



No. 2 The Square, Chacewater, Cornwall

Archaeological watching brief and historic building record



Historic Environment Projects

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Acknowledgements

This study was commissioned by Dr Anthony Bradley and carried out by Historic Environment Projects, Cornwall Council.

The Project was carried out and managed by the author.

The views and recommendations expressed in this report are those of Historic Environment Projects and are presented in good faith on the basis of professional judgement and on information currently available.

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Cover illustration

Frontage of No. 2 The Square, Chacewater (taken on 11/7/12)

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Abbreviations

HER	Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly Historic Environment Record
HE	Historic Environment, Cornwall Council
NGR	National Grid Reference
OS	Ordnance Survey

1 Summary

Historic Environment Projects (Cornwall Council) were commissioned by Dr Anthony Bradley to carry out an archaeological watching brief and building record during the removal of part of a possible chimney and the removal of plaster at No. 2, The Square, Chacewater (a Grade II listed building) located at NGR: SW 7508 4440. This work was commissioned to fulfil a condition for Listed Building Consent (Planning Application PA12/01842) which stipulated that a programme of historic building recording and analysis in accordance with a written scheme of investigation was secured and implemented prior to the work taking place.

The Grade II listed house is located within the historic core of Chacewater and also lies within the Conservation Area. Another Grade II listed building adjoins the property to the south (No. 3, The Square). The building, stylistically, appears to date to the 18th century and has been extended to the rear in the 18th or early 19th century.

The watching brief, carried out during the removal of what was thought to be a possible chimney breast in the present bathroom on the first floor revealed that this feature was, in fact, part of the south-east gable end wall. A brief inspection of the walls in the hallway, landing, bathroom and rear bedroom where plaster had been removed as part of the present works revealed the original plan of the building and later historic phases of extension and remodelling.

2 Introduction

2.1 Project background

Listed Building Consent application PA12/01842 for was submitted on the 26th February 2012 and was for the installation of a bathroom suite requiring removal of a possible redundant masonry chimney stack, the removal of internal cement and decayed lime plaster work and replacing with lime plaster throughout the house and maintenance of all timber framed walls and ceilings. This application was approved subject to 6 conditions. Condition 3 states:

'No works to remove the chimney on the first floor shall commence until an appropriate programme of historic building recording and analysis has been secured and implemented in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Conservation Officer.'

Reason: To record existing features of archaeological interest.'

Dr Anthony Bradley approached HE Projects with a view to putting in place the necessary recording work to satisfy the planning condition. Following agreement of costs, a Written Scheme of Investigation was prepared. After the approval of the WSI an archaeological watching brief and building historic record were carried out during the removal of what was thought to be a possible chimney breast. This report presents the results of the fieldwork.

2.2 Aims

The objective was to obtain an archaeological record of the site during renovation works.

Specific aims were to:

- Determine the extent, condition, nature, character, date and significance of any archaeological remains encountered.
- To establish the nature, function and relationship to the original structure of the feature thought to be a chimney breast.
- To create an historic building record.
- To provide further information on the archaeology of the building from any building details revealed during the course of the works.

2.3 Methods

The archaeological programme followed four stages: desk-based assessment, fieldwork, archiving and reporting.

2.3.1 Desk-based assessment

A rapid search of desk-based historical sources was undertaken comprising:

- Cornwall HER.
- Images of England online listed buildings database.
- Early maps (see Section 8.1).
- Published histories (see Section 8.2).

2.3.2 Fieldwork

A site visit was carried out by the author on 11th July 2012. The removal of what was thought to be a possible chimney breast was carried out under archaeological supervision.

All areas where historic fabric had been disturbed were inspected and any features exposed were recorded by written description and photographic record and located on a measured plan or elevation.

2.3.3 Post-fieldwork

The site archive was collated. This included:

- Preparation of finished measured drawings.
- Archiving of drawings, photographs, paperwork and digital files.
- Preparation of HE and Archive Index forms.
- Production of this report.
- Completion of an English Heritage OASIS form.

3 Location and setting

No. 2, The Square is located in the centre of the village of Chacewater in the parish of Chacewater (formerly the Parish of Kenwyn) at grid ref SW 7508 4440 (Figs 1 and 2). Chacewater lies approximately 5 miles to the west of Truro and 4 miles to the east of Redruth on the main historic road route between the two towns. The village has grown up either side of the river Carnon that runs north-south at the base of a gently sloping valley at a height of 60m OD. The underlying bedrock is Middle Devonian mudstone, siltstone and sandstone.

The house itself is located close to the road junction where Fore Street meets The Square and is set on a north-west south-east alignment which differs to all the other buildings on The Square which are aligned with the road (almost north-south). No. 3 The Square (a former shop) adjoins the south-east gable end of No. 2. This building was constructed during the mid to late 19th century and follows the alignment of the road.

Within No. 2 the feature that was thought to be a chimney breast was located in the south-west corner of the building at first floor level in the present bathroom.

4 Designations

No. 2, The Square is a Grade I listed building located within the historic core of Chacewater and also within the Conservation Area. Another Grade II listed building adjoins and post-dates the property to the south (No 3, The Square). Chacewater itself is included within the Gwennap Mining District which is part of the World Heritage Site for Cornish mining.

The listed building description for No. 2, The Square, Chacewater is as follows:

'Small house. Circa 1820. Killas and elvan rubble with elvan and freestone dressings with cob to part of right gable end and the stud and plaster wall to wing. Scantle slate roof sweeping lower to rear, left, with brick chimneys over gable ends. L-shaped plan of 2 front rooms with central cross passage and stair and 1-room kitchen wing to rear, right and narrow service room to rear left. 2 storeys. Symmetrical 2-window north east road front. Central freestone and elvan ashlar doorway with plain pilasters, moulded impost stones round-headed arch with keystone, architrave and cornice. Top-glazed 6-panel door with blind fanlight over. Rendered plinth and flat dressed stone arches with projecting keystones over windows. Elvan sills. Original 12-pane hornless sashes with mostly original crown glass. Original sashes also to wing and stair and original 16-pane 2-light casement to rear, left.

Interior is little altered with original T-plan stair, and mahogany doors with moulded architraves; original floors, bead moulded beams to wing and original roof structure. Blocked borrowed light between right-hand room and passage suggests that front door fanlight has always been blind. Cobbled pavement to front. An interesting example of a small town house with farmhouse plan of rear kitchen wing and integral service room modified and reduced in scale to suit the site.'

5 Site history

It seems likely Chacewater developed as a settlement during the 17th century. There is no recorded physical evidence for structures within the village that pre-date this period and it is not shown on Norden's detailed map of Kerrier Hundred (1597), but is shown on Gascoyne's map of 1699 as a hamlet labelled 'Chesewater'.

Another indication of the settlement's post-medieval origin is the following statement made by Tonkin in 1736:

'I don't know whether it be worthwhile to take notice of a place to the south of it (Kelly-freth) called Chace Water, which being on the great road between Truro and Redruth, and very near to the Great Works, hath now general houses built on it.' (quoted in Acton 1997).

The following historic background for Chacewater is taken from Cornwall Industrial Settlements Initiative, Chacewater (Cahill Partnership and CAU, 2002):

'The 1791 British Directory noted that there was no market in Chacewater, and the place was principally inhabited by tanners.'

The earliest phase of settlement was along the tracks from Redruth and the Wheal Busy workings following the higher ground of the valley sides (The Terrace), to crossing points over the Carnon stream, or south down the valley itself (Falmouth Road). There were some small clusters of buildings along the main road and near the bridging point.

Mining was steadily expanding locally in the early 19th century and this had a major impact on the landscape around as well as the settlement. In 1818 700 people were employed on the Wheal Busy setts, 400 at Treskerby, although only 25 at Creegbrowse, which had seen its glory days in the previous century and was now in a decline from which it was not to recover. From 1826, Killifreth developed as a major copper producer.

The importance of the area is reflected in the name of the Redruth and Chacewater Railway set up in 1824, with the intention of linking the local mines to a new port at Devoran (although Chacewater never did receive its branch line).

As well as mining, there were elvan quarries at Creegbrowse in operation throughout the 19th century; although locally well known for the quality of the stone, this was only a minor local employer.

As the settlement grew, it clearly developed economic functions on its own account, particularly as a market and servicing centre for the surrounding industrial area, which gave it some independent economic role beyond being a purely industrial residential settlement. Pigot's 1830 directory makes the point that it was the combination of its situation on the great road from Truro to Redruth and the west of Cornwall as much as the intensity of the surrounding mining industry which led to the development of the village.'

Martyn's map of 1748 shows the settlement of 'Chasewater' but is not detailed enough to give an idea of the extent of the village at this date. The earliest map to give an idea of the extent and intensity of settlement in Chacewater is the c1809 OS surveyors'

drawing (Fig 3). The settlement at this date is shown as 'Chacewater' and the c1809 map indicates a well-established centre focused around The Square and stretching east-west along Fore Street more or less to its modern extent. Buildings are shown on this map in the area of The Square but it is not detailed enough to pin-point exact structures.

The Tithe map of c1840 (Fig 4) is the earliest map to show the plan of No.2 The Square. It appears at this date to stand alone with its existing service wing extension to the rear already added and with further extensions to the rear within the present backyard. The accompanying Apportionment lists a group listing for the houses in this area. It lists the owner as the Earl of Falmouth and records 'houses' leased by James Tyacke and occupied by Mark Richards.

The next available map of the area is the First Edition OS map of c1880 (Fig 5) which shows the plan of the house in its present form. It also shows that No. 3 had been added to the south-east by this date. The Second Edition OS map of c1907 (Fig 6) shows the same plan of the house but indicates that the area to the rear had become a backyard by this date.

6 Archaeological results

Prior to the site visit existing plaster and areas of plasterboard had been removed in the bathroom, landing, hallway and rear bedroom.

The watching brief undertaken in the house focused on the removal of a feature in the south-west corner of the house at first floor level within the existing bathroom (Figs 2, 7, 8 and 13). An earlier inspection of this feature by an independent surveyor (whose opinion had been supported by the Conservation Officer) had noted that it may have been a chimney breast servicing the room below where the lower part had been removed and the stack above roof level may also have been removed.

The removal of the plasterboard covering the feature revealed that it was constructed from cob, comprising mid orange/brown silty clay with frequent shillet fragments and moderate chopped straw pieces. It was square in plan, reaching from floor to ceiling and protruded into the room space by 0.7m. During the demolition of the feature it became clear that it was not the remains of a chimney breast but part of the original south-east gable end wall with a maximum recorded width of 0.8m (see Figs 7 and 8). The area of former wall to the north-east of it within the bathroom had clearly already been removed to allow for the insertion of a shower, and at an earlier date (second half of the 20th century) the ground floor gable end wall within the rear service room had also been removed and a concrete slab inserted at first floor level to support the cob wall on the first floor.

A brief inspection of the other areas in the house where plaster had been removed combined with what was visible of the rest of the building enabled a cursory phased development to be formed. The original building appears to have been a simple gable ended house of single room depth. This is evidenced in the northern half of the building by the survival of the original exterior rear wall (seen after removal of plaster in the hallway) which comprises masonry at ground floor level and cob at first floor level (shown in Fig 10). It seems likely that this wall was demolished in the southern half of the building when a small, two-storey, cob-built extension was added which now contains the boiler room and bathroom, although it is possible that the building was originally designed with this extra room space to the rear. The present kitchen wing with bedroom above (to the rear north) is a later extension but may still have been added as early as the 18th or early 19th century. This is evidenced by the location of the 18th century staircase (Fig 11), which appears to be *in situ*, and breaches the original rear wall of the house giving access into the first floor extension(s).

The partition walls on either side of the hallway on the ground floor comprise studwork infilled with cob. They appear to have been inserted at the same time as the staircase,

since the staircase is built up against the south partition and an earlier plastered wall face is visible behind the partitions where they butt up against the front wall either side of the front door. In the north partition wall there is a blocked door opening (Fig 12). Other alterations noted were that the window and door openings in the bathroom had been inserted at a later date.

7 Conclusions/discussion

The results of this study have brought together a brief historic background for this property, established phases of construction and created a record of the historic feature affected during renovation works.

The feature in the bathroom in the south-west corner of the house, thought to be a possible chimney has been identified as part of the south-east gable wall built in cob.

Two or three major construction phases have been identified at the site. The first major phase of building was almost certainly undertaken in the 18th century when a simple gable ended house was constructed. This comprised a stone rubble-built front wall with dressed elvan openings and quoins and the gables and rear wall constructed from stone rubble on the ground floor with cob on the first floor. Later phases of extension(s) to the rear took place in the 18th or early 19th century. When the kitchen wing was added to the rear north, the interior of the original house underwent major remodelling with new interior walls added.

The historic background of the property is fairly scant but we do know that it was owned by the Earl of Falmouth during the 19th century.

8 References

8.1 Primary sources

- Ordnance Survey, c1880. *25 Inch Map* First Edition (licensed digital copy at HE)
- Ordnance Survey, c1907. *25 Inch Map* Second Edition (licensed digital copy at HE)
- Ordnance Survey, 2007. *Mastermap Digital Mapping*
- Tithe Map and Apportionment, c1840. *Parish of Kenwyn* (digital copy at HE)
- Norden's detailed map of Kerrier Hundred (1597)
- Gascoyne's map of 1699
- Martyn's map of 1748

8.2 Publications

- Acton, Bob (1997). *Exploring Cornwall's Tramway Trails. Vol 2* Troutbeck Press
- Cahill Partnership and CAU, 2002. *Cornwall Industrial Settlements Initiative, Chacewater* Truro

8.3 Websites

- http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway/English_Heritage's_online_database_of_Sites_and_Monuments_Records,_and_Listed_Buildings

9 Project archive

The HE project number is **146164**

The project's documentary, photographic and drawn archive is housed at the offices of Historic Environment, Cornwall Council, Kennall Building, Old County Hall, Station Road, Truro, TR1 3AY. The contents of this archive are as listed below:

1. A project file containing site records and notes, project correspondence and administration.
2. Electronic drawings stored in the directory ..\CAD ARCHIVE\Sites C\Chacewater 2 The Square 2012
3. Black and white photographs archived under the following index numbers: GB P 2256
4. Digital photographs stored in the directory ..\Images\Sites A-D\ Chacewater 2 The Square 2012
5. English Heritage/ADS OASIS online reference: cornwall2-130562

This report text is held in digital form as: ..\HE Projects\Sites C\Chacewater 2 The Square 2012\report 146164



Fig 1 Location map

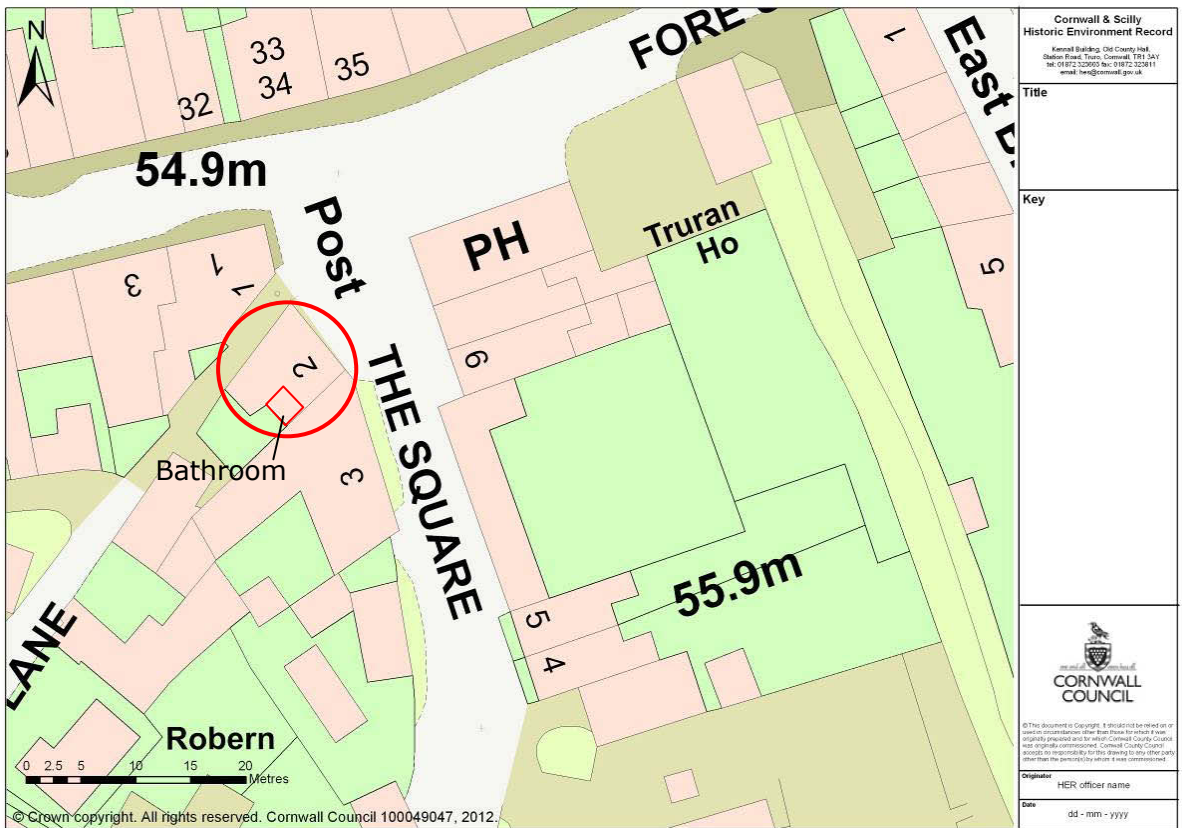


Fig 2 Ordnance Survey digital mapping showing the site and its environs (2012)



Fig 3 OS Surveyor's drawing c1809



Fig 4 Tithe Map, c1840

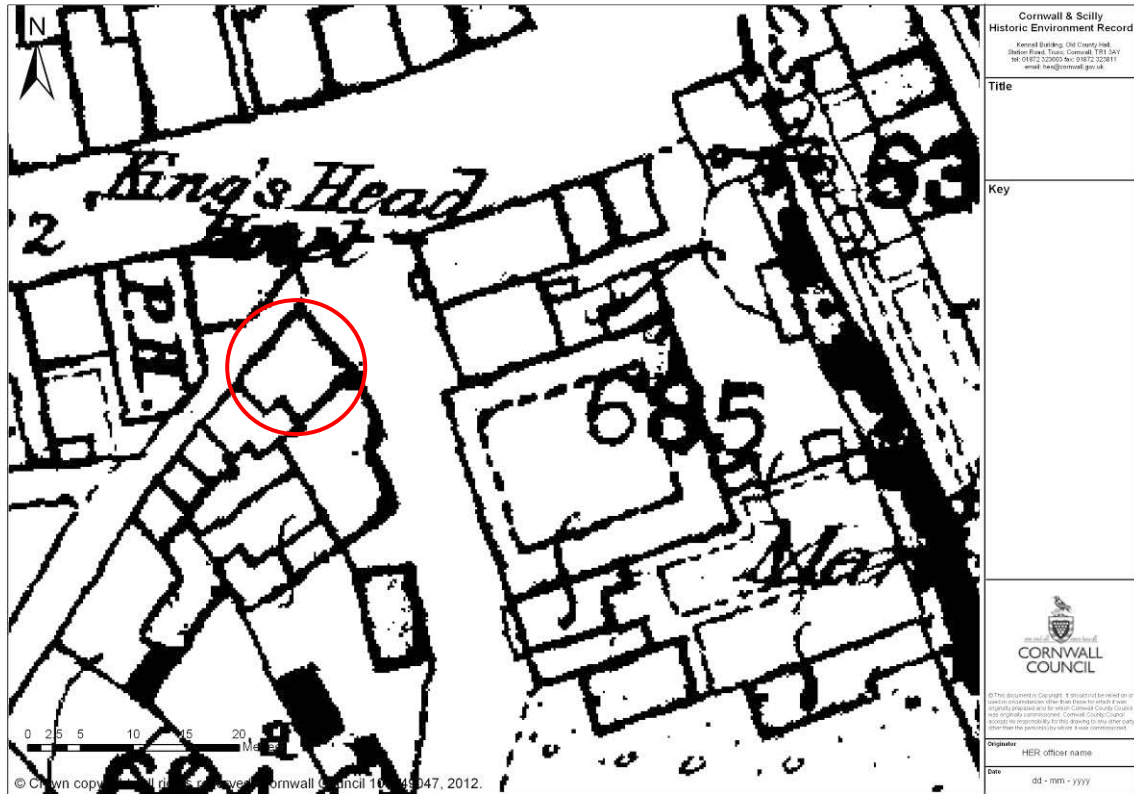


Fig 5 First Edition of the Ordnance Survey 25 Inch Map, c1880

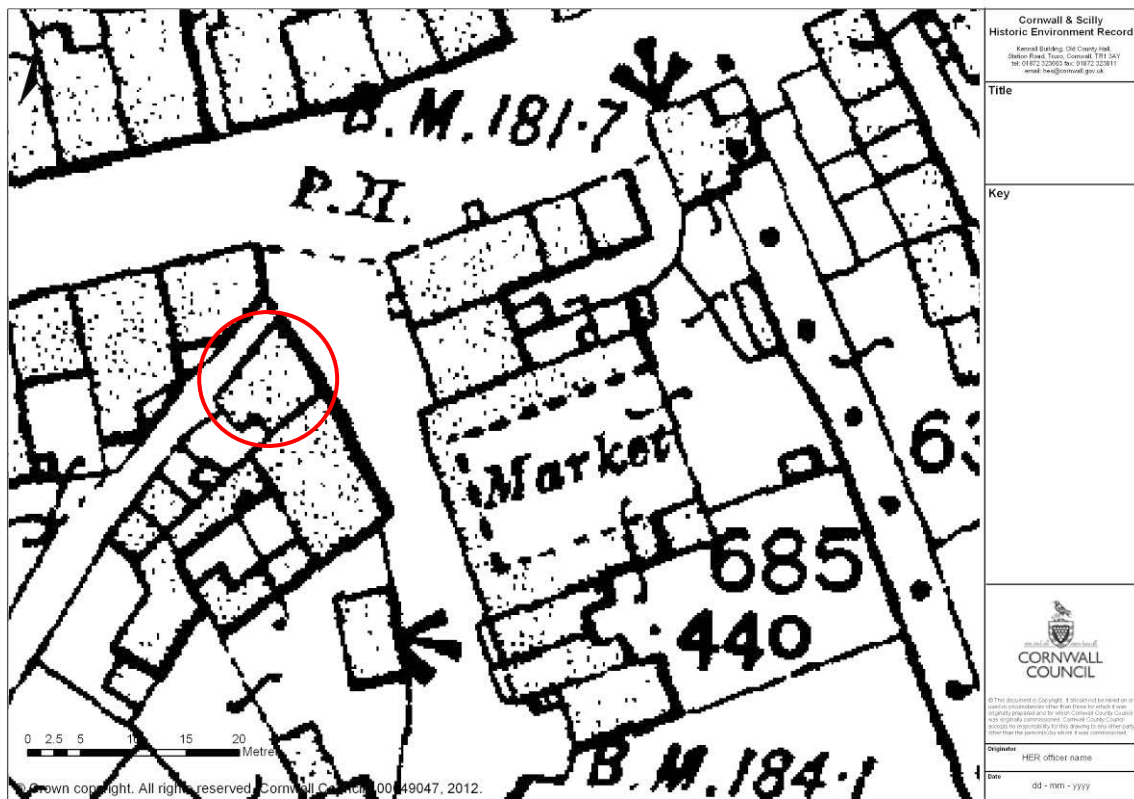


Fig 6 Second Edition of the Ordnance Survey 25 Inch Map, c1907



Fig 7 Remaining section of cob wall in bathroom before removal



Fig 8 Corner of bathroom during removal of cob wall



Fig 9 North-west external elevation showing stone masonry at ground floor level and cob at first floor level, also service wing extension to the rear

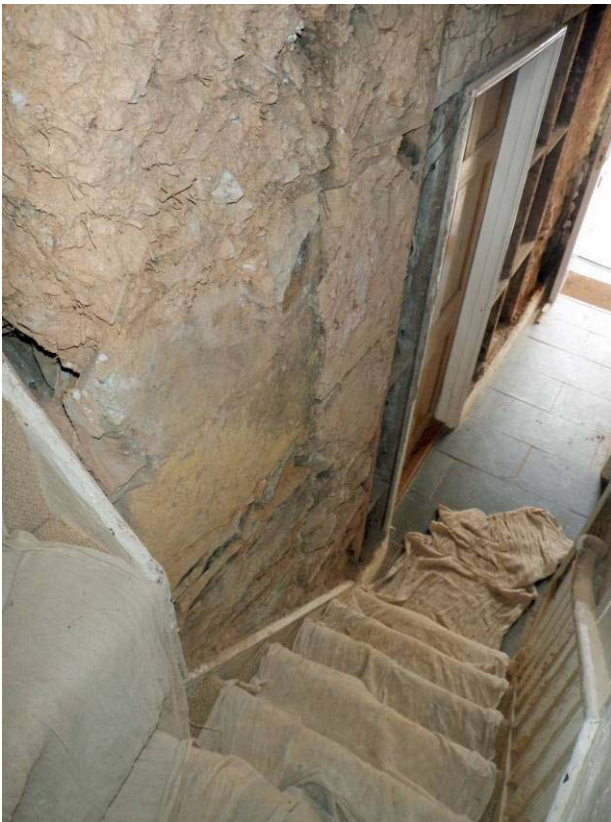


Fig 10 Former rear external wall revealed after removal of plaster from the wall to the north-west of the stairs (construction is stone masonry at ground floor level with cob at first floor level)

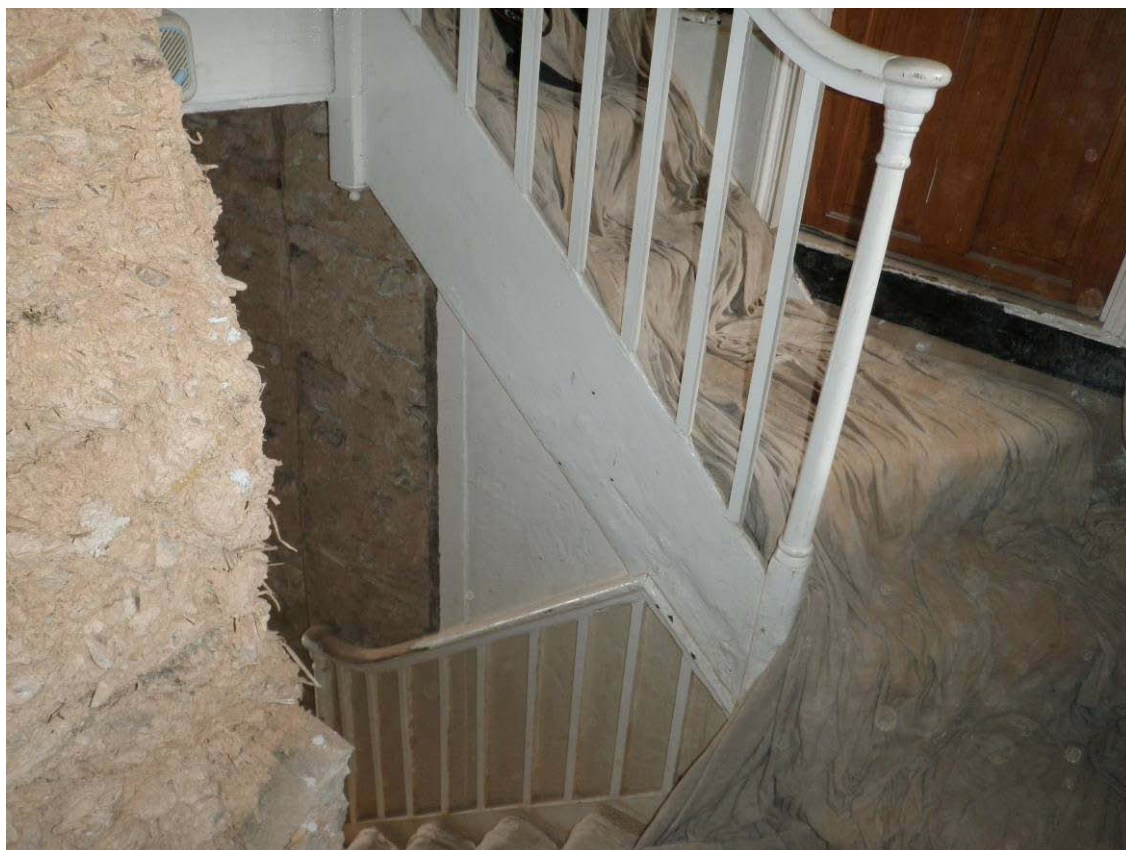


Fig 11 Upper part of stairs



Fig 12 Hallway and stairs

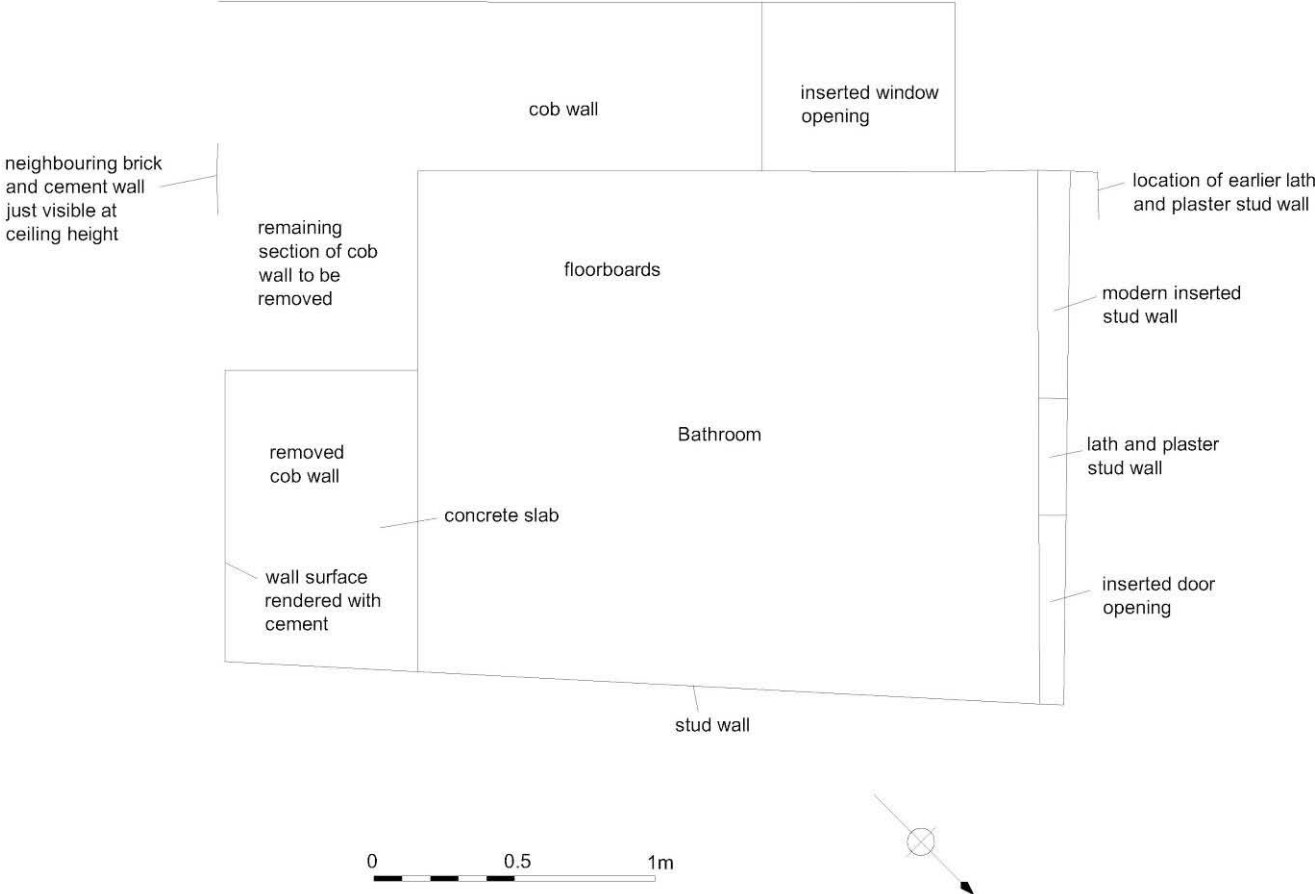


Fig 13 Plan of the bathroom showing 'remaining section of cob wall'