

**Historical Building Recording: Barn and Stable on land  
adjacent to Boynton Hall Old London Road  
Capel St Mary  
Suffolk**



Grid Reference: TM 0871 3716  
Planning Application No.: B/16/00273/FUL/LJB

HER No.: CSM 046  
Event No. ESF 24246  
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Cover picture: The Barn from the south-west

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**Historical Building Recording**  
**on land adjacent to Boynton Hall**  
**Old London Road Capel St Mary Suffolk**  
*Archaeological Record*

Grid reference: TM 0871 3716

## **Summary**

This report provides a written and photographic record (English Heritage, level 2) for a redundant barn and stable block on land adjacent to Boynton Hall Old London Road Capel St Mary Suffolk

## **1. Introduction**

1.1 This report provides a written and photographic record at English Heritage (2006) level 2 for a redundant barn and stable on land adjacent to Boynton Hall Old London Road Capel St Mary Suffolk, prior to their conversion to domestic dwellings. It has been prepared to a brief designed by the Archaeological Service of Suffolk County Council (Richard Hoggett Archaeological Officer, ref: *Historical Building Recording at Land adjacent to Boynton Hall Capel St Mary Suffolk*, (dated the 17th of February 2016) and is intended to fulfil a condition of planning permission for conversion to a domestic dwelling.

1.2 This report is accompanied by a CD containing a full photographic record in the form of 6 megapixel digital images (Appendix 1). Each digital and printed photograph is described in the appendices. The CD also contains this report in MS Word format. The buildings were inspected and recorded on the 6<sup>th</sup> of July 2016, when the accompanying photographs were taken.

## 2. Planning Background

2.1 The Local Planning Authority (LPA) has granted planning consent conditional upon an agreed programme of historic building recording work taking place in accordance with this Written Scheme of Investigation

2.2 The planning application, B/16/00273/FUL/LJB, was granted by Babergh District Council, for the conversion of a redundant barn and stable to form 2 new dwellings. In order to ensure that satisfactory arrangements are made for the investigation, and recording of the site, its buildings and setting, and to comply with Policy of the Council's Local Plan a Historic building record at English Heritage Level 2 was requested by SCCA/CT.

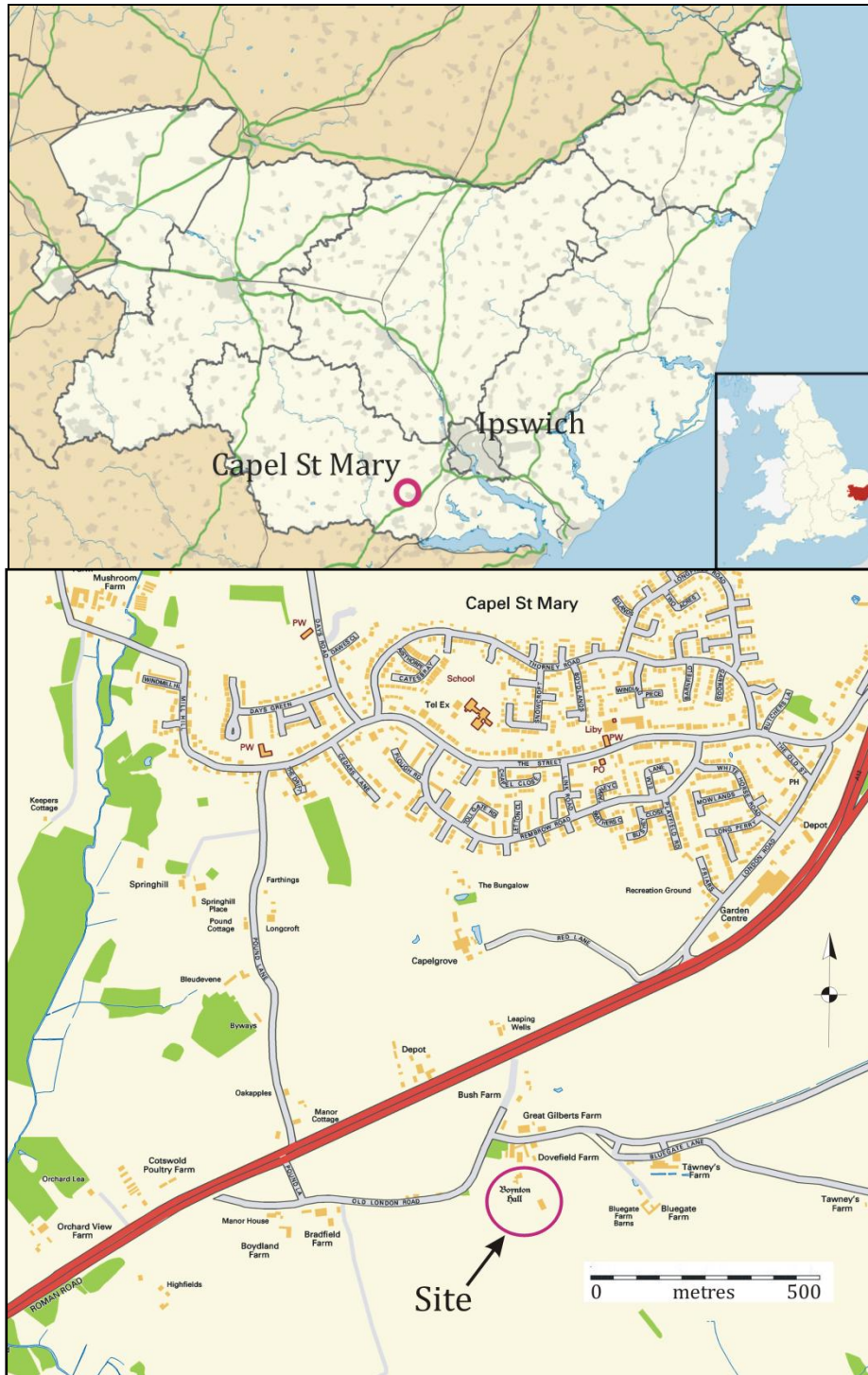
## 3. Site Location

Grid Ref: TM 0871 3716



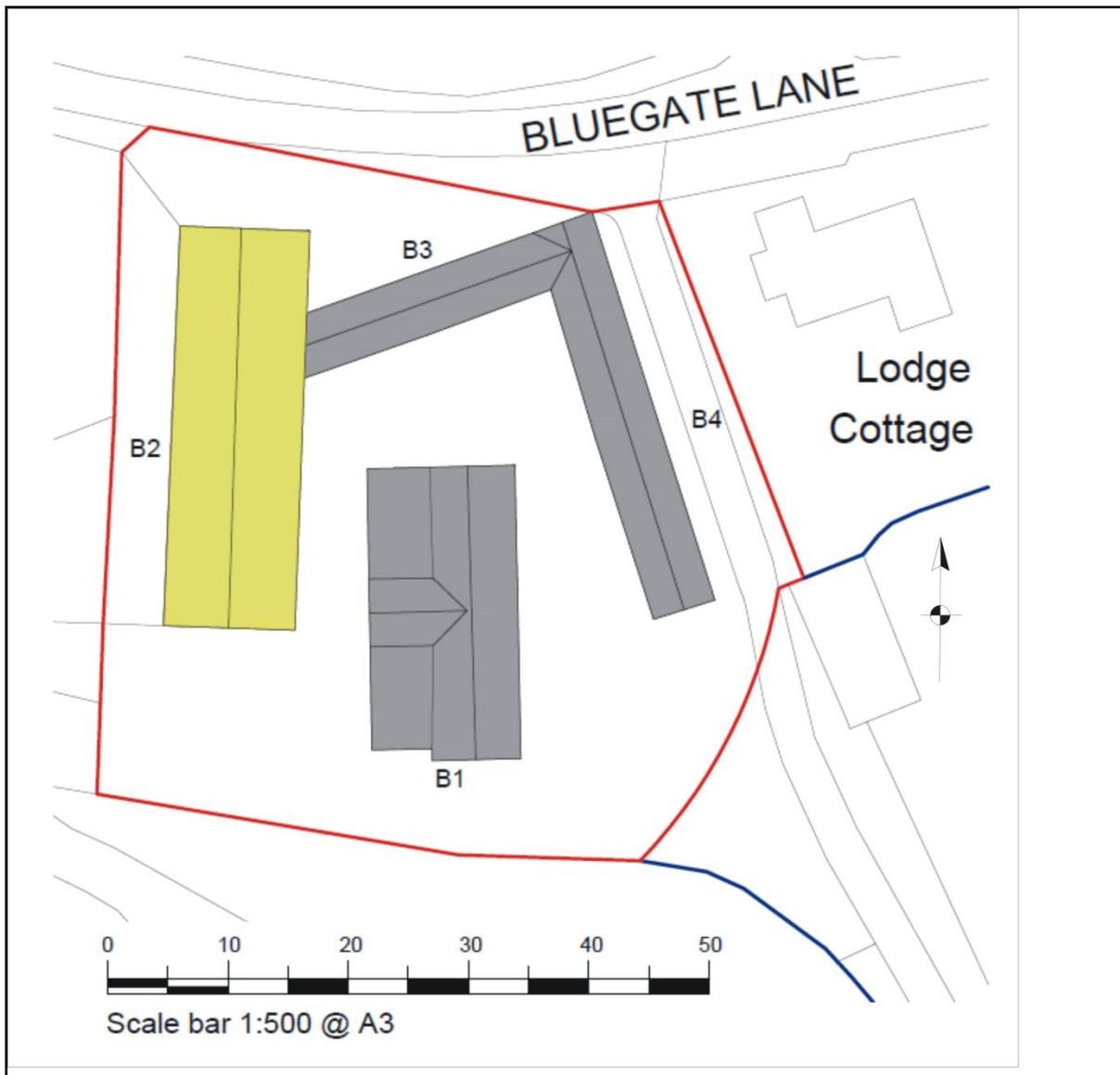
*Figure 1. Earth view of Boynton Hall and the agricultural buildings to the north (Google Earth)*

Capel St. Mary lies in the valley of a small millstream, a tributary of the River Stour. The site is on the old London Road to the south of the main village, which is now separated by the modern A12 trunk road.



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**Figure 2. Capel St Mary and site location**



*Figure 3. Block Plan of Site, showing barn and stable in grey*

## 4. Archaeological and Historical Background

### 4.1 Archaeological Background

The SCCA/CT brief states: ' Although not listed, the submitted described indicate that the barn has a timber frame and that it an other elements of the site are depicted on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map, indicating that these structures are over 120 years old. As such, the buildings should be considered to be non-designated Heritage Assets under the terms of the NPPF and requires archaeological recording prior to conversion.'  
 (SCCA/CT Brief, Dr. R.Hoggett).



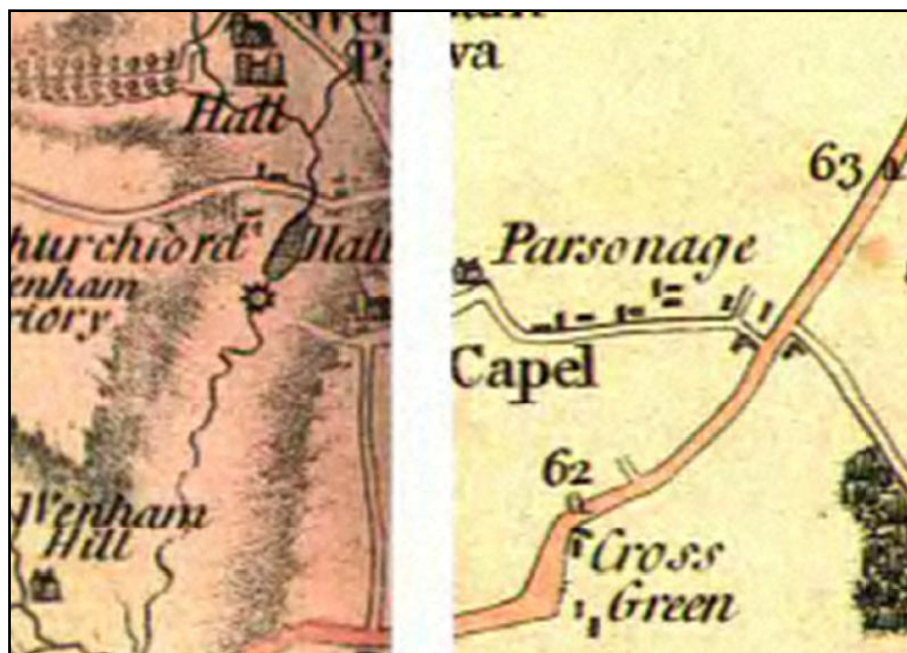
#### 4.2 Historical Background

4.23 There are early references to 'Capeles' that can be found in taxation records dating to 1254 and 1291 (Eckwall 1960, 86). But there are few records to demonstrate the extent of medieval evidence for Capel St Mary, but with a total of 8 listed medieval and post-medieval buildings within the study area, this shows that Capel St Mary was a considerable settlement during these periods.

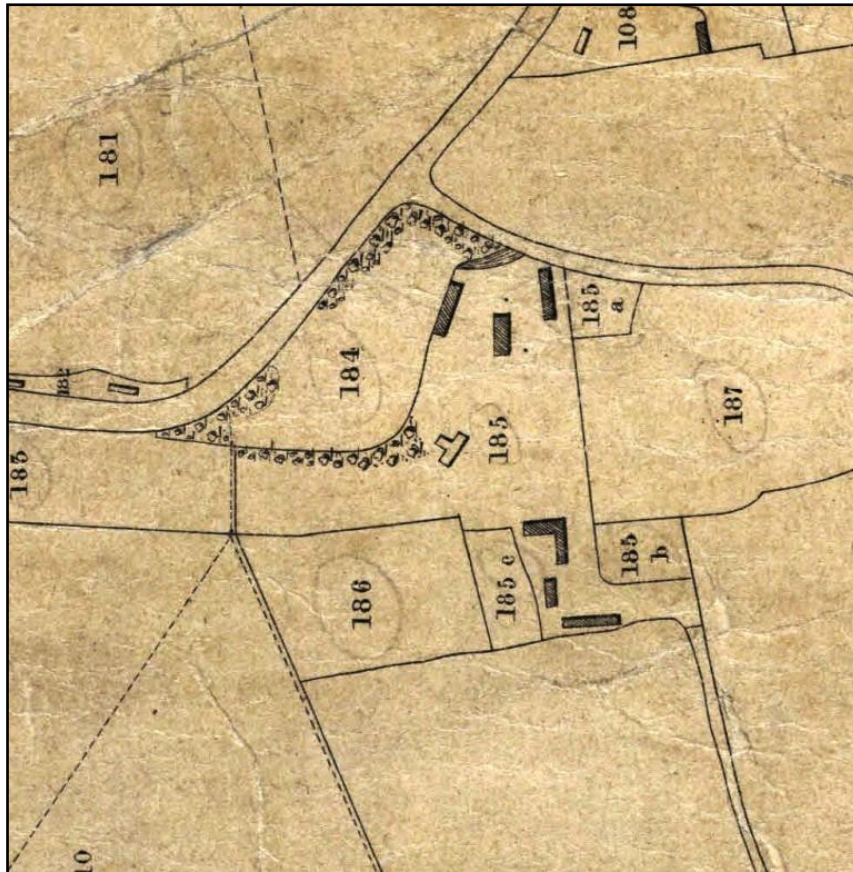
4.24 According to Copinger the 'Manor of Boitwell Hall or Boyton Hall with Groats or Grot's Deny's and Helhouse Lands alias Beames' was 'held in the time of Henry III by Jeffery de Capell of the Honor of Heningham by service of half a knight's fee, and in 1353 was vested in Sir John Braham'. At the time of the tithe map this manor was the property of Queens College, Cambridge who had acquired the lordship of the manor in 1548'. (Copinger, W, A., 1910)

Boynton Hall has origins in the 14th century and was originally of a raised aisle-type construction, which has been altered and extended considerably throughout the 15th- 16th centuries with additional elements added to the building of a much later date.

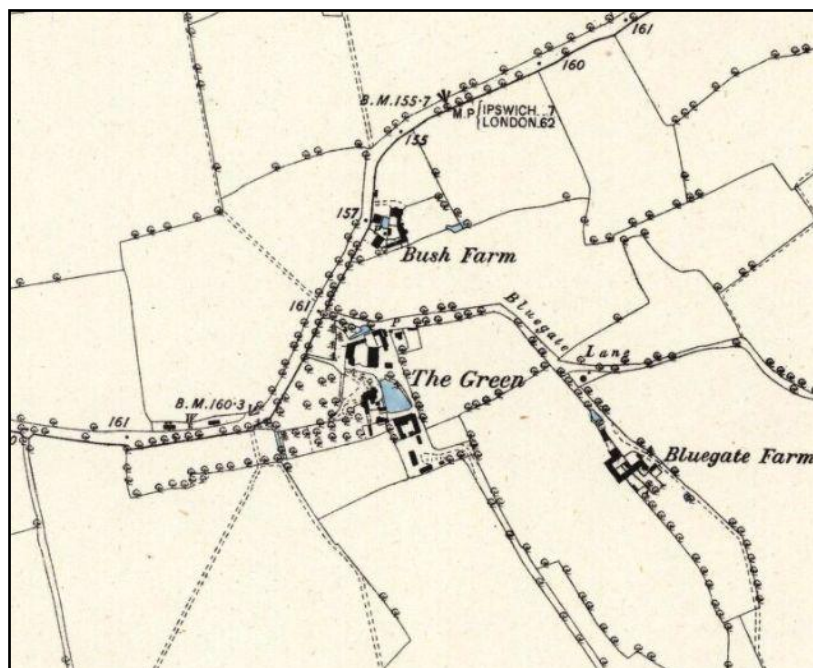
## 5. Map Information & Records



*Figure 3. Hodskinson's map of Capel St Mary, 1783*



*Figure 4. Tithe map of 1838 showing the Barn Cow shed and Stable*



*Figure 5. The Ordnance Survey of 1886 (1st ed.), showing the buildings at centre, west of The Green*

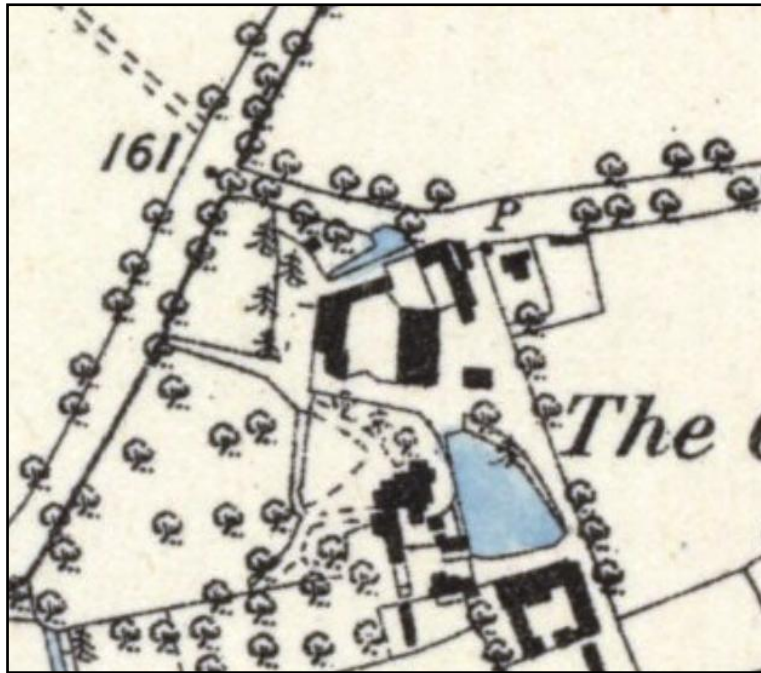


Figure 6. The Ordnance Survey of 1886 (1st ed.), showing the farm buildings at centre

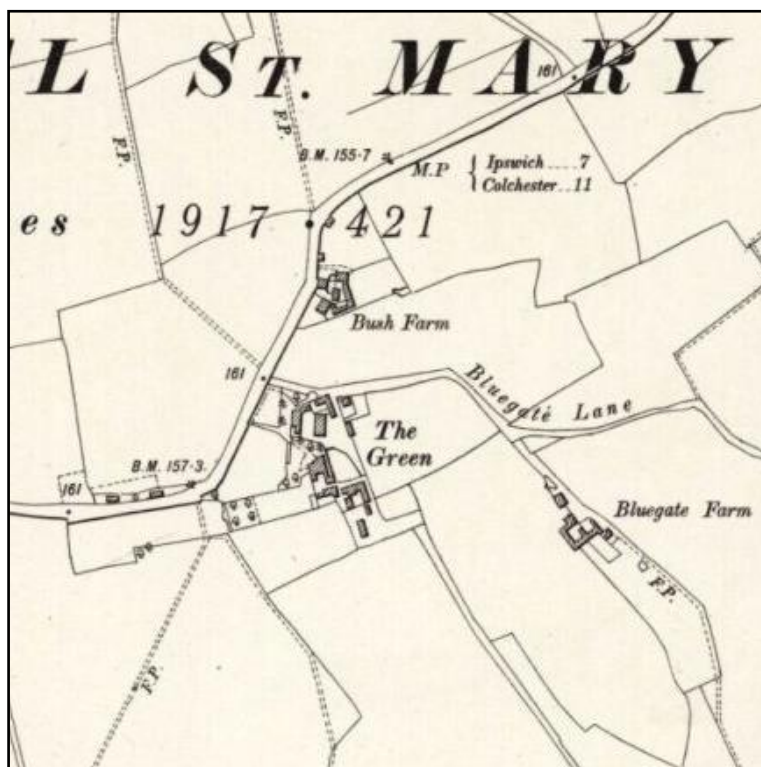


Figure 7. The Ordnance Survey of 1924 (2nd Edition)- 6 inch series)

### **5.1. Discussion of Map Evidence**

The subject buildings do not seem appear on the map by Hodskinson of 1783 (fig. 3). At the time of mapping due to the age of the barn and stable (early 19th century), clearly they would not have existed then, but the map is not always accurate. For those familiar with this map, it has been demonstrated before that Hodskinson's map is not wholly reliable and a missing building or buildings group is not uncommon, and when it is shown it is often not very clear. Two buildings are shown in the correct location, but their positions appear to be those of Boynton Hall and a further building complex to the south-east of the hall, certainly Boynton Hall being of 14th century origins and being of some substance would have been mapped by Hodskinson in 1783.

The barn is shown on the Tithe map ( fig. 4), the earliest depiction, showing clearly that it existed by then, but the stable block is a single range with no returning range from the north-west end, this cannot be the building that now stands here as the current stable is built from fletton bricks of 20th century manufacture, showing that the current stable block is a far more recent building. The building to the west has also been replaced with a large cattle shed, the original building's function is unknown, but probably for the same purpose.

## **6. Methodology**

6.1 A level 2 (English Heritage 2006) photographic record was undertaken to a brief designed by the Archaeological Service of Suffolk County Council (Dr Richard Hoggett).

6.2 A visual inspection was carried out and notes were taken on the features, construction and dimensions of the building. Measurements were taken externally and internally and a scale plan was drawn at 1:50. A series of photographs were taken externally and internally. The photographic record comprised of digital images at 10 million pixels.

6.3 From the evidence presented, an interpretation of the building's function, form and date was made.

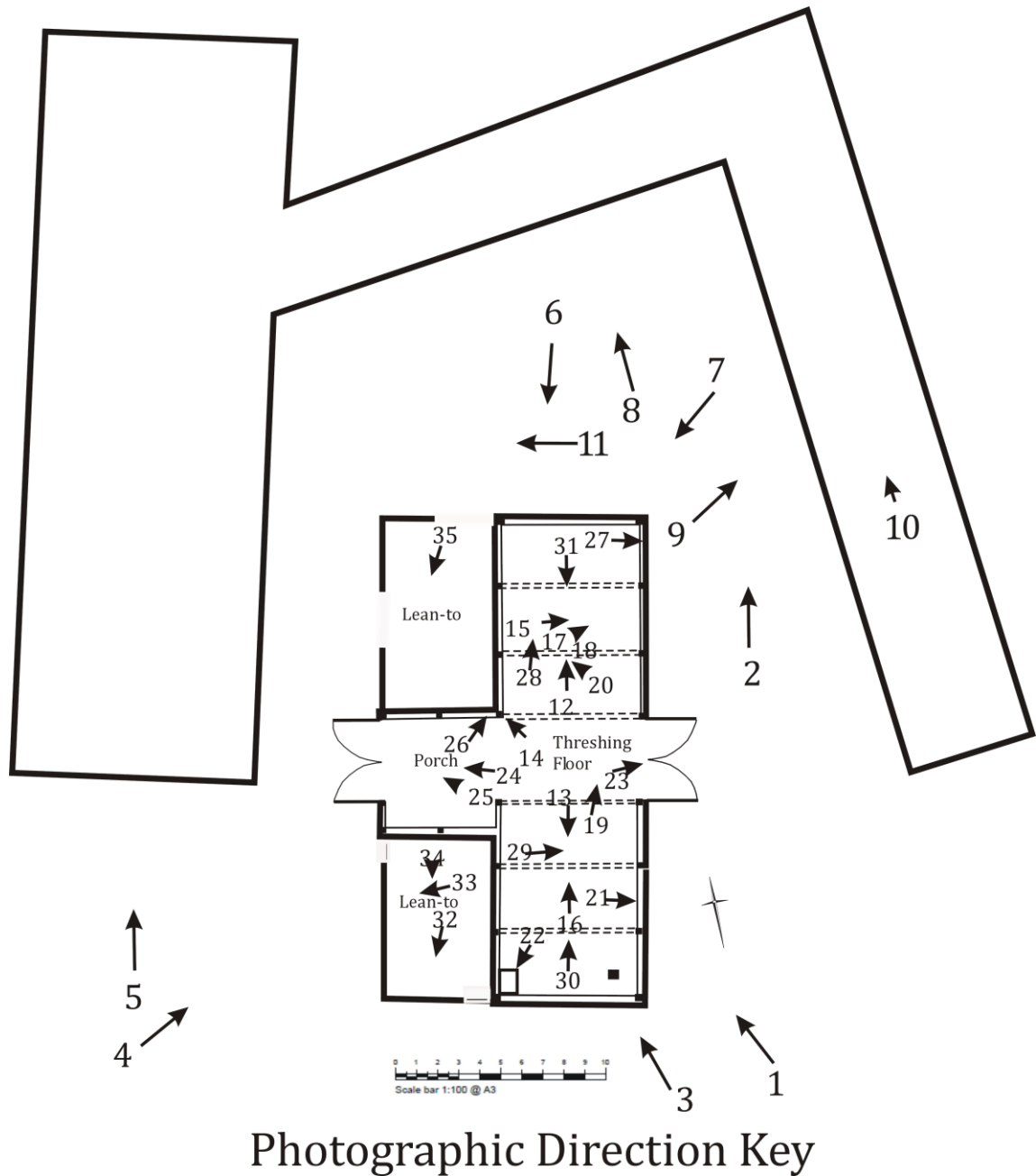
6.4 Within the report, all image references refer to the digital images as listed in appendix I.

6.5 All images referred to can be found in appendix II.

## 7. Building Analysis

### 7.1 General Introduction

This record is mainly concerned with the primary building, the barn and shall be referred to as building (A) throughout this report. The stables (building B) are of a fairly modern date of the early-mid twentieth century and are not considered to be of any architectural merit.



*Figure 8. Photographic Direction Key*

### **7.12 Barn (A) External and Extensions**

Barn (A) is timber-framed under a weather-board cladding, finished in black pitch in the traditional method. It is a seven bay threshing barn of larger than average proportions and number of bays (normally up to 5 bays), built in one phase with extensions to the north: a lean-to and to the south, a further lean-to, which are both erected on the west-facing elevation. The lean-to's appear to be very similar in date and their functions are as follows: the southern-most was used as a stable, the evidence for which is from a mounting block having also been used for a tank base; the tethering rail (plt. 33 ) and a good original feeding rack attached to the southern wall (plt. 32), roofed in corrugated metal sheeting. The northern lean-to appears to be simply for storage, probably for farm implements, which is roofed in slate tiles. The building stands on a brick plinth of at least six courses. Facing west, with its original high doors to allow access for heavily laden carts, the walls rise to a higher than normal elevation of approximately 9 metres to the pitch of the roof, with its greater than 45 degree pitch suggesting that it was always tiled and still retains what appears to be the original terracotta pan tiles with a boarded insulation beneath, which can be seen from the inside. The ground plan of the barn measures 25m in length by 7.50m in width. A porch is erected contemporary with the building to the west-facing elevation with its two usual double hinged doors. The larger than average size of this barn required an equally larger porch (plts.4, 24, 25) and is joined to the main-frame by an off-set method, in that the porch is attached to one principal post on one side and not to the other, which also means the doors are off-set.

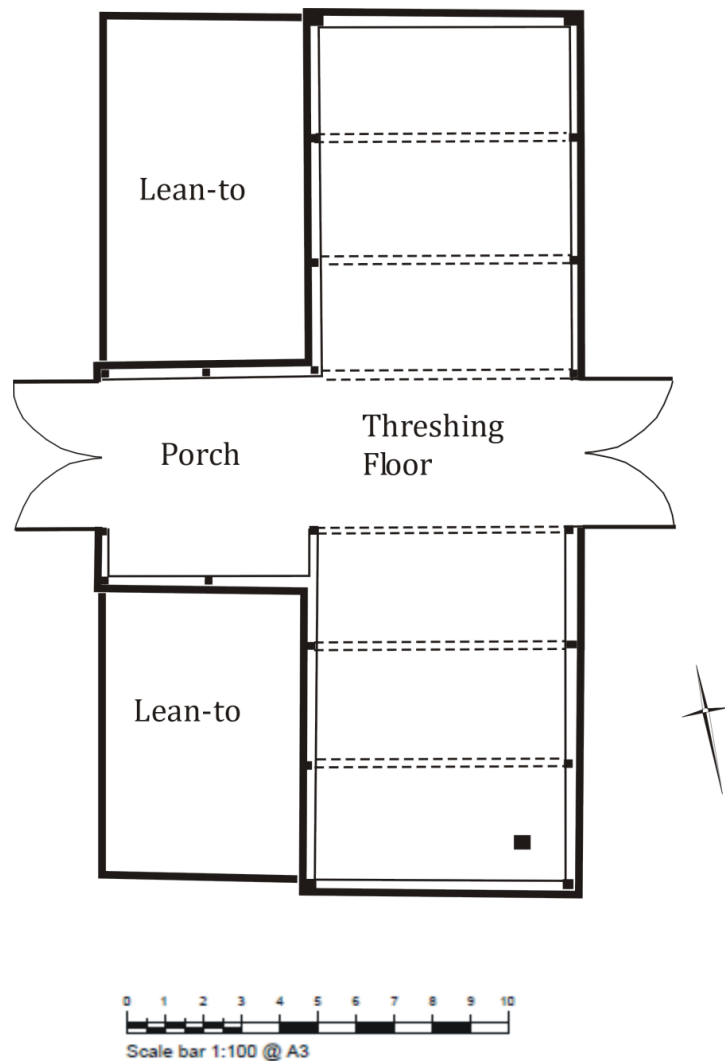
### **7.13 Barn (A) Interior**

The framing is light, typical from the 18th -19th centuries with pairs of principal posts (7) placed at each bay division. The jointing is entirely with nails suggesting a late manufacture technique of assembly. Retaining the roof to the top plate are a series of bolted knee joints (plts. 13-16), all of which are contemporary with the building as there is no evidence for earlier arched braces having been removed (quite common in barns is to find sawn off (blind) mortise and tenon joints where earlier and lower arched braces had existed) to facilitate higher storage and movement of carts. The roof construction (plts. 16, 25, 30-31) is of the basic A-frame truss type of tie beams retaining the top plates, which carry the roof assembly of rafters retained by a single butt purlin to each pitch and all appear to be original.

Mechanisation of produce processing is evident from inside the barn with two wooden brackets attached to the ceiling, presumably for pulleys and or winches and a cradle at one end of the barn would have carried a tank or hopper (plts 17-18; 20, 22); a hay loft is also evident for storage of produce, gravity fed through a chute. A further cast iron chute? is attached to the floor, which empties into a pit within the floor, presumably for some form of drainage and could have been used in conjunction with a portable steam engine to provide power to a threshing machine. Peters in his *Discovering Traditional Farm Buildings* states: ' *Portable steam engines began to appear by the early 1830's. They had the great advantage that they could be used to drive machinery anywhere on the farm; some were designed for ploughing* ' (Peters, 2003. Whether or not this piece of machinery was precisely for this purpose is uncertain but a barn of this proportions would certainly have been able to accommodate such machinery.

### 7.14 Building (B) Stables

This building, used as a stable and or cattle shed replaces an earlier building built in two distinct phases as seen on the Tithe map (fig.4). This figure shows a single north-south range but by the time of the 1st ed. O.S. map this had been added to with western return to the north (fig. 5). The current building which mirrors the ones shown on the old maps is of the early-mid twentieth century and has no architectural merit.



*Figure 9. Plan of Barn (A)*

## 8. Context and Setting of the Building

Barn (A) is a single phase construction consisting of Seven bays and as already mentioned, this barn is considerably larger than the average for the region. The extensions (lean-to's) could be referred to as phases as they are later than the main barn. It is typical of many Suffolk barns, with additions or extensions, to reflect a period of ``gearing-up production`` at a time when demand for foodstuffs was increasing dramatically. Increased agricultural productivity, encouraged by rising grain prices and the demands of an increasingly urban population, was enabled by the expansion of the cultivated area (especially from the 1790s to 1815), due to the continued reorganisation and enlargement of holdings, and the final phase of the enclosure. Further trends to improve barns at this date was the introduction of the **Corn Laws** introduced by the *Importation Act of 1815*. The **Corn Laws** were trade laws designed to protect cereal producers in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland against competition from less expensive foreign imports between 1815 and 1846. To ensure that British landowners reaped all the financial profits from farming, the corn laws imposed steep import duties, making it too expensive for anyone to import grain from other countries, even when the people of Great Britain and Ireland needed the food (as in times of famine).

The high elevation and general large size of this building creates a lofty space within, coupled with the evidence for mechanisation it was capable of processing cereals at a higher than normal rate and was built to cope with the boom period as mentioned above, so it is an example of a barn fit for the purpose of its time of higher demands for cereals. Storage would have been one of its main assets, being especially high for this taller than average Suffolk threshing barn. It also possibly reflects the higher status of Boynton Hall the host farmhouse, located to the immediate south.

The topographical position of the building group is also noteworthy. The adjacent land to the east is shown on all early maps (figs 4-7) as *The Green* indicating that this land would have been common land for tenant farmers or smallholders and in all probability dates to the medieval period and was normally allocated by the lord of the manor who may have lived at Boynton Hall, which we know is an early 14th century aisled building, indicating that it was of a very high status from that time.

## 9. Interpretation

The barn within the building group (except the farmhouse) is usually the earliest of the structures, as in this case, however on this farm no other early buildings have survived. Among the dating evidence and diagnostic features within the barn are the bolted arched knee-braces. These were usually inserted as an improvement which allowed better access for carts and storage, here they are contemporary to the main structure. The very few modifications carried out to the barn, in this case the two lean-to's, are quite common with many barns having been enlarged in some way or another: '*Eighteenth-century alterations such as the expansion of barn space by taking down divisions, extending the building, adding porches or building an entirely new barn are all changes which are part of the farm's history.*' (English Heritage 2012). This example is an entirely new, state of the art barn with no evidence for the blind tenons left behind after the removal of the lower arched braces commonly seen in many Suffolk barns, which would have pre-dated it to the 18th century or even earlier.



The predominance of nails for joints also suggests and points to an early 19th century date (1800-1820).

A further diagnostic feature of the barn is the bricks that form the plinth to support the farming of the barn. The brick plinth (plt. 27) is constructed in *English Bond*, an early form of brickwork common up to the seventeenth century, in this example it uses well made red brick of 19th century type and date so this form of coursework is still being used up until the time that the barn was built (by a traditionalist craftsman or brick layer).

Barn (A) was probably of Tithe status due to its large size: a Tithe barn acted as a collection point of annual production, collected from tenant farmers or smallholders beholding to the local Lord of the manor, (*Manor of Boitwell Hall*; Coppinger) which was re-distributed to support the clergy or church and other local institutions, so an obligation or tax in the form of tithes by local producers at the rate of one tenth of their income/production.

## **10. Conclusion**

Barn (A) is a typical agricultural building of its type, but much larger than the average found throughout the eastern counties and belonging to a large prospering farm and most likely of Tithe status.

The barn is a solitary survivor from what may have existed on the site before, as seen from the map evidence, a range of farm buildings were removed pre-dating the existing ones, leaving the barn as a reminder of what had been a large prospering Suffolk farm on the southern fringes of Capel St Mary, dating to the early 19th century.

## **11. Acknowledgements**

Thanks are due to Jasper Dormer for allowing access to the property and funding this report. The site work and report were completed by Dennis Payne BA (Hons) ACIfA

## **Bibliography**

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## **Sources:**

**The Suffolk County Council Historic Environment Record, Shire Hall, Bury St Edmunds Suffolk**

**The Suffolk Record Office, Ipswich**

Maps Consulted:

FDA57/A1/1b Tithe Map Capel St Mary 1838

Ordnance Survey 1st ed. 1886

Ordnance Survey 2nd revised edition 1924

Other maps:

Hodskinson's map of Capel St Mary, 1783

## Appendix I: Digital Photographic Archive Table

(Full photographic archive on accompanying CD)

Table 1

Key to (fig. 8) and plates	Description	Taken from	Date taken 06/07/16
1	Barn exterior	South-east	
2	Stables exterior	South	
3	Barn exterior	South-east	
4	Barn exterior	South-west	
5	Cattle sheds	South	
6	Barn exterior	North	
7	Barn exterior	North-east	
8	Stables	South	
9	Stables exterior	South-west	
10	Stables interior	South	
11	Cattle shed	East	
12	Barn interior	South	
13	Barn interior	North	
14	Bolted knee brace detail	South-east	
15	Studwork detail	east	
16	Roof construction detail	South	
17	Bracket detail for hoist in roof	Vertical	
18	Bracket detail for hoist in roof	vertical	
19	Studwork and knee brace	South-west	
20	Cast iron chute/drain for mechanical use	South-east	
21	Studwork detail rear elevation wall	West	
22	Wooden cradle for tank or hopper	North-east	
23	Rear door detail over threshing floor	West	

Key to (fig. 8) and plates	Description	Taken from	Date taken 06/07/16
24	Roof detail of porch	Vertical	
25	Roof truss detail for porch	Vertical	
26	Door detail to side of porch	South-west	
27	Brick plinth detail to north-east corner	West	
28	Hay loft	South-west	
29	Detail of studwork to rear wall	West	
30	General view through barn	South	
31	General view through barn	North	
32	Interior of lean-to used as a stable showing original wooden hay rack	North-east	
33	Tethering rail to wall of lean-to/stable	East	
34	Roof detail of lean-to used as a stable	Vertical	
35	View into northern end lean-to used for storage	North-east	
36	Late 19th century stable block, east of barn (A)	South-east	

**Appendix II: Digital Images**



*Plate 1. Barn exterior from the South-east*



*Plate 2. Stables exterior from the south*



*Plate 3. Barn gable end wall from the south*



*Plate 4. Barn exterior from the south-west*



*Plate 5. Cattle shed from the south*



*Plate 6. Interior view from the south*



*Plate 7. Barn exterior from the north-east*



*Plate 8. Stables from the south*



*Plate 9. Stables from the south-west*



*Plate 10. Stables interior view from the south*





*Plate 11. Cattle shed from the east*



*Plate 12. Barn interior showing hay loft from the south*



*Plate 13. Barn interior from the north*



*Plate 14. Bolted knee brace detail from the south-east*



*Plate 15. Brick plinth detail, north-east corner*



*Plate 16. Roof construction detail from the south*



*Plates 17 & 18 Roof bracket assemblies for hoists*



*Plate 19. Studwork and knee brace detail from the south-west*



*Plate 20. Cast iron chute/drain for mechanical use*



*Plate 21. Studwork detail rear elevation wall from the north-west*



*Plate 22. Wooden cradle to support a tank or hopper*



*Plate 23. Rear door detail over threshing floor from the west*



*Plate 24. Roof detail of porch, vertical*



*Plate 25. Roof truss detail for porch from the south-west*



*Plate 26. Door detail to side of porch from the south-west*



*Plate 27. Brick plinth detail to north-east corner of barn*



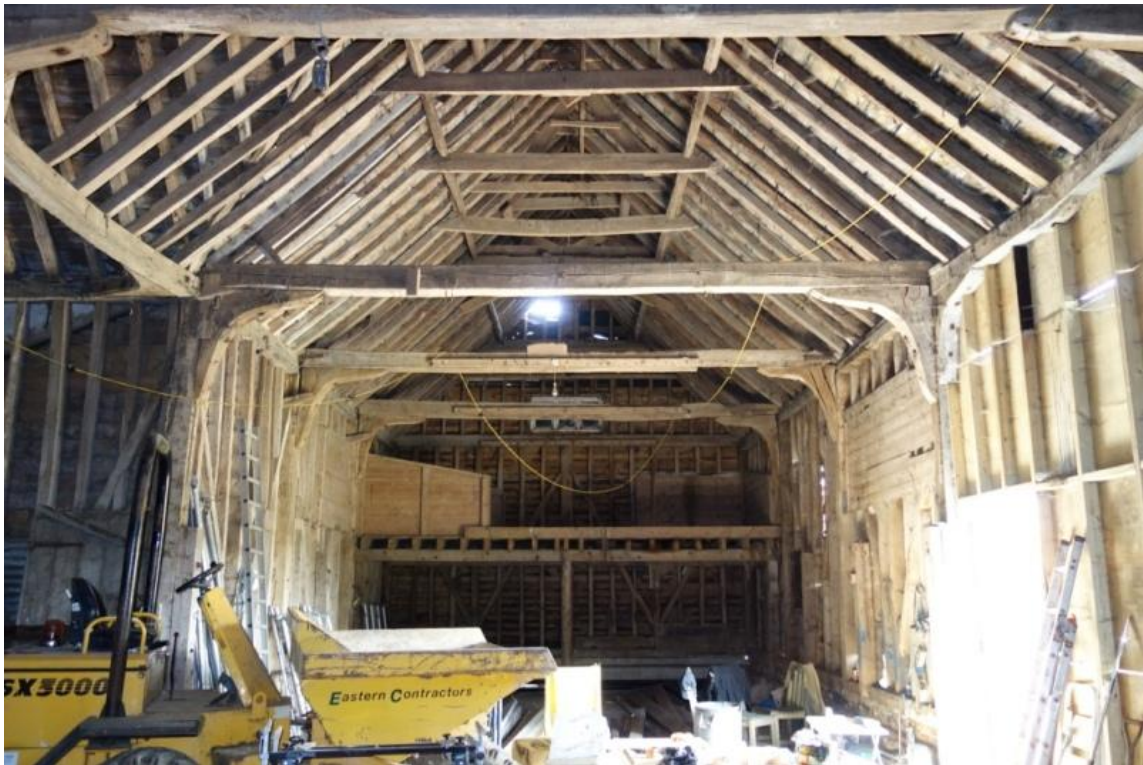
*Plate 28. Hay loft from the south-west*



*Plate 29. Detail of studwork to rear wall from the west*



*Plate 30. General view through barn from the north*



*Plate 31 General view through barn from the south*





*Plate 32. Lean-to detail used as a stable showing the wooden feeding rack from the north-east*



*Plate 33. Tethering rail to west-facing elevation wall of lean-to*



*Plate 34. roof detail of lean-to (stable) from the north*



*Plate 35. Interior view of northern lean-to (storage room)*



*Plate 36. Additional stable block (late 19th century), east of barn*

