



*Historic Building Recording at  
Stone House, Stone,  
Worcestershire*

*A report for Mr John Broadhurst*

July 2008

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**Project: PJ 215**



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# 1. Project Background

## 1.1. Location of the Site

Stone lies off the A448 Kidderminster to Bromsgrove Road, some 6 kilometres to the south-east of Kidderminster and around 6 kilometres to the north-west of Bromsgrove. Stone House is set back from the northern side of the road, behind the church of St Mary (NGR 386219, 275084). The imposing Georgian mansion house stands in an elevated position, with gentle slopes away to the A448 to the south-west and steeper slopes away to Fenny Rough, to the north-west.

## 1.2. Reasons for the Historic Building Recording

Stone House and a stable block to the rear are statutory Grade II Listed structures. The listing details are shown below: -

### The Stone House

*STONE CP STONE HILL (north side) SO 87 NE 7/119 The Stonehouse 25.2.58 GV II Small country house. Early C18 with some mid-C19 alterations. Brick with hipped tile roof and stacks to rear. Three storeys, brick coped parapet and band to each storey. Two plus three plus two windows: boxed glazing bar sashes under rubbed brick heads. Second floor: 9-pane sashes. Ground floor: 15-pane sashes. Central entrance has stone architrave under C19 porch. Interior: right-hand front room panelled with C17 style plaster ceiling; central open-well staircase with turned balusters (Ref: Images of England number 157109).*

### The Stable Block

*STONE CP STONE HILL (north side) SO 87 NE 7/120 Stable block about 15 metres east of The Stonehouse GV II Stables, now garages. Early C18 with some mid-C19 alterations. Brick with tile roof. One storey, with gabled cross-wings to each side which have brick coped verges and ball finials; attics lit by a circular window in each gable; band to ground floor, dentilled brick cornice to centre. Ground floor: entrance to left under segmental head; large double doors to centre; to right a 6-panelled door under segmental head. Centre of roof has an octagonal open-sided cupola with leaded dome, wrought iron weather vane and clock to base. Included for group value (Ref: Images of England number 157110).*

It is understood from the project architect, Steve Greybanks of Central Building Design, Kidderminster, that it is intended to present a Planning Application and Listed Building Consent application to Wyre Forest District Council regarding proposed alteration and modification to the building and associated outbuildings.

Based on the proposals, it was suggested by the Conservation Officer, Wyre Forest District Council, that the structures be photographically recorded prior to the presentation of any

application, and also a programme of historic research be carried out in order that the building and its context may be better understood.

## 2. Methods and Process

### 2.1. Project Specification

- ❑ The project conforms to the Standard and Guidance for the Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures (IFA 2001).
- ❑ The building was recorded to Level 1 as defined in Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice (English Heritage 2006).
- ❑ The project conforms to the service practice and health and safety policy as contained within the Mercian Archaeology Service Manual (Williams 2003)

### 2.2. Aims of the Project

The aims of the historic building recording were to compile an archive of the building within its topographical setting. This was to consist of written, drawn and photographic records. The results of the fieldwork were to be used to produce a report chronicling changes and development within the building(s) and where possible, to attach relative dates to individual phases of building. The documentary survey was to be used to assist the chronological phasing of the complex and also, to place the building into its socio-economic context.

### 2.3. Background Research

*Abbreviations used: -*

*WRO: ~ Worcestershire Records Office*

*KL: ~ Kidderminster Library*

Prior to the commencement of fieldwork, all known relevant and available documentary and cartographic sources were consulted.

The following cartographic sources were specifically consulted and were of use: -

#### **Cartographic Sources**

<b>Source</b>	<b>Reference Number</b>
Tithe Map and Apportionment of Stone (1841)	WRO BA 1572, s760/557
Plan of The Stone Farm Estate (1874)	WRO BA 1065/26-27, 899:118

Ordnance Survey 1st Edition 25".	Worcestershire Sheet 14.4 (1884)
Ordnance Survey 2nd Edition 25".	Worcestershire Sheet 14.4 (1902)
Ordnance Survey revised Edition 25".	Worcestershire Sheet 14.4 (1927)

Other sources used are referenced within the report.

### 3. The Documentary Research

According to notes prepared by the Worcestershire Naturalists Club for a visit to the gardens of Stone House as part of a field trip to the Beline Valley in the 1920's, the house stands on the site of the 'ancient manor house of the *de Stones*, who occupied the manor in the 13<sup>th</sup> century' (Worcestershire Naturalists Club 1923-31, 45). The de Stones held the manor from the 12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> centuries (VCH III).

The Land Tax Assessment for Stone began in 1787 and in this year Samuel Steward owned and lived at Stone House; it appears that at this time Stone Farm was also part of the estate, and Thomas Warr is also listed under the assessment, presumably as tenant of the farm. The assessments for 1793 to 1802 also indicate that Samuel Steward owned and resided at Stone House, with Thomas Allerton, John Broome and William Seagar also listed, again presumably as tenants. The 1812 to 1820 assessments show Thomas Steward as the proprietor, with tenants listed at 1818-20 as Lea, Horn, Giles, Pardoe and Jordan. It is recorded that William Lea M.A, son of William Lea esquire of Kidderminster, was born at Stone House in 1819 (Burton 1890, 166), indicating that Thomas Steward resided elsewhere, and the Lea family now lived at Stone House. William Lea senior had married Frances Turner, daughter of Jacob Turner of Park Hall, Kidderminster the previous year (New Magazine and Universal Register, Volume X, p576). The 1820 Worcestershire Directory lists a William Lea, gent, living somewhere in Stone and it seems apparent that this was William senior, who is referred to by Burton as a magistrate residing at Areley House at the time of his death in 1840. William junior became the vicar of St Peter's Church in Droitwich and in 1881 became Archdeacon of Worcester (Burton 1890, 166).

By 1840 the house was in the occupancy of Reverend Henry Evans (Bentley's History, Gazetteer and Directory of Staffordshire and Worcestershire 1840), who is also listed on the Tithe Apportionment of 1841 as the owner and occupier of Stone House. Nothing could be found regarding Henry Evans, though it maybe that he left Stone House in this year, as there is no record of him in the 1841 Census for Stone and in fact there is no reference in the 1841 or 1851 returns that can be linked to Stone House.

By 1855, Ironmaster J. Morris was at Stone House (Billing's Directory) and according to Worcestershire antiquarian John Noake, Morris was still at Stone House in 1868. The 1861 Census records Thomas Morris, Ironmaster incumbent at Stone House, with his wife Ann, daughters Charlotte, Emily, Adelaide and Nora, sons Thomas, Philip and Collingwood and

servants Ann Davies and Elizabeth Howells. The 1871 Census returns list Thomas Morris, his wife Ann, daughters Adelaide, Ann, Nora, son Thomas and daughter-in-law Sara. The family now had five servants, Elizabeth Alsop, Ann Howells, Mary Bennett, James Steadman and William Book. It cannot be determined from this if Morris was the owner, but a plan of 1874 in a sales catalogue regarding Stone Farm, shows that at this time Stone House was under the trusteeship of Mrs Evans and Miss Steward (WRO BA 1065/26-27, 899:118), suggesting that Morris may have been a tenant. Presumably 'Miss Steward' was a relative of Samuel and Thomas Steward who owned Stone House in the second-half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

By 1881, the Census returns record that Henry Howard, described as a 'master manufacturer and magistrate' is listed at Stone House with wife Alice, sons Stanley, Henry and Geoffrey and daughter Agnes. The family had seven servants who are listed as Mary Aspey (parlour maid), Jane Cope (cook), Henry Cope (coachman), Mary Brewer (housemaid), Ellen Tantrum (kitchen maid), Eliza Adero (help and nursemaid) and a dressmaker, Annie Jordan, is listed as a visitor. The Howard family were still at Stone House in 1891 (Census returns), Kelly's Directories for the years 1884, 1892 and 1896 indicate that the Howards' remained throughout this period, and according to Littlebury's Directory, they were there as late as 1931. The 1901 Census, however, suggests that on the day of the Census, the Howards' were away, as only servants are listed. Henry Howard was churchwarden of St Mary's church for some 62 years (Finney 1939, 20).

Interestingly, Kelly's Directory of 1896 refers to Henry Howard as occupier of 'Stone House and park', with the owner listed as Lieutenant Henry Calvins Russell-Oldnall.

The Kelly's Directory of 1940 lists Neville Garratt as occupying Stone House. The Garrett family moved to Canada during World War 2 and Stone House was used as a convalescent home for injured soldiers (Whiteman undated, 50; also Worcestershire Historic Environment record, The Defence of Worcestershire Project, record number WR 10638).

A transaction of 1952 indicates that in this year Mr Garrett sold Stone House to Harry Oliver of Westwood Park, Droitwich, for £10,250. The house is recorded as 'a mansion house called Stone House, outbuildings, garages, coach houses, stabling, farm buildings, glass houses and cottages' (WRO BA9306/115(iv), 705:1010) the sale did not include Court Farm (formerly Stone Farm), which appears to have always been in different ownership; a further document of the same year indicates that the new owner, Harry Oliver, sold 27 acres of land at adjacent Fenny Rough, to Mr Gough (WRO BA9306/115(iv), 705:1010), who farmed at nearby Dunclent Farm.

## 4. The Fieldwork

### 4.1. The Fieldwork Methodology

The buildings were visited on 27th May 2008 and a basic historic building recording (Level 1) carried out.

A photographic survey was carried out using digital photography.

Notes and sketch drawings were made, in order that the evidence of construction methods, building materials and build phasing could be assessed in combination with the photographic archive.

The methodology adopted and the favourable working conditions meant that the aims and objectives of the project could be fully met and the fieldwork was successfully concluded.

### 4.2. The Results

The Listed Building description for Stone House is shown above (section 1.2) and is little elaborated upon below. The following paragraphs highlight features and components of the build that can be interpreted for dating and phasing purposes and is not a descriptive essay.

It is clear from the evidence that Stone House (Plates 1-3) was built on the site of an earlier building and still incorporates fabric from this earlier build. A rear wing projection at the north-east corner of the building dates from the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The wing is constructed in hand-made 2 ¼" x 9" (average) bricks, which were typical of items used during this period (Plate 4). The steeply pitched roof is carried on the brick gable end and a hidden timber roof frame of which all that can be said without investigating below the plasterwork of the present ceiling is that it employs two tiers of purlins, with straight wind-braces and a collar truss. The plasterwork in the area of the first floor corridor within the wing is 'blown' and the hollow sound produced by gentle tapping on the wall suggests that there may be some timber-framing hidden beneath, though this is conjectural. The gable at attic level contains a three-light mullioned window (Plate 5); the central light has been replaced but the flanking lights contain 12 panes of crown glass with lead cames. This form of window supports the proposed 17<sup>th</sup> century date for this wing. The brickwork of the construction, however, presents an archaeological problem, as the early brick is interceded by a central band of later 2 ½" brickwork. This suggests either that the whole gable end has been rebuilt, with the older bricks at the bottom, a band of later bricks centrally, followed by a further band of older bricks up to the ridge, or that the central part of the building has been replaced. This may have been as the bricks used were poorly fired and soft; the remaining bricks are notably 'crumbly' in areas. On the face of it, the former would be the technically easier option; as to rebuild the central part of the wall would necessitate supporting the top ⅓ of the gable. However, the evidence from the brick coursing suggests that the latter is the case. The upper section of the older brickwork is cut off along a single joint, with a row of headers inserted below, and it seems likely that the newer 2 ½" brick below has concealed a window aperture for a second mullion window to this

elevation, which has been replaced with a *circa* late 19<sup>th</sup> century window, below a timber lintel. The 2 ¼" brickwork extends along the eastern elevation of the build and partly up the chimneystack, though it is broken by an inserted gabled dormer window, complete with brick parapets and gable shoulders. This also indicates that the present chimneystack position mirrors that of the earlier build. The narrow bricks can also be seen in the cellars, which lie below this wing, some raised on sandstone masonry (Plate 6).

At first floor level, a single bridging beam extends from the inner-wall (southern) of the wing to the gable, this is chamfered and stopped (Plate 7), but the stop is not visible at the gable end, indicating that it is buried within the later wall repair. Further similarly chamfered and stopped beams can be seen in the front south-eastern bedroom of the first floor, suggesting that the 17<sup>th</sup> century build is also enclosed within the later build in this area.

The east wing staircase is typically 18<sup>th</sup> century, with slender turned balusters and fluted newels and handrail (Plate 8). Treads from an earlier staircase survive below the first floor floorboards adjacent to the staircase rising to the upper floor; little can be seen of these, but there is a possibility that they are contemporary with the 17<sup>th</sup> century wing, rather than 18<sup>th</sup> century replacements (Plate 9).

The earliest available map showing Stone House is the 1841 Tithe Apportionment Map (Figure 2), although close analysis of this map questions its accuracy, with the width of the building being somewhat wider than it appears on the Ordnance Survey map of 1884. If this were correct, the 17<sup>th</sup> century gable end referred to above would have been enclosed within the building at this time, which cannot be the case. However, the planned shape of the building (ignoring proportions) appears to be correct.

A plan of 1874 relating to Stone Farm shows Stone House, however, this a little schematic and is not useful in interpreting the building development (WRO BA 1065/26-27, 899:118; Plate 10).

The documentary research located a photograph of Stone House taken in 1875 (WRO BA 1332, photo 48,555), unfortunately this image was copyright and could not be used for this project. However, a sketch of the photograph detail has been transposed onto the modern architects drawing of the western elevation (Figure 6). This shows that the western elevation has been extensively altered since 1875. The immediate obvious physical identifier is that the elevation is set with box sash windows with narrow glazing bars (Plate 11), which are a more recent type of window than the original frontage windows, which have thick glazing bars (Plate 12). The image shows that at this time, the house was a three-storied (plus cellars) double pile structure, with a two-storey projection at the rear, which had a gabled roof with parapet to the gable end. The upper floor of the main house has a pair of 9 light sash windows to the front bay, with the rear bay having a blank wall section where the chimneystack sits, followed by a single 9 light sash. The first floor front bay has a pair of 12 light sashes, with a pair of 15 light sashes at ground floor level. The rear bay has a wider sash to the rear of the blank walling with a tri-partite window below at ground floor level; this arrangement is repeated in the two-storied rear wing. There is also no stringcourse shown on the western elevation in the photograph and the southern (front) elevation is identical to today, with the exception that the porch had not yet been built. The two-storey rear projection must post-date 1841 as it is not shown on the tithe map of this date. Unfortunately, the evidence for this (masonry joint) will have been removed by the later alterations to this elevation.

A photocopy of a painting of the opposite eastern elevation, which probably dates from around the same time (Plate 13) shows the building prior to alterations made to the 17<sup>th</sup> century rear



wing projection (dormer window / raising of the parapet; Plate 4). The wing can be seen with its true steep pitched roof profile and a 9-light casement window, which was later replaced with a sash window, which is now partly covered by a further extension on this side. A lean-to glasshouse is shown against the eastern elevation of the Georgian build. The projecting rear annexe can just be seen and this is shown with at least one chimneystack, suggesting a domestic context, most likely as a service / servants range. The Georgian part of the build (front) is shown without the present raised parapet on this side.

The 1884 Ordnance Survey 25" map shows that at this time the main building was rectangular, with a projection at the north-west corner (the two-storey element shown in the 1875 photo) and a long wide projection at the north-east corner (shown in the second 19<sup>th</sup> century photo). A detached building is shown to the north-west, beyond the corner projection, this was most likely a service block or possibly a kitchen. The long wide projection to the north-east corner has now gone, but the footprint is partially fossilised as a garden feature wall with brick piers enhancing the corners (Plate 14), further evidence for this range may be buried; the early 20<sup>th</sup> century annexe at the south-eastern corner of the house utilises the southern wall of this former building as part of its northern wall.

The development of the site between 1884 and 1903, when the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition Ordnance Survey map was produced, is difficult to accurately determine, as the map does not differentiate between different elements of the build such as the main house and external lean-to structures and attached non-domestic buildings. However, it is clear that the building had been extended in the north-western corner, with the detached service block remodelled and now incorporated into a new rear service wing, with servants quarters above (Plate 15). It seems likely that at the same time the two-storey element at the north-western corner was raised to three stories and incorporated into a remodelled continuous western fenestration, with replaced windows and stringcourse to match the frontage; the present French windows at ground floor level are likely to be 1920's replacements. At this time the present kitchen was constructed between the service block and the rear of the building (Plates 16 and 17), infilling part of the former courtyard. The kitchen is reached via a lobby reached by steps down from the courtyard, which also contains the access to the main cellars. A corridor and paired doorways also lead from the corridor at the rear of the hall to the kitchen and service block. The rear corridor also appears to have been 'fashionably updated' at this time, with a series of ionic columns inserted along its length.

By 1926, the time of the revised edition Ordnance Survey map, the present east annexe had been built against the eastern elevation of the house, with access into it provided through a new doorway from the rear corridor of the house. Cellars below the annexe are hewn into the solid sandstone, with 3" brick rising from the levelled rock (Plate 18). The annexe is top lit, with a full length hipped lantern-light above the space (Plate 19). The purpose of this space is unclear, but the construction suggests that light was important, but direct light was particularly avoided. It is possible that this room was set-aside as a private gallery, where collections of natural history or antiquities may have been displayed. The structure was built during the occupancy of Henry Howard, who is recorded as being a member of the Worcestershire Naturalists Club. It is also possible that the space was used for horticultural purposes, though its position at the front of the house, its lack of drainage / water supply and the timber flooring, suggest otherwise. The annexe is constructed of 3" brick and mortar in a Flemish bond, with a terra cotta stringcourse at the eaves.

Later infilling between the 'tradesman's entrance' to the rear of the new kitchen and the former kitchen / service block (Plate 20) continued into the 1930's and later, and the pre-1841 structure on the eastern side of the building was demolished, probably before 1940. It is clear

from the ground levels in the former courtyard that this area has been raised up; the lower levels of the adjacent buildings are clad with a slate damp proof course and certain windows are now at ground level (Plate 20).

To the rear of the house, set back behind a rear access drive, there is a coach house and stable block, with former domestic accommodation for a coachman and possibly a groom (Plates 21-23). Internal inspection of this building was not possible at the time of the survey, but external inspection suggests that an original timber-framed structure (possibly a stable block) has been modified and extended as part of the redevelopment of the site over a century or so. The timber-framed element is possibly 17<sup>th</sup> century; the framing can be seen within the western wing, but the roofline of the central range suggests that this element was also timber-framed, now enclosed behind an 18<sup>th</sup> century façade. The eastern wing appears to have been extended to the north in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

## 5. Concluding Comments

*The building analysis at Stone House identified that the earliest visible structure on the site dates from sometime during the 17<sup>th</sup> century, though there is a suggestion that the house is built on the site of the 13<sup>th</sup> century manor house. Sometime during the first two decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the house was overhauled and modernised, with a ‘modern’ symmetrical Georgian appearance to the fenestration, though 17<sup>th</sup> century fabric was left unaltered to the rear. During the following 130 years, the building was further extended and ‘modernised’, resulting in the piecemeal architectural patchwork that we see today. A stable block and coach house to the rear of the house followed a similar pattern of modification.*

## 6. Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank the client Mr John Broadhurst for allowing access to the property and to the staff of Stone House for their hospitality. Thanks are also due to Steve Greybanks, Architect, of Central Building Design and to the staff of Worcestershire Records Office and Kidderminster Library.

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Transactions Volume III

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Plate 1: Stone House south elevation looking north-east



Plate 2: West elevation



Plate 3: View to the south



Plate 4: 17th century wing looking south-west



Plate 5: Mullioned window in 17<sup>th</sup> century gable



Plate 6: Cellars below the 17<sup>th</sup> century wing (bricks to right of arrow are earlier than those to left)



Plate 7: Chamfered and stopped bridging beam in the 17<sup>th</sup> century wing, first floor



Plate 8: 18<sup>th</sup> century rear staircase in 17<sup>th</sup> century wing



Plate 9: Stair treads below floorboards, possibly 17<sup>th</sup> century

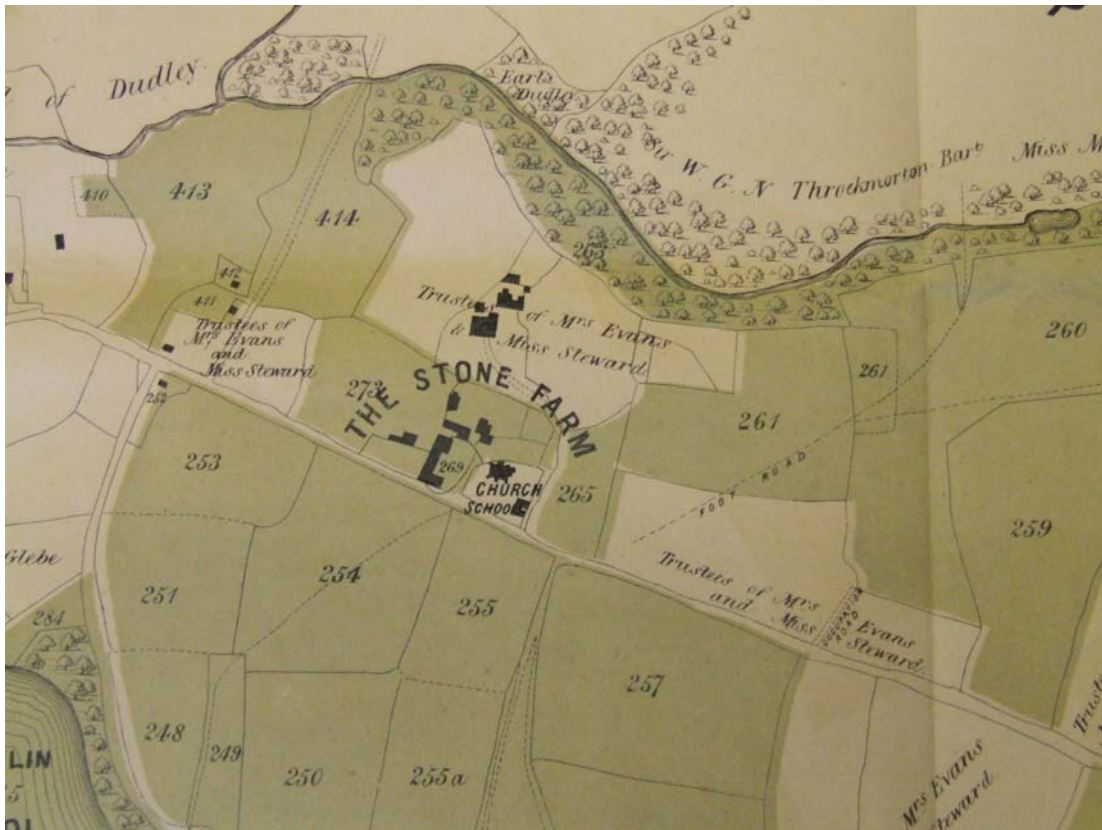


Plate 10: Extract from 1874 map showing Stone House (Courtesy of Worcestershire Records Office, BA 1065/26-27, 899:118)





Plate 11: Early sash with wide glazing bars (astragals), circa 1720



Plate 12: Later replacement sash with slender glazing bars, circa 1860



Plate 13: Photograph of a Victorian painting showing the eastern elevation (Courtesy of the client)



Plate 14: Position of the former long and wide projecting range to the rear of the house



Plate 15: Late 19<sup>th</sup> century much modified and extended service range in the north-west corner of the complex



Plate 16: View of the present kitchen looking north-west



Plate 17: View of the present kitchen looking north-east



Plate 18: Rock cut cellar below the early 20<sup>th</sup> century eastern annexe



Plate 19: Inside the eastern annexe / gallery



Plate 20: Infilled building of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century kitchen (centre)



Plate 21: Stable and coach house looking north-east



Plate 22: The stable east wing looking north, 19<sup>th</sup> century extension at rear

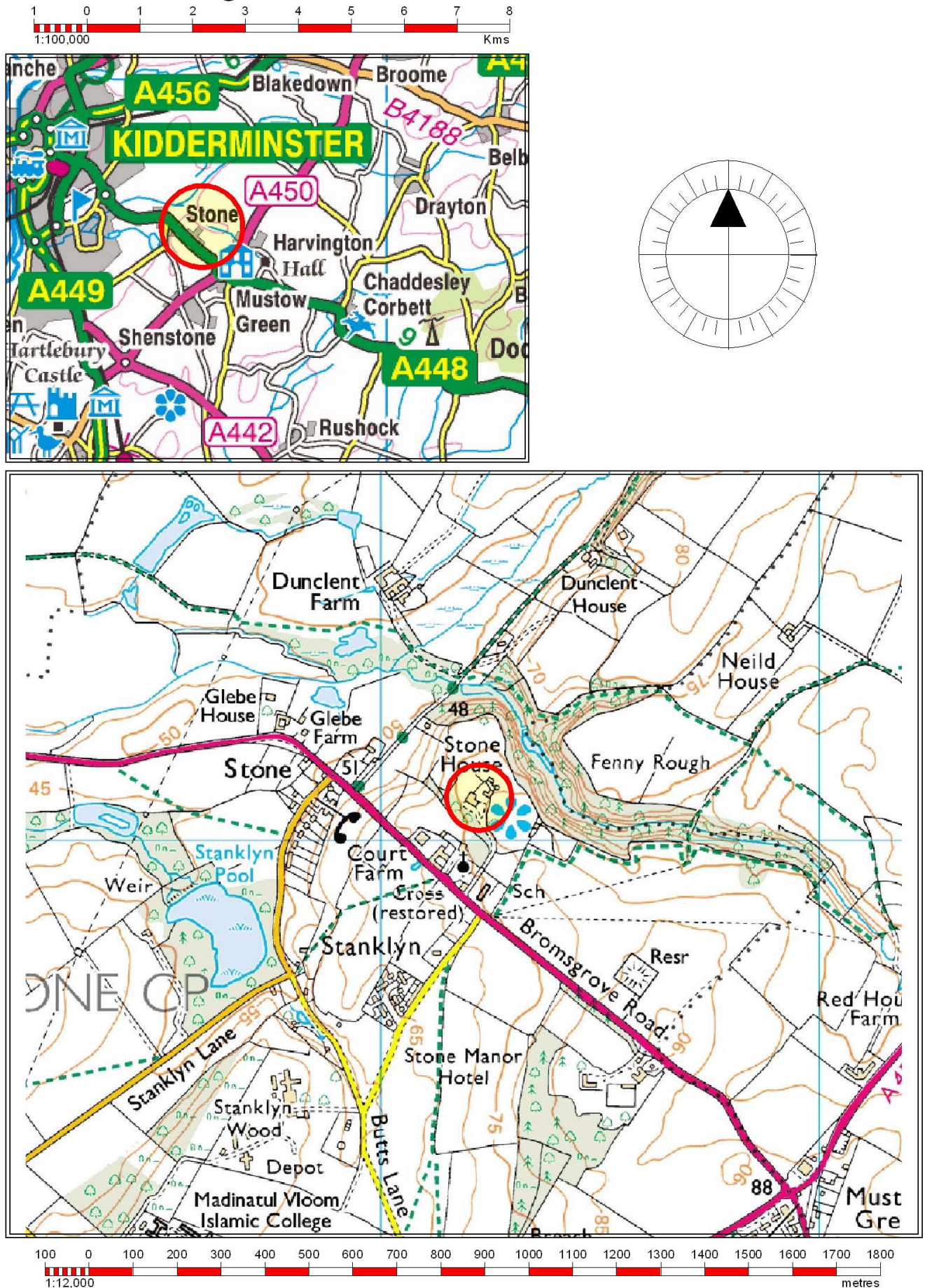


Plate 23: The stables complex looking south-east



Plate 24: Stone House from the original front pathway

# Figure 1: Location of the Site



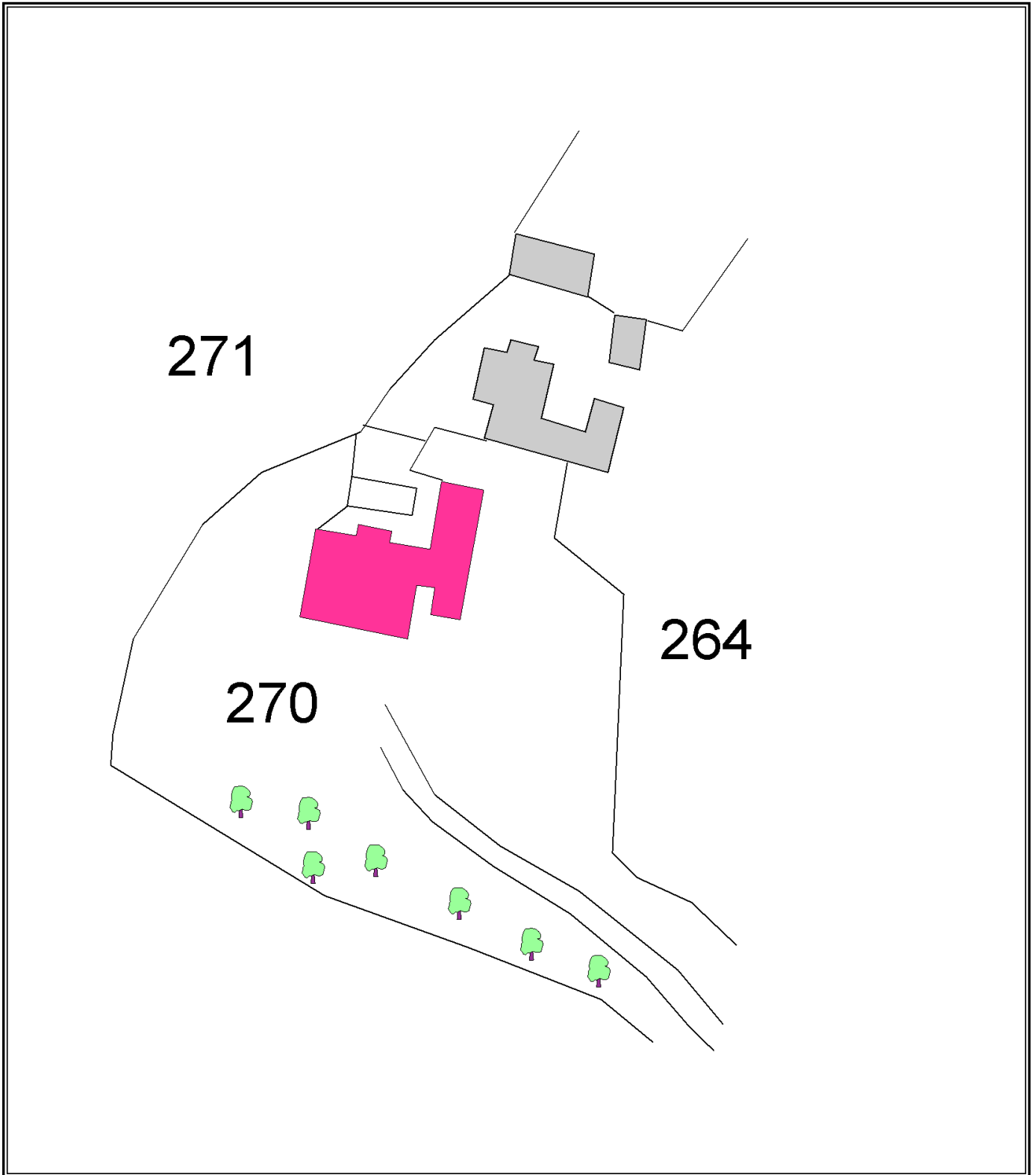
Location of Stone House, Stone,  
Worcestershire

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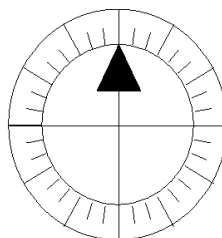
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Figure 2: Sketched Extract from the Tithe Map of Stone (1841)

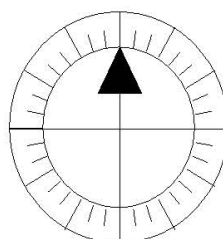
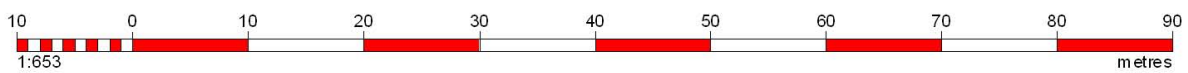
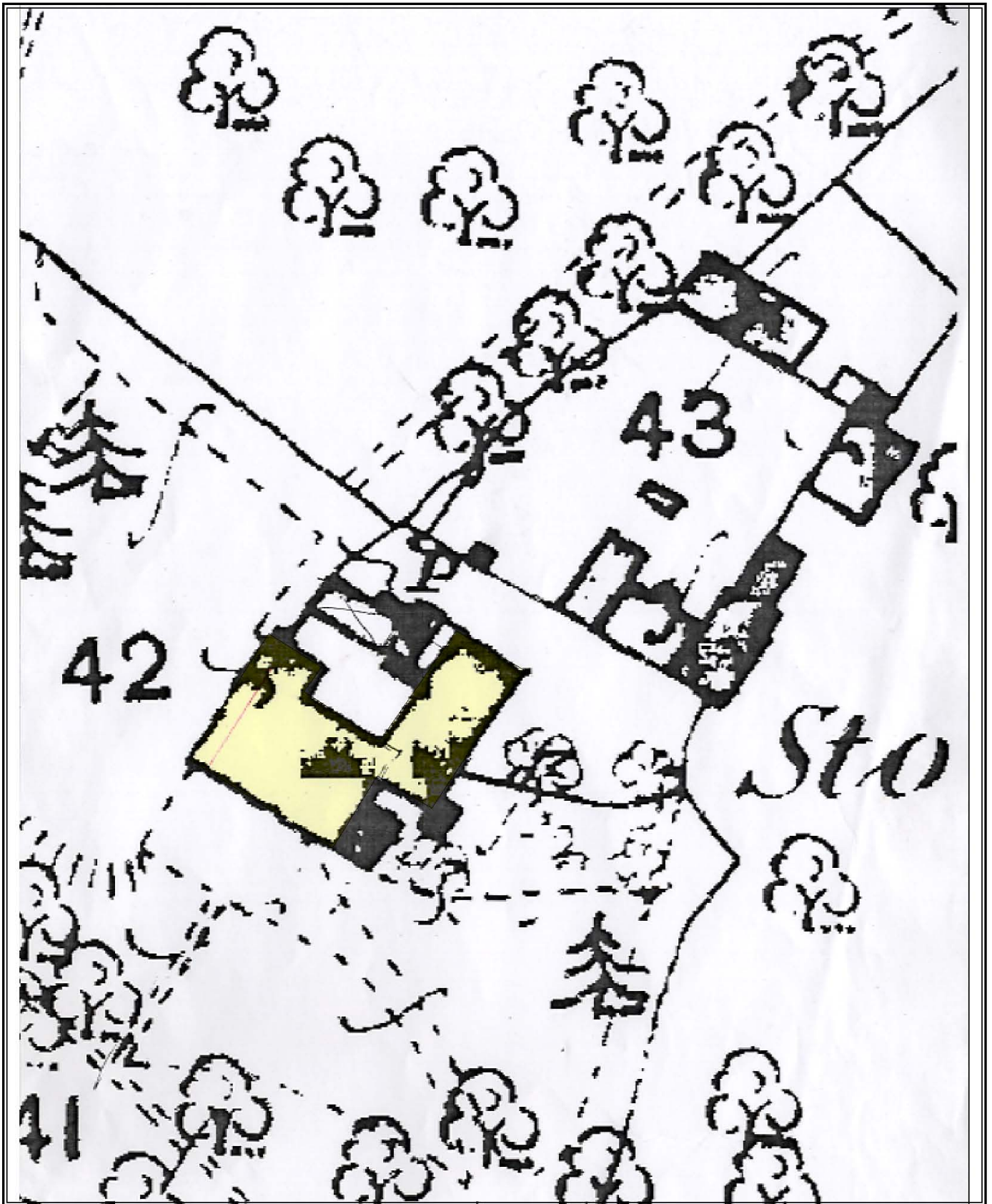


Extract from the tithe map showing Stone House in 1841, though the proportions of the original map may be schematic. The position of the later detached service block in the north-west corner is shown, but this is not depicted as a building and, therefore, may have been under construction at this time.



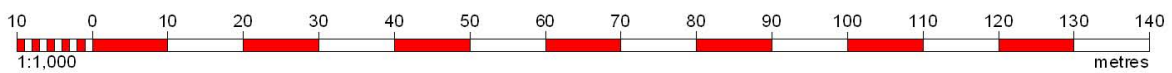
Scale unknown

Figure 3: Ordnance Survey 1st Edition (1884)



The 1884 Ordnance Survey map showing Stone House (main building highlighted) and the stable block to the rear

Figure 4: Ordnance Survey 2nd Edition (1902)



The 1902 Ordnance Survey map showing Stone House (main building highlighted) and the stable block to the rear

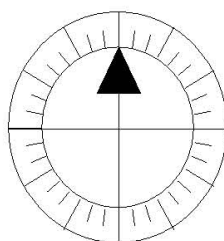
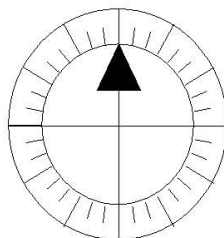
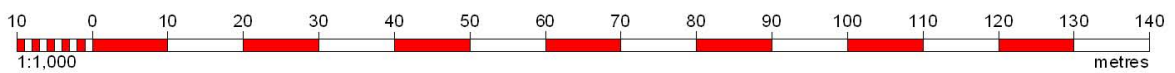
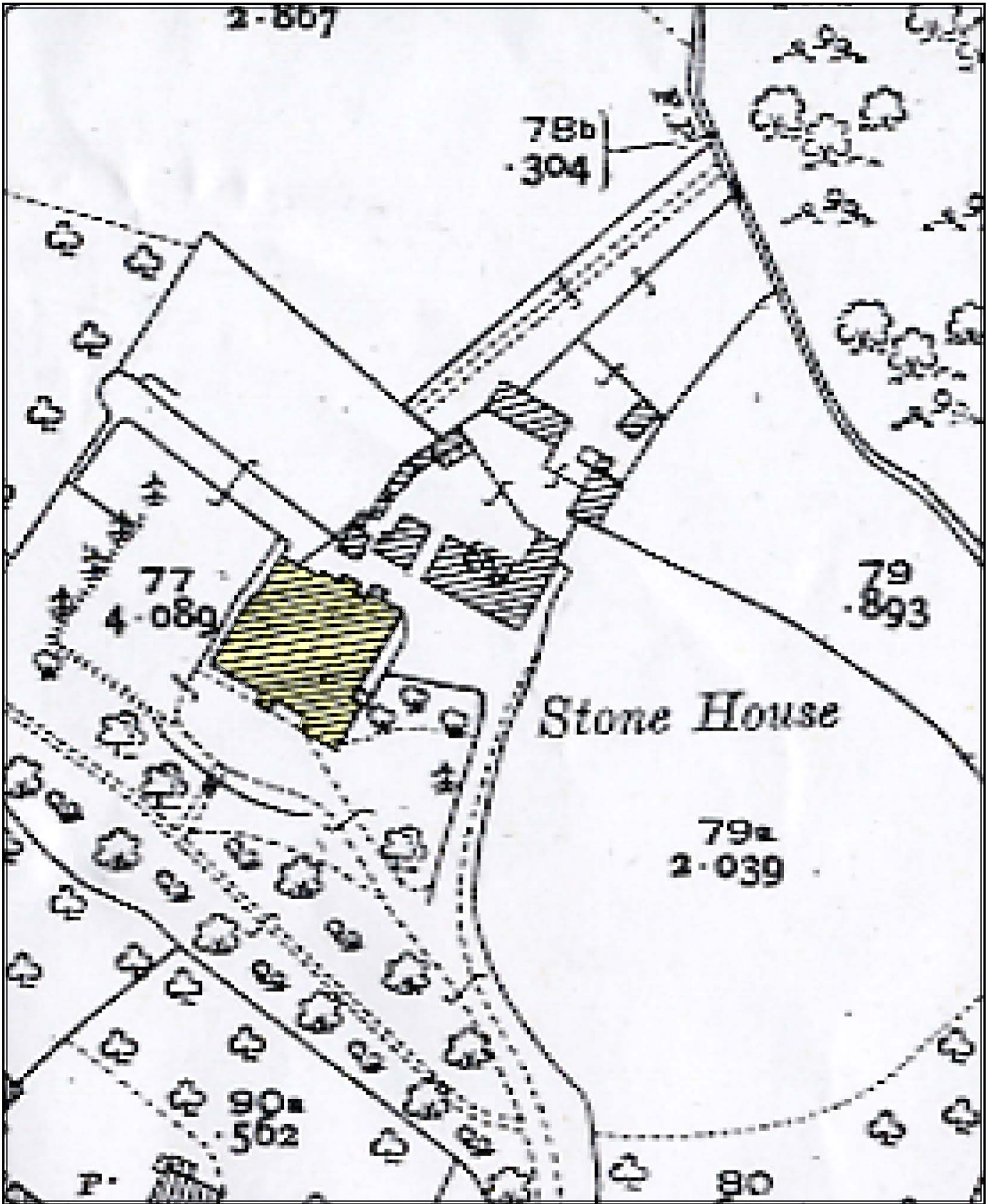


Figure 5: Ordnance Survey Revised Edition (1927)



The 1927 Ordnance Survey map showing Stone House (main building highlighted) and the stable block to the rear

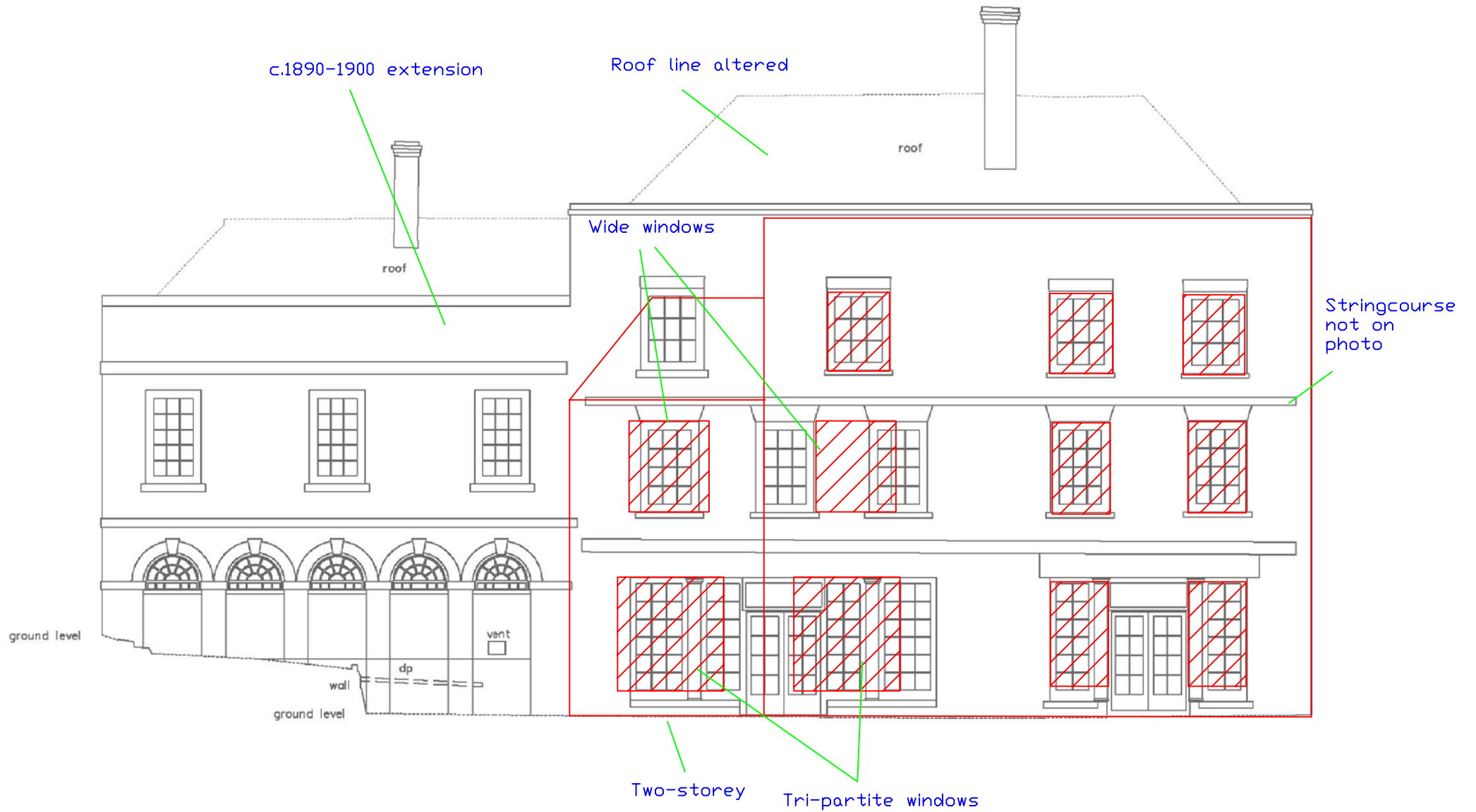


Figure 6: West Elevation with Detail from 1875 Photograph Annotated Over (based on survey by Barry Lowe Chartered Land Surveyors)