

Ambrey Archaeology Ltd

Historic Building Survey of Building recording (Level 3) and monitoring at Nos 58a and 58b High Street, Evesham, Worcestershire

Project AMB261

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Summary

Ambrey Archaeology carried out an archaeological building survey at Nos 58A and 58B, High Street, Evesham. It was commissioned by Mr Alan McColm whose clients, Mumford and Cook, have been granted planning permission for the change of use of the holding from offices to residential units by Wychavon District Council.

The building is a timber-framed Grade II listed property which preserves early wall paintings. Permission for the works was granted, subject to conditions including a programme of archaeological works, comprising a Level 3 building record of the holding, followed by archaeological monitoring and recording to be maintained on further removal of plasterboard which might reveal additional paintings.

The earliest part of the building was a box frame structure occupying one or two burgage plots extending eastward from the street frontage, likely in the first half of the 16th century. It was strengthened with knee braces, supporting tie beams and windbraces in the roof structure.

In the second half of the century the painting was commissioned in the southern bay of the first floor chamber of the building. It depicts a man and a woman in Elizabethan costume standing at a small distance with columns and a frieze above of floral forms with fantastic beasts. These are likely to have been a couple resident in the house. Some decoration also survives on one side of a knee brace opposite the painting, and it is likely that the entire chamber was originally decorated.

At a later date, prior to 1650, the southern part of the building, perhaps the width of one burgage plot, was extended to the east with the addition of a two-bay structure with a gable roof at a slightly lower pitch than the earlier. At the same time, the eastern pitch of the roof beneath the purlins was made shallower, extending the northern part of the building by approximately 1.5m and replacing the purlin on this side.

The addition of buildings to the rear of the property created a courtyard to the rear which appears to have been open at least until 1938. Following this, a flat roofed extension was built in the angle of the two original buildings. At the same time, the internal rear walls of the original structure were removed on the first floor in order to create open spaces between the front and rear of the building.

Later, possibly in the later 20th or early 21st century, stud walls were inserted into the northern half of the building to facilitate its use as a beauty parlour.

1. Introduction

This document describes the results of an archaeological building survey carried out by Ambrey Archaeology at Nos 58A and 58B, High Street, Evesham.

It was commissioned by Mr Alan McColm whose clients, Mumford and Cook, have been granted planning permission for the change of use of the holding from offices to residential units by Wychavon District Council (ref. 21/02852/FUL).

The building is a timber-framed Grade II listed property which preserves early wall paintings. Permission for the works was therefore granted by Wychavon District Council (WDC), subject to conditions including a programme of archaeological works.

Liaison with Aidan Smyth, Archaeology and Planning Advisor to WDC, established that a Level 3 building record of the holding was appropriate, followed by archaeological monitoring and recording (watching brief) to be maintained on further removal of plasterboard which might reveal additional paintings. This document describes the findings of the building survey, should the watching brief be required, this will be the subject of a separate document.

Prior to works a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) setting out a methodology and framework for the proposed works was produced by Ambrey Archaeology (Ambrey Archaeology 2025) and approved by Aidan Smyth.

2. Objectives

The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists defines the aims of building recording as 'a programme of work intended to establish the character, history, dating, form and archaeological development of a specified building' (Standard and guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures, ClfA 2014).

3. Methodology

The survey takes the form of a Level 3 building survey as defined by Historic England's *Understanding Historic Buildings: a guide to good recording practice* (HE 2016) which describes this as an analytical record which will contain a systematic account of the building's origins, heritage and use and will include drawn and photographic records to support an historical analysis.

Prior to fieldwork, a search of historic assets within 250m of the site was provided by Worcestershire Historic Environment Record (HER; search reference #1661558). The event no WSM81604 was assigned to the project. Primary sources were consulted at Worcestershire Archive and online sources including TheGenealogist.com were also accessed.

The building survey was undertaken by Tom Rogers of Ambrey Archaeology in January 2025. Only the first floor of the building is the subject of the application. Access to this level was good, all spaces being accessible. The attic was also entered to inspect the roof structure although access here was limited. Recording was undertaken using pro-forma recording sheets and photographs were taken with a Nikon D3200 SLR camera and a DJI Osmo mobile 6 camera.

Multiple images of the wall painting were combined into a Orthomosaic using Agisoft Metashape Standard.

4. Location, topography and geology

The building (NGR SP 03771 43963) is located on the east side of the High Street in Evesham between Oat Street to the south and Swan Lane to the north. The building comprises two shops (currently 'Subway' and 'Relate') with a flat above, which is the subject of this document. The flat is accessed from a stairwell on the street frontage between the shops as well as from a second stairwell from a passage to the immediate north.

To the south, the building abuts a taller flat-roofed brick building built as a cinema in the early 20th century. To the north it abuts no. 62 High Street, a three-storey brick building with painted ashlar quoins, the ground floor of which is a shop.

The ground at the High Street slopes gently to the south. Bedrock at the site comprises Blue Lias Formation and Charmouth Mudstone Formation (Undifferentiated), overlain by the New Inn sand and gravel member deriving from the River Avon.

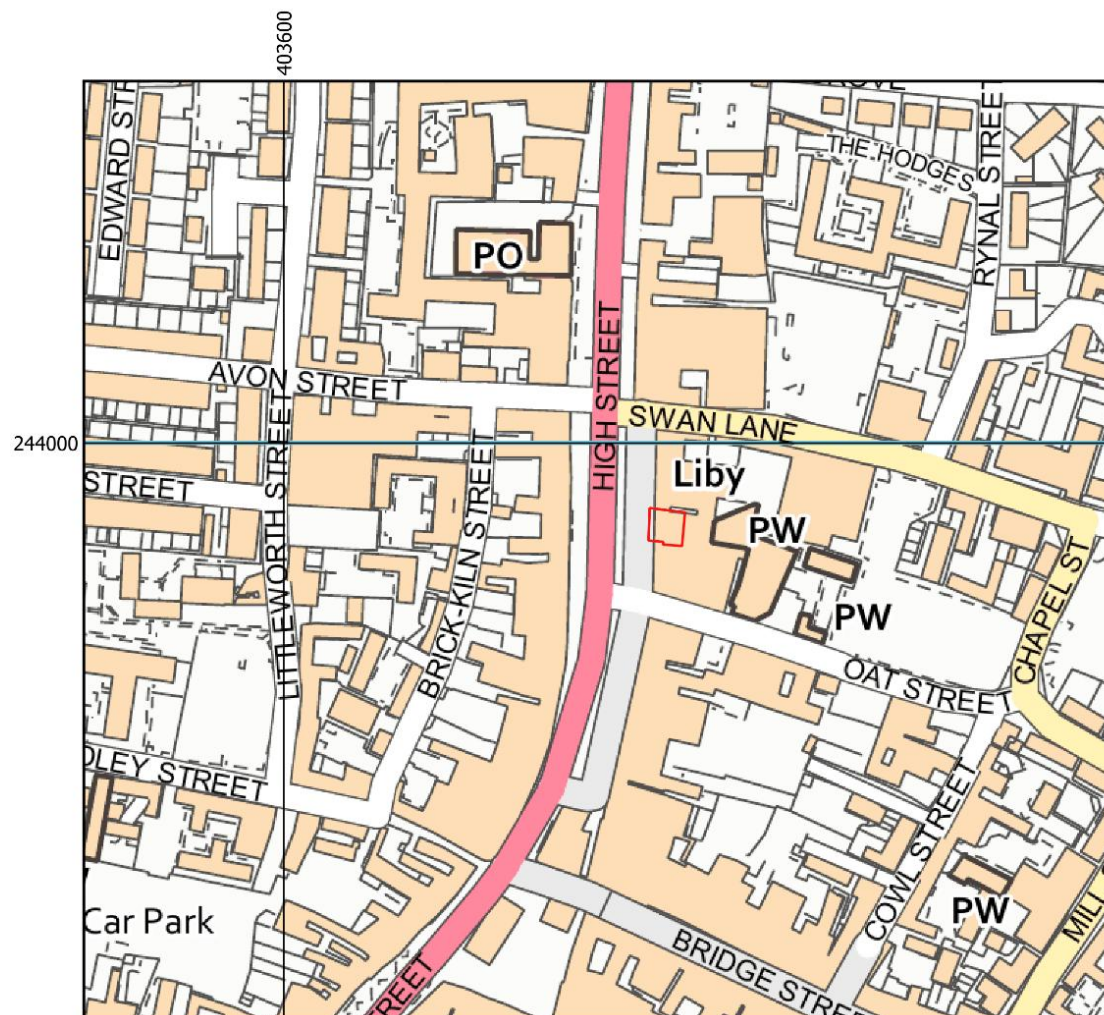


Figure 1. Site location

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5. Archaeological background and historic context

5.1. The town of Evesham

The placename 'Evesham' appears to derive from the early form Eveshomm, although another form was also used (Cronuchomme). Both forms are likely to refer to personal names (Cornoc or Eof) with the suffix hamm, meaning a bend in the river (Dalwood et al 1996).

There is little evidence for the extent of Anglo-Saxon occupation in the town, but the minster church was established c 700 by Ecgwine, bishop of Worcester, possibly on the site of an old church that was "the work of the Britons" according to William of Malmesbury, writing in the early 12th century (Cox, D, 1990, in Dalwood et al 1996). Ecgwine's church collapsed and was rebuilt c 970, and a new church dedicated to the Holy Trinity was built between 1017 and 1037 by Earl Leofric.

In 1055 Edward the Confessor granted a port and market at Evesham (Beresford and Finberg 1973). Market functions may have developed in reaction to pilgrims visiting the shrine of St Ecgwine (Roberts 1980). The Anglo-Saxon market place is assumed to be Merstow Green, at the main gate of the abbey (Bond 1973, 46 and 1975, 57) which is about 400m to the south-west of the site.

Possibly the earliest evidence of early medieval activity in the town is a single sherd of grass tempered ware from a site excavated at 93 High Street 170m to the north of the property.

The abbey was comprehensively rebuilt in the period from 1078 by Abbot Walter, the crossing and chancel being built over the site of the demolished mid-11th century church (Cox, D, 1990 in Dalwood et al 1996). It is probable that the settlement was urban by the late 11th to early 12th century (Hilton 1982 in Dalwood et al 1996). The earliest documentary evidence for urban status is a late 12th century reference to inhabitants *de novo burgo* - "the new borough" (Beresford 1981, 64).

It was during the medieval period that Evesham prospered and expanded, mainly due to the influence and economic power of the abbey. By the 12th century, Evesham had gained urban status as a borough, with a population of over 1000 (Dalwood et al 1996). A weekly market and two annual fairs were documented in 1206 (Page and Willis-Bund 1971).

The recorded building (WSM48555) fronts onto the High Street which, with the Market Square is described on the HER as a marketplace which was probably laid out in late 11th/early 12th century (WSM20768).

Burgages are documented from the early 13th century (*ibid.*) and it is clear that these fronted onto the High Street. The site lies within a tenement block (WSM20777) identified on the HER which represents the burgages between Oat Street to the south and Swan Lane to the north.

Archaeological events in the vicinity include an evaluation undertaken at 1 Swan Lane, Evesham 45m north of the site in 2001 (WSM30295). Deposits dated to the medieval and post-medieval period consisted of demolition or rubbish pits cut into the natural deposits and the remains of structures. Of particular note was the discovery of a large, rounded-plan pit which contained considerable evidence for phased dumping of medieval date.

Slightly to the north of this on the opposite side of Swan Lane, an excavation at Cotswold House in 1995 (WSM26115) revealed a stone lined cess pit of 13th to 14th century date, as well as earlier medieval rubbish pits. It also recorded evidence for possible tenement plots dating to the medieval period, and post medieval horticultural and rubbish disposal activities.

5.2. Designated assets in the vicinity

Nos 58 and 60 High Street (Grade II, list entry 1350081) is described in the listing as follows

HIGH STREET 1. 5249 (East Side) Nos 58 and 60 SP 0343 1/200 19.2.70. II GV 2. Early C17 with later alterations. Engraved stucco; 2 storeys; 4 rush windows; tiles. Inset modern shop fronts. Interior of No 58 has knee brace trusses exposed at 1st storey with traces of Elizabethan painting. There are larger Elizabethan paintings on the end wall to south concealed behind modern panelling.

Note: presumably the reference to 'rush' windows is meant to read 'sash' windows

There are numerous listed buildings in the town of Evesham and on the High Street in particular. Of these there are several in the same tenement block between Oat Street and Swan Lane which are noted on the list entries as forming a group. These are as follows:-

- 62 High Street (Grade II, list entry 1156521) immediately to the north, a Georgian three storey red brick building with sash windows,
- 64 High Street (Grade II, list entry 1081385) a late C18th/early C19th three storey building with cement rendered brick front
- The Star Hotel (Grade II, list entry 1350082) An early C18th two storey brick building although possibly with an earlier core.
- Former barn at the rear of no 66 (Grade II, list entry 1156570) a C16th or C17th timber frame structure with painted brick and rubble.

Also, within the same tenement block, 60m to the east is an 18th century Grade II* listed Unitarian Chapel (WSM03380). The nearest scheduled monuments are Abbot Reginald's Gateway and Old Vicarage (list entry 1005298) and Evesham Abbey (list entry 1005297), both approximately 250m to the south.

5.3. Map regression and census

On the 1884 Town Plan of Evesham (Fig 2) the building is divided into three parts. The northern section is shown as two rectangular holdings on an east-west orientation abutting each other. The buildings are perpendicular to the High Street with the southern part of the site occupied by a large,

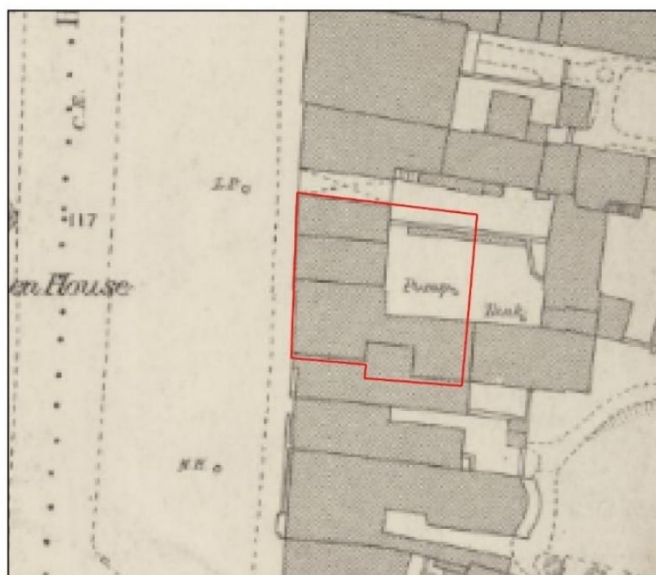


Figure 2. Extract of 1884 Evesham - Worcestershire XLIX.3.4 1-500 town plan showing site location

irregularly-shaped range abutting the northern buildings and extending eastwards from the street. The southern line of the range to the south is crooked, suggesting several phases of building.

An alley is shown to the north of the northernmost of the two small buildings. The area to the east of the buildings is shown as an open yard.

There are no obvious changes to the layout of the buildings or those surrounding on the 1903 Ordnance Survey (not depicted in this report).

On the 1923 map (Fig 3) two small buildings have been constructed to the rear of the rectangular buildings in the north of the site. The smaller of the two new buildings extends eastwards from the rear of where the two rectangular buildings abut each other and the larger of the new buildings is perpendicular to this, extending as far as the plot boundaries to the north and south.

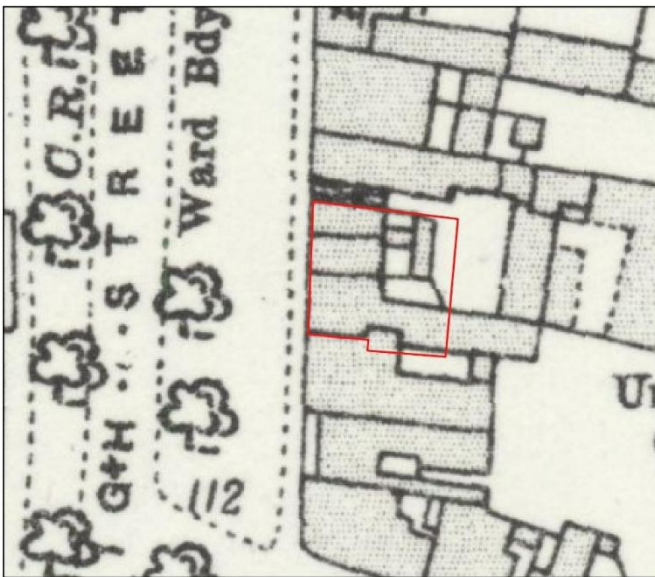


Figure 3. Extract of 1923 Ordnance Survey Worcestershire sheet XLIX.3 at 1-to-25-inch scale

By 1938 (Fig 4) the two rectangular buildings in the northern part of the site are now shown as one square building while a small building has been added in the north, filling in between the alley and the two buildings first depicted on the 1923 map.



Figure 4. Extract of 1938 Ordnance Survey Worcestershire sheet XLIX.3 at 1-to-25-inch scale

On an aerial photograph of the High Street (ref EPW023909) available on the Historic England aerial photos explorer website, the roof is shown with three chimneys close to the ridge line on the eastern pitch of the roof.

On the 1967 map the southern line of the range in the south of the site is unchanged but there is a more definite division between this range and buildings to the east of the site. The western boundaries of the ranges along High Street are unchanged but the buildings have been extended to the rear, replacing or possibly incorporating the smaller buildings in the yard and now appear to be two larger almost regular rectangular abutting buildings.

By 1973 (Fig 5) there has been some further infill in the yard to the rear.

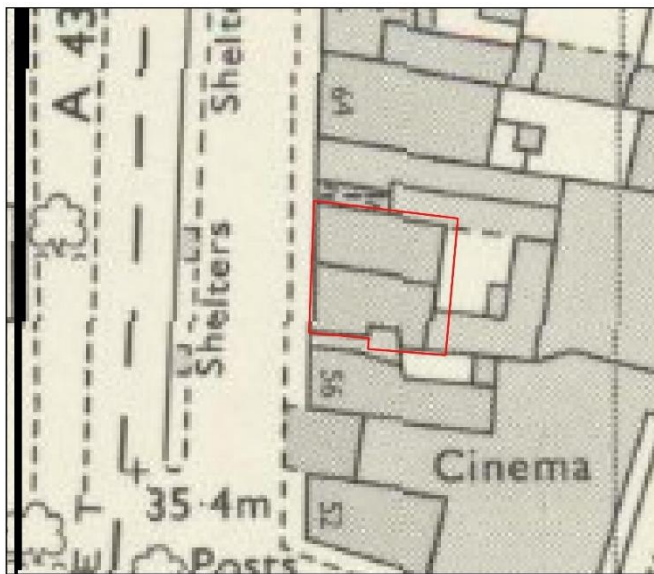


Figure 5. Extract of 1973 Ordnance Survey sheet SP0243-SP0343 – BB at 1:2500 scale

6. Building survey

6.1. General description

The building is roughly square in plan, comprising three elements; a rectangular wing on the street frontage with a gable roof orientated north-south, a wing also with gable roof with a lower ridge height projecting eastwards from the southern end of the street frontage building and a flat roofed section in the angle of the two earlier two wings. The west facing roof pitch is of plain ceramic tiles whereas the east facing pitch has tiles above lower courses of slate. The projecting eastward wing is also roofed with slate.

Four phases have been assigned to the building which are referred to in the building description below, illustrated on Figures 6 and 7 and described in more detail in the discussion, Section 7.

Phase 1 comprises the construction of the rectangular four bay structure on the street frontage, possibly originating as one building later divided into adjacent cottages. It was 14.4m long and 6.6m wide with two storeys. The presence of curved wind braces in the roof structure would suggest a date prior to 1570.

Phase 2 comprises the creation of a two bay wing to the rear of two storeys but with a lower ridge line. This extended the southern side of the building a further 8m to the east. The use of clasped purlins would suggest a construction date prior to 1650. At the same time the original Phase 1 building was extended 1.5m to the rear (east) by replacement of the rafters below the purlins at a shallower angle on the eastern pitch.

Phase 3 is the early 20th century insertion of a flat roofed structure in the angle of the two wings. The use of a Crittall Window and map evidence would suggest that this happened between 1938 and 1967. At this juncture or perhaps later, considerable alterations were made to the Phase 1 building, in that most of the rear wall was removed in order to merge spaces with the modern area and create a more 'open plan' space and the insertion of a skylight.

Phase 4. In the late 20th century or 21st century the larger areas in the north of the building were subdivided into smaller rooms with stud walls.

6.1. Western elevation

External photograph directions are shown on Figure 6.

The western elevation of the building, the street frontage, comprises two modern shop fronts at ground level defined by three brick pillars (Plate 1). To the left the shop front (currently 'Subway') occupies the left (northern) half of the building whilst the southern half is divided between a shop (currently 'Relate') and a smaller central smaller shop window in front of the stairwell which accesses the first floor. Little fabric is visible behind the shop frontages apart from above the stairwell where weatherboarding is visible at the level of shop signs.

At the first floor level the building is faced with stucco, which has been scored to resemble ashlar. Four sash windows of twelve panes are evenly spaced. The roof of plain tiles rises to decorative ridge tiles; there are no chimneys (however the presence of chimney breasts internally indicates that these have been removed).

6.2. Eastern elevation

The east elevation of the building is largely obscured by other structures and could only be viewed by a camera on a pole (Plate 2). Below the roof the only fabric which is visible is the upper part of the late 20th century flat roofed extension, the lower part being obscured by a slightly lower flat roofed structure (not included in this survey) which stands to the east.

6.3 Internal description

The interior of the first floor of the building is divided, for the purpose of this report, into eleven rooms which have been numbered on Figure 8 with photograph directions.

Room 1 is formed of the southern two bays of the earliest part of the building (Phase 1) on the street frontage. It is rectangular, although a section of the room to the north-east has been lost to the stairwell which is enclosed by tall, narrow reinforced glass panels above a stud plinth (Plate 3). The walls of the room are plastered and the floor is covered with lino, although wide floorboards are visible beneath at the edges. There are two sash windows in the west wall overlooking the High Street (Plate 4). A large transverse tie beam crosses the room (Plate 5), supported on posts to the front and rear of the room and supported with pegged, slightly curved knee braces on both sides (Plates 6 and 7).

The tie beam, bowed to rise centrally has empty mortices for the joists of a slightly lower ceiling. The post to the west (front) is within wall whereas that to the east is exposed with empty mortices to hold rails which would have supported the original wall on this side. The beam, posts and braces have been scored at some point to take a plaster coat. Some painted decoration is faintly visible on the southern side of the western knee brace (Plate 8). A similar knee brace is present in the northern wall of the room, tied into the box framing (Plate 9). This is the central wall of the house with two bays to each side. There is a knee brace in the south wall where it has been exposed by the removal of stud lining.

Also exposed by the removal of this wall is the wall painting referred to in the listing description (Plate 10). The painting survives partially over both the plastered panels and box frame timbers although a later layer of plaster has obscured it in places. The exposed section is approximately 3m wide and 2m high. An orthomosaic image of the mural is presented in Figure 9 and also in Figure 10 with the detail picked out by the author.

It depicts a man and a woman, each painted onto two panels, one above the other, and the beam separating them. The man to the left faces forward slightly obliquely. He wears armour, a ruff and a tall cloth hat. He has a moustache and stands in front of a brick wall and partially behind a column to his left. A woman stands to his left, similarly facing obliquely toward the centre of the painting. She stands in front of a mesh, possibly a window and also partially behind a column to her left. She wears a gown and attifet headdress; her face is not well preserved.

Between the man and woman, a central panel has floral patterning, although this section of the painting is very poorly preserved. Some red bosses survive on the timbers, comprising a pattern of concentric circles.

Above and below the figures are borders, the upper of which appears to rest on the columns. Above this is a decorative frieze, largely floral but also with fabulous beasts, possibly the upper half of a lion or griffin with the lower half of a fish or serpent. One example survives above each figure, both

facing to the right but it is thought likely that these were originally pairs facing outwards from a binding ring or cloth. The central panel at the same level has a similar band from which foliage protrudes which probably represents the centre of the largely symmetrical painting.

For the most part there is little colour in the painting, it comprising grey/black lines over the plaster but in places colour is well preserved, for instance at the capitals and bases of the columns which are yellow and red bosses within the floral decoration.

Room 2 is roughly square, defined by a wall formed of frosted glass windows and a flush hardwood door with transom (Plate 11) to the north and a stud wall to the west. To the south the ceiling slopes with the pitch of the roof (the south facing pitch of the rear wing) and a wall plate and post are exposed (Plate 12). The floors are carpeted with plain skirting and there is a blocked hatch to Room 1 to the west.

Room 3 is the landing which provides access to Rooms 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and the stairwell. The south side of the room lies beneath the wing to the rear, whilst the majority falls beneath the flat roof extension and is lit by rooflights (Plate 13). Slightly east of the door to Room 1 is a free standing, boxed-in post (Plate 14). This is thought to represent the original corner where the extended Phase 1 building meets the rear wing (Phase 2).

A post and knee brace are exposed in the north wall of the stairwell (Plate 15) with a rail extending from the brace, representing a continuation of the frame visible in Room 1. The post represents the line of the original back wall of the building prior to extension.

Room 4 is the former male toilets and canteen at the south-east corner of the building which lies within the rear wing. It is rectangular, with an inserted toilet booth to the north-east (Plate 16). As with Room 2, the southern part of the ceiling is sloped to the pitch of the roof, although here it is less even with a distinct drop in level to the east (Plate 17). An exposed axial beam crosses the ceiling midway whilst to the west a plastered chimney breast protrudes from the wall.

Room 5, the female toilets to the north of the canteen and within the flat roofed area comprises a shower room to the north and a toilet cubicle to the south (Plate 18).

Room 6 is a rectangular room to the east of the building divided from the landing by a stud wall. This is within the flat roofed area and it is lit by two skylights and a three light pvc window overlooking the flat roof of the slightly lower structure to the east. The walls are plastered with plain skirting and the floor is of linoleum over hardboards (Plate 19).

Room 7 is the northern part of the landing, partly divided from Room 3 by a stud wall with large opening. It is roughly L shaped, with the stairwell which leads to the passage to the north of the building occupying the north-east quadrant, surrounded by a moulded railing over solid railing between newel posts with bosses (Plate 20). Above this is a metal framed 'Crittall' window with extractor fan. Protruding from the north wall is a vertical box which presumably contains a post and would therefore represent the north-eastern corner of the earliest (extended) wing of the building.

Room 8 comprises three small areas divided by stud walls that do not extend to the height of the ceiling (Plate 21). These presumably relate to the former function of the building as a beauty parlour. Each has a flush hardwood door with a lock. The ceiling above this area follows the pitch of the east facing roof and a skylight has been inserted.

Room 9 is a rectangular space defined by stud walls except to the south. The northern part of the room is crossed by an exposed section of a tie beam (Plate 22).

Room 10, in the north-west corner of the building, is rectangular, divided from Room 7 by a stud wall with frosted glass panels. The chamfered wall plate is exposed on the north wall and a post exposed in the north-western corner, both of which have been wallpapered. To the west a sash window overlooks the High Street (Plate 23).

Room 11, divided from Room 9 by a stud wall, is rectangular with a sash window in the wall to the west (Plate 24). A knee brace is exposed in the north of the room, pegged to a partially visible post and the tie beam, also visible in Room 9 (Plate 25). The timbers are rough with clear adze marks and have been scored to take a plaster coat. The end wall is lined, covering the box framing and knee brace visible in the same wall in Room 1.

The Roof Space is L shaped, spanning the earlier structure on the street frontage and the later extension to the rear. Photographic directions are shown in Figure 11. In the Phase 1 earlier section, the trusses comprise queen posts with posts slightly angled and the collar beam bowed upward (Plate 26). There are single clasped purlins and curved wind braces (Plate 27). There is no ridge piece, the rafters being joined by overlap joints.

The trusses are partially infilled with lath and plaster. The northernmost internal truss has a door inserted and partitions below the purlins to create a small room of the northernmost bay with internal plaster (Plate 28). There are possible taper marks on the tie beam here but for reasons of health and safety, this area could not be inspected closely.

On the eastern pitch of the Phase 1 building, the roof has been extended below the purlins by angling the rafters at a slightly shallower pitch and leaving the original rafters and wind braces exposed. A lower purlin has been inserted which is supported on posts rising from the original principal rafters above the earlier wall plate (Plate 29). Below the purlins (as mentioned above) the roof is of slates.

The ridge line of the extension to the rear is considerably lower and comprises three bays. Here the same general form of roof structure has been employed though with much diminished queen posts and no wind braces (Plate 30). The purlins are again clasped resting on collar beams which have been cut interior to the joint with the queen posts in the central two trusses, perhaps to create a more usable space. The joists have been strengthened by the insertion of an axial beam (visible crossing Room 4) supported on the walls.

7. Discussion

The building likely originated as a single house of four bays or two cottages each of two bays, built on burgage plots extending eastward from the street frontage. It was a box frame construction strengthened with knee braces supporting tie beams and windbraces in the roof structure.

This building was about 6.5m wide, the width of the full truss visible in Room 1. It was built of box framing which had replaced the earlier cruck framed designs for greater versatility for alterations and extensions. The building may have originally had a jetty as other similar examples in Evesham such as No 19 Cowl Street although this could not be established as the study did not include the ground floor.

It was probably built in the in the first half of the 16th century. Prior to the 1550s, curved windbraces were the norm, but from this date straight windbraces come into and became almost universal by the 1570s (Wild and Moir 2013).

The building is unlikely to have been the first construction on this plot or plots as the burgages here were established in the 13th century. It is therefore likely that a previous, probably more rudimentary, structure stood in this location. The replacement house would have been modern in layout for the period, with smaller private chambers replacing the open plan layout of medieval houses and the commission of a wall painting would have also reflected this transition.

It was probably soon after construction that the painting was commissioned for the first floor chamber of the building, depicting a man and woman, almost certain to have been a couple resident in their relatively newly built house. The painting is simple and largely monochrome with some colour applied in places, such as decorative bosses which are red and the column bases and capitals which are yellow.

In her study of vernacular wall paintings of the Welsh Marches (Davies 2024) Kathryn Davies notes that the majority of such wall paintings date from the period 1575-1625 and are found in first floor chambers. There is no doubt that the painting is *in situ* as pattern continues across the box framing. Davies also notes that such paintings often continued over architectural details such as timbers. The painting recorded here is included in Davies's gazetteer as no 231, described as 'Crudely drawn male and female figures in architectural setting.'

Davies notes that a typical wall painting of this kind comprises three elements: a frieze, main panel and dado. Here there is a clear frieze of foliage and fantastic animals above separated from the main panel by a band. The main panel, comprising the figures is central and beneath there is a band, although no clear dado.

She also notes that figurative paintings such as this one were often framed by architectural details. In this example, although not quite framed, there is a small section of upright banding to the right of the woman that may have been an architectural detail; between the figures there are columns and there is brickwork behind the male

The figures bear clear comparison to an example Davies illustrates, that of Dowles Manor, near Bewdley, tragically demolished in 1986 (Davies 2024, 6). Here, paintings in a chamber on the middle floor included two figures very reminiscent of the those described here, picked out largely in monochrome though with some colour particularly to the frieze above. The man and woman in this example stand closer together, their arms overlapping, framed by a border but also two sides of an

arch either side of each head, with brickwork very similar to that behind the man in the High Street with small oval windows.

Conversely the figures in no 58 High Street stand rather far apart. The panel between the figures is relatively sparse, or less well preserved. Davies also notes that in some paintings there are blank areas which have been interpreted as the location of furniture. It is possible that an object stood between the man and woman in this case.

One of the principal characteristics of typical schemes is that they covered the entire surface of the wall. From the exposed section of the painting, there was no indication that the painting continued to the left (east) although there may be a small section of further painting closer to the front wall. However the faint decoration surviving on the southern side of the knee brace might imply, firstly that this southern bay was a single room and secondly that decoration extended around all the walls and possibly the ceiling.

With intensive research it might be possible to establish the actual identity of the couple depicted in the painting. There are numerous deeds relating to properties in the High Street in Worcestershire Archives but none that could be directly linked to nos 58-60 without extensive work tracing the descent of ownership, which lies beyond the scope of this study.

At a later date, the southern part of the building, perhaps the width of one burgage plot, was extended to the east with the addition of a two-bay structure with a gable roof at a slightly lower pitch than the earlier. At the same time, the eastern pitch of the roof beneath the purlins was made shallower, extending the northern part of the building approximately 1.5m and replacing the purlin on this side. This would have created more space across the building and might imply that it was under one ownership at the time.

The use of clasped purlins in this structure would imply a date prior to 1650, so the changes were probably made within a century of the original construction.

The addition of buildings to the rear of the property, extending eastwards from the Phase 2 structure and then to the north, created a courtyard to the rear of the property which appears to have been open at least until 1938, although between 1903 and 1938 some small outbuildings stood within it. Following this a flat-roofed extension (Phase 3) was built in the angle of the two original buildings. This is shown in place on Ordnance Survey maps in 1967, a date reinforced by the use of a Crittall metal window. At the same time the internal rear walls of the Phase 1 structure were removed on the first floor in order to create open spaces between the front and rear of the building.

In the later 20th or early 21st century, stud walls were inserted into the northern half of the building to facilitate its use as a beauty parlour, dividing a single room to create rooms 9, 10 and 11 and creating small booths within Room 8.

8. Acknowledgements

Ambrey Archaeology would like to thank the following for their help with this project: Alan McColm for commissioning the works, John Cook and Marcus Mumford for providing access to the property and Aidan Smyth of Wychavon District Council for monitoring the project.

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9.1. Cartography

1884 Evesham - Worcestershire XLIX.3.4 Town Plan at 1 to 500 scale

1903 Ordnance Survey Worcestershire sheet XLIX.3 at 1-to-25-inch scale

1923 Ordnance Survey Worcestershire sheet XLIX.3 at 1-to-25-inch scale

1923 Ordnance Survey Worcestershire sheet XLIX.3 at 1-to-25-inch scale

1938 Ordnance Survey Worcestershire sheet XLIX.3 at 1-to-25-inch scale

1967 Ordnance Survey sheet SP0243-SP0343 – BB at 1:2500 scale

1973 Ordnance Survey sheet SP0243-SP0343 – BB at 1:2500 scale

Figures 6-11

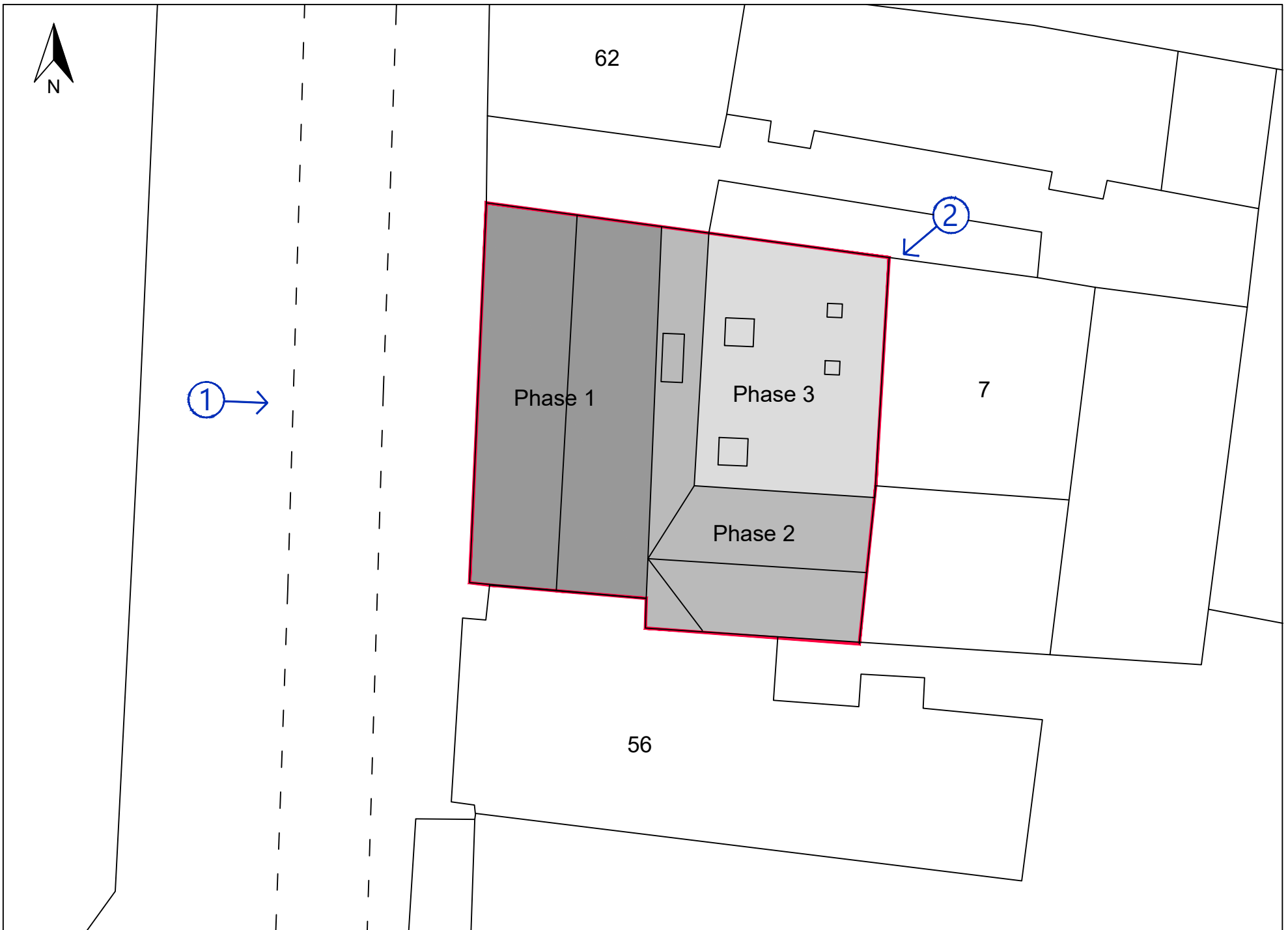


Figure 6. Plan showing broad building phases and external photograph directions

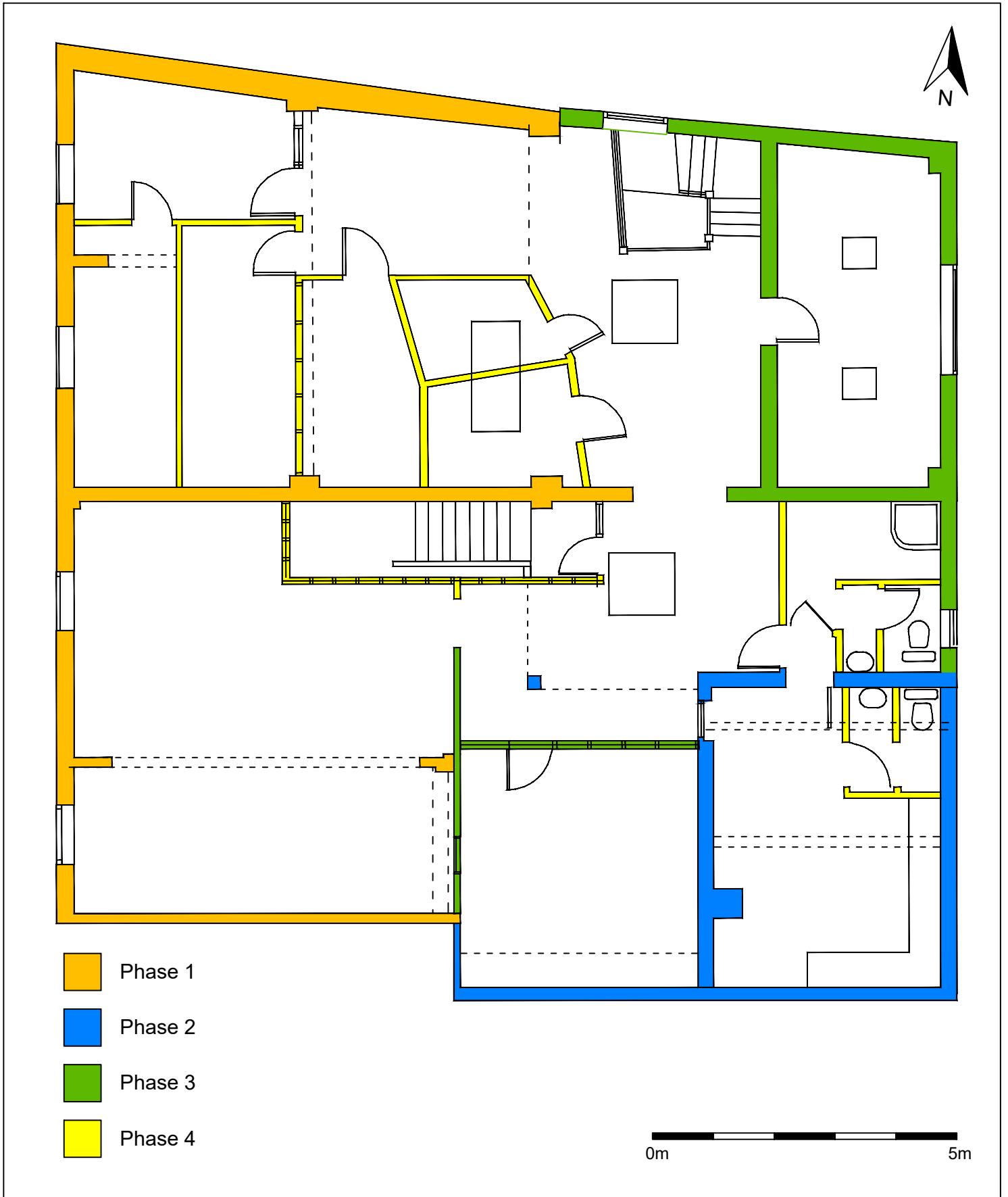


Figure 7. First floor plan showing phases

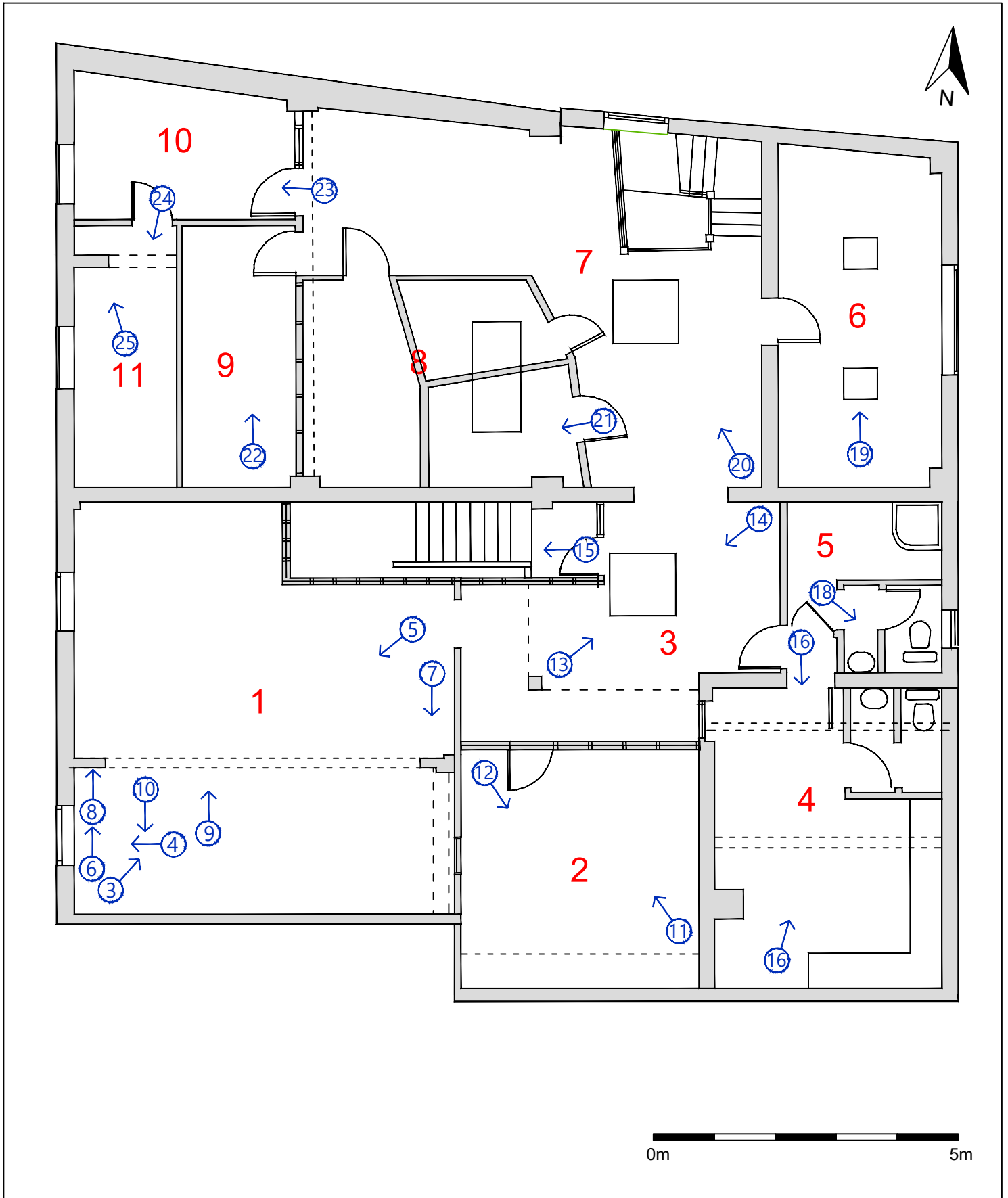


Figure 8. Floorplan showing photograph directions. Room numbers in red



Figure 9. Orthomosaic of wall painting in Room 1



Figure 10. Orthomosaic of wall painting in Room 1 annotated to highlight detail

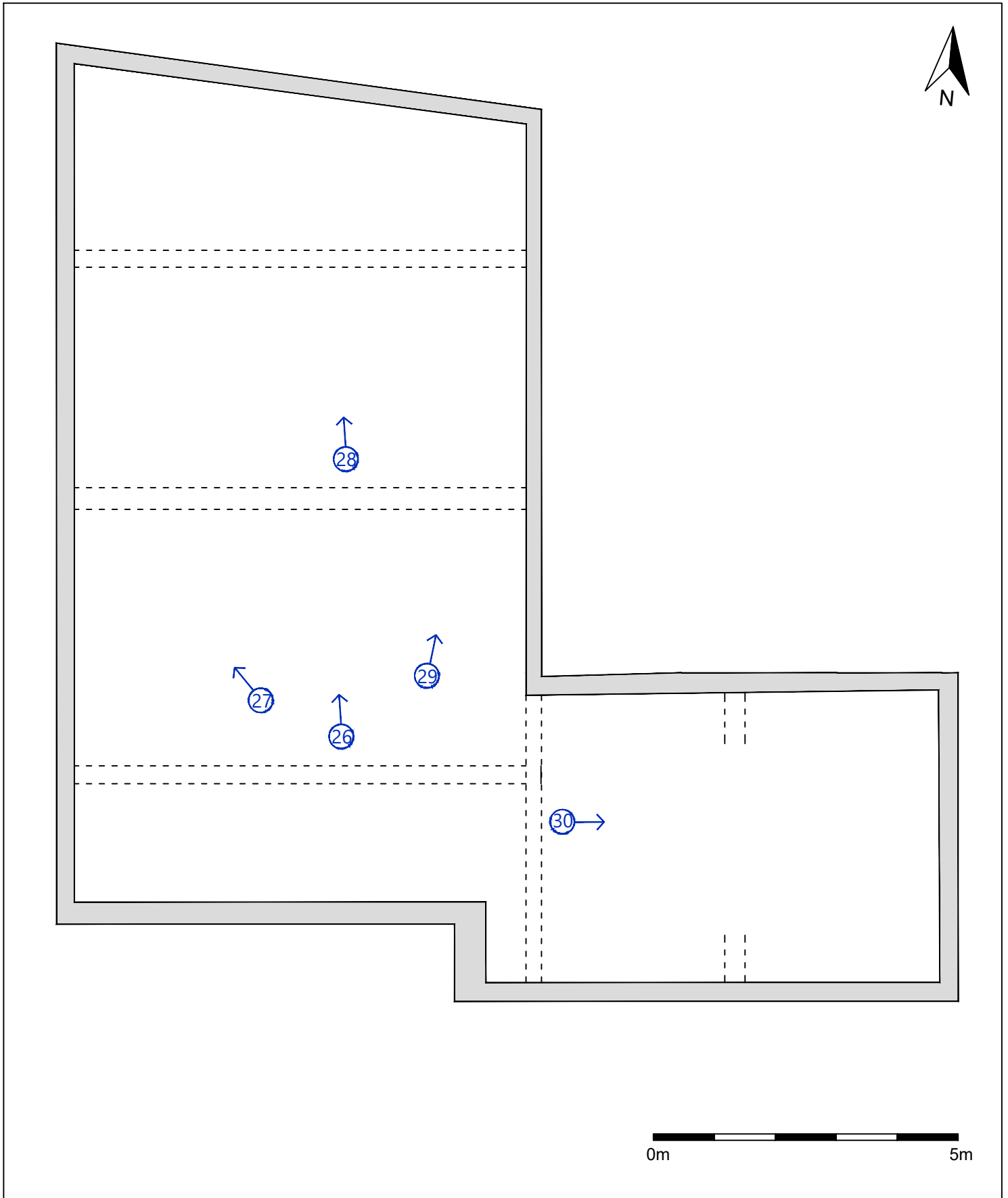


Figure 11. Plan of attic showing photograph directions

Plates



Plate 1. Western elevation of building, view east



Plate 2. Rear view of building, view south-west. Ridge line of Phase 1 section of building to rear of air conditioning unit, Phase 2 extension with slate lower and to left, Phase 3 flat roofed extension in foreground.



Plate 3. Room 1, view north-east, scale 2m

Plate 4. Sash window overlooking the High Street, Room 1, view west, scale 0.5m





Plate 5. Base of tie beam supported on knee braces, Room 1, view south-west, scale 2m. Panel of wall painting to rear.



Plate 6. Knee brace extending from post in western wall, Room 1, view north.

Plate 7. Knee brace and post, eastern wall of Room 1, view south, scale 2m



Plate 8. Detail of decoration on south side of western knee brace, view north



Plate 9. Room 1, view north to central division of Phase 1 building, scale 2m



Plate 10. Exposed area of wall painting, Room 1, view south, scale 2m (see also Figures 9 and 10)



Plate 11. Room 2, view north-west, scale 1m



Plate 12. Room 2, view SSE, scale 1m



Plate 13. Room 3, view north-east, scale 1m



Plate 14. Room 3, view south-west, scale 1m, propped against boxed-in timber

*Plate 15. Timbers exposed in stairwell,
view WNW*



Plate 16. Room 4, view NNE, scale 1m



Plate 17. Room 4, view south, scale 1m against chimney breast



Plate 18. Room 5, female toilets, view south-east



Plate 19. Room 6, view north, scale 1m



Plate 20. Room 7, view north-west, scale 1m against boxed-in timber

Plate 21. Stud walls define small area within Room 8, view west, scale 1m



Plate 22. Room 9, view north, scale 1m



Plate 23. Room 10, view WNW, scale 1m



Plate 24. Room 11, view SSW, scale 1m



*Plate 25. Knee brace exposed in Room 11,
view NNW, scale 1m*



Plate 26. View north to central truss in Phase 1 building



Plate 27. Curved windbraces in western pitch of roof above Phase 1 building, view north-west



Plate 28. View north to northernmost bay in Phase 1 building



Plate 29. View north in attic space of Phase 1 building showing how the southern pitch of the roof has been raised



Plate 30. View east through attic space above Phase 2 extension to the rear. Note truncated collar beam.