

**REPORT ON AN HISTORIC BUILDING SURVEY AND
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF: THE SWILL, LEICESTER ROAD,
THORNHAUGH, PETERBOROUGH, CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

Planning Application Reference: 09/01464/FUL

NGR: TF 0483 0046

AAL Site Code: THTS 10

OASIS Reference Number: allenarc1-93629



Report prepared for Thomas Wilson Architects,
on behalf of Mr and Mrs Carr

By
Allen Archaeology Limited
Report Number 2011032

May 2011



The
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Executive Summary

- An archaeological scheme of works comprising an historic building survey and watching brief was undertaken in advance of and during the conversion of a Grade II Listed barn on land at The Swill in Thornhaugh near Peterborough, Cambridgeshire.
- The structure forms part of a group of farm buildings associated with the adjacent Grade II Listed Home Farmhouse, which was largely rebuilt by the Duke of Bedford in the mid 1800s.
- The building survey recorded a number of 19th and 20th century alterations to the 19th century building, which currently comprises a stable with store and tack room and hayloft above.
- The archaeological watching brief exposed only a sequence of former floor surfaces and bedding layers inside the building.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Allen Archaeology Ltd (hereafter AAL) was commissioned by Thomas Wilson Architects, on behalf of Mr and Mrs Carr to carry out an historic building survey of an 18th century barn prior to its conversion for residential use, and an archaeological watching brief during associated groundworks at The Swill, off Leicester Road, Thornhaugh, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire.
- 1.2 The site monitoring, recording and reporting conforms to current national guidelines, as set out in the Institute for Archaeologists '*Standard and guidance for archaeological watching briefs*' (IfA 1994, revised 2001 and 2008), '*Standard and guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures*' (IfA 1996, revised 2001 and 2008), the English Heritage guidance, '*Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice*' (English Heritage 2006) and a specification for a photographic survey and watching brief prepared by this company (AAL 2010).
- 1.3 The archive will be submitted to Peterborough Museum and Art Gallery following completion of the report.

2.0 Site Location and Description

- 2.1 Thornhaugh is situated in the administrative district of Peterborough City Council, approximately 12.5km west of central Peterborough. The site is located c.1.8km west of the village of Thornhaugh, to the north of the A47 Leicester Road and immediately to the north-west of Home Farm House. The site is centred on NGR TF 0483 0046 and lies at approximately 51m above Ordnance Datum.
- 2.2 The local geology comprises bedrock deposits of Lincolnshire Limestone, with no superficial deposits shown on the site (http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyviewer_google/googleviewer.html).

3.0 Planning Background

- 3.1 A planning application was submitted for the '*Conversion of existing barn to form additional residential accommodation comprising playroom, kitchenette, WC and two en-suite bedrooms, ancillary to The Swill*' (Planning Application Reference 09/01461/FUL), and was approved with conditions. The planning conditions included for the undertaking of a programme of historic building recording of the structures that were affected by development and an archaeological watching brief during all associated groundworks.

4.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 4.1 Prehistoric activity is restricted to a single find spot of a Mesolithic flint scatter c.1km to the north (National Monuments Record (hereafter NMR) Reference 348155).
- 4.2 A possible Romano-British building is shown on historic mapping c.250m to the west of the site, although a field investigation failed to identify any evidence of the supposed structure (NMR Reference 348144). Local tradition suggests that four Roman burials were found in 1953, c.800m to the south-south-east, although there is no further evidence (NMR Reference 361407).
- 4.3 Anglo-Saxon activity was identified during excavations for the Wing to Peterborough Trunk Main, c.1km to the north. Two furnaces and a third possible furnace were identified in association with a number of probable ore roasting pits. Radiocarbon dates from the furnaces placed the features in the late 7th to early 10th centuries (NMR Reference 1172513).

- 4.4 Place name evidence also suggests an Anglo-Saxon origin to the village of Thornhaugh, as it derives from Old English elements meaning ‘thorn-tree enclosure’ (<http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/~aezins/kepnp.php>).
- 4.5 The site is adjacent to the mid 18th century Grade II Listed Home Farmhouse, with later additions and alterations (LBS Reference 50412). The farmhouse and farm was rebuilt by the Duke of Bedford on the site of the former hunting lodge of the 1st Lord Russell Baron of Thornhaugh (*ibid.*). Previous documented farmsteads in Cambridgeshire built by the Duke date from the 1850s (Wade Martins 2002). Other listed elements of the farm estate include the Grade II Listed stables and granary (LBS Reference 50510), and the Grade II barn (subject to this report) and dairy range (LBS Reference 50511).

5.0 Methodology

5.1 Photographic Survey

5.1.1 The photographic survey was undertaken by Chris Clay on Thursday 9th December 2011, using a digital SLR camera (Fujifilm Finepix S9500) with a 28 – 300mm lens. The weather was sunny but the sun was standing low in the December sky and on occasion casting large unavoidable shadows. A tripod and integral flash were used where appropriate. Photographs of architectural detail incorporated appropriate metric scales, and all shots were located on scale plans of the buildings (Figures 2 and 3). A selection of the photographs is included in this report (See Appendix 1 below), and a list of all shots taken is reproduced in Appendix 2.

5.1.2 Photographs were taken of the following:

- All external elevations
- All internal elevations, including internal walls and subdivisions
- The roof structure of the building, internally and externally
- The relationship of the structures to their surroundings
- Architectural details, i.e. decorative brickwork, carpentry joints, re-used timbers and other significant features, fixtures or fittings
- A general internal photographic record of the building. Shots were taken of each room/discrete internal space from sufficient points to show the form, general appearance and methods of construction

5.2 Archaeological Watching Brief

5.2.1 The groundworks for the scheme were monitored by Kevin Trott on Wednesday 9th February 2011. The ground reduction was all undertaken by hand using a hydraulic breaker and hand tools. During excavation, all exposed plan and section surfaces were examined in order to determine the stratigraphic sequence and if any archaeological features had been revealed. Each context was recorded on pro-forma AAL context record sheets, accompanied by plan and section drawings at appropriate scales (1:50 and 1:20 respectively). A full colour photographic record was maintained, and selected prints have been included as an appendix to this report (see Appendix 3).

5.2.2 Each layer identified was allocated a unique identifier (context number), and accorded a written description, a summary of these are included in Appendix 4.

6.0 Photographic Survey Results (Figures 2 – 4, see Appendix 1 for plates)

- 6.1 The surveyed building comprises a Grade II Listed 18th to 19th century barn aligned north-west to south-east and forms part of a larger complex of farm buildings, The Swill, much of which has already been subject to conversion for residential use. The listing (see Appendix 5) uses a generic description for the structure as a barn, although immediately upon viewing it was clear that the structure comprised a stable on the ground floor, with adjacent tackroom and store, and a hayloft above.
- 6.2 It is constructed in coursed irregular squared limestone bonded with lime mortar with large stone quoins on the corners. The roof is double pitched apart from a block extending from the south-west elevation with a hipped roof. Collyweston slate tiles cover the entire roof, with stone coping on the south-eastern gable (Plates 1, 2 and 4).
- 6.3 The south-west elevation has a single wooden door opening with a wooden lintel above. All ventilation holes on the building have been blocked up, one can be seen on this elevation close to the south-west corner. A window with twelve glass panes, with wooden muntins and lintel is situated north-west of the door (Plate 3).
- 6.4 The south-east elevation has two windows with six panes each with wooden muntins and lintels. On the gable there is a four tier wooden nesting box, each tier has a ledge with three nesting holes. Two blocked up ventilation holes are visible either side of the nesting box (Plate 4).
- 6.5 The north-east elevation of the stable block has a twelve pane window in the centre, two blocked up ventilation holes and dressed quoins on each corner (Plate 5).
- 6.6 The northern end of the elevation has a wooden double door leading into the store, above is an opening with a wooden lintel and sill containing an inward opening casement window (Plate 6).
- 6.7 The stable is divided by wooden partitions into four stalls (with the possibility of a fifth stall at the north-west corner under the hayloft hatch). Only one metal and one wooden hayrack remain and a feeding trough is also present within the north-east stall. The two stalls on the north-western side each have a hatch in the ceiling; this is to allow hay to be dropped from the hayloft above. The stable still has its original brick floor. Metal bars in front of the window openings are probably a security measure and may suggest that the current windows are a later addition, replacing the original wooden shutters as there would be little need for glazed windows in a stable block (Plates 9 and 10). Possibly contemporary with this change is the insertion of a number of single brick sized metal ventilators visible above the stalls to improve ventilation (Plates 7, 8 and 10).
- 6.8 A wooden door in the north-west corner of the stable block leads to a room currently used as a general store. The floor is made up of a wooden planks sitting on top of an earlier brick floor which was exposed during the archaeological watching brief (Plates 11 and 12, and see section 8.2 below).
- 6.9 To the south-west there is another doorway into a third room, a tack room with features such as wooden pegs for hanging up harnesses and racks for placing saddles (Plate 13). The room has wooden panelling on all four walls, and also has a brick fireplace and chimney on the north-east wall and workbenches on the south-west wall (Plates 14 and 15).
- 6.10 The hayloft is accessible from the stables via a ladder through a hatch in the ceiling. The original roof structure is visible from this floor and consists of a tie beam collar and struts, supporting purlins and common rafters. Two brick pillars have been put in place to support a tie beam and give extra strength to the structure (Plate 16). On the ground floor these are abutted by the wooden stable partitions (Plate 8).

7.0 Photographic Survey Discussion and Conclusions

- 7.1 Map evidence suggests the listed structure that is the subject of this study was in existence at the time of the Ordnance Survey Map of 1886, and was probably built by the Duke of Bedford in the 1850s when he acquired the estate. The location of the stable block, near to the house, is an indication of the greater importance of the horses relative to other livestock, especially those used for riding rather than traction. Despite the mid 19th century date the stable appears to be following an earlier common practice with the arrangement of the stalls and location of hayloft. Stables before the early 1800s usually had the stalls along the gables, fitting a maximum of four horses. For this reason earlier stables are usually smaller than later examples that fitted the stalls along the length of the building (Wade Martins 1991).
- 7.2 Until the beginning of the 19th century it was also common practice to have haylofts above the stable, reflecting the importance of the horse in the hierarchy of farm animals, as it provided insulation and made feeding easier, by dropping the hay through a hatch into the stable below, as in the present building. However, the procedure was gradually abandoned during the 19th century as the heat and moisture from the animals also resulted in rapidly rotting floor boards of the hayloft above (Wade Martins 1991).
- 7.3 The presence of the large quoins on the north-east end of the north-east elevation of the stable block suggests that this was originally the end of the elevation, and that the north-east elevation of the adjacent store represents a later infilling. In support of this, the adjacent building to the north-east also has quoins on its adjacent corner. It is possible that this was originally a covered opening that allowed the loading of feed into the hayloft over the stables, which was subsequently blocked in line with the changing fashions in the design of farm buildings.

8.0 Watching Brief Results (Figures 2 and 5)

8.1 Stable

- 8.1.1 The uppermost layer in the stables consisted of a brick floor 101 bonded with lime mortar. It sealed a compact sand bedding layer 102 which overlaid make-up layer 103, a very compact yellow sand with limestone rubble.

8.2 Store

- 8.2.1 A planked wooden floor 201 was the first surface encountered. It sealed the original brick surface 202 which overlaid a compact bedding layer of sand, 203. The earliest layer recorded comprised a very compact yellow sand with limestone rubble 204, representing another probable bedding layer.

9.0 Watching Brief Discussion and Conclusion

- 9.1 The watching brief did not reveal any features or deposits of archaeological significance, exposing only a series of floors and bedding layers associated with the existing buildings.

10.0 Effectiveness of Methodology

10.1 Both the photographic survey methodology and the watching brief methodology were appropriate to the scale and nature of the current phase of works. The watching brief methodology demonstrated that the groundworks have had a negligible impact on the limited archaeological resource that has been identified in the development area.

11.0 Acknowledgements

11.1 Allen Archaeology Limited would like to thank Thomas Wilson Architects and Mr and Mrs Carr for this commission.

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Appendix 1: Photographic Survey Plates



Plate 1 (Shot 1): South-west elevation of eastern range also showing the corner of the possible later extension to the left, looking north-east



Plate 2 (Shot 3): South-east elevation of the tack room showing half-hipped roof. The brick chimney is a later addition. Looking north-west



Plate 3 (Shot 4): Detail of window on south-west elevation, looking north-east



Plate 4 (Shot 5): South-east elevation showing nesting holes on the gable, looking north-west



Plate 5 (Shot 8): North-east elevation, looking south-west



Plate 6 (Shot 9): Detail of quoins on the early stable block and wooden double doors and first floor window on the later extension. Also notice the quoins on the right hand side of the shot, suggesting a space may have only been blocked up rather than it being an added extension, looking south-west



Plate 7 (Shot 10): Detail of stable with a feeding trough and a metal hayrack. Also notice the hatch from the hayloft above, looking south-west



Plate 8 (Shot 11): Close-up of stable with hatch in the ceiling, looking south-west. The wooden partitions about the brick roof supports visible on the first floor (see Plate 16)



Plate 9 (Shot 12): General view of stable interior with hatch and ladder leading up to the hayloft. Notice the steel bars in front of the opening to the left of shot, there is also a metal fitting on the wooden partition wall for hanging a tack or harness, looking south-west



Plate 10 (Shot 13): Close-up of south stall in stable block, looking south-east



Plate 11 (Shot 14): General shot of garage/store interior, looking north-east



Plate 12 (Shot 15): General shot of garage/store interior, looking south-west



Plate 13 (Shot 16): General shot of tack room, looking north-west



Plate 14 (Shot 18): General shot of tack room, looking east-south-east



Plate 15 (Shot 17): Detail of fireplace in tack room, looking east-north-east



Plate 16 (Shot 19): General shot of hayloft, looking north-north-east

Appendix 2: List of Photographic Survey Plates

Shot No	Facing	Type	Description
01	NE	Exterior	South-west elevation of stables
02	NE	Exterior	South-west elevation of stables
03	NW	Exterior	South-east elevation of barn
04	NE	Exterior/detail	Window in south-west elevation
05	NW	Exterior	South-east elevation of stables
06	NW	Exterior/detail	Window in south-east elevation of stables
07	NW	Exterior/detail	Nesting box on south-east elevation of stables
08	SW	Exterior	North-east elevation of barns/stables
09	SW	Exterior/detail	Doors and widow on north-east elevation of stables/barn
10	NW	Exterior	North stable block
11	NW	Exterior	Central stable block
12	NW	Exterior	Ladder and central stable block
13	SE	Exterior	Stable block to south
14	NE	Interior	General shot of garage
15	SW	Interior	General shot of garage
16	NW	Interior	General shot of tack room
17	ENE	Interior/detail	Fireplace in tack room
18	E	Interior	General shot of tack room
19	NNE	Interior	General view of first floor
20	W	Exterior	General view of buildings with the new office in foreground
21	NW	Exterior	General site view
22	WNW	Exterior	General site view

Appendix 3: Watching Brief Plates



Plate 17: General shot of the stable, showing sondage through the sand bedding, looking south-south-east.



Plate 18: General shot of ground reduction inside the garage, showing south-west facing section, looking north-east

Appendix 4: Context Summary List

Stable

Context No.	Type	Description	Interpretation
101	Surface	Mortar bonded, worn red bricks laid end on, seals 102	Brick floor in stable
102	Layer	Very compact yellow sand. Sealed by 101, seals 103	Bedding layer for brick surface 101
103	Layer	Very compact yellow sand and limestone rubble sealed by 102	Rubble make-up layer

Store

Context No.	Type	Description	Interpretation
201	Surface	Laid wooden planks, seals 202	Wooden floor in the store
202	Surface	Red worn bricks, mortar bonded, sealed by 201, seals 203	Brick floor in the store
203	Layer	Very compact yellow sand. Sealed by 202, seals 204	Bedding layer for brick surface 202
204	Layer	Very compact yellow sand and limestone rubble sealed by 203	Rubble make-up layer

Appendix 5: Listing Information

Description: Barn and Dairy Ranges (dairy Lodge) to East Side of Stock Yard C20 Metres North of Home Farmhouse
Grade: II
Date Listed: 9th January 1987
English Heritage Building ID: 50511
OS Grid Reference: TF0487400494
OS Grid Coordinates: 504874 300494
Latitude/Longitude: 52.5921, -0.4533
Location: A47, Thornhaugh, Peterborough PE8 6NH
Locality: Thornhaugh
Local Authority: City of Peterborough
County: Cambridgeshire
Country: England
Postcode: PE8 6NH

Listing Text

1.
5141 THORNHAUGH WANSFORD ROAD (north side) TF 00 SW 8/712 Barn and dairy ranges (Dairy Lodge) II GV to east side of stock yard c20 metres north of Home Farmhouse

2.
Barn and former dairy ranges now a dwelling. C18 and late C19. Coursed squared limestone rubble with ashlar dressings. Collyweston stone slated roofs. Barn with parapet gables and two similar hipped roof projections or porches to west with leanto between; two double boarded doors to east elevation partly blocked, and blocked ventilation slits. Attached single storey dairy ranges to east side partly enclosing a small yard and converted to a dwelling with five casement windows and boarded door. The farm was rebuilt in the C18 by the Duke of Bedford.

Listing NGR: TF0487400494

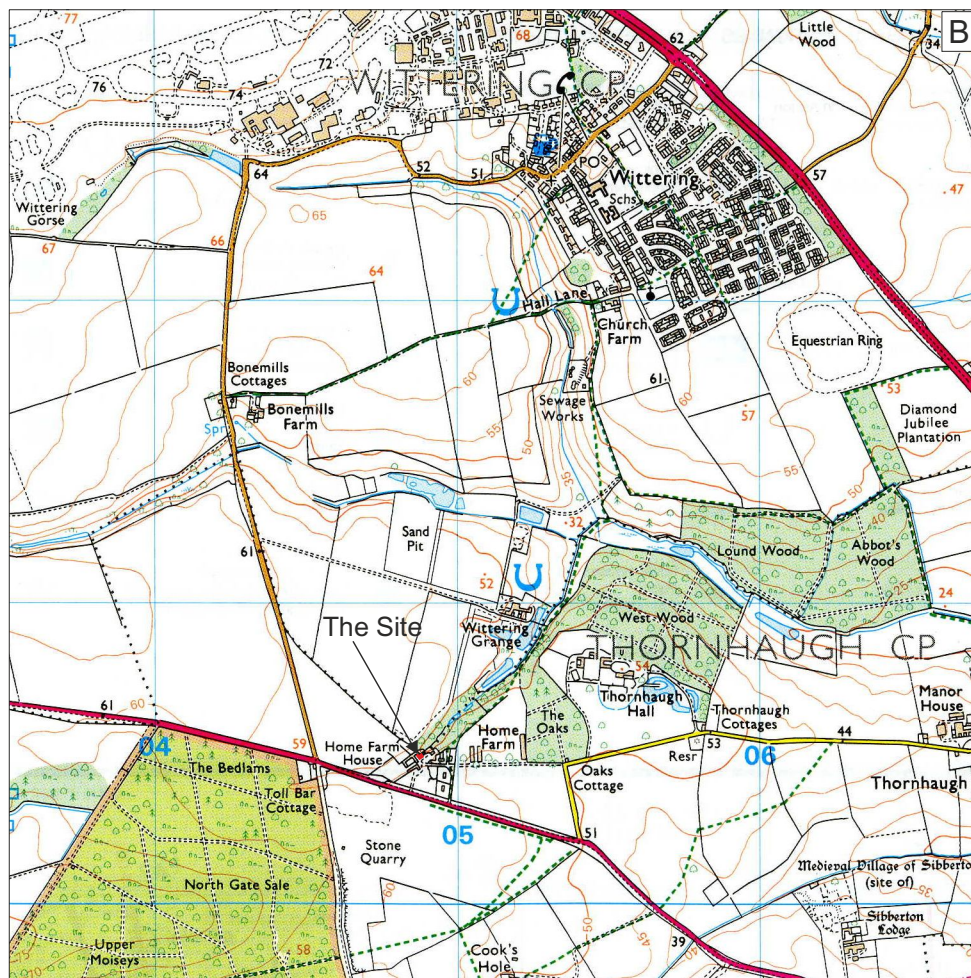
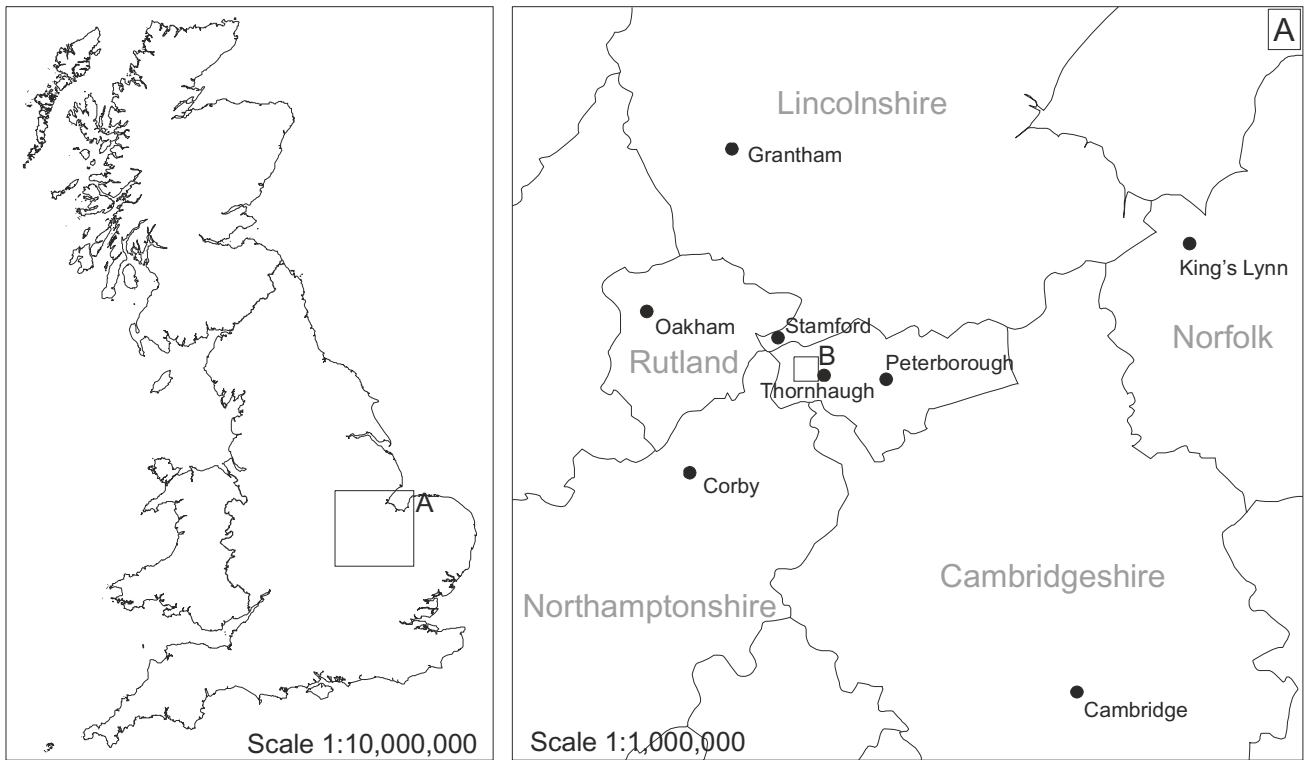


Figure 1: Site location at scale 1:25,000, with the site in red

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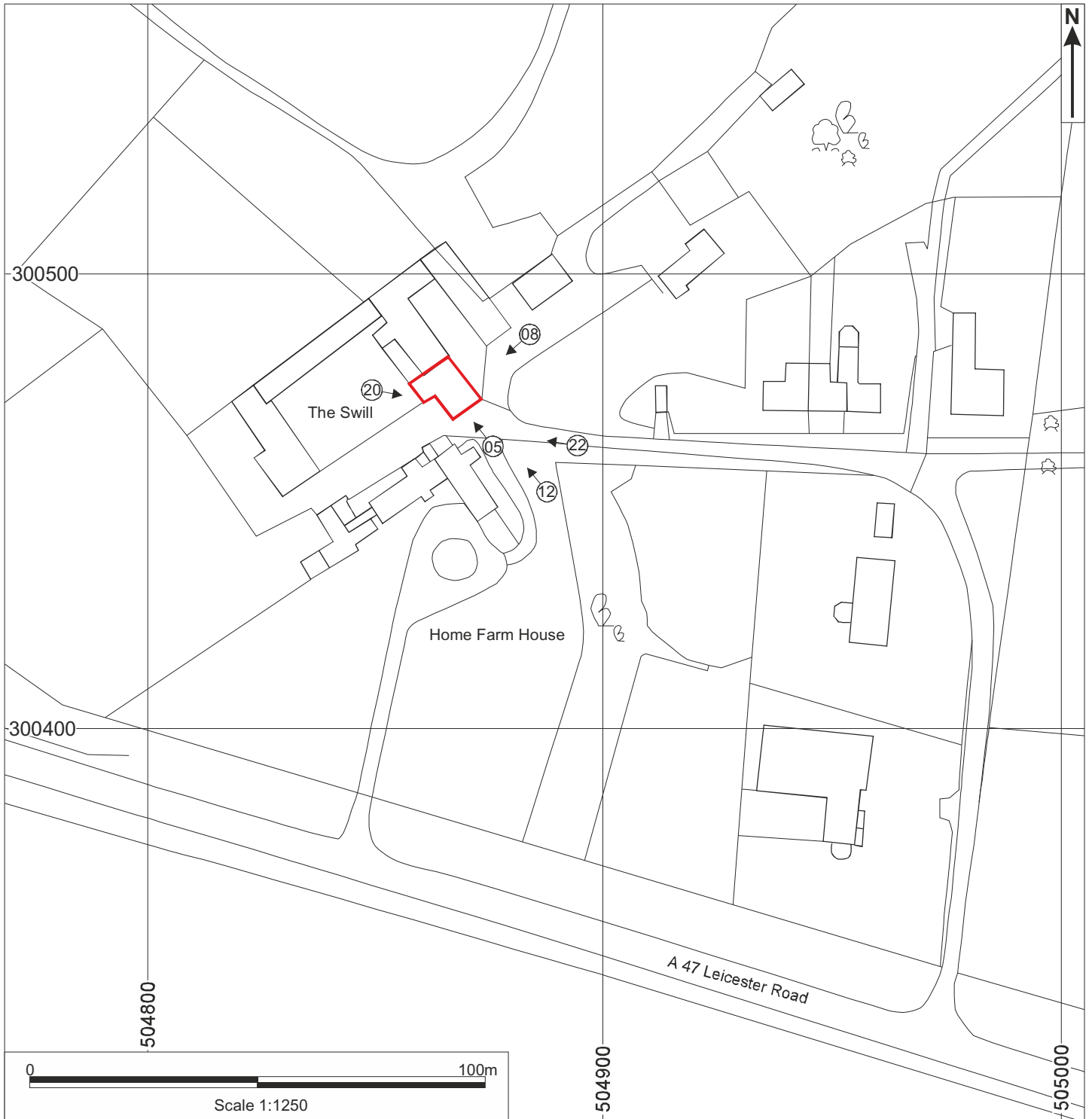


Figure 2: Location plan at scale 1:1,250. Numbered arrows indicate location and orientation of external photographs taken during building survey (listed in Appendix 2). Internal photographs shown on Figure 3

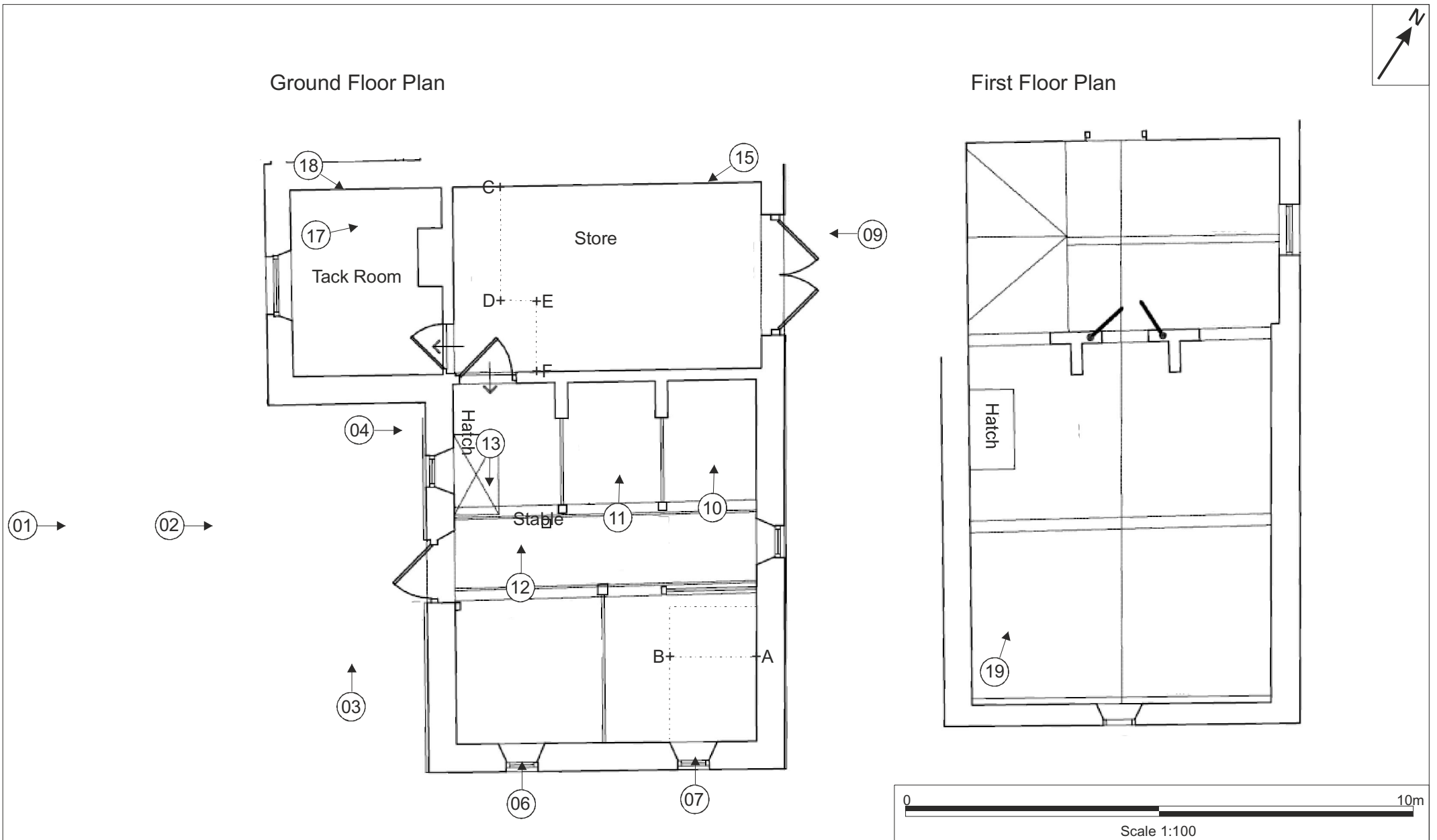
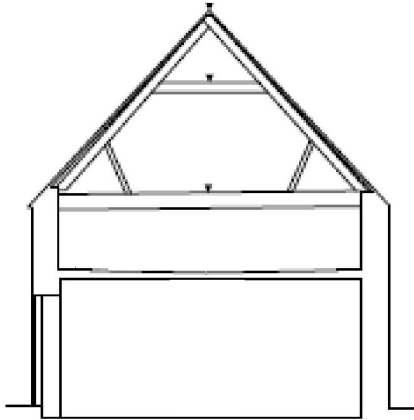


Figure 3: Plans of ground floor and first floor at scale 1:100. Numbered arrows indicate location and orientation of site photographs, and letters relate to watching brief section locations. For sections see Figure 5

North-West Facing Section



North-East Facing Section

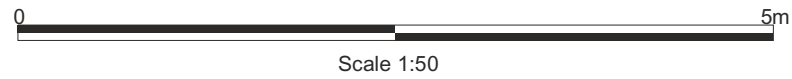
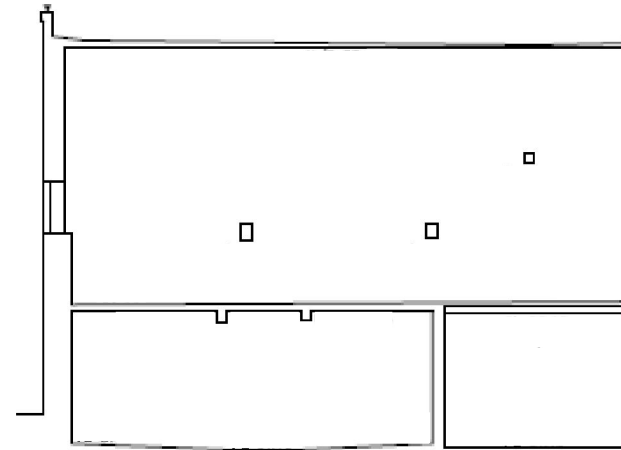


Figure 4: Sections at scale 1:50

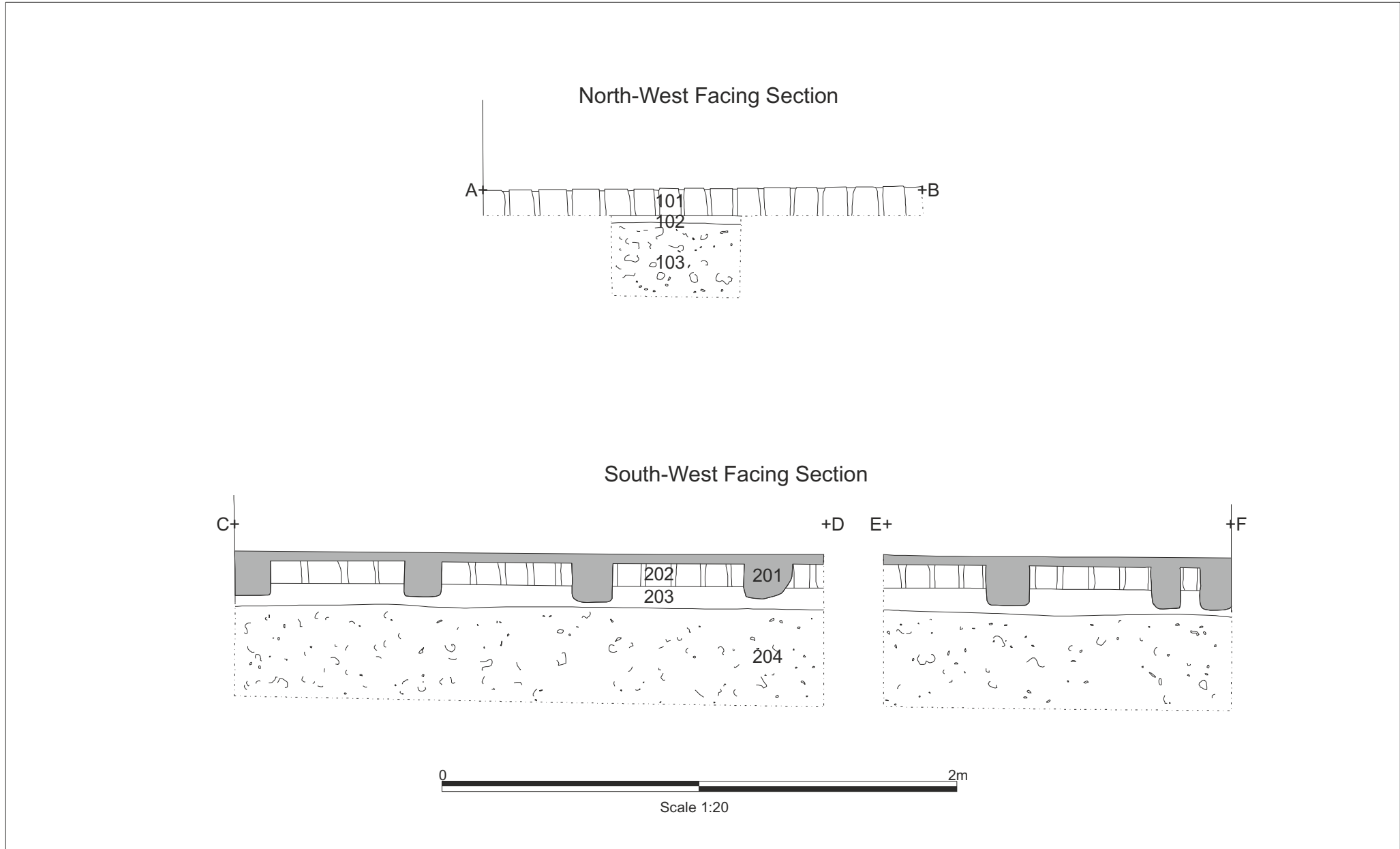


Figure 5: Representative sections in stable and store at scale 1.20. Located on Figure 3



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