

**Barn at  
Pannington Hall Farm,  
Wherstead, Suffolk  
WHR 073**

**Historic Building Record**

OASIS ID: Suffolkc1-81064



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# **Barn at Pannington Hall Farm, Wherstead, Suffolk**

**(TM 144 403)**

## **Historic Building Record**

*This report provides a written and photographic record at English Heritage (2006) Level 2 of a barn in the curtilage of a grade II listed farmhouse. It has been prepared to a brief written by Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Service (Edward Martin, 28th June 2010, ref. SpecHAA(EM)\_PanningtonHall\_Wherstead\_00752\_10), and is intended to inform and accompany a planning application to Babergh District Council (application B/10/00752).*

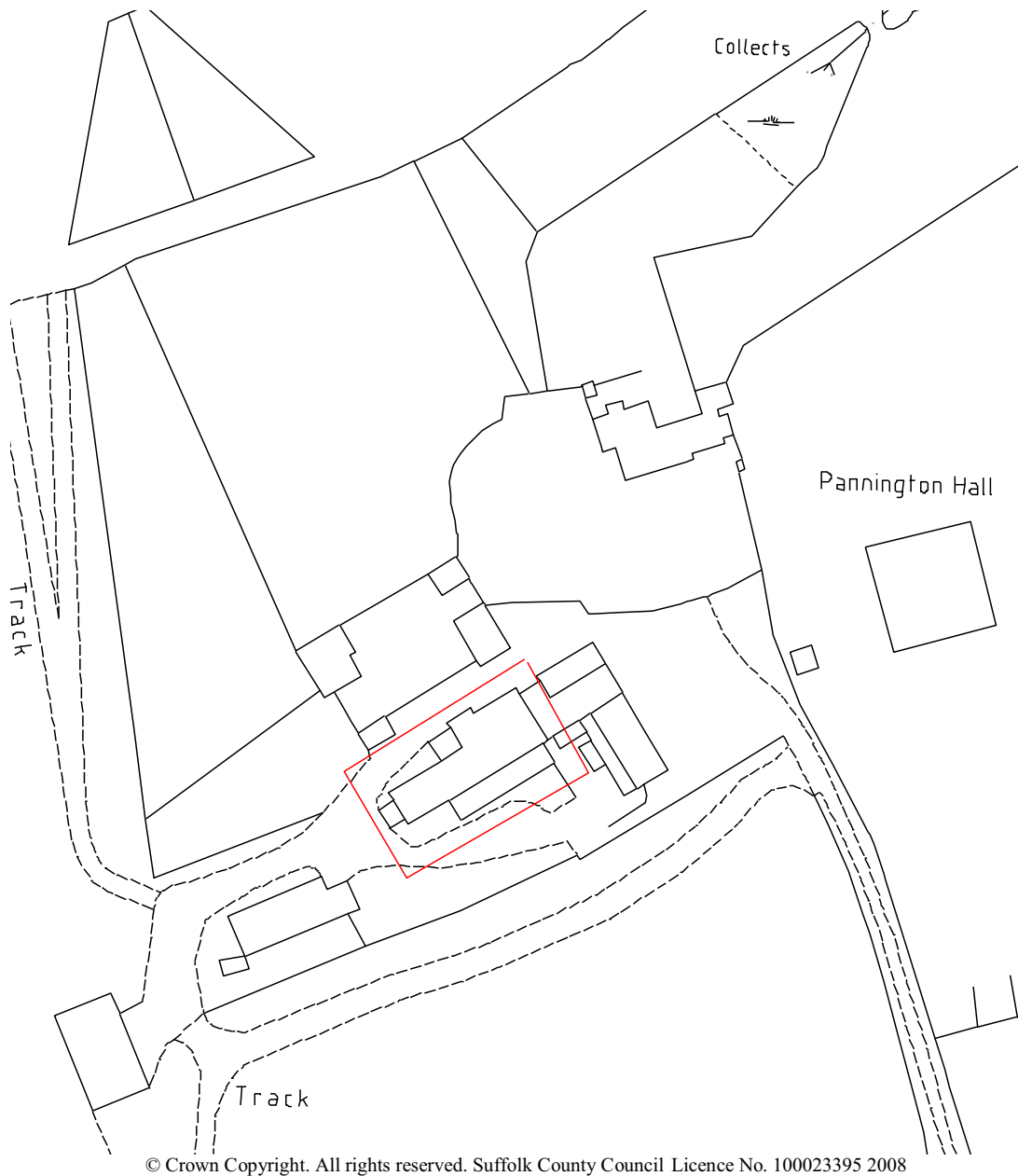
### **Introduction**

The report is accompanied by a CD containing a photographic record in the form of 70 digital images (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 wherever possible includes a scale rod with half-metre divisions. The site was inspected on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2010 by which time conversion work had been underway for some months.

### **Summary**

Pannington Hall Farm lies in open countryside at the western edge of Wherstead parish and approximately 1.75 km south of the modern conurbation of Ipswich. Its immediate area is of historic importance as the site of a Domesday manor belonging to Swein of Essex and later to the Priory of St Peter and Cardinal Wolsey. The present farmhouse is a grade II-listed but derelict timber-framed and brick structure which probably formed part of a much larger mid-16<sup>th</sup> century house built by Henry VIII's physician Sir William Butts. At the time of the tithe survey in 1839 it formed an unusually large holding of 362 acres owned by Sir Robert Harland of Wherstead Lodge and Orwell Park.

The timber-framed barn to the south-west of the house has evolved over four centuries to its present length of 44.8 m (147 ft). It consists of an early-17<sup>th</sup> century five-bay barn with a 19<sup>th</sup> century extension of two bays to the east and a second five-bay barn of the late-18<sup>th</sup> or early-19<sup>th</sup> century to the west with a similar two-bay extension that was probably designed as a stable with a granary or hay loft above. The western barn consists largely of 16<sup>th</sup> century timber but this appears to have been re-used in the present building, although certain areas may survive *in situ*. Gabled porches project from the northern elevations of both barns. The tithe map of 1839 seems to show the barn further to the north, and it is unclear whether this relates to an error on the part of the cartographer or to the movement of the entire barn as part of an extensive redevelopment of the site in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. Precise analysis was hampered by extensive conversion work which had been underway for some months at the time of inspection. The 17<sup>th</sup> century framing is of good quality with mid-rails and externally trussed bracing, but the loss of its original roof structure and the replacement of many principal timbers in the western section with new softwood as part of the conversion mean the barn no longer meets the strict English Heritage criteria for listing in its own right.



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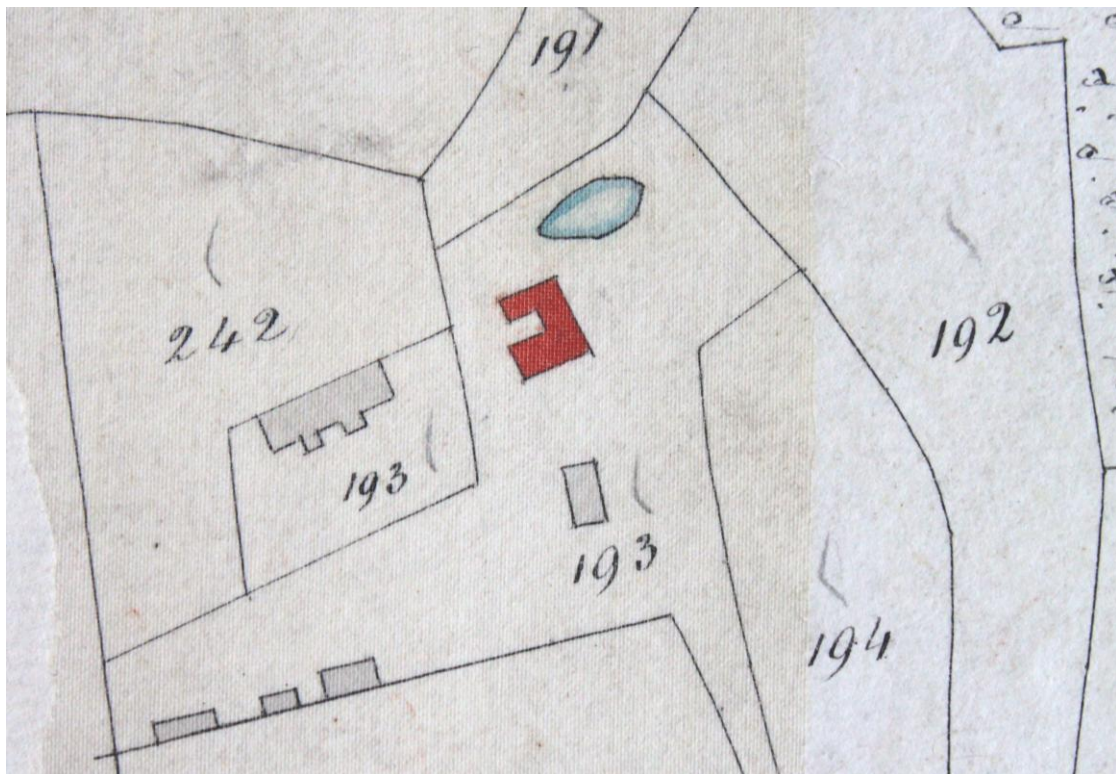
**Figure 1 Current Ordnance Survey Site Plan.  
 Enclosing the western section of the barn in red (omitting the four bays to the east of its eastern porch) and showing the grade II-listed farmhouse to the north-east**

## **Historic Context: Documentary & Cartographic Record**

Pannington Hall Farm lies on a ridge of high ground in open, arable countryside approximately 1.75 km west of Wherstead church and the same distance south of the modern conurbation of Ipswich. It occupies the site of one of three medieval manors in the parish, held at Domesday by Algar from Swein of Essex and later by Gerard de Wachesham (W.A. Copinger's 'Manors of Suffolk'. 1909). It was given to the Priory of St Peter in Ipswich at the beginning of the 13<sup>th</sup> century and held by them until the Dissolution when the estate passed initially to Cardinal Wolsey and then to Henry VIII's physician Sir William Butts. 'Pannington Manor' remained in the Butts family until its sale to Sir Nicholas Bacon in 1592 and subsequently passed to John Vernon who was in possession on his death in 1818.

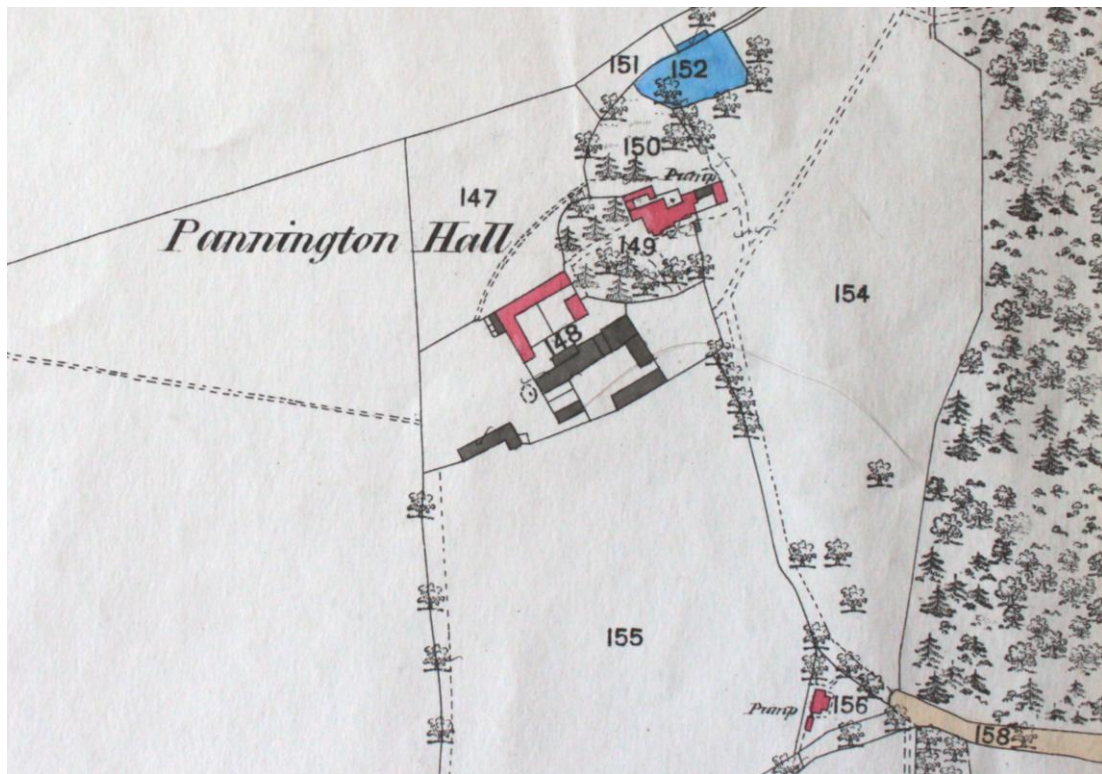


**Figure 2**  
The area of Pannington Hall on the Wherstead tithe map of 1839.

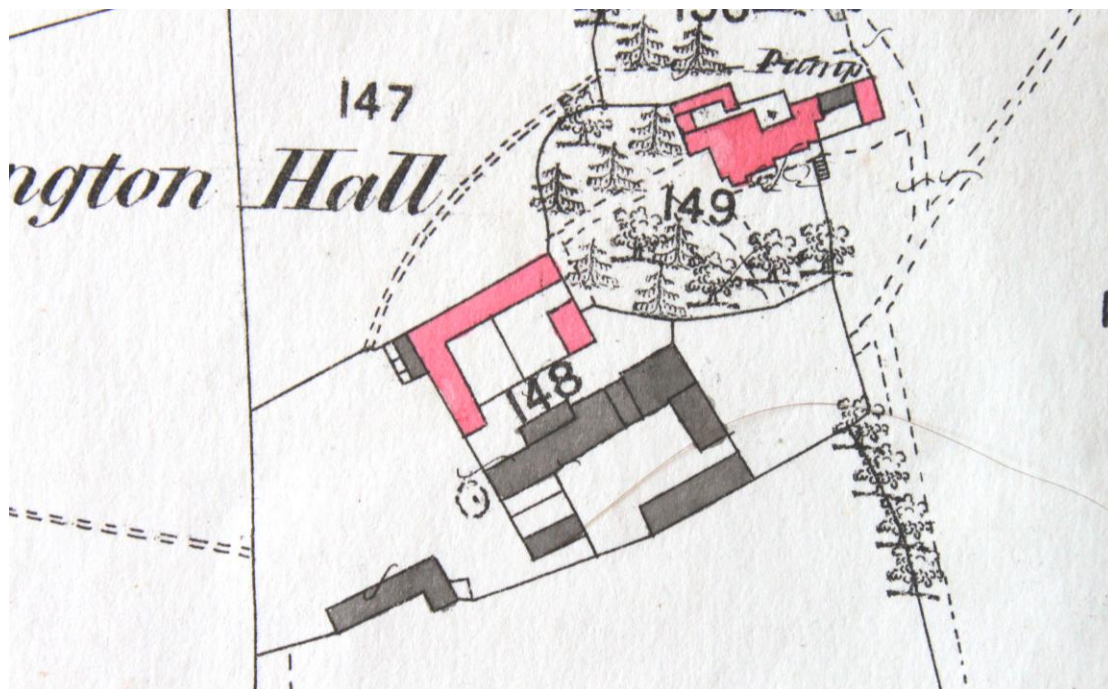


**Figure 2a**  
Detail of 1839 tithe map above, showing the farmhouse in red and the barn to the left with two porches or lean-to sheds projecting from its southern elevation. Of the large U-shaped house to the right only one wing now survives.





**Figure 3**  
**First Edition 25 inch Ordnance Survey of 1885.**



**Figure 3a**  
**Detail of First Edition Ordnance Survey, showing the farmhouse top-right in red and the linear barn in grey to the south with much the same profile as today. The barn appears to lie significantly further south than that shown in 1839, but the latter's accuracy is uncertain. The outline of the farmhouse differs dramatically, and a new brick yard range had been built to the north of the barn (the map uses red to distinctive domestic and brick buildings from timber outbuildings).**

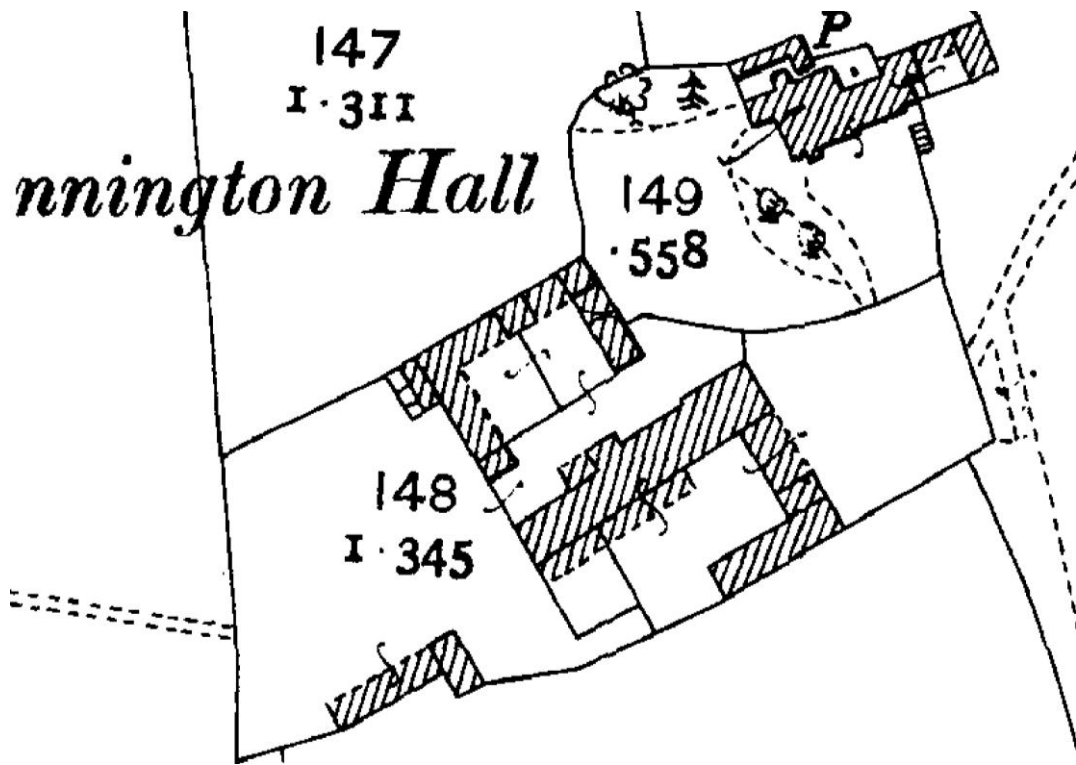


Figure 4  
Second Edition Ordnance Survey of 1904. Showing a new range of open-sided shelter sheds against the barn-s southern elevation.

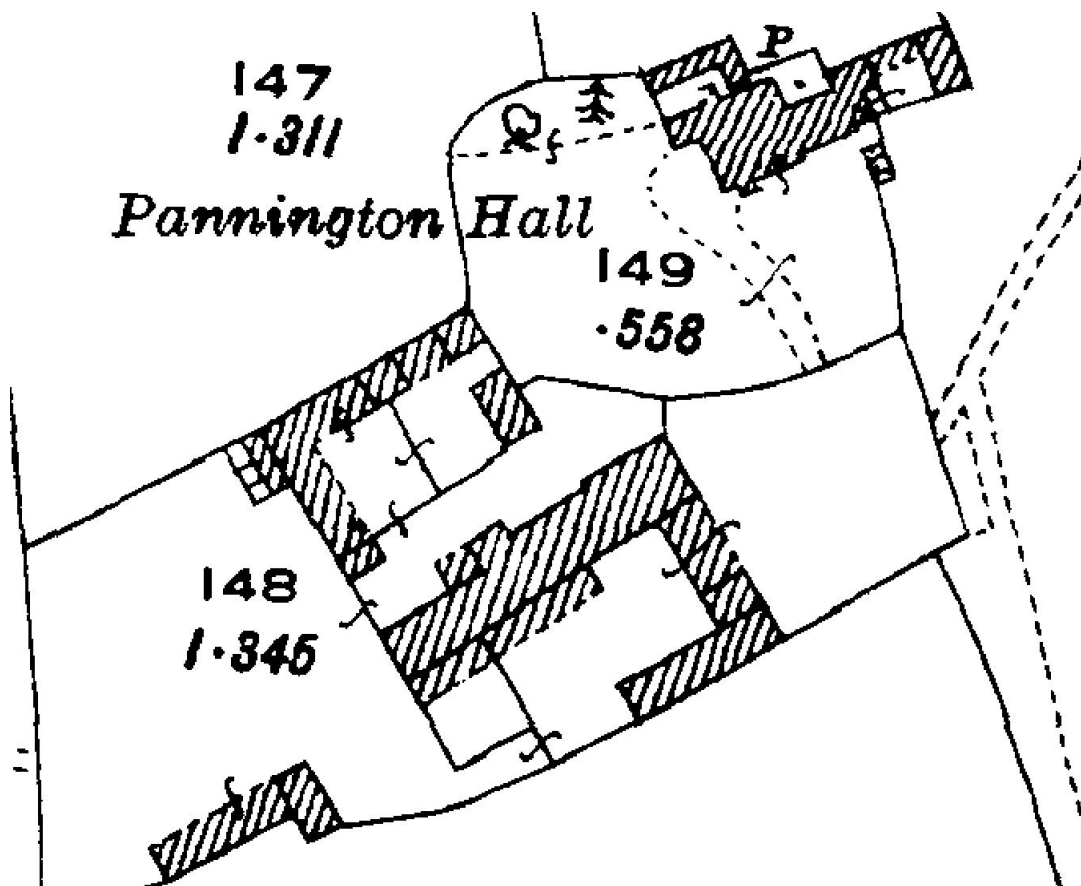


Figure 5  
Third Edition Ordnance Survey of 1926, showing little change since 1904

At the time of the Wherstead tithe survey in 1839 the farm was an unusually large tenanted holding of 362 acres owned by Sir Robert Harland, baronet, of Wherstead Lodge and Orwell Park. Sir Robert owned most of Wherstead and Pannington Hall was the largest of seven or eight substantial estate farms in the parish. The tenant was named as Robert Frost (replaced by Charles Frost in White's 1844 Directory of Suffolk), and the site was described on the tithe apportionment as 'House, yards, etc.' (plot 193 in figure 2). The map shows what appears to be a large barn with two porches projecting from its southern elevation immediately west of a U-shaped farmhouse. The site was adjoined on the south by 'barn field' (240), on the north by 'meadow' (242) and 'orchard' (191), and on the east by 'home pightle' (194) and 'home fen' (192).

The farm buildings had been transformed by the time of the first edition Ordnance Survey in 1885 (figure 3), with a new cattle yard complex of red brick to the north of the present barn. Similar changes occurred on many local farms in the 1850s and 1860s as the system of mixed animal husbandry now known as Victorian High Farming replaced intensive arable cultivation after the Repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846: the price of grain fell sharply and the new urban markets for beef and dairy produce made accessible by the arrival of the railways were exploited instead. The farmhouse was also extensively altered, losing its U-shape and apparently much reduced in size: the present grade II-listed structure may represent only a single wing of a much larger medieval or Tudor house which extended further to the south. It is currently derelict but contains a substantial and impressive ceiling of 16<sup>th</sup> century appearance and is described in the Schedule of Listed Buildings as a 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century property with 'possible earlier origins'. The outline of the barn is much the same on all three historic Ordnance Surveys as today, but seems to lie further south than the barn shown on the 1839 tithe map. This may be due to an inaccuracy on the part of the tithe surveyor, or to confusion relating to the remodelling of the house, but it is also possible that the entire barn was moved southwards to accommodate the new brick cattle yards. The position of the latter is more consistent with the barn of 1839.



## Building Analysis

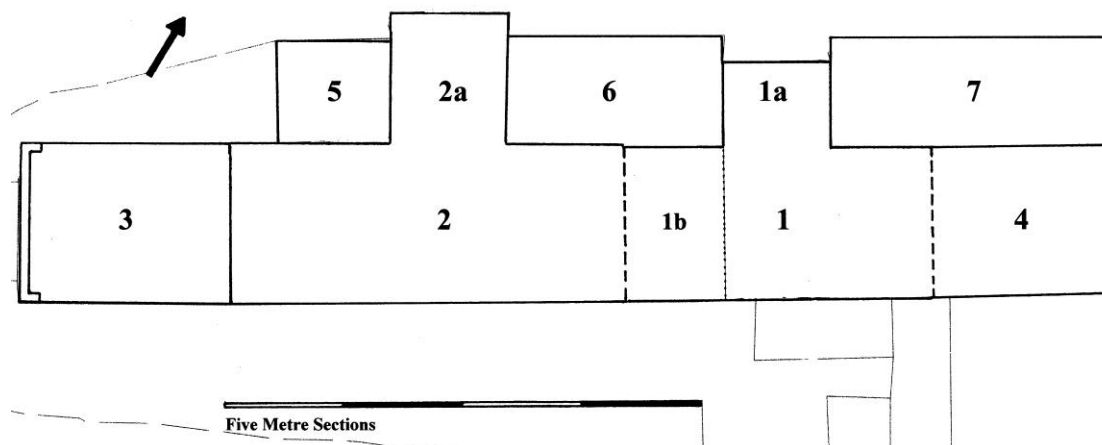


Figure 6

### Block Plan of Barn

Identifying each historic structure with a number for ease of reference in the text and photographic record. Based on the Ordnance Survey.

#### Key

1. Early-17<sup>th</sup> century timber-framed barn of five bays with a gabled entrance porch (1a) projecting from the northern elevation of its central bay. The two western bays (1b) divided from the rest by a new partition. The entrance porch is a 19<sup>th</sup> century reconstruction but there is evidence of an original porch in the same position. Both gables removed and the roof recently rebuilt in softwood but the external walls largely intact with externally trenched corner braces.
2. A five-bay timber-framed barn. Probably of the late-18<sup>th</sup> century but re-using many timbers from a 16<sup>th</sup> century structure of which elements may survive *in situ*. A gabled entrance porch (2a) projects from the northern elevation of the central bay. Both gables removed and the roof recently rebuilt in softwood. Many principal timbers recently replaced in softwood but retaining three original arch-braces to the tie-beams of the central bay.
3. A two-bay timber-framed structure of the early or mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. Originally of the same height as the adjoining barns but the walls of its western bay now raised in new softwood. The western gable rebuilt in brickwork during the 19<sup>th</sup> century beneath its tie-beam and now with a modern ceiling and an external loading door above the tie-beam. Probably built as a stable with a granary/hay loft above but the fabric of its lower storey was entirely concealed by the dry-lining of a new kitchen at the time of inspection and interpretation was hampered accordingly. Roof structure newly rebuilt in softwood.
4. Early-19<sup>th</sup> century timber-framed extension of two bays to the adjoining early-17<sup>th</sup> century barn, re-using two storey posts of a 16<sup>th</sup> century floored structure. The eastern gable recently replaced with glazing.
- 5-7. Mid-19<sup>th</sup> century lean-to sheds adjoining the northern elevation of the main range. Described on an architect's plan of 2009 as a 'store', 'workshop; and 'animal pen' (5, 6 and 7 respectively) but largely rebuilt at the time of inspection.

*N.B. The main range of the barn is ostensibly a single structure of 6.7 m in width by 44.8 m in length (22 ft by 147 ft) divided by two modern partitions into three compartments (areas 3, 2 & 1b, and 1 & 4 in figure 5) with a loft over the western compartment (3). In fact, however, it consists of four distinct timber-frames of different periods as described below. Precise historic analysis and recording was hampered by the extensive repair and conversion work which had been underway for some months before inspection. The present external weatherboarding and the roof covering of plastic sheeting dates only from this period of work. The mid-19<sup>th</sup> century lean-to sheds attached to the northern elevation had been much altered and are not discussed further below.*

## **The Eastern Barn (1)**

The oldest intact structure of the building lies towards its eastern gable and originally formed a five-bay threshing barn of 6.7 m in overall width by 12.5 m in length (22 ft by 41 ft) on an approximately east-west axis. Its timber frame is fully pegged and tenoned in the medieval tradition, with horizontal mid-rails interrupting the wall studs and externally trenched braces rising from all four corner posts in the usual manner. The walls rise to 3.6 m at their roof plates (12 ft) on a shallow brick plinth of variable height. The studs and tie-beams of both gables have been respectively removed and renewed but three of the four wall braces survive *in situ* and the original tie-beams and posts contain empty mortises for arch-braces. The roof-plates contain face-halved and bladed scarf joints of a type rarely found before 1600 and the carpentry is typical of the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The present northern porch of the central bay (1a) is a replacement of the 19<sup>th</sup> century with narrow studs and diagonal primary bracing but the storey posts contain pegged mortises for an earlier porch that was probably contemporary with the barn. The roof-plate of the rear, southern elevation has been cut but would probably have contained a small door to create a through-draught for threshing and winnowing in the usual manner of the period. This rear bay is now blocked by modern studwork and the two western bays (1b) are divided from the rest by a modern partition. The cladding had been removed at the time of inspection but the external surfaces of the timber frame contain trenches for the horizontal laths of original render rather than weatherboarding. The king-truss roof structure is a recent softwood replacement which extends throughout the barn and is reported to replace a similar 19<sup>th</sup> century roof; the original roof would almost certainly have been a thatched side-purlin structure.

## **The Western Barn (2)**

The central part of the building is a second five-bay threshing barn that in its present form was probably built as an extension to the eastern barn (1) in the late-18<sup>th</sup> or early-19<sup>th</sup> century. Its walls extend to 15.5 m in length (51 ft) and contain substantial studs which rise from the ground sills to the roof-plates without mid-rails but with numerous diagonal primary braces which interrupt the studs in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century tradition. A small fragment of a trenched external brace survives in the northern elevation to the east of the porch, but other studs contain trenches for similar braces that are not consistent with each other and suggest re-use from another building. The roof-plates contain edge-halved and bridled joints of 16<sup>th</sup> century type, but these too may have been re-used. Much of the frame, including its roof-plates, sills and storey posts, has been renewed in softwood as part of the current conversion process and the evidence of the structure's development is limited. It is possible that parts of the 16<sup>th</sup> century frame survive *in situ*, or that it was moved in the 19<sup>th</sup> century as the map evidence suggests. Trenches for external laths in the exposed studs of the northern elevation demonstrate the barn was designed for render rather than weatherboarding. The timbers of the porch are tenoned and pegged but are of lighter scantling than elsewhere and appear to be part of a late-18<sup>th</sup> century or early-19<sup>th</sup> century addition. Three arch-braces flank the central

threshing bay but these were re-set when their respective tie-beams and storey-posts were renewed in softwood.

### **Western and Eastern Additions (3 & 4)**

The two threshing barns were extended to east and west in the early or mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. The eastern extension of two bays is 7.6 m in length (25 ft) and re-uses a pair of central storey posts from a 16<sup>th</sup> century structure with mortises for a ceiling joist. These timbers may have been salvaged from the larger farmhouse shown on the tithe map. It appears to have been designed to enlarge the eastern barn (1). The two-bay western extension is 9.1 m in length (30 ft) and now contains a modern ceiling of softwood joists with an external loading door. Its gable is of 19<sup>th</sup> century brick and the building was probably floored from the outset to form a stable with a hay loft or granary above. Stables were often attached to the ends of barns in this manner. At the time of inspection the lower storey was completely obscured by the dry-lining of a new kitchen and precise analysis was impossible. The walls of the western bay have been raised in height with new softwood to increase headroom in the loft and this is understood to reflect the arrangement before the present building work commenced.

### **Historic Significance**

The immediate area of Pannington Hall is of historic importance as the site of a Domesday manor and the present grade II-listed farmhouse is probably a fragment of a substantial 16<sup>th</sup> century property owned by Henry VIII's physician. The oldest part of the barn is an early-17<sup>th</sup> century structure of some quality that would be worthy of listing in its own right but for the loss of its original roof and the extent of its recent repair. The neighbouring barn to the east is of similar layout and scale, and was probably designed to store barley where the earlier barn held wheat. Much of its timber dates from the 16<sup>th</sup> century and certain sections may survive *in situ*, although in its present form the barn dates from the late-18<sup>th</sup> century or early-19<sup>th</sup> century. These barns reflect the most important periods of agricultural boom in Suffolk as the population rose sharply at the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century and the price of grain soared two centuries later when the Napoleonic wars restricted imports. As such they are of considerable historic interest irrespective of their close proximity to the listed farmhouse, but have been too extensively altered (with many major timbers recently renewed in softwood) to meet the strict English Heritage criteria for listing in their own right.

## **Appendix 1 (on accompanying CD): Full Photographic Record**

### **Descriptions of Photographs in Appendix 1**

#### **Photograph no.**

1. General view of site from field used as car park to south-west.
2. General view of site from south showing proximity to conurbation of Ipswich on horizon.
3. General view of site from south-east showing proximity of barn to left and farmhouse to right.
4. Exterior of listed farmhouse from south (included for site context).
5. Interior of listed farmhouse from south showing 16th century ceiling joists (included for site context).
6. Interior of farmhouse from south-east showing 16th century ceiling and later brickwork (included for site context).
7. General view of site from north-east showing barn to right & previously converted pantiled shed to left.
8. General view of site from west showing gable of barn in centre.
9. External eastern gable of barn (4) showing lean-to shed (7) to northern elevation to right.
10. Exterior from south-west showing modern cladding with taller granary (3) to left.
11. Exterior from north-east showing twin porches 1a to left and 2a to right.
12. Exterior from north-west showing modern cladding with taller granary (3) to right.
13. Eastern end of northern exterior showing stripped cladding with porch (1a) to right.
14. Exterior from north-east showing proximity to shed in south-eastern corner of northern yard complex (right).
15. Exterior from south-east of shed in south-eastern corner of northern yard complex (included for site context).
16. Exterior from west showing northern yard complex to left and porches to right.
17. Exterior from north-east of partly demolished detached brick shed to west of barn.
18. North-western corner of barn showing brick lower storey to gable of granary (3).
19. Exterior of western gable of granary (3) showing first-floor loading door.

20. Western end of southern exterior showing tall granary (3) to left.
21. Eastern end of southern exterior showing brick plinth and door in corner of western barn (2).
22. Softwood modern roof of converted shed adjoining eastern end of southern elevation, seen from north.
23. Eastern end of northern exterior showing lean-to sheds 7 & 6 to left and right respectively.
24. New softwood roof structure of bar seen from upper storey of granary to west.
25. Internal south-western corner of first-floor granary (3) showing brick gable with new wall studs.
26. Northern interior of first-floor granary (3) showing new wall of higher western bay.
27. Southern interior of first-floor granary (3) showing higher western bay to right with original roof plate beneath.
28. Northern interior of first-floor granary showing raised wall of western bay to left.
29. Interior of granary (3) from east, showing modern dry-lining to brick gable.
30. Interior of granary (3) from west showing modern partition to western barn (2).
31. Western section of barn (2 & 1b) from west, showing partition to eastern section (1 & 4) in rear.
32. Western section of barn (2 & 1b) from east showing partition to granary (3) in rear.
33. Western end of southern interior of western barn (2) showing new softwood posts, sill and roof plate.
34. Southern interior of western bay showing modern door in central entrance bay.
35. Central southern bay of western barn (2) showing narrow modern door with re-set arch-brace to right.
36. Door in eastern bay of southern interior of western barn (2) showing two bays of eastern barn (1b) to left.
37. Western bays of southern interior of eastern barn (1b) showing secondary partition to left.
38. Western bays of northern interior of eastern barn (1b) showing original trenched corner brace to left.
39. Detail of brace at western end of eastern bay (1b) showing brace mortise of removed gable in post to left.



40. Internal detail of north-western corner post of eastern barn (1b) showing empty mortis of gable mid-rail to left.
41. External detail of north-western corner post of eastern barn (1b) showing trenched brace in northern elevation to left.
42. Detail from south-west of empty arch-brace mortises in tie-beam at western end of eastern barn (1b).
43. Eastern bays of western barn (2) in northern interior showing porch (2a) to left.
44. Detail of external brace to east of porch (2a) in northern interior of western barn (2).
45. Detail of edge-halved and bridled scarf joint in northern roof-plate of western barn (2).
46. Western bays of northern interior of western barn (2) showing porch (2a) to right with lean-to shed (5) beyond.
47. Eastern interior of western porch (2a) showing pegged and tenoned studwork.
48. Western interior of western porch (2a) showing pegged and tenoned studwork.
49. Detail from west of re-set arch-braces flanking porch (2a) of western barn (2).
50. Interior from east of central lean-to shed (6) showing northern exterior of western barn to left.
51. Interior of lean-to shed (6) from west showing northern entrance to left.
52. Fragment of externally trenched brace to northern exterior of western barn showing porch (2a) to right.
53. Northern exterior of eastern barn (1b) seen from central lean-to shed (6).
54. Northern exterior of western barn (2) from western lean-to (5) showing re-used studs & lath notches of original render.
55. Interior of western lean-to shed (5) from west showing porch (2a) with western barn (2) right.
56. Interior of eastern barn (1 & 4) from eastern gable showing modern scaffolding.
57. Interior of eastern barn (1 & 4) from west showing modern glazed doors in eastern gable.
58. Eastern bay of two-bay extension (4) from south showing modern doors of eastern gable to right.
59. Eastern bay of two-bay extension (4) from north showing roof profile of previously converted shed.
60. Re-used 16th century storey post dividing two bays of eastern extension (4) seen from north-east.

61. Northern interior of two-bay extension (4) showing re-used central storey post.
62. Southern interior of two eastern bays of eastern barn (1) showing entrance bay to right.
63. Modern studs blocking southern entrance bay of eastern barn (1) with raised secondary roof-plate.
64. South-eastern internal corner of eastern barn (1) showing wall brace and missing gable mortises to left.
65. Northern interior of two eastern bays of eastern barn (1) showing extension (4) to right.
66. North-eastern internal corner of eastern barn (1) showing wall brace and missing gable mortises to right.
67. North-eastern external corner of eastern barn (1) showing wall brace and notches of original daub cladding.
68. Face-halved scarf joint in roof-plate of eastern barn (1) adjoining northern porch (1a).
69. Interior of northern porch (1a) of eastern barn (1) showing modern glazed doors.
70. Western interior of eastern porch (1a) showing 19th century primary bracing & pegs of original porch mid-rail in post.

*Photographic Appendix follows on pp. 16-22*

**Appendix 2 (pp. 14-18): Selected Printed Photographs**



**Illus. 1. General view of site from field used as car park to south-west showing roof of barn to right.**



**Illus. 2. Exterior of listed farmhouse from south (included for site context).**





**Illus. 3. Exterior of barn from north-east showing twin porches (1a to left and 2a to right).**



**Illus. 4. Exterior from south-west showing modern cladding of ongoing conversion with taller western bay of granary (3) to left.**





**Illus. 5. Western section of barn (2 & 1b) from west, showing partition to eastern section (1 & 4) in rear. The entire roof structure and many principal timbers have been replaced in softwood in recent months.**

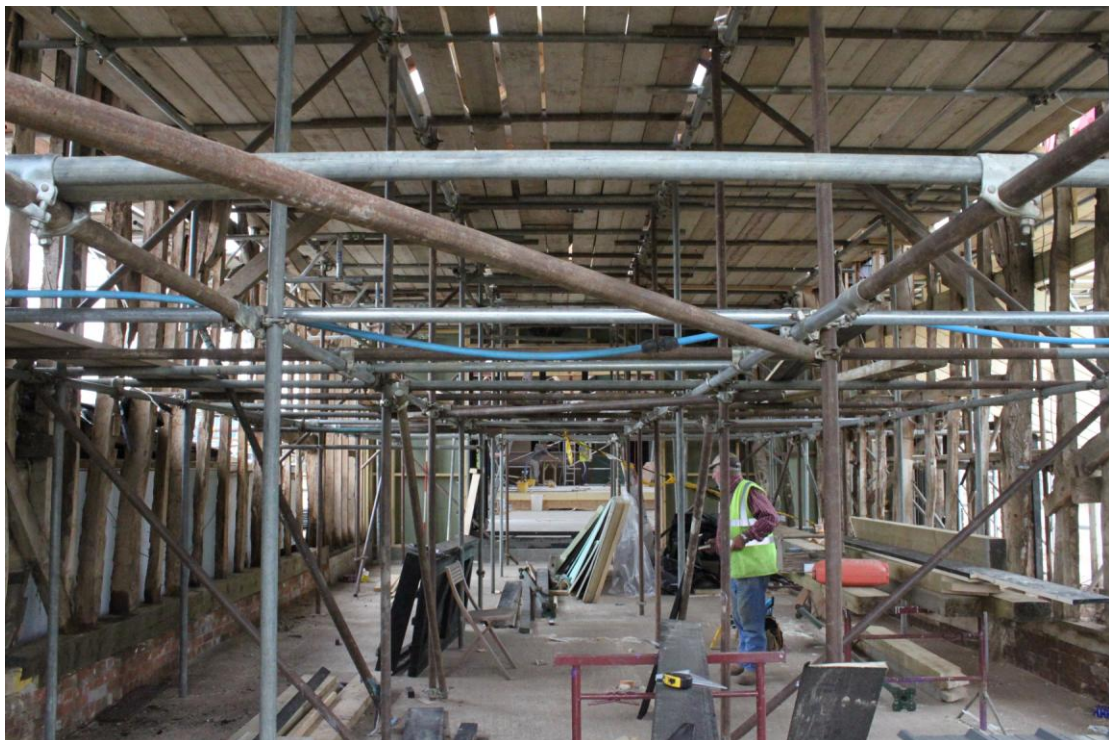


**Illus. 6. Western bays of northern interior of eastern barn (1b) showing an original trenched corner brace with the position of its missing western gable to left.**





**Illus. 7. Detail from west of re-set arch-braces flanking porch (2a) of western barn (2). The tie-beams and storey posts are new softwood timbers, but the arch-braces are understood to have been reinstated in their former positions.**



**Illus. 8. Interior of eastern barn (1 & 4) from eastern gable showing modern scaffolding.**





**Illus. 9. North-eastern external corner of eastern barn (1) showing wall brace with mid-rail and notches of original daub cladding.**



**Illus. 10. Internal south-western corner of two-bay first-floor granary (3) showing brick gable with upper walls of new softwood. The original roof-plate is visible to the left but the walls of the western bay have been raised.**