

STANDING BUILDING RECORDING SURVEY

Pigeon House Farm
Eldersfield
Worcestershire
GL19 4NW

*NGR: SO 8101 3120
Job No: BA1110PHE
HER Ref. WSM 45757*



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1. Non-Technical Summary

This programme of standing building recording undertaken on two barns and an attached semi-circular horse engine house at Pigeon House Farm, Eldersfield, Worcestershire, has identified up to five distinct phases of construction and repair dating back to c.1700.

- The regularly coursed masonry plinth and the irregular brickwork in the SE elevation of the two storey barn (Barn A) appears to represent the earliest evidence of building activity, closely resembling the construction of the nearby pigeon house which is dated to 1706. An early 18th century date can therefore be assigned to this phase of construction.*
- The NW elevation of the Barn A appears to have been reconstructed in the mid to late 18th century, as indicated by its more regularly coursed brickwork with dentilled eaves cornice with the addition of a segmental arched doorway and window. Barn A appears to have functioned as a stable throughout most of the 18th century.*
- At some point during the late 18th or early 19th century, the single-storey, semi circular horse engine house (Barn B) was added to the NW corner of Barn A; it is first shown on the Eldersfield tithe map of 1843.*
- The horse engine may have been built to power a threshing machine or machinery associated with a cider mill; the latter appears to be the most likely usage as a deed of 1842 relating to the Pigeon House estate refers to the presence of a cider mill, which is subsequently mentioned in estate sale catalogues of 1875 and 1895 and in the Land Valuation Survey of 1910.*
- The original roof structure of the engine house and the turning circle have remained largely intact, however any evidence of machinery associated with the horse engine or cider mill appears to have been removed.*
- Contemporary with the building of the engine house, the NE facing gable of Barn A appears to have been reconstructed in stone while the single storey barn attached to the SW end of Barn A was probably added at the same time. The 1843 tithe map shows the layout of the barns and engine house closely resembling their present form.*
- Further evidence of mid-late 19th century alterations is represented by the insertion of a doorway and a section of brick walling in the NE gable of Barn A. Substantial alterations to the complex of outbuildings were made in the 20th century, with the reconstruction of the SW gable end of Barn A and the reconstruction of much of the single storey barn to the SW of Barn A, which appears to have been recently used as a garage.*



2. Introduction

Border Archaeology was instructed by Mr James Bainbridge, Pigeon House Farm, Eldersfield, Worcestershire, GL19 4NW to carry out an historic building recording programme on two redundant barns and an attached horse engine house (WSM 41666) situated immediately S of a Grade II listed farmhouse at Pigeon House Farm (NGR SO8101 3120) prior to conversion to residential accommodation, to RCHME Level 3 as stipulated in the brief issued on March 24th 2011 by M. Glyde Esq., Historic Environment Planning Advisor, Historic Environment & Archaeology Service, Worcestershire County Council detailing *Requirements for Historic Building Recording Work at Pigeon House Farm* (Ref. MH/10/0498).

This report is part of a comprehensive programme of recording works that includes archaeological observation of development work, this being the subject of a separate report.

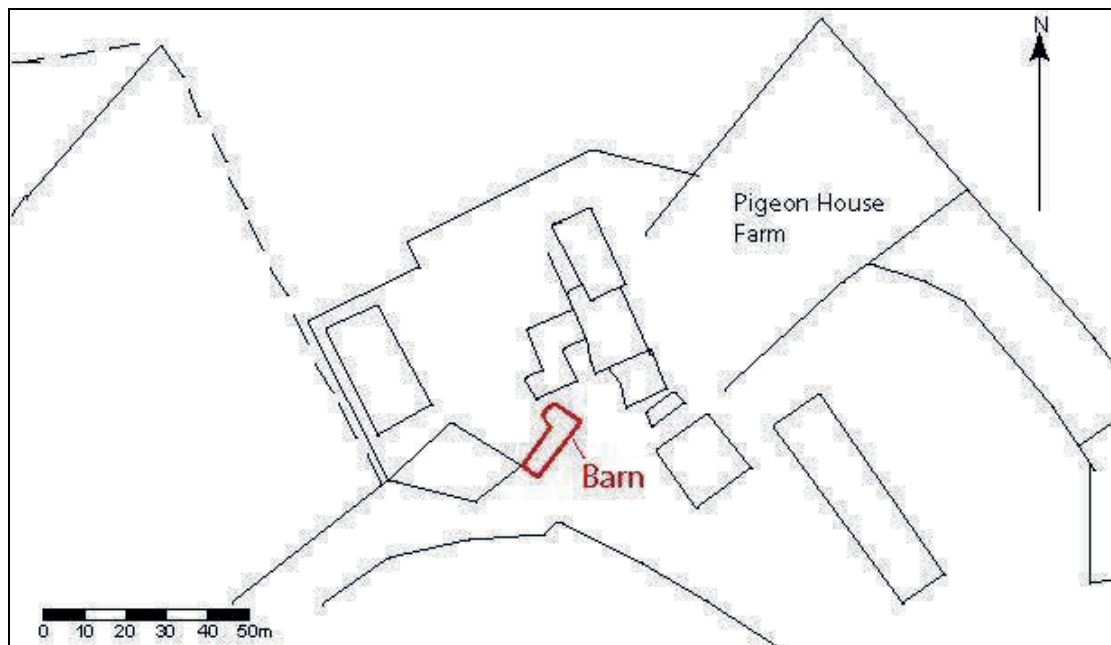


Fig 1 Plan showing location of site

The buildings in question are shown on proposed conversion plans dated Dec 2009 submitted to Border Archaeology by Ten Acre Services for information (Drawing Nos. 1, 2C and 3A).

Copies of the report will be submitted to the client, Mike Glyde Esq. and the Worcestershire County Council Historic Environment Record.



3. Standing Building Recording Methodology

This standing 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) comprising a detailed photographic and descriptive survey of two redundant barns and an attached horse engine house at Pigeon House Farm, Eldersfield, GL19 4NW.

This programme of work was undertaken in accordance with the *Requirements and Guidelines for Archaeological Projects in Worcestershire* and in compliance with the Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of conduct* (2010) and *Code of approved practice for the regulation of contractual arrangements in field archaeology* (2008). The aim of the programme of standing 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.

Primary and secondary documentary sources (where applicable) have been used in order to assess the historic importance of the building(s). 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.

Building phases were established prior to the photographic recording of the building, with each phase being discussed in detail. Border Archaeology carried out a building survey programme to RCHME Level 3 combining a written, drawn and photographic record of all standing walls likely to be affected by the proposed development. This included a detailed written description of original features and a photographic survey of all significant internal and external features (including all door and window openings and external elevations).

This programme of building recording followed guidelines set out within Planning Policy Statement 5 (DCLG, 2010), *Standard and Guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures* (Institute for Archaeologists, 2001) and standards defined by English Heritage/RCHME in *Understanding Historic Buildings – A guide to good recording practice* (English Heritage, 2006).

A photographic record was made using a high-resolution colour digital camera of 12MP capacity. Individual features were photographed as separate items and in detail. Each feature was also photographed and placed into a wider context (i.e. the surrounding elevation).



4. Historical and Archaeological Background

Documentary evidence for the early history of Pigeon House Farm is extremely limited. The farm itself appears to be located within a moated manorial enclosure of medieval date (WSM 42425), one of several moated sites in the locality, while the farmhouse (WSM 08626) is a Grade II listed building of timber framed construction with brick infilling, of 17th century date with later 19th/20th century alterations.

To the SW of the farmhouse is a Grade II listed three storey pigeon house (WSM 06978), of brick construction on a stone masonry plinth with a construction date of 1706 inscribed on a sundial tablet attached to the SE facing elevation of the building (Victoria County History, 1924, 76-9). It appears that this pigeon house had given its name to the adjacent farm by no later than c.1763, which implies that the farm may have been known by another name prior to its construction, or that the pigeon house built in 1706 replaced an earlier building.

The earliest documented reference to Pigeon House Farm occurs in a deed of lease and release dated 6th October 1763 by which one William Williams released his interest in the estate to Abigail Carter, the Rev. Thomas Phillips and Reginald Lygon (GRO Ref. D2079/114/E9). The estate appears to have passed through several hands during the late 18th-early 19th century, before coming into the possession of William Lambe a local farmer in 1804.



*Fig. 2: Extract from the Eldersfield tithe map of 1843 depicting the layout of the farmhouse and outbuildings at Pigeon House Farm
(Reproduced by courtesy of the National Archives)*



The Pigeon House Farm and estate continued to be held by Lambe until his death in 1841, after which it passed to his son James Henry Lambe of Montreal, Canada. By a deed of 15 Feb 1842, Lambe sold the Pigeon House estate and other adjacent lands in Eldersfield to his brother in law George Need Ireland of Forthampton for a payment of £3552 (GRO Ref. D2079/II4/E10). The deed describes the property as comprising ‘all that messuage or homestead called the Pigeon House and all houses, outhouses, barns, stables, beasthouses, sheds, cider mills, buildings, yards, gardens, folds, fold yards, ponds, moats, waters etc.’ George Need Ireland appears to have occupied Pigeon House Farm before that date as he appears as both owner and occupier in the Eldersfield tithe apportionment of 1841 (NA IR 29/39/53); the farm remained in his possession until his death on 27 April 1875, aged 74.

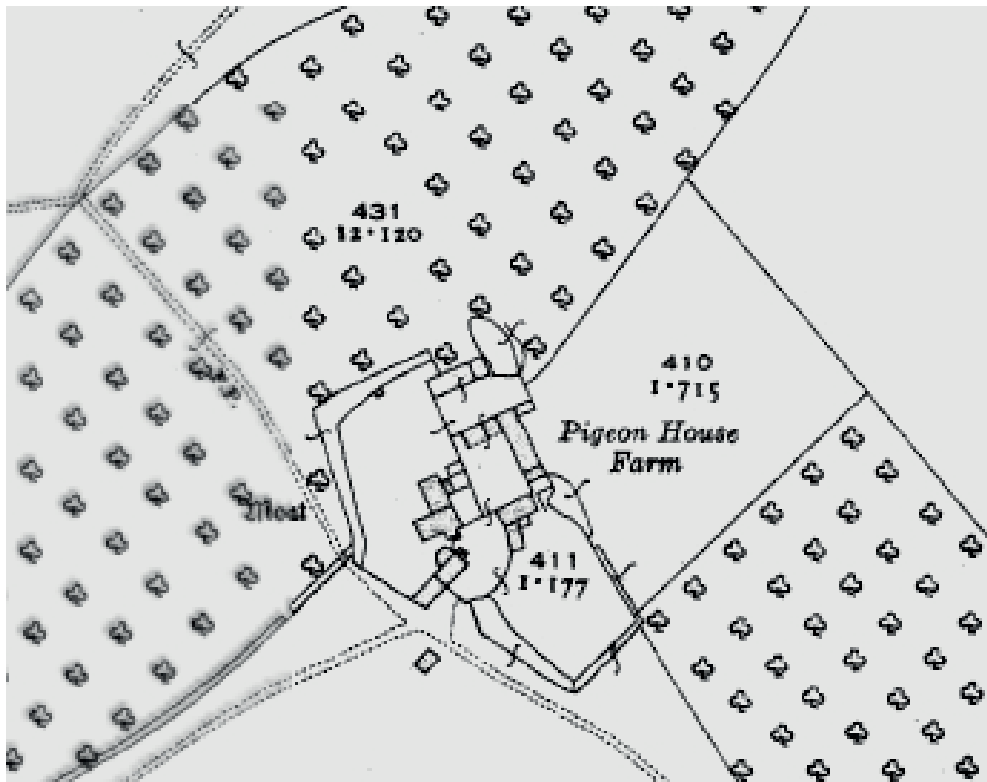
The Eldersfield tithe map of 1843 (NA IR 30/39/53) is the earliest surviving map to depict the layout of the barns and the attached engine house to the S of the farmhouse (**Fig.2**). The layout of the barns and engine house as delineated on the tithe map essentially differs little from the present day, except that no internal division is shown between the large two storey barn and the single storey barn to the SW. No change to the layout of the barns is shown on a plan of the farm attached to a sale catalogue of the Pigeon House Estate dated June 1875 (GRO Ref D2079/II4/E11). The catalogue described Pigeon House Farm as comprising ‘underground cellaring, with kitchen, back kitchen, dairy, parlour, and 5 bedchambers, garden, detached mill house (in which is a capital cider mill), drink house, 2 warm fold yards, with 2 barns, cattle sheds, and cart stables, brick built pigeon house, piggeries etc’. It is possible that the mill house and cider mill referred to here (and in the 1842 deed) may be identified with the two storey barn (Barn A) and attached horse engine house (Barn B) and it is worth noting that the tithe apportionment and 1875 sale catalogue indicate that many of the fields surrounding the farm were occupied by orchards, which may be indicative of cider production on a moderate scale.



*Fig. 3: Extract from the OS 1st edition 25 inch map of 1884 showing the layout of the barns and engine house to the S of the farmhouse at Pigeon House Farm
(Reproduced by courtesy of the National Archives)*



The OS 1st edition 25 inch map of 1884 (**Fig. 3**) provides a slightly more detailed depiction of the barns and engine house. Although their layout differs little from that shown on the 1843 tithe map and the 1875 sale catalogue plan, the 1884 map shows an internal division between the two storey barn to the NE and the single storey barn to the SW, and also depicts the stairway attached to the NE gable of the barn. It is perhaps significant that late 19th- early 20th century OS mapping also shows extensive orcharding surrounding the farm, in view of the documentary evidence for cider production there.



*Fig.4: Extract from the OS 3rd edition 25 inch map of 1923 showing the barns and attached engine house to the S of the farmhouse
 (Reproduced by courtesy of the National Archives)*

It appears that Pigeon House Farm was not sold after George Ireland's death in 1875, for it was still held by his son, Charles Tom Ireland at his death on 3rd November 1884. The Pigeon House Farm estate was eventually sold by auction on 19th June 1895 (GRO Ref. D2079/II4/E16) and was acquired by Joseph Terry, a local farmer, who was listed as owner and occupier of the farm in the Land Valuation Survey of 1910 (NA IR 58/93434).

A description of the farm buildings is included in the Land Valuation Survey, which lists 'a brick timber and tile barn, 2 bay cart house, 4 bay open cattle shed, tool shed, brick half timbered and slate barn, cow stable for 3, stone and tile cart-shed, stable for 6, brick and tile 3 bay cart shed, stone and slate cider mill and granary, brick and tile pigeon house, lower part used for fowls, brick and tile shed.' The stone and slate cider mill presumably refers to the existing engine house, while the granary may refer to the two storey barn attached to the engine house. The 'stone and tile cart-shed' may refer to the single storey barn attached to the SW of the two storey barn. The OS 2nd and 3rd edition maps of 1903 and 1923 show little change to the extent of the barns and engine house as shown on the OS 1st edition map (**Fig. 4**). Later OS mapping of the area dated 1954, 1969 and 1974 respectively shows the layout of the outbuildings as having changed little during the second half of the 20th century.



5. Structural Description and Phasing

5.1 Building Description

The complex of farm buildings forming the subject of this programme of standing building recording are located immediately S of Pigeon House Farmhouse, a Grade II listed house of 17th century origin with later 19th-20th century additions.

The building complex consists of a rectangular two storey barn (Barn A) with a single storey, semi circular structure (Barn B – the horse engine house) attached to the NW and a single storey, three bay barn (Barn C) attached to the SW gable end of Barn A (**Plate 1; Fig. 5**).



Plate 1: View looking ENE showing the NW facing elevation of Barn A with the attached horse engine house (Barn B) to the NW and the single storey stone barn to the SE (Barn C)

Barn A is a two storey, rectangular barn of brick and stone masonry construction with a gabled, tiled roof, measuring five bays long by two bays wide (10m NE-SW × 5.2m NW-SE) and oriented NE-SW. The NW and SE facing elevations of the barn consist of irregularly coursed brick walls, seated on a regularly coursed, squared masonry plinth comprising six courses of rectangular limestone slabs, standing to an approximate height of 1.05m (heavily obscured in places by undergrowth).

The brickwork of the SE facing elevation (overlooking the driveway leading into Pigeon House Farm) is very irregularly coursed, consisting of rows containing alternate sections of headers and stretchers with occasional rows consisting entirely of headers inserted at intervals (**Plate 2**).



The regularly coursed masonry plinth and the irregularly coursed brickwork resemble the construction of the nearby dovecote (recorded as having been erected in 1706). Two flat headed window openings with wooden lintels appear to have been inserted in the two bays flanking the centre bay of the elevation and the brickwork surrounding these windows appears to have been heavily reconstructed (**Plate 7**). Modern concrete quoins are visible at the SW end of the elevation, extending to eaves level (relating to the reconstruction of the SW gable end of the barn).



Plate 2: View looking NW showing SE facing elevation of Barn A with various phases of construction annotated

The brickwork of the NW facing elevation (overlooking the farmhouse) is more regularly coursed compared to its SE facing counterpart (**Plate 3**), consisting of between 3 to 5 rows of stretchers interrupted by a single row comprised entirely of headers, with a dentilled cornice at eaves level. The stone masonry plinth carrying the brickwork is visible internally (up to four courses) but is almost entirely obscured by dense undergrowth externally.

A segmental arched doorway, (partially obscured by the construction of the horse engine house) is located in the central bay of the elevation, with a small segmental arched window with a wooden shutter and sill to its left; the window arch had evidently been damaged by the insertion of a beam associated with the construction of the engine house and a wooden lintel had subsequently been inserted in the window to carry the weight of the beam. To the right is a flat arched casement window (with its glazing partially intact).



Plate 3: View looking SE showing NW facing elevation of Barn A with dentilled cornice at eaves level and attached horse engine house

The NE facing gable elevation (**Plate 4**) is largely of stone construction, consisting of irregularly coursed rubble stone blocks of varying sizes, with a flight of stone stairs, 2.7m in height, leading to the loft at upper storey level. The stairs appear to have been partially repaired in brick and there is possible evidence for a narrow rectangular opening with a wooden lintel inserted into the thickness of the stairs.

Adjacent and to the left of the flight of stone steps is a segmental arched doorway, presumably a stable door, with a thin skin of brick work (laid in English Garden Bond) concealing the masonry work of the gable. The construction break associated with the insertion of this section of walling is clearly visible in the SE facing elevation of Barn A. At the top of the stairs is a flat arched, wooden framed doorway providing access to the loft with a small square flat arched window opening (with wooden frame) to the left of the doorway.

The SW facing gable elevation appears to have been almost entirely reconstructed with modern concrete breeze blocks except for a section of brickwork at the apex of gable, into which a small rectangular wooden framed window opening had been inserted. The brickwork here was noticeably different to that visible elsewhere in the barn, being laid in stretcher bond.



Plate 4: View looking SW showing NE facing gable elevation of Barn A with adjacent horse engine house (to right of picture)

Internally, Barn A exhibited evidence of considerable alteration, mostly relating to its usage as a stable. At ground level, the partially surviving remains of an irregularly laid flagstone floor were visible (obscured by a stall in the NW corner of the barn) extending from the central bay of the barn to its NE end (**Plate 5**). Within the remaining two bays of the barn, it appeared that the flagstone floor had been removed and replaced by a modern screed concrete floor, which had also been removed at a fairly recent date. At the SW end of the barn was a modern concrete trough which presumably was contemporary with the reconstruction of the SW gable end and the laying of the concrete flooring.

No obvious evidence of machinery associated with threshing or cider manufacture (eg. a cider press or trough) was visible within Barn A. However it is worth noting that a series of slots had been inserted in the segmental arched window in the NW elevation of the barn (**Plate 6**), one of which carries a beam associated with the roof structure of the engine house while the others could have been connected with the threshing machinery or cider press which, if the documentary evidence is correct, would probably have been located somewhere in Barn A.

It is also noteworthy that several timber pads were inserted into the thickness of the wall close to ceiling level to support the beams carrying the rafters of the upper storey floor (**Plate 7**); a plank and batten trap door was also present in the northeasternmost bay of Barn A, which would have afforded another means of access to the upper floor.



Plate 5: Internal view looking SW showing flagstone floor in Barn A with a modern concrete floor and trough at the SW end of the barn



Plate 6: Internal view looking NE showing the makeshift timber lintel and slots inserted in the window of the NW elevation of Barn A



Access to the upper storey of Barn A was limited due to the unsafe nature of the floor; however the interior exhibited some evidence of remodelling. The roof construction was composite in nature, comprising a truss with a tie beam connected by two curved principals (one of which appears to have been partially replaced by iron ties) and a kingpost truss with a single row of trenched purlins, the latter truss appeared to be of 20th century date and was probably contemporary with the reconstruction of the SW end of the barn (**Plate 8**). Towards the SW end of the upper storey, a plank and batten screen appeared to demarcate a separate compartment however it was not possible, for safety reasons, to investigate further.



Plate 7: Internal view of Barn A looking SE showing timber pads supporting the beams carrying the upper floor



Plate 8: Internal view of upper storey of Barn A looking SW showing composite roof construction



Barn B, which appears to have functioned as a horse engine house associated with a threshing or (more likely) a cider mill, is attached to NW facing elevation of Barn A. The construction of the engine house appears to have partially obscured the centrally placed, segmental arched doorway in the NW facing elevation of Barn A. It is a single storey structure, roughly semi-circular in plan (its visible dimensions measuring 6.8 NE-SW × 6.2m NW-SE) of roughly coursed rubble masonry construction with a low, conical slate roof (**Plate 9**).

The exterior walls appear to have been extensively rendered and re-pointed in cement (presumably in recent years), while the interior walls are also rendered. Two flat arched windows, with wooden frames and mullions, are visible in the N and W facing elevations while a rectangular opening in the SW corner provides access to the engine house. A section of brick walling (laid in stretcher bond) adjacent to the entrance to the engine house appears to be a modern addition.



Plate 9: View looking SE showing NW facing elevation of the horse engine house (Barn B) of roughly coursed stone with a low conical slate roof

Internally, the roof construction is roughly semi-circular in plan, utilising a traditional space frame truss with one principal transverse tie beam, aligned NE-SW carrying the kingpost (connected to the tie beam with a wrought iron tie) with two subsidiary tie beams extending to the NW and the SE of the centre of the principal tie beam (**Plate 10**). Vertical struts connect the principal and the subsidiary tie beams to the rafters. The principal transverse tie beam and the NW subsidiary tie beam are carried on masonry posts projecting from thickness of the engine house wall. However the SE subsidiary tie beam has been inserted directly into the segmental arched window to the left of the doorway in the NW facing elevation of Barn A, with a makeshift wooden lintel inserted to carry the beam (**Plate 11**).



Plate 10: View looking NW showing interior of engine house and details of roof construction, with partially damaged turning circle below



Plate 11: Internal view of horse engine house looking SE showing subsidiary tie beam inserted into segmental arched window in NW facing elevation of Barn A



No evidence for a mechanism associated with the horse engine itself (eg. a spindle shaft, overhead wheel or gears) was identified within Barn B, although the remains of the turning circle were visible, consisting of a low circular stone plinth with a brick kerbing, approximately 2.45m in diameter and 0.10m in height. The circular stone plinth and the surrounding brick kerbing were heavily denuded in places and obscured by a thick layer of detritus, doubtless associated with its modern usage as a storeroom for agricultural machinery and tools (many of which were still attached to the walls of the engine house at the time of writing).

No visible evidence was identified for a centrally placed slot in the turning circle which presumably would have carried the shaft of the horse engine. A section of intact brick cobbling was noted, measuring approximately 2.25m NW-SE × 0.94m NE-SW, extending from the entrance to the engine house to the doorway in the NW facing wall of Barn A; this appeared to be distinct from the flooring within the rest of the engine house, which appeared to be an earthen floor, although it is possible that the flooring of the engine house was once entirely cobbled (**Plate 12**).



Plate 12: Internal view looking SW showing cobbled floor at entrance to horse engine house

Barn C consists of a single storey rectangular structure with a gabled, tiled roof, three bays in length (10.5m NE-SW × 5m NW-SE), constructed of rubble masonry, brick and concrete breezeblocks and attached to the SW gable end of Barn A.



Plate 13: View looking SE showing reconstructed NW facing elevation of Barn C

The barn appears to have been substantially remodelled in recent years for use as a garage, with the SW facing gable elevation having been reconstructed entirely in brick (laid mostly in stretcher bond with occasional rows of headers) and a carport door inserted (**Plate 13**). The NW facing elevation consists of a thin skin of irregularly coursed rubble masonry concealing a squared, concrete breezeblock wall (visible internally) with a centrally placed, broad rectangular doorway flanked by two flat headed windows. The masonry walling appears entirely to be a modern reconstruction and bears little similarity to the masonry work of the engine house or the NE gable of Barn A.

The exterior SE facing elevation appears to exhibit several phases of construction. The section of masonry walling at the extreme south western end of the elevation appears to be a modern reconstruction (again consisting of a thin skin of masonry concealing a squared breezeblock wall visible internally) and exhibits close similarities to its NW facing counterpart (**Plate 14**). However the roughly coursed masonry walling of the remaining two bays appears to be of an earlier date, although heavily repointed, and bears comparison with the masonry of the NE facing gable end. The two flat headed windows inserted in these bays appear to have been inserted at a later date as the surrounding masonry shows evidence of having been heavily repaired and repointed. Internally, the only noteworthy feature consists of the two kingpost trusses (**Plate 15**), one with intact angled struts connecting the tiebeam to the principal rafters, while the struts had been removed from the kingpost truss nearest to the SW gable end of the barn.

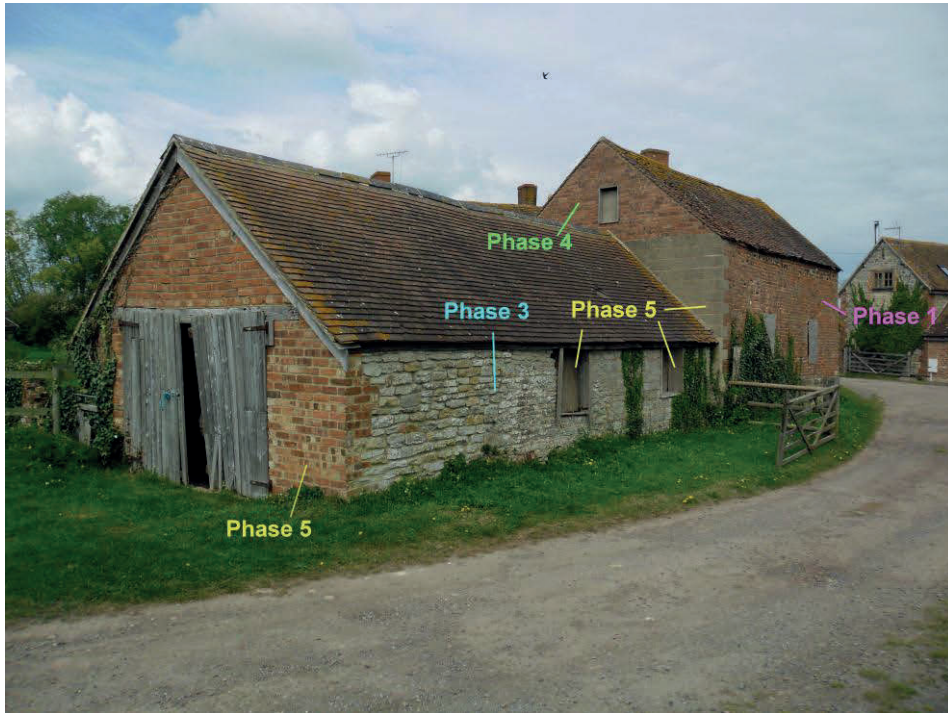


Plate 14: View looking N showing SW gable and SE facing elevation of Barn C



Plate 15: Internal view looking SW showing kingpost roof trusses in Barn C

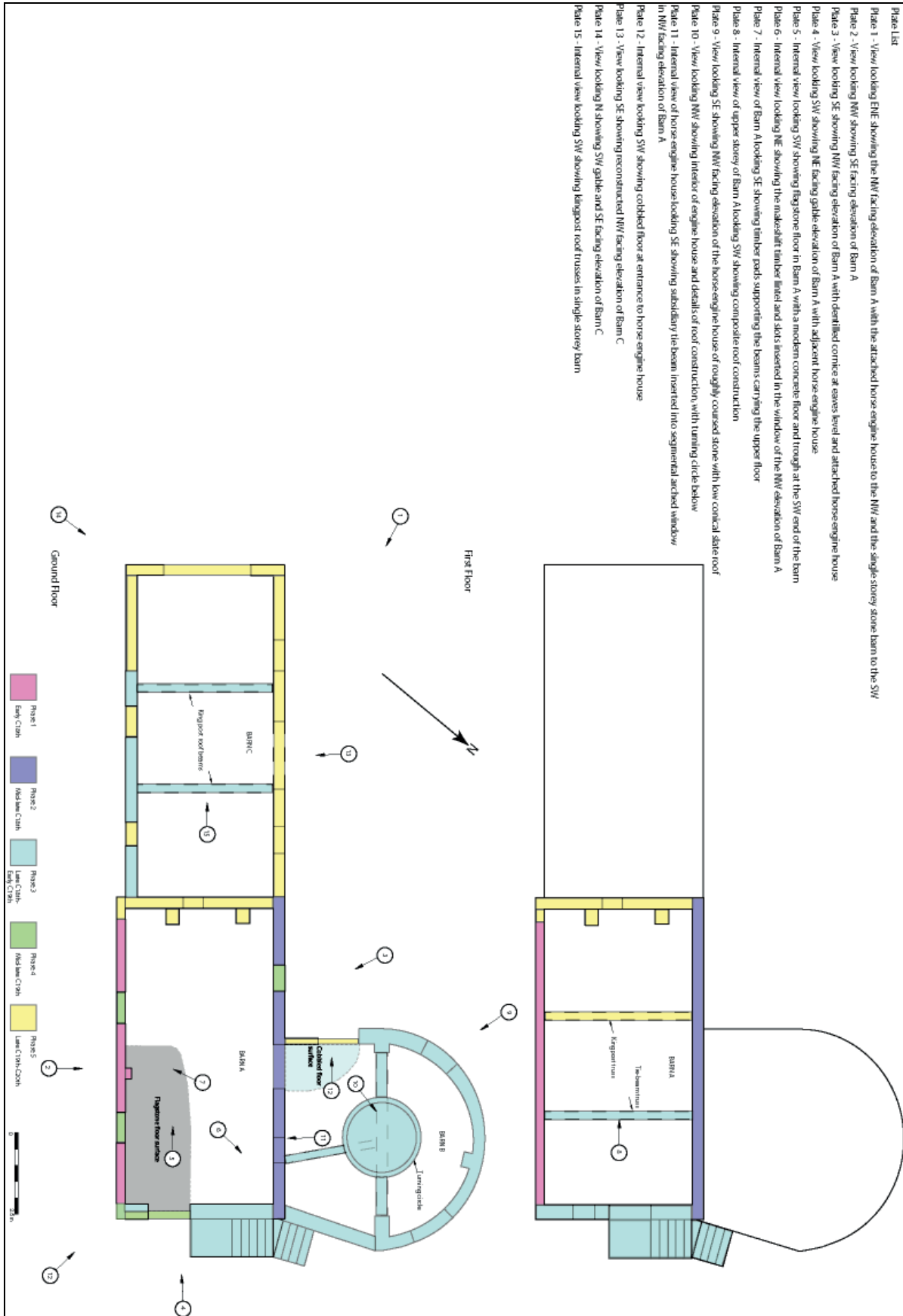


Fig. 5: Phased plan of ground floor and upper floor of outbuildings at Pigeon House Farm



5.2 Discussion of Phasing

The earliest phase of building activity (Phase 1) appears to be of early 18th century date, represented by the regularly coursed masonry plinth and the irregularly coursed brick walling in the SE facing elevation of Barn A, both of which closely resemble the construction of the adjacent three storey dovecote which was built in 1706 (**Plate 16**).



Plate 16: View looking NW showing the SE elevation of the pigeon house with sundial

The NW elevation of Barn A appears to be of a later phase of construction to its SE facing counterpart, suggested by the markedly different, more regularly coursed brickwork, the dentilled cornice at eaves level and, in particular the segmental arched doorway and window which suggest a later, possibly mid to late 18th century date for this phase of building activity (Phase 2). The absence of ventilation slots or a large, centrally placed cart entrance suggests it was not used for grain storage – stabling for horses appears to be the most likely option. The partial remains of a flagstone floor in Barn A may also date from this period of activity.



A later phase of construction (Phase 3), which can be assigned to the late 18th-early 19th century, appears to be represented by the semi-circular horse engine house, attached to the NW elevation of Barn A. It appears that the majority of horse engine houses in the British Isles were built between c.1785 and 1850, after which steam powered engines were increasingly used for threshing machines and cider production (Hutton, 1976, 30-5).

The Eldersfield tithe map of 1843 indicates the existence of the horse engine house by that date and a deed of 1842 makes reference to a cider mill at Pigeon House Farm (GRO Ref. D2079/II4/E11). Further references to the presence of a cider mill at Pigeon House Farm occur in estate sale catalogues dated 1875 and 1895, the latter referring to a 'detached mill house in which is a capital cider mill'. In the absence of any other plausible candidate, the detached mill house referred to in this instance may be identified with Barn A while the cider mill itself presumably corresponds to the horse engine house (Barn B). It may well be that the horse engine house was specifically built for cider production, although the possibility cannot be ruled out that it was originally built to power threshing machinery and was later converted to use for a cider mill.

Evidence for the conversion of Barn A into a mill is suggested by the rebuilding of the NE facing gable elevation, with its external staircase leading to the upper storey which is strongly suggestive of a mill house or granary. The reinforced beams supporting the upper storey floor are also suggestive of use for large scale storage of grain, apples or other agricultural produce. The likelihood that it was used for apple storage may be indicated by the presence of unglazed windows in the upper storey of Barn A, which would usually have been unglazed in order to allow air movement through the stored fruit.

Also probably belonging to Phase 3 is the majority of the SE facing elevation of Barn C and its distinctive kingpost roof trusses, which are probably of early 19th century date. It is possible that Barn C was added to provide additional storage space and as a place to house carts for transporting produce. The Eldersfield tithe map of 1843 depicts Barns A and C as a single block, without any evidence of an internal subdivision between the two; however the OS 1st edition map of 1884 and subsequent historic mapping clearly shows them as two distinct units. It is likely that Barn C can be identified with the 3 bay cart-shed referred to in the Land Valuation description of 1910.

Another phase of minor alterations which can be assigned to the mid to late 19th century (Phase 4) is represented by the insertion of a stretch of brick walling and a segmental arched doorway in the NE gable end of Barn A; the flat headed windows inserted in the SE facing elevation and the casement window in the NW elevation also probably belong to this phase of construction.

A subsequent phase of modern alterations to the barn complex (Phase 5) is represented by the reconstruction of the SW gable end of Barn A and the complete reconstruction of the NW elevation and SW gable end of Barn C. The machinery of the cider mill was presumably removed once cider production ceased; it is unclear when this actually took place but it is worth noting that the Land Valuation Survey of 1910 refers to a granary and cider mill, which can probably be identified with Barns A and B.



6. Conclusions

The programme of building recording undertaken on two barns and an attached horse engine house at Pigeon House Farm identified up to five phases of construction, ranging in date from the early 18th century through to the 20th century. The earliest phase of construction, assigned to the early 18th century, is represented by the regularly coursed limestone plinth on which Barn A is seated and the irregularly coursed brickwork of the SE facing elevation of Barn A.

The coursing of the masonry plinth and brickwork visible in the SE elevation closely resemble the construction of the nearby pigeon house (built in 1706) and it is likely that Barn A was built at about the same time. The NW facing elevation of Barn A appears to have been rebuilt, probably in the mid to late 18th century, and this is reflected in the more regularly coursed brickwork (with dentilled eaves cornice) and the segmental arched doorway and window.

It appears that Barn A was used as a stable throughout most of the 18th century, however this usage changed in the late 18th or early 19th century, with the construction of the single storey, semi-circular horse engine house (Barn B). The horse engine house (which is first depicted on the Eldersfield tithe map of 1843) appears to have been constructed either to power a threshing machine or cider mill, the latter being the most likely interpretation as a deed of sale of Pigeon House Farm dated 1842 refers to a cider mill at the farm. Later sale catalogues of the estate dated 1875 and 1895 and a Land Valuation Survey of 1910 refer to the presence of a cider mill at Pigeon House Farm, suggesting that it remained in use at least until the early 20th century.

Barn A was probably converted to use as a mill house at the same time (reflected in the reconstruction of the NE gable elevation with its external stone staircase and the reinforced beams supporting the upper storey floor). It would have housed machinery associated with the mill (presumably including a cider press) on the ground floor while the upper floor would have been utilised for storing produce. Although the roof structure and the turning circle of the engine house have remained relatively intact, the internal machinery of the mill and any other evidence of cider production appear to have been entirely removed. The single storey stone and tiled barn attached to the SW end of Barn A appears to be roughly contemporary with the construction of the engine house, and may have been added to serve as a cart-shed and as a place for additional storage of produce.

A subsequent phase of mid-late 19th century alteration and repairs is represented by the addition of a segmental arched doorway and brick walling to the NE gable of Barn A and additional flat headed windows to the NW and SE elevations. Further modern alterations are represented by the rebuilding of the SW gable end of Barn A and the extensive reconstruction of the single storey barn (Barn C).



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8. Bibliography

8.1 Primary Sources

Gloucestershire Records Office

D2079/II4/E9 Schedules of deeds relating to the Pigeon House Estate, 1763-1842

D2079/II4/E10 Schedule of deeds relating to property in Eldersfield including Hardwick Hay Estate, Parsonage Farm and Pigeon House Farm, 1829-1874

D2079/II4/E11 Printed sale particulars (plans) of The Werth, c. 100 acres of land in Chaceley and Hillfield and Pigeon House Farms in Eldersfield, c. 240 acres (field names) - 1875

D2079/II4/E12 Abstracts of title reciting deeds relating to the estate of Mr. G.N. Ireland, deceased in Eldersfield and including Hillfield and Pigeon House Estates and sheep pastures on Eldersfield Marsh (plans) – 1829-75

D2079/II4/E16 Printed sale particulars (plans) of Hillfield, Rue Green and Pigeon House Farms, Eldersfield, c. 300 acres of land (field names), sheep pastures on Eldersfield Marsh, the Werth, c. 100 acres of land in Chaceley and cottages and c. 10 acres of land (field names) in Eldersfield - 1895

National Archives

IR29/39/53 *Eldersfield Tithe Apportionment*, 1841

IR58/93434 *Eldersfield Land Valuation Survey*, 1910

8.2 Secondary Sources

Worcestershire County Council Historic Environment Record: HER Search Data & Digital Mapping

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Glyde, M. 2011, *Brief – Requirements for historic building recording work at Pigeon House Farm Eldersfield, Worcestershire*. Unpub report.



Hutton, K. 1976, 'The Distribution of Wheelhouses in the British Isles' *Agricultural History Review*, Vol. 24, 30-35.

IfA, 2001, *Standard and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials*

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IfA, 2008, *Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology*

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SSEW, 1983, *Soil Map of England and Wales Scale 1:250,000*, Silsoe

Victoria County History, 1924, *A History of the County of Worcestershire Vol 4*, 76-83

Worcestershire Historic Environment & Archaeology Service, 2008, *Standards and Guidelines for Archaeological Projects in Worcestershire*

9. Cartography

(All historic mapping was consulted using the collections held at the National Archives unless otherwise stated)

IR 30/39/53 Eldersfield tithe map - 1843

GRO Ref. D2079/II4/E11 Sale catalogue plan of the Pigeon House Estate - 1875

OS 1st edition 25 inch map – 1884

GRO Ref. D2079/II4/E16 Sale catalogue plan of the Pigeon House Estate - 1895

OS 2nd edition 25 inch map – 1903

OS 3rd edition 25 inch map - 1923

OS provisional edition 6 inch map – 1954

OS 1:2500 map – 1969

OS 1:10000 map - 1974



Document Control

Job title	Standing Building Recording Survey – Pigeon House Farm Eldersfield, Worcestershire	Job No	BA1110PHE
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Issue No	Status	Date	Approved for issue
1	Final	May 2011	
<i>Neil Shurety Dip M.GM Inst. M</i>			