

Ashridge Farm, Warren House Road, Wokingham RG40 5QB
Historic recording of the farmyard buildings. Surveyed 30 06 2016.



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2006 Google earth. Location of Ashridge Farm.



2006 Google earth. Detail of the site showing the buildings under study.

Location

Ashridge Farm, Warren House Road, Wokingham RG40 5QB. The farmyard lies to the north of Warren House Road on the sharp bend. The Listed Barn (1) is at NGR: SU8139769725.

Scope of this Report

This report examines the fabric of six farm buildings that make up the farmyard at Ashridge Farm. These are:

1. Timber-framed Barn modernly called the Potato Barn as it was used to store and sell potatoes.
2. Processing Shed. Modernly used to process potatoes. Built originally as a shelter.
3. Timber-framed Workshop. Built as stables and shelters but last used to house machinery.
4. Brick Barn. Brick built barn with machined timber roof.
5. Brick Stables. Designed as a horse stables.
6. Timber-framed Stables. Last used as tack room, workshop and garage.

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The other C20th outbuildings are recorded photographically in Appendix 2.

The report adheres to English Heritage Level 3 as outlined in English Heritage. Understanding Historic Buildings – A guide to good recording practice. 2006. Page 14.

Listing

The Timber-framed Barn is Listed. The House, which is not part of the property and was not examined, is also Listed. (See Appendix 1).

WOKINGHAM WARREN HOUSE ROAD

SU 86 NW

(North side)

10/22 Barn at Ashridge Farm,
south east of farmhouse

12.11.51

G.V. II

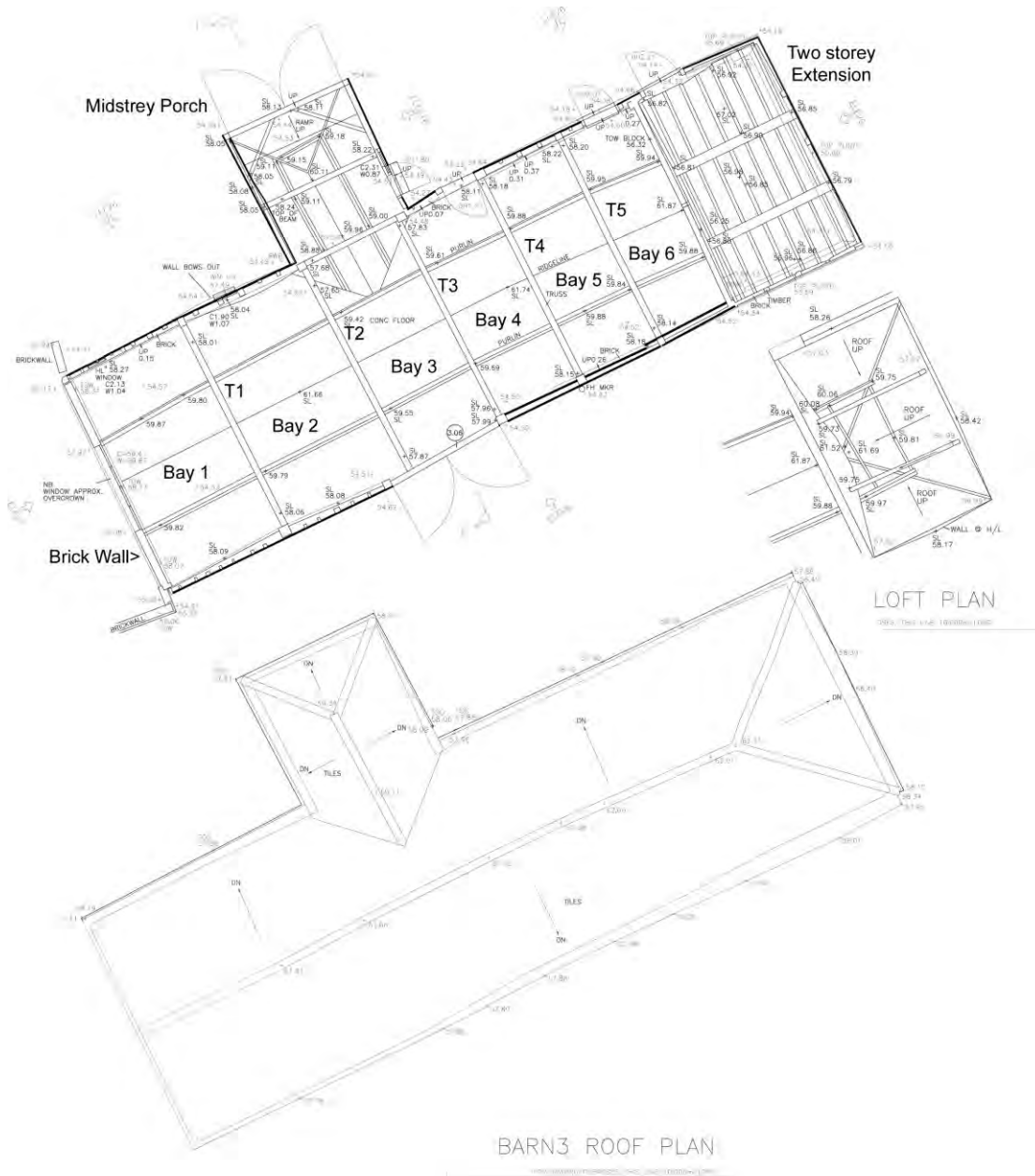
10/22

Threshing barn, now barn and farm shop. Late C16, extended C17. Timber framed and weather-boarded, part brick infill. Old tile roof, hipped on east, gabled and half hipped on west. 5 framed bays and one framed bay extension; midstrey in third bay frame west and on north side. Extension is floored and has brick infill and daub panels externally with a high sole plate, on an old brick plinth. Queen post roof with clasped purlins and reducing principal rafters. Some windbraces replaced.

Listing NGR: SU8139769725

SUMMARY SHEET

Site name/Address: Ashridge Farm, Warren House Road, Wokingham RG40 5QB.	
Parish: Wokingham	District: Wokingham
NGR: SU8139769725	Site Code: N/A
Type of Work: Historic Building Recording	Site Director/Team: Barry Hillman-Crouch
Date of Work: 30 06 2016.	Size of Area Investigated: 100x100m
Location of Finds/Curating Museum: N/A	Funding source: Owner
Further Seasons Anticipated?: No	Related EHER Nos:
Final Report: Ashridge Farm, Warren House Road, Wokingham RG40 5QB. Historic recording of the farmyard buildings. Surveyed 30 06 2016. Barry J Hillman-Crouch MStPA DipFA BSc HND.	
Periods Represented: C18th - C20th	
SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS: The House is believed to be C17th but was not examined as part of this project. The Timber-framed Barn was assembled c.AD1800 using the truss components of a C17th style barn and much reused timber from other buildings. It is principally made of elm rather than oak which may reflect a local industry. Originally erected with five unequal bays and an offset porch on the north side it would have been used as a threshing barn at a time when it was realised that the stored harvest needed more room than the gleaned grain. The Brick Barn and Brick Stables were built as a unit between 1838 and 1877 and the quality of the brickwork and the machine sawn softwood timbers indicates a date late in that range. In the same time bracket the Timber-framed Barn was extended, adding a bay to the western end and a two storey extension using a second-hand C17th frame at the other end. Between 1875 and 1899 the Workshop and Processing Shed were built as a combination of a new brick building and a reused timber-framed one, most likely moved from the middle of the site. In the same period the Timber Stables were added to the western end of the Brick Stable. This concluded the expansion of the farmyard until the late C20th when cow byres and a bull pen were added. The buildings changed in use but not in layout.	
Previous Summaries/Reports:	
Author of Summary: Barry J Hillman-Crouch MStPA DipFA BSc HND.	Date of Summary: 19 07 2016



2016. Plan of the Timber-framed Barn. Martin Pattie Architects.

Description – 1. Timber-framed Barn – External



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The southern elevation of the Timber-framed Barn. Looking NE.



The southern elevation of the later extension to the Timber-framed barn.

Southern Elevation

The southern elevation faces the road and presents six bays clad with LC20th bandsawn and circular sawn weather-boards fixed with French nails. At the eastern end is an extended bay under a fully hipped roof with box framing infilled with brick noggin and render and stood on a 4ft 6in tall brick plinth. The plinth contains 2in Tudor bricks and many patch repairs of EC19th and C20th bricks. The roof is clad in plain clay tiles and was last retiled in the early 1990's when an asphalt membrane was inserted. (Owner –pers comm).



The eastern elevation looking NW.



Detail of the C20th weather-boards and Tudor style bricks in the plinth.

Eastern Elevation

The eastern elevation has been clad with C20th weather-boards with clear bandsaw marks. Only a few older boards remain on the barn high up under the eaves. These are hot-tarred – a practice that only ended in the 1960's. They are fixed with wrought iron nails.



The western elevation of the Timber-framed Barn is made of brick.



Detail of the brickwork from inside.

Western Elevation

The western elevation has the timber-frame replaced in C18th style brickwork, now mostly hidden by a Virginia Creeper. On the outside the brickwork is laid in English bond in lime mortar recently repointed. On the inside the bricks can be seen to be red with many overfired headers of 70x110x225-230mm as well as 2in Tudor style bricks. The interior is not finished and the lime mortar hangs over in snots implying it was built against an earlier wall before it was removed. This end of the barn is gabled.



The Timber-framed Barn in context with the Farmhouse. Looking SW.



The northern elevation.

Northern Elevation

The northern elevation faces into the farmyard. The Barn has doorways for two stables with split stable doors which are lightweight C20th softwood doors. A single heavier C19th gate and ledger door remains near the porch but all of the other doors are MC20th hung on mild steel strap hinges screwed in place. The extended bay has a high level hatch door but the door is missing. There are two homemade casement windows. That above the main door has overlapping panes in the manner of a greenhouse and is likely to be LC19th or EC20th. The porch has a MC20th side door with a C20th casement above.

The porch doors are also MC20th copies in softwood and are hung on reversible hinges. The westernmost bay has been consumed by Virginia Creeper and hidden by brambles but there is a pair of two pane top hung MC20th casements high up in the frame.

Description – Internal



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The interior of the western extension.



Framed granary floor in the western extension. Looking NW.

The two storey extension to the west of the Barn has a fully framed floor with a pair of axial main joists with chamfers and cyma stops. The heavy common rafters are set on edge in the style of the EC17th. The wall is box framed with added interstitial studs that can be seen in the upper storey. The plinth is of Tudor style 2in bricks except in the northern wall where it has been quoined with EC19th bricks and has a large section of C20th Flettons.



The grain loft in the top of the western extension. Looking SE.



Looking up at the exterior wall of the Barn within the western extension.

The upper walls have added studs to support the weather-boards. The wall of the Barn has lath and plaster rendered box panels above hand hewn planks cut from round trunks. The top-plate has many round ended vacant mortices. The wall is shored with poles and it can be seen inside the Barn that the roof has been racked for a very long time. The roof above the granary is made from reused rafters, peppered with nail holes and some set on edge, the others on the flat. The granary floor can only be reached by ladder and there is no stair trap in the floor.



Looking E inside the Barn from the western end.



Looking W inside the Barn from the eastern end.

The Barn has 6 bays but it is immediately evident that Bay 1 (from the west) has been added. Truss 1 is morticed for studwork to form an end wall which has been removed to form the extra bay. The end wall is the brick wall described previously. The midstreys and porches are in Bay 3 giving an asymmetrical earlier building (i.e. the doors were not in the middle).

The walls are completely rebuilt with nailed, interrupted studwork or scantling studs. There are two sets of mortices. Curiously they are all round ended where they have been drilled but not cut square with a chisel to finish them.



The upper section of the western wall frame.



The upper section of the western wall frame.

The western wall frame common with the western extension appears to have been an open truss from an earlier structure that has been morticed for new studs with a large central post side nailed in place. An additional reinforcement has been nailed to the tie-beam and cill plate and a diagonal brace added. The plinth has been replaced with LC20th blockwork.



Wall frame in Bays 5 and 6, south side.



Wall frames in Bays 1 and 2, south side.

Very few of the 4-6in x 3-4in studs look as though they came from the earlier frame and the nailed studwork is of c.1800 in style and fabric. The 9x6in midrails, although more convincing in some bays where they are correctly pegged, are much more slender in others. Most of the timbers are grey with a reddish hue and are therefore elm – a characteristic that has been noted by several carpenter's while repairing the building. (Owner –pers comm).



The frame of Truss 1 showing the mortices for an end wall. Looking SE.



Truss 3 looking W.

The clasped side purlin roof is supported on five queen post trusses with cambered tie-beams with flat soffits. The 6-7inx3-4in flat rafters are paired with gussets and no ridgepiece. In places the queen posts are numbered with a race knife. The trusses have been altered by applying side nailed braces in place of the original curved and pegged spandrels of which only two appear original.



The trusses forming the midstorey. Note the displacement of the post. South doors.



Detail of the displaced storey post and tie-beam assembly.

Truss 2 storey post has been completely displaced. It appears the tie-beam is in its correct position while the storey post has been moved to increase the width of the double doors on the south side. The 10in square storey posts do not have jowls but rather are square posts, tapering upwards with upstands in the style of early medieval carpentry.



The northern side of the roof in Bay 3. Note the remnants of windbraces.

The roof has racked badly over the years and there are many inserted birdsmouthed struts and some C19th iron tie-rods put in to try to arrest the movement. There are remnants of four of the original curved windbraces that braced the principal rafters to the purlins but as they are only one inch thick they have otherwise failed. The roof was retiled in the 1990's and must therefore be braced through its battens.



The roof of the midstrey. Looking NW.



The frame visible on the western wall of the midstrey.

The hipped roof of the midstrey has a queen post truss that mimics that of the main Barn but all the elements are slender and set on edge. The rafters are pitsawn except for the jack rafters that have been machined. The walls have very widely spaced roughly hewn studs and principal posts. The porch has been added to the Barn frame and there is a ragged join where the weather-boards meet.



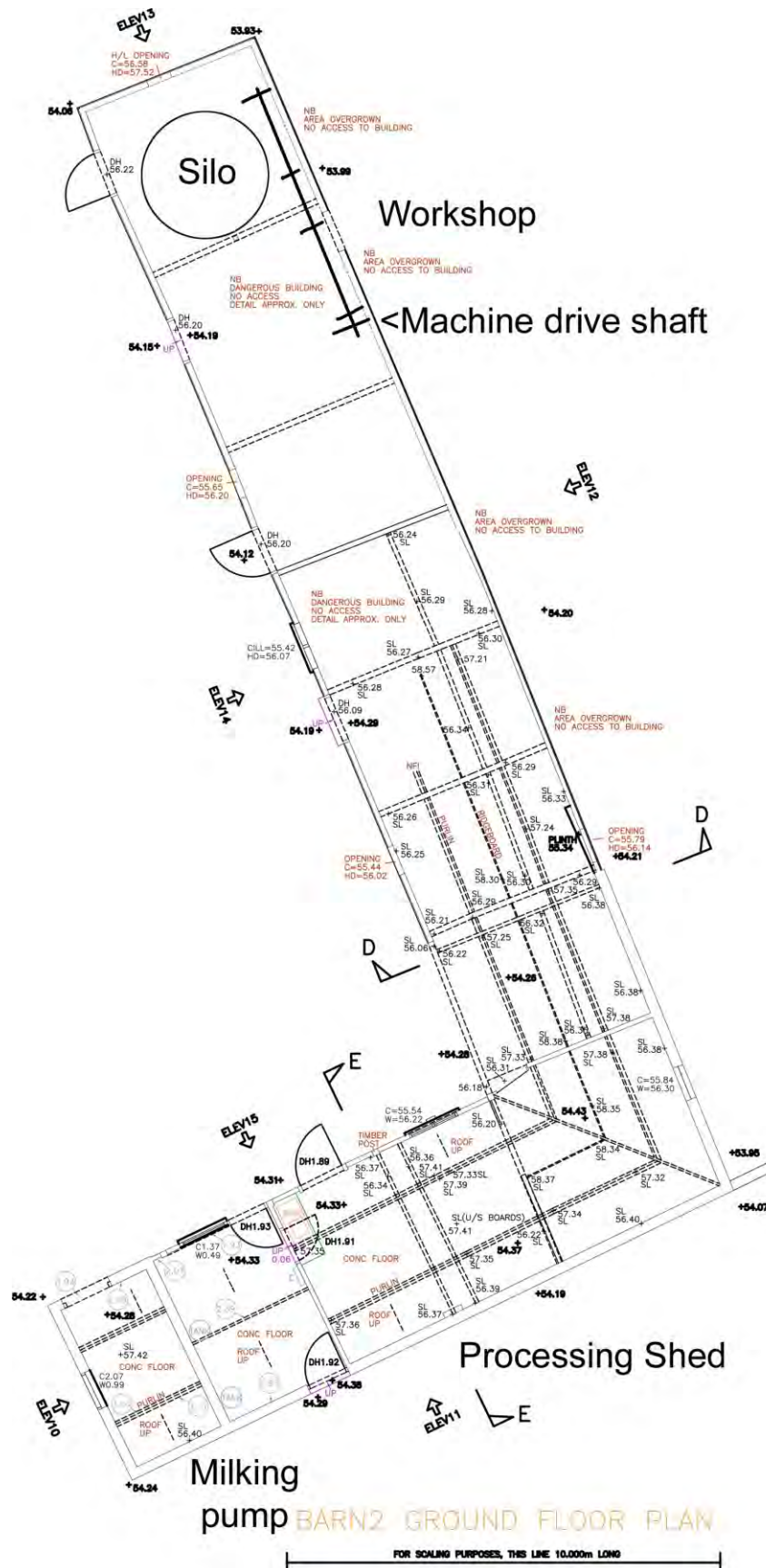
Kickboards lining the north wall.



Detail of the boards.

Fixtures and Fittings

The north wall of the Barn is lined with circular sawn boards fitted with tethering rings fixed with dome headed screws. It is evident the Barn was used to stable horses in the C20th but the boarding is LC19th in character.



2016. The Workshop and Processing Shed range. Martin Pattie Architects.

Description – 2. Processing Shed – External.



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The Processing Shed from the SW.



The southern elevation of the Processing Shed.

Western and Southern Elevations

The Processing Shed was most recently used to process and pack potatoes but it was also a milking shed. Formerly open sided on the north side until at least 1966 (OS maps) it is built of Victorian style 65x110x225mm wire cut bricks, with smooth faces, crisp arrises, horizontal pressure marks, kiss marks and no frogs. They are laid in Flemish bond in lime mortar. While the quoins are finished with queen closers the doors and windows have none and are therefore C20th insertions. All the doors are MC20th. The roof is clad with C20th double roman clay tiles.

The eastern end of the building has been subsumed by foliage.



The western and northern elevations.

Northern Elevation

The northern elevation has inserted C20th brickwork, doors and windows to form small offices. That closest to the entrance way still retains the pumping equipment for the milking machines.



Standing engine to run a milking machine.

Description – 2. Processing Shed – Internal.



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The pump room.



Cleaning Room.

The building is divided with an original brick partition to form the first room and the roof has original tongue and grooved boards. The second room is equipped with a hot water tank and sink for washing. Part of a milking machine frame remains attached to the wall. The Klinett is a modern pressure washer.



Processing and packing room. Sink and heater against the west wall.



Processing and packing room. Looking SE.

The partition walls are LC20th and the Processing Room is insulated with LC20th hardboard and plasterboard dated 08 09 02. The furniture, in particular the steel cabinets are 1960's and 1970's style. On the wall is a calendar for the year 2000.



The corner room appears outfitted as an office.



The roof structure in the corner room.

The roof structure is exposed in the corner room where it is constructed of 2x4in machined softwood rafters with narrow machined battens for the double roman tiles. The 3x7in ties support the clasped side purlin roof. The wall common with the Workshop is clad with LC19th weather-boards.

Description – 3. Timber-framed Workshop – External.



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The western elevation of the Workshop.



The northern half of the western elevation of the Workshop.



The southern half of the western elevation of the Workshop.



The northern and eastern elevations of the Workshop.



The eastern elevation of the Workshop.

The Workshop is in a parlous condition being supported by acroprops and large sections of it have been consumed by foliage. The building has timber-framed walls of 2x4in sawn softwood studs clad with C20th weather-boards. The casements are also MC20th and there is one basculating window of the type typically seen in Victorian era stable buildings. The doors and window glass are missing. The roof is clad with double roman tiles but the roof structure is E-MC19th in design and fabric.

Description – 3. Timber-framed Workshop – Internal.



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Looking N in the southernmost bay.



The roof structure in the southern half of the Workshop.

The Workshop has been formed by adjoining the Processing Shed with a LC19th timber link to a timber-frame with LC19th sawn softwood walls but an E-MC19th elm pitsawn roof structure with side purlins supported by raking struts. The southernmost bay has the common brick wall of the Processing Shed and a LC19th machine cut roof that meets the older roof at the first truss. Additional tie beams and struts have been added to improve the stability of the older roof of which many of the rafters are quarter poles.



Looking N in the northern room towards a steel grain silo.



The grain silo and a Bentall's crusher grinder.

The northern room is equipped with machinery to produce cattle food. There is a large MC20th sheet steel cylindrical grain silo with an electrically powered auger to draw the grain up for delivery into a Bentall's crusher grinder. This machine crushes the grain in rollers to convert it into cattle cake. Close by is a Wrekin root cutter, also used to produce cattle food.



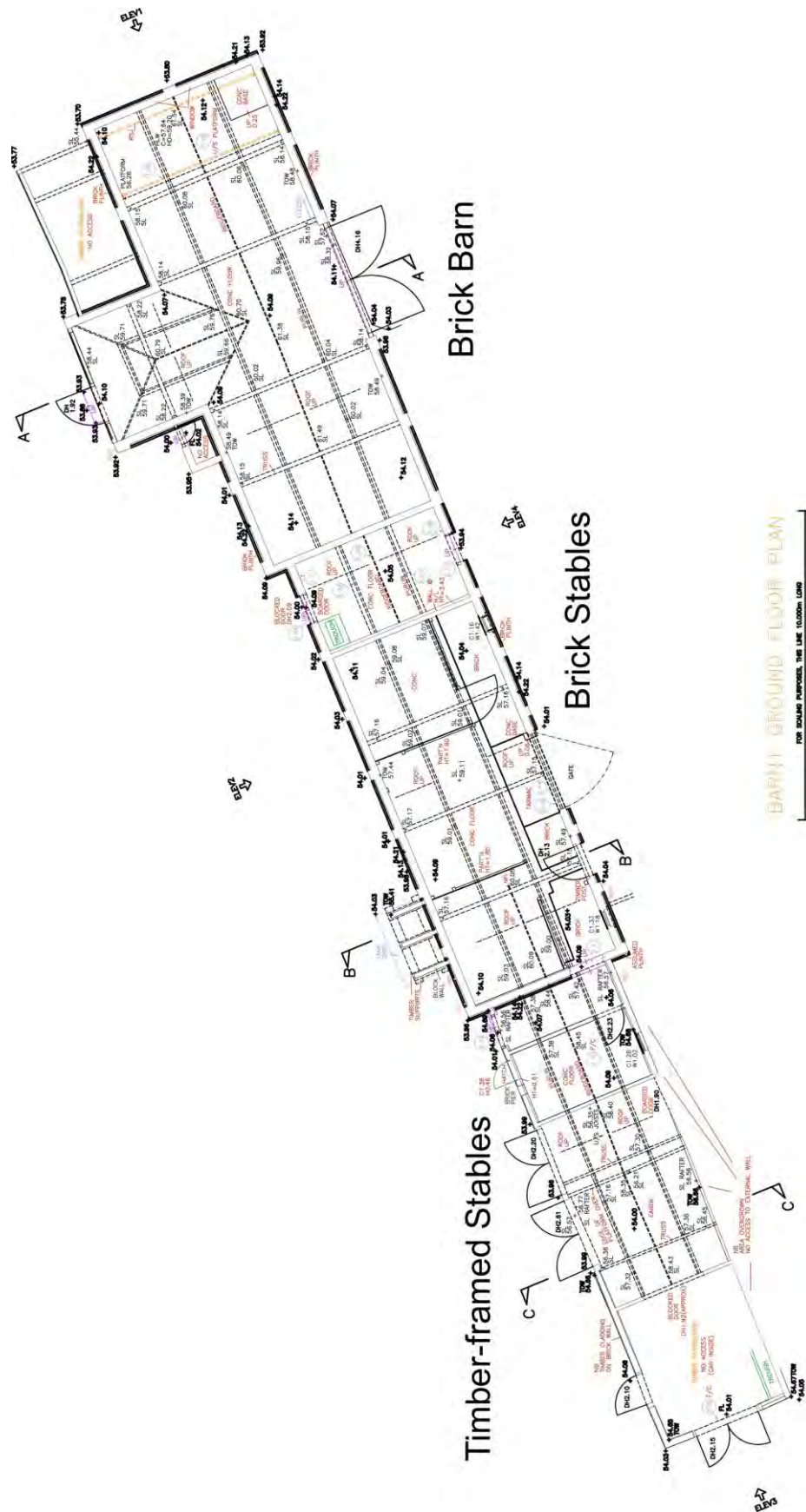
Detail of the hand driven Wrekin root (mangel) cutter. These are MC20th.



Machine drive shaft against the eastern wall.

Running along the eastern wall and hung from added tie-beams is a machine belt drive shaft of Victorian or Edwardian design. This would have been used to run workshop machinery with a small engine turning the shaft powering various machines. One such drilling machine is kept in the Brick Barn.

This part of the building is in parlous condition and the roof is collapsing due to the rotting of the main members.



2016. The Brick Barn, Brick Stables and Timber-framed Stables. Martin Pattie Architects.

Description – 4. Brick Barn – External.



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Oblique view from the NE of the Brick Barn.



The northern elevation of the Brick Barn.

Northern Elevation

The northern elevation presents a symmetrical brick built barn of five bays with an integrated brick porch under a half hipped clay tiled roof. The main roof is gabled at both ends and also clad with clay peg tiles. The pilastered walls are built of 70x110x225mm red bricks with creased faces, sharp arrises and horizontal pressure marks. They are set in lime mortar tempered with crushed stone, lain in Flemish bond with closers for the openings and the brick pilasters. The doors have been replaced with LC20th studs and boards.



The eastern elevation of the Brick Barn.



The interior of the timber shelter.

Eastern elevation

The eastern elevation presents a gabled brick wall with a high level hatch door hidden by foliage. On the northern side is a MC20th timber framed shelter built of bandsawn softwood with a corrugated sheet roof and MC20th weather-boarding. The doors have been lost.