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## The Moot Hall, Appleby-in-Westmorland

### An Investigation and Assessment of Significance

Marion Barter and Dan Elsworth

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## SUMMARY

The Moot Hall was probably built around 1596 for the Borough of Appleby, which was established by a royal charter in 1179. A re-set datestone over the south doorway is dated 1596, which accords with the findings of recent dendrochronological analysis of the oak roof trusses, which include timbers from trees felled in the period AD 1571-1596. The internal details of the roof and the masonry of the south gable end indicate that the eaves and roof were raised after the building was first built, re-using the original trusses. The date of this remodelling is not recorded but is likely to have taken place in the second half of the 17th century, when the accounts record significant expenditure and refer to a 'newbuilding'.

The Moot Hall has been in continuous use for the administration of the borough since it was built, although it has been altered and additional functions have taken place within it, over time. From the 1670s until 1773, the Westmorland Assizes were held in the upper hall, or council chamber. The chamber was also used for coroner's inquests and for other meetings. The ground floor contained a lower hall until the second half of the 18th century, when the space was altered to provide separate shops.

The building consists of three elements: the principal range first built in c1590, the north range added in c1800 and the staircase and screen wall to the south, built to replace an earlier staircase, in 1933. It is prominently situated towards the north end of Boroughgate, the principal street of the medieval town. Built of rubblestone finished in rough cast render, painted white, the building has a roof laid with Westmorland slates. The principal elevations face south and east, with two narrow doorways, four early 18th century sash windows and three 18th century shop windows on the east elevation. The principal entrance into the council chamber is at first floor level, via a doorway on the south gable end; this has a four-centred arched head with a chamfered surround, with a re-set datestone bearing the date 1596 above. The external staircase was built in 1933, on the site of at least two earlier staircase structures. Until the 1880s the staircase was a substantial masonry structure flanked by single-storey outbuildings. The west elevation faces a narrow street, with smaller windows to the ground floor, and two large sashes to the first floor chamber. The north elevation of the north range was altered in 1970.

The principal hall, still used for council meetings, is on the first floor of the 2-storey principal range with the adjoining mayor's parlour to the north. On the south side of the partition that divides these two spaces is a probable former gallery, supported on 19th century moulded posts; as access into this feature was not possible interpretation is difficult and further investigation is needed to understand this element. The fittings in the council chamber are of different phases, but the overall character of the room dates from the early 18th century when the large sash windows with ovolo-moulded glazing bars were inserted. The earliest joinery is a section of wainscot panelling of late 16th or early 17th century date on the north wall, below the gallery. The south door is late 19th century and the oak picture rails for the large collection of mayoral portraits

were probably part of a refurbishment in the 1920s. The mayor's parlour occupies the north bay of the first floor, also re-fitted in the early 20th century, when the current ceiling was inserted. In the roof space above, an earlier plaster ceiling is extant and there are two blocked windows on the former north gable end. The 5-bay roof of the principal range has four collar and tie beam trusses with evidence of re-use, probably when the roof was raised. There are two phases of assembly numbers on the north faces of the trusses. The northern and southern trusses have cambered collars with differing collars to the middle two trusses. The trusses include timbers from trees felled in the period AD 1575-1590.

The ground floor has been much altered for retail use and has largely modern fittings; partitions of varying date and form divide the former lower hall into three spaces. The two south spaces are connected via an inserted doorway and the north space is connected to the ground floor of the north range by another inserted doorway. Chamfered oak floor beams are visible within the ground floor; tree ring dating shows that the timber of the south beam was felled and used soon after AD 1660.

The 3-storey north range was built in 1800 to provide a shop facing east, a house on the upper floors, and space on the west side of the ground floor for the council's weights and measures and weigh bridge mechanism. The north range was substantially remodelled externally and internally in 1970, to designs by William Binney, the Borough Surveyor. The ground floor currently contains a Tourist Information Centre (TIC), connected to the northern of the three shop units in the principal range via an inserted doorway. The offices of the Town Clerk are on the first floor with storage on the upper floor. The most recent re-fitting of the ground floor TIC was carried out in 1995, when the north shop unit in the principal range was also remodelled, as a public exhibition centre.

The Moot Hall has an exceptional level of heritage significance, as a rare surviving example of a Moot Hall first built in the late 16th century to serve the borough, altered in several later phases to meet the continuing needs of the Council. It is very significant as one of the few remaining early examples of a purpose-built moot hall in England, still serving its original administrative purpose.

Heritage significance levels vary within the building, depending on the level of alteration and the date of the fabric. Generally, the structure and fabric of the principal range of the building has exceptional significance for historic, architectural and archaeological interest. The interiors of the council chamber and mayor's parlour have high significance for historic and community values. The north range has high significance as an early 19th century addition, but the interior and fenestration of this range is largely of low significance due to substantial remodelling in the late 20th century.

## CONTRIBUTORS

The investigation of the Moot Hall was carried out by Marion Barter and Dan Elsworth. A survey of the roof and first floor beams was undertaken by Dan

Elsworth and Tom Mace, who prepared the plans. Research was carried out by Marion Barter and Dan Elsworth, who jointly wrote the report. Photographs were taken by Marion Barter and Dan Elsworth.

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## ARCHIVE LOCATION

Historic England Archive, Swindon

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## ABBREVIATIONS

CASC Cumbria Archives Service, Carlisle Archive Centre

CASK Cumbria Archives Service, Kendal Archive Centre

CW Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian & Archaeological Society

CWAAS Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian & Archaeological Society

HEA Historic England Archive, Swindon

RCHME Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England

## NOTE TO READERS

The following terms are used in the discussion of the building, to describe the different elements.

### Terms used to describe the building

- The **principal range**, the 2-storey range aligned north-south that contains the council chamber;
- The **north range**, the 3-storey range abutting the north gable wall of the principal range;
- The **south staircase**, an external staircase leading to the doorway on the gable end wall of the principal range.

## INTRODUCTION

The Moot Hall is a Grade II\* Listed Building, situated within the Appleby-in-Westmorland conservation area. Historically, Appleby was a township in the county of Westmorland with borough status; it was first founded in 1179 under a royal charter. The town was historically the county town for Westmorland, and the Assizes were held here. In 1976 the town's official name was changed to Appleby-in-Westmorland, after the abolition of the county of Westmorland, which was subsumed into the modern county of Cumbria in 1974. The town is within the administrative area of Eden District Council, and is also covered by Appleby Town Council, the owner of building. The Town Clerk's offices are on the first floor and council meetings are still held in the council chamber on the first floor. The Tourist Information Centre is on the ground floor, accessed from the north, and a tenanted shop occupies the south end of the building.

The Moot Hall is prominently situated at the north end of Boroughgate, towards the west side of the street. Boroughgate, the principal street of the medieval town, slopes downhill from the gates of the Castle, at the south end, towards the Church of St Lawrence to the north. Boroughgate is named on the 1754 plan of the town; the overall setting of the building and its relationship to the street scene is little changed from that shown on this plan, although the detail of the surrounding buildings and hard landscaping has altered as buildings have been replaced and surfaces renewed. The area south of the Moot Hall was occupied by the Shambles until the butchers were relocated to the new Market Hall in 1883. The Moot Hall is often referred to as the Town Hall in Council Minutes compiled during the 19th and early 20th centuries.<sup>1</sup>



The earliest cartographic evidence for the Moot Hall is the 1754 plan of Appleby,<sup>2</sup> annotated 'Moot Halls'. This shows the building plan in three parts; the principal range is shown as a single large space with a small opening in the south wall. Abutting the south gable wall are outbuildings, the larger against the west part of the wall, sub-divided by a partition. To the east of this is a small outbuilding or perhaps a staircase. At the north end the plan shows a squarish addition, with a doorway on the west side and two small openings to the north wall.

*Fig 1: 1754 Plan of Appleby (CASK, WDHOT/2/33/42, Box 33; photograph by Marion Barter)*

The 1754 plan, engraved by Nathaniel Hill, was prepared to record how burgage holders voted in the general election of 1754. Buildings are coloured according



to which candidate the burgage holders voted for; yellow denoted supporters of Colonel Philip Honeywood and William Lee Esq.

Jeffery's county survey of Westmorland published in 1770 marks the building's location, but with no detail.



The 1843 tithe map shows the Moot Hall with the footprint subdivided into three parts, probably representing the north range, the principal range and the south staircase and flanking outbuildings shown in Fig 3.<sup>3</sup>

Fig 2: 1843 tithe map (CASK WDRC/8/26)



The first accurate mapping is provided by the Ordnance Survey; the 1:500 sheet surveyed in c1858 shows the principal building and the later north range. An axial staircase and outbuildings are shown to the south, with a void below the staircase shown as a linear space; the line of the south gable wall of the principal building is not

marked.

Fig 3: 1st edition OS map, surveyed c1858, 1:500 (© Crown Copyright [and database rights] 2018. OS 100024900)

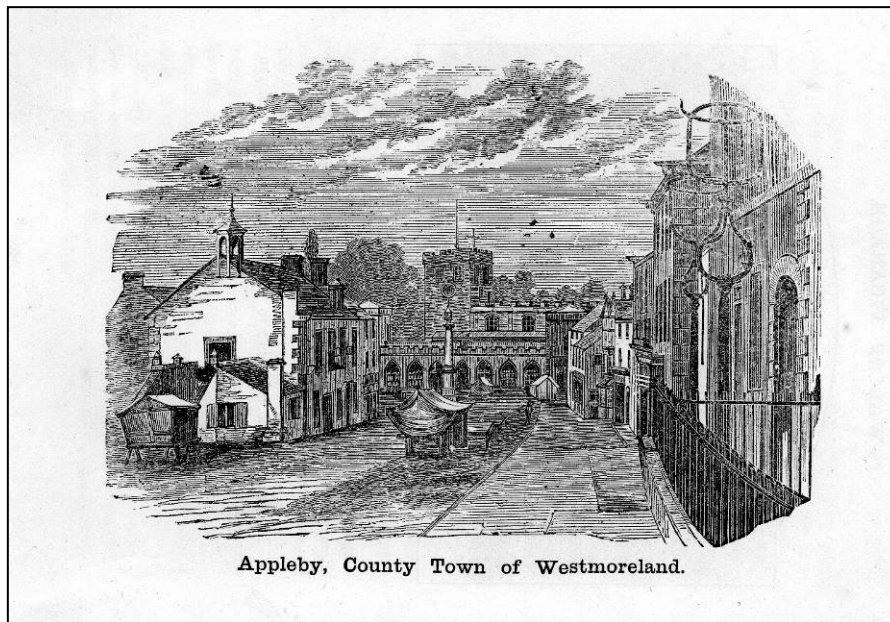
The c1858 OS map shows a weighing machine in the market place to the north of the Moot Hall; the controls for this were in the 'machine room' in the north range, operated by the borough's Weigh Master.

Late 19th and early 20th century OS maps record successive arrangements for the external staircase at the south end of the building, but photographs and engravings provide more detail. Views taken in the 1860s include a photograph taken from the south by Helmut Petschler, of 1865, which shows the butchers' shambles as masonry structures. A view of a similar date, from the south-east depicts the Moot Hall in more detail (Figure 4), with a stone external staircase with large landing, flanked by matching single-storey outbuildings, both with corner chimney stacks. The eastern of these outbuildings is shown without an external door and was presumably accessed via a doorway in the gable-end wall of the principal range.

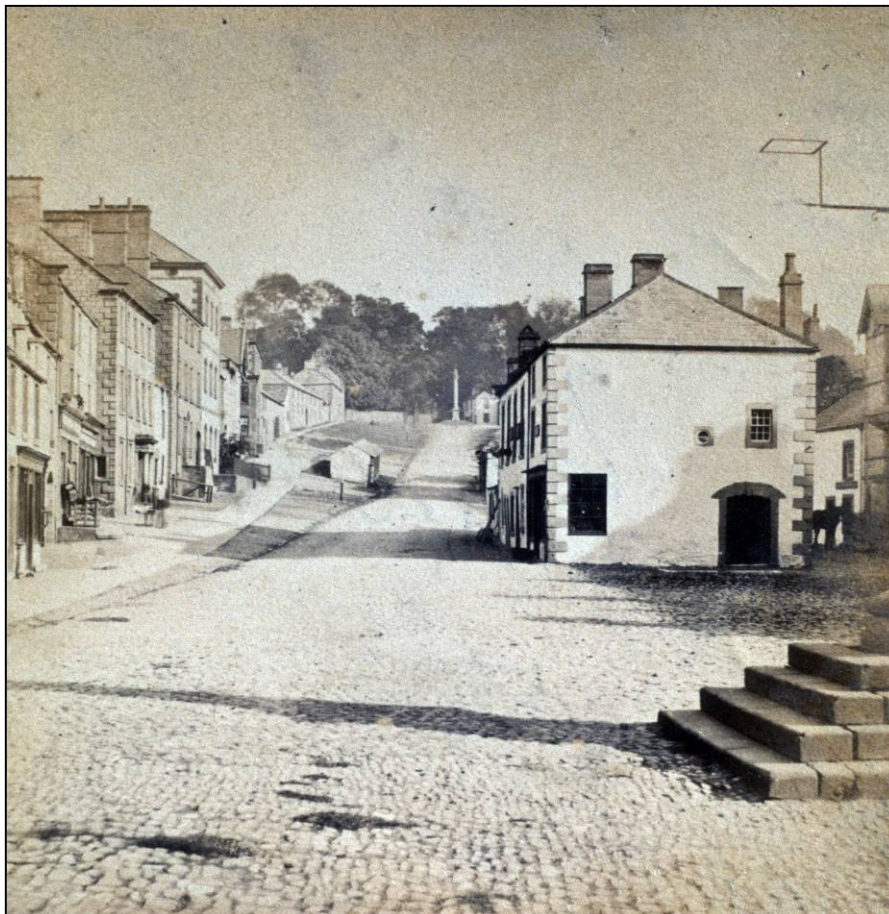


*Fig 4: The Moot Hall in c1860s, from the south  
(courtesy of Appleby-in-Westmorland Society)*

The Moot Hall is depicted in an engraving published in a topographical guide by Braithwaite in 1884 (Figure 5).<sup>4</sup> This is closely based on the photograph in Figure 4. An earlier engraving by Thomas Gilks, published in Sayer's History of Westmorland in 1847, of a more distant view, seems to show the gable end of the Moot Hall, but without detail.<sup>5</sup> The Moot Hall is not included in views of the town from the north across the river, such as prints after Thomas Girtin or Thomas Allom.



*Fig 5: Engraving published in 1884 by Braithwaite  
(image courtesy of Barry McKay)*



*Fig 6: Photograph from the north, taken before 1883 (courtesy of Appleby-in-  
Westmorland Society)*

Of views from the north, the photograph in Figure 6, taken prior to c1883, clearly shows the north range of the Moot Hall prior to later alterations. The north elevation is shown with a large doorway to the west side, with segmental-arched head; this probably served the room for the weights and measures, and the machine room. The window to the east end of the elevation served the shop. The first floor has a small sash to the west and a distinctive small circular window to the centre, which maybe re-set (this form of small window is typical of the late 17th century). A later view from the north dated 1955 (Figure 8) records the shelter which was added onto the north gable end in the early 1900s. This and the historic fenestration of the north range were removed in 1970.<sup>6</sup> There is a lack of historic views depicting the west elevation, which faces a narrow street.



*Fig 7: c1898, showing the iron steps built in the 1880s (© Historic England, HEA Ref BF007554, image cc 76\_00076)*

A photograph of c1898 from the south east, shows the iron stairs built on the south gable end in the 1880s, to replace the stone steps and outbuildings. By this date, shopfronts have been inserted on the east elevation of the principal building in place of smaller windows. The bellcote with its finial is shown on the gable, but the datestone over the first floor doorway does not appear to be *in situ*.



*Fig 8: a view from the north-east, taken in 1955 (© Historic England, HEA BF007554)*

Trade directories provide a primary source for the names and trades of the tenants of ground floor shops, from the mid 19th century onwards. The street addresses given for the Moot Hall in the directories vary, referring to Market Place and Main Street used as well as to Boroughgate. Of 19th and early 20th century census returns, only the return for 1861 clearly identifies occupants of the building, referred to as the Town Hall.

In preparation for the inventory of Westmorland by the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England, a short hand-written record of the building was made in 1934; the record card includes a thumbnail plan of the first floor, a drawing of the datestone, a sketch of the frieze on the panelling at the north end of the chamber, along with photographs.<sup>7</sup> Other sources that record the building include a typescript guide by Guy H. Heelis, Town Clerk 1925-1933, written in the 1930s.<sup>8</sup> Earlier references to the building in topographical publications provide little or no description and are generally dismissive of the building's architectural quality; successive writers repeat the negative comments made by Nicholson and Burn in 1770, that the 'shambles and the town hall in the middle of the street greatly incommode it'.<sup>9</sup> More recent summaries of the building and its history are provided by Sir Martin Holdgate,<sup>10</sup> Martin Holmes,<sup>11</sup> McKay and McKay<sup>12</sup> and Graham Coles;<sup>13</sup> the latter also refers to a report by J.F. Curwen, who 'was invited to advise on the history and potential of the building during the period 1922-24', but this has not been located.

# HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

## The origins of the Moot Hall

The burgesses of Appleby were first granted a charter in 1179, but it is not known where meetings were held during the medieval period. The construction of the first phase of the present building is not recorded in surviving documentary sources, which for the borough commence in the early 17th century.

Dendrochronological analysis of the roof trusses indicates that some roof timbers in the south roof truss are from trees felled in the period AD 1571-1596,<sup>14</sup> suggesting that the building was first constructed with these trusses during the last decades of the 16th century. This is broadly consistent with the carved datestone above the south first floor doorway that bears the initials R∞W and the date 1596, which has traditionally been regarded as the probable construction date. It is not known to whom the initials relate, nor where this datestone was originally located; in 1934, the RCHME investigator noted that it was 'found in an outbuilding before the southern steps were remodelled some years ago'.<sup>15</sup>

The administrative records of the Borough of Appleby include the accounts of the chamberlain, minute books recording the meetings of the corporation and various committees, and associated memoranda, deposited mainly in the Cumbria Archive Service's collection at Kendal, but also at Carlisle. The early records make numerous passing references to the Moot Hall, primarily concerning the cost of repairs and maintenance. Decisions on improvements or changes to the building also occur, but less frequently. The earliest reference to the Moot Hall is a record of a payment for the 'mending of the Mute hall glass windows' in the accounts for 1610,<sup>16</sup> confirming that the building existed by then, and that it had been standing long enough to need repairs. Records relating to repairs carried out between 1610 and 1630 are summarised below (Table 1). A reference in 1628 appears to be the earliest record of a meeting being held there.<sup>17</sup>

Not all references are securely dated and some refer to 'the hall', not specifically naming the Moot Hall; although it is possible that some references could relate to a different building, the context in the records associates them with the Moot Hall. For example, in 1626 there are several references to work associated with windows that do not specifically refer to the Moot Hall but are arranged with others clearly relating to the building. It is noticeable that a large group of references relate to work carried out between 1625 and 1630, suggesting that major repairs were undertaken in this period. The high status of the building is reflected in the use of glass for the Moot Hall windows in the early 17th century; in this period the windows would have consisted of leaded casements in timber or stone frames. There are frequent mentions of the use of lime and moss; the use of moss has been interpreted by Martin Railton in relation to the treatment of the roof soffit, as a form of parging or torching.<sup>18</sup>

<b>Year</b>	<b>Event</b>
1610	Thomas Weaver, 'glasner' paid ' <i>for the mending of the Mute hall glass windows</i> '
1618	John Brice, 'glaisner' paid ' <i>for repairing of the windows in the moot hall</i> '
nd	Barnard Leigh paid ' <i>for iron and mending at the hall</i> '
1625	Several references to ' <i>glassing the mute hall windows</i> '
1626	'Widow Dawn' paid for ' <i>leade to the mute hall door</i> '
1626	William Robinson paid for ' <i>mending the lock of the mute hall door</i> '
1626	Antonie Stewardson paid ' <i>for lead and mending the walle within the mute hall</i> '
1626	Thomas Stewardson paid ' <i>for som door[?] and lead and setting up the windows in the mute hall</i> '
1627	John Smith paid ' <i>for one cart full of slate to the mute hall... six bushels &amp; a halfe of lime for the same...mossing and liming the same... for nails in ye mute hall</i> '
1627	Lancelot [????] paid ' <i>for mossing the moot hall</i> '
1628	Leonard Ponsonbie paid ' <i>for maycing [making] the bordes in the mutte hall</i> '
1630	Paid ' <i>for putting tow feets [two feet?] in one firma[?] in Moot Hall... for lime and moss to the mout hall... for rashes [rushes?] to the mout hall and the session house</i> '

*Table 1: Payments relating to the Moot Hall recorded in the chamberlain's accounts (CASK WSMB/A/2/3 1585-1630), between 1610 and 1630*

In 1656, Lady Anne Clifford endowed the Temple Sowerby Trust, with land in Temple Sowerby, to provide funds for the repair of family tombs in the church, the bridge, the parish church, Appleby Grammar School, and the Moot Hall.<sup>19</sup> The archives of this trust have not been examined, but there are occasional references in the council accounts and the minutes to funds being sought from the Trust by the borough, for works to the Moot Hall.

Not all the chamberlain's accounts are in the archives at Kendal; some are part of the Lowther collection held at Carlisle.<sup>20</sup> The latter refer to payments for works carried out to the Moot Hall in the late 17th century, from 1685, listed in Table 2. A significant volume of work was carried out during this period, with several people employed in 1687 at the 'newbuilding', a term that suggests either a recently built or remodelled structure. Tree ring analysis of a sample from the south beam in the ground floor gives a felling date of AD1660,<sup>21</sup> which could relate to this 'newbuilding', but there is a gap in the records so it is not possible to be certain. The accounts refer to two halls, an upper and lower hall, indicating that the ground floor was one large room. The function of the lower hall is not specified, but it had a new double door in 1707.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>
10 <sup>th</sup> July 1685	Thomas Simpson paid for wood enlarging ye table in ye Moothall
12 <sup>th</sup> July 1685	Paid for moss & stoping ye hall and for Clemy Moresby for making ye Sheriffs [???
18 <sup>th</sup> August 1685	Nicholas Yaire and James Yaire paid for nails joists & planks to ye Moothall & workmanship
1686/7	John Nevinson paid for mossaing ye hall
19 <sup>th</sup> September 1687	Mark Gardener paid for boards mending the Moot Hall, for mending the seats in the hall, for wood and nails. For work at the newbuilding at the hall John Nevison paid two days, Richard Gascorgine one day, Thomas Hayton one day, Richard Richardson two days, Jonathan Genkinson one day, also paid for slate and leading of slate to the moot hall
1690	Christopher Harrison paid for getting mosse for ye moothall
1692	John Nevinson paid for mending ye Town Hall, John Machell paid for work done at the Town Hall by several workmen, and other expenses
1694	Robert Warton paid for repairing the roof of the Moothall, Thomas Knott paid for repairing the Church School and Moothall windows, and money paid for ' <i>the Burthen of Moss for the Moothall</i>
19 <sup>th</sup> August 1697	William and Thomas Bowerbank paid for six days mossaing and liming the Moothall, and Stephen Nevinson paid for three load of lyme to the moorhall
22 <sup>nd</sup> August 1697	Paid for 120 lattes, 400 latte nails, and ten and 20 penny nails, for the Town Hall, also to John Nevinson for four cart loads of slate and three loads of lyme, to Robert Warton for four days and a half slating and for sacks of moss, to John Scott for three days and a half of work and for ten burthen of moss to the Hall and Schoolhouse, and to John Linge for work & wood to ye Hall, as well as for eight yards of Breached stuff for the Upper Hall Table Cloth & Making
20 <sup>th</sup> November 1698	Thomas Knott paid for repairing ye glass in Church Schoolhouse & Town Hall, and money also paid for White washing & mending ye plaster in ye Hall
1699	George Dent paid for a lock to ye lower hall, mending another & a new key to it and also money paid for nails to ye Hall and to John Linge for work done at ye two halls. Money also paid for one rood of slate and for taking the old slate on the Moothall, slaking three roods of lime, nails, latts, moss, and pine and for mending slates at both halls, wood, nails, workmanship & labourers. Also John Linge was paid for making ye Aldermen's seates broader &



	finding wood, and Thomas Knott was paid for repairing the glass in the Moot Hall
6 <sup>th</sup> November 1700	Thomas Knott paid for repairs to glass at ye Church School & Moothall for one year & mending ye plaster in the Town Hall and White Washing it & the inner rooms. Robert Warton paid two days and a half 'Bain filling' and making up lime for the Town Hall & for sand and hare [ <i>sic</i> ] for the same work
30 <sup>th</sup> August 1706	William Bowerbank, slater, paid for seven days mossing and repairing ye Crown Court & Cloysters
August 1707	Materials & work done about ye repair of the Town Hall, including six new boards five foot long for a new double dour [ <i>sic</i> ] for ye Low Hall. Mark Gardener paid for making ye door & chair in ye High Hall & making a binch [bench] in ye Low Hall. Also a plank & [Slulps] paid for ye said binch, and William Bowerbank paid for two days slating & pointing ye Hall. Also George Dent paid for 220 Great Headed Nails for ye New dore of ye Low Hall. Also paid for other nails for it & mending ye seates, mending the lock for it & ye iron bands. Also other work done at the Moot Hall: Mark Garnett in learing [lowering?] ye seat for ye Mayor & Alderman, making chairs in the High & Low Courts and mending ye table; the two maysons Earl & Show for mending the moothall stares [ <i>sic</i> ], James Unthank for a load of lime to ye Moothall, Robert Warton for moss, and also for iron clasp & nails to ye moothall
17 <sup>th</sup> September 1715	John Warton paid for one cart load of Slate for ye Moothall
28 <sup>th</sup> July 1720	William Bowerbank, slater, paid for slating the town hall and Church
8 <sup>th</sup> February 1722	Rowland Hodgson paid for 15 yards of Flaggs getting them from Hilton Grange for the lower Hall stairs and a stair for the threshold for the hall door lime & fettling & work about etc
21 <sup>st</sup> August 1725	Rowland Hodgson and John Hodgson paid for White Washing, pointing and slating at the Moothall
4 <sup>th</sup> December 1725	James Parkin paid for making new rails at the Moot Hall & finding wood workmanship & painting them
September 1731	Paid for wood & work done at school and moothall: 21 feet of inch bord, nailes, and setting up a table in moothall
1730	Paid for nine bushels of lime, slate, and for Richard Bowerbank for pointing the Moothall slate, making up lime, and to Thomas Ion for serving ye slater & getting moss & sand to ye Moothall, and to James Parkin for one plank and other wood and for nayles

*Table 2: Events relating to the Moot Hall recorded in the chamberlain's accounts, 1685-1730(CASC, D/Lons/L/5/4/1/1-9 1638-1835)*

Details from the later accounts held at Kendal were published in 1951, by Bouch,<sup>22</sup> referring to repairs carried out from the end of the 17th century to the early 18th century; there is some overlap with the records in the Lonsdale collection at Carlisle (Table 2). The accounts held in Kendal include payments made in 1692/3 to William Bowerbanke '*for putting upp some new slate on the Town Hall*' and '*Moss for the Hall*', a payment to Thomas Knott for '*glazing the Town Hall windows*', and a payment to Jonathan Guy for '*finding wood & making the Sherriff chair in the Town Hall*'. A Robert Warton was also paid at this time for '*work about the Hall*'. Bouch also lists payments made in later years, many of which relate to maintenance and day-to-day expenses such as the purchase of rushes and '*wood & coals for fire in ye hall* in 1699-1700, payments for specific events, and the maintenance of a curtain and table cloth in 1703-4, repairs to the floor, locks, mending the '*frame of ye King's Picture*', and '*sounding the hall windows*' between 1707 and 1709.

References to the building from the early 18th century include an event during the first Jacobite Rebellion of 1715; Curwen relates that '*Mr Baines, bailiff to Lord Wharton, was confined to the Moot Hall because he refused to say where the Excise money was concealed and would not drink to their [the Jacobites] villainous health*'.<sup>23</sup>

For a hundred years between 1673 and 1773, the Quarter Sessions of the Westmorland County Assizes were held at the Moot Hall, and it was used by the Justices of the Peace. The holding of the Assizes in Appleby reflected the town's county town status and attracted seasonal social and economic activity. There is a record of damage being done to the building at the quarter sessions in 1757 by the '*concourse of people usual at such meetings*', which prompted a formal request from the Corporation to the Westmorland Quarter Sessions for funds to cover the repair costs.<sup>24</sup> The use of the building for judicial purposes ceased when the Shire Hall and a new gaol were built on The Sands in 1773.

Research by the Appleby-in-Westmorland Society identified an early reference to commercial activity at the building in 1718; the source of the archive material is not identified but an article by Graham Coles in a 2007 newsletter relates that '*John Harrison a barber and wigmaker was permitted to take up the ground at the foot of the Moot Hall stairs and have it for four years rent free, to build on it and keep it in repair*'.<sup>25</sup> This structure may relate to one of the single-storey outbuildings depicted in historic photographs taken prior to 1883. The borough collected rents for shops on the ground floor of the Moot Hall from the late 18th century, indicating that the lower hall had by then been subdivided. For the year September 1773 to September 1774, the Chamberlain's Account Books record rental income including a shop '*under the Moothall stairs*', which may relate to one of the southern outbuildings.<sup>26</sup> In 1775 the Borough was paid '*annual Rent of 9 or 10 £ a year for the shops under the present Hall*'.<sup>27</sup> Three or four shops are referred to in the accounts for 1790s and a house '*under the hall*' is mentioned from at least 1797.<sup>28</sup>

From the second half of the 18th century into the mid 19th century there are repeated published references to the inconvenience of the building and its intrusive position in Market Place and on Boroughgate.<sup>29</sup> The Council Minutes also record periodic discussions about the merits of relocating the functions of

the Moot Hall and demolishing the building. In 1769 the Justices of the Peace proposed that a new Court House be built in Appleby, to also serve as a Moot Hall, a suggestion not welcomed by the Borough; the minute book recorded concern that the *'Removal of the Town Hall out of the principal street to such a distance from the market as proposed will be attended by many inconveniences to the inhabitants of the Borough and to the publick in general and also 'a loss of annual rent' from the shops.*<sup>30</sup> The Minutes record that the Borough was not entirely opposed to the idea, however, provided a suitable location could be found and the costs fairly shared.<sup>31</sup> After the Shire Hall was built in 1773, the Borough concluded that *'upon further consideration of this Business it appearing to the court that it would be advantageous to the publick and would enlarge the Market place if the present Town Hall was removed. It is also agreed that the present Town Hall be pulled down, and another built in some situation more convenient within the said Borough and that application be made to obtain a piece of Ground proper for this purpose.'*<sup>32</sup> Subscribers were invited to contribute to this scheme, but it did not proceed.

## **Nineteenth century and early twentieth century alterations**

At a meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> August 1800, the corporation decided to build a new north range: *'It was unanimously resolved that a new building should be erected at the north end of the Moot Hall of the said Borough agreeably to a plan then produced, the same to consist of a Dwelling House fronting towards the east and of conveniences for the Public Weights and Scales, and Granary towards the West'*. The minute records that a committee was established to implement this scheme.<sup>33</sup> The architectural character of the North Range (prior to 1970 remodelling) is consistent with a construction date soon after 1800. The addition was in use by at least 1814 when there is a reference to a payment to *'Thomas Kitchen for repairing the Moot Hall Granery [sic]'*.<sup>34</sup> The form of the granary within the west part of the north range is not known.

The debate about building a new town hall continued into the second decade of the 19th century, despite the recent addition and improvements to the building; at a meeting of 8<sup>th</sup> September 1807 it was agreed that the committee would apply to *'the Earl of Lonsdale for a Building lease of the premises now in the occupation of Mary Monkhouse for the purpose of erecting a Town's Hall in front and Shambles behind the same'*.<sup>35</sup> This scheme was not carried out, but on 12<sup>th</sup> April 1815 another meeting came to the same conclusion: *'that the old Town Hall and Shambles from their present dilapidated state and the very great increase of the market have been a nuisance and ought to be removed'* and *'rebuilt upon the Premises belonging to the Earl of Lonsdale now in the Occupation of Ann Lamb and Richard Ivison [?]'*. The Council agreed that taking down the Moot Hall and the Shambles would *'very much beautify the place'*.<sup>36</sup> The Minutes refer to plans prepared by an architect, Mr Luzmore, but again the scheme was not realised and for at least the third time in fifty years the Moot Hall survived.

Throughout the rest of the 19th century the council records refer to building repairs and maintenance, and occasionally to the use of the Moot Hall. A bill submitted to the *'Trustees for the Repairs of the Moot Hall'* in 1819, lists items

such as sheet lead, lead spouts, lead for chimneys, white paint, boiled oil, blue paint, squares of glass for Hall'.<sup>37</sup> In 1823 a new bell rope was purchased.<sup>38</sup> 'New House' is recorded in the Minutes from the 1840s, which probably refers to the house in the north range built in c1800.<sup>39</sup> The tithe apportionment, dated 1847, accompanying the tithe map, does not refer to a dwelling, recording the Moot Hall (Plot 53) only as 'Weighing house Blackhole &c';<sup>40</sup> the term 'blackhole' often refers to a goal but by this date the Moot Hall was not in use for this purpose; the meaning of this term is puzzling.

The names of the occupants of the dwellinghouse and shops can be traced through the accounts, census returns, trade directories and other records. For example, the 1861 census clearly identifies two families resident in the 'Town Hall'; Thomas and Elizabeth Coulthard, their two daughters and a boarder, and Mary Bird and her two daughters. Thomas Coulthard was a saddle maker and he also performed the role of Weigh Master, for the borough, operating the weigh machine.<sup>41</sup> It is likely that this family were also resident here in 1851 and 1871 when the Coulthards are recorded in the census returns, at an unspecified address on High Street.

The council minutes and accounts refer to building alterations during the 19th century, such to a shop 'under the Town Hall' in 1890 for George Richardson, the chemist, and the removal of a partition in the dwelling house in 1893.<sup>42</sup> The shop fronts to the east elevation of the principal range were installed between the 1860s and c1898 (comparing the images in Figures 4 and 7). By 1895 the Weigh Master was George Williamson; the minutes record complaints against him for not ensuring adequate hours of access to the weigh machine.<sup>43</sup> Kelly's Directory for 1894 records George Wilkinson [Williamson?], greengrocer, fishmonger and tea agent, at Number 63 (the shops were numbered from north to south). A photograph from the late 19th century records the appearance of the shop front at that time; with the tenant's wife and young family at the door (Figure 9). The photograph shows sash windows to the first floor, and smaller 6-pane windows to the second floor, with single-pane opening lights. By 1905, the tenant of the shop in the north range was William Atkinson, who sold bicycles from here until c1970 (Figure 10). Another long-standing retail tenant was William Jespers and Co., clothiers, referred to in trade directories and borough records at Number 66 from the 1880s until the late 1920s; in 1887, the council granted permission for Jespers to 'have a portion of the adjoining shop'.



*Fig 9: Number 63 Boroughgate, in the north range, in an undated view from the east (courtesy of Appleby-in-Westmorland Society)*

There are a few references to improvements to the Moot Hall in the minutes, but a lack of detail on the works; in November 1885 a committee was formed to have 'the Town Hall lighted and heated' and the work was reported as completed soon afterwards.<sup>44</sup> In 1886, an iron staircase was built at the south end of the building (Figure 7), after the removal of the stone steps and outbuildings. A bill dated 24 October 1888 records that George Potts, slater and plasterer was paid 13 shillings 4 pence for 'colouring the Moot Hall', using lime and umber, indicating that the lime finish to the external walls was not white, but tinted.<sup>45</sup> This appears to have been a regular item of work and Potts was also paid in 1898 for 'colouring the Town Hall'. In July 1891 a committee was set up to 'superintend the carrying out of improvements to the Town Hall'. No details are given, but as part of this, the committee was authorised to arrange for the tenant of 'the room adjoining the council chamber' to terminate the tenancy, suggesting that the room was not then in use as the mayor's parlour.



*Fig 10: Atkinson's cycle shop and the shelter, built in 1911, in an undated view from the north-east (Appleby-in-Westmorland Society)*

In 1910, the borough surveyor was instructed to prepare a scheme for the provision of WCs for the tenants of the building and applied to the Local Government Board for funding; this was turned down as the Board did not approve the details, due to 'lack of ventilation and the risk of cutting into the old building'.<sup>46</sup> Presumably these issues were resolved, as tenders were accepted for the work in 1911. The new WCs were accessed from the doorway facing north, and seem to have entailed the relocation of the weighing machine. In 1911, the general purposes committee approved plans for the storage of the weighing machine and a shelter. The open shelter was flat-roofed and supported on four timber columns; against the north wall of the building a fitted bench was provided.

Guy H. Heelis's account of the Moot Hall, written in c1933, notes that 'the interior of the building has been completely changed. There appears to have been a Gallery for the use of the Public, but this has now disappeared. The Hall consists of the Council Chamber and the Mayor's Parlour.... The furniture in the Council Chamber is modern'.<sup>47</sup> Neither Heelis nor the council minutes relate exactly what works were undertaken, but the minutes for a meeting on 17 August 1921 refer to works to the 'council chamber and the Town Hall' and in 1923, the minutes refer to 'repairs to the Moot Hall including painting and whitewashing and new outer door and fittings'. A grant of £40 was offered by the Temple Sowerby Trust.<sup>48</sup> In 1927, the Mayor, Councillor Woof, paid for an oak door. The character of the joinery and the plasterwork in the council chamber and the mayor's parlour suggests these features date from the 1920s. The new work probably included new oak picture rails, to display the large collection of framed portraits of mayors in the council chamber. The Minutes record successive gifts of framed portraits by mayors; for example in 1911, the minutes note 'following a custom now well-established', a portrait of Major Manson offered in a letter was accepted.<sup>49</sup>

## Late twentieth century alterations

The north end of the building was remodelled for the Town Clerk's Offices in 1970, to a scheme designed by William Binney, the Borough Surveyor in 1968.<sup>50</sup> The offices were previously in The Cloisters. The shop previously occupied by Atkinson's bicycle shop (Figure 10) was replaced by a ground floor office; the drawings show a separate entrance for 'Rates and Enquiries' at the east end of the new north porch. The latter replaced the earlier open shelter, which was demolished. The shop doorway facing east was blocked. The Binney proposal plans show some earlier features including the location of a previous staircase from first to second floor in the north-west corner and the ground floor gents' urinal and WC installed in 1911.

The first floor was altered to provide a higher-ceilinged first floor office facing east for the Town Clerk. New sash windows were inserted on the east elevation to match the council chamber sashes, with new architraves in painted cement. By this date, the white walls and black painted details seem to have been established as the external colour scheme. The second floor windows on the east elevation were blocked, forming a 2-storey elevation instead of the original three storeys. All windows on the north and west elevations were also replaced and on the ground floor north elevation, the doorway to the west side was removed and the opening enlarged. In place of the window at the east end of the elevation, a new door opening was formed. New internal partitions, first floor structure and joinery were provided, including flush doors and a staircase in a new location in the south-west corner. It is probable that new plaster finishes were also provided at this time. The only historic feature within the north range that was retained appears to have been the pine roof structure, visible in the second floor store room.

In 1995, the ground floor office was refurbished to provide a Tourist Information Centre (TIC), and the northern retail unit in the principal range (Number 64) was altered to create an exhibition space, connected to the TIC by a new doorway cut through the north gable wall, towards the east end. The alterations were part-funded by the New Fair Committee, recorded on a plaque in the TIC.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE MOOT HALL

### The Principal Range

The Moot Hall comprises three elements of which the principal range is the most substantial and contains the earliest fabric (Figure 11). The rectangular range is aligned roughly north-south, towards the north end of Boroughgate and set to the west side of this wide main street. A narrow secondary street runs along the west side of the building, with a wider section of Boroughgate to the east, onto which the ground floor shop fronts face. The range is approximately 14.6m long and 7.4m wide. The two-storey range is constructed of rubblestone, finished in rough cast render painted white. Its overall style is characteristic of Cumbria Georgian architecture, where 'polite' features such as sash windows and quoins are combined with rough cast render, a vernacular building material. Where masonry is visible on the inner face of the south gable end, in the roof space, it consists of roughly coursed rubblestone; a buff sandstone used for the primary phase and a later phase of mainly red sandstone relating to the raising of the gable wall and eaves. The external dressings are of sandstone ashlar, now mainly painted with black gloss paint; chamfered doorways, plain stone architraves to upper floor sash windows, quoins to the south corners, coped verges with kneelers and shopfronts. There is no plinth or string course. The roof is laid with graduated courses of Westmorland slate, with a lead roll and a metal ventilator to the ridge. There is now one chimney stack, on the east pitch to the north; historic photographs show several stacks serving flues on this range.



*Fig 11: The south and east elevations with the principal 4-bay range to left and later north range to right (© Historic England, photograph: Marion Barter)*



## Exterior

The principal entrance into the first floor chamber is via a first floor doorway on the south gable end, set slightly left of centre and reached by a flight of external steps built in 1933 (see below). The chamfered stone surround, painted black, has a four-centred arched head, suggesting a late 16th or early 17th century date; the face of the architrave is slightly recessed from the face of the render, due to a build-up of render. The oak boarded door with stained finish is set in a plain timber frame, renewed in the 1920s, but the re-set strap hinges fixed to the outer face of the door are earlier, made of wrought iron and perhaps made in the 17th or 18th century. The latter have been truncated at the hinge end and the door is hung from iron strap hinges screwed to the inner face of the door, hung from iron pintles. There are no other openings on the south gable wall. Set slightly to the east side of the gable apex is an open-sided hexagonal bellcote, with six posts and arched openings. The concave hexagonal roof formerly had a shaped finial to the apex, which is missing. One bell hangs within the bellcote, dated 1893 and is said to have been brought here from the Grammar School in 1934.<sup>51</sup> The bell is rung using an external rope fixed to the west side of the doorway. The form and gothic style of the feature suggest it may date from the late 18th or early 19th century. There is a timber flag pole fixed to the wall to the west side of the doorway. The south verge of the roof is finished with flat sandstone copings, with a kneeler only to the east end.



The sandstone datestone over the door bears the date 1596/RW (Figure 12); it is not known to whom the initials relate. The lettering is now eroded but was recorded by RCHME in 1934, noting that 'it was found in an outbuilding before the southern steps were remodelled some years ago, and the date and doorway with it were reset in their present position'.<sup>52</sup> The datestone is not depicted on

photographs or views taken before the 1930s.

Fig 12: 1596 datestone above south doorway (© Historic England, photograph: Marion Barter)

The east elevation has a variety of shopfronts to the ground floor, installed in place of smaller windows during the second half of the 19th century (compare with Figure 6). The three retail units were numbered in trade directories from the late 19th century, Numbers 64 to 66 Boroughgate (north to south). The shopfront to Number 64 has a doorway with reeded stone pilasters with plinth blocks and stylised floral paterae; a feature, perhaps a cornice, is missing from the lintel of the doorway, which has a small oval number plate fixed to the centre. The four-panelled door has a cast-iron letter box to the middle rail and glazed top panels. The separate shop window to the north side of the doorway

has a plain timber surround without mouldings or a cornice. A plain timber fascia extends over both doorway and window, with a flat timber hoodmould dressed in lead. The taller shopfront to Number 65 has an integrated design with three matching pilasters to the doorway and shopfront carrying a fascia and cornice. The pilasters have moulded roundel decoration (partly missing) and altered plinth blocks. The shop window is divided by glazing bars into six panes, above a rendered stall riser. The altered door has moulded solid lower panels below a single glazed upper panel (formerly two panels with chamfered detail), with an oval number plate to the top rail. The lintel is chamfered. The transom panel over the door is solid, but may originally have been glazed. Metal fixings on the fascia may suggest a missing blind.



*Fig 13: late 19th century shopfront with earlier doorway to right (© Historic England, photograph: Marion Barter)*

Number 66 (Figure 13) has a narrow single doorway, no longer in use; this has a moulded timber architrave and recessed four-panelled door of late 19th century type. The door has solid moulded lower panels below glazed upper panels, with chamfered details, and an oval number plate to the top rail, similar to details on the door to Number 65. The door appears to be in the same position as an earlier doorway shown on views that pre-date the 1880s, which show no shop fronts on this part of the east elevation (Figure 6). The separate shop window to Number 66 is south of the doorway, with plain pilasters, fascia and cornice, simple mouldings and radii to the upper corners of the shop window. The stall riser is rendered, between pilaster plinth blocks. Black paint on render has been used as a visual plinth, to the east elevation but not to the west.

The first floor of the east elevation has four regularly spaced large sash windows, each with plain architraves that project slightly from the face of the render. The architraves have rebated inner arrises and iron hinge pintles that indicate missing external shutters. The steel straps for seasonal window boxes

are modern. Each window has a total of eighteen panes (nine panes per sliding sash) and the thick glazing bars are ovolo-moulded to the inner face (Figures 14 & 15). There are no horns to the meeting rails and the sash boxes are largely behind the architraves. The design of the windows, the glazing bar detail and the horizontal proportions of the panes are characteristic of the decades between 1690 and 1740, but no firm date has been found in records such as the accounts. None of the sash windows align with any of the ground floor openings. The eaves are plainly treated, without a moulded cornice; cast-iron half-round gutters are fixed to simple wrought iron brackets.



*Fig 14: sash windows to Council Chamber  
(© Historic England, photograph: Marion Barter)*



*Fig.15: detail of ovolo-moulded glazing bars  
(© Historic England, photograph: Marion Barter)*

The west elevation (Figure 16) differs from the east elevation with an irregular pattern of small windows and doors, to the ground floor and only two sash windows to the first floor; its informal character suggests a lesser status. Towards the south end of the elevation are two windows of similar size related to shop Number 66, with 19th or 20th century joinery; the southern of the two has no jambs, but the northern has a plain stone architrave. North of the latter shop, Number 65 has a narrow door with four-centred head and chamfered surround, similar in style and date to the south door; this has a late 19th or early 20th century part-glazed door, no longer in use. North of the door is a sixteen-pane bow window with slender glazing bars, below a painted stone lintel; the window's character suggests it dates from the first half of the 19th century. Number 64 has a narrow door similar in scale and character to that to Number 65; this also has a part-glazed door no longer in use. To its north is a fixed light 12-pane windows with slender glazing bars, but no visible architrave or lintel; this may also be 19th century.



*Fig 16: the west and south elevations of the main range, with the north range to far left (© Historic England, photograph: Marion Barter)*

The first floor of the west elevation has two widely-spaced 18-pane sash windows similar in scale, pattern and detailing to those on the east elevation; however, they are set around 0.5 metre higher on the wall and closer to the eaves. Neither window aligns with any ground floor openings. Towards the north end of the west elevation are two small openings; the southern of the two is smaller and is blocked, but appears to have a chamfered surround similar in character to the two ground floor doorways. The northern opening has a plain architrave with a small modern sash window, of the same detailing as North Range windows installed in 1970.

## **Interior**

The 1754 plan refers to 'halls' in the plural and 17th century documentary sources indicate that the Moot Hall had a hall on each of the two floors, known as the upper and lower halls. It is not known whether there was an internal staircase connecting the two spaces, and no evidence for an internal staircase was found during this study. The upper hall was the more important of the two spaces, used for Council meetings and the Assizes; this is reflected in the spatial quality of the council chamber room, with its high ceiling and tall windows, compared to the low ceiling of the ground floor. By the late 18th century, the ground floor hall had been subdivided to form separate shops, let to tenants. The shops are numbered from the north, with Numbers 64, 65 and 66 Boroughgate within the principal range.

## Ground floor

The original use of the ground floor lower hall is not revealed by documentary sources, but the term 'lower hall' suggests it was one large space. This may have been accessed by the narrow doorways that survive on the east and west elevations, or by other doorways, since blocked (a double door for the lower hall is referred to in the 18th century). Three separate shops existed from the late 18th century until 1995 when the northern shop was amalgamated with the Tourist Information Centre to form an Exhibition Centre; a doorway was inserted through the north gable end wall, towards the east end of the wall. The two shop units at the south end of the ground floor were combined in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century when a doorway was inserted in the dividing partition wall. The plans produced in 1968 by the Borough Surveyor show that the two southern shop units were at that time subdivided into front and back areas, with each west space annotated as a 'workshop'. Evidence for the former partitions can be seen on the soffit of the beams, particularly in Number 65.



*Fig 17: south beam in Number 66, altered for a doorway, from the south (© Historic England, photograph: Marion Barter)*



*Fig 18: position of former partition on beam in Number 65 (© Historic England, photograph: Marion Barter)*

The level of the current ground floor is below the level of the surrounding footway, with one or two steps down into the shop areas from external entrances. The floors would originally have been laid with stone flags but only the south shop area is known to retain a stone floor, beneath the modern vinyl floor covering. The beams supporting the first floor are visible within the ground floor shop units (Figures 17 & 18); there are four oak beams of heavy section, running east-west across the ceilings, with deep chamfers. Most of the beams have plain stops to the wall ends of the chamfers, but some are missing where a beam has been truncated or cut for a doorway (in Number 66). Recent dendrochronological analysis has shown that the southern oak beam is from a tree felled in AD 1660 and used soon afterwards;<sup>53</sup> the stylistic similarities between this beam and the others suggest they are of similar date. The floor joists are not visible, hidden above a variety of ceilings; the ceilings in shop units Numbers 65 and 66 are lined with modern tongued and grooved boarding or plasterboard and the ceiling to Number 64 (Exhibition Centre) is of modern plaster. Within a cupboard at the north-east corner of shop Number 65 the

soffit of some floorboards to the first floor can be seen, and a section of oak beam within the cupboard is finished in lime-wash.

The construction and form of the partitions between the southern shop (Number 66) and the middle unit (number 65) and between the latter and the northern space (Number 64, now the Exhibition Centre) is not known, as the walls faces are obscured by modern finishes or fittings. The southern partition is the more substantial of the two and may be masonry, but the thinner northern partition appears to be timber stud.

The walls are lined with modern shop fittings, and some of the window reveals are lined with painted pine tongued and grooved boarding which appears to be of early 20th century date. An alcove towards the east end of the south gable wall in Number 66 is lined with tongued and grooved boarding; this may be a blocked doorway that connected to the outbuilding demolished in the 1880s. The middle shop unit (Number 65) retains an historic shop fitting in the form of a two-register wall cupboard with sliding glazed or panelled doors, fitted to the south partition, towards the east end. The character of the joinery suggests this is a late 19th or early 20th century fitting, probably installed when the shop was a chemist's, run by George Richardson; he is listed at Number 65 Boroughgate in trade directories for 1894, 1896, 1905 and 1906.<sup>54</sup> The east end of the floor beam in this unit has been truncated to enable a large shop window to be inserted, probably in the late 19th century, when a cast-iron cylindrical column was inserted to carry the east end of the beam.

## First floor

The principal space on the first floor is **the council chamber**. The rectangular room is aligned roughly north-south, entered from the external south doorway via an inner lobby. The lobby appears to be a 19th century insertion, with an inner panelled door on the east side; the door has chamfered details and brass door furniture. On the north face of the lobby wall is a Roll of Honour for men who served in the First World War, set in a pedimented oak frame. Either side of the lobby on the south wall, lath and plaster canopies have been inserted; these and the roll of honour probably date from an early 1920s remodelling of the room that also included the display of mayoral portraits on oak rails. Within the south-east of the two voids, earlier historic wall surfaces are visible; the ashlar scored textured plaster, pale ochre colour and high level moulded picture rail are characteristic of the mid 19th century.

The partition between the chamber and the mayor's parlour is constructed of timber and lined with wainscot panelling on the south face, with a decorative carved frieze of inter-laced strapwork, of late 16th or early 17th century date. To the east and west ends of the partition oak panelled doors lead into the mayor's parlour, fitted as part of remodelling in the 1920s. The doors have modern furniture. Above the panelling is a full-width gallery, over the central mayor's chair; the date of this feature is not known, although the front south face has been fitted with oak picture rails matching others in the room, of the 1920s. The low plaster ceiling to the soffit of the gallery is supported on a structure consisting of plastered north-south joists carried on a front beam, supported on

a pair of timber posts; the posts have fluted front faces and chamfered arrises to the north face, characteristic of the 19th century (Figure 21). The interpretation of this feature as a gallery is difficult; the structure of the front face suggests a gallery, but the low height of the feature's floor in relation to the ceiling limits standing-room, there is no sign of a gallery front with a space above, nor clear evidence for a means of access. Access may have been via ladder or steps from the north side, where there is lintel over a possible blocked opening (see Figure 49). The plaster ceiling and the painted tie-beam to the north side of the void retain fragments of historic wallpaper, currently displayed in the mayor's parlour; the Whitworth Gallery was consulted on the wallpapers and advise that they span a period between the mid 19th century and c1900. The wallpapers suggest that the space was in use in the mid 19th century but not re-decorated after the turn of the century (Figures 19 & 20). It appears to have been sealed as part of remodelling to the mayor's parlour in the early 20th century.



*Fig 19: the interior of the gallery from the west, with roof truss tie-beam to top left (Appleby Town Council collection)*



*Fig 20: a green mid-19<sup>th</sup> century block-printed wallpaper and a later floral 'sanitary' paper, c1900 (top)*



*Fig.21: gallery front and column details (bottom) (© Historic England, photographs: Marion Barter)*

The council chamber (Figure 22) is lit by large sash windows, three along the east wall, and two to the west wall. Each window has ovolo-moulded glazing bars and nine panes to each sash. The sashes are heavily painted and not currently operational; secondary glazing in aluminium frames has been fitted to the inner face of each window. Two phases of pulley wheels for lifting sash

weights on cords (missing) are *in situ*, near the top of each sash box; the smaller upper wheel is wooden and probably the earliest, with a later, metal wheel set below. These pulley wheels relate to the lower sashes; it is probable that the upper sash did not slide (double-sliding sashes were not usual until the middle of the 18th century). Each window has a plastered splayed reveal and a painted window board; the two sashes to the west are set slightly higher on the wall than the east windows. The walls are plain plastered, scored with lines to resemble ashlar, above an applied dado of embossed paper such as 'Lincrusta'. Above the dado, the walls and the window reveals are fitted with oak rails to display framed portraits of borough mayors, in three tiers; these features probably relate to early 1920s alterations.



*Fig 22: The council chamber from the north-east with the south lobby to the left*

*(© Historic England, photograph: Marion Barter)*

The ceiling of the chamber is finished in plain plaster between three beams, which relate to the tie-beams of the roof trusses; these have a paper finish painted dark brown. There are also applied timber details, aligned north-south, with small metal grilles set into the soffit of these timbers. Larger square ventilation grilles are set into the plaster ceiling; these may relate to the metal vent on the ridge of the roof, which is shown on 19th century photographs. There is no evidence for the position of a fireplace in the room. The floor boards are hidden below carpet.

In addition to the mayoral portraits, the chamber contains an important collection of historic weights and measures, including a bronze bushel dated



1601; the collection is displayed on the south window sill of the west wall and on top of an oak chest within an adjacent alcove on the south wall. The loose furnishings include an oak mayor's chair dated 1893, and a set of chairs and oak panelled desks for elected members, probably acquired in the 1920s as part of the re-fitting of the room.<sup>55</sup>

**The mayor's parlour** (Figure 23) occupies the north bay of the first floor, separated from the council chamber by a timber partition below the north roof truss. The narrow rectangular room is lit from the east by one 18-pane sash window, matching those to the council chamber. There is a small sash set low on the east wall, with late 20th century joinery. The room is entered from a doorway on the north wall, inserted in 1970 when the north range was altered. Before this, the room may have been only accessible via the council chamber. The north face of the south partition wall is fitted with shallow cupboards for ceremonial robes; the hinged doors are made of wainscot panelling in oak; the east door is a re-used section of 17th century panelling, said to be from a farmhouse in Kirkby Stephen.<sup>56</sup> The west doors are panelled with oak made to match, probably as part of a re-fitting in the 1920s. The two oak panelled doors into the chamber are of a similar date. The walls are lined with an oak dado with plaster above, fitted with oak picture rails similar to those in the council chamber; framed historic photographs, a copy of the 1754 plan and other borough memorabilia are displayed. Towards the west end of the north wall is a deep wall cupboard used to store borough regalia and other objects; the cupboard may be in the position of a blocked window and is below a higher blocked window visible in the roof-space above the ceiling.



*Fig 23: mayor's parlour from the east with re-set panelling to left and an inserted doorway to right (© Historic England, photograph: Marion Barter)*

The room has an inserted flat ceiling with applied timber decoration, probably part of alterations in the 1920s; a small hatch to the south-west side of the ceiling gives access to the space above the ceiling, which is constructed of pine joists supporting lath and plaster. The floor boards are hidden below carpet. The metal and glass pendant light fitting is similar to the more elaborate fittings in the council chamber, which may date from the 1920s.

### Roof space

The roof of the principal range is arranged in five bays, numbered 1 to 5, from the north in this account. The roof structure comprises four trusses, which are numbered 1 to 4 from the north, with two tiers of purlins per pitch and a diagonally-set ridge. Each truss is of a simple collar and tie beam type; the collar is notched into the principal rafters, the principals forming a slight lap joint, east on top of west. The positions of the tie beams are visible below the ceiling of the council chamber, the beams finished with a covering which obscures their form. Within the roof-space, the trusses are of oak, hand-finished with wooden pegs, and with evidence of reused elements. The rafters are also mainly of oak. The sarking felt was provided as part of a re-slating in c1989.<sup>57</sup> There are no wind braces or struts and the timbers do not have decorative treatment, such as chamfers with stops; this plain treatment suggests that the roof was not on display from the room below, but hidden above a ceiling.



Fig 24: The south gable showing the change in wall height, viewed from the north-west  
(© Historic England, photograph: Dan Elsworth)

The north and south gable-end elevations of the building are visible within the roof space, where rubblestone masonry is exposed. Two phases of masonry are visible on the south gable; traces of lime plaster adhere to the face of a central triangular area, mainly comprising buff sandstone, with later masonry of mainly red sandstone above, suggesting a raising of the eaves and ridge, by approximately 1m (Figure 24). Modern softwood timbers visible on the upper

part of the gable wall, including a horizontal rail connected to the upper tier of purlins, are related to the bellcote.

The floor of the roof space is covered with insulation and was not accessible at the time of the survey. The level of the roof space floor in Bay 1 is raised relative to the rest of the floor, due to a historic ceiling at the level of the lower purlins. The collar of truss 1 is slightly cambered and relatively thick compared to the rest with a range of carpenter's marks on the north face, of two phases (Figure 25). The earlier of these comprise a chiselled 'IIγ' at the west end of the collar where it meets the principal rafter, which has been cut where the collar has been reused, with a further 'Iγ' on the adjacent part of the principal rafter (Figure 26). The latter is one of the timbers dated by dendrochronology to AD 1571-1596. Just above these marks is a set of chiselled 'I' numerals, probably later, to both the collar and principal (Figure 27) which also occur where the principals meet, with a small timber fillet inserted at the apex (Fig.28). At the east end there was a chiselled 'II' on the principal rafter where it meets the collar and 'III' on the collar (Figure 29).

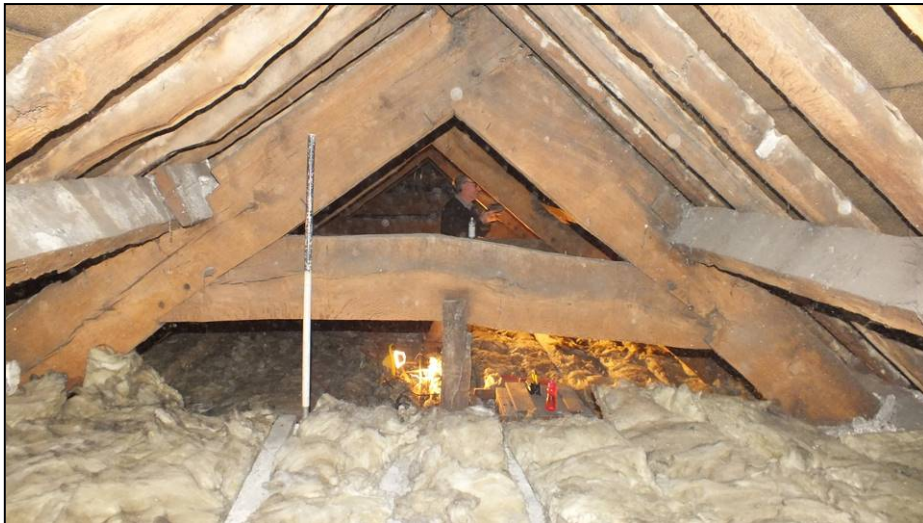


Fig 25: Truss 1, viewed from the north (© Historic England, photograph: Dan Elsworth)



Fig 26: Carpenter's marks on east side of Truss 1, viewed from the north (© Historic England, photograph: Dan Elsworth)



Fig 27: Carpenter's marks on east side of Truss 1, from the north (© Historic England, photograph: Dan Elsworth)



Fig 28: Carpenter's marks at apex of Truss 1, viewed from the north (© Historic England, photograph: Dan Elsworth)



Fig 29: Carpenter's marks on west side of Truss 1, viewed from the north (© Historic England, photograph: Dan Elsworth)

Against the north face of Truss 1 is a rough stud, fixed to the collar; this forms part of a partition between the council chamber and the mayor's parlour, visible in Bay 2, from the south. The west half of the partition is roughly built of brick and the east side comprises vertical timber posts, roughly finished, that connect to a horizontal joist that forms the south edge of a ceiling. The spaces between the timbers are very crudely infilled with hand-made bricks (Figure 29).



Fig 30: The south face of Truss 1, showing the timber stud partition with brick infill (© Historic England, photograph: Dan Elsworth)

Truss 2 has a lighter collar than Truss 1, with no camber; a small fillet of timber has been added at the apex of the principal rafters (Figure 31). The truss has carpenter's marks on the north face with a chiselled 'II' at the junction of the collar and principal rafter as well as a shallower 'IIγ'. Numeral 'II' is chiselled into the top of each principal, with a small square notch is cut into the west principal. The west side of Truss 2 has numerals 'III' and 'II' at the junction between the collar and principal (Figure 32). There are earlier empty slots for

purlins at the lower end of each principal and on the east side of Bay 2 one of the purlins is obviously reused and has several taper burn marks along one face (Figure 35). There is also an earlier and now disused access hatch, on strap hinges, to the floor of Bay 2 (Figure 36).



Fig 31: Truss 2, viewed from the north-west (© Historic England, photograph: Dan Elsworth)



Fig 32: Carpenter's marks at the east end of Truss 2, viewed from the north (© Historic England, photograph: Dan Elsworth)



Fig 33: Carpenter's marks at the apex of Truss 2, from the north (© Historic England, photograph: Dan Elsworth)



Fig 34: Carpenter's marks at west end of Truss 2, viewed from the north (© Historic England, photograph: Dan Elsworth)



Fig 35: Taper burn marks on purlin on the east side of Bay 2 (© Historic England, photograph: Dan Elsworth)



Fig 36: Disused hatch in the floor of Bay 2, viewed from the north  
 (© Historic England, photograph: Dan Elsworth)

Truss 3 is of a similar form to Truss 2 (Figure 37); carpenter's marks chiselled into the north face comprise the numeral 'III' at the east and west junction between the collar and principal rafters (Figures 38 and 40) and, and to the apex of the principals (Figure 39). Empty slots for earlier purlin positions on the principals, indicate that the roof has been reconfigured. The collar appears to be a re-used floor joist, with a row of lap joint slots to the south face (Figure 41).



Fig 37: Truss 3, viewed from the north-west  
 (© Historic England, photograph: Dan Elsworth)



Fig 38: Carpenter's marks at the east end of Truss 3, viewed from the north (© Historic England, photograph: Dan Elsworth)

Fig 39: Carpenter's marks at the apex of Truss 3, viewed from the north (© Historic England, photograph: Dan Elsworth)



Fig 40: Assembly marks at the west end of Truss 3, viewed from the north (© Historic England, photograph: Dan Elsworth)



Fig 41: The re-used collar of Truss 3, viewed from the south-west (© Historic England, photograph: Dan Elsworth)

Truss 4 is similar to Truss 1, with a similar heavy, cambered collar. Like Truss 1, a small fillet of timber has been inserted at the junction of the principals (Figure 44) both of which are from trees felled in the period AD 1571-1596. The north face has a chiselled numeral 'IIII' on the east side, where the collar meets the principal rafter (Figure 43), and at the junction of the principals (Figure 44), but numeral 'I' on the west side (Figure 45). On the south face it has a further 'Iy', although upside down and slightly truncated where the collar has been cut down, and a chiselled 'IIII' at the junction of the collar and principal on the west side (Figure 46). In Bay 5 there are at least three re-used purlins with rows of empty lap joint slots (Figure 47), one of which was also dated by dendrochronology to the period AD 1571-1596.



Fig 42: Truss 4, viewed from the north-west (© Historic England, photograph: Dan Elsworth)



Fig 43: Carpenter's marks at the east end of Truss 4, viewed from the north (© Historic England, photograph: Dan Elsworth)



Fig 44: Carpenter's marks at the apex of Truss 4, viewed from the north (© Historic England, photograph: Dan Elsworth)



Fig 45: Carpenter's marks at the west end of Truss 4, viewed from the north (© Historic England, photograph: Dan Elsworth)



Fig 46: Carpenter's marks at the west end of Truss 4, viewed from the south (© Historic England, photograph: Dan Elsworth)





Fig 47: Re-used timbers forming purlins on the east side of Bay 5, viewed from the north-west (© Historic England, photograph: Dan Elsworth)

### Space over the Mayor's Parlour

Between the top of the current ceiling in the mayor's parlour and the soffit of an earlier ceiling (floor of Bay 1 of the attic) is a low rectangular space, accessed via a ceiling hatch at the west side of the Mayor's Parlour. The space fills the full width of the building, above the mayor's parlour. The north wall is lime-plastered, with fragments of wallpaper. To the east and west ends of this wall are the upper parts of blocked windows, each with plastered reveals (Figure 48 and Figure 49). Each window has been blocked externally by stone masonry, probably relating to the building of the north range in c1800; the openings are now in the form of alcoves with a lime wash or lime plastered finish to the infill masonry. The openings appear to have extended below the line of the inserted ceiling in the mayor's parlour, but both have been infilled below the ceiling and are not visible (Figure 22).



Fig 48: The western blocked window in the north elevation of the space above the current ceiling of the Mayor's Parlour, viewed from the south

*(© Historic England, photograph: Dan Elsworth)*



**Fig 49: The eastern blocked window in the north elevation of the space above the Mayor's Parlour, viewed from the south (*© Historic England, photograph: Dan Elsworth*)**

The south elevation of the space (Figure 50) is divided into two elements; the lower third is a timber partition, partly faced in vertical tongued and grooved boards covered with wallpaper (dating from c1900).<sup>58</sup> There is a small opening towards the west side of this partition into the gallery that projects into the council chamber, which is not accessible; a photograph (Figure 19) shows the walls and ceiling of this space finished with plaster internally with the exception of the south side, which is finished with tongued and grooved boards set below a tie beam finished with lime-wash or lime plaster. The upper part of the partition wall is a timber-framed structure infilled with brick, lined with lime plaster with fragments of wallpaper on the north face. There is a small opening through this wall into the roof space over the council chamber to the south, towards the east; below this opening and set into the partition is a piece of slightly cambered hand-finished timber, of unknown function and perhaps re-used.



Fig 50: The south elevation in the space above the Mayor's Parlour showing access into the attic above the council chamber in the timber partition wall, viewed from the north  
(© Historic England, photograph: Dan Elsworth)

The walls and ceiling of the space are finished with lime plaster and lime wash; the west side of the ceiling has a sloping soffit, below the line of the roof, with one purlin visible. The floral wallpaper dates from around 1900.<sup>59</sup> On the east side, below the slope of the roof, the rafters are exposed where the plaster is missing. The 'floor' of the space is formed by the upper side of the inserted ceiling within the Mayor's Parlour, constructed from softwood joists, with machine-cut laths and plaster; this ceiling appears to date from a remodelling of the mayor's parlour in the early 20th century.

## The North Range

### Exterior

The three-storey two-bay north range is a rectangular structure abutting the north gable end of the principal range, with eaves and roof ridge at the same level. A structure on roughly this footprint and position is shown on the 1754 plan, but the existing range was built in c1800 as 'a new building...at the north end of the Moot Hall'.<sup>60</sup> Late 19th century views of the Moot Hall show that the shop front on the east side of the north range was the first shop front to be installed on the east elevation (Figure 6).



*Fig 51: the north range from the north-west (© Historic England, photograph: Marion Barter)*

The range (Figure 51) is approximately 5.5m long (north-south) and 7m wide (east-west). The walling is obscured by rough cast render painted white, but is likely to consist of sandstone rubblestone. The north corners are finished with rusticated sandstone quoins, painted black, like other details. No straight joints are visible at the junction between this range and the principal range. The range has no plinth, string course or eaves cornice. The roof is laid with graduated Westmorland slates, with sandstone ridges; the roof is hipped to the north.

The east elevation has a double shop front to the ground floor consisting of a central doorway flanked by shop windows (Figure 52 and Figure 53); the doorway and shop windows are framed by moulded timber pilasters with paterae, and a fascia. The stall risers below the windows are rendered. The doorway has been disused since 1970 when a window was inserted in its place, above a new rendered stall riser. The character of the shop front and the classical details of the joinery are characteristic of the late Georgian period in the early 19th century.



*Fig 52: shopfront to North Range, east elevation (© Historic England, photograph: Marion Barter)*



*Fig 53: shopfront details include paterae and moulded pilasters, typical of the early 19th century (© Historic England, photograph: Marion Barter)*

The windows and joinery details on all other elevations of the range date from 1970. The first floor east elevation has a pair of eighteen-pane sash windows with plain architraves; these are similar to those on the principal range, although they differ in their detail, having horns to the sash meeting rails and painted cement architraves without rebates.<sup>61</sup> Around each window, the texture of the rough cast render slightly differs from the surrounding wall surface, indicating where the original first and second floor windows were removed and replaced.

The north elevation has a single-storey flat-roofed porch, built in 1970, designed by Binney. It replaced an open-fronted shelter, added in the late 19th century. The porch spans the full width of the elevation, incorporating a disabled WC to the west end. The structure is built of cavity brick with timber details, designed in a classical style with timber pilasters, a moulded fascia and dentil cornice to the flat roof. The central double entrance doors facing north are glazed with small panes, with part-glazed doors to either side (the east doorway is disused and the west door serves a staff entrance to the Town Clerk's office and the disabled WC). The rendered side walls are blind. An historic brass plaque inscribed 'Town Clerk's Office' is fixed to the wall on the west side of the central doorway.

The first floor of the north range has two twelve-pane sash windows with plain architraves, installed in 1970, in place of the original fenestration on this elevation. Like the east elevation, the render has been patched in areas disturbed by the re-fenestration.

The west elevation has two pairs of small sash windows to ground and first floor towards the north, with a larger 12-pane sash lighting the staircase, to the south; these all have painted cement architraves and timber sashes with horns, installed in 1970. The staircase window is smaller than as shown on the proposal drawing dated February 1968. A cast-iron downpipe approximately marks the junction between the North Range and the Principal Range

## Interior

### Ground Floor

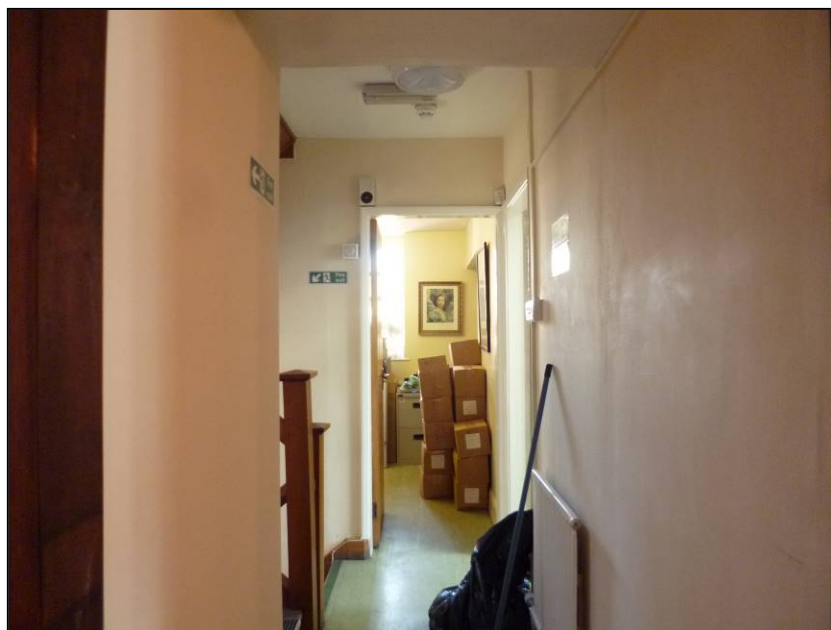
The ground floor of the north range was remodelled in 1970, with new partitions, a staircase and modern finishes, designed by William Binney, the borough surveyor. It is now used as the Tourist Information Centre (Figure 54). The public entrance is from the north, via a porch added in 1970; part of the north wall was removed to form larger openings. A WC for disabled people occupies the west end of the porch, also partly within the north-west corner of the north range. The floor is arranged in two unequal parts, with a larger public area to the east side within the former shop, and a smaller staff area to the west side. The two parts are separated by a stud partition with a sliding flush door. The facilities on the west side include a small kitchen, storage cupboards and a WC, accessed via a narrow passage. The staircase leading to the first floor is at the south end of the west side of the floor; the dog-leg staircase made of timber. The fittings in the Tourist Information Centre were renewed in 1995, with funding from the New Fair Committee. As part of this work, the former shop within the north end of the principal range was fitted as an exhibition space, and a connecting doorway was inserted through the gable wall of the principal range, towards the east end. No historic features are visible within the ground floor of the range.



*Fig 54: view from the south into the Tourist Information Centre, from a doorway inserted through the north gable wall of the principal range (© Historic England, photograph: Marion Barter)*

## First Floor

The first floor was also remodelled in 1970. It is divided into two offices; a larger office for the Town Clerk on the east side and a smaller office to the north-west corner (Figure 55). The staircase occupies the south-west corner. From the landing, a doorway leads south into the mayor's parlour, inserted in 1970. All the windows, doors and finishes date from 1970 and no historic features are visible. The floor may retain earlier joinery but is covered with modern finishes.



*Fig 55: view from the south into the first floor, from a doorway inserted through the north gable wall of the principal range (© Historic England, photograph: Marion Barter)*

## Second Floor

The second floor is reached via the staircase in the south-west corner. The floor is on two levels with a higher level on the east side; this allows for a higher ceiling to the Town Clerk's office, below, installed in 1970. The space is used for storage (Figure 56). The walls and sloping ceiling soffit are plain plastered. The pine roof structure is exposed, with ridges to the hips and a central collar truss; the timbers are lime-washed or painted. The space is lit by metal rooflights, to the east and west pitches.



*Fig 56: second floor store in the north range, from the east (© Historic England, photograph: Marion Barter)*

## **The South Staircase**

The external south staircase was constructed in 1933, with funds from the late William Hewitson, a former Town Clerk who died in 1927; the date and his gift is recorded on a brass plaque fixed to the flat top of the parapet (Figure 58). The present staircase replaces an iron staircase built in c1886, which had been built in place of an earlier stone structure.

The materials used for the screen wall and sub-structure of the feature are not known, but architectural details are of sandstone, painted black. Vertical surfaces are finished in rough-cast render. The staircase is concealed behind a screen wall, semi-circular in plan, with an entrance from the east side (Figure 57). The entrance is secured by a metal gate, dating from the 1930s, which leads into a small yard at the foot of the stairs. The solid staircase rises against the inner face of the screen wall, with stone treads.





*Fig 57: the screen wall to the external south staircase, from the east (© Historic England, photograph Marion Barter)*

At the top of the stairs is a landing or platform, 'from which the results of Council Elections are announced, and the results of Parliamentary elections'.<sup>62</sup> The curved stone steps to the first floor doorway also date from the 1930s. The screen wall is embellished by a pair of flat pilasters on the south face, and has a flat stone coping to the parapet; the parapet was altered in the late 1960s when the 'battlemented' coping and a pair of lamps mounted on top of the pilasters were removed.<sup>63</sup> Centred on the south wall, between the pilasters, is a square red sandstone panel; this is moulded with a raised quatrefoil containing a moulded and painted shield bearing the three leopards from the Royal Arms and incised with the date 1179, the date of the town's first borough charter (Figure 59). The date of this gothic revival feature has not been confirmed, but it may have been made for the 1933 staircase.



*Fig 58: plaque recording the building of the present staircase in 1933 (© Historic England, photograph: Marion Barter)*



*Fig 59: stone plaque on south wall, with date 1179 (© Historic England, photograph: Marion Barter)*

# CONCLUSIONS AND SIGNIFICANCE

## Introduction

Understanding and articulating significance is used to inform decisions about the conservation of heritage assets, and to manage change. This international conservation principle is embedded in the government's *National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)*. The NPPF policies on heritage assets promote a proportional approach, so that 'the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be' on conservation (paragraph 132). This means it is important to understand an asset's level of significance, which may also vary within the building or site.

Historic England published *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance* in 2008 to explain the concept of significance and to provide a framework for applying it to conservation management; an amended version of this guidance is due to be published in 2018 to align with the wording in the NPPF. The NPPF refers to four aspects of heritage interest or value: archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Intangible interest such as community or social may also be important to the significance of a heritage asset, however. Within these key aspects of interest, significance may be measured at different levels:

- **Exceptional** – an asset important at the highest national or international levels, including scheduled ancient monuments, Grade I and II\* listed buildings and World Heritage Sites. The NPPF advises that substantial harm should be wholly exceptional.
- **High** – a designated asset important at a national level, including Grade II listed buildings and conservation areas. The NPPF advises that substantial harm should be exceptional.
- **Medium** – an undesignated asset important at a local to regional level, including local (non-statutory) listed buildings or assets that make a positive contribution to the setting of a listed building or to a conservation area. May include less significant parts of listed buildings. Buildings and parts of structures in this category should be retained where possible, and there is usually scope for adaptation.
- **Low** – structure or feature of very limited heritage or other cultural value and not defined as a heritage asset. May include insignificant elements of listed buildings, and buildings that do not contribute positively to a conservation area. The removal or adaptation of structures in this category is usually acceptable where the work will enhance a related heritage asset.
- **Negative** – structure or feature that harms the value of a heritage asset. Wherever practicable, removal of negative features should be considered to enhance the asset.

## **The Significance of The Moot Hall: summary**

Plans in Appendix 1.5 and 1.6 illustrate significance levels within the building. This study has found that the Moot Hall has an exceptional level of heritage significance overall, as a rare surviving example of a Moot Hall first built in the late 16th century to serve the borough and retaining many architectural features, although altered in several later phases to meet the continuing needs of the Council.

The Moot Hall is significant as the earliest example of a purpose-built moot hall in England, still serving its original administrative purpose. In Cumbria, it is the only pre-19th century moot hall to survive, and the only building partly still in use for its original purpose. Keswick Moot Hall was first built in the 16th century, but the present building dates from 1813, Brampton's dates from 1817, also on the site of an earlier moot hall. Kendal's moot hall was first built in c1591 on Market Place, but destroyed by fire in 1969.

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the word moot derives from the Old Norse and Old English word *motian*, meaning converse, or *motam*, meaning meet. It is not known when the first moot hall was built or how many boroughs were administered from a moot hall. A search for 'moot hall' on the Historic England heritage register returns a total of 35 listed buildings including some buildings near to moot halls, buildings 'on the site of' moot halls or those that incorporate fragments of former moot halls. There are around a dozen moot halls which are still in public ownership, and of these only a very few pre-date 1600 and are still in use for council business. As the current name of the building is not a reliable guide to its historic function or date, a search was also made of the heritage register for guild halls (27 results), market halls (165 results) and town halls (1227 results). Pre-19th century buildings within these categories include characteristic two-storey structures, in which the essential facility was a room for formal meetings, usually on the upper floor, a situation which has symbolic value. The ground floor space was often used for markets, frequently with partly open walls. The structures were often, but not always, built as free-standing buildings in a market place or public square; fine late 17th and early 18th century examples include Peterborough Guild Hall, built in 1671. William Cobbett described a typical moot hall in Great Bedwyn, 'there stood a thing out in the middle of the place, about 25 feet long and 15 wide, being a room stuck up on unhewn stone pillars about 10 feet high'.<sup>64</sup> The symbolic function of the building as a whole, whether known as a moot hall or a town hall was important to the identity of the place and embodied civic pride and independence. The moot hall was one of several building types (the others included guild halls, assembly rooms, courts and market halls) that influenced the design and form of municipal town halls built in the 19th century.

Although it is not possible to be entirely certain, comparative research suggests that there are three buildings of comparable or earlier date to Appleby, which survive in more or less their original form and are still in use for council meetings. Aldeburgh, Suffolk, was first built c1520 and is listed as a Moot Hall, Grade I. It is built with a timber-frame, brick and stone and has an upper floor

meeting room with external staircase, over a former market hall; it is used for monthly Town Council meetings. The Guild Hall at Much Wenlock, Shropshire was first built in 1577, and is timber-framed. It has an upper floor council chamber and former court room; the chamber is still used for monthly Town Council meetings and courts were held here until 1985. The ground floor formerly housed a market and a gaol. On a smaller scale, Steeple Bumpstead, Essex, was built in 1592 and is listed as a Market Hall. This small structure is timber-framed and brick with an upper floor room, still used for monthly Parish Council meetings. Appleby differs from all these as it is a masonry structure, and appears to be the earliest purpose-built moot hall (or town hall) in the North of England, still in use for its original purpose.

Heritage significance levels vary within the Moot Hall, depending on the level of alteration and the date of the fabric. Generally, the structure and fabric of the principal range of the building has exceptional significance for historic, architectural and archaeological interest; elements at this highest level of significance include the roof structure, external and internal masonry walls, hidden partitions and voids within or below the roof space, first floor beams, the plan-form, chamfered stone doorways, the interiors of the Council Chamber and the Mayor's Parlour. The large sash windows with thick glazing bars, which probably date from the early 18th century, are relatively rare in Cumbria;<sup>65</sup> these may be among the earliest sash windows in the county and have exceptional significance.

The 19th century joinery of the shop fronts and external doors is of high significance for historic and architectural interests. The 1920s fittings and collection of framed portraits and furnishings in the Council Chamber and Mayor's Parlour have high significance for historic and community interests, and medium significance for architectural value.

The 1933 south steps and screen wall have medium significance for historic and architectural interest, although their communal value is high.

Of the north range, the building's walls, roof structure and the shop front to the east side are of high significance, for architectural and historic interests; the 1970 north porch and interior (ground floor public areas re-fitted in 1995) have low significance. However, although this range is much altered, the ground floor public areas have high communal value.

## **Designation**

The Grade II\* listing reflects the outstanding national importance of the building; buildings in this grade make up 5.8% of all listed buildings (over 90% are in the lower Grade II). The Moot Hall was first listed in 1951, a fairly early date. The building is also within the Appleby conservation area.

## **Setting and Appleby Conservation Area**

The Moot Hall's setting on Boroughgate contributes very positively to the significance of the building. Its relationship to the street and surrounding frontage buildings, to the Church and The Cloisters is little changed. The

building is particularly prominent in views north down the street where the south gable-end is a striking feature in the street scene (Figure 60).



*Fig. 60: view from the north down Boroughgate  
(© Historic England, photograph: Marion Barter)*

To an extent the setting of the building is marred, visually, by car parking in close proximity to the north and south elevations. The building is surrounded by relatively recent hard landscaping of natural stone paving and kerbs. Historic views show cobbles laid on ground surfaces around the building.

Appleby Conservation Area was designated in 1969, an early designation, just two years after the 1967 Civic Amenities Act enabled local authorities to designate areas of special architectural and historic interest. The boundary includes the medieval town on both sides of the river and the castle and Scattergate to the south. The boundary map and a short summary is available on Eden District Council's website, and an appraisal is in progress at the time of writing. The Moot Hall makes a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area, and is a key landmark in the core of the historic town.

The conservation area is a heritage asset of high significance; it has recently been identified as being 'at risk' by Historic England, which led to its designation as a Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) by Historic England in 2017.

### **Areas for Further Investigation**

A better understanding of the development of the building would almost certainly be possible if further recording could be carried out during the future removal of external render or internal opening-up works. Examination of masonry walls would offer the potential to demonstrate not only the arrangement of the original windows, but also further evidence for the raising of the roofline. If extensive areas of the internal plaster are removed, during

repairs, the opportunity should be taken to enable recording and investigation of internal wall faces and partitions, which could reveal former fireplace and staircase positions, as well as evidence for earlier windows and doorways. In addition, if better access is available to the disused gallery and roof-space, the form and detail of the former feature could be examined in more detail, allowing a better understanding of its origins, construction, phasing and the manner in which it functioned.

## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Appleby Council Minute Books, CASK, WSMBA/3/1
- <sup>2</sup> Plan of Appleby, 1754, CASK, WDHOTH/3/33/42 -Box 33
- <sup>3</sup> Plan of the Township of Appleby in the Parish of Appleby in the county of Westmorland, 1843, CASK WDRS/8/26.
- <sup>4</sup> Braithwaite, J W, 1884, *Guide to Kirkby Stephen, Appleby, Brough, Warcop, Ravenstonedale, Mallerstang &c.* Kirkby Stephen: J W Braithwaite, 64
- <sup>5</sup> The Thomas Gilks engraving is illustrated on the Cumbria Gazetteer website: <http://www.lakesguides.co.uk/html/lgaz/lgazfram.htm> [accessed 27 March 2018]
- <sup>6</sup> The alterations are shown on proposal plans dated 1968 by William Binney, Borough Surveyor for Appleby Town Council [Appleby-in-Westmorland Town Council, scanned copy courtesy of Blackett-Ord Conservation Architecture]
- <sup>7</sup> RCHME record card notes dated 1934, HEA, BF007554
- <sup>8</sup> Heelis, Guy H, *The Moot Hall, Appleby*, nd, CASK, WDS 46/20/17. Heelis refers to the new south staircase, built in 1933, suggesting his account was written soon after this.
- <sup>9</sup> Nicholson, J and Burn, 1777, *The History and Antiquities of the Counties of Westmorland and Cumberland, Volume 1*, 310. London: W Strahan and T Cadell (reprinted by CWAAS, 2011)
- <sup>10</sup> Holdgate, M, 2006, *The Story of Appleby-in-Westmorland*. Kirkby Stephen: Hayloft, 181, 182, 210, 232
- <sup>11</sup> Holmes, M, 1995, *Appleby-in-Westmorland, The Moot Hall and Its Relics*. Appleby-in-Westmorland Town Council
- <sup>12</sup> McKay, B and McKay, V, 2001, *Appleby in Westmorland, an Historic Town Guide*. Appleby-in-Westmorland, Barry McKay Rare Books
- <sup>13</sup> Graham Coles, 'Appleby's Moot Hall', *Appleby-in-Westmorland Society Newsletter* 69, January 2007, 7
- <sup>14</sup> Arnold, A, Howard, R, and Tyers, C 2018 *Moot Hall, Boroughgate, Appleby-in-Westmorland, Cumbria – Tree-ring analysis of oak timbers*, Historic England Research Report Series, 14/2018
- <sup>15</sup> RCHME Record Card for Secular Monuments: Moot Hall, 1934, HEA, BF007554

- <sup>16</sup> Chamberlain's accounts, CASK, WSMB/A/2/3 1585-1630
- <sup>17</sup> Chamberlain's accounts, CASK, WSMB/A/2/2/1 1614-1661
- <sup>18</sup> Railton, M, 2017, *Dig Appleby – Breaking the Ground*. Appleby Archaeology Group, 20
- <sup>19</sup> Holdgate, M, 2006, 151
- <sup>20</sup> Chamberlain's accounts, CASC, D/Lons/L/5/4/1/1-9 1638-1835, Appleby Estate Records. Transcribed by Chris Wilson of Appleby
- <sup>21</sup> Arnold, A, Howard, R, and Tyers, C, 2018
- <sup>22</sup> Bouch, CML, 1951, *Local Government in Appleby in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries*, CWAAS NS, 1951, Vol 51, 157-158; the original source is CASK, WSMB/A/2/1/3 1685-1728
- <sup>23</sup> Curwen, J F, 1932, *Later Records Relating to North Westmorland or the Barony of Appleby*, CWAAS record series **8**. Kendal: CWAAS
- <sup>24</sup> Appleby Christmas Sessions Roll: Moot hall Appleby, 1757, CASK  
WQ/SR/273/14-15
- <sup>25</sup> Graham Coles, 2007, 7
- <sup>26</sup> CASK, WSMB/A/2/4/1 1763-1807
- <sup>27</sup> Bouch, CML 1951, 158; CASK, Appleby Council Minute Books, WSMB/A/2/1/5 1764-1775
- <sup>28</sup> In 1787 Thomas Abbott paid rent for a 'shop and Ho under stair', and in 1797 Mary Abbott, perhaps a relative, paid rent for a 'house and shop under the hall', CASK, WSMB/A/2/4 1763-1807
- <sup>29</sup> Nicholson, J and Burn, R, 1777, 310 and Whelan, W, 1860, 713
- <sup>30</sup> Bouch CML 1951, 158; Appleby Council Minute Books, CASK, WSMB/A/2/1/5 1764-1775
- <sup>31</sup> CASK, WSMB/A/2/1/5 1764-1775; see also Curwen 1932, 39-40
- <sup>32</sup> CASK, WSMB/A/2/1/5 1764-1775; Bouch 1951, 158
- <sup>33</sup> Appleby Council Minute Books, CASK, WSMB/A/2/1/6 1795-1809
- <sup>34</sup> CASK, WSMB/A/2/4 1763-1807



<sup>35</sup> CASK, WSMB/A/2/1/6 1795-1809

<sup>36</sup> CASK, WSMB/A/2/1/7 1810-1824

<sup>37</sup> A photograph of the bill and other records of payments to local tradesmen can be seen on the Facebook page of Old Appleby-in Westmorland.  
<https://www.facebook.com/Old-Appleby-in-Westmorland-598687586880426/>  
[accessed 27 March 2018]

<sup>38</sup> CASK, WSMB/A/2/4 1807-1840

<sup>39</sup> CASK, WSMB/A/2/4 1840-1885

<sup>40</sup> CASK, WDRC/8/26 1843

<sup>41</sup> A bill to weigh a cart of goods issued by the Machine Office, Appleby is printed with the name Thomas Coulthard, Weigh-Master.  
<https://www.facebook.com/Old-Appleby-in-Westmorland-598687586880426/>  
[accessed 27 March 2018]

<sup>42</sup> Appleby Council Minute Books, CASK, WSMBA/3/1/1, 1885-1893

<sup>43</sup> Appleby Council Minute Books, CASK, WSMBA/3/1/1, 1885-1893

<sup>44</sup> Appleby Council Minute Books, CASK, WSMBA/3/1/1, 1885-1893

<sup>45</sup> A photograph of the bill is on the Facebook page of 'Old Appleby-in-Westmorland'

<sup>46</sup> Appleby Council Minute Books, CASK, WSMBA/3/1/4, 1908-1915

<sup>47</sup> Heelis, Guy H, nd, 1-2

<sup>48</sup> Appleby Committee Minute Books, CASK, WSMBA/3/2/1919-1924

<sup>49</sup> Appleby Council Minute Books, CASK, WSMBA/3/1/4, 1908-1915

<sup>50</sup> Scanned copies of proposal plans by Binney, dated 1968, supplied by Blackett-Ord Conservation Architecture (Appleby-in-Westmorland Town Council)

<sup>51</sup> The 1893 bell probably replaced an earlier bell. Holmes, 1995, 1-2.

<sup>52</sup> RCHME record card notes dated 1934, HEA, BF007554

<sup>53</sup> Arnold, A, Howard, R, and Tyers, C 2018 Moot Hall, 63-66 Boroughgate, Appleby-in-Westmorland, Cumbria – Tree-ring analysis of oak timbers, Historic England Research Report Series, 14/2018

<sup>54</sup> Kelly's Directory for Cumberland and Westmorland, 1894 and 1897, Bulmer's Directory for Cumberland and Westmorland 1905, Kelly's 1906

<sup>55</sup> Heelis, nd, 1, CASK, WDS 46/20/17

<sup>56</sup> RCHME record card notes dated 1934, HEA, BF007554

<sup>57</sup> William Binney Associates, Property Condition Report, January 1997. This notes that the roof was 're-slatted approximately 8 years ago' (Appleby-in-Westmorland Town Council)

<sup>58</sup> Amy George, Curator (Textiles and Wallpaper) at the Whitworth Gallery was consulted on a photograph of wallpaper fragments kept in the mayor's parlour. In an email to Marion Barter dated 29 March 2018, she advised that the brown floral paper visible in Figure 49 'looks like a machine-printed 'sanitary paper, possibly turn of the century'.

<sup>59</sup> See endnote 58

<sup>60</sup> Appleby Council Minute Books, CASK, WSMB/A/2/1/6, 1795-1809

<sup>61</sup> Drawings dated 1968 by William Binney, Borough Surveyor for Appleby Town Council [Appleby-in-Westmorland Town Council, scanned copy courtesy of Blakett-Ord Conservation Architecture]

<sup>62</sup> Heelis, nd, 1, CASK, WDS 46/20/17

<sup>63</sup> The original form of the 1930s parapet and the lamps are depicted in historic photographs and drawn on the proposal plans by the Borough Surveyor dated 1968. Graham Coles notes that the 'castellated top' was removed in the early 1960s (Appleby-in-Westmorland Society Newsletter, 69, January 2007, 9)

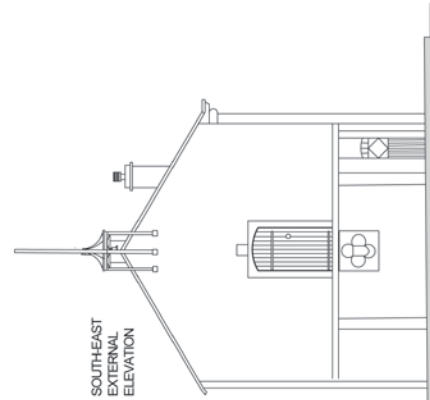
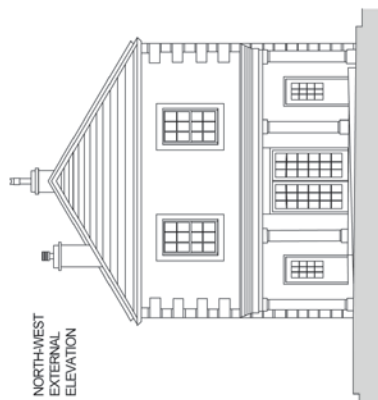
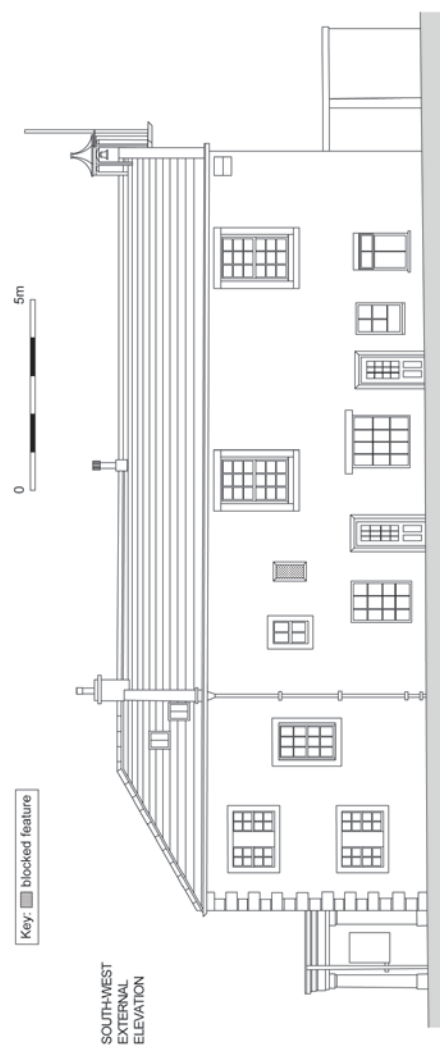
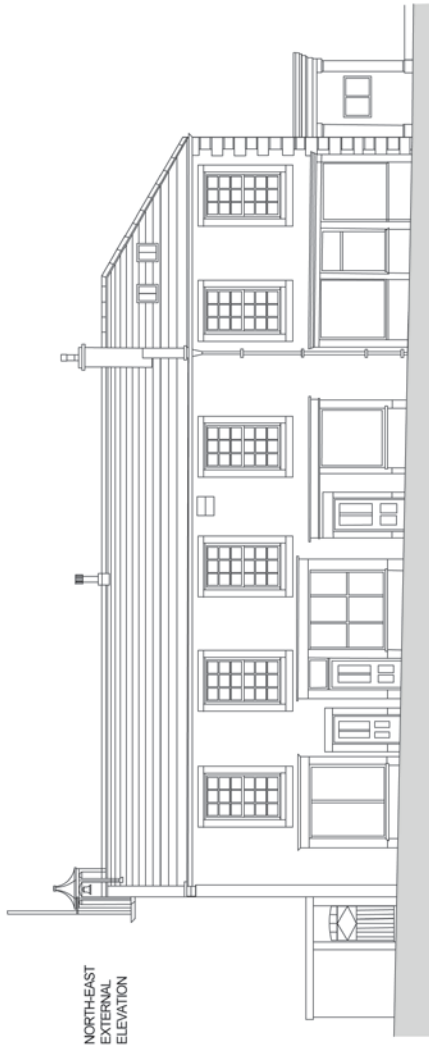
<sup>63</sup> Cobbett's *Rural Rides*, published in 1830, was critical of rotten boroughs. Quoted in Cunningham C, 1981, *Victorian and Edwardian Town Halls*. London: RKP, 1

<sup>63</sup> Hyde, M and Pevsner, N, 2010, *The Buildings of England: Cumbria*. London: Yale, 37

# APPENDIX 1: PLANS AND DRAWINGS

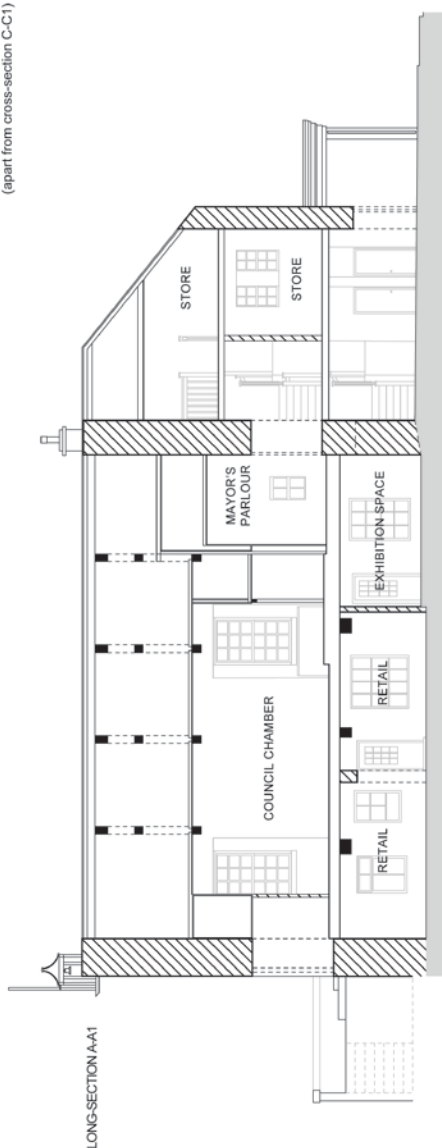
## Appendix 1.1: External elevations

Based on elevations produced by Blackett-Ord Conservation Architecture

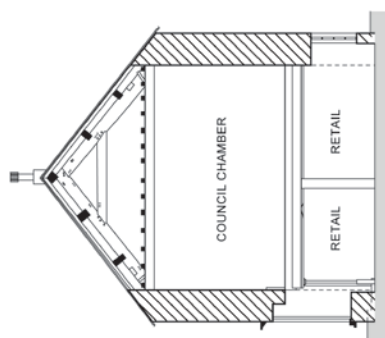


## Appendix 1.2: Sections

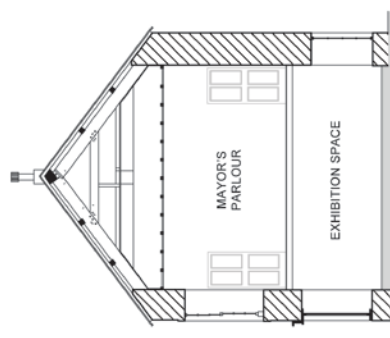
Based on sections produced by Blackett-Ord Conservation Architecture  
(apart from cross-section C-C1)



Key: cross-sectional wall continuation of line cross-sectional timber features to rear **4** room number



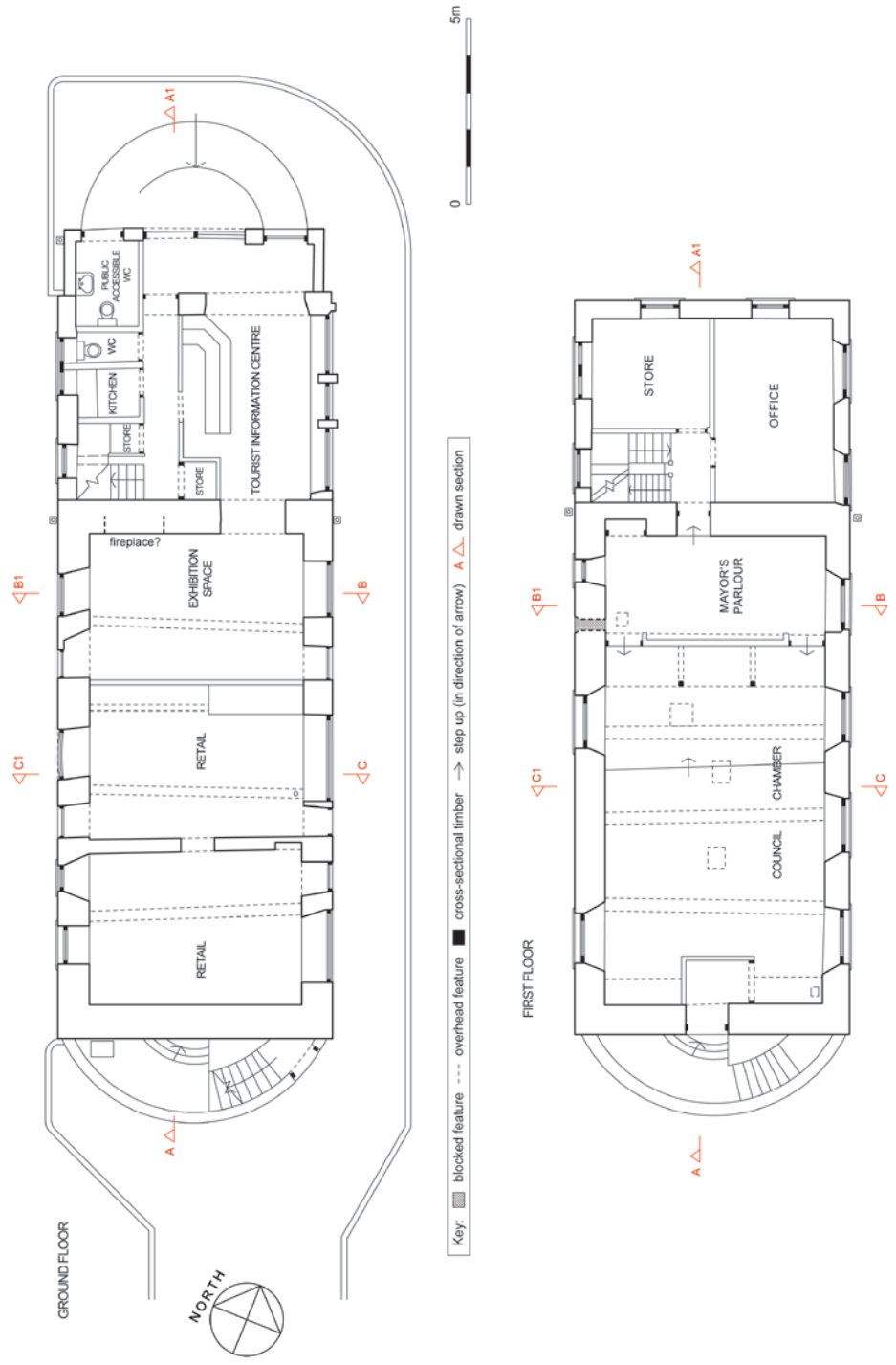
CROSS-SECTION C-C1



CROSS-SECTION B-B1

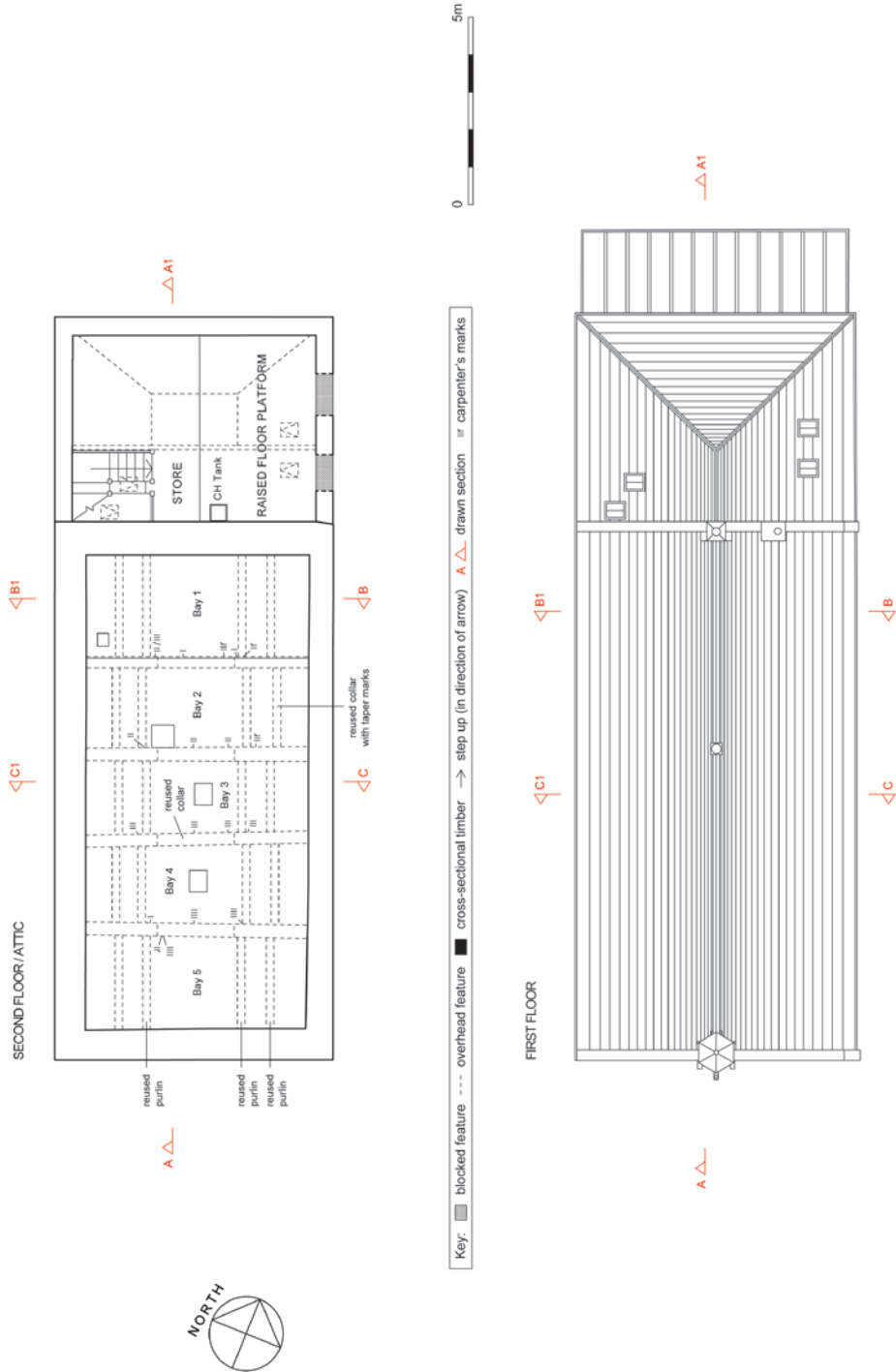
# Appendix 1.3: Ground and first floor plan

Based on plans produced by Blackett-Ord Conservation Architecture



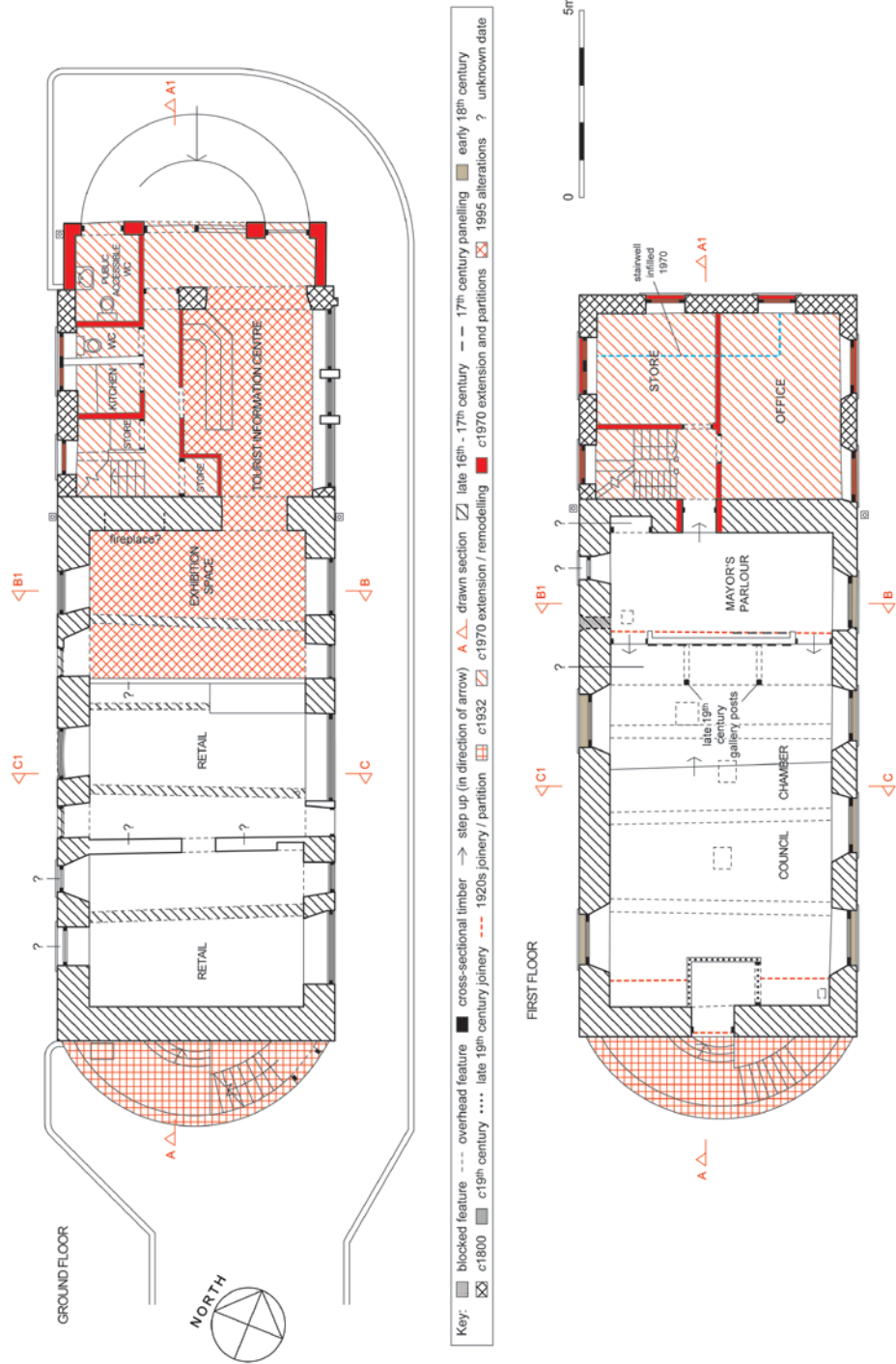
# Appendix 1.4: Second floor/attic and roof plan

Based on plans produced by Blackett-Ord Conservation Architecture



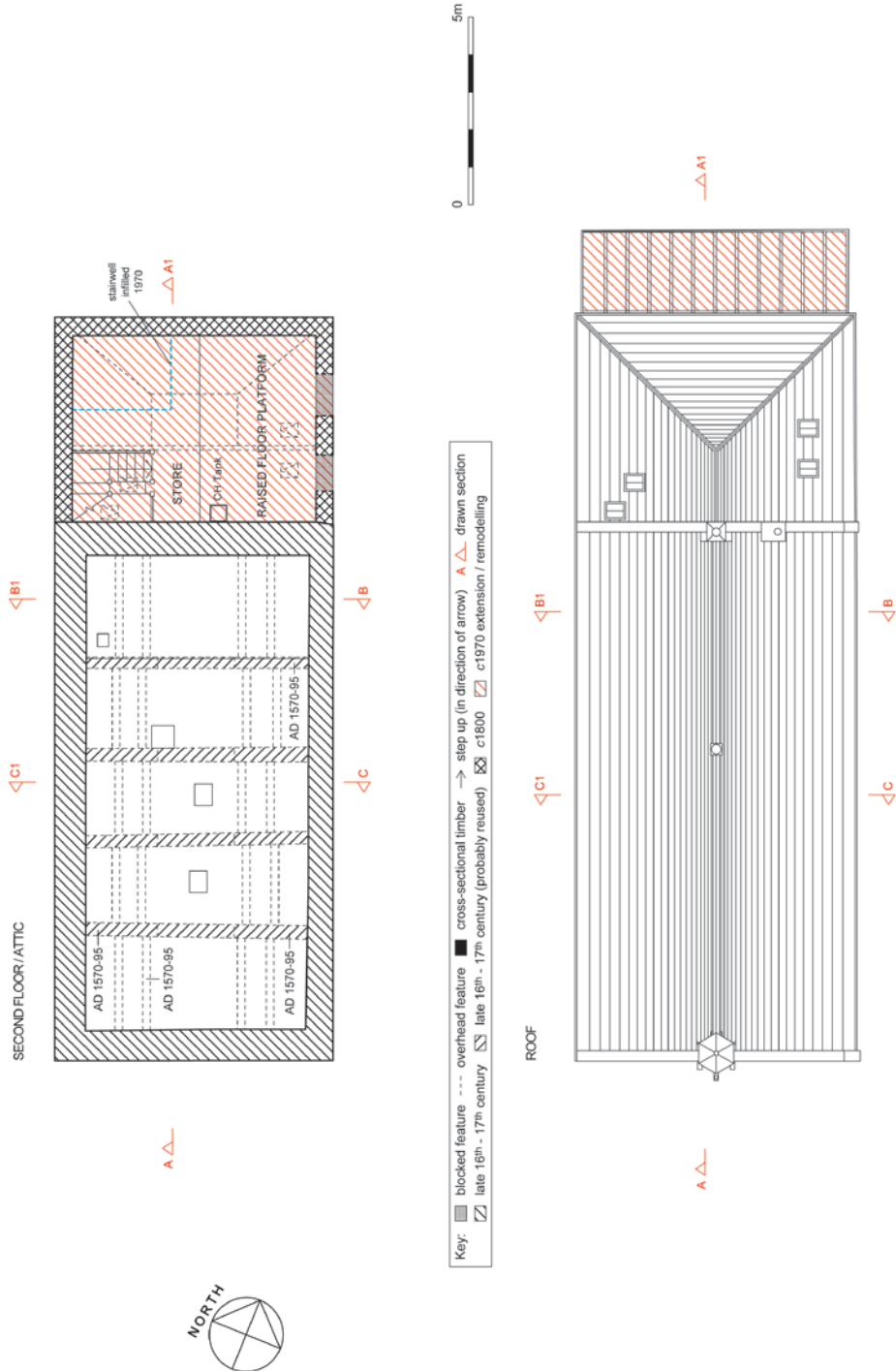
# Appendix 1.5: Phasing – ground and first floor

Based on plans produced by Blackett-Ord Conservation Architecture



# Appendix 1.6: Phasing – second floor/attic and roof plan

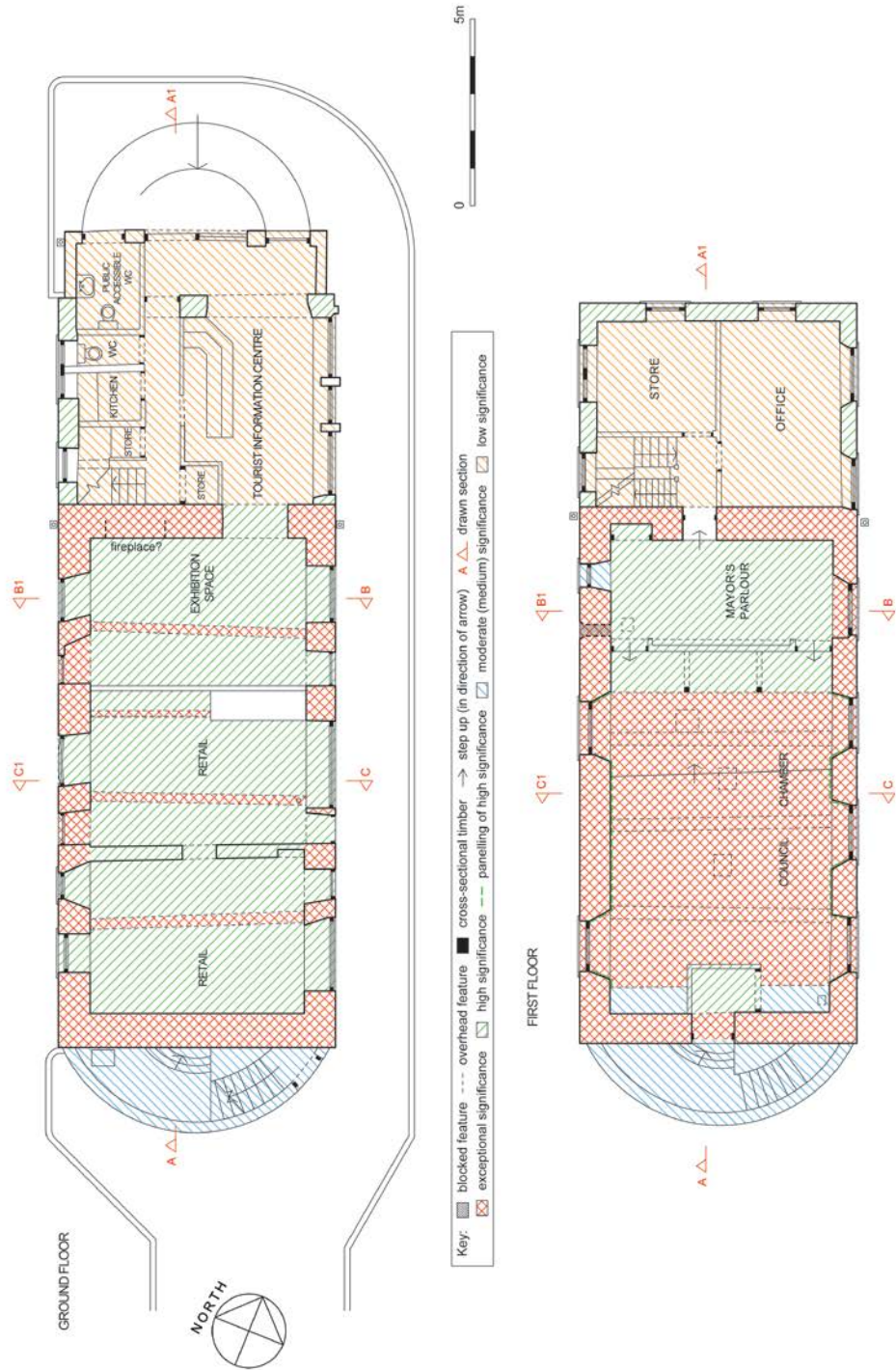
Based on plans produced by Blackett-Ord Conservation Architecture





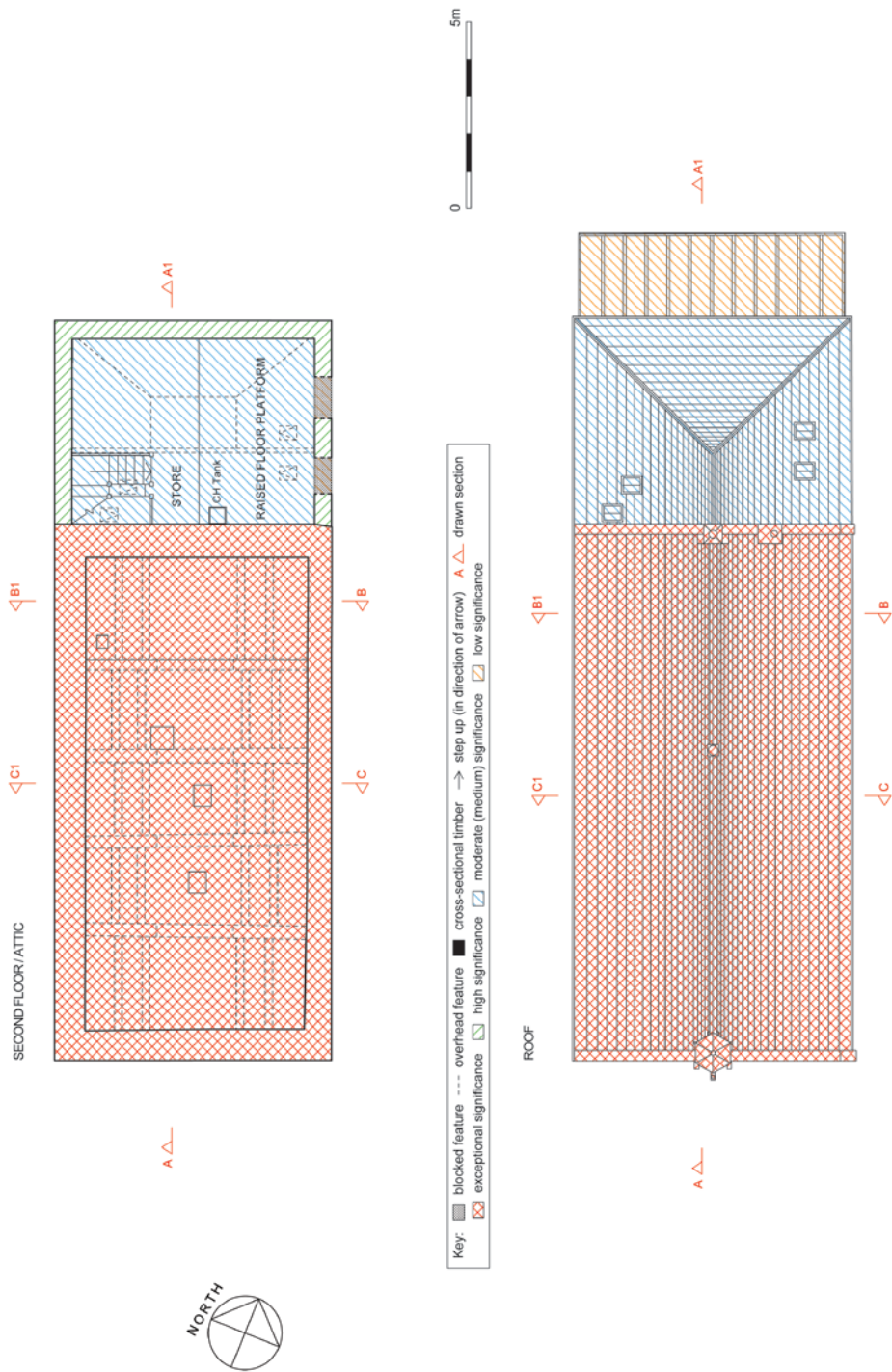
# Appendix 1.7: Significance – ground and first floor

Based on plans produced by Blackett-Ord Conservation Architecture



# Appendix 1.8: Significance – second floor/attic and roof plan

Based on plans produced by Blackett-Ord Conservation Architecture





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