

# **Little Dale Farm**

Dale Road, Stanton, Suffolk,  
IP21 2DY



## A Level II Historic Building Record

prepared for  
Karen Sewell

Suffolk HER: SNT 069

September 2018

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Site Name:	Little Dale Farm, Dale Road, Stanton, IP21 2DY
Site Location:	TL 96124 74934
Local Planning Authority:	St Edmundsbury Borough Council
Planning Application Nos:	DC/18/0143 & DC/18/0144
HER Event No.:	SNT 069
OASIS Reference No.:	richardh2-318656
Survey Date:	21 June 2018

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## 1 Introduction

A programme of historic building recording and analysis of a barn complex at Little Dale Farm, Dale Road, Stanton was undertaken in June 2018, prior to their conversion to residential use.

Little Dale Farm lies 1.5km to the north of the centre of the village of Stanton, in St Edmundsbury Borough, at TL 96124 74934 (Figures 1 and 2). The farm stands on the south side of a shallow east-flowing river valley between the 30m and 35m contour lines, approximately 400m west of the B111 Stanton–Barningham Road.

The immediate environs of the farm comprise open arable fields (Figure 3), with the larger Dale Farm to the north of the site. To the south, a linear string of development lines Dale Road, linking the farm to the wider settlement of Stanton itself.

The survey was required by conditions placed on a pair of planning permissions granted by St Edmundsbury Borough Council on 22 March 2018 (Planning Refs: DC/18/0143 and DC/18/0144, conditions 6 and 7).

The survey was undertaken to Historic England (2016) Level 2 historic building recording specifications, as stipulated in a Brief for Historic Building Recording issued by Dr Hannah Cutler of the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service on 23 April 2018.



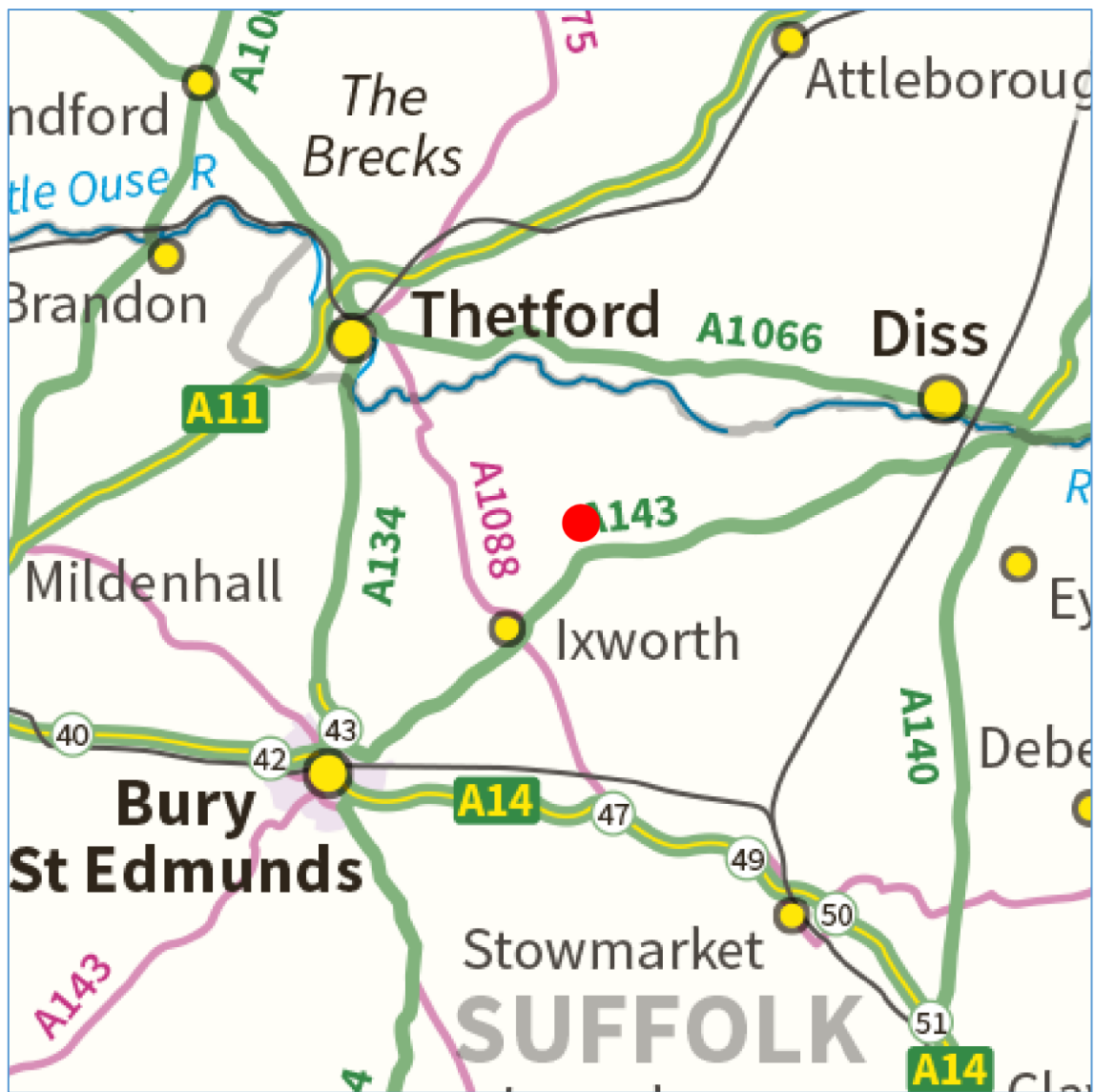


Figure 1. The location of Little Dale Farm, Stanton, in west Suffolk, at 1:300,000. Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2018.

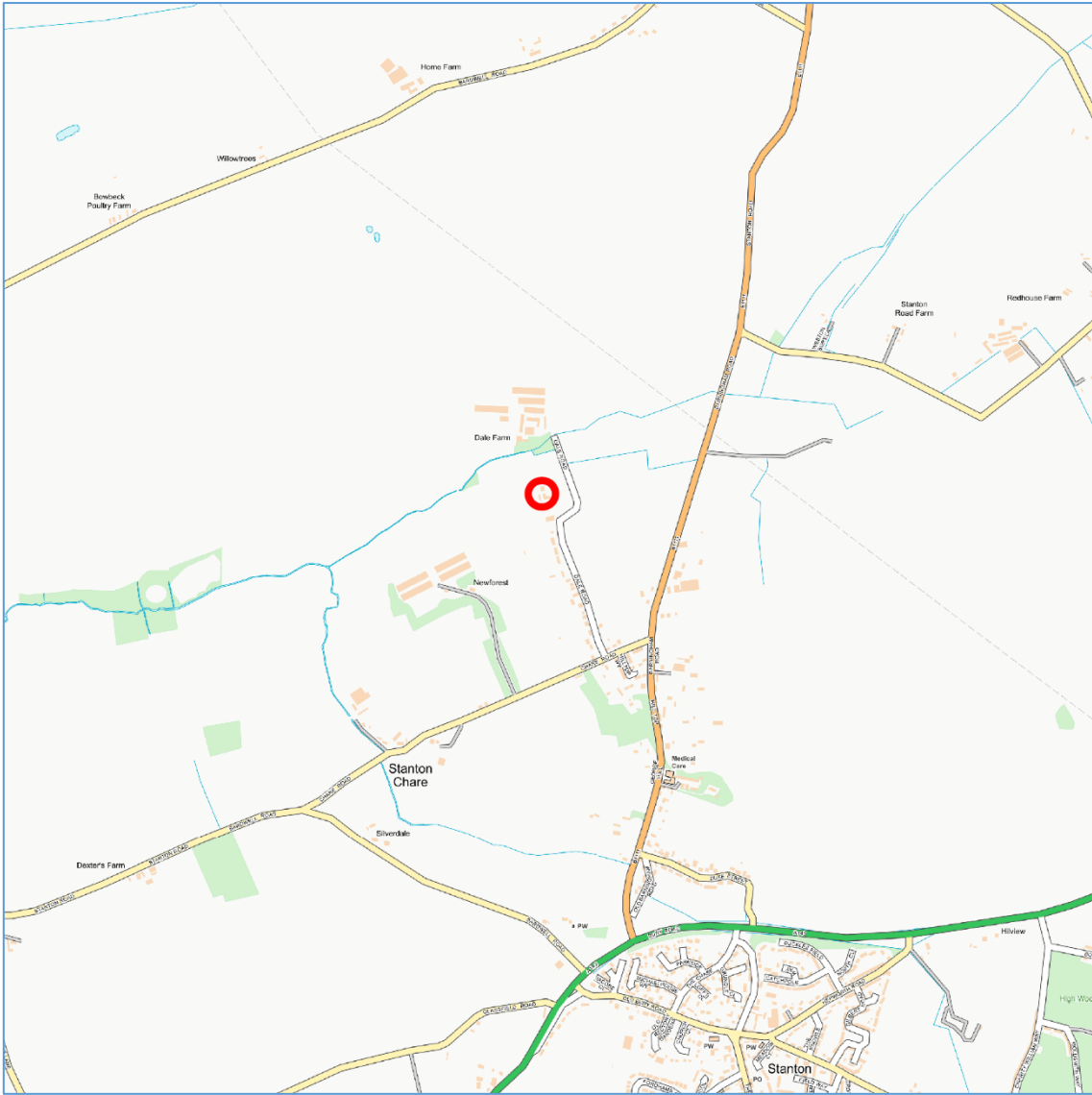


Figure 2. The location of Little Dale Farm, to the north of Stanton, at 1:20,000. Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2018.



*Figure 3. The location of Little Dale Farm, to the north of Stanton, at 1:1000.*

## 2 Historical and Cartographic Context

The earliest reliable cartographic depiction of Little Dale Farm is the Stanton tithe map of 1839 by Henry Calver, a copy of which is held by the National Archives (TNA: IR 30/33/378) along with the related tithe apportionment document (TNA: IR 29/33/378). The tithe map depicts Little Dale Farmhouse itself, with the barn complex shown to the south comprising the main west–east range of the barn, which appears to have a southern porch, and an adjoining north–south range to its west (Figure 4). The farmhouse and barn complex lie within Plot 111, which the tithe apportionment describes as a 'House, Orchard and Premises' owned by Sophia Baker (who also owned other land in Stanton) and occupied by one Thomas Marsh, who also occupied adjacent Plots 112 (Backhouse Meadow) and 114 (Great Orchard).

A clearer picture of the farm, and the barn complex in particular, is offered by the First Edition 1-to-25-inch Ordnance Survey map (Suffolk XXIII.15), which was surveyed in 1882 and published in 1883 (Figure 5). This map clearly depicts the main barn at the heart of the complex as a three-bay west–east barn with a central southern porch, typical of a threshing barn probably dating from the 18th-century. To the east of the porch, it would appear that an additional stall had also been constructed, which is still evident today.

A north–south range is shown extending from the eastern end of the northern side of the main barn. This corresponds with the northern range which is still standing today, and its presence suggests that the eastern lean-to constructed across the eastern gable end of the barn had also been constructed by this time.

To the north-west of the main barn is depicted a second north–south range, which joins the barn at its north-western corner. This corresponds with a surviving structure, which has been subsumed into the later barn complex, but which still retains its identity.

By the time of the Second Edition map, which was revised in 1903 and published in 1904, the southern edge of the main barn had been extended and infilled to create a straight southern face. An additional short southern extension had been

constructed off the south-eastern corner of the barn, which protruded beyond its southern face, although no trace of this survives today.

The north-eastern range depicted on the First Edition is shown again, although this time with a more distinctive diagonal northern end, which the present building retains.

The north-western range is shown wider than it was on the earlier map, suggesting that an additional full-length range had been added to the western side of this building, traces of which still survive. To the south of this range, in the angle against the western gable of the main barn, is depicted a lean-to structure, although later maps and the current structure indicate that this lean-to was subsequently replaced.

Later Ordnance Survey maps indicate that the layout of the barn complex remained largely unaltered throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with the site being depicted in the same fashion on the 1966 map edition. By the mid-1970s, the south-western corner of the barn complex had been enclosed and infilled to create a square block of buildings, a process which might also have included the roofing over of the small courtyard to the north of the barn formed by the three ranges of buildings. The mid-1970s map also indicates that the southern part of the eastern lean-to, which extended southwards of the main barn, was open sided and this range has since been shortened and brought back into line with the southern face of the barn complex.

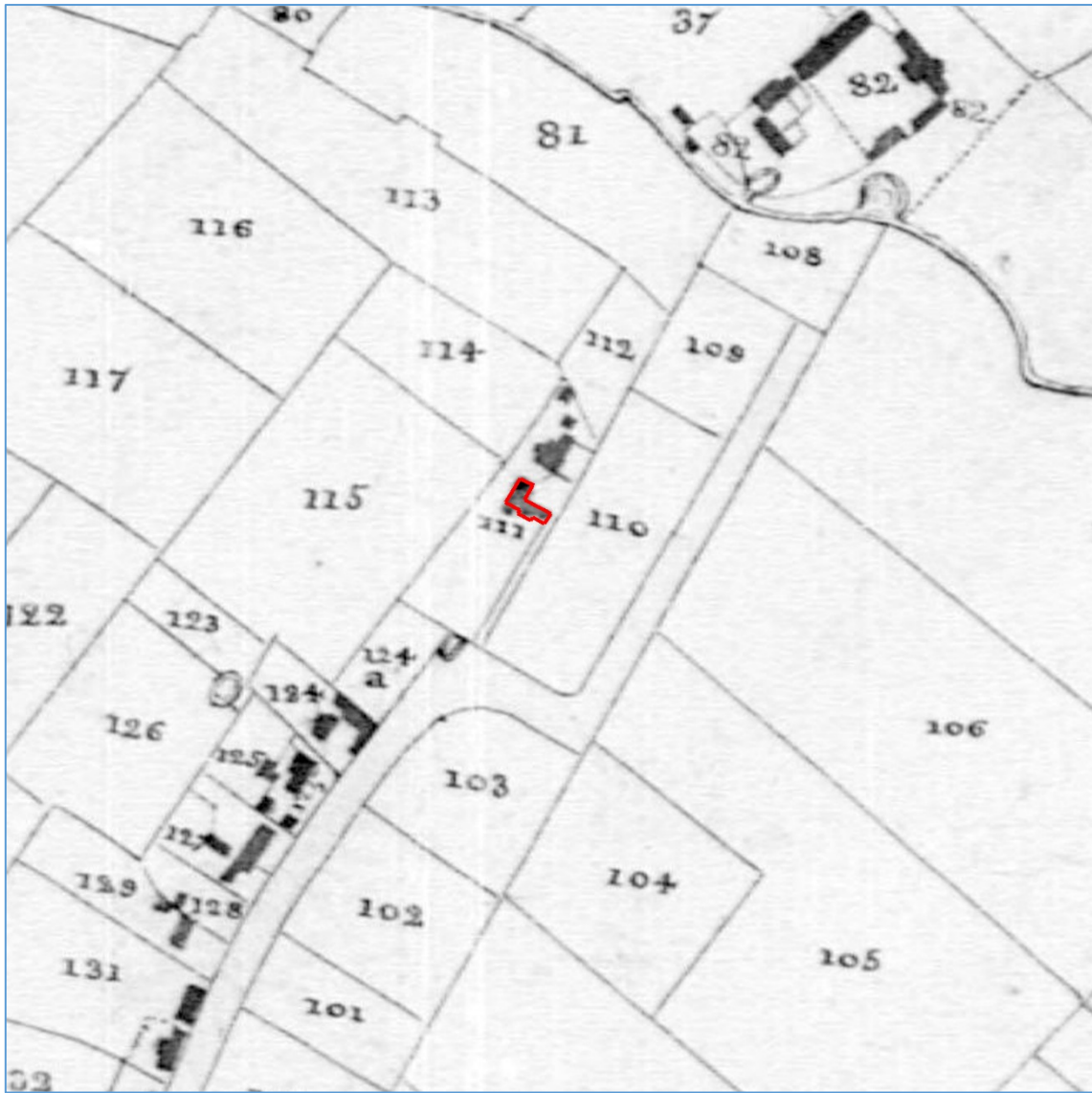


Figure 4. An extract from the Stanton tithe map of 1839 showing the barn complex (TNA: IR 30/33/378)

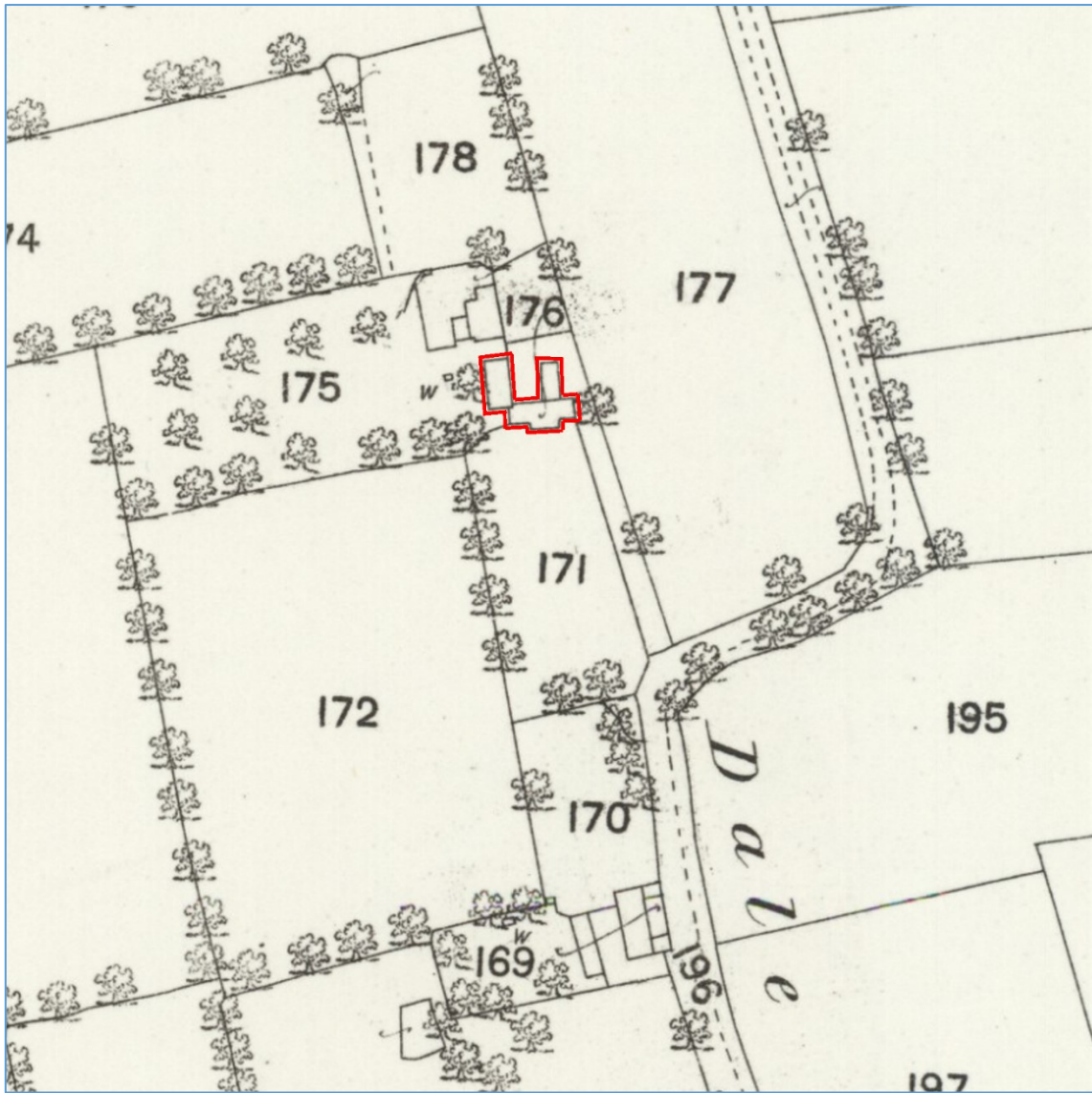


Figure 5. Extract from the First Edition 1-to-25-inch OS map showing Little Dale Farm (Suffolk XXIII.15)

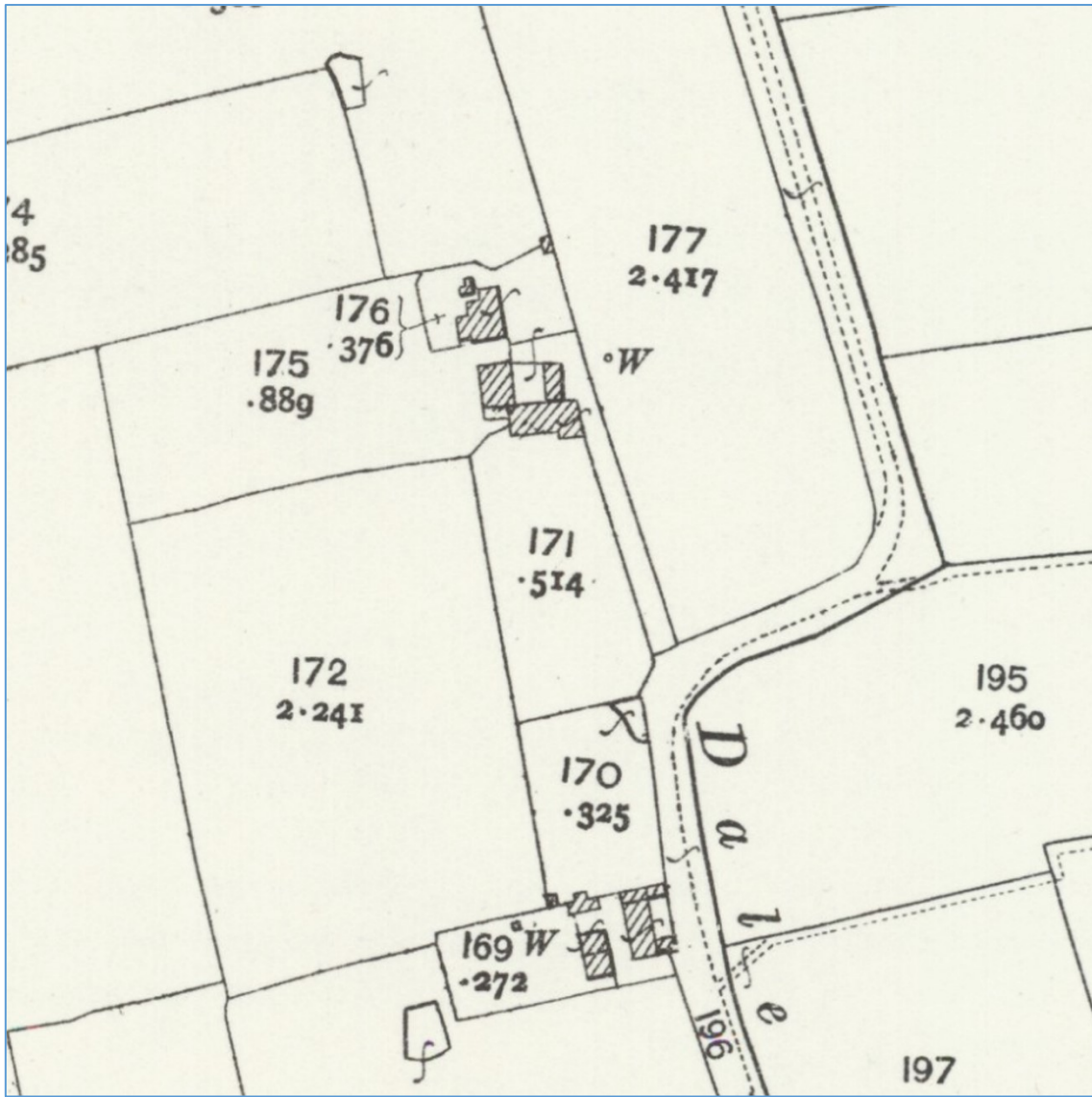


Figure 6. Extract from the Second Edition 1-to-25-inch OS map showing Little Dale Farm (Suffolk XXIII.15)



## 3 Survey Results

### 3.1 Methodology

This programme of historic building recording and analysis was conducted in accordance with the specifications set out by Historic England in *Understanding Historic Buildings*, which describes a Level 2 survey thus:

*Both the exterior and interior of the building will be seen, described and photographed. The examination of the building will produce an analysis of its development and use and the record will include the conclusions reached, but it will not discuss in detail the evidence on which this analysis is based. A plan and sometimes other drawings may be made but the drawn record will normally not be comprehensive and may be tailored to the scope of a wider project.* (Historic England 2016, 26)

The exteriors and interiors of the barn complex were studied, described and photographed on 21 June 2018 using a Canon EOS 450 D 12.2 MP DSLR camera fitted with an 10–18mm lens. Images were taken in .RAW format and converted to .tiff for archiving purposes. The position and direction of the photographs taken has been marked on the existing plans of the site, which are based on those originally prepared by Anna High Consultancy Ltd in support of the planning applications (Figure 7). A CD containing high-resolution digital copies of the photographs reproduced here is included with hard copies of this report.

### 3.2 The Plot

The barn complex which forms the focus of this report comprises an historic core, around which multiple phases of extension have been constructed (Figures 8–11). The farmhouse itself stands to the north of the complex, and the barns are surrounded by an apron of concrete yard surface to the north, west and south. A long cattle-shed stands to the west of the barns and a further large cattle-shed stands to the south. The farm is now accessed across the southern yard from a gate on the main road, although formerly the farm was served by a track which ran along the eastern side of the farmyard.

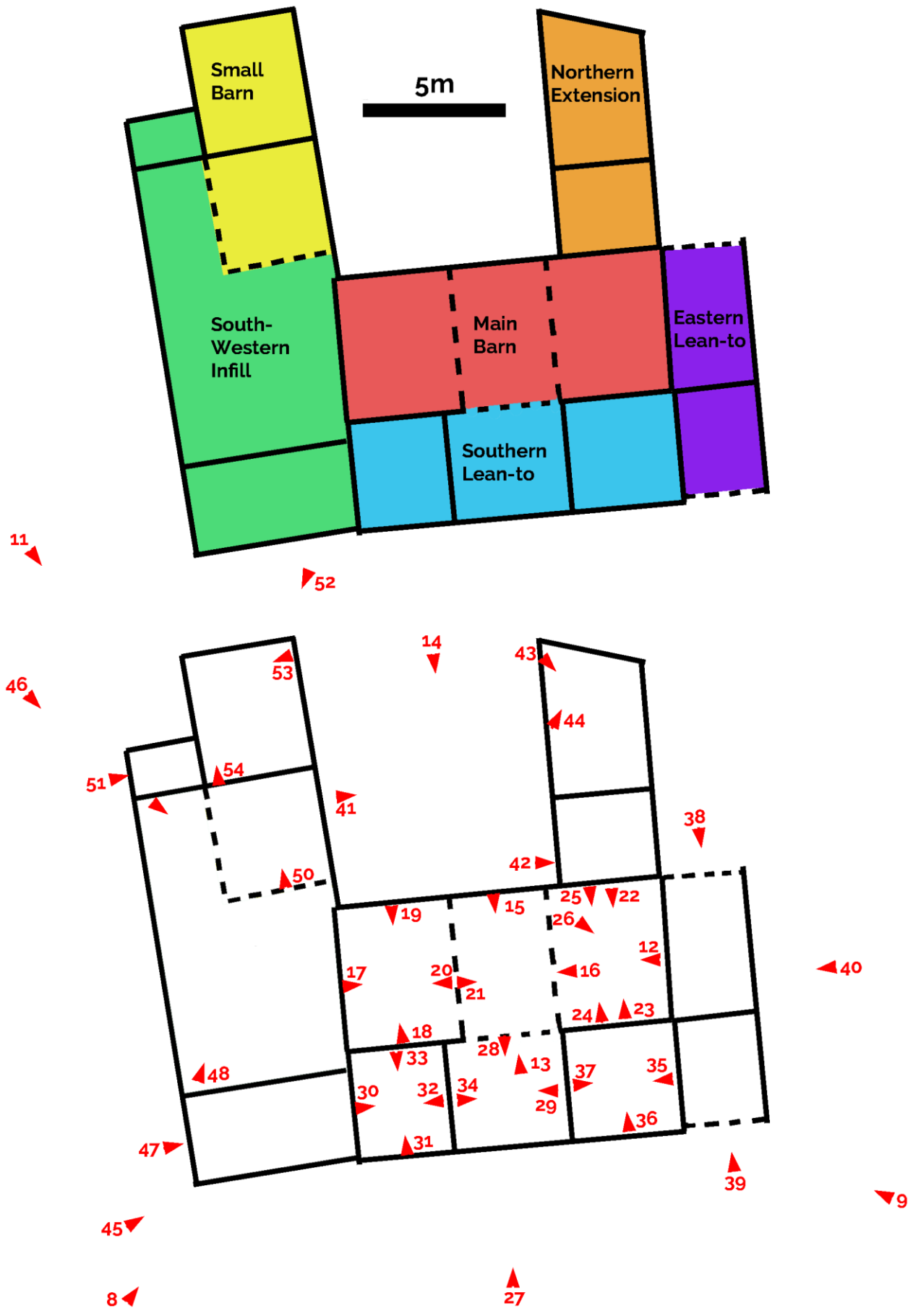


Figure 7. Above: The different elements of the barn complex discussed in this report. Below: the locations of the photographs presented in this report. Scale: 1:200.



*Figure 8. General view of the barn complex from the south-west, showing the tiled roofs of the main west-east barn and smaller north-south barn, surrounded by later extensions.*



*Figure 9. General view of the barn complex from the south-east, showing the eastern lean-to against the eastern gable of the main barn.*



*Figure 10. General view of the barn complex from the north-east, showing the north-south range extending from the northern face of the main barn.*



*Figure 11. General view of the barn complex from the north-west, showing the tiled roof of the north-south barn and later extensions.*

### 3.3 Main Barn

The main barn of the complex comprises a two-storey west–east barn with a pantiled roof, around which later extensions have been constructed (Figures 8–11). As can be seen, where the exterior walls of the barn are still exposed on the west and east gables and within the lean-to constructed against its eastern end, the walls are finished in modern horizontal planking which has clearly been regularly replaced and maintained. The barn is of three bays, comprising a full-height central bay, with two-storey bays to the east and west, each of which is described here in turn.

#### 3.3.1 Roof

The roof of the barn is neatly tiled with orange clay pantiles (Figures 8–10), and inspection of the interior reveals that the roof structure from the level of the tie beams upwards is constructed from regularly spaced machine-cut timbers, over which is laid a sound weatherproof lining, indicating the wholesale replacement of the roof during the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Figure 12).

#### 3.3.2 Central Bay

The central bay of the barn is full height and is defined by a pair of simple box cross-frames with simple diagonal braces (Figure 13). The northern face of the central bay would have originally featured a set of full-height double-doors, but this opening has since been infilled with studwork fronted with weatherboarding leaving only a small timber double-door on the eastern side (Figure 14).

To the south, the central bay has been left open and passes into the central bay of the southern lean-to (Figure 15), and this element is discussed further below. The historical map evidence suggests that this aspect once featured a porch, which would have had a corresponding pair of full-height double doors, enabling laden carts to be driven into one side of the barn, unloaded and driven out of the other.

#### 3.3.3 Western Bay

The western bay is two storeys and is divided from the central bay of the barn by a timber partition constructed from vertical planking affixed to the cross frame (Figures 16 and 17). A modern entrance has been created at its southern end.



Figure 12. The roof of the main barn, looking west, showing the wholesale replacement of the roof structure in modern materials.



Figure 13. The central bay of the main barn, looking north, showing the position of the former double-doors and cross-frames.



Figure 14. The exterior of the northern elevation of the main barn, showing the blocked former central doorway and modern weatherboarding of the exterior.



Figure 15. The central bay of the main barn, looking south, showing the connection with the southern lean-to.



Figure 16. The western elevation of the central bay, looking west, showing the timber partition between the central and western bays.



Figure 17. The eastern elevation of the western bay, looking east, showing the timber partition and inserted upper floor.





*Figure 18. The northern elevation of the western bay, looking north, showing the surviving timber framing with modern weatherboarding attached.*



*Figure 19. The southern elevation of the western bay, looking south, showing the surviving timber framing.*

The upper floor of the western range is approximately 2.5m above the ground level of the barn and is faced by the same timber planking, into which an opening has been cut facilitating access (Figure 16). It was not possible to obtain access to the upper floor of the western bay during the survey due to safety reasons, but it is apparent from below that this floor is of relatively recent construction and is affixed inside the frame, although it may be a replacement for an earlier floor.

The northern wall of the western bay is 3.8m wide and comprises a short plinth of four courses of red bricks on top of which is a horizontal timber sill beam (Figure 18). There are principal posts at each corner of the bay and a central post, with three vertical studs between each pair. A pair of diagonal timber braces are inset into the frame, meeting at the central post. Several of the studs have mortise holes, indicating that they have been reused from elsewhere. Modern weatherboarding has been affixed to the outside of the framing.

This construction is mirrored on the southern elevation of the western bay, where the same pattern of posts, studs and braces is used (Figure 19). The central post features several mortises, indicating its reuse. As the southern elevation is no longer an external wall, due to the construction of the southern lean-to, the boarding on this wall is considerably older and more decayed than that of the northern elevation.

The western wall of the western bay is 5.2m wide and comprises the original gable end of the barn (Figure 20). It follows a similar pattern to the northern and southern elevations, although in this instance there are four studs between each of the principal posts and the diagonal braces do not meet in the centre. The central post has a series of regular mortises, as does the sill beam, suggesting that both of these elements have been reused from elsewhere and indicating that this elevation has been extensively repaired or reconstructed. The gaps between the timbers on the lower part of the wall have been infilled with modern brickwork, and corrugated metal sheeting has been affixed to the outside of the timber frame as this wall now faces into the south-western infill block constructed in the late 1960s or early 1970s.



*Figure 20. The western elevation of the western bay, looking west, showing the surviving timber framing, brickwork and corrugated metal sheeting.*



*Figure 21. The eastern elevation of the central bay, looking east, showing the stairs leading up to the upper storey.*

### 3.3.4 Eastern Bay

The eastern bay is of two-storeys, the ground floor of which opens into the central bay of the barn with no partition wall (Figure 21). The upper storey of the eastern bay has an inserted floor, which is affixed to the inside of the timber frame and supported on a pair of central timber posts, now augmented by modern screw-jacks.

The western face of the upper floor is walled with horizontal planking and is reached by a short flight of timber steps which rise eastwards from the central bay (Figure 21). To the north and south of these stairs, timber hoppers have been created on the upper floor apparently used for the storage of feed pellets or similar (Figures 22 and 23). There is also a large, lead water tank mounted above the hoppers, which feeds into a networks of pipes and would have provided a head of water for livestock and agricultural processing.

The northern elevation of the ground floor of the eastern bay is 3.8m wide and is constructed with the same combination of principal posts, studs and diagonal bases as its western counterpart (Figure 24). Unlike the western bay, the gaps between the lower half of the studwork are rendered, as is the brick plinth. The weatherboarding on the outside of the frame is well maintained but not as modern as that to the west, and this may reflect the fact that the northern extension is built against the outside of this wall.

Again, this construction is mirrored on the southern elevation, where the mid-height render infill is continued (Figure 25), indicating that this bay was used for used for livestock in the past. As with the western bay, the southern elevation is now an internal wall, so the weatherboarding is older and of poorer quality as a result.

The eastern elevation mirrors that of the western gable end, and again features a sill beam with numerous mortises indicative of reuse. The rendering continues on this wall, but the weatherboarding here is modern, as the external face of this wall is exposed within the eastern lean-to. The northern half of this wall also features and inserted three-light window of relatively modern construction which brings light and air into the space and must be a relatively recent addition.



*Figure 22. The upper storey of the eastern bay, looking south, showing timber hopper and lead water tank.*



*Figure 23. The upper storey of the eastern bay, looking north, showing timber hopper and disused water pipes.*



Figure 24.. The northern elevation of the eastern bay, looking north, showing the surviving timber framing with render infill.



Figure 25..The southern elevation of the eastern bay, looking south, showing the surviving timber framing with render infill.



*Figure 26. The eastern elevation of the eastern bay, looking east, showing the surviving timber framing with render infill and modern window.*

### 3.4 Southern Lean-to

The southern lean-to is a 3.8m-deep, full-width, single-storey extension which sits across the entire southern face of the main barn (Figure 27). It has a roof of modern metal sheeting which adjoins the main barn at the eaves and has a shallower pitch than the main roof. Like the barn, the lean-to comprises three bays, which broadly correspond with the three bays of the barn itself. The eastern bay lines up with the eastern bay of the barn, but the western bay is offset to the west. The central bay occupies the space which was formerly a porch to the main barn, while the bays to the east and west represent infilling of the space to create two small looseboxes.

Although the historic mapping suggests that the central and eastern bays were constructed first, with the western bay following later, analysis of the fabric indicates that the range has been heavily altered over time. As can be seen, the lower half of the exterior wall of the western and eastern bays of the range are constructed from soft red bricks laid in simple stretcher bond, while the upper portions of the walls at either end and the central portion of the wall (all now painted pink) are constructed of more modern brickwork.

The southern wall of the central bay is punctuated by a wide timber door, with two six-light windows to its east (Figures 27 and 28). The brickwork beneath the door and windows is relatively modern, suggesting the blocking up of a larger opening, while the brickwork to the west of the door is older, and is likely to relate to earlier loose boxes constructed either side of the entrance.

The partition walls between the three bays comprise of a mixture of old reused timbers and modern woodwork, which is suggestive of their having been altered over time, although it is likely that some original fabric remains.

The western elevation of the central bay comprises a short brick plinth of the same height and material as the main barn, suggesting it at least in contemporary (Figure 29). Above this is a mortised sill beam from which rises six vertical studs, crossed by a diagonal brace. The horizontal timber planking is of the same dimensions and style as the cladding of the south wall of the barn, again suggesting that this is a part of the original porch structure. To the south, a more recent doorway has been made in the wall, giving access to the western bay. This interpretation is strengthened when the partition wall is viewed from the other side (Figure 30), from which it is very apparent that this is part of the original exterior of the barn.

As discussed, the western bay of the southern lean-to is a later addition to the structure, with its northern wall being formed by the original southern face of the barn, albeit with a rebuilt brick plinth (Figure 31). This elevation shows signs of two phases of weatherboarding, with better-made boarding to the west and more haphazard boarding to the east. The bottom of the walls is lined with corrugated metal and the bay is still used as a loose box for livestock.

The western wall of the range not backs onto the late 1960s/early 1970s infill building, but before that formed an exterior wall in its own right (Figure 32). This comprised a brick plinth mimicking that of the original barn, above which was a height of internally rendered and externally weatherboarded timber-framing. The southern wall of the bay comprises simple brickwork for its lower courses, with concrete breeze blocks above, into which a large stable door is set (Figure 33).





*Figure 27. The southern wall of the southern lean-to, looking north, showing the various openings and different construction methods in evidence.*



*Figure 28. The southern elevation of the central bay of the southern lean-to, looking south, showing the later bricking up, openings and the new roof.*



Figure 29. The western elevation of the central bay of the southern lean-to, looking west, showing surviving timber-framing from the original porch of the main barn.



Figure 30. The eastern elevation of the western bay of the southern lean-to, looking east, showing surviving weatherboarding contemporary with the covering of the barn.



Figure 31. The northern elevation of the western bay of the southern lean-to, looking north, showing the surviving weatherboarding of the barn.



Figure 32. The western elevation of the western bay of the southern lean-to, looking west, showing surviving the rendered timber-framing and weatherboarding above. .



*Figure 33. The southern elevation of the western bay of the southern lean-to, looking south, showing the mixed building phases and inserted stable door. .*

The eastern elevation of the central bay exhibits a similar arrangement of brick plinth topped by a pane of timber-framing, and is presumably also a remnant of the original porch (Figure 34). Instead of a southern doorway, this wall features a panel of later infill planking. The reverse of this wall again demonstrates the survival of a patch of original weatherboarding, flanked by later planking (Figure 35). Like the western bay, the eastern bay is a late addition, and it has been altered more than its counterpart. While the northern wall preserves original weatherboarding behind corrugated metal sheeting and plastic (Figure 36), the eastern wall has been completely replaced in modern timberwork, set atop an earlier sill beam and brick plinth (Figure 37). Likewise, although the eastern end of the southern wall mirrors that of the western end, its western half has been rebuilt in modern brickwork and incorporates a large door, window and fittings for extractor fans (Figures 27 and 35).



Figure 34. The eastern elevation of the central bay of the southern lean-to, looking east, showing surviving timber-framing from the original porch of the main barn.



Figure 35. The western elevation of the eastern bay of the southern lean-to, looking west, showing surviving weatherboarding contemporary with the covering of the barn and the rebuilt southern wall.



*Figure 36. The northern elevation of the eastern bay of the southern lean-to, looking north, showing the surviving weatherboarding of the barn behind protective coverings.*



*Figure 37. The eastern elevation of the eastern bay of the southern lean-to, looking east, showing the rebuilt timber walling atop an older sill beam and plinth.*



*Figure 38. The interior of the northern half of the eastern lean-to, looking south.*



*Figure 39. The interior of the southern half of the eastern lean-to, looking north.*

### 3.5 Eastern Lean-to

The historic mapping indicates that there have been a series of lean-tos constructed against the eastern gable of the main barn during its history. It is possible that one such range was depicted on the First Edition OS map (Figure 5) and by the time of the Second Edition OS map, this had been extended forward of the line of the main barn frontage (Figure 6).

In its current incarnation, the eastern lean-to spans the full width of the main barn and the southern lean-to and is open at its northern and southern ends (Figure 9). This lean-to is covered by a corrugated metal sheeting roof, with weatherboarded eastern wall and comprises two elements. The first, the northern half, spans the width of the main barn, and comprises a modern timber eastern wall, while its western wall is formed by the re-boarded gable wall and window of the main barn (Figure 38). The wall which divides the northern element of the eastern lean-to from the southern, though is a much older panel of timber framing comprising a short plinth topped by studwork and planking, which aligns with the southern wall of the barn and is presumably a surviving part of an earlier lean-to.

The southern element of the lean-to spans the width of the southern lean to and also has a modern timber east wall, while its west wall comprises modern weatherboarding attached to the eastern face of the southern-lean to range (Figure 39). The northern wall comprises the weatherboarded face of the older studwork partition.

### 3.6 Northern Extension

A short north-south range extends from the northern face of the eastern bay of the main barn, and the historic mapping suggests that it has existed in various forms in this location since the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. The range is single storey with an apex roof of corrugated metal sheeting and its eastern exterior wall is weatherboarded with a single, small, square shuttered opening high on its wall (Figure 40). The exterior of its western elevation is similarly weatherboarded in modern timber, and features stable doors at its northern and southern ends, with three small windows in between (Figure 41).





*Figure 40. The eastern elevation of the northern extension, looking west.*



*Figure 41. The western elevation of the northern extension, looking east.*



*Figure 42. The interior of the southern cell of the northern extension, looking east.*



*Figure 43. The interior of the northern cell of the northern extension, looking south-east.*



*Figure 44. The interior of the northern gable of the northern extension, looking north.*

The southern doorway leads into a single loose box, which corresponds with the window in the eastern wall, which is built from 19th-century brickwork, and which has a brick partition to the north. The southern wall comprises the modern weatherboarding of the main barn (Figure 42).

The rest of the northern range comprises a single room, accessed via the northern stable door (Figure 43). The eastern and western walls of this room are constructed from a mixture of more modern brickwork, clay lump and render, while the northern wall, which is set at an angle to the room, is constructed from clay lump and weatherboarded on its exterior (Figure 44).

### 3.7 South-Western Infill

The south-western corner of the barn complex comprises an infill building dating from the late 1960s or early 1970s which spans the full width of the western gable of the main barn and southern lean-to and links it to the second, smaller barn which stands at right-angles to the main barn. The north-western corner of this infill range also wraps around the western side of the smaller barn, although its different roof pitch and roof covering differentiate the two structure (Figures 45

and 46). The infill range comprises a long, low building under a single-pitch corrugated metal sheeting roof. Its southern and western walls are constructed from modern brickwork, while the exterior of its north-western end is weatherboarded.

The southern end of the infill range comprises a single cell, accessed via a wire-mesh doorway in the western wall, which is separated from the rest of the space by a half-height brick wall and timber partitioning (Figure 47).

The interior of the rest of this range, as far as the southern wall of the second barn, is open-plan and is now used for storage. The wall abutting the gable of the main barn is lined with corrugated metal sheeting, while the lower portions of the walls are rendered, and the western wall is fitted out with metal railings and troughs, indicating the former use of the building for livestock (Figure 48).

At the join with the southern wall of the smaller barn, the interior is partitioned into stalls by a half-height wall constructed between the former corner posts of the smaller barn (Figure 49). The northern extent of the room is accessed by a stable door from the yard.

The northern wall of this room is level with the centre line of the smaller barn, and comprises a timber partition within the infill extension, while the barn itself is divided by a clay lump wall, the lower half of which is rendered, above which the angle of the roof is filled with corrugated sheeting (Figure 50). The structure of the smaller barn itself is discussed further below.

The northernmost extent of the wrap-around infill extension comprises a small, single loose box constructed from timber, weatherboarded on its exterior and accessed via a stable door from the yard (Figure 51).



*Figure 45. The south-western infill, looking north-east.*



*Figure 46. The south-western infill, looking south-east.*



Figure 47. The interior of the southernmost cell of the south-western infill, looking east.

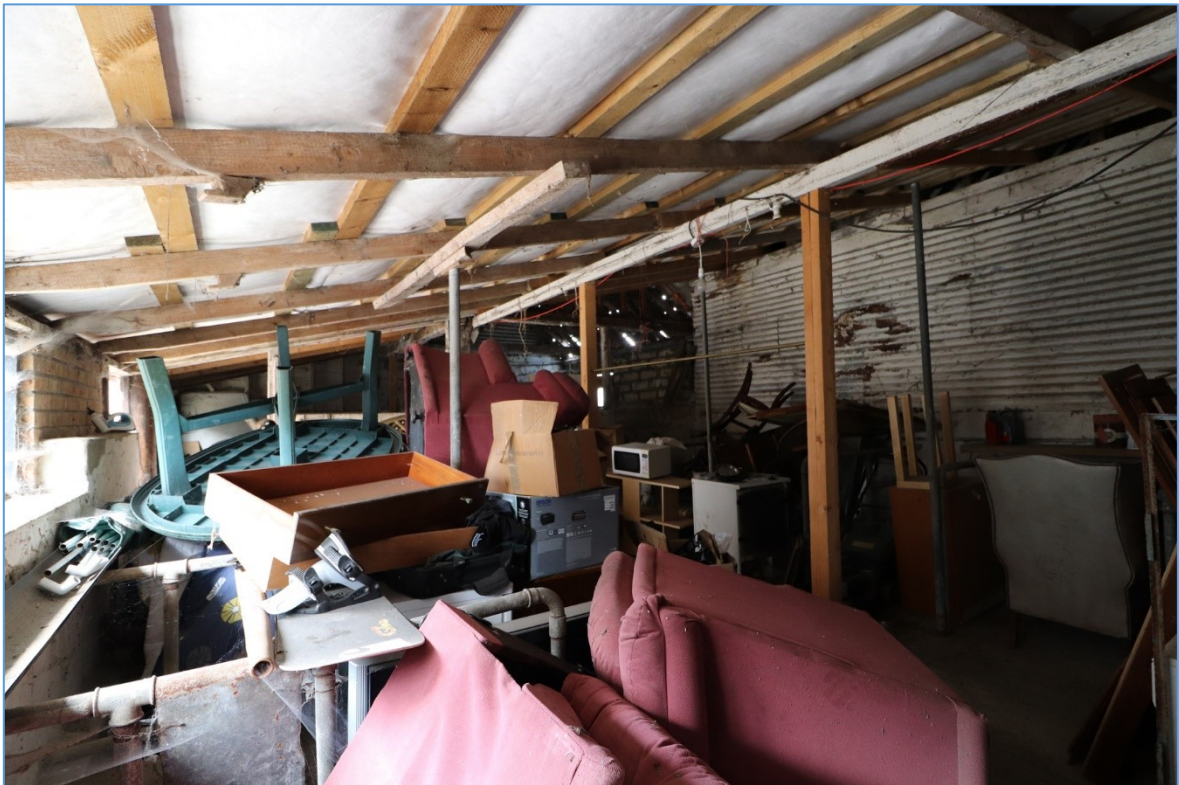


Figure 48. The interior of the large northernmost cell of the south-western infill, looking north-east.



Figure 49. The remnants of the smaller barn within the south-western infill, looking south-east.



Figure 50. The northern wall of the south-western infill, looking north, showing the remnants of the smaller barn.



Figure 51. The interior of the loose box at the northern end of the south-western infill, looking east.



Figure 52. The exterior of the small barn, looking south-west, showing the modern weatherboarding and the gable pulley mechanism.





Figure 53. The western wall of the northern half of the smaller barn, looking west, showing the surviving timber framing.



Figure 54. The northern wall of the smaller barn, looking north, showing the surviving timber framing.

### 3.8 The Smaller Barn

The final element of the barn complex to be described is a small north-south oriented barn which stands to the north-west of the main barn and which historic maps indicate has been a part of the complex since at least the early 19th century. It is possible that the barn was constructed at the same time as the main barn, or at least shortly afterwards

From the outside, this barn retains its separate identity, as it has a tall apex roof with orange pantiles and, where exposed, its exterior is weatherboarded (Figures 11 and 52). A small overhanging roof is constructed off the northern gable, protecting a small doorway and pulley system, which would have enabled loading straight into the loft space.

As has already been mentioned, the former barn is divided widthways halfway along its length by a clay-lump wall, so that its southern half can be accessed via the infill building, and also via a doorway at the southern end of its eastern elevation (Figure 52). The northern end of the barn is accessed by a pair of opposing doors at the northern ends of its eastern and western elevations (Figures 11 and 52).

Despite being heavily altered, many elements of the original timber framing of the barn still survive. Within the southern end of the barn, the two main corner posts survive and have been reused to form the partitioning of the stalls (Figure 49). The southern tie beam of the roof also survives, and has numerous mortices from the studwork which has been subsequently removed. The substantial western wall plate also survives, again with empty mortises, while the eastern wall plate has been replaced with a smaller timber.

The eastern wall of the southern half of the barn, once timber-framed, now comprises a short length of rendered clay-lump wall to the south and a timber door, with the rest of the eastern wall in the northern half of the barn comprising breeze blocks.

Within the northern half of the barn, the timber studwork of the western wall of the barn survives, into which a window and door have been inserted, and a tie beam also survives (Figure 53). The northern gable end of the barn preserves the full

timber frame below the tie beam, which comprises principal corner posts, a central post and two studs each side. Two downwards diagonal braces converge at the centre of the panel and a horizontal brace has also been added below tie beam (Figure 54).

Above the tie beam and throughout the whole roof of the barn most of the timbers have been replaced with modern woodwork, although some older timbers have been reused. The roof is not lined above the timbers, and the pantiles sit straight on the rafters, although several tiles are missing (Figure 49, 50, 53 and 54).

## 4 Conclusions

This programme of Level 2 historic building recording and analysis has demonstrated that at the core of the barn complex at Little Dale Farm stands the remains of a three-bay, west-east oriented timber-framed barn. This barn was probably constructed in the later 18th century, and the barn featured a central porch off the southern side of the central bay, traces of which still survive. The porch and the northern side of the central bay originally contained large double doors to enable the access and unloading of carts. The western and eastern bays are now both two-storey, and although these floors are not an intrinsic part of the timber frame, it is possible they were early additions to the structure. Substantial elements of the original timber-framing survive, despite the later alterations and recladding of the building, although the entire roof has been replaced in relatively modern times.

It would appear that the smaller, north-south oriented barn was also constructed to the north-west of the barn at about the same time, or shortly afterwards, forming a right-angle with the main barn. This barn has been subsumed within the later extensions constructed to the south-west, but many elements of the timber frame still survive within the later structure, the western and northern walls in particular, although the southern and eastern walls and roof have been replaced.

During the mid-19th century the northern extension range was built to the north of the eastern bay of the barn. The construction of the northern wall indicates that the range as it currently stands occupies the same footprint as the mid-19th century building, although it has been largely rebuilt since.

Historic map evidence and structural analysis demonstrate that additional extensions were constructed to the west and east of the southern porch of the barn in the mid-19th century, and these were later brought under a single low roof. These stalls have subsequently been rebuilt in timber and brickwork several times, resulting in the configuration seen today.

It was not until the late 1960s or early 1970s that the substantial south-western infill extension was constructed, which adjoins the main barn and the smaller northern barn and wraps around its western side. As has been seen, this relatively modern

structure incorporates many elements of the northern barn into its design and although its construction greatly altered the appearance of the complex, it was in part responsible for the survival of several elements of the original buildings.

The barn complex at Little Dale Farm has evolved over time, gradually acquiring additional extensions as the needs of the farm have changed. Despite this, several elements of the original timber framing of the two main barns still survive, although the frequent and wide-ranging campaigns of rebuilding, recladding and re-roofing mean that these elements often survive in isolation or are preserved in newer fabric, which greatly enhances the character of the complex and allows the structural sequence of the buildings to be understood.

## 5 References

Historic England. 2016. [\*Understanding Historic Buildings : A Guide to Good Recording Practice\*](#). 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Historic England.

## 6 About the Author

Dr Richard Hoggett is a freelance heritage consultant with over 20 years' experience in the academic, commercial and local authority heritage sectors. Between 2013–16 he was a Senior Archaeological Officer for Suffolk County Council, in which capacity he assessed the heritage implications of planning applications pertaining to listed and historic buildings, and provided specialist advice to Local Planning Authorities, developers and landowners. He is a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London and a Member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. Further details and example of his work can be found at [www.richard-hoggett.co.uk](http://www.richard-hoggett.co.uk).