

Steps House West Wycombe Village



Building Investigation and Recording

oxfordarchaeology



southsouthsouth

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Steps House, West Wycombe Village, Buckinghamshire
Report on Historic Building Investigation

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Steps House, 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 Steps House in the centre of the village. The National Trust HBSMR event number for this work is ENA7420 and the site number is 154720.

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* 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 November – December 1993. For ease of comparison internal spaces and rooms use the same numbering system as used in the Vernacular Buildings Survey report. 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 Steps House 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 Steps House 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 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. The southern-facing slope (the front of the house) was exposed and recovered by the roofing contractors before the recording work began. Measurements were taken of the underside of the rafters where possible and details of the structure were gathered from photographs of the work in progress taken by Gary Marshall. The eastern-facing slope was recorded by means of measuring the underside of the rafters where possible and recording was not carried out during the exposure of the roof structure on instruction from Gary Marshall.
- 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 Steps House was undertaken between 10 April 2014 and 15 April 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.

1.4 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 *Steps House*

1.4.7 More detailed historical research into Steps House, 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 November – December 1993 have been drawn upon.

1.4.8 Steps House was listed in 1954 as 'The Manor House'. This, combined with the grand architectural features and good quality finishing such as the penny-struck pointing to the brickwork of the front elevation (Pl. 1), gives an indication of the status of the building within the village. The Map of the Manor of West Wycombe of 1698, the year in which the Dashwoods acquired the manor, shows a representation of the actual old manor house which was replaced by the Dashwoods a decade or so after purchase much further from the village (Fig 2). The resemblance between the Manor House shown on the 1698 map and the building in the current project is noticeable, and it is possible that Steps House, acknowledged as being 'unusual' in the listing description and dating to this period, was intended to resemble the lost manor house (Pl. 2). It is not inconceivable that materials were reused, although none were apparent in the roof structure, which may be a consideration during future internal works. The buildings on the same map in the approximate location of Steps House appear to be a representation of the village rather than an accurate plan of the existing buildings and Steps House or it's predecessor is not apparent.

1.4.9 A Plan of West Wycombe Town of 1767 show the house in an identical stylised form to the surrounding properties; the lack of outbuildings, details and extensions indicate that this map is only intended to indicated plot size and ownership and so does not provide any information about the property (Fig 3).

1.4.10 The tithe map of 1849, reproduced in the VBS report and the original not inspected by the author, may imply the property was at this point two dwellings. Plot 670 is detailed as "Two houses and a yard", with the owner listed on the Apportionment as Sir George Henry Dashwood M.P. and the tenants listed as William Mead and William Bowler. No evidence of the internal division of the house was noted in the VBS and so it may be the case that the house was grouped with another property and clarification may be found during the further research.

- 1.4.11 A map regression through the Ordnance Survey maps indicate that the footprint of the building has not changed since 1876 (Figs 4 & 5).
- 1.4.12 There are currently dormers in the east and west facing slopes of the roof, and one in the west facing return between the wings to the rear of the property (Pl. 3 & 4). Buckinghamshire Record Office holds photographs, available online, which show a sash-windowed dormer to the western end of the south slope (front of the building) in the early photographs, but a casement-windowed dormer in the east slope in the photographs dated by the Record Office to the 1920s-1930s. Sadly, no photographs of this period are accurately dated or include later photographs of the rear or the west elevation of the building. The buildings in the village underwent improvements by the RSA between 1929 and 1934; the east and west dormers do appear identical and so it can be assumed that the dormer to the front was removed and replaced with dormers to each side. The dormer within the valley has had fairly extensive repairs, although the method and materials of construction are fairly similar to the others and so it may be assumed that this window/roof access point was constructed at the same time as the dormer windows. The listing description from 1954 mentions only the dormer in the west facing return, however, it can be confidently stated that this was an oversight as the side dormer windows appear on photographs which obviously pre-date the listing.
- 1.4.13 Although not within the scope of this study, it was noticed that the off-centre rear attic window in the westernmost half-hipped gable was similar in appearance to the side dormers; although it is of a side sliding sash type, it is an obvious later replacement or insertion and the moulding and window furniture are similar to the dormers and so probably dates to the RSA works.
- 1.4.14 The iron bracket and lamp above the front door and also mentioned in the listing text do not appear to be on the pre-RSA photos.

2 DESCRIPTION

2.1 Summary description of overall building from VBS

- 2.1.1 The Vernacular Building Survey report considers that *'The property has remained relatively little changed structurally since it was first built in the later years of the seventeenth or the early years of the eighteenth century. The square, double-pile plan was unaltered until the mid to late nineteenth century'*. The analysis of the VBS is further discussed in the conclusion and the whole VBS is reproduced at the rear of this report at Appendix B.

2.2 Roof investigations

- 2.2.1 The current recording at Steps House focussed entirely on the roof structure and the current work has not included any investigation of the building's interior or other exterior features. The roof structure was examined from the scaffolding platform outside the building.
- 2.2.2 The leadwork in the valley between the wings obscures the ends of the rafters and so the roof construction in this area is not discussed. As detailed in the methodology, the southernmost and easternmost slopes were not recorded, however, photographs of the exposed south slope were made available and details noted from these.

- 2.2.3 The roof of the southern, front, block consists mostly of jack rafters due to the hip and valley rafters to either end of the roof. A pair of principal rafters is in the centre of the roof with the collar now removed and the empty mortice visible (Pl. 5); the end of the tie beam is visible at the wall plate of the south slope (Pl. 6).
- 2.2.4 The two rear wings are of much the same construction, with eleven or twelve pairs of common rafters with a pair of principal rafters to the south of the chimney stacks. The rafters are partially obscured by the aforementioned leadwork in the valley (Pl. 7). The northern ends of the wings are half-hipped (Pl. 8).
- 2.2.5 The rafters are bridle-jointed at the apex and some pairs are also pegged (Pl. 9). There is no ridge piece in any of the roofs, although a short piece of new timber and a reused rafter (probably a length of timber removed to allow for the dormer window construction) have been added later for support to the apex near to the chimney in the east wing (Pl. 10).
- 2.2.6 A single purlin supports the rafters to each slope. The rafters are pegged to the purlin with square wooden pegs to the rear wings (Pl. 11) and round wooden pegs to the front block. Some of these joints have been reinforced with large iron nails.
- 2.2.7 Despite the rafters being sawn fairly evenly, rather than the popular usage of split logs for rafters (of which there are very few in this roof), the majority are laid horizontally, with widths between 70-90mm for the original timbers and 50mm for the 1930s additions. The depth is fairly consistent at c60-70mm with the principal rafters measuring up to 100mm square.
- 2.2.8 The square-headed iron nails which attached the original battening to the rafters are visible, having been simply hammered flat against the timber.
- 2.2.9 The principal rafters of the southern block have empty mortices (Pl. 12) following removal of the original collar; the same mortices in the wings have the tenons visible, however, the attic ceiling construction obscures any possible remaining collars (Pl. 13).
- 2.2.10 During the RSA works, reinforcing collars were fixed to some rafters and purlins, but the attic ceiling construction makes it difficult to distinguish these structural members from the ceiling frame.
- 2.2.11 All visible areas of the roof display some repairs and reinforcement from additional timbers fixed to the sides of several rafters. Many of the rafters have been sawn off at the wall plate due to rot and sprockets have been fitted to support the eaves (Pl. 14). The original rafters were at least notched over the wall plate, but where the rafters have been sawn off at the eaves the wall plate has been mortared-over, obscuring any potential seating or indication of the method of jointing the two members.
- 2.2.12 The wall plates are laid directly onto the brick walls and abut the hip, valley or principal rafters. To the outer edge of the wall, in front of the wall plate, the spaces between the rafters has been packed by several mortared layers of waste roof tiles laid onto the brickwork.
- 2.2.13 The purlins abut the hip or valley rafters at either end and are considerably obscured by the attic ceiling construction.

- 2.2.14 Only one windbrace is visible, bracing the westernmost slope between the principal rafter and tie beam and the purlin. All details have been obscured by the sheeting of the attic ceiling below, however, it has been fitted over the lath and plaster ceiling phase and so in all likelihood dates to the RSA works (Pl. 15).
- 2.2.15 With the exception of the RSA alterations, the construction of the front block and the wings are contemporary. Some repairs have been undertaken before and after the RSA works. There is no indication of reused timber, and the timber appears to be of fairly high quality, as befits a higher status building. Occasional rafters retain a waney edge, although the majority are square, even, pit-sawn timbers.
- 2.2.16 A few rafters display partial importer's marks (Pl. 16). Timber was imported in balks and sawn on site; the grooves appear to have been part of a tally or Roman numeral style of marking. Further investigation or analysis of the timbers may find where they originated.
- 2.2.17 Repairs to the rafters in the southern, front, slope indicates that there were two dormers; as mentioned previously. One front-facing dormer remained until the RSA renovations when dormers were constructed to each side slope and the dormer to the front slope was removed (Pl. 17). The area from which the dormer had been removed at an earlier date does not appear to have been adequately made good at the time of removal as the timbers bridging the gap date from the RSA works (Pl. 18).
- 2.2.18 The original lath and plaster of the attic ceilings are visible in some areas of the roof, other areas display the later Thistle Fireproof Plasterboard fitted between the rafters. To the western wing, the attic room ceilings were reconfigured during the RSA works by boxing-in the eaves in order to create a barrier to the cold roof and also create a crawl-space containing the services. The previous wall plaster is visible in some areas (Pl. 19).
- 2.2.19 A 1930s cigarette packet was found behind the rafters of the west slope of the east wing, presumably left by the roofers working for the RSA.
- 2.2.20 Several pages of newspapers dated 1950 were found in the west wing, outside of the storage area and around the chimney, suggesting that some work was also carried out at this date.
- 2.2.21 The roof has been re-felted at some point since the RSA works, probably in the 1980s taking the nail and felt types into account. The hip irons date to this phase.

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 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	Late-seventeenth or early-eighteenth century	Steps House first built	No evidence found to doubt the VBS interpretation.
2	Undated	Removal of spine wall, rearrangement of staircases etc.	Not in the scope of investigation
3	Mid- to late-nineteenth century	Single storey rear utility extension	Not in the scope of investigation, however, the Ordnance Survey map of 1876 shows that it was standing by this point
4	c nineteenth century	Removal of the easternmost dormer in the south slope. (Alteration not detailed in the VBS as it was not apparent until the roof covering was removed)	Evidence for a dormer window in the southern slope of the roof, providing a symmetrical elevation, was apparent following removal of the roof covering. No dating evidence is available for this alteration which pre-dates the earliest available photograph which is dated 1890-1909 by the Buckinghamshire Record Office
5	1929-1934	RSA works	Further research into the RSA works will be undertaken at a later date, evidently substantial repairs were undertaken in addition to the relocation of the dormer windows and reconfiguration of the attic ceilings

3.1.3 It is noteworthy that, in common with several other buildings in West Wycombe, dormer windows were added or altered in the RSA works.

Angela Warner
July 2014

APPENDIX A. LISTED BUILDING DESCRIPTION

Name: STEPS HOUSE

List entry Number: 1125135

Location

STEPS HOUSE, HIGH STREET

Grade: II*

Date first listed: 09-Jan-1954

(Formerly listed as The Manor House)

List entry Description

HIGH STREET 1. 963 (North Side) WEST WYCOMBE The Manor House SU 8294 9/91 9.1.54. II* GV 2. Unusual early C18 house. Colour washed brick plinth and ground floor with large coved plaster cornice; yellow brick 1st floor with red brick quoins and dressings. 2 storeys and attics, 4 double hung sashes in flush moulded wooden frames, ground floor fielded panelled shutters, 1st floor segmental arches. 6 red brick steps with plain wrought iron railing up either side of central 6 fielded panelled door with 2 light rectangular fanlight; surround of fluted Roman Doric pilasters carrying frieze and cornice. Coved ground floor cornice breaks forward slightly over doorway and carries a wrought iron lamp bracket and octagonal lamp. Central 1st floor dummy window, hipped old tiled roof with dentil and moulded red brick cornice. Dormer to west return elevation. V.C.H., III, p 135.

Nos 35 to 37 (consec), The Church Loft, Nos 45 to 54 (consec), Nos 56 to 59 (consec) Steps House, The Plough Inn, Premises occupied by Frank Hudson, The Old Smithy, West Wycombe Estate Office, Rose Cottage and Ness Cottage form a group.

Listing NGR: SU8298794675

Selected Sources

1. **Book Reference** - *Author:* Page, W - *Title:* The Victoria History of the County of Buckingham - *Date:* 1908 - *Volume:* 3 - *Page References:* 135

National Grid Reference: SU 82987 94675

APPENDIX B. VERNACULAR BUILDING SURVEY FOR STEPS HOUSE

Steps House
High Street
West Wycombe



The National Trust

VERNACULAR BUILDINGS
SURVEY

THAMES AND CHILTERN REGION

CONTENTS.

INTRODUCTION TO SURVEY; LISTED BUILDINGS

SUMMARY SHEET

1989 EDITION O.S. 1:2500 LOCATION MAP

* SUMMARY OF HISTORICAL VALUE

HISTORY OF OWNERSHIP, OCCUPANCY AND USE

HOUSE : SUMMARY SHEET

STRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT

PLANS : as existing at time of
survey

BUILDING DESCRIPTION : External Appearance
Internal Features

BUILDINGS : SUMMARY SHEET

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 / MODERNISATION

PHOTOGRAPHIC SURVEY

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 alteration. 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

SU 8294 9/91 ✓

9.1.54.

II*


GV

2.

Unusual early C18 house. Colour washed brick plinth and ground floor with large coved plaster cornice; yellow brick 1st floor with red brick quoins and dressings.

2 storeys and attics, 4 double hung sashes in flush moulded wooden frames, ground floor fielded panelled shutters, 1st floor segmental arches. 6 red brick steps with plain wrought iron railing up either side of central 6 fielded panelled door with 2 light rectangular fanlight; surround of fluted Roman Doric pilasters carrying frieze and cornice. Coved ground floor cornice breaks forward slightly over doorway and carries a wrought iron lamp bracket and octagonal lamp. Central 1st floor dummy window. Hipped old tiled roof with dentil and moulded red brick cornice. Dormer to west return elevation. V.C.H., III, p 135.

Nos 35 to 37 (consec), The Church Loft, Nos 45 to 51 (consec). Nos 56 to 59 (consec) The Manor House, The Plough Inn. Premises occupied by Frank Hudson. The Old Smithy, West Wycombe Estate Office, Rose Cottage and Ness Cottage form a group.

Estate: West Wycombe Village	Parish: West Wycombe	Name: STEPS HOUSE	Grid Ref: SU 830 947
Listed Grade: II			
Archaeological Survey Number: 153 260			
Survey Date: November 1993			
Surveyor: A. Waters H. Garside G. Izzard			
Situation: The north side of the High Street, in the centre of the village.			
Likely Date: Late 17th or early 18th century			
Historical Value: An interesting and significant house in the village context. Much of the original structure and several features such as period panelling survive. Often referred to as the 'Old Manor House', this property obviously represented a high status dwelling in the centre of the village.			
Other Sources: See West Wycombe Omnibus Appendix Volume.			
Rooms and Facilities: A: Dining Room B: Reception/Lounge C: Kitchen D: Stair Hall E: W.C. F;G: Utility/Boiler Room H: Landing I: Study J;K;N;M: Bedroom L: Bathroom O: Attic Storage			

STRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT
STEPS HOUSE, HIGH STREET, WEST WYCOMBE

The property has remained relatively little changed structurally since it was first built in the later years of the seventeenth or the early years of the eighteenth century. The square, double-pile plan was unaltered until the mid to late nineteenth century.

When first built, the house was laid out in two parallel and adjacent rectangular blocks, separated by a solid spine wall, forming a near-true square. A central hall/corridor was constructed transversely, connecting the two units of the building on both the ground and the first floors.

The two floors were partitioned into four rooms each, all approximately square. At the time of construction the main stair case did not exist, at least in its present form and position. It now occupies the space formerly taken by the south-west corner room on each floor.

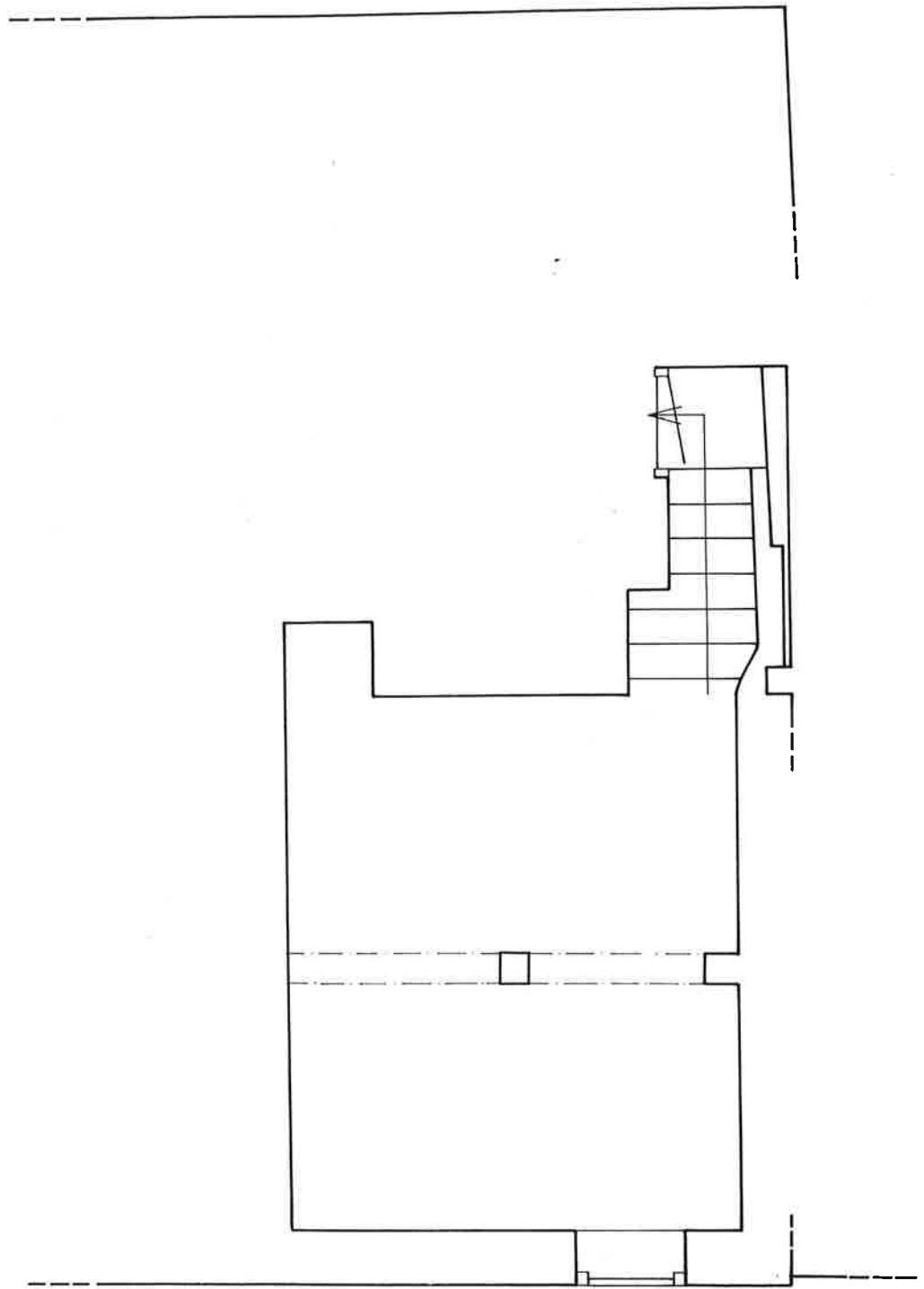
On the ground floor, the two front rooms were fairly formal, reception/family rooms; the two to the rear were service rooms, kitchen and pantry. It seems probable that room (C) was the kitchen, given the existence of the large fireplace opening, and the other was the pantry, since the steps to the basement floor would have led down from there.

The original stair was probably situated directly below that which still survives to the attic. The stair would have been reached from the rear of the hallway (D) through the doorway (C2). The top of the stair would have emerged within the 'understair' doorway (I2) in room I; it seems that the west wall of (I) originally ran on to meet with the party wall of room (J), with a door through into the room from the narrow landing.

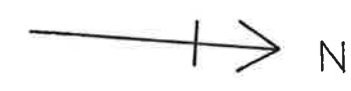
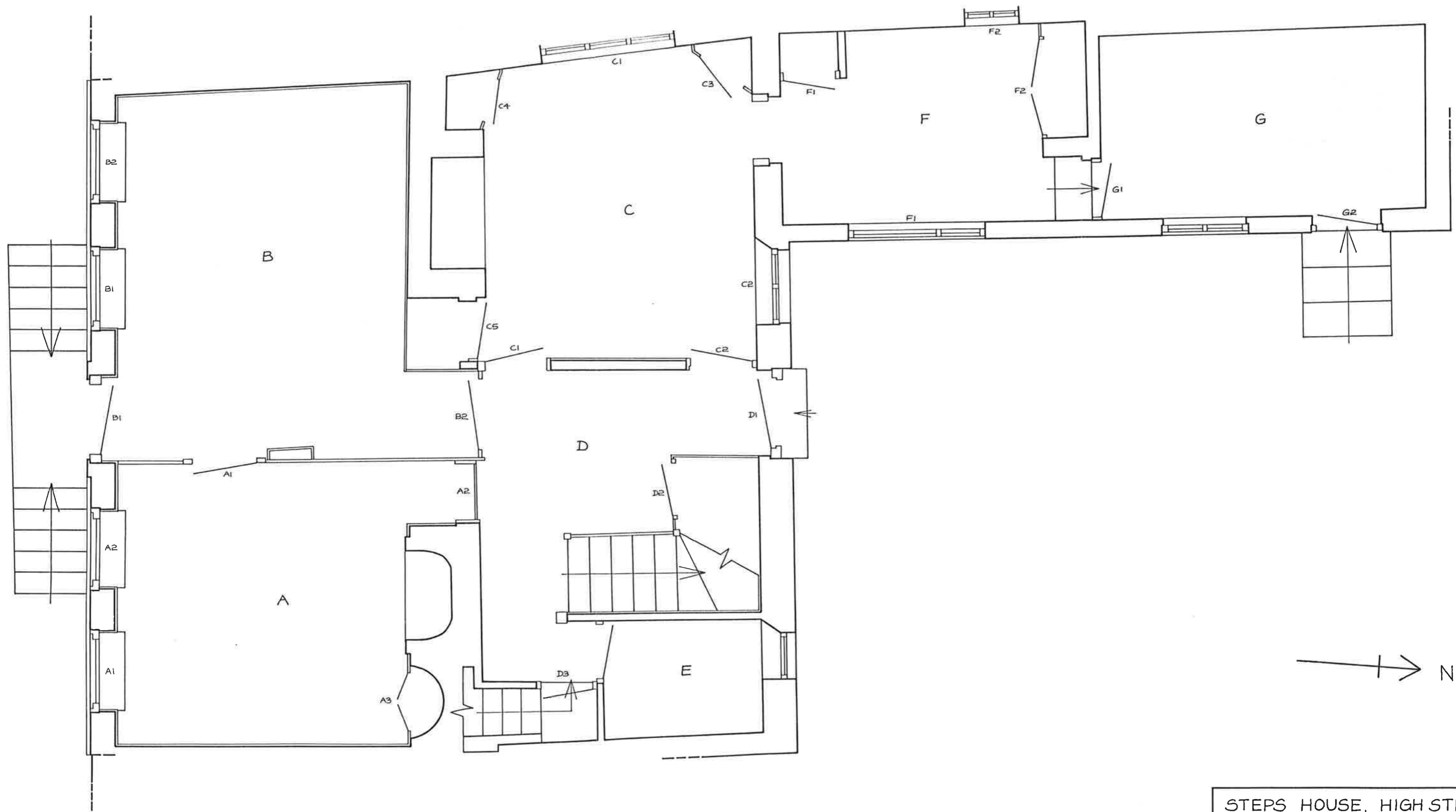
The mid to late nineteenth century saw the addition of the rear extension to the house. This was built purely as a domestic or utility wing, including a scullery or washhouse.

The present staircase was built, using the space taken by one of the former service rooms. The ground floor section of the original stair was removed, to increase the size of the kitchen. The flight to the attic was retained, and presumably used by resident domestic servants.

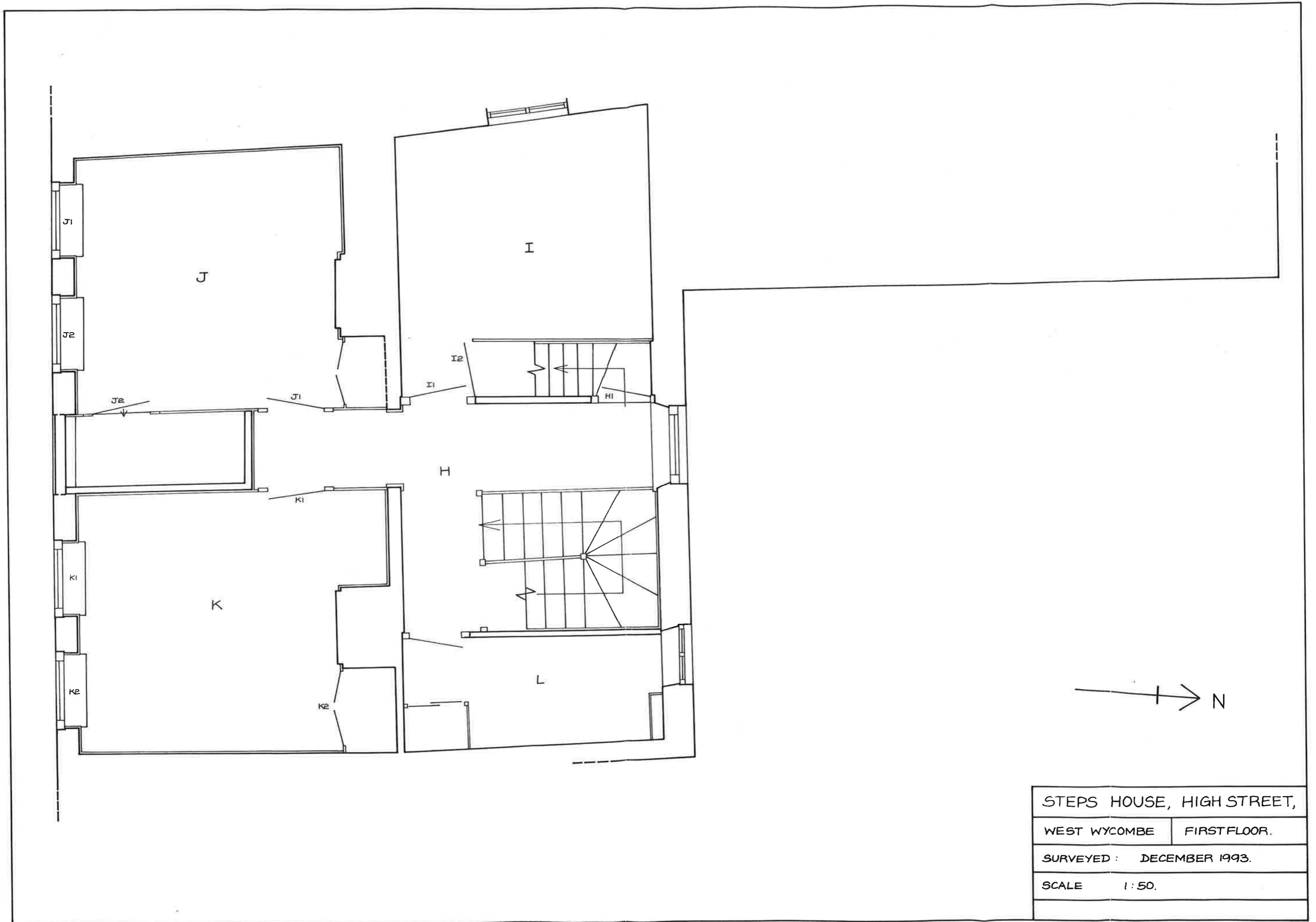
The west wall of the ground floor hallway in the front unit was removed during the early to mid twentieth century, enlarging room (B). Some of the original panelling was replaced and repaired, and new sections added to finish the conversion work.



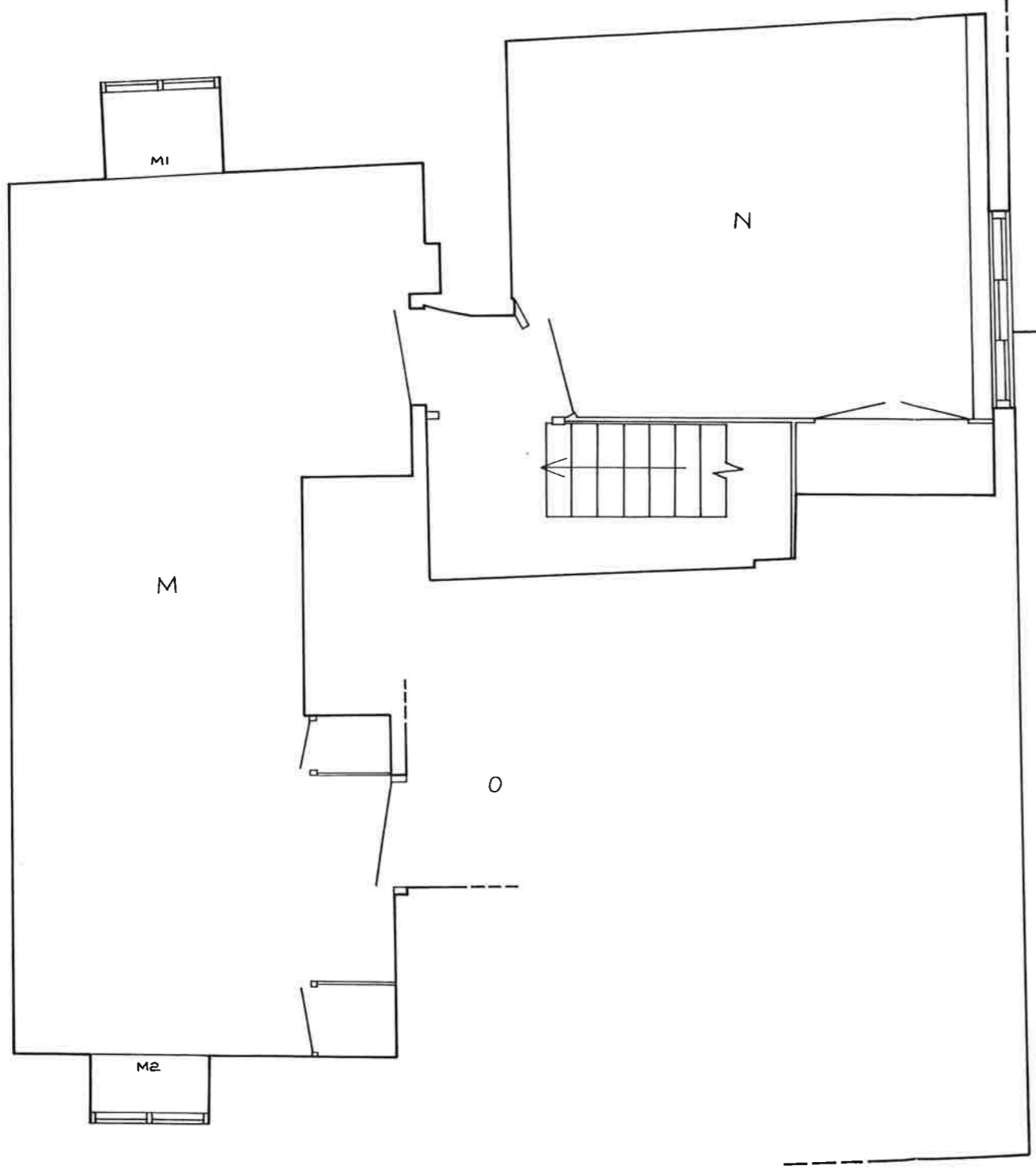
STEPS HOUSE, HIGH STREET,	
WEST WYCOMBE.	CELLAR.
SURVEYED : DECEMBER 1993	
SCALE	1 : 50.



STEPS HOUSE, HIGH STREET,	
WEST WYCOMBE	GROUND FLOOR.
SURVEYED : DECEMBER 1993.	
SCALE	1:50.



STEPS HOUSE, HIGH STREET,	
WEST WYCOMBE	FIRST FLOOR.
SURVEYED : DECEMBER 1993.	
SCALE	1 : 50.



STEPS HOUSE, HIGH STREET,	
WEST WYCOMBE	ATTIC FLOOR.
SURVEYED : DECEMBER 1993.	
SCALE	1:50.

BUILDING DESCRIPTION
STEPS HOUSE, WEST WYCOMBE

EXTERNAL APPEARANCE

Plan/Form

Double pile main block of two and a half storeys, with one and a half storey rear extension.

Walling

- | | | |
|-----------------|---|---|
| North elevation | - | Hung tiles to main block; brick to rear extension. |
| East elevation | - | Main block is constructed against the gable end of No.47. Only small areas of stretcher bond brickwork visible, with some repair work towards north end using Flettons. rear extension is modern brick throughout. Brick dentilled cornice. |
| South elevation | - | Brick plinth, flemish bond brickwork above to storey level. First floor refaced with red stocks and Flettons. Brick dentilled cornice. |
| West elevation | - | Stretcher bond brickwork, with some Flettons towards the north end. brick dentilled cornice. |

Roof

The roof consists of three sections; the main roof is double pitched with shallow hipped gables, and the rear of the house is covered by two short double pitched and hipped roofs placed parallel to each other and at right angles to the main block.

Chimneys

There are two large square stacks, constructed on the axial line of the house. These are brick, with slated double pitched mini roofs, and horizontal cowled flues.

Openings

- | | | |
|-----------------|---|---|
| North elevation | - | Main block; wooden jambs and lintels. three windows have tile sills, others are wood. Extension door has wooden lintel and brick reveals. |
| East elevation | - | Brick reveals and lintels, wooden sills. |
| South elevation | - | Ground floor windows have wooden lintels, reveals and sills. First floor openings have brick segmental arches and wooden lintels. |

Miscellaneous

The front elevation is heavily ornamented, with a stuccoed canopy above the door, and flanking pilasters. A 'carriage lantern' on a curved wrought iron bracket is suspended above the door. The entrance is reached from a raised platform with steps to either end.

INTERNAL FEATURES - STEPS HOUSE, WEST WYCOMBEFloors

A;B;D;E	-	Boarded
C	-	Quarry tiled
F;G	-	Concrete
H;I;J;K;L;N;M	-	Boarded

Ceilings

A;B;D	-	Plastered, with moulded cornice
C	-	Plain plastered, with narrow, chamfered, transverse beam
E;F;G;H;I;L	-	Plain plastered
J;K	-	Plastered, with cornice
M;N	-	Plastered to inside of roof slope, to collar level

Partitions

A-B	-	Stud and moulded panelling
A-D;D-E;C-D;		
H-I;H-L;K-H	-	Lath and plaster on studwork
C-F;F-G;J-I	-	Brick

Stairs

There are two staircases. One is the main stair situated slightly off-centre in the rear part of the main house, which is a dogleg of two straight flights, with turned banisters and a moulded rail. This provides access from the ground to the first floor. The other is a narrow dogleg from the first floor to the attic, separated from the landing by a stud partition and door.

Fireplaces

A	-	Large brick opening, with a quarry tile hearth. Victorian wooden surround and mantel shelf. Indications of an earlier stone hearth visible.
C	-	Large plastered brick opening, with large wooden lintel (appears to have been inserted late, to raise the height of the opening).
J;K;I	-	Blocked.

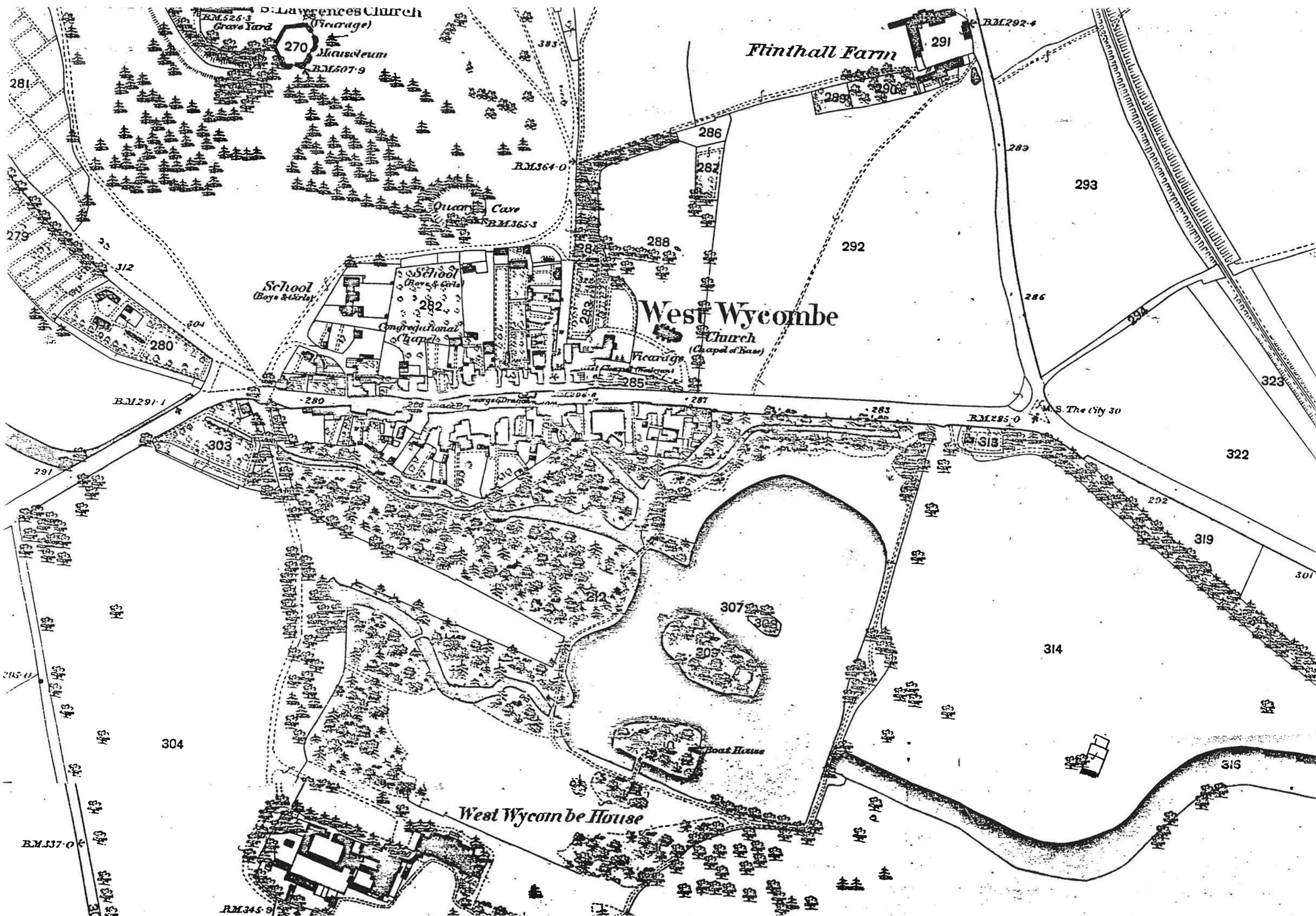
Doors

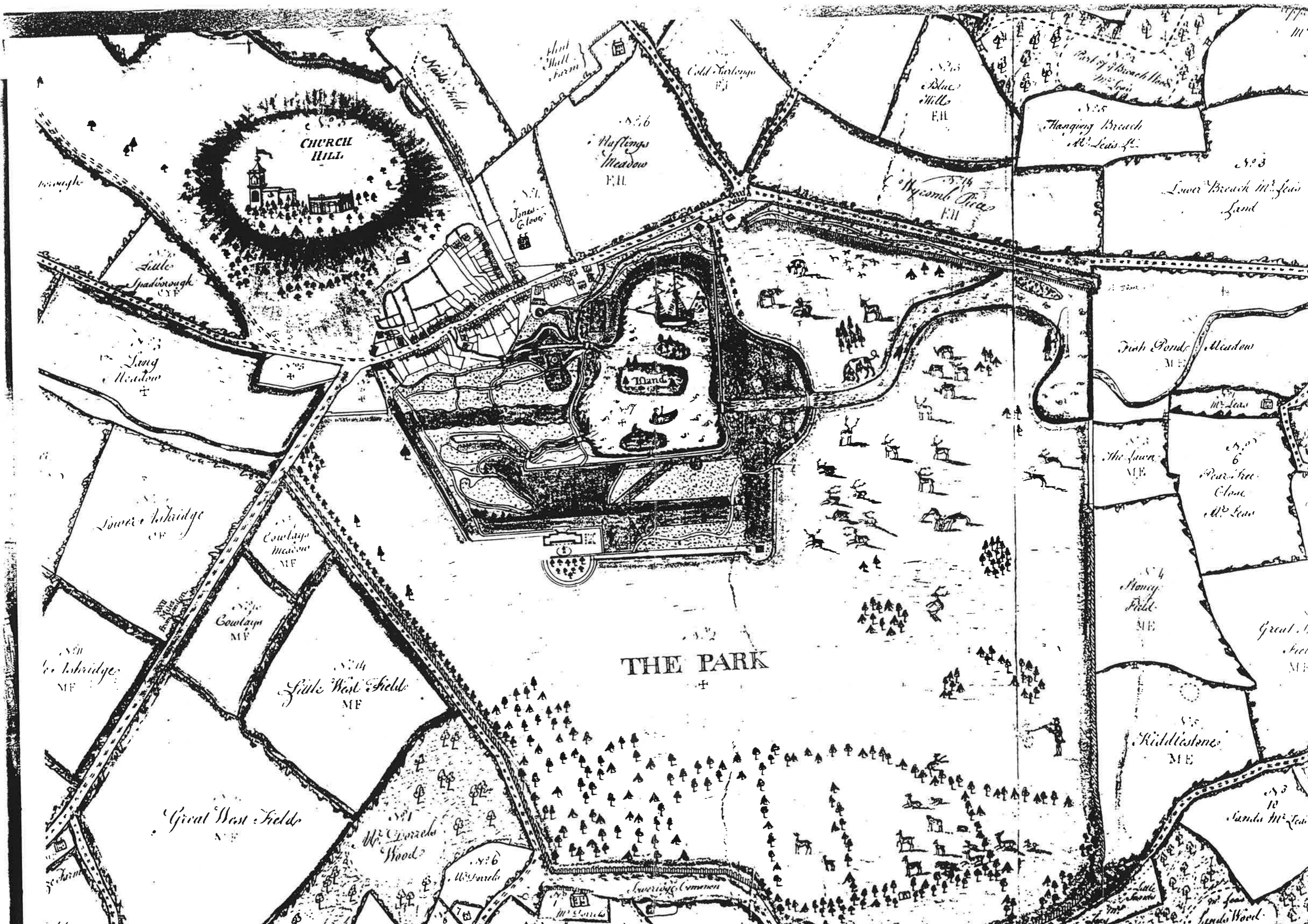
A1;B1	-	Framed and panelled, brass rimlock; 'H' hinges.
A2	-	Framed and panelled, 'HL' hinges; blocked.
A3	-	Twin single paned cupboard doors.
B2	-	Framed and panelled, 9 glass panes above lock rail, brass rimlock, 'H' hinges.
C1	-	Modern framed and panelled.
C2	-	Framed and panelled, thumb latch.

C3	-	Twin beaded-boarded and ledged; modern 'Gothick' style straps.
C4;C5	-	Beaded-boarded and ledged, period fleur de lys straps.
D1	-	Framed and panelled, glass in upper panels, brass rimlock.
D2	-	Framed and single panelled.
D3;E1	-	Beaded-boarded and ledged, butt hinges, thumb latch.
F1;G1	-	Boarded ledged and braced, modern straps.
F2	-	Twin modern boarded and ledged, straps.
G2	-	Framed and panelled, three panes above lock rail.
H1	-	Framed and panelled, strap hinges.
I1;I2;L1	-	Framed and panelled, 'IL' hinges.
J1;K1,K2	-	Framed and panelled, 'H' hinges.
J2	-	Modern framed and panelled, butt hinges.
N1	-	Framed and panelled, spoon-ended strap hinges.

Windows

A1;A2;B1;B2;H1	-	Vertical sliding twin sashes, each of 6 panes, large flat ovolo glazing bars.
C1	-	3 lights, outers side hung, inner fixed, each of 8 panes, ovolo glazing bars.
C2	-	2 lights, one side hung, one fixed, both of 6 panes, ovolo glazing bars.
E1	-	1 light, of 2 panes, side hung, ovolo glazing bars.
F1	-	2 lights, one side hung, one fixed, each of one pane, square glazing bars.
F2	-	2 lights, both side hung, each of 4 panes, ovolo glazing bars.
G1	-	2 lights, one side hung, one fixed, each of 6 panes, metal glazing bars.
I1	-	2 lights, one side hung, one fixed, each of 6 panes.
J1;J2;K1;K2	-	Vertical sliding sashes, each of 6 panes, thick ovolo glazing bars.
L1	-	2 lights, one side hung, one fixed, each of 6 panes, narrow ovolo glazing bars.
N1	-	Horizontal sliding sash of 3 lights. Centre fixed, each of 6 panes, narrow ovolo glazing bars.
M1;M2	-	Dormers, each 2 lights, each of 6 panes, ovolo glazing bars.
O1	-	Dormer, 1 light, side hung, single pane.





CHURCH HILL

Hastings Meadow E.H.

Mycomb Piece E.H.

Hanging Breach M. Leas L.

Lower Breach M. Leas Land

THE PARK

The Lower M.E.

Honey Hill M.E.

Riddlestone M.E.

Sands M. Leas

Little West Fields M.E.

Great West Fields

W. Cowlays Wood

Surrey Common

Sands Wood

Wing

Little Spadborough C.V.

Long Meadow

Lower Ashridge

Cowlays M.E.

Cowlays M.E.

Upper Ashridge M.E.

Hill Farm

Cold Harleys

Jones & Coopers

Blue Mills E.H.

Part of Broad Harleys M. Leas

593

6 Pear Tree Close M. Leas

Great M. Leas M.E.

10 Sands M. Leas

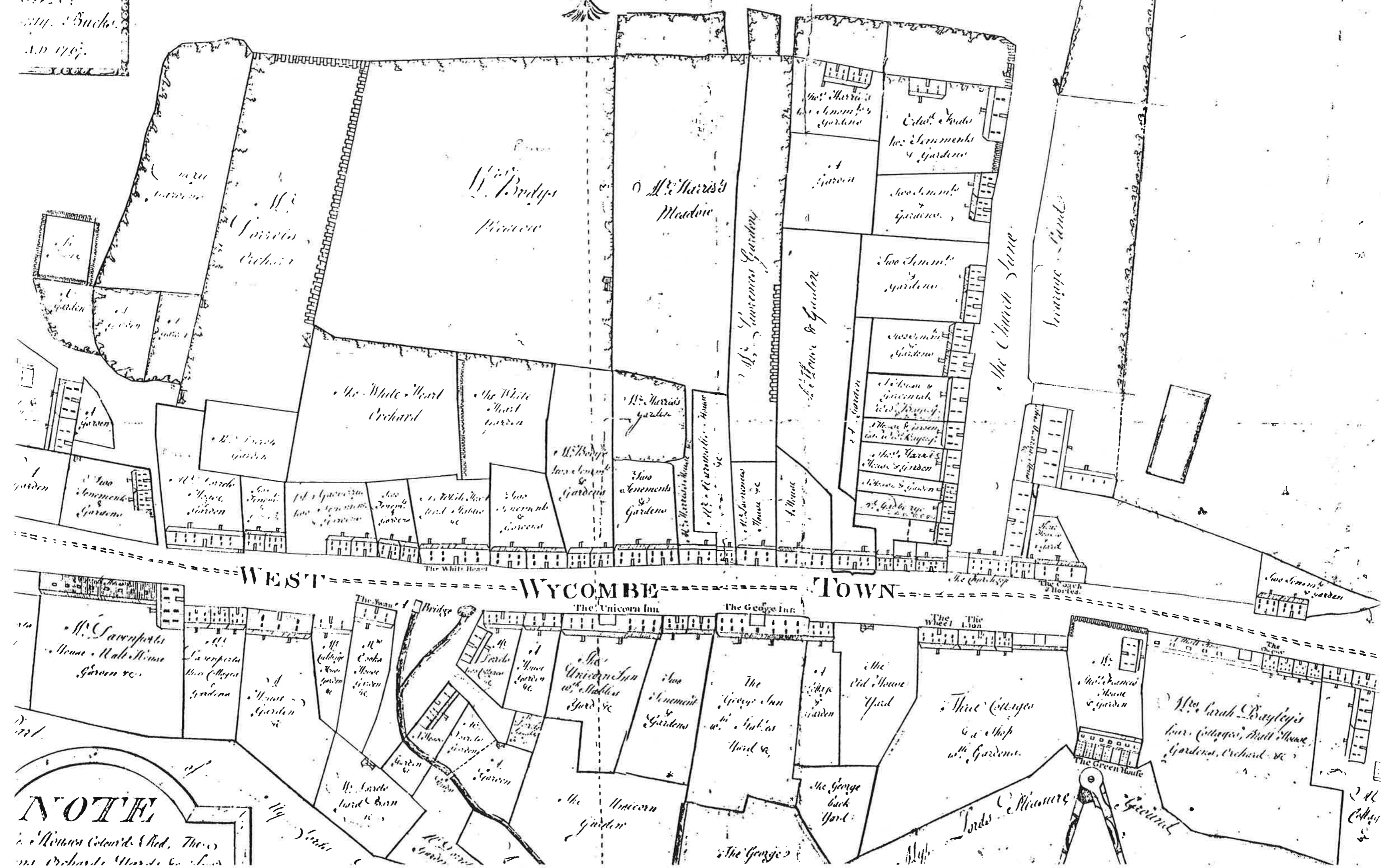
11

12

13

Plan
of
WYCOMBE
COVY:
1774. Bucke.
A.D. 1787.

Part of Church Mill,



NOTE

1. The House Colours & Shed. The
2. The House Colours & Shed. The

West Wycombe Tithe Map, 1849, Bucks. R.O. Ref.420.

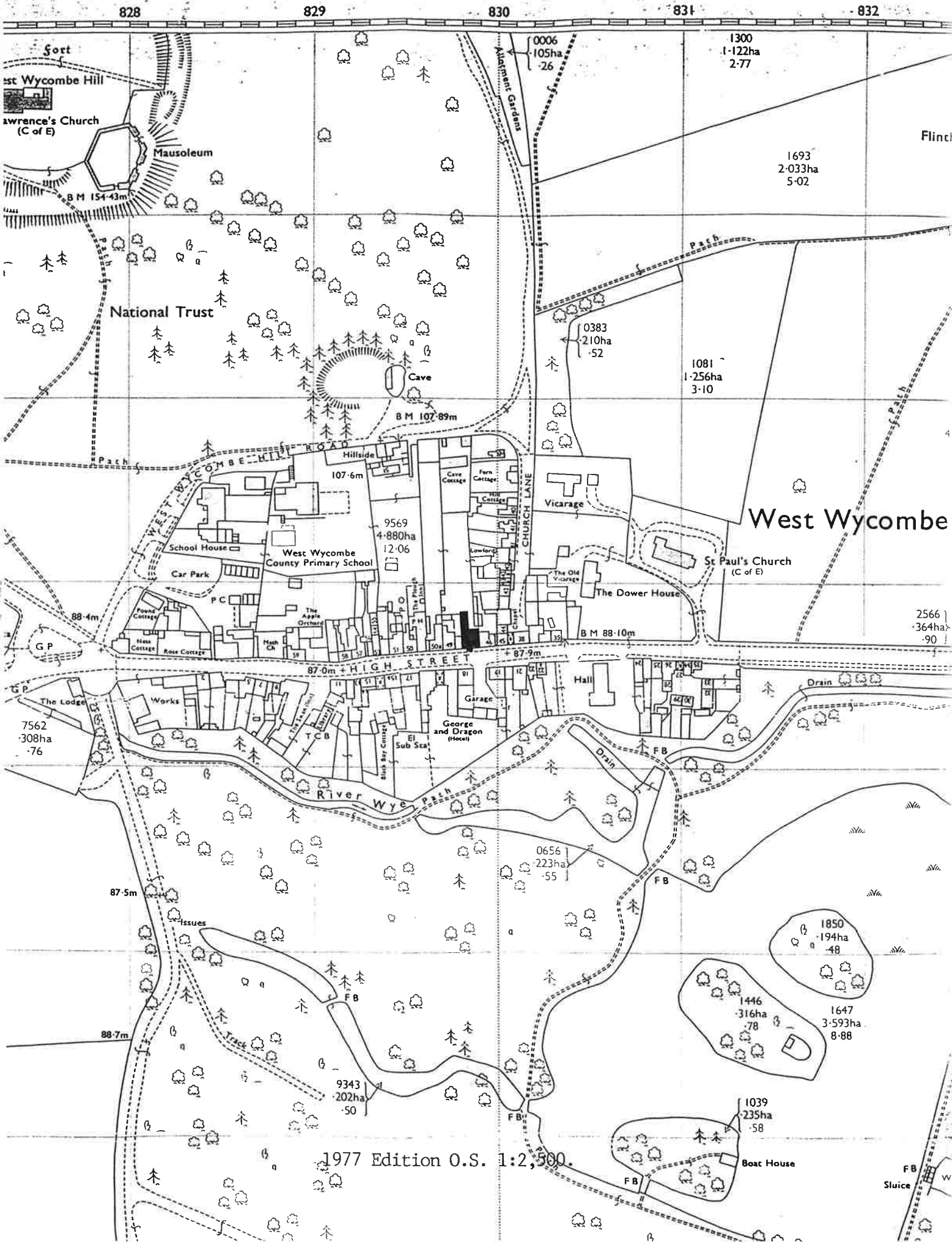


670 - Owner - Sir George Henry Dashwood M.P.
 Occupier - William Mead & William Bowler
 Two Houses and Yard - 0a Or 6p.

ORDNANCE SURVEY

SU 8295-8395

HIGH WYCOMBE M B & C P



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



115
51.292

CHURCH HILL

Camp
269
3.039

St. Lawrence's Church
(Parsonage)
270
1.208

Green Yard

Mausoleum
S.M. 266-7

Flinthall Farm

286
1.315

288
1.849

291
1.602

290
1.884

West Wycombe

School

282
1.877

283
1.375

The Apple Orchard

CAR PARK

284
1.711

285
1.427

St. Paul's Church

Vicarage

dadic 16
W. Corp.

Allotment
Gardens
279
1.743

GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY

The City... 20
University... 28
County Town... 16

220
17.708

315
17.714



FRONT ELEVATION R.243 N.10



FRONT VIEW FROM SOUTH EAST.
R.243 N.11



VIEW FROM SOUTH-WEST. R.243 N.12



REAR. ELEVATION. R.243 N.14

VIEW FROM
SOUTH WEST.
R.243 N.15



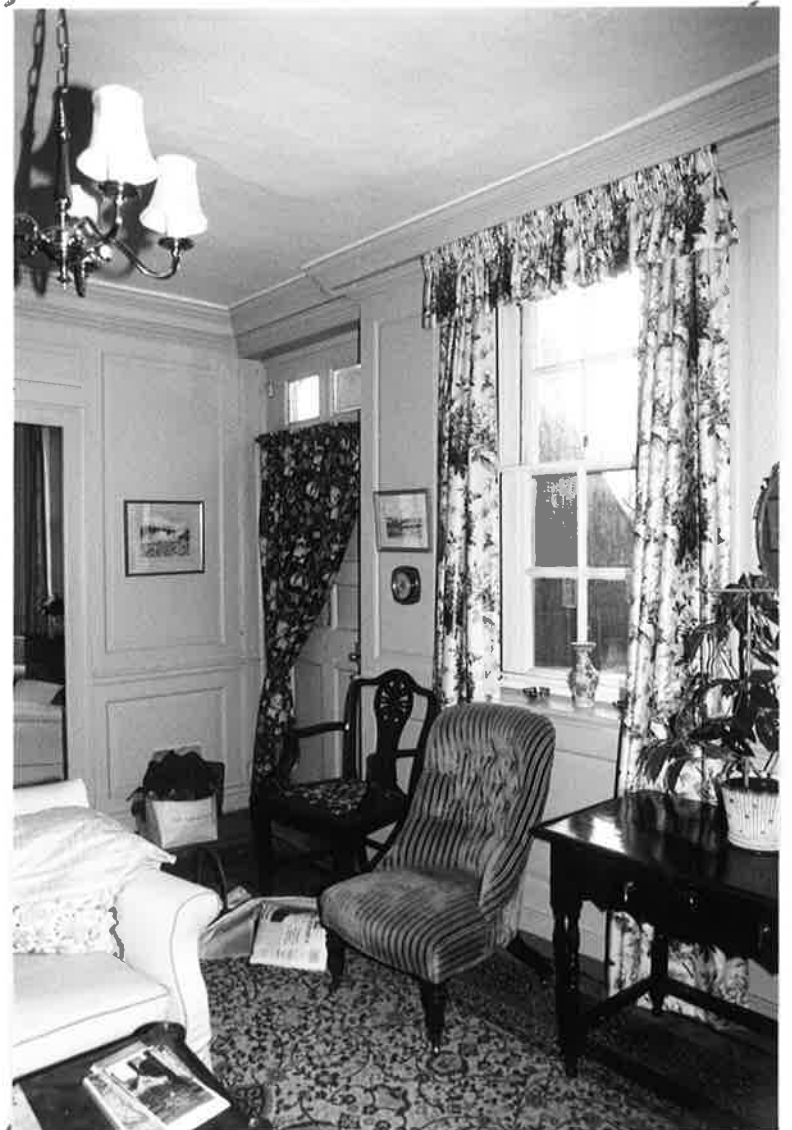
REAR WING
VIEWED FROM
EAST. R.243 N.13





KITCHEN ROOM C LOOKING SOUTH EAST. R.251 N.35

LIVING ROOM B
LOOKING SOUTH-EAST.
R.251 N.33





FIREPLACE, LIVING

ROOM A.

R.251 N.34



LANDING ROOM H

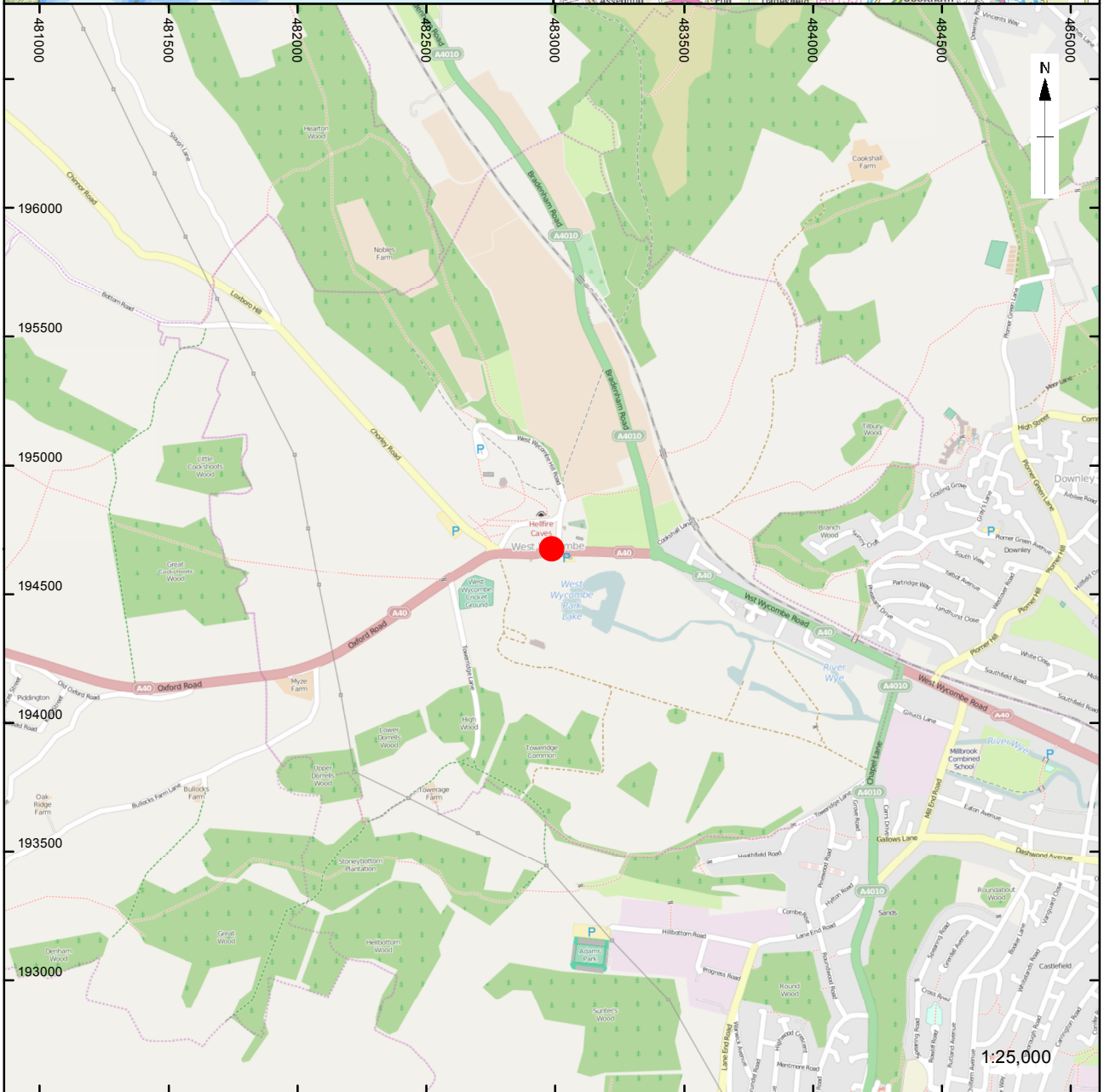
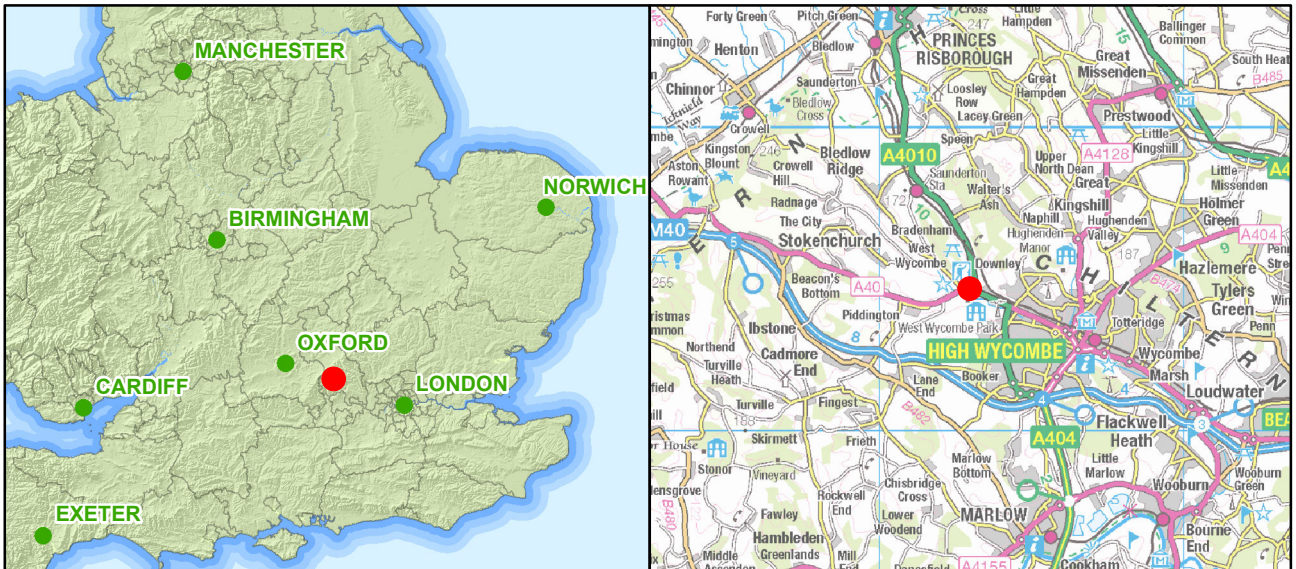
LOOKING SOUTH.

R.243 N.9



DOOR. M, ATTIC.

R.243 N.8



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Figure 1: Site location

\\Server1\invoice codes r thru z\W_codes\WBSBS\WBSBS_Steps_House\WBSBS_Figure01.mxd*hanmah.kennedy*15/07/2014



Figure 2: Extract from The Map of the Manor of West Wycombe (1698).
(Reproduced courtesy of the Dashwood Estate)

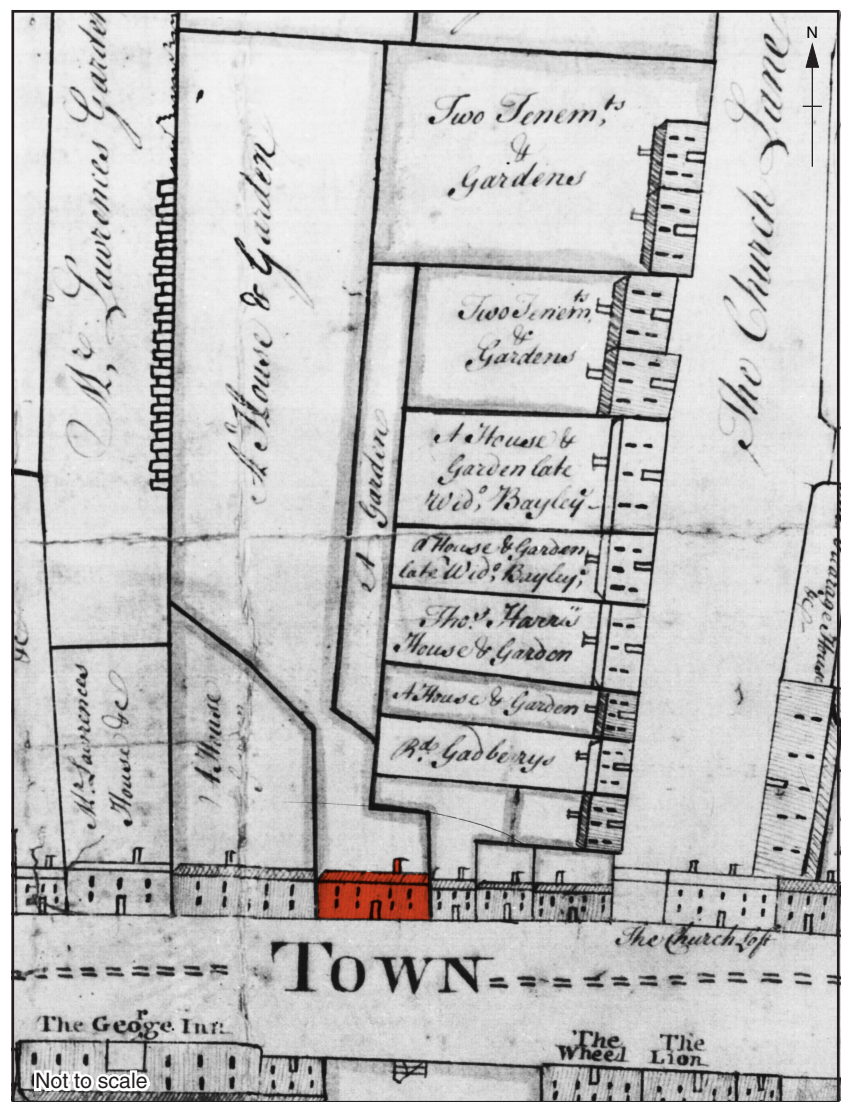


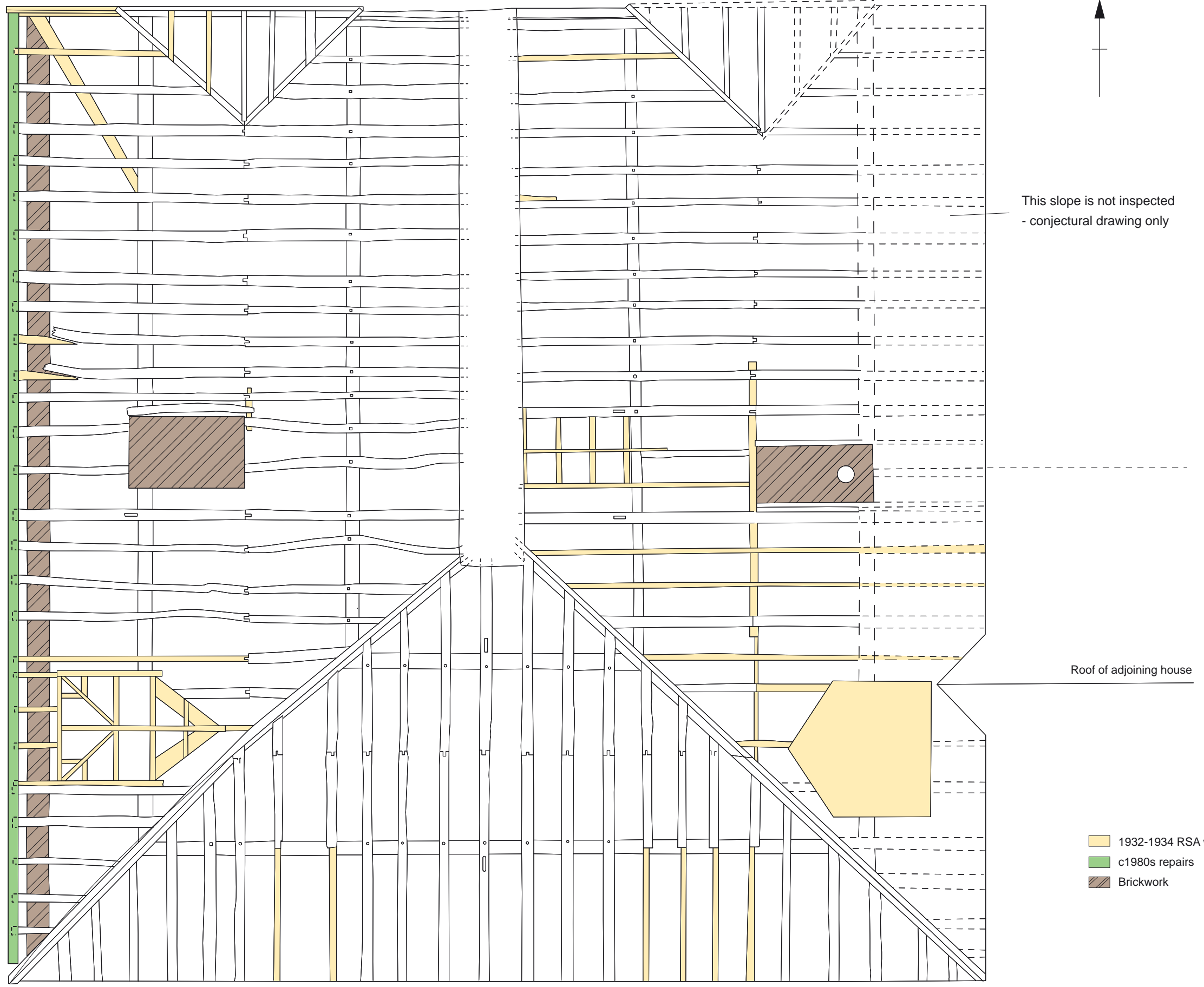
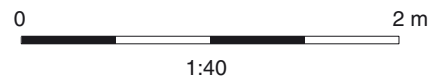
Figure 3: Extract from A Plan of West Wycombe Town (1767)



Figure 4: Extract from 1876 OS map



Figure 5: Extract from 1921 OS map



This slope is not inspected

Figure 6: Plan of roof showing phasing and key features

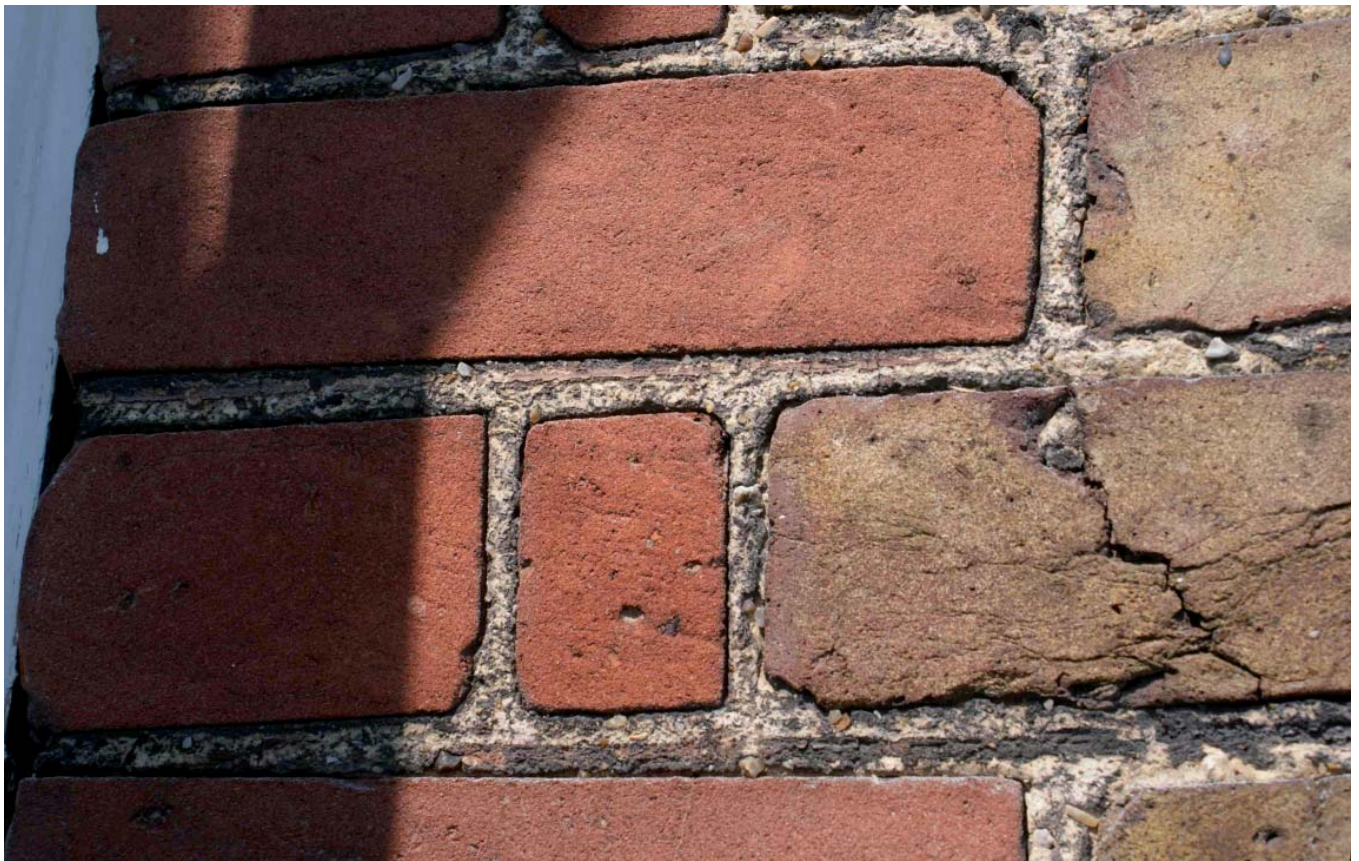


Plate 1: An example of the surviving penny-struck pointing on the front (south) elevation, first floor (courtesy of Gary Marshall)



Plate 2: Steps House following re-covering of the roof, south elevation



Plate 3: Dormer window in the east slope of the east wing



Plate 4: Dormer window/roof access in the valley between the wings



Plate 5: Empty mortice in the principal rafter in the south slope of the south range (courtesy of Gary Marshall)



Plate 6: End of the tie beam in the south slope of the south range (courtesy of Gary Marshall)



Plate 7: Leadwork in the valley obscuring the rafter ends



Plate 8: Half-hipped wings prior to stripping



Plate 9: Example of rafter joints at the apex, west slope of west wing



Plate10: Later support of the rafters at the apex next to the east wing chimney stack, west slope



Plate 11: Example of the pegs attaching the rafters to the purlin, west slope of the east wing



Plate 12: Empty mortice in the principal rafter in the north slope of the south range



Plate 13: Tenon of collar visible but the collar obscured, west slope of the west wing



Plate 14: Rot, reinforcement and sprockets, west slope of the west wing



Plate 15: Windbrace in the west slope of the west wing



Plate 16: Importer's marks, west slope of the east wing



Plate 17: Replacement lengths of rafters to former dormer in the south slope, west end of the south range (courtesy of Gary Marshall)



Plate 18: Replacement lengths of rafters to former dormer in the south slope, east end of the south range (courtesy of Gary Marshall)



Plate 19: Original lath and plaster wall and ceiling and the RSA boxing-in of the eaves, west slope of the west wing



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