



Heritage Statement

On behalf of

Dr Sarah Lotzof

Concerning

Rye End Farm
Codicote
Hitchin
Hertfordshire SG4 8SU

February 2020



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1 Non-Technical Summary

Border Archaeology Ltd (BA) has produced a Heritage Statement with regard to proposed works to salvage and refurbish the Grade II listed Farmhouse and adjoining Grade II listed Barn and Outbuildings at Rye End Farm, Codicote, Hertfordshire. The results of this Heritage Statement, which assesses the significance of the designated heritage assets and the potential impact of the proposed alterations and conversion works, may be summarised briefly thus:

- **Summary Assessment of Significance**

Rye End Farm is an historic farmstead of probable late medieval origins, which was held by the Byg family in the 16th century (who were probably responsible for the earliest fabric of the farmhouse) and subsequently formed part of the Kimpton Hoo Estate from the 17th through to the mid-20th century.

The existing L-plan farmhouse comprises a 16th century central hall range (which probably originally had an open hearth) with a cross wing and substantial brick chimneystack added in the 17th century. Considerable evidence of 16th-17th century timber framing survives within the ground and first floors of the farmhouse.

The farmhouse has been subject to later alterations and additions, most notably the addition of a late 18th century castellated annexe to the east of the cross wing which may originally have housed a dairy and cheese room (now occupied by a Kitchen and Dining Room) and the addition of a fireplace and bread oven in the early 19th century at the north end of the present Scullery. Various minor internal alterations have been made to the rooms both at ground and first floor level during the 20th century, including the insertion of a cloakroom in the ground floor Scullery and the refurbishment of the Kitchen, as well as the insertion of two modern bathrooms and a boiler room on the first floor. Nevertheless, the 'hall and cross wing' plan of the 16th-17th century farmhouse has remained essentially intact and highly legible.

The Grade II listed complex of historic farm outbuildings to the west of Rye End Farmhouse represents a well-preserved example of its type, ranging in date from the early 17th through to the late 19th century, including a particularly substantial example of a 17th century threshing barn with an elaborate queenpost roof and two ranges of brick and weatherboarded stable blocks dating from the late 18th/19th centuries.

The farmhouse and the adjoining complex of outbuildings may thus be regarded as built heritage assets of **High** importance, reflecting their Grade II listed status which is derived from their intrinsic historic character and significance as representing a long-established rural farmstead which can be shown, from the evidence of the extant fabric (as well as documentary and cartographic sources) to have gradually developed from the 16th century up to the present day.

It is thus important to ensure that those key elements (in terms of fabric and plan form) which define the special historic character and significance of these Grade II listed are retained intact and any proposed alterations to a Grade II listed building should require clear and convincing justification.

- **Summary Assessment of Potential Impacts**

With regard to the proposed alterations to the interior of the Farmhouse, it is considered that some aspects can be supported in heritage terms, in particular the alterations to the modern partition walls in the ground floor cloakroom, the removal of the 20th century bathroom between Bedrooms 2 and 3 at the eastern end of the house (thereby restoring one of the bedrooms to its original extent) and the removal of the modern partition between the bathroom and Bedroom 3.

However it may be argued that other elements of the proposed internal alterations, in particular the insertion of a new doorway between the Scullery and Kitchen, the creation of a 3m-wide opening between the Kitchen and Dining Room and the removal of a casement window at the west end of the ground floor sitting room for the insertion of a new doorway, could potentially impact on historic fabric and therefore cannot be supported in heritage terms, based on the current designs.

It is considered that the proposed conversion scheme for the Grade II listed Barn and attached Outbuildings can be broadly supported in heritage terms as representing an opportunity to ensure the long-term preservation of these historic traditional farm buildings which are in a somewhat poor condition generally (particularly the East Stables).

The proposals for conversion of the 17th century Barn (formerly a threshing barn) are considered to be largely sympathetic to the existing structure, with the exception of the proposed fireplace and chimney which is considered to be out of keeping with the agricultural character of this building. The existence of a chaff room and grain loft at the W end of the barn is considered to supply an historic precedent for the insertion of the shower room and mezzanine in this location. The proposals for conversion of the East and West Stables can also be broadly supported in heritage terms.

However the glazed links which are proposed to extend along the front of the West Stables, between the Farmhouse and East Stables and between the East Stables and the Main Barn are considered, in their currently proposed form, to overdomesticate the appearance of this complex of historic agricultural buildings and it is thus respectfully suggested that these elements of the conversion scheme should be carefully reconsidered.

Conclusion: *It is thus considered that significant elements of the proposed internal alterations to the Grade II listed Farmhouse at Rye End Farm and the conversion of the adjacent Grade II listed Barn and Outbuildings can be broadly supported in heritage terms.*

However, it is respectfully suggested that specific aspects of the proposed designs, as summarised above and outlined in greater detail within this report, will need to be reconsidered in order to obtain Listed Building Consent. It is critically important that to ensure that the alterations to the Farmhouse and adjacent Outbuildings should respect their distinct historic character and intrinsic significance as traditional vernacular farm buildings.

2 Introduction

This Heritage Statement (HS) was undertaken by Border Archaeology Ltd (BA) in response to an instruction from Dr Sarah Lotzof to accompany an application for Listed Building Consent for proposed works to salvage and refurbish the Grade II listed Farmhouse and adjoining Grade II listed Barn and Outbuildings at Rye End Farm, Codicote, Hertfordshire SG4 8SU (NGR TL 19588 18929).

Rye End Farm is located about 1.8km NE of the village of Kimpton (Herts), on the W bank of the River Mimram. It is not located within a Conservation Area or within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The Grade II Registered Park of Kimpton Hoo is located about 400m to the N of the site.

2.1 Listed Building Description

Rye End Farmhouse and the Barn and attached outbuildings to the W were designated as Grade II listed buildings on 21st March 1984.

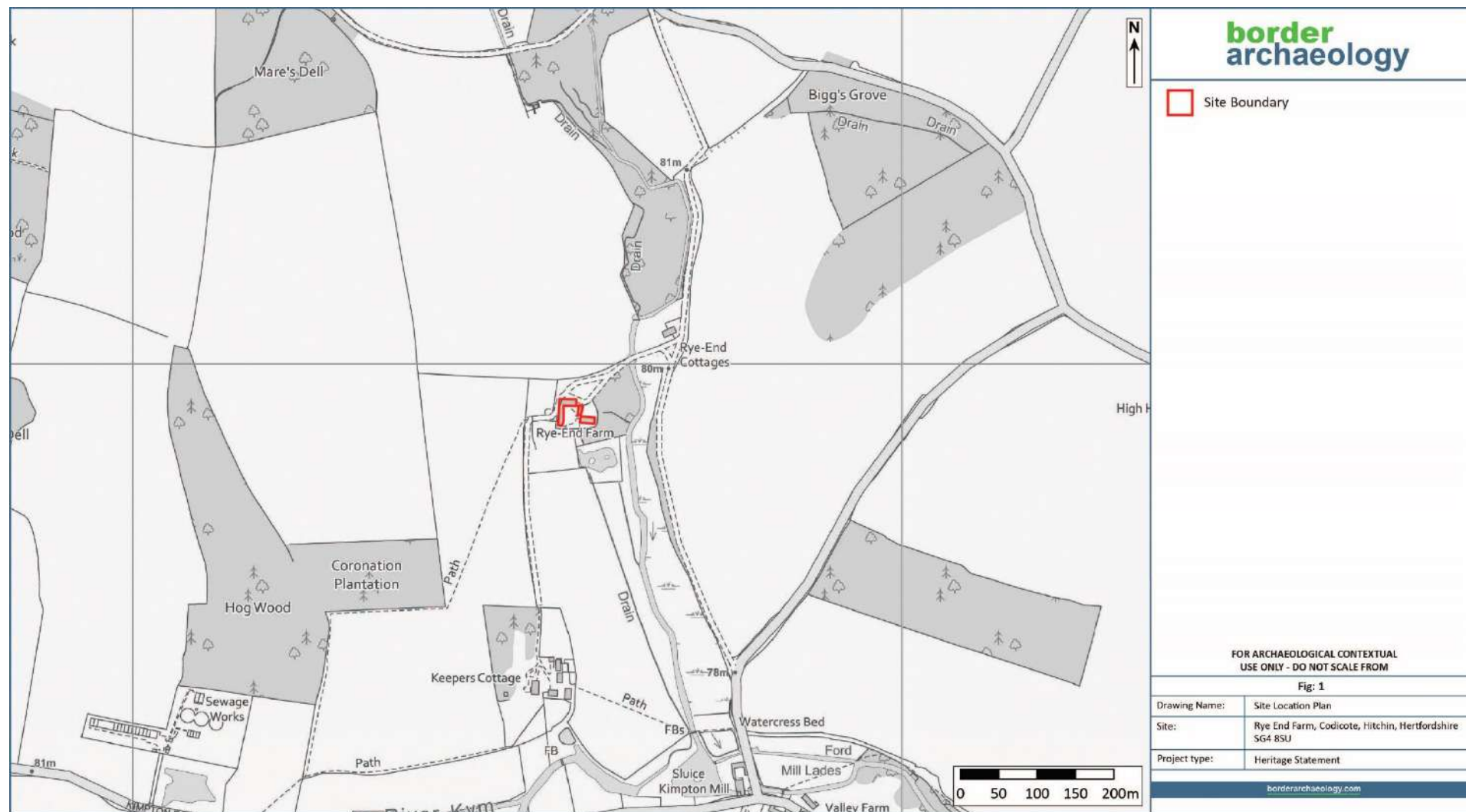
The listed building description for the farmhouse, extracted from the National Heritage List for England (List Entry No. 1295870), reads as follows: *'Farmhouse. 16th century or earlier central hall; 17th century E cross wing forming L plan. Timber frame. Red brick and plaster infill. Some old parquetry. Plain tile roofs. Tall central ridge chimney stack with 4 joined shafts. 2 bays to right, including lean-to projection. Cross wing on left is 2 bays deep with clasped purlin roof and 19th century external chimney stack on N gable end flanked by small oven bay, Dart timber frame and tiled. At E end is a curious late 18th century addition with crenellated parapet. Square, red brick, hipped plain tile roof. Floor bands. Single arched windows. Windows are mostly glazing bar casements, but some 17th or 18th century square leaded casements. Interior: Open brick fireplace is set in timber frame smoke bay, sooted plaster exposed on 1st floor. Roll moulded floor beam and fireplace lintel'.*

The listing description for the barn and outbuildings, extracted from the National Heritage List for England (List Entry No. 1102759) reads thus: *'Barn. 17th century timber frame. Lower walls cased in red brick late 18th /early 19th century. Upper walls weatherboarded. Plain tile roof. 5 bays. Wide central openings N and S. High collar braces with clasped purlins. Angled struts to lower purlins. Outbuildings adjoin on S at E and W ends. On W a single storey range in 3 parts; nearest is red brick and plain tile roof; in centre, weatherboarding and slate roof; at end, a stable in red brick with pyramid plain tile roof. On E side is a late 18th /early 19th century stable in chequered red brick with plain tile roof. 4 stable doors, each with single window'.*

2.2 Soils and Geology

The soils of this area consist largely of stagnogleyic paleo-argillic brown earths of the HORNBEAM 2 series (582c), composed of deep fine loamy over clayey soils with slowly permeable subsoils and slight seasonal waterlogging. Some well-drained fine loamy and fine silty over clayey and clayey soils are also present and some soils are very flinty. The underlying geology is recorded as chalky till (SSEW 1983).

The British Geological Society records the geology as belonging to the Holywell Nodular Chalk Formation and New Pit Chalk Formation (undifferentiated), a sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 90 to 101 million years ago in the Cretaceous Period, overlaid by superficial alluvial deposits composed of clay, silt, sand and gravels.



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3 Summary Historical Background

3.1 General

Documentary research was carried out, including consultation of the Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record (HER) in order to fully understand the historical background of the site.

The origins of the farmstead at Rye End Farm (HER 30973) can probably be traced back to the medieval period. The earliest documented reference to the place name occurs in 1568 and appears to refer to a settlement 'at the water' (*atter ee*), doubtless referring to the River Mimram, which runs about 50m to the E of the farm and marks the boundary between the parishes of Kimpton (to the W) and Knebworth (to the E) (Gover et al., 1938, 16).

The 'end' element in this place name points to it being a marginal settlement of later medieval origin, located on the E periphery of the open fields surrounding the village of Kimpton, probably lying within an extensive area of heath or woodland which was in the process of being reclaimed and cleared for cultivation. The settlement at Rye End appears to have been in the hands of the Byg (Bigge) family by the mid-16th century and it is likely that they were responsible for the earliest fabric of the present farmhouse.

The earliest documentary record of Rye End Farm occurs in a deed of 23rd November 1568 by which one John Byg, described as 'a yeoman of Rye End Knebworth' enfeoffed two yeomen named Richard Snowe of Totteridge and Thomas Hill of St Paul's Walden of a messuage and water mill called Rye End in Knebworth and a cottage and land at Rye End in Kimpton, to hold to the use of the same John Byg and after his death to the use of Richard Byg (his son) and Katherine his wife (HALS Ref: DE/K/22849).

From the evidence of this deed, it is clear that the hamlet of Rye End lay astride the parishes of Kimpton and Knebworth, with the principal dwelling together with a mill being located on the E bank of the Mimram within Knebworth parish (on the site of present-day Rye End Cottages) and a cottage and smallholding further to the SW in Kimpton parish (identifiable with Rye End Farm).

The Byg family were still in possession of Rye End Mill and Rye End Farm in the early 17th century when Richard Byg (son of John Byg) mortgaged the two properties to one Henry Bull Esq. of Hertford (HALS Ref. DE/K/22871). The subsequent descent of the property is not absolutely clear, but it appears that Richard Byg sold Rye End Mill to Sir William Lytton of Knebworth House in 1629 (HALS Ref. DE/K/23375) and it is possible that he may have also sold Rye End Farm to the Hoo family of Kimpton Hoo shortly after that date, as his descendants subsequently resided at Lawrence End to the W of Kimpton. Rye End Farm at Kimpton was certainly in the possession of the Hoo family by the mid-17th century as it is mentioned in the will of Robert Hoo (1648) and is shown on a plan of the Kimpton Hoo estate surveyed in the early 18th century (HALS Ref. 40443).

Rye End Farm thereafter remained part of the Hoo Estate until the mid-20th century; it was sold to Margaret Brand in 1732 and was held by the Brand family until 1938 when the estate was acquired by Oxford University. The neighbouring estate at Rye End Mill appears to have been purchased from the Lyttons of Knebworth by Thomas Brand of Kimpton Hoo in 1799 (HALS Ref. DE/Hm/T57). Rye End Farm was leased to a succession of tenant farmers and various alterations and additions were made to the farmhouse and outbuildings through to the 20th century.

3.2 Site Specific Map Regression

The earliest map to show the site in appreciable detail is a detailed plan of the Hoo Estate probably drawn up in the early 18th century (*fig. 2*). This plan is of especial interest as it shows the layout of the farmhouse and outbuildings at Rye End Farm in some detail. The basic layout of the farmhouse is shown as comprising the central hall range (with a single bay extension to the S) and cross wing to the E. The farmstead then appears to have been laid out to a loose courtyard plan, comprising a series of outbuildings to the N, S, NW and SW of the farmhouse.

A small detached square structure is shown to the NE of the cross wing, however the existing extension to the E (currently housing the Kitchen and Dining Room) had not been added at that time. A rectangular outbuilding aligned N-S is depicted immediately N of the farmhouse, to which it is linked by a narrow range extending from the NW corner of the farmhouse, with another detached range to the S of the farmhouse. A large farmyard is shown on the early 18th century map to the W of the farmhouse, with a substantial E-W aligned structure which is clearly identifiable with the existing barn (which has been dated to the 17th century and was probably built as a threshing barn). A detached rectangular building is depicted to the S of the barn in the SW corner of the farmyard but it is uncertain whether this can be identified with the existing brick structure.



Fig. 2: Extract from early 18th century plan of the Kimpton Hoo estate (HALS Ref. 40443) with Rye End Farm circled in red (Reproduced by courtesy of Hertfordshire Archives & Local Studies).

Andrews and Dury's map of Hertfordshire (1766) depicts the layout of the farmstead in somewhat schematic form (*fig. 3*) but the loose courtyard plan appears to have been regularized slightly. The position of the farmhouse is visible on the E side of the farmyard and a range is shown as extending S of the SW corner of the large barn, along the W side of the yard. A detached outbuilding is also depicted in the far SW corner of the complex. The outbuildings shown to the N and S of the farmhouse on the early 18th century estate map appear to have vanished by that date. An Ordnance Survey drawing of 1810 (*fig. 4*) appears to show a roughly similar layout of buildings to that depicted in 1766 but it may be noted that the farmhouse appears to have been extended slightly to the E.



Fig. 3: Extract from Andrews & Dury's Map of Hertfordshire (1767) with site circled in red
(Reproduced by courtesy of Hertfordshire Archives & Local Studies)

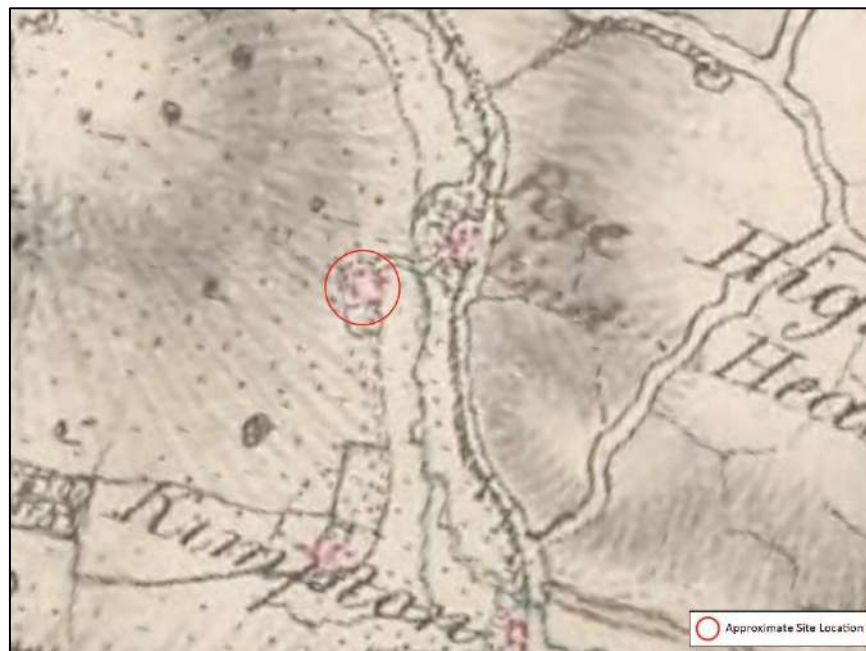


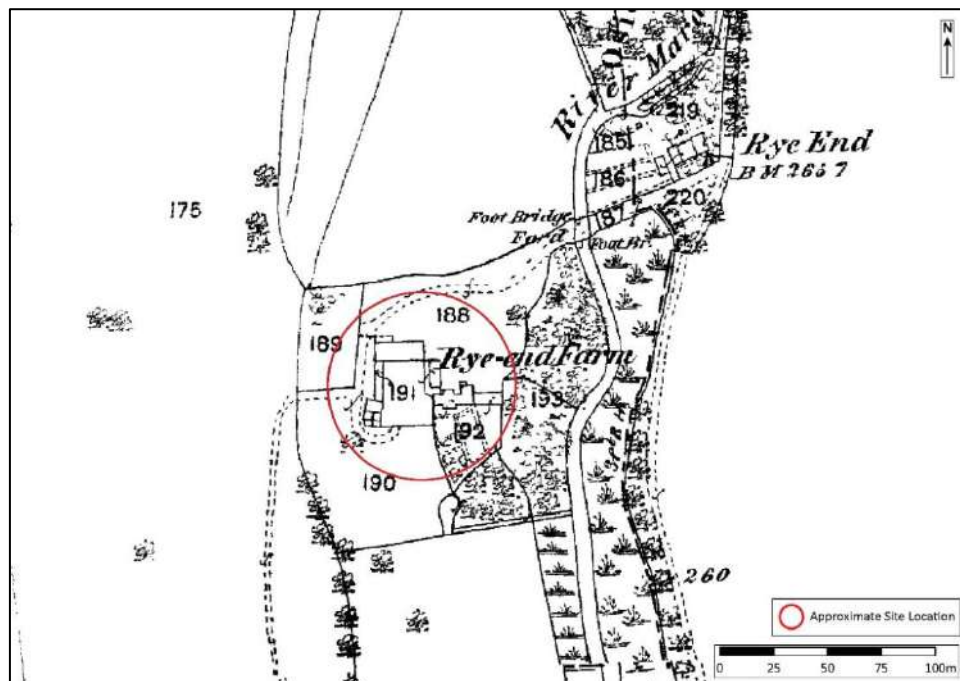
Fig. 4: Extract from an Ordnance Survey drawing of 1810 showing Rye End Farm (circled in red)
(Reproduced by courtesy of the British Library)

The Kimpton tithe map of 1837 (fig. 5) provides an accurate and detailed depiction of the layout of the farmhouse and outbuildings at that date. It confirms that the E end of the farmhouse had been extended to the E and that the existing entrance hall to the N had been added by that date. The large barn to the NW of the farmhouse is shown with a central porch projecting from the N-facing elevation. Attached to the SW corner of the barn is a long rectangular range (which may represent part of the present W stable block) with a freestanding building shown

further to the S which can probably be identified with the existing brick structure with attached piggery at the S end of the W stable range. It may be noted that the existing E stable block is not shown on the 1837 tithe map.

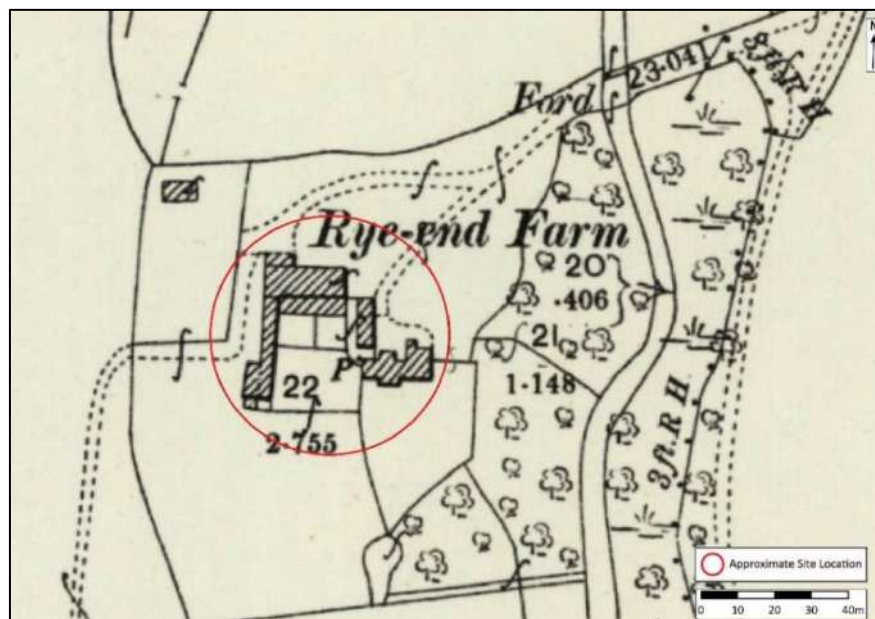


*Fig. 5: Extract from the Kimpton tithe map (1837) with site circled in red
(Reproduced by courtesy of the National Archives)*

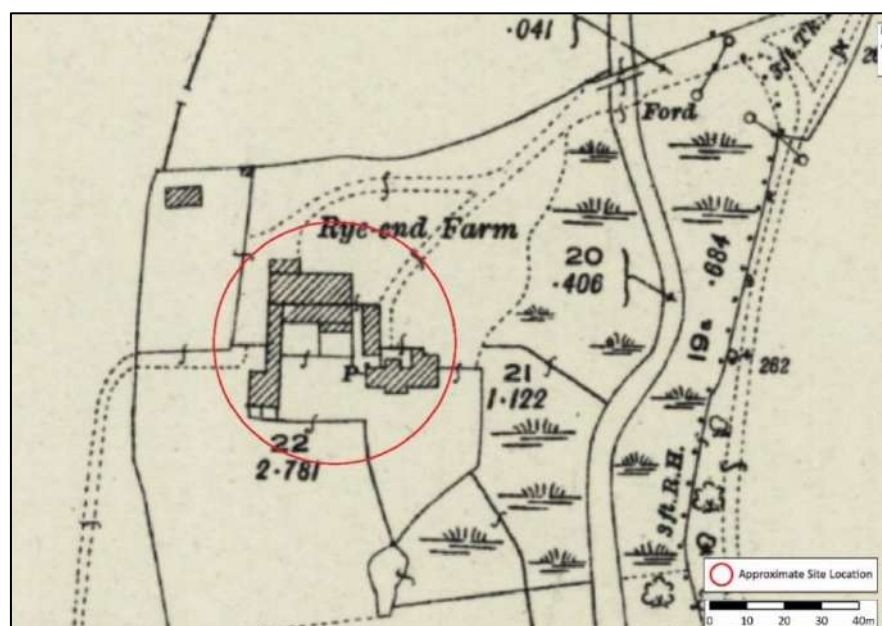


*Fig. 6: Extract from the OS 1st edition map of 1881
(Reproduced by courtesy of Hertfordshire Archives & Local Studies)*

The OS 1st edition map of 1881 (*fig. 6*) shows that the existing regular U-shaped courtyard plan of the farmstead had evolved by that date, with the construction of the East Stables immediately NW of the farmhouse, with evidence for a narrow yard extending to the W of this range. The W stables had also been extended to link up with the detached block further to the S. Later OS maps dated 1897 and 1922 (*figs. 7 & 8*) show that a long rectangular outbuilding had been erected S of and parallel to the barn at the N end of the yard, which in turn had been subdivided into two distinct enclosures (presumably for livestock). The 1922 map also shows a small rectangular building aligned N-S at the E end of the barn, abutting the NW end of the E stable block. Both of these structures are shown on an OS 1:2500 map of 1973 but appear to have been removed by the late 1990s.



*Fig. 7: Extract from the OS 2nd edition map of 1897
(Reproduced by courtesy of Hertfordshire Archives & Local Studies)*



*Fig. 8: Extract from the OS 3rd edition map of 1922
(Reproduced by courtesy of Hertfordshire Archives & Local Studies)*

4 Summary Building Description

4.1 Methodology

A general photographic record of the farmhouse and outbuildings was undertaken to EH/RCHME Level 1 as defined in *Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice* (Lane 2016), comprising high-resolution digital photography (using a Sony RX100 Mark 2 digital camera of 20MPX resolution) all with suitable scales, of all external elevations and all internal room spaces and roof structures (where safely accessible).

A series of plans is provided showing the location of the photos taken (*figs. 9-12*).

4.2 General Site Description

Rye End Farm is located in a secluded rural setting to the NE of the village of Kimpton, on the W bank of the River Mimram (*Plate 1*).

The buildings at Rye End Farm (all of which are Grade II listed) comprise the farmhouse itself, of 16th-17th century date with later additions (*Plate 2*), a two storey L-plan house located on the E side of the side, immediately to the W of which is a complex of traditional farm outbuildings ranged around three sides of a courtyard, the S side of which is demarcated by a brick boundary wall (*Plate 3*). The outbuildings comprise a substantial timber framed barn on the N side, with a five-bay long stable range and piggery of brick and weatherboard construction attached to the SW corner of the barn and extending along the W side of the courtyard and a four-bay brick stable block on the opposite side.



Plate 1: General view of farmhouse and outbuildings looking SW from trackway



Plate 2: View looking NW showing rear of farmhouse with outbuildings to W



Plate 3: General view of barn and attached outbuildings at Rye End Farm looking N

4.3 The Farmhouse

4.3.1 Exterior

Rye End Farmhouse is a two storey L-plan house, chiefly of timber-framed construction with red-brick and plaster infill and roofed with plain tiles. The main body of the farmhouse, comprising a central hall of probable 16th century or earlier origin, is four bays long with a central lean-to extension (again timber-framed with brick infill) with catslide roof with a large dormer casement in the N-facing elevation, housing a vestibule and stairs to the first floor (*Plates 4 & 5*). The roof is surmounted by a tall central ridge brick chimney stack with four joined shafts. The S-facing elevation appears to have been extensively refurbished in brick and the fenestration also displays evidence of having been heavily renewed in places; the central two bays have twin weatherboarded gables (*Plate 6*). The W end of the building also appears to have been partially refaced in brick and has mullioned casement windows and a weatherboarded gable (*Plate 7*).



Plate 4: View looking S towards principal N-facing elevation of farmhouse

The two-storey cross wing attached to the E end of the central hall appears to have been added as a service wing in the 17th century (probably when the upper storey was inserted). The cross wing is two bays deep (N-S) and a single bay wide (E-W); it is of timber-framed construction with brick and plaster infill in the upper storey; the plasterwork of the W-facing elevation is pargetted (*Plate 8*). The S end of the cross wing appears to have been partially rebuilt in brick with the insertion of two segmental arched windows at ground floor level.

Attached to the E end of the cross wing is a two-bay extension (oriented N-S) of red brick construction with crenellated parapet and a hipped plain tile roof (*Plate 9*). It now houses a Kitchen and Dining Room but the location of the building at the rear of the farmhouse, adjacent to the service wing suggests it may originally have accommodated a dairy and cheese room, a suggestion which is further reinforced by the presence of ventilation grilles just above ground level.



Plate 5: View looking S showing detail of N-facing elevation of main portion of farmhouse with lean-to entrance vestibule in foreground and cross wing to left of picture



Plate 6: View looking N showing rear (S-facing) elevation of farmhouse



Plate 7: View looking E showing W-facing gable of farmhouse with mullioned casement windows



Plate 8: View looking E showing cross wing of farmhouse with pargetting on upper storey



Plate 9: View looking W showing late 18th century castellated brick extension to E end of farmhouse

4.3.2 Interior – Ground Floor

A lean-to vestibule, of timber framed construction with brick infill, provides access to the living room at ground floor and also contains a closed-string staircase with a moulded handrail and newel post and twisted balusters leading up to the first floor (*Plate 10*). The interior of the vestibule has exposed close-studded, timber-framed panels with plaster infill, suggestive of a late 17th or 18th century date (*Plate 11*).

The vestibule leads into the middle of the sitting room which appears to represent the core of the original central hall. This room appears originally to have sub-divided into two portions, with the hall occupying the central and easternmost bays and a parlour (private space) at the W end; evidence for a sub-division is represented by the remnants of a close-studded partition at the W end of the room (*Plate 12*). The layout of the room suggests a date in late 15th or the first half of the 16th century. The window at the W end of the room has been heavily renewed but may represent an original opening; while the pair of French doors in the S wall are clearly a modern insertion.

The room has exposed, chamfered ceiling beams and joists throughout; it appears that some of the ceiling joists were replaced at some point previously as evidenced by the mortise slots in the ceiling beam at the W end of the room. Connecting the two ceiling beams within the E half of the room is a substantial longitudinal roll-moulded ceiling beam of probable 16th century date (*Plate 13*). At the E end of the room is a brick chimney breast and fireplace with a deep inglenook and a substantial concave moulded lintel of early to mid-17th century date (*Plate 14*); this fireplace appears to have occupied the position of a former cross-passage with a hearth and 'smoke bay' at the E end of the hall, indicated by exposed smoke-blackened timbers and sooted plasterwork at first floor level.

A single bay on the S side of the sitting room, lit by a three-light casement and a single light casement window, appears to be a later addition of 17th or early 18th century date, indicated by the close-studded timber-framed walls (*Plates 15 & 16*).



Plate 10: Internal view looking towards staircase in entrance vestibule in farmhouse, leading up to the first floor

Plate 11: Internal view W showing close studded timber-framed panels along N wall of entrance vestibule



Plate 12: View looking E showing interior of sitting room showing exposed ceiling beams and partitions and fireplace at E end of room



Plate 13: View looking W towards W end of sitting room with exposed roll moulded ceiling beam (in foreground) and casement window in W wall



Plate 14: View looking E towards fireplace at E end of sitting room with moulded lintel and roll moulded ceiling beam above



Plate 15: View looking S towards southernmost bay of sitting room, showing exposed ceiling beams and floorboards



Plate 16: View looking W showing close-studded timber framed panel in W wall of southern bay of sitting room



Plate 17: Internal view looking ESE showing lobby between sitting room and living room with close-studded timber framing

A doorway to the right of the fireplace leads into a lobby which provides access to the garden to the rear of the farmhouse and also leads into a living room (*Plate 17*). This room occupies the southern half of the cross wing which appears to have been added in the 17th century to the E of the original hall house and would have housed service rooms, normally including a buttery and pantry. It is lit by two 12-pane casement windows (which appear to be later additions, possibly 18th or early 19th century in date) and has exposed chamfered ceiling beams (*Plate 18*). The E wall has large thin-scantled panels beneath a substantial roughly-hewn wallplate; this probably represented the original E wall of the house prior to its extension in the late 18th century (*Plate 19*).

Within the W wall of the living room is a brick fireplace with deep inglenook and a substantial, roughly-hewn timber lintel (*Plate 20*). To the N of the living room is a doorway leading into the Scullery which occupies the N half of the 17th century service cross wing; the existing partition wall appears to be a later insertion and it seems likely that the original partition wall was further to the S, its position marked by a substantial horizontal moulded beam supported by vertical timber posts, one of which has circular indentations possibly indicating a former doorway (*Plates 18 & 21*). Within the NE corner of the room is a doorway with moulded skirting providing access to the Kitchen (*Plate 22*).



Plate 18: Internal view of living room looking S showing moulded beam supported by vertical timber posts



Plate 19: View looking E within living room showing exposed timber framed panels in E wall



Plate 20: View looking W showing brick fireplace with inglenook in W wall of living room



Plate 21: View looking N showing N end of living room with doorway to scullery located further to the N, with doorway to Kitchen to far right of picture



Plate 22: View looking NE towards doorway from living room to Kitchen with moulded skirting at base

The existing partition between the living room and the Scullery appears to be a later insertion, possibly added in the late 19th or early 20th century. The most noteworthy feature within the Scullery is a large deep fireplace at the N end of the room with a bay for a bread oven to the left of the fireplace, which is surmounted by a substantial wooden lintel. The fireplace and bread oven bay, which now contains a modern boiler and associated piping, appears to have been added in the mid to late 19th century (*Plate 23*).

At the S end of the Scullery is a doorway leading to a small cloakroom/WC which probably represents a 20th century insertion (*Plate 25*). This room has evidently been subject to much refurbishment with the walls being heavily plastered and the floor laid with modern ceramic tiles; the only other features of interest noted were an exposed chamfered horizontal ceiling beam supported by a wooden corbel and a short section of a moulded wallplate at floor level, located towards the S end of the Scullery (*Plate 26*).



Plate 23: View looking N showing interior of Scullery with fireplace at N end of room



Plate 24: View looking S showing partition wall at S end of Scullery with doorway to living room to left and cloakroom to right of picture



Plate 25: Internal view looking SW showing doorway from Scullery to yard (to right) with cloakroom to left of picture, with exposed ceiling beam visible above



Plate 26: Internal view showing E wall of Scullery with exposed ceiling beam and remnant of moulded wallplate (to bottom right of picture)

The annexe housing the Kitchen and Dining Room to the E of the living room appear to have been added in the late 18th century. Their function is not altogether clear but they may well have been built to house a dairy and cheese room. This supposition is based on their position at the rear of the farmhouse, the slightly sunken floor level (particularly apparent in the Dining Room), the absence of a chimney and the presence of large windows and grilled vents in the Kitchen to provide sufficient ventilation. The Kitchen is lit by two large round arched casement windows (*Plate 27*) and has evidently been subject to extensive modern refurbishment, with the insertion of a modern ceramic tiled floor and Kitchen range with tiled surround and stove against the E and S walls (*Plate 28*).

Of particular note is the fine kingpost roof structure with iron straps attaching the tiebeam to the kingpost and the principal rafters (*Plate 29*). There originally appears to have been a loft in this room as indicated by the slots for joists in the longitudinal ceiling beams which are keyed into the tiebeams.

The Dining Room is accessed from a doorway in the S wall of the Kitchen and has a coved plaster ceiling; it is lit by a single 12-pane casement window with a doorway to the left leading to the garden (*Plate 30*). The Dining Room floor is set noticeably below that of the Kitchen, which might suggest that the original floor level in the latter room was lower compared to its present height (*Plates 31 & 32*).

The reason for this is not entirely clear but it may have been connected with its presumed former usage as a dairy, which would often have a sunken floor in order to maintain a cool temperature for the storage of milk and other dairy produce (Mercer 1975). However, no features associated with its former possible usage (such as stone shelving) were noted within this room; a modern flue has been inserted in the N-wall for the Kitchen stove.



Plate 27: Internal view of Kitchen looking N showing round arched window in N wall



Plate 28: Internal view of Kitchen looking S showing modern ranges along S wall and doorway to Dining Room



Plate 29: View showing kingpost roof trusses and ceiling beams in Kitchen



Plate 30: View looking SE showing interior of Dining Room with casement window and door in S wall



Plate 31: Internal view looking W showing W wall of Dining Room and sunken floor level



Plate 32: View looking NW towards N wall of Dining Room showing modern flue to right of doorway

4.3.3 Interior – First Floor

The first-floor landing is accessed from a stairway leading up from the vestibule to the N of the sitting room, which has a coved ceiling with exposed beams and is lit by a mullioned 18-pane casement window (*Plate 33*). Doorways from the landing lead S into the bedroom at the W end of the first floor and E along a corridor running along the N side of the first floor towards the two bedrooms in the cross wing at the E end of the house (*Plate 34*).



Plate 33: Internal view looking N showing first floor landing and casement window

The corridor walls have close-studded timber framed panels with plaster infill (perhaps of late 17th or 18th century date) while the floor is largely covered with modern boards, although these appear to mask evidence of earlier floorboards which are exposed in places. Towards the E end of the corridor, where part of the roof structure has been exposed, a section of sooted plaster is visible in the apex of the roof adjacent to the existing brick chimneystack, which may represent evidence of an earlier 'smoke bay' prior to insertion of the chimney (*Plate 35*).



Plate 34: View looking E along first floor corridor showing exposed timber-framed panels

Plate 35: View looking E towards E end of first floor corridor showing sooted plaster in apex with brick chimneystack to right

The principal bedroom to the S of the corridor (marked as Bedroom 1 on the plan) occupies the central and W bays of the first floor; the W bay is demarcated from the rest of the room by a partition with roughly hewn vertical studs supporting a slightly curved tie-beam which appears to extend the entire width of the first floor, into the corridor running along the N side of the bedroom (*Plate 36*). A similar curved truss is visible in the E wall of the bedroom above the fireplace; this truss however is smoke blacked, indicating that it probably formed part of the smoke-bay above the original open hearth prior to insertion of the chimneystack (*Plate 37*). The existing fireplace surround and cast-iron grate in the E wall appears to be of 19th century date.

A suite of modern wardrobes running along the N wall of the bedroom have recently been removed. The S wall of the bedroom bows out noticeably (particularly in the SW corner) and there is evidence of exposed post-and rail panels in this location which have been disturbed by the later insertion of later casement windows (*Plate 38*). Evidence of larger timber-framed wall panels is visible in the NW wall of the bedroom and sections of earlier floorboarding are visible at the W end of the room.



Plate 36: Internal view looking E within W half of first floor bedroom showing curved tie-beam and studded partition



Plate 37: Internal view looking E showing E end of Bedroom 1 with smoke-blackened beam in wall, above 19th century fireplace surround and grate



Plate 38: View looking S showing casement window inserted within earlier timber-framed panels in S wall of Bedroom 1

At some point possibly in the late 19th or early 20th century, a partition wall appears to have been inserted at the SE end of the bedroom to create a separate room, now occupied by a bathroom and water closet. The bathroom is lit by an 18-pane mullioned casement window, surmounted by a horizontal wallplate, which may be of 18th century date (*Plate 39*).

A partial section of exposed close-studded timber framing, possibly of 17th or 18th century date, is visible in the E wall behind the toilet (*Plate 40*); however, the section of wall immediately to the left of this, behind the existing bath, is clad and plaster and appears to have been heavily renewed, perhaps quite recently (*Plate 41*).

Located at the E end of the long corridor to the N of the principal bedroom is a narrow hallway which provides access to the first-floor bedrooms within the N and S portions of the cross wing. The hallway is lit by a single latticed casement window of probable 18th century date. Located directly to the E of the hallway is a bathroom which appears to be a 20th century insertion, probably created out of the southernmost bay of the northern bedroom. The E wall has some exposed, heavily renewed timber-framed panels (*Plates 42 & 43*).



Plate 39 View looking ESE within bathroom to SE of Bedroom 1 showing casement window with exposed beam above
Plate 40: View looking E within bathroom to SE of Bedroom 1 showing exposed timber framing



Plate 41: View looking NE showing partition walls to N and E of bath suite in bathroom to SE of Bedroom 1



Plate 42: View looking E showing interior of bathroom to E of first floor landing

Plate 43: View looking N from first floor landing towards Bedroom 2 (in N half of cross wing)

To the left of the hallway is the bedroom at the N end of the cross wing (Bedroom 2). It is lit by an 8-pane casement window in the N-wall and a large 18-pane mullioned casement in the W wall (*Plates 44 & 45*). The modern flooring of the room has been partially removed, exposing earlier floorboards. The ceiling of the bedroom is coved and an exposed horizontal wallplate is visible above the windows in the N and W wall, supported at either end by jowelled wallposts.

The E wall of the bedroom displays evidence of somewhat irregular timber-framing, with vertical studs and diagonal studs connecting the wallplate to the vertical wall-posts (*Plate 46*). It is noticeable that there is no timber framing in the S wall, suggesting that this is indeed a modern partition inserted when the bathroom was created.



Plate 44: View looking N showing N wall of Bedroom 2 with exposed timber wall plate and flanking jowelled posts



Plate 45: View looking W showing W wall of Bedroom 2 with mullioned window and exposed timber-framing



Plate 46: Internal view looking E showing E wall of Bedroom 2 with exposed timber framed panels with vertical wall-posts and vertical and diagonal studding

The bedroom to SE of the landing, within the S half of the cross wing (Bedroom 3) appears at some point in the past to have been partially truncated by the creation first floor landing and subsequently by the insertion of a boiler room immediately S of the landing. It has a coved ceiling and is lit by a 12-pane casement window which appears to have truncated an earlier timber-framed panel (*Plate 47*). Evidence of earlier floorboarding is visible towards the S end of the room.



Plate 47: View looking S showing interior of S portion of Bedroom 3 with exposed floorboard beneath window

Three thin-scantled timber-framed panels with plaster infill, possibly of 17th century date, are visible in the N wall of Bedroom 3; these appear to have been truncated by the insertion of the existing W partition wall which must almost certainly be of 20th century date (*Plate 48*). It is possible that the existing modern wardrobe range along the W wall is contemporary with the insertion of this partition (*Plate 50*).

Of especial interest is the exposed timber framing in the E wall of Bedroom 3, with a three-light wooden mullioned window centrally placed in the E wall, which has been blocked up with plaster. Immediately above this blocked window is a curved, roughly hewn beam extending the full width of the wall and supported at either end by two jowelled wall posts (*Plate 49*). This window was set in the E gable of the cross wing and appears to have been blocked up when the upper stages of the gable were clad in weatherboarding, probably when the annexe housing the present Dining Room and Kitchen were added in the late 18th century.



Plate 48: View looking N showing thin-scantled timber-framed panels with plaster infill in N wall of Bedroom 3



Plate 49: View looking E showing E wall of Bedroom 3 with exposed timber-framing and blocked three-light mullioned window



Plate 50: View looking W showing modern wardrobe in W wall of Bedroom 3

4.4 The Barn

4.4.1 Exterior

Located at the N end of the courtyard is a substantial timber-framed, gabled Barn which appears to have been built in the 17th century and is shown in its existing position on an early 18th century plan of the Kimpton Hoo estate. It is likely the structure was originally built as a threshing barn, for the processing and storage of grain and wagons, but appears later to have served as accommodation for livestock. The Barn is aligned E-W and is five bays long with a steeply pitched, tiled roof. The lower walls have been rebuilt in brick (probably in the late 18th or early 19th century) while the upper stages of the Barn are weatherboarded, including the E and W gables (*Plate 51*).

Inserted in the centre of the N and S-facing elevations are two tall, wide double door openings which would have provided access for wagons and sufficient draft for winnowing purposes). The 1837 tithe map shows a porch in front of the N-facing opening but this appears to have been removed and no trace of it is now visible.



Plate 51: View looking S showing N-facing elevation of Grade II listed Barn

The brickwork of the lower stages of the S-facing elevation has been partly coated in whitewash and indentations for beams associated with a lean-to outbuilding or open shed, which can probably be identified with a rectangular structure attached to this elevation depicted on Ordnance Survey maps dated 1897 and 1922 (*Plate 52*). It is likely that this outbuilding (which appears to have been demolished by the late 1990s) was utilised as accommodation for livestock as metal ties are still attached to the brickwork. A doorway at the W end of the N-facing elevation provided access to a room at the W end of the barn which may have been used as a chaff house with granary above (*Plate 53*).



Plate 52: View looking N showing S-facing elevation of Barn with partially whitewashed brickwork and indentations for former lean-to outbuilding



Plate 53: View looking SE showing weatherboarded W-gable end of Barn with doorway to chaff room and granary at W end of barn and single storey annexe with pitched roof (tack room) to right of gable



Plate 54: View looking W showing E-gable end of Barn with outline of demolished early 20th century lean-to structure visible to left of picture

The upper stages of the W and E gable ends of the Barn are both weatherboarded, with ventilation holes in the apex of both gables (*Plates 53 & 54*). The roofline of a lean-to structure is visible in the SE corner of the E-gable wall, below which is a section of whitewashed brickwork (*Plate 54*). It is likely that this relates to a small oblong structure situated immediately SE of the Barn and to the NW of the East Stable, which is first shown on the OS 3rd edition map of 1922 and appears to have survived intact at least until the 1970s. A section of whitewashed brick walling between the Barn and the East Stable may represent a remnant of this building. A concrete mounting block, possibly associated with this former structure, survives to the E of the Barn.

4.4.2 Interior

The most notable feature within the interior of the Barn is evidently the substantial, elaborate queenpost roof structure, with vertical queen posts connecting the tie beam to the collar just below the the apex of the truss. The collar beam in turn carries a set of clasped purlins, with another set of purlins lower down, which are connected to the tie beam by a pair of angled struts. The form of the roof (and the presence of clasped purlins) suggests a probable date in the first half of the 17th century (*Plates 55 & 56*)



Plate 55: View looking E showing central and E portion of Barn with queenpost roof structure

Plate 56: View looking W showing roof structure in W half of barn with timber framed partition and granary loft at W end

The upper stages of the Barn walls have close-studded timber framed panels, those in the E half have exposed vertical studs while those in the W portion of the barn are clad in coarse grey plaster. The lower stages of the Barn walls are constructed of brick which appears previously to have been coated in whitewash which suggests that it may have been used at some point as livestock accommodation, possibly in the late 19th/20th centuries.

A feature of particular note is the brick cobbled floor within the Barn, the central portion of which, between the two wide central door openings, have functioned as the main threshing floor for the winnowing of the crops (*Plate 58*). A row of beam slots inserted in the brickwork of the flanking walls just below the level of the timber framed panels may point to the former existence of internal subdivisions, possibly associated with the storage of straw which would commonly have been stored on either side of the threshing floor (*Plate 57*). A number of fittings are attached the Barn walls including iron hooks which could have been used for hanging harness or farm implements.

At the W end of the Barn is a timber framed partition with vertical and diagonal studs resting on a dwarf brick wall which separates the westernmost bay from the rest of the Barn (*Plate 59*). A short flight of steps leads to a room at ground level which may have been used as a chaff room for storing husks from the grain crop (chaff), after it had been threshed and winnowed in the barn, with a loft above which may well have been used as a granary, as evidenced by the ventilation slots above (*Plate 60*).



Plate 57: Internal view looking NE showing partially whitewashed N wall of Barn with timber framed panels resting upon brick walls



Plate 58: Internal view of Barn looking NE showing N entrance flanked by whitewashed brick walls and brick cobbled threshing floor to right



Plate 59: Internal view showing brick and timber-framed partition at W end of Barn for chaff room and granary loft above



Plate 60: View looking NE showing interior of chaff room below granary at W end of Barn

4.5 The West Stables and Piggery

4.5.1 Exterior

Located along the W side of the courtyard is an extensive stable range comprising three distinct elements, which are described from N-S (*Plate 61*). At the N end of the range, projecting S from the SW corner of the Barn, is a single storey gabled brick structure with a clay tiled roof housing a 'tack room' (used for the drying of harness), which is lit by a two-light casement window in the front (E-facing) elevation with a doorway and segmental arched casement window to the rear (*Plate 62*). It is likely that this gabled structure was added in the late 18th or early 19th century, contemporary with the reconstruction in brick of the lower stages of the Barn. The exterior of the E-facing elevation is whitewashed, which probably dates from when a lean-to outbuilding range was erected to the S of the Barn in the late 19th century.



Plate 61: Oblique view looking NW showing front (E-facing) elevation of West Stables

Attached to the S end of the gabled block is a three-bay stable block with a pitched slate roof with weatherboarding on the front (E-facing) elevation while the rear (W-facing) wall is of red brick construction. This range in its present form appears to have been started in the early 19th century but was not fully completed until the early 1880s. There are two doorways in the front (E-facing) elevation of the weatherboarded range, one being located at the N end of the range and the other within the central bay. The latter has a plank and batten door with a glazed light above, flanked by two windows placed immediately below eaves level; the right-hand window has a glazed casement while the glazing in the left-hand window has been replaced by metal grille (*Plate 62*).



Plate 62: View looking W showing single storey gabled brick 'tack room' with adjoining weatherboarded stable range to left

At the S end of this range is a substantial rectangular single-storey stable block constructed of chequered red brick with a pyramidal tiled roof; inserted in the E-facing elevation is a tall plank and batten stable door with glazed light above, extending up to eaves level (*Plate 63*).



Plate 63: View looking W showing brick stable block at S end of West Stables with pyramidal tiled roof and attached lean-to piggy to S



Plate 64: Oblique view looking SE along rear elevation of West Stables towards late 18th-early 19th century stable block with pyramidal roof at its S end

This brick stable block originally appears to have been a free-standing structure (as shown on the 1837 tithe map) and can probably be assigned late 18th or early 19th century date. It appears that this free-standing structure was finally linked to the stable range immediately N of it at some time in the mid-19th century (between 1837 and 1881), as indicated by a construction break towards the S end of the rear elevation of the three-bay range (*Plate 64*). Attached to the S end of the brick stable block is a lean-to brick piggery with tiled roof which appears to have been a slightly later addition, possibly of early to mid-19th century date.



Plate 65: View looking SE towards two-bay stable block with pyramidal tiled roof



Plate 66: View looking NE towards lean-to brick piggery attached to the S end of the stable block

4.5.2 Interior

Due to access constraints it was not possible to access the 'tack house' at the N end of the range; it appears to have a fireplace in the S wall although the chimney stack was removed some time ago. The interior of the weatherboarded stable range has whitewashed walls and is arranged into three loose boxes separated by planked timber and metal rail partitions which appear to be modern in date although the positions they occupy may well be historic (*Plate 67*).



Plate 67: View looking S along central portion of three-bay stable range, showing loose box partitions and roof trusses



Plate 68: View looking S showing loose box partitions and open roof structure in S bay of weatherboarded stable range

The most distinctive feature within the three-bay stable range is the open truss roof structure with angled struts connecting the tie beam to the principal rafters, which in turn are linked by a pair of treenched purlins (Plates 68 & 69). The form of the roof trusses suggests a probable early to mid-19th century date which would seem to correspond well with the available cartographic evidence.

The subdivisions within the bays are marked by a series of vertical timber wall posts along the E wall, each of which has curved braces linking to the tie beam and two flanking curved braces on either side connecting to the wall plate (Plate 70). The wall itself has close studded timber-framed panels to support the weatherboarding. It is evident that the stables have been in use until very recently and considerable evidence of fixtures and fittings associated with their usage have survived throughout this range, including racks, troughs and mangers.



Plate 69: View looking N within weatherboarded stable range showing detail of open-truss roof structure



Plate 70: View looking E showing vertical wall posts and studding along E wall of stable range

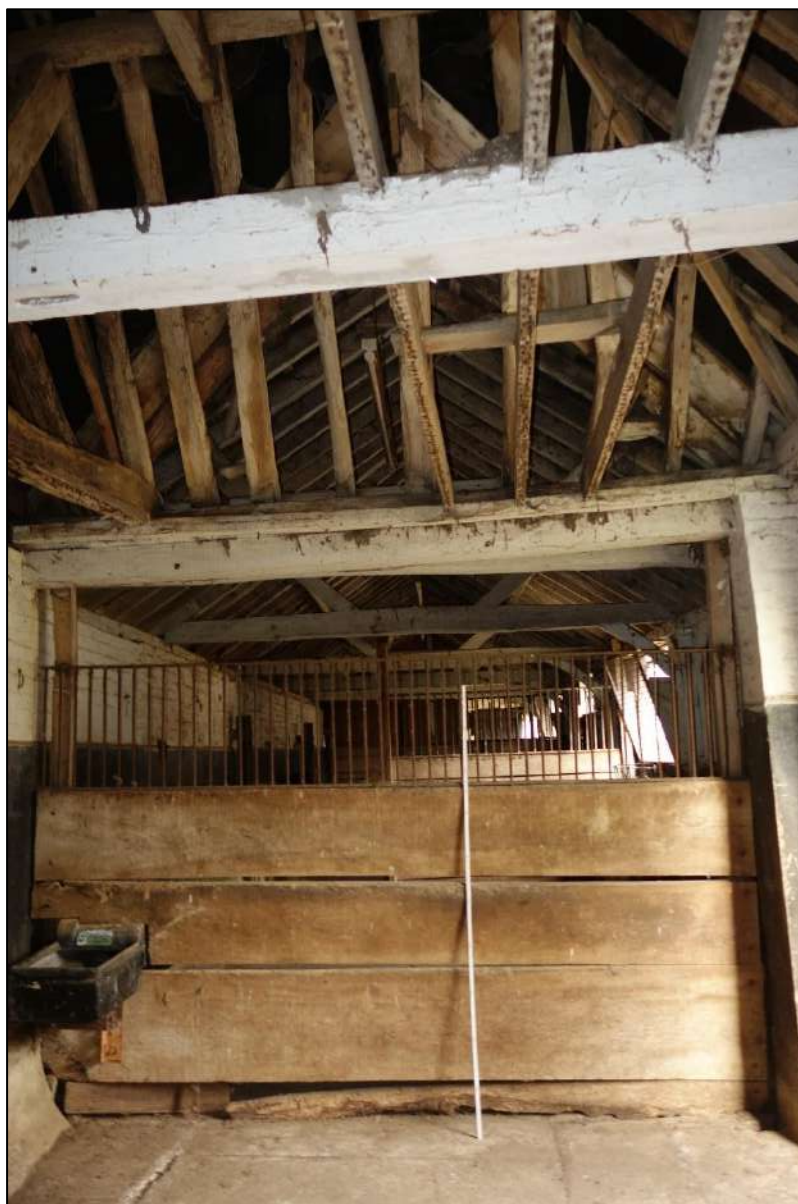


Plate 71: View looking N showing pyramidal roof structure in brick stable block at S end of West Stables

It appears that the N wall of the two-bay rectangular stable block to the S of the weatherboarded range was removed when the two ranges were connected in the mid-late 19th century. A planked timber partition with metal rail above now marks the sub-division between the two structures (*Plate 71*). The most noteworthy feature within this range is the tall, pyramidal roof structure which may at one point have accommodated a hayloft.

At some point, possibly in the late 19th century, it appears that a brick wall aligned N-S was inserted, subdividing the stable into two separate compartments, possibly to provide separate accommodation for a mare in foal. This subdivision is clearly marked on the OS 1st edition map of 1881. The walls of both compartments within the stable block are coated in whitewash and apart from a feeding trough in the eastern compartment few fixtures and fittings survive (*Plates 72 & 73*).



Plate 72: View looking S within eastern compartment of stable block at S end of West Stables



Plate 73: View looking S within western compartment of stable block at S end of West Stables

4.6 The East Stables

4.6.1 Exterior

Located along the E side of the courtyard, immediately NW of the farmhouse is a gabled single-storey stable block, four bays in length (aligned N-S) and constructed of red brick with a steeply pitched clay tile roof (*Plate 74*). Cartographic evidence clearly indicates that this stable block was constructed at some point between 1837 (as it is not shown on the Kimpton tithe map of that date) and 1881 (when it first appears on the OS 1st edition map). The brickwork is partially whitewashed towards the N end of the range, which may be associated with a lean-to outbuilding marked in this location on late 19th/early 20th century OS mapping.



Plate 74: View looking E showing principal W-facing elevation of East Stables with farmhouse to right of picture

The W-facing elevation has two pairs of plank and batten doors with glazed lights above (extending up to eaves level) set towards the N and S ends of the range; these doors are flanked on either side by part-glazed flat-arched windows, the lower portions of which are glazed with horizontal wooden staves. Within the S gable end of the range is a single tall segmental arched window.

The E-facing elevation is largely devoid of fenestration except for a small casement window in the SE corner. A sliding door has been inserted in the N-gable end of the stable range which appears to be of early to mid-20th century date and may well be associated with the usage of this part of the building as a dairy. Local newspaper records appear to indicate that Rye End Farm was predominantly a dairy farm in the first half of the 20th century.



N

Plate 75: Oblique view looking NE showing S gable end of East Stables with segmental arched window in gable



Plate 76: View looking SSW showing N-gable end of East Stables with modern sliding door inserted for dairy

4.6.2 Interior

The interior of the stable range is subdivided into four separate compartments, with a full height brick wall demarcating the southernmost bay from the rest of the range while a low brick wall subdivides the two central compartments. The northernmost compartment is demarcated by a wooden partition wall and could not be fully accessed at the time of the site visit.

The interior of the stable range appears to have been entirely coated in whitewash and has coved plaster ceilings (which have partially collapsed in places) with lath and plaster exposed in the southern and two central compartments (*Plates 77 & 78; Plate 80*). The southern compartment appears to have been used as a storage and tack room as evidenced by shelving and nails and hooks in the wall which would have been used for hanging harness (*Plate 78*).

The two central compartments were clearly used as stabling as evidenced by the brick cobbled floors and low brick feeding troughs against the W wall (*Plate 79*). Few other features, fixtures or fittings relating to its previous usage as stabling were noted in these rooms.



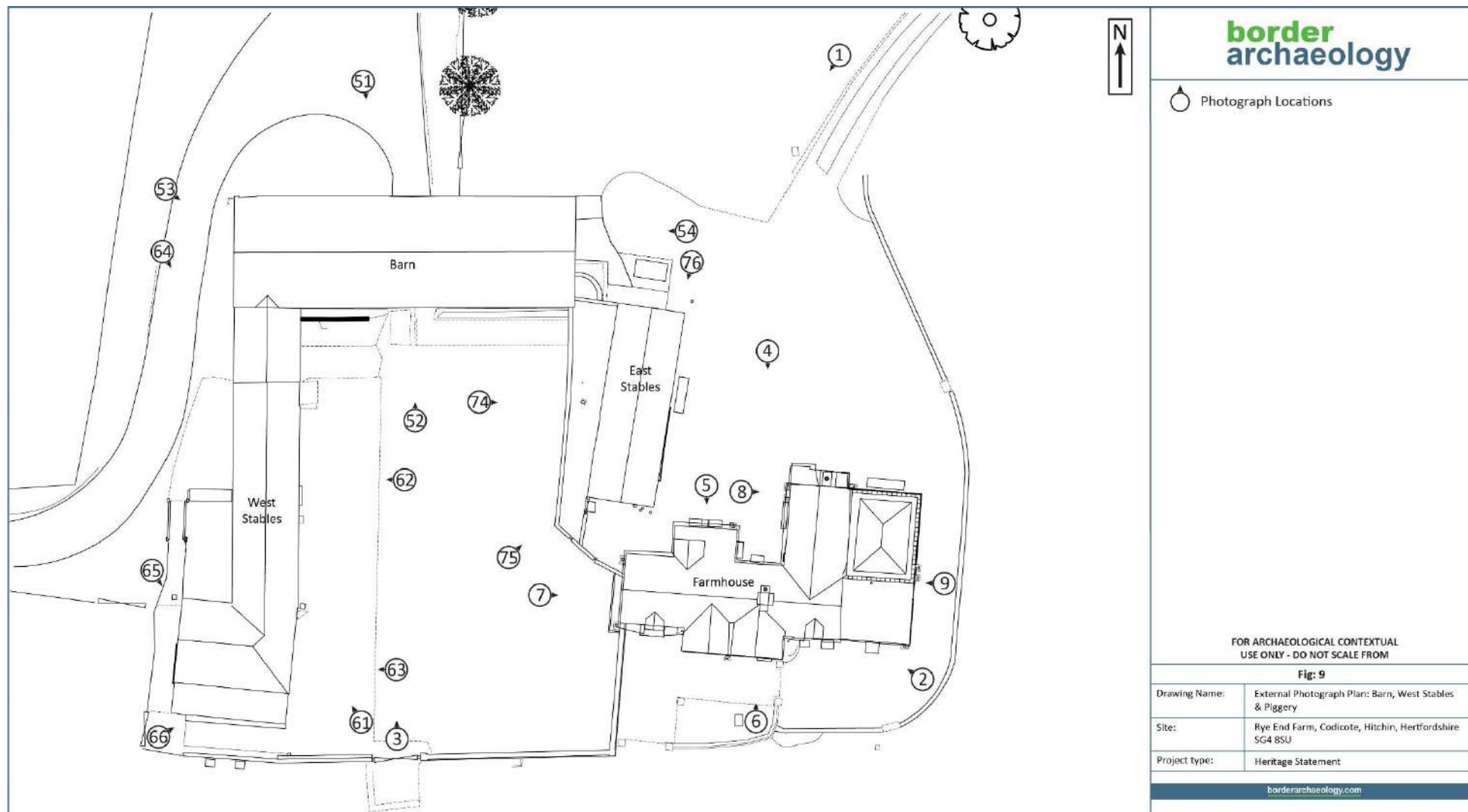
Plate 77: View looking SE showing compartment at S end of East Stables with coved plaster ceiling

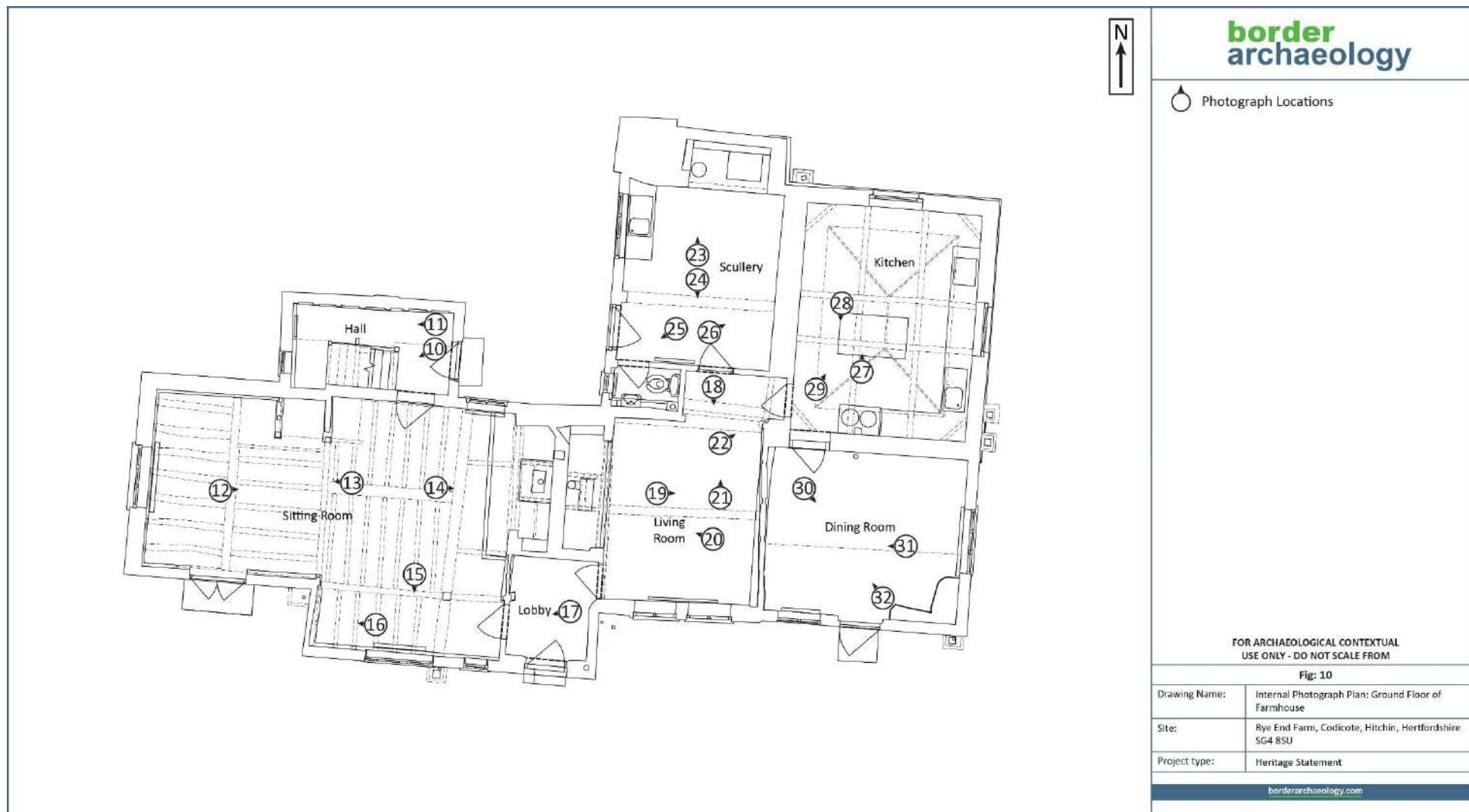


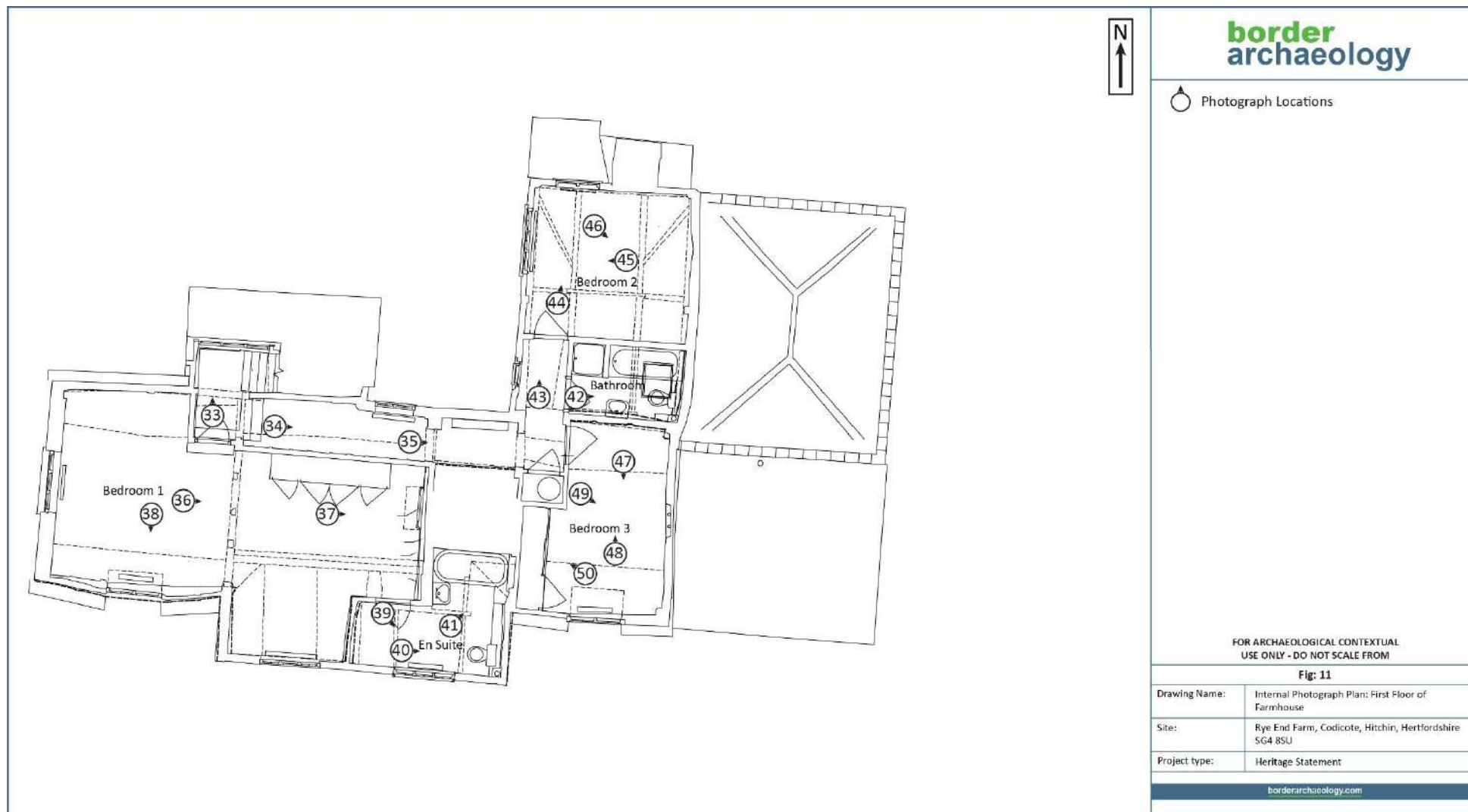
Plate 78: View looking W showing interior of southern compartment with shelving and nails in wall for harness

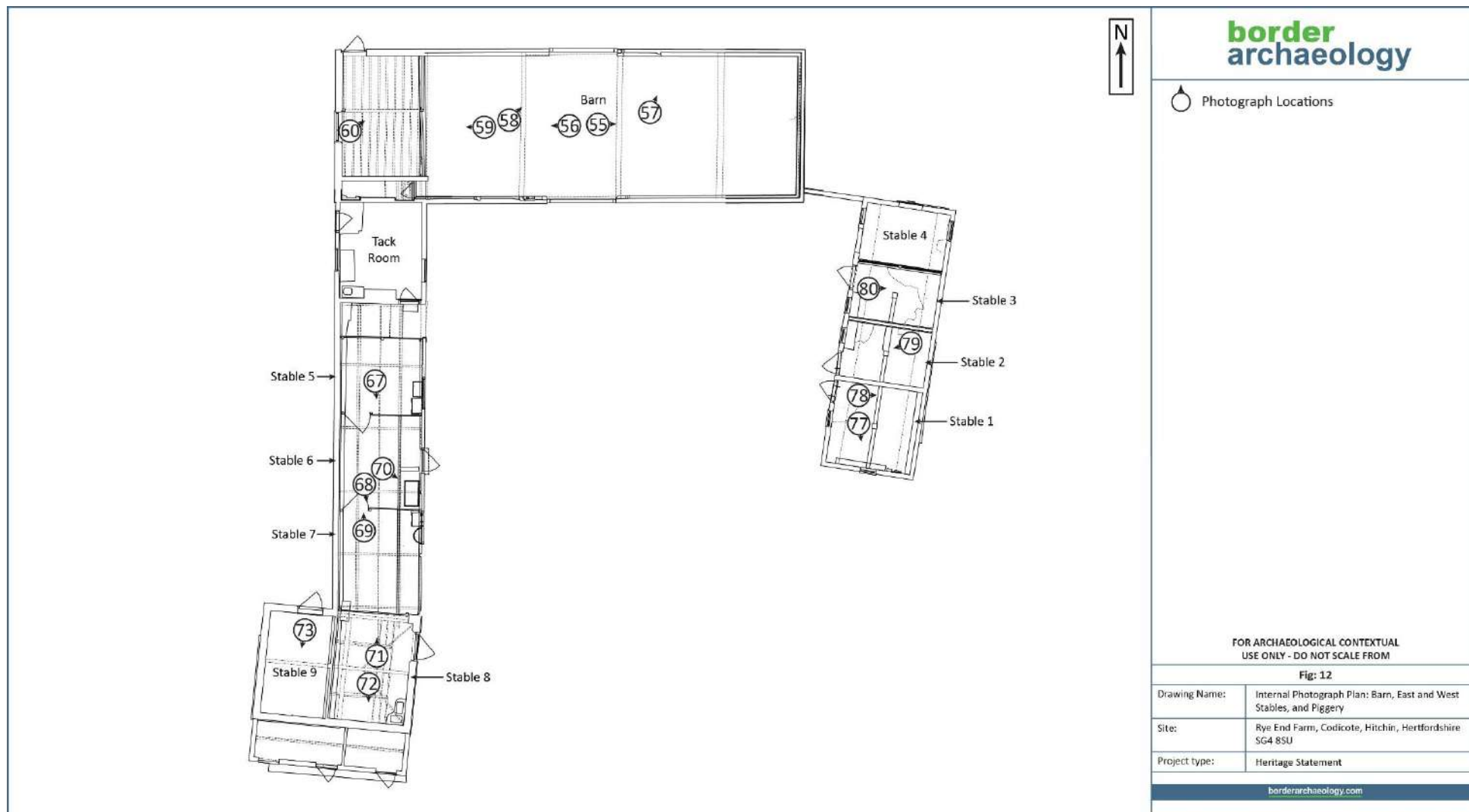


Plate 79: View looking W showing interior of stable in central bay of East Stable with brick cobbled floor and trough
Plate 80: View W showing interior of stable in central bay of East Stable with low brick partition wall and cobbled floor









5 Assessment of Significance

This section of the report consists of an assessment of the intrinsic significance, in heritage terms, of the Grade II listed Rye End Farmhouse and the Grade II listed Barn and attached outbuildings at Rye End Farm, based on the description given in the previous section.

5.1 Methodology

This section of the Heritage Statement has been compiled with reference to the following Historic England guidance documents, namely: *Adapting Traditional Farm Buildings: Best Practice Guidelines for Adaptive Reuse* (Historic England 2017a), *The Setting of Heritage Assets* (Historic England 2017c); *Understanding Place: Historic Area Assessments: Principles and Practice* (Historic England 2015a), *Seeing the History in the View* (EH 2011b [Rev. 2012]), *Conservation Principles Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment* (EH 2008). It has also been informed by relevant national and local planning policy guidance including the *National Planning Policy Framework* (MHCLG 2019) and *North Hertfordshire Local Plan* (in particular Policy SP 13: Historic Environment).

Particular attention is drawn to Paragraphs 193 and 194 in the NPPF which states that ‘*when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.*

Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

- a) Grade II listed buildings or Grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional*
- b) Assets of the highest significance, notably Scheduled Monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, Grade I and II* listed buildings, Grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional’*

The significance of these listed buildings has been assessed with reference to criteria in Section 2.6 of *Understanding Place: Historic Area Assessments: Principles and Practice*, which are briefly outlined below:

Rarity: Does it exemplify a pattern or type seldom or never encountered elsewhere? It is often assumed that rarity is synonymous with historical importance and therefore high value, but it is important not to exaggerate rarity by magnifying differences and downplaying common characteristics.

Representativeness: Is its character or type representative of important historical or architectural trends? Representativeness may be contrasted with rarity.

Aesthetic appeal: Does it (or could it) evoke positive feelings of worth by virtue of the quality (whether designed or artless) of its architecture, design or layout, the harmony or diversity of its forms and materials or through its attractive physical condition?

Integrity: Does it retain a sense of completeness and coherence? In a historic landscape with a high degree of integrity the functional and hierarchical relationships between different elements of the landscape remain intelligible and nuanced, greatly enhancing its evidential value and often its aesthetic appeal. Integrity is most often used as a measure of single-phase survival, but some buildings and landscapes are valuable precisely because of their multiple layers, which can have considerable evidential value.

Associations: Is it associated with important historic events or people? Can those associations be verified? If they cannot, they may still be of some significance, as many places and buildings are valued for associations that are traditional rather than historically proven.

5.2 Assessment of the intrinsic significance of Rye End Farmhouse

Rye End Farmhouse may be considered to be a heritage asset of **High** significance, reflecting its status as a Grade II listed timber-framed yeoman farmhouse comprising a 16th century central hall house with a later 17th century cross wing.

While there are other examples of 'L-plan' yeoman farmhouses of 16th-17th century date in the immediate vicinity of the site (including Rye End Cottages to the NE, also Grade II listed) and elsewhere in Hertfordshire, Rye End Farmhouse represents a well-preserved example of type. Its L-plan form has survived remarkably well in spite of minor alterations and additions made during the 18th-20th centuries and remains highly legible, with considerable evidence of external timber-framing with brick and plaster infill (and evidence of pargetting) which contributes to its distinctive, picturesque character.

Its historic setting is also enhanced by its isolated rural location on the banks of the River Mimram, just beyond the S periphery of the parkland associated with the historic mansion of Kimpton Hoo (demolished in the 1950s) which, essentially, has remained largely unchanged since the early post-medieval period.

Internally, the farmhouse contains an abundance of features attesting to its development from the 16th century to the present, including extensive surviving evidence of timber-framed partitions and ceiling beams on the ground and first floors (of particular interest being the 16th century roll-moulded ceiling beam in the sitting room) as well as other internal features of interest such as the substantial brick inglenook fireplaces in the sitting and living rooms, the studded partition in the principal first floor bedroom and the blocked mullion window in Bedroom 3.

The late 18th century castellated annexe to the E of the farmhouse (containing the Kitchen and Dining Room) appears likely to have been built to house a dairy and cheese room. While few features associated with its former usage have survived (the most notable being the kingpost roof in the Kitchen and the sunken floor in the Dining Room) it nevertheless represents a distinctive and relatively rare survival. The farmhouse, together with the adjacent complex of 17th-19th century farm outbuildings immediately to the W, represent a coherent, highly legible and well-preserved example of a traditional historic farmstead of late medieval/post-medieval date.

The significance of the farmhouse is also enhanced by its well-documented historical associations. Rye End Farm appears to have originated as a medieval marginal rural settlement, closely associated with the nearby farmstead at Rye End Cottages to the NE (occupying the site of a medieval water mill). The early history of the farmhouse is documented in surviving property deeds and can be traced back to a cottage at Rye End first mentioned in 1568,

when it was held by a family of yeomen farmers named Byg (Bigge). From the early 17th century through to the mid-20th century, Rye End Farmhouse was a tenancy pertaining to the nearby historic estate of Kimpton Hoo, which was owned during the 17th/early 18th centuries by the Hoo family, subsequently passing to the aristocratic Brand family (Lords Dacre and Viscounts Hampden).

5.3 Assessment of the intrinsic significance of the Barn and attached Outbuildings at Rye End Farm

The Grade II listed historic farm outbuildings at Rye End Farmhouse may be regarded as being of **High** significance as constituting a well-preserved example of a complex of traditional farm buildings broadly ranging in date from the 17th through to the 19th centuries.

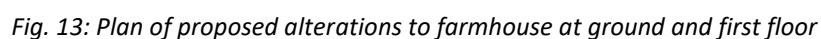
Their intrinsic significance is enhanced by the visible evidence of the surviving fabric, supported by historic mapping, which lucidly demonstrates how this complex of outbuildings evolved from its original loose courtyard plan established in the 17th century (as shown on the early 18th century Kimpton Hoo estate map), into a regular U-shaped courtyard plan by the mid to late 19th century. Subsequent late 19th century alterations to the fabric of the buildings reflect changes in agricultural practices and a greater diversification of activity, from being primarily an arable farm from the 17th century through to the mid-19th century, greater emphasis was placed on dairy farming from the late 19th century onwards.

The substantial 17th century threshing barn at the N end of the courtyard represents a relatively rare survival regionally (English Heritage 2006, 25). Although the lower stages have been rebuilt in brick, the timber-framed upper storey and its particularly fine queenpost roof structure have survived intact and are of considerable interest in architectural and aesthetic terms. The survival of the chaff room and grain loft at the W end of the barn may also be considered to be a fairly rare survival (as such features were often removed from threshing barns at a later date).

The brick and weatherboarded stable range to W of the courtyard (West Stables) appears in its present form to have been built piecemeal from the late 18th through to the mid-late 19th century and retains extensive evidence of partitions, feeding racks and other features relating to its former use as stabling. The early to mid-19th century open truss roof in the weatherboarded range and the earlier pyramidal roof in the brick building at the S end of the range are noteworthy features.

The single-storey gabled brick stable range on the E side of the courtyard appears to have been built in the mid-late 19th century and was then adapted in the first half the 20th century for use as a dairy. This range is in a much more dilapidated condition than the other outbuildings. There are a number of surviving features including brick and timber partitions, brick cobbled floors and troughs relating its former usage as stabling and later as a dairy, but there are fewer features of interest compared to the Barn and the West Stables.

The substantial complex of farm outbuildings evidently has close visual and historical associations with the adjoining historic farmhouse of Rye End and together form a well-defined and highly legible historic farmstead, which has well-documented connections with the historic landed estate of Kimpton Hoo.



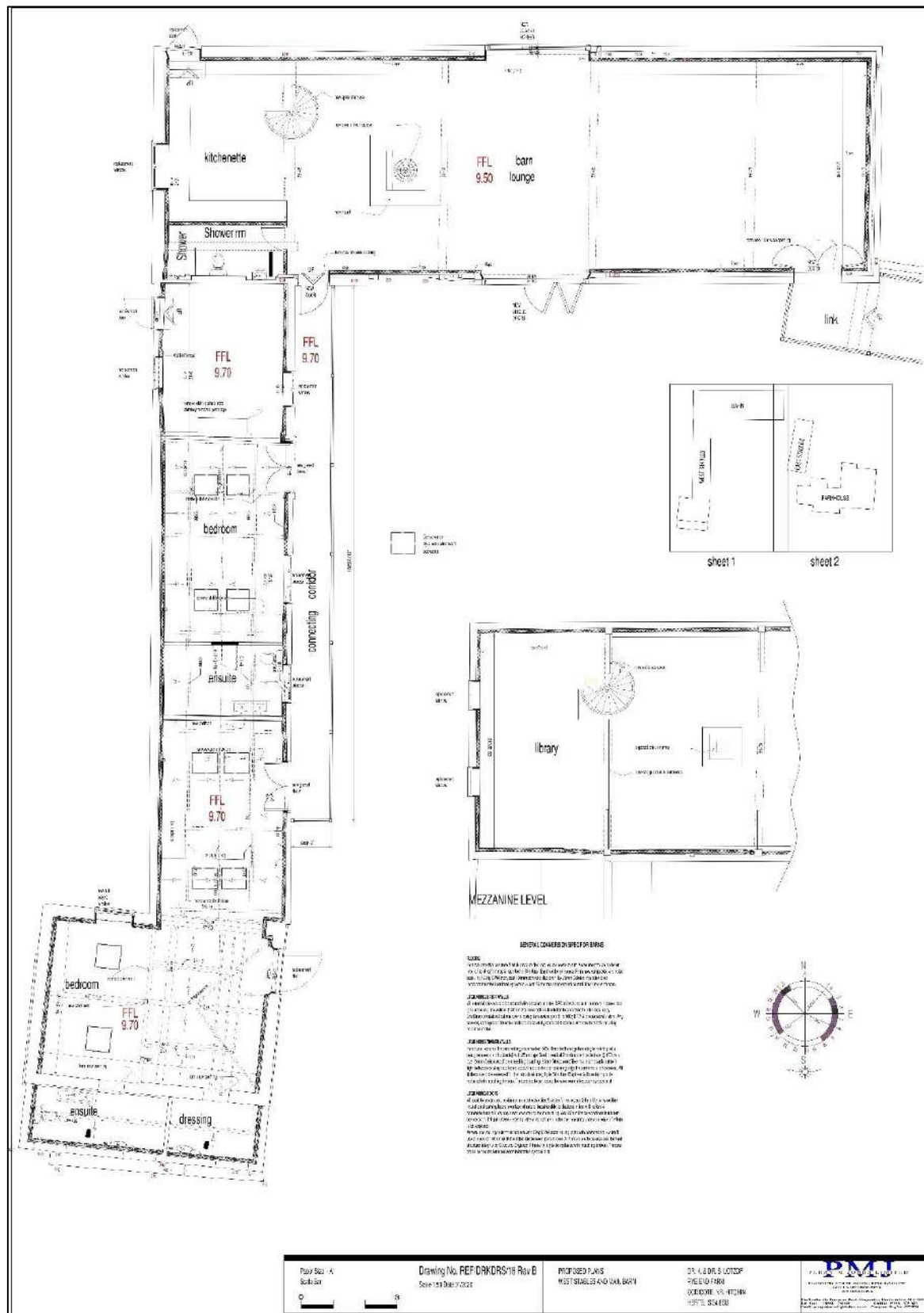
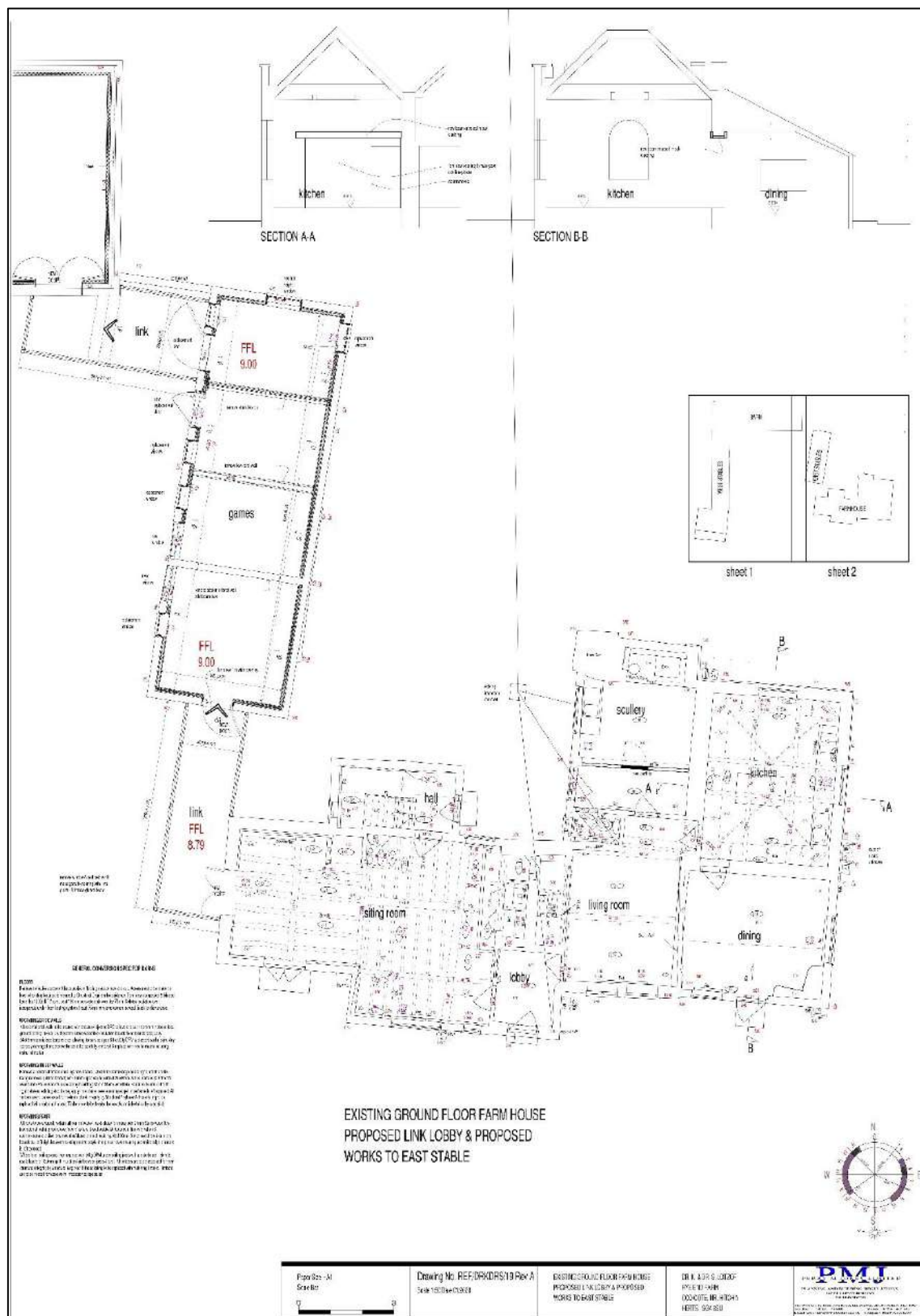


Fig. 14: Plan of proposed alterations to Barn and West Stable





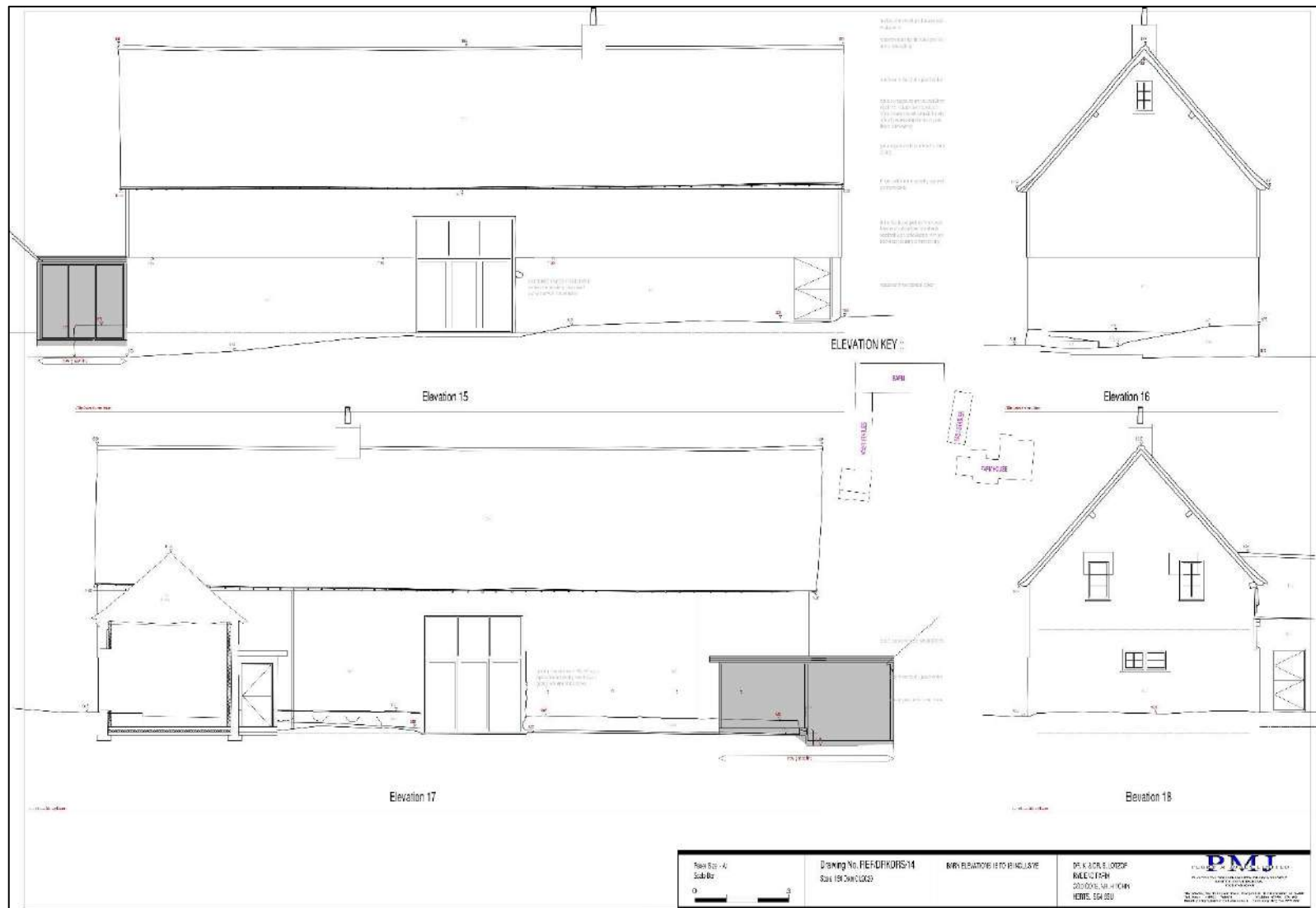


Fig. 17: Elevations of Barn showing proposed conversion works

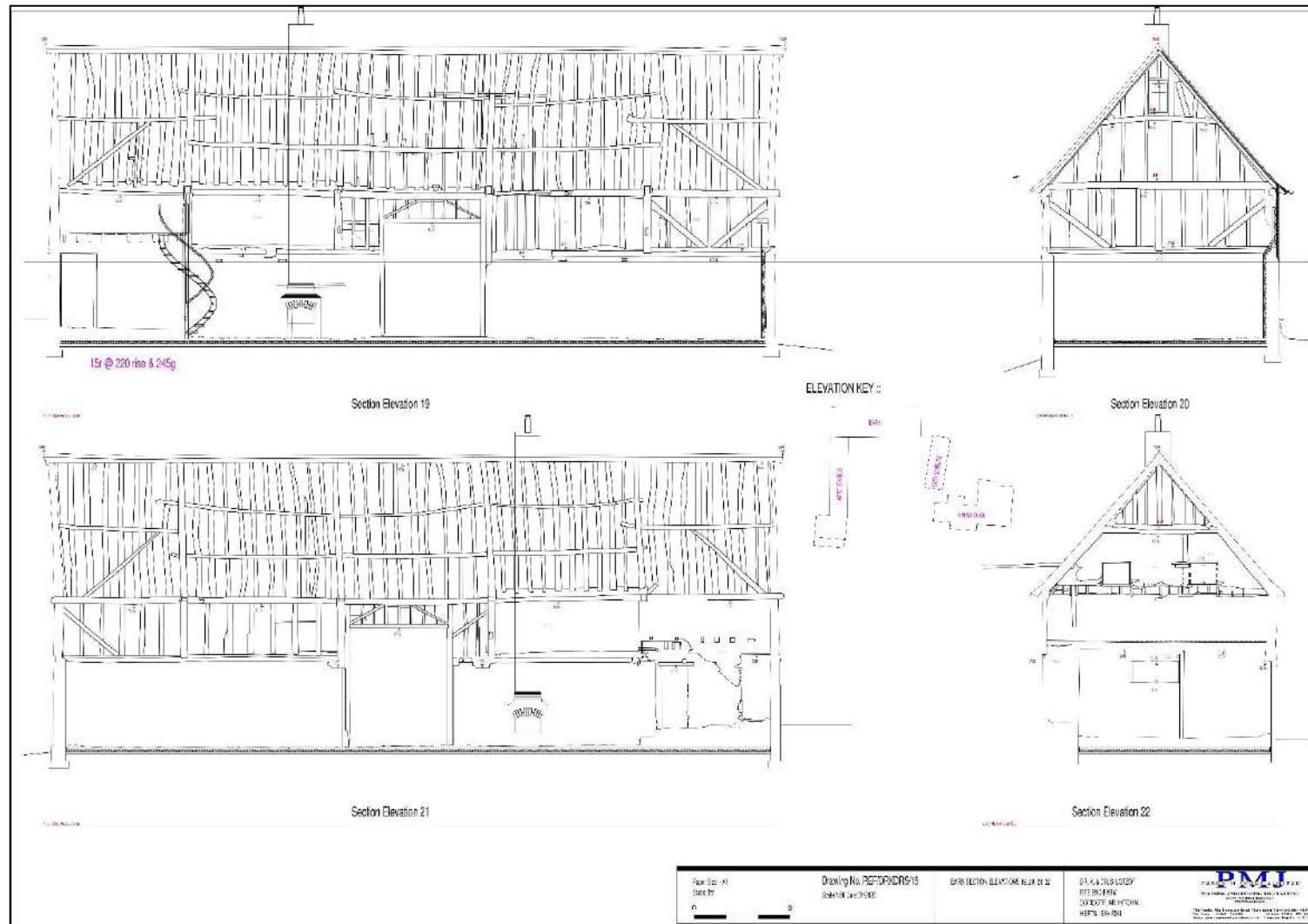


Fig. 18: Internal Elevations of Barn showing proposed conversion works



6 Proposed Development

This section examines the potential impact of the proposed works on Rye End Farmhouse and the adjacent barn and attached outbuildings (all of which are Grade II listed) and their respective settings:

6.1 Site Proposals

The following summary description of the proposed works is based on architects' plans and elevation drawings (figs. 13 -19) and a draft Design and Access Statement provided by Mr. P. Jones on behalf of the client in February 2020. Subsequent issuing of more detailed, revised proposals and specifications for the proposed works, together with updated plans and elevation drawings, may require further revisions to this report.

6.1.1 Rye End Farmhouse

- *Alterations to Ground Floor*

Within the Scullery, it is proposed to form a lobby by inserting of a new timber stud partition and enlarging the cloakroom set off the Scullery by the removal of the existing end wall and constructing a new timber-stud wall. The remaining portion of the Scullery will be converted into a utility room, access to which will be through a new doorway to be inserted in the existing wall between the Scullery and the Kitchen to the E.

It is also proposed for the existing doorway opening between the Kitchen and the Dining Room to be removed together with a section of the existing wall splitting the Kitchen and Dining Room so that a 3m wide opening is created between the Kitchen and Dining Room. A steel beam will be installed to span the new 3.0m wide opening which would then be plastered and covered with oak cladding to conceal the beam.

Within the ground floor sitting room, it is proposed to insert a doorway in the W wall to provide access to a single storey glazed link structure leading to the East Stables (to be converted into a games room), which will necessitate the removal of a casement window in this location.

- *Alterations to First Floor*

On the first floor, it is proposed to remove the old bathroom situated between Bedrooms 2 and 3 and its associated partition walls and to extend Bedroom 2 (at the N end of the cross wing) further to the S. It is also proposed to sub-divide Bedroom 3 (located in the S end of the cross wing) with the insertion of a new timber-stud partition to create a new bathroom and dressing room and to remove a section of wall to the side of the existing bathroom at the E end of the principal bedroom (Bedroom 1) immediately W of Bedroom 3, to allow access through to that portion of Bedroom 3 which will be turned into a dressing room.

6.1.2 Attached Barn and Outbuildings

- *The Barn*

The main barn is proposed to be converted to become a lounge with also a kitchenette to the far end of the existing barn and a shower room. It is proposed to create a mezzanine floor level at the far end of the barn over the

kitchenette area with a spiral staircase providing access to the mezzanine floor level which will become a library. It is also proposed to have an open fireplace towards the kitchenette end with a new brick-built chimney. A glazed screen will be inserted in the wide central door opening in the N elevation and a set of glass bi-fold doors in the corresponding S-facing opening overlooking the courtyard. Two doorways are to be inserted at the E and W end of the S wall of the Barn to provide access to the glazed links leading to the E and W Stables respectively.

In order to provide habitable accommodation, the floor and walls are to be upgraded as well as insulating and boarding the inside of the roof structure. The internal walls will have a timber-stud insulated wall built inside the external walls filled with insulation and covered over with plasterboard. The existing floor will be damp proofed and then insulated and screeded.

- *West Stables*

The West Stables are to be converted to provide additional accommodation with the creation of two additional bedrooms, both with bathrooms and dressing areas.

The Stables will be upgraded to provide habitable accommodation, which will require the floor and walls to be upgraded as well as insulating and boarding the inside of the roof structure. The existing partition walls within the stable block will be entirely removed and new partitions inserted for a bathroom. The internal walls will have a timber stud insulated wall built inside the external walls, which will be filled with insulation and covered over with plasterboard. The existing floor will be damp proofed and then insulated and screeded.

The existing windows will be replaced and there will also be new glazed doors to access the bedrooms. It is proposed that conservation style velux windows will be installed to the existing roof over the Stables to allow additional light to the bedrooms. It is also proposed to add a continuous glazed link running along the majority of the E-facing elevation of the stable block up to the Barn.

- *East Stables*

The East Stables are proposed to be converted to form a Games Room, which will involve the upgrading of the floor and walls, as well as insulating and boarding the inside of the roof structure. The internal walls will have a timber stud insulated wall built inside the external walls filled with insulation and covered over with plasterboard. The existing floor will be damp proofed and then insulated and screeded.

Two partition walls within the stable block will be removed while the partition wall demarcating the southern bay will be partially reduced and a timber beam inserted.

Two single storey glazed links are also proposed, one running NW from the NW corner of the stable block to the Barn and another extending from the S gable of the stable block (where a new doorway will be inserted) to the W gable end of the farmhouse.

Various remedial works are also required to the external elevations of the Barn and attached Outbuildings including brickwork repairs, complete replacement featheredge boarding to match the existing, some localised roof tiling repairs and the replacement of the main roof of the West Stables with clay tiles.

6.2 Assessment of Impact on Heritage Assets

This assessment of the potential impact of the proposed alterations to the farmhouse has been informed by relevant Historic England guidance, in particular the following documents:

Adapting Traditional Farm Buildings: Best Practice Guidelines for Adaptive Reuse (Historic England 2017a)
Farmstead Assessment Framework: Informing sustainable development and the conservation of traditional farmsteads (Lake 2017)

The Maintenance and Repair of Traditional Farm Buildings: A Guide to Good Practice (Historic England 2017b)

Making Changes to Heritage Assets: Historic England Advice Note 2 (Historic England 2015b)

The Setting of Heritage Assets Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Historic England 2017c)

6.2.1 Rye End Farmhouse

- *Cloakroom/Scullery Works*

The Scullery occupies the N end of the service cross wing, which was probably added in the 17th century to the E of the main house. It has been subject to various alterations over the years, including the addition of a fireplace and bread oven at its N end (probably in the early 19th century), the establishment of the existing partition wall at the S end of the room and the insertion of a cloakroom and WC in the 20th century. The proposed sub-division into a utility room and enlarged cloakroom with the insertion of a new stud partition wall would further change the layout and form of the Scullery, although it may be regarded as a minor alteration to a room which has already been subject to a degree of change and would still retain its utilitarian function and character intact.

However, the proposed insertion of a new doorway in the E wall of the Scullery to link it with the Kitchen would result in a distinct change to the plan form of this particular part of the farmhouse, as there does not appear, historically, to have been a direct connection between these two rooms. Moreover, the E wall of the Scullery also appears to represent the original E external wall of the 17th century cross wing and consequently the insertion of a new doorway could have potential to impact on historic fabric in this specific area. It is important that the historic fabric and plan form of a listed building should be preserved, as they are intrinsic to its special significance in architectural and historical terms.

- *Kitchen/Dining Room Works*

The existing Kitchen and Dining Room annexe appears to have been added to the E of the service cross wing in the late 18th century. The evidence of their location to the rear of the farmhouse, their form and surviving architectural features (including the sunken floor, the large windows and kingpost roof in the Kitchen) suggest that they were originally built as a dairy and cheese room. Although there are no surviving fittings or fixtures associated with this former usage, it is clear that the Kitchen and Dining Room were constructed at the same time.

While both rooms have been subject to a degree of modern refurbishment (in particular the Kitchen) their original plan form appears to have remained intact and the doorway connecting the two rooms appears likely to be an original feature although the door itself has evidently been renewed. The proposed removal of the existing door

and the insertion of a much wider door opening between the Kitchen and Dining Room would thus alter the appearance and character of both rooms to a noticeable extent, although it should be noted that the distinctive sunken floor in the Dining Room would be retained as part of the proposed works.

- *First Floor Alterations*

It is considered that the removal of the first-floor bathroom and its associated partitions immediately to the S of Bedroom 2 would not impact upon fabric of historic interest. The bathroom appears to be a 20th century insertion (created out of the S portion of the original Bedroom 2) and the associated stud-wall partitions appear to be of modern date. The consequent restoration of Bedroom 2 to its original extent is to be welcomed.

It appears that the existing partition wall between the bathroom and Bedroom 3 is likely to be a 20th century insertion and thus its removal (together with the modern wardrobes) to create a link between these two rooms is unlikely to impact upon fabric of historic interest.

Bedroom 3, in its present form, has already been subject to a degree of modern alteration, in particular the insertion of a boiler room which has truncated the NW corner of the original bedroom. However, it does retain features of interest, including exposed timber-framing in the N and E walls and a blocked mullion window. The subdivision of Bedroom 3 with the insertion of a stud partition wall to create a new bathroom and dressing room would result in a further change to the plan form of this room. It will be critically important to ensure that the insertion of the new partition wall does not impact on surviving features of historic interest in this room, in particular the exposed timber-framing and blocked mullioned window in the E wall.

- *Glazed Link from Farmhouse to East Stable*

It is proposed to construct a single storey glazed link extending from the W gable end of the farmhouse to the S end of the East Stable. The glazed link itself is appropriately low in height and subordinate to the farmhouse and the stable; however, as part of the proposed works, it is intended to insert a doorway in the W gable wall of the house in place of an existing casement window at ground floor level.

While this casement window has evidently been renewed, its location is evidently historic and there is no documentary or structural evidence to indicate the former presence of a door in this location. It is thus considered that its removal could impact on historic fabric and it is thus respectfully suggested that consideration is given to relocating the entrance to this link from the farmhouse, utilizing an existing door opening if possible.

6.2.2 Barn and attached outbuildings at Rye End Farm

- *Conversion of the Barn*

With regard to the conversion of large, tall structures such as threshing barns, it is particularly important to retain the open aspect of its interior which is an important element of its historic character, with subdivisions kept to a minimum (Historic England 2017, 30). Based on the design drawings supplied, it is considered that the proposed conversion of the barn into a lounge with kitchenette and shower room (with mezzanine above) at its W end represents a largely sympathetic approach which respects the historic character of the building and also, importantly, secures its long-term preservation.

The majority of the Barn will be occupied by a large lounge which will maintain the open, spacious character of the interior. The compartment containing the kitchenette and shower room with mezzanine above will occupy the W end of the barn which has historically been clearly demarcated from the rest of the building with a chaff room at ground level and grain loft above. The presence of the loft provides an important historical precedent for the insertion of a mezzanine floor in this location.

The insertion of a glazed screen in the former N entrance of the Barn and a pair of glazed bi-fold doors in the opposite S-facing opening will help to maintain the historic open character of this important central space within the Barn, where the threshing floor would have been located. It is proposed to remove the existing brick cobbled and concrete floor and install a new floor with an underfloor heating system. Much of the brick cobbled floor within the interior of the barn has survived relatively intact (which attests to its former historic agricultural usage) and it is suggested that the remaining cobbling could either be retained beneath the proposed new floor surface or possibly salvaged and re-used as part of the new flooring.

It is considered, however, that the proposed insertion of a hearth and brick chimney at the W end of the lounge would not be in keeping with the historic agricultural character of the barn and could possibly impact upon the 17th century queenpost roof structure which is the most important feature of this Grade II listed barn. Two doorways are proposed to be inserted in the SE and SW corners of the Barn to accommodate the glazed links to the East and West Stables; it is suggested that the insertion of new openings should be avoided where at all possible and existing openings should be utilised, if feasible.

It may be noted that late 19th/early 20th century maps show a narrow outbuilding extending along the full length of the S elevation of the Barn, between the East and West Stables.

- *The West Stables & Piggery*

The conversion of the West Stables into accommodation is considered, in most respects, to be largely sympathetic to the character of the existing building and ensures the long-term preservation of a building which is in a state of some disrepair.

The new glazed door and windows in the E-facing elevation will make use of existing openings, thereby largely preserving the external utilitarian appearance of the stable block; it should be noted that no new windows are proposed for the rear (W-facing) elevation which is largely devoid of fenestration. Conservation standard rooflights are to be inserted, flush with the roof slope, to provide additional lighting for the bedrooms, which are certainly to be preferred to dormers in this instance.

The removal of most of the existing stable partitions to create the bedrooms and dressing rooms will result in the creation of much larger spaces within the building and will thus significantly alter the internal layout of the stable block. However, it may be noted that the new internal partitions proposed for the bathroom within the central part of the building roughly occupy the same position as the existing partitions of the central stable compartment. The 19th century open truss roof structure within the weatherboarded range and the distinctive late 18th century pyramidal roof structure within the brick stable block at the S end of the range will be renewed and retained.

However, it may be argued that the continuous glazed link which is proposed to extend S of the Barn along the majority of the E-facing elevation of the West Stables, in its current form, is too large and over-domesticates the appearance of this range, detracting from its historic character and appearance as a utilitarian outbuilding. The external weatherboarding is considered to be a distinctive feature of traditional farm outbuildings (especially in the SE of England) and should remain clearly visible.

It is thus suggested that the glazed link should be reduced in size and should be subservient in character and scale to the adjacent stable block and Barn. Substantial glazed extensions to traditional farm buildings are considered by Historic England, in their latest guidance on the adaptation of traditional farm buildings, to be overtly domestic in character and rarely work successfully in this context (Historic England 2017, 37).

It should be noted however that there is historical precedent, as shown on late 19th century/20th century mapping, for a lean-to outbuilding aligned E-W and attached to the S front of the Barn and this may provide some valuable guidance for the design and scale of an appropriate extension in this location.

- *The East Stables*

The proposed conversion of the East Stables into a games room is considered to be broadly sympathetic to character of the existing mid-19th century stable range and will preserve a structure which has already fallen into a dilapidated condition and is in need of extensive remedial works (as evidenced by the partially collapsed roof at the S end of the building).

The fenestration of the W-facing elevation of the stable block will largely remain intact although it is proposed to replace two of the stable doors with glazed window openings. Internally, two of the internal stable partitions would be removed to create a larger space, which would detract from its original layout, although the brick partition wall defining the S bay of the stable range would remain partially intact.

It is also proposed to remove the segmental arched window at the S gable end of the stable block and insert a doorway which would lead to the farmhouse via the single-storey glazed link. It is therefore suggested, with reference to Historic England guidelines, that consideration should be given to using one of the existing door openings in the W-facing elevation, if possible, rather than inserting a new opening.

With regard to the proposed single-storey glazed link running NW-SE and connecting the East Stables to the Barn, it is worth noting that there is historical precedent for a small rectangular N-S aligned lean-to structure, first shown on the OS 3rd edition map of 1922, between the NW corner of the East Stables and the E end of the Barn, the remains of which are still clearly visible today. It may be that a glazed link on the footprint of this rectangular structure would be more in keeping with the historic character of both the East Stables and the Barn, rather than the diagonal glazed extension which is currently proposed.

In terms of the impact of the proposed scheme on the overall external appearance and setting of the Farmhouse and the adjacent Barn and Outbuildings, it is considered that the several glazed links which are currently proposed between the Farmhouse and East Stables and between the Barn and the East and West Stables could cumulatively result in an overly domestic appearance to the setting of these heritage assets, which need to retain their distinct historic character as traditional vernacular farm buildings.

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8 Bibliography

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1619: Mortgage of messuage and water mill called Rye End in Knebworth and a cottage and land at Rye End in Kimpton (HALS Ref. DE/K/22871).

1629: Grant of Rye End Mill to Sir William Lytton of Knebworth House (HALS Ref. DE/K/23375)

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(Local trade directories and newspaper records were consulted using records held at Hertfordshire Archives & Local Studies)

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9 Cartography & Aerial Photography

(All maps were obtained from Hertfordshire Archives & Local Studies unless otherwise stated):

Early 18th century (undated): Map of the Kimpton Hoo Estate

1766: Andrews and Dury's Map of Hertfordshire

1810: Ordnance Survey Surveyor's Drawing of Hitchin and District

1837: Kimpton tithe map and apportionment

1881 - OS 1st Edition 25-Inch Survey of Hertfordshire

1897 - OS 2nd Edition 25-Inch Survey of Hertfordshire

1922 - OS 3rd Edition 25-Inch Survey of Hertfordshire

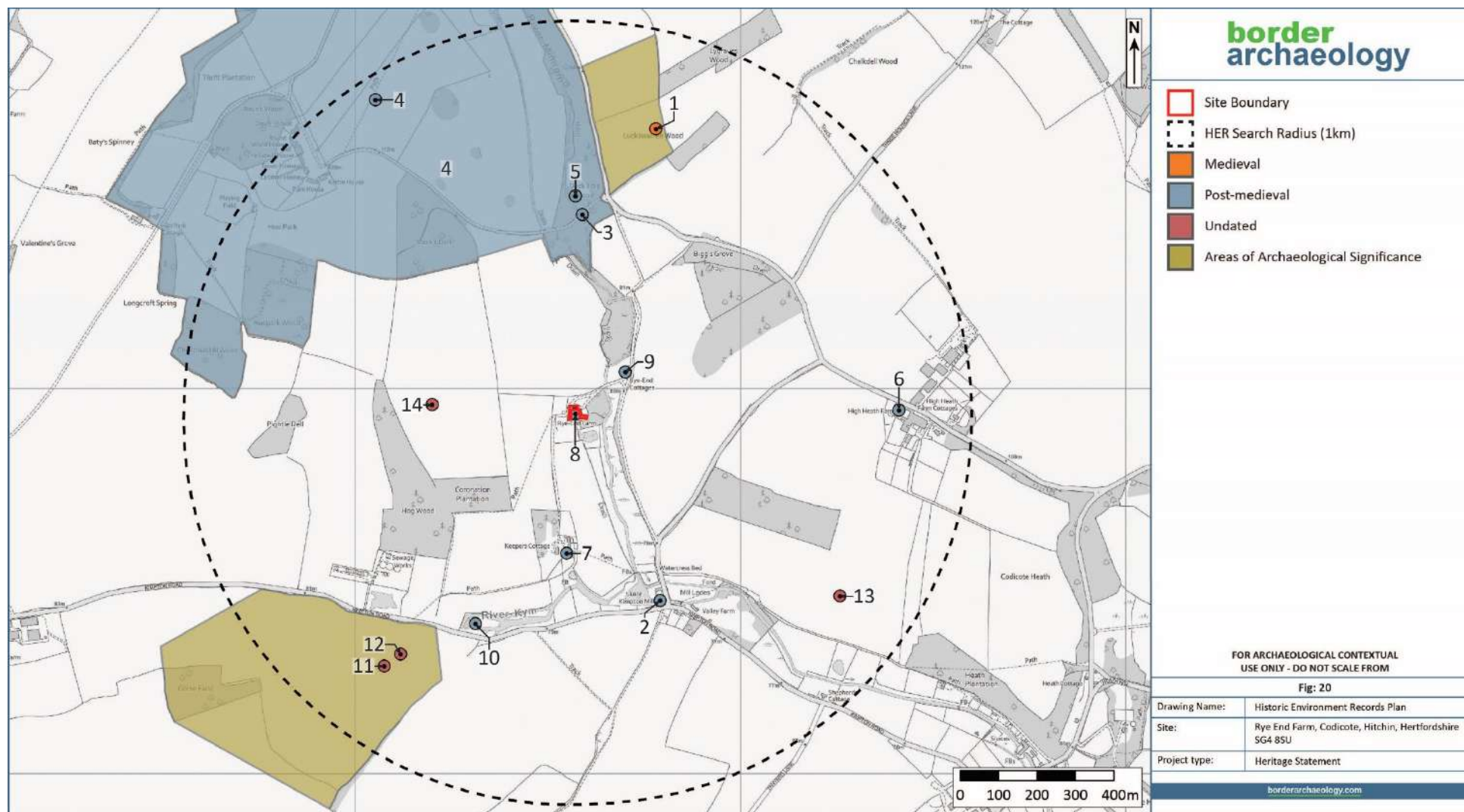
1973– OS National Survey 1:2500 map

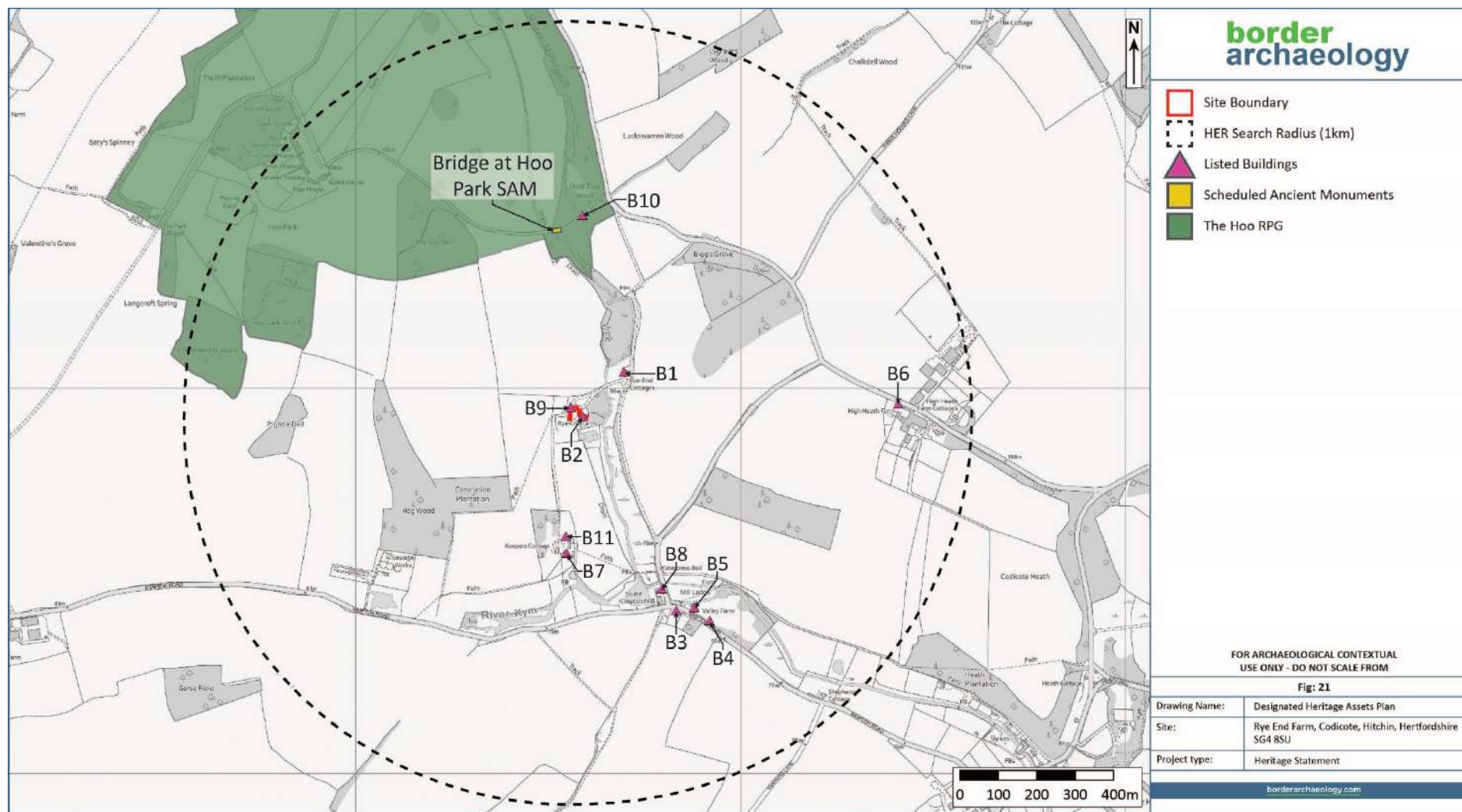
10 Appendix 1: Gazetteer and Plan of Archaeological Monuments and Historic Buildings within a 500m radius of NGR TL 19588 18929

#	PrefRef	Name	Date	NGR
1	18370	Cropmarks of Ridge & Furrow, Luckswarren Wood, Hoo Park	Medieval	TL 1977 1967
2	5797	Kimpton Mill	Post-med.	TL 1979 1845
3	5995	Bridge, Hoo Park	Post-med.	TL 1958 1945
4	7330	The Hoo	Post-med.	TL 1900 1973
5	10553	Flight Pond/Duck Decoy, Duck Trap Wood, The Hoo	Post-med.	TL 1957 1950
6	18541	High Heath Farm, Codicote Heath	Post-med.	TL 2041 1894
7	30972	The Bothy, Rye End	Post-med.	TL 1954 1857
8	30973	Rye End Farm, Rye End	Post-med.	TL 1957 1893
9	30974	Rye End Cottages, Rye End	Post-med.	TL 1969 1904
10	30975	Site of Watercress Beds & 'Kime Head' Spring	Post-med.	TL 1931 1839
11	7935	Cropmark of a Linear Ditch	Undated	TL 1907 1828
12	7936	Cropmark of a Large Amorphous Feature	Undated	TL 1911 1831
13	18367	Cropmarks of Amorphous Cut Features & Anomalies, Cadicote Heath	Undated	TL 2025 1846
14	18368	Cropmarks of Pits & Cut Features, Hog Wood	Undated	TL 1919 1895

Table 1: Gazetteer of Archaeological Monuments

#	National Ref	Name	Date	NGR
B1	1102766	Rye End Cottages (GII)	C16-C17	TL 1969 1904
B2	1295870	Rye End Farmhouse (GII)	C16-C17	TL 1958 1892
B3	1102812	Barn at Valley Farm Adj. River Keeper's Cottage (GII)	C17	TL 1983 1842
B4	1173710	Small Barn, Shed & Flint Wall at Valley Farm (GII)	C17	TL 1991 1839
B5	1347282	Valley Farmhouse (GII)	C17	TL 1987 1843
B6	1102835	Barn on W Side of Farmyard at High-Heath Farm (GII)	C17-C18	TL 2040 1896
B7	1295834	The Bothy (GII)	C17-C18	TL 1954 1857
B8	1347294	Kimpton Mill & Adj. Barns (GII)	C17-C18	TL 1979 1848
B9	1102759	Barn & Attached Outbuildings Rye End Farmhouse (GII)	C17-C19	TL 1955 1895
B10	1102437	Bridge in Hoo Park on East Drive, 60m from Road (GII)	C18	TL 1958 1945
B11	1102760	Granary at the Bothy (GII)	C19	TL 1954 1861





Document Title		Document Ref	
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