



***Barns at Langton Caudle, Stonton  
Wyville, Leicestershire***

*Report on Historic Building Recording*



*Acorn Archaeology Report Number 38.0*

*X.A43.2019*

*July 2019*

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# **BARNS AT LANGTON CAUDLE, STONTON WYVILLE, LEICESTERSHIRE**

## **REPORT ON HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING**

Acorn Archaeology Report Number 38.0  
July 2019

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## **BARNs AT LANGTON CAUDLE, STONTON WYVILLE, LEICESTERSHIRE**

### **HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING**

#### **SUMMARY**

*This report presents the results of historic building recording undertaken on barns at Langton Caudle, Stonton Wyville, Leicestershire. The project was commissioned by Natasha Bale and Stuart Bale to fulfil a condition of planning permission (Planning Application No. 18/01966/FUL) granted by Harborough District Council for the conversion of an agricultural barn to form one dwelling, and the demolition of a barn and erection of a single-storey garage and plant room.*

*The recorded buildings comprised an L-shaped brick range and attached walls forming a group of buildings including a walled cattle yard with a shelter on one side. These appeared to represent a single phase of construction with a later alterations. Their form suggests a possible mid-19th century date. The original roofing had been replaced throughout with corrugated sheeting. The brick walling and roof timbers are largely original.*

*The cattle shelter shed was a typical example, south-facing and open-fronted with a brick manger and a wooden hay rack along the rear wall. The posts of the open south side of the shelter were supported on high plinths, another typical feature of cattle shelters. A circular hole in the east yard wall may have originally provided a source of water serving the cattle yard.*

*This type of arrangement of buildings was not confined to farmsteads and, as here, from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century 'outfarms' or satellites were established away from the main farmstead. This arrangement saved on labour as it minimised the transport of fodder crops and manure.*

*Further animal accommodation was present in the northwest corner of the cattle yard and was likely to have been a cow house, although stable in is also possible. It may have been further altered to provide fodder storage.*

*A second possible cattle shelter may have opened onto small enclosures depicted on early Ordnance Survey maps to the west. Its interpretation was uncertain, and it may have served as a cart shed or hay store.*

*A largely featureless small room at the northwest corner of the range may have been a loose box or a room for the storage and processing of fodder.*

*Fences and gates at the east of the brick range formed small enclosures, probably used to temporarily contain animals during veterinary treatment or other procedures. At least one small enclosure is recorded here on an 1886 Ordnance Survey map.*

*A Dutch barn is not depicted on 1967 mapping but is shown on a map dating to 1991.*



## **1.0 PROJECT AND PLANNING BACKGROUND**

This report presents the findings of historic building recording undertaken on barns at Langton Caudle, Stonton Wyville, Leicestershire. The programme of archaeological investigation was commissioned by Natasha Bale and Stuart Bale to fulfil a condition of planning permission.

Full planning permission (Planning Application No. 18/01966/FUL) had been granted by Harborough District Council for the conversion of an agricultural barn at Langton Caudle, Stonton Wyville to form one dwelling and the demolition of a barn and erection of a single-storey garage and plant room (Planning Application No. 18/01966/FUL).

A condition of planning permission required a scheme of historic building recording, including a full photographic survey, be undertaken prior to alteration.

The works were undertaken in accordance with Written Scheme of Investigation produced by Acorn Archaeology and approved by the Leicestershire County Council Historic and Natural Environment Team. Fieldwork was carried out on the 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2019.

## **2.0 SITE LOCATION**

The site lies approximately 6km north of Market Harborough, in the Harborough District of Leicestershire, and in the Civil Parish of Stonton Wyville.

The buildings are isolated and lie on the west slope of a hill Langton Caudle. They are located on the west side of the road which links Stonton Wyville to the north and Thorpe Langton to the south and lie at the approximately midpoint between the two settlements (Figure 2).

The barns are centred at National Grid Reference 473936 293821.

## **3.0 AIMS & OBJECTIVES**

The aim of the work was to provide a detailed record of the standing buildings on the site prior to its alteration.

The objectives were to establish:

- The form of the building;
- The date of the buildings and features of special interest;
- The state of preservation of the buildings and any features of special interest present.

These aims and objectives would be achieved through:

- Undertaking an archive photographic survey, internally and externally, including roof structures, doors, windows and any original or historic features, cross-referenced and located on a plan of the building.
- Producing a brief written account of the building, and an analysis of its development and use to Level II standard as described in the document *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice* (Historic England 2016).
- Creating a project archive, including a client report, for deposition with the appropriate museum and accession to the county Historic Environment Record.

#### **4.0 METHODOLOGY**

A plan and two elevations of the building as existing were provided by the client. Dimensions were checked by hand on site and copies of these drawings annotated to show any additional detail considered to be of significance.

A full and extensive, high quality photographic record was made of the building internally and externally. All photographs were cross referenced to an existing plan in order to locate them. The primary record was compiled using 35mm monochrome print film utilising a manual SLR supplemented by colour digital SLR photographs in TIFF format. The photographic record includes:

- General views showing the buildings and their setting
- The building's external appearance, comprising a series of oblique views showing all external elevations (dependant on accessibility) and giving an overall impression of its size and shape

- Where practical, views taken at right angles to the elevations
- More detailed photographs of external features where these are not apparent in other photographs
- Any machinery or other plant, or evidence of its former existence, and any building contents or features outside the building which have a bearing on its former use
- Views showing the overall appearance of rooms and circulation areas
- Any dates, signage, makers plates or other inscriptions, accompanied by a transcription
- All roof structures, doors, windows and any other original or historic features

The site record was compiled in accordance with archive guidelines issued by the Leicestershire Museums, Arts and Records Service.

Photographs were logged on site using pro-forma register sheets.

## **5.0 DESCRIPTIVE ACCOUNT OF BUILDINGS**

### **5.1 Setting and layout**

The recorded buildings comprise a single-storey brick L-shaped range and brick walls to the south and east which enclose a yard (Figures 3 & 4). This L-shaped range and walling was a single-phase building with a few later alterations. An adjacent, modern Dutch barn was also recorded (Plate 2, Plate 3) along with a series of small fenced enclosures attached to the brick range.

The buildings are accessible via a lane which links Stonton Wyville to the north and Thorpe Langton to the south (Figure 2) and lie approximately 15m west of the lane (Figure 3, Plate 1, Plate 2).

The surrounding landscape is a mixture of arable and pastoral land, divided by hedgerows and with some mature trees. The gently rolling landscape includes a hill, Langton Caudle, to the east side of the lane, on which several copses were noted. The settlement of Church Langton is visible to the west of the site, as is Thorpe Langton to the south. Traces of medieval ridge and furrow cultivation were visible nearby.



*Plate 1      General view of recorded buildings, looking south along lane*





*Plate 2      General view of recorded buildings, looking north along lane*



*Plate 3      General view of brick buildings, looking northwest*

## **5.2 Cattle shelter, Room 2**

The east-west part of the L-shaped brick range largely comprised an open-fronted cattle shelter (Room 2) which opened onto the enclosed yard to the south (Figures 3 & 4, Plate 3, Plate 4, Plate 5, Plate 7, Plate 8, Plate 9 & Plate 10).

Flooring was not evident in Room 2, with earth covering the majority of the floor, although in places rough patches of concrete were evident.

Most of this room, in common with the majority of the range, was of red brick in Flemish garden wall bond, with an increasing use of stretchers above eaves level.

The north elevation of the range was plain brickwork with no openings or other detailing (Plate 4).



*Plate 4 Plain north elevation of brick structure, looking southwest*

The apex of the east gable end of this room had been replaced or infilled with 20<sup>th</sup> century brick (Plate 5).





*Plate 5 East gable of cattle shelter, Room 2, looking west*

The open south elevation of Room 2 had a spliced timber wall plate supported on brickwork plinths at either end and three wooden posts with angled struts (Plate 6). Each wooden post was set on a red brick plinth with shaped blue bricks and the plinths had been the subject of later concrete repairs (Plate 7 & Plate 8).



*Plate 6 South elevation of cattle shelter, Room 2, looking north*





*Plate 7 View from interior of cattle shelter, Room 2, showing posts of south wall, looking southwest*



*Plate 8 Interior of cattle shelter, Room 2, looking west*

Each of the three wooden posts of the south elevation supported a king-post roof truss (Plate 8 & Plate 9). The roof timbers were machine-sawn. Purlins and rafters were noted, and laths to support tiles or slates survived on the south side of the room (Plate 9). The original roofing material had been replaced with corrugated sheeting, but the

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roof trusses appeared to be substantially original to the building.



*Plate 9 Detail of roof structure of cattle shelter, Room 2, looking west*

The long north wall of Room 2 was occupied by a low brick plinth (Plate 10). Angled holes in the brickwork of both gable ends of the room immediately above this indicated that this had formed the base to a manger, with a now-lost angled wooden upper section (Plate 10, Plate 8). A wooden hay rack survived above the manger, along the full length of the room (Plate 8 & Plate 10).



*Plate 10 Hay rack and manger along north wall of cattle shelter, Room 2, looking northeast*

### **5.3 Cattle yard, Area 6**

Immediately south of the cattle shelter (Room 2) was an enclosed yard of approximately 14.5m by 8.5m (Area 6) (Plate 11, Figure 4). This was enclosed by buildings to the north and west, brick walls to the south and east, with a gateway in the southern wall (Plate 11, Plate 12 & Plate 13).



*Plate 11 General view from southeast corner of cattle yard (Area 6), looking west, northwest and north*





*Plate 12 View from Dutch barn towards brick-walled cattle yard (Area 6)*



*Plate 13 Brick wall and gateway at south of cattle yard (Area 6), looking northeast*

The brickwork of the south and east walls matched the Flemish garden wall bond recorded elsewhere. In places blue ceramic coping survived on top of the southern wall (Plate 12 & Plate 13). The top of the south wall had a noticeable lean to the south in places, and, as such, had been subject to 20<sup>th</sup> century repairs. A single surviving

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wooden post reflected the former position of gates within the southern opening to the yard.

A small opening was noted in the east wall of the yard, perhaps having allowed for a former a pipe or machinery (Plate 14).



*Plate 14 Detail of east wall of cattle yard (Area 6) showing hole through wall, looking northeast*

#### **5.4 Cow house or stable, Room 3**

Located at the northwest corner of the cattle yard (Area 6), and adjoining the west end of the cattle shelter, (Room 2) was a small room (Room 3) (Figure 4, Plate 15, Plate 17).

This was accessible via a single doorway from the cattle yard with a marked step up of approximately 0.30m. Adjacent to this was a bricked-up window, with a rowlock brick

segmental arch over, matching that over the adjacent doorway. A single breather slit had been incorporated within the infill of the former window (Plate 15).

No door survived in the doorway, but a stable door noted inside Room 3 may have originated here (Plate 17).



*Plate 15 South external elevation of Room 3, showing blocked window and inserted breather slit, looking north*

Internally, Room 3 had a brick floor, which gently sloped down towards the doorway (Plate 16 & Plate 17).





*Plate 16      Detail of brick flooring in Room 3, looking north*



*Plate 17 Interior of Room 3, showing brick floor, blocked window and inserted breather slit, looking south, Scale 1m*

The northern wall of Room 3 was occupied by a brick manger, which incorporated shaped blue bricks at the top. Three iron tethering rings were attached to these blue bricks (Plate 18, Plate 19 & Plate 20). A single surviving horizontal timber with a few remnants of smaller vertical timbers attached, along with holes in the brickwork of the west and east walls, represented the remains of a hay rack over the manger (Plate 18 & Plate 19).





*Plate 18      Brick manger with iron tethering rings and remnants of hay rack inside  
Room 3, looking north*





*Plate 19      Detail of brick manger, iron tethering rings and remnants of hay rack in Room 3, looking northwest*



*Plate 20 Detail of brick manger in Room 3, looking west, Scale 1m*

The roof structure in Room 3 comprised wooden purlins supporting wooden rafters with modern corrugated sheeting over, with one panel being translucent (Plate 21, Plate 17).





*Plate 21 Detail of roof structure in Room 3, looking west*

### **5.5 Possible cattle shelter or cart shed, Room 5**

Most of the western range was made up of Room 5 (Figure 4, Plate 22). Although slightly smaller than the cattle shed (Room 2) it was similar, having one open long side at the west which was supported on comparable plinths and wooden posts (Plate 22, Plate 23).

No flooring was evident within Room 5, the interior being filled with earth at the time of the survey.



*Plate 22      General view of brick buildings from southwest, Room 5 at centre, looking northeast*



*Plate 23      Interior of Room 5 showing posts of west elevation, looking northwest*

The southern gable end of Room 5 had been partially rebuilt (Plate 24), possibly due to the same leaning seen in the southern yard wall. Original walling, continuous with that of the adjacent yard to the east, was noted below the sill level of an opening in the gable. Above this, the gable met the yard wall with a ragged join, and had been

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rebuilt possibly in the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Plate 24). It was therefore unknown whether the original gable would have included a similar opening.



*Plate 24 Substantially-rebuilt south gable of Room 5, looking north*

A further substantial opening had been inserted into the otherwise plain east wall of Room 5. This was cut roughly into the brickwork and a modern steel lintel inserted (Plate 11, Plate 25 & Plate 26). It is unknown whether there may have originally been a smaller opening in this position.



*Plate 25 Interior of Room 5, looking north*



*Plate 26 Interior of Room 5, looking south*

The roof trusses of Room 5 were simple structures comprising tie beams supporting a central strut and common rafters (Plate 25 & Plate 26). Laths noted on the east side of the roof would have supported the original roof covering, now replaced with corrugated sheeting.



## **5.6 Room 4, fodder store or loose box**

The final room of the brick structure was Room 4, located at the northwest corner (Figure 4). The brickwork of this room indicated it was of the same single build as the majority of the L-shaped range and yard (Cover Plate, Plate 22). This room was accessible via a single doorway in the west elevation, which had a brick segmental arch over it. No door survived within this opening. Two substantial plank doors were noted inside the room, either one of which may potentially have once filled this opening.

Flooring in Room 4 was concrete, although the potential age of this was unclear.



*Plate 27      General interior view of Room 4, looking southeast and south*

As in some of the other recorded rooms, roof timbers in Room 4 included laths, but the original roofing material had been replaced with corrugated sheeting (Plate 28 & Plate 29).





Plate 28 *Detail of roof structure in Room 4, looking south*



Plate 29 *Detail of roof structure in Room 4, looking east*

In addition to the two plank doors stored in Room 4, further wood and iron objects were noted (Plate 30). One had a selection of iron fixings including chains and may have been part of an agricultural implement such as a harrow.





*Plate 30* Fragment of wood and iron objects in Room 4, looking east, Scale 1m

### **5.7 Area 7, pens**

A series of pens were noted at the east side of the brick range, between it and the adjacent lane (Figures 3 & 4, Plate 31). These were formed from wooden fences and wood and metal gates. They may have served to isolate small numbers of animals for veterinary treatment and other tasks.





*Plate 31 General view of pens (Area 7), looking west*

### **5.9 Dutch barn, Room 1**

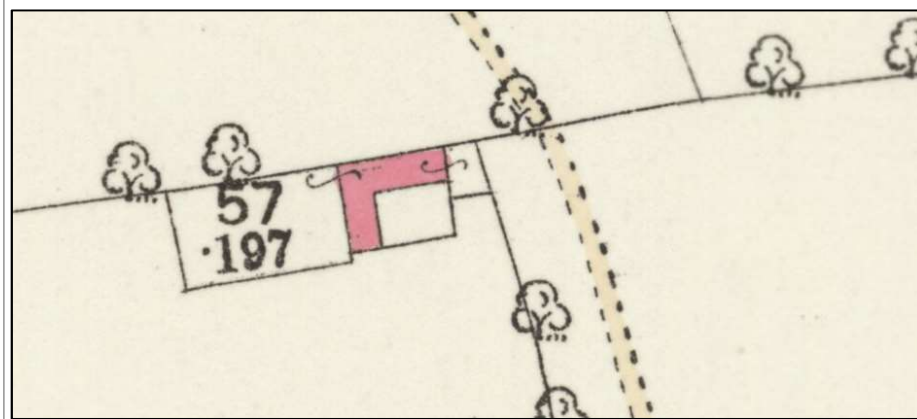
A modern Dutch barn was located approximately 6.5m south of the brick range and yard (Figure 4). This was a concrete structure with corrugated sheeting roof and an 'ATCOST' sign on its east gable (Plate 32).



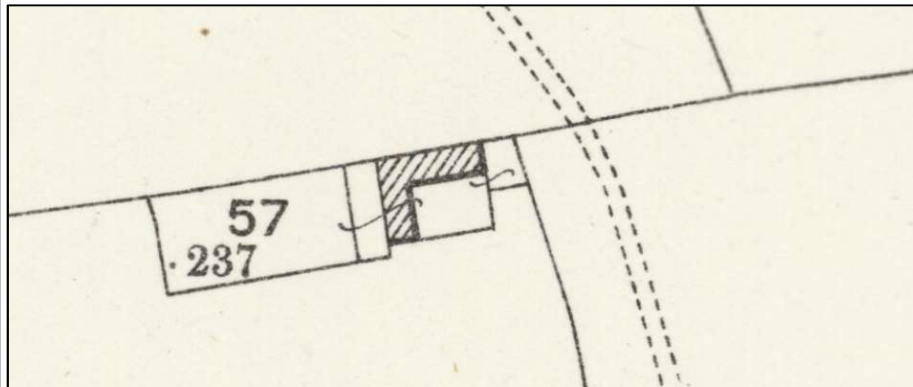
*Plate 32 East gable of Dutch Barn, Room 1, looking west*

## **6.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

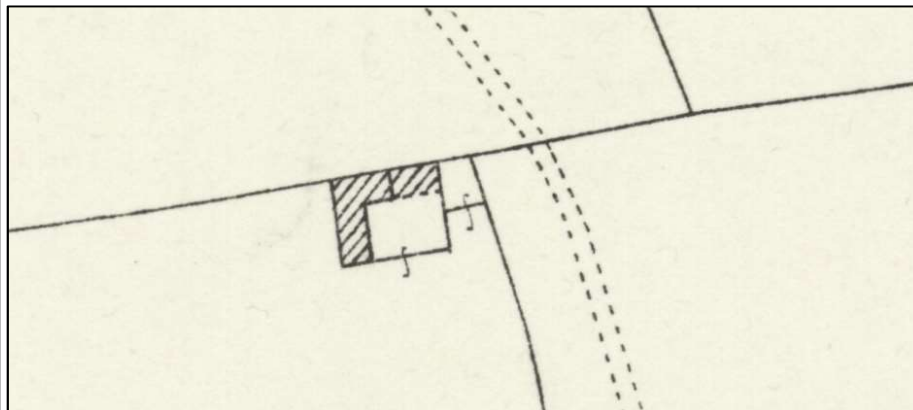
The L-shaped brick range including a cattle yard with a shelter on one side appeared to represent a single phase of construction, with a few later alterations. Most of the brick building was in matching red Flemish garden wall bond with occasional blue brick detailing in places. A brief examination of freely-available historic maps (Figure 1) indicates that these were constructed prior to 1885, and their fabric is consistent with a 19<sup>th</sup> century date. The form of this group of buildings suggests a possible mid-19<sup>th</sup> century date.



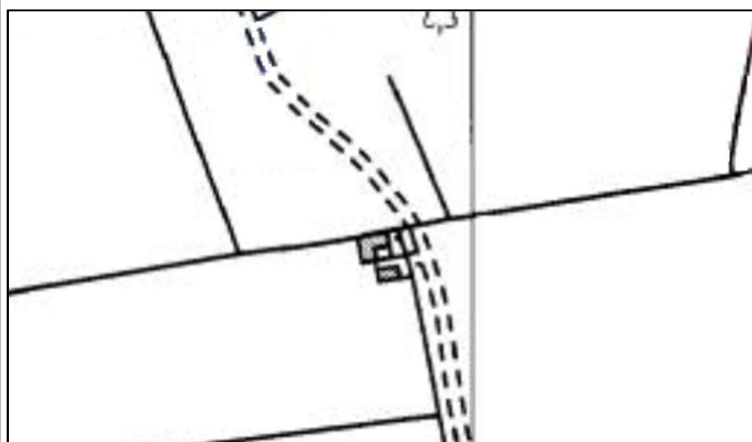
Ordnance  
Survey 25"  
map,  
Leicestershire  
XLVI.5 Surveyed  
1885, Published  
1886



Ordnance  
Survey 25"  
map,  
Leicestershire  
XLVI.5 Surveyed  
1902, Published  
1904



Ordnance  
Survey 25"  
map,  
Leicestershire  
XLVI.5 Surveyed  
1928, Published  
1929



Ordnance  
Survey  
1:10,000 map  
1991-1992

Figure 1 Extracts from Ordnance Survey 25" maps, Leicestershire XLVI.5 and 1:10,000  
1991-1992, Not to scale

Agricultural improvements in the 18<sup>th</sup> century emphasised the importance of manure in maintaining soil fertility. It was also recognised that cattle fattened better and more milk was produced in yards and buildings. Therefore the 19<sup>th</sup> century saw an increase in livestock accommodation in most farmsteads (English Heritage *et al* 2006, 55). Nationally, open-fronted sheds were increasingly built from the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century and were typical for mixed farming areas. There are few surviving separate buildings for livestock in the East Midlands dating from before 1840, and these were possibly either temporary structures or were not provided before this period (*ibid.* 55-57).

Cattle shelter sheds, such as Room 2, were typically open-fronted with a manger and hay rack, usually along the rear wall, which contained no means of tethering cattle (Brunskill 2007, 70). A further characteristic feature of such buildings is the high plinths to support the posts of the open frontage and to protect wooden posts from rotting in the deep accumulated manure in the shelter and adjacent yard (Barnwell and Giles 1997, 57). Cattle yards typically faced south and were protected from the north by a building (Brunskill 2007, 69-70), which is the case for Room 2 and Area 6. No water troughs were observed during the survey, but it is possible that a circular hole in the east yard wall may have originally provided a source of water to the cattle yard.

Brunskill observes that this type of arrangement of farm buildings was not confined to farmsteads, and from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century were added to field barns to make outfarms or satellites away from the main farmstead (2007, 69-70). Outfarms were usually located on larger farms or in areas where farmsteads had been removed from villages after enclosure resulting in some fields being distant from the farmstead. These were usually in the form of a yard which was fully or partly enclosed by buildings (English Heritage *et al* 2006, 66). This arrangement saved on labour as it minimised the transport of fodder crops and manure between the fields and farmstead (*ibid.*).

As investigation as to the original ownership of the recorded buildings was beyond the scope of this survey, it is not known to what farm this formed a satellite. However final enclosures of land in Stonton Wyville parish are recorded by Beresford (1948) as having taken place in 1638-79.

At the northwest inner corner of the cattle yard was Room 3. This had several distinctive features of animal accommodation, with a gently sloping brick floor for ease of removing manure, a brick manger with three iron tethering rings and traces of a hay rack over this. It had a single door and had originally had a window next to this. The size of the manger and hay rack indicates that it was designed to accommodate either cattle or horses.



A comparable example of a stable was identified at Hanby in South Lincolnshire, this having a similar arrangement of internal features (Barnwell and Giles 1997, 55), although stables usually have individual stalls (Brunskill 2007, 76). A stable door was noted inside Room 3 which could tentatively be used as further evidence as to the function of this room.

Usually cow houses are small, and some have a manger and hay rack against one wall indicating a single row of 3-5 cattle tethered facing in one direction. Although the precise function of such rooms is unclear, they may have been for milk cows or fatstock, or have varied in use according to the season (Barnwell and Giles 1997, 58). Given the proximity to the cattle shelter shed and yard it is perhaps more likely that this room was intended as cattle accommodation. It would also be undesirable for horses to have to regularly walk through the deep manure of the cattle yard.

At some time after its initial construction the window of Room 3 had been blocked with brick and replaced with a single breather slit. This suggests that the room was used for fodder storage later in its life and would have been in a convenient position to serve this purpose, being adjacent to the shelter shed. The date of this alteration is uncertain, but the brickwork suggests a possible late 19<sup>th</sup> century to early 20<sup>th</sup> century date.

Room 5 at the west of the L-shaped range was of uncertain function. It had obvious similarities with Room 2, with one open long side supported on posts, suggesting the possibility that it may have been a second cattle shelter. Brunskill notes that sometimes there could be several yards to separate various categories of loose cattle (2007 69-70). Ordnance Survey maps of 1886 and 1904 show small enclosures immediately west of this building (Figure 1), on the open side of Room 5, and it is possible that these formed a yard associated with a shelter.

The recent rebuilding of the south gable and the insertion of a large opening in the east wall of Room 5 mean that its original form is uncertain. Additionally, although the room had an open west side with posts on tall plinths, evidence for other characteristic features of a shelter shed such as mangers and hay racks was lacking. This leaves open the possibility of a different function, possibly as a cart shed, hay store or even manure store, although the latter is a rare building type (Barnwell and Giles, 1997 144) and hence unlikely.

Room 4 at the northwest corner of the range was a small room lacking in features. Openings were restricted to a single doorway in the east elevation and flooring was of concrete of uncertain age, but potentially modern. However, the association of this room with at least one cattle shelter and a cattle yard suggests a related function. One

possibility is that it served as a loose box, an almost featureless room in which a single animal could be isolated or a few left untethered, perhaps used for fatstock, pregnant or ill cattle or a bull (Barnwell and Giles 1997, 59). Most loose boxes date from the 1850s (English Heritage *et al* 2006, 57), fitting within the suggested mid-19<sup>th</sup> century date range for the brick buildings. Alternatively, this room could have been used for the storage and processing of fodder for cattle, possibly a chaff or root house.

A series of fences and gates at the east of the brick range (Area 7) formed small enclosures, probably used to temporarily contain animals during veterinary treatment or other procedures. At least one small enclosure is recorded here on an 1886 Ordnance Survey map (Figure 1), indicating that these enclosures have their origins in at least the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

A Dutch barn, an open-sided structure for storing hay, was recorded on the site as Room 1. This is not depicted on the Ordnance Survey 6" map of 1967, but is shown on the 1991-1992 1:10,000 map, providing a date range for its construction (Figure 1).

## 7.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author of this report would like to thank Natasha Bale and Stuart Bale who commissioned the work and assisted in the successful completion of the project. Simon Loaring provided advice on the project, and Neil Parker edited this report.

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Knight, D., B. Vyner & C. Allen, 2012, *East Midlands heritage: An updated research agenda and strategy for the Historic environment in the East Midlands*

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## **9.0 PROJECT/ ARCHIVE DETAILS**

### **9.1 Project Information**

SITE CODE: LCSW19

PLANNING REFERENCE: 18/01966/FUL

FIELD OFFICER: Vicky Mellor

NGR: SP 73936 93821

CIVIL PARISH: Stonton Wyville

DATE OF INTERVENTION: 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2019

TYPE OF INTERVENTION: Historic Building Recording

UNDERTAKEN FOR: Natasha Bale and Stuart Bale

### **9.2 Archive Details**

ACCESSION NUMBER: X.A43.2019

PRESENT LOCATION:

Acorn Archaeology, 9 New Street, Sleaford, Lincolnshire. NG34 7HG

FINAL LOCATION: Leicestershire Museums Service

ACCESSION DATE: TBC

#### **The Site Archive Comprises:**

Daily record sheets	1
Photographic record sheets	2
Black and White films	3
Digital Photographs	61
Various annotated plans and elevations	

It is intended that transfer of the archive in accordance with current published requirements will be undertaken following completion of this project.