

THE WHARF CAFE TOWN WHARF, NEWARK

An Assessment and Discussion of the Historic Fabric

by

Chris Miele and Richard Lea

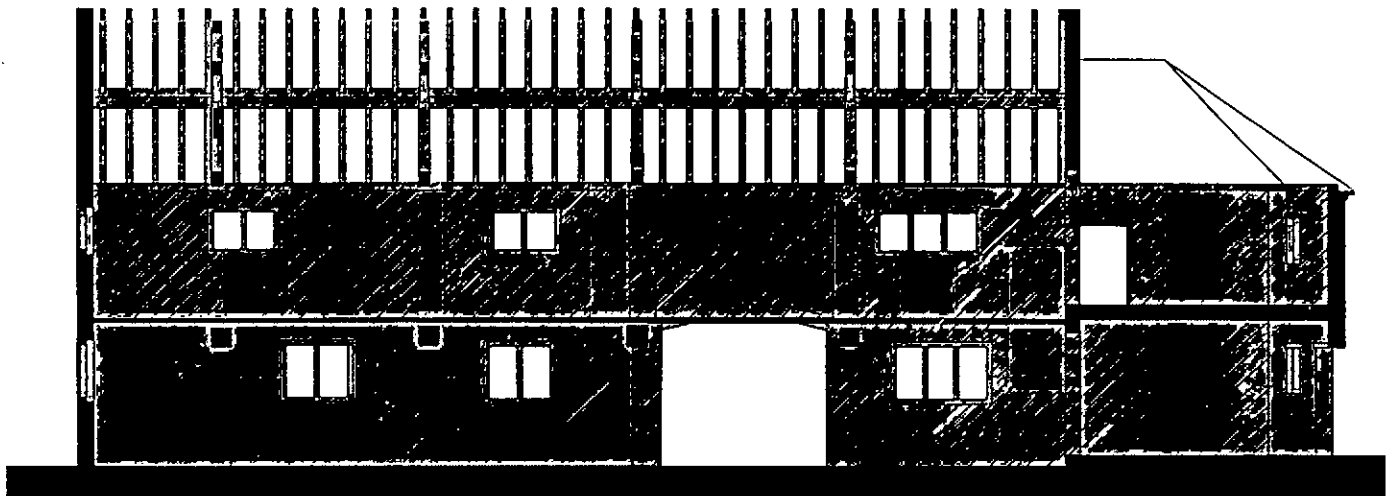
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ABSTRACT

The site known as Town Wharf lay outside Newark's medieval defenses and Civil War fortifications. Although it was possible for boats to land here, the Newark Branch of the Trent was not navigable until the last quarter of the eighteenth century. Prior to this, land not water transport played the most important role in Newark's development, due to its position at the intersection of two major routes, the Great North Road and the Fosseway to Lincoln. River traffic was then primarily local in character and on a very small scale.

In 1772 and 1783 came two pieces of legislation which were instrumental in opening up the Trent valley to water transport, which, being considerably cheaper than road transport, encouraged Newark to prosper. Some of the town's most conspicuous historic buildings and structure's date to this period: Smeaton's causeway for the Great North Road viaduct, Wright's Trent Bridge rebuilding, Carr's magnificent Town Hall, and many fine examples of upper middle class housing. At the same time the setting of the parish church was enhanced, the churchyard enlarged; principal streets and thoroughfares were paved; a theatre was constructed and the shambles rebuilt.

Careful analysis of the site building's fabric and research in historical sources show that it was constructed before 1790, probably in 1787-8, just as Newark's river trade was beginning to prosper. It is the only known purpose built warehouse from this important period in Newark's history to survive. Furthermore, its physical form is a direct response to the peculiarities of the site. It marked the boundary between a private commercial yard (which included at least one riverside warehouse, now demolished) and a public wharf, and, having a full carriage bay, would have served as a gateway building to that yard. The site building also served as a warehouse facility in its own right. Placed as it was, near the wharf and close by the Great North Road and the Fosseway, it could take goods from wagons or Trent ketches (most of which were built in Newark), or, equally, despatch goods. The site building was, therefore, at the heart of a transport interchange.

The site building was commissioned by the Handleys, father and son, prominent merchants and brewers in Newark. William Handley (1719-88) was a leading citizen, alderman from 1756, three times mayor, and active through his family's building business in Newark's great late Georgian expansion. He is known to have paved streets in connection with the town improvement scheme and is reputed to have carried out Smeaton's viaduct for the Great North Road. His son, also William, concentrated on brewing to the exclusion of these other interests. Handley's Wharf Brewery was the largest and most successful in the town in the nineteenth century. Ale sent by boat from the family warehouses and wharves travelled to Handley wharves at Gainsborough, and then, on sea-going vessels, as far as Russia. In return came softwoods in large quantity, which the Handleys, with their background in building would have had no trouble marketing.

The site building continued in commercial use throughout the nineteenth century with little alteration other than the strengthening of the floor with cast iron columns and the insertion of a staircase. In 1934-5 the building was converted for use as a cafe and the building was expanded on the north side.

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1 Introduction

This report provides an initial assessment of The Wharf Cafe, Town Wharf, Newark at the request of Charles Wagner of the English Heritage East Midlands Team. An application to demolish the building was submitted to Newark & Sherwood District Council on 2nd November 1995, and the application has subsequently been called in for determination by the Secretary of State for the Environment.

English Heritage's Historical Research & Analysis Team have been asked to provide information as a basis for written representations to be submitted to the Secretary of State by English Heritage. The work has involved documentary research by Chris Miele and an archaeological assessment of the fabric by Richard Lea. Fieldwork on site was undertaken on Tuesday 1st October.

The Wharf Cafe, hereafter called '*the site building*,' is a grade II listed building which the list description identifies as an early eighteenth century warehouse. The building has been subject to a series of recent fires, which have caused damage to the roof and charring of structural timbers. The local authority declared the building a dangerous structure and the roof above the main range were dismantled under the supervision of the Conservation Manager for the local authority. The roof timbers remain on site.

During the dismantling of the roof, the roof trusses were sketched and a plan was drawn by Philip Heath of Newark and Sherwood Council (see figures 12-14). With the exception of the rafters, the timbers and their structural relationships were recorded using a numbering system. The individual dismantled timbers are now identifiable by numbered plasticised cards nailed to each end.

2 The historical and topographical context of the Wharf Cafe warehouse

2.1 Town Wharf: the site, twelfth to sixteenth centuries

The area now known as Town Wharf¹ lay just outside Newark's first fortifications, a simple earth and bank ditch erected in the twelfth century by Alexander, Bishop of Lincoln (1123-1148), who was responsible for the core of the town with its regular street plan and large market place.² The defenses were rebuilt in the fourteenth century, though the evidence of later maps suggests that they were not maintained. The town stayed within its walls, confined to the high spit of ground around the Castle and Market Place for a very long time.³

In addition to giving the town its distinctive shape, Bishop Alexander is also thought to have been the first to tamper with the Trent, diverting water to improve his defenses. In addition to giving the town its distinctive shape, Bishop Alexander is also thought to have been the first to tamper with the Trent, diverting water to improve his defenses. Somewhat later, north of the town, at the place known as Crankleys, the Trent was split in two in order to drive corn mills at Kelham. At the end of the thirteenth century more corn mills were erected at the Newark end of the Newark Branch, near the junction with the River Devon.⁴

The effect of these works on river trade through Newark itself is not known but was probably negligible since in this period the town's primary transport links were the Great North Road and the Fossway, the road from Leicester to Lincoln. Such river trade as there was at Newark was strictly local in character, designed to serve a compact river valley.⁵

Many of the townspeople were engaged in what is thought to have been a thriving trade in local products and natural resources -- coal, cloth, hides and leather. These were carried largely by road not river: two ancient highways converge on the Market Place, the Great North Road and the Fossway, the road from Leicester to Lincoln.⁶ All in all Newark was prosperous and stable, saved from the drop in

¹ Known as Public Wharf through the late eighteenth and early centuries. It is identified as Town Wharf on Wood's 1829 map.

² See M. Todd, 'Excavations on the Medieval Defenses of Newark, 1972', *Transactions of the Thoroton Society*, vol. 78 (1874), pp. 27-53.

³ M. W. Barley, 'Newark in the Sixteenth Century', *Transactions of the Thoroton Society*, vol. 43 (1949), pp. 15-25, at p. 15.

⁴ Brian Widdowson, in conversation with author, October 1996.

⁵ A. C. Wood, 'The History of Trade and Transport on the River Trent', *Transactions of the Thoroton Society*, vol. 54 (1950), pp. 1-44, at p. 7.

⁶ Barley, p. 15.

productivity that took place in many other places in the late middle ages.⁷ One estimate puts the population in the early thirteenth century as roughly 2,700, a number not exceeded for six centuries.⁸

2.2 Newark's river economy in the seventeenth century: the Civil War and the evidence of the 1645 Siege Plan

The first stirrings of the industrial revolution in Nottinghamshire date to the seventeenth century. Newark played an important role in this economic development, first and foremost as a transport interchange. Wool and corn came into the town to be transported out again by land and also by river to Nottingham and Gainsborough.⁹ In return came coal from the county's rich fields. From the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries some small boats from Gainsborough, which could receive sea-going vessels from North Sea ports as well as from the Baltic, were making their way to Newark, which in the years leading up to the Civil War became a huge inland port for a large percentage of Lincolnshire.¹⁰

The second feature of the local economy which contributed to industrialisation were its boat yards, which provided most of the vessels plying the Trent until well into the nineteenth century.¹¹ By 1790 there was a substantial dry dock at Millgate Wharf and a very large boat yard at Cow Lane Wharf. The town's importance as a centre for malting and brewing came later, in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

This rosy picture of steady economic growth was interrupted, perhaps even disrupted entirely, by hostilities between Parliamentary and Royalist forces. Newark is known by tradition to have supported the Crown. The town was garrisoned and fortified for siege, with substantial defence works being erected in the first half of the 1640s. A plan drawn up in 1645 (figure 1) shows an impressive array. The medieval corn mills appear on the shoals north of the Trent Bridge. Such wharfage and warehousing as there might have been would have been found at this point, on a stretch of river near Millgate and well within the defenses. Immediately south of the bridge was another shoal. The Town Wharf site was outside the earthwork

⁷ Barley, pp. 16-7.

⁸ A. C. Wood, 'A Note on the Population of Six Nottinghamshire Town in the Seventeenth Century', *Transactions of the Thoroton Society*, vol. 41 (1937), pp. 18-25, at pp. 20, 24.

⁹ A petition relating to a scheme to improve the banks of the Trent, dated 1617, can be found in the Nottingham County Record Office (hereafter NCRO), DD 2B/2/13.

¹⁰ Widdowson, in conversation with author, October 1996.

¹¹ Widdowson, in conversation with author, October 1996.

defenses. Had there been any medieval wharfage or warehousing, it surely would have been destroyed in one of three sieges, the last of which was particularly violent and prolonged.¹² River trade was further hampered when the Parliamentary side constructed dams upriver from Newark in an attempt to cut its water supply and slow its grain mills. Royalists in the town countered by damming the Devon just south of the Trent Bridge.¹³ The former were apparently still in place and hindering the flow of the Trent, a century later.¹⁴

After the Civil War the town did not recover quickly. A petition laid before Charles II in July 1661 describes the devastation which had still to be mended. A sixth of the town had been burned; some buildings had been destroyed to make way for the garrison; others had fallen into disrepair; the Bridge was very nearly in ruins.¹⁵ Several court cases relating to the maintenance of the river bank were heard, but no substantial improvements made.¹⁶ Recent research suggests the Mayor and Aldermen might have been exaggerating their plight, since no archaeological investigation has ever turned up a layer of debris from the Civil War period.¹⁷ Nevertheless, the population did dip markedly in the second third of the century.¹⁸ For whatever reason the Crown was slow in answering. A new charter with new powers was only granted in April 1677.

Just how long did it take to repair the damage and restore the town's well being? There is as yet no answer to this question. Some historians follow Maurice Barley in asserting that there was a sudden spurt of growth and great rebuilding in the last decades of the seventeenth century, most of it in brick, which is not to be found in the town before the 1660s.¹⁹ Others, citing evidence of late seventeenth- and early

¹² Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England, *The Civil War Siegeworks* (London: HMSO, 1964), esp. pp. 15, 23, and 47-9.

¹³ Widdowson, in conversation with author, October 1996. See also NCRO, DD 2B /3/1, 9-13, Alterations to the Course of the Trent, 1642.

¹⁴ NCRO, 'Petition ... Newark upon Trent', 1741, DDT 135/1.

¹⁵ C. Brown, *A History of Newark on Trent*, vol. 2 (1907), pp. 142-3.

¹⁶ NCRO, DD 2B/3/34-5, dating to 1660-67.

¹⁷ John Samuels, in conversation with author, October 1996.

¹⁸ A. C. Wood, 'A Note on the Population of Six Nottinghamshire Towns in the Seventeenth Century', *Transactions of the Thoroton Society*, vol. 41 (1937), pp. 18-26, at p. 20.

¹⁹ Barley, p. 18.

eighteenth-century travellers, see development as coming more gradually.²⁰ What can be said with certainty, however, is that by the second quarter of the eighteenth century, the character of the town had changed dramatically, from one built largely of timber to one of bright red brick, and this is the character it wears still. In those same first decades of the eighteenth century the town's population showed tentative signs of recovery.²¹

2.3 Early attempts to improve the navigation of the Trent

After the Restoration there was a spate of schemes to improve inland navigation throughout England. Few succeeded.²² Towards the end of the century Newark was one of more than a dozen Midland towns petitioning parliament for an Act to improve the state of its river.²³ This stressed the need to find new markets in Derbyshire (via the Derwent) for the corn and other grains grown locally in abundance or shipped to the town. Nottingham, which was easily accessible by boat for most of the seventeenth century, went to considerable lengths and expense to oppose Newark and succeeded. The same fate befell the 1695 Derwent Navigation Bill as well as a 1698 scheme to improve the Trent from Burton to Wilden Ferry.²⁴ Newark was in a better position than many other towns in the Trent Valley since it was at least partly accessible by small boats from Gainsborough, though these could not land near the town centre. In 1699 the Burton to Wilden Ferry scheme was revived. Nottingham took the extraordinary measure of stopping all boats from Wilne at Trent Bridges by means of chains. It was a desperate measure that failed; that same year saw the first Act authorising large scale improvements to the Trent, though some years would pass before the improvements were completed.²⁵

There are, sadly, very few illustrations showing the state of the Trent at Newark from this time, an indication of the slight role which the river played in the life of the town. A thumbnail-sized engraving of the castle from the Great North Road made by Daniel King in c1698 for William Camden's *Britannia* shows the north

²⁰ John Samuels, in conversation with author, October 1996. This view is supported by Wood's research into population, which suggests that the numbers living in the town did not begin to reach their pre-Civil War levels until the first part of the eighteenth century.

²¹ Wood, 'Population', pp. 20, 24.

²² T. S. Willan, *River Navigation in England, 1600-1750* (London: Cass and Co., 1964 reprint of 1936 edition), pp 28-9. In Newark several disputes arose relating to the maintenance of the river bank, see NCRO, DD 2B 3/34-5, 1660-67.

²³ Ms. copy of a 1689 Bill relating to the Trent Navigation at NCRO, DD BB 116/1.

²⁴ Willan, pp. 42-5.

²⁵ A. C. Wood, 'Trent', pp. 14-20, and Willan, pp. 43-5, 65-6.

side of the Beast Market built up with three storey structures and the area that is now known as Town Wharf largely bare, though the primary object of this view is the town's position on the Great North Road.²⁶ More detailed views of the Castle made in 1726 and 1727 show the riverbank in a parlous state²⁷, and an engraving of c.1770 (figure 2) confirms that it was in no condition to take commercial boats of any size.

2.4 Newark's Petition of 1741 and John Grundy's 'Plan of the Trent'

In 1741 the Aldermen of Newark petitioned Parliament for an Act to improve the Newark branch of the Trent. Their complaints warrant full quotation.

Mills Erected and several damns made across the said [Newark] Branch in the time of the late Civill Warrs have caused the Navigation thereof to be quite obstructed and your petitioners of late years by reason of several Sands and Sholes formed in the said Branch have been obliged to land their goods and Merchandise ['corn, coal, and wool', according to the opening lines of the petition] in the Meadows of the Said Town (the Property of Diverse Persons) upwards of a mile Distant ... and what goods and Merchandise your petitioners have occasion to Convey up the Trent they are obliged to send two miles by land carriage and there leave them exposed on the Banks of the said River.²⁸

So it appears that boats bound for Newark from Gainsborough and Nottingham unloaded their cargoes north of the town, at Crankleys, that the goods were then carried by road through the town to a site further upstream where they were loaded back onto boats for transport upstream towards Shardlow. Apparently the 'Diverse Persons' whose land had been commandeered for this purpose were not very happy, leaving 'your Petitioners ... destitute of either Navigation or Warfe'. The aldermen -- most of them prominent merchants in the town -- sought the power to dredge the Newark branch and to 'erect such convenient warehouse or warehouses, warfe or warfes' as they may require. The key to economic growth in the eighteenth century was water transport, which cost significantly less than land

²⁶ Folder 21, Acc. 1289 in the Nottinghamshire County Record Office (hereafter NCRO), Nottingham.

²⁷ King's Topographical Collection, British Library, Map Collection: K 33. 31. a, d, and e. The latter was drawn by Millicent and engraved by Kirkstall. These show the wooden precursor to Stephen Wright's Trent Bridge of 1775.

²⁸ NCRO, DDT 135/1.

carriage over short distances and a mere fraction over longer ones.²⁹

Not surprisingly, then, there was strong local support for the petition, particularly among graziers. The opposition was stronger. It came, predictably, from Nottingham with Gainsborough adding its weight to the campaign³⁰; their case was elaborately bolstered by John Grundy Jr., a waterways engineer. His *Objections to the Bill making the Branch of the Trent running by Newark Navigable* appeared in 1743, and focused on those parts of the proposal which called for pound locks to be built at the Newark Corn Mills. Although such locks were known since the late seventeenth century in England, many preferred the old flashing method for negotiating weirs.³¹ Accompanying this pamphlet³² was Grundy's plan, drawn up two years earlier, in 1741, of the two branches of the Trent at Newark and Kelham.

In the end the petitioners failed. How they fared in the face of the impediments set down in their petition is not known. No doubt things carried on much as they had since the turn of the century. The town prospered but not as well it would have had it been accessible by sizeable boats as both Nottingham and Gainsborough were. We have no evidence to suggest that commerce came to a standstill. Indeed, the pace of house building in eighteenth century Newark was remarkably even; only in Millgate was there anything like a speculative housing boom in the late last years of the century.³³ There are fine examples in Appleton Gate, Stodman Street, Northgate, and elsewhere. The only remotely commercial building to survive from this period is the Clinton Arms Inn in Market Place. This would suggest economic growth at a steady if not a meteoric pace.

Not long after the failure of the 1741 petition, the Town Council undertook to improve the state of land transport to and from Newark. A stretch of the Great North Road at Newark had already been turnpiked in the 1720s. In 1755 Trustees were appointed to consider improving the land route from Newark to Little Drayton, but nothing was done until 1766, when a terrific flood damaged the Great North Road. A revived board of Trustees engaged John Smeaton (1724-92), the great engineer, to come up with a scheme to secure this vital land route and his report was ready by 1768.³⁴ It called for a causeway lifting the road above the flood plain. This substantial piece of engineering survives and is listed grade II. Soon after another attempt would be made to improve the Newark Branch of the

²⁹ Willan, pp. 119-20.

³⁰ B. Widdowson, 'A Brief History of the Trent Navigation in the Eighteenth, Nineteenth, and Twentieth Centuries', unpublished typescript (1996), p. 5.

³¹ Willan, pp. 86-9, 93.

³² British Library, Official Publications, SPR 357.c.10 (62).

³³ Statistics taken from the statutory list for Newark.

³⁴ Brown, vol. 2, pp. 293-4

Trent. This one would be more successful.

There is, sadly, a definite lack of archival material relating to this important period of transformation in Newark's economy. Records of land tax payments do not begin until the 1780s³⁵ and our earliest reliable graphic representation of the town is Atterburrow's 1790 Survey. Future archaeological investigations, both below ground and of standing buildings, will almost certainly provide some of the puzzle's missing pieces, as would diligent work in the Duke of Newcastle's papers at Nottingham University and the Treasury Papers at Kew. Until then all we can do is to draw some cautious inferences from barely a handful of documents.

The most easily accessible and revealing of the sources for the present purpose are the parish Poor Rate Books for 1746 to 1748. Remarkably, these record only one warehouse in the entire parish, the mysteriously named 'Company Warehouse', which is rated along with the house of one John Palmer in Northgate.³⁶ His identity and the exact location of his warehouse have yet to be established; however, to judge from later rate books -- in which riverside properties downstream of the Trent Bridge and bordering both the Town Wharf and Cow Lane Wharf to the north are entered under Northgate -- this entry could well have referred to a structure on or very near to Town Wharf. As for other storage venues, these would have been part of merchants's houses or shops and related buildings. Yet the very fact that there is only one specific entry for 'warehouse' in the middle of the century is telling.

2.5 The Newark Navigation Act, 1772

Newark's alderman revived their petition in 1772. The preamble to the Bill reiterates the points made in 1741, adding that the town was now seeking to improve connections with York, Lincoln, Derby, and Stafford. It proposed that Commissioners be appointed to collect 'rates or duties' and to purchase land. Their first object would be to rebuild the Corn Mills upstream and two bridges nearby, making one of them a swing bridge. They were also given the power to build wharfs and quays -- though not warehousing -- in addition to maintaining those areas 'now used as public wharfs'. The location of these is not specified but it is likely that there were by this time at least three: one in Millgate -- which must have been in use since the medieval period; the Town Wharf, or Public Wharf as it was probably then known; and Cow Lane Wharf to the north. The existence of the latter is suggested by one of the conditions set out in the Petition and later Bill, namely that there should be no 'haleing or towing [of] any Boat on the east side [of the river] except to moor at a public wharf from Cow Lane at the North to the

³⁵ There is a good set of Parliamentary Land Tax Returns for Newark for the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. See NCRO, Q DE 1/4. The Newark Land Tax Assessments in the Newark Museum, Appletongate, do not begin until 1788.

³⁶ NCRO, PR 170.

mouth of the River Devon'. In addition to smoothing the way for the growth of commerce, the scheme would prove profitable for the town. Boats travelling through the Newark Branch would have to pay a toll of 2 d. per ton and it was 4 d. per ton to land goods within the Corporation's boundaries.³⁷ The Bill received the Royal Assent that year.

Public Wharf -- to use the name given it on William Atterburrow's Survey of 1790 (figure 3) -- seems to have been the busiest of the three. In 1783 the Town Council debated installing weighing machines near the Castle and the Potterdike. In the following year they decided instead to build two at the junction of the Beast Market and Public Wharf, each capable of taking up to seven tons.³⁸ The presence of these machines here, near the newly rebuilt Bridge, suggests that the town's merchants were treating the Public Wharf as a point of interchange between road and river transport.

The great virtue of the Newark Act was the freedom it gave to property owners along the river. They could, essentially, build whatever they wished on their land -- 'warehouses, quays, landing places, cranes, weighing beams' -- and assign or lease this absolute right to anyone for any period or purpose. Furthermore, the 1772 Act vested rates charged for the use of such facilities in the landowner, his tenant or assign. This term avoided one of the principal defects of the 1699 Navigation Act, which had granted to William, Lord Paget, the bringer of the Bill, exclusive control over the construction of these adjuncts to trade. Accordingly, he monopolised the construction of wharfage and warehousing at Burton to the detriment of other merchants.³⁹

2.6 The expansion of Newark: town improvements in the wake of the 1772 Act

The newly created Commission met for the first time on 14 January 1773. That year two locks at the Devon end of the Newark Branch were rebuilt. A listed lock house is dated to this year.⁴⁰ The locks were capable of taking broad boats of up to 14 feet in width.⁴¹ Seed money for further improvements was raised by a fifty-two year mortgage against future toll income, an arrangement which was in no way

³⁷ NCRO CA 2/3, 'An Act for Improving and Completing the Navigation of that Branch of the River Trent, from a place called The Upper Ware, in the Parish of Aversham ... to a Place called The Crankleys, in the Parish of South Muskham'. Accompanying the Act was a survey by Brindley, which has not been inspected.

³⁸ NCRO, DC/NW/3/1/2, fo. 105 v., 22 April 1784.

³⁹ Willan, p. 116.

⁴⁰ In Castlegate, item number 619-1 8/121.

⁴¹ B. Widdowson, 'History', p. 6, note 6.

unusual.⁴²

The Act coincided with a concerted attempt on the part of the Town Council, Alderman, and the Duke of Newcastle (the largest landowner in the parish and surrounding district) to raise Newark's commercial and architectural profile. In 1770 John Smeaton was commissioned to construct the impressive causeway to carry the Great North Road above the flood plain of the Trent. In 1773, the Town Council obtained an Act of Parliament to divert the income from three of its charity estates in order to pay for Town improvements which would eventually be coordinated by a specially constituted Improvement Commission.⁴³ Principal streets were to be repaved or paved anew. The old Shambles off the Market Place was to be rebuilt along with buildings 'for the use of Butchers and other Persons living in the ... Town with provisions and marketable wares'. The large dry dock near Millgate which is shown on Atterburrow's 1790 survey of the town (figure 3) was probably also constructed at this time.⁴⁴ There were also plans to transform some of the lanes leading up to the spectacular parish church into 'avenues' of more dignified character. The old vicarage was to be rebuilt as part of the programme of enhancements in this area. Most important of all, however, was the construction of a Town Hall, the want of which was for the first time 'keenly felt as trade was increasing'.⁴⁵ John Carr's masterpiece was completed between 1773 and 1776. Interestingly, in these same years the famous York architect was himself heavily involved with improvements in his own town.

The last feather in the town's Georgian cap was the rebuilding of the Trent Bridge itself, a separate undertaking to the designs of architect Stephen Wright, a London man who had trained in the Office of Works under William Kent and was probably an intimate of Lord Burlington. At some point he became a protege of the Duke of Newcastle, a connection that led to several commissions, including, in all probability, this one at Newark.⁴⁶

The 1773 Act also allowed for the comprehensive redevelopment of lands purchased under the terms of William Phillpott's charity (established in a will of 1556). These were located on the edge of the town's historic core, in Millgate and Northgate. Although there were already some houses of quality here⁴⁷, there were

⁴² NCRO, DDT 130/1, Mortgage of Newark Navigation. Obtaining the Act had required substantial outlay, £150 to be precise. See NCRO, DD MG 5/174.

⁴³ Brown, vol. 2, pp. 297-8.

⁴⁴ Widdowson, in conversation with author, October 1996.

⁴⁵ NCRO, CA 2/3.

⁴⁶ See H. Colvin, *A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects, 1600-1840* (3rd ed., London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), p. 1099.

⁴⁷ For example, no. 5 Northgate, listed grade II.

also many tenements. Now, with river trade on the increase, this same land was ripe for suburban development. The 1773 Act did not mince words on the matter: there were a number of prominent citizens eager 'to build substantial houses' near to the centre of the Town. As good Trustees, of course, they had to make every attempt to maximize their charity's income. The Improvements Commissioners oversaw its comprehensive redevelopment, marking the start of Newark's first serious suburban expansion, an essentially linear development along Northgate and Millgate.⁴⁸ Unlike more fashionable suburbs in London being developed from about this time, at Newark there was no strict separation between shop and house. Pleasure grounds sat cheek by jowl with commercial buildings.⁴⁹ Appropriate to the town's growing cosmopolitan character, a theatre was erected in Middle Gate in 1774.⁵⁰

The increased emphasis on river trade did not just affect Newark. The 1760s and 1770s saw the opening up of the Trent valley by a series of Navigation Acts, many involving canals. In 1766 Royal Assent was given to a scheme to link the Trent at Wilden Ferry (Derbyshire) to the Mersey at Runcorn Gap.⁵¹ A canal from the River Severn at Titton Brook to Bewdley was planned to cross the Trent at Heywood Mill, thus bringing together two of England's four great river systems. Three years later improvements between Wilden Ferry and Gainsborough were authorised⁵²; 1769 also saw amending legislation to the 1766 Act.⁵³ In the event the Trent-Mersey link proved hard to establish and further legislation was required in 1775 and 1776, with the canal finally being opened in 1777.⁵⁴ Meanwhile the Chesterfield Canal was begun and a canal linking the Soar to Loughborough was cut.⁵⁵ Finally in 1783 came an Act granting powers for the construction of a

⁴⁸ A. Cooper, 'Newark in 1830', *Transactions of the Thoroton Society*, vol. 74 (1970), pp. 38-144, at p. 40. The largest group of houses marking this episode in the town's history are to be found in Millgate; many are listed. Fewer survive in Northgate, which became heavily industrial in the later nineteenth century. Nos. 14 and 35, both listed grade II, are excellent examples of the sort of housing built on the old charity land at this time.

⁴⁹ In addition to Handley House, no. 7 Northgate, there are also nos. 14 and 35 Northgate, also listed in grade II. The latter is particularly interesting for the surviving malthouse, kiln and stabling which is attached to the house.

⁵⁰ Brown, vol. 2, p. 310.

⁵¹ 6 G. III (1766), c. 96 and 97.

⁵² 10 G. III (1769), c. 57.

⁵³ 10 Geo. II (1769), c. 102 and 103.

⁵⁴ 15 Geo. III (1775), c. 20 and 16 Geo. III (1776), c. 32.

⁵⁵ In 1776 and 1778 respectively. Widdowson, in conversation with author, October 1996.

railway linking the Mersey Trent Canal to Caldon in Staffordshire.⁵⁶

2.7 The Trent Navigation Act, 1783

This activity culminated in the Trent Navigation Act of 1783, which allowed for comprehensive enhancements from Shardlow to Gainsborough, excluding that portion of the river already covered by the 1772 Act. In the short term this hurt Newark as it called for the town's tolls to be halved, but ultimately this opening up of the Trent valley was to increase the volume of traffic on the river, and thus, ultimately, bring great benefits to the town. Under the Act the towing of boats by horse became a legal right; the resulting Trent Navigation Company constructed a towpath from Shardlow to Nottingham in its first year and one from Nottingham to Gainsborough the following.⁵⁷ The canal companies, by now mushrooming, were soon pressurizing the Company to increase the minimum depth of the river to match theirs. William Jessop's first report on the Trent, dated 1791, recommended a minimum depth of no less than four feet and called for 15 locks. The Company objected and he duly revised; a minimum depth of 30 inches and ten locks were accepted.⁵⁸

In 1795 standard boat dimensions were introduced in order to facilitate the gauging of cargoes. From these it is possible to reconstruct a typical, late eighteenth-century Trent ketch. In length it was 71 and 1/2 feet and in breadth 13 feet 10 inches. When fully laden at 40 ton, it drew 31.74 inches. It had a central, square rigged sail and a smaller mizzen mast (or jury mast) for use in the Humber estuary to improve the handling of the barge when tacking. There were lee boards in place of a keel.⁵⁹

2.8 The building of the site building on the Public Wharf, 1787-8

The documentary evidence

At this point, in the 1780s, as the several schemes overseen by the Improvement Commissioners were completed, we find the first hard documentary evidence relating to the site building, in the forms of two plans of the town (1788 and 1790) and the Parliamentary Land Tax Assessments.

⁵⁶ 23 Geo. III (1783), c. 33.

⁵⁷ Widdowson, 'A History', p. 6.

⁵⁸ Widdowson, 'History', pp. 6-7, and in conversation with author, October 1996.

⁵⁹ Widdowson, in conversation with author, October 1996, and 'History', pp. 9-10. Mr. Widdowson is the first person to analyze the Trent Navigation Gauging tables. A typescript summarising his findings can be found in the Newark Local Studies Library.

First, the evidence of the 1788 plan, which details the Crown's holdings in the town held on long lease to the Duke of Newcastle. The Public Wharf is shown quite clearly.

The 1788 plan shows a gap on the location of the site building, which may be taken as proof that it was not yet built or under construction; however, a comparison between this plan and Atterburrow's highly reliable Survey of two years later, shows that the former is inaccurate in many regards. This plan is, therefore, not conclusive proof for the dating of the building. As for the block shown on the riverside, in a position where one would expect to find a warehouse, this may be the 'Company Warehouse' recorded in the Poor Rates of 1746-8⁶⁰ or it may indicate the large warehouse block recorded in an early twentieth-century photograph (figure 10) and since demolished. Finally, there is the possibility that this part of the 1788 plan may simply be a shorthand device describing one or more buildings on or near this part of the site, including, perhaps, the site building.

The site building is clearly shown on the 1790 Survey (figure 3), which provides the *terminus ante quem* for the structure.

For further elucidation we must turn to the Parliamentary Land Tax Assessments for Newark. Entries from the early 1780s show this entire site in the occupation of William Handley (of whom more below), whose property stretched from Northgate to the river and bordered the Public Wharf. Entries for 1783 describe the property as consisting of his own house, a Brick Kiln, three tenement closes, a house and brewhouse for his son William Jr. and two other houses. Also rated is a warehouse, tenanted by one David Stephenson, who is listed in the *Universal British Directory* of 1791 as a member of the local gentry and an alderman. It seems likely that Stephenson -- whose warehouse was rated for £1.10.0 -- was running the warehouse as a commercial concern and letting it from Handley exactly as the terms of the 1772 Act allowed.

In 1787 the rateable value of the site increased dramatically, indicating an extensive rebuilding. Stephenson name is no longer associated with the site. In place of his modest warehouse is a warehousing complex rated at £4.0.0, and a new Malt Office rated at £2.0.0., in addition to the family home and the house and office of William Jr.⁶¹ All the rates were paid for by the elder Handley. The recently expanded Handley property is clearly delineated on Atterburrow's 1790 Survey (figure 3), though the exact function of the individual buildings shown here must remain conjectural. The U-shaped block shown on Atterburrow's Survey and in a photograph of the 1920s (figure 10) dates to this period of intense rebuilding, as it conforms to a

⁶⁰ NCRO, PRO 170.

⁶¹ See NCRO, Q DE 1/4, 1780-1832.

standard type. Did bricks from an older building on or near the location of the site building (Stephenson's Company Warehouse) find their way into the site building at this time? Were the surviving roof trusses also reused? These possibilities cannot be entirely dismissed.

The fabric combined with the documentary evidence

In order to integrate this documentary information with the site building, it is absolutely essential to turn to the analysis of the building fabric itself (a full analysis of which is to be found in the section 4 of this report). In fine this analysis supports an eighteenth-century date, probably of two phases. The evidence for the first phase of construction takes the form of bricks found in the lower storey of the building in each elevation. These are of small and irregular dimensions, suggesting a late seventeenth- or early eighteenth-century date. The upper floor bricks are more regular and are of one continuous build with the wall plate and its associated trusses. According to a local expert on timber framing the form of these trusses and their constructional details are post-medieval, that is, of a style of construction used from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, not pit sawn timbers of the late eighteenth century.⁶² A likely explanation for the two sorts of bricks is that they come from an earlier building on or near the site building.

The bulk of the site building is therefore of late eighteenth-century vintage, 1787-90 to be precise. The only remaining question is whether the present building incorporates in its lower walls the remains of an earlier eighteenth-century warehouse (possibly of one storey), or whether it is of one build using a mixture of old and new materials or materials of varying dimensions. Further analysis of the buildin may answer this question.

Comparable examples in Newark: the rarity of the site building

At the time of writing the site building appears to be the earliest known purpose-built and free-standing warehouse in Newark. Three other structures which might have served as warehouses and which seem to be of comparable date are known to survive, but in each case they are extensions built to the rear of one or a pair of houses. The most intriguing and complete survival is to be found at nos. 3-5 Castlegate; the rear extension warehouse is three storeys tall and has three bays with a hoist at the top. Near to the site building and positioned at the top of the Beast Market, it was perfectly located to capitalize on road and river traffic. A date of c.1800 is given in the statutory list. In Town Wharf itself, close to Northgate, are two rear extensions to no. 7 Bargate, both listed and described as mid to late eighteenth century. However, a cursory examination of the exteriors suggests a quasi-domestic or office use (the window openings are too large for a warehouse), and so these may perhaps have been malt offices. Finally there is the cycle shop in

⁶² John Samuels, in conversations with author, October and November, 1996.

Boar Lane⁶³, whose modest rear warehouse extension can only have been suited to a small-scale enterprise.

An exhaustive analysis of surviving riverside buildings and building complexes might turn up a building of similar date and character to the site building, but until then the site building appears to be unique.

The original use of the site building

Our reconstruction of the eighteenth-century building (see following section) shows a structure of two storeys and 4 and 1/2 bays. One of its most telling features is the carriageway to the east of centre of the building. As can be seen from the 1790 Survey (figure 3) this building bounded a large commercial yard, part of it used for brewing. The stout beams of the first floor -- measuring 320x320 in section -- suggest, furthermore, that the first floor was used for storage of heavy goods. The relatively small windows and the absence of substantial chimneystacks reinforces our interpretation of the site building as a warehouse. It would in addition have functioned as a gateway building for the yard behind. Wagons could have been unloaded within the building itself.

There is as yet no direct evidence of the day-to-day functioning of the industrial buildings on this site, although an exhaustive search of Settlement Statements from the period (of which there is a large collection for Newark) might well shed some light on the workforce and through them on the business. The location of the buildings and their overall layout, taken together with what is known about the family business of the owner at this time, allows some conclusions to be drawn.

Conclusions

- 1 It is likely that both the site building and the larger U-shaped block built hard by the Trent functioned as general purpose warehouses and were not tailored to one particular product. Trade worked in two directions; boats laden with coal from Nottingham or other goods from Gainsborough (including Baltic softwoods) took back the area's local produce, principally wool and corn and, from about this time, beer. And we know from records relating to the owner of the site, William Handley the elder, that they were at this stage both general merchants and brewers.
- 2 The site building was designed to be accessible by two forms of transport: the carriageway suggests a link with vehicular traffic on the Great North Road and the Fossway, while the proximity to Public Wharf made it equally handy for goods delivered by ketch and in smaller quantities than would have been directly unloaded by crane into the larger, riverside warehouse (figure 10). In short, the

⁶³ statutory list item no. 619-1 8/72.

site building was both a warehouse and gateway, a transport interchange.

Finally, both the site building and the larger block which is no longer standing would almost certainly have been let out to all and sundry and not monopolized by the site's owner, although an increasing percentage would almost certainly have been taken up by the adjacent brewery as this expanded in the nineteenth century. It will be remembered that the 1772 Act -- one of whose initiators was responsible for the site building -- was unusual in allowing private individuals to build warehouses for public use in conjunction with established landing places. Furthermore, the Handley family did not specialise in any one form of trade until the early nineteenth century.

2.9 The builder of the site building: the Handleys of Newark

Atterburrow's 1790 Survey (figure 3) identifies the owner of the site building and the surrounding buildings as belonging to William Handley (1746-1798). He had recently inherited the site and the family business from his father, also William (1719-1788), and it was he, the latter, who paid for the construction of new industrial buildings recorded in the 1787 Land Tax Assessment described above. Father and son had started brewing on this site in the late 1770s. At the same time they set themselves up as general merchants. Ale was shipped to Gainsborough -- where the Handleys had wharfage built at roughly the same time as the site building⁶⁴ -- and from there, by larger boats, to Russia. Baltic softwoods came back in return, having been transferred from sea-going vessels to Trent ketches at Gainsborough.⁶⁵

The Handley family had played an important role in the development of Newark during the eighteenth century. They came from the nearby parish of Balderton in the late seventeenth century. John Handley (1662-1734) is described as a bricklayer but also had farming interests. By 1710 he appears on the list of electors, demonstrating that he had become a man of substance, more than likely by acting as a speculative builder in the great rebuilding of the town. His eldest son, William (1691-1738), was a mason with a house in Barnbygate.⁶⁶ Leases in the County Record Office suggest that he was operating as a speculative builder by the

⁶⁴ See wills of the two William Handleys, NCRO, PRNW, Archdeaconry Wills, proved 13 January 1786, and NCRO, DDT 122/116, transcribed 21 March 1799.

⁶⁵ G. Y. Hemingway, *The Handley Family of Newark and Sleaford* (privately printed: 1992) edited by R. C. Handley, pp. 28-32.

⁶⁶ Hemingway, pp. 18, 22-4.

1720s⁶⁷, if not earlier. His son William (1719-1788), who built the site building, makes his first appearance in the town's records in 1738, when as a churchwarden he was called to answer charges that funds from the Phillpott, Brown and Magnus Charities were being improperly used.⁶⁸

This second William Handley continued in the building line, obtaining some work through connections he had made as churchwarden⁶⁹, but he had his eyes on higher things. By the early 1770s he began the momentous transition from working class speculator made good to prominent middle class merchant. He was admitted as an Alderman to the Town Council in 1756, a position he retained until his death.⁷⁰ He served as Mayor in 1760, 1771, and 1784. He was, furthermore, an active promoter of the Newark Navigation Act. He sat as an Enclosure Commissioner for Balderton and other surrounding parishes, in addition to sitting on the town Sewers Commission (and it would be very surprising if further research did not show that he undertook much of the building work). Handley is said also to have executed the contract for Smeaton's Great North Road viaduct and to have carried out some of the work of improving the Newark Branch of the Trent, which is entirely plausible.⁷¹ We know for a fact that he acted as paving contractor in 1773 and 1774, even arranging for the shipment of 300 tonnes of cobbles from York via Gainsborough to Newark.⁷² Contracts for drainage works and canal building at Everton also came to him at this time.⁷³ Despite this continued involvement with building contracting, several documents from the early 1770s identify Mr. Handley Sr. as 'merchant'.

By the second half of the 1770s Handley abandoned the family business entirely. He moved the family from Barnbygate to a grand early eighteenth-century merchant's house in Northgate, now known as Handley House and listed grade II. He bought up further riverside properties in the Northgate area, undoubtedly seeking to take advantage of the hoped for boom in river trade that was to follow the Newark Navigation Act. By the end of the decade, just as the Newark Branch

⁶⁷ NCRO, DDH 31-9, 17 March 1727, and DDH 16 1-2, 4 April 1732.

⁶⁸ NCRO, DD 1440/82, 13 January 1738.

⁶⁹ NCRO, DD MG 5(30) and 5(50), 2 January 1748 or 1749 and 8 January 1749 or 1750: receipted bills from Handley for painting and repairs to the house and walls of the master of the Magnus Charity Grammar School.

⁷⁰ NCRO, Ms. 1470.

⁷¹ Hemingway, pp. 28-9.

⁷² NCRO, DD MG 8(5) and 5(203), letters from M. Arnold at Gainsborough to Mr. Handley Sr. 'merchant, at Newark', 9 and 30 June 1773; see also DD MG 7(7) 2 May 1774, receipt to W. Handley for 'repairing and paving streets'.

⁷³ NCRO, DD MG 5(224) and 5(250), 6 January 1774 and 26 December 1775.

was becoming navigable, he added brewing to his commercial portfolio.⁷⁴ He had been introduced to the trade by Samuel Sketchley, who had emigrated to Newark from Burton sometime in the 1750s or 1760s, becoming one of Handley's fellow Alderman in 1775.⁷⁵ Sketchley is thought to have established a brewery in 1766, which is reputed to be the first in Newark, though it is very likely that brewing on a small scale was going on well before this. The Poor Rate Assessments of 1746-48 list several 'malt floors' and 'malt stores' around the town.⁷⁶ Still earlier, in 1655, the Town Council Minutes record a bequest made by one John Johnson, resident of Newark and 'maltster'.⁷⁷

What Sketchley probably established was the first commercial-scale brewery along the lines of the Burton breweries. Handley bought him out.⁷⁸ The exact location of Sketchley's brewery has yet to be established, but it could well have been on or near the site of the Handley house in Northgate. Before long William Handley was sending his brew from Newark up the Trent and across the North Sea to Russia, the goods having been transferred from ketch to sea-going vessel at Gainsborough, where the family would later own wharfage. The Empress Catherine was said to have been particularly fond of Handley's own 'stout humming ale'.⁷⁹ In return came large amounts of Baltic softwoods, which, with his connections in the building trade, Handley would have known how to market.

His eldest son, another William (1746-1798), started out on the same career path as the father. His appointment as Commissioner of Sewers in 1781 (a post he held until 1794) suggests that the family still had some links to building. Unfortunately, a conviction for house breaking stood in the way of his becoming an Alderman.⁸⁰ Freed from the obligations of civic duty, he was able to focus all his energies on commerce. It was his decision to develop the brewing side of the family business.⁸¹

⁷⁴ Hemingway, p. 32.

⁷⁵ NCRO, Ms. 1481.

⁷⁶ NCRO, PRO 130.

⁷⁷ NCRO, DC/NW 3/1/1, fos. 305-6.

⁷⁸ A. Barnard, *Noted Breweries of Great Britain and Ireland* (London: Causton and Sons, 1890), vol. 3, pp. 365-6.

⁷⁹ R. P. Shilton, *History of Newark* (1820), as quoted in *Newark and the Magic of Malt*, ed. by P. Stephens, (Nottingham: County Council Leisure Services, 1993), at p. 8.

⁸⁰ NCRO, DC/NW 3/1/2, Town Council Minutes, 1675-1835, fo. 104, 18 December 1783, and following.

⁸¹ Hemingway, 32, 35-7.

Handley's timing was impeccable. Newark was then poised to become one of the most important centres for brewing and malting in England. Although the range and quality of its beer never quite matched the products of Burton upstream, when it came to malting few places matched Newark. Indeed, by the end of the century there were more malthouses here than anywhere else in Great Britain.⁸² The Handley family stuck with brewing, becoming one of Newark's two principal brewers, along with the Castle Brewery.⁸³

Gradually the next Handley in Northgate, William Farnsworth, distanced himself from the brewery, eventually handing over control of it to Richard Warwick, formerly a manager in a local bank. Disagreement over the management of the Wharf Brewery, as it came to be known, led to Warwick buying out the Handley interest. In 1871 he secured a large piece of land near the Great Northern Railway, on which he built a new brewery, sparing no expense in order to ensure a facility with the latest and most sophisticated plant. The Wharf Brewery site off Northgate was kept on for stabling and bottling. The beer travelled between sites on a GNR siding that terminated in Cow Lane Wharf.⁸⁴ From this time the focus of activity on the Wharf Brewery site shifted away from site building to those buildings nearer Cow Lane Wharf, which may explain why the site building's basic structure survived intact until the recent fire. In 1889 Warwick's amalgamated with Richards's Brewery. The business was eventually absorbed by John Smith's, now part of Courage's.

2.10 Newark's riverside industry in the early nineteenth century

By the turn of the century industrial development in Newark was concentrated along the river and centred around the Castle. Town Wharf, or Public Wharf as it was known until the nineteenth century, was the busiest of the three principal wharfs, the most important for 'general business' purposes, and the oldest north of the Trent Bridge. Its primacy stemmed from the proximity of the Beast Market, Fossway and Great North Road. Castle Wharf, at the foot of the Castle, was a coal wharf with three shipment places, a house and counting house. Further upstream was Cruckstool Wharf, which was probably also used for coal. The area behind Millgate and along the river was extensively developed in the years following the Newark Navigation Act; there was also a dry dock here, the only one shown on Atterburrow's 1790 Survey, and several smaller wharves. Cow Lane Wharf, north

⁸² Barnard, pp. 365-72; see also Stephens, *Magic*, *passim*.

⁸³ The office range of which survives and is listed in grade II. See 619-1 8/5. It dates to the late nineteenth century.

⁸⁴ Newark Local Studies Library, typescript, dated 1944, L66.1.

of Public Wharf, was also a creature of the 1772 Act.⁸⁵ The area between it and Public Wharf, or Town Wharf as it was now being called, was one of Newark's early industrial suburbs, and was packed with malshouses by 1830.⁸⁶ Cow Lane Wharf was also the site of Flint's boatyard, a reminder that Newark boat builders were the busiest on the Trent.⁸⁷

2.11 The site building in the twentieth century

After the transfer of the business to a greenfield site near the Great Northern Railway, the Wharf Brewery complex was retained and adapted for stabling and bottling. According to the recollection of a local resident, one part of the site building was used as a tea-room for warehousemen.⁸⁸ The planning application for converting the site building from a warehouse to a cafe, the Wharf Cafe, survives in the Archives of Newark and Sherwood District Council and is dated 1934.⁸⁹ The accompanying plans (figure 11) do not show the present two-storey extension, which must have been constructed between 1934 and 1948, as the District Council Planning Register for 1948-74 does not list an application for works to the site building.⁹⁰

⁸⁵ A good series of maps for this area of the town is to found in the NCRO, NE 5L-9L.

⁸⁶ For a summary of this development, see Cooper, 1970 as above, and the same author's 'Victorian Newark', *Transactions of the Thoroton Society*, vol. 75 (1971), pp. 103-14.

⁸⁷ Widdowson, in conversation with author, October 1996.

⁸⁸ *Newark Advertiser*, 3 August 1990, p. 4.

⁸⁹ D20. 77/1941.

⁹⁰ NCRO, CC/SV/15/2/1-3, Registers of Planning Development Approval, 1948-1974. The District Council Registers for 1974 to 1981 are at NCRO, DC/NS. These were not examined as part of this research.

3 An architectural description of the present building

Note - At present, as a result of the recent fires, the building is without a roof, the interior finishes are fire damaged and most of the windows and doors have been blocked up.

The Wharf Cafe consists of an east-west, two storey range of four and a half bays with a hipped extension at the east end. Although the eaves of the extension are continuous with the main range, the extension is not as wide consequently, the hipped roof is not as tall. The east wall of the extension is not square with facade. Additions on the north side of the main range are clearly of a separate build from the main range. They date from the twentieth century (see figure 14).

The walls of the principal range are of brick construction, a single skin, 9" thick, rough cast on the exterior, and rendered or lined with modern plywood panelling internally. The bonding pattern, where it is exposed, is a very loose Flemish bond with a disproportionate number of stretchers. At eaves level the wall terminates in a simple brick corbelled cornice.

In the main facade, doors set within windows open into the three eastern bays. At the west end a single door opens into the half bay. The windows in the two intervening bays are timber casements. The first floor windows are of the same pattern and aligned with the ground floor. The implied bays correspond with the roof structure. The west gable wall has one window in the ground floor and two at first floor. The north wall is now mostly obscured by the later additions, although there is a door exposed at first floor level at the west end. The east wall of the extension has a small window on each floor. A buttress like feature in the middle may either serve to support a floor beam or possibly served as a gate post for the yard to the north.

The roof (now dismantled) between the two gable walls of the main range consists of four arched collar trusses with tie beams, and staggered butt purlins. Before the recent fires some of the trusses had diagonal and vertical struts nailed in place.

The ground floor is solid. The first floor of the main range is lime ash on lathes resting on joists.

The largest addition to the north is a two storey block abutting the eastern half of the earlier building. It continues as a single storey westwards as far as the half bay. The addition is constructed in brick with concrete lintels. The brick wall extending northwards from the north-east corner is of the same build. The two latest additions to the north are of concrete block construction with corrugated iron, pitched and lean-to roofs. They appear to enclose an earlier small brick shed.

4 The historical development of the fabric of the site building

The aim of the fieldwork was to use the fabric of the building as a basis for reconstructing its history. Some of the brickwork behind the plaster and rendered surfaces, as a result of the fires, has been exposed. This has enabled the simplified phasing of the building's structural development illustrated in the accompanying illustrations.

The reconstruction drawings (figures 19-25) are an attempt to reconstruct the principal east range of the building as it first appeared with the present roof structure before the addition of the structures to the north. They show the interior elevations of the principal range.

Dark hatching in these drawings is used to denote work interpreted as dating from the eighteenth century, paler hatching denotes reconstruction. In some cases this is based on the supposition that original work survives behind plaster or rendered surfaces, in other cases where openings have clearly been cut through or altered a reconstruction of the original arrangement is shown. A more detailed discussion of the evidence on which this reconstruction is based is included as an appendix to this report.

It must be stressed that this is a preliminary interpretation, based on a single visit, and that much of the early structural fabric of the building was not visible as a result of modern render and plaster finishes.

4.1 Phase 1: a seventeenth century brick building?

In both the north and south wall in the eastern half of the principal range and the eastern extension, there was a concentration of smaller bricks measuring between 50 and 60mm in thickness in the lower parts of the walls. The size of the bricks suggests a seventeenth century date of construction. However, the full extent of the masonry employing these smaller bricks was not fully determined and it is not possible at this stage to tell if this constitutes an earlier phase of building.

It is therefore possible that there was a brick building on the site of the principal range and that the present structure constitutes a rebuilding or enlargement.

The documentary evidence however points to the conclusion that the site was not developed until the later eighteenth century and that the smaller bricks are simply a variation in the building materials used at that date.

4.2 Phase 2: an eighteenth century warehouse

The archaeology of the building suggests that the principal range comprises an eighteenth century industrial structure, most probably a warehouse (see figures 19-23).

The walls of the principal range were built with bricks measuring between 60 and 70mm in thickness. This phase includes the smaller hipped bay at the east end of the range. The wall plate immediately above the corbelled brick cornice, continuous around the whole of the principal range, is scarf jointed at intervals. This links the construction of the roof to that of the walls implying they were of the same build. The brick walls were painted internally and externally with limewash.

The pattern of original window and door openings is no longer readily apparent (see detailed discussion in the attached Appendix). However, there were large segmental arched openings in the long walls, doors at first floor level in the south wall and an irregular pattern of window openings. An Edwardian photograph shows a large door at first floor level in the facade in the bay west of the carriage door bay. The precise nature of these windows and door openings is not known although the windows were probably lead glazed windows set in solid timber frames with some opening casements.

It is not clear how access to the first floor was obtained. The present staircase appears to have been inserted, probably in the later nineteenth century. It is possible that the half bay at the west end of the building housed a staircase but this area was not visited during the survey. There was a doorway at first floor level in the north wall of the hipped extension. This suggests the possibility of an external staircase to the north. A staircase is shown in this position on the planning application drawing of 1934 (figure 9) but as this is labelled 'NEW STAIRS' it is not clear whether there were any in this location before this date.

The function of the building implied by the fabric evidence

The absence of internal partitions and small room sizes indicates that the building was not used for domestic accommodation. This and the absence of any architectural elaboration suggests an utilitarian application.

The first floor main beams are substantial indicating that the floor construction was intended to be very strong. The lime ash floor created a very smooth and durable floor surface. This surface would have been suitable for the handling of grain in sacks suggesting warehousing although such floors are also found in domestic buildings of the period.

Wide arches suggesting carriage doors, diametrically opposed, are characteristic of barn design. This feature allows a horse drawn cart to pass through the building for loading and unloading. Cart sheds combined with granaries, a common building type⁹¹, incorporate openings of this size with a first floor. Barns required greater head room. In this location it is possible that the arches also functioned effectively as a gatehouse to an inner yard, presumably on the north side of the range.

⁹¹ R W Brunskill, *Traditional Buildings of Britain*, 1992 pp. 63, 163

The construction date of the site building

William Atterburrow's Survey of Newark, 1790 (figure 3) shows a building on the site of the Wharf Cafe as a long rectangle which, when scaled, measured c 18 x 5.5m. A similar building is shown on A Plan of Newark by John Wood, 1829 (figure 4) which when scaled appears to have measured c 18 x 7m.

Neither of the two surveys shows the east end of the building as anything other than square. The long dimension of 18m corresponds with the mean length of the two existing long sides of the principal range of the Cafe building. This now measures c 6m in width.

Given the scale of the two surveys and estimated tolerances for their accuracy, it appears reasonable to assume that the building surveyed 1790 and 1829 was the main range of the present building.

This fits with the fabric evidence which suggests an earlier construction date either in the C18. This is based on the following observations.

- The design of the roof truss, the arched collar, butt purlins, tie beam is difficult to date closely. Butt purlin roofs are common in the sixteenth century and run on into the nineteenth. Generally, by the late eighteenth century the king post roof had become dominant.
- The use of oak for the trusses suggests an earlier, seventeenth century date, but used in conjunction with a pine wall plate an eighteenth century date is more likely.
- The carpentry techniques employed in the construction of the roof truss, quality of workmanship, pegged mortice and tenon joints continued into the nineteenth century.
- Carpenters continued to number their trusses, floor beams and joists using chiselled Roman numerals from the seventeenth into the nineteenth century⁹².
- The size of the bricks, 60-70mm, is consistent with an eighteenth century date.
- Flemish bond has been dominant since the seventeenth century.

4.3 Phase 3: nineteenth century minor alterations, c 1830?

Cast iron columns of early nineteenth century appearance were inserted under the

⁹² Richard Harris, *Discovering Timber Framed Buildings* 1982, ill. 22

main beams of the first floor. This indicates that the floor was fully loaded and suggests an industrial or commercial use.

The staircase in the north-east corner of the principal range was probably inserted at this date. It necessitated the relocation of the door between the extension and the main range. The door lining incorporated a panelled round arch. This is probably not later than the early nineteenth century (see figure 24).

The small window at the foot of the stairs in the north wall was probably also modified at this date.

4.5 Phase 4: conversion for use as a cafe, 1934

The drawing submitted in 1934 to the Borough of Newark titled *Proposed Alterations to Cafe, Town's Wharf for Mrs Marsh* (figure 9) shows the principal range still without any major additions to the north. The proposal was to use the east half the principal range as a cafe with an office in the east extension. Access to the east half of the first floor was to be via the office. This indicates that the upper floor was not open to the cafe clientele and was probably to be used as a store.

Three doors set in windows are shown in the ground floor of the main facade. It is not clear whether these were proposed or existing. Stylistically they are consistent with other alterations included in this proposal. '4. NEW WINDOWS' were proposed for the first floor. The door in the half bay at the west end was shown as a small window into 'E Knight's Office.'

At this time it is clear that the building had been divided into two tenancies if not ownerships. The west end of the principal range was occupied by E Knight as part of the warehouse immediately to the north and west. A 'NEW STAIRS' was proposed on the north side of the east extension but it would appear that this was not built. Either the staircase inside the principal range was built at this date or it was retained from the earlier date suggested above in section 4.4.

The drawing does not show the iron columns at ground floor level but, given the general lack of detail, this omission cannot be taken as evidence they had not been installed by this date.

4.5 Phase 5: the construction of a two storey addition after 1934 and before 1948

A two storey brick addition was constructed along the north side of the main range (see figure 24). The windows and doors were spanned with concrete lintels. The addition terminated at its west end in line with the insertion of a cross wall inside the main range. Access to the addition was obtained by doorways cut through the north wall at landing level and at first floor level. The door at first floor level cut through an earlier window. The window was presumably made redundant by the

construction of the addition to the north. The window in the north wall next to the staircase was reduced in size.

The joinery of the windows in the south wall of the principal range and the lining of the interior with thin plywood panelling appears to date from the same period or later.

The construction of the additional range must have occurred after 1934 since it is not shown on the planning application of that date (see figure 7). It is possibly shown on the OS map of 1938 (figure 10). It probably occurred before 1948 since there is no reference to its construction in the Newark planning registry between 1948 and 1974.

4.6 Phase 6: minor alterations c 1970

The building was extended again to the north by the addition of concrete block structures with a corrugated low pitched roofs. This appears to have taken place within the last twenty years. These additions are shown on the OS map of 1976 (figure 11).

Following the disuse of the building, many of the windows especially those in the south wall were blocked with breeze blocks.

5 The potential for further research

The present report is simply an outline appraisal of a building which has undergone many changes. It is based on observations made during a visit of only a few hours. Further study of the fabric will inevitably lead to the resolution of some of the outstanding problems of interpretation.

The warehouse is a building type which is often ignored in favour of industrial structures which more obviously reflect process - such as the textile mill or factory. Studies of financial investment in Manchester show how significant the warehouse was in attracting investment, and how important the collection and distribution of goods was to the local economy.

5.1 Further documentary research

In order to obtain a fuller picture of the site building's history and historical context, further research in the following archival sources should be pursued. There may be references to the tolls the town was able to extract under the 1772 and 1783 Acts amongst the Treasury papers at the Public Record Office in Kew. The PRO may also have some papers relating to the Trent Navigation Company, although the manuscripts collection of the Nottingham University Library is known to have a large deposit of TNC papers. Finally, there are the Duke of Newcastle papers, including rent books, title deeds, and the like. Although the site building and Wharf Brewery were on the land which the Duke held on long lease from the Crown, these papers are bound to contain information which will give a fuller picture of trade and industry in Newark from the time of Charles II to the late eighteenth century, a period about which we know very little.

The Handley's Wharf Brewery records have passed to the archives of John Smith's in Tadcaster. There are, according to the archivist, no papers relating to the brewery before the middle of the nineteenth century.

5.2 Further fabric research

We do not yet fully understand how the early eighteenth century warehouse was accessed and loaded. There is as yet no evidence for an internal staircase contemporary with the early eighteenth century structure or trap doors. It is possible that there is evidence for either exterior stairs or support for a hoist. This could be resolved by further work on the building.

There is probably a good deal of additional evidence for the form of the openings to the ground floor of the early building which would be revealed if the present finishes were removed.

Dendrochronology would probably provide a date for the construction of the roof of the main range.

Figure 1 The siege plan of Newark, 1645, British Library, Maps.

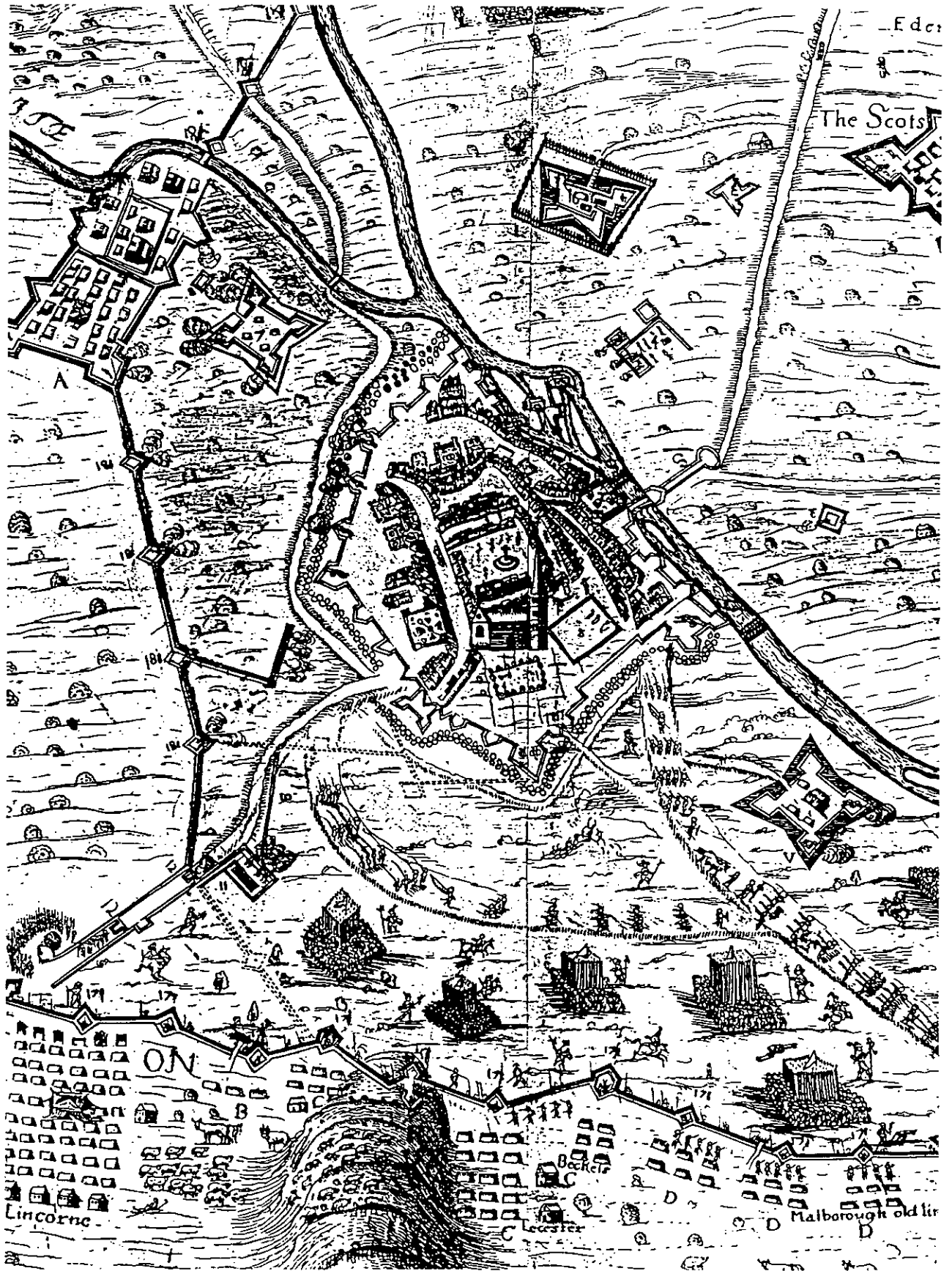


Figure 2

A view of the river and castle from the south-west, c 1770, courtesy of Brian Widdowson.



NEWARK CASTLE; NOTTINGHAMSHIRE.

Figure 4

A detail from A Plan of Newark by John Wood, 1829, Newark Local Studies Collection.

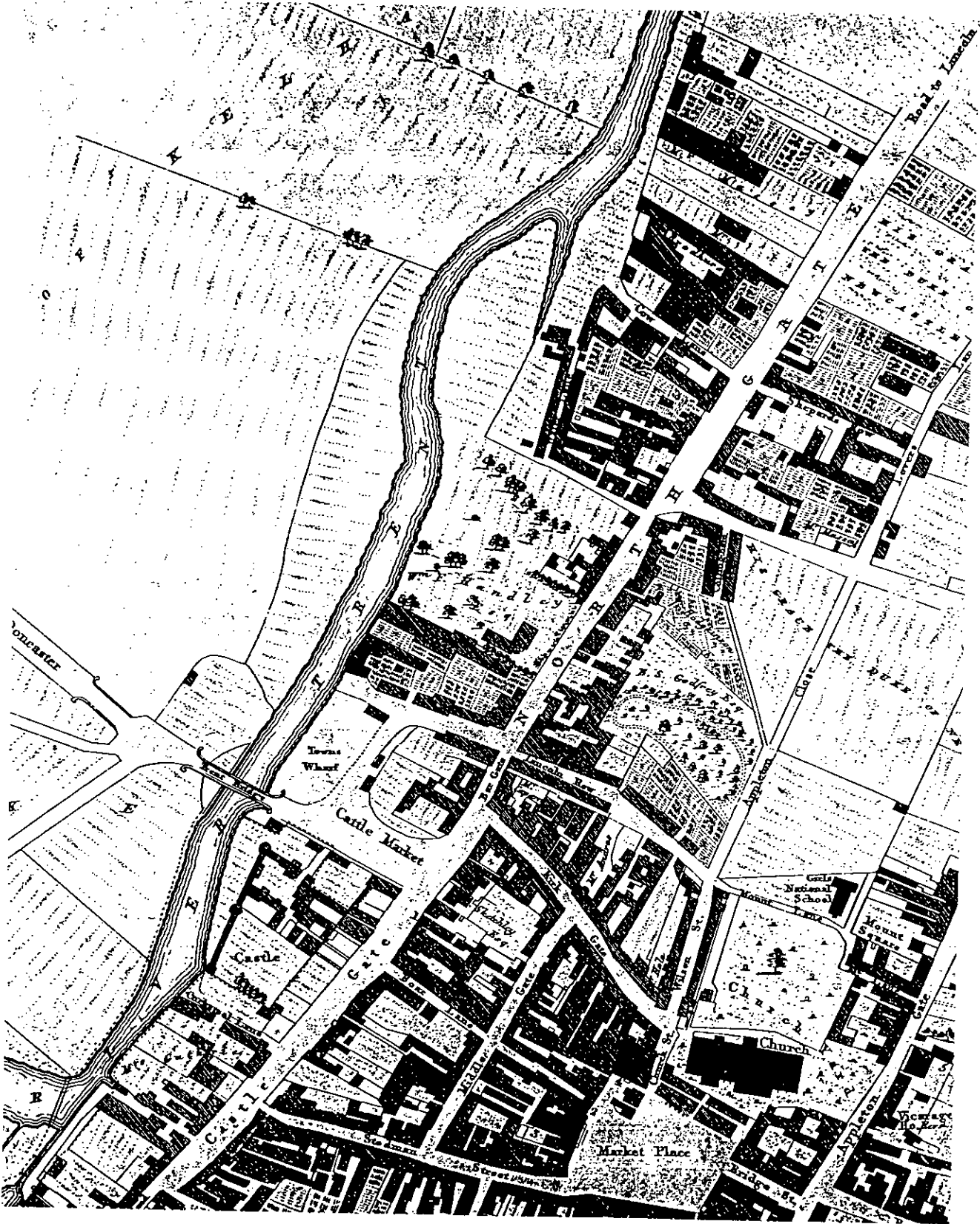


Figure 5 Tithe Map of Newark, 1841

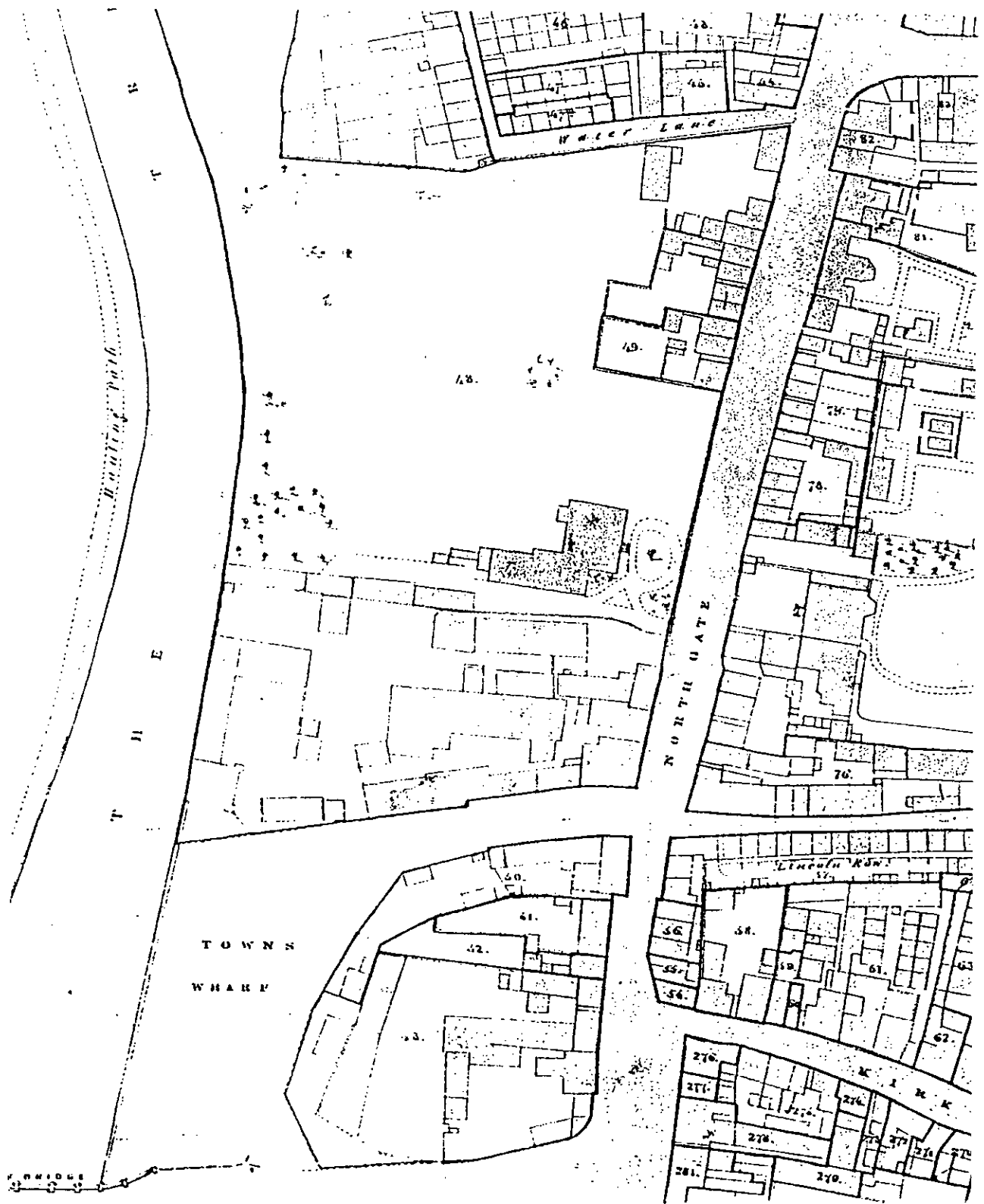


Figure 6 The OS map of Newark, 1884



Figure 8

A photograph of Town Wharf from the south-west, c1920, courtesy of Brian Widdowson. Original in the Town Collection.

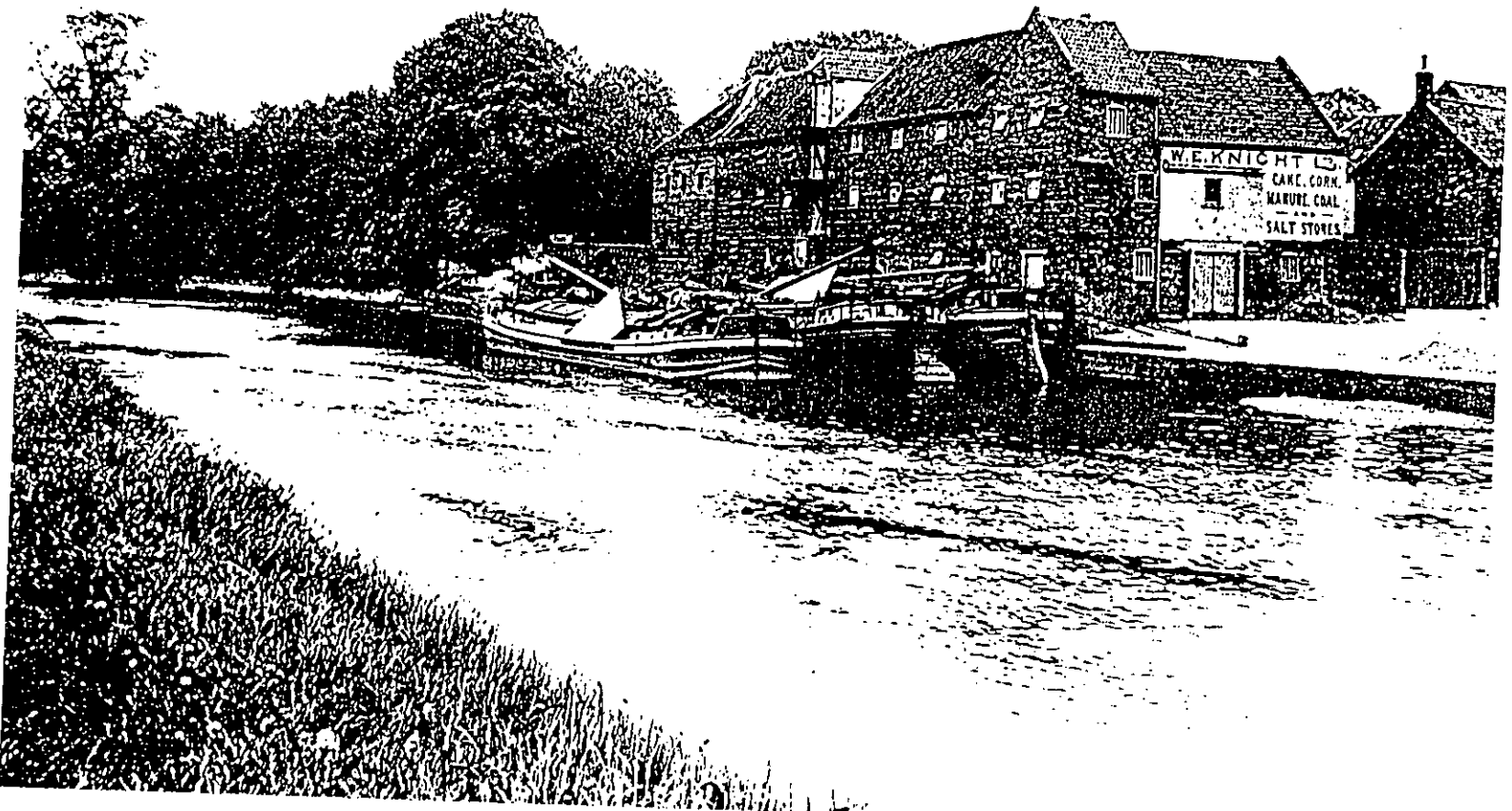


Figure 9 A planning application drawing for alterations for use as a cafe in 1934, Newark and Sherwood District Council Archives, D20. 77/1914.

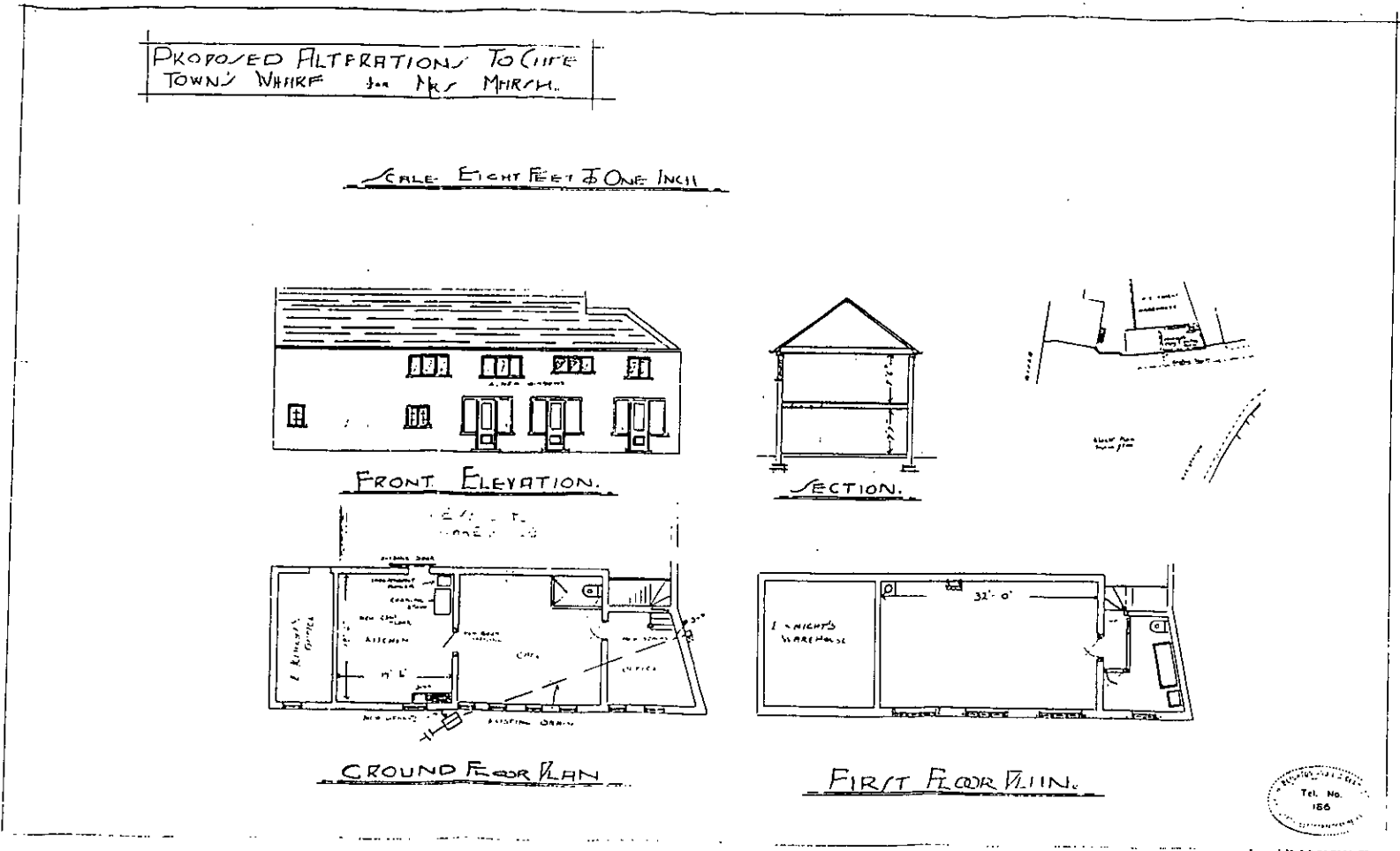


Figure 10 The OS map of Newark, revised 1938

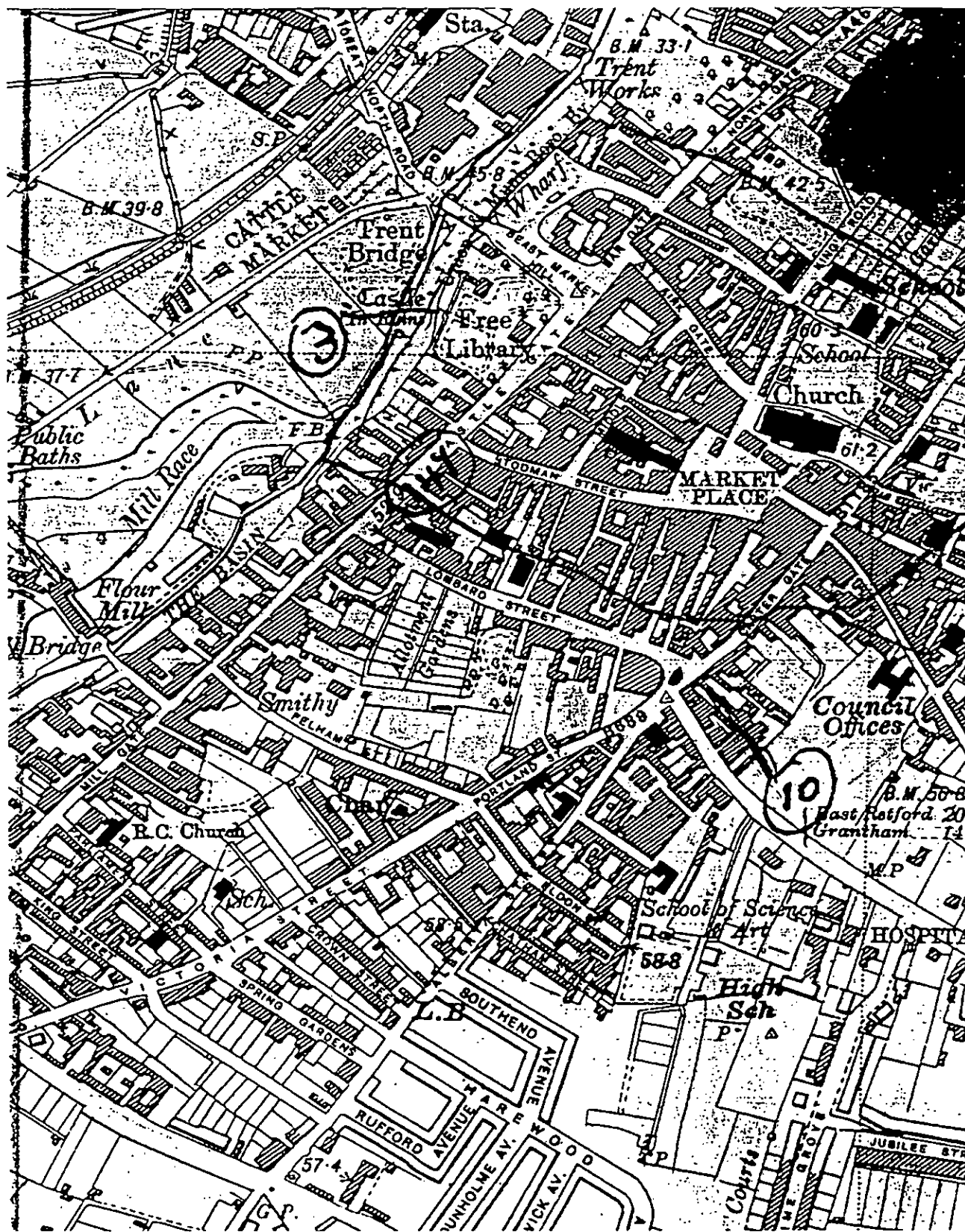


Figure 11 The OS map of Newark, 1976

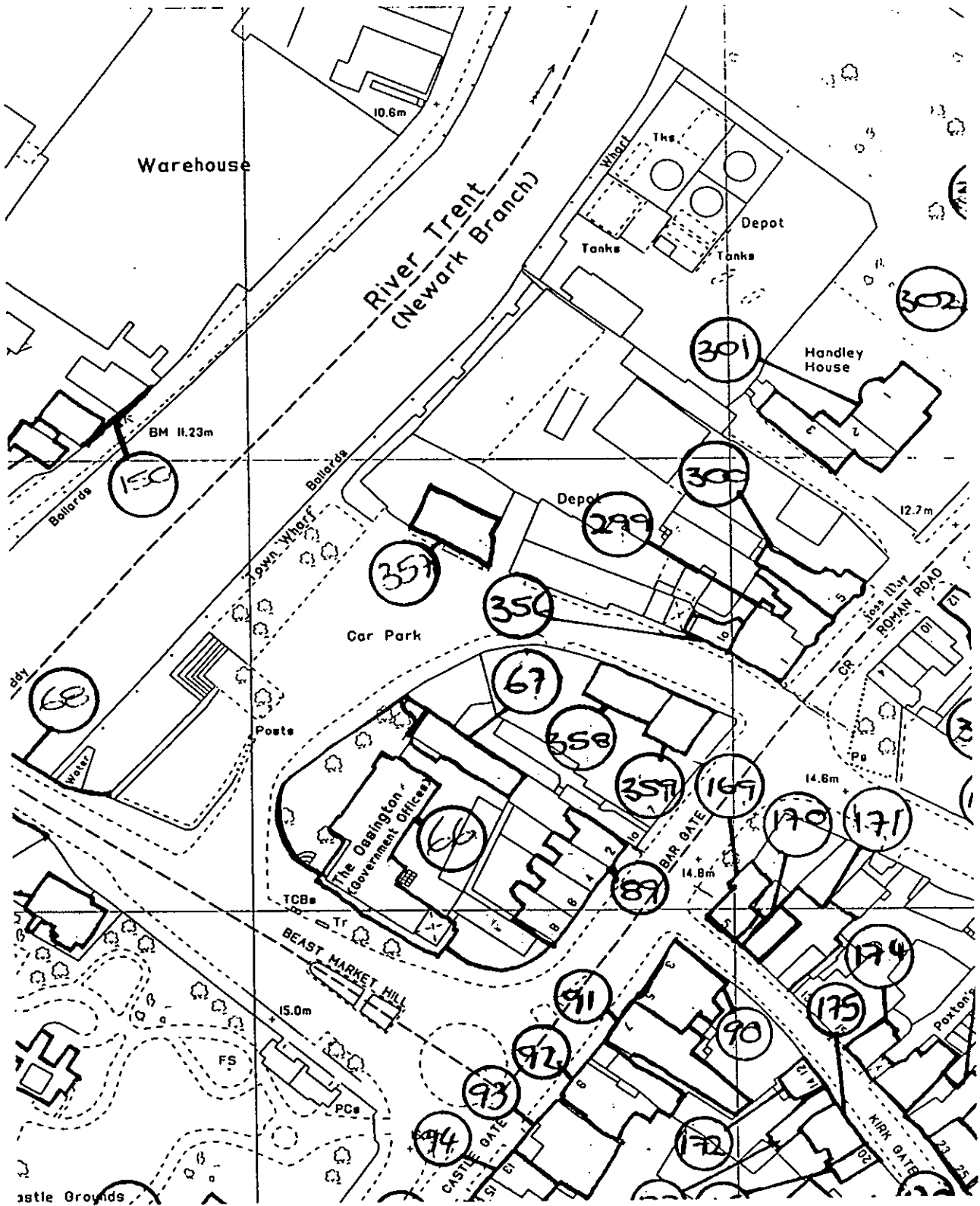
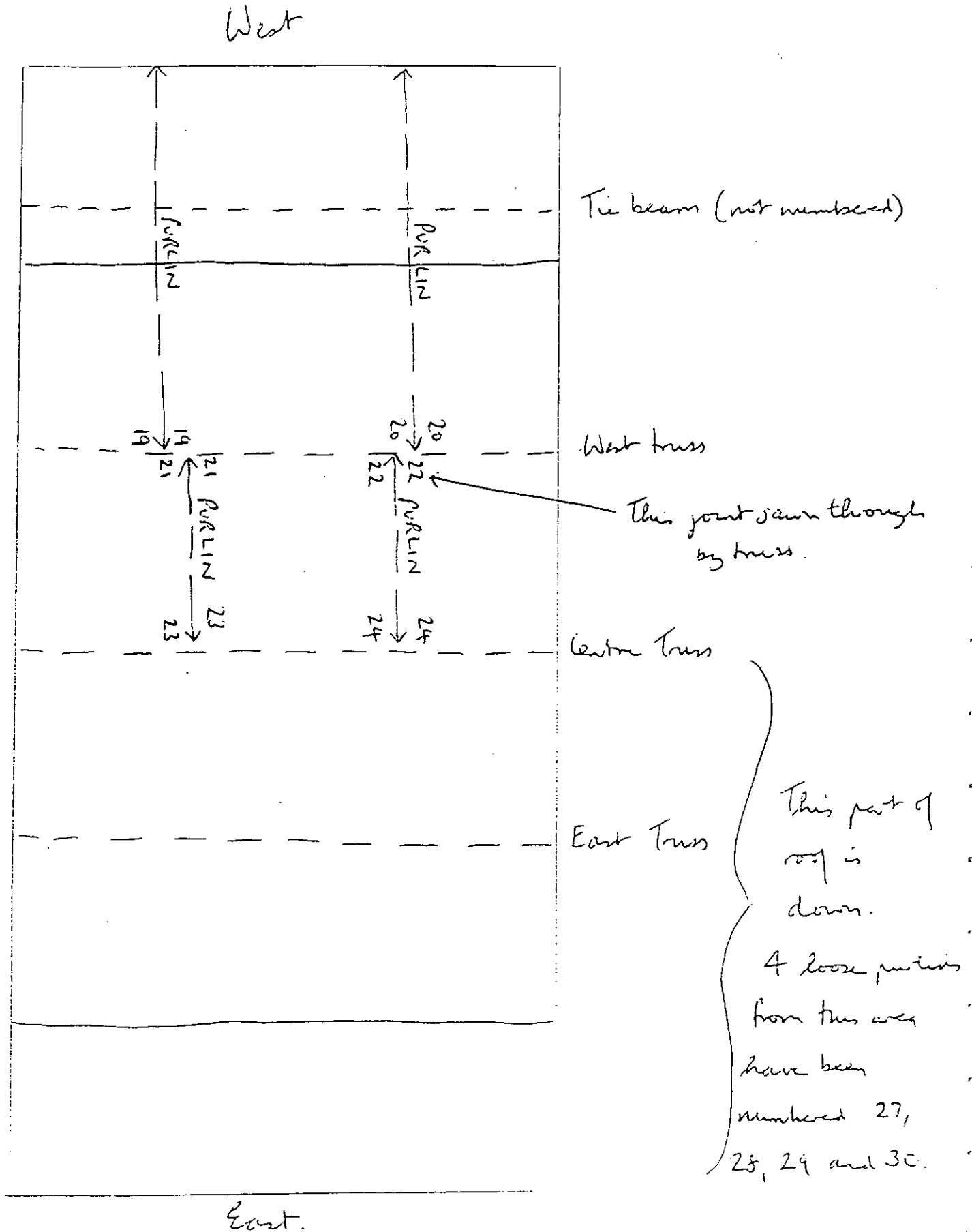


Figure 12 Sketch plan of the west end of the roof over the principal range, not to scale, drawn by Philip Heath of Newark and Sherwood Council

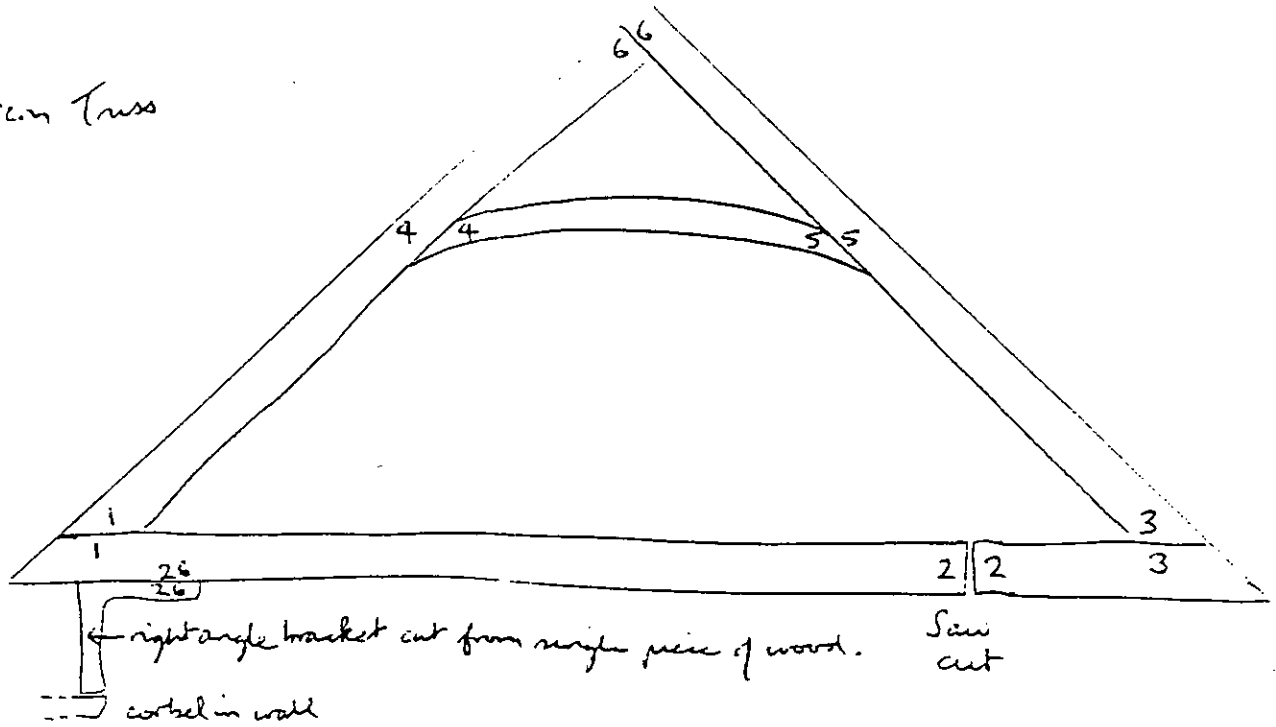


N.B. The wall plates & their joints were not numbered.

Figure 13 Sketch elevations of two trusses from the principal range, not to scale, drawn by Philip Heath of Newark and Sherwood Council

1110 Truss joints numbered & sketched as seen from east face

Western Truss



Centre Truss

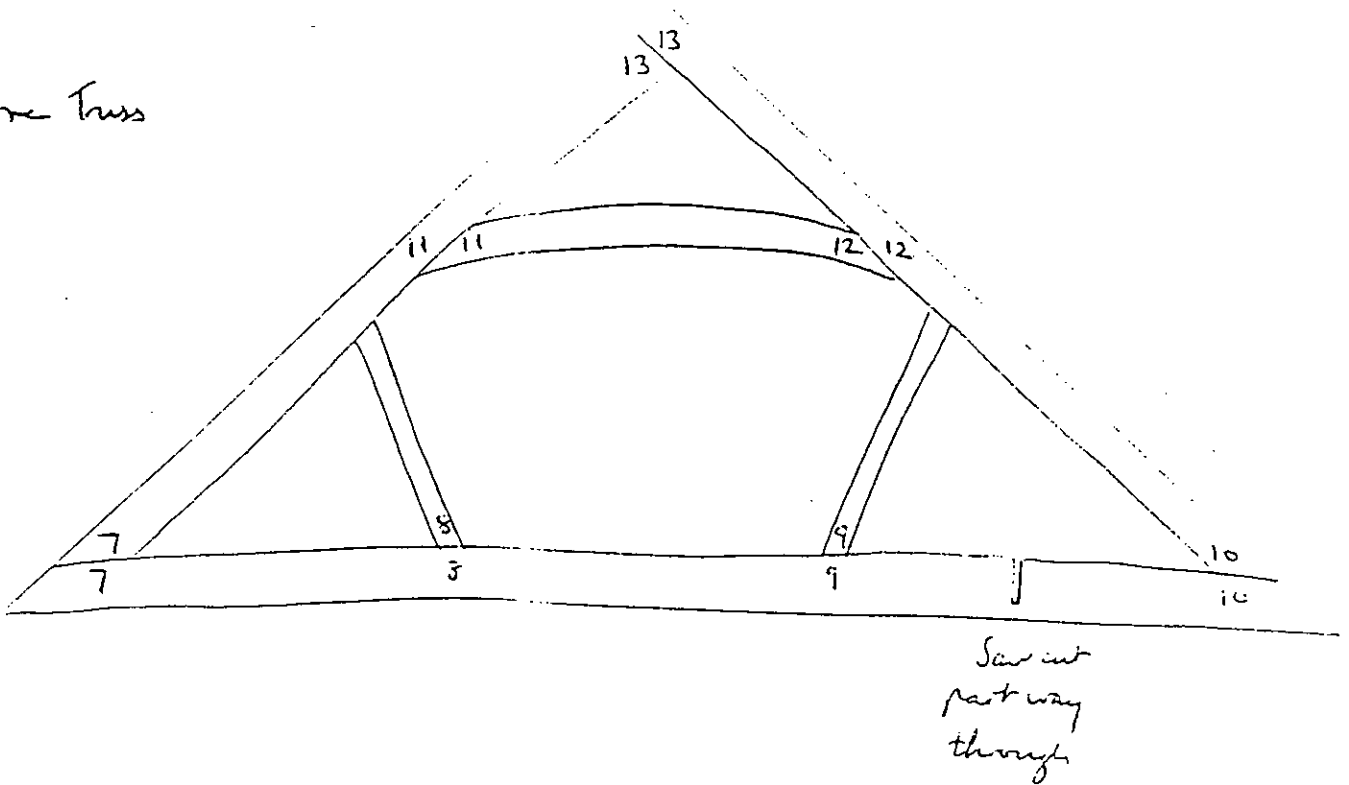


Figure 15 A plan of the site building derived from the survey by the architect Clive Booth, showing the building before the fire

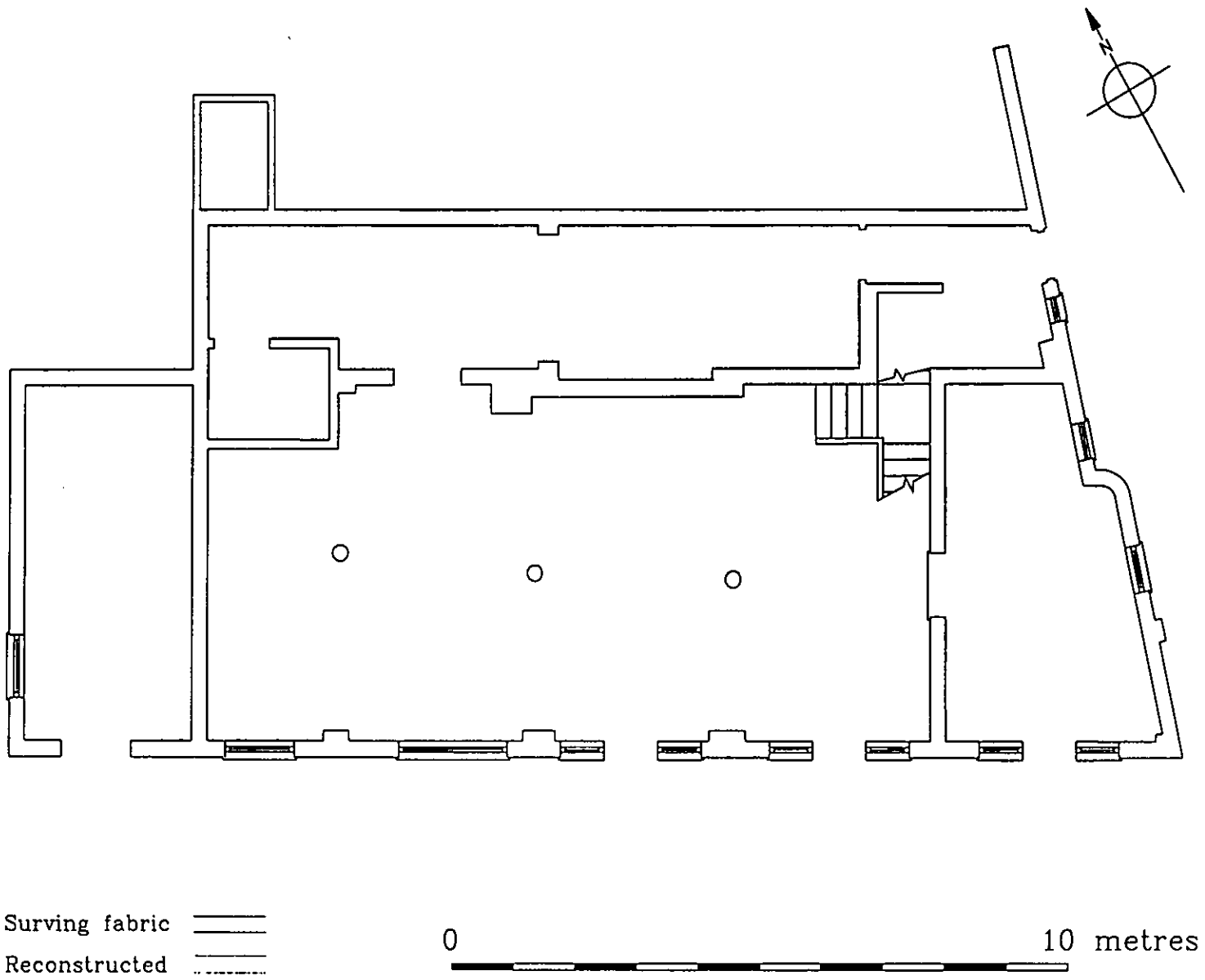


Figure 16 An interior elevation of the north wall of the principal range based on survey notes made on 1/10/96

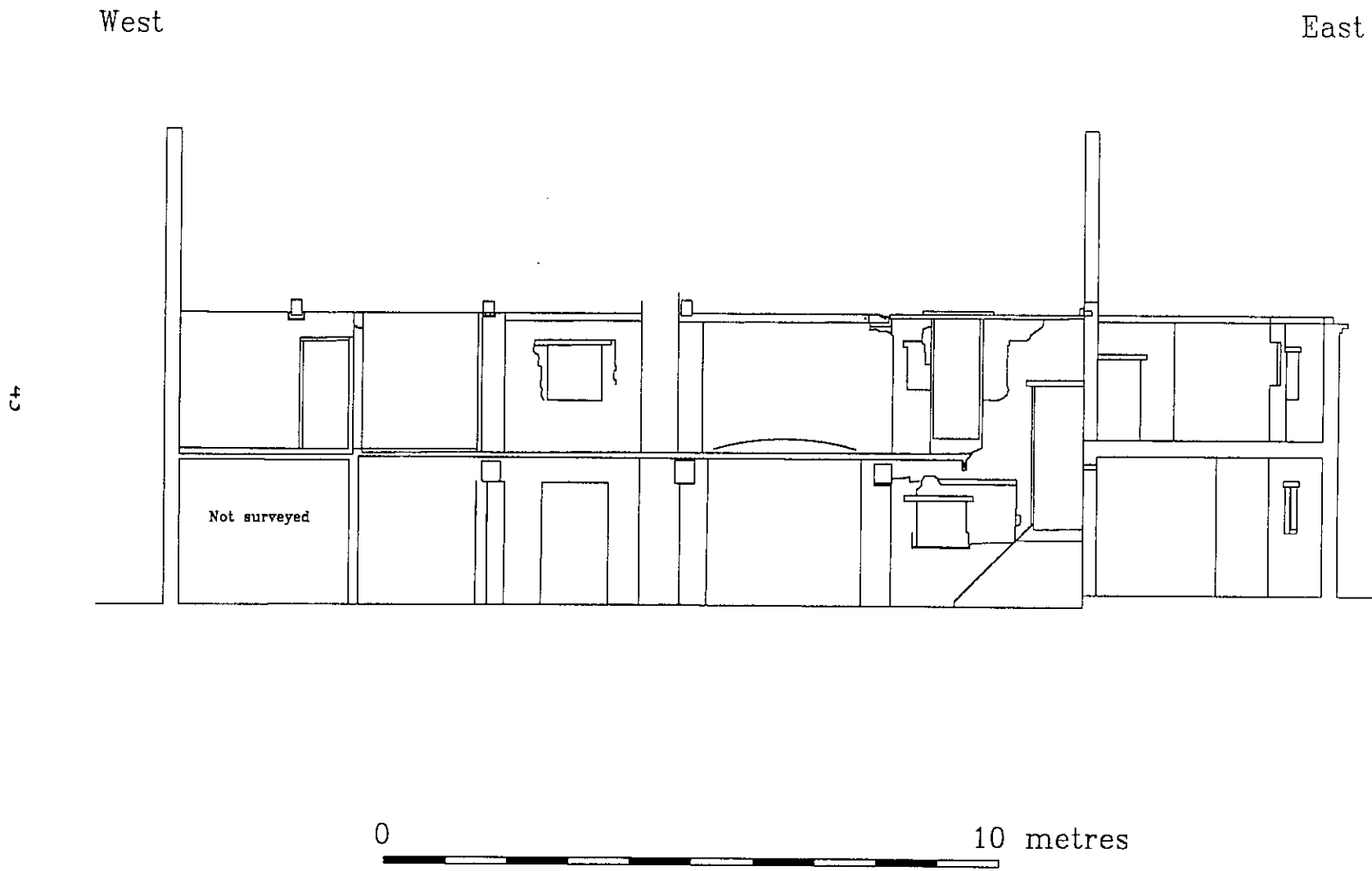
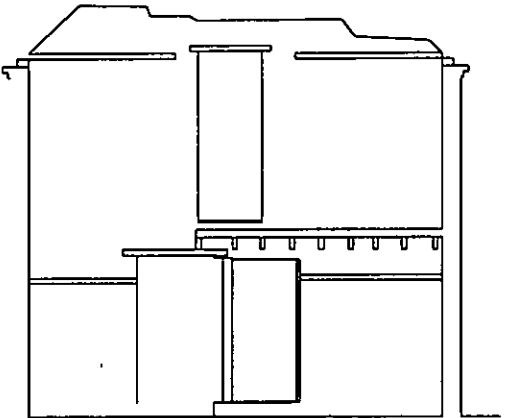


Figure 17 An interior elevation of the east wall of the principal range based on survey notes made on 1/10/96

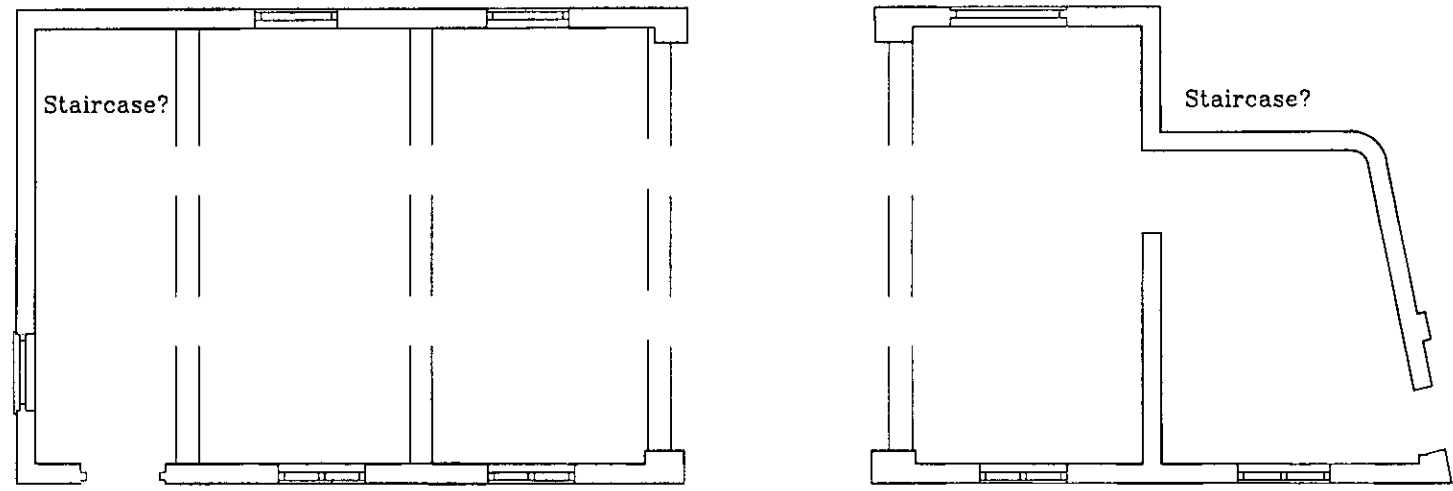
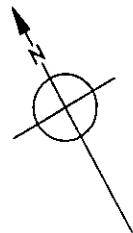
North

South



0 10 metres

Figure 19 A reconstruction plan of the site building as first built in 1787-8





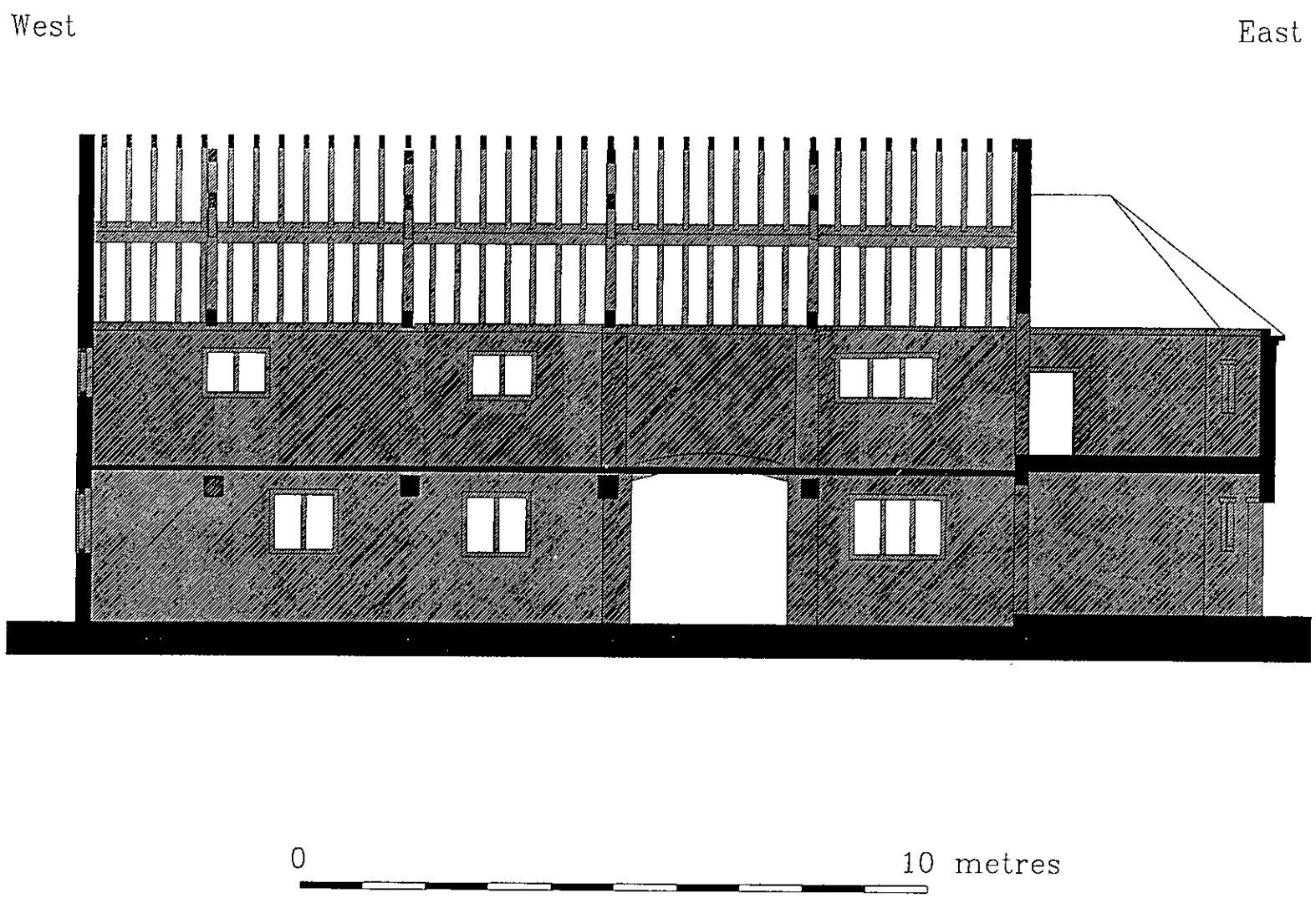
Surviving fabric 
Reconstructed 



Figure 20 A reconstruction drawing of the interior of the north wall of the main range as first built in 1787-8.

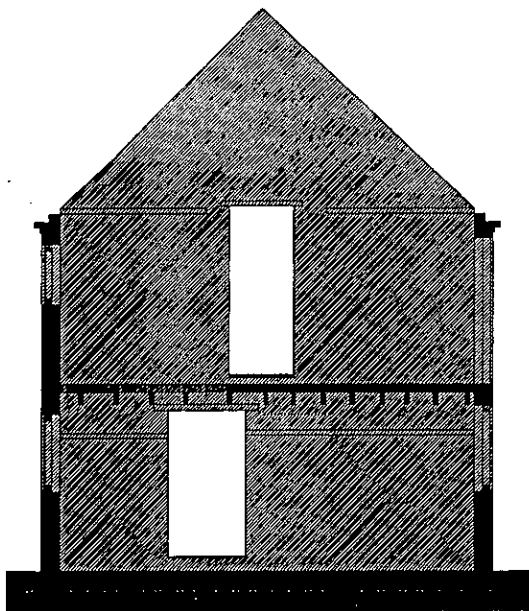


47

Figure 21 . . . A reconstruction drawing of the interior of the east wall of the main range as first built in 1787-8.

North

South

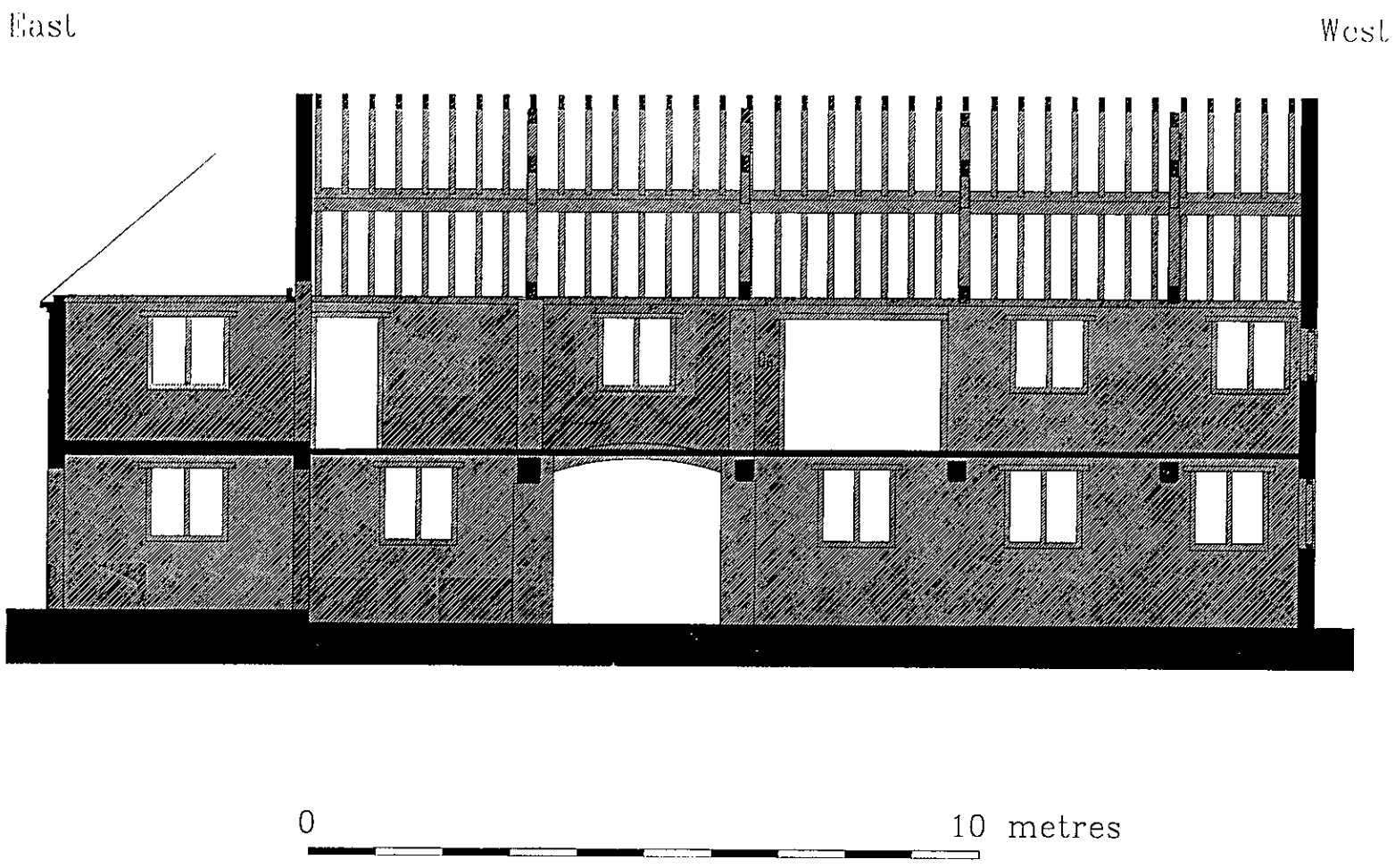


0



10 metres

Figure 22 A reconstruction drawing of the interior of the south wall of the main range as first built in 1787-8.

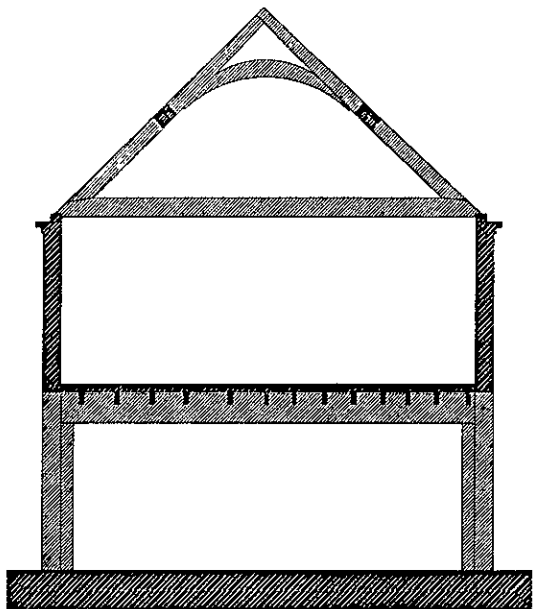


49

Figure 23

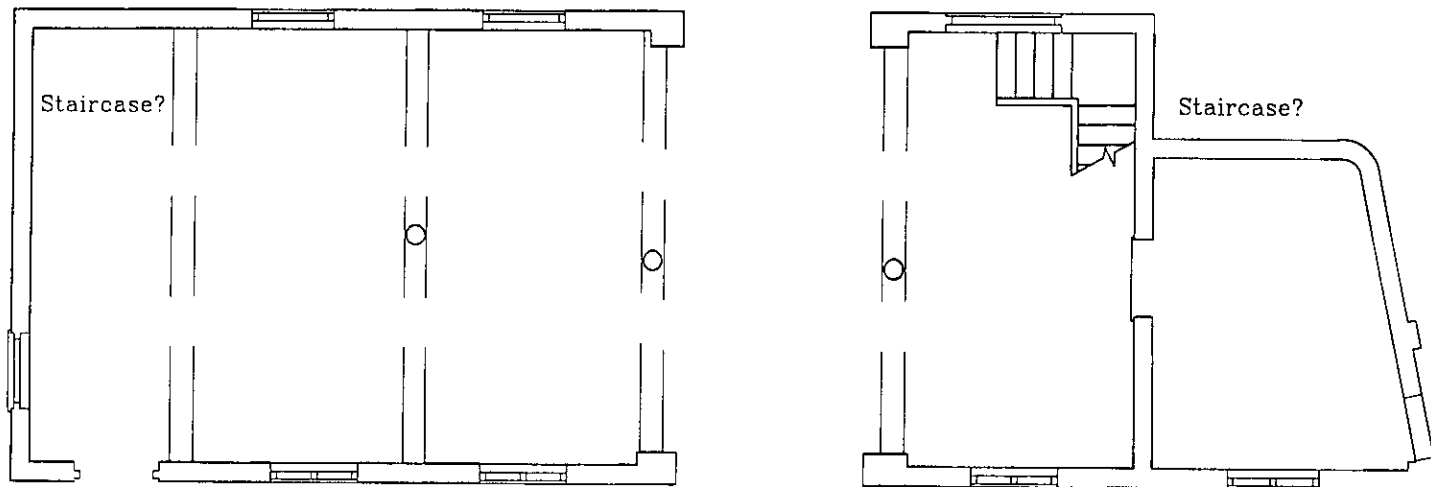
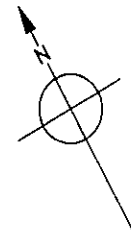
A reconstructed cross section through the principal range, as first built 1787-8.



North South



0 10 metres

Figure 24 A reconstruction plan of the site building as altered c 1830

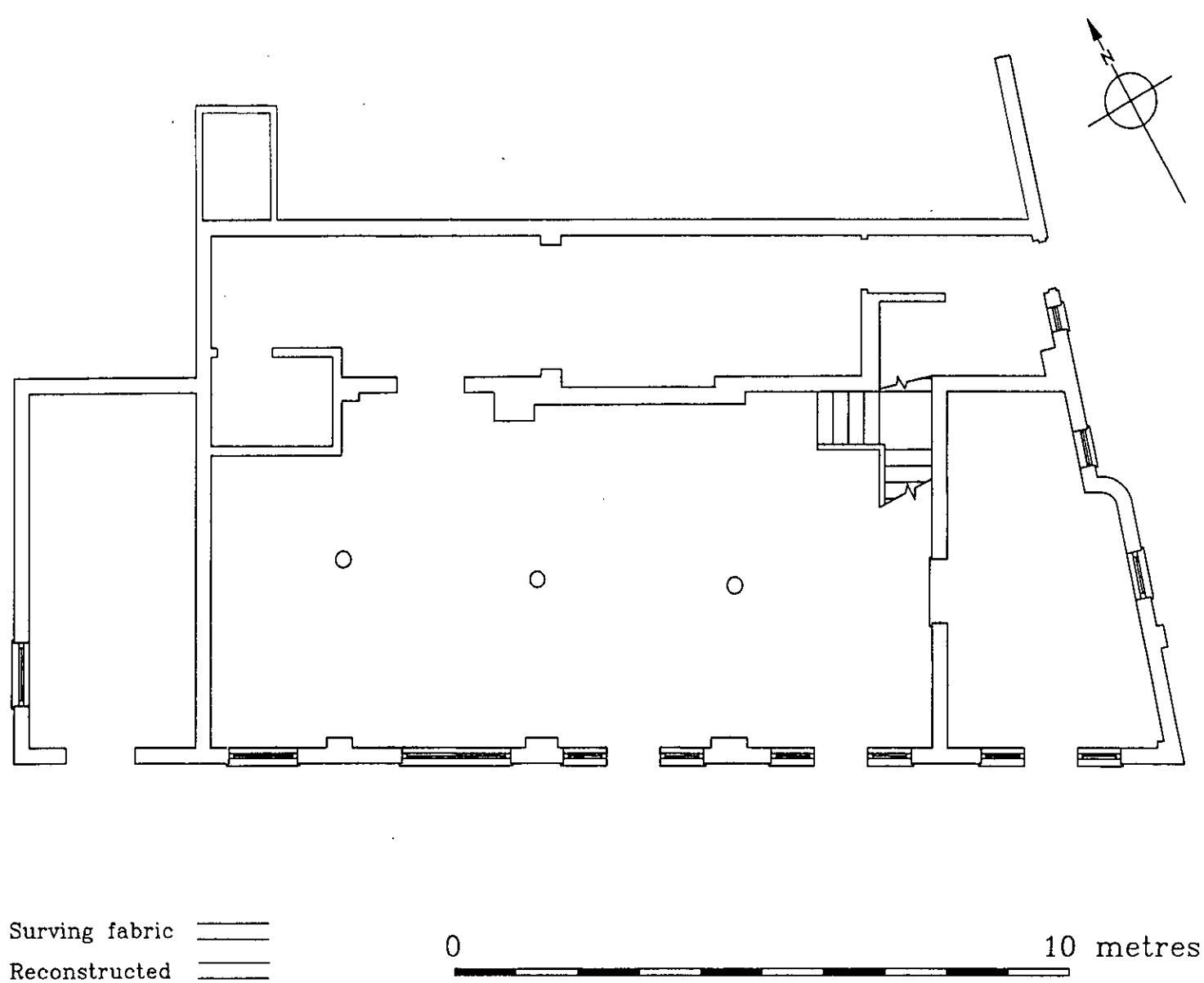


Surviving fabric 
Reconstructed 



51

Figure 25 A reconstruction plan of the site building as extended after 1934



Appendix

Notes on the reconstructed internal elevation drawings, figures 19-25

In the following discussion the north or back wall is considered first because it is simpler to analyse. The south wall poses more problems of interpretation because of later alterations.

The north wall

The bay immediately west of the east gable wall of the main range was not plastered. The bricks used in the wall construction in this bay were red, apparently hand made and measured between 55 and 70 mm in thickness. However, in the time available it was not possible to define separate phases of building within this work.

At first floor level, the jambs for a window were visible in the brickwork surrounding a later door at the head of the stairs. At ground floor level, a window opening which retains its timber lintel has been reduced in size.

The top of a segmental or three centred arch in the second bay was visible in the face of the wall just above the floor.

The brick piers for the main beams either side of the arches appeared to be of one build with the adjacent wall faces.

This did not appear to be the case for the piers for the tie beams west of the arch bay. This indicates that the western piers were added later.

The external brickwork of the north wall is exposed at its west end. From this, it appears that the present doorway is an enlargement of a window. The brick jamb of the west window jamb survives intact but below the sill level the bricks have been cut. The east jamb also appears to have been cut which indicates that the window was narrower than the present door. The location of the window in relation to the roof truss above indicates a great deal of faith in the strength of the wall plate.

For the other bays in the main range, there is a main floor beam for each roof truss. In the half at the west end of the building, it seems likely that there was a similar tie beam, yet none is shown on the architects survey in this position nor is there any indication of a brick pier on this line. Access to the ground floor room at the west end of the main range was not obtained for this survey. It is likely that if a floor beam existed at this point it was removed when the wall was inserted across the west end of the main range.

The east wall

This appears to have been a full height gable wall providing support for the roof.

The coursing of the brickwork is consistent with that of the north and south walls, the junctions are properly jointed. The bricks were red and measured between 60 and 70mm in thickness.

Because the east extension had a lower roof this wall was partly exposed. The brickwork from the exposed section of wall does not survive. From the lower parts of the wall it does not appear that either side was built as an external wall.

Blocked sockets for floor joists indicate that the staircase was a later insertion. The floor would therefore have been continuous in this area and apparently throughout the whole of the main range. Access to the first floor was presumably obtained via the bay east of the gable wall of the main range. It is possible that there were doors at first floor level in the south wall (see below).

From the bonding pattern in the brickwork there were doorways at ground and first floor level. The ground floor door appears to have been originally located to the north of the door on the first floor. The evidence for the ground floor door consists of a blocked opening with a timber lintel to the north of the present doorway which was lined with round arched panelled lining. This joinery probably dates from the early nineteenth century.

The south wall

This elevation was cut about with enlarged modern window openings and this has made interpretation difficult. The brickwork at first floor level was exposed at the east end of the building. At the west end, much of it was still concealed by plaster.

Brickwork for a segmental or three centre arch survives in the centre bay opposite the matching feature in the north wall.

Two vertical joints rising from the first floor level suggest doors in the upper storey. However, it is difficult to equate these with the positions of the roof trusses although it is apparent from the window/door at the west end of the north wall that the first floor openings did not necessarily respect the locations of the roof trusses.

The first floor structure

The main beams were substantial, measuring 320x320mm in section. The size suggests pine rather than oak although because of the charring caused by the recent fires, this was not evident on site. Similarly, the joist sections, typically 150x70mm suggests pine rather than oak. The joists were partly lapped over the tops of the main beams. Laths were laid on top of the joists as a base for a lime ash floor c 100mm thick.

Lime-ash floors were common in the East Midlands and further west in the Cotswolds from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries and were in common use in every class of house. The traditional method of construction used reed or straw

placed directly over the floor joists and secured by battens. Onto this base the plaster (consisting of lime/gypsum/ash or animal dung) was applied, trowelled smooth and allowed to dry slowly to prevent cracking.

The roof structure

The reconstruction of the roof is based on the evidence of the wall plates, which survive *in-situ*, the tie beams some of which also survive *in-situ*, the dismantled roof trusses and Philip Heath's sketches made when the roof was dismantled.

The softwood wall plate was scarfed at several points around the building, in some places at the junction with tie beam. The scarf joints were pegged.

The tie beams were set on top of the wall plate with a lap dovetail joint. The cutting of this joint was relatively precise. This generally appears to be the case for the jointing of all of the roof trusses.

The design of the truss is very simple, an arched collar with a tie beam. All the main joints are mortice and tenoned and pegged. The purlins abutted the principals and were jointed to the truss with staggered tenons. Some of the trusses had struts rising from the tie beam to the principals but, since these were only nailed in place, they appear to have been later additions. Similarly, the south end of the second truss from the west was supported in part by a cranked timber brace which rose from a timber set in the brick pier below the truss. This member was simply nailed to the soffit of the tie beam and appears to have been later addition.

The trusses were originally numbered with chiselled Roman numerals. These numbers were cut both in the sides and soffits of the tie beams. Those cut in the soffits were on the dovetail and therefore well preserved. The numbering system employed fits with their present locations, that is they were numbered I, II, and III working from the east.