

**HISTORIC BUILDING APPRAISAL OF
195 HIGH STREET, EXETER**

Prepared for the Greggs PLC

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Contents

1. Introduction	1
2. Archaeological background	1
3. Method	1
4. The ground floor and basement	1
5. The upper floors	2
6. Development of the building	3
7. Impact assessment	4
8. Conclusions	5
Acknowledgements	5
Sources consulted	5
Appendix 1: the listed building description	6

Illustrations

Fig. 1 Location of site.

Fig. 2 Plans of the basement, ground and first floors.

Fig. 3 Plans of the second and third floors and the attic.

Plates

Pl. 1 Ground-floor front room showing cornice above modern suspended ceiling.

Pl. 2 Ground-floor store behind the stairs showing arch and 'splayed' masonry.

Pl. 3 Basement, brick vault in rear store.

Pl. 4 First-floor front room showing fireplace, panelling and recess.

1. INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of an historic building appraisal of No. 195 High Street, Exeter (SX 91938 92615; Fig. 1). The appraisal was undertaken by Exeter Archaeology (EA) in September 2010 and was prepared on behalf of Greggs PLC in advance of alterations to the building. These alterations will affect the ground floor and basement of the building; the principal alterations are listed in section 7 below. The work was undertaken in accordance with advice provided by the Exeter City Council Archaeology Officer in an e-mail dated 20 August 2010 to Kim Read of Greggs.

The property is a grade II listed building of Special Architectural or Historic Interest (no. 481138). The listed building description is presented in appendix 1.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The building occupies a rectangular plot bounded to the southeast by High Street and to the southwest by Parliament Street. The site may originally have formed part of a larger burgage plot extending back to Waterbeer Street. The rear of the site was formerly occupied by parts of No. 196 High Street and No. 23 Waterbeer Street. These properties were demolished for the construction of the Guildhall Shopping Centre in the 1970s. No. 196 High Street was demolished without record in 1973, although limited observations identified the presence of 16th-century features within the main tenement and the rear range behind No. 195 High Street (EUAD record 11180). Excavations following the demolition of this property (and others to the north) exposed a deep sequence of archaeological deposits, which are discussed further in section 6 below (EUAD records 11180 and 11181).

A rapid visual survey of the property was prepared by EA in August 1998 prior to internal alterations (Parker 1999). A basic description of the whole building was made, with the exception of the basement, which was not inspected.

3. METHOD

This document presents a basic description of the property in order to describe the development of the building. Particular attention is paid to the ground floor and basement, where alterations will take place. The upper floors remain largely unchanged since 1998 and the locations of architectural features on these floors (as seen in 1998) are shown on Figs 2-3. This is followed by a development of the building, and a description of potential areas of impact. Details of historic fittings are presented in floor plans (figs 2-3) where an attempt at phasing the building, largely on the basis of the architectural fittings, has been put forward.

4. THE GROUND FLOOR AND BASEMENT (Fig. 2; Pls 1-3)

Ground floor

The ground floor is currently divided into a front shop, with rear stores, corridors and stairs to the basement and first floor. Throughout the front room all the fittings are of modern date, and relate to the most recent commercial use of the property. The present suspended ceiling is modern and obscures earlier historic fabric. The shop was formerly divided into two rooms, evidence for which survives in the form of a large transverse ceiling beam. Also visible are several contemporary joists, as well as later (?19th-century) smaller joists attached to which

is a lath and plaster ceiling. In both rooms are the remains of a wooden cornice (Pl. 1), of unknown antiquity, but possibly fairly late (?19th/early 20th-century).

On the evidence from the first floors, it is likely there is a fireplace in the south-west elevation, close to the front wall currently obscured by shop fittings.

Most of the partitions at the rear of the property are modern, but tongue-and-grooved panelling survives on the north-west (rear) wall. This may be 19th-century in date and contemporary with the replacement of the lower staircase. Further tongue-and-grooved lining exists in the rear wall of the store, obscured behind modern plasterboard, but its extent is unknown. As noted in 1998 part of this rear area retains an early cornice.

The upper floors are accessed by a very fine late 17th-century staircase. The lower section between the ground and first floors was replaced in the 19th century. At its base three steps lead up to a half-landing, where there is access to a store under the first-floor toilets (Pl. 2). Within this store are a number of features. In the south-west wall is a blocked opening (with timber framing and brick nogging) that may predate the position of the stairs in this location. In the north-east elevation is an arched opening, one side of which is angled towards the back of the building. This masonry also incorporates a blocked opening. To the west there is evidence of a break in masonry, but the structural sequence could not be established.

Basement

The main part of the basement is currently divided into a series of rooms and corridors by modern plasterboard walls. The main rear wall of the basement is constructed of brick, whereas the front wall is constructed of stone. One edge of a coal chute – that has been covered over at street level – is visible in this wall. The south-west wall is rendered, probably indicating that it is constructed of stone, and is lined with later tongue-and-grooved panelling.

Two transverse beams for the ceiling/ground floor are visible, displaying laths for a removed ceiling. Where exposed, most of the joists have been removed and replaced by a structure supporting modern ground floor.

At the rear is a small store, constructed of stone with a brick vaulted ceiling (Pl. 3). This vaulting has been partially removed, and services have been taken through the side walls of the store.

5. THE UPPER FLOORS (Figs 2-3)

The upper floors have hardly been altered since the 1998 survey, and all the historic architectural features recorded in 1998 survive. The description prepared at that date is not repeated, but the locations of these features are shown on Figs 2-3. On all floors the windows in the rear elevations (overlooking the courtyard/light well) are all modern replacements and no historic windows survive. Other minor alterations include the replacement of some floorboards and covering of historic floors with carpet.

On the first floor the fireplace in the front room has been boarded up, but part of the 19th-century grate lies within the room (Pl. 4). The condition of this fireplace is not known but the removal of the grate may indicate this is poorer than in 1998.

On the second and third floors the front of the building is divided into two rooms. The arrangement of these partitions is odd, and their antiquity is not known. On the second floor the partition is clearly a secondary feature. On the third floor the partition overlies the skirting board on the front wall indicating it is a later addition. However, at the north end of the room the partition retains early door frames and architraves that connect with other partitions, which suggests that at least part of this partition is of 18th-century date. It is therefore possible that some of the other partitions are later, i.e. 18th century.

6. DEVELOPMENT OF THE BUILDING

The site lies within the core of the Roman military fortress and later civil town, as well as the medieval city. Excavations at the rear of the property have demonstrated that archaeological deposits of Roman military date survive below medieval and later buildings. Excavations under No. 196 High Street also uncovered evidence for Saxo-Norman timber buildings, and features of this period were shown to predate the cellar walls of the later (then upstanding) houses. The present tenement boundaries were established in the late 14th or 15th century.

In the 15th and early 16th centuries the larger tenement (of Nos 196-197 High Street) was divided into two properties, and from the limited evidence it appears the houses were rebuilt. It is possible that on each new tenement a pair of properties was constructed (i.e. Nos 195-196 and Nos 197-198). This is a phenomenon recorded elsewhere in the city – a particular good sequence of paired buildings survive at Nos 41-2, 43-44, and 46-47 High Street; Parker *forthcoming*). The former 16th-century features at the rear of 195 (described as being situated within the now-demolished No. 196 High Street) is probably evidence that the two buildings formed part of the same larger tenement. Timber-framing in the party wall between Nos 197 and 198 High Street is also evidence for the same arrangement on this tenement (3-D reconstruction drawing to appear in Parker *forthcoming*).

The earliest architectural features in No. 195 High Street date to the late 17th century. A 16th-century wooden overmantel, now in the Royal Albert Memorial Museum, removed from No. 195 before 1930 may have come from the first-floor front room, where there is a blank space above the fireplace (Parker 1999, 2). If this identification of its position within the building is correct then the bas-relief must have been reused, perhaps from an earlier house on the site. The house represents a late 17th-century rebuilding of the front block of an earlier, probably 16th-century, house. This house would have comprised a front block, courtyard and rear block with a connecting gallery. The rear of the present building – the ground-floor corridor – appears to have encroached into the courtyard, and the position of the gallery is probably represented by the current toilets on the upper floors.

Some 18th- and 19th-century alterations were noted in 1998 including the rebuilding of the front elevation, the provision of cast-iron fireplaces, and the replacement of the lower flight of stairs. The present assessment has also identified the presence on the ground floor and basement of tongue and grooved panelling, as well as wooden cornices. These features are not as yet firmly dated but are likely to be additions of the 19th or early 20th century. The rear store on the opposite side of the light well from the toilets may also be of 19th-century date. Overall, these fittings relate to the more recent commercial use of the property.

During the 20th century this commercial use continued, with, not surprisingly, most activity taking place on the ground floor. The upper floors had until recently been used as offices, serviced by the rear door in Parliament Street, and consequently few significant alterations

have been undertaken. It appears that only since 1998 has the basement been extensively utilised.

7. IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The major proposed alterations are described in Table 1 below, along with the impact on the historic fabric of the building.

Alteration	Required works	Impact on historic fabric
New dumb waiter	Insertion of a dumb waiter from the basement to the ground floor, located within the rear store	Limited, or no, impact on basement ceiling, since at this location the vaulted ceiling has been removed
New drainage in Basement	Reusing of existing drainage	Possible impact on below-ground deposits or wall fabric, but full existing drainage runs in the basement obscured and was not investigated
New stairs to the basement (1)	Removal of lowest three treads of lower staircase	Removal of part of the 19th-century replacement staircase
New stairs to the basement (2)	Insertion of new stairs through a disused store.	Note shape of the store is not as regular as depicted on the architect's plans. Removal of some masonry associated with the party wall with 196 High Street, below-ground deposits (of unknown date), and drains will probably be required
Raising of the ground-floor suspended ceiling	Present modern suspended ceiling removed and new suspended ceiling inserted	None, but its removal will expose historic ceiling timbers and finishes
Raising of the basement suspended ceiling	Present modern suspended ceiling removed and new suspended ceiling inserted	Surviving historic floor joists above appear to be at different levels, and raising of the present ceiling level may affect these timbers at the front of the building
Removal of ground-floor partitions	Removal of ground-floor partitions	Generally no impact, but one partition, at least of 19th- or early 20th-century date, survive within the rear store
Removal of basement partitions	Removal of basement partitions	None – all partitions are modern
Removal of ground- and first-floor shop fittings and lining to exterior walls	Removal of modern shop fittings and lining to external walls and replacement with new linings	None, but removal will expose earlier panelling and potentially earlier fabric of the building
Installation of a new air duct	Installation of a new dir duct from the ground floor to the first floor, utilising existing fireplaces, and exiting through a rear window	Potential damage to 19th-century grates in fireplaces, but these are currently blocked and are not visible. Rear window is a modern replacement

Table 1. Proposed alterations and impact on historic fabric

Although it is not the aim of this report to assess below-ground archaeological remains, surviving archaeological deposits have been excavated within the adjacent properties (see sections 2 and 6 above). Two elements of the proposed works – creation of new stairs to the basement, and services within the basement – will, or in the case of the latter may, expose archaeological deposits.

8. CONCLUSIONS

The proposed new shop will continue a tradition of commercial use of the property. Indeed it is likely that when rebuilt in the late 17th century the building was designed with a shop on the ground floor. The proposals follow the recent trend of occupation of the building, with use of the ground floor and basement, in doing so preserving the historic fittings on the upper floors.

The proposed general alterations mostly involve removal (and where necessary) replacement of modern fittings. For the most part this will not affect the historic fabric, but will offer the opportunity to investigate and record earlier partitions and fittings such as panelling and ceiling decoration.

New kitchen fittings where possible will be located in areas where historic fabric has already been removed.

Installation of the new stairs to the basement should allow the investigation of part of the party wall with 196 High Street, and the nature of below-ground deposits visible within the ground-floor rear store behind the stairs.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The appraisal was commissioned by Greggs PLC and managed for them by Kim Read and for EA by T. Gent. The appraisal was undertaken by Andrew Passmore and the report illustrations were prepared by T. Ives. Thanks are due to John Allan (also EA) for discussing the archaeology of the adjacent properties.

SOURCES CONSULTED

Exeter Urban Archaeological Database monument records 11180 and 11181

Parker, R.W. *forthcoming* 'The transformation of the building stock in Exeter, 1450-1700', in Allan, J., Alcock, N., and Dawson, D. (eds) *West Country Households, 1500-1700*, Soc. Post-Med. Archaeol. Monograph.

Parker, R.W. 1999 *195 High Street*, Exeter Archaeology no-number report.

APPENDIX 1: The listed building description

Building Details:**Building Name:** 195**Parish:** EXETER**District:** EXETER**County:** DEVON**Postcode:****Details:****LBS Number:** 481138**Grade:** II**Date Listed:** 23/06/2000**Date Delisted:****NGR:** SX9194092613**Listing Text:**

SX 9192 NE HIGH STREET
 871/2/10064 (Northwest side)
 23-JUN-00 195
 II

Town house now with shop at ground floor level. c.1700 core with later alterations and mid C19 refronting. Mass wall construction, stuccoed and painted; left return brick. Slate roof with red ridge tiles concealed on front elevation by parapet. Roughcast chimney shafts.

Plan: Deep, rectangular plan with back block projecting from rear left. Heated by stacks to left.

Exterior: 4 storeys, 2-bay front. Ground floor has early C20 shop front with left and right pilasters with sunk panels and sunk panels below the plate glass shop windows and recessed central doorway. Glazed shop door with low panel and plain, deep overlight. First floor has two 3/6 hornless sash windows. Second floor has two 12-pane hornless sash windows. Third floor has 3/6 hornless sash windows. Left return is rendered at ground floor and forms part of one side of a narrow lane called Parliament Street. The painted brick rear elevations can be partly viewed from Parliament Street.

INTERIOR: Not inspected but first floor known to have bolection-moulded panelling of the late C17/early C18 and other features of interest may survive.

Listing NGR: SX9194092613

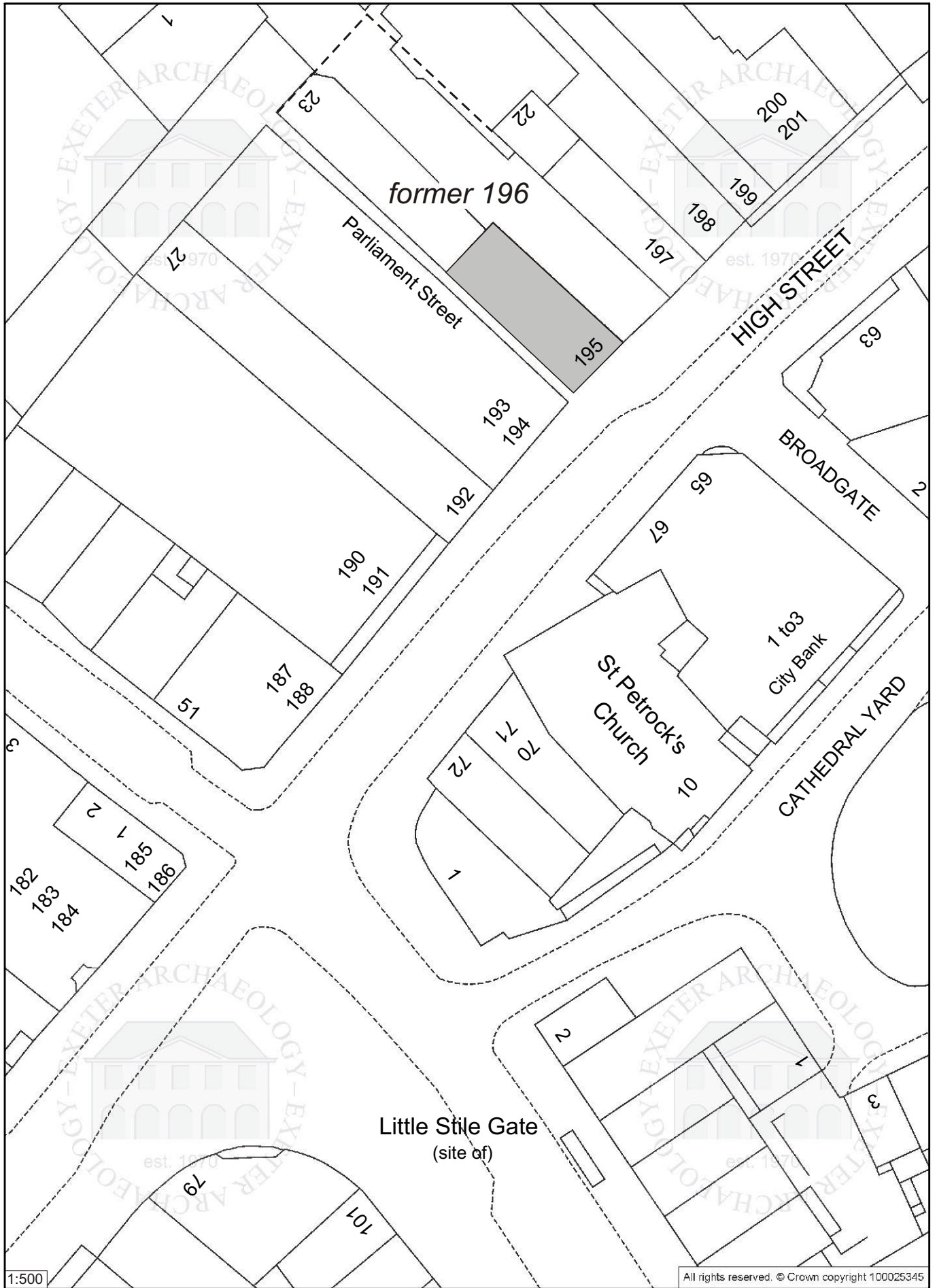
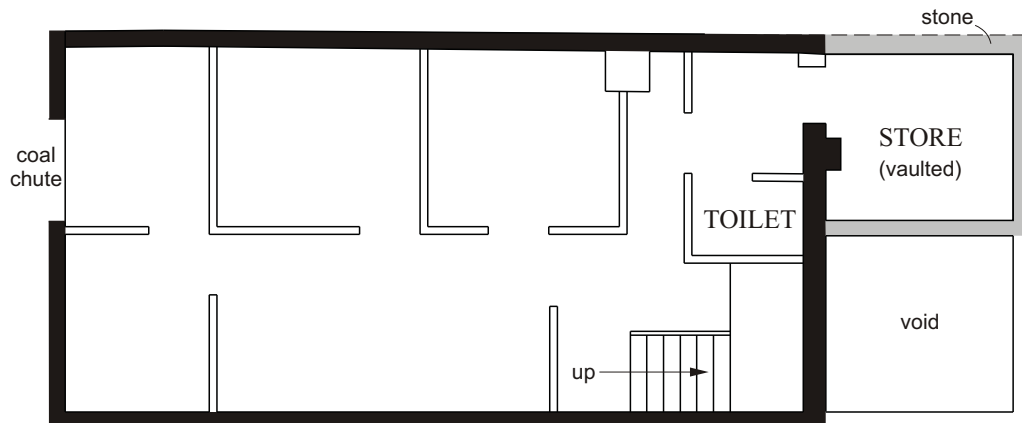
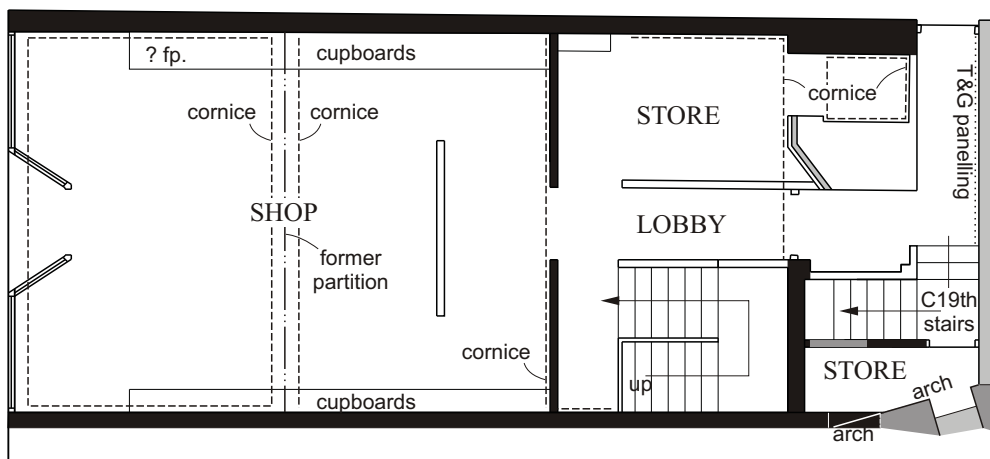


Fig. 1 Location of site.

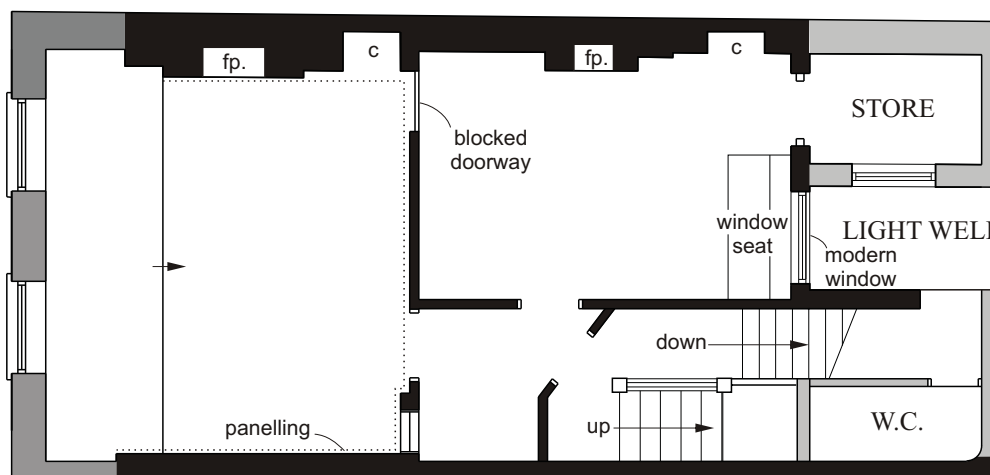
Basement



Ground floor



First floor

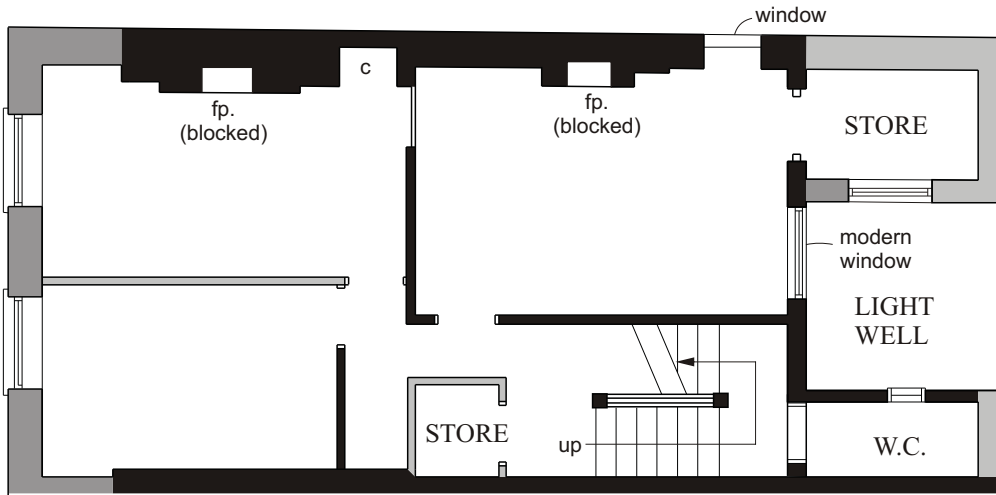


c = cupboard 18th century 20th century
 17th century 19th century

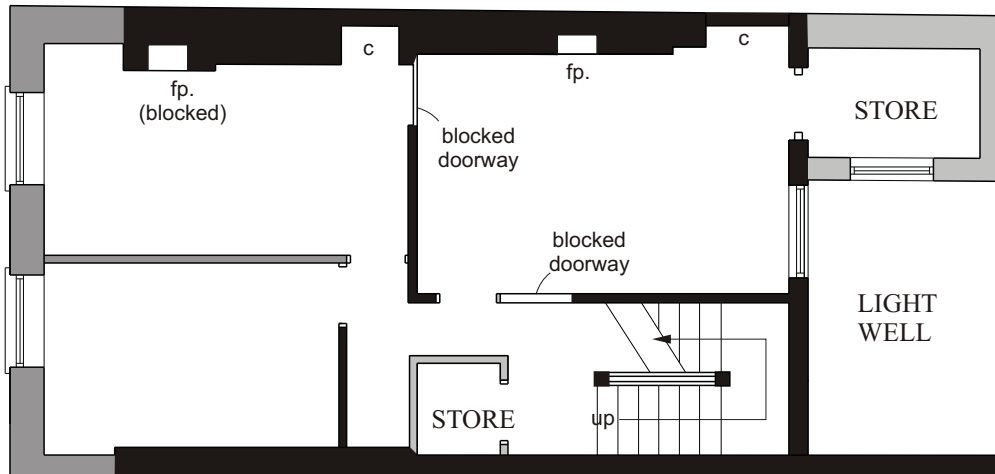
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Fig. 2 Plans of the basement, ground and first floors.

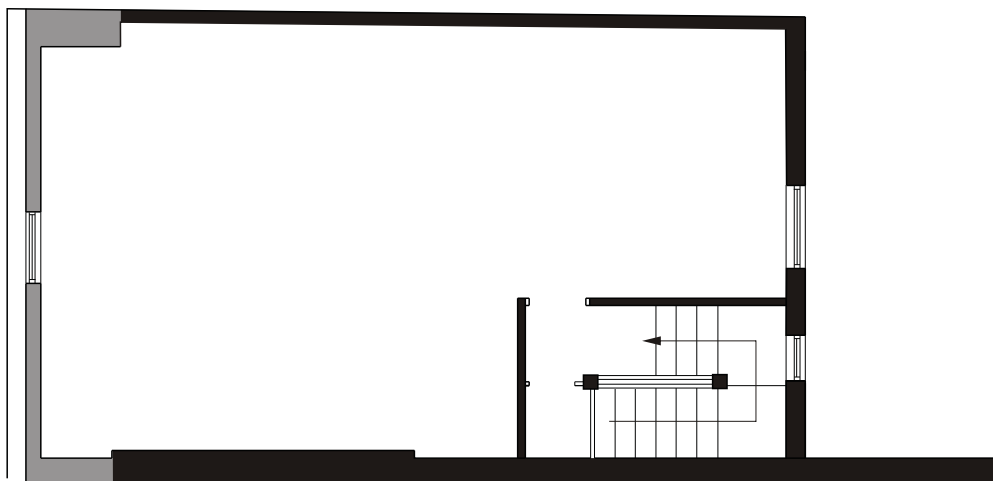
Second floor



Third floor



Attic



c = cupboard
 17th century
 18th century
 19th century
 20th century

0 5 metres

Fig. 3 Plans of the second and third floors and the attic.



Plate 1 Ground-floor front room showing cornice above modern suspended ceiling, looking northwest.



Plate 2 Ground-floor store behind the stairs showing arch and 'splayed' masonry, looking east.



Plate 3 Basement brick vault in rear store, looking northwest.



Plate 4 First-floor front room showing fireplace, panelling and recess, looking southwest.