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Historic Building Recording

Peter Hunt Architects

Nafford Bank Farm Barns
Eckington Pershore Worcestershire
WR10 3DH

WSM 57116

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Cover: View southeast showing two storey block and adjoining L-shaped open fronted range of animal shelters at Nafford Bank Farm Barns

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1 Executive Summary

The results of this programme of historic building recording, supplemented by documentary research, on the complex of outbuildings at Nafford Bank Farm Barns, Eckington revealed evidence of three broad phases of construction and rebuilding ranging in date from c.1855-75 up to the mid-late 20th century.

- Consultation of documentary and cartographic records relating to the study area indicate that the outbuilding complex formed part of a farmstead called Upper House Farm, which was built at some point in the late 1830s (the earliest reference to the farm occurs in a trade directory of 1840-1). The farmhouse and outbuildings at Upper End Farm appear to have been substantially rebuilt after a disastrous fire in 1854.
- The principal construction phase, datable to c.1855-75 and probably contemporary with the building of the adjoining farmhouse to the north (present day Nos. 1 & 2 Nafford Bank Cottages) in 1867, is represented by the majority of Building A, comprising a gable two storey block (probably used as a stable or cowhouse) and adjoining L-shaped range of livestock shelters.
- Other buildings which may be assigned to this primary phase of construction include the lower stages of the east and west walls of Building B, a barn originally of four or five bays which appears to have largely been demolished at some point between c.1947 and 1970, with the remainder being heavily reconstructed and clad in corrugated metal sheeting.
- The majority of Building C (comprising a barn and attached range of livestock shelters) may also be assigned to this primary phase of construction on architectural grounds; the brick bonding and dentilled eaves corncicing closely resembles that found in Building A, as does the construction of the attached animal shelters although the kingpost roof structure differs somewhat from the post and truss construction used for the roofing of the L-shaped range of shelters in Building A.
- Buildings A, B and C, together with the adjoining farmhouse, are all depicted on the OS 1st-edition map of 1886 and can therefore be regarded as forming part of the original complex of outbuildings formerly known as Upper End Farm which was probably built by the Attwood family at some point between c.1855 (following the fire which destroyed much of the farm in 1854) and 1875. The outbuildings appear primarily to have been used for livestock accommodation although documentary evidence indicates that arable farming and market gardening was also practised on the farm.
- A secondary construction phase, which may be assigned on the basis of cartographic evidence to some point between c 1904 and 1923, is chiefly represented by the construction of Building D, adjoining the northwest corner of Building C, which appears to have been built by no later than 1923 as it is shown on the OS 3rd-edition map of that date. Also belonging to this phase of construction is a pair of brick pigsties with a corrugated metal roof added to the south of the L-shaped range (Building A) which are first shown on the OS 3rd-edition map of 1923.
- A tertiary construction phase, which may be assigned roughly to the second half of the 20th century, is represented by 1/ the addition of a lean-to shed adjoining the north gable end of Building A, 2/partial demolition of Building B and consolidation of the surviving northernmost bay, 3/ the insertion of several door and window openings in Building C and the walling-up of one of the bays of the adjoining open shelters and 4/the insertion of steel trusses to support the roof structure in Building D.

2 Introduction

Border Archaeology (BA) was instructed by Peter Hunt Esq of Peter Hunt Architects Hunters Moon Gorse Green Lane Belbroughton Worcs DT9 9UH to carry out a programme of historic building recording at Nafford Bank Farm Barns, Nafford Road, Eckington Pershore Worcs WR10 3DH (NGR: SO 93508 41581) (*fig. 1*) in connection with the conversion of barns to form a dwelling unit, stables, office accommodation and manège (Wychavon District Council Planning Ref. W/14/00104/CU condition no.2)

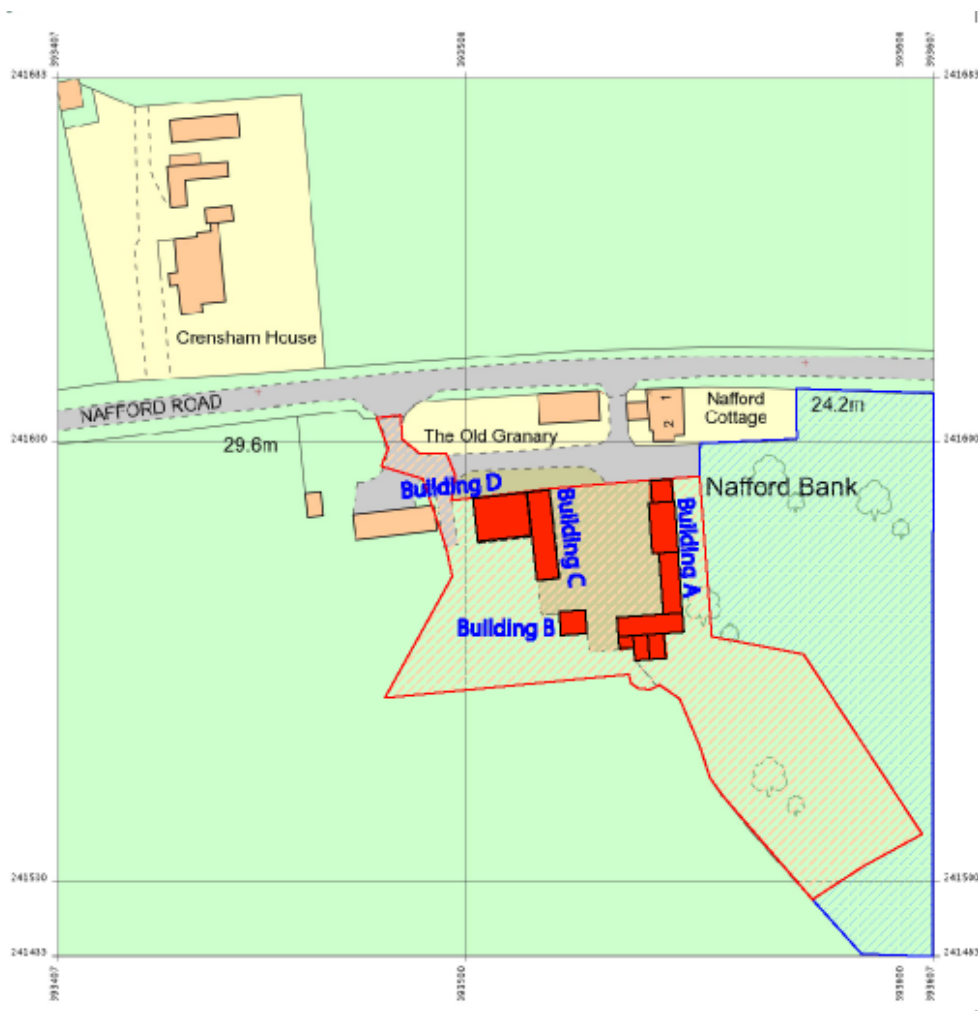


Fig 1: Plan showing location of site (based on mapping supplied by the client)

The development was identified as potentially affecting a site of archaeological significance, which is registered on the County Historic Environment Record (reference WSM32463) and consequently Mike Glyde Esq, Historic Environment Planning Officer Worcestershire County Council (WCC) advised that a programme of historic building recording to RCHME Level 3 was required. Copies of this report will be submitted to the Historic Environment Planning Officer WCC and to the client; one bound paper and one digital .pdf copy will be deposited with the WCC Historic Environment Record. A digital copy will also be deposited with Oasis (<http://www.oasis.ac.uk/>) the English Heritage's Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations website.

3 Site Description

The development area comprises four separate buildings (henceforth referred to as Buildings A-D) ranged around a roughly quadrangular shaped farmyard (currently laid out to grass and heavily overgrown).

Building A, situated on the east side of the yard, consists of a gabled two-storey block of red brick construction (laid in Flemish Garden Bond), five bays long with a hipped, tiled roof. Extending to the south of this block is an L-shaped range of livestock shelters.

Building B, located to the southwest of Building A, consists of a freestanding two-storey structure, representing the remains of a partially demolished oblong building. The lower stage of the building is built of brick while the upper floor is of corrugated metal construction.

Building C, situated on the west side of the yard opposite Building A, consists of a single-storey oblong gabled brick structure with a four bay range of open fronted livestock shelters extending to the south.

Building D, attached to the northwest corner of Building C, comprises a broad gabled building of brick construction, currently used for equipment storage, with a timber roof with steel trusses.

4 Geology

The site lies at a height of approximately 27m AOD. Two predominant soil types have been identified in the vicinity of the study area, consisting of the following:

1/In the immediate vicinity of the site, the predominant soil type comprises typical calcareous pelosols of the EVESHAM 2 series (411b), being composed of slowly permeable calcareous clayey soils, with some slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged non-calcareous clayey and fine loamy or fine silty over clayey soils. These soils overlie Jurassic and Cretaceous clay.

2/ Immediately to the north of the study area, the main soil type consists of the stagnogleyic argillic brown earths of the BISHAMPTON 2 series (572t), consisting of deep fine loamy and fine loamy over clayey soils with slowly permeable subsoils and slight seasonal waterlogging associated with similar slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged soils. These overlie river terrace drift (SSEW 1983).

5 Historical and Archaeological Background

Consultation of the Worcestershire HER has identified evidence of prehistoric and Roman activity in the vicinity of the study area. The cropmark of a square enclosure, possibly a farmstead of late prehistoric date, was identified from aerial reconnaissance to the south of Nafford Bank Farm (WSM 07722) while another sub-rectangular enclosure of possible late Iron Age has been recorded to the east of Nafford Bank at NGR SO 940 416 (WSM 24025). Two further blocks of ridge and furrow have been recorded to the northwest and northeast of the farm (WSM 10531; WSM 10541).

Evidence of medieval activity chiefly consists of several extensive blocks of ridge and furrow recorded in the vicinity of the site, which survive in varying states of preservation. To the southeast of Nafford Bank is a large block of ridge and furrow 6m wide with an associated holloway (WSM 10504; NGR SO 936 415) with another area of ridge and furrow (partially ploughed out) located immediately southwest of the farm (WSM 10534; NGR SO 934 414).

The existing farm buildings at Nafford Bank Farm (WSM 32463) consist of several ranges of brick buildings of mid-late 19th - century date with some 20th -century additions. The complex of outbuildings is located immediately south of the former farmhouse, now sub-divided and renamed as Nos. 1 & 2 Nafford Bank Cottages (WSM 42197), which appears to be of a similar date and design to the majority of the surviving outbuildings. A date plaque affixed to the façade of the farmhouse is heavily weathered; it appears to bear a date of 1867 but the rest of the inscription is illegible.

The farm is not shown on an Ordnance Survey drawing of Pershore and district dated 1811, neither does it appear on Nathan Izod's enclosure map for Eckington parish (surveyed in 1813) or Greenwood's county map of 1822.

The inclosure award plan for 1813 (*fig. 2*) shows that the study area was then located at the eastern end of a roughly triangular shaped plot to the south of the road from Eckington towards Nafford Mill, forming part of a series of irregularly shaped field enclosures on the south side of the road, suggestive of piecemeal enclosure of previously unenclosed common land. To the north of the road lay an extensive swathe of largely unenclosed common land on the eastern edge of Eckington Parish. The land on both sides of the Nafford road is marked on the inclosure map as being in the possession of William Phelps Esq of Tynning, who appears to have retained possession of the estate until his death in 1834.



*Fig. 2: Extract from the inclosure map for the parish of Eckington surveyed by Nathan Izod (1813)
 (Reproduced by courtesy of Worcestershire Record Office)*

Documentary evidence relating to the property is extremely limited; no tithe map was drawn up for Eckington as the tithes for the majority of the parish had been commuted (in other words, substituted for a money payment) as a result of the inclosure award of 1813. A search of records held at the Worcestershire Record Office identified no estate maps or deeds specifically relating to the property.

Later historic mapping (specifically the OS 2nd -and 3rd -edition maps) mark the complex of outbuildings as forming part of Upper End Farm, an extensive farmholding situated on the eastern edge of Eckington. There appear to have been two farms in Eckington known as 'Upper End', namely 'Upper End Farm', probably representing the site of present day Nafford Bank Farm on the south side of Nafford Road close to the parish boundary between Eckington and the neighbouring parish of Birlingham with Nafford, and 'Upper End House', located some distance to the W of Nafford Bank Farm on the eastern outskirts of the village.

In the absence of a tithe map or other available records, is not entirely clear when Upper End Farm was established, however a date in the late 1830s may be suggested. The earliest documentary reference to the farm occurs in Bentley's Directory of Worcestershire dated 1840-1, which refers to Catherine Attwood farmer at Upper End. Catherine appears to have died by no later than 1849 and the landholding then appears to have passed to her younger son Thomas Attwood. The 1851 census refers to Thomas Attwood, described as a farmer of 50 acres, as occupying the property at Upper End Farm together with his wife Mary and two servants. Billing's Directory of Worcestershire (1855) lists Thomas Attwood farmer at Upper End Farm and clearly distinguishes this property from Upper End House, owned by another farmer named William Shepherd.

In June 1854, it appears that the farm buildings at Upper End Farm were severely damaged by fire. A report in the Stamford Mercury dated 16 June 1854 mentions that 'property of the value of £3000 has been destroyed by fire on the premises of Thomas Attwood farmer at Eckington Worcestershire. The fire after taking the circuit of the farmyard and premises, communicated to the house, where it burst forth with fury; in a short time the house was completely gutted' (Stamford Mercury 16th June 1854).

The farmhouse and outbuildings at Upper End Farm appear subsequently to have been rebuilt, as the 1861 census refers to Thomas Attwood as occupying the premises together with his elder brother Edmund Attwood and sister Priscilla. It appears that the extent of the farm had been increased since 1851 as both Edmund and Thomas are described as being 'farmers of 68 acres'. The evidence of the plaque affixed to the front of Nafford Bank Cottages which appears to bear the date 1867 suggests that the rebuilding of the farm took some time and may not have been fully completed until the late 1860s.

Thomas Attwood and his sister Priscilla are recorded as being in residence in Upper End Farm in the 1871 census, the elder brother Edmund having died three years earlier in 1868. In June 1871, shortly after the census was taken, Thomas appears to have died, followed by his sister Priscilla who died in January 1875. Upper End Farm was subsequently put up for auction by the trustees appointed under the will of Priscilla Attwood in July 1875.

No sale catalogue has been found for this property, however the sale advertisement in the Worcester Journal describes it as being an 'excellent estate...comprising a farmhouse with suitable farm buildings and yards, and several closes of rich arable, pasture and orchard land, lying in a ring fence, together with 'several detached messuages and closes of splendid orchard, rich pasture and arable land' and a 'modern villa residence' described as being situate in the neighbouring parish of Defford (Worcester Journal 10th July 1875). It would appear that the 'farmhouse with suitable farm buildings and yards' refers to present-day Nafford Farm Barns, while the villa residence, two messuages and lands at Defford mentioned in the advertisement probably represented the landholding of Thomas Attwood's elder brother Edmund.

An entry in the Worcestershire Chronicle for July 1875 records that Upper End Farm was purchased for the sum of £3500 by Robert E. Browne (Worcestershire Chronicle 17th July 1875), who is listed as being in residence there in the 1881 census, together with his wife Mary and two servants. Robert appears to have died by no later than 1890 and was succeeded in occupation at Upper End Farm by his son William J. Browne, who is listed as being in residence there together with his wife Edith and two children in the 1891 census. Browne appears to have attempted to diversify into fruit growing, based on the evidence of several newspaper advertisements referring to the sale of 'Victoria plums' from Upper End Farm in the period 1900-10 (Sussex Agricultural Express 17th August 1901; Western Times 20th August 1908). William Browne and his family continued in residence at Upper End Farm until his death on 19th January 1939 and his estate was auctioned in May 1939 for the sum of £3000. The advertisement for the sale, dated 22nd April 1939 refers to the farm as comprising a 'modern residence, excellent farm buildings, 3-span roof tomato houses, high class pasture and pasture orchard land' (Worcester Journal 22nd April 1939).

Cartographic evidence for the site, prior to the late 19th century, is extremely limited. In the absence of a tithe map for Eckington parish, the earliest detailed plan showing the farmhouse and outbuildings is the OS 1st edition 25 inch map of 1886 (*fig. 3*). This shows four separate buildings ranged around a roughly quadrangular yard, located to the south of the farmhouse. The existing rectangular block and L-shaped range on the east side of the yard is shown (corresponding to Building A); while in the southwest corner of the yard is another oblong structure aligned north-south (which partially survives as Building B). To the north of this structure is another oblong range (identifiable with Building C). On the north side of the yard, a long rectangular range oriented east-west is shown, attached to the north gable end of Building A, with a water pump marked immediately north of it.



*Fig. 3: Extract from the OS 1st edition 25 inch map of 1886
 (Reproduced by courtesy of Worcestershire Record Office)*

The OS 2nd-edition 25 -inch map of 1904 (*fig. 4*) marks the farmhouse and outbuildings as Upper End Farm. It shows that the long rectangular range attached to the north gable end of Building A had been demolished (at least in part), with its site being occupied by a small freestanding oblong structure oriented east-west. The pump marked on the 1886 map is also no longer shown; otherwise, the layout of the buildings appears to have changed little from that shown on the OS 1st-edition map.

The OS 3rd-edition 25 -inch map of 1923 (*fig. 5*) shows that a number of alterations and additions had been made to the complex of outbuildings (still marked as Upper End Farm), chiefly consisting of the addition of two pigsties to the south of the L-shaped range (Building A) and a large rectangular structure attached to the northwest corner of Building C, which appears to correspond to the existing single storey brick barn recorded as Building D.

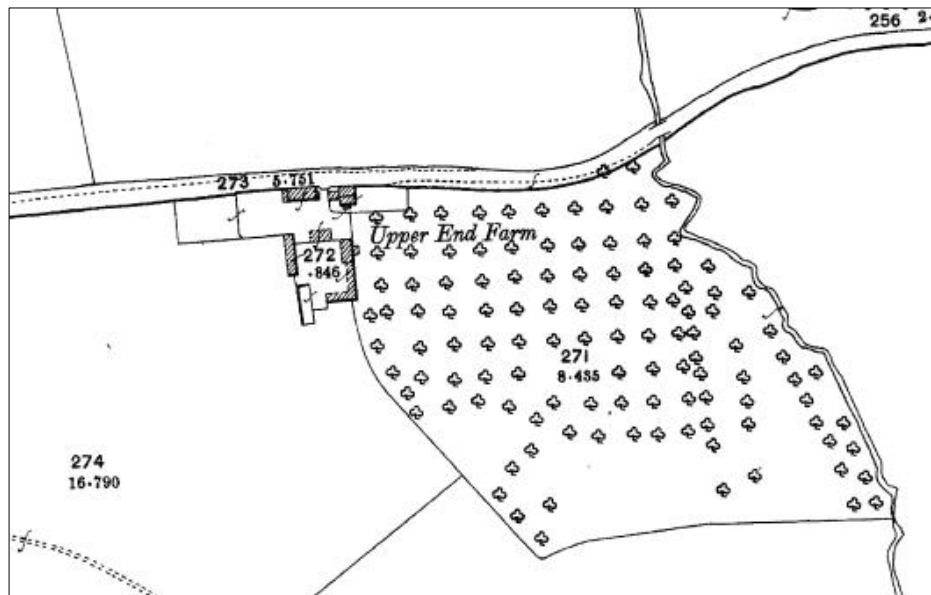


Fig. 4: Extract from the OS 2nd edition 25 inch map of 1904
(Reproduced by courtesy of Worcestershire Record Office)

An RAF vertical photograph of the site dated 1947 and an OS 6-inch map of the area dated 1954 show the farmhouse and associated complex of outbuildings to have remained essentially unaltered since 1923; it is noteworthy that the 1954 map still marks the site as Upper End Farm. An OS 1:2500 map of 1970 shows that the name of the farm had been changed from Upper End Farm to Nafford Bank; moreover it reveals that the oblong barn situated in the southwest corner of the yard (Building B) had been partially demolished with only the northernmost bay surviving. A later aerial photograph dated 1999 shows that the central part of the farmyard was then covered by two large open sheds, although the general layout of outbuildings appears to have remained largely unchanged since 1970. A photographic record of the extant structures at Nafford Bank Farm was undertaken in 2007 (Tipton, 2007; WSM37118).

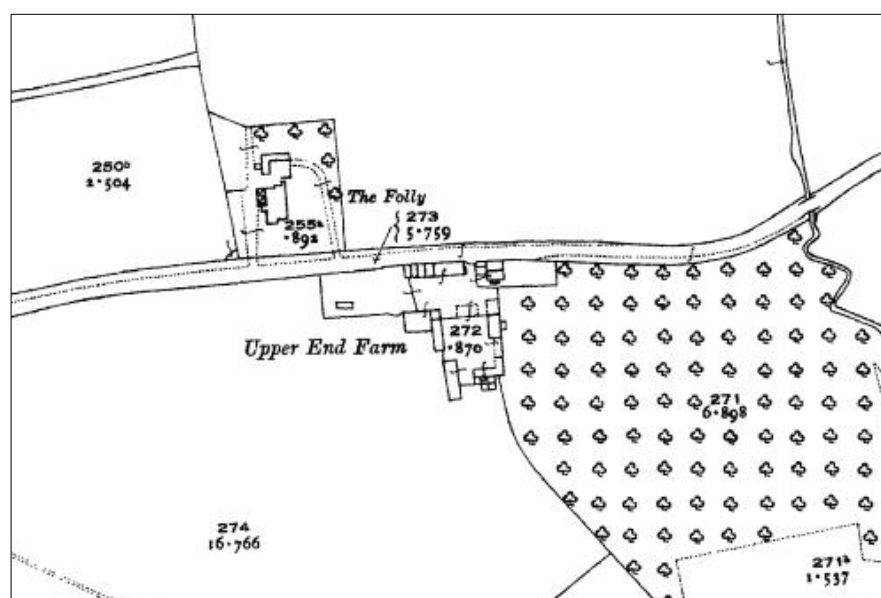


Fig. 5: Extract from the OS 3rd edition 25 inch map of 1923
(Reproduced by courtesy of Worcestershire Record Office)

6 Historic Building Recording Survey

6.1 Methodology

This historic building recording survey was carried out to RCHME Level 3 as defined within *Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice* (English Heritage, 2006). Level 3 is defined as ‘... An analytical record [comprising] an introductory description followed by a systematic account of the buildings origins, development and use, The record will include an account of the evidence on which the analyses has been based, allowing the validity of the record to be re-examined in detail. It will also include all drawn and photographic records that may be required to illustrate the buildings appearance and structure to support an historical analysis’ (EH 2006, 14).

The work also followed guidance contained within *Standard and Guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures* (IfA 2013) and was undertaken in accordance with the *Requirements and Guidelines for Archaeological Projects in Worcestershire*. Border Archaeology complied throughout with the Institute for Archaeologists’ *Code of Conduct* (2013) and *Code of approved practice for the regulation of contractual arrangements in field archaeology* (2008). The aim of the programme of historic building recording was to allow for the preservation by record of all standing building fabric of historical interest that will be destroyed or substantially altered by the development. The survey thus comprised a detailed photographic and descriptive survey of the complex of four outbuildings.

A documentary assessment was carried out prior to fieldwork in order to assess the historic importance of the buildings. Copies of relevant information, including historic mapping and HER data, were obtained from the Worcestershire County Council Historic Environment Record and reference was made to the Worcestershire Historic Farmstead Survey. Historic mapping comprised successive editions of the OS; it should be noted that no tithe map evidence is available for this area. These have been reproduced in the final report where necessary to aid interpretation. Building phases were established prior to photographic recording, with each phase being discussed in detail.

The programme of Standing Building Recording consisted of the following elements:

1. High-resolution digital photography (16MPX capacity), all with suitable scales, of the following.

- All external elevations
- All internal room spaces and roof structures (where accessible)
- Details of any architectural or functional fixtures, fittings and features relating to either the function or development of the building. Each feature was photographed and placed into a wider context (i.e. the surrounding elevation), individual features being photographed as separate items and in detail
- Photographs illustrating the buildings relationship to surrounding buildings and setting

2. Collation and annotation of existing survey drawings

The report contains:

- A phased plan of the building, with photo locations clearly marked, and a location plan related to the national grid.
- An annotated elevation drawing
- Appropriate additional illustrations that help support findings and the interpretation of the buildings
- Additional illustrations of dateable fixtures and fittings (mouldings, catches, hinges, latches etc.)
- A summary description of the building in its current form in the format of a typical listed building description

The paper archive (including the report, photographs and annotated survey drawings) will be deposited with Worcestershire County Museum and the digital archive will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service.

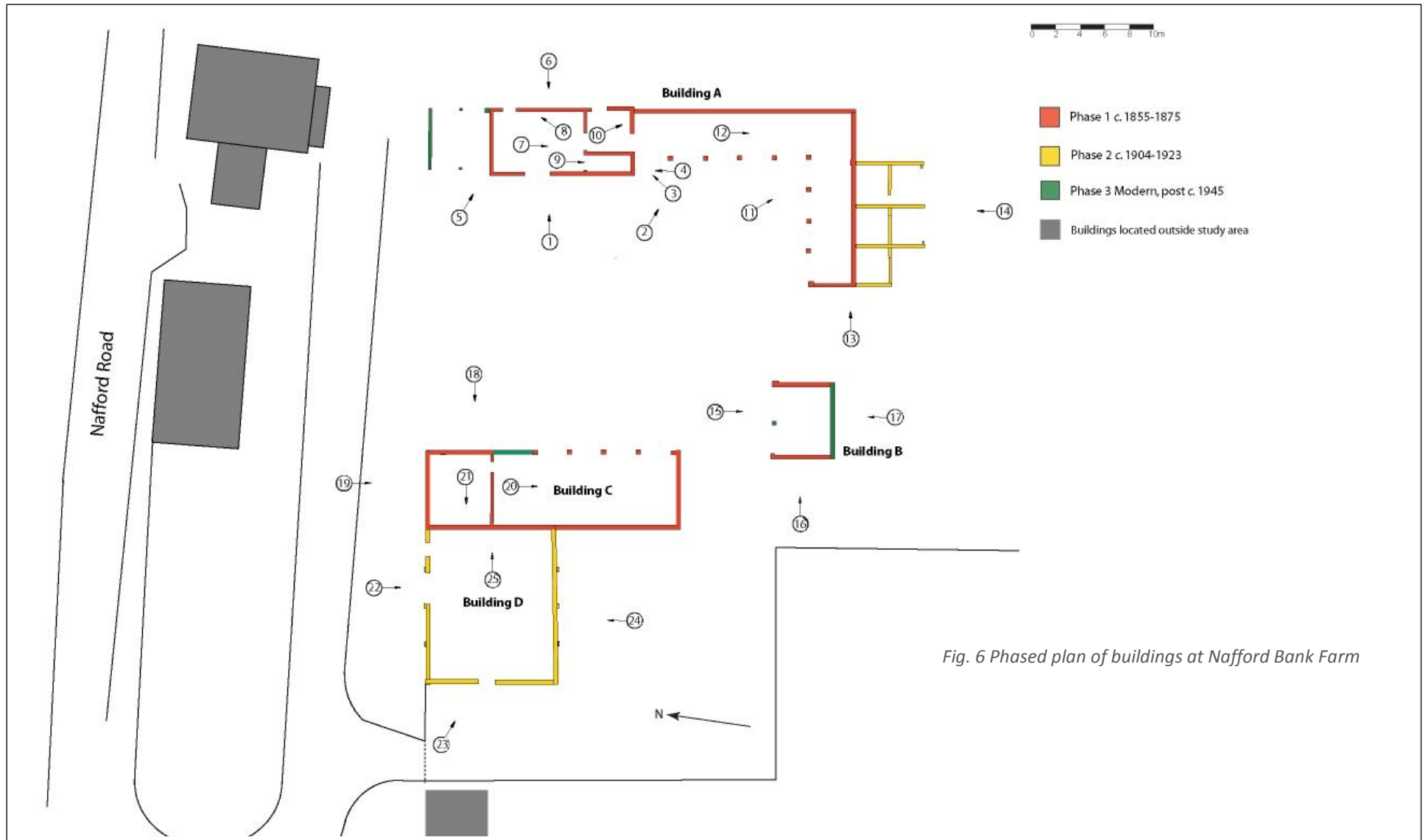


Plate No.	Description
1	View looking east showing west-facing elevation of two storey gabled main block (Building A), with central loading bay and dentilled eaves cornice
2	View looking southeast showing L-shaped open fronted range of livestock shelters to south of two storey main block (Building A)
3	View looking north-northeast showing south-gable range of main block (Building A)
4	Detail showing arched culvert beneath doorway in south gable end of Building A
5	View looking southeast showing north-facing gable end of Building A with adjoining modern lean-to structure with corrugated metal roof
6	View looking west showing rear (east-facing) elevation of Building A with dentilled cornice at eaves level
7	Interior view of Building A looking south showing detail of open truss roof structure and internal partition walls
8	Interior view looking northeast showing west-facing internal elevation of barn with two horizontal rows of slots (some with timber stubs) for wooden racks or mangers
9	Interior view looking south showing partition wall and compartments in south part of Building A
10	Interior view looking southwest showing the larger of the two compartments in the southern part of Building A
11	View looking southeast showing L-shaped range of animal shelters with partially denuded tiled roof to south of Building A
12	View looking south along southern arm of open fronted animal shelter adjoining Building A showing post and truss roof construction
13	View looking east showing west-facing gable end of L-shaped range (Building A) with segmental arched window opening in upper storey and later brick pigsties to right of picture
14	View looking north showing brick pigsties attached to south elevation of L-shaped range (Building A)
15	View looking south showing north-facing elevation of Building B with weatherboarded upper storey
16	View looking east showing west-facing elevation of Building B with corrugated metal cladding upon a brick wall
17	View looking north showing south-facing elevation of Building B showing wall stub representing remains of barn wall
18	View looking west showing east-facing elevation of Building C with blocked up door opening in centre of elevation with an open fronted animal shelter to south (the northernmost bay having been blocked in at a later date)
19	View looking south showing north-facing gable end of Building C with later doorway inserted (to right of picture)
20	View looking south showing kingpost roof construction of animal shelter attached to Building C
21	Interior view of Building C looking west showing modern flat arched door opening leading to Building D
22	View looking south southwest showing north-facing elevation of Building D, built between c.1904 and 192
23	View looking east southeast showing west-facing gable elevation of Building D
24	View looking north showing south-facing elevation of Building D
25	Interior view of Building D showing details of roof construction with timber roof supported by steel trusses

Table 1: List of plates referenced in phased plan of buildings at Nafford Bank Farm (Fig. 6)

7 Structural Description and Phasing

7.1 General Building Plan

The complex of buildings at Nafford Bank Farm comprises four structures (henceforth referred to as Buildings A-D) ranged around a roughly quadrangular shaped farmyard which may be described as follows:

Building A, situated on the east side of the yard, consists of a gabled two storey block of orange-red brick construction (laid in Flemish Garden Bond), five bays long with a hipped, tiled roof. Extending to the south of this block is an L-shaped open fronted range of animal shelters.

Building B, located to the southwest of Building A, consists of a freestanding two-storey structure, representing the remains of a partially demolished oblong building. The lower stage of the building is built of brick while the upper floor is of timber framed and corrugated metal construction.

Building C, situated on the west side of the yard opposite Building A, consists of a single -storey oblong gabled brick structure with a four bay open fronted range of cowsheds extending to the south.

Building D, attached to the northwest corner of Building C, comprises a broad gabled building of brick construction, currently used for equipment storage, with a timber roof supported by steel trusses.

7.2 Analytical Description

7.2.1 Building A

Building A, situated on the east side of the yard, consists of a gabled two storey block of red-brick construction (laid in Flemish Garden Bond and bonded with a coarse greyish-brown mortar), oriented north-south, five bays long with a hipped, tiled roof lit by two skylights (*Plate 1*). This building was probably used either as a stable or cow-house. Extending to the south of this block is an L-shaped, open-fronted range of livestock shelters, also with a tiled roof, although most of the roofing has been removed from the north arm of this range (*Plate 2*). Attached to the south end of the L-shaped range are two brick pigsties with a flat corrugated metal roof.

The principal west-facing elevation has a dentilled eaves cornice and a centrally placed gable with a loading bay leading to a hayloft at first floor level, consisting of a wooden frame and sill set within a segmental gauged brick arched opening, with a small circular opening (presumably a ventilation slot) immediately above. At ground level is a large segmental arched doorway providing access to the main part of the building, inserted to the left of the central gabled bay and flanked on either side by two small wooden framed windows with brick sills set within segmental-arched openings; no clear evidence of window bars or shutters was noted. At the south end of the elevation is a small flat-arched window, possibly later in date than the other two windows.



Plate 1: View looking east showing west-facing elevation of two storey gabled main block (Building A), with central loading bay and dentilled eaves cornice



Plate 2: View looking southeast showing L-shaped open fronted range of livestock shelters to south of two storey main block (Building A)

The south gable end of the two-storey block has a centrally placed segmental arched doorway providing access to the L-shaped range of shelters (*Plate 3*). Just below and to the left of the doorway, the upper part of a broad segmental brick arch is visible, probably relating to a culvert or drain which appears to have extended on a roughly north-south alignment beneath the two storey block (*Plate 4*).



Plate 3: View looking north northeast showing south-gable range of main block (Building A)



Plate 4: Detail showing arched culvert beneath doorway in south gable end of Building A

The north gable end of the building is devoid of fenestration (*Plate 5*). Attached to the gable end is a small two-bay timber lean-to structure, probably of fairly recent date, with a timber framed roof covered with corrugated metal sheeting set upon an area of concrete hard-standing. Two sets of four horizontal beam slots set into the thickness of the wall at ground level would appear to relate to an earlier structure formerly attached to the north end of the building, which may be further evidenced by a partially truncated brick wall stub at the east end of the gable wall. The gable end appears to have required support following the removal of the structure adjoining it, as evidenced by the addition of a thin brick buttress. It is also noticeable that the brickwork of the upper stage of the north gable wall is much more irregular compared to the more regularly coursed Flemish Garden Bond visible at ground level, suggesting that it may have been partially rebuilt.

The rear, east-facing elevation of the two storey block has dentilled eaves corncicing similar to that visible in the principal elevation (*Plate 6*). It is largely devoid of fenestration apart from a single light window consisting of a wooden frame and iron grille set within a segmental arched opening and brick sill; the use of Staffordshire blue bricks for the arch and sill suggests that it probably represents a later 20th-century insertion.



Plate 5: View looking southeast showing north-facing gable end of Building A with adjoining modern lean-to structure with corrugated metal roof



Plate 6: View looking west showing rear (east-facing) elevation of Building A with dentilled cornice at eaves level

Internally, the two -storey block is arranged into three compartments separated by brick partition walls, with a hayloft at first floor level. The roof is of open truss construction with a series of interrupted tie beams at eaves level connected by vertical struts to the collars above (*Plate 7*). The largest compartment (three bays long) occupies the central and northern parts of the building and may have been used as a cow-house or for stabling, suggested by the presence of two rows of beam slots probably for racks or mangers set into the thickness of the east wall (*Plate 8*). The upper row of slots contained evidence of timber stubs protruding from the slots which were almost certainly associated with racks or mangers (since removed). Evidence of whitewashing on the walls was noted but no evidence for cobbled or flagstone flooring or any other internal features of interest was identified in this area. The joists for the hayloft floor are intact however the planking has been removed.

Separated from the main compartment by a thin brick partition wall (two courses thick) are the southernmost two bays of the barn, which, in turn, are sub-divided into two unequal sized compartments, each light by single light windows (*Plate 9*). The uppermost part of the partition wall appears to have been rebuilt (the coursing in stretcher bond differs from the Flemish Garden Bond used for the lower courses) and the two single light window openings appear to be later insertions. The entrance to the larger compartment is via a flat -arched doorway while a narrow segmental arched doorway provides access to the smaller compartment. Both rooms appear at some point to have been whitewashed; however, both were almost entirely devoid of features that might give an indication of their former function and no cobbled or flagstone flooring was noted. Two rows of slots set into the thickness of the east wall in the larger compartment might indicate that there were racks or mangers in this part of the barn (*Plate 10*).



Plate 7: Interior view of Building A looking south showing detail of open truss roof structure and internal partition walls



Plate 8: Interior view looking northeast showing west-facing internal elevation of barn with two horizontal rows of slots (some with timber stubs) for wooden racks or mangers



Plate 9: Interior view looking south showing partition wall and compartments in south part of Building A



Plate 10: Interior view looking southwest showing the larger of the two compartments in the southern part of Building A

Attached to the south gable end of the two storey block is a single -storey open fronted range of sheds or shelters for livestock, (*Plate 11*). The range, which is L-shaped in plan, consists of two arms, both five bays long and oriented north-south and east-west respectively. The eastern and southern exterior walls are of brick construction laid in Flemish Garden Bond and have dentilled eaves cornices identical to those in the adjoining two -storey block, indicating that they almost certainly form part of the same phase of construction. Set within the upper storey of the west-facing gable end of the L-shaped range is a wooden slatted window in a broad segmental arched opening. Two regularly spaced rows of square slots inserted in the west gable wall at ground level may represent a lean-to structure adjoining the animal shelters.

The roof of the L-shaped range of shelters is of simple post-and-truss construction with the principal rafters linked by a single set of trenched purlins, the wallplate is supported on its west and north facing sides by a series of roughly-hewn timber posts carried on stone pillars (*Plate 12*). No evidence of internal fittings (e.g. slots for racks) was noted and any flooring appears to have been removed. Attached to the south-facing wall of the L-shaped range are two brick pigstys with a flat corrugated iron roof which may be identified with buildings in this location first depicted on the OS 3rd -edition map of 1923 (*Plate 13*).



Plate 11: View looking southeast showing L-shaped range of animal shelters with partially denuded tiled roof to south of Building A



Plate 12: View looking south along southern arm of open fronted animal shelter adjoining Building A showing post and truss roof construction



Plate 13: View looking east showing west-facing gable end of L-shaped range (Building A) with segmental arched window opening in upper storey and later brick pigstys to right of picture



Plate 14: View looking north showing brick pigstys attached to south elevation of L-shaped range (Building A)

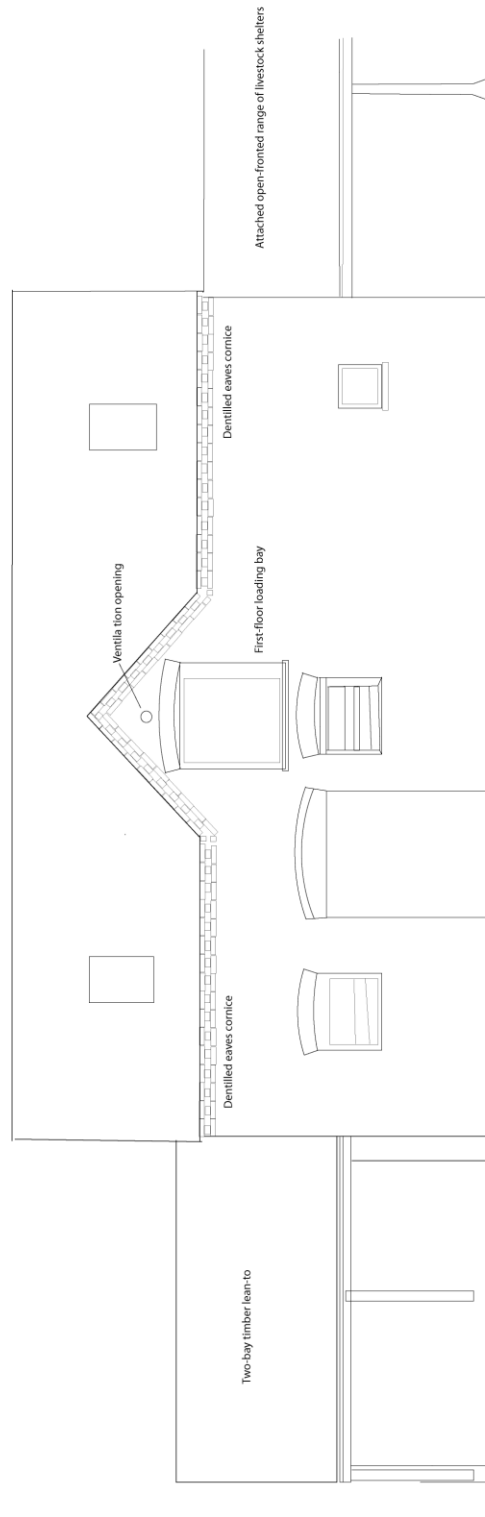


Fig. 7: Principal west-facing elevation of Building A

7.2.2 Building B

Located to the southwest of Building A, in the southwest corner of the yard is a freestanding two -storey structure, representing the surviving northernmost bay of a partially demolished barn, probably four or five bays long originally and aligned north-south, which is first shown on the OS 1st -edition map of 1886 but appears to have been largely taken down by no later than 1970. The lower stage of the building is built of brick while the upper floor is of timber -framed and corrugated metal construction, with a corrugated metal roof.

The north-facing elevation is open-fronted at ground level with a weatherboarded upper storey with no fenestration (*Plate 15*), while the west facing elevation comprises a low brick wall, 15 courses in height, laid in Flemish Garden Bond and surmounted by corrugated metal cladding, with a centrally placed loading bay door and a modern three -paned window inserted at first -floor level (*Plate 16*). The east-facing elevation is of similar construction with a large modern two paned window at first -floor level.



Plate 15: View looking south showing north-facing elevation of Building B with weatherboarded upper storey

The south-facing elevation appears to have been heavily rebuilt with a modern brick wall laid in stretcher bond and bonded with a greyish white cement, again surmounted by corrugated metal cladding to eaves level, with two modern flat arched four paned windows inserted at ground level immediately above the brickwork (*Plate 17*). At the east corner of this elevation, a heavily truncated brick wall stub extending southwards represents the original east wall of the barn, which appears to have been largely removed at some point between 1947 and 1970. Internally, the ground floor of the building, which appears to have been used in recent years as a stable, exhibited no features or fittings of interest, apart from a plank and batten stable door of probable modern date. Health and safety concerns with regard to access to the upper floor of the building meant that it was not possible to investigate this area in greater detail.



Plate 16: View looking east showing west-facing elevation of Building B with corrugated metal cladding upon a brick wall



Plate 17: View looking north showing south-facing elevation of Building B showing wall stub representing remains of barn wall

7.2.3 Building C

Building C, located on the west side of the farmyard opposite Building A, consists of a single storey gabled brick structure oriented north-south, two bays in length, with an open -fronted range of sheds or animal shelters four bays long (originally five) extending to the south. This building, which has a hipped, tiled roof, appears to correspond to a structure marked in this location on the OS 1st edition map of 1886 although there is some evidence of alterations.



Plate 18: View looking west showing east-facing elevation of Building C with blocked up door opening in centre of elevation with an open fronted animal shelter to south (the northernmost bay having been blocked in at a later date)

The gabled brick structure at the north end of Building C is two bays long, of orange-red brick construction (laid in Flemish Garden Bond) with a dentilled eaves cornice in the east-facing and west-facing elevations identical to that found in Buildings A & B (Plate 18). Evidence was noted for a partially blocked up doorway, in the centre of the east-facing elevation, which appears to have been converted into a narrow window slot, as evidenced by a segmental arch of Staffordshire blue bricks which probably represents a modern insertion. A similar segmental -arched doorway of probable modern date has been also inserted in the north-facing gable (Plate 19).

Extending to the south of this building is a range of open-fronted sheds or shelters for livestock, originally five bays in length with a roof of kingpost construction with angled struts connecting the tiebeams to the principal rafters and a single set of trencled purlins (Plate 20); the wallplate being supported by roughly hewn posts carried upon stone pillars identical to those in the L-shaped range of sheds attached to Building A.



Plate 19: View looking south showing north-facing gable end of Building C with later doorway inserted (to right of picture)



Plate 20: View looking south showing kingpost roof construction of animal shelter attached to Building C

The northernmost bay was subsequently blocked by the insertion of a thin brick wall (laid in stretcher bond and bonded with greyish white cement) incorporating the original timber wallplate at eaves level, with a flat arched two light window of probable modern date. No features or fittings of interest were noted within Building C apart from a modern flat -arched doorway with a wooden lintel inserted to provide access to the adjoining early 20th -century building to the west (Building D) (*Plate 21*)



Plate 21: Interior view of Building C looking west showing modern flat arched door opening leading to Building D

7.2.4 Building D

Attached to the northwest corner of Building C is Building D, comprising a single storey low gabled structure of light buff brown brick construction (laid in an irregular English Garden Wall bond), oriented east-west and four bays long and three bays wide, with a slate roof. This building is first depicted on the OS 3rd -edition map of 1923.

The north-facing external elevation is four bays long, punctuated at regular intervals by three brick buttresses, with a large doorway, blocked up by corrugated iron sheeting located just to left of the central part of the elevation, to the right of which is a flat -arched eight -paned glazed window with an iron grille (*Plate 22*). The west-facing gable end comprises a centrally placed flat -arched doorway surmounted by an eight -paned glazed casement window with a large wooden lintel, flanked by two flat arched four -paned windows with wooden lintels and sills (*Plate 23*).

The south-facing elevation is punctuated with three regularly spaced buttresses in similar form to its northern counterpart; the fenestration consisting of two flat -arched eight -paned glass windows in the central two bays, with a single flat arched two -light glazed window in the northernmost bay (*Plate 24*).



Plate 22: View looking south southwest showing north-facing elevation of Building D, built between c.1904 and 1923



Plate 23: View looking east southeast showing west-facing gable elevation of Building D

Due to access restrictions, it was not possible to inspect the interior closely, which is currently used for equipment storage. The roof construction consisted of an open truss timber roof with a single set of trenched purlins, with a series of steel roof trusses (carried on brick supports) comprising ties and angled struts inserted to provide additional support, presumably at some point after its original construction (*Plate 25*). No other fixtures or fittings of interest were noted.



Plate 24: View looking north showing south-facing elevation of Building D



Plate 25: Interior view of Building D showing details of roof construction with timber roof supported by steel trusses

7.3 Summary Discussion of Phasing

Investigation of the complex of outbuildings at Nafford Bank Farm Barns, Eckington revealed evidence of three main phases of construction and rebuilding extending from c.1855-75 up to the mid-late 20th century.

7.3.1 Phase 1

The principal construction phase, which can be assigned roughly to c.1855-75 and is probably contemporary with the building of the adjoining farmhouse to the north (present day Nafford Bank Cottages) which was built in 1867, is represented by the majority of Building A, comprising the two -storey block (either used as stables or a cattle house) and adjoining L-shaped range of open fronted livestock shelters.

Other buildings which may be assigned to this primary phase of construction include the lower stages of the east and west walls of Building B, most of which appears to have been demolished at some point between c. 1947 and 1970 (based on the evidence of historic maps and aerial photography) with the remainder being heavily reconstructed and clad in corrugated metal sheeting.

The majority of Building C (consisting of a barn and attached range of open -fronted livestock shelters) may also be assigned to this primary phase of construction on architectural grounds, the brick bonding and dentilled eaves corncing closely resembles that found in Building A, as does the construction of the attached animal shelters, although the kingpost roof structure differs somewhat from the post and truss construction used for the roofing of the L-shaped range of shelters in Building A.

Buildings A, B and C, together with the adjoining farmhouse, are all depicted on the OS 1st -edition map of 1886 and can therefore be regarded as forming part of the original complex of outbuildings formerly known as Upper End Farm which was probably built by the Attwood family at some point between c.1855 (following the fire which destroyed much of the farm in 1854) and 1875 (when the farm was sold).

7.3.2 Phase 2

A secondary construction phase, which may be assigned on the basis of cartographic evidence to some point between c 1904 and 1923, is chiefly represented by the construction of Building D, adjoining the northwest corner of Building C, which appears to have been built by no later than 1923 as it is shown on the OS 3rd -edition map of that date.

Also belonging to this phase of construction is a pair of brick pigsties with a corrugated metal roof added to the south of the L-shaped range (Building A) which are first shown on the OS 3rd -edition map of 1923.

7.3.3 Phase 3

A tertiary construction phase, which may be assigned roughly to the second half of the 20th century, is represented by 1/ the addition of a lean-to shed adjoining the north gable end of Building A, 2/ partial demolition of Building B and consolidation of the surviving northernmost bay, 3/ the insertion of several door and window openings in Building C and the walling-up of one of the bays of the adjoining open shelters and 4/ the insertion of steel trusses to support the roof structure in Building D.

8 Conclusion

It appears from the results of this programme of building recording supported by documentary research that the majority of the surviving outbuildings at Nafford Bank Farm (formerly Upper End Farm) were probably built in a single campaign at some time between c.1855 and c.1875, roughly contemporary with the construction of the adjacent farmhouse (now Nos. 1 & 2 Nafford Bank Cottages) in 1867.

Consultation of documentary and cartographic records relating to the study area indicate that Upper End Farm was established at some point in the late 1830s (the earliest reference to the farm occurs in a trade directory of 1840-1) and that the farm was rebuilt after a disastrous fire which largely destroyed the farmhouse and outbuildings in 1854.

It is likely that the earliest extant outbuildings post-date the 1854 fire which appears (based on the evidence of the contemporary newspaper account) to have largely destroyed both the farmhouse and the adjacent outbuildings on the site; no evidence was noted for fire-blackened trusses or repairs occasioned by fire damage. Buildings A and C closely resemble each other in terms of the use of deep orange-red brickwork laid in Flemish Garden Bond and dentilled eaves cornices; the animal shelters attached to both buildings also are generally similar in construction although the roof structures differ in type.

The layout of outbuildings at Nafford Farm Barns, loosely ranged around a central yard, may be regarded as being a fairly typical example of a 'model farm' of mid to late 19th-century date, one of many which were newly established on recently enclosed common land in Worcestershire parishes (and indeed elsewhere in the Marches) during the 'High Farming' era of the 1840s -70s, when agricultural productivity was boosted by good manure from livestock increasingly wintered in yards or buildings.

The layout and architectural detailing of these farm buildings closely resemble other 'model farms' built in this area during the mid-late 19th-century, one example being Seaford Grange at Pinvin near Pershore, originally built in 1851-2 and further enlarged in the 1870s-80s and another being a complex of farm outbuildings at Woodrow Farm, Hanbury which has dentilled eaves corning similar in design to that exhibited in Buildings A and C.

The provision of extensive accommodation for cattle/sheep presumably reflects the fact that the farm was predominantly a livestock farm; although documentary evidence indicates that a mixed regime of livestock husbandry with some arable cultivation and market gardening was being practised on the site. Somewhat surprisingly, in view of the close proximity of several orchards to the site, there appears to be little documentary or structural evidence for buildings associated with the orchard industry (*e.g.* cider mills). The construction of an additional barn in the early 20th century (Building D) may reflect a period of relative prosperity and perhaps a greater diversification into areas such as market gardening.

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10.3 Cartography

(All maps were obtained from Worcestershire Record Office unless otherwise stated)

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