

Normanton House Farm, Thurlaston, Leicestershire.
Historic Building Photographic Survey

Produced for The Art of Building Ltd

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Summary

In January 2020, Trent & Peak Archaeology (TPA) were commissioned by The Art of Building Ltd to carry out a Historic Building Photographic Survey in advance of the demolition of several outbuildings and the erection of an extension on the main house at Normanton House Farm, Earl Shilton Road, Thurlaston, Leicestershire.

Overall the buildings represent an agricultural yard and ranges typical of a small dairy/beef farm of the early to mid-19th century. The buildings allow for the housing of horses and associated carts and implements needed to work the farm, along with a barn and haylofts for storing feed, and cow houses and calf houses for rearing and fattening cattle. It is likely that the farm also had a dairy room, but this was most likely in the main farmhouse, which was not covered by this survey.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. In January 2020, Trent & Peak Archaeology (TPA) were commissioned by The Art of Building Ltd to carry out a Historic Building Photographic Survey in advance of the demolition of several outbuildings and the erection of an extension on the main house at Normanton House Farm, Earl Shilton Road, Thurlaston, Leicestershire (See Fig. 1).
- 1.2. The proposed development entails the demolition of a block of outbuildings to allow for a large extension to be added to the main house at Normanton House Farm, Thurlaston, Leicestershire. This extension will consist of two stories and a basement (Planning Application No. 19/0103/HH). Both the house and outbuildings appear to be of 19th century date.
- 1.3. Blaby District Council requested that a Written Scheme of Investigation for a programme of Historic Building Recording be submitted for approval, stating that:

“No demolition/development shall commence until a written scheme of investigation (WSI) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the District Planning Authority.

The WSI shall include:

- a) The statement of significance and research objectives; and,*
- b) The programme and methodology of historic building survey and recording and the nomination of a competent person(s) or organisation to undertake the agreed works; and*
- c) The programme for post-investigation assessment and subsequent analysis, publication & dissemination and deposition of resulting material.*

No demolition/development shall take place other than in accordance with the agreed WSI.’

- 1.4. The work was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation approved by Blaby District Council (Appendix 1), which proposed a programme of historic building recording in the form of a photographic survey as a means of ensuring ‘preservation by record’ ahead of redevelopment of the building.

2. Site Description

- 2.1. Normanton House Farm is located in a rural area within south-west Leicestershire. It is situated approximately 0.8 km north-east of the small town of Earl Shilton and approximately 1.5 km south-west of the village of Thurlaston (Fig. 1). The farm lies to the east of Earl Shilton Road and is surrounded to the north, east and south by large fields under arable cultivation.
- 2.2. The outbuildings to be demolished form a U-shape around a central courtyard. These buildings are joined to the main house at the southern end of the easternmost range by a connecting, suspended roof. The house is a three-storied building with mainly of 19th century date but with some modern additions. The majority of the buildings are of early 19th century date.

3. Research Objectives

- 3.1. The aim of the Historic Building Recording was to produce a photographic record of the buildings in their current state prior to their alteration and demolition.

3.2. The photographic survey will contribute to wider research aims as defined by the East Midlands Historic Environment Research Framework (Knight et al. 2012). In particular, the following research objectives for the Modern Period (1750 to Present):

- 9G: Assess the landscape impact of the early industrialisation of agriculture.
- 9H: Characterising the rural environment: identify and record historic buildings and landscape features.

4. Methodology

- 4.1. The fieldwork was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation which has been approved by Blaby District Council (See Appendix A). The stipulation was for a programme of Historic Building Recording consisting of a photographic survey in line with the guidance *Understanding Historic Buildings* (Historic England 2016). The principal aim of the work was to produce a photographic record of the exterior and interior of the building, with a brief analysis of the building's development and use.
- 4.2. Two of the upper rooms were not accessed due to health and safety concerns. Aside from this, all fieldwork took place in accordance with the approved WSI.

5. Building Description and Analysis

- 5.1. The buildings consist of three agricultural ranges forming a U-shape around a central yard to the northwest of a large farmhouse. The ranges are of differing heights and appear to have been constructed over a period of time rather than representing a single planned or model farm.
- 5.2. Most of the exterior walls of the agricultural buildings and main farmhouse have been covered with a pebble-dashed render, most likely in the mid to late 20th century, making identification constructional details and relative phasing of the buildings extremely difficult.
- 5.3. The northwest-southeast running range to the southwest of the central yard is currently in use as garages, but was most likely a cart shed and implement store.
- 5.4. The northeast-southwest running range to the northwest of the central yard was originally a line of three stables, which has been subdivided in the later 20th century to form a workshop space.
- 5.5. The northwest-southeast running range to the northeast of the central yard comprises a two-storey barn at the northwest range with an attached cow house and hay loft. Abutting the southeast end of this building is a lower building with a second cow house and calf house with a hay loft and pigeon loft above. The southeast end of this block is attached to the main farmhouse by a roof stretching across a covered carriageway. This space facilitated access to the hayloft above via a pitching hole at first floor level.
- 5.6. Overall the buildings scheduled for demolition represent an agricultural yard and ranges typical of a small dairy/beef farm of the early to mid-19th century. The buildings allow for the housing of horses and associated carts and implements needed to work the farm, along with a barn and haylofts for storing feed, and cow houses and calf houses for rearing and fattening cattle. It is likely that the farm also had a dairy room, but this was most likely in the main farmhouse, which was not covered by this survey.

5.7. The buildings have seen substantial modification in places, as is typical of farms which continued in use through the 20th century, and are overall in a poor state of repair. There is a low survival of original features such as feed racks and troughs and tack hooks.

6. Archiving

6.1. A bound copy of the report, along with a digital copy in PDF/A format, will be provided for inclusion within the Leicestershire County Council Historic Environment Record.

6.2. The archive will be fully catalogued and prepared to recognised standards (AAF 2007) and contain where relevant:

- copies of correspondence relating to fieldwork
- site notebooks/diaries
- original photographic records

6.3. The paper archive will remain the property of TPA until deposited with the appropriate repository.

6.4. An OASIS online record has been completed and included as Appendix B.

7. References

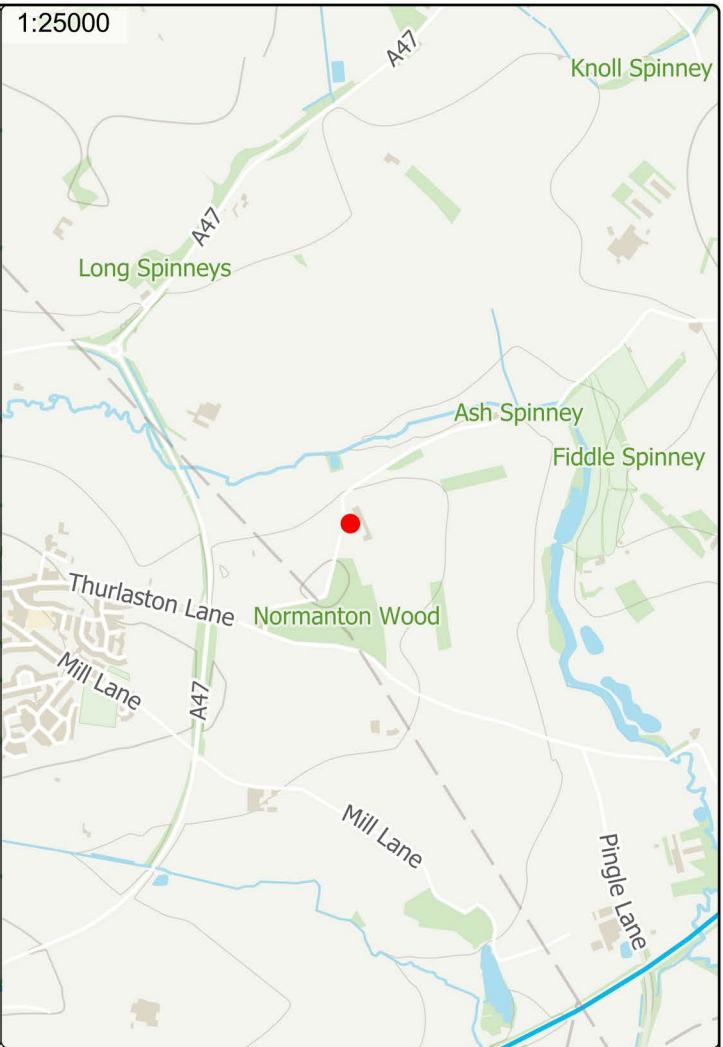
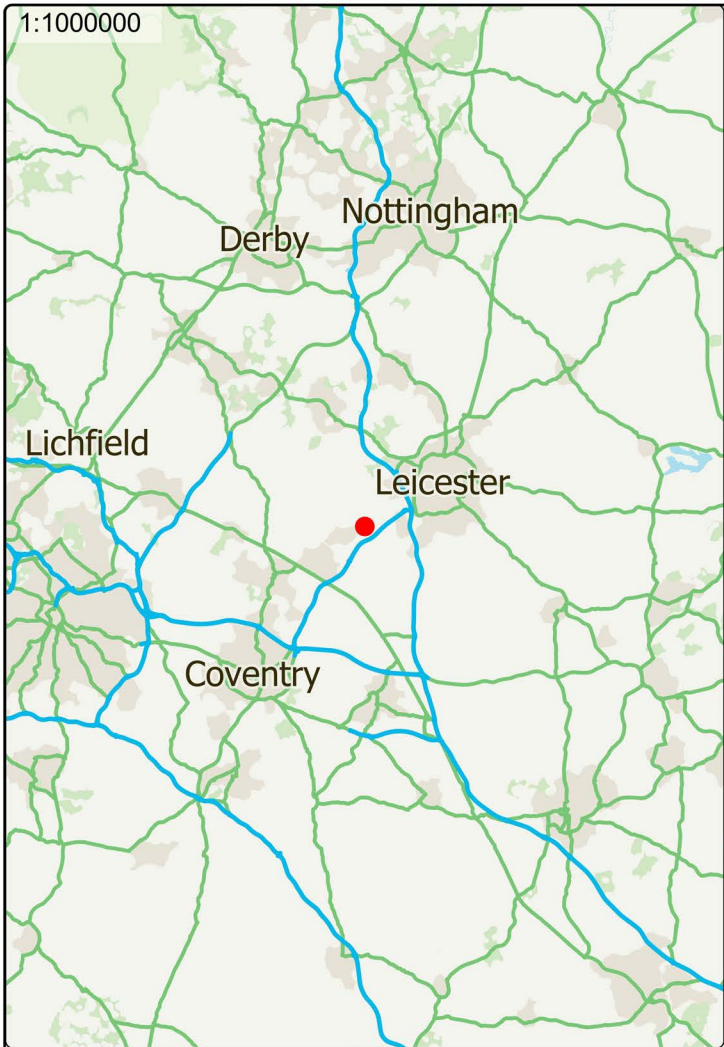
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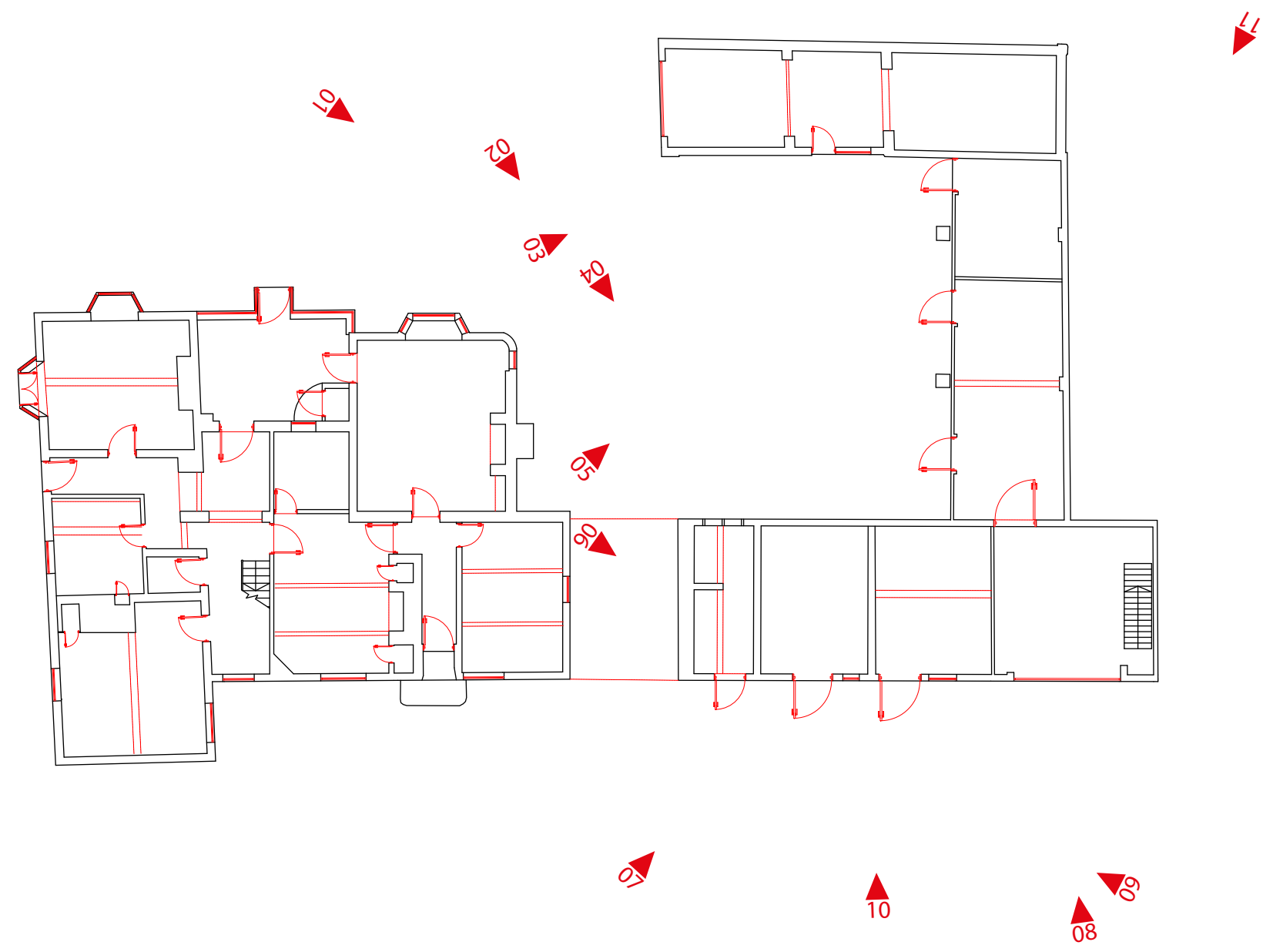
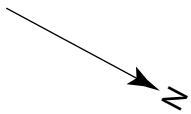
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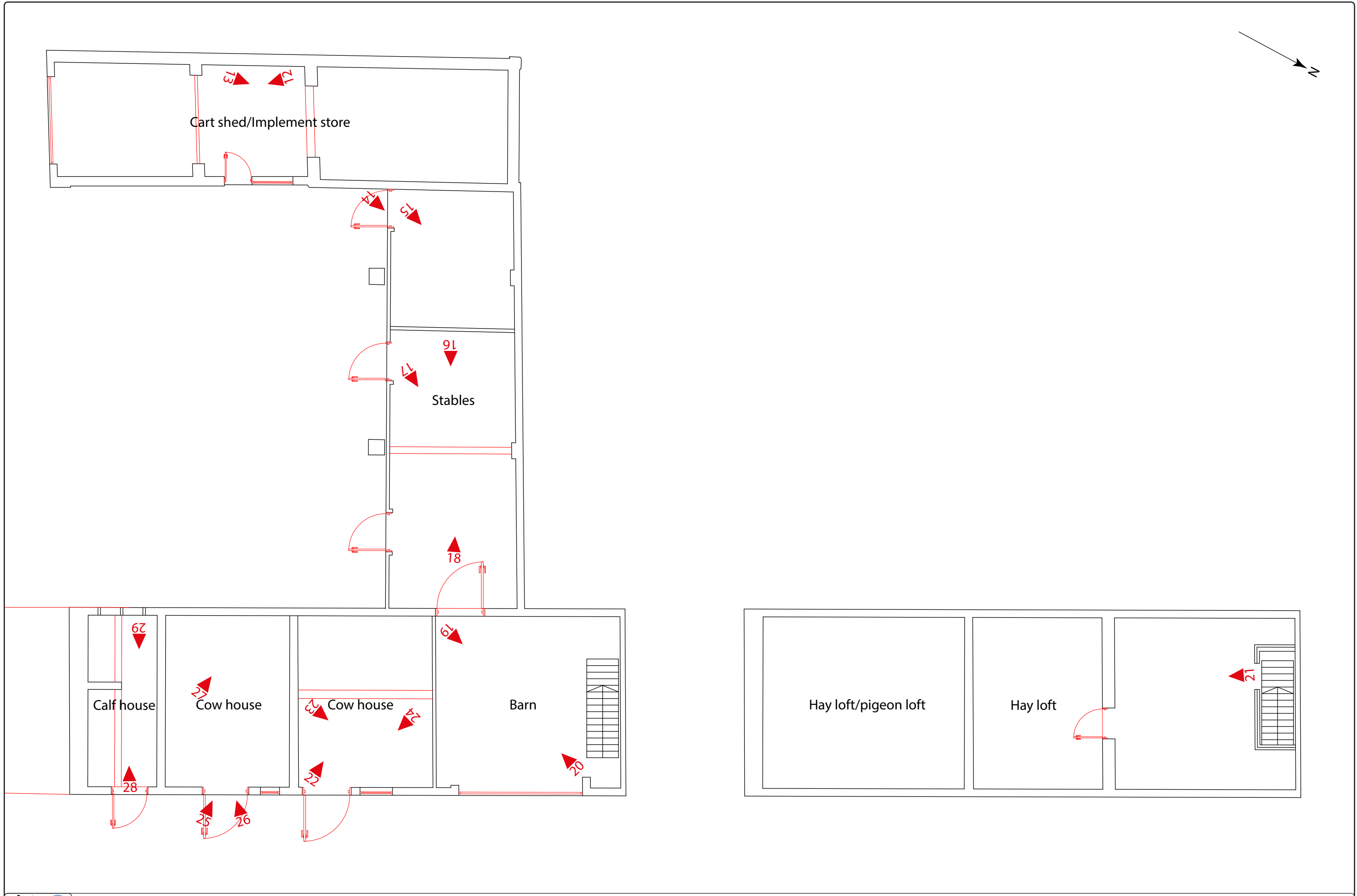
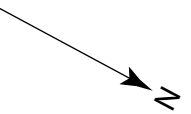




Plate 01: General view of buildings from the south



Plate 02: General view of courtyard from the south



Plate 03: Exterior of stables and cart shed/implement store from the southeast



Plate 04: Exterior of barn and cow houses from the south



Plate 05: Exterior of stables and cart shed/implement store from the east



Plate 06: Exterior of hay loft/pigeon loft from the south



Plate 07: General view of buildings from the east



Plate 08: Exterior of barn and cow houses from the northeast



Plate 09: General view of buildings from the north



Plate 10: Exterior of cow houses from the northeast



Plate 11: General view of buildings from the west



Plate 12: Interior of cart shed/implement store from the northwest



Plate 13: Interior of cart shed/implement store from the south



Plate 14: Interior of stables from the south



Plate 15: Southwestern truss within stables from the south



Plate 16: Interior of stables from the southwest



Plate 17: Northeastern truss within stables from the south



Plate 18: Interior of stables from the northeast



Plate 19: Interior of barn from south



Plate 20: Interior of barn from north



Plate 21: Modern mezzanine above barn from the northwest



Plate 22: Interior of cow house from the east



Plate 23: Interior of cow house from the south



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Plate 25: Interior of cow house from the east



Plate 26: Interior of cow house from the north



Plate 27: Watering trough at southwest end of cow house from the east



Plate 28: Interior of calf house from the northeast



Plate 29: Interior of calf house from the southwest

Plate 30: Interior of east room of stable block (ground floor) from the northeast