

**Historic building recording  
at Court Farm,  
Lincomb Lane,  
Lincomb,  
Hartlebury,  
Stourport-on-Severn,  
Worcestershire,**

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WSM 46467

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# **Historic building recording at Court Farm, Lincomb Lane, Lincomb, Hartlebury, Stourport-on-Severn, Worcestershire**

## **Introduction**

Historic building recording of a dwelling and associated buildings at Court Farm, Lincomb Lane, Lincomb, Hartlebury, Stourport-on-Severn, Worcestershire (SO 8237 6866; planning ref W/09/0799, Fig 1) was undertaken at the request of Julia Whelan, according to a written scheme of investigation provided by Martin Cook BA MifA and approved by Mike Glyde of Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service.

The project was undertaken in order to provide a descriptive account and interpretation of the building, including discussion of its local, regional and national significance.

## **The documentary material**

Documentary research at the Worcestershire County Record Office took place on the 2nd August 2012 and a search of the Historic Environment Record was received on the 8th May 2012.

## **Historic mapping**

The earliest available map was the tithe map of Hartlebury of 1838 (Fig 2.1). This shows a 'T' shaped farmhouse, a rectangular building to its north and two rectangular buildings, slightly overlapping, to its south-east. At the western end of the property there is a square building adjacent to the highway. The 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1884 (Fig 2.2) shows the farmhouse as unchanged. The rectangular building to the north has been extended to the west. Of the two buildings to the south-east, the more southerly has been extended to the west and the overlapping one to the north no longer remains. It has been replaced with another structure at right-angles to the existing building. To the north-east of the farmhouse there is a small rectangular building. At the western end of the property, the square building adjacent to the highway has been extended to the north. To the south of the farmhouse, a rectangular building with an open yard attached has been built adjacent to the highway. Finally, to the east of the farmhouse, two, small, square buildings have been erected. The Ordnance Survey map of 1903 (Fig 2.2) shows no changes to this arrangement. The Ordnance Survey map of 1927 (Fig 2.3) shows a glass-roofed structure linking the farmhouse with the rectangular building to the north.

## **The Worcestershire Historic Environment Record**

Court Farm, Hartlebury (WSM 05859) is described as a farmstead of early 19th century date with late 19th century additions (listed Gd II). It is of brick with a tile roof and gable end stacks. It has three storeys, a dentilled brick cornice; three windows to each floor on the front (west) elevation, the central one being blind. The outer two have tripartite glazing bar sashes, all with rubbed brick heads and stone sills to the ground and first floors. The second floor has 9-pane sashes with timber lintels. The entrance is in the north elevation through a late 19th century glazed lean-to.

Grove Farm, Lincomb (WSM 05856) is described as a farmhouse of the early to mid 17th century, of timber framed construction on a sandstone plinth with white brick infill (listed Gd II). It has early 19th century and mid 20th century alterations. It has a tile roof and is of 'T' plan, with an external gable end stack of sandstone to the east gable of the front range (two framed bays). There are two storeys. The fenestration comprises two 3-light 19th century casements and, on the ground floor, two glazing bar sashes (of the early 19th century; imported in the mid 20th century). It has a central entrance with an early 19th century doorcase, a 3-pane overlight and a 6-panelled door. The timber framing comprises three rectangular panels, raised by a further two square panels, each with straight tension braces. The west gable has two collars with queen struts and a V-strut in the apex.

Lincombe Hall, Hartlebury (WSM 05857) is described as a house of the early 17th century. It is of brick. The facade on the southern side has a central doorway which is likely to be Victorian. Wings project on each side of the doorway. A stone in the gatepost and an iron plate on the wall in the porch claim a date of 1624.

### Census information

A serious difficulty arises with the census data as the various properties which were part of the Lincomb Estate are often undifferentiated. In addition, apart from Lincomb Hall (presumably the manor house) the only establishment to be named is Grove Farm which lies immediately to the south of what is now known as Court Farm.

1841

Mostly undifferentiated except by parish

1851

There are ten undifferentiated entries for Lincomb

1861

Lincomb House (?Lincomb Hall) is specifically mentioned but no names are appended to any of the ten other related properties

1871

If Lincomb House is Lincomb Hall then the 'Lincomb' that follows may be Court Farm. This entry is followed by 'Grove Farm' which may add some weight to this interpretation.

Name	Position	Age	Occupation
Eliza Harris	Head	45	Landowner
Mary Freeman	Visitor	15	
Hannah Grove	Servant	50	General Servant

1881

Lincomb is undifferentiated as before.

1891

In the census there is a 'Lincomb Farm' listed before Lincomb Hall. This is presumed to be Court Farm.

Name	Position	Age	Occupation
Herbert Harris	Head	63	Farmer
Susan Harris	Wife	49	
Herbert	Son	27	Farmer's labourer
Frances	Daughter	18	Farmer's daughter
Robert	Son	11	Scholar
Henry	Son	10	Scholar
Charlotte	Daughter	9	
Ellen Gliver	Servant F	16	Domestic, seasonal, general

1901

In the census there is a Lincomb Farm listed before Lincomb Hall. This is presumed to be Court Farm.

Name	Position	Age	Occupation
Herbert Harris	Head	31	Farmer
Jessica	Wife	31	
Ann Hyde	Visitor	64	
Mary Hyde	Visitor	36	
Lewis Phillips	Servant	19	Domestic Servant
William Kirk	Servant	20	General agricultural labourer

nb this Herbert Harris was probably the son of the 1891 Herbert Harris, then aged 63. The discrepancy in the son's age (ie in 1901 he was not 10 years older than he was in 1891) is probably just a result of the uncertainty regarding a person's age at this time. Small importance was attached

to the precise number of calendar years that a person had attained because little or nothing depended upon it.

Given the uncertainty regarding whether the entries transcribed above are in fact relevant to what is now known as Court Farm, it was not thought worthwhile to make any further analysis of them.

## **The fieldwork**

### *General*

Fieldwork took place on the 9th May 2012. It comprised a walk-around survey, with as-existing architect's plans and elevations which were annotated with historic information and photographs taken as appropriate.

### **Description**

#### *The farmhouse*

The farmhouse at Court Farm is of two distinct phases of construction with other minor structural alterations. It is described phase by phase below. Its associated buildings are principally of a single date, with various extensions and modifications. Their phasing and dating have, as far as possible, been related to the farmhouse.

#### **Phase 1: Late 17th to early 18th century**

The earliest phase of the farmhouse comprises three walls of squared, coursed stone construction, approximately 0.5m thick, with splayed window reveals (Figs 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4). Although the stone construction extends almost to the entire height of the existing building it has been rendered over on the south and east elevations and is visible, on the exterior, only on the north (Figs 7 and 32). It may, however, be seen in the cellar (Figs 3.2, 8, 9 and 11).

It is felt that the position of the winding stair within the surviving phase 1 structure is original, even if the stair itself has been replaced (see below). The tall, narrow window in the south elevation (Figs 3.8, 29 and 30) only makes sense if it is providing light to a staircase.

It is clear from the fragmentary remains in the cellar that the entrance hall/passage in the existing structure was probably also the entrance in the phase 1 building. The same remains, forming a small, rectangular space with a beaten earth floor (Fig 3.2), also suggest that the access to the cellar was located in the same position. It is highly likely that the phase 1 cellar was located in the same position as the phase 2 cellar and that the phase 1 building extended over it. However, the extent and nature of that part of the phase 1 structure that lay to the west is unknown.

#### *Cellar (Figs 3.2, 9 and 11)*

The remains of this are fragmentary as the likely location of the phase 1 cellar is now occupied by that of the phase 2 structure.

#### *Ground floor (Figs 3.1, 15, 16 and 18)*

The phase 1 elements comprise three substantially built stone walls on the north, south and east, pierced by splayed openings. It is likely that the splayed opening in the east wall (Figs 3.1 and 15) was originally a window. A door dividing the winding stair from the principal room (Fig 16) and another separating it from the hall/stairwell are probably contemporary with Phase 2, as are the latches used to secure them (Fig 18).

#### *First floor (Figs 3.3 and 24)*

The phase 1 elements comprise three substantially built stone walls on the north, south and east, pierced by slightly splayed openings. Little else can be attributed to this phase except the position of the winding stair (Fig 24) and possibly some elements of its construction.

#### *Second floor (Fig 3.4)*

The phase 1 elements comprise three substantially built stone walls on the north, south and east. Little else can be attributed to this phase except the position of the winding stair and possibly some elements of its construction.

## **Phase 2: Early 19th century**

Whatever its nature, part of the phase 1 structure, including the cellar, was demolished and the phase 2 building erected against it, on a very slightly different alignment. The front (west) elevation (in this case the elevation intended to be seen across a garden, from the road) was built in the typical symmetrical, Georgian style and little can be added to the description in the Historic Environment Record (see above: WSM 05859) except to note that the bricks were laid in Flemish bond in lime mortar (Figs 3.5 and 28). An unusual feature is that the principal entrance was not provided in the centre of this elevation but in the comparatively undistinguished north elevation. This compromise must have been necessary due to the need to accommodate the retained element of the phase 1 structure. This was probably recognised as a flaw in the design and, as a measure of compensation, an elaborate window was provided above the entrance (Fig 3.7).

In plan the phase 2 building was simple, comprising a two cell, single pile arrangement on all floors including the cellar, with chimneys on the external gable ends. It is believed that the chimney on the east elevation also belongs to phase 2 (for the evidence for this see below: *First floor*).

### *Cellar* (Figs 3.2, 7 and 8)

The walls are of brick (except where elements of the phase 1 structure remain; Fig 3.2), and the floor is covered with brick setts (Figs 7 and 8). The southern room was provided with a shallow channel providing drainage out through the entrance in the south-west corner.

### *Ground floor* (Figs 3.1, 12, 13, 14 and 17)

This comprises two, almost square principal rooms and the hall/stairwell. The primary of the two rooms appears to have been the southern one. The fire surround is the more ornate (although only marginally so) but there is a cornice decorated with urns and swags (Fig 13) that is lacking in the northern room (Fig 14). In the stairwell, the stair comprises a wooden banister rail with turned, wooden ballusters (Fig 17). Within the phase 1 structure, an opening in the north-west corner, blocked in phase 4, gave access to the cellar (Fig 3.1).

### *First floor* (Figs 3.3, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23 and 24)

This comprises two, almost square principal rooms, the landing/stairwell and, probably, the sub-division of the phase 1 structure (Fig 3.3). There is nothing, in terms of decoration, to distinguish the two principal rooms from each other: the fire surrounds are identical (Figs 19 and 20) and the walls and ceiling are plain. The wooden banister rail with turned, wooden ballusters continues to the first floor but not beyond to the second. The winding stair continues through the first floor and has an access onto the landing (Figs 23 and 24).

The sub-division of the phase 1 structure was accomplished with solid walling, not timber partitions, and the thickness of the two walls indicates that this was carried out in brick (Fig 3.3). Two rooms were created (excluding the stairwell and the winding stair). The more southerly one (Fig 22), which was unheated, was of somewhat irregular shape due to the configuration of its external walls. The northerly one (Fig 21) has a fireplace but this is asymmetrically situated within the room, indicating that it is a later addition.

### *Second floor* (Figs 3.4, 25, 26 and 27)

This comprises two, almost square rooms, the landing/stairwell and, probably, the sub-division of the phase 1 structure (Fig 3.4). There is nothing, in terms of decoration, to distinguish the two principal rooms from each other (Figs 25 and 26). Indeed, they are plain even by the standards of the rooms on the first floor, being partly within the roof space, lacking skirting boards and having the simplest fire grates. The winding stair continues to the second floor and emerges onto a spacious landing.

The sub-division of the phase 1 structure was accomplished with solid walling, not timber partitions, and the thickness of the two walls indicates that this was carried out in brick (Fig 3.4). The arrangement is almost exactly the reverse of the floor below with the smaller room being to the north and the larger to the south. In this case, however, the minor room is accessed from the major creating a small suite. A small, simple grate was provided in the corner of the larger room (Fig 27).

### **Phase 3: Mid 19th century**

There is no mid-19 century phase in the farmhouse.

### **Phase 4: Late 20th century**

This phase is limited to the construction of a porch against the north elevation and the blocking of a door giving access to the cellar (Fig 3.1).

### **The ancillary buildings**

#### *The dairy and bakehouse*

This was built in three phases:

#### **Late 17th century to early 18th century (corresponding with Phase 1 of the farmhouse)**

Two courses of coursed stonework are visible in the southern elevation (Fig 4.3). The nature of the building of which this construction was a part is unknown. Stone masonry is also visible further to the east forming what is known as 'the shed' (see below).

#### **Early 19th century (corresponding with Phase 2 of the farmhouse)**

Whatever the nature of the earlier structure, this was substantially demolished and a rectangular building in brick substituted on the same site. This was erected in stretcher bond with 'cog' dentilation at the eaves and with a red tile roof (Fig 4.3). Its interior (Fig 4.1) was provided with brick setts, a bread oven (Fig 35), a hearth or range (probably open, now blocked; Fig 36), a pair of 'coppers' (Fig 38) and a stone sink (Fig 37). There may also be a well in the middle of the floor (Fig 4.1).

#### **Mid 19th century (no direct correlation with the farmhouse)**

In the mid 19th century, this was extended to the west. The extension was almost square and was constructed in English garden wall bond with 'cog' dentilation at the eaves and with a red tile roof (Fig 4.3). At ground floor level this was floored with brick setts and provided with a stone slab supported on low, segmental arches (Figs 4.1 and 35). The western elevation (Fig 3.5 and 39) was constructed in Flemish garden wall bond, presumably to complement the principal elevation of the farmhouse, and was provided with two openings, a window at ground floor level and a door on the first floor. This gave access to a boarded open space, extending over the early 19th century bakehouse (Figs 4.2 and 40) and was presumably used for storage.

#### *The barn and stable*

The building, as it appears today, is substantially of a single phase with minor alterations (phase 2: early 19th century; Fig 5.1). However, the barn has a few courses of coursed stone in the lower parts of its north and south elevations, hinting at an earlier phase, probably contemporary with the use of stone elsewhere on the site (phase 1: late 17th to early 18th century).

The phase 2 structure is rectangular and divided into two principal components: a barn and an attached stable, built contemporaneously. The barn is of three bays, a threshing floor with opposed, full height doors (one opening onto the farm yard and the other the road) and a storage area. Apart from the stone construction, the bulk of the barn is constructed in stretcher bond with ventilation holes occupying most of the south elevation (Figs 5.3, 44 and 45). This was probably duplicated on the north elevation (Figs 5.2 and 43) but much of this is now obscured by a 20th century building. The east elevation also has a lower coursed stone component (Figs 5.4 and 46). This is constructed in Flemish garden wall bond with ventilation holes in diamond patterns. There is a door in the middle of the gable with a double brick arch, which is probably original. A stable style door at ground level in the middle of the east elevation and two glazed windows, all with lintels, are probably later modifications. The part of the west elevation of the barn, which is visible above the stable (Figs 5.4 and 43), has a regular pattern of ventilation holes which are probably original. The interior is now a clear, open space (Fig 42) with a concrete floor. There is no sign that a loft was ever present.

The stable is approximately square (Fig 5.1) and, originally, also had opposing doors (Figs 5.2, 5.3, 43 and 44) although the one facing onto the road was blocked in phase 4 (late 20th century). All three elevations were built in Flemish garden wall bond. The surviving door, on the north elevation,

(Figs 5.2 and 43) is of a stable style with a double brick arch. The west elevation (Figs 5.4 and 43) has two windows spanned by double brick arches WOODEN DIAMOND MULLIONS. The interior is now a clear, open space (Fig 41) with a floor of brick setts.

#### *The coach house*

The building, as it appears today, is substantially of two phases (phase 2: early 19th century and phase 3: mid 19th century; Figs 6.1 and 6.2). However, its south elevation (Figs 6.3 and 50) has a few courses of coursed stone in its lower parts, hinting at an earlier phase, probably contemporary with the use of stone elsewhere on the site (phase 1: late 17th to early 18th century).

The phase 2 structure is rectangular and is divided into two components: a stable and a coach house. The principal elevation, the south (Figs 6.3 and 50) is built in Flemish garden wall bond. It has two entrances; one approximately in the centre of the elevation, which is a typical stable door, and the other, on the eastern side of the elevation, which has double doors to accommodate a small carriage or trap. Both are spanned by single-brick arches. The east and west elevations (Figs 6.4, 50 and 52) are a strange mixture of shallow bricks in an irregular bond and Flemish garden wall bond. The west elevation (Figs 6.4 and 52) has a small, square opening at ground level and a similar opening in the gable. The flooring is a mixture of brick setts, probably original, and concrete, modern.

The phase 3 structure is a square extension on the northern side of the phase 2 structure (Figs 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 51 and 53). This was a further stable. It was built in Flemish garden wall bond and was partially subterranean, being built into the higher ground to the north. Its east elevation has a typical stable door with a small window adjacent, both with single brick arches (Figs 6.4 and 51). Its west elevation (Fig 6.4) has a blocked door and small window. The north elevation (Figs 6.3 and 53) has a small opening in the gable, spanned by a single brick arch. The interior has a floor of brick setts and the floor of the chamber above (Fig 6.2 and 49) has narrow gaps in the floor, against the northern wall.

#### *The shed*

The structure known as the shed comprises two excavated chambers in the sandstone cliff to the east of the dairy and bakehouse (Figs 4.3, 54 and 55). As in the other structures described above, there is stone masonry visible in the lower parts of the wall which fronts the chambers (Figs 4.3 and 54). The majority of the facing wall, however, is in stretcher bond. The western-most chamber has a brick arch forming its roof (Fig 55); the eastern-most has a modern pitched roof (Fig 54).

## **Interpretation and discussion**

#### *The typical layout and use of the Georgian house*

The following section provides an indication of what might be expected in a newly-built house of some pretension of the period c 1720-1840, commonly known as the Georgian period. This corresponds to phase 2 at Court Farm. The extent to which these features were employed at Court Farm gives an indication of the ambitions, the social position of its inhabitants, their developing sensibilities and the compromises that they felt able or compelled to adopt.

The plan of the smaller Georgian house was largely standardized and this provides clues to the way in which modest urban houses were occupied (Cruikshank nd). Compact plans included miniature open-well stairs, modest newel staircases and dog-leg stairs. The plan of the house itself had also reached a standard form by c 1720 with a room at the front and a room at the back and, very often, the addition of a third small room per floor, in the form of a narrow closet reached off the back room. The early 18th century builder managed to create, in vertical form, the sort of apartments found in contemporary country houses. In the front of the house was a drawing room, behind it a bedroom/withdrawing room and beyond that a closet which, in a larger terrace house could be reached by a smaller, secondary staircase, which allow the removal of night soil out of sight of the rest of the house.

Typically, the various rooms and floors would be used in the following manner (<http://jane Austen's world>):

**the cellar, or subterranean section:** all except the poorest houses had cellars. They were occupied by the kitchens and other servant offices. The housekeeper and/or cook might be given rooms in this area away from the maids who slept in the attic (<http://janeaustensworld>). The kitchen would have been immediately adjacent. Access for the other servants and for tradesmen was provided by a rear access and circulating area. The various rooms would have been used for storage for food, wine and coal.

**ground floor:** the drawing room was usually placed near the front door so that it was easily accessible. Drawing rooms were a place to greet visitors and where the women of the house could retreat. The humbler parlour was generally a private room where the family could retire. Furnishings in the drawing room were generally more feminine than those in the adjacent dining room. Double doors would lead to the dining room, which was more austere and masculine in nature. After dinner the men would remain there to enjoy conversation over port and cigars, while the women retreated to the drawing room. The closer the dining room was located to the kitchens, the warmer the food remained when it arrived at the table.

**the first floor:** this could feature a large room for entertaining on a grand scale, such as dancing, card playing, or other fashionable pastimes. In the smaller class of house, this floor often held the principal bedrooms, which were generally placed in front of the house. The principal bedroom would be decorated lavishly and in the latest style. Other rooms on the same floor would be primary, secondary and tertiary bedrooms, providing accommodation for other members of the family or guests.

**the second floor or attic:** this was usually for servants, had the most basic decoration and was usually at least partially, in the roof space.

The external appearance of the house also underwent significant changes in this period, adopting clean and symmetrical lines, especially on the facade, where rows of well-proportioned windows were balanced about an imposing front door set firmly in the centre (Breckton and Parker undated). There were major design changes, such as the superseding of the gabled roof by the hipped one and the roof was often hidden behind a parapet. The hall declined still further in importance, no longer being used as a living area, but becoming merely an extension of the entrance, although often none the less grand for that. The staircase, which had been earlier usually tucked away, became a prominent feature, and its emergence often ousted the single large fireplace from its central position, replacing it by smaller ones serving individual rooms.

#### *The farmhouse*

##### **Phase 1: Late 17th to early 18th century**

The phase 1 structure, although easy to identify, is difficult to interpret as as much as 50% of it no longer survives. It is likely that the stone construction, so clearly evident as the eastern part of the existing farmhouse, once continued to the west, perhaps by the same amount again (Fig 3.1). The principal entrance would then have been in the centre of the north elevation, in the same position as, or immediately adjacent to, the existing entrance. This entrance would have given access to a hall or corridor with a single room on either side. The stair to the upper floors, the arrangement of which would have reflected that of the ground floor, would have been at its southern end, in the position of the existing servants' stair. There was clearly a cellar associated with the phase 1 structure (Fig 3.2). There was no apparent access to this in the position of the existing servants' stair and it may be that a simple trap door and ladder was provided. This early building faced north, towards one or more service buildings (see below) and may have had an axial chimney, although no evidence for this survives.

##### **Phase 2: Early 19th century**

The western part of the phase 1 structure was demolished. The eastern part, which survives to this day, was retained and became part of the servant accommodation. In the place of the demolished western part, a three storey (plus cellar) Georgian style building was added (Figs 3.1 and 3.5). Its principal elevation was to the west, thus changing the perceived orientation of the original building. This elevation, although typical of the Georgian style in most ways, lacked the usual central, imposing entrance, retaining the entrance used in phase 1. This was presumably a compromise in



order to facilitate the re-use of part of the phase 1 structure as servants' quarters. Without this re-use, another wing would have had to be erected to accommodate them.

There were other consequences too. The presumed original axial chimney could not have been retained under the new arrangements. Chimneys were built as part of the gable walls of the phase 2 building and a further chimney was built against the eastern end of the phase 1 structure (Fig 3.1). Inside, new arrangements had to be made for access to the upper floors. The original stair was retained (or rebuilt in the same position) for the use of the servants. This gave access between the ground, first and second floors. A new stair was erected at the northern end of the hall, giving access between the cellar, ground and first floors. Access to the stair to the cellar was provided for the main house, in the position where an under-stair cupboard is often provided and for the servants by an opposing door, later blocked (see below).

It is thought that the first and second floor sub-divisions of the phase 1 structure also date to this time (Figs 3.3 and 3.4). On the second floor, to the east of the servants' stair, are two rooms of unequal size, the smaller of which can only be accessed from the larger (Fig 3.4). It is thought that this provided accommodation for the housekeeper.

It is clear from the above that the decision to retain part of the original, phase 1, house had consequences for the way in which the new, more fashionable, building could be used. Undoubtedly a considerable economy resulted from not having to build servants' accommodation but the result was a sub-optimal layout. Given that there were few restrictions on space in the countryside, compared to the town, the house would have appeared cramped and awkward to fashion pundits of the day.

### **Phase 3: Mid 19th century**

There is no mid-19 century phase in the farmhouse.

### **Phase 4: Late 20th century**

This phase, which may have occurred a little earlier, sees the domestic arrangement of the farmhouse modified a little to accommodate a time without servants. The servants' door to the cellar was blocked (Fig 3.1), enabling full use of the western wall in which it had been sited and a porch was constructed against the north elevation.

#### *The dairy and bakehouse*

As with the farmhouse and barn, the bakehouse appears to have had an earlier phase (phase 1; Fig 4.3, south elevation) subsequently substantially demolished. In phase 2 (early 19th century) it was rebuilt almost anew (Figs 4.1 and 4.2). The dairy was added in phase 3.

A number of bakeries are included in the Worcestershire Historic Environment Record. Those that appear to be domestic (as opposed to ones that appear to be associated with commercial use) include a former bakehouse and barn, east of the Rectory at Areley Kings, Stourport (WSM 17487) of the early 18th century; a 19th century bakehouse at Dagnal End Farmhouse, Beoley (WSM 37602) which has a segmental arch fireplace with oven and boiler to side; a bakehouse at Dingle Farmhouse, Hillhampton (WSM 38623); a detached bakehouse, granary, stable and hop kiln, Rowe Farmhouse, Holt (WSM 38624) which includes a large oven and a heated chamber above the bakehouse and a detached kitchen about 5 yards north of Hownings Farmhouse, Droitwich Road (WSM 38628) which includes baking ovens and a boiler.

At Court Farm the bakehouse originally provided all the facilities for cooking and washing. The bread oven lay in the north-western corner of the facility with a range in the centre (now blocked; Fig 4.1). Two coppers were situated in the north-eastern corner. It was common for facilities for domestic cooking and washing to be provided in an out-building at this period (early 18th century and later) and Court Farm was no different (Cook 2008).

Operating a bakery was a full-time occupation in the 19th century, in an entirely literal sense. The oven fire would have been kept going, day and night, for six days a week. The reason for this was that the bread was baked by the heat given off by the structure of the oven; not the temperature of

the coals. The baker would be in serious difficulty if he allowed the fire to go out and he would often sleep in the bakery in order to be on hand to tend the fire.

A baker's working day would have started at 3.00am with mixing the first batch of dough. The usual size of loaf that was produced - four pounds five and a half ounces in weight - took about 2 hours to bake (Cashmore 2001) and the first batch of loaves would have come out of the oven by 6.00am.

Once a week - possibly on Saturday afternoon - the oven fire would be allowed to die down (although possibly not altogether go out) and the oven was cleaned. This was particularly important as, with the oven open to the firebox, soot formed black stalactites on the roof of the oven itself. Once a week, on this day, a boy would have to get inside the oven and sweep it out. It was important to relight the fire as soon as possible in order to maintain the oven's temperature for the next baking session.

It is possible that the bakehouse was used by Court Farm as a source of income, as well as providing bread for the household (see also below: the dairy). In *Silus Marner*, George Eliot (Eliot 1861) describes bakehouses being used to cook the Sunday meat:

‘...if you'd a roasting bit, it might be as you couldn't leave it. Being a lone man. But there's the bakehus (*sic*), if you could make up your mind to spend a twopence (*c* 1p) on the oven now and then...’

Villagers, or tenants of the landowner might bring their cakes or joints of meat to the farm to be cooked. This kind of practice was still alive in the mid-20th century. In Forestfach near Swansea, people with small coal-fired ranges did not have ovens large enough for a cake or joint of meat (Williams 2007). Two weeks before Christmas, on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, in addition to the usual bread-baking the correspondent's grandfather would also do three cake baking sessions. Neighbours would borrow tins from the bakery and return bringing their cakes to be baked. On Christmas eve an additional load of bread was baked not only to last the bank holiday but also to free the ovens for cooking the neighbours' meat. On Christmas morning people arrived with turkeys, rabbits or sometimes a sheep in whatever tins, bowls, buckets or baths they could find. Each would be labelled with brown parcel labels before placing them in the oven. Apparently, the correspondent's father still had difficulty enjoying Christmas as for him it represented a time of hard graft, extra delivery rounds and parents hard at work (Williams 2007).

The dairy was not always a distinct farmyard building (Brunskill 1982). Often, perhaps mostly, it was a part of the farmhouse, facing north, well-ventilated, equipped with cold stone slabs and located near to the back door which led to the farmyard. Much of this is the case at Court Farm. The building faces south but it lies in the shadow of the farmhouse.

Landowners and men with large arable farms were not normally concerned with dairying for the commercial market (Orwin and Whetham 1971) although, as much of Staffordshire and Worcestershire have heavy soil derived from the Keuper Marl (Mercian mudstone), dairy farming is encouraged by circumstance (Barley 1961). Very often the dairy the province of the farmer's wife and, along with caring for hens and pigs, formed part of the domestic economy. In the mid 19th to early 20th century, and probably before, a large quantity of skimmed milk was sold at the farmhouse door (Thompson, 1845) and provided an income to the farm.

#### *The barn and stable*

##### **Barn**

As with the farmhouse and bakehouse, this building appears to have had an earlier phase (phase 1; Fig 5.3) subsequently substantially demolished. In phase 2 (early 19th century; Fig 5.1) it was rebuilt almost anew. It is of an unusual configuration but falls, broadly speaking, into type 4 of Peters' classification (Peters 1969).

This includes those examples which had a threshing floor at one end of the barn, with one or more bays on one side and a plain wall on the other, without access to the loft. At Court Farm the

threshing floor is at the western end of the barn with two storage bays to the east. In western, lowland Staffordshire all the pre 1850 examples appear to have been designed to house corn, the threshed straw being consumed immediately or housed in lofts or feeding passages. To the west of the barn, and built as part of the same structure, is the stable.

### **Stable**

This, like other buildings at Court Farm, is of an unusual design (Fig 5.1). It is not uncommon for stables to be built adjacent to, or even to be part of, a barn: it made sense to have one of the principal users of the straw produced on the threshing floor near its source.

This stable falls into type 1a of Peters' classification (Peters 1969). This is the earliest recognizable type of stable in which the horses faced along the axis of the building. This arrangement is found in most of the stables surviving from before the 19th century, and in perhaps all from before 1750; it continued to be built until 1880, sometimes in combination with a later type..

The main advantage of the type 1 arrangement was that when facing along the building the animals occupied the least space. This was thus the most economical way to house them, the horses fitting neatly into the width of the barn, the early stables being usually built against one of its gables (as at Court Farm). The length of the bay was then much less than it would have been had the horses faced across the building.

There were a number of disadvantages to this arrangement. Only the outer horses received adequate ventilation. It is possible that this was much less important if there were no loft, as at Court Farm. The type 1a stable comprised the smallest stables, with one row of between three and six horses and no supplementary accommodation for the harness etc. Whether the door was in the gable or side wall did not appear to have any significance with respect to date or location. Another peculiarity with this stable is the opposing doors, one to the farmyard, one to the road, the latter being blocked in phase 4. Arrangements of this kind were usually criticised by contemporary pundits as they promoted draughts.

Usually each horse was given an individual stall, though in Scotland the earliest stables had no stall partitions while, after about 1770, it was quite a common practice to place in double stalls horses which worked with each other (Brunskill 1982). Common dimensions for individual stalls were 9 or 10 feet (2.7-3.0m) between head and foot and six feet (1.8m) between stall partitions giving enough space for the horse to lie down or stand. At Court Farm the width of the stable was 5.4m, providing space for three horses. These are believed to have been the working horses as another stable was provided as part of the coach house for the carriage animals (see below).

### *The coach house*

As with the farmhouse, bakehouse and barn, this building appears to have had an earlier phase (phase 1; Fig 6.3, south elevation) subsequently substantially demolished. In phase 2 (early 19th century; Fig 5.1) it was rebuilt almost anew with an attached stable. The coach house itself was a simple rectangular space with double doors (Fig 6.3, south elevation). The adjacent stable has no surviving fixtures and fittings and the greater part of the floor has been replaced with concrete (Fig 6.1). From the general configuration of the building it seems likely that the animals' stalls were constructed against the north wall. The available width is generous for two equines but cramped for three (using the same calculation as above). However, if these animals were ponies then three might have been accommodated without undue crowding.

In phase 3 an extension was built to the north of the phase 2 building (Fig 6.1 and 6.2). This was also a stable and the surviving features, a feeding slot in the ceiling and the remains of the hay rack (Fig 49) clearly show that this was also a type 1 stable (Peters 1969). In this case the available width allowed a fairly generous amount of space for two animals.

Finally, in phase 4, two concrete piers were constructed, blocking the passage between the phase 2 stable and the coach house (Fig 6.1). These probably supported a tank containing diesel fuel, probably for the use of smaller farm machinery.

### *The shed*

This is not a building in the true sense of the word but comprises two excavations in the cliff to the north of the farmhouse which have then been roofed over, one with a brick arch, probably of the early to mid 19th century. That the eastern-most of these chambers was in use during phase 1 of the farmhouse is evidenced, as elsewhere, by the presence of stone construction in its lower parts. Their use, then as now, was probably as a store for dirty materials, in particular coal and logs.

### **Assessment of the building's significance**

Were this merely another brick-built Georgian farmhouse with a collection of, mostly, 19th century brick outbuildings, as described in the Worcestershire Historic Environment Record (WSM 05859), then it would have only local significance, as implied by its Gd II listing. However, it is clear from the recording project that approximately half of the existing farmhouse is earlier and of stone construction, such construction also being apparent, although vestigial, in the various outbuildings.

Court Farm is thus an example of a trend towards gentrification in the 18th and early 19th centuries that saw rude and often rambling agricultural establishments swept away and replaced, if not with model farms, then with something rather more refined, orderly and fashionable and represents, in physical form, the ambitions of the minor gentry and local worthies. Court Farm is unusual in that its antecedents were not completely removed and remain to this day as evidence of this change. This phenomenon has been seen elsewhere (Fig 56). None of this justifies re-listing but the collection of buildings has greater significance than suggested by its HER entry. This is believed to have been derived from the The Historic Farmstead Characterisation Project. It has been noted before by the author (Cook 2011) that the information provided by this project, and subsequently used as a planning tool, can be unreliable.

### **Summary**

Historic building recording of a farmhouse and associated buildings at Court Farm, Lincomb Lane, Lincomb, Hartlebury, Stourport-on-Severn, Worcestershire was undertaken as a condition of planning permission. The project found that the farmhouse, although having a Georgian front wing of the early 19th century, had an antecedent in stone, dated to the late 17th to early 18th century, which had been partially demolished in order to erect the later structure. The surviving part of the earlier building had then been converted to servant accommodation.

Most of the associated buildings, comprising barn, stables, bake house, dairy and coach house, also possessed stone antecedents, before being substantially rebuilt in brick, presumably at the time of the alterations to the farm house. Of these minor structures, the most interesting was the bake house, which still possessed its bread oven, the (blocked) site of what was presumably an open range and the base for two coppers.

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#### **Acknowledgements**

The author would particularly like to thank Julia Whelan, Chris Smith, A D Horner Ltd and Mr Mike Glyde of Worcestershire Archives and Archaeology Service for their kind cooperation.

#### **Archive**

The archive consists of:

- 9        Annotated scale drawings
- 1        DVD-ROM
- 1        Hard copy of report

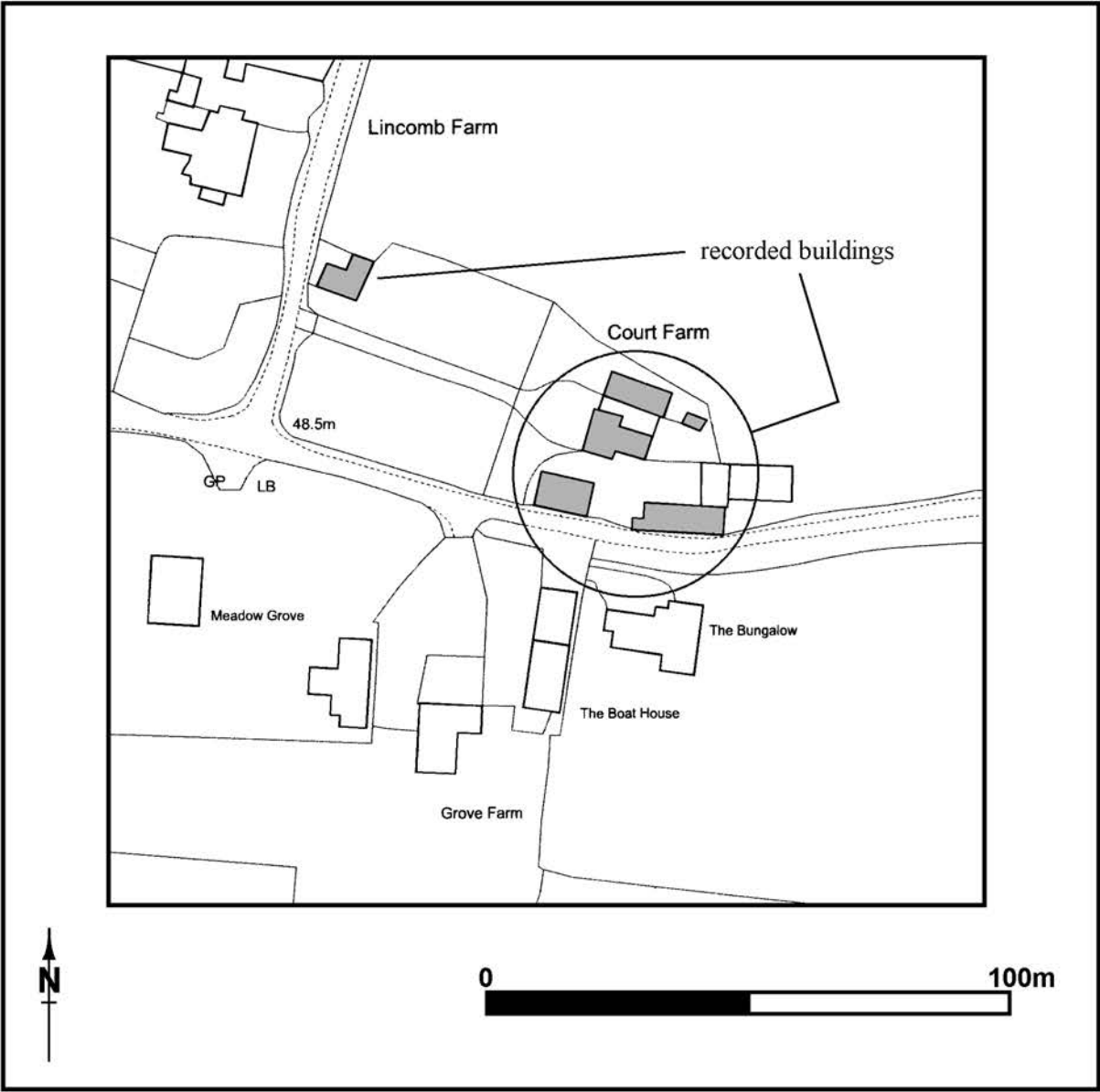
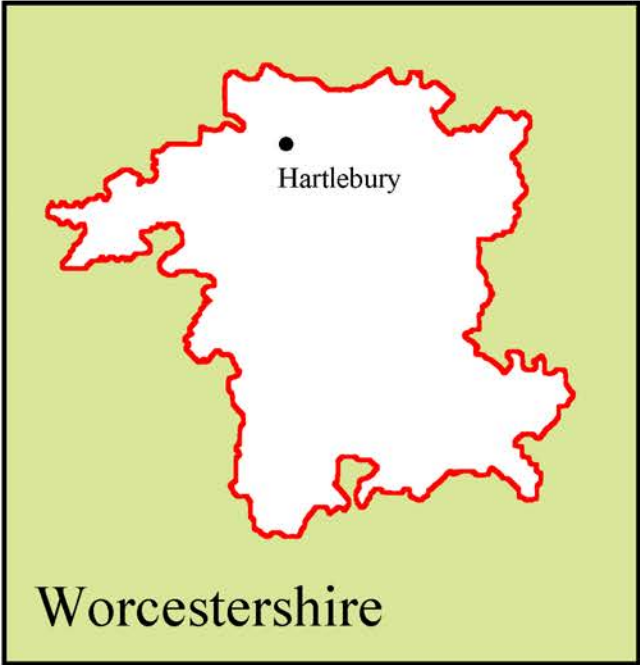
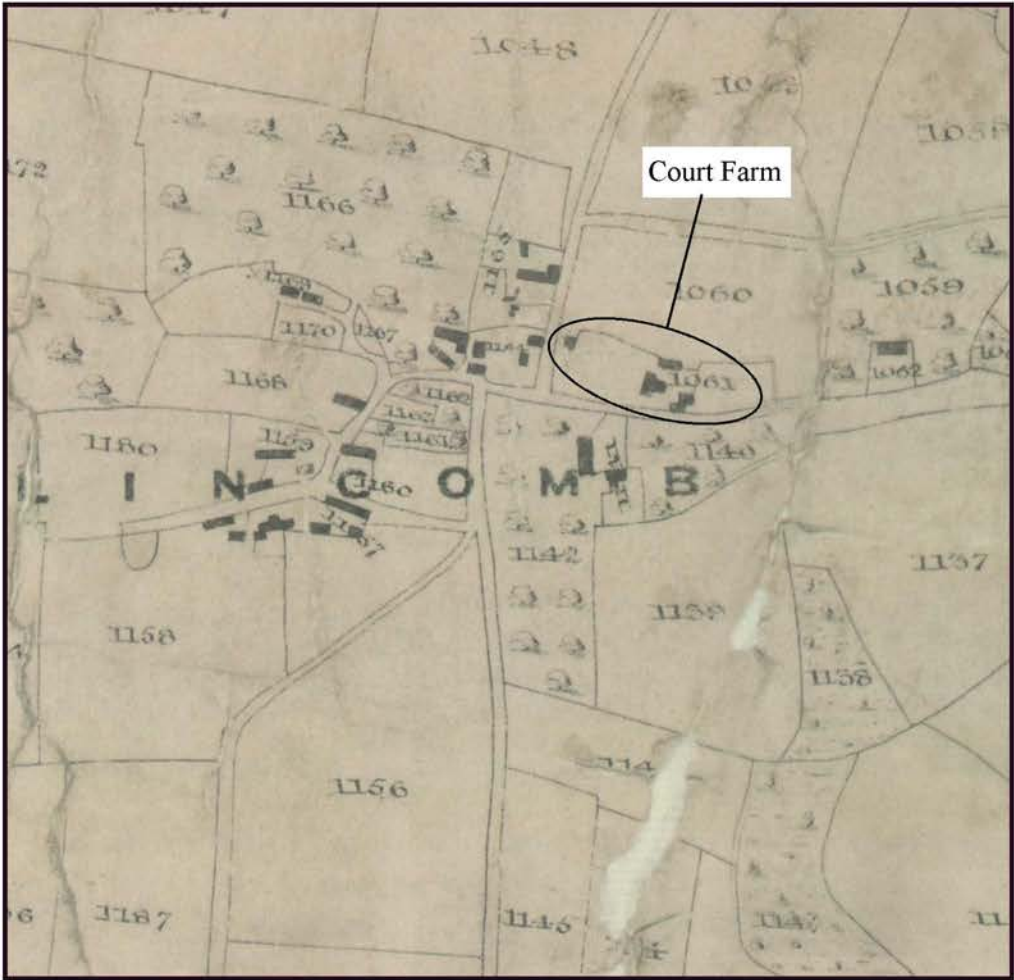


Fig 1: Location of site

1838 Hartlebury tithe

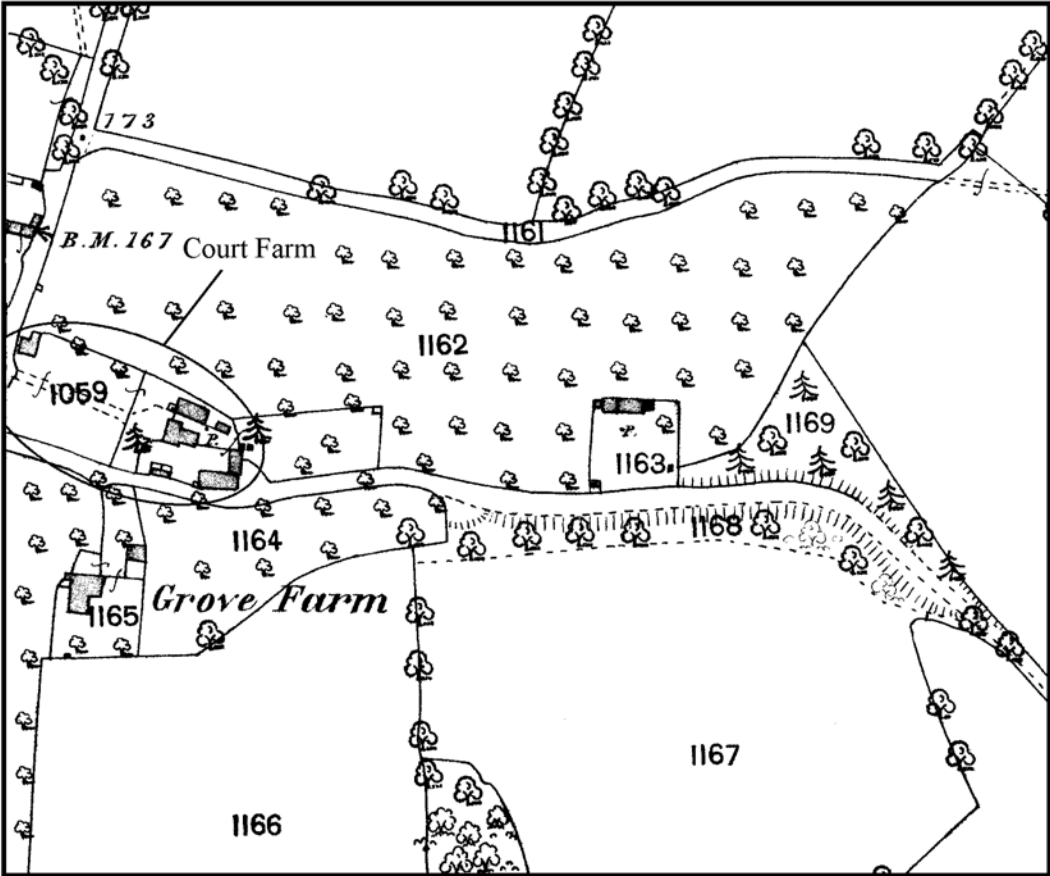


not to scale

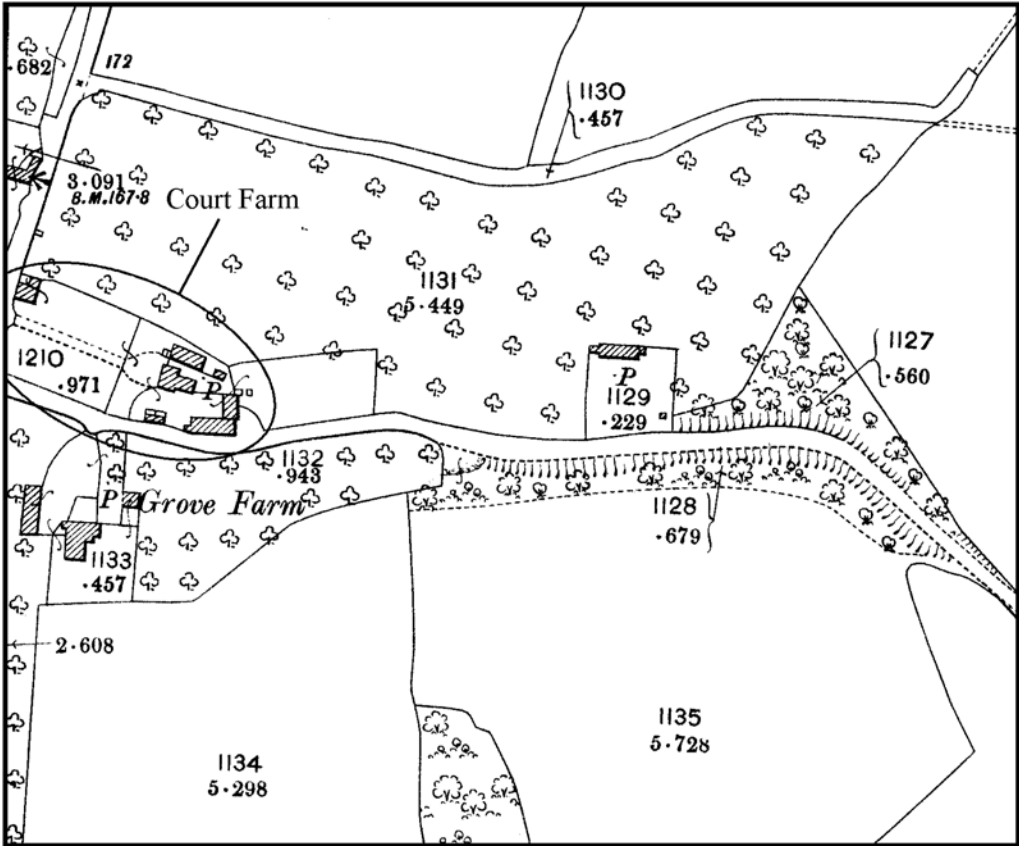
Fig 2.1: Historic mapping



1884



1903



0

200m

Fig 2.2: Historic mapping





Fig 28

- Phase 1: late 17th - early 18th century
- Phase 2: early 19th century
- Phase 3: mid-19th century
- Phase 4: late 20th century

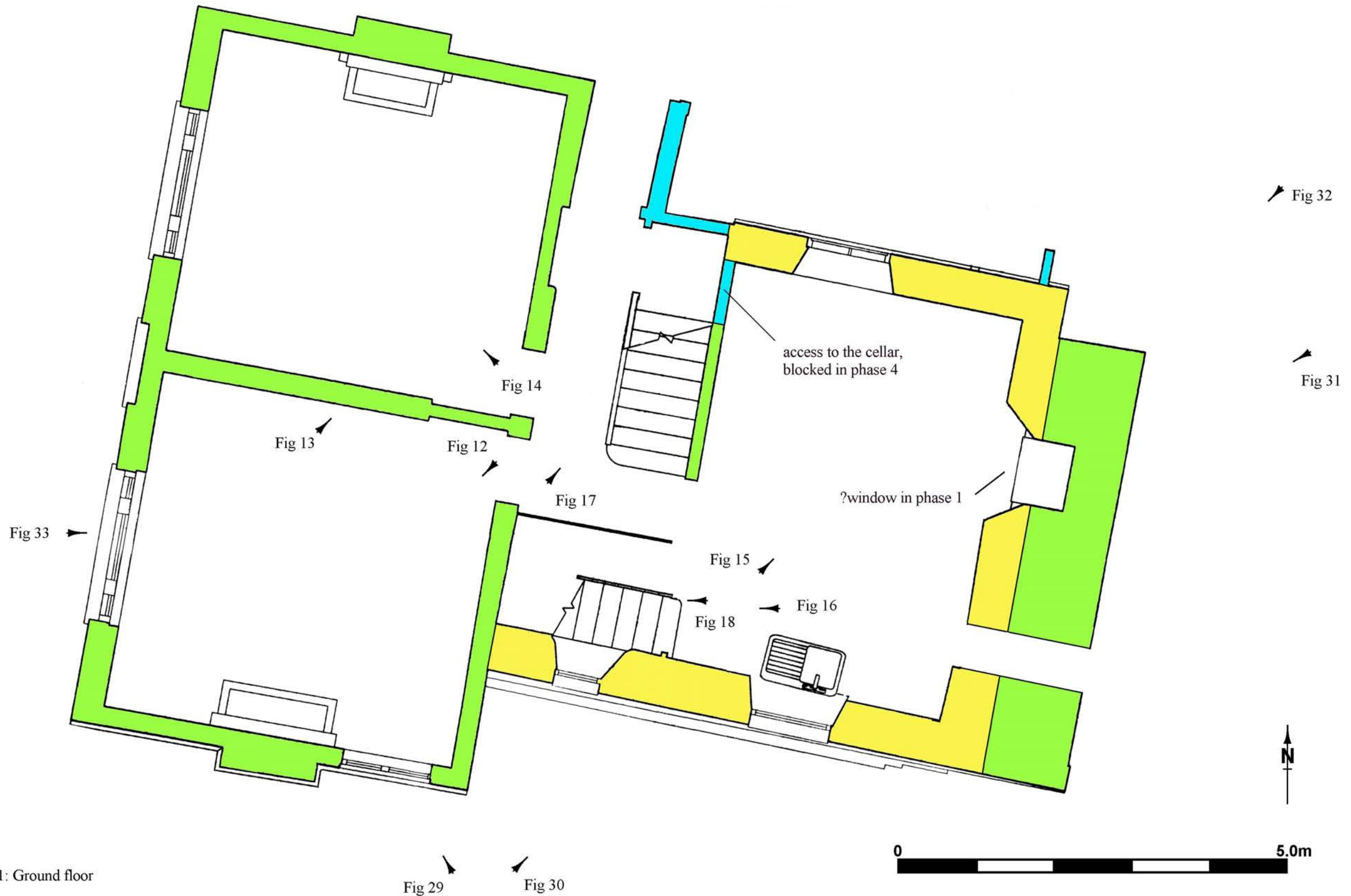


Fig 3.1: Ground floor

- Phase 1: late 17th - early 18th century
- Phase 2: early 19th century
- Phase 3: mid-19th century
- Phase 4: late 20th century

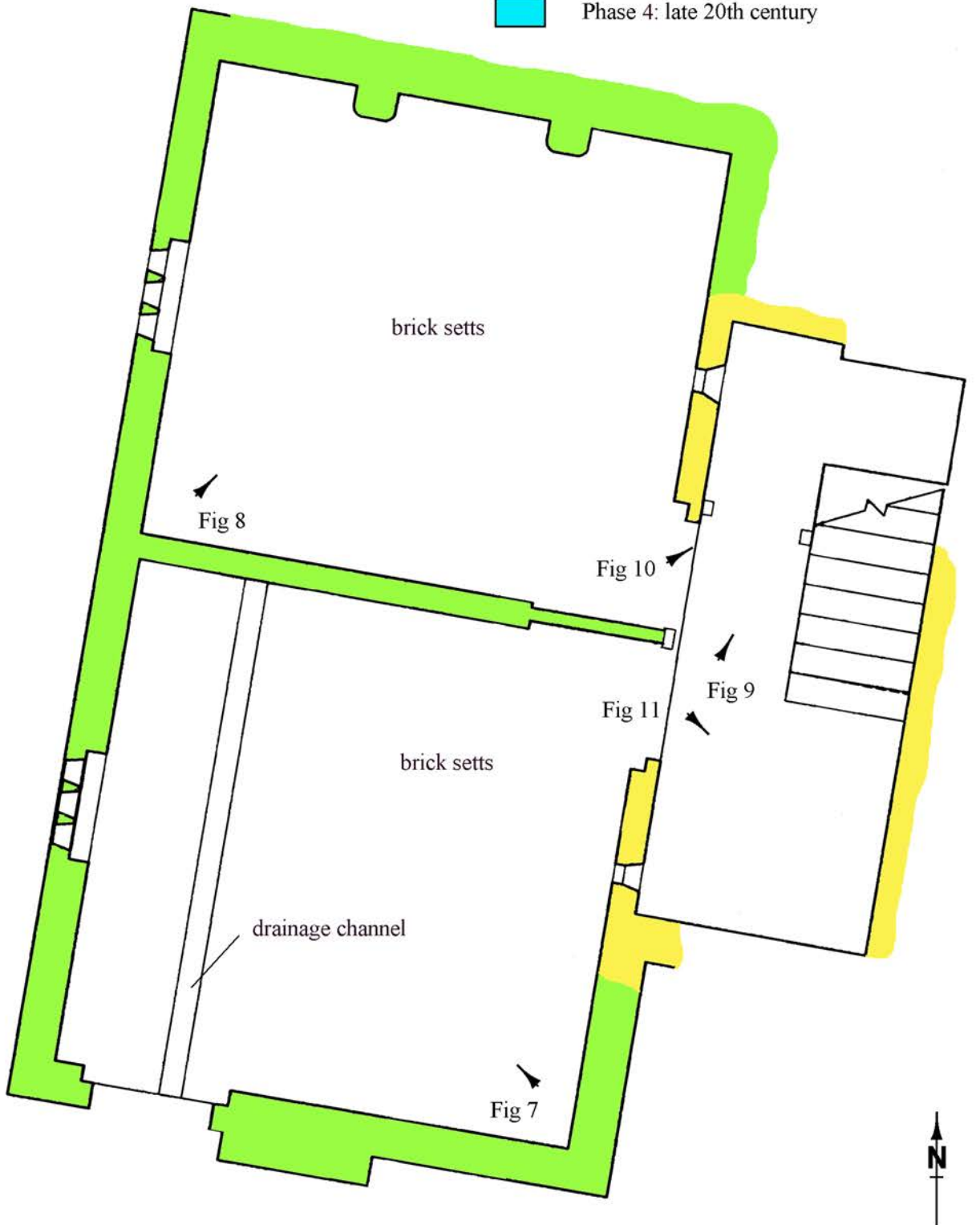


Fig 3.2: Cellar

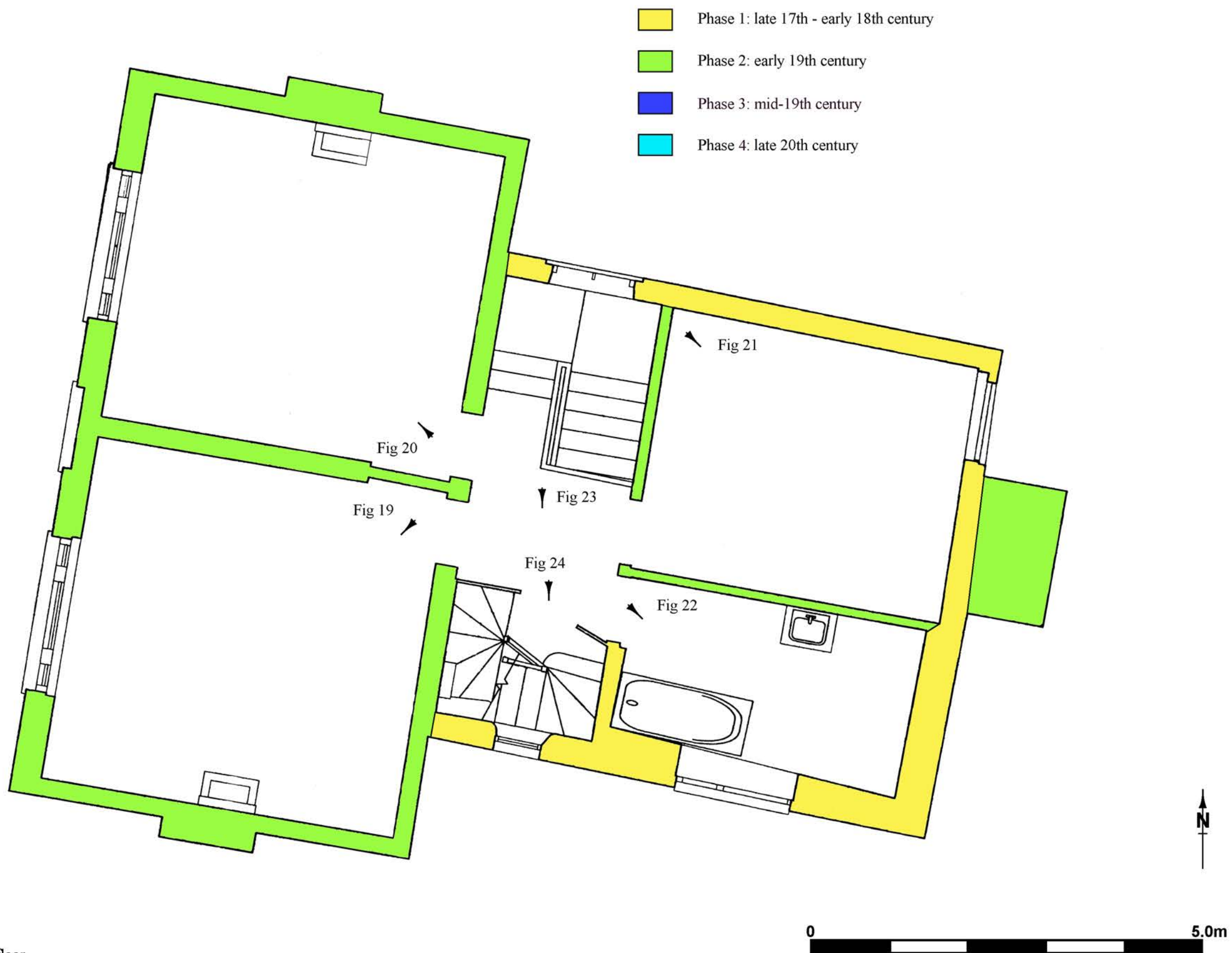


Fig 3.3: First floor



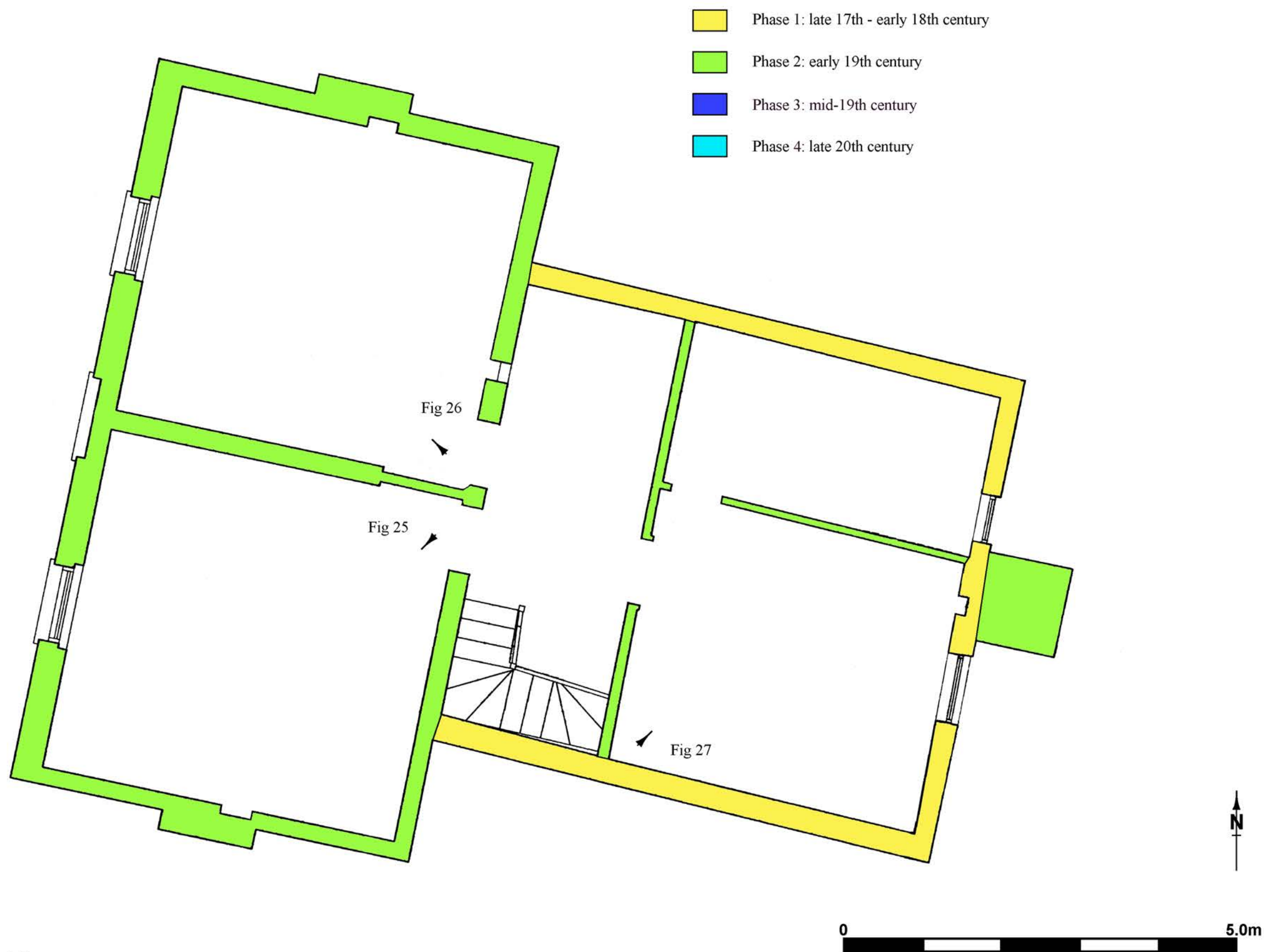


Fig 3.4: Second floor



Fig 3.5: Farmhouse, dairy and bakehouse; west elevation

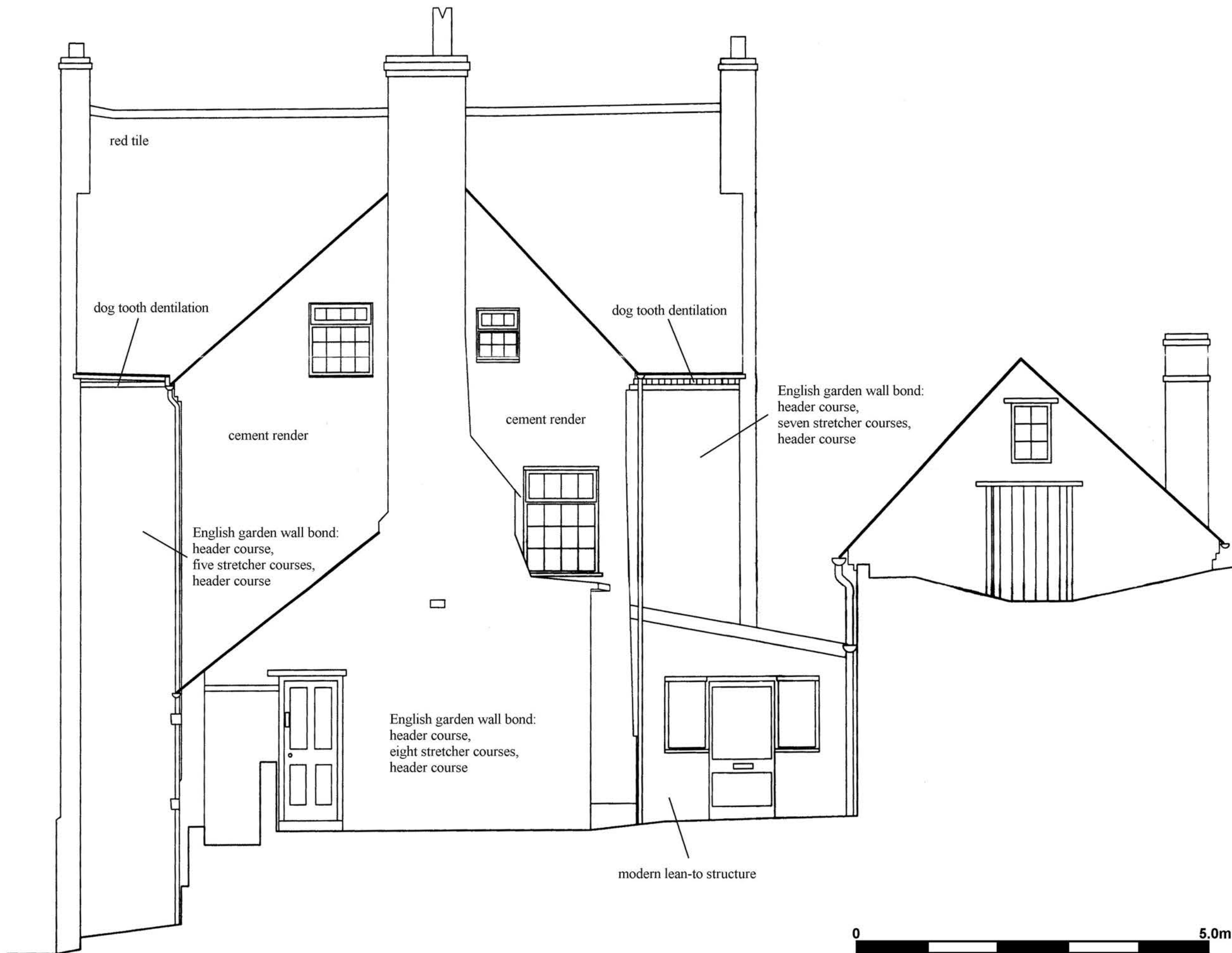


Fig 3.6: Farmhouse and shed; east elevation

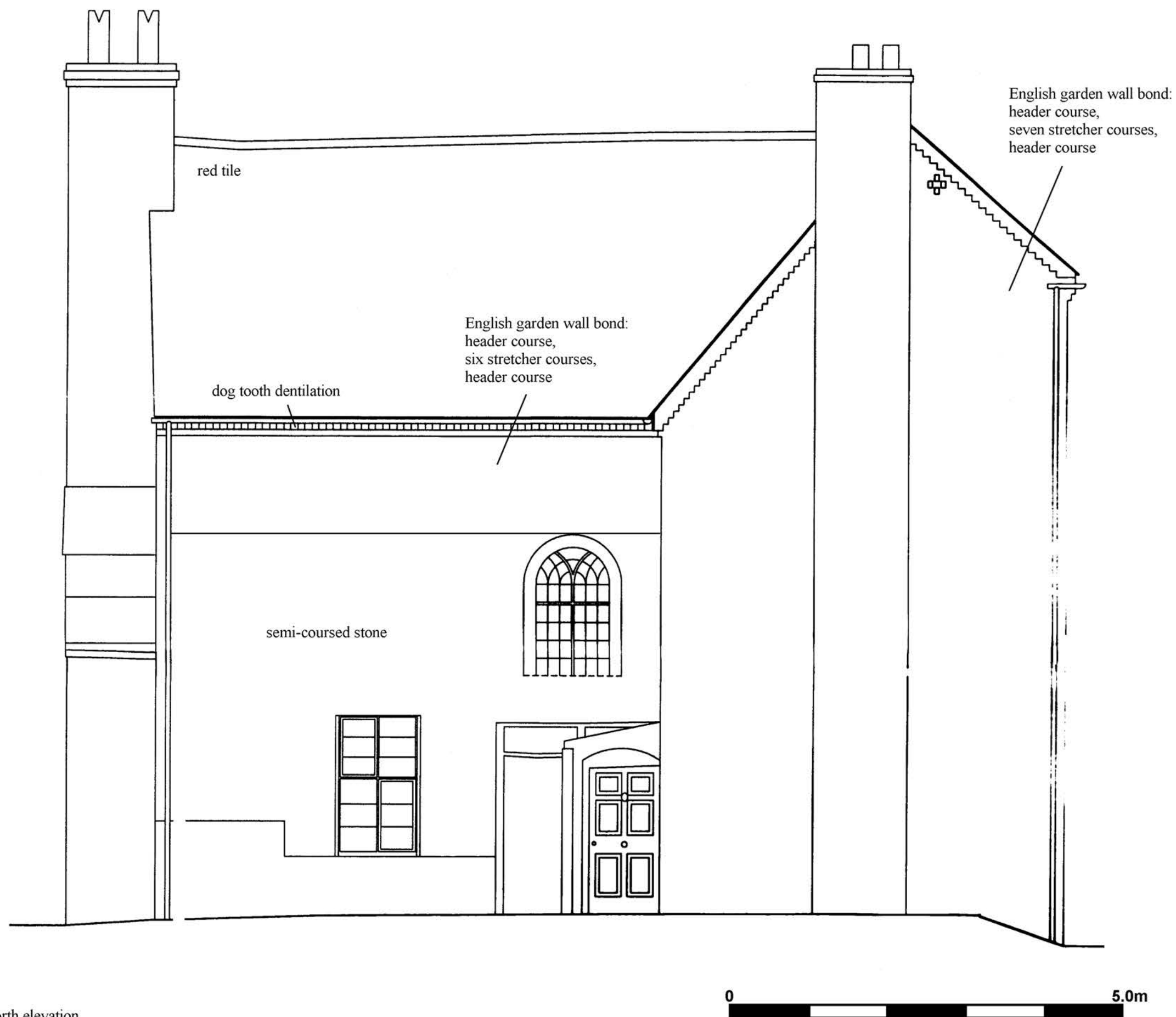


Fig 3.7: Farmhouse; north elevation



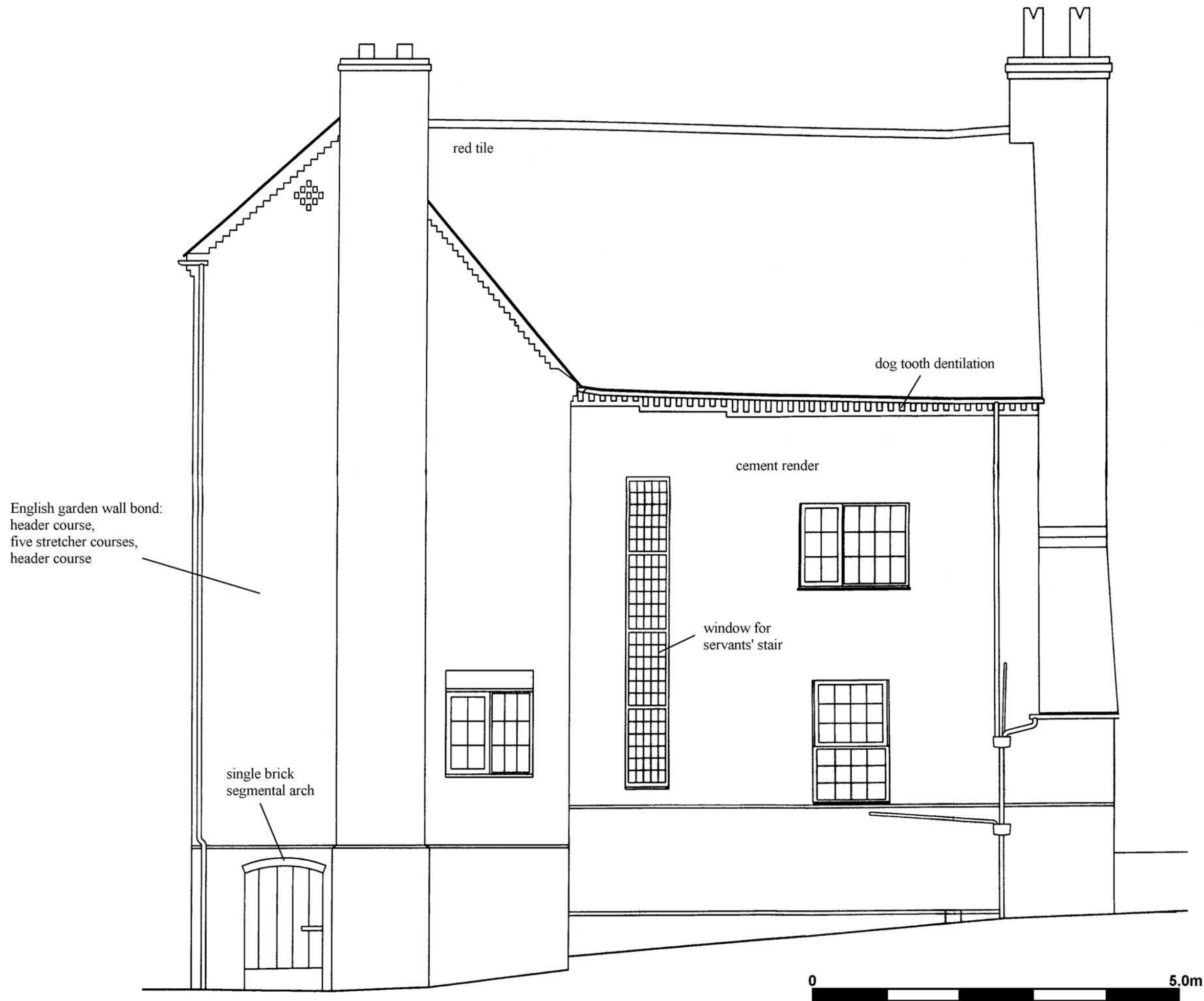


Fig 3.8: Farmhouse; south elevation

- Phase 1: late 17th - early 18th century
- Phase 2: early 19th century
- Phase 3: mid-19th century
- Phase 4: late 20th century

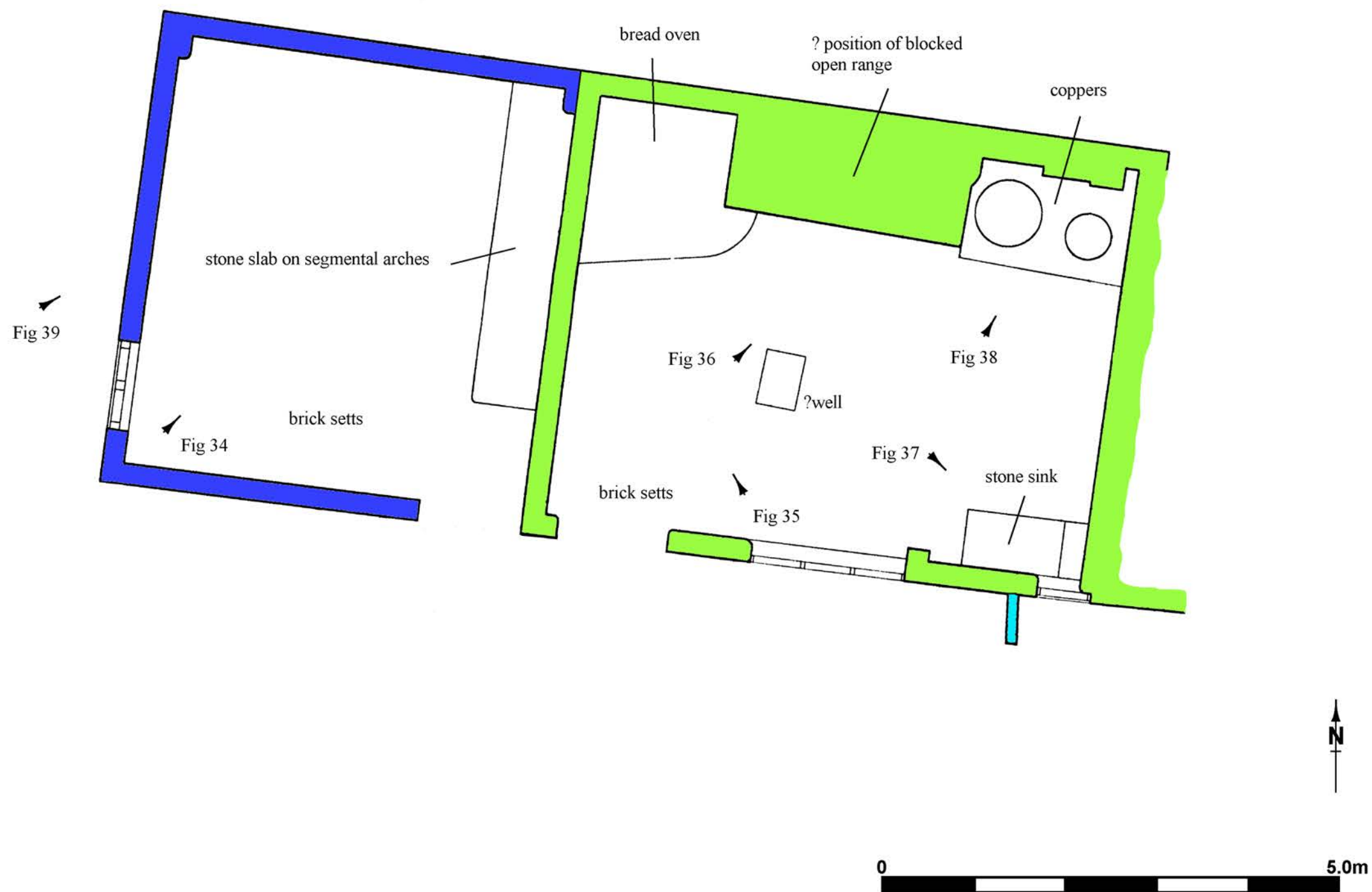


Fig 4.1: Dairy and bakehouse; ground floor

- Phase 1: late 17th - early 18th century
- Phase 2: early 19th century
- Phase 3: mid-19th century
- Phase 4: late 20th century

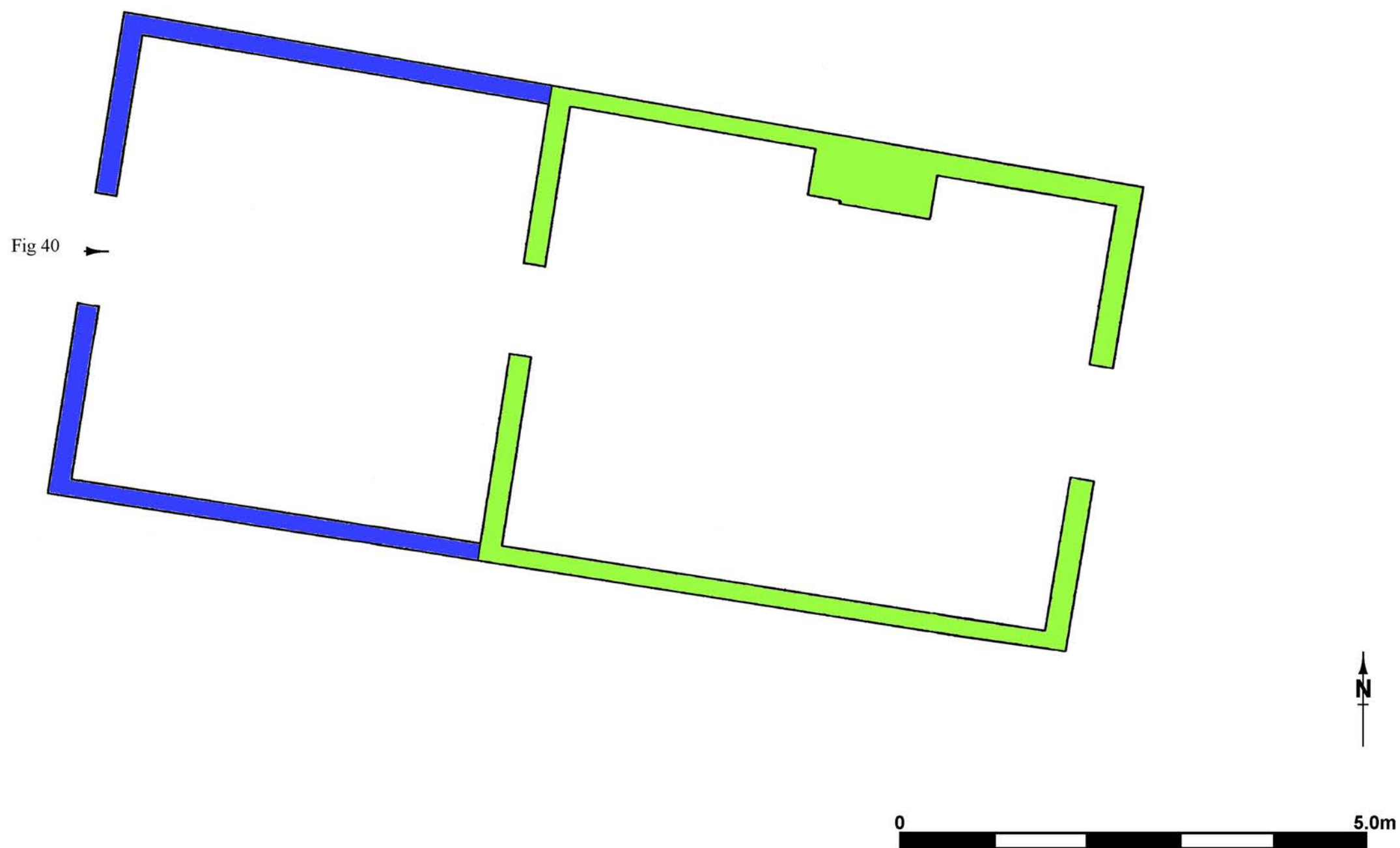
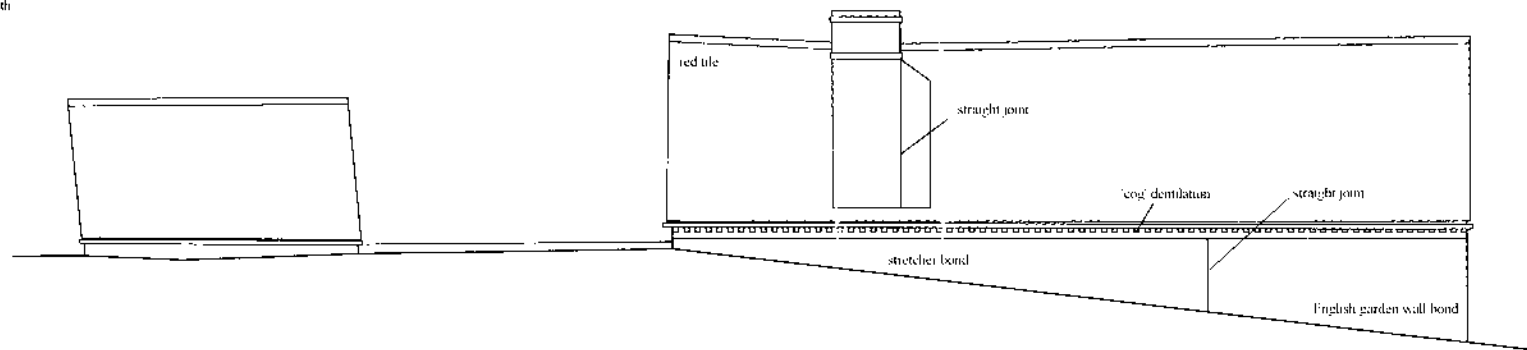
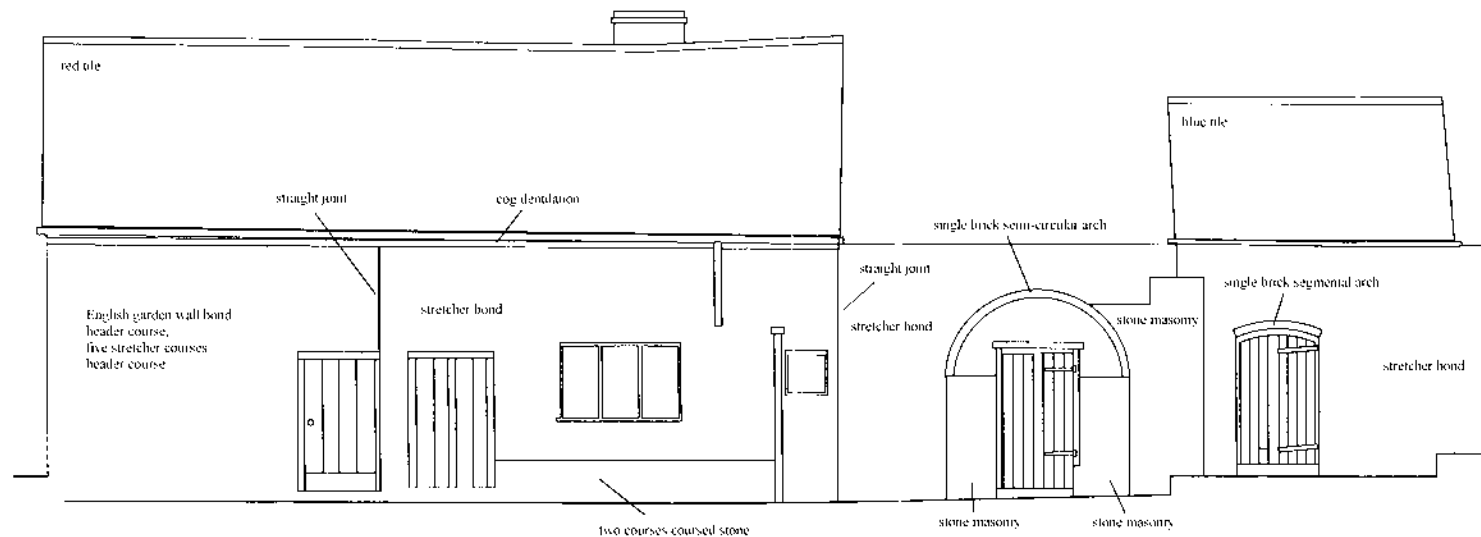


Fig 4.2: Dairy and bakehouse; first floor

North



South



0 5.0m

Fig 4.3 Darryl: bakehouse and shed, north and south elevations

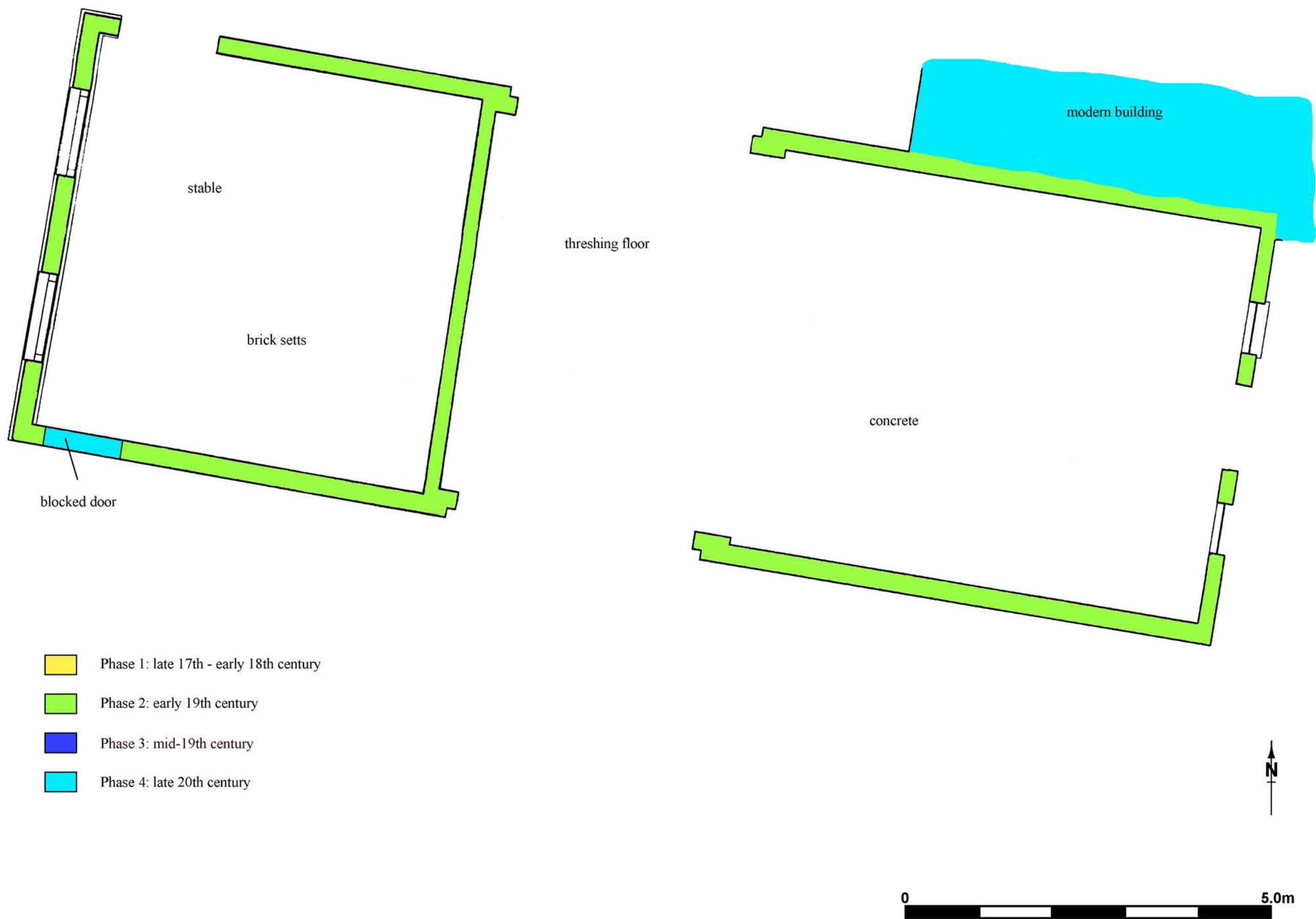


Fig 5.1: Stable and barn

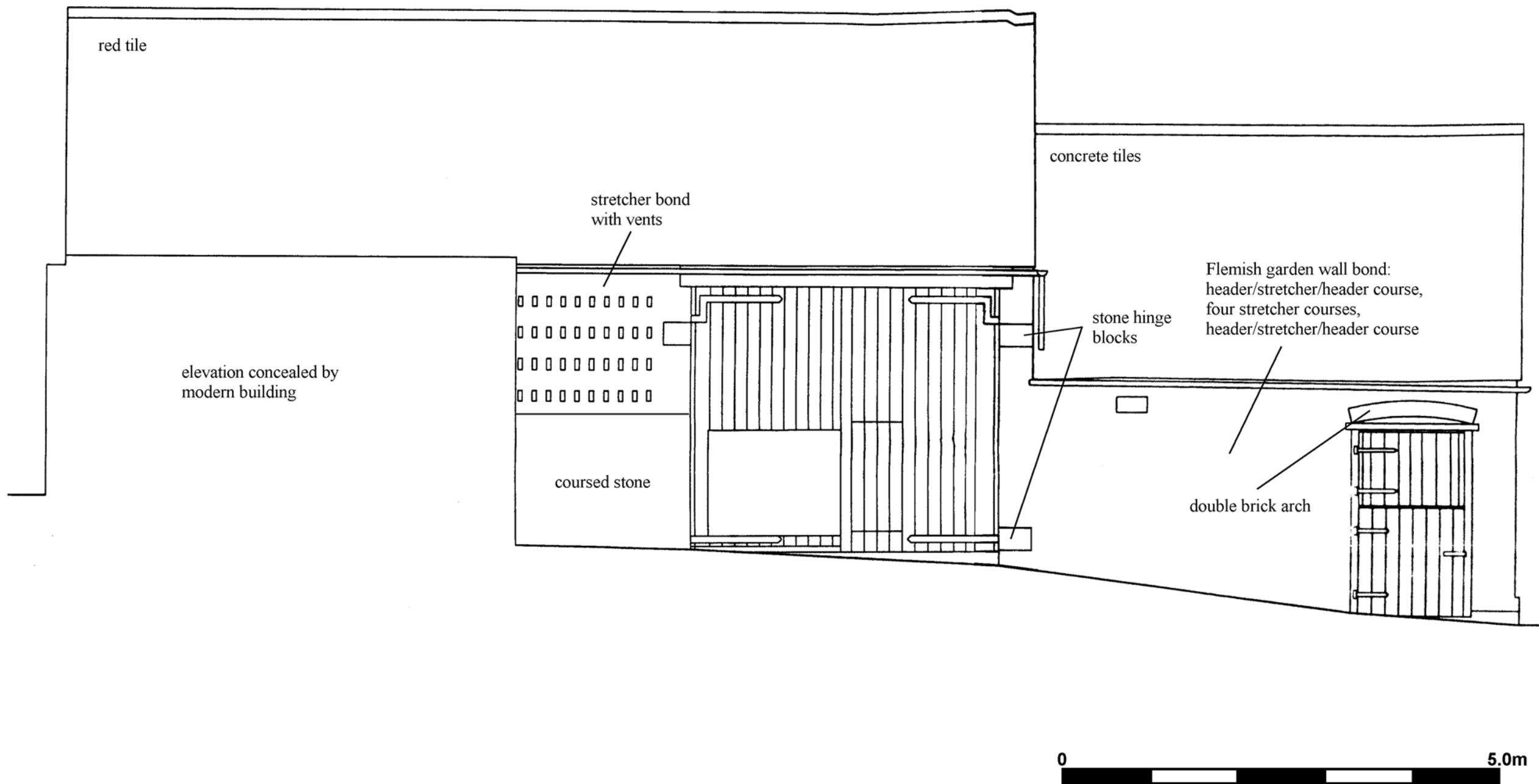


Fig 5.2: Barn; north elevation

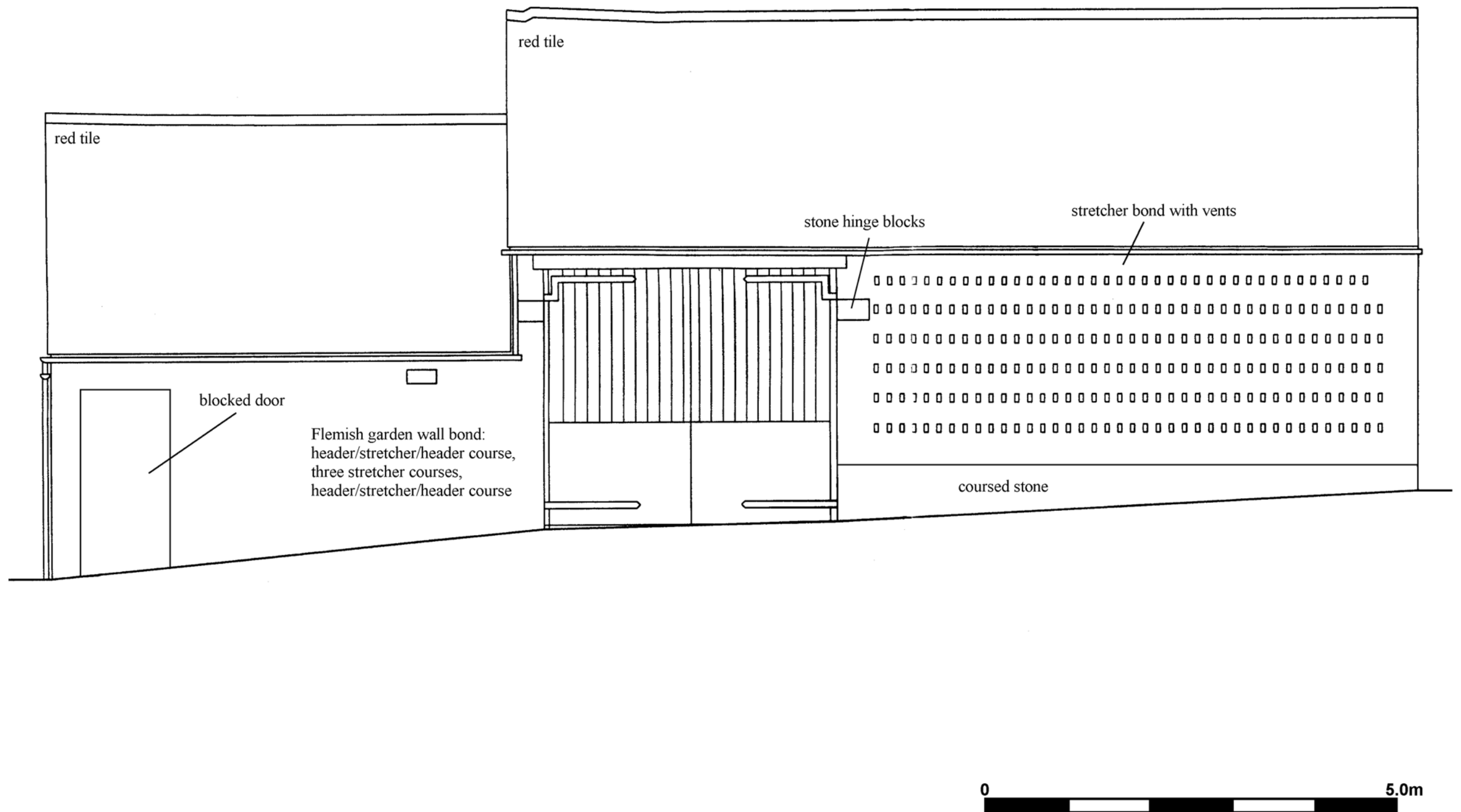


Fig 5.3: Barn; south elevation

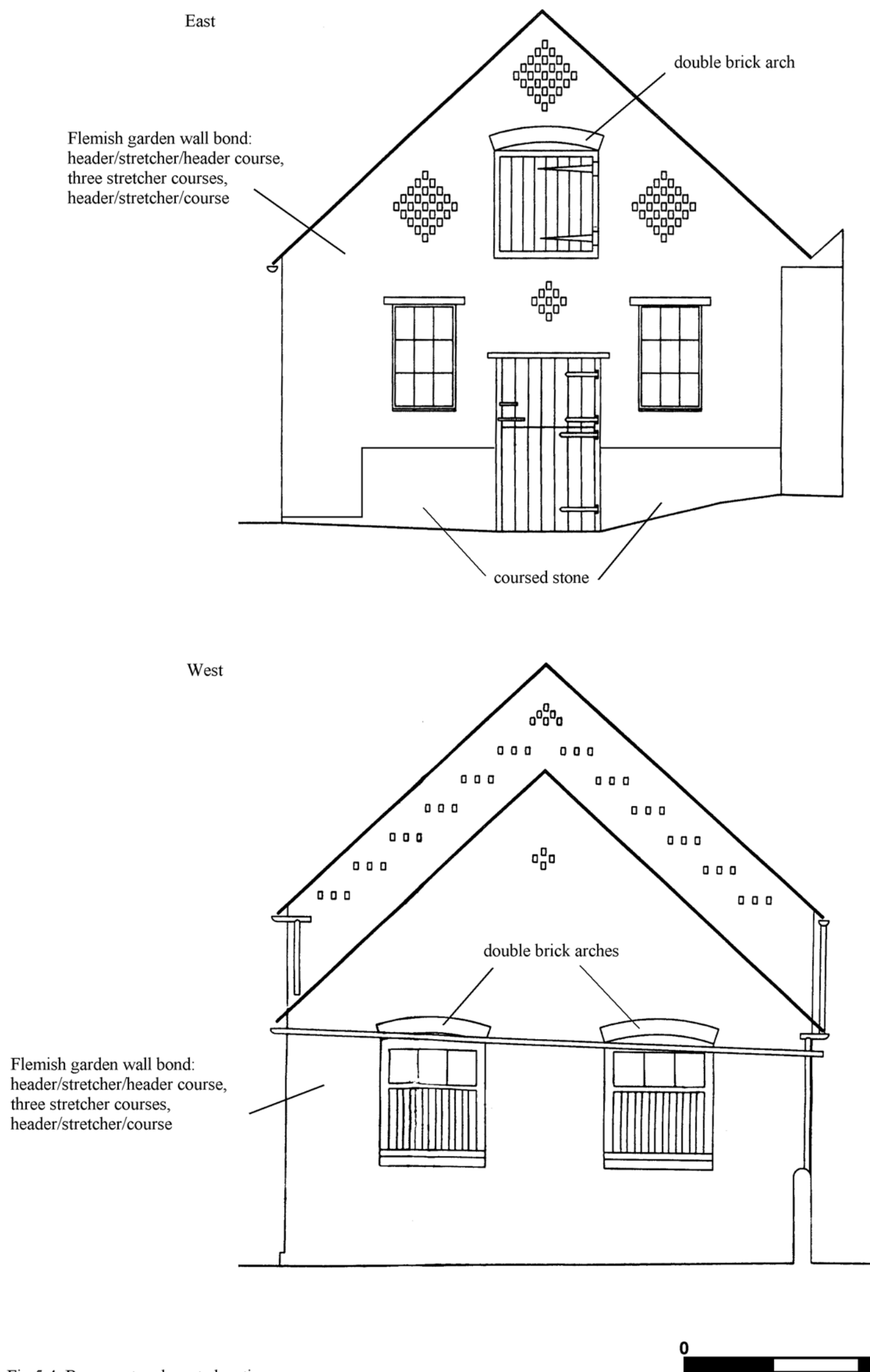


Fig 5.4: Barn; east and west elevations



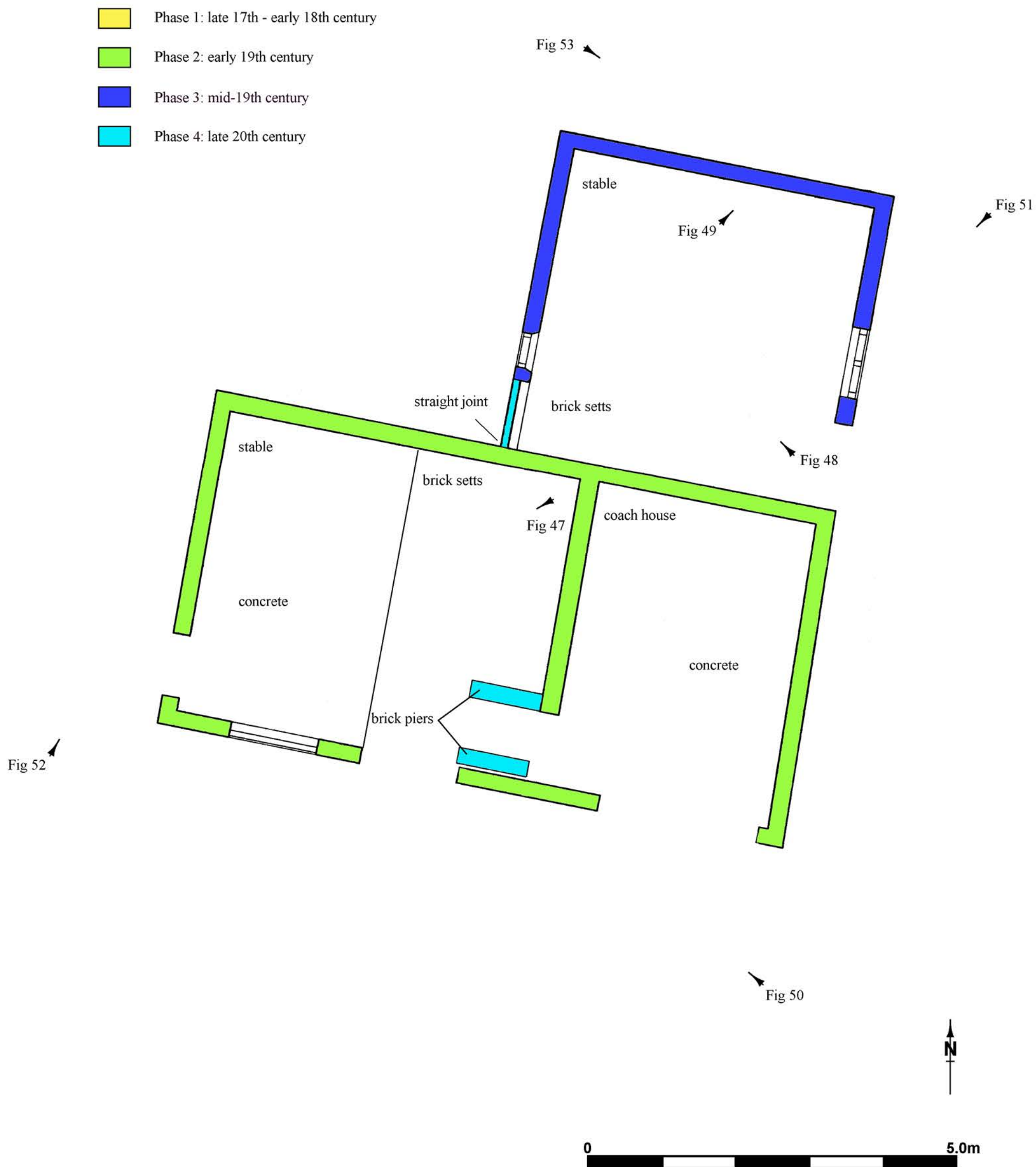


Fig 6.1: Coach house and stable; ground floor

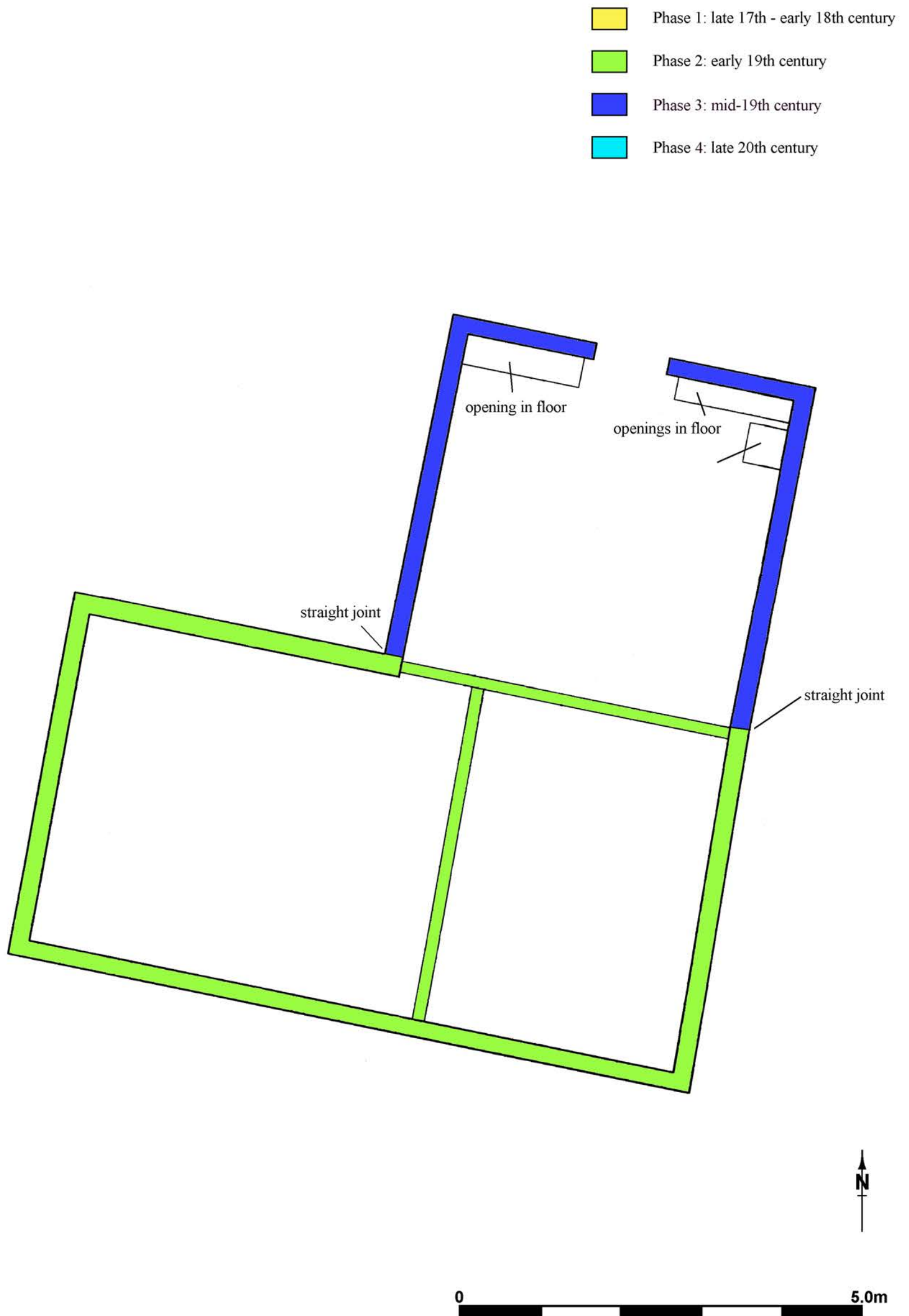


Fig 6.2: Coach house and stable; first floor

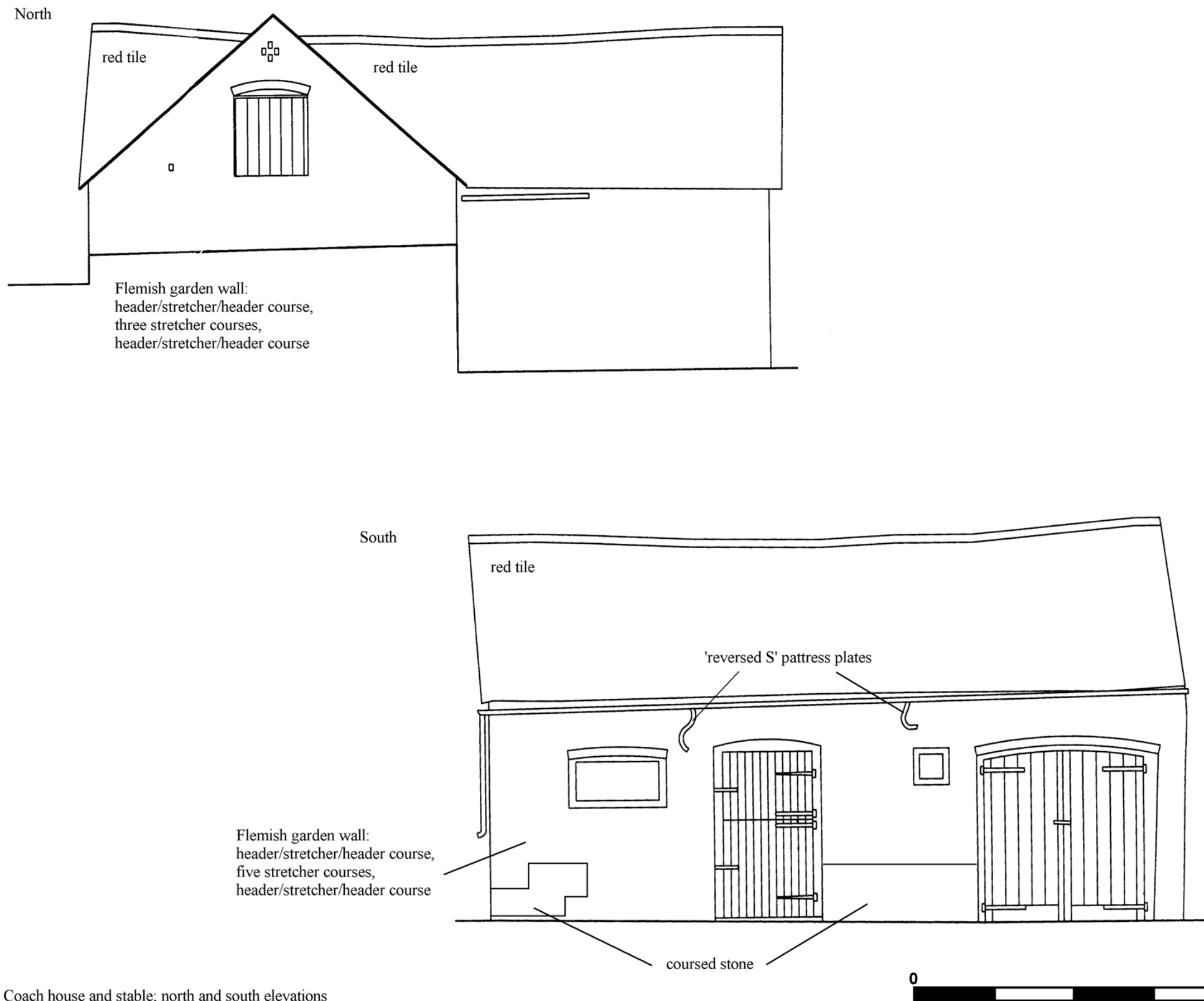


Fig 6.3: Coach house and stable; north and south elevations

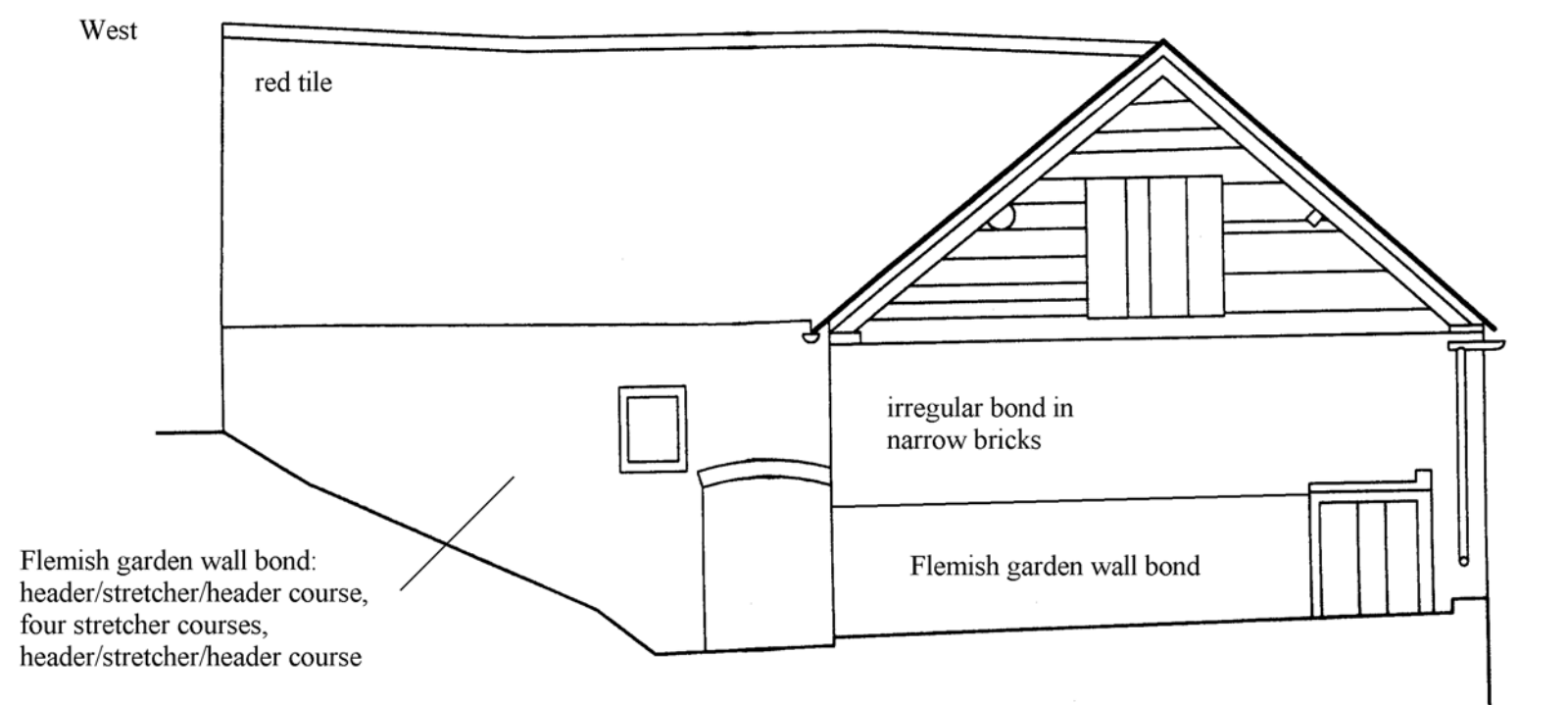
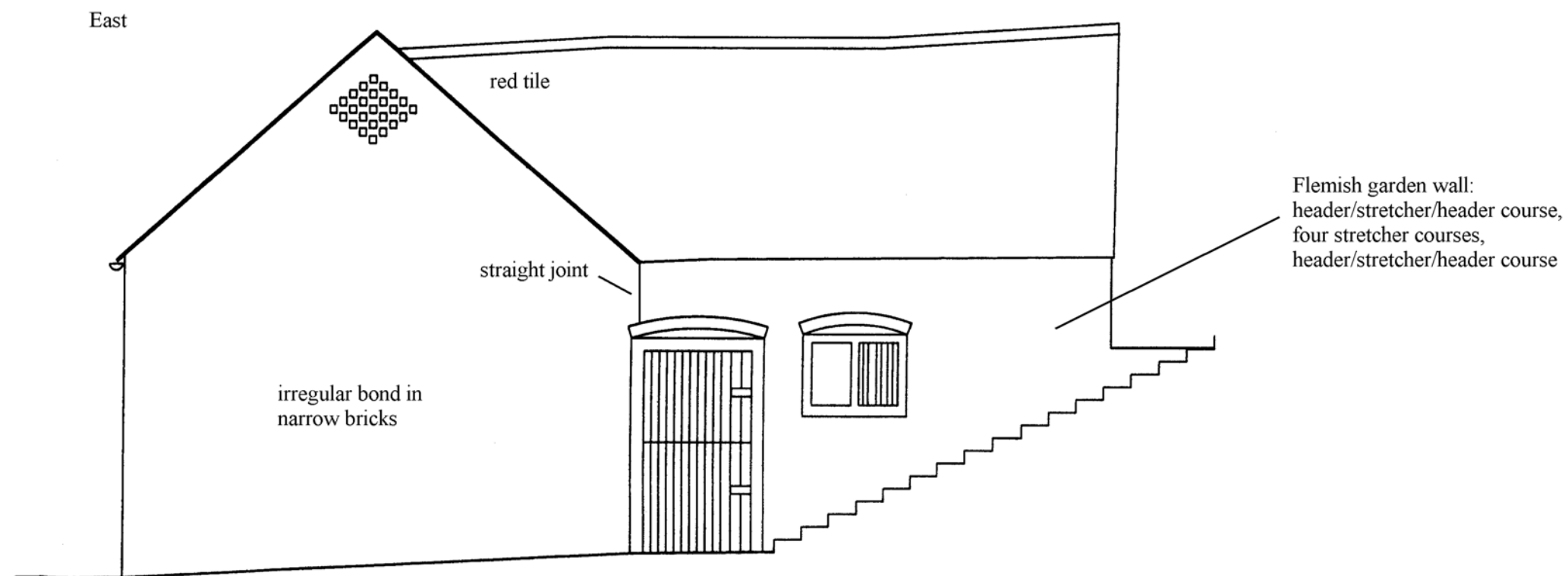


Fig 6.4: Coach house and stable; east and west elevations





Fig 7: Farm house, cellar; phase 2



Fig 8: Farm house, cellar; phase 2, showing phase 1 masonry





Fig 9: Farm house, cellar; phase 2 stair, showing phase 1 masonry



Fig 10: Farm house, cellar; phase 2 door lock



Fig 11: Farm house, cellar; phase 2, showing phase 1 masonry





Fig 12: Farm house, ground floor; phase 2, principal reception room



Fig 13: Farm house, ground floor; phase 2, principal reception room showing detail of cornice



Fig 14: Farm house, ground floor; phase 2, sitting room



Fig 15: Farm house, ground floor; phase 1, servants' hall



Fig 16: Farm house, ground floor; phase 1, servants' hall, detail of servants' stair



Fig 17: Farm house, ground floor; phase 1, principal staircase





Fig 18: Farm house, ground floor; phase 1, servants' hall'  
detail of door fittings



Fig 19: Farm house, first floor; phase 2, principal bedroom



Fig 20: Farm house, first floor; phase 2, secondary bedroom



Fig 21: Farm house, first floor; phase 1, tertiary bedroom



Fig 22: Farm house, first floor; phase 1, ?guest's bedroom



Fig 23: Farm house, first floor; phase 1, landing, servants' access for servicing bedrooms

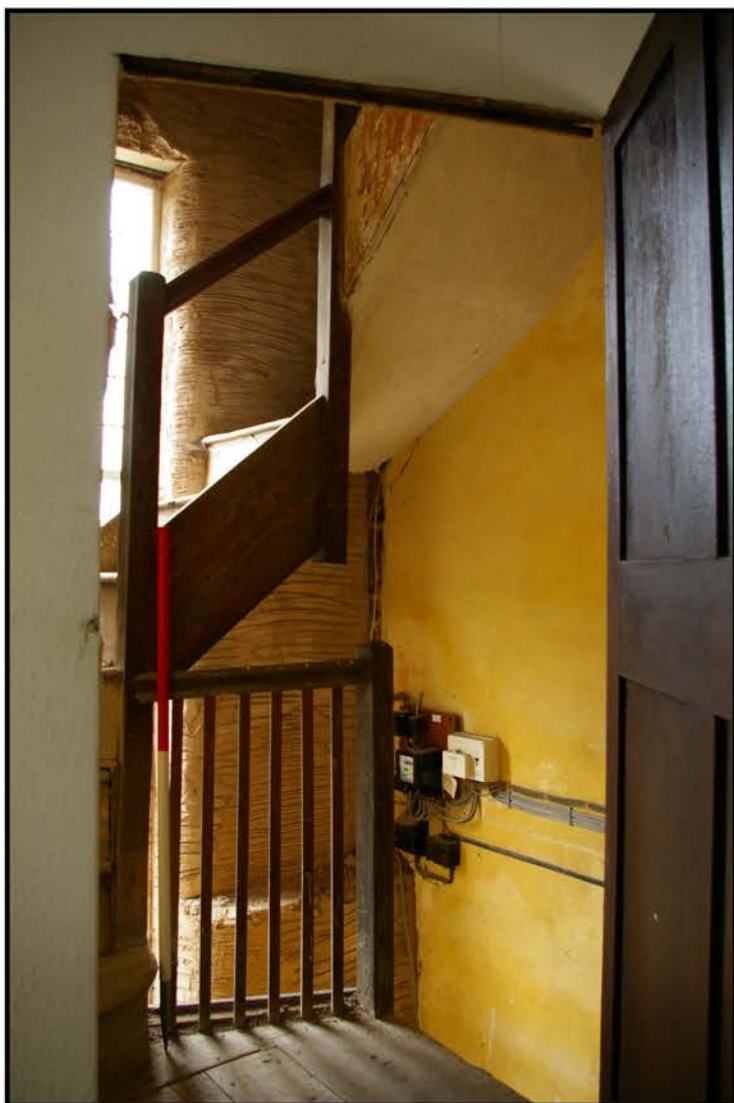


Fig 24: Farm house, first floor; phase 1, landing, detail of servants' stair





Fig 25: Farm house, second floor; phase 2, servant's bedroom



Fig 26: Farm house, second floor; phase 2, servant's bedroom



Fig 27: Farm house, second floor; phase 1, ?house keeper's bedroom



Fig 28: Farm house; west elevation



Fig 29: Farm house; south elevation



Fig 30: Farm house; south elevation





Fig 31: Farm house; east elevation



Fig 32: Farm house; east and north elevations



Fig 33: Farm house; west elevation, detail of cellar vent





Fig 34: Dairy and bakehouse; detail of stone table



Fig 35: Dairy and bakehouse; detail of bread oven



Fig 36: Dairy and bakehouse; detail of blocked hearth



Fig 37: Dairy and bakehouse; detail of ceramic sink





Fig 38: Dairy and bakehouse; detail of copper base



Fig 39: Dairy and bakehouse; west elevation



Fig 40: Dairy and bakehouse; first floor



Fig 41: Combination barn and stable; stable showing king post roof truss





Fig 42: Combination barn and stable; barn showing king post roof truss



Fig 43: Combination barn and stable; west and north elevations



Fig 44: Combination barn and stable; south elevation



Fig 45: Combination barn and stable; south and west elevations





Fig 46: Combination barn and stable; west elevation



Fig 47: Stable



Fig 48: Stable, showing gap in ceiling for filling hay rack





Fig 49: Stable, showing gap in ceiling for filling hay rack and remains of hay rack



Fig 50: Stable; west elevation



Fig 51: Stable; south elevation



Fig 52: Stable; north elevation





Fig 53: Stable; east elevation



Fig 54: The 'shed'; south elevation



Fig 55: The 'shed'; interior showing brick arch and 'chute' from bank above

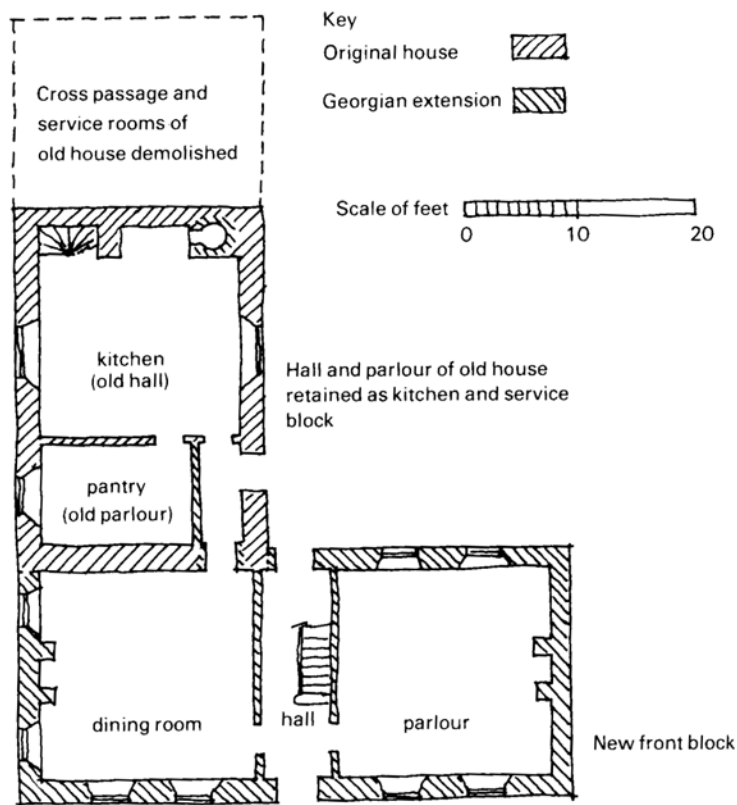


Fig 56: Cunnington 1980; fig 28