

BARN AT GLADHAYES FARM, CLAYHIDON, DEVON

(NGR ST 15235 14158)

Results of an historic building evaluation

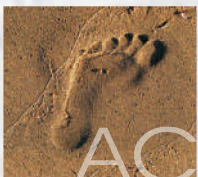
Mid Devon District Council planning reference 14/00011/FUL

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archaeology

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Summary

An historic building evaluation of a barn at Gladhayes Farm, Clayhidon, Devon, was prepared by AC archaeology in February 2104 to accompany a planning application for conversion to residential use.

The barn has its origins as a cow shed, probably in the late 16th century. It remained in such use until it fell into disuse, although part of the main barn has recently been utilised for storage.

The significance of the building is derived mainly from its evidential value, with a lesser contribution from its setting. Overall, it is considered to be of medium significance.

1. INTRODUCTION (Fig. 1)

1.1 This document represents the results of an historic building evaluation to accompany a planning application (reference 14/00011/FUL) for the conversion of a barn to residential use. The evaluation has been requested by Mid Devon District Council, as advised by the Devon County Historic Environment Team (DCHET), who have provided a brief (Reed 2014).

1.2 Gladhayes Farm is located at ST 15235 14158 between Clayhidon and Hemyock (Fig. 1), just above the floodplain of the River Culm at a height of 150m aOD. The underlying geology comprises Triassic mudstone of the Mercia mudstone formation overlain by Quaternary colluvium.

1.3 The barn forms the east side of a farm complex, with other agricultural buildings situated to the north and west of the yard. There is a further small barn to the southeast. The farmhouse is modern and located to the east of the farm complex. The character of the barns is described further in section 4.4 below. The barn is situated on a hillside with the land sloping down to the southwest.

2. AIMS

2.1 The principal aim of investigation was to evaluate the historic building to allow the local planning authority and the DCHET to determine the impact of any permitted development upon its historic fabric and if necessary the appropriate archaeological works required in mitigation for this impact.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 The evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by AC archaeology (Passmore 2014) and the Institute for Archaeologists *Standard and Guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures* (revised 2008). Reference was also made to English Heritage's 2006 document *Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice*.

3.2 A rapid desk-based appraisal, comprising an assessment of the relevant historic maps, and data held at the Historic Environment Record (HER), was undertaken.

3.3 The survey was prepared in accordance with AC archaeology's *General Site Recording Manual, Version 2*, and was taken to levels 1-2 as set out in *Understanding Historic Buildings*. It comprised:

- A written description of the building and its local context in relation to the farm;
- Annotated architect's as existing plan and elevations, to show builds of different date and architectural fittings and features; and
- A basic photographic record including the overall character of the building, as well as detailed views of any architectural features and fixtures and fittings as necessary to illustrate the report.

4. DOCUMENTARY BACKGROUND (Figs 2-3)

4.1 Clayhidon is a rural parish on the north side of the Blackdown Hills. Hoskins (1954, 369-370) identified the 15th-century church of St Andrews as being notable, and also mentions an ancient track way that follows the edge of Buckland Hill on the parish's northern boundary.

4.2 Gladhayes is first recorded in 1330 as Clodeheis (Gover *et. al.* 1931, 611), although its origins are not given. The Devon HER entry (MDV 104627) for Gladhayes farm simply notes that it is shown on Ordnance Survey maps.

4.3 The barn, along with the other buildings is depicted on the 1838 tithe map (Fig. 2), surrounded by arable and pasture fields as well as orchards. The accompanying apportionment describes the farm as being owned and occupied by John Marke, with the farm itself described as "building and courtledge" and the land use as "barton". The barn itself was shown as a long rectangular structure. The barn is similarly depicted on the Ordnance Survey 25-inch map of 1889 (Fig. 3).

4.4 The farmhouse was situated to the north of the barn separated by what maps appear to depict as an enclosed garden. It burnt down in 1930, and only fragments of historic stone walling survive. Modern large agricultural sheds have been constructed on its site. On the west side of the farmyard is a cider barn. An historic L-shaped range to the south of this barn has been rebuilt in the later 20th century, although the rear walls of the former buildings have been retained.

4.5 There is an HER entry (MDV47158) for a field to the northeast of the farm. This is called Ridges close, a name suggestive of an earthwork. However, no evidence was found of an earthwork during the Blackdown Hills survey conducted by Exeter Museums Archaeological Field Unit in 1992-1993.

5. THE BARN (Fig. 4; Plates 1-9)

5.1 The barn is a long rectangular structure with a modern stable block attached to the east side. The latter is constructed of concrete blocks and wooden panelling under a slightly pitched corrugated iron roof. The barn is aligned roughly north-northwest to south-southeast, but for the purposes of this report it is described as north-south aligned.

5.2 The exterior elevations

The walls are built of subangular chert, laid in rough courses, with a hard cream-white mortar. The walls have a layer of cob, about 0.60m high, on top of them. The reason for this unusual form is unclear; it may have formed part of the original build or may have been used to heighten the walls at a later date. There is no obvious

reason for the later, for example there is no evidence of an inserted first floor, yet the feet of the trusses are set into the cob, and not packed around them (a technique used for example at Bowhill in Exeter), which may imply the cob is later. The cob has been covered externally in cement render.

The north elevation is featureless and is partially obscured by the high level of the farm track situated behind the building.

In the west elevation there is a large modern opening at the north end, with a wooden frame, lintel and doors, as well as two doorways and two window openings towards the south end (Plate 1). The windows and doors all have wooden frames. The north doorway has been partially infilled with modern breeze blocks. The southern two doorways and the window are defined by stone voussoirs. The land slopes down to the south along this elevation and a band of concrete has been applied along the base of the wall and steps have been added outside the doorways, indicating that the farmyard surface has been lowered during the 20th century.

Only the northern part of the east elevation is visible externally; the rest is obstructed by the modern stables (Plate 2). The exposed fabric incorporates a large modern opening crudely chopped through the masonry. The opening has some breeze block repairs on one side. It has no lintel, and two metal posts have been inserted to support the ends of the principal rafters and to hold the metal door.

In the south elevation there is a ground-floor window opening and a loading hatch above (Plate 3). The window opening has stone voussoirs, whilst both openings have single wooden shutters. A large proportion of this elevation has modern repointing in a hard grey cement mortar.

5.3 The interior

The barn is formed of seven bays (as defined by the roof trusses), and has a partition wall separating two bays at the southern end (Plate 4). The partition wall is constructed from several materials. The lower portion is built of stone masonry identical to the external walls, above which is a layer of cob. The top of the cob is lower than the eaves line of the external walls. Above this, the partition continues to the apex, and is formed from vertical wooden posts or studs, its panels infilled with cob, which are covered by nailed horizontal laths that hold the cob in place and are used to support a layer of lime plaster. Both the laths and plaster only partially survive. A central gap in the lath and plaster is an original opening. The frame is not as wide as the lower portion of the wall; it lies flush with the wall on its north face but is set back from the wall on its south face.

The cob on the top of the wall has lime plaster present in some areas and this is present on the lower stone portion of the wall in the northeast corner. The lower walls particularly to the north of the partition wall have patches of repointing in a medium pink to grey cement mortar.

A window in the east elevation, immediately north of the partition is blocked externally (Plate 5). This has a wooden frame, lintel and a cill. The latter is unusually long and extends around 1m beyond the window reveal. There is modern plaster below the window, and it is likely that the window has been formed from an earlier doorway.

The area to the north of the partition has most recently been used to house livestock (Plate 6). This part of the barn has a concrete floor. There is a feeding

passage raised up on breeze blocks with a metal railing along the west side. There was a metal gate, now removed to divide this livestock area from the northern storage area. Livestock access was through the large modern openings in the east and west elevations. The lower part of the partition wall (to the height of the rails) within this livestock area has been rendered with concrete. The feeding passage partially blocks the doorway in the west elevation. The current floor level is higher than the blocked doorway indicating that the internal surface has been raised and levelled when the concrete floor and feeding passage were inserted.

The area to the south of the partition formerly had a first floor used as a hay loft, which was accessed via a wooden ladder attached to the south elevation (Plate 7). The floor has been removed, and only the supporting horizontal timber remains, retaining sawn off joists. The external walls have holes present for the floor joists. There is a central vertical post under the floor beam. This is not structural but appears to be the remains of a livestock pen. The floor in this part of the barn is concrete. The ground-floor window openings are slightly splayed, whilst the internal wooden lintels of the doorway and adjacent window are reused beams displaying sockets – the former on two faces.

5.4 The roof

The roof is hipped at both ends and currently covered with corrugated iron sheets. The supporting structure is formed from six principal rafters (Plate 8). Their apexes are obscured by saddles supporting diagonal ridge purlins. Most of the collars are lap jointed and fixed with pegs. There are two rows of through purlins, and where visible, these appear to be butt jointed using tenons, and fixed to the principal rafters (Plate 9). The purlins support closely-spaced principal rafters that have batons attached. The original roof covering was thatch and the lower layers of this survive across around 60% of the barn, attached to the rafters with spars.

Some elements of the historic structure have been removed, and the roof has been strengthened in some areas. Two vertical timbers have been added on the west side to support the ends of the principal rafters. These have metal straps to hold them onto new purlins. Three horizontal metal bars have also been added to principal rafters running across the barn just above wall height.

6. DEVELOPMENT AND USE OF THE BARN

- 6.1** The architectural features of the roof structure – the saddles supporting the ridge purlin, the through purlins, and the pegged joints of the collar – are all indicators of an early date. The former can be of medieval date, whilst the latter probably dates to no later than the early 17th century. Overall, a probable date in the later 16th century seems likely. It has been noted that the walls may have been heightened with cob. The relationship, and significance, of the possible heightening of the walls and the roof structure is not clear.
- 6.2** The partition at the south end of the barn is separate from the fabric of the exterior walls, and must be secondary. However, the positions of the adjacent doorways indicate that it is an early feature, and it is possible that it was added soon after the shell of the structure was built, but before the barn was completed.
- 6.3** The few openings in the building, and its overall form, indicate that the barn was originally used as a cow shed. The opposing doors would have given access to the farmyard and the fields beyond. The small room at the east end could have been used as bull's or calves' house, or perhaps as a root store. It had a small first-floor

hayloft served by a loading door in the south elevation and with an opening in the partition allowing hay to be transferred to the adjacent cow house.

- 6.4** The barn underwent little change until the second half of the 20th century. In line with post-war recommendations and local practices the cow shed was upgraded, although not all the barn was utilised. Here the floor level was raised. The northern end was used for hay and vehicle storage, which required the insertion of two large openings into the side walls. During this period the roof covering was replaced and structural repairs made to both the roof and walls. More recently, stables have been added to the east side.

7. ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Plate 10)

- 7.1** Guidance on the assessment of significance has been taken from English Heritage's 2008 document *Conservation Principles*, and is assessed according to the heritage values outlined in the document.

7.2 Evidential value

Evidential value derives from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity, and includes both architectural and archaeological evidence.

There are no Historic Environment Record entries which relate to below-ground archaeological investigations or find spots relating directly to the site.

The barn provides evidence of past farming activity, including both historic use and modern adaptations. The building is of limited architectural merit, the main area of interest is the roof including the overall structure and remains of the historic thatch covering.

From this evidence, overall it can be concluded that the building has medium evidential value, and therefore this forms a large part of the building's significance.

7.3 Historical Value

Historical value derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present. It tends to be illustrative or associative.

The barn forms the east side of an historic farm complex, of which only some of the primary buildings survive, and therefore has a connection with the agricultural history of Gladhayes Farm. As far as has been determined, there are no specific historical associations attached to the farm.

It can be therefore concluded that the barn has low historical value, and therefore this forms a small part of the building's significance.

7.4 Aesthetic value

Aesthetic value derives from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place.

The building has limited aesthetic value, which mainly derives from the external stone voussoir detail above some of the windows and doors, and the open nature of the barn with the roof on display, although historically these were purely structural and functional designs and not designed to be aesthetically pleasing. The aesthetic appeal has been diminished by the insertion of large openings in the north end of

the building and the addition of a block of modern stables against the east elevation.

From this evidence it can be concluded that the building has low aesthetic value, and therefore this forms a very small part of the building's significance.

7.5 Communal Value

Communal value derives from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory. Communal values are closely bound up with historical (particularly associative) and aesthetic values, but tend to have additional and specific aspects.

The barn may be considered to have communal value as it forms part of a farm complex in an agricultural community. However, this value has diminished during the 20th century, with the loss of the farmhouse, rebuilding of the L-shaped range of buildings and the requirements for larger, modern farm buildings to suit more recent agricultural practices.

From this evidence it can be concluded that the building has low communal value, and therefore this forms a very small part of the building's significance.

7.6 Setting (Plate 10)

Farms and individual farm buildings can have different settings. The setting of a farm – usually only assessed where they contain high-level designated assets – may be considered to be land within the wider holding.

The setting of the barn can be considered to be its immediate environs, in particular the farmyard and the remains of the other historic farm buildings to the north and west, and the field to the east. The architectural evidence – the historic and modern doorways in the east and west elevations – demonstrate a relationship with these areas.

This setting forms part of the barn's significance, although it considered to be of lower importance than evidential value.

7.7 Assessment of value

In summary, it is considered that the significance of the barn is drawn mainly from its evidential (in particular its architectural) value. It has a lesser historical association with the surviving farm buildings, which forms part of its significance through its setting. In view of the 20th-century changes to the farm, this is considered to be a low component of its significance.

The evidential value has the potential to contribute to two of the research aims set out in the *South West Archaeological Research Framework* (Webster 2007):

Research Aim 8: Utilise the survival of Medieval and later artefacts and buildings to their full extent.

Research Aim 15: Use innovative techniques and methodologies to ask sophisticated questions of Post-Medieval to Modern artefacts and buildings.

The building is therefore considered to have a medium level of significance.

8. SOURCES CONSULTED

Devon Heritage Centre

1838 Clayhidon tithe map and apportionment

Ordnance Survey 25-inch 1st edition map sheet 36.15, published 1889

Printed Sources

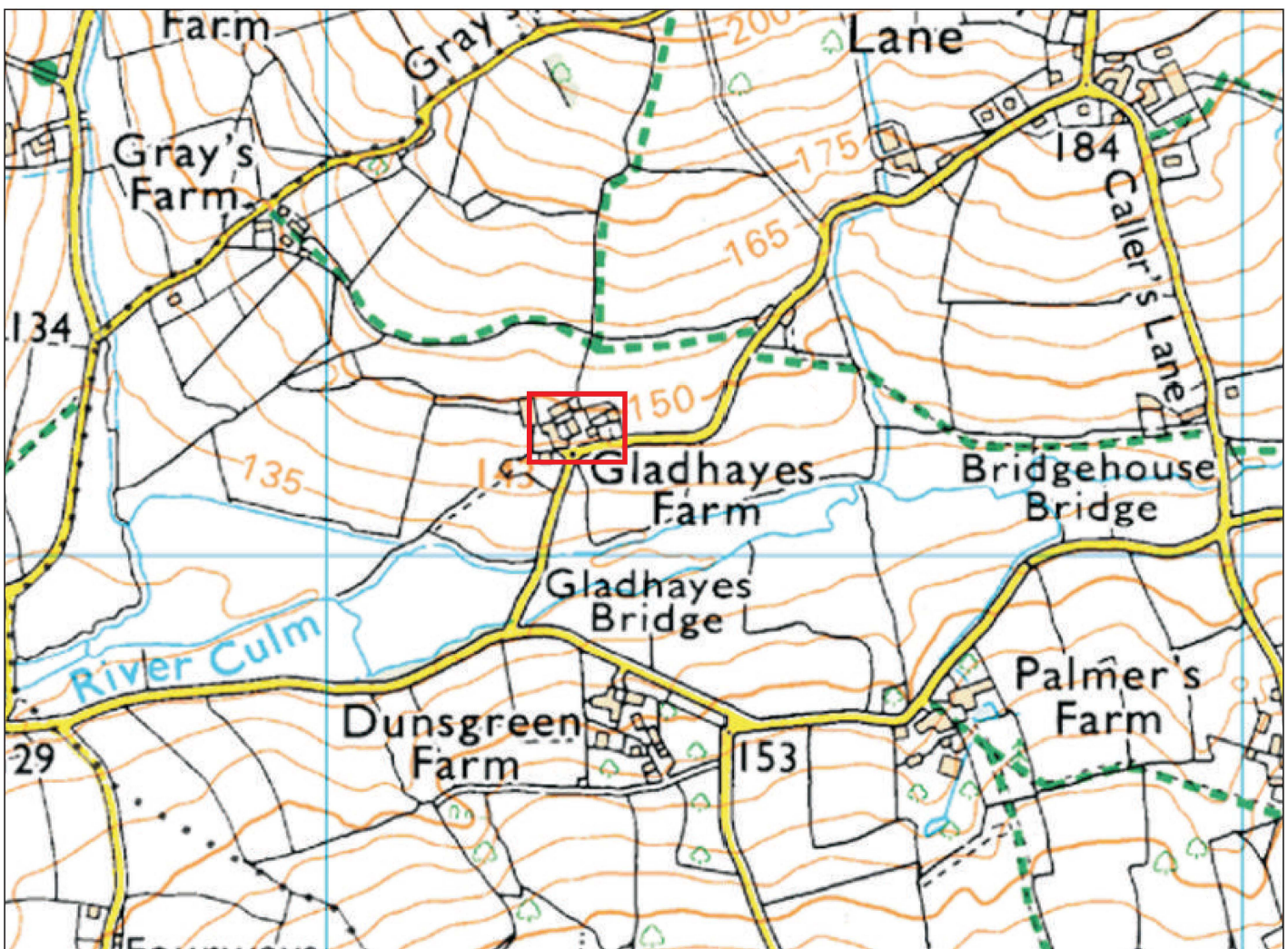
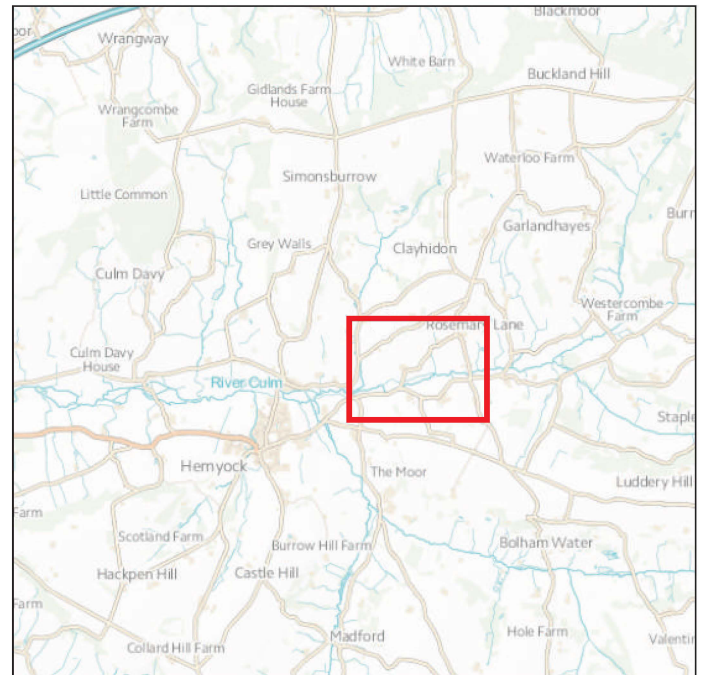
Gover, J.E.B., Mawer, A., and Stenton, F.M., 1931, *The Place-Names of Devon*, English Place-Name Society Volume **VIII**

Hoskins, W.G., 1954, *Devon* (Collins)

Passmore, A.J., 2014, *Barn at Gladhayes Farm, Clayhidon, Devon, (NGR ST 15235 14158), Written Scheme of Investigation for an historic building evaluation, Mid Devon District Council planning reference 14/00011/FUL, AC archaeology document no. 858/1/1*

Reed, S., 2014, *Scheme of Works for Historic Building Evaluation, Land and Buildings at NGR 315235 114158 (Gladhayes Farm) Clayhidon, Historic Environment Team reference ARCH/DM/MD/21572*

Webster, C.J., 2007, *The Archaeology of South West England, South West Archaeological Research Framework Resource Assessment and Research Agenda* (Somerset County Council)



0 250m
Scale 1:7500@A4

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 Location of site

PROJECT
Barn at Gladhayes Farm, Clayhidon, Devon

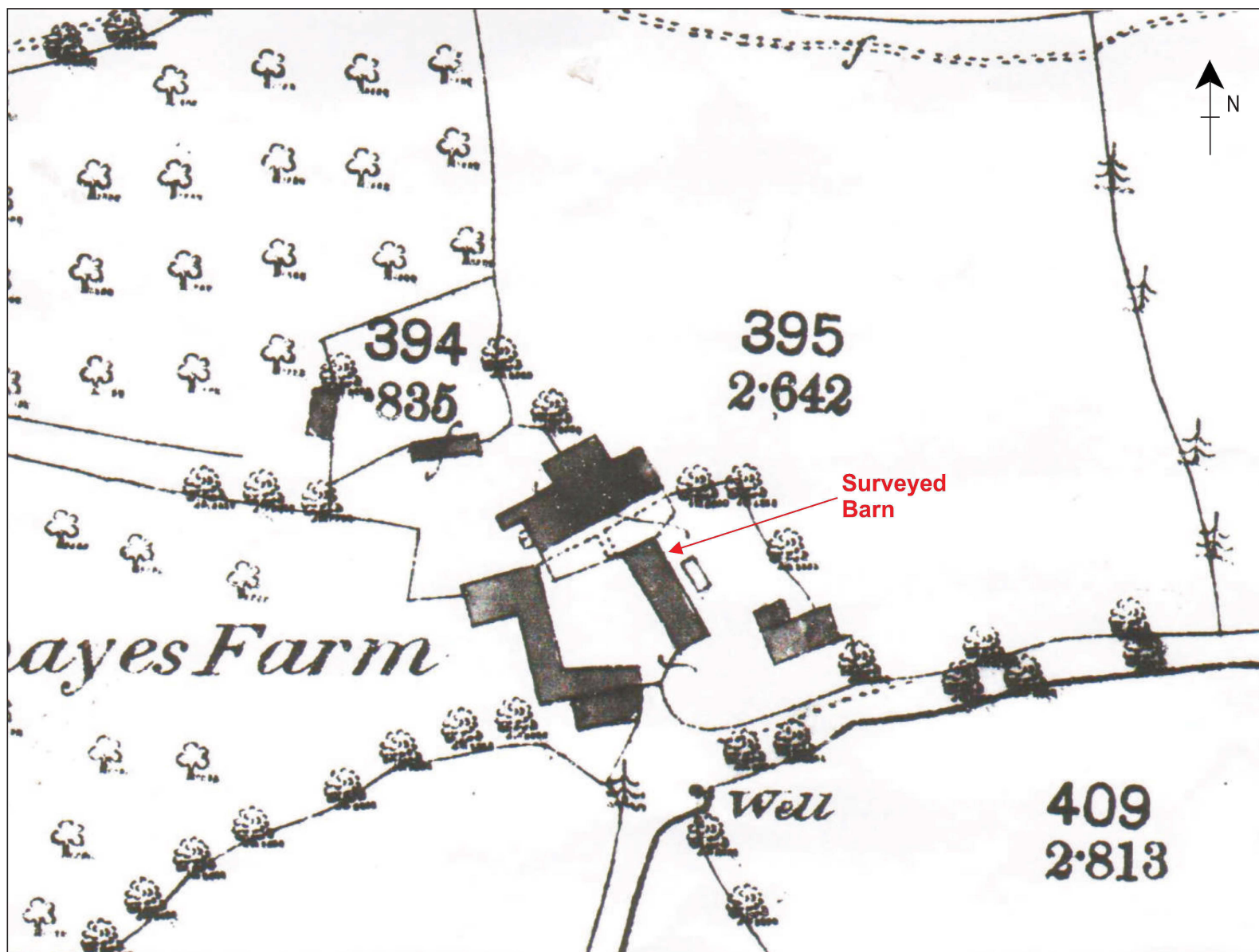
TITLE

Fig. 1: Site location



PROJECT
Barn at Gladhayes Farm,
Clayhidon, Devon

TITLE
Fig. 2: Extract from the
Clayhidon tithe map of
1838



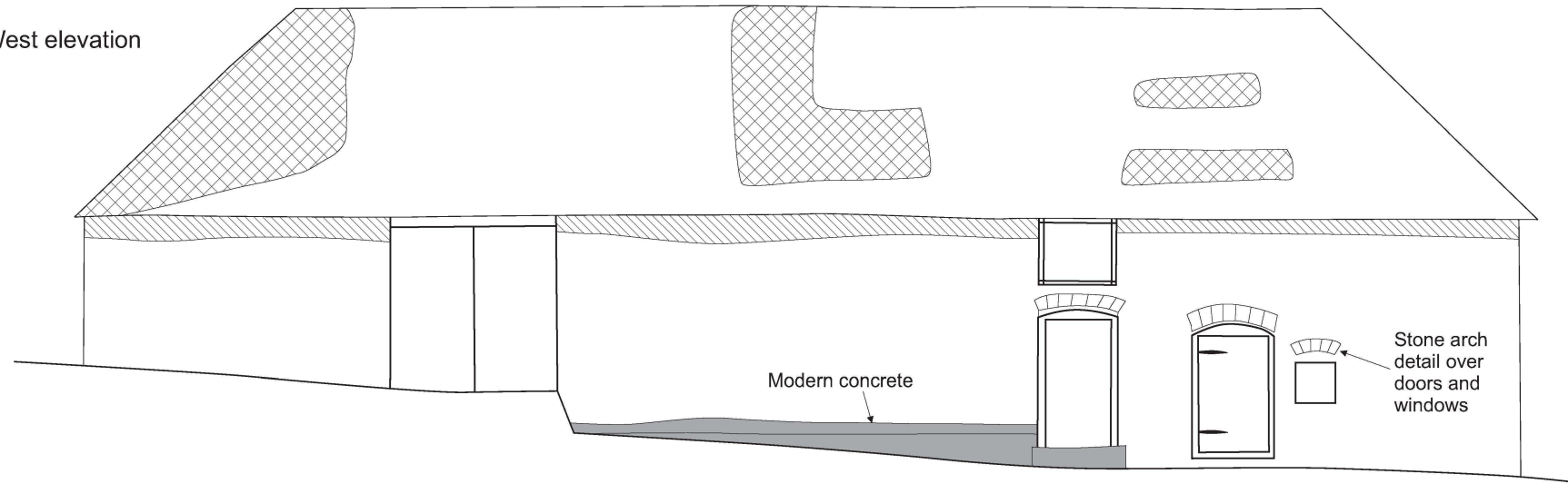
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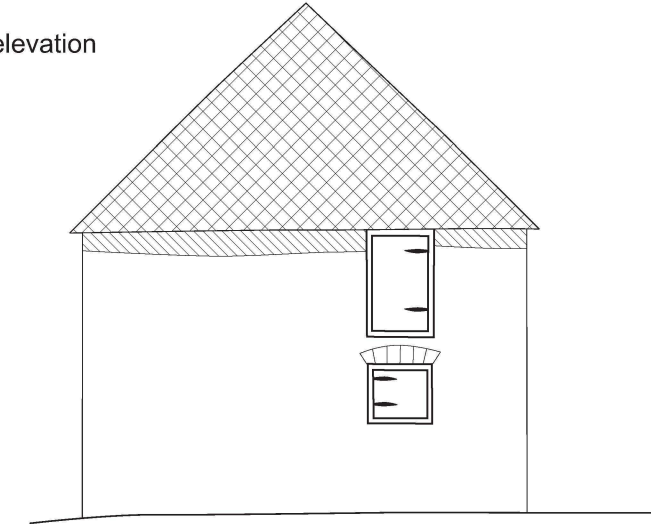
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Fig. 3: Extract from the
25-inch 1st edition
Ordnance Survey map,
published 1889

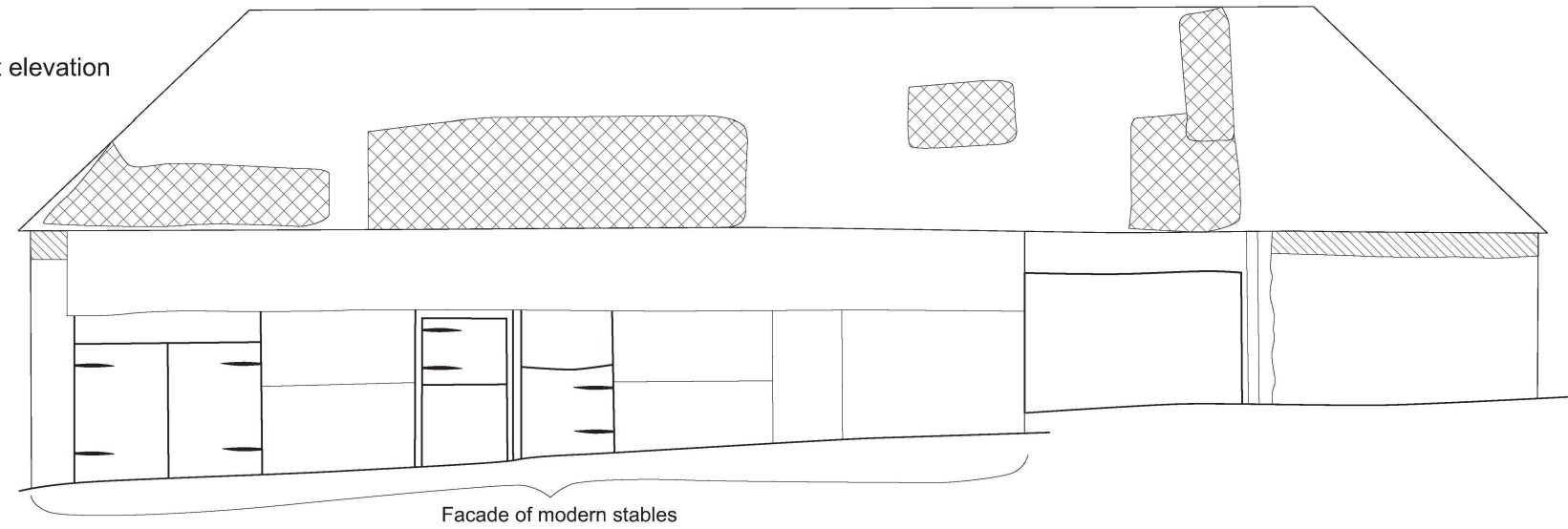
a) West elevation



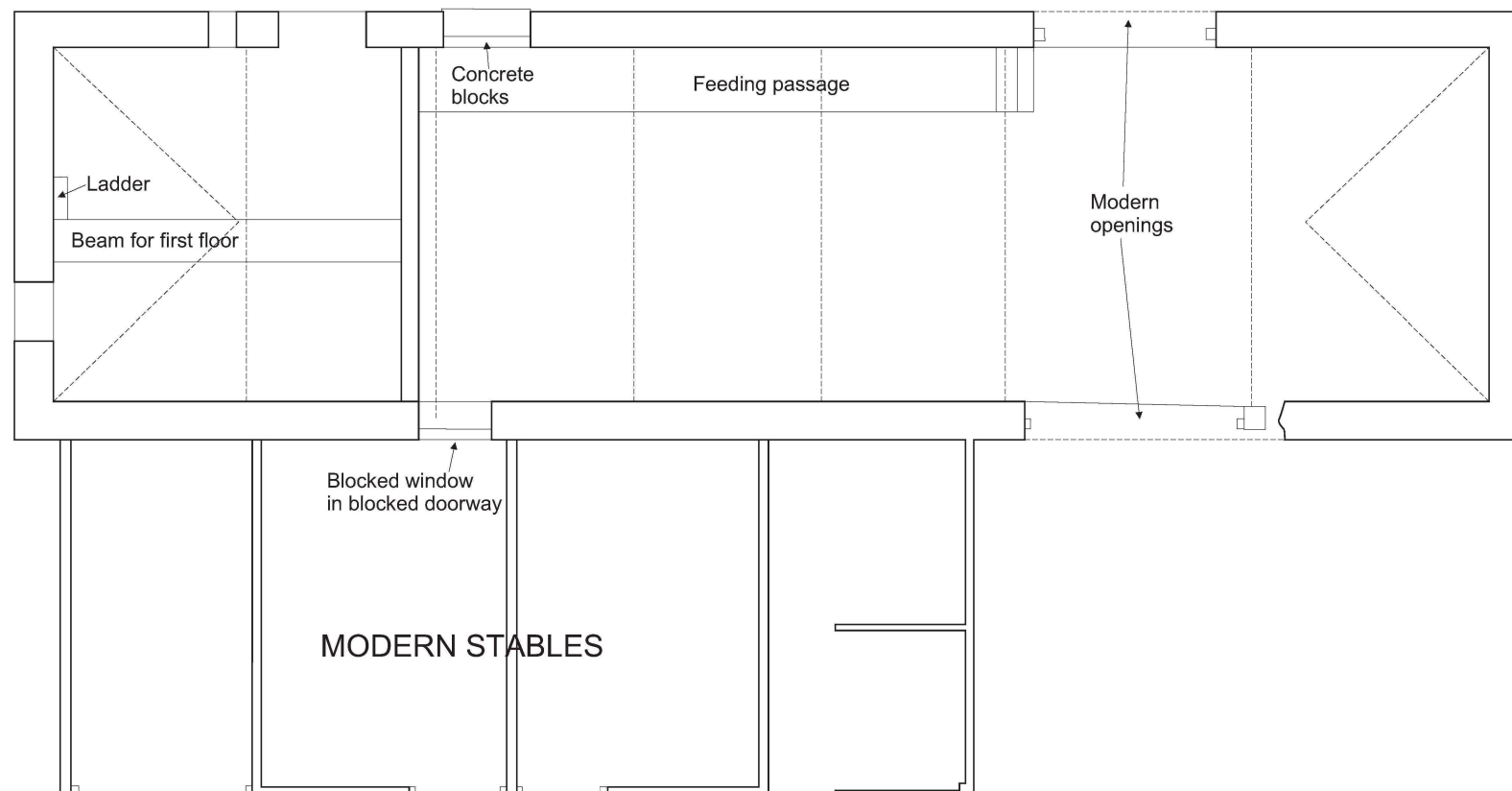
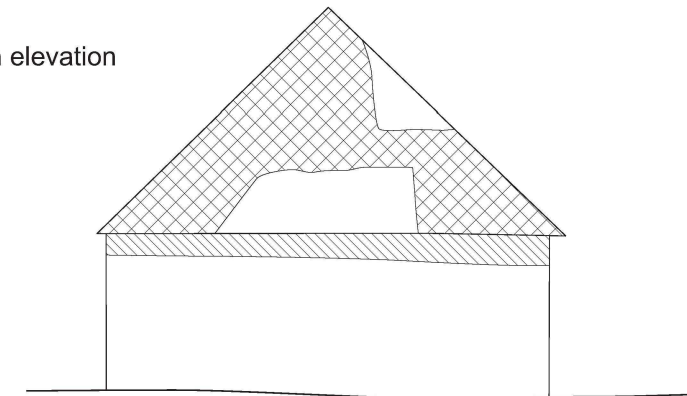
b) South elevation



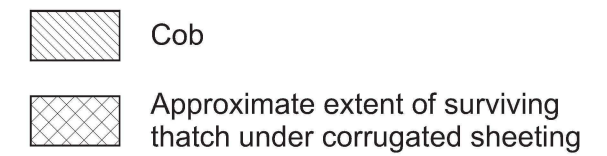
c) East elevation



d) North elevation



e) Plan



PROJECT
Barn at Gladhayes Farm,
Clayhidon, Devon

TITLE
Fig. 4: Plan and elevations





Plate 1: The west elevation,
viewed from the west. 1m scale.



Plate 2: The east elevation,
viewed from the northeast.



Plate 3: The south elevation,
viewed from the south. 1m scale.



Plate 4: The interior showing the partition, viewed from the north. 1m scale.



Plate 5: The blocked opening in the east elevation, viewed from the west. 1m scale.



Plate 6: The modern fitting against the west elevation, viewed from the northeast. 1m scale.



Plate 7: The southern room showing floor beam and ladder, viewed from the northeast. 1m scale.



Plate 8: The roof structure and northern hip, viewed from the south. 1m scale.



Plate 9: Detail of a through purlin, viewed from the northeast.



Plate 10: The farmyard showing the barn to right, and other historic buildings, viewed from the south.

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