

Black Boy Cottage West Wycombe Village



Building Investigation and Recording

oxfordarchaeology

southsouthsouth
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Prepared by: Angela Warner

Position: Buildings Archaeologist

Checked by: Jonathan Gill

Position: Senior Project Manager (Buildings Archaeology)

Approved by: Julian Munby

Position: Head of Buildings Archaeology Department

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Oxford Archaeology

Janus House

Osney Mead

Oxford OX2 0ES

t: (0044) 01865 263800

e: oasouth@oxfordarch.co.uk

f: (0044) 01865 793496

w: www.thehumanjourney.net

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Black Boy Cottage, West Wycombe Village, Buckinghamshire
Report on Historic Building Investigation

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Black Boy Cottage, West Wycombe Village

Historic Building Investigation and Recording

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA) have been commissioned by The National Trust to carry out historic buildings recording and archaeological investigation during conservation works to a number of properties within the village of West Wycombe, Buckinghamshire. The work relates to a programme of on-going refurbishment works (detailed further below) and the current report covers the recording of Black Boy Cottage located in the rear courtyard of the former Black Boy Public House. The National Trust HBSMR event number for this work is ENA7414 and the site number is 154694. The National Trust HBSMR event number for the dendrochronological dating is ENA7423.

1.2 Wider background to the West Wycombe project

1.2.1 The current work forms part of a wider project to refurbish the tenanted National Trust buildings within West Wycombe village and it is being carried out in a number of stages between 2012-2015.

1.2.2 The main works in the current programme include:

- Re-roofing and insertion of insulation
- Upgrades of services
- Upgrades of bathrooms and kitchen facilities
- Repairs to gutters

1.2.1 The National Trust owns c50 tenanted buildings in the village and c23 of these are listed. Steps House is a Grade II* listed building while the others are listed at Grade II.

1.2.2 The village forms a collection of vernacular buildings from a range of dates and with various historical functions and the current project provides a rare opportunity to undertake a single overarching study of a settlement such as this. The investigation of this group will particularly allow the easy comparison of constructional techniques between buildings to identify similarities between structures of different ages as well as highlighting evidence to show how constructional techniques or structural design in this area has evolved over time.

1.2.3 In September 2012 Gary Marshall (National Trust Archaeologist London and South East) issued a brief for the recording project and in October OA responded with a *Proposal for Building Investigation and Recording*.

1.2.4 Vernacular Building Surveys were undertaken on many of the buildings in the early 1990s and these provide much valuable information on the history of the structures and evolution of the village. The current recording work utilises existing plans and research undertaken by the Vernacular Buildings Survey in April 1993. The VBS report, which is included here as Appendix B, should also be read in conjunction with the current report.

- 1.2.5 This document forms a stand-alone report on the investigation of Black Boy Cottage and ultimately similar reports will be issued on the other buildings investigated at West Wycombe. The information contained in all these reports will then be distilled into a wider context study which will discuss the overall development of the village and highlight common themes or features between buildings.
- 1.2.6 The recording at Black Boy Cottage focused purely on the roof structure following removal of the roof tiles and prior to the insertion of insulation. This report is intended to complement the Vernacular Building Survey rather than to replace it and it focuses particularly on the areas exposed. The VBS is reproduced here as an appendix while the main body of the current report discusses the areas recently exposed and assesses how this affects the previous understanding of the building.

1.3 Methodology

- 1.3.1 The work comprised three principal elements: a photographic, a drawn and a written survey.
- 1.3.2 The *photographic survey* consisted of both general photographs and specific details and was undertaken using 35mm black and white print film and digital photographs were taken using an 8 megapixel camera.
- 1.3.3 The *drawn survey* consisted of a measured survey of the elements of the roof as they were exposed.
- 1.3.4 The *written survey* consisted of notes and annotations that complemented the photographic and drawn surveys and added further analytical and descriptive detail.
- 1.3.5 The site work for the recording of Black Boy Cottage was undertaken in three phases between 22 May 2014 and 2 June 2014; each area of the roof which was uncovered was recorded as detailed above and immediately insulated and covered by the roofing contractors before the next area was stripped.
- 1.3.6 The northern-facing slope (the front of the house) was used to showcase the insulation method for the Green Open Homes Network event on 30th May 2014 and so an area to the western end was left tiled for the event and stripped and recorded on 2nd June 2014.
- 1.3.7 The roofs of the twentieth-century extensions, although being re-covered, were not recorded in the scope of this work.
- 1.3.8 On 21st July 2014, Dan Miles of the Oxford Dendrochronology Laboratory took four core samples for dendrochronological dating, the outcome of which is discussed in Section 3.

1.4 Historical Background to West Wycombe Village

- 1.4.1 West Wycombe is a small historic village which is just detached from the modern western boundary of the much larger town of High Wycombe (Fig 1). Archaeological investigations have provided evidence of continuous occupation in the general vicinity since the Bronze Age, particularly on West Wycombe Hill and the area where St Lawrence's Church now stands.

- 1.4.2 In the first half of the 18th century West Wycombe Park and country house was laid out by Sir Francis Dashwood to the south of the village.
- 1.4.3 The current buildings in the village are believed to largely date from the early 16th century to the later 19th and they formed part of the Dashwood's estate. The village was located on the main road between London and Oxford and records show there were a large number of inns which prospered on the coaching trade.
- 1.4.4 By the early decades of the 20th century the buildings of the village had fallen into a state of considerable disrepair and in 1929 the village estate was purchased from the Dashwood Family by the Royal Society of Arts (RSA). The RSA undertook a programme of refurbishment under their Campaign for the Preservation of Ancient Cottages, a remarkable but little known campaign established in 1926 to protect cottage architecture by establishing a fund which purchased or restored cottages. (RSA ref: PR.EN/100). Documents relating to this purchase and refurbishment are held at the RSA Archives in London and this may be an avenue of valuable research in the current project.
- 1.4.5 In 1934, following the RSA refurbishment, the buildings were donated to the National Trust and they remain as a tenanted estate today.
- 1.4.6 *Black Boy Cottage***
- 1.4.7 More detailed historical research into Black Boy Cottage, as well as the village more generally, will be undertaken in due course as part of the current project and the findings will be incorporated into the final report on all the buildings. The sources contained within the Vernacular Buildings Survey (VBS) of April 1993 have been drawn upon.
- 1.4.8 Black Boy Cottage was originally constructed as a coach-house to the rear of what was a coaching inn called both 'The Unicorn Inn' and 'The Black Boy and Unicorn' in documents from 1767, and by 1808 'The Black Boy'. When the RSA acquired the estate, the Inn's licence was relinquished and the coach-house converted to domestic use.
- 1.4.9 The building does not appear on the map of 1767, however, no outbuildings are shown on this map and the description written on the plot states "The Unicorn Inn with stables, yard etc." as does the description for The George Inn and The White Heart [as spelled] nearby and so it is feasible that the coach-house was standing by this point (Fig 2).
- 1.4.10 The building has been very much altered; the listing details do not attempt to state the age other than to say it is eighteenth-century and the VBS report contradicts itself, stating that the coach-house was constructed in the early-eighteenth century on the summary sheet, whilst stating late-eighteenth century in the structural development text. The window to the right of the front door is a re-used early eighteenth-century sash window, although this domestic feature would have been recycled, presumably from another building in the village, during the RSA works to convert the coach-house to domestic use as it is set within an area of later alteration and infilling.
- 1.4.11 The building was constructed from a fair amount of re-used material, certainly in the case of the roof timbers, and most of the elements of the building have since undergone numerous alterations and repairs, again using reclaimed material, the chamfered and stopped beam in the living room, for example, is not something expected in a coach-house, and so more precise dating is difficult.

- 1.4.12 Black Boy Cottage was given listed building status in January 1954, titled 'Cottage in yard of Premises formerly the Black Boy Public House' and later changed to 'Black Boy Cottage'.
- 1.4.13 A map-regression through the 25 inch Ordnance Survey maps indicates the demolition of the extension to the rear of the property by 1921, as detailed in the VBS report which surmises this could have been a bothy associated with the addition of the chimney in the late-nineteenth century (Figs 3 & 4).
- 1.4.14 The plan of the Black Boy Inn in 1932, included in the VBS as Appendix 8, shows the building was still referred to as a coach-house at the time the licence was relinquished.
- 1.4.15 During the mid-twentieth century a one and a half storey brick-built extension was added to the east of the building.

2 DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary description of overall building from VBS

- 2.1.1 To summarise the description of the VBS report (here in Appendix B in full): The building is a rectangular two-storey main block [although the first floor is little over a half-storey] with a one-and-a-half-storey wing to the east, projecting beyond the main block to the rear. A single-storey lean-to is against the west elevation with a single-storey block joining the south of the lean-to.
- 2.1.2 The main block is of brick, with the remaining original brickwork in Flemish bond with vitrified headers to the front elevation. Much of the brickwork in all elevations is later infilling and alteration, with the side elevations being mainly of flint. In the front elevation, the wide carriage entrance has been infilled, with further infilled areas and insertions of later features being apparent in all elevations. A projecting brick string course extends around the building at storey height with an additional projecting string course above eaves height to each gable.
- 2.1.3 The roof of the main block is plain-tiled, with ceramic ridge tiles. Two gabled dormers are to the rear elevation as is a brick chimney stack.
- 2.1.4 The front door is set within the area of infill of the carriage entrance under a flat brick head. The adjacent window, a reused early-eighteenth-century sash, is below a shallow brick arch. The other openings have lintels consisting of several courses of tiles laid flat on top of one another.
- 2.1.5 S-shaped tie-plates are in the front and rear elevations; cross-shaped tie-plates are in the apex of the gables.
- 2.1.6 The analysis of the VBS report is further discussed in the conclusion and the whole of the VBS is reproduced in Appendix B of this report.

2.2 Roof investigations

- 2.2.1 The current recording work at Black Boy Cottage focussed entirely on the roof structure and this work has not included any investigation of the building's interior or other exterior features, although the interior was inspected for exposed elements of the roof structure and these timbers taken into account. The roof structure was examined from the scaffolding platform outside the building (Pl. 1).
- 2.2.2 Although the majority of the rafters appear to be original, most of the other elements of the roof appear to have been constructed from reused timber, and the builders and later repairers have concentrated their efforts for this small utility building on the best use of available materials. Although obviously not intended to be on display, the front, northern, slope contains the 'best' timber: the straighter purlins and rafters and ostensibly fewer reused timbers (Fig 5).
- 2.2.3 The roof consists of 16 pairs of common rafters, with a pair of principal rafters to the centre of the roof and a pair to each gable end, with two purlins to each slope (Pl. 2). The tie beams to either end of the building are visible in the bedroom walls, cutting across the casement windows, with the central tie beam cutting across the stairwell and landing, exposing the cranked principal at the northern end (Pl. 3); the same at the southern end barely visible against the chimney stack via the stripped roof. These trusses also have a low collar at the level of the lower purlin (Pl. 4). The collar to the central truss contains two empty mortices which do not correspond with the principal rafters, indicating further reused timber. On the landing, the central tie beam displays two shallow, and fairly doubtful, remnants of lap joints which may indicate previous use, or more likely, a former fixture.
- 2.2.4 The aforementioned cranked principal rafter is a similar feature to the curved principal rafter in the roof truss of 32-33 Crown Court, also re-roofed within this programme of works. Although the truss was pictured in the VBS for Black Boy Cottage, the feature was not discussed in that report.
- 2.2.5 As discussed within the 32-33 Crown Court report, the cranked/curved principal is characteristic of (although by no means exclusive to) the area of South Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Berkshire, used for approximately a century either side of the construction of this building, and most often utilised in agricultural buildings. Of the theories mooted for the use of the cranked principal, the creation of circulation space in the loft area is the most likely in relation to this particular building, although the floor inserted during the RSA's conversion has since rendered it redundant.
- 2.2.6 There is no ridge piece in the roof. The rafters are bridle-jointed at the apex and occasional pairs are also pegged, however, many joints have been reinforced by later timber and so the jointing method is often obscured or has rotted away. Thin collars were also fixed near to the apex during later works (Pl. 5). The common rafters are interrupted by the lower purlin, after which they continue to the wall plate where at least two phases of sprockets have previously created the eaves. The ends of the rafters have long-since rotted and been cut back to wall plate level; they are completely obscured in the south slope, however, the ends visible in the north slope indicate that they were notched over the wallplate in the same manner as the previous sprockets and the new sprockets. The wallplate does not appear to have been cut at all to receive the rafters (Pl. 6).

- 2.2.7 Many of the rafters have later thin strips of timber batten packing attached to their backs, and so the original method of jointing to the purlin is completely obscured. Occasional visible areas at the lower purlins indicate that they are mortice and tenoned and pegged; empty mortices are also visible in the soffit face of the lower purlin behind the dormer windows where the lower sections of the rafters have been removed (Pl. 7).
- 2.2.8 The rafters to the western end of the south slope have been heavily packed-out by adding bespoke shaped timbers to the backs [the upper-face] to counteract sag. Presumably, this packing was affixed during the RSA works (Pl. 8).
- 2.2.9 The majority of the rafters, although much patched-up, appear to have been new when the roof was constructed; any redundant notches etc. appear to have been made to join to, or allow for, other members which have since been replaced. The rafters to the western end of the north slope display several peg holes and notches which do not tie in with the current form of the roof and so these may be the exception and are reused. Two pieces of reused timber have been used to replace lower parts of the rafters either side of the westernmost dormer (Pl. 9).
- 2.2.10 Several of the rafters are of split logs, many of which retain the waney edge to the underside. Six rafters to the eastern end of the southern side display the same distinctive 's' shape towards the top, indicating that they have been cut from the same piece of wood, although the differing thicknesses and shape to the underside make it difficult to deduce the shape of the original tree (Pl. 10).
- 2.2.11 The rafters are laid mainly horizontally but occasionally vertically, according to their shape, with widths between 70-100mm for the original timbers and 50mm for the 1930s additions. The depth varies greatly, from areas of only 40mm to an estimated depth of 150mm for upper areas of the aforementioned 's' shaped timbers. This lack of uniformity is due to the nature of manufacture of these timbers, being split or sawn directly from logs too narrow or uneven to be used in other areas.
- 2.2.12 The iron bar connected to the cross-shaped straps in the gables is visible just above the level of the upper purlin (Pl. 11).
- 2.2.13 The wall plates are laid directly onto the brick walls and abut the principal rafters at either end.
- 2.2.14 The ends of the purlins are built into the gables and the ends of the timbers exposed.
- 2.2.15 The upper purlins, although nominally through purlins, are made up from several pieces of timber, jointed with rough scarfs, peg holes are visible within the scarf joints, but it is not clear if these originate from a former use of the timber as they contain numerous empty mortices (Pl. 12). In the western end of the north slope, the original purlin has apparently rotted away towards the centre and a new purlin fitted, however, the remnants of the original now hang from the end built into the gable and long pegs, with the other end still in the rafters, project from the timber (Pl. 13). The western purlin on the opposite slope is also heavily rotted, but still remains in place and also shows an empty mortice from the timber's previous use. To the upper purlin in the south slope, the easternmost piece, scarfed to the next, also shows empty mortices from a previous use (Pl. 14).

- 2.2.16 The lower purlin at the westernmost end of the rear slope has a stave slot to the now-top face, this would have held the staves in a wattle and daub panel in a wall frame in its previous use (Pl. 15). The empty mortices and peg holes indicate the location of the posts in this former usage.
- 2.2.17 In the northern slope, the lower purlin and the replacement upper purlin do not appear to be reused, as is the case for the lower eastern purlin to the southern slope. The latter consists of a fairly misshapen length of timber: another indication that the 'front' face of the building received the better pieces of timber than the rear, despite not being on display.
- 2.2.18 The same purlin which includes the stave slot also has the tail of a lap dovetail joint to the soffit face of the easternmost end, adjacent to the principal rafter (Pl. 16); a socket of a lap dovetail joint is included in the lower purlin at the easternmost end of the northern slope, partially obscured by the principal rafter at the gable. These appear to be of different sizes and so may not be related (Pl. 17).
- 2.2.19 Windbracing appears to have been a later consideration and consists of one piece of scrap timber nailed to the underside of the rafters in the eastern end of the north slope and two similar braces to either end of the southern slope (Pl. 18).
- 2.2.20 Several pieces of timber, appearing to be of different phases of work, have been added at varying angles to attempt to brace the upper purlins against each other and prevent them from bowing inwards under the weight of the roof (Pl. 19).
- 2.2.21 Carpenter's marks are visible on the lower timbers of both slopes. The marks on the lower westernmost purlin in the south slope are not reflected on the surrounding timbers and so can be assumed to be from its former use, however, they do not seem to correlate with each other, hinting that the timber may have been used more than once prior to this (Fig 6, Pl. 20).
- 2.2.22 The carpenter's marks to the north slope consecutively number alternate sets of timbers from west to east below the lower purlin. The rafters above the lower purlin, however, have a less consistent system of marking which may point to more widespread recycling than the timbers indicate, however, this top face of the timber is heavily degraded in many places and is also obscured by the aforementioned battening or packing, and so the visible marks may well be incomplete (Fig 7, Pl. 21).
- 2.2.23 The dormer windows were installed during the RSA works and consist of softwood frames matching the timber used in the roof repairs and the construction of the first floor ceilings (Pl. 22).
- 2.2.24 The roof has been recovered since the RSA works, probably around the 1980s. A quantity of straw in the roof space may represent the straw insulation used before the introduction of modern materials.

3 CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY OF PHASING

- 3.1.1 The current project has helped to confirm and clarify the existing understanding of this building which had been largely based on the Vernacular Building Survey.
- 3.1.2 Four core samples were taken for dendrochronological dating; three from the principal rafters and a further sample from a common rafter (Fig 8), however, no consistent result could be obtained which would provide a felling date.
- 3.1.3 The table below summarises the phasing outlined in the VBS together with some comments from the current project.

Phasing previously proposed by VBS			
Phase	Date	Detail from VBS	Comments from current investigation
1	Early-eighteenth century [on the Summary Sheet] or Late-eighteenth century [in Structural Development]	Coach-house first built to serve the coaching inn	<p>The listing details do not attempt to date the coach-house to anything narrower than 'eighteenth-century'; the VBS contradicts itself by stating each end of that century on different pages of the report.</p> <p>The reuse of materials and the utility nature of the building, which has since lost the majority of its original features which may have aided dating, makes it difficult to suggest a more accurate date.</p> <p>None of the maps used within the scope of this project aid dating due to the out-building status of the coach-house and so further documentary research may be considered to enable a narrower date range to be found.</p>
2	Mid-nineteenth century	L-shaped extension to the south east corner	No evidence found to doubt the VBS interpretation
3	Late-nineteenth century	Insertion of a chimney stack towards the rear of the building	No evidence found to doubt the VBS interpretation
4	Early-twentieth century	Demolition of the rear extension	No evidence found to doubt the VBS interpretation
5	1932-1934	RSA works: conversion to domestic use including blocking carriage entrance and alteration of most, if not all, openings and removal of all	No evidence found to doubt the VBS interpretation

		fixtures	
6	Mid-twentieth century	Extension constructed to the east of the main block	No evidence found to doubt the VBS interpretation

- 3.1.4 There are some common features in Black Boy Cottage which have been noted elsewhere at West Wycombe including the use of rudimentary windbraces, dormer windows added in the 1930s works, lengths of timber packing pieces added on top of rafters to re-profile the roof line and cranked principal rafters. The re-used early-eighteenth-century sash window is an intriguing hint to the other works in the village from where, presumably, the window was recycled.

Angela Warner
July 2014

Bibliography

Clark D 'Cranked Inner Principals' *Vernacular Architecture* Vol 35 (2004)

APPENDIX A. LISTED BUILDING DESCRIPTION

Name: BLACK BOY COTTAGE

List entry Number: 1125170

Location

BLACK BOY COTTAGE, HIGH STREET

Grade: II

Date first listed: 09-Jan-1954

(Formerly listed as “Cottage in yard of Premises formerly the Black Boy Public House”)

List entry Description

HIGH STREET 1. 963 (South Side) WEST WYCOMBE Black Boy Cottage (Formerly listed as Cottage in yard of Premises formerly the Black Boy Public House) SU 8294 9/332 9.1.54. II GV

2.

C18, much restored. Red brick, old tiled roof. 2 storeys, ground floor double hung sash window, 1st floor casement, both flush set with glazing bars. Modern door and left hand single storey 1 window wing. Graded II for group value.

Outbuildings adjoining No 2 on West, Nos 2 to 5 (consec), Nos 7 to 9 (consec), The Swan Public House, West Wycombe Branch County Library, Nos 10 to 13 (consec), No 15, Black Boy Cottage, The George and Dragon Inn and Nos 16 to 23 (consec) form a group.

Listing NGR: SU8294094629

APPENDIX B. VERNACULAR BUILDING SURVEY FOR BLACK BOY COTTAGE

BLACK BOY COTTAGE,
WEST WYCOMBE VILLAGE.



The National Trust

VERNACULAR BUILDINGS
SURVEY

THAMES AND CHILTERN REGION

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION TO SURVEY ; LISTED BUILDINGS

SUMMARY SHEET

1977 EDITION O.S., 1:2500 LOCATION MAP

* SITE PLAN

* SUMMARY OF HISTORICAL VALUE

* HISTORY OF OWNERSHIP, OCCUPANCY AND USE

STRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT

PLANS : as existing at time of survey

BUILDING DESCRIPTION : External Appearance
Internal Features

* ARCHIVE PHOTOGRAPHS AND DOCUMENTS

HISTORICAL MAPS

* PLANS FOR PAST CONVERSIONS / MODERNIZATION

PHOTOGRAPHIC SURVEY

* Included only where appropriate

This report concentrates on features considered to be of particular importance with regard to the history of the building or its future management. Some modern features such as replacement doors or windows may not have been described in full.

It is possible that other historic details obscured or inaccessible at the time of the survey may come to light, particularly during building works, and the report will then need to be updated or amended.

Consultation with the Vernacular Buildings Survey team would be most valuable prior to any repair work or alterations so that arrangements could be made for any necessary further recording.

Listed Buildings

There are three grades.

- Grade I - buildings of exceptional interest.
- Grade II* - particularly important buildings of more than special interest.
- Grade II - buildings of special interest which warrant every effort being made to preserve them.

Listed Building Consent from the Local Planning Department is required for any proposal to demolish, extend or alter a listed building in any way that affects its character.

A building's character is easily marred by minor but inappropriate alterations. Details such as the materials and techniques used in repointing or rendering, the arrangement and design of doors and windows and internally the surface treatment of walls and timberwork are all critical.

Many other features contribute to the understanding and value of historic buildings and the survival of an early plan in particular should be respected.

List of Listed Buildings of Special Architectural or Historical Interest.
As at January 1954. See page over leaf.

1.
963

HIGH STREET
(South Side)
WEST WYCOMBE

Black Boy Cottage
(Formerly listed as
Cottage in yard of
Premises formerly the
Black Boy Public House)

SU 8294 9/332

9.1.54.

II

GV

2.
Cl8, much restored. Red brick, old tiled roof. 2 storeys, ground floor double hung sash window, 1st floor casement, both flush set with glazing bars. Modern door and left hand single storey 1 window wing. Graded II for group value.

Outbuildings adjoining No 2 on West, Nos 2 to 5 (consec), Nos 7 to 9 (consec), The Swan Public House, West Wycombe Branch County Library, Nos 10 to 13 (consec), No 15, Black Boy Cottage, The George and Dragon Inn and Nos 16 to 23 (consec) form a group.

Estate West Wycombe	County Buckinghamshire	Name Black Boy Cottage	Grid Ref. SU 829 946
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Listed Grade

II

Archaeology survey
Number

153 253

Survey Date

April 1993

Surveyor
H.E. Garside
G. Izzard



Situation Stands within the yard to the rear of the Black Boy which was formerly a coaching inn. Forms the southern boundary of the yard, the other three sides of which are also delineated by buildings. Garden, to rear, backs onto West Wycombe Park.

Likely Date
Early 18thC, converted 20thC.

Historical Value Constructed as a coach-house during the early 18thC to serve a coaching inn, known as the 'Unicorn' later called the 'Black Boy'. Converted to domestic use during the 1930's after the licence of the Inn was relinquished.

Other Sources
see other list of appendices

Rooms and Facilities

Ground Floor

- Room A - lounge-dining room
- B - entrance lobby
- C - toilet
- D - lobby
- E - pantry
- F - living room
- G - kitchen
- H - bathroom
- Wash-house and shed - store

First Floor

- Rooms I,K,L and M - bedrooms
- J - landing
- N - attic store



1977 Edition O.S. 1:2,500.

STRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Black Boy Cottage was originally constructed as a coach-house during the late 18thC. It was built to serve the coaching inn known as both 'The Unicorn' and 'The Black Boy and Unicorn' in 1767 (see Appendix 1 and 4) later called 'The Black Boy'.

The coach-house was positioned towards the rear of the yard behind the inn. It comprised the existing main block and was built of brick in flemish bond incorporating blue, glazed headers, there were slightly projecting brick string courses and plinth. The gabled roof had a plain tile covering. There were probably no internal partitions.

There was originally a large coach entrance in the centre of the yard elevation. The two internal, transverse wooden beams indicate the approximate original width of the coach-house. There was also a smaller opening to the east of the coach entrance which was probably a door opening. There was also an opening in the east end of the rear elevation, probably a doorway, this was later partially infilled to create a window opening and finally altered to its present form when the structure was converted to domestic use. There is also an infilled window opening in the east gable which lit a loft floor which probably provided accommodation for stable lads. The loft floor may have continued across the entire building and would then have been interrupted by the central truss.

The 1876 map shows an L-shape extension enveloping the south-east corner of the main block. The form and function of this extension is unknown. The part of the extension which was constructed against the rear of the building was demolished prior to 1921.

A stack was inserted towards the rear of the main block, probably during the late 19thC. This may have served a bothy created in part of the rear of the building and maybe associated with the extension built to the rear and east of the building.

The structure was recorded by William Wier as a coach-house on his plans of the Black Boy Inn, 1932. The coach-house is shown as the rectangular main block only, the addition to the east having been demolished by this time.

The inn was acquired by the Royal Society of Arts in 1932 and the licence was relinquished. Following this the coach-house was converted to domestic use. The openings within the front elevation were infilled. A new door was created towards the centre of the elevation, this opened into a small entrance passage. Towards the west end of the elevation the wall was rebuilt and a window opening, Al, inserted re-using an early 18thC sash window. All the external walls have been considerably altered with original openings being infilled, new ones created, and sections of walling being repaired. The existing walling is therefore a mixture of different brick types and flint.

Internally the ground floor was divided to provide three rooms all accessed from the central entrance hall. The stairs were inserted towards the front of the building, these led onto a small first floor landing. The existing arrangement of bedrooms was probably created at this time.

The wash-house and privy block, constructed towards the west, is probably contemporary with the conversion to domestic use. This was a weather-boarded structure on a brick plinth. The copper was positioned in the north-west corner, served by the stack which remains today.

During the mid-20thC the addition to the east was built. This comprised a kitchen

and bathroom on the ground floor with a storage loft above. A toilet (room C) was created on the ground floor of the main block by the division of an existing room.

BUILDING DESCRIPTION

EXTERNAL APPEARANCE

Plan/Form

Rectangular, 2-storey main block, upper storey contained partially within roof space.

1½-storey wing adjoins east elevation and projects beyond main block towards rear.

Single-storey lean-to against west elevation with single-storey block adjoining south of lean-to.

Walling

- Main Block: front elevation - brick. Original brickwork is in flemish bond with blue glazed headers. Section of walling towards west end has been rebuilt. Brick differs from original, also in flemish bond, no glazed headers. Large carriage entrance towards centre has been infilled in slender brick in random bond.
- slightly projecting brick string course at storey height.
 - projecting brick plinth.
- west elevation - flint with brick quoins. Brick quoins towards front are later. Projecting brick string course at storey height and at eaves level. Projecting brick plinth. Brick courses above inserted window openings. Original brick in apex of gable.
- rear elevation - mixture of flint and brick. Ground floor walling is mostly brick incorporating areas of infilling and patching-up; area around western window is flint. Slightly projecting plinth, brick towards east end, flint beyond with brick plinth course. Flint to first floor level with brick quoins. Projecting brick string course at storey-level.
- east elevation - ground floor level mostly brick in flemish bond with areas of modern brick around inserted openings. Slightly projecting brick plinth with brick plinth course. Brick quoins. Flint to first floor level with brick quoins. Modern brick around inserted opening. Original brickwork in apex of gable. Slightly projecting brick string course at eaves level, small section raised towards centre, probable drip mould over earlier opening. Areas of brick infilling towards centre of elevation, above and below string course.
- East Wing: all elevations - modern brick in stretcher bond.
- Western lean-to and shed - wash-house has weatherboarded stud walling, lined out internally.
- remainder is weatherboarded and lined internally with breeze block.

Roof

- Main block - gabled, sprocketed at eaves towards rear. Plain tile covering with circular-section ceramic ridge tiles.
- two gabled dormers towards rear, across line of eaves. Covering as main roof. Rendered cheeks and gables.
- East Wing - gabled. Modern plain tiles. Circular section ceramic ridge tiles.
- Western lean-to and shed - small gable roof over shed. Lean-to and shed have plain tile covering. Gable has circular section ceramic ridge tiles.

Chimneys

- Main block - large internal stack towards centre of house, avoids ridge. Comprises two flues. Brick with oversailing courses towards top.
- East wing - modern stainless steel chimney.
- West wing - internal side wall stack, brick with oversailing courses towards top.

Openings

- Main block: front elevation - door has a flat brick head, brick jambs. Ground floor window set below shallow brick arch, brick jambs and wooden cill. First floor opening has surround as walling, tile cill.
- all other elevations - lintels comprise ceramic tiles laid flat, on top of one another. Brick jambs. Wooden cill.
- East wing: all elevations - shallow brick arch, brick jambs, wooden cills.
- West lean-to and shed: all elevations - set within weatherboarding.

Miscellaneous

- Main block - S-shape tie-plates in front and rear elevations.
- large cross-shape tie-plates in apex of each gable wall.
- Garden features- well to south of east wing concealed below large concrete slabs.

INTERNAL FEATURES

Floors

- Rooms A,B,C,D,E,G and H
F and all to first floor
Wash-house and shed
- large, square, modern red quarry tiles.
 - wooden floorboards
 - concrete.

Ceilings

- Room A
- large, possibly original transverse wooden beam. Plain chamfered with notched run out stop towards front of building. Regular pegholes along each side of the soffit face. Large metal tie-strap each end of beam.
- B, G and H
C, E and F
D
- plain plastered.
 - transverse wooden beam, as A.
 - two sections of ceiling at different heights. Upper level is plain plastered, lower level is boarded.
- wash-house
shed
- roof lined-out with plasterboard.
 - common rafter roof.
- I
- plain plastered. Slender tie-beam exposed in west wall, cuts across inserted window opening. The outer face of the tie-beam shows possible signs of weathering. Large metal tie-strap towards front of building.
- J
- base of truss exposed. Principal rafter is morticed and tenoned into the tie-beam and probably into the soffit of a collar which is above ceiling level, and inaccessible. The tie-beam is possibly re-used.
- K
- as I.
- L
- plain plastered. Tie-beam exposed in west wall, large metal tie-strap towards rear of building. Section of tie-beam is also exposed to north of stack in internal transverse wall.
- M
- plain plastered. Tie-beams exposed within partitions between rooms L-M and M-N. Large metal tie-straps towards rear.
- N
- roof lined-out with felt. Single diagonally-set purlin each side of the roof.

Partitions

- Ground floor
First floor
- probably all brick partitions.
 - probably all hollow-core partitions. Some vertical wooden boards around stairs and room J.
- Room K
- slightly projecting brick pilaster in wall towards front of building.

Stairs

1/4 turn with winders leads onto long straight run onto 1/2 landing which separates bifurcated flight leading to first floor level.

Fireplaces

- Room A - square fire-opening, brick to back and sides. Narrow wooden lintel. Large, square red quarry tiles to hearth.
F - modern brick fire-surround. Wooden mantel shelf.

Doors

- Rooms A1, A4, B1, N, M2, wash-house and shed - modern plank and batten doors.
A2 and C - standard hollow-core doors.
A3, E1, F, I, J and M1 - 19thC plank and batten doors. Decorative metal thumb latch with arrow-headed back plates. Modern hinges.
B2 - modern 2-panelled door. Upper panel is glazed, lower panel is plain and recessed.
E2 - standard hollow-core cupboard doors. Two early 20thC panelled cupboard doors above. Single beaded panel to each door.
H - modern 4-panelled door. Panels recessed and moulded.
L - modern plank and batten door. Re-used spoon-ended cross-garnet hinges.

Windows

- Room A1 - re-used early 18thC single-hung sash window. Eight glass panes per sash. Heavy section ovolo moulded glazing bars.
A2, A3, F, G1, I, K, L and M - modern double-lights. Two side-hung casements, squared mullion. Six glass panes with moulded glazing bars.
C, wash-house and N - modern single-light. Side-hung casement. Four glass panes with moulded glazing bars.
E - modern fixed-light with side-hung casement above. Fixed-light has four glass panes, casement has two glass panes. Slender moulded glazing bars.
G2 and H - modern double-light. One fixed-light, one side-hung casement, beaded mullion. Six glass panes to each light thick moulded glazing bars.
J - modern stair-light. Single fixed-light. Four glass panes with moulded glazing bars.

Miscellaneous

- Room C - within wall towards front of building wooden lintel of earlier opening visible.

APPENDICES - CONTENTS

- APPENDIX 1 - Manorial Surrender 1767. Bucks R.O. Dashwood Catalogue, D/D/11/92
- APPENDIX 2 - Leases of Black Boy Inn 1808-1842. Bucks R.O. Dashwood Catalogue D/D/6/187; D/D/6/188; D/D/6/190.
- APPENDIX 3 - Copy of photograph of Black Boy Cottage, 1978. Phgr. unknown. Photographic copy in Blue Photo Album, Hughenden Manor, Bucks.
- APPENDIX 4 - A plan of West Wycombe Town, 1767. Bucks R.O. Mar 36/4
- APPENDIX 5 - Survey of West Wycombe Park, surveyed by Richardson, 1767.
- APPENDIX 6 - 1st Edition 1:2,500 O.S. map, surveyed 1876.
- APPENDIX 7 - 1921 Edition 1:2,500 O.S. map
- APPENDIX 8 - Plan of Black Boy Inn, as existing 1932. By William Wier. Scale 1/8 inch to 1 foot. Copy at Hughenden Manor, Bucks.
- APPENDIX 9 - Plans and elevations of Black Boy Cottage 1981, as existing and proposed alterations to lean-to shed to provide garage. No scale. Copies at Hughenden Manor, Bucks.

APPENDIX 1 - Manorial Surrender - 1767

Researched at Bucks R.O. by Mrs. Mary Everett.

Dashwood Catalogue D/D/11/92

Manorial Surrender - 'Black Boy and Unicorn'
by Susanna Clarke, widow of Chepping Wycombe, Relict of John Clarke, Apothecary.

Surrender of 'The Black Boy and Unicorn', formerly occupied by Richard Godfrey
now by Thomas Reading, to Francis, Lord le Despencer.

APPENDIX 2 - Leases re. Black Boy Inn 1808-1842

Researched at Bucks R.O. by Mrs. Mary Everett

Dashwood Catalogue D/D/6/187

Lease Black Boy and Swan 9.11.1808
From Sir J. Dashwood King of Halton
To John Rotton of Chepping Wycombe Esq.
Black Boy is occupied by William Morris
Swan is occupied by Mary Hedding.

Dashwood Catalogue D/D/6/188

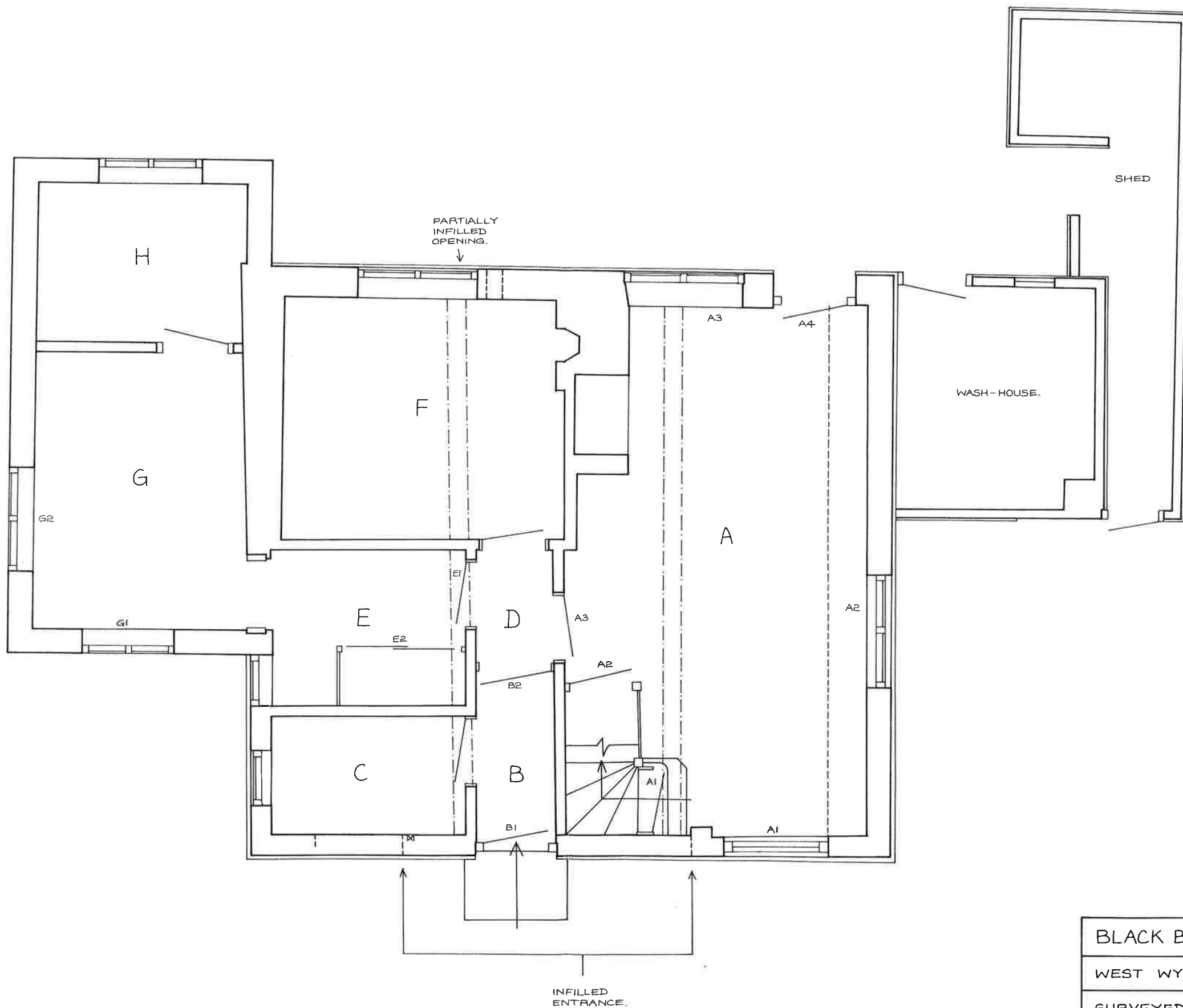
Lease George, Black Boy, Swan 19.12.1828
From Sir J. Dashwood King
To Robert Wheeler, Common Brewer
George Inn, occupied by John Broom. Brooms Meadow 6 acres.
Black Boy, occupied by Peter Scotland
The Swan occupied by ? Heading
21 years £105 p.a.

Dashwood Catalogue D/D/6/190

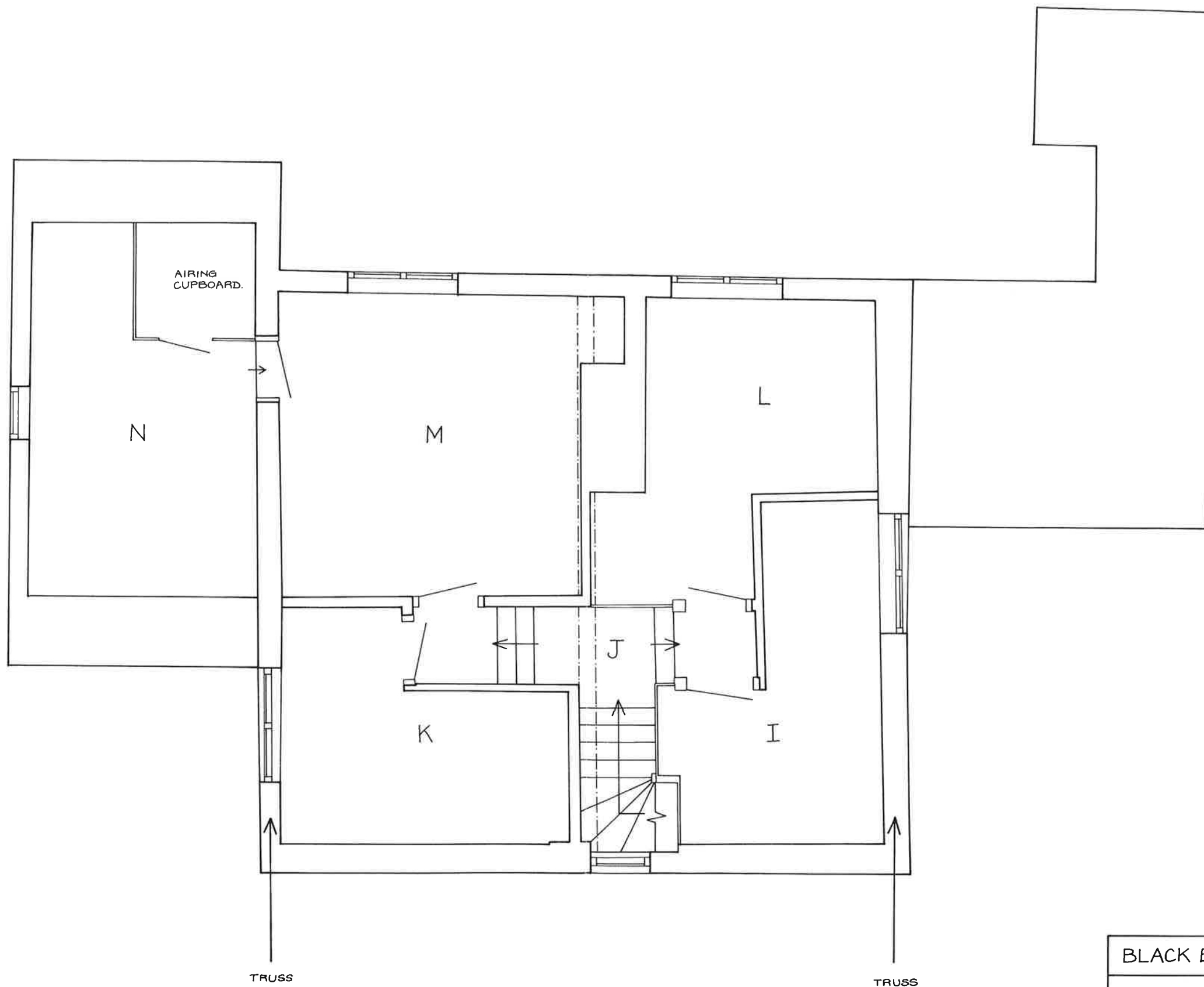
Copy lease 2.9.1842 Property as in D/D/6/188
From Sir J. Dashwood King
To Robert Wheeler Elder)
Robert Wheeler Younger) Brewers and partners
Thomas Wheeler)



Appendix 3 - Black Boy Cottage, 1978. Phgr. unknown. Photographic copy in Blue Photo Album, Hughenden Manor, Bucks.



BLACK BOY COTTAGE.	
WEST WYCOMBE.	GROUND FLOOR.
SURVEYED : APRIL 1993.	
SCALE	1 : 50.



BLACK BOY COTTAGE.	
WEST WYCOMBE.	FIRST FLOOR.
SURVEYED : APRIL 1993.	
SCALE	1 : 50.

Part of a Plan
 of
 WEST-WYCOMBE
 in the County of Bucks.
 1799.

Part of Church
 Hill,



NOTE

All the Houses, Gardens, &c. (as shown)
 Gardens, Parks, &c. (as shown)
 belong to the King, Queen, &c.
 belonging to the Crown, or
 are State Lands.

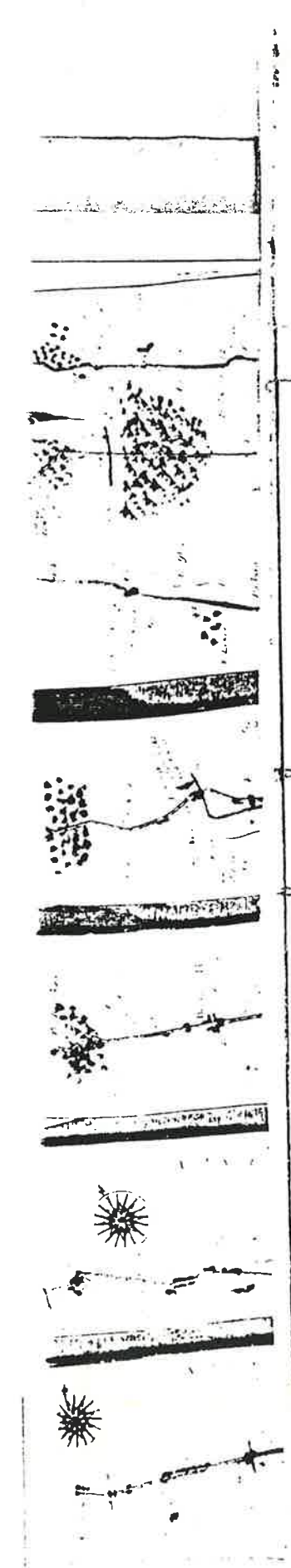
HR

1799 to 1800

South



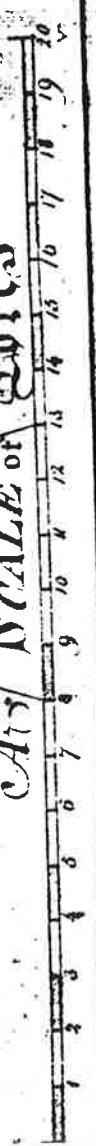
Mill,



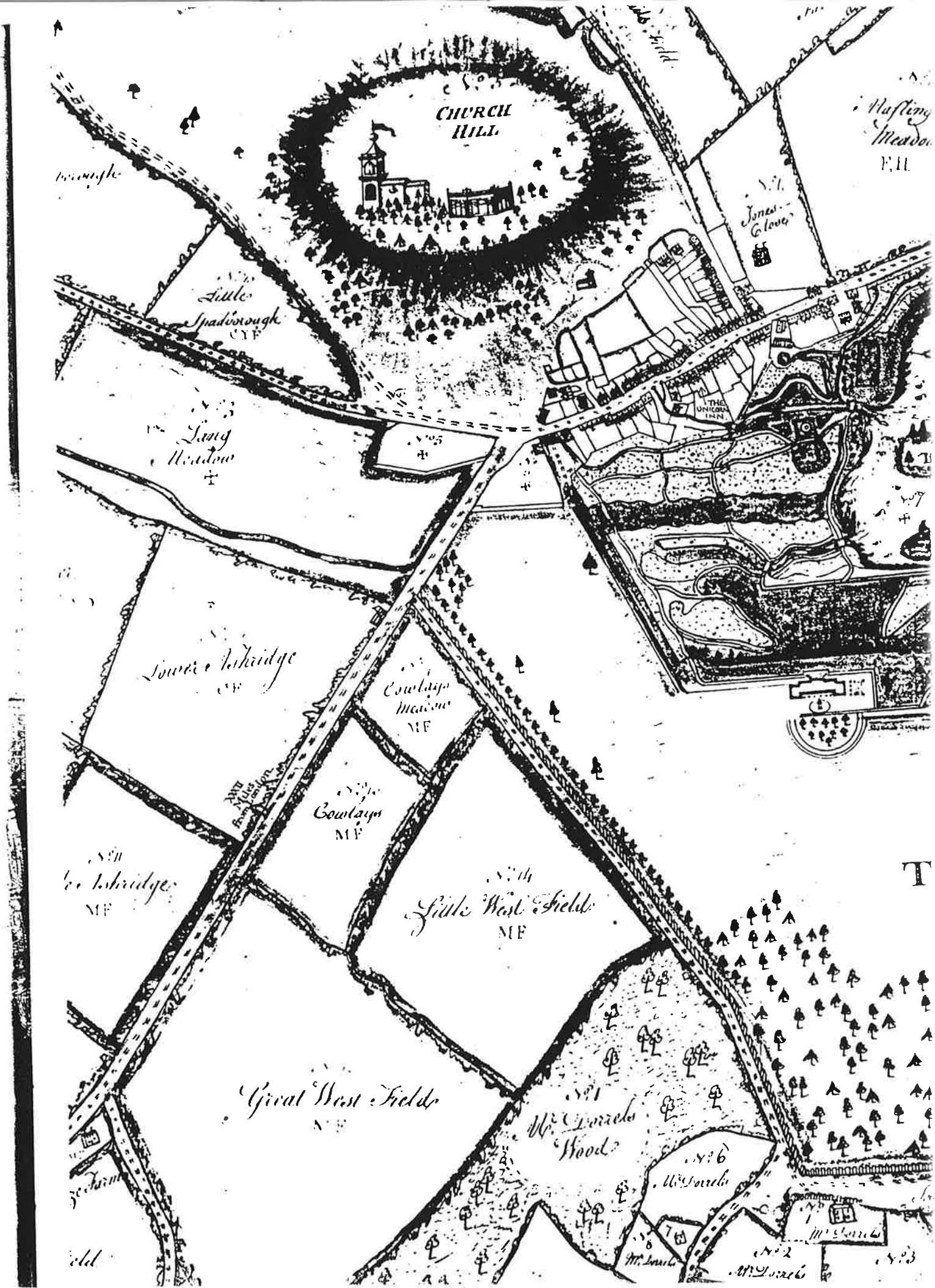
TOWN

OMBE

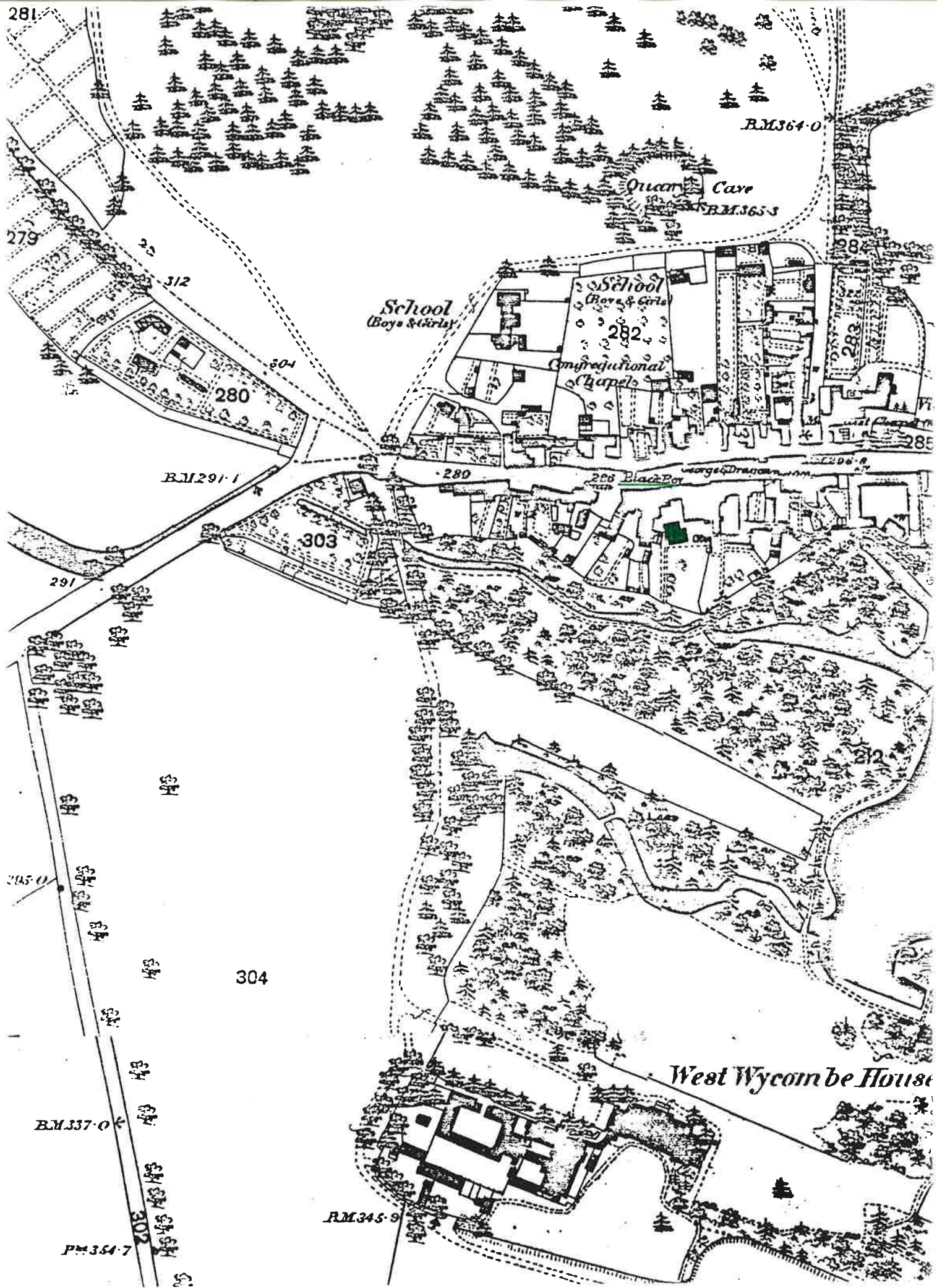
A Scale of Poles



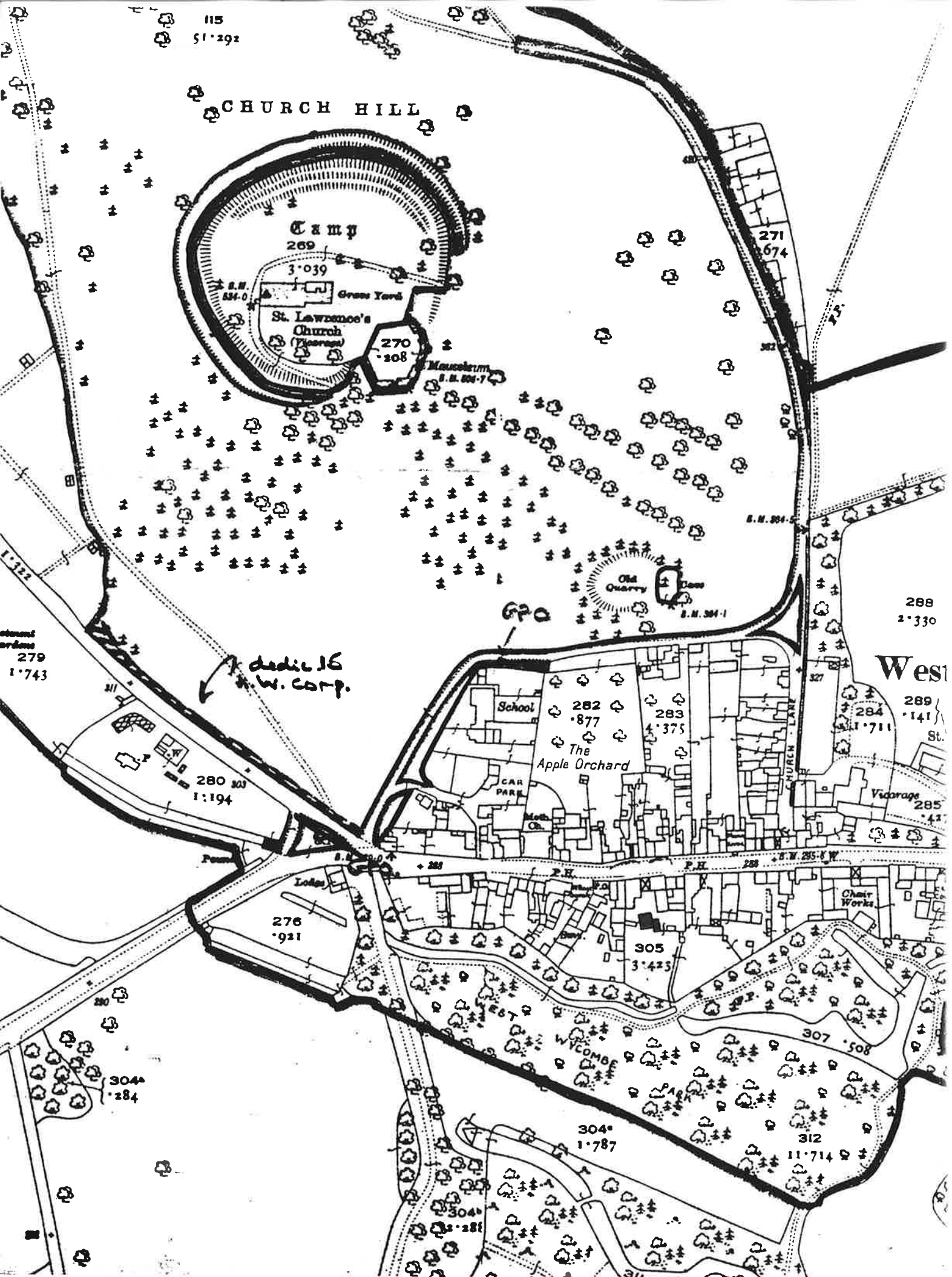
South



APPENDIX 5. Survey of West Wycombe Park, Surveyed by Richardson, 1767.



APPENDIX 6. 1st Edition O.S. Surveyed 1876.

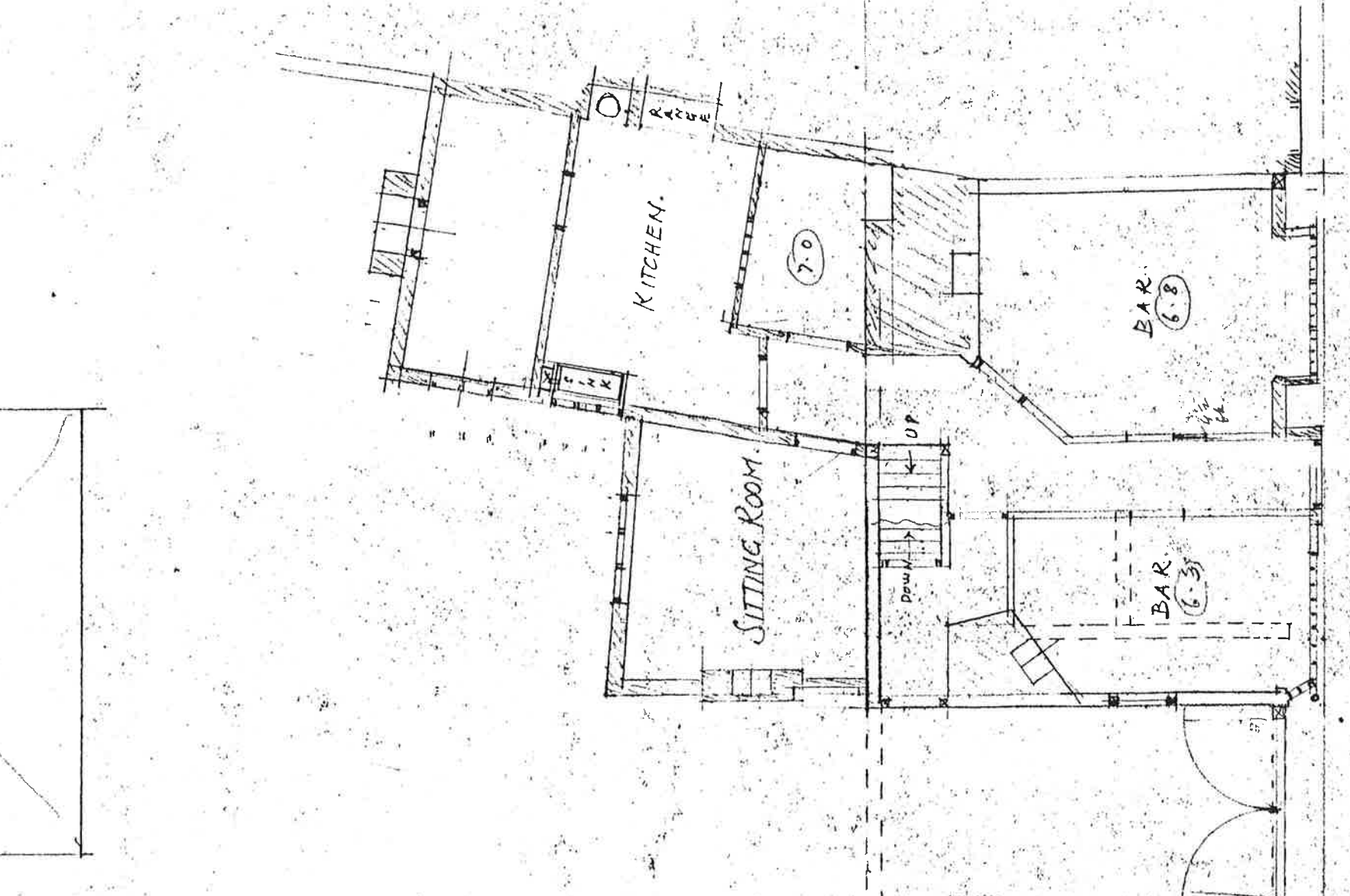
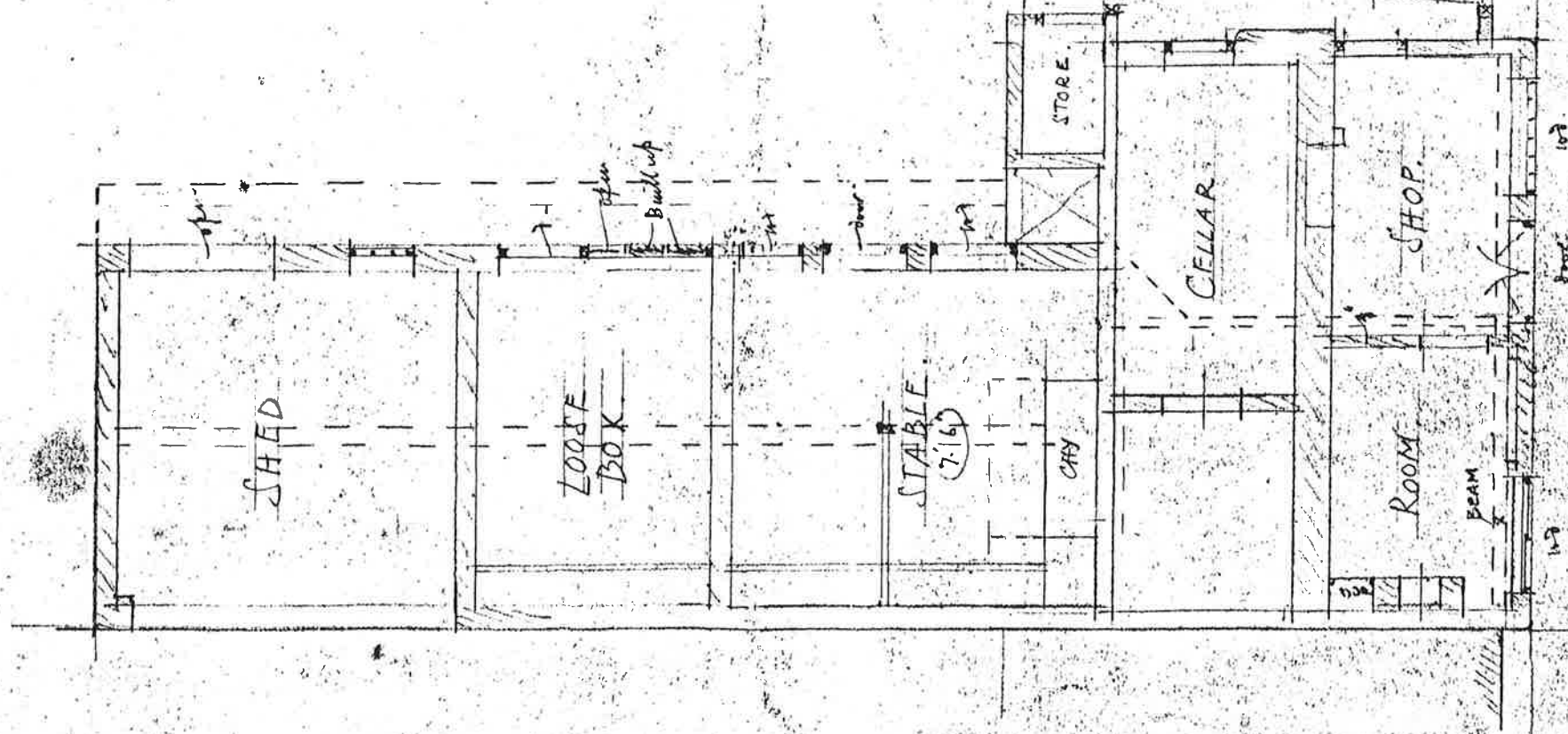
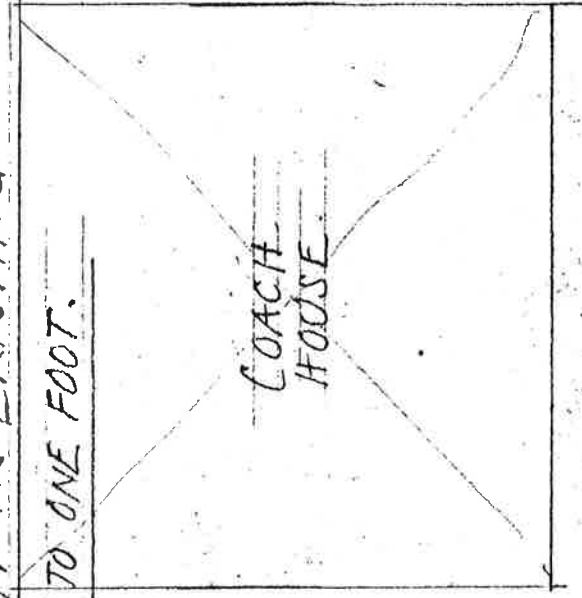


APPENDIX 7. 1921 Edition O.S. 1:2,500.

WEST WYCOMBE, BUCKS.

PLAN OF BLACK BOY INN AS EXISTING.

SCALE 8TH INCH TO ONE FOOT.



PLAN OF GROUND FLOOR.

APPENDIX 9.

BLACK BOY COTTAGE, BLACK BOY YARD, WEST WYCOMBE VILLAGE. EXISTING BUILDING.

Richard Slee, March 1981. Contd on following 5 pages....

Memo to robin mills, c.c. christopher wall.
from richard slee.

4th march, '81.

reference — black boy cottage, black boy yard,
west wycombe.

I attach copies of sketch proposal toward alterations on the existing lean-to shed to provide a garage. The top copy is the existing building, the copy underneath shows the alterations.

An idea also passed through my mind to provide the proposed garage entrance at the rear of the property, thus not disturbing the existing front looking into black boy yard — this though will require some reasonable use of garden area for access & turning space?

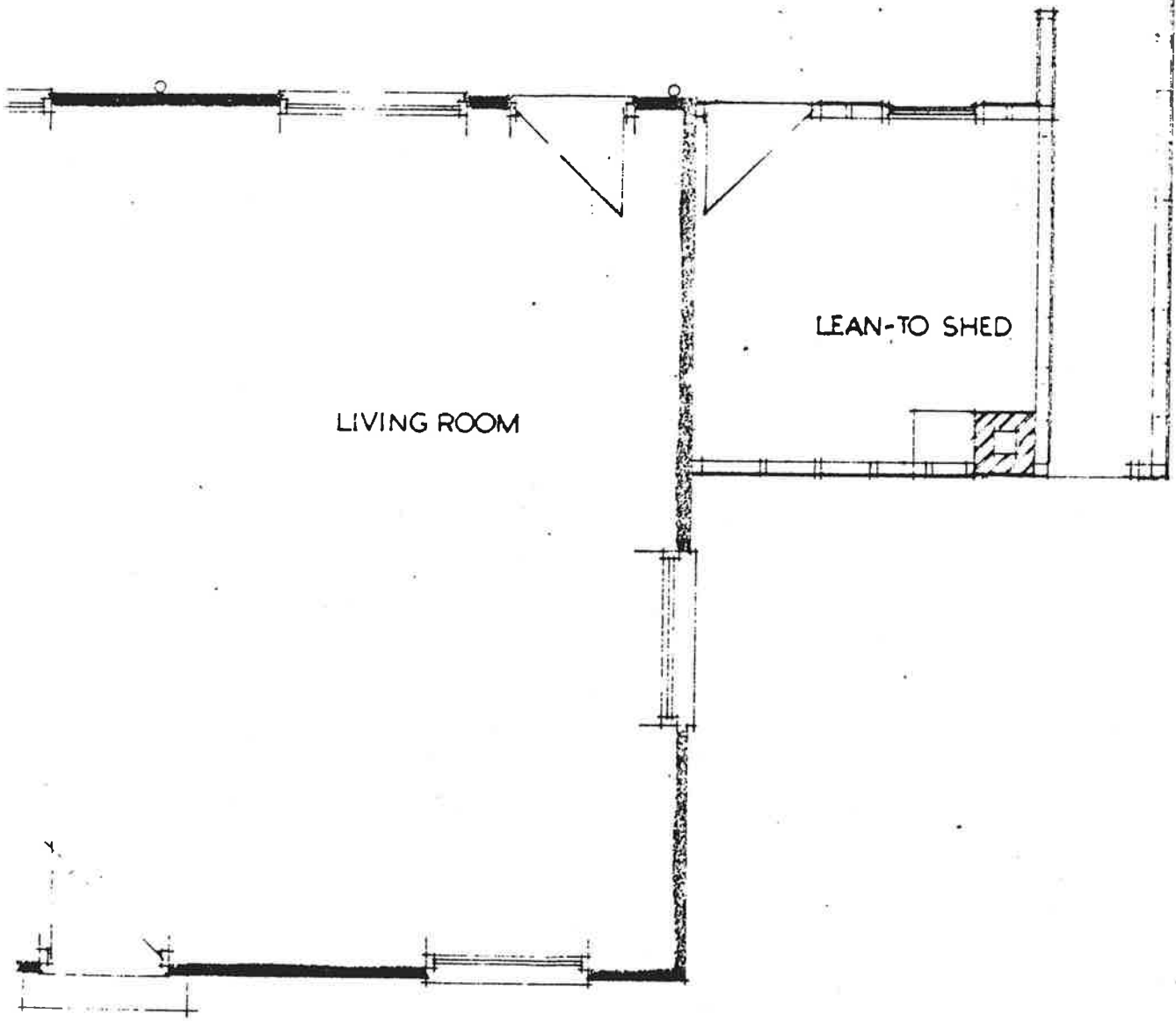
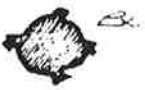
There is also the question of providing some form of shelter to the door at the rear or south elevation of the cottage. Whether the shelter can be combined with the proposed garage or — of a separate nature? I have not put this on the attached sketches.



Discussed with

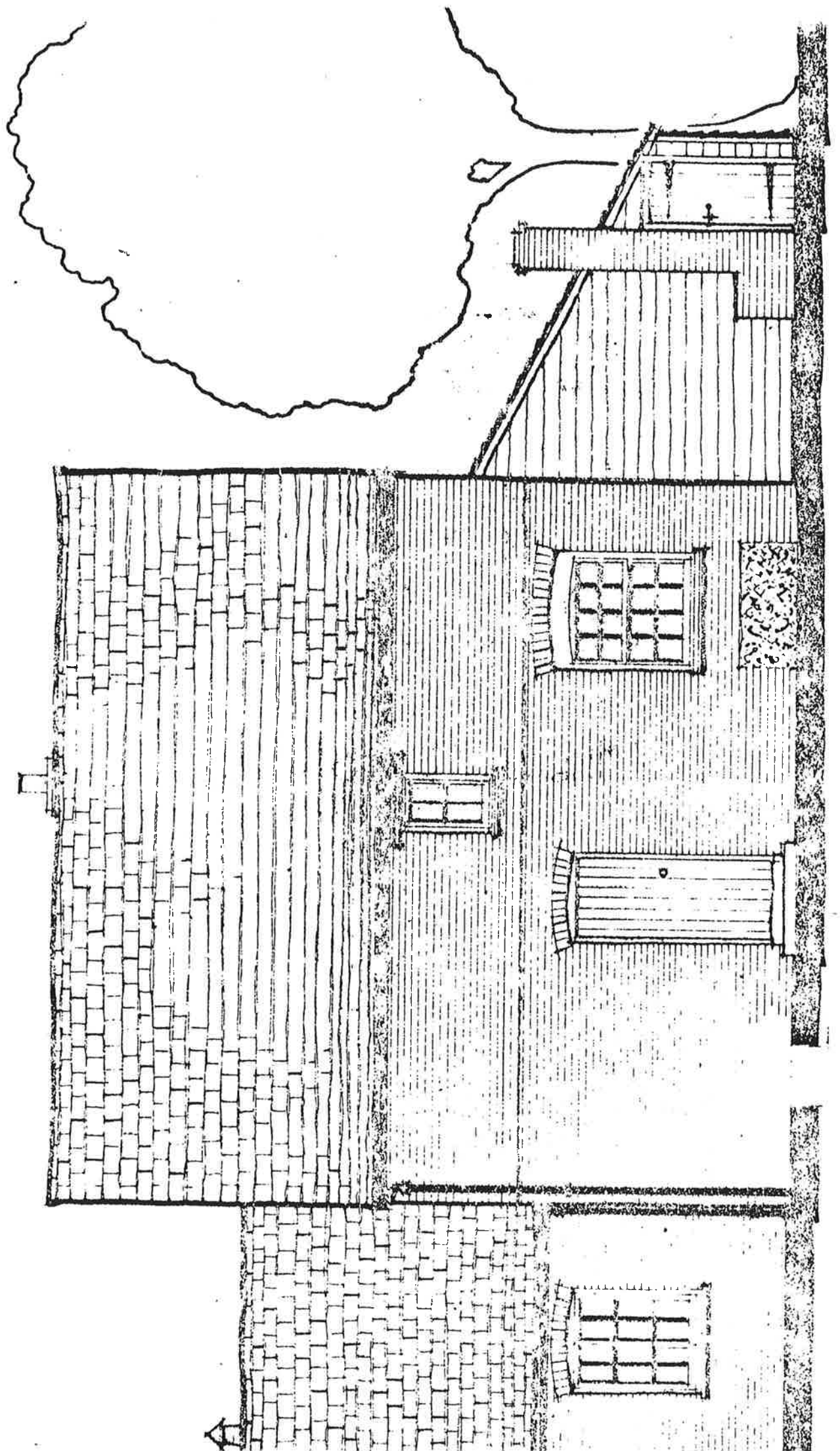
RHM. & agreed

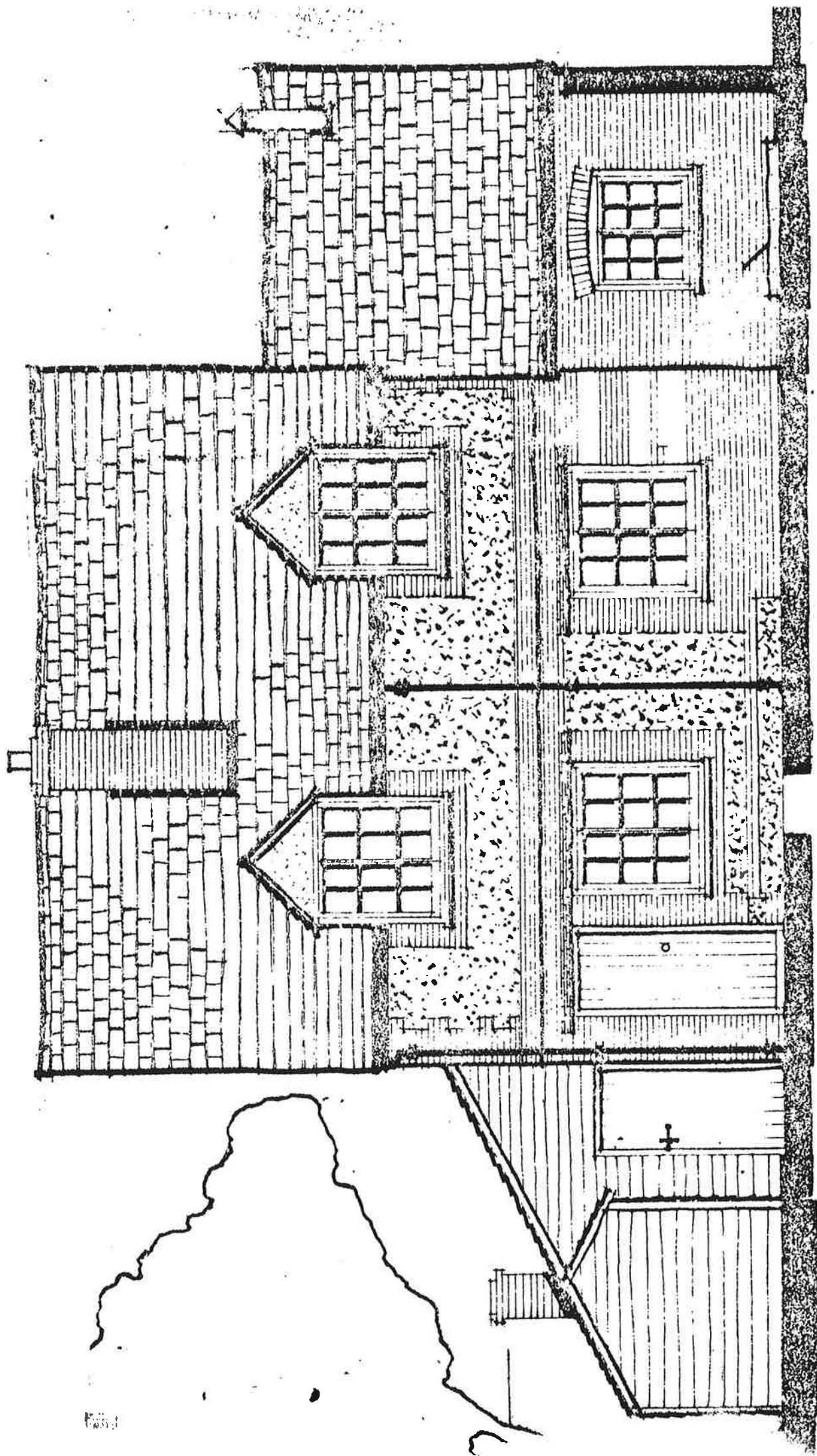
bygone look

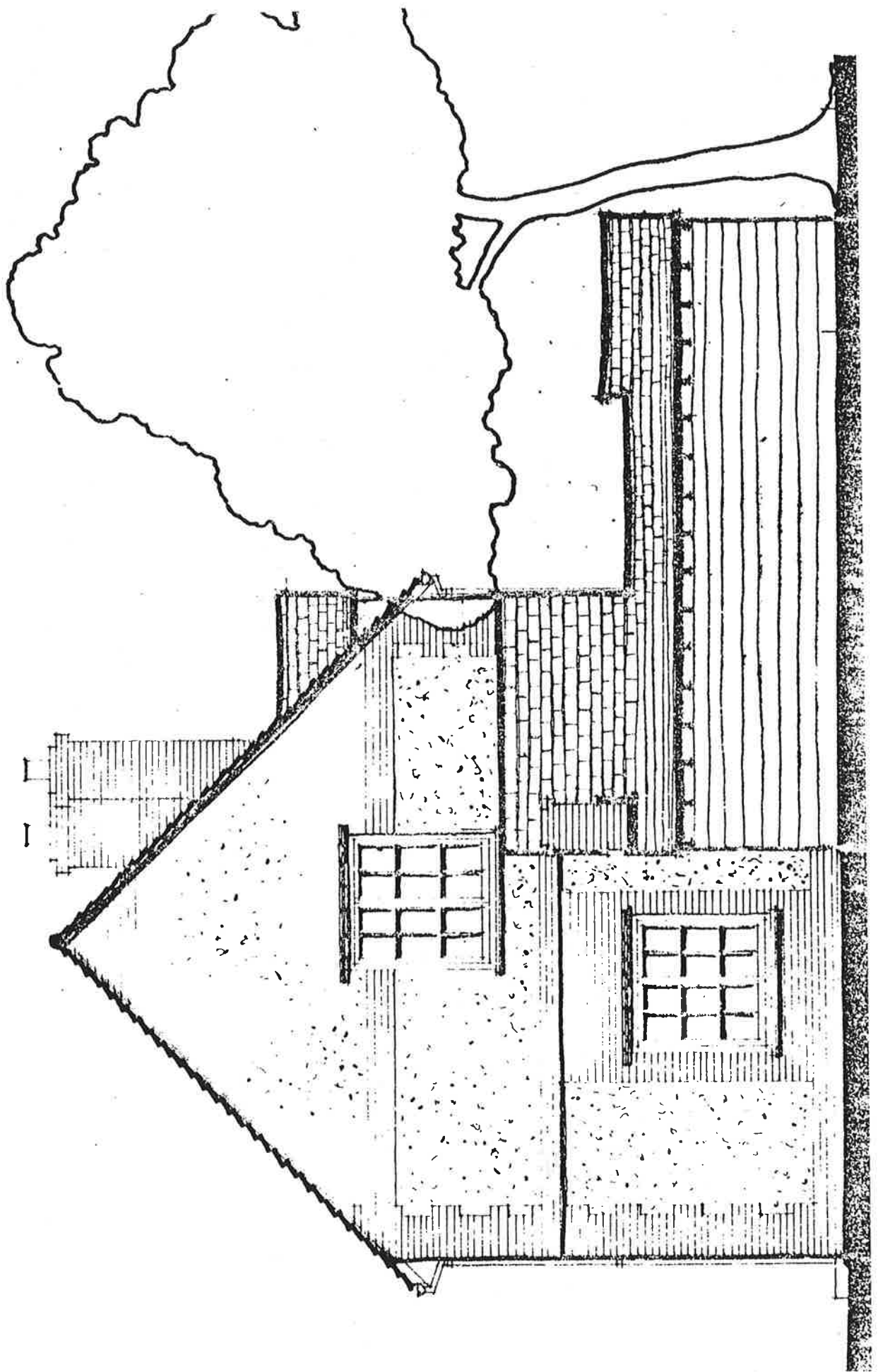


LIVING ROOM

LEAN-TO SHED







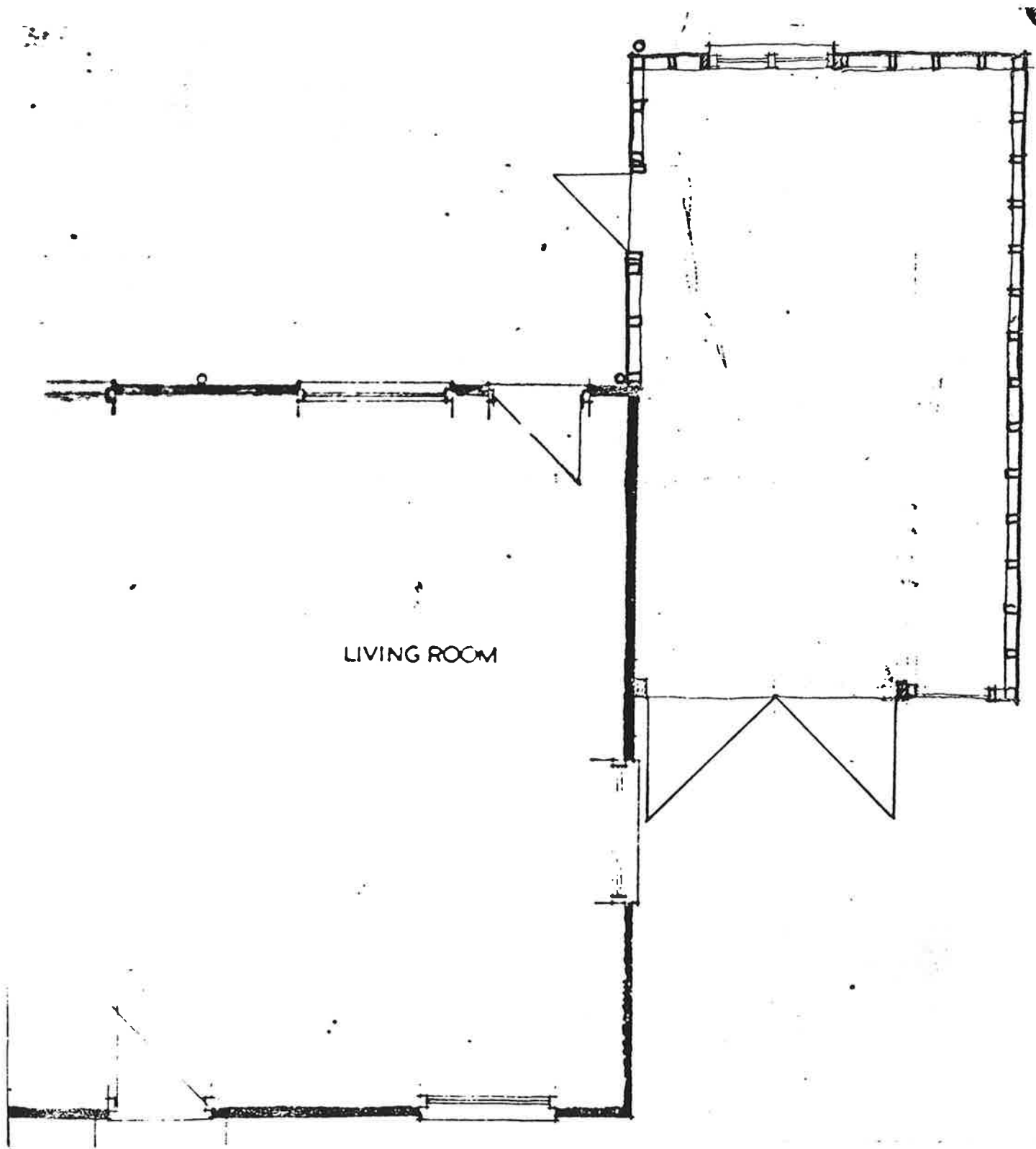
APPENDIX 9 Contd.

BLACK BOY COTTAGE, BLACK BOY YARD, WEST WYCOMBE VILLAGE.

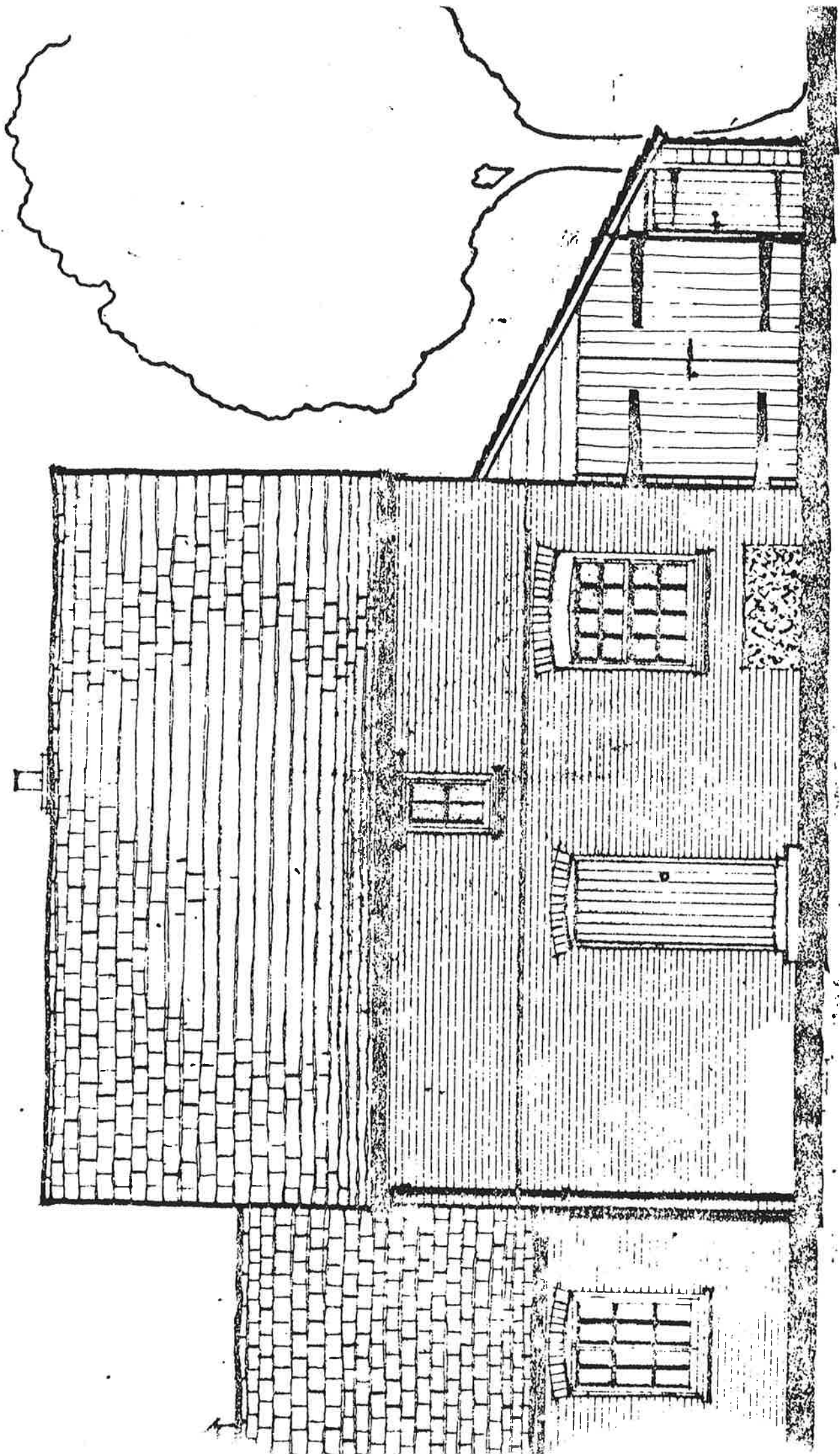
PROPOSED ALTERATIONS TO LEAN-TO SHED TO PROVIDE GARAGE.

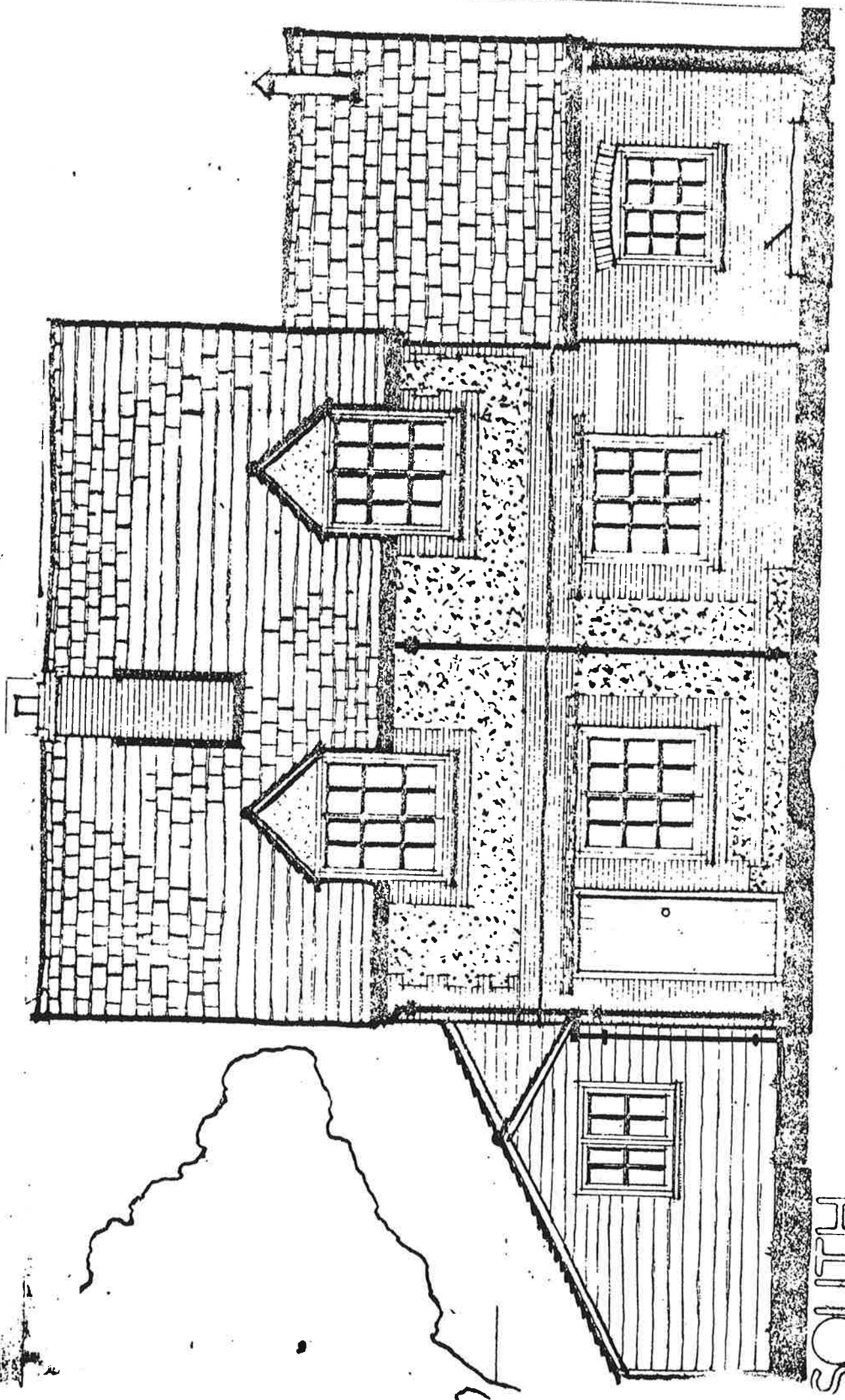
Richard Slee, 1981. Copies at Hughenden Manor, Bucks.

Contd. on following 4 pages...



LIVING ROOM





SOUTH



EXTERNAL APPEARANCE



FRONT ELEVATION
R216 N35.



PART OF FRONT
ELEVATION, SHOWING
INFILLED CART
ENTRANCE R125
N 3.



REAR ELEVATION
R216 N31.



VIEW FROM SOUTH-WEST. R 216 N 32.



EAST GABLE, VIEWED FROM NORTH-EAST
R 216 N 34.



WEST GABLE, VIEWED FROM NORTH-WEST
R 216 N 36A.



VIEW FROM SOUTH-WEST R 215 N 2.



RE-USED 18TH CENTURY SASH WINDOW,
A1. R215 N 14.



DETAIL OF BRICK INFILLING AROUND
WINDOW F. R 216 N 33.

MOULDED TIMBERS
STORED TO WEST
OF BLACK BOY
COTTAGE. R215 N1.



INTERNAL FEATURES.

KITCHEN, ROOM G.
LOOKING SOUTH-
EAST. R215 N4.



DETAIL OF WOODEN
BEAM, LIVING
ROOM F, LOOKING
SOUTH-EAST.
R215 N5.





DETAIL OF ROOF TRUSS,
ROOM J, LOOKING
NORTH-EAST. RZIS N9.



BEDROOM M, LOOKING SOUTH-WEST. RZIS N12.



DINING ROOM A
LOOKING NORTH-
EAST. RZIS N6.



RE-USED 18TH
CENTURY WINDOW
A1. RZIS N8.



FIREPLACE, DINING
ROOM A, RZIS N7.



LANDING ROOM J, LOOKING EAST.
R.215 N.13



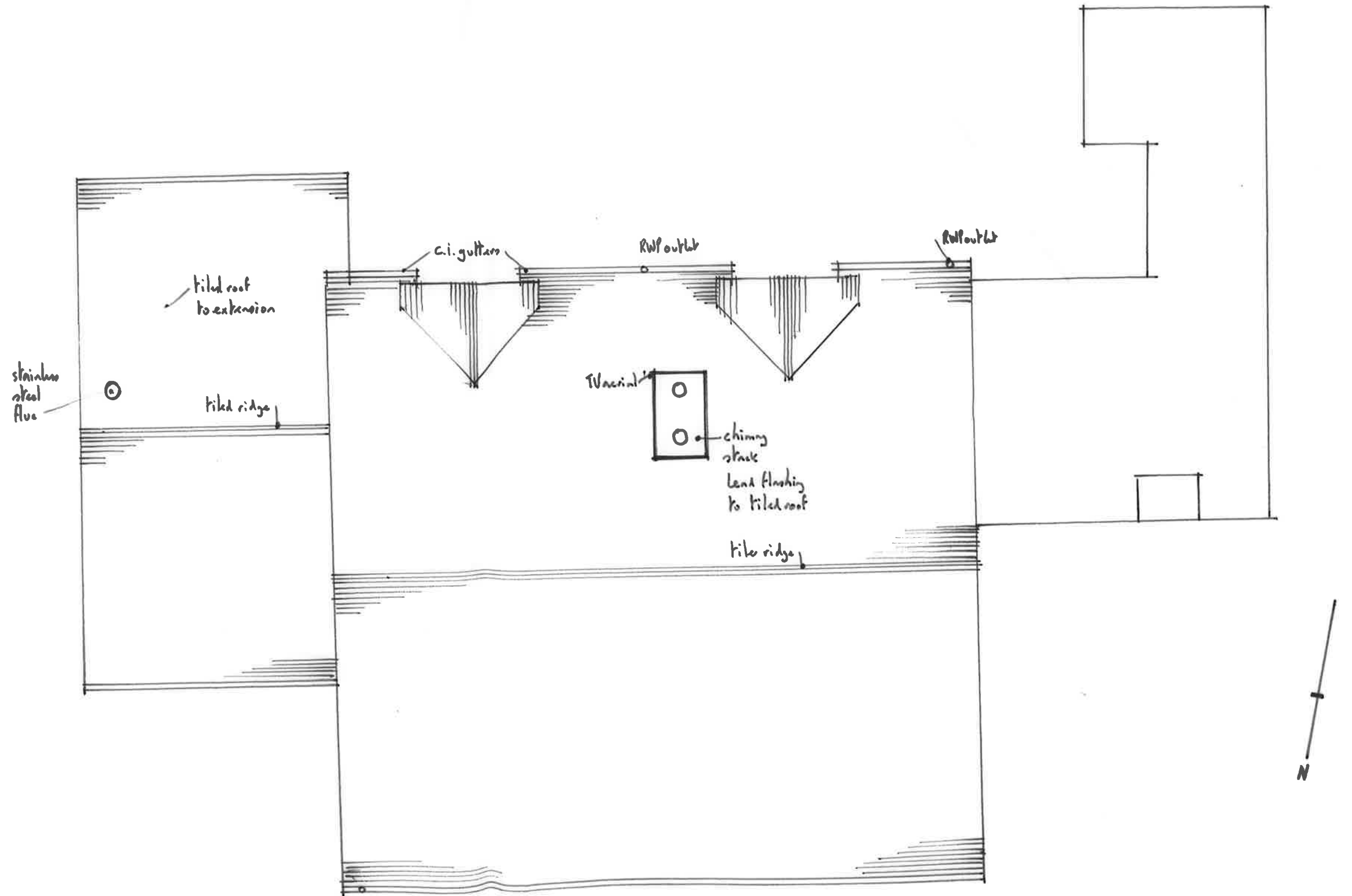
BEDROOM L, LOOKING NORTH. R.215 N.11



BEDROOM I, LOOKING SOUTH.
R.215 N.10

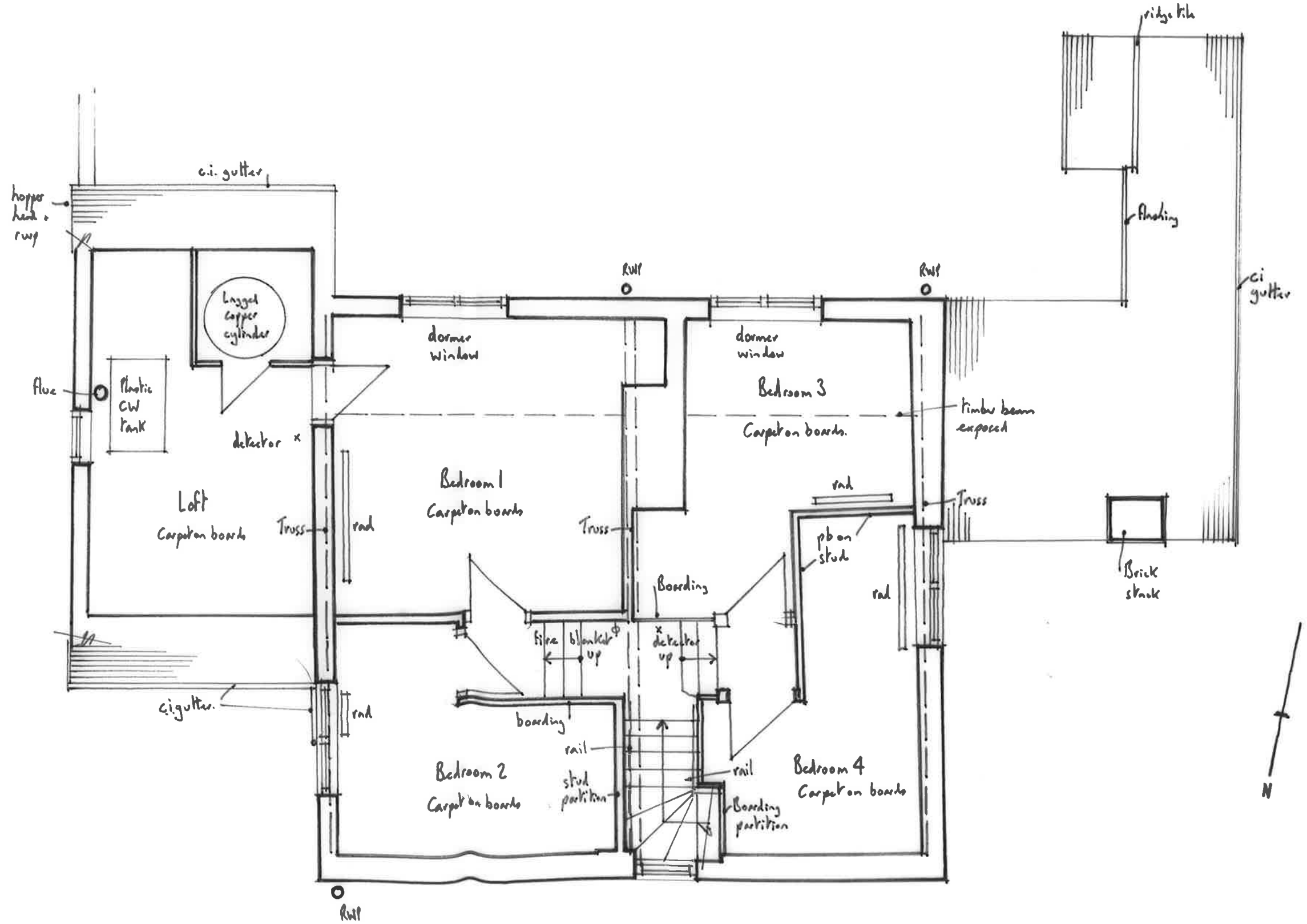
B Plans
B.4. Main building roof

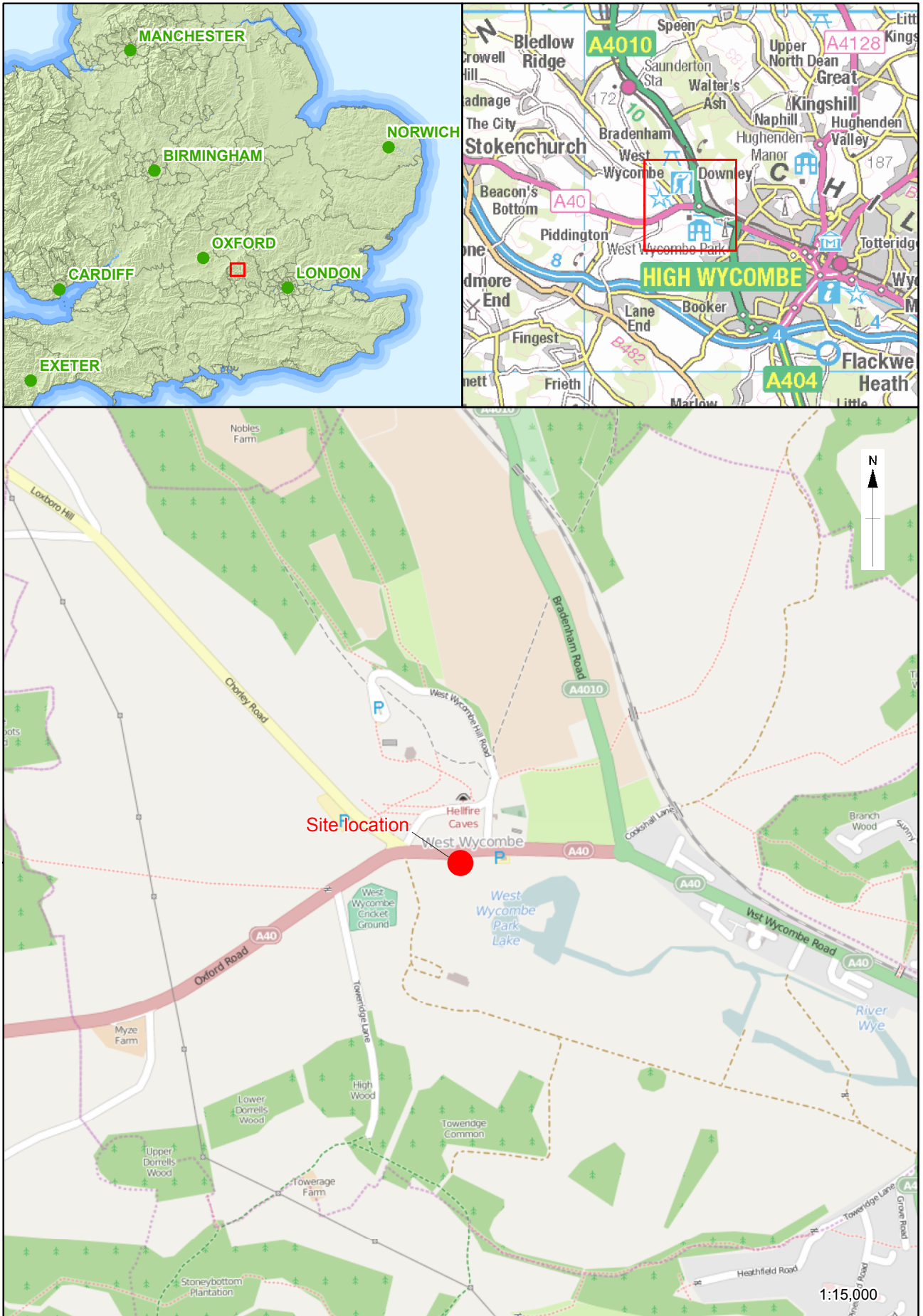
Black Boy Cottage
High St, West Wycombe
Page 20
Scale 1.50



B Plans
B.3 Main building First floor

Black Boy Cottage
High St, West Wycombe
Page 27
Scale 1.50





Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2014
(c) OpenStreetMap and contributors, Creative Commons-Share Alike License (CC-BY-SA)

Figure 1: Site location

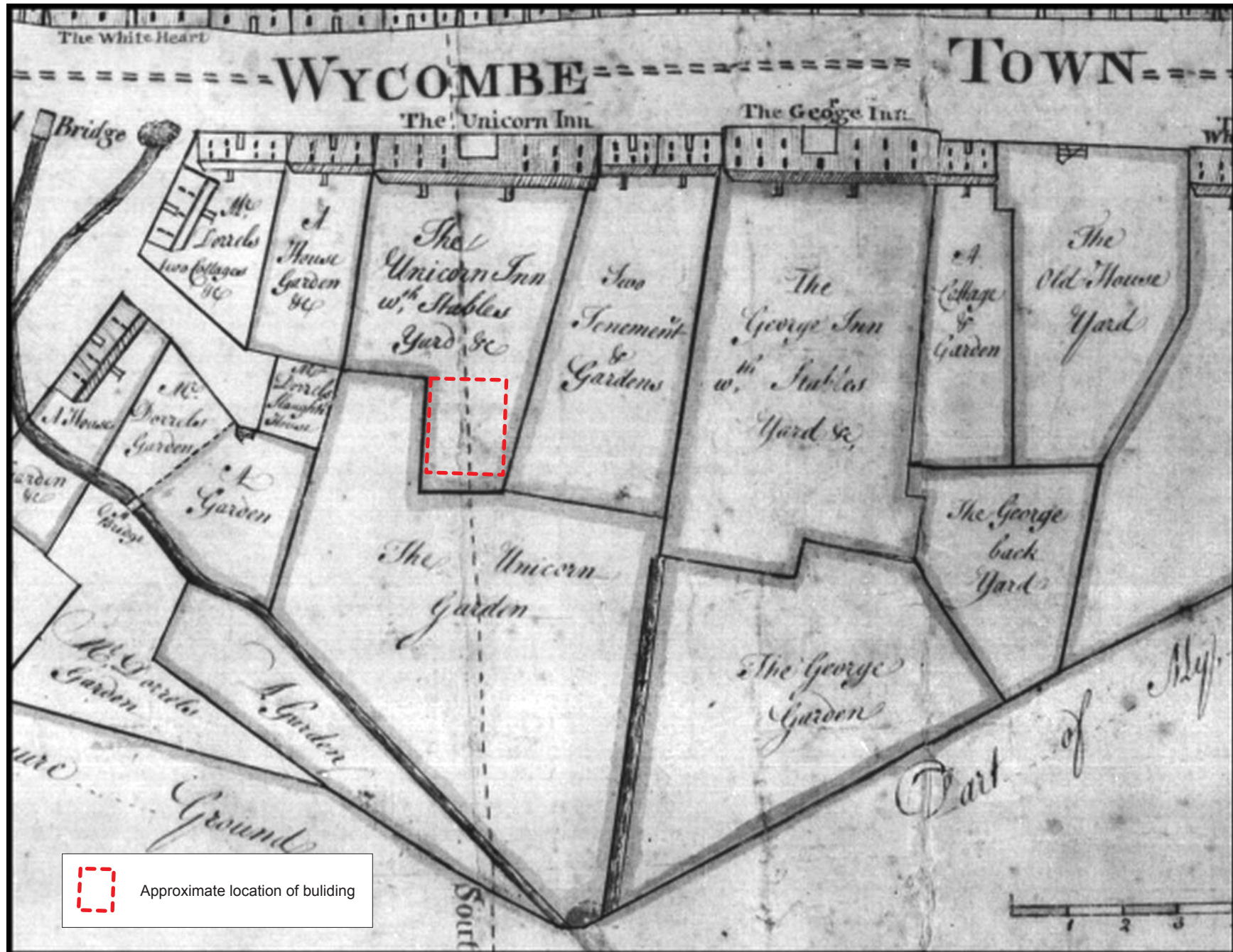


Figure 2: Extract from A Plan of West Wycombe Town (1767)

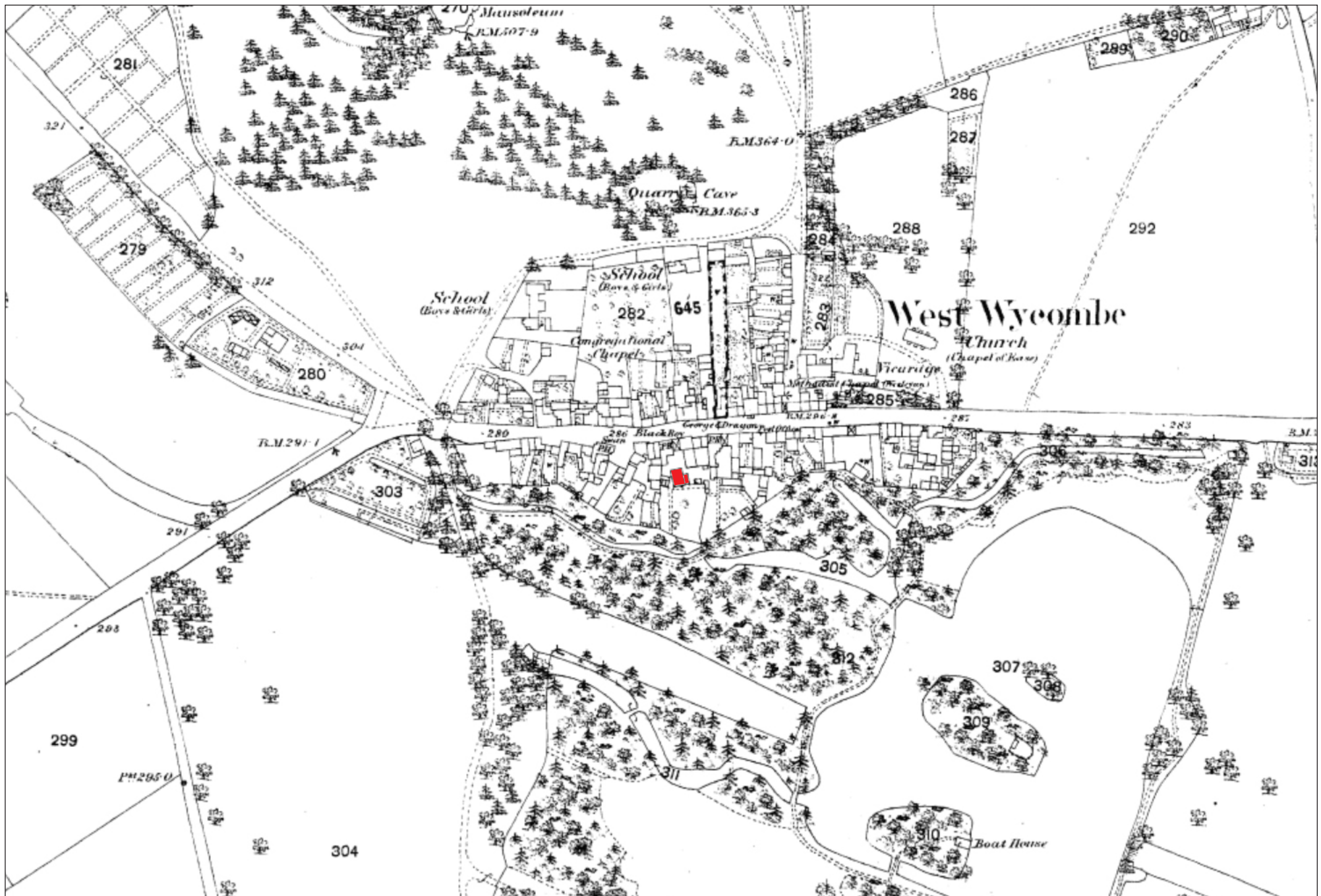


Figure 3: Extract from 1876 first edition OS map

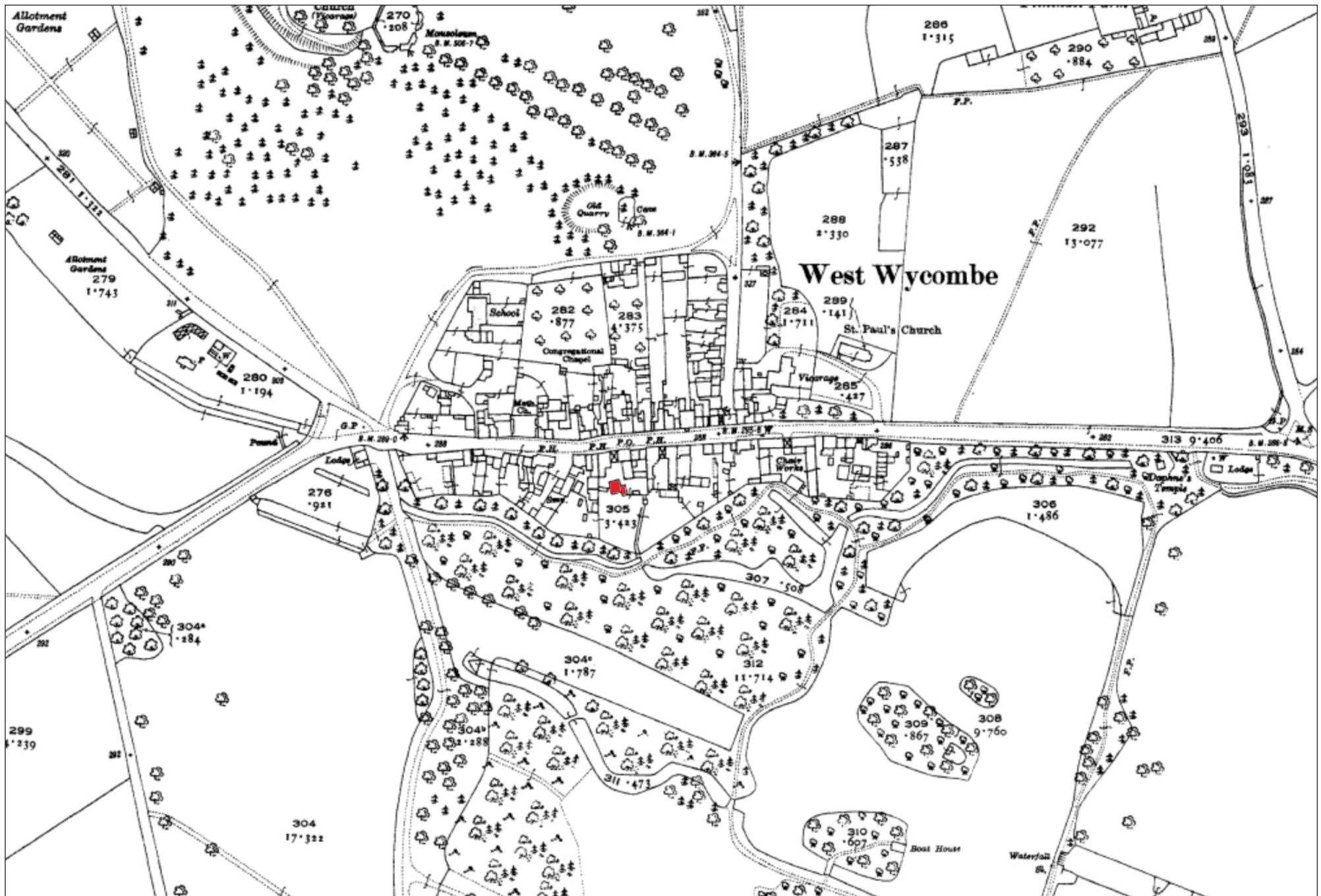
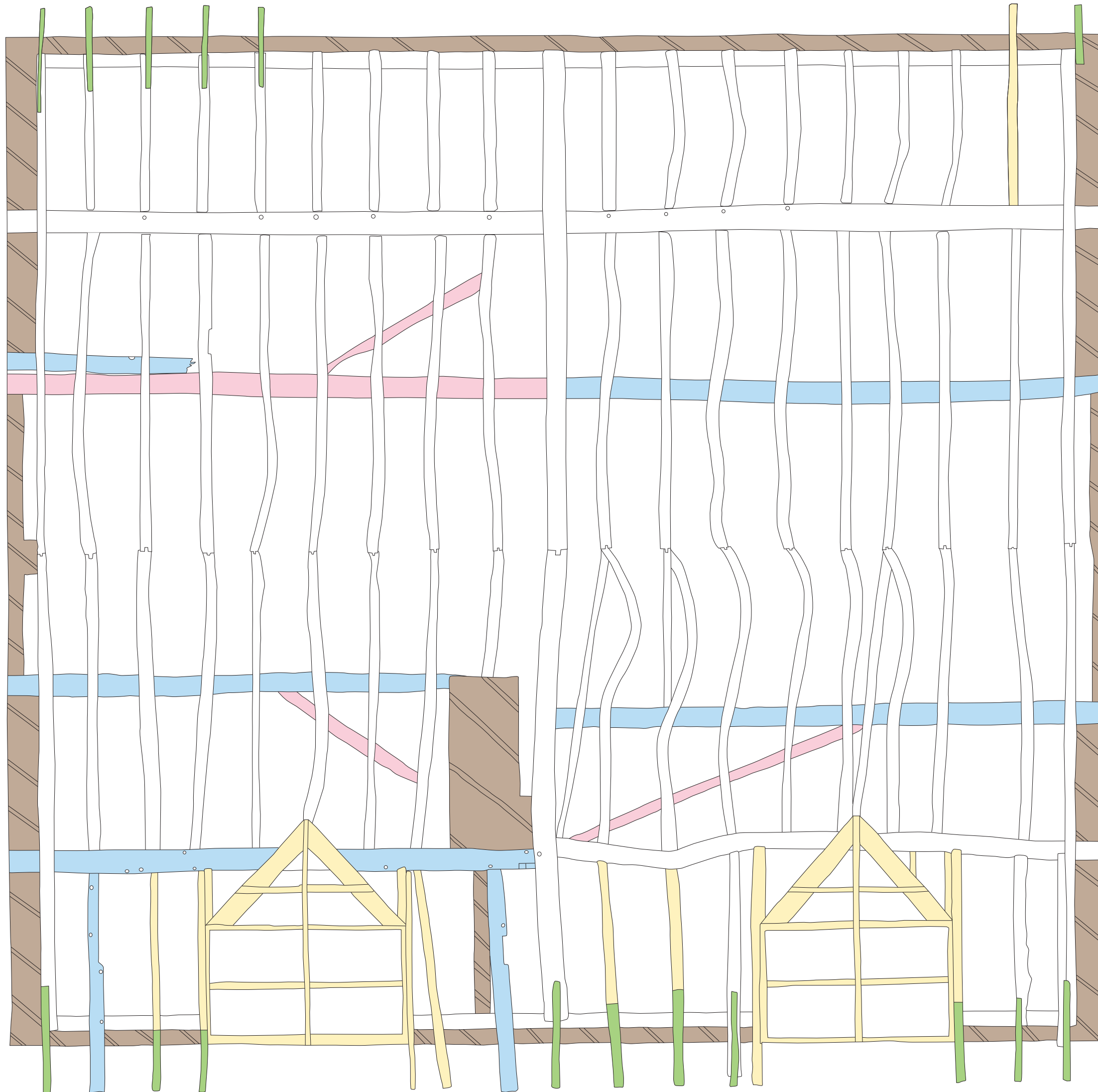


Figure 4: Extract from 1921 edition OS map

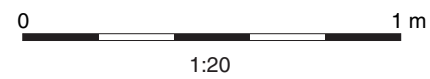
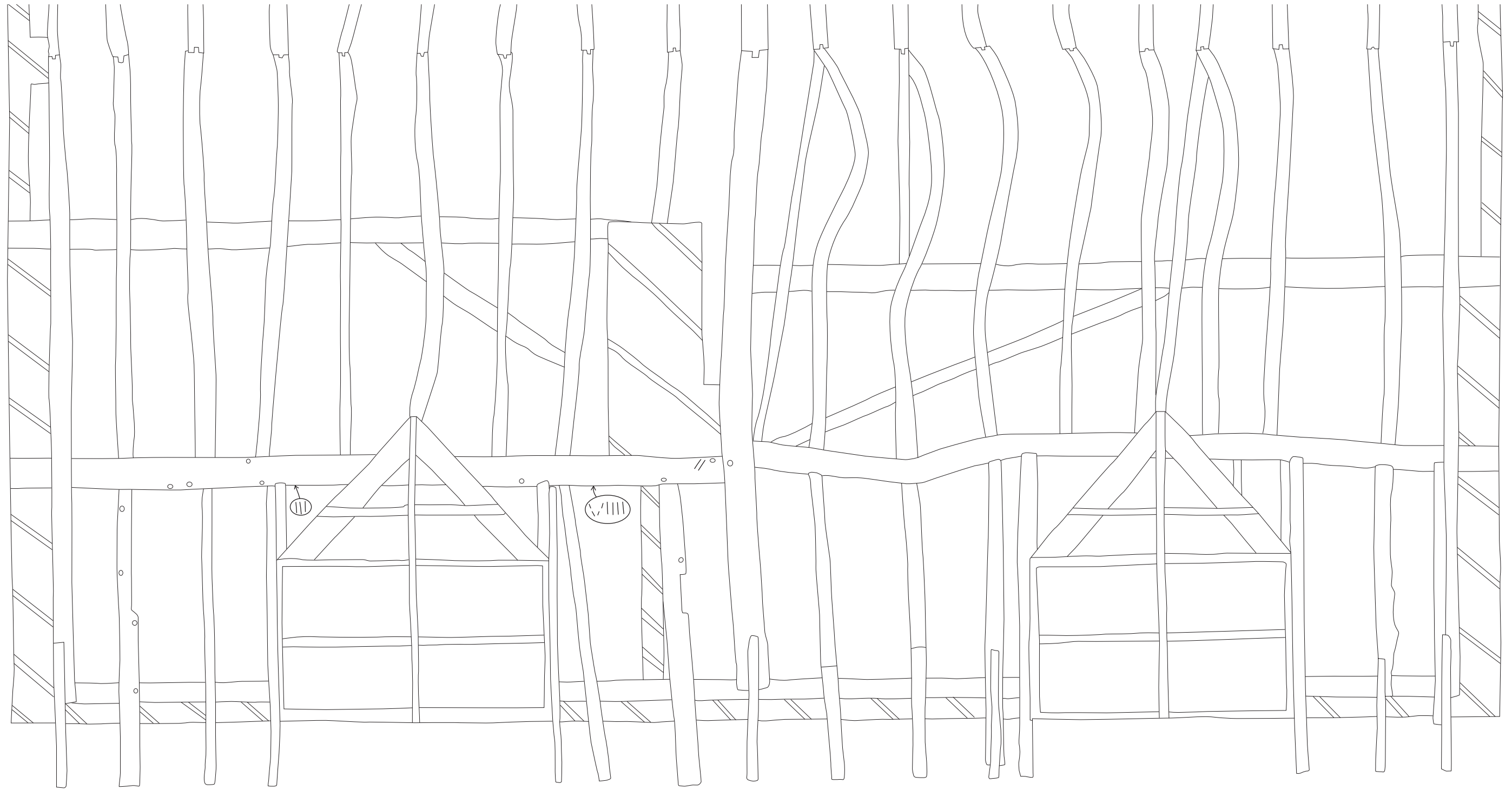


0 1 m
1:25



- original to 18th Century build
- Reused timber
- 1932-1934 RSA works
- c1980s repairs
- undated repairs
- Brickwork

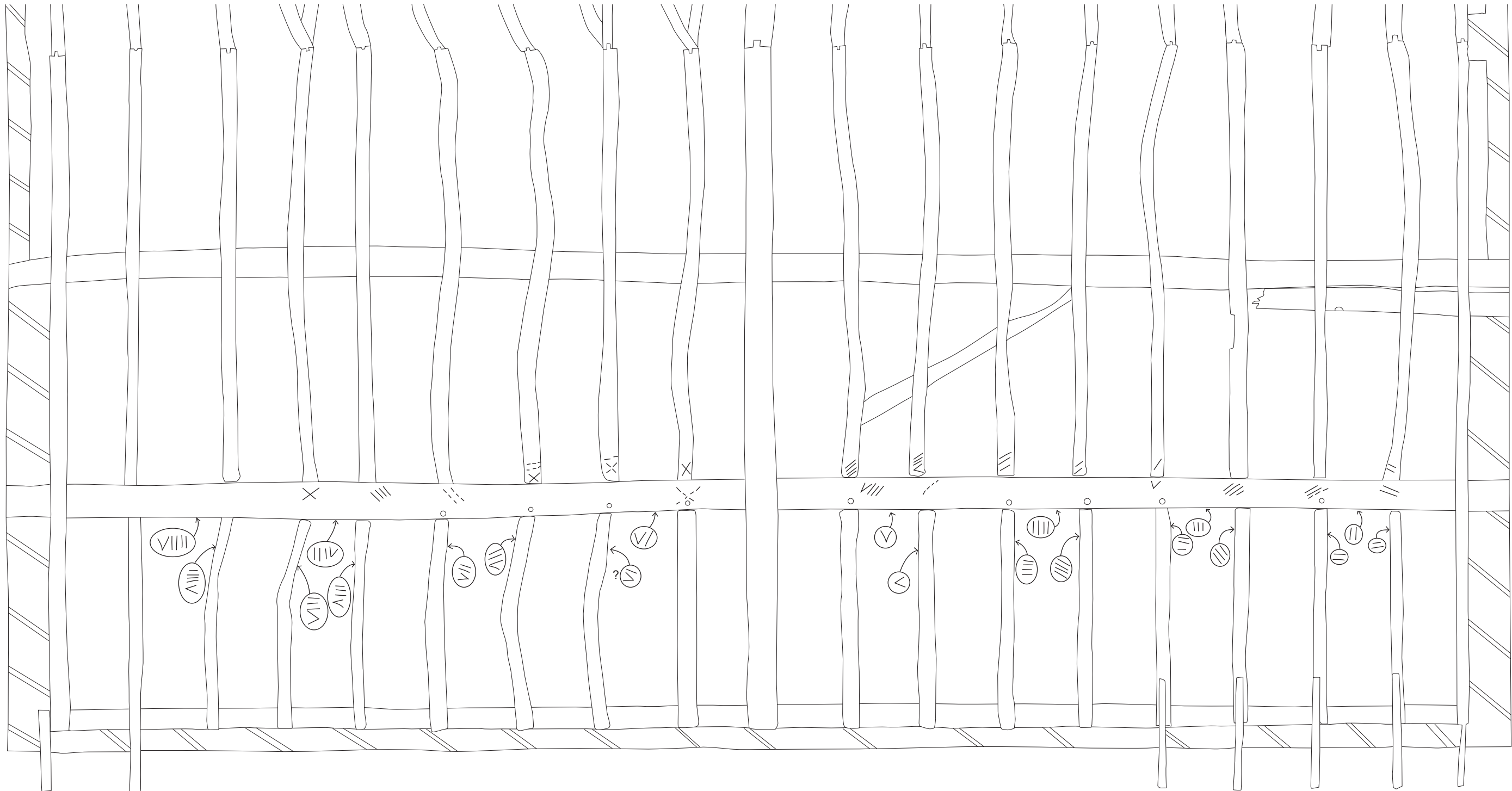
Figure 5: Plan of roof showing phasing and key features



VIII Location indicated by arrow

X Mark degraded and uncertain

Figure 6: Carpenter's Marks on the South Slope (marks are illustrative of location and not to scale)



0 1 m
1:20



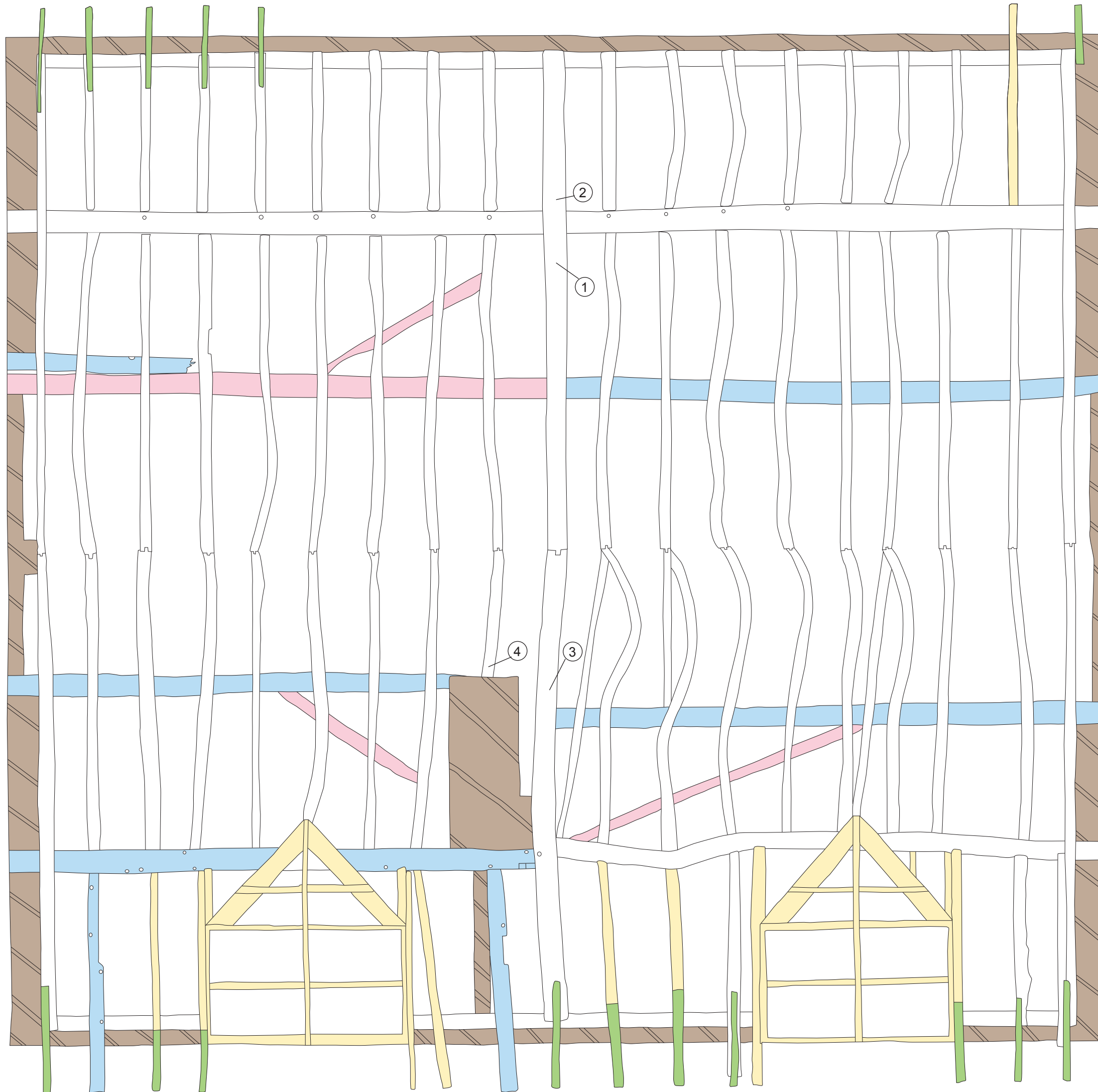
 Location indicated by arrow
 Mark degraded and uncertain

Figure 7: Carpenter's Marks on the North Slope (marks are illustrative of location and not to scale)










-  original to 18th Century build
-  Reused timber
-  1932-1934 RSA works
-  c1980s repairs
-  undated repairs
-  Brickwork
-  Dendrochronology sample location

Figure 8: Location of samples taken for dendrochronological dating



Plate 1: Black Boy Cottage, front (north) elevation



Plate 2: North slope of roof with unstripped area to the west



Plate 3: Cranked principal of the central truss seen from the landing



Plate 4: Collar and cranked principal of central truss (courtesy of Gary Marshall)



Plate 5: Apex joints and repairs



Plate 6: Rafter ends, wall plate and sprockets



Plate 7: Empty mortise behind easternmost dormer



Plate 8: Packing to rafters on the south slope



Plate 9: One of the few reused portions of rafter



Plate 10: 'S' shaped rafters



Plate 11: Reinforcing bar visible in the roof space



Plate 12: Scarf of north slope upper purlin (courtesy of Gary Marshall)



Plate 13: Redundant length of north slope upper



Plate 14: Rotted length of north slope upper purlin



Plate 15: Stave slot in south slope lower purlin



Plate 16: Dovetail from a former use of the south slope lower purlin



Plate 17: Dovetail from a former use of the north slope upper purlin (courtesy of Gary Marshall)



Plate 18: Windbraces



Plate 19: Braces between upper purlins



Plate 20: Degraded Carpenter's Marks on south slope



Plate 21: Carpenter's Marks on north slope



Plate 22: Dormer windows



**Head Office/Registered Office/
OA South**

Janus House
Osney Mead
Oxford OX2 0ES

t: +44 (0) 1865 263 800
f: +44 (0) 1865 793 496
e: info@oxfordarchaeology.com
w: <http://oxfordarchaeology.com>

OA North

Mill 3
Moor Lane
Lancaster LA1 1QD

t: +44 (0) 1524 541 000
f: +44 (0) 1524 848 606
e: [oanorth@oxfordarchaeology.com](mailto: oanorth@oxfordarchaeology.com)
w: <http://oxfordarchaeology.com>

OA East

15 Trafalgar Way
Bar Hill
Cambridgeshire
CB23 8SQ

t: +44 (0) 1223 850500
e: [oaeast@oxfordarchaeology.com](mailto: oaeast@oxfordarchaeology.com)
w: <http://oxfordarchaeology.com>



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