



UNIVERSITY OF
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Archaeological Services

**A Level 2 Historic Building Assessment
at Hallfield Farm, Diseworth, Leicestershire**

SK 45499 24499

Jon Coward



ULAS Report No. 2018-077

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**A Level 2 Historic Building Assessment at Hallfield Farm, Diseworth, Leicestershire. (SK
45499 24499)**

Jon Coward

For: **John Sutton Developments**

Planning Ref: 15/00949/FUL

2018-074	Vicki Score	24/04/2018
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Summary

A Level 2 Historic Building Assessment at Hallfield Farm, Diseworth, Leicestershire. (SK 45499 24499) was carried out by the University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) in March 2018. The building, which is always likely to have been for agricultural use, is in stone with brick gables, and appears to have been converted to an open front cart barn at the turn of the 20th century. The archive will be deposited with Leicestershire County Council Museums Service under accession code X.A33.2018 in due course.

Site Description

The building lies at the west end of the village, on Hall Gate adjacent to Diseworth brook. It is now the only building on the site, but up until recently there were several 20th century barns adjacent (shown as still extant in Figure 2) which have since been removed.



Figure 1 Diseworth, Leicestershire

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The village Diseworth is first documented as *Digtheswyrth* in the Charter of AD 966, and later as *Digopsworþ*; 'worþ' refers to a walled or more likely in this case an enclosed settlement. By Domesday, the village is recorded Diwort. The use of the suffix 'Gate', as in Hall Gate and Lady Gate as street names within the village may be a reflection of Viking influence, 'gata' meaning the way to in Norse, and is a common usage within the Danelaw. Hallfield Farm is located within the historic settlement core of medieval and post-medieval Diseworth (MLE10599), within the designated Conservation Area (DLE657).

The historic farm building of the Hall Farm are located on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map and are recognised as being of historical significance. The historic settlement core is recorded by the Historic Environment Record (**HER Ref MLE5936**). At the western extremity of the village is a series of earthworks interpreted as a manorial site (Hartley 1984); documentary references to the site include references to a 'capital messuage with a garden, dovecote and outbuildings'. The field is still known as Hall Close and is recorded by the Historic Environment Record (**HER Ref MLE4759**).

Aims and objectives

The purpose of the work was to record and advance understanding of the heritage asset.

The objectives of the Historic Building Recording programme are:

- To provide a written, drawn and photographic record of all the buildings on site prior to the commencement of works.
- 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 recording was undertaken on 15th March 2018, in persistent light rain. This caused a few problems with rain on the lens, especially since the roof covering had been removed. The camera used was a Pentax K5 digital SLR, recording DNG files which were post-processed into TIFFs.

Results

The building is stone-built with brick gables above the wall plate. The most recent roof was corrugated sheeting (see Richards, 2015, fig 20) but this had been removed. The stone work is largely random rubble, with some coursing towards the ground level. The geology of the masonry is varied, and the corners are partly quoined. There is a broken millstone in the east gable, and another in the west. The building has four bays, open to the north. The roof is carried on deal king post trusses and paired purlins. A superstructure has been added to the top of the rafters consisting of horizontal rails cleated to the rafter tops, this would have been added when the roof was sheeted. A line of bricks edge-on blocks the gap at the gables created by the raised sheeting. The wooden lintel across the open side is chamfered and stopped, supported by three plain iron columns.



Figure 3 North face



Figure 4 East wall. Note broken millstone centre left in the masonry

Most of the floor is unmade except a raft of concrete at the east end, where slots in the floor indicate static machinery.



Figure 5 East wall, internal, looking south east



Figure 6 South, and east walls



Figure 7 West, and south walls



Figure 8 West wall



Figure 9 North elevation, west end. Note superstructure over rafters for corrugated sheets



Figure 10 Roof structure, looking west



Figure 11 Detail of junction between column and lintel. Note chamfer and stop



Figure 12 Interior, west end



Figure 13 Millstone in west wall interior



Figure 14 junction of tie beam, lintel, column



Figure 15 Mounting sockets in floor, east end

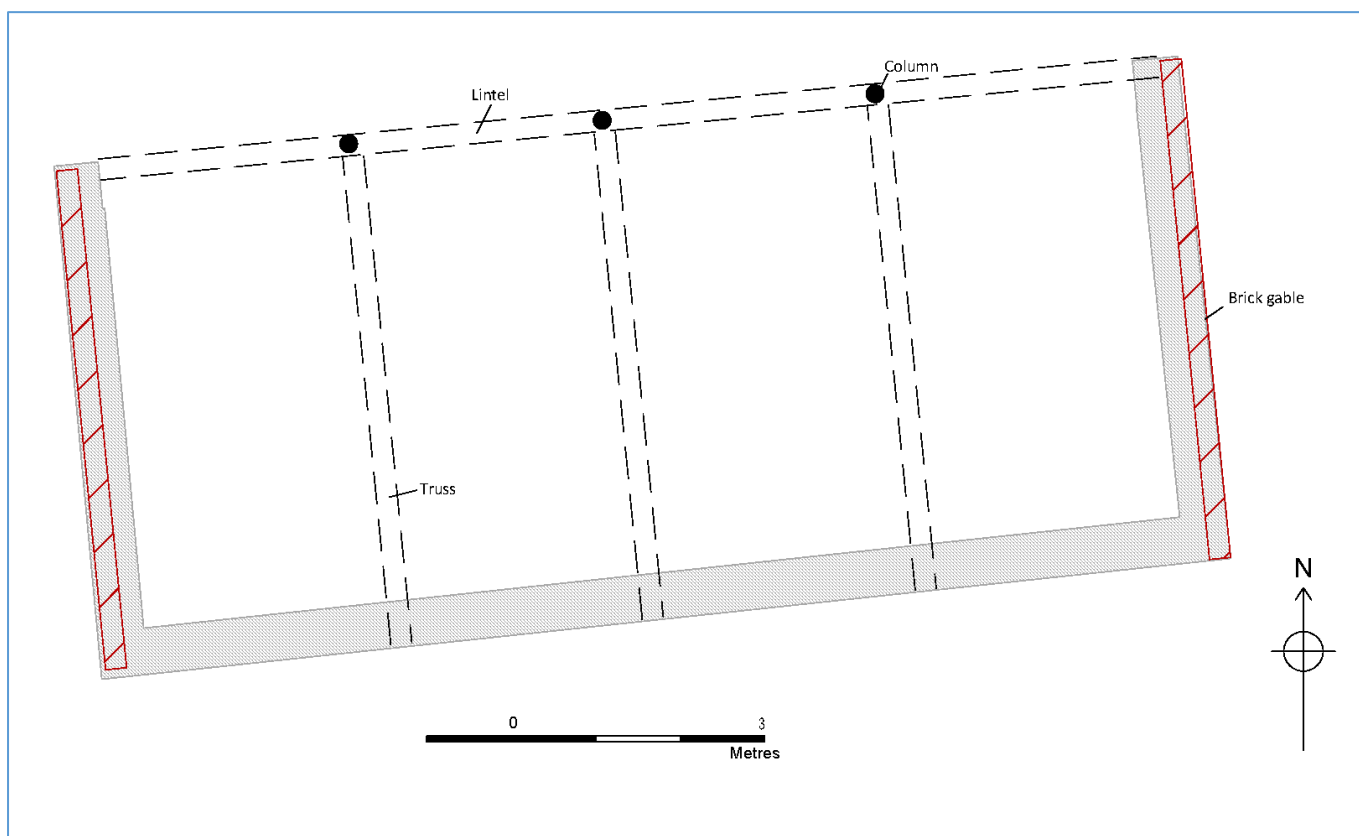


Figure 16 Plan

Cartographic evidence

The barn does not appear on the 1796 enclosure map for Diseworth, but nor do most of the buildings in the village centre, so this is of little use. It appears on the OS 1884 first edition; of note is that the north wall is represented by a solid line, whereas the second edition of 1903 shows a dashed line, indicating an open front. There is no change to the building itself in subsequent editions, although the large Dutch barn adjacent which has been recently removed had appeared by the 1961 edition.

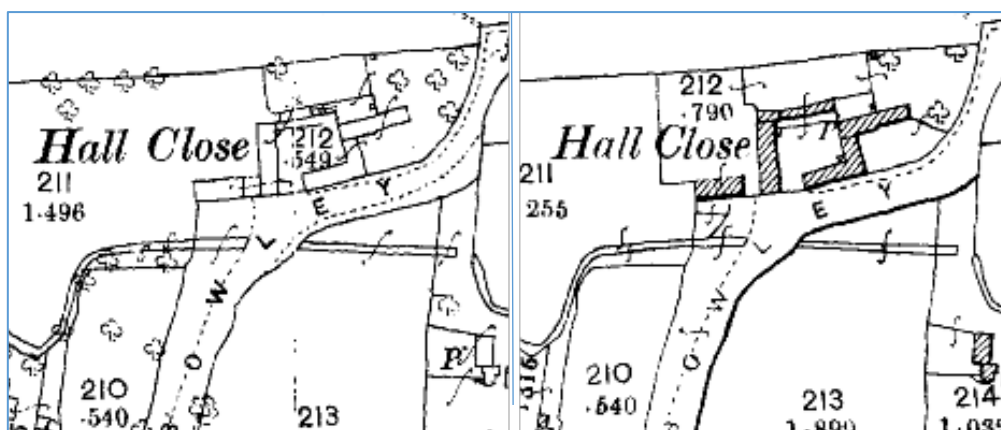


Figure 17 Ordnance Survey First (left) and Second editions: detail.

Discussion

The cartographic evidence ties nicely into the physical survey of the barn, in that it appears very likely that the north wall has been removed. The tie beams of the trusses sit nicely over the rear wall, but only perch on the front lintel (e.g. Figure 11, Figure 14). The lintel itself is a curiosity in that it is chamfered and stopped, which is unusual in an agricultural building. It is unlikely to be a single piece of wood, presumably it is in at least two sections, the join hidden by the columns and tie beams. Each section is of a size to have been suitable as an axial beam in a house, so may be re-used, but there are no signs of mortices for joists, and moreover the chamfers and stops correspond to the position of the column / tie beam junctions. The trusses themselves are unusual in that the foot of the king post (Figure 10) would normally be joggled to accept diagonal braces out to the principals; they seem in very good condition and may be 20th century rather than 19th.

The random rubble masonry leads the eye into creating any number of possible blocking/alteration episodes, not helped by structural cracks and the fact that different areas have been repointed at different times. The most plausible blocking episode is perhaps the west gable, although this looks less believable on the exterior than it does on the interior (Figure 8, Figure 12). Also of note is the lack of pointing near ground level (e.g. Figure 8). A medieval raised earthwork is known to be heading into the area of the building footprint, and it is possible the barn was deliberately dug into this 'hump' to improve drainage. This would fit with a postulated original entrance at the west end, as access would be via the raised platform. Subsequent levelling would expose un-pointed masonry. Nevertheless although this seems quite plausible for the gables, the lack of pointing to the rear extends almost one third of the way up the wall.

The change to an open front was likely to do with the increasing mechanisation in farming, and it would also have given impetus to backfill any surviving earthwork hollow to the north of the building to improve access and egress for machinery and vehicles.

The original construction date of the building can only be guessed at, as random or semi-coursed masonry is a very old technique which was in use for centuries. It is unlikely to be after 1800 as brick would have been cheaper and easier by then. The original roof form and covering is unknown; the brick built gables are likely to be an addition, but probably pre-date the present roof structure as they look more 18th century than 19th and moreover are not built in bond. The gables needed tweaking to

accept the present roof structure (note the rebuilding line visible in the west gable, Figure 8) which was probably originally in tile or slate, then replaced with sheeting.

Acknowledgments

The survey and report was undertaken by the author. Vicki Score of ULAS provided project management. ULAS would like to thank Martin Sutton for their help during the project.

Archive

The archive consists of:

- 1 unbound copy of this report
- 1 photo record sheet
- 1 colour photo contact sheet
- 1 CD containing a copy of this report and 26 digital images.

Publication

Since 2004 ULAS has reported the results of all archaeological work to the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) database held by the Archaeological Data Service at the University of York (Appendix 1).

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Sources consulted

ROLLR Records Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland: Maps and records

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ULAS 2018

Appendix 1: OASIS Data

PROJECT DETAILS	Oasis No	universi1-377656		
	Project Name	A Level 2 Historic Building Assessment at Hallfield Farm, Diseworth, Leicestershire, SK 45499 24499		
	Start/end dates of field work	15-03-2018		
	Previous/Future Work	None		
	Project Type	Building survey		
	Site Status	None		
	Current Land Use	In use as building		
	Monument Type/Period	Barn		
	Significant Finds/Period	None		
	Reason for Investigation	NPPF		
Position in the Planning Process	Planning condition			
PROJECT LOCATION	Site Address/Postcode	Hallfield Farm, Diseworth, Leicestershire, DE74 2QL		
	Study Area			
	Site Coordinates	SK 45499 24499		
	Height OD			
PROJECT CREATORS	Organisation	ULAS		
	Project Brief Originator	ULAS		
	Project Design Originator	ULAS		
	Project Manager	Vicki Score		
	Project Director/Supervisor	Jon Coward		
	Sponsor/Funding Body	John Sutton Developments		
PROJECT ARCHIVE		Physical	Digital	Paper
	Recipient	-	LCC Museum Service	LCC Museum Service
	ID (Acc. No.)	-	X.A33.2018	X.A33.2018
	Contents	-	Photographs	Report, photo index
PROJECT BIBLIOGRAPHY	Type	Grey Literature (unpublished)		
	Title	A Level 2 Historic Building Assessment at Hallfield Farm, Diseworth, Leicestershire		
	Author	Coward, J.		
	Other bibliographic details	ULAS Report No 2018-077		
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