

**HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING AT WOLSEYS FARM
DUTON HILL, GREAT EASTON
ESSEX**



Essex County Council

Field Archaeology Unit

February 2008

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**WOLSEYS FARM, DUTON HILL, GREAT EASTON
ESSEX**

HISTORIC BUILDING RECORD

Client: Mr. M. Morton

FAU Project No.: 1821

NGR: TL 6057 2747

OASIS No.: essexcou1-37443

Planning Application: UTT/0504/05/FUL & UTT/0505/05/LB

Dates of Fieldwork: 8th-11th October 2007

1.0 INTRODUCTION

A programme of building recording was undertaken by Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit (ECC FAU) on a large multi-phase farmstead at Wolseys Farm, Duton Hill, prior to conversion for commercial uses. The work was commissioned by the owner, Mr. M.Morton, 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) at County Hall, Chelmsford. The archive will be stored with Saffron Walden Museum. An OASIS online record has been created.

The farm complex contains eleven agrarian structures largely dating from between the 17th and 19th-centuries, forming a complicated sequence of development. The two earliest structures, the barns, are both Grade II listed. The identity of the recorded structures is as follows:

- Listed 17th-century aisled bank barn 1 (LBS 122163)
- Late 19th century shelter shed 2, converted to milking parlour in 20th century
- Mid 19th-century shelter shed 3
- Possible 17th-century open-sided shed 4, rebuilt as a byre in the 18th-century
- Early 20th-century bull pen/cart shed 5
- Mid 19th-century shelter shed 6

- Listed late 17th-century barn 7 (LBS 122164)
- Early 19th-century shelter shed 8
- Late 19th-century machine store 9
- 18th-century granary 10
- Mid 19th-century stables 11, by farmhouse

The farmhouse is outside the conversion scheme and not recorded.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 Site location and description (fig.1)

Duton Hill is part of the parish of Great Easton, a village situated to the west of the B184 main Dunmow to Thaxted road, in Uttlesford District, north-west Essex. Wolseys Farm (TL 6065 2749) lies on the north-east side of Duton Hill at the end of a long track (fig.1) in existence from the establishment of the farm.

The farm buildings are a combination of brick and timber-framing, neatly arranged around four yards, with a farmhouse on the west side. Their condition is very good and well-maintained. They are still in use, mainly for storage purposes, and have changed very little except for the 18th-century barn, which contains modern grain processing machinery. A modern cow shed and Dutch barn stand to the east, away from the main group.

With the River Chelmer to the west, the farm occupies a position on the high ground above the valley, a common place to find older settlements because of the good water supply (Watkin & Watkin 2007). Beyond the farm core, the landscape is undulating meadow land with arable on the flatter high ground to the east.

2.2 Planning background

A planning application for conversion of farm buildings to commercial use was submitted to Uttlesford District Council in March 2005 (UTT/0504/05/FUL & UTT/0505/05/LB) and approved in May 2005. There is also an outstanding permission for residential conversion dating back to 1992 (HEM 2007). Since the commissioning of survey, planning permission was withdrawn on the oldest structure, barn 1, to conserve a resident bat colony. However, revised plans were subsequently presented and accepted (R. Havis pers. comm.).

Mindful of the likely effects of the conversion on the historic integrity of the farm complex, ECC HEM advised the LPA that a full archaeological condition should be attached to the planning permission, based on advice given in Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment (DOE 1994).

2.3 Farming from the post-medieval period onwards

Medieval farm buildings tended to adopt an unplanned plan form, scattered around the farm house rather than around a central courtyard. 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 (or the farmhouse) 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 threshing floor of the barn. Arable and livestock farming were mutually dependent on each other. Cereals were produced as a cash crop and as animal feed and in return, the animals provided work power, manure for the crops and wool, meat and dairy products.

In the late 17th century, improvements in crop rotation, with the introduction of improved grasses and winter feed crops, heralded the end of the medieval three field system. Improvements in animal husbandry meant larger animals could be bred and increased winter feed meant that more could be kept for fattening.

Agricultural improvements led to the establishment of larger, more efficient farms. From the 1740s, the courtyard 'planned' or 'model' farm, established by improving landlords, began replacing the earlier scattered farmsteads. Cattle were fed in one or more enclosed yards, usually with an entrance to the south and a barn to north for shelter. In the yards manure was trod into threshed straw and the mixture added to the fields, increasing crop and straw yields.

Such improvement accelerated between 1850 and 1875, the period known as the 'golden age of farming,' based on an increased population and the demand for milk, meat and bread by growing urban centres, aided by the growing railway network for distribution purposes and new farming methods. New planned farms were established on the courtyard principle and others were adapted to incorporate philosophies on efficiency based on the Victorian factory system. Great debate was had in influential circles on the merits of different husbandry techniques and efficiency/labour saving devices, e.g. mechanised threshing and ploughing machinery, to increase productivity.

Thanks to new feeds, farms could now specialise in cattle and with the increased demand for dairy and beef products, the numbers of cattle kept on farms increased by one third between 1864 and 1876 (Peters 2003). This trend continued toward the end of the 19th-century, partly due to rises in the cost of arable farming from bad harvests leading to higher corn prices.

In general, the expense of the planned model farm in its purest form was a barrier to smaller landowners. So, rather than demolish and build afresh, many farmers remodelled their farms utilising the courtyard system. Larger buildings, inevitably barns, were retained, with new housing for livestock attached around a courtyard layout. This was the prevailing trend in Essex.

Many Essex farmsteads today are composites of larger post-medieval buildings (commonly barns) integrated into a 19th-century courtyard layout and augmented 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 alternative uses are sought.

2.4 Historical background & development

Cartographic and documentary research was undertaken at the Essex Records Office Chelmsford (ERO) to understand the development of the farm. Secondary sources were also used to place the farm in context. The results are presented below with their accompanying ERO references. As the development of the farm is quite complex and includes a large group of structures, a phase plan is included as fig.1, which may be referred to at this stage of the report for greater clarity.

Wolseys Farm is associated with the family of Richard *Wolcy*, mentioned in medieval Court rolls from 1421 and letters and papers from 1509 (Reaney 1969). A moated house bearing the Wolsey name was located to the east of the farm in the late 18th-century (fig.2 Chapman and Andre's map of Essex, 1777). The early, though unlabelled farm, is shown on a square plan divided into two enclosed yards. Three buildings gather around the edges of the western yard, interpreted as barns 1 and 7 and granary 10. Byre 4 is not shown but is likely to have been present by this time. Early maps like these do not necessarily fully represent what was on the ground. The eastern yard is depicted as containing a lot of trees and is perhaps an

orchard/grazing area. The moated site, now known as Moathouse Farm, still stands along the main Thaxted road (fig.1).

Between the late 18th-century and middle of the 19th century (fig.3, Tithe map for Great Easton, 1839) the current farm layout slowly begins to take form. A farmhouse has been built to the west (not the present one) and byre 4 and shed 8 are apparent. Further development has occurred around barn 1 in the form of unidentified structures standing to the north and attached to the west, that had been removed by the latter part of the century. The Tithe Award (D/CT 125A) shows a large holding of approximately 100 acres grazing and 125 acres arable owned by Thomas Kearsley and rented to Robert Joslin, a tenant farmer, with a tithe of £59 payable to the Rector.

The main phases of improvement occur around the middle of the 19th-century (1839-76). Primarily, this is the setting-up of the planned farm, around four distinct yards, the layout of which survives almost unaltered today (fig.4, first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1876). With the formation of stock yards, incorporating the existing buildings, shelter sheds 3 and 6 are established. Stables 11 are constructed beside the (altered or rebuilt) farmhouse, and granary 10 is shortened at the south end and replaced with machine house 9; open-ended to admit new steam-powered machinery. An extension is attached to the west side of barn 1 and others on the porch of barn 7, since removed, and another on the south end. After the removal of other 19th-century buildings around barn 1, two long open-fronted structures (a small shelter shed and cart shed 5, Watkin and Watkin 2007) have been built to the east of the barn and Yard A (fig.4). At the end of the century (well represented in fig. 5, second edition OS map of 1897), the layout is complete, with shelter shed 2 built, along further small additions to the barns, that have subsequently been removed during the 20th-century.

Cart shed 5 was built in the early part of the 20th-century, before 1920 (New Series OS map, not illustrated). Silos and grain processing machinery were built onto the south end of barn 7 (replacing the 19th-century addition) in the post-war period and also a modern cattle house and large machine shed to the east of the traditional farming core, on the higher ground. Cattle were moved from the farm when the Morton's took over in 1963 (Mrs Morton pers. comm.) and up until the time of the survey the farm has been used for arable purposes whilst conserving the surrounding landscape and wildlife.

3.0 OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the historic building survey was, as specified in the brief (ECC HEM 2007), to provide a detailed record of the traditional farm buildings to RCHME level 3 standard prior to conversion and to assess the overall significance of the farm.

In addition, the record was required to address the following: plan form of the site, materials and method of construction, building chronology and phasing, function and internal layout, process flow, fixtures and fittings, additions and modifications and the context of the farm within its contemporary landscape.

Notwithstanding the importance of the early timber-framed structures, the study of the development and impact of the agricultural revolution and Victorian High Farming has been identified as an important area for further research by the Regional Research Agenda for the East of England (Brown & Glazebrook 2000, 42 & 45).

4.0 DESCRIPTION OF WORKS

The standing buildings were recorded based on architect's drawings supplied by the client (floor plans, frame surveys and sections). A block plan was produced to show the location of the structures within the survey and each structure given a numeric reference for ease of identification (fig.1).

External and internal architectural descriptions were made and the function of each building was assessed, along with its relationships to others as part of the working farm. Many of the structures, notably byre 4, barn 7 and stables 11, were still in use and some internal areas difficult to access. This was particularly the case with the barn, whose southern bays were full of silos and grain movement equipment, which affected the quality of internal views. It is hoped that once the building is cleared for conversion, a subsequent visit will provide a more detailed photographic record that will be included in the archive.

Each of the 11 recorded structures are described in this report under their original functions, where this is known, and evidence for later adaptation/change of use is included at the start of their description. Specialist assistance was provided in the survey by freelance consultants Brenda and Elphin Watkin (formerly of the ECC Historic Building team), whose contribution are acknowledged. Their observations are incorporated into the descriptive text, while a full report is included in the archive.

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 any areas of important architectural detail, fixtures or fittings. A representative selection of photographs is reproduced at the back of the report as plates 1-46. The remainder can be found in the archive.

Documentary and cartographic research was undertaken at the Essex Records Office (section 2.4) to understand the origins and development of the farm from historic primary sources.

5.0 HISTORIC BUILDING DESCRIPTIONS

5.1 General description

The farm complex (plates 1-3) lies on a roughly north to south orientation terraced into ground falling to the west either side of what used to be a track that passed through the farm in the late 19th-century. The plan is roughly square, with four historic stock yards arranged around a large open central tarmaced yard, with farmhouse to the west (fig.1). Each yard has buildings along two sides, the third side often defined by those of an adjacent yard and the fourth bounded by red brick walls. They are referred to as yards A-D in the text. The yard walls are built in orange c.9 inch brickwork laid in Flemish bond surmounted with semi-circular copings. Two more modern yards to the east of the complex have been created by removing earlier structures and creating concrete surfaces.

5.2 Yard A

Yard A (plate 4) stands at the north end of the complex. It has been grassed over to create a lawn. The stub of a flint boundary remains attached to the south-west corner of the barn, but the rest was lost before the yard was turfed. The oldest building, barn 1 and former Victorian shelter shed 2, converted to a milking parlour, form the main boundaries, with stables 11 to the west and the main yard to the south.

5.2.1 Barn 1

This is the oldest of the standing farm structures and stands at the north end of the yard, with shed 2 to the east. The barn is included as part of the post-medieval farm alongside buildings 7 and 10 on 18th-century mapping. It is an attractive building that was originally daubed, probably with a thatched roof too. In the intervening period, there have been small changes to the external structure, but the interior remains intact. The list description describes it as a

16th-century 'bank barn', with large areas rebuilt in the 17th-century; namely the southern side, roof and midstrey. Examination as part of the present survey suggested the barn is in fact a single 17th-century phase, but with some repaired and rebuilt areas (Watkin & Watkin 2007).

The barn is laid out on three bays with aisles either side and a central midstrey to the south. Its timber-framing is constructed from well-converted oak in the close-studded form traditional to the area, with many reused timbers (Watkin & Watkin 2007). The plinth on which it stands is visibly 19th-century comprising red bricks with dimensions of c.220 x 110 x 65mm (c.8¾ inches) laid in Flemish bond, with some disruption in the build to the rear and west sides. The plinth is set higher on the north side where the ground falls away dramatically, hence the term 'bank barn'. Weather-boarded cladding has been renewed in the modern period and asbestos tiles added to the hipped roof. In contrast, the midstrey roof is plain tiled. The barn is in a good state of repair and has been used for village events in recent times.

External description

Projecting beyond the main body of the barn, the central porch on its south elevation (plate 5) contains the main cart doors, for bringing wagons in, especially at harvest time. The doors are modern, but held on traditional pintels and round-ended strap hinges. The threshold leap has been removed from beneath the doors, but one of the planks was fitted to the east side of the porch (plate 5) when the doors were enlarged. Above the doors, the tiled roof is fully hipped with swept gables. The plinth to the west of the porch has been extensively rebuilt since the mid 19th-century infill here was removed and a French drain installed in the modern period. Modern steps lead up to an early doorway in the west side of the porch that is now concealed on the outside by modern cladding that covers the whole frame.

The plinth on the two short ends and the rear elevation (north) of the barn rises considerably in three stages to a height of 1.75m. Brickwork at the back is extremely patchy in places and shows little regard for bond. Away from view, most is laid as on-edge headers (plate 6). Also on this side, a doorway has been replaced in its original housing. The build of the east side is less random but contains a large proportion of yellow stock bricks above the first lift. An eight-pane iron-framed Crittalls casement window has been inserted into the fabric on this side.

Internal description

Inside, the interior was clear and free from clutter (plates 7-9). The three bays are a regular 4m-wide each. The floors are concrete, with the west bay set slightly lower (plate 7). Either side of the midstrey are slots in the arcade posts for mowstead rails (figs. 7a & c). Each bay has seven or eight studs pegged and tenoned to plates either end, except for bay 2 where they are pegged to the top only. The studwork on the outer bays are reinforced by slightly curved internal braces falling from the corner aisle posts. Typical stud dimensions are between 13-15cm wide and 10cm deep, with gaps of 35-38cm.

Main framing

The main frame consists of braced heavy oak posts and beams (plates 7-9). Bays are defined by lateral trusses comprising wall posts, arcade posts, tie beam and collar purlin roof connected by longitudinal arcade plates (fig.8a). All the posts have jowled heads, some swelling and others more angular, creating a broad platform to house wall plates and tie beams.

Slightly curved, rather flat, arch bracing connects arcade posts to arcade plates, locked in with single-pegs. The tie braces are double-pegs. Shores follow from the rear of the arcade posts to the arcade ties. The north arcade plate is repaired with lapped scarf joints held by forelock bolts (Watkin & Watkin 2007) and the north wall plate, above the door, has a face halved and bladed scarf. The south arcade plate has a housed bladed scarf joint central to the midstrey (fig.7c, plate 10). Edge-halved and bridled scarf joints are a later medieval technique of joining large structural timbers, dating from c.1370 up until the mid-17th century. The edge-halved and bladed scarf joint appeared in the 16th-century and is a common post-medieval form. The two were used together in the 17th-century (Walker 1994), when the barn is believed to have been built, especially in the early part.

Chiselled carpenter's assembly marks are located on the north-east (I) and south-east aisle posts (II) (fig.6). The north post also has an 'IXI' fair face mark (Watkin & Watkin 2007).

Wall framing

The north wall (fig.7a, plate 7) comprises reused studwork in the west bay with new housings cut for wattle and daub on an original sole plate. The wall plate above and extending into the central bay is sagging and another has been used to level up. The central bay contains an attractive modern door in an earlier opening high above the ground below and only accessed by a ladder. New studs have been added to the west of the door (fig.7a). The sole plate

below has been replaced and the plinth under-built around the door. The east bay is less affected and most likely stands on its original 17th-century plinth (Watkin & Watkin 2007).

Studs have been removed in the east wall to insert a Crittall window (fig.7b, plate 8). The aisle tie and corner post are reused. Two studs above the aisle plate are later replacements nailed to the shore. The main part is fully framed and pegged. Internal bracing is absent from the upper register (south) where the arcade post was not wide enough to form a jowl, and a manufactured jowl was fitted instead (fig.7b) that would not have had the strength if a brace was fitted.

On the south wall (fig.7c) there is a high proportion of re-used studs to the east of the midstrey, associated with a replaced sole plate, lapped rather than scarf-jointed. To the west, most studs are a mix of new and reused stood on a reused plate.

The west wall (fig.7d) has late repairs to the sole plate and a second central post has been bolted to the original to provide greater strength. Stud bases have been reinforced by thin nailed timbers for better stability. Otherwise, much of the framing is complete and original.

Midstrey

The midstrey (plate 10) is contemporary with the barn but has undergone much repair/replacement, especially to the infill panels (Watkin & Watkin 2007). It never held daub in its present state. No frame drawings exist, but detailed photographs are included in the report as plates 11 and 12.

The east wall midrail is replaced and double pegged to the arcade and corner post, with a forelock bolt securing it to the aisle wall (plate 11). The wall plate, also replaced, has single-pegging. Studwork on the lower register is rarely pegged and primary-braced, but may include former members and the brace itself is nailed to the wall post. Above, the studs have alternate pegging. An empty mortice hole on the corner post above the midrail belongs to the removed brace.

The west side is more complete and retains its studwork and internal brace in the top register. A boarded and ledged door stands off-centre providing access to the outside or the mid 19th-century structure formerly appended to the midstrey this side. It has a cat door, wooden lock and catch (plate 12), and is supported on pintels and strap hinges.

Roof

The main roof is original to the 17th-century build and has a steep 50° pitch. It is assembled from paired rafters and clasped side purlins and double-pegged collars. The east bay has mortise and tenoned wind-bracing on the north side (fig.7a, plate 7). Rafters are mainly reused and trenched into the purlins. The roof has been partially lifted and replaced on the north side (Watkin & Watkin 2007) with a secondary wall plate, already mentioned (fig.7a). The midstreay roof is the same but without reduced principle rafters (Watkin & Watkin 2007)

5.2.2 Shelter shed 2

This linear brick and timbered building began life in the late 19th-century as an open-sided cart shed built onto shelter shed 3/Yard B, facing a pre-existing cart or shelter shed to the east. Both are shown on the 1897 map (fig.5). With the removal of the second shed in the last century, a concrete yard was laid up to the flint retaining wall to the east (fig.6 & plates 14 & 26). A small modern enclosed shed was built at the southern end of the yard (plate 26) but was not recorded as part of the survey. As part of the 20th-century conversion of the shelter shed to a milking parlour, the east wall was filled-in and new floor laid. Now standing as a redundant building, its most recent use is to store furniture.

The shed is well-built in Flemish bond and feather-edged boarding under a 45° pitched gabled roof. The roof is tiled to the west but clad in corrugated asbestos the other side, not visible from the yard.

External description

The main elevation on the west side faces onto Yard A and comprises mainly of a red/orange brick wall rising up to the north with the slope, below a narrow feather-boarded section held on a light timber frame (plate 13). A pair of ledged, boarded and braced cattle doors (with narrow ledge heights and short bracing to centre, common on this site) is located centrally, with two later eight-pane fixed windows towards the south and a third (now blocked) one to the north, beyond the cart entrance (fig.6). The windows are contemporary with the milking parlour conversion. A half-heck door is located at the south end into the woodshed, fixed with original strap hinges and pintels, as are all the historic doors on the site.

Brick walling returns onto the north gable, but finishes one third of the way along (fig.6). The rest of this side is an amalgam of late concrete block and Fletton brick infill. There are no mortices to the wall plate this side for studs, so it is clear that much of this side was originally open. There is a hatch in the gable above (plate 14).

The east elevation (plate 14) is clearly later in date than the front, representing in-fill of the open side. Its brick plinth is built in stretcher bond and bonded in cement with modern boarding above. Ramp bracing is nailed to the bay posts, typical of open-fronted structures (Watkin & Watkin 2007). A single half-heck door stands centrally, opposite the main doors on the front and there is a modern iron-framed window at the south end. The rear of the woodshed has been in-filled in corrugated tin sheeting (fig.6).

Internal description

The interior (plate 15) is laid out over eight regular bays, with the southern bay separated by a plastered brick and timber partition to provide separate storage, perhaps for feed or bedding. It is now used as a woodshed. The area to the south of the main entrance has a raised concrete milking floor on the west side, with a drainage channel behind (fig.6) that discontinues soon after the doors. Beyond, to the north, where parts of floor are hidden, there appear to be no such features. Any historic fixtures and fittings were probably lost during past conversion.

In the modern period, one half of the old cattle door was blocked off with a wooden fence section to form one side of a stall. The rest of the stall was built from concrete blockwork continuing to the east to form an enclosed 2.2 x 3.5m rectangle now mostly demolished. A raised milking area continued from the stall to the southern partition wall (fig.6).

In terms of construction, the main posts are in oak and the studs in softwood. Some have timber marks from the Baltic wood yards they were imported from. Those on the in-filled east side are nailed to the wall plate, while those on the west, part of the primary build, are tenoned-in. Only the end bays are primary-braced. The tie beams that separate the bays are flat, strapped to the wall plates and supported on nailed straight braces (plate 15). Above, the roof is simple, with nailed collars halved over the rafters and trenched purlins (fig.8b). Long wind braces are set in the two bays south of the cow doors.

5.3 Yard B

A similar brick wall/L-shaped building layout is adopted by yard B. Byre 4 forms the eastern side onto which shelter shed 3 was built, to form the north side. The south is represented by the buildings of Yard C (fig.1). Walls enclose the west side, which has a gateway to the south, facing another gap between the end of the byre and barn 7, where there was another gate. A large gatepost is still present, attached to the barn (fig.9). The yard is grassed and there is a definite slope on the west side reflected in the roof slope of shelter shed 3 (plate 16).

5.3.1 Shelter shed 3

Shed 3 is a four-bay rectangular weather-boarded structure that belongs to the mid 19th-century phase when the yards were laid out. It forms an L-shaped plan form alongside byre 4, onto which it is built; a pattern repeated in Yard C. It is similar in form and construction to shed 6 and contemporary with the barn extension 7a and stables 11.

Originally built open-sided to the south, with a long 45° pitch roof hipped to the west, subsequent farm development has resulted in the infilling of the west bays, which are now used as a log store, while the remaining open bays hold kindling wood. The roof has been re-clad in asbestos slates like many of the buildings, but was probably originally thatched.

External description

Across Yard B, the ground falls away to the west, and with it shed 3 (plate 16). As approached from the gates in the south-west corner, the main south elevation consists of two weather-boarded western bays and two open eastern bays (plate 17). A single planked heck door with cast iron straps leads into the enclosed part, the exterior of which has been fabricated in a fairly haphazard fashion, with different board lengths and widths on a patchy, light frame. The eastern bays are divided by a single post. The wall plate is reused. A low concrete wall has been built between the post and enclosed bay (fig.9).

The west wall of the shed is built onto the main yard wall, but the rear (north) wall is built onto a neatly-built flint wall that is contemporary with the flint east retaining wall (plate 26, right). There is a doorway on the rear, where the end juts out westwards past the log store of building 2 (fig.9).

Internal description

Wall-framing is light, hand-sawn and primary-braced with a lightweight roof structure been suitable for thatch. The central division consists of a low 9" vertical-planked wall, with a framed horizontal boarded 7" addition above (plate 18). Tie beams are crude half-trees (fig.11a) with bark attached in places and nailed collars at half-bay intervals. The rafters and pole purlins are cut four from a tree (Watkin & Watkin 2007). The floor is unmade and any surviving historic fixtures and fittings are not apparent.

5.3.2 Animal byre 4

The byre is one of the more difficult structures to interpret within the group, containing different build phases. There are signs that it was originally part of the early pre-improvement farmstead, created as a 17th-century byre; an animal shed open-sided to the west.

Unfortunately it is not shown on early (late 18th-century) mapping, but early maps can be inaccurate anyway. It is believed that in the 18th-century an extension was added to the south and the front wall filled-in to form a stable for working horses. Its wattle and daub panels were removed and the frame boarded internally and externally. Additional tie beams were added during a 19th-century refit, whose uneven nature show they were fitted during the 19th-century improvement phase.

Externally, the weather-boarded walls stand on a low brick plinth, with the main 18th-century elevation facing the west. Inside are three unequal bays, with another added on the south end. The interior contains the remains of five modern brick stalls, presumably for cattle. The asbestos clad roof is hipped to the north (with a small gablet) but half-hipped to the extended south bay. As neither gable was prominent, this difference between the two ends was apparently not seen as a particular incongruity.

The building is racking to the east, and probably has been for some time. Diagonal timber struts have been added against the west wall and the opposite wall has a high rebuilt plinth and strengthened studwork (plate 21). At the time of the survey the building was functioning as a store for all manner of things, though this did not impede recording works.

External description

The front elevation (plate 19) stands on a 1m-high brick plinth, consolidated at the base with concrete against the fall of the land. The main features are two fixed eight-pane Victorian windows either side, with half-heck doors to the left in both cases. The door to the north retains wooden latches (plate 20) that have been preserved through protection from shed 3. If this is an original feature, then this end was enclosed as a loose box, but a missing tie beam to this bay makes this hard to prove. The door further to the south has more common iron fixtures, with a wooden slatted vent above. Between the door and north window is an iron grilled vent, closed off on the inside by a wooden shutter (fig.10d), another sign of animal accommodation.

Each of the two short elevations have different characteristics. The north end has an inserted high brick plinth built onto flint cobble walling the same as that to the yard and rear of building 3 (plate 26). The wall above is plastered with lime-base, up to the roof hip. The south side has plaster in the gable, but the majority is weather-boarded (plate 19). The rear east wall is built onto the terrace wall and has no external features in its weatherboarding.

Internal description

The interior is 14.5m in length, with a 4.5m-long bay extension to the south, laid over three bays. The corner posts of the primary build are jowled and likely to be of 17th-century date while those in the probable 18th-century extension are plain. Curved tie beams have been added at random intervals to counter the spread of the structure toward the east, which remains a problem today, evidenced by the use of modern planks shoring up the western wall plate (plate 21). The original square section tie of the first bay has been cut back and replaced (fig 9).

The original south end tie retains six peg holes (the same as the other end) for studs that were removed when the extension was built (plate 21). The south-east wall post has an empty mortice just below the jowl that would have held a brace. The other post has been removed and placed at the new end, which has the same brace housing (plate 24). It is likely that some of the old timbers were incorporated into the new end wall, which is primary-braced rather than close-studded like the original walls. The infilling along the front was probably carried out at the same time as the extension. Barring the incorporation of some reused timbers, the studwork on the inserted west side is lighter, at c.10 cm-wide and, towards the south at least, which is easier to see, are simply nailed behind the wall plate rather than pegged and tenoned.

The end walls and part of the newer east wall are lined-out in butt-jointed boarding up to 10 inches wide. In other parts, where there are modern rebuilt and repaired areas (fig.10), the lining is absent, but nail holes in the studwork show it was once here. Wattle marks on the studs show the main part of the byre interior was daubed. However, there are none on the extension and it is likely the exterior was cladded at the same time. Studs are heavy and around 15cm wide, pegged to the plates top and bottom and spaced 0.4-0.45m apart.

Main jointing, where seen, is fairly primitive short bridle scarfs. Where the two builds are joined, the scarf joints either side are drifting (plate 21). The best scarf is a face halved and bladed joint on the east wall plate (fig.10b). Considering this type of joint, jowled wall posts and external bracing, a build date in the first half of the 17th century seems likely.

Roof framing is pegged collar trenched purlin, except for the extension that has a birds-mouth collar. Purlins are lap-jointed together. One is missing on the east wall (fig.10b). Many of the paired roof rafters appear reused from an earlier building (Watkin & Watkin 2007) and those in the extension are closely-set. The floor at the north end is made of hardwearing 19th-century Staffordshire bricks (plate 22). The rest was concreted over stalls were added in

the 20th-century, and their outlines can be seen in the floor (fig.9). Earlier stalls were probably lost when the internal boarding was taken down. There are three saddle racks at each end of the building (fig.9), but no other fixtures and fittings of significance.

5.4 Bull pen/cart shed 5

This is one of the most recent structures, dating to the early 20th-century and possibly replacing the lodge opposite building 2 before it was made into a milking parlour. It was built open-sided away from the farm core on high ground facing onto the fields to the east. It is commonly known as the 'bull pen'/cart shed and either of these functions could be appropriate. Certainly, its position away from the buildings connected to the dairy herd would fit, although there is no surviving evidence for animal usage. In the second half of the 20th-century, the end bays were enclosed to form a workshop to repair and maintain farm vehicles, etc. This part is still used as a workshop and the rest is used as storage.

The structure stands on a low orange brick plinth, with its open side facing the east under an asbestos slated gabled roof (plate 25). The other sides are fully boarded on a primary-braced frame (plate 26). A ladder hatch is located in the south gable, but does not correspond to an existing internal loft.

Plan form is simple and regular, laid out in five bays, of which the northern two are enclosed in Fletton brickwork as the workshop. Inside are tools, workbenches and an inspection pit (fig.12). A pair of sliding doors provide access and iron casement windows are situated on the east and west elevations. The open three bays are defined by 15cm-wide posts on low plinths that carry planked ties on bolted knee braces. The studs are a mixture of machine and hand-sawn timbers and the roof is clasped purlin construction with wind braces nailed to the rafters either end.

5.5 Yard C

Yard C is located on the south-east side of the farmstead, with the farm track and Yard D to the west (plates 1, 2 & 27). Rectangular in plan, the yard is surfaced in concrete. Shelter shed 6 stands on the north side and barn 7 to the east, which is earlier in date and, like the byre, used as a starting point for the laying out of the yard. The west and south sides are fully enclosed by brick walls, with a gateway in the south-east corner.

5.5.1 Shelter shed 6

This is much the same as mid 19th-century shelter shed 3, with which it is contemporary, but remains largely unaltered and retains original features. Much of the interior is currently taken up with stacked timber planks.

The shed is open-fronted to the south, facing out to the yard. It is half-timbered, with the north and west wall framing built as part of the yard wall. The collar clasped purlin roof is hipped to the west. On the front open side, square-cut oak posts support thick waney tie beams made from halved trees (Watkin & Watkin 2007) at four equal bay intervals (fig.13).

Inside, the walls are primary-braced and there is a bladed scarf in the rear wall plate (fig.12). A softwood hay rack and feeding trough are located on the rear wall (plate 28) as original features. The floor is unmade and there is a door in the north-east corner into the next yard (fig.13).

5.5.2 Barn 7

Barn 7 is one of the older more important structures on the site, broadly contemporary with barn 1, byre 4 and possibly building 10. Its well-converted oak framing, use of straight primary-bracing with a strong pegging pattern and butt-purlin roof, suggest it was built some time in the late 17th-century (Watkin & Watkin 2007). Unfortunately, its large open interior has led to more recent use as a grain processing/storage facility and much of the southern bays are taken up with machinery and other equipment, including an overhead walkway, making recording works difficult. Sheds have been added to the east side to feed the grain into the building and a large silo house built onto the south end, replacing a mid 19th-century addition (plate 2). Despite these changes, the build fabric remains in particularly good order, with comparatively little damage caused to the barn's framing.

The barn is raised on a high red brick plinth and comprises a central midstrey projecting to the east and opposing doors to the west. The walls are primary-braced and built in oak and boarded. The roof is pitched at a steep 55° angle with gabled ends, swept eaves and a weathered tile covering.

External description

The west elevation (plate 27) is the first to be viewed on entry to the farm. Its exterior is largely feature-free, apart from its centrally-placed cart doors. Evidence in the internal framing show these are not original features but have been inserted into the wall fabric (fig.13a). They probably date to the setting out of the yards and it is interesting to note the

difference in height between the threshold and existing ground level, which is eight brick courses down, approximately 0.7m. The doors are unusual in having short braces and extra ledges (plate 27), but seem common on the site. The ledges extend beyond the doors, to mesh together like teeth and ensure a good fit. Above the doors is an in-filled area to a former pitching hatch, itself a secondary feature. Below is a deep section framed leap board, a rare survival (Watkin & Watkin 2007). The board is held either side by the jowled bases to the inserted door posts, one of which is carved (on the north side) while the other is nailed (fig.14a). A much later addition on this side is the grain chute hanging under the eaves between the doors and yard entrance (plate 27).

A large gatepost is situated on the west corner of the north elevation (fig.12), but its opposite was removed when the plinth wall of the byre was replaced. An off-centre fixed window on this side may indicate the position of a former pitching hatch. There is a modern weather vane in the form of a hare above. The south gable elevation is completely hidden by modern steel grain silos built up against it. Studwork on the west bay of the lower register was removed to facilitate connection between the two areas (fig.14d).

The midstrey extends centrally from the east elevation (plate 29), which faces onto a concrete yard and modern Dutch barn, not recorded in the survey. It too has a pitched gable and swept eaves. The doors are the same as those on the west side, but taller, covering in this case the leap area, which no longer remains on this side. The door is made from cock-beaded boards hung on forelock-restrained pintle hinges with fine chamfered ledges on the inside suggestive of an 18th- or early 19th-century date (Watkin & Watkin 2007). They are fastened using a rotating security bar, but there are also slots in the door posts for an additional security bar to be fitted that fastened the door internally and could also be used for hanging sacks off to control air flow during threshing (Watkin & Watkin 2007).

The walls either side have been underbuilt in Fletton brick (plate 32) and this continues along the line of the midstrey inside too, demarking the midstrey and grain processing areas (plate 30). The exteriors of the front porch and southern bays have suffered from building grain feeds and sheds against the walls and elevator housing and blowers in the roof (plate 29). A later casement window at the southern end provides the only natural light into this cramped area.

There is no trace of the late 19th-century outshot on the north side of the porch. There is, however, a blocked area of boarding (fig.14c), a former pitching hatch probably blocked after the extension was removed.

Internal description

The modern grain processing area is confined to the two southern bays. The rest of the barn is relatively clear, apart from some junk covering parts of the floor and lower parts of the walls.

The barn is not aisled and has bays uniform in width at approximately 3.5m. The midstray is slightly wider (at 4m), which is common in barns to provide plenty of room for unloading the harvest from the carts. Flooring is laid in concrete and the plinth is partly rendered.

Wall framing

Most of the main timber is axe-converted from large oak trees and sawn to lesser section size (Watkin & Watkin 2007), and consistent in size and quality. Much of the framing is complete and in excellent condition. There are many reused timbers incorporated into the build, but few replacement timbers. Wattle marks for daub panelling are evident, especially on the reused studs.

Bay posts are typically around 20cm-thick with tapered jowled tops. High slightly curved braces lead from the base of the jowl to tie beam. Most have been combined at a later date with applied bolted knee braces for extra strength. Those on the east side of the middle bay were removed when the internal brick walls were constructed and are only held by knee braces (plate 30). Framing between the two north bays has modern secondary bracing (fig.15 & plate 31). The flying wall plate over the midstrey and main cart doors retain short, but fairly attractive, curved bracing (plate 32) that bears a resemblance in style, if not scale, to bracing recorded in granary 10. Additional bracing has only been applied to the midstrey, but the same effect is achieved in the main doorway by a panel of inserted studwork from bracing to the cart doors (fig.14h), which are believed to date from the 18th or early 19th-century (Watkin & Watkin 2007). Short pegged post ties restrain the door posts from bowing inwards (fig.14f) and applied jowls are fitted to the bottom of the door posts for leap boards. Slots in the door posts allowed the security bar to be fitted across the threshold.

Midrails are double-pegged to the bay posts. Wall plates are consistently scarfed together with face halved and bladed joints spanning between one bay to one-and-a-half bays length (fig.13). Long blades support a 17th-century construction date (E. Watkin pers. comm.). Some of the sole plates have been replaced (fig.13).

Each bay is primary-braced comprising six studs of c.15cm width, spaced between 35 and 40cm apart. The main walls generally have a pattern of three studs fully-pegged and the

other three nailed to the brace and sometimes pegged at the top. In all cases the braces are pegged into the frame and there is no consistent pattern to their direction of fall. In the west wall of the midstrey, above the midrail, there are eight studs, but only the middle four are pegged. Studs have been removed in the lower register to accommodate the cart doors and door posts added (fig.14a). The midstrey is contemporary with the main part of the barn and exhibits the same character and sequence of timbers.

The north gabled wall has a pegged central post and five-stud infill either side. Above the midrail, the braces fall from jowls to the centre and rise up to the centre below (fig.14b, plate 31). The top east brace falls short of the inserted window and two full-length studs have been cut for its insertion. Much of the lower register is hidden by 7 inch pine boarding rising to 1.4m, perhaps to protect the walls from livestock.

A central window or pitching door was originally located in the upper register of the gable-ended south wall, shown by the lack of mortice in the wall plate soffit. This also explains why there is no central post here (Watkin & Watkin 2007).

The intermediate west post in the southern bays shows evidence it was not originally meant for this purpose. Three barely-started drill holes close to the outside edge of the post suggest the post was started off as a different timber in the yard (fig.13). No carpenter's marks were recorded in the barn.

Roof framing

The roof is a butt-purlin type, first encountered in Essex in the rebuilt granary of 1624 at Cressing Temple and, though rare, very much a 17th-century phenomenon. Each of the trusses have paired principle rafters with mortice and high tenoned collars, some of which are reused (plate 33). Butt-purlins pass between the principles and are pegged either side, while the rafters, which are in two sections, are pegged at the plate, purlin and roof apex, where the pairs are joined by a bridle joint. Intermediate bird's mouth collars are set out in each bay between the purlins (plate 33).

5.6 Yard D

Yard D is a concrete yard to the south-west of the complex on the opposite side of the driveway and Yard C. The yard is bounded to the south by building 8 and to the west by buildings 9 and 10. Brick walls enclose the other sides, curving round to the north-east as the driveway leads onto the central tarmac yard in front of the farmhouse (plates 1 & 34).

5.6.1 Shelter shed 8

Shed 8 is an open-sided structure built slightly earlier than the laying out of the yards in the mid 19th-century. As it is shown on the tithe map of 1839, but not on the Chapman & Andre map of 1877, a late 18th- to early 19th-century date is suggested. Indeed, despite its familiar form, there are qualities that support the earlier date. Originally it was five bays long, but one of the end bays was lost in the 20th-century when machine store 9 was partially rebuilt. Its present use is as a store for roofing tiles that are likely to have belonged to those structures on the site whose roofs have been replaced with asbestos tiles. An oil tank stands in the east bay that historically formed a separate enclosure (fig.16).

Externally, the shed is open to the north. Judging by the uneven nature of the brickwork, the shed was underbuilt when the yards were created, which may explain why the rear wall is wholly timber-built rather than brick or half-timbered. The rest is timber-framed in primary-bracing and weather-boarded finish. Moss covers the asbestos slate roof that is pitched at 45° and racking to the south (fig.14a). The gable is half-hipped to the east and open to the west where the fifth bay was removed (plates 34 & 36).

Although another shelter shed with basic requirements, the building's construction is slightly different to sheds 3 and 6. Mainly this is in its much greater re-use of timber, especially as ties, which are straighter and better quality rather than the waney types offered in the mid-19th-century builds. Reused timber is a common factor of all the post-medieval structures at Wolseys Farm.

The main elevation on the north side features earth-fast 24cm square posts at bay intervals, with strapped pillows connecting to the wall plates. Slots are located on the sides for wooden rails. The gabled west wall facing onto the tarmac track was under-built in brick when the yards were laid out (plate 35), and seems have initially to have been open-ended under the half hip. Above the brickwork is an ancient 7-inch tarred weather-boarded gable that contains a nice original feature in the form of a three-light mullion window vent. The mullions are plain, with iron bars forming horizontal divisions. There is rather an awkward join from the brick wall and boarding to the rear elevation. Boarding covers the three-course brick plinth on the rear (south) elevation, which continues to the west, along with part of the sill plate showing the line of the lost bay (fig.16). Closer inspection of the wall plinth was possible through exposure, and bricks measuring c. 220 x 110 x 70mm (9-inch) recorded with wide shallow frogs indicative of 19th-century manufacture (Ryan 1996).

Inside, the main construction is different to the other sheds. The west bay was originally partitioned off, evidenced by empty mortices on the tie beam soffit, to form a separate stall or storage area. By 1920 the front had apparently been closed off, according to the OS map from this date (not illustrated), but there are no signs of this today. The concrete yard area extends inside into both areas. The main framing is basic, with strapped tie beams and pegged straight bracing, mainly replaced to the rear with nailed secondary bracing (fig.18a, plate 36). There is much reused timber, both in the main frame and exposed rear wall. High levels of reuse is a characteristic of the earlier farm buildings and it is possible this may date to the late 18th-century, but no earlier. Framing on the east bay is hidden by cock-bead boarding (Watkin & Watkin 2007) that would have also lined the partition wall. A low feed trough, suitable for cattle or sheep (Watkin & Watkin 2007) is located on the rear wall up to the partition, and was truncated on the west side when this bay was removed (fig.16 & plate 36).

In the roof, heavy principle rafters support a pegged collar clasped purlin roof. In the apex, top saddles on each truss support a longitudinal ridge board (fig.14a). Some of the rafters were replaced with machine-sawn members after the roof was relaid.

5.6.2 Machine store 9

When the yards were created in the 19th-century, granary 10 was cut back to build machine store 9, a tall structure open-sided to the south, to accommodate large farm machinery, such as threshing boxes (Watkin & Watkin 2007). (figs.4 & 5). In the 20th-century the open side was filled-in, and other parts, mainly the roof, rebuilt and the outer boards re-clad. Shed 8 was shortened by one bay on its east side to enable the work to be done.

The structure has a weather-boarded primary-braced frame built onto a low plinth that seems contemporary with that of building 10. Most of the structure is built from reused timbers. The central tie beam retains bracing similar to that retained in the adjacent structure.

Large modern cart doors are positioned on the west side, opening out to the yard (fig.16, plate 34). A smaller door is inserted toward the south-east corner, leading into the garden and swimming pool (fig.16). The eaves are a full 0.7m higher than those of the adjacent building, creating 2.8m internal ground clearance. The roof has a steep 55° pitch and is clad in peg tiles. It is half-hipped to the south (plate 37).

Inside is a large open space, divided into two bays by a heavy tie beam supported centrally on a single braced post. Slightly curved, high-set braces, similar to those in barn 7 and the

granary next door, are pegged either end (fig.18b, plate 38). Wall infill is in reused studs under a contemporary wall plate, linked by bladed scarf joints at the bay intersection each side (figs.17a & b). Those on the sill are simple lap joints. The southern end wall has thin modern stud infill that suggests this was originally open for bringing machinery in, perhaps traction engines or threshing machines. The north adjoining wall to building 10 has modern stud infill in the centre, perhaps representing a blocked former opening. The gable above is plastered and conforms to the narrower gable of the original structure (plate 39).

5.6.3 Granary 10

Building 10 is a primary-braced timber and weather-boarded structure, probably built in the 18th-century. It was cut back in the 19th-century when machine store 9 was built and then been adapted and rebuilt for use as a garage in the last century. Therefore its primary function is difficult to assess. The stoutly-built first floor suggests the upper part was used as a granary; and a granary this size would be suited to serve the two barns on the large post-medieval farm. The ground floor, with its large area, would have had a separate or combined use, perhaps as a cart lodge and implement store. Its position close to the house suggests it may have been a stable, but the low ceiling and lack of apparent ventilation would make it an unlikely home for animals or livestock and no fixtures or fittings remain for stalls or tethering points. To make matters worse, much of the studwork is hidden by boarding and the roof entirely rebuilt. The north end has been refurbished around two garage doors (plate 34) and it is unclear what features originally appeared at the front.

The roof is pitched the same as machine store 9 on the south end, but set slightly lower (plates 34 & 37). It is half-hipped to the north and covered in peg tiles. The first floor loft survives and was repaired when the roof was rebuilt in the modern period. It is currently used to store furniture. Much of the timber is reused. The southern end of the building has been truncated by at least one bay.

The north gable faces onto the central tarmac yard with farmhouse nearby to the north-west (fig.1). Two garage doors have been inserted into the front and the surrounding boarding is replaced, most notably around a pitching hatch above (plate 34), whose tarred exterior is in marked contrast to the modern boarding around it. The side elevations reflect little in the way of development: a wide door has been inserted on the west side onto the lawn (plate 37), a small window inserted on the east side and a door replaced toward the south end onto the yard. Carved wooden closing fixtures on the door jamb, like those in byre 4, indicate an early opening for a half heck door (fig.16).

Inside (plate 40), the bays are laid out in short c.2m intervals, closely-spaced to carry the weight of the granary floor above. On the sides, the walls have been boarded over on the two northern bays (in elm butt-boarding to west and softwood to east (Watkin & Watkin 2007) and half boarded on the southern bays. The south wall/partition is also boarded and is inserted slightly over from the tie beam rather than built into it (fig.16). Studwork on the machine store side shows no sign of ever being an external wall and, indeed, the lightness of build would make this impractical. The south gable is built simply from waney, unstripped branches with laths attached and plastered on the outside.

Main framing is in heavy straight timbers c.20cm-wide, some of which are reused. Infilling is in primary-bracing, again with reused elements. Wall plates are connected by face halved and bladed scarf joints typical of the post-medieval period, one of which has a sallied end (figs.17a & c). On the south end, the plates are simply butted onto the corner posts of the machine store rather than jointed. At the opposite end on the west side (fig.11c), the plate finishes just after the last truss and a short piece scarfed on, as if the last bay is secondary, though this does not seem the case on the east wall. However, there are mortice holes for studs on the underside of the northern tie beam that would support this, though their spacing is narrower at 30cm rather than the 30-45cm encountered on the external walls, which may be due to these being cut fresh rather than simply reassembled. Reused timbers can muddle the evidence, illustrated by the fact that all except the north end wall posts have mortices for braces, yet only the two south trusses have corresponding holes in the ties (figs.17a & c). Of these, those in the penultimate south truss are missing and it is only the final truss that is 'complete' (fig.18c). It should be noted that the bracing here is reminiscent of that observed in barn 7, which may either point to building 10 being contemporary or that its timbers were reused from a contemporary structure to the barn. There are no carpenter's marks on the timbers.

The first floor granary is located in the final two north bays and its heavy frame has modern additions too, including pine floor boards. Its joists are lapped over the tie beams. It was probably reached by a ladder. Stud rebates on the tie beams faces show these are reused wall plates. An inserted central stud wall, now stripped of boarding, provides little or no support over such a wide floor plan and post-dates a removed partition wall between the two north bays (fig.16) of which nothing else is known.

The roof and its trusses are entirely modern, comprising nailed collars, double purlins, cross-pieces and struts (fig.18c) and contemporary with the rebuilding of building 9.

5.7 Stables 11

A stable was constructed in the mid 19th-century close to the farmhouse for domestic horses, housed in high quality stalls. A timber-framed and boarded outshot at the back was used, in part at least, as a dairy. With no horses remaining, the stables are currently used to store items such as chemicals, paint and logs.

External description

The structure is brick built with gabled ends to west and east and a 45° roof pitch. Prominent elevations stand to the south and west, facing the central yard and farmhouse (plate 41 & 42). They are built from white-painted gault brickwork mirrored in the remains of a small fragment of stable yard at the front (fig.19). The front elevation (south) has two doors, the central one leading into a two-stall area and the other, at the west end, into a single stall. Both have 5-light pivoting stable windows above the doors and fixed windows in between. A tethering ring remains by the west doorway and the roof this side is clad in pantiles, but in asbestos tiles at the back. A vent window is located on the white-painted west gable wall with a boarded door into a loft above (plate 42). Ladder access appears the only way in, through a short taking-in door. An entry point (modern door) into the dairy is located to the north, with a high fixed 4-pane window light above (plate 42). The eastern gable is very different, facing away from the house. It is brick-built in a herringbone pattern up to the gable (plate 41). Thereafter the bricks are coursed in a rough English bond. The gable has a four-pane tilting window like those over the stable doors and the outshot this side has modern stud infill and door (fig.19). Roof pitch changes slightly from the stable, but not substantially. The rear stable elevation has large areas of flint walling, exposed inside the outshot. The main wall at the back is brick-coursed and buttressed against the natural fall of the land. It extends to weather-boarded sheds close to the farmhouse, outside the remit of this survey (plate 42).

Internal descriptions

Stables

Inside, the main part of the stable contains three bays, the third of which is divided by a stud wall partition (fig.19). The main two stalls retain their 19th-century 8-inch boarding and grilling and gault brick floors at the point of entry (plate 43). The stalls have Staffordshire blue brick floors, and concrete surrounds that slope towards iron-grilled drains in the centre (fig.19). The walls are plastered internally and the ceiling vaulted and boarded in pine.

The western part contains a modern stall and it is likely this was originally a hay or feed store. The partition is, however, original and is built from heavy reused primary-braced studs. Boarding survives against the studs on the inside of the stall itself (plate 44) and the interior

is lime-washed. Flooring is re-laid in concrete with a cleaning area in the south-west corner leading out to a drain. Re-claimed timbers carry the loft above that extends as far as the west bay only. Inside the stores is a large wooden bin on the north side almost covering half the floor area (plate 45). The walls and ceiling are lime-plastered and the partition studwork continues up to the apex of the roof. Set within the gable is a small hatch leading to a tiny roof space that continues to the east wall. The roof space interior is also plastered, as if this were once the ceiling to the two bays below, which is unlikely. The roof is a simple collar clasped-purlin form built from fresh timber.

Dairy

The interior of the outshot is also lime-washed. It is divided into two parts by a thin stud partition into stores on the east side and workshop to the west. The workshop is believed to have formerly been a dairy (plate 46), and there is an in-filled drainage channel running along the middle of its concrete floor and under the external door to perhaps corroborate this. Walls and ceilings are plastered and boarded. The wall on the opposite side (east) is later stud infill, suggesting this side was open below the wall plate (fig.19). The dividing door has a test-tube rack on the dairy side of the door and below the shelf beside it (plate 46) that would presumably have been used to hold milk samples.

6.0 DISCUSSION, PHASING AND PROCESS FLOW

Wolseys Farm has evolved from the 17th-century into the modern period. The earlier structures, the barns, byre and granary are vital structures on any farm and suggest a mixed complex with a large, primarily arable-based, land holding. As farming practice changed and dairy/beef farming became more profitable, shelter sheds and stock yards were incorporated and an emphasis placed on livestock. Today, the survival of so many historic buildings in their original landscape setting around the yards is very unusual. Much of the form and fabric remains. The timber-framed structures are, apart from barn 7, relatively unaltered and the changing form of the byre over three centuries of use, is worthy of study. Similarly, the granary deserves further investigation if more precise information on its date and purpose is to be acquired.

The existing 'improvement' structures are built on a smaller scale, sitting comfortably within the post-medieval pattern. Most of the larger cattle sheds located to the north-east have been lost over time, but their former presence points to a large herd of cattle being kept. Similarly, the two barns and granary point to a substantial arable element. Together, at the

height of high farming in the 19th-century, they formed a large, mixed and busy working farm. With its range of buildings of thatch, daub, board and brick, the farm would, and still does, present an attractive group of buildings.

The fabric and historic interiors have survived well, thanks to good maintenance and modern roofing materials, i.e. asbestos slates that keep watertight without being as intrusive as some modern roofing materials. The standard of timber-framing is high, even if some has been re-used. Over time, most fixtures and fittings relating to form and function have been lost, even those from the modern age, which is inevitable. However, there are some fine original features in the form of doors, partitions, feeding troughs and hay racks from both major periods of development.

Phasing

An outline phasing of farmstead development is presented below, based on the results of the survey, cartographic study and, where relevant, the list description. This information has been grouped into the historic phasing outlined below, as illustrated in fig.1. Reference is made to buildings outside the survey where pertinent.

Phase 1: Early 17th-century (pre-1650)

A scattered group of buildings form an organic farming unit at the end of the track, including barn 1 and byre 2 from the survey, and possibly others. The farm, arable based, is being run from 'Wolseys', the moated manor house to the east. The earliest known farmhouse is not built until the late 18th-century at least. In terms of fabric phasing, barn 1 has studwork, bracing and a combination of joinery suggesting an early 17th-century date. Byre 4, due to later changes, is more difficult to date, but its bracing suggests a contemporary date. Other perhaps transitory buildings, such as sheds, may have been part of the group but do not remain.

Phase 2: Late 17th-century

Barn 7 is added in the latter part of the 17th-century to barn 1 and the byre. The fact that this is a much larger building suggests there was either a need for greater capacity resulting from land acquisition or post-medieval farming improvements were providing greater yields. Quality primary-bracing and a butt-purlin roof is characteristic of this phase. A similar date is possible for the granary build and, with two barns operating, a large granary would be a necessity. In addition, granary 10 retains similar fabric and form to barn 7, despite the loss of its historic roof in the modern period. Therefore, based on limited evidence, a later, perhaps

18th-century date for the granary cannot be ruled out. The four buildings were arranged around a more distinct central yard.

Phase 3: 18th-century

A broad 18th-century date is offered for the extension and in-filling at the front of byre 4 to convert it into a stable. More horse power would be needed if the amount of arable land was increasing. It is possible that granary 10 dates from this period, but is more likely to belong to phase 2. Three of the four post-medieval buildings are shown on the map from 1777, but it is reasonable to suggest that all four are present at this time. Access to the farmstead is provided by the existing trackway, probably laid out when the farm was established in the 17th-century.

Phase 4: Late 18th to early 19th century (1777-1839)

During this phase, Wolseys Farm is firmly established in name, as the title is transferred from the moated Wolseys site, the latter becoming simply 'the moat house' (Tithe map 1839). This is the first major improvement phase. Judging from the map evidence (fig.3), a large cross-wing plan farmhouse is built, which pre-dates the existing one. A grouping of unknown structures is built close to barn 1, to the north and south-west, without yards. The land holding is c.225 acres, just over half of which is arable. By 1839, shelter shed 8 has been built, by utilising reused timbers; reuse of building materials being a characteristic of the pre-Victorian farmstead.

Phase 5: Mid to late-19th century (1839-1876)

The second big improvement phase starts with the laying out of five walled yards around the square central yard in the middle to late 19th-century, with a move into beef and dairy cattle. The buildings around the barn are demolished and an open-sided shelter shed built to the east, at the continuation of the farm track (fig.4). Another long shed is built together with the brick/flint retaining wall, forming its own yard, divided from yard A. The short shelter sheds, buildings 3 and 6, are introduced with the establishment of the yards. They are characterised by softwood frames and curved tie beams. Each is attached to the earlier structures in the yard layout. The east end of the existing shelter shed 8 is under-built in brick when the yard D wall is built. Granary 10 is truncated to provide space for machine store 9, heralding the arrival of some degree of mechanisation to what is clearly a relatively large and wealthy farm. An extension is added to the south of barn 7 and a smart two stall stables/dairy 11 is built. The farmhouse is rebuilt or remodelled into its current form and the trackway extended past the yards to the north.

Phase 6: late 19th-century (1876-1897)

Further development occurs at the end of the 19th-century around the existing structures in the culmination of the improvement phase. Little standing evidence remains from this phase apart from the addition of shelter shed 2 opposite the pre-existing one splitting the yard that formerly extended to the flint retaining wall east of yard A. The areas either side of the midstrey in barn 1 have been enclosed and open-sided additions have been made to barn 7 to the south-east (fig.5). The range between stable 11 and the house is built and there is a small structure at the rear of the stables, no longer standing.

Phase 7: modern (20th-century)

The farm maintains its 19th-century form until after 1920, with only minor adjustments. Bull pen/cart shed 5 is built on the high ground to the east between 1897 and 1920, perhaps to replace the northern shelter shed, which is lost in this period. After 1920, shelter shed 2 is converted to a milking parlour and in the post-war period, a large cow house is built to the east of the farm unit away from the survey area. Cattle ceased to be kept on the farm from the early 1960s and there after the old cattle buildings were used as stores. Mechanised grain processing machinery and storage facilities were introduced to barn 7 and its immediate area, and many of the historic buildings had their roofs replaced with asbestos tiles. In recent years, granary 10 was converted to a garage and both this and machine shed 9 had cladding and roofs replaced, resulting in the removal of the western bay of shelter shed 8 that was already a redundant building.

Process flow of the 19th-century planned farm

The two barns were used to process cereals and root crops grown in the surrounding fields. Both were equally important to a large farm with high head of cattle and arable land, and each would have had a specific use, i.e. roots, straw, hay. After harvest, the sheaves were brought into the barns by cart, through the cart doors facing onto the fields. The sheaves would be separated and threshed on the floors behind the cart doors where the grain was separated from the chaff, either manually or using a steam-powered threshing machine. Root crops were processed on the barn floor and perhaps stored at one end as animal feed. After threshing, the straw was stored in the barn or stacked in a heap outside, ready for spreading on the floors of the stables, sheds and yards. The grain was winnowed using the through-draft under the barn doors and then stored in the granary.

During the summer months the long grass was periodically cut and would be stored as hay in one of the barns. Meadowland or fallow fields were used for summer grazing and cattle brought into the yards for milking. At other times, the cattle were fattened in the stock yards

and sheds where they ate the root crops, hay and chaff and produced manure from dung and straw for the fields in spring, which was piled-up in the yards to decompose. Working horses were kept in the stables, and carts, wagons and other large implements kept underneath the granary, to be linked-up to the horses in the large open yard in front of the house.

Breeding bulls were kept away from the main herd in the bull pen and it is possible that sheep were kept in the surrounding pasture as well.

7.0 CONCLUSION

The farm forms an attractive group of buildings dating from the 17th to early 20th-century. Modern impact has been marginal, which is extremely rare for Essex farms that have often been overwhelmed by large modern farm structures. Their group value is therefore high in local and regional terms, improved further by the secluded position within an area of high landscape value. The build quality of the two listed buildings points to a relatively wealthy farm in the post-medieval period, while the quantity of cattle sheds shows a large dairy/beef farm in the Victorian period with plenty of grazing land.

The eleven structures studied during the survey at Wolseys Farm demonstrate the development and improvement of the farm from the 17th-century through the Victorian Golden Age and into the 20th century. Like many Essex farms, the older buildings were incorporated into a new improved layout in the 19th-century.

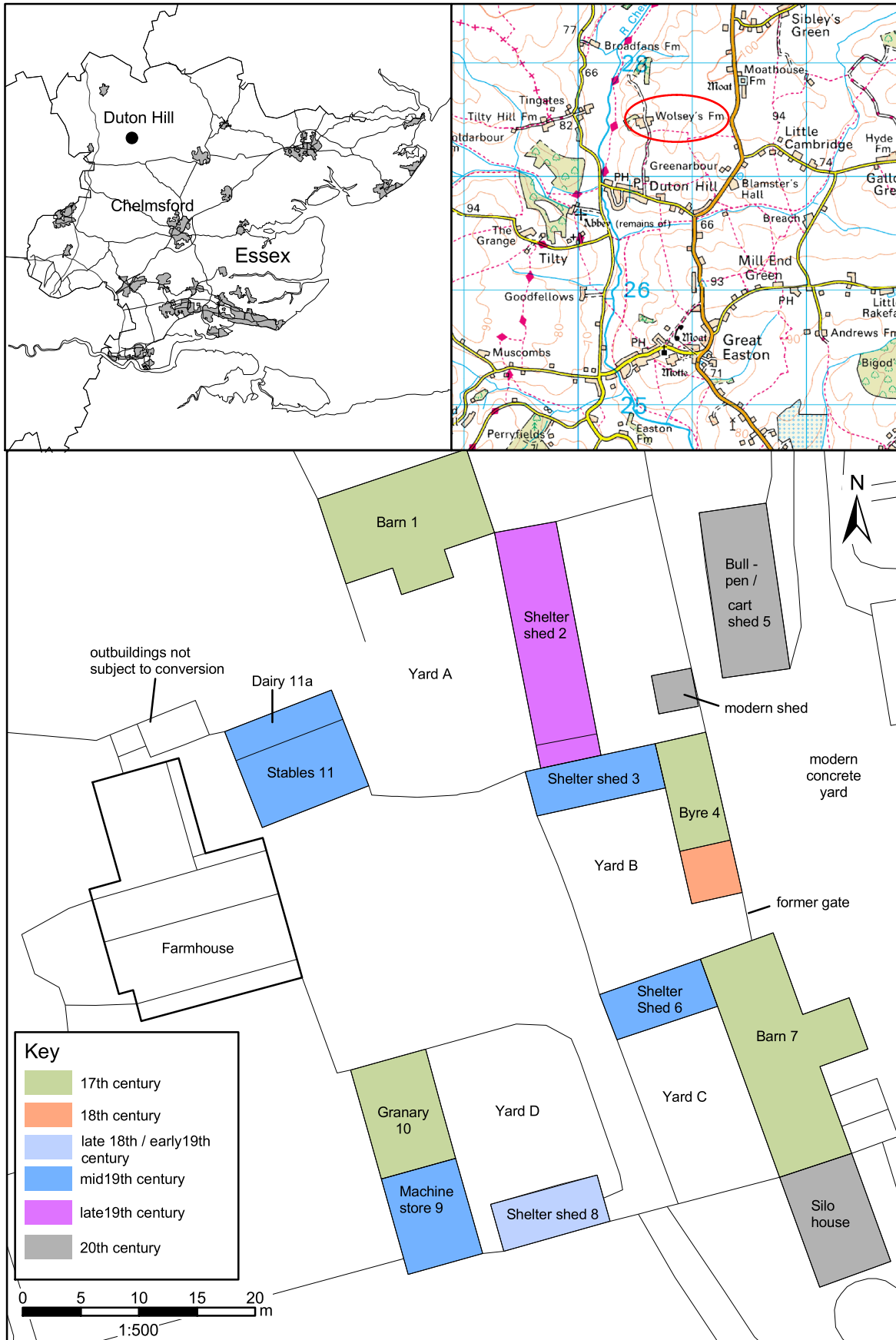
Taken as a whole, the surviving multi-phase complex at Wolseys Farm forms an attractive and varied group whose buildings and environment survive essentially unaltered since the days of Victorian improvement.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The client, Mr. Martin Morton, is thanked for commissioning the works and supplying architects drawings. The assistance of staff at the Essex Records Office is also acknowledged. Thanks also to Brenda and Elphin Watkin who contributed their record of the farming complex. Otherwise, fieldwork, recording and photography were undertaken by the author. Illustrations were prepared by the author and produced by Andrew Lewsey. The site was monitored by Richard Havis of ECC HEM on behalf of the LPA.

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Fig.1. Site location and block plan

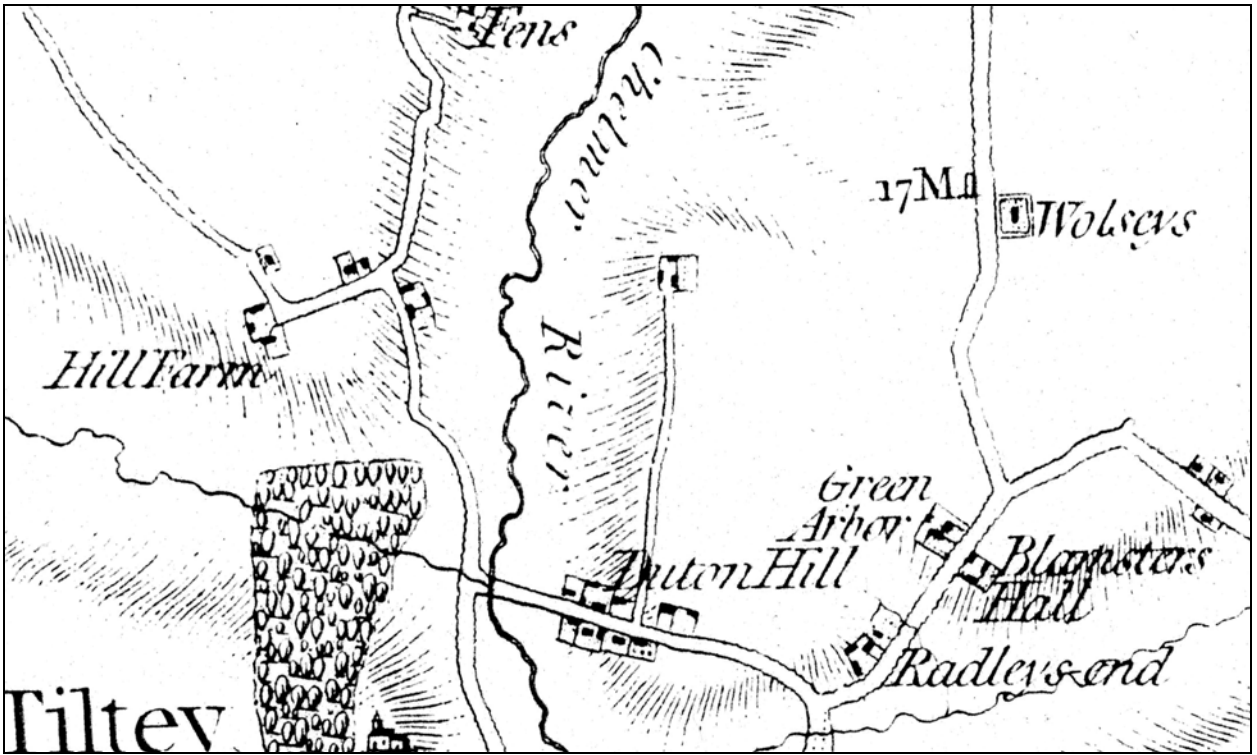


Fig. 2 Chapman & Andre map, 1777 (plate 7)



Fig. 3 Great Easton tithe map, 1839 (D/CT 125B)

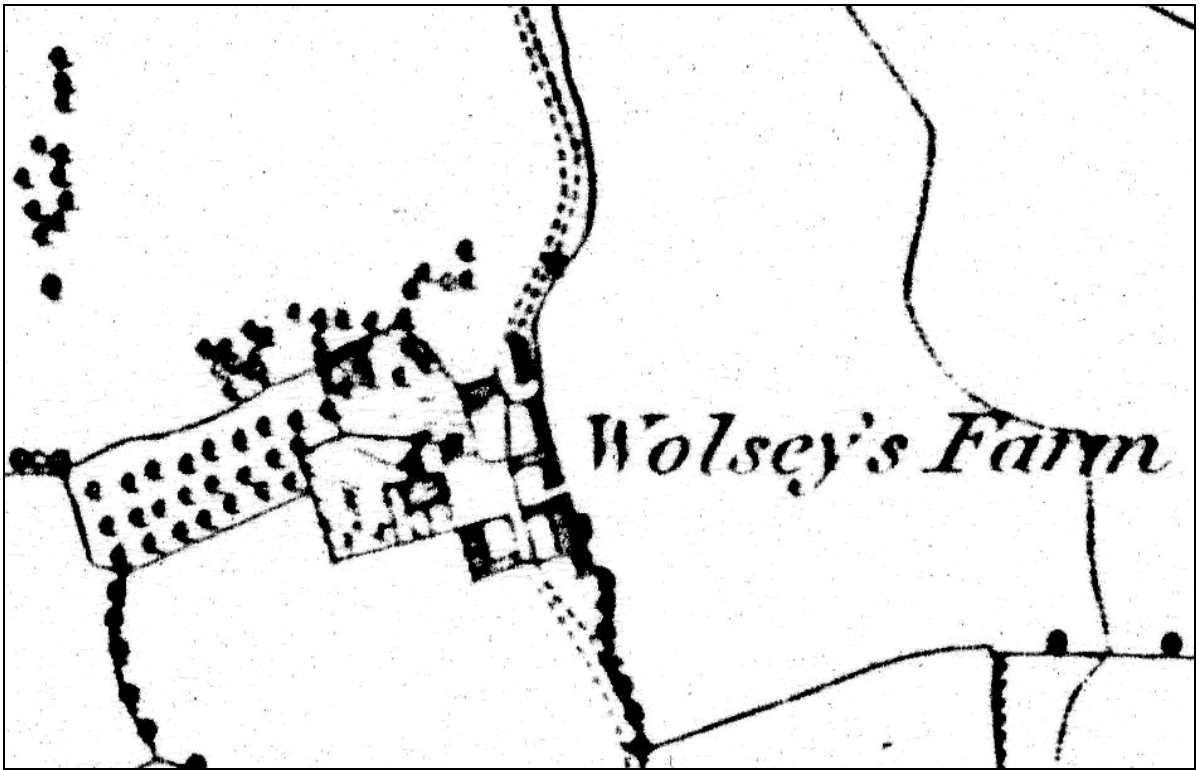


Fig. 4 First edition 6" OS map, 1876 (sheet 14)

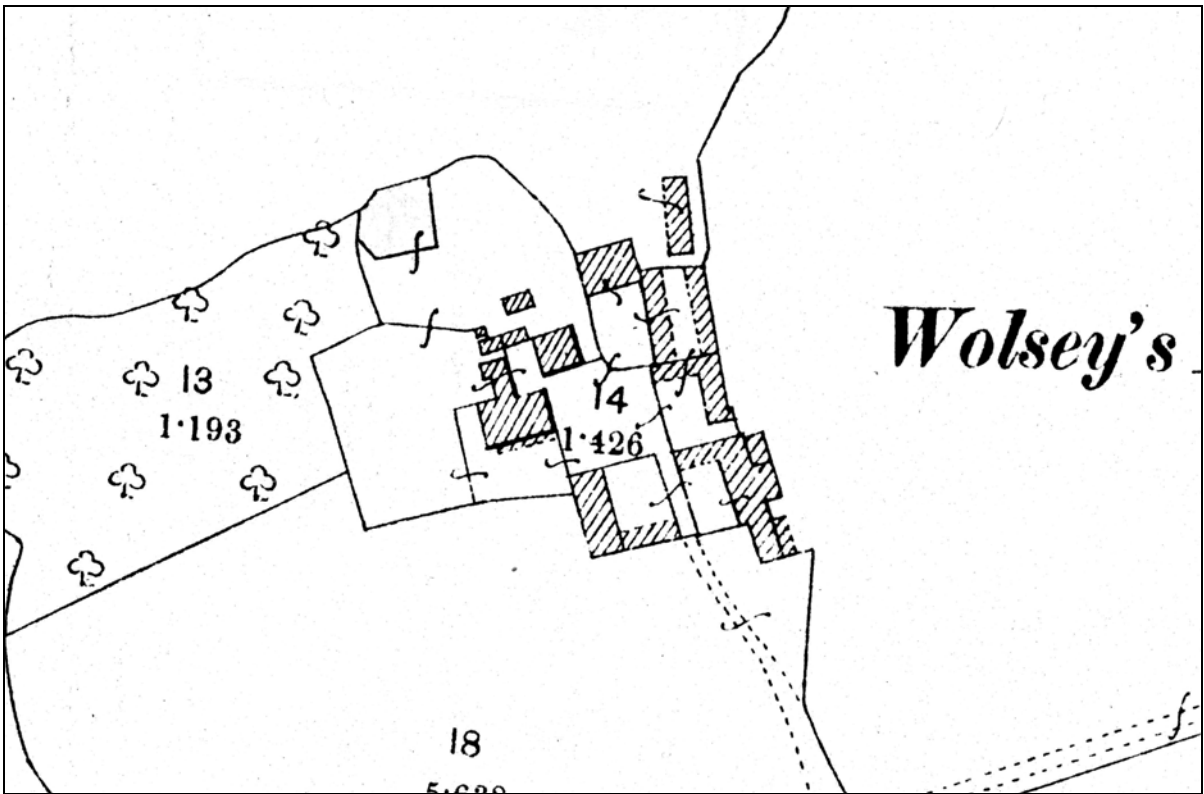


Fig. 5 Second edition 25" OS map, 1897 (sheet 14.16)

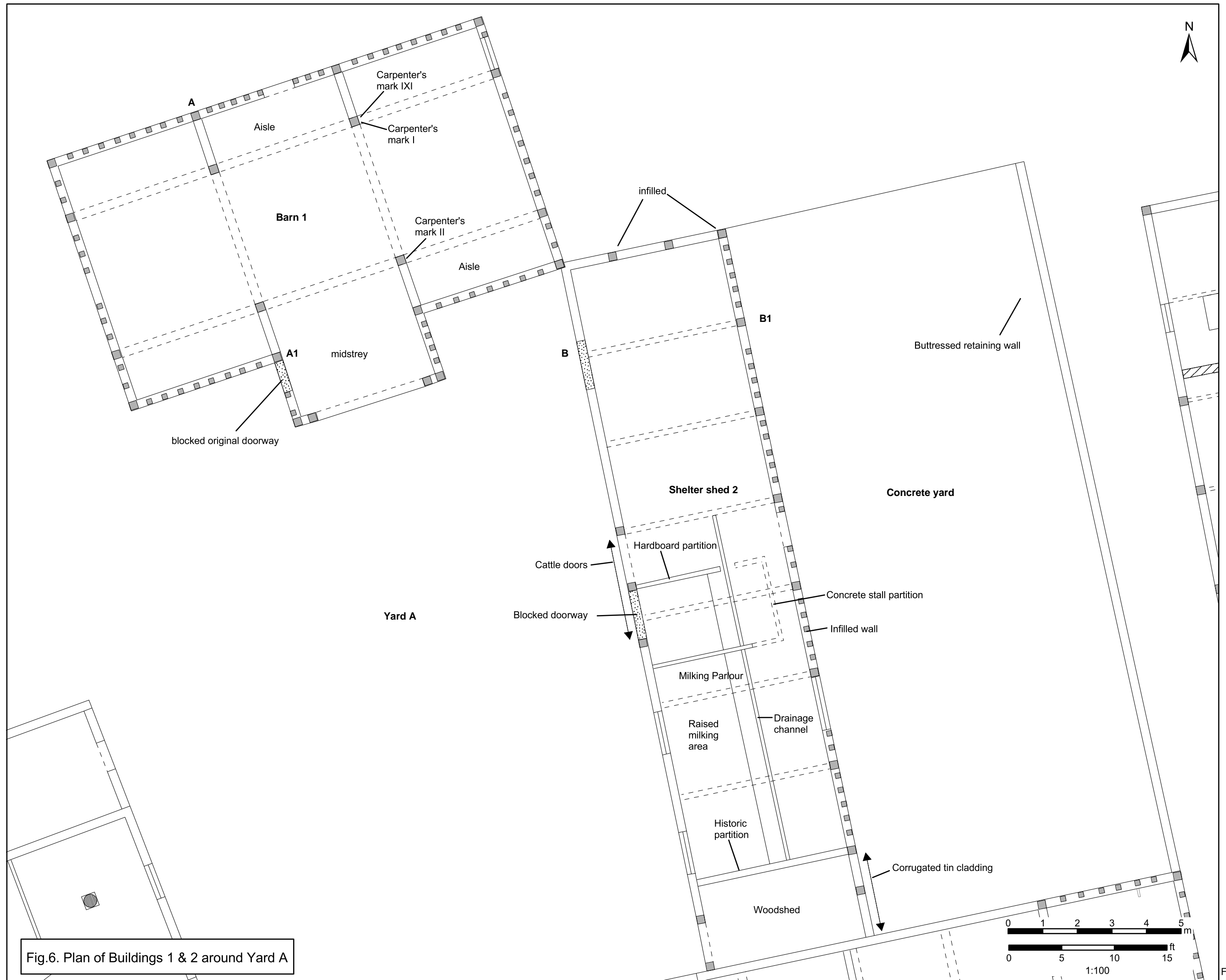


Fig.6. Plan of Buildings 1 & 2 around Yard A

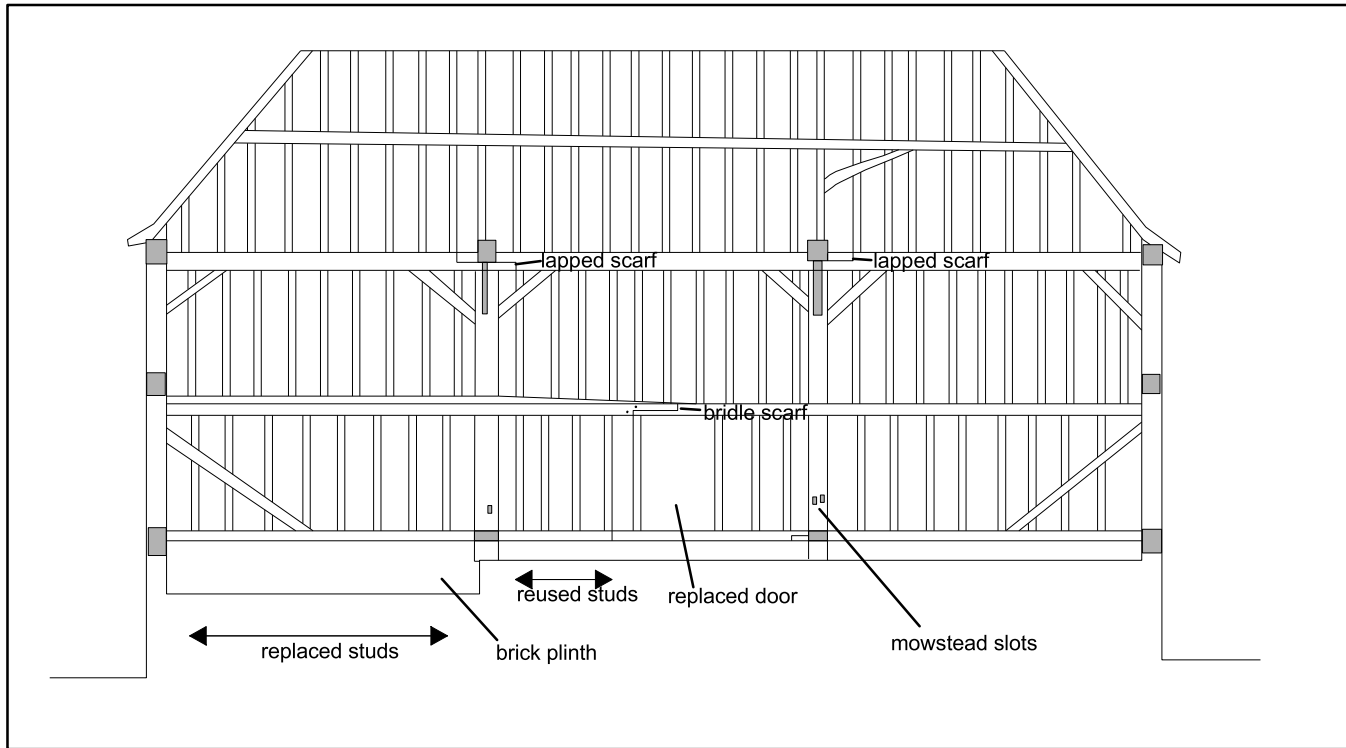


Fig.7a. North wall

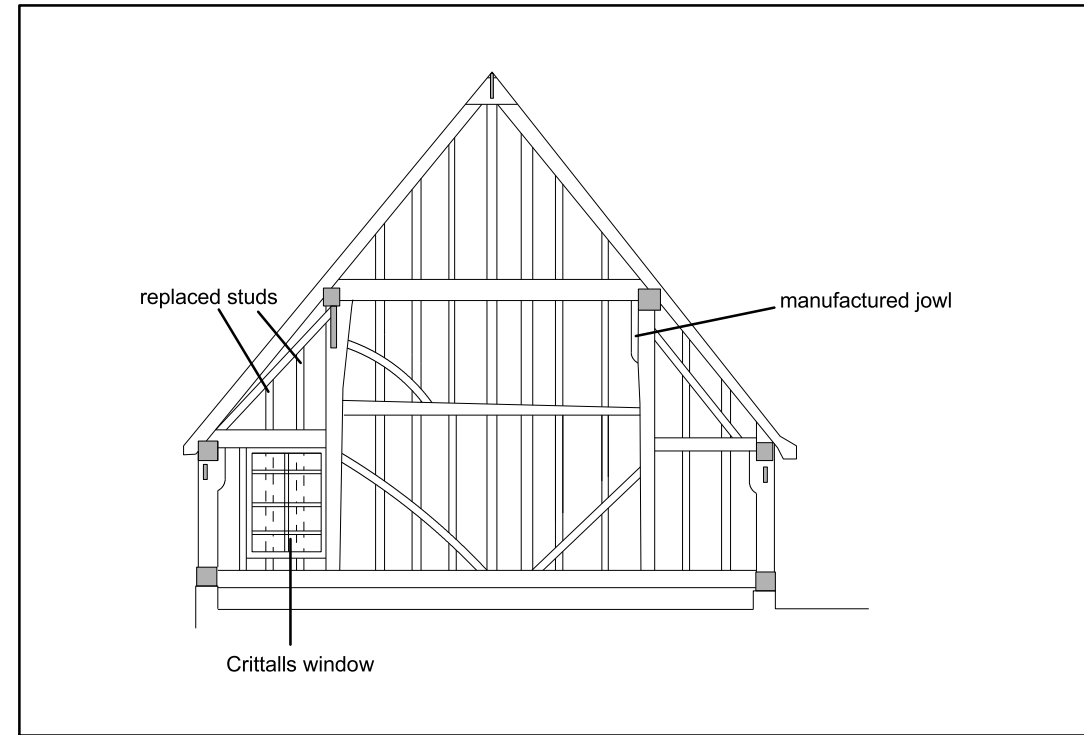


Fig.7b. East wall

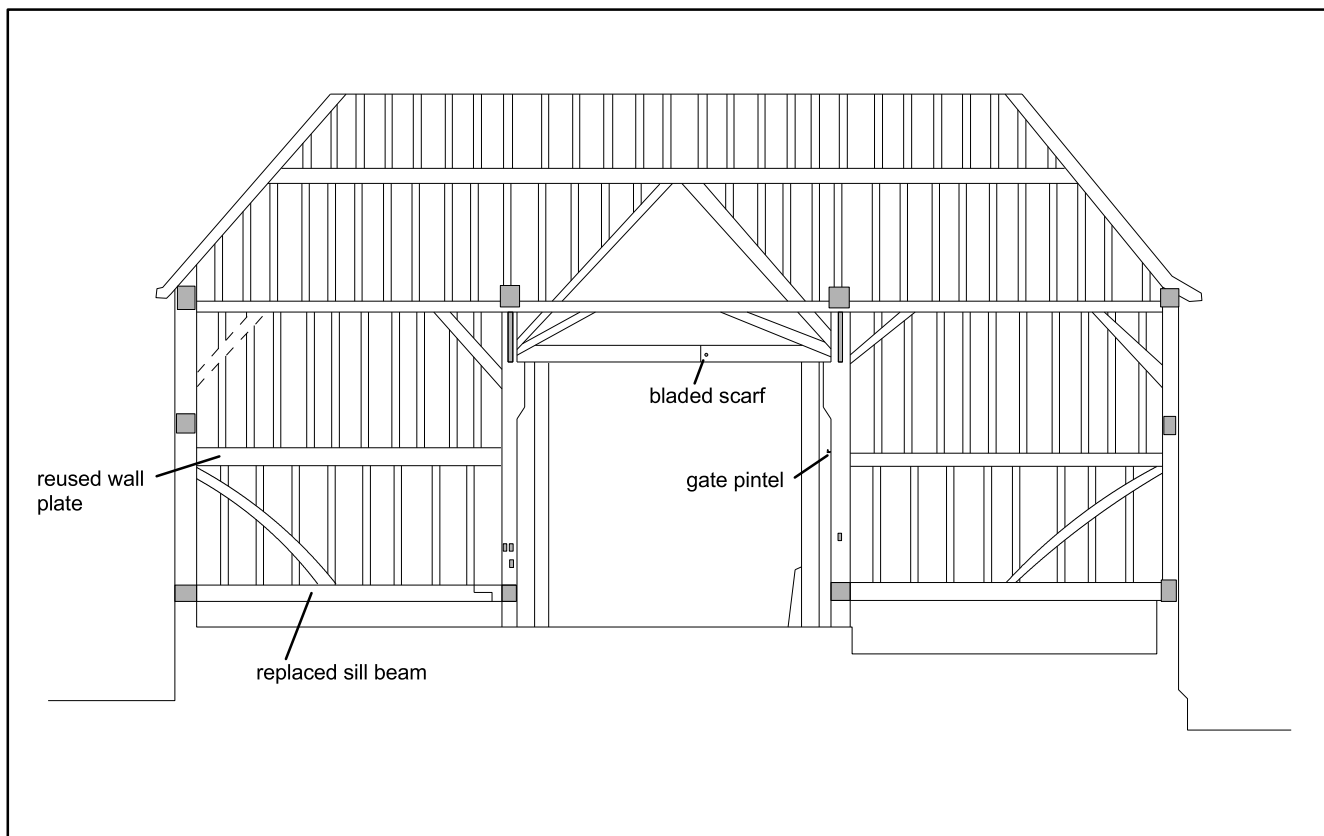


Fig.7c. South wall

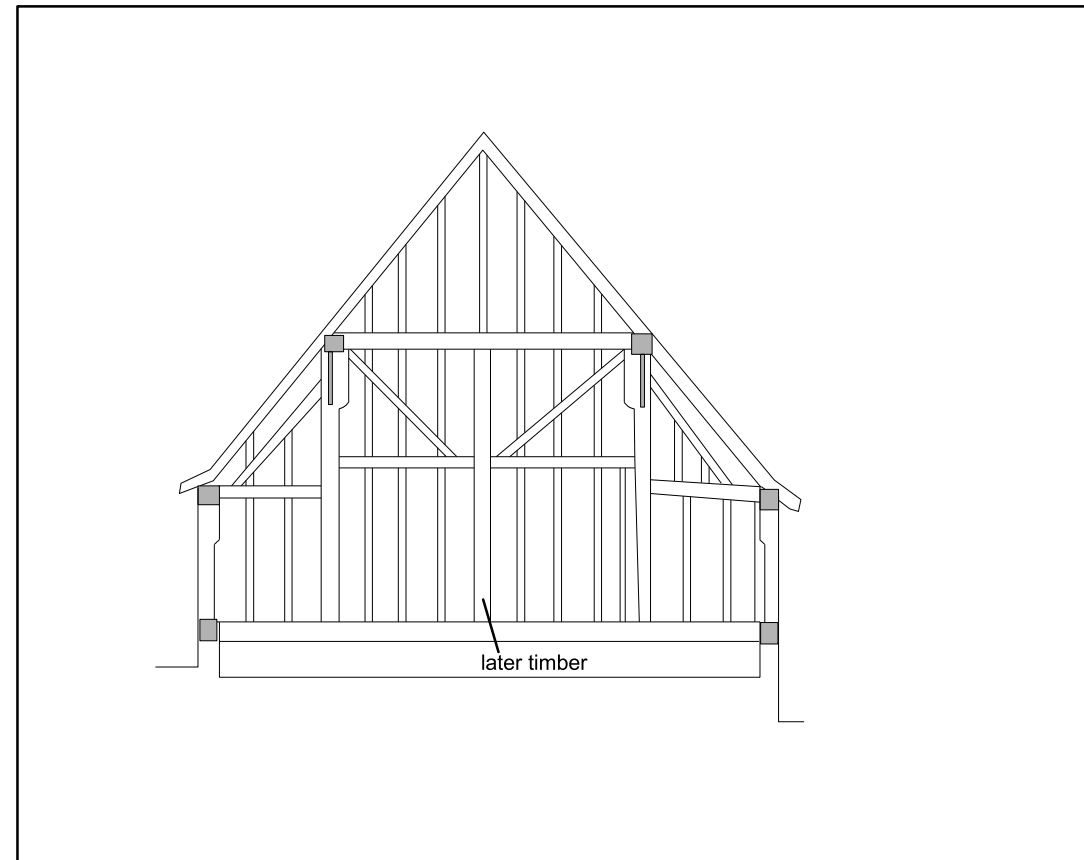
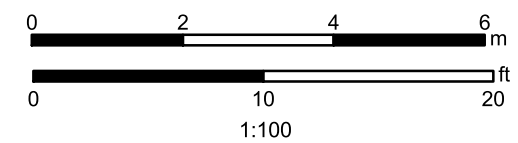


Fig.7d. West wall

Fig.7. Frame survey of barn 1



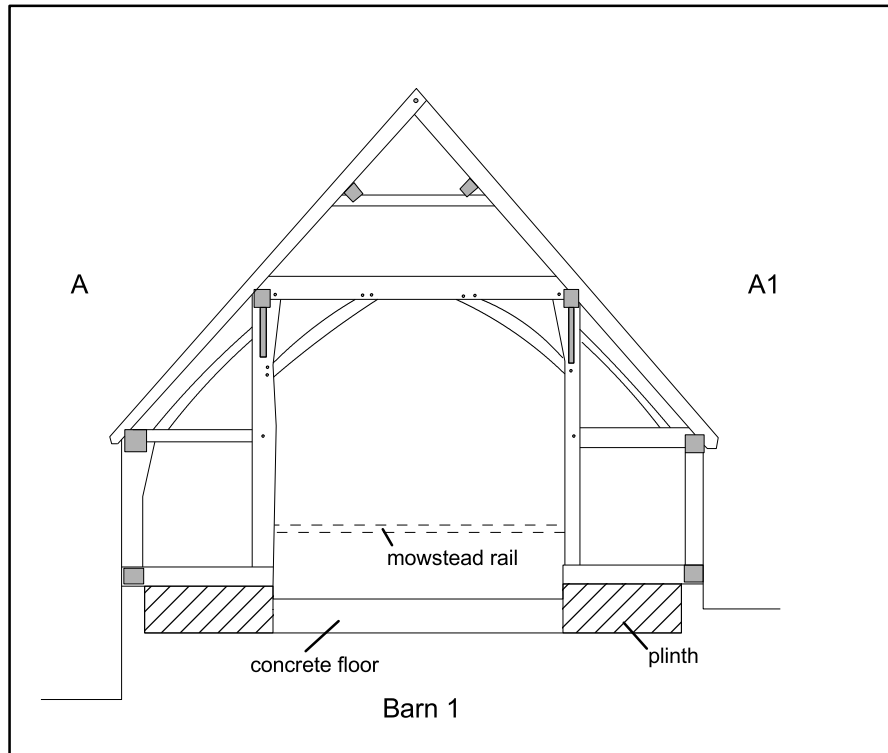


Fig.8a. Barn 1, section A-A1

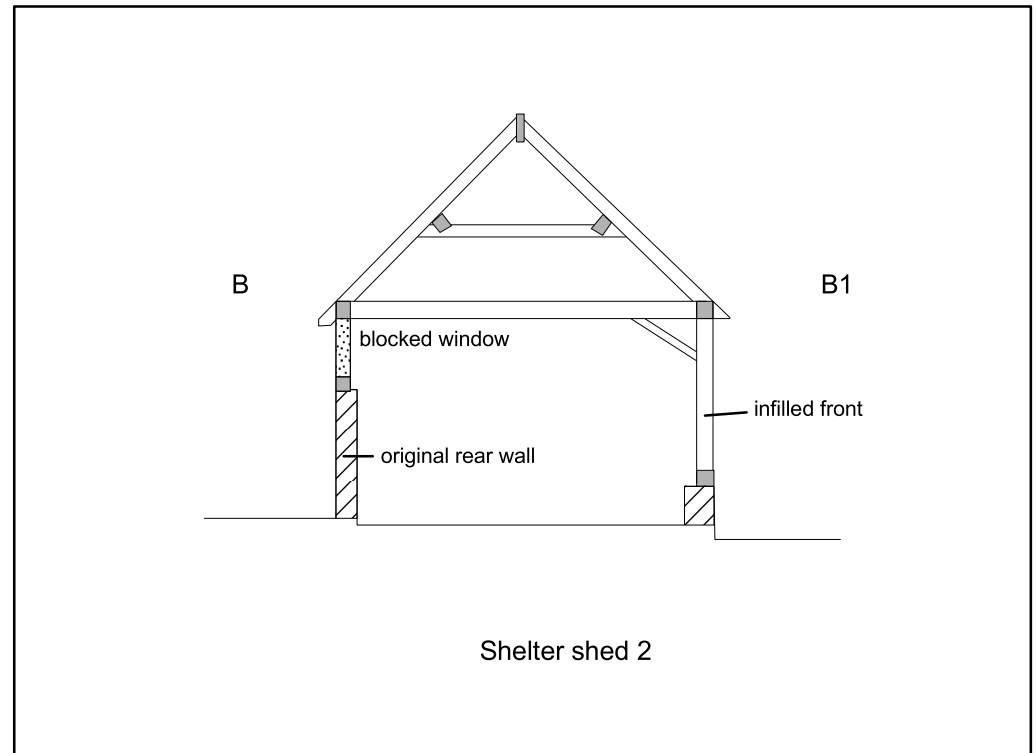
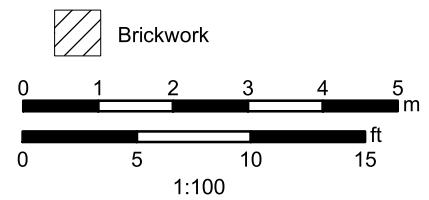


Fig.8b. Shelter shed 2, section B-B1



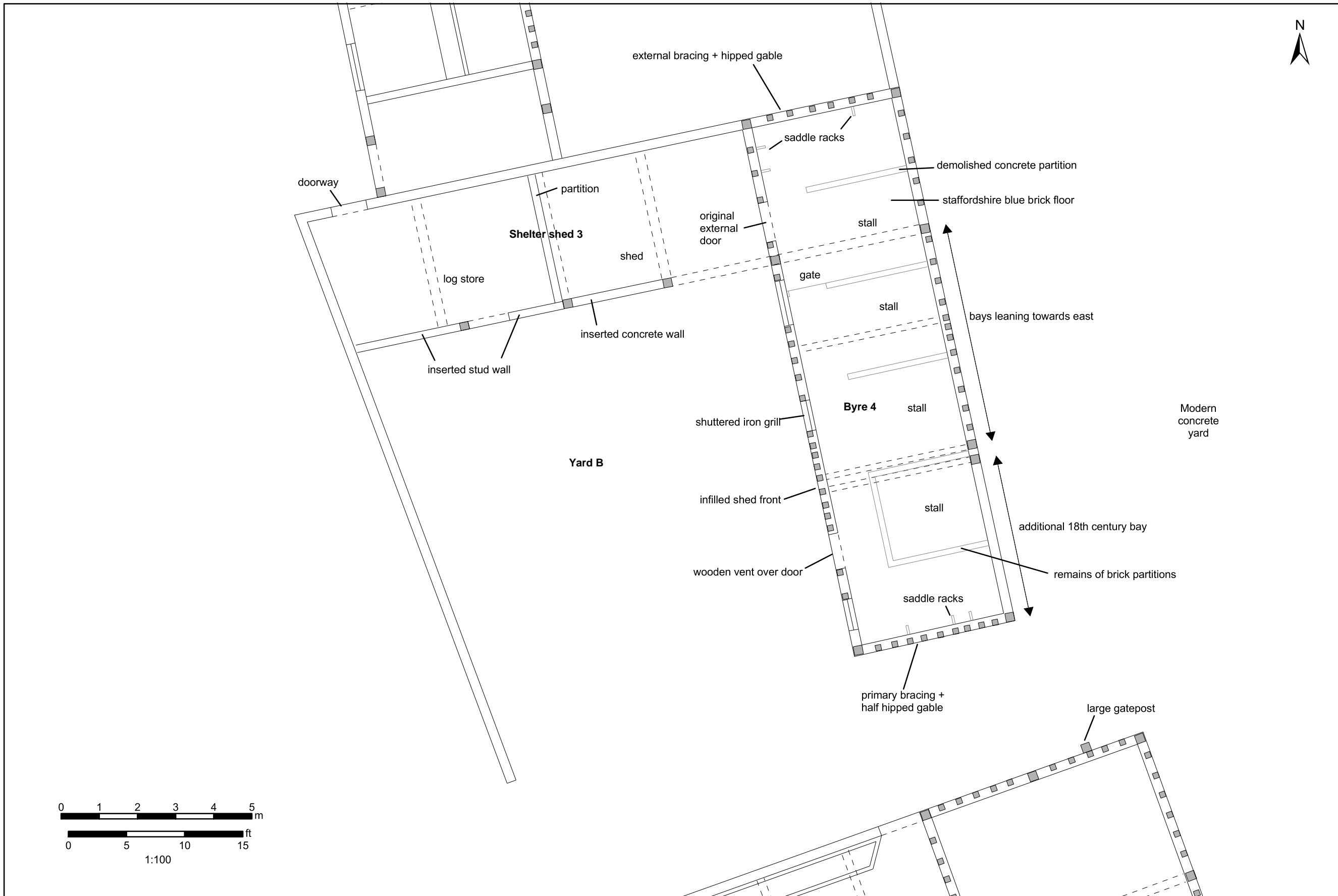


Fig.9. Plan of Buildings 3 & 4 around Yard B

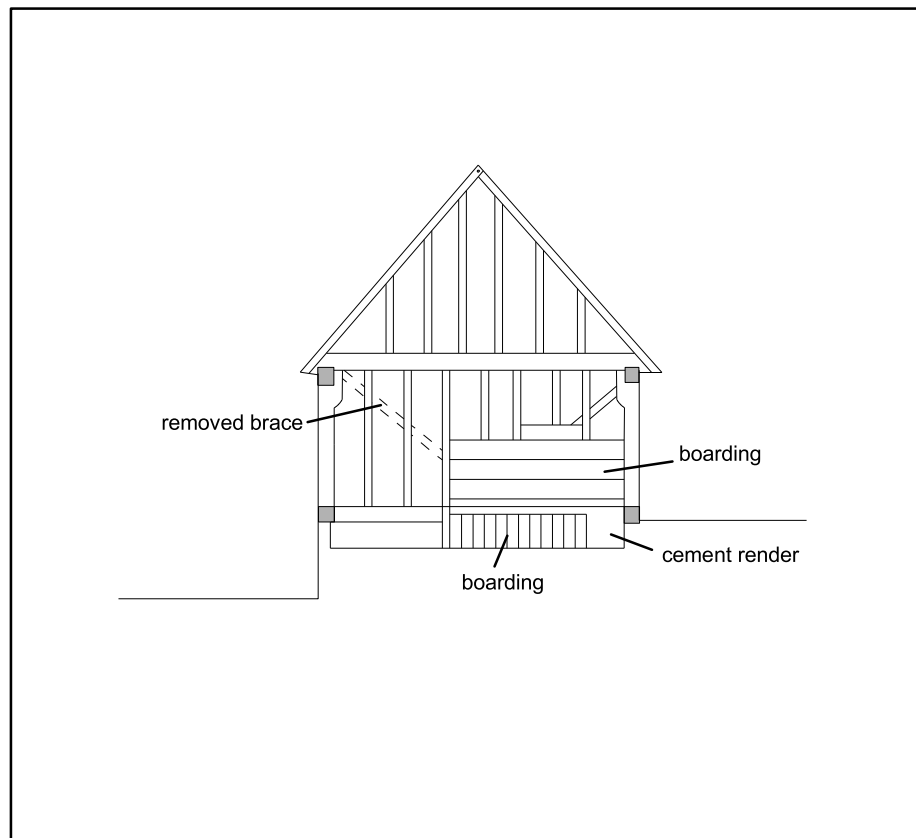


Fig.10a. North wall

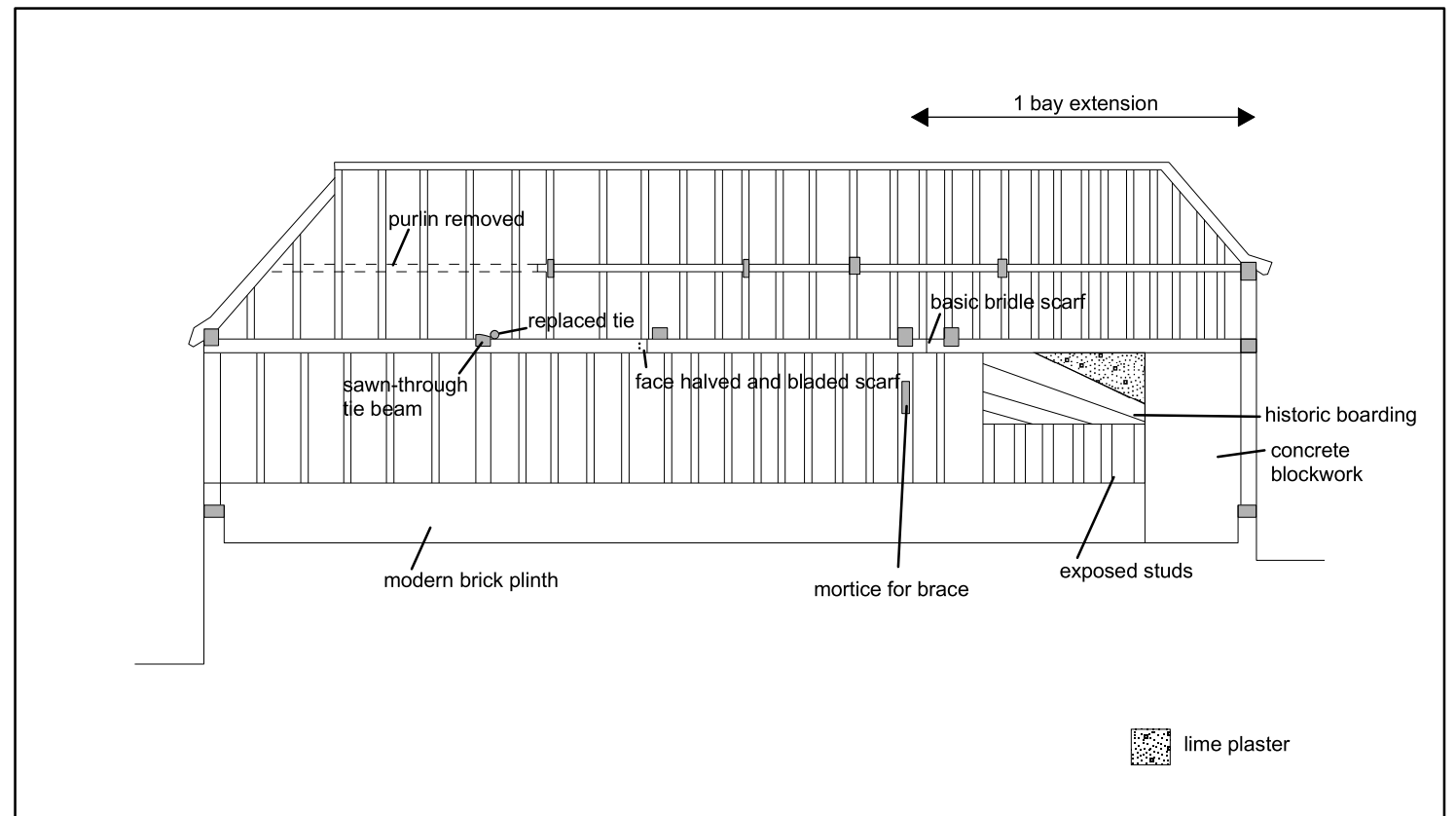


Fig.10b. East wall

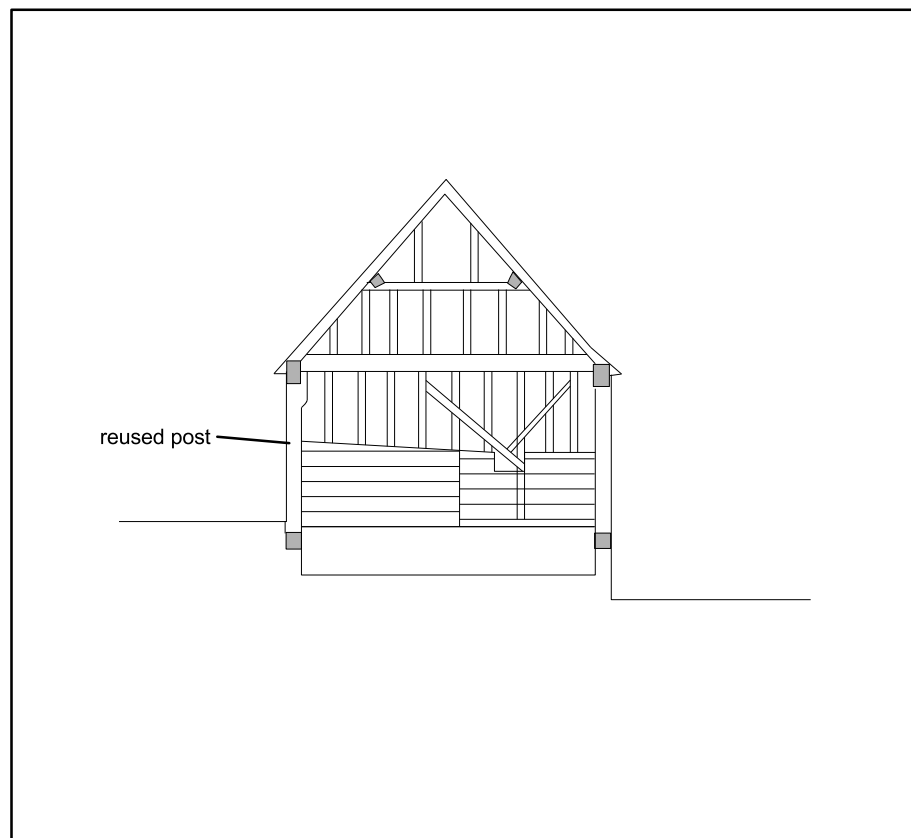


Fig.10c. South wall

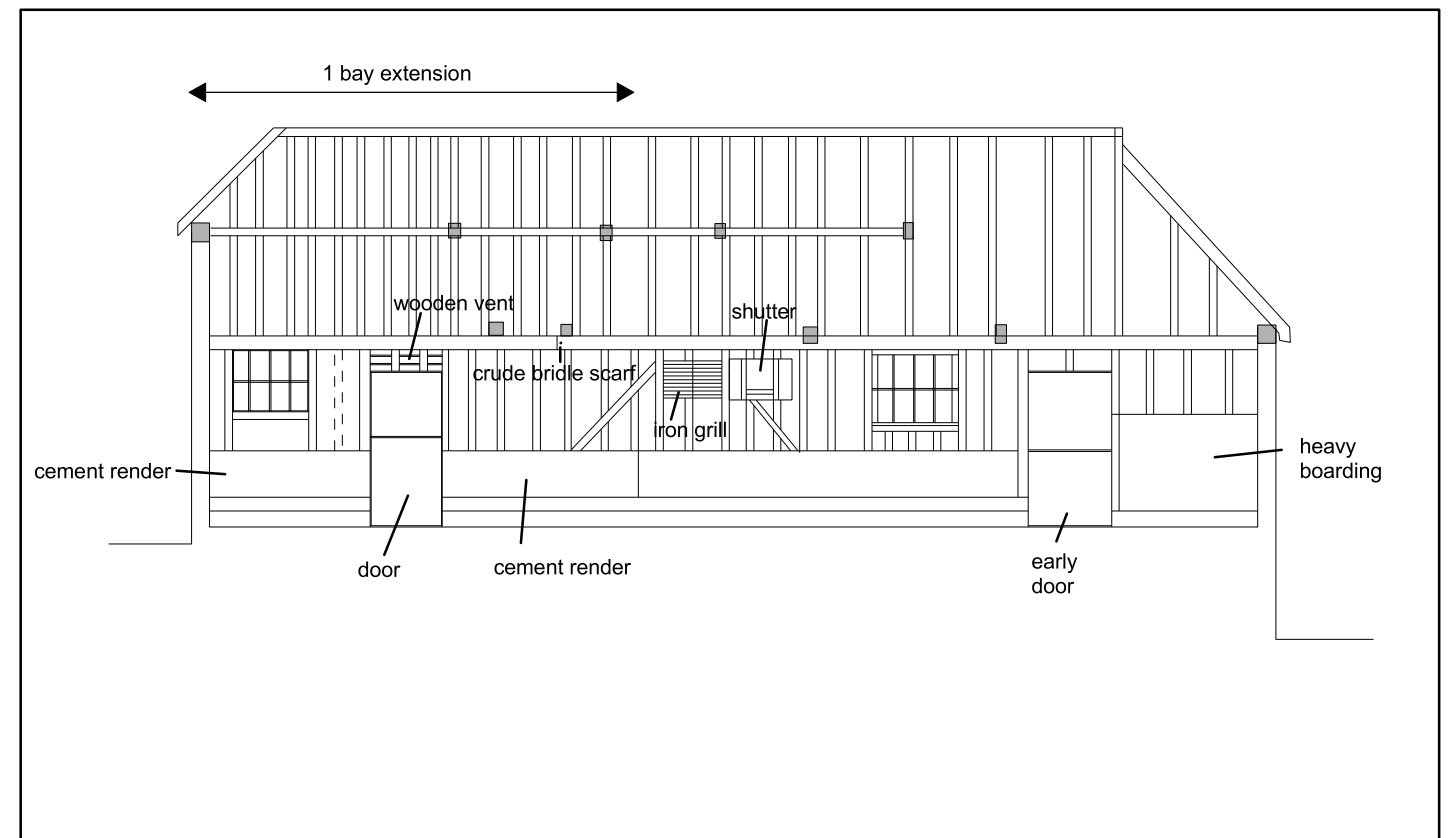


Fig.10d. West wall

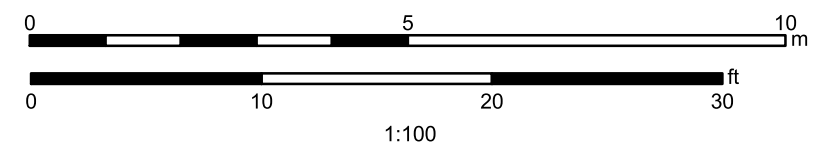


Fig.10. Frame survey of Byre 4

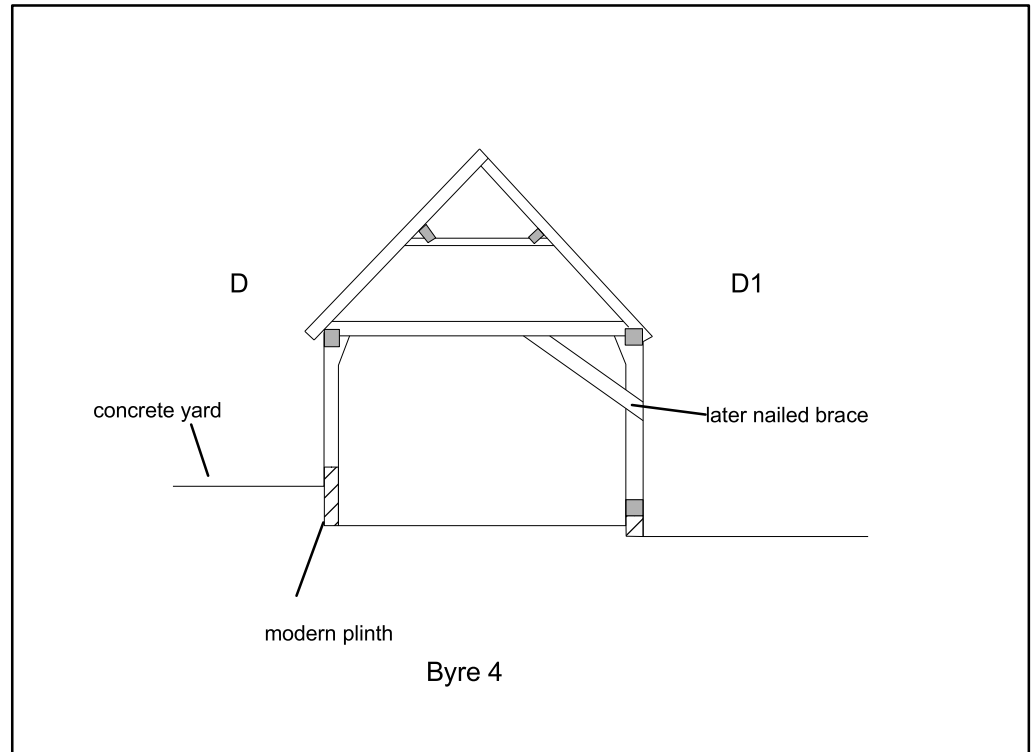
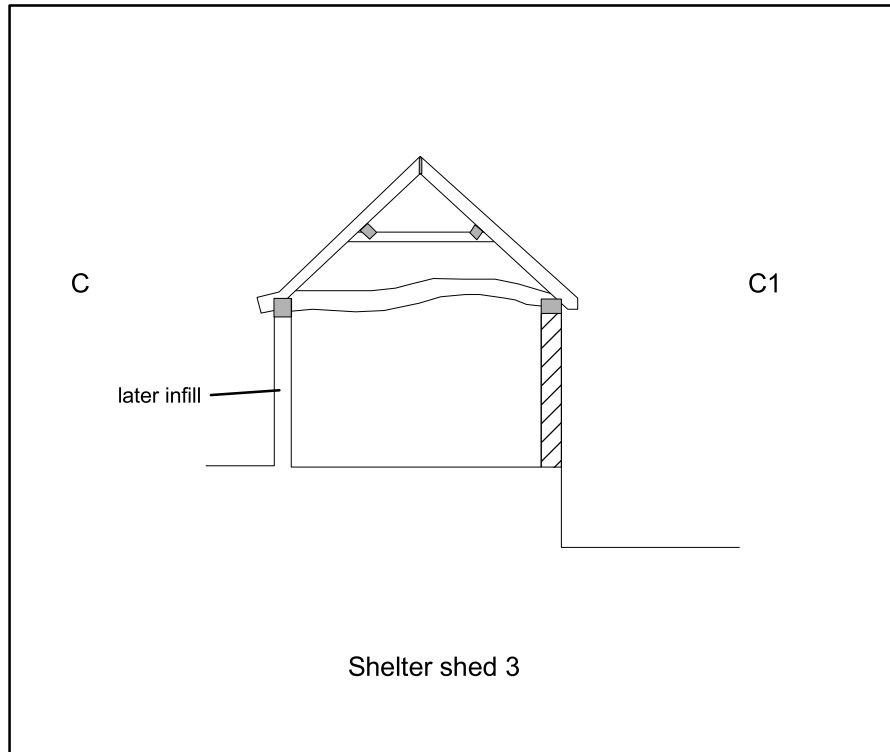
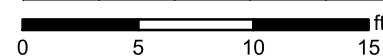


Fig.11a. Sections C - C1

Fig.11b. Section D - D1



Brick wall



1:100



Essex County Council
Field Archaeology Unit

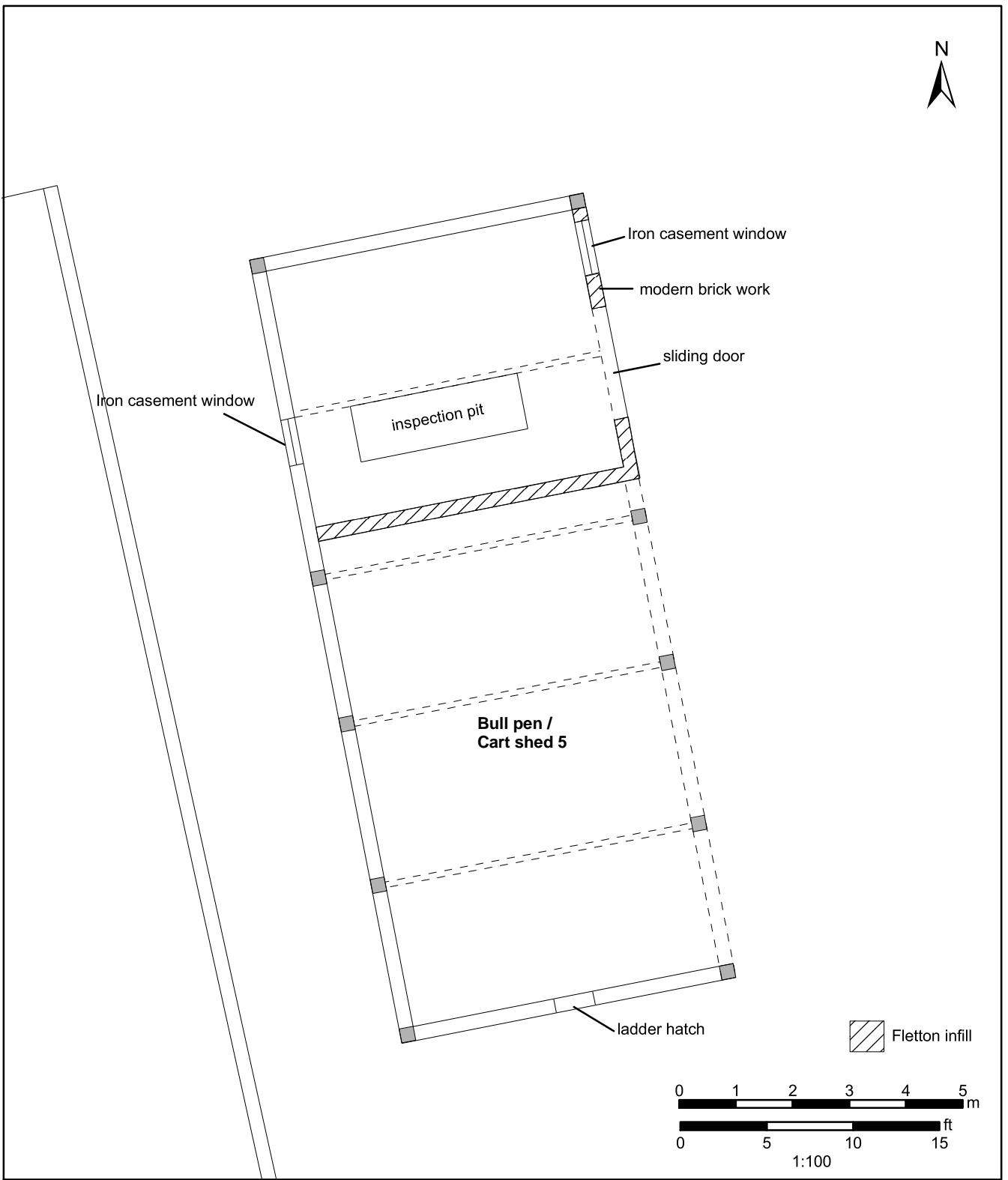


Fig.12. Plan of bull pen / cart shed 5

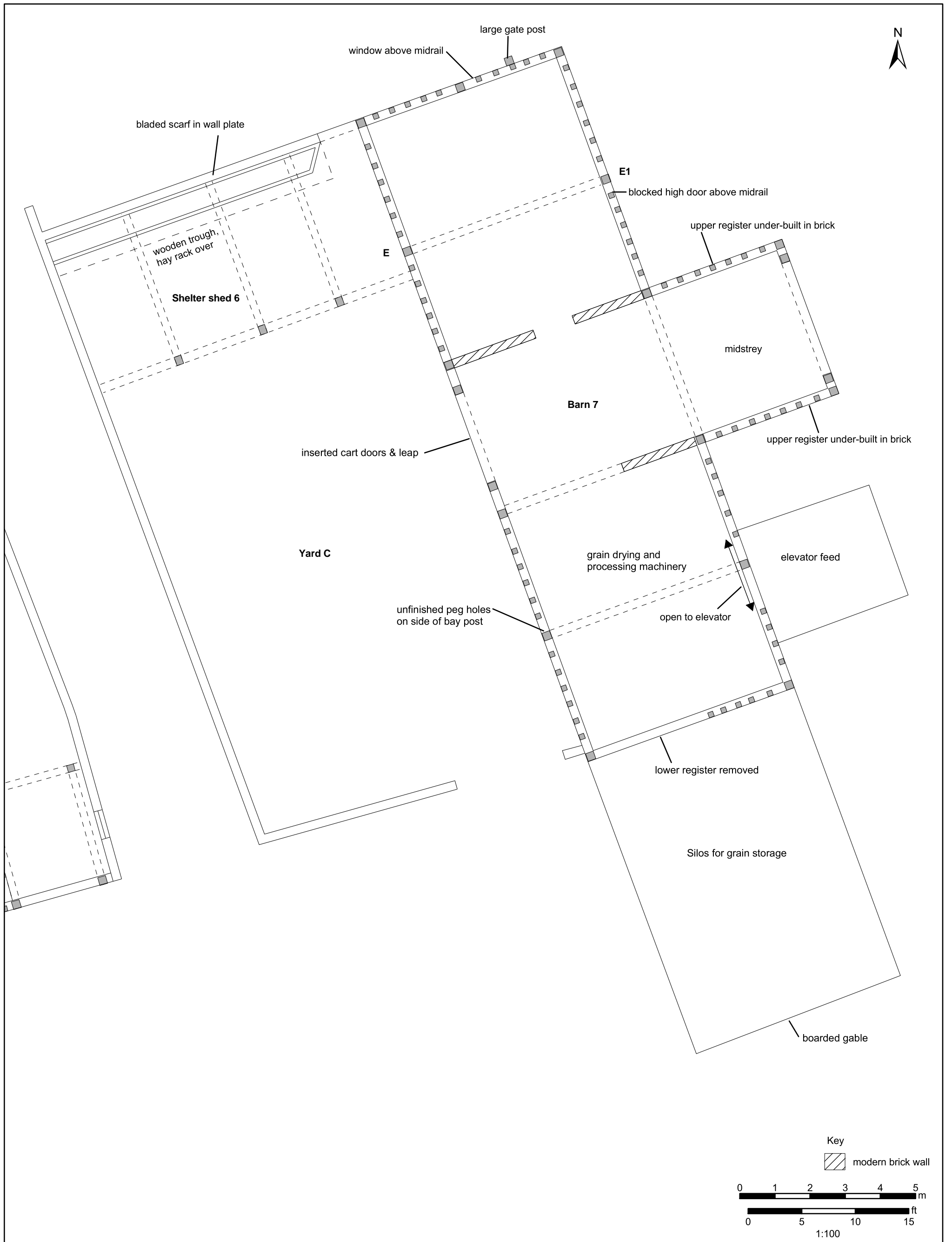


Fig.13. Plan of buildings 6 & 7 around Yard C

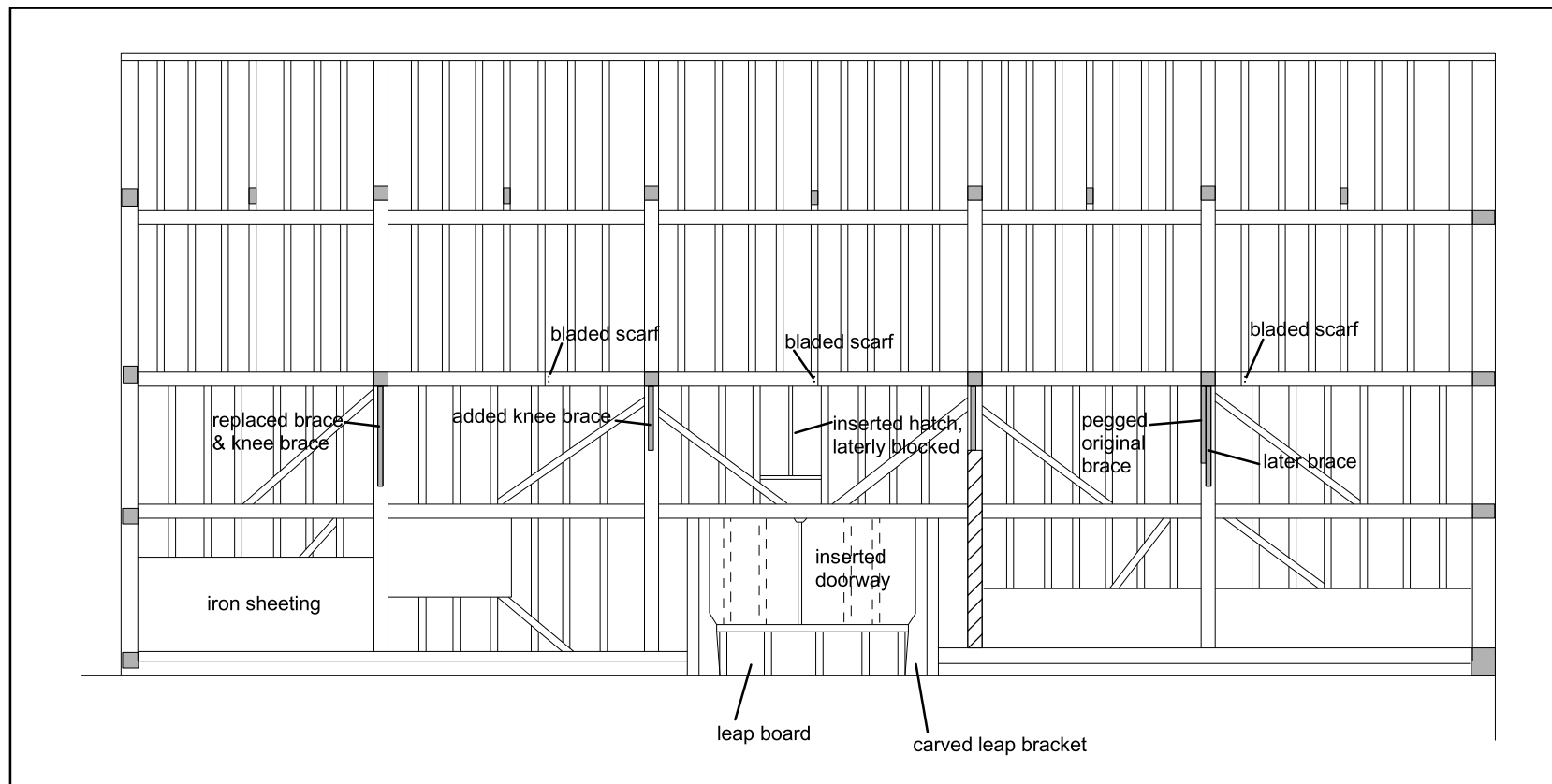


Fig. 14a West wall

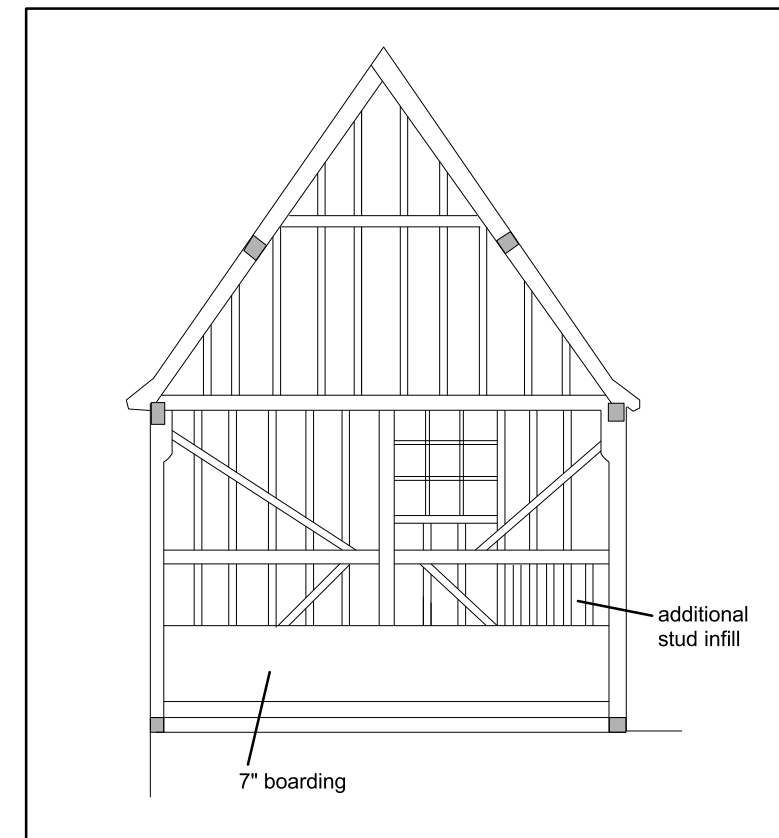


Fig. 14b. North wall

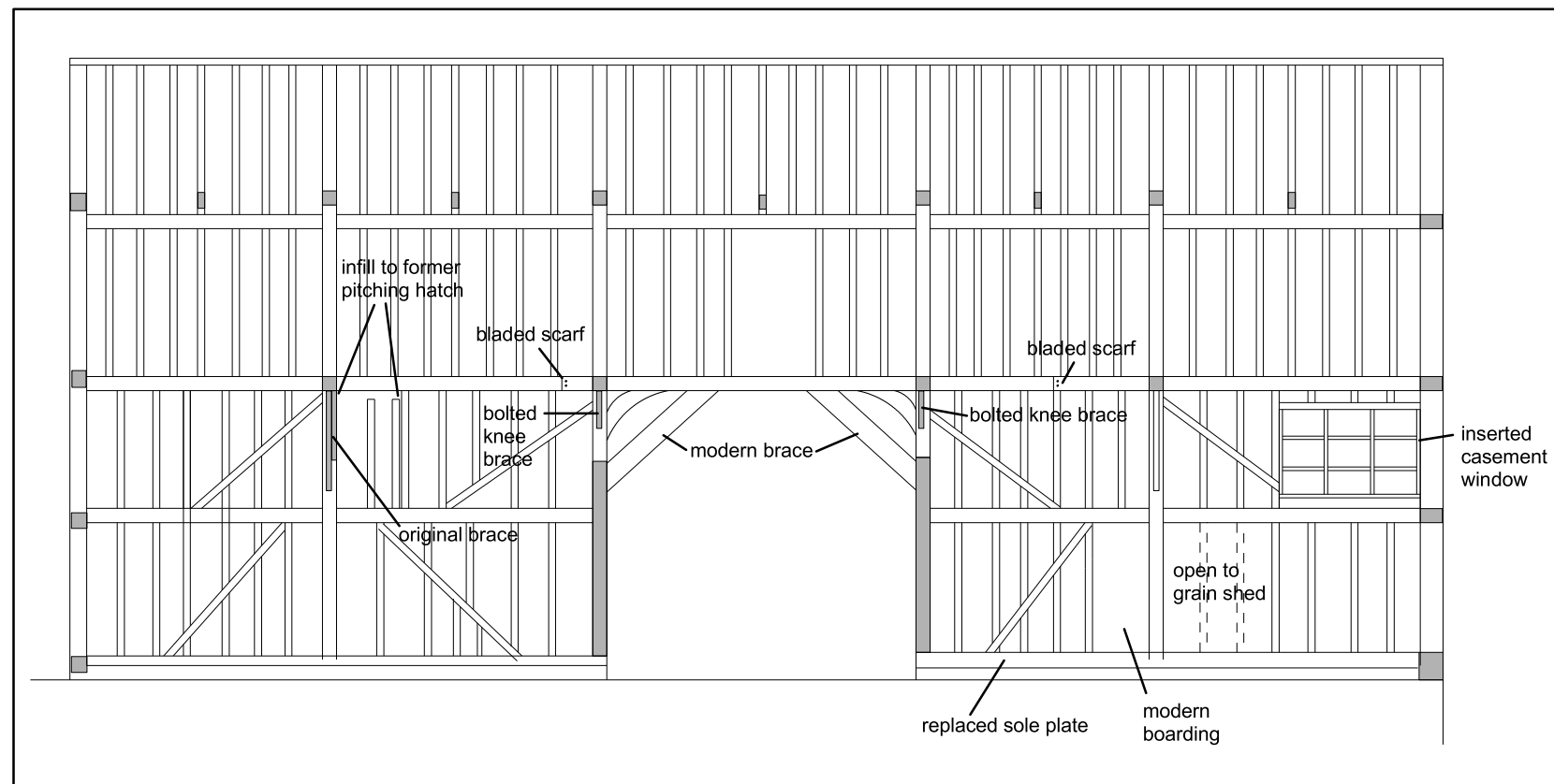


Fig. 14c. East wall

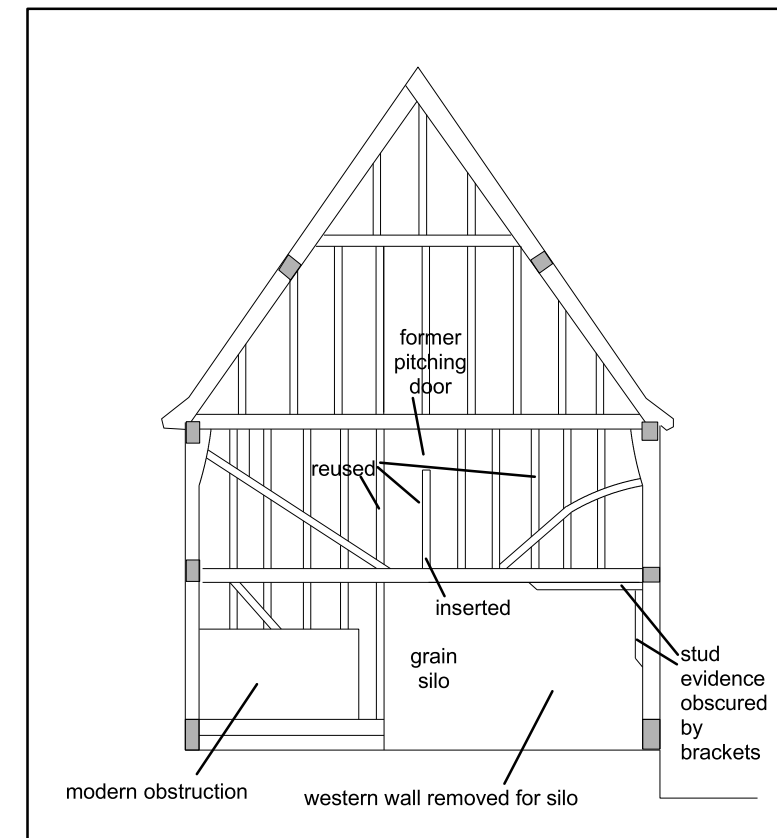


Fig. 14d. South wall

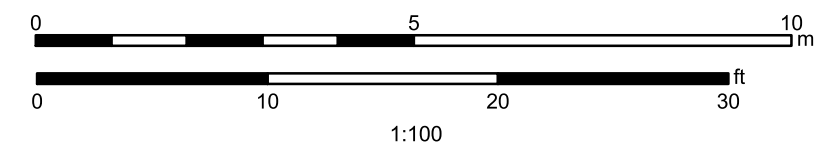


Fig. 14. Frame survey of Barn 7

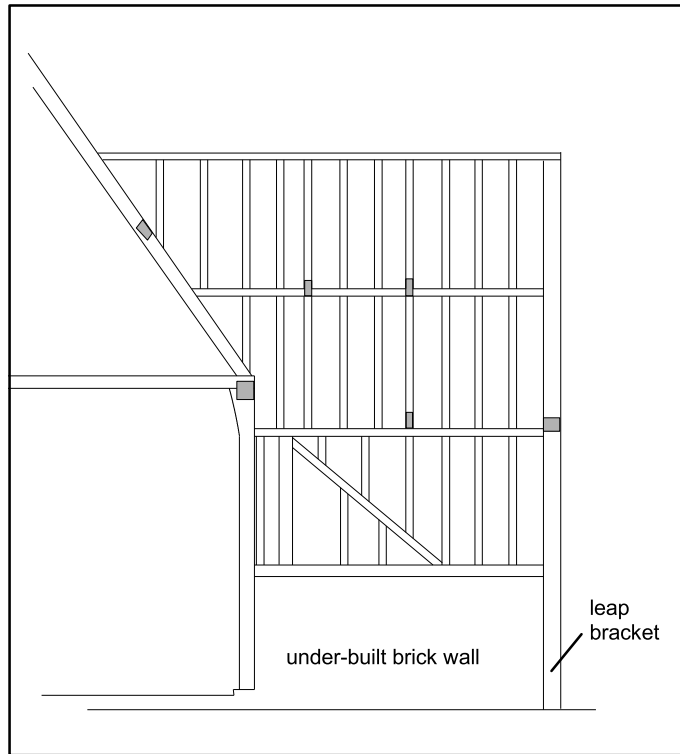


Fig.14e. North wall of midstrey

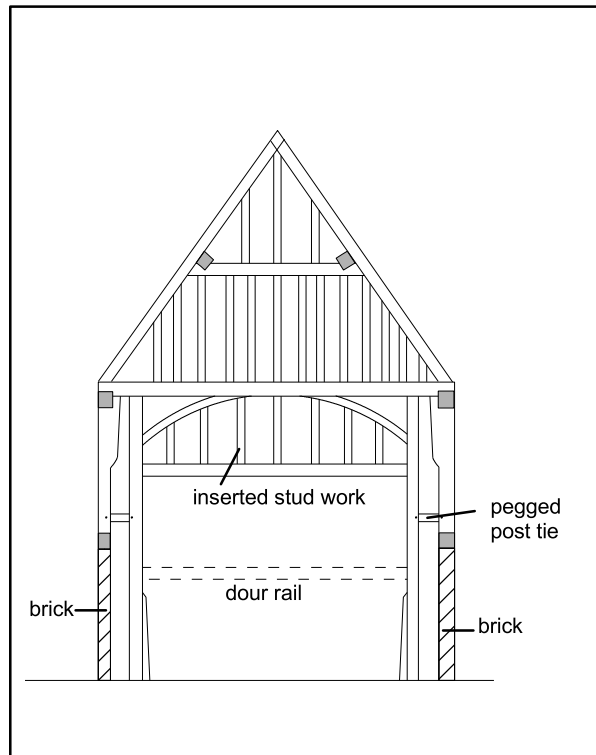


Fig.14f. Gable end of midstrey

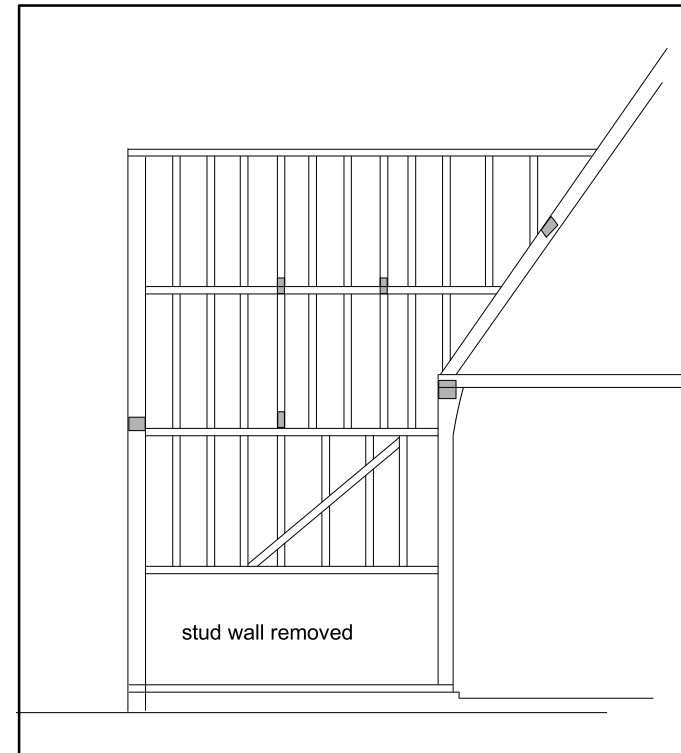
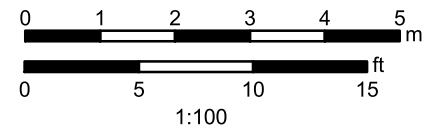


Fig.14g. South wall of midstrey

Fig.14 (continued). Frame survey of Barn 7: midstrey



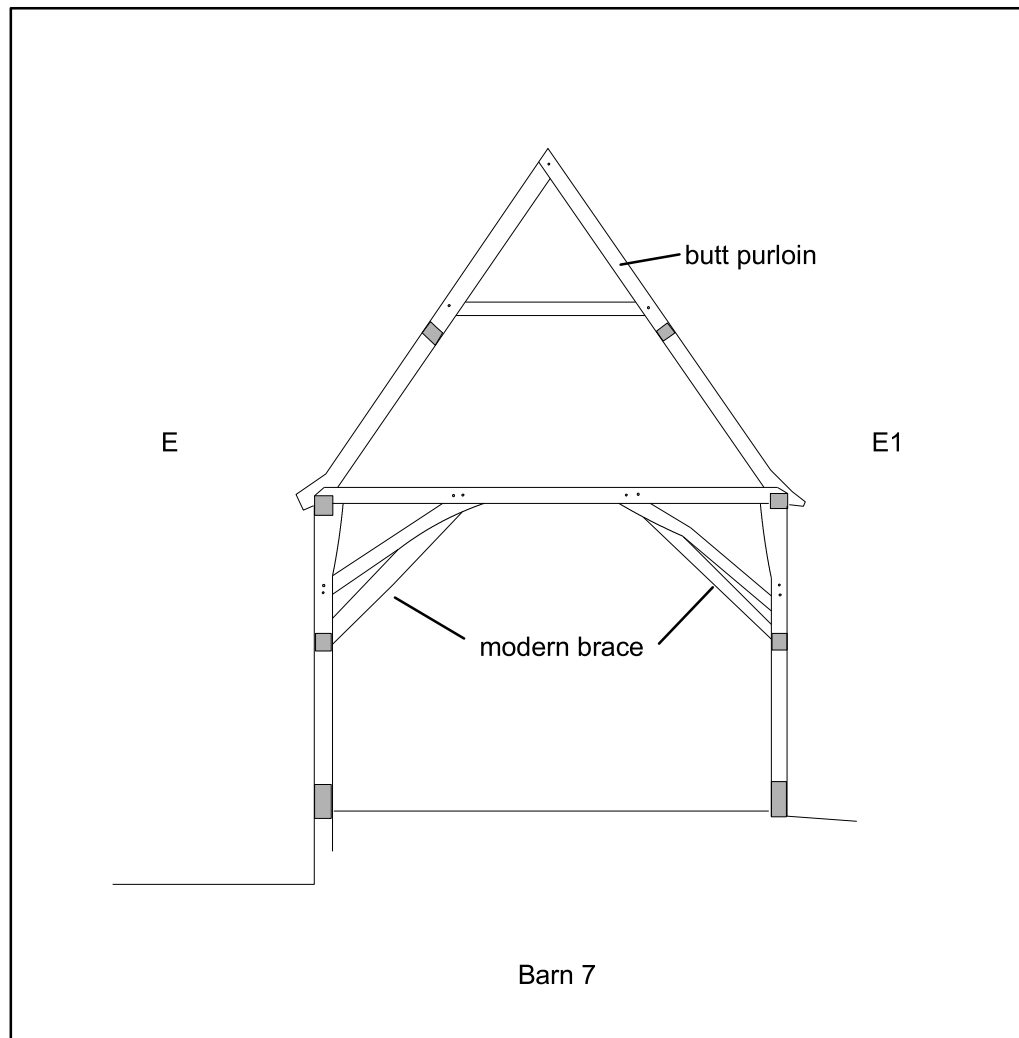
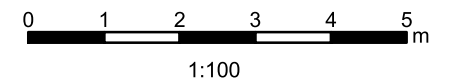


Fig.15. Section E - E1



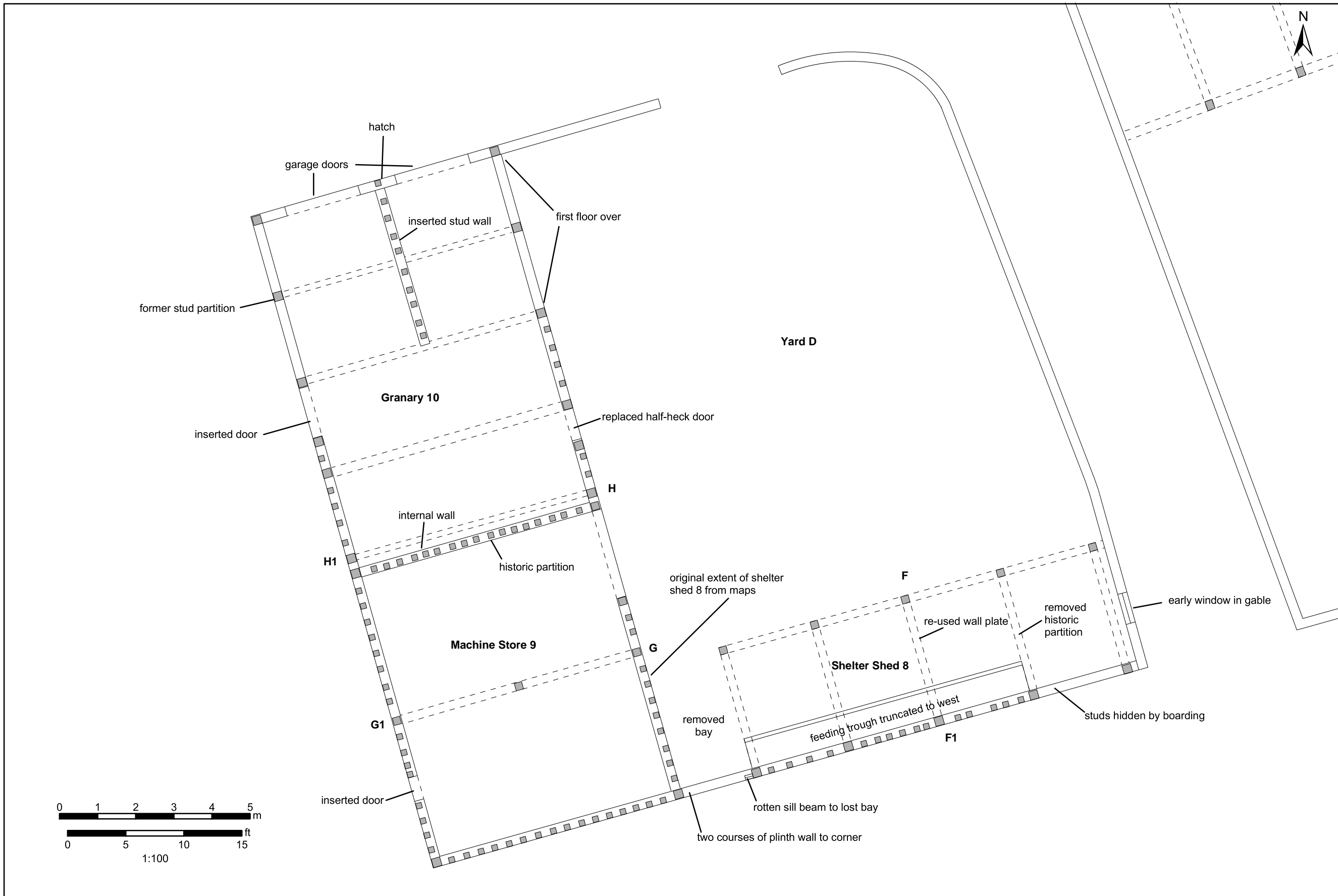


Fig.16. Plan of Buildings 8 & 9 around Yard D

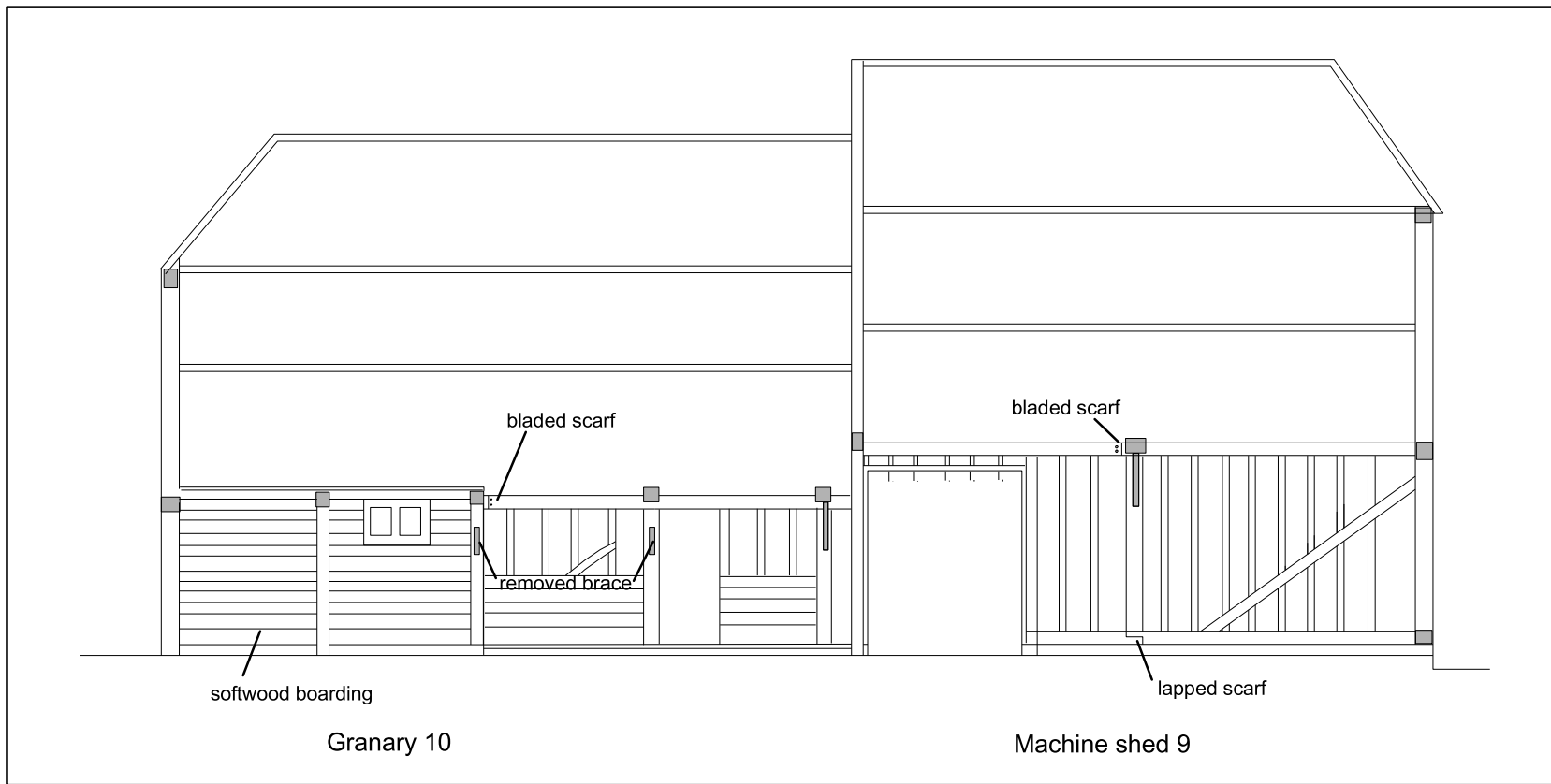


Fig.17a. East wall

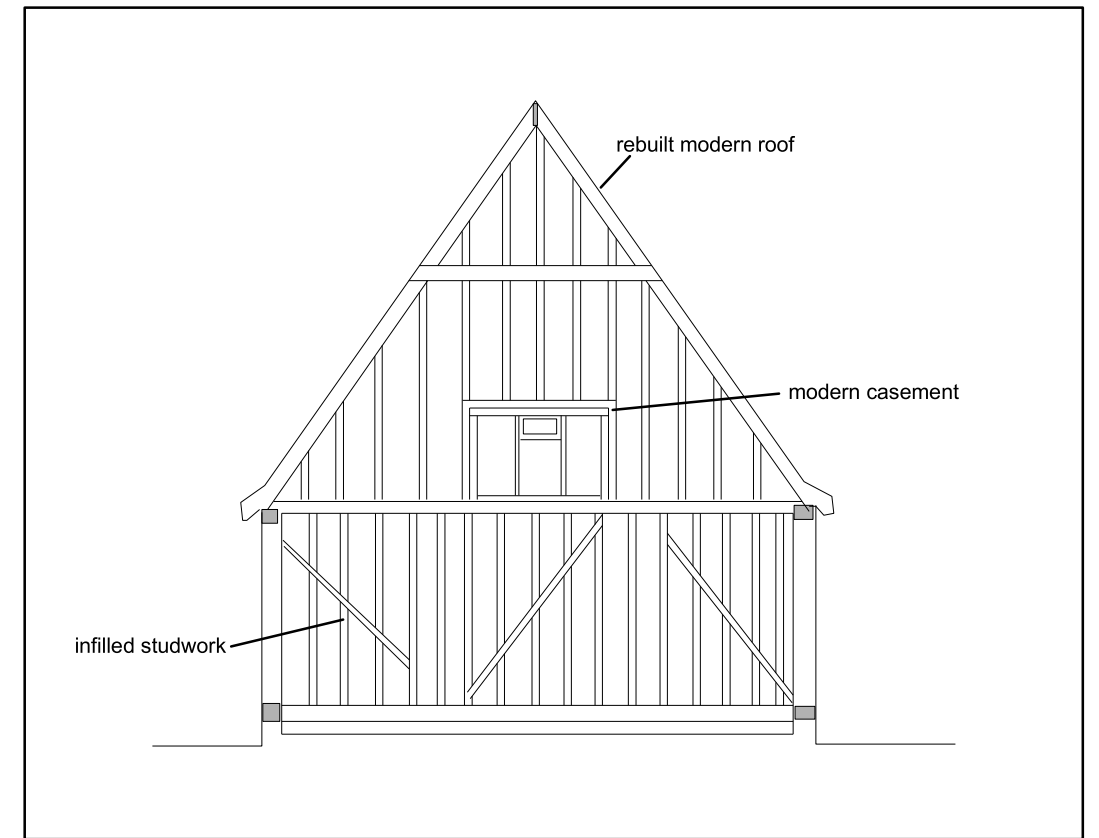


Fig.17b. South wall of machine shed 9

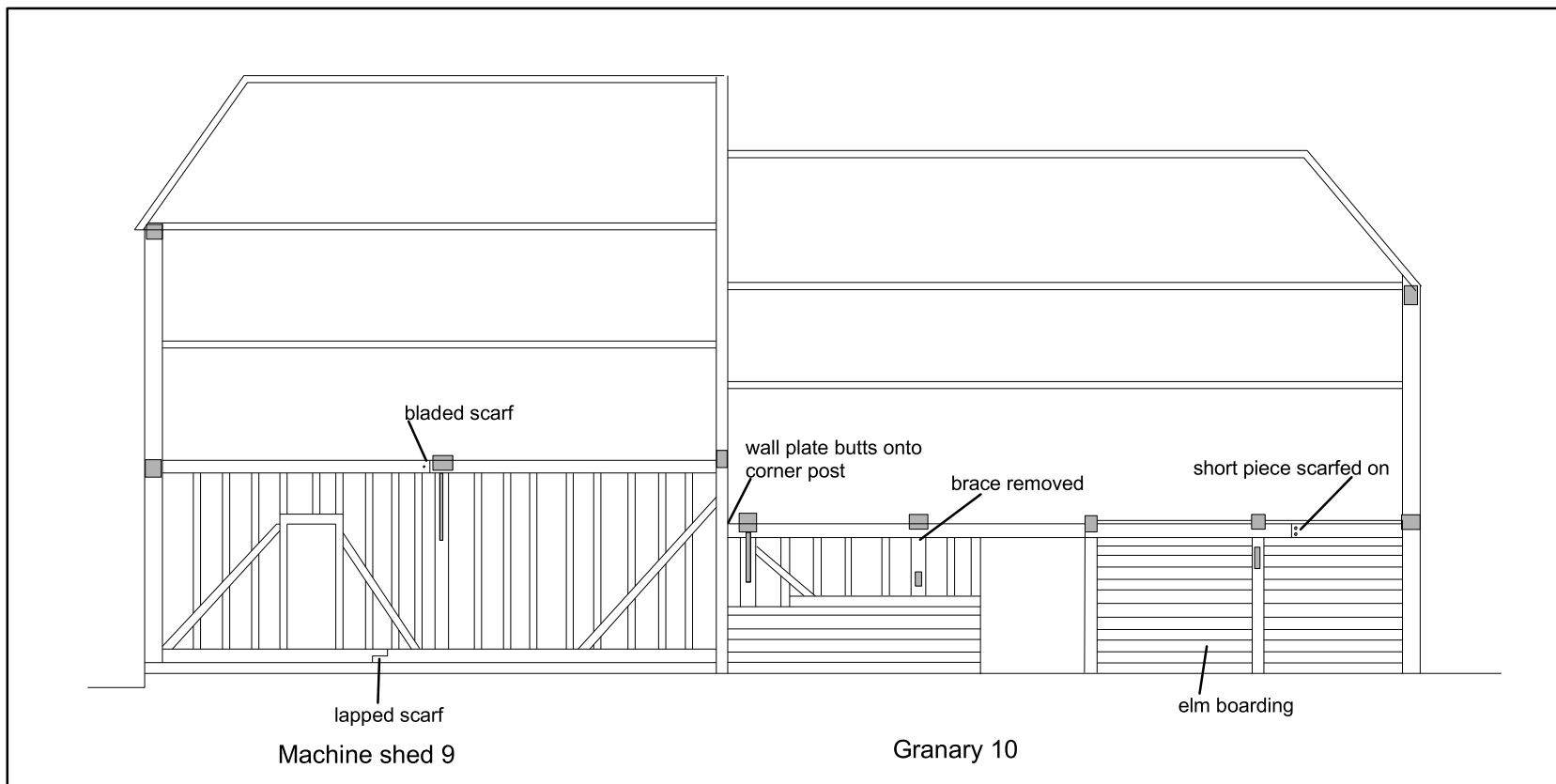


Fig.17c. West wall

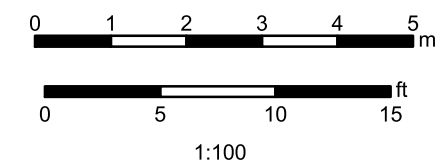


Fig.17. Frame survey of buildings 9 and 10

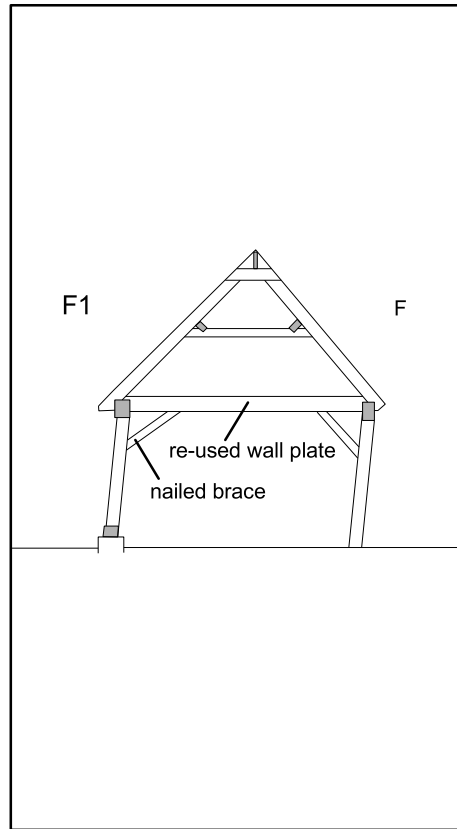


Fig.18a. Section F - F1 through shelter shed 8

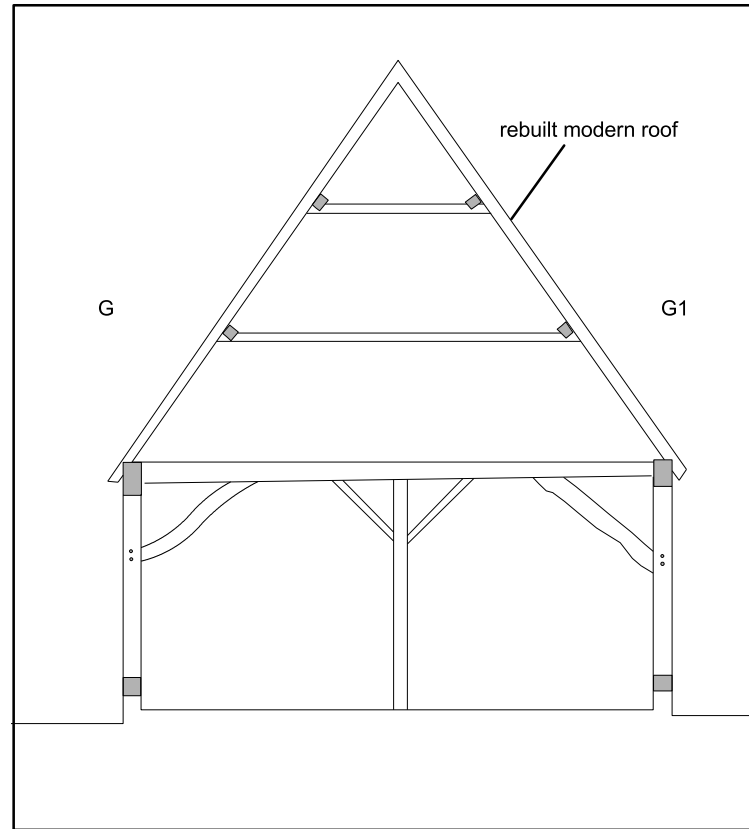


Fig.18b. Section G- G1 through machine shed 9

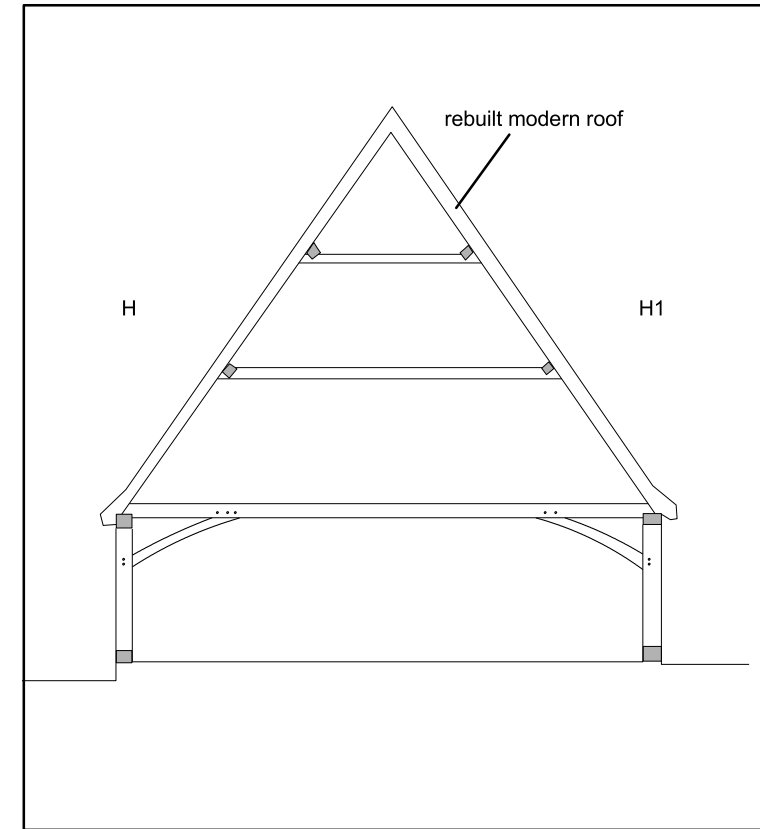
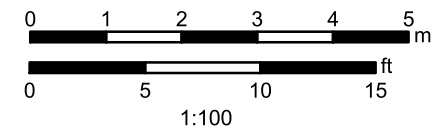


Fig.18c. Section H - H1 through granary 10



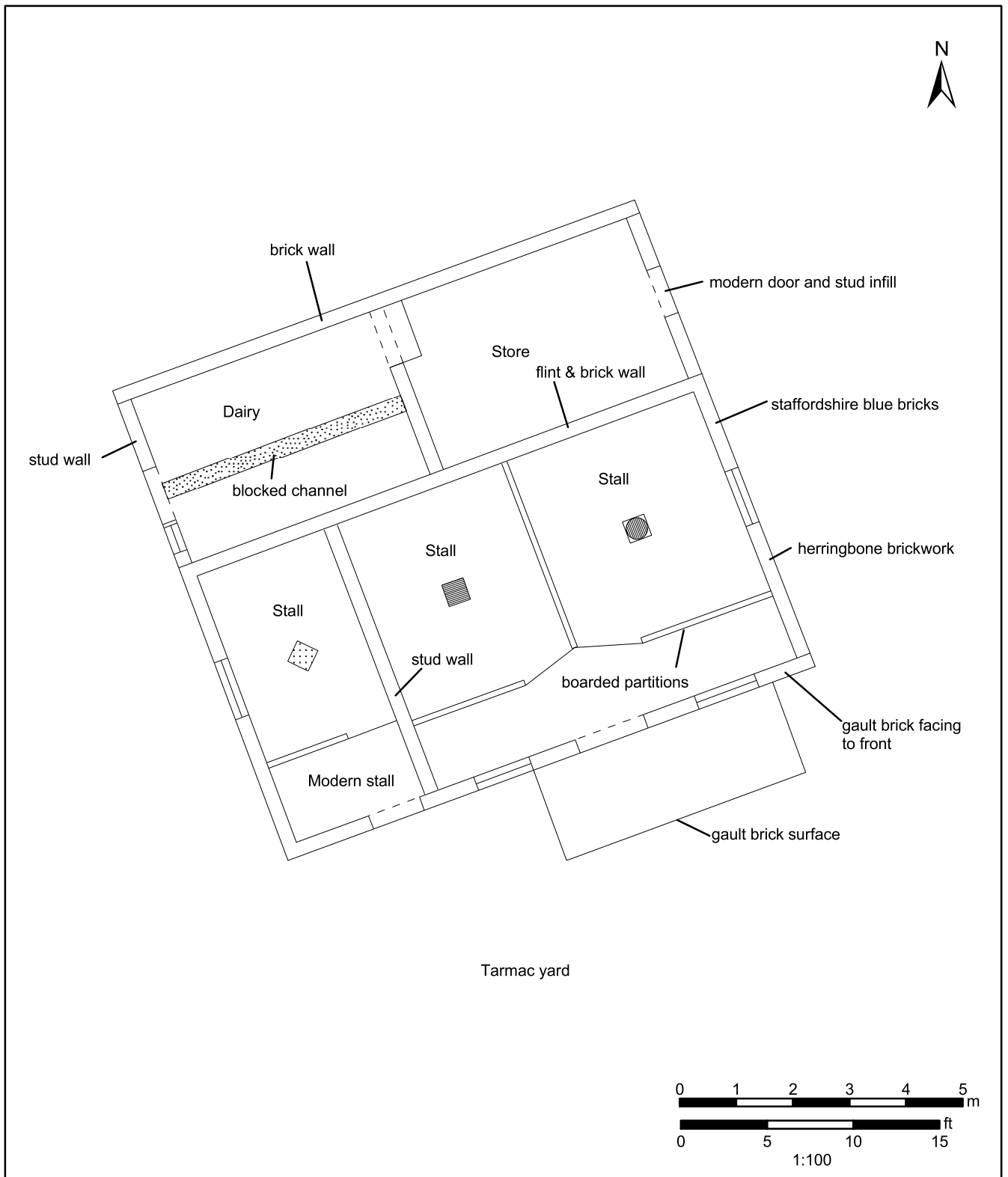


Fig.19. Plan of stables 11



Plate 1 Entrance to farm between yards C & D



Plate 2 View across tarmac yard to yards B & C (east)



Plate 3 Farm from meadow land to the rear (north)



Plate 4 Yard A viewed from west showing barn 1 & shelter shed 2



Plate 5 Front view of barn 1



Plate 6 Barn 1 viewed from north-west up slope toward yard B



Plate 7 Interior of barn 1 viewed from south-west



Plate 8 Interior of barn 1 viewed to east end



Plate 9 Interior of barn 1 viewed to west end



Plate 10 View through barn 1 midstrey



Plate 11 Midstrey east wall in barn 1



Plate 12 Midstrey west wall in barn 1, showing door



Plate 13 Rear elevation of shelter shed 2 viewed from west



Plate 14 In-filled open front of shelter shed 2



Plate 15 Interior of shelter shed 2 viewed to south



Plate 16 Yard B with shelter shed 3 & byre 4



Plate 17 Shelter shed 3 viewed from north



Plate 18 Interior of shelter shed 3



Plate 19 East elevation of byre 4



Plate 20 Early door into byre 4 now hidden by shelter shed



Plate 21 Interior of byre from south extension



Plate 22 Original north wall of byre



Plate 23 Interior of byre viewed to south



Plate 24 Secondary south wall of byre



Plate 25 Bull pen/cart shed viewed from south-east



Plate 26 Rear of bull pen, flint retaining wall & modern shed in former stock yard



Plate 27 Yard C with shelter shed 6 & barn 7 viewed from south-west



Plate 28 Interior of shelter shed 6 showing original fixtures



Plate 29 East elevation of barn 7



Plate 30 Interior of barn 7 viewed to processing machinery at south end



Plate 31 Northern bays of barn 7



Plate 32 Barn 7 midstrey



Plate 33 Detail of butt-purlin roof in barn 7



Plate 34 Yard D showing shelter shed 8, machine store 9 & granary 10



Plate 35 Under-built east wall of shelter shed 8 with stables 11 & farmhouse in background



Plate 36 Interior of shelter shed 8 viewed to east from missing bay



Plate 37 Exterior of machine store 9 & granary 10 from south-west



Plate 38 Interior of machine store 9 showing in-filled south wall



Plate 39 Extant lime plastered partition wall between machine store 9 & granary 10 & former roof line of missing end



Plate 40 Interior of granary 10 viewed to south partition wall showing granary above



Plate 41 Stables 11 viewed from south-east with farmhouse to left



Plate 42 Stables 11 viewed to east, showing loft entrance & contemporary sheds to left



Plate 43 Original stalls in main part of stables 11



Plate 44 Modern stall below loft



Plate 45 Loft interior viewed from bins on north side



Plate 46 Interior of former dairy viewed to east

Appendix 1: Contents of Archive

Site name: Wolseys Farm, Duton Hill, Great Easton, Essex

Project no.: 1821

Index to the Archive:

1. Introduction

- 1.1 HEM design brief
- 1.2 FAU written scheme of investigation
- 1.3 Client/archive report
- 1.4 Unbound version of report
- 1.5 CD containing drawings, digital photographs & copy of report, pdf-formatted

2. Site Archive

- 2.1 Photographic record (digital prints, colour 120mm & monochrome 35mm prints & negatives) & register
- 2.2 Site notes & annotated survey drawings
- 2.3 Set of architect's drawings
- 2.4 Consultant specialist building report

Appendix 2: EHER Summary Sheet

Site Name/Address: Woleseys Farm, Duton Hill, Great Easton, Essex	
Parish: Duton Hill	District: Uttlesford
NGR: TL 5888 0330	OASIS record No.: essexcou1-37443
Type of Work: Building recording	Site Director/Team: Andrew Letch ECC FAU
Dates of Work: 8th-11th October 2007	Size of Area Investigated: N/A
Curating Museum: Saffron Walden	Funding Source: Mr. M. Morton
Further Work Anticipated? None	Related LB Nos.: 12263 & 12264
Final Report: Summary in EAH	
Periods Represented: Post-medieval & modern (17th-20th-century)	
<p>SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:</p> <p>Recording works were undertaken at Woleseys Farm in advance of mixed residential and commercial conversion of a large multi-phase farmstead. The eleven buildings recorded range in date from the 17th to early 20th-centuries. The oldest structures are two 17th-century timber-framed barns, each Grade II-listed. A byre is likely to be contemporary with them and perhaps a granary/cart shed (although possibly an 18th-century build). The byre was enclosed in the 18th-century to form a stables. From a post-medieval layout centred around a single yard, the farm was improved in the third quarter of the 19th-century for cattle. Brick shelter sheds and stock yards were built around a central open yard. The new yards were arranged around the already existing layout. A stable and new farmhouse were built and an unusually tall structure built against the granary, part of which was removed. This building is interpreted as a machine store, for threshing machines or perhaps a traction engine.</p> <p>Subsequent development in the modern period has been largely minimal and the buildings have been maintained to a high standard. Historic features have been retained and the integrity of the built fabric largely conserved, with only a few major changes and little in the way of modern development to the historic core. As such the farm is a rare, well-preserved example of an evolving farm complex situated in an area of great landscape value.</p>	
Previous Summaries/Reports: None	
Author of Summary: A. R. Letch	Date of Summary: 8th February 2008