

HISTORIC BUILDING
RECORDING AT
COOKHILL PRIORY, COOKHILL,
WORCESTERSHIRE

Anna Deeks

Illustrated by Carolyn Hunt

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Historic Environment and Archaeology Service,
Worcestershire County Council,
Woodbury,
University College Worcester,
Henwick Grove,
Worcester WR2 6AJ
WSM 32518



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Archaeological building recording at Cookhill Priory, Cookhill, Worcestershire

Anna Deeks

Part 1 Project summary

An archaeological building recording project was undertaken at Cookhill Priory, Cookhill, Worcestershire (NGR SP 0582 5729; Figure 1). The project was undertaken on behalf of Mr and Mrs Connell, via their agent Design Build, who intend to convert a group of existing historic traditional farm buildings for residential use for which a planning application was submitted to Wychavon District Council (planning ref. W/02/1742-3/LBC). The buildings, which are listed grade II and registered on the County Sites and Monuments record (WSM 31116) comprise a succession of timber framed and brick structures dating from the 17th century. They are also located within the confines of a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM 246). Such buildings form a significant part of the region's vernacular and agricultural heritage, which at present remains relatively poorly documented. The project aimed to establish the techniques used in the construction of the buildings, its phases of development (and where possible ascribe a date to these phases), the functional and historical use of the building, as well as its association with surrounding buildings and the landscape.

The results of the building recording concluded that several phases of development were extant within the farm buildings, the earliest of which dated to the 17th century. Subsequent phases provided evidence in a gradual increase in the size of the farm and several changes in the functions of the buildings. The ground works monitored during the course of the project revealed earlier floor surfaces in the milking parlour and a store. However no archaeological features or deposits relating to the 12th century Priory were revealed.

Part 2 Detailed report

1. Background

1.1 Reasons for the project

An archaeological building recording project was undertaken at Cookhill Priory, Cookhill, Worcestershire (NGR SP 0582 5729; Figure 1), on behalf of Mr and Mrs Connell. Mr and Mrs Connell intend to develop existing farm buildings for residential use and have submitted a planning application to Wychavon District Council (reference W/02/1742/LBC), who consider that a site of archaeological interest may be affected (WSM 31116).

1.2 Project parameters

The project conforms to the *Standard and guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures* (IFA 1999).

The project also conforms to a brief prepared by Worcestershire Planning Advisory Section (HEAS 2002a) and for which a project proposal (including detailed specification) was produced (HEAS 2002b).

1.3 Aims

The aims of the archaeological building recording were to create a comprehensive photographic and written record of the extant buildings prior to re-development. The record aimed to examine the techniques used in the construction of the buildings, the phases of development (and where possible ascribe a date to these phases), the functional and historical use of the building, as well as its association with surrounding buildings and the landscape.

2. Methods

2.1 Documentary search

Prior to fieldwork commencing a search was made of the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR). In addition the following sources were also consulted:

Cartographic sources

- 1st edition Ordnance Survey. [Extract from], 1:10000. (1885).
- 2nd edition Ordnance Survey. [Extract from]. (1905)
- Soil survey of England and Wales. Provisional edition 1951 with additions 1974. Alcester sheet SP05. 1:25000

Documentary sources

- Place-names (Mawer and Stenton 1927).
- County histories (VCH II).
- The building of England. Worcestershire. (Pevsner)

2.2 Fieldwork

2.2.1 Fieldwork strategy

A detailed specification has been prepared by the Service (HEAS 2002b). Fieldwork was undertaken between 29th April and 1st May 2003. Prior to any development work a photographic record was made with 35mm camera using black and white print and colour slide film, images were also taken using a digital camera. The location and direction of all photographic shots were recorded on a 1:100 plan of the buildings (as supplied by the client; Fig 3). A written record was also made both through annotation onto existing plans and elevations (as above) and notes made in a day record sheet.

Further fieldwork was undertaken following the commencement of re-development, comprising the monitoring and recording (photographic and written) of all ground breaking activity within and surrounding the farm buildings. The areas observed are shown on Figure 3.

2.2.2 Structural analysis

All fieldwork records were checked and cross-referenced. Analysis was effected structural evidence, allied to the information derived from other sources.

2.3 Artefacts

2.3.1 Artefact recovery policy

The artefact recovery policy conformed to standard Service practice (CAS 1995).

2.3.2 Method of analysis

All hand retrieved finds were examined. They were identified, quantified and dated to period. A *terminus post quem* date was produced for each stratified context. The date was used for determining the broad date of phases defined for the site. All information was recorded on *pro forma* sheets. Pottery fabrics are referenced to the fabric reference series maintained by the Service (Hurst 1994).

2.4 Building recording

The project conformed to the specification for a photographic survey as defined by the Royal Commission on the Historic Monuments of England (RCHME 1996). The survey comprised an examination of both internal and external elevations of all extant buildings as well as earlier floor surfaces and footings where exposed during ground breaking activity. As such the survey examined the following elements:

- General views of the buildings within their landscape setting as well as in relation to the surrounding buildings and landscape features
- All external elevations
- All room spaces and roof structures (where accessible)
- Details of any functional or decorative fixtures or features
- Any exposed former floor surfaces or footings exposed during the course of redevelopment work

2.5 **The methods in retrospect**

The methods adopted allow a high degree of confidence that the aims of the project have been achieved.

3. **Topographical and archaeological context**

The site, centred on NGR SP 0582 5729 is located at the eastern limits of the parish of Cookhill. The parish is bordered to the east by the road between Redditch and Evesham, which also forms the border to the neighbouring county of Warwickshire, and to the south by the road to the neighbouring parish of Inkberrow. The land lies at approximately 100 – 120m AOD on a ridge of land running south from the centre of Redditch, also known as the Ridgeway. The soils are a combination of gleyed brown earths of the Arrow, Whimple, Salwick and series and brown earths of the Wick series, all of which are well suited to cultivation especially arable (Beard *et al* 1986). The underlying geology comprises Pleistocene and recent drift glacial sand and gravel overlying Permo-Triassic Arden sandstone and keuper marl (British Geological Survey 1974).

The only recorded prehistoric activity within a 1.25km² radius of the site is The Ridgeway, Inberrow (WSM 03294) which has been listed as having origins as a trackway dating to the Upper Palaeolithic. Evidence of Roman activity is limited to a findspot of a brooch and coins of Allectus at the priory site itself (WSM 08259) and a trackway to the south of the Cookhill Nunnery (WSM 03292). The latter has also been assigned to the early medieval period suggesting a continuity in the landscape between these periods.

In contrast the evidence of medieval activity is relatively abundant and largely focused around the site of Cookhill Priory. The priory at Cookhill is said to have been founded in 1260 by Isabel de Mauduit (VCH II, 156), making it one of the earliest Cistercian nunneries in the county. However several sources, comprising an abstract of a deed and a suit on the 1227 patent roll, indicate that the foundation of the nunnery in fact took place even earlier than this, in the 12th century. If this was the case Isabel would not have been the original foundress but rather a benefactress, possibly responsible for the rehabilitation of the nunnery (VCH II, 156 – 157). The nunnery continued in existence until the dissolution in 1540, and in 1542 the site was granted to Nuch Fortescue. The original nunnery buildings underwent dramatic alterations, namely extensive demolition leaving only the east and north walls of the chapel and the nucleus of the adjacent range which were incorporated into the chapel of the Priory farm by descendant of Nuch Fortescue in 1783.

The site is registered as a scheduled ancient monument (SAM 256), and comprises several remains attributed to the original priory site. This includes the precinct wall (WSM 03266), the remains of the nunnery (WSM 03259), the chapel (WSM 03289) and associated fishponds (WSM 03265, WSM 03264, WSM 03263) and a possible moat (WSM 03263) which is situated to the south of the buildings which currently occupy the site. In addition to the north-east corner of the site are several earthworks (WSM 03261) comprising Windmill Mound, a motte and castle remains, of which the latter two have been assigned to the medieval period. The farmhouse itself, Priory Farm (WSM 03260) is also classed to have medieval origins as it incorporates elements of the original nunnery buildings.

The first mapped evidence of the site is the 1st edition Ordnance Survey (Fig 4) which shows the footprint of the farmhouse and outbuildings as being largely the same as the present buildings. The only obvious difference at this time is the absence of eastern range of the outbuildings (now housing the implement stores and chicken shed), which is depicted as a single boundary wall running along the eastern extent of the yard. The east range is present on subsequent editions from 1904 (Fig 5) indicating it was completed between 1885 and 1904.

4. **Building description**

The names given to the separate elements of the farm buildings in the following text are based upon the terms employed in the survey drawings used during the course of this project. They have been used in order to facilitate greater ease of cross reference between the report and the existing survey drawings and do not necessarily reflect any interpretation of the function of these buildings.

4.1 **The milking parlour and store**

The milking parlour is a single storey brick built structure, measuring 15.0metres by 5.0 metres, aligned east-west forming part of the northern range of the farmyard complex (Plate i). To the south lies the yard and to the north a partially infilled ditch which runs the length of both the milking parlour, the pig cote and store C (Plate ii). The brickwork is coursed in Flemish stretcher with bricks measuring 9.5 x 2.75 x 4.5 inches. Openings comprise single casement wooden framed window openings in the south, north and west elevations, three gated openings which provide access at both ends and to the west of centre in the southern elevation and a further door opening in the west elevation, which has been partially blocked to create a window opening. The southern frontage is in a poor state of repair, with the east end dramatically buckling outwards (Plate iii) and the lower portion of the central area partially rebuilt in breeze block.

Internally the building comprises a long single celled bay (the milking parlour) supported by four king post trusses with through purlins (Plate iv). The trusses sit to the north onto the brickwork and wall plate and to the south onto a wall plate supported by three extant arched brace frontage posts (with the exception of the second truss from the west where the post has been removed to accommodate a wider opening and the truss is supported by the wall plate alone). Carpenters marks were clearly visible on the western face of the trusses and the southern face of the frontage posts indicating that they were assembled on site from ready cut timbers (Plate v). The northern elevation houses a number of tethering rings relating to the function of milking parlour. At the western end of the building are two smaller cells (the stores) separated by a single skin brick wall with two door openings. The floor is principally 20th century poured concrete with an area of stretcher brickwork at the eastern end (Plate vi). The roof has a half-hipped gable end to the west (Plate vii) and a gable to the east, which abuts the west gable of the adjacent pig cote (Plate viii). The roof covering comprises flat rectangular tiles.

4.2 **The pig cote**

The pig cote (pig sty) is a single celled brick structure, measuring 5.00 by 3.75 metres, with remains of brick infilled timber framing in the northern elevation (Plates ix and x). The building forms the central element of the northern range flanked by the milking parlour to the west and store C to the east. The brickwork is coursed in Flemish stretcher with bricks measuring 9 x 2.5 x 4.25 inches. Openings are all located in the southern frontage and comprise a low flat headed opening at the west, a semicircular arched opening at the centre and a taller flat headed opening with segmental arch voussoirs at the east (Plate ix). The timber framing in the northern elevation is of square panelling (Plate x) typical of the Welsh Marshes region and the West Midlands from the 15th century amongst higher status buildings disseminating into wider use by the 17th century (Brown 1986, 49). Grooves evident in the internal faces of the timbers indicate that they would have originally housed wattle and daub rather than brick infill. At the eastern external corner a pronounced groove, undoubtedly to house wattle and daub, is evident in the stud of the framing, above this a mortice joint in the wall plate indicates that the elevation originally continued to the east (Plate xi). As such the east elevation of store C represent a different phase of construction to the northern panelled elevations. A former doorway in the framing, blocked by re-used chamfered bricks provides further evidence of alterations to this elevation. Carpenters marks are clearly visible at the joints between braces and studs or posts. The sill beam is supported by brickwork and stone,

the brickwork is keyed into the lower elements of the pig cote's eastern elevation whilst the stone is similar to that present at the base of the west and south elevations indicating that two phases may be present.

The west and east gable ends contain several builds incorporating the elevations of the milking parlour and store C which respectively flank the pig cote, both encompass composite form trusses with diagonal struts flanking a square of straining beams, identical in form to the one located to the centre of the pig cote (Plate xii). The timbers of the trusses show clear evidence of being reused in the form of numerous redundant mortice holes (Plate xiii), including a those along the underside of the tie beam of the central truss which may be indicative of a former partition stud wall or some form of bracing. Carpenters marks were also clearly visible on the timbers, again indicating that they were assembled on site from ready cut timbers. The principal timbers (tie beam, struts and principal rafters) were all secured with round section wooden pegs.

Internally a low brick half wall divides the space into two bays, the western of which is significantly narrower. The narrower western cell contained evidence of the building function in the form of the remains of a wooden frame feeding trough housed on the northern elevation (Plate xiv). The remains of another wall is evident as a scar running north – south along the floor and up the internal side of the south elevation. This would have originally created three cells within the pig cote. Both the extant wall and the scar respect the position of the openings in the southern frontage indicating that they are contemporary. To the south of the pig cote were the remains of a further structure marked out by a partially extant low wall and the footings of other walls marking out a rectangular area. The remains indicate that there was a fairly insubstantial outbuilding formerly occupying the area and is likely to have been an enclosed yard area.

The roof is a single build over the pig cote and store C with one pitch running east-west over the pig cote (Plate ii) and a gable to the west (abuted by the gable of the milking parlour; Plate viii). The pitch changes over store C with the ridge turning 90° to run north-south to a hipped roof at the southern frontage of store C (Plate ix).

4.3 **Store C**

Store C is a single celled brick structure measuring 5.40 by 3.75m forming the eastern extent of the northern range (Plate ix). The brickwork is coursed in Flemish stretcher with bricks measuring 9 x 2.5 x 4.25 inches. The northern elevation is continuous with that of the pig cote. The building is open to the south with wide double gates under a hipped roof. The trusses appear to be reused and have been cut above the collar (Plate xv) in order to accommodate the change in roofline at the northern end and to accommodate the hipped roof at the southern end. Their form, the type carpenters marks employed and the use of round section wooden pegs (Plate xvi) at the joint between the tie beam and principal rafters strongly resembles that of the trusses observed in the pig cote, and implies a contemporary period for their initial use.

Internally the floor is covered by poured concrete and provides no obvious indication of the building's function other than hard ground for storage possibly for livestock, vehicles and/or implements. However the northern elevation houses the remains of a wooden frame feeding trough indicating that at some point the build was used for livestock. The western elevation of the store clearly abuts the northern elevation, yet it is keyed into the southern elevation of both the store and the adjacent pig cote indicating that it is contemporary to these two elevations.

4.4 **The eastern range – The byre, implement stores and chicken shed**

The eastern range comprises four cells; the byre, two implement stores and the chicken shed (Plate xvii). The brickwork of the eastern and northern elevation is coursed in Flemish

stretcher with bricks measuring 9.25 x 2.5 - 2.75 x 4.5 inches. The eastern wall of the range is a continuous build and also forms part of the eastern elevation of the south range. The upper two courses of the elevation have been either replaced or raised as they differ in size from the remaining build. The upper build is composed of bricks identical to those of the internal dividing walls of the individual bays indicating that they are contemporary phases of construction. This alteration probably indicates a re-roofing of the range or an alteration to an existing wall enabling it to house a wall plate and roof structure. To the front (the west) the eastern range is mainly open to the yard with the exception of the byre. Internal divisions are formed by single skin brick walls which abut the east elevation, with the exception of the southern elevation of the byre and the southern elevation of the chicken shed which are keyed in. The individual elements of the range are described in greater detail below.

4.4.1 **The byre**

The byre is a single cell brick built structure at the southern end of the east range (Plate xvii), measuring 5.00 by 5.00m. A number of blue lias blocks have been incorporated into the main build at the door opening to the west (yardside) and within the main build at the east and south elevations. Openings are present in both the west and east external elevations and in the south internal elevation (where the byre adjoins the implement store). The western end of the northern elevation clearly abuts store C. Internally there is no extant evidence of the building's function the floor is covered by poured concrete. The kingpost truss (Plate xviii) is of the same form observed in the milking parlour with a slightly longer length of the crown post projecting above the principal rafters and clasped pulins which continue south into the implement stores.

4.4.2 **The implement stores and chicken shed**

These three bays are all open to the west (Plate xvi) supported by two A-frame trusses (Plate xix) with angled queen struts and through pulins, situated in implement stores A and B. The southern elevation of the chicken shed is of two builds; the lower being keyed into the eastern elevation, and the upper build abutting the east elevation, matching in brick dimensions and coursing that of the other internal walls of the range.

4.4.3 **The southern range**

The southern range comprising the wood store, stores A and B is two storey, three celled brick structure with door and window openings to the north south and west (Plates xx and xxi). The brickwork of the main external elevations is coursed in Flemish stretcher with bricks measuring 9.25 x 2.5 - 2.75 x 4.5 inches, with the internal elevations and part of the east elevation coursed in stretcher bond in bricks measuring 8.5 x 2.5 x 4 inches. The roof is gable ended to the east and west and supported by A-frame trusses only visible in store A, due to the presence of hay lofts in both the wood store and store B. Openings are present in the north, west and south elevations, all openings have flat segmental arches characteristic of the mid to late 19th century. The west elevation houses a stable door. The internal southern wall of Store A houses a small hearth with an internal brick stack abutting the southern elevation which projects through the roofline. The west and south walls also house tack hooks.

The eastern elevation of the wood store contains several phases of construction, comprising a continuation of the main build from the eastern range, only present in the lower courses, which abuts the main build of the southern range at the south-east corner (Plate xxii). The joint coincides with two iron gate fixtures one inserted into the main build of the southern range and one in the lower build.

5. **Monitoring of ground breaking activity**

The location of all groundbreaking activity is shown in figure 3.

5.1 **Internal floor spaces**

All existing floor surfaces were removed in the milking parlour, pig cote and store C, revealing former floor surfaces and consolidation layers.

5.1.1 **The milking parlour**

The existing concrete floor a brick floor was removed with a mechanical excavator revealing a brick floor laid in stretcher courses running north-south. The bricks measured 9.25 x 3 x 4.75 inches and were laid directly onto orange sand. Ground reduction was ceased at this level, approximately 0.30m below the former floor surface. No features of archaeological significance were encountered.

5.1.2 **The pig cote**

The floor of the pig cote was removed by pneumatic hammer and hand pick. Directly below the existing concrete floor was rubble material (200) including brick, tile and stone rubble acting as a consolidation layer. A single piece of worked masonry was recovered from this material, however no features or structural remains of archaeological significance were encountered.

5.1.3 **Store C**

The floor of store C was removed by mechanical excavator, beneath the existing concrete floor the remains of a former floor surface was revealed at a distance of 2.20m north of the present southern elevations. The flooring was composed of a small surviving area of 1.0m wide strip of bricks cut to the west by the western wall of the store. The remaining area was covered by large rounded cobbles (120 – 180mm) divided from the brick by a single row of blue lias stones running north - south. The cobbles had no apparent signs of metalling and appear to represent consolidation or packing material. The relation between the remains of the surface and the northern wall was difficult to ascertain, as it was only partially extant. However the blue lias stones certainly respected the elevation implying that the wall was present before the laying of the floor.

A sondage was inserted next to the northern wall revealing brick footings to a depth of approximately 1.00m (12 courses) below the sill beam. This depth of brickwork below the sill beam may indicate that the original elevation was underpinned at a later date. In support of this supposition is the fact that the underpinning is keyed into the east wall of store C which certainly appears to post-date the original timber panelled building (see 4.2)

5.2 **External clearance and drainage trenches**

To the north of the northern range (the milking parlour, the pig cote and store C) a partially infilled ditch was emptied and re-profiled. Little ground was actually excavated with the exception of the western end of the range where a greater build-up of material was present to a depth of 1.20m. The area was photographed and recorded on day record sheets. The section excavated at the west end of the range revealed a backfilled (101) construction cut (103) though re-deposited natural (102), all sealed by a substantial layer of top soil (100). The construction cut ran east-west and is likely to be related to the construction of the milking parlour.

At the base of the ditch a drainage pipe was laid and machining was carried out to continue this service along the western extent of the milking parlour. The ground works were monitored but no features of archaeological significance were observed.

6. Discussion

6.1 Historic buildings recording

The phasing of the structures at Cookhill Priory was relatively straightforward and the results of this are shown in figure 6. However due to the functional architecture of farm buildings there is a great difficulty in ascertaining any absolute dates. The datable features and fixtures found in domestic architecture are almost entirely absent (Wade Martins 1991, 78) and as such comparisons to the trends within the local vernacular is often the only means of assigning dates to the phases within a structure. The best dating evidence is potentially provided by the roof structure, however as this is often a relatively vulnerable element of the building as it is often the case that the building has been reroofed on at least one occasion (Wade Martins 1991, 79). The reuse of materials within farm buildings is also a potential obstacle to stating with any certainty that elements are original to the existing structure. Never the less the structures at Cookhill Priory Farm provided sufficient evidence to create a phased plan of the complex.

6.1.1 Phase 1- c. 17th Century

The only extant building elements relating to this period are the timber framed northern elevation of the pig cote and store C and possibly the trusses of these buildings. The square panelling shows clear evidence of several alterations. Originally the panelling would have been infilled by wattle and daub, the grooves for which are still evident on the internal faces of the studs. A blocked doorway would have provided access from the north, the dimensions of its height and width indicates it was for human access rather than livestock. At the eastern end the evidence of a groove in the vertical stud and a mortice hole in the wall place indicates that the building originally extended to the east.

The sill beam sits over brickwork and stone footings, which are evidently the two phases. The brickwork is the same form as that of both the infill and the brick elevations of the pig cote (to the south, east and west) which is evidently a secondary phase to the original framing. Furthermore the brickwork has been keyed into the east elevation which again is evidently a secondary phase. As such the brickwork represents a later phase probably dating to the late 18th or early 19th century during which the timber frame barn was altered and incorporated into a brick structure (see 6.1.2). However the stones of the footings are the same as those observed in the west and south elevations and seem to represent the original footings of the sill beam. Furthermore this indicates that although the eastern extent of the building has been subject to alteration the southern and western elevations overlie the original footprint.

It is not possible to assign a definite date to the trusses present in the pig cote and store C. All are adze cut with wooden pegs which can be dated to a range of between late 17th century to mid 19th century (Wade Martins 1991, 80). However their dimensions and form indicate that they are early and are likely to have been contemporary to the original timber framing. Those in store C have clearly been reused and may have originally been employed in the eastern continuation of building. Numerous mortice holes indicate that the tie beam and principal rafters have been subject to numerous alterations and may even be reused.

6.1.2 Phase 2 – c. 18th century

The existing timber-framed structure was incorporated in to a brick building, timber framing only survived at the northern elevation. The original infill was replaced by bricks of the same fabric and dimensions as those used in the west elevation of the pig cote (also infilling the gable truss) the southern elevations of the pig cote and store C, the east and the west elevations of store C. The same bricks were also employed in the underpinning of the sill beam, which appears to have been raised at this time, probably to increase the overall height of the building. The bricks are narrow (2.5 inches) indicating that they are fairly early, the

Flemish stretcher bond indicates that they were constructed in the latter part of the 18th century, as pre-1800 English bond was the form more commonly used in farm buildings.

The eastern end of the building was subject to considerable alteration, namely the truncation of this extent of the building and a change in the orientation of the roofline over store C running north-south, as opposed to east-west, to a hipped roof at the south.

It is unlikely that these two bays were the only elements of the farmyard during this period, however any other structures appear to have been superseded or replaced in both the remaining north and the east range.

6.1.3 **Phase 3 a – c. 19th century**

The eastern range was added at this time incorporating blue lias blocks into the brickwork at the north, west and east elevations of the byre. Given that stone was observed in the footings of the pig cote, the blue lias may well have been reused from the footings of an earlier building. Initially the eastern range comprised the byre, and a single boundary wall, which is now the eastern elevation of the implement stores, chicken shed and wood store. Elements of brickwork of the same fabric and dimensions present in the northern elevation of the woodshed may indicate that elements of the southern range were also present during this phase. However this is the only extant remain of this build within the southern range of the yard.

6.1.4 **Phase 3b- c. 19th century**

The northern range was lengthened by the construction of the milking parlour extending westwards from the pig cote. The west wall of the pig cote was almost entirely rebuilt, the new build clearly abutting the south-west corner of the pig cote. The frontage of this building would have originally been open to the yard with five bays demarcated by five timber posts with curved braces to the wall plate. This form of frontage clearly indicates that the originally the building would have served as a cartshed. The number of bays provides a useful indication of the size of the farm at this time. The original brick ground surface was 0.30m lower than the present concrete floor.

6.1.5 **Phase 4 – c. Late 19th century**

The south range was constructed during the late 19th century and appears for the first time on the 1885 Ordnance Survey. The present structure is possibly a rebuild or an extension of earlier buildings represented by a lower build in the north elevation of the wood store. At this time the buildings were used for hay storage within the hay lofts present at the east and west bays of the building. The presence of stable doors and tack hooks in the west bay indicates that the area below the hayloft would have been used as stables. The central bay houses an open hearth, which is likely to have been used for black smithing.

The cart shed was also subject to alterations at this time. The southern frontage was partially bricked up and internally two small cells were created at the western end. These alterations to the layout clearly reflects a change in function of the building, and the iron tethering rings along the internal northern elevation indicate that the building was employed as a milking parlour.

6.1.6 **Phase 5 – Late 19th to early 20th century (1888 – 1904)**

The eastern range was subject to several alterations during the early 20th century, comprising the addition of two courses to the height of the eastern elevation in order to support the newly erected roof. The western extent of the roof was supported by brick piers, which were also constructed at this time. Internally the range was divided into three bays (in addition to the byre, which was already present at the northern end,) with two new walls constructed

between implements stores A and B and between implement store B and the chicken shed. The southern wall of the chicken shed was also raised to the new roof height at this time.

6.1.7 **Phase 6 – 20th century**

The farmyard was subject to several alterations during this phase, confined to repair or consolidation activities of the existing buildings. A breeze block wall replaced the lower elements of the southern frontage of the milking parlour. Poured concrete floors were laid within all the buildings masking all earlier surfaces - mainly consisting of laid brick floors. Several new buildings were constructed of breeze block with corrugated iron roofs, evidence of an expansion in the size of the farm at this time and a change in the implements and vehicles being used.

6.2 **Watching brief**

The results of the watching brief revealed former floor surfaces in both the milking parlour and store C as well as providing further evidence of the phasing in the pig cote and store C. The stone footings appear to reflect the primary phase of the building superseded by the brickwork, which is certainly part of the second phase. The depth of brickwork (1.00m) beneath the sill beam of the northern elevation strongly suggests that at the time of the alterations the building was raised to a greater height, possibly reflecting a change in function. The evidence of a former floor surface uncovered in store C indicates that the former northern limit was the same as that of the pig cote. The full eastern extent of the building was not ascertained during the course of this project.

The external groundworks provided little information regarding the date or phasing of the farm buildings. The backfill (101) of the construction cut (103) immediately north of the milking parlour yielded no datable material, the only material recovered was either from the top soil (100) or unstratified (1000).

7. **Conclusions**

The earliest farm buildings at Cookhill Priory Farm were timber box-framed single storey buildings, which would have been in the same foot print as the present pig cote, with a continuation to the east. The only surviving element of this building is the northern elevation of the pig cote and store C. Subsequent to this initial phase several phases of brick farm buildings were constructed in a typical layout of three adjoining ranges surrounding a yard to the west. A total of 3 or 4 main phases are represented by the extant brick structures of the farm yard with an additional phase of repairs and alterations taking place in the 20th century. It is not possible to determine the chronology of phases 3a and 3b. The presence of blue lias blocks within the build of phase 3a may indicate it occurred soon after than alterations to the pig cote in the 18th century, reusing some of the footings as an architectural detail. Evidence of changes in the function of buildings reflect changes in farming practices over the 300 year span of these buildings.

8. **Publication summary**

The Service has a professional obligation to publish the results of archaeological projects within a reasonable period of time. To this end, the Service intends to use this summary as the basis for publication through local or regional journals. The client is requested to consider the content of this section as being acceptable for such publication.

A building recording and watching brief was undertaken on behalf of Mr and Mrs Connell, who intend to convert a group of existing historic traditional farm buildings at Cookhill Priory Farm, Cookhill, Worcestershire (NGR SP 0582 5729; SMR 31116). The farm buildings were found to contain several phases of construction and alterations, the earliest of which

dated to the 17th century with the latest dating to the early 20th century. Groundworks were also carried out revealing earlier floor surfaces within the existing buildings. No archaeological features or deposits relating to the original 12th century Priory site were observed.

9. **The archive**

The archive consists of:

3	Fieldwork progress records AS2
2	Photographic records AS3
1	Colour transparency film
2	Black and white photographic films
1	Context number catalogue AS5
1	Trench record sheet AS41
5	Annotated existing survey drawings
1	Box of finds

The project archive is intended to be placed at:

Worcestershire County Museum

Hartlebury Castle

Hartlebury

Near Kidderminster

Worcestershire DY11 7XZ

Tel Hartlebury (01299) 250416

10. **Acknowledgements**

The Service would like to thank Mr and Mrs Connell and Mike Glyde for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project.

11. **Personnel**

The fieldwork and report preparation was led by Anna Deeks. The project manager responsible for the quality of the project was Hal Dalwood. Fieldwork was undertaken by Anna Deeks, finds analysis by Erica Darch and illustration by Carolyn Hunt.

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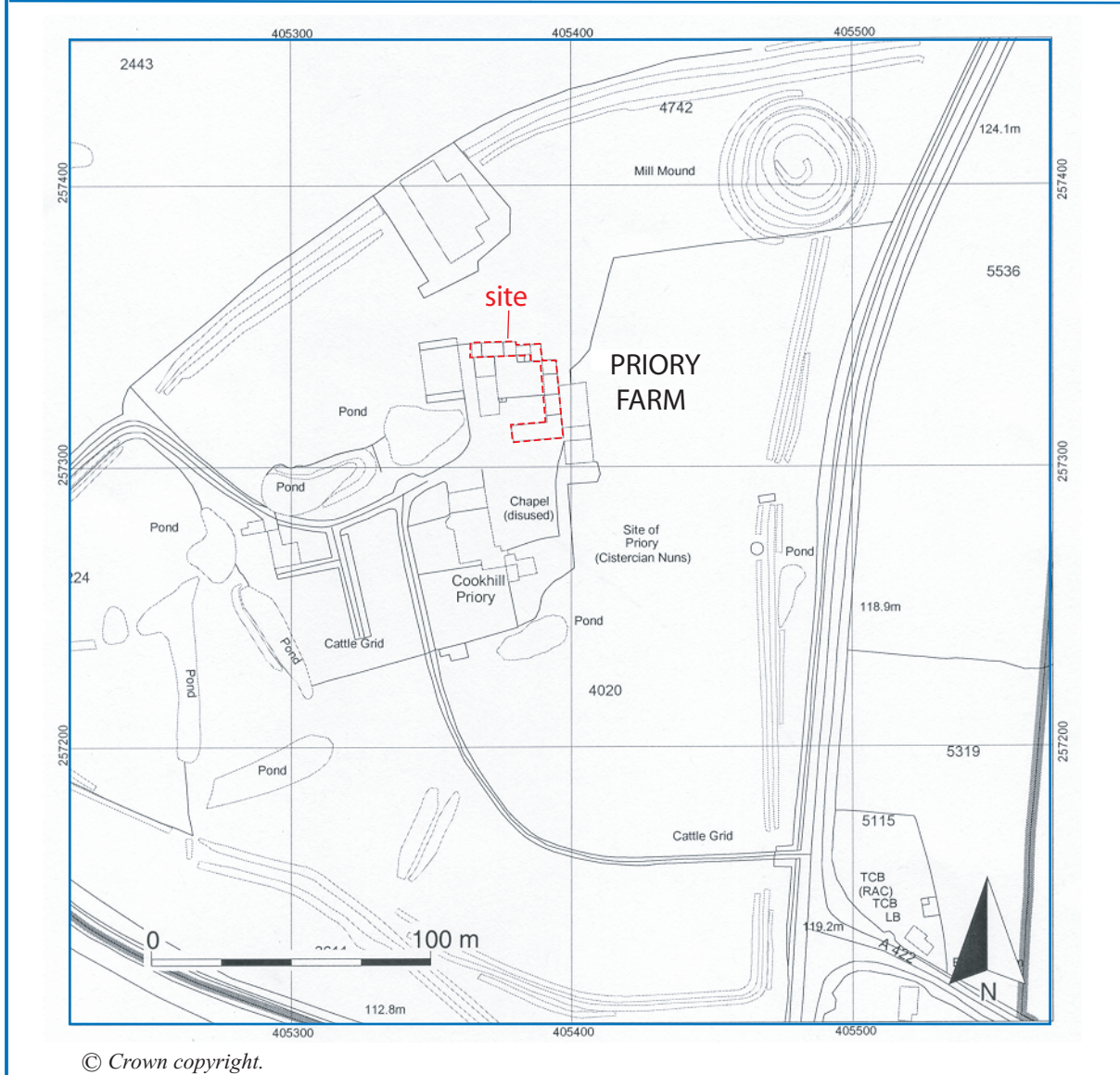
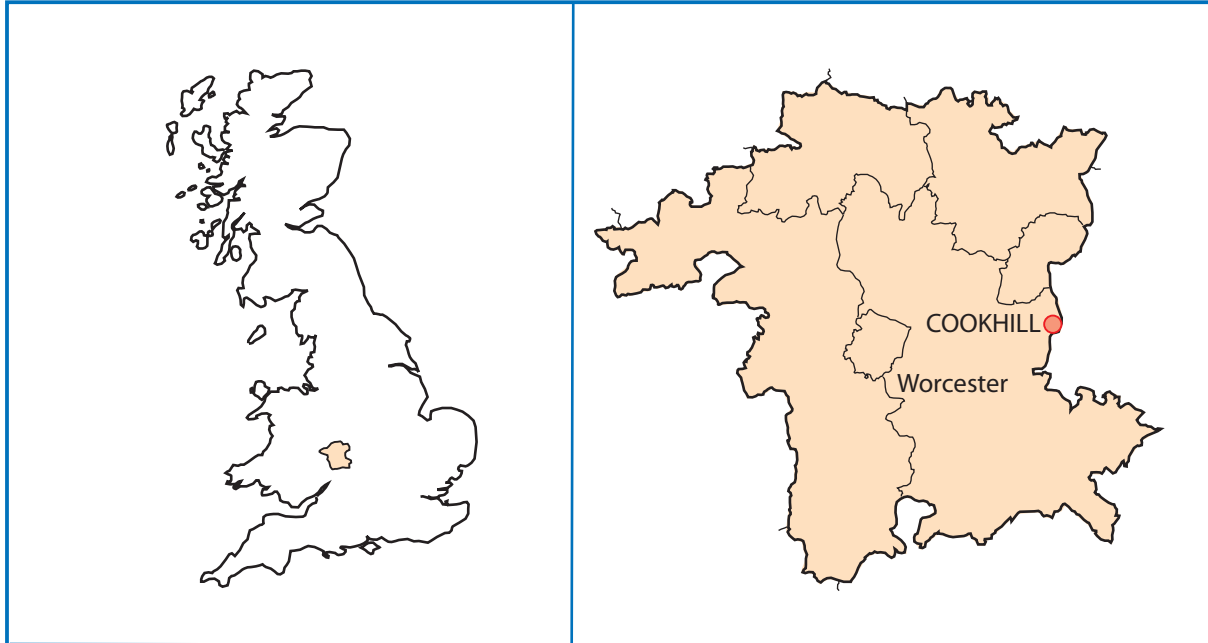
13. **Abbreviations**

WSM Numbers prefixed with 'WSM' are the primary reference numbers used by the Worcestershire County Sites and Monuments Record.

WCRO Worcestershire County Records Office.

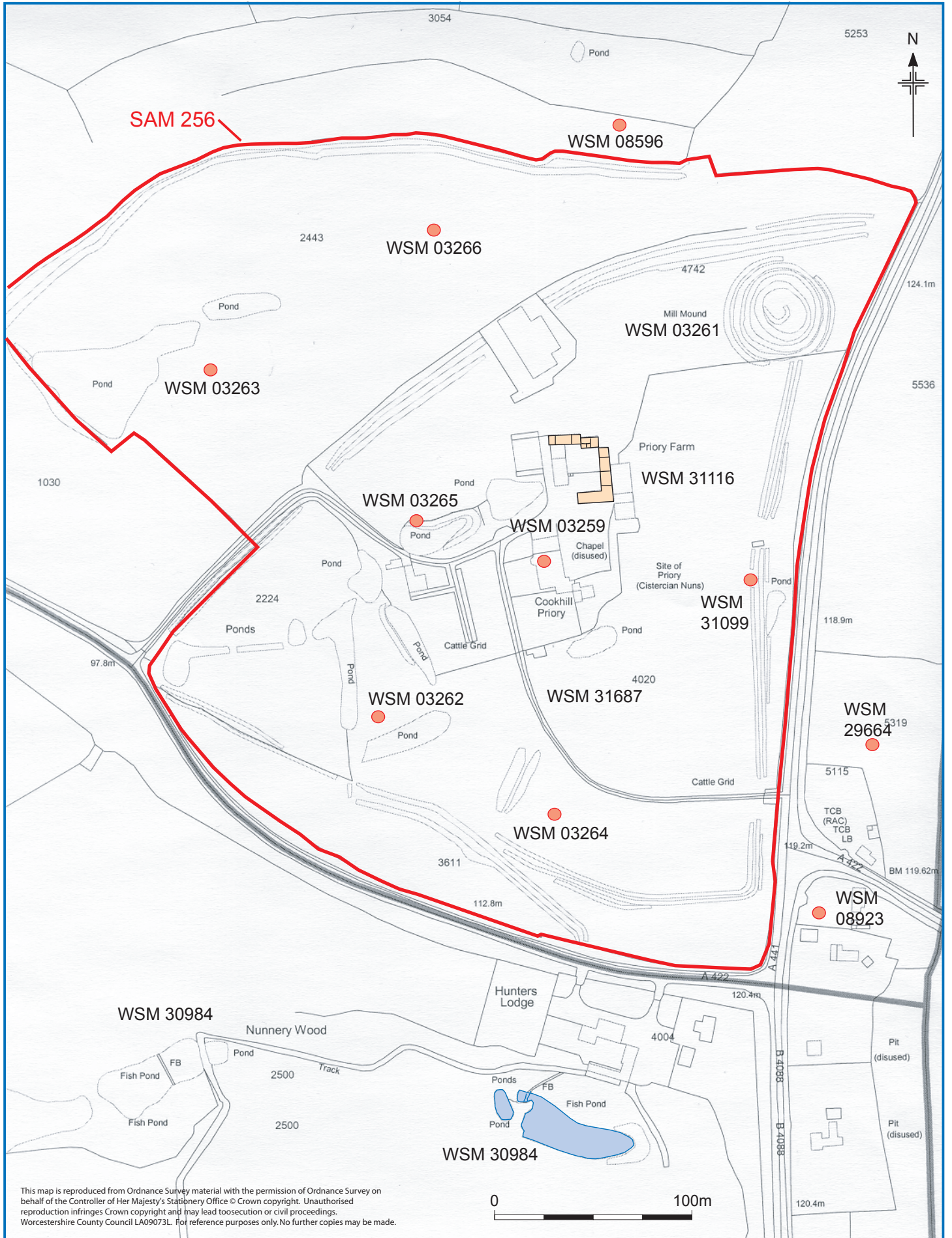
NMR National Monuments Record.

SMR Sites and Monuments Record.



Location of the site.

Figure 1



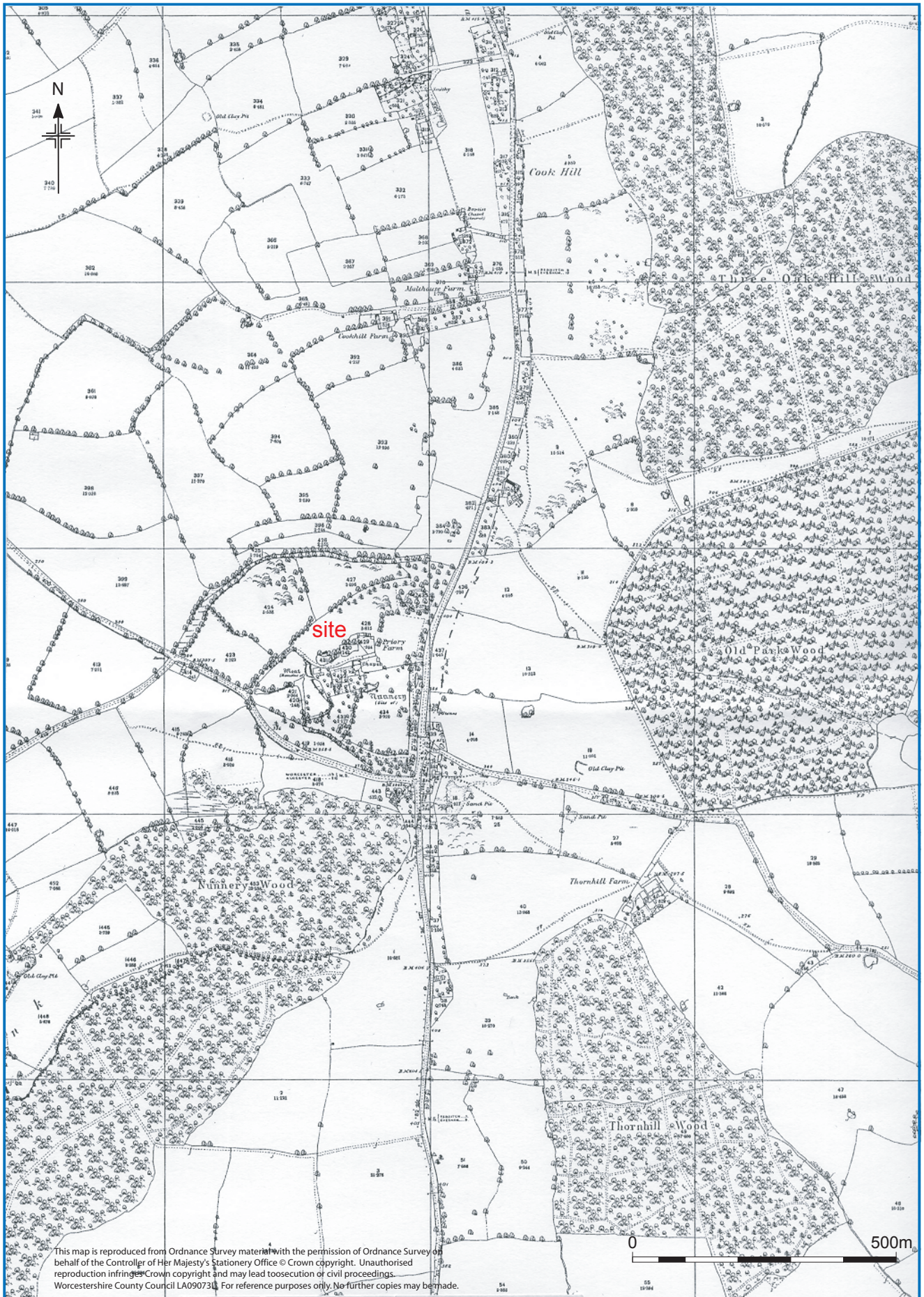
Sites in the vicinity.

Figure 2



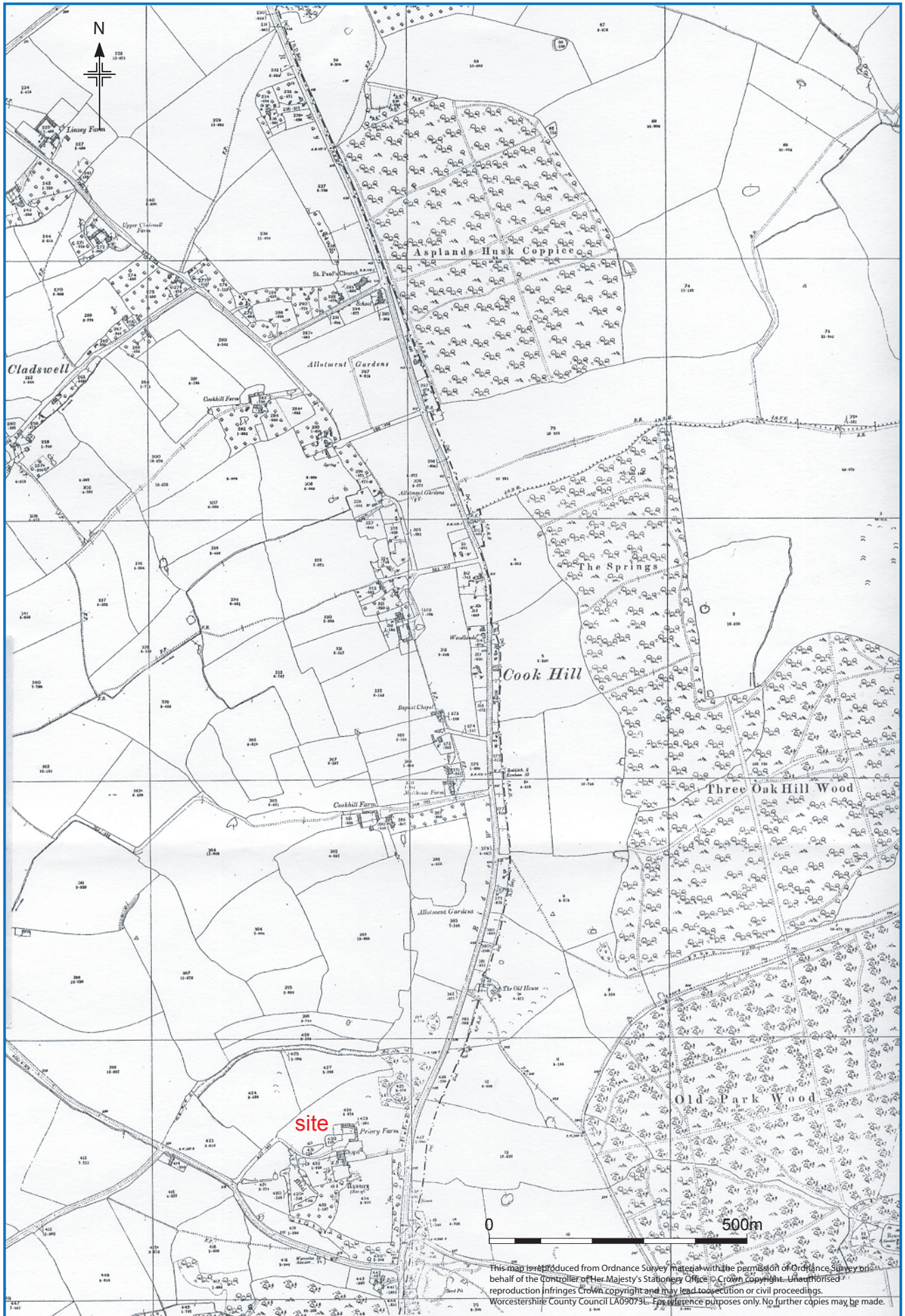
Location of external and internal photographs showing directions of view and plate number.

Figure 3



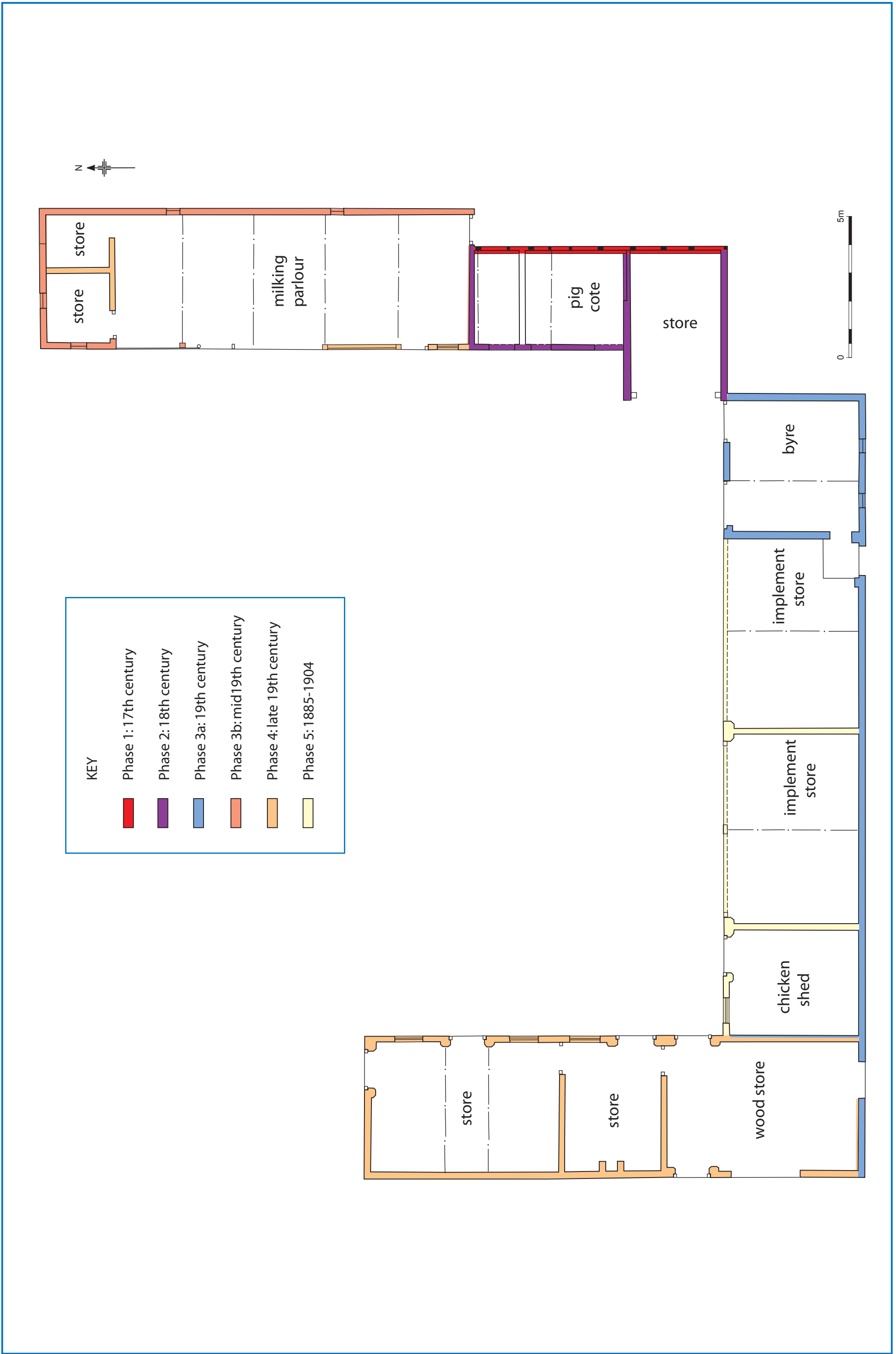
Extract from 1st edition Ordnance Survey (1885).

Figure 4



Extract from 1904 Ordnance Survey.

Figure 5



Phased plan of farm buildings.

Figure 6



Plate i South facing elevation of milking parlour



Plate ii Store C, pig cote and milking parlour north facing elevations



Plate iii *Buckling of wall at southern frontage of milking parlour*



Plate iv *Truss in milking parlour*



Plate v Carpenters marks on milking parlour truss



Plate vi Carpenters marks on main support beam of milking parlour south elevation



Plate vii Internal floor at east end of milking parlour



Plate viii West facing elevation of store and milking parlour



Plate ix *Abutment between pig côte and milking parlour*



Plate x *South facing elevation of store and pig côte*



Plate xi North facing elevation of pig cote



Plate xii Detail of mortice joint and groove at east corner of pig cote



Plate xiii Truss in pig cote



Plate xiv Detail of truss and purlin formation in west elevation of pig cote



Plate xv *Internal south facing elevation in pig cote showing feeding trough and stone footings*

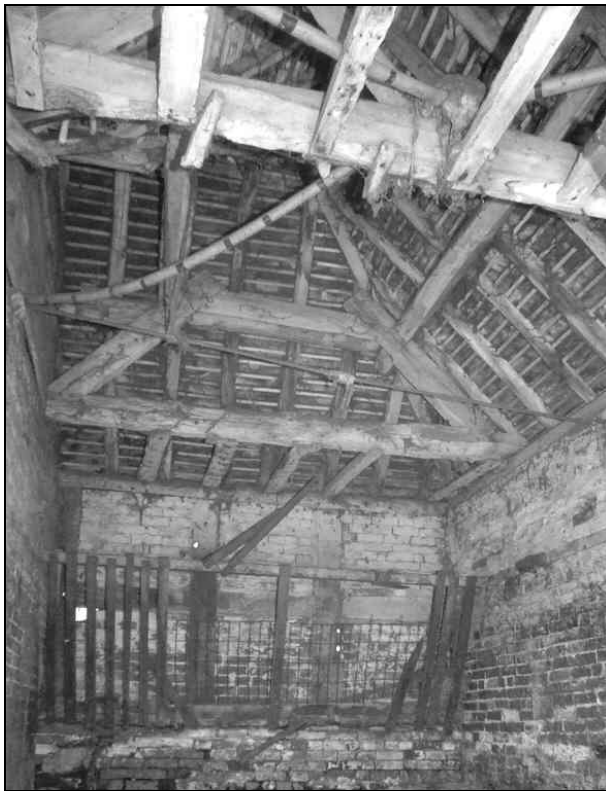


Plate xvi *Truss in store C*



Plate xvii Detail of truss in store C

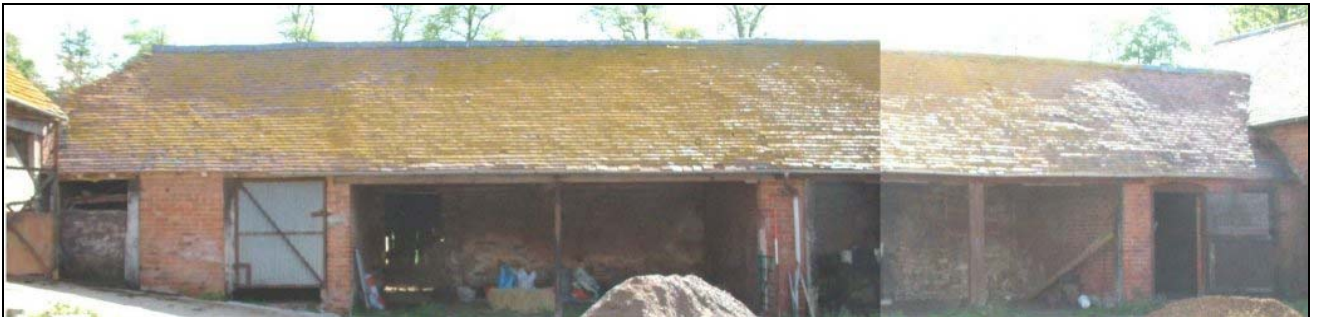


Plate xviii West facing elevation of implement store and chicken shed



Plate xix Truss in byre



Plate xx Truss in implement store A



Plate xxi North facing elevation of southern range – wood shed and stores A and B



Plate xxii South facing elevation of southern range – wood shed and stores A and B



Plate xxiii East facing elevation of wood shed



Plate xxiv Floor of milking parlour during ground works



Plate xxv Old brick floor surface revealed in milking parlour



Plate xxvi Milking parlour following ground works



Plate xxvii *Detail of brickwork below frontage beam of milking parlour*



Plate xxviii *Pig côte following ground reductions*



Plate xxix *South facing elevation and ground following ground reduction in store C*