

Wardington Manor Wardington Oxfordshire



Historic Building Investigation: Chimney C4



Oxford Archaeology

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WARDINGTON MANOR, WARDINGTON: DEMOLITION OF CHIMNEY C4

HISTORIC BUILDING INVESTIGATION AND RECORDING

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WARDINGTON MANOR

WARDINGTON, OXFORDSHIRE

HISTORIC BUILDING INVESTIGATION AND RECORDING

SUMMARY

Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out a watching brief on behalf of the Architects Rodney Melville and Partners. The works consisted of the controlled demolition of a chimney and part of the gable below on the south west side of the house. The chimney having become inherently unstable as a result of the loss of support from the fire damaged roof frame. The works were completed as planned, revealing an insight into the materials used in the construction and further details on the flue structure of the chimney.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1.1 The watching brief was been requested by the Architects Rodney Melville and Partners on behalf of Lord Wardington as an anticipated condition of Listed Building Consent (LBC) that had been granted retrospectively. In normal circumstances, as a Grade II* Listed Building, LBC would be required in advance of the undertaking of any works, however, due to the dangerous nature of the structure special dispensation was granted by English Heritage to demolish the unsafe structure on the basis of an archaeological watching brief being carried out in conjunction with this work. OA has been commissioned by Rodney Melville and Partners to conduct a watching brief during the gradual demolition of the chimney and part of the gable below.

1.2 LOCATION AND SCOPE OF WORK

1.2.1 Wardington Manor (SP 493 461) is located on the western side of the village (Thorpe Road), approximately 1 mile from the A361 Banbury to Daventry road and 6 miles from Banbury to the south west (Figure. 1). The chimney and gable are located in the south west section of the manor, forming the north eastern wall of the panelled smoking room at ground level and rising up to form the north west elevation of the Butlers accommodation on the second floor. The initial programme of works for demolition was to include the chimney stack and the uppermost part of the gable deemed unstable and at risk of collapse. However, during the course of demolition it was found necessary to remove the gable down to 0.50m below first floor level for reasons of instability.

1.2.2 The watching brief was to include a photographic, written and drawn record of the chimney and upper part of the gable before and during demolition. The watching brief was to monitor the removal of the chimney stack and the stone work within the gable. Any features of archaeological interest were to be recorded and the Local Planning Authority (LPA) was to be contacted as appropriate. The primary aims and objectives are outlined in further detail below in 2.

1.3 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 1.3.1 Wardington Manor is situated in the Banbury Hundred in the ancient parish of Cropredy (although Wardington was considered a separate civil parish after 1888). The Manor is a substantial gabled house constructed primarily of local ironstone and of an irregular H-shape in plan (Figure 2). Although the earliest date for the construction of the house is currently open to speculation, it is apparent that the core of the surviving house is medieval in date with documentary evidence attesting to the presence of a manor house in the mid 16th century. Ongoing historic building analysis at the house has recently confirmed this.
- 1.3.2 George Chamberlayne drastically remodelled the building in 1665, with major alterations undertaken between 1905 - 1914 by Clough William Ellis. Further substantial works were undertaken between 1917- 1923 for the first Lord Wardington by Randall Wells, restoring the existing original details with a high degree of accuracy and making any alterations in keeping with the Jacobean elements of the house.
- 1.3.3 As a result of the fire in April of this year (Plates 1 - 4), an extensive programme of restoration and conservation work has been proposed by Rodney Melville and Partners, Architects, details of which are currently being finalised and are likely to run until the latter part of 2005.
- 1.3.4 As referred to in a proposed Written Scheme of Investigation for Building Recording and Archaeological Works (Prepared for Rodney Melville and Partners in September 2004), future research, if commissioned, would include further research detailed research into the general historical context and narrative for the building and its immediate setting. This would incorporate existing material in addition to any information provided by Rodney Melville & Partners and Lord Wardington.

2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The general aims and objectives were:

- To make a record of the present chimney and gable prior to removal
- To conduct a watching brief during the removal of the chimney and gable
- To record any features of archaeological interest (such as different material and construction) to the Oxfordshire Planning Authority during the watching brief as appropriate
- To produce a brief report detailing the findings of the watching brief
- To deposit the site archive with the LPA and the Sites and Monuments Record Office (SMR).

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 FIELDWORK METHODS AND RECORDING



- 3.1.1 The fieldwork for the watching brief was completed intermittently over August - October 2004. This included:
- 3.1.2 *The Base Survey*
- 3.1.3 The base survey for the programme of restoration and conservation work was commissioned Rodney Melville and Partners and undertaken by On Centre Surveys. Access to this data was kindly granted by Andrew Brookes of Rodney Melville and Partners and this survey forms the base plans for figures 6, 7 and 8.
- 3.1.4 *The Drawn Record*
- 3.1.5 A section (1:20) was completed and then reduced to 1:50 showing the central chimney C4 and the gable below to first floor level, detailing the external structure of both. Two plans were also drawn at 1:20 detailing the arrangement of flues revealed at two points during the demolition of the gable. The first after the chimney stacks had been removed and the second recorded at approximately first floor level.
- 3.1.6 *The Photographic Record*
- 3.1.7 A full black and white and colour slide photographic record was made by OA of the chimney and upper gable. Photographs were taken prior, during and following the removal of the chimney and upper section of the gable. A wide selection of digital images were also taken through out the process of demolition and recording at a resolution of 4000 DPI.
- 3.1.8 *The Written Record*
- 3.1.9 Notes were made of the chimney and upper gable as part of the annotated drawings. Additional notes were taken as appropriate during the watching brief.

4 DESCRIPTION

- 4.1.1 Chimney C4 and the associated gable end below are located in the south west side of the manor house (Figures 3, 6 - 8). The gable end forms the north eastern wall of the panelled smoking room at ground level and rises up to form the north west elevation of the Butlers accommodation on the second floor. The chimney forms an integral part of the gable end and appears to serve the fire places in the smoking room at ground level, the dining room to the north east and several rooms at first floor level. The examination of the flues from chimney C4 will hopefully form part of a more comprehensive future programme of historic building analysis at Wardington Manor.
- 4.1.2 As a result of a substantial episode of burning in the roof space earlier in the year, resulting in the loss of most of the adjacent roof structure, the gable end and chimney stack have become inherently unstable. Controlled demolition was recommended by both English Heritage and the LPA on the advice of Rodney Melville and Partners.
- 4.1.3 Chimney C4 comprised 4 pots each placed on tops of its own stone encased flue with the main body of the stack above roof level measuring approximately 1.15m x 1.15m. (Plates 5 - 10). The four individual flues (Plates 11 & 12) are observable down to the level at which the chimney enters the top of the gable and then divide further into what appears to 5 flues further

down the chimney. Initially the chimney was reduced down to the level of the top of the gable end, (0.75m above the purlins as represented in figure 3). The four stacks were constructed of a dark grey limestone stone, (probably not a local stone), with a concrete cap and a cement render on the sides. These appeared to be cemented to a red brick structure below and covered in a light / pale brown mortar.

- 4.1.4 Below the upper structure supporting the stacks were four pillars 1.20m in height, each of the pillars constructed using slabs of a light grey / brown stone with a wall thickness of 0.11m. At the base of these pillars it could also be observed that at this point four regular shaped flues (0.35m square) were present. These four symmetrical flues were separated by a cross structure of red brick .23m wide, (overall dimensions of bricks 0.23m x .11m x .07m).
- 4.1.5 A further 1.10m of coursed rubble limestone was remove to bring the elevation down to the approximate top of the gable end. This part of the chimney was approximately 1.35m square with the rubble ironstone being covered in a thin, dark grey render.
- 4.1.6 The section of gable removed below was approximately 5m in height (reduced to 0.50m below first floor level), and was constructed primarily of local rubble ironstone, some of it quite shelley), with patchy remains of a very coarse light pink render remaining ion some areas. Tile had also been used in a variety of places to fill voids.
- 4.1.7 At 0.65m above first floor level the gable a ledge had been constructed that sprung to the north east for 0.25m. This again was of rubble ironstone construction but covered in 7mm of grey render (Plates 15 & 16).
- 4.1.8 At 3.75m and 3.50m respectively above the first floor level the remains of 2 heavily charred purlins (Plates 13 & 14), were still set in the gable end, running north east - south west. The remains of charred rafters were also observable on the east side of the gable end.
- 4.1.9 It should also be noted that a substantial part of the north west side of the gable end was destroyed and collapsed in the aftermath of the fire. Although part of this survived at the extreme north west it was inaccessible during the process of drawn recording, although was recorded photographically (Plates 21 & 22).
- 4.1.10 On the north east side of the chimney lead flashing was clearly visible (Plate 9) showing the height and pitch of the former roof structure to the north east. Only approximately 10% of this former roof structure survives.
- 4.1.11 At two points during the demolition of the gable a plan was made of the location and position of a variety of different shaped flues and their route throughout the elevation to the lower levels of the house, (Figures 4 and 5).
- 4.1.12 Figure 4 was drawn at a point 2.95m above the first floor level and revealed the presence of 5 flues (Figure 4.) They can be summarised thus;
- 4.1.13 Flue 1: Located on the south west side of the gable and exhibiting the largest opening at this point with a maximum measurement of 1.28m x 0.65m . The flue was partially recessed to a depth of 0.20m on its southern side. The flue slopes inwards from both the north and the south with two observable ledges on the north side and one on the south east. On the western side of the flue a vertical 'channel' approximately 0.10m wide had been cut, presumably to ease



and speed the rise of smoke from below. At this point the flue could be measured to a depth of 4.00m.

- 4.1.14 Flue 2: Located on the eastern side of the gable in plan view. Approximately 0.80m x 0.38m with two internal breaks of slope on its north eastern side.
- 4.1.15 Flue 3: Positioned 0.16m west of flue 2, on the western side of the elevation in plan. One ledge present to the north.
- 4.1.16 Flue 4: Positioned immediately to the north of flue 3 with a 0.10m brick between them. Two ledges sloping in from the north and the west.
- 4.1.17 Flue 5: Positioned north of flue 2 with a maximum observable size of 0.38m x 0.28m. At this point it was not possible to discern whether not the flue extended further to the north or whether this was a separate flue. Again one brick width (0.10m) divides flues 2 and 5 and through observation of the north east elevation of both flues it appears that the bricks are part of a later attempt to divide a previously larger flue.
- 4.1.18 At first floor level a further plan was made of the positions of the flues observed 2.95m above (Figure 5). Although much of the gable was covered by rubble at the time of recording it was possible to identify reduced parts of Flue 1, 0.64m x 1.00m and Flue 4, 0.24m x 0.40m. What was apparent was that Flue 5 extended much further northwards than was observable higher up the elevation and appeared to have maximum dimensions of 0.42m x 1.54m with a considerable slope inwards from the south west. It is therefore likely that flues 2 and 5 were at one point part of the same large flue which has been subsequently divided into two. The brick used in creating the division into two appeared to be of late 19th / early 20th C in origin. The maximum depth measurable at this point was 3.70m reaching down to the ground floor levels (Plates 23 - 26).

5 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1.1 From the watching brief undertaken during the course of demolition work it was observed that the upper elements of the chimney stack were constructed primarily of a non local limestone cladding forming the upper section of the four flues and employing local red brick as flue dividers. Within both the gable and integral chimney stack local roughly cut and rubble ironstone had been employed in its construction, with a lime based mortar. Tile and reused timber had also been utilised on both the south west and north east sides of the gable to fill voids and provide general support within the matrix of the structure as a whole.
- 5.1.2 The only element of particular note was the design and division of the flues further down the chimney stack, starting with the original 4 which were subsequently altered to provide at least 5 designed to serve a variety of fireplaces throughout the property.
- 5.1.3 No medieval elements were identified with the structure observed and that part of the chimney and gable end demolished appeared to be of 17th century origin, with later modifications during the 19th and early 20th century. It is possible that any subsequent historic building analysis undertaken at Wardington Manor may reveal further structural elements or features, therefore allowing a more accurate phasing of the chimney and its associated flues to be undertaken.

6 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

Sherwood, J & Pevsner, N *The Buildings of England: Oxfordshire*, Penguin Books, 1974

Salter, H, Litt, D & Lobel, M (ed) *The Victorian History of the Counties of England - Oxfordshire (Vol. 3)*, Oxford University Press , 1954

7 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name: Wardington Manor, Wardington, Oxfordshire

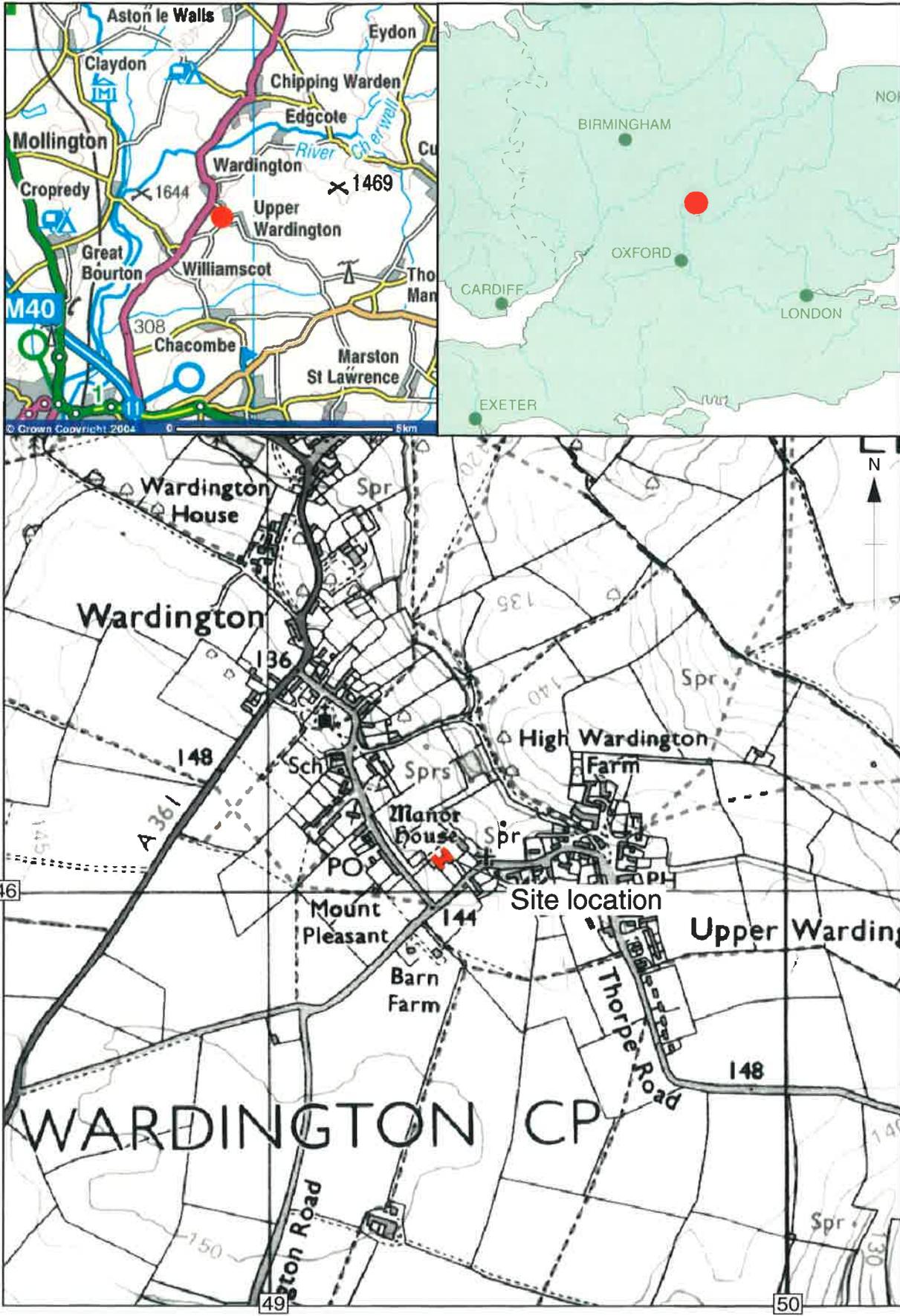
Site code: WAMA04

Type of evaluation: Building Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: Work undertaken September - November 2004

Summary of results: Demolition of the chimney C4 and part of the gable were carried out as planned. No unusual construction features were observed although the size and paths of the flues serving various parts of the house were partially revealed.

Location of archive: The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES.



Scale 1:10,000

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Figure 1: Site location

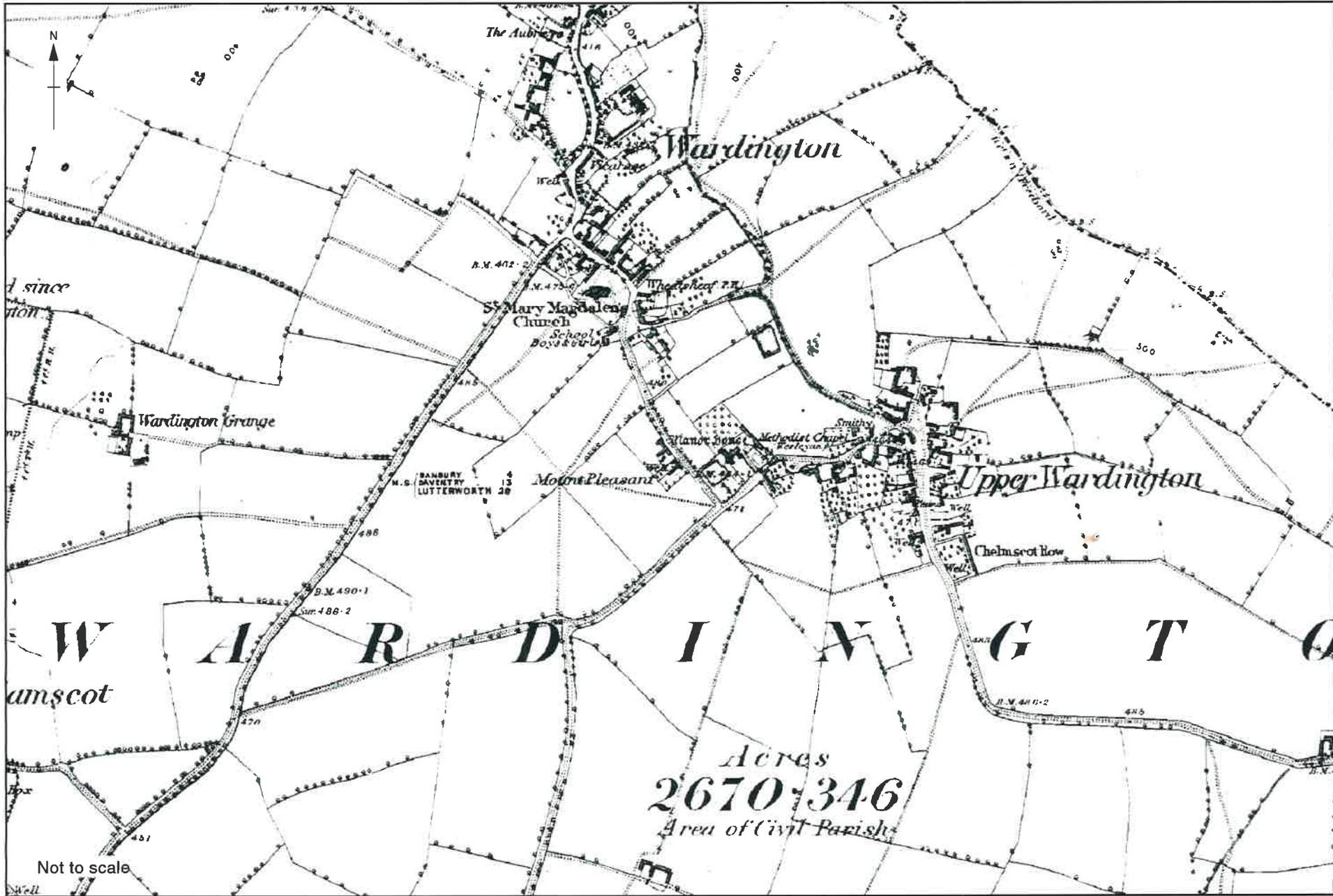
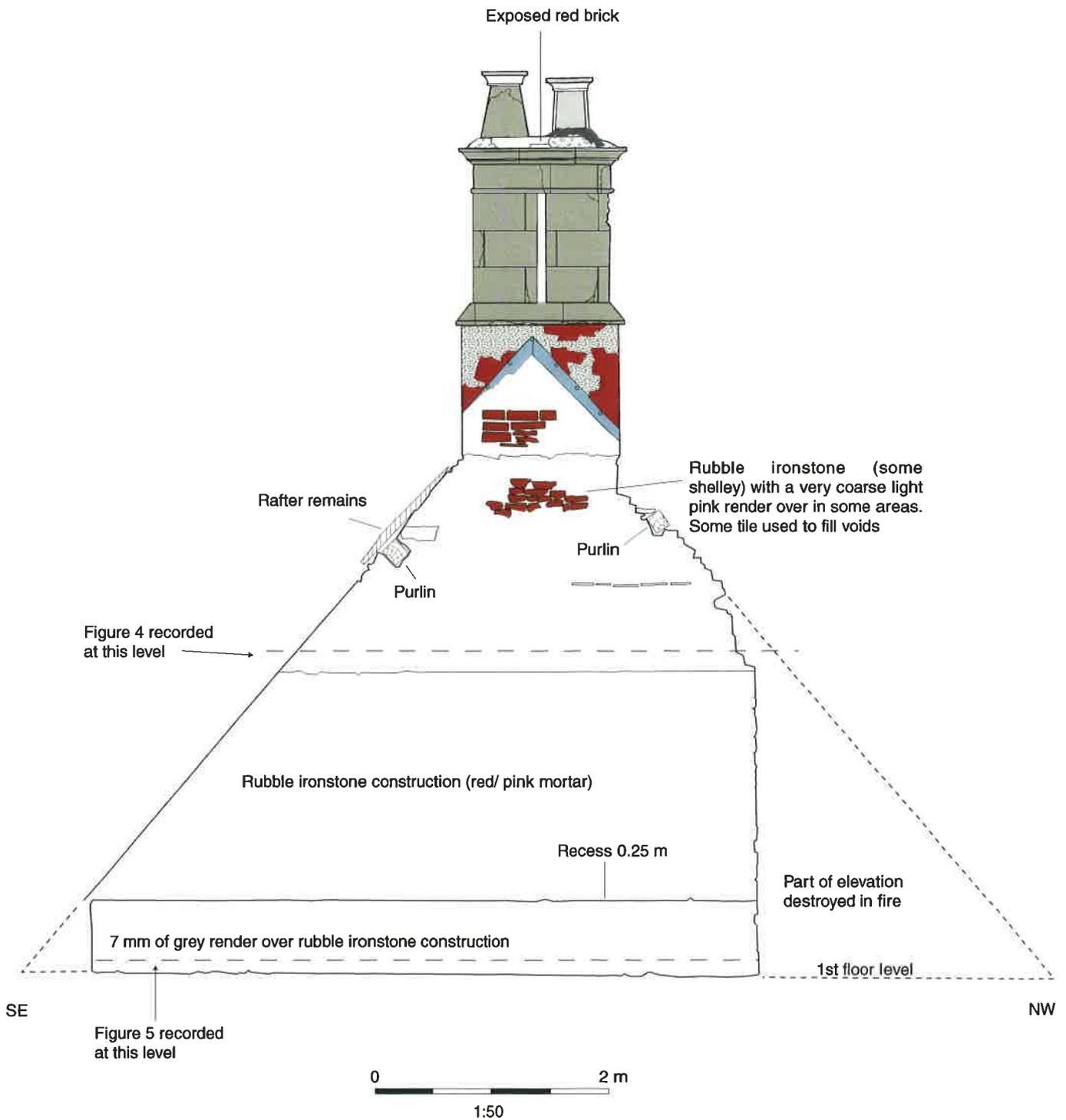
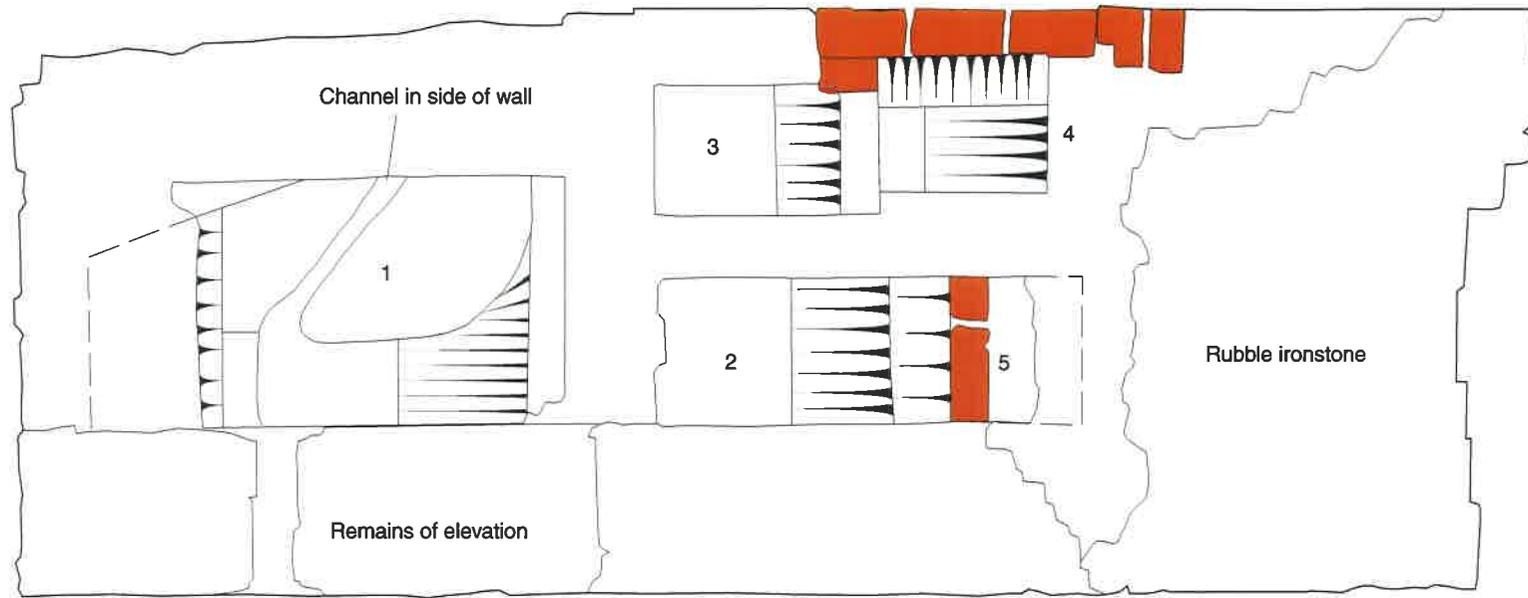


Figure 2: Wardington Manor 1885, 1st edition 1:10,560 county series



-  Concrete
-  Dark grey cement
-  Dark grey render
-  Dark grey stone
-  Ironstone
-  Lead flashing
-  Mortar

Figure 3 : Wardington Manor - central chimney C4, south-west wing, north-east elevation.



Flue 1: Largest flue 1.28 x 0.65 m maximum (partially recessed on south side). Interesting 'channel' on West side at this level, approximately. 4 m to bottom of flue

Flue 2: 0.80 x 0.38 m max. - 2 slopes into vertical drop from North

Flue 3: 0.34 x 0.50 m, slope from North

Flue 4: 0.34 x 0.44 m, slope from North and West

Flue 5: 0.38 x 0.28 m maximum, partially hidden. 2 and 5 possibly one flue that has been divided



Figure 4 : Plan through elevation below chimney stacks (after stack removal)

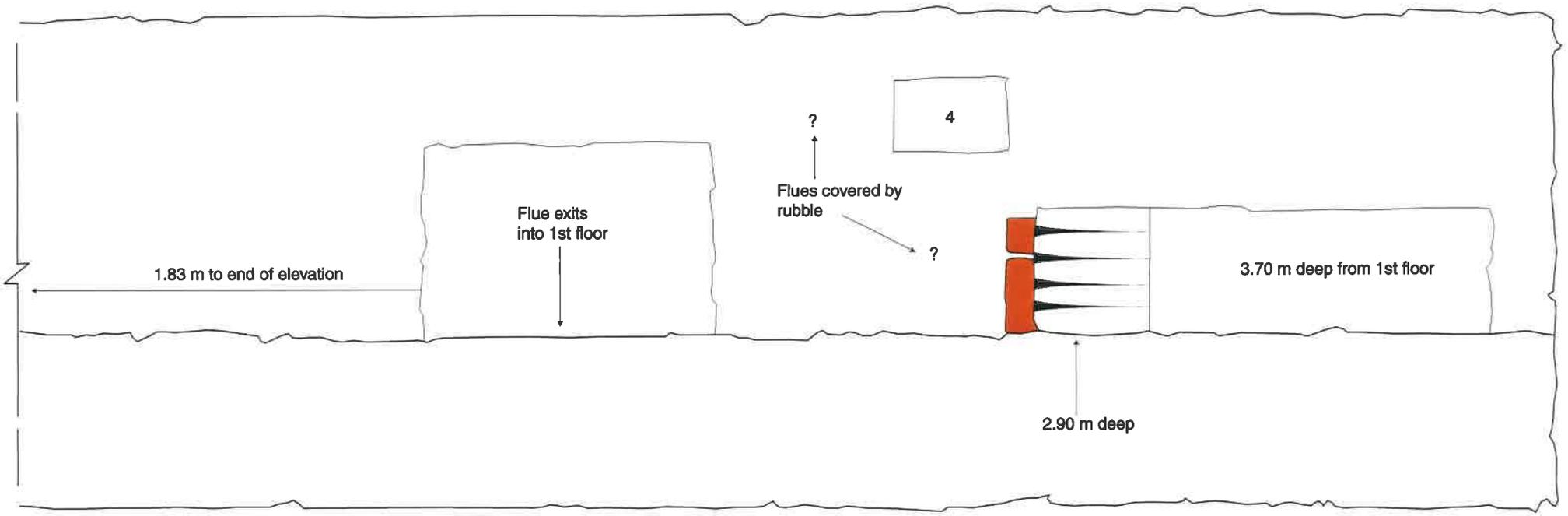


Figure 5 : Plan through elevation below chimney at 1st floor level

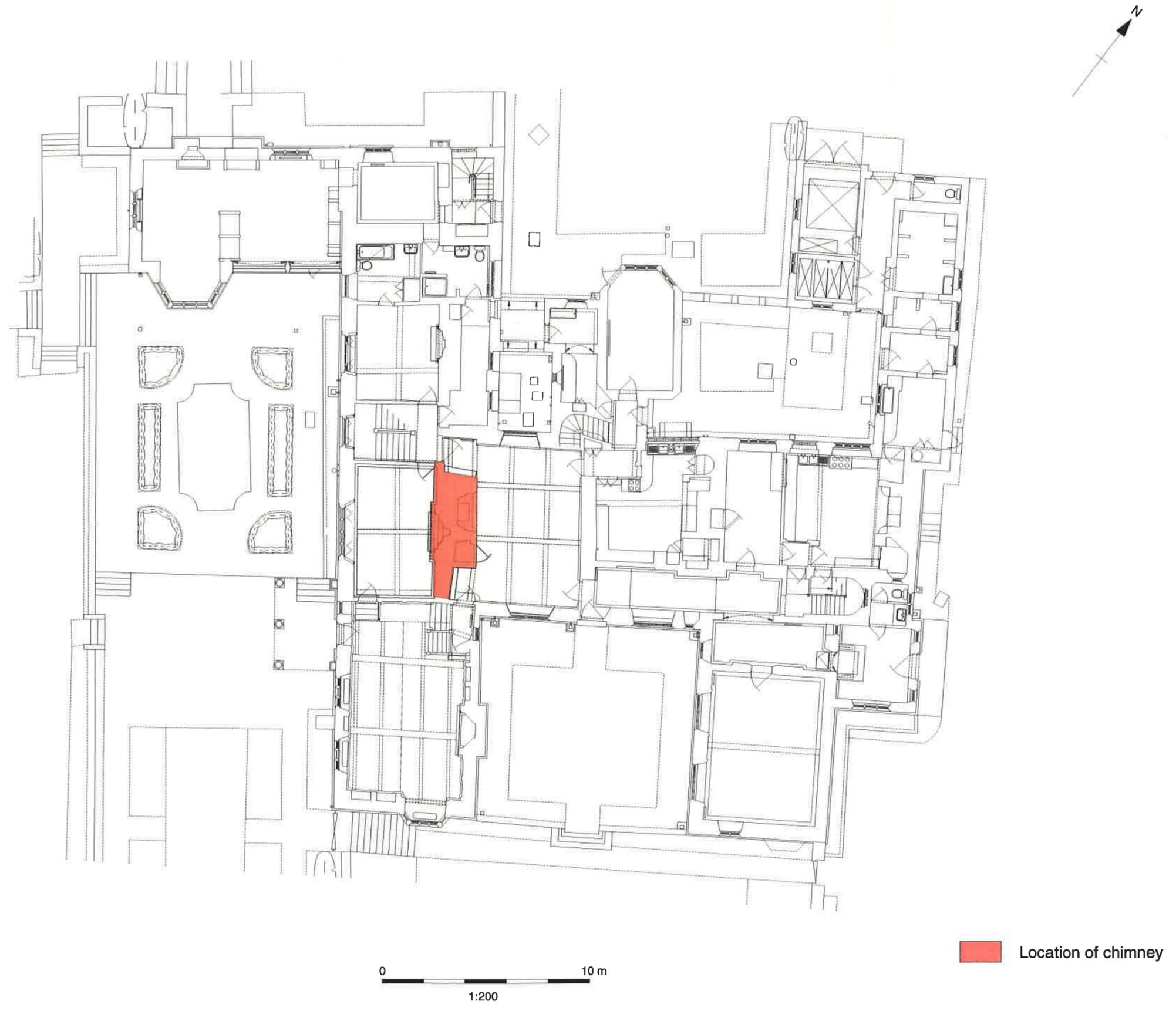
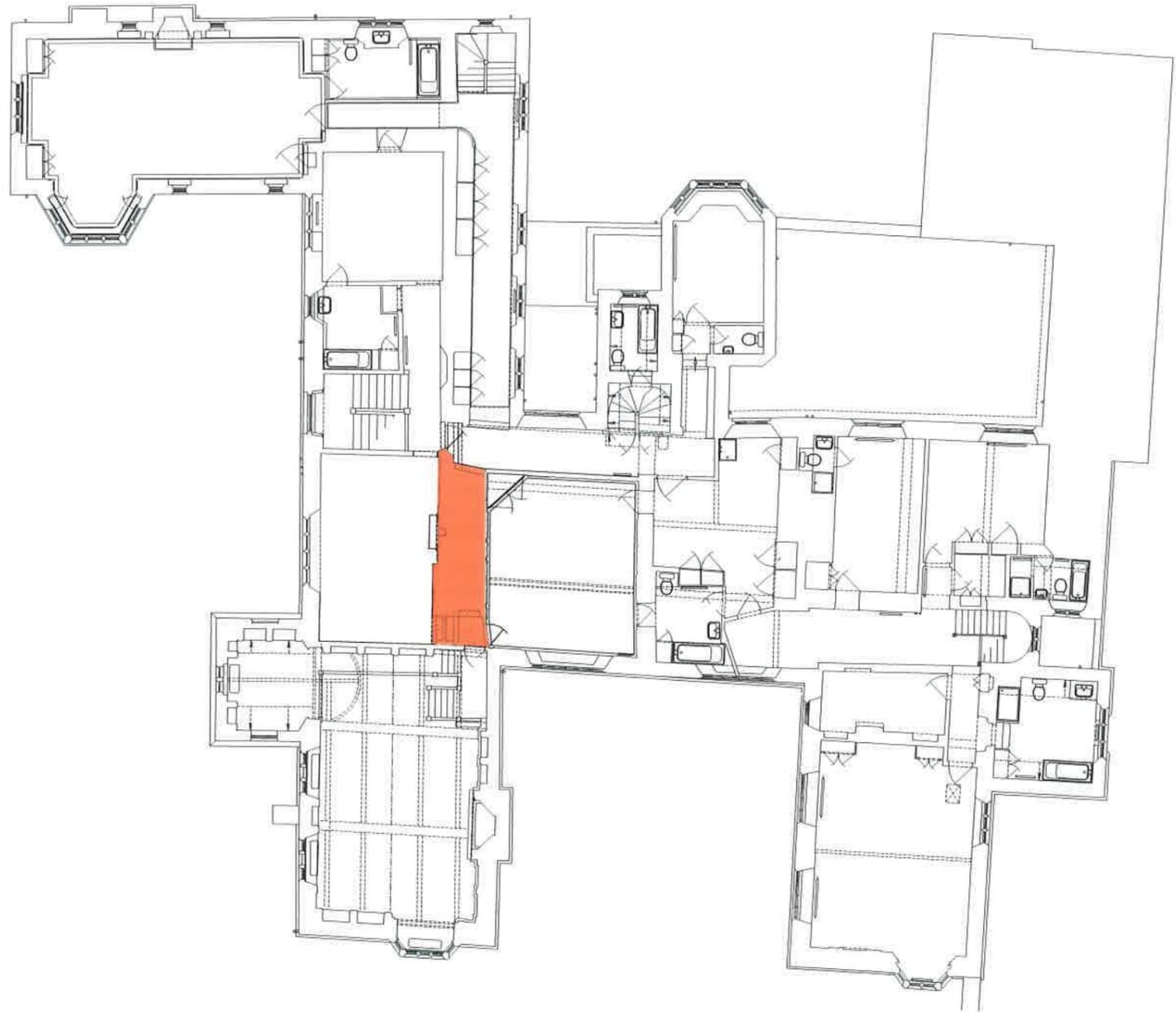


Figure 6: Ground floor - chimney location (**not** demolished)



 Location of chimney



Figure 7: First Floor - Chimney location (demolished)



Figure 8: Second Floor - chimney location (demolished)



Plate 1: South east elevation - general damage to roof structure



Plate 2: View north - general damage to roof structure

Plate 3: View south east - scaffolded chimney



Plate 4: View east - south-west elevation of chimney





Plate 5: Detail of chimney stack - view east

Plate 6: Detail of chimney stack - view north west





Plate 7: Chimney detail - view south west



Plate 8: Chimney detail - view north west

Plate 9: Chimney detail - view south



Plate 10: Chimney detail - view east

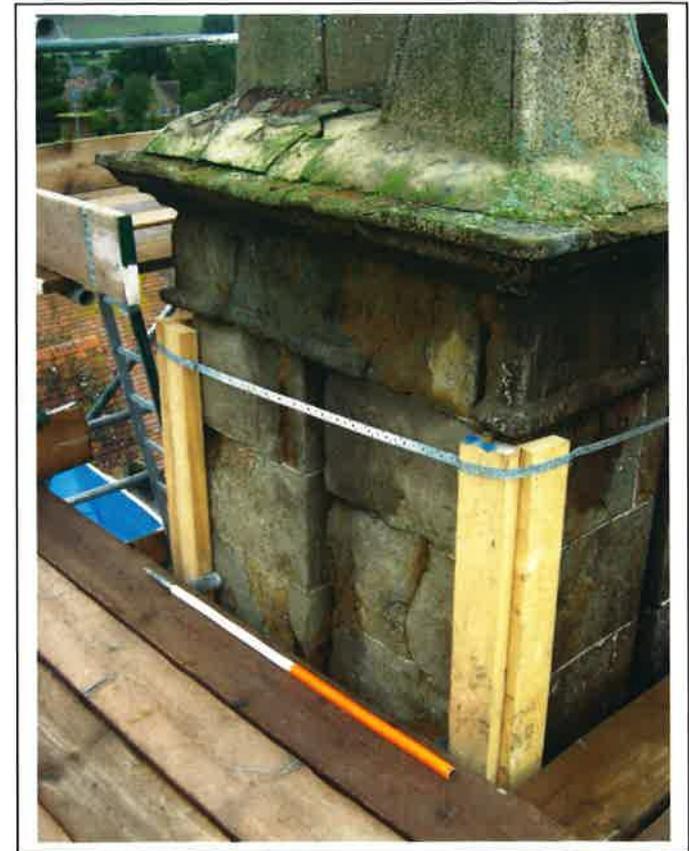




Plate 11 : Detail of chimney with stacks removed - view south west

Plate 12 : Detail of chimney with stacks removed - view south west



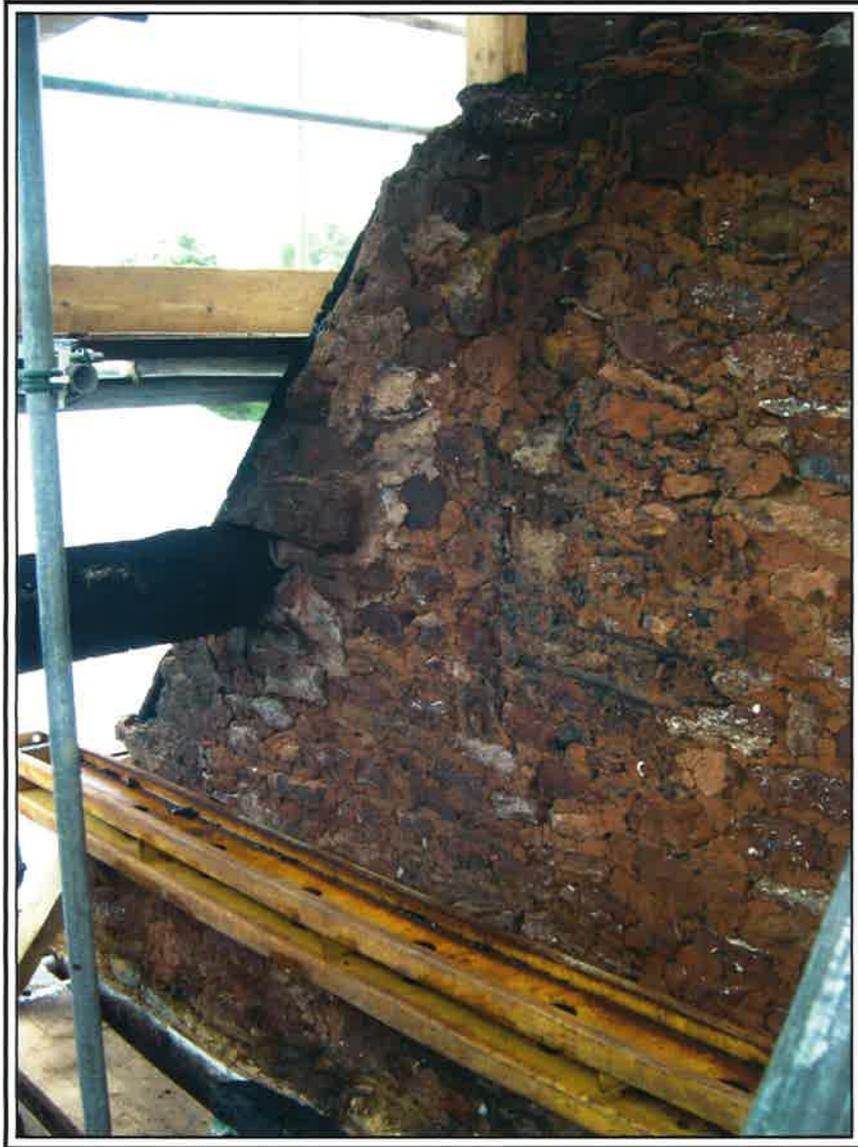


Plate 13 : Charred purling embedded in south east side of elevation



Plate 14 : Charred purlin embedded in north west side of elevation



Plate 15 : South east side of elevation - 2nd floor level

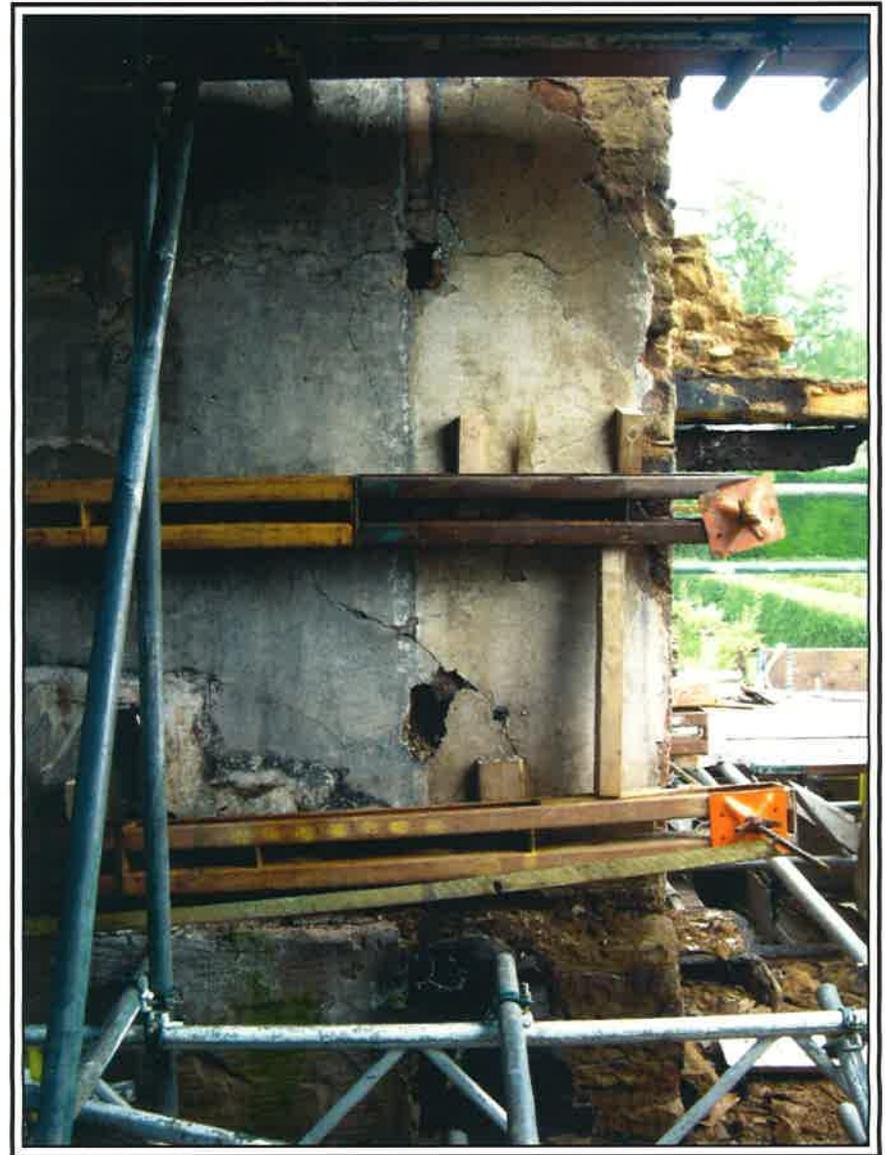


Plate 16: North west side of elevation - 2nd floor level



Plate 17: South west elevation - view north



Plate 18: South west elevation - view north east

Plate 19: South west elevation - view north east



Plate 20: South west elevation - view north east



Plate 21: Detail of purlins on north west side of elevation



Plate 22: Detail of remaining north west side of elevation - view east



Plate 23 : Flue 5 at first floor level - view north west

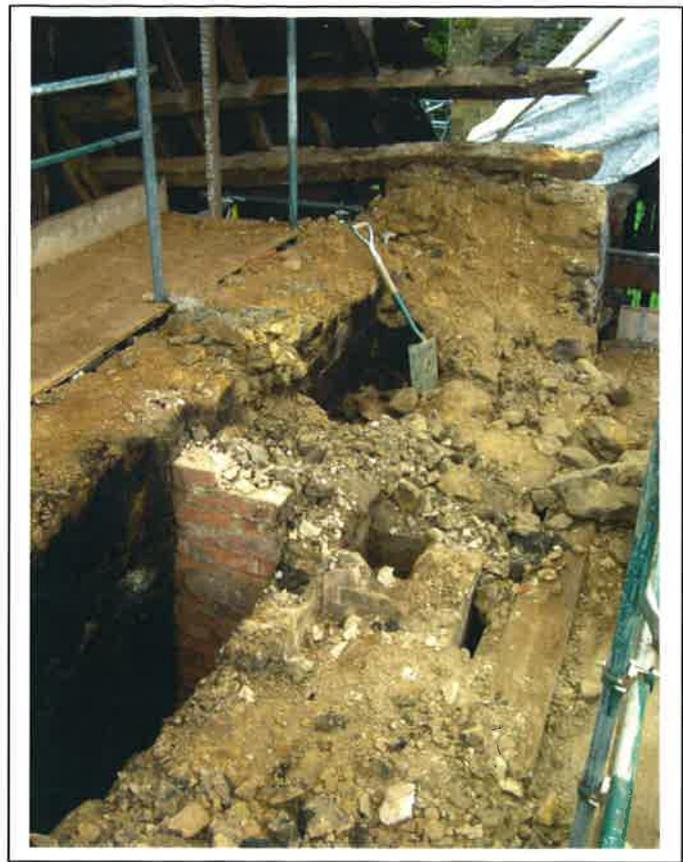


Plate 24: Flues 5 and 1 - view east

Plate 25 : Flues 3 and 5 - view north



Plate 26: Flue - view south east





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