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Leicester**

**Archaeological Services**

**An Archaeological Standing Building Survey of  
the Former Lisk Controls Site, Nottingham Road,  
Lount, Leicestershire (NGR SK 386 192)**

**Gerwyn Richards**



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**An Archaeological Standing Building Survey  
of the Former Lisk Controls Site,  
Formerly Coleorton Pottery,  
Lount,  
Leicestershire  
(NGR SK 386 192)**

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***Summary***

*University of Leicester Archaeological Services were commissioned by Bellway Homes Ltd to undertake an archaeological standing building assessment (to English Heritage Level 2) of the former Lisk Controls site, Nottingham Road, Lount, Leicestershire. Planning permission is being sought to re-develop the site for residential use. The proposed re-development will require the demolition of the existing buildings on the site of the former Coleorton Pottery.*

*The Pottery at Coleorton was in operation from about 1840 to 1932. The building survey suggests that there are no structural remains of the earliest pottery building surviving within the proposed development area. The survey did however record elements of the late 19th century buildings recorded by the 1903 Ordnance Survey map; these were limited to large partially exposed timbers in the office building on the Nottingham Road frontage. Recent renovation work and decoration within this building may be concealing other earlier elements.*

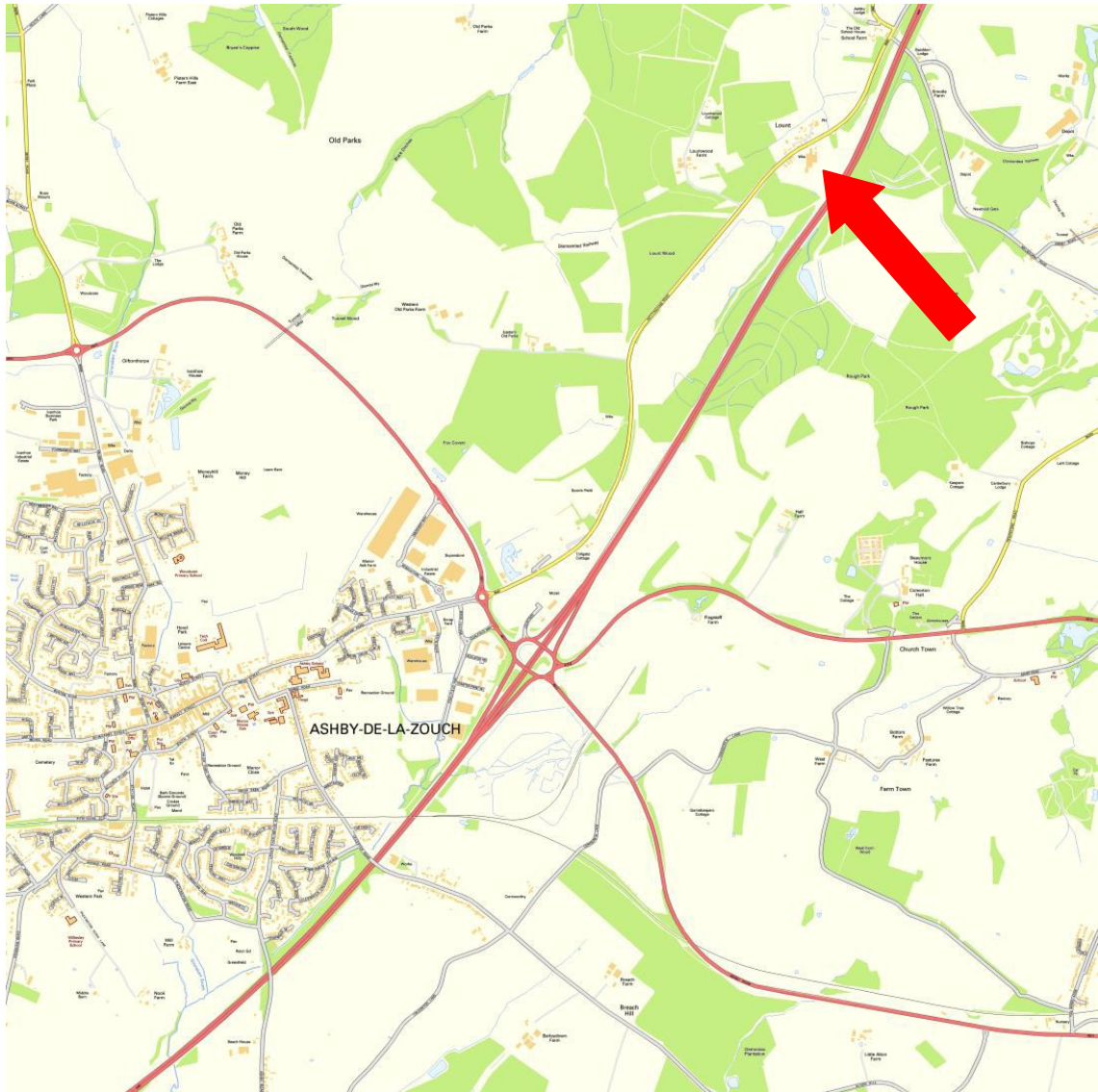
*The remainder of the buildings within the proposed development area are mainly mid- to late 20th century in date and of limited historical or architectural interest. However, the building survey did suggest that significant quantities of re-used materials had been used during the construction of these later buildings.*

*The archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council Museums, under the museums accession number X.A94.2011.*

**1. Introduction**

University of Leicester Archaeological Services were commissioned by Bellway Homes Ltd to undertake an archaeological standing building assessment of the former Lisk Controls site, Nottingham Road, Lount, Leicestershire (SK 386 192). Planning permission is being sought to demolish the buildings in advance of the proposed redevelopment of the site for residential use. The buildings are multi-period and may relate to the original Coleorton Pottery which occupied the proposed development area during the 19th and early 20th centuries and as a result, the Planning Control Archaeologist, as advisor to North-west Leicestershire District Council has recommended that an historic building assessment be undertaken prior to determination of the planning application, to English Heritage Level 2 as defined in *Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice* (English Heritage 2006).

The project was completed in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) *Code of Conduct* and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing buildings or Structures (2008)*. In addition, Leicestershire County Council's *Guidelines and Procedures for Archaeological Work in Leicestershire and Rutland (1997)* was followed.



**Figure 1.** Site location

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The early history of Coleorton Pottery is vague. The first definitive information regarding the pottery is the 1841 census which lists Thomas Wilson, John Wilson and George Proudman as pot makers. Suggesting that the pottery was already a going concern by 1841, by 1842 the pottery is listed as the Wilson & Proudman Pottery. In the 1881 census William Wilson probably an heir of either Thomas or John Wilson is

listed as an earthenware master, employing ‘17 men, 11 young women and 3 boys at the Potworks, Cole Orton’.

The census returns suggests that the pottery was at its peak between 1851 and 1881, with the largest workforce. The census returns for that period also list brickmakers and pipemakers as well as pot makers indicating diversity and overlapping trades within the pottery. At the moment it is not possible to confirm the exact period during which decorative wares were produced at the pottery, and indeed it is not clear what decorative wares were produced, although one source describes the production of yellow glazed wares. A recent auction, however lists a two brown vases (*Figure 2*) as Coleorton Ware. It is possible that more than one type of decorative ware was produced.

The pottery closed down in 1932 and during World War II the site was used for the storage of tinned foods. During the post-war years the buildings went through periods of occupation and of being empty. The longest occupation was by Lisk Industrial Controls who remained at the site until 2007, producing engineering and electrical components. After a period of dereliction, the site was taken over by Bradnor Investments, who renovated and occupied the northernmost buildings as office space and maintained the remainder the buildings as plant workshops and storage.



**Figure 2** Pair of Coleorton Pottery vases (approximately 9inches/230mm tall).

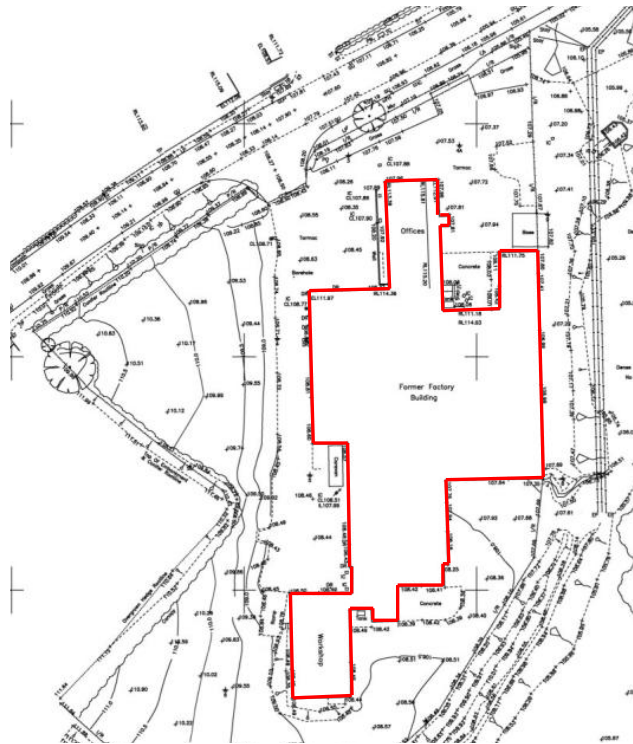


**Figure 2a** Coleorton Pottery from the north-east (unknown date)

## 2. Aims and Methodology

The specific objectives of the standing building survey were as follows:

- To provide a written, drawn and photographic record of the buildings prior to their demolition.
- To ensure the long-term preservation of the information through deposition of the record and a summary written report with an appropriate depository.
- The site-based element of the Historic Building Recording programme involved the production of measured survey drawings and the compilation of photographic and written records.
- Desk-based research included the analysis of readily available documentary and cartographic sources.



**Figure 3** Buildings recorded during this work (in red).  
(Drawing supplied by Bellway Homes Ltd Grid 100m. North to the top).

*Orientation:* The recorded buildings occupy the northern and central part of the proposed development area and consist of a large single multi-phase block of buildings, fronting Nottingham Road. The long axis of the buildings is orientated approximately north to south, with the principal elevations being north-facing. Where the terms ‘left’, ‘right’, ‘front’ and ‘back’ etc. are used in the report, this is in relation to these principal elevations, as viewed from the north. There are four principal buildings of interest and a fifth building included for group value. For the purpose of this report number identification has been allocated to identify the buildings and a number prefix added for significant partitions.



The site visit was undertaken by Gerwyn Richards on July 5th 2011.

An archaeological desk-based has been carried out for the proposed development area as a whole (Hunt 2010) as well as an archaeological evaluation of the Nottingham Road frontage (Higgins 2011). As far as is known, no previous historic building recording has been undertaken of the buildings.

### **3. Description of the Buildings**

#### **3.1 Building 1**

Building 1 is the northernmost building, adjacent to Nottingham Road. It is a two storied building aligned north-south, with the gable fronting Nottingham Road. The building is stucco rendered with a pitched roof on the eastern side and a flat roof on the western side, suggesting two separate structures. The windows on the eastern elevation are modern uPVC while on the western elevation they are a mix of modern uPVC and older Crittal style steel-framed windows.

A limited view of the un-rendered south-facing gable confirmed that building 1 consisted of two separate buildings, building 1a to the west and 1b to the east. Building 1a is built of 20th century incised Fletton bricks, while building 1b is built of earlier looking possibly handmade red bricks (McKay 1945). The lack of access prevented a detailed record from being made of the type of bond or size of brick.

Internally, there is very little of historical or architectural interest remaining within either building. Both were extensively renovated by the new owners. On the first floor of 1b there are a number of partially exposed timbers, probably the tie beams of the roof trusses (*Figures 12 & 13*). The size and finish of the beams suggest they may be early in date. It is possible that the recent renovation work is also concealing other earlier features of historical interest.

Cartographic evidence (*Figure 17*) indicates that building 1b is the earliest remaining within the proposed development area and is likely to be part of the original Coleorton Pottery works and the roof of which can be seen in *Figure 2a*.

#### **3.2 Building 2**

Building 2 is likely to be one of the most recent buildings within the proposed development area. It is a red brick, three bay building with large vehicle doors on the western elevation and a flat roof and re-enforced concrete lintels (*Figure 7*). The bricks are laid in a Dutch Bond (alternating bands of headers and stretchers) with brick dimensions of 8 ½ x 2 ¾ x 4 inches. Cartographic evidence (*Figure 19*) suggests a 1950s or 1960s date for the building.

#### **3.3 Building 3**

Building 3 is the largest of the buildings within the proposed development area and consists of at least five historic phases and a modern block-built extension to the

southernmost elevation (*Figure 8*). On the whole building 3 is a red brick building with a north-light roof. There is a single bay (building 3d) towards the centre of the building which has a pitched roof carried on fan trusses of angled steel (*Figure 11*). Cartographic sources suggests that building 3d may be the earliest, complete phase of the group, dating from the early part of the 20th century (*Figure 18*). To both the north and south of 3d are large single storey north-light factory buildings (3c-to the north and 3e-to the south). The roof design of angle steel north-light trusses with longitudinal pratt trusses supporting the apex of both bays is identical suggesting the pair are contemporary and date from the 1950s or 1960s.

On the western side of building 3, at its northern end there is a long narrow bay. There are two clear phases with a clear change in both the external brickwork and internal roof structure. The northernmost bay (building 3a) has the same roof design as that within bays 3c and 3e and is likely, therefore to be contemporary. The southernmost part (building 3b) is a much simpler roof design where the north-light roof is carried on only two purlins, as a result of which significant bowing has occurred. The dating of Building 3b is uncertain; the brickwork is red bricks (brick dimensions 8 x 2 ½ x 4 inches) laid in a Flemish Garden Wall bond (three stretchers and one header in each course) with what appears to be a lime mortar containing ash or clinker, which has the appearance of a late 19th or early very 20th century build, but cartographic sources suggest a post-World War II date.



**Figure 4** Coleorton Pottery staff, with limited view of building 3b.

The photograph of Coleorton Pottery staff (*Figure 4 above*) shows the gable end of gable end of one of the southern bays. Although un-dated, the photograph is clearly either 1920s or very early 1930s in date (the pottery closed in 1932). The photograph, therefore confirms that the southernmost bay, 3b is 1910-1920s in date, while 3a to the north is likely to be post World War II.

### **3.4 Building 4**

Building 4 is located to the east of building 3, towards the centre of the proposed development area. Again, there are at least two identifiable phases (4a and 4d) as well as another two sub-divisions which may represent separate phases (4b and 4c). The earliest phase is the large central bay, the long narrow bay on the east side of the building, 4d is the latest. 4d is red brick (brick dimensions  $8\frac{3}{4} \times 2\frac{1}{4} \times 4$  inch) laid in a Flemish Garden Wall bond (three stretchers and one header in each course). The roof is an angle steel pratt truss. Cartographic sources suggest 4d may date from the 1950s.

The central three bays, 4a is the largest part of the building. It has a timber-built north light roof with four cast iron columns carrying the central gutter beams. There are both carpenters marks and possible rase marks visible on some of the trusses (Atkinson 2007; TR Projects 2006). The trusses within 4b (to the north) and 4c (to the south) are identical, suggesting, despite the brick-built partitions, that the three bays are contemporary. Within 4c there is an overhead hoist on a semi-circular runner which circles the work space. This is the only evidence of the buildings previous use. There is a single original steel-framed window surviving within the southern wall, which along with the external brickwork, which suggests that this part of the building may be early, dating from the turn of the 20th century (*Figure 10*). There are a number of blocked windows in the eastern wall, confirming that 4d is a later addition, these windows are those seen in un-dated internal photograph of Coleorton Pottery (*Figure 5*), which also confirms that building 4a was used by Coleorton Pottery.

Once again the date of this part of the building is difficult to ascertain; the timber trusses carried on cast iron columns appear Victorian in date, but cartographic sources suggest a construction date of as late as the 1950s or 1960s. It is likely, that the building dates by in large from the early part of the 20th century, but may be as late as the 1920s.



**Figure 5**

Coleorton Pottery staff inside building 4a (the left hand wall is the easternmost wall of 4a).

### **3.5 Building 5**

At the southern end of the buildings there is a modern pre-cast concrete framed workshop, clad in box profile polycarbonate sheets and pre-cast concrete panels. The building most likely dates from the 1980s and represents the most recent and final building within the proposed development area (*Figure 9*).

## **4. Conclusion**

The former Coleorton Pottery is more complicated building than its appearance would suggest. There are elements of the early pottery buildings still standing, most notably the Nottingham Road offices (building 1a) which may contain significant historical fabric within the roof space and possibly elsewhere concealed by modern decoration.

The remainder of the factory buildings are exclusively 20th century in date, however their appearance and in some cases the materials used appear to pre-date this. It is likely that the factory buildings were built piecemeal as and when expansion was necessary and cartographic sources indicate that significant demolition and re-building has occurred throughout the history of the proposed development area, so redundant buildings were removed in piecemeal manner as well. It is possible that salvaged and reclaimed building materials were retained and re-used during the construction of the later buildings.

## 5. Bibliography & Sources

Atkinson, D. 2007 *Shipbuilding & Timber Management in the Royal Dockyards 1750-1850: An Archaeological Investigation of Timber Marks*. University of St Andrews.

English Heritage, 2006 *Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice*. London: English Heritage.

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M<sup>c</sup>Kay, W.B 1945 *Building Craft Series, Brickwork*. Longmans, Green & Co.

PPS 5 2010 *Planning and the Historic Environment* (Department for Communities and Local Government March 2010).

TR Projects. 2006 *An Historic Building Assessment & Record of the Standing fabric forming the Grade II\* Listed Building known as Bradgate Stables, Part 4: Supplementary Note*. ULAS Report 2006-055.

### Sources

HER Historic Environment Record for Leicestershire and Rutland (Leicestershire County Council: Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record, County Hall)

ROLLR Records Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland maps and records.  
OS MAPS: 25 inch maps: Leicestershire Series sheet XVI.6, 1st Edition (1882); 2nd Edition (1903); 1923 Edition.

1: 2500, SK3819, 1960 Edition.

1: 1250, SK3819, 1984 Edition.

Magic Attic, Swadlincote Figures 5 and 6.

## 6. Archive & Publication

The site archive consists of

1 A2 permagraph sheet containing sketch plans & site notes

DVD containing 78 digital images

3 A4 contact sheets

78 Black & White negatives and contact prints

3 A4 photo record sheets

Unbound copy of this report (ULAS Report Number 2011-112)

The archive will be held at Leicestershire County Council Museums under the Accession Number X.A94.2011.

A version of the summary (above) will be submitted to the editor of the local journal *Transactions of Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society* for inclusion in the next edition.

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## 7. Colour Plates



**Figure 6** North-facing elevation of building 1.



**Figure 7** West-facing elevation of building 2.



**Figure 8** West-facing elevation of building 3.



**Figure 9** North- & west- facing elevations of building 5.





**Figure 10** South-facing elevation of building 4.



**Figure 11** Building 3d, roof construction.

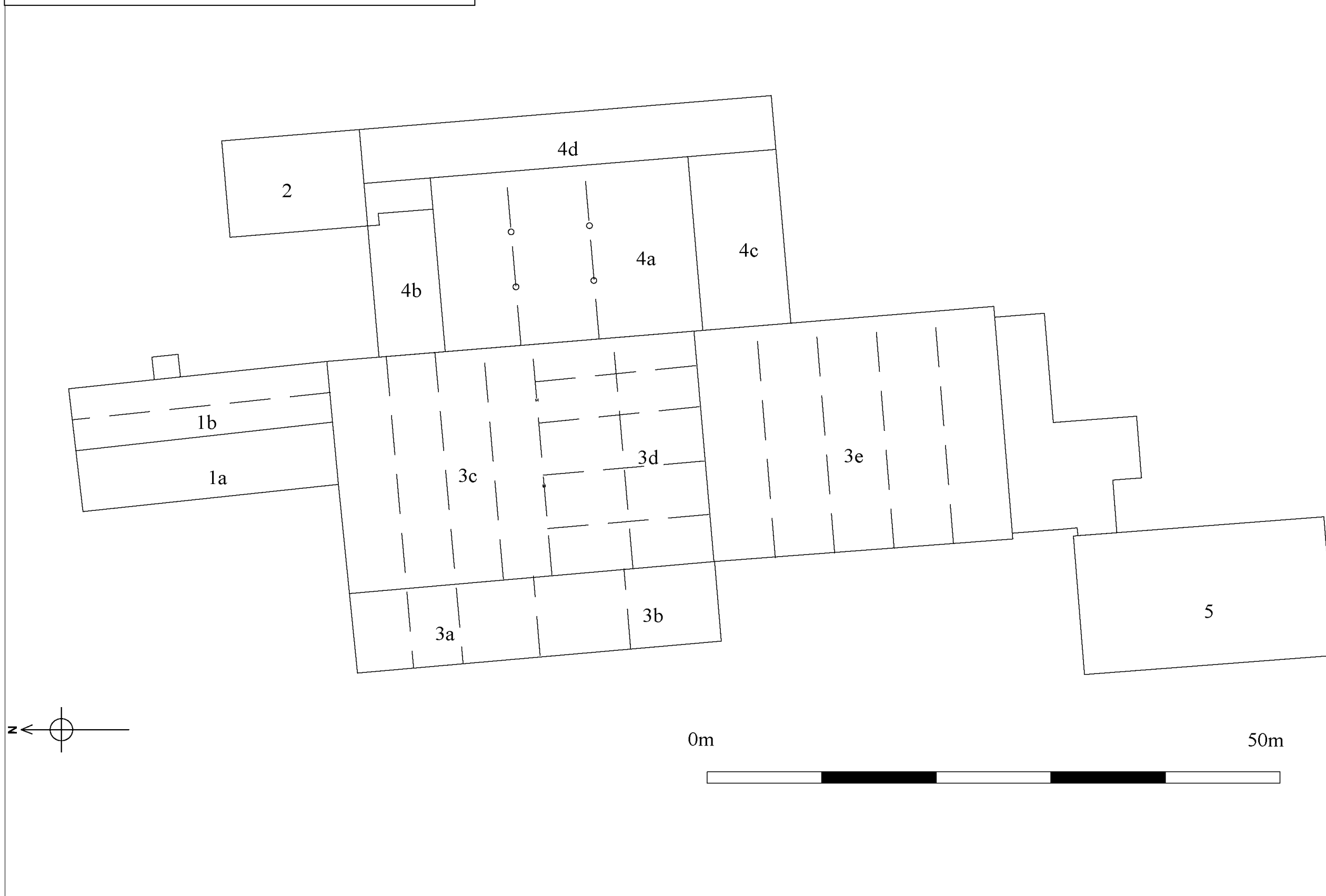


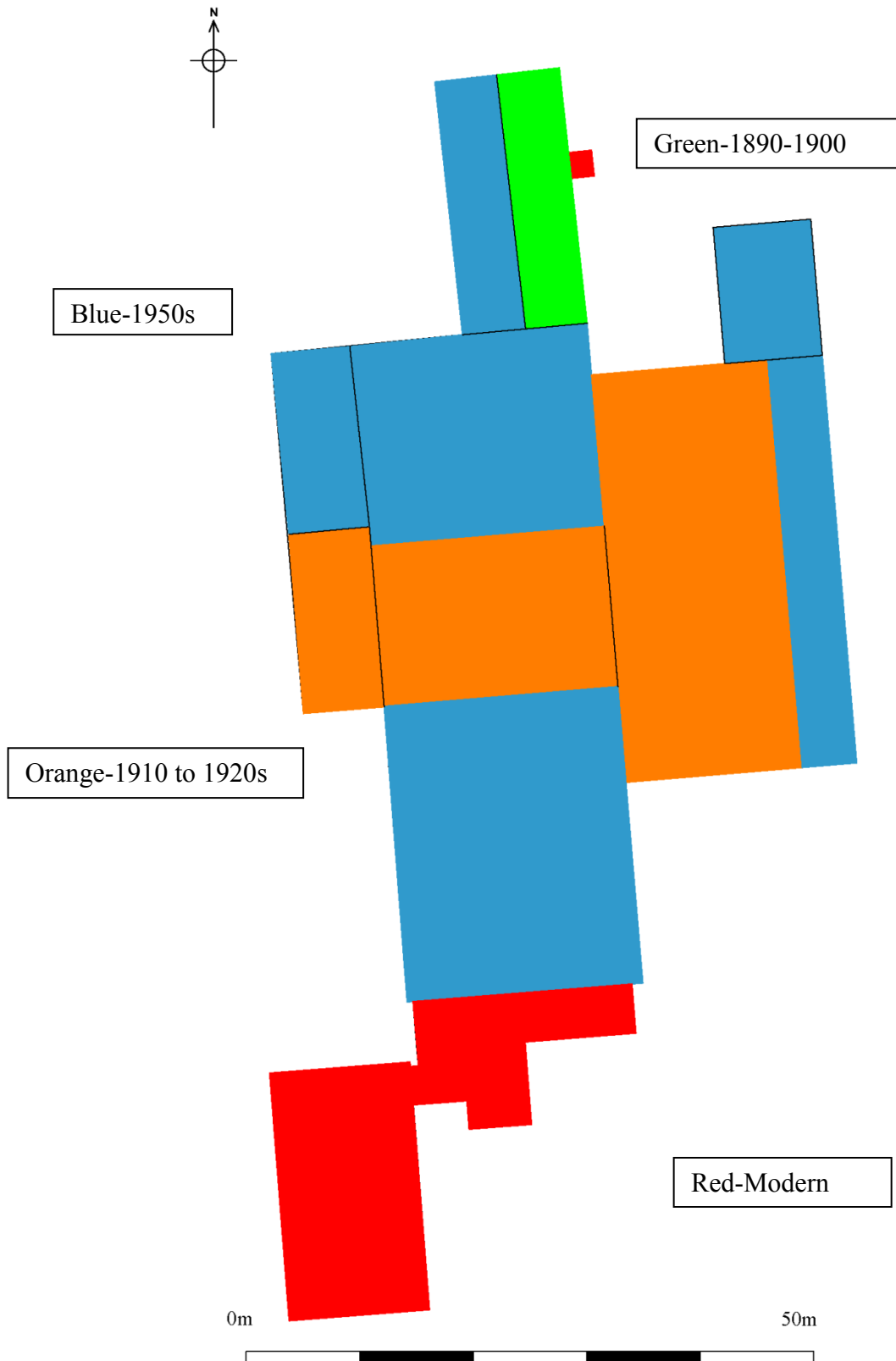
**Figure 12** Partially exposed roof truss within building 1a.



**Figure 13** Partially exposed roof trusses within building 1a.

Figure 14 Block plan of recorded buildings, showing principal divisions.





**Figure 15** Block plan showing approximate phasing.

## 8. Cartographic Sources

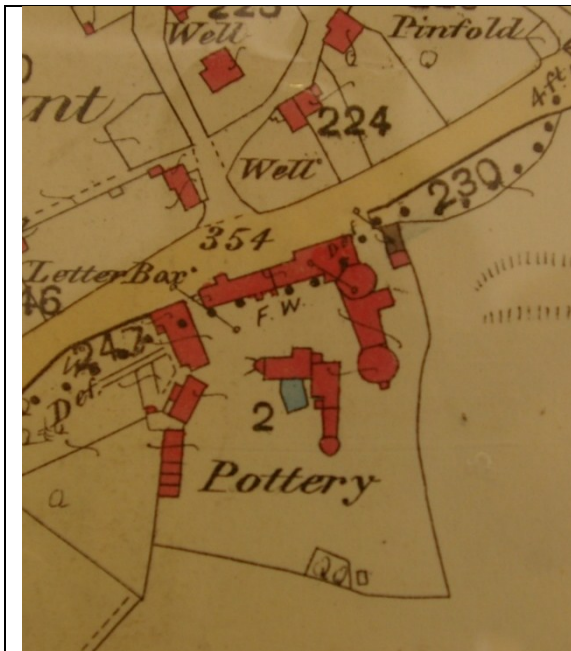


Figure 16 First Edition Ordnance Survey (1882)



Figure 17 Second Edition Ordnance Survey (1903)

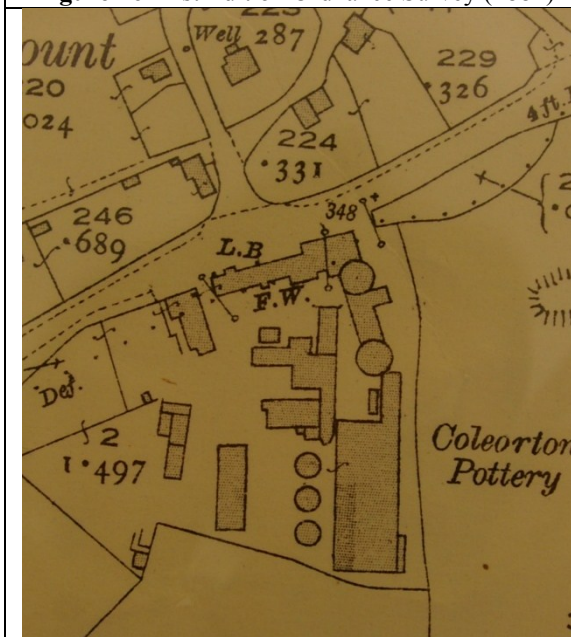


Figure 18 1923 Edition Ordnance Survey

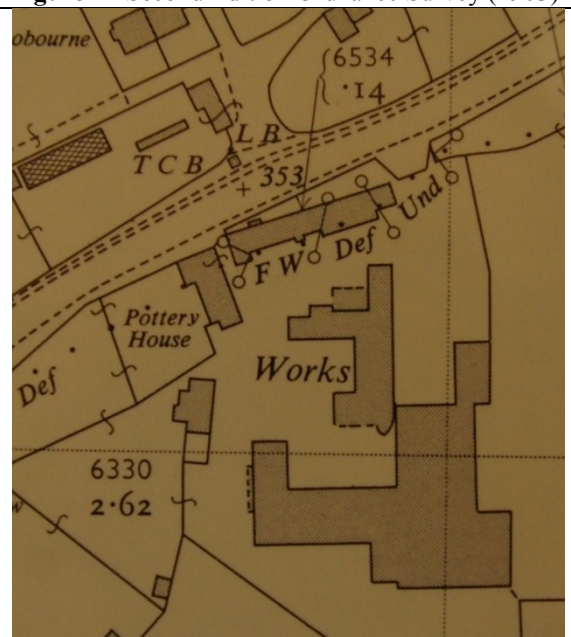
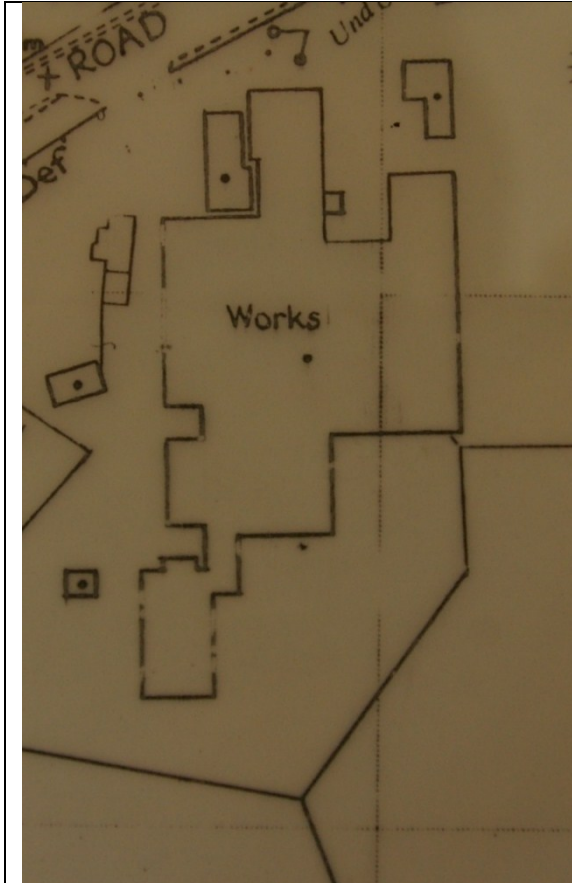
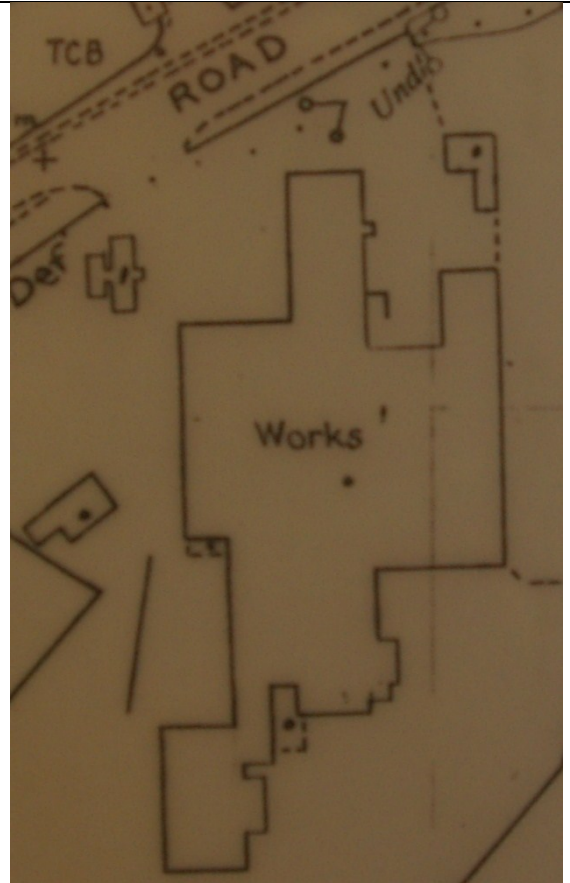


Figure 19 1960 Edition Ordnance Survey



**Figure 20** 1984 Edition Ordnance Survey



**Figure 21** 1991 Edition Ordnance Survey

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