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LINDSEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

Hall Farm, Harpswell, Lincs.
Archaeological Watching Brief

NGR: SK 933 899
Site code: HHF05
LCNCC Accession No.: 2005.251
Planning Application No.: MO2/P/0376

Report For
Mr and Mrs M. Tatam

By D. Young

LAS Report No: 905

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Summary

An archaeological watching brief was carried out during the conversion of a 19th century stable block for residential use. No archaeological features were encountered during the groundworks. Evidence for an earlier floor surface and drainage was revealed beneath the concrete floor slab.

Introduction

The following project design has been prepared for Mr and Mrs M. Tatam in accordance with the general requirements set out in the *Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook* (Lincolnshire County Council Archaeology Section, 1998).

Site Location and Description

Harpswell is situated 15km north of Lincoln on the west facing scarp of the limestone ridge. The site forms part of the farm complex around the former Harpswell Hall, now Hall Farm.

Planning Background

Planning permission was granted for the conversion of an existing farm building for residential use, subject to an archaeological watching brief being carried out during any groundworks for the development.

Archaeological Background

Harpswell is mentioned in the Domesday Survey of 1086 when there were two manors and is clearly a settlement which is Saxon in origin. Little survives of the village as later gardens, themselves abandoned, overlie it. There was potential for medieval settlement remains on the site, which may have been disturbed during groundworks.

Objectives

The purpose of the watching brief was to record any archaeological deposits disturbed during groundworks at the above site.

Method

One experienced archaeologist attended the site to record any earthmoving operations. A context numbering system for archaeological remains was in operation. LAS operates a standard context recording system, developed by its staff over the past 20 years based on

MOLAS and CAS models. A full photographic record was made during the progress of the groundworks.

During the preliminary clearance of the stable block, the client reported the discovery of an internal floor surface which was possibly contemporary with construction of the stable block. For this reason it was decided to record the internal surface and the various stages of the building itself in addition to the monitoring of the groundworks. The recording work was commenced on Nov. 21st and 22nd 2005.

Results

Three trenches were machined to accommodate drainage and a fourth trench to check the foundations of the south wall.

Trench 1 ran 6m westwards from the western side of the building and into a soakaway 1.2m x 1.2m and 1.2m deep (Fig. 2), (Pls. 2, 3). In the section of the soakaway three different materials were evident, a re-deposited topsoil (100), a possible external rubble surface (101), and the natural orange clay with limestone brash (102). An outlet for an internal drain was evident on the outer face of the west wall at the east end of Trench 1 (Pl.3).

Trench 2 (Fig. 2) was machined through an area recently used for hardstanding. The section showed the hard-standing surface (104), overlying the subsoil (105), which was in turn overlying the natural clay / limestone brash (102).

Trench 3 was machined along the length of the eastern wall and a further 25m to the north to a depth varying from 0.50m to 0.90m (Pls. 4, & 5). This also contained layers (104), (105), and (102).

Trench 4 was machined alongside the south wall to investigate the foundation (Pl. 6, 7 & 8). The section at the east end of the trench revealed re-deposited topsoil (100), overlying an external cobble-stoned surface (106). This surface was cut by the later insertion of drains running into a manhole, also at the south-east corner of the building.

The Stables

The stable block is a rectangular single-storey structure measuring 15.2m N/S x 3.95m E/W internally, constructed in limestone with mortar bonding.

The Exterior

North exterior elevation. (Pls. 9 & 10)

The northern gable was actually the south gable of a demolished building. The west side has a finished face whereas the east end has a northern return (demolished). This suggests that the building to the north of the stable may have been a barn or cart-shed open to the west. There is a blocked doorway west of centre of the wall which was partially blocked to form a

window which in turn was blocked. The window jambs are finished in red brick with a re-used timber lintel over.

East exterior elevation (Pl. 14).

The east elevation has been raised in height with courses of red brick. A blocked entrance with wooden lintel is evident approximately 3 metres south of the north end of the wall with a large scar that suggests that a much greater section of the wall had to be rebuilt at that time. A few header bricks have been used at the base of this entrance as part of the blocking. There is an inserted entrance towards the south end of the elevation with red bull-nosed reveal on the external face. The section of wall between this entrance and the south-east angle has been re-built and includes a re-used limestone architectural fragment and red bull-nosed bricks. The rebuild projects c. 0.11m from the wall.

Two breaks in the added brickwork along the top of the wall are possibly the positions of the intermediate timber trusses.

The South gable. (Pls. 11, 12 & 13).

The south gable shows mortar differences to the upper part of the wall consistent with the raising of the roof-line. The south-west angle has been rebuilt to remove the sharp right-angled corner and produce a 45 degree angle, presumably either as a safety measure to protect horses or just to make the most of a restricted access to the rear of the stables. A rebate remains in this corner after a vertical timber has been removed, possibly a part of a frame to accommodate some form of entrance. The east end of the south wall has been rebuilt as described in the east wall account.

A concrete lintel has been inserted into the end of the south wall and across to the brick wall at right-angles to the south wall to form an entrance.

The West elevation (Pl. 15).

The west wall as it stands includes two existing cottage-style windows with a single row of header bricks to form an arch over the window. These are 0.89m high x 0.80m wide and retain one timber of the window frame. A doorway of similar style but with a double row of header bricks over the doorway has been blocked using bricks of a very similar type to those used to increase the height of the walls and to raise the roof-line. A new entrance has been added at the north end of the stable with a timber lintel over. The wall has been increased in height to accommodate the new roof height evident on the two gable ends.

External surfaces (Pl. 2, 6 & 7)

Evidence of an external surface was seen in the section of the soakaway trench to the west of the stables. This was made up of limestone, brick and tile fragments probably just spread roughly over the clay natural. The area was apparently raised in the late 1960's or early

1970's with approximately 0.30m of topsoil.

A few large cobblestones were seen in both the entrance on the west side of the stable and also in the area of the south east corner of the building.

The Interior

North elevation. (Pls. 16, 17 & 18).

The internal face of the north wall contains a doorway which has then been partially blocked to form a window before being blocked completely. This is the external face of the opening with limestone voussoir above it. Differences in the limestone and mortar build near the top of the wall indicate that the roof-line was raised.

The elevation. (Pls. 19 & 20).

The internal elevation confirms the raising of the gable-end seen on the opposite gable. A timber lintel spans the south-west angle to support the angled corner seen on the outside of the wall.

The East elevation. (Pl. 21).

The openings recorded on external face are present internally although the entrance at the south end has been finished using standard bricks internally.

The blocked entrance towards the north end of the east wall had brick jambs added when it was inserted and a very considerable section of the wall had to be re-built for this insertion. The later blocking of this entrance left the timber lintels intact.

The West elevation (Pl. 22).

The two cottage-style windows have bull-nosed internal jambs which are splayed. This maximises the available light from these rather small windows. Both windows have a timber lintel over them. A central doorway with timber lintel over has bull-nosed brick jambs and was blocked only on the outside face leaving a rebate in the internal face. A blocked window which was not seen on the external elevation can clearly be seen between the blocked doorway and the northern most of the two cottage windows. This window has a very thin lintel over and is blocked with bricks.

Internal surfaces (Pls. 23 – 28).

The stable had a variety of different floor surfaces. At the north end a small area of similar size to a single stall was seen with a surface comprising of re-used flooring bricks laid on edge. The surface sloped from the north towards a drain approximately 2.5m from the north wall and running east/west to a hole through the west wall. The drain was edged with timber and had been partly back-filled with bricks and had a large Yorkstone slab cover possibly still *in situ*.

A brick threshold was constructed probably at the time of the insertion of the brick-lined entrance at the northern end of west wall. This was made up of bricks laid flat to form a rectangle with a brick surround. Although these bricks are of a different size to the flooring bricks used in the north end, they are of very similar date and the threshold was probably laid as part of that same refurbishment.

The remainder of the stable floor consists of limestone fragments laid on edge in a bed of soil. These stones, particularly when worn, created a cobbled surface which in much of the stable was at least partly screeded at a later date. Three rows of these limestone fragments have been laid along the length of the building approximately 1.3m from the west wall. By laying the remainder of the floor with the cobbles running in the opposite direction and sloping slightly down towards the central runs of cobbles, they created a crude open drain along the length of the stable and towards the timber edged drain at the northern end of the building.

Three bricks were recovered from the stable (appendix 2). Those from the brick re-surfacing of the stall are re-used flooring bricks, originally used laid flat, from the 18th century. The brick from the threshold is also of 18th century date.

Conclusion

The monitoring of the groundworks produced no evidence of any archaeological features or layers.

The stable is probably 19th century in date and was part of a large complex of outbuildings around an enclosed courtyard. The original structure has been altered on more than one occasion with the re-positioning of several windows and doors and the raising of the roof. The stable abutted an earlier building to the north whose finished west edge suggests that this building could have been an open-sided barn.

Acknowledgements

LAS would like to thank Mr and Mrs Tatam for their help and cooperation during the watching brief. Naomi Field edited the report which was collated by Doug Young.

Contents of the archive

9 Context sheets.

1 Permatrace drawing.

LAS film No. 06/15

Site notes

APPENDIX 1

Appendix 1

Context List.

100	Re-deposited topsoil.
101	Limestone and tile fragment possible surface.
102	Orange clay and limestone brash natural.
103	Internal timber-edged drain.
104	Compacted gravel external surface.
105	Dark grey-brown sandy clay subsoil.
106	Cobbled surface to the south-west of the stables.
107	Brick surface at the north end of the stable.
108	Brick pad inside the west entrance.

APPENDIX 2

Brick Archive HHF05

Jane Young

context	cname	full name	fabric	frags	weight	description	date
103	BRK	Brick	oxidised sandy fabric	1	3022	complete;hard fired;sanded base;slop moulded ?;burnt vitrified header;stacking scar on stretcher;224x97-105x64	17th to 18th
107	BRK	Brick	oxidised sandy fabric	1	1835	almost complete;handmade;worn upper surface;sanded base & edges;stacking mark on stretcher;sunken margin;reused on edge;175+x112x55	17th to 18th
107	BRK	Brick	oxidised sandy fabric	1	1008	handmade;corner;?x105x54;upper surface worn & slightly polished;reused on edge as also were on this surface;hard fired;sanded underside & edges	17th to 18th

THE FIGURES

Fig. 1 Location of Harpswell (inset c based on the Ordnance Survey 1:10,000 map, sheets SK 98, SK 99.Crown copyright, reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO. LAS Licence No. AL 100002165).

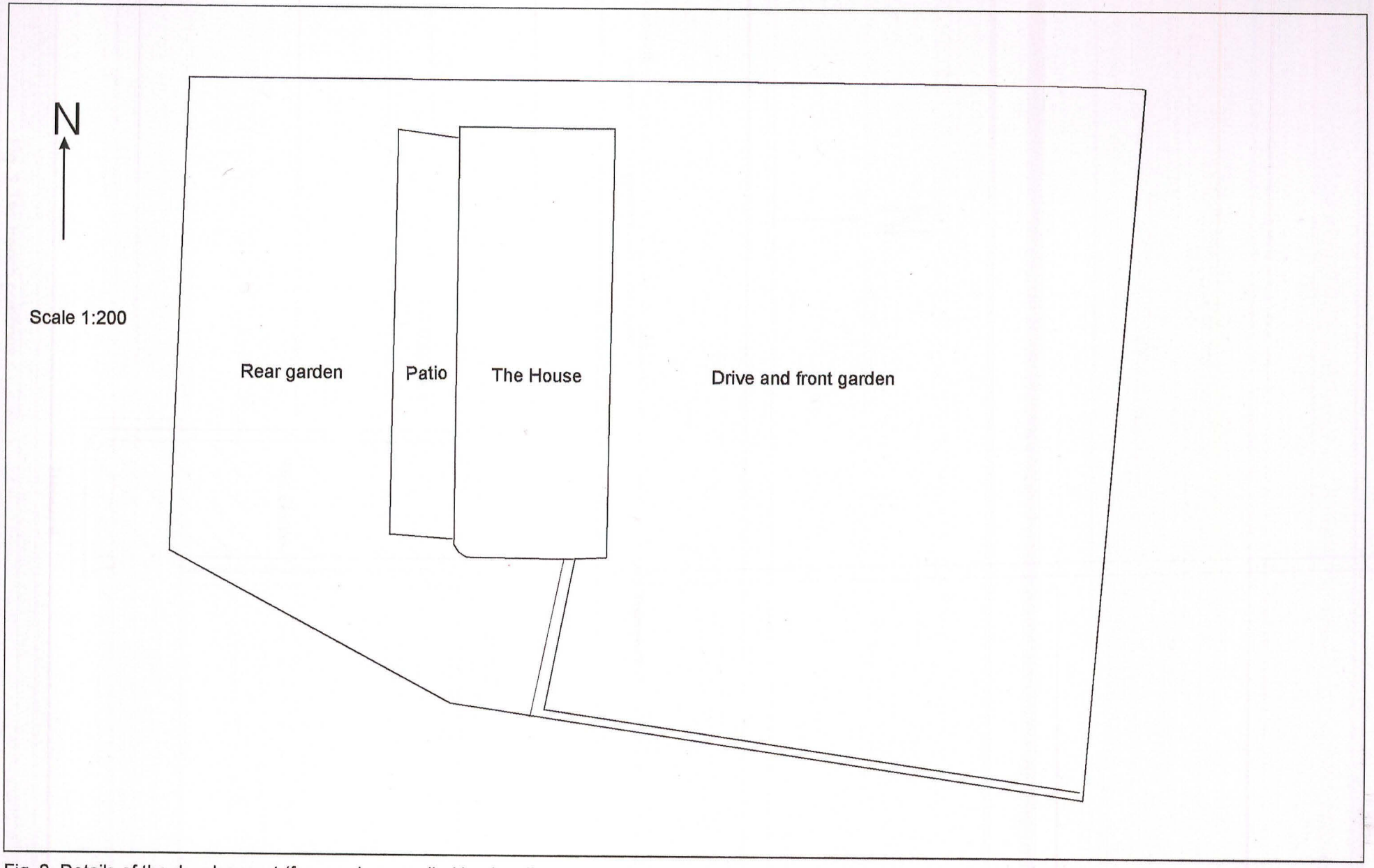


Fig. 2 Details of the development (from a plan supplied by the client).

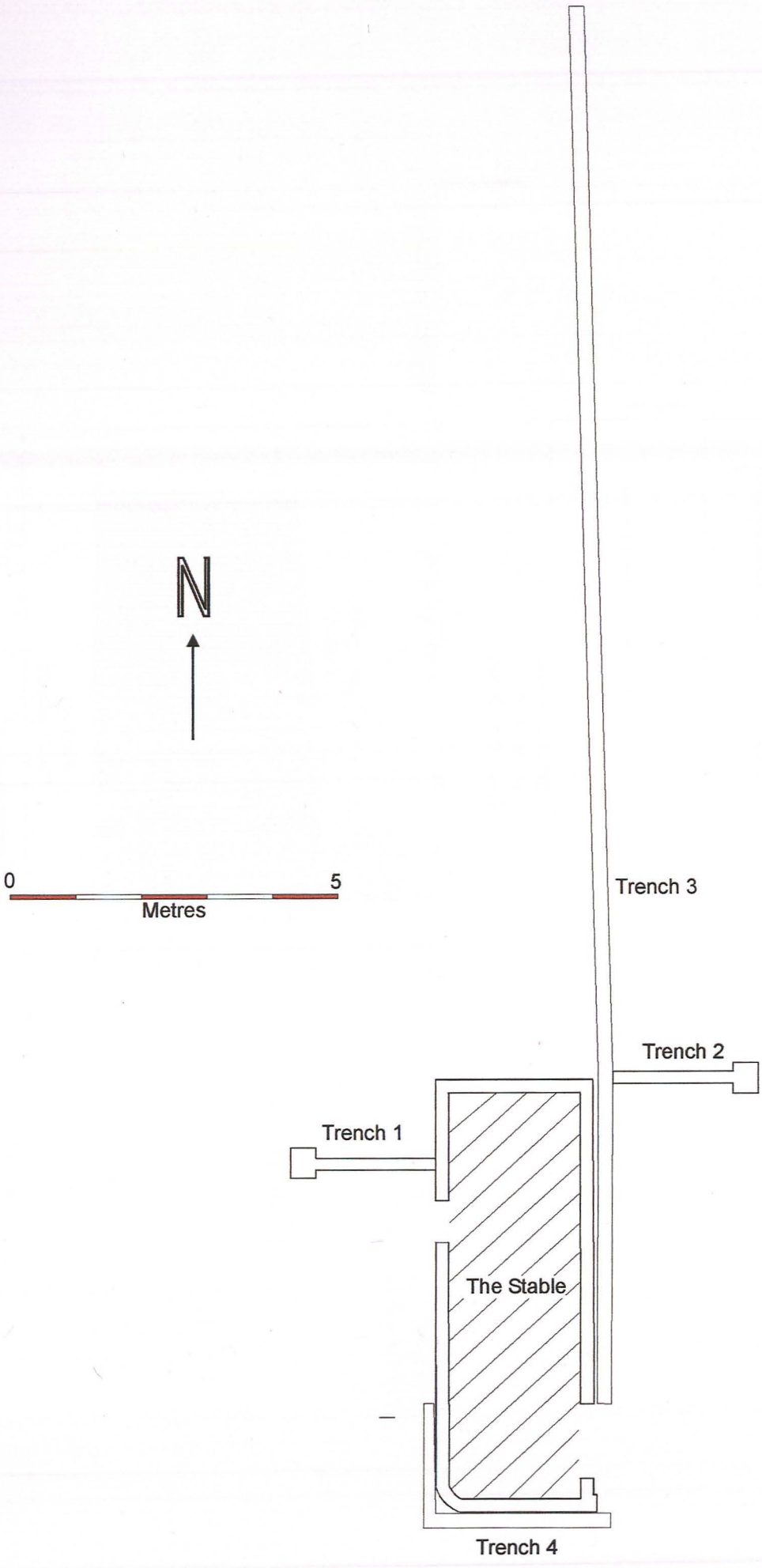


Fig. 3 The trench positions.

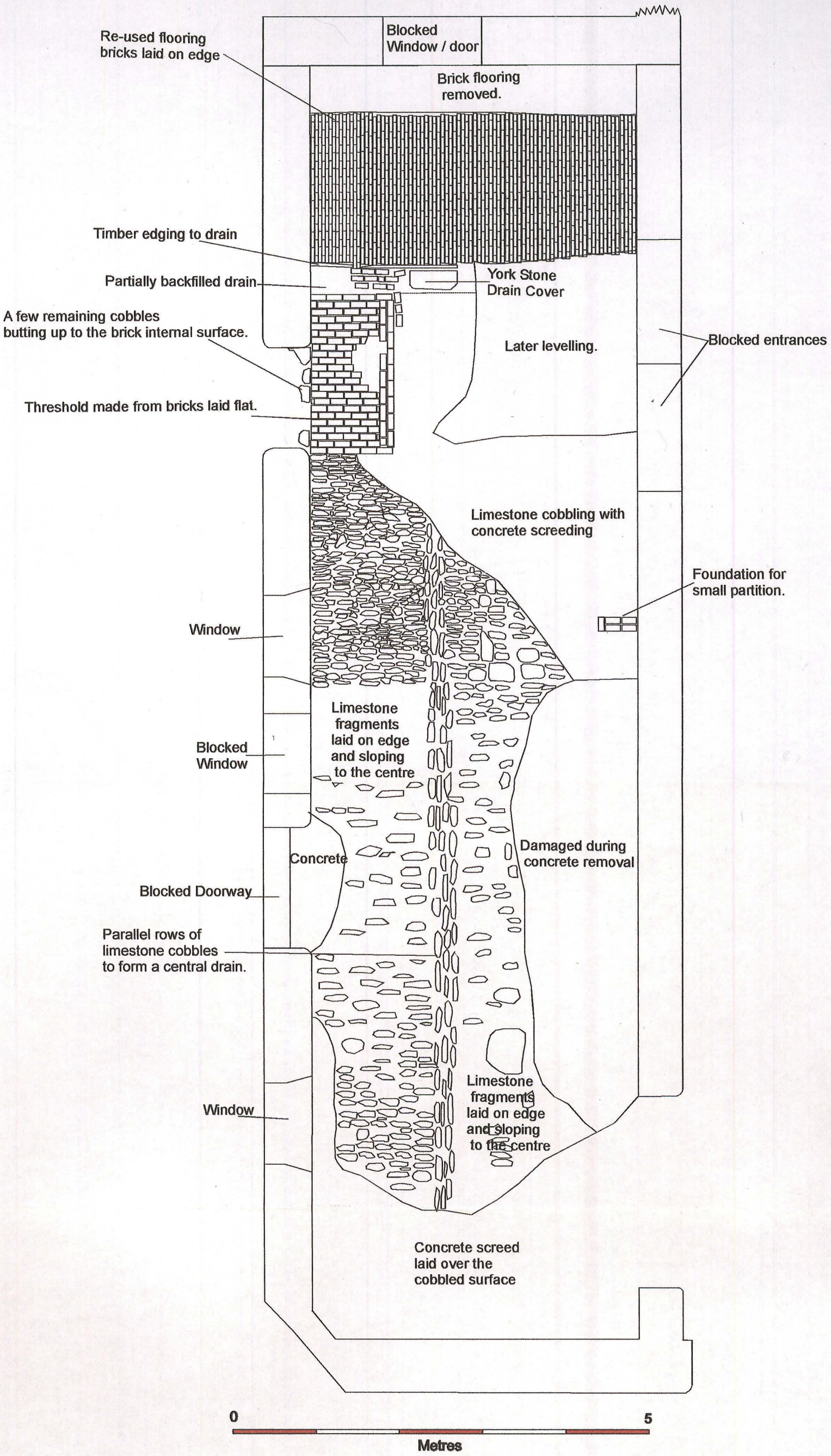


Fig. 4 Detailed plan of the stable

THE PLATES

Pl. 1 General view of the stable block from the east.

Pl. 2 West facing section of the soakaway at the end of Trench 1. Scales 2m, 1m and 0.50m.

Pl. 3 Trench 1 at the east end with the exit of the internal drain through the limestone wall.

Pl. 4 Trench 3 at the south end.

Pl. 5 Trench 3 from the north end.

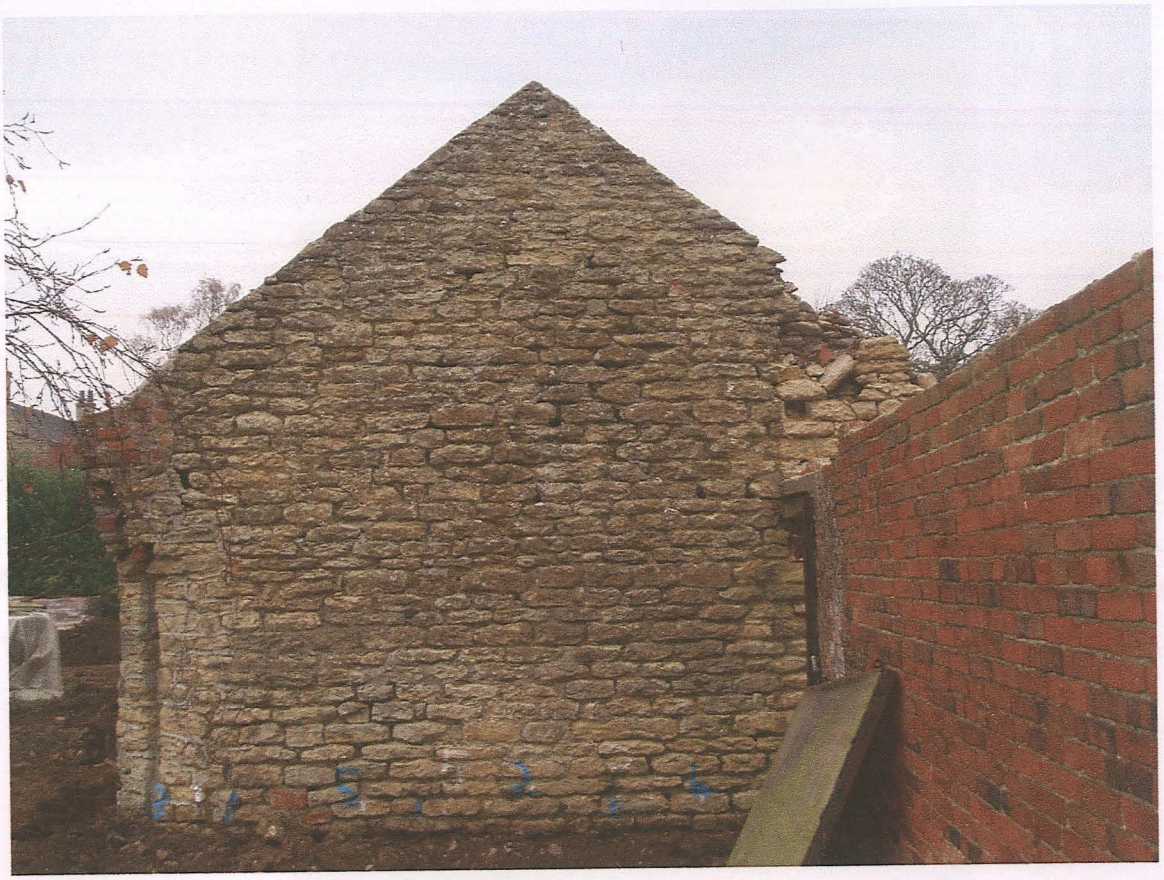
Pl. 6 trench 4 with the limestone foundation of the south wall and the large cobblestones showing in the section on the right hand side. View from the south. Scales 1m and 0.50m.

Pl. 7 The section at the east end of trench 4 with the large cobblestones and the disturbance from the later drain and manhole.

Pl. 8 The foundations of the south wall in Trench 4. View from the east. Scales 1m and 0.50m.

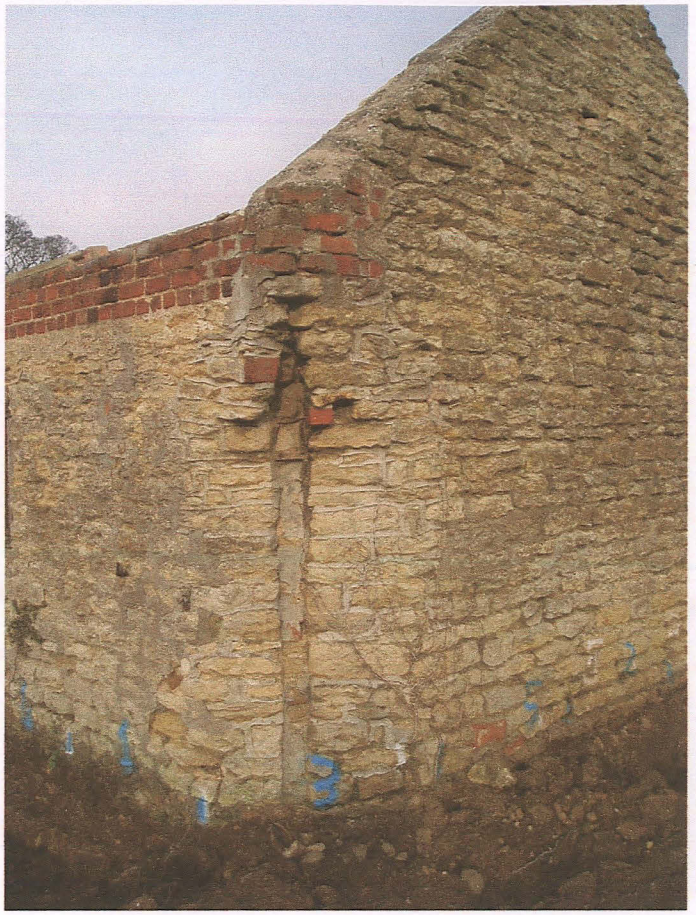
Pl. 9 The external elevation of the north wall. Oblique view from the north west corner, showing the butt joint of the west wall.

Pl 10 Detail of the brick lining of the window in the north wall with re-used timber lintel above.



Pl. 11 The external elevation of the south wall.

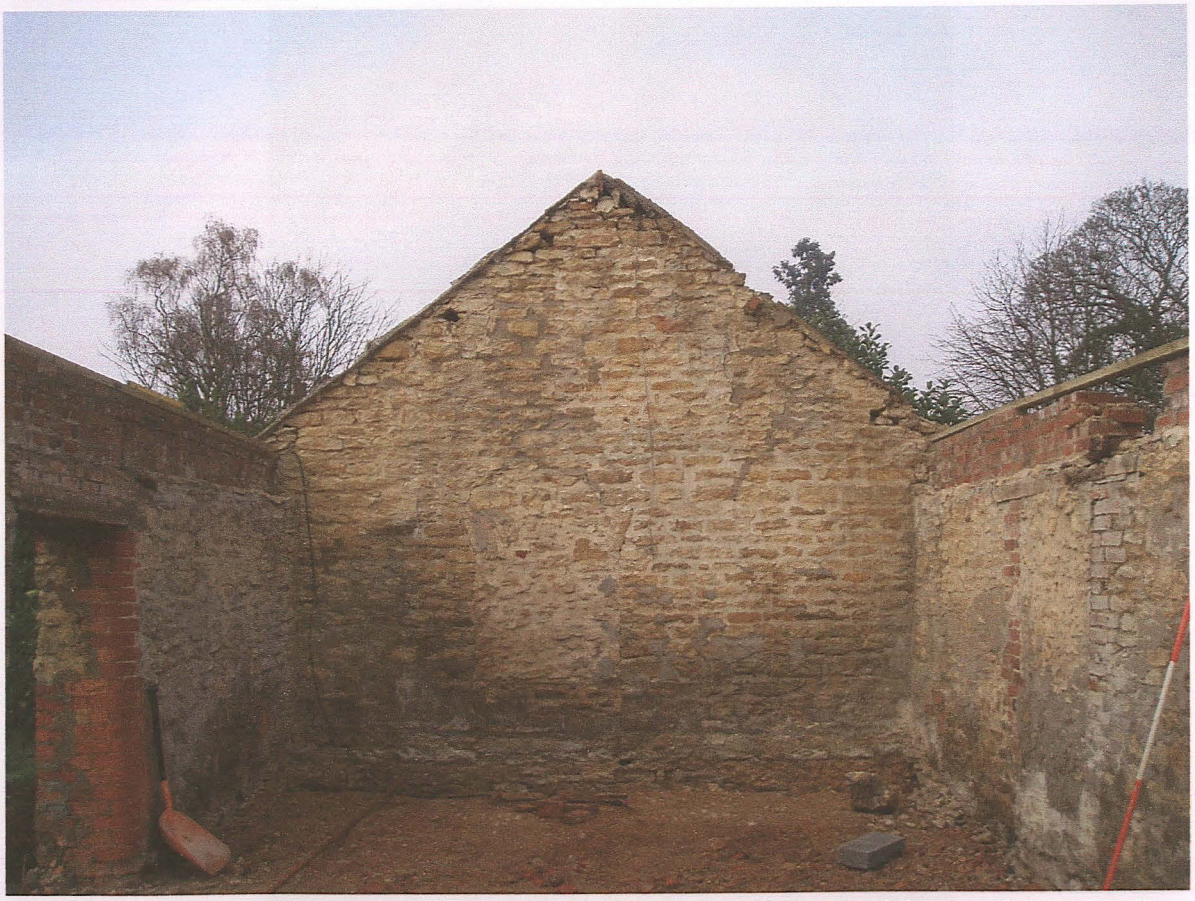
Pl 12 The south-east corner with the re-used limestone fragments set in the corner and showing the position of the concrete lintel.



Pl. 13 The re-built south-west corner with the slot for the timber frame.

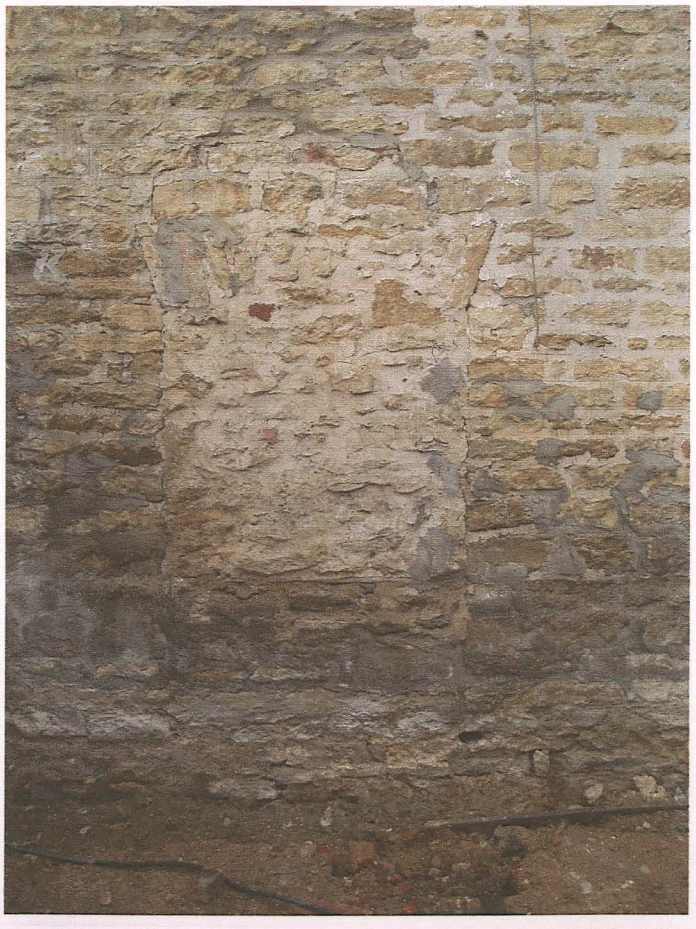
Pl. 14 The east elevation with spoil from Trench 3 along its length.

Pl. 15 The west elevation with existing and blocked doorways and windows. Also shows the butt joint at the north west corner.



Pl. 16 The internal elevation of the north wall with the blocked window and the scar from an earlier doorway.

Pl. 17 Detail of the internal elevation of the north wall with the upper detail of the window / doorway.

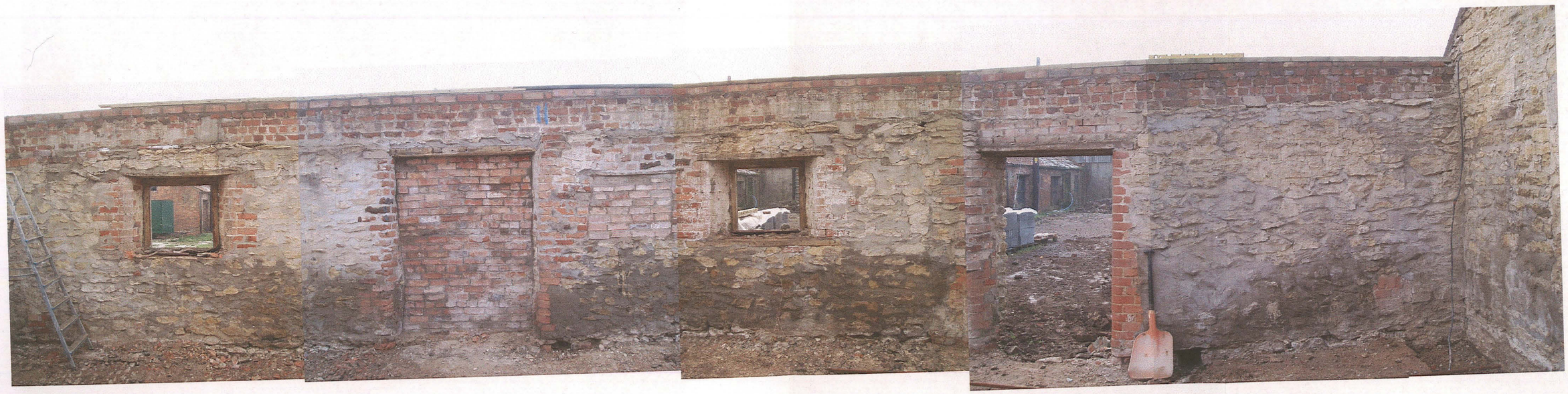


Pl. 18 Detail of the internal elevation of the north wall with the upper detail of the window / doorway.

Pl. 19 The internal elevation of the south wall.

Pl. 20 Internal detail of the re-built south-west corner, with wooden lintel over.

Pl. 21 Composite view of the east wall internal elevation.



Pl. 22 Composite view of the west wall internal elevation.

Pl. 23 The surfaces at the north end of the stable, with the limestone cobbling in the foreground. Scales 2m and 1m.

Pl. 24 Partially excavated internal drain with the timber edging and the later filling and levelling. Scale 1m.

Pl. 25 Detail of the internal drain. View from the east.

Pl. 26 The brick pad inside the west entrance.

Pl. 27 The concrete screed over the limestone cobbles with the foundation of the brick partition against the east wall

Pl. 28 the area of limestone cobbles to the south of the west entrance with detail of the cobbles used to form a central drain.