



KDK ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

HISTORIC BUILDING WATCHING BRIEF REPORT:
15 GEORGE STREET
ST ALBANS
HERTFORDSHIRE

on behalf of J & E Berridge



NGR: TL 1450 0717

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KDK: 045/SGS/2

March 2014

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Site Data

<i>KDK project code:</i>	045/SGS		
<i>OASIS ref:</i>	kdkarcha1-174688	<i>Event/Accession no:</i>	TBC
<i>County:</i>	Hertfordshire		
<i>Village/Town:</i>	St Albans		
<i>Civil Parish:</i>	Non civil parish		
<i>NGR (to 8 figs):</i>	TL 1450 0717		
<i>Present use:</i>	Residential		
<i>Planning proposal:</i>	Removal of a beam in the dining area		
<i>Local Planning Authority:</i>	St Albans City and District Council		
<i>Planning application ref/date:</i>	5/13/3161/LBC		
<i>Date of fieldwork:</i>	3 rd – 10 th February 2014		
<i>Client:</i>	Joel & Edna Berridge 15 George Street St Albans Hertfordshire AL3 4ER		
<i>Contact name:</i>	Joel Berridge		

Quality Check

<i>Primary Author:</i>	Karin Kaye MA MIfA	<i>Date:</i>	14 th March 2014
<i>Edited/Checked By:</i>	David Kaye BA AlfA	<i>Date:</i>	14 th March 2014
<i>Revisions:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	

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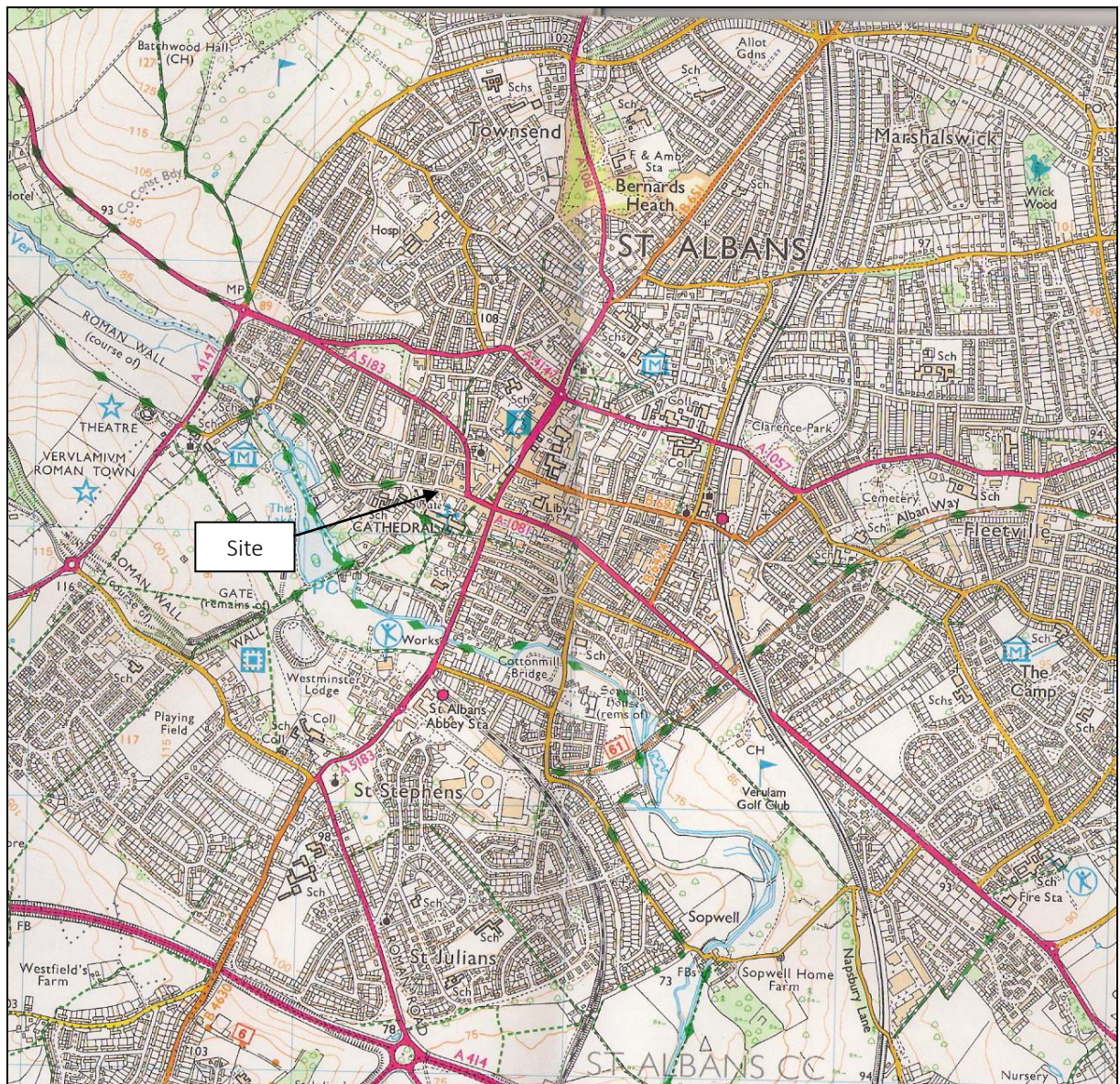


Figure 1: General location (scale 1:25,000)



Summary

In February 2014 a programme of historic building observation and recording was undertaken at 15 George Street, St Albans, Hertfordshire as a condition of planning permission for the development of the site. The property is a mid terraced, Grade II listed brick building dating from the 18th century, which is situated on the southern side of George Street. Some timber framing and floor joists are exposed inside the building. A modern beam, inserted in a ground floor room to support the floor, was removed and the fully exposed joists recorded. All of the joists had signs of being machine cut along at least one face, and redundant mortices, rafter seatings and pegs were present on several. The joists appear to have originally been structural timbers of a medieval building that had been modified for use here.

1 Introduction

1.1 In February 2014 KDK Archaeology Ltd undertook a programme of historic building observation and recording of 15 George Street, St Albans, Hertfordshire. The project was commissioned by Joel Berridge and was carried out according to a Method Statement prepared by KDK, and approved by approved by the District Archaeologist and the Conservation Officer of St Albans City and District Council. The relevant planning application reference is 5/13/3161/LBC.

1.2 *Planning Background*

This project has been required under the terms of National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as a condition of planning permission for the development of the site.

1.3 *The Site*

Location & Description

The property is a mid terraced, Grade II listed building (Ref 163297) situated on the southern side of George Street, the rear garden of which backs on the Abbey grounds (Fig. 1). It is a 2 storey, brick building with some timber framing and wattle daub surviving inside. To the rear of the property is a 1980s single storey extension housing the kitchen (Fig. 2).

The listed building description is as follows:

Later C18, originally one house. 2 storeys and basement (only visible below No 15), 3 windows. Moderately high pitched, tiled roof. Red brick, with brick eaves cornice. Casement windows with glazing bars in stucco lined reveals. Modern shop front to ground floor of No 14, No 15 has ground floor sash window with glazing bars under gauged brick arch, and similar arch to basement window. Doorcase of fluted pilasters and cornice hood, but modern door.

Nos 1 to 16 (consec) form a group.

Proposed Development

The proposed works include the removal of a modern central beam on the ground floor (Fig. 3).

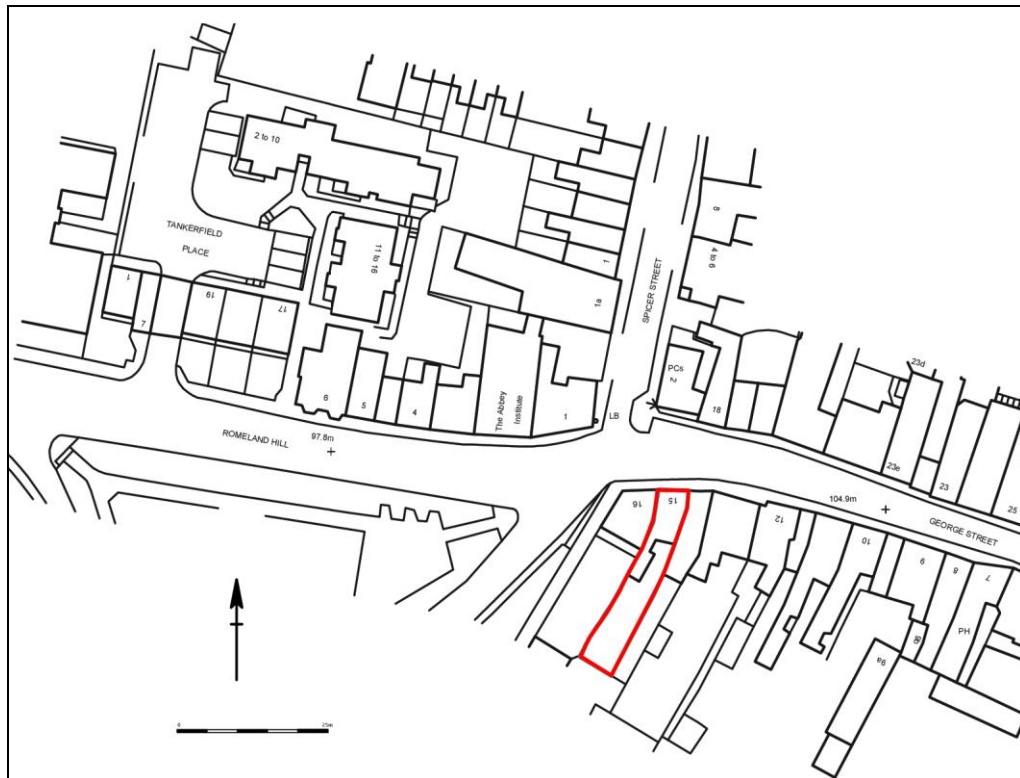


Figure 2: Site location (scale 1:1250)
(Courtesy of A.D. Practice Ltd)

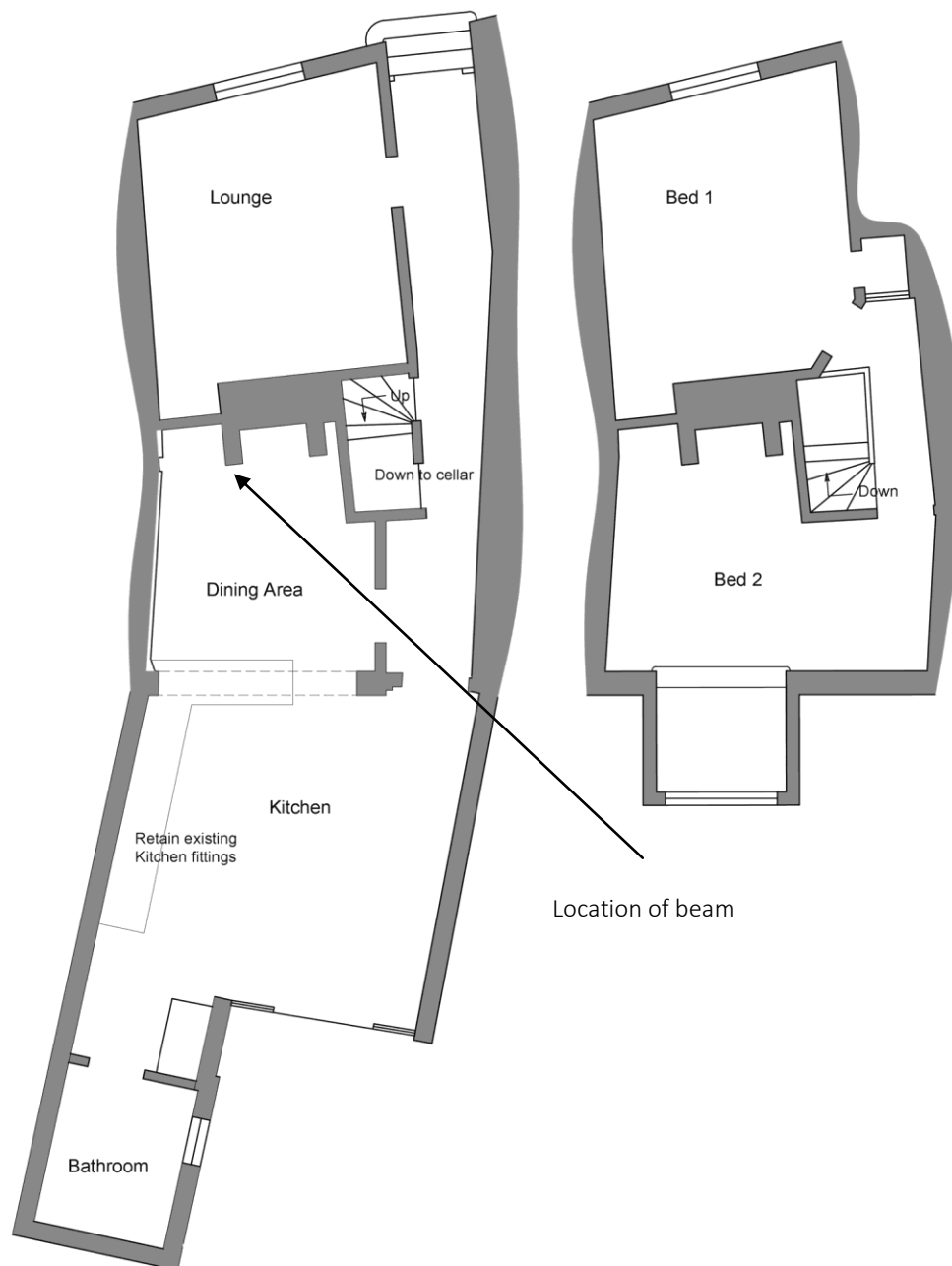


Figure 2: Proposed works (scale 1:100)
(Courtesy of A.D. Practice Ltd)



2 Aims & Methods

2.1 The aims of this project as defined in the approved KDK Method Statement were:

- All alterations to the building that impact on the historic fabric or expose previously hidden structural and/or architectural material would be monitored by an experienced archaeologist, who would undertake additional historic building recording, analysis and assessment if required.

2.2 *Methods*

In line with the requirements of the Method Statement, the methods used were as follows:

- An initial photographic survey was undertaken (no further building analysis was found necessary)
- All alterations to the building that impacted on the historic fabric or expose previously hidden structural and/or architectural material were monitored
- A written record was made of each site visit using KDK's Historic Building Restoration Sheet.
- These records are accompanied by sketches
- In addition, a photographic record was maintained throughout the watching brief.

2.3 *Standards*

The work conformed to the following requirements:

- The design brief
- The relevant sections of the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance Notes* (IFA 2008a)
- The Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (IFA 2010),
- Current English Heritage guidelines (EH 1991)
- The Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers East of England Region *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (ALGAO 2003)



3 Contextual Background

St Albans is renowned for its Iron Age, Roman and medieval heritage, of which the latter provides the historic and immediate setting for the development site, as it backs directly onto the ground of St Albans Abbey. The abbey was founded by King Offa in 793AD for Benedictine monks but was largely rebuilt by Paul of Caen, the first Norman abbot (1077–93) (VCH online). The abbey greatly influenced the layout of the medieval town; Abbot Wulsin had Watling Street diverted through the town to stimulate market trade and increase the abbey's income. George Street, formerly known as Church Street, undoubtedly also developed if not prospered as a result of the influx of pilgrims during the medieval period by providing necessary services, such as the smith discovered during archaeological investigations at Tankerfield Place in 1978 (SADC 2010: 2). A number of inns, such as the Tudor Tavern, were also located along this road, which ultimately linked London with Chester (Smith & North 2003: 1). However, following the dissolution of the abbey in the mid 16th century, the focus of the coaching trade shifted to Holywell Hill (SADC 2010: 2). Whilst the area to the west of the abbey became increasingly residential, the eastern end of George Street has retained more of its earlier character in that it is largely commercial. One of the few exceptions is number 15, which was formerly part of a larger dwelling that incorporated in neighbour to the east.

Number 15 is a brick built structure dating from the 18th century. Internal timber framing survives with primary bracing and square framing with brick infill at ground floor level. The building was extended to the rear in the 1980s to provide an open plan kitchen and living space. A modern beam was inserted in the living space at much the same time, no doubt with the intention of supporting the floor above. Whilst this may have had some success in that respect, the brickwork over the fireplace was suffering structural problems where the beam had been built into it.

The exposed floor joists in the living space are between c.5 and 9.5cm in width and on 33-38cm centring. They are painted black, as is the modern beam, which is 18.5 x 14.25cm with narrow chamfers. The bricks making up the fireplace into which the beam has been built are handmade with few inclusions and measure approximately 21-21.5 c 10.5 x 6.5cm. The fireplace in the room above is similarly built and has an iron strap supporting the arch. A floorboard had been removed in the first floor room to allow the joists to be inspected from above. The board is of softwood, up to 26.5cm wide and held with machine cut nails.



4 Results

The joists were completely exposed during the watching brief visit, and only worked on from below (Plate 1). The joists, which are numbered here from south to north, were clearly re-used as all were machine cut on either the north or south face. One joist, J2, was machine cut on both sides but was clearly a re-used tiebeam as was evident in the mortice, pegs and rafter seating (Plates 2-3).

Joist 3 had faint diamond shaped marks on the underside, reminiscent of a timber mullioned window. These were clearly so faint that they only showed in certain light and do not appear on the photograph of the joist (Plate 4), which may suggest that they may have been a trick of the light rather than true evidence of former use.

The joist adjacent to this, J4, had two long through mortices measuring 36 x 4cm, with a peg hole below the western one (Plate 4). Five smaller mortices measuring 12 x 4cm and some 33cm apart, no doubt for studs, were observed on the south face of Joist 8 next to the fireplace (Plate 5). Joist 5 had a peg at the western end and a rectangular timber seating to the east (Plate 6).

Joists 1-2, to the west of the fireplace, and joists 6 and 7 showed no evidence for earlier use other than the machine cut face on Joists 6 and 7. All the joists had been cut so that the lip formed in the upper half could rest on the walls on either side (Plate 7).



Plate 1: View of the exposed joists from the south



Plate 2: Joist 2 from the south with rafter seating arrowed



Plate 3: Joist 2 from the south with mortice arrowed



Plate 4: Western end of Joists 3 and 4 from the south. Through mortice on Joist 4 arrowed

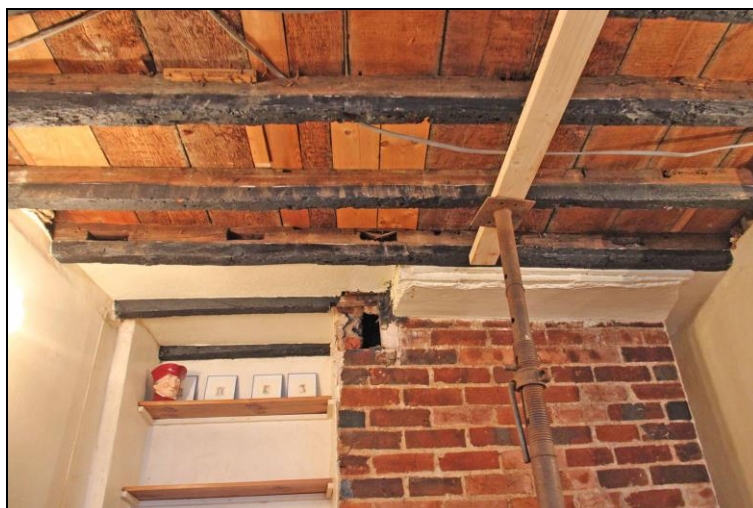


Plate 5: Mortices in Joist 8

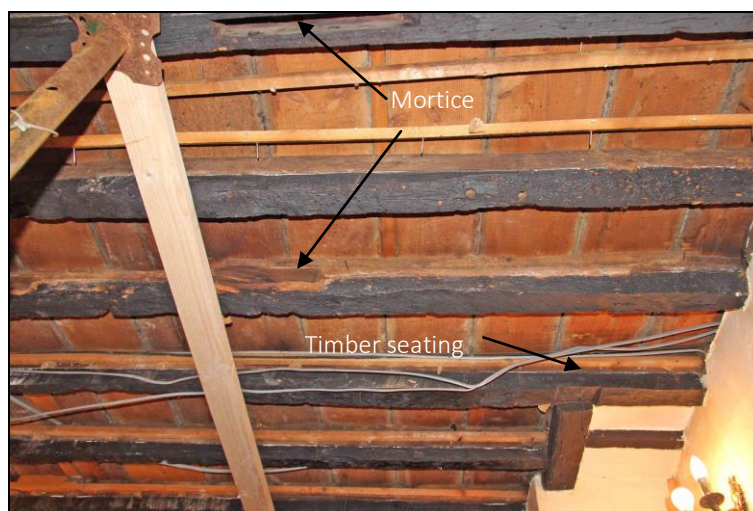


Plate 5: Eastern side of ceiling



Plate 7: Joist detail

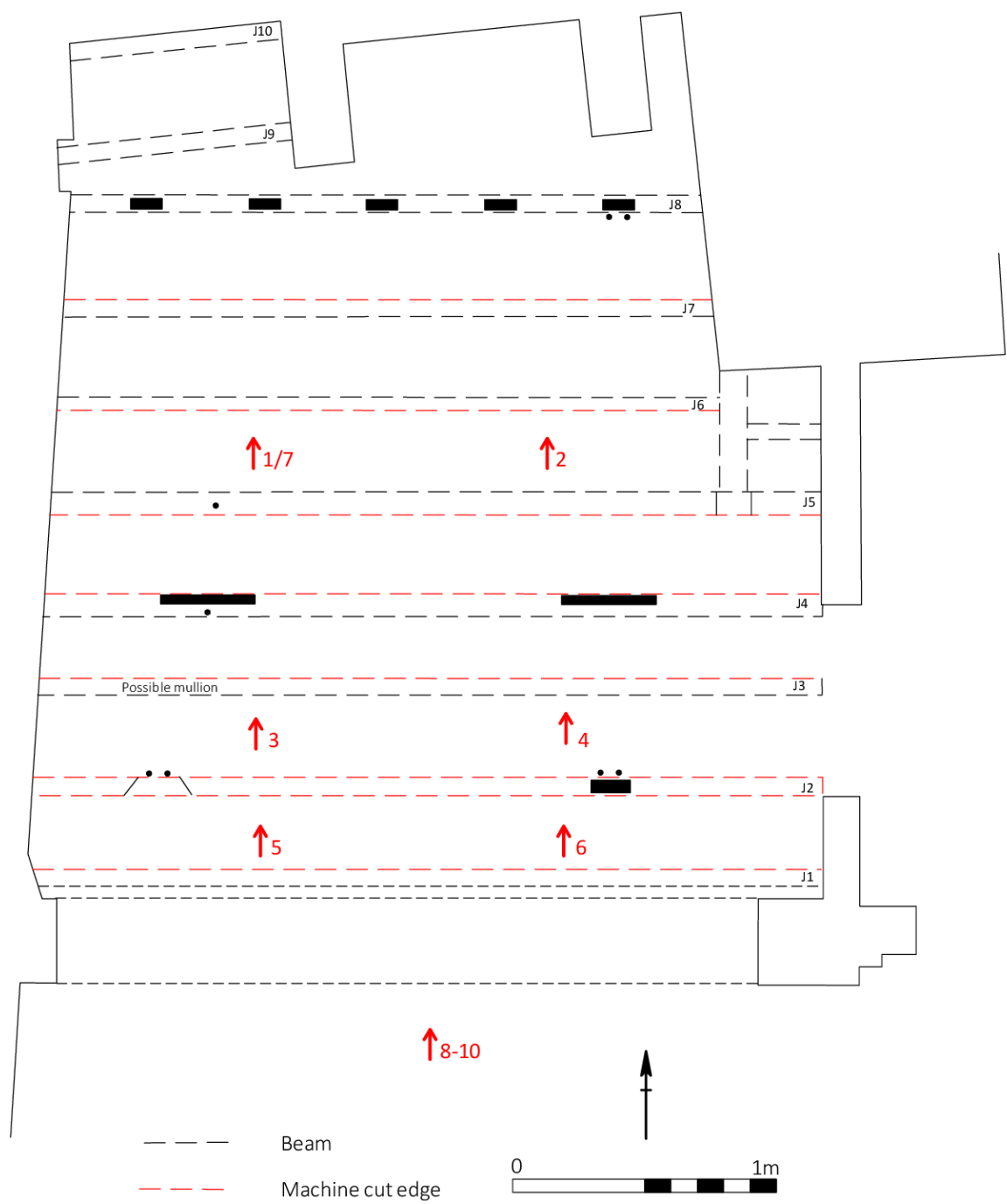


Figure 4: Ceiling plan (scale 1:25)



5 Conclusions

Number 15 George Street is not untypical in that it incorporates contemporary building materials (the bricks) with re-used timbers. Where the joists originated from will never be known, but it is clear that they were originally structural timbers that were cut lengthwise with the ends modified to be able to sit on top of the wall. No graffiti or carpenters marks were observed that may have given further indication of use, or whether these timbers may have come from the same room/structure. The size of the timbers and the way in which the timber has been converted suggest that they may have come from a fairly robust medieval building. It is probably not unreasonable to hypothesise that this building would have been local.



6 Acknowledgements

KDK Archaeology is grateful to Joel Berridge for commissioning this report and for his assistance during the initial survey. Thanks are also due to Tom Young for his help during the site visit. The project was monitored by Simon West of St Albans City and District Council.

7 Archive

7.1 The project archive will comprise:

1. Brief
2. Written Scheme of Investigation
3. Initial report
4. Monitoring sheets
5. Site drawings
6. Client's site plans
7. List of photographs
8. B/W prints & negatives
9. Specialist reports
10. CDROM with copies of all digital files.

7.2 The archive will be deposited with Hertfordshire Archive and Local Studies (HALS)



8 References

Standards & Specifications

- ALGAO 2003 *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 14.
- Allen J L & Holt A St J 1986 (with later updates) *Health & Safety in Field Archaeology*. London: Federation of Archaeological Managers & Employers
- Brickley M & McKinley J I 2004 *Guidelines to the Standards for Recording Human Remains*. Reading: Institute for Archaeologists Technical Paper.
- EH 1991 *The Management of Archaeological Projects, 2nd edition*. London: English Heritage
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- EH 2011 *Environmental Archaeology: a guide to the theory and practice of methods from sampling and recovery to post-excavation* London: English Heritage
- Ferguson L M & Murray D M 1997 *Archaeological Documentary Archives: Preparation, Curation and Storage*. Manchester: Institute for Archaeologists' Paper 1
- Gurney, D. 2003 *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 14
- IFA 2010 Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct*. Reading: Institute for Archaeologists
- IFA 2008 Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology* Reading: Institute for Archaeologists
- IFA 2008a *Standards & Guidance for the Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings*. Reading: Institute for Archaeologists
- IFA 2009 *Standards & Guidance for Archiving Archaeological Projects*. Reading: Institute for Archaeologists
- IFA 2010 Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct*. Reading: Institute for Archaeologists
- IFA (various dates) Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance documents (Desk-Based Assessments 2011, Watching Briefs 2008, Evaluations 2009, Excavations 2008, Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings 2008, Finds 2008, Archiving 2009)*.
- KDK Historic Building Watching Brief Method Statement
- McKinley J.I. & Roberts C. 1993 *Excavation and Post-Excavation Treatment of Cremated and Inhumed Human Remains*. Institute for Archaeologists Technical Paper 13
- MGC 1992 *Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections*. London: Museums and Galleries Commission
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St Albans City & District 2010 *Character Assessment Area 4: City Centre*
http://www.stalbans.gov.uk/Images/Area%204%20The%20City%20Centre_tcm15-13980.pdf



St Albans City & District 2010 *Character Assessment Area23 Romeland*

http://www.stalbans.gov.uk/Images/St%20Albans%20Conservation%20Area%20Character%20Statement%20Key%20List%20and%20Map_tcm15-13996.pdf

Victoria County History 'The city of St Albans: The borough', *A History of the County of Hertford: volume 2* (1908), pp. 477-483.

<http://www.british-history.ac.uk>



Appendix 1: Photograph List

SITE NO/CODE: 045/SGS			Site Name: 15 George Street St Albans
Shot	B&W	Digital	Subject
Watching brief visit			
1	x	x	Joists 6-10: western end
2	x	x	Joists 6-10: eastern end
3	x	x	Joists 3-6: western end
4	x	x	Joists 3-6: eastern end
5	x	x	Joists 1-5: western end
6	x	x	Joists 1-5: eastern end
7	x	x	Joists 6-8
8	x	x	Whole ceiling from the south
Initial survey			
1	x	x	Ground floor rear room looking north
2	x	x	Ground floor rear room looking north
3	x	x	Ground floor rear room: beam detail
4	x	x	Ground floor rear room: beam detail
5	x	x	Ground floor rear room: beam detail
6	x	x	Joists from the bedroom



Appendix 2: KDK OASIS Sheet

PROJECT DETAILS			
Project Name:	15 George Street St Albans Hertfordshire	OASIS reference:	kdkarcha1-174688
Short Description:	In February 2014 a programme of historic building observation and recording was undertaken at 15 George Street, St Albans, Hertfordshire as a condition of planning permission for the development of the site. The property is a mid terraced, Grade II listed brick building dating from the 18 th century, which is situated on the southern side of George Street. Some timber framing and floor joists are exposed inside the building. A modern beam, inserted in a ground floor room to support the floor, was removed and the fully exposed joists recorded. All of the joists had signs of being machine cut along at least one face, and redundant mortices, rafter seatings and pegs were present on several. The joists appear to have originally been structural timbers of a medieval building that had been modified for use here.		
Project Type:	Historic Building Watching Brief		
Previous work: (eg. SMR refs)	None	Site status: (eg. none, SAM, listed)	Grade II listed
Current land use:	Residential	Future work:	No
Monument type:	Dwelling	Monument period:	Post-medieval
Significant finds:	N/A		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County:	Hertfordshire	OS reference: (8 figs min)	TL 1450 0717
Site address:	15 George Street, St Albans, Hertfordshire, AL3 4ER		
Study area: (sq. m. / ha)	N/A	Height OD: (metres)	N/A
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation:	KDK Archaeology Ltd		
Project brief originator:		Project design originator:	KDK Archaeology Ltd
Project Manager:	Karin Kaye	Director/Supervisor:	Karin Kaye
Sponsor / funding body:	J & E Berridge		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date:	3 rd February 2014	End date:	10 th February 2014
PROJECT ARCHIVES			
	Location (Accession no.)	Content (eg. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)	
Physical:	Hertfordshire Archive and Local Studies		
Paper:		Recording sheets, photographs, architects plans	
Digital:		1 CD	
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)			
Title:	Historic Building Watching Brief: 15 George Street, St Albans, Hertfordshire		
Serial title & volume:	KDK Archaeology Ltd Report ref. 045/SGS		
Author(s):	Karin Kaye MA MifA		
Page nos	20	Date:	14 th March 2014



Appendix 3: Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record Sheet

Site name and address: 15 George Street St Albans		
County: Hertfordshire	District: St Albans	
Village/Town: St Albans	Parish: St Albans	
Planning application reference: 5/13/3161/LBC		
Client's name, address, & tel. no: J. Berridge, 15 George Street St Albans		
Nature of application: Removal of beam in ground floor ceiling		
Present land use: Residential		
Size of application area: N/A	Size of area investigated: N/A	
NGR (to 8 figures): TL 1450 0717	Site code: 045/SGS	
Site director: Karin Kaye	Organization: KDK Archaeology Ltd	
Type of work: Historic Building Watching Brief		
Date of work:	Start: 3 rd February 2014	Finish: 10 th February 2014
Curating museum: HALS		
Related HER nos:	Periods represented: Post-medieval	
Relevant previous summaries/reports: N/A		
<p>Summary of fieldwork results:</p> <p>In February 2014 a programme of historic building observation and recording was undertaken at 15 George Street, St Albans, Hertfordshire as a condition of planning permission for the development of the site. The property is a mid terraced, Grade II listed brick building dating from the 18th century, which is situated on the southern side of George Street. Some timber framing and floor joists are exposed inside the building. A modern beam, inserted in a ground floor room to support the floor, was removed and the fully exposed joists recorded. All of the joists had signs of being machine cut along at least one face, and redundant mortices, rafter seatings and pegs were present on several. The joists appear to have originally been structural timbers of a medieval building that had been modified for use here.</p>		
Author: Karin Kaye MA MIfA	Date: 14 th March 2014	