

CAMBRIAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECTS

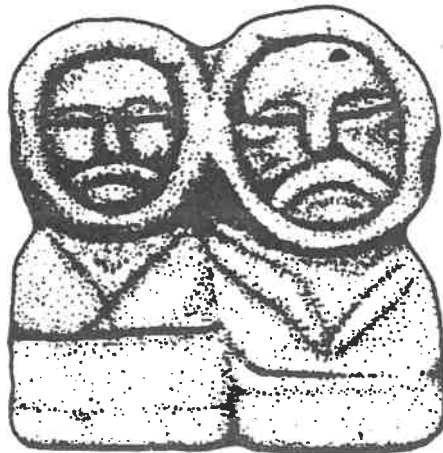
AN INTERIM REPORT

ON THE RECORDING OF THE STABLE BLOCK BUILDINGS

AT MIDDLETON HALL, CARMARTHENSHIRE

1999

By Duncan E Schlee Msc



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Cambrian Archaeological Projects Limited

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

After the majority of render had been removed from the outside of the Stable Block, the external elevations of the entire complex were photographically recorded, before major refurbishment of the buildings was commenced. Much of the inside of the buildings had been stripped back to its original fabric. Parts of Neuadd Deg Derwen Las, however, had not been stripped back to the original fabric due to the presence of asbestos. Other walls were still painted or were obscured by stored equipment. The ground floor surfaces within the main Stable Block had already been removed at the time building recording was undertaken.

Architects drawings and plans of the existing building were used as a basis for recording architectural details and alterations to the fabric of the original building. Illustrations were prepared to indicate the probable original layout and appearance of the building. Where later alterations have made it difficult to ascertain the original appearance of the building, these alterations have been included. Notes to accompany the illustrations are used to identify, describe, and discuss alterations that cannot be clearly indicated on the illustrations.

For reasons of clarity, some of the less significant details that were recorded, have not been included in the illustrations. These details are represented on the archive of original working drawings.

2.0 GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

At the behest of William Paxton, owner of the estate from 1789 to 1824, a new hall and associated buildings were constructed by the architect Samuel Pepys Cockerell, from 1793 to 1795. Although the Hall itself is no longer standing, the Servants Block (Trawscoed), Stable Block (including Neuadd Deg Derwen Las) and the Barn are still present. Middleton Hall, Trawscoed and the Stable Block, are placed on a north west-south east axis.

The Stable Block buildings have undergone numerous alterations, both during their life as stables and subsequently as domestic accommodation. The development of the Stable Block can be divided into the 'original stable block' phase, and the 'domestic accommodation' phase, with an intermediate phase of alterations to the doors and windows overlooking the courtyard. This intermediate phase probably reflects changes in the way the building was used before it was converted to living accommodation.

Originally, the building appears to have had a largely functional internal layout. Little evidence has survived of the internal fixtures, fittings and structural details. These

would indicate how the entire building functioned, both independently, and in relation to the other buildings that make up the whole complex.

The exterior appearance of the building to some extent belies its functional interior. Perhaps the most immediately apparent feature is its size, which has the effect of making the basically functional buildings a much more impressive feature of the landscape. The stables would also have been impressive on the inside, since there would not have been a first floor. The stable wings would have been open to the rafters, with attic space and a pigeon loft within the roof space.

The buildings original function, however, still dictated the shape and layout of the building. This is apparent when one considers the quantity and size of windows required when the building functioned as stables and had a different internal layout. When the stables were converted to domestic accommodation, fewer doors were required and more, larger, windows were necessary.

The outward facing elevations, that would be visible from the surrounding landscape, are strictly symmetrical and well proportioned. The elevations facing into the courtyard (which were less likely to be in public view), appear to have been designed on a less strictly symmetrical basis. They still, however, respect the style of the external facades.

3.0 DESCRIPTIVE NOTES AND COMMENTS

3.1 THE STABLE BLOCK

3.1.1 Ground Floor Plan (figures 1 and 2)

The external walls of the building all appear to be of one building phase. The two wings appear to have been the main stables. The only original internal divisions are those between rooms A, B, and C, and between D, E, and F. The Doorways between rooms A, B, and C, are probably in their original positions, while several doorways have been added and blocked in at various times between rooms D, E, and F.

All the other internal walls of red brick or stud work are later modifications from when the stables were converted to domestic accommodation (see figure 1). With the exception of additional doorways, there was no surviving evidence of any original internal divisions that were subsequently demolished. All the fireplaces that exist at present are later, brick built additions. There is no evidence for any original fireplaces.

The need for light and ventilation suggests that originally there was no first floor in the stable wings, the circular and semicircular windows providing most of the light for the whole building. This is illustrated by the relationship between the level of the existing first floor and the semicircular window (see figure 18 H-I).

The only surviving stable features are a series of oval concave recesses (see figure 18, J-K and N-O). These are presumed to have held fodder for the stabled horses. Some of these recesses show evidence of having been plastered and painted yellow. If this decoration is original, it may suggest that the interior of the stables were rather

smartly appointed. From the number of oval recesses, each wing would have had stabling for up to nine horses (see figure 2).

Since the internal layout of the stables is unknown, it is difficult to ascertain exactly how the original building was used.

From the presence of more oval recesses (three in each), rooms (B) and (E) also appear to have been stabling areas (see figure 18, H-I and L-M). These were also probably open to the rafters. It seems likely that originally there would have been a single doorway between Rooms (E) and (F) as is the case between rooms (A) and (B). The barn door to room (E) is a later addition. The original arrangement of doors and windows in room (E) was probably the same as that of room (B).

Rooms (C) and (D) appear not to have been stables. It is unclear whether the barn doors are original feature. It seems more likely that they are later modifications reflecting a change in the layout or overall function of the Stable Block. Such modifications may reflect a change in use of Neuadd Deg Derwen Las. Later, both barn doors were blocked up and a doorway and window inserted in each. These later features may possibly represent the original appearance of the building before the barn doors were added.

The doors leading from the archway to rooms (C) and (D) were later converted to windows, again suggesting a change in the function of the rooms. What appear to be two other blocked doorways (G), seem to be decorative features giving symmetry to the building but which were never functional.

There is some evidence that the existing staircases in rooms (C) and (D) are not original features. Possible scars of earlier staircases were noticed on the faces of the archway walls in both rooms. If these are indeed stairway scars, their position suggests that they must pre-date the insertion of the barn doors. In addition, the position of earlier floor joists (which must have been removed when the existing staircase was built), suggests that this area may previously have been a half landing. From here, the stairs would have had to turn and continue upwards, in order to reach the level of attics and pigeon loft.

3.1.2 First Floor Plan (figures 3 and 4)

In order that the circular windows of the Stable Block could light wings (A) and (F), and rooms (B) and (E)(figure 2), there could not have been a first floor in the original building. There were, however, attics within the roof-space. Only the semi-circular window above the archway (see north west elevation) lights this attic space.

Although there is evidence that the original stairs to the first floor were not in their present position, their original layout is not certain. Whatever the arrangement, areas (G) and (I) are most likely to have contained the stairwell, leading to the roof-space at the level of the pigeon loft (H). The present stairs lead to the first floor which is a later modification, with a further flight of stairs leading up to the level of the pigeon loft and attic space. The existing first floor level dates from when the building was converted to domestic accommodation.

The existing roof structure is not thought to be original, so there is no surviving evidence as to how this roof-space may have been arranged and utilised.

3.1.3 South East Elevation (figures 5 and 6)

Several alterations have been made to this facade, reflecting changes in the use of the building. Doorways at the ends of the wings (A) were later converted to windows. Originally these doorways would have been the primary entrance to the stable wings from the outer face of the block. Between the wings and the central archway (E) there were originally no windows on the ground floor. Evidence on the interior of the building (see figure 18) indicates that this area was also used for stabling. The windows on either side of the archway (D) appear to be original and suggest that this part of the building had a different function to the other rooms. There is no evidence that they were ever doorways. These windows were the only ones on this side of the building giving a view of approaching traffic from the Hall and Trawscoed.

Unless all the stabling areas were open to the rafters, there would have been insufficient light and ventilation in these parts. The two semi-circular windows (B) and the circular windows (C), were the primary source of light and ventilation for the stabling areas. Windows (B) were later bricked up (when the first floor was inserted). Alternatively, features (A) and (B) may never have been intended to be functional. They may have formed decorative facades (as may have been the case on the north east elevation) to mirror the central archway. If this were so, however, it seems unlikely that the features would have been constructed to have been functional.

3.1.4 North West Elevation (figures 5 and 6)

The ends of the two wings of the stable block (C) do not appear to have had doorways (as was the case with the south east elevation). Although there was a semi-circular window (B) above the archway, it is uncertain whether there were similar windows on the wings (A) as illustrated. Features (A) and (C) may have been a decorative façade, but it seems more likely, that they must have been open in order to light the stables sufficiently.

The central section of the façade appears to have undergone several alterations, making its original appearance uncertain. These alterations reflect changes in the use of the building. Originally a doorway with a dressed stone surround, (D) was later converted to a window. Window (E) may be an original feature since there is none of the red brick that surrounds other inserted windows, and no evidence that it was ever a door.

Assuming that the exterior of the building originally had a symmetrical appearance, original features such as (D) and (E) ought to be mirrored on the other side of the archway. In position (J) there is evidence of a window, probably symmetrically opposed to window (E). There is no evidence of an original doorway to mirror doorway (D).

The absence of a cornice on this side of the façade suggests that it was removed during the various alterations. Although barn door (I) was blocked, and a later window inserted, it is probably itself a later modification, since it is not mirrored on

the other side. It does however have a dressed stone surround, which may be re-used from an earlier feature that probably had a more symmetrical layout than the later modifications.

Similarly, (F) and (H) were barn doors (subsequently blocked, with symmetrically positioned doors and windows inserted). (F) has a dressed stone surround (possibly the remains of an original feature) though barn door (H) does not. (G) is a small raised doorway that was present after (F) was blocked but before the later window and door (see figure 5) were inserted.

3.1.5 South West Wing - South West Elevation (figures 7 and 8)

The ground floor south west elevation (A) originally seems not to have had any windows. Before the first floor was added, the four circular windows (B) would originally have lit and ventilated the stables.

Later, doors and windows were added to the ground and first floors when the building was converted to domestic occupation.

3.1.6 South West Wing - North East Elevation (figures 7 and 8)

Twin doorways (C) appear to be original. Both were later blocked up and converted to windows. Originally a window, (D) was later converted to a doorway. Window (E) appears to be original. This facade is presumably where there was main access for horses and people into the stable wings from the courtyard. Two circular windows (F) on the first floor, were later replaced with rectangular windows.

3.1.7 North East Wing - North East Elevation (figures 7 and 8)

As with the south west wing, the north east elevation originally had no ground floor windows (B). The stable was lit by the four circular first floor windows (C).

Features (A), are of dressed limestone. They may have been vents, but were not visible on the interior of the building. Alternatively they were sockets for a structure on the exterior of the building.

3.1.8 North East Wing - South West Elevation (figures 7 and 8)

Twin doorways (F) mirror those on the opposing face of the south west wing (C). Originally a window, (E) was later converted to a doorway. Unlike its opposite feature on the south west wing, (D) appears to have been a doorway with a dressed stone surround, before it was converted to a window. The evidence suggests that this elevation was always different to its reflection on the south west wing. It is not known what the significance of this apparent asymmetry in the location of doors and windows might be.

3.2 NEUADD DEG DERWEN LAS

Although Middleton Hall, Trawscoed and the Stable block were all constructed simultaneously between 1793-95, Neuadd Deg Derwen Las does not appear to have been built until later. The building is not present on the 1824 map (see figure 20), nor on the 1849 map (see figure 21). It is represented on the 1886 map (see figure 22), and a stone on the porch structure of the building is dated 1870. The date is flanked by the initials E.A. It was therefore constructed when the estate was in the ownership of Edward Abadam. Edward Abadam was also responsible for the construction of a wing to Middleton Hall connecting the house with Trawscoed.

Neuadd Deg Derwen Las forms the north west side of the stable complex. While it is clearly associated with the main Stable Block, its facades are significantly different in architectural style. These differences are due partly to the function of the building, but primarily because it was built some seventy five years later. By this time, the plan that set the original buildings in the surrounding park landscape had changed.

With the later addition less consideration seems to have been given to the architectural balance and external appearance of the complex as a whole. The position of the porch of Neuadd Deg Derwen Las also suggests a change in the directional focus of the building and the complex as a whole. It may be that the building was originally far more in keeping with the style of the main Stable Block, but that large-scale alterations have obliterated the evidence of its earlier appearance.

There is a significant constructional difference between the Stable Block and Neuadd Deg Derwen Las. Whereas the wall joints of the Stable Block are bonded, in Neuadd Deg Derwen Las, the corners of the building appear to be built as columns. The long facades and end walls all appear to butt up against these corner columns.

Although of later construction, the dressed stone and circular windows used in the building suggests that some attempt was made to relate the courtyard-facing façade to the rest of the complex (though not the north west façade). It may also be possible that the stone was incorporated from an earlier building that was more stylistically in keeping with the earlier stable block.

3.2.1 Ground Floor Plan (figures 9 and 10)

The five arched entrances (A), suggest the building originally functioned as a coach house. Due to the absence of the original internal fixtures and fittings, the exact way in which the building functioned is unclear.

The existing internal divisions are all of red brick and relate to the conversion of the central third of the building to domestic accommodation. Any original internal divisions were probably of wooden construction, of which the only surviving evidence visible at the time of this survey was a vertical line of three voids in the stonework (in position F). These may originally have held timbers.

The porch structure (B), appears to be contemporary with the rest of the building and is dated by an inscribed keystone to 1870 (see figure 14). Access from the porch was originally through arched doorway (C). There may have been a second arched

doorway in position (D) but access to confirm this was obscured. The central doorway appears to be a later modification.

The existing doors and windows on the ground floor are not all original. The only features with original stonework lintels are windows (O) and doorways (P). Windows (G) are presumed to be later additions. It is assumed that if present at all, doorways (J) were similar to doorways (P). All the existing door and window frames are later additions replacing earlier features in the same locations.

On the north west side, stonework lintels suggest that doorways (N) and (K) are original. Window (L), later converted to a doorway was originally the same as window (M). Doorway (H) was later converted into two windows. Windows (I) were originally smaller.

3.2.2 First Floor Plan (figures 9 and 10)

As with the Stable Block, it seems most probable that there was originally no first floor to this building. Beam-slots above the first floor windows at both ends of the building suggest there were probably attics in the roof-space along the entire length of the building.

Later, it appears likely that a first floor was inserted along the entire length of the building. This is suggested by the style and frequency of windows on the north west side of the building. These windows (F) seem superfluous unless they lit a first floor. It is not certain how the function of the building changed at this time.

Later still, it would appear that both ends of the building were again opened up to the roof, with a first floor in the central part of the building only. This may correspond with the blocking up of the barn doors in the Stable Block. Windows (G) were probably enlarged at this time.

While circular windows (B) appear to be in their original positions, windows (A) appear to have been re-set at some stage (see figure 14).

Circular windows (C) are in their original positions. Windows (D) are thought likely to have existed, but any evidence was destroyed by the insertion of later windows.

Window (E) is a later addition but it is unclear whether it replaced an earlier window or not.

3.2.3 South East Elevation (figures 11 and 12)

The south east elevation, overlooking the central courtyard, retains four first floor circular windows (A) like those of the Stable block. It is probable that there were an additional two circular windows (in position (B)), although the size of the later windows would have destroyed any evidence of these. The position occupied by later windows (C) probably did not contain a circular window, since there would have been a wider distance between (C) and (B) than between (B) and (A). It also seems unlikely that there would have been a semi-circular window in position (C).

There is a cornice between the ground and first floor around the entire Stable Block. This is entirely absent on Neuadd Deg Derwen Las. It is unclear whether there was ever a cornice on this building.

The ground floor doors and windows all appear to be later alterations. Stone lintels above windows (D) and doorways (E), however suggest that there were earlier features in these positions. Windows (F) are thought to be later additions, since they do not have stonework lintels. It is unclear whether doorways (G) are original features, since no evidence of earlier features survives.

The central archway originally opened directly into the building, but was converted to a porch when the central part of the building was converted to domestic accommodation.

3.2.4 North West Elevation (figures 11 and 12)

There are numerous alterations to this facade. Again its character is markedly different to that of the rest of the courtyard complex. This may partly be functional, partly because it was less visible. Alternatively, by the time the building was constructed, its external appearance was less important than was the case when the stable block was originally constructed.

There is no evidence that the existing first floor windows occupy the positions of earlier circular windows. The stone lintels of the existing windows (A) suggests they are not later insertions into the facade. Red brick blockings indicate that the four central windows (B) were originally smaller than the present ones.

The ground floor features have also undergone considerable alteration. Again, the style and appearance of the facade are different from the rest of the stable block. From the existing evidence there were originally two sets of twin arches (C, D and E), presumed to be for coaches. All but one of these (E) were later blocked. This could perhaps coincide with the insertion of the barn doors to the main stable block.

As can be seen from the elevations, numerous alterations were made to the building. Windows (A) appear to be their original size and shape, while windows (B) originally smaller than the existing windows. Old doorways were blocked, and new doorways inserted in archways (C) and in area (F) on either side of blocked doorway (G).

3.3 THE BARN

The Barn is situated to the south west of the Stable Block. At the time of this project, the inside of the building was not available for inspection. Recent additions to the exterior of the building had also not yet been removed. These may have masked original features. Any visible alterations to the outside were, however, recorded.

The Barn is not represented on the 1824 map (see figure 20), but is present on the 1849 map (see figure 21). It must be later than the Stable Block but earlier than Neuadd Deg Derwen Las. As such, it may have been constructed during the time the

estate was owned by Edward Hamlin Adams (1824-1842). Adams was the father of Edward Abadam.

The construction style of the barn is similar to that of Neuadd Deg Derwen Las, but is on a much more modest scale. It is basically not associated with the stable buildings architecturally, although it may have had a functional connection. Originally it was built into the east wall of the walled garden and seems most likely to have been associated with the garden. Features with stonework lintels were taken to be original features, while all other features were assumed to be later alterations.

3.3.1 Ground and First Floor Plans (figure 17)

It was not possible to investigate the inside of the building.

3.3.2 South West Elevation (figures 15 and 16)

The only features that showed evidence of being part of the original building were doorways (B) and (C). Window (A) also appeared to be original. Other features in area (D) appear to be later modifications but may have destroyed evidence of earlier windows.

3.3.3 North East Elevation (figures 15 and 16)

Each end of this elevation was obscured by later additions to the exterior of the building. It is not known what features these additions may have obscured. The first floor windows that exist at present appear to be later alterations. It is not known whether in its original form there would have been any openings at this level (area A).

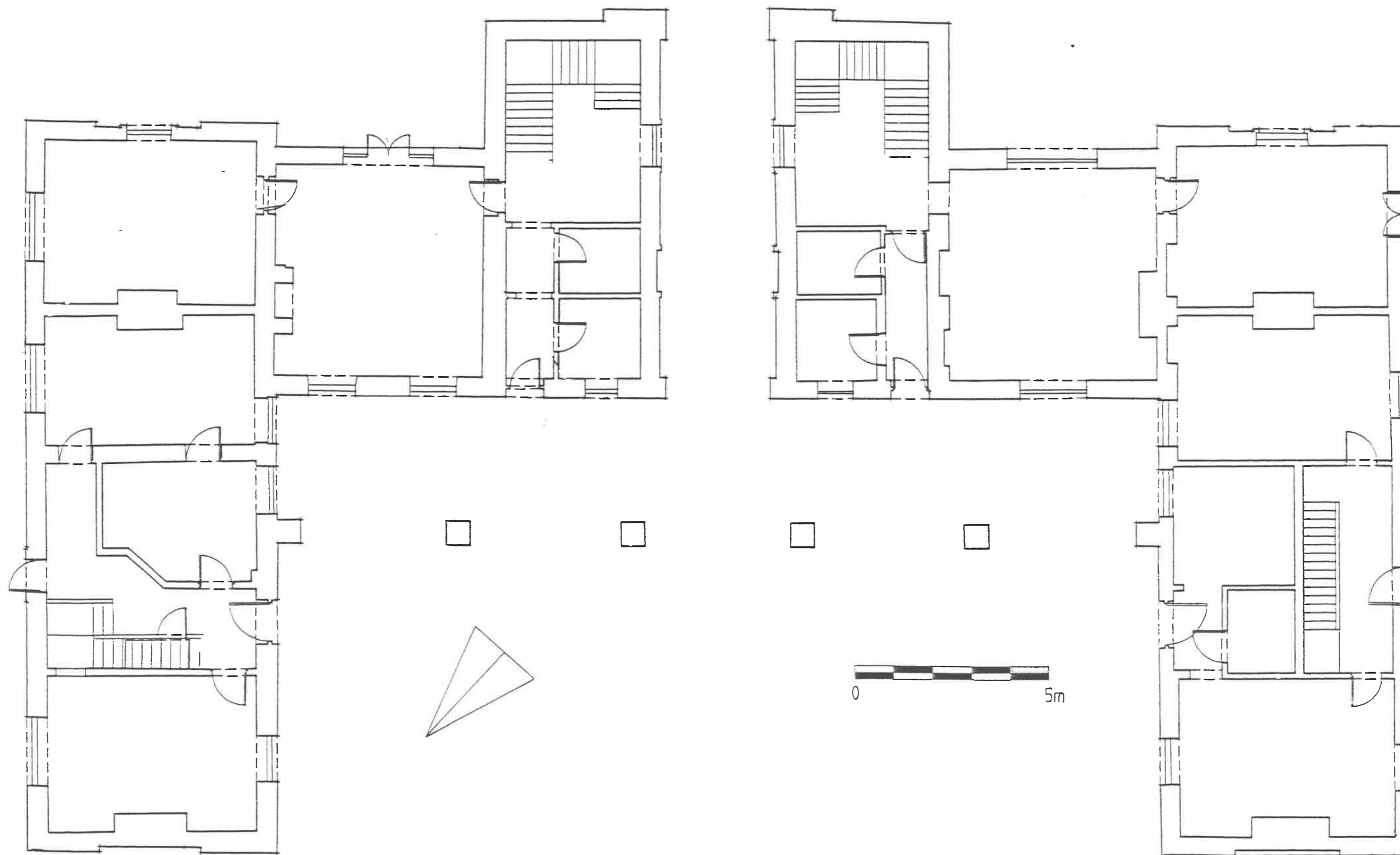
Door (C), and windows (B), (D), and (E), all appear to be original features with stonework lintels. (B) was later modified into a doorway, (C) was blocked up and changed to a window, and (D) was altered to become a doorway. An additional doorway was created between Windows (D) and (E). Archways (F), (G), and (H), are all original features. These were later blocked up and converted to smaller doorways. It is possible there may have been a fourth archway to the right of (H).

3.3.4 North West and South East Elevations (figures 15 and 16)

No evidence survived to indicate whether there were ever any features on the original elevations.

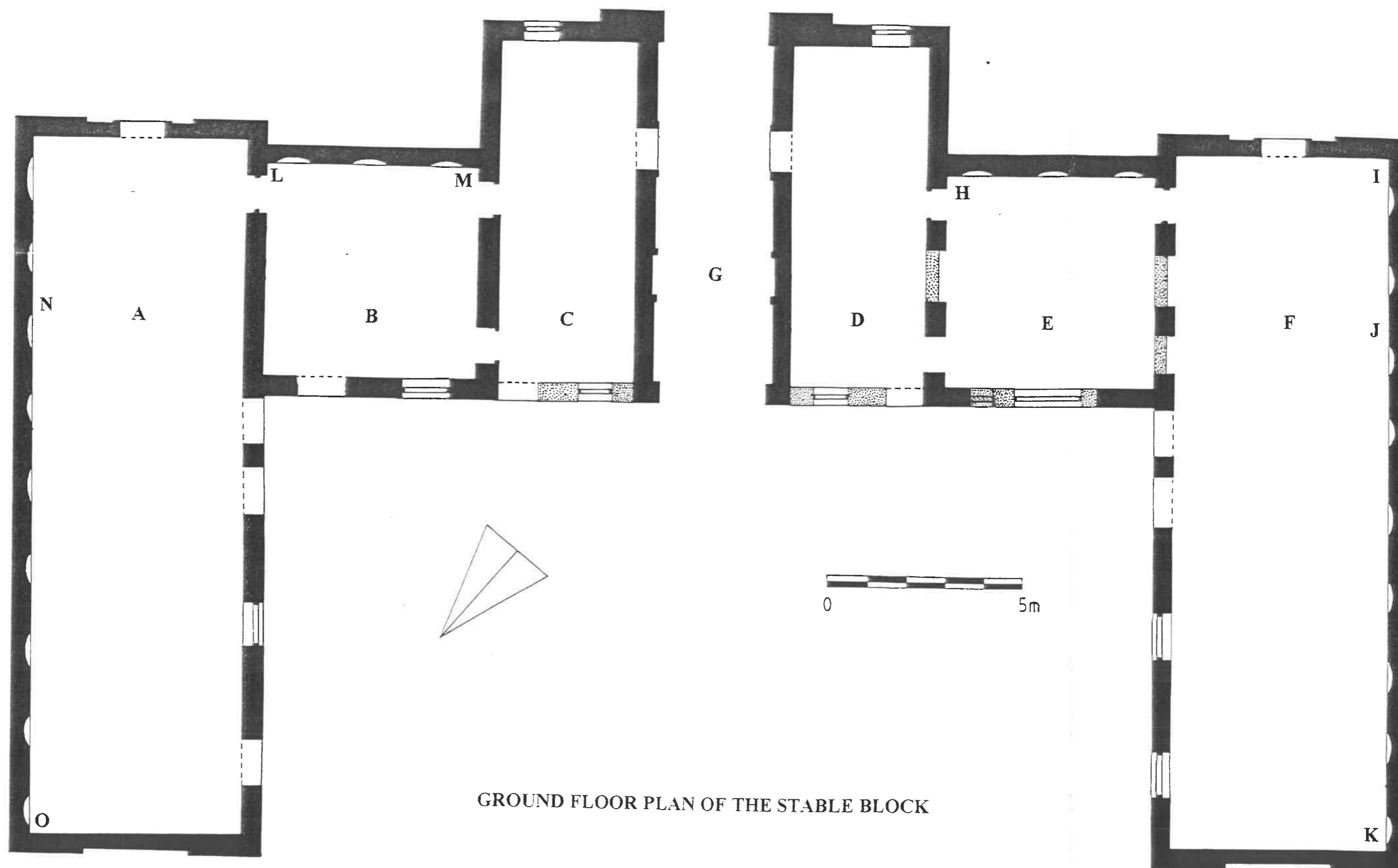
4.0 CONCLUSIONS

Although the buildings as they exist today, appear to be part of a planned complex, the documentary and architectural evidence indicates that the buildings were constructed at different times. The location, alignment, and function of each new building is influenced by the existing buildings, but is not dictated by a grand plan. The appearance of each building is influenced by its relation to existing buildings and to its appearance in the landscape, but is not united by a single architectural style or design.



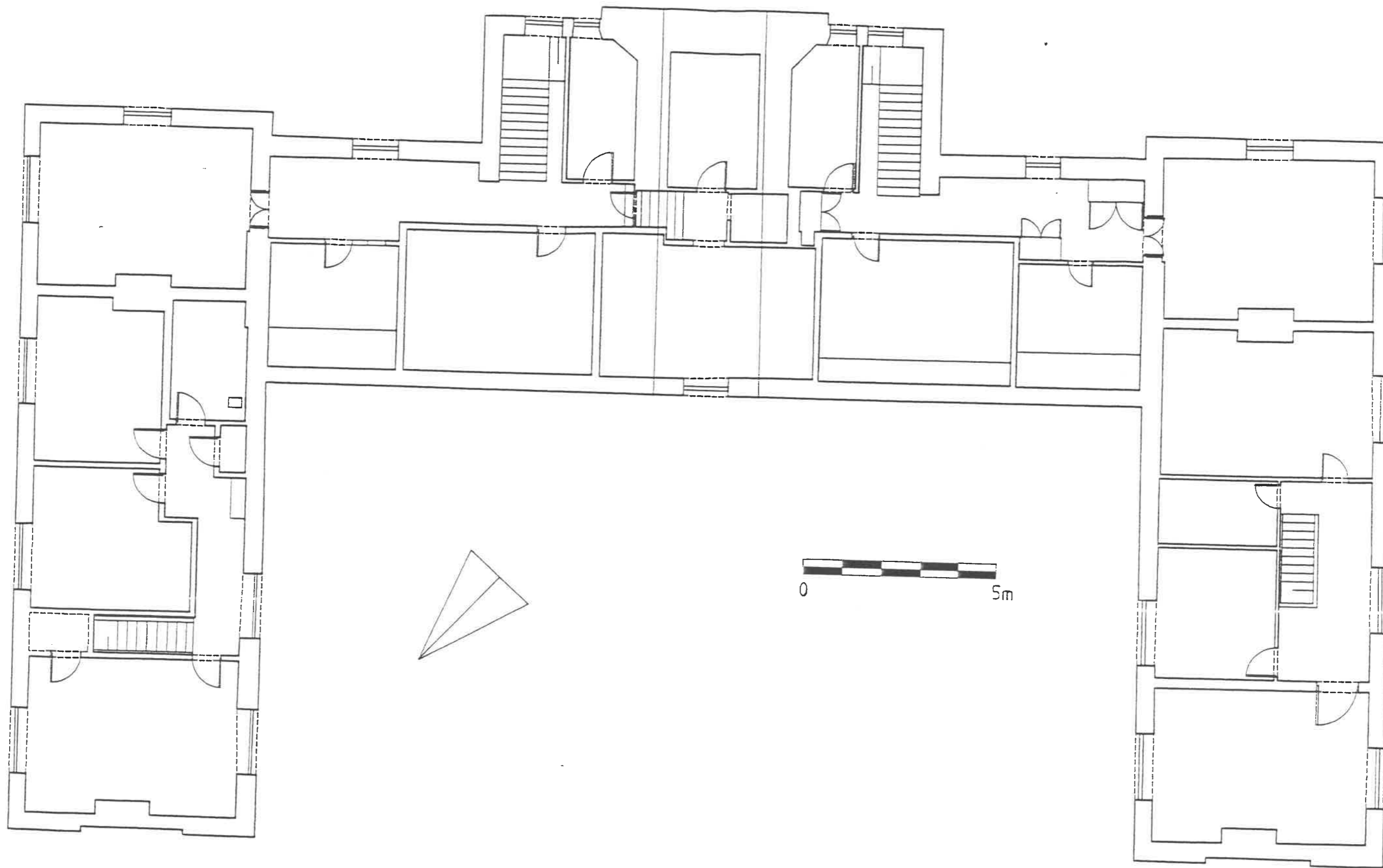
GROUND FLOOR PLAN OF THE STABLE BLOCK
(ARCHITECTS DRAWING)

FIGURE 1:



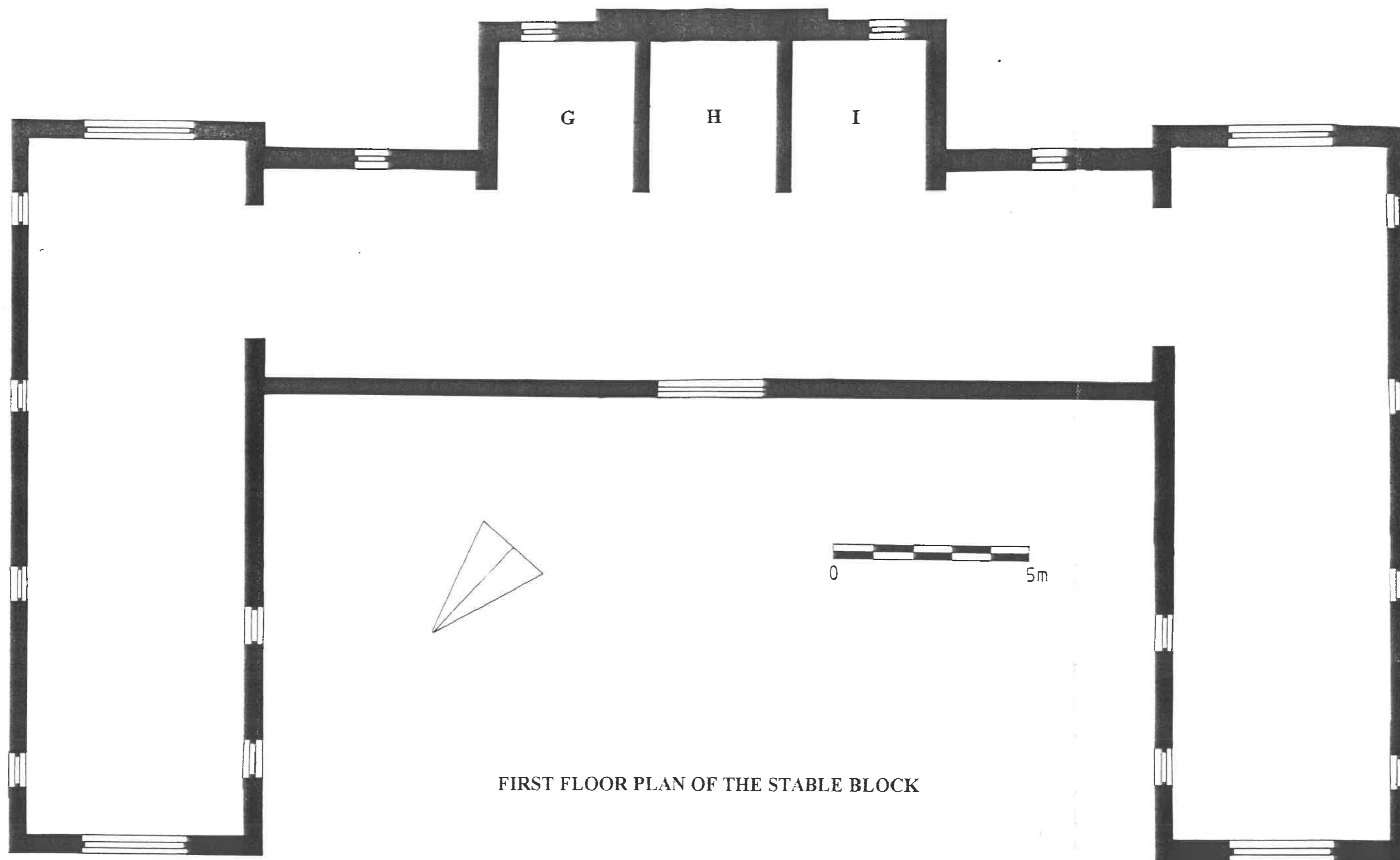
GROUND FLOOR PLAN OF THE STABLE BLOCK

FIGURE 2:



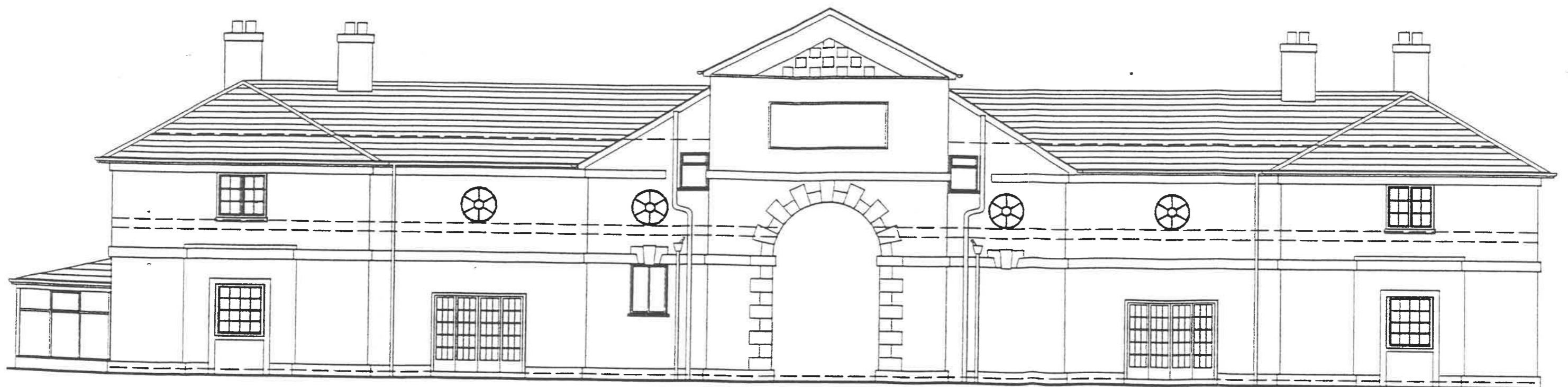
FIRST FLOOR PLAN OF THE STABLE BLOCK
(ARCHITECTS DRAWING)

FIGURE 3:



FIRST FLOOR PLAN OF THE STABLE BLOCK

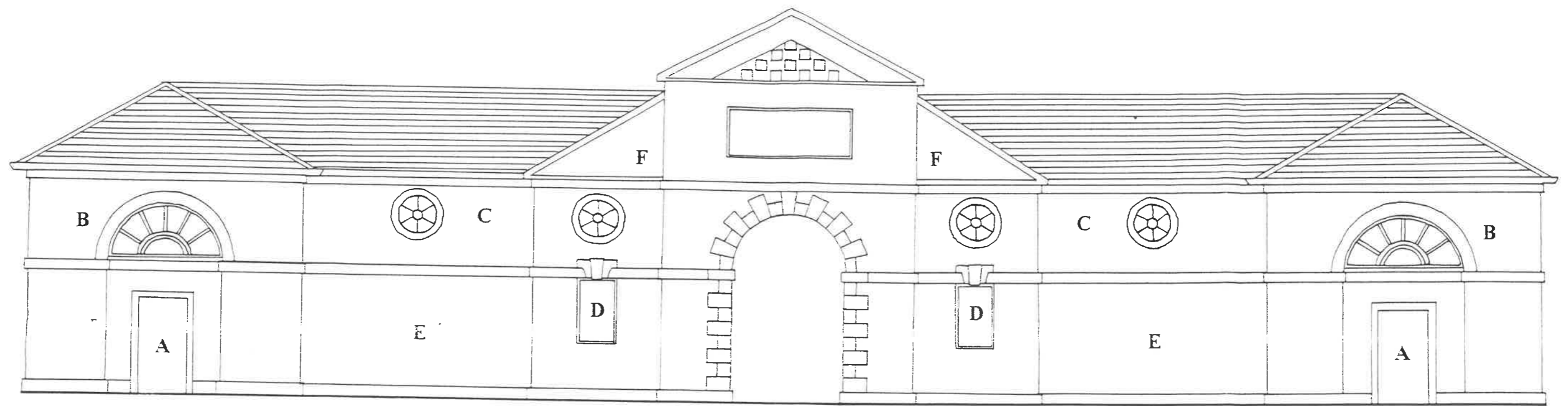
FIGURE 4:



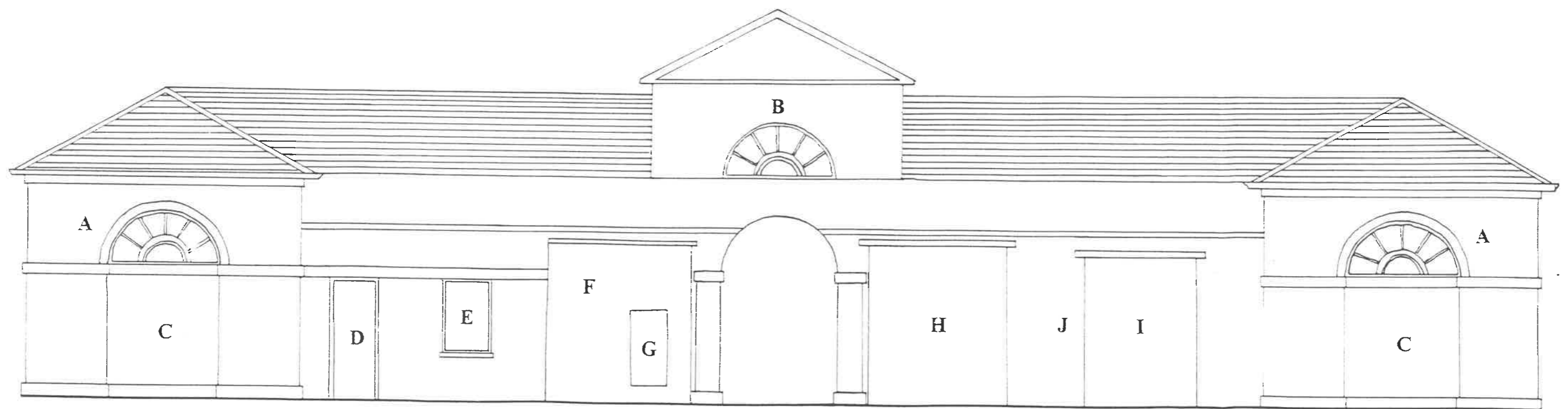
SOUTH EAST ELEVATION OF THE STABLE BLOCK
(ARCHITECTS DRAWING)



NORTH WEST ELEVATION OF THE STABLE BLOCK
(ARCHITECTS DRAWING)



SOUTH EAST ELEVATION OF THE STABLE BLOCK



NORTH WEST ELEVATION OF THE STABLE BLOCK

FIGURE 6:



SOUTH WEST ELEVATION

SOUTH WEST WING OF THE STABLE BLOCK
(ARCHITECTS DRAWING)



NORTH EAST ELEVATION



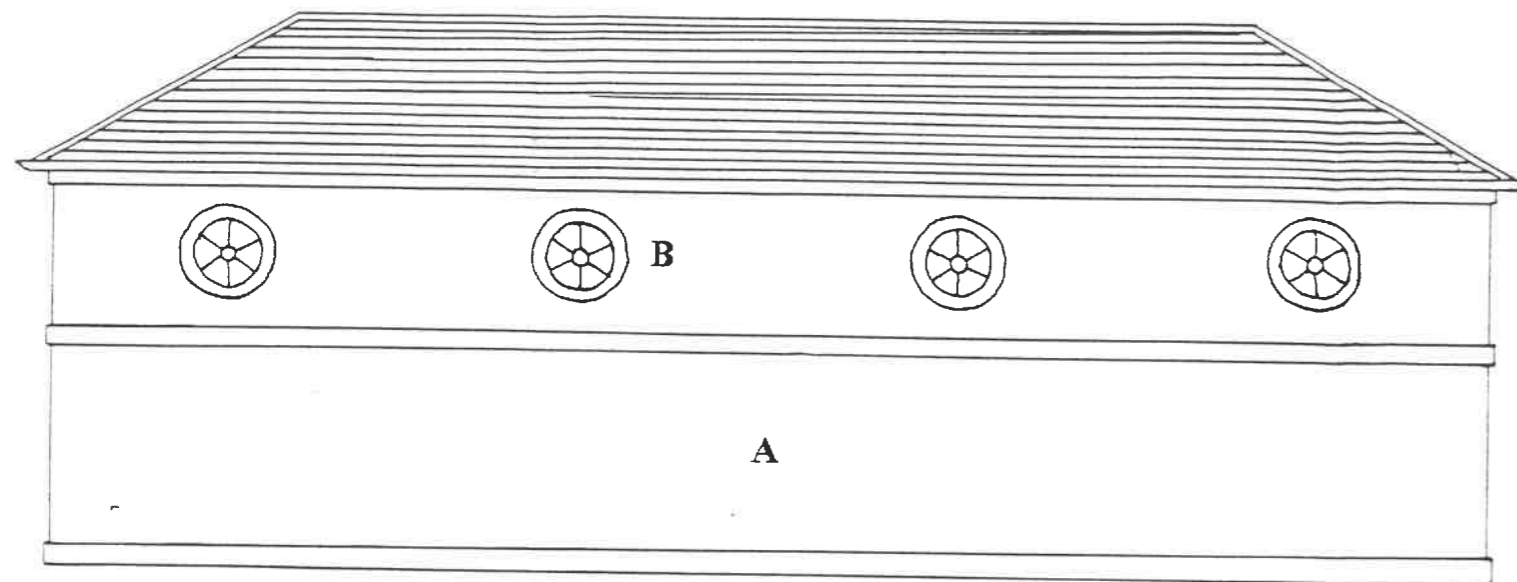
NORTH EAST ELEVATION

NORTH EAST WING OF THE STABLE BLOCK
(ARCHITECTS DRAWING)

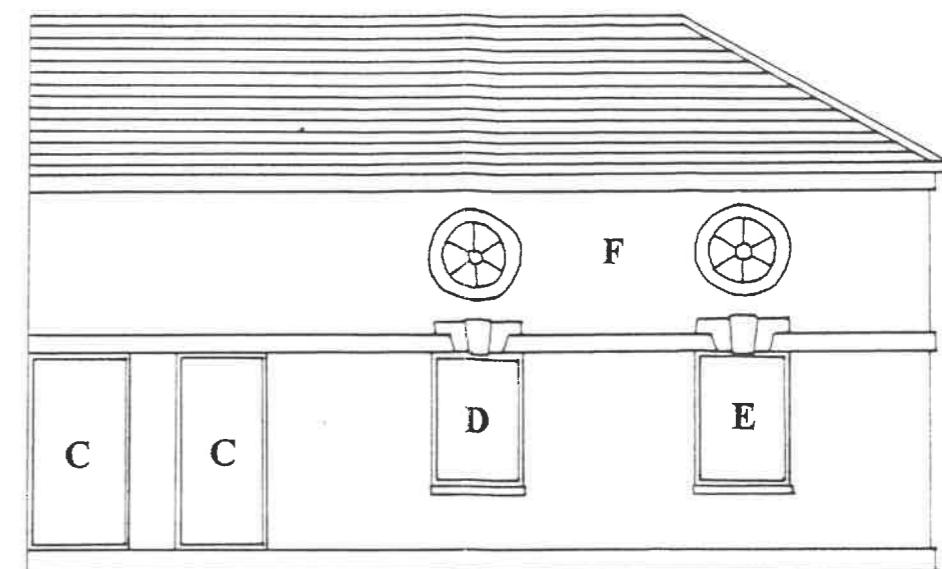


SOUTH WEST ELEVATION

FIGURE 7:

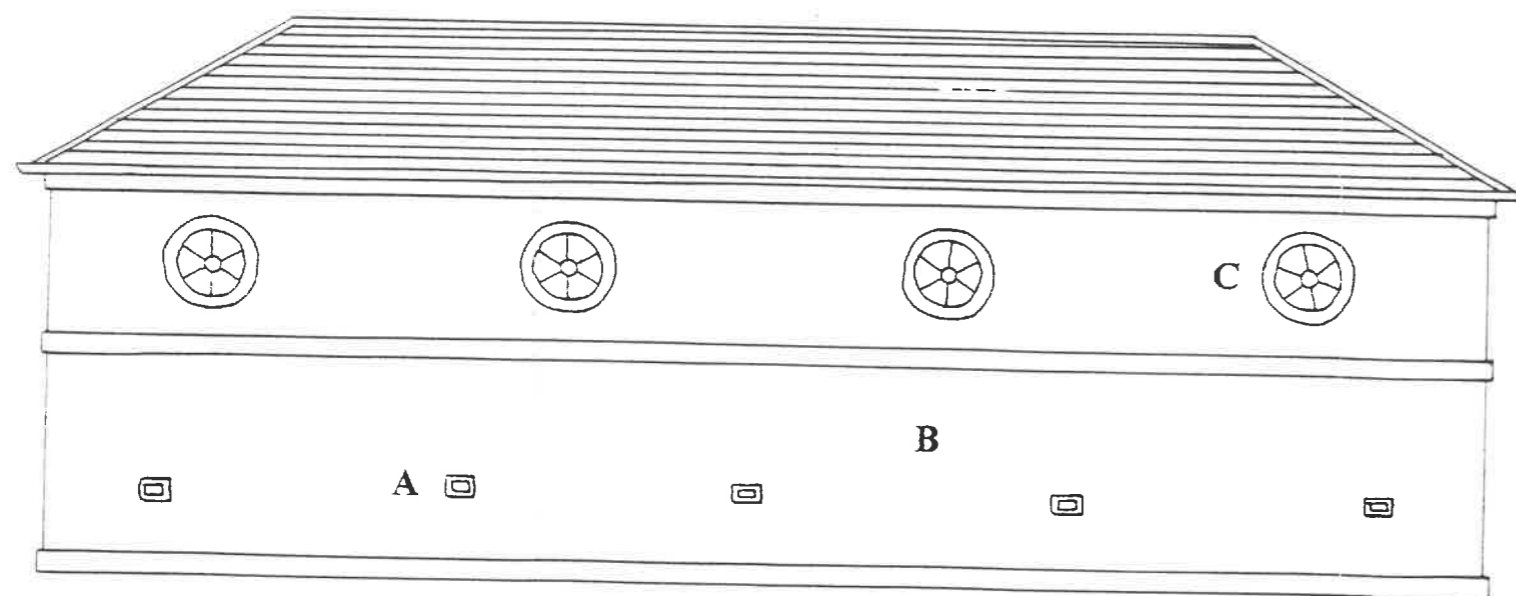


SOUTH WEST ELEVATION

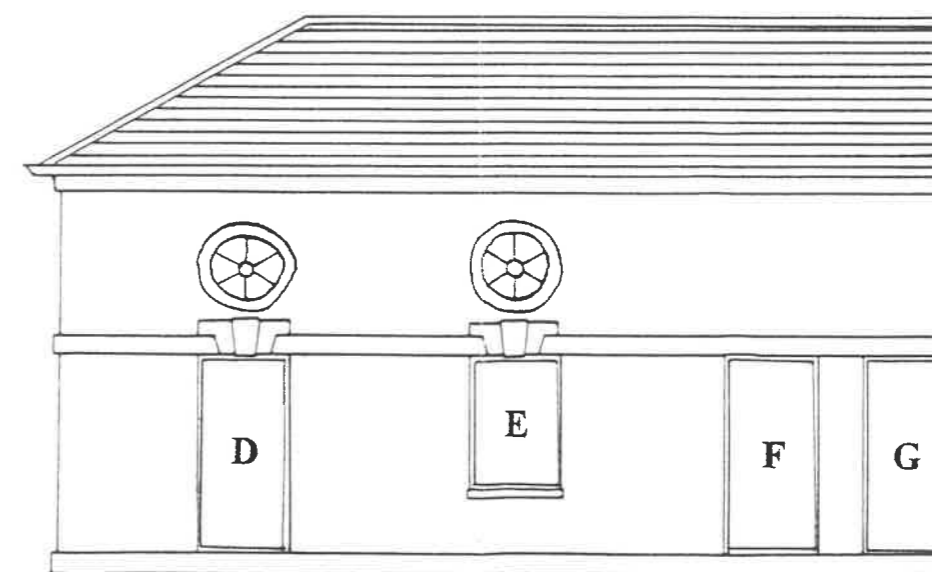


NORTH EAST ELEVATION

SOUTH WEST WING OF THE STABLE BLOCK



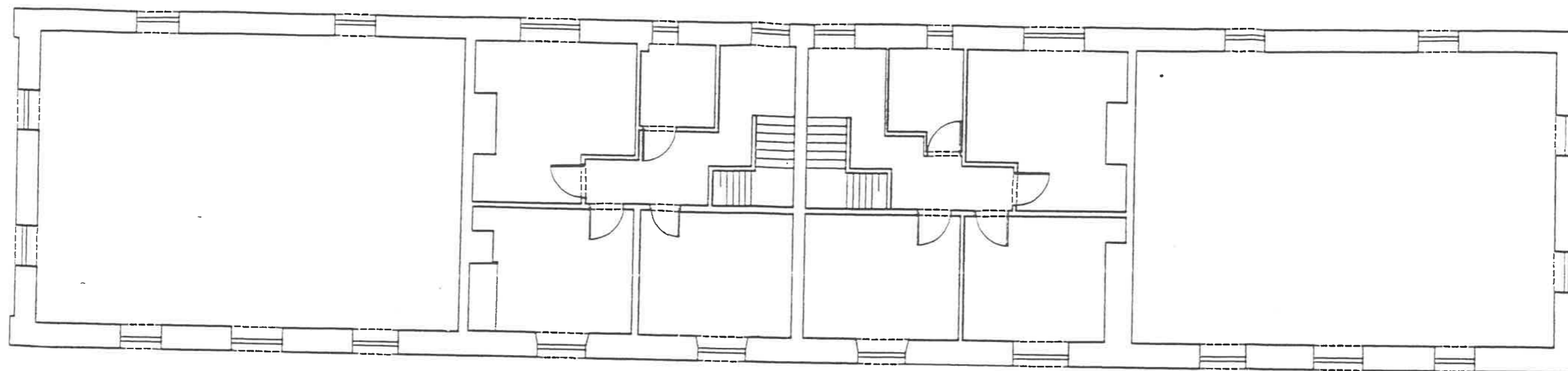
NORTH EAST ELEVATION



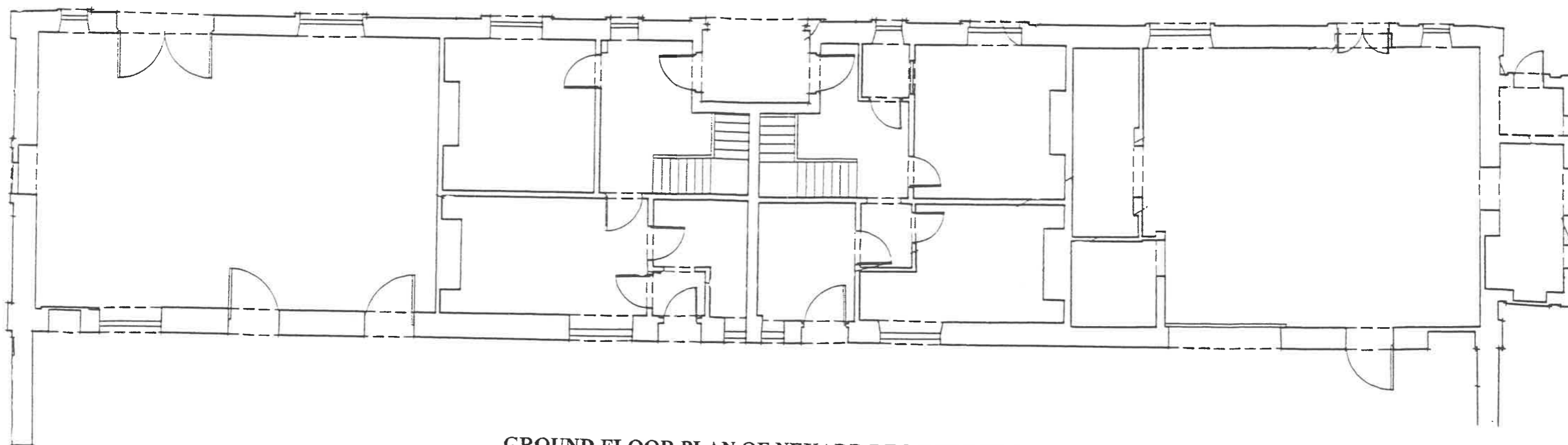
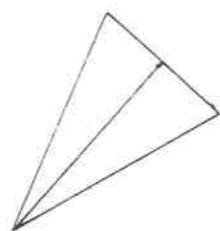
SOUTH WEST ELEVATION

NORTH EAST WING OF THE STABLE BLOCK

FIGURE 8:

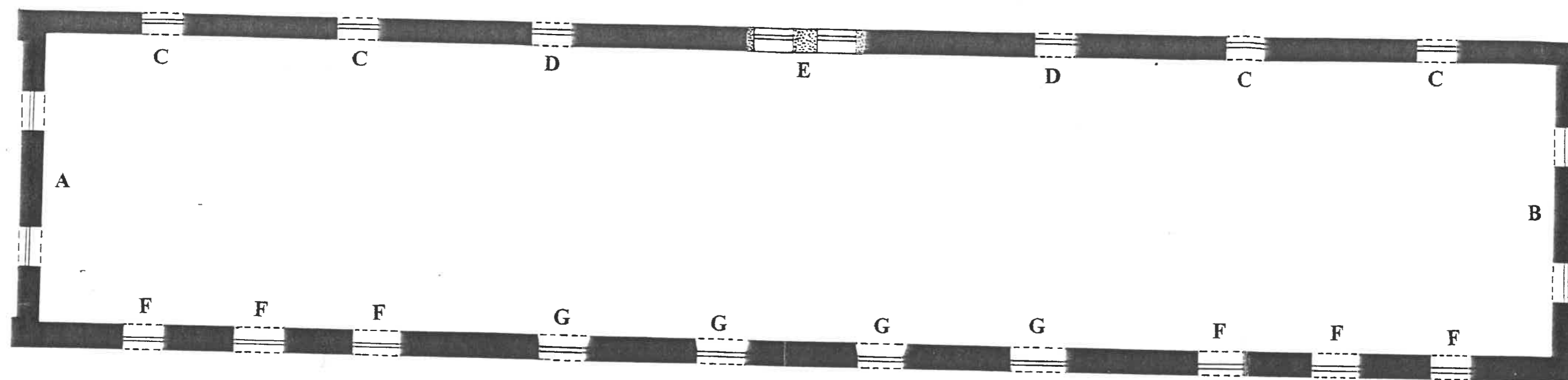


**FIRST FLOOR PLAN OF NEUADD DEG DERWEN LAS
(ARCHITECTS DRAWING)**

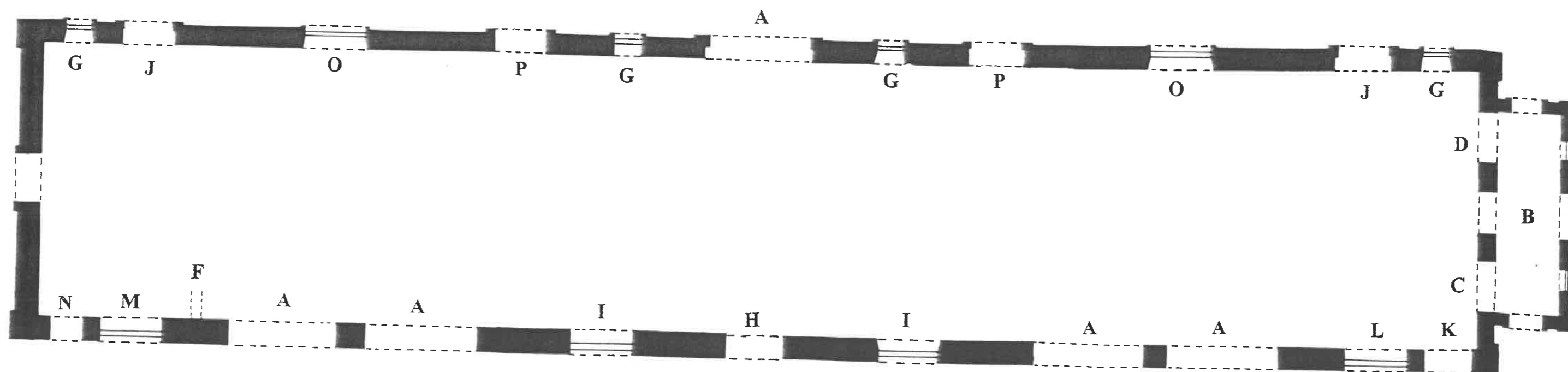


**GROUND FLOOR PLAN OF NEUADD DEG DERWEN LAS
(ARCHITECTS DRAWING)**

FIGURE 9:



FIRST FLOOR PLAN OF NEUADD DEG DERWEN LAS



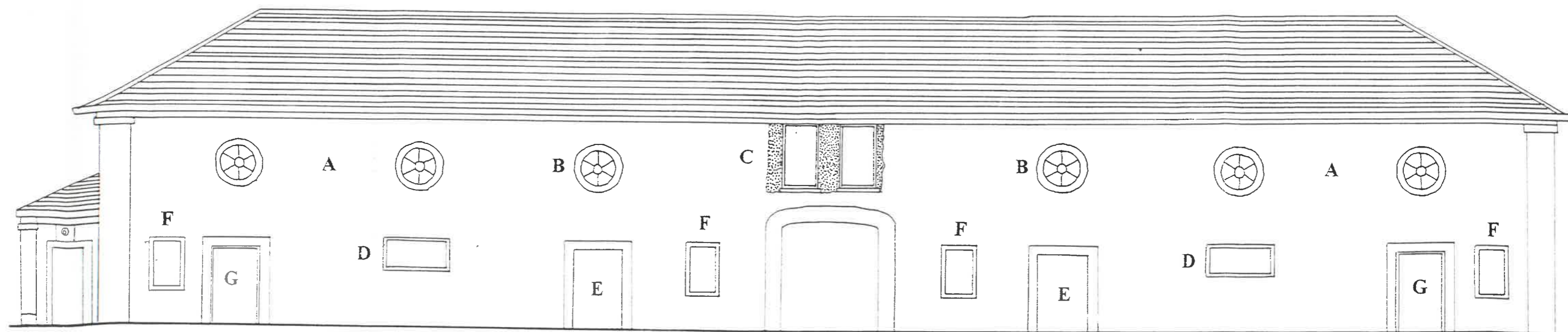
GROUND FLOOR PLAN OF NEUADD DEG DERWEN LAS



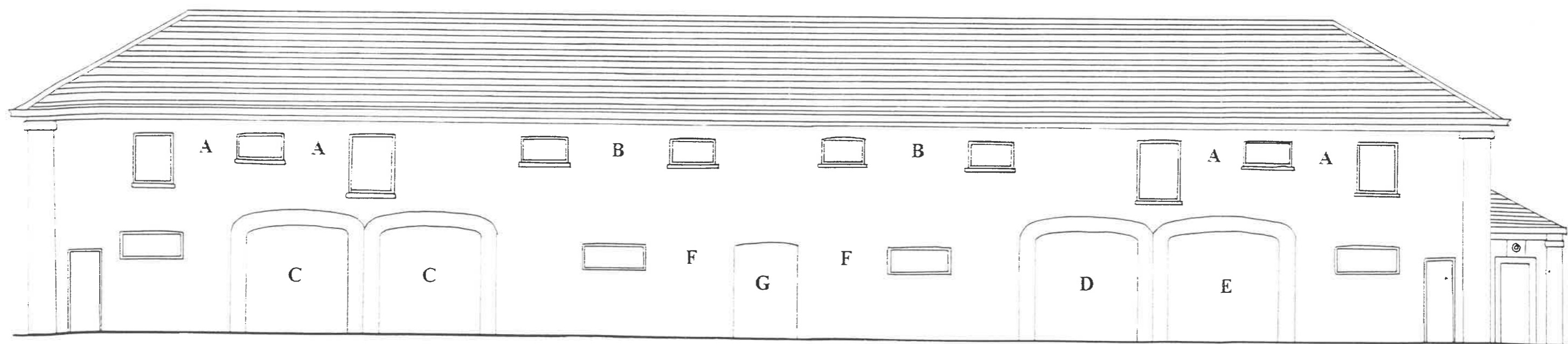
**SOUTH EAST ELEVATION OF NEUADD DEG DERWEN LAS
(ARCHITECTS DRAWING)**



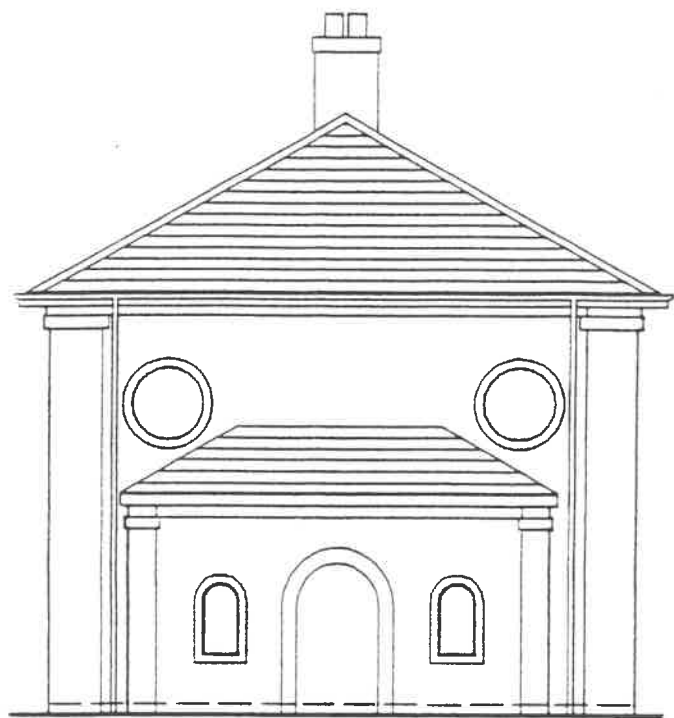
**NORTH WEST ELEVATION OF NEUADD DEG DERWEN LAS
(ARCHITECTS DRAWING)**



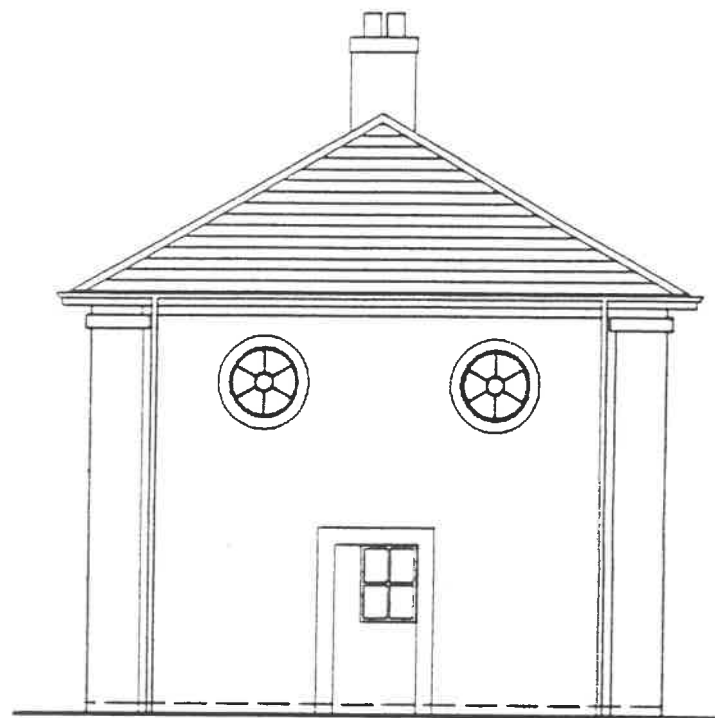
SOUTH EAST ELEVATION OF NEUADD DEG DERWEN LAS



NORTH WEST ELEVATION OF NEUADD DEG DERWEN LAS



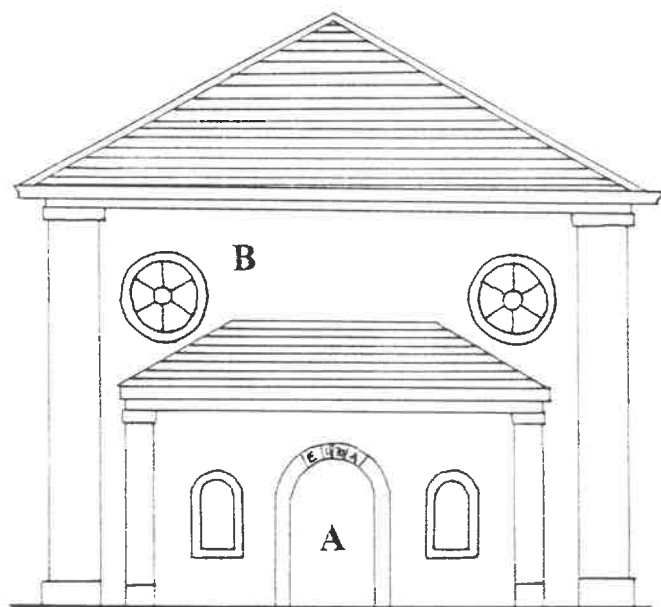
**SOUTH WEST ELEVATION OF
NEUADD DEG DERWEN LAS
(ARCHITECTS DRAWING)**



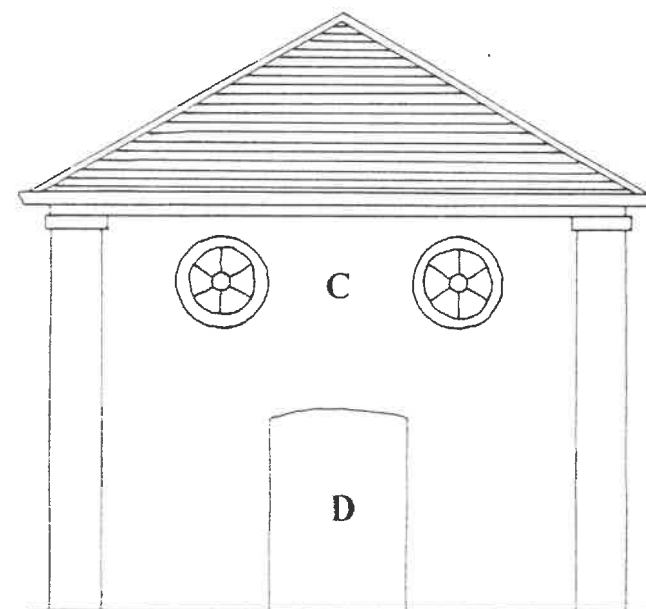
**NORTH EAST ELEVATION OF
NEUADD DEG DERWEN LAS
(ARCHITECTS DRAWING)**



FIGURE 13:



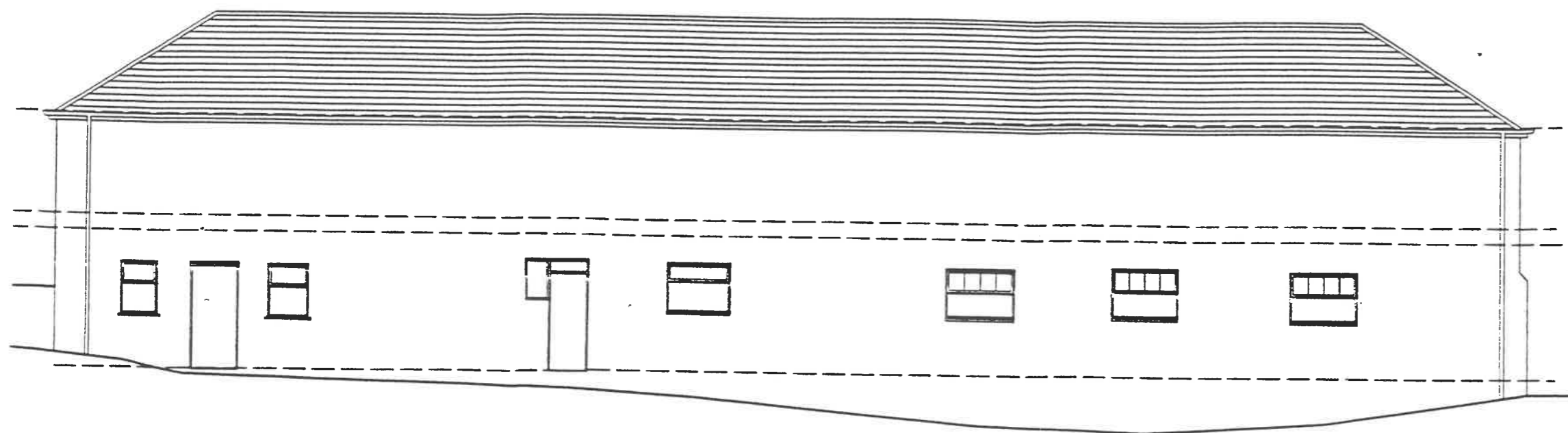
SOUTH WEST ELEVATION OF
NEUADD DEG DERWEN LAS



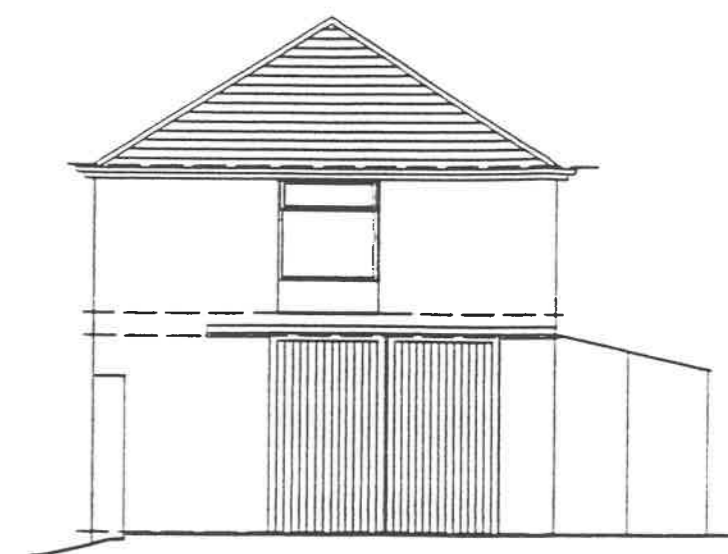
NORTH EAST ELEVATION OF
NEUADD DEG DERWEN LAS



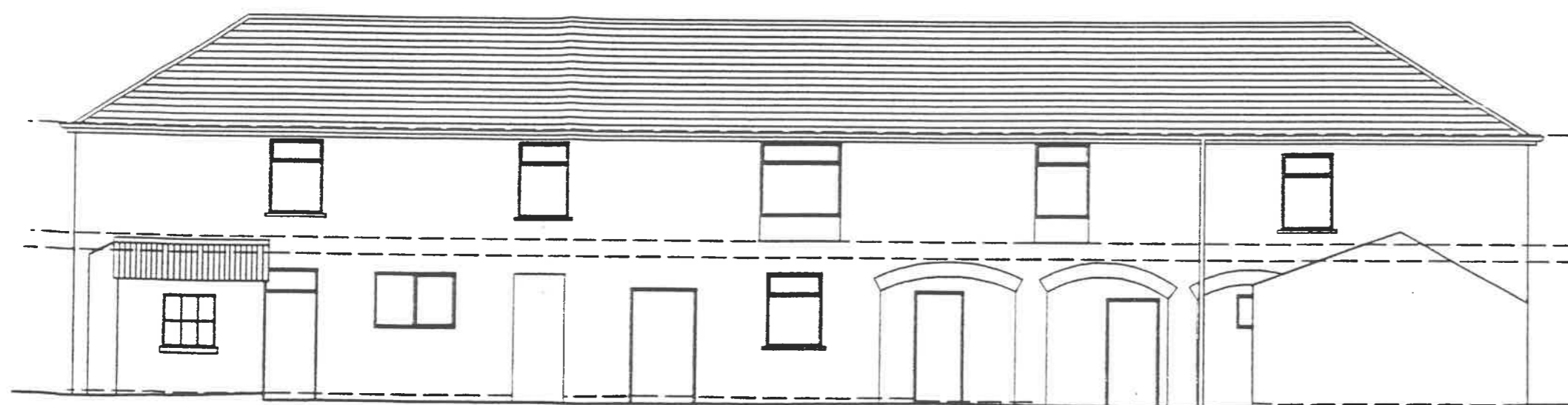
FIGURE 14:



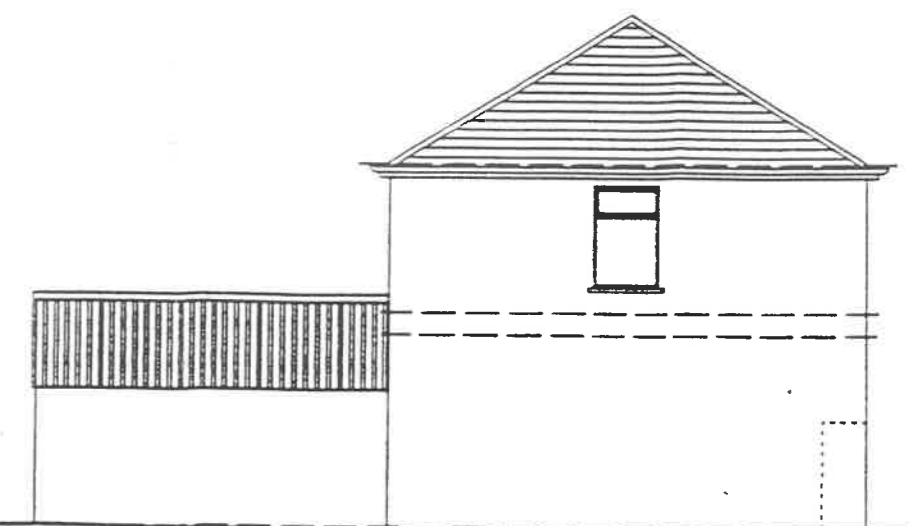
SOUTH WEST ELEVATION OF THE BARN
(ARCHITECTS DRAWING)



SOUTH EAST ELEVATION OF THE BARN
(ARCHITECTS DRAWING)



NORTH EAST ELEVATION OF THE BARN
(ARCHITECTS DRAWING)



NORTH WEST ELEVATION OF THE BARN
(ARCHITECTS DRAWING)

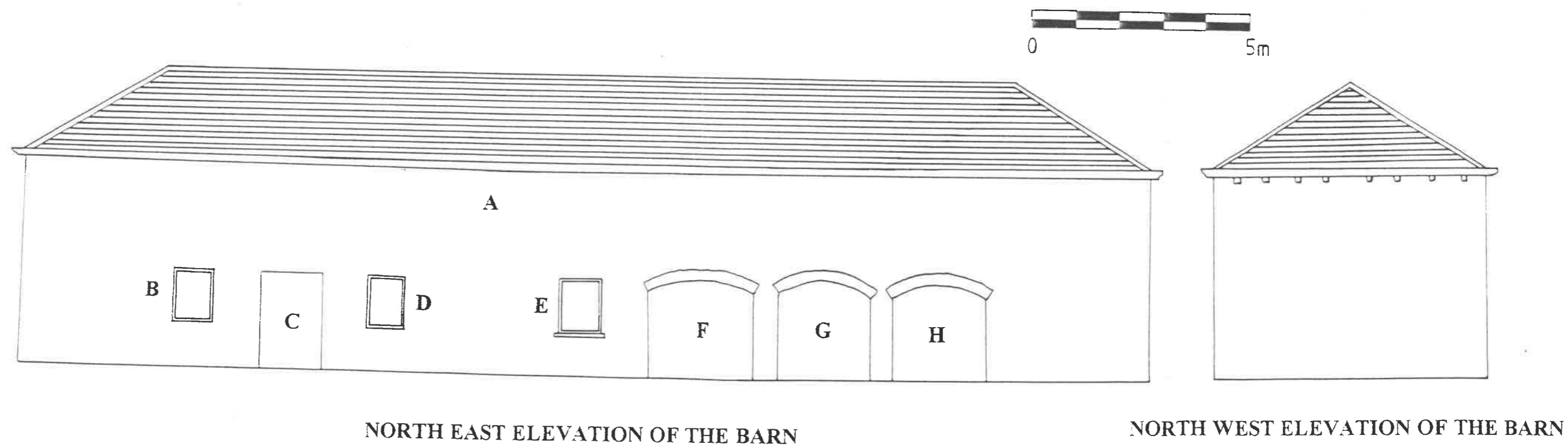
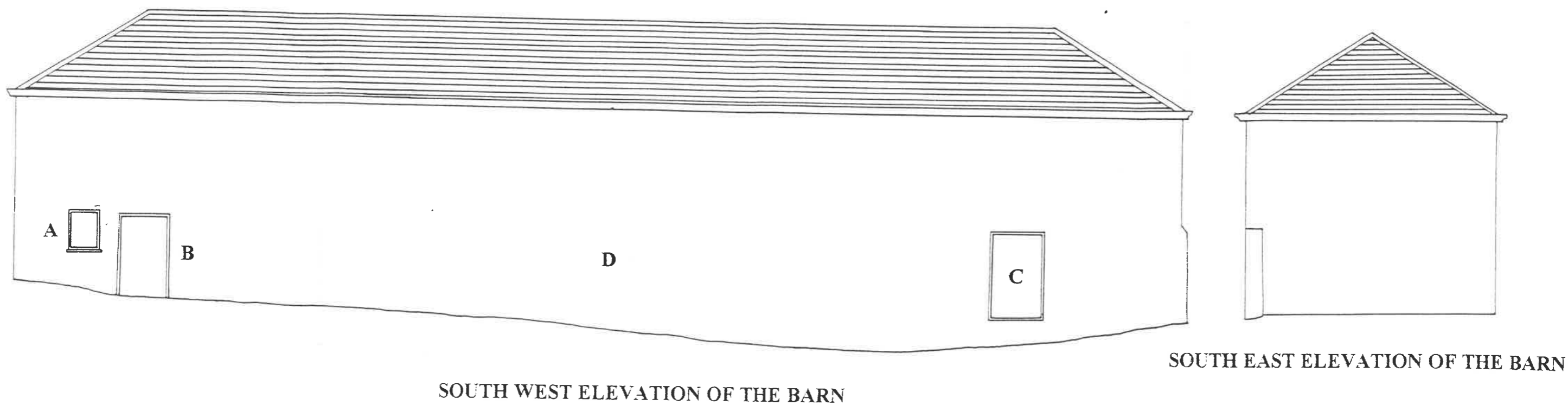
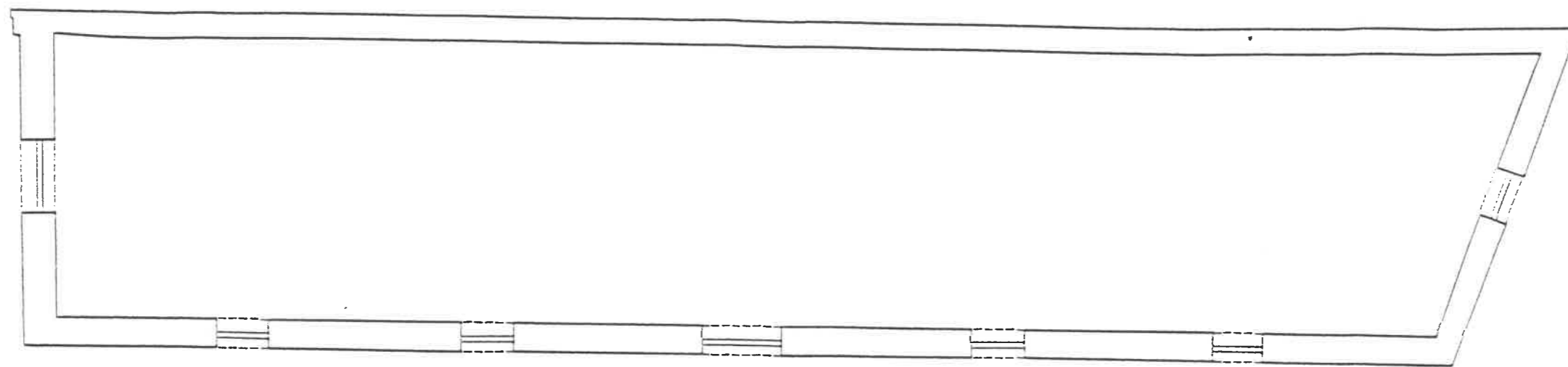
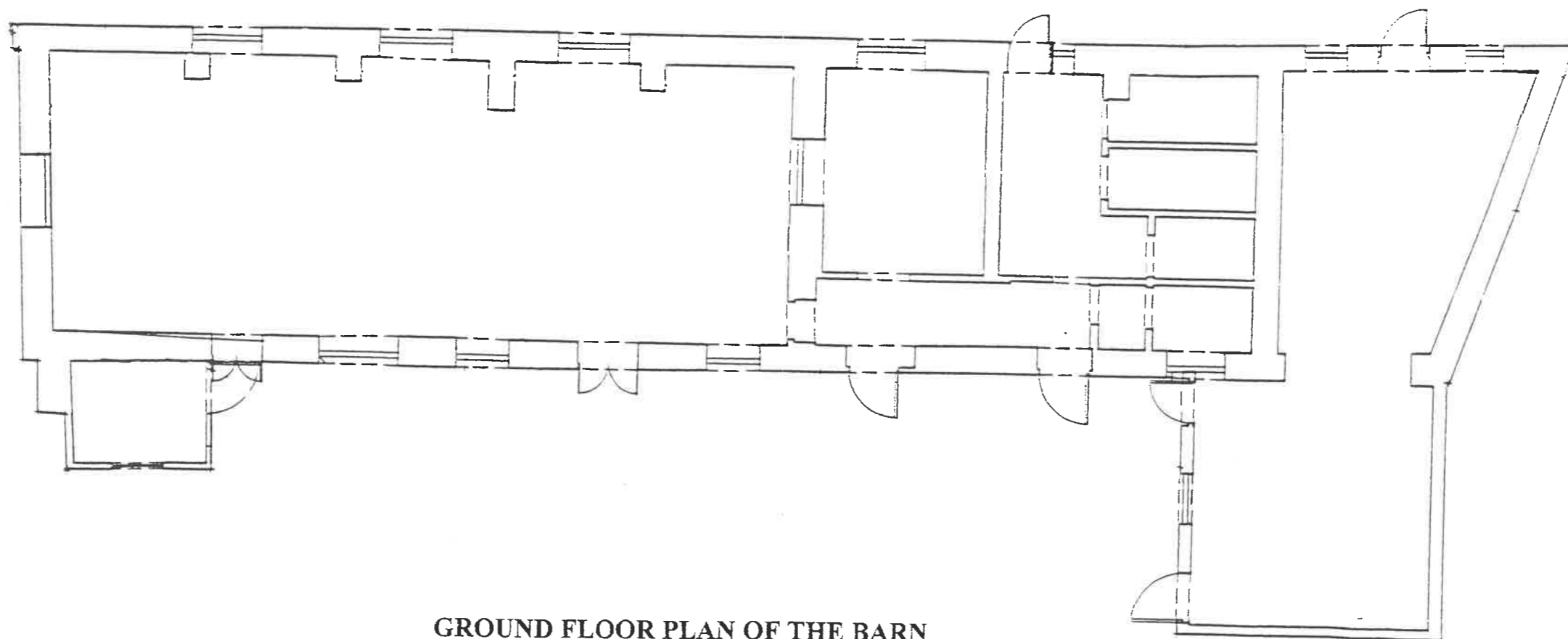
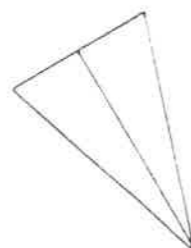


FIGURE 16:

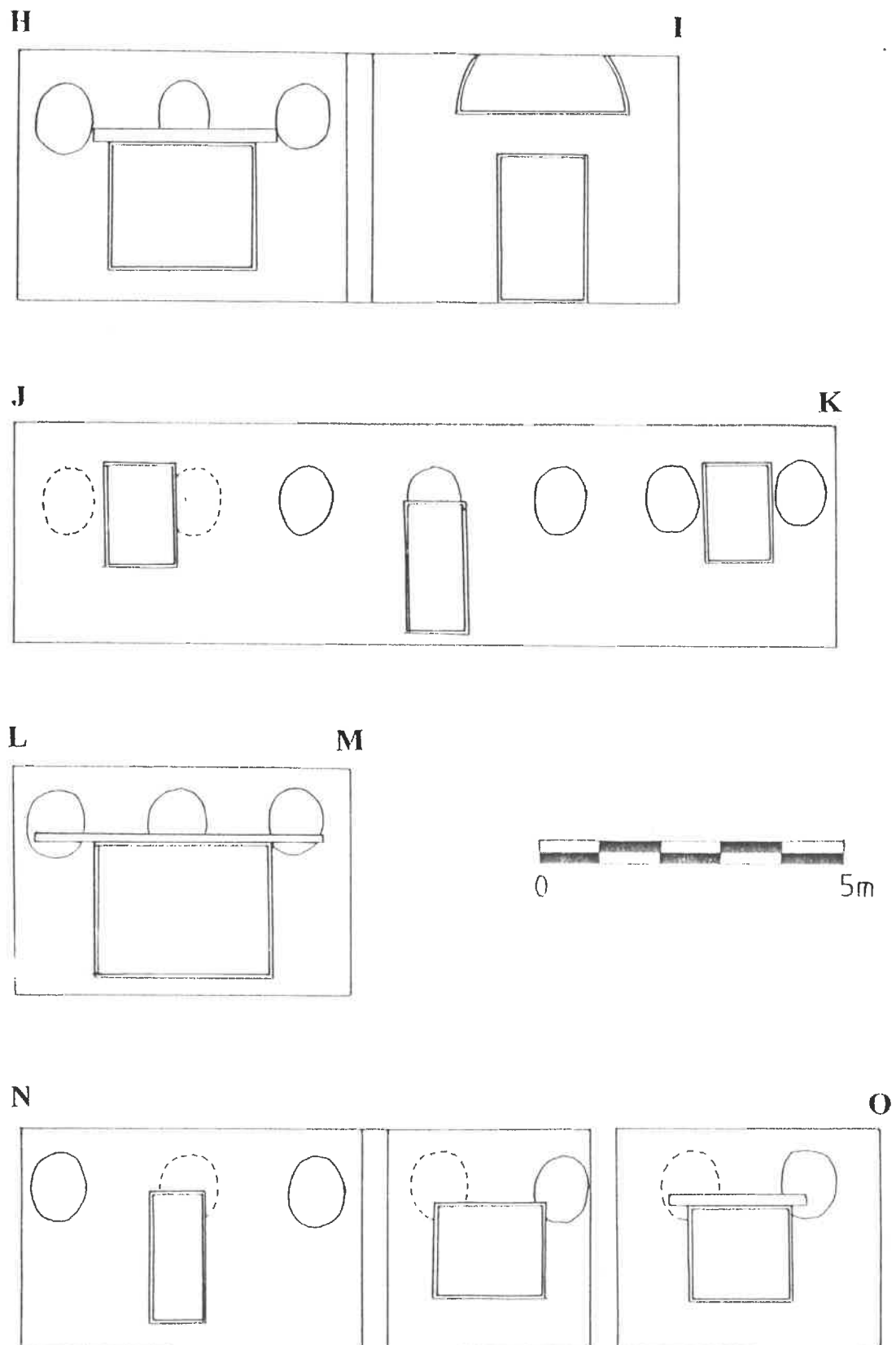


FIRST FLOOR PLAN OF THE BARN
(ARCHITECTS DRAWING)

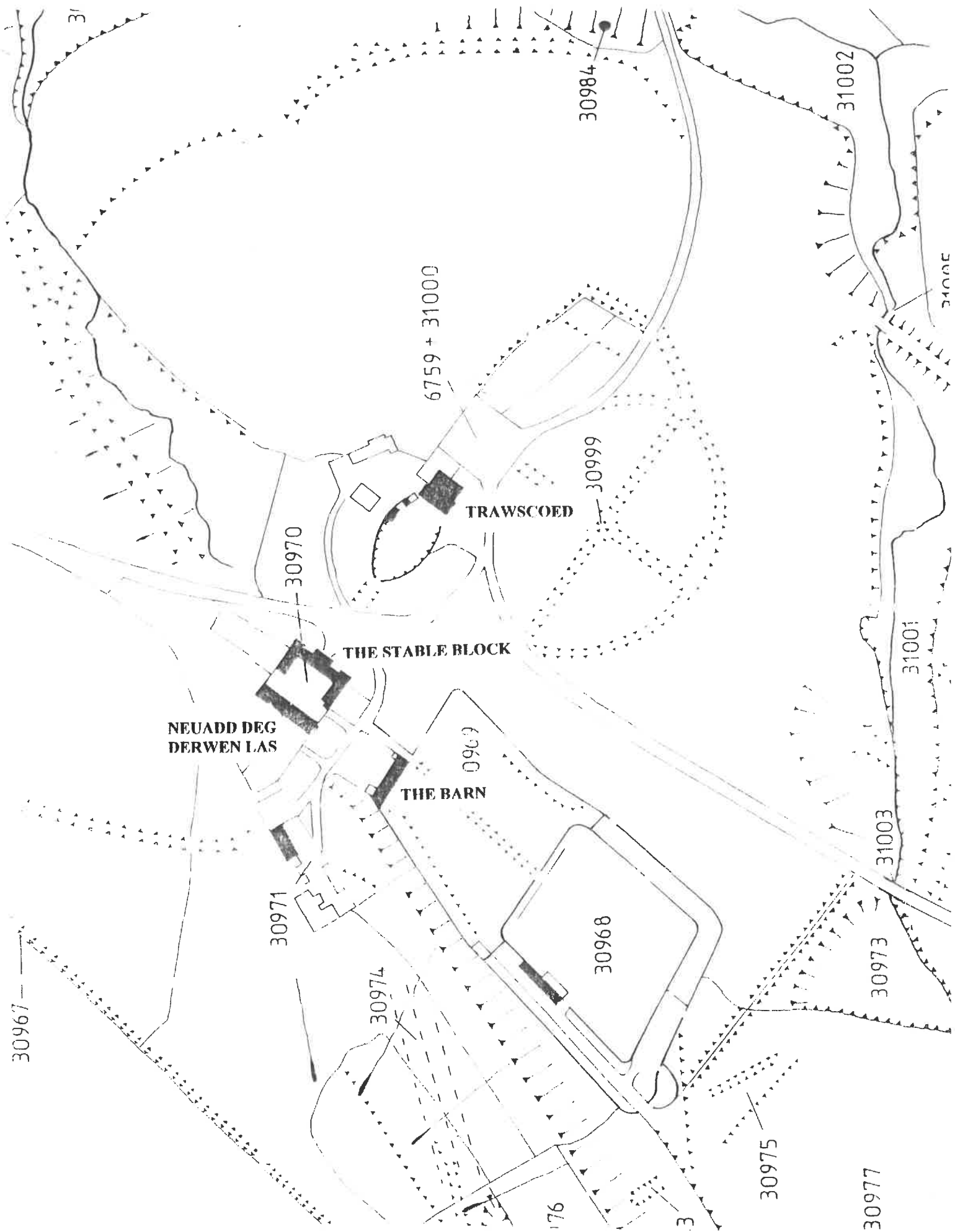


GROUND FLOOR PLAN OF THE BARN
(ARCHITECTS DRAWING)

FIGURE 17:



INTERNAL ELEVATIONS OF THE STABLE BLOCK
(See Figure 1 for locations)

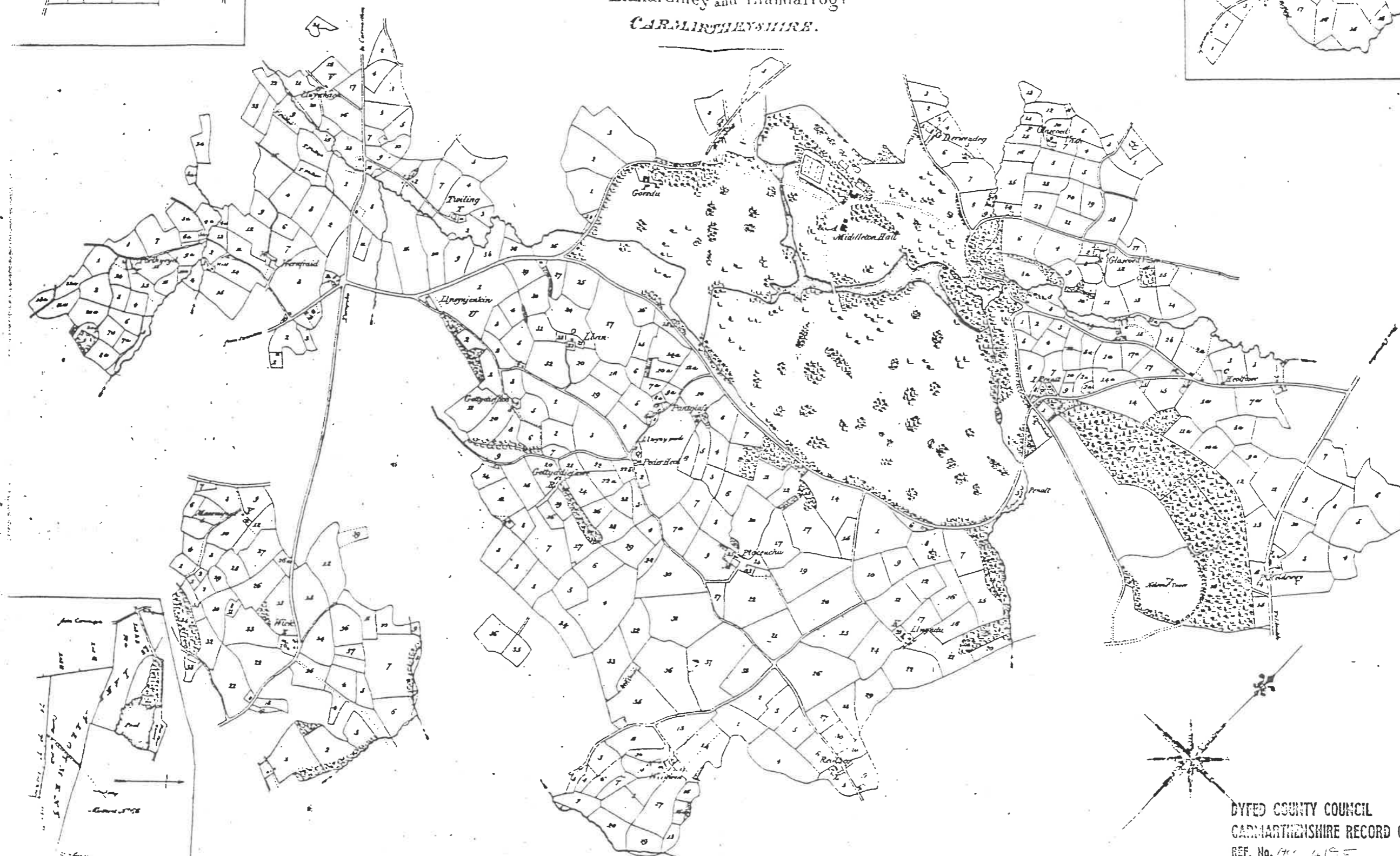


LOCATION PLAN OF BUILDINGS AT MIDDLETON HALL

FIGURE 19:

Byrdair.

in the Parishes of
Llanarthney and Llandarrogo:
CARLISLESHIRE.



DYFED COUNTY COUNCIL
 GARMARTHENSHIRE RECORD OFFICE
 REF. No. *400 4195*
 DATE *5. 6. 1971*
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FIGURE 20:

Copy of part of 'The Parish of Llanarthney', Tithe Map and Apportionment, 1849.

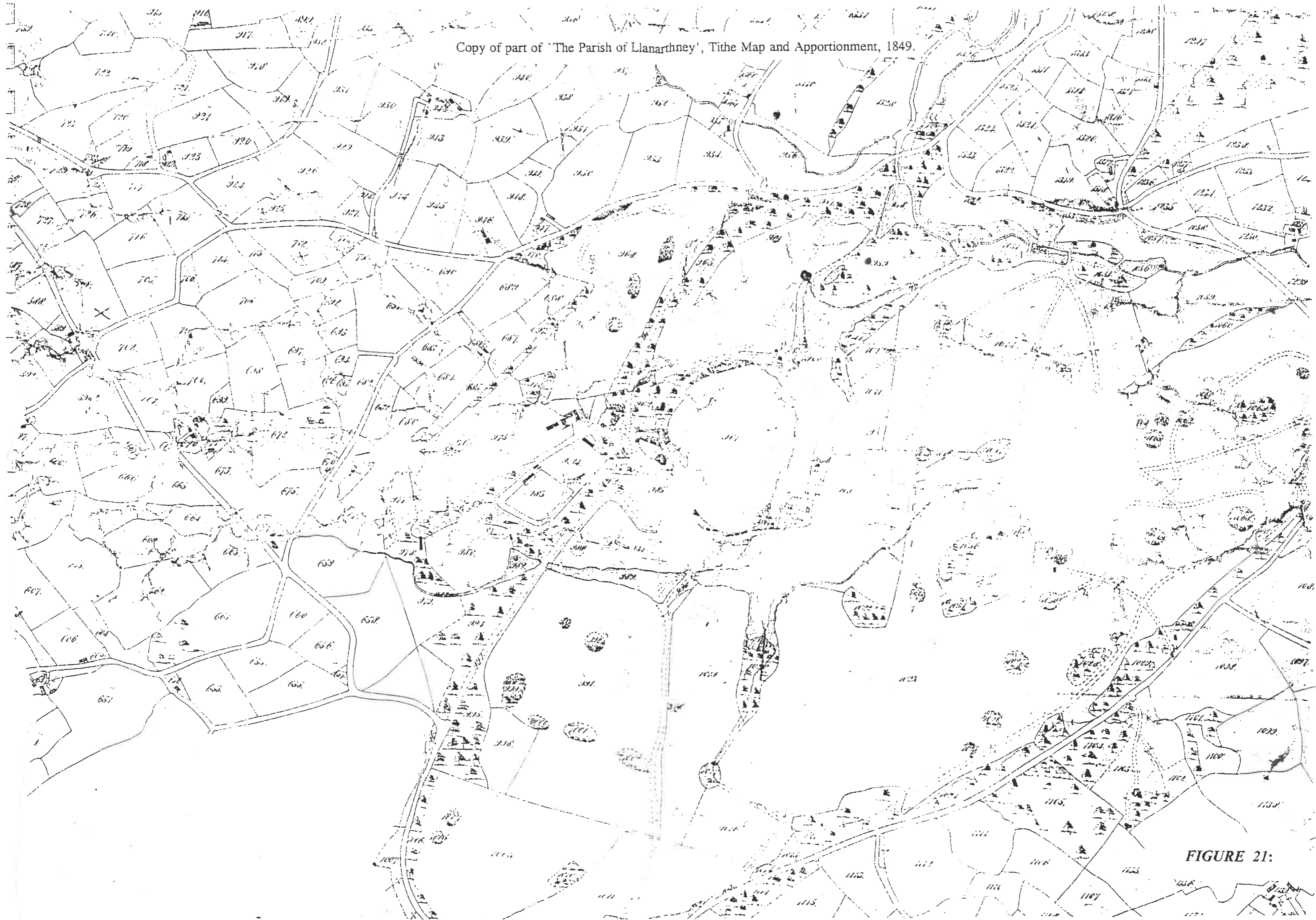


FIGURE 21:

Copy of part of Ordnance Survey, 1:2500, First Edition,
Carmarthenshire Sheet XL.11 (1886)

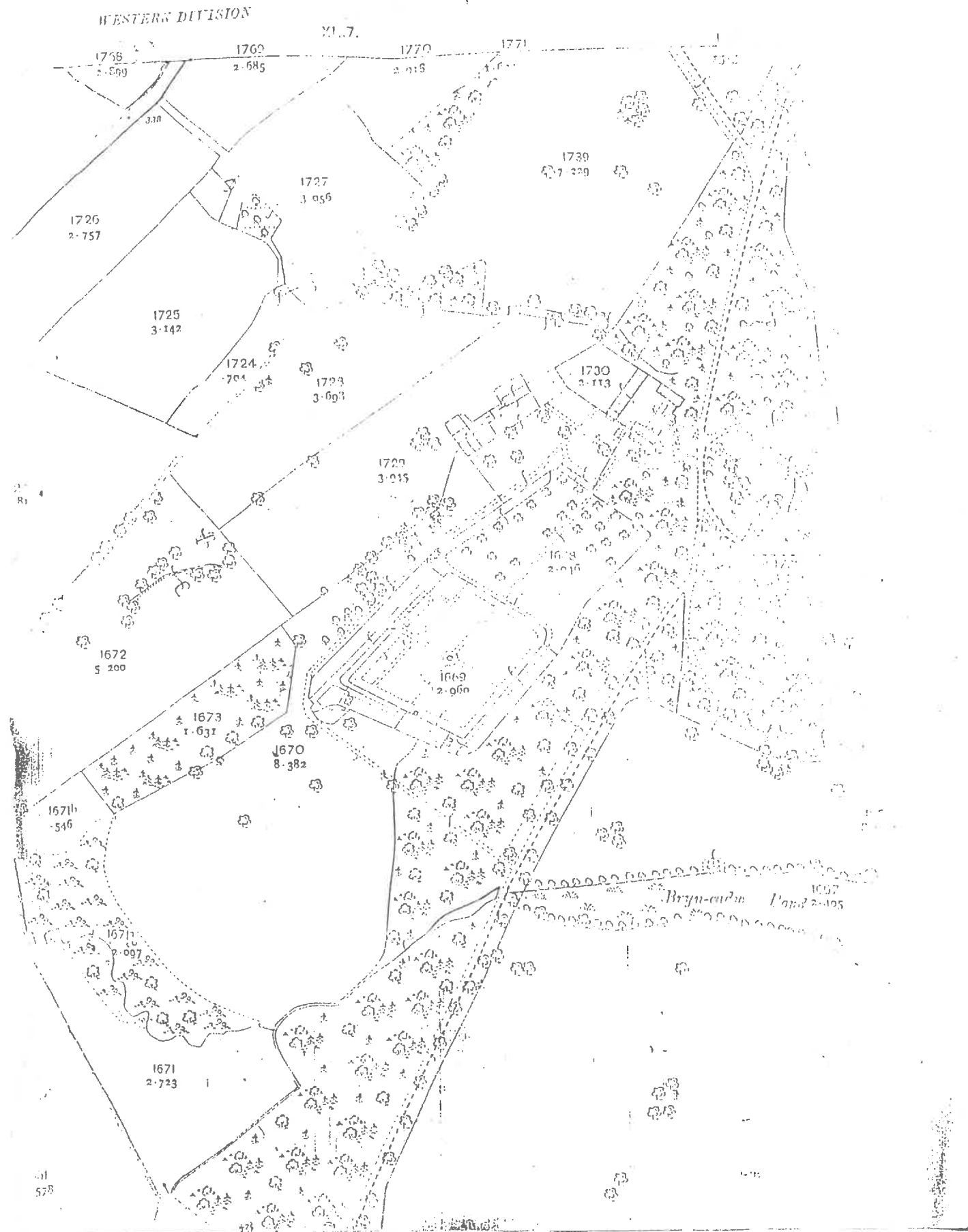


FIGURE 22: