A Photographic Survey at Gorse Farm, 9 Main Street, Stonesby, Sproxton, Leicestershire SK 823 246

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For: Mr and Mrs Pepper

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A Photographic Survey at Gorse Farm, 9 Main Street, Stonesby, Sproxton, Leicestershire. NGR: SK 823 246

Andrew Hyam

Summary

A photographic survey was undertaken by The University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) at Gorse Farm, 9 Main Street, Stonesby in the parish of Sproxton, Melton, Leicestershire. The survey studied two former barns located within a larger farmyard complex which are to be converted and extended into two dwellings (planning application No: 04/00902/LBC. Because the 19th century barns are closely associated with Gorse Farm, which is a Grade II listed building, the Senior Planning Archaeologist requested that they be recorded before any conversion work takes place. The barns also represent typical, but diminishing, examples of agricultural buildings to found within the locality.

The survey took place on the 29th of April 2008 and was carried out by A R Hyam. The report and archive will be deposited with Leicestershire County Council under Accession Number X.A.69.2008

1. Introduction

In accordance with Planning Policy Guidelines 16 (PPG 16, Archaeology and Planning), para 30 and PPG 15 (Planning and the Historic Environment), this document forms the report for a photographic survey on two barns at Gorse Farm, 9 Main Street, Stonesby, Leicestershire (NGR: SK 823 246). Mr and Mrs Pepper have applied for planning permission to convert and extend two former barns into two domestic dwellings (planning application number 04/00902/LBC). When considering the planning application the Senior Planning Archaeologist at Leicestershire County Council recommended that, because the 19th century barns are a diminishing example of farm buildings from this period, a photographic survey take place before any alterations take place.

Gorse Farm is located within the historic core of Stonesby, Sproxton parish, approximately 8km north-east of Melton Mowbray (figs. 1 and 2.). The site is situated on the north side of Main Street and the corner of The Green. The Grade II Listed farmhouse and a converted barn attached to the farmhouse lie to the north of the two barns which are located around a yard in the south-east corner of the property (figs.3 and 4). The site is at a height of approximately 144m OD on a gentle slope running down from the north. The underlying geology for the area is mudstone and Lower Lincolnshire Limestone which has traditionally been used for local building materials.

2. Background

Although not of exactly the same age the two barns form the western and northern boundary of a courtyard area fronting onto Main Street and The Green. Until relatively recently another structure formed part of the eastern boundary backing onto The Green but this has since been demolished leaving a 2m high wall that is now used as the boundary wall. The outline of this building is shown on an architects' plan which bears the date 2004. Barn A is on an east to west alignment and is actually two barns joined at the gable ends whilst Barn B follows a north to south alignment. The predominant building material, as with the farmhouse and with many of the older buildings in the village, is locally quarried limestone.

The first edition Ordnance Survey map of the area shows the building layout virtually the same as seen in figure 2 apart from Barn B having a slightly narrower addition running from its north wall towards the farmhouse. This is still present on the 1948 edition but current editions show the building as it stands today.

3. Objectives

The objectives of the photographic survey as specified in the ULAS Design Specification were:

- 'The recording by photography of the building that is to be with specific attention given to those elements proposed for demolition, conversion and/or alteration. This work to be undertaken to a standard that will allow the future interpretation of the building within the context for which it was originally designed and which subsequently evolved.'
- To produce an archive and report of the results.

4. Methodology

Black and white 35mm photographs and digital colour photographs were taken throughout the survey. Notes and sketches were also made and scale drawings supplied by HSSP Architects were used and annotated where necessary. The specific levels of detail used in the survey followed the guidelines laid down in the RCHME (1998) and English Heritage (2006) specification for photography, which were:

- Item 1: General view or views of the exterior of the building.
- Item 2: The overall appearance of principal rooms and circulation areas.
- Item 3: Detailed coverage of the building's exterior appearance.
- Item 4: Any external detail, structural or decorative, which is relevant to the building's design, development and use and which does not show adequately on general photographs.
- Item 5: The building's relationship to its setting, to other buildings, or to a significant viewpoint.
- Item 6: Internal detail, structural and decorative, which is relevant to the building's design, development and use, and which does not show adequately on general photographs.

All work followed the Institute of Field 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 was

followed. The Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England (RCHME) *Recording Historic Buildings: a Descriptive Specification* (3rd edition, 1996) was used as a basis for defining levels of recording.

5. Results

The two barns undergoing redevelopment are built, as mentioned, around the northern and western corners of a small yard on the corner of Main Street and The Green. At one time they formed part of a complex of five barns but two have since been demolished leaving the barns the subject of this study. Gorse Farm farmhouse lies to the north of the barns and helps create a small courtyard on the northern side of Barn B. The farmhouse has been extended and modified to occupy an additional barn at its eastern end which still retains its opposing double doors forming what may have been a threshing barn. Measured drawings have been produced by HSSP Architects which show the key components of the buildings (figs. 5 and 6)

Barn A, eastern half

Although labelled as a single barn in the developer's plans Barn A actually consists of two gable-ended barns built side by side along a curving east to west alignment (figs. 3 and 7). The eastern half of the barns, which are built at ninety degrees to The Green, is built of coursed limestone rubble with a Welsh slate roof. Two sheets of plain glass on both sides of the roof help to let light in. Larger, roughly shaped, limestone blocks act as quoins to support each corner of the barn. Six courses of red brick laid in an English bond form the upper courses of the south facing wall. The bricks measure 220mm long x 70mm high x 110mm wide and have a variety of lime and Portland cement pointing, as does the limestone portion of the wall.

The south face of the barn contains a single stable door near to the centre with a timber lintel. There is faint evidence of a wall scar approximately 3.2m from the eastern corner although this area has recently been heavily repointed which has obscured most traces of any scaring. At this point are the remains of a concrete and brick surface heading southwards running parallel to the 2m high boundary wall which joins the eastern corner of the barn with a straight line joint. The developer's plans show this area as a demolished barn although it is still shown on the latest OS map. On the western side of the doorway is a slight step in the lower part of the wall but it is not clear what purpose this served (fig. 8).

The eastern gable end of the barn forms part of the boundary of the farmyard and The Green. A square wooden-framed window is located in the centre of the gable but otherwise the wall is plain with no evidence of any other openings (fig. 9). Most of the western gable end is obscured by the western half of Barn A but it appears that the gable has been rebuilt in order to accommodate the higher ridge-line and the slightly different alignment of the western building. The lower half of the wall, which is probably original, has no openings set within it.

The northern face of the barn has a single stable door entrance towards the western corner (fig. 10). The western corner of the barn projects out approximately 1m beyond the wall line of the adjoining barn to the west. Part of the eastern wall of the brick outhouses has been let into the corner of the projecting corner which has been rounded to improve access into this area (see fig. 14). A small raised garden and a 2m

high boundary wall have been built between the barn and the converted threshing barn attached to the farmhouse. These two features appear to be relatively recent additions.

Inside the barn is a concrete floor with a number of small modern partitions dividing the space into a series of pens. No apparent scaring or blocked openings are visible although much of the walls have been painted with limewash or paint which may have obscured any features (fig. 11). The roof consists of a king post structure with raking struts supporting principal rafters onto which the purlins are laid on cleats. The principal rafters do not act as common rafters and appear to be scarf jointed onto the king posts below the ridge line. None of the roof timbers appear to have been re-used elsewhere.

Barn A, western half

This part of Barn A appears to have been added to the western end of the original stone barn. It is built at a slightly different alignment to the adjacent barn and follows the line of Main Street in order to create a slightly larger yard to the south. The roof is of Welsh slate with plain terracotta ridge tiles. The south facing wall is constructed of a single skin of red bricks measuring 210mm long x 70mm high x 100mm wide laid in an English bond (fig. 7). This has recently been reinforced with an internal skin of modern breezeblocks. A single wooden-framed window and two stable doors are the main openings into the barn. Both doors and windows have shallow arches constructed of a single course of red bricks laid as headers. Two 0.4m wide x 0.2m high chamfered limestone blocks project from the bottom of the wall corresponding with two internal pilasters which support the two main roof beams (fig.12). This suggests that the barn may have been an open-fronted structure when first built. A projecting red brick corner pillar with shaped, rounded bricks supports the western corner of the barn. The bricks measure 230mm long x 70mm high x 110mm long. A low brick wall, made of the same sized bricks, runs southwards into the yard from this pillar.

The eastern gable end of the barn rises to a higher level than the adjacent barn and has been coated with render obscuring any construction details. A small slit-like air vent is visible at the tip of the gable.

The western gable end is constructed of coursed limestone rubble and has a single width doorway in the southern corner (fig. 13). It has a wooden-framed window in the gable with a straight timber lintel. To the north of this window is a small timber beam above what is apparently a blocked small square opening below which is a projecting limestone ledge measuring 0.4m wide and 0.3m deep. The ledge is approximately 2.68m above current ground level and presently acts as a shelter for an electric light but it is not clear what its original purpose was. The northern half of the roof and part of the gable end have been modified to create a catslide roof over a range of small red brick built outbuildings running along the back of the barn. The bricks for the outbuildings measure 220mm long x 70mm high x 115mm wide.

The northern face of the western half of the barn is generally obscured by the later outhouse buildings under the extended catslide roof. Inspection within these outbuildings revealed a coursed limestone rubble rear wall to the barn matching that

seen on the western face. A single bricked-up doorway in the eastern corner of the barn was noted but no other openings were seen (fig. 14).

Inside is a large open space partially sectioned into three bays by modern partitions (fig. 15). The floor is of concrete and is higher than the courtyard to the south. The modern breeze block skin on the southern face rises to wall plate height and effectively hides any internal construction details on this wall. The blocked doorway in the north-east corner is visible as is the blocked opening on the west wall over the limestone ledge, but otherwise no internal details or fittings that may aid analysis are visible. The two large roof beams are re-used from elsewhere and have 90mm high x 100mm wide rectangular holes for joists and are clearly marked with Roman numerals (fig. 16). Raking struts directly support the purlins with no use being made of a king post. The purlins and rafters appear to be relatively new timbers and are unmarked.

Barn B

Barn B is located to the west of the present entrance to Gorse Farm and follows a north to south alignment. It is built using coursed limestone rubble with red brick detail around the two doorways and a course of projecting headers at wall plate height (fig. 17). As with Barn A larger shaped blocks of limestone act as quoins at each corner. The gable ended roof is covered with pan tiles which are commonly used in this area as a lightweight and cheap roofing material for agricultural and vernacular buildings.

The eastern face, fronting onto the driveway and yard, has two stable door entrances. Narrow bricks, measuring 220mm long x 50mm high x 100mm wide, have been used around each door and for the supporting arches and header course. It is not clear if these form part of the original structure or if they have been added at a later date. The piecemeal way they have been used suggests the latter although some attempt at a pattern survives around parts of the doorways. However, they are quite soft and may have eroded only to be patched by limestone blocks at a later date. Remains of iron hinge pins can be seen on the south side of both doors.

The south face of the barn fronting onto Main Street has a number of lower courses made from some very large limestone blocks (fig. 18). No other features are visible in this face of the barn. Two low limestone walls which act as boundary walls butt against either side of the barn.

The north face of the barn bears the scar of a lower gable ended building butting up against it (fig. 19). The rear wall of this demolished barn, discussed earlier, remains in place to a height of 2m and is presently used as a garden wall. The wall has two recessed alcoves on the eastern side presumably forming part of an internal feature of the old barn (fig. 20).

The rear, western face, of Barn B contains three small square windows which are double glazed and are set in new wooden frames (fig. 21). The openings however appear to be of original size. Barn B's wall and the remaining wall belonging to the demolished barn are continuous with no join between the two walls which indicates a contemporary date.

Inside is an uneven earth floor with a small brick plinth and gully running along the western wall (fig. 22). Each window has a narrow plank beneath a sloping brick sill with brick detail around the slightly splayed cheeks (fig. 23). The size and method of laying matches the bricks around the doorways. The roof timbers have been recently erected and are bolted together at key points with modern coach bolts (fig. 24). A simple king post and principal rafter supporting a cleated purlin method of construction has been used.

6. Discussion

The barns at Gorse Farm are an interesting group of 19th century agricultural buildings that were at one time common to this part of Leicestershire. It would appear that Barn A has undergone a number of phases during its life, the first being the construction of the eastern stone portion followed by the western half which was probably constructed as an open fronted cart shed. As cart sheds are generally dated after the middle of the 19th century this seems a reasonable date to ascribe to the first of its phases. Later phases saw the addition of the rear outbuildings with the modified roofline plus the infilling of the south wall to create an enclosed space. It is not clear to what period the demolished portion of the barn on the east wall belonged but judging from the plan form and the lack of a joint on the south wall of Barn A it seems unlikely to pre-date the first part of Barn A.

The brick detail around the doors and windows of Barn B are hand-made and of a relatively early 19th century date but, in the fashion of agricultural buildings, may have been re-used from elsewhere. The modern roof also prevents an accurate date but it is likely that both barns date from within the second half of the 19th century.

7. Archive

The archive consists of:

This report,

2 contact sheets of digital photographs,

1 cd of digital photographs + this report,

2 cd's of digital photographs in .tif format

1 contact sheet of black and white 35mm photographs,

35mm negatives,

8 sheets of handwritten notes taken during the survey.

2 photographic record sheets (1 digital, 1 black and white).

8. Publication

A summary of the work will be submitted for publication in the *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society* in due course. A record of the project will also be submitted to the OASIS project. Oasis is an online index to archaeological grey literature reports.

9. Acknowledgements

The fieldwork was undertaken by A R Hyam. The project was managed by Dr P Clay.

10. Bibliography

Clay, P. 2006. Design Specification for a Photographic Survey. Gorse Farm, 9 Main Street, Stonesby, Leicestershire. (ULAS 05/572).

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

English Heritage 2007. Agricultural Buildings Selection Guide. London: English Heritage

RCHME 1996. Recording Historic Buildings; A Descriptive Specification Third Edition, Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England

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Appendix 1. Figures



Figure 1. Stonesby location map.

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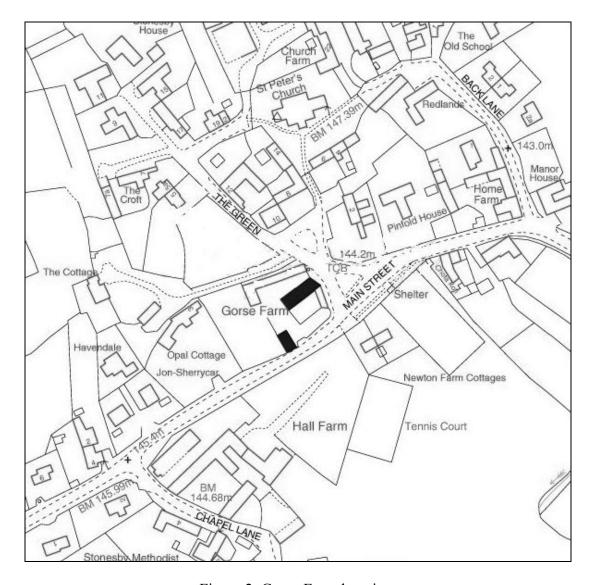


Figure 2. Gorse Farm location.

Modified from Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. \bigcirc Crown Copyright 1996. All rights reserved. Licence number AL 10009495.

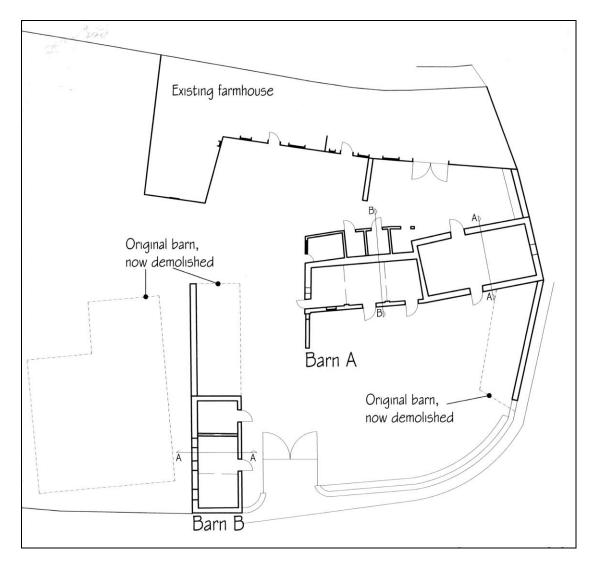


Figure 3. Plan of Gorse Farm and barns Source: HSSP Architects



Figure 4. Gorse Farm viewed from Main Street. Barn A on right, Barn B on left.

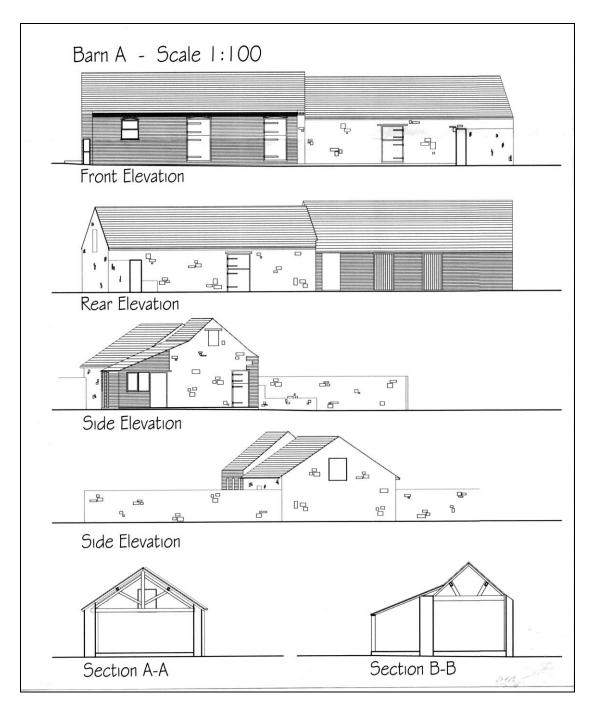


Figure 5. Barn A drawing. Source:HSSP Architects. Original scale 1:100

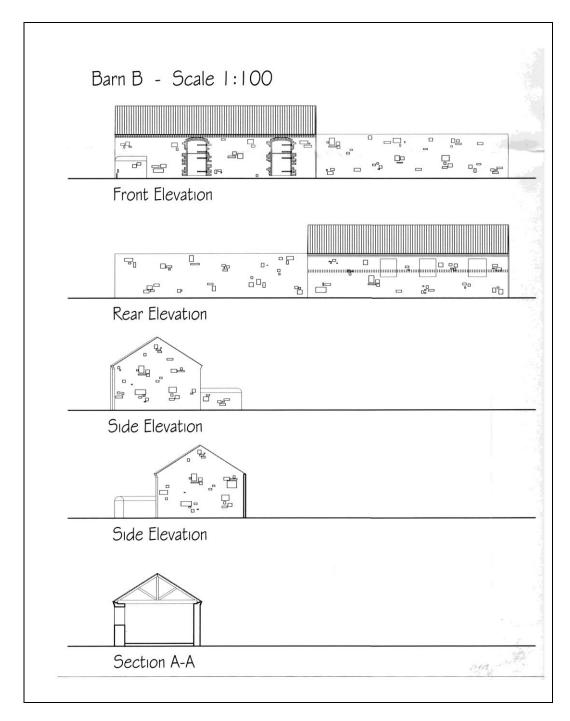


Figure 6. Barn B drawing. Source:HSSP Architects. Original scale 1:100



Figure 7. Barn A looking north.



Figure 8. Step or repair in south wall of Barn A (eastern section).



Figure 9. Eastern gable end of Barn A with converted threshing barn attached to farmhouse to the north (right).



Figure 10. North face of Barn A looking south-east.



Figure 11. Interior of Barn A (eastern section) looking south-east.



Figure 12. Plinth projecting from south face of Barn A (western section).



Figure 13. Western gable end of Barn A showing limestone plinth and rear outbuildings.



Figure 14. Blocked doorway on north wall of Barn A (western section) viewed through rear outbuilding doorway.



Figure 15. Interior of Barn A (eastern section) looking west.

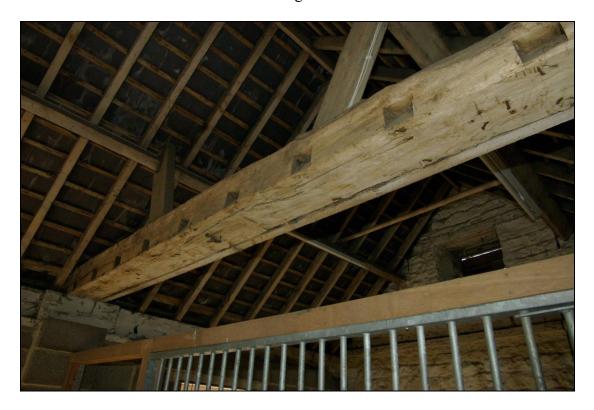


Figure 16. Barn A re-used roof timbers with carpenter's marks.



Figure 17. Barn B east face.



Figure 18. South face of Barn B.



Figure 19. Building scar on Barn B north face.



Figure 20. Remaining wall of demolished barn attached to Barn B Looking west.



Figure 21. West face of Barn B.



Figure 22. Interior of Barn B looking south.



Figure 23. Window detail in Barn B. Looking south-west.

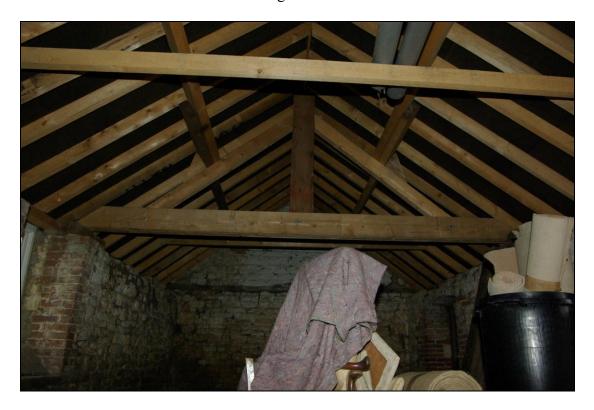


Figure 24. Roof detail Barn B. Looking north.

Appendix 2 ULAS Design specification

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

Design Specification for Photographic Survey
Gorse Farm, 9, Main Street, Stonesby, Leicestershire
NGR: SK 823 246
P.A 04/00902/6
Client: HSSP Architects Ltd/Mr and Mrs Pepper
Planning Authority: Melton Borough Council

1 Introduction

1.1 Definition and scope of the specification

This document is a design specification for a photographic survey at the above site, in accordance with DOE Planning Policy Guidance note 16 (PPG15). The fieldwork specified below is intended to provide a record by photography of the existing structure on the site prior to demolition, at the request of the Planning Authority.

1.2 The document provides details of the work proposed by ULAS on behalf of the client.

2. Background

2.1 Context of the Project

- 2.1.1 The site comprises two former barns associated with Gorse Farm, a Grade II Listed building at 9, Main Street, Stonesby, Leicestershire (NGR SK 823 246).
- 2.1.3 Development proposals for the conversion have been submitted to Melton Borough Council. The Planning Archaeologist at Leicestershire County Council has advised the planning authority that a photographic survey of the existing buildings should be undertaken prior to conversion.

3. Archaeological Objectives

- 3.1 The purpose of the archaeological work may be summarized as follows:
 - 'The recording by photography of the building that is to be with specific attention given to those elements proposed for demolition, conversion and/or alteration. This work to be undertaken to a standard that will allow the future interpretation of the building within the context for which it was originally designed and which subsequently evolved.'
 - To produce an archive and report of the results.

4. Methodology

4.1 General Methodology and Standards

- 4.1.1 The photographic record of all main, accessible, areas of the standing building on the site is required, and that as this entails total loss it should be made to Level 3 of the RCHME 'Recording Historic Buildings: A Descriptive Specification' (RCHME, *Third Edition*, 1996).
- 4.1.2 The specific levels of detailed required include items 1-6 of the RCHME specification for photography.
 - Item 1: General view or views of the exterior of the building.
 - Item 2: The overall appearance of principal rooms and circulation areas.
 - Item 3: Detailed coverage of the building's exterior appearance.
 - Item 4: Any external detail, structural or decorative, which is relevant to the building's design, development and use and which does not show adequately on general photographs.

- Item 5: The building's relationship to its setting, to other buildings, or to a significant viewpoint.
- Item 6: Internal detail, structural and decorative, which is relevant to the building's design, development and use, and which does not show adequately on general photographs.
- 4.1.3 Photographs will be taken in 35mm format using both black and white print, colour transparency film, supplemented by colour print film and digital images as appropriate.
- 4.1.4 All work will follow the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) Code of Conduct and adhere 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 will be adhered to. The Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England (RCHME) Recording Historic Buildings: a Descriptive Specification (3rd edition, 1996) has been used as a basis for defining levels of recording.
- 4.1.5 Staffing, Recording systems, Health and Safety provisions and Insurance details are provided.

5. Report and Archive

- 5.1 The full report in A4 format will usually follow within eight weeks of the completion of the fieldwork and copies will be directed to the Conservation Officer at Charnwood Borough Council (1 copy), to Heritage Services at Leicestershire County Council (1 copy), and to the Leicestershire Sites and Monuments Record in the Heritage Services at the County Council (1 copies).
- 5.2 The report will include consideration of:
 - The aims and methods adopted in the course of the work.
 - The location, date, significance and quality of the building.
 - Summary.
 - The location and size of the archive.

6 Publication and Dissemination of Results

6.1 A summary of the work will be submitted to the local archaeological journal, the *Transactions* of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society. A larger report will be submitted for inclusion if the results of the evaluation warrant it.

7. Copyright

7.1 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.

8. Timetable

8.1 It is envisaged that the photographic survey will be able to be completed within one day. It is likely that this will be carried out during w.c 21.6.04.

9. Health and Safety

9.1 A Risks assessment form will be completed prior to work commencing on-site, and updated as necessary during the site works.

10 Insurance

All employees, consultants and volunteers are covered by the University of Leicester public liability insurance, £20m cover with Gerling Insurance Service Co. Ltd. and others (leading policy no. 62/99094/D). Professional indemnity insurance is with Royal and Sun Alliance, £10m cover, policy no. 03A/SA 001 05978. Employer's Liability Insurance is with Eagle Star, cover £25m. Copies of the certificates are attached.

11. Monitoring arrangements

11.1 Unlimited access to monitor the project will be available to both the Client and his representatives and Planning Archaeologist subject to the health and safety requirements of

the site. Notice will be given to the Leicestershire Planning Archaeologist before the commencement of the archaeological evaluation in order that monitoring arrangements can be made.

- 11.2 All monitoring shall be carried out in accordance with the IFA *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations*.
- 11.3 Internal monitoring will be carried out by the ULAS project manager.

12. Contingencies and unforeseen circumstances

12.1 In the event that unforeseen archaeological discoveries are made during the project, ULAS shall inform the site agent/project manager, Client and the Planning Archaeologist and Planning Authority and prepare a short written statement with plan detailing the archaeological evidence. Following assessment of the archaeological remains by the Planning Archaeologist, ULAS shall, if required, implement an amended scheme of investigation on behalf of the client as appropriate.

13. Bibliography

RCHME 1996 Recording Historic Buildings; A Descriptive Specification Third Edition, Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England

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Appendix 3 Digital photographs contact sheet