HERITAGE CONSULTANCY

HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING **MILL FARM MILL ROAD WISTOW CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

Prepared For Rose Homes (EA) Ltd

> By Neil Parker MA





APS Report No: 59/19

The Old School, Cameron St, Heckington, Sleaford, Lincs NG34 9RW

T: 01529 461618 **F**: 01529 469444

E: info@apsarchaeology.co.uk **W**: www.apsarchaeology.co.uk

Event No:ECB5879

Planning Application No. 18/02449/FUL, & 18/02450/LBC

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1. SUMMARY

A programme of historic building recording was required prior to the conversion of farm buildings at Mill Farm, Mill Road, Wistow, Cambridgeshire.

Historic mapping shows buildings in the form of the surviving historic structures present on the site since at least 1888. The footprint remained largely unchanged until the 20th century until the addition of modern coverings for grain production and storage.

The buildings originally comprised a threshing barn with stable and cartshed and separate cattle accommodation to the south

The building's floor plans and other details were recorded in writing, graphically and photographically. Elevations showing the extent of where the modern buildings covered the historic buildings have been included.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Definition of Archaeological Building Recording

Building recording is defined as: 'a programme of work intended to establish the character, history, dating, form and archaeological development of a specified building, structure, or complex and its setting, including its buried components on land or under water.'

2.2 Planning Background

A planning application 18/02449/FUL was submitted to Huntingdonshire District Council for conversion of agricultural barns into three dwellings, including external alterations and two single storey extensions. The proposals include the demolition of existing agricultural storage barns and the formation of an access along with associated external works. As the buildings lie to the northeast of Mill Farm Cottage, a Grade II Listed Building, Listed Building Consent (18/02450/LBC) was also sought and granted subject to a programme of historic building recording being undertaken prior to the commencement of the alterations in accordance with a written scheme of investigation approved by the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Team (CHET). Archaeological Project Services was commissioned by Rose Homes (EA) Ltd to undertake the work which was carried out on 10th May 2019.

2.3 Site Location

Wistow is a civil parish in the Huntingdonshire district of Cambridgeshire (Fig. 2). The village is located 8.5km northeast of Huntingdon and 20km southeast of Peterborough. The proposed development site lies on the southwest side of the village on the junction of Mill Road and Parsonage Street at National Grid Reference TL 2783 8089. The proposed development site lies on the southwestern part of Wistow at approximately 16m AOD (Fig. 3).

3. AIMS

In accordance with the written scheme of investigation, the aims of the work were to provide a detailed report of the traditional barns prior to their conversion into dwellings to formulate a strategy for the conservation, alteration, demolition, repair or management of a building, or structure, or complex and its setting according to CIFA Standard and Guidance for the Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Historic Buildings (2014). The objectives will be to establish the form of the building, the date of the building and its sequence of development, identify features of special interest and place the building in its thematic and/or



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regional context to seek a better understanding, compile a lasting record, analyse the findings/record, and then disseminate the results in a report to Historic England Level 2 standard fit to discharge the planning condition. The standards set in Historic England's *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (2015) were adhered to.

4. METHODS

Recording of the building was undertaken in accordance with Historic England guidelines 2016 and ALGAO guidelines 1997.

Subject to accessibility, the recording of the building included:

- A photographic survey showing the building in its context, general and detailed views of the exterior, interior views of the principal rooms and circulation areas and structural or decorative details.
- A written record providing an account of the building's location, type, materials and possible dates.
- A drawn record was made based on architects drawings of the site that were measured and checked for their accuracy and updated accordingly. These appear as the figures in this report.

Photographic recording was undertaken with a digital camera producing uninterpolated images of 12 megapixels with a CMOS APS-C sensor. An index of the photographs was compiled on an annotated register.

There were no constraints on site that required deviation from the methods set out in the WSI.



Plate 1. Oblique view of the buildings, looking northwest

5. HISTORICAL EVIDENCE

There has been settlement within the immediate surroundings of the site since at least the Roman times, both around the village and in the wider setting. To the southwest of the site is a complex of cropmarks including rectangular and curvilinear enclosures indicating a probable Prehistoric or Roman enclosed settlement site (MCB18538). Undated cropmarks, potentially of a similar date lie to the south of the site (MCB26730) and an undated rectangular enclosure can be found to the east (MCB23472).

Wistow is recorded in Domesday Book of c.1086. It was owned by Ramsey Abby and had meadow land, woodland, a mill and a church (Williams and Martin, 554). The current Grade I

Listed Church of St John the Baptist (NHLE 1128371) dates from the 14th century. Associated with the church, a medieval gravestone (CHER 02846) lies adjacent to the northern boundary of the site. The wider landscape setting shows the farm complex sitting within a rural landscape adjacent to the village core, the church. Aside from the change in the shapes of the fields from the medieval ridge and furrow cultivation (CHER 02870, 08756, 08757 CB14617) that can be seen around the village and the steady modernisation of farming practices, the immediate setting of this farmhouse has changed little. The landscape has been continually utilised for agricultural purposes possibly since the subsistence farming of the prehistoric period through to the mechanised modern mass production of grain crops.

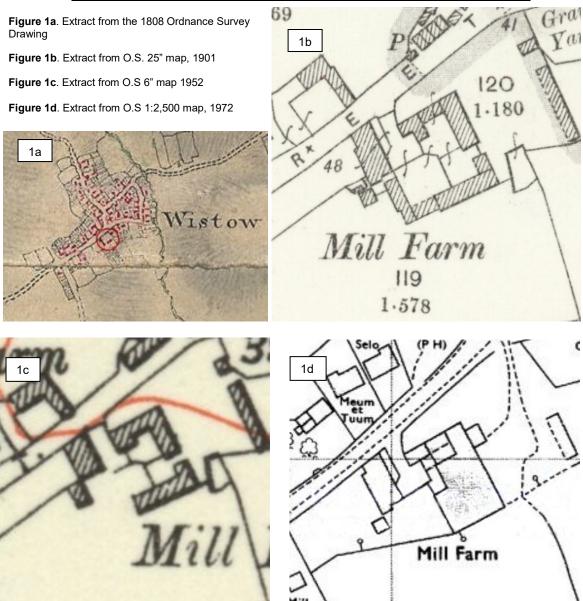
The buildings that are the subject of this report are a complex of historic farm buildings which form part of Mill Farm. These are associated and originally belonged to Mill Farmhouse, a Grade II Listed Building. The list entry describes this building as;

'Late C16 or early C17 cottage with later additions. Gable end to road. Timber-framed, plaster rendered. Rubblestone and brick sill. Plain tiled, gable roof. Red brick ridge stack with recessed panel to base. One-storey and attics. Two dormers with elliptical heads. One small casement above entry opposite stack. C18 panelled door. Interior has moulded pad to main beam. Two late C17 or early C18 linked gabled wings at rear right hand. Red brick. Plain tiled. Wrought iron lettering "G.E." to gable ends. One elliptical window, sealed. C19 gault brick wing at rear left hand'.

In 1808, a drawing for the Ordnance Survey of the Huntingdon area by the draughtsman William Hyett shows the village of Wistow. Mill Farm is depicted with the farmhouse and a north-south range extending from it. An east-west range is also depicted at the south end of the site, although this is likely to be a building that pre-dates those that occupy the site today (Fig. 1a).

The Ordnance Survey 25" Map of 1888 and the following map of 1901 depict the farm buildings that were recorded during this survey. These are all a contemporary build indicating that the building shown on the 1808 drawing was replaced with a purpose built range for grain production and transport with animal housing. The buildings now create an enclosed central yard, divided into four parts. Access to the yard was from the eastern side out to the fields and northwest corner onto the road. A small passage on the western side gave access to the farmhouse and its outbuildings. On the eastern side of the site, adjacent to the graveyard are two further buildings, the southern of which is shown as being open fronted, and as such is likely to be a shelter shed.

By 1952, the 6" map shows that the buildings remained unchanged aside from the demolition of a north-south aligned range on the west side of the complex. At some time between 1952 and 1972 when the 1:2,500 map was published, the modern storage areas were added, presumably along with the mechanised grain production equipment. The buildings on the east of the site have changed, with the northern of the two having been removed and the southern reduced in size by approximately one third.



6. FABRIC EVIDENCE

The historic structure is divided into two contemporary ranges. The northern range includes a dwelling, 'The Barn', which was originally part of the agricultural structure but has been converted and is not a part of this survey. The remainder of the range comprises a cartshed, stable and threshing barn, partly covered by the modern additional metal structures.

The southern range was constructed as housing for cattle with access from both the fields to the east and the central crew yard.

The buildings are constructed with locally produced bricks, 'Warboys yellows' laid throughout in Sussex bond.² Where the roof survives it comprises a mixture of original pantiles and corrugated metal repair.

The buildings were examined externally and internally and will be described externally first, in terms of the historic structure, even where it falls within the modern barn extensions, and then internally. A discussion of the building and its phases of construction and alteration will follow.

 $^{^2}$ Each course has three bricks laid lengthways (stretcher) and one laid end on (header) repeated throughout the course.

External

The northwest elevation of the farm complex (Elevation 3) faces onto Mill Road, and comprises the outer wall of the cartshed and stable, and the upper storey of the northwest gable end of the threshing barn.





Plate 2 (above). Vented window, north elevation of the stable

Plate 3 (left). Stable and cartshed, north elevation

The north elevation of the cartshed has no apertures or openings. There is a plinth at the base of the wall that is not carried through into the wall of the stable. The stable at the northeast corner has a single vented window with a segmental arch³ and queen closer⁴ bricks surrounding the window aperture.

An upturned plinth header⁵ brick forms a kneeler⁶ at the base of the gable end of the roof, the edge of which is capped with

half-round capping bricks.

Two iron ties are present in the gable and in the middle, a hole has been cut to accommodate a fan, installed with the modern machinery inside.

Plate 4. Northwest gable end of the threshing barn

³ A type of arch with a circular arc of less than 180 degrees.

⁴ A brick cut in half down its width, and laid with its smallest face exposed and standing vertically.

⁵ Header end angled at 45 degrees

⁶ Brick at the bottom end of the coping at the gable end of a roof that projects over the wall below.



The northeast elevation of the stable has a partially blocked Dutch door⁷. Alterations in the outside ground level mean that the step into the building is higher than the surrounding ground surface.

Where the stable abuts the threshing barn, a modern extension covers the join as does lead flashing at the roof level.

Plate 5. The northeast elevation of the stable

On the northeast elevation of the threshing barn, the wall to the northwest of the main threshing door is covered by a modern corrugated metal extension with a breeze block base. It was not possible to enter to view this section of the barn externally.



Plate 6
The modern extension to the northeast elevation of the threshing barn



Plate 7
The northeast elevation of the threshing barn to the south of the modern extension

The threshing door on the northeast elevation (one of two opposing doors either side of the threshing floor) has been heightened from its original size and now reaches the eaves level. The wooden doors and shuttering above are not original. Either side of the threshing door and at the corners of the barn are brick pillars for additional structural strength. The window with the segmental arch at the southern end of the elevation is original.

Viewed from underneath the covered entrance to what would have served as the crewyard, the southeast elevation of the threshing barn has undergone alteration. On the bottom part of the wall, the bricks are laid in English bond, stepped out to form a plinth, whereas above in the gable, they are laid in Sussex bond. Two door apertures have been added in the lower part of the wall while the pitching door with segmental arch in the upper part of the gable end is original.

⁷ Door divided horizontally in two, so that the upper and lower halves can be opened and closed independently of the other.





Plate 8 (above). The original gable end and pitching door in the southeast elevation of the threshing barn

Plate 9 (left). The southeast elevation of the threshing barn with the rebuilt lower wall and two inserted entrances



Plate 10
The southwest elevation of the threshing barn, mostly blocked by a modern extension

Much of the southwest elevation of the threshing barn is covered by a modern corrugated metal extension for grain storage. The northwest end is visible showing that the bricks in English bond forming a plinth continue along the bottom part of this elevation. The window at the eaves height appears to be contemporary with the original phase of the build.



Plate 11

The modern grain store that blocks much of the southwest elevation of the threshing barn

Facing southeast into the crewyard is the open fronted cartshed that extends southwest from the stable and the northwest end of the threshing barn. At the southwest end the cartshed adjoins the converted dwelling, 'The Barn', previously part of the cartshed range.

Two bays survive of what appears to have been a three bay shed. A modern concrete floor has been poured around the hexagonal pillars, which are constructed with left and right handed external angle bricks sitting on wider brick bases.

The pantile roof sits on simple timbers that for the main part appear to be original. At the northeast end there is a door through to the stable.





Plate 12
The southeast elevation of the cartshed, looking northwest

Plate 13
Inside the cartshed looking northeast to the stable

A southern building range comprising cattle accommodation was once separate from the threshing barn but has been joined to form a covered entrance to the modern extensions to the rear of the barn. The covered area between the two buildings has been roofed with corrugated metal.



Plate 14
The northeast elevation of the cattle accommodation

The cattle accommodation is also constructed in Sussex Bond. The northeast elevation is mostly featureless while at the southeast end wooden double doors are accessed from a sloping concrete ramp, a later insert for farm machinery.

Much of the pantile roof is missing and the wooden batons to which the tiles attach are stapled to boarded wooden uprights.



The open northwest end has 'single bullnose's bricks creating a rounded finish to the wall edge suggesting that it was designed as an open front.

An iron supporting beam holds the roof and is seated onto the top of the rounded bullnose bricks where some have been removed and replaced with later bricks of a type other than Warboys yellows.

Plate 15 (left). Detail of the bullnose bricks at the northern end of the cattle accommodation



Plate 16. The southeast facing elevation of the cattle accommodation, looking north



Plate 17 (above). The original window in the southeast elevation of the cattle shed surrounded by queen closers

Plate 18 (right). The blocked door, replaced with a window at the northeast end of the cattle accommodation



The southeast elevation of the cattle shed had a door at the northeast end, blocked with plain red brick and a window left in its place. Southwest of this was an original window surrounded by queen closer bricks.

The door at the southwest end is a later addition.

The central part of the roof timbers have collapsed.

-

⁸ Brick rounded on one side on one of the header ends



The northwest elevation of the cattle accommodation has a single door leading into the now covered crewyard. The windows either side are topped with segmental arches and are original. The level of the crewyard is now considerably lower than when the cattle shed was used by animals.

Plate 19. The northwest elevation of the cattle accommodation

Internal

As it was small and open fronted with no internal features of note, the cartshed, Room 1, has been dealt with above.

Room 2, formerly the stable has been mostly cleared. The floor is of poured concrete and fairly modern. The southeast internal wall has a continuation of the double thickness base and plinth in English bond seen on the external southeast and southwest elevations. In the southwest corner, a door has been knocked through into the threshing barn, Room 3. Two other holes have been created to allow hot air from the modern corn drier burner which was installed in this room.

The wall plates⁹ and main roof timbers appear to be original although some of the common rafters¹⁰ have been replaced and roofing felt added below the tiles.





Plate 20 (above). Detail of the makers plate (J.W. Woolley & Co Ltd) on the grain drier in Room 2

Plate 21 (left). Room 2, a former stable used to house the burner for the modern grain drier

Room 3, the main threshing barn has been almost completely filled with modern equipment for the drying and processing of grain prior to its storage in the modern extensions that abut the barn.

As an overall space, the barn, is open to the roof height. The floor has been altered with three variously sized grain pits, the remainder is sectional concrete. Two of the grain pits sit directly inside the main threshing doors on the winnowing floor of the barn. The length of the centre of the barn floor is taken up with these and brick plinths to support grain hoppers and

⁹ Longitudinal timber set on top of a wall on which roof trusses, joists or rafters rest.

¹⁰ A rafter which extends from the wall plate to the ridge at right angles to both members, and to which roofing is attached.

upper ducting for the processing equipment.





Plate 22 Internal view of Room 3, the threshing barn, looking northwest

Plate 23
Internal view of Room 3, the threshing barn, looking southeast

At the rear of Room 3, on the southwest wall, the opposing door to the main threshing door now leads to a storage area. It is much smaller as it was only necessary to provide through draught for the threshing process. The windows on the ground floor of this wall have been blocked. Towards the northwest end of the northeast wall, a door has been knocked through to give access to the modern extension on the front of the barn.

The size of the barn, the pitching door in the southeast gable end and the upper window in the northwest end alludes to an upper storage floor on either side of the main threshing area in the middle, but this and any structural evidence of it are no longer present.





Plate 24 (above). Roof timbers in Room 3, the threshing barn

Plate 25 (left). The small opposing door for the threshing floor in the southwest wall of Room 3

The roof timbers are of angled queen post construction where the main tie beams¹¹ have angled posts leading to the purlins.¹² Here the purlins are supported by additional collars¹³ which span the space near the top of the roof. The main structure appears to be original.

Room 4 is the entrance to the cattle shed from the area now covered with a roof between the

¹¹Main transverse beam in a roof truss connecting the feet of the principal rafter and preventing the spreading of the two sides of a sloping roof.

¹² Longitudinal timber giving support to the rafters of a roof.

¹³ Transverse horizontal timber connecting pairs of rafters above their feet and below the apex of the roof.

barn and the main animal accommodation. The wall on the southwest side is a modern block wall against which a sloping ramp leads to Room 5.



Plate 26 (left). The entrance to the cattle accommodation, Room 4, looking southeast

Plate 27 (below). Detail of the king post roof trusses in Room 4



The main roof structure differs from the threshing barn being of king post construction¹⁴. The main timbers appear to be original. There are no common rafters 15, instead boards have been used leaving only the principal rafters¹⁶ and the ridge piece¹⁷ at the top.



Room 5 has four access points, from Room 4, from the doors in the northeast elevation. from a blocked Dutch door at the southeast end of the northwest wall leading into the crewyard, and from a more recently added door at the southwest end of the southeast wall.

Plate 28. Room 5, cattle accommodation, looking southwest

The floor of the cattle shed is concreted and the walls show evidence of scarring where double stalls to hold two animals next to each other have since been removed to allow the space to be used for storing farm machinery. Any fixtures and fittings relating to its previous use have been removed.

7. DISCUSSION

Although not the original agricultural buildings associated with Mill Farm, the historical agricultural buildings on the site comprise purpose built, mid to late 19th century structures designed for the processing of grain and housing of animals. There is a high degree of survival and although some of the alterations are major, there are very few phases of change

¹⁴ Vertical timber standing on a collar or tie beam and rising to the apex of a roof to support a ridge piece.

¹⁵ Inclined timbers following the slope of a roof to support a roof covering.

¹⁶ Rafters that form a part of the roof truss.

¹⁷ Longitudinal timber at the apex of a pitched roof where the rafters lean against it.

within the buildings overall.

The most notable change from the exterior is the addition of the modern extensions that cover the crewyard and much of the original threshing barn and cartshed, but within, much of the brick fabric and superstructure of the buildings remains unchanged.

One of the most major alterations is the conversion of the southwestern end of the range of buildings forming the stable and cartshed. Now a dwelling, this part was not included as part of this survey.

The threshing barn is large and built at a time when mechanised threshing was about to become more prevalent. At this time, the barns generally became smaller as less space was needed for the threshing area, much of which was done outside the barn itself. This suggests that the barn may date from the middle of the 19th century just prior to the more widespread use of machinery where planned barns were greatly reduced in size.¹⁸

The pitching door in the threshing barn's southeast elevation is opposite the Room 4 entrance to the cattle accommodation. This would have allowed fodder, such as hay, to have been easily transferred from the upper floor of the barn where it was stored into the cattle shed opposite.

The fabric of the southern range of cattle accommodation, along with the historic mapping and location of the pitching door on the barn indicates that this was a contemporary build to the threshing barn. It is unclear whether the access in the northeast elevation is original, or an existing aperture that was made larger to allow easy access for machinery when the building went out of use as a cow house. Internally, the scars on the walls where the stalls have been removed indicate the original purpose of the building as do the small windows which were as much for ventilation as for light. By the middle of the 19th century, this style of cow house, open to the roof without a hayloft above was becoming the standard.¹⁹

During the middle of the 20th century, the most striking alterations took place with the insertion of the mechanised grain processing equipment in the threshing barn and the addition of the corrugated metal extensions. Structurally, the insertions caused little change with the addition of some knocked through doors and holes in the stable to barn wall being the main impact of the changes. It was probably about this time that the cattle accommodation was stripped out for use as a means of storing the farm machinery which accompanied a more mechanised approach to grain production.

A small but notable change is the difference in ground level, now considerably lower around the whole range than when the structures were first built.

The large size of the threshing barn and its mid-19th century construction date is of interest and contributes to the regional research agenda, specifically towards the development of the mechanisation of agriculture in the modern period.²⁰

8. CONCLUSION

Historic building recording has been undertaken on agricultural buildings at Mill Road, Wistow, Cambridgeshire. Historic mapping shows buildings in the form of the surviving historic structures present on the site since at least 1888, the footprint of which remained largely unchanged until the 20th century until the addition of modern coverings for grain production and storage. The building was recorded prior to its conversion into a residential dwelling.

¹⁸ Barnwell & Giles 1997, 49

¹⁹ Brunskill 1999, 66

²⁰ Medlycott, 2011, 78

9. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services wishes to thank Steven Buddle of Rose Homes (EA) Ltd. who commissioned the work and provided access to the buildings. The project was coordinated by Neil Parker. The report was edited by Mark Dymond and Paul Cope-Faulkner.

10. PERSONNEL

Project Coordinator: Neil Parker Building Recording: Neil Parker

Photographic reproduction: Neil Parker

CAD Illustration: Neil Parker

Analysis: Neil Parker

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Ordnance Survey, 1888 *Huntingdonshire Sheet XIV.11* 25 inch map (1st edition).

Ordnance Survey, 1901 Huntingdonshire Sheet XIV.11 25 inch map

Ordnance Survey, 1952 Huntingdonshire Sheet XIV.SE 6 inch map

Ordnance Survey, 1972 Huntingdonshire Sheet XIV.11 1:2,500 map

12. ABBREVIATIONS

AOD Above Ordnance Datum

ClfA Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

OS Ordnance Survey



Figure 2. General location plan

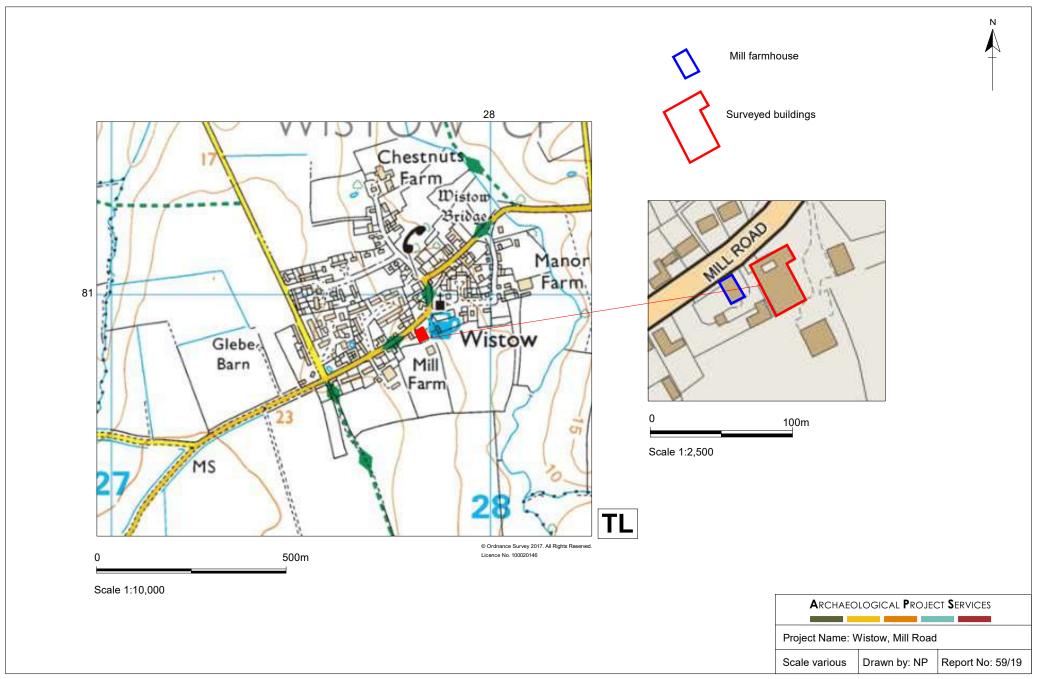


Figure 3. Site location plan



Figure 5. Barn plan and plate locations

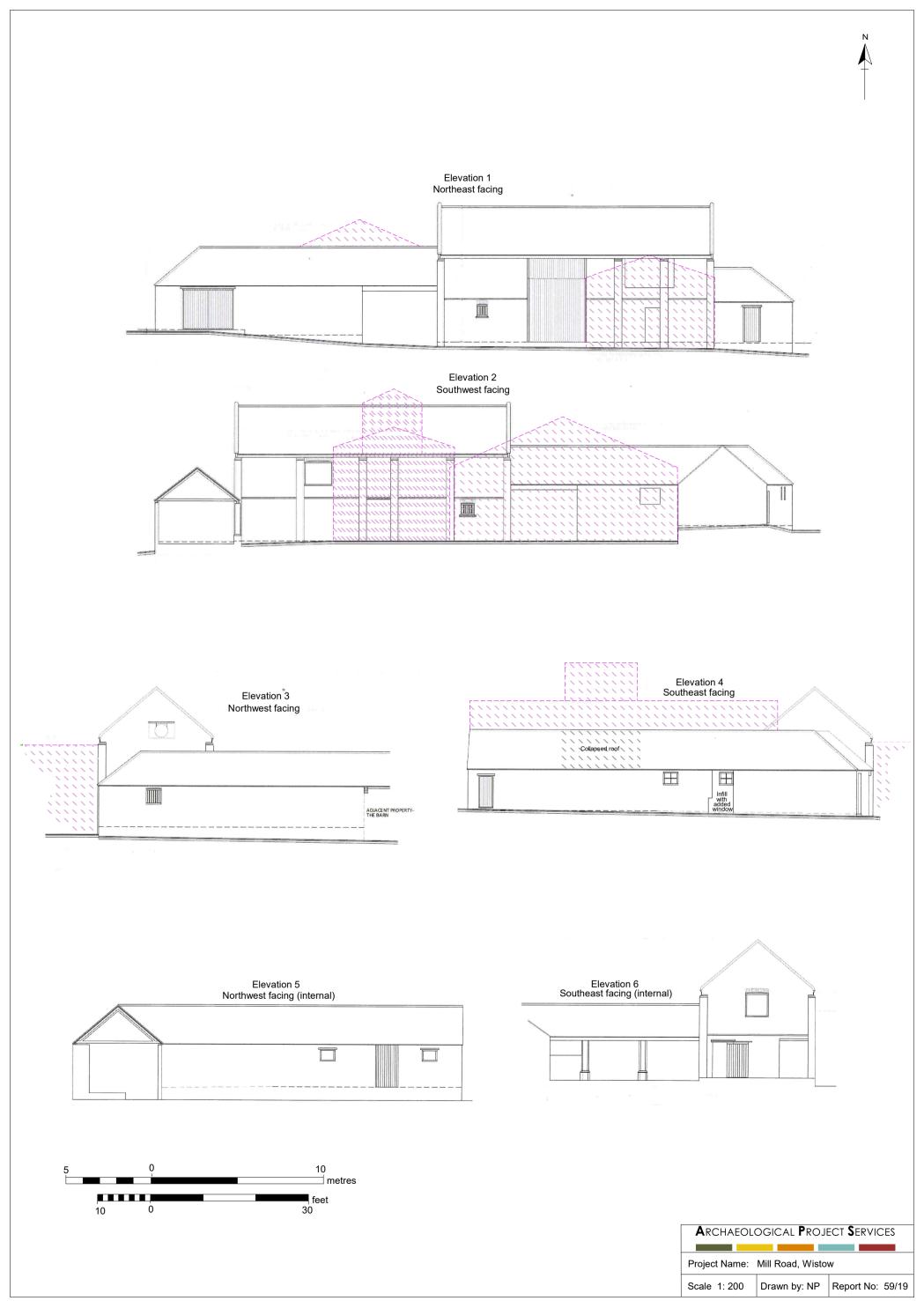


Figure 5. Elevations

Appendix 4

THE ARCHIVE

The archive consists of:

- 1 Annotated drawing
- 2 Annotated photographic sheets with notes
- 1 Daily record sheet

All primary records are currently kept at:

Archaeological Project Services The Old School Cameron Street Heckington Sleaford Lincolnshire NG34 9RW

The ultimate destination of the project archive is:

Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Archive Facility

The digital archive will be deposited with a publically accessible CoreSealTrust repository (Archaeology Data Service) in accordance with their best practice guidelines.

Event Number ECB5879

Archaeological Project Services Site Code: WSMR19

Oasis record no: archaeol1-365162

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OASIS ID: archaeol1-361458

Project details

Historic Building Recording, Mill Farm, Mill Road, Wistow, Cambridgeshire Project name

the project

Short description of Recording of agricultural buildings in Wistow, Cambridgeshire. These comprised a threshing barn, stable, cartshed and cattle accommodation. Constructed in a single phase of out of local materials, the buildings appear to date to the , mid18th century. The buildings were added to in the 20th century where much was covered by modern metal storage areas and altered to accommodate modern small scale industrial grain production and

storage.

Project dates Start: 10-05-2019 End: 10-05-2019

Previous/future

work

No / No

Any associated WSML19 - Sitecode project reference

codes

associated ECB5879 - HER event no. Any

reference project

codes

Type of project **Building Recording**

Site status None

Current Land use Other 15 - Other

Monument type **BARNS Post Medieval**

Significant Finds **NONE None**

& "Photographic Survey", "Survey/Recording Methods Of

Fabric/Structure","Annotated Sketch" techniques

Prompt Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS

Project location

Country England

Site location CAMBRIDGESHIRE HUNTINGDONSHIRE WISTOW Mill Farm, Mill Road,

Wistow, Cambridgeshire

Postcode PE28 2QQ

Study area 765 Square metres

Site coordinates TL 2783 8089 52.410664528733 -0.120447904522 52 24 38 N 000 07 13

W Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 16m Max: 16m

Project creators

Name of Archaeological Project Services

Organisation

Project brief Local Planning Authority (with/without advice from County/District

originator Archaeologist)

design Archaeological Project Services Project

originator

Project Neil Parker

director/manager

Project supervisor Neil Parker

Type of Developer sponsor/funding

body

Project archives

Physical Archive No

Exists?

Physical Archive n/a

recipient

Digital Archive Cambridgeshire County Archaeology Office

recipient

Digital Contents "none"

Digital Media "Images raster / digital photography"

available

Paper Archive Cambridgeshire County Archaeology Office

recipient

Paper Contents "none"

Paper Media "Correspondence", "Diary", "Drawing", "Plan", "Report"

available

Project bibliography 1

Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Publication type

Title Historic Building Recording, Mill Farm, Mill Road, Wistow, Cambridgeshire

Author(s)/Editor(s) Parker, N

Other bibliographic 59/19

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publication

Description A4 comb bound report

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 - Mitigation Strategies



