



**Historic Building Recording at
Rye Hill Farm Barns, Eydon
Northamptonshire
May 2015**

Report No. 15/104

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Illustrator: Amir Bassir



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Project Manager: Amir Bassir
Planning ref: S/2015/0457/FUL
NGR: SP 55934 48687

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OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		OASIS molanort1-213316
Project title	Historic Building Recording at Rye Hill Farm Barns, Eydon, Northamptonshire, May 2015	
Short description	MOLA was commissioned by Mr G Wood to undertake a Level 2 photographic survey of a complex of agricultural buildings associated with Rye Hill Farm, Eydon, ahead of the conversion of the buildings to a residential dwelling. The surveyed buildings date largely to the mid-19th century with intermittent alterations and repair work in the following years. The buildings had a range of functions and included a barn, stable, cart shed, cow shed and a modern shelter. The buildings were found to be derelict, partly unroofed and overgrown.	
Project type	English heritage Level 2, Historic Building Recording	
Previous work	Heritage assessment	
Future work	Unknown	
Monument type and period	Early-mid 19th century and modern agricultural buildings	
PROJECT LOCATION		
County	Northamptonshire	
Site address	Rye Hill Farm Barns, Leicester Lane, Eydon, Northamptonshire	
NGR	SP 55934 48687	
Area	c238sqm	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation	MOLA Northampton	
Project brief originator	Mr G Wood	
Project Design originator	NCC Assistant Archaeological Advisor	
Director/Supervisor	Amir Bassir	
Project Manager	Amir Bassir	
Sponsor or funding body	Mr G Wood	
PROJECT DATE		
Start date	May 2015	
End date	June 2015	
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
Title	Historic Building Recording at Rye Hill Farm Barns, Eydon, Northamptonshire, May 2015	
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Historic Building Recording at Rye Hill Farm Barns, Eydon, Northamptonshire May 2015

ABSTRACT

MOLA was commissioned by Mr G Wood to undertake a Level 2 photographic survey of a complex of agricultural buildings associated with Rye Hill Farm, Eydon, ahead of the conversion of the buildings to a residential dwelling. The surveyed buildings date largely to the mid-19th century with intermittent alterations and repair work in the following years. The buildings had a range of functions and included a barn, stable, cart shed, cow shed and a modern shelter. The buildings were found to be derelict, partly unroofed and overgrown.

1 INTRODUCTION

MOLA was commissioned by Mr G Wood to undertake a programme of historic building recording at Rye Hill Farm Barns, Eydon, Northamptonshire (NGR SP 55934 48687, Fig 1).

Planning consent has been granted (S/2015/0457/FUL) for the buildings to be converted to a private residential dwelling. The consent was granted with a condition attached for a programme of historic building recording on structures to be effected within the development area. This report follows a Written Scheme of Investigation (MOLA 2015) which was approved prior to commencement of fieldwork.

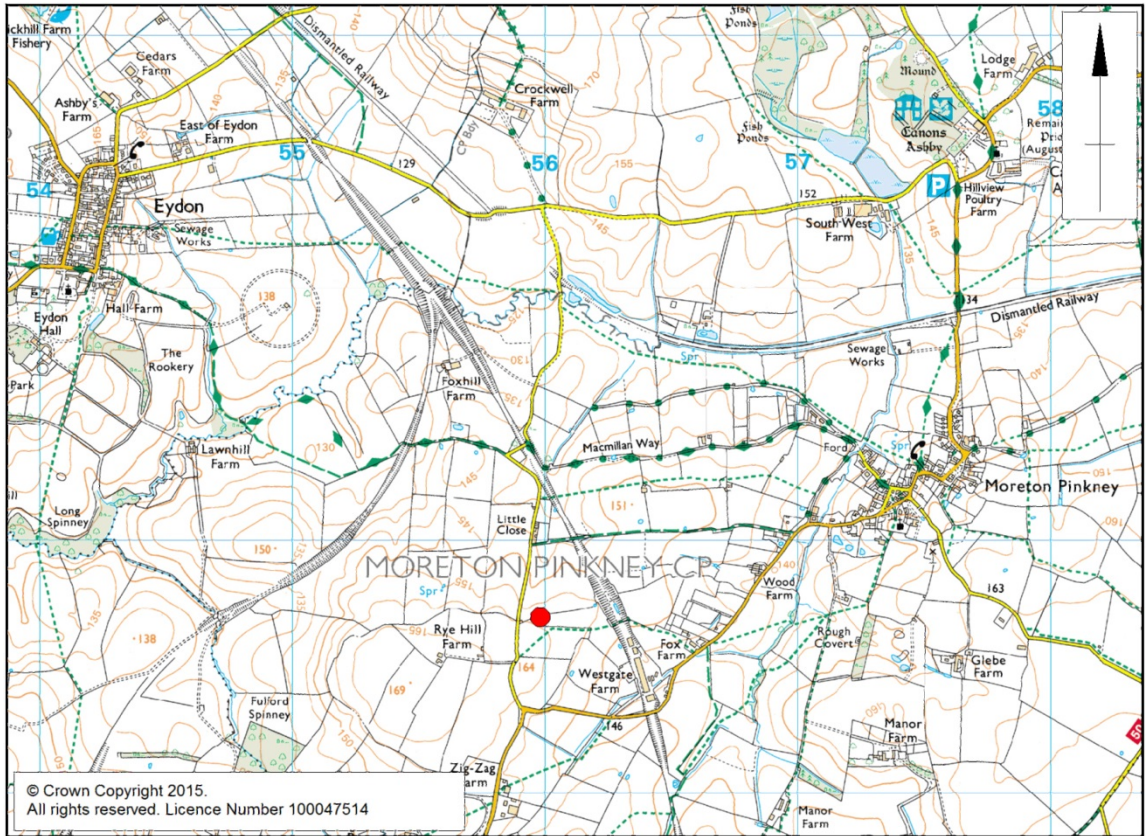
The underlying geology has been mapped by the British Geological Survey as comprising early Jurassic bedrock of the Whitby Mudstone Formation Middle Jurassic Limestone and Mudstone.

(<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex>).

The survey area is located approximately 2.2km to the south-east of Eydon and 1.4km to the south-west of Moreton Pinkney (Fig 1). The site is to the east of Leicester Lane and comprises a range of agricultural buildings (Fig 2). To the east lies a disused rail line of the Great Central Railway which was constructed in the late 19th century (Fig 5).

The area falls within the Northamptonshire Uplands National Character Area 95, part of the East Midlands Farmsteads and Landscapes Project (NCA 2014). The character of the area is summarised as having a low density of farmsteads in the landscape and comprising medium-large scale regular and loose courtyard farmsteads on the edges of villages with regular courtyard plans commonly incorporating L-shaped ranges.

RYE HILL FARM BARN, EYDON



Site location Fig 1



Aerial view of the site, © Google Earth Fig 2

2 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The objective of an English Heritage (EH) Level 2 building recording is to provide an analytical record of an extant structure in accordance with the EH procedural document '*Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice*' (HE 2015a). It provides a systematic account of a building's origins, development and use.

Site recording included the following elements:

- Establish an accurate archaeological record of the buildings to English Heritage Level 2 (HE 2015, section 5.2);
- An overall photographic survey of the buildings in their present condition comprising general and detailed shots. Photography was carried out using a Nikon D200 DSLR equipped with Sigma 35-17mm and Nikon 18-70mm lenses. Black and white 35mm film photography was carried out using a Nikon F80 SLR equipped with a Sigma 10-20mm lens.
- Written notes on the buildings' construction, present and former use and where appropriate, the buildings' past and present relationship to its setting in the wider landscape.

All works were conducted in accordance with the procedural documents (*The Management of Research Projects on the Historic Environment*) (HE 2015b); The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Standard and Guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures (CIfA 2014b).

Site location plans indicating the position and orientation of photographs are included in the report.

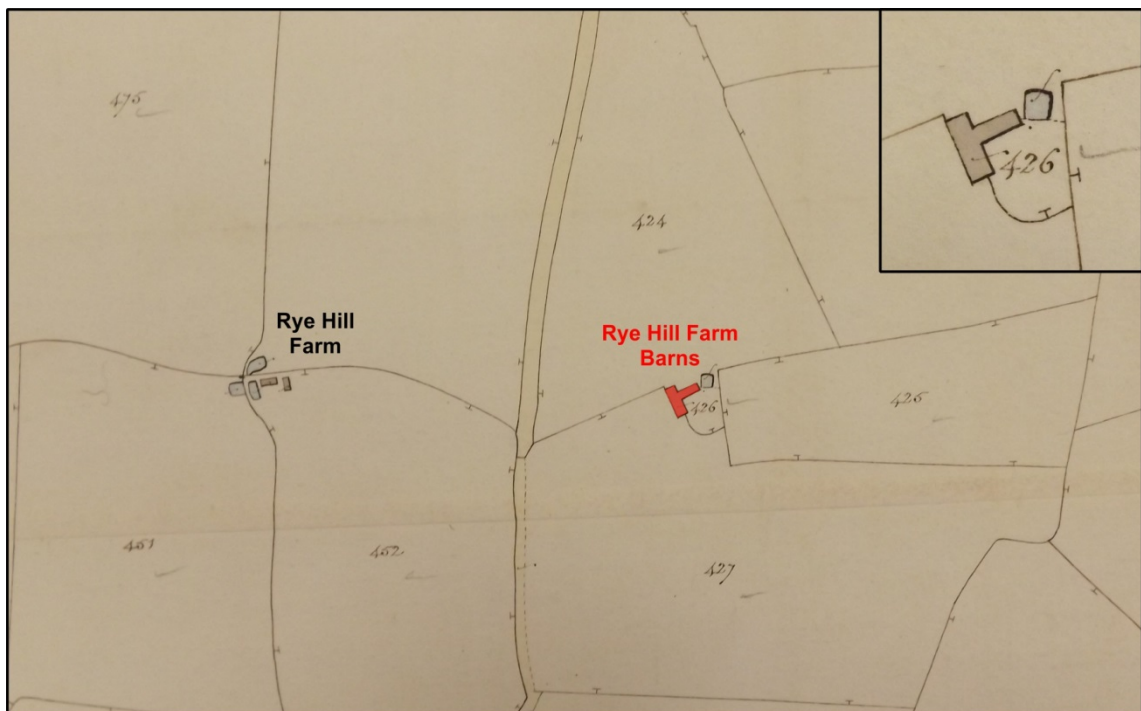
3 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND CARTOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE

The villages of Eydon and Moreton Pinkney have historically been largely agricultural settlements with farming of open field systems up till the enclosure act of the mid-19th century. The site is fairly typical of this tradition and functioned as an agricultural hub at the junction of its associated fields, detached and separated from the main farm which is located some 400m to the south-west, on the western side of Leicester Lane.

A historic building assessment has previously been commissioned for the site (Beacon 2011). The assessment states that deeds and documents of conveyance place the construction of a barn, stable and outbuildings in c1850, post-dating the enclosure of the former open fields.

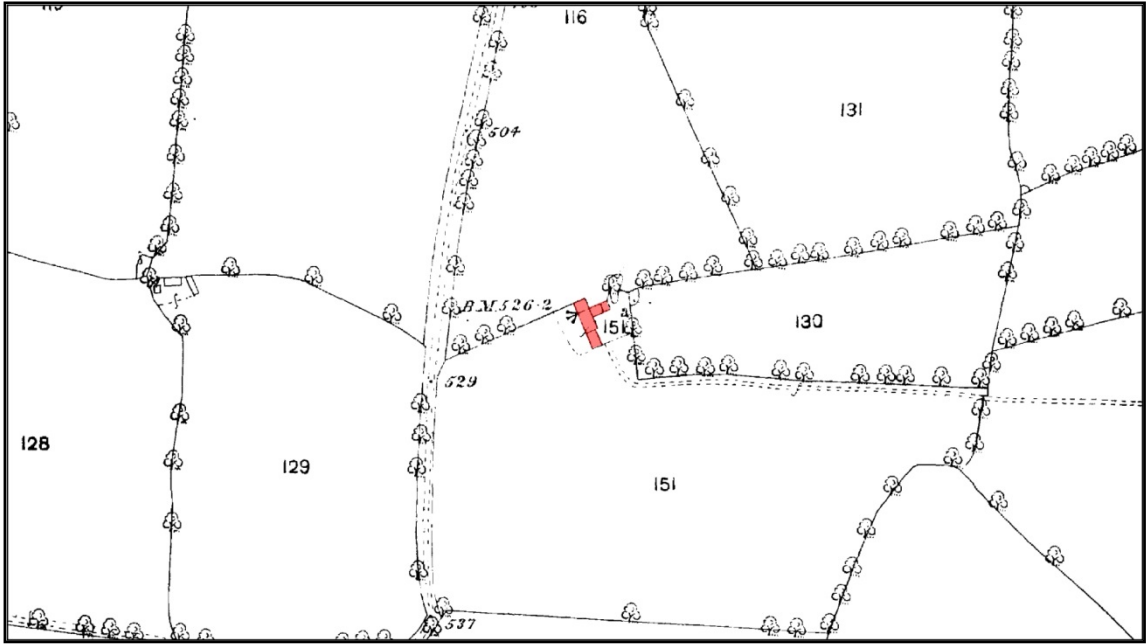
The tithe map of Moreton Pinkney, dated to 1848, accurately depicts the site as it stood at that time (Fig 3). It can be seen that the barn, cart shed and cowshed were in place by 1848 but the stable was not yet built. By the Ordnance Survey map of 1884 (Fig 4), the stable has been built and the site fully formed, with the exception of the much more modern shelter.

The site has remained largely unchanged in the following years with the exception of the construction of a branch of the Great Central Railway to the east (Fig 5) and the addition of the fairly modern cattle shelter.

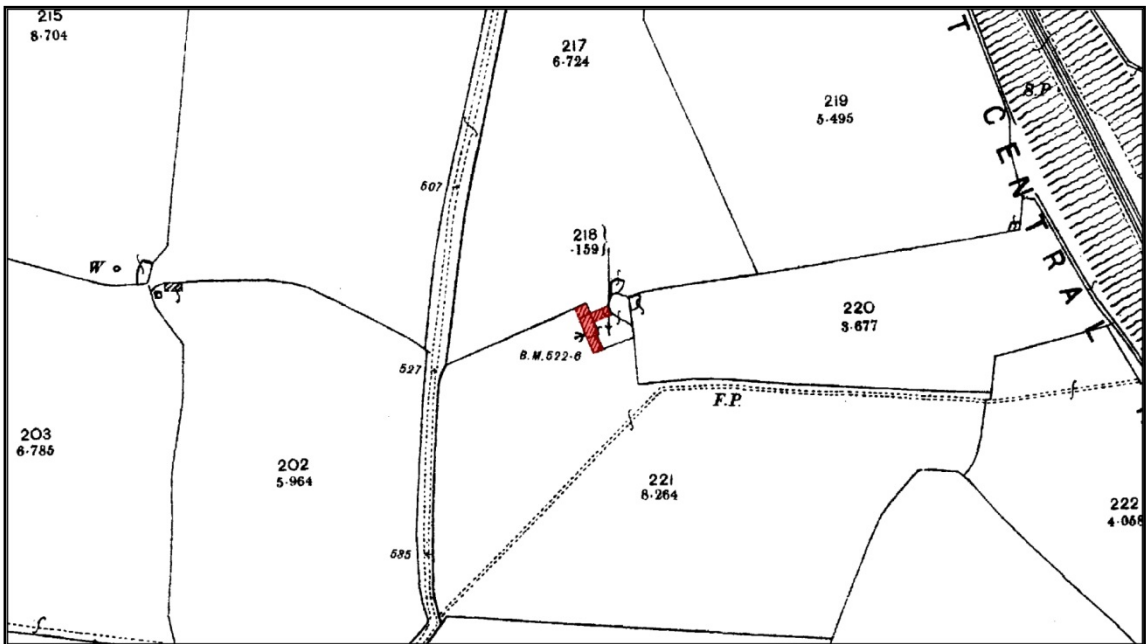


Moreton Pinkney tithe map of 1848 Fig 3

RYE HILL FARM BARNS, EYDON



Ordnance Survey map of 1884 Fig 4



Ordnance Survey map of 1900 Fig 5

4 DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS OF THE STANDING BUILDINGS

The recorded buildings comprise an L-plan group of agricultural buildings aligned approximately north-west to south-east with a covered cattle shelter located at the intersection of the ranges (Fig 7). The site is made up of five enclosed structures: Cart shed, Threshing Barn, Stable and Cow shed, and Shelter. The site is located at the intersection of a number of fields and is accessed by a hedge bound track which joins Leicester Lane to the east (Fig 2).

The buildings were generally in a poor state of repair, partly unroofed with vegetation ingress into the brickwork (Fig 8). Large cracks were visible particularly around the weaker areas of the structures such as the window and door openings.

4.1 Cart shed

This building is located at the northern end of the linear range, abutting the Barn to the south and is a single-storey structure measuring c6x5.5m (Fig 7). It is open-fronted to the west and has dwarf walls of red brick in Flemish Garden bond, supporting timber posts and vertical cladding around the north and east sides (Figs 10 & 11). The north-east corner and middle portion of the east wall are given additional support by short projecting brick buttresses capped in stone. The structure is covered by a slate clad gable roof supported over a central, braced tie beam with iron tie rod. To the west and east, the truss is carried over decorative timber supports jointed to the main posts (Fig 12). Similar detailing can also be seen atop the other supporting posts to the rear of the room. These supports carry the timber lintels that support the rafters (Figs 13 & 14). The room was found to contain a lot of debris and rubbish which almost entirely obscured the room's floor which was determined to be of beaten earth.

It is probable that the cart shed is a later addition to the range, though it had been constructed by 1848 (Fig 3). The roof ties are keyed into the north wall of the Barn which has had brickwork removed to accommodate them.

4.2 Barn

The largest of the buildings, the Barn is the central core to which the other structures are joined. It comprises a single room of three bays, measuring c6.2x11.5m (Fig 7). The building is constructed of red brick in English Garden bond, having three rows of stretchers to a row of headers (Fig 20). The bricks measure c220x110x70mm with three courses being c225mm in height. The header courses have been picked out by the use of lighter coloured brickwork, creating a decorative enhancement to the walls. At the eaves is a dentil course providing further decorative embellishment. At the top of the north and south elevations are located panels of hit and miss brickwork allowing ventilation to the barn.

The main entrance is to the west through a full height double-width opening central to the west wall (Fig 15). A substantial timber lintel carries the wall plate over the doorway (Fig 16). Iron pegs were located at the distal ends of the lintel.

A smaller, raised door is located in the opposing wall, directly opposite to the main entrance, as would be expected in a threshing barn (Fig 17). This also has a timber lintel as well as a timber door frame. The door itself is a braced, ledged type, painted black, with iron strap hinges. This door opens into the eastern yard, allowing for loading and unloading onto carts etc.

Two further door openings are located in the south wall, providing access into the adjacent stable (Fig 18). These are a later addition to the barn, being inserted with the construction of the stable. These have timber door frames and timber lintels. No doors were within the openings and it is possible that these were always simply openings with no doors. The insertion of the openings has resulted in the weakening of the overlying wall and significant cracking and warping of the wall is visible around the openings.

If the barn did indeed function as a grain store and threshing barn, it would have had a central threshing floor flanked by storage areas. Due to vegetation, debris and roof collapse, it was not possible to see the floor, however, the Historic Building Analysis (Beacon 2011) states that the Barn has an earth floor with evidence of a brick surface at the northern end of the room.

The roof had completely collapsed at the north and central area with only the southern extent remaining at the time of this survey (Fig 19). The collapsed roof remained where it fell within the room. The roof structure is fairly simple with roughly cut, partly waney edged tie beams supporting principal rafters, these being much thicker than the common rafters, and carrying trenched purlins. The principal rafter are jointed and pegged to each other at their peak and carry the ridge. The ends of the tie beams are supported by short brick pilasters which project into the room. They are also cut at the distal ends to allow for the angle of the roof.

4.3 Stable

The stable is the southernmost room and abuts the barn to the north (Figs 7 & 21- 23). It is a single-storey building comprising a single room measuring c8.4x5m. The walls are constructed of red brick in Flemish Garden Wall bond (Fig 28). The bricks measure c240x110x70mm, with three courses being c255mm in height. Unlike the brickwork of the barn, a high proportion of the bricks which make up the stable show skintling marks - impressions in the brick faces from the stacking process of their original manufacture. In contrast to the barn, there has been no sorting of the brickwork into bands though a large number of headers are of a different colour than the surrounding stretchers and appear to have been differentially selected for decorative effect. Internally, a pair of brick buttresses or pilasters project into the room from the western wall (Fig 7).

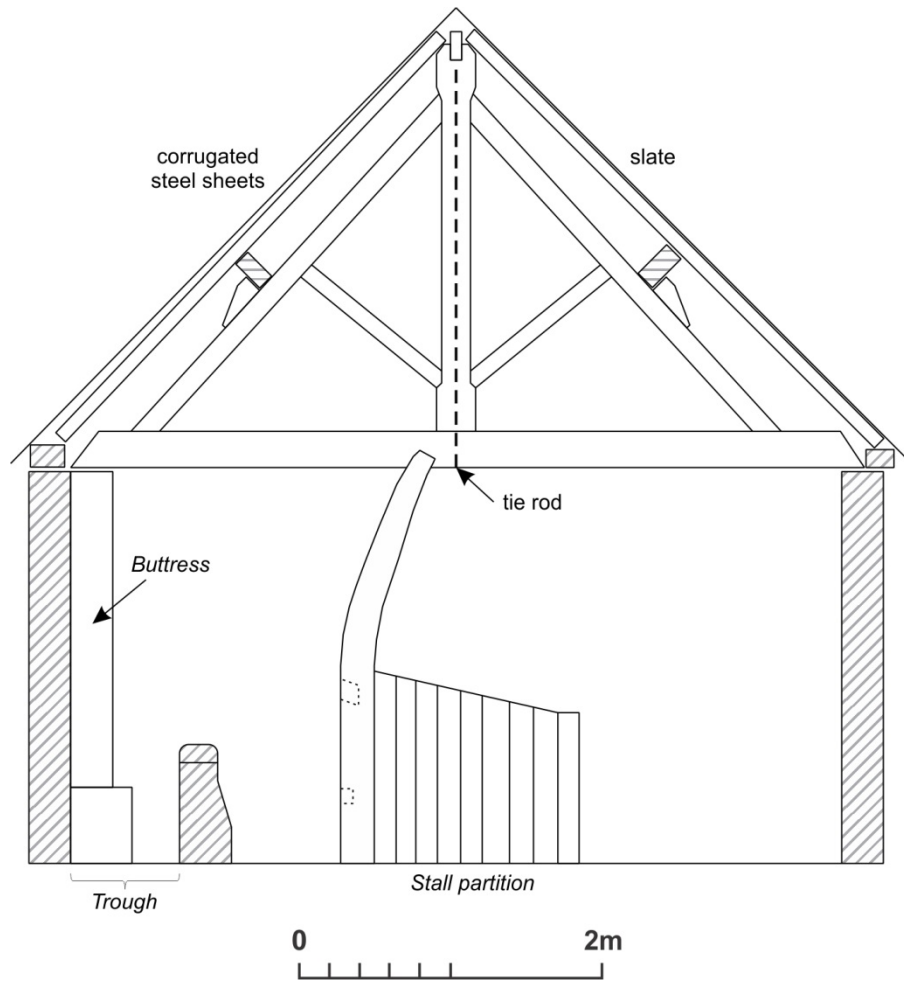
The roof is an open gable, re-roofed to the west with corrugated sheets whilst retaining slate tiles to the east. The ridge is also of metal sheeting folded over the apex. Overlapping metal sheets have been folded over the southern edge of the roof and wall to make the structure more watertight (Fig 22). The internal roof structure comprises a pair of machine-sawn, pine, kingpost trusses with iron rods through the kingposts, with diagonal bracing connecting the kingposts to the top chords (Figs 6, 25 & 26). The western ends of the trusses are supported over the projecting pilasters. A pair of pine purlins are carried over the trusses, braced from below. At the far ends, the purlins are keyed into the end walls. The rafters are a mix of machine sawn pine and waney edged branches, roughly hewn and many retaining bark (Fig 25). The two types of rafters are evenly disbursed to the east and west sides of the roof. They are carried over the top of the wall by a timber wall plate. On the east side of the roof the slate tiles are nailed to pine battens.

The room can be accessed from three directions through four door openings (Fig 7). At the north-west corner is a full height standard width door opening with timber lintel and frame with a single cast iron door hinge remaining (Fig 21). Central to the east wall is a full height door opening with timber door frame to which are attached several cast iron hinges suggesting a top and bottom opening stable door (Fig 23). Above the door is

space for a louver or ventilation panel. Short bonding timbers are located to either side of the door, midway up the frame and at lintel level. These provide additional support for the brickwork at a weaker point in the structure and provide a surface to which iron tack hooks have been attached. A pair of door openings into the northern wall allow internal access to the Barn (Fig 24).

The floor was largely obscured by a layer of mixed rubbish, straw and soil at the time of the survey. However, a brick floor can be seen at the northern end of the room (Figs 7 & 24). Adjacent to the eastern wall, in front of the eastern door into the barn, the bricks of the floor are aligned north to south and placed with the broad face upward. The bricks of the central portion of the floor, between the two north doors are aligned east to west and are placed with the stretcher face upward. The western portion of the floor is slightly raised and separated by the brickwork of the trough. Similar to the eastern side, the bricks here are aligned north-south, broad face up.

A brick trough formerly extended the full length of the room, running north-south against the western wall (Figs 6 & 7). This has been largely demolished but survived to full height at the southern end (Fig 27). The trough is c350mm at its widest and c800mm in height, enclosing a space c720mm in width. It is capped with double bullnose bricks to prevent injury to feeding animals, likely horses. A single timber stall divider partly survived below the northernmost truss to which it is fixed (Figs 6 & 25). The divider has a square profile post at its eastern end to which one horizontal and one diagonal brace are jointed. At the west, the braces are jointed to a post which rises to the overlying truss. For this post the carpenter utilised the natural curve of a branch or trunk. A number of planks are nailed to southern side of the braces. These are cut diagonally, in line with the diagonal brace. The stall is aligned with the truss and brick buttress and it is very likely that another was formerly located to the south, in line with the southern truss and buttress.



Section through the Stable Fig 6

4.4 Shelter

This structure is located at the intersection of the two main ranges and essentially forms a roofed area in front of the cow shed (Figs 7 & 29-31). It is very simple, comprising a number of upright steel girders which support horizontal girders and rolled steel trusses. The trusses support timbers purlins and ridge which in turn carry the roof of corrugated sheeting. The shelter area was heavily overgrown and the ground waterlogged at the time of this survey.

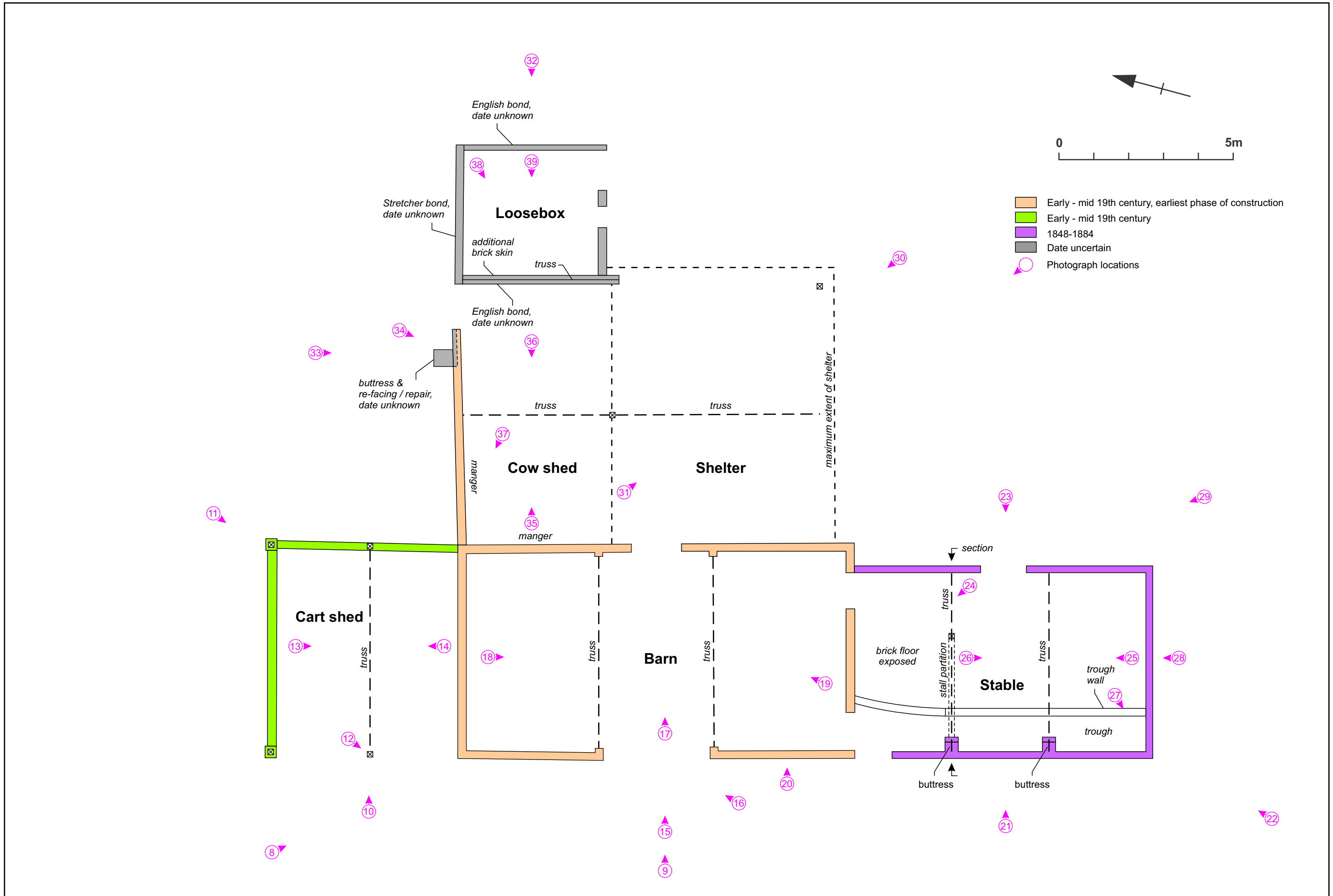
4.5 Cow shed

The Cow shed is located perpendicular to the main range and abuts the barn to the north-east, against its eastern wall (Fig 7). The larger part of the building is open fronted to the south, facing the yard. The eastern end of the building is fully enclosed and likely formerly served as a loosebox. The principal construction of the barn is of red brick in Flemish Garden Wall bond (Fig 33), however, the eastern gable wall, the partitioning wall of the loosebox and shed, and the southern wall of the loosebox are in English Garden Wall bond, and appear to be of a different phase to the main structure, indicating that this room is a later addition (Figs 7 & 32). The partitioning wall has an extra skin of brick internally to the loosebox (Figs 7 & 39). Off-centre to the north wall, at the north-east corner of the shed is a timber plank door with cast iron strap hinges, set within a timber frame with timber lintel carrying the timber wall plate over (Fig 33). This north wall is weaker at this point has suffered warping and cracking in the area

around the door. The brickwork here has been replaced and re-pointed and a row of headers has been inserted to attempt to strengthen the wall. A short brick buttress has also been constructed against the wall adjacent to door to help mitigate the structural weakness (Fig 34). It is likely that this door is a later insertion, contemporary with the enclosing of the loosebox.

The building is covered with corrugated iron, replacing an earlier slate roof. The roof is supported over two machine-sawn kingpost trusses which carry a pair of purlins and the ridge (Fig 35). The eastern truss has been incorporated into the partitioning wall of the loosebox and is faced with vertical planks on its western face (Figs 38 & 39). To the south the roof has largely collapsed and the western truss has become disconnected from its supporting post.

The cow shed is an open space with an earth floor, measuring c4.2x7.5m (Fig 7). Raised iron mangers are fixed to the west and north walls (Figs 36 & 37). The loose box is a rectangular room measuring c4x3.6m (Fig 7). It has a single doorway to the south which is flanked by a single square window (Fig 38). Both door and window openings have timber lintels and frames. A single beam spans the room, supported to the west on the tie beam of the roof truss, and at the east by a beam which crosses the room north-south, supported over the walls. A number of chains are looped around the central beam. The floor of the room has been dug up but it seems likely that the room formerly had an earth floor.





General view of the buildings, looking south-east Fig 8



The west elevations of the Cart shed, Barn and Stable, looking north-east Fig 9



The Cart shed, looking north-east Fig 10



The Cart shed, looking south-west Fig 11



Cart shed, detail of post with decorative supports Fig 12



Cart shed, the interior, looking south Fig 13



Cart shed, the interior, looking north Fig 14



The Barn, the west elevation, looking north-east Fig 15



The Barn, detail of timber lintel Fig 16



The Barn, interior, looking north-east Fig 17



The Barn, interior, looking south Fig 18



The Barn, interior, looking north Fig 19



The Barn, detail of the building's construction Fig 20



The Stable, the west elevation, looking north-east Fig 21



General view of the Stable, looking north-east Fig 22



The Stable, looking south-west Fig 23



The Stable, the northern door openings, showing the brick floor surfaces Fig 24



The Stable, interior, looking north Fig 25



The Stable, interior, looking south Fig 26



The Stable, detail of brick trough Fig 27



The Stable, detail of the building's construction Fig 28



General view of the buildings, looking north-west Fig 29



The Shelter, looking north-west Fig 30



The Shelter, looking south-east Fig 31



The Cow shed, the east elevation, looking south-west Fig 32



The Cow shed, the north elevation, looking south Fig 33



The Cow shed, detail of buttress adjacent to door Fig 34



The Cow shed, interior, looking east Fig 35



The Cow shed, interior, looking west Fig 36



The Cow shed, detail of manger Fig 37



The Cow shed, Loosebox, looking south-west Fig 38



The Cow shed, Loosebox, looking west Fig 39

5 DISCUSSION

The recorded buildings are fairly typical of mid-19th century agricultural buildings of the region, built for practicality and continually expanded, repaired and re-modelled up till modern times. The historic core, comprising the barn and cow shed, likely dates to the early 19th century, with the cart shed being added to the north by 1848. The stable was not constructed by this time but had been built in 1884.

The buildings are presently derelict and partly un-roofed, with some obvious structural damage and weakness. Conversion of the structures will allow the buildings to be strengthened and mitigate against further damage.

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Websites:

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<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex/home.html>

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