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Hammerson UK Properties plc

# 2-4 London Street, Reading Berkshire

BUILDING INVESTIGATION, RECORDING AND  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF



OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT  
NOVEMBER 2000

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## **2-4 LONDON STREET, READING, BERKSHIRE**

### **BUILDING INVESTIGATION, RECORDING AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

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## 2-4 LONDON STREET, READING, BERKSHIRE

### BUILDING INVESTIGATION, RECORDING AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

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#### *Summary*

*A programme of building investigation and recording was undertaken at 2-4 London Street in Reading prior to its conversion to a wine bar. The on-site recording, together with additional historical research, revealed that the building was probably constructed between 1816 and 1840 on the footprint of an older building and possibly incorporated the cellar from the previous structure. The work also revealed that the building had been substantially altered after its initial construction. This work included the insertion of a chimney stack and the removal of a corner of the building to step it back from the River Kennet as well as the possible refacing of the building shortly after 1840. The two units were a single property until c.1888, occupied by beer retailers. For most of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century Number 2 was occupied by a hairdresser and Number 4 by a newsagents and tobacconists.*

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

1.1.1 The Oxford Archaeological Unit (OAU) was commissioned by Hammerson UK Property to undertake a programme of building investigation and recording at 2-4 London Street (SU 7176 7328) close to the centre of Reading. This resulted from the granting of planning permission for the conversion of the premises to a wine bar. Due to the historic and architectural significance of the building (Listed Grade II) permission was granted with the condition that a programme of recording be undertaken prior to the commencement of site works and that a further stage of investigation be undertaken as a watching brief during site works. This is in line with national planning guidance (PPG15).

### 1.2 Aims and objectives

1.2.1 The main aim of the recording project was to preserve 'by record' the building on the site prior to its alteration, concentrating on its structure, construction, layout, surviving fixtures and fittings and any evidence relating to its previous function. A previous assessment of the building undertaken by the OAU in August 1997 concluded that the building had undergone several major alterations since its original construction and the second main aim of the project was to investigate those developments, attempting to determine what remains of the original fabric.

### 1.3 Methodology

1.3.1 The recording was undertaken using three principal survey techniques: photographic, drawn and written. The photographic survey (black and white prints and colour slides) provided general shots, both internal and external, together with specific details of the building's construction and form. The drawn record amended an existing survey of the building adding archaeological detail to the floor plans and

elevations of the building. The written survey complemented the other two areas of recording providing additional descriptive and explanatory notes.

1.3.2 The initial on-site building recording work was undertaken on 26 and 27 November 1998 and subsequently on 29 April, 20 May, 4 June and 8 July 1999 as part of a watching brief undertaken during building works. The watching brief was primarily timed to record features exposed within the building but subterranean ground works were also observed.

1.3.3 Cartographic and documentary research was also undertaken as part of the project in order to gain a greater understanding of the development of the building. Each of the available Ordnance Survey maps, from the first edition of 1879, have been studied along with other maps including Speed's of 1611, Roque's of 1761 and Coate's of 1802. Trade directories of Reading have been consulted along with the principal secondary sources. A full bibliography is contained at the rear of the report. The site archive will be deposited with Reading Museum and will include slides, site notes, photographic negatives and prints of each photograph taken during the recording.

## 1.4 The site

1.4.1 2-4 London Street is located towards the south of Reading town centre, on the west side of London Street, immediately to the south of where the late 18<sup>th</sup>-century High Bridge crosses the canalised River Kennet (Fig 1). The street level rises significantly towards the northern end of the building due to the High Bridge immediately beyond. The ground level also rises from west to east, thus allowing the basement of the building to be accessed directly from the western facade but not from the east.

## 2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

### 2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 London Street is historically one of Reading's most elegant and handsome streets, providing a wide approach to the town centre from the south with No 2-4 at its northern end. The surviving historic buildings which line the street are largely Georgian, as is the High Bridge at the street's northern end, which was constructed in 1788 to replace an earlier structure. The northern end of the street has been substantially altered in recent years and the building forming this study is the only surviving historic building between the inner relief road and the River Kennet.

2.1.2 The route itself along which London Street passes is substantially older than the Georgian period and 2-4 London Street is close to where Reading originally developed along the north bank of the River Kennet. This is suggested by Harman's *The Parish of St Giles-in-Reading* based on a survey of the parish undertaken in 1552. A reconstructed map showing the area in the mid 16<sup>th</sup>-century shows that at this date London Street was well developed with buildings lining both sides of the road, including several close to the footprint of the existing building at No 2-4.

### 2.2 Historic maps

2.2.1 The collection of maps for Reading and 2-4 London Street is relatively good from early maps pre-dating the main subject of this study to later more directly relevant maps. Roque's map of 1761 does not appear to show a structure on the footprint of the existing building but Coate's map of 1802 (Fig 2) does show one of its



approximate location and dimensions. From other evidence (detailed below) it appears likely that this was not the existing building but was one replaced by it on the same footprint.

2.2.2 The next two maps, of 1813 and 1834 (Fig 3) do little more than confirm that there was a building at the current location of 2-4 London Street but the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1879 (Fig 4) is at a scale large enough (1:500) to accurately detail the outline of the building. This map shows that by this date the single storey extension to the south had been constructed but that the extension to the west had not. It also shows a small step (c.0.5 m) in the ground plan at the north-west corner of the building, only a quarter of the depth of the existing step. Together with physical evidence, this suggests that by this date the large step had probably been inserted into the ground plan and a small lean-to structure had been constructed to partially in-fill the step. The next available map (Goad, 1895, Fig 5) suggests that by this date there had been no further significant structural changes to the building but the second edition OS map of 1898 (Fig 6) shows that the small western extension had been constructed by this date. The 1910 OS map (Fig 7) shows what appears to possibly be a canopy to the west elevation, immediately to the south of the extension, extending over the doorway. There are no significant changes shown on the next map (1931) and the deeper step to the north-west is only first shown on the 1967 map (Fig 8), suggesting that the lean-to referred to above was demolished between these dates. There appear to have been no significant structural changes shown on the 1987 map.

2.2.3 The fact that the deep north-western step is first shown on the 1967 map does not mean that it is of a mid-20th century date because physical evidence shows that there was a small lean-to structure within this corner extending up to the water's edge which would not have been distinguished from the rest of the building on each map.

### 2.3 Photographs and illustrations

2.3.1 Of particular use in the documentary research were several photographs and illustrations showing 2-4 London Street at various dates in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The earliest was that contained within John Man's *History of Reading* (1816) and although it is primarily a scene of the High Bridge it also shows the roof and upper storey of 2-4 London Street to the rear of the bridge (Plate 1). The building shown appears to be brick-built, with a hipped roof and with three first floor windows to the east, each one immediately below the eaves. The windows are long and are suggestive of the horizontal lights of an upper workshop.

2.3.2 The building appears to have the same location, orientation and depth as the existing building but its fenestration is totally different and the building appears to be lower. The building in the illustration is also two storeys tall but it appears that it would have had low floor-to-ceiling heights as opposed to the relatively tall ceilings in the existing building. This strongly suggests that it was a previous building on the same (or similar) footprint rather than the same building prior to alterations to its existing structure. It is also significant to note that there was no inverted step in the ground plan of the building at its north-western corner as is the case with the current building. There are some similarities to the roof form and it is possible that the roof was at least partially reused from the previous building.

2.3.3 An engraving of the north end of London Street dated c.1840 (Plate 2) viewed from the south shows 2-4 London Street and this is clearly the same, tall structure as that existing today but apparently without the blind arcading present on the current building. The building shown is four bays wide with ground and first floor window

openings to the east; it has a hipped roof, a small single storey projection to the south (shorter than that existing when the current recording was undertaken), below a first floor window and a shop sign which, with the help of trade directories (see below), can be seen to say *Kennet Brewery*. One of the curiosities of this view, and also of the 1816 building is that there is no chimney stack visible in either building. There is a small battlement-like projection extending above the southern eaves, at the location of the existing chimney stack, but it appears to be too low to be a chimney. A copy of the engraving is held within Reading Local Studies Centre.

2.3.4 Two further views were studied dated 1880 and c.1900, both of which are held within Reading Local Studies Centre. Both were photographs taken from a similar angle as the c.1840 view and although it was possible to decipher details about the building from the original the quality and size of the photographs did not warrant reproduction here. The most notable difference between the c.1840 engraving and the late 19<sup>th</sup>-century photographs is the parapet, cornice and blind arcading on the later views which is also present on the current building. It may be that these features were added shortly after 1840 as an architectural embellishment but stylistically this seems unlikely. It appears more likely that the difference in the view is due to an inaccuracy in the 1840 engraving and that the blind arcading was an original feature of the building. The door case surrounding the main entrance to the east was certainly present in the c.1900 photograph and apparently also in the 1880 view but the large glass shop fronts which were in situ when the current recording was undertaken were not present in either. The southern chimney had been built/extended to its existing form and the large chimney stack towards the north end of the building had also been erected by 1880.

2.3.5 The final view of the building is much more recent consisting of a painting of the east elevation of the building in 1978, a copy of which is held within Reading Local Studies Centre. The building shown is similar to that which existed when the recording was undertaken with only superficial differences such as No 4 is shown to have been painted a yellow/ochre colour and the recessed arched panels around the first floor windows of No 2 are shown to have been red with the rest of the façade painted white.

## 2.4 Trade directories

2.4.1 When read in conjunction with the available historic maps the trade directories of Reading provide a useful and relatively clear history of the occupants of the buildings from the mid nineteenth century to 1976, the most recent directory held by Reading Local Studies Centre. A summary of the findings is included here but for greater detail see Appendix 1.

2.4.2 One of the main findings from the directories and the maps is that No 2-4 was a single building (No 2 London Street), from at least 1839 to 1888. This is shown by the 1879 1:500 map which shows no boundary between the properties, by the 1895 Goad map and by the directories which show that 4-6 London Street was a separate, detached property housing a chemists from 1865 to 1935.

2.4.3 During the period that it was a single building it was occupied by a series of beer retailers, sometimes under the title 'Kennet House', initially (and possibly subsequently) owned by the nearby Kennet Brewery. The obvious conclusion would be that it was a pub or inn but it is not labelled as such on the 1879 map. There does however appear to have been a public house within the existing No 4, when the 1895 map was produced and beer retailers continue to be listed in the directory as operating



from the property until 1901 and there are clear links between these occupants and those up to 1909. From 1911 until the last directory in 1976 No 4 was occupied by a series of newsagents and tobacconists. This confirms the 1978 painting mentioned above which shows Rogers and Shergold newsagents to the left hand side of the building.

- 2.4.4 When the building was divided into a pair of units (apparently in 1889) there was a short-lived attempt to use what is the existing No 2 by a china doll dealer and then in the 1890s by a confectioner and toy dealer. A more successful and longer lasting commercial venture began between 1899 and 1901 when a hairdresser, James Preston, began operating from No 2 and there was a hairdressers listed in each directory up to and including 1960. This would appear to fit with the large glass shop front, possibly added at the time of this change of use from confectioner to hairdresser. It is known from an auctioneers sales particulars (Appendix 3) advertising No 2 for sale in 1934 that Edwin Saunders (hairdresser) had leased the property on a 14 year lease in 1929.
- 2.4.5 The more recent directories show that No 2 housed the Women's Institute Market from 1964 until 1976 and the shop front sign which survived when the recording was undertaken shows that the most recent occupants were One World Crafts. The final occupants of No 4 were one to one recruitment but both properties were vacant at the start of the project.

### 3 2-4 LONDON STREET

#### 3.1 External description

- 3.1.1 2-4 London Street was a two storey (with a cellar) brick-built structure with a hipped roof clad in part with wooden-pegged, hand-made, red clay tiles. It was four bays wide and single storey extensions had been added to the south elevation and towards the north end of the west elevation. The plan of the building included a step (c.2 x 2 m) at the north-west corner which appeared to have been inserted at some time after the building's original construction due to the corner being too close to the river's edge. There were two secondary chimney stacks; the larger one was located off centre to the west, at the northern end of the horizontal ridge (Plate 6) and the other was flush with the southern end of the main building.
- 3.1.2 Although there is no single piece of evidence to conclusively prove that the inverted step was a secondary insertion it is such an awkward detail that it appears inconceivable that it was primary and there are pieces of evidence which strongly suggest it was secondary. There are no clear, full-height straight joints at the two corners of the inverted step but there have been substantial areas of rebuild on the west side of the building and it may even be that the entire west wall was rebuilt when the step was inserted. The main evidence suggesting that the step was secondary was that it was slightly off centre and only extended east as far as the chimney stack which is known to have been secondary. A slightly deeper step, in line with the spine of the building, would have made the roof construction at the north end of the building a lot simpler and it would have allowed the north end of the ground floor principal joist to be supported (see 3.3.9).
- 3.1.2 The **street (east) elevation** (Plate 3) had the remains of blind arcading with impost bands at first floor level to the three northern bays, largely truncated at ground floor level by the early 20<sup>th</sup>-century glass shop front to No 2. The central arch was slightly

depressed and surrounded a square-headed sash window which contrasted with the semi-circular sashes and arcade arches in the flanking bays. The arcading remained intact for its full height in the left hand bay enclosing a classical doorcase around the wide front door to No 4. In contrast to the arcading in the three northern bays the southern bay had flanking recessed walls rising to the simple cornice and parapet which extended across the whole elevation. The southern bay had a four-pane sash window at first floor with a cambered brick lintel, above an open plate-glass shop front at ground floor. As detailed above (see 2.3.4) there is the possibility that the blind arcading was a secondary feature added to the building shortly after 1840. The glass-plated shop fronts are known to have been added after c.1900.

- 3.1.3 The **rear (west) elevation** (Plate 4) was plainer and unpainted unlike the other three elevations. Each of the three bays towards the south had a first floor sash window beneath segmental brick lintel, the fourth bay having been removed by the secondary step in the building's plan. At ground floor there was a similar window in the southern bay and two doorways in the central bay leading to the cellar and ground floor. The northern bay had been obscured by a single storey brick projection added in the late 19<sup>th</sup>-century, with two sash windows in its west face. The flashing partially survived of a lean-to which adjoined this projection to the south and which enclosed the ground floor door. A large, secondary, iron tie-bar anchor, consisting of a horizontal member and three verticals, was located towards the centre of the first floor and a circular cast-iron tie bar plate was at the northern end, immediately adjacent to the projection. An extra brick course had been added immediately beneath the wall plate in the northernmost 2 m of the west elevation suggesting that the primary wall immediately beneath the wall plate was sagging and therefore an extra course was inserted as a measure to prop up the roof.
- 3.1.4 There was a full height straight joint towards the southern end of the façade (a single brick from the south-west corner at first floor level and two bricks in at ground floor) suggesting that either the south wall or the west wall had been substantially rebuilt (Plate 9). There is other evidence of work undertaken to the west wall such as straight joints, inconsistent coursing and the large step at the north-west corner and it seems most likely that it was the west wall which was rebuilt.
- 3.1.5 The stepped-back portion of the west elevation was of unpainted brick and had a ground floor door (visible internally) blocked by a 1960s (?) board advertising the newsagents formerly within the building. Above this board was the sloped outline of a former lean-to roof at the ground floor partially filling the ground plan of the step. The northern extent of the structure is shown by a vertical imprint 0.5 m from the edge of the building, apparently confirming the map evidence that this structure had been erected by 1879.
- 3.1.6 The **north elevation** (Plate 7) was headed by the secondary cornice and parapet which wrapped around from the east as far as the step in the ground plan. The elevation contained a single window at ground floor directly above a similar feature at basement level, towards the centre of the building. Each window was beneath a segmental brick lintel. Two iron tie bars are visible at a level between the two windows located just behind the surface of the northern wall and mortared over. Plain cross tie-bar anchors are visible at their western ends. These are clearly secondary possibly dating to the insertion of the step in the plan. There were several former openings and other pieces of phasing evidence in the recessed face of the north elevation. These included a blocked opening (60 x 60 cm) at the base of the wall, a blocked opening c.1.75 m wide between ground and first floor and a long

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straight joint (25 courses) at second floor level close to the central wall of the building.

- 3.1.7 The cornice and parapet again extended around the front half of the **south elevation** (Plate 5) and were terminated by a secondary chimney stack. At ground floor level a secondary projection with a shallow lean-to roof had been added, with two slim buttressing piers articulating the southern end. Although it is barely visible it is possible to apparently discern the blocked first floor window towards the east side of the south elevation which is shown on the c.1840 engraving mentioned above. It also appears that the battlement-like projection to the south elevation (also shown on the engraving) was incorporated into the existing chimney stack.

### 3.2 General plan

- 3.2.1 As referred to above the building was formerly a single property and this is reflected in the inconsistent property division within the cellar, ground and first floor and also in the location of the primary staircase which formerly served the united building. At ground floor level the boundary was off-centre (towards the south) in the front half of the building but to the rear it stepped towards the north around the primary staircase. At first floor level the boundary was located close to the central line of the building to the north of the staircase. The cellar was almost entirely the property of No 4 with only a small room (C6) at the north-east corner of the building belonging to No 2.
- 3.2.2 The primary staircase was towards the rear of the building (G3, F5) and consisted of a relatively plain flight rising from the cellar to ground level and a more elegant dog-leg staircase from ground to first floor. There was a room at the southern end of the building (F1) at the intermediate level of the staircase. The staircase was characteristic of an early-19<sup>th</sup> century date with button-headed newel posts and swan-necked handrail. Boarding had been nailed over square-section balustrades.

### 3.3 Cellar (Fig 9)

- 3.3.1 The cellar extended beneath the full extent of the building except for the two single storey extensions. As referred to earlier it is believed that the building was pre-dated by a older structure on the same (or similar) footprint and it may be that the cellar was incorporated from this building. Possibly marking the extent of the previous structure was a 4 cm deep ledge which extended around the edge of the cellar at external ground level. Thus this ledge stepped up repeatedly along the east wall as the external ground level rose towards the bridge. The ledge continued along the south wall (at 90 cm above internal floor level) and along the west wall. It appears possible/likely that the previous structure was demolished down to ground level and then rebuilt.
- 3.3.2 The partially-surviving, primary ground floor structure, visible from the cellar consisted of a principal joist, 16 cm (h) x 18 cm (w), along the spine of the building supported by three posts and two rudimentary scarf joints. The primary, softwood common joists appeared to largely survive in-situ although several additional strengthening joists had been added. The joists were exposed and painted with no evidence of a former ceiling except for within G5 in the north-west corner of the building (see below).
- 3.3.3 It is likely that the cellar would originally have been more open-plan than when the survey was undertaken. The internal walls all appear to be secondary and there was no clear evidence found of previous internal walls. As detailed earlier the building



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appears to have originally been a public house and a large open-plan cellar such as this would have been used for storage, particularly of casks of beer.

- 3.3.4 The cellar was accessed from a low door within the west elevation, utilising the lower ground level to this side of the building with three steps leading down into C1 a relatively large room extending beneath the southern third of the building. No evidence was found to suggest that the room had at any stage been used for anything other than storage or for the most utilitarian of purposes. The unplastered brick walls were roughly painted, the head height was low (1.8 m from cellar floor to underside of ground floor boards), there were no lath marks on the underside of the exposed joists and there was an open soakaway drain (ceramic-lined, cast-iron cover, 19 cm diameter) within the uneven, brick-paved floor. A north-south beam (18 cm wide x 16 cm high) was supported within the room by an octagonal-section post and at the southern end of the building by a brick pier which also formed part of an arch supporting the fireplace above. Primary softwood joists of a rough quality were laid over the beam with a series of short, additional secondary joists added at the centre of the building directly above the principal joist. There appears to have been a blocked doorway at the west end of the southern elevation and at the same corner the straight joint visible externally was also apparent. At this point there was a corner pier with a corbelled base which projected slightly into the room. There was also a straight joint within the east wall, c.2.05 m from the south end of the building, which extended vertically from the joists down to the ledge referred to above.
- 3.3.5 Room C2 (Plate 13) was on the east side of the central third of the building and was divided from C1 by a secondary (late-19<sup>th</sup>-century?), single skin brick wall with 3 horizontal timbers tying the wall together. The western wall was formed by a possibly late-19<sup>th</sup>-century stud partition immediately to the west of the principal joist which extended along the spine of the building. The beam was supported by a simple, rectangular-section softwood post on a brick base, and it had a rudimentary stepped scarf 75 cm to the north of the southern wall shared with C1. The 20 cm step in the principal joist created by the scarf allowed a slightly greater head height within the main part of the room (2 m to underside of the ground floor boards). An apparently-primary hatch (c.1 m x 1 m) survived towards the centre of the room which consisted of two long flat joists supporting a covering board. The hatch appeared to be the same date as the primary floor boards which survived in situ beneath the secondary floor within G2.
- 3.3.6 C3 was to the west of the central section of the building and contained the base of the staircase and corridor between rooms. The staircase appeared to be primary and was of a less decorative nature than that between ground and first floor. The square-section balusters were exposed and the staircase was flanked with simple panelling. In the northern section of C3 there was a small hatch opening in the west wall of the building. The shutter was no longer in situ when the survey was undertaken but its former existence was suggested by two iron top-hinges.
- 3.3.7 C4 was a small WC off C3, formed of modern brickwork and had a small, square window immediately beneath the ceiling which had been previously been obscured by external boarding.
- 3.3.8 C5 was located at the north-west corner of the building immediately to the south of the inserted step within the ground plan and it was the only part of the cellar with a lath and plastered ceiling suggesting that at some stage it was used for a purpose more formal than just storage. Due to its small size the uses to which the room could have been put would have been limited, especially considering that the ceiling was still low

(1.76 m above ground). The walls were painted rather than plastered, and the floor was roughly paved in a similar fashion to the rest of the cellar. The room would presumably have been a small office or something similar. There was a former opening c.1.4 m wide, infilled with rough brickwork, towards the centre of the west wall and there was also a partial straight joint within the north wall, c.1 m from the north-west corner, suggesting that the corner had been rebuilt, as is strongly suspected. The east side of the room was formed by the brick chimney stack which was diverging away from the north wall of the room. Within the chimney stack there was a simple bricked-up fireplace with an arched iron lintel and segmental brick arch. The opening would have been 61 cm wide and 87 cm from the north wall. At the north end of the west face of the chimney stack there was what appeared to be a truncated relieving arch which abutted the east-west wall of the recess. As detailed elsewhere both the chimney and the recess wall are believed to have been secondary and the truncated arch possibly suggests that the chimney was built first at a greater width than that existing, and this was then truncated by the wall of the recess.

- 3.3.9 C6 was a small room at the north-east corner of the building, the only part of the cellar accessible from No 2 via a simple timber-lined hatch. There was a full height recess in the northern wall, towards the central spine of the building, which had been bricked up to its lower half and had had a window inserted above. It appears likely that this would originally have been a doorway allowing access to the river. The southern half of the west wall was formed by the secondary chimney stack. The southern wall was of clearly later brick (early-20<sup>th</sup> century?) and abutted the external east wall and the brick chimney stack at the centre of the building. The principal floor joist which ran north-south along the spine of the building extended half way into G6 and the post which would have supported it (c.1 m into the room) was no longer in-situ when the survey was undertaken. The beam terminated with a stepped end apparently confirming that at this point there would have been a scarf joint similar to that detailed above within C2 and that a further beam would have extended to the north wall. The construction of the secondary chimney stack and the inversion of the north-west corner of the building resulted in a brick wall directly adjacent to the beam in C6 thus making it redundant. It is also significant to note that when the beam extended it would have continued directly beneath the hatch. This confirms that the hatch must have been secondary and that C6 was originally united with the rest of the cellar.
- 3.3.10 The cellar floor within C6 consisted of a single layer of brick pavers laid on mortar and set of a sub-base of compacted chalk and small stones. The lowest three course of the east wall stepped-out by 5 cm and each of the lowest four courses of the north wall each stepped out slightly beyond that above. The stepped foundation of the north wall continued around the east jamb of the doorway in the north wall. The limited foundations may have been the cause of a substantial crack within C6 towards the north end of the east wall.

### 3.4 Ground floor (Fig 10)

- 3.4.1 G1 (Plate 11) was the main ground floor room within No 4. It had a large plate-glass shop front facing on to the road and fixings survived of former roller shutters. There was a single timber casement window to the rear (east) wall of the room. The walls were covered with artex-covered tongue and groove boarding, beneath a mid-height dado rail and plaster above. The principal floor joist which supported the first floor consisted of a pair of softwood beams (each 15 x 6 cm) bolted together which spanned the room east-west. The room was formerly divided by an east-west partition (which had been removed before the survey was undertaken) c.1 m to the



- south of this beam which would have created a lobby for the front door. The former partition marked the line of a 49 cm step within the ceiling (higher to the south) but there is evidence (detailed below in 3.5) that the area of raised ceiling may formerly have extended a further 1 m south to the principal joist. It was previously possible to access the rear part of the ground floor (G3) directly from the lobby via a door in the west wall of the lobby. This had been covered with plasterboard when the survey was undertaken.
- 3.4.2 There were two blocked fireplaces adjacent to each other within the southern wall each one below a segmental brick arch and cast iron lintel bar. Beside each fireplace, adjacent to the east and west walls of the building were two large panelled doors which allowed access to the southern extension (G5). The Goad map shows that this arrangement of fireplaces and doors must post-date 1895 and was probably inserted when the pub was converted to a newsagents and the southern extension was extended, believed to have been in c.1910. The two fireplaces and two doors suggest that when the c.1910 conversion was undertaken G1 was initially divided by a north-south partition with a small newsagents to the front of the building and accommodation to the rear.
- 3.4.3 **G2** (Plate 12) was the main ground floor room in No 2, divided from G1 by a stud partition of late 19th-century date with modern board covering. It occupied the front (east) half of the property with a large plate glass shop front facing onto the street possibly dating to the conversion of the property to a hairdressers in c.1901. The floor level within G2 was 33 cm higher than in G1 partially due to the insertion of secondary joists on to the previous floor boards which raised the floor by 15 cm but the previous (primary?) floor in G2 would still have been 18 cm higher than that in G1 due to the scarf and step in the principal floor joist visible in C2 (see 3.3.5 above). A cellar hatch existed within the floor towards the northern end of the room allowing the only access down into the small C6. As detailed above (see 3.3.9) it is known that this hatch is secondary dating to around the turn of the century. There was a simple brick brick-lined fireplace with no mantel surround facing onto G2 utilising the secondary chimney stack.
- 3.4.4 There was formerly a doorway within the short, external west wall of G2 at the northern end of the building. The tongue and groove boarding, which clad the rest of the walls in the room, continued across the lower half of the doorway suggesting that it had not been used as a door for many years. The upper half of the door was covered with a simple piece of hardboard and externally the whole door was covered with a 1960s (?) advertising board (Plate 10). The door was well above the external ground level to this side of the building but it is known that until the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century there was a lean-to structure within this area at cellar and ground floor level.
- 3.4.5 Two primary softwood principal floor joists (E-W) were exposed during the works above the central section of the ground floor and apparently primary common joists which passed over these beams. The joists to the rear (western) half of the building were painted white and were without lath marks in contrast to those to the front which were unpainted and with lath marks. Thus the central section to the front of the building had a ceiling while that to the rear did not. To the underside to the southernmost of the two principal joists (directly over front door to G1) were attached modern ceiling joists extending northwards into No 2 as far as the secondary staircase.
- 3.4.7 **G3** consisted of a small room at the rear (west) of the building which had been incorporated into No 4 when the property was divided. The room was the circulation

hub of No 4 and contained staircases to the first floor and cellar and doors to G1, the lobby and outside. The surfaces of the walls were originally lath and plastered but when the survey was undertaken they had been partially replaced by modern plasterboard. There was a 12 cm step within the floor reflecting the step within the floor joists visible from beneath in the cellar. A 20<sup>th</sup> century sink had been inserted into G3 at its north-east corner.

- 3.4.8 G4 was the area to the rear of No 2 and was partly within the primary building and partly within the extension to the north-west which appears to have been constructed between 1895 and 1898. An L-shaped staircase was added when the property was divided into two (c.1890) which would originally have been against the external wall but which awkwardly projected into the room after the construction of the north-west projection. The primary ground floor structure appeared (from below) to have survived but the floor boarding was all of the same date, presumably dating to the construction of the projection. The floor had not been overlain by later joists and boards like that within G2 to the front of the building. The chimney stack was utilised from within G4 by a fireplace formed by two brick arches on a cast iron arched plate. The surround had been removed.
- 3.4.9 The primary first floor survived above G4, initially obscured by a secondary ceiling, with white-painted joists similar to those above G2. Three principal joists (E-W) were exposed within G4 close together at c.1.25 m centres. In the south face of the southernmost joist was a distinctive empty mortice (Plate 20) matching a similar feature in the north face of the adjacent beam to the south (above G3). Each mortice was c.16 cm wide x 11 cm high, with a sloped soffit and central peg intact, and was flush with the underside of the beam. Unfortunately most of the ceiling within the north-eastern part of the building had not been removed when the watching brief was undertaken so it is not known whether there were other similar features across the floor but it was possible to see that there were none within c 1.25 m in either direction. The mortices appeared to approximately line up with one another and it is possible that they housed joists which would have supported common ceiling joists. It may however be that the beams have been reused and the mortices may relate to a previous building.

*North-west projection*

- 3.4.10 A single-storey, rectangular plan brick projection was added to the northern end of the western face of the building apparently between 1895 and 1898. The structure was supported 70 cm above the low external ground level by three pairs of machine-cut softwood beams (10 x 22 cm) set on two brick piers (30 x 30 cm) with simple infilling panels between them held by 20<sup>th</sup> century metal brackets. The panels to the north and west were of sheet metal while that to the south was of hardboard and was severely charred suggesting a fire apparently in the removed lean-to roofed structure to the south. The suggestion of a fire is supported by the blackening of the brickwork either side of the sloped line of the flashing of the previous structure. There were two timber sash windows to the west face of the projection and one to the north.
- 3.4.11 When the projecting bay had been demolished as part of the conversion it was apparent that the secondary brick structure had been inserted into a wide opening within the primary building. Thus the primary brickwork abutted the secondary rather than vice-versa. The opening was created by a deep softwood lintel and above this lintel, directly in line with the north edge of the first floor window, was a 6 course-tall straight joint in the primary west wall of the building. Two courses of unusually thin (5 cm) brick extended from the top of the straight joint to the north-western corner of the building. The thin bricks corbeled out slightly, becoming

gradually more pronounced towards the corner of the building and it is possible that this is evidence that the wall beneath this corbel was at some stage rebuilt.

### ***South extension***

- 3.4.12 At the south end of the primary building there was a single-storey extension, c.3 m long with an almost flat roof and brick walls which were rendered externally except for the northern part of the west wall (Plate 5). The extension consisted of a single room (G5) internally clad in tongue and groove boarding, with a large early-20<sup>th</sup> century sash window in the east wall and a smaller sash of the same date awkwardly squeezed in at the southern end of the west wall. When the boarding was removed a green-coloured wall paper with a floral design was revealed beneath. The room was accessed from G1 by two panelled doors and beneath the western one the opening within the primary wall extended down to ground level (62 cm below ground floor) but this had been in-filled with later brick. This may suggest an original floor level within the extension lower than that existing when the survey was undertaken. To the centre of the west wall was a fireplace with a early/mid-20th century tiled surround and a door-shaped recess immediately to the north of this.
- 3.4.13 The extension abuts and therefore post-dates the main building and the windows, fireplace and much of the structure of the extension appear to date to around the turn of the century. The c.1840 illustration (Plate 2) however shows a similar, apparently slightly shorter structure existing at that date and the first edition Ordnance Survey map (1879) is at a scale large enough to also clearly show a structure slightly shorter than that which existed when the current recording programme was undertaken. The fact that there had previously been a shorter structure was confirmed by the survival beneath the floor of G5 of the lowest section of the original south wall of the extension, c.1.25 m to the north of the modern south wall. The wall would have lined up with the south edge of the fireplace. It was also confirmed by the difference in brickwork in the southern part of the west elevation. The chimney was presumably retained from the previous structure and the door-shaped recess, immediately to the north of the chimney, may also relate to the earlier structure. Map evidence suggests that the extension was rebuilt and lengthened between 1898 and 1909/10 probably towards the later date when the pub closed and No 4 was converted to a newsagents.
- ### **3.5 First floor (Fig 11)**
- 3.5.1 **F1** was located at the south end of the main building and was accessed from a landing three-quarters of the way up the dog-legged primary staircase at a level 71 cm beneath the rest of the first floor. This created a high floor to ceiling height within F1 of 3.2 m. The difference in floor level between F1 and the adjacent room (F2) allowed a low, floor-boarded cupboard (1 m deep x 60 cm high) beneath F2 accessed from F1 by two doors (Fig 12, Plate 19). The small doors (41 cm wide x 53 high) were quite elegant with a moulded frame, an iron latch and 2 long iron hinges. They were integral with the tall skirting board surrounding the room and appeared consistent with an early-20<sup>th</sup> century date, possibly to around the time when the pub was converted to newsagents (c.1910) and the lobby created downstairs.
- 3.5.2 The first floor joists beneath F2 were visible within the cupboard and they all showed lath marks except for the westernmost two joists. This suggests that the area of raised ceiling to the northern section of G1 formerly extended c.1 m further south as far as the principal floor joist. It also confirms that the front half of the building had a ceiling while the rear did not. The lower first floor structure within the southern part of the building (F1) was not double, the floor boards above and the ceiling below were both attached to the same joists. A secondary, iron tie-bar was visible within the



room (F1) immediately adjacent to the internal wall, 2.11 m above floor level. The bar had a screw joint at its centre. There was a brick-lined fireplace within the south wall with a cast-iron arched lintel. The fireplace appeared to be of the same date as the pair of fireplaces below in G1 which almost certainly post-date 1895 (see 3.4.2 above). The recess within the east wall for the four-light sash window extended down to the floor.

3.5.3 **F2** was located within No 4 at the top of the primary staircase. Each of the internal walls were stud partitions covered with lath and plaster and the floor boards were lino-covered. The ceiling joists are of 20<sup>th</sup>-century date. (See 3.4.9 above for description of first floor structure).

3.5.4 **F3** consisted of a single room above the front half of No 2. The room was illuminated by two softwood sash windows in the east wall: a four light rectangular sash to the south and a 6 light horizontal sash to the north. An early (primary ?) ceiling survived in-situ beneath modern boards laid on battens. The 19<sup>th</sup>-century lath and plaster ceiling had been covered with a paper with a circular design. The floor was covered with large secondary boards. There was a fireplace with a 20<sup>th</sup> century glazed brick surround.

3.5.5 **F4** was a small room at the rear of No 2 with a modern ceiling c.20 cm below a possibly primary ceiling similar to that within F3. The opening survived within the west wall of a removed window and there was also a blocked window within the north wall. The room contained a modern WC and was formerly divided from the staircase by a partition, removed before the survey was undertaken.

### 3.6 **Roof**

3.6.1 The roof was hipped to its southern end and although the northern end would probably also been originally hipped the inserted recess in the building had removed the western half of the northern hip. The roof was covered with clay tiles fixed to softwood rafters (10 x 5.5 cm) by a combination of primary hand-made cut nails and 20<sup>th</sup> century machine-made nails. There was a single softwood, clasped purlin (Plate 18) to each slope supported by three queen-post trusses. Both queen posts survived in the central and southern truss (Plate 14) but only one survived in the northern truss. There would originally have been four trusses prior to the insertion of the chimney stack and the recess.

#### *Trusses*

3.6.2 The principal rafters (15 x 10 cm), collars (15 x 7 cm) and queen posts (10 x 7 cm) were of sawn softwood (one post possibly reused elm) while the tie-beams were of reused oak with possibly 16<sup>th</sup>-century scribed carpenters marks relating to a set of sawn through pegged tenons as well as later chiselled marks relating to the existing dove-tailed queen-posts (Plate 18). The central and northern tie-beams consisted of pairs of beams (each beam measuring c.28 x 14 cm) bolted together with two square-headed bolts. The southern tie-beam was a single beam. Each of the ends of the tie-beams lapped over the wall-plate and were additionally secured by probably secondary iron ties (Plate 16) fixed between tie-beam and wall plate with thick hand-made nails.

3.6.3 The principal rafters abutted each other directly while the ridge piece (which secured the common rafters) terminated to either side supported by a triangular yoke. The ridge piece was of thin section softwood and noticeably diminished in height from c.20 cm at its northern end to c.10 cm at the south. The wall plates (16 x 12 cm) were

of reused softwood with apparently 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> century carpenters marks and each section of the wall plate was scarfed with a secret bridled joint visible from above (Plate 22). At the north-western corner of the building the wall-plate overhung the western wall by c.15 cm whereas at the centre of this elevation it was flush with the wall below. This may be due to sagging but the wall towards this corner has undergone considerable rebuilding and this may be the cause of the non-alignment. Softwood corner braces strengthened the south-east and south-west hips.

- 3.6.4 The first floor ceiling joists were 8 cm high by 6 cm deep and there was a structural division in the joists above F1 and F2. Both sets of joists appeared primary but those above F1 were slightly higher than those above F2 and the joists rested on a softwood plate supported by the studs of the partition below.
- 3.6.5 The condition of the softwood roof timbers as a whole was poor particularly the lower ends of the rafters. The southern hip had slumped so that the apex had come away from the end of the ridge piece despite the insertion of two softwood sloped props between the southern-most tie-beam and the roof hips.
- 3.6.6 When it was possible to investigate the roof of the building closely the secondary parapet to the street (east) façade had been demolished but the similar northern section remained. The coping consisted of a row of up-standing, triangular-headed special bricks which were set upon two layers of clay roof tiles. These were above an up-turned metal tie which braced the feature and secured lead flashing which lined the gully behind. Below this there was a stone fronting cornice which was behind an inner layer of very rough brickwork barely bonded with mortar.

#### ***Roof analysis***

- 3.6.7 Analysis of the roof confirms that both the recess at the north-western corner of the building and the adjacent chimney stack must have been secondary alterations and it also appears to confirm that the stack was inserted before the recess. The off-centre chimney stack was shown to be secondary by trimming and alterations to the roof timbers in this area. The stack was located to the west of the spine of the building, immediately to the north of the northern-most truss, and to allow its insertion the original ridge piece within this bay was removed and replaced by short secondary extensions to the primary rafters rising to the chimney stack. Thus the east slope extended above the height of the ridge piece (Plate 17). On the west slope each rafter was cut immediately above the purlin and replaced by a short rafter extending up to the stack (Plate 21). If the chimney had been primary it would structurally have been much more logical to cut the rafters immediately adjacent to the stack and cantilever them over the purlin but presumably it was necessary to create an opening at this point to allow the construction of the stack.
- 3.6.8 The recess only extends east as far as the secondary stack (rather than continuing slightly further to the spine of the building) and the fact that its form relates to the stack appears to suggest that the recess could not have pre-dated the stack. The fact that the recess wall abuts the stack shows that they are not contemporary with each other so the recess must post-date the stack.
- 3.6.9 It appears that when the chimney stack and recess were inserted much of the northern end of the roof was rebuilt. The north-eastern ridge-piece of the hip was clearly secondary because it extended up above the main ridge piece to the chimney stack on a slightly different line to the previous, primary hip ridge. The rafters on the northern slope were of a slightly smaller section (8 x 6 cm) than the rafters to the east slope and it appears likely that they were all insertions dating to the construction of the



stack. The rafters on this slope adjacent to the western recess wall were definitely secondary because they extended up above the height of the primary ridge piece. The rafter furthest to the west was constructed within the recess wall and was of a larger section (10 x 7 cm) suggesting that it must date to the insertion of the recess rather than the construction of the chimney stack. Also suggesting that the rafters on the northern slope were all secondary was the lack of cut nails visible. The roof tiles were almost all supported by later round-headed machine-made nails.

- 3.6.10 The possibility should also be acknowledged that the roof may have been dismantled and reused from the previous building which is believed to have been on the site. As referred to previously the building shown on the 1816 illustration appears to be on the same footprint and with a similar roof as that existing when the survey was undertaken.

### **3.7 Ground works**

- 3.7.1 The watching brief was largely timed and targeted to record features within the building exposed by the construction work and these findings have been incorporated into the report. Intrusive ground work was also undertaken however to the rear of the building, relating to the modern extension, and these subterranean works were also observed for structural features as part of the intermittent watching brief of the site.
- 3.7.2 The excavation work necessary to the rear of the building was limited due to the substantially lower external ground level in this area compared to the ground floor level of the main building and that of the proposed extension to the rear of the building. The shuttering and reinforcing for the base for the new structure was set largely upon the existing ground.
- 3.7.3 The intrusive works observed largely consisted of piling. There was a shallow excavation adjacent to the northern half of the west elevation of the building and a deeper excavation further from the building close to the river wall. The earth was of a stoney, chalky nature and no structural or archaeological features were encountered.

## **4 CONCLUSION**

- 4.1.1 Number 2-4 London Street is an interesting building at a prominent location close to the town centre which has undergone a number of substantial changes since its initial construction/rebuilding in the early-mid 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Its importance lies primarily as a surviving historical fragment of a part of Reading which has been greatly altered in recent decades but which was once one of the town's most elegant thoroughfares. It is this rather than any particular intrinsic architectural or historic significance which provides an importance to the building although it is of some architectural merit and does have an interesting history.
- 4.1.2 Documentary research shows that the existing building was constructed between 1816 and c.1840, apparently on the footprint of an older structure and possibly incorporated the previous cellar. Directories suggest that the entire building was a public house from its initial construction until c.1888 when the property was divided with the pub remaining in No. 4. In the 1890s several small scale commercial enterprises occupied No. 2 before a hairdressers moved in at the turn of the century and remained in the building until c.1960. A newsagents moved into No. 4 in c.1910 and remained there at least until the last available directory in 1976.

4.1.3 On first inspection the building has several unusual features such as the inconsistent internal floor levels, the recess in the ground plan at the north-west corner and several straight joints in the west elevation. Evidence suggests that the changes in floor level are merely due to the rise in external ground level and the straight joints are due to several large rebuildings of the west wall. For example the straight joint at the south-western corner which extends for the full height of the building suggests that either the west elevation or the south elevation have been rebuilt (probably the west elevation). Evidence also suggests that the recess in the ground plan was probably inserted in the mid to late 19<sup>th</sup>-century to step the building back from the river although it is possible that it was inherited from the previous building on which the existing structure appears to have been built. Other substantial changes include the insertion of the large chimney stack and possibly the addition of blind arcading to the street elevation in the mid 19<sup>th</sup>-century.

Jonathan Gill  
Oxford Archaeological Unit  
November 2000

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## BIBLIOGRAPHY

The main research was undertaken at Reading Local Studies Centre, Reading Public Library. Other sources were consulted at the Ashmolean Library, Oxford and the Oxford Archaeological Unit's library

### Published material

- Arnold HG 1982 '17-19 London Street' *Transactions of the Ancient Monuments Society* Volume 26
- Man J 1816 *The History and Antiquities, Ancient and Modern, of the Borough of Reading in The County of Berks*
- Pevsner N 1966 *The Buildings of England; Berkshire*
- Various Reading trade directories from 1796 to 1976

### Cartographic sources

- Rennie's plan of the proposed canal and towing path at Reading. From Man's *History of Reading* (1816) but date of map probably 1723 when canalised to Newbury or possibly 1810 for opening of Kennet and Avon.
- Coates's map of Reading (1802)
- Plan of the Borough of Reading in Berkshire (1813)
- Map of the borough of Reading as determined by the commissioners appointed by the honorable the commons house of parliament (1834)
- Goad's map (1895)
- Ordnance Survey 1:2500 Surv 1875/7 revised 1898
- Ordnance Survey 1:2500 Surv 1875/7 revised 1909/10
- Ordnance Survey 1:2500 Surv 1875/7 revised 1931S
- Ordnance Survey 1:1250 Surv 1956, revised 1967
- Ordnance Survey 1:1250 Surv 1956 revised 1987

### Other sources

- List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest (Berkshire) DOE

**APPENDIX 1:** Relevant information from various trade directories of Reading.

The numbering of the existing 2-4 London Street, along with other buildings on this part of the street, has changed more than once. The number shown in brackets is the part of the existing building that the listing is believed to relate to.

1839	No 1 (2+4): Evans & Francis, Kennet brewery No 2: Williams & Son, ironmongers
1842-43	No 1 (2+4): blank No 2 (6): blank No 3: ironmongers
1859-60	No 1 (2+4): Henry Coggs, beer retailer No 2 (6): Samuel Poulton, photographic printer & publisher (then commercial wharf and 2 granaries listed)
1865-70	No 1 (2+4): as above No 2 (6): Edward Brunnsden, chemist No 4: William Howse, grocer
1874-76	No 2 (2+4): 'Kennet House' Henry Coggs No 4: nothing listed No 6 (6): Edward Brunnsden No 12: William Howse, Grocer
1879	No 2 (2+4): H Farley, beer retailer No 4-6 (6): Edward Brunnsden, operative chemist
1884	No 2 (2+4): Albert Turtle, beer retailer No 4-6 (6): as above
1885-86	No 2 (2+4): WG Angel, beer retailer, 'Kennet House' No 4-6 (6): as above
1888	No 2 (2+4): FC Norman 'The Kennet House' No 4-6 (6): as above
1889-90	No 2 (2): William Mayers, china doll dealer No 2 (4): Charles Norman, beer retailer No 4-6 (6): as above
1890-91	No 2: not listed No 4-6 (6): as above
1891	No 2 (4): Albert Wheeler 'Kennet House' No 4-6 (6): as above
1892	(2) Albert Tennant (no number) No 2 (4): Albert Wheeler, beer retailer No 4-6 (6): as above
1894	(2) Albert Tennant, (no number) confectioner and toy dealer No 2 (4): Esther Wheeler 'Kennet House', beer retailer No 4-6 (6): as above
1897	(2) Albert Tennant (as above) No 2 (4): David Allen, beer retailer No 4-6 (6): as above
1899	No 2a (2): Albert Tennant, confectioner No 2 (4): as above No 4-6 (6): as above
1901	No 2a (2): James Preston, hairdresser No 2 (4): as above

No 4-6 (6): as above

1903-5 No 2 (2): James Preston, hairdresser  
 No 4 (4): Mrs Esther Allen 'Kennet House'  
 No 6 (6): Edward Brunsten, operative and dispensing chemist  
 (then passage to TC Williams & Sons Ltd ironworks foundry)

1907-9 No 2 (2): as above  
 No 4 (4): as above  
 No 6 (6): Bradley & Bliss, wholesale druggists and chemists

1911 No 2 (2): as above  
 No 4 (4): HC Golding, tobacconists & News  
 No 6 (6): as above

1912 No 2a (2): James Preston, hairdresser  
 No 2 (4): Harry Charles Golding, tobacconists  
 No 4-6 (6): Bradley & Bliss, wholesale druggists and chemists

1913-24 No 2 (2): James Preston, hairdresser  
 No 4 (4): HC Golding tobacconists and newsagents  
 No 4-6 (6): *Bradley & Bliss Ltd*, wholesale druggists, manufacturing  
 pharmaceutical chemists

1927 No 2 (2): as above  
 No 4 (4): Charles S Golding  
 No 4-6 (6): as above

1928-29 No 2 (2): as above  
 No 4 (4): Walter Pease, tobacconists  
 No 4-6 (6): as above

1931-32 No 2 (2): Edwin Saunders, hairdresser  
 No 4 (4): Fras (Francis?) Rogers, tobacconists  
 No 4-6 (6): as above

1934-35 No 2 (2): As above  
 No 4 (4): As above  
 No 4-6 (6): *Bradley & Bliss Ltd*, manufacturing chemists

1936-52 No 2 (2): As above  
 No 4 (4): *Rogers & Shergold*, tobacconists. Cecil G Shergold

1954-60 No 2 (2): As above  
 No 4 (4): *Rogers & Shergold*, Newsagents and tobacconists. Cecil G  
 Shergold

1962 No 2 (2): Empty  
 No 4 (4): As above

1964-76 No 2 (2): Women's Institute Market  
 No 4 (4): *Rogers & Shergold*, Newsagents. Cecil G Shergold



## APPENDIX 2: Transcript from Buildings Listing

London Street (west side)

Nos 2 and 4

Grade II

SU 7173SE 3/526

Mid C19th altered. 2 storeys and basement, rendered brick. Simple cornice and parapet. Hipped tiled roof (part of old tiles) 4 bays, the left hand bay has flanking recessed walls and slight panel to parapet. The 3 right hand bays are arched recesses (centre with depressed arch and higher parapet) and impost bands. Cross-glazed sash windows, round head to outer windows of the right hand group. Ground floor, 2 modern shop fronts.

**LOT 6.**

---

Freehold  
Double Fronted Business Premises  
No. 2, London Street,  
Reading

**Situated** close to the Centre of the Town, with **Frontage** to the River Kennet.

**Constructed** of brick, painted front, having tiled roof, the **Frontage** is about 23-ft., with additional 11-ft. between building and River Kennet. Right of way through door at side of No. 4, London Street, to yard at rear, as shewn upon plan, which can be inspected at the Auctioneers' Offices.

**THE ACCOMMODATION** comprises :—

SMALL SHOP.

FRONT SALOON.

BACK SALOON.

**ON THE FIRST FLOOR—**

TWO ROOMS.

CELLAR in Basement.

YARD at side and at rear.

**Let** to Mr. E. J. Saunders (Hairdresser) on Lease for a term of 14 years from 25th March, 1929, at a

**RENTAL of £60 per annum.**

Lessee paying Rates and being responsible for internal repairs.

*Assessment*—Gross, £42 ; Rateable Value, £32.

*Half-Year's Rates*—£10 1s. 1d., including Water Rate.

*Land Tax Redeemed.*

**Appendix 3:** Extract from *investments within the Borough of Reading for sale by Public Auction at the Masonic Hall, Greyfriars Road, Reading on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 1934 Cooksey and Walker (Auctioneers)*



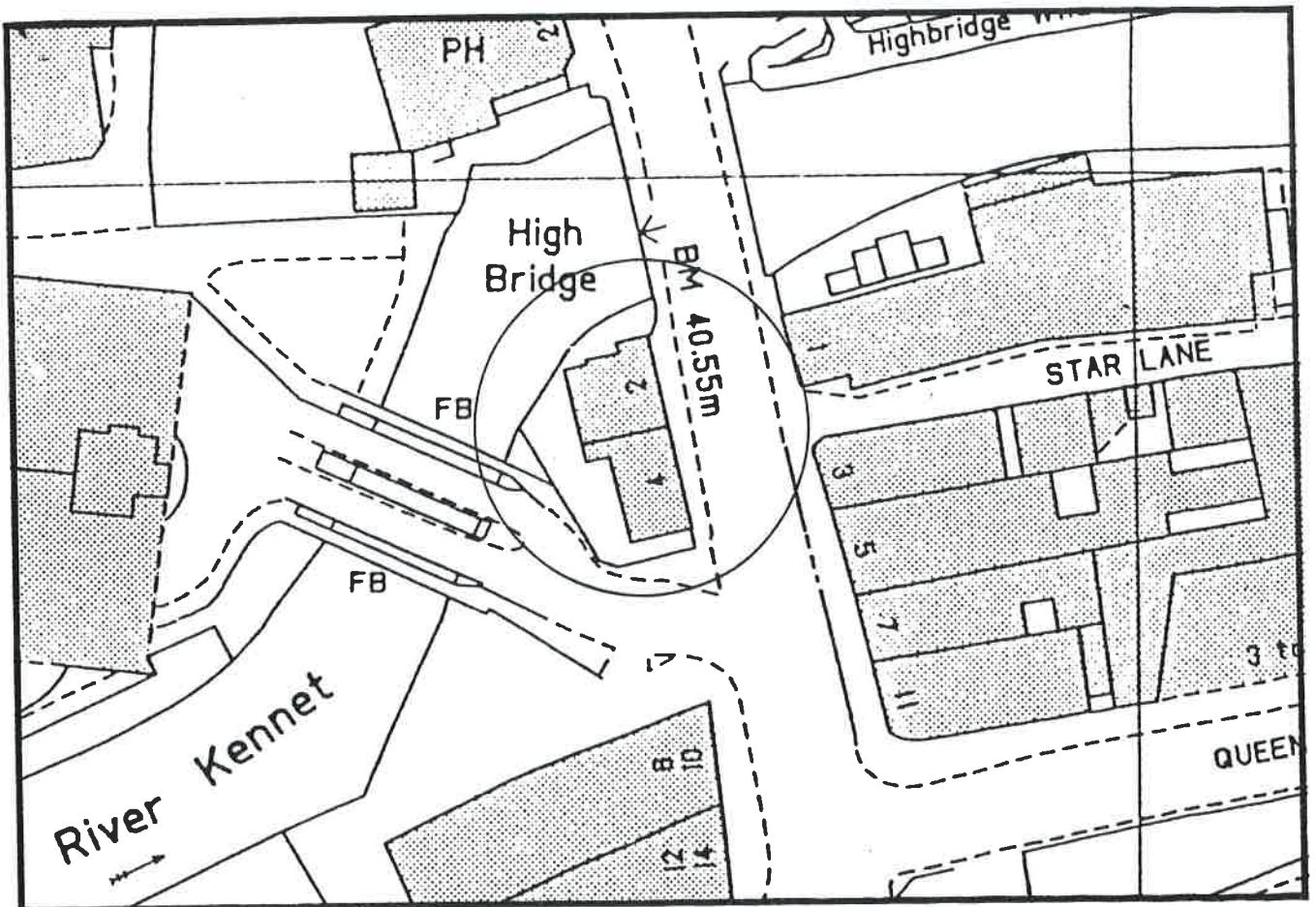
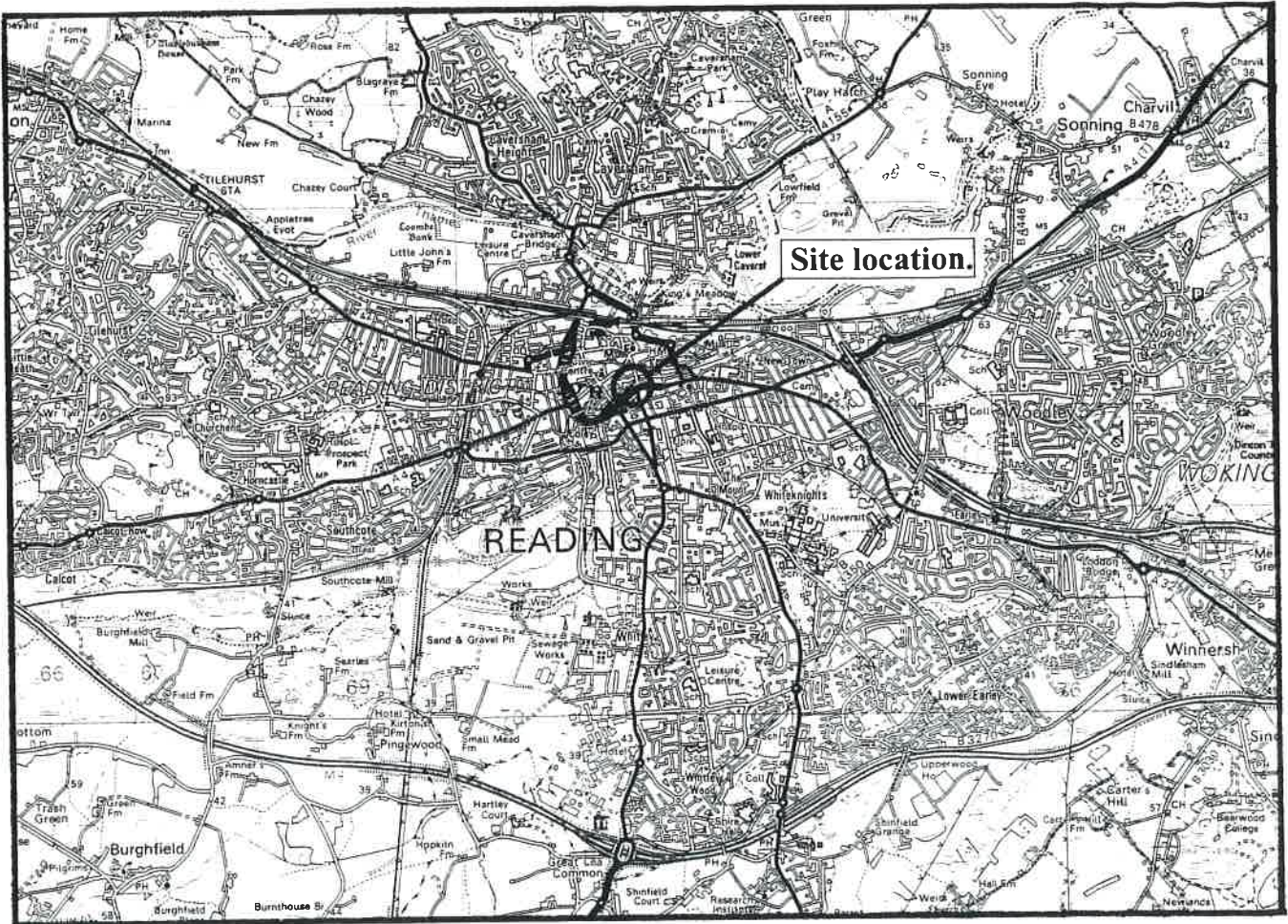


Figure 1: Site location.



Figure 2: Coate's Map of Reading (1802).

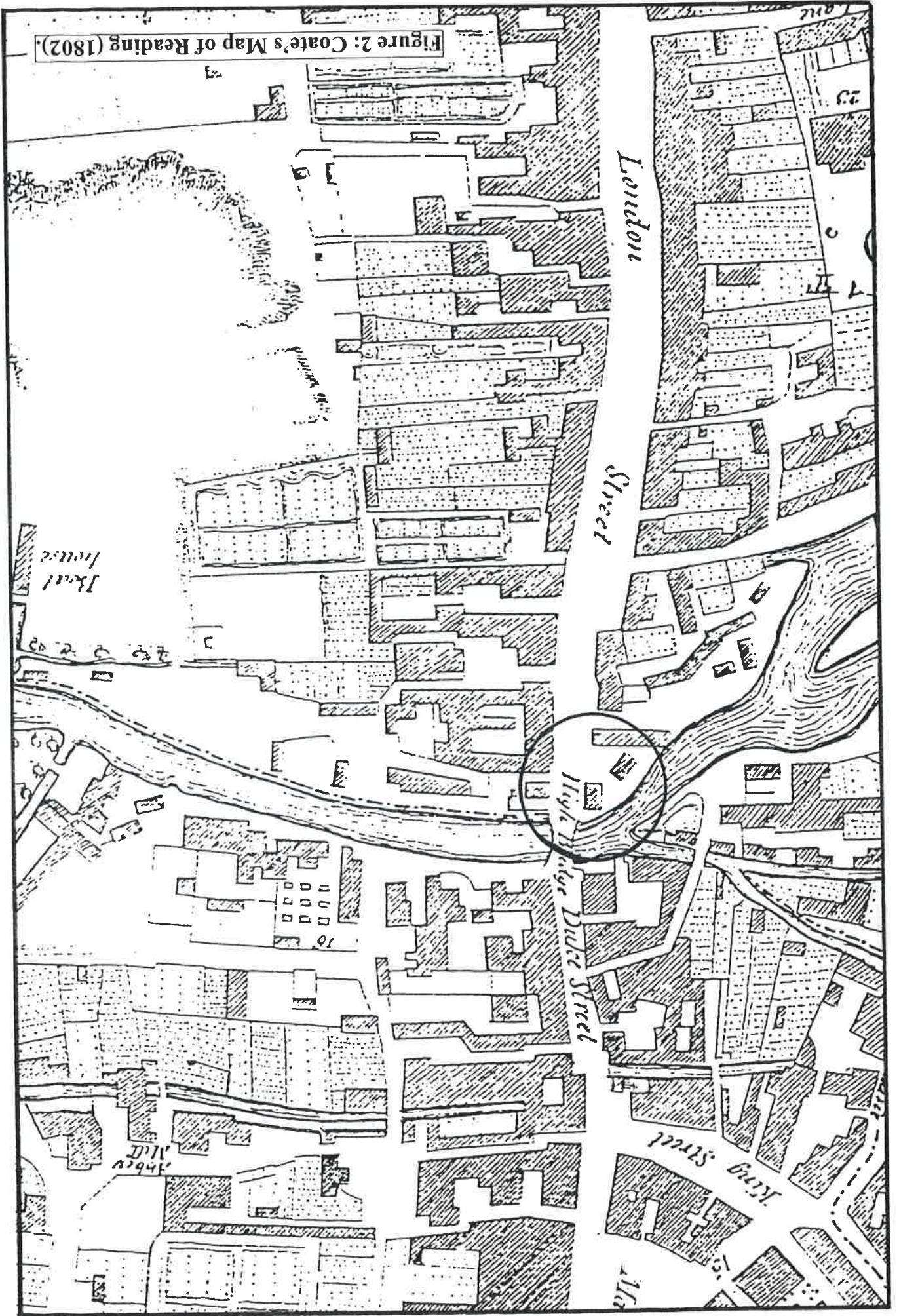




Figure 3: Map of the Borough of Reading (1834).









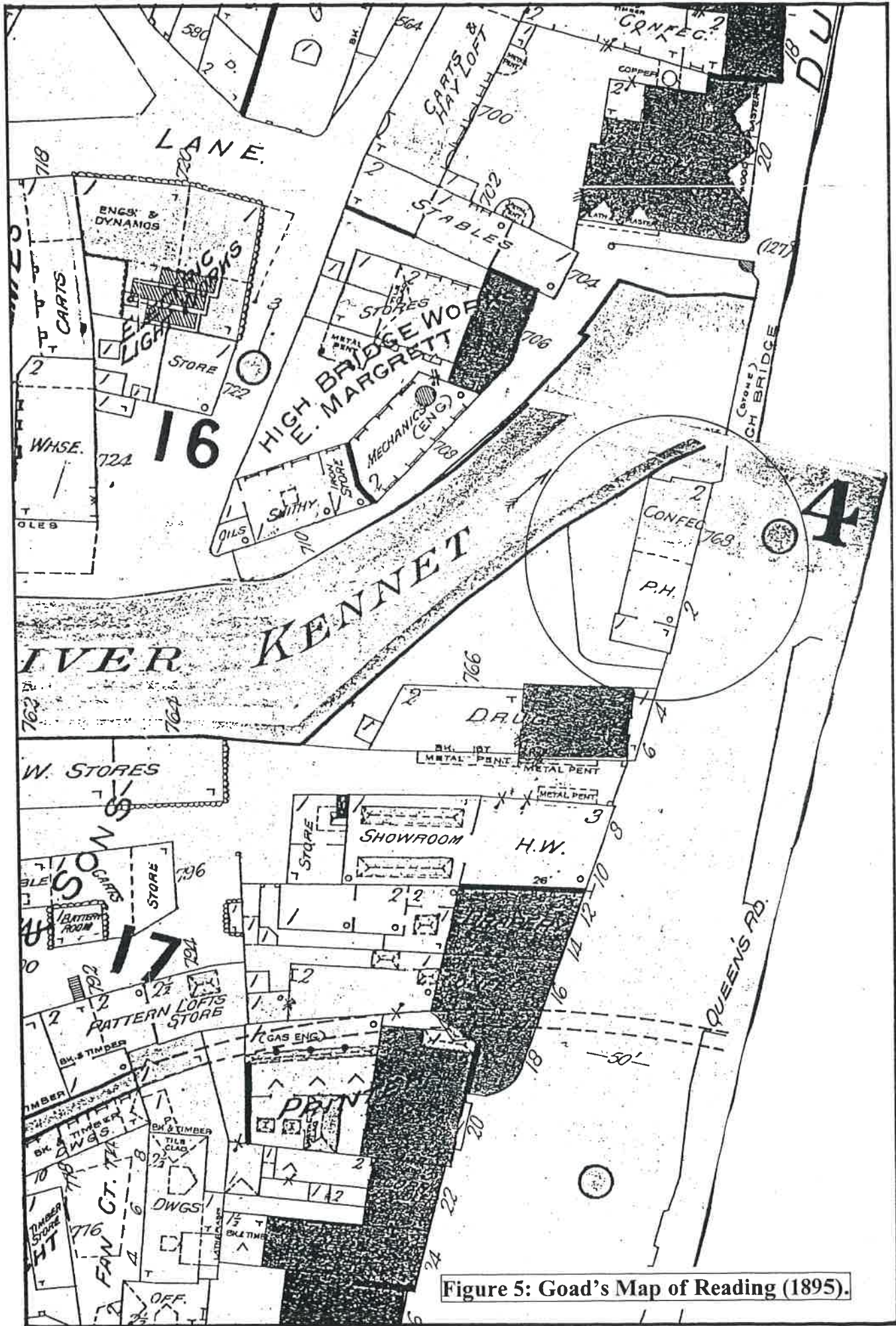


Figure 5: Goad's Map of Reading (1895).



Figure 6: Second edition 25" Ordnance Survey Map (1898).





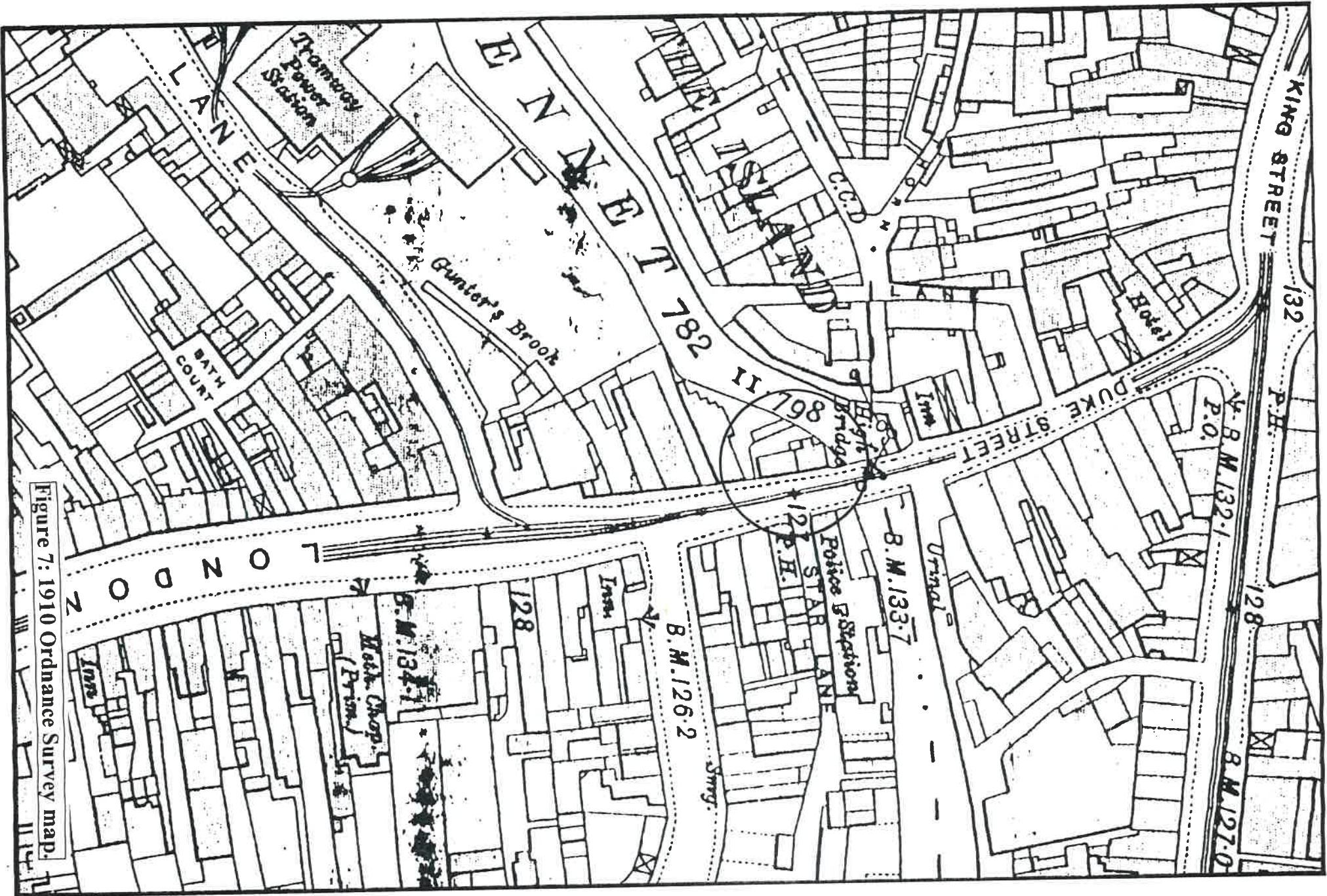
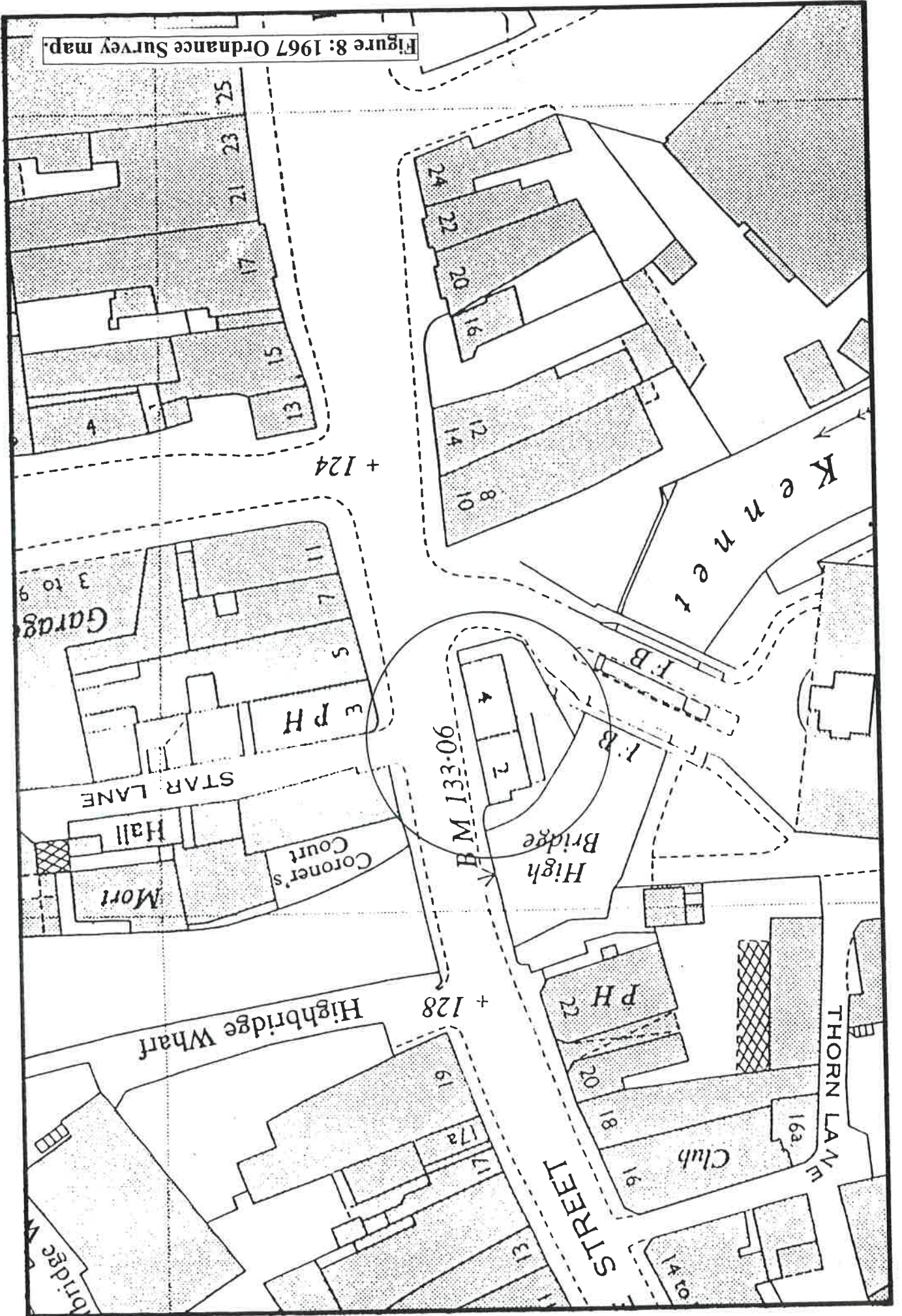


Figure 7: 1910 Ordnance Survey map.



Figure 8: 1967 Ordnance Survey map.



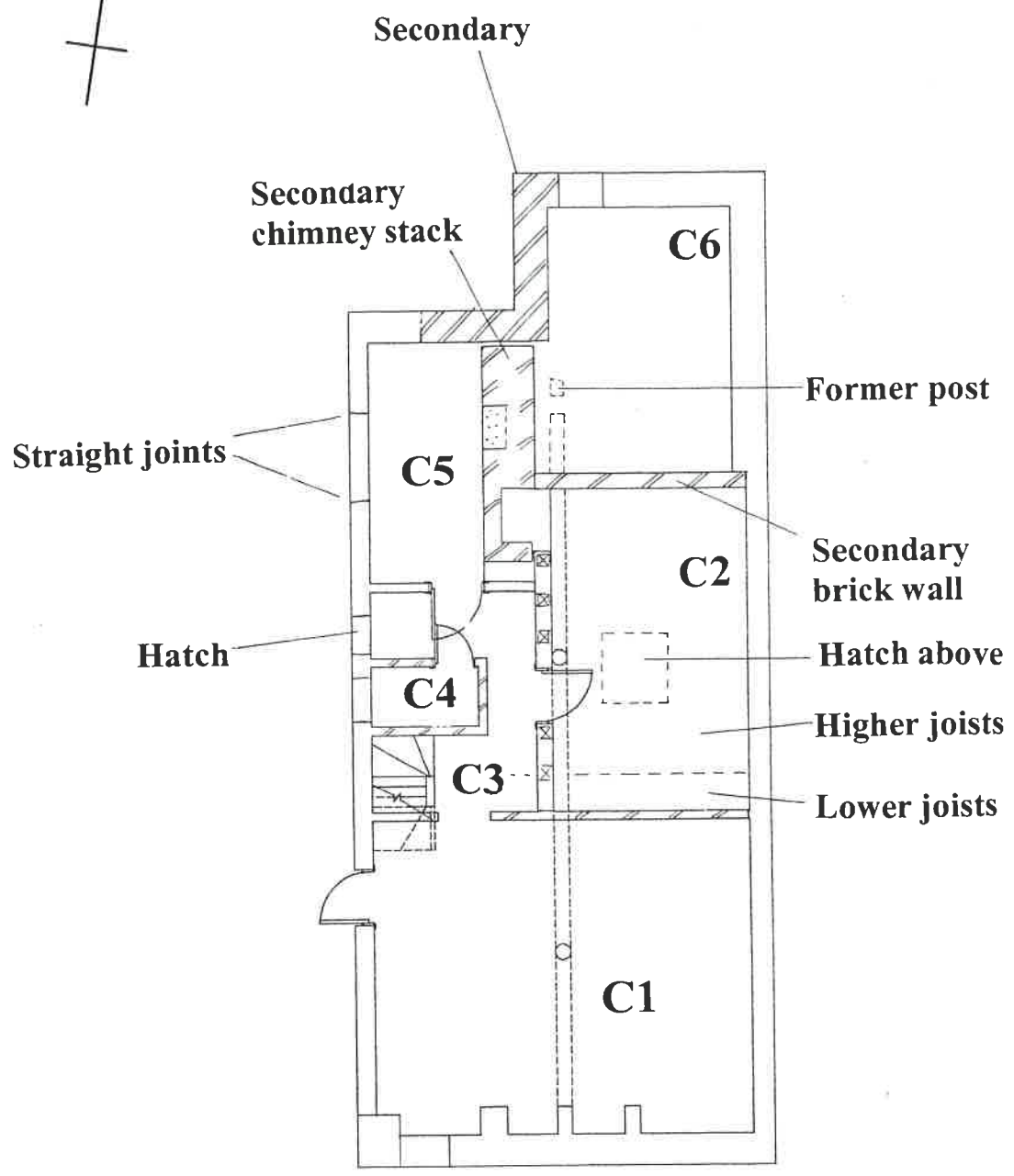


Figure 9: Cellar plan.

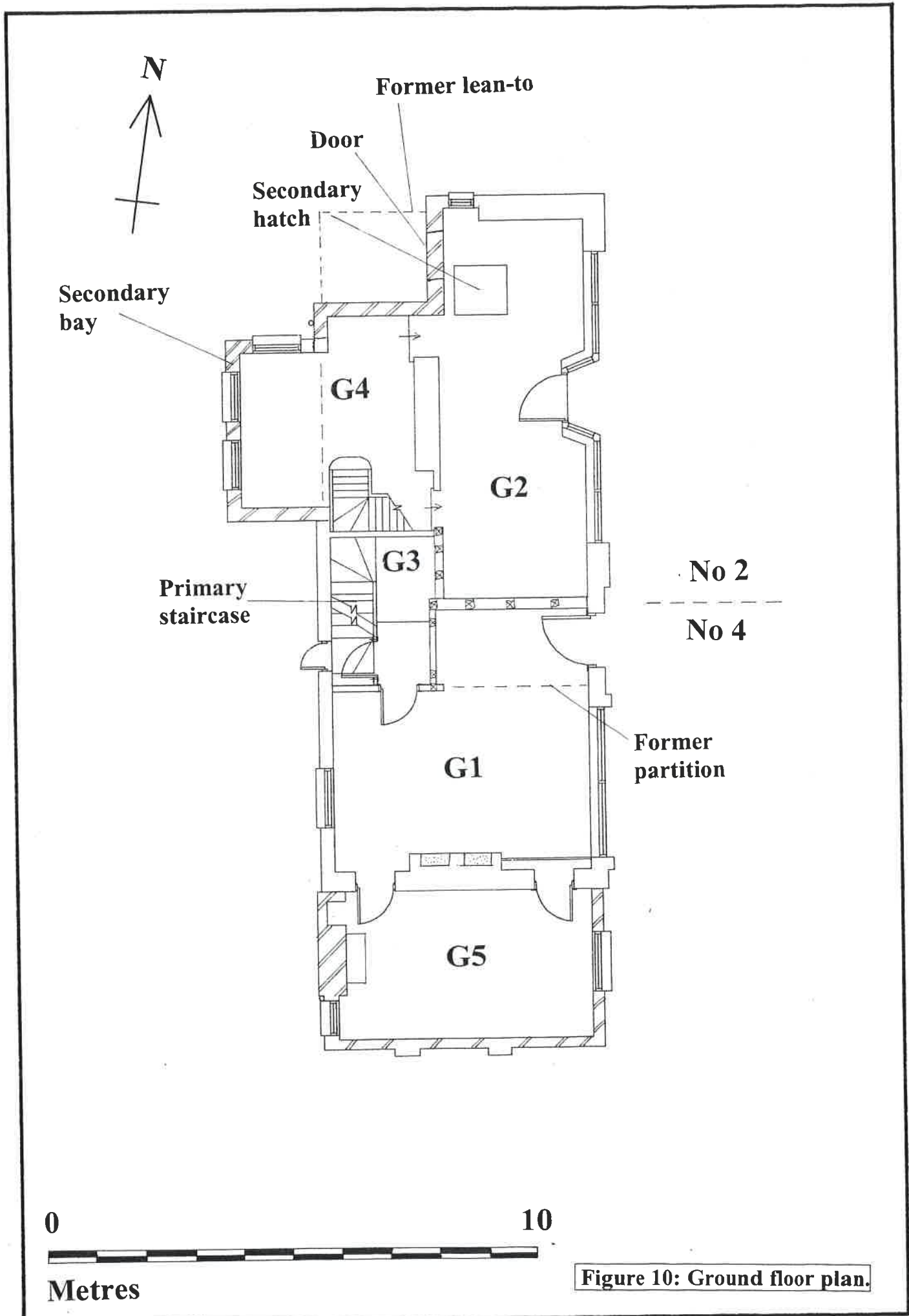
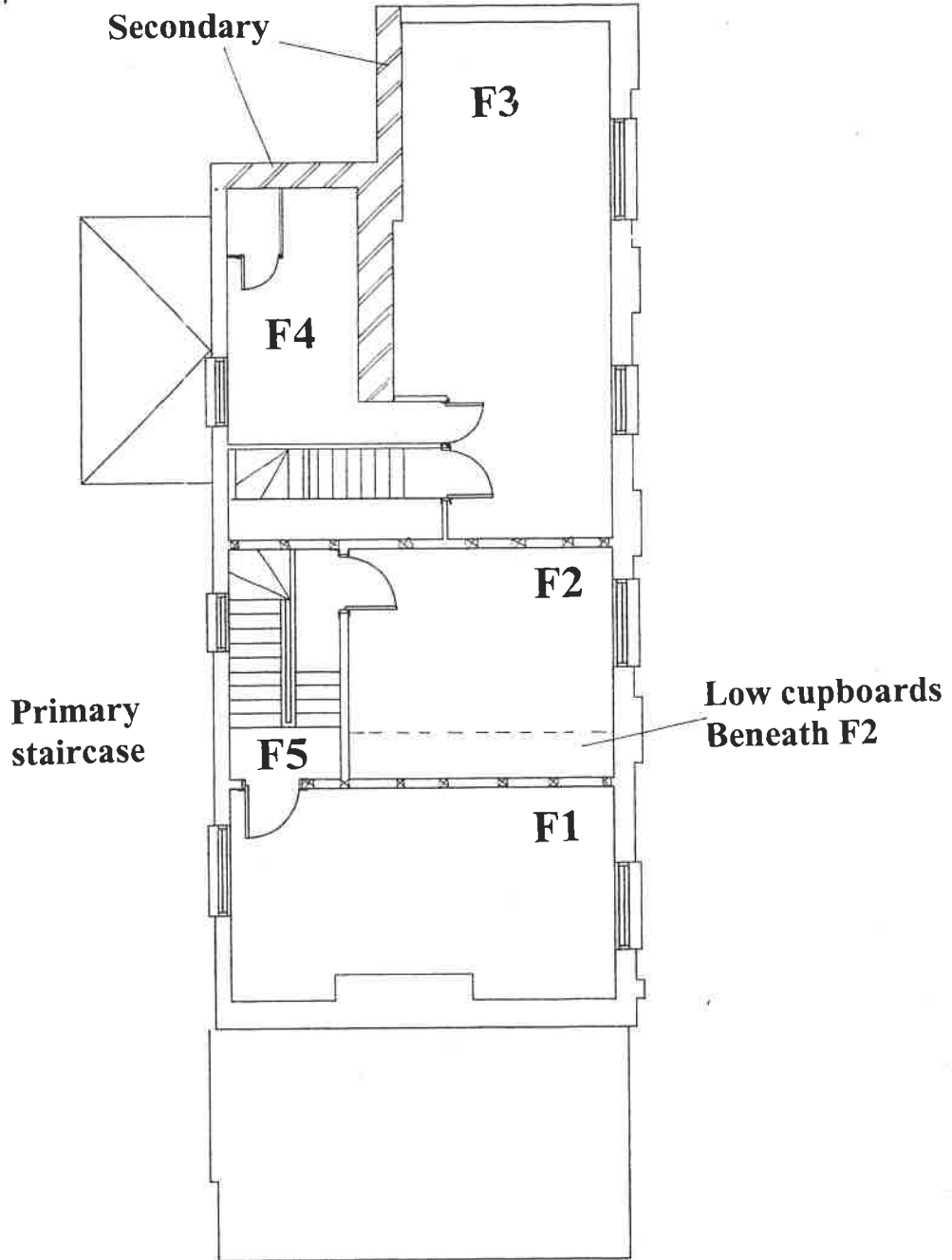


Figure 10: Ground floor plan.





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Metres

Figure 11: First floor plan.





**Plate 1:** East view of High Bridge (From J Man's History of Reading 1816)

**Plate 2:** View of London Street from the south from the junction with Queen's Road c.1840 (Reading local studies centre ref: PR485/A). Shows 2-4 London Street at left of centre of view.





**Plate 3:** Street (east) elevation



**Plate 4:** Rear (west) elevation

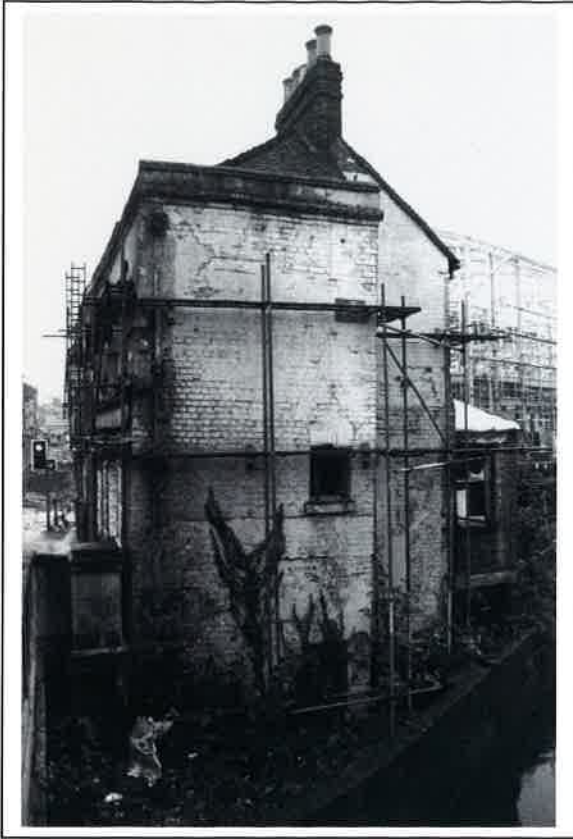
**Plate 5:** South elevation with secondary extension in foreground



**Plate 6:** Roof from north-east showing off-centre chimney stack







**Plate 7:** North elevation showing river wall adjacent to inverted north-west corner.

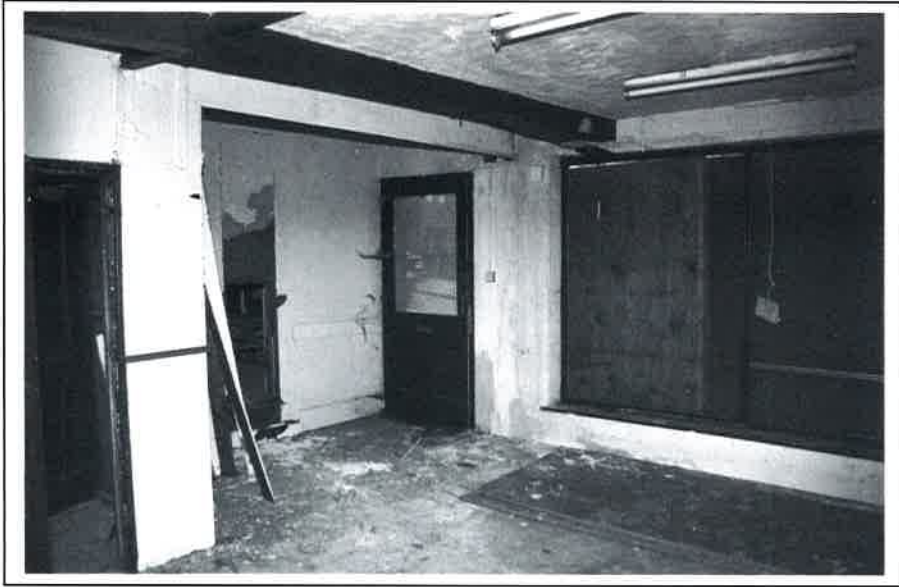
**Plate 9:** Straight joints at south-west corner of primary building, visible after removal of ivy



**Plate 8:** Outline of secondary bay which projected from west elevation after demolition

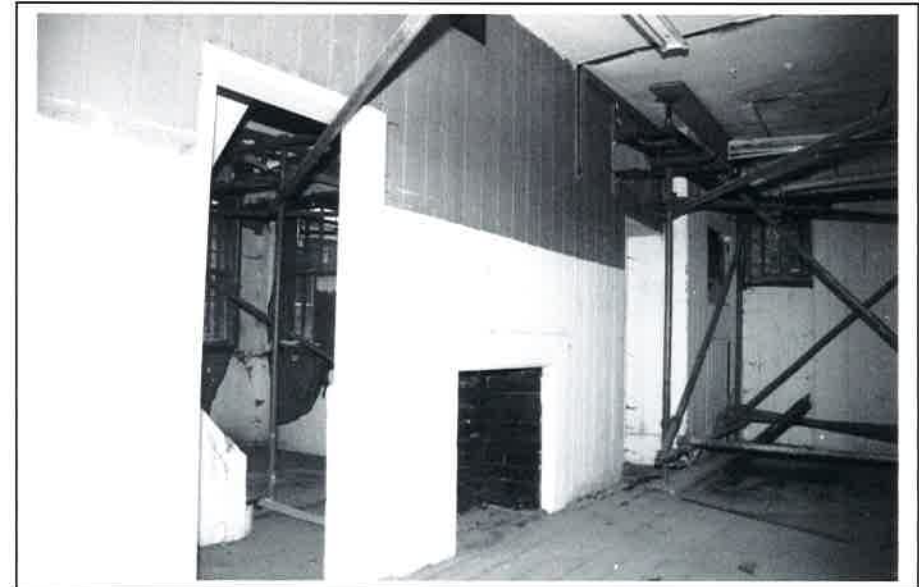
**Plate 10:** Outline of former lean-to, above shop sign in recess at north-west corner of building





**Plate 11:** General view within G1, from south-west before start of works

**Plate 13:** View within C2 from north-east showing trap-door and rough scarf in main beam adjacent to secondary brick cross-wall



**Plate 12:** View within G2, from south-east, before start of works

**Plate 14:** Queen post roof truss at south end of building

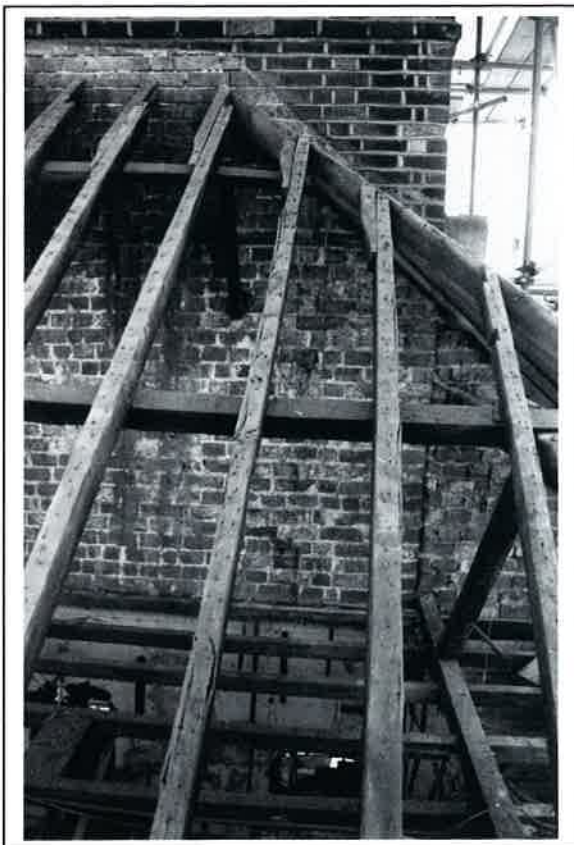






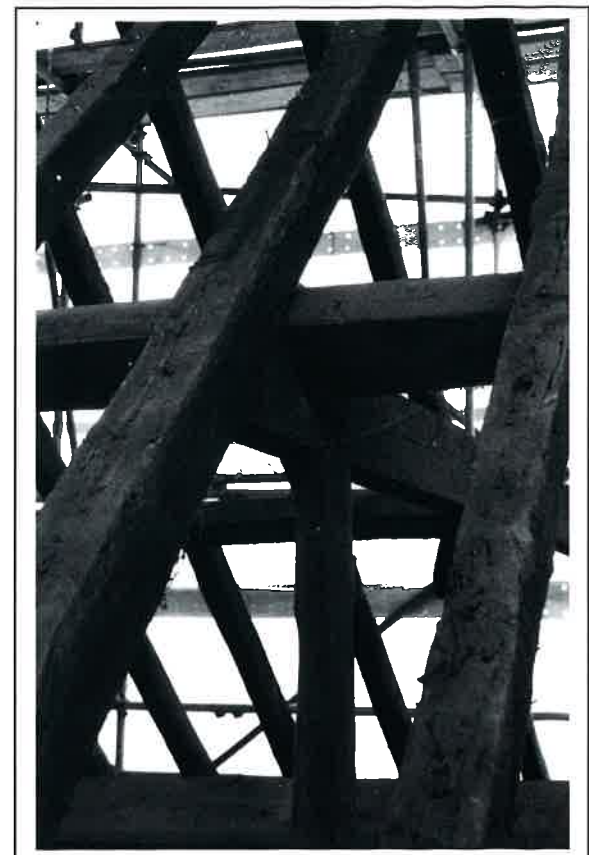
**Plate 15:** Swan-necked handrail and button-headed newel post within building

**Plate 17:** Rafter extensions on east slope of roof adjacent to inserted chimney which abuts inverted north-west corner



**Plate 16:** Tie-beam lapping over wall plate on west side of building.

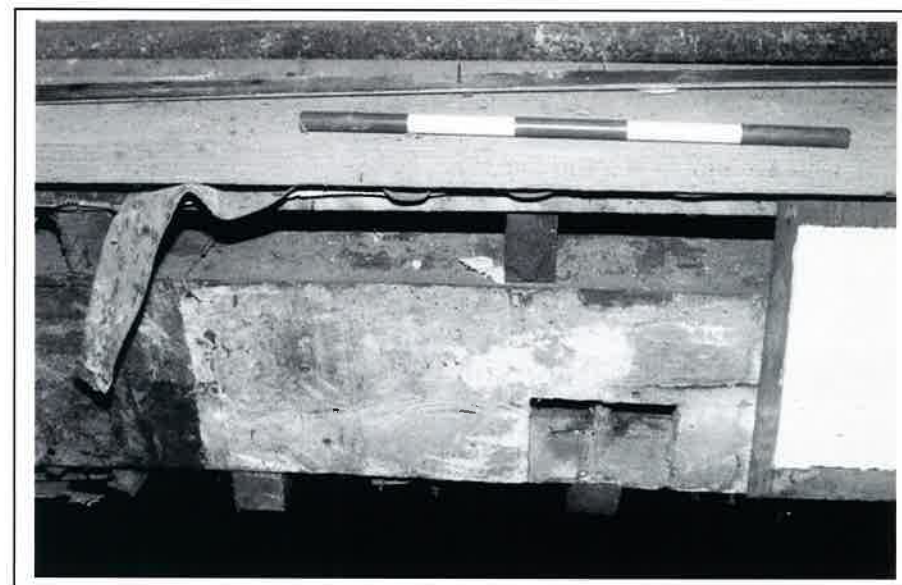
**Plate 18:** Purlin clasped between principal rafter and collar. Queen post dovetailed into collar adjacent to just-visible chiseled carpenters marks





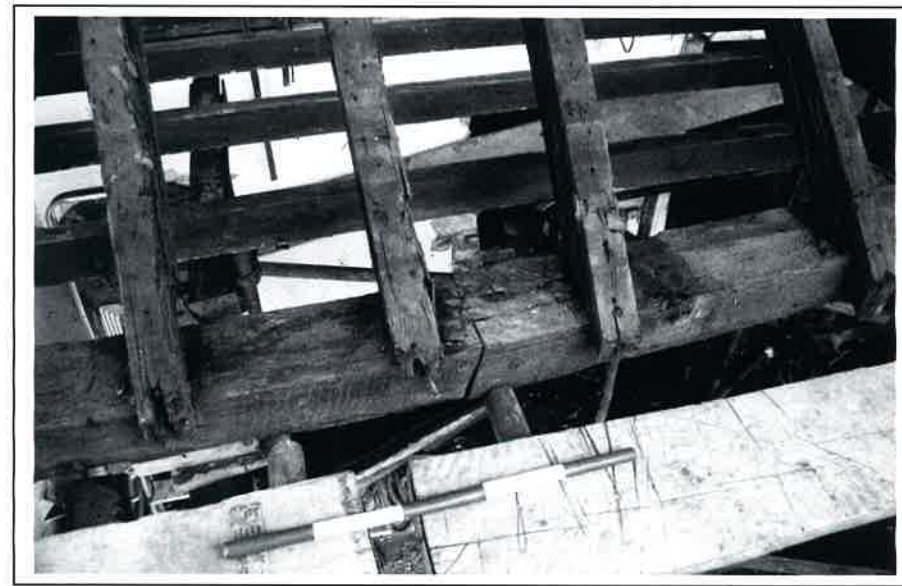
**Plate 19:** View of low 'cupboard' beneath F2 and accessible from F1 after removal of ceiling

**Plate 21:** Trimming to rafters on west side of inserted chimney stack



**Plate 20:** North-facing joist socket in floor joist above G4

**Plate 22 :** bridled joint in wall plate on west side of building







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