

**7-9 THE HUNDRED
ROMSEY, HAMPSHIRE**

HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING REPORT

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 *AOC Archaeology group were appointed to carry out Historic Building Recording on an 18th century town house at 7-9 The Hundred, Romsey. The building was built as a single unit, and was later split into two shops. Much of the original fabric of the building was seen to survive on the upper two floors despite modern alterations and repairs.*

2 INTRODUCTION

SITE LOCATION (Figure 1)

- 2.1 The site was located on the west side of The Hundred, close to the centre of Romsey and was centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) SU 35300 21154. The building is not listed, and the recording took place in advance of the demolition of 20th century extensions to the rear and alterations to the shop front and doors to return the building to a single unit.

PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 2.2 The building front is to be retained, as are the upper two storeys. Twentieth century extensions to the rear will be demolished as part of the development of the site, which includes the erection of part single and two storey rear extensions including sales area and sanitary facilities to the rear.
- 2.3 A Written Scheme of Investigation was prepared to satisfy the requirement for Historic Building Recording attached to Conditional Planning Permission for Development for the scheme (Planning Application TVS.03592/5).
- 2.4 This report should be read in conjunction with the report on an Archaeological Evaluation, which was conducted at the same time (AOC 2005).

HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.5 A great number of excavations, assessments and watching-briefs have been undertaken in Romsey, making it one of the most intensively studied small market towns in Hampshire (English Heritage 2004). This has resulted in a large amount of archaeological data being amassed.

2.6 The Extensive Urban Survey of small towns of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, commissioned by English Heritage (English Heritage 2004), collated much of the published data from these investigations and the results of that study are summarised by period below:

Prehistoric (before c. AD 43)

2.7 There have been numerous pieces of evidence found in and around Romsey which indicate prehistoric activity in the area. These include a Palaeolithic axe recovered from the town centre and Palaeolithic material found at Latimer Street approximately 100m to the north. A Neolithic mace-head and Bronze-Age and Iron Age material have also been recovered from within stream channels around Romsey.

2.8 There is evidence for Iron Age smelting in the vicinity of the town discovered during excavation of a settlement site approximately 200m to the west of the site. Other evidence of Iron Age occupation exists to the east of the town centre, in the Orchard Lane car park area, and to a more limited extent, to the south-west of Romsey where a ditch and several post-holes of Iron Age date have been excavated.

Roman (c. AD 43 - 450)

2.9 There is little evidence for any substantial Roman settlement in Romsey. Small quantities of pottery have been recovered from the town and it is possible that a small settlement, such as a farmstead, lay to the west of the development area but no evidence of structures were found on that site. Romano-British building materials are also incorporated into the structure of the later medieval Abbey however it is likely that these were imported in from the surrounding landscape.

Anglo-Saxon (c.1451-1065)

2.10 There have been numerous finds from the Anglo-Saxon period within the town. This includes industrial activity, in the form of iron smelting and smithing, concentrated in an area approximately 150m to the west of the site. Later Saxon pottery has also been recovered from many sites in the town, particularly in the area to the west of the Holbrook, a watercourse that ran north-south through the town approximately 200m west of The Hundred.

Medieval (c.1066 - 1485)

2.11 There is a great deal of archaeological material dating to the medieval period from the town, especially from the area to the west of the Holbrook. This area includes the abbey. Construction of the present building began c. 1120-1140 and continued

- through to 1150-1180. The addition of three arches, in the Early English style, to the west end of the Nave in 1230-1240, completed the last phase of construction.
- 2.12 The Abbey lay in an enclosure which extended from Mill Lane to the north to Newton Lane in the south. The eastern limit of the enclosure appears to have been defined by a second watercourse, Shitlake, which ran along the western edge of Church St. A third watercourse, Abbey Water, ran through the enclosure, joining Shitlake opposite the Market.
- 2.13 The Hundred is a principal street of the modern town, running west-east from the market-place to its junction with Latimer Street. However during the medieval period this was probably not the case and it is likely that the route along Church Street and Bell Street, running north-south 250m to the west, were more important.
- Post-Medieval (c.1485 - modern)**
- 2.14 The abbey was dissolved in 1539 and the abbey estates were divided up and sold. Several leases which relate to parts of the abbey's properties within the precinct still exist. The extent to which the dissolution of the abbey had an economic impact on the town is unknown; the Abbey must however have been a significant employer.
- 2.15 No *in situ* archaeological evidence has been found that accurately dates the development of the southern side of The Hundred though it is likely that by the twelfth or thirteenth century there was settlement there and that the street alignment may have been altered in the 16th century.
- 2.16 Documentary sources from the late 13th or early 14th century record properties, including a shop, along this stretch and by the sixteenth century the building known as the Manor House of Romsey Extra is recorded; this building was however probably not the manor house but a merchant's or steward's house.
- 2.17 Town houses were thrown up during the post-medieval period, some likely to have replaced earlier, medieval buildings, but much of The Hundred today is occupied by buildings dating to the 18th century, or more recently.

3 AIMS OF THE RECORDING ACTION

The aims of the survey were defined as follows:

- a) To record the precise location of the building, by name or street number, civil parish, town and National Grid Reference, and details of listing or scheduling.
- b) To record the building's type and purpose, construction materials.
- c) To record the possible date of the building.
- d) Make available to interested parties the results of the investigation in order to inform the mitigation strategy as part of the planning process.
- e) Enable the Archaeological Advisor to the Test Valley Borough Council to make an informed decision on the status of Planning Conditions, and any possible requirement for further work in order to satisfy that Condition.

4 METHODOLOGY

The building recording involved a photographic, drawn and written survey to a standard defined as Level 1 by the RCHME. This included the following methodology:

The Written Account

- The precise location of the building, by name or street number, civil parish, town and National Grid Reference, and details of listing or scheduling.
- The date when the record was made, and the identity of the recorder.
- A summary statement describing the building's type or purpose, materials and possible dates so far as these are apparent from superficial inspection.

Drawing

- A fully-dimensioned plan of each floor.

Photography

- General view of the exterior of the building.
- The overall appearance of principal rooms and circulation areas.
- This was undertaken with 35mm colour slide and monochrome print film, supported by digital images.

5 RESULTS

GENERAL

- 5.1 The property at 7-9 The Hundred was formerly a single building, and was a three-bay, three story house with a tiled roof. This report reflects the original layout, the rooms numbered sequentially throughout the whole property. The ground floor did not appear to contain any original fixtures or fittings, and contained Rooms 1-3. The first floor featured Rooms 4-7 and the top floor Rooms 8-10.
- 5.2 There was easy access into all rooms, but the first storey of Number 7 had to be accessed by a vertical steel ladder, because the staircase had been removed to provide more shop space. The original stairway rose through the centre of the property, thus to the west of No. 7. A new rear wall had also been added, enclosing the original. To the rear of the property were a range of 20th century extensions of no architectural or historical value. Access to the first floor of No.9 was via a staircase in one of these extensions.

THE SETTING (Plate 1)

- 5.3 The property was oriented east-west, its front facing north onto The Hundred. The two buildings flanking the property are both brick-built, neither of them rendered. No.3, The Hundred has had its windows replaced with modern double-glazing, whereas Nos. 7-9 shows much more of its original aspect, despite the added render. To the west of the properties, a neo-classical doorway led to an alley which was blocked by the twentieth century extensions.
- 5.4 The original property measured 12.25m by 5.01m, but the 20th century extensions had considerably enlarged the footprint of the building.

THE EXTERIOR

- 5.5 The northern face of the property showed the most detail. The ground floor presented two shop-fronts with large plate glass windows, No. 7 housing a turf accountant, No. 9 a travel agent. A central doorway provided access to the ground floor. The whole of the first and second storeys were rendered and painted white, covering the original fabric. The first and second storeys also featured sash windows, original to the property. There was a double set of windows serving each main room, and a single window lighting the central stairway. Each element of the sashes on the first floor had two rows of three lights, those on the second storey, single rows of three lights each. The window openings had flat arches above with central triangular keystones and wooden sills below. Because of the render, it was impossible to determine any other details.
- 5.6 The rear of No. 7 showed a blank brick wall, a late 20th century façade. This blocked a window on the second floor, which was an original sash. This was the only window at the rear of the whole property. The eastern wall of No.7 lay at an angle of 84° to the front, resulting in the back being shorter.

- 5.7 The roof was tiled with a mixture of red peg and nib tiles, some of which may have been part of the original fabric, and a chimney stack rose at either end of the standing approximately 0.50m proud of the ridge with ceramic chimney pots above.

GROUND FLOOR

- 5.8 The ground floor was divided into three rooms: one each for the two shops, and one breeze-block built compartment for the ladder access to the first floor. The rear wall of the property had been removed, extending the shop spaces into the 20th century extensions. The upper floors were supported by a beam, possibly a steel joist.

Room 1: No.7 shop

- 5.9 The shop space encompassed some 72 square metres. The front of the property held plate glass windows and an access door, the rear wall of the historic structure had been removed. The east wall is considered original to the building, but was clad in shop fittings, and could not be inspected. The wall dividing this room from No.7 was partly original, in that it was made of the same brick as the rest of the building. The ceiling was set 2.74m above the floor.

Room 2: No.9 shop

- 5.10 This shop space was smaller, only 24.5 square metres. The west wall and the east wall within the footprint of the original building are both considered original. The shop front was clearly modern, as were the extensions to the rear. Like Room 1, the ceiling was 2.74m above the floor.

Room 3: Ladder Access

- 5.11 This room provided access to the first floor. The east and north walls were considered part of the original structure, whereas the other two sides were made from breeze-blocks. Access to the first floor was through a hatch cut through the floor of the landing above. This is likely to be the location of the original staircase of the building, removed when the shops were developed. The stairs continue on the first and second floors directly above. If the front wall of this room is part of the original fabric, then it is likely that the door is in its original location, but not of its original form.

FIRST FLOOR

Room 4: Landing

- 5.12 The landing was accessed through a hatch from the room below, revealing a floor depth of 0.32m. There had been originally stairs, as revealed by scars on the south and west walls. The staircase at this level was intact, leading to the second floor, and was composed of thirteen stairs in two flights. The banister was made of simply turned wood with slightly decorative stops at each turn.
- 5.13 The walls of the landing were plastered and painted dark green. One doorway led west into the main room, and there was a blocked doorway against No.9, proving that this was once a single property, the stairs rising in the centre of the house. The ceiling here was 2.70m above the floor.
- 5.14 The north wall of the landing showed the most original features: a sash window with wooden panelling below. The sash was in two parts, each window containing six lights. The frame in which it was set was twisted, suggesting a degree of structural subsidence. Beneath the window was a wooden board, carved into two lozenge-shaped panels. This decorative detail was present in the other rooms of this floor.

Room 5: Main Room, No.7 (Plate 2)

- 5.15 The main room on the first floor had much of its original elements, plus a late Victorian fireplace. The fireplace was in the western wall, situated centrally in the chimney stack, and had a cast iron grate flanked by floral ceramic tiles, five to each side. The associated mantelpiece was marble, of Georgian style, with minimal scrollwork and a floral motif.
- 5.16 The sash windows that lit this room were on the north side, and there was no evidence of windows to the rear of the property in this room. Two sashes were set side by side in a large wooden frame, each sash having three lights in two rows. As in the landing, the wall below the window had wooden boards carved with lozenge-shaped panels.
- 5.17 The walls and ceiling were all covered by plaster with included hair among its coarse components. The walls were painted white.
- 5.18 Examination of the joists revealed that two principal joists ran north south across the room, with common joists at intervals of approximately 0.40m. The principal joists were 0.22m square, the common joists 0.06m wide.
- 5.19 The door into this room was furnished with several decorative fittings. The outside had a ceramic handle and door-plate; the interior had small florally-decorated copper alloy panels (Plate 3).

Room 6: Main Room, No.9

- 5.20 The other main room on the first floor, above No.9, was laid out in the same way as Room 5, excepting the chimney stack in the east wall. The fireplace was boarded over, and the mantelpiece and grate presumably taken away. All other features were present: double sash windows in the north wall with panelling below.
- 5.21 The original doorway into this room was blocked: it was formerly accessed from the landing, but the splitting of the property into two required a new access. This was provided by a new opening in the south wall from the 20th century extensions.

SECOND FLOOR

Room 7: Upper Landing

- 5.22 The upper landing showed many of the features of the landing below. The stairway was guarded by its banister as it rose, and by a wooden board at the edge of the stairwell. The window was smaller, having only a single row of three lights in each sash, and also displayed similar distortion to that observed on the floor below. One door opened westwards into Room 8; the entrance to Room 9 was blocked. The whole of the second floor had the lowest ceiling in the property, only 2.18m high.

Room 8: Main room, No.7

- 5.23 The main room on the second floor had few features of interest compared to Room 5 below. The chimneybreast again included a fireplace, with a cast iron grate and a simple mantelpiece. The panelling observed on the floor below was not present. The windows were shorter than on the floor below, being single row three-light sashes, again a pair set side by side in a wooden frame.
- 5.24 The most interesting element to this room was a small sash window in the south wall, with only two lights in each sash. It was in poor condition, the glass broken and the frame split, but it was the only window in the whole building in the south wall (Plate 4).

Room 9: Main Room, No.9

- 5.25 This main room was laid out in the same way as Room 8, except that the chimneystack was incorporated into the eastern end wall. In front of this fireplace were two rows of red floor tiles, painted white, and each 0.20m square. There was no evidence for a small window in the south wall, although this may have been obscured by later redecoration. The walls were painted and well-maintained, unlike No.7, which seemed to have been neglected since the property was divided and the staircase removed.

- 5.26 Access into this room was through a new opening in the south wall for stairs from the 20th century extensions. The room was so well-decorated that there was no evidence of its blocked doorway visible.

ROOF STRUCTURE

- 5.27 The roof was pitched and tiled, with ridge tiles sealing the joint at the top of the apex. The supporting structure was of queen post construction, and the ridge stood 1.97m high from the wall-plates. Treenails held each element together, and there were frames at each end of the building, above each internal wall, and two others centrally placed above the main rooms (Plate 5).
- 5.28 The roof space was formerly a single unit, but the division of the property had resulted in an asbestos board partition being added. Above Room 9, the ceiling was intact with a small hatch leading to the roof space. Above Rooms 7 and 8, the joists had been removed. This revealed several interesting construction details. The joists had been affixed without wooden pegs: instead, there were mortises on one side of each principal joist, and slots in the opposing side. This indicates that the common joists were added after the structure was built: one end slotted into the mortise, the other end was wedged into the slots.

Each principal joist also displayed carpenter's marks: a row of one, two, three, or four vertical lines were scribed next to the joist-slots, I towards the front of the building, IIII towards the rear.

6 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The house at 7-9 The Hundred, Romsey, was built of brick, with no timber-framing apparent. The sash windows, ceiling heights and form of the window openings suggest a late 18th century date of construction. Alterations to the ground floor have removed approximately a third of the historic fabric, while the abandonment of the upper two floors of No.7 had resulted in a gradual deterioration of its materials.
- 6.2 The property was originally a single unit, with a central staircase rising to all floors, and a single room on each side on the first and second floors. Whether the ground floor was similarly laid out cannot be determined. Each main room had its own fireplace, and No.7 contained, at the time of recording, a good example of a late Victorian fireplace, with all its elements intact. There were probably originally fireplaces on the ground floor, but this cannot be determined without removing all modern wall and floor surfaces.
- 6.3 The major alterations to the original building apart from the removal of most elements from the ground floor were the partitioning of the structure and the blocking of doors, coupled with the necessary creation of new access points once

the staircase had been removed from the ground floor. This had its biggest impact upon No.9, The Hundred, with new openings being broken through the rear wall. The addition of a new brick face to the rear of the property obscured any ornamental details that may have been incorporated into the brickwork, and the rendering of the front had a similar effect.

7 CONDITIONS

The building recording was conducted on one day prior to remodelling of the structure, which includes the retention of the street frontage. There were no limits to access for the purposes of this Historic Building Record.

8 BIBLIOGRAPHY

AOC Archaeology (2005), *An archaeological evaluation report at 7-9 The Hundred, Romsey, Hampshire.*

English Heritage (2004). *The Hampshire and Isle of Wight Extensive Urban Survey (EUS), Archaeological Assessment Document, Romsey.*

APPENDIX A – OASIS Data Collection Form

OASIS ID: aocarcha1-12283

Project details

| | |
|--|---|
| Project name | 7-9 the hundred, romsey, hampshire |
| Short description of the project | AOC Archaeology group were appointed to carry out Historic Building Recording on an 18th century town house at 7-9 The Hundred, Romsey. The building was built as a single unit, and was later split into two shops. Much of the original fabric of the building was seen to survive on the upper two floors despite modern alterations and repairs |
| Project dates | Start: 28-06-2006 End: 28-06-2006 |
| Previous/future work | Yes / No |
| Any associated project reference codes | A2005.29 - Museum accession ID |
| Type of project | Building Recording |
| Site status | Area of Archaeological Importance (AAI) |
| Current Land use | Industry and Commerce 3 - Retailing |
| Monument type | HOUSE Post Medieval |
| Significant Finds | NONE Post Medieval |
| Prompt | Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16 |

Project location

| | |
|---------------|---|
| Country | England |
| Site location | HAMPSHIRE TEST VALLEY ROMSEY 7-9 The Hundred, Romsey, Hampshire |
| Postcode | SO51 8YP |
| Study area | 405.00 Square metres |
| National grid | SU 35300 21154 Point |

reference

Project creators

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Name of Organisation | AOC Archaeology |
| Project brief originator | Local Planning Authority (with/without advice from County/District Archaeologist) |
| Project design originator | AOC Archaeology |
| Project director/manager | Mark Beasley |
| Project supervisor | Les Capon |
| Sponsor or funding body | Developer |

Project archives

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Physical Archive recipient | Hampshire museums |
| Physical Archive ID | A.2005.29 |
| Physical Archive Exists? | No |
| Digital Archive recipient | Hampshire Museums |
| Digital Archive ID | A.2005.29 |
| Digital Archive Exists? | No |
| Paper Archive recipient | Hampshire Museums |
| Paper Archive ID | A.2005.29 |
| Paper Contents | 'none' |
| Paper Media available | 'Diary','Drawing','Map','Notebook - Excavation',' Research',' General Notes','Section','Unpublished Text' |

**Project
bibliography 1**

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Publication type | Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript) |
| Title | 7-9 The Hundred, Romsey, Hampshire |
| Author(s)/Editor(s) | Capon, L |
| Date | 2005 |
| Issuer or publisher | AOC Archaeology |
| Place of issue or publication | London |
| Description | Grey literature plus floor plans and building elevation, 5 colour plates plus location map |

| | |
|------------|---|
| Entered by | Les Capon (lescapon@aocarchaeology.co.uk) |
| Entered on | 9 January 2006 |