

**Barn at
Lake Farm,
Rougham, Suffolk
RGH 061**

Heritage Asset Assessment

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Lake Farm,
Rougham Green,
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(TL 903 615)

Heritage Asset Assessment

This report provides a written and photographic analysis and record at English Heritage (2006) Level 2 of a traditional timber-framed barn. It has been prepared to a specification written by Edward Martin of Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Service (ref. SpecHAA_LakeFm_Rougham_pre_2011, dated 26th July 2011), and is intended to inform and accompany a planning application for conversion.

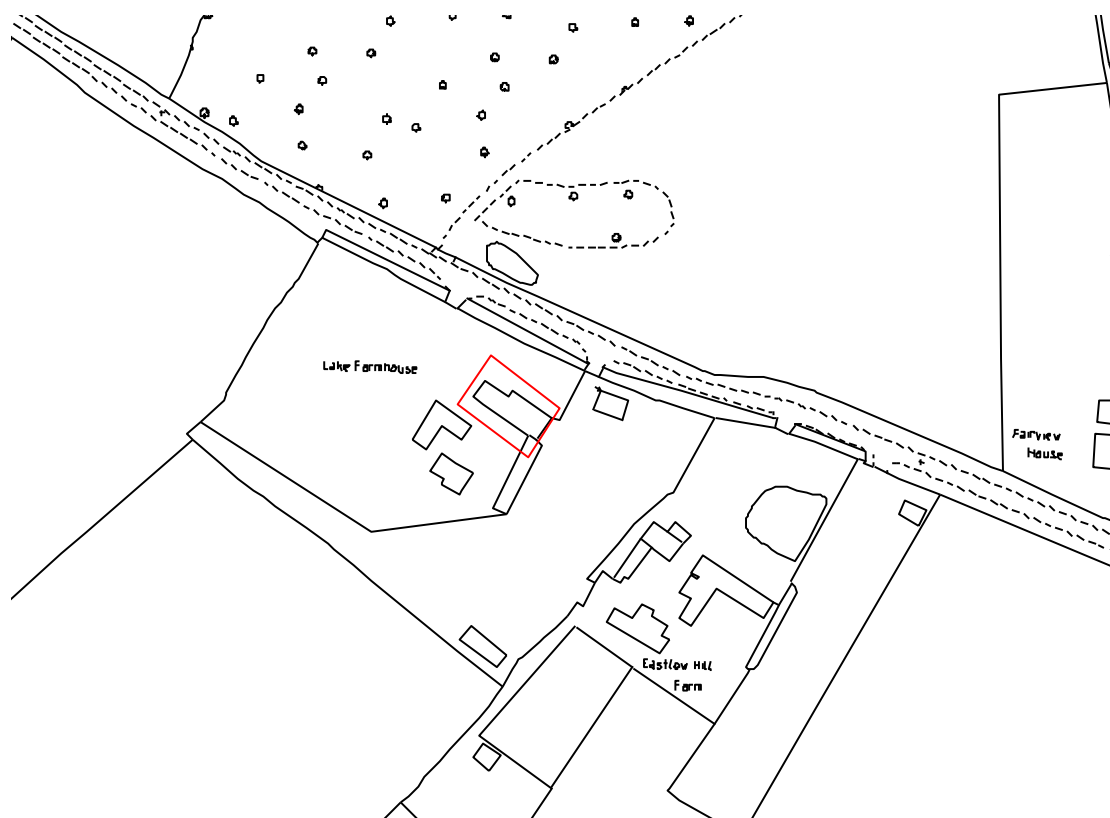
Introduction

The report is accompanied by a CD containing a photographic record in the form of 55 digital images of 21 megapixels (Appendix 1), but also includes 10 printed photographs of key features to illustrate the text (Appendix 2). Each image is described in a separate schedule and the site was inspected on 7th September 2011.

Summary

Lake Farm lies in open countryside approximately 0.5 km west of Rougham Green and 1.5 km south-west of St Mary's church. The farmhouse is a timber-framed and thatched building which is reliably reported to date from the mid-17th century but is not listed. The property was shown on the Rougham enclosure map of 1813 with a barn on the same site as the present timber-framed and weatherboarded structure of five bays, but its outline differs significantly and the surviving fabric probably represents a rebuilding of *circa* 1820. Much of the framing, which incorporates arch-braced tie-beams flanking the central threshing bay in the medieval tradition, may have been re-used from its predecessor, including a course of dressed stone of probable medieval origin in its brick plinth.

The barn retains its original southern door jambs together with a rear lean-to designed to extend the length of the threshing floor, and is typical of the many built in Suffolk during and immediately after the Napoleonic wars. Despite this point of historic interest, however, key elements of the structure have been lost and it no longer meets the English Heritage criteria for listing: the original roof was probably designed for thatch but was replaced in the mid-20th century by a shallow-pitched structure covered with corrugated iron, and much of the eastern gable was removed to accommodate a new vehicle entrance. The external cladding and entrance doors also date from this 20th century refurbishment, although some good 19th century boarding survives within the rear lean-to and two of the four arch-braces remain intact. A building adjoining the barn's western gable may have been a contemporary stable and granary but was entirely rebuilt in cement block-work in recent years to form a garage, while the former shelter-shed attached to its southern elevation is an addition of the mid-19th century which has been converted into loose boxes and also re-roofed with corrugated iron.



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Figure 1
Modern Ordnance Survey

Enclosing the barn in red and showing the L-shaped farmhouse immediately to the south-west. The survey appears to pre-date the rebuilding of the shed at the western end of the barn as its southward projection is not present. See figure 5 for more detail.

Documentary and Cartographic Evidence

Lake Farm lies in open countryside approximately 0.5 km west of Rougham Green and 1.5 km south-west of St Mary's church. The farmhouse is a timber-framed and thatched building at right-angles to the nearby lane and is believed by the present owner to date from the mid-17th century (citing a report by Mrs Sylvia Colman) but is not listed. The property was not inspected internally for the purpose of this survey.

The timber-framed and weatherboarded barn forms the north-eastern side of a small yard to the rear (east) of the house with a single-storied brick shed projecting from the eastern end of its southern elevation. The Suffolk Record Office does not possess a tithe map for Rougham parish, but the enclosure map of 1813 shows a barn on the same site (figure 2). The present barn dates from a similar period and it is impossible to determine from the map alone whether it depicts the existing building or its predecessor: the complexity of the outline on the map suggests the presence of adjoining sheds to both north and south of which there is no evidence today, and it is more likely, in my view, that it shows an earlier range of buildings. There is nothing, for example, to suggest that the central section of the northern wall, which ostensibly lacked an adjoining shed in 1813, was ever exposed to the elements.

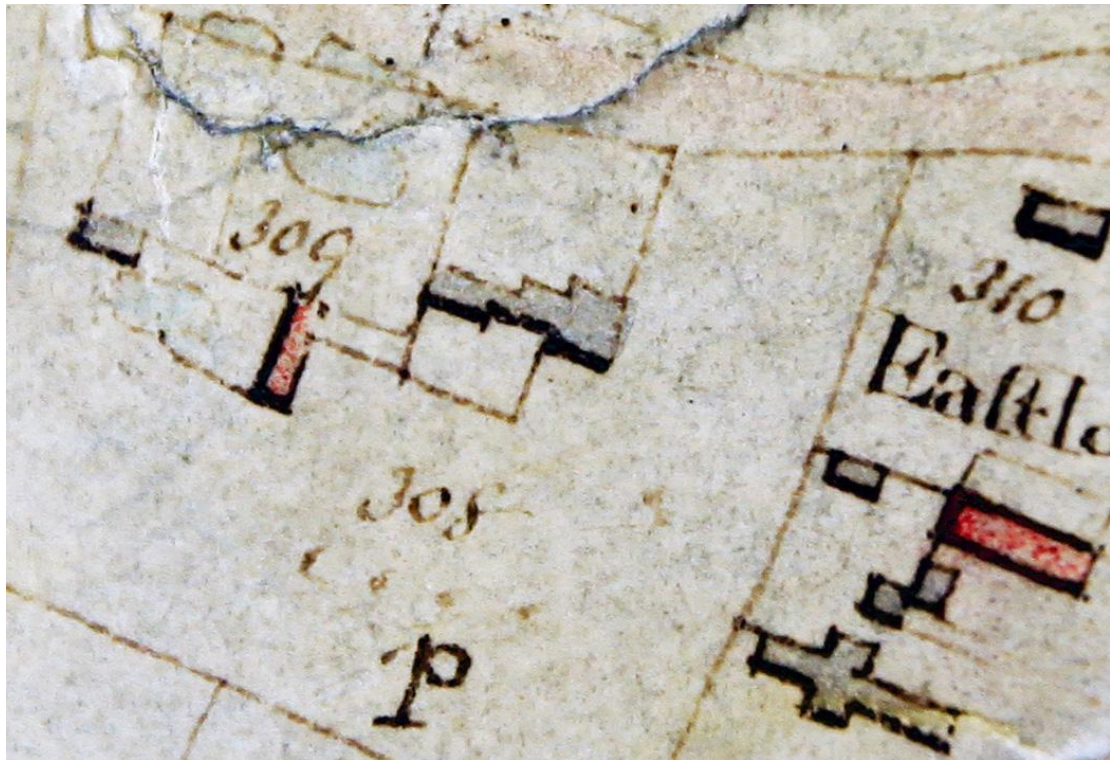


Figure 2. The Rougham enclosure map of 1815 (Suffolk Record Office HA 534/7592) showing the farmhouse in red to the left and the irregular outline of a barn with attached sheds in the centre.

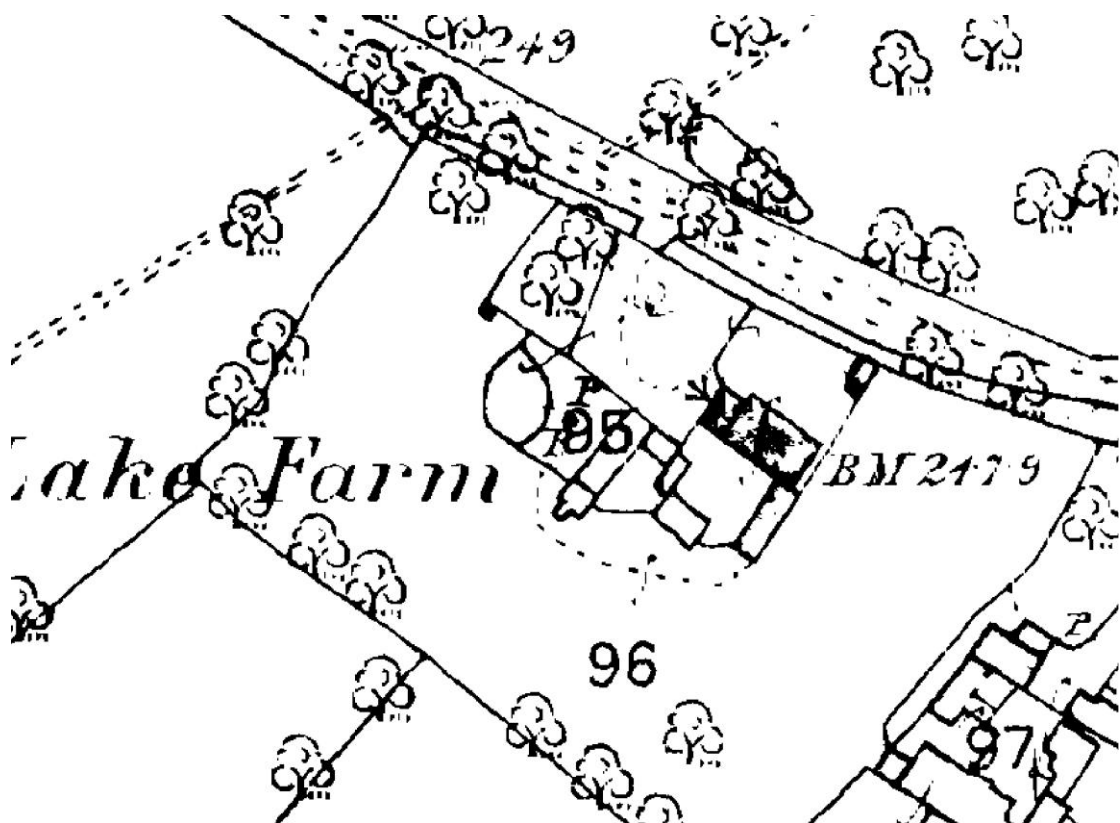


Figure 3. The First Edition 25 inch Ordnance Survey of 1884, showing the present rectangular outline of the barn with the shelter-shed to the south-east and a narrow structure to the west that was rebuilt in recent years to form a garage.

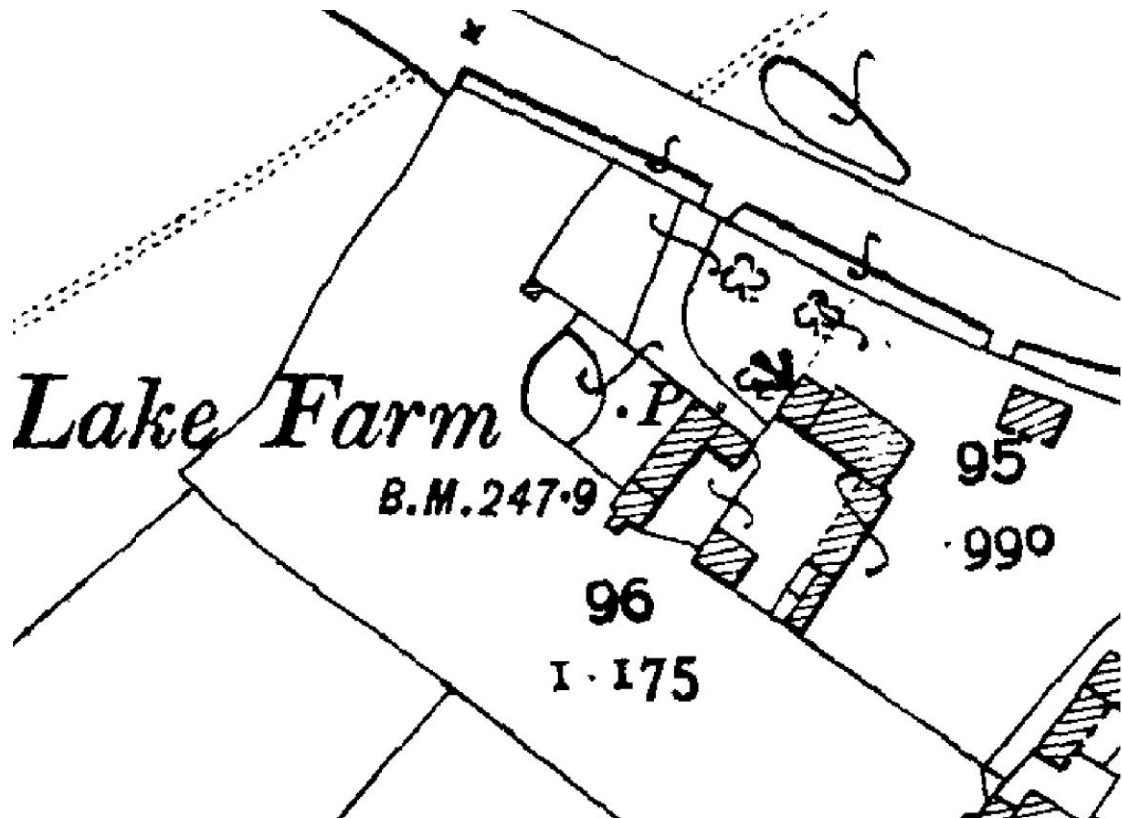


Figure 4
Second Edition 25 inch Ordnance Survey of 1904, indicating the open-sided western elevation of the shelter-shed by a broken line.

The Ordnance Survey of 1884 indicates a major refurbishment of the farm buildings during the mid-19th century (figure 3). The house had been provided with a new rear wing and the unusual outline of the barn on the enclosure map had been replaced by the simple rectangle of the existing building. The shelter-shed (building 4 in figure 5) had been added to the south, and the narrower structure adjoining the barn's western gable is understood to have formed a granary rebuilt by the present owner after his purchase of the property in the 1980s. The Ordnance Survey of 1904 shows the buildings in greater detail and clearly indicates that the entire western elevation of the shelter-shed was open to the yard in the usual manner of shelter-sheds for cattle: the building's location in the corner of an enclosed yard demonstrates that it was not designed as a cart lodge (which would have been placed at the entrance to the site). The narrow range to the south of the shelter-shed possessed a pair of very small yards and was probably a pig sty but was replaced by a building of cement block-work in the 1980s.

Building Analysis

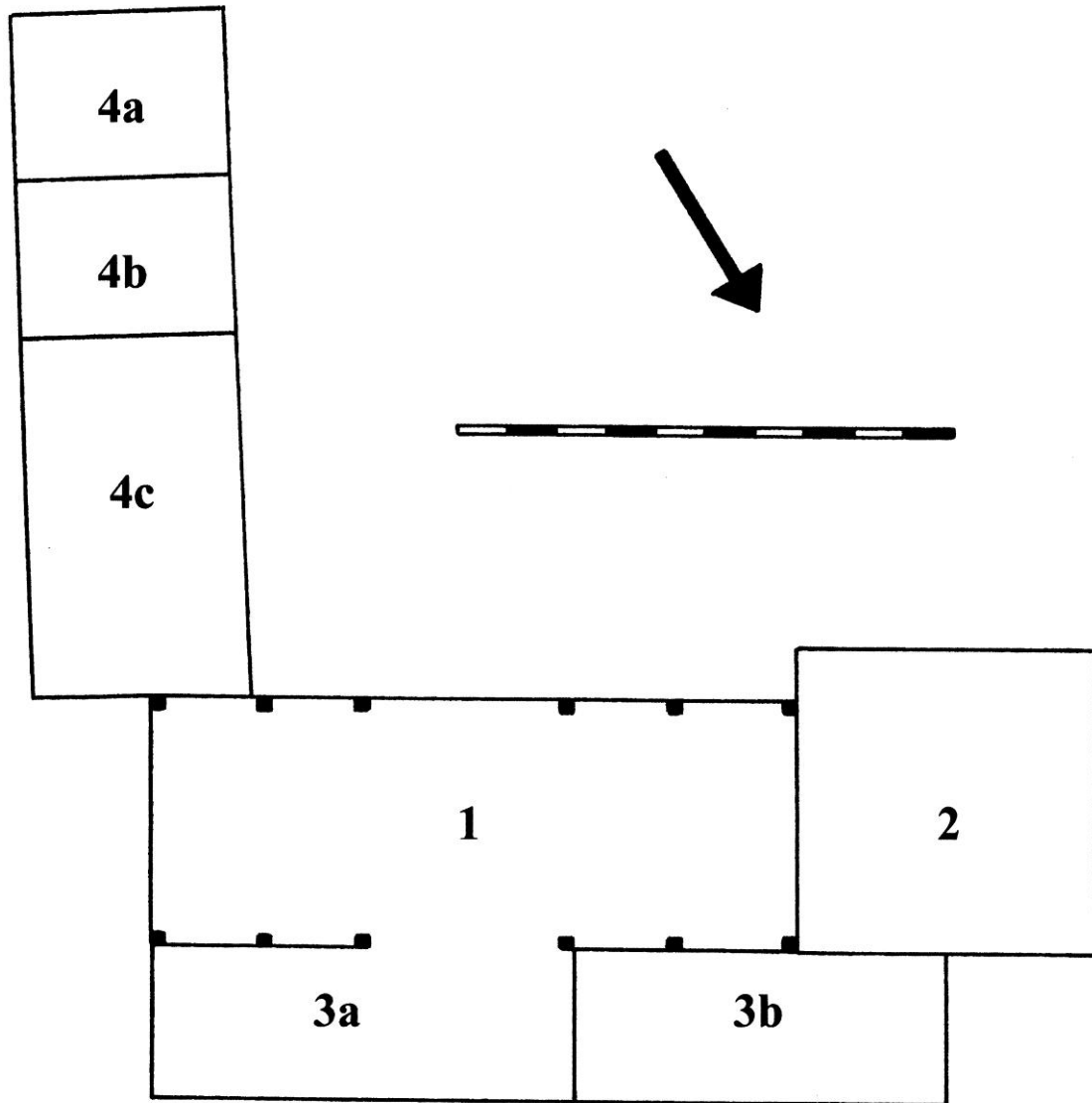


Figure 5

Schematic ground plan of the barn and attached sheds, identifying the bays and principal compartments for ease of reference in the text and photographs. Scale in metres.

Key:

1. Early-19th century (*circa* 1820) timber-framed and weatherboarded threshing barn of five bays with intermediate trusses dividing the outer bays (i.e. with tie-beams and posts without jowls but lacking arch-braces). Arch-braced tie-beams flanking central bay (northern arch-braces removed). Original door jambs survive to southern entrance. Tall red-brick plinth incorporating re-used ashlar (dressed stone) of possible medieval origin. Concrete floors but with beaten earth to threshing bay (presumably where the brick threshing floor has been removed). 20th century shallow-pitched softwood roof structure covered with corrugated iron. Pegged primary wall-braces and much re-used timber. External weatherboarding and doors largely renewed in 20th century. No evidence of studs to rear of threshing bay suggesting it always adjoined a rear lean-to. The wall framing substantially intact but with 20th century vehicle doors in

the eastern gable and a door to the loft over the adjoining modern garage interrupting the central post of the western gable.

2. Late-20th century garage of cement block-work disguised externally with weatherboarding to match the adjoining barn. Incorporating a modern false jetty (first-floor overhang) to its western gable. Built by the present owner on the site of a demolished 19th century granary (probably a stable or vehicle shed with hay loft or granary above). Of no historic value and not discussed further below.

3 Timber-framed and weatherboarded lean-to shed divided into two compartments but formerly with an additional compartment behind the threshing floor. Probably contemporary with the barn but now with vehicle doors in both gables. Glazed pantile roof.

4. Mid-19th century red-brick former shelter-shed, probably for cattle and originally with an open arcade to the yard on the west but now enclosed by mid-20th century boarded studwork and divided into three loose boxes by two late-20th century partitions of cement block-work. The original softwood clasped-purlin roof structure probably designed for pantiles but now covered with corrugated iron. Of limited historic value and not discussed further below.

The original barn at Lake Farm is a timber-framed and weatherboarded structure in five bays on a north-west/south-east axis (parallel to the nearby road) which extends to 12.8 m in length by 4.9 m in overall width (42 ft by 16 ft). Its walls rise to 3.2 m (10.5 ft) above the internal concrete floor and consist of oak studs of varying scantling interrupted by straight primary braces that are tenoned and pegged to the frame. The external ground to the southern yard is 0.5 m lower and the sill beams rest on a tall red-brick plinth of 1 m in height which incorporates ashlar blocks in its lower courses. These blocks are typical of those found within a 10 miles radius of Bury St Edmunds and may have been salvaged from the town's monastic buildings. Many individual studs contain mortises and other features that do not relate to their present positions and are clearly re-used from older buildings, although the principal timbers are primary and well hewn, with neatly cut jowls to the heads of the storey posts. The central bay is flanked by open trusses with arch-braced tie-beams, but the two northern braces have been removed and the entire roof was rebuilt at a shallow pitch and covered with corrugated iron in the mid-20th century. The original roof was probably steeply pitched for thatch like most barns of this quality and period. The intermediate posts and tie-beams of the outer bays lack jowls and braces of any kind.

The southern wall retains the original door jambs of the principal entrance, both set inside the storey posts and interrupting the sill beams. Nothing remains of the brick threshing floor that might have been expected here but an area of beaten earth and chalk between the modern concrete of the outer bays probably indicates its position. The roof plate has been renewed between the two jambs but is intact elsewhere. The present vehicle entrance in the eastern gable is a 20th century insertion (which has destroyed most of the framing), as is the door to the loft over the modern garage (2) which interrupts a central intermediate post in the opposite gable. The central part of the rear (north-eastern) roof plate lacks stud mortises and would have abutted a lean-to with low doors designed to increase the length of the threshing floor in the standard manner. The present lean-to (3) extends along the entire length of the barn (and overlaps the garage) and has been much rebuilt but appears to reflect the barn's original layout: the external boards of the rear walls (visible within the lean-to) are butted rather than lapped (except where they have been renewed at lower levels) and show no signs of exposure to the elements – they are not painted, tarred or weathered. The central area of the lean-to adjoining the threshing floor was formerly divided from the eastern section of the shed as it remains divided from the western section (3b), and these two outer areas are now used as

tractor sheds. When first built these side sheds are likely to have been grain stores. The external cladding of the southern and eastern elevations of the barn was renewed in the 20th century along with the entrance doors.

Historic Significance

The barn is a typical threshing barn of modest proportions with carpentry features associated with the first quarter of the 19th century, when many similar barns were built in Suffolk as the sharp rise in grain prices during and immediately after the Napoleonic wars (which restricted imports) resulted in an increase in cereal production and capital investment. By the 1840s, for example, arch-braces had been replaced by bolted knee-braces and primary braces were usually nailed rather than tenoned to their frames. The building is accordingly of some historic interest, retaining much of its wall fabric (including re-used stone of potentially medieval origin in its plinth, and two of its four tie-beam arch-braces), but has been much depleted by the loss of its roof and the possibly contemporary stable or granary on the west which has been completely rebuilt in block-work. Given the extent of these alterations it fails to meet the English Heritage criteria for listing despite its relatively early origin.

Appendix 1 (on accompanying CD): Full Photographic Record

Descriptions of Photographs in Appendix 1

1. General view of site from north-west showing barn to left and farmhouse to right.
2. General view of site from south-west showing farmhouse to left and barn in rear to right.
3. General view of site from west showing farmhouse to right and barn in rear to left.
4. Exterior from north showing overhanging gable of 1980s garage (2) to right and lean-to shed (3) to left.
5. Exterior from north showing glazed pantiles of 1980s garage (2) and lean-to shed (3) with corrugated iron to roof of main barn (1).
6. Exterior from north-east showing 20th century vehicle doors to barn (1) in centre & lean-to (3a) right with brick shed (4) to left.
7. Detail of brickwork to eastern external corner of brick shed (4) showing gable of barn (1) to right.
8. Eastern exterior of brick shed (4) from south showing cement-block addition of 1980s to left.
9. Exterior from west showing house to right with brick shed (4) in centre & barn (1) and 1980s garage (2) to left.
10. Southern exterior of pantiled 1980s garage (2) with corrugated iron roof and tall brick plinth of barn (1) to right.
11. Detail of red-brick to southern exterior of western bay of barn (1) showing re-used ashlar.
12. Detail of southern brick plinth of barn showing re-used ashlar with central entrance to right.
13. Southern exterior of barn (1) showing 20th century weatherboarding and central doors with original brick plinth to left.
14. Originally open western exterior of brick shelter-shed (4) showing 20th century boarded infill.
15. Southern external gable of brick shelter-shed (4) seen from 1980s block-work addition.
16. Interior from west of southern compartment of brick shelter-shed (4a) showing gable to right & block-work internal partition to left.
17. Interior from east of southern compartment of brick shelter-shed (4a) showing later studwork of open arcade.

18. Interior from west of central compartment of shelter shed (4b) showing 20th century block-work partitions to left & right.
19. Interior from east of central compartment of shelter shed (4b) showing 20th century studwork to formerly open eastern arcade.
20. Southern exterior of barn (1) from northern compartment of shelter-shed (4c) showing brickwork of latter to right.
21. Interior of northern compartment of shelter-shed (4c) from north showing brickwork of eastern rear wall to left.
22. Clapped-purlin roof structure of brick shelter-shed (4c) seen from north.
23. 20th century boarded infill of formerly open eastern interior of northern compartment of shelter-shed (4c).
24. Detail of eastern roof-plate at northern end of shelter-shed showing mortise of removed arcade post.
25. Interior of garage (2) from south showing door to lean-to shed (3b) to right.
26. Interior of garage (2) from north showing modern cement and softwood fabric.
27. Internal western gable of upper storey of 1980s garage (2) showing softwood roof structure.
28. Interior of loft above 20th century garage (2) from west showing door to barn (1).
29. Interior of lean-to tractor shed (3b) from west showing door to 1980s garage (2) to right.
30. Detail of brick plinth of barn (1) from lean-to shed (3b) showing re-used ashlar in lower courses.
31. Unpainted boarded exterior of western bays of barn (1) from lean-to shed (3b) to north.
32. Interior of lean-to shed (3b) from west showing door to eastern lean-to (3a) with barn (1) to right.
33. Interior of lean-to shed (3a) from east showing door to western section (3b) and rear door of central threshing floor to right.
34. Interior of lean-to shed (3a) from west showing central bay of barn (1) to right.
35. Interior of eastern lean-to shed (3a) showing unpainted boarded cladding of barn (1).
36. Interior of barn (1) from western gable showing original arch-braces flanking central bay right & positions of removed braces left.
37. Interior of barn (1) from west showing original arch-braces flanking central threshing bay to right.

38. Southern interior of barn (1) showing doors of central bay to left and primary braces pegged to intermediate post to right.
39. Detail of ground sill to west of central southern entrance interrupted by original jamb of doorway.
40. 20th century softwood roof structure of barn (1) from west showing removed northern arch-braces to tie-beams to left.
41. Detail from east of well-cut jowl to western storey post of southern entrance showing original door jamb to left.
42. Interior of western bays of barn (1) from east showing primary wall braces and door to loft over garage (2) in gable.
43. Detail of central post of internal western gable of barn (1) with pegged primary braces cut by door to loft (2).
44. Southern interior of western bays of barn (1) showing typical framing with pegged primary braces interrupting studs.
45. Detail of jowled south-western corner post of barn (1) showing waney timber and pegged primary wall braces.
46. Northern interior of western bays of barn (1) showing face-halved and bladed scarf joint behind storey post of central bay to right.
47. Northern roof-plate of central bay of barn (1) showing lack of stud mortises adjoining rear lean-to (3a).
48. Detail from west of floor of beaten chalk and clay in central bay, showing modern concrete of western bays in foreground.
49. Southern interior of eastern bays of barn (1) showing variable studs interrupted by primary braces.
50. Original tie-beam above intermediate post in eastern half of southern interior of barn (1).
51. Jowled storey post and original arch-brace bearing chiselled carpenter's numeral II to east of southern entrance with jamb to right.
52. Internal eastern gable of barn (1) showing 20th century inserted vehicle doors.
53. Northern interior of eastern bays of barn (1) showing primary braces pegged to intermediate post & empty mortises in re-used timber.
54. Detail from east of northern jowled storey post to east of central bay showing face-halved scarf and re-used timber.
55. Interior of eastern lean-to (3a) from east showing mortises of removed partition adjoining central bay of barn (1).

(Photographic Appendix 2 follows on pp. 11-15)

Appendix 2 (pp. 11-15): Selected Printed Photographs



Illus. 1 The exterior of the barn from the north showing the glazed pantiles of the modern (1980s) garage with overhanging upper storey to the right and the lean-to shed (3) to the left. The corrugated iron roof of the main barn (1) is visible to the rear.



Illus. 2 The exterior from the east showing the inserted vehicle doors in the gables of the barn (1, centre) and the lean-to shed (3a, right) with the brick shelter-shed (4) to the left.



Illus. 3 The exterior from the west showing the unlisted but reputed 17th century farmhouse to the right with the brick shelter-shed (4) in the centre and the barn (1) and 1980s garage (2) to the left.



Illus. 4 The southern exterior of the barn (1) showing its 20th century weatherboarding and central doors with the original brick plinth contained re-used ashlar (dressed stone) to the left.



Illus. 5 The originally open western exterior of the brick shelter-shed (4) showing its 20th century boarded infill and corrugated iron roof.



Illus. 6 The interior of the loft above the 20th century garage (2) from the west showing its cement-block fabric (hidden by weatherboarding to the exterior) and the door to the barn (1).



Illus. 7 The interior of the lean-to shed (3a) from the west showing the entrance to the central bay of the barn (1) to the right and the fragmentary remains of the boarded partition which originally divided the area adjoining the threshing floor from the eastern shed beyond.



Illus. 8 The late-20th century softwood roof structure of the barn (1) from the west, showing the two original arch-braces tie-beams flanking the central bay to the right and the positions of the removed northern arch-braces to the left.



Illus. 9 The northern interior of the eastern bays of the barn (1) showing a typical section of wall fabric: The diagonal primary braces which interrupt the vertical studs are tenoned and pegged to the intermediate post in the centre. Many timbers, including the weathered post, contain empty mortises and have been re-used from earlier buildings.



Illus. 10 A detail from the east of the northern jowled storey post to the east of the central bay showing a face-halved and bladed scarf joint in the roof-plate and copious evidence of re-used timber. The butted external boards shown here suggest the rear lean-to is an original feature.