

A Level 2 Historic Building Survey at Limes Farm, Main Street, Kilby, Leicestershire

NGR: SP6189 9544

Andrew Hyam



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Kilby,

Leicestershire

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For: Leicestershire County Council

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CONTENTS

Summary	1
Introduction	1
Background	3
Objectives	7
Methodology	7
Results	7
Unit 1	7
Building 1	9
Building 2	10
Building 3	10
Building 4	10
Unit 2	20
The barn	22
The outbuildings	22
Discussion	27
Archive	27
Publication	28
Bibliography	28
Appendix 1 OASIS Information	29
Appendix 2 Digital photographs	30
Figure 1 Kilby village location	
Figure 3 Limes Farm and buildings to be surveyed	
Figure 4 Limes Farmhouse	
Figure 5 East end of Limes Farmhouse	
Figure 6 Proposed redevelopment scheme	
Figure 7 1st Edition Ordnance Survey Map 1886	
Figure 8 Unit 1 elevations and plan	
Figure 9 Unit 1, north-east facing elevation gable end	
Figure 10 Unit 1, north-east facing elevation gable end bricks above hayloft door	
Figure 11 Unit 1, Building 1 north-east and north-west facing elevations	
Figure 12 Unit 1, Building 1 north-west facing elevation	
Figure 13 Unit 1, Building 1 northern room	
Figure 14 Unit 1, Building 1 passageway adjacent to northernmost room	
Figure 15 Unit 1, Building 1 centre room	
Figure 16 Unit 1, Building 1 south room. Door to Building 2	14
Figure 17 Unit 1, Building 1 south room mezzanine floor	
Figure 18 Unit 1, Building 2 north-east and north-west facing elevations	
Figure 19 Unit 1, Building 2 north-west facing elevation	
Figure 20 Unit 1, Building 2 interior	
Figure 21 Unit 1, Building 2 interior	
Figure 22 Unit 1, Building 3 north-west facing elevation	
Figure 23 Unit 1, Building 3 inside	
Figure 24 Unit 1, Building 3	

i

Figure 25 Unit 1, Building 4 north-west facing elevation	19
Figure 26 Unit 1, Building 4 north-west facing elevation southern end	19
Figure 27 Unit 1, Building 4 inside	20
Figure 28 Unit 2, Barn and outbuildings south-east facing elevations and plans	21
Figure 29 Unit 2 buildings seen from the yard	21
Figure 30 Unit 2, Barn south-east facing elevation	23
Figure 31 Unit 2, Barn and outbuildings	23
Figure 32 Unit 2, Barn south-west facing gable end	24
Figure 33 Unit 2, Barn vent	24
Figure 34 Unit 2, Barn north-west facing elevation	25
Figure 35 Unit 2, Barn ground floor	25
Figure 36 Unit 2, Barn mezzanine	26
Figure 37 Outbuildings	26
Figure 38 Outbuildings	27

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Summary

An historic building survey (level 2) was undertaken by the University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) at Limes Farm, Main Street, Kilby, Leicestershire on the 8th of December 2015. The survey studied a number of historic farm buildings associated with the Grade II listed farmhouse. The farmhouse dates from the late 18th century and it is likely that some of the buildings, especially a stone-built barn, are from a similar period. Modifications and adaptations have taken place up to the present day in all of the buildings.

The report and archive will be deposited under X.A136.2015

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 recording (Level 2) on farm buildings belonging to Limes Farm, Kilby, Leicestershire. Level 2 historic building surveys are defined in the Historic England (formerly English Heritage) guidance document – Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice (2006). Leicestershire County Council, who are the owners of the farm, propose to convert two redundant farm buildings on the site into two residential units and to build one new property on western element of the site. Limes Farmhouse is an 19th Century Grade II listed building and the buildings affected by the proposed redevelopment work fall within its curtilage.

The village of Kilby lies approximately 7km to the south-east of Leicester within a large area of pastureland typical of this part of Leicestershire (Fig. 1). Limes Farm is located at the western end of Kilby on the southern side of Main Street opposite the village school. Limes Farmhouse has been divided into two properties and is now known as Numbers 11 and 15. The farmhouse runs along the street front with the farm buildings located behind it to the south. Limes Farm consists of the farmhouse, a long range of sheds along the eastern boundary, and a cluster of larger barns to the southwest of the farmhouse (Fig. 2). There is also a group of outbuildings and pig pens between the farmhouse and the barns.

The building survey was commissioned by Leicestershire County Council in advance of the proposed demolition and redevelopment. Because of the listed farmhouse and the possible historic value of the farm buildings within its curtilage the Senior Planning Archaeologist at Leicestershire County Council, as advisor to the planning authority, requested that an historic building survey of specific buildings takes place before any development work commences.

An archaeological Desk-based Assessment, also commissioned by Leicestershire County Council, has been produced by ULAS (Baker 2015) which discusses the archaeological background of Kilby and the proposed development site.

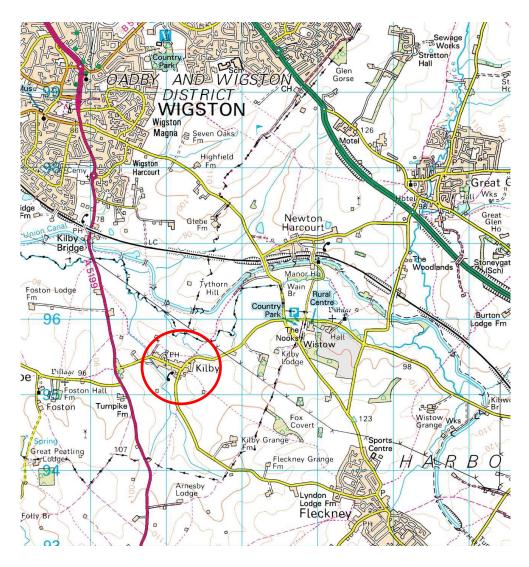


Figure 1 Kilby village location

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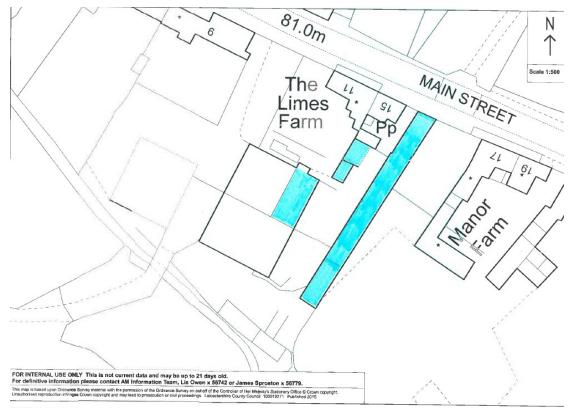


Figure 2 Limes Farm and buildings to be surveyed Supplied by client: Leicestershire County Council

Background

Limes Farmhouse is located along the south side of Main Street (Figs. 3 and 4). It has now been divided into two separate dwellings although the listing description covers both properties:

The grade II listed farmhouse was listed in 1986 under Listing ID 188914:

Farmhouse and labourer's cottage. Late C18. Painted brick with Welsh slate roof. 3 storeyed, the two dwellings comprise 4 bays with doorway to left to No.15, in moulded wood architrave, and 3 light casement windows with transoms and cambered brick heads. The third bay, which is No.11, is slightly set forward. Upper windows are also 3 light casements. No.11 is entered from the side. Gable and axial stacks.

The present house was constructed in the 1770s but may have older origins as there is evidence of a stone platform base on the east facing gable end wall (Fig. 5). The brickwork of the farm also shows evidence of modification since its initial construction date. The farmhouse does not form part of this survey.

One range of the farm buildings to be surveyed forms the eastern boundary of the site as it slopes down towards a brook. The proposed redevelopment scheme identifies this range as Unit 1 and this identification will be used for the purposes of this survey (Fig. 6). The cluster of barns to the south of the farmhouse is composed of one

historic building with the remainder being late 20th century structures. The historic barn is identified as Unit 2. The existing pig pens and outbuildings will be converted into a garage and store shed.

Only a limited number of historic maps were available to study. A hand-drawn Ordnance Survey map from 1814 held by the British Library shows that some buildings were on the site at this time. This map cannot be reproduced here due to copyright issues but is available to view on the British Library website at: http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/onlineex/ordsurvdraw/b/002osd000000012u00222000 httml. Unfortunately the details of this map are insufficient to identify individual structures. The next available map is the First Edition County Series Ordnance Survey of 1886 which shows a long structure on the eastern farm boundary with an extended barn to the south-west (Fig. 7). The long structure appears to be what is now Unit 1 and extends as far south on the map as it continues to do today. The map appears to show the Unit 2 barn as having a group of structures enveloping its southern and western sides which then extend southwards to create a long courtyard leading to fields in the south. The next available map published in 1956 shows a very similar layout which gives an indication of how modern the later barns are.



Figure 3 Limes Farmhouse Looking south-east along Main Street. Number 11 is the cream coloured building Number 15 is the white building



Figure 4 Limes Farmhouse Looking west along Main Street. Unit 1 building on left of picture



Figure 5 East end of Limes Farmhouse Looking north. Note stone platform (arrowed) and rebuilding line in the brickwork on the gable end. Unit 1 buildings on right of picture

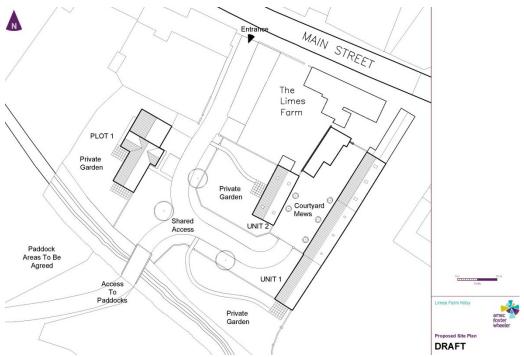


Figure 6 Proposed redevelopment scheme Plan supplied by client

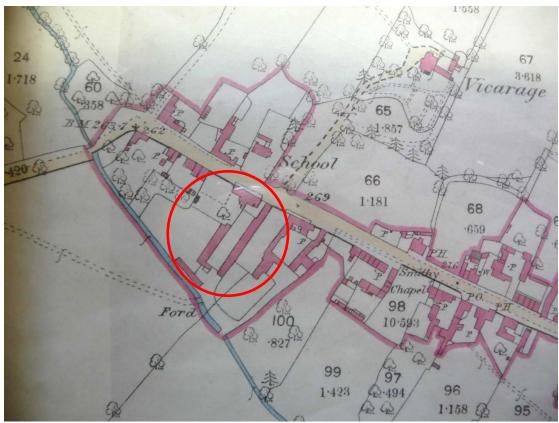


Figure 7 1st Edition Ordnance Survey Map 1886 Sheet XLIV.4. Original scale 25 inch to 1 mile. Limes Farm highlighted

Objectives

The purpose of the work was to record and advance the understanding of the significance of the heritage assets, namely the farm buildings belonging to Limes Farm. The objectives and research themes are laid out in the ULAS *Written Scheme of Investigation for Historic Building Recording: Limes Farm, Main Street, Kilby, Wigston* (ULAS 2015; hereafter the WSI).

The specific 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

The methodology used throughout the survey is discussed in detail in the ULAS WSI and also followed English Heritage's (now Historic England) 2006 guidelines *Understanding Historic Buildings*. The Historic Building Recording for this project was undertaken to Level 2 which was augmented to record any fixtures, fittings and evidence of any equipment surviving in the former farm buildings.

Results

As noted, Limes Farm consists of the farmhouse with an elongated yard extending southwards between a range of buildings (Unit 1) to the east and a set of outbuildings and barns (Unit 2) to the west. The farm buildings are oriented on a north-east to south-west axis and create an elongated yard in between them. Immediately behind (south) of the farmhouse is a garden which presumably at one time functioned as another yard.

Unit 1

The Unit 1 range of buildings run along the eastern site boundary and are built using red bricks and a variety of roof coverings. The range consists of four different buildings each with a successively lower roofline as they descend south-westwards down the slope of the yard. For the purposes of this survey the northernmost building at the top of the slope on Main Street has been given the identification designation of Building 1 with the southernmost named as Building 4 (Fig. 8). These identification numbers do not relate to any official designations or former uses.

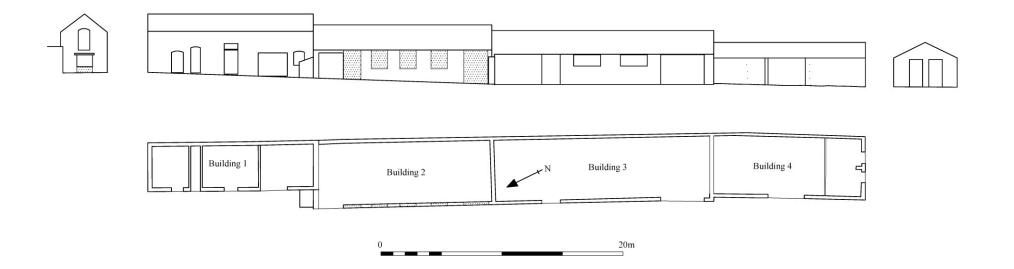


Figure 8 Unit 1 elevations and plan South-east facing elevation not shown

Building 1

Building 1 is constructed from red brick and has a slate roof. It is showing signs of structural weakness and has several ties holding the walls which are bulging in a number of places. The north-east facing gable end fronts onto Main Street and is level with the farmhouse frontage (Fig. 9). The brickwork at ground floor level is slightly darker than at first floor level suggesting a possible rebuild or extension. The elevation has a ground floor rectangular wood framed window with a horizontal sliding York sash. This window appears to have been reused from elsewhere as the original opening has been modified from a doorway which has now been partially blocked with brickwork. The window also has a concrete lintel. Above the window is a hayloft door with bricks with the initials W.D. T.W. D.G. carved into them (Fig. 10). In smaller lettering the date 1814 can be seen to the side of the brick with D.G. on it. By coincidence this is the date of the hand-drawn Ordnance Survey map. These bricks are slightly darker than the surrounding bricks so they may have been re-located from elsewhere on the building or even elsewhere on the farm.

The north-west facing elevation runs parallel to the side of the farmhouse and the top of the long yard. This elevation also shows the difference in colour in the brickwork at ground floor and above (Figs. 11 and 12). There is a vertical joint in the brickwork towards the southern end of the elevation which appears to show that the building was always two storeys at this end. A modern breeze-block built structure with a cement tiled roof has been built into the angle created by Building 1 and Building 2.

At the northern end of the north-west facing elevation is a low but wide doorway which leads into a small room with modern milk processing equipment inside (Fig. 13). The walls have been covered in a white boarding material presumably to aid cleanliness. The room has a low ceiling which has been plastered and is supported by a substantial chamfered beam. A narrow doorway with a brick-arched head is located to the south of the northernmost room. This doorway leads into a narrow passageway which runs the width of this building although the purpose of this is not clear as there is no evidence of a doorway, blocked or otherwise, on any of the walls (Fig. 14). A number of modern pipes for transporting milk run across the room at ceiling height.

To the south of the passage room is a larger rectangular room which is reached via a stable type door with a three-paned window-light above it. This room was also used until recently for milk processing and is a full height room extending up to the rafters which rest on purlins supported by the gable walls (Fig. 15). A hayloft door with no access steps or ladder is set into the gable on the north-east wall. A step in the wall thickness may indicate where a first floor or mezzanine was once located.

The southernmost room of Building 1 coincides with the vertical joint in the change in brickwork suggesting that this part of the building was always a two-storey structure. The ground floor has a double-width doorway with a large timber lintel and a wooden-framed window to the south. At eaves level is a small four-paned casement window. Inside, the room appears to have been most recently used as an animal pen or chicken house. A thin wooden partition divides the room into two and has a mezzanine floor above it which covers approximately two-thirds of the room leaving only the western third open to the roof. A locked or sealed wooden door leads south into Building 2 (Fig. 16). There was no access to the mezzanine which was also unsafe to walk on but it could be seen from ground level that

there is a small fireplace and chimney located on the south wall (Fig. 17). The chimney stack is not visible from the outside which indicates that the roof has been re-covered.

Building 2

The slate-roofed Building 2 is lower and wider than Building 1 and also partially wraps around the south-western corner of Building 1 showing that it was built at a later date than 1 (Fig. 18). The north-western corner of Building 2 has rounded bricks to prevent damage from vehicles and animals entering the yard from the road. The north-west facing elevation has been significantly modified by blocking at least four windows and a doorway with modern bricks and adding a modern sliding door at the northern end (Fig. 19). Inside the building has been converted to a milking parlour with most of the equipment remaining in-situ (Figs. 20 and 21). The southern end wall has been adapted to take a full-width roller door which appears to have been used to allow the cows to enter and leave the parlour.

Building 3

Although Building 3 is the same width as Building 2 the roofline steps down once more to accommodate the slope of the yard. It is not clear if the brickwork is continuous between the two buildings as there has been rebuilding and modification where the two join. However, the bricks on the unmodified parts of both buildings appear to be very similar. The north-west facing elevation is typical of an animal shed and has a doorway at each end with the southernmost doorway being wide enough to allow cattle to enter and leave (Fig. 22). In the centre of the elevation are two wood-framed windows with tilting openings above blue-brick sills.

Inside Building 3 is a large open space with bays and small troughs for cows to be tethered (Figs. 23 and 24). Above each stall is a small board where the animal's name was chalked. The roof structure has a very shallow pitch and consists of multiple common rafters all supported by tie-beams set half way up their length. A single timber beam or truss runs across the room.

Building 4

Building 4 is in a state of deterioration and appears to have been added at a later date than Building 3 as the bricks do not join and the width is less than Building 3 (Figs. 25 and 26). The roof is covered in corrugated sheet metal but this may have replaced an earlier slate roof. The north-east facing elevation shows evidence of many areas of patching and rebuilding with a number of brick varieties and joints visible. Inside the room is another open shed used for storage (Fig. 27). A make-shift timber partition separates the end of the building which has two door-sized openings. The roof timbers have been patched and repaired in many places.



Figure 9 Unit 1, north-east facing elevation gable end Looking south-west. 1m scale. Note farmhouse on right and stone barn of Unit 2



Figure 10 Unit 1, north-east facing elevation gable end bricks above hayloft door Looking south-west



Figure 11 Unit 1, Building 1 north-east and north-west facing elevations Looking south. Note the rest of the Unit 1 buildings continuing down the slope



Figure 12 Unit 1, Building 1 north-west facing elevation Looking north-east. 1m scale. Note changes in brickwork (arrowed)



Figure 13 Unit 1, Building 1 northern room Looking east

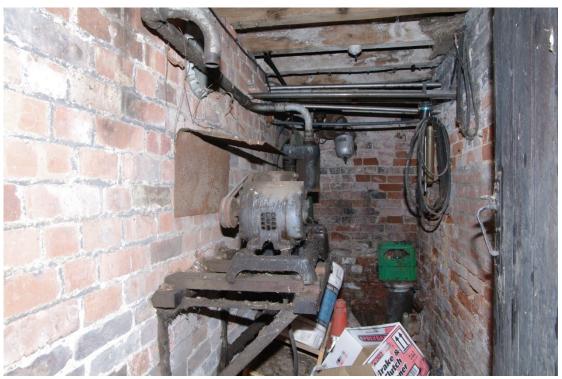


Figure 14 Unit 1, Building 1 passageway adjacent to northernmost room
Looking south-east



Figure 15 Unit 1, Building 1 centre room Looking north-east



Figure 16 Unit 1, Building 1 south room. Door to Building 2 Looking south-east. 1m scale



Figure 17 Unit 1, Building 1 south room mezzanine floor Looking south from ground floor



Figure 18 Unit 1, Building 2 north-east and north-west facing elevations Looking south. Note how Building 2 wraps around the corner of Building 1



Figure 19 Unit 1, Building 2 north-west facing elevation Looking north-east



Figure 20 Unit 1, Building 2 interior Looking north-east



Figure 21 Unit 1, Building 2 interior Looking south. Note roller shutter door into Building 3 at far end of room. 1m scale



Figure 22 Unit 1, Building 3 north-west facing elevation Looking north-east. 1m scale. Building 3 on right of picture



Figure 23 Unit 1, Building 3 inside
Looking south-west. Note black plaques to hold the cow's names



Figure 24 Unit 1, Building 3
Looking north-east. Roller shutter door into Building 2 at far end



Figure 25 Unit 1, Building 4 north-west facing elevation Looking south-east. 1m scale. Note joint with modern brickwork (on right)



Figure 26 Unit 1, Building 4 north-west facing elevation southern end Looking south-east. 1m scale. Note multiple brick joints

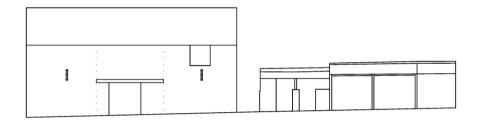


Figure 27 Unit 1, Building 4 inside Looking south-west

Unit 2

Unit 2 consists of a group of barns in the south-east corner of the long yard. Most of the barns are modern steel structures constructed in the later part of the 20th century, however a large stone and brick barn building forms the north-eastern corner of this group. It seems likely that this barn is part of the line of buildings shown on the 1886 First Edition Ordnance Survey map. None of the modern barns were recorded in this survey. In addition to the barns there is a brick-built outhouse, lean-to and pig sty (Figs. 28 and 29). The outhouse and pig sty do not appear on the 1886 maps but are clearly present by the time of the 1956 edition of the Ordnance Survey.

The area to the south of the barns is used as a cattle yard and slurry pit as this is the lowest part of the farm complex. To the west of the barns is another open barn structure surrounded by neighbouring gardens and open space.



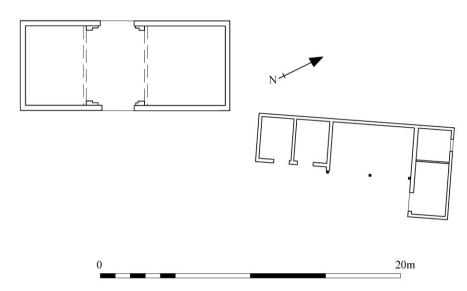


Figure 28 Unit 2, Barn and outbuildings south-east facing elevations and plans



Figure 29 Unit 2 buildings seen from the yard Looking south-east. Unit 1 buildings on left of picture. Outbuildings in foreground on right of picture

The barn

The barn building is built from granite rubble with red brick corners and inserts around the doors and windows (Figs. 30 and 31). The building has a slate roof which, according to the tenant farmer was renewed around fifty years ago. The granite appears to be of the same type as that used for the platform supporting the farmhouse walls and the same as a number of boundary walls seen elsewhere in the village.

The south-east facing elevation of the barn faces into the long yard and is the only elevation which is unobscured by other structures. The brick-built corners appear to be handmade and are keyed into the stonework and are likely to be part of the original design (Fig. 32). Air vents in the form of vertical slits are also likely to be original features especially as the vent has a stone sill (Fig. 33). A set of double doors with a substantial timber lintel is set into a central area of brickwork which is also keyed into the adjacent stonework. The lintel is much longer than the door which suggests that the opening has been modified, perhaps to put in a smaller doorway. A hayloft door, also with a brick surround, is located below the eaves at the northern end of the elevation.

The gable ends of the barn are both of stone with the apexes being built in brick. The south-west facing gable end has a slit vent just above eaves height suggesting that the buildings attached to this end shown on the 1886 map were lower than this. The rest of the gable end is obscured by the modern barns. The north-east facing gable end has exactly the same details but is obscured by a set of brick outbuildings built against it.

The north-west facing elevation of the barn is partially within the adjacent barn and can only be partially inspected (Fig. 34). The details of stone and brickwork appear to be the same as the south-east facing elevation although on this elevation the doorway has only a small amount of brickwork above it with the rest being stonework. The timber lintel is supported on brick pillars. A full height hayloft door is located at first floor level to the south of the doorway.

Inside the barn is a full-height central area with mezzanine floors at both ends (Figs. 35 and 36). The barn is used for storage and is in a fairly poor state due to a leaking roof. The mezzanine floors, which have wooden partitions at the end, can be reached via sets of wooden steps but the floors appeared to be in varying stages of rot so only a cursory inspection was made from the ground floor.

The outbuildings

The outbuildings to the north-east of the barn are a group of brick-built structures which share the same common back wall on their north-western side (Figs. 37 and 38). The buildings impinge on the yard to quite an extent and their construction must have represented a significant change of use in this area. Closest to the barn are a pair of sties currently used to house chickens. To the north of this is an open-fronted lean-to shed currently used for storage. There is no indication what this was used for but could have been a small cart shed. At the northern end is a long room with a stable door facing towards the south-west. This is presently used as an office or store.



Figure 30 Unit 2, Barn south-east facing elevation Looking west



Figure 31 Unit 2, Barn and outbuildings Looking north. Outbuildings immediately to left of the barn



Figure 32 Unit 2, Barn south-west facing gable end Looking north



Figure 33 Unit 2, Barn vent Vent on south-east facing elevation



Figure 34 Unit 2, Barn north-west facing elevation Looking south-east. Central doorway is behind the living van



Figure 35 Unit 2, Barn ground floor Looking south-west



Figure 36 Unit 2, Barn mezzanine Looking north



Figure 37 Outbuildings
Looking north. 1m scale. Yellow arrow shows the sty, red arrow is the lean-to, orange arrow is the outbuilding



Figure 38 Outbuildings Looking north-west. Sty on left of picture lean-to on right

Discussion

The buildings at Limes Farm form an interesting group of structures relating to the development of a village farm. Although the exact construction dates are not entirely clear it seems likely that the barn was built at the same time or very soon after the farmhouse in the late 18th century. The barn uses local stone and locally produced bricks and reflects the difficulties in transporting building materials in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The long row of buildings along the eastern boundary to pre-date the 1886 map and parts of the structure might be as early as the farmhouse and barn. However, the row has been substantially modified since that date with a rebuilding or addition of a first floor to Building 1 at the northern end of the row. Other buildings along the row, especially Building 4, have also been heavily modified or rebuilt. The pig sty and outbuildings are likely to have been added in the first half of the 20th century. The bricks are mass-produced and were probably imported from elsewhere in the region.

Archive

The archive consists of:

This report,

2 A4 pro forma photographic record sheets,

88 digital photographs,

2 A3 permatrace drawings of plans and elevations,

DVD of this report and digital photographs in tiff and jpeg format.

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.

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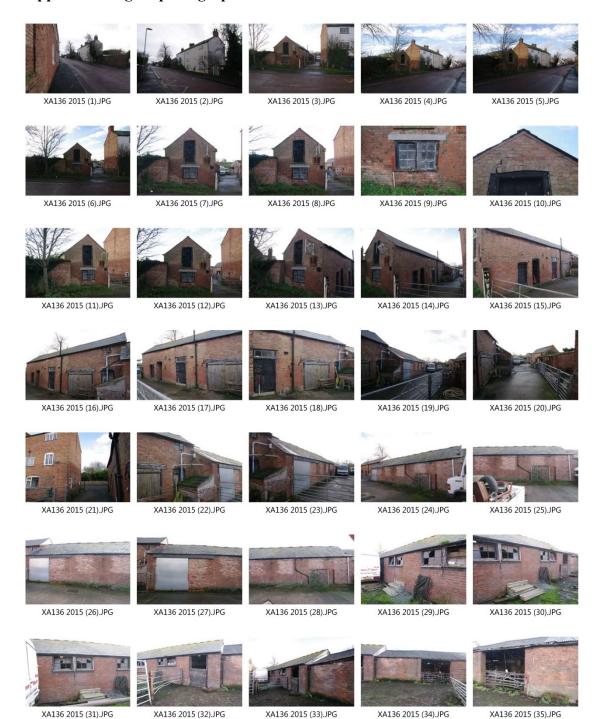
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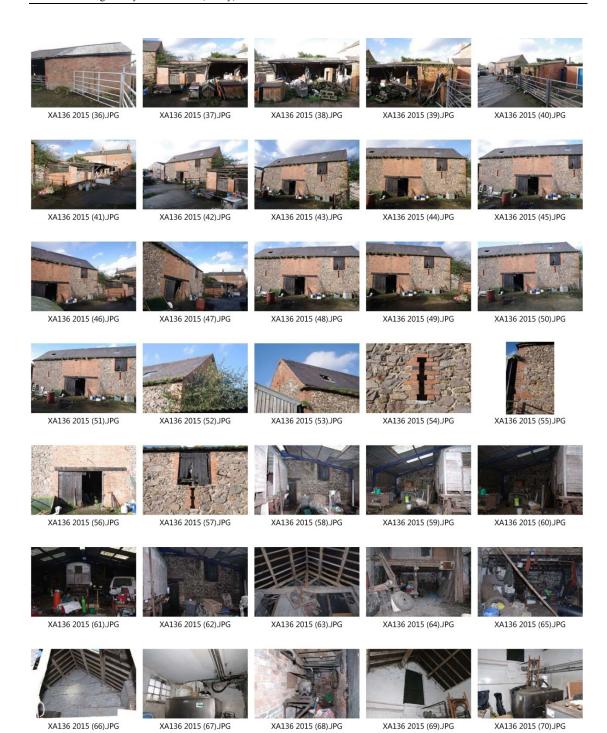
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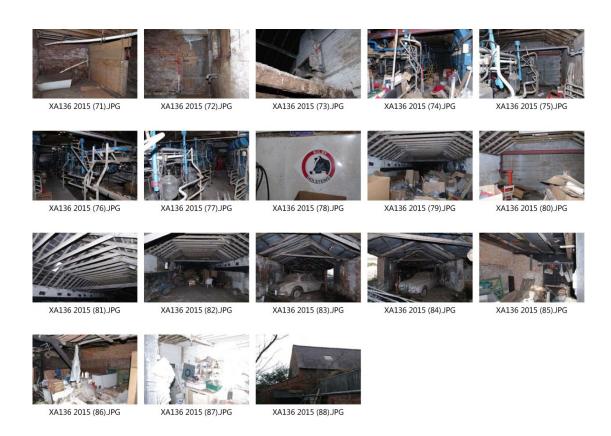
Appendix 1 OASIS Information

Project Name	A Level 2 Historic Building Survey at Limes Farm, Main
	Street, Kilby, Leicestershire.
Project Type	Historic building survey
Project Manager	P Clay
Project Supervisor	A Hyam
Previous/Future work	Desk based assessment
Current Land Use	Farm
Development Type	Proposed residential redevelopment
Reason for Investigation	Pre planning
Position in the Planning	Pre planning
Process	
Site Co ordinates	SP 6189 9544
Start/end dates of field	8.12.2015
work	
Archive Recipient	LCC
Study Area	100m^2

Appendix 2 Digital photographs







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