
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD

**7 COWBRIDGE,
HERTFORD,
HERTFORDSHIRE**

HISTORIC BUILDING APPRAISAL

Authors: Dr Lee Prosser BA PhD Tansy Collins BSc	
NGR: TL 3239 1275	Report No. 3143
District: East Herts	Site Code: n/a
Approved: Claire Halpin MIFA	Project No. 3153
Signed:	Date: August 2008

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Project details			
Project name	7 Cowbridge , Hertford, Hertfordshire		
<p><i>In July 2008, Archaeological Solutions Ltd conducted an historic building appraisal at 7 Cowbridge, Hertford, Hertfordshire (NGR TL 3239 1275, Figs. 1-2). The building, most recently occupied by a motorcycle dealership, now consolidates three properties: 7 Cowbridge, 2-4 Dimsdale Street and 6-8 Dimsdale Street which are listed separately.</i></p> <p><i>The central range is a late 15th century timber-framed building with a crown post roof, preserved substantially intact. The main street frontage was added in the early 17th century, while a rear, service range probably dates from the later 17th or early 18th century. Other elements, such as the staircase probably date from a refurbishment carried out at a similar date.</i></p> <p><i>The building has undergone much modification during its existence, and many internal fixtures and fittings such as original doors and window joinery have disappeared. However, other important elements remain in situ, including the main structural frames, which allow the building to be analysed with a high degree of accuracy, as well as its principal staircase and other minor decorative features.</i></p> <p><i>The appraisal found that the proposal would have a varying impact; largely uncontentious in many places, but with considerable and detrimental impact in discrete areas, involving the loss of historic fabric such as door surrounds and some primary structural elements, outlined in detail in the text. Additionally, division of the upper chamber of the central range would destroy the unity of the crown post roof, thereby losing its original architectural sense and purpose. Installation of electrical services and under-floor pipes could also have an impact on historic walls, joists and floorboards, which could not be assessed during the appraisal.</i></p>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	29/07/08		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	N	Future work (Y/N/?)	
P. number	3153	Site code	n/a
Type of project	Historic Building Appraisal		
Site status	Listed Grade II.		
Current land use	Vacant – former Bob Hill Motorcycle Shop		
Planned development	Internal alterations to convert the property		
Main features (+dates)	No. 7 Cowbridge – 17 th century. 2&4 Dimsdale Street – 15 th century. Nos. 6&8 Dimsdale Street – 17 th / 18 th century. All with 19 th and 20 th century alterations		
Significant finds (+dates)			
Project location			
County/ District/ Parish	Herts	East Hertfordshire	Hertford
HER/ SMR for area			
Post code (if known)			
Area of site			
NGR	TL 3239 1275		
Height AOD (max/ min)	c. 40m AOD		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	None		
Project supervisor/s (PO)	Tansy Collins		
Funded by	Briskwalk Ltd		
Full title	7 Cowbridge , Hertford, Hertfordshire: an Historic Building Appraisal		
Authors	L Prosser, T Collins		
Report no.	3143		
Date (of report)	August 2008		

7 COWBRIDGE, HERTFORD, HERTFORDSHIRE HISTORIC BUILDING APPRAISAL

SUMMARY

In July 2008, Archaeological Solutions Ltd conducted an historic building appraisal at 7 Cowbridge, Hertford, Hertfordshire (NGR TL 3239 1275, Figs. 1-2). The building, most recently occupied by a motorcycle dealership, now consolidates three properties: 7 Cowbridge, 2-4 Dimsdale Street and 6-8 Dimsdale Street which are listed separately.

The central range is a late 15th century timber-framed building with a crown post roof, preserved substantially intact. The main street frontage was added in the early 17th century, while a rear, service range probably dates from the later 17th or early 18th century. Other elements, such as the staircase probably date from a refurbishment carried out at a similar date.

The building has undergone much modification during its existence, and many internal fixtures and fittings such as original doors and window joinery have disappeared. However, other important elements remain in situ, including the main structural frames, which allow the building to be analysed with a high degree of accuracy, as well as its principal staircase and other minor decorative features.

The appraisal found that the proposal would have a varying impact; largely uncontentious in many places, but with considerable and detrimental impact in discrete areas, involving the loss of historic fabric such as door surrounds and some primary structural elements, outlined in detail in the text. Additionally, division of the upper chamber of the central range would destroy the unity of the crown post roof, thereby losing its original architectural sense and purpose. Installation of electrical services and under-floor pipes could also have an impact on historic walls, joists and floorboards, which could not be assessed during the appraisal.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In July 2008, Archaeological Solutions Ltd conducted an historic building appraisal at 7 Cowbridge, Hertford, Hertfordshire (NGR TL 3239 1275, Figs. 1-2). The appraisal was undertaken after a request from Kirby Cove Architects, on behalf of their client Briskwalk Limited, to provide information prior to the submission / determination of planning proposals for alterations to the property and its conversion to residential and commercial units.

1.2 The project compiled an analysis of the existing historic structure through description and photography, paying particular attention to areas where the proposed conversion would have an impact on historic fabric.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

2.1 The assessment site lies close to the medieval core of Hertford. The building comprises three distinct ranges extending from its main gabled frontage on Cowbridge, with a long elevation along Dimsdale Street. The building is aligned approximately north-north-east to south-south-west, although for the purposes of this report is simplified to north – south.

2.2 Hertford has a long and distinguished history, from its foundation as a pair of fortified *burhs* during the tenth century, to become an important centre of population centred on the castle. At its peak, the castle was used to incarcerate the captured King of France during the 14th century, but later experienced some decline, though it was a favoured palace among the Tudors. By the time the first accurate map of the town was drawn up by John Speed in 1610, the town had shrunk considerably. Later resurgence and growth occurred from the 18th century onwards, with the development of traditional industries and the importance of the settlement as the county town. Despite moderate decline in the mid 20th century, new industries and its relative proximity to London have sustained the town and continued its growth into the modern era.

2.3 The site is classed, as noted above, as three distinct properties, reflecting its earlier tenurial and structural division. These are all Grade II Listed, comprising No. 7 Cowbridge (the main frontage), Nos. 2-4 Dimsdale Street (forming a central range), and Nos. 6-8 to the rear (See Appendix 1). The building has been the subject of some interest with building historians, and is mentioned, if briefly, in J.T. Smith's survey of the county's important buildings (Smith. 1993, p.83). The list description is extensive and detailed.

2.4 For clarity, the division of the building is maintained in the appraisal below as this allows a better understanding of the historic fabric. The site was most recently occupied by Bob Hill Motorcycles, with much of the ground floor modified and consolidated to form a showroom, with storage in the basement. A modern single-storey extension occupying the re-entrant angle between the south and central ranges was a repair workshop, is of no interest and is not considered in any detail below.

3 METHOD OF WORK

3.1 The site was visited on 26/07/08 in order to undertake assessment and photographic work (Figs. 3-6). The appraisal was carried out in accordance with a specification prepared by Archaeological Solutions (dated 07/04/08) in response to a request for an historic building appraisal to be carried out. The historic building recording conformed to the IFA *Standard and Guidance for the Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures* (IFA 2001), and it also conformed to English Heritage's *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice* (2006).

3.2 The photographic recording was carried out using an Olympus Camedia E20 digital camera for all external views, general internal shots and fine detail. External lighting and weather conditions were good at the time of the survey. A scale was used wherever possible, and a flash was employed for internal shots. A pictorial index of the digital photography and selected colour plates are included below together with location plots (Figs. 3).

4 THE BUILDINGS (Figs 3-6)

4.1 The listing description is comprehensive and accurate. The following observation reiterates this, and adds detail where necessary.

4.2 Exterior

4.2.1 The gabled Cowbridge façade with its jettied attic is the most distinctive building in this part of Hertford. It is larger than buildings of similar type and extends to the rear along the narrow Dimsdale Street, connecting the smaller central range, which lies perpendicular, to the rear range at 6-8 Dimsdale Street. It adjoins the Cowbridge Halls on the west, and lies adjacent to a number of derelict 19th century buildings on the south.

4.2.2 The exterior is mostly rendered with rough-cast, much probably of 20th century date, now coated with masonry paint (Plate 1). In the upper gable ends and other discrete areas, however, more traditional plaster-work with ashlar-lining and pargeting survive. This was probably the universal medium before the 20th century fashion for the rougher, textured finish which we now see over much of the building.

North range

4.2.3 The north range is of two storeys with attic, partly oversailing and dominating the central range. The ground floor has been reconfigured by 20th century shop windows, while the first floor retains some historic windows with eight-over-eight sashes on the north and east and three-light casement window to the south. Historic photographs show that several have been replaced, though in sympathetic style and materials. The gable frames a further three-light casement as on the east at first floor level.

4.2.4 The roof is tiled and defined by a cluster of ostentatious octagonal chimneystacks at the apex. These have been rebuilt but replicate those seen in historic photographs. The east pitch of the roof also contains two dormer windows, with small hipped and tiled roofs, each containing a three-light casement window – also completely refurbished.

4.2.5 A series of undated historic photographs indicate the form of the building prior to its conversion to commercial premises (Green. 1993), when it was utilised as an inn named The Traveller's Rest. Much of the ground floor has been altered with the insertion of the 20th century shop windows. The windows on the north have replaced a single door and window, while on the east a door currently lies in the location of an earlier sash window. A further shop window has replaced a door and window to the south on the east side. Interestingly the earlier form of window was of six-over-six sash form, although the building now displays wider eight-over-eight sash windows in the same locations at first floor level, which must be more modern replacements. The dormer windows in the roof pitch are of similar form, having undergone some alteration, but latterly restored to their earlier appearance.

Central range

4.2.6 The central range is the oldest surviving element, and displays projecting gable ends to the east and west. Large shop windows occupy the ground floor on the east, incorporating original sill-beams and mid-rails of the timber-frame, and utilising the original corner posts of the building. The intermediate mullions are 20th century in date.

4.2.7 The first floor gable originally framed a sash window, but this has been removed (though traces of the blocking are still visible to the interior face). A small window, of 20th century date has been inserted on the north return wall. The west gable is a late 19th century rebuild, contemporary with the construction of the adjoining Cowbridge Halls in 1890, and might suggest that the range was shortened to allow the erection of these neighbouring buildings. The roof has a large plain chimneystack with three pots, lying at the junction with the range to the south.

South range

4.2.9 The ground floor of the south range has been extensively modernised with modern shop-fronts, as elsewhere. Two casement windows on the east at first floor level appear consistent with those seen on the early photograph, and internal inspection confirms these to be contemporary with the construction of the range. The south gable wall is plain aside from a late 19th century chimneystack addition. Modern extensions are visible at ground floor level at this end and also as a pent-roofed unit on the west side.

4.3 Interior

4.3.1 Consolidation of the three ranges leads to some confusion, and the list description, which describes the complex floor by floor, exacerbates the difficulty in making coherent sense of the historic fabric. Below, they are treated separately.

Central range

4.3.2 Two bays of the original, central 15th century range survive. This may have been truncated on the west, where the building has been walled up in yellow brick, but further analysis would be needed to establish this. Most importantly the building preserves its original, open crown-post roof intact.

4.3.3 At some point, the range was extended by a single bay to the east. Structurally we can see this at all levels, where at the ground floor, the supporting floor joists are joggled and of slightly different form to those on the west, and at upper level, by the fact that the roof form changes to a more simple type. The crown post terminates at a weathered stump, and the studs above the tie-beam at this point have wattle slots and holes, suggesting that this was the original external wall (Plate 2). This extension may have occurred in the late 16th or early 17th century, possibly when the chimney was added to the south.

4.3.4 Sufficient elements of the internal fabric at both levels allow a fairly accurate reconstruction of the original form of the building to be attempted. Most of the upper wall-plates are exposed, and with some supporting posts, show the position of both early windows (one of which was provided with a sliding shutter, while another had diamond mullions), and the configuration of the studs and braces, several of which have been removed subsequently. Many more elements are probably preserved behind existing plaster. A doorway in the south-east corner, adjacent to the chimneystack, preserves an early 18th century or earlier rudimentary door surround.

4.3.5 In the early 17th century, the existing chimney stack was added to the south, attached to the exterior (rather than being installed in an internal position), with a small gable spanning the gap thereby introduced between the brickwork and the roof. The roof here is of rudimentary trapped side-purlin form (Plate 3), but clearer dating is given by the fabric of the

bricks and the treatment of the fireplace surround (with flattened, chamfered arch and high stops to the jambs), suggesting that it was built at the same time as the north range, which displays identical characteristics.

North range

4.3.6 The north range was a substantial addition of much more robust proportions, and given its scale, probably dates from the time the building first became an inn. It is divided by an internal brick stack into a large north bay, with a smaller area to the south housing a staircase and open landing, while the attic extends over the roof of the central range to provide more space at higher level.

4.3.7 Substantial modification is evident, though much more of the frame remains hidden behind plaster than in the central range. Good datable elements include the central chamfered binding joist at ground floor level in Room 1 with early 17th century lamb's tongue chamfer stops, and a conspicuous fireplace, with its exposed bressumer beam, probably recycled from another building. The arch of the fireplace has been rebuilt in the recent past in a heavy-handed manner, but would have been plastered originally. The doorway to the rear on the south-east preserves a slightly moulded surround.

4.3.8 This range is organised loosely on a lobby-entry system with its original door opening directly onto the stack. The south bay (Room 2) houses a winder staircase, preserving a small two-light window (now blocked) at each half-landing level. Their heavily moulded surrounds and central mullion with deep ovolo with fillet provide additional corroborating dating evidence for the 17th century. The timber-framing of the flanking walls, and beneath the staircase gives good insight into the form of the structure, which is obscured elsewhere.

4.3.9 The staircase is of considerable interest (Plate 4). The manner in which it winds around a central, partly-chamfered newel running up through the building is traditional, but other elements, such as the balusters and decorations have probably been added. The handrail is of fairly simple profile, while the first floor newel preserves a moulded top with a rhomboid finial. This, together with the shape and wide spacing of the balusters suggest it was upgraded in the later 17th or early 18th century; a date around 1680 could be suggested.

4.3.10 At first floor level there is a disparity of floor levels, perhaps deliberately intended to give the lower, principal room a high ceiling. The upper chamber (Room 5) is now reached by a short flight of steps, through a 17th century doorway, which preserves heavy chamfers and lamb's-tongue chamfer stops to the jambs, which are of the same date as the other exposed decorative timbers. The flanking in-fill panels are probably also of contemporary date, though no original door survives, and the existing applied architrave is of 19th century date. The room itself also preserves good original fabric. On the north wall, for example we see heavily jowled corner posts, while the east window has a 17th century surround, though the mullions have been replaced. The fireplace is an exceptional survival. In form, it has the flattened arch with high stops on chamfered jambs as we see in the central range, but the aperture was probably blocked for many years, as it preserves its original ruddling or colour-washing to the internal cheeks and back, which is extremely rare, and most unusual given the level of modification we see elsewhere. In addition, a cupboard to the west of the chimneystack has a 17th century door architrave with 19th century door frame. The flanking walls comprise studwork, with heavy lath and plaster, along with a cranked brace rising from the bay division post on the west (Plate 5).

4.3.11 At attic level the roof is not wholly exposed and is mostly underboarded with modern plasterboard. This presents some limitations of interpretation. The visible elements reveal in-line butt-purlins with collar and peg holes for lower morticed rafters, although the rafters themselves are not visible. The pattern of peg-holes also indicate that the existing dormers are in their original position. Beneath the plaster-board below the purlins, we would expect to see wind-braces. Their presence, absence and shape could help to pin-point the date of the range more accurately.

South range

4.3.12 The south range is the most recent and modest addition to the complex. Elements such as the window surround and lack of decoration suggest this was a service range, providing kitchens and other functions. Much less fabric is visible, making clear interpretation difficult, but overall several elements point to the late 17th / early 18th century for construction. At ground floor level little of interest is visible, aside from a re-worked fireplace on the north and the 19th century compartment on the west enclosing a modest back-stair (Plate 6).

4.3.13 At first floor level a straight joint is visible in the chimneystack, showing how the existing, external stack of the central range was enlarged to provide extra fireplaces to the south. The brickwork is consistent with the date, and is also congruous with the cellar walls, suggesting a generous provision of facilities at that time.

4.3.14 The roof is not accessible for inspection, and while the tie-beams are exposed, they do not provide enough diagnostic evidence. The two windows at first floor level have heavy frames with thick-section mullions, however are robust in the later 17th century style, although have more delicate mouldings that tends towards an 18th century date. A small 18th century door and architrave leads to a cupboard set into the west side of the chimneystack. The little flight of stairs enclosed within its own compartment is fairly rudimentary in construction and quality, and is probably early 19th century in date. A probable blocked window to the west wall of the frame is apparent within the staircase.

Cellar

4.3.15 The cellar underlies the south and central ranges only, comprising a single cell to the south and two smaller cells to the north. Much seems created in the 18th century as the exterior walls are of large sandy friable bricks typical of this period. The two ranges are connected by a well-made arched passage which supports, and extends beneath the chimney stack. Most modification can be seen to the south in the form of brick piers and other replacements in Fletton bricks. The floors to the ground floor rooms appear to have 19th or 20th century softwood joists, incorporating a few older, waney timbers to the north although these not jointed and therefore reused. A large robust oak joist spans the south, latterly truncated for the insertion of a goods lift in the south-west corner. A rudimentary stair in the south cell is modern and of no historic interest.

5 DISCUSSION

5.1 The building has been examined by several experts in the past, leading to an accurate and detailed list description. Greater understanding of features such as window mouldings however, helps to refine our understanding, though much historic fabric remains covered up

(such as floor joist runs, the south range roof and wall studwork). Three main phases can be established. During the first, the central range was constructed in the late 15th century. This is still not fully understood. It is rather small, suggesting that it has been truncated, and had windows on both sides, which suggest that it stood in an open plot, rather than in a tightly packed urban landscape. Nor was this early range evidently heated, suggesting perhaps that this is a surviving fragment of a larger building.

5.2 In the late 16th or early 17th century, this range was extended forward by a bay, and a chimney added soon after, when the building was extended to the north, to create the Cowbridge elevation which is so distinctive today.

5.3 The new range established a capacious lower chamber, a staircase, a large upper chamber and accommodation in the roof, all displaying decorative flourishes and finishes, such as the shaped fireplace apertures. The ruddling preserved within the fireplace is an exceptional survival which merits preservation.

5.4 In the late 17th or early 18th century the service range was added. The quality of the timber here is much poorer than elsewhere, illustrating both its later date and status, and indeed it is unusual to see a timber building at such a late date, particularly if it was provided with a brick cellar.

5.5 Later modification is present, as would be expected in a working building of this kind. Regrettably most of the doors have disappeared, and the windows appear to have been refurbished several times. Those in the rear wing, for example, preserve their surrounds, but the casements, which originally would have been of iron, were replaced in the late 19th century. The conversion of the ground floor to a show-room was probably the most drastic intervention, requiring the removal of studwork and other partitions, but much of interest undoubtedly remains hidden.

6 HISTORIC FABRIC IMPACT ANALYSIS

6.1 The proposal envisages conversion of the building to a number of residential units, requiring subdivision of rooms, removal of some partitions, the enclosure of the staircase and installation of plumbing and other services in walls and beneath floors. The following impact analysis considers each room individually and discusses any impact the proposals will have on surviving historic fabric as it has been established during the appraisal. Points 1 – 36 reflect areas proposed for alteration and are indicated on the proposed building plans (Fig. 5).

6.2 There remain a number of unknown factors which are not shown on the plans, such as the routing of electrical services and the installation of plumbing, which can have an impact on historic plasterwork, and floors through the trenching of joists and lifting of historic boarding. Much of the plasterwork is historic, though fragile, which often leads to replacement and upgrading.

Ground floor

6.3 North range (Room 1)

1 – Insertion of a new shop front entrance – no perceived impact to historic fabric.

2 – Removal of lower stair flight in south-west corner. This element is clearly modern and has no impact on historic fabric.

3 – Removal of a wall and doorway to the east of the chimneystack. **High impact** on fabric, entailing removal of early 17th century door surround, and flanking panels possibly of contemporary date, comprising early daub infill.

6.4 North range (Room 2)

4 – Insertion of a new entrance on the east. Removal of two shop window mullions. Both modern, with no perceived impact. However, the south stud is part of the early frame, but it is not clear from the plans whether this is scheduled for removal.

5 – New partitions for a communal lobby – possible impact to the ceiling, though its historic nature could not be assessed at this level of analysis.

6.5 Central range (Room 3)

6 – Alteration of existing doorway on the east side of the south wall - may involve the cutting back of door jambs. If so, some impact possible, but further investigation needed to discern its extent.

7 – Alterations to the chimneystack on the east – possible impact on historic fabric if this includes the removal of fire surround and grate dating to turn of 20th century. This area is also likely to block a larger, earlier aperture.

8 – Widening of west door on south wall giving access to new build by cutting back existing jambs. **High impact** on 15th century timber-frame in this area.

9 – Insertion of a new staircase to give access to the cellar – no perceived impact to historic fabric.

6.6 South range (Room 4)

10 – Creation of a utility cupboard to the west of the chimneystack involves the removal of the existing electricity cupboard - no perceived impact to historic fabric.

11 – Creation of a cupboard to the east of the chimneystack - no perceived impact to historic fabric.

12 – Removal of west wall enclosing the hydraulic lift – no perceived impact to historic fabric. Wall here is of plasterboard, with modern heavy inserted beam above.

13 – Insertion of a new staircase to the cellar by removal of the existing 19th century staircase and door. **Moderate impact**, though no impact to primary fabric.

14 – Associated removal of the west external wall and doorway currently giving access to the modern extension - possible impact to historic frame, but more investigation needed.

First floor

6.7 North range (Room 5)

15 – Removal of the doorway and flanking walls to the cupboard west of the chimneystack – **high impact** to primary historic fabric, contemporary with range resulting in loss of 17th century partition, doorway and 19th century architrave.

16 – Removal of the doorway and flanking walls east of the chimneystack – **high impact** on primary fabric, resulting in loss of 17th century doorway and surrounding partition wall.

17 – Care should be taken to preserve the colour-washing or ruddling of the fireplace interior.

6.8 North range (Room 6)

18 – Enclosure of staircase at landing level to create an entrance to Apartment 2 – **high impact** to historic fabric of stair, particularly the decorated newel.

19 – Insertion of a partition to landing – possible impact to ceiling and wall fabric, but needs more investigation.

20 – Blocking of south wall of stair vestibule. If this utilises existing studs, then moderate impact with attachment of modern materials to historic timber.

6.9 Central range (Room 7)

21 – Insertion of a window in the west gable wall. Moderate impact on late 19th century brickwork.

22 – Insertion of a partition wall at the west bay division – moderate impact on historic timberwork at connection of tie-beam and studs.

23 – Insertion of a partition at the east bay division – moderate impact to tie-beam and studwork, but **high impact** to fireplace, as this proposal sub-divides the early 17th century aperture and destroys its integrity.

24 – Insertion of a window on the east – this reinstates an historic feature, though elements of the earlier window may remain behind plaster.

25 – Blocking of the doorway in the south-east corner adjoining the chimneystack – possible impact on the early doorway.

26 – Insertion of partitions in the central bay to create a bathroom / en-suite – **high impact** on the integrity and unity of the roof structure.

6.10 South range (Room 8)

27 – Removal of elements in the north-west corner – **moderate to high impact** on primary fabric. This proposes the removal of an 18th century cupboard into the chimneystack, the 19th century stair compartment and the primary external wall at this level together with an area to the north-east currently part of the central range of rooms. The external wall retains a probable blocked window.

28 – Insertion of a window in the west wall at the south end – possible impact on primary fabric of the frame, though this area is much altered. Further investigation needed.

29 – Insertion of a window in the south gable wall to the east of the chimneystack – possible impact on primary frame.

30 – Subdivision of rooms in this area – some impact to historic ceiling fabric, and sub-division of range without reference to existing bay divisions could be viewed as detrimental.

Second floor

6.11 North range (Rooms 9-11)

31 – Blocking of the existing doorway in the south wall – no perceived impact to historic fabric.

32 – Insertion of a doorway to the east of the current door in the south wall – further investigation needed as historic fabric could not be assessed.

33 – Removal of a partition between the existing kitchen (Room 10) and bathroom (Room 11) – no perceived impact to historic fabric.

Cellar

6.12 Central and south ranges

34 – Insertion of a new staircase giving access to the ground floor – no perceived impact to historic fabric.

35 – Alteration to the arched passage beneath the chimneystack by creation of a cupboard – no perceived impact to historic fabric.

36 – Removal of the existing staircase and hydraulic lift, along with the insertion of a new staircase giving access to the ground floor – no perceived impact to historic fabric.

7 SUMMARY OF CHANGES

7.1 The most detrimental impact is confined to discrete areas. Of particular consequence, most damaging to the integrity of the building and the historic fabric would be the subdivision of the upper chamber of the central range, which would conceal the unity of the crown post roof – a rare and precious survival from an early date, and the doorways and small partitions in the north range, mentioned above, which are among the last surviving decorative elements of this area, integral to our understanding of the original layout.

7.2 In the south range, most impact could be argued as less detrimental because the quality of the frame is much poorer, there is more evidence of recent modification, and the date of the range places it in a period when many more buildings of this type survive.

7.3 Mitigation can be achieved, but it should also be considered that the ‘hidden modification’ noted above, such as service installation, could have equally dramatic effects.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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APPENDIX 1

LISTED BUILDING SUMMARY

HERTFORD

TL3212NW COWBRIDGE
817-1/16/49(South side)

No. 7
GV II

Includes: Nos.2-8 DIMSDALE STREET. House, subsequently public house, now motor cycle retail showrooms, service area, stores and offices (incorporating Nos 2 & 4 Dimsdale Street, and former residential properties Nos 6 & 8 Dimsdale Street. C17 (No.7 Cowbridge); C15 (former Nos 2 & 4 Dimsdale Street); C18 (former Nos 6 & 8 Dimsdale Street); all with C19 and C20 alterations. Timber-framed, plastered, pebbledashed and colourwashed, old tile roofs. EXTERIOR: 2 storeys and attics (No.7) and 2 storey. No.7 originally had lobby entry plan, with large 2 bay room at front to left. No.7 has jettied gable facing street, deep eaves cornice, and 2 three-light casement dormers with plastered cheeks. Moulded cornice and hipped tiled roofs on left-hand (east) side. Central red brick chimneystack with 3 octagonal shafts above brick base with bands (restored 1970s). Former Nos 2 & 4 Dimsdale Street has gabled roof facing Dimsdale Street (east) frontage; former Nos 6 & 8 Dimsdale Street has old tiled roof, with yellow brick stack and external chimney breast at left and red brick stack at right above party wall with former No.2. Cowbridge frontage has 1 nearly flush-set 16-pane sash window on first floor and 1 flush-set three-light casement in attic gable. Early C20 shopfront to ground floor, with colourwashed brick piers, continuous fascia with cut profiled consoles at ends, and later three light timber-framed display window. Dimsdale Street (east) frontage of No.7 has 1 three-light casement at left and 1 flush-set 16-pane sash window at right on first floor. Ground floor with C20 glazed door at right in lengthened void of former window, and C20 four-light timber-framed display window at left on ground floor. Former Nos 2 & 4 Dimsdale Street has gable projecting forward, blank above C20 five-light timber-framed display window on ground floor and a C20 two-light casement window on return (north) flank at first floor. Former Nos 6 & 8 Dimsdale Street has 2 two-light timber casements on first floor, and C20 display windows and glazed door in voids on ground floor. Right-hand flank (west) elevation has projecting gable of former No.2 Dimsdale Street at rear. This was truncated c1890 due to the redevelopment of the adjoining site for the Cowbridge Halls, and the gable end was rebuilt in yellow gault brick. INTERIOR: front ground floor showroom to No.7 has rebuilt segmentally-arched (originally 4 centre arched) red brick fireplace with chamfered cheeks and intrados, and heavy timber bressumer above. Dogleg plan staircase, with lowest flight raised to eliminate windows, newel with multi-faced rhomboid cap on inverted square urn, moulded handrail, with some bold column-on-urn balusters, and closed strings. 2-light landing window with ovolo mouldings. Exposed beams with chamfer and tongue stops. Attics partly oversail above former Nos 2 & 4 Dimsdale Street. Roof has peg jointed purlin and rafter construction. Former Nos 2 & 4 Dimsdale Street is now opened out into No.7 Cowbridge. Ground floor remodelled internally but pattern of beams indicate 3 bay structure at right angles to rear of No.7. First floor has original studwork external wall, with several studs removed forming an openwork screen with access from first floor of No.7 (no separate staircase now survives within No.2). Mortices in wall plate indicate positions of diamond section window mullions. Exposed 2 bay braced tie-beam and crown post roof structure of late C15 date, with cambered tie beams and square section unmoulded crown posts with fore and aft curved bracing. No evidence of smoke blackening, indicating

that the building may have been unheated in its original form. Third bay rearwards from Dimsdale Street appears to be C17 with no evidence for further prolongation of crown post structure and truncated wooden purlin. Some evidence for filled mortices in soffit of tie beam. To left side of front, on south face, is an inserted chimneystack, with fireplace arch at first-floor level. Interior of former Nos 6 & 8 Dimsdale Street remodelled and opened out on ground floor, with access to modern workshop at rear. Evidence for smoke-hood behind large chimneystack shared with former Nos 2 & 4. Ceiling inserted above tie beams on first floor indicating earlier subdivision into 3 tenements of 1 bay each. No access to roof. Basement beneath No.7 has arched vault through to main cellar beneath front room. Brick lined walls. (Forrester H: *Timber-framed buildings in Hertford and Ware*: Hitchin: 1964-: 19; Smith JT: *Hertfordshire Houses: Selective Inventory*: London: 1993-: 83; Green L: *Hertford's Past in Pictures*: Ware: 1993-: 51, 98).

HERTFORD

APPENDIX 2

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD SUMMARY SHEET

Site name and address:	7 Cowbridge, Hertford, Hertfordshire
County: Herts	District: East Herts
Village/Town: Hertford	Parish: Hertford
Planning application reference:	
Client name/address/tel:	<i>Briskwalk Limited</i>
Nature of application:	<i>Internal alterations to convert the property</i>
Present land use:	<i>Vacant – former Bob Hill Motorcycle Shop</i>
Size of application area:	Size of area investigated
NGR (8 figures):	TL 3239 1275
Site Code:	n/a
Site director/Organization:	Archaeological Solutions Ltd
Type of work:	Historic Building Appraisal
Date of work:	July 2008
Location of finds/Curating museum:	Hertford
Related SMR Nos:	Periods represented: Medieval to Post-medieval
Relevant previous summaries/reports: -	
Summary of fieldwork results:	<p>In July 2008, Archaeological Solutions Ltd conducted an historic building appraisal at 7 Cowbridge, Hertford, Hertfordshire (NGR TL 3239 1275, Figs. 1-2). The building, most recently occupied by a motorcycle dealership, now consolidates three properties: 7 Cowbridge, 2-4 Dimsdale Street and 6-8 Dimsdale Stree which are listed separately.</p> <p>The central range is a late 15th century timber-framed building with a crown post roof, preserved substantially intact. The main street frontage was added in the early 17th century, while a rear, service range probably dates from the later 17th or early 18th century. Other elements, such as the staircase probably date from a refurbishment carried out at a similar date.</p> <p>The building has undergone much modification during its existence, and many internal fixtures and fittings such as original doors and window joinery have disappeared. However, other important elements remain in situ, including the main structural frames, which allow the building to be analysed with a high degree of accuracy, as well as its principal staircase and other minor decorative features.</p> <p>The appraisal found that the proposal would have a varying impact; largely uncontentious in many places, but with considerable and detrimental impact in discrete areas, involving the loss of historic fabric such as door surrounds and some primary structural elements, outlined in detail in the text. Additionally, division of the upper chamber of the central range would destroy the unity of the crown post roof, thereby losing its original architectural sense and purpose. Installation of electrical services and under-floor pipes could also have an impact on historic walls, joists and floorboards, which could not be assessed during the appraisal.</p>
Author of summary: T. Collins & L. Prosser	Date of Summary: 12/08/08

COLOUR PLATES



Plate 1 View of assessment building, taken from the north-east (6)



Plate 2 Roof structure of the central range showing crown-purlin stump (indicated) to the original gable end, taken from the south-east (40)



Plate 3 Detail of fireplace and chimney extension in Room 7, first floor of the central range, taken from the north-west (42)



Plate 4 Detail of staircase, north range, taken from the north-west (26)



Plate 5 Detail within cupboard on south-west of Room 5, first floor of the north range, taken from the west (30)



Plate 6 Room 4, ground floor of the south range, taken from the north-east (23)

PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



1.

*South elevation of the south range,
taken from the south*



2.

*South and east elevation, taken from
the south-east*



3.

*East elevation of the south and
central ranges, taken from the south-
east*



4.

*East elevation of the south range,
taken from the north-east*



5.

*East elevation of the south, central
and north ranges, taken from the
north-east*



6.

*View of assessment building, taken
from the north-east*



7.

North elevation of the north range, taken from the north



8.

North elevation of the north range, taken from the north-west



9.

South area of the south range cellar, taken from the north



10.

North area of the south range cellar, with arch supporting the chimneystack above, taken from the south



11.

West area of the cellar beneath the central range, taken from the south-east



12.

Room 11, within attic of the north range, taken from the north



13.

East area of the cellar beneath the central range, taken from the south



14.

East area of the cellar beneath the central range, taken from the north-west



15.

Room 1, ground floor of the north range, taken from the north



16.

Room 1, ground floor of the north range, taken from the north-west



17.

Room 2 and staircase giving access to first floor of the north range, taken from the south-east



18.

Fireplace in Room 3, ground floor of the central range, taken from the north



19.

South wall detail of Room 3, ground floor of the central range, taken from the north



20.

Room 3, ground floor of the central range, with view into the north range, taken from the south-east



21.

Room 4, ground floor of the south range, taken from the south



22.

Room 4, ground floor of the south range, taken from the south-east



23.

Room 4, ground floor of the south range, taken from the north-east



24.

Room 4, ground floor of the south range, taken from the north-east



25.

Modern south-east extension, taken from the north



26.

Detail of staircase, north range, taken from the north-west



27.

Finial on newel of staircase in the north range, taken from the north-east



28.

South elevation of the assessment building, taken from the south



29.

North wall of Room 5, first floor of the north range, taken from the north-east



30.

Detail within cupboard on south-west of Room 5, first floor of the north range, taken from the west



31.

Detail of fireplace in Room 5, first floor of the north range, taken from the north



32.

Detail of door in Room 5, first floor of the north range, taken from the north



33.

Detail of the door giving access to Room 5, first floor of the north range, taken from the south



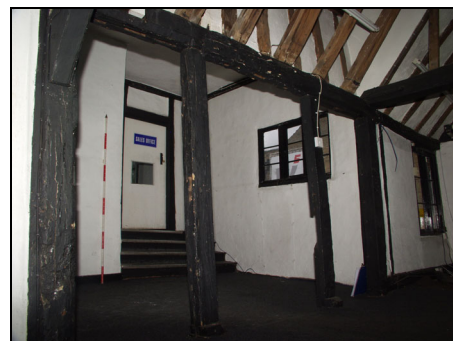
34.

Wave moulding to door architrave to Room 5, first floor of the north range, taken from the south-west



35.

View of Room 6, first floor of the north range, taken from the central range and the south



36.

View of Room 6, first floor of the north range, taken from the central range and the south-west



37.

View of Room 6, first floor of the north range, taken from the central range and the south-east



38.

View of Room 7, first floor of the central range, taken from the north range and the north-west



39.

Room 7, first floor of the central range, taken from the east



40.

Roof structure of the central range, taken from the south-east



41.

Room 7, first floor of the central range, taken from the east



42.

Detail of fireplace and chimney extension in Room 7, first floor of the central range, taken from the north-west



43.

Detail of weathered crown-purlin in roof of the central range, taken from the north-east



44.

Detail of crown-post in roof of the central range, taken from the north-east



45.

Room 7, first floor of the central range, taken from the west



46.

Room 8, first floor of the south-range, taken from the north



47.

North-west corner of Room 8, first floor of the south range, taken from the south-east



48.

West wall within stair compartment of the south range, first floor, taken from the east



49.

West wall of the south range within the stair compartment, first floor, taken from the north



50.

Staircase of the south range, first floor, taken from the north



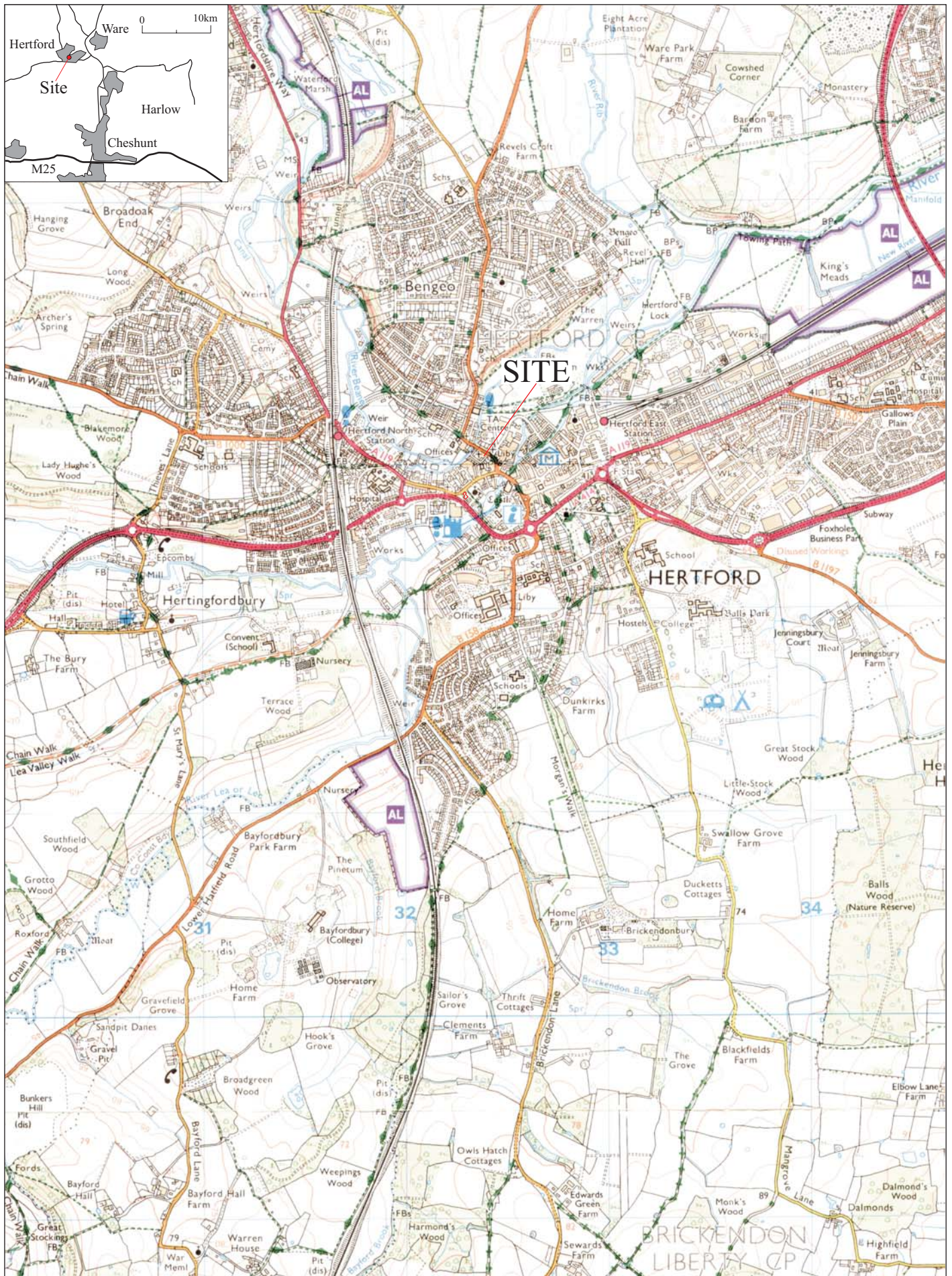
51.

Room 9, attic level of the north range, taken from the north-west



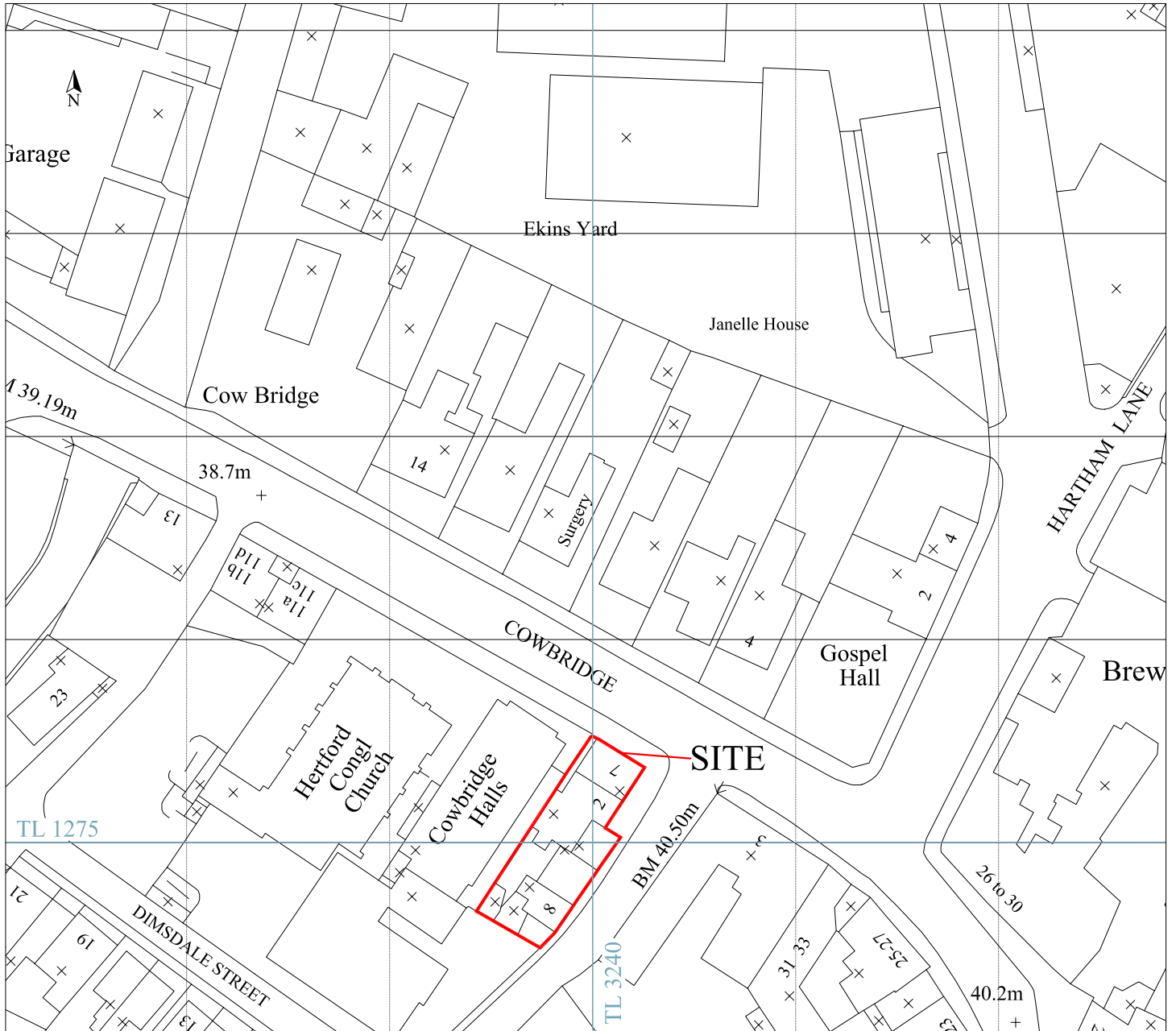
52.

Room 10, attic level of the north range, taken from the north-west

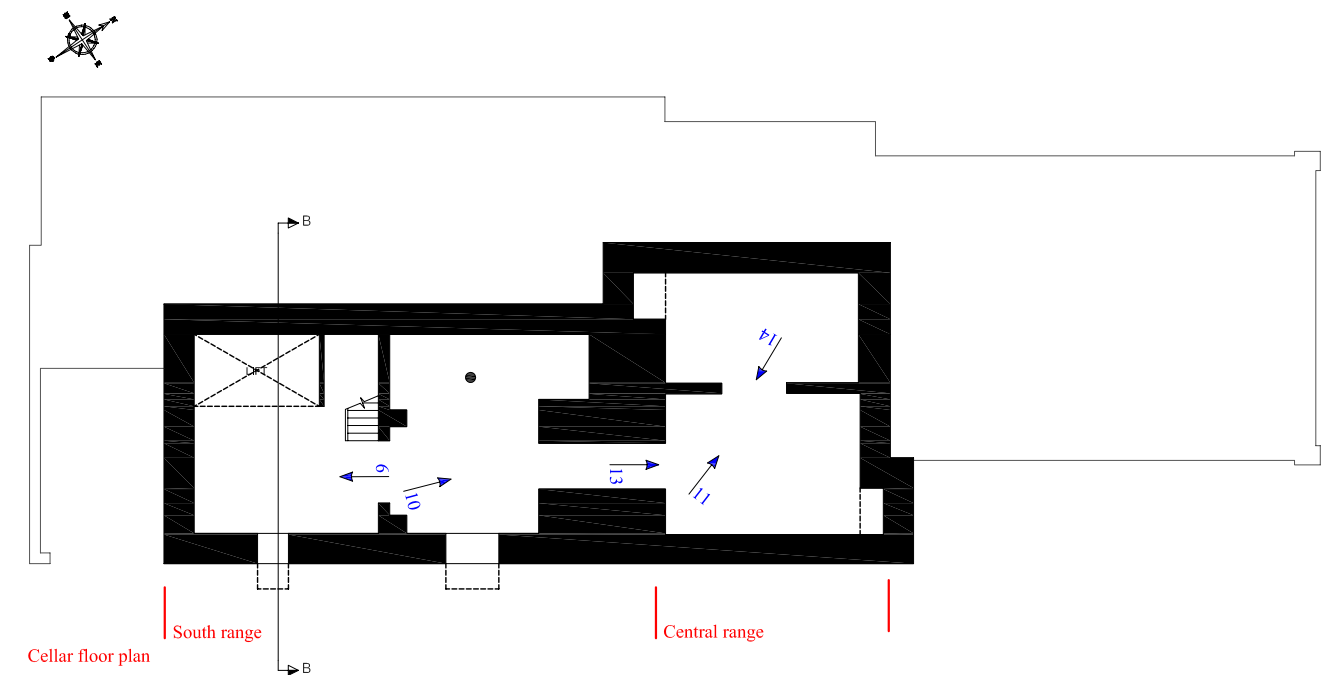
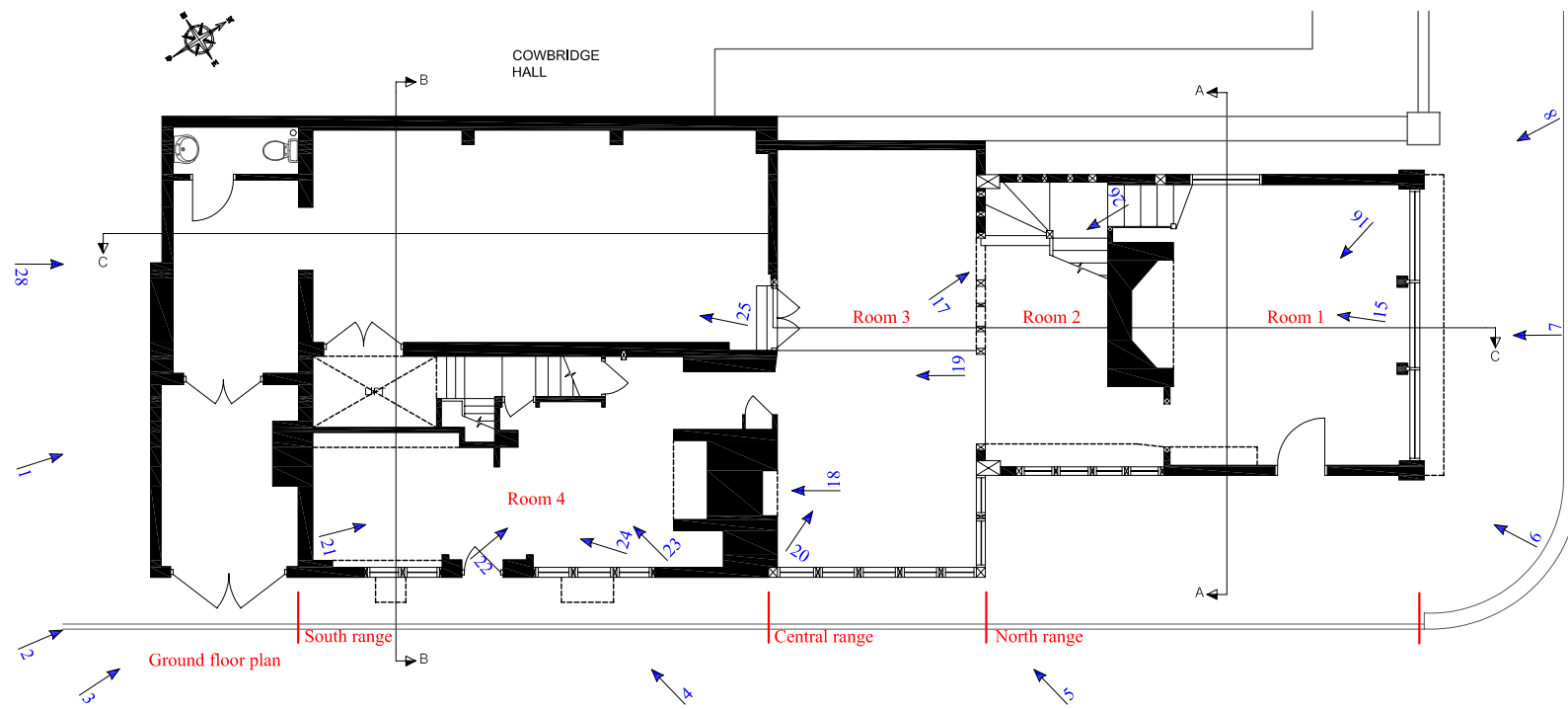
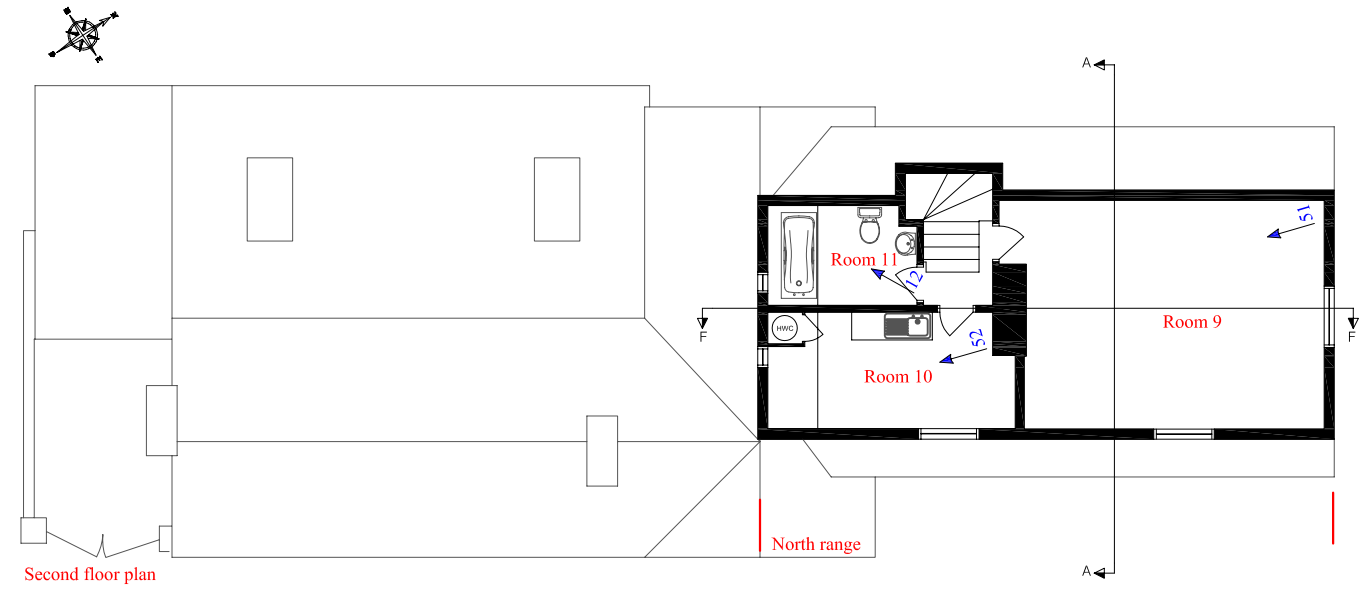
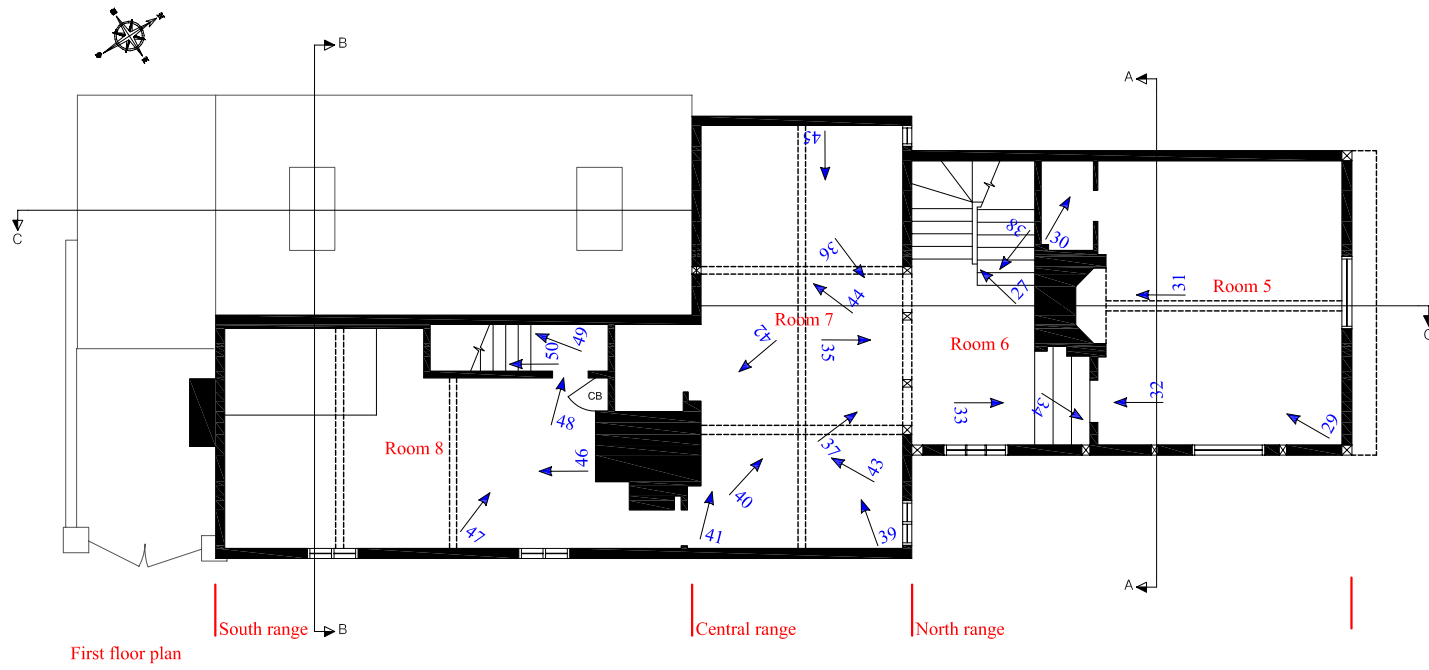


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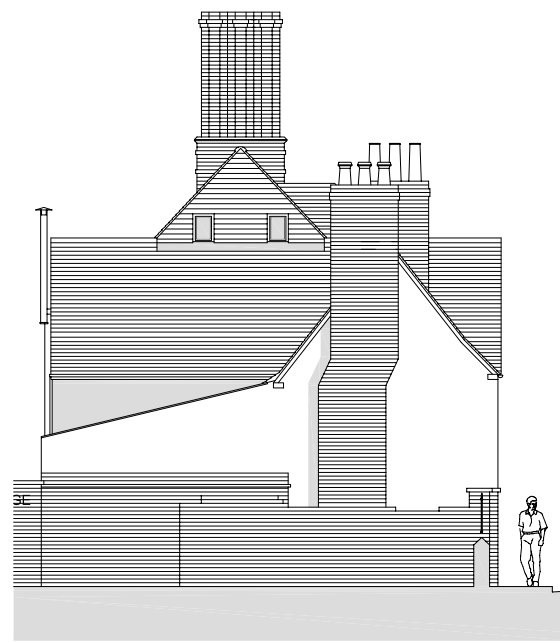
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Fig. 1 Site Location Plan
 Scale 1:25,000 at A4



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Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan
 Scale 1:750 at A4



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Fig. 3 Existing plans
 Scale 1:150 at A3



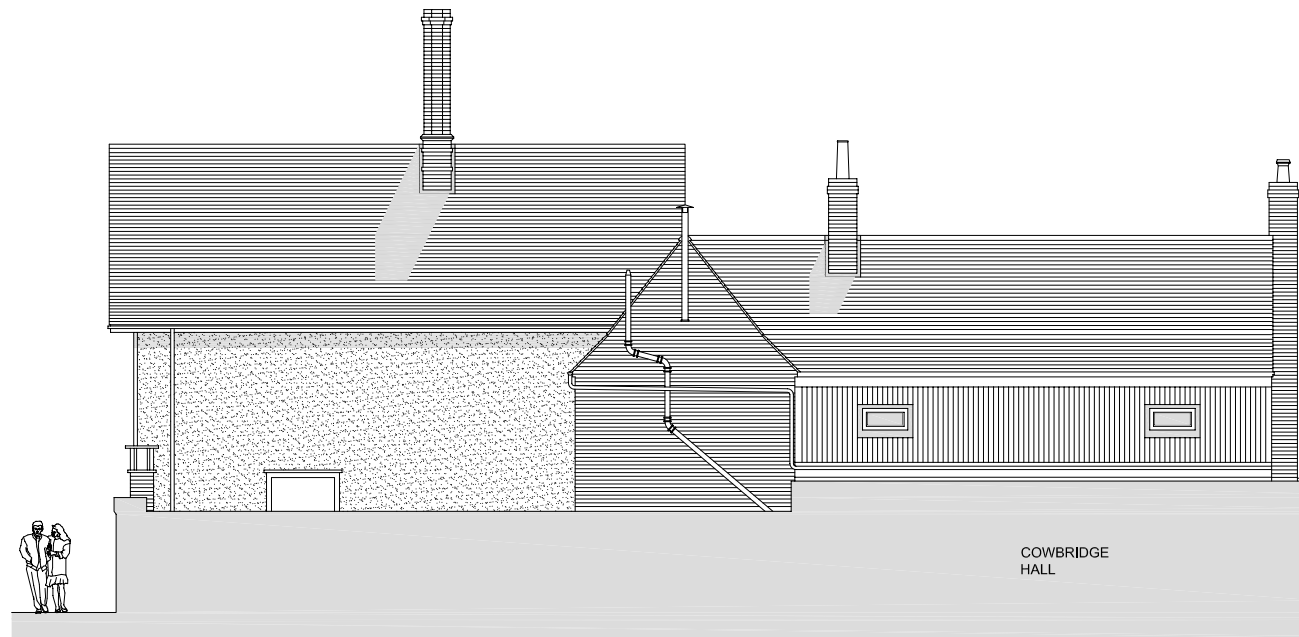
SOUTH WEST ELEVATION



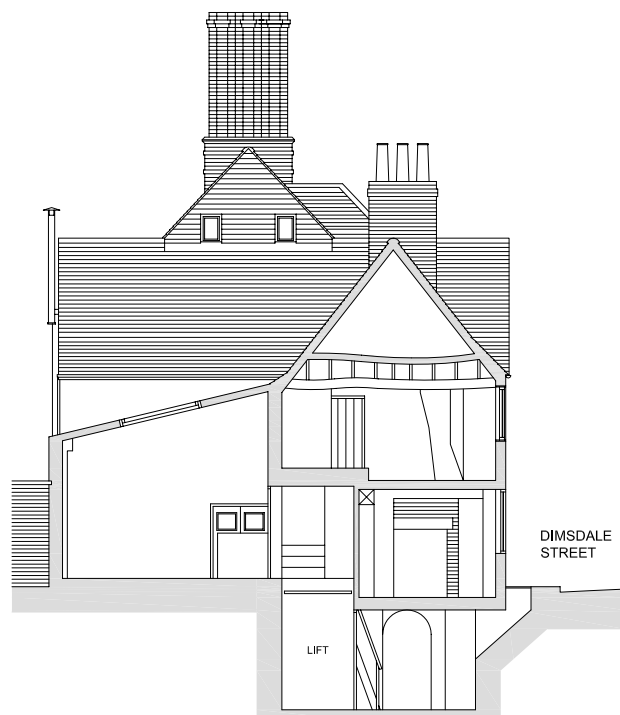
SOUTH EAST ELEVATION



NORTH EAST ELEVATION



NORTH WEST ELEVATION



SECTION 'B' - 'B'

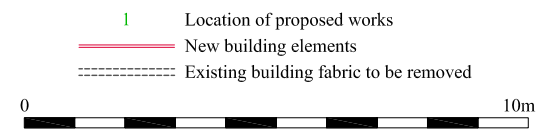
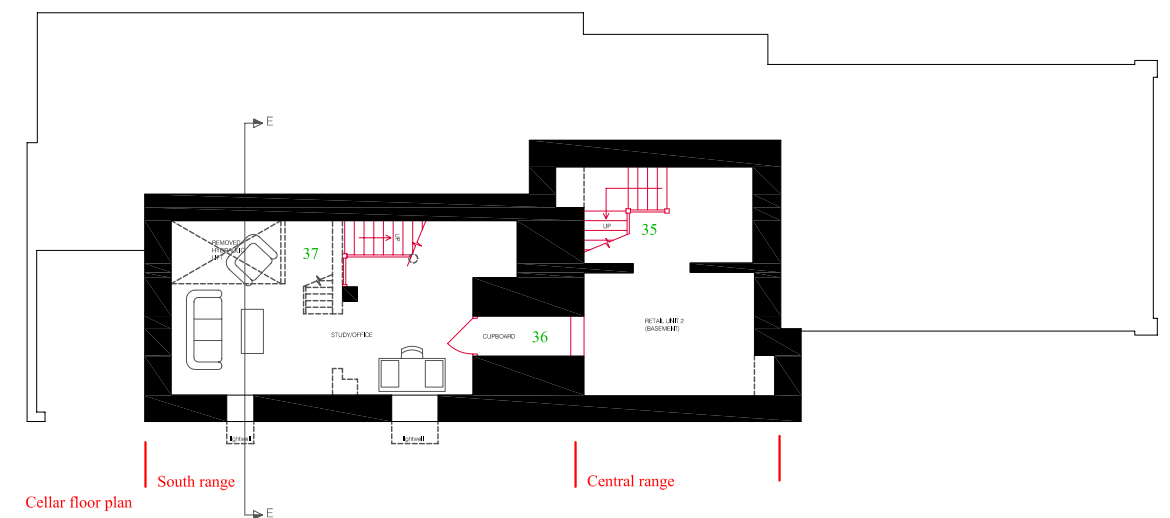
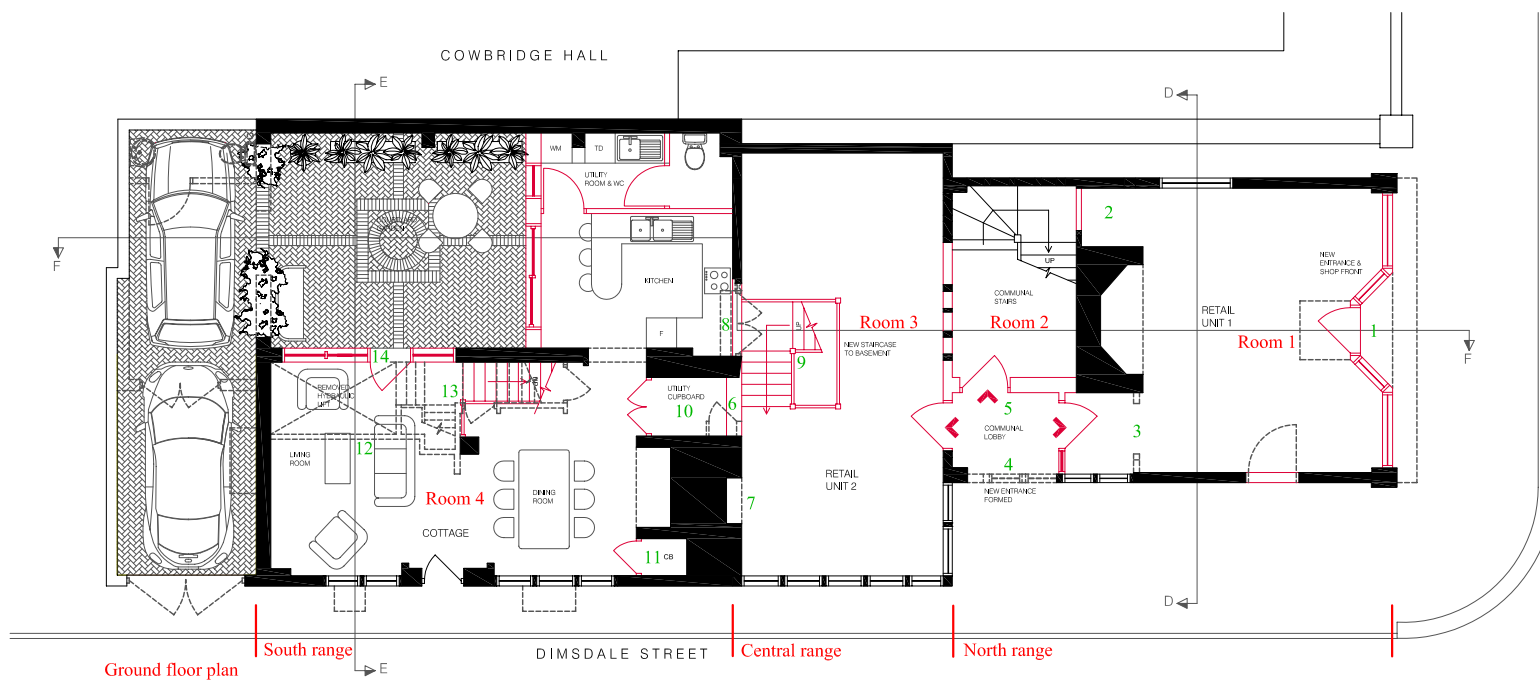
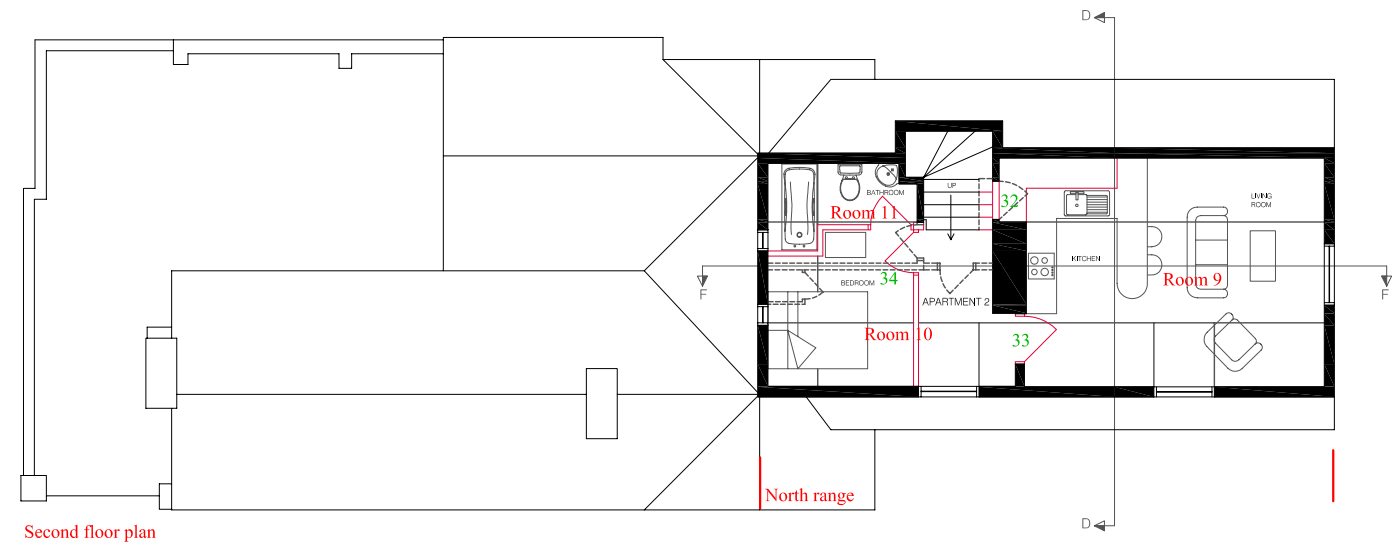
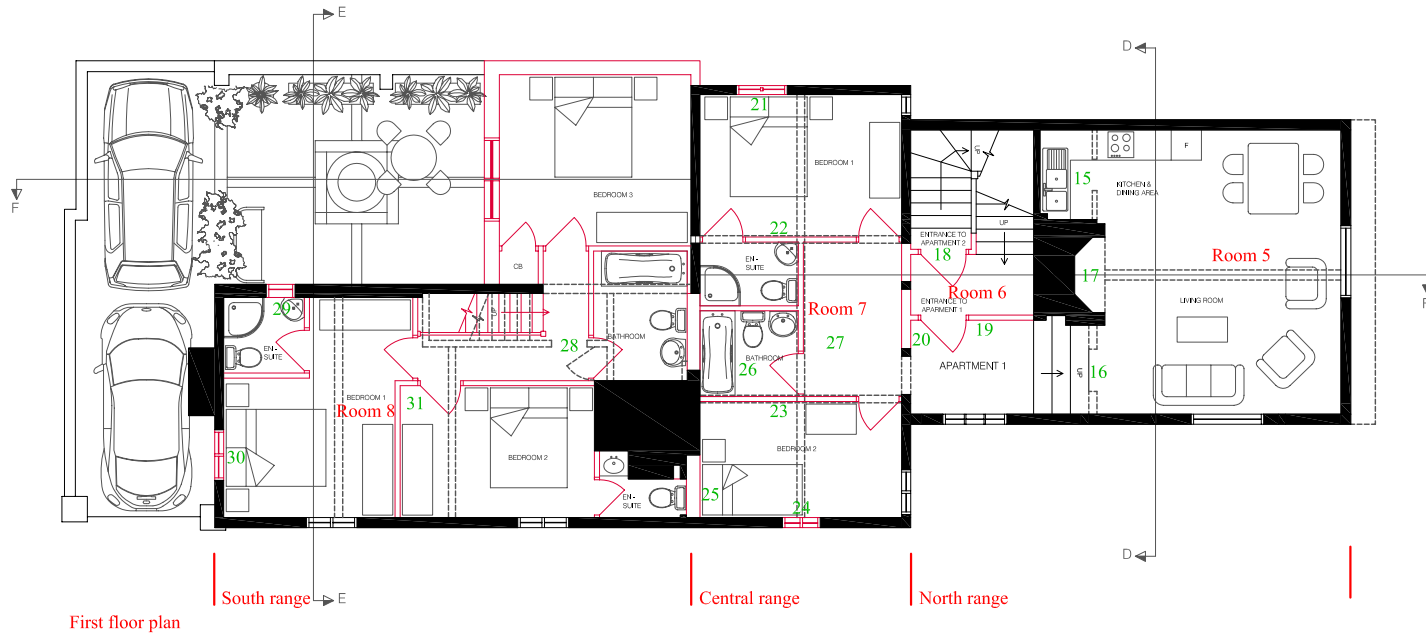


SECTION 'A' - 'A'



SECTION 'C' - 'C'





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Fig. 5 Proposed plans
 Scale 1:150 at A3



SOUTH WEST ELEVATION



SOUTH EAST ELEVATION



NORTH WEST ELEVATION



SECTION E - E



SECTION F - F

