

**Warren Farm,
Aldworth, West Berkshire**

**Building Recording
For Chesterman Commercial Holdings Limited**

by Clare Challis
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code WFA 04/76a

June 2005

Summary

Site name: Warren Farm, Aldworth, West Berkshire

Grid reference: SU 5485 8165

Site activity: Building Recording

Date and duration of project: 14th January – 1st March 2005

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site code: WFA 04/76a

Summary of results: A farmhouse and two barns were photographically recorded

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at the West Berkshire Museum in due course. A copy of the report will also be sent to the National Monuments Record in Swindon

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Preston 30/06/05 Jennifer Lowe 08/07/05
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Warren Farm, Aldworth, West Berkshire Building Recording

by Clare Challis

Report 04/76a

Introduction

This report documents the results of building recording at Warren Farm, Aldworth, West Berkshire (SU 5485 8165) (Fig. 1 and 2). The work was commissioned by Mr J. Sprately of Sprately and Woodfield, Overy Farm, Dorchester-on-Thames, Oxfordshire, OX10 7JU on behalf of Chesterman Commercial Holdings Limited.

Planning consents (04/00382/FUL & 04/00383/FUL) have been granted by West Berkshire Council for conversion and redevelopment work at the farm. It is proposed to construct a new residence and garages following demolition of the existing building along with conversion of redundant farm buildings. The consents are subject to conditions which require photographic recording of the house and farm buildings subject to redevelopment or demolition.

This is in accordance with the Department of the Environment's Planning Policy Guidance, *Planning and the Historic Environment* (PPG15 1994), and the Council's policies on the historic built environment. The fieldwork was undertaken by Steve Ford between 14th January and 1st March 2005 and the site code is WFA 04/76.

The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at West Berkshire Museum. A copy of the report will also be sent to the National Monuments Record in due course.

A watching brief also required as part of the planning consent has been reported on separately (Challis 2005).

Location, topography and geology

Aldworth is located on the Berkshire Downs to the west of Goring and the Thames Valley. Warren Farm lies on the outskirts of Aldworth to the north-west of the centre of the village (Figs 1 and 2). The site lies at approximately 183m above Ordnance Datum, on a boundary between upper chalk and clay with flints (BGS 1980).

Archaeological Background

The settlement of Aldworth forms part of the Compton Hundred and has been known as *Alderworthe* and *Aldwicke* signifying the ‘old town’. In Domesday Book it is spelt *Elleorde* which is the corruption of two Saxon words meaning ‘ancient’ and ‘worth’ which is the term for a place of habitation (Hewett 1844).

The earliest cartographic sources showing the site area in detail are the Tithe map of 1840 (Fig. 3) and First Edition of the Ordnance Survey of 1877 (Fig. 4). Three of the structures shown on the Tithe Map correspond in position and general dimensions with the structures recorded here although it is not clear if the structures are one and the same or have been rebuilt on the same footprints. The map of 1877 and that of 1912 (not illustrated) show a very similar layout suggesting that they are in fact the same structures as those depicted in 1840.

Methodology

The structure has been recorded photographically on 35mm format using colour print, colour slide and black and white media (Appendix 1).

Description

Warren Farm is a farm complex where the farmhouse is detached from the farm buildings which form a small courtyard (Fig. 5). Other outlying buildings of modern block construction include those that recently housed chickens. Those subject to the planning conditions are the farmhouse, to be demolished, and two barns to be converted to residential use.

The Farmhouse

The farmhouse is constructed of red brick which has tile hanging with brick underbuild. The house was originally two cottages, as is apparent from the north-west elevation as this shows the building’s symmetry (Fig. 6) (Plate 1). This elevation also indicates that the two cottages form one building which is one storey with two two-storey wings. The south-east elevation shows that three gabled dormer windows inserted to allow more light enable the second storey to be utilized throughout the house and not just in these wings. A single storey extension has been added to the south-western wing and weather boarded lean-to added at both ends. Windows in the south-east elevation are all made of wood and are square; four examples in the north-west elevation are square with segmental arched heads in brick (Fig. 6). The roof is tiled and there are three brick chimney stacks, one has two pots (Pl. 2).

A cellar was present beneath the kitchen at the eastern end of the structure.

Barns A and B

These two barns lie at right angles to one another and to the south-east of the main farmhouse (Fig. 5) (Pl. 3). They are both timber framed structures with horizontal timbers resting on brick plinths (Pl. 4). Both barns are of aisled construction, a central aisle with one aisle on either side. Barn A is smaller in size and comprised of three bays, Barn B is constructed of five bays divided by timber posts. The sides and roofs of both barns probably would originally have been weather boarded or tiled, however, later modernization sees the roofs covered with corrugated metal and some walls replaced with concrete blocks. The aisled barns both have additions to their original structures, possibly from the change or expansion of farming use. These are constructed with concrete blocks and bricks with timber roofs to match those existing. The main purpose of aisled barns were the processing and storage of sheaves with the central bay acting as the threshing floor and the remaining bays used for storage (Brunskill 1992). The roof has a half-hipped end and a gabled porch enabling the extension of the threshing floor.

Conclusion

Aisled barns were constructed in the eastern and south-eastern counties of England from the 14th century through to the early 19th century (Brunskill 1999). The examples identified during the building recording at Warren Farm are of unknown original date but from the cartographic study are likely to be earlier than the mid 19th century, but not necessarily much earlier. They have 20th-century additions and modernizations. The farmhouse is late 19th/20th century in date and may have replaced an earlier building.

References

- BGS, 1980, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50,000, Sheet 254, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth
- Brunskill, R. W, 1992, *Traditional Buildings of Britain*, London
- Brunskill, R. W, 1999, *Traditional Farm Buildings of Britain and their conservation*, London
- Challis, C, 2005, 'Warren Farm, Aldworth, West Berkshire; An Archaeological Watching Brief', TVAS report 04/76
- Hewett, W Jnr, 1844, *The History and Antiquities of the Hundred of Compton, Berkshire*, Reading
- PPG 15, 1994, *Planning and the Historic Environment*, Dept of the Environment Planning Policy Guidance 15, HMSO

Appendix 1. Photographic Catalogue

a. Colour Prints

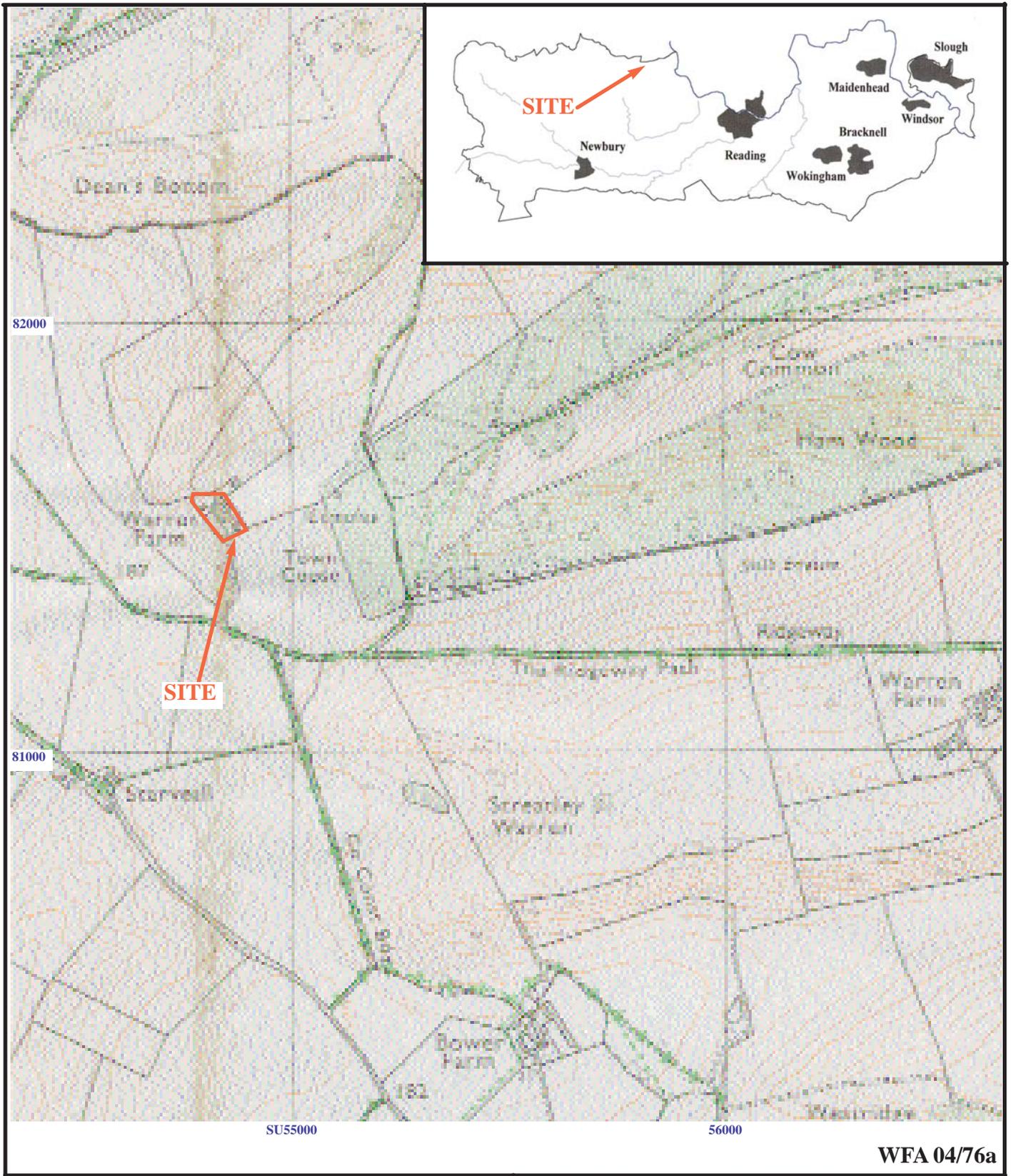
No.	Description
1	Barns, looking north
2	Barns, looking north
3	Barns, looking north, 1x2.0m
4	Barns, looking north, 1x2.0m
5	Barn entrance
6	Barn entrance
7	Horizontal timbers resting on wall
8	Horizontal timbers resting on wall
9	Timber structure of barn
10	Timber structure of barn
11	Block and brick wall of barn
12	Side elevation of farmhouse
13	Looking across the front of the farmhouse
14	South-east elevation of farmhouse
15	Internal elevation of farmhouse
16	Internal elevation of farmhouse, sink
17	Internal ceiling and painted brick wall
18	South-east elevation of farmhouse

b. Colour Slide

No.	Description
1	Outside of barn
2	Outside of barn
3	Outside of barn
4	Outside wall of barn
5	Internal timbers of barn
6	Internal timbers of barn
7	Outside of barn
8	Outside of barn

c. Monochrome Images

No.	Description
18	Outside of barn
19	Outside of barn
20	Outside of barn
21	Corner of barn, brick and block work
22	Roof of barn
23	Elevation of side of barn
24	Removal of weatherboarding to reveal wall timbers



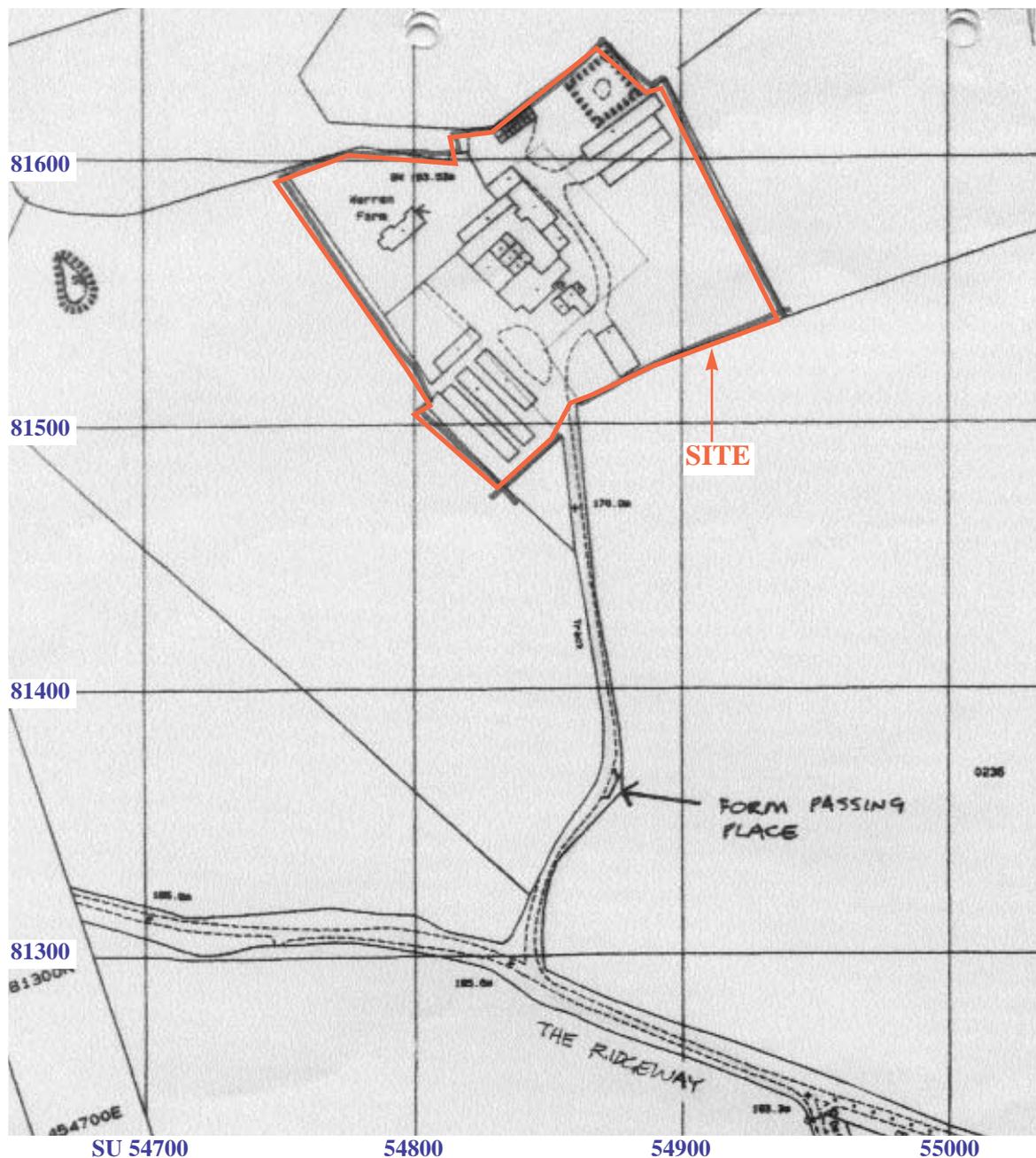
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Figure 1. Location of site within Aldworth and West Berkshire.

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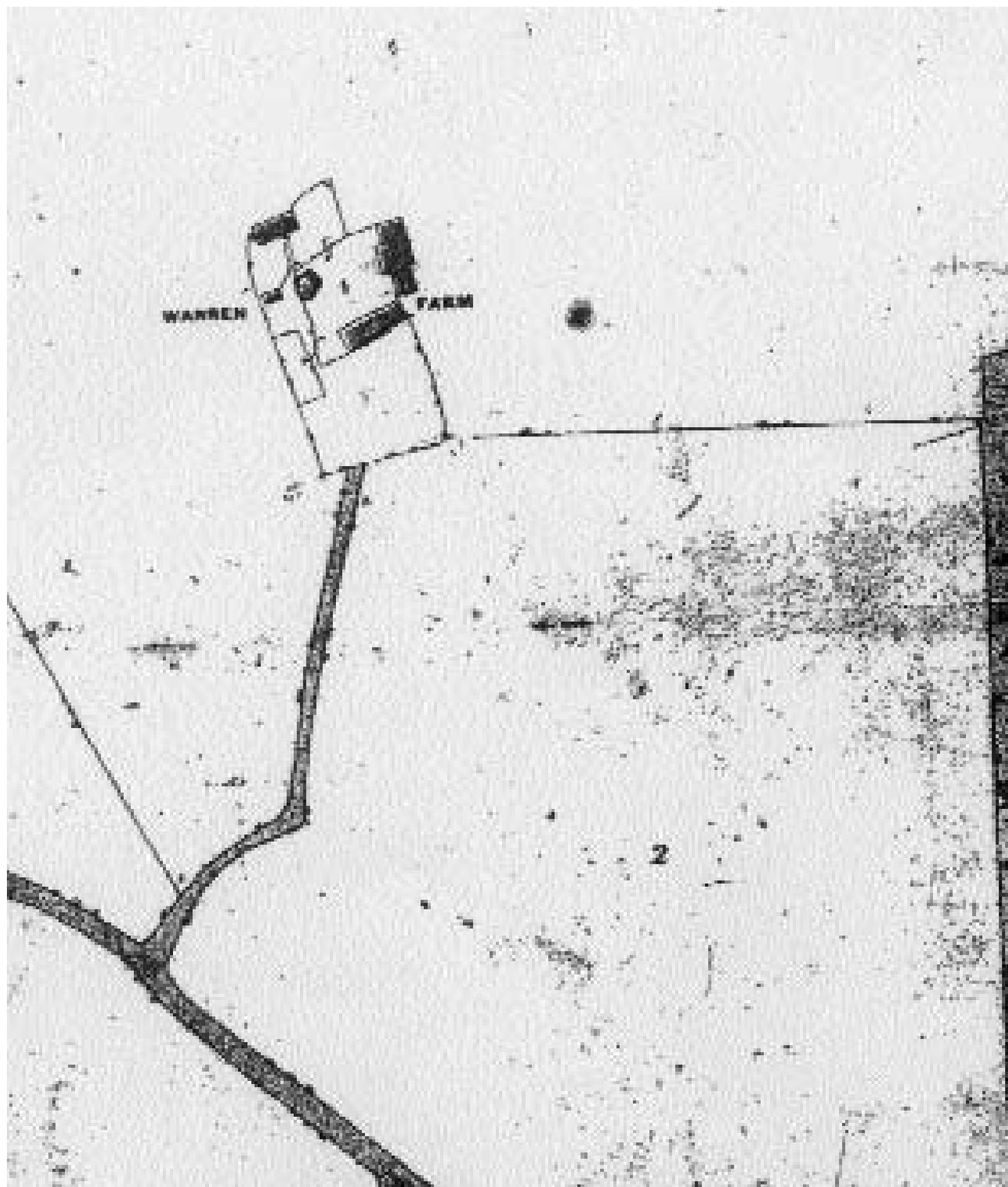
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Figure 2. Plan of site.

Scale: 1:2500

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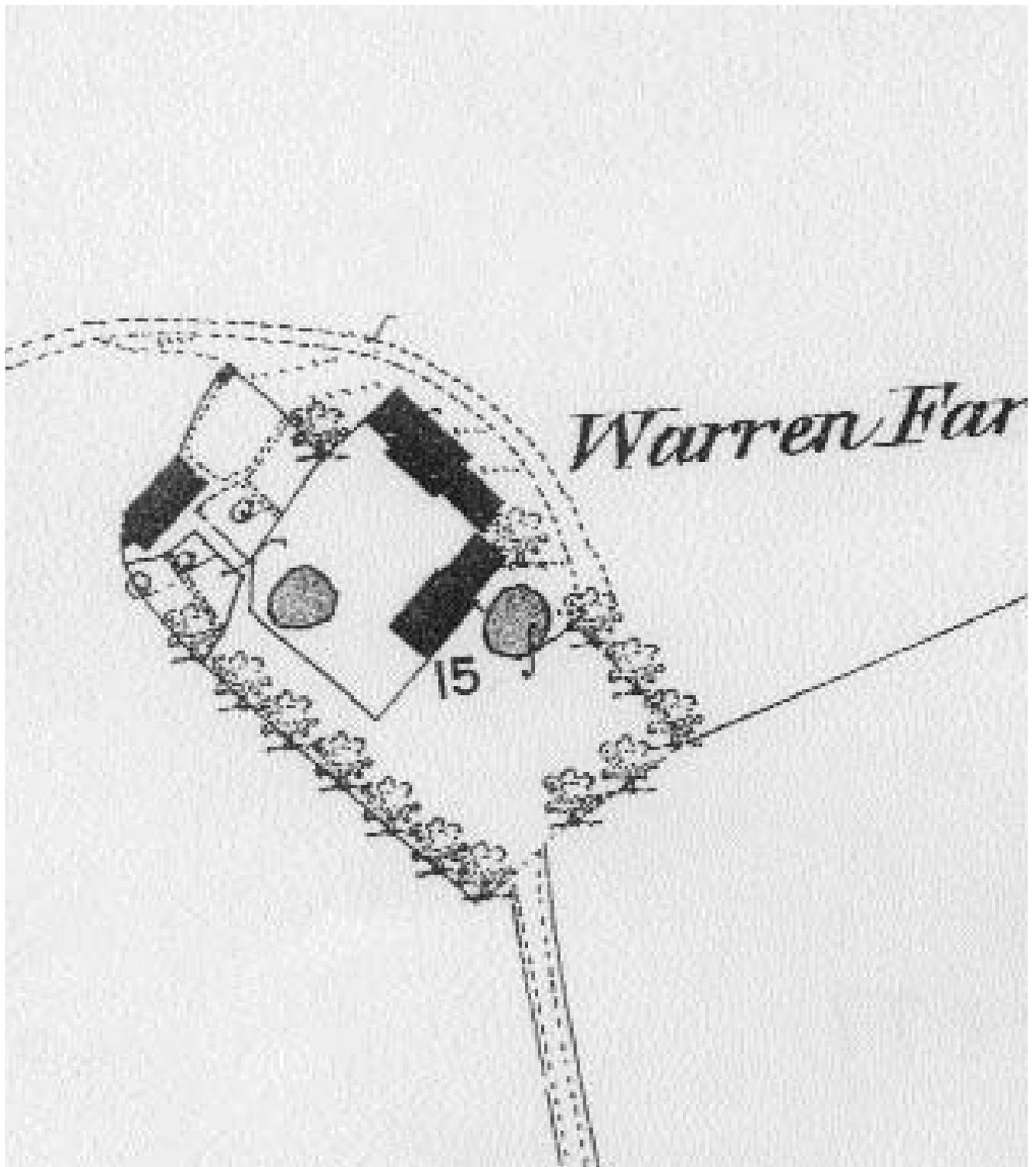


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Figure 3. Aldworth Tithe map 1840.

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Figure 4. First Edition Ordnance Survey 1877.

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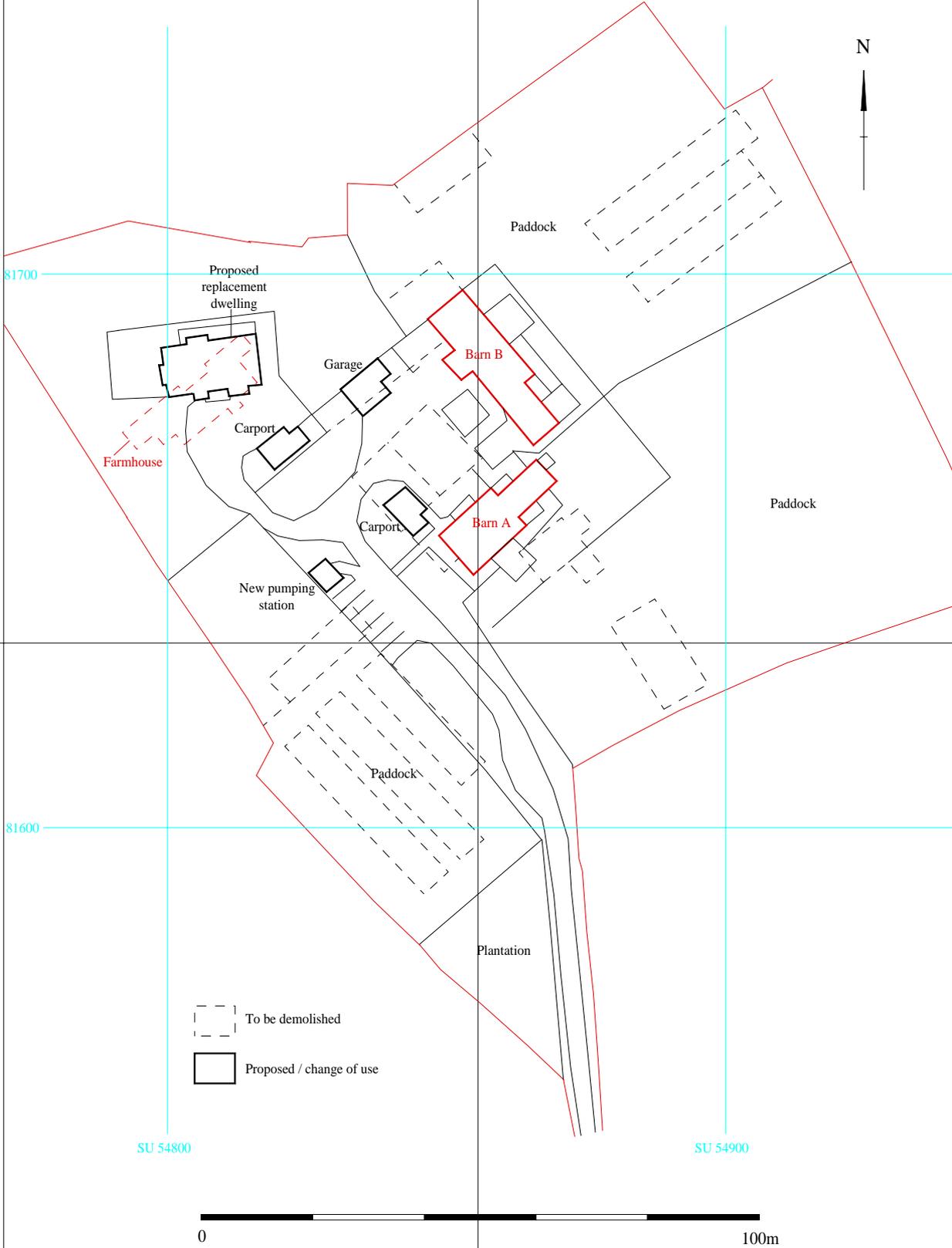
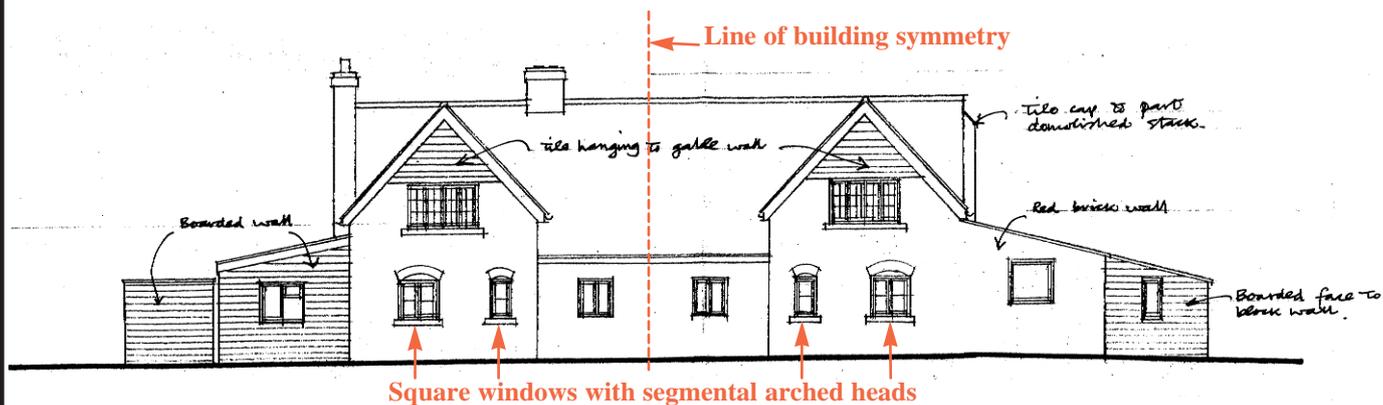
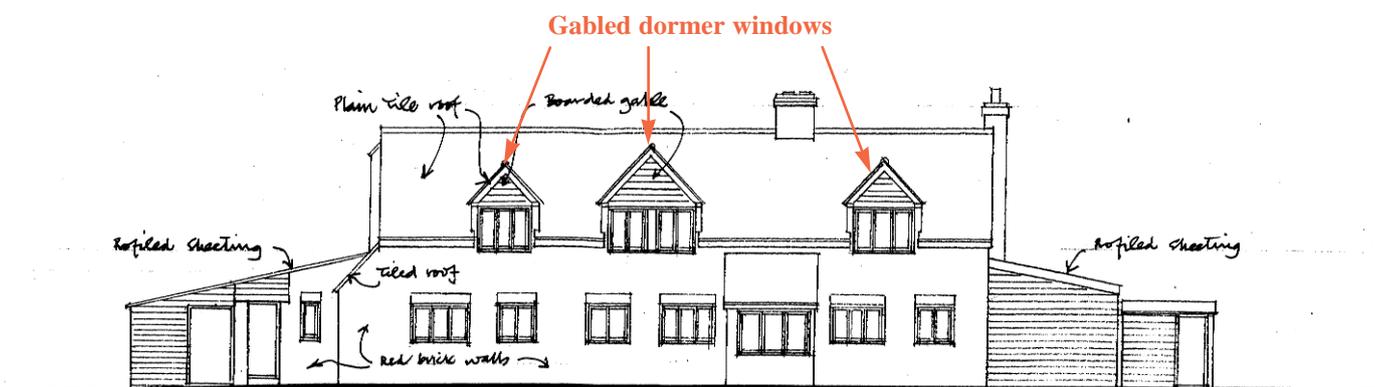


Figure 5. Plan showing location of observed buildings

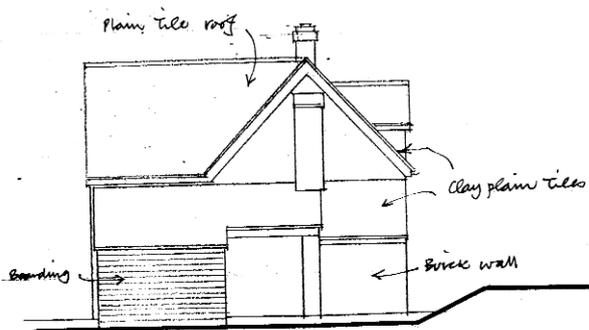
North-West Elevation



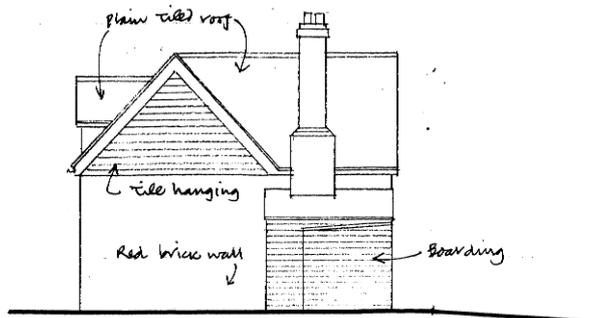
South-East Elevation



South-West End



North-East End



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Figure 6. External elevations of farmhouse

Scale: 1:200

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Plate 1. South-east facing elevation



Plate 2. North-east facing elevation



Plate 3. Barns A and B, looking north



Plate 4. Horizontal timber resting on brick plinth