

**New House Farm,
Poslingford,
Suffolk
PSG 018**

Archaeological Record

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Archaeological Record

This report provides a written and photographic record at English Heritage (2006) Level 2 of a group of former farm buildings. It has been prepared to a brief written by the Archaeological Service of Suffolk County Council (Dr Jess Tipper, 5 September 2008, Ref. /NewHouseFarm_Poslingford2008) and is intended to fulfil a condition of planning permission for conversion (St Edmundsbury District Council application SE/07/0997).

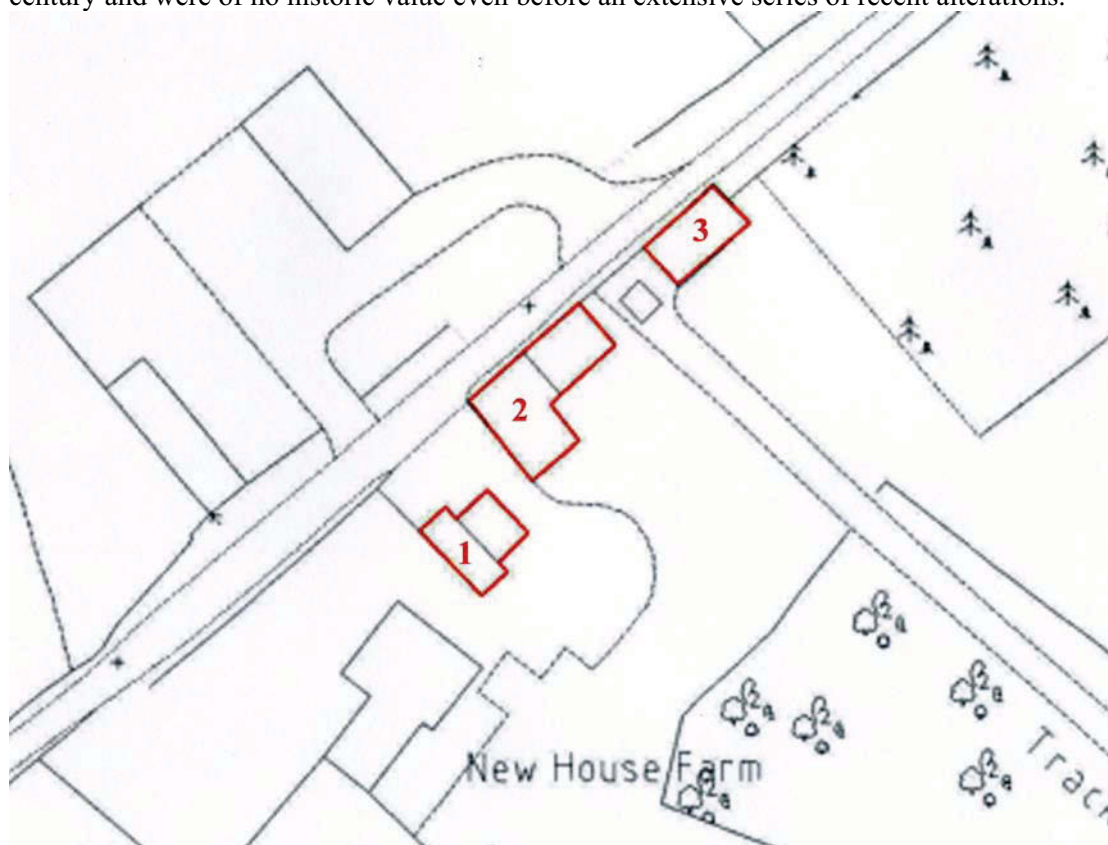
Introduction

The report is accompanied by a CD containing a full photographic record in the form of 60 digital images (Appendix 1) but also includes printed photographs of key features to illustrate the text (Appendix 2). Each image is described in a separate schedule and includes a scale rod with half metre divisions wherever possible. The site was inspected on 31st March 2009.

Summary

New House Farm lies in open countryside approximately 1 km east of Poslingford parish church and commands fine views over the Stour Valley to the south. The site appears to have adjoined a small green at the time of the tithe survey, and the property may represent all that remains of a medieval tye settlement. An unusual linear pond which may have originated in the 17th century as a garden canal extends onto this green from the rear of the grade II-listed farmhouse. The farm was a relatively large holding of 190 acres in 1841, and the house is a substantial structure with an 18th century brick wing and a timber-framed core which may date from the 17th century or before. A long and narrow brick structure of the late-18th or early-19th century lies in close proximity to the house at the entrance to the yard, and was probably designed as a vehicle shed with a granary above. It preserves an original 'upper cruck' roof truss, but has otherwise been internally gutted and much rebuilt in recent years during an attempt at conversion. The historic interest which the building formerly possessed has been lost in consequence. A series of weatherboarded and tarred roadside sheds to the east of the house lay opposite a fine 'model' farm of the mid-19th century of which little more than

fragmentary foundations now remain. These sheds date only from the first half of the 20th century and were of no historic value even before an extensive series of recent alterations.



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Figure 1

Existing Ordnance Survey Site Plan

Showing the listed house to the south-west, and the remains of the 19th century farm complex on the north-western side of New House Lane. The buildings surveyed in this report are numbered as follows:

- 1. Early-19th century brick shed with modern lean-to to the east, much altered and partly converted at the time of inspection but probably designed as a vehicle shed with granary or hay loft above.**
- 2. 20th century timber-framed and boarded enclosed vehicle and storage sheds**
- 3. 20th century open-sided cart lodge, probably incorporating fragments of a 19th century lodge on the same site.**

Historic Context: Documentary & Cartographic Record

New House Farm lies in open countryside on high ground overlooking the Stour valley to the south, approximately 1 km east of Poslingford parish church. The site is approached by New House Lane, which terminates 500 m to the north-east. The farmhouse is listed at grade II and described in the Schedule as a 17th century timber-framed and rendered structure with an 18th century brick wing to the east (listed building 425255). This description was not made with the benefit of internal inspection and the rendered western wing may be of earlier or later origin than suggested. The lane divides the house and a series of roadside sheds on the south from the fragmentary remains of a large farmyard complex shown on 19th century maps to the north.

The Poslingford tithe map of 1841 (figure 1) shows the farmhouse with its existing L-shaped outline, and a long, narrow building immediately to the east which must represent the surviving brick shed (no. 1 in figure 1). New House Lane appears to open onto an unenclosed green or tye numbered '282' immediately west of the site, but unfortunately the entire farm was omitted from the tithe apportionment (presumably as it was exempt from the payment of tithe) and the area was not named. Greens of this kind are normally of medieval origin, and often contained small settlements on their margins. The farm's size was given at 190 acres, rendering it a relatively substantial holding by the standards of the day. A linear pond, resembling a 17th century garden canal, extended onto the apparent green and still survives in trees behind the house, while a pair of large barns adjoined its northern boundary. A building is also shown on the site of the present open shed (3), but little if anything of this structure survives today. The first edition Ordnance Survey of 1885 shows an enclosed lane which follows the existing course, with a new, mid-19th century complex of sheds and cattle yards opposite the farmhouse. These yards were divided by a broad central avenue, suggesting they were carefully designed as a fashionable 'model' farm, but this was largely demolished in the 20th century to leave only fragmentary brick plinths and a single rebuilt shed *in situ*. The second edition Ordnance Survey of 1904 shows the same layout, and uses broken lines to indicate that the roadside elevation of the building on the site of structure 3 in figure 1 was open in the manner of a cart lodge. The present structure is open to the south instead and was substantially or wholly rebuilt in the 20th century. The enclosed sheds (2 in figure 1) are conspicuous by their absence from the map of 1904 and appear to date only from the 1920s or 1930s, although fragments of the building shown in 1904 may survive in their eastern gable.

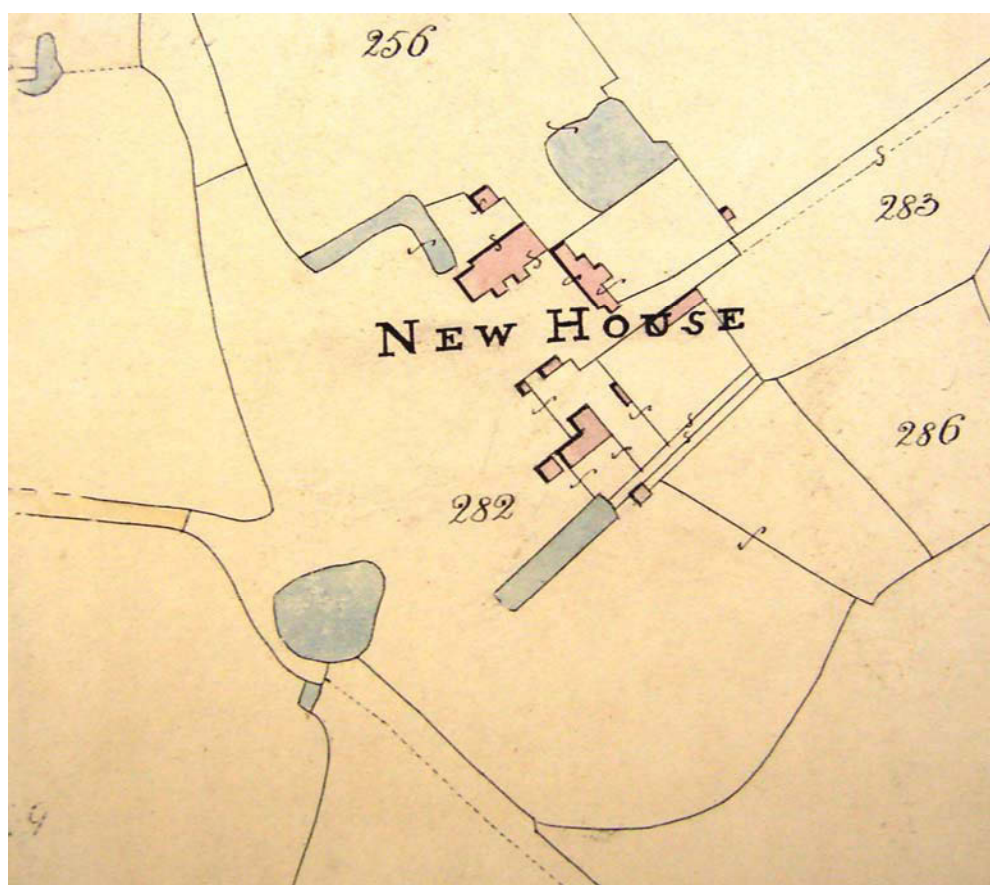


Figure 2

Poslingford Tithe Map of 1841 (Suffolk Record Office)

Showing the L-shaped house to the south, apparently adjoining a green to the west. The narrow outline of the brick shed (no.1 in figure 1) is clearly recognisable to the east of the house but the remaining outbuildings are not shown in their present form.

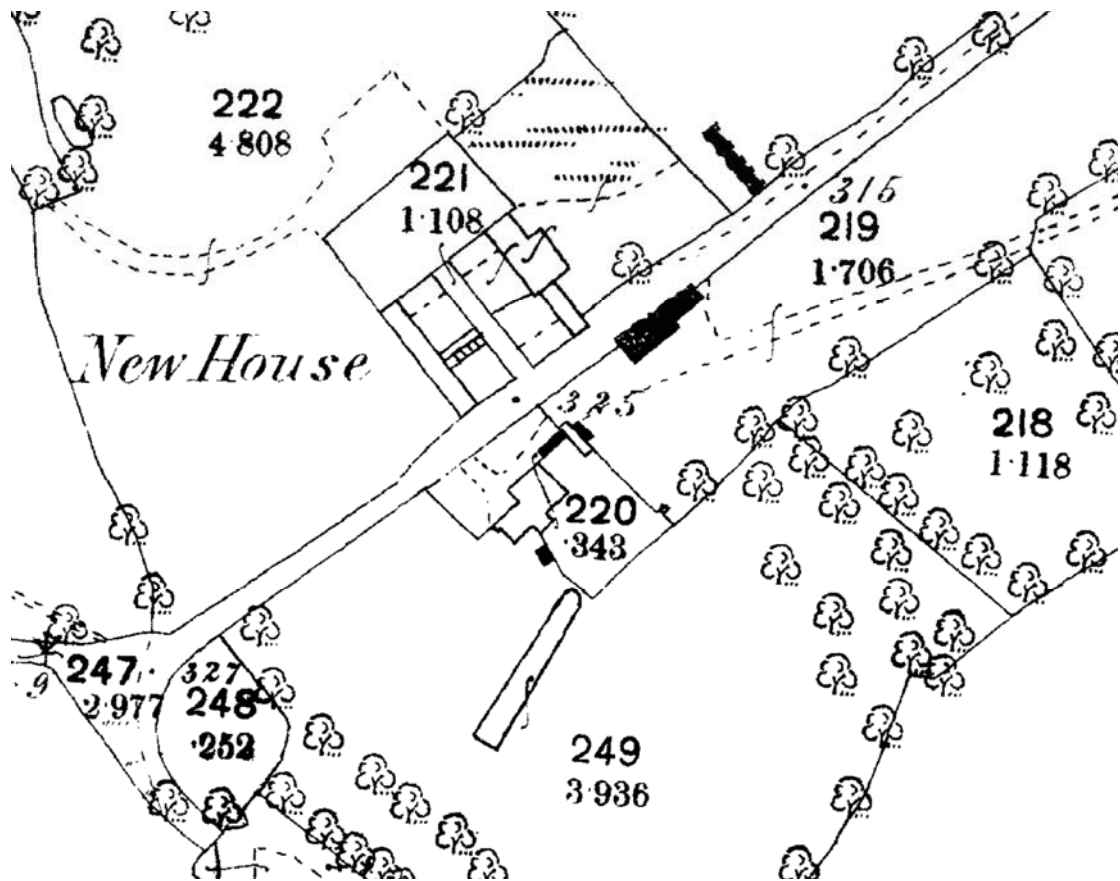


Figure 3

First Edition 25 inch Ordnance Survey of 1885, showing the present layout of the site with a newly built 'model' farm complex on the northern side of New House Lane (since demolished).

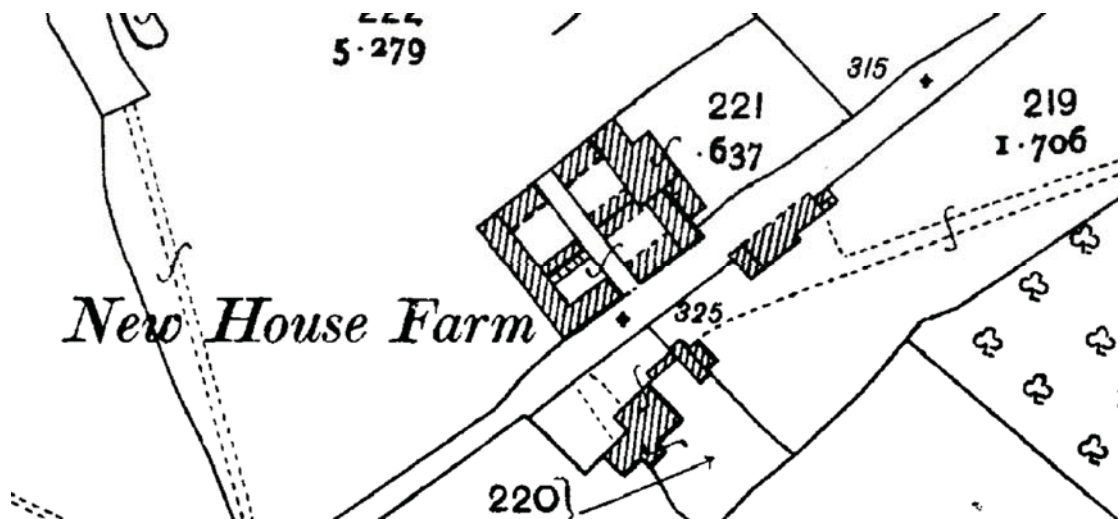


Figure 5

Second Edition 25 inch Ordnance Survey of 1904, using broken lines to indicate open-sided structures such as shelter sheds and cart lodges. The brick shed (1) is shown with a demolished addition to the west and a lean-to to the east (recently rebuilt), while the building on the site of the open shed (3) is shown open to the road rather than the southern garden. The enclosed sheds (2) are conspicuous by their absence, although parts of the narrow shed at the western end of the building shown here may survive at their eastern end.

Building Analysis

1. Brick Shed

Building 1 in figure 1 is a red brick structure of unusually narrow proportions at the entrance to the site, approximately 6 m from the eastern façade of the farmhouse. It is aligned on a NW-SE axis (simplified to north-south for the purpose of this analysis) with its northern gable facing the lane, and extends to 9.6 m in length by 3.6 m in width (31.5 ft by 12 ft). It rises to 3.3 m at its eaves and is covered with mid-20th century treble-tiles. The uniform soft red bricks are laid in Flemish bond with original features such as doors and windows defined by closer bricks (quarter bricks), and the fabric appears to date from the late-18th century or early- 19th century. The building is shown on the tithe map of 1841. An open-ended timber lean-to shed to the east is a modern addition, but a similar shed is shown on the Ordnance Surveys of 1885 and 1904.

The shed has been extensively mutilated in the past, with at least four phases of brickwork discernable in its northern gable, and its interior had been gutted and rendered prior to inspection (apparently as part of an aborted attempt at conversion in recent years). The roof structure had also been renewed, with the exception of an open truss consisting of curved posts resembling upper crucks which rest on renewed brick corbels at a height of 2 m (6.5 ft) and are pegged and tenoned to a low roof collar. This unusual arrangement was designed to increase headroom on the upper storey, but the ceiling has been removed without trace. A tall modern window in the northern gable presumably replaced a loading door to a granary or possibly a hay loft. The lower storey was almost certainly designed as vehicle shed (for a horse trap) as the northern road gable contained a wide doorway indicated by a tier of closer bricks just 73 cm (29 ins) from its western corner. This doorway was subsequently blocked with bricks of late-19th century appearance, and replaced by a window with a normal door to the east, and this window was blocked in turn during the 20th century. The eastern elevation contains evidence of three original narrow window apertures on the lower storey, each approximately 55 cm (21 ins) in width, but the present frames are secondary. The western elevation probably contained a similar pattern of fenestration, but the area of the central window is hidden by ivy, and the southern gable possessed a narrow doorway with a (blocked) window alongside. The central window of the eastern elevation was later converted into a door, which is now blocked by 20th century brickwork and an iron water pump.

2. Enclosed Sheds

The enclosed sheds to the east of the site entrance from New House Lane consist of two studwork structures of the early- to mid-20th century clad in tarred weatherboarding and roofed with corrugated iron, with a recent lean-to to the south. The softwood studwork is typical of the 1920s and 1930s and the corrugated iron roofing is probably original. The taller barn-like shed to the west contains a wide entrance in its western gable, now lacking doors, and is probably a tractor shed, while the smaller shed to the east is divided into two compartments: a narrow vehicle shed to the east is entered from the road by double doors with a window and single door to the rear, while a larger shed to the west was originally entered from the road by a double-hung door and may have operated as a feed store or a small stable. The latter's interior has been stripped of any relevant fixtures and fittings, and converted into a workshop by cladding the roadside elevation with hardboard; is it now entered from the western shed by a recently inserted doorway. The eastern gable of the vehicle shed is of post-and rail construction, in contrast to the primary-braced studwork of the side elevations, and re-uses at least one chamfered 17th century timber; this framing may represent a fragment of the 19th century building shown to the east of its site on the Ordnance Surveys. The larger western shed extends to 10 m in length by 7.3 m in width (33 ft by 24) and rises to 4 m at its eaves, while the smaller eastern shed extends to 9.3 m in overall length

and 6.7 m in width (30.5 ft by 22). Its walls rise to 2.6 m (8.5 ft) and the vehicle shed to the east is 3.3 m in length (11 ft) with a ceiling of tall-sectioned softwood joists 2.2 m (7.5 ft) above its floor; the western section is currently open to the roof, and to the loft above the vehicle shed.

3. Open Shed

The easternmost of the roadside sheds is a studwork structure clad in tarred weatherboarding which is open to its southern elevation and to a lean-to against its eastern gable. The building extends to 8.2 m (27 ft) in length (excluding the lean-to of 3.6 m or 12 ft) and 6.1 m in width, with eaves of 2 m (6.5 ft). The roof-plates are spanned by two large tie-beams, one of which has fallen to the ground at its southern end, and the treble-tiled side-purlin roof is now supported by an array of modern softwood props. The walls are crudely constructed with a variety of re-used timber and although a similar building is shown on the site in 1904 there is little to suggest it was not completely rebuilt in the 1920s or 1930s. Most of the shallow brick plinth is a replacement of the late-20th century, and in its present form much of the fabric may be of very recent origin.

Historic Significance

The brick shed adjacent to the farmhouse is an unusual structure which, although altered in the 19th century, would probably have retained much of its historic interest and integrity before its interior was recently gutted and its northern gable largely rebuilt. The remaining sheds date only from the 20th century, possibly with minimal fragments of the buildings shown on the same site on 19th century maps, and were of little merit even before their recent alterations. The traditional appearance of their tarred roadside elevations represents the extent of their contribution to the site's historic value.

Appendix 1 (on accompanying CD): Full Photographic Record

Schedule of Photographs in Appendix 1

Photograph no.

1. General view of site from north-west showing house to right and sheds to left.
2. General view of site from lane to north-east showing sheds to left & modern barns to right.
3. General view of site from lane to south-west showing house to right.
4. General view of site from east showing sheds to right and house to left.
5. General view from south-west of modern barns on site of 19th century farmyard opposite sheds.
6. General view of roadside sheds from west.
7. Entrance to yard from lane to north showing brick shed (1) with house in rear.
8. House from west showing proximity of brick shed (1) to right.
9. Brick shed (1). Exterior from north showing eastern lean-to to left.
10. Brick shed (1). Exterior of northern gable showing upper window of recent partial conversion.
11. Brick shed (1). Exterior of northern gable showing at least four phases of brickwork.
12. Brick shed (1) Detail of northern gable showing quarter-bricks of original wide doorway to right.
13. Brick shed (1). Eastern elevation showing enlarged window with original quarter-bricks to left.
14. Brick shed (1). Interior of modern lean-to from south showing eastern elevation to left.
15. Brick shed (1). Eastern elevation from lean-to showing blocked secondary door and pump.
16. Brick shed (1). Detail of iron pump against eastern elevation.
17. Brick shed (1). Detail of blocked original central window to eastern elevation.
18. Brick shed (1). Detail of enlarged window to eastern elevation showing southern gable to left.
19. Brick shed (1). Detail of dated graffiti at southern end of eastern elevation.

20. Brick shed (1). Detail of southern external gable showing original door to right & window left.
21. Brick shed (1). Western external elevation with evidence of three narrow windows.
22. Brick shed (1). Detail of original window position at southern end of western elevation.
23. Brick shed (1). Detail of original window position at northern end of western elevation.
24. Brick shed (1). Guttered interior from south.
25. Brick shed (1). Guttered interior from north.
26. Brick shed (1). Open truss of roof structure from north.
27. Brick shed (1). Detail of open truss showing pegged joint of collar and upper cruck.
28. Brick shed (1). Modern rafters seen from north.
29. Enclosed sheds (2). External southern elevation showing modern lean-to in foreground.
30. Enclosed sheds (2). External elevation of western gable showing modern lean-to to right.
31. Enclosed sheds (2). External northern elevation of western shed.
32. Enclosed sheds (2). External northern elevation of eastern shed, showing double doors to left.
33. Enclosed sheds (2). Detail of half-hung doors in northern elevation of eastern shed.
34. Enclosed sheds (2). External southern elevation of eastern shed.
35. Enclosed sheds (2). Detail of southern window and door to eastern shed.
36. Enclosed sheds (2). Exterior from south-east showing junction between three structures.
37. Enclosed sheds (2). Interior of western shed from west, showing modern door to eastern shed.
38. Enclosed sheds (2). Interior of western shed from east showing original entrance.
39. Enclosed sheds (2). Internal southern elevation of western shed.
40. Enclosed sheds (2). Internal northern elevation of western shed.
41. Enclosed sheds (2). Detail of original softwood roof structure from west.

42. Enclosed sheds (2). Interior of eastern shed showing modern door to western shed.
43. Enclosed sheds (2). Internal southern elevation of eastern shed.
44. Enclosed sheds (2). Internal northern elevation of eastern shed showing modern boarding.
45. Enclosed sheds (2). Interior of eastern shed from west showing internal ground-floor partition.
46. Enclosed sheds (2). Detail of roof structure of eastern shed seen from west.
47. Enclosed sheds (2). Interior of eastern shed from south, showing double doors to road.
48. Enclosed sheds (2). Interior of eastern shed from north showing southern window and door.
49. Enclosed sheds (2). Internal eastern gable showing post-and-rail construction.
50. Enclosed sheds (2). Detail of chamfered post to internal eastern gable.
51. Enclosed sheds (2). Interior of modern southern lean-to from east.
52. Enclosed sheds (2). Interior of modern southern lean-to from west.
53. Open shed (3). External northern roadside elevation.
54. Open shed (3). External southern elevation showing western gable to left.
55. Open shed (3). Interior from east showing modern props and collapsed tie-beam.
56. Open shed (3). Interior from west showing props and collapsed tie-beam.
57. Open shed (3). Interior from west showing lean-to against eastern gable.
58. Open shed (3). Interior of western gable.
59. Open shed (3). Internal northern elevation from south-east.
60. Open shed (3). Detail of roof structure from east showing modern props.

Appendix 2 (pp. 13-16): Selected Printed Photographs



A2.1 General view of site from north-west showing the house and fragmentary remains of the 19th century farm yards to the right



A2.2 General view of roadside sheds from west, showing the enclosed sheds (2) in foreground and the open shed (3) in the rear



A2.3 Brick shed (1). Exterior of northern gable showing upper window of recent partial conversion and at least four phases of brickwork



A2.4 Brick shed (1). Gutted interior from north



A2.5 Brick shed (1). Apparently original open truss of recently rebuilt roof from north



A2.6 Enclosed sheds (2). External northern elevation of eastern enclosed shed, showing double doors to vehicle compartment to left and double-hung doors to right



A2.7 Enclosed sheds (2). Detail of original softwood roof structure of western shed viewed from west, showing gable adjoining eastern shed to right



A2.8 Enclosed sheds (2). Internal southern elevation of lower eastern shed showing original 20th century wall fabric.



A2.9 Open shed (3). External southern elevation showing western gable to left.



A2. 10 Open shed (3). Interior from east showing modern props and collapsed tie-beam