



# Northamptonshire Archaeology

## Archaeological building recording at Walltree House Farm, Steane, Northamptonshire



### **Northamptonshire Archaeology**

2 Bolton House  
Wootton Hall Park  
Northampton NN4 8BE  
t. 01604 700493 f. 01604 702822  
e. [sparry@northamptonshire.gov.uk](mailto:sparry@northamptonshire.gov.uk)  
w. [www.northantsarchaeology.co.uk](http://www.northantsarchaeology.co.uk)



**Northamptonshire  
County Council**

Yvonne Wolframm-Murray

Report 13/80

May 2013



**STAFF**

Project Manager: Steve Parry MA MIfA FSA  
Text: Yvonne Wolframm-Murray BSc PhD  
Fieldwork: Yvonne Wolframm-Murray  
Illustrations: Amir Bassir BSc PlfA

**QUALITY CONTROL**

	Print name	Signature	Date
Checked by	P Chapman		
Approved by	S Parry		

**OASIS REPORT FORM**

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		<b>OASIS NO. 150 622</b>
Project title	Archaeological building recording at Walltree House Farm, Steane, Northamptonshire	
Short description	Northamptonshire Archaeology carried out a buildings recording action at Walltree House Farm, Steane, Northamptonshire to record a mid to late 19th-century farm building before it is converted into a private dwelling. The building may have been a corn barn. Repairs and alterations were made by the MoD during the Second World War, most notably the raising of the rear barn door, possibly to make it easier for machinery to pass through.	
Project type	Building recording	
Previous work	none	
Future work	unknown	
Monument type and period	19th-century building	
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>		
County	Northamptonshire	
Site address	Walltree House Farm, Steane, Northamptonshire	
Easting / Northing	SP 5421 3725	
Area sqm or ha	78sqm	
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Project brief originator	NCC Assistant Archaeological Advisor	
Project Design originator	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Director/Supervisor	Yvonne Wolfram-Murray	
Project Manager	Steve Parry	
Sponsor or funding body	RB Harrison	
<b>PROJECT DATE</b>		
Start date	30 April 2013	
End date	16 May 2013	
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>		
Title	Archaeological building recording at Walltree House Farm, Steane, Northamptonshire	
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Author(s)	Yvonne Wolfram-Murray	
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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL BUILDING RECORDING**  
**AT WALLTREE HOUSE FARM, STEANE, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**  
**APRIL 2013**

**Abstract**

*Northamptonshire Archaeology carried out a buildings recording action at Walltree House Farm, Steane, Northamptonshire to record a mid to late 19th-century farm building before it is converted into a private dwelling. The building may have been a corn barn. Repairs and alterations were made by the MoD during the Second World War, most notably the raising of rear barn door, possibly to make it easier for machinery to pass through.*

**1 INTRODUCTION**

Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA) were commissioned by Mrs Pauline Harrison to undertake an archaeological buildings recording action on the farm building at Walltree House Farm, Steane, Northamptonshire (NGR SP 5421 3725, Figs 1 and 2). The work was carried out in response to the proposed conversion of the building (Planning consent No: S/2012/1372/FUK).

The farm is located on the north-western edge of Hinton-in-the-Hedges Airfield, between Charlton and Hinton-in-the-Hedges. The barn forms part of the northern range of the farmyard buildings at Walltree House Farm. The barn is currently unused and the buildings to either side have already been converted.

**2 OBJECTIVES**

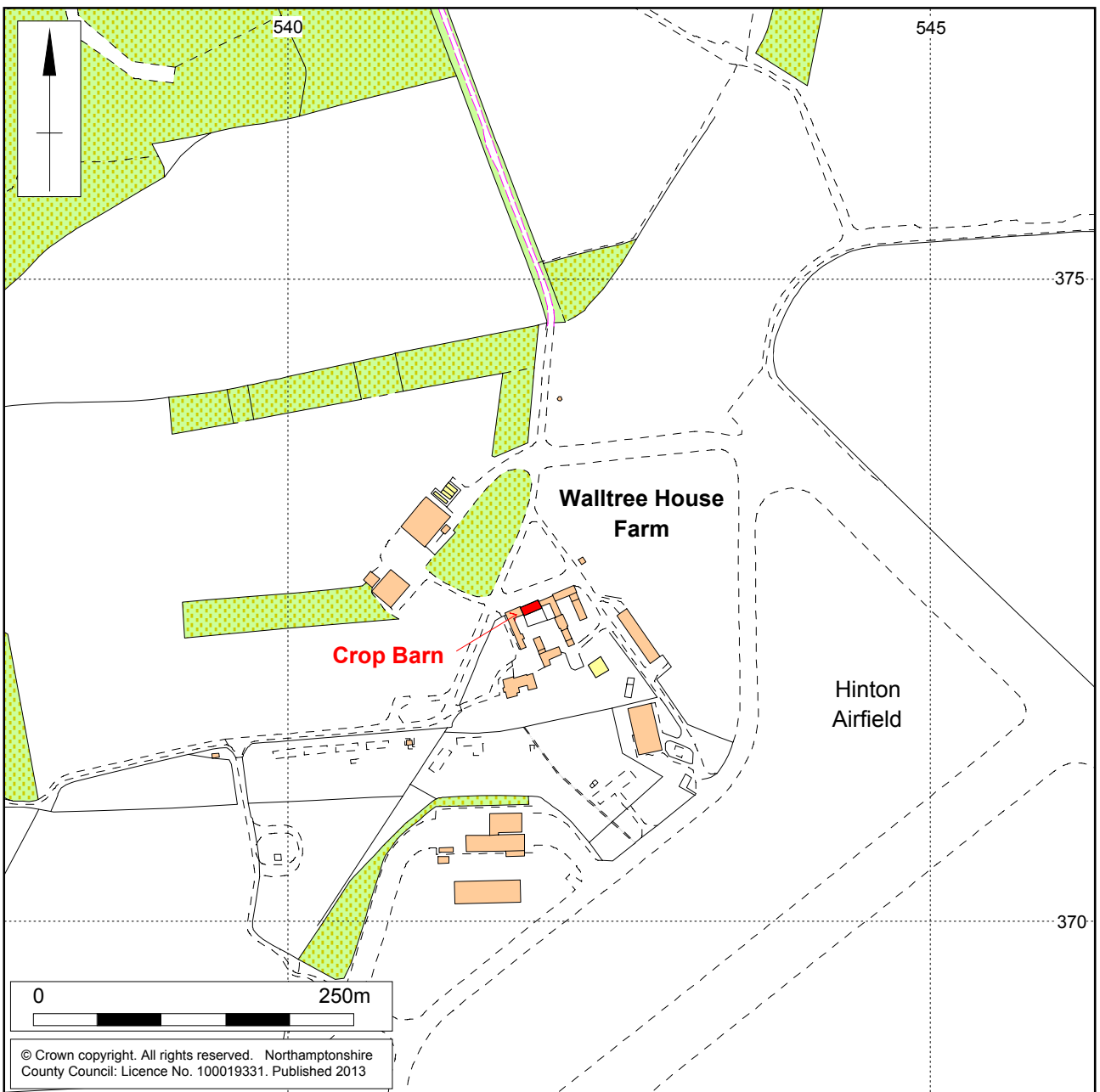
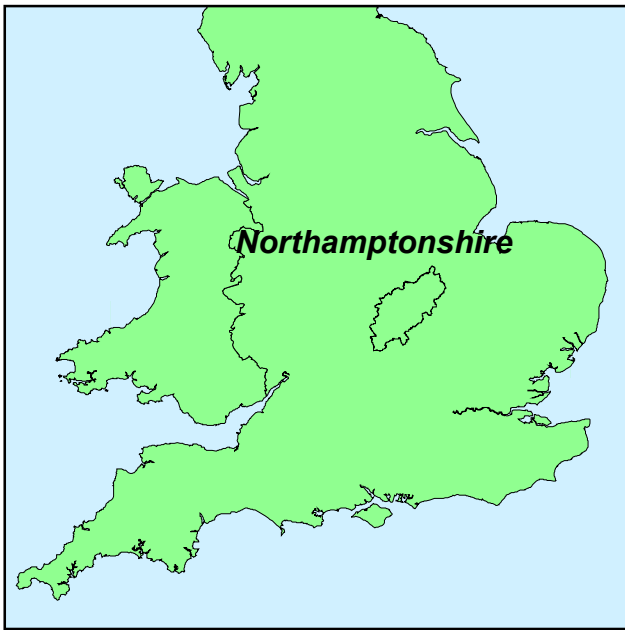
The objectives of the work, subject to accessibility, were to:

- Compile a descriptive record of the building at English Heritage's Level 2 before conversion of the building takes place,
- Provide a detailed understanding of the nature of the building, and to provide the historical context, development and significance of the building group.

**3 METHODOLOGY**

A site visit was made on Tuesday 29 April 2013. The work was carried in accordance with the WSI (NA 2013), which was prepared with reference to the brief issued by the Northamptonshire County Council Assistant Archaeological Advisor (NCC 2012).

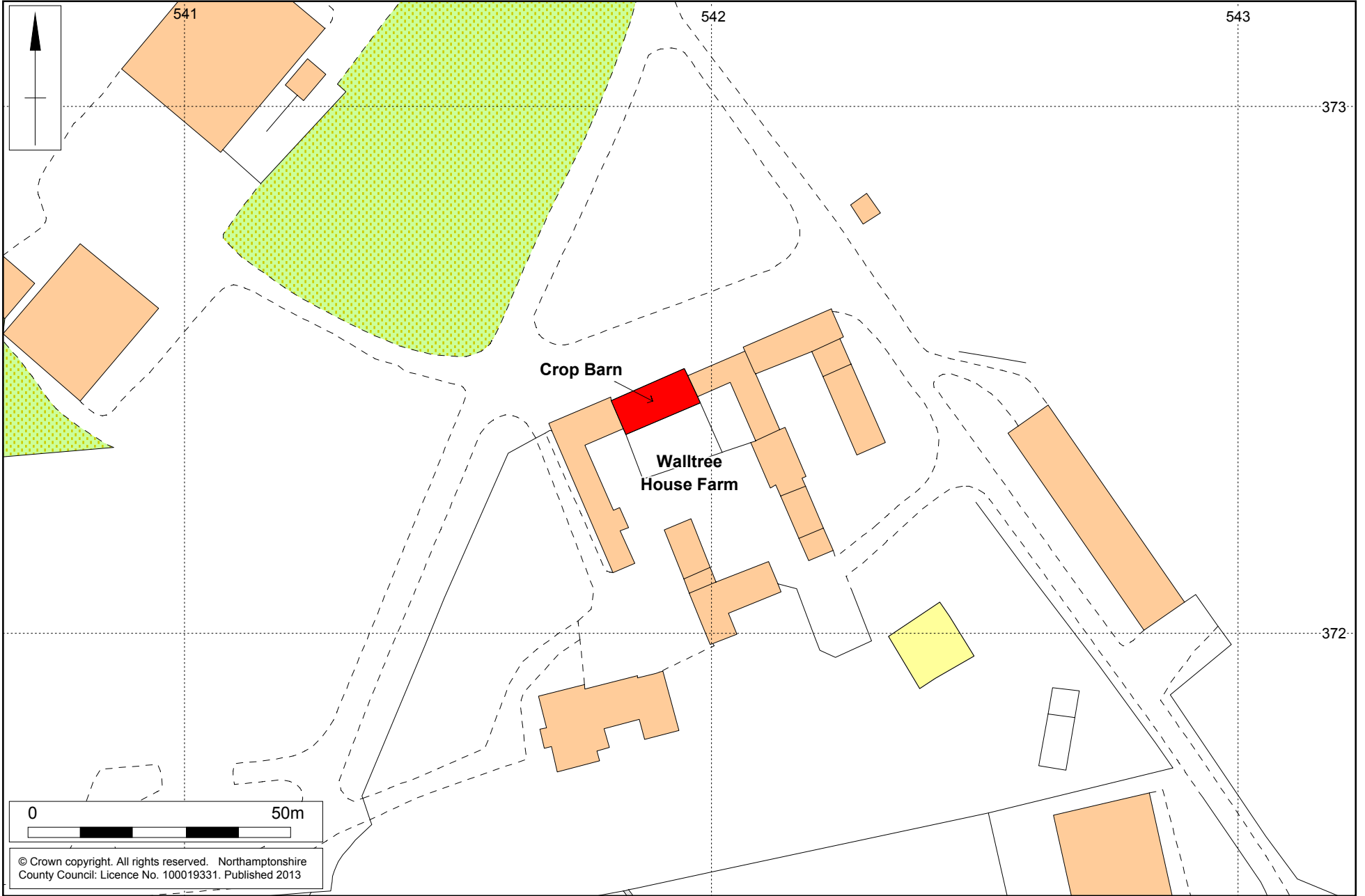
All works was conducted in accordance with the procedural documents *The Management of Research Projects on the Historic Environment* (EH 2006b, revised 2009); *Standard and Guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures* (IfA revised 2008).



Scale 1:5000

Site location Fig 1

Scale 1:1000



The surveyed building  
Fig 2



An overall photographic survey of the building in its present condition comprising general and detailed shots were taken in black and white with a high quality camera as well as digital photographs for reporting purposes.

The plans and elevations of the building, provided by the developers, were checked for accuracy on site and annotated. Fixtures and fittings, which related to the building's early use, were recorded and former uses of the building were postulated where sufficient evidence remained to do so.

### 3 BACKGROUND AND VIEWS

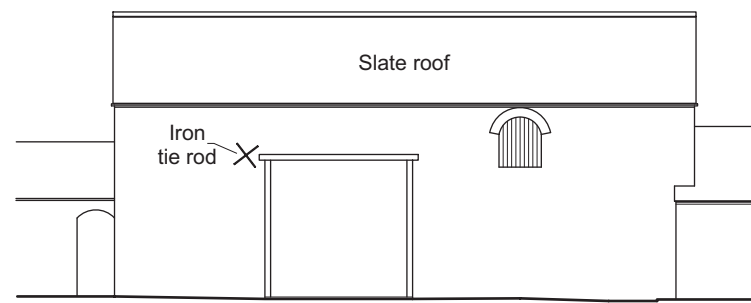
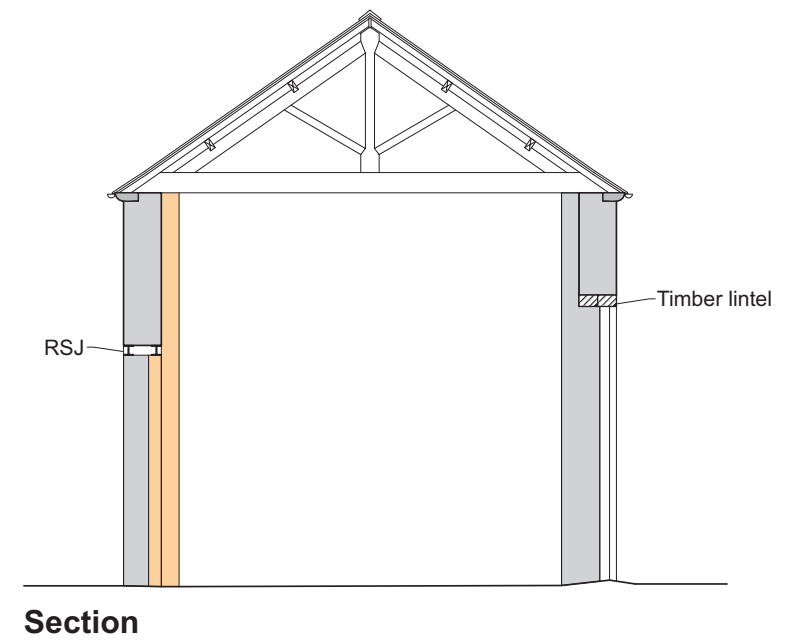
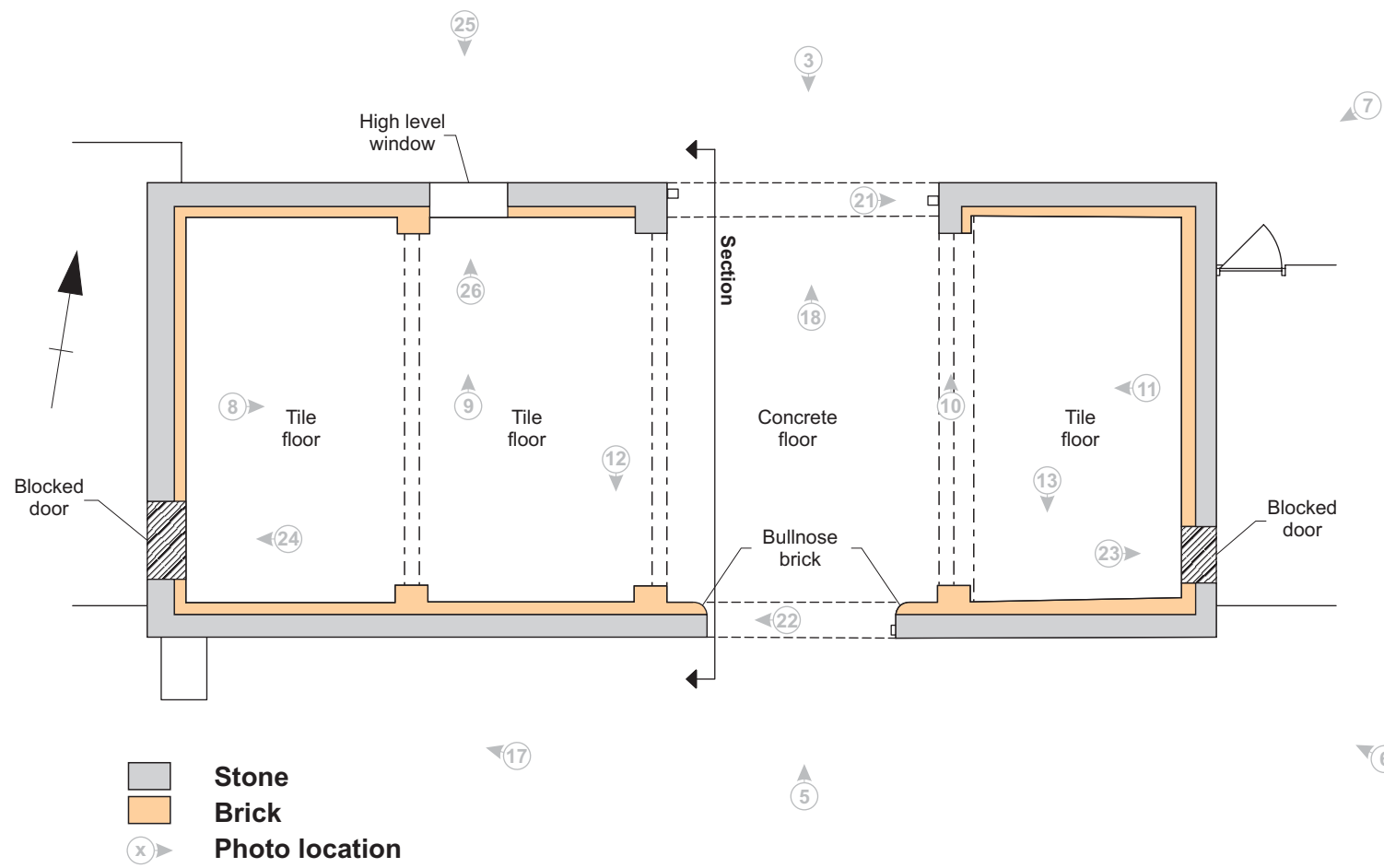
The farm and associated buildings do not show on the 1810 Ordnance Survey Surveyors map, but are present on the 1885 First Edition Ordnance Survey map in a layout similar to that of the present time. The airfield (runways and associated features: HER 8540/1) opened in 1940 and was used during WWII. The farm was appropriated by the Ministry of Defence who made changes to some of the farm buildings including the barn under investigation. A search of the Historic Environment Record and in Northamptonshire Records Office did not reveal any information on Walltree House Farm itself.

To the north of the farmhouse is a complex of buildings arranged around two courtyards. The farm building under investigation is situated in the centre of the north-western range of the western courtyard. The building measures 14.30m long by 5.50m wide (Fig 4).

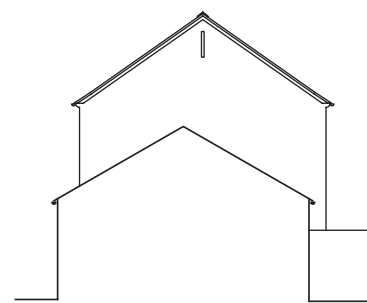
#### 3.1 External views



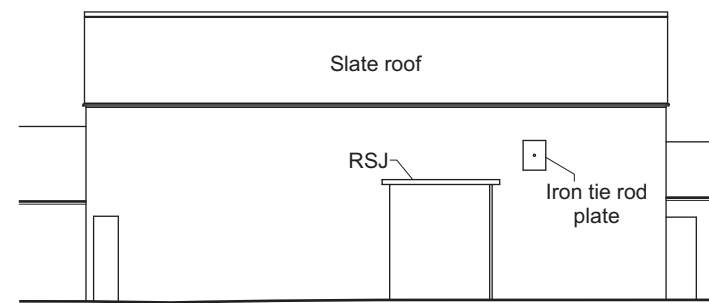
Front elevation, looking south-west Fig 3



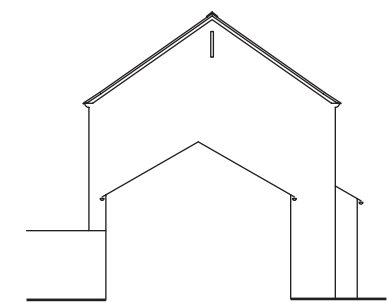
Front (north) elevation



Gable (west) elevation



Rear (south) elevation



Gable (east) elevation





Rear elevation, looking north-east Fig 5



Side elevation, looking north-west Fig 6



Side elevation, looking south-west Fig 7

### 3.3 Internal views



Internal side elevation, looking south-east Fig 8



Left internal elevation beside front barn door, looking north-west Fig 9



Right internal elevation beside front barn door, looking north-west Fig 10



Internal side elevation, looking north-west Fig 11



Right internal elevation beside rear barn door, looking south-east Fig 12



Right internal elevation beside rear barn door,  
looking south-east Fig 13

#### 4 BUILDING ASSESSMENT

The barn was constructed with coursed pale grey limestone bonded in a lime mortar (Fig 14), small patches were repaired with concrete mortar. Internally the walls are lined with bricks bonded in a lime mortar. They are laid alternatively with two rows of shiners and rowlocks (also known as rat-trap bond) with a row of stretchers (Fig 15), this pattern is not repeated in the brick pilasters. The bricks (240mm x 110mm x 70mm) are red in colour and have small to medium-sized inclusions (including flint) and voids. This was possibly to give the wall a smoother, cleaner surface.



External limestone wall, Fig 14  
looking north-west



Internal brick wall, Fig 15  
looking south-west

The roof of the gabled building was constructed of timber and laid with grey Welsh slate tiles. There are three wooden machine sawn king post trusses, supporting a frame of machine sawn purlins, rafters and battens (Fig 16). The north-eastern bay was also supported with iron ties, and externally the western bay was supported on the south-western corner by a stone buttress (Fig 17).



Machine sawn king post trusses, purlins, rafters and battens Fig 16



Buttress, looking north-west Fig 17

There were three pairs of pilasters supporting the trusses. All were brick except for the two flanking the north-western door, which were stone-built (Fig 18). The north-eastern stone pilaster was repaired with brick (Fig 19). There are other areas of the internal stone wall that have been repaired with brick, this brick (220mm x 100mm x 70mm) is a variegated red and yellow colour; possibly used by the Ministry of Defence (MoD). The top of the wall was finished off externally with a header course of bull-nosed bricks and a rounded stone at each corner.





Stone pilasters, looking north-west Fig 18



Brick repairs to pilaster, looking north-west Fig 19

The building has two large opposing entrances on the north-west and south-east sides. The lintel of the north-west door are two wooden beams, internally a segmental relieving arch is visible above the door (Fig 20). Two wooden door jambs with iron hinges remain, however, the left one was bent out of position (Fig 21).



Brick segmental relieving arch, looking north-west Fig 20



Door jamb, looking east Fig 21

The south-east door was originally much lower than the other; the original bull-nosed brick used on the inside of the doorway remain. During the Second World War the MoD raised this door, this can be seen through the use of the red and yellow variegated brick, the in-between brick was chamfered to give a neat transition (Fig 22). Bull-nosed bricks

are typically used to avoid damage to the arris over time. Also a steel girder was used as a lintel, and only one of the wooden door jambs remain.



Original features and changes to door,  
looking south-west Fig 22

At the south-western and north-eastern corners of the barns are openings bricked-up with breeze blocks. These doors were later inserted to connect the barn with the buildings to either side, but closed off when the neighbouring buildings were converted. Both openings have concrete lintels and extensive brickwork repairs surrounding the openings. The brick utilised is the variegated yellow and red variety. The south-western opening has a wooden plywood box as steps whereas the other opening has a concrete step (Figs 23 and 24).



North-eastern door, Fig 23  
looking north-east



North-western door, Fig 24  
looking north-west

An arched opening was located in the north-western bay at a high level, just under the eaves next to one of the pilasters. Externally the opening is constructed entirely of stone (Fig 25). Internally the arch and right side is lined with bull-nosed bricks, the left hand side is keyed into the pilaster to give a flush surface. The lintel is probably tiled (Fig 26).



External view of window, Fig 25  
looking south-east



Internal view of window, Fig 26  
looking north-west

At the top of each gable are externally narrow slit windows (Fig 27), internally it can be noted that they have been bricked up. It is likely that they were splayed as the bricked-up area is a much larger rectangle (Fig 28).



External view of window, Fig 27  
looking south-west



Internal view of window, Fig 28  
looking south-west

The flooring can be divided into three distinct areas. The central area between the two barn doors has been replaced by concrete with an asymmetrical level surface in the centre (Fig 29). To either side the original brick and tile floor remains, albeit in a poor

condition. The areas are lined with blue bricks with a wider central part (Fig 30), the remainder of the floor was laid with red square tiles (240mm x 240mm) (Fig 31). A possible repair was made near the north-western door where the floor was laid with red brick. There are areas that have been infilled with concrete or dirt. In the south-western corner is a raised concrete platform, measuring 2.10m by 0.85m.



Central concrete area, Fig 29  
looking south-east



Blue brick border, looking north-west Fig 30



Red tile detail, looking north-east Fig 31

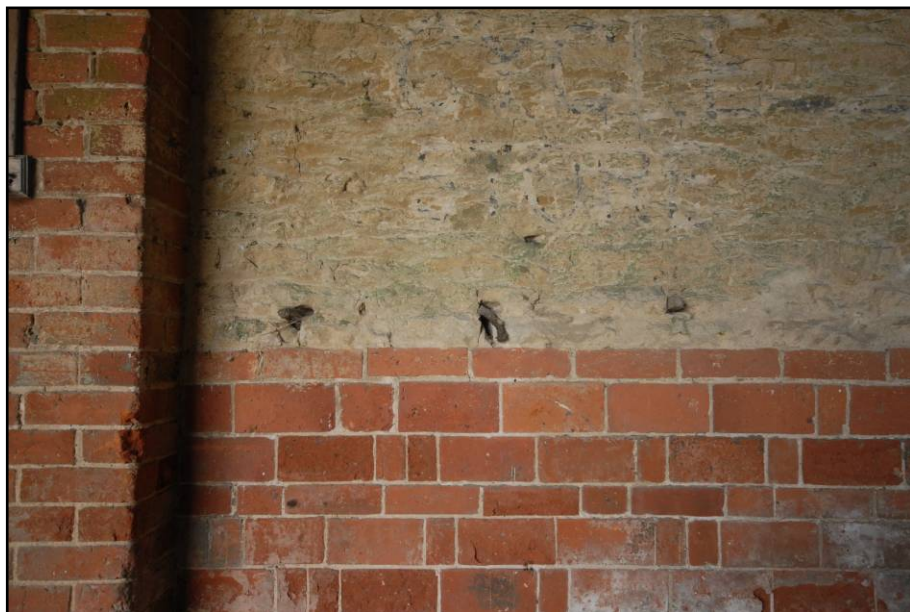
## 5 DISCUSSION

The survey recorded the building that is proposed for conversion. It is possibly a corn barn dating to the mid to late 19th century, based on historic mapping. The building was probably constructed to store grain crop and straw.

There is very little evidence of original fixtures or fittings. There is electricity in the barn. On the wall, approximately at a height of 2.62m, are three hollows. These are large enough for beam slots, but there is no evidence on the side walls of slots. Therefore it is difficult to conclude if there ever was a platform in this part of the barn. Below these is a row of infilled holes (Fig 32). On the right, inside the south-western door, are three wooden stumps (Fig 33).



Holes in the wall, looking south-east Fig 32



Wooden pegs in wall, looking south-west Fig 33

The barn was maintained and repaired over the years. There appears to have been a major period of alterations to the building during the Second World War when it was appropriated. The MoD altered the height of the rear door, created two doors into neighbouring buildings, and made repairs to the internal walls. These alterations and repairs appear to have been made with the red-yellow variegated brick. Raising the height of the rear door would have made the use of machinery easier.

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