

**HISTORIC BUILDING SURVEY OF
HULL'S MILL FARM, HULL'S MILL LANE
GREAT MAPLESTEAD
ESSEX**



Essex County Council

Field Archaeology Unit

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**HULL'S MILL FARM, HULL'S MILL LANE
GREAT MAPLESTEAD
ESSEX**

HISTORIC BUILDING SURVEY

Client: Medusa Design on behalf of Mr A. Nott

FAU Project No.: 2182

NGR: TL 7931 3320

Planning Application: 09/01417/FUL

OASIS No.: 78534

Dates of Fieldwork: 16th–17th February 2010

1.0 INTRODUCTION

A programme of building recording was undertaken by Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit (ECC FAU) on the extensive remains of a redundant mid-19th century farmstead at Hull's Mill Farm prior to conversion to a live-work unit. The work was commissioned by the architects, Medusa Design, on behalf of the owner/developer, 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.

A post-medieval farmstead was improved during the boom years of Victorian farming, based on the prevalent courtyard plan form of three ranges surrounding a south-facing stock yard. The structures survive in remarkable condition with little modern impact and therefore have high group value. The development and impact of the agricultural revolution and Victorian High Farming in East Anglia is regarded as an important area for further research by the Regional Research Agenda (Brown & Glazebrook 2000, 42 & 45).

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 Braintree Museum. An OASIS online record has been created at <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/oasis/index.cfm>.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 Site location and description (fig.1)

Hull's Mill Farm (TL 7931 3320) lies on the very west side of Great Maplestead parish, close to the boundary with Sible Hedingham. The boundary between the two parishes is represented by the River Colne, which flows into Hull's Mill to the south of the farm (fig.1). The farm lies in an unspoilt area of wood and farmland off Hull's Mill Lane, a minor road leading to Great Maplestead from the main Hedingham to Halstead road, the A1124.

The focus of the modern farm is to the north of the historic farm, which has been redundant for some time. The historic farmstead consists of two timber-framed ranges either side of an unmade south-facing yard connected by a brick range to the north (fig. 1). The farmhouse was traditionally set to the south, but was replaced by one to the north in the second half of the 20th century. The early farmhouse, barn, stables and brick boundary wall are all Grade II Listed and all the farm buildings are therefore curtilage listed. Hull's Mill, which historically owned the farm, is also listed (LBS 114314).

The following structures were recorded:

- Barn 1 (LBS 114316): 17th-century barn, refurbished in 1781
- Wagon lodge 2: 19th century barn extension
- Cattle shed 3
- Loose box 4
- Loose box 5: former chaise house
- Piggeries 6: forming the north range, contemporary with Listed wall (LBS 114317)
- Stable 7 (LBS 114318): former cart horse stable with chaff store above
- Lean-to 8: former cart lodge and nag's stable
- Cowhouse 9: rebuilt in modern period
- Modern machine shed 10

The standing buildings are in reasonable condition apart from the barn, whose roof is racking badly to the north, and the stables, where damp has entered through the roof. Despite this they form an intact and largely unaltered group of Victorian farm buildings built around the barn.

2.2 Planning background

A planning application for conversion to live/work units was submitted to Braintree District Council (BDC) in August 2009 (09/01417/FUL). Mindful of the impact of conversion on the historic integrity of the farm complex, and the importance of farming in the East Anglian region during the post-medieval and Victorian periods, ECC HEM advised BDC that a full archaeological condition should be attached to the planning consent, based on advice given in Planning Policy Guidance Note 16: Archaeology and Planning (DOE 1990).

2.3 Historical background & development

Cartographic and documentary research was undertaken at the Essex Record Office (ERO), Chelmsford, to understand the origins and development of the farm. Listing descriptions and secondary sources were also studied. The results are presented below with their accompanying ERO references. Historic map extracts included in the report as figures 2-5 have been enlarged in the report to provide greater clarity.

The present Hull's Mill was probably built in the 18th century, but a mill has stood on the site since 1086 (LBS 114314). The original farmhouse dates to the 16th century or earlier (LBS 114315) and is now in private ownership. It is likely associated with an earlier mill and farmstead, which historically were under single ownership.

The only survivor from the early farmstead is the barn, which has characteristics suggesting a 17th build date, slightly later than the farmhouse is believed to be. The early farmstead and mill are indicated on Chapman and Andre's Map 1777 map of Essex, in simplified form (fig.2). Some alterations were carried out to the barn in 1781, according to an inscription inside.

The earlier, pre-Victorian farmstead is drawn in clearer detail on the Great Maplestead Tithe Map of 1840 (D/CT 231), which shows the barn and two other buildings loosely arranged around a yard, with a long range to the east (fig. 3). In plan, the barn seems very much as it does today, with attached structures to north and south. The accompanying tithe award (D/CT 231A) describes plot 61 as a 'homestall', with a holding of approximately 28 acres of which 18 are arable, 5 are meadow and 5 acres trees and coppice. The farm is owned and occupied by Edward Mumford, who also owns the mill and a further 5 acres of land around it (Sible Hedingham Tithe Award D/CT 174A, 1840).

It is not until the mid 19th century, or slightly later, that Hull's Mill Farm adopts its current form, influenced no doubt by improvements in agriculture that heralded the 'Golden Age of

Agriculture', the period between 1840 and 1870 when British agriculture was booming and new ideas and techniques coming to the fore. New farms were built and existing farms 'improved'; i.e. rebuilt and modernised, to a strict courtyard plan form. The improved layout is illustrated on the 1876 first edition Ordnance Survey map that shows all the current structures as well as the precursor to building 9, the cowhouse, which stands at the south end of the east range. Entry into the yard is on the south-west side, next to the farmhouse, that continues as a track into the fields on the other side of the yard (fig.4). A more detailed illustration of the farm is provided on the second edition OS map of 1897 (fig.5), remaining essentially unchanged.

The mill and farmstead were sold at auction in 1887 as part of the estate of the late Richard Hanbury esq. At the time, the farm was occupied by Charles Metson with an increased holding of 42 acres of 'capital meadow and arable land' (SALE/B641). This is an important document, as the functions of the farm buildings provided in the sale catalogue (fig. 6) can be cross-referenced to the existing structures, thanks to their good survival.

Hull's Mill was last operated by Hovis Ltd between the 1930s and 1957s, after which the mill was converted into a dwelling and the farmhouse sold-off. The farmer, Peter Gagen and his wife, had tenanted the farm from the mill and bought it when the opportunity arose, building a new farmhouse to the north (fig. 1). Now retired, his sons and grandsons run it from new farm buildings to the north-east that line the old trackway (fig. 1) leaving the traditional farmstead largely redundant.

3.0 OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the historic building record was, as outlined in the brief (ECC HEM 2010), to provide a RCHME level 3 standard record of the farm buildings in their present state prior to conversion and assess their architectural merit and significance.

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, fixtures and fittings, additions and modifications and the context of the farm within its contemporary landscape. An interpretation of the functional relationships of the 19th-century farm is presented in the discussion (section 6.0).

4.0 DESCRIPTION OF WORKS

The standing buildings were recorded using drawings (floor plans, sections and elevations) supplied by the client. A block plan has been produced to show the location of the structures within the survey (fig.1).

All building interiors apart from lean-to 8 had been cleared prior to the survey and were free to access. External and internal architectural descriptions were made and building function assessed as part of the traditional working farm.

A series of photographs (digital and 35mm black & white print) were taken to record the main 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 1-28. The remainder can be found in the archive.

Documentary and cartographic research, outlined in section 2.3, was undertaken to investigate the origins and development of the farm.

5.0 HISTORIC BUILDING DESCRIPTIONS

The structures were recorded in their current condition. Most of the buildings have primary-braced timber-frames stood upon brick plinths and clad in faded weatherboard and mainly tile, occasionally slate, roofs. The only exception is the piggeries, which are built of brick. In the following text buildings 1 to 5 are described externally as a single range, but internally as separate. Other buildings are described separately in both respects.

5.1 General description

The farmyard was traditionally entered from Hull's Mill Lane between the original farmhouse and barn 1 (fig. 1), then out the opposite side onto a trackway leading eastwards to the fields. Since the old farmhouse was split and sold off, this entrance is now in private hands and a tall hedge planted between the house and yard. Current access to the farm is now around the north side of the farm buildings to join with the old trackway, which is now straddled by elements of the new farm. The modern farmhouse stands away to the north of the yard (fig. 1).

The farm buildings stand in three ranges around a south-facing yard (plate 1-3). The west and east ranges either side yard are centred on the barn and stables, while the piggeries form the north range, extending from the Listed rear wall.

5.2 Barn 1

The structure stands on the west side of the complex with its entrance to the yard. It is a moderate-sized barn forming the main part of a range enclosing the west side of the yard, with porch to the east. Its dimensions are 13.5m long and 6m-wide, roughly equivalent to 2½ by 1 rods. It has a primary-braced timber frame, set on a brick plinth constructed from c.9 inch 19th-century soft reds typical of the brickwork on the farmstead, loosely arranged in no discernable bond. The undulating roof is plain-tiled, with a 45° pitch and gables either end. It is racking badly towards the north, which has probably been a long-term problem. Outshots 3, 4 and 5 are attached to the east and wagon lodge 2 to the north.

Barn 1 contains 17th-century characteristics and a later porch, possibly added during a late 18th century (1781) building phase. Wagon lodge 2 and the lean-tos 3, 4 and 5 were added in the improvement stage. In the 20th century, when the mill was under the tenure of Hovis (1930-50), the wagon lodge was used as a garage for the company's trucks and part of the north wall was removed. In more recent years, the midstrey was raised and dwarf walls built either side.

5.2.1 External description

The porch on the **eastern elevation** (plate 4) is set centrally to the barn and retains its tall cart doors intact; ledged battened and braced, with iron strap pintel hinges. To close, the doors are attached by iron chains to link on the central bar (plate 4). Modern bracing has been fitted to the inside of the north door. The lower leaves have radiating boards (plate 4) that form the threshold leap, plus wooden locking bar. A threshold leap was a low partition for keeping muck and straw in the yard from getting inside the barn and to contain grain and deter livestock during threshing. A second door is inserted into the north side of the porch.

Outshots 3 and 4, positioned either side of the porch, are Victorian additions with slate roofs. **Loose box 3** has a single-pitched roof of only 25° and entry by a half-heck boarded door (plate 4). On the other side of the porch is the open-sided **cow shed 4**. The bays are divided by a plain cast iron column under a shallower single-pitched roof of 20°. Through the open bays can be seen the wall of the barn, which was rebuilt in brick during the 19th century improvement.

The southern elevation is screened by a tall hedge (plate 5) that hides the rebuilt south wall of the barn, entered by a central ledged battened and braced door, and a pair of short ledged and battened cart doors face the former farmhouse in loose box 3.

The **western (roadside) elevation** (plate 6) incorporates wagon lodge 2 which, although an extension, blends in with the barn. There are few features on this side, though it is possible there was once a doorway on the central bay, whose internal frame is different to the walls either side. A central 2 x 6 pane horizontal sliding window sits within a longer former opening now blocked (plate 6). A 20th century fixed-pane window is sited towards the south end, which is now boarded. Weatherboarding to the wagon lodge is later than the rest and carried on a secondary machine-sawn frame.

5.2.2 Internal description

The internal layout (plates 7 & 8) is of two 4.5m-wide bays, one either side of a relatively narrow (3.7m) midstrey. Often the midstrey is the widest bay, to allow fully-laden carts into the barn at harvest, but in this case the storage bays are wider. The floor is concreted and there is no evidence for earlier floors, though it is possible a threshing floor may lie under the midstrey, which is raised, and bounded with modern dwarf walls (fig. 7).

There appears to be at least three building phases to the barn: the early barn, alterations carried out in the 18th century (that may include the addition of the porch), plus the rebuilt south wall and repairs around the failing porch in the 19th century.

Main framing appears to be of oak or elm and largely intact with few reused pieces. All main members are single-pegged to one another. Jowled posts define the bays, supporting strapped tie beams on pegged and bolted knee braces, which were added in the 1781 building phase. Empty slots and pegholes exist for earlier braces. The main timbers are slender and consistent in size, typically c.16cm². The tie beam in the frame north of the midstrey (plate 8) was replaced when the east wall was rebuilt in brick but the frame on the south side of the midstrey is largely intact (plate 9), though failing as a structure. This is most likely due to the weight of the porch, whose wall frame is higher than the barn and attached to the rafter rather than the wall plate, bending the east bay post inwards (fig. 7). This has happened over some time and may be the reason why the knee braces were added in 1781, a date carved into the knee brace here (fig. 8). To stabilise the area between barn and porch a secondary post and wall plate have been added to support the feet of the rafters (fig. 7, plate 9). Minor pieces of wood have been nailed to brace the two posts in more recent times. The north wall of the porch is sagging from the weight above (plate 8).

Generally, the ground sills are rotted and the wall plates are one bay in length. The wall plate on the rear wall of the midstrey is connected by short, rather crude double-pegged 'lapped' scarf joints (fig. 7).

Primary-braced wall-framing occurs through most of the barn except for the midstrey/porch area which is un-braced. What remains survives well, though some framing has been lost in the northern bay. The studwork is quite substantial, measuring up to 6 inches wide and four inches deep, and few pieces are reused. There are seven studs per frame in the barn, each spaced quite widely between the other at 40-45cm, tenoned (unpegged) to the plate and nailed to the long pegged braces. Dimensions of all main framing members are consistent.

The southern bay survives the best, with long braces falling from the corner posts along the side walls (plates 7 & 10). In contrast, the south end wall (plate 10), is replaced; built from narrower timbers that have stronger 18th or early 19th century characteristics more like the other structures. In the centre is a wide ledged and braced door, perhaps for livestock, as there is a good deal of historic plaster surviving between the panels to act as insulation.

Studwork in the central bay (midstrey plate 7, right) is boarded over in 6 inch-wide planks, which are a secondary addition, nailed onto plaster. Closer inspection shows seven pegged studs behind the boards with no bracing, but similar large dimensions to the braced timbers. Such framing is observed better in the porch, where a midrail divides two registers of inline pegged studs (plates 7 and 8) between jowled posts, an earlier construction style to the primary-bracing seen around the barn, hence reused. Further evidence to show the porch was not built for the barn is the fact that the porch wall plate is about 0.5m higher than the barn plate.

The north bay of the barn has lost a considerable amount of wall-framing. The entire east wall, up to the porch, was probably rebuilt in Flemish-bonded red brick beneath the wall plate with the new farmstead, probably to correct similar structural problems to the other side of the porch. In addition, half the north wall was removed when the wagon lodge was extended into the barn the early 20th century (fig. 7), resulting in modern studs being added to the surviving end wall providing extra strength (plate 8).

The roof is racking badly to the north. It was rebuilt c.25 years ago (P. Gagen pers. comm.) with new and additional collars. Essentially its form was, and remains, a collar clasped purlin form (fig.8). Most of the rafters are original, substantial in size like the studwork, but spaced closely-together, thus adding to the weight of the roof, already heavy with the tiles. A ridge

plate was inserted with the rebuild, and roofing felt. Additional rafters have been laid on the west side of the midstrey where rafters have snapped and the purlin is broken at the join.

5.3 Wagon lodge 2

The wagon lodge is an extension to the barn that was probably built with the rest of the farm complex in the 19th century. It is a two bay structure floor with an asphalt floor used for farm carts, with a granary occupying the loft space above. In later years it was used as a garage for the Hovis lorries and the granary was removed.

There are two pairs of large modern doors at the front, with a pitching hatch onto the loft (plate 12).

Internally the structure is less complicated than the barn. The two bays are defined by stout 19 x 14cm posts, plain rather than jowled, that have double-pegged mortices and ledges cut into the tops that formerly carried the loft floor joists. The walls around are still boarded from this level upwards (plate 13). The framing is primary-braced in inferior timber to the barn, the scantling on the studwork being only c. 6 x 10cm and at times quite waney. Opportunity to compare the two builds occurs where the end wall of the barn was removed (plate 14). Additional framing has been nailed to this side to strengthen the weak frame. The other side is partly-supported on the brick wall that continues from the barn (fig. 7).

The roof like is of clasped purlin type and relaid with the barn. The rafters have larger scantling to the studwork but are quite unevenly cut.

5.4 Cow shed 3

A two-bay cow shed stands on the north side of the barn next to the loose box. The low-pitched slate roof of the open bays is supported on a heavy beam across to the with the red brick of the barn forming the back wall and plain 10cm diameter cast iron column, which is likely to be a replacement (plate 15). The floor is made of 9 inch common red bricks, sloping towards the yard. There is a stud partition wall between shed and loose box. Some lime plaster remains on the back wall and it is likely the whole range was lime plastered or washed. Walls are brick and weatherboard.

5.5 Loose box 4

The loose box is fully-enclosed and entered from the adjacent cow shed. It is a small single-bayed structure whose north end is the Listed brick wall. A window has been inserted on the east wall. All the walls are in red brick. The floor is a combination of worn cobbles, yellow

brick setts and a former millstone has been added to the floor by the entrance (plate 16). Surviving fixtures such as a low wooden feeding trough (for calves?) stands against the partition wall, with a hay rack above (fig. 7, plate 16). The single pitch roof is supported on two struts to the purlin.

5.6 Loose box 5

A second loose box is located on the south side of the barn porch, although the pair of battened and ledged doors at the south end facing the old farmhouse indicate this was originally the chaise house (plate 17) mentioned in the auction catalogue. Wall-framing is exposed on the east side only, which is primary-braced in thin timbers the same as the wagon lodge. These have plaster infill panels as well, related to its use as for livestock also indicated by the triangular feeding trough (fig. 7). The floor is made from robust 9 x 2 inch floor bricks and there is a half heck door out to the yard (plate 4). The style of roof is identical to the other barn lean-to structures roof and it is clear they are of contemporary build.

5.7 Piggeries 6

Three brick pigsties stand along the northern wall, facing the warm southern side of the yard (plate 18). Each is typical in design, comprising a small brick floored yard and box (Peters 2003). One of the brick walls has been rebuilt in concrete block (fig. 7). The roofs are single-pitched and pantile-clad with slate eaves and overgrown with ivy, making entry difficult. There are wooden-slatted litter areas inside (plate 19).

The piggeries are built along the Listed yard wall that joins the barn and stable at the north end which is also overgrown with ivy (plate 20). The wall comprises good quality 9 inch soft red bricks neatly laid and pointed-up in Flemish bond, with dimensions varying from around 225-230 x 110 x 65mm, suggesting a 19th century date (Ryan 1996).

5.8 Stable 7

The stable encloses the eastern side of the farmyard along with the rebuilt cowhouse 9, which is modern in date. At the back is a largely derelict lean-to shed 8, which is contemporary with the mid-19th century improvement phase (1840-76). The stable comprises three different elements, a four stall stable, first floor chaff store and a former harness house (7a, fig. 1), the latter forming an L-shaped plan form attached to the piggeries. The main structure has primary-braced and boarded walls, a plain-tiled roof and half-hipped gables (plates 3 & 20). The former harness house is boarded also, with a single-pitch roof. The interior is open to the stable and is now lined-out in steel sheeting from later use as a grain store. Like many of the buildings, good features survive inside, though the exterior has

fares less well as many tiles have been lost and damp has affected the first floor, making it unsafe to enter.

5.8.1 External descriptions

The west elevation faces onto the yard (plate 4). Entry to the yard is by a central half-heck door, while a second door is located on the north side, both held on with wrought iron strap hinges. A stable vent is located to the south of the yard door, operated internally (fig. 7), and there is an eight-pane fixed window also, perhaps a later insertion. Following on from the stable is the modern cow house, which is described in section 5.10.

The door on the north gable has had the bottom part replaced. Beside it is a narrow glazed light above which is a pitching hatch for throwing chaff up into the loft after threshing (plate 20). Elevations to east and south are largely occupied with other structures (fig. 7), but the south gable does contain a small slatted vent up in the chaff store, below the roof hip (plate 1).

5.8.2 Internal description

Inside, the stable is laid out over three bays. Flooring is more complete than any of the other structures, laid in 7 inch brick setts, quite worn and sloping towards a gully on the yard side (fig. 7). Originally the floor was occupied by four timber stalls, only one of the partitions survives, dividing the second and third stalls (fig. 7, plates 21 & 22). The partition is typical in form, built of vertical boards nailed to a curving frame with the high end attached to the wall (east), and passing the full length of the horse to stop them biting or kicking each other (Peters 2003). Troughs and hayracks have been removed, which the stalls were formerly built onto. Above, on three of the four stalls, are hatches over the troughs for dropping chaff down as feed (fig. 7) and there was likely a fourth that no longer remains. Beside the west door is a stout wooden gate for guiding the horses out into the yard (fig. 7, plate 22). The vent on the west wall (plate 23) is designed to lift up and sit at an angle to encourage air circulation but prevent draught.

Wall-framing is in thin unpegged primary-braced timbers, consistent with the other buildings. Bay posts are slightly larger at c.20 x 18cm and mostly-reused. Unusually large knee braces, almost 2m in depth, span the ground and first floors, bolted between posts and tie beams (fig. 9). High wall braces run between post and up to the wall plate, some of which are cut into the studwork, suggesting secondary strengthening of the frame, which is carrying a heavy load. Wall plates are connected by face-halved and bladed scarf joints, one of which was seen on the eastern wall high up on the first floor chaff store (fig. 7).

Originally the interior was plastered on laths over bricks inserted between the studs, according to remains in the north-east corner. The ceiling was also plastered, providing good insulation for the animals at night, especially with the loft above (Peters 2003).

The first floor chaff store is carried on a 23 x 20cm-thick central lateral joist, jointed to thinner bridging joists continuing to each end (plate 21). This is quite a span to carry, and since the floor has started to rot, the central joist is now acro-propped (plate 23), with additional modern posts added to support the joists in the northern bays. 9 inch floorboards are attached to minor joists lapped between the bridging joists and wooden clamps nailed to the studwork.

Entry to the first floor is by a small ladder hatch beside the doorway on the western wall (fig. 7a). The third bay of the loft is divided by a low studded partition attached to the tie beam (fig. 7a, plate 25). Behind the partition is the only chaff chute to remain, feeding down to the stall below via a hatch (removed). Closer inspection was not possible due to the unsafe nature of the floor.

Roof-framing is of double-pegged collar clasped purlin type, the same form as the barn, but with all original members (fig. 9).

A small doorway connects the stable with the former harness house, 7a (fig. 7). Wall-framing is hidden behind a steel sheet lining dating from recent times when it was probably used to store pig food.

5.9 Lean-to 8

Building 8 appears to be referred to in the 1887 auction catalogue as a lean-to cart lodge and nag's stable (fig. 6). More recently it has been used for storage purposes. It too has suffered like the adjacent stable, but worse so, and owing to its poor condition it was not fully-investigated.

The lean-to is linear in form and attached to the rear of the stable, open-sided to the traditional trackway (fig. 7, plate 1). A doorway on the north elevation has later T-hinges and is therefore likely to be an original insertion (plate 20). The boarded primary-braced frame is a slightly more robust version of the framing observed around the Victorian farmstead, but some of the roof timbers have snapped or are on the verge of snapping through damp and the weight of the pantile roof above (plate 26).

5.10 Cow house 9

The Victorian cow house was rebuilt in the modern period by extending the west wall flush with the stable over a new cement blockwork plinth and replacing many of the old timbers with machine-sawn versions. Two half-heck doors have been retained at the front (plate 3), combining metal T-hinges with the old. The rear wall, which stands on a brick/flint plinth, contains original framing (plate 27) but the south wall, shortened by one bay, is new. The roof has been entirely rebuilt and the floor is concrete and covered in straw from recent use.

5.11 Modern machine shed 10

A three-bay open-sided pre-fabricated building stands to the east of the farmstead on the south side of the old farm track. Clearly of 20th century date, plate 28 shows the structure along with other elements of the modern farm.

6.0 DISCUSSION

A farm has existed at Hull's Mill since at least the 16th century, which is the date of the farmhouse (Listed Buildings Online). The farmhouse, owned by the mill, was known as Hull's Mill House as the miller and farmer were the same. Given that a mill has existed here since before 1086 (Listed Buildings Online), it is likely that earlier farmsteads have stood on the site.

Inside the farmhouse, the RCHME inventory of 1916 mentions 'shaped wall posts', probably referring to the same type of jowled post seen in the barn. The List description refers to 'exposed timber frame' (LBS 114315) and it would be useful to compare the structure of the two buildings. Jowled posts were commonly used up until the first half of the 17th century and the thick primary-bracing of the original barn would suggest a similar date. The straight studwork of the porch and rear wall of the midstrey suggests the porch was added later and that there was originally a door on the western side, typical of a 'threshing floor'. Such well-pegged and uniform studwork is likely to have been reused from an earlier building, which was often the case with old barns. Certainly the porch is not attached properly to the barn and it is perhaps this that has led to structural failing around the porch/midstrey area. A date of 1781 is carved into the bay here, which may date the insertion, and perhaps also indicate the date of the present mill, which is listed as 18th century (EHER 29681). During the 18th century good building timber was rare and it was common to recycle old buildings in this way, especially on farms, where the buildings had a utilitarian function.

No evidence was found in the survey to suggest alternative wall-coverings or roofing materials to the barn and it is assumed the barn was always boarded and tiled, the latter of which was quite expensive at the time.

The post-medieval farmstead was cleared, leaving only the barn that was retained when the farm was improved in the Victorian period, probably in the early stages of the so-called 'Golden Age of Agriculture', which lasted from the 1840s to the 1870s. The farm was quite small at 28 acres and essentially arable, with small portions of pasture and woodland. The form and construction of the other structures is fairly typical of late 18th and early 19th century farm buildings and not dissimilar to the barn, but the quality of timber is interior.

The improvement structures blend-in with the barn in its rural setting and are largely unaltered, containing important historic fixtures and fittings. For example, the stable, which is a nice example, retains one of its stall dividers and a chaff loft above; Chaff being fed to the horses below through chutes. Most stables had hay or chaff lofts, but it is unusual for one to have survived, and the stall dividers even more so.

The survival of a 19th century auction catalogue in the Essex Records Office has made the interpretation of the farm structures relatively easy, meaning that an idea of how the Victorian farm 'worked' can be gained. The layout utilises a planned form around a single square yard open to the warm southern side, incorporating a barn, wagon lodge/granary, stable, piggeries, cow shed, loose boxes and chaise house. Entry into the yard was in the west corner from the lane and exiting eastwards to the fields. The barn was used for threshing and storing grain and fodder crops, with high cart doors facing the yard to bring in the laden harvest carts, but could also be used for keeping animals over winter. Attached is a wagon lodge, for storing farm vehicles, with a first floor granary for storing the threshed grain. A small herd of cattle were housed in the cow house and in the yard to create manure that was spread on the fields and there was also a small shed and loose box, often used for calving or sick animals. A chaise house was situated close to the house for the convenience of the farmer/miller. The stable held working horses, one per stall making a total of four. They were fed and groomed in the stalls and hitched up to carts or ploughs by walking through the yard. Nags and carts were kept in the lean-to at the back. Pigs were kept on farms for fattening and to clear up food waste.

7.0 CONCLUSION

Hull's Mill Farm comprises an interesting and cohesive group of 19th-century farm buildings built on a planned courtyard layout. It incorporates a barn from the earlier post-medieval farmstead that is likely to be broadly contemporary with the house. During the mid-19th century many farms in Essex underwent agricultural improvement. Sometimes new farms were established but often the existing farm buildings were replaced whilst retaining the larger more useful buildings, inevitably the barn, in the new layout. Such changes occurred throughout East Anglian, the main agrarian centre of the country, and are therefore regarded as important areas of study by the Regional Research Agenda (Brown & Glazebrook 2000).

The farm is a particularly good surviving example of a Victorian farming unit built in the vernacular tradition, other examples recently recorded being Chalk End Farm, Roxwell and Hoe Mill Farm, Woodham Walter. Unlike many Essex farms, few modern alterations or structures have been added to spoil the character and appearance of the farm; a rare survival and mostly due to the relocation of the farm complex in modern times. Not only is much of its historic character and integrity intact but also important fixtures and fittings such as stalls, lofts, floors, feeders and troughs and wall-coverings. Historic character, fabric and features are often lost as farms develop over time, especially during the intensive development of agriculture in the modern period. Thus the importance of the farm lies in the group value of the planned complex that has hardly changed since the Victorian era.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks are due to Mr Andy Nott for commissioning the works and to the architects, Medusa Design, for supplying drawings for use in the survey. Thanks also to Mr Gagen and his family for their interest and cooperation. The assistance of staff at the Essex Records Office is also acknowledged. Fieldwork, recording and photography were undertaken by the author. Illustrations were prepared by the author and produced by Andrew Lewsey. The project was managed by Mark Atkinson of ECC FAU and monitored by Teresa O'Connor of ECC HEM, on behalf of the Local Planning Authority.

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Fig.1. Site location and block plan

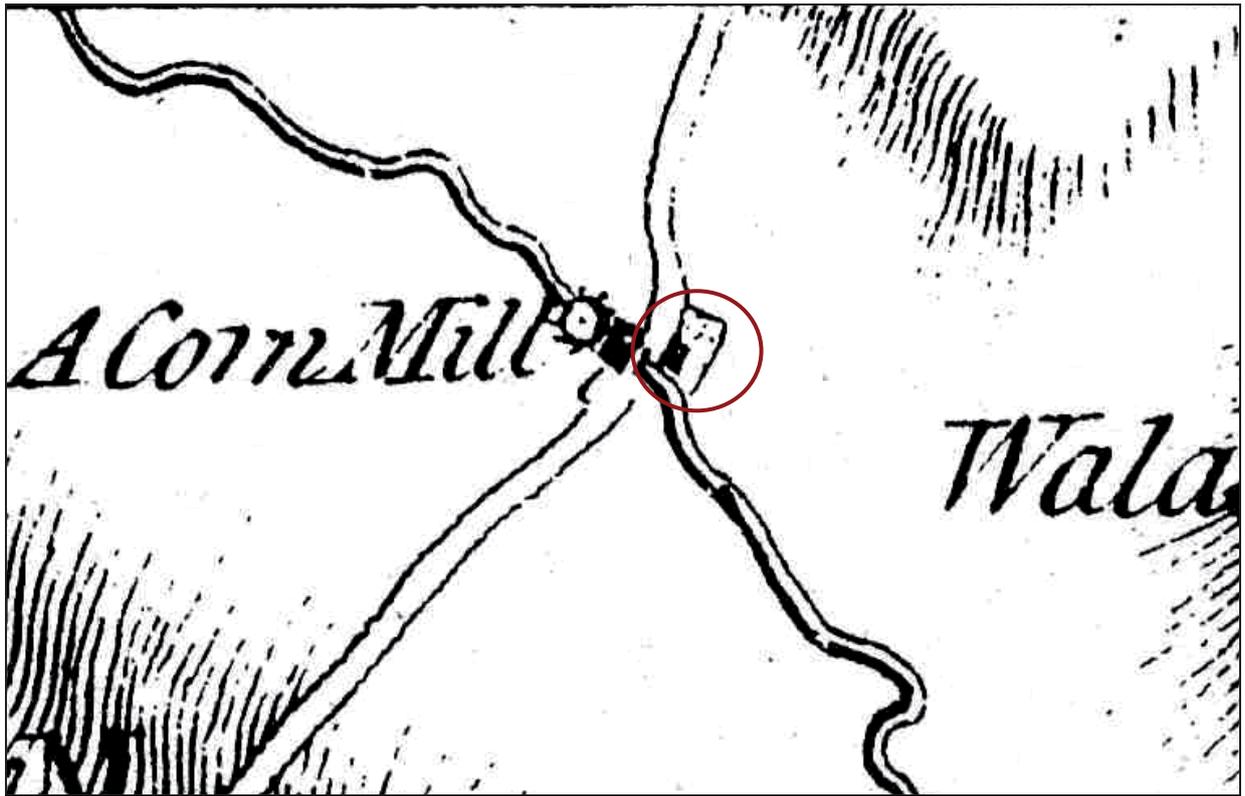


Fig. 2 Chapman and Andre map of Essex, 1777 (plate 8)

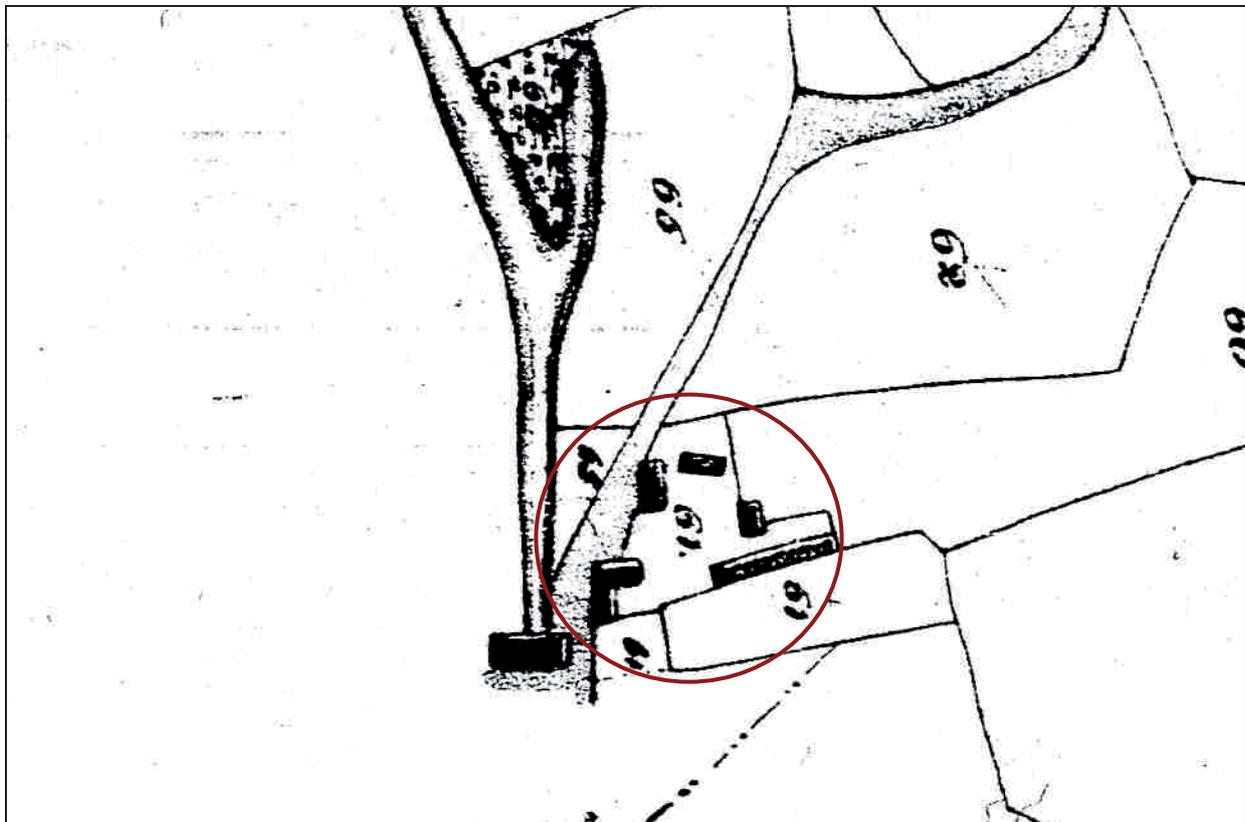


Fig. 3 Tithe map of Great Maplestead, 1840 (D/CT 231)

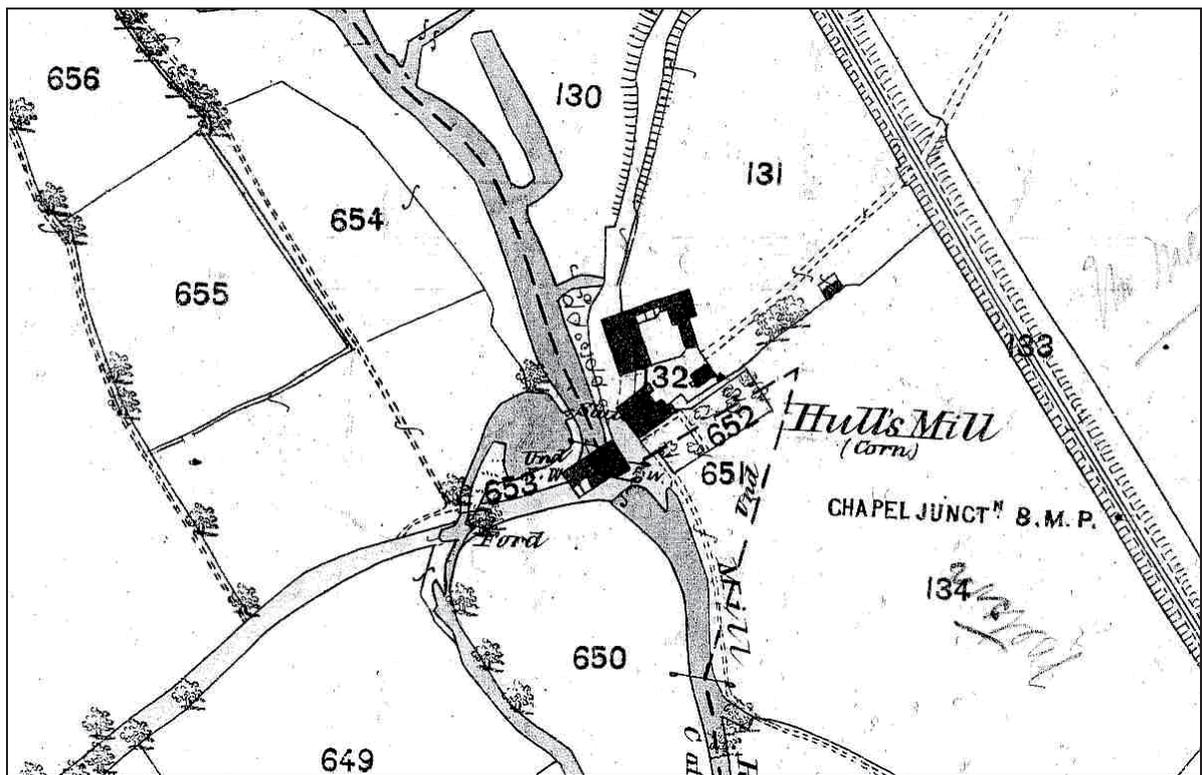


Fig. 4 First edition 25" OS map, 1876 (sheet 16/4)

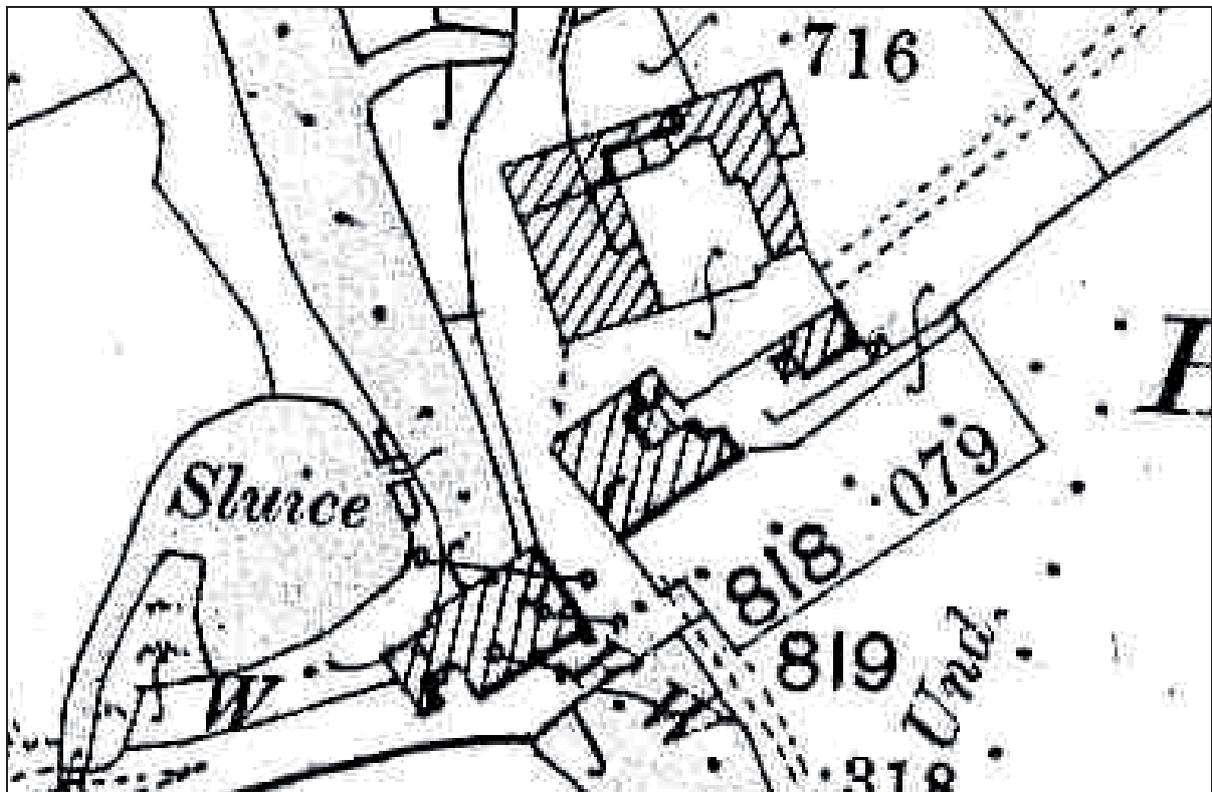


Fig. 5 Second edition 25" OS map, 1897 (sheet 16/4)

THE "GULLS MILL" PROPERTY,

Situate in the Parishes of Great Maplestead, and Sible Hedingham,

COMPRISES

A TIMBER PLASTER AND TILED DWELLING HOUSE,

Containing, Entrance Hall, Keeping Room, Parlour, Kitchen, Dairy, Cellar, Bake and Wash-house, Coal-house, Office, Workshop, 4 Bedrooms, 2 Attics, and several closets:

A Substantially Erected Brick, Timber, Weather Boarded and Slated

"WATER CORN MILL"

Placed over a 9 feet Water Fall, containing 4 Floors, and Storage Accommodation for over 1,000 Qrs. of Grain and Meal, and ample Space for 3 pairs of Stones.

Brick Built and Slated ENGINE and BOILER HOUSES with Steam Shaft, and Range of lean-to Timber Built and Slated Buildings, forming Steam Mill, Pastry, and Counting House, and possessing Ample Accommodation for running 3 pairs of Stones.

THE OUTBUILDINGS

COMPRISE :

Timber, Weather Boarded, and Tiled Barn, (asphalted throughout), with lean-to Slated Cattle Shed in 2 bays, and Loose Box. Lean to Slated Chaisehouse. Range of Four lean-to Fowlhouses, 2-bayed Waggon Lodge with Loft over. Range of Three Brick and Pantiled Piggeries, Timber, Weather Boarded, and Tiled Cart Horse Stables for 4 Horses, with Harness House, and Loft over. Timber, Weather Boarded, and Slated Cowhouse, Calves' Pound, and Nag Stable for 3 horses. A lean-to Pantiled Cartlodge and Nag Stable. A Brick Built and Pantiled Cartlodge, in 2 compartments, and

45 a . 2 r . 31 p .

(MORE OR LESS.)

OF CAPITAL MEADOW AND ARABLE LAND,

As per following Schedule :

No. on Ordnance Map.	Name of Field.	In Great Maplestead.			In Sible Hedingham.			Cultivation.	Total.		
		A.	R.	P.	A.	R.	P.		A.	R.	P.
130 Pt of	Garden	0	0	7					0	0	7
131	Meadow	1	3	39				Grass	1	3	59
132 & 652	House, Yards, &c.	0	1	23	0	0	12		0	1	35
134 & 651	Home Field	4	3	11	0	1	10	Arable	5	3	21
135	Meadow	1	3	22				Grass	1	3	22
143	Mill Field	27	0	57				Arable	27	0	57
654	Meadow				3	1	24	Grass	3	1	24
655	Meadow				1	1	3	Grass	1	1	3
649	Meadow				2	1	33	Grass	2	1	33
650	Mill Meadow				1	2	34	Grass	1	2	34
653	House, &c.				0	0	16		0	0	16
		36	1	19	9	1	12		45	2	31

As in the occupation of Mr. Charles Metson, a yearly Michaelmas Tenant, subject to 6 months' notice to quit, at the very inadequate Rent of £80 per annum, he paying in addition Insurance, Tithe and parochial charges.

All the fixtures and fittings in the Water and Steam Mill, including the water wheel, are the property of the Tenant, but it is believed may be taken by the Purchaser, at a valuation to be made in the usual way.

A portion of this Lot is sold subject to payment yearly of £7 10s. 0d., to the Poor of the Parish of Braintree, in Essex.

About 1a. 2r. 0p. of this Lot is Copyhold of the Manor of Hedingham Upland subject to a Quit Rent of 2s. per annum, and another portion thereof is subject to a Free Rent to the Manor of Grays of 4s. 2d. per annum, also a piece of Pasture called Roves is held of the Manor of Dynes Hall. 8½ acres called "Lorchons" are also holden of the Manor of Overhall in Gestingthorpe, subject to Quit Rents of 2s. and 1s. 2d. per annum. The Copyholds are believed to be subject to fines arbitrary.

LAND TAX FOR SIBLE HEDINGHAM 8s. 10d. PER ANNUM. REMAINDER BELIEVED TO BE FREE OF LAND TAX.

Fig. 6 Auction catalogue, 1887

Fig.7a. Ground floor

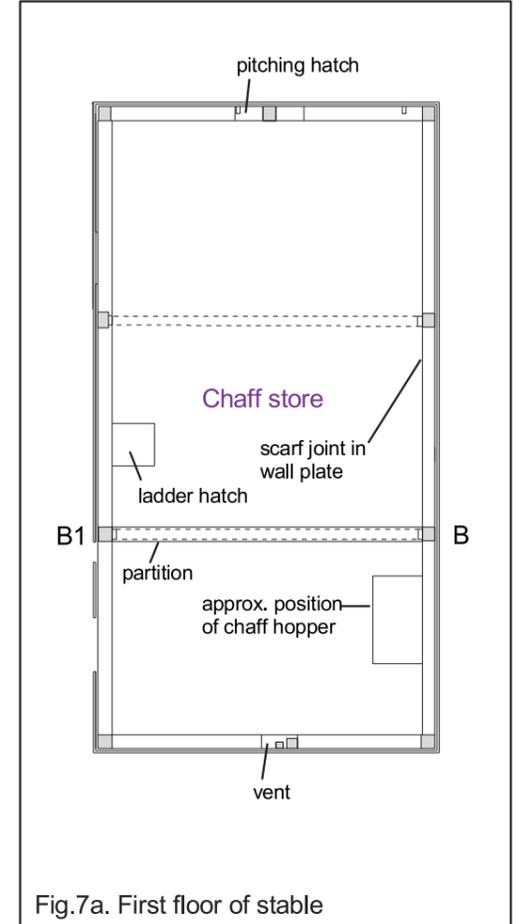
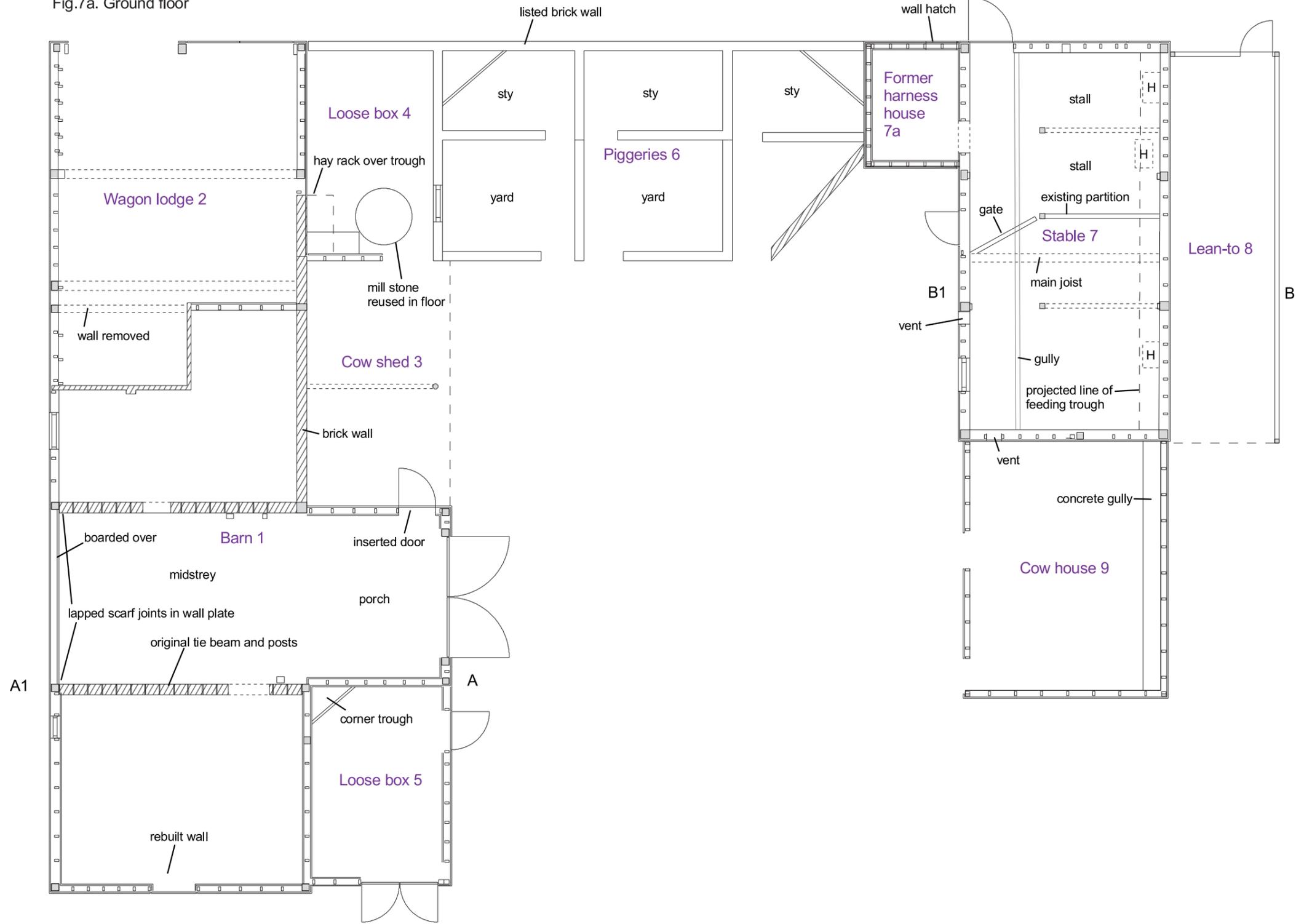


Fig.7a. First floor of stable

Key
 // // // // rebuilt
 H hatch

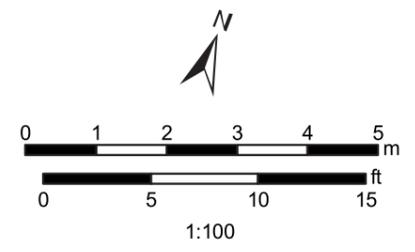


Fig.7. Existing plans of historic farmstead

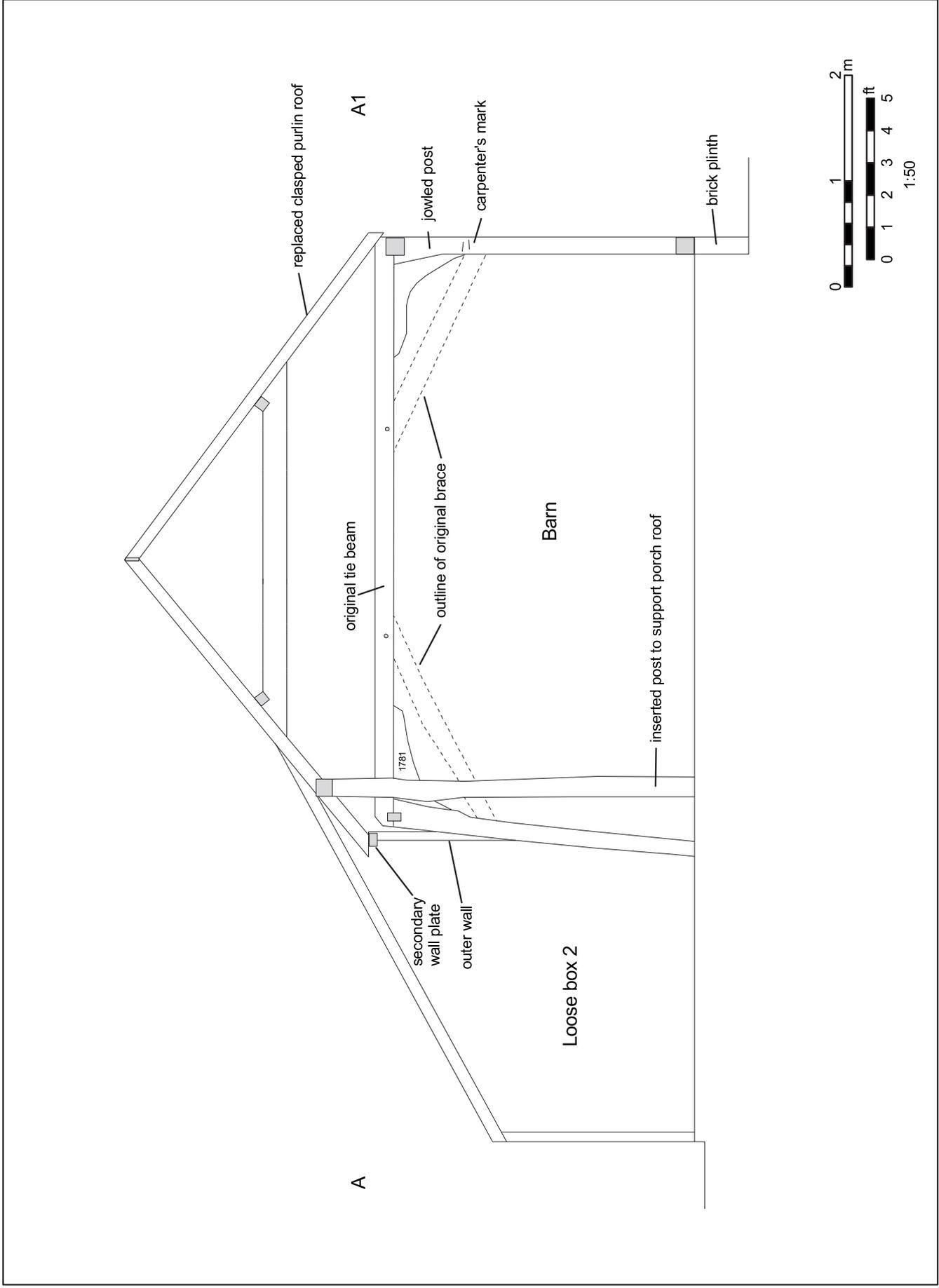


Fig.8. Section A - A1 through barn

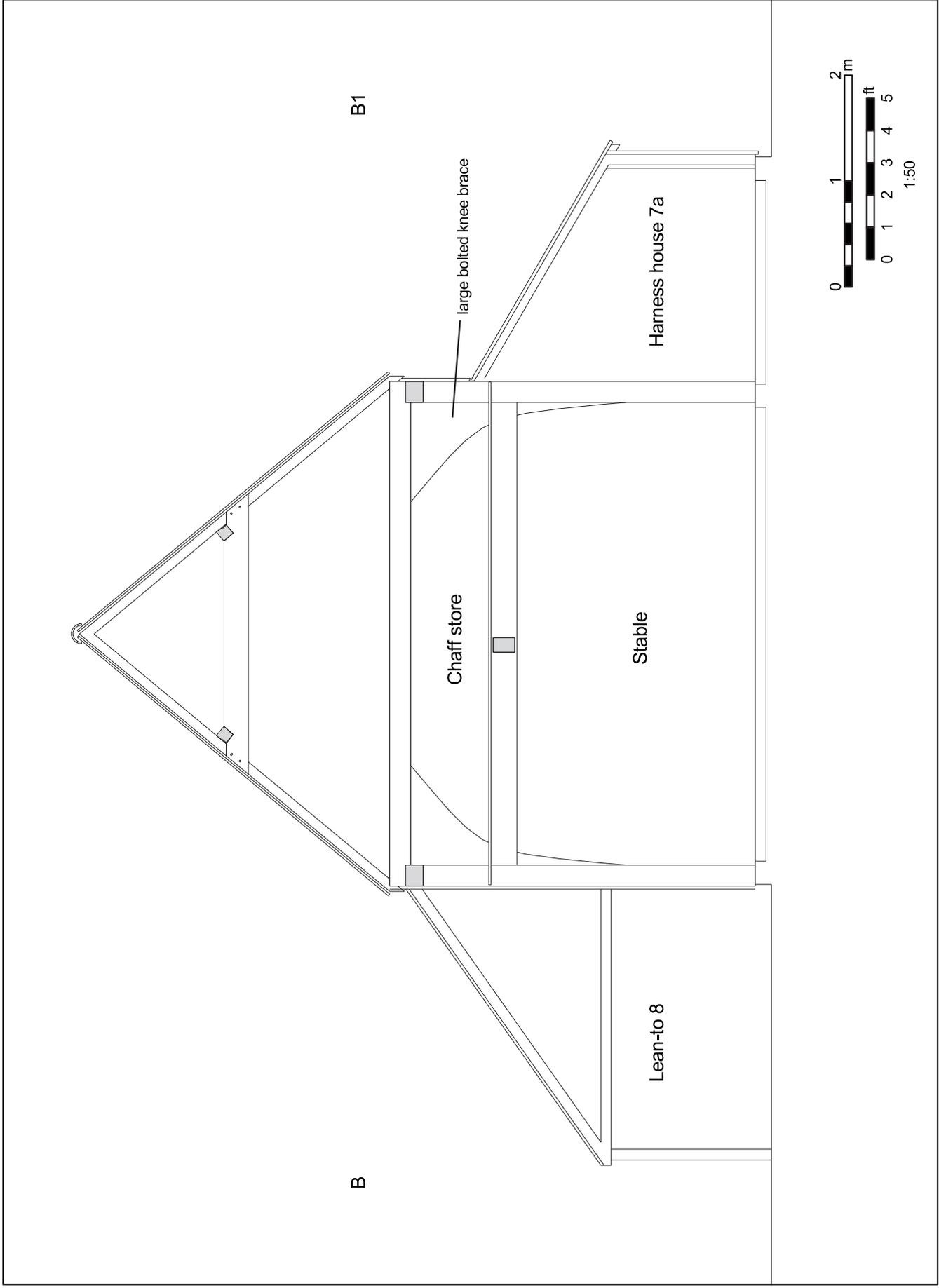


Fig.9. Section B - B1 through stable



Plate 1 Historic farmstead viewed to west



Plate 2 Main barn range



Plate 3 Stable viewed to north-east



Plate 4 Barn viewed to west



Plate 5 Rear of barn viewed to north



Plate 6 Barn viewed to south with former farmhouse and mill in background



Plate 7 Interior of barn viewed to south



Plate 8 Interior of barn viewed to north



Plate 9 Construction detail around porch on south side of midstrey



Plate 10 Wall-framing detail viewed to south



Plate 11 Wall-framing detail viewed to south-east



Plate 12 Wagon lodge and Listed brick wall viewed to south



Plate 13 Interior of wagon lodge viewed to south



Plate 14 Comparison of barn and wagon lodge structures on west wall



Plate 15 Interior of cow shed 3 viewed to north



Plate 16 Interior of loose box 4 viewed to south



Plate 17 Interior of loose box 5 viewed to south



Plate 18 Piggeries viewed to north from yard



Plate 19 Litter stall inside sty



Plate 20 Stable and lean-to 8 viewed to south-west



Plate 21 Interior of stable viewed to south



Plate 22 Interior of stable viewed to north



Plate 23 Stable vent on west wall (25cm scale)



Plate 24 Chaff store viewed to north



Plate 25 Chaff store viewed to south, showing low partition



Plate 26 Interior of lean-to 8 viewed to north



Plate 27 Interior of cow house viewed to north-east



Plate 28 Pre-fabricated shed 10 (right) on approach to modern farm

Appendix 1: Contents of Archive

Site name: Hull's Mill Farm, Hull's Mill Lane, Great Maplestead, Essex

Project no. 2182

Index to the Archive

Document wallet containing:

1. Research Archive

- 1.1 ECC HEM design brief
- 1.2 ECC FAU written scheme of investigation (WSI)
- 1.3 Two copies of the client report (one unbound)
- 1.4 CD containing digital images, drawings & pdf-formatted report

2. Site Archive

- 2.1 Photographic registers
- 2.2 Photographic record (colour digital & 35mm monochrome prints)
- 2.3 Site notes & annotated survey plans

Appendix 2: EHER Summary Sheet

Site Name/Address: Hull's Mill Farm, Hull's Mill Lane, Great Maplestead, Essex	
Parish: Great Maplestead	District: Braintree
NGR: TL 7931 3320	Oasis ref.: 78534
Type of Work: Building recording	Site Director/Group: Andy Letch, ECC FAU
Dates of Work: February 2009	Size of Area Investigated: N/A
Curating Museum: Braintree	Funding Source: Mr A. Nott
Further Work Anticipated? No	Related EHER Nos.: 29682-84; LBS 11416-18
Final Report: Summary in EAH	
Periods Represented: Post-medieval & Victorian	
<p>SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:</p> <p>A programme of building recording was undertaken on the extensive remains of a redundant mid-19th century farmstead at Hull's Mill Farm prior to conversion to a live-work unit. The original post-medieval probable 17th century farmstead was improved during the boom years of Victorian farming, based on the prevalent courtyard plan form of three ranges surrounding a south-facing stock yard.</p> <p>The barn has jowled bay posts and substantial primary-bracing elements combined with pegged studwork to the porch and midstrey reused from an earlier structure, suggesting the original barn was built without a porch and had a rear doorway. A carved date of 1782 suggests they may have been added at this time. The other elements are good timber-framed examples of typical farm buildings: stable, cow sheds, chaise house, wagon lodge loose boxes, using thin primary-bracing typical of the late 18th and early 19th centuries. In particular, the stable contains good fixtures and fittings in the form of a stall and first floor chaff store, while there is evidence for a granary above the wagon lodge. The brick-built piggeries are a rare survival.</p> <p>The structures survive in good condition with little modern impact and therefore have high group value.</p>	
Previous Summaries/Reports None	
Author of Summary: Andrew Letch	Date of Summary: 18th June 2010