Archaeological Building Recording at The Old Rectory Barns, North Crawley Milton Keynes Buckinghamshire

Report No. 14/35

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NGR: SP 92512 44688
HER No: EMK1200
Planning application reference: 13/02150/FUL

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Quality control and sign off:

Issue No.	Date approved:	Checked by:	Verified by:	Approved by:	Reason for Issue:
1	26.02.14	Pat Chapman	Tim Upson-Smith	Andy Chapman	Final draft

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OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS	OASIS No: molanort1-171371
Project title	Archaeological Building Recording at the Old Rectory Barns, North Crawley, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire
Short description	Northamptonshire Archaeology was commissioned to undertake an assessment of barns on land adjacent to The Old Rectory, North Crawley, Buckinghamshire. This assessment included a photographic survey as well as field notes and annotations and amendments to existing architects drawings. Evidence for structural alterations and changes in fabric were recorded in order to determine a sequence of historic development. The barns and stables were found to be in good condition and were determined to be of a 19th century date with mid 19th-century and modern alterations.
Project type	Building assessment
Previous work	Unknown
Future work	Unknown
Monument type and period	19th century barns
Event number	EMK 1200
Planning application ref	13/02150/FUL
PROJECT LOCATION	
County	Buckinghamshire
Site address	Old Rectory, 2 High Street, North Crawley, Buckinghamshire
NGR	SP 92512 44688
Area	97.5 sqm
PROJECT CREATORS	
Organisation	MOLA
Project brief originator	Planning Archaeologist, Milton Keynes
Project design originator	MOLA
Director/Supervisor	Tim Upson-Smith
Project Manager	Amir Bassir
Sponsor or funding body	Mr Simon Davies
PROJECT DATE	
Start date	Jan 2014
End date	Feb 2014
BIBLIOGRAPHY	
Title	Archaeological Building Recording at the Old Rectory Barns, North Crawley, Buckinghamshire
Serial title & volume	MOLA Report 14/35
Author(s)	Amir Bassir
Page numbers	25
Date	Feb 2014

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Archaeological Building Recording at

The Old Rectory Barns, North Crawley

Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire

Abstract

MOLA (formerly trading as Northamptonshire Archaeology) was commissioned to undertake an assessment of barns on land adjacent to The Old Rectory, North Crawley, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire.

This assessment included a photographic survey as well as field notes and annotations and amendments to existing architects drawings. Evidence for structural alterations and changes in fabric were recorded in order to determine a sequence of historic development.

The barns and stables were found to be in good condition and were determined to be of a 19th-century date with mid 19th century and modern alterations.

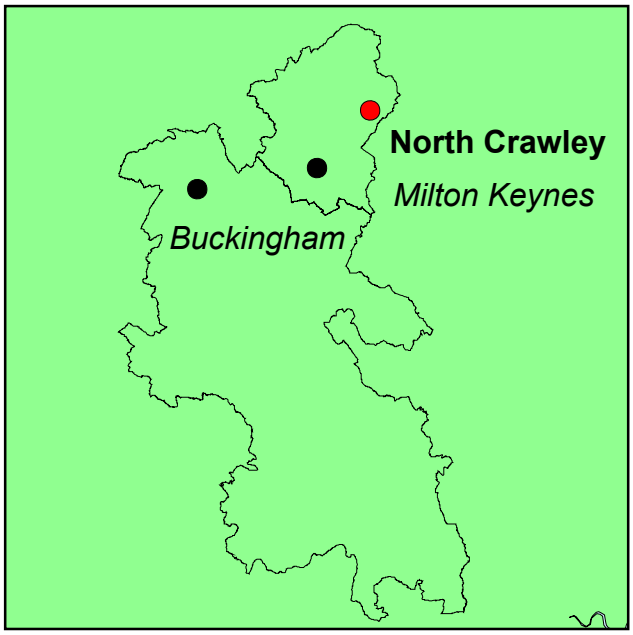
1 INTRODUCTION

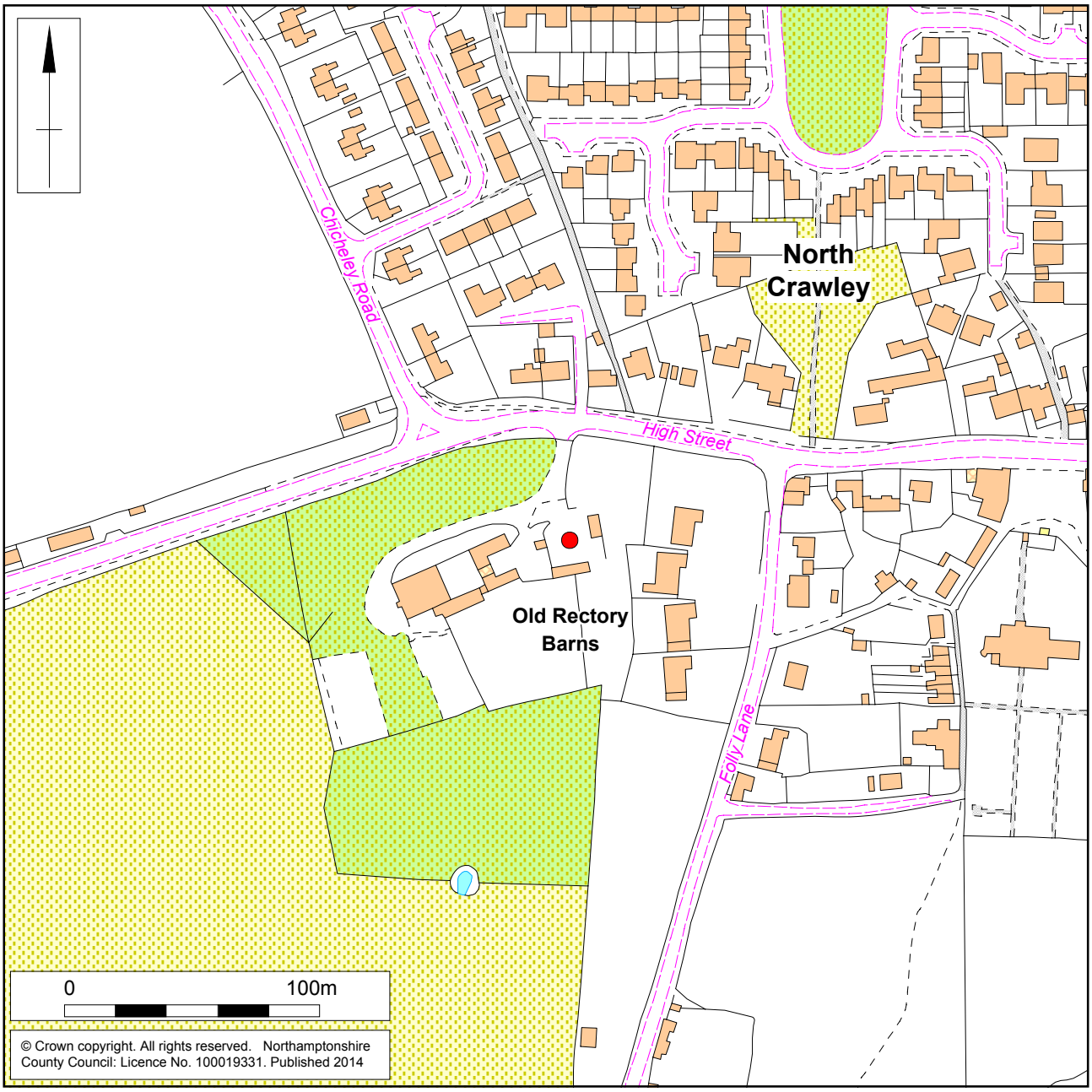
MOLA (formerly trading as Northamptonshire Archaeology) was commissioned by Mr Simon Davies to undertake an archaeological building recording of two barns on land adjacent to the Old Rectory, North Crawley, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire (NGR SP 92512 44688, Figs 1 & 2). The work was carried out in February 2014, in response to a proposed scheme of conversion, construction and alteration.

The development area containing the surveyed structures lies within the parish of North Crawley, approximately 3.5 miles east of Newport Pagnell. The site lies on the western limit of the village (Figs 1 & 2). Access to the site is via High Street to the north. Open fields are present to the south and west and north-west of the site.

The underlying geology of the area is of Middle Jurassic Mudstones overlain by alluvial clays and silt and glacial deposits. (http://www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex/home.html). The site is located on a fairly level platform which then slopes gently to the south and lies at *c*92m above Ordnance Datum.

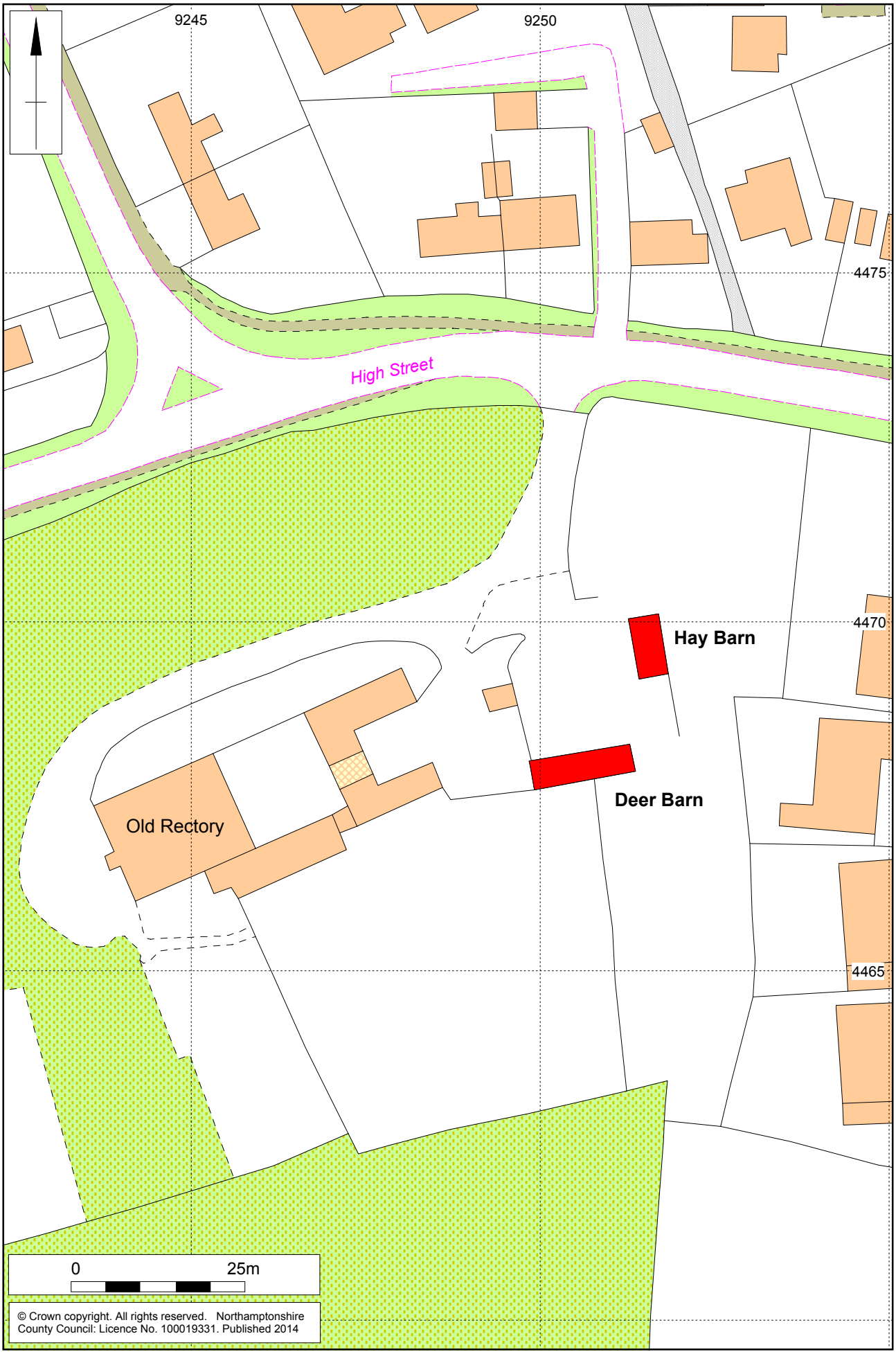
At the time of this survey, the site was well maintained and the buildings were found to be in good condition, utilised mainly as storage.





Scale 1:2500

Site Location Fig 1



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Plan of the surveyed barns Fig 2

2 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The level of recording was specified as Level 2 – a descriptive and analytical record (English Heritage 2006, 14).

This is defined by English Heritage as consisting of:

- A written account of the building's origins, development and use
- An account of the evidence on which the analysis is based
- A drawn and photographic record to illustrate the building's appearance and structure.

A site visit was made in February 2014, when the principal exterior elevations were photographed. The interiors were photographically recorded to include structural details that might be lost during the development and notes were made of any features and alterations. Measured plans and elevations were annotated to include any relevant features and alterations.

3 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The parish of North Crawley has a history that predates the Norman invasion. It is mentioned in the Domesday book as *Crauelai* and was formerly split into Great Crawley and Little Crawley. The Church of St Firmin has its origins in the 12th century. The parish formerly housed a monastery dedicated to St Firmin which was recorded in the Domesday Book though it had fallen into disuse and disrepair even by the time of the Dissolution in 1536.

The village is historically arranged east-west along the High Street with the Old Rectory at the western extent of the village.

4 BUILDING RECORDING

4.1 Introduction

The structures surveyed as part of this assessment comprise a pair of outbuildings labelled respectively as “Hay Barn” and “Deer Barn” located to the east of The Old Rectory.

The Hay Barn is a single-storey structure resembling a small threshing barn with opposing doors. It is on an approximately north-south alignment and is located to the north of the Deer Barn. The Deer Barn is also a single-storey structure on an east-west alignment. It is unclear as to why it is called the Deer Barn as no mangers, tether rings or other fittings typically associated with animals could be seen.

4.2 The Hay Barn

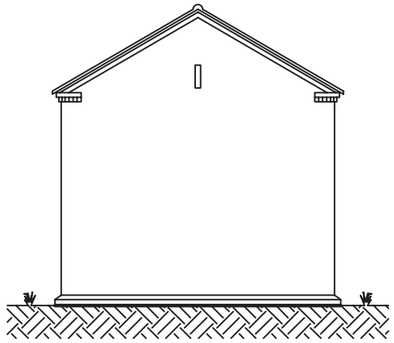
This is a single-storey structure aligned north-south, measuring approximately 9m x 4.6m (Fig 3). It is constructed of handmade red brick, whitewashed, in prevalently English Bond with red brick dog tooth dentils below the eaves and brick wall plates (Fig 17). A chamfered brick plinth runs the full perimeter of the building (Fig 19).

Opposing door openings are built into the east and west elevations flanked by tall, narrow ventilation slots (Figs 7 & 11). The eastern door opening appears to be a later addition to the structure with a timber lintel carrying the brickwork over (Fig 7). A window, blocked in brick with a simple brick arch is above this doorway though slightly off centre and narrower than the door (Fig 17). The door itself is ledged and braced on a concrete sill with simple iron strap work and latch (Fig 18). Ventilation slots are also built into the north and south gable elevations (Figs 6 & 9). A curved, splayed, brick lintel overlies the door opening in the west elevation (Fig 11). The door here is more modern than that to the east though the door opening itself probably dates to the original construction.

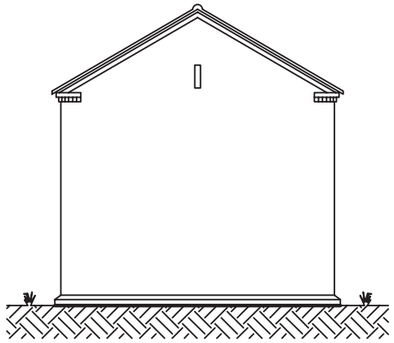
The gabled roof is of pantiles with a plain ridge supported on simple king post trusses of machine sawn pine (Figs 16 & 17). The trusses have iron ties in the king posts and rest upon a wall plate of brick externally and timber internally.

The floor is largely of beaten earth though fragmentary remains of a former brick floor can be seen in places.

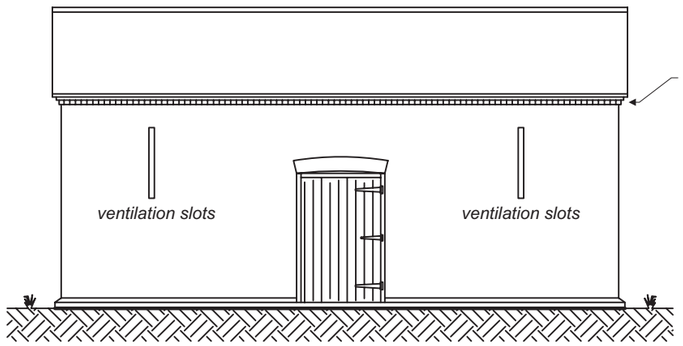
Evenly spaced, missing bricks on the south elevation indicate that a small, possibly wooden structure may have one attached here (Fig 9). No associated roof scars are visible. Iron fittings are still extant on the exterior walls (Fig 20).



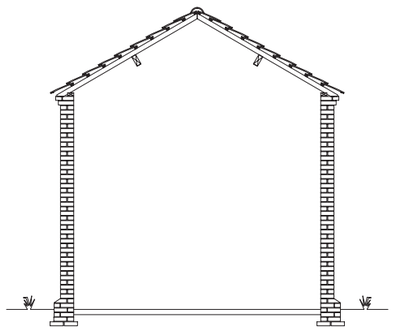
North Elevation



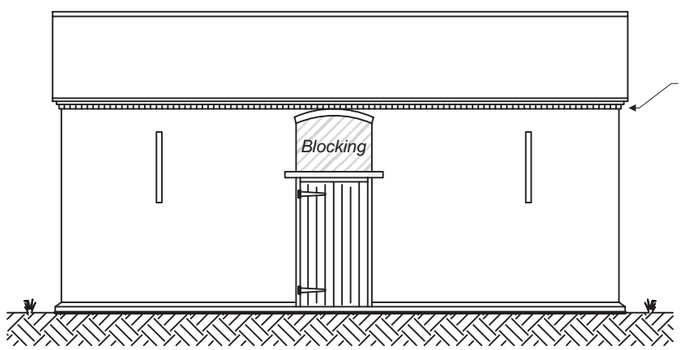
South Elevation



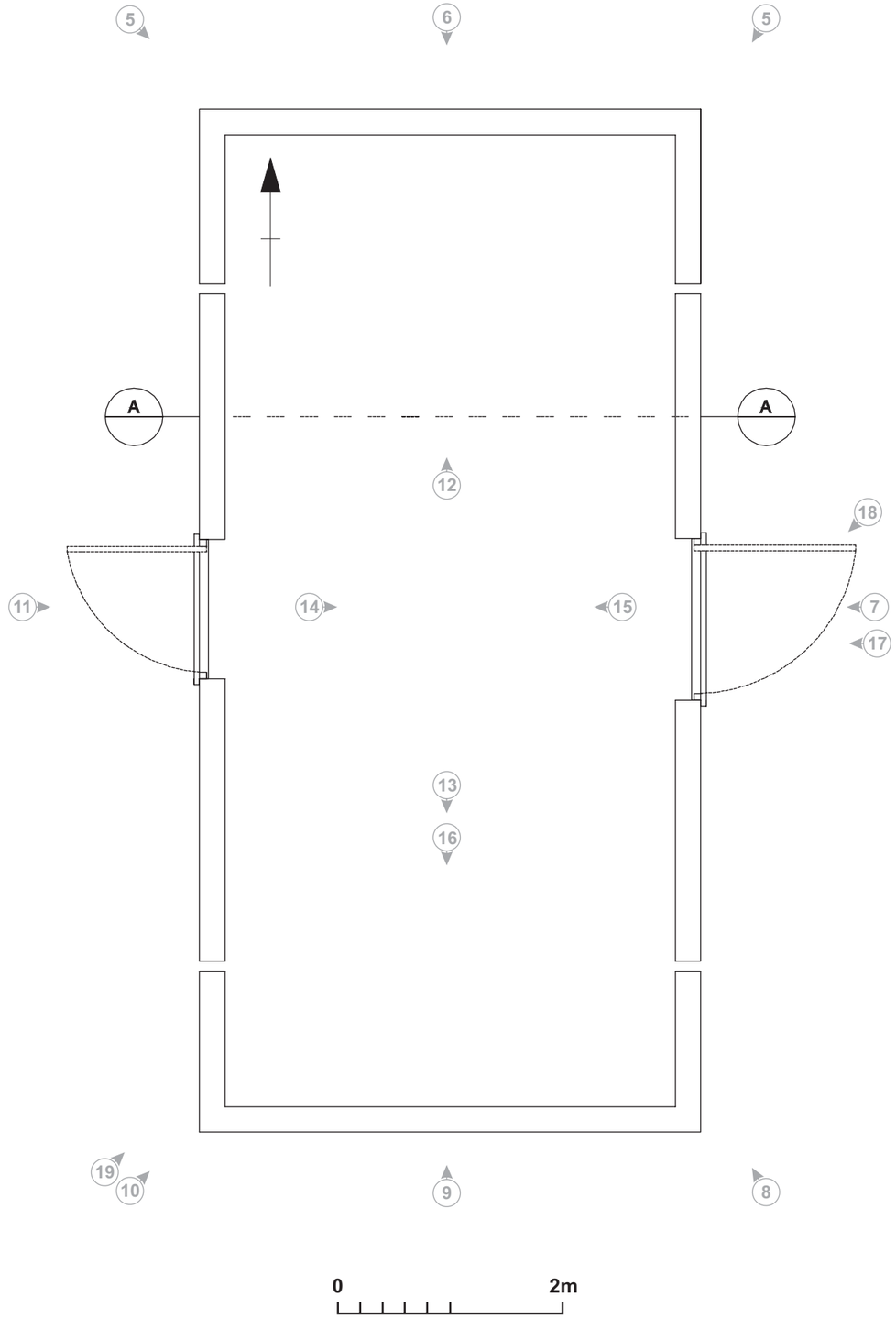
West Elevation



Section a-a



East Elevation



0 5m

Scales 1:100 & 1:50 (A3)

The Hay Barn, elevations, plan and section, showing photograph locations Fig 3

General view of the site, showing the two barns, looking south Fig 4

General view of the Hay Barn, looking south-west Fig 5

The north elevation, looking south Fig 6

The east elevation, showing the blocked window over the central door, Fig 7

General view of the Hay Barn, looking north-west Fig 8

The south elevation, looking north, showing evidence of a possible former wooden structure Fig 9

General view of the Hay Barn, looking north-east Fig 10

The west elevation, looking east Fig 11

Interior of the Hay Barn, looking north Fig 12

Interior of the Hay Barn, looking south Fig 13

Interior of the Hay Barn, looking east Fig 14

Interior of the Hay Barn, looking west Fig 15

Detail of the Hay Barn interior roof structure, looking south Fig 16

Detail of the blocked window in the east elevation Fig 17

Detail of the ledged and braced door Fig 18

Detail of the chamfered brick plinth, looking north-east Fig 19

Detail of iron fittings on the Hay Barn exterior Fig 20

4.3 The Deer Barn

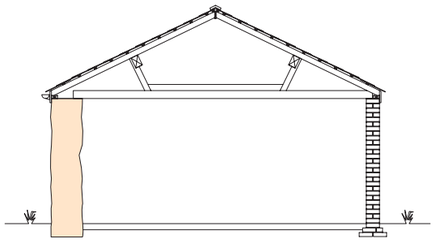
Measuring approximately 5.4m x 14.7m, the Deer Barn is rectangular in plan with an east-west orientation (Fig 21). The south elevation is constructed of coursed limestone rubble with limestone quoins (Fig 23). The east, north and western elevations are of red brick, largely in English bond. The remains of a coursed limestone return can be seen on the east elevation where it meets the south wall (Fig 25). Small, square, single glazed, six light windows with metal frames are built into the east and western elevations (Fig 33). Basic electrical fittings such as lights and switches have been installed in the structure (Fig 34).

The north elevation features a central length of weatherboarding over a timber frame (Fig 22). This is flanked by square openings resembling those seen in a cart shed. A brick plinth runs the length of the weatherboarding, indicating that it is an original part of the brick structure rather than a later blocking (Fig 31). The wall plate is of timber and is supported on timber bracing over the eastern opening (Fig 28).

The gabled roof is of Welsh slate carried on simple braced ties of machine sawn pine (Figs 29, 30, 32). This appears to be a replacement of an earlier roof. Curved timber bracing struts support the ties where they meet the weatherboarding frame (Fig 29). The timbers of these ties, as well as the bracing and timber frame are cruder, with a rougher finish than those making up the rafters and purlin, indicating that they may represent the remains of an earlier phase of roof.

As in the Hay Barn, the floor is of beaten earth (Figs 26 & 27). The remains of a former cobbled floor surface can be seen in places.

The main bulk of the structure is clearly of a later build than the coursed stone of the south wall though the form and function of the earlier structure cannot be ascertained.



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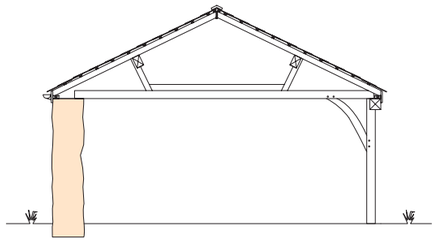

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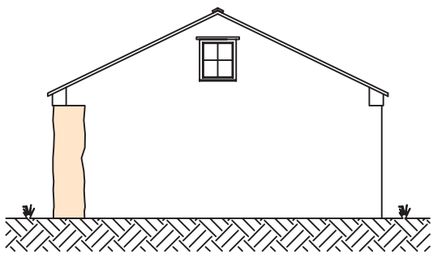
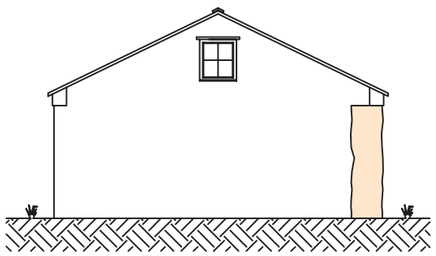
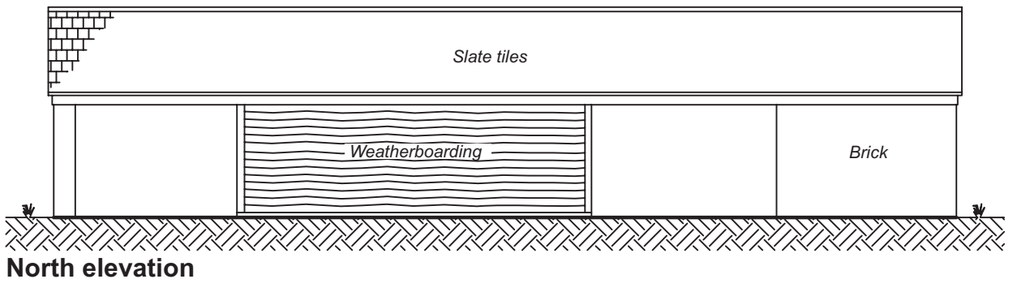


East elevation



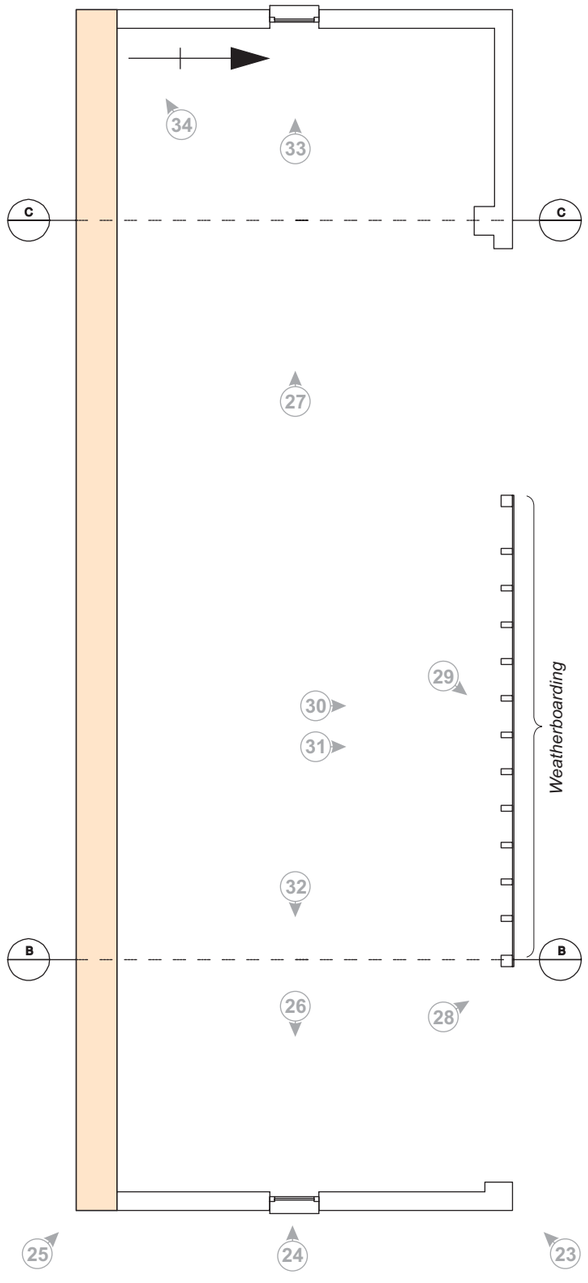
West Elevation

South elevation



North elevation

0 5m



0 2.5m

Scales 1:100 & 1:75 (A3)

The Deer Barn, elevations, plan and section, showing photograph locations Fig 21

The Deer Barn, north elevation, looking south Fig 22

General view of the Deer Barn, looking south-west Fig 23

The east elevation, looking west Fig 24

The south and eastern elevations showing the joint between brick and stone constructions, looking north-west Fig 25

Interior of the Deer Barn, looking east Fig 26

Interior of the Deer Barn, looking west Fig 27

Timber bracing around the eastern opening on the north elevation Fig 28

Detail of timber bracing below roof tie Fig 29

The timber frame supporting the weatherboarding, looking north Fig 30

Detail of the brick plinth below the weatherboarding with the remains of the cobbled floor in the foreground Fig 31

Detail of the roof ties, looking east Fig 32

Detail of the metal framed window in the west elevation, looking west Fig 33

Detail of electrical switch on the west wall, looking west Fig 34

5 DISCUSSION

The surveyed buildings are part of a larger complex of outbuildings which are associated with The Old Rectory. They originally served an agricultural function as hay barn and cart shed until the cessation of agricultural activity at the property.

They both have 19th-century origins with later, small scale alterations. The Deer Barn clearly incorporates the remains of an earlier structure, though it is not possible to determine the form and function of this structure.

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