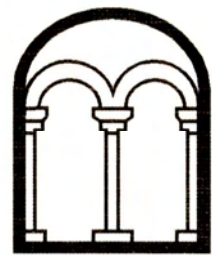


**LAND ADJACENT TO CHURCH FARM
41 HIGH STREET
ROXTON
BEDFORDSHIRE**

HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING

Albion
archaeology



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Preface

All statements and opinions in this document are offered in good faith. This document has been prepared for the titled project or named part thereof and was prepared solely for the benefit of the client. The material contained in this document does not necessarily stand on its own and should not be relied upon by any third party. This document should not be used for any other purpose without an independent check being carried out as to its suitability and the prior written authority of Albion Archaeology (a trading unit of Central Bedfordshire Council). Any person/party relying on the document for such other purposes agrees and will by such use or reliance be taken to confirm their agreement to indemnify Albion Archaeology for all loss or damage resulting therefrom. Albion Archaeology accepts no responsibility or liability for this document to any party other than the persons/party by whom it was commissioned. This document is limited by the state of knowledge at the time it was written.

The building recording was undertaken by Mark Phillips BA, who is the author of this report. Photographs were taken by Nigel Macbeth. The project was managed on behalf of Albion Archaeology by Drew Shotliff MA BA (Hons), MCIfA.

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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 historical maps and documents is presented in Section 2. A description of the buildings forms Section 3 with an analysis of the buildings presented in Section 4. The bibliography forms Section 5.

Version History

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Key Terms

Throughout this document the following terms or abbreviations are used:

BARS	Bedfordshire Archives and Record Service
CIfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
OS	Ordnance Survey
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation



Non-technical Summary

Planning permission (14/01736/FUL) was granted by Bedford Borough Council for the redevelopment and conversion of barns to form five dwelling houses on land adjacent to Church Farm, 41 High Street, Roxton, Bedfordshire. The redevelopment involved the demolition of most of the farm buildings on the site. To address condition no. 19 on the permission Albion Archaeology carried out a programme of historic building recording in May 2017.

Church Farm is located in the centre of Roxton on the east side of the High Street. The consented development area is c.0.4ha in extent, centred on grid reference TL 1528, 5446. The farm buildings comprise a compact group of buildings next to the High Street and two buildings on the east side of the farmyard. The group nearest the road is made up of a U-shaped range that partially surrounds a T-shaped range to its east. The buildings on the east side of the yard consist of a brick and timber building with a loft (used as a garage) and an open-fronted, steel-framed building.

The farmhouse at Church Farm dates from about 1600. A map from 1813 shows the farmhouse within a plot of over 3 acres with a number of outbuildings. An 1850 map of the Roxton Park estate shows farm buildings arranged around two yards with one located immediately south-west of the farmhouse and another in the southern part of the present development area. All of the farm buildings shown on the 1850 estate map had been demolished and the farm redeveloped to a courtyard plan when it was drawn by the OS in 1884. Only the garage with loft on the east side of the farmyard survived from the 1884 plan. It was probably an open-fronted shelter shed when it was first built around 1870 or later. This phase of wholesale rebuilding coincides with the period of Victorian 'high farming' and Church Farm was redeveloped in accordance with the principles of the improved farmstead of this time.

Another major phase of development took place at the end of the 19th century, resulting in the plan that has remained largely unaltered up to the present day. The OS map surveyed in 1900 shows that most of the buildings depicted on the 1884 map had been demolished and replaced by the U-shaped and T-shaped ranges in the western part of the site. The reasons for this second major reconstruction of the farm after a comparatively short interval are not known. Smaller-scale alterations to the farm buildings continued throughout the 20th century.



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 **Background to the Report**

Planning permission (14/01736/FUL) was granted by Bedford Borough Council for the redevelopment and conversion of barns to form five dwelling houses with associated access, parking and amenity spaces on land adjacent to Church Farm, 41 High Street, Roxton, Bedfordshire. The redevelopment involved the demolition of most of the farm buildings on the site. The planning permission contained a condition (18) requiring an archaeological mitigation strategy and a further condition (19) requiring a building recording strategy.

Albion Archaeology had previously prepared a heritage assessment (Albion 2014) to accompany the application and was subsequently commissioned by Resolution Homes Ltd to prepare a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) (Albion 2017) for the building recording and archaeological evaluation, required by the planning conditions. This report presents the results of the historic building recording.

1.2 **Site Location, Description and Nature of Development**

Church Farm is located in the centre of Roxton on the east side of the High Street. The development area is c.0.4ha in extent, centred on grid reference TL 1528, 5446 (Figure 1).

The farm buildings comprise a compact group of buildings next to the High Street and two buildings on the east side of the farmyard (Figures 7 and 8). The group nearest the road is made up of a U-shaped range that partially surrounds a T-shaped range to its east. The buildings on the east side of the yard consist of a brick and timber building with a loft and an open-fronted steel-framed building.

The planned development includes the demolition of the majority of the farm buildings. The north arm of the U-shaped range is not included in the development and is in use as an outbuilding of the farmhouse. The west arm of the U-shaped range is to be retained for residential conversion and the remaining buildings will be demolished.

1.3 **Project Objectives**

The relevant research frameworks for the area are: *Bedfordshire Archaeology. Research and Archaeology: Resource Assessment, Research Agenda and Strategy* (Oake *et al.* 2007) and *A Revised Framework for the East of England* (Medlycott 2011).

The purpose of the building recording was to record structures related to 19th- and early 20th-century agriculture, which played a major role in shaping the landscape of the Ivel and Great Ouse Valleys. The study of post-medieval agriculture in Bedfordshire has been identified as a regional research objective (Oake 2007, 16).



2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 *General Historical Summary*

This section provides a brief chronological summary of the site. Further detailed information on cartographic and documentary evidence is included in the following sections.

Church Farm is located on the main street in the village, close to the medieval parish church. Investigations carried out a short distance to the south at 51 High Street identified medieval archaeological features containing pottery dating from the 12th to the 15th centuries (Albion Archaeology 2015).

The farmhouse is a timber-framed building dating from about 1600. In the 19th century the north and west elevations were refaced with gault brick. A first floor bedroom retains a plasterwork decorative panel over a blocked fireplace, showing the royal arms of James I (1603–25), flanked by caryatids and portrait heads.

In the 19th century Church Farm was part of the Roxton Park estate, which was held by the Metcalfe family from at least 1737 until the mid-19th century. A map dating from 1850 produced to accompanying the sale of the estate includes details of Church Farm (see Section 2.2.2 and Figure 3).

By 1854 the Roxton Park estate had been purchased by Rev. Robert Delap of Monellan (Ireland). His son, James Bogle Delap of Lillingstone Lovell, Buckinghamshire inherited the estate and held it into the 20th century. Rating and Valuation Act records show that a number of the cottages in Roxton were still owned by the trustees of James Bogle Delap in 1927. Some parts of the estate were sold off in the early 20th century; e.g. Bell Farm in Colesden was sold to Bedfordshire County Council in 1914.

Names of the farmers occupying Church Farm are recorded in trade directories from the mid-19th century onwards: Joseph Banks in directories published between 1898 and 1906; William Hull in the 1910 to 1936 directories; and the Bates brothers in 1940. Documents show that William Hull took over the farm in 1906 (see Section 2.3 below). The Rating and Valuation Act records from 1927 name William Hull as the owner and occupier of Church Farm.

Details of the farm buildings shown on historical maps (see below) show a significant sequence of expansion and rebuilding. In 1813 only a few buildings are shown but by 1850 the layout had been significantly enlarged. The farm was completely rebuilt to a regular courtyard plan sometime between 1850 and 1884. The farm was again substantially rebuilt between 1884 and 1900.

2.2 *Historical Maps*

This section contains evidence from selected historical maps, illustrating changes in the development area and in its general vicinity from the early 19th century onwards. Extracts of the maps discussed below are reproduced at the back of the report.



2.2.1 1813, Roxton enclosure map (Figure 2)

This 1813 map accompanied the parliamentary enclosure award of 1819 (BARS ref. MA44). It shows buildings in plan coloured red and the parish church as a thumbnail sketch. The buildings at this time were almost all on the High Street with a few on what is now Ford Lane and at Roxton Park, in the south-east and south-west parts of the village respectively.

Church Farm is shown in an L-shaped plot of land belonging to Charles James Metcalfe. A building corresponding to the farmhouse is shown near the south-west corner of the nearby churchyard. A large rectangular building, probably a barn, is located on the western boundary of the churchyard. A T-shaped building is shown to the south-west of the house. Two small buildings are shown on the street frontage of the plot and a third is shown in a square enclosure at the south-west of the plot.

The plan shows the home close of the farm with a small number of outbuildings spread across the plot.

2.2.2 1850, Plan of Roxton Park Estate (Figure 3)

This plan was prepared to accompany the sale of the Roxton Park estate (BARS ref. X478-20). An advertisement for the sale appeared in the *Morning Chronicle* on 30th May and the *London Standard* on 31st May. The estate was to be sold by auction in one lot on 28th June. In addition to the family residence set in 36 acres of park it also mentions “five farms of rich arable, meadow and pasture land, in the occupation of a most respectable tenantry”. Apart from the church the map only shows buildings which formed part of the estate. The buildings are shown in detail with the main residential buildings coloured red. Roxton Park is shown as a single area of landscaped parkland with a sweeping carriage drive leading to the house in the south-east of the park.

At Church Farm the large rectangular building next to the churchyard shown in the previous plan has gone and dashed lines indicating paths suggest that the areas to the north and east of the farmhouse were occupied by gardens. Compared to the 1813 plan, this plan shows many more farm buildings at Church Farm forming two irregular courtyard arrangements, one immediately adjacent to the south-west of the farmhouse and another further south.

2.2.3 1884, OS 25-inch map (Figure 4)

This is the first detailed survey of the whole village. It was surveyed in 1882 and published in 1884. The overall layout of the village remains largely unchanged from the previous map. However, changes are evident in individual plots but due to the omission of non-estate buildings in the previous map it is not clear when all of these developments took place.

The plan shows that Church Farm was completely redeveloped after 1850. All of the buildings shown on the previous plan with the exception of the farmhouse had been demolished by 1884. The new farmyard consisted of buildings ranged around a large rectangular yard and a few other buildings to the east. The yard was



subdivided to form an access through the yard and a series of stockyards. Most of the buildings are shaded grey, indicating timber or iron construction.

2.2.4 1900, second edition 25-inch OS map (Figure 5)

Comparison with the previous plan shows that the farm underwent another major phase of redevelopment before 1900. The building to the east of the main farmyard, a continuous range along the south of the yard and all of the buildings in the western half of the yard were demolished. The buildings in the western half of the yard were replaced with the U-shaped and T-shaped buildings that survived to the present day (2017). Dashed lines on the east-west aligned arm of the T-shaped building indicate that it was open-sided.

The three buildings on the east side of the yard in the 1884 map were retained along with the stockyards attached to two of them. A small building, probably a row of three pigsties was erected on the east side of the middle building.

A cross-hatched rectangle on the west side of the farmhouse appears to indicate a glazed porch.

2.2.5 1924, third edition 25 inch OS map (Figure 6)

Some changes are visible in the farm buildings on this map. Open-sided shelter sheds have been erected in the two stockyards in the east of the farmyard. In the south of the farmyard a rectangular open-sided building represents a Dutch barn.

2.3 Historical Records

2.3.1 Papers relating to Church Farm 1906

The BARS holds a bundle of papers relating to Church Farm, dating from 1906 when William Hull took over the farm (BARS ref. Z740/104/2). The papers include a schedule of repairs to walls, fences, farmhouse and various farm buildings. The farm buildings which are mentioned in the schedule are listed below. The schedule provides some information on the construction materials and this is listed in brackets.

- Hen house (plain tile roof)
- Old granary and buildings adjoining (plain tile roof)
- Stable and cow hovel (slate roof)
- Chaff house
- Barn (slate roof)
- New granary (tiled roof)
- Calf place, at end of old granary (timber-framed)
- Pigstyes
- Cart hovel (slate roof and weatherboard walls)
- Shelter hovel in yards (slate roof)
- Coach house and nag stable (slate roof)



2.3.2 Rating and Valuation Act 1925

The assessment of Roxton was done in 1927. The entry in the valuer's notebook (BARS ref. DV1/H13/4) lists the owner and occupier of Church Farm as William Hull and lists the homestead buildings as:

a garage; a stable for two horses; a stable for seven horses; a three-bay open shed; a loose box; another stable for seven; a chaff house; a one-bay shed; three loose boxes; a barn; a six-bay cart shed; a six-bay open hovel; two kennels used as hen houses; a seven-bay open hovel; two more loose boxes; a Dutch barn and an implement shed.

The valuation notes include the comment: "Buildings excessive and little used".



3. BUILDING RECORDING: DESCRIPTION

3.1 *Methodology*

Throughout the project the standards set in the CIfA's *Standard and guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings and structures* (2014) and English Heritage's *Understanding Historic Buildings* (2006a) have been adhered to. All work has been done in accordance with the CIfA's Code of Conduct. Terminology for describing timber structures follows the CBA glossary (Alcock et al. 1996).

In line with English Heritage (now Historic England) historic building survey definitions (English Heritage 2006a), this survey has been undertaken to English Heritage Level 3 and in accordance with the agreed WSI.

The survey comprised an examination of the buildings and a photographic record. Where necessary annotations and measurements were added to drawings provided by the developer with additional notes and sketches. The photographic record consists of high resolution digital images. The selected digital images that 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 text below, in conjunction with figures and images bound at the end of the report, forms the description of the buildings. Figure 8 provides a plan of the buildings and the elevations are shown on Figure 9.

The building survey was undertaken on 30th May 2017.

3.2 *The Buildings*

The farm consists of a compact group of buildings on the west side of the farmyard, an unenclosed yard to the south of the farmhouse and a north-south aligned range of buildings along the east side of the yard (Figure 8 and Images 1–2).

The buildings on the west side of the farmyard comprise U- and T-shaped ranges. The northern arm of the U-shaped range does not form part of the present development and was not included in the survey. It consists of single-storey sheds currently used for storage and garaging. The west arm of U-shaped range is single-storey and is divided into two, long compartments. It is referred to below as the west range. The south arm of the U-shaped range is a barn.

The west arm of the T-shaped range consists of a pair of back-to-back shelter sheds, which have been enclosed with brick to form sheds. The east arm of the T-shaped range is a 6-bay cart shed.

The buildings to the east of the yard consist of a brick and weatherboard building that has been converted for use as a garage and an open-fronted shelter shed covered with corrugated iron.



3.2.1 General construction details

All of the buildings on the west side of the farmyard form part of the same construction phase and share similar construction details. All have weatherboard walls with those in west range and the barn lined internally with vertical tongue and groove boards. All of the roofs are close-boarded, covered with Welsh slate and are supported by kingpost trusses. The trusses over the shelter sheds have double raking braces whilst the other roofs have single braces. The trusses have a standard bolted fixing at the base of the king post. Instead of the more common arrangement of a strap or bolted fixing at the junction of the principal rafter and tie beam, a bolt passes through these two timbers a short distance from the joint (Images 14 and 21). The roof trusses in the cart shed and the shelter sheds and the barn have curved braces nailed below the tie beams.

3.2.2 Barn (Images 2–9)

This is an east-west aligned, double-height building that forms the south arm of the U-shaped range.

Plan

The building was constructed at a slight angle to the west range and is, therefore, not rectangular (internal dimensions 17.2m long by 7m wide). It is arranged in five irregularly spaced bays. The central bay contains a full height opening with a roller shutter door in its south side and a single door off-centre in the north side. A small internal door opening in the north-west corner connects it to the west range. There are two high-level loading doors in the south wall and three in the north wall. The barn is lit by two fixed lights with internal sliding shutters in the east end wall.

Construction

The building is timber-framed and clad in weatherboard. The frame has posts at the corners, on the bay divisions and in the centre of the end walls. The posts in the central bay continue down to ground level while the other wall posts are supported by sill beam on a brick sill wall c.700mm high. The sill wall does not extend across the north side of the central bay. The floor is paved with brick in the central bay and concreted in the other bays.

In the full height doorway, in the south of the central bay, the door head is framed by a separate plate supported by curved braces a short distance below the wall plate. The same details are repeated in the north side of the central bay, even though this side only has two small openings instead of a full-height doorway (Image 6).

Where the wall has been filled with brick nogging (see below) the frame is visible and consists of the main wall posts and studs spaced at c.450mm centres with diagonal primary bracing.

Internally the walls are lined with vertical tongue and groove boards. In the end bays, the treatment of the lower part of the walls is different (Images 7–9). In the east wall the lower part of the wall (above the sill beam) is filled with brick nogging to a height of 2m above the floor. In the side walls the brick nogging slopes down from 2m above the floor at the corners of the barn to 1.4m above the



floor at the bay division. There is no brick nogging above the sill beam in the west wall; instead the lower part of the wall is lined with horizontal weatherboard.

The roof is supported by four kingpost trusses with curved braces nailed below the tie beams.

3.2.3 West range (Images 10–17)

This is a north-south aligned, single-storey range, which extends along the High Street frontage of the farmyard. An attached east-west aligned range at the north end does not form part of the development, and is retained by the owners of Church Farmhouse for use as outbuildings and garages. This range was not covered by the present survey; the plan details included in the figures are from existing survey drawings supplied by the developer. It appears to be of the same type of construction as the west range.

Plan

The west range is approximately 37m long by 5.4m wide overall. It is divided into two compartments, which are connected by a small sliding door.

The south compartment is approximately 20m long (Images 12–14). It has double doors in the south end wall and a heck (stable) door in the east wall. It is connected to the adjacent barn by a small opening in the east wall. There are seven horizontal sashes in the west wall and four horizontal sashes and a larger fixed light in the east wall.

The north compartment is approximately 16.4m long (Images 15–16). It has external doors in the north wall and the east wall. The north door is fitted with a folding internal wooden screen and the lower part of the east door is block with boards up to a height of 650mm above floor level. Another former door opening in the east wall has been converted into a window by blocking the lower half and fitting a vertical sash in the upper part. The north wall contains two vertical sash windows; the east wall has two horizontal sashes plus the one converted door opening previously noted; and the west wall contains five horizontal sash windows. All of the sliding/sash windows in the west range are fitted in horizontal or vertical wooden slides attached to the inside face of the walls (Image 17).

Construction

The building stands on a brick sill made from a mixture of red and gault brick. Internally it stands approximately 380mm above the concrete floor. The external visible height of the sill varies from c.300mm in the frontage up to 750mm in the east wall. The difference partly reflects a slight drop in ground level away from the street but it is also likely that some ground reduction has occurred on the east side of the building because the door sills on this side are raised above the external ground level.

The walls are timber-framed with external weatherboard and internal tongue and groove. The timber frame consists of posts on the bay divisions (marked on plan) and lighter studding. In the south end wall, where the tongue and groove lining is absent, the framing consists of full height studs between the sole plate and wall



plate. The nailing pattern in the lining on the other walls suggests that west wall has a rail between the studs at the level of the window sills and the east wall appears to have a rail level with the window sills and another at two-thirds of the height of the windows. It is not known if the frame includes any diagonal bracing.

The roof has kingpost trusses as described above under general construction details (Section 3.2.1).

Internal fittings

The only fittings are lighting bulb holders on the underside of the tie beams and a mains electrical distribution panel and meters fitted to the wall in the south end of the north compartment.

Function

The function of this building is not obvious from its present form. Before the adaption of the two doors in the east side of the northern compartment this may have been used for animals, either a stable or cow house. In its present form with a raised door threshold and a folding screen across the inside of the north door it could have been used to house chickens.

3.2.4 Cart shed (Images 18–21)

The cart shed forms the north-south aligned arm of the T-shaped range in the group of buildings on the west side of the farmyard.

Plan

This six-bay cart shed has an open front on its east side. It is 16.8m long by 5m wide. Towards the middle of the back wall a large sliding door and a smaller sliding hatch open off the enclosed compartments in the range to the rear of the cart shed.

Construction

The rear and end walls are constructed on a brick sill wall. This is 1m high, mainly of gault brick with occasional red bricks built in monk bond. The timber-framed wall has primary bracing and closely spaced studs with slightly larger posts at the corners, bay divisions and in the middle of the end walls. The exterior is covered in weatherboard.

The open front is supported by rectangular-section wooden posts with bolsters at the top to spread the load on the wall plate. Both the bolsters and the wall plate have plain chamfered edges.

The roof is supported by five kingpost trusses, matching those used elsewhere in the T-shaped and U-shaped ranges of buildings (Images 20–21). The end walls have similar trusses with the addition of studs to carry the external weatherboard cladding on the gables. The roof is close-boarded and covered in Welsh slate.

The sliding hatch in the rear wall is made up with planks and diagonal bracing and runs in a wooden slide fixed to the studs in the rear wall. The sliding door is a commercially produced, framed plank door suspended from a metal rail (Image



19). It is likely that the hatch and the door in this wall are later additions with openings being cut through the wall. They are not closely dateable.

Function

The building would have been used to store carts and implements. It was still in use to store farm trailers when the building was examined for a heritage assessment in 2014.

3.2.5 Converted shelter sheds (Images 22–27)

This building is the east-west aligned part of the T-shaped range on the west side of the farmyard. When it was built it consisted of a pair of open-fronted shelter sheds. The structure was later altered by the insertion of external brick walls to form enclosed sheds.

Plan

The primary structure consists of a pair of four-bay, open-fronted shelter sheds arranged on either side of a central east-west aligned wall. Each shed measures 11.8m long by 4.5m wide. The structure abuts the rear wall of the contemporary cart shed to the east.

The building was modified during the 20th century by the insertion of brick walls on three sides and an internal partition wall to convert the building into a single enclosed shed on the south side and two interconnecting sheds on the north side.

Two openings into the adjacent cart shed, a large sliding door and a small sliding hatch above sill wall level, are likely to be later adaptations. The opening for the large sliding door appears to be cut-in; the sill wall of the cart shed shows no closers to indicate a constructed break in the wall and its sill beam is truncated very close to a scarf joint.

The southern compartment, as modified in the 20th century has four windows and two doors (Images 23–24). The two northern compartments are linked by a sliding door. The eastern of the two has two windows and contains a small loft floor. The western compartment has two windows and a single door in the north wall (Images 25–26).

Construction

The remaining fabric from the primary construction consists of the central partition wall between the two shelter sheds, the roof and a few posts that have been incorporated into the later brick infill. The central partition is timber-framed on a brick sill wall. The sill wall is 1m high, made with a mixture of reds and yellow gault bricks in monk bond with some repairs in 20th-century Fletton brick. The timber-framed partition extends up to the underside of the tie beams, with the roof above spanning both compartments. It is constructed with closely set studs and primary bracing and is clad in weatherboard on its south side. A few of the timber posts in the formerly open sides of the sheds were retained within the later brickwork — one in the middle of the south wall as the eastern side of the later doorway, another on the north-west corner of the building and a third on the east side of the door in the north wall. These posts carry bolsters at the top (horizontal



timbers to spread the load on the wall plate) and where the posts were removed the bolsters remained in place, indicating the former arrangement of the building (Image 24). The roof is supported by kingpost trusses with double raking braces with curved braces nailed below the tie beams.

The inserted 20th-century brick walls are in Fletton brick in monk bond. The windows are metal-framed, Crittall-type windows with a top hinged vent and side hinged casement in each. The doors in the 20th-century modifications are all different: a heck door in the west end of the north wall; a ledge and braced door in the west wall; and a framed door with glazing in the upper part in the south wall. The sliding door between the two northern compartments is constructed from parts of a reused 19th-century plank and batten door. Silvery grey paint similar to that on the sliding door noted above was used to paint the date '1940' on the wall above the heck door in the north-west compartment (Image 27).

Function

As first built the shelter sheds would have been used for animal housing, probably cattle. The gable end would have had a weatherboard wall and the north and south sides would have been open, supported by timber posts. The OS map survey in 1900 shows that the area between the U-shaped and T-shaped ranges was divided into two stock yards attached to the two shelter sheds. It is not clear what the buildings were used for after they were converted into enclosed sheds in the mid-20th century.

3.2.6 Garage with loft (Images 28–30)

This building is located on the east side of the farmyard. It is described as a garage as that was its latest use; however, it appears to correspond to a farm building first shown on the 1884 OS map. On the 1884 and 1900 maps it is shown attached to what appears to be a stock enclosure. In recent years it was used as garage or store, with double doors fitted on its western side. A modern, timber-framed and corrugated metal lean-to has been constructed against the east side of the building.

Plan

The building measures 12.4m long by 5m wide inside. It is a four-bay structure with a loft over. The front which was probably originally open-fronted is fitted with three sets of double doors. The ground floor has been divided into two compartments in the recent past by the insertion of a plank partition. The loft is accessed by a ladder to a door in the south gable end.

Construction

The ends walls (to loft floor level) and rear wall are made of brick. This is a mixture of orange/red and gault brick in monk bond. The front and upper parts of the end walls are in weatherboard. The front wall is supported by three posts. The northern two are *c.*200mm x 170mm in section and have curved braces to the lintel in the front wall and to the main floor joists. The curved braces in this building have pegged mortise and tenon fixings, contrasting with the nailed fixings used in the later buildings on the west side of the farmyard. The southern post in the front wall is smaller in section and lacks braces, possibly being a later replacement.



The loft floor is supported by closely spaced joists with herringbone strutting (Image 29). The main joists on the bay divisions (where visible) are made up by doubling a pair of the standard joists.

The low, weatherboard wall on the front of the loft is framed with closely spaced studs with primary bracing. In the rear wall the brickwork is carried up to eaves level. The loft roof is supported by interrupted tie beam trusses on the bay divisions (Image 30). These have posts supporting a collar beam with c.2m headroom. The trusses are constructed with a mixture of pegged joints and metal straps.

The roof covering has been re-laid in the recent past, being lined with modern roofing felt. The roof is covered in red, clay double-Roman tiles with matching double Roman ridge tiles.

Internal fittings

The northern ground floor compartment contains a workbench in connection with its recent use as a garage and workspace.

Function

The ground floor is likely to have been built as an open-fronted shed that was later enclosed. OS maps from 1884 and 1900 show this building was attached to a small stockyard suggesting a possible use as a shelter shed at this time. Interestingly though, neither of these plans uses a dashed line for the front wall, which was the standard convention to indicate an open-fronted building. A later plan from 1924 shows an open-fronted lean-to attached to the east side of the building and open-fronted shelter sheds on the north and south sides of the stockyard to the west.



4. BUILDING ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

The farmhouse at Church Farm dates from about 1600. A map from 1813 shows the farmhouse within a plot of over 3 acres with a number of outbuildings (Figure 2). These include a long building to the north-east of the farmhouse and a number of separate buildings to the south-west of the farmhouse, in the area occupied by the present-day farm buildings. An 1850 map of the Roxton Park estate (Figure 3) shows farm buildings arranged around two yards with one located immediately south-west of the farmhouse and another in the southern part of the present development area.

4.2 Mid- to Late 19th-century Buildings

All of the farm buildings shown on the 1850 estate map had been demolished and the farm redeveloped to a courtyard plan when it was drawn by the OS in 1884 (Figure 4). At the time of the present building survey, the only surviving farm building from the 1884 plan was the garage with loft on the east side of the farmyard. This building stood at the south-east corner of the courtyard. A range of buildings on the south side of the courtyard extended across the south end of this building and the modern access to the loft via an external ladder in the south end is a later development. The building with the loft was probably an open-fronted shelter shed when it was first built; the 1880s plan shows it associated with a stockyard on its western side. The loft with its interrupted tie beam roof was clearly intended as a first-floor store from the outset. The construction details seen in this building with machine-sawn softwood, herringbone strutting in the floor and the form of trusses used in the loft suggest a late 19th-century date, probably around 1870 or later.

4.3 Late 19th-century (c.1890s) Buildings

Another major phase of development took place at the end of the 19th century, resulting in the plan that has remained largely unaltered up to the present day. The OS map surveyed in 1900 shows that most of the buildings depicted on the 1884 map had been demolished and replaced by the U-shaped and T-shaped ranges in the western part of the site (Figure 5). Two buildings from the earlier phase remained on the eastern side of the farmyard, including the present-day garage building. The farm buildings are listed in a schedule of repairs prepared in 1906 (see Section 2.3.1). Some of the buildings examined in the present survey can be identified in the list: the barn; the cart hovel (cart shed); and the shelter hovel in yards probably corresponds to the converted shelter sheds at the rear of the cart shed. The types of buildings listed in the 1906 repair schedule indicate a typical mixed-farming economy with animals and arable.

4.4 20th-century Buildings

Smaller-scale alterations to the farm buildings continued throughout the 20th century. The 1924 OS map shows various additions to the buildings with the construction of a lean-to on the east side of the present-day garage building, construction of open-fronted shelters in the two stockyards on the east side of the farmyard and a Dutch barn to the south of the farmyard. The 1924 map shows that



the shelter sheds behind the cart shed were partially enclosed and subdivided at this time. The shelter sheds were altered again in the mid-20th century when they were enclosed in Fletton brick walls with metal-framed windows. A painted date of 1940 on the interior face of this wall is likely to record the construction date. Adaptions to the west range may have formed part of this phase of works. Two of the door openings in its east elevation have been modified, converting one into a window and raising the threshold of another. It is possible that the glazed sliding windows fitted throughout the west range are also a later addition. In the north compartment of this range, the raised threshold door and an internal shutter to the door in the north of the compartment suggest it could have been used to house chickens.

4.5 Historical Context

Following the sale of the Roxton Park estate in the 1850s the farm buildings at Church Farm were completely rebuilt. The irregular arrangement of buildings clustered around two yards was replaced with a planned courtyard farm. The one surviving building from this phase (examined in the present survey) appears to have been built *c.*1870 or later. A study of planned and model farmsteads shows two peaks in construction (Wade Martins 2002, 22–3). The first occurred between *c.*1790 and 1820 and a second much higher peak in construction activity occurred from *c.*1840 until *c.*1870, in the period of Victorian ‘high farming’. Church Farm was redeveloped in accordance with the principles of the improved farmstead of this time.

The rebuilding of the farm probably occurred towards the end of this second national peak in farm building. In the 1870s the profitability of British farming declined due to the arrival of cheap grain from America and the later large-scale imports of meat that became possible with the introduction of refrigerated steamships. Historical map evidence and examination of the remaining buildings show that the farm underwent another major phase of rebuilding towards the end of the 19th century. The western half of the farmyard was completely rebuilt, resulting in a broadly similar layout but without the continuous range along the south side to form an enclosed courtyard. The reasons for this second major reconstruction of the farm after a comparatively short interval are not known.



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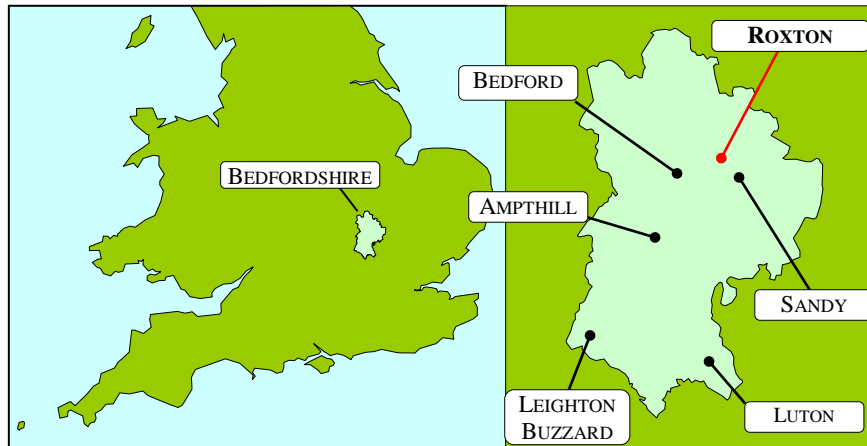


Figure 1: Site location plan

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Figure 2: 1813, Roxton enclosure map (BARS ref. MA44)

(Approximate location of development area shown in red)

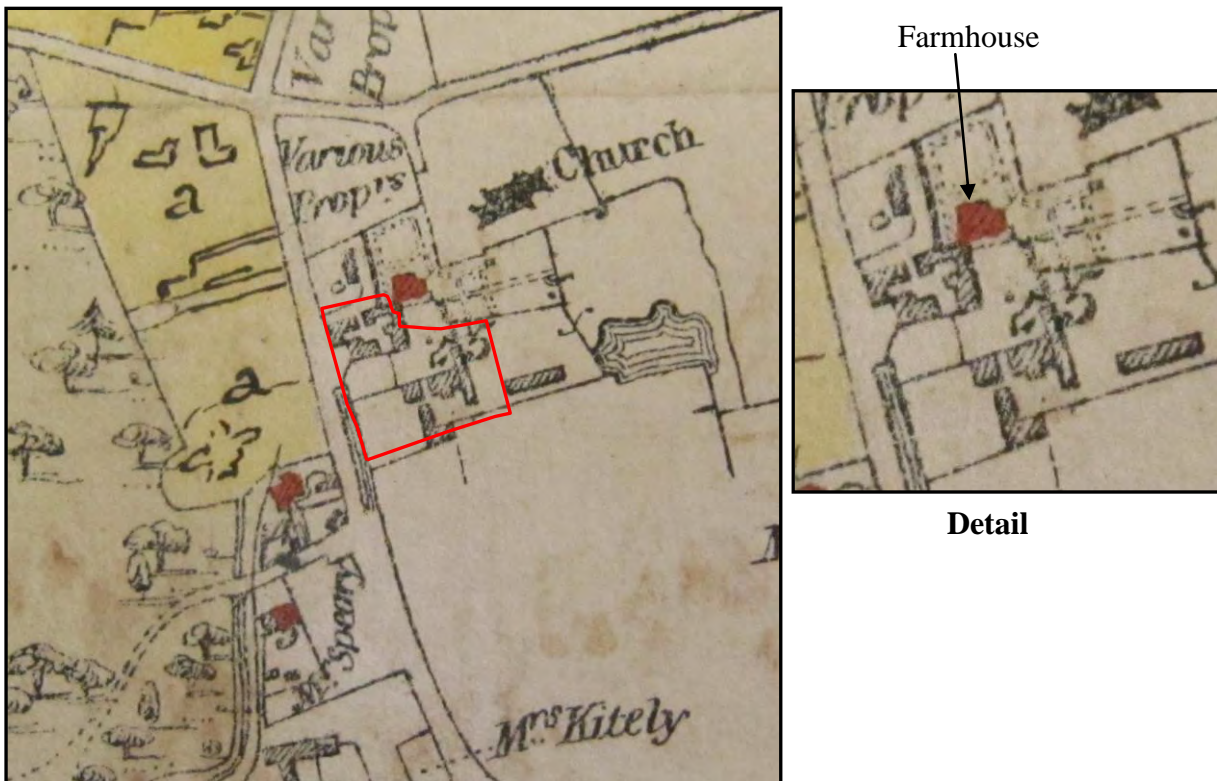


Figure 3: 1850, Plan of Roxton Park Estate (BARS ref. X478-20)

(Approximate location of development area shown in red)

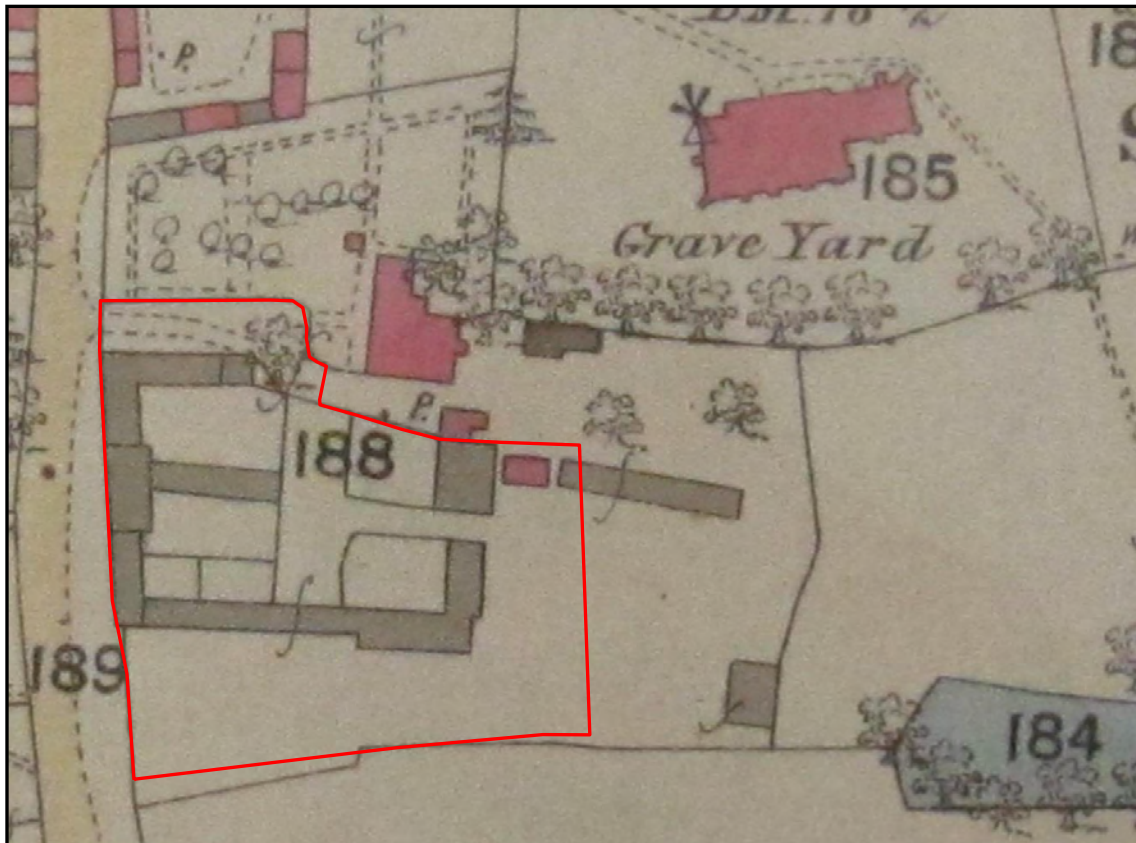


Figure 4: 1884, Ordnance Survey 25-inch map
(Approximate location of development area shown in red)

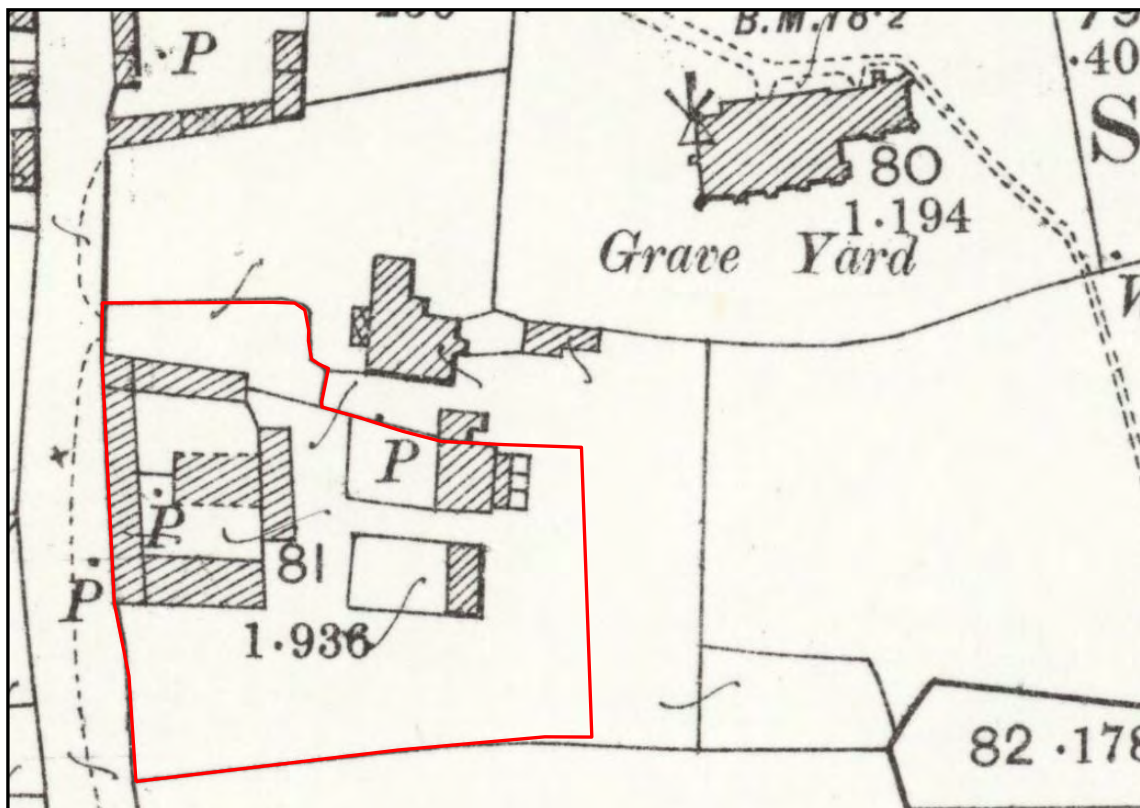


Figure 5: 1900, Ordnance Survey 25-inch map
(Approximate location of development area shown in red)

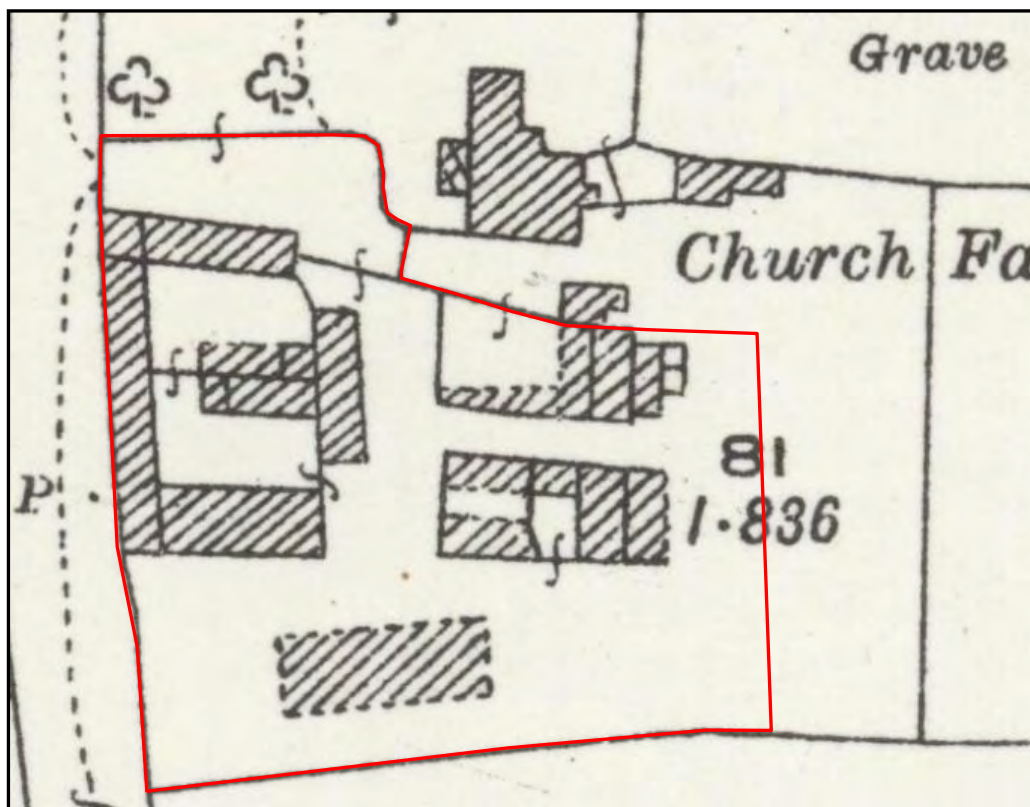


Figure 6: 1924 Ordnance Survey 25-inch map

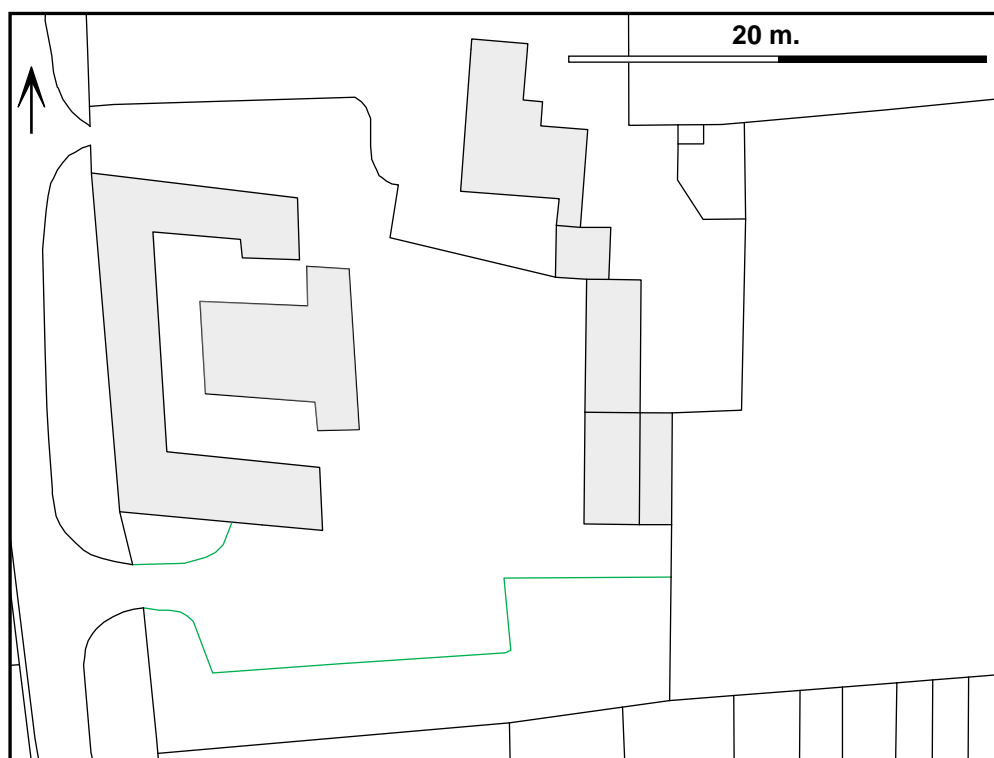


Figure 7: 2016 Ordnance Survey map

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Figure 8: Plan of farm buildings

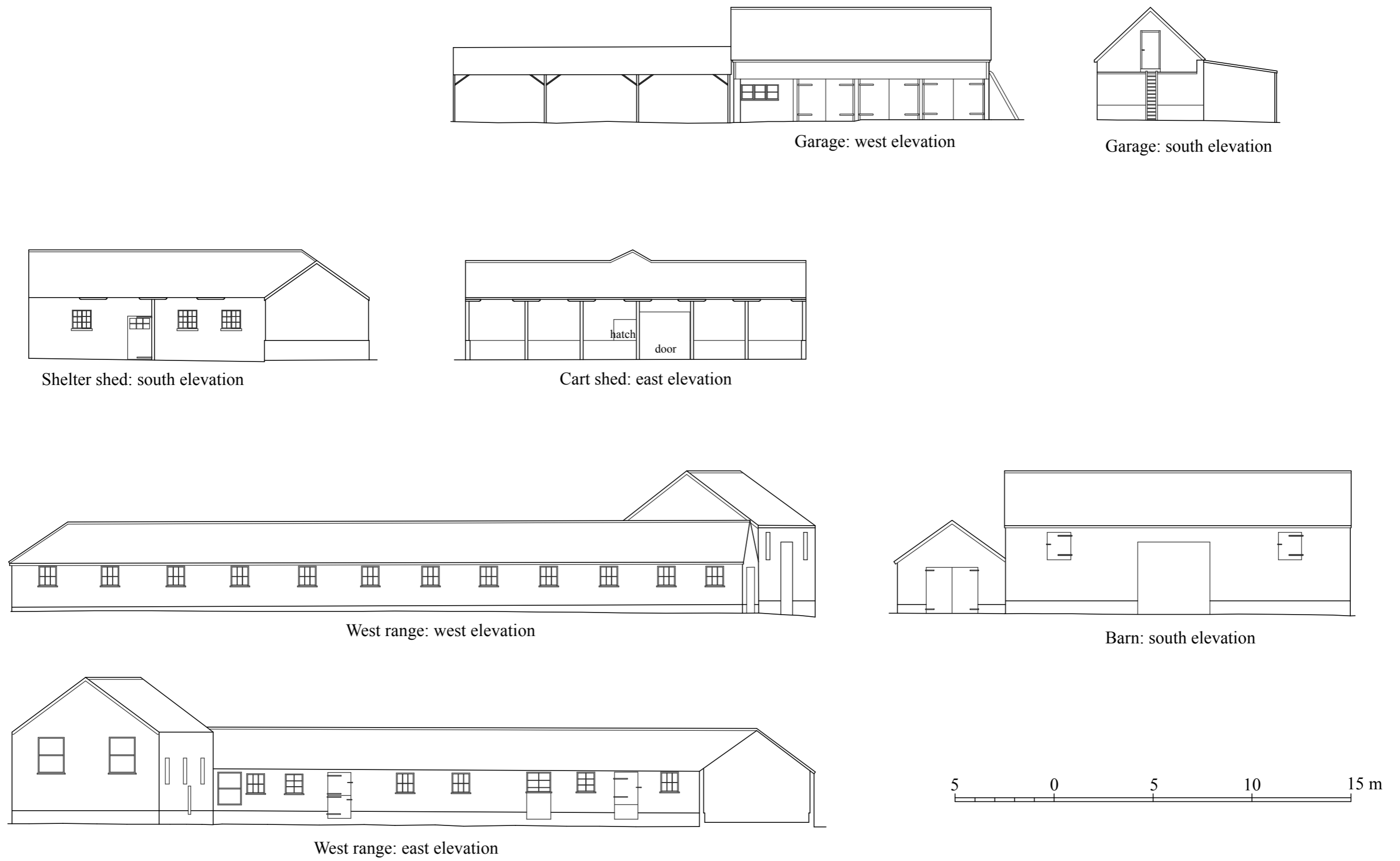


Figure 9: Elevations of farm buildings



Image 1: General view of farmyard, looking north

Cart shed visible on left and garage at right



Image 2: General view of farmyard, looking north-west

Shows barn at left with cart shed in the centre of image



Image 3: Barn, south elevation

South end of west range visible to left of barn (Scale 2m)



Image 4: Barn, north elevation

Note break in sill wall and weatherboard at central bay (Scale 2m)



Image 5: Barn, looking north-west

Shows brick floor in central bay (Scale 2m)



Image 6: Barn, central bay in north wall

Shows break in sill wall and frame with curved braces (Scale 2m)



Image 7: Barn, west end

Shows details of roof, brick infill in lower side walls, horizontal plank lining in west wall with small internal door to west range at right end of wall (Scale 2m)



Image 8: Barn, east end

Shows lower wall with brick infill in side and end wall (Scale 2m)



Image 9: Barn, detail of west end of north wall

Shows framing with brick infill (Scale 2m)



Image 10: West range, western elevation

The farmhouse and north range of the farm buildings are visible at left (Scale 2m)



Image 11: West range, eastern elevation

Shows partially infilled door openings and windows facing farmyard (Scale 2m)



Image 12: West range, south compartment, looking north

Shows roof truss supported by RSJ posts (Scale 2m)



Image 13: West range, south compartment, looking south
Looking towards double doors at south end of range (Scale 2m)



Image 14: West range, south compartment, roof
Shows fourth truss from south end



Image 15: West range, north compartment, looking north

Shows windows and modified door openings in east (right) wall (Scale 2m)



Image 16: West range, north compartment, looking south

Looking towards south end of compartment with small sliding door (Scale 2m)



Image 17: West range, detail of sliding window in west wall

Shows sliding window with wall post at left



Image 18: Cart shed, looking north-west

Part of barn and west range visible at left (Scale 2m)



Image 19: Cart shed, looking north

Shows small sliding hatch and sliding door in rear wall (Scale 2m)



Image 20: Cart shed, looking south, roof

Shows king post truss roof with curved braces to tie beams

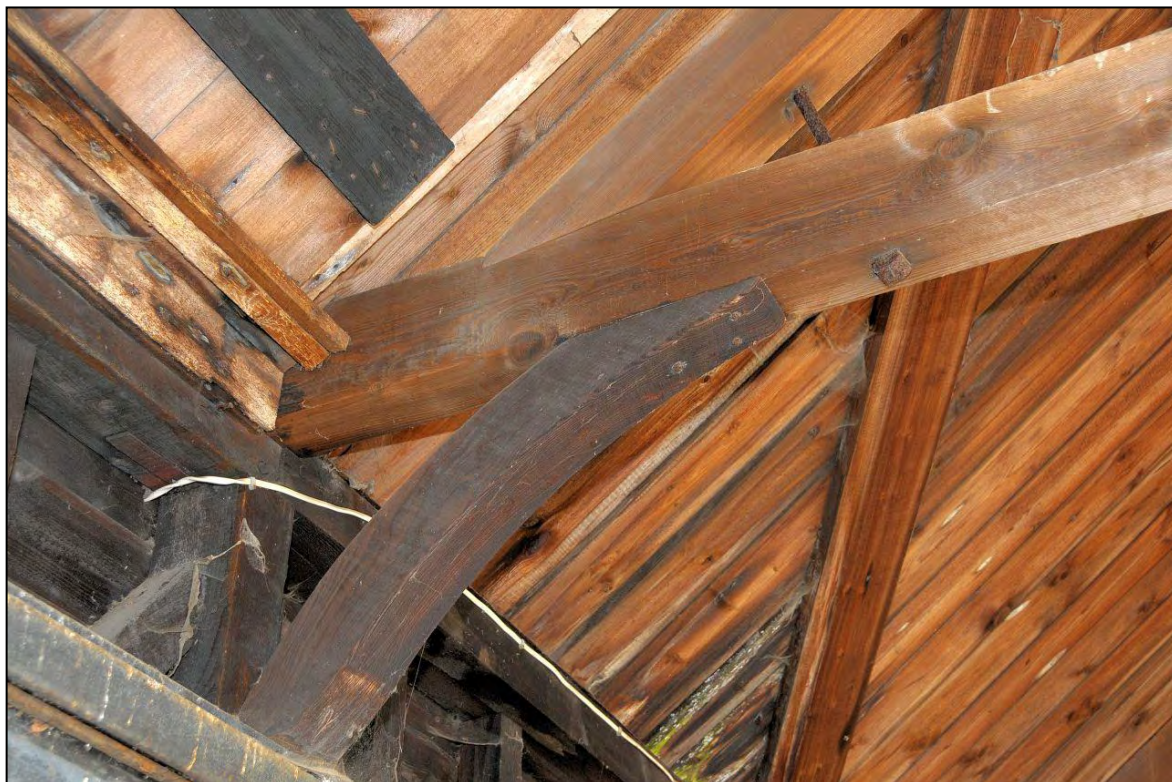


Image 21: Cart shed, detail of roof

Shows junction of west wall and roof with curved brace



Image 22: Shelter sheds, looking north-east

Shows former open-sided shelter sheds, converted to enclosed sheds with brick walls (Scale 2m)



Image 23: Shelter sheds, south shed, looking north-east
Shows spine wall with brick sill and plank partition (Scale 2m)



Image 24: Shelter sheds, south shed, looking south-west
Shows inserted exterior walls in Fletton brick with metal-framed windows (Scale 2m)



Image 25: Shelter sheds, north shed, looking south-east

Shows spine wall at right and inserted brick partition wall at left (Scale 2m)



Image 26: Shelter sheds, north shed, looking south-west

Showing spine wall at left and inserted external brick wall at right (Scale 2m)



Image 27: Shelter sheds, north shed, detail of painted date

Shows painted date on internal face of wall above door in north wall



Image 28: Garage, looking north-east

Shows building converted into garage with loft over (Scale 2m)



Image 29: Garage, north compartment, looking north-east

Looking towards north-east corner showing end and rear walls with loft floor above (Scale 2m)



Image 30: Loft above garage, looking south

Looking towards door in south end, showing roof trusses (Scale 2m)



Image 31: Monochrome contact print

*Land adjacent to Church Farm, 41 High Street, Roxton, Bedfordshire:
Historic Building Recording*

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