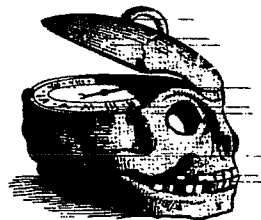


ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
BUILDING RECORDING AT  
HARBOROUGH HALL,  
BLAKEDOWN,  
WORCESTERSHIRE

WSM 33553



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# Archaeological building recording of agricultural buildings at Harborough Hall, Blakedown, Worcestershire (WSM 33553)

January- February 2004

Mike Napthan 18<sup>th</sup> March, 2004

## 1 Summary

*A photographic building recording survey of agricultural outbuildings at Harborough Hall was undertaken as a mitigation strategy prior to further conversion from agricultural to residential use. The project comprised of internal and external photographic survey. The buildings included in the survey consisted of the barn (already partly in residential use), open fronted sheds, the "Granary" building (in residential/ancillary use) The "Balcony" Flat and adjacent air-raid shelter, together with the stable block (also partly in residential use).*

*The farm buildings are rather unusual in form and range, reflecting the historical use of the house as a gentlemen's residence and estate rather than as a normal working farm. The buildings are primarily equestrian related, but include a high proportion of storage space, particularly at first floor level. All the building surveyed are grouped around a large farmyard which had been artificially leveled down and terraced into the hillside. The area to the front of the main house may have been raised and leveled up as part of the same improvement works, which appear to have occurred in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century.*

*The barn is of brick construction, of five bays (only three of which were accessible as the remainder have been converted) The building carries a weather vane dated "TB 1767", and this date appears to be consistent with the brickwork and architectural style. The interior skin of the brickwork is partially of re-used brick of 17<sup>th</sup> Century date, as is the plinth at the eastern end. The visible roof timbers are also re-used, probably from a previous barn. At each end of the barn there was a brick built hayloft; these were contemporary with the original construction of the building At the western end there was with stable beneath, extending to one bay in length. Abutting to the western end of the barn is a large single storey building of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, possibly originally a carriage house but subsequently a garage. Abutting the barn to the south east of the second bay is a very large brick built stable block of later 18<sup>th</sup> or early 19<sup>th</sup> Century date, clearly post-dating the barn. The accessible parts of the ground floor of this building appear to have originally been stables and the iron barred and timber partitions of two loose boxes survive in the main stable, the remainder having been opened up to form a garage/store-room. A probable tack-room occupied the eastern end of the building. On the first (attic) floor little internal detail survives in a single long room open to the roof. This appears to have been a hayloft, but no hay-drops were visible from below. No original access (other than via a small doorway from the barn hayloft) was visible, the present stairs down to the stable being a 19<sup>th</sup> Century or later insertion.*

*The interior of the Balcony Flat building was not accessible – it consists of the tack room and a single storey short wing adjoining, and apparently contemporary with, the stable block and a lower-roofed single storey range of probably 18<sup>th</sup> Century date. This eastern part of the range appears to have been founded on an earlier sandstone plinth, which had been under-built in brick when the farmyard was lowered in the later 18<sup>th</sup> or early 19<sup>th</sup> Century. An early 19<sup>th</sup> C extension to the south-east overlies a small woodstore, within which a further section of sandstone plinth is visible. Between this range and the "Granary" further fragments of sandstone foundation or plinth were visible in the retaining wall, these appeared to relate to a demolished building in the area now occupied by the steps up to the front of the main house.*

*The "Granary" was only partially accessible; the exterior is of late early-mid 19<sup>th</sup> Century brickwork and retains few original architectural details above ground floor level. The ground floor appears to have served primarily as stabling, with a large brick vaulted ?dog kennel in the centre*

*beneath the steps. Immediately above the probable kennel was a double-doored room facing the main house – this was possibly for a small carriage or gig, and a small hatch in the elevation facing the farmyard suggests that the adjacent first floor rooms were probably used for storage or as haylofts.*

*A range of open fronted sheds facing away from the farmyard appear to have been implement sheds or possibly cattle shelters, and were of at least three phases ranging from late 18<sup>th</sup> Century to mid 19<sup>th</sup> Century date.*

*To the north-west, just outside the study area, in an adjoining property stands an unusual early 19<sup>th</sup> Century brick storage building standing on brick piers; it is possible that this relates to the documented early 19<sup>th</sup> Century leather dressing business which occupied the water mill immediately to the north of the farmyard.*

## **2 Introduction**

2.1 This report represents the findings of an archaeological survey of agricultural outbuildings at Harborough Hall, Blakedown, by Mike Napthan Archaeology in early 2004. The project was designed to meet a requirement (a Brief supplied by the County Archaeological Service (10 December 1998, ref WSM 27207, WF/0791/98) for a programme of building recording prior to conversion of the remaining disused parts of the farm buildings to residential use. Approximately half of the buildings are already converted, or partially converted, to residential use. The present planning application is being made by Mr L Turner through his Architect Roger Dean Walker of Dean-Walker Bateman.

2.2 The purpose of the present project was to “establish the character, history, dating, form and archaeological development” of the building and its setting” (WAS Brief). The conversion scheme is being undertaken for Mr L Turner (the Client). The project design has been prepared in accordance with the RCHME guidance “Recording Historic buildings- a descriptive specification”, (3<sup>rd</sup> Edn, 1996).

## **3 Aims**

3.1 The aims of the building recording were to gather high quality data from the direct observation of the historic building fabric in order to provide sufficient information to establish the nature of the resource (including character, extent, date, state of preservation and quality). The purpose of an archaeological project (as defined by the IFA) is “to examine the archaeological resource in a given area or site within a framework of defined research objectives, to seek a better understanding of and compile a lasting record of that resource, to analyze and interpret the results, and disseminate them”

3.2 These aims were achieved through pursuit of the following specific objectives:

- i) to define the past functions of the buildings
- ii) to determine the dates of construction and subsequent changes of form and function
- iii) to establish whether the buildings fit within the local vernacular architectural traditions
- iv) to identify whether the buildings were built as part of a group or complex.

## **4 Methodology**

4.1 The buildings were examined and recorded in January and February 2004. The buildings were all in good condition, and the accessible parts of the buildings were almost all empty at the time of the survey. Access to the converted parts of the buildings was not possible as they were variously tenanted or keys were not available.. The buildings were partially covered with ivy, but this did not appear to obscure any architectural details. Record Office and SMR searches were undertaken for documents and plans relating to Harborough Hall and Blakedown.

4.2 All recording was undertaken photographically. The photographic media used were primarily digital media (339 images), and colour transparency (77 images). A selection of the digital images are presented with this report on CDROM.



- 4.3 The plans are based on the architects drawings which appear to be accurate, although precise dimensions were not checked on site.

## 5 Archaeological background

- 5.1 The only previous archaeological intervention in this area appears (from supplied HER data) to have been a previous building survey undertaken by Hagley Historical and Field Society in 1998. The background material quoted here is largely based on this previous research (Padgett 1998).
- 5.2 The site lies in the former manor of Hagley, and the earliest reference to the name (then "Herdeberue"), is in a Lyttleton family document of the late 13<sup>th</sup> Century. A similar source refers to John Penne at Harberrow in 1418, and the family retained ownership of the estate until the death of William Penn in January 1731. The main house bears the initials WAP and the date 1635. The estate then passed to a granddaughter, Mary Dolman, and it was retained by the Dolman-Scott family until 1884. The name "Harberrow" was still current as late as 1832, though perhaps interchangeably used as the house was called "Harborough House" in the title to a drawing of 1835 by Charles Dudley. The identity of the builder of the barn "TB" remains uncertain, but presumably relates to the then tenant.
- 5.3 The property does not appear to have been the principal residence of the family, nor was it farmed by them – in 1838 the owner Sir Edward Dolman Scott lived at Great Barr Hall and the land was farmed by Thomas Whittaker. By 1863 Sir Francis Edward Scott of the same address leased to Philip Williams of Wednesbury (for 21 years at an annual rent of £234) "all that ancient messuage or tenement with the adjoining stables, barns, outbuildings, homestead, gardens and ?rough containing together two acres and twenty four perches or thereabouts..." – WRO BA 11766 ref 705:84.
- 5.4 Williams bought the property at the expiry of his lease in 1884 and appears to have occupied it until his death in 1914. Subsequently it was rented, then purchased by a Major Thompson. After the second world war it was used as a Birmingham Corporation convalescent home but was returned to private ownership in the 1960s. The conversion to residential use of a number of the farm buildings appears to have occurred about this time.
- 5.5 The drawing of 1835 shows the front of the main house with farm buildings to the north and south. The group to the north are those that were considered by the present project. Obscuring the main agricultural range is a one and a half storey timber framed building with pierced brickwork infill – this appears to stand just to the east of the location of the present "pavilion" which is a reconstructed timber-framed building retaining some wattle and daub infill (now in separate ownership and not closely examined). A single storey shed is visible just to the north – possibly the precursor of the present carriage house/garage. The roof of the main stable block is visible behind. Along the line of the present retaining wall a tall timber-framed building is marked, though the perspective is such that this might be on the site of the "Granary" building.
- 5.6 The Tithe map of 1838 only shows three outbuildings – one on the site of the present "pavilion", one approximately in the centre of the present farmyard and the barn to the south of the house. As a number of the unmarked existing buildings are demonstrably pre 1838 this map cannot be considered reliable in this respect.
- 5.7 Just to the north of the study area lie a series of four artificial pools (WSM 07561) which are held back by a massive earthen dam, across which the rear drive provides access to the farmyard. The mill is shown on the Tithe Map, but the present house on the site appears to have been largely, if not totally, rebuilt. An advertisement of February 1817 described the property as "an overshot watermill and a pool of water of 12 acres which has been used and occupied by Mr Jas Pitman for the last 20 years for dressing leather, situated at Harborough in the Parish of Hagley" (Birmingham Gazette 24 Feb. 1817). Access to many of the farm buildings appears to have been reliant on the route across the dam, and it is therefore likely that a dam was in existence by the mid 18<sup>th</sup> C at the latest. It is quite probable that the material removed in terracing down the farmyard was used to create or increase the size of the dam.

- 5.8 The barn appears to be listed on the County HER as WSM 27225 – though this is described as at “Halborough Court” the grid reference and description suggests that Harborough Hall was intended. The previous building survey is recorded as WSM 30113, and the present survey is WSM 33553.

## 6 Results

### 6.1 The Barn (Figs 2, 3 and 4)

- 6.1.1 The weather vane on the southern end of the barn bears the initials TB and date 1767, and this appears to reflect the construction date. The vane is secured by a large threaded bar through a timber fixed to the rafters and has evidently been in this position for a considerable number of years; though the vane was not mentioned in the 1998 survey (Padgett 1998) it may have been overlooked.
- 6.1.2 The barn is of conventional brick and slate construction, of five bays with a central threshing floor, two pairs of opposed double doors and with haylofts in the two end bays. The earliest visible element of the barn appears to be the brickwork plinth at the north-eastern end of the building (Fig 3) – this survives to ground level only and might be a relic of an earlier building of similar size. It is also possible that the brick, which is of late 17<sup>th</sup> or early 18<sup>th</sup> C date, was reused in 1767 to create a new plinth, as brick of similar size and date has clearly been re-used within the barn. The outer skin is entirely of mid to late 18<sup>th</sup> C brick, but the inner skin of the walls has been constructed of bands of reused thinner bricks so arranged to form a level course of four facing bricks to five thinner re-used bricks on the interior. The intervening header courses between these bands are so spaced as to form pierced work ventilation, which originally continued full height for the middle three bays, whilst the end bays were pierced above hayloft level only. This external arrangement clearly indicates that the barn was built with a hayloft in both ends. Beneath each loft was a byre or stable, each accessed through a single wide door on the eastern elevation. A blocked doorway on the western elevation at the northern end (Bay 5) appears to have been a secondary insertion infilled when the building was converted. The visible roof trusses (of the three south western bays; Figs 2 and 4) are also composed of re-used timber, and the tie beams of Trusses 1 and 2 appear to have originally been part of another large timber structure, but probably not a former roof. These timbers may be of considerable antiquity as the trusses do not appear to have been newly made in 1767. The trusses were presumably constructed for a former barn – the principal rafters have redundant trenches relating to a previous purlin arrangement, and the present roof does not appear to have been substantially altered since the 18<sup>th</sup> or early 19<sup>th</sup> Century.
- 6.1.3 The barn doors are possibly replacements of 19<sup>th</sup> Century date, and the only other surviving external doorway (in the surveyed part of the barn) is that which now provides access from the barn stable to the side stable. It is however possible that the other doorway (to the courtyard from the stables beneath the hay-loft) was an alteration of the original stable window. There is no communicating door between the barn and the barn stable, the only access to the hayloft above being through a vertical ladder and hatchway in the corner of the stable. Two hay-drops serve the semi circular mangers below. A blocked window is visible at the gable end of the hayloft – this, like the pierced brickwork vents in the gable end, was clearly blocked by the construction of the adjacent carriage-house in the early 19<sup>th</sup> C. An inserted communicating door between the hayloft and the upper floor of the adjoining main stable block has a beaded trim to the door lining and appears to have been contemporary with the construction of the main stable block in the later 18<sup>th</sup> or early 19<sup>th</sup> Century.
- 6.1.4 The stable within the barn retains most of its fittings (Fig 7), though these appear to be at least partially of 19<sup>th</sup> C date. There are two stalls divided by a timber boarded semi-partition. Each stall has a semi-circular manger (filled from the hayloft above) and a cast iron trough/mash trough arrangement that may originally have been fitted with “automatic” water valves. At the far end of the stable, between the internal and external doorway there is a small grain chute (suitable for filling a sack or bucket) fed from the hayloft above. The stable is lit only by two tiny vents in the north western wall, and a small light over the external door, and must have been very dark except when the door was open. As this is not now a split stable door, it may have been replaced in the 19<sup>th</sup> C. The internal door to the side stable (Fig 7) is part barred and has a recessed sliding latch (to prevent the horses opening it). The function of the side room (within the main stable block but originally accessible only from the stable within the barn) is unclear, but is part rendered and bead moulded like the other stable-rooms and may have served to hold mares in foal or as a tack-room – the external door to the farmyard appears to have been an early-mid 19<sup>th</sup> C insertion, the windows to courtyard and farmyard are apparently original.

- 6.1.5 There is a scar of a further single storey building with single pitched roof on the north-eastern corner of the barn, and the footprint of this building is shown on the 1883 Ordnance Survey.
- 6.2 **The Main Stable Block** (Fig 2, Fig 7)
- 6.2.1 The central part of the ground floor of this block appears to have originated as large airy and well lit stable room, consisting of four individual boxes, each very strongly built in iron-reinforced timber with high close barred partitions. Two boxes remain essentially intact, and one retains a cast iron trough/mash trough arrangement with manger almost identical to those described above. The boxes appear to have been built “no expense spared” for valuable thoroughbreds rather than as accommodation for working horses. One end of the room has been converted (in the 1970s?) to use as a garage (Fig 7) and has lost its original fittings, though scars remain. The present staircase to the first (attic) floor runs up from inside one of the boxes and is probably an insertion of late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> C date as it would largely block a horses access to the feeder, and there would be no way to prevent an inquisitive animal from climbing the stairs.
- 6.2.2 The end bays of the stable block appear to have had no communication with the central stable room at ground level. One end has been incorporated into the “Balcony Flat” and was not accessible. A small chimney flue is present above this bay (but has been removed above roof level). The previous survey included this area and reported the presence of tack-room fittings (Padgett 1998). The windows of this bay (on the gable end) have been increased in depth, and are not original. The other end bay is accessible only through the barn stable and has been described above.
- 6.2.3 The first floor attic room of this block is a single long room, open to the roof, which is unlined. The walls are bare brick, and do not appear to have ever been painted or plastered. The original uses of this area are unclear – no partitioning is apparent, but this may have been removed. The side windows are probably replacements for shutters which appear to have been horizontally sliding, and may have served for the stacking of hay or other materials. All the windows are at floor level. The floor was obscured by replacement boarding at the time of inspection, and it was not possible to determine the original location of any steps or stairs to this floor. There are no hay drops through to the stables beneath.
- 6.2.4 The date of the stable-block is unclear – it is certainly later than the barn, probably early-mid 19<sup>th</sup> C and perhaps as late as the 1840s – though it appears to be present on a drawing of 1835. The roof structure is of softwood and without trusses, suggesting that it was intended to serve for storage, though the lack of wear and tear to the frames which support the purlins indicate that it was never heavily used. The apparent lack of loading doors and access from below is curious, and it is possible that the upper storey served more for display and aesthetics than as a really functional storage area. As a hayloft it would be poorly ventilated and difficult to access. The cast iron round headed window in the gable end appears to be original, but presumably served more for external effect than practical purposes as the foot of the window is actually just below floor-level.
- 6.3 **The stable courtyard** (Figs 2 and 7)
- 6.3.1 The southern elevation of the main stable block faced a small walled courtyard, which also provided access to the stables within the barn, a carriage house and the tack room/carriage house to the east. The courtyard is laid with 19<sup>th</sup> C Staffordshire blue paviments, except for the central area which has a central circular concrete patch approximately 5m in diameter. It has previously been suggested that this marked a horse-mill for raising water (Padgett 1998), but the location would be rather awkwardly placed in the middle of the stable-yard, particularly if carriages were to be turned. The cast iron hand pump survives in situ against the Balcony Flat wall, and this presumably stands as close as possible to the well (which has not been located) or to a rainwater cistern. The circular patch might equally relate to a carriage turn-table, though it would perhaps have been more prudent to widen the gates. The location of the gateway is not central to the courtyard and it is probable that the gateway location was dictated by the former presence of the timber framed building shown on the 1835 sketch by Chas Dudley.
- 6.3.2 It is of note that the large diameter early-mid 20<sup>th</sup> C heating pipes were run right through the stable block to serve the carriage house – this was presumably related to the use of the building as a vehicle workshop, an inspection pit in the carriage house floor appeared to be of 1920s or 1930s construction.

#### 6.4 **The Balcony Flat (Figs 2, 7 and 8)**

6.4.1 The only accessible area of this building was the wood-store beneath the south-eastern end. The remainder of the ground floor (farmyard level) appeared to be solid. The retaining wall was primarily brick faced but included several courses of ashlar sandstone visible within the wood-store and along the wall facing the farm-yard. The sandstone appears to have been underbuilt in late 18<sup>th</sup> or early 19<sup>th</sup> C bricks, apparently at the time that the farmyard area was lowered and levelled. The sandstone within the wood store was considerably less weathered than the exterior stones. The nature of the building originally supported by the sandstone plinth is unclear – it was presumably completely replaced by the present late 18<sup>th</sup> or early 19<sup>th</sup> C superstructure. The drawing of 1835 shows a timber framed building in this area, but is perhaps not an entirely reliable guide. Re fenestration at the time of conversion to residential use has obscured the location and size of any original openings. The present building has a small chimney of 18<sup>th</sup>-early 19<sup>th</sup> C date, and appears to have served a domestic/ancillary function, perhaps as accommodation for a groom. The previous survey indicated that there was evidence that the eastern-most part of the main stable block building had been used as a tack room, whilst the double doors facing south served as a carriage house (Padgett 1998)

#### 6.5 **Air-raid Shelter (Figs 2 and 8)**

A brick built air-raid shelter was accessible through a doorway off the wood-store beneath the Balcony Flat and a second steel door faced the steps. The interior of the shelter appeared to be devoid of original fittings and the steel door was firmly rusted to its frame. The roof was a cast concrete slab approximately 0.4m thick. The shelter, though small, was rather more advanced than might usually be expected for a civilian structure, and may have had military origins. Its location in the lea of the retaining wall and double entrance suggest that it was designed with some expertise.

#### 6.6 **Outbuildings (Figs 2 and 6)**

6.6.1 A range of open fronted out buildings lay on the north-east side of the farmyard. These were partially terraced into the hill-slope, and thus were not directly accessible from the yard. Several phases of construction were evident – the rear retaining wall being the earliest. The shed nearest the house appeared to be of early 19<sup>th</sup> Century date, and this had been extended by an open front three bay shed to the west. The furthest bay, adjacent to the barn, had a partially rebuilt end wall and had been converted to a closed shed. This range would appear to have served primarily as implement shelters, but might have served occasionally as cattle-sheds or for lambing as necessary. There were no traces of mangers or tethering rings. All of these buildings were present on the 1883 Ordnance Survey

6.6.2 Just beyond the study area (in separate ownership) was a further small brick building (Figs 1 and 6), supported on brick piers and a substantial timber frame. The building had two opposed doors at first floor level, each with a projecting pulley beam above. There was, however no sign of a permanent staircase to provide access. The ground level around the building appears to have been deliberately reduced and it is possible that access to the up-slope door was originally ground level. Whilst evidently not part of the Harborough Hall farm buildings it is of interest that this building may be related to the storage of hides for the documented leather dressing industry on this property, and was perhaps subsequently used as an apple store as the field was marked as orchard in 1883

#### 6.7 **The “Granary” (Figs 2 and 5)**

6.7.1 The present building appears to be of early-mid 19<sup>th</sup> C origins and is almost entirely brick built, though some sandstone has been previously recorded in the ground floor retaining wall to the south and east. Further sandstone was noted in the northern wall of the lean-to at the north eastern corner of this building.

6.7.2 During the present project it was only possible to internally inspect the central workshop room, which was originally accessed through double doors on the south eastern elevation, but is now only accessible through a small hatch in the north-eastern elevation, a doorway to the boiler house having been bricked up. This part of the building appears originally to have been a small carriage house, and beneath it, accessible through an archway under the steps is a large brick vaulted dog kennel, which at 2x4.5m would be sufficiently large for a small pack of hounds.

6.7.3 The northern ground-floor room is currently a disused workshop and has inserted double “garage” doors to the farmyard, with a former stable door on the northern elevation partially bricked up and converted to a window. The plan accompanying the 1998 survey report shows three bays within this room, which may have been stalls for horses. The plan appears to be based on the 1950s survey drawings as it shows only a single door entrance. The southern ground floor room (now the boiler room) is also shown rather differently to its present configuration and may indicate the former

presence of stairs down to the carriage house from the first floor. The present boiler room is accessed through a stable-type door and has shuttered windows typical of a stable and may have been converted to its current function from a stable.

- 6.7.4 The first floor of the building is without any surviving original windows, and the presence of pierced brickwork vents in the gable ends suggests that it was originally intended for storage, though it was converted to residential use (staff accommodation?) in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> C.
- 6.7.5 The present name of the building may reflect the function of a previous building on the site, but clearly does not relate to the current building, which appears to have been constructed as a stable/gig house block. The upper floor possibly served as hayloft and tack-room, but this could not be confirmed by the present survey. The small store-room projecting from the corner of the building perhaps enclosed a well as there is a pump shown on this location on the 1<sup>st</sup> Edition Ordnance Survey of 1883. Remains of a wall crossing the corner of the yard (marked in 1883) are visible in plan and as a projecting stub from the open-fronted outbuilding nearest the dam.
- 6.8 **The retaining wall (Figs 2 and 8)**  
The retaining wall on the southern side of the farmyard supports a change in surface level of approximately 2 metres between the flat approaches to the main house and the farmyard. The upper (above ground) part of the wall appears to have been rebuilt using reclaimed brick in the early 20<sup>th</sup> C, but the lower part is of late 18<sup>th</sup>-mid 19<sup>th</sup> C construction and incorporates a fragment of an early 18<sup>th</sup> C brick structure sitting on a sandstone plinth or foundation. Two small buildings are shown on this area in 1883, the western extent of the structure is unclear as it is masked by the air-raid shelter.

## 7 Interpretation

- 7.1 The buildings represent an unusual group of late 18<sup>th</sup>-early 19<sup>th</sup> C farm or estate buildings, and directly reflect the prosperity of this area in the years that followed the industrial revolution, and at a time where there was considerable money to be made from providing agricultural products to the manufacturing areas of the Midlands. The present condition of the buildings suggests that they never suffered any lengthy periods of neglect, nor were they heavily used.
- 7.2 There is a clear division of the buildings between the “gentrified” south-eastern elevation intended to be seen and accessed from the house, and the working area to the rear of the buildings, where life was literally at a lower level. There appears to have been very little direct communication between the front of the range and the back – the only direct access being through the main stable block, from which steps presumably once lead down from the glazed northern stable door.
- 7.3 The present farmyard levels appear to have been at least partially modified in the 20<sup>th</sup> C, particularly in the western part of the farmyard, which appears to have been reduced to provide a sloping access to the Barn Flat across the footprint of the demolished single storey building. The date of the earlier terracing of this area is uncertain, and may have occurred in more than one episode between the mid 18<sup>th</sup> and mid 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries. It is also possible that the farmyard was formed in an existing quarried depression from which material had been previously extracted to construct the adjacent dam, and that the reduced area was subsequently modified and adapted over time.
- 7.4 The apparent predominance of equestrian buildings is of interest, as it seems to reflect the gentrification of the house in the 19<sup>th</sup> C. The original stabling was presumably within the end bays of the barn (though one end might equally have housed other stock). Adequate ventilation and lighting was considered important for stables with “sashes or large casements for the sake of letting in air enough” (Loudon, 1831) and this was not the case in the barn, where the ceilings were also less than the recommended 12 feet minimum, though these apparent failings probably reflect the usual situation prior to agricultural improvements of the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> C. The second stable range (“The Granary”) was better located for accessing the working side of the farm, particularly the implement sheds, whilst the large “main” stable block was constructed apparently for riding and/or carriage horses, and was not provided with any direct access to the farmyard. In total there was stabling for between 11 and 13 horses, (though not all were necessarily used contemporaneously. By way of comparison a farm owned by Mr T Knight at Lea Castle Wolverley in 1807 required 10 horses on about 330 acres, 159 of which were under cultivation, whilst at Worley Wiggorn,

Halesowen at a similar date 7 horses served 218 acres of which only 56 acres were under cultivation, the horses spending "leisure times" carting muck from Birmingham (Pitt, 1813).

- 7.5 The range of storage buildings (including the two barns formerly present in front of the house) appears to have been rather large for the known size of the agricultural holding (148 acres in 1838), and this suggests that the farm included rented land beyond the immediate farm boundaries. Whilst the size of the hayloft storage areas may seem excessive there was stabling for at least eleven horses and the estimated consumption of hay per horse in the early 19<sup>th</sup> C was 1.5 tons per year (Loudon 1831).
- 7.6 The farm buildings included in the study do not appear to represent a complete range, and it is probable that others (such as the dairy and brewhouse) stood closer to the house (outside the study area), others such as the granary and pig sties may have been amongst the previously demolished structures.

## 8 Conclusions

- 8.1 The project has produced a reasonably comprehensive record of the outbuilding as it stood immediately prior to proposed conversion works. The scope of the project was limited, but it has been possible to define the broad phasing and functions of the structures. It is clear that the development of the buildings was not a single planned development, but that it evolved with the changing use of the property. The potential loss of historic fabric and detail due to the conversion process has to a small extent been offset by a greater understanding of the structures present. The further conversion of the remaining buildings will help secure their long-term preservation, though it is to be hoped that future conversion works might be more sympathetic to the historic fabric than the previous phase of conversions.

## 9 Bibliography

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## 10 Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to Mr L Turner (the Client), and his son (who arranged access). Amanda Holmes assisted with the fieldwork and Kerry Whitehouse undertook other research for the project. The brief was prepared by Mike Glyde of WCC, and HER searches were undertaken by Debbie Overton also of Worcestershire County Council

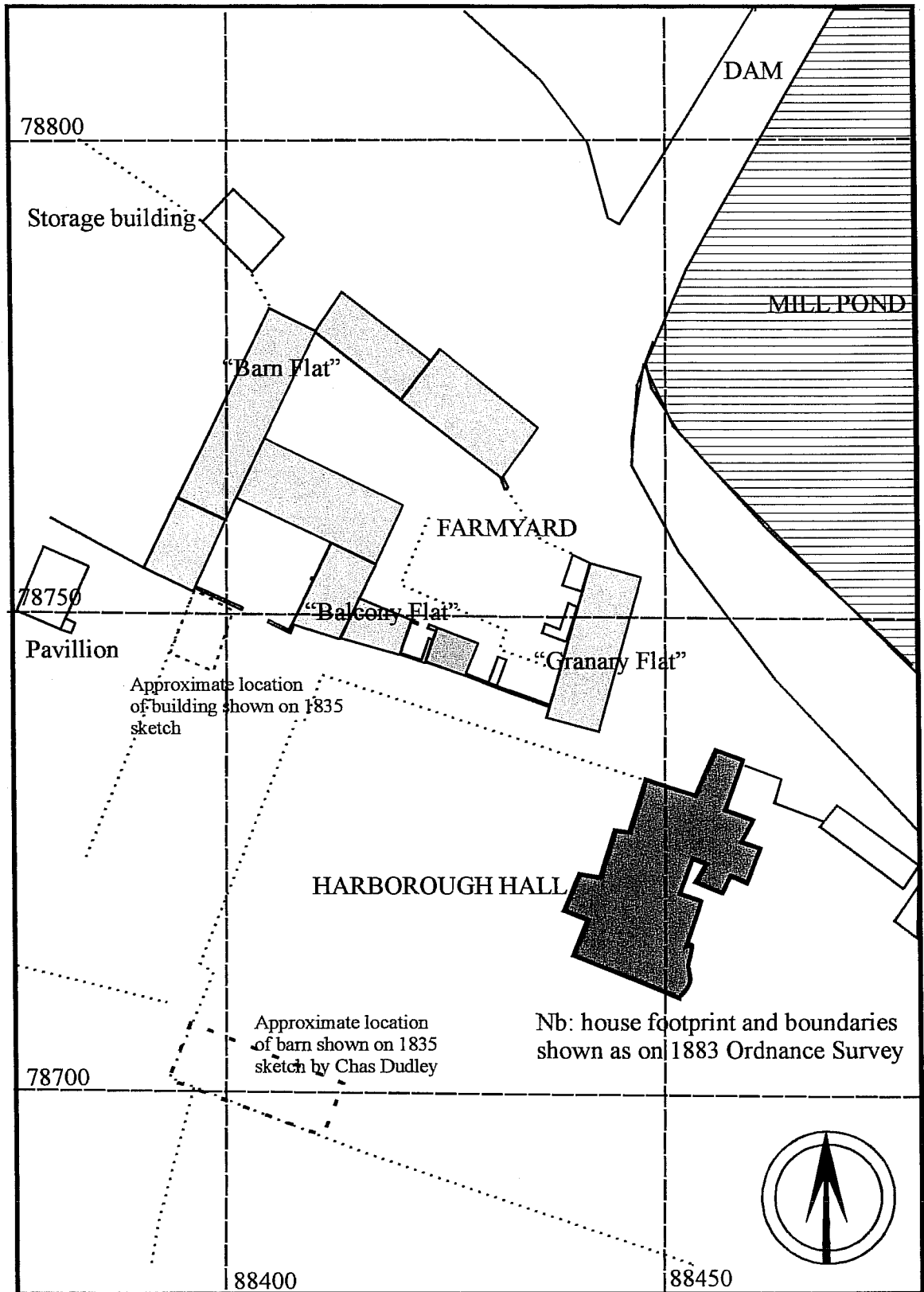


Figure 1: Location of surveyed buildings Harborough Hall, Blakedown, Worcestershire

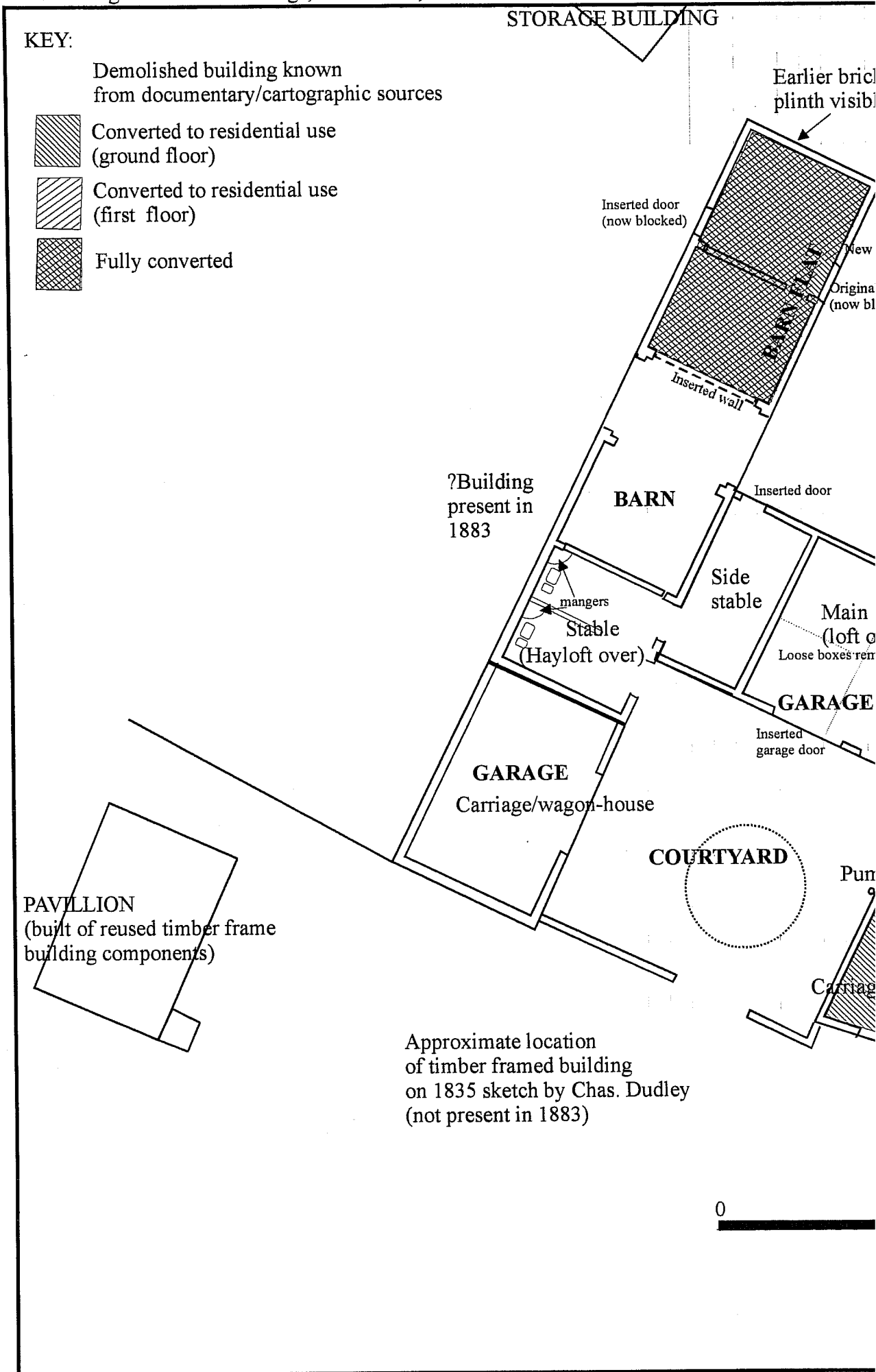


Figure 2: Site plan showing historical usage

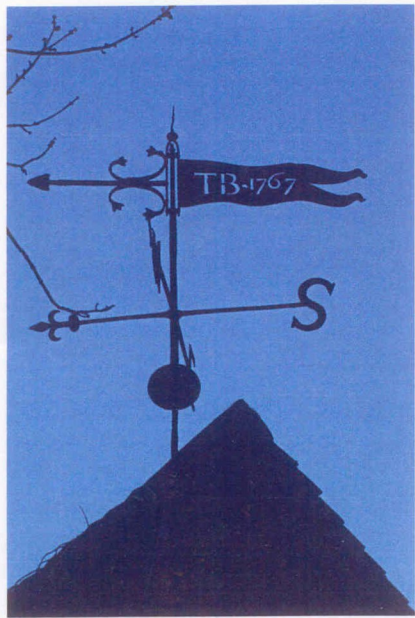




North-west elevation - note owl-perch



North west elevation



Weather vane



South west gable end - note owl-perch



South east elevation





Trusses 3



Truss 3, showing blocking wall of Barn Flat



Truss 1 (viewed from hayloft)



Truss 1 from south



Truss 2 (Truss 3 beyond)



Truss 2 (viewed from below)



Blocked window in gable end



Truss 1 and hayloft

Figure 4: Trusses of main barn





North-eastern gable end - note blocked doorway behind figure



Principal elevation



?Gig house



South-eastern elevation



Vaulted ?kennel behind steps





Implement shed from south-east



Northern gable end of implement shed range



Implement shed from north-east



Implement shed - interior

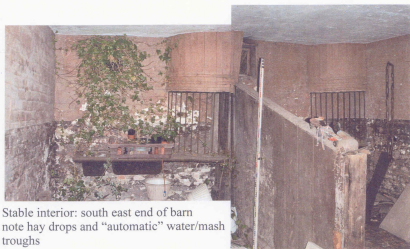


Two storey storage building  
(on neighbouring property)



Figure 6: Outbuildings





Stable interior: south east end of barn  
note hay drops and "automatic" water/mash  
troughs



Side stable



"Balcony Flat" and southern elevation of stable block, air-raid shelter on extreme left



Main stable block - north west elevation



Carriage house/ garage?



Entrance to stables in barn and  
west end of stable block



Stable block from courtyard, note inserted garage door and  
rear door to "Balcony Flat"





Retaining wall



Air-raid shelter



Stone work plinth beneath "Balcony Flat"

Figure 8: Retaining wall, air-raid shelter and "Balcony Flat"