



**Heritage Assessment for Middle Ripley Farm, North  
Ripley Road, Ripley, Hampshire, BH23 8ES**

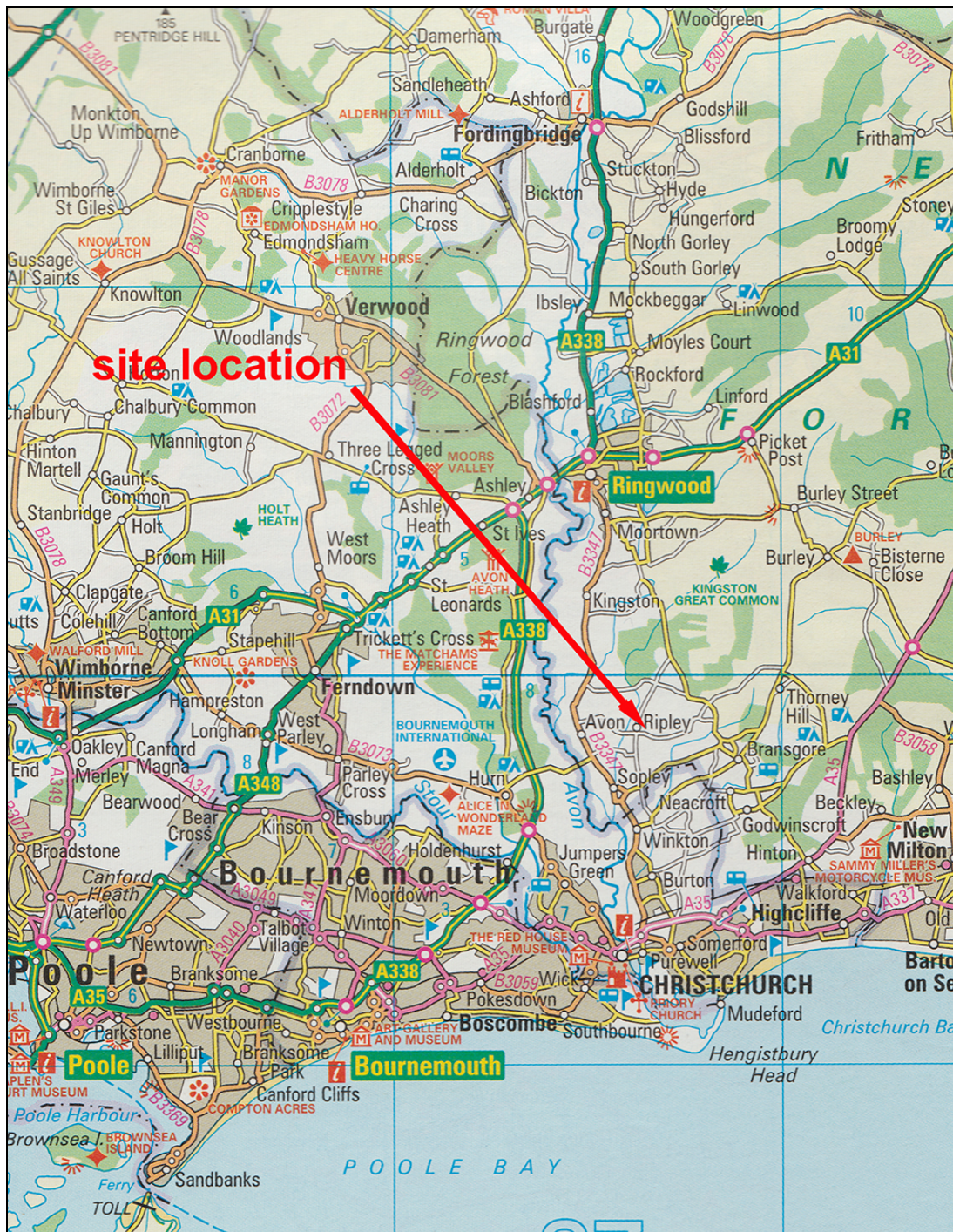
August 2021

## NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

***This Heritage Assessment sets out the heritage background to Middle Ripley Farm, Ripley, Hampshire. Middle Ripley Farm may well have been first established by the Webb family during their ownership of the manor of Avon from the early 17<sup>th</sup> century until the later 18<sup>th</sup>. Certainly the oldest agricultural building on the site, a timber threshing barn, would fit within this period. Significant expansion then took place in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century after a change of ownership, when a brick threshing barn and two further non-domestic buildings (now lost) were added. Later 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century additions included a shelter shed added to the north-east corner of the brick barn, and the southern side of a new farmyard to the south with the construction of a second shelter shed and stables.***

***Those buildings of historical significance now present on the site are considered to be: the Threshing Barn, the Brick Barn, the Shelter Shed & Small Store, and the western two blocks of the Stables. All are currently unused, with their condition deteriorating as a result. It is recommended that appropriate new use is found in order to ensure their preservation into the future.***

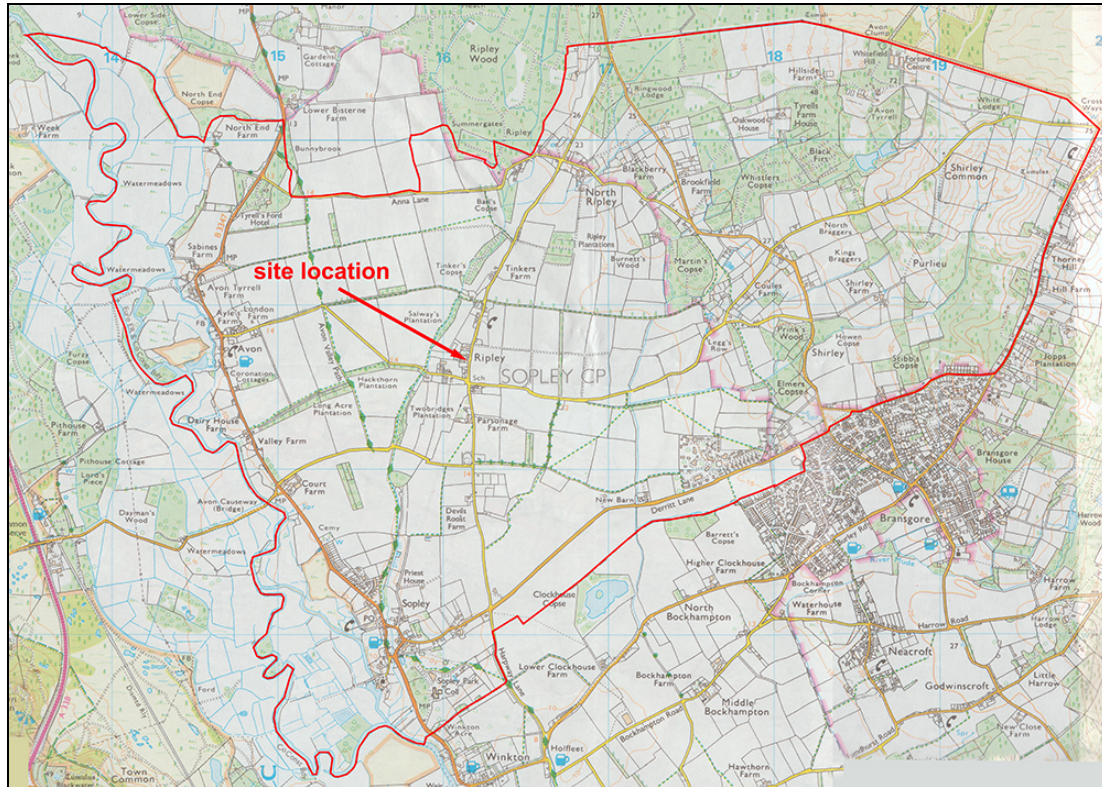
## BACKGROUND



**Figure 1** Site location. © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. License number: AL100036068

1. Middle Ripley Farm lies within the hamlet of Ripley in the parish of Sopley on the Hampshire/Dorset border. The River Avon, which forms that border, lies only c.1.5km to the west of the hamlet. The site sits at 13m aOD and is centred at SZ 1611 9868. The underlying geology of the site are the sands of the Boscombe Sand Formation overlain by River Terrace Deposits.

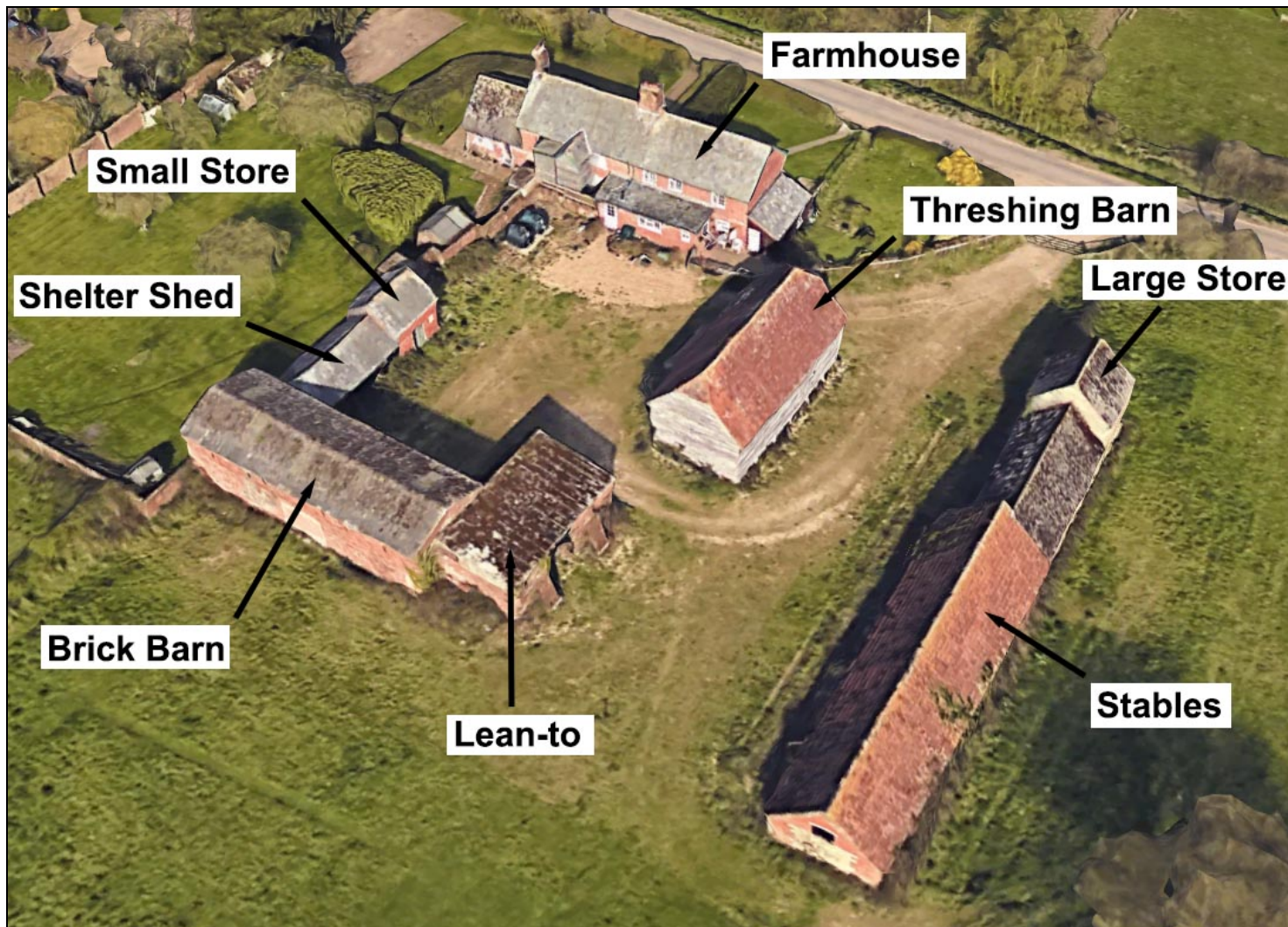
# WEST SUSSEX ARCHÆOLOGY



**Figure 2** Site location, with Sopley parish boundary outlined in red. © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. License number: AL100036068

2. The landowner is intending to submit an application for the re-development of Middle Ripley Farm. In order to inform both themselves and the Local Planning Authority of any potential heritage issues relating to the development of the site, they have commissioned West Sussex Archaeology Ltd to draw up this Heritage Assessment.
3. It is not the purpose of this Heritage Assessment to rehearse the clauses of the various publically available planning legislation, guidance and policy documents, suffice it to say that these provide the framework within which the heritage issues relevant to this site will be discussed. With reference to this project these are: the National Planning Policy Framework (2018 revision); the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990; and the New Forest District Council Local Plan Part 2: Sites and Development Management (2014), p.20-3.

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**Figure 3** Middle Ripley Farm as it is today, with buildings mentioned in the text labelled, looking north-east (Google Earth © 2021 Google)

## THE HERITAGE ASSETS

### Designated Assets

1. There are four Listed Buildings within 1km of the site, all lying within the hamlet of Ripley: Nos.31 & 32, a late 18<sup>th</sup> century farmhouse, Grade II, No.1094956 (Listed 12<sup>th</sup> March 1987); The Laurels, early 19<sup>th</sup> century manse, Grade II, No.1178906 (Listed 12<sup>th</sup> March 1987); Granary at Middle Ripley Farm, early to mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, Grade II, No.1356768 (Listed 25<sup>th</sup> August 1999) – this building, which lies within the site boundary, is actually a threshing barn and labelled as such in Figure 3 above and in the text below; Brook Cottage, 18<sup>th</sup> century or earlier, Grade II, No.1094957 (Listed 12<sup>th</sup> March 1987).

### Documentary Evidence

1. Ripley, never a manor itself, lies within the manor of Avon (also called Northavon or Avon Tyrrell). Avon manor was held by the Peverell family from the mid-13<sup>th</sup> century, then the Tyrrells from the mid-14<sup>th</sup> until the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. It was presumably during this time that the manor became known as “Avon Tyrrell”. In the early 17<sup>th</sup> century it came into the hands of the Webb family, who held it until the latter part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, when was sold to the Batson, later Fane, family (Page, pp. 124-127). Anne Fane, who inherited the estate in 1810, is thought to have presided over a major expansion of the estate until her death in 1838 (Burn & Elkins, p.17).

### Historic Maps



**Figure 4** Middle Ripley Farm in 1764 from a map of John Webb's estate, the approximate location of the existing buildings are shown in red (HRO COPY/92/1)

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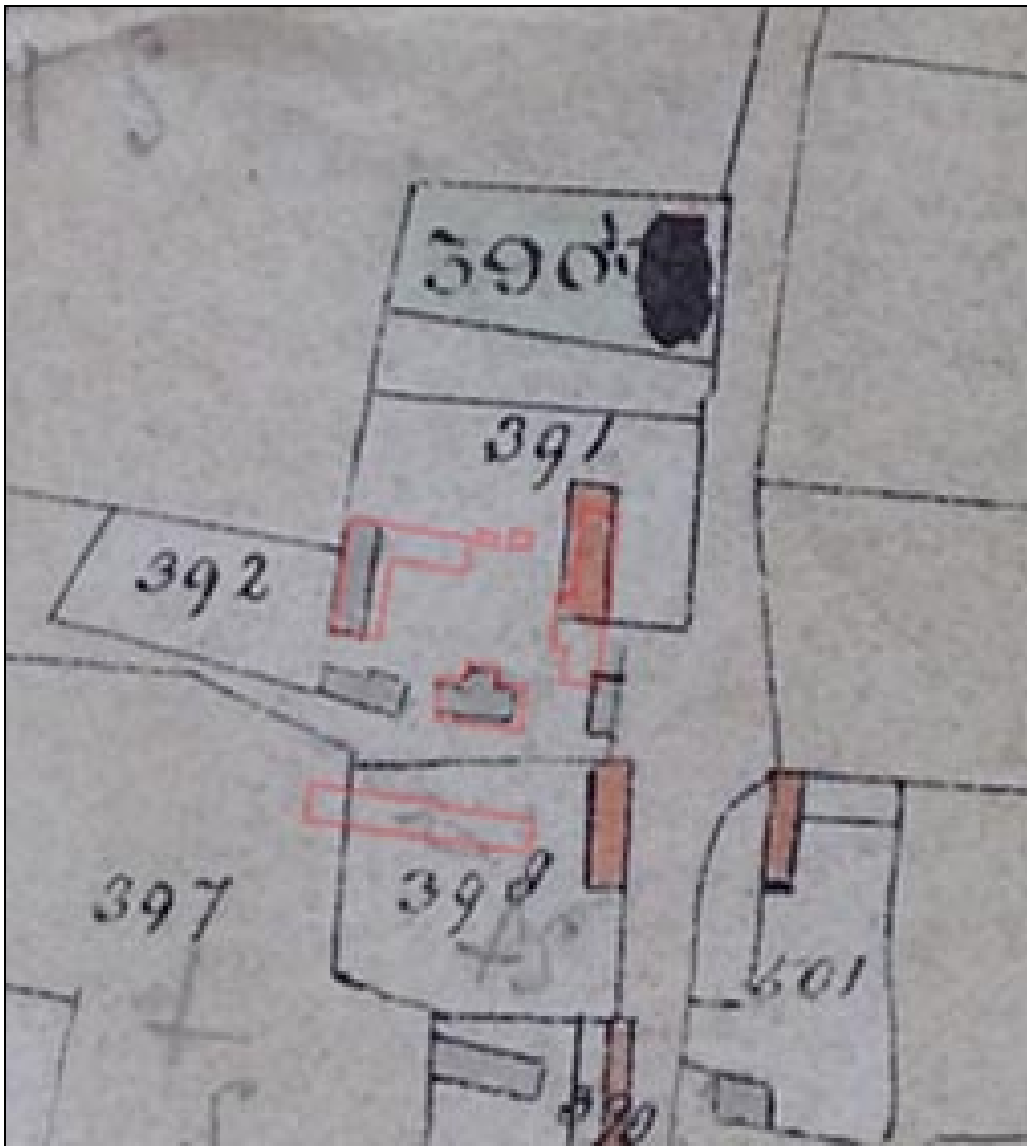
1. The earliest map of sufficient detail to show Middle Ripley Farm is one dated 1764 and entitled “A Plan of Sir John Webb’s Estate, being the complete Manor of Avon near Christchurch in Hampshire by Richard Richardson Darlington 1764” (HRO COPY/92/1 & 25M65/3/38). This shows three buildings at the farm, most probably the existing farmhouse, the Threshing Barn and another parallel to and north of the latter, demolished prior to 1797.
2. The Ordnance Survey 1797 map of Christchurch again shows the farm (<http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/onlineex/ordsurvdraw/c/002osd00000015u00343000.html>), although this time with only two buildings, probably the farmhouse and Threshing Barn.



**Figure 5** Middle Ripley Farm in 1797 (circled) from the Ordnance Survey map of that date (British Library OSD 75-1)

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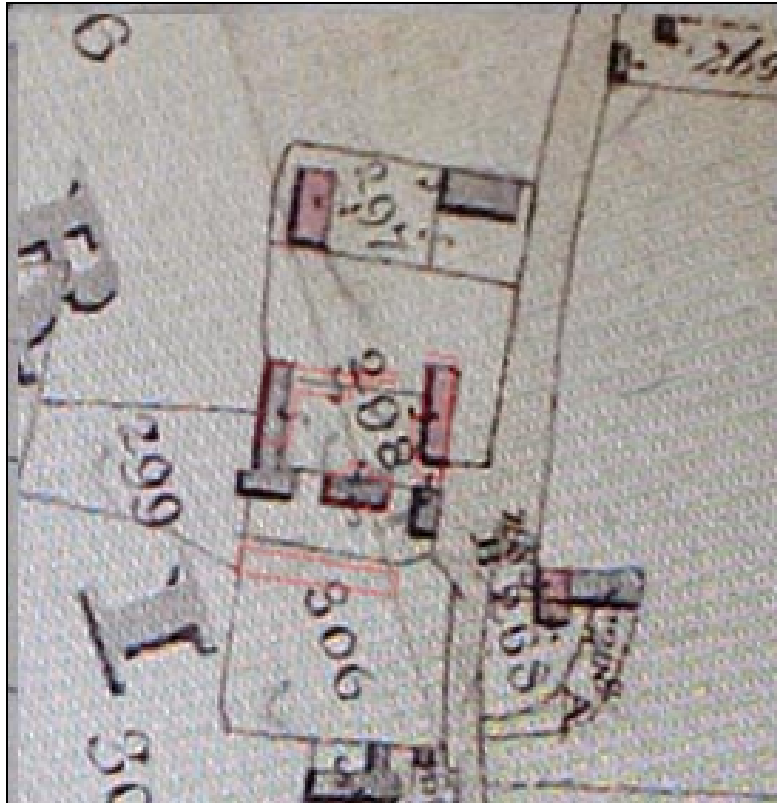
3. A map dating to 1824 and entitled 'The Parish of Sopley in the County of Hants' is of a larger scale (HRO 6M50/28). This shows the farmhouse and Threshing Barn, together with three new non-residential buildings: to the south of the farmhouse; to the west of the Threshing Barn (south wall of the Lean-to) and to the north-west of the Threshing Barn (the Brick Barn). In addition a residential dwelling, demolished by 1839, is marked on the road frontage immediately to the south of the farm, and to the east of the later Stables.



**Figure 6** Extract from the map of Sopley dated 1824 (HRO:6M50/28)

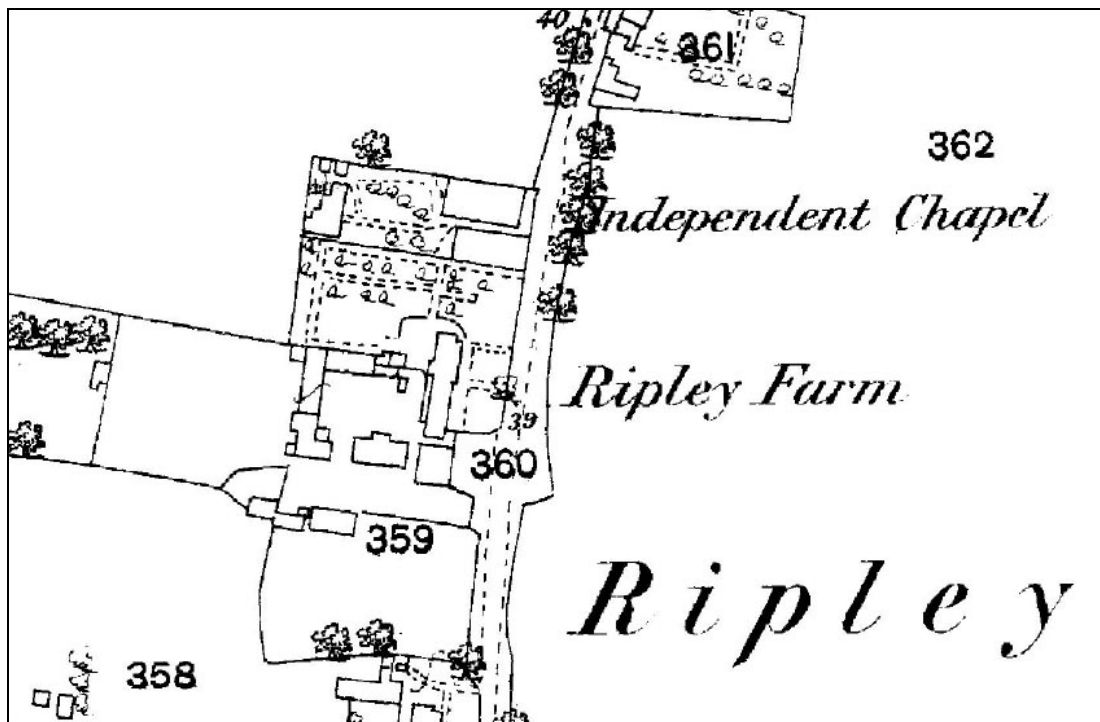
4. The Sopley Tithe map of 1839 (HRO 21M65/F7/211/2), shows the same number and layout of agricultural buildings, save that the building to the west of the Threshing Barn and the Brick Barn are now shown linked. The farm is listed in the Tithe apportionment as belonging to Sir Henry Fane, son of Anne Fane, with Frederick Harman as tenant. The plot to the south (No.306) is also owned by Fane, but is separately tenanted by James Barrow.





**Figure 7** Extract from the Sopley tithe map dated 1839 (HRO:21M65/F7/211/2)

5. By the date of the 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey map of 1871 two additional buildings have been added to the farm, to the north the Shelter Shed and to the south the first phase of the Stables, now its central portion.



**Figure 8** Extract from the Ordnance Survey 1:2500 map of 1871

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- The second edition 1:2500 Ordnance Survey map of 1897 shows the addition of the eastern extension to the Stables, while the third edition of 1909 shows its western extension.

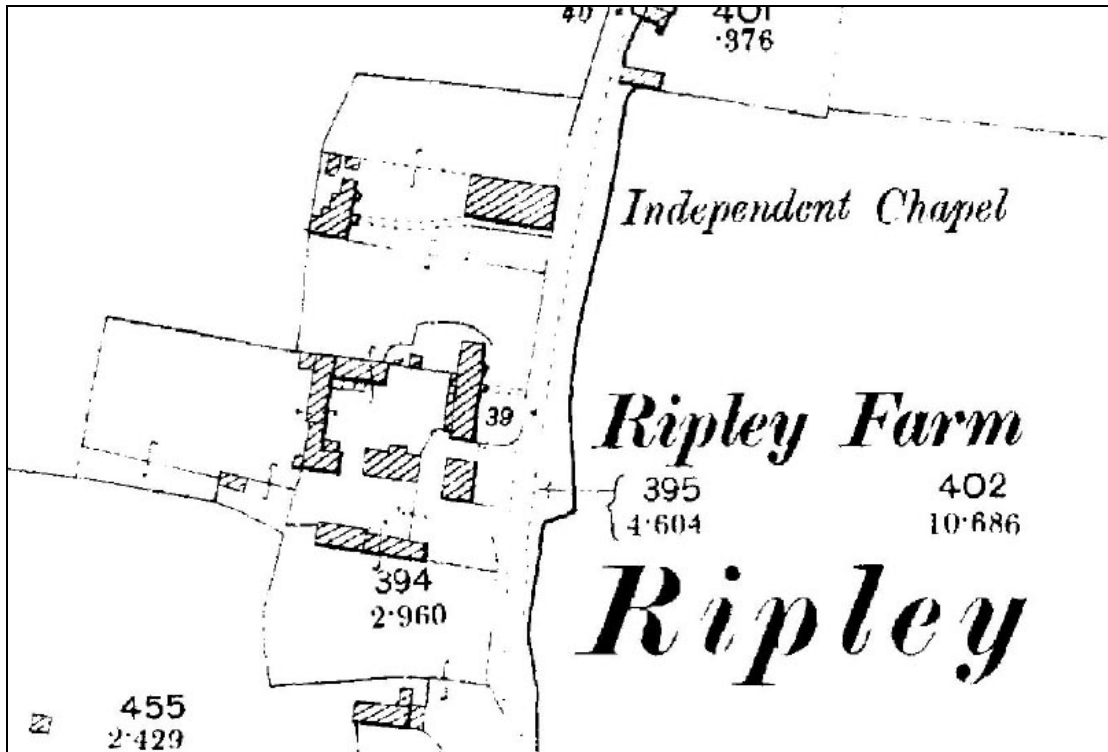


Figure 9 Extract from the Ordnance Survey 1:2500 map of 1897

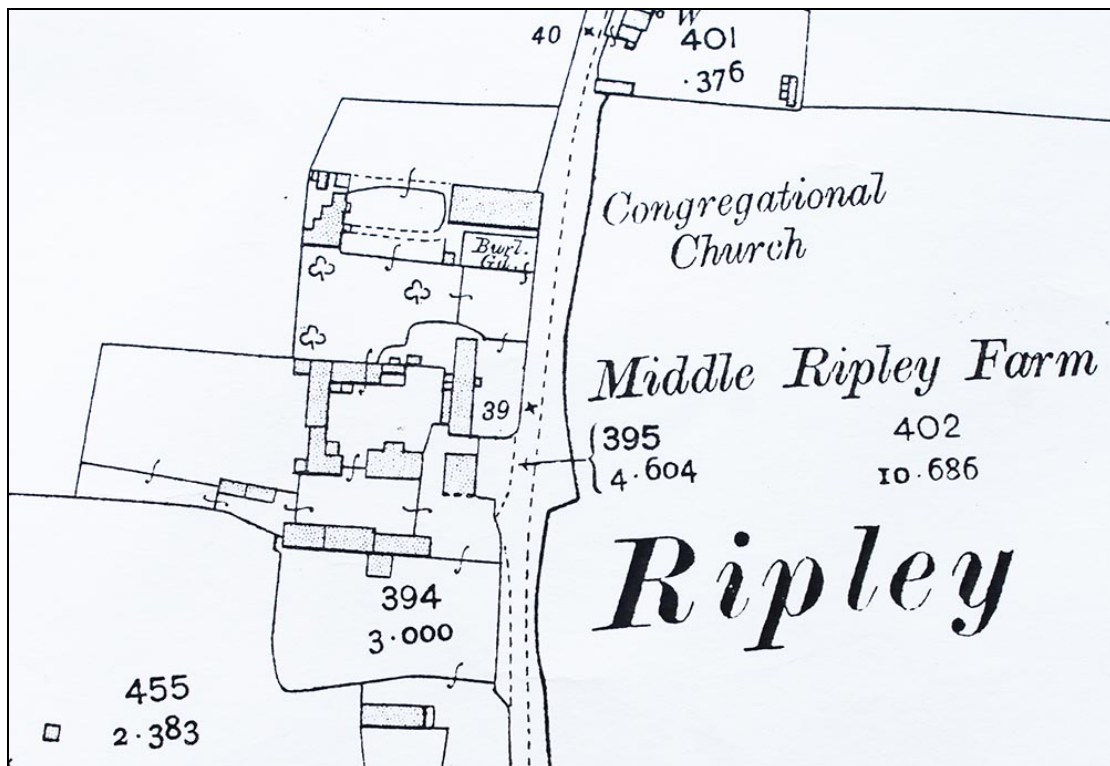


Figure 10 Extract from the Ordnance Survey 1:2500 map of 1909

## Site Visit

1. A site visit was made by George Anelay of West Sussex Archaeology Ltd and Joe Thompson of Sussex Oak & Iron on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2021. The results from this are described below.

### *The Threshing Barn*



**Figure 11** The Threshing Barn looking south



**Figure 12** The Threshing Barn looking north-west

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1. The earliest structure surviving on the site, aside from the farmhouse which was not internally inspected but is reputed to contain some evidence of timber-framing, is a three bay threshing barn, 13m east-west and 6.35m north-south. It sits upon twenty-eight Portland stone staddles, in four rows of seven. It is unlikely, based on structural evidence, to be earlier than 1700 in date, but would appear to have been in existence by 1764, assuming that it is the building shown in its location on the map of that date.



**Figure 13** Interior of the Threshing Barn looking west showing the frame construction and the original beech boarding on the lower walls as surviving in the western bay

2. The original structure is well constructed out of oak in a stud framing or “quartering” pattern with posts at the bay divisions with bowl-shaped jowls. The front doors, on the north side, project forward as a lean-to porch. Internally the walls were boarded up to a metre in height with beech feather-edge boards in order to retain the corn and deter any vermin. The roof cross-frames are collared with two queen struts that support tiers of staggered and tenoned purlins. At the apex is a ridge beam. There are four long wind braces, a pair in each outer bay. The roof itself was half-hipped and tiled.
3. An unusual detail are the short horizontal timber struts nailed to the jowl posts and studs that supported a boarded soffit and external rail at the eaves, another anti-rodent feature to keep the corn safe. This may also have incorporated a ventilation slot to assist in drying out the stored produce. Externally the barn was weather-boarded, with some of the elm feather-edge boards surviving at eaves level above the horizontal struts.



**Figure 14** View up under the eaves showing the short horizontal timber struts (red arrow), the external rail (yellow arrow) and one of the near vertical boards that may be remnants of a ventilation scheme (blue arrow)



**Figure 15** The south wall of the Threshing Barn looking west and showing the surviving elm boards just below the wall-plate, together with the infilled south door in the central bay

4. The first phase of alterations, probably in the late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century, was for the insertion of softwood collars in the roof-space between the cross-frames to resist the bending of the purlins. Softwood rafters were also inserted alongside the existing oak rafters to further reinforce the roof. In addition the original beech internal boarding was replaced in the eastern bay using softwood tongue, groove and beaded boards and the external cladding likewise replaced with new softwood weather-boarding. The wall-plate in front of the porch, clearly bowing, was reinforced using two nailed on arch braces and a large timber fixed to the soffit.



**Figure 16** Interior of the Threshing Barn looking east showing the frame construction and the softwood boarding on the lower walls that replaced the earlier beech boards of the eastern bay in the late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century. One of the additional collars between the purlins can be seen in the bay roof above, as well as the additional rafters. To the left can be seen one of the arch braces and the timber affixed to the soffit of the northern porch

5. A second phase of alterations occurred in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century when the rear southern doorway was infilled with studwork and some softwood tongue and grooved boards fitted across it internally (see Figure 15). Finally in 2006/7 the external softwood weather-boarding was replaced with oak feather-edge boards.

### *The Brick Barn*

1. Of the three buildings that make their first appearance on the 1824 map, the largest is another threshing barn, this time constructed of brick. It sits to the north-west of the earlier timber threshing barn and forms the third side to a farmyard now formed by its wooden predecessor on the south and the farmhouse to the east.



**Figure 17** The east elevation of the Brick Barn

2. This new brick barn is of five bays, totalling 17.4m in length and 6.1m in width, with opposing doorways in the central bay; the western of these being infilled with blockwork in the later 20<sup>th</sup> century. Both doors exhibit signs of vehicle damage, with their lower jambs broken away and only then repaired on the southern jamb of the western door. The external walls, which include four high-level ventilation slots in the east and west elevations, are largely of Flemish Garden wall bond, while the internal walls are in irregular bond.



**Figure 18** The west elevation of the Brick Barn



**Figure 19** The interior of the Brick Barn, looking south

3. The original roof of the Brick Barn is now lost, apparently as a result of a fire in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, but it was reputedly thatched with a steeper pitch than its replacement, which is of corrugated sheets supported by softwood roof trusses and purlins. Modern anchor plates with tubular tie rods have also been inserted under the two central pairs of modern trusses to provide support to the walls. The earlier roof trusses were supported on brick pilasters projecting from the internal side walls. Charred timbers set high in the gable ends may also be related to this earlier roof structure, although it is not clear as to how.



**Figure 20** The interior of the Brick Barn, looking north



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4. Five rectangular anchor plates with square nuts inserted through the west barn wall above and either side of the west barn door suggest that a lean-to was attached on this side, probably of only short duration, at some time between 1871 and 1897.



**Figure 21** The infilled west door of the brick barn showing the five anchor plates in a row above

### *The Lean-to*



**Figure 22** The Lean-to looking west

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1. Attached to the south end of the Brick Barn is a lean-to composed of two brick walls on the western and southern sides, the latter partially collapsed, and open to the east and part of the north. It is covered by a low-pitched corrugated sheet roof. The roof and timber supporting posts are modern, however the brick walls are clearly older.



**Figure 23** The Lean-to looking north-east

2. The map of 1824 shows a building, c.13m by c.5m, lying to the west of the timber threshing barn, separated by a gap from the brick barn to the north. The northern wall line of this building lies approximately on that of the brick southern wall of the lean-to. This wall is laid in irregular bond set in lime mortar, however two modern buttresses have been added to its southern elevation and eight courses added to its height using a modern concrete mortar, both presumably to support the existing lean-to roof. The original building survived until at least 1960 according to map evidence, and is said to have been a stables with hayloft over that burnt down in the mid-1960's.
3. By 1839 this stable block had become attached to the brick barn to the north. The surviving brick wall that forms the western wall of the existing lean-to is clearly part of this link and is in irregular bond set in a lime mortar. Towards its northern end is a window with timber lintel, infilled with bricks again in lime mortar. Its southern end would appear to have butted up against the earlier stables to the south. A row of infilled slots in the brickwork internally would suggest that it was floored, with the walls of the lower space whitewashed, as is evidenced by traces still surviving.



**Figure 24** The interior of the Lean-to looking west towards the blocked window in its west wall; above can be seen the infilled sockets for the floor timbers.

*The Shelter Shed*



**Figure 25** The Shelter Shed and adjoining Small Store, looking north

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1. Between 1839 and 1871-2 a three-bay shelter shed for cattle was added to the growing farm, attached to the north-east side of the Brick Barn. Its rear wall, and possibly its original eastern end, were of brick laid externally in a rough Flemish garden wall bond, and internally in irregular bond, with an open front, with the wall-plate, rafters, purlins and ridge-board all of homegrown softwood. Its span was 4.3m, with a roof pitch of about 36°.



**Figure 26** The interior of the Shelter Shed, looking west at the east wall of the Brick Barn



**Figure 27** The interior of the Shelter Shed, looking east at the later partition inserted after the addition of the Small Store

2. Sometime in the later 19<sup>th</sup> century its eastern bay was partially demolished, extended and re-built to form the Small Store, with the remainder of the eastern bay to the west partitioned off and floored with brick. In the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century the western part of the front wall-plate was repaired with a new section of timber, together with some of the rafters on the south elevation, with the overlying roof re-slatted. In the early 21<sup>st</sup> century further repairs were undertaken, again to the western part of the front wall-plate, although this time the adjoining stretch directly abutting the Brick Barn, and using a piece of former railway sleeper fixed to the earlier repair with a metal angle iron strap. A new western post was also added, again utilising a timber sleeper. The existing concrete floor may well have been added at this time.



**Figure 28** The west end of the front wall-plate of the Shelter Shed, showing the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century repair (red arrow) and subsequent early 21<sup>st</sup> century repair (black arrow)

### *The Small Store*

1. As state above, in the later 19<sup>th</sup> century part of the eastern bay of the Shelter Shed was re-built to form a small brick walled store. The location of its original windows and doorway are unknown, due to later re-modelling but are likely to have been in the south elevation. The roof was probably of slate to match the adjoining Shelter Shed.
2. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century the walls of this store were raised, reputedly to house Shire horses. The existing south door and window date to this phase, as do a new window in the east elevation and a new door

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linking to the Shelter Shed in its west wall. The roof probably continued to be slate. In the 1960's it was re-roofed with new softwood rafters, side purlins, a ridge-board and slate over.



**Figure 29** The Small Store looking north-west, with the height of its original brickwork indicated by the yellow arrow

### *The Stables*



**Figure 30** The Stables and Large Store looking south-west



**Figure 31** The western end of the Stables, showing the earliest block (to the left) and the western extension of 1897–1907 (to the right)

1. At about the same time that the Shelter Shed was being added to the Brick Barn, a second open-fronted shelter shed was added to the south of the farmyard. This was of a similar length to its northern counterpart, but divided into five bays, with a wider span of about 6.45m. It too had brick rear and probably side walls, with an oak kingpost roof covered with pantiles.
2. Between 1871 and 1897 a three or four bay extension was added to the east end of this shelter shed, with a narrow span of just over 5m. Nothing now survives of this structure.
3. At the western end of the original shelter shed, a second extension was added between 1897 and 1907, this time of three bays and entirely walled in brick using a rough Flemish garden wall bond. It had softwood kingbolt roof trusses, again covered with pantiles, with a large doorway (with window above) in its west end and a stable door and window on its north elevation. A low brick wall was built between the oak posts on the north elevation, possibly in response to the flooding to which the neighbouring yard is prone.
4. In the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century the eastern extension was demolished and replaced on the same footprint with a mass concrete-walled three-bay stable, with span of 5.25m and a corrugated sheet roof supported by softwood kingbolt trusses. At the other end, in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, the roof truss at the junction between the original shelter shed and its western extension was replaced by a similar timber kingpost truss.



**Figure 32** The central and western blocks of the Stables, looking east



**Figure 33** The central (western part) and western blocks of the Stables, looking west. The division between the two is marked by the new truss (not painted white) that was inserted in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century.





**Figure 34** A mid-20<sup>th</sup> century roof truss within the rebuilt eastern block of the Stables

## *Large Store*

1. In the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century a two storey gabled building was added at the east end of the stables, probably at the same time that its eastern extension was rebuilt, for it too was of mass concrete. Entry to its upper floor was via an external timber staircase on the eastern elevation. It was roofed with corrugated sheets. Both of its rooms are likely to have been for storage or office use.

## **CONCLUSION**

1. It is not known when Middle Ripley Farm first came into being, the oldest existing buildings being the Farmhouse, of possible 17<sup>th</sup> century origins, and the Threshing Barn (1700-1764). It may be that a farm was established here by the Webb family, who acquired the manor in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century, and in total it might have consisted of simply the three buildings shown on the map of the Webb estate dated 1764.
2. Later in that century the manor passed into new ownership, and in the early decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century it experienced a significant phase of enlargement, possibly soon after 1810 when Anne Fane took control of its management. This resulted in the construction of the existing Brick Barn (by 1824) and two other new agricultural buildings subsequently demolished to the west and east of the Webb era Threshing Barn. Further expansion was to take place during the remainder of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with the addition of a link between the Brick Barn and the building to its south, and the construction of the Shelter Shed, Small Store and Stables.

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3. Of the surviving elements of the 18<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> century farm, that of the Threshing Barn is clearly the most significant, due both to its earlier date and its relative completeness. The next phase of development, probably dating to the second decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, is essentially now represented only by the Brick Barn, with just fragments of the north wall of one of the other two buildings now surviving as the south wall of the existing Lean-to. The Shelter Shed, the link to the south of the Brick Barn and the central block of the Stables, all belong to the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, the latter reflecting the first stage in forming a second yard to the south of the first. The Shelter Shed was then altered with the insertion of the Small Store into and beyond its eastern bay, with the latter itself developed with the raising of its roof in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Only the west wall of the link to the south of the Brick Barn now survives, and it is now considered to be too fragmentary to be of significance. The Stables were to expand twice, although the late-19<sup>th</sup> century addition to the east is now lost; what remains being the central mid-19<sup>th</sup> century block and its western early 20<sup>th</sup> century addition.
4. The mid-20<sup>th</sup> century replacement of the eastern block of the Stables together with the Large Store, as common and utilitarian structures, are not considered to be of historic significance. However the Threshing Barn, Brick Barn, Shelter Shed, Small Store and the western two blocks of the Stables are all considered to be of historic significance and worthy of retention. All these agricultural buildings are now disused, except for some limited storage, and as such are deteriorating in their condition. It is recommended that some sustainable re-use is found in order to prevent further degradation and potential collapse.

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