

Building recording at Top Barn, Middle Lane, Hadzor, Droitwich Spa



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Illustrations by Carolyn Hunt

Summary

Building recording was required to meet a planning condition relating to the redevelopment of Top Barn at Middle Lane, Hadzor, Droitwich Spa.

The planning condition specified that the building should be recorded and to Historic England specified standards. This required photographing the exterior and interior of the building and annotating existing survey drawings, producing an archive of the building before any changes were made.

An element of historical research and synthesis was also a condition planning approval. Historic maps, aerial photographs and other online sources were accessed, and a search of the Worcestershire Historic Environment Record was undertaken.

Analysis of the buildings was based upon the recorded fabric and documentary research. The development of the buildings was reconstructed and illustrated on phased ground plans. These have been reproduced at the end of the report along with relevant photographs.

The building consisted of a brick threshing barn complete with large central doors and ventilation holes visible from the exterior. The fabric of the building suggested mid-19th century date. Added to the southern side of the barn within the 19th century was a brick shelter shed used for housing cows. This arrangement was typical of outfarms with the yard area in between used for the production of manure.

Report

1 Background

1.1 Reasons for the project

Recording of a historic building was undertaken at Top Barn, Middle Lane, Hadzor, Droitwich Spa (NGR SO 91192 61391). It was commissioned by Mr C J O'Donnell (the Client), who proposes change of use of the building and residential conversion to one dwelling, for which a planning application has been submitted to Wychavon District Council (reference number W/15/00754/CU).

The building is an undesignated heritage asset, within the terms used by the *National Planning Policy Framework*. The building is also registered with the Worcestershire Historic Environment Record (HER; WSM50860).

The project conforms to a brief prepared by Worcestershire County Council (WCC 2017) and for which a project proposal (including detailed specification) was produced (WA 2017).

The project also conforms to the *Standard and guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures* (ClfA 2014), *Standards and guidelines for archaeological projects in Worcestershire* (WCC 2010).

2 Aims

The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists defines the aims of building recording as 'a programme of work intended to establish the character, history, dating, form and archaeological development of a specified building' (Standard and guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures, ClfA 2014a).

The aim of the project, as detailed in the Brief (Section 2.1), is as follows:

Provide a descriptive and illustrative account and interpretation of the building including discussion of its local, regional and national significance.

3 Methods

3.1 Personnel

The project was undertaken by Timothy Cornah (BA (hons.), MSc); who joined Worcestershire Archaeology in 2006. The project manager responsible for the quality of the project was Tom Rogers (BA (hons.); MSc). Illustrations were prepared by Carolyn Hunt (BSc (hons.); PG Cert; MClfA).

3.2 Documentary research

Prior to fieldwork commencing a search was made of the Historic Environment Record (HER).

3.3 List of sources consulted

Cartographic sources

- 1884 1st Edition Ordnance Survey Map, 1:10,560 (Fig 2)
- 1905 Ordnance Survey Map, 1:10,560
- 1930 Ordnance Survey Map, 1:10,560
- 1938 Ordnance Survey Map, 1:10,560

Documentary sources

Published and grey literature sources are listed in the bibliography.

3.4 Fieldwork strategy

A detailed specification has been prepared by Worcestershire Archaeology (WA 2017).

Fieldwork was undertaken between on 15 May 2017. The site reference number used by the Historic Environment Record to record archaeological "events", and site code used in the archive is WSM 69252.

Building recording consisted of a photographic survey of the interior and exterior of the buildings, analysis of their development and annotation of existing survey drawings. All photographs were taken with photographic scales visible in each shot where possible. The photographic survey was carried out with a Sony α350 digital SLR camera. All photographs were recorded on a pro-forma Photographic Record Sheet. Annotation of existing ground plans and completion of pro-forma Building Record complemented the photographic record.

The project conformed to the specification for a level 2 survey as defined in the Historic England document *Understanding historic buildings: a guide to good recording practice* (HE 2016). This level of survey is described as descriptive record. This is a visual record supplemented by the minimum of information needed to identify the building's location, age and type. The record will produce enough information to produce conclusions about the buildings development and use.

The record will include the following elements of survey:

- Photography
 - General view or views of the building in its wider setting or landscape
 - External appearance of the building, using oblique and right angle shots
 - Overall appearance of the principal rooms and circulation areas
- Drawings
 - Roughly dimensioned sketched plan, section, or elevation
 - Measured plans as existing
 - Measured drawings recording the form or location of other significant detail (when required)
 - Measured cross-sections, long sections or elevational sections illustrating the vertical relationships within the building (when required)
 - Measured drawings showing the form of any architectural decoration (when required)
 - Measured elevations (when required)
- Written account
 - A summary of the building's form, function, date and sequence of development, including builders, architects, owners or patrons names where known

3.5 Building analysis

Analysis of the building was based on the study of the photographic record, building recording forms and annotated drawings. It was also informed by the documentary sources listed above. This allowed plans to be drawn up showing the structural development of the building.

The building as recorded is depicted in Plates 1-16. A phase plan has been reproduced as Figure 3.

3.6 Statement of confidence in the methods and results

The methods adopted allow a high degree of confidence that the aims of the project have been achieved despite the presence of modern internal coverings which did not allow full visibility of the fabric of the barn.

4 Context

The site is located approximately 2.3km to the south-east of Droitwich town centre, and approximately 0.8km to the south of the village of Hadzor. The geology is recorded as Mercian Mudstone with no superficial deposits recorded (BGS 2017). The topography of the area is broadly flat.

The following information is derived from the Worcestershire Historic Environment Record, which was searched within a 500m radius of the building.

This area of north Worcestershire is broadly thought to have been part of Feckenham forest (WSM42160) which is considered to have been cleared by the 17th century, though some of the road pattern, such as Trench Lane to the south, is thought to have a medieval origin (WSM46301).

To the south of the building, Grange Cottage (WSM15584) is a timber framed building and dates from the 17th century. To the north-east, Hazel Cottage (WSM56492) is considered to date to the 18th century whilst Primsland Farm (WSM60559, WSM61220), which formerly existed to the west, is likely to date to the 19th century. The field systems of the area are a distinctive 19th century hedged field pattern, as a result of the late enclosure of Newland Common.

The building is recorded with its earlier name of Straddlestones outfarm (WSM50860), and its description is given below.

5 The building

5.1 Building description

The building is approached from Middle Lane along a track from the north-east and are associated with a modern house. The building comprises of two elements, with some 20th century changes. The first element is an east-west aligned brick-built five bay former threshing barn with central doors and roof with modern coverings. To the rear of this within a small courtyard area is a further low brick and stone built range which was formerly open fronted on its eastern side and split into seven bays.

5.2 Historical information

The Worcestershire Historic Environment Record (HER) describes the building as: Straddlestones (Outfarm), Hadzor. Extant 19th century (?) unlisted outfarm with unconverted buildings. Regular courtyard of L-plan. Isolated location (WSM50860).

The first mapping of the site in 1884 (Fig 2) shows the buildings broadly as they remain, but in an isolated position with no other buildings within the vicinity. The buildings are shown enclosed by fences to the north, east and south-east, with a track leading from the road at the north-east and continuing past the buildings to the south-west. A pond is also shown within the field to the east. The same detail is shown in 1905, 1930 and 1938.

5.3 Building development

Three phases were identified during the investigation of the building which are described as follows:-

- Phase 1: Mid-19th century
- Phase 2: Mid-19th century to 1884
- Phase 3: 20th century

5.4 Phase 1: Mid-19th century

The initial building on the site was a brick built threshing barn, aligned east to west (Plate 1 to Plate 4). Vertical ventilation slits were present around the building above the ground, with further

diamond pattern vents at the gable ends. Vents the size of individual bricks were present across the upper half of the building with further small round vents below the apex on either gable. On the eastern gable was a blocked window that may have been used to hoist crops to above the tie beam level internally.

At the centre of the building were opening for two full height doors, one either side with that on the south blocked within Phase 3. The door on the northern side is probably an early Phase 3 replacement (Plate 5 and Plate 6). The building was fitted with internal cladding and false ceiling added during Phase 3 (Plate 7 to Plate 9), obscuring much of the internal historic detail.

The roof structure was of five bay construction with four intermediate softwood King Post trusses (Plate 10) that supported purlins set at 90 degrees to the common rafters. The trusses were constructed with iron fixings and fastenings with the conversion of the timbers having been undertaken mechanically using both a vertical band saw and circular saw, suggesting a mid-19th century date at earliest. No visible evidence for a floor above the tie beams remained.

5.5 Phase 2: Mid-19th century to 1884

Butted on to the Phase 1 barn and was a north-south aligned low structure split into seven bays (Plate 11 and Plate 12). The northern two bays former a single room with a door on its eastern side (Plate 13) with a roof truss spanning its centre. This is likely to have been a feed room with the further five bays to the south (Plate 14 and Plate 15) having formed part of a shelter shed open fronted to the yard on the eastern side. The fact that it was open fronted was visible from four round brick columns at its frontage in line with the interior roof trusses. In the south-west corner was a remnant of an original feed trough which would have extended along the back wall (Plate 16).

The roof trusses were also of softwood king post construction, similarly using metal fastenings and mechanically converted. Some hardwood elements were present, including the wall plate and post heads at the front of the building. These would have been designed in due to their weather durability.

5.6 Phase 3: 20th century

The Phase 2 shelter shed had sandstone inserted between the columns at the frontage and the building used for stabling, as seen by an inserted hay rack (Plate 14).

Within the Phase 1 barn, the southern door was blocked with internal cladding added to the walls and a false ceiling added. As part of this, two small rooms were added internally at its eastern end. The roofs of both the Phase 1 and 2 buildings were replaced.

6 Discussion

The building comprised two elements initially that together formed an outfarm. The arrangement of threshing barn and shelter shed for housing cattle not an uncommon one, with manure being produced in the yard between them. The historic mapping clearly shows the provision of water for the cattle in the form of a pond in the field to the east. The buildings display many of the outward features typical of their type and dated to the middle of the 19th century onwards.

19th century threshing barns and shelter shed are not uncommon within the county and not therefore particularly rare or their arrangement together as an outfarm (Lake, Hathaway, Robson-Glyde 2014).

The building was later included with the ownership of the adjacent house which was built in the second half of the 20th century

6.1 Research frameworks

This building does not currently fit into any known research frameworks.

7 Publication summary

Worcestershire Archaeology has a professional obligation to publish the results of archaeological projects within a reasonable period of time. To this end, Worcestershire Archaeology 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 historic building recording project was undertaken on behalf of Mr C J O'Donnell at name of site, parish Top Barn, Middle Lane, Hadzor, Droitwich Spa, Worcestershire (NGR ref SO 91192 61391; HER ref WSM29252).

The building consisted of a brick threshing barn complete with large central doors and ventilation holes visible from the exterior. The fabric of the building suggested mid-19th century date. Added to the southern side of the barn within the 19th century was a shelter shed used for housing cows. This arrangement was typical of outfarms with the yard area in between used for the production of manure.

8 Acknowledgements

Worcestershire Archaeology would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project, Con O'Donnell and Adrian Scruby.

9 Bibliography

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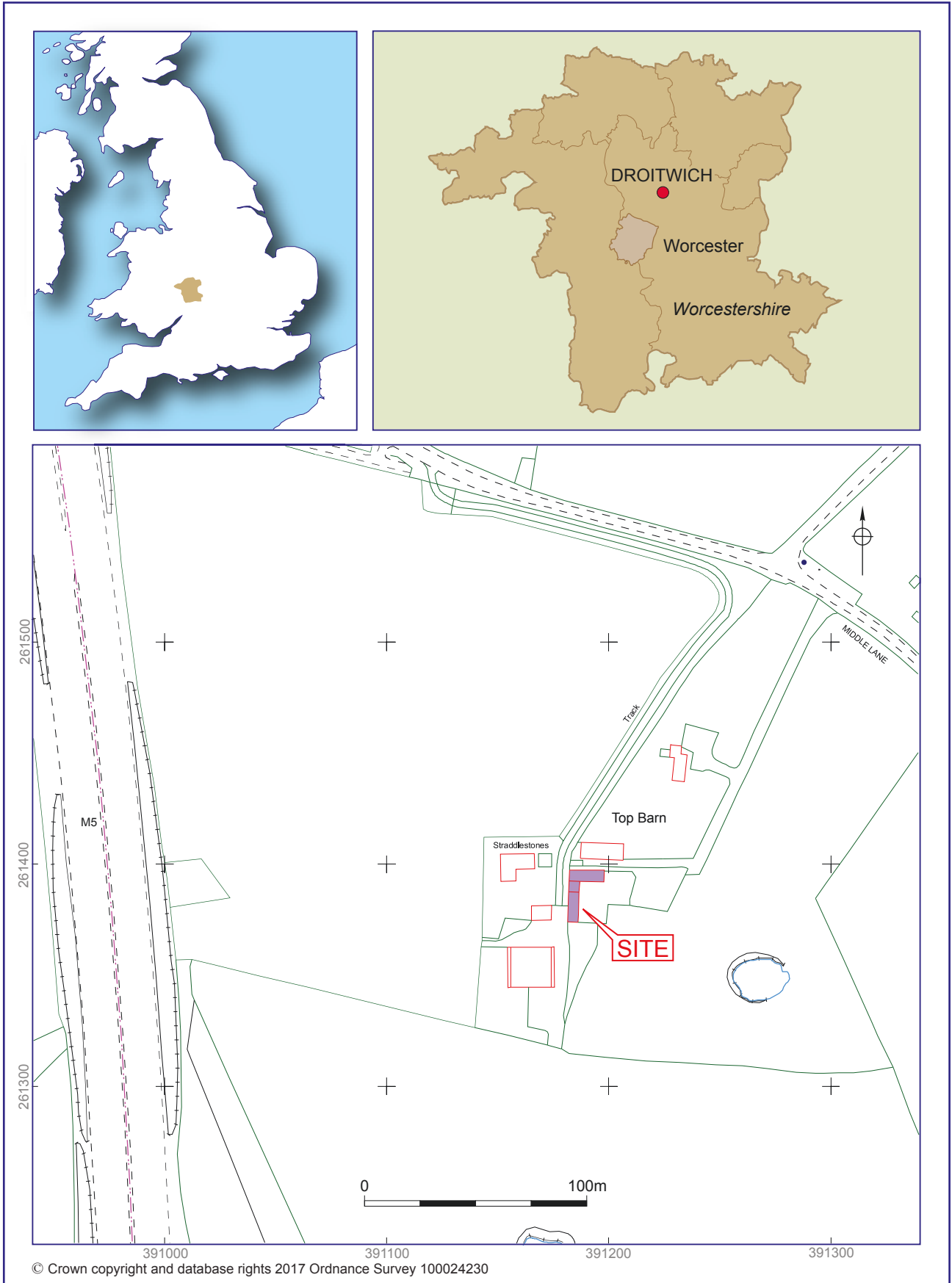
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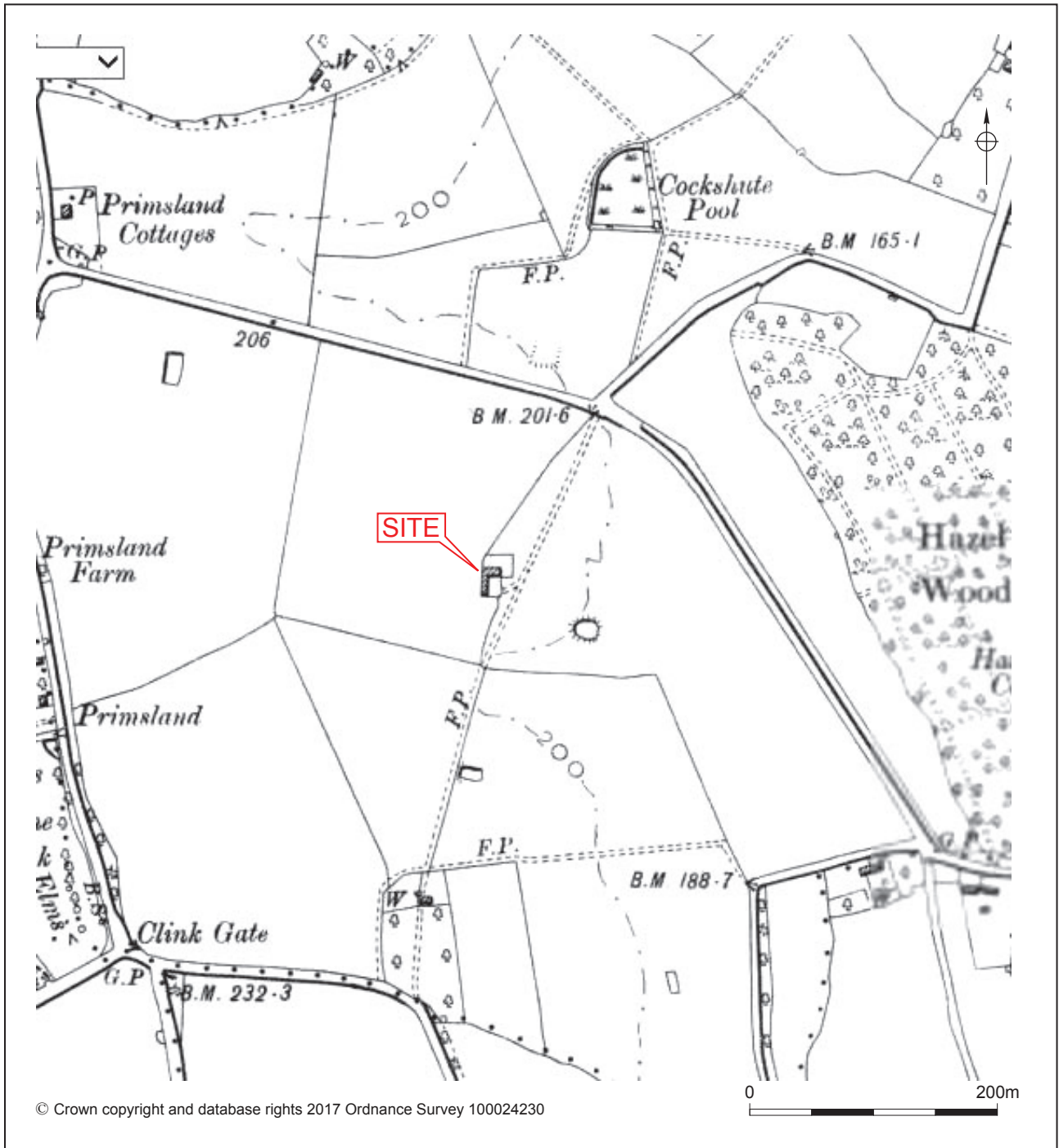
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Figures



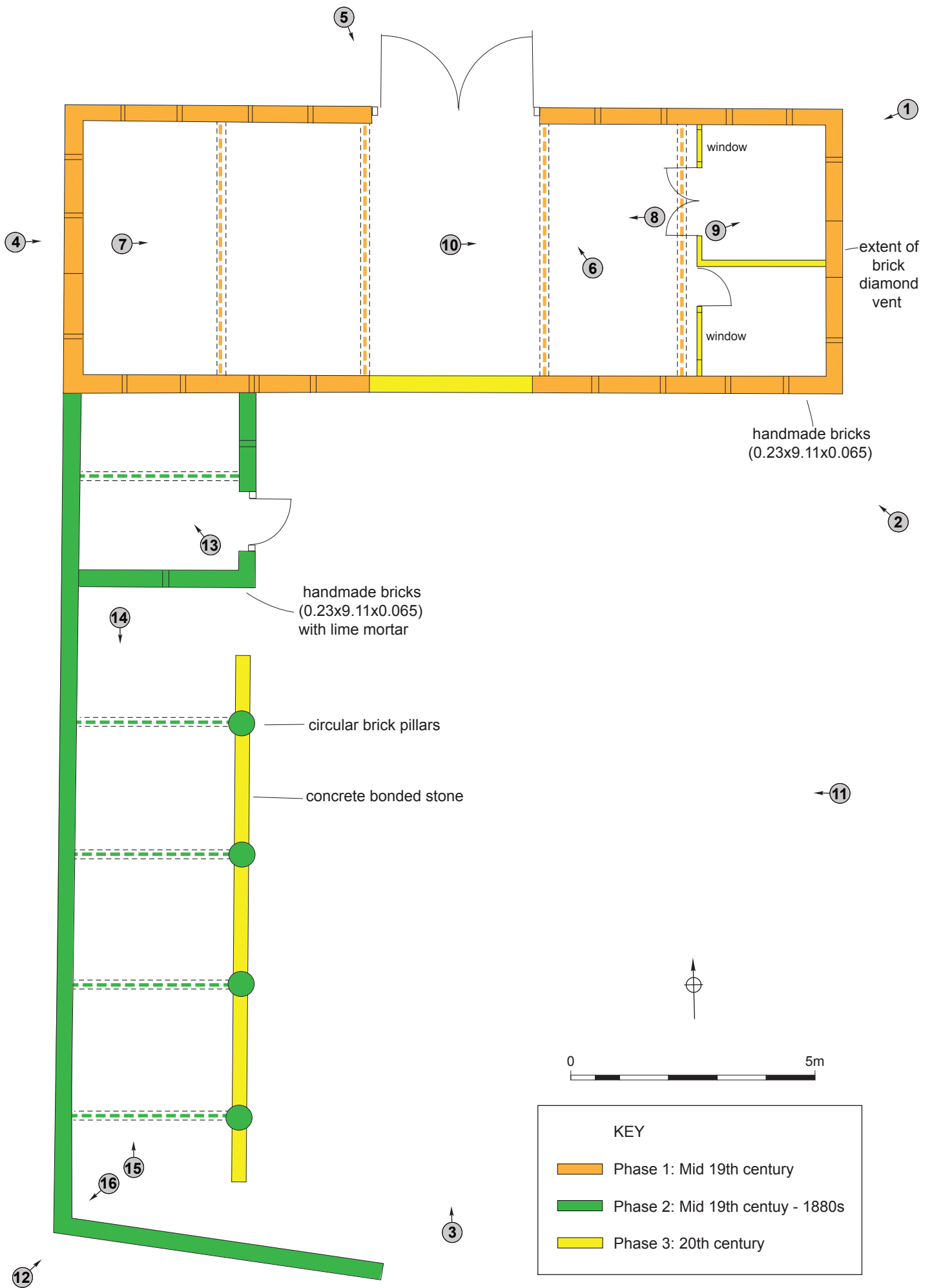
Location of the site

Figure 1



Extract of 1st edition OS, 1884

Figure 2



Phased plan of barn with photolocations

Figure 3

Plates



Plate 1 Phase 1 barn, looking south-west



Plate 2 Phase 1 barn, looking south-west



Plate 3 Phase 1 barn, looking north



Plate 4 Phase 1 barn, looking east



Plate 5 Phase 1 barn, looking south-east



Plate 6 Phase 1 barn, looking north-west



Plate 7 Phase 1 barn, looking east



Plate 8 Phase 1 barn, looking west



Plate 9 Phase 1 barn, looking north-east



Plate 10 Phase 1 barn, looking east



Plate 11 Phase 2 cow shed, looking west



Plate 12 Phase 2 cow shed, looking north-east



Plate 13 Phase 2 cow shed, looking north-west



Plate 14 Phase 2 cow shed, looking south



Plate 15 Phase 2 cow shed, looking north



Plate 16 Phase 2 cow shed, looking south-west

Appendix 1 Technical information

The archive (site code: WSM69252)

The archive consists of:

- 1 Field progress reports AS2
- 2 Building record form
- 2 Photographic records AS3
- 103 Digital photographs
- 1 CD-Rom/DVDs
- 1 Copy of this report (bound hard copy)

The project archive is intended to be placed at:

Worcestershire County Museum
Museums Worcestershire
Hartlebury Castle
Hartlebury
Near Kidderminster
Worcestershire DY11 7XZ
Tel Hartlebury (01299) 250416