

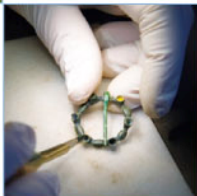
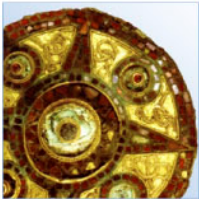
Harps Farm Stables, Bedlar's Green, Great Hallingbury Essex Historic Building Record

Planning Application Numbers: UTT/0483/08/FUL and UTT/0484/08/LB

National Grid Reference: TL 5202 2050

AOC Project no: 30275

November 2008



ARCHAEOLOGY

HERITAGE

CONSERVATION

Harps Farm Stables

Bedlar's Green, Great Hallingbury, Essex

Historic Building Record

On Behalf of: Sworders,
The Gatehouse,
Hadham Hall,
Little Hadham
Ware,
Herts
SG11 2EB

National Grid Reference (NGR): TL 5202 2050

AOC Project No: 30275

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Date of Document: December 2008

This document has been prepared in accordance with AOC standard operating procedures.

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Summary

A programme of Historic Building Recording was conducted on the Stables at Harps Farm, Bedlar's Green, Essex; a farmstead with whose origins lie in the medieval period. The stables were of several phases, and form a building facing into a courtyard. Many repairs and replacement beams within the building were clear, but the older parts are potentially of late 18th century or early 19th century date.

This report provides an enhanced Level 2 record of a not untypical post-medieval farm stable. This building was functional but has some degree of design. The report describes the stable, its materials and phasing, and sets the building into its local and regional context.

1 Introduction

This document presents the results of a Historic Building Record of the Stable block at Harps Farm, Bedlar's Green, Essex. The recording included plans, field notes and photographs. The block was in use as a stable at the time of recording, and bales of hay obscured some areas.

1.1 Site Location

- 1.1.1 The site is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) TL 5202 2050, and is within a complex of farm buildings accessed along a track running west from The Street; north of Bedlar's Green and northwest of Great Hallingbury. The surrounding land is farmland.

1.2 Development Proposal

- 1.2.1 A planning application has been made for the conversion of the Stable for Business use (Planning Application Nos UTT/0483/08/FUL and UTT/0484/08/LB). The building record has been made prior to demolition works but after closure.

1.3 Planning Background

- 1.3.1 The local planning Authority is Uttlesford District Council. Archaeological advice to the council is provided by the Historic Environment Management Team (HEM) of Essex County Council. Listed building consent has been granted for alteration of use, with a condition that a Historic Building record was carried out.
- 1.3.2 The next stage in the planning process was creation of a Written Scheme of Investigation, detailing the methodology for recording, and including some background history of the site (AOC 2008).

1.4 Listing

- 1.4.1 The farmhouse is a Grade II listed Hall House comprising a 15th century hall and cross-wing with 17th century and later additions. To the east of the farmhouse is a Grade II listed granary and a Grade II listed 16th century barn. The 19th century stable range lies immediately south of the listed barn.

1.5 Methodology

- 1.5.1 The Survey work and resultant report is designed to fulfil the requirements set out within the design brief set out by Essex County Council (ECC 2008). It also corresponds to an enhanced form of Level 2 of the guidelines published by English Heritage (EH 2006). The scope of recording is based upon these guidelines.
- 1.5.2 Level 2 is a **descriptive record**. It is suitable for this building, which is judged not to require any fuller record. Both the exterior and the interior have been viewed, described and photographed. The record presents conclusions regarding the building's development and use, but does not discuss in detail the evidence on which these conclusions are based.
- 1.5.3 The site records and archive are identified by the Site Code GH HB 08.

1.6 Topography

- 1.6.1 The site is broadly flat, at over 90mOD on the eastern side of the Stort Valley. Various tributaries of the Stort flow southwest off this plateau including the Latchmore Brook. Farmland spreads to great Hallingbury to the southwest, Tilekiln Green to the north, and west to Bishop's Stortford, broken only by the route of the M25.

2 Archaeological And Historical Background

2.1 Pre-16th Century

- 2.1.1 The parish of Great Hallingbury is bound by Little Hallingbury to the south, Hatfield Broad Oak to the east, Birchanger to the north, and the River Stort forms the western boundary. Bedlar's Green is the nearest settlement to the site, and is based around Latchmore Brook, a tributary of the Stort (VCH 1983).
- 2.1.2 The earliest prominent archaeological feature in the landscape is an Iron Age Hillfort, Wallbury Camp, a 14-hectare site with banks and ditches. Further Iron Age presence has been found at the church in Great Hallingbury, and includes cremation urns from a burial ground. Hallingbury may have its origins in the Roman period; Roman pottery has been found on Church Road, and the church incorporates Roman brick in its walls. Stane Street runs a short distance to the north of Great Hallingbury and Harps Farm, and a Roman amphora is reported as being found at the farm in 1887. Hallingbury Roman villa actually lies nearer Sawbridgeworth than Hallingbury.
- 2.1.3 The name Hallingbury is of Saxon origin and refers to the hillfort. The village is recorded in the Domesday Survey, with a population of thirteen. Some enlargement of the village occurred during the medieval period, there being 24 men assessed for tax in 1327, and 34 by 1525. By 1670, the entire parish contains 58 houses, although 24 households are too poor to pay tax. Bedlar's Green and Tilekiln Green had begun to be settled by the 16th century.
- 2.1.4 The oldest building in the parish is the church at Great Hallingbury, which is 11th century. It adjoins Hallingbury Hall, later Hallingbury Place, the manor house of the parish and it came into the Morley family. The estate was sold in 1666 to Sir Edward Turnor, speaker of the House of Commons, and on the death of his son, sold by trustees to pay debts.

2.2 16th Century to Present

- 2.2.1 The second oldest building in the parish is Harps Farm, which takes its name from the family of John-atte-Harpe, first recorded in 1420. The Hall on the site is from the early 15th century, the older part of the building also includes a north-south cross-wing. Other buildings on the site are later additions as the farmstead was enlarged, including additions during the 'Model Farm' movement.
- 2.2.2 There are numerous maps of Essex from the late 16th to the late 18th century, the earliest being John Norden's Map of Essex (1594), depicting the general area. 'Great Hastingbury' and 'Little Hastingbury' are marked, as well as two subcircular enclosed forests, Hatfield Chace and Hatfield Forest nearby. The first map that shows Harps' Farm is that by Chapman and André (1777), which shows a courtyarded building within an enclosure, accessed by a road from the east. The site is also depicted on Charles and John Greenwood's 'Map of the County of Essex' (1824), which shows four buildings.
- 2.2.3 The Great Hallingbury Tithe Map (1840) identifies the Farm and surrounding fields as owned by John Archer Houblon and occupied by Elizabeth Clarke. The field to the north of the farmhouse is an orchard. There is a thin L-shaped building in the south of the site, in the approximate position of the Stable Range. This shows a long building to the south and a shorter eastern wing extending northwards. The field to the south is identified as the Stable Ley, and is currently (2008) used as a paddock for Harp's Farm's horses. Deeds of Harp Farm from 27th February 1829, kept at the Essex Records Office, confirm the ownership; 225 acres in tenure of the executors of Henry and Elisabeth Clarke. The stable block is first shown in its current shape on the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1875 and again on the 2nd edition (1898). No changes are apparent until the Ordnance Survey Map of 1951, that shows walls added between the two wings.

- 2.2.4 The Hallingbury estate, of which Harps Farm was a part, had been bought in 1729 by the executors of Sir Richard Houlton (1672-1724), High Sheriff of Hertfordshire, and settled on his nephew Charles son, Jacob Houlton. The Houlton family held the estate until it was broken up and sold in 1923. The records of Houlton's family and of Hallingbury Estate record that the Houlton family are of Flemish origin, and migrated to England during the reign of Elizabeth I. In the course of the next century and a half they rose to a position of eminence in the commercial life of London. Their family's first connection with Essex had been a country House in Wanstead, where they moved in 1683.
- 2.2.5 The auction catalogue from 1923 describes Harps Farm (D/DU 1597/17/2). A transcript of part of the document is given here:

**THE IMPORTANT AND HIGHLY PRODUCTIVE
AGRICULTURAL HOLDING**
known as
HARPS FARM

Situating for the most part in the Parish of Great Hallingbury, with
**Substantial Farmhouse, Extensive Buildings and
Seven Cottages**
In all about
446 a. 3 r. 32 p.

THE FARMHOUSE

well built of timber, plastered, with tiled roof, contains, on the Ground Floor, Hall, Office, Dining Room, Lounge Hall and Drawing Room. Kitchen, Back kitchen, Dairy, Pantry and Larder. The First Floor, approached by two Staircases, contains five Bedrooms, Bathroom with Lavatory basin (h. and c.), Box-Room, W.C., two Attics overhead. Drinking Water from well, fitted with Pump in the Back Kitchen, actuated by means of horse power (the tenant claims to have installed this). Wood and Coal-shed. Kitchen Garden.

THE FARM HOMESTEAD

for the most part built of timber, with tile roofs, includes Engine House, Cake House, Range of three Loose-boxes and Harness-room, three-bay Dutch Barn, Hen-house, Gig -house, Implement Store, large two-bay Barn with corrugated iron roof and cement dressing floor, three-bay open shed to Yard, further three-bay Open Shed fitted with Mangers and Feeding passage, three Piggeries, two large Loose-boxes, Loose-box to yard, Carthorse stabling for eight, Loose-box, Chaff-house, Gear-house, four Loose-boxes, three-binned Granary, Drill-house, Binder-house, six-bay Cart-shed, two-bay Waggon Lodge. Water laid on from private supply

3 Building Record

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 Harps Farm is a farmstead on a plateau above the River Stort. The farmstead is set around a courtyard. The Farmhouse is in the east, the Great barn to the north and the stable building to the south. The stables form a U-shaped block, two wings running northwards from the southern range. The entire block is single storey, although there is some evidence that the parts of the roof space were used for storage. Five or possibly six phases of build are apparent. The initial build is timber framed upon a brick base, with boarded walls. Later additions involve a greater use of brick.

3.2 Initial Build, south block

(Figure 3)

3.2.1 The southern block of the stable range appears to be the earliest part of the stable complex. This is shown by the presence of former exterior gable-ends no longer relevant to the current form, as well as alterations to the roof. The eastern and western ends of this part of the stables are built outside of and against the core of the block. The whole of the southern range is suffering lateral loading; the tops of the walls are moving outwards and westwards. This may be the part of the farmstead described in the sales document as 'Range of three Loose-boxes and Harness-room'. The initial build is timber framed set upon low brick walls.



Plate 1, south side of southern block

3.2.2 This building has brick dwarf walls standing three courses high above the internal enclosed area. The size of the bricks indicates date of 1700-1800, measuring 228mm by 107mm by 60mm (9" by 4¼" by 2⅜"). The mortar used is a lime mortar, quite sandy and coarse, with notable 2mm gravel inclusions and the walls are 0.34m thick. The end footings are not standing, later additions to each end of the building having necessitated their removal. The core of the southern block measures 19.8m east-west and 5.6m north-south. The ground walls are topped by a sill beam laid close to the outer edge of the ground walls.

3.2.3 Posts and studs rise from this sill beam, the posts providing the principal supports for a wall plate above, the studs forming the body of the wall. The south-facing wall is entirely clad with timber boarding. The north wall is clad with boarding on the lower half, the lowest board overlapping the ground wall whereas the upper half has lath and render covering the frame. Three layers of this

exterior plaster are apparent, each finer than that beneath. Internally, all walls appear to have been fully boarded to wall-plate level, although this was randomly missing in several locations.



Plate 2: Rendered and boarded north wall



Plate 3, sample of south wall framing, Room 7

- 3.2.4 The major posts are typically 0.20m (8 inches) square in profile, and many showed signs of re-use from previous buildings, with mortises, empty peg-holes and lap-housings apparent (see 3.3 below). The wall-plates that form the base for the roof were typically 0.25m (10 inches) square in profile. Lateral stability is given by nine tie-beams, these span the building, and some show evidence of re-use. Two tie-beams at the centre of the building are just 0.80m apart. They both have additional iron straps affixing them to the wall-plates.



Plate 4, wall framing, Room 6

- 3.2.5 The east wall of the core of the building is largely intact, and is built in several sections: the ground floor wall is a series of studs, between the floor and the first tie-beam, the central stud supported by angled struts that are primary bracing. The other posts are irregular studs. There is a doorway to the north and a small narrow room partitioned next to it, almost a lobby. The door is boarded and hangs on two hinges. The wall above the tie-beam has studs to an upper collar. A third row of studs rise from the collar to the roofline. The wall is fully boarded on its eastern face to ridge level, not at all in its western (internal) side.



Plate 5: Gable end of early phase.

- 3.2.6 The partition is formed of studs with boards attached between the end tie-beam and the second tie-beam. This little partitioned area is the only area of the core building that has a boarded ceiling. Four joists run north-south from the partition wall to the north wall, and a row of planks are laid on this, an area of upper flooring 1.6m north south and 2.3m east-west. There was no jointing evidence in any timbers to prove that this had a larger extent, but the door in the centre of the gable

end must have been accessible. Possibly, the floor joists were simply pinned atop the tie-beams rather than being jointed in. The top of the doorway is level with the upper collar.

- 3.2.7 The west wall of the core building is present only as the gable end in the roof space. Any wall at ground floor level has been totally removed. At the same location as the gable, the sill beams and wall plates terminate, abutted by timbers of a secondary build. The gable is constructed of vertical struts, with a collar beam at purlin level, and boarding on both sides. Both of the gables lean westwards at 74°, the result of movement of the entire roof.
- 3.2.8 The roof is a clasped purlin roof with a ridge plate at the top. The purlins and ridge beam are supported primarily by the timber end gables of the building, and the common rafters lie atop this, fixed to the wall plates at their base and extending to form eaves, and laid on the outside of the purlins. Many of the rafters are quite narrow quartered conversions of small straight timbers, frequently with the bark still upon them. The purlins, which run the entire 19.8m length of the building, are not single timbers, but are box-quartered beams that are jointed in sections with scarf joints. Above each tie-beam is a collar beam that clasps the purlins, and is nailed in position; there are no principal rafters that are forming a major truss. The collar beams are supported by angled struts from the tie-beams. There are no wind-braces or struts that would have given the roof lateral stability.



Plate 6: Roof detail

- 3.2.9 The entire roof, rafters as well as end-walls, is sloping at 74°. This suggests that the thin rafters are contemporary with, or at least collapsed with the main movement of the roof westwards. The roof has been lined with roofing felt, indicating a phase of later 20th century repair. The roof is tiled and the ridges are sealed with ridge tiles.
- 3.2.10 This part of the building has three rooms. The eastern room (Room 6) has a stable door in the north side and a regular boarded door in the south side. It also contains the small partitioned area. The west wall of the room is boarded, the boards applied to arrow of studs between the ground and the third tie-beam. It could not be determined if the studs rise from the floor or a base-plate, due to a large quantity of straw in the room. The lack of mangers or hay racks in the room and the small partitioned area may suggest that this is the 'Harness Room' referred to in the sales document.
- 3.2.11 The second room (Room 7) is accessed through a stable door in the northern side and lies between a boarded partition at the third tie-beam and another at the seventh tie-beam, where there is also an opening into Room 8. The room has two wooden partitions running north from the south wall. The seventh tie-beam may be more of a wall-plate to support the top ends of the timber studs

rather than a full structural tie-beam. Two windows in the north wall are virtually sealed by offset vertical slats of wood. These allow some air but little light into the building. Partitions in the room indicate a degree of stalling, perhaps for mares and foals, but may be described as a loose-box.

- 3.2.12 The third room in the core of the building (Room 8) extends beyond the block into the western extension. This room would have been very small if the partition to Room 7 were original, just 2m wide, so possibly, the partition is not part of the original layout. The form of the original west wall at ground floor level is unknown. The room has mangers and hay-racks along the south wall, so was clearly a loose-box.

3.3 Additions, South Block

(Figure 4)

- 3.3.1 The southern building has been extended to the east and west. There is one to the east and possibly two sequential extensions to the west.
- 3.3.2 The eastern extension enlarges the southern part of the building by 4.6m, and is built in a similar style to the core of the south block. The exterior is clad in boarding, and the structural timbers rise from sill beams set on low ground walls. Wall plates atop each of the walls support the roof. The studs that help hold the exterior and interior planking of this room are generally smaller and more frequent than those of the primary build. The end wall of the east block is visible in the north part of the room, being a vertical abutment. The room can be accessed from the east, and also through the door in the east wall of the core. Mangers and hay-racks along the south wall show this to have been a third loose-box.
- 3.3.3 The purlins of the core build have been extended eastwards using face-halved scarf joints, and these purlins continue along the eastern end, which is hipped. The rafters all sit outside the purlins, and the rafters are all present, despite the building being later extended northwards with the eastern block. The common rafters of the new hipped ends all rise straight from the wall plates, and are cut to accommodate the collapsed roof of the core. A wide timber supports the valley of the change in angle outside of the common rafters, proving its later date. There is no break apparent in the tiling of the roof of the block. This is most likely the result of more recent re-roofing of the whole structure, using the original tiles.
- 3.3.4 The western end of the south block has been extended by 11.5m (Rooms 8/9). The entirety is founded on a low ground wall, and has a structure based on posts rising from a sill beam and wall plates above. Frequent vertical studs are set between the major beams. The timberwork in this section of the block is of a notably different style using thinner timbers. All but one of the main posts are freshly cut box-quartered timbers, and only one shows signs of re-use. The principal posts also have supporting struts at the top towards the wall-plates. The wall plates too are of inferior quality, being short sections of squared timbers laid end-to end, and showing little regularity. The entirety of the block is boarded: the north face where visible, the west end and the south side. This is a contrast to the primary structure of the build, which is part-rendered.



Plate 7: Framing of western extension

- 3.3.5 This western end of the block contains Room 8, partitioned at the western end to form room 9. The partition is formed of boards nailed to studs at the thirteenth tie-beam. The floor is partly formed of bricks lain on edge, with a northwards camber. Much of this is obscured by concrete screed. Room 8 has a small area of floorboards in the roof space at the eastern end, carried by a tie beam added next to the end wall of the core building (tie-beam 10), and the next tie-beam (11), 2.35m to the west. Joists span the distance, and boards are laid on top. Entrance was from the south end, and may have been accessed by a ladder, since there was no evidence for fixings.
- 3.3.6 Five further tie-beams add stability to the structure, including that at the west wall at the end of room 9. The roof structure at the west end shows evidence of alteration and repair. All the common rafters of the roof show the lean westwards apparent in the rest of the building, showing that the roof has moved after the construction of the western extension. However, the hip at the northern end is structurally sound, the rafters rising straight from the baseplates, and the sloping common rafters cut to accommodate this new end. This may indicate that the entire western roof has been rebuilt. Extra supports have been added to the wall-plates at the western end. An iron bracket has been inserted in the southwest corner, and there is a large iron bar spanning the corner, pulling the west and south walls together.

3.4 Re-used Timbers

- 3.4.1 Many of the principal members of the initial build are timbers that have been re-used from another building. There may be others, but these are hidden within the standing fabric of the building. The reused materials are tie-beams and principal posts at their locations. The second tie-beam contains three straight single-pegged mortises and four lap housings, This suggests that this was a wall-plate, the mortises for upright members, the lap housings possibly holding rafters. The sixth tie beam was also a wall-plate or sill-beam, containing four straight single-pegged mortises.
- 3.4.2 Three tie-beams were of identical form (Nos 3, 4 and 5). These were each 0.20m wide beams with 45° mortises at each end, all pegged with two trenails. These would have held angled struts or braces, and are therefore probably also wall plates.

- 3.4.3 The north and south posts beneath tie-beam 2 both have an empty mortis near the top, angled downwards at 45°, double pegged. These are oriented away from the tie-beam, so therefore cannot have interacted with it. The northern posts beneath the sixth and seventh tie-beams also contain empty angled mortises, former housings for braces. The 12th tie-beam has a straight mortis near the top, as do two uprights that form door-posts accessing Room 9. The empty mortises are commonly 0.05m wide, or two inches.

3.5 Fittings

- 3.5.1 The south blocks' internal fittings indicate that this was used for stalling and feeding of livestock.



Plate 8: Room 7 manger and hay rack.

- 3.5.2 Set against the south wall of room 7 are mangers made of planks, supported on posts. The top of the mangers are 1.20m above floor level, supported by posts in front. These mangers are for soft feed. Higher up on the walls, in Rooms 5 and 7, are hay racks, which could be grazed from, providing a contrast and roughage to the softer feed below. These confirm that the block was used for keeping animals. The compartments apparent in Room 7 may indicate a degree of tethering. Boarding the inside of this building would help prevent damage to the walls from kicks.

3.6 Eastern Block

(Figure 6)

- 3.6.1 The Eastern Block is built of brick with flint panelling on its eastern face and northern end. Four stable doors open on the western side. The block is a single build, and measures 13.22m north-south and 5.30m east west. It is single storey. The principal construction material is brick, each brick 230 by 104 by 64mm, and laid in English Bond, bonded with very coarse lime-rich mortar with high sand and gravel content. Each exterior wall is 1½ bricks thick. The eastern side has four flint panels, each half the height of the walls and each beneath a high level four-paned window. The flint panels add no structural support and are a walling type common in flint areas.
- 3.6.2 Two flint panels are present in the north wall. The north wall also has a window, a fixed window with an arched lintel, wooden sill and split into 20 panes. This window had been blocked on the inside by several short planks.



Plate 9: Eastern stable block

- 3.6.3 The four doors on the western face of the building are each stable doors, split into two sections, each section with its own fixing. Each part of the doors hinge open on two hinges. The lower parts of the doors have bolts to secure them, the upper doors have latches. Each door leads to an individual stable, large enough for two horses. This may be the area of 'carhorse stabling for eight' as described in the 1923 auction document.
- 3.6.4 The four stables have virtually identical layouts, and each are of similar widths. The two to the south are slightly wider than the two to the north. There is one brick partition between rooms 2 and 3. The partitions between rooms 1 and 2 and between rooms 3 and 4 are formed of narrow posts 0.06m wide with planking applied horizontally on the north sides and vertically on the south sides in both cases. Each room has a narrow cobbled gully parallel to the western wall. Each has a floor of concrete screed, but the northern room, Room 1, has occasional patches where this is worn away, revealing squared setts beneath. Each room is lit by a window in the eastern wall; each stable door has a narrow four-pane window above. The walls are limewashed or white-washed.
- 3.6.5 Each room has a manger across the eastern wall, 1.16m high, constructed of solid planks, supported on posts and with an iron plate running its length. Each room also has a small trough. Few other fittings are present. Room 1 has two tethering rings attached to the southern wall, plus an iron hanger. The other rooms have two wall-mounted tethering rings.
- 3.6.6 The roof of the eastern block is hipped, and abuts the southern range, proving its later date. The valley formed by the change in angle is unflushed. The southern wall of the range is timber, and is boarded to ridge height. The roof is supported by a pair of king-post trusses with braces from the base of the king-post to the purlin locations, which are laid onto the principal rafters. A back purlin is also used at the northern hipped end (profile 2). The principal rafters rise from the tie-beams and the common rafters are set in mortices of the wall-plates, across the purlins and meeting at a central ridge piece that runs the axis of the building. At the mid point of the block, where a brick wall separates rooms 2 and 3 from each other, two struts have been added to help keep the roof level in the absence of a proper truss. The rafters and trusses are notably clean, and all exhibit saw marks rather than axe-marks or similar. This may be an indication that the roof is a modern replacement. None of the timbers have evidence for previous use. No trenails or iron nails were apparent in the roof assembly, suggesting the king-post trusses are made of unpegged mortis and tenon joints. The only fixings apparent are a pair of iron straps bolting the partition between rooms 1 and 2 to the tie beam of the truss. The roof is tiled and the ridges are sealed with half-round ridge tiles.



Plate 10: Stable King Post roof

3.7 West block

- 3.7.1 The western block appears to be of 20th century date, made of smooth red bricks laid in English bond with cementitious mortar. Three stable doors open westwards from three rooms. Each room has a concrete floor, white-painted walls and open to the roof. The western wall is boarded inside and out, and is constructed on a low wall. The wall appears to be solid concrete, but may be render over brick. The northern end of the block has a pair of doors virtually the width of the block, wide enough to allow access for a carriage. The gable end above the doors is boarded. The roof is tiled with flat interlocking roof tiles.
- 3.7.2 The southern room of the western block (Room 10) is virtually bare of fittings. A bucket and some cloths suggest that it may be used as a cleaners store. A tie beam at its northern end marks the division with Room 11 to the north, which is boards over studs. The tie-beam is notably smooth and in very good condition. The roof of this room is boarded on the inside, hiding evidence for a possible purlin roof or upper collars. The room is lit by a window above the door.
- 3.7.3 Room 11 is larger, and is used as a store for gardening equipment and chairs. A second stable door opens in the west side. The room is boarded on the interior, all painted, and in good condition.
- 3.7.4 The northernmost room was not accessible, the doors being locked. As well as having a stable door in the east side and the doors in the north end, there is a small window on the west side, providing further light.
- 3.7.5 The remarkably good condition of the brickwork, timberwork and external boarding, plus the roofing material, all suggest that this is a modern part of the building. Although it may have its basis in the 19th century, as suggested by the historic maps of the site.

3.8 The Environs

- 3.8.1 The stables and associated buildings surround a courtyard which has, a brick surface, the bricks laid on edge. Much of this is sealed by concrete. Between the two main wings of the stable is a hollow parallel to the south block. It may have been a manure pit for the sweepings from the stable block, or may be a historic feature. The background of the property is of medieval date, and there is a north-south hollow to the northeast of the stables. Possibly, these two hollows are remnants of a ditch around the entire farmstead.



Plate 11, Western central block

- 3.8.2 The hollow in front of the stables is sealed with concrete, and two additional building blocks have been raised on cast concrete foundations. These are built in the same style as the stable blocks, single storey gable ended brick buildings with pitched roofs and stable doors. The westernmost of the two blocks contains rooms. Two are used for domestic fowl, the rest are empty. Cockerels are in one compartment, guinea-fowl in the other. The block has concrete window lintels, the roof is a hipped purlin roof with flat interlocking tiles. It is built of similar style to the main structure, and does not detract from the group. A low wall with metal gate runs between this block and the western arm of the building. The brickwork is bonded into this building but abuts the main structure, showing it to be contemporary with these 20th century additions.
- 3.8.3 The easternmost building is clad in boards, and has a pitched tiled roof with gable ends. The doors are in the eastern side. There are two stable doors leading to individual areas that may have been used as stables. The floors are concrete. To the south is a room used as an office, and is accessed through a pair of doors.



Plate 12: Eastern central block

- 3.8.4 To the south of the block, the site is farmland, bound by hedges and fences. The field boundaries are fewer than shown on the Tithe Map, testament to the changing face of agriculture following mechanisation and more intensive farming in the 20th century.

4 Conclusions and Interpretation



Plate 13: Harps Farm, stables in the foreground.

The Structure

- 4.1 The core, earliest part of the stable block is the central part of the southern range, a timber framed loose-box built atop low ground walls with gabled ends and a boarded exterior. The north wall is half-rendered, and this may be the original finish. The original east wall was boarded from the ground to the apex of the gable and is still extant within later extensions. A ground-floor entrance in the east wall still exists. A door at eaves level indicates that there had been an upper floor more extensive than that currently present. It is tempting to describe the upper floor as a hay-loft. There is a building shown on Chapman and Andres' plan of the area (1777), but of such a scale and lack of detail make this somewhat unclear.
- 4.2 The large beams from a previous building in the principal structure of the loose-box could have derived from any of several sources: a previous timber framed building on the site may have been dismantled, or the timbers may have been purchased second-hand from any nearby farmstead or settlement. The re-use of many timbers in this building suggests that dendrochronological analysis of the major posts and tie-beams would not give a date for the construction of the earliest part of the building, only a date for the felling of the timbers prior to their initial use.
- 4.3 The presence of a loose-box on the site indicates husbandry and care of a substantial equine population. Loose-boxes are more than stabling and can be used for a variety of horse-related activities. These are larger spaces where sick or injured animals can be cared for, or new foals and mares housed. Also, they are suitable for rubbing down horses, tacking up and tacking off. The extra space compared to a small stable allows more room for these activities. The rooms are enclosed, and have to be sufficiently large to allow a horse to turn round and lie down, a minimum space of 3m by 3m. Although loose-boxes could have been used by other livestock, the alterations to this building for stabling and the identification on the Tithe Map of 1840 of the field to the south as the Stable Ley, suggests that the focus of this part of the farm was horses.
- 4.4 The initial build was extended. Most of the western extension appears to be the earliest; since when the roof leaned westwards, to 74°, the rafters of the extended area leaned with it. Only the two ends of the block above rooms 5 and 9 have properly set rafters. However, the east and west ends could be post-lean repairs to secure the structure.
- 4.5 Roof timbers of the eastern block overlie the repair to the southern roof. The map evidence, specifically the Tithe Map, shows this eastern block to be present by 1840. The new block is of a

much more solid build, the walls entirely of brick, inset with flint panels. The eastern block contains four regular sized stables, potentially for holding two horses each. This could be the building containing 'stabling for eight carthorses' as described in the 1923 sales document.

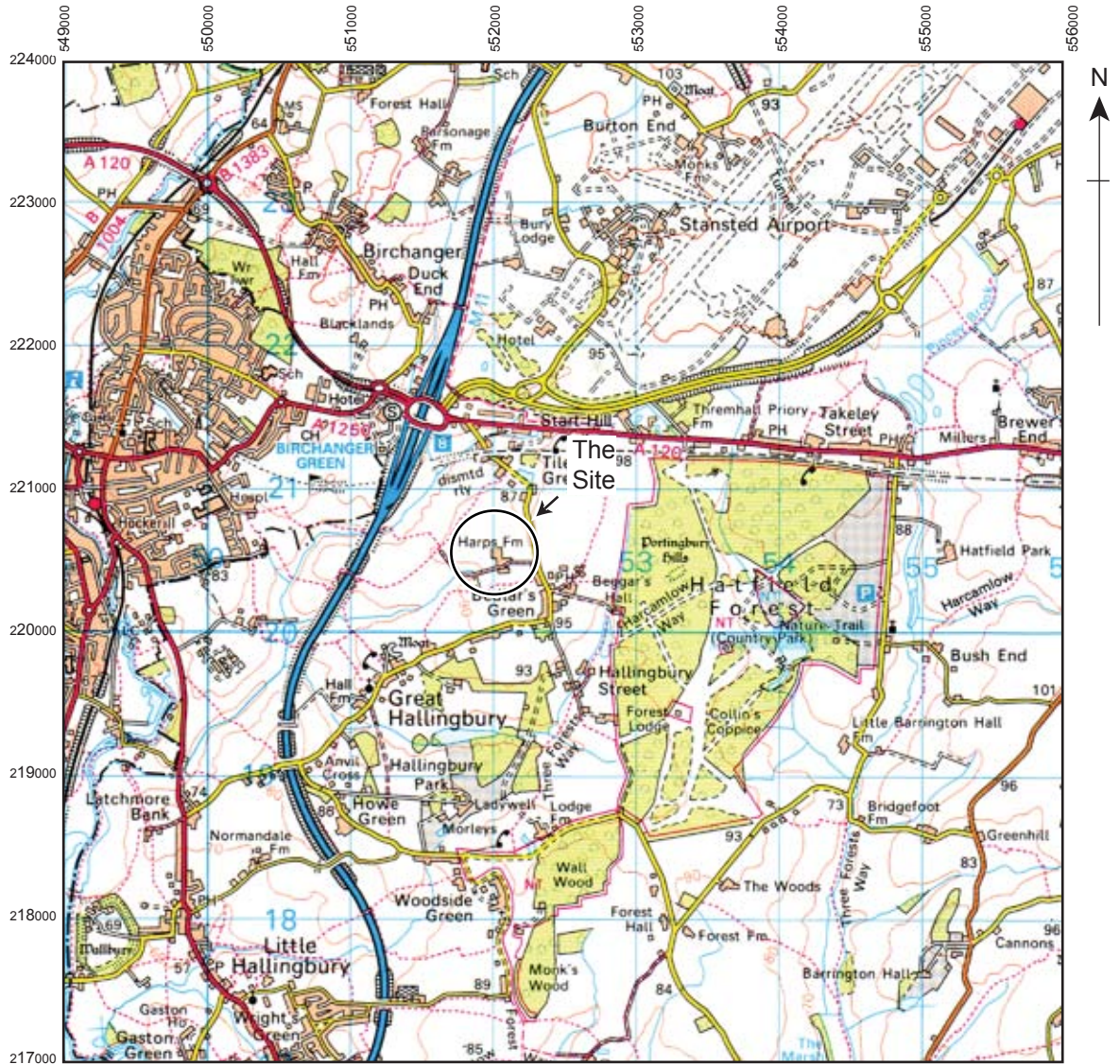
- 4.6 The western block is added to the western end of the south block. There is a block shown here in the late 19th century Ordnance Survey maps, but this block with its concrete floors, smooth timbers and well-finished walls, appears to owe more to a 20th century rebuild than being of any great historical merit. The two central buildings in the yard to the north of the main buildings appear to be of modern date, as shown by their pre-cast concrete elements, and are not shown on plan until 1951.
- 4.7 The group of stables and loose boxes that form the building under discussion lie on the south side of a courtyarded farm complex that may owe more to gradual evolution than a sudden influx of enthusiasm associated with fashion or the Model Farm Movement. The oldest building on the site is the early 15th century Hall House, still used as the principal dwelling on the site. This is presumably the dwelling of John-atte-Harpe, resident in 1420. The north side of the complex is dominated by the large 16th century barn, whose size is testament to the quantity of land farmed as well as the quantity of crops produced. The eastern side of the courtyard is formed by an open shed and one arm of the Stable, with access to the main house between. The south side is delineated by the Loose-box, and the rest of the farm complex is bound by a 2m high stone wall. The shed and stable block are later structures than the house and barn, but it seems probable that the earliest section is of 18th century date, since it predates the eastern row of stables that are shown on the Tithe Map.
- 4.8 The shed on the eastern side of the courtyard is built over a linear hollow running north-south. The looseboxes that are part of the building in this report are located immediately south of a linear hollow oriented east-west. It is tempting to interpret these two features as sections of a ditch, possibly suggesting a moat or partial moat around the medieval house, such as those present in the local area, for example, Stock Hall at Matching Green, at Matching, Little Laver, Rookwood Hall, Lea Hall, and Great Hallingbury itself.
- 4.9 The courtyard plan of Harps Farm may owe its layout to both the practicalities of using a formerly enclosed area as well as developments in farming during the 18th century. The layout of farm buildings around a courtyard dominated by the farmhouse is a typical mid 18th century layout, keeping animal husbandry and storage in the same area. Such a farm would have been self-reliant on foodcrops for the livestock and thus manure for the fields too. The livestock needed to be situated close to the barn, since waste products such as straw and chaff would be used as bedding and feed (*Wade Martins 2002*).
- 4.10 The ownership of Great Hallingbury Estate after 1725 by the Houblon family, of which the farmers at Harps Farm were tenants, will have influenced development of the site. Agricultural improvements which will have turned a profit for the tenants will also have ensured the long-term value of the property. To such an owner as the Houblon family, a long-term vision may be assumed. Changes to estates were frequently initiated by new ownership as well as new theories and practice, so the earliest part of the stable building may be of mid 18th century date. Throughout the late 18th and 19th century, improved techniques of animal husbandry as well as developing theory of land management could have influenced the development of the farm. Simple, practical arrangements within the stable and loose-boxes are proven by the existence of feeding stalls, storage areas, although in a building technology dominated by brick and wood, 19th or early 20th century stalling fashions and fixtures differ little from those used in the 18th century. However, loose-boxes are not really built until the late 18th century, so the function of the building must date

to after 1780. The building itself could have been an open stable that was converted following the new fashion.

- 4.11 The later development and enlargement of the Stable at Harps Farm is initially a repair: possibly the east and west ends of the loose-boxes were extended as a better means of repair than taking the leaning roof down. There is little to suggest the influence of the model farm movement about the courtyarded farm: it has no great extent, and has little architectural design until the eastern row of four stables are added. The stables have some architectural detail that surpasses functionality and is purely decorative; the use of flint panels in the east-facing side break up the potential blank façade of brickwork.
- 4.12 The addition of the western wing breaks the courtyarded feel of the farm complex, creating a barrier between the stables and the main house; the stable block becomes a self-enclosed unit. The addition of the two later blocks are functional, but are still confined within the courtyard precinct. These are of post-war date.
- 4.13 Practicalities of ventilation are evident in the new eastern range of stables. The windows are set high in the walls and above the doors. This provides ventilation without subjecting the horses to chills. The drainage channel in the floor also encourages good animal health, so the beasts are not living in their own filth. The enclosure of stabling instead of open animal shelters was a 19th century innovation. The lack of covered rides or highly decorative or designed buildings indicates that the horses stabled therein were primarily working horses rather than riding horses for the wealthy elite.
- 4.14 The Stable Block at Harps Farm can therefore be considered to owe some of its elements to advances in animal husbandry and farming theory in the late 18th century, some elements to Model Farm design, and some elements to more modern functional requirements. However, the layout of the whole farm complex may be considered to owe more to its origins as a medieval enclosed farmstead.

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Figure 1: Site Location

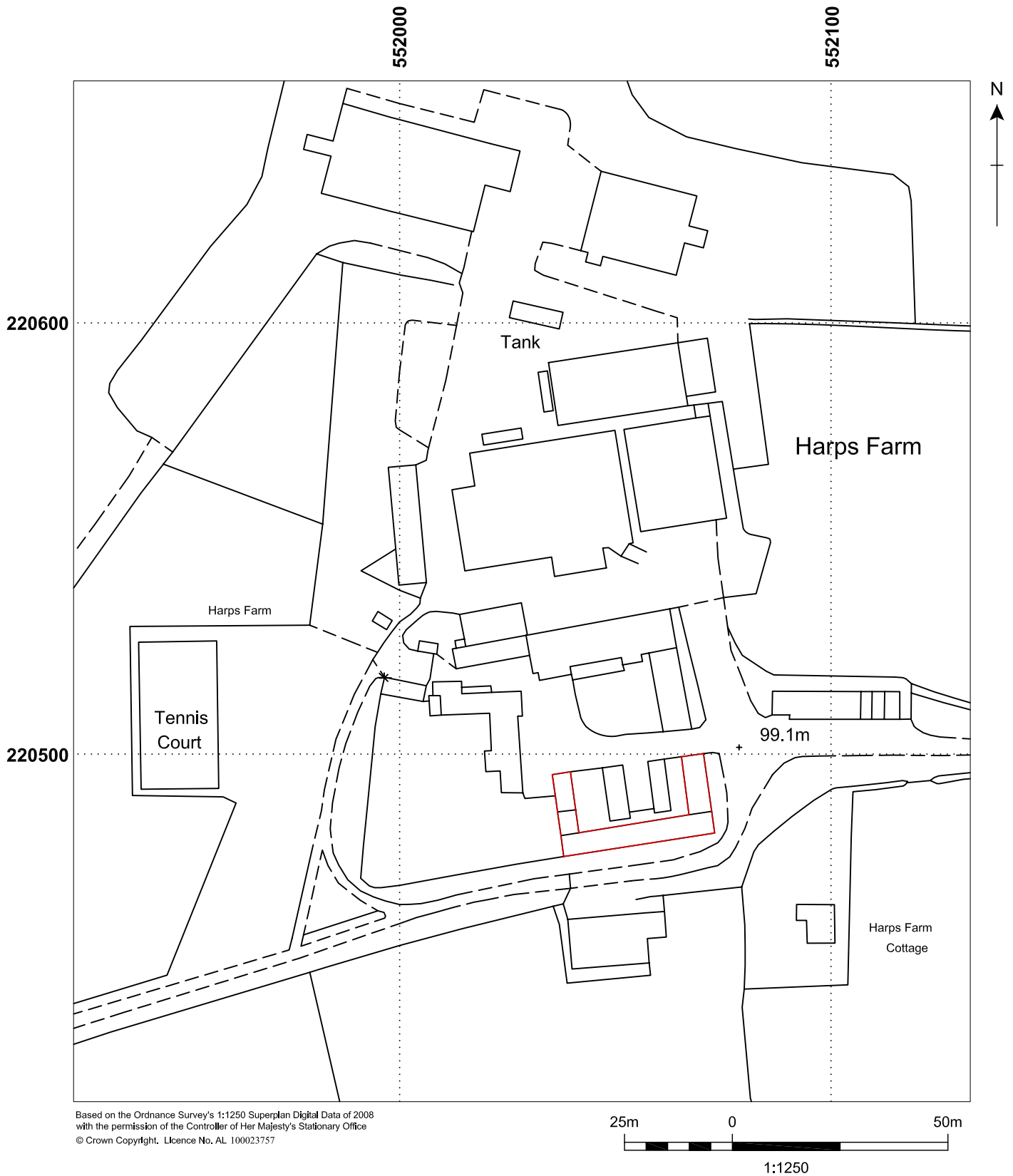


Figure 2: Detailed Building Location



Figure 3: Building Plan

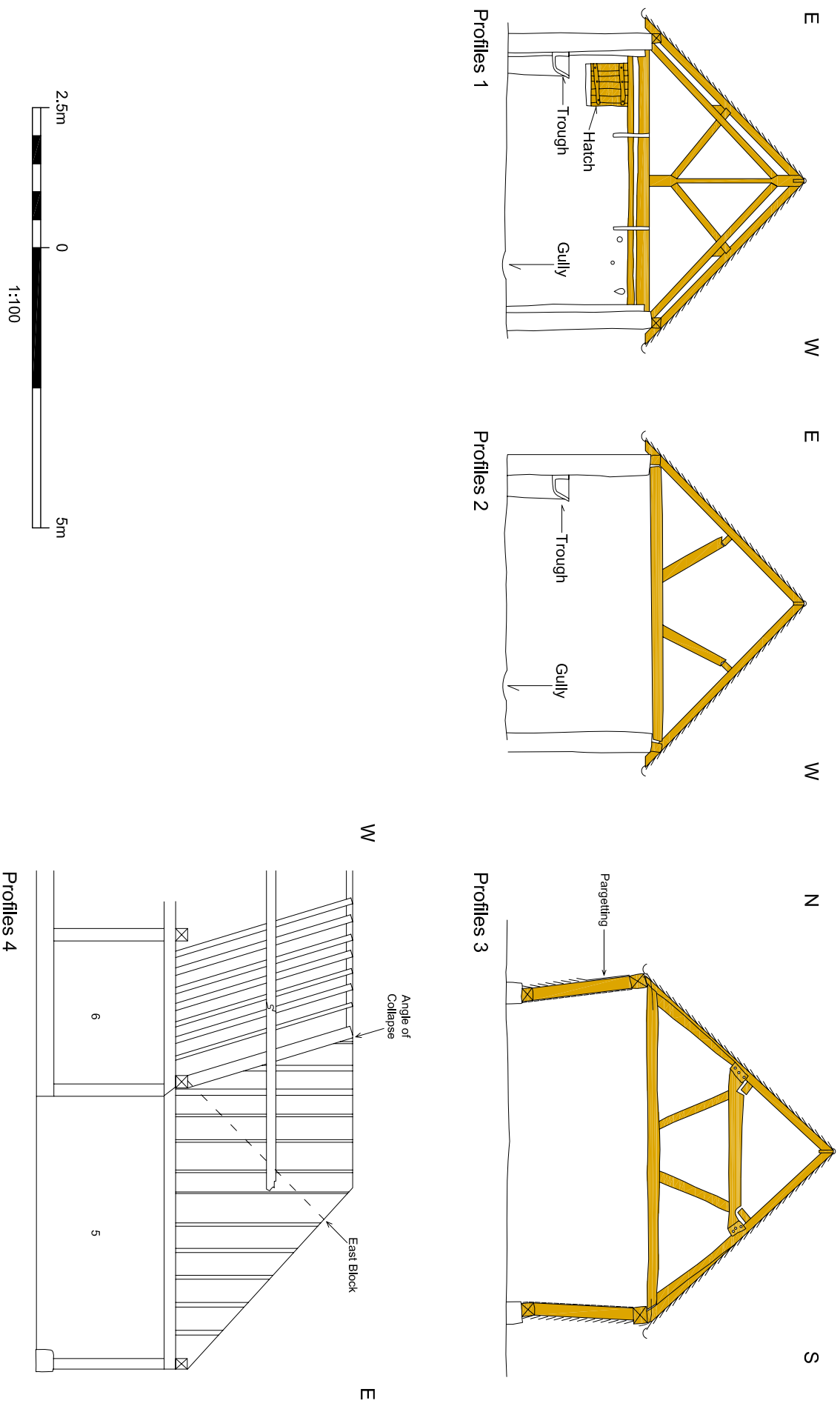


Figure 4: Building Profiles

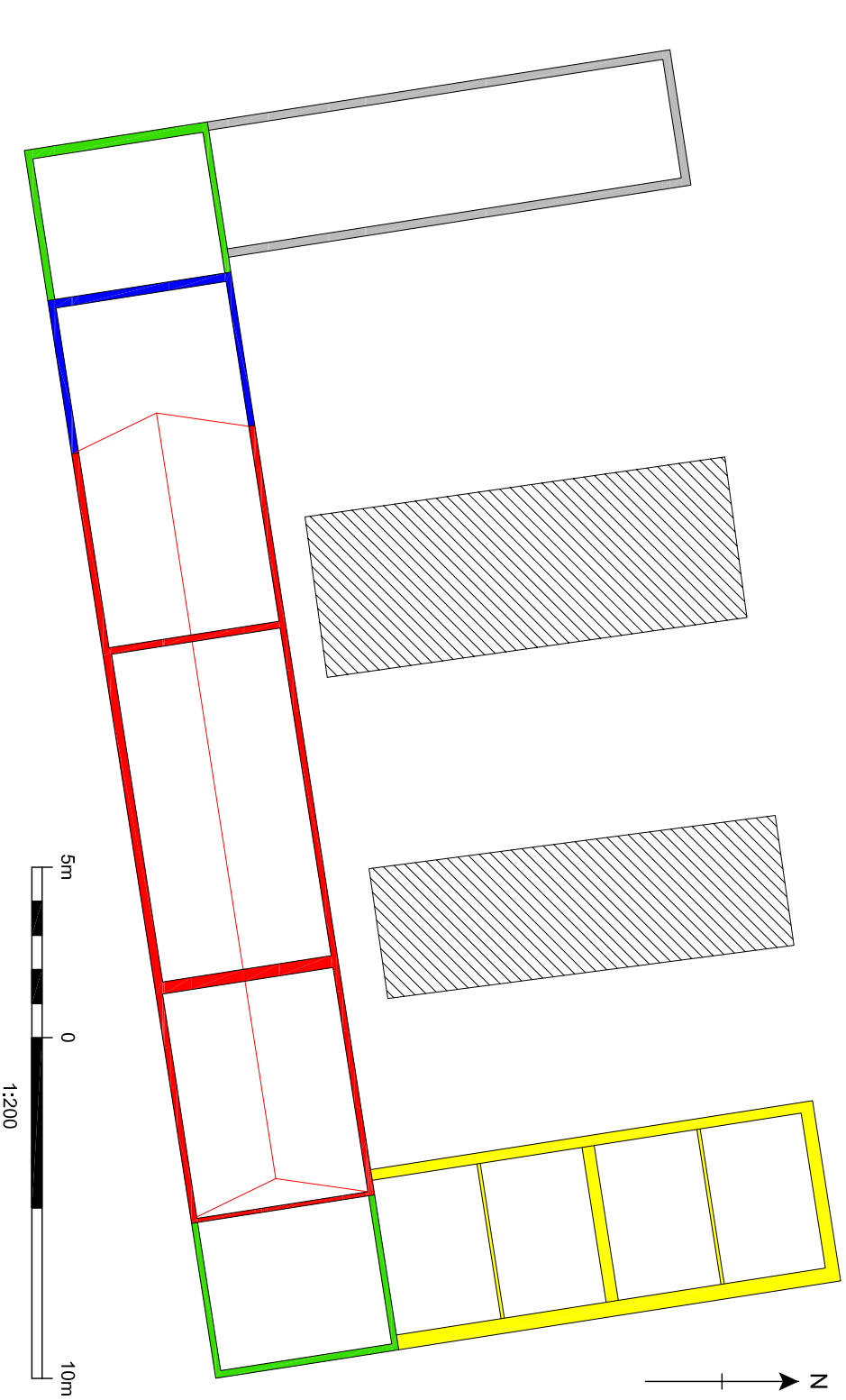


Figure 5: Building Phase Plan



Figure 6: Photo Location Plan

Appendices

Appendix A, Photographic Register

Photo	Description	View	Digital	B/W	Colour
001	Eastern Block	SE	Y		
002	Eastern Block	SE	Y		
003	Eastern Block	SE	Y		
004	Eastern section	S	Y		
005	Centre east block	SW	Y		
006	Centre west block	SW	Y		
007	West Block	SW	Y		
008	Centre west block	SE	Y		
009	Centre east block	SE	Y		
010	East block	SE	Y		
011	East block	S	Y		
012	East block	W	Y		
013	East block	W	Y		
014	Stable Block	NW	Y		
015	Stable Block	NW	Y		
016	Stable Block	NW	Y		
017	West end south range	N	Y		
018	South block	NE	Y		
019	Southeast corner	NW	Y		
020	Overview	W	Y		
021	Overview	W	Y		
022	Stable Gully	E	Y		
023	Stable Roof	E	Y		
024	Stable Truss 1	SSE	Y		
025	Stable Truss 1	S	Y		
026	Stable Truss 1	S	Y		
027	Stable Truss 1	S	Y		
028	North end of stable	-	Y		
029	Hatch, Room 1	SE	Y		
030	Fittings, Room 1	SW	Y		
031	Manger, Room 1	E	Y		
032	N wall, Room 2	NE	Y		
033	Room 2 S wall	SE	Y		
034	Truss 2	S	Y		
035	Truss 2	S	Y		
036	Room 3	E	Y		
037	Truss 3	SE	Y		
038	Room 3	S	Y		
039	Truss 3	S	Y		
040	Room 4	E	Y		
041	Stable door detail	SE	Y		
042	Cobbled entrance, Room 6	S	Y		
043	Tack room, part of room 6	W	Y		
044	End wall, Room 6	E	Y		
045	End wall, Room 6	E	Y		
046	Room 6 S wall	SE	Y		

Photo	Description	View	Digital	B/W	Colour
047	Room 6	W	Y		
048	Room 6	W	Y		
049	North wall and tank, room 5	N	Y		
050	Room 5 roof	NW	Y		
051	Old end wall, room 5	W	Y		
052	Room 5	S	Y		
053	Room 5	E	Y		
054	North wall, main block	SE	Y		
055	Room 7	E	Y		
056	Room 7 roof trusses	E	Y		
057	Room 7 roof trusses	W	Y		
058	Room 7	W	Y		
059	Room 7	W	Y		
060	Room 7	SW	Y		
061	Room 7	SW	Y		
062	Room 8	W	Y		
063	Room 8	S	Y		
064	Room 8	SE	Y		
065	Room 8	S	Y		
066	Room 8 floor	W	Y		
067	Room 8	S	Y		
068	Room 9	SW	Y		
069	Room 8	NE	Y		
070	Room 9	NW	Y		
071	West Block	W	Y		
072	Room 10	W	Y		
073	Room 10	NW	Y		
074	Room 11	W	Y		
075	Central west block	NE	Y		
076	Central west block	NW	Y		
077	Room 8 rafters	E	Y		
078	West end roof	W	Y		
079	Room 8	E	Y		
080	Room 8	E	Y		
081	Room 8	E	Y		
082	Room 9	SW	Y		
083	Room 9	SW	Y		
084	Room 9	N	Y		
085	Room 9	NE	Y		
086	Beam ,Rooms 8-9	W	Y		
087	Room 8	E	Y		
088	Room 8 west end	S	Y		
089	Overview	N	Y		
090	Room 6 roofspace	E	Y		
091	Room 6 roof space	E	Y		
092	Room 7 roof space	W	Y		
093	Room 7 Roof space	W	Y		
094	Room 8 upper floor	N	Y		

Appendix B, OASIS Form

OASIS ID: aocarcha1-50347

Project details

Project name Harps Farm

Short description of the project A level 2 Historic Building Record was conducted on the Stables at Harps Farm, a farmstead with its origins in the medieval period. The stables were of several phases, and formed a building facing into a courtyard. Many repairs and replacement beams within the building were clear, but the older parts are potentially of late 18th century or early 19th century date.

Project dates Start: 28-10-2008 End: 28-10-2008

Previous/future work No / Not known

Any project codes associated reference GH HB 08 - HER event no.

Any project codes associated reference 30275 - Contracting Unit No.

Any project codes associated reference UDT/0484/08/LB - Planning Application No.

Type of project Building Recording

Site status Listed Building

Current Land use Other 2 - In use as a building

Monument type STABLE Post Medieval

Significant Finds NONE None

Methods & 'Survey/Recording Of Fabric/Structure','Measured Survey','Photographic Survey'
techniques

Prompt Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG15

Project location

Country England

Site location ESSEX UTTLESFORD GREAT HALLINGBURY Harps Farm Stables
Block,Bedlars Green

Postcode CM22 7TL

Study area 400.00 Square metres

Site coordinates TL 5202 2050 51.8618740453 0.207958971629 51 51 42 N 000 12 28 E Point

Project creators

Name of AOC Archaeology Group
Organisation

Project brief Essex County Council - Historic Environment Branch
originator

Project design Les Capon AOC Archaeology
originator

Project Andy Leonard
director/manager

Project supervisor Les Capon

Type of Developer
sponsor/funding
body

Project archives

Physical Archive No
Exists?

Digital Archive Saffron Walden
recipient

Digital Archive ID GH HB 08

Digital Contents 'Survey'

Digital Media 'Images raster / digital photography','Text'
available

Digital Archive any digital images and final report on disk
notes

Paper Archive Saffron Walden Museum
recipient

Paper Archive ID GH HB 08

Paper Contents 'Survey'

Paper Media 'Correspondence','Drawing','Microfilm','Miscellaneous
available Material','Photograph','Plan','Report','Unpublished Text'

Paper Archive notes Museum will likely issue an accession for the archive

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title Historic Building Recording at Harps Farm,Bedlars Green,Great Hallingbury

Author(s)/Editor(s) Havis,R

Date 2008

Issuer or publisher Essex County Council

Place of issue or publication or Historic Environment, Chelmsford publication

Description A4 job brief

Project bibliography 2

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title stable block at Harps Barn, Bedlars Green, Great Hallingbury: a written scheme of investigation

Author(s)/Editor(s) Capon, L.

Date 2008

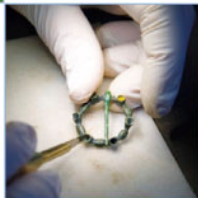
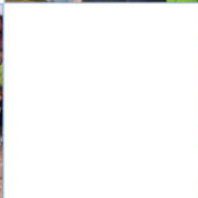
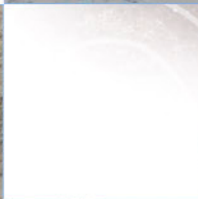
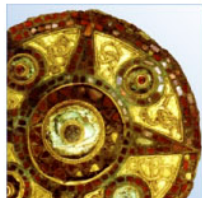
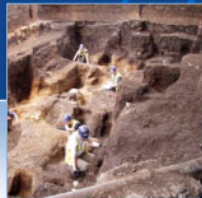
Issuer or publisher AOC Archaeology Group

Place of issue or publication or AOC Archaeology, Twickenham publication

Description Colour A4 text and 5 site location figures

Entered by les capon (les.capon@aoc archaeology.com)

Entered on 3 November 2008



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