



BRISTOL & WEST ARCHAEOLOGY

No. 22 Jeffries Hill Bottom, Bristol

Standing Building Survey Report

Project Ref: 14/2491

Client: Rosecourt Projects Ltd

04 July 2014

Bristol & West Archaeology

Planning Authority:

Bristol City Council

National Grid Reference

Centred on: NGR ST 6370 7243

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NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

In line with current government guidelines and national legislation, the Archaeology Service of Bristol City Council has asked for an English Heritage Level 1 Standing Building Survey Report on No. 22 Jeffries Hill Bottom, Bristol, BS5 8SF. The study area occupies a 945m² irregular polygon of land (centred NGR ST 6370 7243) located on the east side of Gillingham Hill between Dundridge Lane and Jeffries Hill Bottom. This Standing Building Survey Report was requested in advance of a proposed planning application to demolish the present standing building and construct 2 three bedroom houses and 1 two bedroom bungalow (Bristol City council planning application reference 11/01002/F).

The results of this assessment are set out in the following report and summarised here.

The present building was probably constructed between 1803 and 1842. It was known to have been occupied into the later 20th century – the presence of internal electrical apparatus (viewed from outside) confirms this.

The surviving building consists of a rectangular single-storey sandstone built structure, aligned roughly north to south, set at the southern (lower) end of a former garden, now partially overgrown, but probably terraced into the valley side. The main frontage of the building faces south, with a single ground floor entrance. A 2011 plan of the exterior suggests there may have been a porch covered entrance in the eastern gable end, but this was not accessible in June 2014.

Due to the danger from collapsing walls, the inside of the building was not available for inspection and recording, with the exception of views through the partially collapsed western gable end. Although the north face of the roof was highly visible, only the western gable end and the southern wall were accessible. The roof was covered with ceramic tiles, with the addition of some shaped ridge tiles. From the interior views gained, the building appeared to be single storey, with loft space above the lath and plaster ceiling.

As a result of this project a record has now been made of the former dwelling at No. 22 Jeffries Hill Bottom. The associated documents, plans and digital media will in due course be deposited with the Bristol City Council museums service for long term curation and public access.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Bristol and West Archaeology Limited wish to acknowledge the assistance given by the following in the production of this report: Terry Cook of Rosecourt Projects Ltd together with Pete Insole, Archaeological Officer, Bristol City Council planning department.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

- 1.1.1 Bristol City Council has requested a Standing Building Survey Report of No. 22 Jeffries Hill Bottom, Bristol, BS5 8SF (centred NGR ST 6370 7243). This work was requested in advance of a proposed redevelopment of the study area as two new houses and a bungalow (planning reference 11/01002/F). The project was commissioned by Terry Cook of Rosecourt Projects Ltd.

1.2 Site Location, Topography and Land Use (see Figures 1 and 2)

- 1.2.1 The study area is located on the western edge of Kingswood, Bristol, on the border with Hanham, South Gloucestershire. The study area is located between approximately c. 50m aOD and 60m aOD, on the southeast facing side of the upper Conham Valley.
- 1.2.2 In plan the study area is an irregular polygon, approximately 30m long north to south by up to 21m east to west; it encompasses 945m².
- 1.2.3 At present the study area consists of a disused and boarded up building (described below), occupying a plot of land in the angle between Dundridge Lane, Gillingham Hill and Jefferies Hill Bottom. The building is located at the base of the slope, with south face fronting Jefferies Hill Bottom, behind a sandstone retaining wall.
- 1.2.4 A trawl of the Bristol City Council Historic Environment Record (HER) indicates the study area has no statutory constraints pertaining to archaeology or historic features.

1.3 Geology

- 1.3.1 The study area lies on Mangotsfield Member sandstone of the Carboniferous period (c. 309 to 310 million years old), laid down in an environment dominated by rivers (BGS 2014).

1.4 Methodology

- 1.4.1 In compiling this Standing Building Survey Report the standards and guidelines of the IfA, NPPF, and English Heritage were followed as appropriate (DCLG 2012; DCLG, DCMS, and EH 2010; EH 2006). The methodology followed the proposed schema laid out in a Written Scheme of Investigation submitted to Bristol City Council on 19th June 2014 and subsequently approved by them.
- 1.4.2 The author and Bruce Williams of Bristol & West Archaeology Ltd visited the study area on 23 June 2014, during which digital still photographs and black and white negatives were taken. The position of the photographer, the direction of view and the frame number of each photograph were recorded on a pre-printed scale plan of the study area.
- 1.4.3 This document was compiled using MS Word 10, references were compiled using Mendeley 1.11 following the current *World Archaeology* (Harvard) style. Figures were produced using QGIS 2.20, TurboCAD 19, DraftSight 2013 and Paint Shop Pro 8. Photographs were taken with a Fuji Finepix HS10 digital SLR camera and a Pentax K1000 35mm SLR using Ilford 400ASA black and white negative film.
- 1.4.4 On completion of the project the archive will be deposited with the Bristol City Council museums service.

2 BASELINE SURVEY

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The author undertook the EH Level 1 walkover and photographic survey on the morning of 23 June 2014. The weather at that time was warm and the skies clear. While generally good for photography, this did create a few issues with contrast, occasionally requiring the use of a camera mounted flash.

2.1.2 As agreed between the client and Bristol City Council planning department, only the exterior of the building was surveyed. This was due to the dangerous condition of the building, which was already in a partial state of collapse.

2.2 Previous Research

2.2.1 In 2004 a Desk-Based assessment of the study area was undertaken. That study identified the present building had been extant since at least 1842, when it was shown on the St. George parish tithe map, in the present plot of land (plot 871) which now forms the study area (BHER 21838). The building and study area were not shown on the earliest detailed map of the study area, Maule, 1803 (ibid.). The building is likely to have been an earlier 19th century cottage. It was occupied into the later 20th century (Terry Cook, *pers. comm.*). The broader area was still largely rural in 1946, but by 1949 suburban development had begun to seriously encroach on the district ([Bristol Know Your Place](#)). Most of the present housing stock in the vicinity appears to date from the 1960s and 1970s.

2.3 Survey of the Exterior (see Figures 1, 2 & 3)

2.3.1 The study area comprises a plot of land measuring approximately 41.6m north north west by south southeast and approximately 28.4m at its widest (Plate a). The study area occupies part of a south facing slope between the 50 and 60m aOD contours. The northern side of the study area is bounded by Dundridge Lane, to the east is the adjoining property of No. 45 Dundridge Lane, the southern boundary is formed by the single track Jeffries Hill Bottom (Plate l), while the western boundary is formed by Gillingham Hill, a street which links Dundridge Lane with Jeffries Hill Bottom. Boundaries on the north, west and south sides are formed of mortared sandstone rubble walls, which in places have a retaining function. It was observed that in places there was evidence these walls have been rebuilt on several occasions. There is a blocked entrance in the southwest corner of the boundary wall (Plate k). Incorporated into the fabric of the wall at this point is a re-used 18th century copper slag block, probably from the Conham works which was located at the foot of the valley.

2.3.2 The building that forms the focus of this study is a simple rectangular structure with a small extension or porch on the east face (not seen, but shown on the 2011 survey – see Figure 3). The core of the building measures externally 6.47m NNW-SSE by 6.29m, while the south face (including the possible porch) measures 7.87m. Where observable the walls were constructed of lime-mortared sandstone rubble, consistent with the underlying geology and the characteristics of older buildings in East Bristol and the general locale.

2.3.3 The roof, which is possibly the most visible part of the building, is covered with ceramic pan-tiles, with a crest of ridge tiles, alternating between plain and decorative (Plates a, b & c). The decorative tiles were of two forms, the simplest has a crest of four saw teeth, while the remainder had two raised ridges with rounded tops. There seemed to be no order to the distribution of decorative forms. The slope of the ridge was in two parts, with the easternmost part fairly level in appearance, while the western ridge sloped down to the west (Plates b & c). Whether this was a deliberate part of the build, or the result of the collapsing western gable end is not clear, but the latter seems the most likely explanation. No evidence was observed for a chimney. If the structure had one it had to have been located on the western gable end, since that is the only part of the building not

- extant. The southern side of the roof could be glimpsed from Jefferies Hill Bottom, but no chimney was observed.
- 2.3.4 From the western gable end, internal timber rafters and joists can be seen, though on the northern side there appears to have been some collapse of timbers (Plate h). The building is probably small enough that no further supporting structures were required than the gable ends themselves.
- 2.3.5 From what could be ascertained, despite the intense overgrowth, it would appear the building had been partially terraced into the hill side. Probing with a two metre ranging pole indicated there is a significant drop from the surrounding land towards the rear of the western gable end, indicating a person wide gap between the gable end and a presumed retaining wall (not actually observed). This might explain why it was not possible to observe the north and east walls of the structure, since they could have been below the level of the surrounding land surface.
- 2.3.6 Despite the partial collapse of the western gable end (noted in 2004; BHER 21838), this is the most accessible part of the building, and provided the most informative views. Even so, a certain amount of careful vegetation clearance was required to improve the situation. Great care was taken not to disturb the fabric of the building, and at no time was the structure entered.
- 2.3.7 Approximately one third (the northernmost) of the western gable end remains intact (Plate d). Parts of the collapsed wall were found lying on the ground immediately to the west of the building (Plate e). The standing third indicates this building had at least two construction phases, with what appears to have been a northward extension added at a later date (there is a clear vertical butt joint in the west face – see Plate d). This single storey ground floor extension was accommodated by a downward extension of the roof, without any discernable variation in pitch (Plate d).
- 2.3.8 Construction techniques between the two phases did not differ markedly. Both were of lime mortared Pennant sandstone, mostly rough-hewn and fair faced slabs and smaller rubble, laid in uneven and irregular courses. Larger slabs were reserved for the stressed corners, where the two phases met.
- 2.3.9 The only window that could be observed in the whole building was located in this northernmost third of the western gable end (Plate f). It was rectangular, timber framed (but minus any glass it may have had), approximately 300mm wide by 400mm tall, with a wooden sill and evidence for a beaten lead hood or surround protruding from around the upper portions of the frame. Remains of two iron hinges on the northern side suggested there may have been an external wooden shutter. Traces of green paint were observed on the timberwork.
- 2.3.10 Views through this window to the interior indicated the north wall had been whitewashed at some time past (Plate f). An internal west facing wall was observed (Plate g). This bore traces of paint (cream coloured) over plaster (still largely intact). Mounted on the wall is what appears to be antique electrical apparatus, with cable attached, probably either a fuse box or possibly an old style wall mounted telephone.
- 2.3.11 Internal views through the collapsed gable end indicated a west facing internal wall or partition constructed of or covered with varnished timber planks (Plate h). There appears to be a timber door on the south side of this wall, giving access to the space beyond (not clearly visible, but a whitewashed wall and ceiling could be glimpsed). The ceiling of the western end was of whitewashed lathe and plaster. From the evidence gathered the building appears to be single-storey with loft space, rather than two-storey as described in the Bristol HER (2909M).
- 2.3.12 Despite the collapse, the southwest corner of the building is intact, though heavily overgrown with ivy (Plate i). The remains of three Bakelite telegraph cups attached to a corner bracket and suspended by wires, hangs from the roof area.

- 2.3.13 The southern wall is almost completely overgrown with ivy, only glimpses of the stonework were visible. What appears to have been the front door (from its size and location) is boarded up with a sheet of galvanized corrugated iron (Plate j). Extensive overgrowth prevented further progression around the exterior of the building, while attempts to undertake vegetation clearance would have placed the operators at some risk, for dubious returns.

3 CONCLUSIONS

- 3.1.1 A historic standing building survey has been undertaken of c. 945m² of land located at No. 22 Jeffries Hill Bottom, Bristol (centred NGR ST 6370 7243) at about c. 50m aOD. The study area comprises an irregular plot of land occupied by a single building. This standing building survey has been undertaken at the request of the office of the Bristol City Council Archaeology Service, as a preliminary to a proposed scheme to redevelop the study area for new housing.
- 3.1.2 The study area is located on the lower slope but towards the upper end of the north side of the Conham Valley, a narrow vale formed by a tributary stream of the River Avon. The structure in question stands at the base of the slope, near the 50m aOD contour. The rectangular structure, built of lime mortared sandstone rubble, appears to have been terraced into the valley side. This might explain why the northern and eastern walls were not visible during this survey, since they would have been below ground level.
- 3.1.3 It was agreed in advance with the Bristol City Council planning department that it was only necessary to record the exterior of the structures present. External recording was undertaken at English Heritage level 1 specifications, employing an external survey plan, digital photography and traditional 35mm black and white photography.
- 3.1.4 The principle structure of note comprises a roughly north to south aligned single-storey building with gable ended roof, measuring c. 6.5m long by 6.3m wide. Despite significant collapse of the western gable end, this was found to be the most accessible part of the building, which because of its parlous state was never entered by the surveying team.
- 3.1.5 The southern face proved difficult to record and due to the overgrown nature of the site and the suspected terracing, the northern and western faces were impossible to record.
- 3.1.6 The roof is covered with ceramic pan-tiles with alternating plain and shaped ridge tiles; there was no evidence for a chimney.
- 3.1.7 A review of the available archaeological and historical evidence has indicated there is no evidence for Prehistoric, Roman or earlier post-Medieval activity in the immediate area. The earliest activity dates from the early 19th century, with the construction of the present cottage between 1803 and 1842. Copper slag blocks in the external retaining wall are probably 18th century in date and may derive from the Conham copper works known to have operated at the foot of the Conham Valley. The blocks are probably a later re-use of available material.
- 3.1.8 A photographic record has therefore been made of this structure prior to demolition, the results of which are encapsulated within this report. In due course the archive will be deposited with the Bristol City Museum and Art Gallery, where it will be available for consultation by the public.

4 REFERENCES

4.1 Abbreviations

| | |
|---------|---|
| aOD | Above Ordnance Datum |
| AD | <i>Anno Domini</i> – year of our Lord, also known as Common Era |
| AONB | Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty |
| BA | Bronze Age (c. 2,500 BC to c. 800 BC) |
| BC, BCE | Before Christ, Before Common Era |
| BGS | British Geological Survey |
| BHER | Bristol HER |
| BP | Before Present |
| DCLG | Department for Communities and Local Government |
| DCMS | Department for Culture, Media and Sport |
| EH | English Heritage |
| GIS | Geographical Information System |
| HER | Historic Environment Record |
| Ibid. | See previous reference |
| IfA | Institute for Archaeologists |
| NMR | National Monuments Record |
| OS | Ordnance Survey |
| QGIS | Quantum GIS (mapping software) |

4.2 Definitions

4.2.1 These suggested dates apply to southern England and may not be appropriate for other parts of Britain and Ireland.

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Prehistory | Before AD 43 |
| Pleistocene | Geological time period that partially overlaps with the Palaeolithic (c. 1,640,000 BP to c. 10,000 BP) |
| Palaeolithic | Old Stone Age (c. 800,000 BP to c. 8,000 BC) |
| Mesolithic | Middle Stone Age (c. 8,000 BC to c. 4,000 BC) |
| Neolithic | New Stone Age (c. 4,000 BC to 2,500 BC) |
| Bronze Age | c. 2,500 BC to c. 800 BC |
| Iron Age | c. 800 BC to AD 43 |
| Roman | AD 43 to c. AD 410 |
| Early Medieval | c. AD 410 to AD 1066 |
| Medieval | AD 1066 to AD 1539 |
| Post-Medieval | AD 1540 to c. AD 1837 |
| Victorian | AD 1837 to AD 1901 |
| Modern | 1901 to present |

4.3 Bibliography

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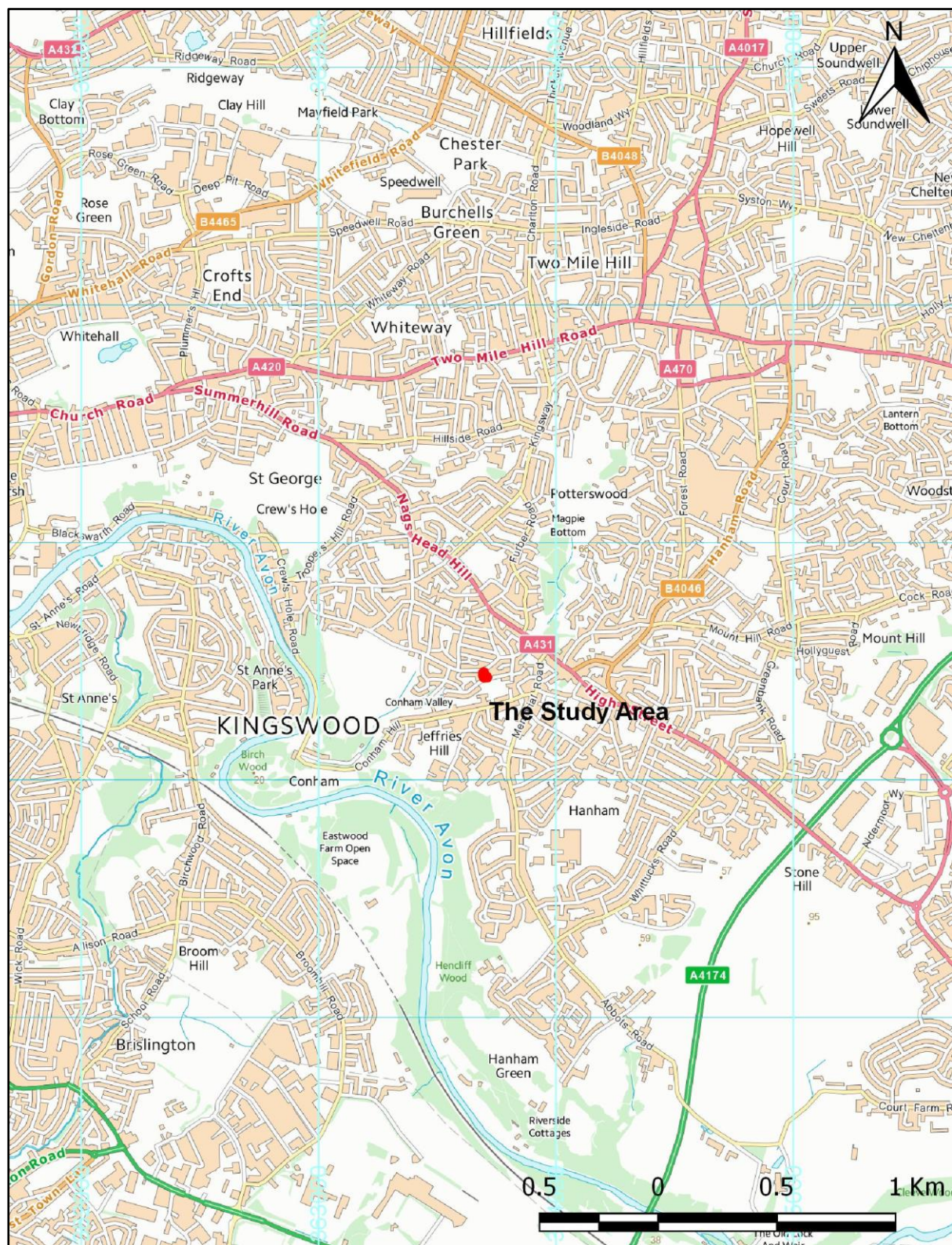
FIGURE 1

Figure 1: Location of the study area (indicated in red). Scale 1:25,000 at A4. Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown Copyright and database right 2014.

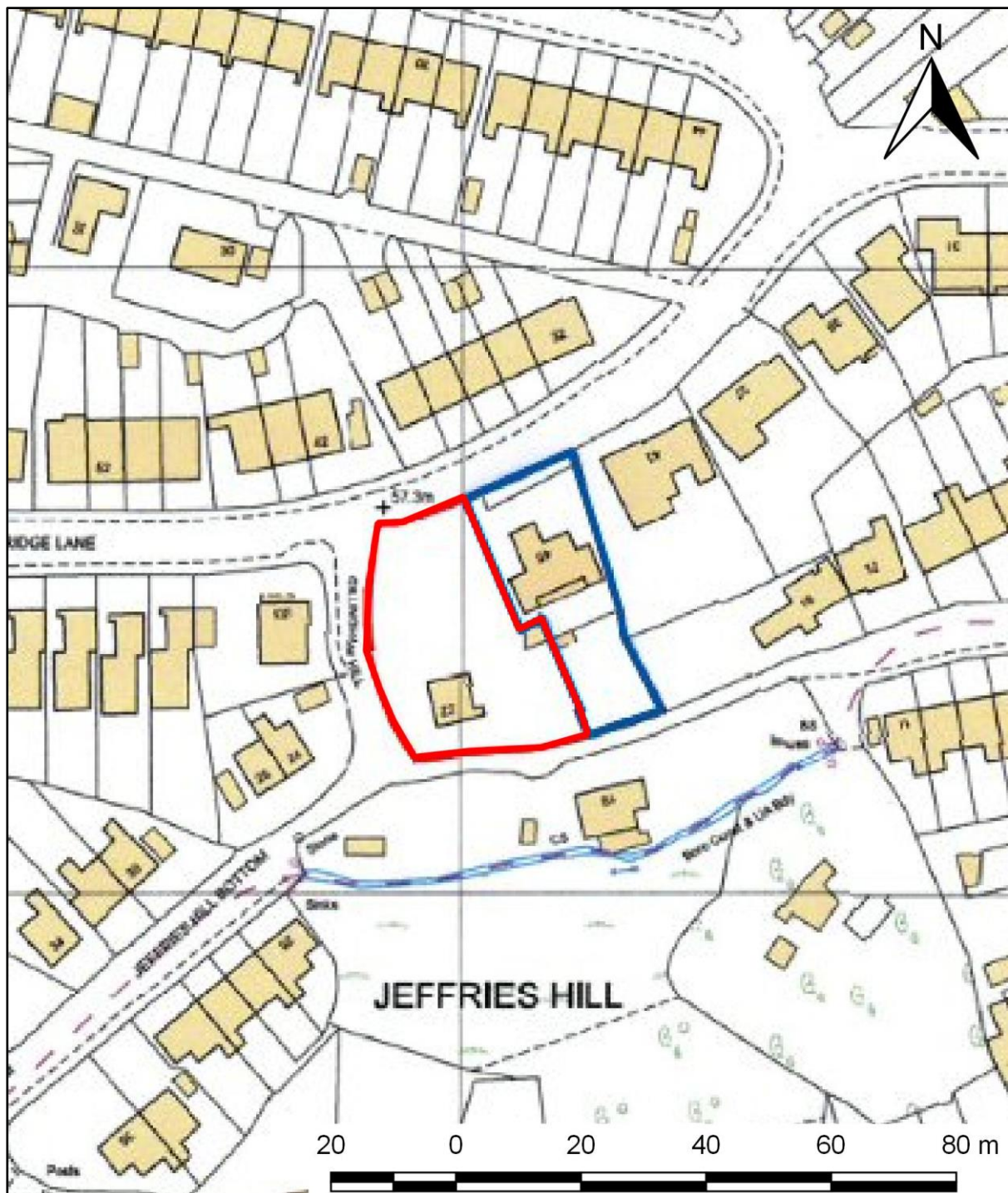
FIGURE 2

Figure 2: Detail of the study area, outlined in red. Approximate scale 1:1000 at A4. Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright 2011 all rights reserved. Licence No. WL1005476.

FIGURE 3

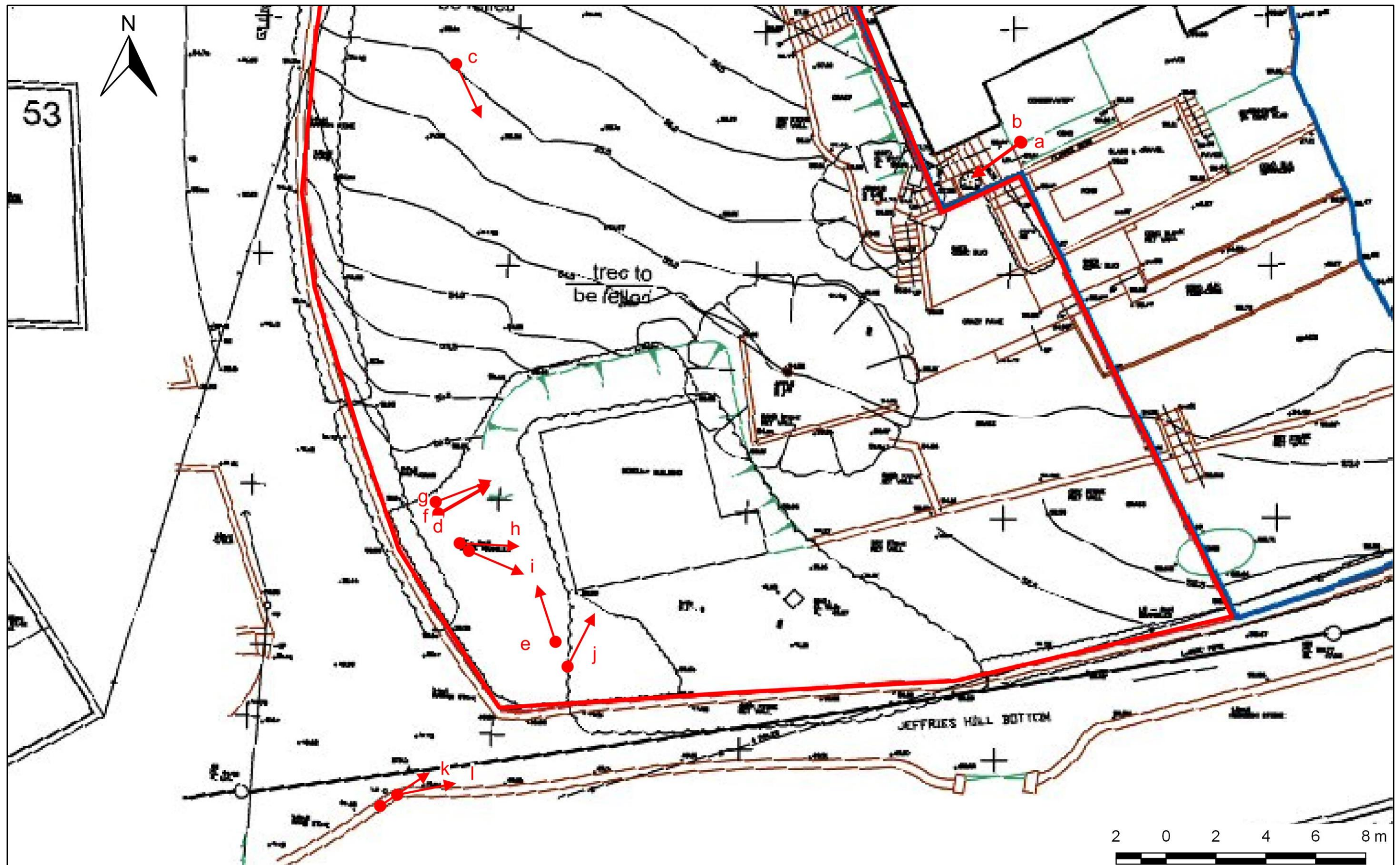


Figure 3: A survey of the exterior after Maddox Design Ltd (2011), reproduced by permission of Rosecourt Projects Ltd. Photographs referred to in the text are indicated by red arrows that show the location and angle of the camera. Adjacent labels indicate the plate number. Approximate scale 1:200 at A3.

PLATES



Plate a. A view of the study area looking southwest.



Plate b: The north face of the roof, looking southwest.



Plate c. The north face of the roof, looking SSE.



Plate d. Detail of the west facing gable end, looking ENE.



Plate e. Part of the collapsed western gable wall, looking NNW; scale 1m.



Plate f. Detail of the window in the west facing gable end, with a view of the interior, looking ENE.



Plate g. View of the interior looking ENE.

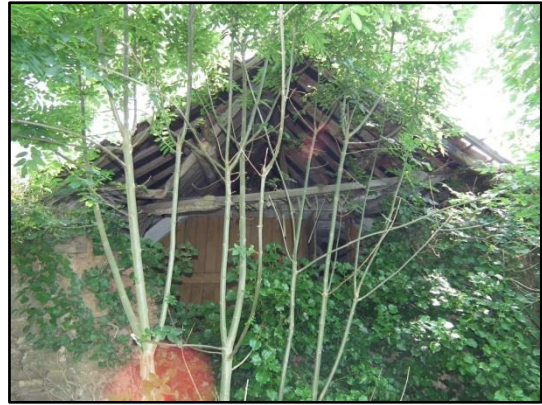


Plate h. View of the interior through the collapsed western gable end, looking ESE.



Plate i. Southwest corner of the building, looking southeast.



Plate j. South face and boarded-up entrance of the building, looking northeast.



Plate k. The southwest corner of the boundary wall, showing former entrance now blocked. Looking northeast.



Plate l. Jefferies Hill Bottom and the southern boundary wall (lhs), looking east.