

**A Photographic Survey of Building 2,
254 Braunstone Lane,
Braunstone Town, Leicestershire.**


(NGR SK 554 026)

Gerwyn Richards

Planning Application: 07/0768/1/PX

For: Parkers of Leicester Ltd

Checked by Project Manager

Signed:  **Date:** 29.02.2009
Name: Patrick Clay

**University of Leicester
Archaeological Services**

University Rd., Leicester, LE1 7RH

Tel: (0116) 2522848 Fax: (0116) 2522614

Website: <http://www.le.ac.uk/ulas/>

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Summary

University of Leicester Archaeological Services were commissioned by Parkers of Leicester Ltd to undertake a photographic survey of Building 2, 254 Braunstone Lane, Braunstone. Planning permission had been granted for the demolition of this and other buildings within the proposed development area.

A previous rapid building appraisal identified the building as being early to mid 19th century in date and may be part of the near by Grade II Listed Manor House and, therefore, requiring further recording.

The photographic survey provided a permanent visual (photographic) record of the building in its current state prior to demolition. Documentary research concluded that the building, in all likelihood, belonged to a former farm, not the Manor House.

The archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council, under the accession number X.A28.2008.

1. Introduction

University of Leicester Archaeological Services were commissioned by Parkers of Leicester Ltd to undertake a photographic survey of Building 2 at 254, Braunstone Lane, Braunstone Town, Leicestershire (SK 554 026). Outline planning permission has been granted for the demolition of some of the existing buildings and erection of three office blocks (Planning Application Number 07/0768/1/PX).

The Senior Planning Archaeologist, Leicestershire County Council, as advisor to Blaby District Council advised that the proposed works would impact significantly upon historic buildings. As a photographic survey of Building 2 was a requirement of the planning permission prior to its demolition.

All work followed the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) Code of Conduct and adhered to its *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* was adhered to. *Understanding Historic Buildings* (English Heritage 2006) has been used as a basis for defining levels of recording.

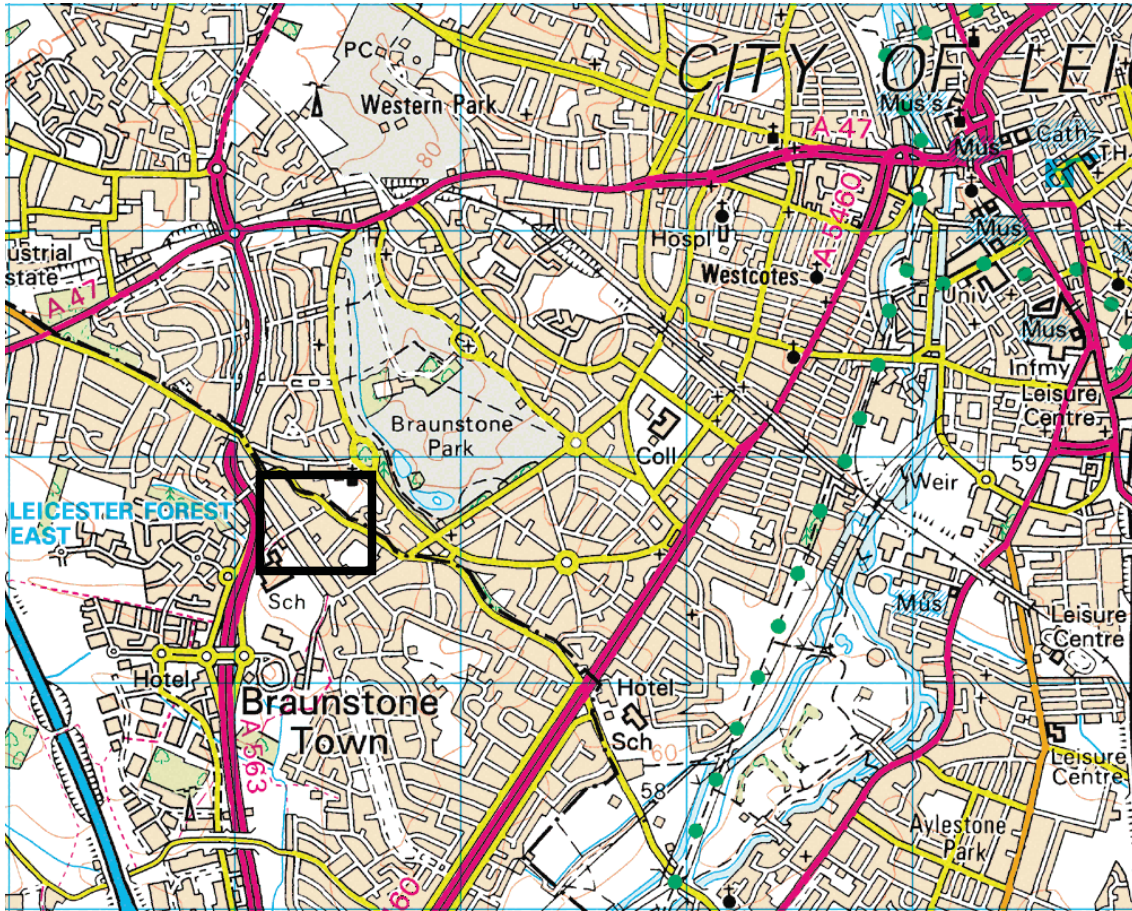


Figure 1. Site location Scale 1:50000

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2. Aims and Methodology

The aim of the photographic survey was to provide a permanent visual (photographic) record of the buildings in their current state, prior to alteration or demolition, to standards set down by English Heritage (2006).

The photographic survey was undertaken by Gerwyn Richards. Photographs, in 35mm monochrome negative and 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). The survey was carried out on June 3rd 2008 and January 14th 2009.

The proposed development area consists of four buildings of interest; one is to be retained and three others are scheduled for demolition. Although only Building 2 is being recorded as part of this photographic survey its relationship with the other buildings was noted (*Figure 9*). Each building has been allocated a number for identification purposes and a letter where internal sub-division is also required.

Orientation: The long axis of the building detailed in this report is orientated approximately north-east to south-west, with the principal front being the north-west facing elevation.

3. Description of the Building

Building 2 consists of a single-storey twin-bay red brick building aligned north-east to south-west, fronting to the north-west (*Figure 8*). The bricks appear to be handmade measuring 9 ¼ inch by 3 inch, with relatively large inclusions, suggesting an early date of manufacture, possibly pre 1850. The bond is a Flemish Garden Wall bond, showing extensive cement mortar re-pointing although traces of an earlier lime mortar can be seen in places. There is no damp proof course, which is not unusual for agricultural buildings, while there is a hole at ground level to the left of the building, the lowest point, which would have originally served as a drain (*Figure 10*).

There are two large doors to the north-east and south-west of the building hanging on sandstone hinge pads with sandstone lock keeps. There is early, possibly original, ironwork on the doors and the doors themselves may also be original, with new uPVC units installed behind. There is a third, blocked, door on the south-western gable, towards the front of the building, while there is a central pitching hole, also blocked, on the north-eastern gable. The proximity of the two would suggest they may not be contemporary. There are four forward-facing windows within the north-eastern bay, all with cambered arched heads of two courses of headers and sills of single cant blue bricks on edge. These are possibly not original and, as with the doors, the windows are recent uPVC units. The roof comprises modern concrete tiles.

With the exception of a very recent dry wall partition to the north-east, internally, the building is little altered having been converted to commercial rather than agricultural use. The roof is a single bolted king-post design with raking struts (*Figure 12*) carrying purlins in a soft wood. There is a full height brick-built partition wall between the two bays with a blocked central pitching hole and a blocked doorway adjacent to the front wall (*Figure 13*), which may suggest that one bay is later than the other, although there is no visible joint on the external walls. Limited remains of cast iron drinking troughs can be seen on the rear wall within room A. There are new concrete floors throughout.

The south-western bay (Room B) has remained largely unaltered. The blocked openings are clearly visible in both the partition wall and the gable wall (*Figure 15*). There are original bull-nosed brick piers and reveals on the blocked gable door. The roof truss is identical in design. Again the floor is of relatively recent concrete.

An Ordnance Survey benchmark has been carved on the north-eastern gable, the exact date of which is unknown, but may relate to the second geodetic levelling carried out by the Ordnance Survey between 1912 and 1921 (*Figure 11*).

The general appearance and layout of the building with the doors on the front (north-western) elevation and south-western gable, bull nosed brick door reveals and internal buttresses would suggest that the building was originally built as a cow house or milking parlour possibly with a small storage area above.

4. Historical Research

An examination of the historic maps held by Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester & Rutland, with particular attention to the County Series 1:2500 (1854-1949) provides evidence for the origins of the building.

The building is clearly identifiable on the first edition OS map (*Figure 2*) as is a range of since demolished buildings immediately to the north-west, which has the appearance of a farm complex. The Manor House is located to the north-east, fronting Braunstone Lane. There is also what appears to be a fence or boundary between Building 2 and the Manor House, suggesting Building 2 belongs to this other farm complex, not the Manor House. The fact that the buildings doors face the north-west also suggests that the building relates to the former farm complex, not the Manor House. Even with the distortion of the reproduced maps it is possible to see that Building 2 is slightly out of alignment with the projecting rear wing of the Manor House.

With only occasional alterations and additions, later editions of the map (*Figures 3, 4 & 5*) all apparently show the same arrangement with the boundary between Building 2 and the Manor House remaining constant. The third revision (*Figure 5*) records the building as being wider than in earlier editions and as no evidence of this can be seen on the current building in all likelihood it represents a lean-to of some sort added to the building and since lost. The evaluation trench in this area did uncover a layer of compacted gypsum, possibly the floor of this lean-to (Richards 2008).

The third revision OS map is also the first to record Building 3, to the south-west. This map evidence confirms that the building dates from the immediate post-war period. Vast numbers of this type of building, using Fletton Bricks and corrugated asbestos cement roofing sheets upon steel trusses were built at this time. The design had been introduced during the war and used extensively by the War Department; as a result such buildings are frequently mis-identified as being military in origin. The bricks used to block the door in the south-western gable of Building 2 are the same Fletton Bricks used in the construction of Building 3. The gap between the two buildings would suggest that the door was in use at the time Building 3 was built, otherwise the building would have been likely to have been built abutting Building 2; however the use of matching bricks would suggest the door was blocked soon afterwards.

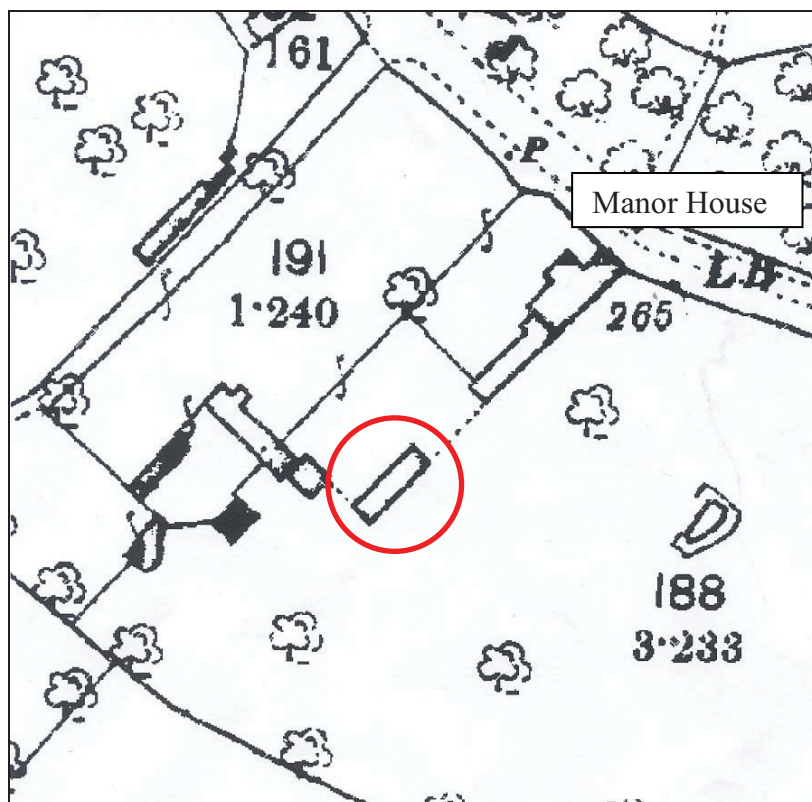


Figure 2 First Edition OS map 1854-1901.



Figure 3 First Revision OS map 1893-1915.

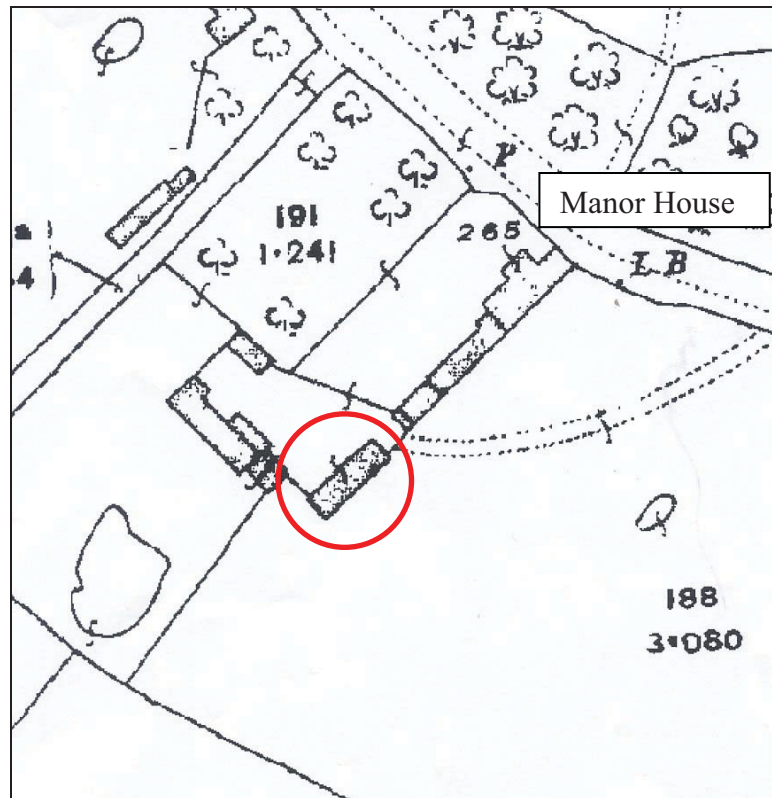


Figure 4 Second Revision OS map 1906-1939.

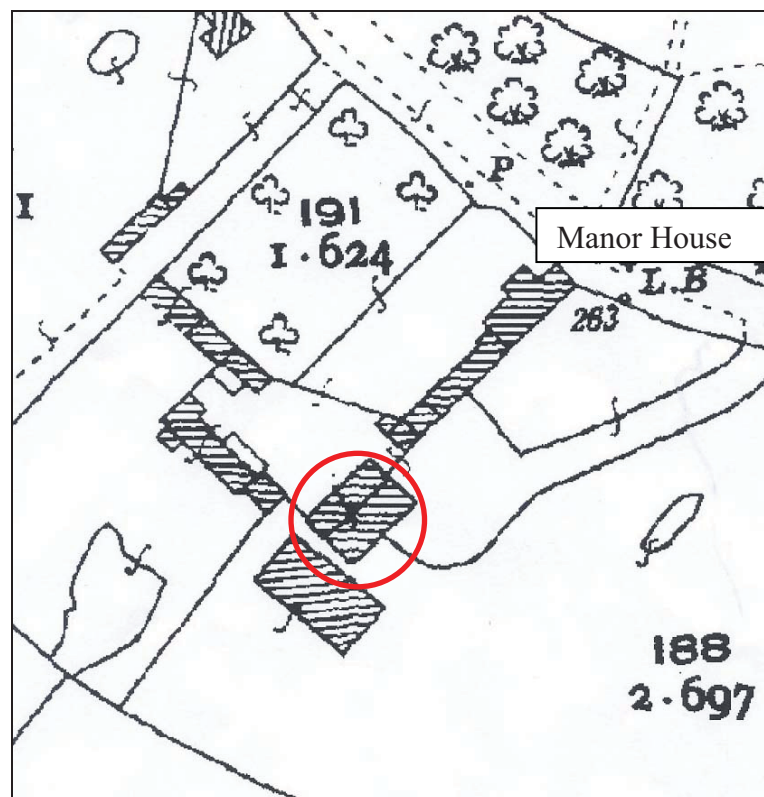


Figure 5 Third Revision OS map 1924-1949.

5. Conclusion

The building is a good example of a mid 19th century midlands farm building, probably originally built as a cow house or milking parlour during the re-development of the farm during the agricultural boom in the mid-19th century. Despite the loss of the original farm, the lone building has survived relatively intact, having most likely been converted from agricultural use during the middle years of the 20th century and as a result has been better maintained than if it had remained in agricultural use.

Historical and cartographic sources suggest that the building belonged to a former farm complex to the north-west and not to the Manor House to the north-east. This is supported by information recorded during the photographic survey, the most obvious of which is the fact that the principal front elevation of the building faces north-west, towards the former farm complex.

6. Photographic Index

Digi	B & W	Room	Description	Dir
001	001	A	General, Left to Right	
002	002	A	General, Left to Right	
003	003	A	Roof Truss	
004	004	A	Roof Truss	
005	005	A	Blocked pitching Hole, Right Hand Wall	
006	006	A	Blocked pitching Hole, Right Hand Wall	
007	007	A	Detail of Internal Brick Work, Rear Wall	
008	008	A	Detail of Internal Brick Work, Rear Wall	
009	009	A	Iron Tie Plate, Front Wall	
010	010	A	Iron Tie Plate, Front Wall	
011	011	A	Original Door Ironwork	
012	012	A	Original Door Ironwork	
013	013	A	External Window Detail	
014	014	A	External Window Detail	
	015	A	External Door Detail	
	016	A	External Door Detail	
017	017		Front Elevation, General	SE
018	018		Front Elevation, General	SE
019	019		Relationship With Building 03	SSW
020	020		Relationship With Building 03	SSW
021	021		Left Elevation, General	S
022	022		Left Elevation, General	S
023	023		Drain at Ground Level, Front Left	
024	024		Drain at Ground Level, Front Left	
025	025		Partial Rear Elevation	W
026	026		Partial Rear Elevation	W
027	027	B	General, Front to Back.	
028	028	B	General, Front to Back.	
029	029	B	Right Hand (Southwest) Gable, Internal.	
030	030	B	Right Hand (Southwest) Gable, Internal.	
031	031	B	Roof Truss	
032	032	B	Roof Truss	
033	033	B	Blocked pitching Hole, Right Hand Wall, Internal	

034	034	B	Blocked pitching Hole, Right Hand Wall, Internal
035	035	B	Right Hand (Southwest) Gable, Internal.
036	036	B	Right Hand (Southwest) Gable, Internal.
037	037	A	Remains of Cast Iron Troughs, Rear Wall.
038	038	A	Remains of Cast Iron Troughs, Rear Wall.
039	039	A	Unobstructed View of Right Hand (Southwest) Partition Wall.
040	040	A	Unobstructed View of Right Hand (Southwest) Partition Wall.
041	041	A	Angled Brick Plinth Above Doorway.
042	042	A	Angled Brick Plinth Above Doorway.
043	043		OS Benchmark on Left Hand (Northeast) Gable.
044	044		OS Benchmark on Left Hand (Northeast) Gable.

7. Bibliography

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8. Archive & Publication

The site archive consists of

- 3 A2 permatrace sheet containing building plans & trial pit locations
- 78 Black & White negatives and contact prints (44 photographic survey & 34 trial trench evaluation photos)
- 2 CD containing 76 digital images (42 photographic survey & 34 trial trench evaluation)
- 3 A4 contact sheet
- 2 A4 Photo Index Sheet
- 4 A4 Trench recording sheets
- Unbound Copy of This Report (ULAS Report Number 2009-005)
- Unbound Copy of An Archaeological Evaluation and Rapid Building Appraisal of 254 Braunstone Lane, Braunstone Town, Leicestershire (NGR SK 554 026). (ULAS Report Number 2008-031)

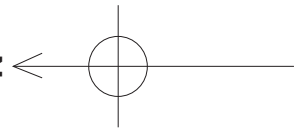
The archive will be held at Leicestershire County Council under the Accession Number X.A28.2008

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

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

Tel: 0116 252 2848
Fax 0116 252 2614

23.01.2009



anstone Lane

Building 1
(Retained)

Parkers Office
(Retained)

Building 2

Building 3

Building 4

Avon Road

0

100m

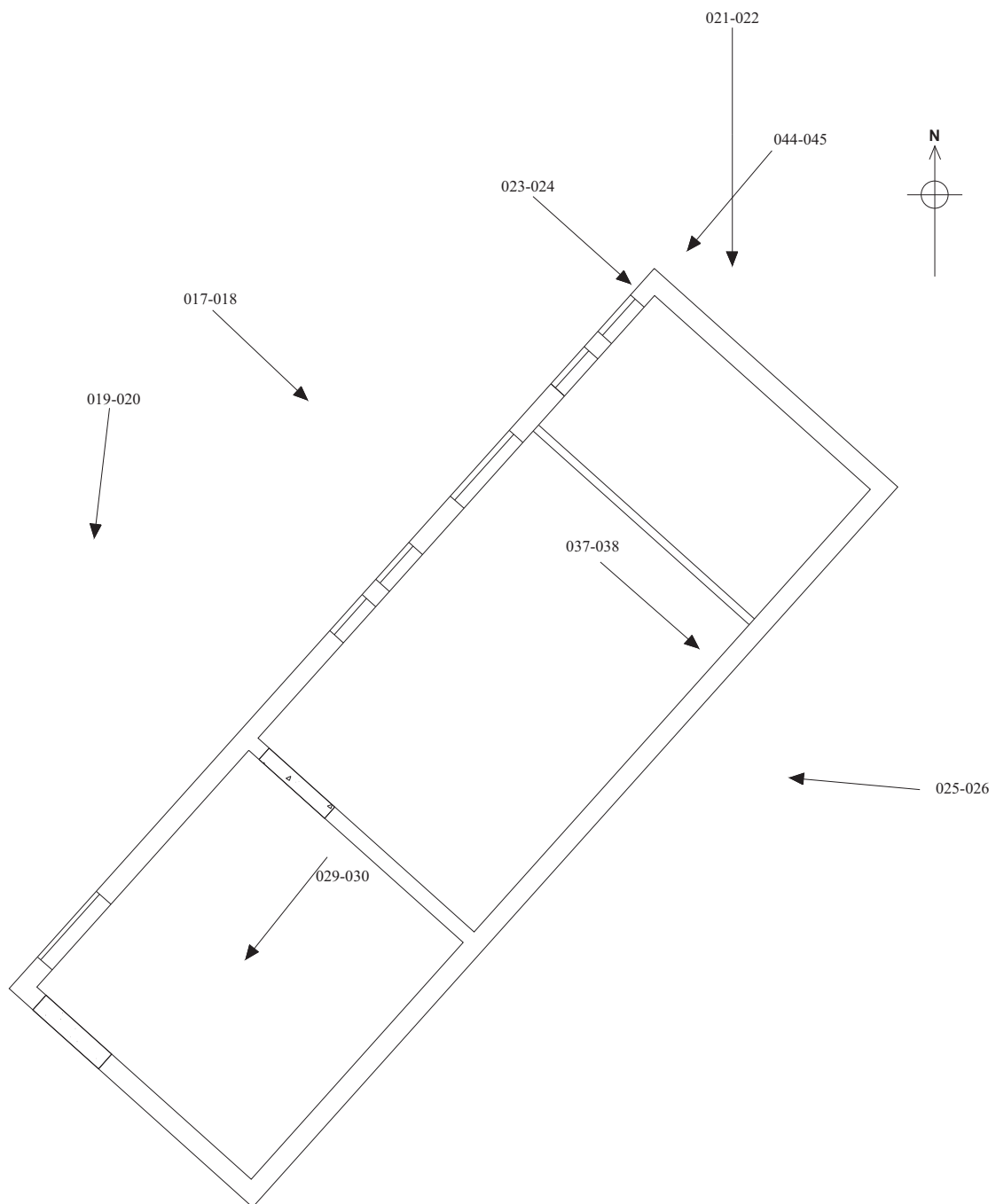


Figure 7 Sketch Plan of Building 2 showing direction of photographs mentioned in the text.



Figure 8 Front Elevation (looking south-east).



Figure 9 Building 2 with Buildings 3 & 4 to the right (south-west).



Figure 10 Original open drain on front (north-western) elevation.



Figure 11 Ordnance Survey Benchmark on north-east gable.



Figure 12 Roof Truss in Room 1.



Figure 13 Blocked Openings in partition wall.



Figure 14 Remains of feeding troughs (Room 1).



Figure 15 Interior showing south-western gable of Room 2.