

THE GRANARY, EAST COOMBE FARM, STOCKLEIGH POMEROY, DEVON

(NGR SS 88934 03969)

Results of historic building recording

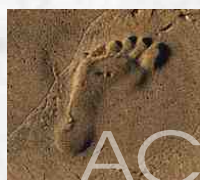
Mid Devon District Council planning reference
17/01527/FULL, condition 3

Prepared by:
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On behalf of:
Just Us Retreats

Document No: ACD2244/2/0

Date: July 2020



AC archaeology

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The views and recommendations expressed in this report are those of AC archaeology and are presented in good faith on the basis of professional judgement and on information currently available.

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Summary

An historic building record was prepared by AC archaeology in May 2020, on behalf of Just Us Retreats, prior to redevelopment of a former granary at East Coombe Farm, Stockleigh Pomeroy, Devon EX17 4AY (NGR SS 88934 03969) in to holiday accommodation. The building is Grade II Listed.

The granary dates to the mid-19th century, and was constructed sometime between 1842 and 1889. The context for its construction may have been increased grain production; the farm utilised water to power threshing machinery and may therefore have been a productive grain producing farm. The building is two storeyed, with a ground-floor open-ended cart shed whose stone walls support the first-floor granary. The latter was originally timber framed but the east elevation and part of the west elevation have been replaced in brick. More recently, the timber framing and brick infill of the remainder of the latter elevation, along with the south gable, have been rebuilt. Canopies were added to each gable over the cart shed openings, one of which survives and has been enlarged.

1. INTRODUCTION (Fig. 1)

1.1 This document presents the results of historic building recording carried out by AC archaeology on 22 May 2020 prior to redevelopment of the 'The Granary', East Coombe Farm, Stockleigh Pomeroy, Devon EX17 4AY (SS 88934 03969; Fig. 1). The investigations were commissioned by Just Us Retreats, and were required under condition 3 of the grant of planning permission (Mid Devon District Council reference 17/01527/FULL) for 'conversion and extension to granary building to holiday accommodation and siting of bell tent for seasonal use'. Guidance on the scope of works has been provided by the Devon County Historic Environment Team (DCHET) in their consultation response to the application; no formal site-specific brief has been provided.

1.2 East Coombe Farm is located 1km to the northeast of the small village of Stockleigh Pomeroy. The farmhouse and its associated buildings occupy an area to the north of Eastcombe Lane, and the granary is located 30m to the west of Higher East Coombe Farmhouse, close to the lane. The farm is situated in a valley bottom, at a height of between 100m and 105m above Ordnance Datum, with the buildings located to either side of a stream that flows west into the watercourse Shobrooke Lake. The underlying geology consists of Carboniferous mudstone and siltstone of the Bude Formation, overlaid by Quaternary head deposits of sand with clay and gravel (British Geological Survey online viewer 2020).

Designation

1.3 The granary is a Grade II Listed Building (National Heritage List for England entry 1250971; Devon Historic Environment Record (HER) entry MDV41187) and forms part of the Higher East Coombe farmstead (HER entry MDV115604). The granary has the following description prepared in 1985 when the building was designated:

Granary over waggon shed. Early C19. Ground floor walls of stone rubble and plastered stud and braced wall with brick nogging to first floor. Hipped dry slate roof. 1 room plan to first floor grain store over waggon shed open at each end. West wall built into low bank. 2-storeys. West entrance central to first floor approached by straight flight of 9 stone steps adjoining wall. Large entrance to waggon shed from north and south. Small window with iron bars to first floor middle over each entrance. Interior structure is intact with heavy cross beams supporting

granary floor, the end 2 forming the bottom rails of the timber framed walling over. Original roof structure with lapped collars to trusses. Plastered wall surfaces. Included for group value.

The scheme

- 1.4 The scheme includes the conversion of the building into holiday accommodation. The existing ground floor will be subdivided into an entrance hall, and bedroom with en-suite, with a new extension housing part of the entrance hall and a further bedroom with en-suite. The first floor will contain an open-plan kitchen and living room.

2. AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 The scheme will involve internal and external alterations to the granary building including repairs to the structure and works such as internal lining of the walls that will obscure currently visible features. The aim of the investigation was therefore to prepare an historic building record of the granary building prior to work commencing.

- 2.2 All works were undertaken in accordance with an approved Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by AC archaeology (Passmore 2020), the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures* (revised 2019), and the AC archaeology *General Site Recording Manual, Version 2*.

- 2.3 The historic building recording was also undertaken in accordance with the guidance set out in *Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice* (Historic England 2016), and undertaken to level 3. It comprised the following:

- A written description of the building and its context in relation to other farm buildings;
- A colour digital photographic record including general views of the building and its local context, detailed external and internal views, and a record of individual historic fixtures and fittings. The photographic register is included as Appendix 1; and
- As existing architect's plans, elevations and profiles were annotated and updated to show the location of observed historic fabric and fixtures and fittings, along with information on the phasing and development of the building.

- 2.4 The recording considered the following:

- Date/period of initial build and subsequent alterations;
- Materials and method of construction (and differences in material and construction techniques/architectural styles in each identified phase);
- Fenestration and the design of elevations and elements of the building in relation to the function of internal spaces;
- Internal arrangements including evidence for alterations;
- Original fixtures and fittings;
- Subsequent fixtures and fittings, and evidence for change of use; and
- Ephemeral evidence of occupation and use, for instance any evidence of historic graffiti or signage.

3. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND (Fig. 2)

- 3.1 The farmhouses at both Higher and Lower East Coombe both have c. late 15th or early 16th century origins, with later 17th-19th and 20th century additions and alterations (HER entries 41186 and 41183, respectively); both originally had open halls. Transcriptions of aerial photographs have identified a series of linear cropmark ditches to the northeast of Higher East Coombe farm interpreted as field boundaries and drainage ditches of medieval to 19th century date associated with the farm (HER entry MDV121989). The *higher* and *lower* placenames are also indicative of a medieval origin for the settlement. The *East Coombe* element is topographical, reflecting the local river valley (see Section 1.3 above); *North Coombe* is situated in a different valley to the northwest of the village.
- 3.2 The earliest available mapping showing the farmsteads at Higher and Lower East Coombe is a 1772 estate map produced for Sir Humphrey Davie, which is reproduced in a heritage statement (Bunning 2017) that supported the application. The granary was not extant at this time, although a rectangular north-south aligned building is shown in the adjacent plot to the west.
- 3.3 The farmsteads of Higher and Lower East Coombe are also shown and annotated on the Stockleigh Pomeroy tithe map of 1842. Higher East Coombe farmhouse is shown within Plot 270 along with a range of four associated outbuildings. The granary had not been constructed, but the rectangular building shown on the 1772 estate map is again depicted, within plot 269. The Stockleigh Pomeroy tithe apportionment of 1841 records the farmstead along with a large number of associated pasture, meadow, arable and orchard plots in the tenement of 'Higher Eastcombe and Waller Barton'. The landowner is recorded as Sir Humphrey Phineas Davie and the farm was occupied by John Bodley. 'Lower East Combe' is shown within plot 201, and was also in the ownership of Sir Humphrey Davie, but was occupied by William Strong.
- 3.4 The Ordnance Survey First Edition 25-inch map of 1889 is the first map to show the granary, as a square building within the pre-existing open yard. It has open-fronted north and south sides. The older building to the west now has a small extension at its southeast end. The farmhouse has also been altered and extended, and the range of outbuildings to the south of the house shown on the earlier tithe map have been removed and replaced with new buildings in part facing onto a new yard. To the north of the farmstead a sluice and mill pond are annotated (HER entry MDV123472), associated with a waterwheel within or attached to a barn (HER entry MDV60817), forming part of a complex of in part new buildings around a new yard.
- 3.5 The Ordnance Survey Second Edition 25-inch map of 1905 shows that the granary has been extended to the south, and also has two smaller extensions attached to its western side (Fig. 2). To the northeast of the farmstead an aqueduct is now annotated (HER MDV123474) which would have carried water from the mill pond to the waterwheel.
- 3.6 Later 20th-century mapping and aerial photographs show the granary building has been extended to the north, with the building to the southwest demolished.

4. DESCRIPTION OF THE BUILDING (Figs 3-6; Plates 1-8; Appendix 1)

External description (Plates 1-4)

4.1 The granary is a two-storey building with open-fronted ground floors in the north and south gable elevations; the latter elevation fronts an access into the property from East Coombe Lane. The two side walls are constructed of rubble local siltstone with squared-off blocks used as quoins, all bonded in a hard buff lime mortar with charcoal, stone and small lime inclusions.

4.2 The building at first-floor level was originally fully enclosed with a timber frame, but this has been partially replaced in brick (see below), and the timber frame itself has also been partially replaced. The replacement timber frame is fully exposed in the south elevation and within the southern half of the west elevation; the north elevation is obscured by a primary external lime plaster finish. This plaster extends down over the beam supporting the timber frame where it is attached using laths. The frame consists of slender, machine cut timbers, and in the south elevation there is a pair of diagonal braces. A single brace is present within the west elevation. The frame is infilled with brick nogging, of standard sized red bricks laid in stretcher bond, between bands of thin wooden lacing, in a gravelly cement. The north and south elevations incorporate single small, high-level window openings. These are unglazed but are fitted with two and three vertical iron security bars in the north and south elevations respectively.

4.3 The first floor is entered via a doorway in the west elevation, accessed via a flight of steps from the (now raised) ground to the west of the building. This structure is constructed of local siltstone, and incorporates four visible steps of the same material; the lowest original step is probably obscured. The remainder of the six full and one half steps are cast concrete replacements, whilst the handrail is also modern. The door is of the plank and batten type attached with a pair of older-style lozenge-headed strap hinges. The doorframe is set within the opening, originally behind studs within the timber frame. The south upright of the frame has been removed, as correspondingly has the lock case from the door.

4.4 At first-floor level the entire east elevation and northern half of the west elevation have been rebuilt in red brick. In the former the lower section is a double width brick wall laid in English bond, whilst the upper section is a single skin, mainly of stretcher bond, with occasional headers. Internally, this section of wall incorporates full width piers to support the roof structure. The top of the timber frame survives in the northern half of the west elevation, including over the doorway, at eaves level above the replacement brickwork.

Ground-floor extensions (Plate 5)

4.5 There is some evidence for a former ground-floor extension on the south side of the building. This takes the former of a pair of iron brackets to support beams; part of one beam survives internally attached to the west wall. A third, central bracket has been removed but bolt holes remain.

4.6 The north extension is in two parts. The earliest is a lean-to canopy supported on three 'tie beams' fixed into iron brackets, of the same style as present on the south elevation. An end rail or head beam joining all three beams, originally attached using mortice and tenon joints, has been removed. The canopy above itself is a modern replacement or addition, with rafters supporting battens and a corrugated iron sheet covering. A later corrugated iron sheet roof extends down to the north, on a slightly shallower pitch doubling the size of the extension. The north and west sides are

defined by panels of corrugated iron sheets; the east side facing the access to the farm buildings is open fronted.

Internal description (Plates 6-8)

- 4.7** The ground floor is a single open space with an earth floor that extends north into the extensions. Externally, to the south is a modern concrete surface representing part of the upgrading of the adjacent access to the farm. The first-floor is carried on four large bridging beams that support closely-spaced joists. The floorboards are large wide planks, that may have been reused, with a second layer of much narrower boards added over the top. In the centre of the building, but offset to the east is a hatch in the floor.
- 4.8** The first floor is an open space with no (non-structural) primary fittings present. As on the outside, the north elevation is plastered. The replacement timber framing and brick infill has been left exposed with no render finish. The replacement brickwork is painted although the southeast corner is partly exposed, possibly indicating it had another, now removed, finish, or was the location of a small grain bin. There is no evidence that the room was originally subdivided or contained grain bins. Recent additions include a pair of fuel tanks in the southeast and southwest corners, and a work table.
- 4.9** The roof structure is fully hipped and is supported on a pair of full trusses with half trusses and hip rafters at the gables. The trusses are tie beams with pegged mortice and tenon joints and lapped apexes to the rafters. There are no collars or posts but the rafters are braced by diagonal struts, again attached with pegged mortice and tenon joints to the tie beams and with notched ends fixed with nails to the rafters. The rafters support two rows of staggered through purlins and a slender ridge set vertically into a notch. The purlins carry battens with a slate roof finish. Each hip rafter is supported on a corner plate laid onto a T-shaped arrangement of timbers set into the walls at 45° to the corners.

5. DISCUSSION

- 5.1** The cartographic evidence indicates that the granary was constructed sometime between 1842 and 1888. This broad date is confirmed by the slender nature of the timbers in the surviving original first-floor frame, and, although perhaps slightly archaic in style (probably due to its small, lightweight size), the roof structure also uses relatively slender pieces of machine-sawn timber.
- 5.2** The building had a dual function, as a granary over cart shed. The layout of a high-level granary reflected the need to keep grain away from brown rats, and the building displays typical characteristics with an external doorway and a hatch to the floor below (allowing for the hoisting of full sacks). Whilst dedicated granaries have medieval origins, many are of later date, with most examples in the South West dating from the 18th and 19th centuries. Cart sheds tend to date from the 18th century onwards, becoming more common as the road network improved (English Heritage 2016, 53-55). The layouts of both cart sheds and granaries varies, although the association of these two functions in one building is commonplace. Where combined they can form part of a larger range of farm buildings or as at East Coombe Farm be a detached structure. Later granaries are frequently found, with many different architectural styles, as small detached buildings (*ibid.*, fig. 27), or in combination with other uses; in Devon placement above stables is a common arrangement.

- 5.3** The exact context for the construction of the building is unknown, and could be for several reasons including the need to store carts, which had been purchased in response to improvements in the local road network. Additionally, the existing threshing barn had water-powered machinery, and the process might have been technologically more efficient (including the potential for longer use throughout the harvesting season) than hand (or steam-powered) threshing, thereby producing more grain that required storage. It was also constructed during a period of expansion at the farm.
- 5.4** The mixed architectural styles of timber frame over stone appears unusual, but has a rational explanation. The stone walls would have provided a solid support for the first-floor structure, allowing them to carry a heavy weight; the four large bridging beams are key structural elements. However, without supporting gable walls the side elevations would be liable to movement, and the weight carried by these walls appears to have been reduced by the use of a timber frame with brick nogging and a lightweight roof structure. This observation also appears to apply to freestanding granaries constructed on staddle stones (cf the photographs in English Heritage 2006, fig. 27, although in some regions this may reflect the prevailing wider tradition of timber-framed construction). This observation is also made by Child (1990, 68) in relation single-storey Devon examples on staddle stones).
- 5.5** Early additions to the building comprised the adding of porches or canopies over each of the open fronts. These probably allowed for the storage of additional, or longer carts or implements within the building, providing an element of extra weatherproofing. The replacement of the lower half of the east elevation at first-floor level is another early, perhaps later 19th-century alteration.
- 5.6** Later recent changes include the replacement of the upper part of the east elevation and the northern section of the west elevation at first-floor level, and more recently the rebuilding of the timber frame in the south and west elevations. Based on the limited available evidence, this appears to have been in keeping with the style of the original architecture, although any evidence for original internal and external plaster (as survives on the north elevation) has been lost. Unlike on the north elevation there is however no evidence that a plaster finish extended down over the bridging beam below the timber frame.

6. ARCHIVE AND OASIS ENTRY

- 6.1** The digital archive will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service within three months of the acceptance of this report by the Devon County Historic Environment Team.
- 6.2** Details of the project have been submitted to the OASIS (Online AccesS to the Index of Archaeological investigationS) database under the unique identifier 390289. The entry will include a digital copy of the approved report.

7. SOURCES CONSULTED

Bunning, A.J., 2017. *The Granary, East Coombe Farm, Stockleigh Pomeroy Draft Heritage Statement 211/17.*

Child, P., 1990. 'Farm Buildings', in Beacham P. (ed). *Devon Building, An introduction to local traditions*, 61-94. Devon Books. Exeter.

English Heritage, 2006. *Historic Farmsteads, Preliminary Character Assessment: South West Region*. University of Gloucestershire in association with English Heritage and the Countryside Agency. Cheltenham.

Ordnance Survey 25-inch Devonshire map sheet LV.12
First Edition, surveyed 1888, published 1889
Second Edition, revised 1904, published 1905

Passmore, A., 2020. *The Granary, East Coombe Farm, Stockleigh Pomeroy, Devon, (NGR SS 88934 03969), Written Scheme of Investigation for historic building recording, Mid Devon District Council planning reference 17/01527/FUL*. AC archaeology document number **ACD2244/1/0**.

Stockleigh Pomeroy tithe map, 1842, and apportionment, 1841

Websites consulted February 2020

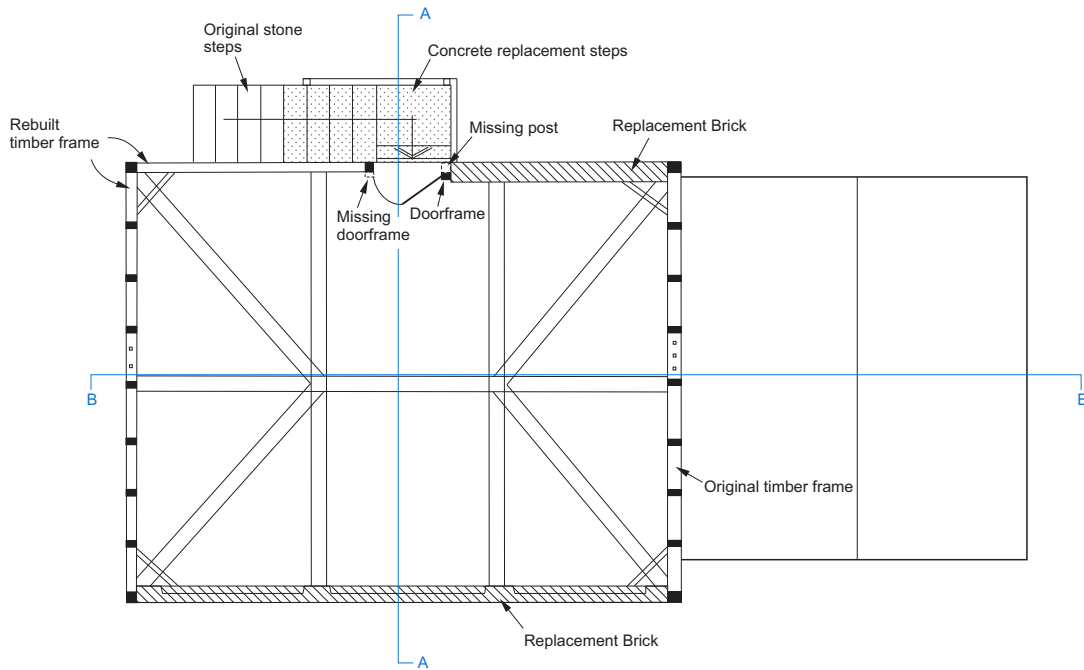
British Geological Survey on-line viewer
www.bgs.ac.uk

Devon and Dartmoor Historic Environment Record
<http://map.devon.gov.uk/dccviewer>

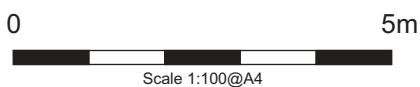
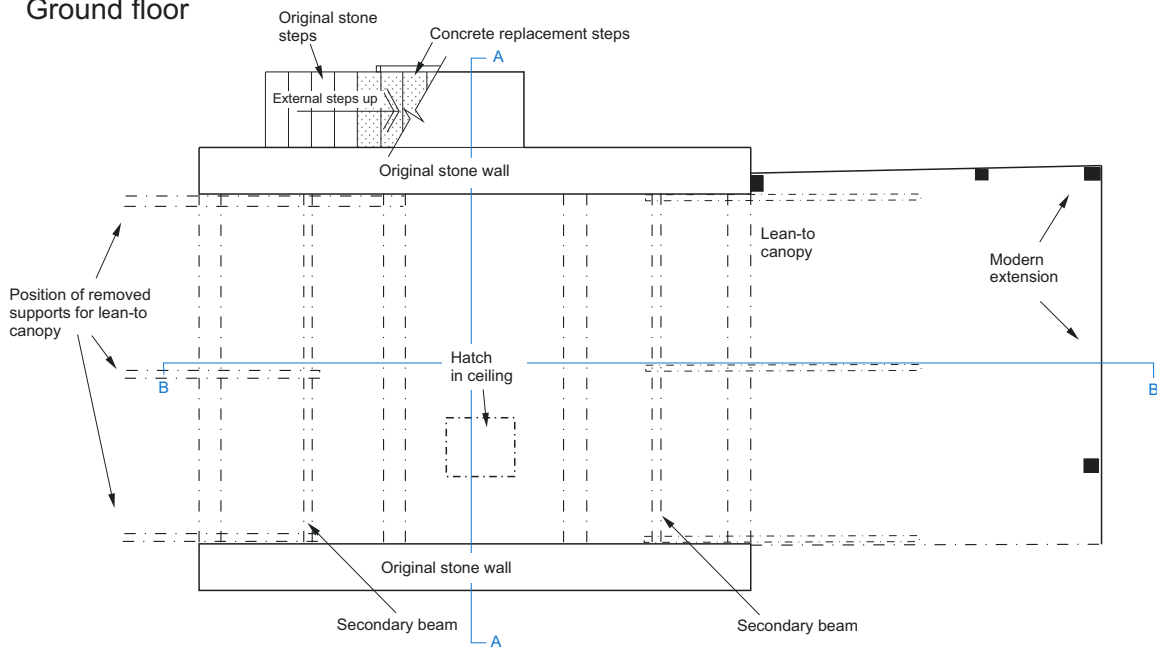
National Heritage List for England
<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>

Old Maps
<https://www.old-maps.co.uk>

Upper level



Ground floor



PROJECT

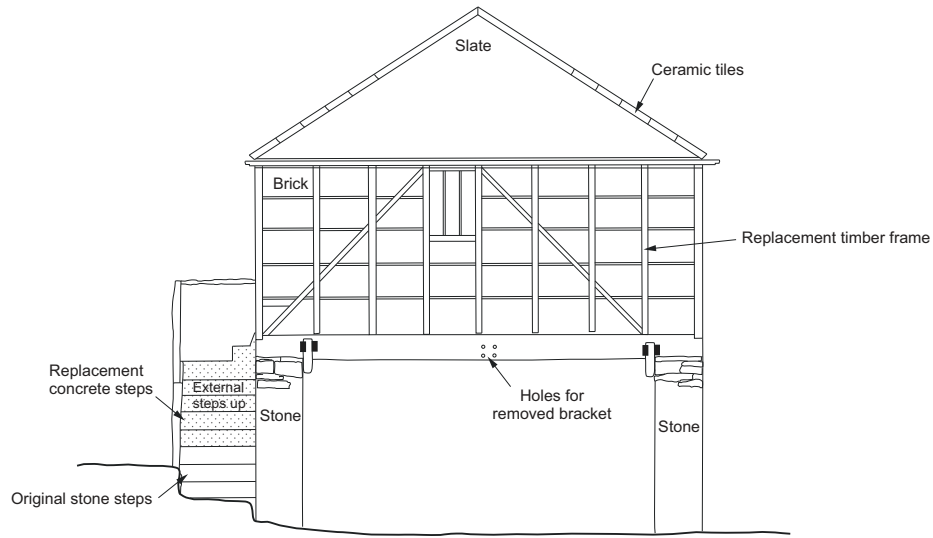
The Granary, East Coombe Farm,
Stockleigh Pomeroy, Devon

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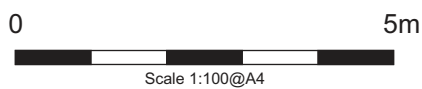
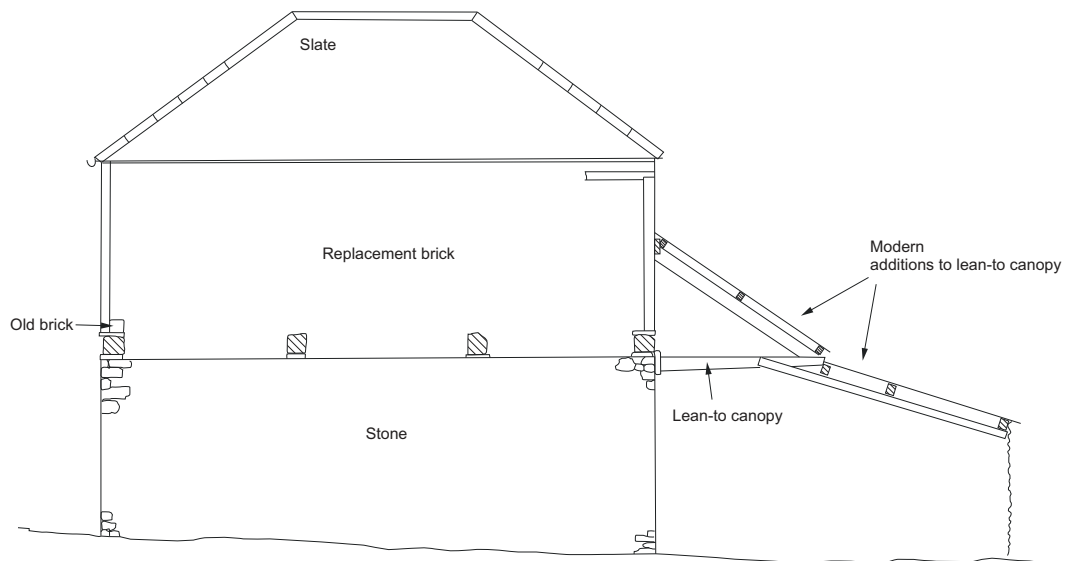
Fig. 2: Ground and upper floor plans



South elevation



East elevation



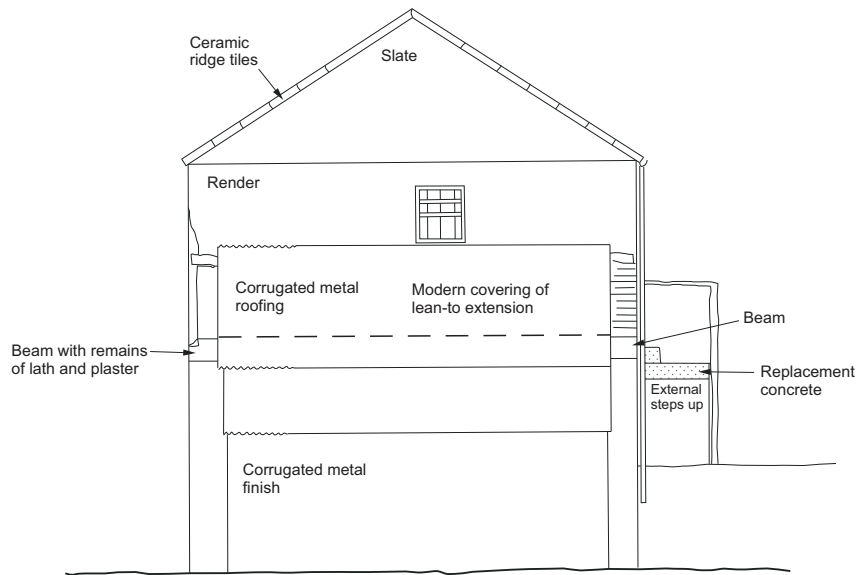
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Stockleigh Pomeroy, Devon

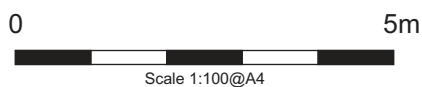
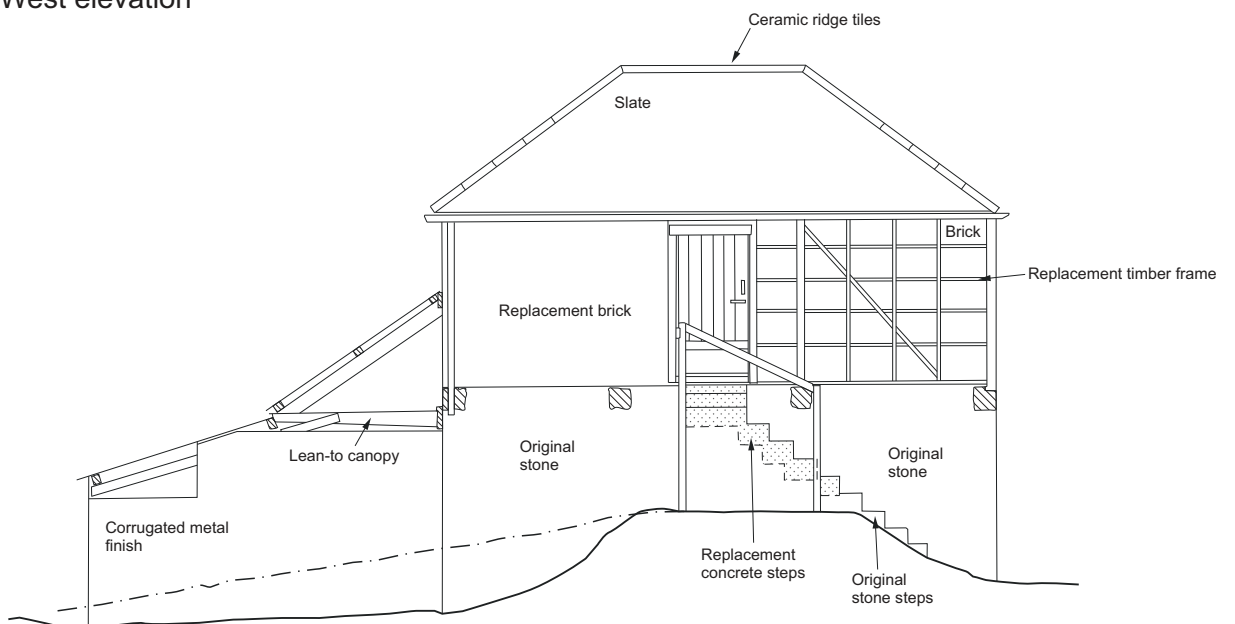
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Fig. 3: South and east elevations

North elevation



West elevation



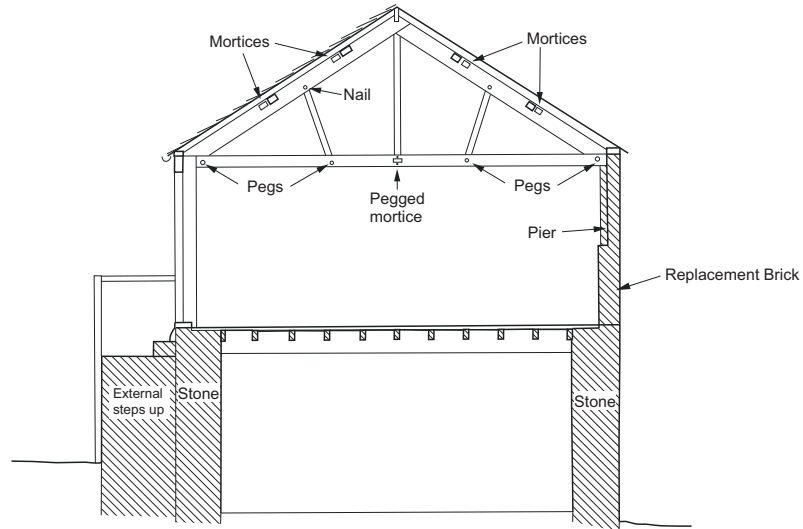
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The Granary, East Coombe Farm,
Stockleigh Pomeroy, Devon

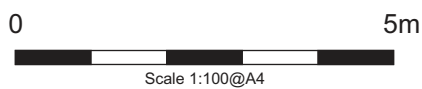
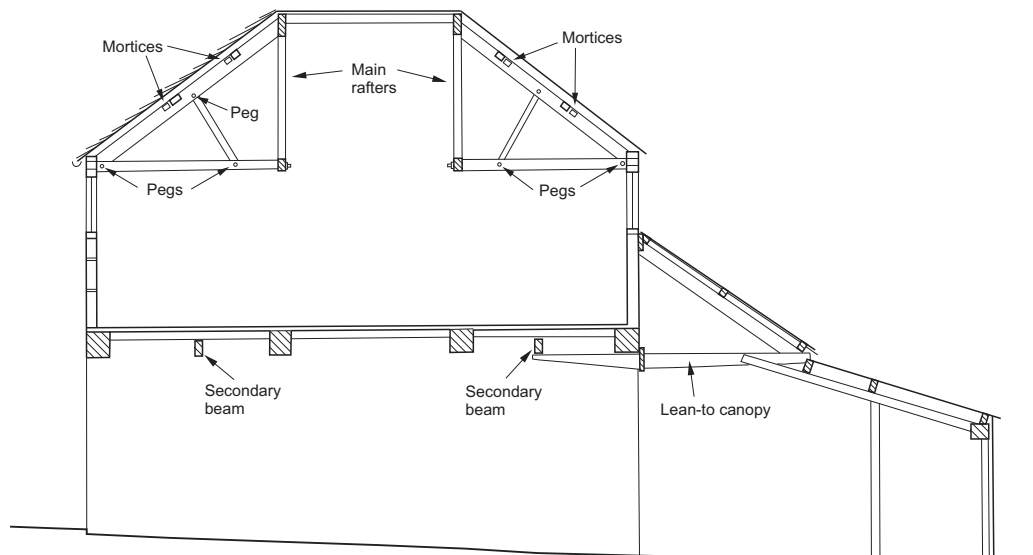
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Fig. 4: North and west elevations

Section A:A



Section B:B



PROJECT

The Granary, East Coombe Farm,
Stockleigh Pomeroy, Devon

TITLE

Fig. 6: Sections A:A and B:B



Plate 1: The granary looking north-northwest, also showing the threshing barn in the background (2m scale)

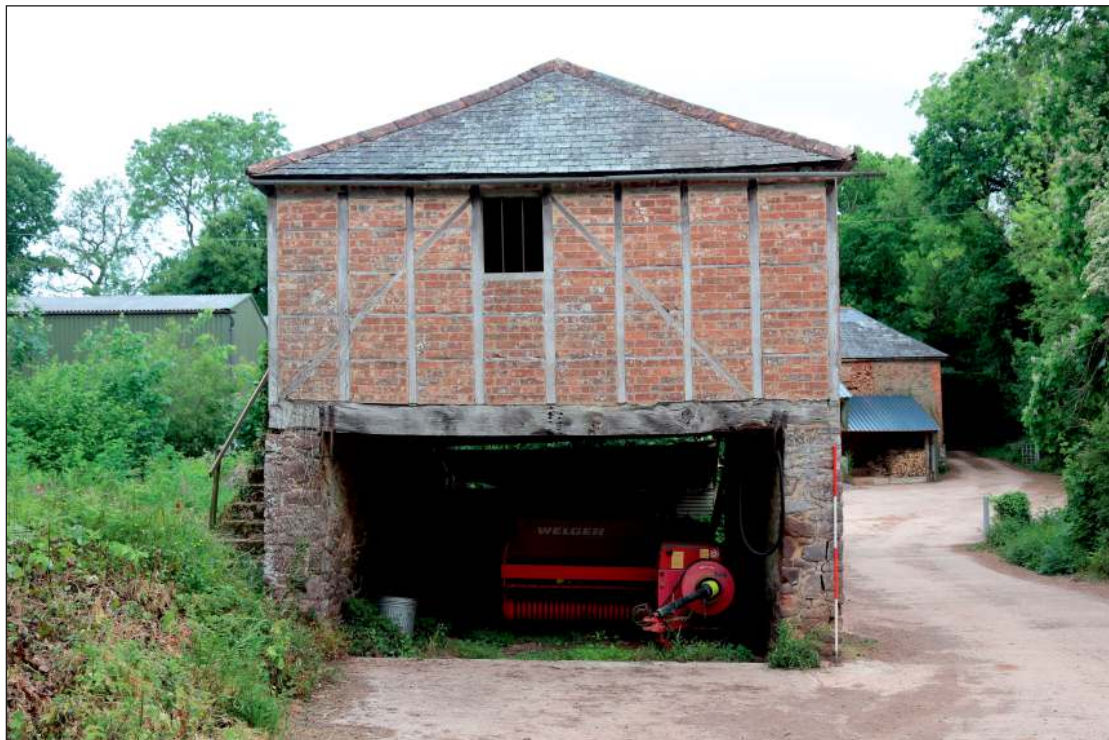


Plate 2: The south elevation looking north, showing the replacement timber framing and brackets for the removed canopy (2m scale)

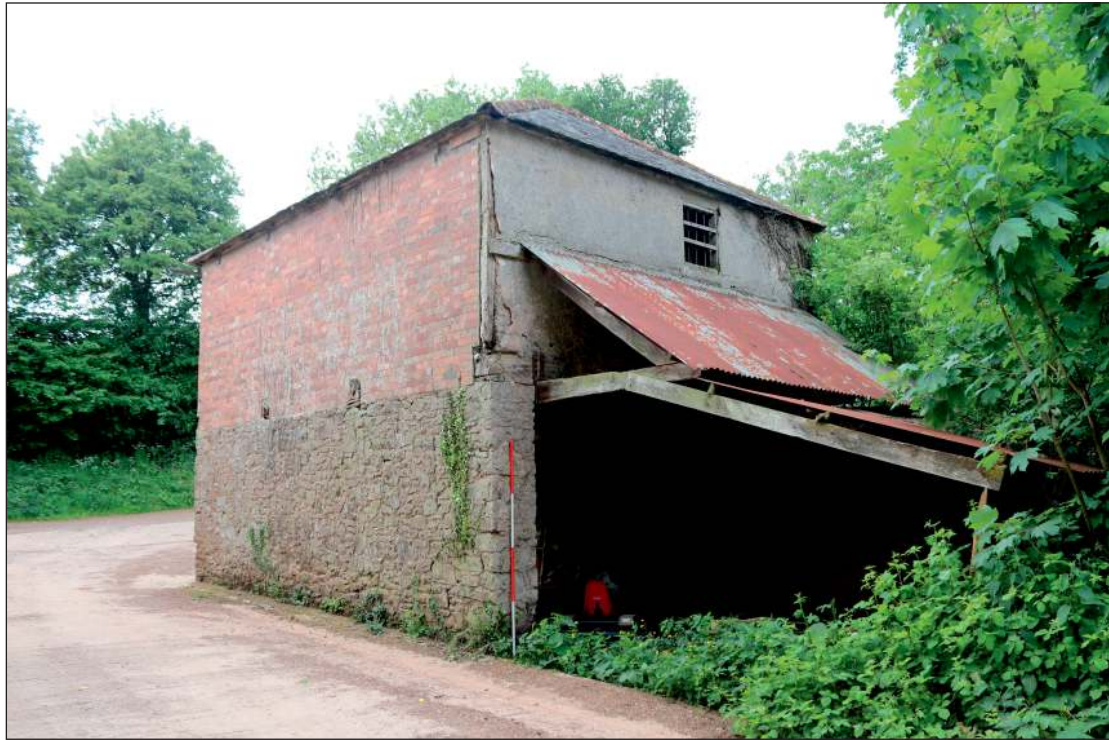


Plate 3: The east and north elevations looking southwest, showing the replacement brick masonry and the original plastered timber frame as well as the northern extensions (2m scale)



Plate 4: The west elevation looking east, showing the steps to the first floor, and the replacement brickwork and timber framing (2m scale)



Plate 5: Close-up view of the north canopy looking east, also showing the lath and plaster on the bridging beam for the first floor



Plate 6: The interior of the ground-floor cart shed looking southwest, showing the hatch (left), bridging beams for the first floor, and brackets and associated secondary beam for the north canopy (2m scale)



Plate 7: The interior of the first floor looking north, showing the original plastered timber frame of the north elevation and replacement brick east elevation to the right (1m scale)



Plate 8: The north roof truss looking north-northeast

Appendix 1

The photographic register

Photographic Register
ACD2244 The Granary, East Coombe Farm, Stockleigh Pomeroy

Archive number	Description	Scale	View to	Photo by	Date
001	General view, also showing the threshing barn in the background	2m	NW	Andrew Passmore	22 May 2020
002	The south elevation, showing the replacement timber framing and brackets for the removed canopy	2m	N	Andrew Passmore	22 May 2020
003	The east elevation, showing the replacement brick masonry	2m	NW	Andrew Passmore	22 May 2020
004	The east and north elevations, showing the replacement brick masonry and the original plastered timber frame as well as the northern extensions	2m	SW	Andrew Passmore	22 May 2020
005	The west elevation, showing the steps to the first floor, and the replacement brickwork and timber framing	2m	E	Andrew Passmore	22 May 2020
006	The steps to the first floor	1m	N	Andrew Passmore	22 May 2020
007	The first-floor door	1m	NNE	Andrew Passmore	22 May 2020
008	The interior of the ground-floor cart shed, showing the hatch (left), bridging beams for the first floor, and brackets and associated secondary beam for the north canopy	2m	SW	Andrew Passmore	22 May 2020
009	The interior of the ground-floor cart shed	2m	N	Andrew Passmore	22 May 2020
010	The hatch in the first-floor structure	N/A	E	Andrew Passmore	22 May 2020
011	Close-up view of the north canopy, also showing the lath and plaster on the bridging beam for the first floor	N/A	E	Andrew Passmore	22 May 2020
012	The interior of the first floor, showing the original plastered timber frame of the north elevation	1m	N	Andrew Passmore	22 May 2020
013	The interior of the first floor, showing the replacement timber frame of the south elevation	1m	S	Andrew Passmore	22 May 2020
014	The interior of the first floor, showing the replacement brick of the east elevation	1m	E	Andrew Passmore	22 May 2020
015	The interior of the first floor, showing the replacement timber frame of the west elevation	1m	W	Andrew Passmore	22 May 2020
016	The north roof truss	N/A	NNE	Andrew Passmore	22 May 2020
017	The central, south hip truss	N/A	E	Andrew Passmore	22 May 2020
018	Detail of the joints at tie beam level in the roof	N/A	NE	Andrew Passmore	22 May 2020
019	Detail of the foot of a hip rafter	N/A	SW	Andrew Passmore	22 May 2020
020	The first-floor door	1m	W	Andrew Passmore	22 May 2020
021	The associated threshing barn	N/A	N	Andrew Passmore	22 May 2020

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