

HISTORIC BUILDING RECORD

**‘THE HEMP WORKS’
CHEDISTON STREET
HALESWORTH
(SMR Ref. HWT 028)**

M. Sommers
©May 2007

Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service
Field Projects Team
Lucy Robinson, County Director of Environment and Transport
Endeavour House, Russel Road, Ipswich. IP1 2BX.

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Summary: A photographic survey of a group of buildings collectively known as 'The Hemp Works', Chediston Street, Halesworth, was undertaken in January 2007 prior to restoration and conversion to business units. The group comprises a series of stables with adjoining spaces that may have housed a small scale industry or were simply used for storage. Despite the name given to the group of buildings there is no obvious evidence that they were used for the processing of hemp. The survey comprises general shots of all major external elevations and numerous internal pictures. It was noted that part of the basement of the building had been converted to form an air-raid shelter through the strengthening of the floor above and the creation of a covered entrance to the basement on the west side of the building. This survey is recorded in the County SMR under the reference HWT 028. It was undertaken by the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Field Team who were commissioned and funded by the Morten Partnership Limited acting on behalf of their client, the Suffolk Regeneration Trust.

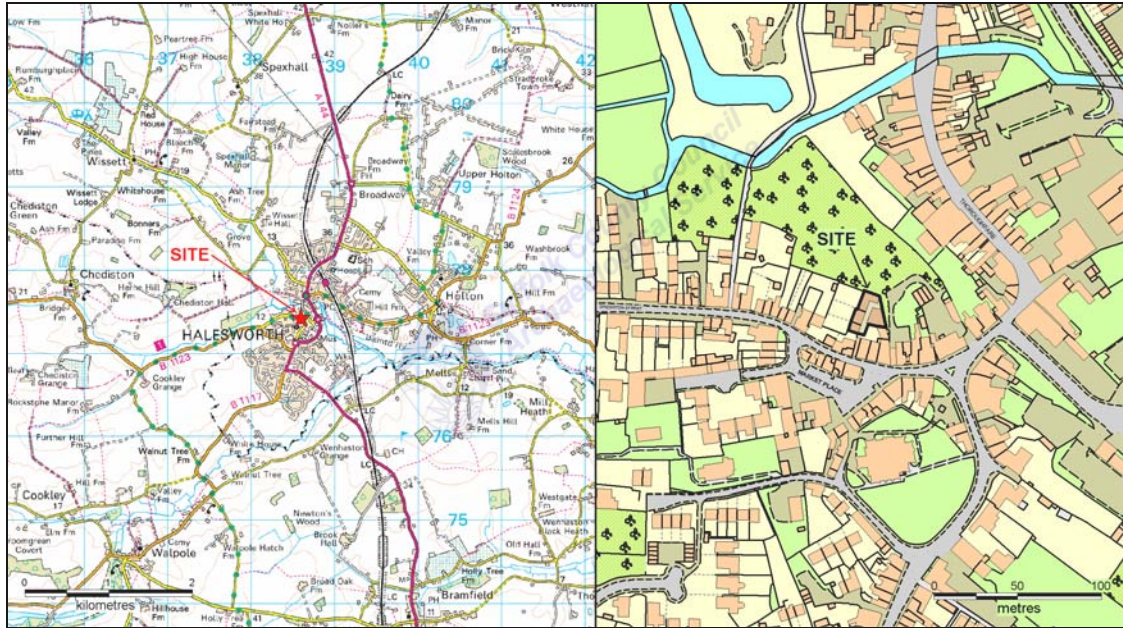


Figure 1: Location Plan

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1. Introduction

It has been proposed to refurbish a small group of dilapidated buildings, locally known as 'The Hemp Works', to create a series of small business units and for this a planning application has been made (W/3990/25). The Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Conservation Team advised the local planning authority that any consent should include a PPG 16, paragraph 30 condition requiring the applicant to ensure an agreed programme of archaeological works is in place prior to the commencement of any site works.

Assessment of available evidence indicates that suitable mitigation for losses and alterations to the buildings can be achieved through a systematic recording of the structure prior to refurbishment. For this a Brief and Specification was produced by Mr R. Carr of the Conservation Team detailing the work required (Appendix I).

The site is located behind a large Italianate building housing shops on the north side of Chediston Street, close to the centre of the Suffolk town of Halesworth. The National Grid Reference for the approximate centre of the group is TM 3858 7744; see figure 1 above for a location plan. The site is accessed by a private covered

carriageway off Chediston Street. The structures comprise two separate groups; an 'L' shaped block of which the longer range runs perpendicular to Chediston Street (Block A in figure 2), and an irregular trapezoid shaped block set a single roadway width to the east (Block B). It is believed that these structures were originally associated with the large Italianate building fronting Chediston Street and enquiries made locally by Mr I. Millar of the Morten Partnership indicate that they were held under the same ownership during at least the late Victorian period through to the mid 20th century (see Appendix II). It was also discovered that 'The Hemp Works' was not used for the processing of hemp. Conversation with the Halesworth museum curator reveals that this group of structures is commonly mistaken for a hemp works that actually stood further up Chediston Street. The mistake has probably occurred as both the real and the supposed hemp works were owned by members of the same family.

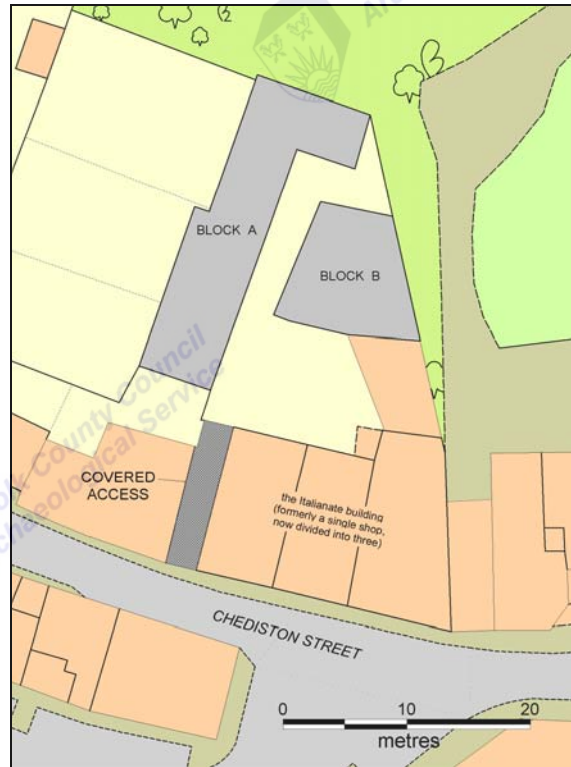


Figure 2: Site Layout

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The photographic survey was commissioned and funded by the Morten Partnership Limited on behalf of their client, the Suffolk Regeneration Trust. The work was undertaken by the Field Projects Team of the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service. The archive of the work is lodged with the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service at its Bury St. Edmunds office under the Sites and Monuments Record reference, HWT 028. A summary of this project has also been entered onto OASIS, the online archaeological database, under the reference suffolkc1-26909.

2. Methodology

The survey was carried out using a digital camera with a resolution of 6 megapixels. All exterior elevations of the structure were recorded and many general shots were taken of the interiors. Additional photographs were taken of any fittings that may be of added interest. The location and orientation of each photograph was recorded on floor plans. This methodology equates to a Level 2 (EH) Record. The plans used in this report are based on paper copies of plans supplied by the Morten Partnership Limited.

3. Results

The site was visited on the 3rd January 2007 to undertake the survey. A total of 106 digital photographs (totalling 267MB of data) were taken and will be held, unedited,

in the archive. Edited versions of these photographs (cropped and in some cases brightened) are reproduced below accompanied by figures illustrating the location and direction the camera was facing. The photographs are arranged into four groups, exterior, interior upper floor, interior ground floor and interior basement.

Exterior

A total of 29 photographs were taken of the exterior of the two blocks. The approximate locations and direction of the camera are illustrated in figure 3 below.



Figure 3: Plan of Ground Floor showing direction and approximate location of camera (photographs 1-29)



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Interior – Upper Floor

A total of 23 photographs were taken of the interior of the upper floor of Block A. No access was available to enter the upper floor of Block B and consequently it was not possible to record the interior. The approximate locations and direction of the camera are illustrated in figure 4 below.

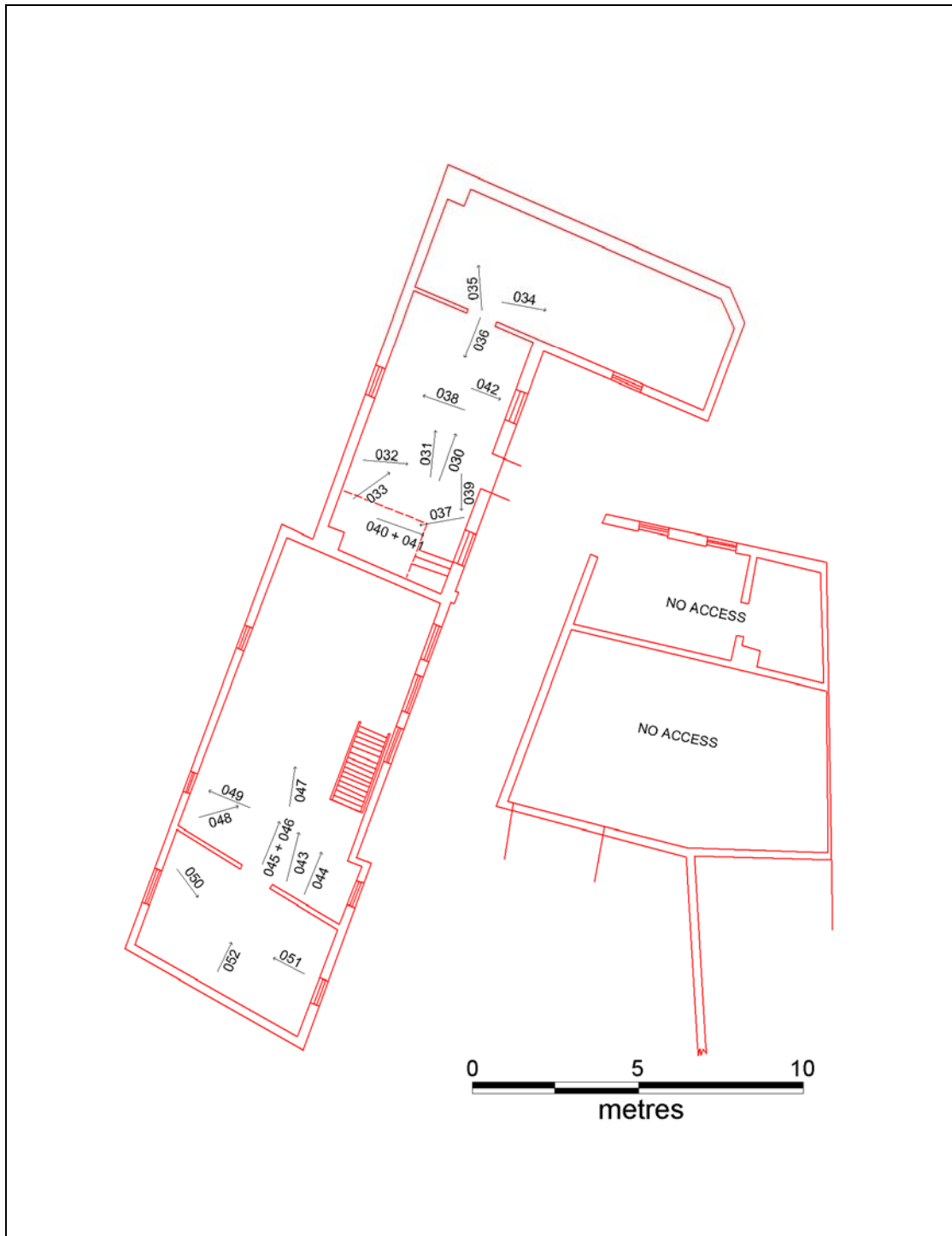


Figure 4: Plan of Upper Floor showing direction and approximate location of camera (photographs 30-52)



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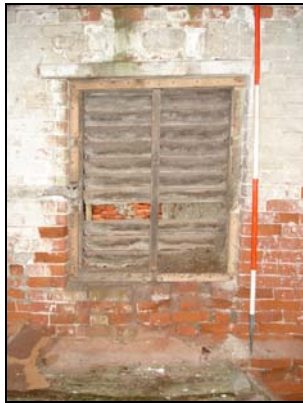
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Interior – Ground Floor

A total of 46 photographs were taken of the interiors of the ground floors of Block A and Block B. The approximate locations and direction of the camera are illustrated in figure 5 below.



Figure 5: Plan of Ground Floor showing direction and approximate location of camera (photographs 53-98)



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Interior – Basement

A total of 8 photographs were taken of the interiors of the basement within Block A. The approximate locations and direction of the camera are illustrated in figure 6 below.

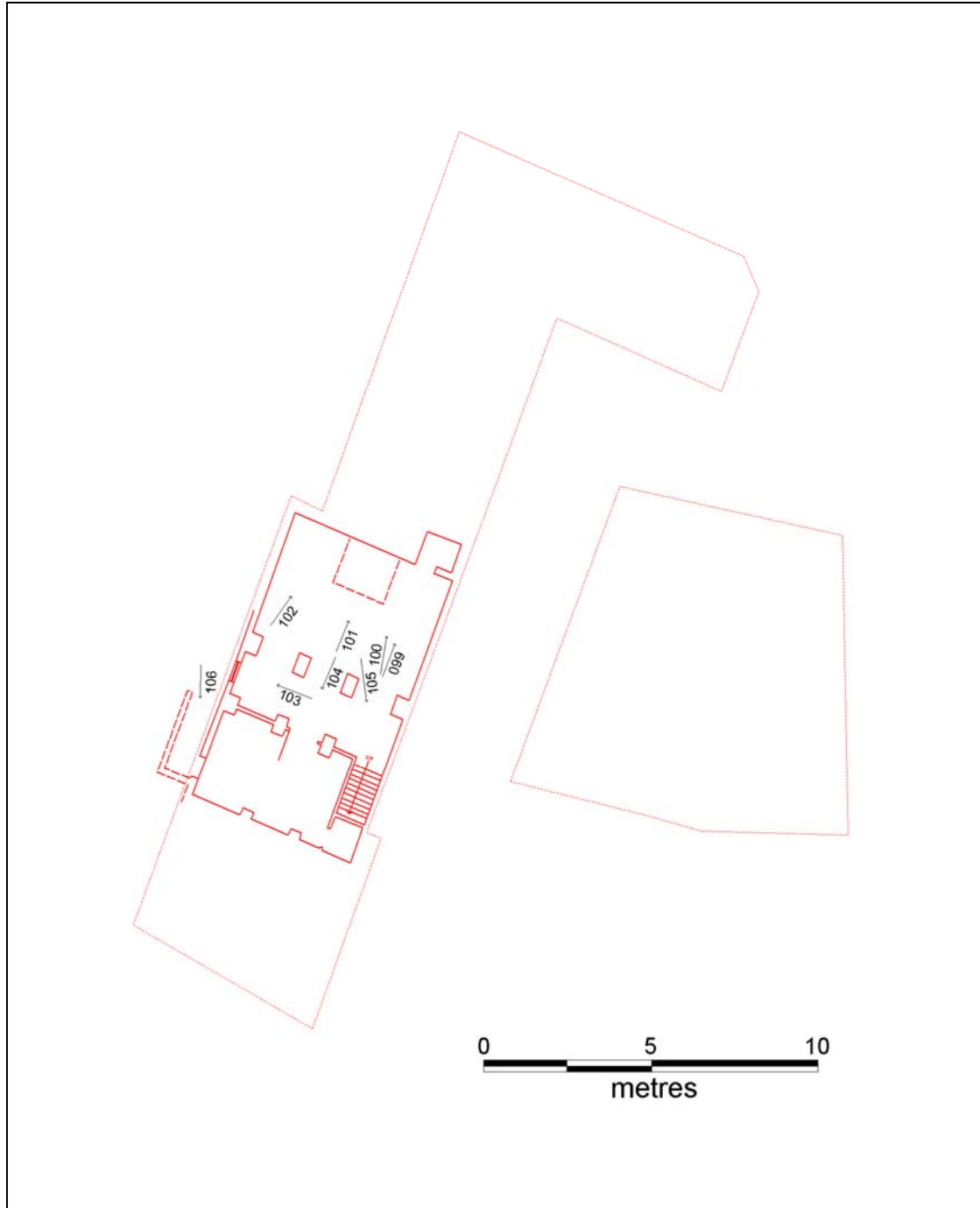


Figure 6: Plan of Basement showing direction and approximate location of camera (photographs 99-106)



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4. Description of the Buildings

All buildings within the site (see figure 2) are of red brick construction set into a lime based mortar and are of two storeys, ground and a first floor, although additionally a basement exists under the central area of Block A. Divisions between the sections of the buildings indicate that the complex is not one build. Observation would suggest that the southern half of Block A is of one build whilst the stables constructed to the north are a later single build.

The buildings are set onto a sloping site running downhill in a north north-east direction with the construction of the buildings making use of the slope to form different floor levels. This is particularly apparent between the possible industrial areas in the southern half of Block A and the stables to the north. A basement below the northern section is wholly below ground at its southern end but becomes a half basement at its northern end.

Block B appears to be two separate builds with the row of stables to the north being a lean to addition to the southern portion of this block.

All buildings within the site are likely to be of Victorian construction with the southern end of Block A being the earliest. All appear on the 1st and 2nd

editions of the Ordnance Survey 1:2500 maps of the area dated c.1880 and 1900 respectively (figure 7). The shape and form of Block A does not appear to have altered greatly since the 1st edition map although it can be seen that the central area of Block B is marked with cross hatching which generally indicates an area of glass roof. It can also be seen that that the southern boundary of this structure was originally curved. By the second edition neither the glass roof is indicated and the curving area of wall appears to have been formalised. Inspection of Block B suggests that the present southern portion, or at least the upper part of it, is possibly a later rebuild.

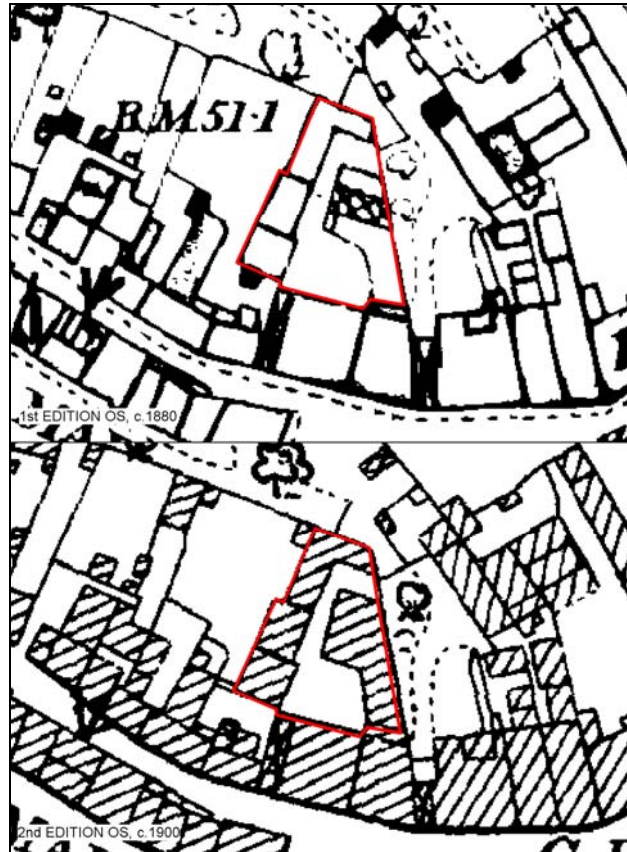


Figure 7: 1st (upper) and 2nd (lower) edition Ordnance Survey 1:2500 scale map extracts (not to original scale, site outlined in red)

5. Discussion

It can be clearly seen that the northern half of the complex formed a series of stables as indicated by the mangers and straw feeders extant within. A 'tack room' was also evident, identifiable by the series of wooden brackets mounted on the walls for hanging the collars and tack. For the other areas of the complex their purpose, without further research, can only be guessed. Figure 8 indicates the location of the stables and tack room and proposes possible uses for the remaining spaces on the ground floor. The areas above the stables were undoubtedly haylofts and it could be seen that the feeders in the Block A could be filled directly from the loft. Other spaces within the first floor of Block A may have housed some small-scale industry or were simply used for storage.

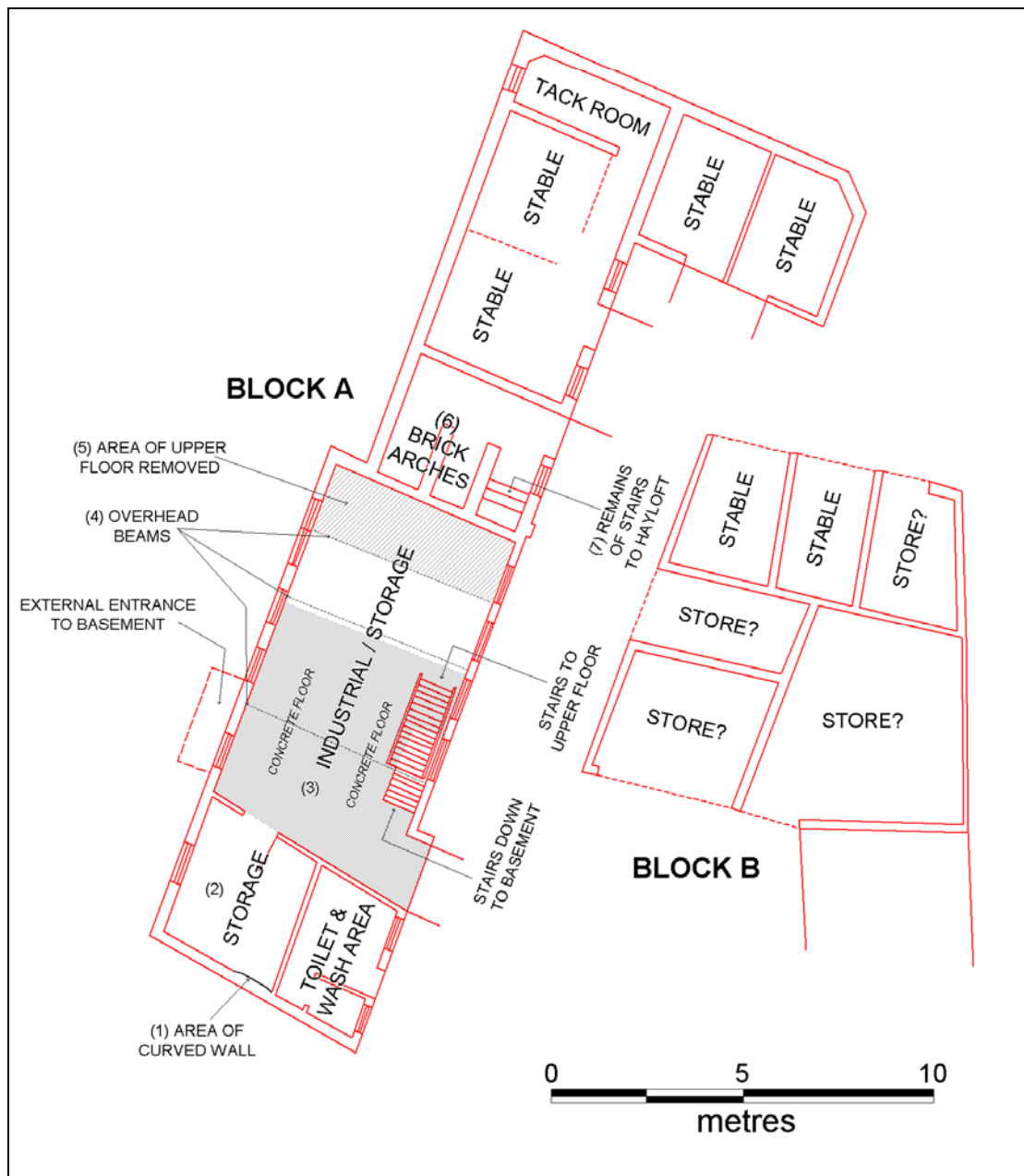


Figure 8: Blocks A and B, Details noted and possible interpretations for use

Various details worthy of discussion were noted within the buildings (paragraph numbers refer to figure 8, relevant photographs are noted in *italics*). These are as follows:

1. The wall forming the southern end of Block A contained a section of what appeared to be an earlier wall constructed from red brick and built on a curve suggesting it originally formed part of a circular structure (92, 93). It could be seen on both the ground floor and to a lesser extent it was visible at first floor level. A black filled, roughly circular shape is marked on the 1st edition OS map (figure 7) which probably represents a structure. Although its precise nature cannot be determined some form of kiln is a possibility.
2. Within the ground floor room within the southwest corner of Block A a series of small brackets are set into the joists supporting the floor above (95, 96). Within one of these a small segment of timber doweling was present. This suggests that lengths of doweling were supported by the brackets to form a series of rails across the ceiling. This could either be to support a hanging ceiling or more likely used for hanging some product either for storage or possibly for drying.
3. Within the large room on the ground floor of Block A lengths of shaped timber were attached to the joists supporting the floor above (87, 88, 89). These appeared to be quite specifically shaped although their purpose could not be positively determined. Possible interpretations are that they supported machinery or a framework, possibly for shelves.
4. The southern of the three main beams supporting the upper floor and its joists has been strengthened by bolting lengths of timber to its southern side and base (90). An upright has also been installed. It could not be determined whether this was in response to a weakness in the beam or a need to strengthen it due increased loading of the floor above.
5. Between the third main beam supporting the upper floor and the northern wall of the large room within Block A the upper floor above had been removed and a barrier erected to prevent users of the upper floor from walking over the edge (84). This is clearly a later alteration as evidence for floor joists spanning this area were visible on the beam. Its purpose was either to facilitate the movement of goods between the ground and upper floor or to allow for a greater headroom on the ground floor either for machinery or storage.
6. Within Block A, in the southern end of the stables area, a pair of brick arches running partway across the width of the building were present (75, 76). These are in a similar brick to the stables part of the block and appear to be integral with its construction. Above these arches, on the upper floor, a rectangular depression approximately the same size as the footprint of the arches was visible (36, 37). Although no evidence of pipe work could be seen the most likely purpose for the arches is to support a heavy tank of water for use within the stables.

A further brick arch was also present within the basement (100, 101 & figure 9). This did not appear to be an integral part of the original construction, as it was not bonded into the north wall of the basement against which it stood. There was no obvious

evidence for its purpose although it was presumably to support something on the floor above but there was no obvious indication as to what this may have been. The area immediately above this arch is coincidental with the removed section of upper floor and this may be associated.

7. Adjacent the two arches on the ground floor were the remains of a wooden staircase up to the hayloft. Access to this staircase would have originally been through a doorway from the room to the south although this has been bricked up (36, 77) rendering the stairs useless. It was noted that the wall between the two sections of Block A has been altered with what appears to be the filling in of a window or doorway into the upper floor of the southern section and the blocking of the doorway to the hayloft stairs.

The basement within Block A was presumably used for storage although certain alterations indicate it was modified to serve as an air raid shelter (figure 9). The alterations comprise the strengthening of the floor above by covering the original ground floor with a thick layer of concrete (83) and the addition of further support in the form of brick piers spanned by steel girders (104). An entrance into the basement from the gardens to the west of Block A has been created although this is now blocked. A substantial structure formed of concrete slabs had been erected over this entrance to provide protection from the direct blast of a nearby explosion (106). Only the southern portion of the basement was converted possibly because it is only this part that is wholly underground. This conversion is presumably related to World War II.

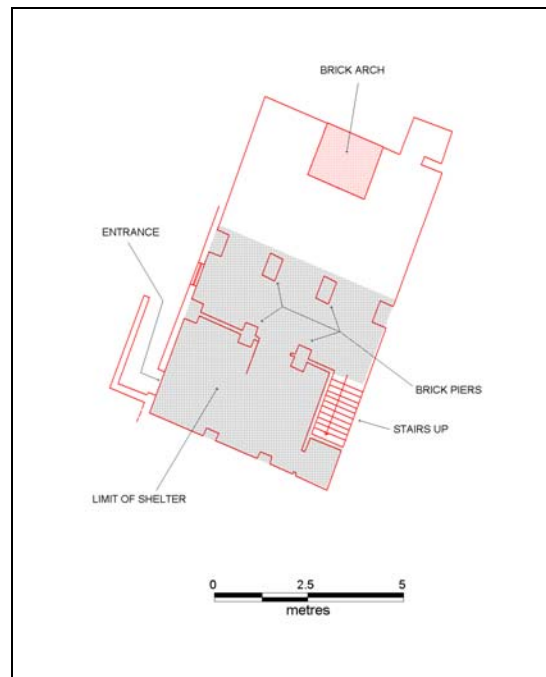


Figure 9: Basement Plan

Although not actually within the study area a large timber beam with an attached hook was noted towards the northern end of the covered access (18). It is likely this hook would have been used as an aid to loading and unloading in association with activities within the site.

References

The Morten Partnership *The Former Hempworks, Halesworth* (unpublished report)

APPENDIX I

**SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICE - CONSERVATION TEAM**

Brief and Specification for a systematic record of an Historic Building.

THE HEMP WORKS, HALESWORTH

1. Background

- 1.1 A planning application (W/3990/25) has been made change the use and refurbish this group of buildings, The local planning authority have been advised that the buildings have archaeological potential and that any consent should be conditional on a PPG 16, paragraph 30 condition. Assessment of the available evidence indicates that suitable mitigation for losses and alterations to building fabric can be achieved through systematic recording of the structure before any works begin.
- 1.2 This application involves the conversion of a group of historic buildings. A policy statement on historic farm buildings by English Heritage and the Countryside Agency, endorsed by English Nature and the Rural Development Service (*Living buildings in a living landscape: finding a future for traditional farm buildings*, 2006 - available on www.helm.org.uk) advises that recording of such structures before conversion works is desirable. The various forms and methodologies appropriate to such surveys are defined in "Understanding Historic Buildings, A Guide to Good Recording Practice" (English Heritage 2006).
- 1.3 Documentary study and a site visit have shown that the buildings are a 19th century store and stable complex associated with a local business man. The form of the buildings is non domestic, unusual and of historic interest.
- 1.4 This brief should not be considered sufficient to enable the total execution of the project. A Project Design (PD) based upon this brief and outline specification of minimum requirements, is an essential requirement. This must be submitted by the developers, or their agent, to the Conservation Team of the Archaeological Service of Suffolk County Council for approval. The work must not commence until this office has approved both the archaeological contractor as suitable to undertake the work, and the PD as satisfactory. The PD will *provide the basis for measurable standards* and will be used to establish whether the requirements of the planning condition will be adequately met.
- 1.5.1 Detailed standards, information and advice to supplement this brief are to be found in "Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England" Occasional Papers 14, East Anglian Archaeology, 2003.

2. Brief for Archaeological Recording

- 2.1 Provide a record of the standing structures to level 2 as defined in "Understanding Historic Buildings, A Guide to Good Recording Practice" (English Heritage 2006).
- 2.2 The main academic objective will centre upon the need to understand and provide outline objective evidence for the basic sequence and phasing of the building throughout its history.

3. Arrangements for Recording

- 3.1 To carry out the specified work the developer will appoint an archaeologist or historic building recorder (the recording contractor) who must be approved by the Conservation Team of Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Service (SCCAS) - see 1.4 above.

- 3.2 The developer or his archaeologist will give the Conservation Team of SCCAS five working days notice of the commencement of works on the site, in order that the work of the recording contractor may be monitored. The method and form of development will also be monitored to ensure that it conforms to previously agreed locations and works upon which this brief is based.
- 3.3 Allowance must be made to cover recording costs incurred in providing the record. The size of the allowance should be estimated by the approved recording contractor, based upon the outline works in paragraphs 2.1 and 4.1 of the Brief and Specification.
- 3.4 If unexpected remains are encountered the Conservation Team of SCCAS must be informed immediately. Amendments to this specification may be made to ensure adequate provision for archaeological recording.

4. **Specification**

- 4.1 Level 2 recording will cover both the interior and exterior of the building / buildings. It will consist of a dimensioned sketch ground floor plan based on either an architects drawing or the Ordnance Survey. Photographic record of the generality and setting; oblique or right angled views of all external elevations; internal views; records of any machinery, fixed furniture or ironmongery related to the function of the building. Monochrome 35mm film or digital images taken with a camera of 5 megapixel or greater will be acceptable.
- 4.2 A written account of the building setting out simply the location, form, development, approximate dates and use of the structure.
- 4.3 Detailed guidance is provided in : "Understanding Historic Buildings, A Guide to Good Recording Practice" (English Heritage 2006), and the principles stated in this document must be adhered to.
- 4.4 The developer shall afford access at all reasonable times to both the County Council Conservation Team archaeologist and the recording contractor to permit archaeological observation of subsequent building and engineering operations in order to record previously unseen or unrecorded features newly exposed.
- 4.5 The data recording methods and conventions used must be consistent with, and approved by, the County Sites and Monuments Record.

5. **Report Requirements**

- 5.1 An archive of all records is to be prepared consistent with the principles of *Management of Archaeological Projects (MAP2)*. This must be deposited with the County Sites and Monuments Record within 3 months of the completion of work. It will then become publicly accessible.
- 5.2 A report on the recording and archive, consistent with the principles of *MAP2*, particularly Appendix 4, must be provided. The report must summarise the methodology employed, the building sequence, and an inventory of records. The objective account of the archaeological evidence must be clearly distinguished from its interpretation. The Report must include a discussion and an assessment of the evidence. Its conclusions must include a clear statement of the archaeological value of the results, and their significance in the context of the Regional Research Framework (*East Anglian Archaeology*, Occasional Papers 3 & 8, 1997 and 2000).
- 5.3 County Sites and Monuments Record sheets must be completed, as per the county SMR manual, for all sites where archaeological finds and/or features are located.

- 5.6 At the start of work (immediately before fieldwork commences) an OASIS online record <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/> must be initiated and key fields completed on Details, Location and Creators forms.
- 5.7 All parts of the OASIS online form must be completed for submission to the SMR. This should include an uploaded .pdf version of the entire report (a paper copy should also be included with the archive).

Specification by: R D Carr

Date: 12 December 2006

Reference: Hempworks build record/doc

This brief and specification remains valid for 12 months from the above date. If work is not carried out in full within that time this document will lapse; the authority should be notified and a revised brief and specification may be issued.

If the work defined by this brief forms a part of a programme of archaeological work required by a Planning Condition, the results must be considered by the Conservation Team of the Archaeological Service of Suffolk County Council, who have the responsibility for advising the appropriate Planning Authority.