

**Lyddington Manor History Society  
Historic Building Survey**

**24 Main Street & 1 The Green  
Lyddington, Rutland**

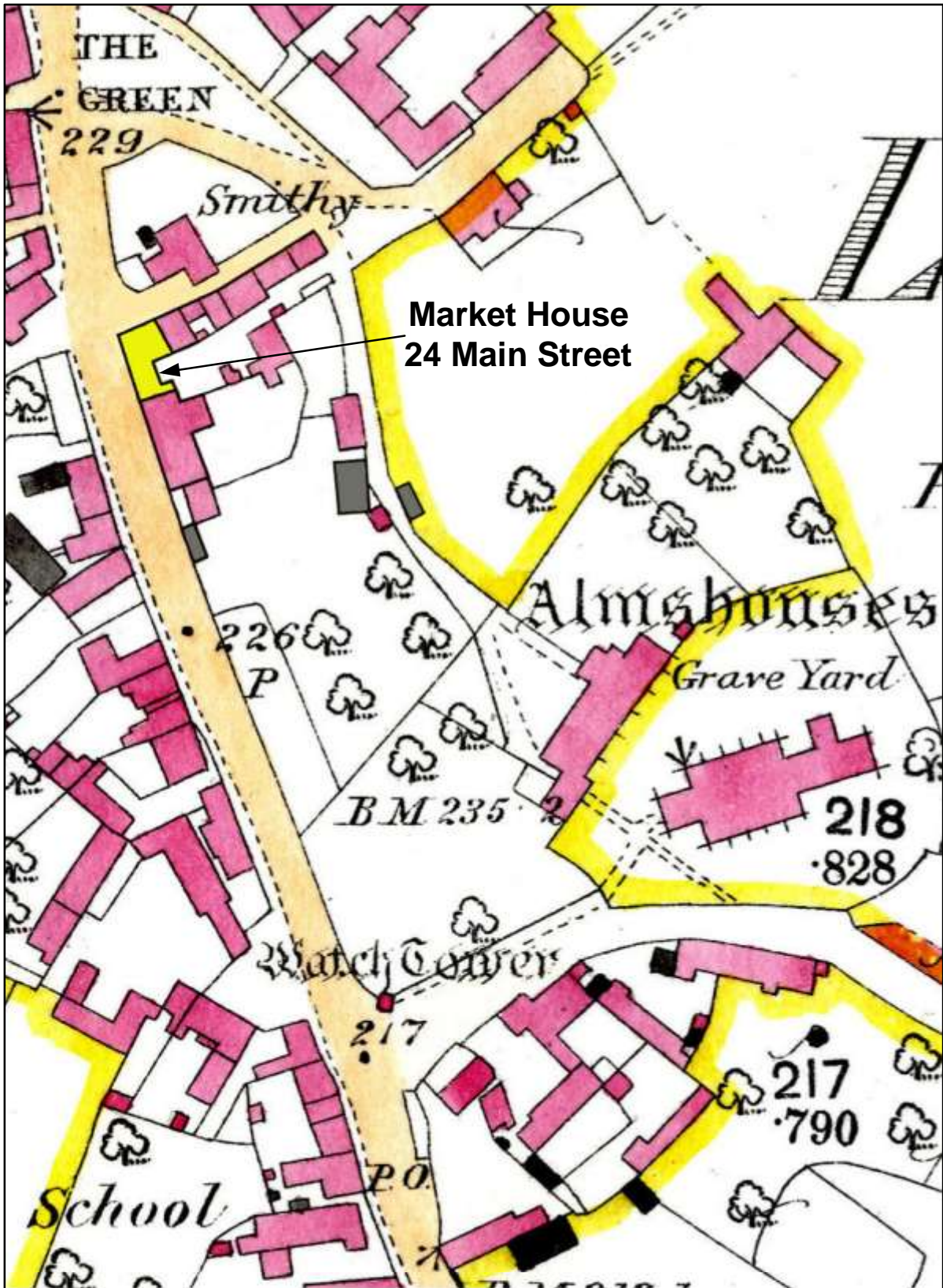


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Location Map – Market House, 24 Main Street, Lyddington  
(OS First Edition 1886)

## 24 MAIN STREET & 1 THE GREEN, LYDDINGTON, RUTLAND

### Summary

Set in the centre of the village, at the corner of Main Street and The Green, this building had timber-framed external walls, a highly unusual feature in Rutland. The timber-framing was in fact of rather limited extent, being confined to the first floor front and rear walls, with the ground floor and both gable ends built of stone. The front wall was distinguished by an impressive set of curved braces, sadly known now only through early photographs, as the front wall was rebuilt in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Dating from around the early 16<sup>th</sup> century, the original building is of unusual plan form, with two first floor chambers of roughly equal size, and no clear evidence of an open hall. Each chamber formed a lofty room, with a central roof truss of clasped purlin type. It seems there was always a stone cross wall dividing the building into two, the wall also providing the location for one or more fireplaces. The unusual use of timber-framing marks the building out as of higher status than the usual vernacular buildings of this period, so it was presumably connected to the Bishop's Palace in the village. The plan form suggests it may have been built as a pair of high-class lodging suites for members of the bishops' retinue.

### Building development

#### The original house

As seen in photographs of c.1900, the front wall formed an impressive feature. Set above a ground floor wall of stone, there were four bays of timber framing, with heavy braces running from high up on the posts down to the cill beam. When examined closely, the pattern of braces is not as regular as it first appears, as the bays differ slightly in length. Unlike other examples of timber-framing in the area, the wall is not formed of closely set studs, but with quite widely spaced posts. The rear wall, of which enough fragments remain to discern the arrangement, was of similar type, with slightly wider spaced studs and only occasional down-braces, rather than a full matching set. The infill to the panels, of which a small section survives to the rear, was of mud mixed with hay, probably with light vertical timber and wattling in the middle. No evidence for the arrangement of windows survives, though these must have been fitted in around the bracing, rather than having major horizontal members.

On the first floor there were two chambers of roughly equal size, quite lofty and open to the roof, with a display truss at the centre of each room. The roof is of clasped purlin type, with heavy arch-braces, jowled posts and a slightly cranked tie-beam. Above this the principal rafters are diminished at purlin height, with a tenoned collar. In the slightly smaller north chamber (No 1), there is an unusual pattern of a central post and curved braces between the tie beam and collar, though this was never fitted in the south chamber (No 24). The roof also originally had a full set of curved wind-braces.

The ground floor had stone walls, only around 450mm thick to the front and rear, though much thicker at the north gable end. There was also a stone cross-wall at the

centre of the building, dividing it into two halves. As there is no other evidence for the location of fireplaces, and a building of this status must surely have been heated, this cross-wall must be the location of the original fireplaces. A large inglenook was inserted in the 17<sup>th</sup> century on the north side of the wall and other fireplaces were later added to the south side, so the evidence has been obscured. However, the nature of the building suggests there would have been a fireplace in each half, probably to each of the two major chambers on the first floor. The original arrangement of rooms on the ground floor has also been obscured by later development. The north end probably formed a single room, though the south end is perhaps too large for this, so may well have been subdivided. The straight joint to the masonry at the south end of the west front suggests there may have been a door here originally. It is not clear if there were originally connecting doorways between the north and south parts, though there was certainly such a doorway on the ground floor at a later date, now a blocked recess. The ceiling of the ground floor rooms was originally rather lower, as the surviving medieval joist ends in the rear north-east wall indicate.

The use of timber-framing with masonry walls seems to have led to a few unusual features or incongruities. The north-west corner has a strange corbel in the masonry towards the top of the wall. This sort of feature can sometimes accompany a jettied timber front, but there is no such arrangement here, and the corbel does not align with any other feature. Perhaps it is connected to a former parapet gable feature, now lost. At the south gable end, the builders seem first to have constructed a lightly-framed timber gable, complete with mud infill panels, but then to have followed this immediately with the erection of a stone gable wall which formed part of the adjoining building. This confusion was no doubt caused by the existence of an existing building on the adjoining plot, giving a pattern of alternate rebuilding on each side of the boundary. The adjoining Manor House was taken down and rebuilt in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century.

A third incongruity is that the timber framed rear wall of the north part is set on the inner edge of the ground floor stone wall, rather than on the outer edge (as for the front wall). This would leave an awkward exposed shelf of masonry, unless there was an adjoining building here. Openings in the masonry wall, however, particularly the blocked inglenook window, suggest there was no adjoining building in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The anomaly does not seem to exist for the south part, though the rear wall has been much altered here. This incongruity is particularly difficult to explain. One possibility is that there was an original adjoining building to the east, but this must have disappeared by the 17<sup>th</sup> century when the inglenook was installed, with its ingle window. Such a building would probably have taken the form of a major block at right angles, rather than a lean-to, as lean-to structures would usually be of fairly late date. However, one would expect such an internal wall to be timber-framed down to ground level, not set on a stone wall. A second possibility is that the ground floor wall was originally further west, but has been rebuilt to the east. However, this rebuilding would have had to have taken place quite early, as it pre-dates, or is contemporary with, the 17<sup>th</sup> century inglenook. The third possibility is that the structure remains as built, and incorporated some sort of coping detail to weather the exposed outer shelf of the wall. The fact that the quoins of the north-east corner appear integral to the original gable wall suggests this third possibility is perhaps the most likely.

The style of timber-framing, the clasped purlin roof and the thick north gable wall all suggest a date in the 15<sup>th</sup> or 16<sup>th</sup> century. The fact that the building is fully floored, without it seems any open hall, points towards an early 16<sup>th</sup> century date. The character of the timber-framing, with slighter timbers, simple jointing and no close-studding, is also suggestive of such a date. It could be thought that the large, curving down-braces indicate an earlier date, but similar braces are found at 10-14 Churchgate, Hallaton (5 miles to the west, in Leicestershire), which has been tree-ring dated to c.1484-1509. The braces at Lyddington are clearly very much for show, with the remainder of the external timber frame of fairly simple, minimal construction (unlike the richer close-studding at Hallaton).

Timber-framing to external walls is very rare in Rutland and the surrounding area, located as it is on the stone belt. Only one other rural timber-framed house has been found, at Langham in the north of the county. At North Luffenham there is a barn with a timber-framed upper storey, though this is associated with the high-status building of North Luffenham Hall. There were more examples (as is frequently the case in stone-built areas) in the towns of Oakham and Uppingham, but the only timber-framing now known to survive is at Flores House in Oakham. Timber-framing is found more frequently in the non-stone belt areas to the west (as at Hallaton) and the east. All of the examples cited date from the 15<sup>th</sup> or early 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, and have close-studded walls, not the slighter framing found at Lyddington. At North Luffenham and Flores House, the ground floor walls are of stone. In Lyddington itself, the stone-built Bishop's Palace has fine internal cross walls with close-studding, dating from the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

The plan form, with two approximately equal-sized first floor chambers and no open hall, is highly unusual for this date. Apart from a few special-purpose houses or some town dwellings, all houses in the region dating before c.1550 had an open hall. An example of a special-purpose house in this stone-belt area is the Priest's House at Easton-on-the-Hill, Northamptonshire. This dates from the early 16<sup>th</sup> century and has a single room on the ground floor, with a single, heated bedchamber above. The most likely explanation for the highly unusual pair of chambers at Lyddington is that this was a suite of lodgings, which provided accommodation for the bishop's retinue or other visitors to the Bishop's Palace. A comparable example is the lodging ranges provided at the Old Inn and the New Inn, Fotheringhay, Northamptonshire. Dating from the 15<sup>th</sup> century, these provided a range of rooms for visitors to the castle. Interestingly, though mainly built of stone, the New Inn has a close-studded timber-framed wall to part of the first floor.

### Later development

A major inglenook fireplace was added to the north room around the 17<sup>th</sup> century. This may well have been the only fireplace in the building at this date, suggesting that both parts may now have been occupied as a single dwelling. Towards the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> or during the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the first floor structure was replaced to the south part, with two new transverse beams replacing the medieval floor joists. The lateral chimneystack was added rather later, providing another much-needed fireplace.



Around the late 18<sup>th</sup> or early 19<sup>th</sup> century, a new wing was added to the north-east, with a further fireplace in the north-east gable. The single storey lean-to structures against the rear wall of No 24 would also have been added around this time. By 1900, if not well before, the house had been subdivided into two cottages, probably with a third one in the north-east wing. The timber-framing and stonework of the front wall were replaced with brickwork in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. By the late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century it was known as 'Market House' but this must refer to its location beside the market place on the village green, rather than a specific market function. The Hinch family owned both properties in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, but sold No 24 in the 1970s to Mr and Mrs Evans, who have recently also bought No 1.

Nick Hill  
Rose Cottage, Bringhurst

February 2009

# APPENDIX

## **BUILDING DETAILS**

OS ref: SP875971

Orientation is taken as the main front facing W. No 1 is to the N, with No 24 to S.

### **Main block**

#### **External features**

##### Walls

Front W wall of 9in brick, early C20. SW corner abutting Manor House has large ironstone ashlar quoins to ground floor, with straight joint to N as well as the SW corner. This straight joint can also be seen on c.1900 photos. The walling does not run on into main wall (as to NW) - probably because there was a former doorway here.

N gable has irregular ironstone rubble, some small, some big stones, more irregular than the standard C17 walling in the locality. 750mm thick to ground floor, 670mm to 1<sup>st</sup>. The two window openings have no lintels, only plain stones – lintels presumably now lost. Ironstone quoins to NW and NE. At the NW corner, the stonework returns onto front W face, with a quarter round ironstone corbel set quite high up. This does not seem to relate to any other feature, unless somehow connected to a former gable parapet.

##### Windows and doors

Generally of early C20 date. N gable 1<sup>st</sup> floor window has flat iron casement in softwood frame, centre pintle hinges – C18/early C19.

##### Roof

Collyweston slates, C19/20 central brick stack

#### **Internal features**

##### Ground floor

No 1 has main has single main room with inglenook fireplace. In E wall, exposed during current building works, is a remaining section of timber plate, still in situ, set on top of the rear stone wall. Pegs and tenons for 2 posts to first floor. Regular mortices for heavy flat-set floor joists (140mm wide), now missing, with vertical pegs. No pegs or mortices for any timber posts to ground floor – always set on a stone wall. Various other notches etc from later alterations.

The stone wall below has irregular small rubble, clay mortar. Blocked central opening with oak lintel and straight joints, plaster to reveals. The R joint appears to go down to the floor, for a doorway, but not the L joint. Another straight joint to L., apparently for a window.

Large inglenook fireplace with stone jamb and good beam – run-out stops both ends, chamfered to rear. Blocked inle window to E, now a cupboard with 2-panel door on nailed H hinges. To R side at back of inle is a niche. Inserted brick stack.

No 24 has main central room, with alterations of c.1970s. Two transverse beams carry small rectangular oak floor joists, reported to have carpenter's marks to top face. Several big bullnose stops visible to the beams, set c.200mm out from the modern 9in brick wall, so relating to the former stone wall of c.400m thickness. Lateral chimneybreast to rear, disused with central fireplace and side cupboards. This post-dates the ceiling beams, as it covers the chamfer stops. Stone fireplace to N wall inserted in 1970s, recess for blocked doorway connecting to No 1. Rear wall N end had a doorway in 1970, but now opened out with inserted beam and post.

All of the rear part to E of No 24 is a new build of c.1970s. There was a single-storey lean-to all along the E wall here, with pantiled roof, but this was demolished in 1970s and completely replaced. See b/w photos of 1970s.

### Roof structure

Parts of the timber frame to the rear E wall survive, together with most of the roof structure. 4-bay roof, with 4 trusses. The two main open trusses T1 and T3 are of similar type. No smoke blackening to any part of the roof.

Truss T1 to N is the best preserved, also has fancier decorative post and braces from tie to collar. Slightly cranked tiebeam with heavy curved arch-braces, jowled post to E survives. Clasped purlin roof, principal rafters diminish at purlin height. Straight collar. Unusual vertical post and braces. Post is tenoned and pegged at foot, but has only a small stub tenon and no peg at top. To lower part, the post has 2 pairs of 2 pegholes running from face to face W-E. Unclear what these could be – perhaps to attach some decorative detail. The curved braces are pegged at the foot, but the top joints are covered by later timber, so not clear if pegged. Chamfer (both sides where visible) to the post, jowl, underside of tie, inner side of principal and underside of collar. Also a smaller chamfer to inner side of principal right up to apex. The braces are square-edged.

Truss T3 is similar, except that it never had the post/braces detail between tie and collar – no pegholes to the top part of the tie, no mortice to underside of collar. Knife-cut setting out marks to S face of E principal, also a big scribed carpenter's mark VV. The collar has 3 small mortices to the top edge, unpegged – perhaps a later alteration. The purlins are both jointed at this truss, with bridle joint set on edge to E but on flat to W. Surviving E wall post has jowl cut back.

N gable has rough rubble internally, with some big and some small stones. An early pegged rafter couple is set on outer edge of the gable, but probably re-set. There may have been a truss against the gable, but no evidence remains. The NW post on 1900s photo and the rear wallplate to NE suggest there would at least have been a tiebeam, so probably a truss – though set in from the stone gable, as this is thinner at upper level.



Bay 1 to N has W purlin renewed in C19, scarfed and bolted onto original purlin. E purlin probably original, neat splayed scarf joint. T1 has mortices for wind braces to Bay 1, both now missing. 6 rafter couples, mostly of original squared oak, plus the couple set on the N gable.

Bay 2 has original purlins to W and E. 6 rafter couples, mostly original. To the S end of Bay 2 is the inglenook stack. This abuts a stone cross-wall, 220mm thick at top of W side, where it stops at purlin height. The cross-wall seems to be an original dividing wall, despite the fact that the purlins run right through it. Straight joint where chimneystack butts against the cross-wall. Mortices for wind-braces to both sides of truss T1, also surviving cut-off part of SE wind-brace rising from truss T2.

Truss T2 is clearly built to be a closed truss, against the stone cross-wall. Tiebeam, collar, some evidence for pegholes to E end of tie for the arch-brace. The 1900 photo shows the former front W post. The key point is that the principals and collar have a chamfer to the S side, but are square-edged against the stonework on the N. No evidence for timber studs of a closed truss, no pegholes or mortices. Instead, the masonry is built up to and half around the truss members in various places – looks like it was built with it or immediately afterwards. The W purlin runs through from Bay to N, with bridle joint at T2. Knife-cut setting out marks to collar/principal joint to W and X mark to collar.

Bay 3 has original purlins and 7 rafter couples. Here several have carpenter's marks to S face below apex on both rafters: No 1 to N is IIIIV, no 2 is IIV. Wind-brace survives to NE, mortices for the other missing 3 also. The wind-braces have a good mortice and double-pegging to the foot, but the joint to the purlin is a thin plain lapping, with a peg or nail.

Bay 4 has original purlins and 7 rafter couples. Wind-brace to NE survives in situ, elsewhere evidence not visible. At the S end of this bay there is a hybrid construction, with the gable neither fully timber-framed nor fully masonry. Rafter couple 7 has a thin (200 x 40mm) dovetail-lapped collar, with 1 peg, which clasps and supports the purlin. Truss T4 is not a full truss, having principals only slightly larger than normal rafters. There is a tiebeam and there were probably arch-braces (peghole visible to underside of tie to SW) as elsewhere, but the structure above the tie is different. Thin collar, morticed and pegged to rafters. Rising to this are vertical queen struts, morticed and pegged at the top to the collar. The purlins, which are clasped and supported by rafter couple no 7, simply pass through T4 without contact or support from timbers. They run on into the stone gable wall. One curving down-brace visible from strut to tie, with crude lapped joint at top, nailed. Two small mortices (with cut-off tenon) but no pegholes to underside of collar for missing studs, but not normally spaced. No mortices or pegholes to top of collar. Mud infill survives to SE, with a finished face to outer side, though this is only 100mm away from the adjoining stone gable. The stone gable has rough rubble in clay mortar and is roughly finished, not flat – clearly always an internal face here. So: Truss T4 must have been built first, and the outer face of its mud infill finished. However, it seems likely that the stone gable was constructed shortly afterwards, as it is integral to the construction and supports the purlins. Why bother with the mud infill and external finishing? Maybe it was a temporary closure, with the full stone gable to follow on in the next season's building?

## First Floor

Enough remains of the rear E wall frame to piece together most of its original pattern. 4 posts remain to No 1, including that of T1. The posts are c.140mm wide, with panels of c.1m width between. One section of original infill survives to N of T1, with solid mud infill, mixed with hay, and an outer coating of lime plaster. On the exposed S face of T1's wall post there are two lengths of V-gouging, which would have provided a key for the infill. The top wallplate has a scarf joint around mid-way, splayed scarf with under-squinted butts. Another straight-splayed scarf towards N, but this may be a later repair. The wallplate is chamfered, with a step stop visible by truss T1, though the chamfer runs on past the intermediate studs.

Only one clear peghole/mortice for a horizontal member (centre of Bay 2), so no clear evidence of windows. The underside of the wallplate S of T3 has 10 drilled holes. Underside of wallplate to N of T4 has 2 rounded mortices and a row of drilled holes. These are more likely to be additional support/fixing for the mud infill than for windows/latticing. No other sections of the underside of the wallplate are visible, so this detail probably exists more widely.

No regular pattern of bracing to posts, unlike the front W wall. Post T1 has no brace to S side, evidence not visible to N. Post T2 not visible. Post T3 has 2 pegs for presumed brace to N side, but no mortice or pegholes to S side. Post T4 has mortice and 2 pegholes for brace.

The front W wall frame can be reconstructed from the two c.1900 photos and surviving evidence. The studs are slightly closer-spaced than on the rear wall, with regular down-braces (though the bay spacing and brace length varies somewhat). No evidence for original window positions – it seems there were no good framed-in cill members.

The first floor of No 1 has been replaced with 8x2in softwood joists and modern floorboards, at a higher level than the original floor.

## **North-east Wing**

External walls of well-squared neatly coursed ironstone and good quoins. N front has continuous ashlar band over door and window. Gable has gable parapet with plain kneelers, plain squared coping and seating for single stack, of C19 brick. Door and window openings here have plain timber lintels. Windows and doors C20. Collyweston roof.

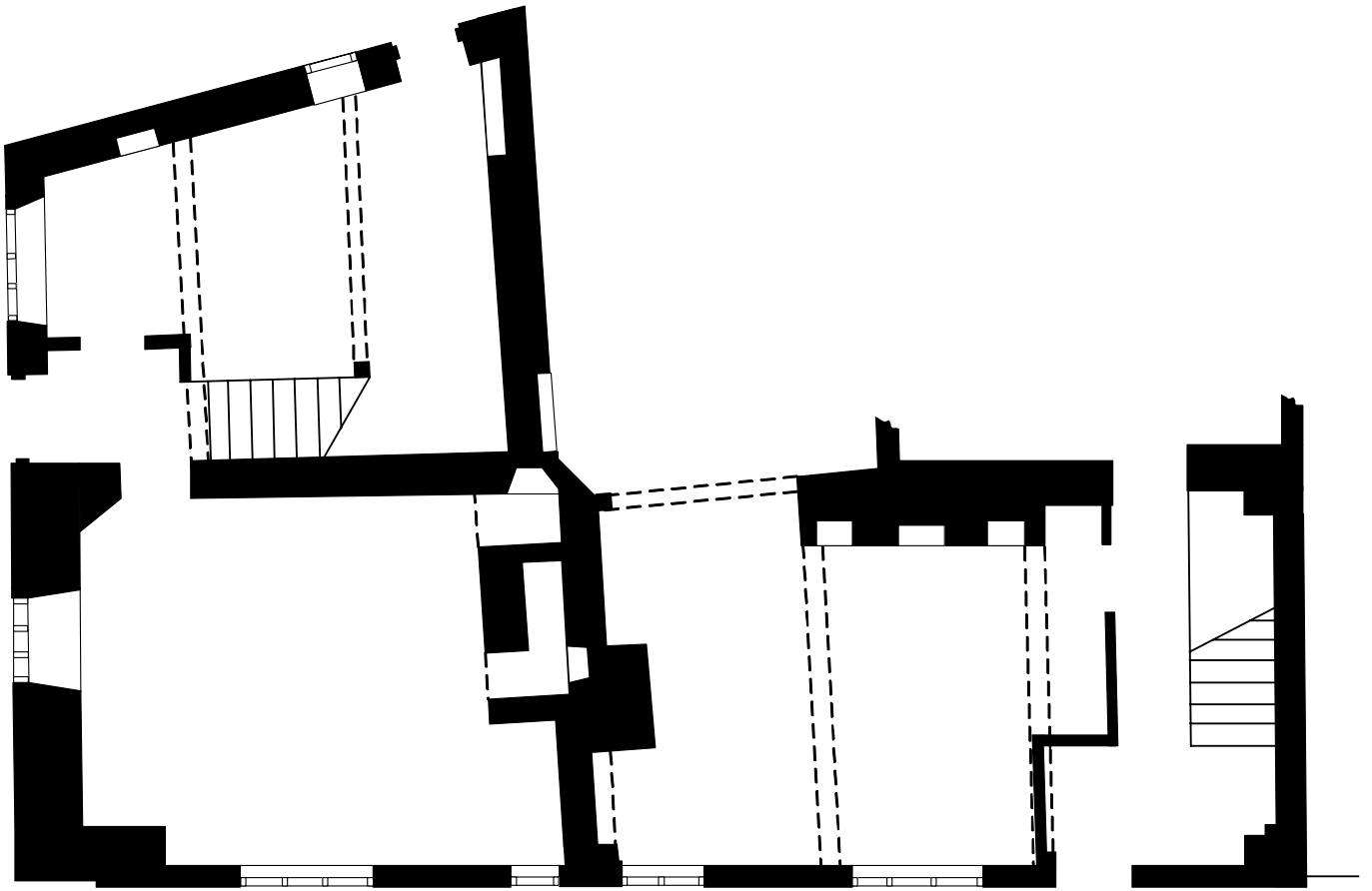
Ground floor has skewed walls c.450mm thick. 2 ceiling beams, one re-used with early step-stops to W end. Modern stair and first floor. Brick chimneybreast removed to ground and first, still remains in roof void.

Roof has lots of later timber, but one older truss: principal rafters, low-set collar and higher collar, both of poor irregular timber, crude lap and forelock-bolted joints, purlins on back, some old rafters of rough timber. All this suggests a date of late

C18/early C19. Both principals re re-used from earlier building. N principal has mortice and 2 pegholes for collar, neat knife-cut setting out, carpenter's mark: I. S principal has big mortice and pegholes for a collar joint. Also re-used is a length of purlin to NW, with a row of mortices and pegholes – from a timber-framed stud wall. N gable has half-brick projecting brick stack, original – late C18 or early C19.

### **Site**

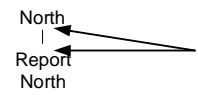
OS maps of 1886 and 1904, also the Enclosure map of 1802, show the site with the long row of buildings to the NE, fronting the green, now demolished except for some low stone walls.

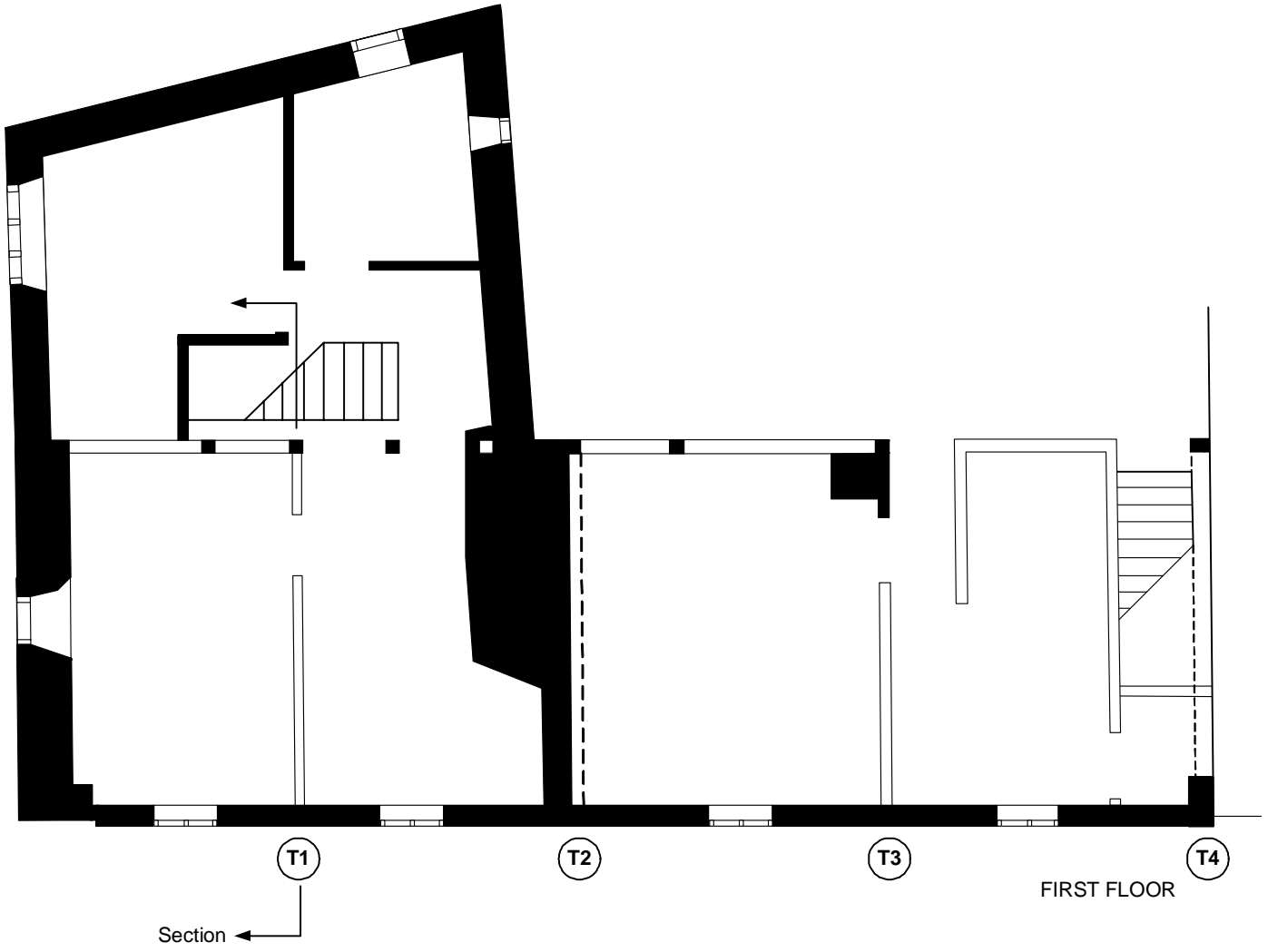


GROUND FLOOR

MARKET HOUSE, 24 MAIN ST, LYDDINGTON

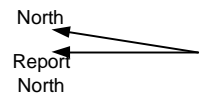
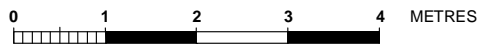
NH / RO January 2012

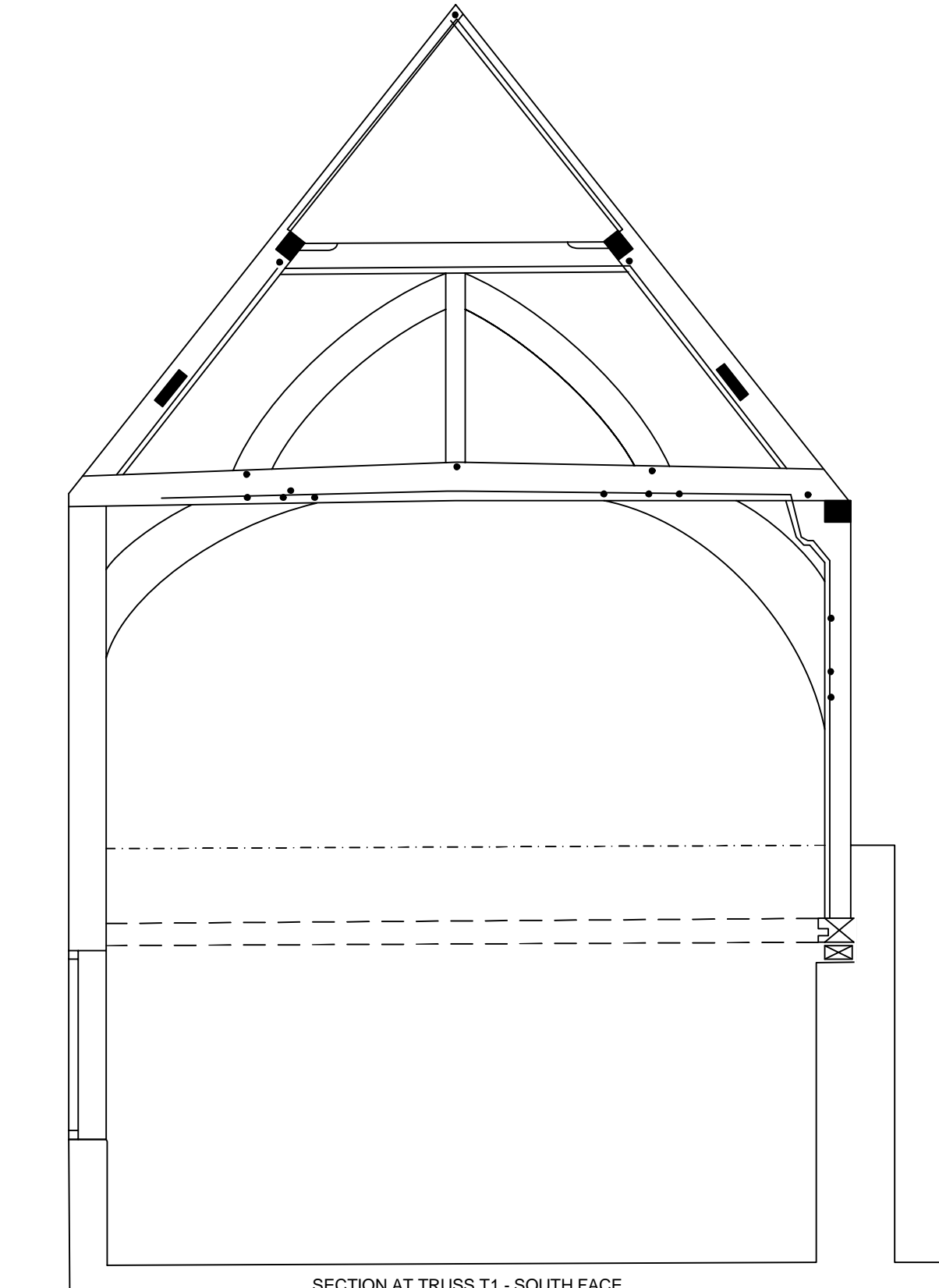




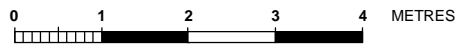
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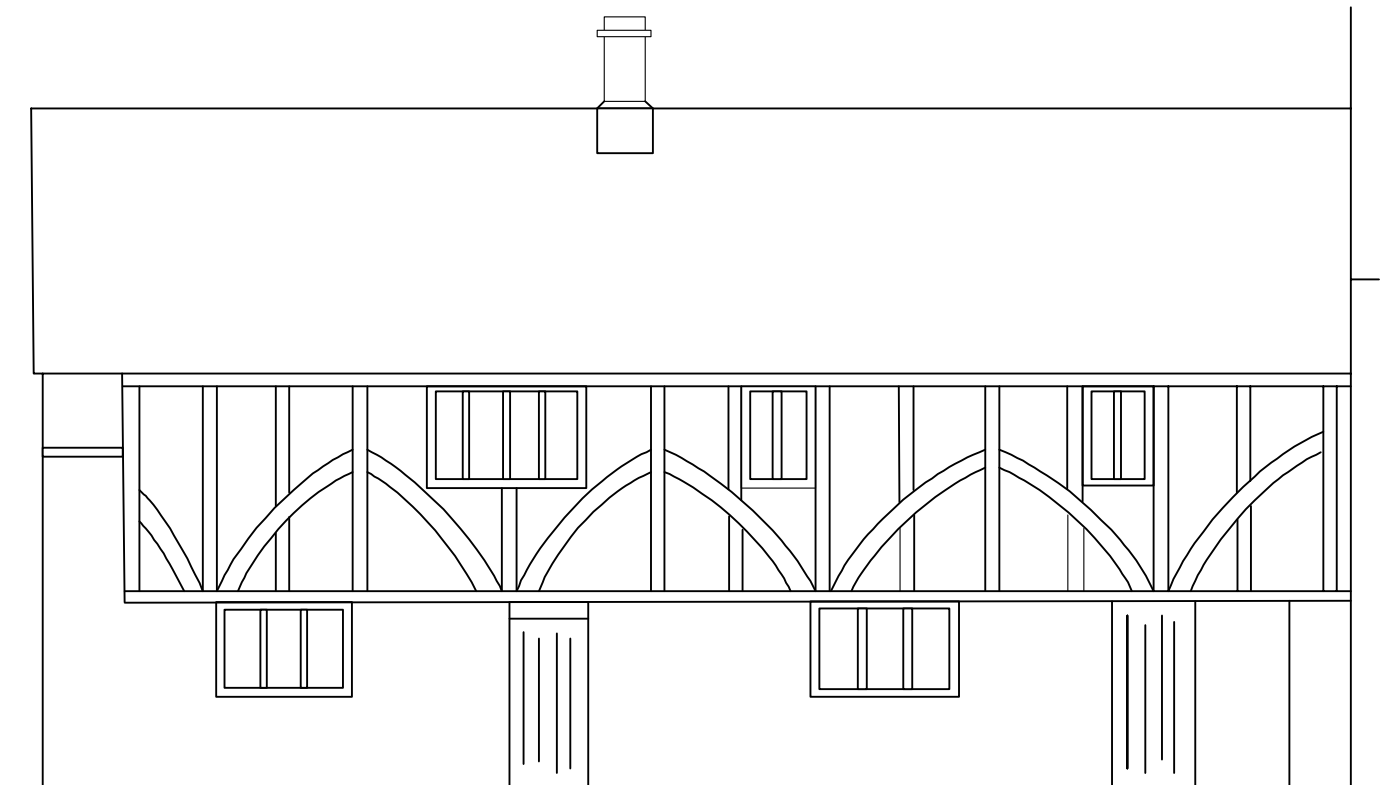




SECTION AT TRUSS T1 - SOUTH FACE  
 MARKET HOUSE, 24 MAIN ST, LYDDINGTON

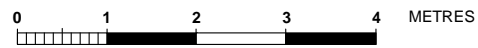


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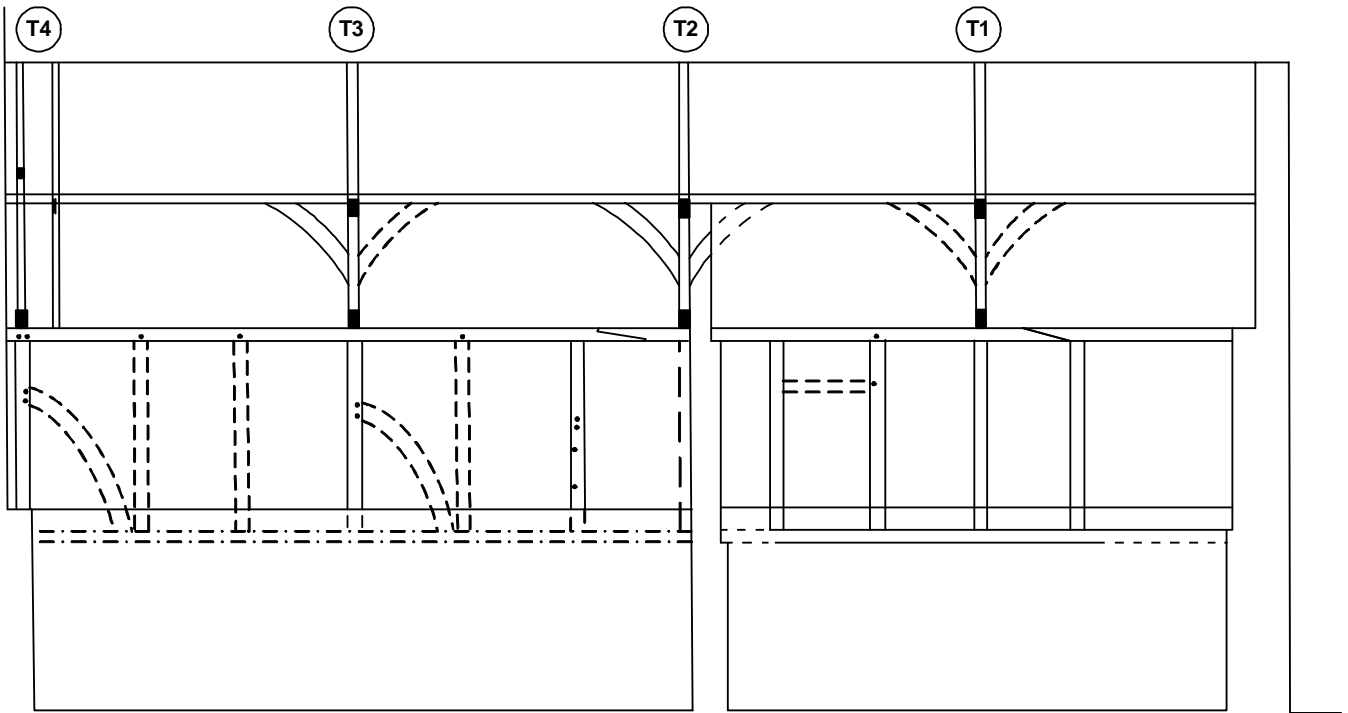
RECONSTRUCTION OF FRONT ELEVATION  
(From a photograph of c1900)

MARKET HOUSE, 24 MAIN ST, LYDDINGTON



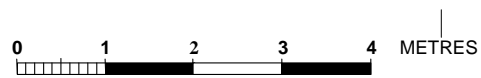
NH / RO January 2012





REAR (EAST) ELEVATION

MARKET HOUSE, 24 MAIN ST, LYDDINGTON



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View from north-west, with No 1 to left and No 24 to right



North-east wing (1 The Green)



Photograph of c.1900



Photograph of c.1900





Rear east wall of No 1, with timber plate on top of stone ground floor wall



Surviving original infill panel to rear wall of No 1



View from north-east wing  
towards Truss T1



Lower part of Truss T1 with jowled post  
and heavy arch brace



South face of Truss T3 in No 24



South face of Truss T1 with decorative bracing between tie-beam and collar





South side of Truss T3 with purlin and wind-brace



Detail as above, showing clapped purlin joint





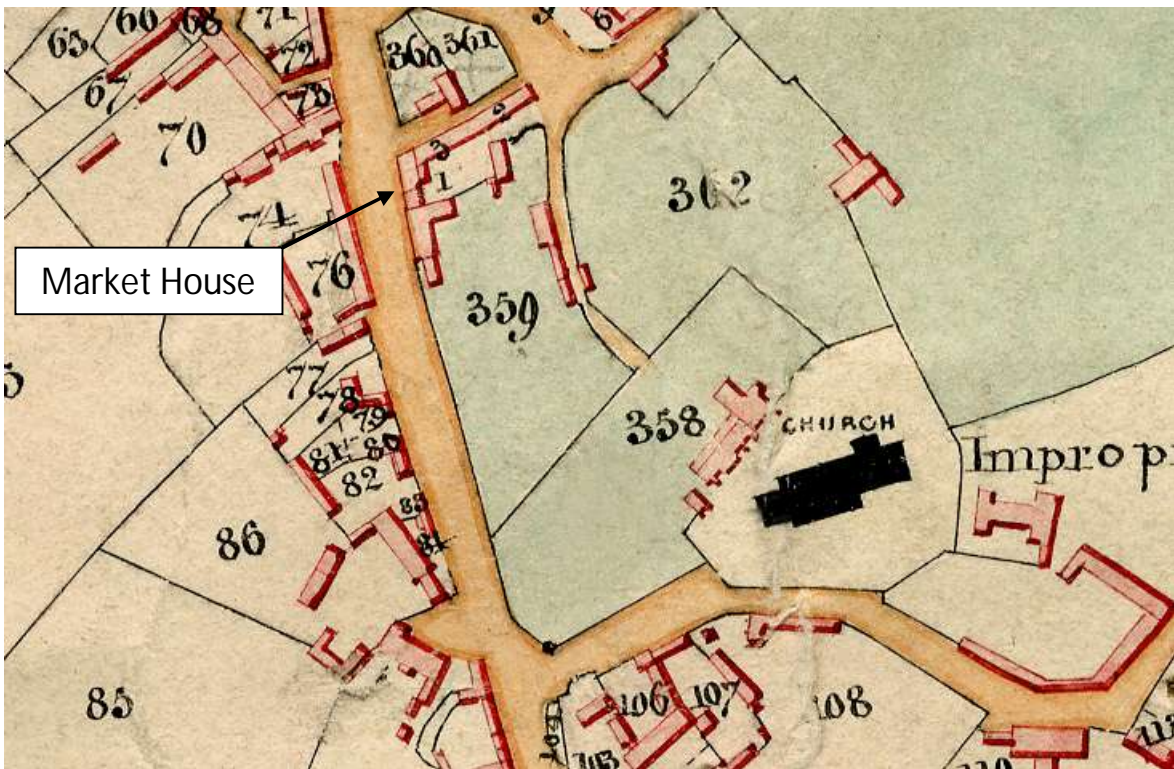
Junction to the Manor House, showing stone wall to ground floor



Junction to the Manor House, showing Truss T4 against the Manor House gable. The rafter couple to the left has a thin collar which clasps the purlin

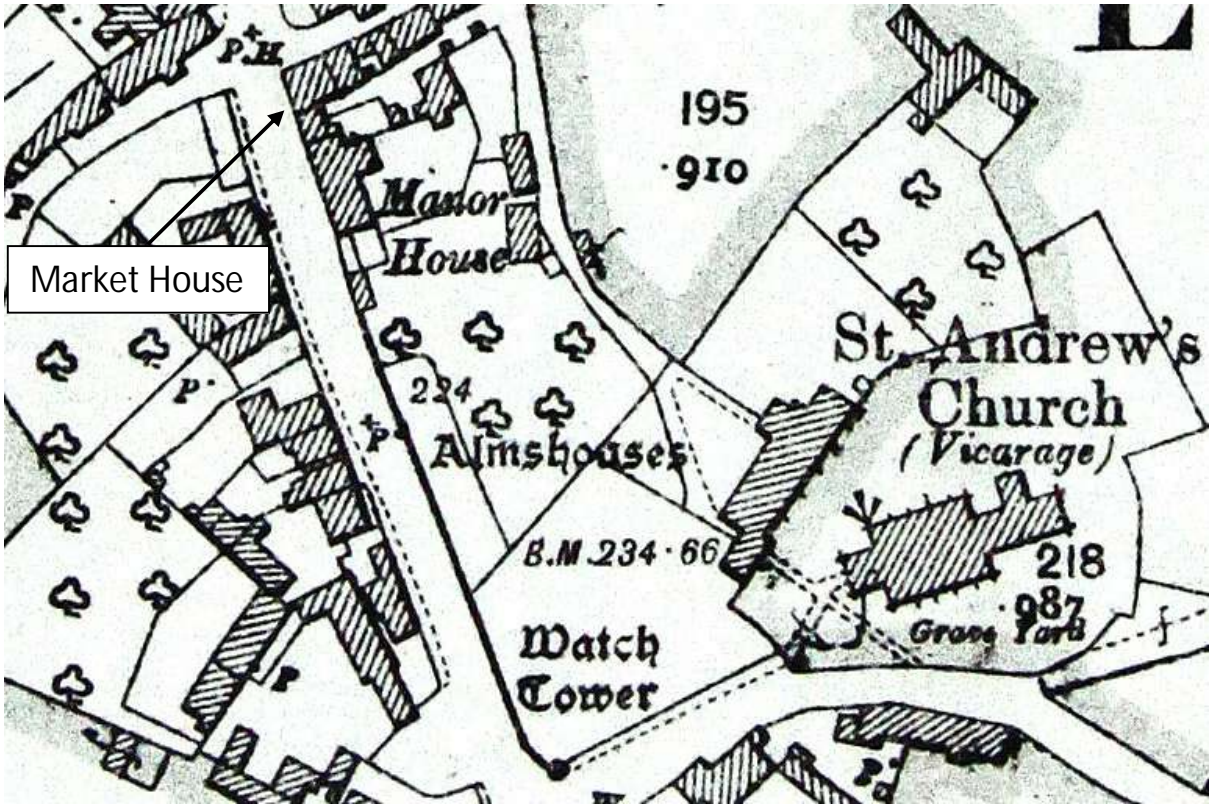


Lyddington Enclosure Map - 1804



Lyddington Estate Map, 1848 (Burghley Archives)





Ordnance Survey 2<sup>nd</sup> Series, 1904