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*Comment on an Historic Building at
Butts Bank Farm, Broadwas, Worcestershire*



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Building at Butts Bank Farm,
Broadwas, Worcestershire***

A report for Mr and Mrs Barnes

November 2006

Paul Williams

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1. Project Background

1.1. Location of the Site

The village of Broadwas straddles the A44 Worcester to Leominster Road, elevated on the northern edge of the floodplain of the River Teme. Butts Bank Farm is located on Weston Hill (NGR SO 7637 5540), which runs adjacent to the east of the A44, to which it was the precursor. Broadwas may be described as a large village with an historic core of buildings dating from the 16th and 17th century with later ribbon development following the main road.

1.2. Development Details

There is currently no proposal to develop the site, but following concern regarding the condition of a cruck framed structure to the rear of the present farmhouse, the client Mr and Mrs Barnes of Butts Bank Farm, in conjunction with their agent, Wall James and Davies and Mike Glyde, Planning Archaeologist, Worcestershire County Council, commissioned an archaeological assessment of the structure, in order that informed decisions may be made in the future regarding its preservation.

The structure is a Grade II* Listed building. The building is regarded as being in very bad condition (Category A) on the Buildings at Risk Register.

1.3. Reasons for the Building Assessment

The building is thought to represent the remains of a former longhouse, which is said to be the only known surviving cruck framed longhouse in Worcestershire (Mike Glyde pers comm). Due to this apparent rarity value and concern over the physical condition of the structure, it was sought to commission a report to highlight its historic, archaeological and architectural background, its context within our present knowledge of this form of building and its present condition.

It is not the intention of this report to record the fabric of the structure in any depth, or to make more than basic observations regarding overall condition.

2. Methods and Process

2.1. Project Specification

- ❑ The project conforms to the *Standard and Guidance for the Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures* (IFA 2001).
- ❑ The archaeological project conforms to the Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation (IFA 2001).
- ❑ The building was recorded photographically (where possible) and notes were made on its construction, which approximately equates with a Level 1 survey as defined by the Royal Commission for Historic Monuments of England (RCHME 1996).
- ❑ The buildings were recorded following guidelines contained in *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice* (English Heritage)
- ❑ The record archive will be offered to the appropriate museum after discussion with the client and / or archaeological curator.
- ❑ The Code of Conduct of the Institute of Field Archaeologists (1997) will be adhered to.
- ❑ The Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology, Institute of Field Archaeologists (1997) will also be followed
- ❑ Guidelines for Finds Work, Institute of Field Archaeologists (2001) will be followed.
- ❑ The documentary research will follow the guidelines contained within the Institute of Field Archaeologists Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment (2001)
- ❑ Guidelines for the Preparation of Archives for Long-Term Storage (Walker 1990) and Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections, Museum and Galleries Commission (1992) will be followed.
- ❑ Conservation Guidelines No 2, United Kingdom Institute of Conservation.
- ❑ Management of Archaeological Projects 2, English Heritage 1991
- ❑ The project conforms to a brief prepared by the Planning Advisory Section, Worcestershire Historic Environment and Archaeology Section, Worcestershire County Council (WHEAS 2006) and for which a project proposal and detailed specification was produced (Mercian Archaeology 2006).
- ❑ The project conforms to the service practice and health and safety policy as contained within the Mercian Archaeology Service Manual (Williams 2003)

2.2. Aims of the Project

The aims of the historic building assessment were to provide a statement regarding the date, significance and overall condition of the subject building based on the results of the fieldwork.

The fieldwork was to comprise a programme of documentary research in order to place the structure into context; a basic photographic record of the structure and former timbers, which were removed from the structure during partial demolition several years ago and the excavation of two test-pits to investigate the survival and nature of below ground remains.

2.3. Background Research

During the project, all known relevant and available documentary and cartographic sources were consulted.

Documentary research was carried out at Worcestershire Record Office (WRO).

3. The Documentary Research

Abbreviations Used: WRO ~ Worcester Records Office

PRO ~ Public Records Office

VCH ~ Victoria County History

3.1. Background

By the early 20th century Broadwas parish, in the Middle and Lower Oswaldslow Hundred, extended to 1,108 acres, of which over around a third were arable, almost two thirds permanent grass, a third arable and just 9 ½ acres being woodland. The loamy soils with marl and gravel subsoil were traditionally suited to growing wheat, beans, hops and cider apples (VCH III, 292).

At Domesday, Broadwas was held by the monks of Worcester, who were granted the lands some 300 years earlier by King Offa of Mercia (VCH III, 293). The priory held Broadwas until the Dissolution, when it was granted to the Dean and Chapter of Worcester. In 1650 the Parliamentary Trustees under the Commonwealth sold the manor to Sir Henry Pitt, but it was restored to the Dean and Chapter at the Reformation, who collected rents on the manorial holdings into the 20th century.

3.2. Specific Background

The later history of the site (buildings and land) is tied to the Berkeley family, who held the plot on lease from the Dean and Chapter of Worcester, along with other lands further afield.

In 1836 the Tithe Commutation Act was passed by Parliament, resulting in an extensive survey of land across England in order to produce a series of Tithe Apportionment Maps that relayed information about land ownership and use, aimed at converting the commutation of tithe in kind to land taxation (Hoskins 1972, 37). The tithe apportionment and tithe map for

Broadwas were produced in 1839. The Apportionment indicates that Butts Bank Farm (not then referred to as such) was held from the Dean and Chapter by Reverend John Rowland Berkeley and occupied by Edward Pullen under lease. The property was described as ‘house, garden and fold’ and extended to 1 acre and 30 perches, paying tithes to the vicar of Broadwas of £31- 5 shillings (WRO: BA 1572 AP s760/44; Figure 2 below).

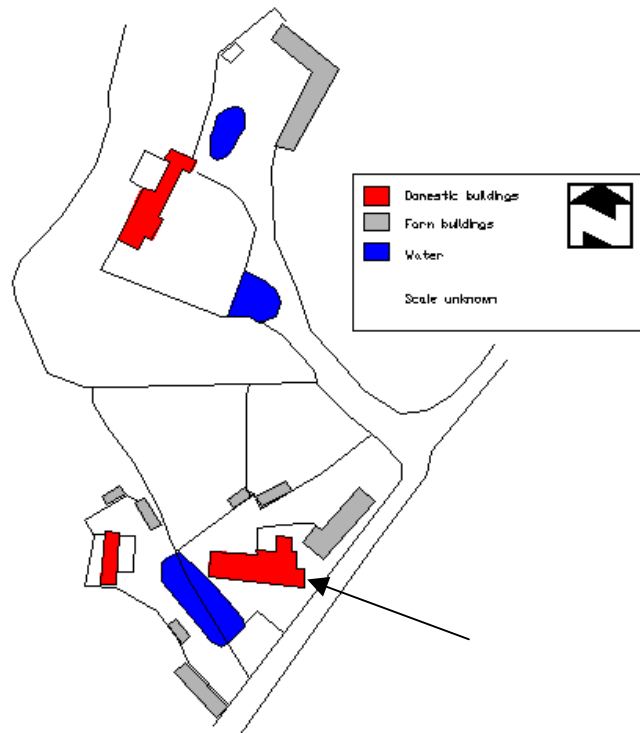


Figure 2: *Extract from the Tithe Map of Broadwas (1839), with the subject building arrowed*

A valuation of estate leased to Edward Pullen in 1858 was located; a further valuation of the same estate in 1844 indicates this was *probably* not the subject property, as at this time it was in the occupation of William Hill, although sub-letting was commonplace in this period. The valuations are worthy of a mention here as they give an insight into the general style and quality of buildings at Broadwas at this time. In 1844 the property was described as ‘ number 132 - cottage, garden and gravelpit piece. This was formerly the farmhouse of the Stone Estate, it is timber built and tiled and in a very bad state of repair. This would make two cottages if repaired’ and ‘number 335- house, garden and rickyard. The farmhouse, which is timber built, brick nogged and tiled is very old and requires considerable repair, especially the roof. The buildings consist of a stable, cowhouse, cider mill house, cart hovel with adjacent piggery, all timber built, boarded and thatched and very old and in a poor state’ (BA 2602/75, 009:1). The later valuation of 1858 indicates that the dilapidated cottage had been ‘taken down’ and the materials used to repair farm buildings. The farmhouse had also been repaired and was described as being in ‘fair order’. Billings Directory Of 1855 lists Edward Pullen of Butts Bank, farmer and butcher, also of the Brook and Rectory farms and it is likely that this valuation refers to his ancillary properties.

Land Tax Assessments indicate that the Berkeleys’ held the copyhold for the subject property from 1781, whilst the leasehold tenants varied. The property was listed as Butts Bank. This information is contained in tabulated form below.

Date	Leaseholder	Copyholder	Tax Due	Reference
1836	Revd. Berkeley	Edward Pullen	£17-6-2	BA 4609/10, 260.2091
1835	ditto	ditto	ditto	BA 4609/10, 260.2091
1834	ditto	ditto	ditto	BA 4609/9, 260.2091
1833	ditto	ditto	ditto	BA 4609/9, 260.2091
1832	ditto	ditto	ditto	
1831	ditto	ditto	ditto	
1826	ditto	ditto	ditto	BA 33/24, b152
1825	ditto	ditto	ditto	BA 33/23, b152
1815	Dr Berkeley	Richard Rimell	ditto	BA 823/18, 152
1801	ditto	Mary Reynolds	£8-13-3	BA 4609/1, 260:2091
1800	Berkeley	ditto	ditto	BA 283/8, 152
1798	Berkeley,	ditto	ditto	BA 1636/3, 152
1793	ditto	Thomas Reynolds	ditto	BA 823/7, 152
1787	ditto	John Reynolds	ditto	BA 823/2, 152
1781	Rowland Berkeley	John Reynolds		BA 823/1, 152

An estate book of 1804 (BA2602, b009:1) refers in detail to three cottages at Butts Bank, although from the reference it is not possible to define which cottage, if any, represents the subject property. The cottages listed are: -

1. Cottage and 4.2 acres at the Butts Bank tenanted by Mary Cartwright.
2. A cottage and half acre of land from the waste called Little Green, tenanted by Ben Birch, assignee of William Wood. This entry refers to William Pullen, son of Edward Pullen with the date 1844. Littlebury's Trade Directory of 1872 lists Edward Pullen at Brook House and maybe this is that property?
3. A cottage and garden 80 yards long by 12 yards broad tenanted by Richard Bacon. This reference also refers to 'son of Edward Pullen' with the date 1851 written beside.

A codical to the last will and testament of Rowland Berkeley dated 1805, indicated that he required that his copyhold messuages and farms at Broadwas were not sold on his death, although the document gives no further useful information (BA 918, 899:79).

The Court Books of The Dean and Chapter of Worcester offered further significant evidence regarding the property at Butts Bank. The Court Book of 1794 (referring to November 1793)

indicates that the copyholds were then passed to Henry Rowland Berkeley after the death of --
 -? Berkeley, upon receipt of 4 Heriots. The holding in question is described as ‘one messuage
 and one nook of land called Smiths and one messuage and two nooks of land called Calverhill’
 (BA 2602/19 009:1). The Court Book entry for 1793 indicates that the copyholds may have
 been held by Lucy Berkeley at that time.

The entry in the Court Book for 1755 (BA 2602/86, 009:1) shows that the Berkeleys’ were
 still in possession of the property; the entry refers to the extension of the lease for a life (7
 years) by heriot (payment to the Dean and Chapter).

A survey of the Broadwas estate belonging to the Dean and Chapter of Worcester was made in
 November 1649 (Cave and Wilson 1924, 17-28). The survey indicated that Thomas
 Walsingham and his brothers, Francis and George held the subject property by copyhold,
 referred to as ‘1 messuage and 1 noke of land called *Smythes* and 1 messuage and 2 nokes of
 land called *Calverhill*’.

William Dingley, Talbot Badger and Richard Turton, leased from Walsingham until reversion
 in 1647. It appears that Dingley, Badger and Talbot were then bankrupt. In 1644 Nathaniel
 Tovey held the property from Walsingham, with Thomas Cave and Rowland Berkeley, who
 were the trustees of the late Cicely Tovey, presumably the Mother of Nathaniel.

Humphrey Wythie, John Sawyer and John Biddle, referred to as ‘three singing men of the
 quire (choir) of the Cathedral Church of Worcester were in possession prior to the death of
 Cicely Tovey.

In 1611 a Thomas Walsingham resided in Berkshire and was recorded as naming his uncle,
 Humphrey Walsingham of Broadwas, as his attorney (Shakespeare Birthplace Trust Archive
 DR5/1244). In 1625 a Maurice Walsingham of Broadwas was accused together with Richard
 Clever, Thomas Dunne and William Noxon, also of Broadwas, with of riotous assembly
 (WRO: BA 151, 1/1/48).

3.3. The Map Evidence

Various maps and plans were consulted that were of no use, these were as follows: -

Title	Date	Reference
Plan of Broadwas Court Estate	19 th century	5589/138, 705:192
Broad Green plan	ditto	ditto
Youngs’ plan of glebe lands at Broadwas	1775	BA 1691, s971.2/4
ditto	1800	BA 1691, s971.2/5

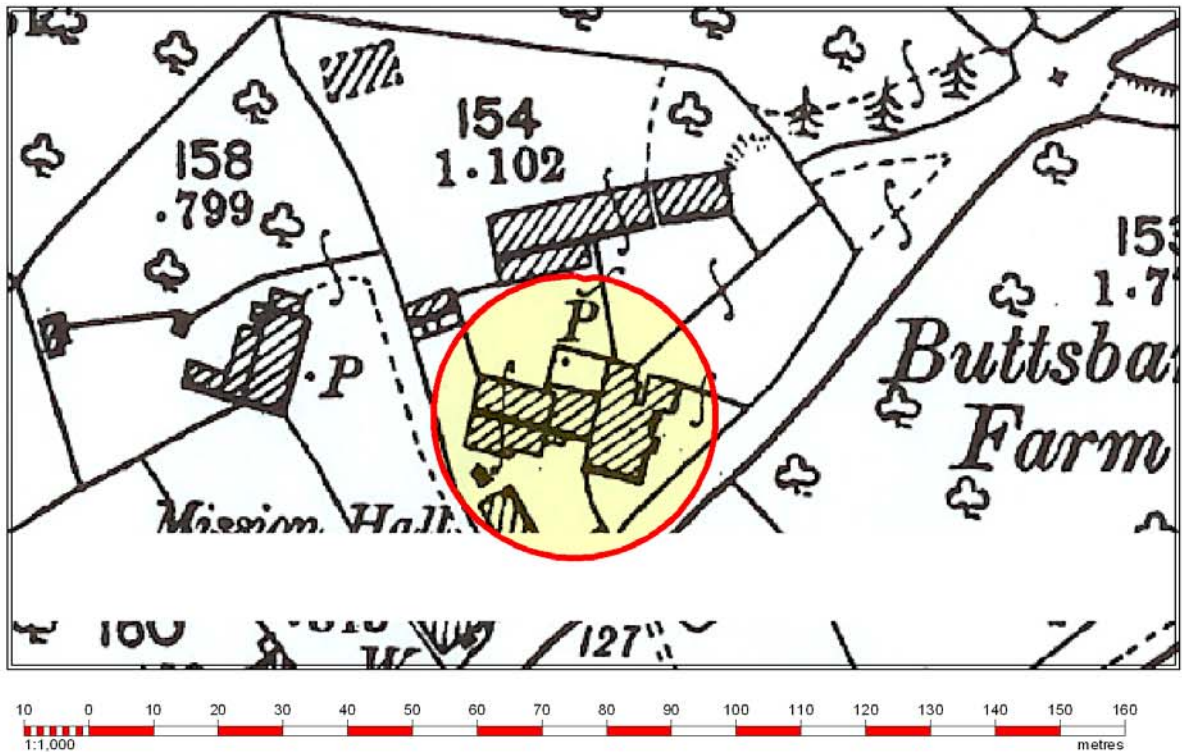
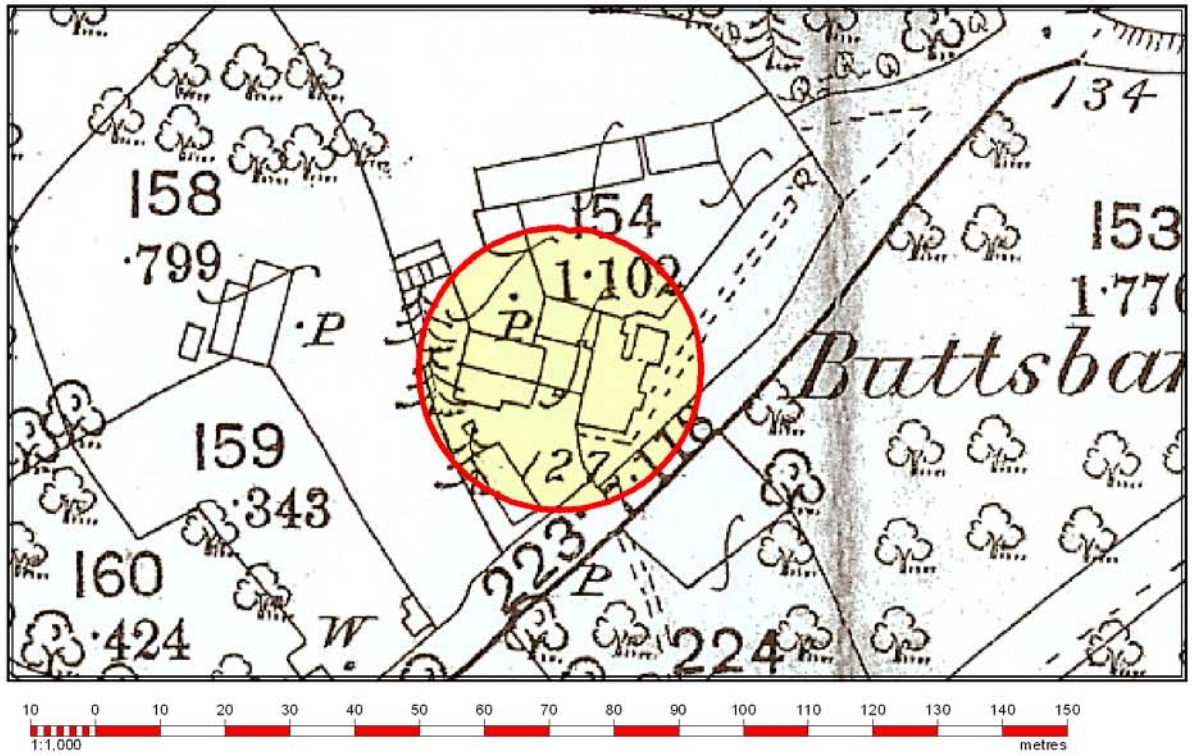
The Tithe Apportionment Map of 1839 (Figure 2) differentiates between domestic property (in
 red) and animal enclosure (in grey). The subject building is depicted in red, indicating its
 status as domestic, although it should be stressed that discrepancies do occur on tithe maps.
 The map shows the building extending between approximately the same eastern and western

points as today, but the present brick farmhouse is not depicted, indicating it was built later on the footprint of part of the eastern end of the earlier build. The eastern end of the building is depicted as being narrower than the western end and there are also projections to the north. One significant element is that the wider section projecting to the north, steps out at a juncture with a property boundary, which encloses a yard on the northern side. The plan also shows a pond to the south-west of the structure, which considering the topography may have been a man made feature, possibly a quarry-pit.

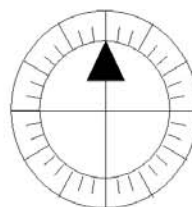
The present farmhouse is not shown on the 1839 tithe map, but appears on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1885, indicating it was built between these dates. In 1696 England was subjected to a window tax for houses with more than six windows. Owners of property sidestepped this taxation by blocking windows, which were then frequently painted to resemble a window. The taxation was repealed in 1851 and as the present Butts Bank farmhouse has a blocked and painted window aperture, it can be inferred that it was constructed prior to 1851. However, there is an anomaly, as the remaining sashes are set flush with the fenestration, a style that was generally earlier, with rebated sashes the later style.

The 1st and 2nd edition Ordnance Survey 25" sheets dated to 1885 and 1904 respectively (Figures 3 and 4 below), both show the present farmhouse with its Victorian brick extension to the north-east corner. The standing cruck-framed structure is shown extending back to the west and there is a further attached building to the southern side. The cruck structure is depicted as two parts, with a north-south split, suggesting individual structures were apparent to the surveyors externally. Slightly to the west of this point there is the boundary to an enclosed yard and the structural element to the east of this point clearly is wider than that to the west, in common with the detailing on the earlier tithe map.

Figure 3 and 4: 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map (1885, top) and 2nd Edition (1904, bottom)



Extracts from comparative early
Ordnance Survey maps, showing Butts
Bank Farm



3.4. The Topography

The general terrain around Butts Bank Farm slopes down to the south and south-west, resulting in the present farmhouse having an exposed basement to the south-western corner and southern side. The cruck-framed structure is terraced into the slope, above a stone and brick retaining wall to the southern side.

The sloping topography is highlighted by adjacent field-names, with The Bank, Weston Hill, Crumps Hill and Crumps Bank to the south and Near Hill, Far Hill, Round Hill and Kimley Hill to the north. The place-name Butts Bank is likely to derive from *butts* – ‘the end of a ploughed strip’. The title map shows strips to the south in Petchwick Field, terminating close to Butts Bank, although frequently a ‘butts’ place-name derives from an area of ground where archery was practiced during the medieval period.

3. The Historic Building Recording

3.1. The Fieldwork Methodology

The building recording was undertaken between 11th July and 16th August 2006.

A photographic survey of the upstanding building was carried out using digital photography. Either a 2-metre or 1-metre scale was used, although the poor condition of the structure and internal obstacles meant that this was not always possible.

A photographic record was made of accessible timbers pertaining to part of the dismantled structure, which were stored inside the building, using the same methodology.

Two test-pits were excavated by hand in order to determine the existence and nature of deposits within the area of the demolished section of the building.

Proforma Building Record Forms were used to record the structure in tandem with site notes and reference to site photographs, to produce the final record contained within this report.

The methodology adopted and the favourable working conditions meant that the aims and objectives of the brief could be fully met and the fieldwork was successfully concluded.

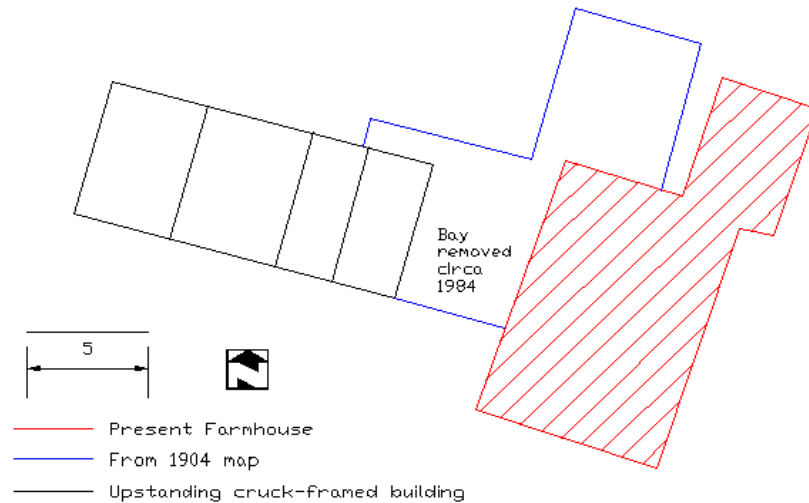


Figure 5: *The elements of the building as referred to in the text.*

4. The Fieldwork Results

4.1. General Description of the Upstanding Structure

For ease of reference the bays of the cruck building are numbered T1 to T3 from the eastern end, with cruck frames numbered C1 to C4 from the same end.

The upstanding remains of the subject structure form a three-bay, cruck-framed detached former agricultural building, of which at least one further bay, which was butted by the present farmhouse, is known to have been removed. The northern elevation is founded on a stone plinth, although this is patchy in extent and brick and mortar has been used to consolidate. The southern elevation sits on a circa 2-metre high, mainly stone wall, that drops down to the lower level to the south, indicating the nature of terracing up. The western end of the structure is built on lower ground and consequently the floor level of the central bay has been built up to accommodate. The low height of the central bay bridging beams suggests that there has been substantial build up of floor levels and concrete has been heavily utilised.

The structure is variously clad in weatherboarding, sheet timber and corrugated iron, with some remnant wattle and daub work at the eastern end and brick nogging remaining as infill to some panels. The roof cover is mainly of hand-made clay tile with some areas covered only in felt and lath.

The timber framing is much altered, with additions of later timbers, some showing evidence of re-use. The original pattern of framing appears to be of four rectangular panels to each bay elevation (two over two) with the central posts tied-across the bay with substantial bridging

beams that are carpented into the frame, rather than later additions. Presumably these originally carried a hayloft.

There are four remaining cruck-frames (pairs of crucks, tiebeams, spurs, packing etc), crucks C1 and C2 are both true crucks from floor to ridge and C3 and C4 are base crucks to collar height; this type of cruck is congruent with a hipped gable and suggestive that the roof cover was once of thatch. Cruck frame C4 is therefore, thought to be a later addition, the hipped gable moved to the east when bay 3 was added at this end. The true cruck apex type is F2 (Alcock 1981), with short principals above the collar carrying a ridge purlin. Only 26 examples of this type of apex were noted by Alcock in his cruck survey of 1981, the majority of these lie in south-west England, with few in the English Midlands and north-west England, only one was recorded in Wales.

Bay 1 is divided laterally by an inserted partition and empty mortises in the side framing suggest that it was originally enclosed, the access through the northern frame probably fairly recent and the opposing access, leading to steps down to the south, probably 19th century. There is a moulded doorhead carved from the framing of C1, which sits above a later inserted door. This doorway is original to the frame and would have allowed access into the adjacent bay to the east, which was demolished in the late 20th century. The inserted cross-frame is used to support one end of an upper floor, which runs to the western end of the structure, although in poor condition and much is missing.

4.2. The General Condition of the Remaining Structure

The majority of the timber used in the timber frame construction appears to be of a timber other than oak, elm being the most likely. This is noticeable, as the timber has suffered greatly from woodworm, which has bored into the heartwood. Woodworm will only be evident in the outer sapwood of oak, as the centre is generally too dense to be bored. However, the cruck-frames appear to be of oak, being in noticeably better condition than the majority of the frame.

The structure is generally in poor condition and there are many indications of stress, movement and fracture of structural timbers. The remaining wattle and daub panels in the exposed eastern frame (C1) have been exposed to the elements for many years and degradation is clear. The daub is cracking and falling out and some of the wattle lattice, on which the daub is applied, has moved out of its securing holes and is in danger of collapsing outwards.

The southern framing of bay 1 has suffered from wet rot as well as insect boring, as has the wall plate of the northern frame. The framing of the southern elevation is leaning to the south.

The tiebeam of truss 2 has split from the cruck stud on the southern side and the stud has skewed to the south. The remaining timbers of the frame show similar degradation as to bay 1.

The cumulative problems caused by the split in the tiebeam of C2 is noticeable in bay 2, where there is a distinct lean of the southern frame to the south. The northern framing is in poor condition and the sill beam has totally rotted away.

The northern foot of C3 is twisted and the cruck stud has rotted out causing weakness in this area. The tiebeam of this cruck frame is also cracked and is in poor condition.

The upper framing of bay 3 has broken at the central post and is leaning to the north.

4.3. The Dismantled Timbers

One bay of the timber framed structure and the northern projections were demolished around 1984 by a previous owner in order to 'detach the structure from the present farmhouse' so that windows could be added at the rear. Many of the timbers from the demolished sections are stored inside the building, although unfortunately some appear to be lost. The majority of a well-carpented and substantial cruck frame remains, although one cruck blade is missing (though there may be some remains of this within the building that were not visible).



Plate 1: *The cruck frame removed during the late-20th century stands propped against the building (Photograph by courtesy of Mr and Mrs Barnes)*



Plate 2: *The remaining cruck blade is unfortunately fractured (Scale 1 metre)*



Plate 3: *Cruck collar re-united with its arch-braces* (Scale 1 metre)



Plate 4: *The arch braces and one of a pair of cusped struts, which formed a 'V' strut above the collar of the cruck-frame* (Scale 1 metre)



Plate 5: *Curved wind braces and packing pieces (Scale 1 metre)*



Plate 6: *Cruck stud with attached crook spur, the opposite one was not found (Scale 25 centimetres)*



Plate 7: *Half beam of upper floor and various other timbers (Scale 1 metre)*



Plate 8: *Upper floor beam. Angle of tenon suggests it was an integral cruck tiebeam (Scale 1 metre)*



Plate 9: *Various timbers from dismantled timber-frame (Scale 1 metre)*



Plate 10: *Steep chamfered bridging beam (Scale 1 metre)*

4.4. The Upstanding Structure: Photographs



Plate 11: *Aerial photograph of Butts Bank Farm showing the northern timber frame projection (arrowed), probably of 17th century date (Photograph courtesy of Mr and Mrs Barnes)*



Plate 12: *Butts Bank Farm looking south-west*



Plate 13: *The remaining cruck framed structure looking north*



Plate 14: *Cruck frame C1 looking south-west. The door is the location of the earlier door between the domestic end and the byre (Scale 2 metres)*



Plate 15: *The inserted 'passage frame' in Bay 1, looking north-west*



Plate 16: *Detail of the true cruck apex style*



Plate 17: *Southern framing of Bay 2. The bridging beam is inserted and originally was tenoned into the central post (arrowed)*



Plate 18: *The opposite northern framing of Bay 2, with the original location of the opposite end of the bridging beam arrowed*



Plate 19: *Base cruck C4, looking west*

4.5. The Test-Pits

Two 1-metre square test-pits were excavated by hand in order to assess the existence, condition and nature of below ground deposits.

The pits were referenced TP1 and TP2 and their locations are shown in Figure 6 below.

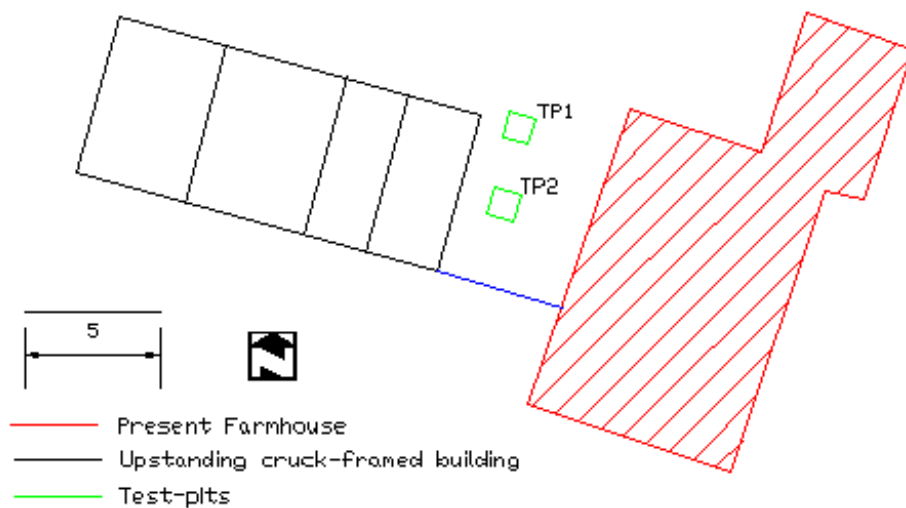


Figure 6: *Test-Pit Location*

Test-pit 1 was located in an attempt to identify the northern plinth of the removed bay of the cruck-framed structure and to examine associated deposits. Test-pit 2 was located to determine the survival of floor deposits inside the removed bay.

Test-Pit 1

A thin layer of greyish-brown sandy clay lay below the turfline [100]. A patchy whitish lime plaster layer over a rammed clay surface [101] was identified 8-10 centimetres below the present ground level. This was interpreted as the remains of a former internal floor surface. A sondage was cut through this layer to sample the material below, which was found to be a re-deposited purplish-red, very stiff clay, containing 17th century ceramics, vessel glass and animal bone. The deposit was excavated to around 30 centimetres and probing suggested that the deposit carried on below this level.

Test-Pit 2

The turf was removed by hand to reveal a thin, very dry crumbly layer of greyish-brown sandy clay including moderate small rounded stones and fragmentary modern building rubble [200], this was only around 3-5 centimetres thick. The layer was directly over what was interpreted as an internal floor layer, which was of a denuded screed of whitish plaster laid directly onto a rammed clay surface [201]. There was no evidence for any tile or flag covering having been removed.

Analysis of Test-Pit Results

A remnant floor layer was identified in both test-pits, although at a slightly lower level in test-pit 1, possibly due to later truncation. There was no indication of the plinth wall for the northern side of the missing bay of the cruck structure. This is likely to be as there was modification of this end of the structure in the 17th century (substantiated by the ceramic finds below the floor layer). At this time the structure appears to have been widened and extended to the north with a timber-framed extension (see Plate 11 above). The deposit of clay below the floor level suggests that original occupation levels of the cruck-framed structure were lower and it may be inferred from this that there was once an undercroft at this end, which was levelled during the 17th century modifications, though this could only be proven by further excavation, which would not be practical.

4. The Finds from the Test-Pits (*by Laura Griffin*)

4.1. Aims

The brief required an assessment of the quantity, range and potential of artefacts from the excavation.

The aims of the finds assessment were: -

- To identify, sort, spot date, and quantify all artefacts
- To describe the range of artefacts present
- To preliminarily assess the significance of the artefacts

4.2. Method of analysis

All hand-retrieved artefacts were examined and identified, quantified and dated to period. Pottery fabrics are referenced to the fabric reference series maintained by the Worcestershire County Council Archaeological Service (Hurst and Rees 1992).

Results of Analysis

The artefactual assemblage from Butts Bank Barn came from one stratified context (101) and the ground surface and consisted of 15 finds weighing 360g. All datable material was of post-medieval and modern date (see Appendix 1, Tables 1 and 3).

Pottery totalled 6 sherds, forming 40% of the assemblage recovered. The level of preservation was good with little surface abrasion in evidence. All sherds have been grouped and quantified according to fabric (see Appendix 1, Table 2). No diagnostic sherds were present and therefore sherds were only datable by fabric type to the general period or production span.

Other finds consisted of two pieces of brick (context 100), one of which was glazed, three fragments of animal bone (context 101), one iron nail (context 100), one fragment of bottle glass (context 101), one fragment of modern ceramic tile (context 100) and one copper coin from the reign of George V and dating to 1936 (context 100).

Discussion of the artefacts

The discussion below is a summary of the finds and associated location or contexts by period. Where possible, dates have been allocated and the importance of individual finds commented upon as necessary.

Post-medieval

The only stratified context from which finds were retrieved (context 101), could be dated to the late 17th- early 18th centuries on the basis of the pottery recovered. This included four small sherds of post-medieval red sandy ware (fabric 78), all of which appeared to come from the same vessel and were decorated with a dark brown/black surface glaze.

A further unglazed fragment of the same fabric type was also identified within this context, along with three fragments of animal bone and a small shard of dark green vessel glass from the neck of a bottle.

In addition, a fragment of brick with a thin, uneven greenish brown glaze on two surfaces, was dated to between the late 15th and 16th centuries. The fabric is of a type commonly seen on sites of this date in Worcester (A Crawford pers comm). The glaze has formed runs and does not appear to be intentional and is most likely to have resulted from the brick having been fired alongside glazed floor tiles. However, as in the case of similar bricks retrieved from the tile kiln excavated on The Tything in Worcester (Miller *et al* 2004), it is also possible that this brick originally formed part of a kiln structure and has been reused at a later date.

Modern

All remaining finds were of 19th-20th century date and unstratified. These consisted of a single sherd of Nottingham stoneware which could be dated to the mid 18th century, an iron nail, a

small fragment of a modern ceramic bathroom tile, a fragment of modern brick and a George V copper coin which was dated 1936.

Significance

The material retrieved from the single stratified context would indicate domestic activity in the close vicinity during the late 17th and early 18th centuries.

5. The Building in Context

5.1. The Building as a Longhouse

The subject structure is listed Grade II* as a 'former longhouse'. The Images of England description of the structure (based on the listing) is as follows: -

Part brick with hipped, tiled roof and end brick stacks; part timber- framed on a sandstone rubble plinth, some brick infill, otherwise weather- boarded with brick ridge stack. Cruck-built longhouse had upper "solar" bay, two hall bays open to roof, and 2 lower or "animal" bays, with broad passage (7' 6") giving access to both parts of range. A further lower bay was added, probably C15, in the same form as the original end truss in which the blades reach only to the collar beam to form a hipped gable. At c1600 the hall bays were floored and an enclosed fireplace inserted centrally in the upper bay. Finally the solar bay and half of the upper hall bay were demolished and replaced by the present farmhouse (Images of England number 151688).

This description was clearly made prior to the demolition of the bay that stood between the present farmhouse and the upstanding cruck building, although the description must be in retrospect as the present farmhouse had removed definitive evidence. From the listing text, an aerial photograph of the 1960's (Plate 11) and map evidence we can produce a plan showing the possible layout of the building prior to the mid-19th century.

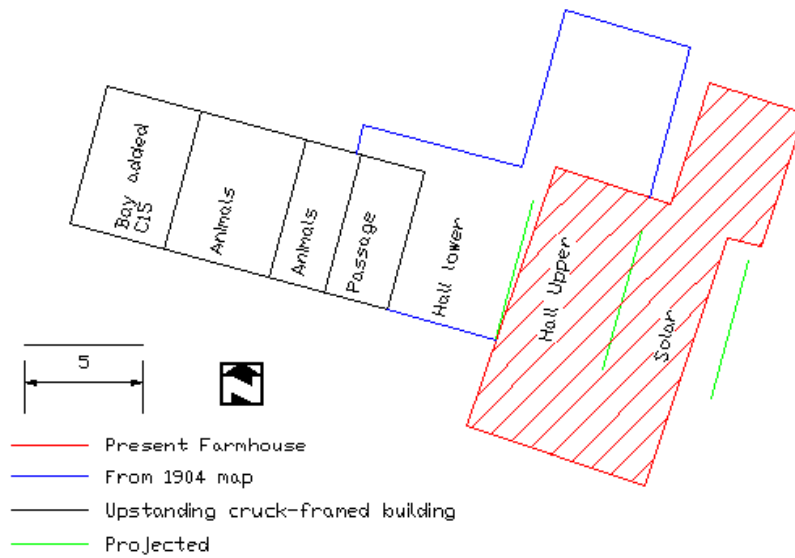


Figure 7: Proposed layout of the longhouse based on the listing details (Overlay of 1904 map and modern base plan was approximately 2 metres out - do not scale off).

5.2. What is a Longhouse?

The definition of a ‘longhouse’ has been a constant source of debate since I.C.Peate first coined the term in 1940. It was based on the literal translation of *tŷ hir* as found in Welsh medieval document, the English equivalent being the Latin form *longa domus*. However, it has been argued that the term may simply mean ‘a house that is long’ (Alcock and Smith 1972, 145). The term has since been further defined, with common access for human and animal (Alcock 1969), entry from the byre part to the house part (Smith, P, 1963) and direct access between the house and byre (Smith J.T, 1963) all being put forward as the key feature that ‘defines’ a longhouse. Further work in the 1970’s determined that longhouses took many forms and had variable functions and analysis of French examples suggested that function changed over a long period of time (Meirion-Jones 1973, 137).

The English Heritage thesaurus of monument types lists a longhouse as: -

A barn and dwelling under one roof, with a cross passage between them.

In this definition the cross passage is the key element of identification. Expanding on this description, the longhouse is further described as having a common cross passage, for entry and exit of animals and humans, with humans housed to one side and animals to the other. The proportions of the building are long and low (Brunskill 50-51). Further details derive from the results of excavations at Wharram Percy in Yorkshire, where excavated longhouses were described as buildings in which both humans and animal live under the same roof, comprising a living room with a central hearth and an inner room for sleeping or dairying, sometimes with a storage loft above. There is a cross-passage with opposing doors separating the living part from the animals. Sometimes there is no evidence for animals and the third room is likely to

have been used for various types of farm storage (Beresford and Hurst 1971, 137). Further characteristics of a 'typical' longhouse may include, construction on a slope to aid drainage from the byre, dropped roofline at the junction of the byre and domestic end, wide (up to 3 metres) common passage to allow for a wide turning circle required by cattle (Moran 2003, 24).

There are those that have argued that longhouses are uniquely an upland form of vernacular architecture, stressing that only in the upland regions was there a need to live so closely with animals, for security reasons, with cattle rustling endemic in isolated areas during the medieval period (Moran 2003, 23); in Britain, longhouses are generally associated with Devon, Cornwall, Somerset, Wales, Cumbria, and many regions of Scotland, although there are many cited examples in the lowlands (although arguably marginal regions), for example in Herefordshire, Shropshire and Hertfordshire, suggesting a wider distribution (Meeson 2001, 2).

It is likely that longhouses were widespread before 1350, although these are usually only now recognised as below ground archaeological remains (Dyer 1986, 35). Examples of early West Midland longhouses, or more correctly in view of the evidence, dwellings with a domestic end and a byre or non-domestic end under the same roof, have until recently come mainly from documentary sources; one at Northfield, now in Birmingham, of 'hall and chamber with a byre at the rear' (Dyer 1986, 25), a second example at Wolverley, Worcestershire appears in a court document of 1422, with a third recognised from documentary sources dating to 1340 relating to Hallow, Worcestershire (Field 1965, 114-5). In view of this evidence, it seems likely that the distribution of longhouses, or dwellings with a byre under the same roof, were geographically more widespread than recognised and have even been identified in nucleated lowland settlements, such as at Alrewas, Staffordshire (Meeson 2001, 14).

There has to date, been no survey of existing longhouses in the West Midlands, but some 30 examples of longhouses, longhouse derivatives (human and animal under the same roof) and house-byres have been noted during recent fieldwork in Shropshire (Moran 2003, 23-28), suggesting that there are further examples waiting to be discovered / interpreted elsewhere in the region. Worcestershire is thus far relatively devoid of longhouse possibilities, although in view of the Shropshire evidence, this appears to be flawed. Butts Bank Farm is listed as a longhouse and there are indications that The Fleece public house at Bretforton had a byre and domestic accommodation under a common roof (Bob Meeson pers comm).

5.3. The Date of the Structure

As outlined above, longhouses were likely to have been widespread before the middle of the 14th century, probably with a slow decline over the following 150 years or so. The construction of longhouses in order to keep stock animals secure and within view of the domestic arrangement, must by definition have been carried out in ephemeral areas, often in upland secluded locations where animal rustling must have presented a threat to the livelihood of farmers and by further definition, at times when the economic climate meant that security of livelihood was imperative. The majority of the cruck-framed longhouses / house-byres identified in Shropshire have been proposed as of 15th century date (Moran 2003, 23-28) although the adjacent proximity of the uplands of Shropshire and the Welsh Marches, from where there were frequently cross-border animal rustling raids, may be an additional factor.

A programme of tree-ring dating (dendrochronology) was undertaken at Butts Bank Farm by Martin Bridge of University of Central London. Many of the in situ timbers were unsuitable for dating, not having enough growth rings to produce reliable dates, but 3 in-situ timbers

(including 2 cruck blades) and 4 ex-situ timbers from the demolished domestic end were dated. From the subsequent analysis of the results, all these timbers appear to have been derived from trees that were felled at about the same time. One dated timber retained complete sapwood, thereby giving a precise felling date of spring AD 1496. The longhouse is therefore very likely to have been built in 1496, or perhaps a year or two afterwards.

5.4. How Does Butts Bank Farm Fit the Accepted model?

Getting waylaid in arguments of definition can detract from the evidence of what form the structure actually takes and attempting to make evidence fit a model is counter-productive. It is clear from the surviving parts of the dismantled cruck frame that it is distinctly different from the upstanding crucks. The former cruck frame is well carpented and elaborated with moulded bracing and cusped struts, indicating that the cruck was 'meant to be seen' and was from a human context. The cruck was in fact enclosed within a cottage that stood between the current farmhouse and the upstanding cruck building and was still occupied into the latter 20th century. Unfortunately, this was demolished without an adequate record of the fabric being made.

There is an entrance from the byre end of the structure into the domestic end. Although replaced by a later, larger doorway, it is clear from the carved hood that the doorway is original to the cruck and therefore, disregarding the possibilities of re-use, original to the structure.

The existence of a cross passage presents a problem as empty mortises in the side frames of Bay 1 indicate that it was once fully framed across, although again, re-use and modification should be borne in mind.

The structure is elevated on a bank and the hall end was at the highest level, with the byre end down slope. The internal floors, however, post date the structure and have destroyed any evidence for tethers, mangers and central drain. Interestingly, the byre has a central bridging beam to each bay and these appear to be integral to the build, being tenoned in to both side frames and presumably these would have carried a hayloft. The height of these timbers suggests that the level of the present floor is much higher than the original.

The location of the site at Broadwas cannot be described as upland or isolated and so those who would regard the longhouse as an upland phenomenon would presumably disregard Butts Bank Farm. However, as outlined above, there are now many recognised longhouse or house-byre buildings recognised in less marginal regions and there is a general train of thought that the function of the byre end of the arrangement may have been variable, suggesting that they would also have been constructed during periods of economic stability, when security would have been less of a priority.

6. Overall Assessment of the Evidence

The documentary sources were limited in their content, although a reasonable picture of post-medieval tenure was built up and the results provide a good basis on which, further research may be undertaken. The documents browsed also gave a good insight into the running and condition of the Dean and Chapter estate. The mid 19th century valuations describe some properties as being in a poor state of repair (see above) and buildings dismantled to provide materials for the repair of others. The references to the Ecclesiastical Dilapidation Act of 1871 shed no further light on repair and modification of the holdings (WRO: BA 2601, 724.1).

The map evidence, although from the 19th and early 20th century, is informative. The tithe map of 1840 (Figure 2) shows the form of the building prior to the construction of the present farmhouse. The buildings on the map are divided into those which were domestic (coloured red) and those that are non-domestic (coloured grey); the subject building is depicted as being domestic. However, it is difficult to comment on this and the significance is unclear in view of the physical evidence suggesting a domestic and non-domestic split. The form of the depicted building is interesting, as it appears to contradict the proposed arrangement in Figure 7 above. The map shows a narrow portion of the building at the eastern end, which must represent an outshut (lean-to). It is highly unlikely that this would have been contemporary with the proposed solar bay of the cruck framed domestic end of the building and would either have been butted onto a service bay, or more likely a later build, indicating a change of use of internal space. This most likely occurred in the 17th century, when the hall would have been modified with an upper floor inserted and probably a chimneyplace and stack(s). Modifications of this type were commonplace around this time and the aerial photograph, which shows the complex, probably in the 1960's (Plate 11), shows timber framing on the northern side of the building that is typically 17th to early 18th century, suggesting a programme of remodelling and extension at this time. Unfortunately, apart from the remains of timbers in the western and northern elevations of the present farmhouse (Plate 20), the remainder of the framing has gone.

The 1885 and 1904 Ordnance Survey plans are also of interest. These show the building with three separate spaces, which must have been externally apparent in order to be noted; these are the present farmhouse, central cottage and the agricultural end. The map and physical evidence indicates that the present farmhouse was built 'into' the 17-18th century timber-framing (Plate 20).



Plate 20: *Remaining timber-framing in the external walls of the present farmhouse; also note the shadow lines of the former rooflines.*

Two trial-pits were excavated in the area between the present farmhouse and the cruck building. These were located to test the presence of the northern plinth wall of the cruck building and internal floor levels. The plinth wall was not encountered, although a remnant plaster floor was identified, with a lower plastered floor extending beyond the projected line of the cruck building. The floor level was above a deposit of stiff purplish-red clay, which contained pottery dating to the 17th or early 18th century. This ties into the development of the site around this time, with a box-framed projection added to the north, inserted floors and chimneyplace. The clay deposit also contained a fragment of brick with a thin, uneven greenish brown glaze on two surfaces, which could be dated to between the late 15th or 16th century. It is unlikely that this brick was part of any structure associated with the longhouse and is more likely to have been included within the deposit purely as bulk. This suggests that the deposit was laid down in order to level the base of the site in the 17th century at the time of the ‘modernisation’. The present farmhouse is built into the natural bank and has a basement at the south-eastern corner. This and the low position of the shadow roofline on its northern elevation (Plate 20 above) suggests that there may have been an undercroft within the original structure at this end, which was levelled to accommodate the new build in the 17th century. The plaster floors, therefore, must date to from, or later than this period.

The brief analysis of the upstanding fabric determined that the suggested passage at the eastern end of the cruck building was probably not an original passage, although the access from this bay to the adjacent bay (now gone) is original. This indicates direct access between the house and byre (accepting the fact that the elaboration of the dismantled cruck suggests a domestic context), falling into J.T.Smith’s definition of a longhouse as suggested in 1963 (Section 5.2 above). In-depth analysis of the fabric of the cruck structure, which would entail removal of some external covering and internal clearance, may suggest a passage, or more likely the location of an entrance to the byre end.

The cruck framed structure is substantial and well built, although suffering somewhat from the ravages of time. The crucks are heavily curved, with cruck spurs and packing pieces used to align the geometry of roof and cruck-stud. The frames are braced with a tiebeam and collar, with a ridge piece carried between the emergence of the principals (apex type F2; (Alcock 1981). It has been suggested the use of a ridge piece was rare in Worcestershire crucks and such ridges were part of an upland tradition (Cordingley cited in Charles 1967, 33), presumably the ridge purlin being more common. As outlined above, this type of apex is rare in the Western Midlands. Cruck framed structures are now rarer than the box frame counterparts, although generally the box-framed structures survive in greater numbers from the 17th, a time when cruck framing was declining; although crucks were still being used in agricultural buildings. The timbers of the Butts Bank building have been scientifically dated to 1496, a date congruent with many other dated examples from Shropshire and a date that fits into the range of longhouse building.

7. Concluding Comments

Butts Bank Farm longhouse is a Grade II Listed structure, that began its rapid decline when the remaining part of the domestic end of the structure was pulled down in the late 20th century, leaving parts exposed to the elements and it is possible the method of 'demolition' weakened parts of the structure resulting in stress and movement of the framing. The present owners have done their best to waterproof and consolidate the structure, but this seems to have been in vain and the structure is now on the Buildings at Risk Register, being in poor condition and functionally redundant. There are around 1400 Grade I and Grade II* Listed buildings currently on the a- risk register (www.english-heritage.org.uk).*

The building is listed as a 'longhouse', although the domestic end of the structure has now completely gone, other than some dismantled timbers from one bay, which are stored on site. The proposed layout of the building as described under the listing is likely, although the fieldwork suggests that the proposed passage is unlikely, as there are empty mortises in the northern side framing suggesting that it was framed across, although modification after construction is obviously a possibility. What is clear is that there was direct access to the domestic end from the byre end from the date of construction, with a carved doorhead protruding from the tiebeam of the partition frame. This would satisfy a definition of a longhouse as proposed by J.T.Smith in 1963, although today it is probably better regarded as a very rare surviving example of a cruck framed house-byre in Worcestershire.

The evidence from the documentary research, fieldwork and dendrochronology indicates that the building has evolved since its crucks were first reared in AD 1496, with rebuilding and extension in the 17th century, partial demolition and the construction of a new 'modern' brick farmhouse in the mid-19th century and further demolition of the remaining domestic end in the late 20th century, the worst case scenario would be the final chapter of the history of Butts Bank longhouse concluding with collapse in the early 21st century, a scenario that no-one concerned with the building desires and concerned parties must work together to ensure that it is saved in some form for future generations.

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APPENDIX

Appendix 1: Artefactual Analysis of material From Butts Bank Farm, Broadwas

Material	Total	Weight (g)
Post-medieval pottery	5	16
Modern pottery	1	1
Modern ceramic tile	1	22
Brick	2	28
Animal bone	3	88
Copper coin	1	4
Vessel glass	1	6
Iron nail	1	4

Table 1: Quantification of the assemblage

Fabric no.	Fabric name	Total	Weight (g)
78	Post-medieval red sandy ware	5	16
81.3	Nottingham stoneware	1	1

Table 2: Quantification of the pottery fabric type

Context	Material	Total	Weight (g)	Date range	Period
100	Brick	1	20		Post-medieval
100	Glazed brick	1	208		Late medieval-early post medieval
100	Copper coin	1	4	1936	Modern
100	Iron nail	1	4		Modern
100	Modern pottery	1	1	18 th Century	Post-medieval
100	Ceramic tile	1	22	20 th Century	Modern
101	Animal bone	3	88		
101	Vessel glass	1	6		Post-medieval
101	Post-medieval pottery	1	6	Late 17 th – early 18 th Century	Post-medieval
101	Post-medieval pottery	4	10	Late 17 th – early 18 th Century	Post-medieval

Table 3: Summary of the assemblage from Butts Bank Farm, Broadwas