

**Church Farm Barn,
Cavendish,
Suffolk,
CAV 052**

Historic Building Record
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Church Farm Barn, Peacocks Road, Cavendish, Suffolk

(TL 804 466)

Historic Building Record

This report provides a written and photographic record at English Heritage (2006) Level 2 of a timber-framed barn in the curtilage of a grade II-listed former farmhouse and in close proximity to the parish church. It has been prepared to a brief written by Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Service (Edward Martin, 17th July 2009, ref. SpecHBR&Mon(EM)ChurchFmBarn_Cavendish_09) and is intended to fulfil a condition of planning consent for residential conversion (St Edmundsbury Borough Council application SE/08/1107).

Introduction

The report is accompanied by a CD containing a photographic record in the form of 45 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 in red and white. The site was inspected on 20th November 2009.

Summary

Church Farm adjoins the northern edge of the churchyard in Cavendish and is reached from Peacocks Road to the west. The grade II-listed farmhouse appears to date from the late-16th century and consists of a single timber-framed cross-wing with a jettied southern gable facing the church and a later extension to the north. At the time of the tithe survey in 1848 it was known as Motts Farm and contained just 39.5 acres of land occupied by the owner of Ducks Hall 1.5 km to the north-east. The farmhouse is depicted on the tithe map as an outbuilding and was probably unoccupied and possibly derelict at the time.

The barn lies 15 m north of the farmhouse (approximately 35 m from the churchyard) and had been partly converted into a domestic annex and sold into separate ownership shortly before inspection. It is a weatherboarded and pantiled structure of five-bays on an east-west axis with a central porch to the south, which in its present form dates from the mid-19th century and was probably newly built in 1848 (when a barn of similar outline was shown on the tithe map). Nothing remains of the additional farm buildings shown on the Ordnance Surveys of 1885 and 1904.

The barn contains typical 19th century features such as bolted knee-braces to its tie-beams and diagonal primary braces to its walls, but most of the individual timbers were re-used from a late-16th century domestic building. The principal posts and tie-beams of the two eastern bays may remain *in situ*, and originally formed a three-bay cross-wing with a single-bay chamber to the east and a two-bay chamber to the west lit by a tripartite oriel window with cavetto-moulded mullions in its gable. This may survive from a second Tudor house on the site, but probably represents the missing jettied cross-wing of the farmhouse. More evidence may be revealed both above and below ground during the forthcoming conversion work. It is highly unusual for a barn to contain a recognisable domestic building in this way, and the structure is accordingly of considerable historic interest despite the extent of its recent alterations.

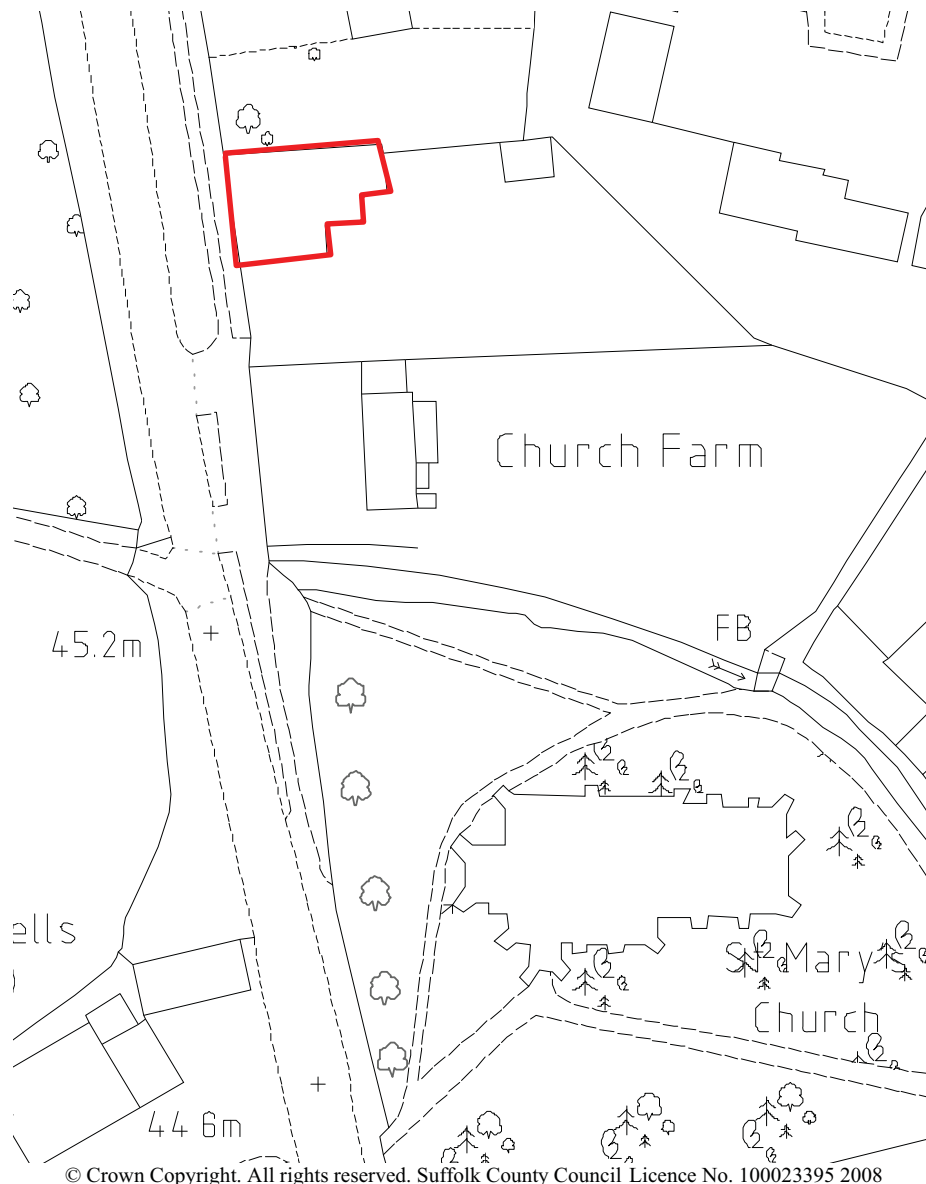


Figure 1
Current Ordnance Survey Site Plan
Outlining the barn in red and showing its proximity to Church farmhouse and St Mary's church to the south. The barn was L-shaped at the time of inspection, having lost the projection shown here in the eastern return of its porch.

Historic Context: Documentary & Cartographic Record

Church Farm adjoins the northern edge of the churchyard in Cavendish and is reached from Peacocks Road to the west. The barn lies 15 m north of the farmhouse (approximately 35 m from the churchyard) and had been sold into separate ownership shortly before inspection. The house is a grade II-listed timber-framed and rendered structure on a north-south axis (at right-angles to the barn) and its southern gable is jettied towards the church. This property was not inspected internally, but is dated to the 16th century in the Schedule of Listed Buildings and includes an ovolo-moulded tie-beam with evidence of a projecting oriel window to the upper storey. The building may date from as early as the late-14th century (when ovolo-mouldings were also fashionable), and probably represents only a fragment of a cross-wing house which originally possessed a central hall and matching cross-wing to the west. The lower northern half of the house is a later addition.

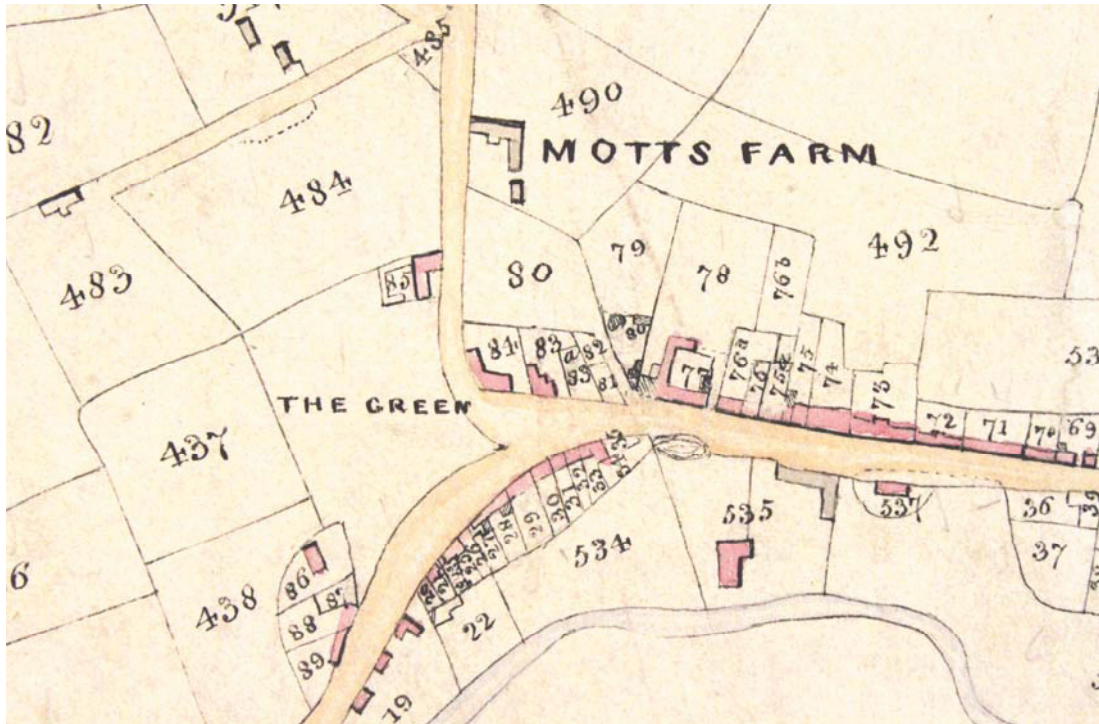


Figure 2

The Cavendish tithe map of 1848 showing Motts Farm (now Church Farm) to the north of the churchyard (plot 80: the church is not depicted) with the green to the west. The much photographed L-shaped group of thatched cottages south of the churchyard is not shown in its present form – suggesting it does not date from the 16th and 17th centuries as stated in the Schedule of Listed Buildings. (Suffolk Record Office, Bury St Edmunds.)

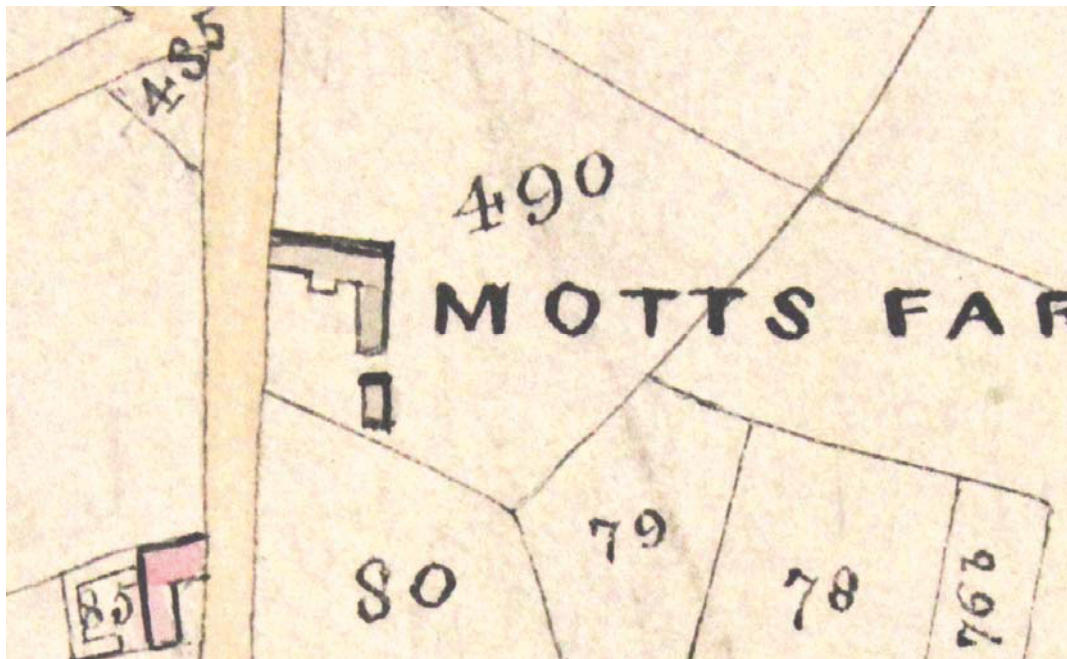


Figure 2a

Detail of 1848 tithe map above, showing the outline of the barn (or its predecessor) as it remains today, with a central porch to the south, but with an additional wing projecting towards the farmhouse from the eastern end of the same elevation. This wing probably contained a stable but no longer survives. The small size of the house suggests its northern extension had not yet been added.

The Cavendish tithe map of 1848 names the farm as 'Motts Farm', and shows the barn with a long wing projecting from the eastern end of its southern elevation towards a relatively small farmhouse. The farm was a modest holding of 39.5 acres (67% arable) owned and occupied by William Coldham, who also owned and occupied Moors Farms of 35 acres (3.75 km to the north) and Home Farm of 78 acres (1.5 km to the north-east). Home Farm is now known as Ducks Hall, and was entered by the same name as the residence of William Coldham, farmer, in White's Suffolk Directories of 1844 and 1855. The barn and house at Motts was described in the tithe schedule together with the adjoining field (plot 490 in figure 2) as 'Home pasture and buildings' without the usual reference to a farmhouse or homestead. This, along with the grey pigment used to depict both the house and barn (instead of the red colouring normally given to domestic buildings), strongly suggests the present house was unoccupied and possibly derelict.

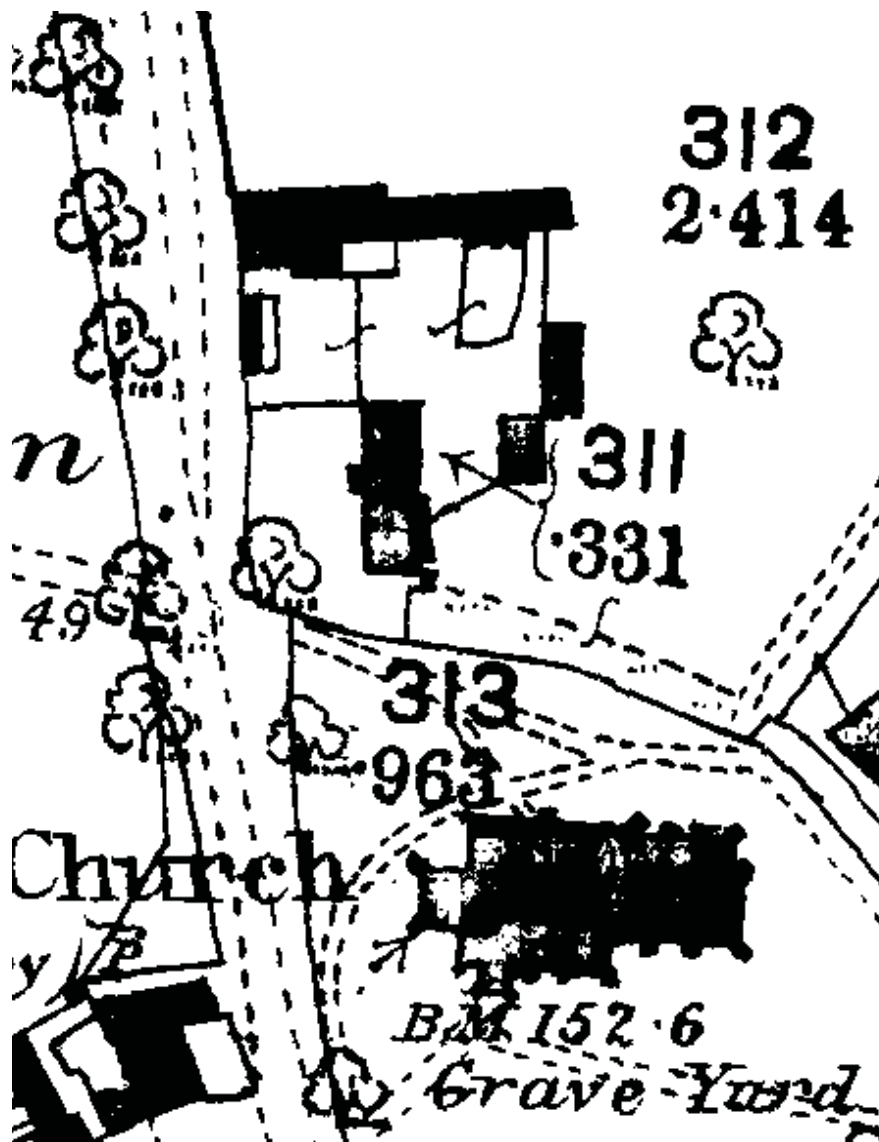


Figure 3

First Edition 25 inch Ordnance Survey of 1885

The southern wing of 1848 has been replaced by another to the east, with several additional new buildings and (apparently) a northern extension to the farmhouse. A small yard occupies the south-eastern angle of the barn and porch. The site is named as Church Farm – and Church Cottages to the south are depicted with their current profile (not shown here).

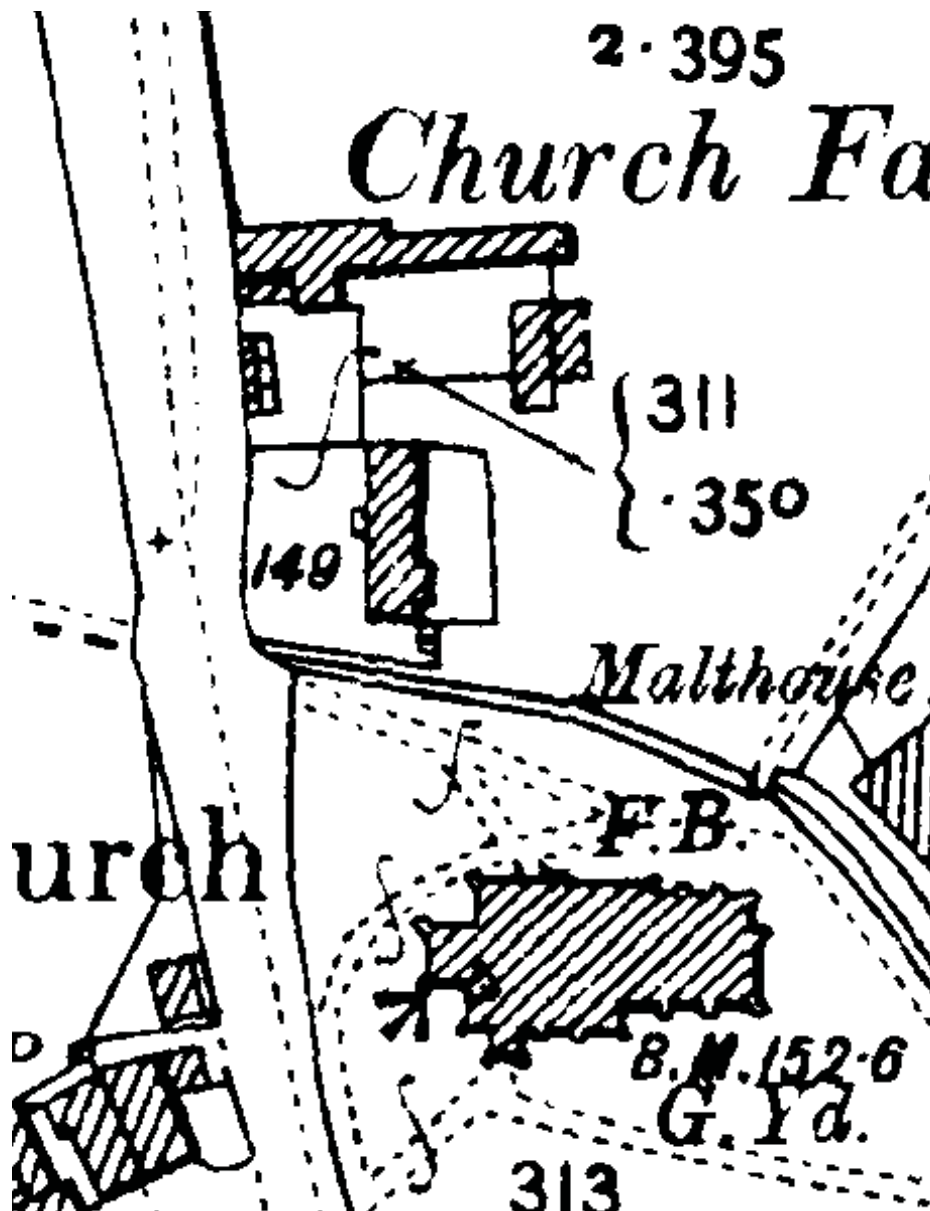


Figure 4

Second Edition 25 inch Ordnance Survey of 1904

The layout of the site had changed little since 1885, with minor alterations to the yards and outbuildings of which no trace now survives. The stream which divides the farmhouse from the churchyard is clearly shown.

By the time of the first edition Ordnance Survey of 1885 the site had been transformed, and re-named Church Farm (figure 3). The southern wing which adjoined the barn in 1848 had been demolished and replaced by a similar range to the east with new yards and outbuildings. The house had apparently been enlarged and evidently operated as a farmhouse in the normal manner (unlike in 1848). The barn's central southern porch was flanked by a shed on the west (as today) and by a small yard on the east (to which the blocked side-door of the porch would have given access). This situation had changed little by 1904, although at least one of the outbuildings to the east of the yard had been rebuilt and the small yard east of the barn's porch had been removed.

Building Analysis

N.B. In recent years the barn at Church Farm has been partly converted into a residential annex to the farmhouse. The bays to the east of the porch contain a loft with a first-floor sitting room, kitchen and bathroom and a narrow stair lobby against the gable. These parts of the building contain modern doors and windows while the rest of the structure has been extensively renovated and provided with new external weatherboarding. In consequence, no agricultural fixtures or fittings survived at the time of inspection.

The barn is a timber-framed and weatherboarded structure of five bays with a low-pitched pantiled roof of approximately 35 degrees. It extends to 16 m in length by 5.5 m in width on an east-west axis (53 ft by 18 ft) and its walls rise to 4.6 m at their roof-plates (15 ft) – including a brick plinth of 60 cm or 2 ft in height. The plinth is laid in English bond and contains a high proportion of 17th century bricks (mixed with 19th century bricks). A gabled porch projects by 4.2 m (13.75 ft) from the southern elevation of the central bay, and the western gable adjoins Peacocks Road (photo A2.1).

The exposed wall fabric consists of oak studs interrupted by diagonal primary braces with horizontal mid-rails 1.7 m beneath the roof-plates (5.5 ft), as shown in photo A2.4. The various timbers are of substantial section (the studs measuring of 15 cm by 9 cm or 6 ins by 3.5 ins) and are of medieval or 16th century appearance, but contain numerous empty mortises, brace trenches and other features that prove them to have been re-used. The eastern mid-rail of the porch, for example, contains empty diamond-shaped mortises (A2.9) for the mullions of a domestic window. The presence of small holes for glazing bars between each mortise suggests a late-16th or early-17th century origin (before which period glass was rare). The tie-beam to the west of the central bay was clearly re-used from the gable of a late-16th century domestic cross-wing as it contains evidence of a tripartite window with a central oriel (which projected beyond the plane of the wall, hence the absence of mullion mortises) flanked by two smaller, shallow windows with glazing bars and cavetto-moulded mullions with rectangular mortises – the mouldings still visible as scars in the tie-beam's whitewash (A2.6).

The wall timbers of the porch and the two western bays are fully exposed and are clearly not *in situ*. In its present form this part of the barn can be dated to the mid-19th century on the basis of its nailed primary braces and the bolted knee-braces between its tie-beams and storey posts; there is no evidence of tenoned arch-bracing as might be expected in the early-19th century and before. The pantiled roof is a clasped-purlin structure with nailed softwood collars and a ridge-board which re-uses older timbers but appears to have been rebuilt in the 20th century. It is not certain whether the present building can be equated with the barn of similar outline shown on the tithe map of 1848 (figure 2) – in which case it would have been new - or represents part of the farm's extensive refurbishment of *circa* 1860 (which involved the extension of the house and the addition of several new outbuildings). The porch contained an original side-door at the southern end of its eastern elevation (now blocked) which is respected by the brickwork of the plinth (A2.8) and relates to a small enclosed yard shown in 1885 (figure 3). The present southern entrance doors are modern but lie between the jambs of the full-height original doorway, and the lower doors in the northern elevation of the central bay have been blocked. The open-fronted lean-to shed in the western angle of the barn and porch was shown for the first time on the Ordnance Survey of 1885 but was rebuilt during the 20th century.

The two eastern bays contain a loft which has been converted into a domestic annex. Much of the wall fabric is accordingly hidden by modern plaster, but the principal storey posts and tie-beams remain exposed and are less obviously re-used than those of the western bays. The roof-plates and tie-beams appear to be *in situ*, with evidence of a central window in the eastern gable, a closed truss with empty stud mortises in the central tie-beam and an open

truss (without studs or arch-braces) to the west. The roof-plates contain face-halved and bladed scarf joints and a gap in their pattern of stud pegs (the studs themselves are concealed) for a first-floor to the east of the central storey post of the northern elevation. Each tie-beam contains a central mortise for the axial joist of a first-floor ceiling, and the storey posts contain mortises and corbel blocks for the binding joists of a ground-floor ceiling. These features are entirely consistent with a domestic cross-wing of the late-16th century with a single-bay chamber to the east and a two-bay chamber to the west; the re-used tie-beam to the west of the central bay almost certainly belonged to its western gable but now forms part of the altered fabric. At approximately 3 m in length (10 ft) each eastern bay is significantly longer than its counterpart to the west (of approximately 2.4 m or 8 ft), and this feature too suggests a difference in origin. The greater width of the entrance bay (of 4.3 m or 14 ft) may explain the need to move the western tie-beam when the barn adopted its present form.

Although the eastern half of the barn originated as a domestic cross-wing, its wall and ceiling timbers are hidden and it is unclear whether it remains *in situ* or simply represents a more complete re-used frame than in the western half of the barn. The few wall timbers that remain exposed beneath the eastern loft are similar to those of the western bays, and it seems most likely that the cross-wing originated elsewhere. As the farmhouse now possesses only one jettied wing instead of the usual pair it is entirely possible that its missing wing is now contained in the barn. The apparent dereliction of the house in 1848 supports such a scenario, and more evidence (in the form of wall and ceiling fabric) may be uncovered during future conversion work. If the cross-wing remains *in situ* some evidence of domestic floor levels may be revealed by any new service trenches.

Historic Significance

The barn at Church Farm is of particular historic interest given its highly unusual re-use of an entire late-16th century domestic cross-wing with evidence of tripartite windows and a first-floor doorway. It seems likely that it represents the missing jettied cross-wing of the grade II-listed farmhouse shown as unoccupied and possibly derelict on the tithe map of 1848. It remains possible, however, that it remains *in situ* and instead represents the remains of a second Tudor house on the site. More evidence may be revealed both above and below ground during future conversion work. As an otherwise typical five-bay barn of the mid-19th century the building is of less significance due to its partial conversion and extensive alteration in recent years.

Appendix 1 (on accompanying CD): Full Photographic Record

Descriptions of Photographs in Appendix 1

Photograph no.

1. General view from Peacocks Road to north showing barn to left, house in centre & church to right.
2. General view of site from Peacocks Road to south showing barn in centre with house to right.
3. Western facade of farmhouse showing jettied southern gable to right (included for site context).
4. Southern gable of farmhouse from churchyard to south, showing close proximity to church (right).
5. General view of site from Peacocks Road to south-west showing barn to left and farmhouse to right.
6. Entrance to barn from Peacock Road to west.
7. General view of site from east showing house to left and barn to right.
8. Northern external elevation from north-west showing modern weatherboarding.
9. External southern elevation showing central porch with lean-to shed to left.
10. Exterior from south-east showing converted western bays to right.
11. External western gable of barn showing lean-to shed to right.
12. Interior of lean-to shed from south showing modern weatherboarding to barn.
13. Interior of lean-to shed from west showing porch to right.
14. Eastern exterior of porch showing position of original side-door to left (note closer bricks).
15. Interior of barn from east showing primary wall bracing & southern porch to left.
16. 19th century roof structure from east showing re-used timber with evidence of oriel window.
17. Detail of tie-beam to west of porch showing profile of cavetto-moulded clerestorey window mullions.
18. Interior from west showing converted loft in eastern half of barn with porch to right.
19. Interior of western gable showing primary braces and re-used timber.
20. Northern interior of western bay showing primary bracing and re-used timbers.

21. Northern interior of central bay showing blocked doorway with converted loft to right.
22. Scarf joint in northern roof-plate of central bay, showing in situ timber to right.
23. Detail of corbel block to storey post at northern corner of loft.
24. Detail of corbel block to storey post at southern corner of loft, showing porch to right.
25. Southern internal elevation beneath eastern loft.
26. Interior of porch from north-west showing converted loft to left.
27. Internal eastern elevation of porch showing original side-door to right.
28. Detail of re-used eastern porch mid-rail showing diamond window mullion & glazing bar mortises.
29. Internal southern gable of porch showing partly blocked original doorway.
30. Detail of corner braces and jambs of original doorway in southern internal elevation of porch.
31. Empty stud mortises in roof-plate of central bay seen from porch - apparently in situ.
32. Western internal elevation of porch showing southern door to left.
33. Southern interior of western bay of barn, showing porch to left.
34. Stair lobby from north showing eastern gable to left.
35. Stair lobby from south showing modern stair with eastern gable to right.
36. Northern interior of converted loft showing central tie-beam with partition mortises.
37. Detail of axial ceiling joist mortise in central tie-beam of converted loft.
38. Central northern storey post of loft showing binding joist mortise at base.
39. Detail of binding joist mortise at foot of central northern storey post in loft.
40. Detail of south-west of bolted knee-brace to central tie-beam of loft.
41. Internal eastern gable of converted loft showing ostensibly *in situ* 16th century framing.
42. Internal southern elevation of converted loft showing tie-beam to right.
43. Detail of open truss with inserted knee-brace in south-western corner of converted loft.

44. Detail of carpenter's mark to bolted knee-brace in north-western corner of loft.
45. Detail of face-halved scarf joint in northern roof-plate of converted loft.

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



A2.1 General view of site from Peacocks Road to north showing barn to left, former farmhouse in centre & church to right



A2.2 General view of site from Peacocks Road to south-west showing barn to left and farmhouse with jettied southern gable to right.



A2.3 External southern elevation showing central porch with lean-to shed to left and windows of converted eastern loft to right



A2.4 Interior of barn from east showing primary wall bracing with re-used timbers and the southern porch to left.



A2.5 Interior from west showing previously converted loft in eastern half of barn with porch to right and blocked northern door to left. The corbel blocks of the storey posts supporting the loft are visible at both sides.



A2.6 Detail of re-used tie-beam to west of porch showing rectangular mullion mortises of clerestorey window with scars of cavetto mouldings in white paint.



A2.7 Internal southern gable of porch showing corner braces and jambs of original doorway (now reduced in height).



A2.8 Internal eastern elevation of porch showing original side-door to right.



A2.9 Detail of re-used mid-rail in eastern side-elevation of porch showing mortises for diamond window mullions & glazing bars.



A2.10 Northern internal elevation of converted loft showing apparently *in situ* late-16th century framing with open truss to left and closed truss with empty stud mortises in centre (and position of first-floor door to right). The bolted knee-braces are 19th century insertions.