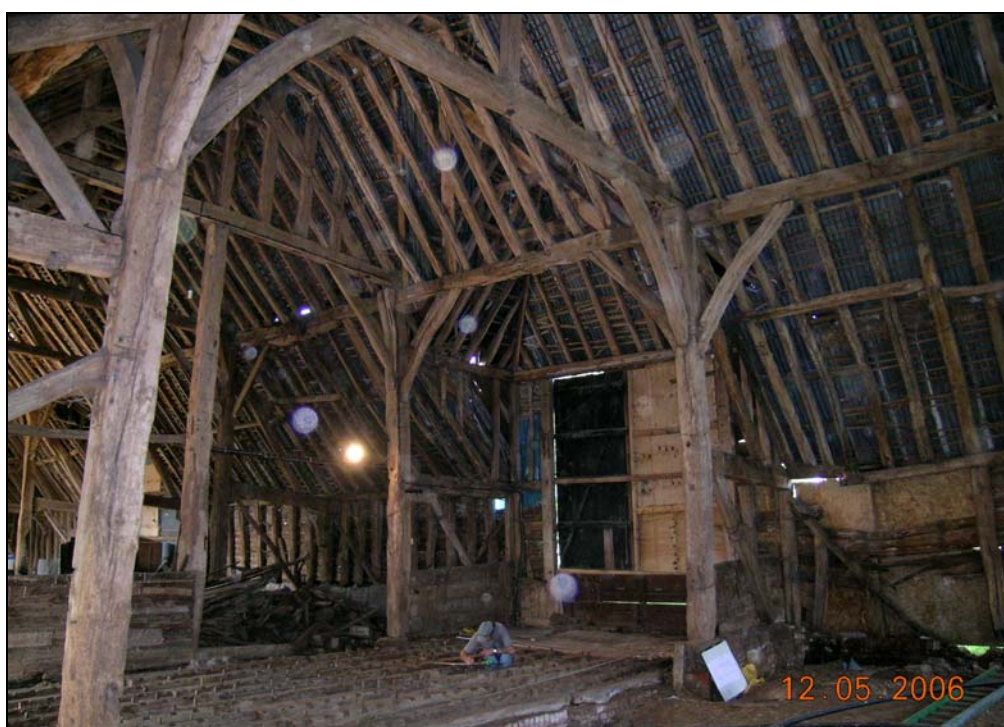


**PICCOTTS FARM BARN & OUTBUILDINGS  
PICCOTTS LANE  
GREAT SALING, ESSEX**

**HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING  
& ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING**



**Essex County Council**

**Field Archaeology Unit**

**December 2006**

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& ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING**

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***As part of our desire to provide a quality service, we would welcome any comments you may have on the content or the presentation of this report.***

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**PICCOTTS FARM BARN & OUTBUILDINGS, PICCOTTS LANE  
GREAT SALING, ESSEX**

**HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING**

**Client:** Pocknell Studios

**FAU Project No.:** 1641

**NGR:** TL 7083 2567

**Site Code:** GSPF 06

**OASIS No.:** essexcou1-20679

**Planning Application:** BTE/2039/05 & BTE/LB/2040/05

**Dates of Fieldwork:** 10th-12th May 2006

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

A programme of building recording and groundworks monitoring was undertaken by Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit (ECC FAU) during conversion work to live/work units on a medieval barn and later outbuildings at Piccotts Farm. The work was funded by the developer, Pocknell Studios, and carried out in accordance with a brief issued by the Historic Environment Management team of Essex County Council (ECC HEM), who also monitored the work.

Copies of the report will be supplied to ECC HEM and the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER, former SMR) at County Hall, Chelmsford. An OASIS record has been created. The archive will be stored at Braintree Museum.

## **2.0 BACKGROUND**

### **2.1 Site location and description (fig.1)**

Piccotts Farm is located on the east side of Great Saling parish, along a minor road known as Piccotts Lane, at TL 7083 2567. The remaining farm complex is multi-period, formed around two former yards to the north and east of the farmhouse. The earliest structures are timber-framed. The most important of these is a large Grade 2\* listed barn, dated to the late

14th or early 15th-century (Listed Building of Special Architectural & Historic Interest- LBS 114998). A Grade 2 listed 16th-century animal byre stands to the south-east (LBS 114999) and a 19th-century cart shed immediately to the east (curtilage listed). This and a large double open-sided cattle shed have been converted and incorporated into the development. Other contemporary buildings from the age of high farming (mid to late 19th-century) are no longer standing, though they feature on recent maps. The farmhouse dates to the late 17th century and is also listed (LBS 114997), but is not affected by the development.

Topographically, the farmyard occupies an area of slightly falling ground from north-west to south-east, surrounded by arable farmland. There is a clear division in the natural geology either side of the barn, with clay on the north side and sand or sand/gravel to the south, immediately below topsoil. By the barn, the level is c.50.20m OD, while at the opposite end of the yard, by the animal byre, ground level is c.48.00m OD.

The barn has been included on the ECC Buildings at Risk Register (BARR) since 1987 (ECC HEM 2006). In the 2003 BARR, its condition is described as poor, requiring cladding and general repairs. It is given a 'C' rating, denoting 'slow decay' (ECC Heritage Conservation 2003).

## **2.2 Planning background**

Braintree District Council received a planning application (BTE/2039/05) for change of use and conversion of farm buildings to live/work units in October 2005. Mindful of the possible effects on the historic integrity of the barn and other structures, and the likely impact on any below-ground archaeological remains, ECC HEM attached a full archaeological condition to the planning permission, based on advice given in Planning Policy Guidance Note 16: Archaeology and Planning (DOE 1990).

## **2.3 Historical background & development**

Much of the history to the site has already been covered in some detail in a previous desk-based assessment (DBA) (Padfield 1998). The main points from this are mentioned below, alongside other information obtained from the Essex Records Office.

The name 'Saling' is believed to derive from one of two possible origins: the Latin 'salix' willow, or willow field, or a local Saxon landowning family called 'Saeling' (Reaney 1969).

Sir Ralph Piccott, descendant of Auberon de Vere, gave his name to the estate sometime between 1189 and 1216 (Pope 1982-92). His son, Sir William held 120 acres of arable and

26 acres of meadow and pasture land, with 13s 9d for “keeping a sarhawk and mewling it at his own cost” for Henry III (1216-72). Many estates were held by the king’s sergeantry in this manner, to raise and keep hawks, horses, grooms and hounds for the king’s pleasure (Pope 1982-92).

Thomas de Mandeville of Black Notley bought the estate in 1349, when it consisted of 300 acres (Padfield 1998). Thereafter it was owned by various families including the Hende family of Bradwell Hall, near Coggeshall, an immensely rich family who bought the estate in the late 14th-century and certainly would have had the resources to have built the barn (Padfield 1998). In the late 16th-century it passed through marriage to the Maxey family of Saling Hall (Padfield 1998).

In 1734 the estate was acquired by Thomas Guy to found and upkeep the hospital of the same name (Pope 1982-92). This sale was necessary because of bad debts of over £20,814, mainly left by Sir Martin Lumley and his heir being pronounced “a lunatic and had been so for four years” (Padfield 1998). Thomas Guy had made his fortune from the South Sea Company, before the bubble burst, and bought large tracts of land in Essex (including the nearby Panfield Hall estate) and Hertfordshire.

‘Picotts’ features on Chapman and Andre’s map of 1777 (fig. 2) as a square yard with three buildings set around it. Their proportions are equivalent to the three oldest standing structures: the barn, byre and farmhouse (buildings 1-3 in fig. 1), but only the farmhouse is shown in its correct place. Thus the map gives a representative rather than factual account.

The Great Saling tithe map (1838, D/CT 508B, fig. 3) shows that by the 1830s, much of the 19th-century plan form is in place. As this was a rich estate, early farming ‘improvement’ is likely and the farm continued to expand through the 19th-century, in line with agricultural developments. The tithe map (fig. 3) indicates two small structures on the eastern side around, and partly attached to, the byre. A long brewhouse range stands to the south-east of the farmhouse (Padfield 1998), adjacent to a hop garden. The accompanying tithe award (D/CT 508A) indicates a holding of 165 acres, c.107 of which is arable, farmed by Joseph Agent. As part of his tenancy, Guy’s Hospital received £34.4s and the Vicar £16.1s per annum in rent.



The first edition OS map of 1875 (fig. 4) shows a more planned layout around three main yards, two of which are divided by an open-sided cattle shed, largely rebuilt during the recent conversion works. The granary on the west end of the barn (fig. 1) has also been constructed by this date. Footpaths leading off to the north-east and south-east appear to represent forgotten elements to a medieval cross roads (Padfield 1998). The track leading down the slope is still in use today, leading to a small paddock and stables. The following map, the second edition OS map of 1897, sees this layout remain unchanged.

## **2.4 Farming in the late-medieval and post-medieval periods (1400-1901)**

Medieval farm complexes tended to adopt an unplanned plan form, scattered around the farm house rather than a central courtyard. Farms were owned by estates or religious institutions. Some of the larger more durable barns remain, such as the 13th-century barns at Cressing Temple and Priors Hall Barn at Widdington. The latter is closer in date and style to Piccotts Barn. Many more ordinary and less-durable medieval structures have been lost.

Farms in the south-east of the country were 'mixed', producing cereals and livestock and consisted of a barn, where crops were threshed and stored, granary to store the grain (although the farmhouse was often used instead) and stable, built with internal hay lofts. Except for the horses, animals were kept outside or in temporary shelters. Implements (ploughs, etc) and wagons were stored in sheds or on the barn's threshing floor. The relationship between crops and livestock was close. Cereals were produced both as a cash crop and animal fodder, with enough kept by to feed a few animals over the winter. In return, the animals provided transport and traction, wool, meat, dairy products and manure for the fields.

In the late 17th century, improvements in crop rotation heralded the end of the three year crop cycle. Increased production of winter feed meant that more cattle could be kept for fattening and improvements in animal husbandry meant larger animals could be reared.

Improvements led to the rationalisation of plan form into the 'planned' courtyard layout, the 'model' farm being the culmination of this type. From the 1740s, planned farms began replacing the earlier scattered farmsteads, set up by 'improving' landlords. Cattle were fed in one or more enclosed yards, with an entrance on the warmer southern side and a barn to the north for shelter. Either side of the yard were open-fronted shelter sheds, loose boxes and stores for feed and bedding. In the yards manure was trod into straw as litter, which was collected and added to the fields, increasing crop yields.

Improvement accelerated between 1840 and 1870, a period known as the 'golden age of farming', when grain prices were at their peak, leading to the expansion of farms and farm buildings. On the larger planned farms, the buildings were arranged efficiently around the yard to follow the natural flow of materials. By the 1860s open-sided sheds were provided for cattle on most farms (Barnwell 1998). The focus on mixed farm agriculture accentuated the reciprocal relationship between the animals and farmer: food and straw in exchange for manure. The ideals of 'high farming' philosophies developed the courtyard system to its full potential, aided by mechanisation, artificial fertilisers and new feeds, in conjunction with prevailing Victorian views on efficiency and organisation. In the printed form, great debate was had on the benefits of different designs and husbandry techniques.

The expense of the planned model farm in its purest form was a barrier to smaller farmers, many of whom were also influenced by high farming ideas. In these cases, rather than demolish and build afresh, many landowners remodelled their farms by retaining some of the larger buildings, inevitably barns, while constructing new housing for livestock around courtyard layouts.

Many Essex farmsteads today are composites of post-medieval barns integrated into a 19th-century courtyard layout and supplanted by 20th-century pre-fabricated structures, usually to one side of the traditional farm core. Inevitably in Essex, Britain's entry into the EEC in the 1970s accelerated the move to more intensive agriculture, amalgamation of estates and a shift away from mixed to arable farming. With larger economies of scale through larger machinery and crop yields, the smaller traditional farm buildings no longer have a role and with property prices continuing to boom, offer an attractive and profitable incentive for conversion.

### **3.0 OBJECTIVES**

#### **3.1 Historic building survey**

The purpose of the historic building survey was, as outlined in the brief (Clarke 2006), to investigate and record the farm buildings to RCHME level 3 standard prior to conversion. The record was required to consider the plan form of the site, materials and method of construction, building chronology, development and phasing, function and internal layout and survival of early fixtures and fittings relating to original or change of usage. The record also aimed to understand the context of the farm within broad historical trends in agricultural development and the local/regional significance/rarity of the buildings.

### **3.2 Archaeological monitoring**

From the documentary and built evidence, the site has origins as a medieval manor dating to the 14th/15th-century. A requirement was therefore made in the brief to monitor the excavation of groundworks associated with the development, in order to identify and record any buried archaeological deposits or features relating to the origins and development of the site; particularly medieval and later occupation deposits (including earlier farm structures and surfaces) and the relationship between upstanding buildings and below-ground deposits. The results are presented in section 7.0.

## **4.0 DESCRIPTION OF WORKS**

Conversion and groundworks had begun before the survey was commissioned. The cart shed and byre were being renovated and the open-sided shelter shed rebuilt, along with the linking passage to the byre, reprising the 19th-century layout. An extension to the byre, rebuilt in the 1940s by prisoners of war (Padfield 1998), had been rebuilt again on the same ground plan. The yards had been cleared and contained building materials and open service trenches. Contractors were busy with the build. Fortunately the barn had not been affected and recording was able to take place without interference. Time was taken to record the other buildings where possible, but a full record was not always possible. Nevertheless, this information, combined with pre-conversion photographs of the site supplied by the client provides an acceptable record. The DBA, which is included in the archive, should be consulted for more detailed descriptions of the pre-conversion outbuildings.

The standing buildings were recorded using base drawings (existing floor plans and sections) supplied by the client. Each structure was assigned a number and referenced to a block plan of the site (fig. 1). External and internal architectural descriptions were made and wherever possible the function of each building was assessed, along with its relationships to others as part of the agricultural environment. The buildings covered in the survey, and recorded to varying degrees, were as follows:

- Late medieval aisled barn (Building 1)
- Pre-1839 cart shed (Building 2)
- Late 16th- to early 17th-century animal byre (Building 3)
- Double-sided shelter shed built between 1839 & 1875 (Building 4)

The survey utilised the desk-based assessment of the site undertaken by historic buildings specialist Anne Padfield (1998) as a principle source of background information and preliminary building analysis, and there are several references within the text of this report. The DBA includes in-depth historical analysis and a preliminary architectural appraisal that was undertaken when the buildings were redundant and used for storage; therefore, parts of the fabric were difficult to view. During the recent survey, with the barn interiors largely cleared and more of the built fabric exposed (including the wooden threshing floor construction), the author of the DBA was invited back as a specialist. Her subsequent addendum report (Padfield 2006) is included in the archive along with the 1998 DBA.

A series of photographs (digital, medium format and 35mm black & white print) were taken to record the buildings internally and externally. Specific shots were taken of areas of important architectural detail, fixtures and fittings. A representative selection is reproduced at the back of the report as plates 1-31. The remainder can be found in the archive.

Numerous service trenches were dug around the perimeters of the new and old standing structures using a mechanical excavator. Underpinning and service trenches were dug around the barn. All significant contractor's groundworks were subject to archaeological monitoring wherever practically possible. The results are described in section 7.0 and locations shown in fig. 11 at the back of the report. Standard FAU methodologies were used to record any archaeological deposits and features in drawn and written form. Photographs were taken in 35mm monochrome and digital formats.

Existing historical information was augmented by additional cartographic and documentary research at the Essex Records Office (ERO), Chelmsford (section 2.3).

## **5.0 HISTORIC BUILDING DESCRIPTIONS**

### **5.1 General description (fig. 1, plate 1)**

The farmyard is set on a north-west to south-east alignment, with the barn (1) open to the south-east above the gravel driveway to the farmhouse, at the intersection of the former crossroads. Cart shed 2 stands perpendicular to it facing the fields and trackway down the slope to the paddock. Timber-framed animal byre 3 stands further down the slope on the same alignment, with a rebuilt extension to the rear. A double-sided open shelter shed stands centrally, dividing the west and east yards. Except for the barn, all were recorded in a full or partial state of renovation, although the external photographs included in the report

show the buildings in their pre-conversion state. Remains of walls, fences and yard surfaces were beyond record, as the yards had been landscaped and grassed over since the farm closed.

Floor plans of the barn and converted byre and cart shed are included in the report. Full descriptions of the double-sided shelter shed, byre extension and central range, already converted before the survey, may be found in the desk-based assessment (Padfield 1998) in the site archive that also includes the pre- and post- conversion plans.

When Anne Padfield visited in 1998, farming had ceased and the buildings were disused but intact and used in part for storage purposes. Her assessment of the barn was based on observations and comparisons with similar contemporary barns made by Cecil Hewett (1969), most notably Priors Hall Barn, Widdington, on the north-west fringe of the county. Her appraisal drew her to a date of 1385-1405. However, since 1998 Priors Hall Barn has been tree-ring dated to 1417-42, so the date for Piccotts has been revised by Anne further into the mid-15th-century to 1450. Whilst the early date is still stylistically valid, a preference is now given for a 15th-century date, perhaps around 1440-42 (Padfield 2006).

## **5.2 Barn 1 (figs. 6 &7)**

By far the most important structure of the remaining farm group is the barn. It dominates the surrounding flat arable terrain from its position on the bend in the road, above the farm. It is Grade II\* listed and the description reads:

Barn. Late C14, early C15. Timber framed and weatherboarded with some plaster. Brick plinth. Corrugated iron clad roof, hipped to left, half hipped to right (?), with gablets. 2 midstreys, that to left hipped, with catslide to right. Aisled of 7 bays. Arched braces to tie beams and top plates. Halved and bridled scarfs to top plates. Reversed outshot eaves assembly. Jowled wall posts in line with top plate. All jowls of scotia above return pattern as at Powers Hall (Witham) and Bradwell-Juxta-Coggeshall barns. Arched braces to aisle ties, wall and storey posts. The tall square 4 armed crown posts are braced to centre purlin and tie beam. On edge brick threshing floor. (C.A.Hewett Development of Carpentry 1200-1700). RCHM 5. (Listed Buildings Online).

The condition of the barn is generally very good, better than what is expected from the outside, which stands out with its patchwork of rusty corrugated cladding, though contrary to first impressions, there are still areas of weatherboarding along the long sides. The roof has leaked in places and parts of wall and aisle plates need replacing, but otherwise much of the

frame is dry and strong. Corrugated roofing and cladding may look untidy but it has kept the worst of the weather out. One part of the barn that has suffered above all others is the north-east end, around the end bay, where the plinth has collapsed and sill plates rotted. This has caused the wall to bow outwards.

Originally the barn had wattle and daub infill between the large framing timbers and most likely a tiled roof, reflecting the wealth and status of the owners. Diamond mullioned windows set high up in the gables either end provided a good deal of general light, added to by narrow windows between the middle studs on each bay, as at Priors Barn (Padfield 1998), although conceivably these may have been vents (Padfield 2006). Rushlights would have provided light on gloomy winter days during the threshing season. Later on the barn was daub-rendered on laths, perhaps in the Neo-classical 18th-century when the lack of good timber and change in taste made hiding the frame fashionable. Latterly, perhaps in the 19th-century, clapboard was added, which, in some areas, has been nailed over the laths.

### **5.2.1 External description**

The barn is a large seven-bay aisled timber-framed and weatherboarded construction, raised on a later stepped Flemish-bonded brick plinth. By the 19th-century, timbered farm buildings were invariably built on plinths to keep the frame free from damp and often other older buildings originally built onto the ground had plinths built underneath. Often, new sole plates were added to replace the rotten ones. The plinth rises to 1.3m on the south-east side, where the yard has been worn away by animals and successive litter removal. Fairly soft red/oranges, some burnt headers, with dimensions of c.22.5 x 11 x 6.5m (approx. 9 x 4 ½ x 2½”) and rough faces and soft arises are included within a hard lime mortar, suggesting a date range of late 18th to early 19th-century.

The vast half-hipped and gablet-ended roof has high wagon doors extending in pairs on either side of the two threshing floors on bays two and five (fig. 6) that are built into the aisles. All except one (to the north, which is hipped) are simple sloping canopies, of a slightly lower pitch to the roof. They are all secondary, added when the doorways were heightened, probably in the 19th-century. Some pegtiles remain in the valley of the hipped porch but in all other places the tiles have been replaced by corrugated iron sheeting. A 49° roof pitch was suitable for traditional peg tiles and would be appropriate for a barn of this status, though it would have been steep enough to carry thatch. The roof is primarily clad in rusty old corrugated iron sheets nailed to the rafter and laid on a partially-surviving straw bed. The walls display in part a patchwork of utilitarian, rather unattractive, materials in the form of the

ubiquitous corrugated iron, cement render and chipboard, attached to ancient weatherboard and, occasionally, secondary lime plaster.

The great doors stand in the later wagon entries either end, either side of the two threshing floors. Largely intact, these 19th-century insertions retain the low timber 'leap' slots provided to contain the grain (and keep animals out) during threshing (plate 4) and create a through-draft when the corn was winnowed. They also enabled the barn doors to be opened when the litter in the yard was high. This is apparent on the south-east side where the ground level of the former yards is greatly reduced, illustrating the extent of wear from hooves and successive removal of litter in the yards over winter.

### ***South-east elevation*** (plates 2 & 3)

The south-east elevation faces the farmyard and is furnished in a variety of materials where the weatherboarding has fallen off, or was in such poor condition through previous lack of maintenance. The former brick granary (1a) close to the south corner, retains an attractive curved header bonded outer wall, and a single partition wall (plate 2), but has lost its roof. The bricks are similar to those in the plinth in colour and dimension, but are clearly built onto and over the plinth making the granary later in date; an interpretation borne-out by the cartographic evidence which dates it between 1838 and 1875. The granary also uses a different brick bond (English) in its construction. Originally the granary occupied most of this side of the wagon doors, as evidenced by the remains of limewash and lath and plaster (to keep the grain clean and reduce loss) over the plinth and weatherboarding in plate 2. The surviving wall plate on top of the plinth shows the removed part of the structure was timber-framed. Adjacent to the header wall, a tumbling-in buttress has been added to support the corner of the barn against the slope (plate 2) that, in the 19th-century, defined the western side of the farmyards.

Both wagon doors on the south-east elevation are accompanied by a side door to its left, useful for access at harvest time and during threshing. Between the doors is a long expanse of cement render laid on chicken wire, fixed onto the cladding.

Underneath the north-east door on the south-east elevation stand low brick piers associated with a timber threshing floor inside (plate 3) that occupies the second bay. The piers would have provided an up-draft and thus prevented damp. Although a secondary feature interpreted as 19th-century in date, the survival of such a well-made timber threshing floor is significant and the feature was fully recorded during the survey (see section 7.0).

### **North-west elevation** (plates 5 & 6)

The second long elevation, positioned on the opposite side to the farmyard, is more straightforward in aspect. Cement render has been applied to much of the under-eaves area, with weatherboarding exposed at either end. Render has been applied over the plinth too, on this and the north-east elevation, which, facing away from the yard, are more exposed to the weather. Although the wagon entry on the north-east end has a hipped roof, judging from the internal build it is contemporary with the others. The wagon doors on this side were clad in corrugated iron (plate 5) and fixed shut during the survey.

### **South-west elevation**

Openings on the short south-west elevation show later additions to the barn in the form of two pitching doors located on different levels within the gable end (plate 6). The lower twin steel-covered pair are modern and lit by an adjacent double-pane safety glass window. If grain was being stored and mechanically processed in here in the modern period, like in so many other big barns, they provided an easier route of conveyance than the great doors, especially. The hatch above is more traditional, used to pitch the harvested corn from the wagon and into the barn from the side. It is placed within part of an original mullioned window that has since been boarded over. By unloading the wagons from two sides, the bays could be filled quickly without wasting space. The crop would have been piled up to tie beam level (Padfield 1998), which corresponds to the hatch's position. The hatch's spearhead strap hinges are identical to those in the wagon doors and may suggest contemporary insertion, although such hinges were locally-produced throughout the late post-medieval and Victorian periods.

### **North-east elevation**

Part of the lower clapboarding is missing and, due to the collapsing wall behind, there is a larger array of modern materials fixed onto the weatherboard (plate 5). Much of the plinth has collapsed and parts of the sill are sagging under the weight of the frame. A pair of high, fixed four-pane, windows are situated beneath the eaves; modern replacements for mullioned windows that, like their counterparts on the opposite end, were boarded over at a more recent stage, either when the plastered exterior was replaced by weatherboarding or in a re-cladding phase since. Their positions can still be recognised inside.

## **5.2.2 Internal description**

Internally, the barn is laid out over seven bays with threshing floors in bays two and five (fig. 6, plates 7 and 8). Its overall dimensions are 12.4 x 36.5m (38 x 120') with 3.2m-wide aisles either side of a 6m-wide nave (fig. 6). As English oaks seldom provide lengths of timber over



25 feet/7m, aisles were a way of increasing the span of a barn (Padfield 1998). The bays are defined by thick 28cm<sup>2</sup> (11") arcade posts spaced 4.8m apart, approximately 5½ yards or one rod. Some have crooked feet, where the tree has started to branch, suggesting the carpenter had problems finding timber of suitable length (Padfield 1998). The post on the left in plate 9, between bays 1 and 2, is like this.

The brick plinth is much lower inside than the yard side at only 0.5m. On the north-west and south-west walls it is cement rendered. An associated concrete floor was removed in the two south-west bays and the ground reduced by c.0.5m during the present conversion works.

### ***Main framing***

The barn has a crown post roof, typical of the medieval period, with curved down braces to tie beams (fig. 7, plates 7 and 9). Arcade plates run along the length of the barn between the ends of the tie beams and jowl of the bay posts. Commonly, the arcade plates are joined by side-halved and bridled scarf joints (plate 18), a common later medieval technique of joining large structural timbers. In bays 1 and 3, on the north-west side where the wall framing has been rebuilt in primary bracing (plate 10), the wall plates are connected by later face-halved and bladed joints. This jointing technique emerged in the mid 16th-century but became common after c.1600. The wall plates connect to the swollen jowled bay posts by arch bracing and down to the aisle tie by shores, roughly parallel to the rafters. Shores replaced the passing brace from earlier aisled buildings. The aisle ties are stocky pieces of timber that prevent the walls buckling and spreading from the load. They are connected to the wall plates through 'reverse assembly' (i.e. beam *under* plate) and locked to the arcade posts by large jowls, secured by four pegs. Many of the jowled ends have been damaged by secondary diagonal braces inserted from the sole plate in the post-medieval period (fig. 7). The opposite ends of the aisle ties are connected to the aisle post by small but quite stocky arch braces, many of which have been removed.

### ***Wall framing***

Much of the original wall framing survives. A few bay walls were rebuilt in the post-medieval period and inevitably there are repaired areas, mainly in the gables from the Victorian and modern periods. The original build (plate 10, centre) comprises heavy c.16 x 13cm-thick studs (up to 22 x 13cm) with slightly curved external tension bracing. The braces are pegged as part of the original fabric. Each bay carries seven studs, pegged and c.50cm-apart, between 13 x 18cm mid-rails. The wall plates are fairly modest at c.13 x 18cm and connected by side-halved and bridled scarf joints, as are the arcade plates, which are locked-in with four vertical pegs. This type of scarf joint is used in constructions between

c.1370 and the 16th century (Padfield 1998). Some of the north-west bays have clearly been rebuilt in the post-medieval period (fig. 6,) in primary bracing with nine studs apiece, reused from the medieval phase (plate 10, right). They are more closely-spaced at c.35cm (fig. 6) and the braces are nailed and the tenons rarely pegged. Some of the studs have been turned. The wall plates appear reused and of the same dimensions, but are joined by the post-medieval form of assembly; the face-halved and bladed scarf joint (common between 1600 and 1800).

The gable ends contain original framing with modern and post-medieval repairs and rebuilds, varying from one end to the other. It is clear that both ends and the partition between bays 2 and 3 had a distinctive curved cross (X) braced pattern, a practical and decorative motif on view between the daub infill. Part of it survives on the north-east gable wall above the midrail (plate 13). The lower section has been cut through/removed, perhaps during an episode of cladding, but there are clear rebates at the rear of the studs for external trenched braces. Otherwise the framing in the nave area is complete. It also contains a former diamond mullion window below the wall plate where the present day glass windows are located. The mullions are placed either side of the mid-post (plate 14). Both aisles either side of the nave wall have been rebuilt in primary bracing, most markedly on the right hand side, where vacant peg holes indicate where the jowled aisle tie was located (plate 13). There is little evidence of reuse. The studs are nailed, but only the studs in the aisle upper registers have been replaced, with narrower, but still hand-sawn, versions. There is a small area of hair plaster surviving in the north corner above a long section of chipboard (plate 13), also seen on the outside, around the protruding arcade plate. The wall is bulging out severely at the base, rolling the plinth outwards.

Wall fabric on the opposing south-west end wall was also originally cross braced in the upper register and partly survives close to the pitching hatch (plate 9, left). Much of the original framing in the lower register was rebuilt in the modern period or removed to accommodate new insertions: the steel-covered doors and window. The pitching hatch in the upper register is an earlier, though not original, feature that intrudes into the base of one of a pair of plain diamond mullioned windows situated either side of the mid-post (plate 14). Both windows are larger than the one at the north-east end, to bring in more light from the darker south-west. Of the three original mullions to each window, only the central mullions remain. Small diamond mullioned windows also lined the long sides of the barn, located centrally to each bay between the studwork. Evidence for these was found in all but the rebuilt bays. Bay 2 north (fig. 6) retains a sill with two shallow diamond-shaped mullion holes (plate 17) enlarged through damp. A lack of mullion holes in the wall plate soffit above suggests they were

wedged in at the top (Padfield 1998). Elsewhere the sills have been removed, but peg holes and mortices remain for sills in all but the few replaced sections of wall framing.

Bays 2 and 3 are divided by the remains of a partition to the north-east of the wooden threshing floor (fig. 6, plate 11). Whether this is an original feature or the later in-filling of the truss, perhaps to delineate storage areas for different crops or livestock is unknown, but its basic construction is identical to the rest of the barn. The fact that the arcade plates continue past the partition indicates it was never an end wall to an earlier, shorter, barn (Padfield 1998). Below the tie beam, much of the framing has been removed in the nave, but mortice and peg holes illustrate the former existence of rails and studs, with cross-bracing arranged in an X-shape like the gable end walls. The only difference in the built fabric is quite minor, but worth attention. V-shaped grooves are cut in the aisle tie soffits to attach vertical wattles rather than the prevalent axe cuts seen in the partition nave studwork and all the outside walls for horizontal mounting. This aspect is discussed later.

### ***Roof framing***

Lower rafters over the aisle have been replaced in many of the bays with slightly thinner or machine-sawn members (plate 10). Their shallower pitch means they are usually more vulnerable to damp (Padfield pers. comm.). Those in the nave appear to be original. Two types of purlin are visible in the aisle roof. One set of purlins is pegged and cross-shaped, similar to the post and rail arrangement in the wall frames. The purlins in this instance are pegged to the central and principle rafters of each bay and retain substantial rafters like those in the nave. The second type is secondary, belonging to replaced rafters of narrower scantling and rougher build. These purlins are simply slotted through the middle rafter and pegged to the rafters either side. The butt ends are roughly-cut and overlap in the centre of the bay producing a joggled effect, whilst the remainder are pegged and morticed into the truss rafters. There is no wind bracing in the roof except for some primary bracing in bay 2, which has been rebuilt.

Carpenters marks were recorded high-up in the roof trusses during monitoring works from an internal scaffold, used in part to support the building whilst repairs to the frame were ongoing. Scored carpenter's marks for trusses II and III were identified at the north-east end (fig. 6) indicating likely construction from the north-east. However, some of those further back appear to be out of sequence. For example truss 3 also has a IIII scored on the crown post and truss 6 is labelled as X and VIII. Such inconsistencies are not unusual in timber-framed buildings whose assembly is likely to change slightly from yard to construction site. Of greater interest is an identified mark on the truss 5 post, idle graffiti by one of the medieval

workmen, perhaps, or a symbol imbued with mystical properties, like a witch mark. It appears to be like a simple cross in a box (plate 23) and may not have any special connotations. Whatever it is, its inaccessibility suggests some age.

### ***Wagon entries***

The wagon entries probably date to the late 18th or 19th-century. As the site slopes naturally up to the south-east side of the barn, it is possible that in the medieval period an entrance up to eaves height would have been adequate for the smaller medieval horse and its load to enter from the farmyard (Padfield 2006). It was not until the 18th-century that the larger heavy horses were reared for working on the farm (Padfield 2006) and higher doorways inserted for their larger loads. There is no joinery to the canopies; the wall plates have simply been cut through at the stud to insert door posts, and planks nailed between stud and door post rather than tenoned in. High wall plates have been nailed to the aisle posts onto which the light framing is nailed (plate 19) and the same construction appears to have been used for the hipped entrance. There is no evidence for earlier doorways or rebuilds to existing ones, to explain the presence of the hipped porch amongst the canopied types.

### ***Threshing floors***

The threshing floors are situated in bays two and five, between the wagon doors. Both are no earlier than the 19th-century (Padfield 1998). One is brick, the other timber. The boards to the timber floor were removed by building contractors before the survey, for later reinstatement. Intact threshing floors, especially timber ones, are a rarity since government grants were extended to farmers in the 1960s and 70s to lay concrete floors (A. Padfield pers. comm.).

The brick floor in bay 5 (B5 in fig. 6), which is worn and uneven (plate 20), is made from unmortared whole, half and quarter bricks, of similar size (24 x 7cm) to those found elsewhere on the farm. A carved date of 1839 on an aisle strut beside the south-east wagon door (fig. 6, plate 22) may indicate when it was constructed.

The wooden floor is entirely different. Along the width of the sixth bay, tightly-fitting oak planks were laid on joists supported on brick plinths and secured by pegs (plate 21). The pegs are arranged in alternating rows. Many pegs remain *in situ*. The floor (fig. 8) is divided into five 'bays', each the width of the barn bay and 2.25m wide. The north-west end extends beneath remnants of a concrete floor.

Underlying the removed plank flooring, four main 12 x 20cm joists (representing the bays) are laid on narrow 20 x 40cm brick piers. Transverse cross joists run are either laid over, where the scantling is thinner, or lapped onto the main joists. They butt loosely up against each other. Many are crooked (plate 21), but they are all stout timbers, and appear to be oak. Their thickness varies from around c.14 x 23. Short 2 x 7cm struts are coggled into the joist face, adding rigidity to the floor and perhaps preventing grain from slipping in between the boards. The bay was dug out on purpose to construct the threshing floor. The edges are brick-lined, in English bond using large bricks, probably when the plinth was added to the barn.

Either side of the threshing floor, boards are nailed to the sides to a height of 1.20m to contain the corn during use (Padfield 1998) and to keep the shreeves and loose corn from falling onto the floor. The presence of pegs indicates the probability that these are replaced former floor boards from the floor (plate 19). Certainly their sizes are comparable and it is likely that boards would need replacing from time to time.

Entry onto the threshing floor from the south-west bays was through a gap in the partition wall for a door (fig. 6). On the centre post of the partition is a burn mark from a rushlight taper, one of many used to light the barn during the dark winter months (fig. 6, plate 24). Another anomaly is a pair of 'W' marks on the bay 2 south-east aisle brace facing the threshing floor, carved by a labourer or tenant, perhaps. This is followed by the letters Coo (l), i.e. W. W. Coo.(l).. (the rest is vague at best); The 'W' marks appear to be authentic, but the rest, in a different hand, appear to have been added at a separate stage. A tracing is available in the archive.

Opinion was divided during the recording works as to the purpose of the floor; whether it was for threshing or hop-drying, perhaps assisted by some form of underfloor heating or ventilation. Although a hop field was formerly located behind the farmhouse, the close-fitting nature of the boards would make the latter function unlikely. During the recording stage two bulk soil samples were taken from underneath the boards in an attempt to establish its use. The results are presented in section 7.1 and Appendix 1.

### **5.3 Cart shed 2 (fig. 9)**

An early 19th-century (pre-1838) brick-built cart shed stands perpendicular to the barn, its western corner almost touching (fig. 9, plate 1). It faces away from the main yard to the north-east, with enough room to manoeuvre carts and implements in front (Padfield 1998).

Typical of its kind, the shed is brick-built on a rectangular plan form with a single open side, separated into bays by square-cut posts (plate 25). The bricks are reddish-orange and laid in English bond within a lime mortar. The roof is gabled both ends under secondary corrugated iron-clad roof that is supported on king posts strut trusses. Plate 25 shows a wooden partition partially screening the north bay, removed when the structure was cleared.

#### **5.4 Animal byre 3 (fig. 10)**

The byre (plates 25 & 26) is a small but heavy timber-framed building used to keep loose animals, latterly cattle. It has been dated to the mid to late 16th-century and may have been built for cows or oxen (Padfield 1998). Its position facing toward the field and lack of windows would support either. By the late 16th-century, horses were preferred as draught animals to oxen, but oxen were still raised for beef and other associated products (Padfield 2006). Such structures of this age rarely survive, for they become damaged by animal movement and their manure encourages timber rot (Padfield 1998). The tithe map/award (DC/T 508A) shows 'cowhouse pasture' immediately to the east.

This is a three bay weatherboarded structure with slated gablet roof to north. The southern end is gabled onto the brick shed behind, but originally had a gablet end too. The brick plinth is later in date. The attached outbuilding to the south was rebuilt in brick by Prisoners-of-War in the 1940s, but replaced an earlier structure. During the recent conversion it was rebuilt again. At the time of the survey, the byre was in the process of conversion. The wall framing was exposed and recorded in this context.

The interior (plate 27) is divided into three equivalent c.3.5m-wide bays giving total dimensions of 11.5 x 5m, roughly one by two rods. The original build uses jowled bay posts (c.max. 19 x 23cm) and substantial (15cm square) pegged studs with gaps of c.45cm in between. Bracing members are all fairly straight, contrary to the barn. They are trenched internally rather than externally; a post-medieval trend that begins in the 16th-century and finishes in the 17th, by which time the braces have become hidden on the outside (J. Walker pers. comm.). The wall plates measure 15cm square. Some bays have been rebuilt, reusing original timbers, in primary bracing (plate 28), and indicated in fig. 10. It is possible these repairs were contemporary with those to the barn, probably undertaken some time in the late 17th or 18th-century. The wall plates are joined by face-halved and bladed scarf joints (fig. 10), again, a post-medieval construction form. There is much reused medieval timber.

Opposing doorways in the central bay appear to be original, and were small enough to admit singular animals. The north-east door was infilled with primary bracing in the historic period

and the other was blocked in the conversion to house a new window (fig. 10). There are modern doorways on the two short ends; that to the north-west appears to have been added during the conversion.

Roof framing is pegged collar clasped-purlin, with the purlins splay-scarfed together. Although wind braces are normal on such roofs, they are omitted here because the hips provide the necessary strengthening (Padfield 1998). It was probably thatched originally, but is now slated. A small ventilation louvre on the ridge is mentioned in the 1998 survey can be seen in plate 26.

Daub panels were recorded in the original survey and axe wattle cuts remain between the studs. Horizontal laths were added over the outside of the studs at a later date to carry lime plaster. Inside, the north wall was lined with space boarding to a height of 1.5m and the end wall with close boarding to protect the frame from damage by livestock. These have been removed. The present concrete floor has replaced, or is laid over, an (on edge) brick floor, a probable dung passage (Padfield 1998), providing an easy-clean surface.

#### **5.5 Shelter shed 4**

Formerly, this was an open-sided shed facing onto yards to the north-east and south-west. Plate 29 shows part of a large seven bayed hipped corrugated iron roofed structure for loose cattle open to the yards either sides. The dividing wall was retained and consolidated and the feeding troughs attached to the wall had been removed to the barn (plate 30) and recorded photographically during the monitoring phase (section 7.0).

### **6.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING (fig. 11)**

Service trenches associated with the converted buildings to the south-east of the barn were monitored during the building recording stage, before work started on the barn itself. Although they were largely backfilled by this stage, it was shown they cut directly through c.0.35m of topsoil into bright orange sand natural at c.48.69m OD. The only below-ground feature recorded was a 19th-century brick wall foundation on the north-east side of the byre (fig. 11), that has not been identified through map evidence. Otherwise no features of archaeological interest were discovered.

The second phase of monitoring covered service runs in and around the barn, and underpinning works. Underpinning trenches were dug one bay at a time, so as not to cause

undue stress to the frame. Each was dug to between 1m and 1.6m in depth. Due to dampness in the soil, the mortar in the plinth had failed and in all cases the brick plinth was replaced as part of the works. Mixed topsoil was recorded at a similar depth to that found in the main yard area (c.0.4m) overlying natural deposits, which, on the north-west side, was either an orange sandy clay or a reddish brown clay over chalky boulder clay completely different to the orange sandy soils encountered on the south-east side of the barn.

Service runs inside the barn were cut directly onto natural clay deposits. Again, no features of archaeological interest were identified.

During the monitoring phase, the opportunity was taken to study the trusses from an internal scaffold used by the conversion works contractor to support the structure and enable repairs to be undertaken on the frame. Carpenter's marks and carvings were identified, that have been included in the main part of the report.

#### **6.1 Environmental sample from timber threshing floor** by Val Fryer

Two soil samples for the retrieval of the plant macrofossil assemblages were collected from beneath the boarded threshing floor. Numerous macrofossils were preserved in a semi-desiccated state.

The assemblages were scanned under a binocular microscope at magnifications up to x 16, and the plant macrofossils and other remains noted are listed in Appendix 1. Nomenclature within the table follows Stace (1997).

Given the context, cereal remains were relatively scarce. This is, perhaps, testimony to the quality of the boarded floor, which would have been constructed to minimise grain loss. Barley (*Hordeum* sp.) rachis nodes were recorded, along with a single bread wheat (*Triticum aestivum/compactum*) type node, but cereal grains were entirely absent.

Weed seeds were common. Most were off common segetal species, including orache (*Atriplex* sp.), fat hen (*Chenopodium album*), black bindweed (*Fallopia convolvulus*), poppy (*Papaver* sp.), wild radish (*Raphanus raphanistrum*), dock (*Rumex* sp.), campion (*Silene* sp.) and sow thistle (*Sonchus asper*). These would have grown amongst the cereal crops in the fields, and the seeds, which would have been removed during threshing, were small enough to fall through the board floor into the space below. Other plants, including the fools parsley (*Aethusa cynapium*), hemlock (*Conium maculatum*), cinquefoil (*Potentilla* sp.), nettles (*Urtica dioica*) and brambles (*Rubus* sect. *Glandulosus*) may have been growing either in the field hedges or as weeds around the barn site.



The composition of the assemblages does not clearly indicate whether grain, straw or a mixture of both was being stored within the barn, although the predominance of barley chaff would suggest that this crop was of considerable importance. It is apparent, however, that whatever was stored was subject to acute insect infestation.

## **7.0 DISCUSSION & PHASING**

The barn is clearly the most important structure at Piccotts Farm and was the main focus of the recording works. Its construction date was originally suggested as between 1385 and 1405, based on Cecil Hewett's stylistic chronology of similar barns. However, this date has been reappraised after recent dendrochronological works at Priors Farm, Widdington, which is stylistically very similar (Padfield 1998). The new date for Priors Barn is now between 1417 and 1442 and a later date range is now suggested for Piccotts from the early to mid 15th-century (Padfield 2006), although technically it could still fall into the earlier late 14th-century range.

In its newly-completed form, the barn's substantial timber framing was displayed, surrounding infilled panels of wattle and daub, evidenced by cut marks on the studs. The long walls were close-studded with external tension bracing. Diamond mullioned windows were inserted high up in the gable ends and mullioned lights on each bay of the long walls, as seen at Priors Barn (Padfield 1998). It is debatable whether the side lights were for ventilation or light. Normally ventilation is not required in timber/daub barns because the daub naturally dries and shrinks as part of the drying process (Padfield 1998). Anne Padfield has suggested the barn was originally boarded, presumably to prevent moisture entering the barn, but allow air to pass underneath. However, no evidence was found during the monitoring stage when the frame was exposed. In fact, the direct evidence, weather-worn studwork and mullion mortice holes through exposure, suggests the contrary. The fact that all but one of the mullion sills no longer remain (presumably through exposure) is another argument for windows over vents. The mullions kept the interior secure and provided extra detailing. Sacking may have been hung on the inside to prevent the elements from entering.

The partition, which is likely to be an original feature of the barn, has V-shaped grooves in the two aisle tie soffits to hold the wattles, but this is not the case in the nave. This anomaly shows the wattles were fixed vertically rather than horizontally, like the rest of the barn. The explanation for this is not clear, but is probably little more than a craftsman using a different

technique. There is no doubt the long grooves were cut pre-assembly along with the stud mortices and are contemporary with the framing.

The byre is believed to have been constructed between 1550 and 1600, based on the heavy jowls and internal trenched wall bracing. It may have originated as an oxhouse. The survival of such structures is rare and they are difficult to identify (Padfield 2006). In the later post-medieval period, between perhaps the 17th and 18th- centuries, areas of wall and roof framing were rebuilt using the old timbers. The walls were rebuilt in primary bracing with new sections of wall plate scarfed in. Roughly cut staggered butt purlins were incorporated into the roof frame. It is possible that parts of the barn were rebuilt at the same time.

Later on in the early 19th-century, possibly around 1839 the wagon entries were built to the barn and larger doors installed, with leaps. The threshing floors were inserted and possibly the plinth walls. From the soil sample evidence it seems likely the wooden floor was built for threshing wheat and barley; its high quality generally preventing the downward passage of anything other than tiny weed seeds. The cart shed was probably built during this phase of expansion, alongside other buildings to the north-east of the yard. During the mid- to late-part of the century the open-sided shelter shed was added and the yard divided to contain animals of different age, sex or type. The layout remained much the same until the farm became redundant. From the remaining evidence, the later buildings were typical vernacular style brick and timber-framed/clapboarded structures encountered on many 19th-century improved farms in the area. They were arranged on a basic planned two yard layout, subdivided into three separate yards beside the barn. The alignment of the farmstead meant that the long sides of the barn were exposed to the prevailing north-west wind. This was useful for winnowing the grain and also sheltering animals in the yards behind.

Archaeological monitoring of groundworks across the site found a 19th-century brick wall foundation but no medieval deposits or any other structures, surfaces, floors or other remains of occupation.

## **8.0 CONCLUSION**

Piccotts Farm contains a rare survival of a late medieval aisled barn (c.1440) tied to a large working estate. The byre belongs to the early post-medieval phase (1550-1600) and doubtless functioned alongside it on the working farm. Both are dated through diagnostic carpentry features and joinery techniques, as well as in the case of the barn, stylistic

parallels with contemporary structures. Each contain post-medieval repairs to the frames that may have been carried out as part of the same maintenance programme. Other structures remain from the era of 'high farming', showing development of the farmstead into the 19th-century, influenced by prevalent trends in the industry. It is likely that over time, other, perhaps less permanent, buildings have been lost. Unfortunately no evidence for related structures were found in the monitoring works due to the shallow nature of their foundations and the reduction in ground level through wear to the farmyard.

The barn was built to hold a vast amount of crop. Based on estimated calculations of 80 sheaves per acre in medieval farming, there would be capacity for 176 acres of corn if the five storage bays were used and the threshing floors left open (Padfield 1998). Around the time of its construction, in 1349, the farm held 300 acres of mainly arable land which, allowing for woodland, pasture and fallow land, seems to comply.

Important characteristics were discovered in the barn during the two major surveys. Of particular significance are the mullioned windows on the sides and gables, the partition and the wooden threshing floor. It seems fairly certain, from the internal evidence and after examination of the external timbers, that the side lights were used as windows rather than vents. No evidence was found for hop drying on the wooden threshing floor in the environmental sample. Hop seeds are likely to be finer and pass between the joists like the extensive remains of weed seeds. Graffiti recorded during the main stage may relate the floors to 1839. During the monitoring phase carpenter's marks and graffiti were recorded on the crown posts.

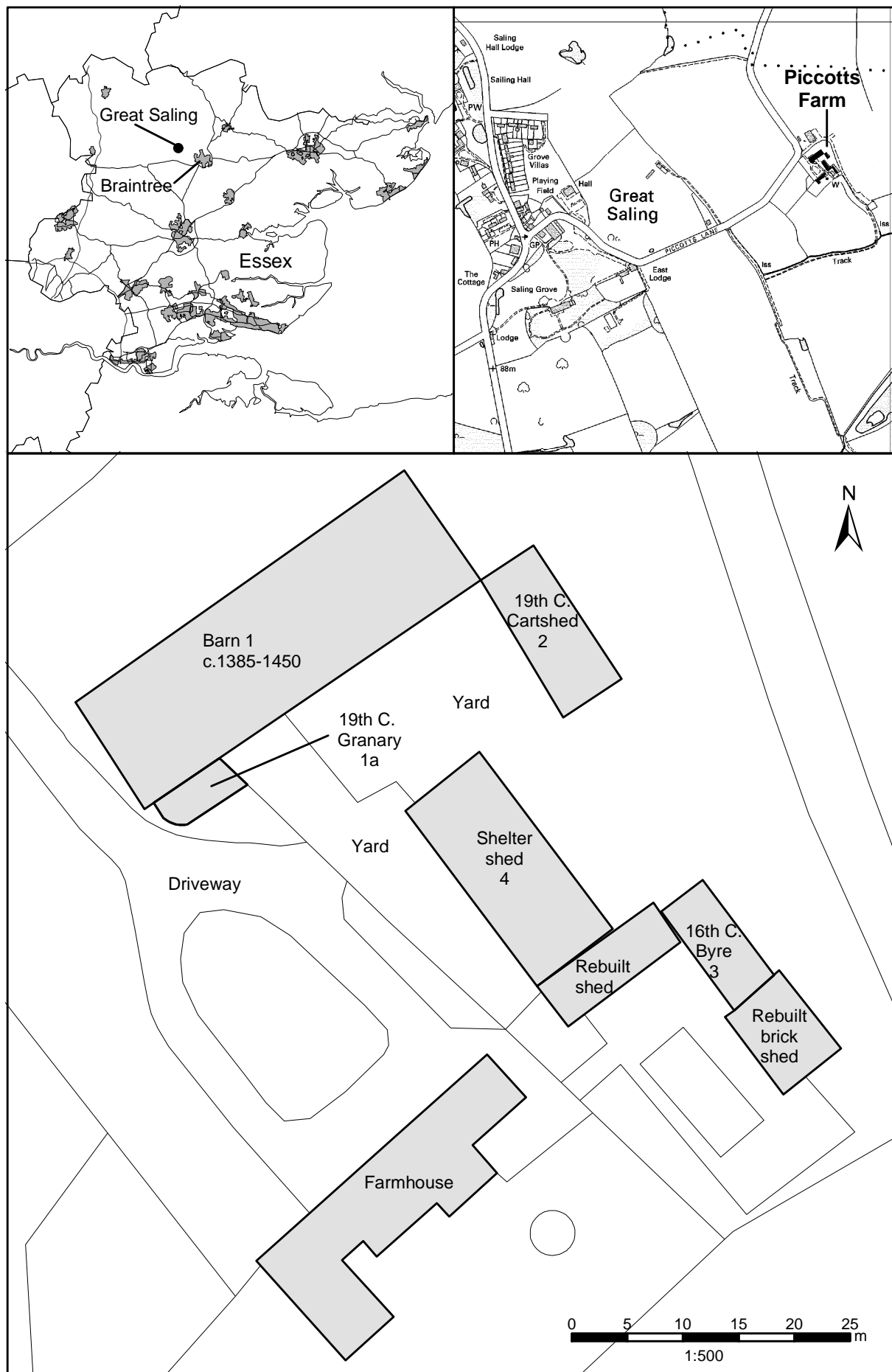
Modern developments in agriculture have had a low impact on the fabric and character of Piccotts Farm and the surviving farm complex provides a good example of vernacular agricultural architecture in brick and timber adopting earlier structures within a 19th-century plan form. As such this is typical of many improved Victorian farms, yet its real significance is the inclusion of its medieval aisled barn that architecturally and historically, is of national importance.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Thanks are due to David Pocknell of Pocknell Studios for commissioning the works and supplying copies of drawings and photographs, including plates 1, 25, 26, 29 & 31 used in the report. Thanks also to Bob Chapman of C & H Builders for assisting in the monitoring stage. Thanks also to Anne Padfield for her valuable contribution toward the analysis and interpretation of the farm, past and present, and to staff at the Essex Records Office for their assistance. Fieldwork, recording and photography were undertaken by the author with the help of Dave Smith of ECC FAU. Illustrations were prepared by Andrew Lewsey and the author. The site was monitored by Vanessa Clarke on behalf of ECC HEM

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Fig.1. Location and block plan

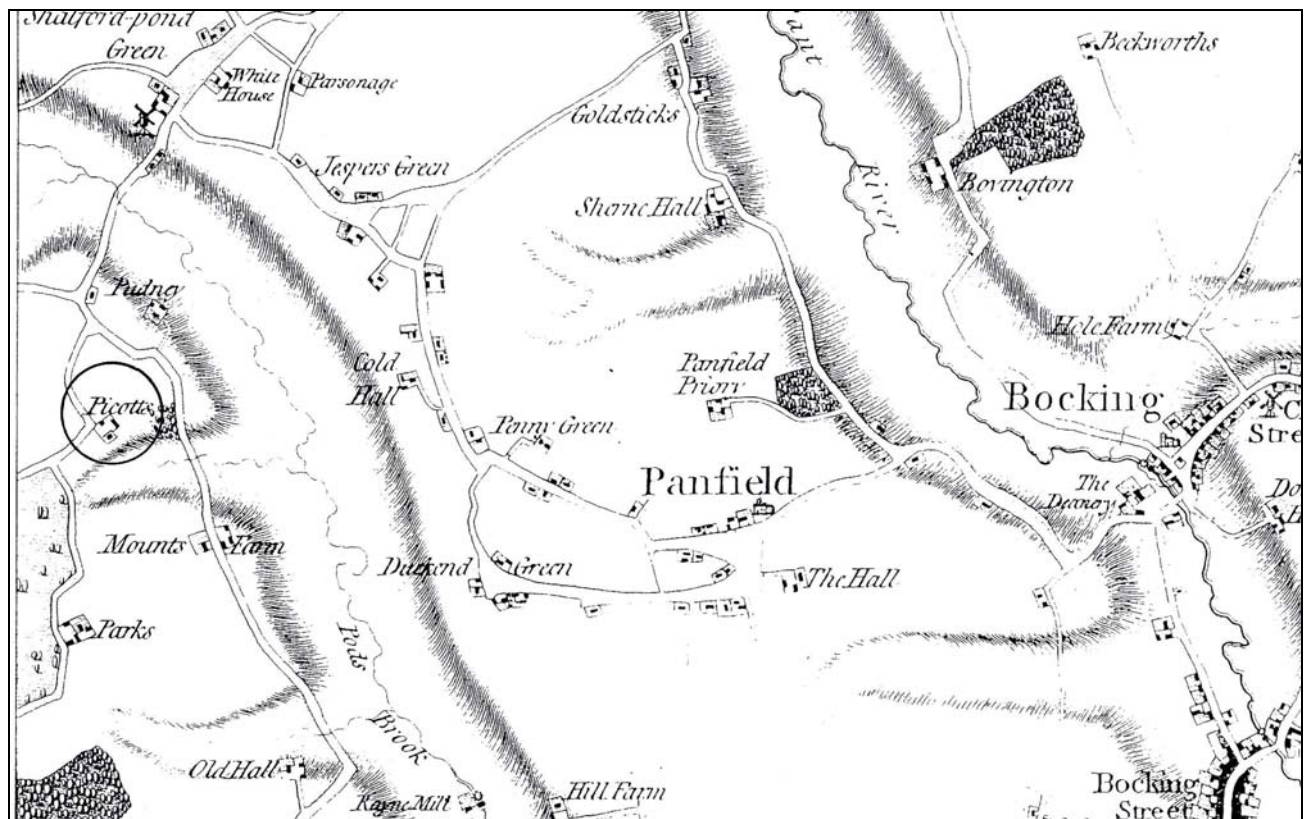


Fig. 2 Chapman and Andre, 1777 (plate 8)

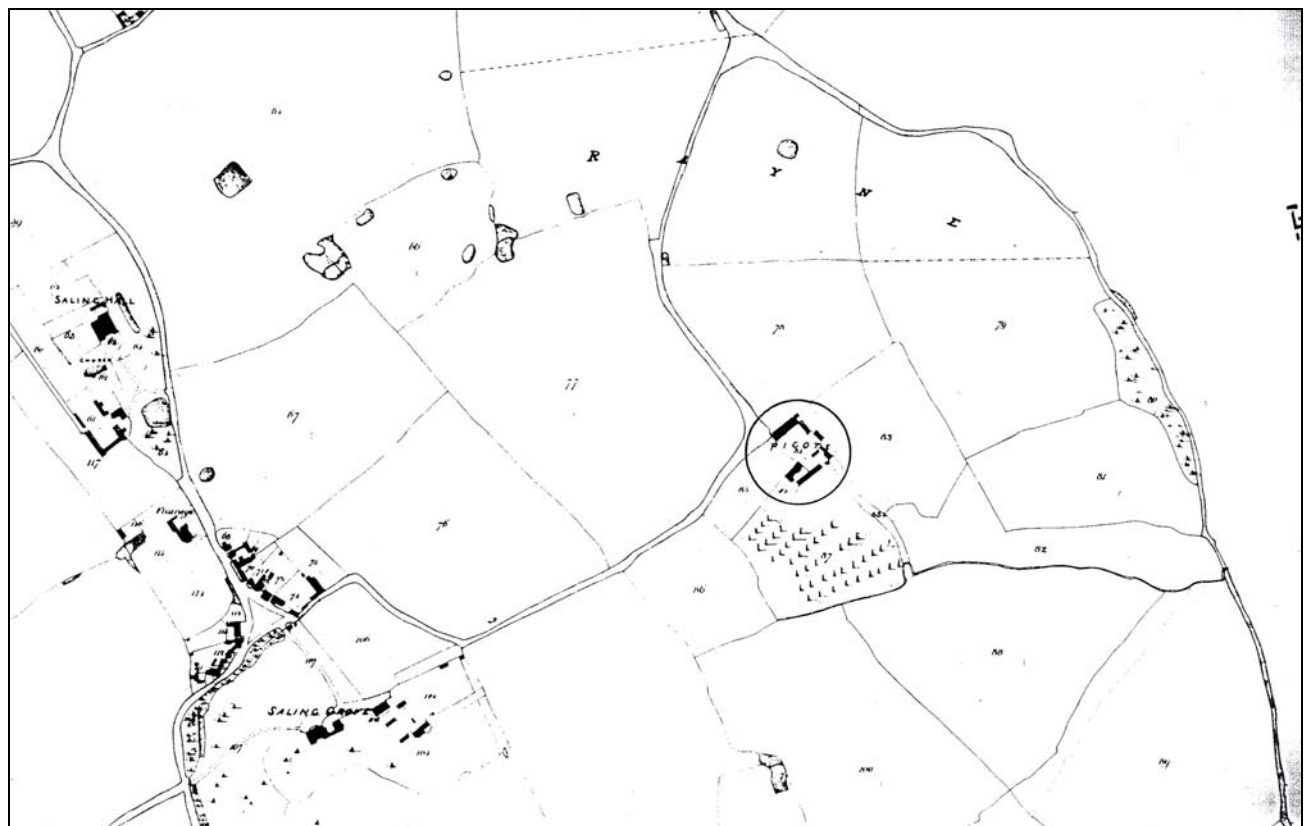


Fig. 3 Great Saling tithe map, 1838 (D/CT 508B)



Fig. 4 First Edition 6" OS map, 1875 (sheet 25)

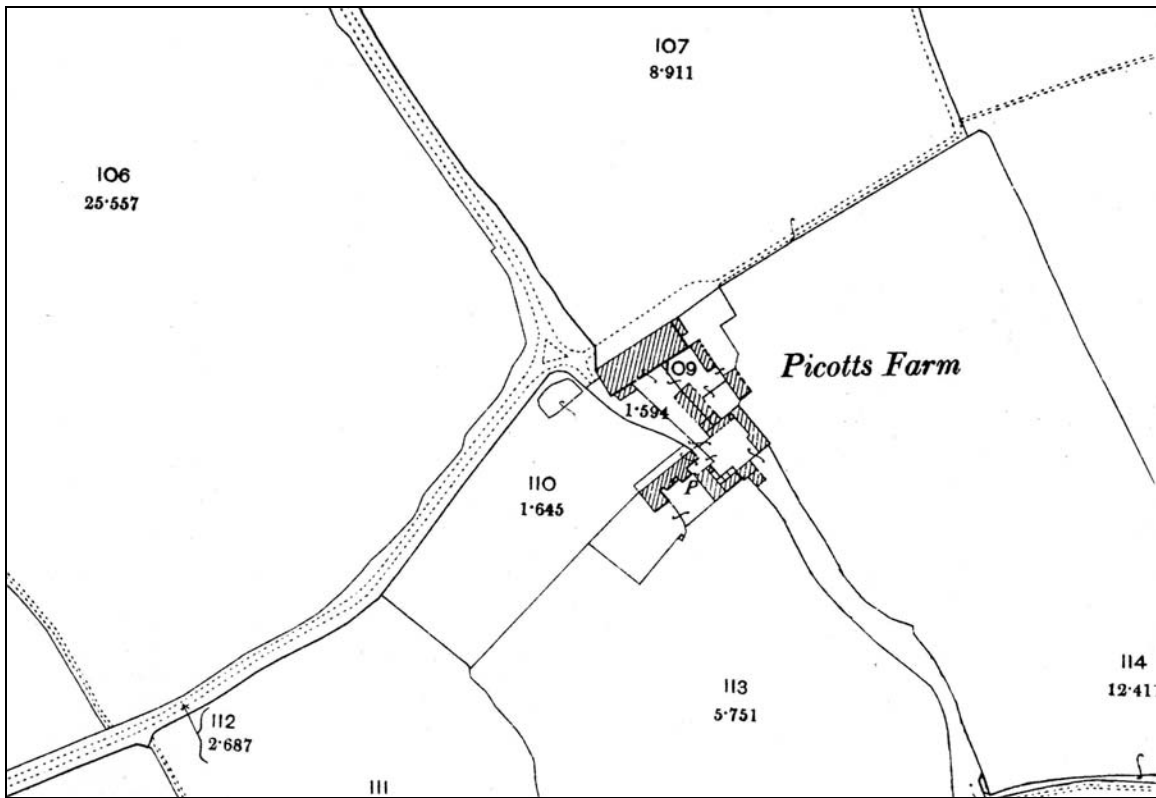


Fig. 5 Second Edition 25" OS map, 1897 (sheet 24.8)



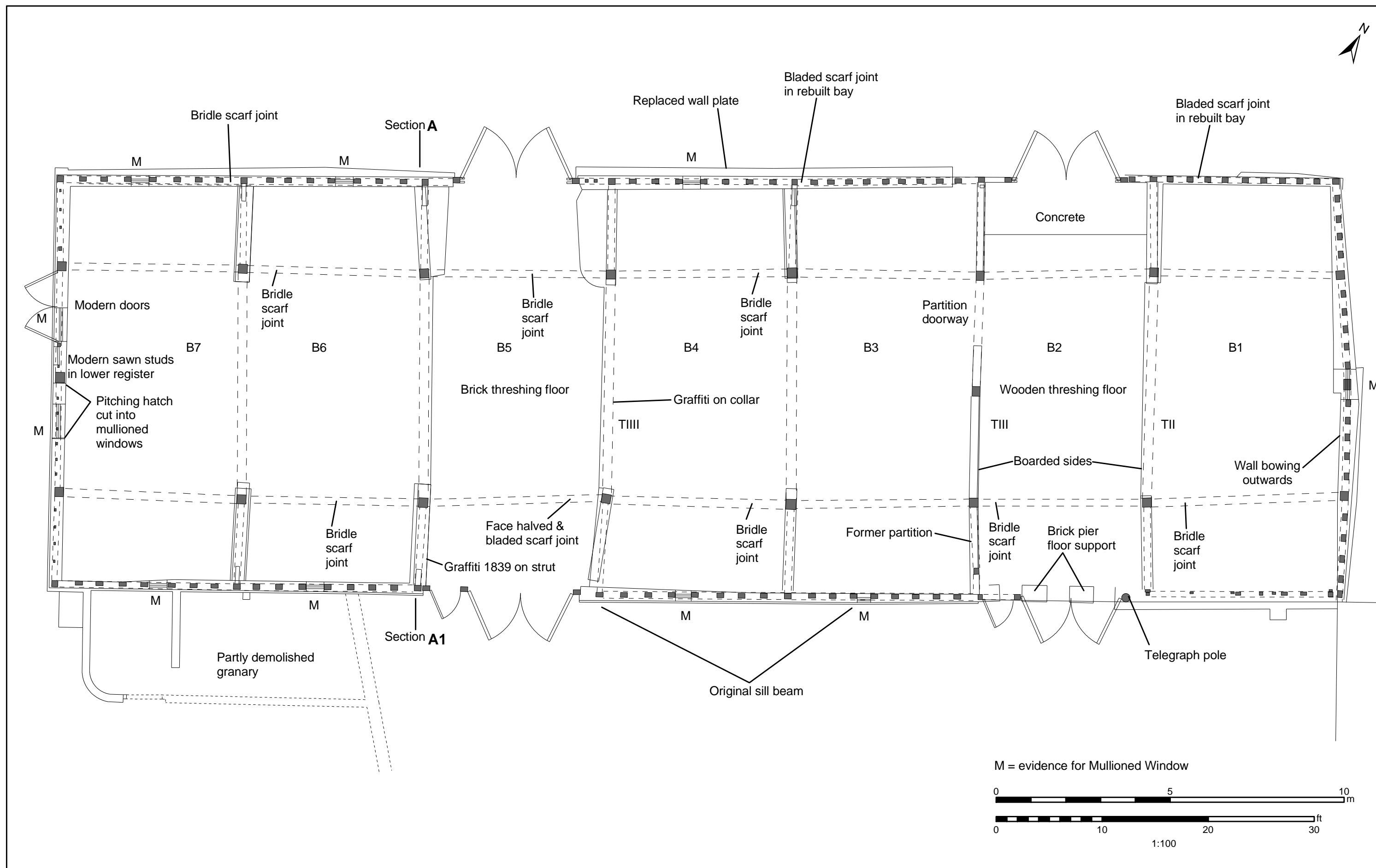


Fig.6. Plan of Barn 1

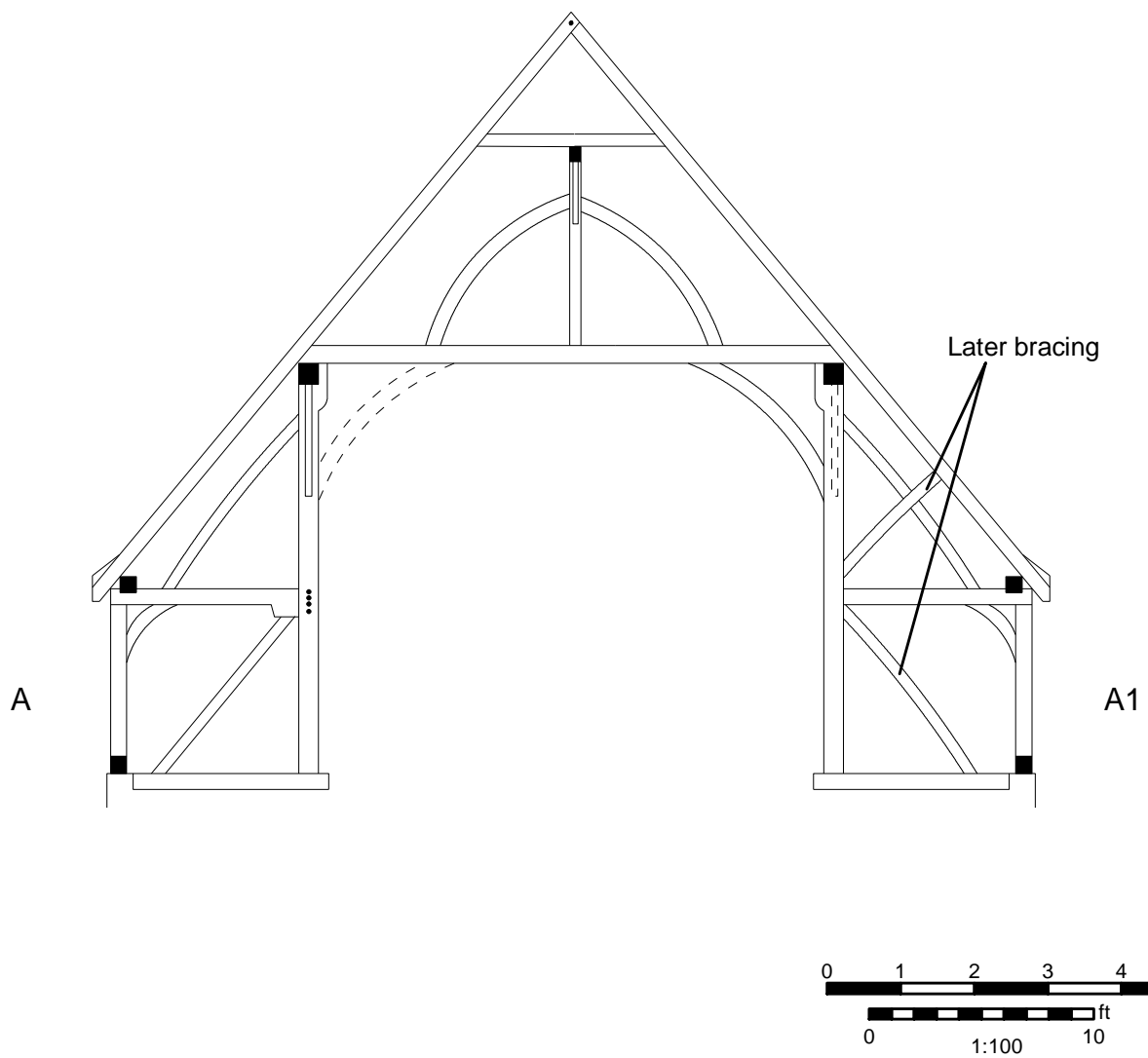


Fig.7. Section A-A1 through barn

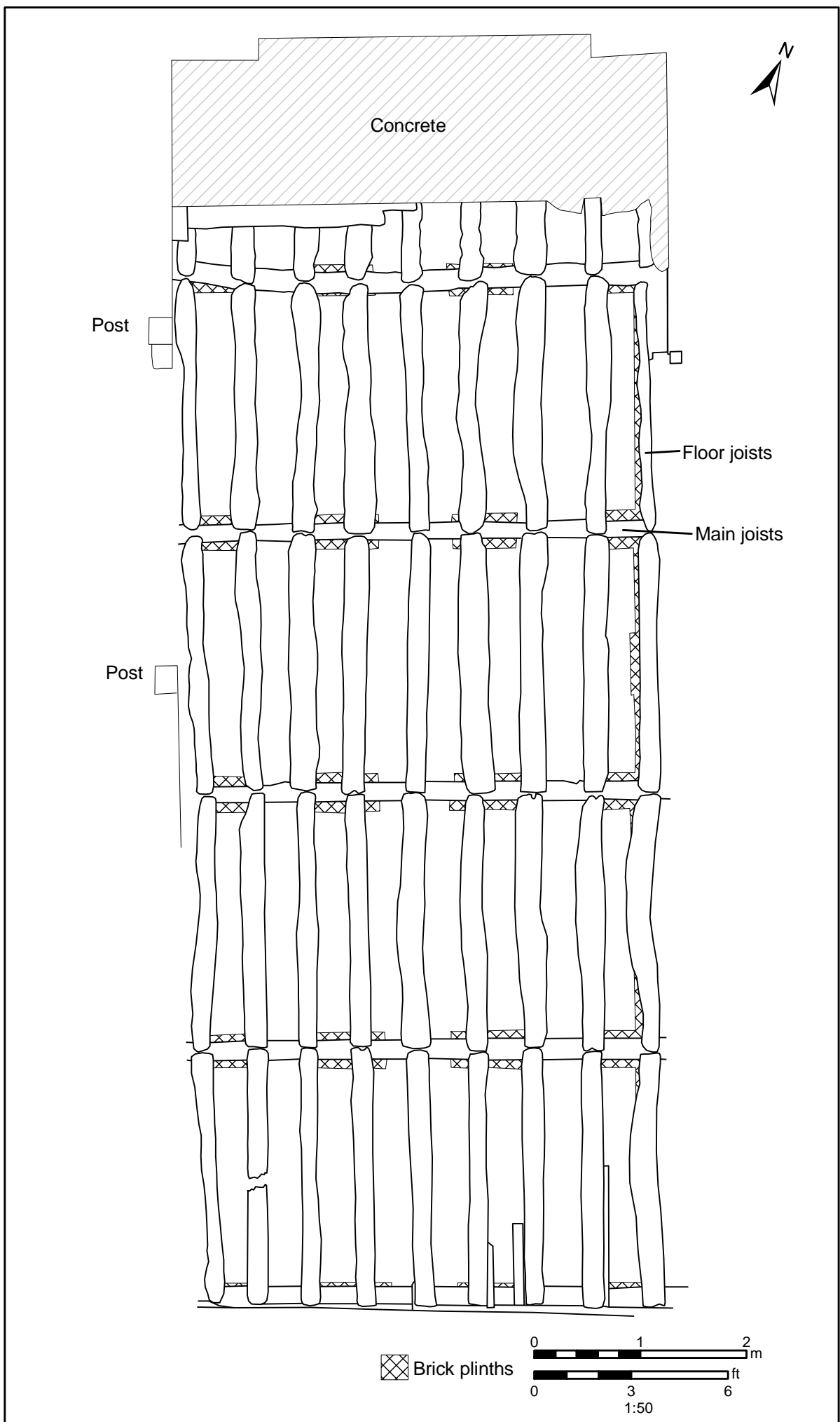


Fig.8. Plan of the threshing floor

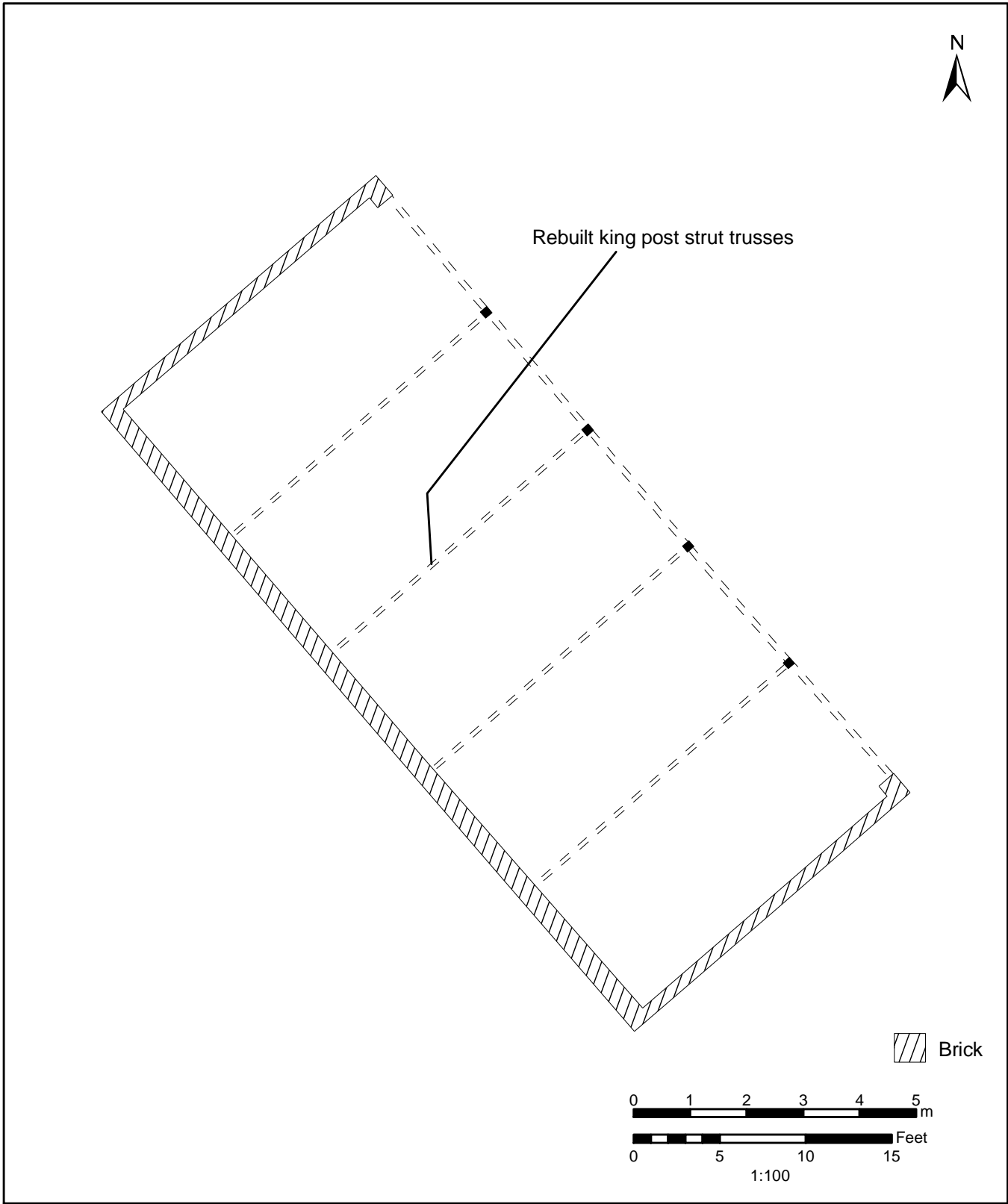


Fig.9. Plan of Cart Shed 2

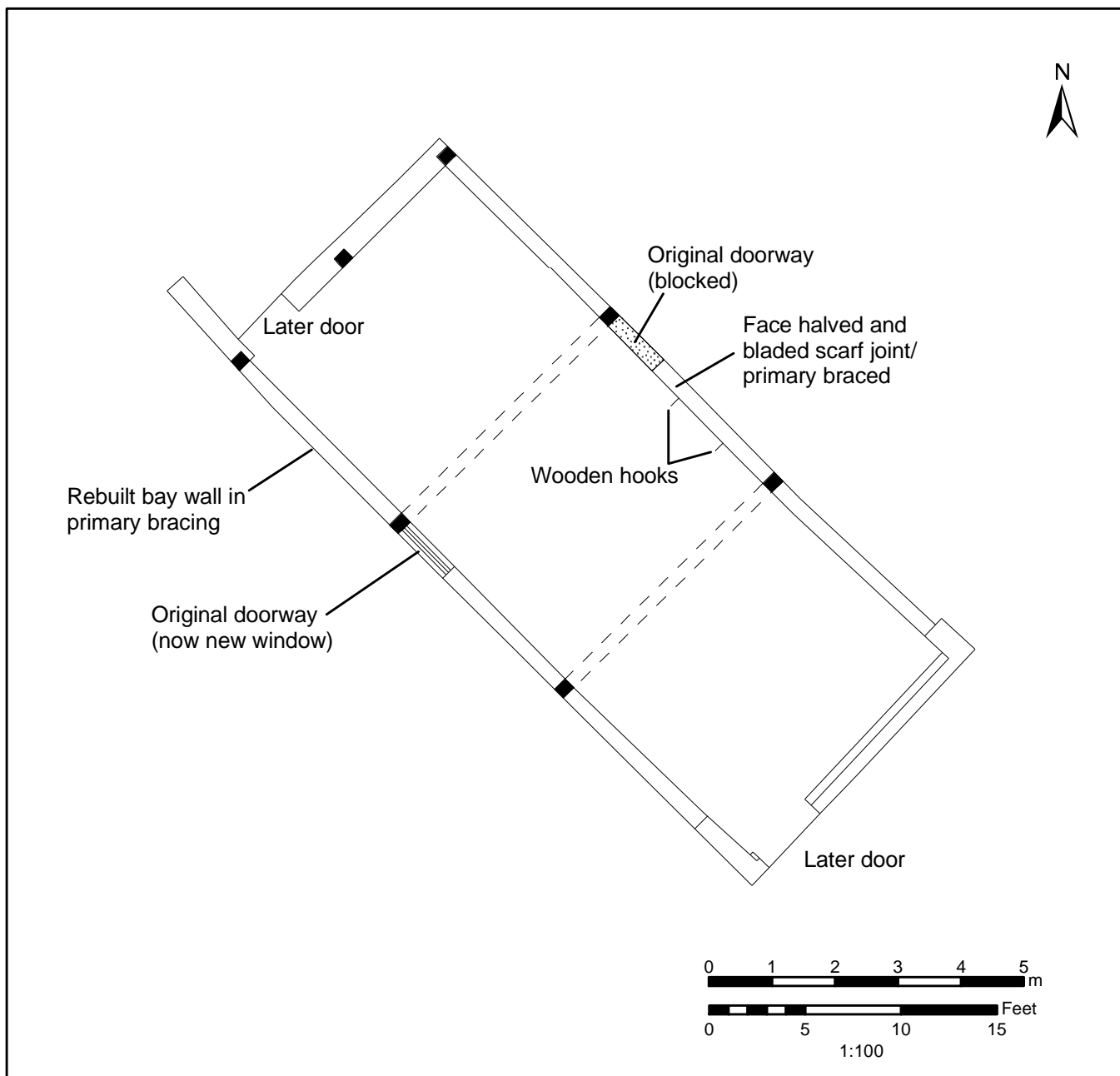
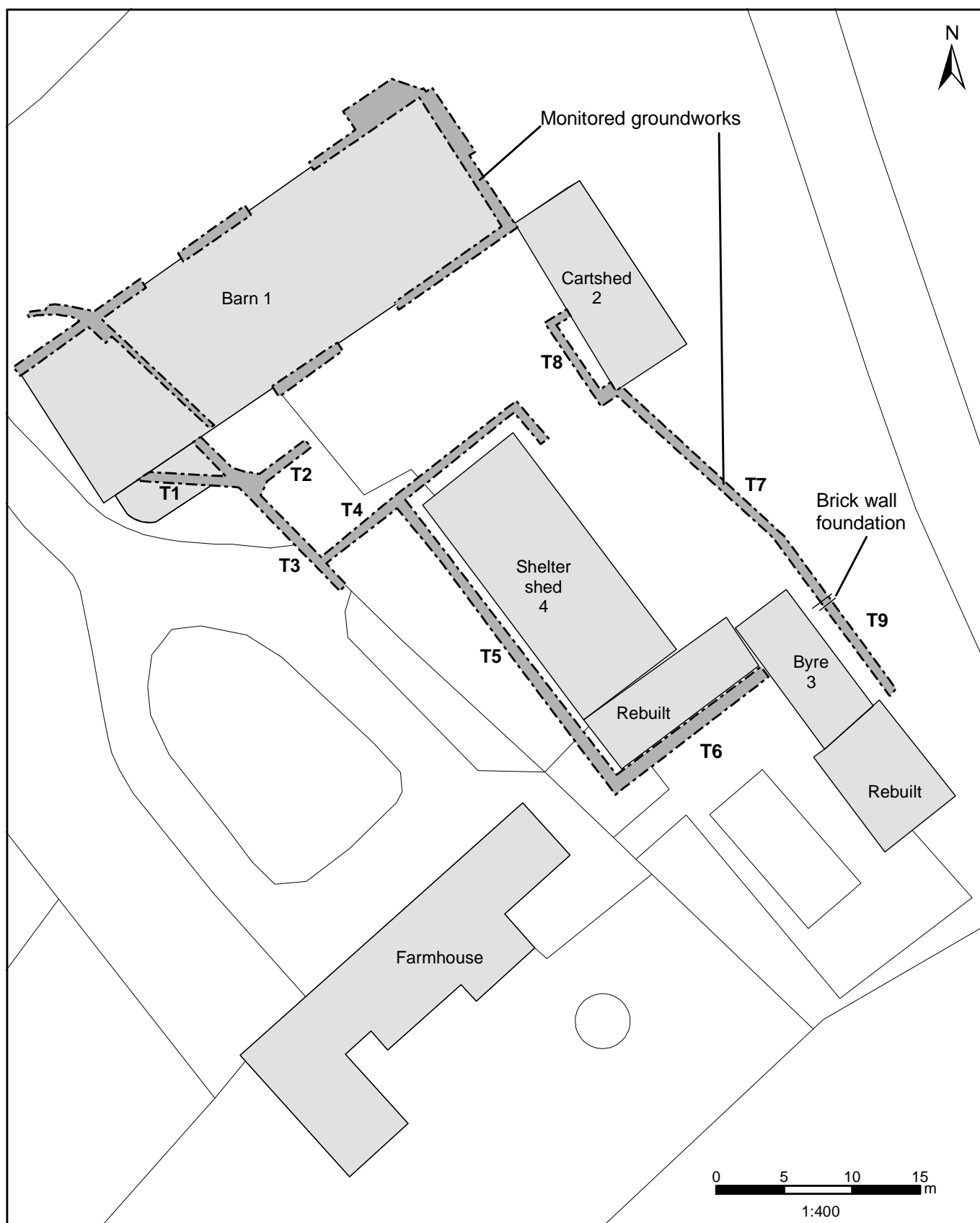


Fig.10. Plan of Byre 3



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Fig.11. Areas of archaeological monitoring



Plate 1 Barn and outbuildings viewed from north



Plate 2 Barn viewed from south





Plate 3 Brick piers to wooden threshing floor on south-east side of barn

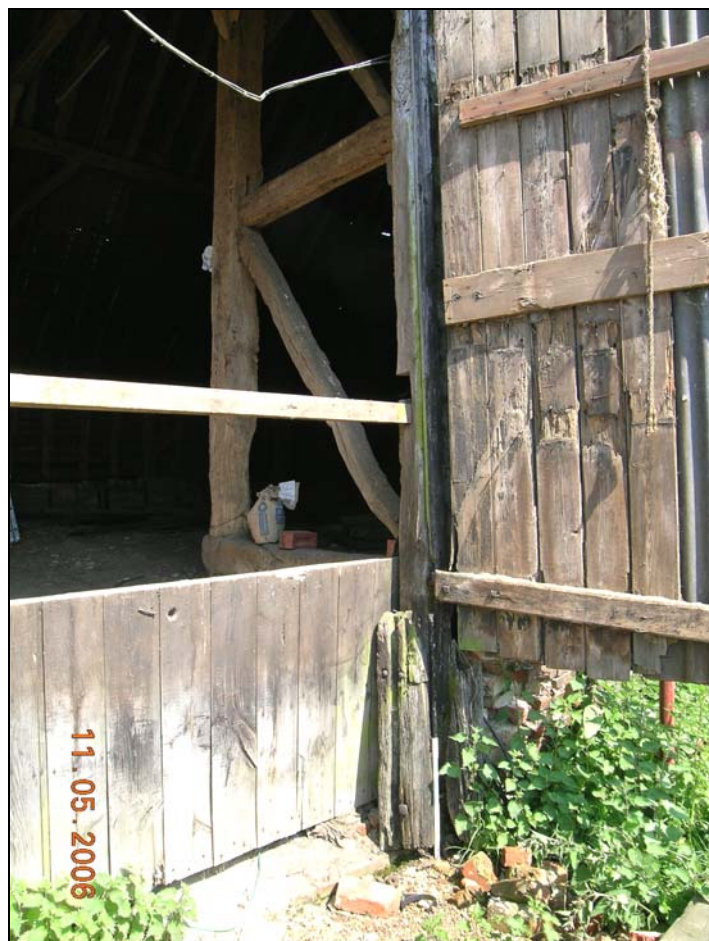


Plate 4 Leap slot on entrance to brick threshing floor on south-east side





Plate 5 North-east and north-west elevations



Plate 6 North-west and south-west elevations





Plate 7 Interior of barn viewed from south-west



Plate 8 Interior of barn viewed from north-east across wooden threshing floor





Plate 9 Wall framing to south-west gable



Plate 10 Comparison of external and primary braced framing on south-west wall to bays 3 and 4





Plate 11 Remains of partition framing viewed to north-east



Plate 12 Wattle grooves to north-west aisle of partition with primary-braced framing in background





Plate 13 North-east gable framing



Plate 14 Empty mortices for window mullions on north-east gable



Plate 15 Pitching door inserted into mullioned window in south-west gable



Plate 16 Second mullioned window in south-west gable





Plate 17 Remaining sill to medieval side window containing rotted diamond mullion recesses



Plate 18 Typical side-halved and bridled joint in barn





Plate 19 Typical porch construction



Plate 20 Brick threshing floor viewed to main yard





Plate 21 Timber threshing floor viewed to main yard

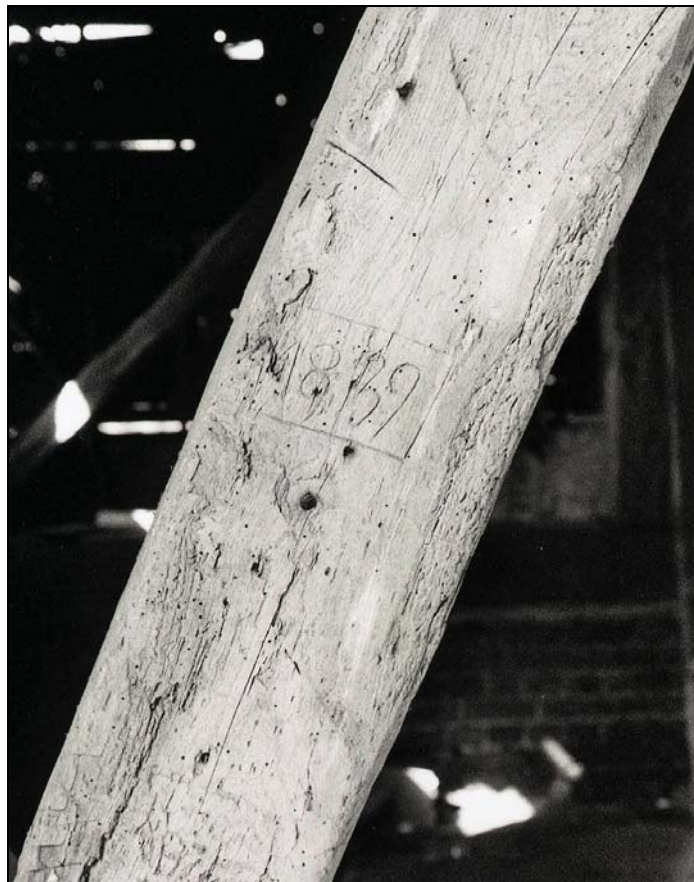


Plate 22 Graffitied date (1839) on strut by brick threshing floor



Plate 23 Graffiti mark on truss 5 recorded from scaffold (inset detail at 1:2)





Plate 24 Rushlight burn mark on partition post



Plate 25 Cart shed viewed from north





Plate 26 Byre and brick-built shed from north



Plate 27 Interior of byre viewed from south-east





Plate 28 Comparison of internal and primary braced bays in byre



Plate 29 Open-sided shelter shed viewed across eastern yard toward barn





Plate 30 Wooden feeding troughs removed from shelter shed into barn



Plate 31 North-west elevation of rebuilt shed before conversion

## Appendix 1: Plant macrofossils extracted from environmental sample

Cereals	North end	South end
<i>Hordeum</i> sp. (rachis nodes)	xx	x
<i>T. aestivum/compactum</i> type (rachis node)	x	
Cereal indet. (floret frags.)	x	x
(basal rachis nodes)		x
<b>Herbs</b>		
<i>Aethusa cynapium</i> L.	x	x
<i>Anthemis cotula</i> L.	x	x
<i>Atriplex</i> sp.	x	xx
<i>Brassica</i> sp.	xx	xx
<i>Carduus</i> sp.	x	x
<i>Centaurea</i> sp.	xcf	
<i>Chenopodium album</i> L.	xx	x
Chenopodiaceae indet.	xx	x
<i>Cirsium</i> sp.	x	
<i>Conium maculatum</i> L.	x	
<i>Fallopia convolvulus</i> (L.) A. Love	xx	xx
<i>Lamium</i> sp.		x
<i>Medicago/Trifolium/Lotus</i> sp.		x
<i>Papaver</i> sp.	x	x
<i>P. argemone</i> L.	x	
<i>P. dubium</i> L.	x	x
Small Poaceae indet.		x
Large Poaceae indet.	x	
<i>Polygonum aviculare</i> L.	x	x
<i>Potentilla</i> sp.	x	x
<i>Ranunculus</i> sp.	x	
<i>Raphanus raphanistrum</i> L. (silique frags.)	xxx	xx
<i>Rumex</i> sp.	xxx	xxx
<i>Scrophularia</i> sp.	x	
<i>Silene</i> sp.	xxx	xx
<i>Solanum nigrum</i> L.	x	x
<i>Sonchus asper</i> (L.) Hill	x	xx
<i>S. oleraceus</i> L.	x	x
<i>Stellaria media</i> (L.) Vill	x	x
<i>Tripleurospermum inodorum</i> (L.) Schultz-Bip		x
<i>Urtica dioica</i> L.	xx	x
<i>Viola</i> sp.	x	x
<b>Wetland plants</b>		
<i>Carex</i> sp.	x	
<b>Tree/shrub macrofossils</b>		
<i>Rubus</i> sect. <i>Glandulosus</i> Wimmer & Grab	x	x
<b>Other plant macrofossils</b>		
Charcoal <2mm		x
Wood frags.<5mm	xx	x
Straw/stem frags.	xxx	xxx
Indet.culm nodes	x	
Indet.inflorescence frags.	x	x
Indet.moss	x	
Indet.seeds	x	
<b>Other remains</b>		
Arthropod remains	xxx	xxx
Small mammal/amphibian bones		x
<b>Sample volume (litres)</b>		
<b>Volume of flot (litres)</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>0.2</b>
<b>% flot sorted</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>50%</b>

### Key to Table

x = 1 – 10 specimens    xx = 10 – 50 specimens    xxx = 50 – 100 specimens    cf = compare

## **Appendix 2: Contents of Archive**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Brief for works
- 1.2 WSI

### **2. Research Archive**

- 2.1 Copy of report
- 2.2 Copy of report pdf-formatted

### **3. Site Archive**

- 3.1 Site photographic record (digital images, 120mm & 35mm monochrome prints) & registers
- 3.2 Miscellaneous plans & drawings
- 3.3 Site notes
- 3.4 Sample processing sheet
- 3.5 Architects drawings
- 3.6 CD of pre-conversion photographs taken by Pocknell Studios
- 3.7 Desk-Based Assessment & addendum report (Padfield 1998 & 2006)
- 3.8 Environmental report



### Appendix 3: EHER Summary Sheet

<b>Site Name/Address:</b> Piccotts Farm, Piccotts Lane, Great Saling, Essex	
<b>Parish:</b> Great Saling	<b>District:</b> Braintree
<b>NGR:</b> TL 7083 2567	<b>Site Code:</b> GSPF 06
<b>Type of Work:</b> Building recording & archaeological monitoring	<b>Site Director/Group:</b> Andrew Letch ECC FAU
<b>Dates of Work:</b> 10th-12th May 2006	<b>Size of Area Investigated:</b> Approx. 1 hectare
<b>Curating Museum:</b> Braintree	<b>Funding Source:</b> Pocknell Studio
<b>Further Work Anticipated?</b> None	<b>Related EHCR Nos.:</b> EHER 27602 & 27603.
<b>Final Report:</b> Summary in EAH	
<b>Periods Represented:</b> Medieval, post-medieval & 19th-century	
<p><b>SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:</b></p> <p>Piccotts Farm retains a large Grade II* listed late medieval barn and Grade II post-medieval byre alongside 19th-century cart and shelter sheds. The current survey followed a desk-based assessment (Padfield 1998) and an addendum report produced after further observations during the recent survey (Padfield 2006). The barn is aisled with a crown post roof and dated to c.1440 (Padfield 2006). Some repairs were made in the post-medieval period and porches and threshing floors, one of brick and the other of wood, probably inserted in the 19th century. Otherwise the barn has not been structurally altered. The byre is dated between 1550 and 1600 and may have been built initially as an oxhouse, which is rarity (Padfield 2006). At the time of the survey, the byre and sheds were being converted for residential usage.</p> <p>The barn was the centrepiece to the Piccotts estate that in the 15th-century held approximately 300 acres. An impressive sight, with its sturdy oak frame and daub panels, low catslide roofs over the aisles and diamond mullioned windows to each of the bays and gable ends. In the post-medieval period, the timbers were plastered over. At another stage, possibly during the 19th-century improvement phase, plaster was exchanged for weatherboarding. The byre evolved in a similar manner.</p> <p>The built group represents developments in farming from the medieval to 19th-century periods. The barn was built to accommodate the harvest from the estate and its survival attests to the scale of the holding. Although there are several famous examples in Essex, barns dating to the medieval period are rare in the country as a whole.</p> <p>Archaeological monitoring was undertaken on underpinning and service trenches. No important archaeological remains were found, apart from an unprovenenced 19th-century brick wall footing.</p>	
<b>Previous Summaries/Reports</b> Padfield, A., 1998, <i>Piccotts Farm Great Saling: Desk-based Assessment</i> & 2006, <i>Piccotts Farm, Great Saling: Observations on Barn &amp; Cattle Shed</i>	
<b>Author of Summary:</b> A. R. Letch	<b>Date of Summary:</b> 18th December 2006