



University of Leicester

Archaeological Services

**An Historic Building Survey (Level 2) at
Cold Comfort Farm, Rogues Lane,
Barwell, Leicestershire.**

NGR: SP 418 963

Andrew Hyam



ULAS Report No. 2013-051
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**An Historic Building Survey (Level 2) at
Cold Comfort Farm, Rogues Lane, Barwell,
Leicestershire**

NGR: SP 418 963

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For: Corporate Architecture Ltd

Approved by:

Signed:



Date: ...25.03.2013.

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A Historic Building Survey at Cold Comfort Farm, Barwell, Leicestershire. NGR SP 418 963

Andrew Hyam

Summary

An historic building survey was undertaken by the University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) at Cold Comfort Farm, Rogues Lane, Barwell, Leicestershire on the 8th of March 2013. The survey studied a complex of farm buildings including the farmhouse, a two storey brick barn, stables and sheet metal clad barns.

Although the farm as a whole is likely to have older origins the oldest surviving component of the complex is a two storey brick-built barn with a supported cruck blade roof structure probably dating to the early 19th century. The farmhouse and stable were constructed in the mid to later 19th century and have later modifications. The metal-framed and corrugated sheet clad barns are from the mid-20th century.

Planning permission has been granted to refurbish the buildings and convert the brick structures to a domestic use. The metal barns will be removed.

The report and archive will be deposited with Leicestershire Museums under Accession Number X.A16.2013

Introduction

In accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 12 *Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment* this document forms the report for an historic building survey (Level 2) on the farm buildings known as Cold Comfort Farm. Level 2 historic building surveys are defined in the English Heritage guidance document – *Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice* (2006). Under planning application number 12/00542/FUL it is intended to extend the present farmhouse and convert the existing outbuildings to a domestic use.

Cold Comfort Farm is located on the south side of Rogues Lane and is approximately 5km to the west of Barwell and 3km to the north of Hinckley (Fig. 1). The farm and farmyard area consists of a farmhouse, stable block and brick and metal-framed barns surrounded by areas of hard standing and flat partially metalled yards (Fig. 2). The site lies at approximately 110m OD and covers an area of 0.418 hectares. The site is largely level with a slight fall from the lane into the yard to the rear of the buildings in the north.

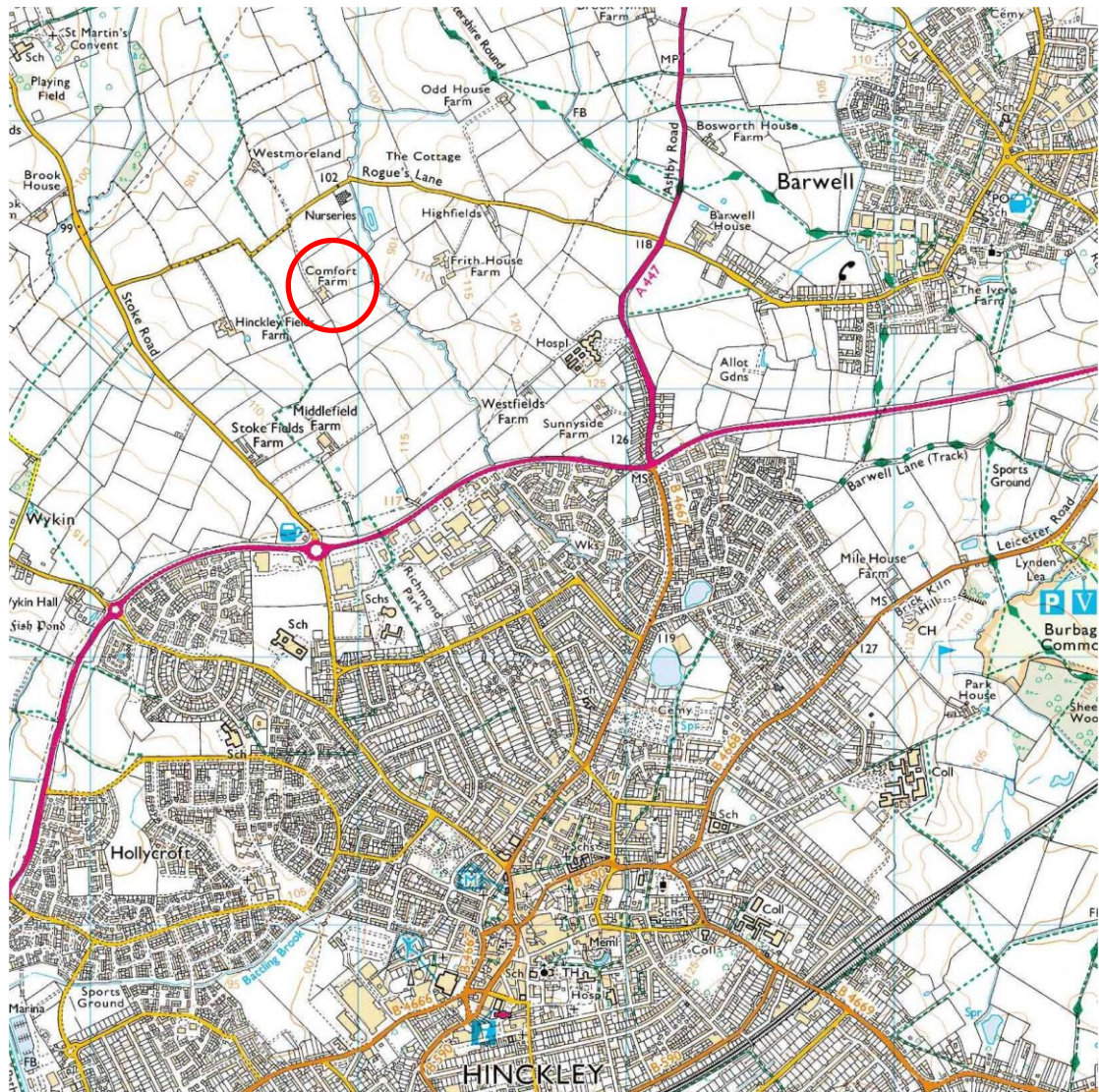


Figure 1 Site Location

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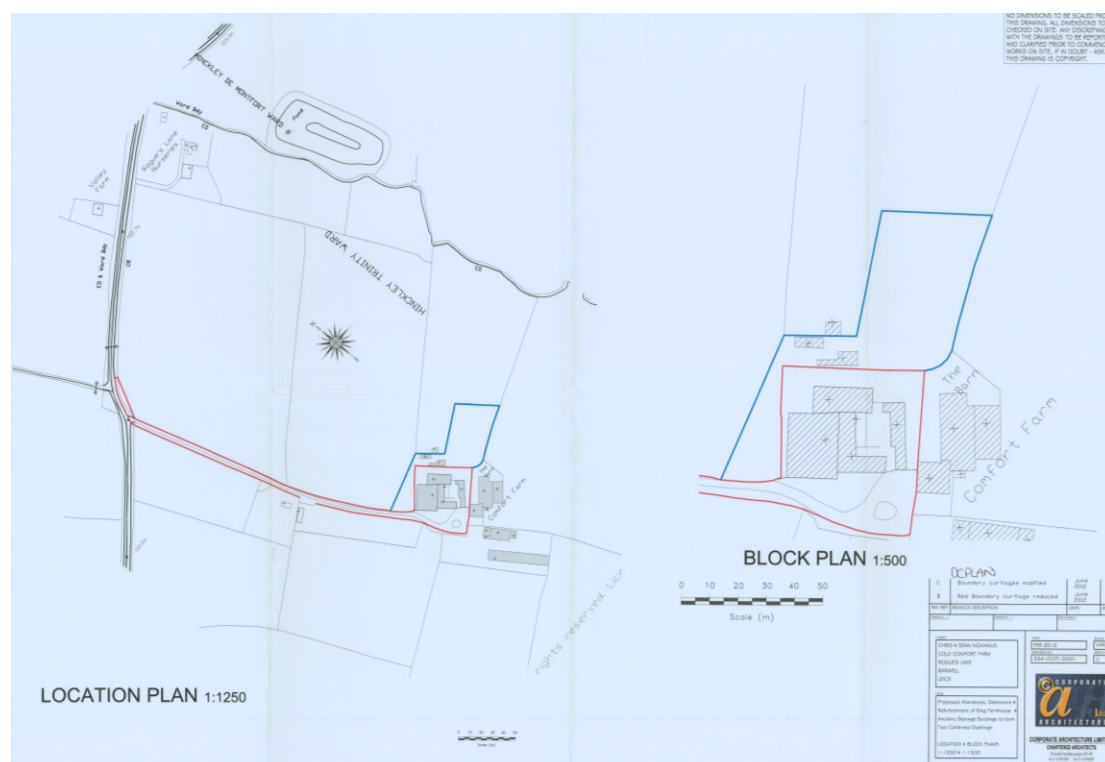


Figure 2 Site plan
Supplied by Corporate Architecture Ltd

Background

A desk-based assessment was compiled by ULAS in 2012 (ULAS report 2012-033) which discussed the potential impact of the development on any archaeological deposits which may be present. This building survey is a response to the request by the Senior Planning Archaeologist that a Level 2 historic building survey be completed before any development work takes place.

The earliest available map of the site is the 1831 One-inch Ordnance Survey map which shows the location of Cold Comfort Farm but is lacking in any detail other than to show that there are some buildings present on the site. The 1885 First Edition OS map shows the farm buildings very much as they exist today but without the metal barns and the northern range has some additional buildings which are no longer present (Fig. 3). The 1929 edition suggests that a large barn had been constructed by this date on the location of the large corrugated iron barn to the west of the farmhouse. It is not clear if this is the present barn or not. By the time of the 1972 edition the building layout is very much as it appears at the present time.

The existing barn buildings are currently used for storage purposes and are in varying states of repair. The stable block brickwork in particular is suffering from frost and weather damage. The farmhouse has been partially extended into the ground floor of the barn at its north-west corner to use a small part of the ground floor of the barn range as a utility room and bathroom. At one stage during the early 20th century at least, the building was used as a mill (pers. comm. S McManus, farm owner).

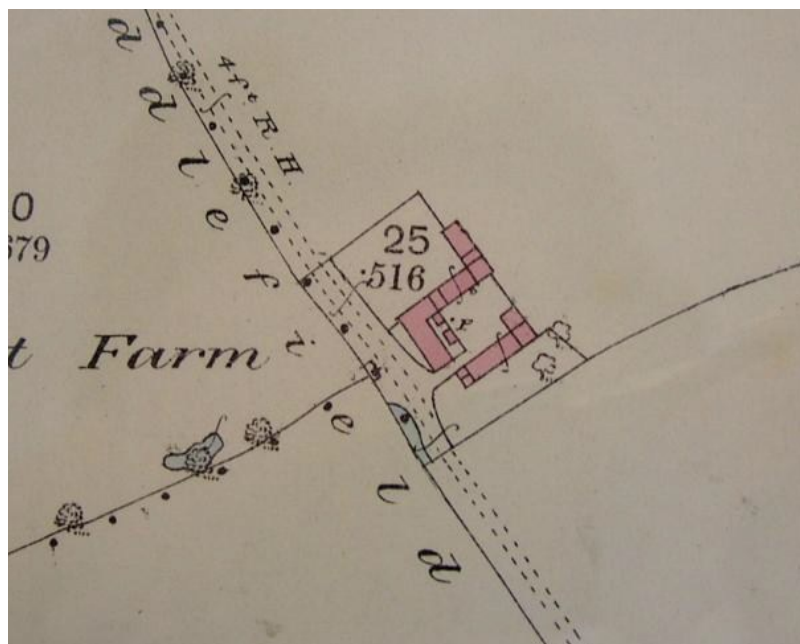


Figure 3 1885 First Edition OS map sheet XXXV.15
Original scale 25 inch to 1 mile

Under the proposed redevelopment of the site the corrugated metal barns will be removed. The two storey barn on the north-eastern side of the courtyard will be refurbished to provide two-storey living accommodation and the single storey barn/stables will also be converted to domestic uses.

Objectives

The objectives of the historic building survey were:

- To provide a written, drawn and photographic record of all the buildings on site prior to the commencement of works with specific attention given to those elements proposed for demolition, conversion and/or alteration. This work to be undertaken to a standard that will allow the future interpretation of the building within the context for which it was originally designed and which subsequently evolved.
- To ensure the long-term preservation of the information through deposition of the record and a summary written report with an appropriate depository.

Methodology

Black and white 35mm photographs and digital colour photographs were taken throughout the survey. Notes and sketches were also made and scale site plans supplied by the client were used and modified to suit the purposes of this survey. The specific levels of detail used in the Level 2 survey followed the guidelines laid down in the RCHME (1996) and English Heritage (2006) specification, which were:

1. The Written Account:

- The precise location of the building, by name or street number, civil parish, town, etc, and National Grid reference and details of listing or scheduling.
- The date when the record was made, and the name(s) of the recorder(s).
- A statement describing the building's plan, form, function, age and development sequence. The names of architects, builders, patrons and owners should be given if known.
- An account of the building's overall form (structure, materials, layout) and its successive phases of development, together with the evidence supporting this analysis.
- An account of past and present uses of the building and its parts, with the evidence for these interpretations. An analysis of any circulation pattern or decorative, iconographic or liturgical scheme.

2. Drawn Record:

- Shall comprise plans (to scale or full dimensioned) of all main floors as existing. Small buildings of well-known types, or buildings with a repetitive structure (e.g. many industrial buildings) may be planned on one floor only, but a note or a sketch plan should be made to show the arrangement of other floors. Plans should show the form and location of any structural features of historic significance (e.g. blocked doors and windows; former fireplace openings; masonry joints; changes in internal levels).
- As a minimum, in all cases, the drawn record will include a sketch plan roughly dimensioned (when no more thorough drawn record is required). Such a plan may not always include structural details (e.g. timber framing).
- In each of the above cases, use may be made of available plans (i.e. those prepared as part of a planning application). In all cases these shall be checked by the historic building specialist and supplemented or amended where necessary.

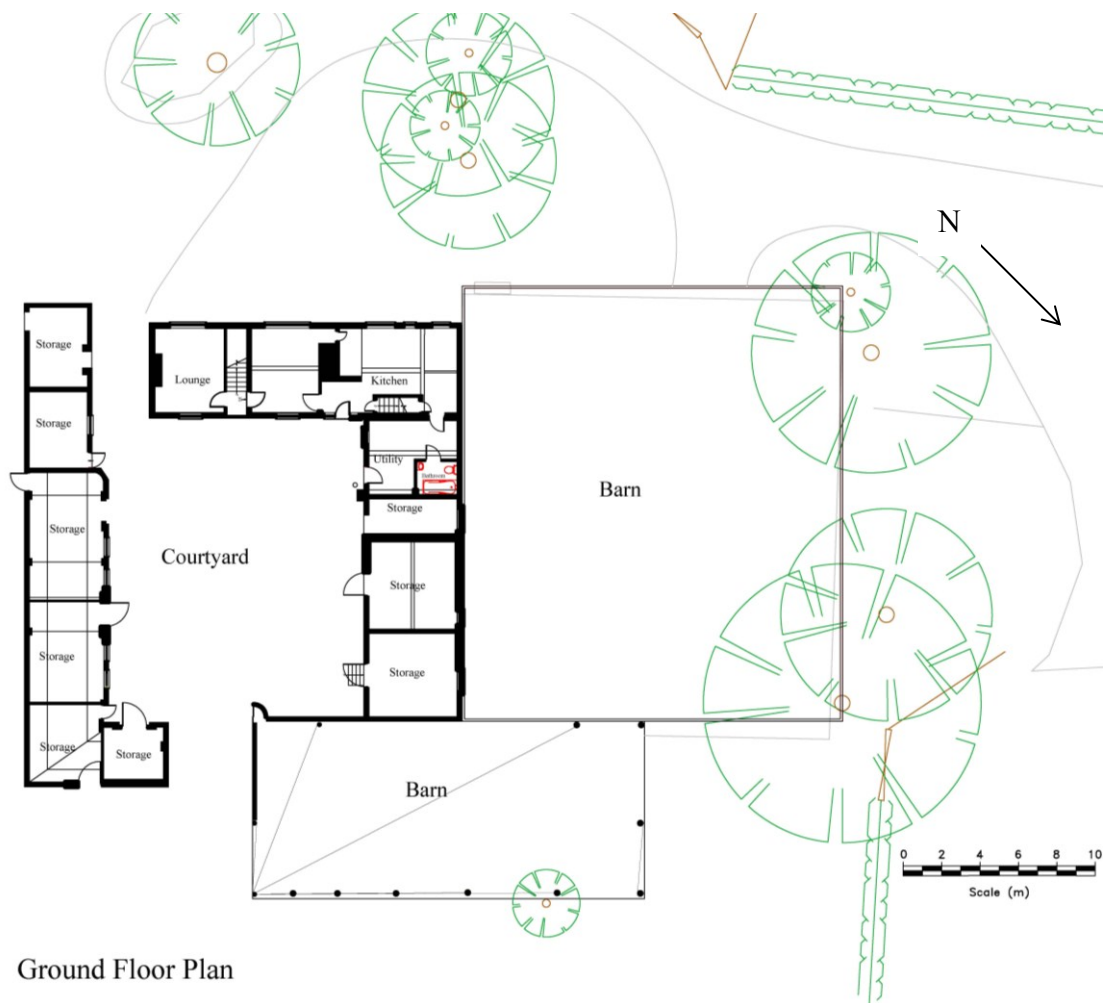
3. Photographic Record:

- General view of views of the exterior of the building.
- The overall appearance of principal rooms and circulation areas.
- Detailed coverage of the building's external appearance. In the case of a building designed by an architect, or intended to be seen from a certain point of view, it is important to have regard to the builder's intentions and to record the effect of the design or of the building's placing.

All work followed the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) *Code of Conduct* (2010) and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing buildings or Structures* (2010). In addition, Leicestershire County Council's *Guidelines and Procedures for Archaeological Work in Leicestershire* (1997) was followed.

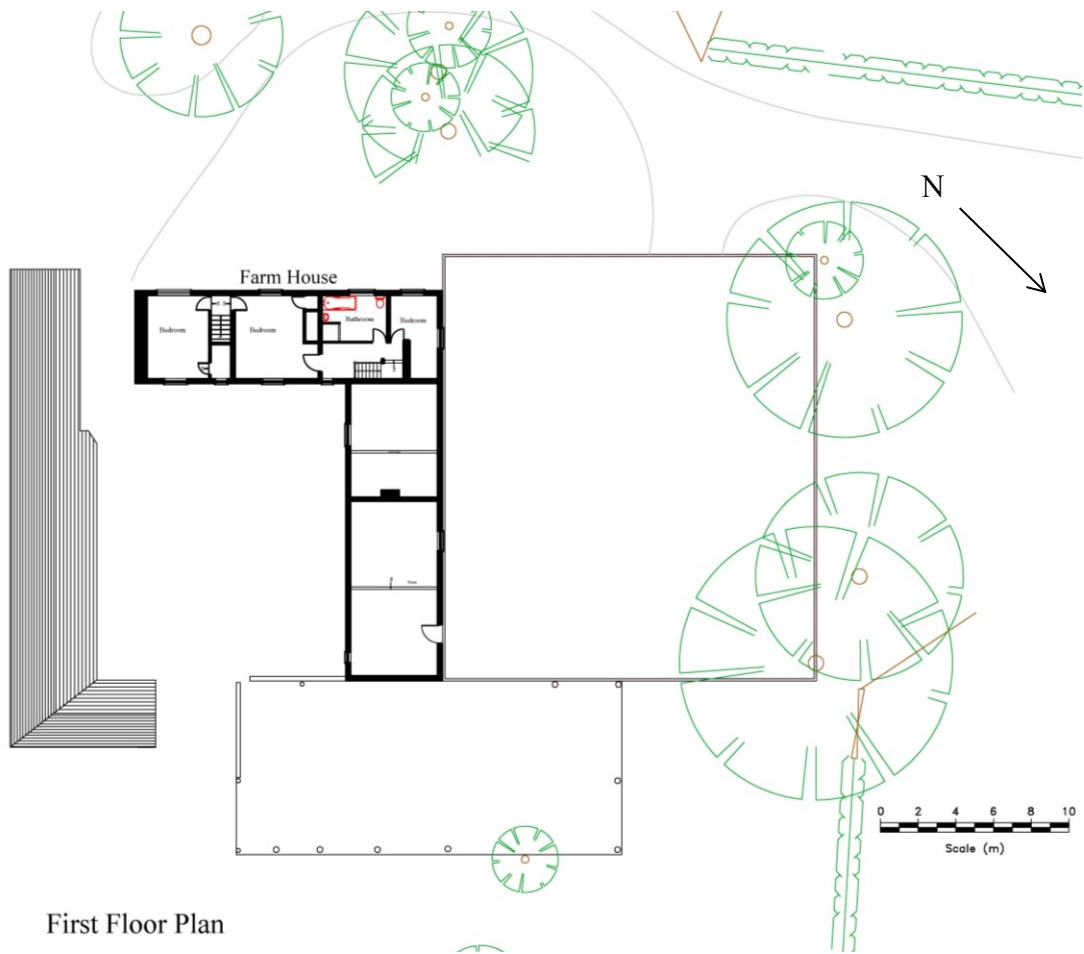
Results

The farm complex consists of the south-west facing farmhouse with a north-east to south-west aligned two storey brick-built barn range leading away from its western corner. Running along the western edge of the barn is a metal-framed barn clad with corrugated iron sheeting. A partial brick and metal barn has been built across the north-eastern end of the barn. On the east side of a cobbled courtyard is a long single storey brick-built range which appears to have been built as stables but is presently used for storage (Figs 4, 5,6 and 7). Elevation drawings of the buildings are shown in Appendix 1.



Ground Floor Plan

Figure 4 Site layout and existing ground floor plan
Modified from Corporate Architecture Ltd drawing



First Floor Plan

Figure 5 Existing first floor plan
Modified from Corporate Architecture Ltd drawing



Figure 6 Cold Comfort Farm south-west facing elevation
General view from lane leading from Rogues Lane



Figure 7 Cold Comfort Farm south-east facing elevations
General view from rear yard

The farmhouse, outside

The main elevation of the house is the south-west facing elevation which faces away from the courtyard to the north (Fig. 8). The building has a tiled roof and a cement render finish over red brick walls. The render appears to mask a number of blocked and modified openings. The most noticeable being a modified patio doorway altered from a window. A small window towards the west end of this elevation may be a blocked doorway. Brick dentil detailing consisting of alternating projecting bricks runs along the eaves but is broken at each window suggesting that the lintels have been modified. The central chimney stack is large and must contain a number of flues, whereas the gable end one, to the east, only appears to contain two. All the windows on this, and all other elevations, are modern uPVC.

The south-east facing gable end is a plain rendered façade broken by a blue brick plinth at its base. The bricks have been laid in a rough attempt at an English Bond and continue round to the north-east facing elevation which faces into the small courtyard (Fig. 9). A single width doorway has been blocked leaving only the rectangular fan light above it. The doorstep has been removed and the gap in the brick plinth has been infilled. A wide opening in the northern corner has wooden partition-like doors and windows and may represent an earlier opening into the former mill (Fig. 10).

The north-west facing gable end is partially obscured by the corrugated metal barn at ground floor height. However, it can be seen that a ground floor window and doorway have been blocked with later brickwork. A window at first floor height has been created by partially blocking a former doorway. It is not clear what this may have been used for but seems likely to be a loading door or access into a now demolished structure.



Figure 8 South-west facing elevation of the farmhouse
Composite photograph. Looking north-east. 1m scales



Figure 9 North-east facing elevation
Looking south-west. 1m scale



Figure 10 Former doorway in north-east facing elevation
Looking west. 1m scale

The farmhouse, inside

The most southerly ground floor room has been quite heavily modernised with little evidence of any earlier features. A panelled door leads into a small hallway behind the blocked door seen on the north-east facing elevation (Fig. 11). The stairs are narrow and steep and lead up to a small landing. At ground floor level in the hallway another panelled doorway leads northwards to a larger living room with a wide and high fireplace in the north-east corner (Fig. 12). A north-west to south-east timber beam runs across the middle of the ceiling and has a stop-chamfer at its southern end.

The kitchen at the northern end of the farmhouse is reached from the living room by a small corridor passing by the wooden partition doors seen on the north-east elevation. This may have been an open porch in an earlier phase of the building. At the north end of the corridor is another set of stairs leading up to the first floor which are enclosed by a masonry wall. The kitchen has another stop chamfered beam running along its length which sits on top of a more substantial north-east to south-west beam. A door in the north-east corner of the kitchen leads into the first bay of the barn range which has now been converted into a bath and utility room.



Figure 11 Ground floor southernmost room
Looking north



Figure 12 Ground floor living room
Looking east



Figure 13 Possible porch area between living room and kitchen
Looking east



Figure 14 Kitchen area
Looking east

On the first floor two similar sized bedrooms flank the central staircase located towards the south-east end of the building. The end bedroom with the external south-east facing gable end wall has an unusually thick wall which appears to box in the chimney breast. The reason for this is not clear (Fig. 15). The bedroom to the north of the end bedroom does not show any evidence of any earlier phases, although it does have panelled doors possibly dating to the first half of the 20th century. A doorway in the north-west corner of this bedroom leads out onto a small landing containing the enclosed stairs down to the kitchen. The landing and bathroom would presumably have originally formed a third bedroom when the house was first built (Fig. 16). A large beam in the ceiling above the top of the stairs and a stepped arrangement in the north-east wall of the northern end bedroom indicate the presence of a first floor entrance into the barn range. No evidence of this can be seen in the plasterwork on the house side but a blocked doorway is visible from the barn (see later). There was no access to the roof space during the survey.



Figure 15 South-eastern bedroom gable end wall
Looking east. Note boxed-in chimney breast



Figure 16 Landing and stairs at north-west end of house
Looking south-east. Bathroom on right of picture

The barn range, outside

The north-east to south-west barn attached to the farmhouse is built of red brick with slightly thinner bricks than those used on the farmhouse suggesting that the barn has an earlier construction date. The tiled roof ridgeline and eaves are lower than the farmhouse although this could simply be a consequence of the slope of the land running down to the east (Fig. 17). The barn range appears to be of one continuous build phase and does not appear to be bonded to the farmhouse. The range consists of two storeys but, on the south-east facing elevation, has only two square headed windows at first floor level. At ground floor level, on the same elevation, there were five round headed doorways. The western two have been modified to become part of the utility room for the farmhouse but the other three remain intact. The eastern doorway is reached by a set of stone steps leading into a room with a raised floor.

The north-east facing gable end of the barn range is obscured by the later modern barn running at right angles across this face. The north-west facing elevation is also partially obscured by the corrugated metal barn running alongside it but enough of the ground floor is visible to show that a number of earlier doors and windows have been blocked up with later brick and block work (Fig. 18).



Figure 17 Barn range, south-east facing elevation
Looking north-west. 1m scale



Figure 18 Barn range, north-west facing elevation
Looking south-east

The barn range, inside

As already noted, the south-western bay has been converted into a utility and bath room for the house leaving three remaining bays of uneven size divided by brick walls. The first bay, to the north-east of the utility room, is the smallest of the three but has substantial brick walls supporting the floor joists of the first floor which are covered with a plaster and lath floor (Fig. 19). The central bay has a substantial timber beam supporting the floor above which suggests that the floor above was designed to bear a significant amount of weight (Fig. 20). The north-eastern dividing wall consists of a brick base with a timber frame on top which has brick nogging infill. The other side of this wall is also visible in the north-eastern end bay room (Fig. 21). The end room has a raised earth floor which is at the same height as the metal barn floor to the rear.



Figure 19 Barn, ground floor, south-west bay
Looking north-west



Figure 20 Barn, ground floor, middle bay
Looking south. 1m scale



Figure 21 Barn, ground floor, north-east bay
Looking south-west. 1m scale

On the first floor there are two large rooms extending the full length of the barn. The south-west room has a blocked doorway leading into the farmhouse, as noted earlier. The room is now accessed through a hole in the brick dividing wall between this and

the north-east room. It has a plaster floor which, at the time of the survey, was in a degraded condition and was deemed unsafe to walk on. A fireplace is located on the north-east wall but the stack no longer pierces the roof. The roof is supported by two large cruck blades resting on the dividing wall on the floor below (Figs. 22 and 23). The blades are joined at the top by a short collar and have two cleated purlins on their upper sides. Large windbraces are socketed into the purlins at the north and south ends with sockets evident for two missing braces. The common rafters sit on the backs of the purlins. Because of the unsafe floor it was not possible to closely inspect the blades in order to ascertain whether or not they were pegged together. However, a metal band can be seen joining the foot of each blade to the wall-plate.

The north-east first floor room has a more conventional king post with pegged raking struts supporting cleated purlins (Fig. 24). The purlins have the same socketed windbraces as in the adjacent room which could suggest a similar date for the two sections of roof. A wooden partition built below the tie beam partially divides the room into two. The northern half of the room has a slightly higher floor and has a number of holes where chutes and trapdoors were once located.

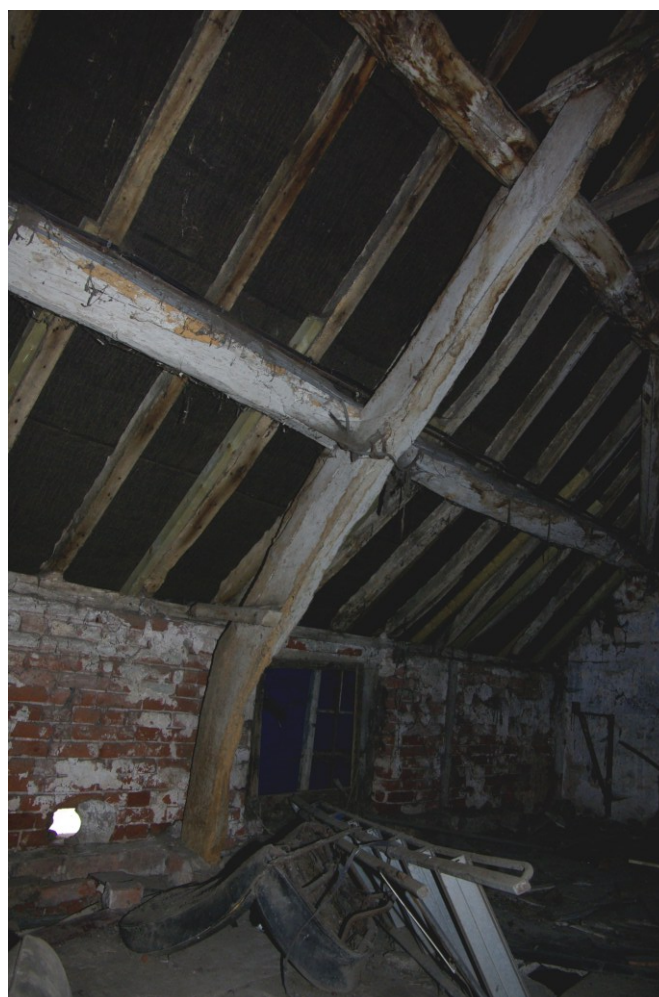


Figure 22 Barn, first floor, south-west room cruck blade
Looking south



Figure 23 Barn, first floor, south-west room roof detail
Looking south-west



Figure 24 Barn, first floor, north-east room, roof structure
Looking south-west. 1m scale

The stable block

The stable block forms an elongated L-shape on the south-east side of the courtyard and runs parallel to the barn range. It is a single storey structure built of red brick with blue brick detailing around the arched window and door openings (Figs. 25, 26 and 27). The south-western end of the range steps back a little and has a corrugated asbestos roof rather than the tiles used on the rest of the building. The stepped back portion is clearly a later addition or rebuild as the remnant of a blue brick window surround can be seen in the brickwork just before the step in the wall. It also has a more shallow pitch to its roof. At the south-east corner the building makes a short turn to the north-west to partially enclose the courtyard. This turn is of the same phase as the main part of the stable block.

Internally the stable block is divided into a number of bays. The dividing walls are made from a variety of modern materials but may represent the positions of earlier dividers. The roof has a series of trusses supporting cut-down principal rafters joined near the top by tie beams (Fig. 28). Substantial purlins are clasped onto the backs of the principals. The south-west end addition has a roof supported by narrow section timbers resting on the gable end which appears to be in a state of imminent collapse.



Figure 25 Stables, north-west facing elevation
Looking south-east. 1m scale



Figure 26 Stables, north-west facing elevation, south-east extension
Looking south. 1m scale



Figure 27 Stables, north-west facing elevation, east corner
Looking south-east. 1m scale



Figure 28 Stable, main roof detail
Looking south

The modern barns

The corrugated metal clad barn running alongside the farmhouse and barn range is typical of the Dutch barn with lean-to attachment seen on many farms in the region (Fig. 29). It is supported by metal box-section posts with timber roof members and has metal trusses helping create the distinctive curved roof profile. The outer edge of the lean-to is supported by wooden posts which may be re-used telegraph poles. It has an earth floor.

To the north-east of the main barn, and running across the north-east gable end of the brick barn is another modern barn (Fig. 30). Most of this metal-framed building is covered in corrugated sheet metal and appears to have been made and patched over a number of different phases and repairs. The stub of a brick wall survives in the south-west corner and has a number of blocked openings on it. This may be the surviving remnant of an earlier brick-built barn.



Figure 29 Metal barn to north-west of farmhouse and brick barn
Looking east



Figure 30 Metal barn to north-east of brick barn
Looking south-west

Discussion

The farmhouse has undergone a number of alterations in its lifetime. It is possible that it was once much smaller and that only the south-eastern end was used as a residence forming a two-up two-down house. The remainder of the house may then have been given over to more agricultural purposes possibly associated with its life as a mill. It seems unlikely that the farmhouse has been enlarged from two small side by side cottages as the staircases should match, which they do not. The stairs from the kitchen are an unusual arrangement and seem to have been built more for ease of access into the barns than for the house. Modernisation masks many of the traces of different phases which may survive. The joint between the barn and the house and the use of thicker bricks for the house suggests that it is of a later date, possibly mid-19th century but may well sit on earlier foundations.

The supported cruck frame in the barn suggests a late 18th or early 19th century construction date and was often used as a method of gaining extra height on the first floor. The fireplace may suggest that this was once a domestic room which would require such extra head height in order to make it habitable. The use of the pegged king post in the other half of the barn would point to an early 19th century date. The purlins with wind braces and the use of pegs rather than bolts points to the probability that both parts of the roof are contemporary and that they were both built in the earlier part of the 19th century.

The stable block appears to date from the second half of the 19th century at the earliest but certainly pre-dates the first edition OS map of 1885. The south end of the block has been modified more recently. Although the building is reasonably intact, the brickwork has suffered very badly due to age and frost damage and will require extensive remedial work during the refurbishment.

The metal covered barns are typical of the farm structures erected during, or after, the Second World War. From the map evidence it would appear that they replace earlier structures and the heavily patched stub of wall in the north corner of the courtyard would certainly point towards this.

Archive

The archive consists of:

This report,

Contact sheets of 92 digital photographs,

65 35mm black and white photographs and negatives,

3 Photographic record sheets, combined black and white and digital,

CD of this report and the digital photographs.

Publication

A summary of the work will be submitted for publication in the *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society* in due course. A record of the project will also be submitted to the OASIS project. OASIS is an online index to archaeological grey literature.

Acknowledgements

The fieldwork was undertaken by A Hyam, the project was managed by Dr P Clay. Thanks to the client Corporate Architecture Ltd for supplying the original survey drawings and to the owners for background information.

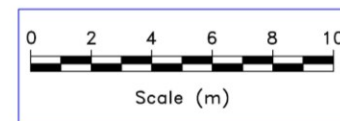
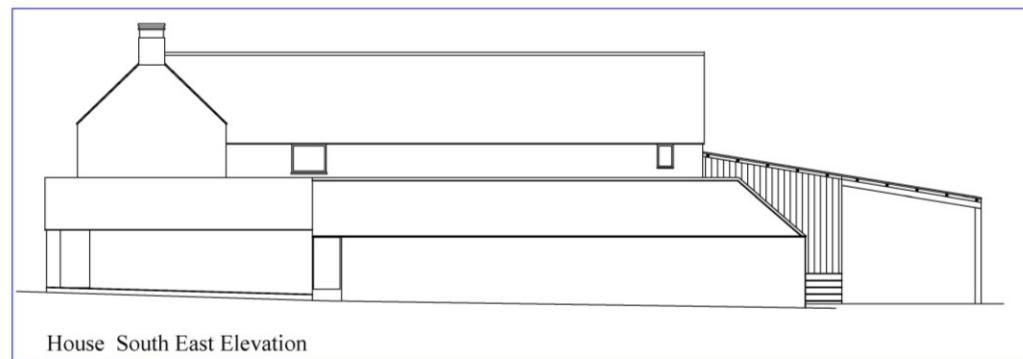
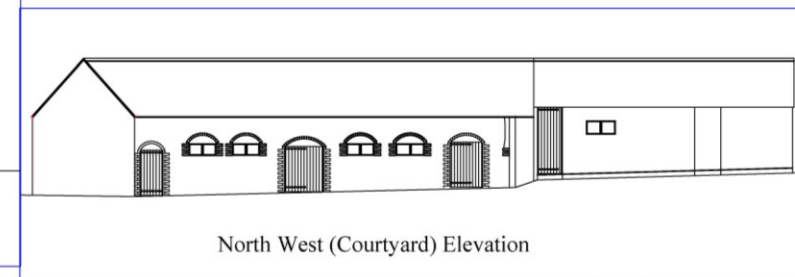
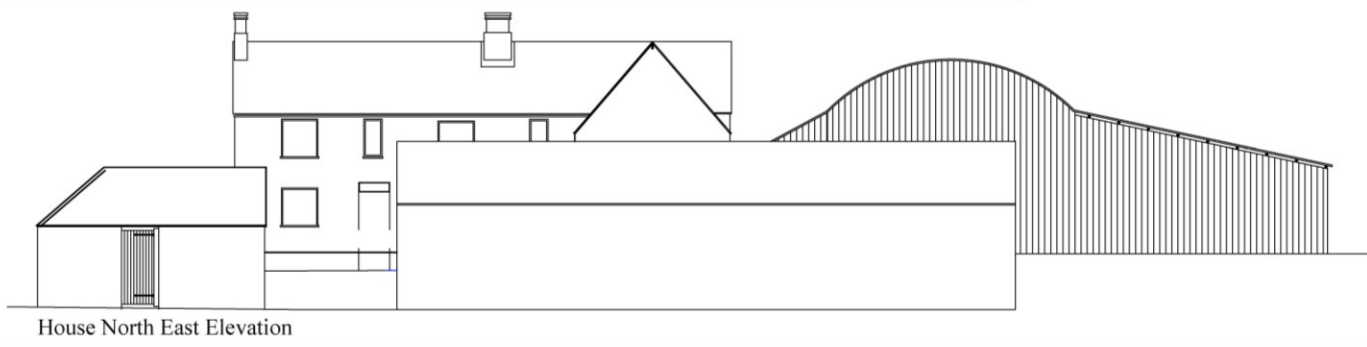
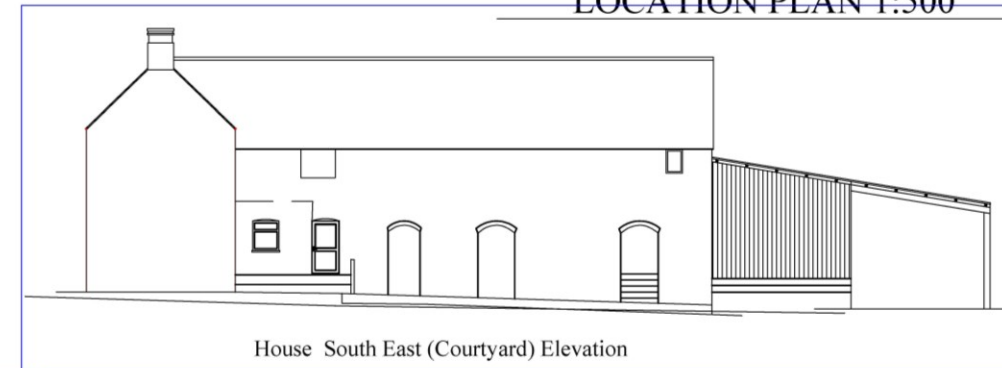
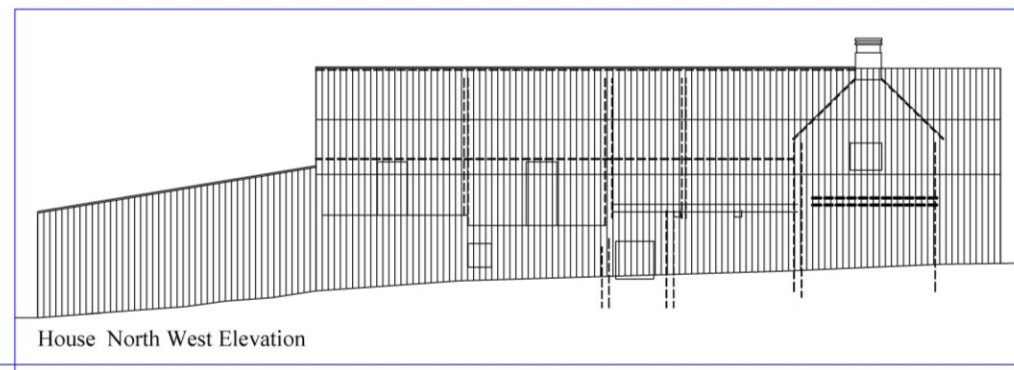
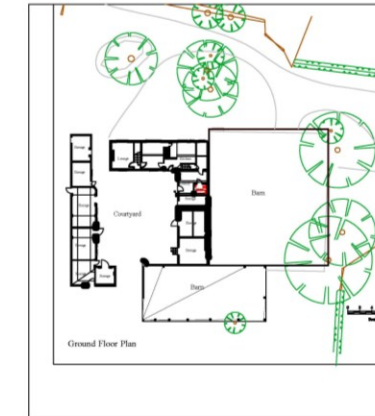
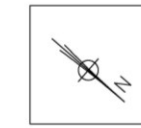
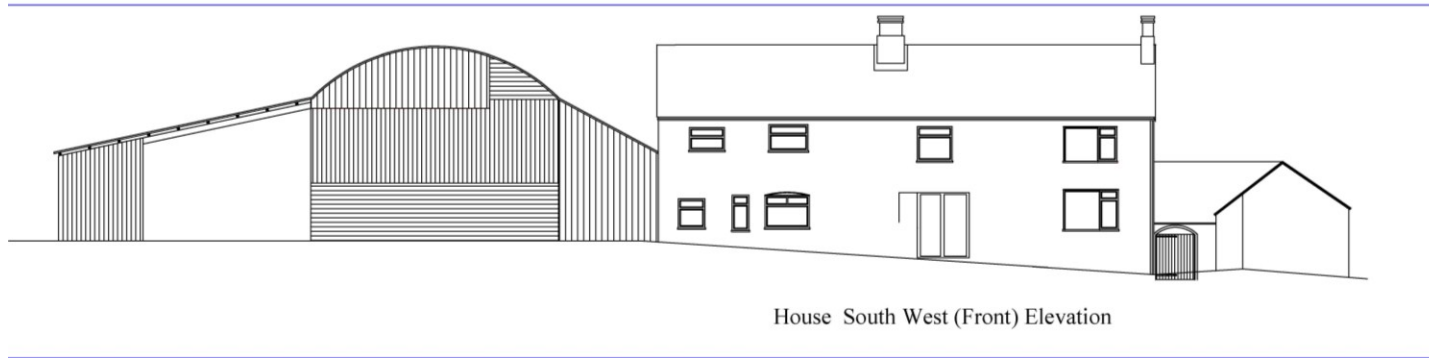
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Institute for Archaeologists' (IfA) *Code of Conduct*, adhering to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures*.

ULAS 2012. *An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment for Cold Comfort Farm, Rogues Lane, Barwell, Leicestershire*. ULAS Report 2012-033

Appendix 1. Elevation drawings



REV	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY
01	PROPOSED ALTERATIONS - EXTENSIONS & REFINISHMENT OF EXISTING FARMHOUSE & ANCILLARY STORAGE BUILDINGS TO FORM TWO COMBINED DWELLINGS	JAN 2006	
02	ELEVATIONS AS EXISTING		

CHRIS & SEAN MCMANUS COMFORT FARM ROGUES LANE BARWELL LEICS	DATE: JAN 2006 SCALE: 1:100 PROJECT NO: 3341/CCF/12/006
CORPORATE ARCHITECTURE LIMITED CHARTERED ARCHITECTS <small>27, Lutterworth Road, Lutterworth, Leicestershire, LE15 9JG</small>	

Modified from Corporate Architecture drawings.

Appendix 2. OASIS Information

Project Name	Cold Comfort farm, Rogues Lane, Barwell, Leicestershire
Project Type	Level 2 Building Survey
Project Manager	P Clay
Project Supervisor	A Hyam
Previous/Future work	DBA
Current Land Use	Agricultural farm buildings
Development Type	Change of use to domestic
Reason for Investigation	As a condition
Position in the Planning Process	Ongoing
Site Co ordinates	SP 418 963
Start/end dates of field work	8.3.13
Archive Recipient	LCC
Study Area	0.418ha

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