

**Former Griffin and Fudge Premises,  
Whiteheads Lane, Bradford on Avon,  
Wiltshire**

**Standing Building Recording Project  
NGR ST 82734 61063**



By Kevin Potter BA MCIfA

**Avon Archaeology Limited**  
Bristol: September 2017



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## Abstract

Avon Archaeology were commissioned to undertake a programme of building recording at the former Griffin and Fudge Premises in Bradford on Avon, Wiltshire. The work was commissioned in compliance with the wishes of the building conservation officer of Wiltshire County Council. The work requested was not indexed to Historic England recording levels, but was described as a 'photographic survey'. This description conforms broadly with Historic England level II specifications, which were adopted.

The development will construct six new dwellings on the site and convert the Griffin and Fudge office building to provide two apartments and a commercial office unit. The original application (application ref: 16/03879/FUL) was rejected and the current development approved following appeal (APP/Y3940/W/17/3166946).

The former Griffin and Fudge premises comprise an L shaped office, which is the southern half of a larger and formerly gable ended building, fronting onto Whiteheads Lane, located in the north-east corner of the site; and an interconnected group of modern concrete block built industrial units to the west of the site. The office building is built of Bath stone and is almost certainly an extant part of a larger former brewery building of the G & T Spencer Brewery, which occupied the site at the time of the 1887 first edition Ordnance Survey. Originally four storeys, the property has been reduced to only two, the southern half of the gable end having been converted into a flat roof.

Although predominantly built of concrete block, elements of Bath stone masonry were observed within the walls of the industrial units, again probably remnants of the earlier Brewery.

A photographic record has been created of the entire property and is presented here accompanied by a descriptive account of the buildings. Illustrations have utilised existing plans and elevations.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Avon Archaeology Limited wishes to acknowledge the assistance given by the following in the production of this report, David Carhill Design, for commissioning and funding the project. The conservation officer of Wiltshire County Council, and the former co proprietor of Griffin and Fudge, Mr Griffin.

## NOTES

Avon Archaeology Limited has taken all care to produce a comprehensive summary of the known and recorded archaeological evidence. However, no responsibility can be accepted for any omissions of fact or opinion, however caused.

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## 1 THE SITE

The site (**Figures 1 & 2**) is located on the western side of Whiteheads Lane, centred on NGR ST 82734 61063 covering an area of approximately 0.12ha. The existing office fronts onto Whiteheads Lane while the former workshop buildings are accessed off Whiteheads Lane. It is bounded to the south by the rear of properties fronting onto Silver Street; to the west by an area of open (undesigned) land accessed off Coppice Hill; to the east by Whiteheads Lane; and to the north by a Quaker meeting room and former Whiteheads Lane Mill both of which are accessed off Whiteheads Lane.

The site is located in the historic centre of Bradford on Avon, a designated conservation area, and is surrounded to the south and west by numerous listed buildings.

The underlying geology of the site is located on the boundary of the Fuller's Earth Formation described in the British Geological Survey (BGS) Online Viewer as 'Mudstone. Sedimentary Bedrock formed approximately 165 to 168 Million years ago in the Jurassic Period. Local environment previously dominated by shallow seas'. Immediately north of the site the bedrock geology is represented by the Charfield Oolite Formation described by the BGS as 'Limestone. Sedimentary Bedrock formed approximately 165 to 168 million years ago in the Jurassic Period. Local environment previously dominated by shallow carbonate seas'. No superficial geology is indicated for the area.

## 2 METHODOLOGY

The building survey site work was conducted over the course of one day in August 2017. The work followed the criteria for a Historic England Level II survey, which is described as follows:

*This is a descriptive record, made in similar circumstances to Level 1 but when more information is needed. It may be made of a building which is judged not to require a more detailed record, or it may serve to gather data for a wider project. Both the exterior and interior of the building will be seen, described and photographed. The examination of the building will produce an analysis of its development and use and the record will include the conclusions reached, but it will not discuss in detail the evidence on which this analysis is based. A plan and sometimes other drawings may be made but the drawn record will normally not be comprehensive and may be tailored to the scope of a wider project.*

The survey was undertaken prior to any alterations taking place.

Plans and elevations were adapted from existing drawings provided by the client. All rooms and elevations were photographed and detailed photographs were taken of features of specific archaeological interest.

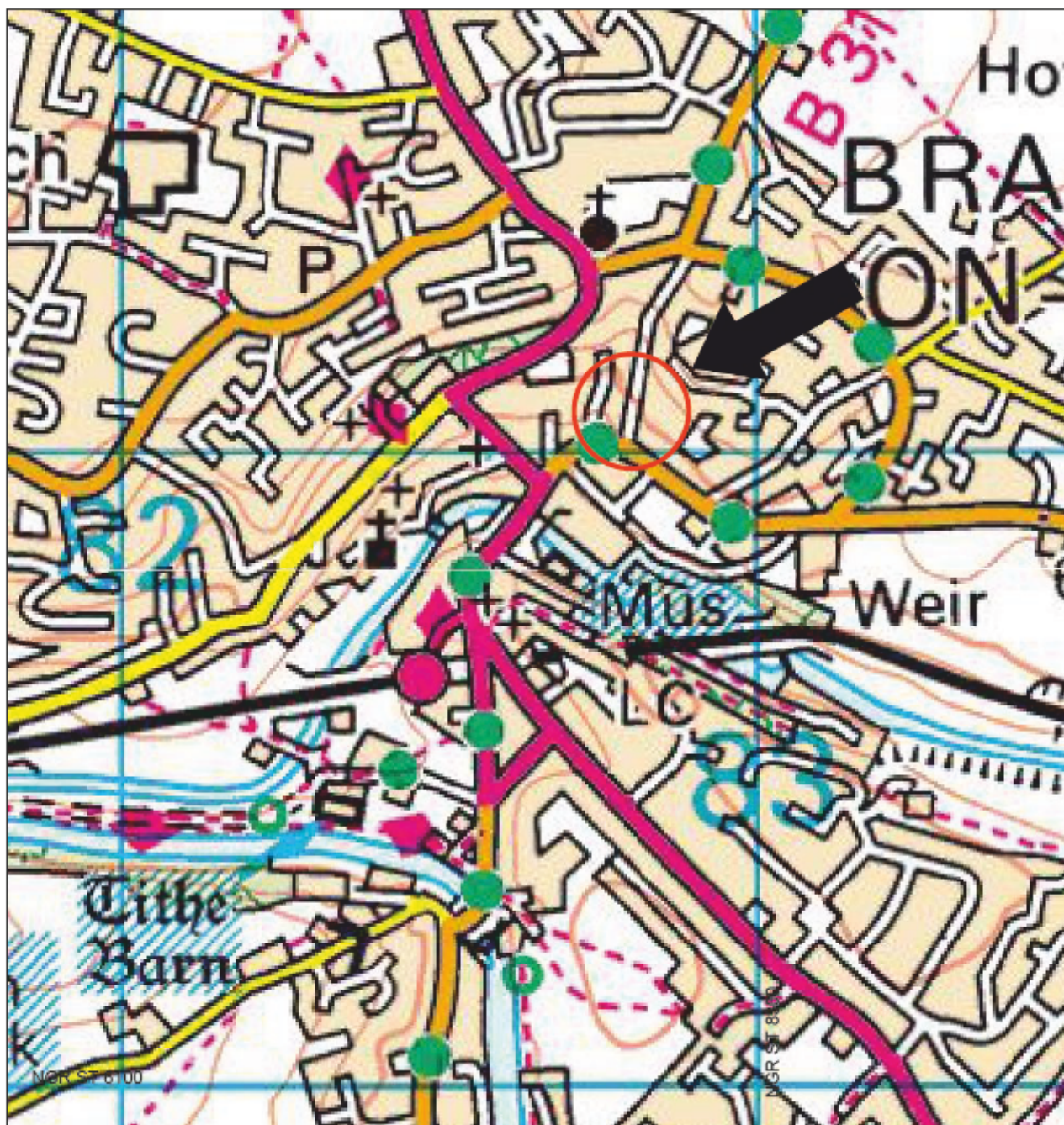
### *Phasing*

This report does not present a detailed phased chronology of the buildings on the site. Only two phases of development were observed, although more detailed study would undoubtedly elucidate a more detailed phasing. The phases reflect late 19<sup>th</sup> century structures, including the Griffin and Fudge office, which were originally part of the G & T Brewery and modern concrete structures plus modern alterations and cosmetic features.



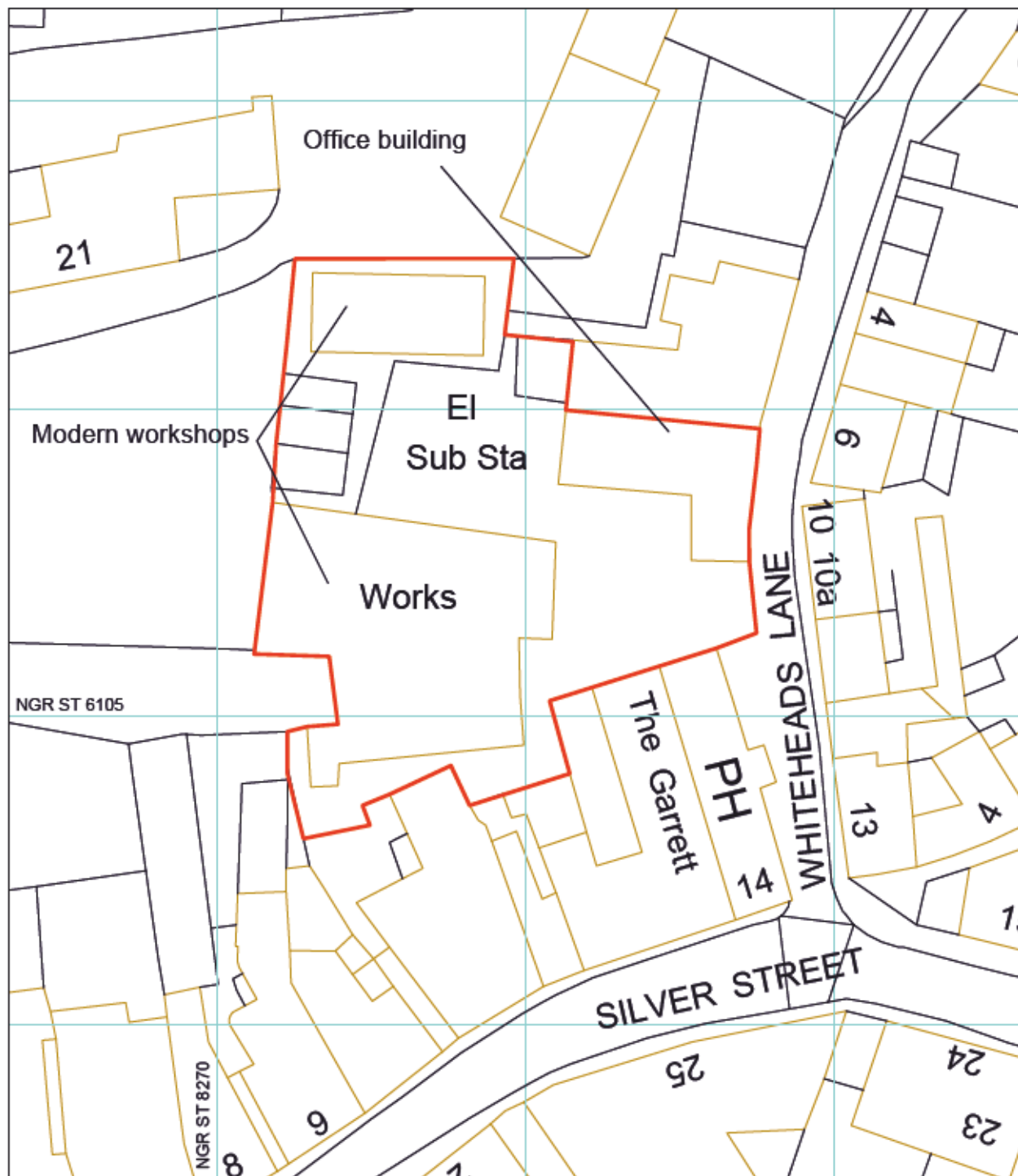
Figure 1

Site Location Plan





Site Plan showing location of buildings to be recorded



### 3 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The site which is the subject of this building survey was certainly occupied by a building by the time of the Bradford tithe map of 1841, and it is very likely that, being firmly within the core of the historic town, and not far from the river crossing (the 'broad ford' of the place-name) which gave rise to the settlement in the first place, the site had already seen long use by that date. Occupation, or activity of at least medieval date, might be expected on the site itself, or in the vicinity. Certainly the street frontage of Silver Street is likely to have been built up by the end of the middle ages, and it is possible that the Griffin and Fudge building stands in a so-called 'backside' area of yards, workshops, wells and other ancillary features lying in plots extending to the north behind houses on the frontage itself. It is, anyway, clear that Bradford was a thriving small town in the medieval period – it had already been formally recorded as a borough, with a functioning market, in the Domesday survey in the late 11<sup>th</sup> century, and had a fair, of probably ancient origin, that was recorded in operation in the late 13<sup>th</sup> century, and was still held as late as the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. Certainly, therefore, the historic core of the town is likely to have seen extensive, permanent occupation since at least the late Anglo-Saxon period, and it was certainly in existence as a named and bounded estate by that time.

The function of the building identified by the Bradford tithe map in 1841, which occupies the current site, is listed as a brewery in the accompanying award, and a house and garden next door to it were apparently occupied by the Spencer family, who operated the brewery. The building occupied by the business clearly, therefore, pre-dates the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, but its date of construction is problematic. The brewery business was closely associated with an inn on the Silver Street frontage, which established the brewery business on land to the rear of the inn building, although the date is vague. The inn traded under various names, such as the Angel, and then the New Bear. The brewing business had apparently been started in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, but the complex of which the surviving building is, apparently, a part, seems to have been constructed by a member of the Spencer family before 1837. The business expanded rapidly and acquired inns and pubs across a wide swathe of east Somerset, Wiltshire, Bristol, and even into Berkshire. It seems, however, as though the expansion eventually became over-ambitious, and the company, by this time known as G & T Spencer, was acquired by another firm of Wiltshire brewers, Ushers, in 1913, and went into liquidation in 1914. The premises had become an engineering works by the late 1960s, but it is unlikely that Griffin and Fudge occupied the building before the late 1970s or early 1980s, as the company was not formally incorporated (at least, under that name), until 1981. That company was itself formally dissolved in July 2011.



## 4 THE STANDING BUILDING RECORDING

### Description

#### *General*

The former Griffin and Fudge premises comprise a sub rectangular plot of land bounded by Bath stone walls on all sides. Access is through a set of modern metal gates in the eastern boundary wall. The site sits on the northern slope of the valley of the river Avon and is terraced into the slope. The northern boundary wall retains the terrace of the property to the north of the site while to the west the boundary wall retains the baulk upon which the Griffin and Fudge premises are built, above a lower terrace. The former G&T Brewery was connected to the retaining walls to the north and west of the site, the walls effectively forming the outer walls of the building. The Brewery buildings are shown on the 1841 Tithe map, which would suggest that the extant retaining walls may be of early 19<sup>th</sup> century date. They are built from random coursed limestone blockwork, which has been re-pointed using sand and cement but, where exposed, appear to have originally been bonded with lime mortar.

The former Griffin and Fudge office block (**Figures 3 - 4 & 6 - 8, Plates 1 - 4**) was also originally part of the G & T Brewery. Cartographic depictions show that originally it was physically connected to the wider Brewery complex, although the west facing gable end appears to be an original external elevation. Indications that the office was formerly connected to a larger building remain in the presence of a now redundant section of wall, with a vaulted archway, protruding from the south-west corner of the building (**Figure 7, Plate 1**). The Griffin and Fudge office comprises the southern half of a roughly T shaped building, bisected along its central east to west axis. Originally the T shaped building had a cross gabled roof, however the roof of the Griffin and Fudge offices has been reduced and is at the time of writing a flat roof (**Figure 7, Plate 21**).

Most of the buildings on the Griffin and Fudge premises are modern industrial workshop units constructed in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. There are three blocks of steel frame buildings, which are interconnected forming a U shape (**Figure 5**). The linking axis of the units runs roughly north-south parallel with, and very close to, the western site boundary. The east facing façade of each of the industrial units is clad with machine cut rectangular blocks of random (but following a regular pattern) coursed sandstone bonded with cement. Behind the façade the units are predominantly built from concrete block. Although remnants of random coursed Bath stone masonry, likely to be surviving elements of the former brewery, were present within some of the modern walls (**Plates 24 - 25**).

### Features

#### *The Griffin and Fudge Office Building (Figures 3 - 4 & Plates 1 - 21)*

The construction materials and architectural style of the former Griffin and Fudge office, which is the only building on site with a historically significant character, are consistent with the vernacular tradition of the area, the dominant characteristic being the use of Bath stone. Windows are predominantly metal frame. Those on the first floor are typically three light latch windows, divided into 12 panes. The ground floor is typified by more ornate arch topped one and two light windows, set in stressed Bath stone surrounds with pronounced keystones (**Figure 7**



**& Plates 1 & 10**). Of note is a round opening in the east facing façade, which is now blocked but may also have been a window (**Figure 8 & Plate 3**).

Internally the Griffin and Fudge offices are divided into three rooms on the ground floor (**Figure 3, Plates 5 – 10**) and six on the first floor (**Figure 4, Plates 12 – 20**); however the divisions are largely modern insertions, with the only original dividing walls separating the two distinct axes of the building on both floors. None of the fittings and fixtures present within the building appeared to be original.

#### *The Workshop Buildings (Figure 5 & Plates 22 – 29)*

There are three ranges of interconnected workshop units (**Figure 5**). The southern range (**Plates 22 – 23**) is the largest and runs east to west. It is essentially a single hangar with a smaller unit on its southern side, the latter divided into two. The roofs of both sections are pitched and constructed from corrugated metal sheet (**Plate 26**). Access is via two sets of large metal roller doors in the east facing elevation of each unit respectively (**Plates 22 – 23**). The floor is concrete. Of significance is the dividing wall between the two units (**Figure 5 & Plates 24 – 25**). It is constructed from random coursed sandstone blocks and is probably of 19<sup>th</sup> century date, associated with the former Brewery. The eastern end of the wall extends beyond the lean to structure (although not to the front of the hanger). Its ends in a return to the south, where there was an arched opening, which has been removed leaving it an isolated structure, although it was clearly formerly attached to the boundary wall of the site (**Plate 22**).

The central range (**Figure 5 & Plates 27**) consists of a single storey structure with a flat corrugated iron roof with a partition wall leading to the northern range. It is primarily constructed in concrete blocks with a Bath stone façade.

The northern range (**Figure 5, Plates 28 – 29**) is a two storey structure divided into smaller workshop spaces. It is constructed from concrete blocks with a face of Bath Stone on the south facing elevation.

## 5 CONCLUSION

The recording works presented in this report have shown that while many original features exist both inside and outside of the property, substantial remodelling during the later 19<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> century has destroyed much. The front rooms of No.28 were the best preserved during Leech's study in 2007 and remain so today. That said, the deterioration of the roof structure has led to water ingress and pigeon infestation which has caused damage to the structure. If left unchecked this decay will rapidly become worse. The floors, stairways and cornice (particularly the lantern cornice) is in particular danger.

While the basic external fabric of 2 – 8 Cave Street is essentially original there are few surviving internal partitions or features from its original 1828-30 construction. Aside from the general deterioration discussed above numerous other changes have occurred since the previous surveys of the building. Partitions, machinery and other features have been removed throughout.



To the rear of the building the collapse of the coach house of No.27 and former workshop roof has caused much damage. The coach house has been almost completely destroyed, while the former workshop is deteriorating rapidly and action is required to preserve any remaining original features, particularly the stairway.



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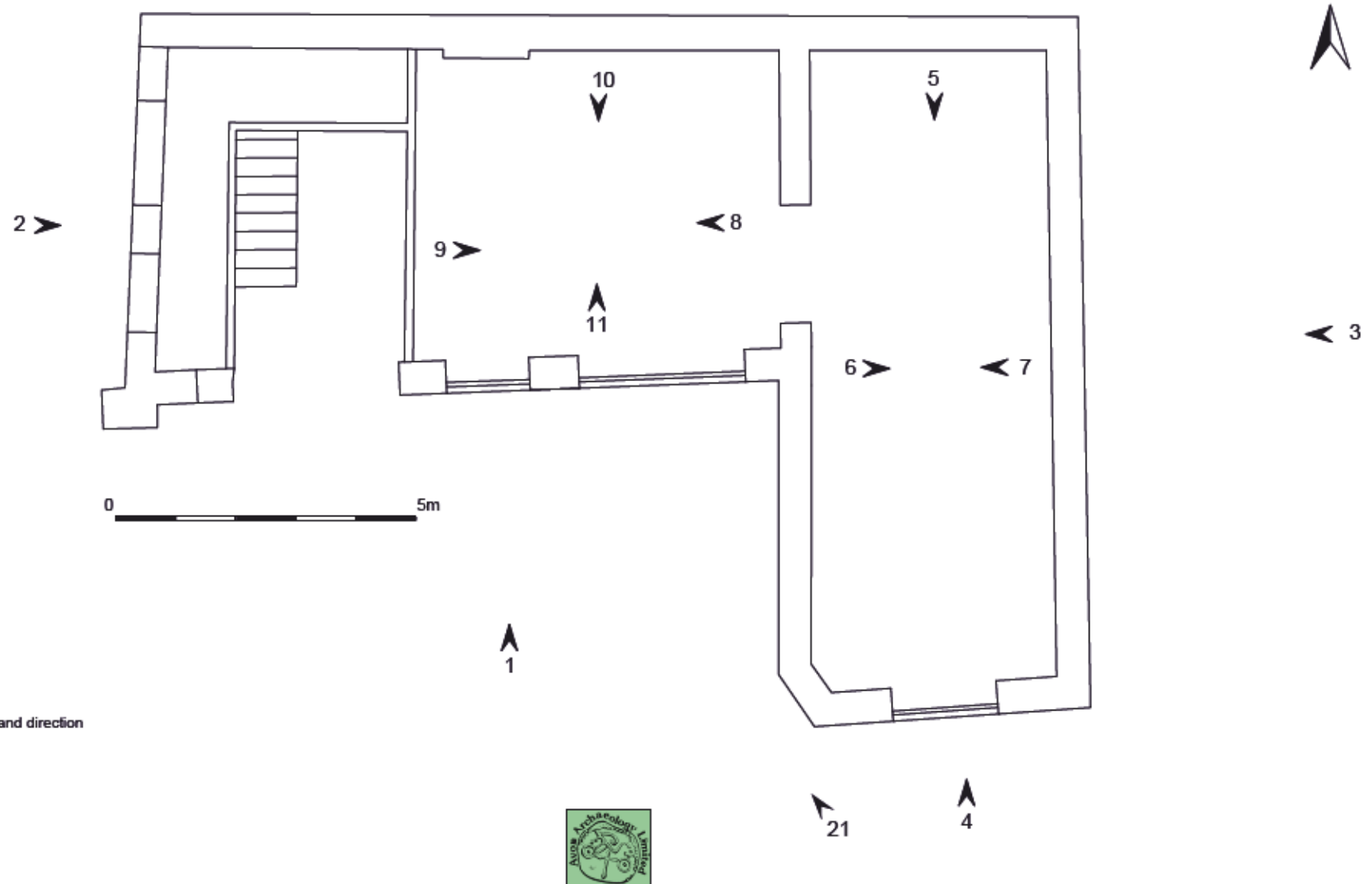
**Wiltshire Historic Environment Record** Accessed through the *Know your place* website:

<http://www.kypwest.org.uk/>



Figure 3

Ground Floor Plan of Office Building



First Floor Plan of Office Building

Figure 4

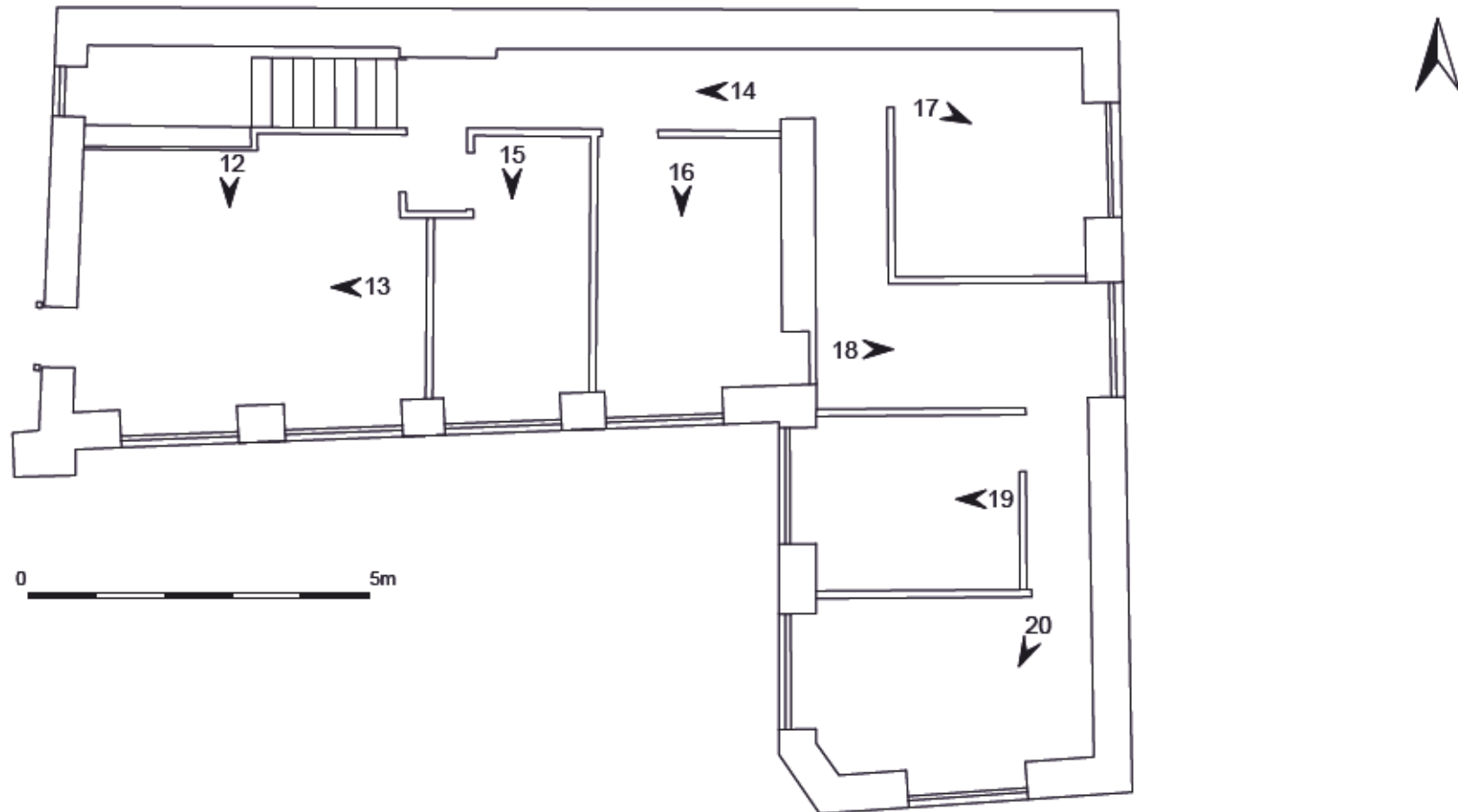




Figure 5

Ground Floor Plan of 20th Century Workshops

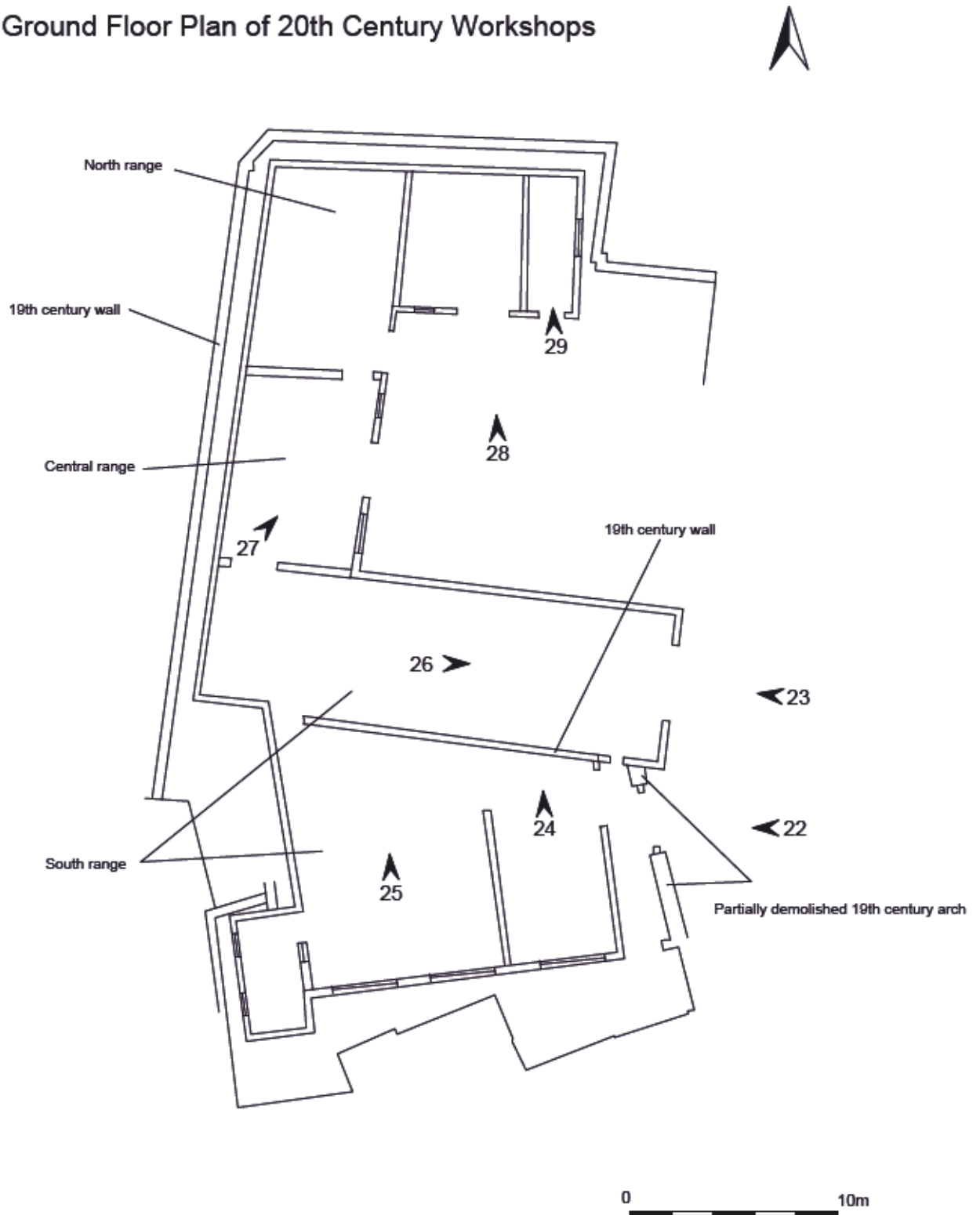
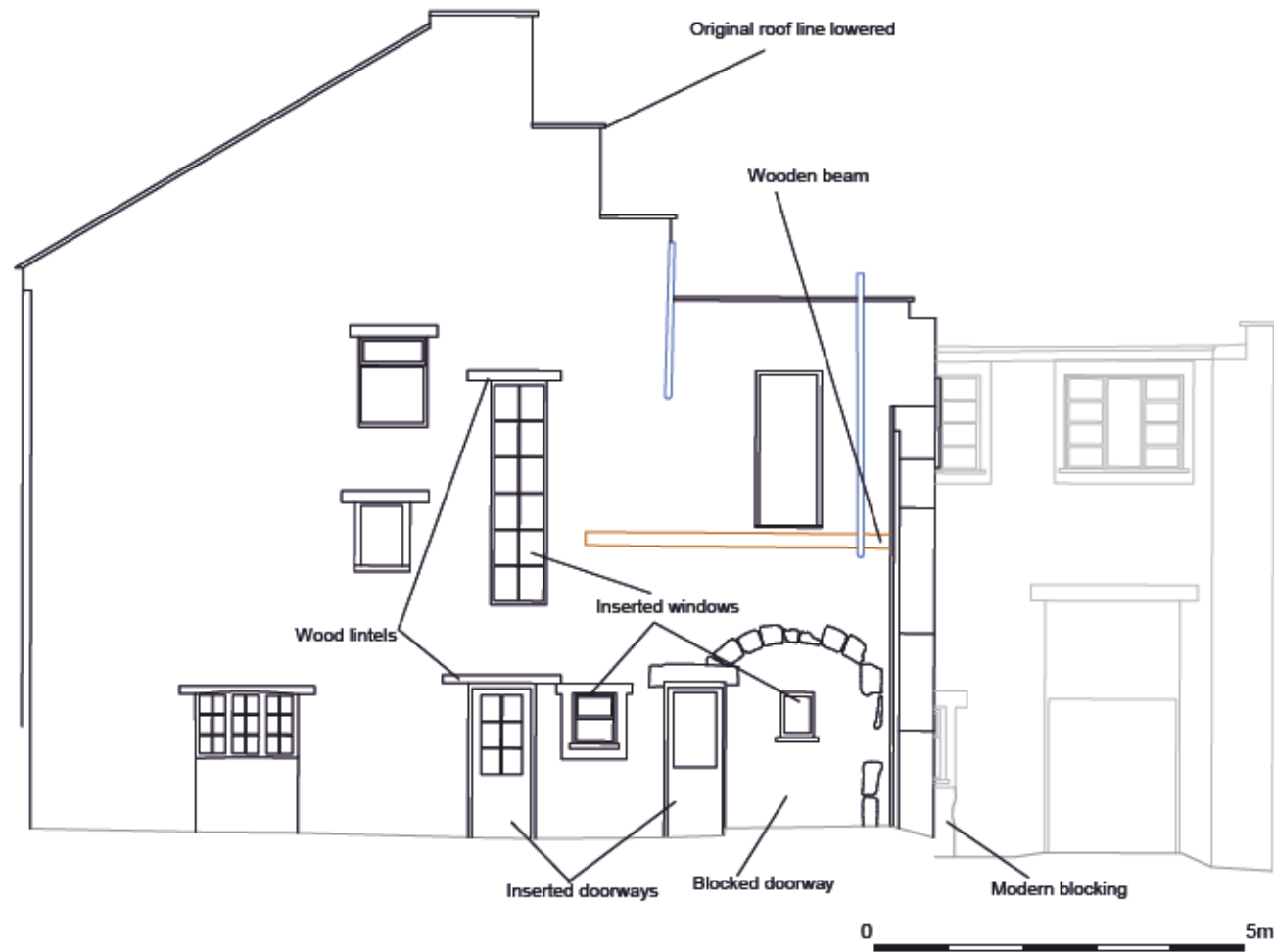


Figure 6

West Facing Elevation of Office Building



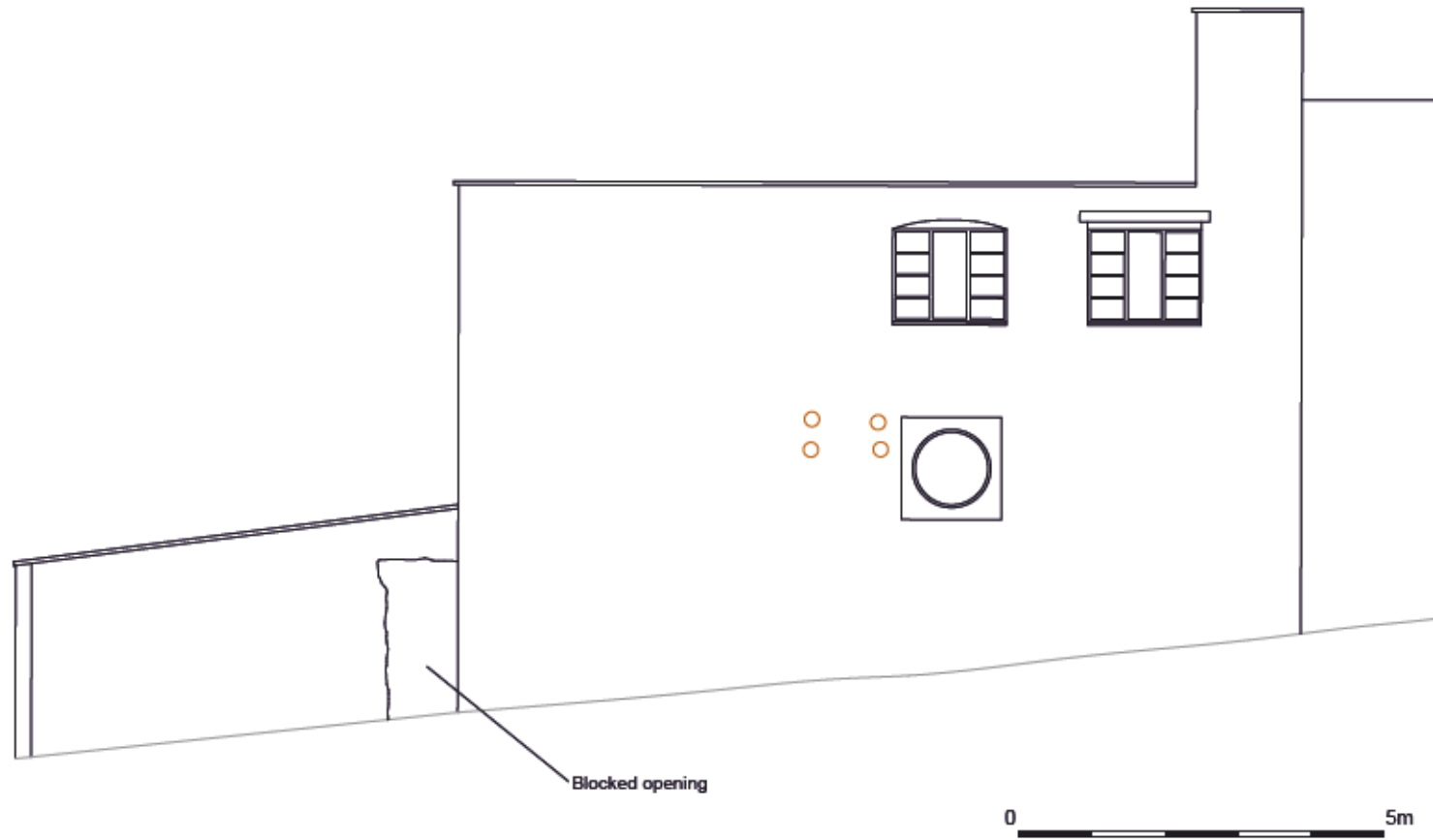
South Facing Elevation of Office Building

Figure 7



East Facing Elevation of Office Building

Figure 8



## PLATES



Plate 1: South facing external elevation of office building.



Plate 2: West facing external elevation of office building.



Plate 3: East facing external elevation of office building.



Plate 4: South facing ground floor external elevation of office building.



Plate 5: North facing ground floor internal elevation of office building.



Plate 6: West facing ground floor internal elevation of office building.



Plate 7: East facing ground floor internal elevation of office building.



Plate 8: East facing internal elevation of office building.



Plate 9: West facing internal elevation of office building.



Plate 10: North facing ground floor internal elevation of office building.



Plate 11: South facing ground floor internal elevation of office building.



Plate 12: North facing first floor internal elevation of office building.



Plate 13: East facing first floor internal elevation of office building.



Plate 14: Looking west along first floor corridor of office building.



Plate 15: North facing first floor internal elevation of office building.



Plate 16: North facing first floor internal elevation of office building.



Plate 17: West facing first floor internal elevation of office building.



Plate 18: Looking east along first floor corridor of office building.





Plate 19: East facing first floor internal elevation of office building.



Plate 20: East facing first floor internal elevation of office building.



Plate 21: Looking north west at original roof line of office building.



Plate 22: View through partially demolished 19th century arch to the southern range of the modern workshop building behind. Looking west.



Plate 23: Looking west at east facing elevation of central range of the modern workshop building.



Plate 24: Looking north at 19th century wall re-used as partition within the southern range of the modern workshop building (eastern end).



Plate 25: Looking north at 19th century wall reused as partition within the southern range of the modern workshop building (western end).



Plate 26: Looking east at west facing internal elevation of central range of the modern workshop building.



Plate 27: Looking north east at internal space of central range of the modern workshop building.



Plate 28: Looking north at south facing external elevation of northern range of the modern workshops.



Plate 29: Looking north at internal space of the easternmost room of the northern range of the modern workshops.