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**An Archaeological Historic Building
Assessment of an outbuilding at
The Water Tower, Countesthorpe, Leicestershire
(NGR SP 570 958)**

Gerwyn Richards



ULAS Report No 2010-115
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**An Archaeological Historic Building Assessment of
An Outbuilding at The Water Tower, The Drive,
Cosby Road, Countesthorpe,
Leicestershire
(NGR SP 570 958)**

Pre Planning Enquiry

Gerwyn Richards

For: Isherwood McCann Ltd

Approved by

Signed:  **Date:** 14.06.2010

Name: Patrick Clay

University of Leicester

Archaeological Services

University Rd., Leicester, LE1 7RH

Tel: (0116) 252 2848 Fax: (0116) 2522614

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(NGR SP 570 958)**

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Summary

University of Leicester Archaeological Services was commissioned by Isherwood McCann Ltd to undertake an archaeological historic building assessment of an outbuilding at The Water Tower, The Drive, Countesthorpe, Leicestershire. It is proposed that the outbuilding be renovated and joined to a new build on the footprint of an adjacent demolished building, forming a single new residential unit.

The outbuilding is within the curtilage of a Grade II Listed building. This assessment has confirmed that the outbuilding was originally built as two separate buildings, the larger of the two (Building B), is contemporary with the water tower and boilerhouse, and shares some of their design characteristics while the smaller building (Building A) is a later addition.

Building A has undergone considerable alterations and as a result very little of the original building remains. Building B, on the other hand has remained largely untouched and unaltered. The proposed work should preserve the historically significant elements and secure the survival of the building in its original context.

The archive will be deposited with Leicestershire County Council, Accession No X.A96.2010.

1. Introduction

University of Leicester Archaeological Services was commissioned by Isherwood McCann to undertake an archaeological historic building assessment of an outbuilding at The Water Tower, The Drive, Cosby Road, Countesthorpe, Leicestershire (SP 570 958). Planning permission is being sought for the re-development of the outbuilding, re-building a nearby demolished building and combining the two to create a single residential unit.

As the proposed works will have an impact upon the retained historic fabric of the building and the setting of the adjacent Listed building, the Planning Archaeologist, Leicestershire County Council, on behalf of the planning authority has recommended that an archaeological historic building assessment be carried out prior to the works commencing. The record should be undertaken to a level 2 standard as defined in *Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice* (English Heritage 2006). The proposed works will provide the planning authority with the base

line information from which an appropriate and informed decision can be made by the planning authority.

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*. In addition, Leicestershire County Council's *Guidelines and Procedures for Archaeological Work in Leicestershire and Rutland* was followed. The methodology to be followed was detailed in the Design Specification for Archaeological work (Appendix 1; ULAS 05.05.2010)

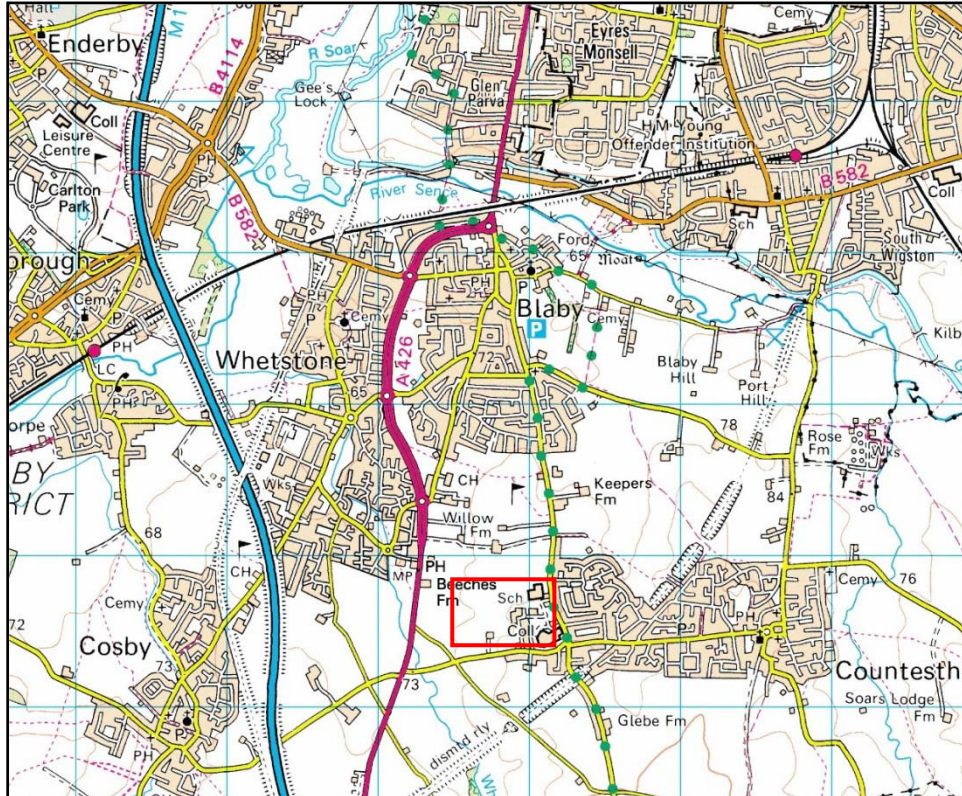


Figure 1. Site location

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The Water Tower was originally constructed as part of Leicester Cottage Homes, the building is Grade II listed; the listing description records it thus:

COUNTESTHORPE SP59 NE THE DRIVE (West Side) 1/31 Boilerhouse and Water Tower 21.9.81 GV II Boilerhouse and water tower built for the Countesthorpe cottage homes by the Leicester Poor Law Union in 1884. Architect I. Baradale. Brick with Welsh slate roofs. The tower is a tall brick building with stone corbels supporting brick machicolations. Capped by a pyramidal slate roof with wide overhanging eaves. Adjacent to this building are the former boilerhouse and coal stores and although these have been altered, their original form is still apparent. They contain a number of

decorative features including patterned cast iron grilles, and a circular lantern which has an ogee cupola and crucifix.

The Leicester Cottage Homes were opened in November 1884; they were built by the Leicester Union to provide homes for pauper children away from the Workhouse within a rural environment at a cost of £29, 340. In all there were eleven children's "cottages", within a 55 acre site to the west of the village of Countesthorpe, nine accommodating 24 boys or girls, the other two accommodating 16. Every cottage was under the supervision of a resident house-father or house-mother. A site Superintendent and Matron oversaw the running of the site and had control over the children's welfare and administered any corporal punishment.

As well as the cottages, the site had its own school, which still operates as Countesthorpe Nursery School, to the south of the Water Tower and a 20-bed infirmary, part of which was a 10-bed isolation ward and swimming baths. All the children attended a religious service in the school room on Sunday afternoon at 3pm.

Although considerably better than life in the Workhouse itself, the children were still expected to contribute to household chores such as cleaning and food preparation and there were workshops and a laundry in which the children laboured.

The cottages remained as Local Authority children's homes into the 1970s with the last child leaving in 1974, and all the cottages subsequently converted to residential use.

2. Aims and Methodology

The aim of the archaeological building assessment was to provide a base line of information regarding the building in its current state, prior to alteration or repair, to standards set down by English Heritage (2006) from which an appropriate and informed decision can be made by the planning authority regarding the building.

The building assessment was undertaken by Gerwyn Richards. Photographs, in digital format taken as raw image files and converted to TIFFs (Tagged Image File Format) covered items 1-6 of the English Heritage guidelines (2006, 4; Appendix 4.1.2). A sketch plan of the building was undertaken and appropriate notes recorded. The site visit was carried out on June 8th 2010.

Orientation: The building is linear in plan, aligned east to west with the principal elevation facing the Water Tower to the south. Where the terms 'left', 'right', 'front' and 'back' etc. are used in the report, this is in relation to this principal elevation. There are two principal phases visible and for the purpose of this report each has been identified with a letter prefix.

No previous historic building recording has been undertaken of the building.

3. Description of the Building

3.1 Building A

There are two distinct phases of building within the proposed development area. The building likely to be the most recent is the westernmost building; it is a single storey buff orange brick-built building in a Flemish Garden Wall bond (brick dimensions 3inch x 9inch x 4 ½inch) with a lime mortar bond. The building was originally two storied but has recently been reduced to single storey, the five highest courses, below the eaves being in modern fletton bricks, while the roof is clad in modern concrete tiles. There are three double doors of modern timber on the south-facing elevation, with surrounds, with the exception of the easternmost reveal, of chamfered bricks. There has been considerable movement in the northern wall where the eaves are approximately 80mm (2-3inches) out of true, which is probably the reason why the building has been reduced in height. The bricks on the northern wall appear to be modern Fletton bricks, suggesting that this wall has been re-built, but without the results of the movement being corrected.

The building has the appearance of a cart shed and, in all likelihood, the doors would have originally been open carriage entrances with flat cambered arches above. The first floor would have originally been for storage with access via a ladder. The extensive rebuilding work means that with the exception of the columns and the westernmost gable, there is actually very little of the original building still surviving.

3.2 Building B

Building B abuts the easternmost gable of Building A. It is two-storied, red brick built (brick dimensions 3inch x 9inch x 4inch) in an irregular Flemish Garden Wall bond, with the roof this time of Welsh Slate which is, in all likelihood, original. There is no straight joint visible on the southern elevation despite the buildings being tied together when the later building was added. When the first floor was removed on Building A the blanks left by the removed bricks in Building B were replaced, leaving no scar.

There are two large windows at first floor level, similar to appearance to “weavers” windows seen on small scale industrial premises during the early to mid-19th century. At ground floor level there are similar large windows, below which is evidence of blocked double doors. There is a substantial timber lintel above the windows, which, although untidy in appearance, appears to be original, while there is a sandstone pad carrying the lintel on the central column. The sills on both first floor and ground floor windows are angled blue bricks.

On the easternmost gable there are a number of original openings including a narrow pedestrian door leading towards a ground floor window and a boarded up window at first floor level. All the openings have un-cambered flat-arched heads; both the windows have angled red brick sills with the closing bricks being double angled, a somewhat unnecessary flourish for a building such as this. The highest 15 courses of bricks have been re-built.

Further flourishes include the purlins projecting beyond the build line and moulded timber barge boards. The projecting purlins can also be seen on the western gable, suggesting the building was originally taller than building A. There is also a blocked entrance indicating the two buildings were joined at first floor level. On the northern wall there is evidence of a lost building of unknown form or appearance and a blocked window.

Internally there is little of architectural or historical significance, the interior, however, appears largely unaltered. The floor is laid with blue bricks and the internal reveals of the blocked doors are cant bricks. First floor access is via a rather steep staircase on the east gable. The first floor is a single room with a flat cambered arched fireplace and projecting chimney breast. There is a fitted cupboard over the stairs, which appears to be original, with some decorative timber moulding and tongued and grooved panelling enclosing the stairwell.

The room is currently open to the roof but the lack of paint on the higher roof timbers suggests that there was originally a ceiling within the room. The roof is held by a bolted king-post truss with raking struts. The large windows on the southern wall appear to be original and provide excellent light for the room.

4. Discussion

In isolation both buildings are of limited architectural or historical interest, however their association with the Leicester Cottage Homes and their location within the curtilage of a listed building means they are of some merit. Building A has undergone major alteration, while building B is largely unchanged.

A rapid examination of accessible cartographic sources indicates that building B predates building A. Building B appears to be contemporary with the Water Tower and is clearly recorded on the 1885 Ordnance Survey. Building A appears to have been added at the same time when the infirmary was built and is recorded on the 1904 Ordnance Survey.

The original use of the buildings is difficult to ascertain. The appearance of building A suggests that it was originally a cart or carriage shed. It is located at the end of an avenue leading south to Cosby Road and may have housed any transport the Home had or operated. Building B is rather more difficult to assess. The southern elevation originally had two large openings and large windows on the first floor. It is possible; therefore, that each floor had a separate use; the first floor, with its fireplace and good light from the large windows may have been one of the workshops in which the children laboured, while the ground floor may have been an earlier cart shed. The northern elevation of B shows evidence of a lost building, possibly a lean-to added at a later date to provide additional weather proof storage.

5. Conclusion

This archaeological building assessment has confirmed that both buildings are associated with the Leicester Cottage Homes. Building B is contemporary with the

Water Tower and shares the same architectural design features and, with the exception of the blocking up of the ground floor double doors, remained largely un-altered. Building A is a later addition and has undergone significant alterations, leaving very little of the original building.

Both buildings show extensive movement and settlement cracks and are showing signs of being no longer weather proof. The proposed works, should they go ahead will, seek to preserve the historically significant elements and secure the survival of the building in its original context, following Planning Policy Statement 5 (PPS5 2010). The new build plans are sympathetic in incorporating Building B into the design and, by replacing building A enhance the setting of the Listed building.

6. Archive

The site archive consists of:

CD containing 31 digital images
1 A4 Contact sheet
1 A2 permatrace sheet containing sketch plan and site notes
Unbound copy of this report (ULAS Report Number 2010-115)

The archive will be held at Leicester County Council Museums under the Accession Number X.A96.2010.

A version of the summary (above) will be published in *Transactions of Leicestershire Historical & Archaeological Society* in due course.

7. Acknowledgements

The survey was commissioned by Isherwood McCann plc. The assessment was carried out by Gerwyn Richards; the project was managed by Patrick Clay.

8. Bibliography

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

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

Gerwyn Richards
ULAS
University of Leicester
University Road
Leicester LE1 7RH

Tel:0116 252 2848
Fax: 0116 252 2614

Email: gr42@le.ac.uk

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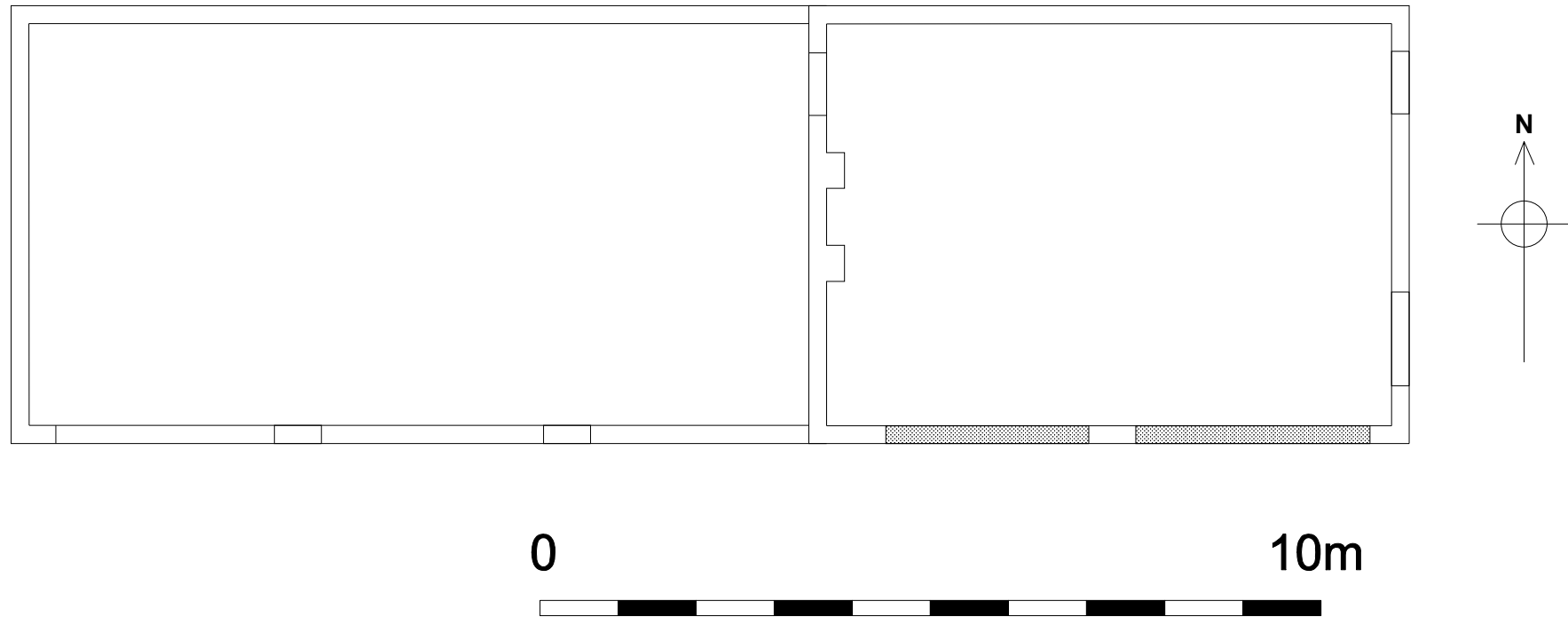


Figure 2 Sketch Pan of Assessed Building.

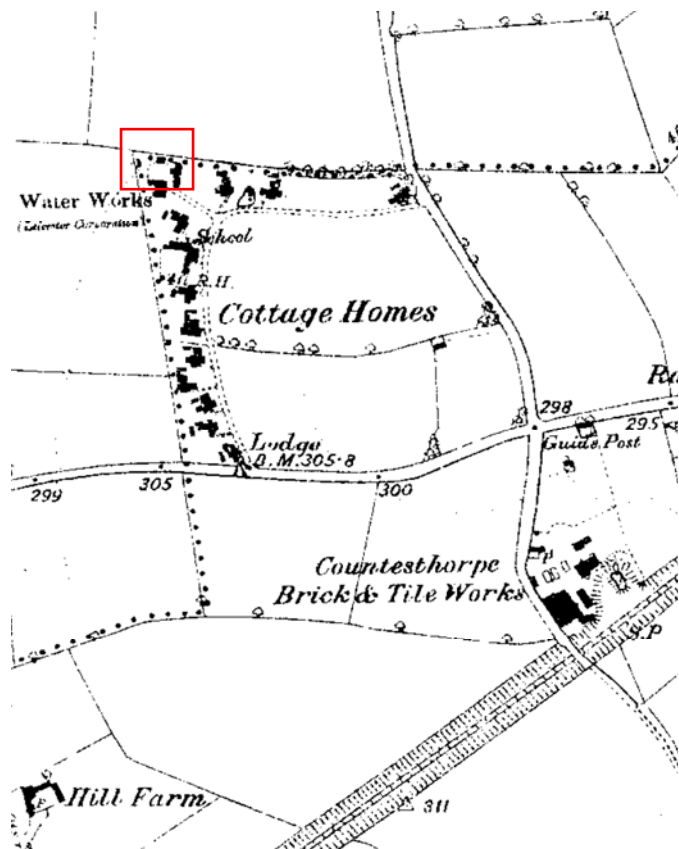


Figure 3 1885 Ordnance Survey map with area outlined

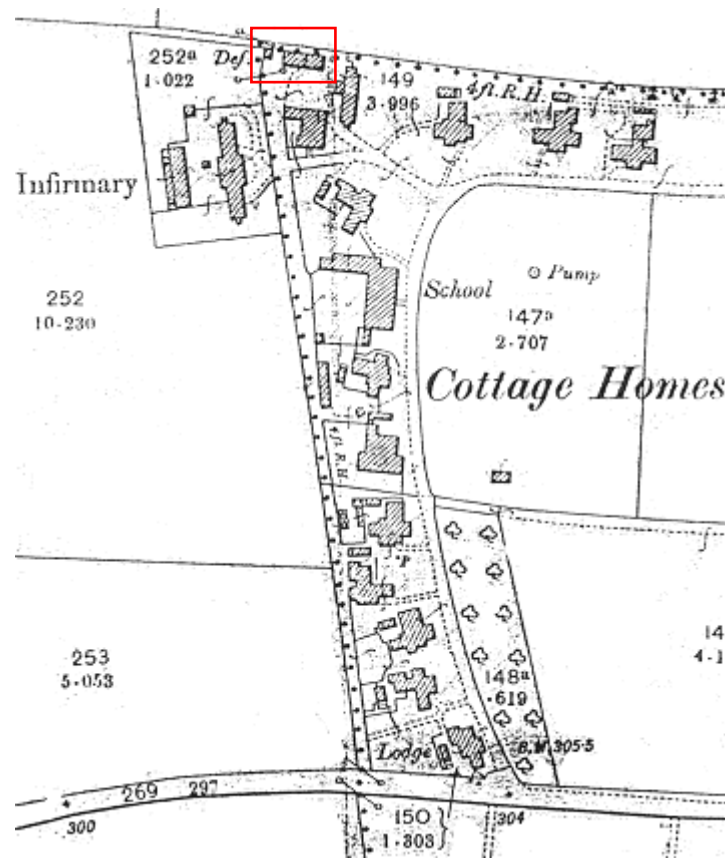


Figure 4 1904 Ordnance Survey map with area outlined

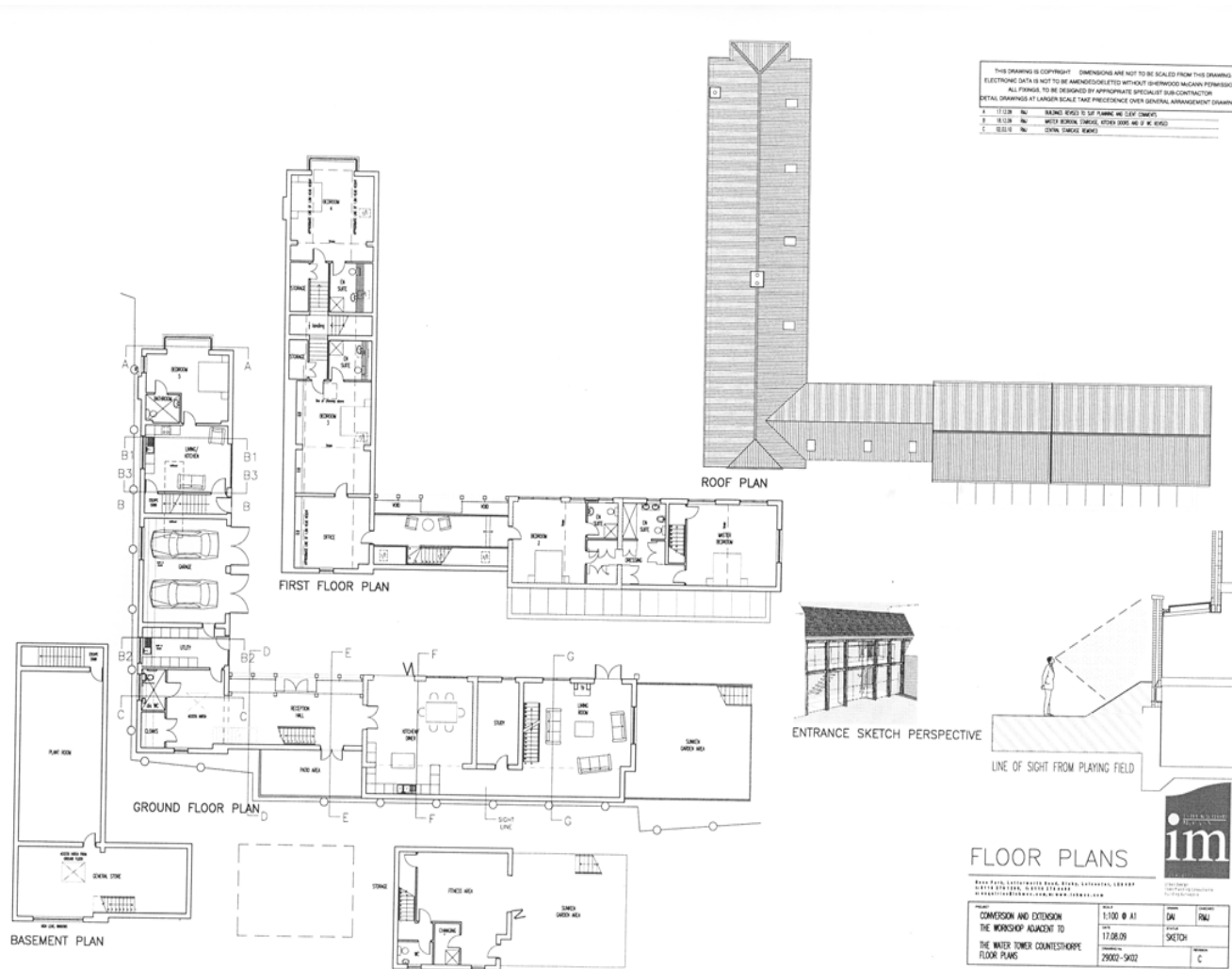


Figure 5 Plans of the new development (provided by Isherwood McCann)

Plates



Plate 1 Water Tower with Building A to the right.



Plate 2 Buildings A (left) and B (right) looking north-west.

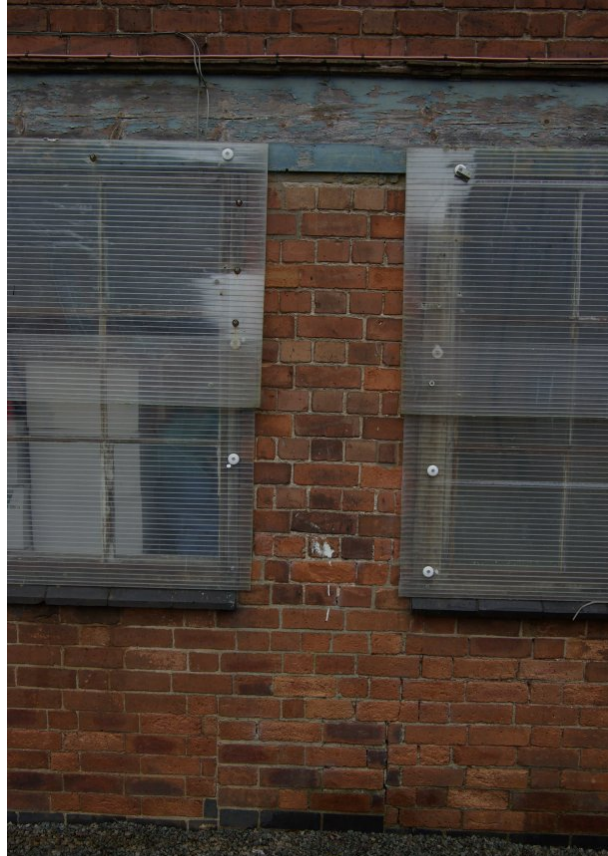


Plate 3 Elevation detail, Building B, showing blocked entrances (bottom) & original lintel.

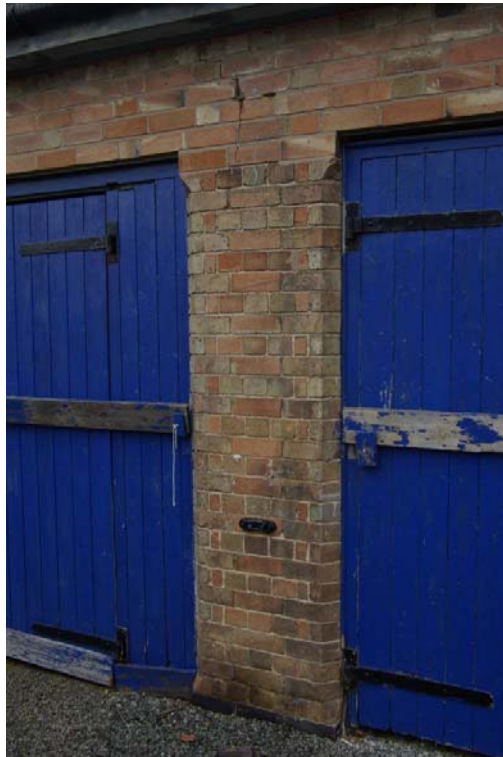


Plate 4 Elevation detail, Building A, showing original door reveals with modern brickwork above



Plate 5 Northern elevation showing blocked window, evidence of lean-to & new brickwork.



Plate 6 General view of interior, Building B, first floor.

Appendix 1 OASIS Record

Project Name	An Archaeological Historic Building Assessment of an outbuilding at The Water Tower, The Drive, Cosby Road, Countesthorpe, Leicestershire. (NGR SP 570 958)
Project Type	Historic building assessment
Project Manager	P. Clay
Project Supervisor	G Richards
Previous/Future work	Not known
Current Land Use	
Development Type	New dwelling
Reason for Investigation	Planning request
Position in the Planning Process	Pre-determination
Site Co ordinates	SP 570 958
Start/end dates of field work	05.06.2010
Archive Recipient	Leicestershire County Council
Study Area	300 sq metres

Appendix 2

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

Design Specification for Archaeological Work

**Site: The Water Tower, The Drive, Cosby Road,
Countesthorpe, Leicestershire, (NGR: SP 570 958).**

Client: Isherwood McCann Ltd

Planning Authority: Blaby District Council

Pre-Planning Enquiry

Non-Technical Summary

This document represents a design specification for archaeological historic building assessment for: **The Water Tower, The Drive, Cosby Road, Countesthorpe, Leicestershire, (NGR: SP 570 958)**. The design specification addresses the requirements of Leicestershire County Council as advisors to the planning authority and follows the guidelines as laid out in the *Institute for Archaeologists Standards and Guidance for Standing Buildings or Structures (IfA S&G)*.

1. Site Location and condition

- 1.1 The Water Tower, lies to the north west of The Drive, Cosby Road, Countesthorpe, Leicestershire, (NGR: SP 570 958) around 0.5km south of the centre of the village.

2. Planning Background

- 2.1 The requirement for archaeological work is in accordance with PPS 5 Planning and the Historic Environment (DCLG 2010).
- 2.2 The current proposals include demolition of a building identified as of historic, architectural and/or archaeological interest from information held in the Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record (HER). In consequence, the Planning Archaeologist (SPA) has recommended the need for an assessment of the impact on the building following English Heritage guidelines as detailed in *Understanding Historic Buildings. A guide to good recording practice* (English Heritage 2006).

3. Archaeological and Historical Background

- 3.1 The proposals involve the demolition of a building adjacent to Listed structures The Listing description for the structures is as follows:

COUNTESTHORPE SP59 NE THE DRIVE (West Side) 1/31 Boilerhouse and Water Tower 21.9.81 GV II Boilerhouse and water tower built for the Countesthorpe cottage homes by the Leicester Poor Law Union in 1884. Architect I. Baradale. Brick with Welsh slate roofs. The tower is a tall brick building with stone corbels supporting brick machicolations. Capped by a pyramidal slate roof with wide overhanging eaves. Adjacent to this building are the former boilerhouse and coal stores and although these have been altered, their original form is still apparent. They contain a number of decorative features including patterned cast iron grilles, and a circular lantern which has an ogee cupola and crucifix.

4 Aims and objectives

- 4.1 The aim of the work is to complete an appropriate level of historic building assessment of the impact of proposed works to the structure. This will pay specific attention to those elements where demolition/conversion and/or alteration are proposed. The work should be undertaken to a standard that will allow the future interpretation of the buildings within the context for which they were originally designed as well as later uses

5. Methodology

5.1 Building Recording

- 5.1.1 The building assessment will produce a record of the areas of fabric that are to be removed or altered to English Heritage level 2 (2006) prior to the commencement of works.
- 5.1.2 The building recording written account will be in accordance with level 2 items 1-7 (4-7 in summary form specifically as they relate to the areas being removed or altered). Sufficient details of physical evidence will be provided will be provided to validate interpretations.
- 5.1.3 The building recording drawn records will be in accordance with level 2 items 2-6 specifically as they relate to the areas of fabric being removed; item 2 will be a general ground floor plan at a scale of 1:50 or 1:100. Unusual constructional features will be recorded in greater detail at specified scales of between 1:1 to 1:50 where appropriate.
- 5.1.4 The building recording photographic records will be in accordance with level 2 items 1-6 and should cover all general areas specifically the areas of fabric being removed. Items 1-4 and 6 will be as appropriate to the areas of loss and alteration. All areas will be placed within the visual context of the site as a whole and a record will be provided of the interior and exterior of the building within the parameters of Health and Safety, to demonstrate its current form. The primary record will be in Black and white print and colour transparency format supplemented with digital and colour prints as appropriate.
- 5.1.5 The buildings assessment will be undertaken following the Institute of Field Archaeologist's Code of Conduct and will adhere to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures*. (IFA S&G). The building will be examined under ULAS Health and Safety Policy (*ULAS Health and Safety Policy Statement and Health and Safety Manual*). A risks assessment form will be completed prior to and updated during the visit.
- 5.1.5 Unlimited access to monitor the project will be available to the Client and his representatives, the Conservation Officer, Melton Borough Council, the Team Leader of the Heritage and Resources Team, Leicestershire County Council subject to the health and safety requirements of the site. At least one week's notice will be given prior to commencement of the recording work in order that monitoring arrangements can be made. All monitoring shall be carried out in accordance with the *IfA Standard and Guidance for the Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures*.

7. Report Preparation

- 7.1 The reports will contain as a minimum:
- non-technical summary
 - introductory statements
 - aims and purpose of the survey

- methodology
 - an objective summary statement of results
 - supporting illustrations at appropriate scales
 - supporting data, tabulated or in appendices
- 7.2 The report will be in A4 format and copies will be sent to the Client, LCC HNET, HER and Conservation Officer for Melton Borough council.

8. Copyright

- 8.1 The copyright of all original finished documents shall remain vested in ULAS and ULAS will be entitled as of right to publish any material in any form produced as a result of its investigations.

9. Health and Safety

- 9.1 ULAS is covered by and adheres to the University of Leicester Archaeological Services Health and Safety Policy (2007) and FAME (SCAUM) Health and Safety manual with appropriate risks assessments for all archaeological work. The relevant Health and Safety Executive guidelines will be adhered to as appropriate. The HSE has determined that archaeological investigations are exempt from CDM regulations.
- 9.2 A Risks assessment form will be completed prior to work commencing on-site, and updated as necessary during the site works.

10 Insurance

- 10.1 All ULAS work is covered by the University of Leicester's Public Liability and Professional Indemnity Insurance. The Public Liability Insurance is with St Pauls Travellers Policy No. UCPOP3651237 while the Professional Indemnity Insurance is with Lloyds Underwriters (50%) and Brit Insurances (50%) Policy No. FUNK3605.

11. Monitoring arrangements

- 11.1 The production of the assessments will be monitored by the ULAS project manager.
- 11.2 All monitoring shall be carried out in accordance with the *IfA S&G: DBA* (section 3.5).

12 Bibliography

- DCLG 2010 *Planning Policy Statement 5 (PPS5): Planning and the historic environment*, Department for Communities and Local Government March 2010,
- English Heritage, 2006. *Understanding Historic Buildings*.
- Institute for Archaeologists, 2008. *By-laws, standards and policy statements of the Institute for Archaeologists*

Patrick Clay
Director
ULAS
University of Leicester
University Road
Leicester LE1 7RH

Tel: 0116 252 2848

Fax: 0116 252 2614
Email: pnc3@le.ac.uk

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Fig 1 Site location with building arrowed



Contact Details

Richard Buckley or Patrick Clay
University of Leicester Archaeological
Services (ULAS)
University of Leicester,
University Road,
Leicester LE1 7RH

T: +44 (0)116 252 2848

F: +44 (0)116 252 2614

E: ulas@le.ac.uk

w: www.le.ac.uk/ulas



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