

**An Archaeological Interpretative Survey of
Frenches, Mark Cross, Rotherfield, East Sussex**

**Supplementary Report on Farm Buildings To North Of House
Commissioned by Kember Loudon Williams Ltd
on behalf of R Godfrey, Esq.**

**Project Ref. 3437
Report No. 2008241**



by David Martin FSA IHBC MIFA & Barbara Martin AIFA

2008

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OF
FRENCHES, MARK CROSS,
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**Archaeology South-East
Institute of Archaeology
University College London**

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STANDING BUILDINGS

ARCHAEOLOGICAL INTERPRETATIVE SURVEYS

AN INTRODUCTORY NOTE

ABOUT THESE SURVEYS

The intended purpose of an *Archaeological Interpretative Survey* is to give an overview of the date, sequence of construction, and principal architectural features of a building. As such, they should not be regarded as a detailed archaeological record, nor should they be taken as definitive. Further research, particularly that undertaken during building works, is likely to refine and extend the archaeological record.

These reports are aimed at three groups of user, namely those owners who wish to know more about their property, those persons (architects and planners) who are charged with the responsibility for both conserving the buildings and ensuring that they are carefully adapted to the needs of the future, and finally the academic carrying out wider historical or archaeological research,. A secure use for the future is, in our opinion, the only way of ensuring the long-term survival of any historical building.

INVESTIGATIVE TECHNIQUE

Unless noted to the contrary, the assessments involve a visual inspection of the fabric, both internally and externally, including any accessible roof voids and basement areas. Except where building works are being carried out, intrusive techniques are inappropriate. Interpretation of the fabric and fittings therefore relies principally upon inspection of the visible evidence. As part of the interpretative procedure, a measured outline survey of every property is undertaken.

THE WRITTEN REPORT

For ease of reference the written reports are divided into sections under a series of headings and sub-headings. The typical sequence of headings is as follows:-

- 1 Location of the building.
- 2 Sequence of development.
- 3 Detailed architectural description, arranged period-by-period.

THE DRAWINGS

A set of drawings produced from an measured outline survey is included within the body of each report. The purpose of these drawings is to identify the features included within the written text and to illustrate, as far as is known, the form of the structure during its various stages of development. For clarity the drawings have been prepared in the form of scale 'sketches', rather than detailed archaeological record drawings. For reasons of economy, the making of detailed archaeological drawings is restricted to stripped-out or exceptionally important buildings.

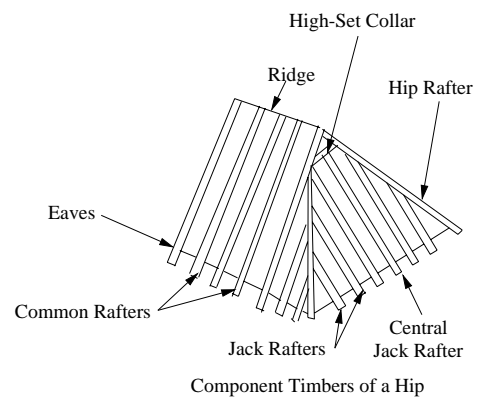
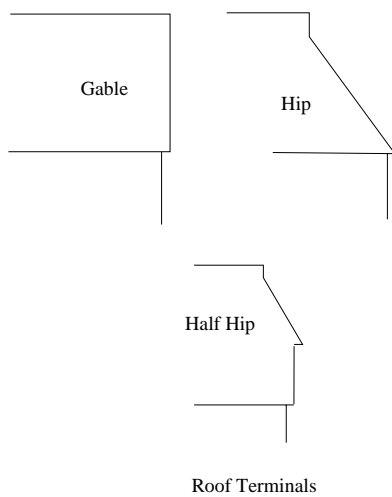
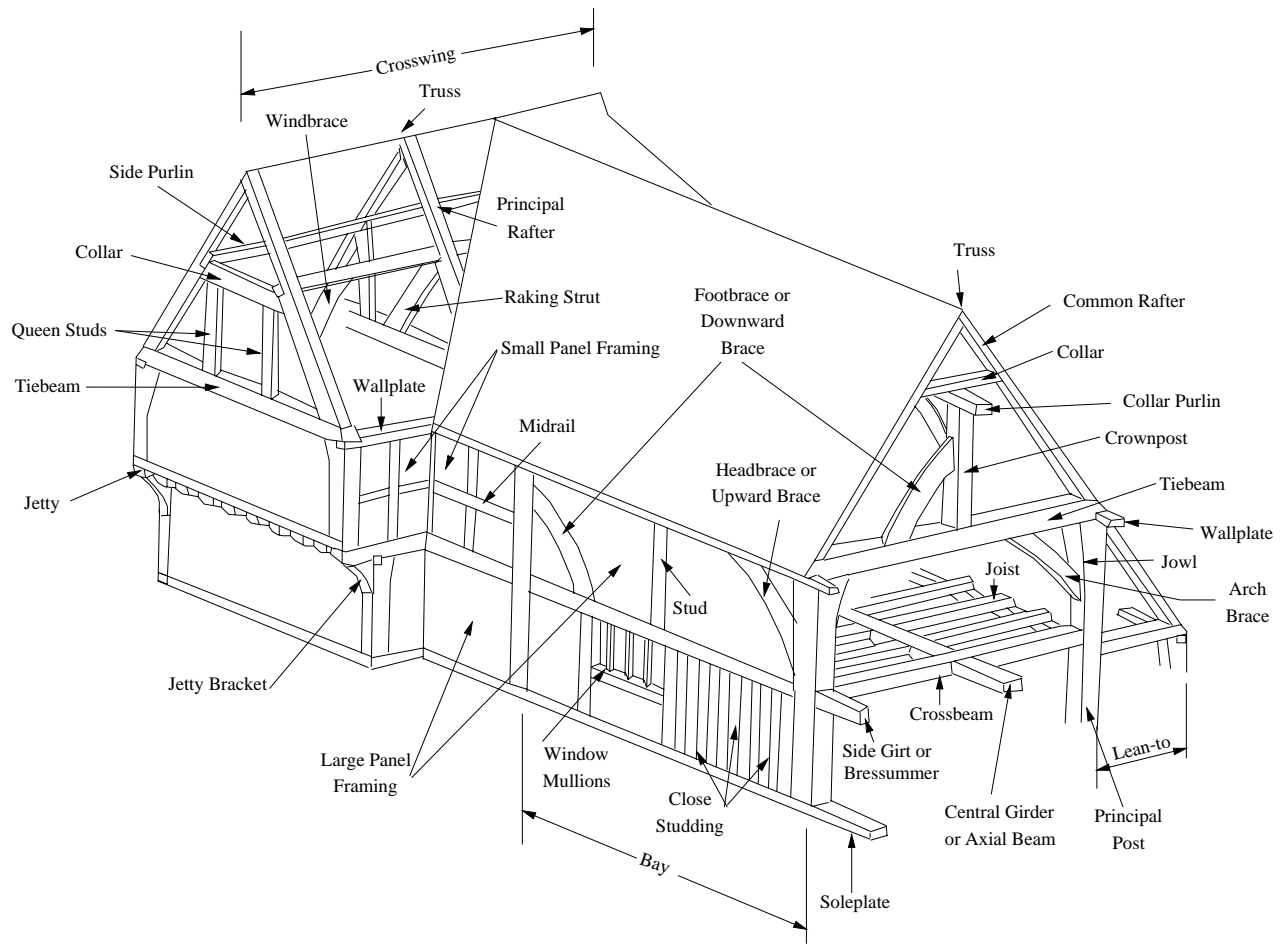
The symbols as used in the drawings attached to this report are as follows:

—————	Surviving Timber-Framed Wall
///////	Surviving Brick or Stone Wall
-----	Features evidenced but destroyed or masked from view
- - - - -	Beam or feature immediately overhead
.....	Conjectural or very approximate
■	Structural timber
?	Details unknown or doubtful

OTHER CONVENTIONS USED -

1 Doors are shown in plan only where known: hence rooms may appear to have no obvious means of access.

2 With the exception of rafters, wallplates, and some chimneys and roof-lines, sections show features cut by or immediately adjacent to the cutting line only.



GLOSSARY OF PRINCIPAL TERMS

**REPORT NO. 1365
(Supplementary Note)**

ROTHERFIELD - FRENCHES, MARK CROSS.

**Supplementary Report on
FARM BUILDINGS TO NORTH OF HOUSE**

NGR TQ 5810 2974

LOCATION [see Drawing No. 1365/7]

The farm buildings which are the subject of this supplementary report are sited a little to the north of the farmhouse (see inset historical plans in Drawing No. 1365/7). They are of modified L plan, comprising a two-storeyed structure aligned NNE-SSW (hereafter assumed N-S) with a long single-storeyed range projecting eastwards from the northern end, aligned WNW-ESE (hereafter assumed E-W) extending up to the public highway. In addition, there is a short lean-to outshut projecting westwards from the southern end of the main range.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

In 2000 David and Barbara Martin of Archaeology South-East were commissioned by Bob Godfrey to undertake an Archaeological Interpretative Survey of the farmhouse at Frenches, and at the same time they were asked to prepare a report on the farm buildings to the north. Having viewed the farm buildings, their advice to Mr Godfrey was that the buildings were of too little historical interest to warrant such a report. Whilst these buildings had value in placing the farmhouse within its landscape context, it was felt that the constructional details and design of the outbuildings were not in themselves of historical or archaeological interest. The Martins considered that one part — the early 19th-century two-storeyed range — did contain sufficient original fabric to warrant a short note appended to the report on the farmhouse. However, given the late date, the fact that none of the range's details were in themselves unusual or of high quality, and bearing in mind that the fabric had been badly damaged by 20th-century repairs to the walls, at which date the roof was completely replaced, even this part was not felt to be of sufficient interest to warrant more detailed study. As agreed, a brief note on the buildings was included at the end of the report on the house (see East Sussex Record Office HBR 1/1365).

Irrespective of the Martins' opinion of the building, in 2008 Bob Godfrey (through his

planning consultants, Kember Loudon Williams Ltd, requested that a brief interpretative survey of the complex be undertaken in order to further inform him with regards to its 19th- and 20th-century development, with specific reference to features incorporated within the eastern end of the long east-west aligned part. This present supplementary report addresses these issues.

LISTED STATUS OF THE BUILDING

The farmhouse at Frenches was listed grade II on 31st December 1982, its listed building reference being TQ 52 NE 21/256. The description in the list entry is purely for the purpose of recognition and is normally, therefore, primarily based on external appearance. The date is given as C17. [Source: English Heritage, Images of England - website]. The description must not be treated as a comprehensive schedule of those elements which are legally protected as, no matter what the grade, the legislative cover not only relates to both the interior and exterior, but also extends to any building within the curtilage which predates the 1st July 1948. Although not listed in their own right, the outbuildings are therefore protected as curtilage buildings to the listed farmhouse.

OVERVIEW OF THE BUILDING [Drawing Nos. 1365/7-8]

Located at the northern end of the house, across the track, is a two-storeyed outbuilding dating from 1820 (+/- 25 years): this represents the earliest [**Phase 1**] part of the farm complex as it currently survives. Constructed originally as an entirely detached building, it measures 13.45 metres long x 4.60 metres wide (44'2" x 15'1") and has walls of mass construction on the ground floor, mainly of brickwork faced externally in rough ashlar sandstone blocks. The first-floor storey is of weatherboarded timber studwork, absent of both principal posts and properly framed internal trusses. All this is typical of work undertaken during the first half of the 19th century. The ground floor section of the northern end wall has been reconstructed in brickwork. Likewise, the timber studwork to the southern end wall represents a 20th-century repair. The structure always incorporated a first floor, the deep, rectangular-section joists apparently having been purpose cut for the building. This is in stark contrast to the majority of the first-floor studwork which has been reused from elsewhere. The first-floor walls incorporate regular studs with straight raking struts. The present roof structure is a 20th-century replacement supported off secondary wallplates placed over and levelling up the original plate. The roughly-finished internal tiebeams are currently supported by this second plate, but redundant dovetail joints in the earlier plates indicate their original locations. Whereas the internal tiebeams (in their original assemblage) were held in standard assembly, the end walls are constructed in level assembly. This too is typical of work of the period. The northern gable was retained when the roof was rebuilt and shows the original pitch to have been c.40 degrees, perhaps indicating a slate covering. The gable is of regular stud construction, but there are no other hints as to its original

constructional detail.

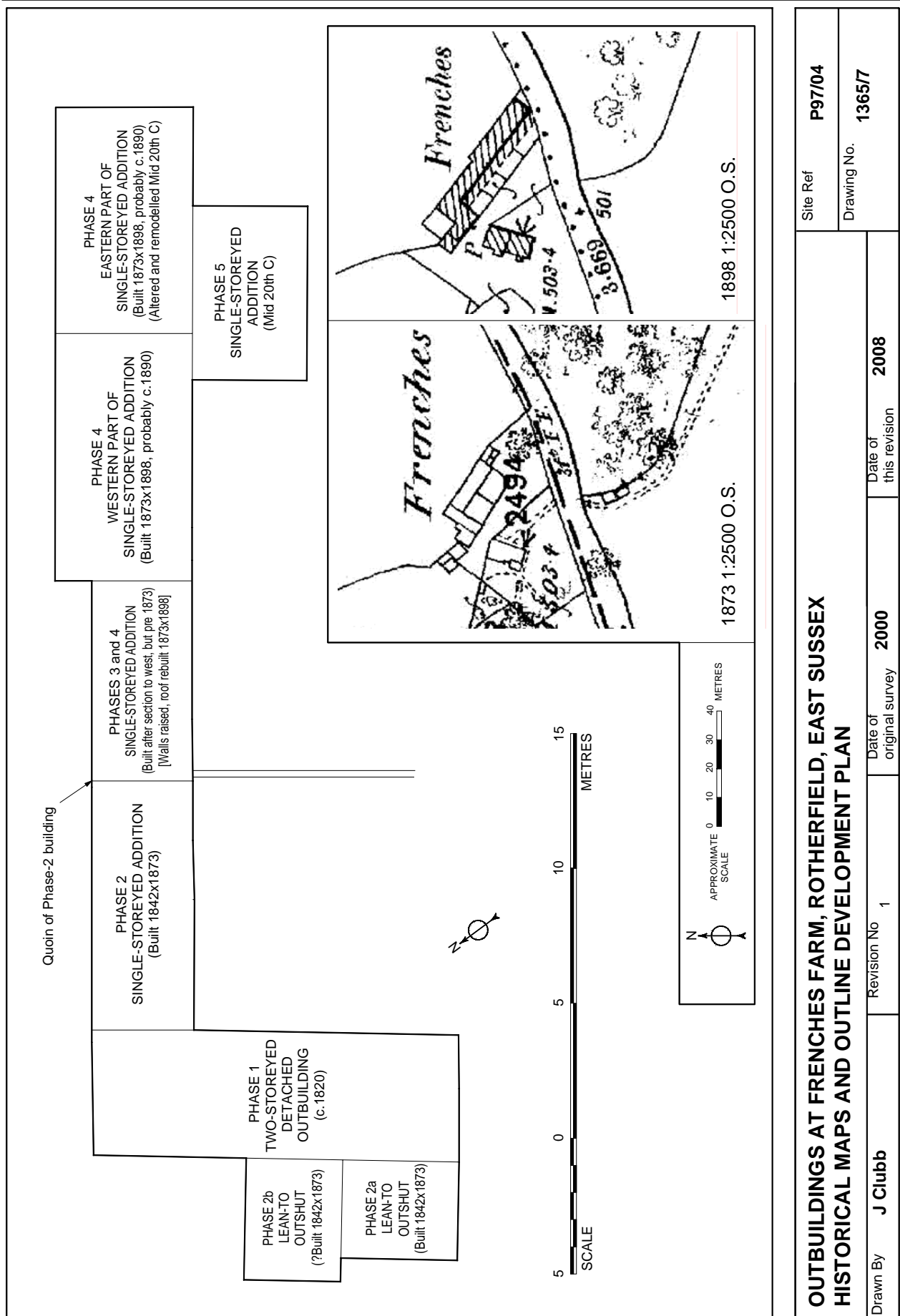
The 1st edition 1:2500 Ordnance Survey plan indicates that already by 1873 a lean-to outshut had been built against the western wall, at the southern end, and the long single-storeyed eastern range had likewise been erected [**Phases 2 and 3**]. In fact, both of these additions are of two dates, and in each case both parts seem to have been erected by 1873 — certainly both parts of the eastern range had. Both phases of the lean-to outshut are built using walls of neat brickwork laid in Sussex bond, straight-jointed together. Whereas the brickwork used in both phases of the lean-to are similar, the brickwork used in the two parts of the phase-2/3 section of the east range is very different. The joint in the north wall between the phase-1 range and the phase-2 part of the east range has been achieved by means of a bonded joint, but the original quoin is clearly visible at the base. Likewise, that between the phase-2 part and the phase-3 extension is bonded, but the bricks used in the phase-2 part are far more orange in colour than those used in the phase-3 part. Both sections are laid in Flemish bond, with some burnt headers to the phase-3 part. There are queen closers marking the site of the phase-2 quoin. The old east wall of the phase-2 part remains, converted into an internal partition. There is now a marked step up in the eaves between the two phases, but this is the result of the roof over the phase-3 part having been removed after 1873, the walls raised using a distinctive purple-tinged deep crimson brick laid in Sussex bond, and the phase-2 roof replaced at the new higher level. All of the south wall is constructed using this purple-tinged brick, which is likewise used within the phase-4 work. The fact that the south wall was rebuilt so quickly suggests that both the phase-2 and phase-3 parts of the east range were originally open fronted, though this point cannot now be confirmed. The roof over both parts is similar — cut-and-pitched construction using multiple-conversion hardwood rafters (with some waney edges) and a continuous ridgeboard. The tiebeams are laid in normal assembly and are of traditional (rather than machine-sawn) type.

The 1st- and 2nd-edition 1:2500 Ordnance Survey plans confirm that it was between 1873 and 1898 that the **Phase-4** eastern extension was added, enlarging the range up to the road. In fact, prior to consulting the Ordnance Survey maps it was thought that this extension could have been erected during the early 20th century. It is constructed partly on the farmyard close and partly on the field adjacent to the buildings, cutting across the field boundary. Internally it housed a single room, originally open to the roof. Except where rebuilt at the eastern end in the early 21st century (following an accident involving a vehicle) all external walls are built using the distinctive purple-tinged bricks mentioned above, laid in Sussex bond. There was a wide opening towards the western end of the south wall and windows (probably three) further east, but there were no windows in the north and east walls. Unlike the phase-2 and phase-3 parts, the roof is of machine-sawn softwood, of standard 'modern-style' construction, cut-and-pitched with a continuous ridgeboard at the apex. Side purlins are supported by side-applied collars which divide the roof into five near-equal bays. Each collar was originally located over a tiebeam, but the two tiebeams within the eastern part were removed in the mid 20th century when this section of the range was divided off to form a second room, ceiled off from the roof area by slender sawn softwood ceiling joists nailed to the

sides of the rafters. The new room was delineated at its western end by a concrete-block partition (block-bonded to the walls) and it is up to this partition that the new inserted ceiling extends — it never continued to the west of this point. A second similar partition a little further to the west allowed the formation of a passage.

Also belonging to the middle years of the 20th century (probably 1940s or 1950s) is a pitched-roofed southern extension with concrete lintels (cast *in-situ*) to its openings. This is classified as **Phase 5** in Drawing No. 1365/7.

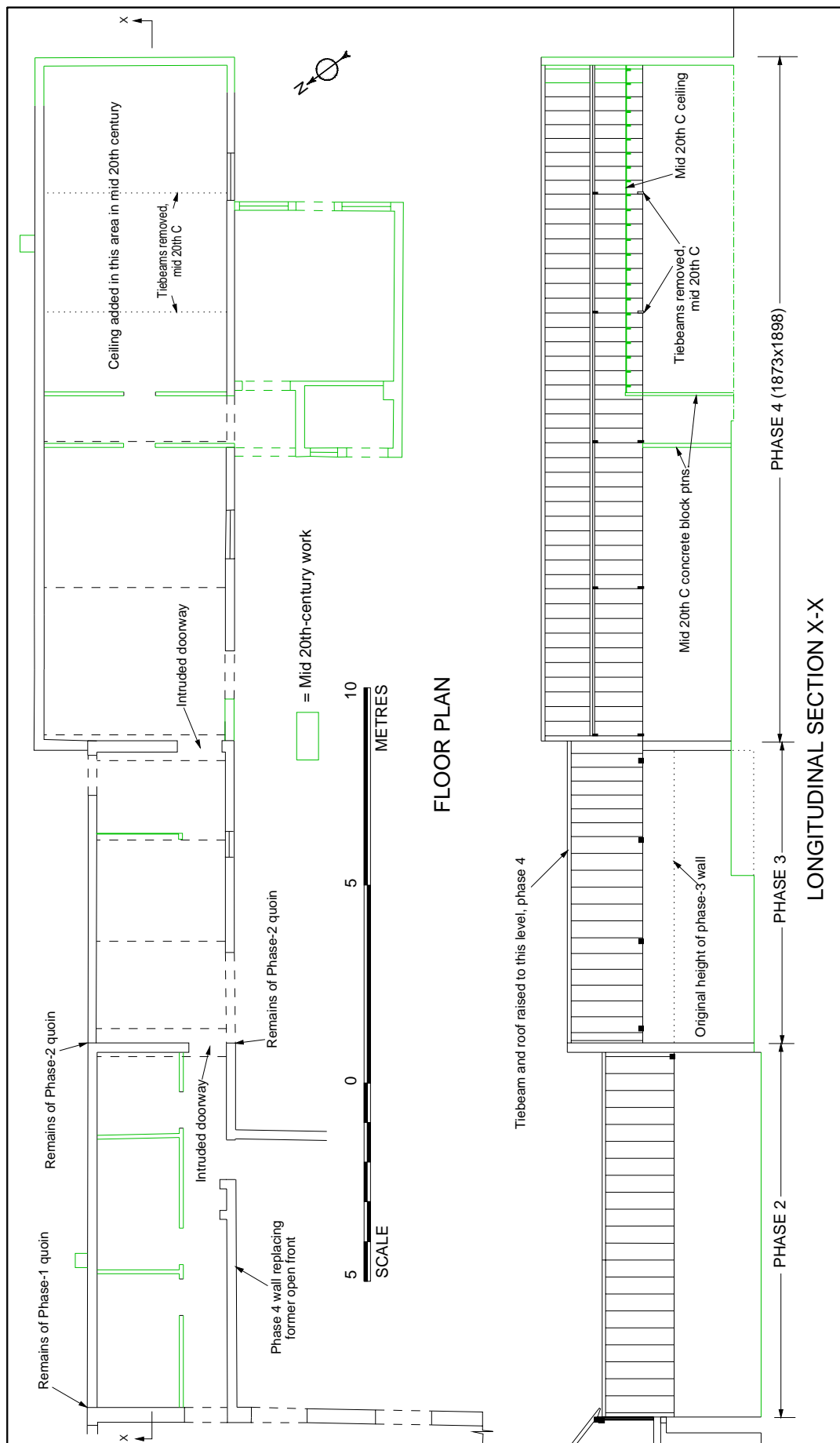
Because of the late date and the non-outstanding form/design of the building, no detailed architectural description is included within this supplementary report.



**OUTBUILDINGS AT FRENCHES FARM, ROTHERFIELD, EAST SUSSEX
 HISTORICAL MAPS AND OUTLINE DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

Site Ref	P97/04
Drawing No.	1365/7

Drawn By	J Clubb	Revision No	1	Date of original survey	2000	Date of this revision	2008
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OUTBUILDINGS AT FRENCHES FARM, ROTHERFIELD, EAST SUSSEX			Site Ref P97/04
OUTLINE PLAN SHOWING BUILDING PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT OF CONVERSION TO DOMESTIC USE			Drawing No. 1365/8
Drawn By J Clubb	Revision No 1	Date of original survey 2000	Date of this revision 2008

Head Office
Units 1 & 2
2 Chapel Place
Portslade
East Sussex BN41 1DR
Tel: +44(0)1273 426830 Fax:+44(0)1273 420866
email: fau@ucl.ac.uk
Web: www.archaeologyse.co.uk



London Office
Centre for Applied Archaeology
Institute of Archaeology
University College London
31-34 Gordon Square, London, WC1 0PY
Tel: +44(0)20 7679 4778 Fax:+44(0)20 7383 2572
Web: www.ucl.ac.uk/caa

The contracts division of the Centre for Applied Archaeology, University College London 

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