

Historic Building Record
Commercial Hotel
Errol
PERTH & KINROSS
ER05



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HISTORIC BUILDING RECORD
COMMERCIAL HOTEL
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Illustration 1: Site location plan

Illustration 2: Exterior elevations and ground floor plan

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ABSTRACT

Alder Archaeology undertook an Historic Building Record survey of a derelict building in advance of demolition and the erection of a new dwelling house and flats at High Street, Errol. The proposed development area is a C-listed former hotel, centred on NGR NO 25149 22835. The work (site code ER05) was undertaken on 6th December 2016 in fine weather conditions. The hotel was thought to date from 1793, perhaps originally a cottage later repurposed. The prevalence of clay-bonded and clay-walled buildings in the vicinity and in the wider Carse of Gowrie generally gave reason to suppose the hotel might have contained evidence of the use of clay within its fabric. In the event, no such evidence was noted, the fabric being mainly lime-bonded rubble walls with worked stone elements and later additions of machined brick.

1 Background

1.1 Introduction

Mr Duncan Morgan commissioned Alder Archaeology to undertake an Historic Building Record survey of a derelict building in advance of demolition and the erection of a new dwelling house and flats at High Street, Errol. The proposed development area is a C-listed former hotel, centred on NGR NO 25149 22835. The work (site code ER05) was undertaken on 6th December 2016 in fine weather conditions. The requirement was to create a permanent record of the building prior to works commencing.

The work was designed to satisfy the archaeological condition on development application reference 16/01398/FLL.

1.2 Aims and Objectives

The main aim of this investigation was to create a visual and descriptive record, (including scale drawings, photographs and a narrative consideration of form, function, location, age, type and architectural phasing) of the standing building in advance of the development works.

1.3 Reporting

The present document has been prepared as the final report on this survey. Copies will be sent to the client, Historic Environment Scotland and Perth & Kinross Historic Environment Record.

1.4 Planning and Curatorial Issues

This survey and record were designed to satisfy the outstanding archaeological condition on the planning consent for this development.

1.5 Acknowledgements

We wish to thank Mr Duncan Morgan for his assistance and guidance throughout this project. Mr Morgan funded this survey.

2 Details of Work

2.1 The Site (Illus 1)

The roofless, two-storey former hotel building occupies a corner plot on the southeast side of Errol High Street, at the junction with School Wynd.

2.2 Archaeological Potential

The Commercial Hotel building is C-listed and of historical interest, dating to 1793. It forms a distinctive historic feature in Errol, but was damaged by fire and was roofless at the time of the survey. Of additional historic interest was the possibility of clay construction within the hotel fabric. The Carse of Gowrie contains a substantial number of significant historical structures which demonstrate the local tradition of mass clay walls or mudwall. The potential for these buildings to survive was identified during a

recent Clay Building Audit Rapid Survey carried out by the Tay Landscape Partnership, which confirmed the existence of at least forty inhabited mudwall buildings in the village of Errol. This number is likely to be unique certainly in Scotland if not the UK.

2.3 Archaeological Method

All internal and external elevations were photographed, together with any noted features of interest. A narrative textual account was created, describing the building's form, function, fabric and phases of construction and use, as well as current setting, with measurements taken of features described. The account was illustrated with annotated plans and elevations.

2.4 Results of Investigations

The hotel was aligned SW-NE, with the ground floor plan divided into two: a main room to the SW measuring 11.50m x 5.00m (internal) and a smaller extension to the NE measuring 4.00m x 5.20m (internal). The main room wall was 0.50m thick, with that of the extension being 0.45m thick along the High Street frontage. The main room entirely lacked a roof, while the extension featured a roof divided into modern replacement corrugated metal to the rear and surviving grey slate on the street front. Although a two storey building, the first floor was absent throughout. The ground floor was of poured concrete in both the main room and the extension.

The exterior fabric was white-painted, tuck-pointed rubble with stone margins along the High Street frontage, white-painted harling on the School Wynd and rear elevations. The render had largely flaked away from the upper storey along the High Street and from much of the rear, but the School Wynd wall was still covered.

The SW end of the building was a free-standing gable, while the NE adjoined a neighbouring structure; the hotel was thus the end unit of a terrace. The SW gable featured a chimney offset to the N from the centre line, with a dogleg back to the centre above a first floor fireplace. The chimney was 1.60m wide at base and jutting 0.40m into the room. The fireplace and a ground floor example directly below it both included heavily cemented modern brick rebuilding work; on the ground floor, this probably represented the insertion of a gas fire into the existing hearth, while the first floor example also featured ceramic heat reflecting surrounds. The first floor mantelpiece measured 1.15m wide (height not measured as could not be accessed) and was possibly later Victorian, while the ground floor measured 1.25m wide x 1.10m high (external) and was of severely corroded stone supported by a wood beam and possibly somewhat earlier.

A blocked window to the left (S) of the ground floor fireplace featured a stone rubble fill beneath a wooden header, the filled area measuring 1.05m wide x 1.30m high. The absence of brick from the fill suggested a possibly quite early modification. An open, glassless window in a decayed wooden frame on the first floor directly above the blocked example appeared to be of the same dimensions, but had been rebuilt with a concrete lintel beneath a row of bricks laid on their narrow sides. To the N of the ground floor fireplace, an embrasure 1.56m high, 1.10m wide (external), 0.70m deep, contained a 0.90m wide/1.40m high wooden sash window, unglazed and boarded up at the time of the survey. The embrasure sloped on the fireplace side (S) only, the wall-end side being flat. Brick repair of the chimney wall fabric suggested the window may

have been inserted into a previously blank wall; however, the bricks were handmade rather than machined, suggesting an early modification. The stone sill and header both featured incised rope-work decoration.

The wall fabric of the upper gable and chimney was of grey sandstone rubble, with the remainder of the first floor being of pink sandstone rubble. This pattern was repeated across the whole of the main room except in the NE corner, where the first floor had been rebuilt in brick where the hotel adjoined the neighbouring property in School Wynd.

The NW elevation of the main room featured three evenly spaced first floor windows in very slightly sloped embrasures; the ground floor featured two ground floor windows either side of a central door opening onto the High Street. All five windows appeared to be of the same dimensions, suggesting a common construction date, measuring 2.15m high, 0.95m wide, with wooden lintels (decayed or removed above the door, the N ground floor window and the S and central first floor windows). All were contained within 1.10m wide embrasures. A wooden sash frame survived in the NE first floor window, but the remaining window apertures were empty and the ground floor examples boarded up. The doorway featured double wooden doors with corroded iron fittings, not original but of considerable age (probably earlier twentieth century), the doorway itself measuring 1.10m wide and 2.26m high. The wall fabric of the ground floor to the SW of the door was of random but mostly light grey or white stone rubble, of highly varied sizes and shapes, occasional large (0.50m x 0.20m) blocks but mostly 0.1m slabs. This may have been the original fabric of the eighteenth century cottage, but no traces of clay bonding were evident, the rubble being bonded with lime mortar. To the NE of the door, more pink/red sandstone was noticeable upwards of a line 1.40m from the floor surface, merging with the first floor fabric, which this part of the ground floor wall resembled. Thus, it seems likely that the original core of the cottage was represented by the SW end of the ground floor, with subsequent expansion upwards and to the NE.

The SE elevation featured two doors in the S end. The SW door was located 2.00m from the gable end, directly opposite the High Street ground floor window. This door was partly cased with modern machined brick beneath a somewhat bowed wooden lintel. The doorway measured 2.15m high, 1.00m wide, with a modern wooden door, formerly a fire exit. The NE doorway was 5.25m from the gable, with stone casing (a slab facade with no ashlar) with a wooden lintel; the door was absent, the aperture being boarded up. The doorway measured 2.10m high, 1.10m wide. The wall fabric of the first floor above the doorways contained less red stone than the opposite wall, again suggesting a different construction phase- in this case, perhaps indicating that during the initial expansion, the High Street facade was taller than the rear, with a roof slope from front to back, before the wall heights were subsequently equalised prior to a final upwards expansion to the current height. The High Street windows were cased with stone and stone slab fascia intended to mimic ashlar blocks and clearly dated from the final upwards expansion phase, as the upper third of their height was composed of the upper, greystone fabric (it is possible the extant windows replaced earlier, perhaps smaller examples).

0.50m NE of the second door, the SE elevation ground floor featured a fixed window, 0.65m wide x 0.72m high with frosted glass, set in a slight embrasure 0.80m x 0.80m square with a decayed wooden lintel. This was a modern feature within an early or

original aperture, 1.10m above the floor surface. 1.30m to the NE (opposite the ground floor window NE of the High Street doorway), a 0.90m wide sash window of reinforced glass in a frame of decayed wood was set 0.60m from the floor within a 1.40m high x 1.14m embrasure, the top edge of which was absent. The first floor above both windows was also absent, replaced by wooden boarding flanked by late Victorian machined brick (possibly re-used, as somewhat eroded), forming rebuilt casing to the S and the recently re-pointed wall of the adjacent School Wynd property to the E/NE. The boarded gap was 3.70m long, representing the location of a former balcony and the reduction of the main wall to single storey in this area (the NMRS records a "cantilevered timber bay" in this location in 2009).

The NE gable end of the main room featured a chimney, as in the SW elevation opposite but wider, at 1.90m (base) and jutting 0.45m into the room; unlike the SW chimney, there was no dogleg but instead a narrowing at the same level (upper first floor), with a clear change in fabric from red/pink sandstone to grey stone. The narrowing was to the E, with an attic door or window in the wall to the W (High Street side). The chimney served two fireplaces, with the first floor example set immediately against the W edge of the chimney, 1.10m wide and featuring stone mantel surrounds and a sandstone hearth bed. The ground floor fireplace featured large block sandstone and concrete surrounds and was in-filled with machined brick, which had originally been faced with twentieth century, plain white ceramic tiles. This fireplace measured 1.90m wide, 1.75m high, 0.68m deep and took up the entire base of the chimney. The chimney itself had been extensively re-built with machined brick, probably Victorian and possibly re-used as numerous breaks and signs of erosion were apparent. The bricks were concentrated above the ground floor fireplace and to the E of the first floor fireplace, suggesting extensive remodelling of the former and perhaps insertion of the latter into the existing chimney, or the replacement of an original fireplace with a narrower version.

Doorways to the extension were located 0.60m NW and 0.80m SE of the ground floor fireplace, both cased with machined brick and featuring wooden board lintels. The doors were absent. A first floor doorway was located directly above the SE example. The ground floor doorways were both 1.90m high and 0.80m wide, with a 0.12m step at the base of the SE door.

Within the extension, the High Street wall and the NE gable end were entirely of machined brick. The ground floor of the SE wall also contained brick, with the first floor composed of heavily rendered greystone rubble which probably represented the original wall of the adjoining property, annexed to the hotel upon extension. This elevation also featured a central ground floor doorway 1.20m wide x 2.10m high (plus a step up 0.14m high- a second step within the doorframe was 0.15m high, making the frame itself 1.95m high). The doorway contained a double door of twentieth century date. A boarded-up window 0.35m SW of the door featured brick casing and a stone sill ledge 0.43m from the floor with a 0.20m deep alcove beneath. The window aperture measured 0.90m high and 0.66m wide.

The NE gable end of the extension featured a 2.10m wide chimney 1.10m from the junction with the High Street wall, with two fireplaces directly in line with each other and central to the chimney. The ground floor fireplace was 1.20m wide and 1.05m high, with tooled stone surrounds and brick backing. This elevation featured no windows, as it adjoined the next property in the terrace.

The NW elevation- High Street frontage- featured a central first floor window with a doorway and window on the ground floor. The doorway, located 0.45m NE of the junction with the main room, measured 1.20m wide, 2.25m high and contained a modern wooden door. The ground floor window, 0.50m NE of the door, measured 1.40m wide, 1.50m high and sat 0.52m above the floor.

The SW elevation, the gable end of the main room, continued the fabric of the main room, but with the brick inserts described above. The A-frame roof rafters and slats were modern.

No evidence was found of clay bonding or clay wall construction anywhere in the extant hotel building. The wall fabric was of lime-bonded stone rubble or cemented machined brick, with additions of stone or concrete around features such as fireplaces.

3 Conclusions and Recommendations

Alder Archaeology consider the Historic Building Record survey to have been carried out satisfactorily and do not recommend further work in connection with the present development. However, the final decision ultimately rests with Perth & Kinross Heritage Trust, as curators of the local Historic Environment Record.

Appendix 1 Photographic Register

<i>Image No</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>View</i>
001-2	General view, SE corner, external	N
003	General view, SW and SE elevations, external, oblique	N
004	SW elevation, base, external	NE
005	SW elevation, upper storey/gable, external	NE
006	SW elevation, base, external	NE
007	Gable end, SW end of SE elevation, external	NW
008	Base, SW end of SE elevation, external	NW
009	SE elevation, external, oblique	N
010-12	Mid-section, SE elevation, external	NW
013-14	NE end, SE elevation, external	NW
015	NW elevation, external	SE
016	NE end, NW elevation, external	SE
017	General view, NW corner, external	E
018	General/location shot, NW elevation, external	S
019	General view, main room, internal	N
020-22	SW elevation of main room, internal	SW
023	Detail, 1 st floor fireplace and window, SW elevation of main room, internal	SW
024	Detail, ground floor fireplace and windows, SW elevation of main room, internal	SW
025	Detail, decorated sill, ground floor window, SW elevation of main room, internal	SW
026-33	NW elevation, main room, internal	NW
034	NE elevation, main room, internal	NE
035	Detail, ground floor fireplace, NE elevation, main room, internal	NE
036	Detail, 1 st floor fireplace, NE elevation, main room, internal	NE
037	Detail, doorways in SE end, NE elevation, main room, internal	NE
038-41	NE end, SE elevation, main room, internal	SE

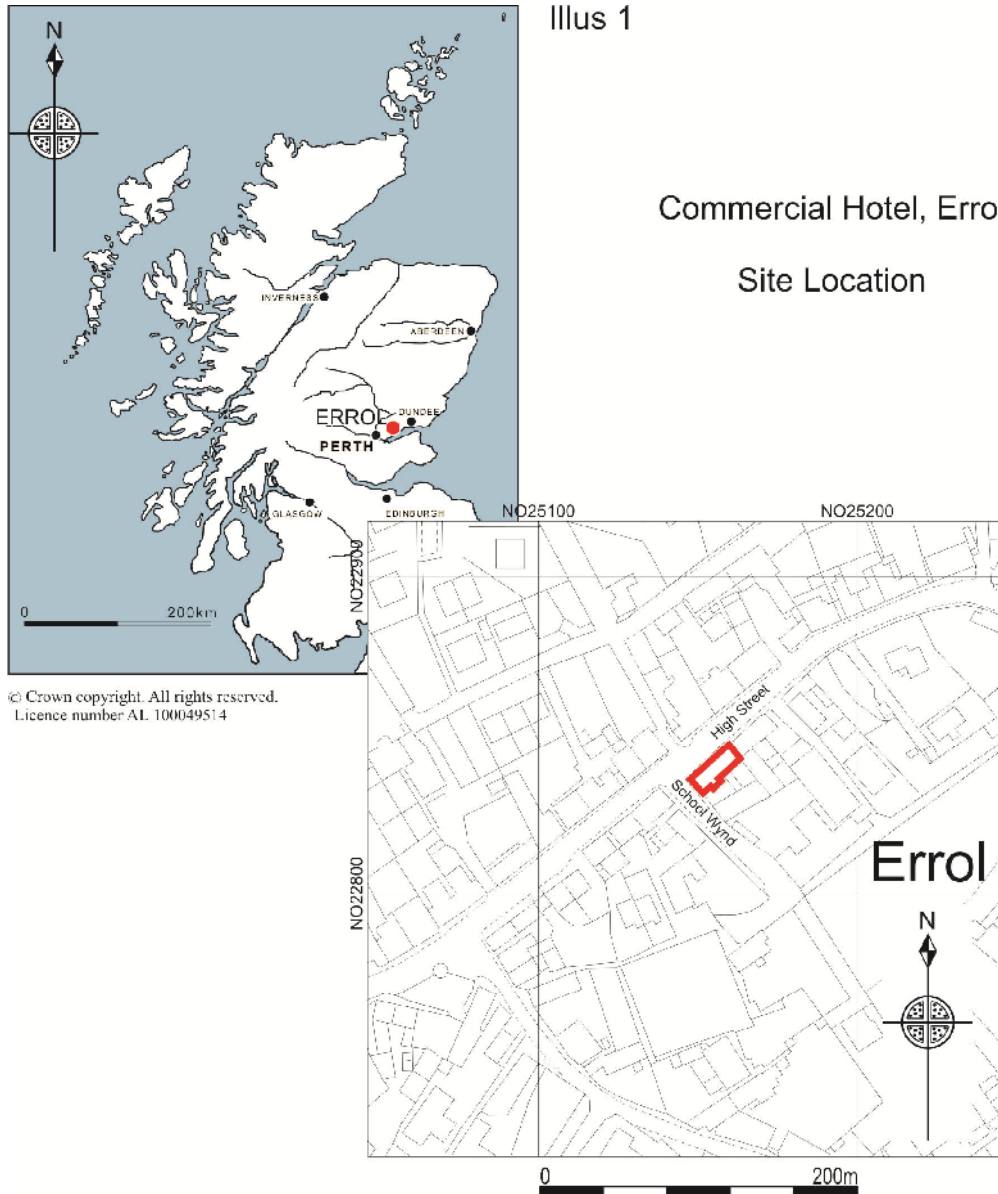
042-47	SE elevation, main room, internal	SE
048	Detail, concrete floor, main room, internal	NE
049-50	General view, extension, internal	N
051-52	NW elevation, extension, internal	SE
053	Detail, window, NW elevation, extension, internal	SE
054	Detail, doorways in SE end of SW elevation, extension, internal	SW
055-56	SE end, SW elevation, upper storey, extension, internal	SW
057-58	NW end, SW elevation, base, extension, internal	SW
059	Upper storey, SW elevation, extension, internal	SW
060-61	Detail, rafters, extension, internal	SW
062	Detail, doorway, NW end, SW elevation, extension, internal	SW
063-64	NW end, SW elevation, upper storey, extension, internal	SW
065	NW elevation, extension, internal	NW
066	NW elevation, base, extension, internal	NW
067-68	NW elevation, upper storey, extension, internal	NW
069	NW elevation, base, extension, internal	NW
070-71	Junction of NW and NE elevations, base, extension, internal	NE
072	Detail, 1 st floor fireplace, NE elevation, extension, internal	NE
073-76	Detail, rafters, extension, internal	NE
077-79	Detail, ground floor fireplace, NE elevation, extension, internal	NE
080	Detail, 1 st floor fireplace, NE elevation, extension, internal	NE
081-82	NE elevation, base, extension, internal	NE
083	SE end of NE elevation, upper storey, extension, internal	NE
084	Detail, concrete floor of extension, internal	NW

Appendix 2 Discovery & Excavation in Scotland Entry

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Perth & Kinross
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Commercial Hotel, Errol
PROJECT CODE:	ER05
PARISH:	Errol
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	C Fyles
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	Alder Archaeology Ltd
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	HBR
NMRS NO(S):	NNO22SE 61
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Hotel
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 8 or 10 figures)	NO 25149 22835
START DATE (this season)	6 th December 2016
END DATE (this season)	6 th December 2016
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. <i>DES</i> ref.)	None
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	Alder Archaeology undertook an Historic Building Record survey of a derelict building in advance of demolition and the erection of a new dwelling house and flats at High Street, Errol. The proposed development area is a C-listed former hotel, thought to date from 1793, perhaps originally a cottage later re-purposed. The prevalence of clay-bonded and clay-walled buildings in the vicinity and on the wider Carse of Gowrie generally gave reason to suppose the hotel might have contained evidence of the use of clay within its fabric. In the event, no such evidence was noted, the fabric being mainly lime-bonded rubble wall with worked stone elements and later additions of machined brick.
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	-
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Mr Duncan Morgan
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	Alder Archaeology Ltd, 55 South Methven Street, Perth PH1 5NX
EMAIL ADDRESS:	director@alderarchaeology.co.uk
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	HES (intended)

Illus 1

Commercial Hotel, Errol
Site Location

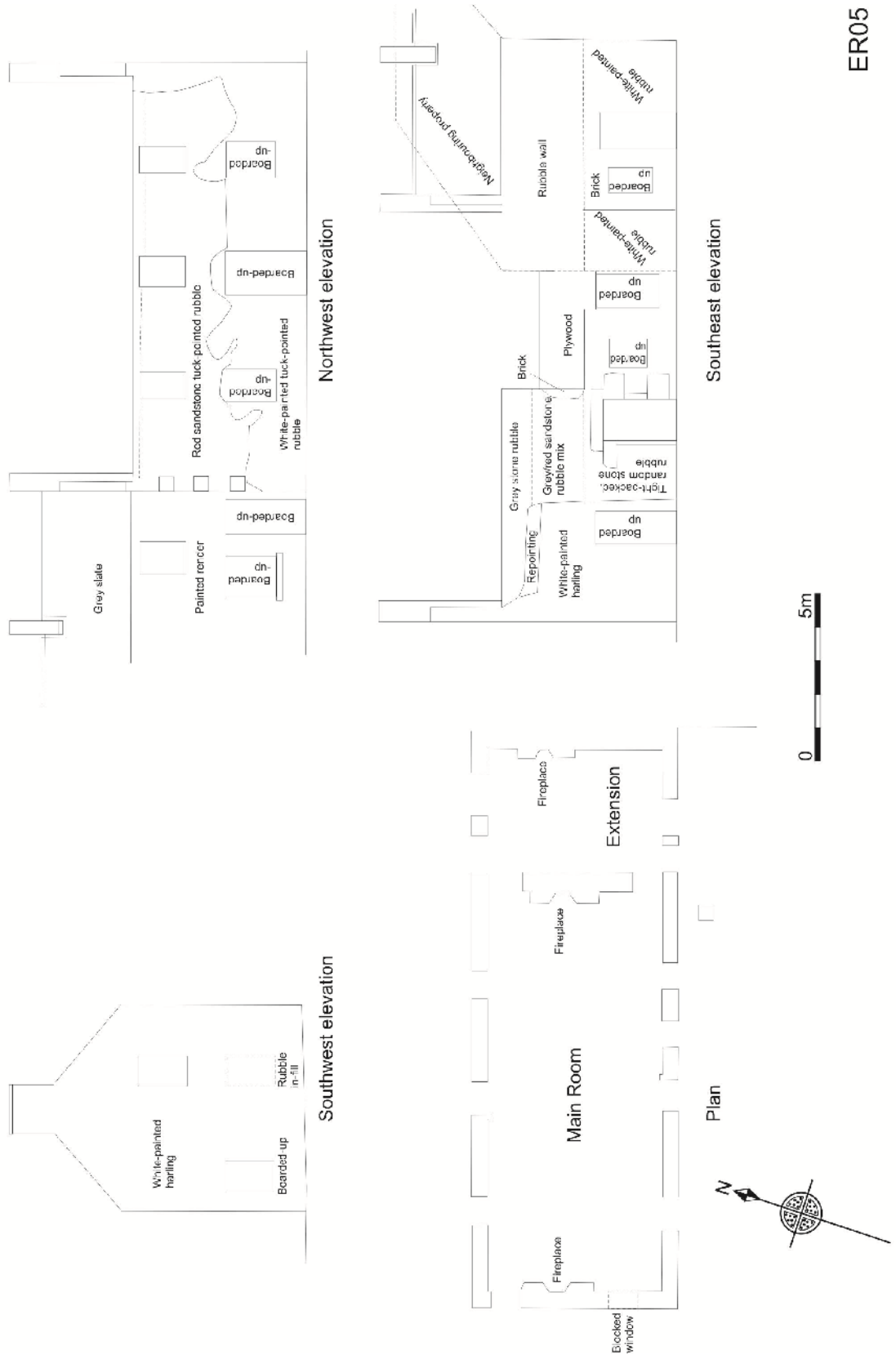


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Illus 2

Exterior elevations and ground floor plan



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