

# Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

**HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING:  
THE BARN  
MICKLEFIELD HALL  
SARRATT  
HERTFORDSHIRE**

NGR: TL 0531 9751

*on behalf of Micklefield Hall Partnerships*



Karin Semmelmann MA MIFA & Calli Rouse BA PIFA

November 2008

ASC: 1125/SMH/1



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## Site Data

<i>ASC project code:</i>	SMH	<i>ASC Project No:</i>	1125
<i>OASIS ref:</i>	archaeol2-49995	<i>Event/Accession no:</i>	TBC
<i>County:</i>	Hertfordshire		
<i>Village/Town:</i>	Sarratt		
<i>Civil Parish:</i>	Sarratt		
<i>NGR (to 8 figs):</i>	TL 0531 9751		
<i>Present use:</i>	Redundant barn		
<i>Planning proposal:</i>	Conversion to commercial venue		
<i>Planning application ref/date:</i>	Not known		
<i>Local Planning Authority:</i>	Three Rivers		
<i>Date of fieldwork:</i>	29 <sup>th</sup> Oct – 3 <sup>rd</sup> November 2008		
<i>Commissioned by:</i>	Antony Tight 1 Stonecross St Albans Hertfordshire AL1 4AA		
<i>Client:</i>	Mr & Mrs Rankin Micklefield Hall Sarratt Road Sarratt Nr. Rickmansworth Hertfordshire WD3 6AQ		
<i>Contact name:</i>	Antony Tight		

## Internal Quality Check

<i>Primary Author:</i>	Karin Semmelmann	<i>Date:</i>	21/11/2008
<i>Revisions:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	
<i>Edited/Checked By:</i>	Bob Zeepvat	<i>Date:</i>	21/11/2008

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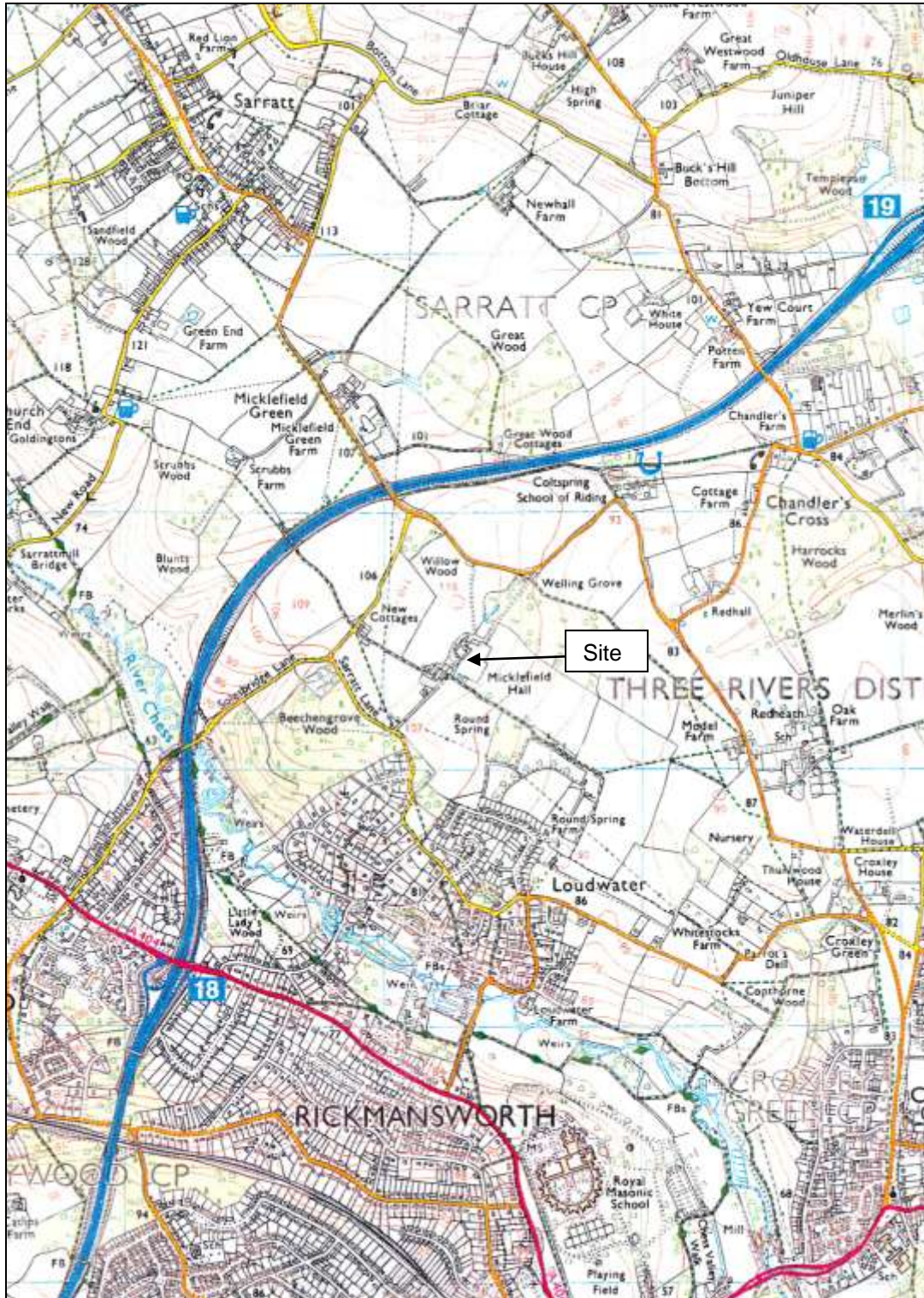


Figure 1: General location (scale 1:25,000)

## Summary

*Between October & November 2008 Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd carried out historic building recording of a Grade II listed barn at Micklefield Hall, Sarratt Road, Sarratt, Hertfordshire in order to inform proposals for the development involving buildings on the site.*

*This L-shaped building consists of a large, 7 bay barn with two midstreys and two outshuts to the north, and a smaller barn set at right angles at the eastern end. The smaller barn has had an upper floor inserted, which is only accessible by a door at first floor level. The main barn appears to have been built in the 17<sup>th</sup> century using parts from earlier structures. The smaller barn, which may be 16<sup>th</sup> century, was added on to this at a later date, possibly at the same time that the first floor was inserted. The barn is suffering a great deal of lateral movement, particularly to the rear, and a substantial amount of repair work is required to prevent its complete decline.*

## 1 Introduction

1.1 Between October & November 2008 *Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd* (ASC) carried out historic building recording of a barn at Micklefield Hall, Sarratt Road, Sarratt, Hertfordshire (NGR: TL 0431 9751; Fig. 1). The project was commissioned by Antony Tight on behalf of Jamie and Anne Rankin, and was carried out according to current professional standards.

### 1.2 *Planning Background*

This building recording project has been required under the terms of *Planning Policy Guidance Note 15* (PPG15), in order to inform proposals for the development involving buildings on the site.

### 1.3 *Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd*

*Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd* (ASC) is an independent archaeological practice providing a full range of archaeological services including consultancy, field evaluation, mitigation and post-excavation studies, historic building recording and analysis. ASC is recognised as a *Registered Organisation* by the Institute for Archaeologists, in recognition of its high standards and working practices.

### 1.4 *Management*

The project was managed by Karin Semmelmann BA MA MIFA, and was carried out under the overall direction of Bob Zeepvat BA MIFA.

### 1.5 *The Site*

#### 1.5.1 *Location & Description*

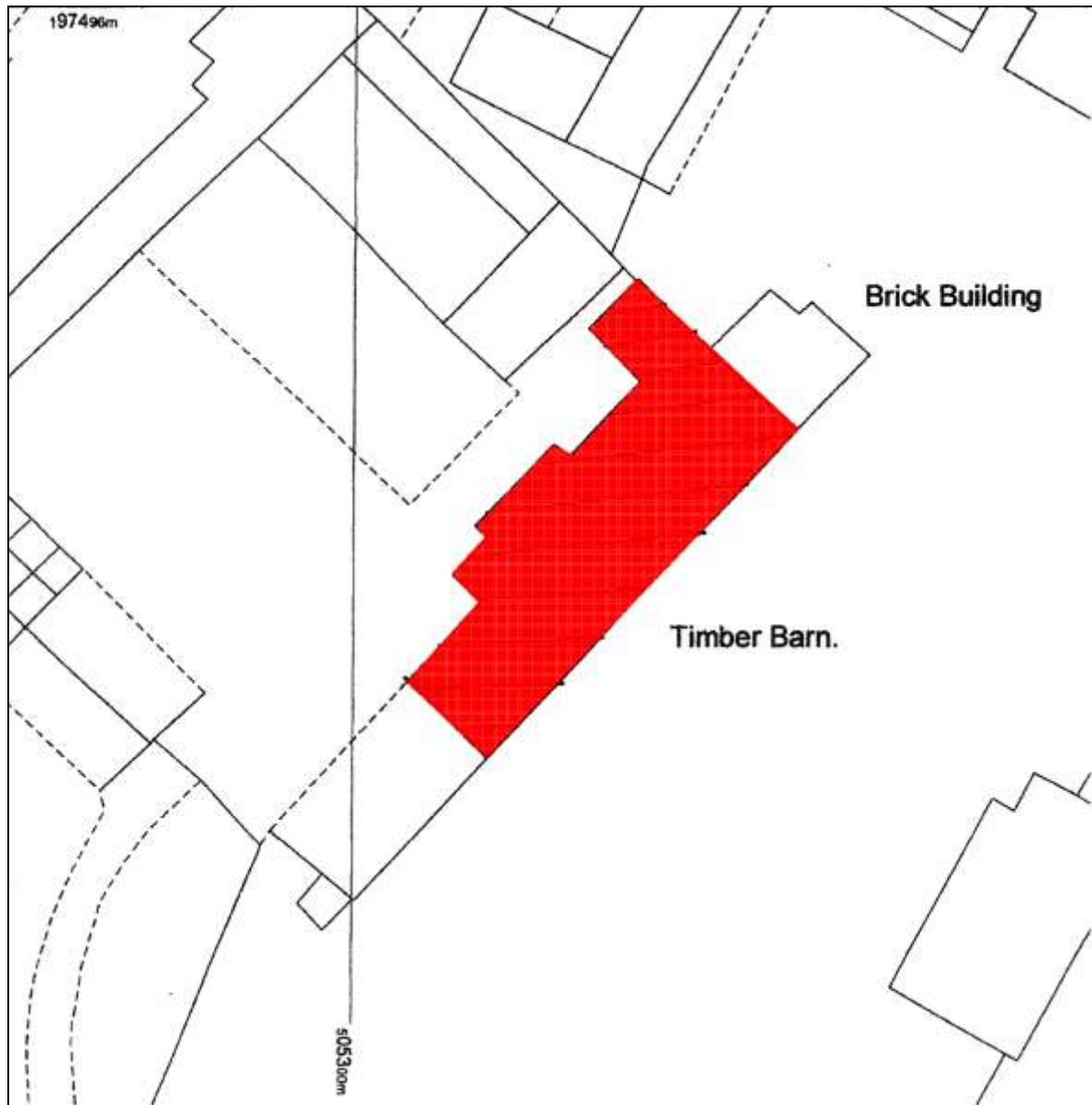
The barn is located in the Three Rivers District, in the parish and village of Sarratt at NGR TL 0531 9751 (Fig. 1).

This L-shaped building consists of a large, 7 bay barn with two midstreys and two outshuts to the north, and a smaller barn set at right angles at the eastern end. The smaller barn has had an upper floor inserted, which is only accessible by a door at first floor level. Both buildings have tiled roofs (Fig. 2). Although orientated northeast to southwest, the northwest elevation is considered to be facing north for the purposes of this report.

The buildings are set within a yard to the rear of Micklefield Hall, opposite a row of estate cottages. To the rear of the barn are estate gardens.

#### 1.5.2 *Proposed Development*

The proposed development includes the conversion of the main barn to a venue for weddings, with the two outshuts becoming a kitchen, washing up area and store. The eastern barn is intended to become a dance hall (Fig. 3).



**Figure 2:** Site location (*scale 1:500*)



## **2 Aims & Methods**

### **2.1 Aims**

The aims of the building recording were:

- To compile a photographic record
- To compile measured drawings of the barns

### **2.2 Standards**

The work conforms to the relevant sections of the Institute of Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (IFA 2000) and *Standard & Guidance Notes* (IFA 2001), to current English Heritage guidelines (EH 2006), to the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers East of England Region *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (ALGAO 2003), and to the relevant sections of ASC's own *Operations Manual*.

### **2.3 Methods**

The work was carried out in accordance with the client's request, and was based on:

- A programme of historic building recording to English Heritage Level 3 (EH 2006).

### **2.4 Constraints**

The upper floor of the eastern barn could not be drawn as the access and floor were unsafe.

### 3 Description

#### 3.1 *Main Barn*

The main barn is a timber-framed structure under a clay-tiled roof. The frames have a mixture of primary, external and internal bracing, which suggests that it has been constructed from parts of several earlier buildings. This is further suggested by the re-used timbers with redundant mortices, the presence of different types of scarf joints in the wallplates and the different types of braces used in the roof trusses. The timbers are mainly oak, with some elm and softwood used in the weatherboarding and later repairs.

The frames rest on a supporting dwarf wall made of brick, flint and rubble and showing areas of former repair and signs of present disrepair.

The roof is a clasped purlin roof with queen posts and straight braces. Some of the braces are tenoned and others jointed. In some trusses both types of braces are present, and occasionally a single brace is tenoned into the post and jointed to the tiebeam. Despite the missing tiles, the rafters indicate that the building has clearly been re-roofed.

The western midstrey is a later addition, as is evident from the partially covered weatherboarding to either side and the empty mortices in the corresponding wallplate. The nature of the brick- and timberwork suggests that it has been built or rebuilt relatively recently. The eastern midstrey is likely to be original.

Earlier repairs to the barn are evident in the iron ties and clamps, but these have not prevented the serious listing of the building in several directions.

Both outshuts are later additions to the building and have no significant architectural merit.

Although listed as being 17<sup>th</sup> century, there are features, such as the edge-halved scarf joint in the northern wallplate, the external tension braces and the use of notched lap joints in the trusses that are characteristic of earlier work.

#### 3.2 *Eastern Barn*

The eastern barn is also timber framed under a clay tile roof. It has two bays and an upper floor that was inserted at a later date. The beams supporting the upper floor have lambs tongue chamfer stops, which suggest a 16<sup>th</sup> or early 17<sup>th</sup> century date for these beams. The southern end of the beam rests on a timber that in turn rests on the mid rail of the main barn wall, and is clearly a later insertion. The floor joists sit on the rails and the floorboards above have been cut back from the east wall, presumably to allow straw to be swept directly into the ground floor space.

The frame has close studding and arched braces, and it also rests on a brick supporting dwarf wall. The clasped purlin roof has queen struts and the only carpenters assembly marks observed throughout the survey were those in the central roof truss in this barn.

The barn appears to have been added to the main barn and the upper floor added some time after that.

### 3.3 **Listed Building Description**

*C17. Timber frame on brick base. Weatherboarded. Half hipped tiled roof. 7 bays. 2 gabled midstreys in bays 3 and 6 from house facing away from house, 2 bay gabled wing on same side on bay nearest house. Linking lean-to outshuts. Gable end facing house attached C18 red brick outbuildings with double weatherboarded gables over lean-tos to house. Cambered heads, diagonally glazed iron frame casements. Left return entrance with a moulded hood. Right return loft entrance. Interior: curved braces from jowled posts to cambered tie beams, queen struts to collars clasping purlins, curved windbraces, original walling.*



**Plate 1:** Barns form the northwest



**Plate 2:** Eastern barn



**Plate 3:** Eastern outshut



**Plate 4:** Eastern barn, east elevation



**Plate 5:** South elevation



**Plate 6:** Main barn: West gable



**Plate 7:** Main barn: Bay 1 north



**Plate 8:** Main barn: Bay 2 north



**Plate 9:** Main barn: Bay 3 north



**Plate 10:** Main barn: Bay 4 north



**Plate 11:** Main barn: Bay 5 north



**Plate 12:** Main barn: Bay 6 north



**Plate 13:** Main barn: Bay 7 north



**Plate 14:** Main barn: East gable



**Plate 15:** Main barn: Bay 7 south



**Plate 16:** Main barn: Bay 6 south



**Plate 17:** Main barn: Bay 5 south



**Plate 18:** Main barn: Bay 4 south



**Plate 19:** Main barn: Bay 3 south



**Plate 20:** Main barn: Bay 2 south



**Plate 21:** Main barn: Bay 1 south



**Plate 22:** Main barn: Eastern midstrey



**Plate 23:** Main barn: Western midstrey



**Plate 24:** Main barn: Roof truss



**Plate 25:** Eastern outshut north wall



**Plate 26:** Eastern outshut west wall



**Plate 27:** Eastern outshut south wall



**Plate 28:** Western outshut east wall



**Plate 29:** Western outshut southwest corner



**Plate 30:** Western outshut north wall





**Plate 31:** Eastern barn north wall



**Plate 32:** Eastern barn north end of west wall



**Plate 33:** Eastern barn south wall



**Plate 34:** Eastern barn southern end of east wall



**Plate 35:** Upper floor south wall



**Plate 36:** Upper floor northern end of east wall



**Plate 37:** Upper floor north wall



**Plate 38:** Upper floor southern end of west wall



**Plate 39:** Carpenters assembly mark on roof truss



Figure 3: Main barn elevations (scale 1:100)

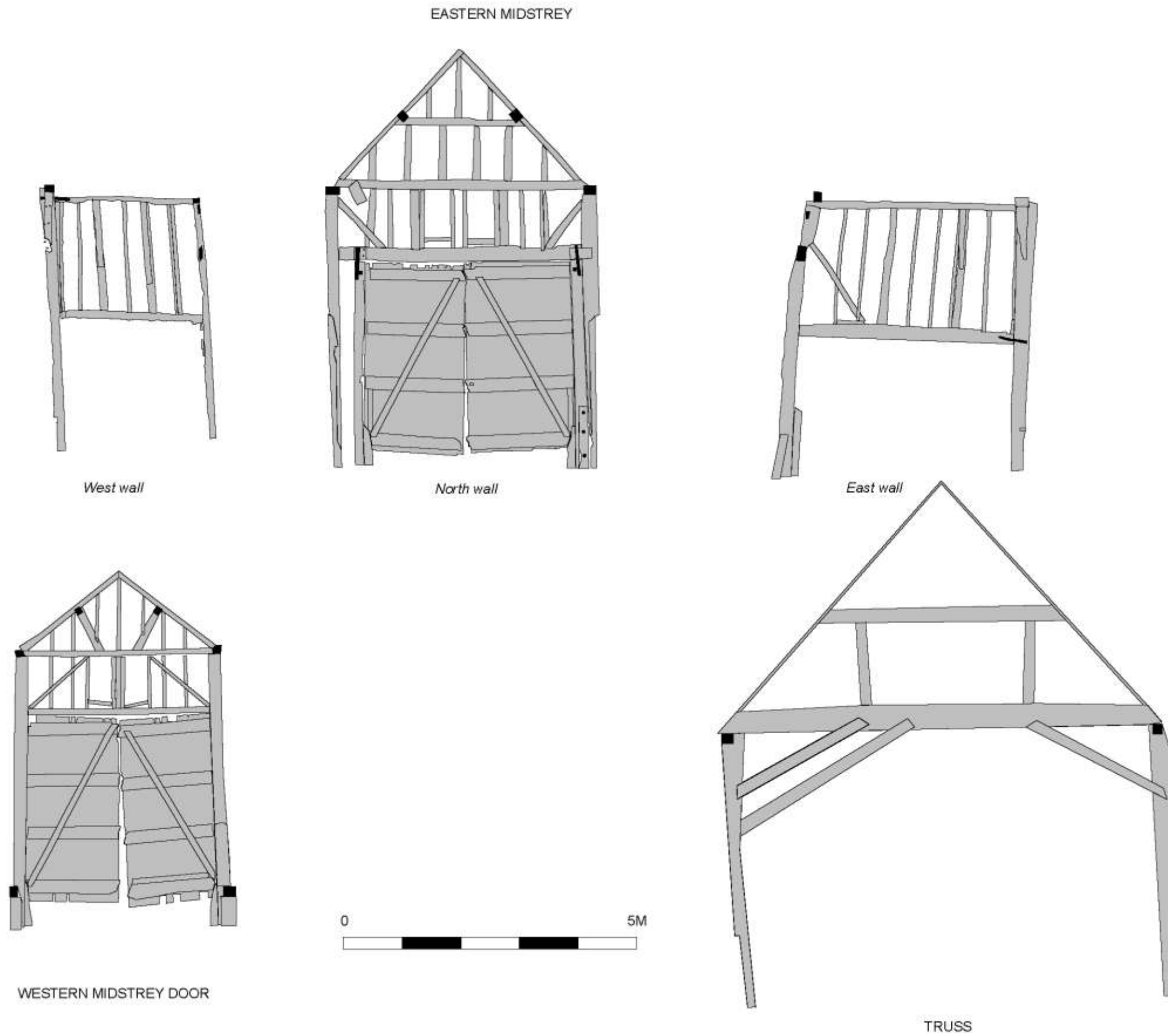


Figure 4: Main barn doors, truss and midstreys (scale 1:75)

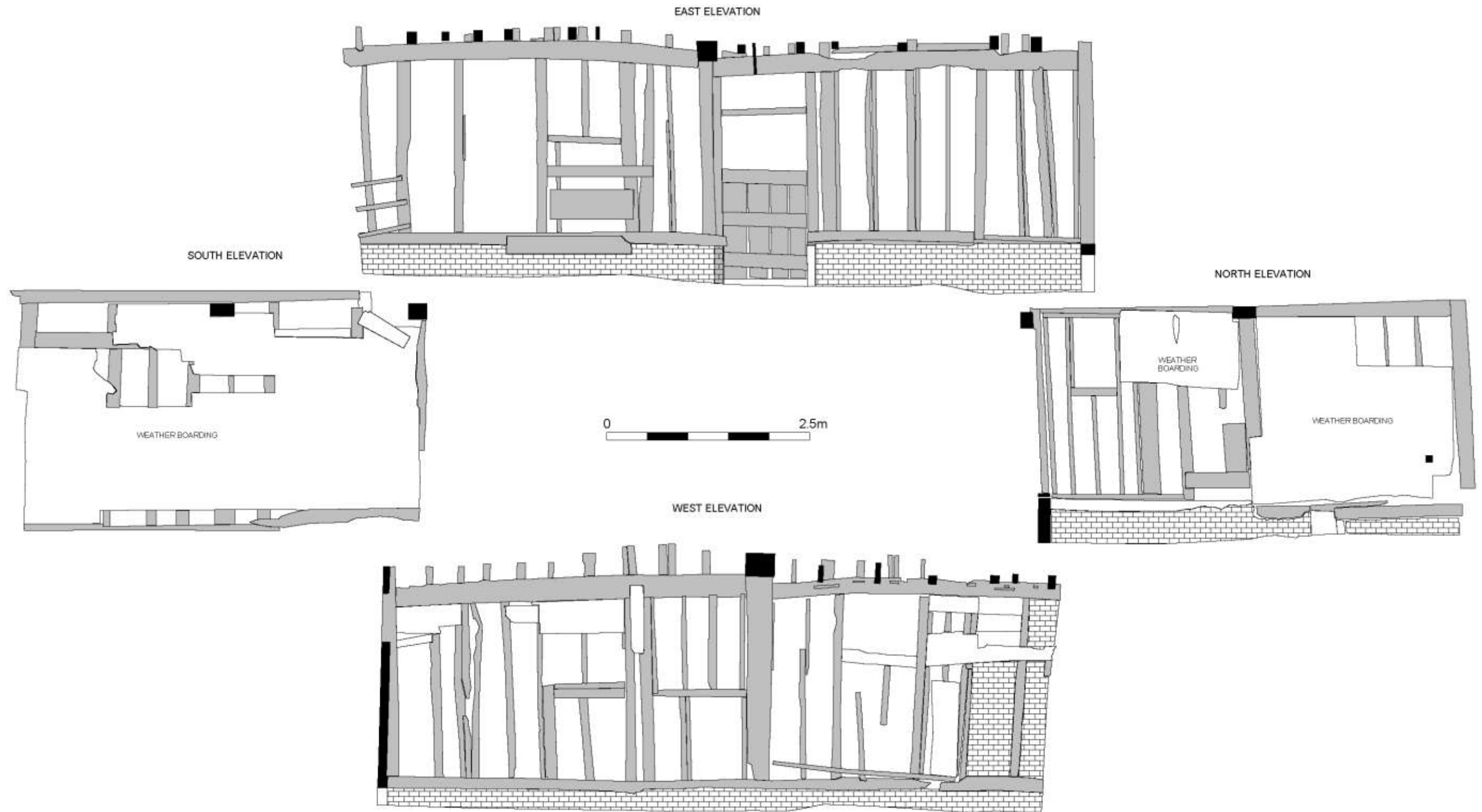
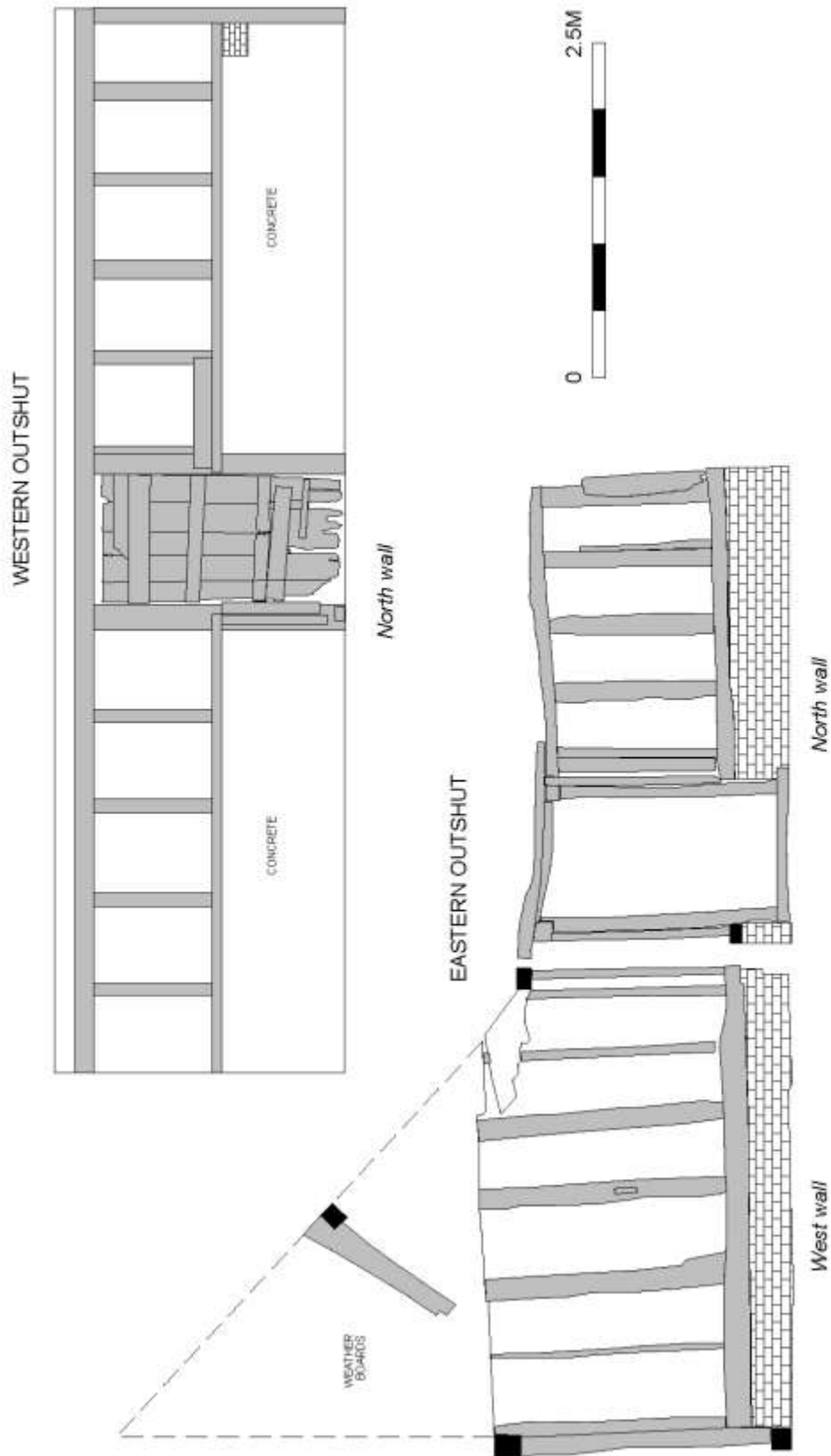


Figure 5: Eastern barn elevations (scale 1:50)



**Figure 6:** Outshut elevations (scale 1:50)

## 4 Conclusions

- 4.1 Although described as being 17<sup>th</sup> century, the barn has architectural characteristics that pre-date this. These include the use of the edge-halved scarf and the notched lap joints as well as the intermittent use of external tension bracing. The combination of structural techniques as well as the re-use of timbers could suggest that the main barn may have been created in the 17<sup>th</sup> century using parts of two or more buildings.
- 4.2 The western midstrey is a fairly recent addition as is evidenced in the timberwork, the mortices in the soffit of the wallplate, which show that studs have been removed from here and the presence of weatherboarding behind the midstrey frame. Ordnance Survey maps from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century show the barn in its present format, which would suggest that the present midstrey has replaced an earlier one. The eastern midstrey appears to be original. Both outshuts appear to have been added to the barn in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- 4.3 The arched bracing, close studding and clasped purlin roof with straight queen struts in the eastern barn suggests that this is a late medieval construction, possibly 16<sup>th</sup> century. The first floor was inserted at a later date, probably once it had been added to the main barn.
- 4.4 A number of iron repairs are evident in the timberwork in the main barn, and the supporting dwarf wall has also been patched up in places. Nonetheless, the barn is listing in a number of directions, most particularly to the south where some trees are currently stabilising it to some extent. It is clear that a substantial amount of remedial work is required in order to safeguard the future of this building.

## 5 Acknowledgements

The project was commissioned by Anthony Tight on behalf of Jamie and Anne Rankin. The writer is grateful to all three for their assistance.

The project was managed for ASC by Karin Semmelmann MA MIFA. Fieldwork was carried out by Karin Semmelmann, Calli Rouse BA PIFA and Nigel Wilson HND AIFA. The report was prepared by Karin Semmelmann, illustrated by Calli Rouse and edited by Bob Zeepvat BA MIFA.

## 6 References

### *Standards & Specifications*

ALGAO 2003 *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper **14**.

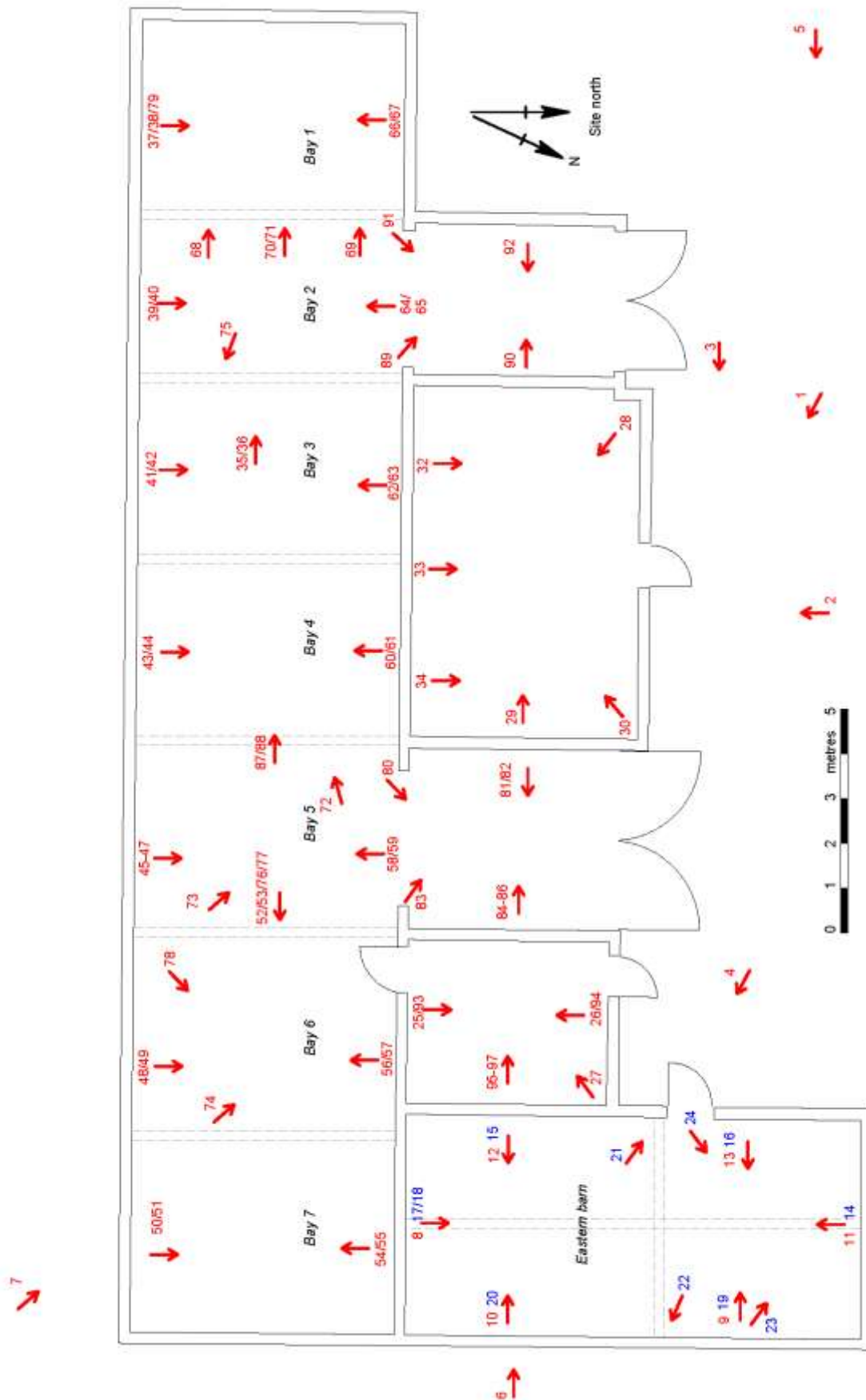
EH 2006 *Understanding Historic Buildings: a guide to good recording practice*. English Heritage (London).

IFA 2000a Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct*.

IFA 2000b Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology*.

IFA 2001 Institute for Archaeologists' *Standards & Guidance documents (Desk-Based Assessments, Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings)*.





**Figure 7:** Photos Plan (Red = ground floor Blue= first floor) (scale as shown)

## Appendix 1: List of Photographs

SITE NO/CODE: 1125/SMH			Site Name: The Barn, Mickelfield Hall, Sarratt
Shot	B&W	Digital	Subject
1	✓	✓	Main elevation
2	✓	✓	Midstreys
3	✓	✓	Eastern barn
4	✓	✓	Eastern outshut
5	✓	✓	Barn complex
6	✓	✓	Eastern barn:East elevation
7	✓	✓	Eastern barn: South elevation
8	✓	✓	Eastern barn: north wall
9	✓	✓	Eastern barn: northern end of west wall
10	✓	✓	Eastern barn: southern end of west wall
11	✓	✓	Eastern barn: south wall
12	✓	✓	Eastern barn: southern end of east wall
13	✓	✓	Eastern barn: northern end of east wall
14	✓	✓	Eastern barn: upper floor south wall
15	✓	✓	Eastern barn: upper floor southern end of east wall
16	✓	✓	Eastern barn: upper floor northern end of east wall
17	✓	✓	Eastern barn: upper floor north wall
18	✓	✓	Eastern barn: upper floor north wall
19	✓	✓	Eastern barn: upper floor northern end of west wall
20	✓	✓	Eastern barn: upper floor southern end of west wall
21	✓	✓	Eastern barn: central truss detail
22	✓	✓	Eastern barn: carpenters assembly mark on central truss
23	✓	✓	Eastern barn: northwest corner of roof
24	✓	✓	Eastern barn: northeast corner of roof
25	✓	✓	Eastern outshut: north wall
26	✓	✓	Eastern outshut: south wall
27	✓	✓	Eastern outshut: west wall
28	✓	✓	Western outshut: east wall
29	✓	✓	Western outshut: west wall
30	✓	✓	Western outshut: southwest corner
31	✓	✓	Western outshut: north wall
32	✓	✓	Western outshut: west end of north wall
33	✓	✓	Western outshut: central part of north wall
34	✓	✓	Western outshut: east end of north wall
35	✓	✓	West gable
36	✓	✓	West gable
37	✓	✓	Bay 1 north wall
38	✓	✓	Bay 1 north wall roof
39	✓	✓	Bay 2 north
40	✓	✓	Bay 2 north wall roof
41	✓	✓	Bay 3 north wall
42	✓	✓	Bay 3 north wall roof
43	✓	✓	Bay 4 north wall
44	✓	✓	Bay 4 north wall roof
45	✓	✓	Bay 5 north wall
46	✓	✓	Bay 5 north wall
47	✓	✓	Bay 5 north wall roof

48	✓	✓	Bay 6 north wall
49	✓	✓	Bay 6 north wall roof
50	✓	✓	Bay 7 north wall
51	✓	✓	Bay 7 north wall roof
52	✓	✓	East gable
53	✓	✓	East gable
54	✓	✓	Bay 7 south wall
55	✓	✓	Bay 7 south wall roof
56	✓	✓	Bay 6 south wall
57	✓	✓	Bay 6 south wall roof
58	✓	✓	Bay 5 south wall
59	✓	✓	Bay 5 south wall roof
60	✓	✓	Bay 4 south wall
61	✓	✓	Bay 4 south wall roof
62	✓	✓	Bay 3 south wall
63	✓	✓	Bay 3 south wall roof
64	✓	✓	Bay 2 south wall
65	✓	✓	Bay 2 south wall roof
66	✓	✓	Bay 1 south wall
67	✓	✓	Bay 1 south wall roof
68	✓	✓	West gable: south end
69	✓	✓	West gable: north end
70	✓	✓	West gable: centre
71	✓	✓	West gable
72	✓	✓	South west corner of the barn
73	✓	✓	Northwest corner of the barn
74	✓	✓	Bays 4-5, north
75	✓	✓	South east corner of the barn
76	✓	✓	East gable
77	✓	✓	East gable & roof trusses
78	✓	✓	Northeast corner of the barn
79	✓	✓	Bay 1 north
80	✓	✓	Eastern midstrey, east wall
81	✓	✓	Eastern midstrey east wall
82	✓	✓	Eastern midstrey east wall roof
83	✓	✓	Eastern midstrey west wall
84	✓	✓	Eastern midstrey west wall
85	✓	✓	Eastern midstrey west wall
86	✓	✓	Eastern midstrey west wall roof
87	✓	✓	Roof truss Bays 4/5
88	✓	✓	Roof truss Bays 4/5
89	✓	✓	Western midstrey west wall
90	✓	✓	Western midstrey west wall roof
91	✓	✓	Western midstrey east wall
92	✓	✓	Western midstrey east wall roof
93	✓	✓	Eastern outshut north wall
94	✓	✓	Eastern outshut south wall
95	✓	✓	Eastern outshut west wall
96	✓	✓	Eastern outshut west wall
97	✓	✓	Eastern outshut west wall

A CDROM containing copies of all the digital photos listed above is included in the back cover of this report.