

Building Recording at Uppertown Farm, Berrington, Tenbury Wells

for
Clair Wright

March 2019



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Building Recording at Uppertown Farm, Berrington, Tenbury Wells, Worcestershire



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Building recording at Uppertown Farm, Berrington, Tenbury Wells, Worcestershire

Tim Cornah

Illustrations by Carolyn Hunt

Summary

A building recording exercise was carried out to meet a planning condition relating to the redevelopment of an outbuilding at Uppertown Farm, Berrington, Tenbury Wells (NGR SO 57498 67317).

Uppertown Farm is located in Berrington, approximately 2km west of Tenbury Wells on the western edge of Worcestershire, south of the River Teme. Uppertown Farm is a listed farmhouse dating to the 17th Century. The building proposed for redevelopment is aligned broadly east–west along the road frontage, to the east of the farmhouse. It visually comprises of four elements with a timber frame and brick element at its western end. Heading east from this is a timber frame and stone element followed by a weather boarded element. These three elements are tile covered. The westernmost element is a brick structure covered with a slate roof

The phases of the building mirrors those of the farmhouse and farmstead from the 17th century onwards. The building's earliest element was contemporary with the farmhouse comprising a two bay structure probably linked with a service function of the house and accommodation, in contrast to the more agricultural function of the farm yard buildings to the west of the house. Half of this building closest to the house was demolished, probably in the 18th century, leaving only a single bay.

Later a stone and timber frame structure was added to the eastern side, probably a stable on the ground floor with accommodation linking into the early building on the first floor. The 18th century timber framed addition may have been stabling with hayloft above, though this interpretation is hard to support. The fabric of this structure is the rarest elements of the recorded building, being at the end of the timber framing tradition when most contemporary such buildings had brick built walls with wood used for the floor and roof structures. It also has a number of features which are highly unusual, such as the dovetail jointing of the floor boards and the laths and lime plaster added to the rear of the flush weather boarding.

A brick addition built in the second half of the 19th century is fairly typical of oast houses in the region. Where this structure stands out is its retention of original features such as floor hatches, hop press, ventilation holes and hop drying floor evidence which allows a reconstruction of the hop drying and packing process through the building.

Report

1 Background

1.1 Reasons for the project

Recording of a historic building was undertaken at Uppertown Farm, Berrington, Tenbury Wells (NGR SO 57498 67317). It was commissioned by Clair Wright, who intends a change of use of a redundant outbuilding to a holiday let and a dwelling for which a planning application has been submitted to Malvern Hills District Council (Planning ref 18/01568/FUL and 18/01569/LB). Permission for the development was granted subject to planning conditions including the creation of a building record prior to the works.

The building falls within the curtilage of Upper Town Farm which dates from the 17th Century and is Grade II listed (List Entry Number: 1157435). The building itself 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; WSM34048).

No brief was prepared for this project but it conforms to the generality of briefs. A detailed specification was produced (WA 2019).

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

2 Aims

The aims of this evaluation are:

- to describe and assess the significance of the historic building;
- to establish the nature, importance and extent of the historic building;
- to assess the impact of the application on the historic building.

3 Methods

3.1 Personnel

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

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

- 1843 Tithe Map of Berrington, Tenbury Wells
- 1883 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map 1:10,560
- 1905 Ordnance Survey Map 1:10,560
- 1953 Ordnance Survey Map 1:10,560

Documentary sources

3.4 Fieldwork strategy

A detailed specification has been prepared by Worcestershire Archaeology (WA 2019).

Fieldwork was undertaken on the 18th of March 2019. The site reference number used by the Historic Environment Record to record archaeological "events", and site code used in the archive is WSM71405.

Building recording consisted of a photographic survey of the interior and exterior of the buildings, analysis of their development, annotation of existing survey drawings and measured survey. All photographs were taken with photographic scales visible in each shot where possible. The photographic survey was carried out with a Canon EOS 200D digital SLR camera. All photographs were recorded on a pro-forma Photographic Record Sheet. Annotation of existing ground plans and elevations, and completion of pro-forma Building Record and Building Phase sheets, complemented the photographic record along with measured drawings completed to scale on drawing film at 1:20 scale.

The project conformed to the specification for a Level 3 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 'an analytical record' comprising of 'an introductory description followed by a systematic account of the buildings origins, development and use' (*ibid.*). This required the following elements of survey.

Survey and drawings

- Plans of all main floors and elevations as existing (provided by client).
- Measured drawings showing the form of any architectural or functional detail not more readily captured by photography.

Photography

- Overall appearance of rooms and circulation areas.
- Detailed coverage of the building's external appearance.
- Any detail, structural or decorative, relevant to the building's design, development and use, which does not show on general photographs.

3.5 Building analysis

Analysis of the building was based on the study of the photographic record, building recording forms, annotated drawings and measured 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 to 40. Phase plans and elevations have been reproduced as Figures 1-6.

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.

4 Context

Uppertown Farm is located 2km west of Tenbury Wells and 1.5km east of Berrington. It stands on raised ground about 500m south of the River Teme. The underlying geology is Raglan Mudstone Formation with no superficial deposits recorded. The site is within parish of Tenbury Town, and is characterised as settled farmlands with pastoral land use (HWR2978).

The farmstead itself, and associated farmhouse, is listed on the HER as dating from the 17th century to the present day usage, with alterations mainly dating from the 18th century (WSM34048). It has been listed as being located with, or in association to, the site of a shrunken medieval village (WSM55366). To its immediate north lies Freemans Place (WSM63027), another later farmstead, dating to the 19th Century and to its southeast lies another 19th century farmstead-Green Acres Stud (WSM63023).

An 11th to 19th century watermill (WSM05396) is located 450m to its west, utilising the waters of Cadmore Brook, which feeds Cadmore Lake (WSM56042). A medieval chapel (WSM08106), likely associated with Sutton Court, is known to be within the search radius but its exact location is not known.

Within the surrounding area the landscape is dominated by small, irregular piecemeal enclosure. Settlement is historically dispersed farmsteads and clustered villages along the network of winding lanes. There has been little boundary loss and the historic landscape survives relatively intact. Patches of woodland and hedgerow trees produces a reasonably wooded landscape. Within the search area interrupted row settlement, an isolated farmstead and modern expansion is surrounded by modern subdivision, piecemeal enclosure, field amalgamation and horticultural nurseries and isolated mill complexes, woodland plantation and Parliamentary enclosure.

5 The building

5.1 Building description

The building is aligned broadly east –west along the road frontage, to the east of the farmhouse. It visually comprises of four elements with a timber frame and brick element at its western end. Heading east from this is a timber frame and stone element followed by a weather boarded element. These three elements are tile covered. The westernmost element is a brick structure covered with a slate roof (Plate 1 to Plate 4).

5.2 Historical information

The historic mapping throughout shows a long range of buildings to the west of the farm house aligned broadly north-south that appear to make up elements of a farm yard. The building recorded here to the east of the house is illustrated within its own enclosure throughout, though separated from the time of the 1884 Ordnance Survey map onwards by a track between the building and the house. On the 1884 map, the building is shown as having a thin linking structure to the house. Comparison between the 1843 and 1883 maps shows that the building was extended to the east between these dates. This is likely to correspond to the remaining brick structure.

5.3 Building development

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

- Phase 1: 17th century
- Phase 2: later 17th to 18th century
- Phase 3: 18th century
- Phase 4: 19th century
- Phase 5: 20th century

5.4 Phase 1: 17th century

At the western end of the structure was a single bay timber framed structure with a ground and first floor (Plate 5 to Plate 7, figures) and built on a low sandstone plinth wall. The wall framing of this element consisted of three high square framing that with bay post and an intermediary post running from the sill beam to the wall plate. The same pattern was repeated on its former gable end frame, (Plate 8 figure 4) though with slightly curved bracing running from the jowl post to the mid rail. The same bracing was present on the extant gable frame (Plate 9), though this was covered by later brickwork (Plate 5). The original gable frame consisted of a collar with vertical queen struts below between two principal rafters with single trench side purlins and ridge purlin above. The remaining gable frame had a lower collar with raking v struts above. The tie beam was interrupted by two vertical studs which jointed to the mid rail and collar, which would have formed access to a now removed bay to the west. The presence of this former bay was supported by truncated purlins

above the existing that would have covered the bay to the west as well as empty mortices with pegging on the western side of the jowl post of truss (Plate 10). The carpenters marks on the northern wall frame mid-rail (figure 5) show the numbers three and four incised on the posts and intermediate joints, implying a number per half bay. If this system was consistent along the full elevation of the original building, it would imply a single missing bay only. The marks below these appear to be marking each post of that single bay. The clearest evidence of the missing element is the lack of mortices on the underside of the mid rail of truss 2 (Plate 11). This shows that the ground floor of the extant and missing bays were open throughout, with the same true at the first floor level.

The timber of this structure was of oak throughout with a significant amount of re-use. It is possible that the elements of truss 1 from tie beam upwards were re-used complete from elsewhere. Whilst almost all of the timbers were converted by hewing and pit or double trestle sawing, some rafters were single trestle sawn, a technique which is suggested to have ended in the middle of the 16th century (James 2012). The infill of the panels was of split laths, originally probably daubed but later lime render coated (Plate 12). This technique of using wide lath was used through the west-midland but was most widespread in Herefordshire. Probably towards the end of Phase 3, much of the framing was infilled with brick. None of the roof tiles can be clearly stated as original. The floor beam and joists are original and horizontally set.

The function of this building is not immediately obvious although its location close to the house may suggest that it was a detached brewhouse, kitchen or other such semi-domestic building with accommodation above. This is further supported by the location of the well and suggested bread oven at the rear of the house. No door or window positions were visible within this structure.

5.5 Phase 2: later 17th to early 18th century

During this period, a further bay was added onto the eastern side of the Phase 1 structure which was sand stone built to the height of the Phase 1 mid-rail, with square frame timber framing above and the wall plate maintaining the height of the original structure (Plate 13 and Plate 14). Its eastern gable was built in stone to full height. The gable had windows at ground and first floor level and the ground floor room a wood framed door facing south (Plate 15 and Plate 16).

The original floor beam and joists remain. The floor joist positions were marked out with a scratch awl, started cutting to a certain depth at each then all of the positions moved to their remaining positions (Plate 17). The start of the drill positions were cut with a spoon auger, a type used up until circa 1800.

The first floor consisted of a further single room, with a doorway cut through the Phase 1 gable truss to extend into the earlier structure. The lime plaster within this room and that inserted into the Phase 1 buildings first floor dates to this era as it respects the new door. This plaster suggests a continuation of use as accommodation and was accessed from the exterior staircase (Plate 7), potentially implying that the demolished bay of the Phase 1 building had been removed by this time. The ground floor space is likely to have been stabling.

The roof structure was supported by two purlins on each side of the roof as well a ridge purlins with square set rafters and tiles above. The dormer window on the south side may be original or added shortly after.

5.6 Phase 3: 18th century

The building was further extended to the east, continuing the same ridge line and wall plate height as the phase 1 and 2 structures (Plate 18 and Plate 19). This was a three bay structure with timber framed walls on a low sand tone plinth wall with exterior weather boarding, of which some remained (Plate 20). The bays were split by the floor beams positions in the ground floor and upper cruck trusses on the first floor (Plate 21 and Plate 22). The gable end truss was had a kingpost truss (Plate 23), though this was truncated in Phase 4. Whilst the wall framing at ground floor level was largely obscured, parts of the sill beam and long straight bracing was visible. The bracing ran from the sill to post on the gable frame, interrupting the vertical posts as it went (Plate 24). The first

floor use of upper crucks was fairly common in the 18th century and allowed full access through the space. These sat upon the floor beam as well as being both bolted and strapped to both the wall posts and wall plates (Plate 25). They were pegged together at their apex, as well as having a pegged collar. They supported single purlins each side, which in turn supported the rafters. These were nailed together at the top onto a ridge board.

The carpentry of the building was typical of the 18th century with traditional jointing as seen by various carpenters marks (Plate 26) and pegging, combined with metal strapping and the widespread use of handmade nails to attach smaller joints. All the structural timbers were hand sawn throughout and of oak where visible. The jointing of the floor joists was also unusual in that they were morticed to the beam as usual but with the addition of a dovetail joint onto the top of the beam.

An exception to the use of oak was in the weather boarding which was of an unidentified hard wood. The boarding was unusual in that it was untreated and that it was flush to the frame exterior at its top and bottom, as opposed to overlapped. The boarding was then made weather tight by the application of laths nailed to their interior as a key to a layer of lime mortar (Plate 27).

The interpretation of the use of this structure remains difficult. There remained a original doorway, that on the south side at ground floor level, flanked by two windows (Plate 19) along with a further at the gable end at ground floor level. It is probable that there were windows, but no clear evidence of these remains. The most likely interpretation seems to be further stabling with hay storage above as horses were considered to require some insulation. An indication of crop protection was present on the first floor in the form of a candle burn on the collar of one of the upper cruck trusses (Plate 28). These marks are well documented and were considered to afford ritual protection from the presence of the devil.

5.7 Phase 4: 19th century

At some point that is not closely dateable but likely to be during 19th century, a small fireplace was added into the Phase 1 building (Plate 29) , with its chimney punched through the southern wall (Plate 7), though the chimney breast no longer remains. This shows a clear domestic function for the building at this time.

The brick structure on a stone plinth wall to the west of the Phase 3 timber framed building was added, based upon map evidence, between the years of 1848 and 1884. The roof line and wall plate levels were slightly higher than the earlier structures, and the roof slate covered as opposed to tile (Plate 30 and Plate 31). Internally it was split into two bays with two rooms on each floor, divided by a brick wall (Plate 34 and Plate 35).

It had a wide double door facing onto the road which would have allowed in carts (Plate 31), with an opposing pedestrian door position, though this had collapsed. A hatch to the room above would have allowed materials, in this case most likely hops in sacks, to be hoisted to the floor above (Plate 36). This room had a wide entrance to that to the east where vents were visible in the through the stone plinth wall (Plate 30 and Plate 31). It is likely that this room originally contained a heat source in order to dry hops on a lightweight, well ventilated floor above. The former presence of such a floor was supported by lattice bracing between the thin gauge, deep joists above that would allow maximum air movement (Plate 37), with the bracing stopping lateral movement that would normally be prevented by floor boards. Venting would have been provided by a high window in the gable as well as a gap above the dividing wall as well as a door on the southern wall above the cart bay and the former window in the north wall.

A wide entrance had been cut into the Phase 3 western gable, and it is likely that the dried hops were laid out to dry on the floor of this structure. Once dried, they would have been pressed into sacks known as pockets. The press remains in this building (Plate 38 to Plate 40) and was constructed by JL Larkworthy and Co who were based in Lowesmoor in Worcester. This company was first registered in 1869 (Littleburys 1869) and went out of business in 1938 (Grace's guide 2019) suggesting that this press may have been bought for the first use of this building. The hop

pockets would have been supported under the floor below by ties and slings through small holes in the floor from the press above which could be pulled upwards using a handle on the west side of the press. A round wooden paddle was then driven downwards using the geared handle which would have attached to a central ratchet, now missing. It is possible there was a second press, given the presence of a second hatch (Plate 41). The pockets would then have been taken down and stored in the ground floor of the Phase 3 building then taken back through a new door in its ground floor gable to the cart entrance. The flow of this process is recreated on (figure 6).

5.8 Phase 5: 20th century

No major additions were present of this century with only the addition of concrete flooring in the Phase 3 building and changes to the floor joists in the Phase 4 building.

6 Discussion

The building as recorded in this project represents the various phases of the listed farmhouse and its farmstead from the 17th century onwards. The building's earliest element is likely to have been contemporary with the farmhouse and is suggested to have been a two bay structure probably linked with a service function of the house and accommodation, as opposed to a more agricultural function of the farm yard buildings to the west of the house. Half of this building closest to the house was demolished, probably in the 18th century, leaving only a single bay.

This was as added to on its eastern side by a stone and timber frame structure that was probably a stable on the ground floor with accommodation linking into the early building on the first floor. The 18th century timber framed addition may have been as stabling with hayloft above, though this interpretation is hard to support. It is certainly true that the fabric of this structure is the rarest elements of the recorded building, being at the end of the timber framing tradition. By this point in time, most contemporary such buildings had brick built walls with wood used for the floor and roof structures, it is uncommon to have a building fully timber framed. It also has a number of features which may well be unique, such as the dovetail jointing of the floor boards and the laths and lime plaster added to the rear of the flush weather boarding.

The brick addition in the second half of the 19th century was fairly typical of oast houses in the region. Where this structure stands out was its retention of original features such as floor hatches, hop press, ventilation holes and hop drying floor evidence. This allowed a reconstruction of the hop drying and packing process through the building.

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 building recording exercise was carried out to meet a planning condition relating to the redevelopment of an outbuilding at Uppertown Farm, Berrington, Tenbury Wells (NGR SO 57498 67317).

Uppertown Farm is located in Berrington, approximately 2km west of Tenbury Wells on the western edge of Worcestershire, south of the River Teme. Uppertown Farm is a listed farmhouse dating to the 17th Century. The building proposed for redevelopment is aligned broadly east –west along the road frontage, to the east of the farmhouse. It visually comprises of four elements with a timber frame and brick element at its western end. Heading east from this is a timber frame and stone element followed by a weather boarded element. These three elements are tile covered. The westernmost element is a brick structure covered with a slate roof

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8 Acknowledgements

Worcestershire Archaeology would like to thank Clair Wright for her kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project.

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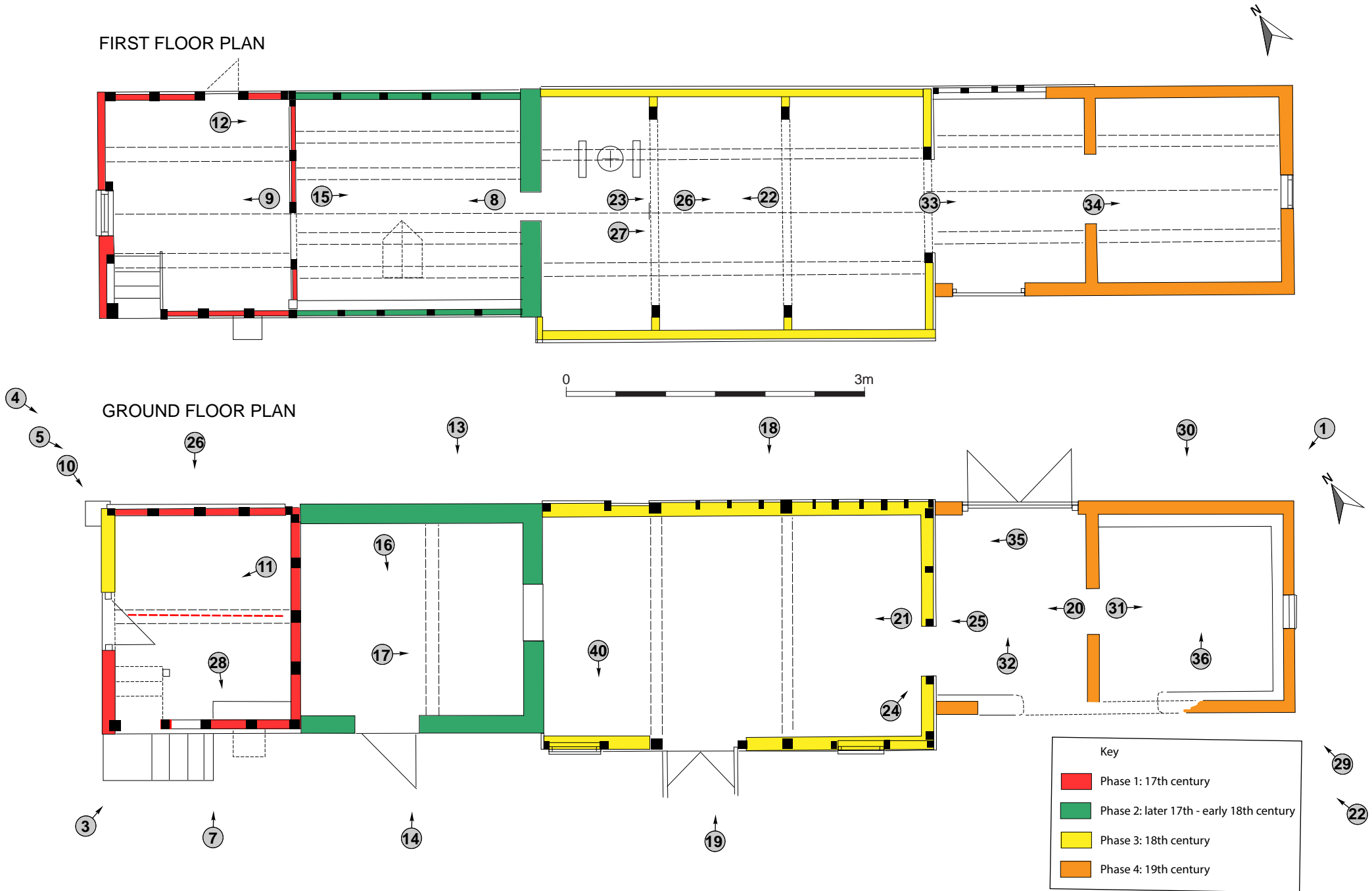
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Figures



Location of the site

Figure 1



Phased plan of barn (based upon Eric Hudson Architect Drg 1894/1)

Figure 2



Key	
	Phase 1: 17th century
	Phase 2: later 17th - early 18th century
	Phase 3: 18th century
	Phase 4: 19th century

Broad phasing elevation (based upon Eric Hudson Architect Drg. 1894/1)

Figure 3

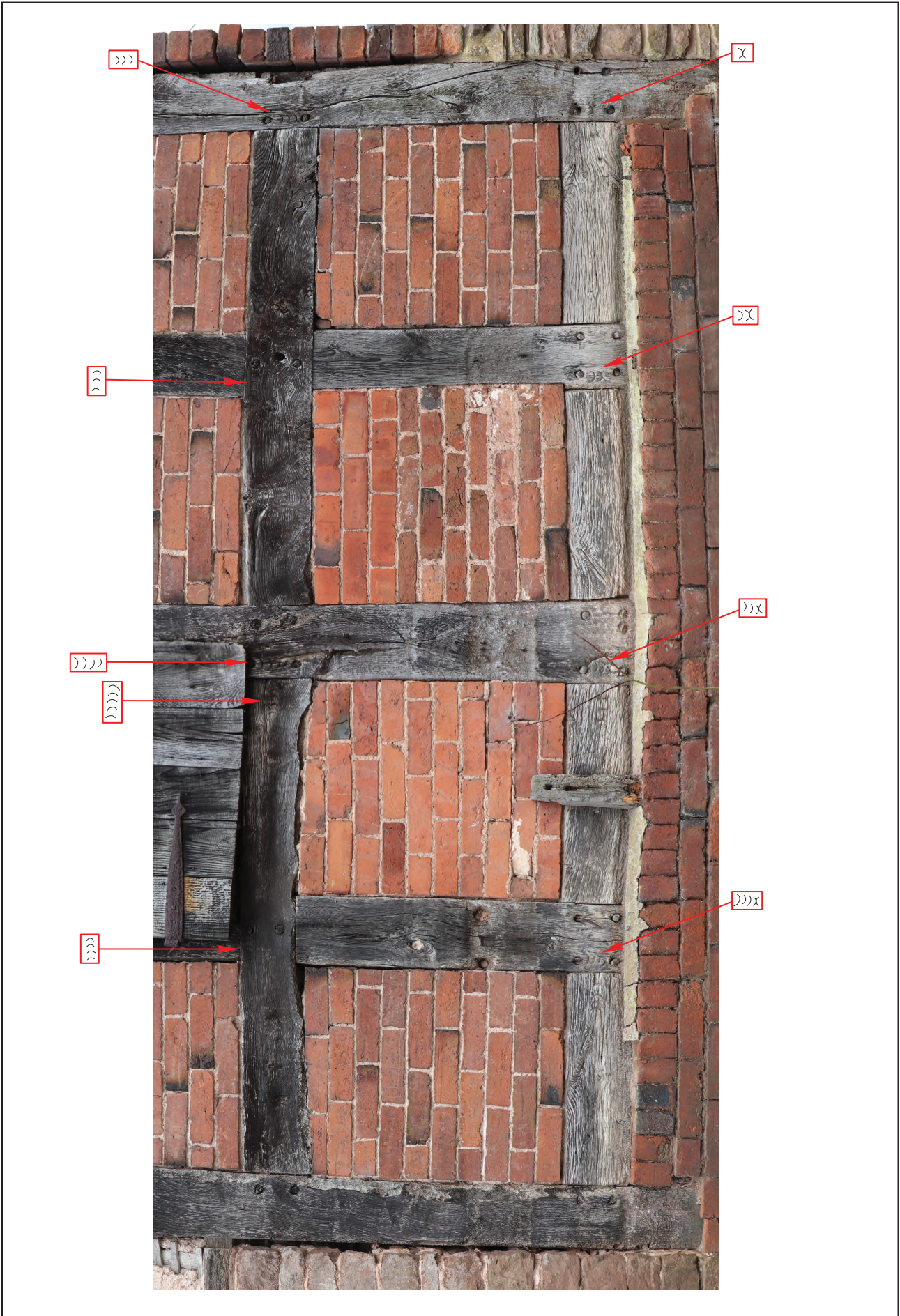


0 3m

Key	
	Phase 1: 17th century
	Phase 2: later 17th - early 18th century

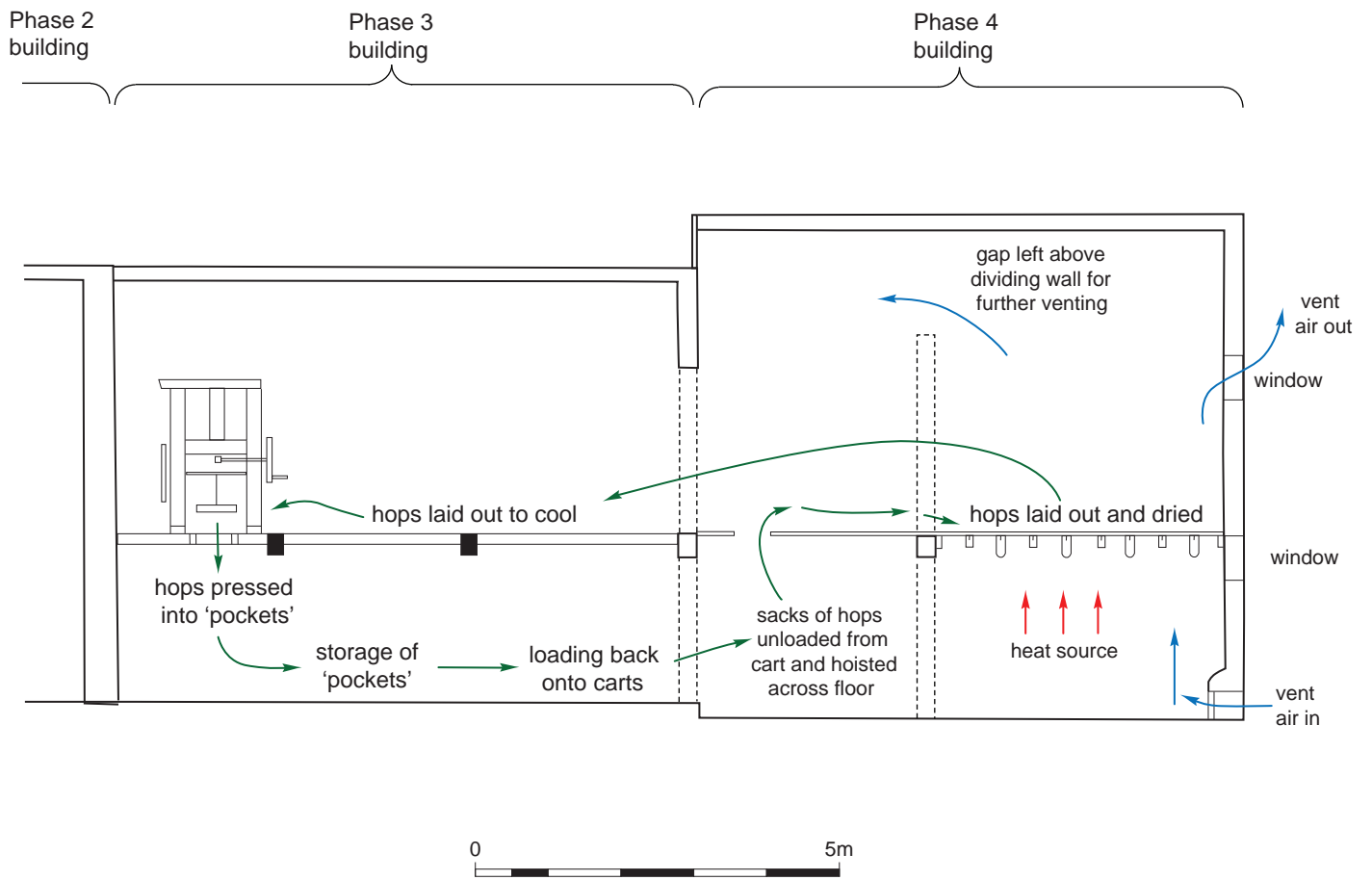
Gable elevation of Phase 1 building

Figure 4



Carpenter's marks

Figure 5



Interpretation of hop production process

Figure 6

Plates



Plate 1 The building, looking south-west



Plate 2 The building, looking north-west



Plate 3 The building, looking north-east



Plate 4 An agricultural buiding, the house and thel building, looking south-east



Plate 5 Phase 1 element, looking south-east, scale 2m



Plate 6 Phase 1 element, looking south, scale 2m



Plate 7 Phase1 element, looking north, scale 2m



Plate 8 Phase 1 former gable looking west, scale 1m



Plate 9 Phase1 former central, now gable truss, looking west, scale 1m



Plate 10 Phase1 empty mortice, looking south,20 cm of 2m scale visible



Plate 11 Phase1 element, looking west, scale 2m



Plate 12 Phase1 wattle panel with later lime plaster, looking east, scale 1m



Plate 13 Phase 2 element, looking south, scale 2m



Plate 14 Phase 2 element, looking north-east, scale 2m



Plate 15 Phase 2 element, looking east, scale 1m



Plate 16 Phase 2 element, looking south, scale 2m



Plate 17 Phase 2 element started mortices, looking west



Plate 18 Phase 3 element, looking south, scale 2m



Plate 19 Phase 3 element, looking north, scale 2m



Plate 20 Phase 3 gable weather boarding, looking west, scale 2m



Plate 21 Phase 3 element, looking west, scale 2m



Plate 22 Phase 3 element, looking west, scale 2m



Plate 23 Phase 3 gable, looking east, scale 2m



Plate 24 Phase 3 sill, wall framing and brace, looking north-east, scale 2m



Plate 25 Phase 3 upper cruck base bolted to the post and strapped to the wall plate, looking north-west, scale 1m



Plate 26 Phase 3 Carpenters marks, looking west



Plate 27 Phase 3 lathe and plaster to the rear of the boarding, looking east



Plate 28 Phase 3 tie collar and candle burn mark, looking east, scale in centimeters in 20cm sections above



Plate 29 Phase 4 added fireplace, looking south, scale 1m



Plate 30 Phase 4 element, looking north-west, scale 2m



Plate 31 Phase 4 element, looking south, scale 2m



Plate 32 Phase 4 element, looking east, scale 2m



Plate 33 Phase 4 element, looking north, scale 2m



Plate 34 Phase 4 element, looking east, scale 1m



Plate 35 Phase 4 element, looking east, scale 1m



Plate 36 Phase 4 hatch, looking west



Plate 37 Phase 4 floor with lattice bracing, looking north, scale 0.60m of 2m scale visible



Plate 38 Phase 4 hop press, looking north, scale 1m



Plate 39 Phase 4 hop press



Plate 40 Phase 4 hop press, looking north, scale 1m



Plate 41 Phase 4 additional hatch, looking south

Appendix 1 Technical information

The archive (site code: WSM71405)

The archive consists of:

- 1 Field progress reports AS2
- 3 Photographic records AS3
- 187 Digital photographs
- 1 Drawing number catalogues AS4
- 4 Scale drawings
- 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
