



**The Firs, Elgars Birthplace Museum,
Lower Broadheath
Building Recording**

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July 2018

EH1803-1

WSM70364

The Firs, Elgars Birthplace Museum, Lower Broadheath Building Recording

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The Firs, Elgars Birthplace Museum, Lower Broadheath

Building Recording

1. Reasons for this Report

This document has been produced by Elmwood Heritage, at the request of the National Trust for historic building recording in order to fulfil Condition 3 of the approved retrospective planning application Malvern Hills 17/01317/LB.

The work conforms to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Standard and guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures* (CIfA 2014) and Historic England's (HE) *Understanding Historic Buildings* (HE 2016). The work also conforms to a Method Statement prepared by Elmwood Heritage (EH 2018).

The report is also led by government guidance, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF; DCLG 2012).

1.1. Location

Historic building recording is required as a result of internal alterations that have been carried out to the listed building of The Firs, Elgars Birthplace Museum, Crown East Lane, Lower Broadheath, Worcester, WR2 6RH. It is located on the south side of Lower Broadheath and centred on NGR SO 80784 55641 (Figure 1).

Lower Broadheath is a small village located in the central area of Worcestershire, three miles north west of Worcester City centre. It lies on bedrock of Sidmouth Mudstone Formation (BGS 2018). This sedimentary bedrock formed in the Triassic Period, approximately 228 to 250 million years ago, in an environment previously dominated by hot deserts. This is overlain by 'slightly acid loamy and clayey soils with impeded drainage' (UKSO 2018).

1.2. Aims

The National Trust applied for retrospective planning permission, MH/17/01317/LB, to cover 'internal alterations' to the listed building of The Firs.

Permission was granted for this scheme by Malvern Hills District Council, application no 17/01317/LB, with a number of conditions. Condition 3 of the decision notice required that '*No development shall take place until a programme of archaeological work, including a Written Scheme of Investigation, and/or a programme of historic building recording, and interpretation, has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing*'. This is in accordance with Policies SWDP6 and SWDP24 of the South Worcestershire Development Plan and the NPPF paragraph 141.

The general aim of the building recording is to provide a descriptive and illustrative account of the building, including discussion of its local regional and national significance. Malvern Hills District Council required the building recording to be based upon the Historic England *Understanding Historic Buildings* (HE 2016) Level 3 survey.



Figure 1 Location of site

2. Methodology

2.1. Documentary Search

Prior to fieldwork commencing a search of Worcestershire HER entries (WSM numbers) was obtained from Heritage Gateway (HG 2018) and a search of grey literature reports of archaeological work was carried out with the Archaeology Data Service and the Worcestershire Online Archaeological Library. Information held on the National Heritage List for England (NHLE numbers) and on the Historic England website PastScape (NRHE numbers) was also accessed.

2.2. Fieldwork

Fieldwork was undertaken on 22nd June and 25th June 2018 by Shona Robson-Glyde. A Worcestershire HER number has been assigned to the fieldwork, WSM70363. A Nikon D7100 digital SLR camera set at large fine (24.2 MP) was used and two 1m ranging rods were used for scale.

A number of professional organisations have produced standards and guidance which the project will adhere to. The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) has produced the *Standard and guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures* (CIfA 2014). Historic England (HE) has produced *Understanding Historic: a Guide to Good Recording Practice* (HE 2016). A Level 3 survey is defined in the HE guidance as ‘*an analytical record, and will comprise an introductory description followed by a systematic account of the building’s origins, development and use*’.

The building recording consisted of the following elements:

Drawings

- Annotated measured plans to scale (based on supplied architects drawings)
- A site plan relating the building to other structures and to any related topographical and landscape features
- A plan or plans identifying the location and direction of accompanying photographs
- Phased ground plans
- Copies of earlier drawings of the building

Photography

- A general view of views of the building in its wider setting or landscape
- The external appearance of the building as a series of oblique images and at right angles to the elevations
- Further views showing the design intentions
- Overall appearance of the principal rooms and circulation areas
- External or internal detail, structural or decorative relative to the design of the building and its development or use
- Machinery, plant or evidence of its former existence
- Dates, inscriptions, signage, maker’s plates or marks and graffiti which contribute to an understanding of the building
- Building contents which have a bearing on the history of the building

2.3. Reporting

This report includes the following elements:

- Location of the building as an address and in the form of a National Grid reference
- The planning application reference number (MH/17/01317/LB)
- A note of any statutory designation (such as listing) and non-statutory designation (such as local lists and HER)
- Date when the record was made and the name of the recorder
- A summary statement describing the building, its form, function, materials and date
- Introduction setting out the circumstances in which the record was made, its objectives, methods, scope and limitations, and any constraints
- Acknowledgements to all those who have made a significant contribution to the making of the record
- Discussion of the published sources relating to the building and its setting, an account of its history as given in published sources, an analysis of historic map evidence (map regression) and a critical evaluation of previous records of the building
- Photographs of the building
- Account of the building's overall form (structure, materials, layout) and of its successive phases of development, together with the evidence supporting this analysis
- A location plan of the site and a photograph location plan
- Account of the building's past and present use, and of the uses of its parts, with the evidence for these interpretations
- Any evidence for the former existence of demolished structures or removed plant associated with the building
- Copies of historic maps, drawings, views or photographs illustrating the development of the building or its site (subject to copyright)
- Any further information from documentary sources, published or unpublished
- An outline of the significance of the building
- Full bibliographic and other references, or a list of the sources consulted

3. Site Information

3.1. Description

The Firs consists of a cottage and adjoining outbuildings now used as an archive store. The buildings are grade II listed, NHLE1178964, with the list entry describing the buildings as follows: *'House. Mid C19. Brick, parallel roof ridges, slate to front, tiled to rear, brick end stacks. 2 storeys; dentilled eaves cornice; 2-celled plan. Front elevation: 4 windows are 16-pane sashes, ground floor windows have cambered heads; central entrance has gabled porch on timber uprights, decorated barge-boards and central pendant; panelled door with cambered head. Coach house and stables, built by Sir Edward Elgar's father and uncle, W H Elgar and Henry Elgar, adjoin to left. Birthplace and home of Sir Edward Elgar (1857- 1934) from 1857 to 1859'* (NHLE 2018).

Cottage

The cottage is brick built with its frontage facing south onto a large triangular garden. It is believed to have been built in two sections with the rear part being older and the frontage an extension. A track that runs east to Oldbury Farm, and is now a public footpath, is to the immediate north of the

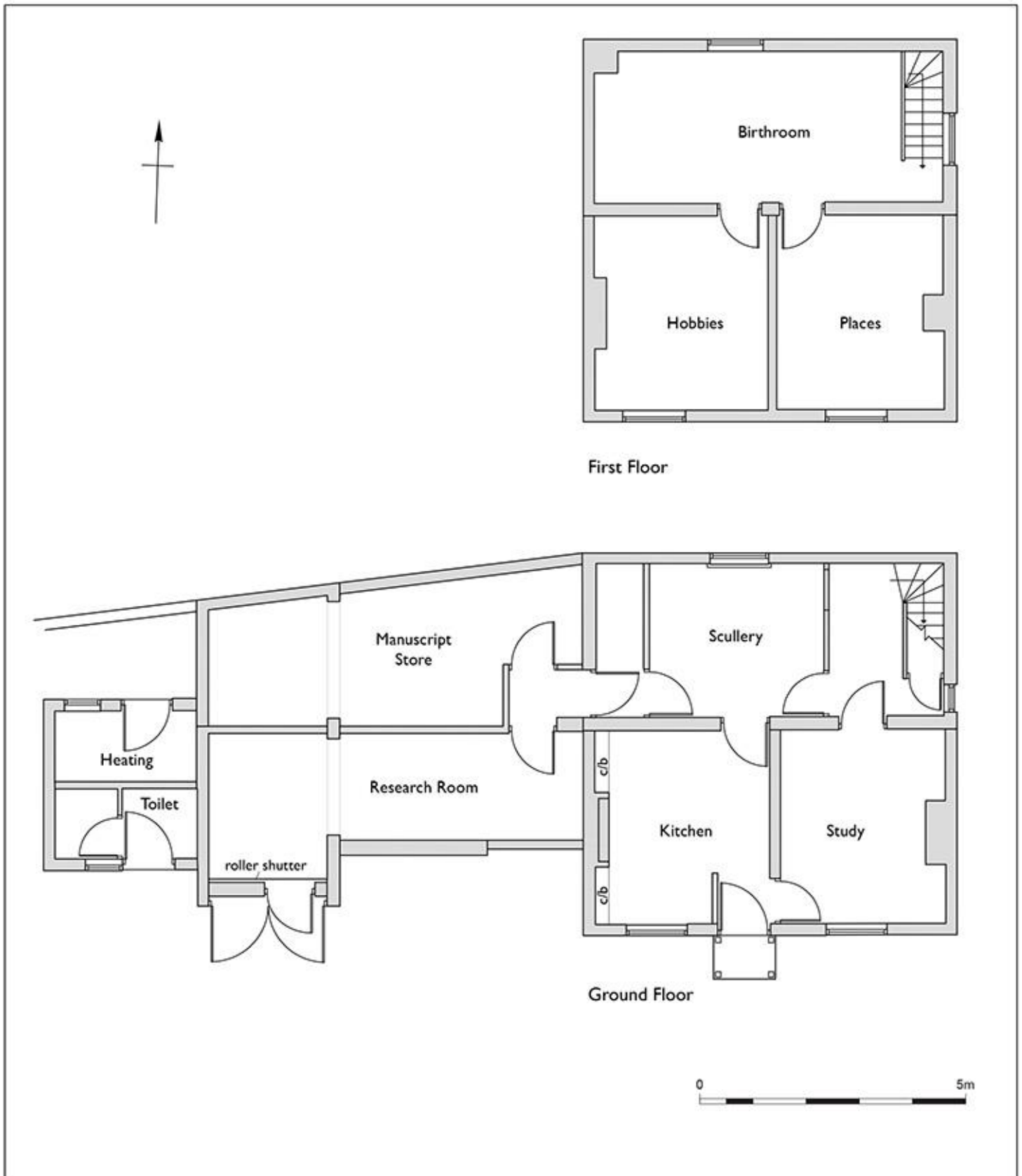


Figure 2 The Firs, Elgars Birthplace, as existing

cottage and its outbuildings. The front of the building (Plate 1) has a slightly off-centre door with an open gabled porch and 16-pane sash window to each side. There are two more 16-pane sashes to the first floor. The roof is M-shaped and gabled with the front part roofed in slate and the rear in plain ceramic tile. There are two chimneys built into the side walls of the front part of the cottage.



Plate 1: South, front, elevation of The Firs from the south



Plate 2: East elevation of The Firs from the north east

The west side of the cottage has the outbuildings attached to it. The rear elevation has a single 12-pane sash window on the ground floor and above this a 6-pane sash. The east elevation (Plate 2) is open to the garden of the adjoining modern property (Enigma House) and is not accessible in any other way. The first floor of this elevation has a 12-pane sash window and a small barred window on the ground floor.

Internally the cottage has a kitchen, study and scullery, with adjoining stair hall, on the ground floor. Upstairs there is the birthroom with two other rooms now used for hobbies and places exhibits.

Outbuildings

The outbuildings attached to the cottage consist of a number of small structures all attached to each other and all with plain ceramic tile roof coverings. Attached directly to the west wall of the cottage is a low-level building with a gable facing south that has scalloped bargeboards above a blocked opening (Plate 3).

Attached to the west wall of this structure is a taller building that projects further to the south. This also has scalloped bargeboards over a large set of double doors (Plate 3). The north elevation of both these buildings is blank.

Internally these two structures consist of two rooms and are used as a manuscript store and a research room.



Plate 3: South elevation of adjoining outbuildings

Adjoining these buildings to the west is another low-level structure. Again, it has scalloped barge boards on the south elevation over a doorway and a small window (Plate 4). The north elevation also has a doorway and window. Internally the building consists of two rooms used as a boiler room and a toilet.

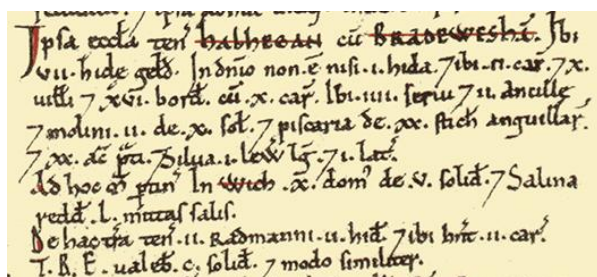


Plate 4: South elevation of adjoining outbuildings

3.2. Historic and Archaeological Background

The site, The Firs (WSM35420, NHLE1178964), is located on the southern side of Lower Broadheath village. Broadheath was originally part of Hallow parish but became a separate parish in the early 20th century. The village consists of two sections along the northern western and southern edges of a large common and to the north east of it. Historically there were two commons the smaller at Lower Broad Heath and the larger at Upper Broad Heath. This latter is the common still in existence today although it was originally much larger.

Evidence of Neolithic and Bronze Age activity has been found to the north and south of the site (NHREI16096 and NHREI16244) but evidence of settlement prior to the early medieval period has not yet been recovered. Hallow, which included Broadheath until the early 20th century, has an entry in Domesday Book (Thorn and Thorn 1982) showing that there was a Saxon settlement in the area. The Domesday Book entry is very detailed and states:



Hallow entry in Domesday Book

The Church itself holds HALLOW with BROADWAS. 7 hides which pay tax. It is not in lordship, except 1 hide; 2 ploughs there; 10 villagers and 16 smallholders with 10 ploughs. 4 male and 2 female slaves. 2 mills at 10s; a fishery at 20 sticks of eels; meadow, 20 acres; woodland 1 league long and 1 wide. To this manor belong 10 houses in Droitwich at 5s and a salt-house which pays 50 measures of salt. 2 riders hold 2 hides of this land; they have 2 ploughs. Value before 1066, 100s; now the same. (ibid, 2,68).

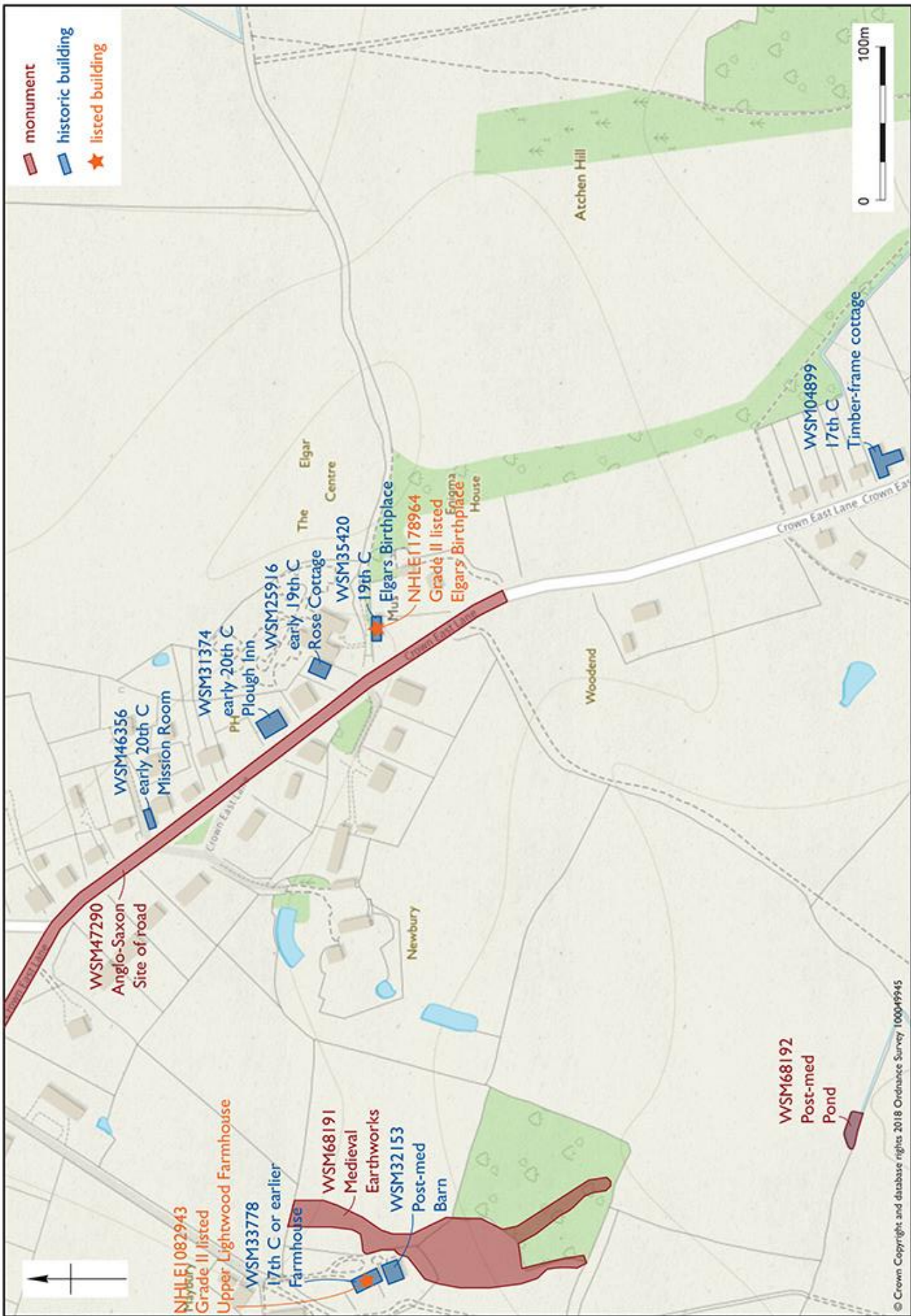


Figure 3 HER information

Both parts of the name Broadheath are probably Old English in origin and have been used in place-names since the 13th century (Ekwall 1960). In Old English broad was ‘brād’ and heath was ‘hæth’ and together they meant the same as today – wide or large open uncultivated land. This can be interpreted as the common still found in the southern part of the village. When the place name was first used for Broadheath itself, however, is not known.

To the west of the site, at Upper Lightwood Farm a large area of medieval earthworks has been recorded showing that settlement in the area can at least be dated back to this period. The earthworks (WSM68191) have been interpreted as former field boundaries and water channels possibly associated with a water supply to a moat. The farmhouse of Upper Lightwood (WSM33778) has been dated to the 17th century or earlier and is grade II listed (NHLE1082943). The listing description details it as being on a moated site that had been filled in in the 1980s (WSM41914). Adjacent to the farmhouse is a barn (WSM32153) that has been dated to the post-medieval period. To the south east of the farmhouse and earthworks is a post-medieval pond that is shown on historic maps.

Along Crown East Lane to the south of the site is Woodlands (WSM04899), a timber-frame house with a tiled roof, believed to date to the late 18th century. Rose Cottage (WSM25916), to the immediate north of the site, is a house of timber-frame with brick cladding that is believed to be early 19th century in date. It is shown on mapping of 1813 and therefore may even date to the late 18th century.

Close to the site is the later building, the Plough Inn (WSM31374). This structure is early 20th century in date and is first marked on the Ordnance Survey of 1926. The building was used as an air raid warden’s post during World War II.

North of the Plough is a mission room also built in the early 20th century (WSM46356). This building is constructed of corrugated metal panels in a style known as ‘tin tabernacle’. Many late 19th century and early 20th century churches and village halls were built around the country in this style. The structure was used as an art gallery and studio later in the 20th century.

In the fields to the north east of the site, a World War II searchlight emplacement, with accommodation huts, was built between 1939 and 1945 (NHRE1415170). Also during World War II, the Broadheath Scout Hut, on Bell Lane, was used initially as a base for the Sampson Patrol of Worcestershire Auxiliary Unit (NHRE1426176) and later as the headquarters of the local Home Guard (NHRE1426175). Both the Scout Hut and the searchlight emplacement structures have now been demolished.

3.3. Map Regression

Historic mapping of the area around The Firs can be dated back to the 16th century but the first map that showed any detail was produced in 1813 by Dawson (see below). This map was produced for the 1830s Ordnance Survey and included individual fields, woodland, contours and buildings. It shows no structure on the site but if a building existed at this time, it was small and may not have been large enough to be shown on the map.



1813 Dawson of Lower Broadheath and environs (location of site circled)

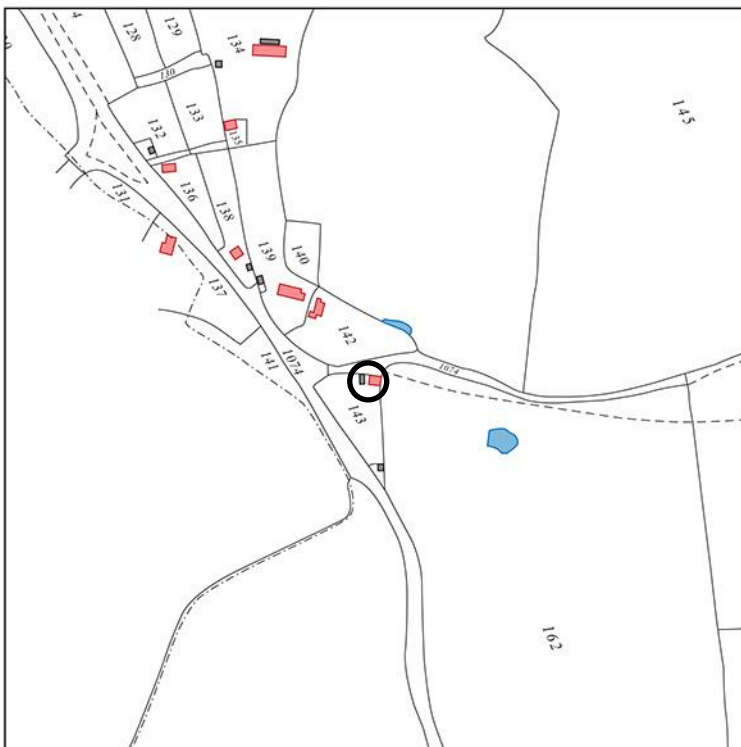
The 1830s Ordnance Survey (see below) shows much of the same detail, without the individual fields, and again shows no building on the site of The Firs. This is likely to be because at this time the cottage was too small to be shown on such a large map. The name 'Newbury' also covers the site and may be why no building is shown on the map.



1832 Ordnance Survey of Lower Broadheath and environs (location of site circled)

An 1841 tithe map of St John in Bedwardine (see below), now a suburb of Worcester, includes the Lower Broadheath area. This map was surveyed by James Webb and was used for the commutation of tithes. It is very detailed and shows individual houses coloured red and outbuildings coloured black.

The tithe map clearly shows The Firs marked red. It appears to be the same size as the cottage is today so the extension to the frontage had already been constructed by this time.



1841 Transcription of tithe map (location of site circled)

Interestingly, the map also shows, marked black, a small outbuilding to the west of the house. This may be a stable or an possibly a washhouse. Documentation (Collett 1981, p15), including the listing information, suggests that the existing stable (now a toilet and boiler room) was constructed by W H Elgar and Henry Elgar in the mid 1850s. Therefore it is more likely that the structure is washhouse and it still exists today.

From the tithe map, it can be seen how scarcely settled this part of Broadheath is at this time. Later



Transcription of 1885 OS



Transcription of 1904 OS



Transcription of 1928 OS



Transcription of 1971 OS

Figure 4 Transcribed sections of historic Ordnance Surveys, with the site marked in green

mapping (Fig 4) shows how this had changed by the end of the 19th century and through the 20th century. The 1885 map (Fig 4) is very similar to the 1841 tithe with only a few minor changes. However, the outbuildings adjacent to The Firs have been extended by this period and now seems to consist of three adjoining elements. The entrance to the cottage is shown off Crowneast Lane with a track running up to the frontage. A well is also marked in front of the outbuildings.

The 1904 Ordnance Survey (Fig 4) shows that a number of the buildings around the site have been extended by this time. The site itself has not altered with The Firs cottage and outbuildings being shown in the same arrangement as the previous map. This case is repeated on the 1928 Ordnance Survey (Fig 4) with no alteration of the site with the exception of a possible wall or fence joining the outbuildings to the cottage. Other buildings have been constructed to the north of the site by this time including the structure now known as the Plough Inn.

By the time of the late 20th century, as shown by the 1971 Ordnance Survey (Fig 4), there has been a lot of development in this area of Broadheath with houses being constructed to north, south east and west of the site. Again, little change has taken place at The Firs, with the outbuildings still separate to the cottage, although the well is now not recorded on the map. Documentation suggests that the well was filled-in in 1959 (Collett 1981, p16).

4. Building Development

4.1. Late 18th century/early 19th century

At some point in the very late 18th century or early in the 19th century a small structure was built on Crown East Lane, known as Crows Nest Lane at this time. It had a large room on both ground and first floors and possibly small subdivisions. The bricks of this structure measured 9" by 4 1/4" to 4 1/2" by 2 3/4" to 2 7/8" coursed in English Garden Wall Bond with three rows of stretchers to each row of headers (Plate 5). The bricks were mould made and generally copper brown (RAL 8004) in colour.



Plate 5: Detail of brickwork on original part of building

The original structure is the rear part of the cottage building and the join to the front part can be seen obviously in Plate 2 (above) and in Plate 6. The original structure had two windows on its north elevation (Plate 7) with flat-topped rubbed brick arches. There is no evidence of there being a door in the same elevation and it is likely that the doorway through to the southern part of the building or that into the manuscript store and research room was the original doorway into the structure (see Fig 2).



Plate 6: West elevation of the cottage from the south west, showing join between original structure (rear) and later (front)



Plate 7: Window on north elevation, original structure of late 18th century or early 19th century

4.2. c1830

Around the 1830s, the original building had an extension built against south elevation. This created a cottage much as we know it to exist today (Fig 5, Plate 8). The building was constructed of brick measuring 9 to 9 ¼" by 4 ½" by 2 ¾" coursed in Flemish Bond. The bricks themselves were mould made. It had two windows to both ground and first floor on the south elevation, all of which were 16 pane sash windows (Plate 9). The eaves cornice was dentilated (Plate 10) with a gap of two headers between each projection of two headers.

The building had three rooms on the ground floor. The front door opened into the sitting room which was adjoined by a drawing room (Fig 5). Both of these rooms were in the part of the structure built in this phase. To the rear, in the original part of the structure, was a large kitchen

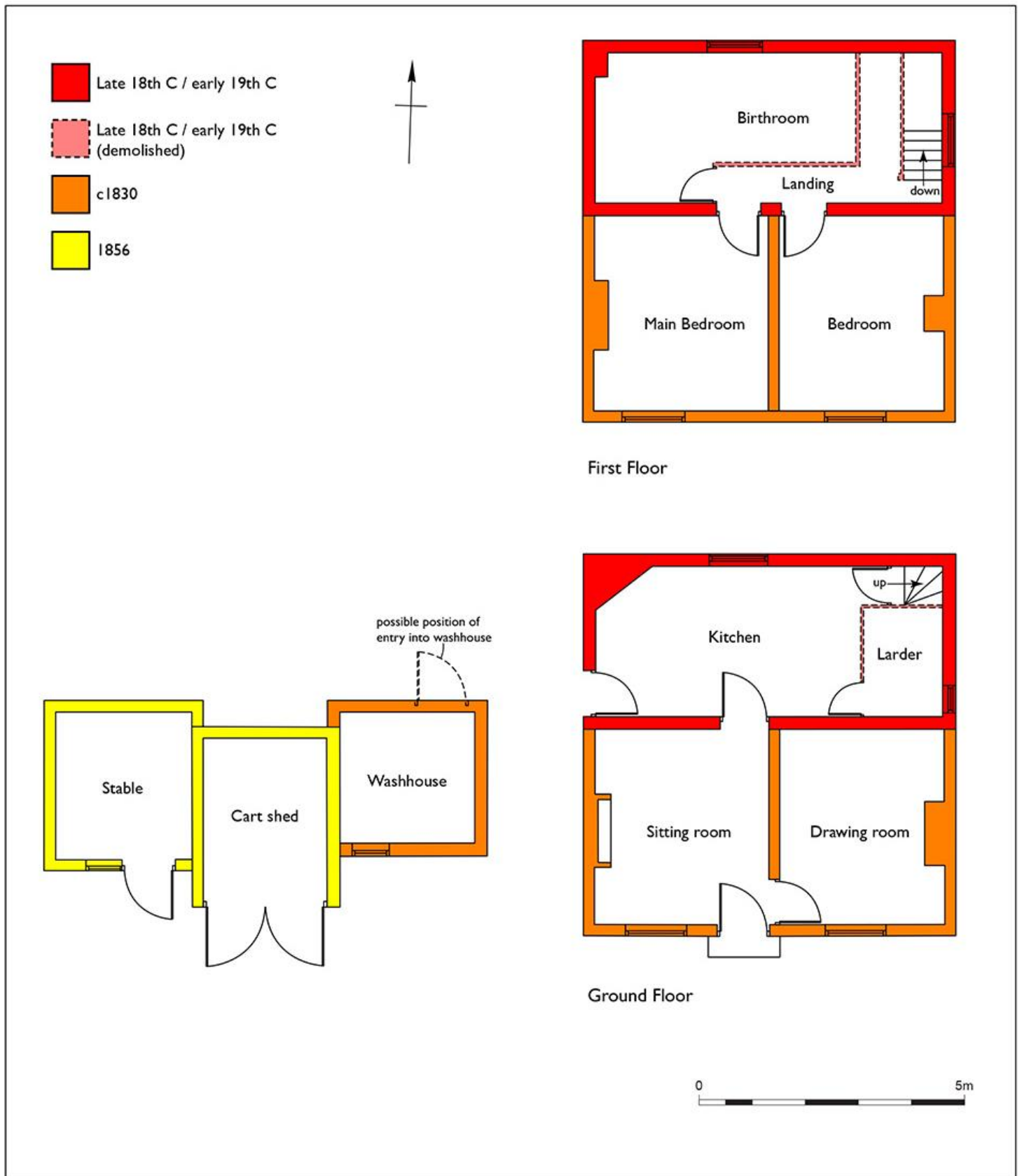


Figure 5 The Firs, Elgars Birthplace, in 1856



Plate 8: South elevation of cottage, c1830 phase of building

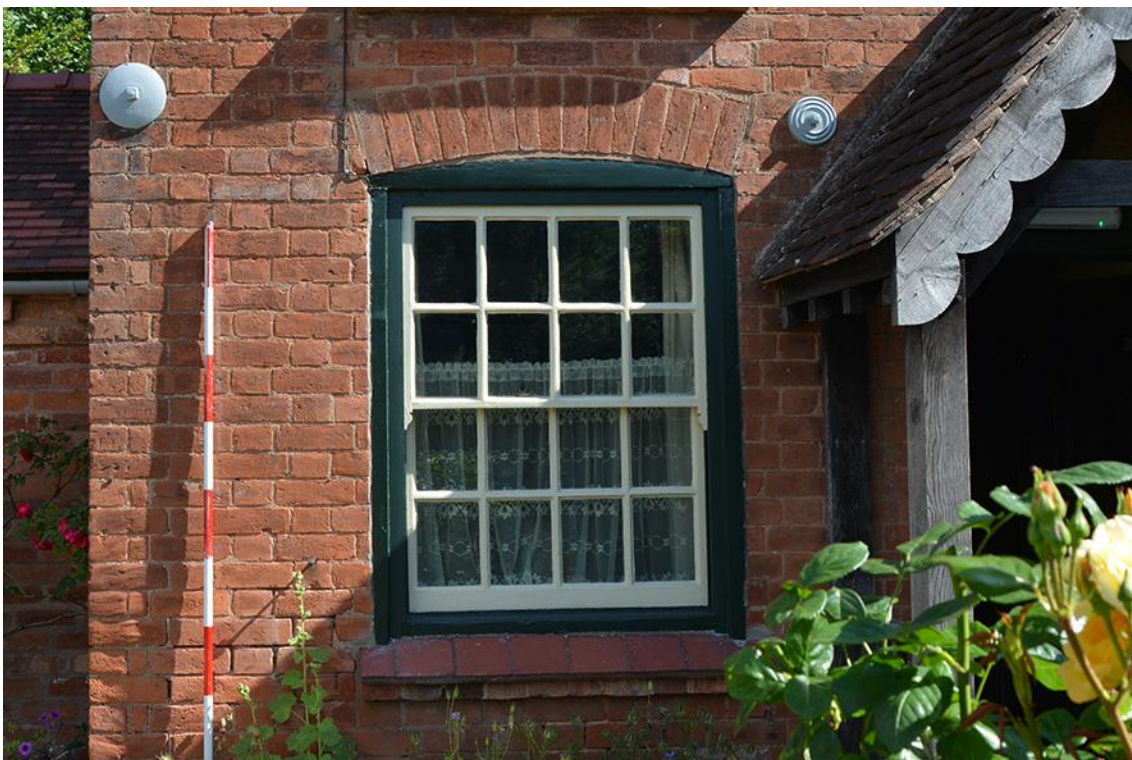


Plate 9: One of windows on c1830 extension of cottage

with a small larder in the east of the room. Stairs to the first floor rose over the larder and were incredibly narrow and steep, much as they are today. The first floor consisted of three bedrooms. The northern room, where the stairs had their head, had a division to create a landing and another

bedroom. Evidence of this division can be seen on the ceiling of the room still today (Plate 11). It was in this divided room that Edward Elgar was born in June 1857.



Plate 10: Dentilated eaves cornice of c1830 phase of building



Plate 11: First of cottage showing birthroom and evidence of division of wall (above and to right of cabinet)

Given that another structure was shown on the site on the 1841 tithe map (see above), it is probable that a washhouse was constructed at around the same time as the extension to the cottage. This building is shown on maps throughout the 19th and 20th century and still exists today (Plate 12).

This wash house was constructed with bricks measuring 9 to 9 ½” by 4 ½” by 2 ⅞” and coursed in Flemish Garden Wall Bond. This bond was typically used for outbuildings where appearance and structural strength was less important. It had a pitched roof and a small window on its southern elevation. Its entrance may have been on the northern elevation.



Plate 12: Washhouse west of cottage built c1830, note blocked window (left part only)

4.3. c1856

In 1856, the Elgar family moved to The Firs from Worcester City. The cottage at that time has been documented in ‘*Elgar Lived Here*’ by Pauline Collett (Collett 1981, 17). Later in 1856, Elgar’s father and Uncle, W H Elgar and Henry Elgar, built a stable (Plate 13) and cart shed (Plate 14) adjacent to the existing washhouse (Fig 5). The stable is constructed of brick measuring 9” by 4 ¼” by 3” and coursed in Stretcher Bond. The size and bonding of the cart shed is identical.

The stable had a small window on adjacent to a door on its south elevation. This door was most probable split with both top and bottom opening sections. Internally it would have had a feeding trough and hayrack which at this period would have been wooden. The cart has double doors on its south elevation, which still survive to today.

A drawing produced by a friend of the Elgar family in 1856, shows the cottage with a similar porch as that of today and shutters on the ground floor windows. Evidence of these could still be seen on the brickwork around these windows (see Plate 9, to left of window).



Plate 13: Stable of 1856 construction



Plate 14: Cart shed of 1856 construction

A postcard of this drawing, by John Chessell Buckler, was produced in the early 20th century and a number of features can be seen that are relevant to this phase of construction at the site. The stable and cart shed can both be seen, with a pony's head showing over the door in the stable and a cart in the cart shed.



Postcard of drawing produced by J C Buckler in 1856 showing Elgar's family

A small window can be seen on the south wall of the washhouse, adjacent to the cart shed, and in front of this the structure over the well is also visible.

The figures in the foreground of the image are all members of the Elgar family, apparently. The Elgars

moved back to Worcester in 1859 but returned to Broadheath to visit family in the area.

4.4. 1860s to 1960s

A number of different families lived in the cottage through the 19th century and into the 20th century.



Postcard of Elgars Birthplace c1920

Despite this, the historic mapping shows no change to the overall layout of the site during this time. An early 20th century postcard of the cottage shows that the garden had become overgrown and the porch had been replaced with a much inferior style than the original. This postcard also shows the shutters still in place on the house.

The first major changes probably took place in the 1930s, after the death of Sir Edward Elgar, when the cottage and outbuildings were acquired by the Corporation of Worcester (now Worcester City Council) as 'a memorial to Elgar's life and work' (Collett 1981, 16). It was officially opened at the Three Choirs Festival in 1938 with the garden restored, based upon the Buckler drawing, and a new porch added to imitate that shown on the drawing.

A post card from the mid to late 20th century shows the cottage with its garden restored and the new porch in place. However, there is no longer a well in front of the wash house, as was shown on the historic maps (Fig 3) and in the Buckler drawing. The well was covered or in-filled in 1959 (Collett 1981, 16).



Postcard of Elgars Birthplace in mid 20th century, post 1966

The postcard also shows that the washhouse is now attached to the cottage with a low-level, pitched, extension. This is likely to be the bedroom that was created from the

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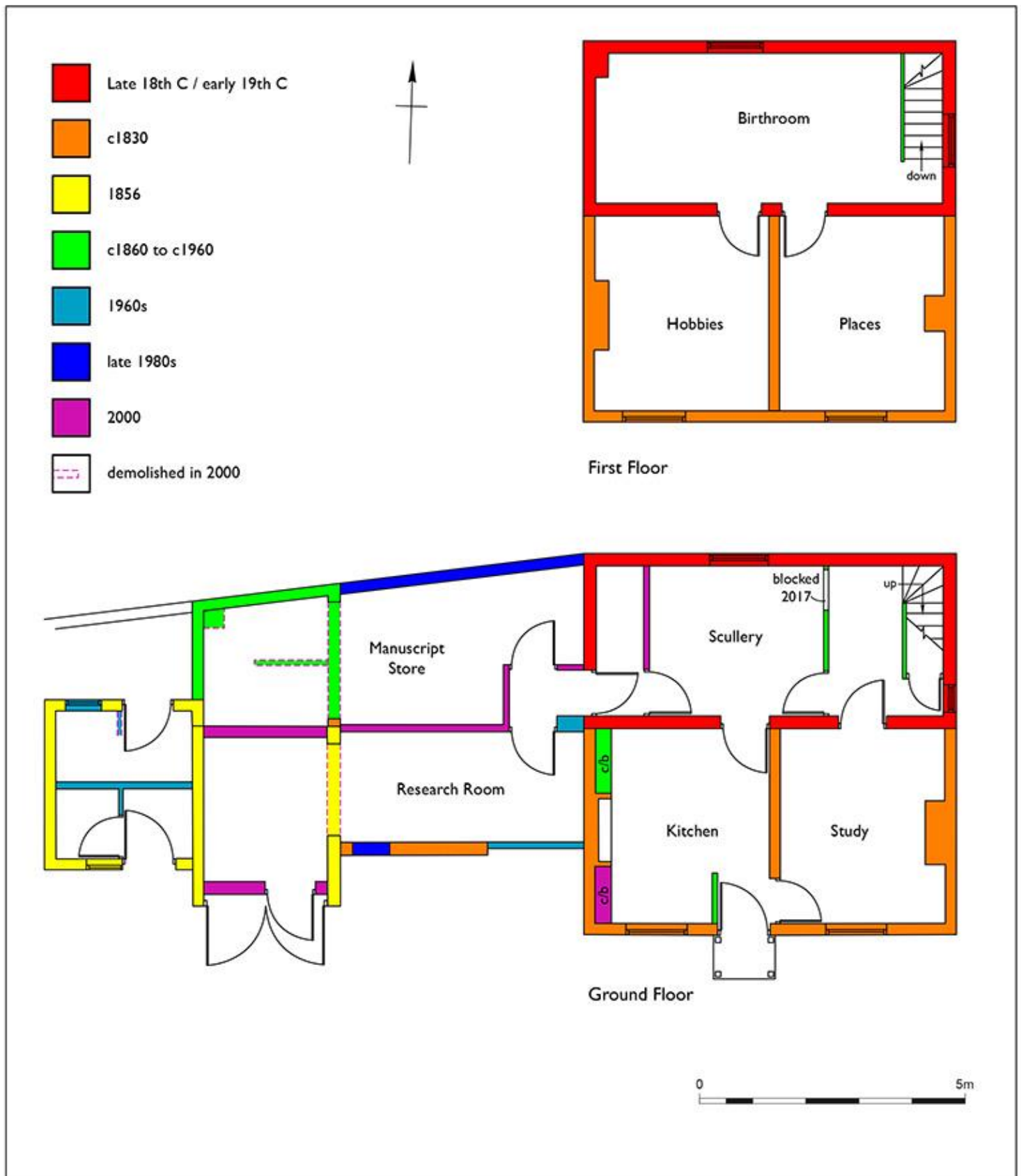


Figure 6 The Firs, Elgars Birthplace, phased plans

washhouse in 1966 (Collett 1981, 15; Fig 6 and Plate 15). The 1971 Ordnance Survey appears to show this extension (Fig 3). When the cottage was opened as a museum, a caretaker lived in part of the property and it is likely for this purpose that the extra bedroom was added to the cottage.



Plate 15: South elevation of bedroom extension of washhouse
can be traced in the fabric building.

In 1986, an application was approved for the conversion of the 1966 bedroom and bathroom and yard space (MH/86/00814/LBC) into a manuscript room. This caused the blocking of the small window in the south wall, originally part of the washhouse, and the construction of a wall to the north (Fig 6 and Plate 16). This manuscript room has been altered since the 1980s and its full appearance and layout cannot be ascertained.

An application in 1992 to demolish a '20th century partition on the first floor to create a safer environment for visitors' (MH/92/00684/LBC) was refused. This appears to relate to the division between the top of the stairs and the birthroom that may have been early 19th century in date. The partition was still in existence when Pauline Collett wrote her book *Elgar Lived Here*, as an image in the book (Collett 1981, p19 top) has been taken of the birthroom facing the partition and showing the landing and the top of the stairs. Despite this application being refused, that partition has been removed at some point since 1992.

A number of other alterations probably took place in the period between the late 1850s and the 1960s (Fig 6). The cart shed had an extension added to the north which included a division and a chimney in the north west corner. The staircase partition and balustrade, possibly the stairs also, were replaced, creating a small under-stairs cupboard. The scullery was subdivided with the division being paneled. In the kitchen, formerly the sitting room, a small partition was added to the side of the front door probably to create protection from draughts. A cupboard was also added into the recess on the north side of the fireplace in this room. The stable was altered to create two toilets with a central dividing wall and a new door and window being added into the north elevation.

4.5. Late 1960s to c2000

The planning history of the site (see Appendix 1) shows that a number of alterations to the cottage were approved between 1974 and 2000. Some of these



Plate 16: Blocked window in south elevation of former washhouse



Plate 17: Division added in the scullery, note how ceiling beams continue into wall

The 1998 application (MH98/01288/LBC) for 'ground floor alterations to provide a manuscript store and a research study area' is the application that relates to works carried out in the year 2000 that caused considerable internal modifications. The scullery was divided with a studwork partition (Plate 17)

and a cupboard was built into the southern recess beside the fireplace in the kitchen (Plate 18).



Plate 18: Division added in the scullery, note how ceiling beams continue into wall



Plate 19: Interior of new manuscript store facing west



Plate 20: Interior of research room facing east

The most intrusive alterations were carried out in the area of the cart shed and its extension, the former washhouse and the 1980s manuscript store (Figs 6 and 7). The new manuscript store and research room were created by knocking out the eastern walls of the cart shed and its extension and adding divisions to make two spaces (Plates 19 and 20). The northern walls of the outbuildings were not demolished at this time but were partly rebuilt in order to accommodate the new roofs of the manuscript store (Plate 21).



Plate 21: Northern wall of outbuildings from the north east

Other, undocumented, repairs to the building have also been carried out during the period between the 1960s and 2000. All but one of the windows have been replaced. Whilst, initially, these appear to be in keeping with the age of the building there are features of the windows that are incorrect. Multi-paned sashes do not need to have sash-horns. These small projections below the joint on each side of the sash were used to counteract the weight of the larger sheets of glass that were being used in the later half of the 19th century. They were used for windows with a single or two panes of glass in each sash and therefore would never have been needed for the sashes used on The Firs. The early postcards of the building show the windows (see above) without sash horns however the windows in the building today do have them (Plates 9, 22 and 23), with the exception of the ground floor window on the north elevation (Plate 7).

4.6. Post 2000

The planning history (Appendix I) shows that an application was approved (MH06/00926/LBC) in 2006 to convert the toilet, the former stable, into a tea bar. However, this change was never implemented, and the toilet still exists today.

The latest alterations that have been carried out to the cottage, for which this report has been necessary, have included cosmetic works to carry out needed repair to plasterwork, architraves and

stair rails. A door was re-hung, another doorway was blocked and a removeable panel over a ground floor window was created.



Plate 22: South, front, wall the cottage showing all four windows with sash horns



Plate 23: Detail of sash horns

5. Conclusions

The Firs, known as Elgars Birthplace Museum for many years, was originally constructed as a two-storey, two room building in the late 18th or early 19th century. It was extended in the early to mid 19th century around 1830 and a washhouse was also constructed at this time. In the 1850s the Elgar family moved from Worcester to live in the house, at which time it was known as The Firs, and built a stable and cart shed adjoining the washhouse. In 1857, Sir Edward Elgar, the famous composer, was born in the house before the family then moved back to Worcester in 1859.

A number of minor changes were made to the cottage throughout the 19th century up to the 1930s when the cottage, it's outbuildings and garden were bought as a memorial to Edward Elgar. When the cottage opened as a museum in 1938, a caretaker lived in the property and a new bedroom and bathroom were created from the former washhouse in the late 1960s.

Major alterations were carried out in the late 20th century with the creation of a manuscript store and research room. This required demolition of some of the walls of the cart shed washhouse and 1960s bedroom.

Visiting The Firs today, as it is presented as displaying the life and works of Elgar, it appears that little in the cottage has altered since the composer and his family left in 1856, however this has proven not to be the case. The full history of alteration and adaptation of the building, from its construction to the present day has been documented within this report.

6. Bibliography

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7. Appendix I: Planning History

The below table consists of the planning applications relating to Elgars Birthplace Museum. Those records in **bold** relate particularly to the cottage and outbuildings themselves.

App Number	Proposal	Status
74/01680/FUL	New Access & car park for 5 cars at	Approved
77/01356/OUT	Wardens flat waiting room car park and vehicular access.	Refused
82/00741/FUL	Summer house of rustic construction.	Approved
86/00813/FUL	Change of use for conversion of bedroom bathroom and yard into manuscript room	Approved
86/00814/LBC	Conversion of bedroom bathroom and yard into manuscript room	Approved
87/01400/FUL	New building to serve as visitor and study centre on land adjacent to Elgar's Birthplace	Approved
91/01748/FUL	New building to serve as a visitor centre for Elgar's Birthplace. Conversion of existing bungalow to use as a library and staff flat. New access via car park on land to the north	Approved
92/00684/LBC	Demolition of 20th Century partition on 1st floor to create a safer environment for Visitors & improve Display facilities on 1st floor. Restoration of 1st floor	Refused
94/00346/FUL	Construction of proposed Visitors' Centre relating to Elgar's Birthplace involving demolition of 'The Elms' bungalow.	Approved
97/00920/FUL	Demolition of Rose Cottage. Construction of replacement accommodation and activity workshop adjacent to the existing building.	Approved
98/01287/FUL	Internal alterations to ground floor. Provision of a new window.	Decision - Information
98/01288/LBC	Ground floor alterations to provide a manuscript store and a research study area.	Approved
99/00769/FUL	Extension to existing building to form reception/exhibition space and rooms in existing roofspace	Approved
00/00977/FUL	Provision of additional car parking spaces	Approved
01/01180/FUL	Erection of a 1.8 metre high sculpture	Approved
02/01809/FUL	Proposed new car park at Elgar's Birthplace Museum Trust	Approved
06/00926/LBC	Conversion of outbuilding used as toilet to form tea bar including internal alterations, repairs of existing joinery and providing new double glazing for window and new door with counter inside.	Approved
07/00642/FUL	Erection of single storey wooden Tea Shack adjacent to gable wall of existing Elgar Centre	Approved
07/01936/FUL	Addition of life-size sculpture of elgar	Approved
12/00481/FUL	Timber pergola (25m x 2.5m x 2.4m)	Approved
17/01317/LB	Internal Alterations (see annotated drawings for scope of works)	Approved

8. Appendix 2: Archive Information

The Archive consists of 100 digital photographs of the site and 3 pages of notes produced on site. Digital copies of the archive will be deposited with the Archaeological Data Service.

A copy of the report will be sent to the Historic Environment Record and will be lodged with OASIS the Online Access to the Index of archaeological investigationS.