



**CHESTNUT COTTAGE AND BARNs  
COMMON STREET  
RAVENSTONE**

**HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING**

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## **Preface**

Every effort has been made in the preparation of this document to provide as complete a report as possible, within the terms of the commission. All statements and opinions in this document are offered in good faith. Albion Archaeology cannot accept responsibility for errors of fact or opinion resulting from data supplied by a third party, or for any loss or other consequence arising from decisions or actions made upon the basis of facts or opinions expressed in this document.

The building recording was undertaken by Mark Phillips BA. Mark Phillips is the author of the report and the project was managed on behalf of Albion Archaeology by Hester Cooper-Reade BA (hons), MIfA.

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## **Structure of this report**

Section 1 is an introductory chapter giving the background to the report. Historical background information derived from historic documents and secondary sources is presented in Section 2. A description of the building forms Section 3 with the analysis of the building in Section 4. The bibliography forms Section 5.

Figures are included at the end of the report.

## **Version History**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

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### 1.1 *Background to the Report*

Planning consent (13/00799/FUL) was granted for a single-storey extension to Chestnut Cottage and conversion of the Grade II listed barns to the north of Chestnut Cottage to an independent dwelling. The application included associated landscaping and boundary alterations.

Chestnut Cottage and barns lie within Ravenstone Conservation Area and are surrounded by a large number of Grade II listed buildings, mainly cottages but also the parish church and priory, dating to the medieval and post-medieval period.

A condition was attached to the planning condition in order to mitigate the loss of archaeological evidence. The condition required a programme of historic building recording to be carried out in advance of works and archaeological monitoring of the groundworks. A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced by Albion Archaeology sets out methodologies for building recording and archaeological monitoring (Albion 2014).

Albion Archaeology was commissioned to carry out the programme of archaeological works in accordance with the requirements of the planning condition. Following amendments to the proposed development works, the archaeological officer advising the local planning authority agreed that archaeological monitoring of groundworks was no longer required.

This report presents the results of historic building recording.

### 1.2 *Site Location and Description*

Chestnut Cottage and Barns are situated east off Common Street, Ravenstone, with the western walls adjoining the street (figure 1). The buildings are arranged in an U-shape open to the south. There are detached residential properties to the north and south of Chestnut Cottage and Barns. There are no houses on the land plots to the east and west.

Chestnut Cottage was converted into a one-bedroom residential dwelling in the late 1960s. The Barns to the north of the cottage were used as garages and for storage. The two-storey coursed rubble stone and thatched barn is a Grade II listed building dating to 1822. It has a cart entry in the eastern bay and a draught door on the north side.

The application area is centred on grid reference SP 8402019 5065111 and lies between 70mOD and 75mOD. The underlying geology is formed of Rutland Formation of argillaceous rocks with sand and limestone and is edging onto Blisworth Limestone Formation in the east. The superficial deposits are not comprehensively recorded but consist partially of Oadby Member and lime rich loamy soils<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Contains British Geological Survey materials © NERC [2014]; and material from Land Information System - LandIS © Cranfield University [2014]



### **1.3 Project Objectives**

The requirements are for building archaeological building recording to English Heritage Level 2 (English Heritage 2006).

The objectives of the building recording are to:

- provide a visual record of the structures prior to conversion of the building. This will be undertaken in accordance with the brief. The photographic survey will be to English Heritage Level 2 standard.
- provide a review of the local and regional historical context, with reference to the appropriate regional research agendas. This needs to be adequately detailed to place the findings of the recording in context and to inform future conservation and management decisions.
- produce a high quality, fully integrated archive suitable for long-term deposition in order to ‘preserve by record’ the buildings in their current form prior to conversion.



## 2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

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A brief historical background focussing on the proposed development area is given in P. Johnson's *Heritage Statement* (Johnson 2013). Its main points are summarised here. A total of 47 sites are recorded by the Milton Keynes HER within 500m of the proposed development; most are post-medieval in date and relate to standing buildings. Four relate to the parish church and six to Ravenstone Priory

The layout of the cottage, barns and other ancillary buildings is depicted on the first edition Ordnance Survey Map from 1882 and has remained largely unchanged. Changes have occurred in the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century when the internal division of the yard was removed.

Older historic maps like the Jefferey's (1760) and Bryant Map (1820) show that the main focus of the village is along the northern stretch of Common Street and in North End, where the parish church is situated. The location of Chestnut Cottage and Barns falls into this settlement core along Common Street. Even though the barn north of Chestnut Cottage dates to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, it is likely that the site was already occupied in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century.

The majority of listed buildings within a 500m radius of the PDA are situated along Common Street and at North end. They mainly date to the 18<sup>th</sup> century with some dating to the 17<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Little is known of the prehistoric periods in Ravenstone. A human inhumation, comprising a crouched burial with a breaker, dating to the early Bronze Age has been recorded c.2 km south of the site, west of Ravenstone Mill Road. An Iron Age enclosure has also been recorded in the parish, at Chitmore Hill (Mynard 1970).

The general area around the present-day village was occupied during the Roman period. Roman remains have not been found in the village, but a bath house has been recorded in Black Furlong field, c.1km southwest of the site.

The early history of Ravenstone is not well understood but the settlement may have originated during the Saxon period. The Domesday Book entry suggests that the origins of Ravenstone date back to at least the early medieval period if not to the Anglo-Saxon period. It is recorded as a medium sized settlement in the Bunsty Hundred with 20 households, 6 plough lands, meadow for 6 ploughs, woodland for 300 pigs and a mill.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> <http://domesdaymap.co.uk/place/SP8550/ravenstone/> accessed 14/05/2014





### 3. BUILDING RECORDING: DESCRIPTION

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#### 3.1 Methodology

Throughout the project the standards set in the IFA *Standard and Guidance for the Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings and Structures* and English Heritage's *Understanding Historic Buildings* (2006a) have been adhered to. All work has been done in accordance with the IFA Code of Conduct. Terminology for describing timber structures follows the CBA glossary (Alcock *et al* 1996).

In line with the English Heritage historic building survey definitions (English Heritage 2006a), this survey has been undertaken to English Heritage Level 2 and in accordance with the agreed WSI.

The survey comprised an examination of the building, field notes and a photographic record. The field notes were made as annotations and measurements added to drawings provided by the architect with additional notes and sketches. The architects' drawings as submitted with the planning application were used as the basis for the survey. The photographic record consists of high resolution digital images. The selected digital images which accompany the text have been reproduced at a lower resolution in order to ensure digital versions of the report are of a manageable size.

The building survey was undertaken on 11 June 2014.

#### 3.2 The Buildings

The buildings are arranged in an inverted U-shape, surrounding a rectangular yard area which is open to the south (figures 2 and 3).

The western range lies adjacent to the street. It is a single-storey range, approximately 38m long. The southern part of this range was converted to residential use in the 1960s and is not included in this survey. The remainder of the range consists of stables, a tack room and an open-fronted shelter shed. The north range consists of a barn with two single storey stables at its eastern end. The western half the barn retains a steep thatched roof but its eastern end this has been replaced with a lower roof. The eastern range consists of row of single storey shelter sheds and enclosed compartments. The easternmost compartment of the north range and the whole of the east range are in separate ownership and do not form part of the present survey.

#### 3.3 West Range

The part of the west range included in the building survey, excluding Chestnut Cottage at the south, is 18.5m long. It comprises from south to north, a stable, a tack room and an open-fronted shelter shed.

The walls forming the western elevation are in coursed limestone rubble (image 1). Separate sections of masonry correspond to the stable/tack room and the shelter shed. Straight joins mark the point where the shelter shed abuts the north range and



to the south where it abuts the masonry of the stable/tack room. Where the stable/tack room adjoins Chestnut Cottage the masonry in the external elevation is largely continuous with a straight join only at the top of the wall. Larger, squared quoin stones on the southern side of the join could indicate that the masonry of the stable/tack room has been raised at some time. The only opening in the western elevation of the west range is a small, unglazed opening at eaves level in the stable.

The east elevation of the west range is in brick (images 2, 6 and 7). The east wall of the stable contains a centrally located heck door and windows to either side with horizontal pivoted vents in the upper part. The brickwork is in Flemish garden wall (Sussex) bond. Dark red-brown headers used in alternate courses contrast the red brick in the rest of the wall to form a pattern of vertical lines of headers (image 6).

The brickwork for the stable and the tack room are separated by a straight join (image 7). Regular bonding and closers to the south of the join contrast with more irregular brickwork to the north, indicating that the brickwork of the tack room is a later addition. The tack room has three-light window with two timber mullions and a central opening casement. The brickwork adjacent to the right-hand side of the window contains a straight join, possibly connected with the construction of the window.

In plan the location of junctions in the limestone masonry suggest a construction sequence beginning with the barn in the north range, followed by the shelter shed which abuts it and then the remainder of the west range extending to the south.

### 3.3.1 West Range: Stable

The stable is situated between a converted residential section to the south (Chestnut Cottage) and a tack room to the north (images 6 to 12).

It measures 7.5m long north to south by 5.5m wide. A door in the middle of its east wall opens into the yard and an internal door in the north-east corner leads to the tack room (image 8). The stable is lit by two windows in the east wall (described above) and ventilation is provided in the form of a small unglazed opening located high up in the middle of the west wall. A small square hatch at ceiling height in the middle of the north wall gives access to the loft space above the tack room.

The north, west and south walls are coursed limestone rubble and the east wall is brick. The north wall is an internal cross-wall forming the division between the stable and tack room. Its junction with the west wall is a straight join, indicating that it was inserted after the construction of the west wall.

The floor surface consists of a mixture of brick, rounded pebbles and modern concrete repairs. Bricks laid on edge have been used to create strip with a slightly cambered surface which runs from the external door to the middle of the back wall. More bricks form a surface next to the east wall, leading to the door into the tack room. The floor in the southern part of the stable and in a single stall in the north part consists of rounded pebbles. Elsewhere the floor is concrete.



A three-bay roof is supported by two queen post trusses (images 8 and 9). The remains of a lath and plaster ceiling remain over the northern bay. It is attached to the underside of the Queen-post strainer beams with sloping soffit sections at the east and west sides of the room. Surviving joists in the central bay and the plastered soffit which extends along the whole west side of the stable indicate the ceiling formerly extended across all three bays.

### **3.3.1.1 Fittings**

Feed troughs run along the north and south walls (images 10 and 11). Those on the south side are supported by four posts while those on the north side are supported by two posts in the west and by the stall dividers in the east. Tether rings are attached to the rails on the front of the troughs, five at the south and three at the north. A wooden hay-rack is fitted in the north-west corner of the stable.

The south side of the stable is open. Three stall dividers in the north of the stable are used to form a 1.5m wide stall towards the east side of the stable and an approximately square area in the north-west corner. Both sides of the easternmost stall divider and the eastern side of the adjacent divider are covered in vertical tongue and groove boards which are planed and have a beaded moulding on one edge. The remainder have rough sawn vertical boards. Hinge pintles and a staple fitted to the posts on the ends of the stall dividers indicate that a gate was fitted to form a loose box in the north-west corner of the room.

### **3.3.1.2 Modern repairs**

Modern repairs or additions to the building comprise concrete repairs or replacement in parts of the floor. A section of the south wall has been repaired with Fletton brick at its east end (image 10).

### **3.3.2 West Range: Tack Room**

The tack room is situated to the north of the stable. It is 2m wide from north to south and 5.5m long (images 13 to 19).

The room is accessed via a door in its southeast corner that leads into the stable (image 13). It is lit by a single window that occupies most of the width of the east wall. A fireplace is located on the north wall, slightly offset to the west (image 17). It is in brick with a single thickness for the sides of the fireplace and a cambered arch over. The chimney above is stepped in to form a narrow flue at ceiling height.

A flat lath and plaster ceiling is attached to joists supported by two transverse beams below the ceiling. These are approximately square in section with narrow, plain chamfers.

#### **3.3.2.1 Fittings**

Fittings in the room indicate its former function for the storage of horse equipment.

Along the south wall, close to ceiling height is a row of five saddle racks. These consist of timbers embedded in the masonry. They project 460mm from the wall and are five sided in cross-section. Boards fitted to the sloping upper surfaces form an inverted V-shaped support (image 19).



Two timbers are attached close to ceiling level in the west end of the room, one across the west wall and the other occupies the west end of north wall. These contain the stubs left by cutting off 30mm diameter pegs, five on the west wall and three on the north wall (image 16).

A wooden shelf over the door is supported, by a shaped bracket fixed to the ceiling at its western end and a flattened piece of iron driven into the head of the door frame (image 13).

In the eastern end of the north wall is a narrow cupboard just over 1m tall with its top level flush with the ceiling. A frame around the opening carries a simple beaded moulding. The door is a plain two-panel door in pine with plain L-shaped hinges (image 17).

The window in the east side of the room has a central opening casement hung from plain L-shape hinges. It has 15mm thick glazing bars with a plain chamfer (image 18).

Most of the woodwork in the room has a light, bluish-grey paint finish. The saddle racks and pegs for harness are not painted.

### **3.3.3 West Range: Shelter Shed**

The shelter shed is situated between barn in the north range and the tack room to the south. It is 8m long from north to south and 5.5m wide (images 20 to 26).

It is three-bay shed open-fronted shed. The open eastern side is supported by two brick columns (images 20 and 21). The columns have square bases 460mm across with three courses visible. The columns are made from 70mm thick, quarter-round bricks with four in each course. Square wooden pads on the top of the columns support the wall plate and tie beams. The pads consist of two blocks of wood, side by side, joined with two bolts.

The walls are coursed rubble limestone. The north side is formed by the south wall of the adjacent barn. Movement of the west wall has caused it to become detached from the south wall.

The three-bay roof is supported by queen post trusses matching those in the rest of the western range (images 25 and 26). The wood retains traces of white wash. The upper part of the roof (the common rafters and ridge plate) is a modern replacement.

#### **3.3.3.1 Fittings**

The remains of feed trough extend along the west wall (images 22 and 23). The base of the trough is set just above floor level with a fillet of cement across the gap. The front of the trough was supported by seven posts; however the lining and rail are missing.



### 3.3.4 North Range

The majority of this range consists of a barn, whose western gable end extends to the street frontage (images 1, 3 and 4). The eastern end of the range consists of a three-bay stable or byre. The two eastern bays of this building are in separate ownership and do not form part of the present survey.

### 3.3.5 North Range: Barn

The barn is 20m long, 5.5m wide and 3.7m high to the eaves (images 1 and 27 to 35). A brick partition at ground floor level divides it into 13.5m long eastern and 6.5m long western sections. The partition wall supports a narrow mezzanine floor or gallery in the western section of the barn.

The walls are in coursed rubble limestone at least 0.5m thick. The exterior of the western gable wall has roughly squared quoins at its corners and is thickened at the base with two offsets; the lower one a plain offset in the coursed rubble and the upper one formed by dressed stones with a straight chamfer (image 1). The gable contains a small triangular opening positioned near the top which is lined with roughly dressed stones. These openings are often referred to as owl holes. Immediately beneath the opening is a date stone inscribed with the initials W + K and dated 1822.

The doorways comprise a full height double door in the centre of the south wall and single doors at the east end of the south wall and the north end of the east wall (images 34 and 35). The main opening in the south wall has been glazed to light the west end of the barn but retains its earlier doors on the exterior. A low, planked door is visible externally in the centre of the north wall but has been blocked and plastered over on the interior. This would have been a draught door located opposite the double doors in the south side. In general the door openings are formed from undressed rubble masonry, the exception being the door in the eastern end wall which has brick dressings.

A single window in the north wall at eaves height lights the small mezzanine floor. This is a fixed light with narrow glazing bars holding two rows of four panes (image 31). Other unglazed openings comprise the triangular vent high in the west gable (mentioned above) and a narrow splayed opening set high in the eastern part of the north wall.

The mezzanine or gallery is supported by the ground floor partition wall and two short return walls next the north and south walls. These hold two transverse beams and a series of short east-west aligned joists. The upper floor is accessed via a modern wooden stair built against the east side of the brick partition. The west side of the mezzanine has a modern balcony rail (c.80cm high) covered with tongue and groove boards on its west side. The east side of the mezzanine has a stud-and-plank partition wall. The studs are nailed to a cross-beam at their base and tennoned into a rail at the top. The planks are plain sawn boards, laid horizontally. The mezzanine is lit by a window in the north wall at eaves level (image 31). The sides of the window opening have brick dressings which appear to be a later insertion in the rubble walling of the barn. The opening extends below the window sill, where it is



filled with brick. The bricks are hand-made (220 x 110 x 70mm) with longitudinal pressure marks, uneven edges and straw impressions on some.

### 3.3.5.1 *Roof*

The roof of the barn comprises a thatched western section and a lower pitch eastern section covered with corrugated-iron. At the break in the roof-line, the steeper eastern part of the roof has a weatherboarded gable wall above the lower roof section. The break corresponds to the position of the western side of the mezzanine floor.

The western part of the roof is in three bays and has three tie-beam, collar beam principle rafter roof trusses (image 32). A crossed lap joint fixed with two pegs is used to join the tops of the principle rafters. These support a ridge piece at the crossed apex and double back-purlins. The purlins appear to have simple splayed scarf joints fixed with pegs. Long diagonal braces in the two eastern bays rise from the foot of the principle rafters to a level above the upper purlins. These are made from half-round softwood and are likely to be later additions used to reinforce the roof. The collar beam in the central truss is made from a reused timber with three mortise holes and a series of stave holes in its underside. The timber comes from a horizontal rail in a wall. The wall it came from had wattle infill and quite widely spaced studs with five stave holes between the adjacent pairs of mortise holes. Two of the roof trusses have carpenters marks. These are deeply-cut Roman numerals made with a chisel. The central truss had no obvious marks. The western truss is marked with II on its western face, close to the lower end of the southern principle rafter. The western face of the eastern truss is marked with III in three places; at the northern end of the tie beam and collar beams and at the lower end of the northern principle rafter.

The lower, eastern part of the roof is in three bays including a short bay above the mezzanine. Details of the roof truss above the eastern edge of the mezzanine are obscured by modern panelling. The two northern bays of the roof are supported by a king post truss made from relatively thin section, machine sawn softwood (image 33). The king post has a raised, splayed head, notched to take the ends of the principle rafters. It widens towards its base with slightly convex curved sides and is through-bolted to the tie beam. The truss has no braces; instead lightweight, raking subsidiary posts rise from the tie beam. The corrugated metal roof is carried by a ridge plank and double back-purlins.

### 3.3.5.2 *Fittings*

The double doors in the middle of the south wall are full height heck doors (separate upper and lower sections) (image 34). The sections are framed with stiles on each side, four rails and braced with a diagonal iron strap. Strap hinges extend across their full width of the doors. These are plano-convex in section with a flattened section for the hinge and cross-shaped decorative terminal ends. The regular appearance of the hinges indicates that they were produced from machine-made metal stock.

The door at the east end of the south wall is a heck door (image 35). The lower section is ledged and braced. A shorter upper section is framed with stiles along



each edge and is fitted with a Suffolk latch with leaf shaped ends. The hinges are of the same type used on the double doors to the west. These are stamped with the name "R. Bates" close to the terminal.

The door at the north end of the east wall is a ledged and braced door with seven narrow planks of probable twentieth century construction (image 5). The hand-made fittings appear to be re-used. It has strap hinges with expanded terminals and a Suffolk latch with leaf shaped ends in a style common in the 18th or early 19th centuries (Hall 56-57, fig 2.82).

### **3.3.6 North Range Stable**

This measures 2m east to west and 3.5m long north to south internally (images 35 to 38). It is a single bay within a building of three bays, being separated by an internal partition. The rest of the building to the east is in separate ownership and did not form part of this survey.

The north wall is of coursed limestone rubble (image 37). It contains a shuttered window opening towards its western end. The window opening appears to be have been formed by infilling a larger door opening; a straight join is visible in the exterior elevation below the east side of the window and inside the stonework below the window is thinner than the rest of the wall.

The south wall is brick with a slatted wooden ventilation panel in its upper part and a door at the western end (images 35 and 36).

The west wall of this building is formed by the coursed limestone rubble wall at the eastern end wall of the adjacent barn. Visible from inside this building, the eastern face of the wall shows a straight join, which is keyed in at intervals, between the south and east walls of the barn (image 38).

The east wall is an internal wall formed by a planked stall divider approximately 1.5m high with plywood panels fixed behind it.

#### **3.3.6.1 Roof**

The roof is supported by a simple tie-beam and rafter truss. This is roughly constructed in waney timber with half-round sections used for the rafters. The rafters are fixed to the tie-beam with pegged tenon joints. The base of the rafters and the ends of the tie-beam have assembly marks to match up the joins; I at the north side and II at the south. The roof has been repaired in the recent past. It has purlins and a 'kingpost' nailed to the centre of the truss in machine sawn, softwood. The roof covering is corrugated iron.

#### **3.3.6.2 Floor**

The building is floored with pitched limestone slabs aligned east-west in the western half of the floor and north-south in the eastern part. A section in the south-east corner has been repaired with concrete.



### 3.3.6.3 *Fittings*

Fittings in this room consist of evidence for a former feed trough which would have run along the north side of the stall but has been removed; cut-off at its eastern end. The eastern side of the space is formed by a roughly constructed wooden stall divider (images 36 and 37).





## 4. BUILDING ANALYSIS

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### 4.1 Introduction

The buildings form part of a farmyard associated with Westcott House, which stands a short distance to the south. The farmyard forms a U-shaped courtyard arrangement open on its south side. A large barn forms the north side and single storey buildings are ranged along the east and west sides, facing inwards towards the courtyard. The barn is a former threshing barn with full height doors in its south side and a (blocked) draught door in the north wall. The buildings on the sides of the courtyard include open-fronted buildings on the east and west sides (either cart sheds or animal shelters) and stables on the southern side.

The first edition 25" Ordnance Survey map of 1881 shows the farmyard in its present plan form. A date stone in the western gable wall of the barn is inscribed with the date 1822 and the initials W + K.

### 4.2 Construction Sequence

Vertical joins in the masonry between different buildings provide evidence for their probable construction sequence.

On the street frontage there are straight joins between the barn, the shelter shed and the stables. The barn was built first, followed in sequence by the shelter shed, the stables and the southernmost section of the range, now in residential use.

At the south-east corner of the barn, the end wall meets the south wall in a tied-in, straight join. The end wall appears to be the later part, extending slightly over the south wall at the top. The significance of this is not entirely clear; the corresponding relationship at the north-east corner of the barn is obscured by the presence of a door as well as white wash inside and cement render externally. It is possible the barn has been shortened.

### 4.3 Date of the barn

The barn has a date stone for 1822; however the traditional design does not preclude an earlier original construction date. The steep thatched roof with tie-beam, collar-beam trusses contrasts with the later form of roof trusses used in the other buildings.

It is possible that the roof was rebuilt at some time or it may have been reused from an earlier building. The assembly marks on the roof trusses do not form a regular pattern and some re-used timber has been used.

### 4.4 Early Nineteenth Century

The constructional details seen in the western range and an inserted first-floor window in the barn are consistent with a date in the later eighteenth or early nineteenth century. It is likely that the 1822 date stone records a construction phase that produced the present courtyard arrangement.



Surviving fittings in the west range that date from this period include the window in the tack room with small panes, narrow glazing bars and L-shaped hinges.

It is likely that the barn was modified during this period. The eastern half of the barn has lower pitch roof supported by a king-post truss. The narrow mezzanine floor is a later modification that appears to date from this period. It stands on brick walls built against the limestone walls of the barn. The inserted window opening on the mezzanine dressings made from brick matching those used elsewhere in this phase of construction. The window has small panes and narrow glazing bars.

The bricks used for this construction phase are of similar size and colour but vary in finish with the best ones used as facing bricks in the stables. The more irregular bricks, some with straw impressions, are used in areas such as the dressing for the inserted opening on the mezzanine.

The buildings constructed at this time represent a planned farmstead, consisting of an integrated set of buildings set around a courtyard which faces south towards the farmhouse.

#### **4.5 *Twentieth Century: Repairs and Alterations***

In the west range the southern end has already been converted to residential use and the whole range has been re-roofed with modern rafters over the queen-post trusses. The south-east corner of the stable a section of the masonry has been repaired with Fletton brick, probably in connection with the conversion of the adjacent section to residential use.

In the barn the mezzanine floor has been fitted with a modern handrail along its western side and the stairs up to the floor are also modern. The roof covering over the eastern half of the barn and the single storey building to its east has been replaced with corrugated iron at some time in the twentieth century.

#### **4.6 *Historical Context and Significance***

The buildings represent a planned farmstead consisting of an integrated group of buildings in a regular courtyard arrangement. As such they it is a product of the age of agricultural improvement that began during the eighteenth century. The open-fronted shed in the west range is typical of the post-1750 farmyards. This type of cattle housing was based on the provision of shelter sheds around straw yards where manure would build up over the winter. Although far removed from the model farms of the great estates, this farmyard was clearly built with the degree of planning typical of that seen in most newly built or modernised farmsteads of this period.

A study of planned and model farmsteads shows two peaks in construction (Wade Martins 2002, 22-23). The first occurred c.1790 and 1820 and corresponds to a period of prosperity caused by high grain prices during the Napoleonic wars. A collapse in the price of grain at the end of the war caused an agricultural depression. A second much higher peak in construction activity occurred from c.1840 until the start of another agricultural depression in the 1870s.



The construction of the Chestnut Cottage in farmstead in 1822 occurred during a period of agricultural depression. At this time “new farmsteads continued to be built, if at a slower rate and with practical rather than architectural considerations coming to the fore” (Wade Martins 2002, 75).

In terms of their survival and value “substantially complete examples of farm buildings of the 1750-1840 period are far less common than those of the post 1840 period, when many farmsteads matured into their present form and huge numbers of buildings were erected” (English Heritage 2006b).



## 5. OASIS SUMMARY

OASIS ID: albionar1-201582

### Project details

Project name	Chestnut Cottage and Barns, Ravenstone
Short description of the project	Albion Archaeology was commissioned to undertake historic building recording in advance of conversion of former farm buildings to residential use at Chestnut Cottage, Ravensden. The buildings form a U-shape around a yard open to the south. The north range consists of a barn aligned end-on to the street frontage. The east and west sides are single storey ranges. The south end of the west range and all of the east range are in separate ownership and were not included in the survey. The barn has double doors in its south side and a blocked draught door in the north wall. A stone in the west gable carries the date 1822. The roof has a thatched western section and king post roof at the east. Internally the barn is divided into two by a narrow, first floor gallery, lit by an inserted window. Buildings in the western range comprised an open-fronted shelter shed, a tack room and stables. The west range is covered by a queen post roof. Structurally the barn is the earliest building with the other ranges abutting it at straight joins. Details in the western range and the inserted first-floor window in the barn are consistent with the inscribed date. The eastern and western ranges may have been added in the early 19th century to an earlier barn to form the present courtyard arrangement.
Project dates	Start: 11-06-2014 End: 11-06-2014
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	CC2398 - Contracting Unit No AYBCM: 2014.55 - Museum accession ID 13/00799/FUL - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Building Recording STABLE Post Medieval TACK ROOM Post Medieval SHELTER SHED Post Medieval BARN Post Medieval
Significant Finds	NONE
Methods & techniques	"Photographic Survey" , "Survey/Recording Of Fabric/Structure"
Prompt	Planning condition

### Project location

Country	England
Site location	BUCKINGHAMSHIRE MILTON KEYNES RAVENSTONE Chestnut Cottage and Barns, Ravenstone
Study area	620.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	SP 8402019 5065111

### Project creators

Name of Organisation	Albion Archaeology
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Project brief originator	No Brief
Project design originator	Albion Archaeology
Project director/manager	Hester Cooper-Reade Mark Phillips

### Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Albion Archaeology
Paper Archive recipient	Buckinghamshire County Museum
Paper Archive ID	AYBCM: 2014.55
Paper Contents	"other"
Paper Media available	"Correspondence", "Miscellaneous Material", "Photograph", "Report"
Paper Archive notes	To be accessioned to Buckinghamshire County Museum on behalf of Milton Keynes

### Project bibliography

1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Chestnut Cottage and Barns: Historic Building Recording
Author(s)/Editor(s)	'Phillips, M'
Other bibliographic details	2014/133
Date	2015
Issuer or publisher	Albion Archaeology
Place of issue or publication	Bedford

Entered by	Helen Parslow (hl.parslow@albion-arch.com)
Entered on	13 February 2015



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## 6. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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English Heritage 2006b. *Historic Farmsteads. Preliminary Character Statement: South East Region*

Hall L. 2005 *Period House Fixtures and Fittings 1300-1900*

Wade Martins, S. 2002. *The English Model Farm*



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## 7. APPENDIX 1: LIST DESCRIPTION

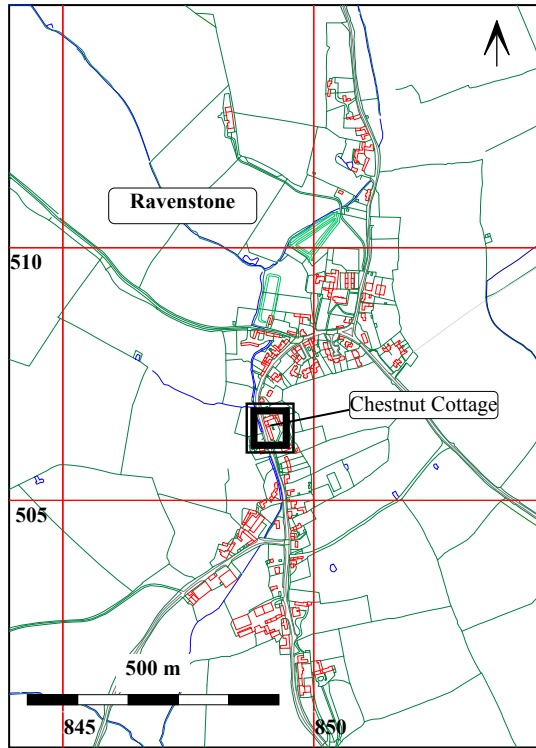
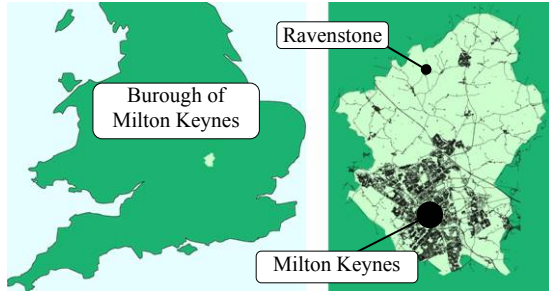
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### BARN TO NORTH OF CHESTNUT COTTAGE

GV II

Barn. Dated 1822. Coursed rubblestone and thatched roof. 3 bays. Chamfered plinth, cart entry in east bay away from road with opening draught door on north side. Datestone in street gable inscribed 'W.K.1822'.

Listing NGR: SP8490850660



**Figure 1: Site location plan**

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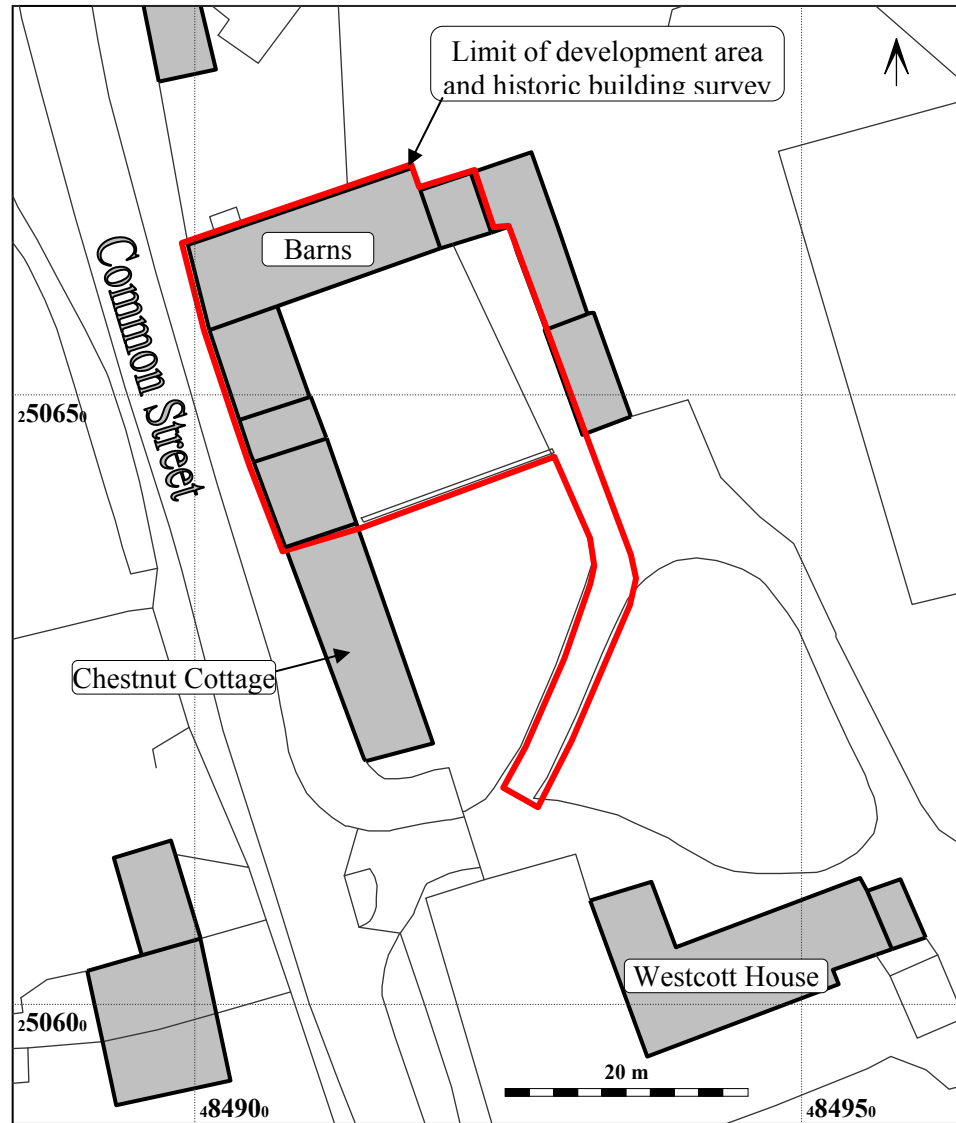






Figure 2: General plan showing all farm buildings

Figure 3 Detail plan of buildings surveyed

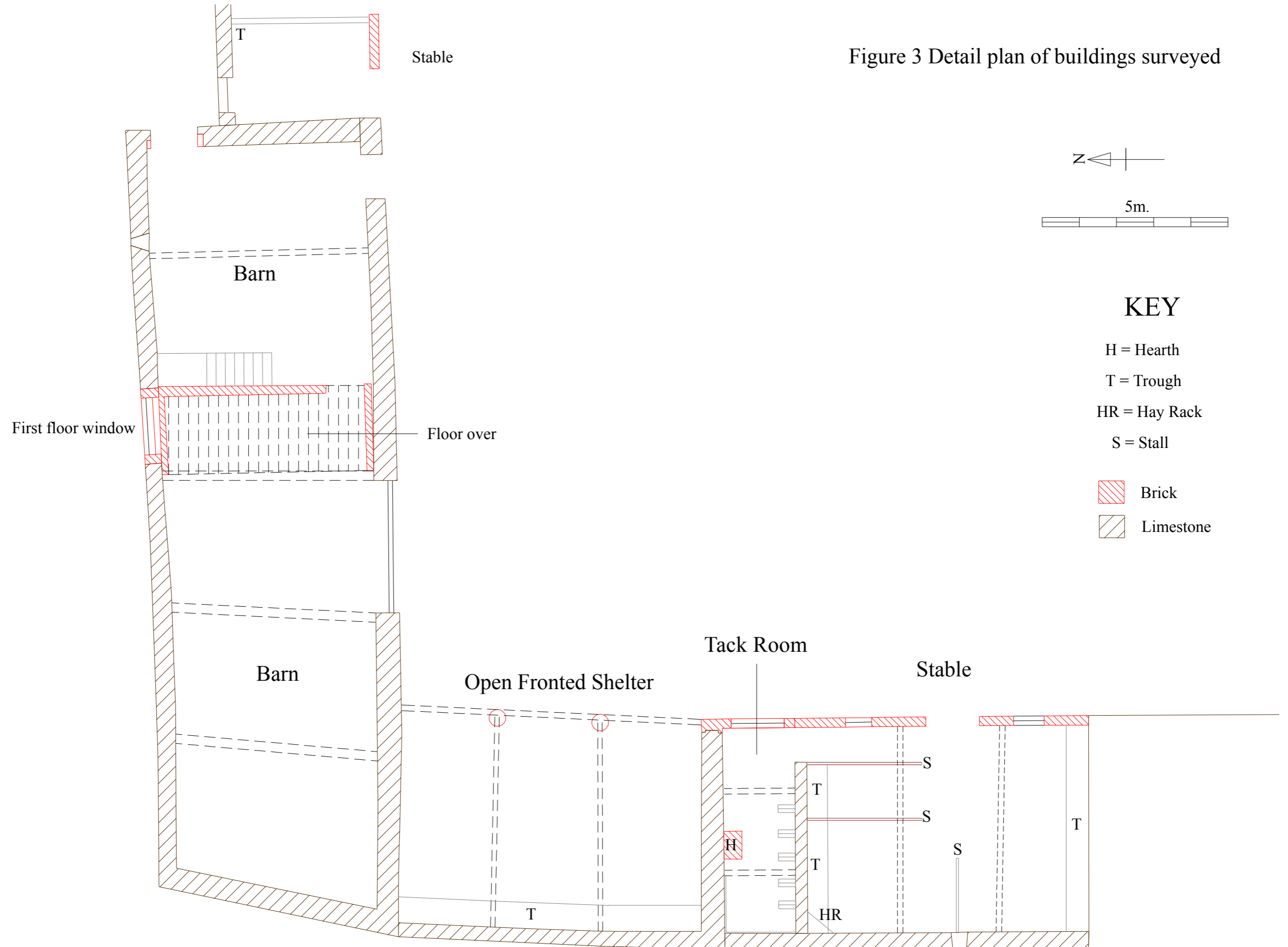




Image 1: West range and west end of barn seen from street



Image 2: West range seen from the courtyard



Image 3: North range from inside courtyard



Image 4: North range, view looking south

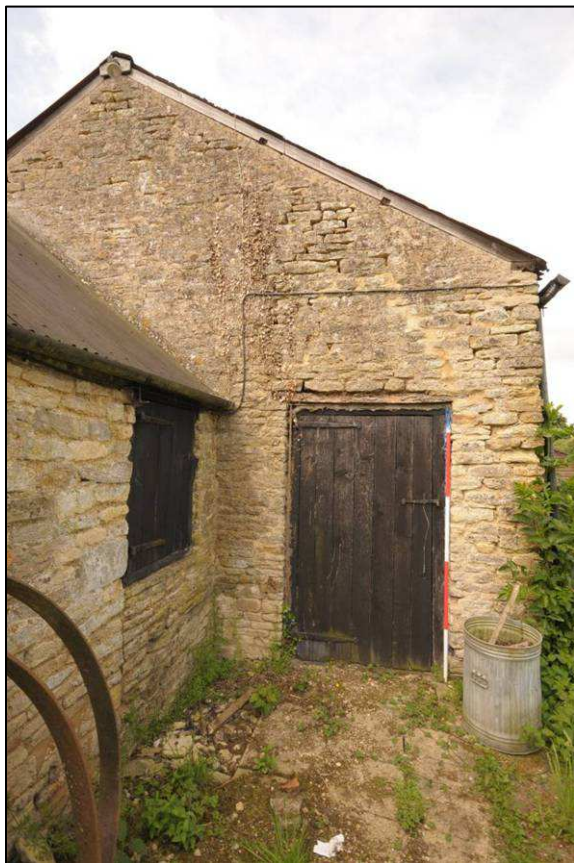


Image 5: North range:  
showing east end of barn



Image 6: West range: showing east wall of stable



Image 7: West range: showing east wall of stable and tack room (shows straight joint between brickwork of stable and tack room on the right)



Image 8: West range: Interior of stable looking north-west



Image 9: West range: Interior of stable looking north-east



Image 10: West range: Interior of stable looking south-west



Image 11: West range: Interior of stable looking north-east  
(Loose box with feed trough and hay rack)



Image 12: West range: Details of stable window



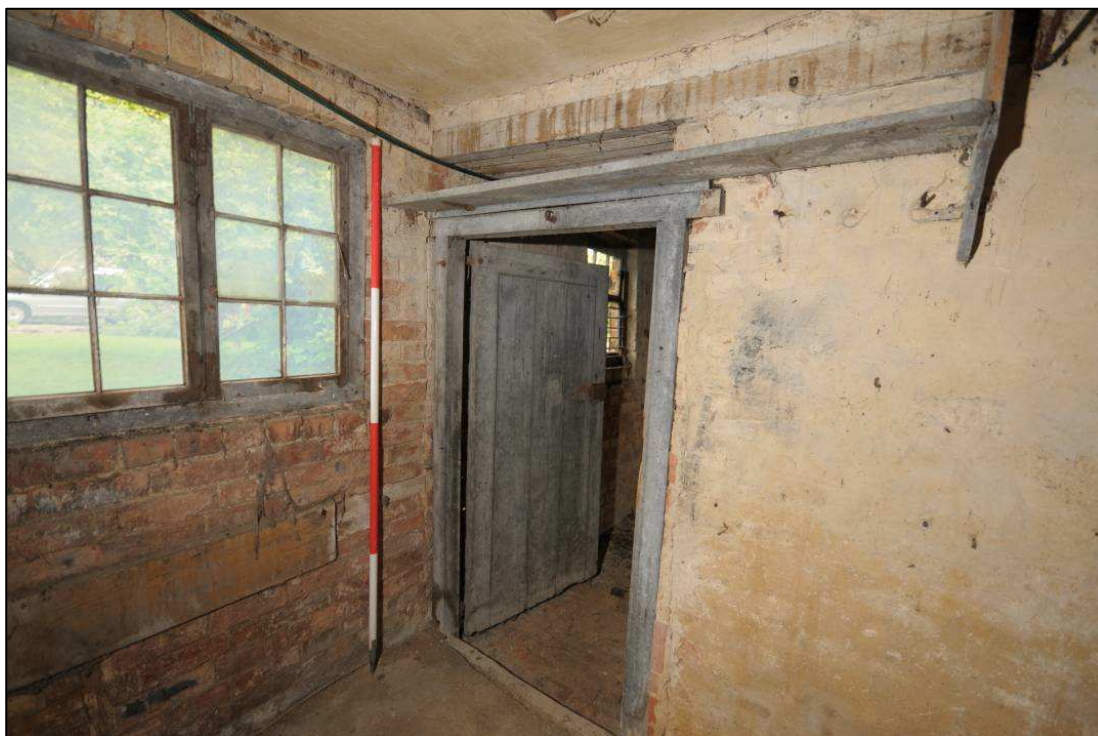


Image 13: West range: Tack room looking south-east

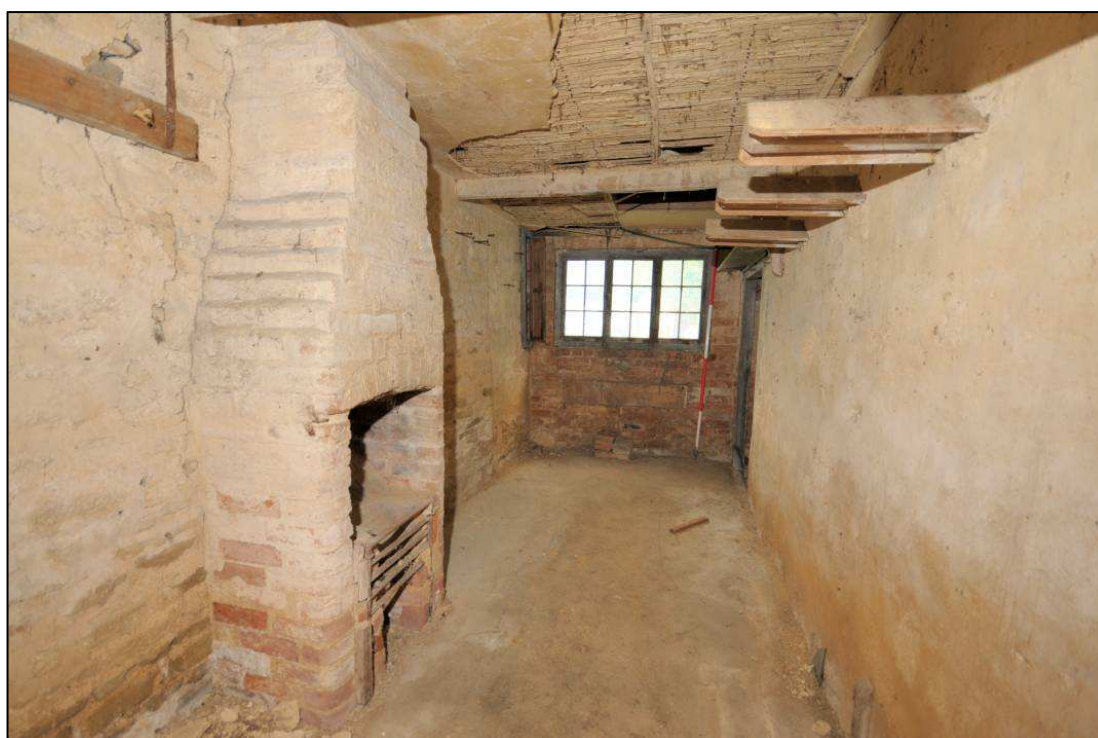


Image 14: West range: Tack room looking east



Image 15: West range: Tack room looking north-east



Image 16: West range: Tack room showing north-west corner

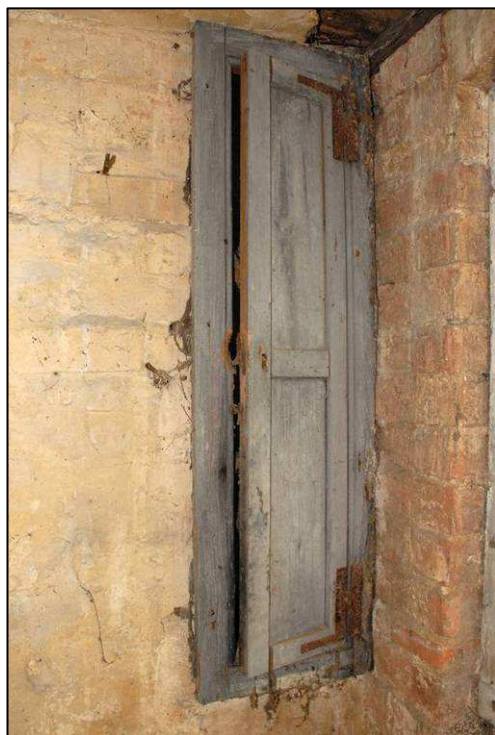


Image 17: West range: Tack room details, cupboard and fireplace



Image 18: West range: Tack room window



Image 19: West range: Tack room, saddle racks on south wall



Image 20: West range: east side of shelter shed



Image 21: West range: east side of shelter shed



Image 22: West range: Shelter shed, west wall



Image 23: West range: Shelter shed, north wall



Image 24: West range: Shelter shed, south wall



Image 25: West range: Shelter shed, east side



Image 26: West range: Shelter shed, detail of queen post roof truss



Image 27: North range: Barn, western section looking north-west



Image 28: North range: Barn, western section, looking south-east





Image 29: North range: Barn, eastern section, looking north-east

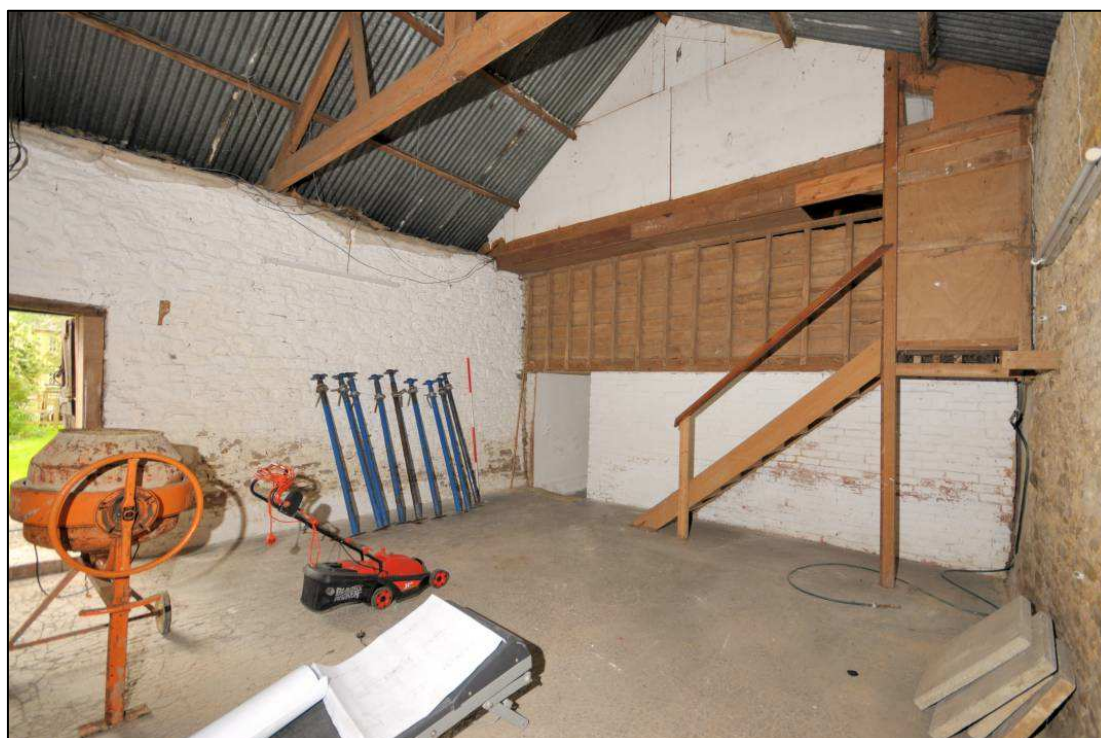


Image 30: North range: Barn, eastern section, looking south-west



Image 31: North range: Barn, mezzanine looking north-east



Image 32: North range: Barn, detail of roof over western section



Image 33: North range: Barn, detail of roof over eastern section



Image 34: North range: Barn, detail of double doors



Image 35: North range: detail of doors in barn and adjacent stable



Image 36: North range: Stable, looking south-east

(Remains of feeding trough visible at lower left-hand side)



Image 37: North range: Stable, looking north-east



Image 38: North range: Stable, west wall

(Straight join visible towards left-hand side of wall)