

Suffolk County Council
Archaeological Service

Wixoe Barns Wixoe, Suffolk

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Archaeological Record



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Wixoe Barns, Wixoe, Suffolk

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An Archaeological Record

This report provides a written and photographic record at English Heritage (2006) Level 2 of an unlisted barn and adjoining stable known as Wixoe Barns. It has been prepared to a brief designed by the Archaeological Service of Suffolk County Council (Dr Jess Tipper, 30 March 2007) and is intended to fulfil a condition of planning permission for domestic conversion (St Edmundsbury Borough Council Application SE/07/0333).

Introduction

The following written report is accompanied by a CD containing a full photographic record in the form of 8.2 megapixel digital images (Appendix 1) but also includes printed photographs of key features (Appendix 2). Each digital image is separately described in the written report, and the CD also includes the report in MS Word format. The building was inspected on May 4th 2007, when the accompanying photographs were taken (wherever practical a white metre rod with centimetre subdivisions has been included for scale purposes).

Summary

The complex of buildings known as Wixoe Barns adjoins the southern edge of the lane between Wixoe and Ains Ford, some 200 metres south-west of the Norman church of St Leonard. The site was formerly known as Hoy's Farm. The timber-framed and weather-boarded barn and former stable which form the subject of this report date from *circa* 1910 and are

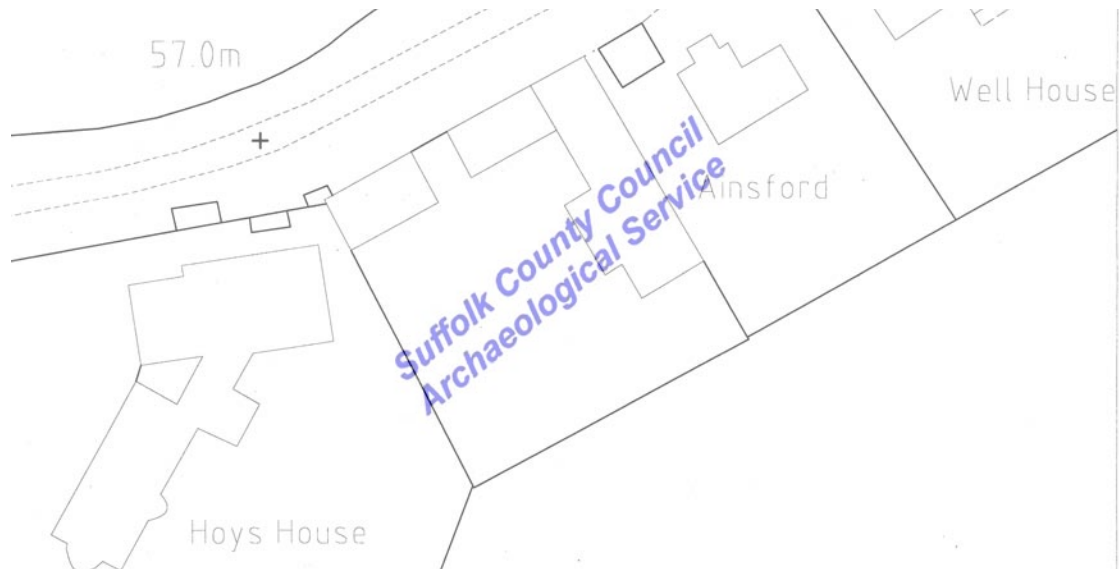
not shown on the Ordnance Survey of 1902. The two buildings lie at right-angles to the lane, while the 1902 survey appears to show a large barn with twin porches alongside the lane and a series of animal enclosures attached to its rear elevation. There is now no trace of the farmhouse which lay behind this earlier barn (close to the present barn's southern gable) and the

existing building known as Hoy's House, which lies in a walled enclosure to the west, dates only from the late-20th century.

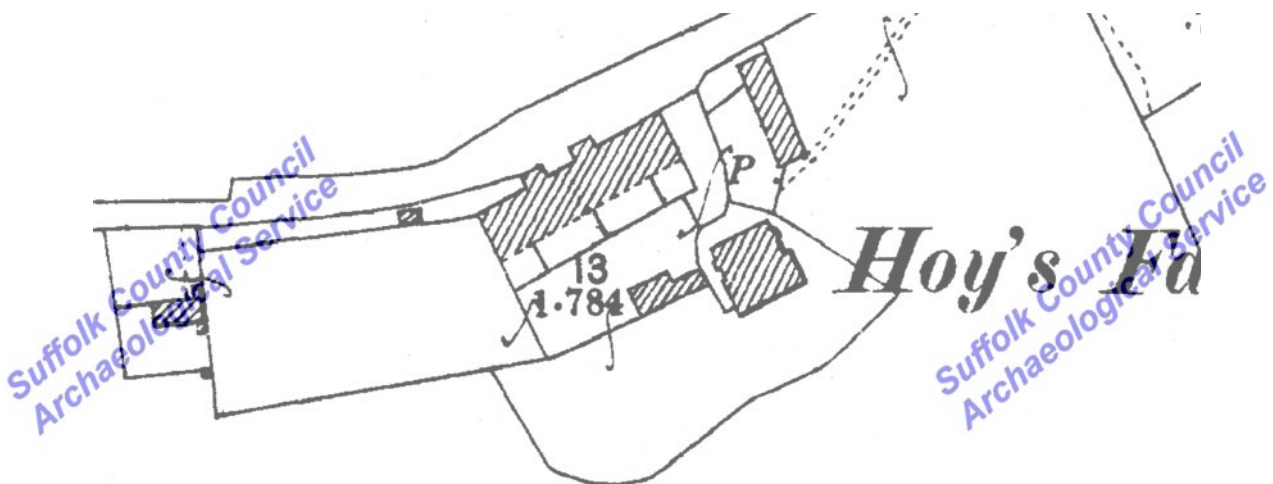
The former stable extends to 12.5 metres in length by 5.6 metres in width and contains two half-hung doors in its western elevation. The northernmost entrance was moved slightly when a single-storied shed was built against it. A small additional opening with a vertical sliding flap in the stable's northern gable against the lane was probably designed to evacuate manure. A water pump and two harness hooks remain in place within the building, together with part of a cobbled stone floor, but no other fittings survive

and there is no evidence of original fenestration.

The barn of 12.5 metres by 6 metres adjoins the stable's southern gable and the two structures are now linked internally. A narrow porch lies in the centre of its western elevation and there is evidence of an original full-height doorway in its rear, eastern wall immediately opposite (which doorway is now blocked). The framing of both stable and barn consists of machine-sawn softwood with nailed primary bracing of typical early-20th century type and the buildings do not possess significant architectural or historic merit.

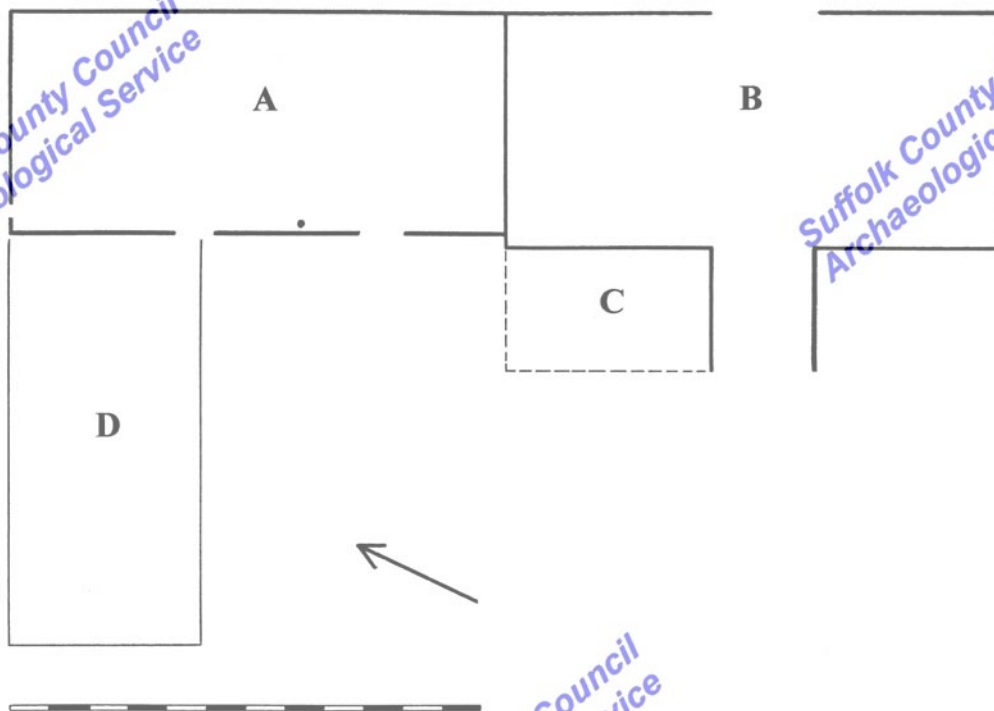


Plan of Site as Existing



Plan of Site in 1902 (Second Edition 25 inch Ordnance Survey)

The empty walled enclosure to the left is now occupied by Hoys House, but the farmhouse and all other buildings shown here have been demolished. Only south-western angle of the flint farmyard boundary wall now remains.



Block Plan of Buildings
 (Showing former stable A and barn B. Scale in metres)

The Site

The complex of buildings known as Wixoe Barns lies on arable land which slopes gently upwards from the River Stour some 200 metres to the south. The Norman church of the small settlement of Wixoe lies a similar distance away to the north-east, and the building adjoin the southern edge of the lane which connects it with Ains Ford to the west and the parish of Sturmer beyond.

The second edition 25 inch Ordnance Survey of 1902 shows what appears to be a large barn with two porches alongside the lane, and a series of open-sided animal shelters and enclosures along its rear (southern) elevation. A farmhouse occupies the south-eastern corner of the yard behind this barn, with a large rectangular enclosure to the west that may have contained an orchard or paddock. The Survey labels the site as Hoy's Farm. None of the buildings shown in 1902 now

survive, and the adjacent boundaries have been altered almost beyond recognition with the construction of several late-20th century houses to the east. Having formerly been detached from the edge of the built-up area of the parish the farm now forms part of a suburban landscape. Only the late-19th century wall of flint rubble with red brick dressing which framed the south-eastern corner of the farmyard in 1902 remains standing, and forms its eastern boundary with the rectangular enclosure which has been enlarged to contain a modern brick dwelling known as Hoys House. The farmyard of 1902 has been truncated to the east, and the site of the demolished farmhouse is probably indicated by a raised platform in the grassland behind the neighbouring property (marked as 'Ainsford' on the accompanying modern site plan).

The present farm buildings consist of a former stable and barn of *circa* 1910 (marked A and B respectively on the Block Plan above), together with a pair of single-storied mid-20th century sheds which face the road. The western shed has recently been converted into a domestic dwelling and a series of extensions in the

style of cart lodges added to its southern wall (these extensions are not shown on the site plan). The eastern shed (marked D on the Block Plan) has been converted into a games room. A lean-to in the north-western angle of the barn and its porch has been demolished prior to inspection but is indicated as C on the Block Plan.

The 20th Century Stable (A)

Area A on the Block Plan indicates a timber-framed and weather-boarded former stable of *circa* 1910 with a roof of treble tiles. The structure extends to 12.5 metres in length by 5.6 metres in width and is aligned north-south with its northern gable abutting the lane. The position of this gable approximately coincides with the easternmost of the two apparent barn porches shown on the Ordnance Survey of 1902. The framing consists of machine-sawn softwood with unpegged mortises and primary nailed bracing in typical early-20th century form. The interior shows no sign of internal divisions but is open to its roof timbers and was entered by two half-hung doors in its western elevation as shown on the Block Plan; the northern entrance was partly blocked by the later construction of

shed D and moved slightly to the south of its original position as indicated by the arrangement of stud mortises. A water pump lies within the building as indicated on the Plan, and a small aperture with a vertically sliding door in its northern gable was presumably designed to evacuate manure, but its door has been re-set and no longer operates. A pair of bentwood harness hooks remains in situ but there is now little evidence of its original function and only a small section of cobbled flooring now survives. There is no evidence of original fenestration, but a modern window has been inserted in the northern gable which is now rendered externally. The building is of standard 20th century pattern and having been stripped of its fittings has little historic interest or architectural merit.

The 20th Century Barn (B)

Area B on the Block Plan indicates a timber-framed and weather-boarded barn of *circa* 1910 with red brick plinth and a roof of treble tiles. The structure extends to 12.5 metres in length by 6 metres in width and adjoins the southern gable of the contemporary stable A. A narrow porch projects from the centre of its western elevation but its full-height rear doorway has been blocked and a new doorway inserted to provide an internal

link with the stable. Like those of the stable, the individual timbers are chiefly of small-sectioned softwood, although the southern jamb of the rear (eastern) doorway is a re-used section of 16th or 17th century roof-plate which contains rafter housings and stud mortises. The floor has been re-laid with concrete. The barn has been redundant for some time and as a relatively recent structure possesses little historic interest or architectural merit.

Appendix 1 (on accompanying CD): Full Photographic Record

Description of Photographs in Appendix 1

Photograph no.

1. General view of site from south-west, showing pre-1902 perimeter wall to left and probable site of demolished farmhouse to extreme left.
2. Probable site of the demolished farmhouse on a raised terrace with newly planted trees as seen from the west.
3. South-western corner of farmyard wall shown on 1902 Survey as seen from the east. This section of wall is the only structure shown on the survey which still survives.
4. Hoys House from the south-east (included for site context).
5. Western side of yard seen from east (recent domestic conversion, included for site context). Shed D to right.
6. Northern gable of Stable A (left) and Shed D seen from lane to north, with late-20th century render and windows relating to an earlier partial conversion.
7. Northern entrance to yard seen from lane to north-east with Shed D to left.
8. Eastern side of yard from the south-west, showing left-to-right Shed D, Stable A and Barn B.
9. Stable A (centre) seen from the west showing northern and southern half-hung entrance doors to left and right respectively.
10. Stable A. Interior view to northern gable.
11. Stable A. Interior view to Barn B from north, showing inserted connecting door & removed boarding.
12. Stable A. Interior of eastern elevation showing secondary blocked door and original cobbles.
13. Stable A. The small surviving area of original cobbled floor against the eastern wall. This presumably lay beneath the removed hay racks.
14. Stable A. Detail of manure hatch in northern gable with vertical sliding door (the door now re-set and unable to pass the wall brace).
15. Stable A. Detail of face-halved-and-bladed scarf joint in roof-plates.
16. Stable A. Eastern elevation from north, showing two bentwood harness hooks in situ.
17. Stable A. Detail of the southernmost bentwood harness hook.

18. Stable A. Detail of the northernmost bentwood harness hook.
19. Stable A. Detail of the interior water pump against the eastern elevation.
20. Stable A. Internal view of northernmost entrance, moved from its original position to the right. The narrow door now leads to the later Shed D.
21. Stable A. Internal view of southernmost entrance.
22. Stable A. Detail of the 20th Century secondary floor tiles recently removed from the stable.
23. Stable A. Internal view of northernmost half-hung stable door.
24. Stable A. Detail of an iron pintle hinge to the northernmost half-hung stable door.
25. Stable A. Detail of an iron pintle hinge to the southernmost half-hung stable door.
26. Barn B from west showing its original central porch and the area of demolished lean-to C to left.
27. Barn B from north-west showing position of demolished lean-to C.
28. Barn B. Detail of unpainted circular-sawn boarding formerly within Lean-to C.
29. The south-eastern corner of the yard showing the rebuilt boundary wall with the corner of Barn B to the left.
30. Barn B. Southern gable from south-west showing Shed D to left.
31. Barn B. Detail of brick plinth to southern gable.
32. Barn B. Detail of original 20th century roof structure with more recent felting.
33. Barn B. Internal view of northern half of eastern elevation showing Stable A to the left.
34. Barn B. Internal view of eastern elevation showing blocked central door.
35. Barn B. Internal view of southern half of eastern elevation showing southern gable to right.
36. Detail of the re-used 16th or 17th century roof-plate which forms the southern jamb of the eastern door.
37. Barn B. Internal view of southern gable.
38. Barn B. Internal view of southern half of western elevation with porch to right.
39. Barn B. Internal view of porch in centre of western elevation.
40. Barn B. Internal view of northern half of western elevation showing Stable A to right.
41. Barn B. Detail of face-halved-and-bladed scarf joint in roof plates.

Appendix 2 (pp.8-10): Selected Printed Photographs



A2.1 The eastern side of the yard from the south-west, showing from left-to-right the 20th century buildings marked on the Block Plan as Shed D, Stable A and Barn B.



A2.2 The probable site of the demolished farmhouse shown on the 1902 ordnance Survey seen from the west with the existing barn and stable yard to the left (the site is marked by a raised platform recently planted with saplings).



A2.3 The northern gable of Stable A (left) and Shed D seen from the lane to the north, with late-20th century render and windows relating to an earlier phase of partial conversion. The gable of the slightly taller Barn B is visible in the background, and the modern entrance to the yard to the right.



A2.4 Stable A. Interior of the eastern elevation showing a secondary blocked door and a small section of original cobbles. The machine-cut softwood framing is typical of the early-20th century.



A2.5 Stable A. Detail of the southernmost of two bentwood harness hooks nailed to the western wall at its northern end.



A2.6 Barn B. The original roof structure of the 20th century barn with its southern gable to the right. The roof has been re-felted.