

Report 2761



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Historic Building Recording at Smallways Farm, Newmans End, Matching Tye, Essex

MATSF 11



Prepared for
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Location:	Smallways Farm, Newmans End, Matching Tye, Essex
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Summary

A historic buildings survey was conducted for Bryan Russell ahead of renovation and conversion of five structures to domestic use at Smallways Farm, Newmans End, Matching Tye, Essex.

The farm buildings appear to have been constructed in one phase of construction during the mid 19th century and the present farm house appears to be of the same date. These buildings replaced earlier buildings shown on maps of 1609, 1777 and 1843.

The layout of the farmyard and buildings is regular and enclosed, typical of a 19th-century date.

All the buildings have walls or dwarf walls of 19th-century London Stock-type brick and the timber framed portions were lightweight and externally weather boarded, all typically 19th-century features in this context. The roof trusses were open, with raked struts and iron fittings and a shallow roof slope; again typically 19th-century features.

Building 1 (the barn) was irregular in shape and proportion, probably due to pre-existing masonry features and a change of plan during construction. It was constructed of a timber frame and was weather boarded above dwarf walls. It was probably used for threshing and storage.

Building 2 (the stables) had space for two stalls and storage. It was constructed of brick with a shallow pitched roof with a central louvre.

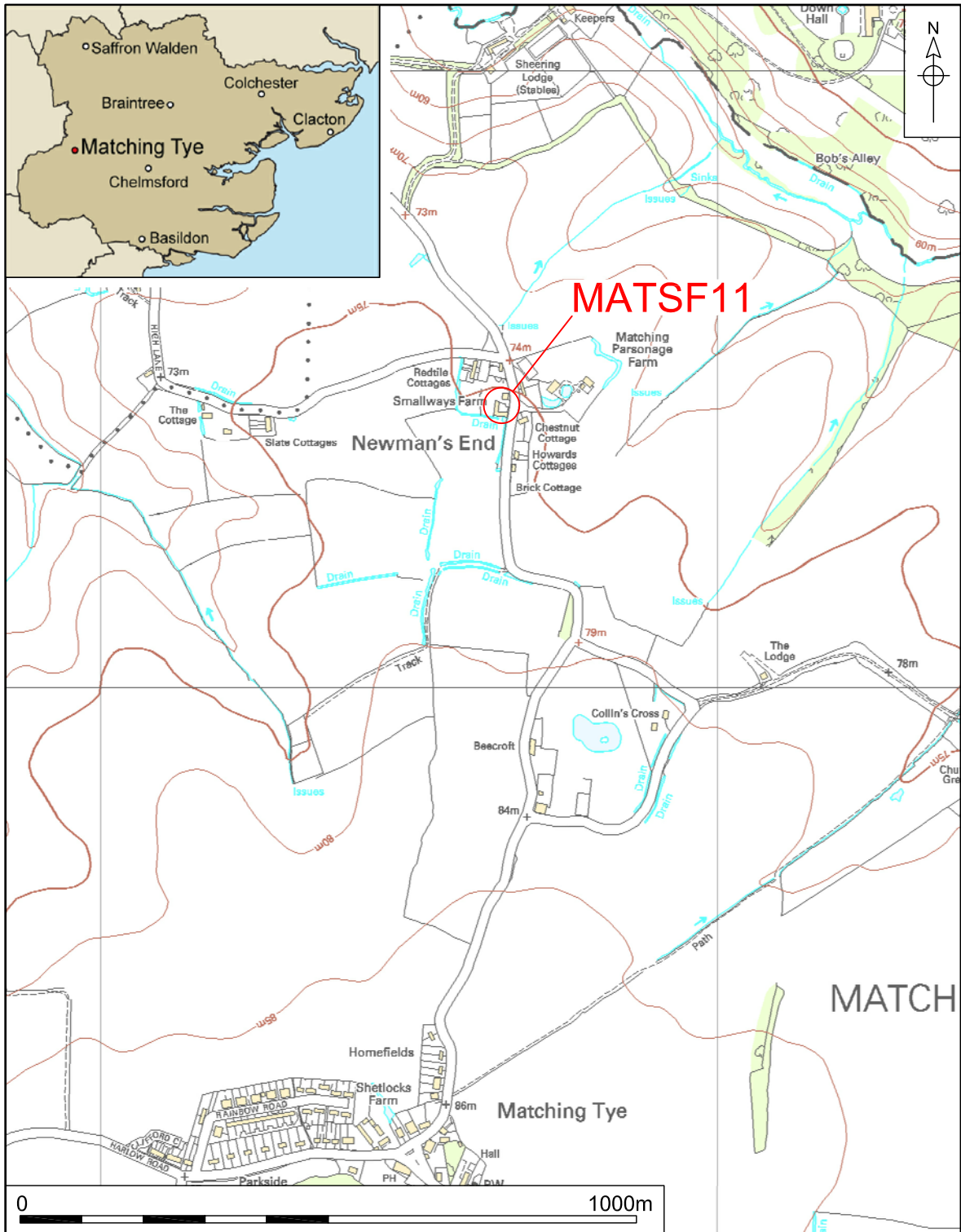
Building 3 (the cart shed) was open on one side; its masonry back wall was probably a relic of an earlier farm complex.

Buildings 4 and 5 were small lean-to sheds, both probably later additions.

There were no internal fixtures present to suggest the function of the various buildings, but the building forms on their own provided typical examples of their function.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

An historic building survey was undertaken of a complex of agricultural buildings at Smallways Farm north of Matching Tye in Essex (Fig. 1). The survey was designed to recover information relating to the extent, date, phasing, character, function, status and significance of the buildings, in preparation for proposals to



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Figure 1. Site location. Scale 1:10,000

convert the buildings.

This work was undertaken to fulfil a planning condition set by Epping Forest District Council (Ref. EPF/1112/05) and a Brief issued by Essex County Council Historic Environment Management Team (Garwood 2011). The work was conducted in accordance with a Project Design and Method Statement prepared by NPS Archaeology (Ref. NAU/BAU2761/NP). This work was commissioned and funded by Bryan Russell.

This programme of work was designed to assist in defining the character and extent of any archaeological remains within the proposed redevelopment area, following the guidelines set out in *Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment* (Department for Communities and Local Government 2010).

The results will enable decisions to be made by the Local Planning Authority about the treatment of any archaeological remains found.

The site archive is currently held by NPS Archaeology and on completion of the project will be deposited with Epping Forest District Museum following the relevant policies on archiving standards.

2.0 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

Newmans End is a hamlet to the north of the village of Matching Tye, east of Harlow and south of Bishop's Stortford, lying in undulating countryside at a height of 70-75m OD.

The natural geology is a thick till of chalky boulder clay deposited by the Anglian Ice Sheet (430,000 BP) above sand and gravel river terraces left by earlier courses of the River Thames (Hunter 1999, 34).

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The area of Essex in which Smallways Farm is located is an area of late clearance for agriculture (only starting in the Late Bronze Age) and it still retains a highly wooded character (Hunter 1999, 34-35). Hatfield Forest lies to the north and Epping Forest to the south. The landscape is one of small hamlets, small irregular fields and little evidence of landscape planning, identified by Oliver Rackham as 'Ancient Countryside' (Rackham 1986, 3).

An estate map of 1609 (Plate 1) held by the Essex Record Office (ERO D/DU 25/1) shows the hamlet of Newmans End and a farm complex on the site of Smallways Farm, consisting of what appears to be a three-celled farmhouse in the same position as the present house, and a barn in the same position as the present barn (Plate 1, centre). The map is orientated with north to the right. In 1609 this plot was owned by Thomas Foster.

Chapman and Andre's map of 1777 (Plate 2) shows the hamlet of Newmans End and the presence of buildings at the location of Smallways Farm, but the scale of the mapping does not allow details of the layout of the buildings to be defined.

The Tithe map of c.1843 (ERO D/CT 236B) shows the house and farm buildings in a different layout than at present (Plate 3). The farmhouse was in roughly the same position as its current location, but of a different plan, perhaps more like that shown on the 1609 map. The farmyard area is obscured by ink blotting, but the

building, although in a similar layout, differ in detail. There are buildings shown on the site of Buildings 1 and 2, but not 3. There is also a range extending westwards from the west end of the building on the site of Building 1.



Plate 1. 1609 estate map (ERO D/DU 25/1) north to the left

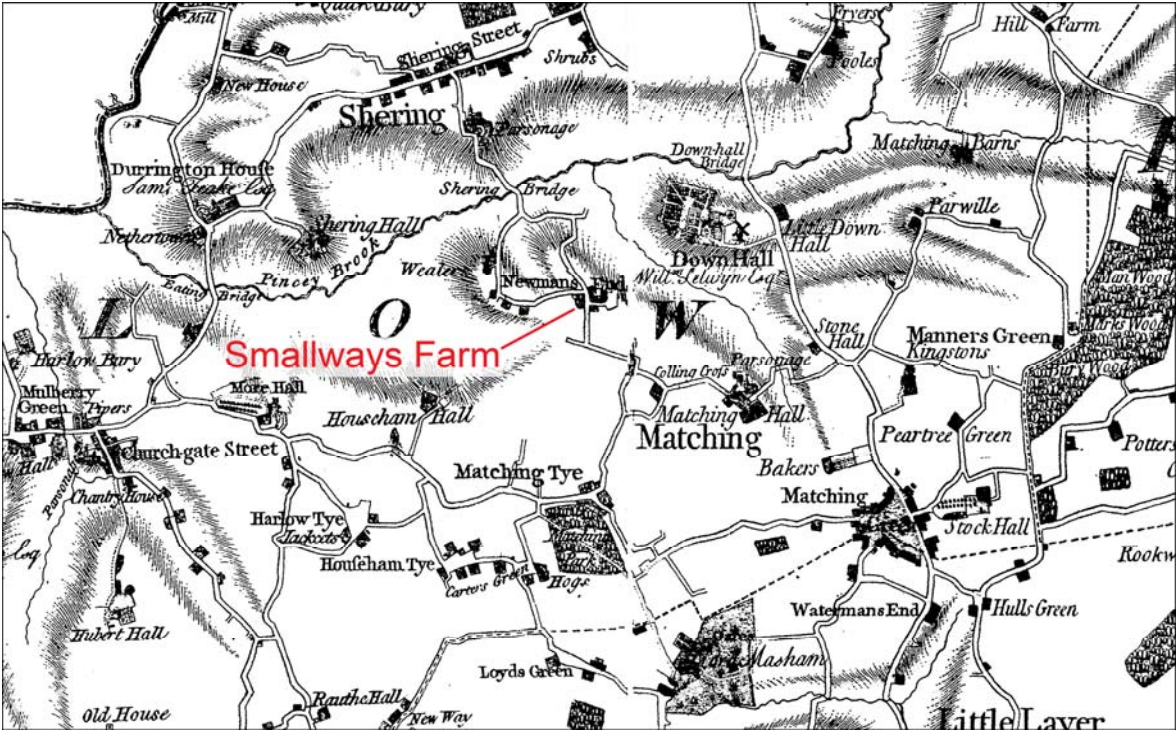


Plate 2. Chapman and Andre's map of 1777 (north to the top)

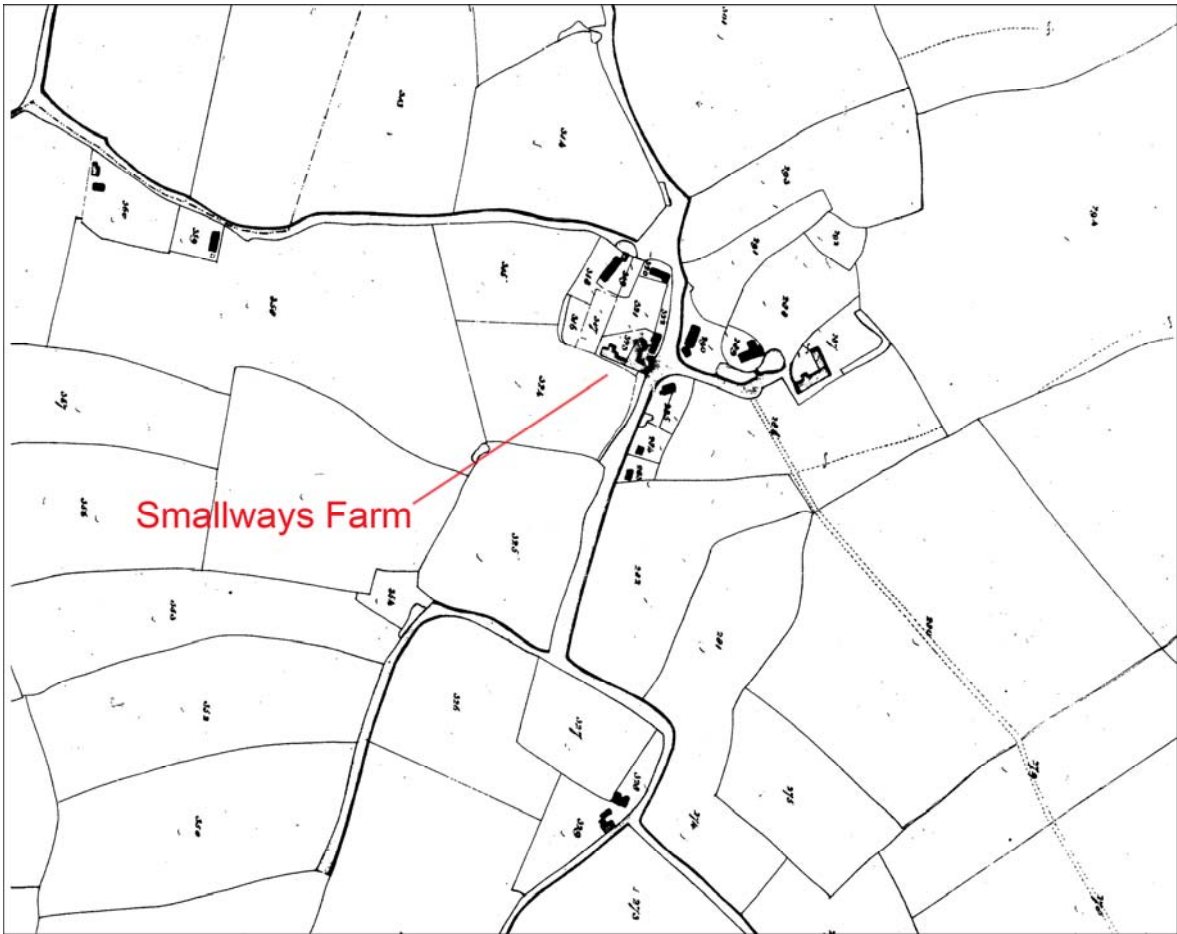


Plate 3. Matching Tithe Map (1843) (ERO D/CT 236B) (north to the top)

The 1874 First Edition Ordnance Survey map (Plate 4) shows the layout of farm buildings much as it is today, but without the addition of Building 5 (see below). Building 4 appears to be of a different layout, perhaps forming a pig sty.

The 1921 Third Edition Ordnance Survey map (Plate 5) shows an identical layout, apart from the addition of Building 5.

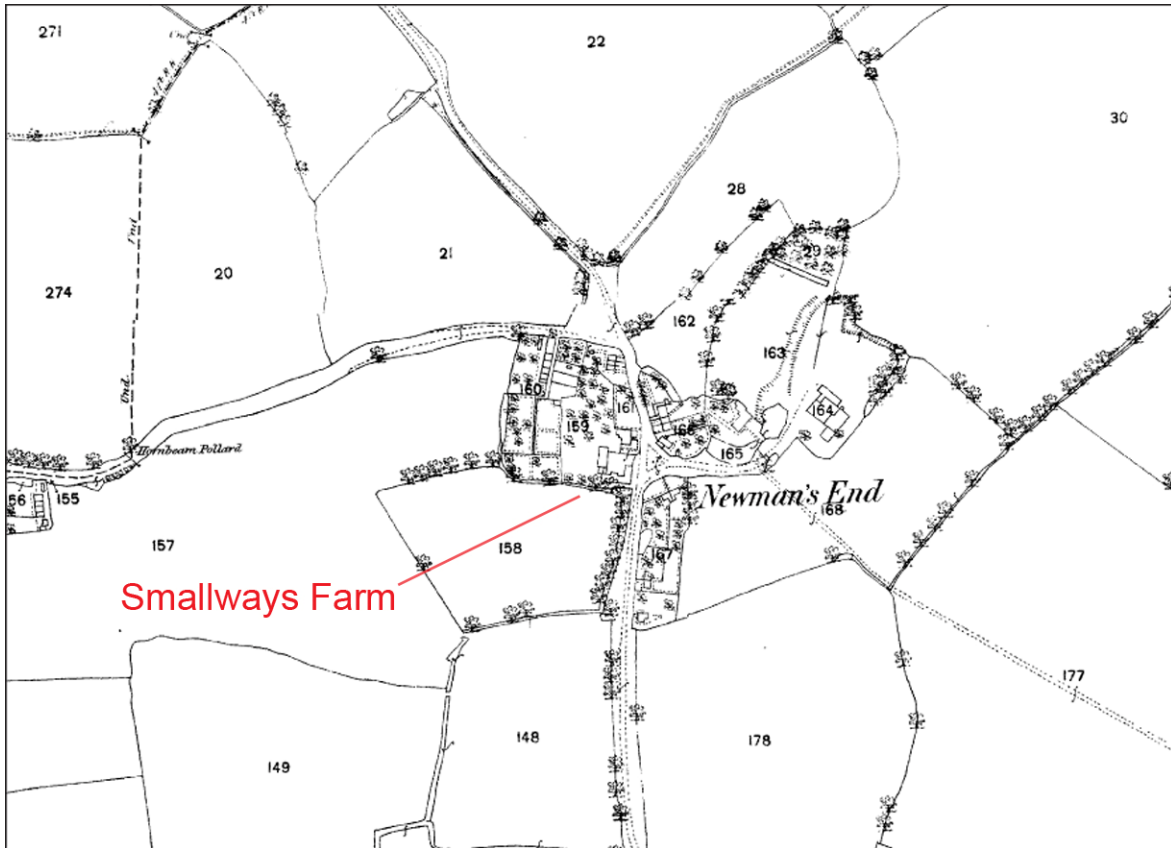


Plate 4. Ordnance Survey First Edition (1874) (not to scale)

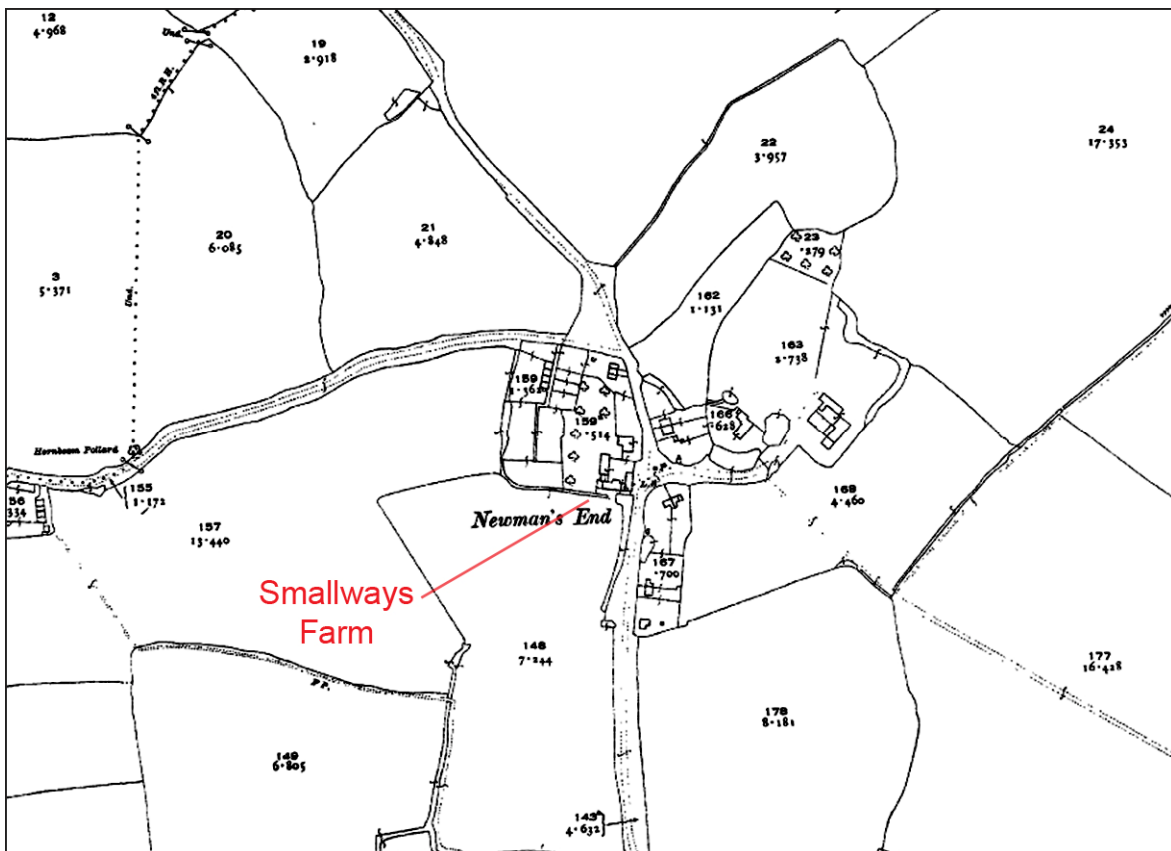


Plate 5. Ordnance Survey Third Edition (1921) (not to scale)

4.0 METHODOLOGY

The objective of this survey was to create a record that included the following elements:

- 1) A drawn record consisting of annotated plans and elevations of the buildings and cross sections of the barn and stable block, based on the architects plans.
- 2) A photographic record consisting of a general view of the builds in their wider setting, the buildings external appearance, any internal or external detail relevant to the buildings use, any machinery or plant, any dates or descriptions and any contents or ephemera which have a bearing on the buildings history or function.
- 3) A written record consisting of the buildings precise location, a note of any statutory designations, the date of the record and the name of the recorder and a description of the building's form, function, date and sequence of development.

5.0 RESULTS

The buildings within the complex have been assigned numbers 1-5 to aid identification (Fig. 2) and are described in numerical order below below.

5.1 Building 1 (Barn)

Building 1 was aligned east to west and was of five bays, measuring 19m long (east to west), 5.8m wide at the west end and 5.6m wide at the east end (Figs 2 and 3). It formed the southern side of the farmyard. The roof was shallow and composed of corrugated asbestos above boards. The internal floor was of concrete, apart from the central bay and porch which was of tarmac. The shape of the barn was irregular, the northern wall running at a slightly southern angle from the porch to the east end, narrowing the building slightly to the east. The bays were of irregular lengths, from west to east being 3.1m, 3.1m, 4.1m, 4.6m and 3.6m.

The northern elevation was of lightweight close studded timber framing, with diagonal bracing and external weatherboarding resting on a dwarf wall c.0.5m high of double thickness London Stock-type brick laid in Flemish Bond. The eastern bay was of brick to first floor level. The porch in the central bay measured 4.2m wide and 2.1m long and was of identical construction to the rest of the barn (Plate 6).

The southern elevation was of lightweight close-studded timber framing with a horizontal beam at first floor level and diagonal bracing, with external weather boarding (Plate 7). It rested on a dwarf wall 0.7m high composed of London Stock-type brick in Flemish Bond. On the eastern bay this wall extended to first floor level, still constructed from London Stock-type brick, with a shallow external buttress at the eastern end. There were two openings in the timber framing, above the level of the dwarf wall. A smaller one to the west and a larger one opposite the porch. This would allow access for produce from the south and provide a through-draft for threshing. Both doors were weather boarded. There was evidence of recent rebuilding at the eastern end at ground floor level; the dwarf wall from the centre point of the barn to the eastern gable end had been replaced, probably reusing the same bricks, and a portion of the weather boarding up to first floor level had been renewed (Plate 8).

The eastern elevation was brick built to first floor level (c.2.5m) with lightweight close-studded framing and external weather boarding above. The brickwork was of double thickness, coursed, reused, red brick, 0.05-0.65m thick, with the upper eight courses single skin. There was no recognisable bond, but the wall was painted externally with black (tar?) paint. There was evidence of recent rebuilding on the south-east corner in London Stock-type brick.

The western elevation was obscured by Building 5 (Shed), but was timber framed and gabled. It was faced externally with weather boarding and the frame had some diagonal braces. The studding was close, but light weight.

The four internal roof trusses were open trusses with a tie beam at wall plate level and two raking struts supporting the principal rafters (Plates 9, 10 and 11). Also present on each truss was a central iron tie extending from the centre of the tie beam to the apex (like a king strut) and occasional knee braces below the tie

beam (not present on all trusses). The principal rafters were secured to the tie beams with iron clamps. This type of truss is described by Richard Harris (Harris 1978, 11, Fig. 8) as 'post and truss'.

The timber framing exhibited no evidence of reuse of older timbers and bore no evidence of carpentry marks. The posts were probably of hardwood and the studding and weather boarding of softwood. The frames were nailed rather than pegged. Diagonal bracing was more common at first floor level than at ground floor level.

All timber framed walls were faced externally with weatherboards, painted with black (tar?) paint. Likewise, all the original dwarf walls were painted black externally. It has been suggested (A Garwood *pers. comm.*) that the present weatherboarding may be a replacement, but there is no evidence for an earlier phase of weatherboarding or hole to take staves or wattle panels. The only obviously replaced weatherboarding is that area of the southern elevation adjacent to the rebuilt masonry.



Plate 6. Building 1 exterior north side



Plate 7. Building 1, exterior south side



Plate 8. Building 1, rebuilt portion of south-east wall



Plate 9. Building 1, example of roof truss, facing north-east



Plate 10. Building 1, roof detail, facing south-east



Plate 11. Building 1, interior, facing west

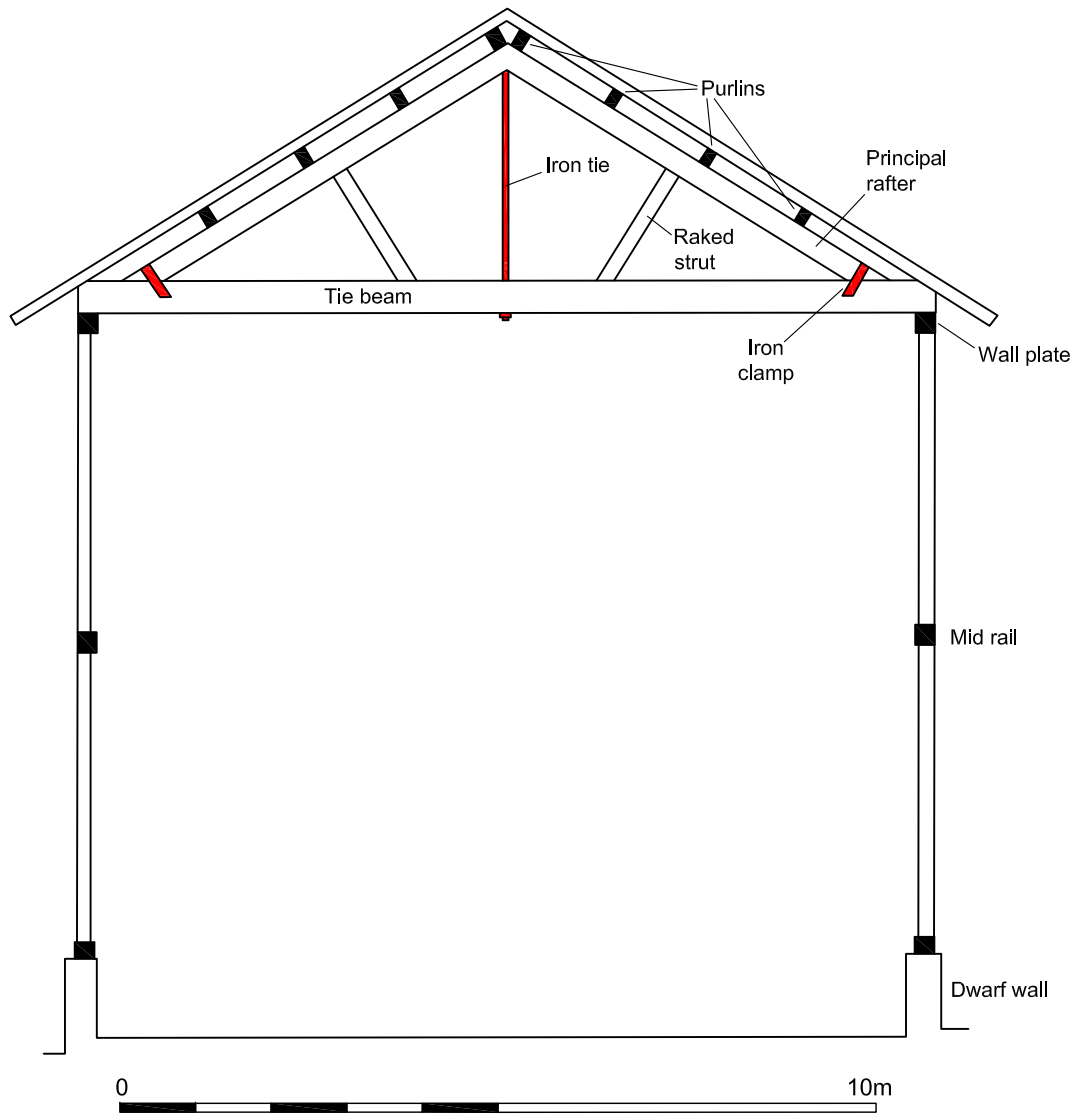


Figure 3. Building 1 (Barn) section through western truss (not gable end). Scale 1:100

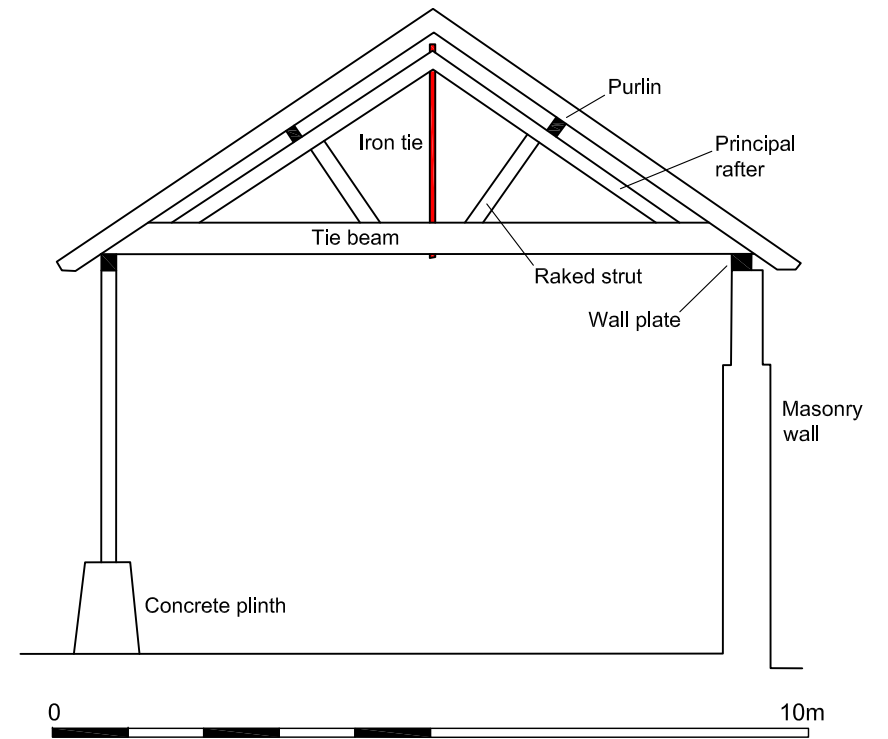


Figure 4. Building 3 (Cart shed) section through northern truss (not gable end). Scale 1:100

5.2 Building 2 (Stables)

Full access to what had constituted the stables was not available as it is currently occupied (the building has been converted to residential use). Internally it had been extensively renovated and plastered, but one of the roof trusses in the living room was exposed and was of identical construction to trusses observed in Buildings 1 and 3.

Externally, this building appeared to be single storey, aligned north to south, with a shallow, hipped roof of slate tiles and a louvre in the centre of the apex. It formed the western side of the courtyard and measured 5.4m wide and 13.5m long (Fig. 2). It was constructed of London Stock-type cream bricks measuring 0.23m x 0.11m x 0.07m laid in Flemish Bond and of double brick thickness.

The external eastern elevation contained one original doorway to the south, a blocked doorway to the north and two small windows between (Plate 12), which presumably originally formed accommodation for two horses.

The external western elevation showed no original openings, but has a modern doorway allowing access on to a patio area. The northern part of the elevation is obscured by a small modern extension (Plate 13). Two courses of brick towards the base of the wall appeared to be of narrower red brick, possibly reused.

The external southern elevation was obscured by Building 4 (Shed).

The external northern elevation had two doorways, one recently lowered. These doorways face the farmhouse and probably provided accommodation for a toilet and washroom for the farm house.



Plate 12. Building 2, exterior east side with blocked door behind van



Plate 13. Building 2, exterior west side showing new doorway and modern extension to the left

5.3 Building 3 (Cart Shed)

The Cart Shed was located adjacent to the entrance to the complex and formed the eastern side of the farmyard (Figs 2 and 4). There were no internal fittings, or evidence of internal fittings present.

It measured 7.7m long (north to south) and 4.5m wide (east to west).

Its southern wall was formed by the wall of the adjacent barn (Building 1).

The western wall was open, originally to allow access for carts (Plate 14). The two roof trusses were supported by free standing posts, secured on the ground by concrete plinths (presumably due to rotting of the base of these timbers) and with additional longitudinal braces to the roof plate above.

Its eastern wall was formed of reused red brick of 0.50-0.65m thickness, coursed but not laid in any specific bond. It was painted with a coat of black (tar?) paint (Plate 15).

The northern wall was of timber framing with weatherboarding on the outside.

The roof trusses, including the northern gable end, and all aspects of the carpentry were of an identical form to those seen in Buildings 1 and 2. The slope of the roof was shallow and covered with slate tiles.



Plate 14. Building 3, exterior west face



Plate 15. Building 3, exterior east face (right) with Building 1 to the left

5.4 Building 4 (Shed)

Building 4 was a lean-to structure, with the roof sloping down to the west. It was located between Building 2 (Stables) and Building 1 (Barn)/Building 5 (Shed) with wide double doors on its eastern side opening out into the farmyard (Fig. 2, Plate 16). The carpentry was similar to that seen in Buildings 1 and 3

The eastern wall is predominately made up of the doors, with a short stretch of wall which is timber framed and weather boarded resting on a dwarf wall (Plate 17). The bricks were covered with a thick layer of black paint.

The northern wall constituted the southern wall of Building 2 (Stables).

The southern wall of Building 4 was formed by the north wall of Buildings 5 (Shed) (partial) and Building 1 (Barn) (partial) and was built of London Stock-type brick.

The western wall was partially obscured by foliage but appeared to be of London Stock-type brick above random coursed rubble of reused bricks of varying sizes.

The roof was constructed of corrugated asbestos.



Plate 16. Building 5 (right), exterior west face, with Building 4 (centre), and Building 2 (left)



Plate 17: Building 4, exterior east face

5.5 Building 5 (Shed)

Building 5 was a one storey lean-to shed attached to the western gable-end of Building 1 (Barn) and the southern wall of Building 4 (Fig. 2).

It was of similar timber construction to the barn (Building 1) but its northern wall was of London Stock-type brick in Flemish bond.

The southern dwarf wall did not appear to be continuous with the dwarf wall of Building 1, but a hole that had been dug at the join, showed that the foundation courses were actually of the same build (its upper course was of headers laid on edge) (Plate 18).

The building was roofed with sheets of corrugated iron (Plate 19).

This structure does not appear on the 1874 First Edition Ordnance Survey map, suggesting that it is a later addition.



Plate 18. Join of Buildings 1 and 5, exterior south face



Plate 19: Building 5, exterior west face showing two possible phases of wall build

CONCLUSIONS

The farm buildings at Smallways Farm appear to have been constructed in one phase during the mid 19th century. The 1843 Tithe map shows buildings which are significantly different to the present buildings and may be those shown on the 1609 map. The First Edition Ordnance Survey map (1874) shows the layout of the farmyard in its present form. The bricks used are probably London Stocks, normally dated to a period around the late 18th century and first half of the 20th century (Ryan 1996). The bricks at Smallways Farm were of 2½ inch thickness, with shallow frogs, suggesting a mid 19th-century date giving a date range for the construction between 1800-1874, and most likely towards the end of that range. The farmhouse appears to have been constructed at the same time.

The form of the farmyard is regular and enclosed and replaced an earlier complex of buildings partially shown on a 1609 estate map (ERO D/DU 25/1) and the 1843 Tithe map (ERO D/CT 236 B).

The timber framed walls are typical of the 19th century, and are composed of lightweight close studding externally clad with weather boards; a technique popular in East Anglian agricultural buildings from the end of the 18th century (Brunskill 1971, 64). The wood used appears to be mainly soft wood for the trusses and studding and possibly hardwood for the posts (Gowlett 2005, 1).

Building 1 was probably a threshing barn, with opposed central openings (the porch and door on the north side and the large hatch on the southern side) providing a draft for threshing in the central bay, with the two bays either side of the central bay for storage of produce. The present mezzanine floors in the two end bays appear to be later additions. However the join in the foundations of the dwarf walls of Building 1 and Building 5 and the shorter lengths of the two western bays of Building 1 suggests that Building 1 was originally intended to extend further west, but may have been shortened during construction (and Building 5 added later). Building 1 was narrower at its eastern end; the reason for this irregularity in an otherwise regularly laid out farmyard, may lie in the masonry gable end of that building. Perhaps this masonry was a relic of a previous building, such as the barn shown on the 1609 estate map.

Building 2 was certainly a stable block, with provision for two stalls and possibly storage of tack or hay at the southern end. The louvre (if it is original) is unusual. This building has been recently converted to residential use, with one of the stall doors infilled and a new doorway inserted in the western wall, adjacent to a modern extension. Internally, a brief inspection revealed no surviving internal fixtures. It has been suggested (A Garwood *pers. comm.*) that this building may have been loose boxes/sheds later reused for stabling. The absence of surviving internal features makes any interpretation problematic. The roof ventilator/louvre suggests it was used for housing stock of some description and the internal masonry wall, if it is original, may suggest that the northern part of the building was a stable, while the southern part may have been either stable and tack store or loose boxes for cattle.

Building 3 appears to have been a cart shed with access through the open west side for three wagons. Like Building 1, its masonry eastern wall may be a relic of previous farm buildings. It has been suggested (Garwood *pers. com.*) that this

building may have been an open sided shelter shed facing onto an open stockyard, but no evidence of this assertion with the absence of feed troughs or internal partitions (as in Peters 1981, p.70).

Building 4 was a small storage shed which was present on the site in 1874 and whose western wall may predate the 19th-century rebuilding of the farmyard. On the early OS mapping, this building appears to be of a different form, with a small enclosed yard, possibly suggesting use as a pigsty. At some point between 1921 and 1974 this building assumed its present form.

Building 5 was another lean-to shed, which post-dates 1874, but may have used footings initially intended for Building 1.

The surviving farm buildings suggest that this agricultural unit was used for mixed farming, with the barn (Building 1) having the facility to be used as a threshing barn and the stables (Building 2) being used for horses and/or cattle. The farmyard could have occasionally served as an open stockyard (as suggested by Garwood per com.) but this does not appear to have been its primary purpose.

Acknowledgements

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