



# Northamptonshire Archaeology

Building recording at Sunny Hill Farmhouse  
Old End, Padbury, Buckinghamshire  
July 2012



## Northamptonshire Archaeology

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Northamptonshire  
County Council

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**NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL  
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY  
SEPTEMBER 2012**

**BUILDING RECORDING AT  
SUNNY HILL FARMHOUSE  
OLD END, PADBURY  
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE  
JULY-SEPTEMBER 2012**

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**QUALITY CONTROL**

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**OASIS REPORT FORM**

PROJECT DETAILS		OASIS No 130743
Project title	Building Recording at Sunny Hill Farmhouse, Old End, Padbury, Buckinghamshire	
Short description	<p>Following an initial assessment of the 17th-18th-century Sunny Hill Farm, Old End, Padbury by Northamptonshire Archaeology in June 2012, a more detailed Level 3 recording of the building was undertaken.</p> <p>Evidence for structural alterations was recorded with particular attention paid to the western ground floor partitions and northern chimney which are to be removed during the proposed works. The chimney is likely contemporary with a brick rebuild of the southern facade in 1842. The partition, which dates to the original 17th-century construction of the building, retains some of this original fabric along with later phases of alteration dating to the 19th-century and 20th-centuries.</p>	
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Future work	Watching Brief	
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NGR	SP 71537 30509	
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PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Project brief originator	Assistant Archaeological	Advisor,
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Director/Supervisor	Amir Bassir	
Project Manager	Tim Upson-Smith	
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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL BUILDING RECORDING**  
**AT SUNNY HILL FARMHOUSE, OLD END**  
**PADBURY, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE**

**Abstract**

*Following an initial assessment of the 17th-18th-century Sunny Hill Farm, Old End, Padbury by Northamptonshire Archaeology in June 2012, a more detailed Level 3 recording of the building was undertaken.*

*Evidence for structural alterations was recorded with particular attention paid to the western ground floor partitions and northern chimney which are to be removed during the proposed works. The chimney is likely contemporary with a brick rebuild of the southern facade in 1842. The partition, which dates to the original 17th-century construction of the building, retains some of this original fabric along with later phases of alteration dating to the 19th-century and 20th-centuries.*

**1 INTRODUCTION**

Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA) were commissioned by Neil Tanner Associates to undertake an archaeological building recording at Sunny Hill Farmhouse, Old End, Padbury, Buckinghamshire, (NGR SP 71537 30509, Fig 1). The work was carried out in July 2012, in response to the proposed removal of an internal partition wall and a chimney, as part of works to renovate the property.

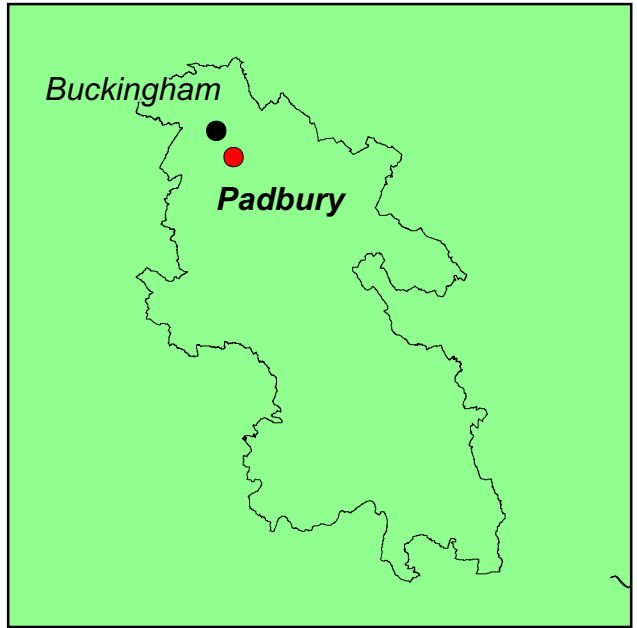
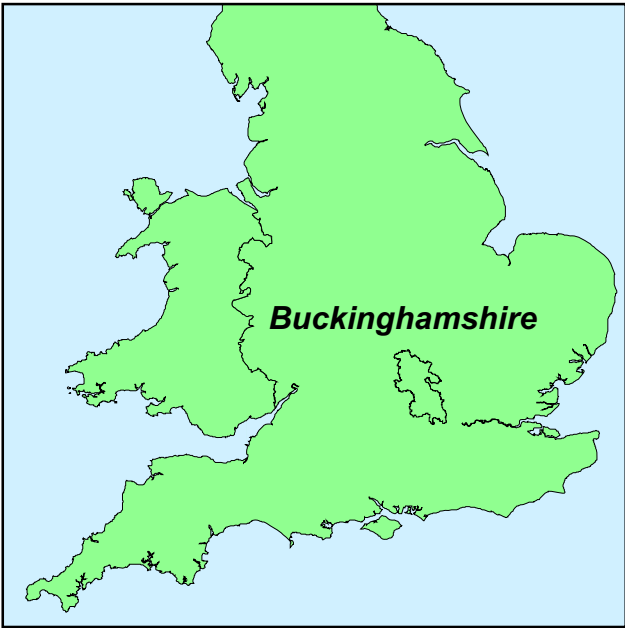
An assessment of the building had previously been undertaken by NA in June 2012 (Upson-Smith 2012) during which the historic potential and character of the chimney and partition was examined.

The site lies within Old End, Padbury. The farmhouse is part of a larger assemblage of agricultural buildings such as barns and sheds. The farm area is on the northern extent of the village, facing onto an area of open fields.

The underlying geology of the area is of upper Jurassic siltstone, mudstone and sandstone overlain by glacial till. (<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex/home.html>).

At the time of recording, there was ongoing work to the structure and scaffolding was present across the majority of the external elevations. The building was unused and empty during the survey, fixtures and fittings had already been removed and the walls mostly stripped of wallpapers.





Scale 1:5000

Site Location Fig 1

## 2 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The level of recording was specified as Level 3 – an analytical record (English Heritage 2006, 14).

This is defined by English Heritage as consisting of:

- A written account of the building's origins, development and use
- An account of the evidence on which the analysis is based
- A drawn and photographic record to illustrate the building's appearance and structure.

A site visit was made in July 2012, when the principal exterior elevations were photographed. The interiors were photographically recorded to include structural details that might be lost during the conversion and notes were made of any features and alterations. Measured plans and elevations were obtained from Neil Tanner Associates. Three measured drawings were produced showing the chimney and a staggered section through the ground floor partition, first floor and attic. A second site visit was made in early September following the exposure of the chimney from Bedroom 1 and removal of the breeze block wall from the ground floor partition.

## 3 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

### 3.1 Historical background

Recorded in the Domesday book of 1086 as *Pateberie*, Padbury was one of the few villages in the country to be retained under the control of a native rather than a Norman family. It remained in this family, who took the name of the de Wolverton after the village of Wolverton, until 1442 when the manor was sold to All Souls College, Oxford. (Upson-Smith 2012).

The village had little impact or involvement in national events; its only connection arising during the Civil War, when Sir Charles Lucas, the Royalist commander, defeated a force under Col. Middleton on 1st July 1643. The burial of eight soldiers is recorded in the church registers ('Parishes : Padbury', A History of the County of Buckingham).

Following the Inclosure Act of 1795, the open fields of Padbury were inclosed (Fig 4).

### 3.2 Historic maps

A visit was made to the Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies and County Archives in July 2012 to examine any historic documentation relating to the property.

#### ***All Souls College Estate Map of 1590 (ref: MaR/1/14.T, Figs 2 and 3)***

The All Souls College estate map of 1590 clearly shows that the form of the village has hardly changed since the 16th-century. With the exception of development of the A413, which sliced through the north-eastern end of the village during the 19th century, the general layout of the roads and position of the buildings in relation to them have changed remarkably little. Comparisons between contemporary maps and the All Souls College Map show that the characteristic opening out of the roads to form triangular shaped areas of open space, for example at Old End, are clearly visible on the 16th-century map and still exist today. Similarly the form of the triangular area of open space between what is now Main Street and Lower Lane shown on the All Souls College map is still legible today despite being infilled during the 19th and 20th centuries. The general characteristic of buildings positioned towards the front of their plots with long thin strips of land to the rear

is also evident in contemporary maps, although this form has in places been blurred by more recent backland development (Upson-Smith 2012).

The position of Sunny Hill Farmhouse falls within a plot of land belong to a George Budde (Figs 2 and 3, highlighted). The buildings on this land are not accurately rendered, and are represented by a generic depiction of a single building.



All Souls College Estate Map of 1590 with plot highlighted Fig 2



Detail of the Estate Map of 1590 showing George Budde's plot Fig 3

***Inclosure Map of 1796*** (ref: IR/1/4, Fig 4)

The general layout of the village and position of boundaries has changed little since the 16th-century. A large L-shaped building with adjacent structures is depicted in the position of the current farmhouse. This indicates the presence of an eastern, north-south aligned range in the space now occupied by the modern garage. The rebuilding of this part of the structure in the mid 19th-century has left little, if any, evidence of the previous fabric or form of the building in this area.



Inclosure map of 1796 showing the layout of buildings Fig 4

***25" First Edition Ordnance Survey Map of 1880*** (ref: 18/7, Fig 5)

This map shows the farmhouse in its current form. The north-south range visible on the 1796 Inclosure map (Fig 4) has been demolished and replaced with a smaller structure abutting the main farmhouse and a separate range of buildings to the north. Interestingly, a line is depicted across the centre of the main farmhouse. This seems to represent a join which is visible on the north and south elevations of the structure and which will be discussed further in this report (Figs 8 and 12).

***Aerial photograph, mid 20th-century*** (ref: AR 43/2010, Fig 6)

The farmhouse appears in one of a series of aerial photographs taken between 1955 and the mid 1970s of Padbury and several other Buckinghamshire towns and villages. There are no visible or obvious changes between what was present during this survey and what is shown in the photograph.



25" First Edition Ordnance Survey Map of 1880 Fig 5



Mid 20th-century aerial photograph showing Sunny Hill Farmhouse Fig 6

## 4 BUILDING RECORDING

The building is a two storey 17th-18th-century farmhouse with an attic. It comprises an earlier, roughly coursed stone-built and thatched structure with later brick-built facades dated to 1842. A modern brick garage has been constructed against the eastern corner of the northern elevation (Figs 12 and 17). The main access is via the southern, street facing elevation with a secondary entry via the garage and a door in the north elevation. A lawn surrounds the front and sides of the building, with a short wooden fence where it meets the road (Fig 8). The north elevation faces a concrete yard surrounded by modern structures. The farmyard comprises mainly modern structures such as sheds and barns, though a small shed or animal shelter is of a 19th-century origin (Figs 14 and 15).

The main structure is built principally of mortared stone rubble faced internally with plaster. The internal partitions are primarily lath and plaster though stud partitions and lath and cob are also present in the structure.

The main (southern) facade of the structure as well as the upper portion of the western gable and the eastern elevation were re-built in red brick in 1842. A decorative element with "1842" written is present below the ridge on the west elevation (Fig 11). An existing ground floor partition which is to be removed as part of the works, appears contemporary with the original construction of the farmhouse (see page 27). This wall shows evidence of multiple alterations both modern and 19th-century including the addition of a partition which divides the Bathroom and Dressing Room (Figs 16 and 42). A further alteration of unknown date, though earlier than the 1842 works, is visible in the partition in the form of a panel of brick with timber bond (Figs 44, 45 and 69). This brickwork was partially demolished to allow the insertion of the 1842 brickwork (Figs 44, 45 and 69). The whole partition was thickened in the 20th-century by a layer of breeze block, plastered and wallpapered over.

The chimney to be removed in the north-eastern corner of the farmhouse has an early-mid 19th century date, perhaps contemporary with the 1842 alterations (see page 14). The structure of the chimney is enclosed within the modern garage extension (Figs 17-21). The extensive alterations in this area have removed most of the earlier fabric.

The farmhouse is covered with a thatch roof supported by a hand cut timber frame with a modified queen post truss at the western end (See 4.3 The Attic). An upright beam with lateral props supports the roof structure on the western side of the central chimney (Fig 67). Two purlins, one on either side of the roof structure run from the western gable to midway down the building. The southern purlin is lost from sight behind the chimneys and the northern purlin stops at a step in the roof structure (Fig 67). This change in roof structure is coincidental with a pair of joins visible on the north and south elevations and indicates a previous division of the building. The roof is hipped at the east gable and overhangs further here than on other elevations.

The farmhouse shows evidence of having previously been divided into two distinct areas. Externally, opposing joins running from the eaves to the ground can be seen on both the north and south elevations. These joins align with the vertical division of the chimney, central to the structure. There is a noticeable change in roof structure on the north side of the building where the thatch steps down by approximately 1m (Fig 12). As discussed above, this change in roof structure is also visible from within the attic. The chimney structure as viewed from within the Attic consists of two separate, abutting flues. Externally they both appear to be brick-built, however, the western chimney is stone-built, changing to brick where it rises above the thatch (Figs 8 and 67). The division of the structure can be seen in the 1880 Ordnance Survey map (Fig 5). It is unclear if the two areas of the building had differing functions such as domestic and working. A single

blocked window was noted on the northern elevation, to the east of the existing door (Figs 13 and 70).



The eastern, brick-built elevation, looking north-west Fig 7



The southern elevation showing the central join Fig 8



The south-western corner of the farmhouse, looking north-east Fig 9



The western elevation Fig 10





Western gable, decorative element with "1842" written beneath Fig 11



The northern elevation showing central join and change in roof structure Fig 12



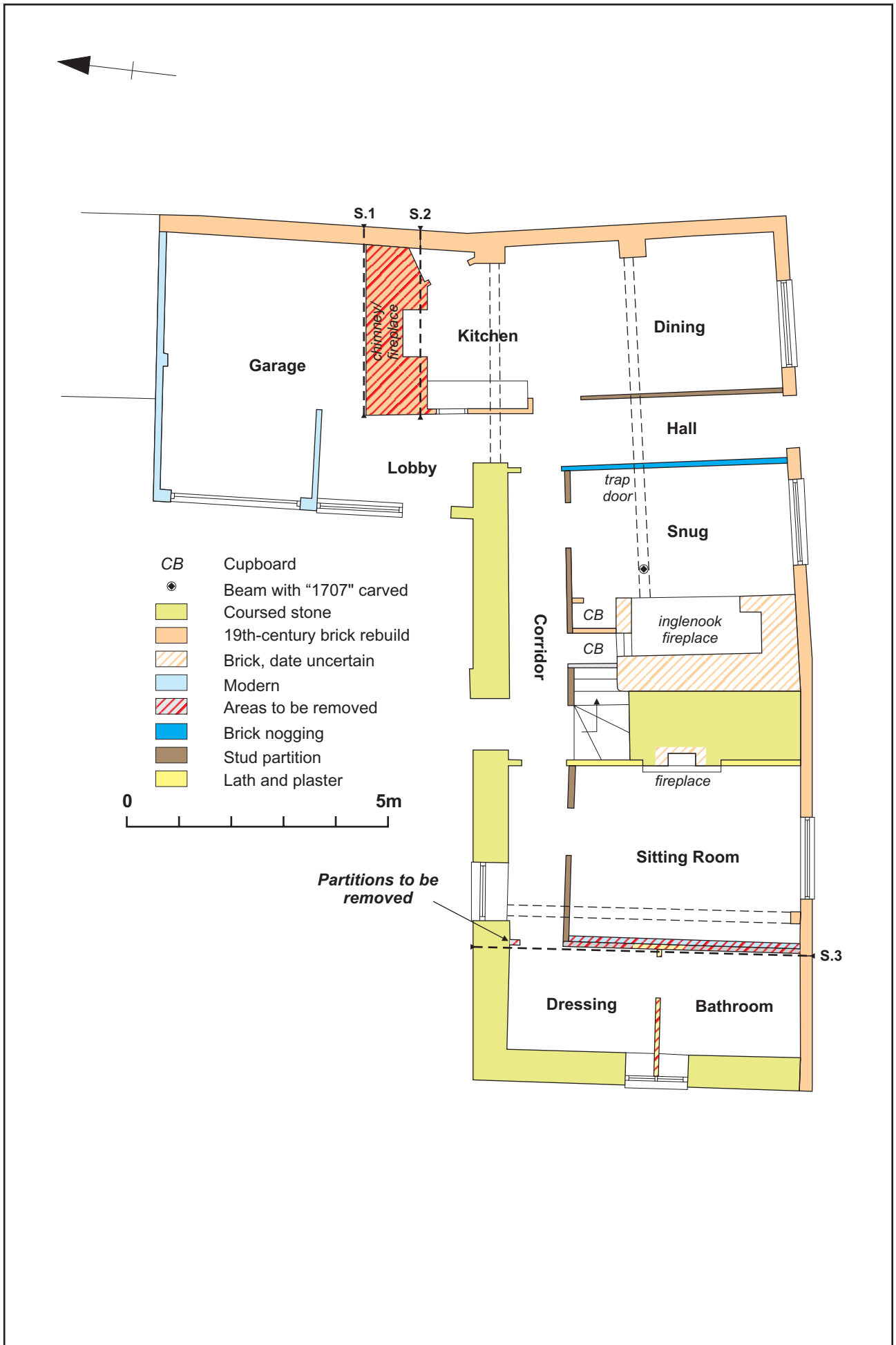
The blocked window Fig 13



The farmyard and associated structures Fig 14



The 19th-century shed or animal shelter Fig 15



Scale 1:100 (A4)

Ground floor plan Fig 16

## 4.1 The Ground Floor

### *The Garage*

This room, measuring approximately 5m by 3.8 is the most recent part of the building. It is accessed by a large, weighted Garage door in the western wall and provides internal access to the lobby area. It is constructed from red brick with a pattern of alternate red and black brick stripes on the eastern wall (Fig 17). The floor is of concrete and the room is covered by a modern roof of grey slates supported on a simple timber frame (Figs 16 & 17).

The southern wall is dominated by the Kitchen chimney (Figs 16, 17 and 20). The structure of the chimney is enclosed by the wall and a small hatch provides access to a small space between the south wall and the rear wall of the Kitchen. The eastern wall has a step-like structure and the chimney has been rendered. The garage and its roof are built against the original farmhouse and along with the 19th-century alterations have removed most of the older fabric in this area of the structure.

### *The Lobby*

This area, c3m by 1.6m, provides covered passage between the Garage and the Kitchen (Fig 16). There are three doorways providing access to the Garage, the yard and the Kitchen. The southern doorway to the hall appears to be part of the older, pre 19th-century structure. The doorway is built into a stone rubble wall and is flanked by a black painted timber beam and topped with a black painted timber lintel (Fig 19).

The main electrical switches and fuses for the building are housed in the Lobby.



The west elevation of the Garage Fig 17



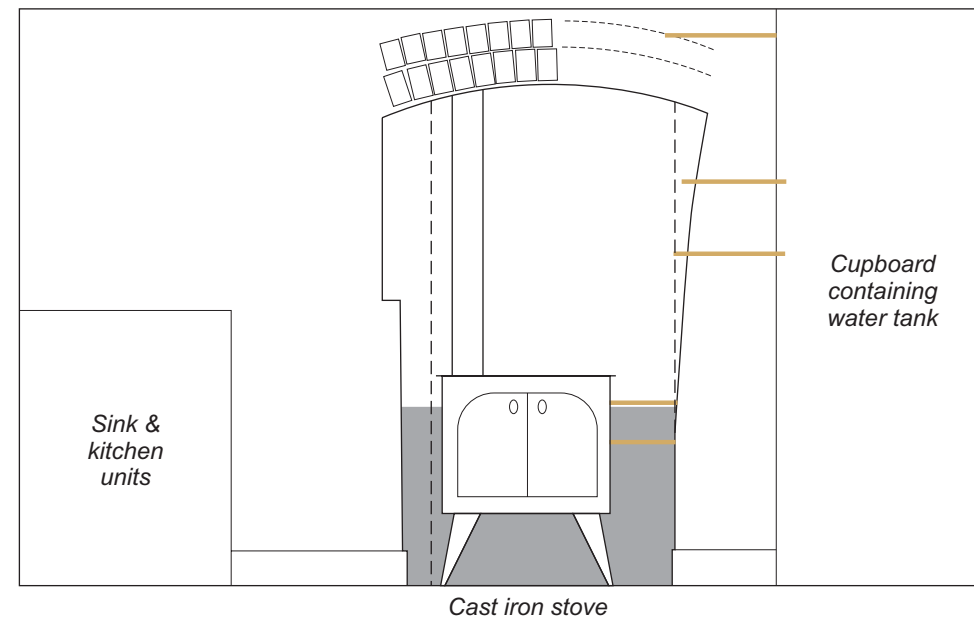
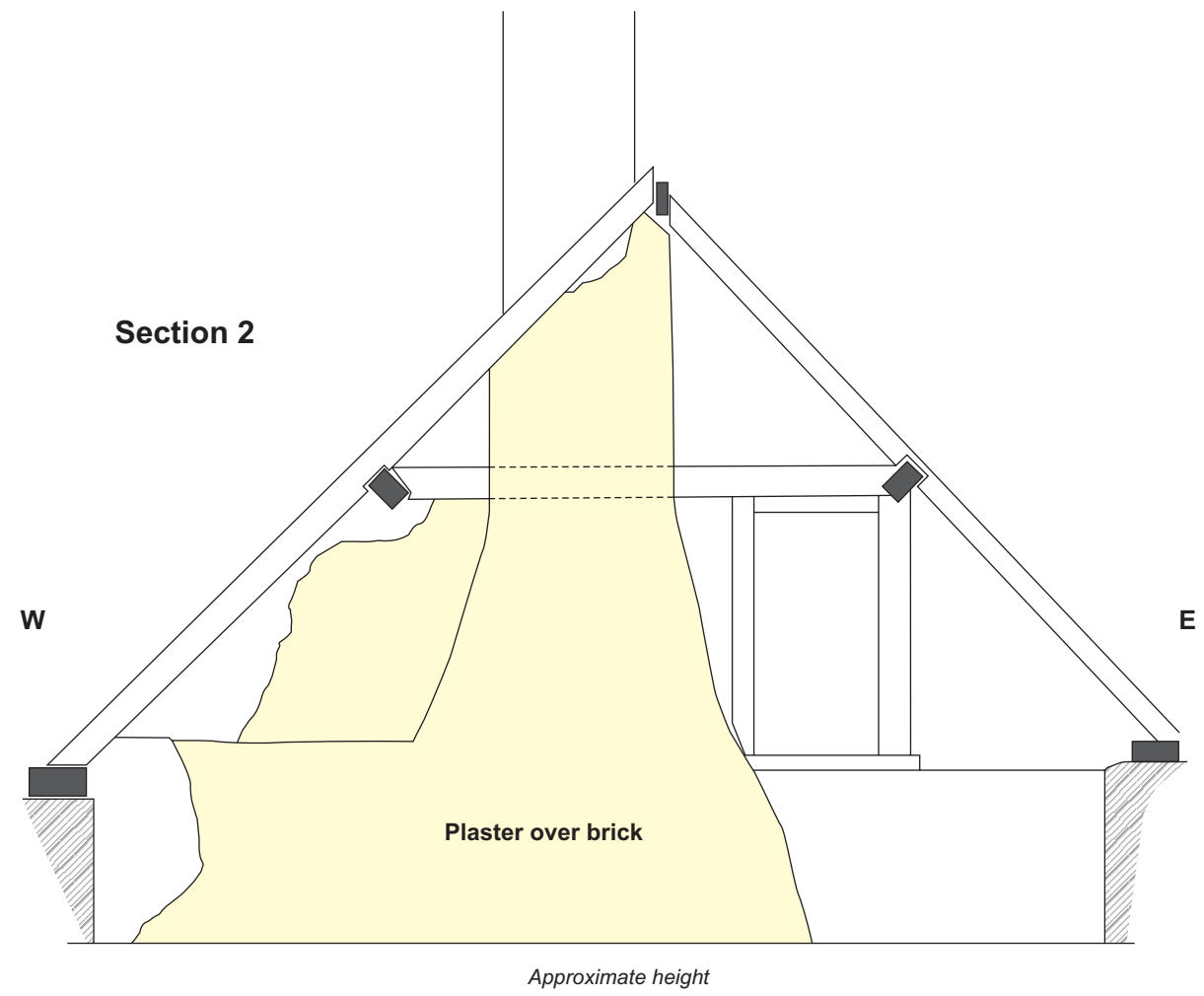
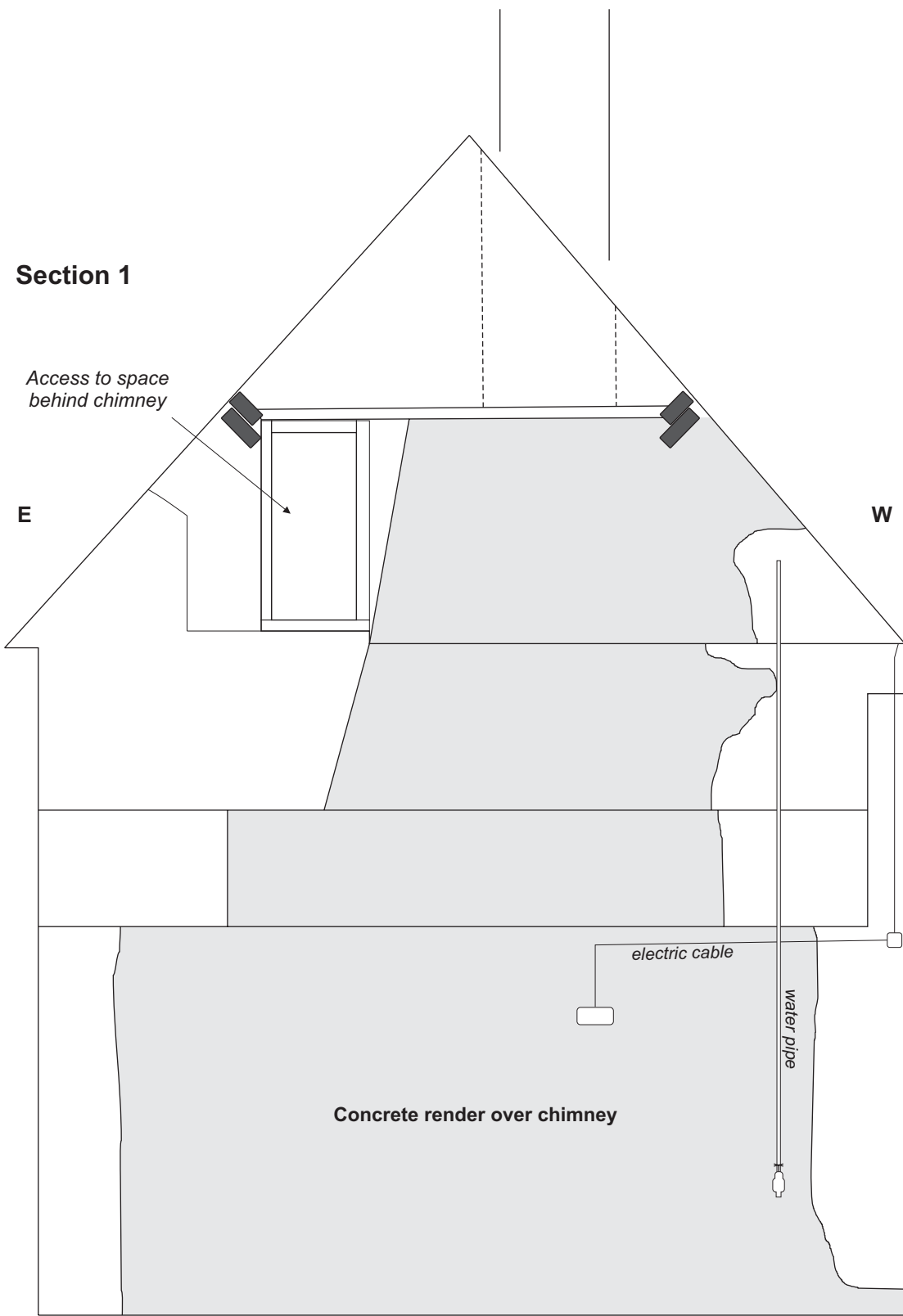
The north elevation of the chimney in the Garage Fig 18





The south wall of the Lobby Fig 19



The south face of the chimney as seen from Bedroom 1 Fig 20



-  Copper pipes
-  Area of black paint

0 1m

### ***The Kitchen and Dining Room***

The Kitchen and Dining Room are currently merged into one space, with a total measurement of c 3.6 by 6m, with a fireplace, kitchen units, water tank and sink in the northern end of the room. A modern sliding door in the western, stud partition wall provides access to the rooms. The north wall is constructed from a mix of brick and stone. The stone may represent the remains of an older fabric. An arched, brick fireplace with splayed interior is built into the wall. A cast iron stove is present in this space, with a circular flue rising up into the chimney. The lower portion of the fireplace behind the stove is painted black (Figs 21 and 22). Two copper pipes are *in-situ*, fixed to the wall, leading to the side of the stove. An angled cupboard containing a water tank encloses the north eastern corner of the room. A small window is built into the west wall of the Kitchen above the sink and looks out into the Lobby.

An off centre, three light window each of six panes, two fixed and central light side hung, is built into the southern, brick built, 19th-century wall (Fig 23).

The walls are painted white or creamy yellow and a dark red skirting board runs around the south, east and north walls (Fig 23).

### ***The Hall***

Measuring 5.5m by 1.2m, the Hall runs from the lobby to the front door in the south elevation (Fig 16). The eastern wall is a stud partition and the west wall is of brick nogging set within vertical black painted timber beams (Fig 24). An east-west corridor leads off from the north end of the Hall. The date of the Hall is uncertain, its construction in brick nogging rather than just brick, suggests an earlier date than the 1842 works (see *The Snug*)

### ***The Corridor***

Running from the hall to westwards to the Dressing the corridor is c 9m long by 1.1m wide (Fig 16). It provides access to the Snug, Sitting Room and Dresser / Bathroom. A small, enclosed space below the stairs is also accessible from the passage.

A door midway along the north wall, opposite the entrance to the staircase, opens onto the north courtyard. The Corridor was once divided into two by a door to the west of this area (Fig 25). This division of the corridor seems to align with the division of the building as a whole.

A 19th-century floor of red and yellow tiles bordered by red tiles remains along the extent of the corridor (Fig 26).





The north wall of the Kitchen showing the fireplace Fig 22



The south wall of the Dining Room Fig 23



View down the Hall towards the south wall, showing the brick nogging Fig 24



View down the Corridor, looking west Fig 25



The tile floor in the Corridor Fig 26

### ***The Snug***

This room is dominated by a large inglenook fireplace with flanking cupboards in the western wall (Figs 16, 27 and 28). The recess is raised above the floor level by a low, brick platform. A large, black painted timber lintel with affixed shelf runs over the top of the recess. The fireplace itself is set in the centre of the recess with red brick surround and jambs, and an arched lintel with a decorative, dropped keystone. The surround is stepped up to the brick flue. Two brick cheeks protrude out either side of the fire opening. An inglenook faces the fireplace to the west. The jambs of the recess are constructed from breeze blocks in contrast to the brick surround. The lower portion of the rear wall is constructed of stone topped with red brick.

The fireplace is flanked by a pair of wooden framed recesses set at different heights (Fig 27). These might have previously served as spice and salt cupboards.

A blocked trapdoor is present in the ceiling of the snug, against the eastern wall, adjacent to a black painted beam with "1707" carved into its northern side which extends from the Snug, across the Hall and over the Dining Room to the east wall (Figs 16, 29 and 30). The position of the trapdoor when seen from above is away from the wall separating Bedroom 1 from Bedroom 2 (Figs 46 and 57). This suggests that the eastern wall of the Snug was inserted at a later date than the trapdoor which was then blocked. It is possible that the Snug extended to the western wall of the kitchen and was then divided to create the Hall and a south entrance. The construction of this wall in brick nogging would suggest that it is of an earlier date than the 1842 re-facing which is entirely of brick.

The northern wall of the Snug is a stud partition wallpapered over and the south wall is brick plastered over and painted creamy white. The eastern wall is of brick nogging, plastered and painted (Fig 24).

A three light window each of six panes, two fixed and central light side hung, is built into the southern wall (Figs 8 and 70).



The inglenook fireplace in the Snug Fig 27



The north-west corner of the Snug Fig 28



The trapdoor in the ceiling of the Snug Fig 29



"1707" carved into a beam in the Snug Fig 30

### ***The Understairs Cupboard***

A small enclosed storage cupboard is built into the space to the side of the inglenook fireplace, below the stairs (Fig 16). A small glass hatch looks into the inglenook fireplace from the cupboard and a small wooden shelf is built into the wall below this hatch (Fig 31).

### ***The Sitting Room***

The western half of the central chimney opens into the Sitting Room (Fig 16). Any external elements of the fireplace had been removed by the time of this survey. The remaining elements of the fireplace consist of a red brick surround topped with a large timber lintel (Fig 32). The brick portion of the fireplace is set within thick jambs of stone. A rough rectangular hearth with brick border lies before the fire opening, level with the floor. The whole fireplace structure backs onto the inglenook fireplace in the Snug. The relation between the two fireplaces is unclear at this level due to inaccessibility. The eastern sitting room wall into which the fireplace is set is of lath and plaster wallpapered over. The north wall of the room is a stud partition wallpapered over. A sliding door is built into the north wall so that the door slides out of view into the north corridor when open.

A breeze block wall plastered over and wallpapered forms the western extent of the room (Fig 33). This wall represents a re-facing and thickening of an existing partition (See *Dressing Room, page 27*). This is one of the walls marked for demolition during the proposed works.

The floor of the room is of grey bricks laid on edge in a herringbone pattern (Fig 33).

A black painted beam runs from the north outer wall, across the north corridor to the south wall of the Sitting Room where it rests atop a short brick plinth which abuts the front wall (Figs 33 and 34). Prior to the 19th-century alterations, this beam would have been secured within the original stone wall. The south end of the beam was then cut back to accommodate the thinner brick wall. Laths, possibly from the partition on the first floor, extend through the ceiling and are nailed to the beam where it sits on the plinth.

A three light window each of six panes, two fixed and central light side hung, is built into the southern wall (Fig 33).



The understairs cupboard Fig 31



The fireplace in the Sitting Room Fig 32





The south wall of the Sitting Room Fig 33



Beam resting on the brick plinth abutting the south wall Fig 34

***The Dressing Room, Bathroom and ground floor partition***

Though two separate rooms, these can be described together. Evidence suggests that the area encompassed by the Dressing Room and Bathroom was originally a single room which was subsequently subdivided into two rooms. They both share a single window which is split down the middle by a later lath and plaster partition that separates the two rooms (Fig 16).

The eastern partition which is to be demolished as part of the works, is probably contemporary with the original 17th-century construction of the farmhouse. This older fabric survives as lath and cob which was divided into panels separated by timber studs (Figs 35-36, 38 and 69). A white painted panel door with strap hinge and plain L hinge is built into the lath and cob and provides access to the north Corridor (Fig 69). The door is surrounded by a timber frame onto which a light switch is attached. The scar of a former shelf can be seen to the south of the door (Fig 38).

The central portion of the partition was demolished and rebuilt in lath and plaster to allow the construction of the partition dividing the Bathroom and Dressing Room (Figs 38 and 44). It is uncertain whether this is contemporary with the 1842 works or represents a different phase of works. The lath and plaster is separated from the earlier fabric by timber studs. These studs are probably contemporary with the lath and cob and were kept in place during the demolition of the central part of the partition.

An area of creamy, yellow painted brick with timber bonding at regular 0.5m intervals is built into the wall, separated from the lath and cob by a vertical timber stud (Figs 44 and 45). It is of an earlier date than the 1842 brickwork as it has been partially demolished to accommodate the later brickwork. The reason for the demolition of the lath and cob and rebuilding in brick is not clear. The bricks are not of a truly uniform size with some variation in length of the bricks, suggesting a pre-19th century date. Patterned wallpaper on a thin plaster dated to the early-mid 20th century covers the east face of the partition, stopping at the join with the 1842 brickwork (Fig 44). It appears that the 1842 brickwork was left deliberately exposed.

The whole wall was later thickened by the construction of a breeze block wall with nails driven into the underlying timber studs. This was plastered over and wallpapered (Fig 44).

The western wall which runs the length of both the Bathroom and Dressing Room is of stone rubble, plastered internally and painted blue (Fig 37). A deep two light window with splayed reveals and timber lintel is positioned centrally to the western elevation (Figs 39 and 42). The partition between the Bathroom and Dressing Room divides this window at the former mullion. It is constructed of lath and plaster covered in blue painted woodchip wallpaper. A panelled door in the partition provides access between Bathroom and Dressing Room (Fig 41).



Composite of the east partition within the Dressing Room Fig 35



Composite of the east partition within the Bathroom Fig 36



The north and west walls of the Dressing Room Fig 37



Detail of the fabric in the east partition in the Dressing Room Fig 38



The window in the Dressing Room Fig 39



The south wall of the Bathroom Fig 40



The central partition looking through into the Dressing Room Fig 41



The window in the west wall of the Bathroom Fig 42



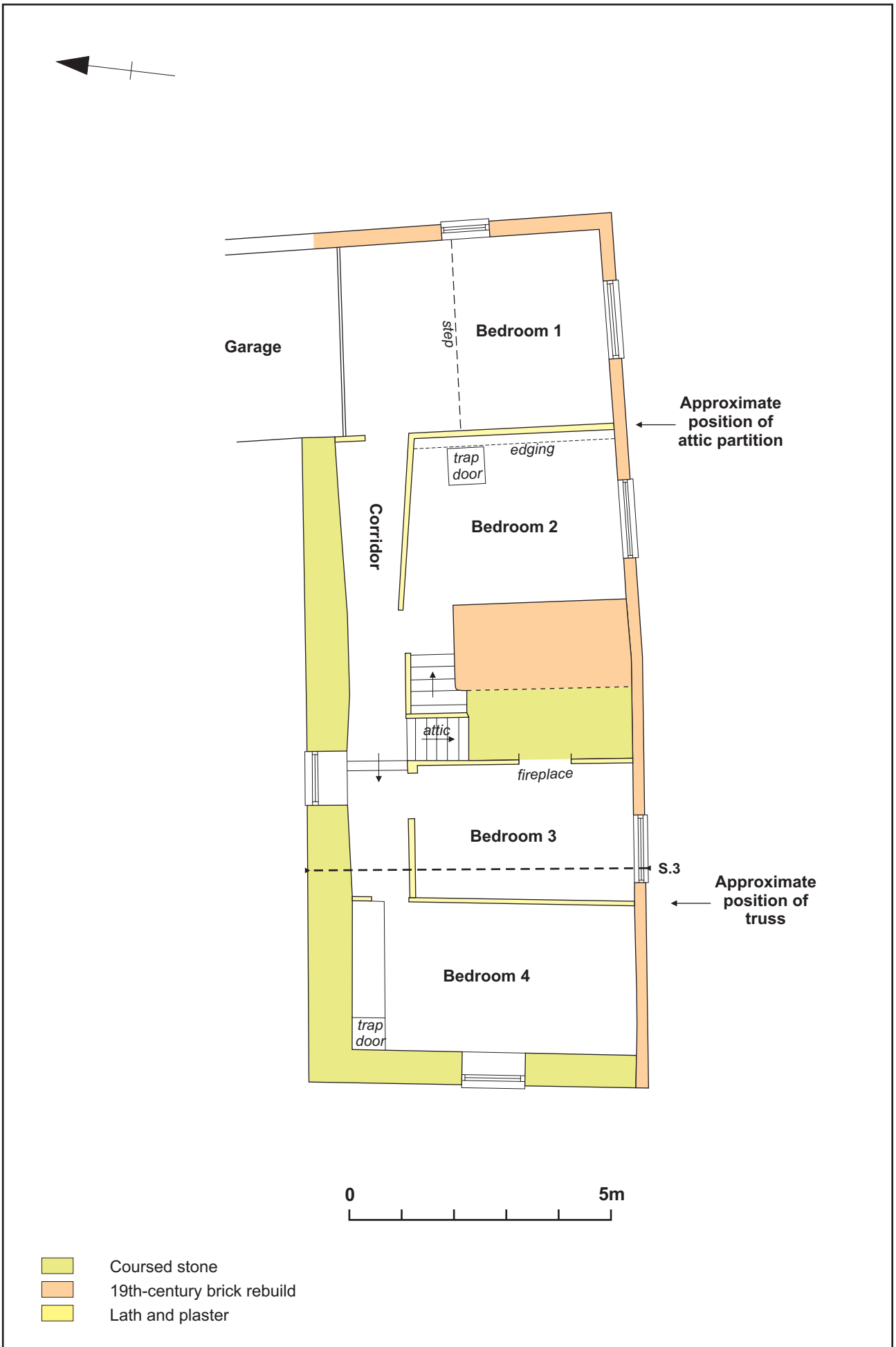
The east partition wall abutting the south wall in the bathroom showing timber bond Fig 43



The east face of the ground floor partition (photo composite) Fig 44



The partition showing the join between the 1842 brickwork and the earlier brick with timber bond Fig 45



Scale 1:100 (A4)

The first floor plan Fig 46



## 4.2 The First floor

Apart from the southern walls which are the 1842 brick rebuild and the north wall of Bedroom 1 which was re-built in the 19th-century, this floor retains much more of the original fabric of the building than the ground floor. The walls are rough and undulating and the floors are of uneven floor boards. The ceiling throughout the rooms is of lath and plaster.

### *The staircase*

The first floor is accessed via a staircase located to the north of the central chimneys (Fig 46). The entrance to the stair is opposite the ground floor entrance in the north Corridor. It turns a 90 degree angle to the east to meet the first floor landing. A black painted skirting board runs the length of the stair. The north of the eastern chimney structure juts out slightly into the staircase (Fig 47). A white painted wooden banister is present at landing level on the first floor.

### *The Corridor*

Providing access to all the rooms on the first floor as well as the attic, the Corridor is approximately 8.5m in length. The width of the Corridor varies but has a general narrowing towards the west from c 1.2m at the east to 1.0m at the west. The north wall of the Corridor is undulating and leans inwards at the top, dramatically so at the eastern end, reflecting the eaves which start lower down in this area (Fig 48).

Black painted timber skirting boards run the length of the Corridor above the uneven floor boards. The level of the Corridor steps upwards by 0.25m immediately to the west of the stairs to the attic (Fig 49).

There is a deep set, two light window, each of four panes with splayed reveals in the north wall, at eaves level (Fig 50).



The staircase with chimneys to the left Fig 47



The first floor corridor, looking east Fig 48



The first floor corridor, looking west Fig 49



The window in the north wall of the first floor corridor Fig 50

**Bedroom 1**

Measuring 3.7m by 5.1m, Bedroom 1 encompasses the eastern end of the farmhouse (Fig 46). The north of the room is separated from the chimney and modern garage by a stud partition (Figs 20 and 51). This space is accessible by a small hatch in the stud partition. The partition slopes inwards from a height of 0.7m, reflecting the slope of the hatch behind.

Access to the room is via a white painted plank and batten door with strap hinges in the western wall (Fig 51). This wall is of lath and plaster wallpapered over. A timber, showing signs of reuse in the form of defunct lap joints, remains within the wall (Fig 53). In the attic, a partition can be seen extending upwards through the ceiling and up into the roof space, positioned above this wall (Fig 68). Several of the beams in this partition descend through the ceiling level and can be seen in this wall (Fig 53, *See The Attic*).

The south wall is of red brick, constructed in 1842. A three light window with two panes each is built centrally in the wall (Figs 52 and 70). The brick portion of the wall gives way to lath and plaster where it meets the slope of the roof at the top of the window (Fig 54).

The east wall of the room is of red brick, plastered and painted internally. A two light window with four panes is built centrally to the wall.

The room has a floor of wood boards running east-west. The floor level drops by approximately 500mm in the north half of the room. A wooden step runs the width of the room level with the eastern window (Figs 46 and 51). The purpose of this step is uncertain, perhaps relating to a former use of the building contemporary with the trap door in Bedroom 2. The floorboards in the centre of the room retain a cleaner colour than the edges of the room indicating a former square carpet. Black skirting runs the full length of the room.

**Bedroom 2**

This room has a very irregular shape with undulating walls and a floor that dips in the middle. The eastern wall is lath and plaster with a prominent timber beam running nearly the full width of the wall (Figs 54 and 56). The same beam can be seen on the eastern face in Bedroom 1. The north and western walls are also of lath and plaster wallpapered over.

The floor of the room is of uneven floor boards with an edge of chamfered boards where it meets the eastern wall (Figs 56 and 57). A trapdoor c 0.7 by 0.8m is set into the floor in the north eastern corner of the room (Fig 57). This is the upper access to the trap door seen in the ceiling of the Snug on the ground floor (Fig 29).



Bedroom 1, looking north showing the stepped floor Fig 51



Bedroom 1 showing the timber frame in the ceiling, looking south-east Fig 52



The west wall of Bedroom 1 showing the timber frame and defunct lap joints in the horizontal timber Fig 53



Bedroom 2, looking south-east showing the timber beam in the east wall Fig 54



Bedroom 2, looking south-west Fig 55



The north-east corner of Bedroom 2 showing the trapdoor and timber beam in the east wall Fig 56



The trapdoor in Bedroom 2 showing the chamfered border Fig 57



### ***Bedroom 3***

This is the smallest bedroom, measuring 4.3m by 2.7m (Fig 46). It is accessed via a white painted plank and batten door with strap hinges in the north wall (Fig 58). A small, plain, 19th-century fireplace is built into the eastern wall. This has a white painted wood surround with a mantle shelf and a black painted iron grate (Fig 60). A hearth of square red tiles is level with the floor.

The north, east and west walls of the room are of lath and plaster wallpapered over. The south wall is 1842 brick, plastered and wallpapered over.

The floor is uneven, dipping toward the middle and is of timber floor boards, roughly aligned. As in Bedrooms 1 and 2, the outer extent of the floorboards is a darker colour than the centre due to previous carpeting.

A three light window with six panes is built off centre in the south wall, its top level with the eaves (Fig 59).

### ***Bedroom 4***

Bedroom 4 measures approximately 5.4 by 2.8m. The north and western walls are stone rubble, plastered and painted a yellow colour (Figs 61 and 62). The room is lit by a deep wooden framed two light window, each of six panes with splayed reveals and timber lintel and sill is in the middle of the western wall (Fig 63).

The east wall is lath and plaster painted yellow and the south wall is 1842 brick plastered and painted. A black painted panel door in a wooden frame provides access to the corridor through the east wall. The slope of the roof is reflected in the upper extent of the walls at the north and south.

The floor, which is of rough, uneven floorboards running north-south, dips towards the centre of the room from the north and south walls. Two strips of boards, sloping upwards from floor level are present against the north and south walls. A squared trapdoor roughly 0.8m by 0.8m is built into the north-west corner of the room (Fig 64). It is unclear whether this trapdoor originally went through to the room below as no evidence of it can be seen in the ceiling of the ground floor Dressing Room.



Bedroom 3, looking north Fig 58



Bedroom 3, looking south Fig 59



The fireplace in Bedroom 3, looking east Fig 60



Bedroom 4, looking north Fig 61



Bedroom 4, looking south Fig 62



The window in the west wall of Bedroom 4 Fig 63



The raised floor boards at the north end of Bedroom 4, with trapdoor to the left Fig 64

### 4.3 The Attic

The Attic is accessed via a stair which opens onto the corridor on the first floor. The Attic space is bounded by the rough timber roof structure which supports the thatch and a floor of rough, uneven floorboards over joists.

The centre of the Attic space is dominated by the large structures of the two central chimneys which rise through the building and out through the roof (Fig 67).

At the western gable, a small window with six panes set into a timber frame provides some measure of light into the Attic. The upper extent of the western gable was rebuilt in brick in the 1842 (Figs 10 and 70).

A modified queen post truss supports the roof structure at the west (Figs 65, 66 and 69). It comprises three upright timbers supporting a straining beam between the principal rafters. Two purlins pass through the principal rafters either side of the truss. The upper extent of the truss is covered by flat timber boards fixed to the principal rafters above the straining beam. Several of the timbers show signs of re-use.

An upright beam with lateral props supports the roof structure on the western side of the central chimney (Fig 67). The two purlins, one on either side of the roof structure run from the western gable to midway down the building. The southern purlin is lost from sight behind the chimneys and the northern purlin stops at a step in the roof structure (Fig 67). A third purlin runs along the stepped roof, just above the joists (Fig 68). This change in roof structure is coincidental with a pair of joins visible on the north and south elevations and indicates a previous division of the building. The roof is hipped at the east gable and overhangs further here than on other elevations.

To the east of the chimneys, a pair of waney edged, upright timbers provide some support for the ridge (Fig 68). A rough timber runs down the centre of the roof above the joists from the chimneys to the partition at the eastern end (Fig 68). As noted in Bedroom 1, the western lath and plaster wall of that room rises through the ceiling level and into the attic, creating an internal partition (Fig 68). The partition was extended southwards in brick during the 19th-century alterations. Interestingly, the thatch does not rest against the southern common rafter but is held further out by the brick extension of the partition (Fig 68). This could indicate that the partition did not fully divide the roof space, the partition was partially demolished and re-built or that the roof pitch was extended southwards during the 19th-century, thus creating the gap.



The modified queen post truss, looking west toward the west gable Fig 65



The modified queen post truss, looking east Fig 66



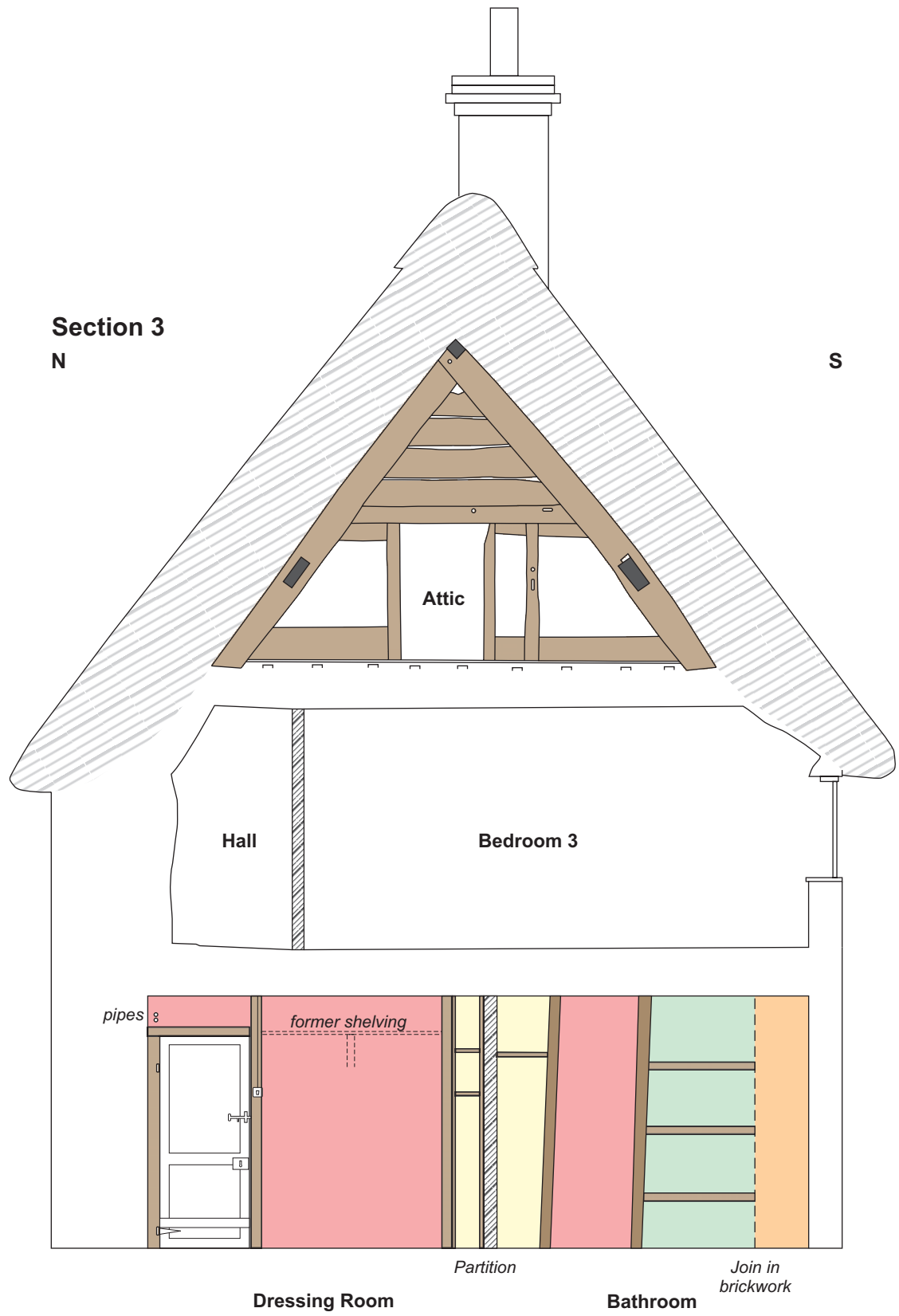
The west face of the central chimneys, looking east Fig 67



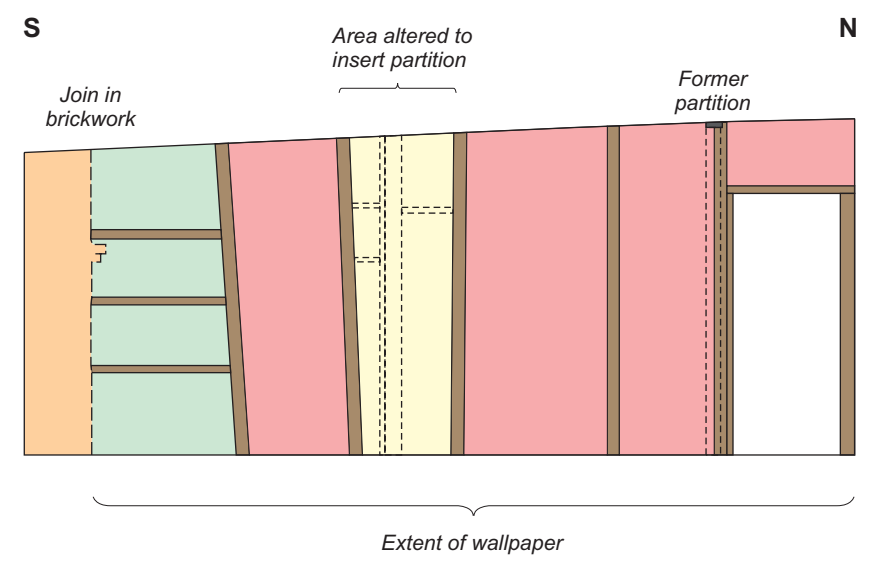
The eastern roof partition above Bedroom 1, looking east Fig 68



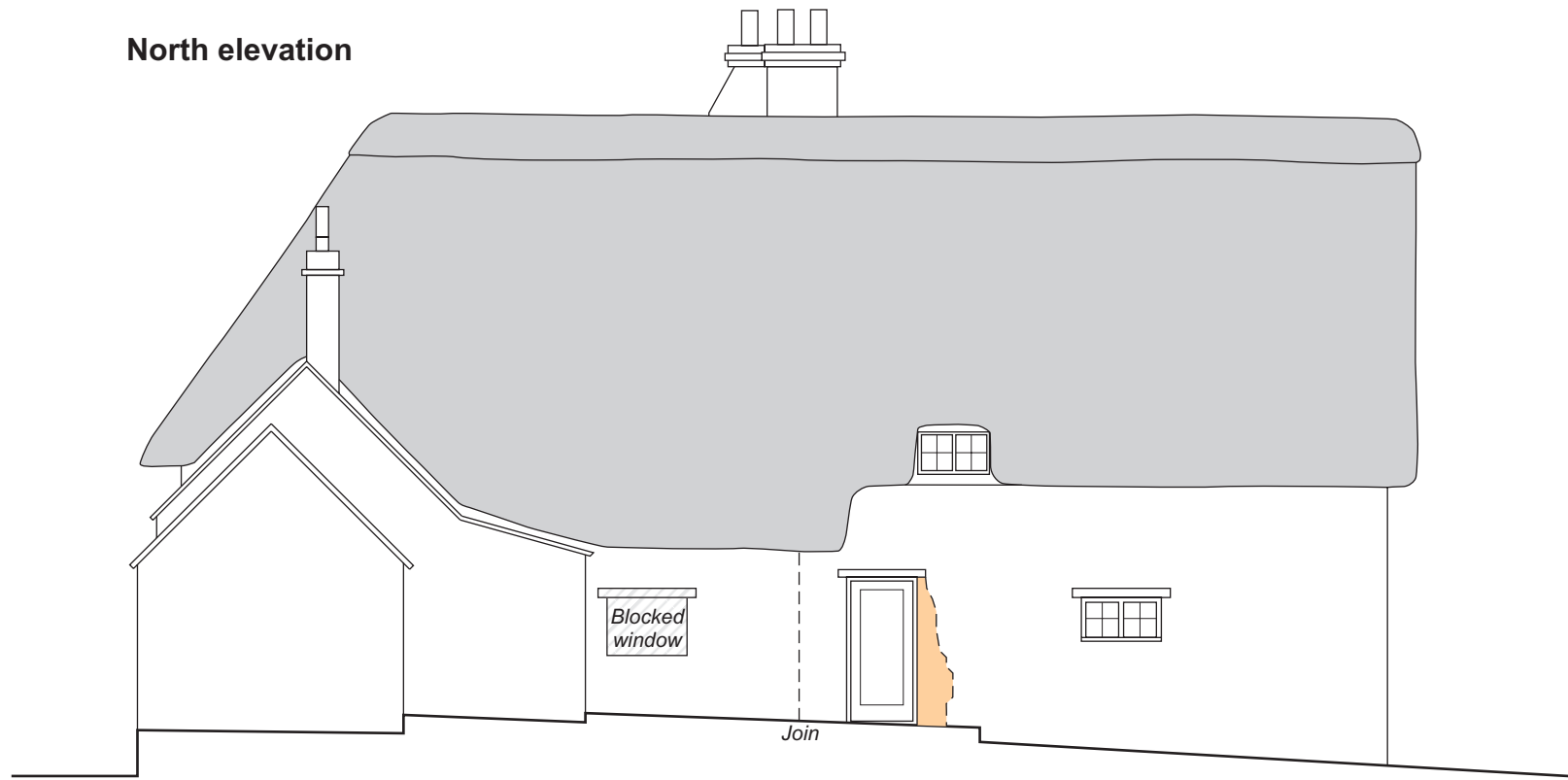
- Thatch
- Partition
- Timber
- Lath and Cob
- Lath and Plaster
- Brick with timber bond
- 1842 Brick
- Section through timber



**East face of the ground floor partition**



North elevation



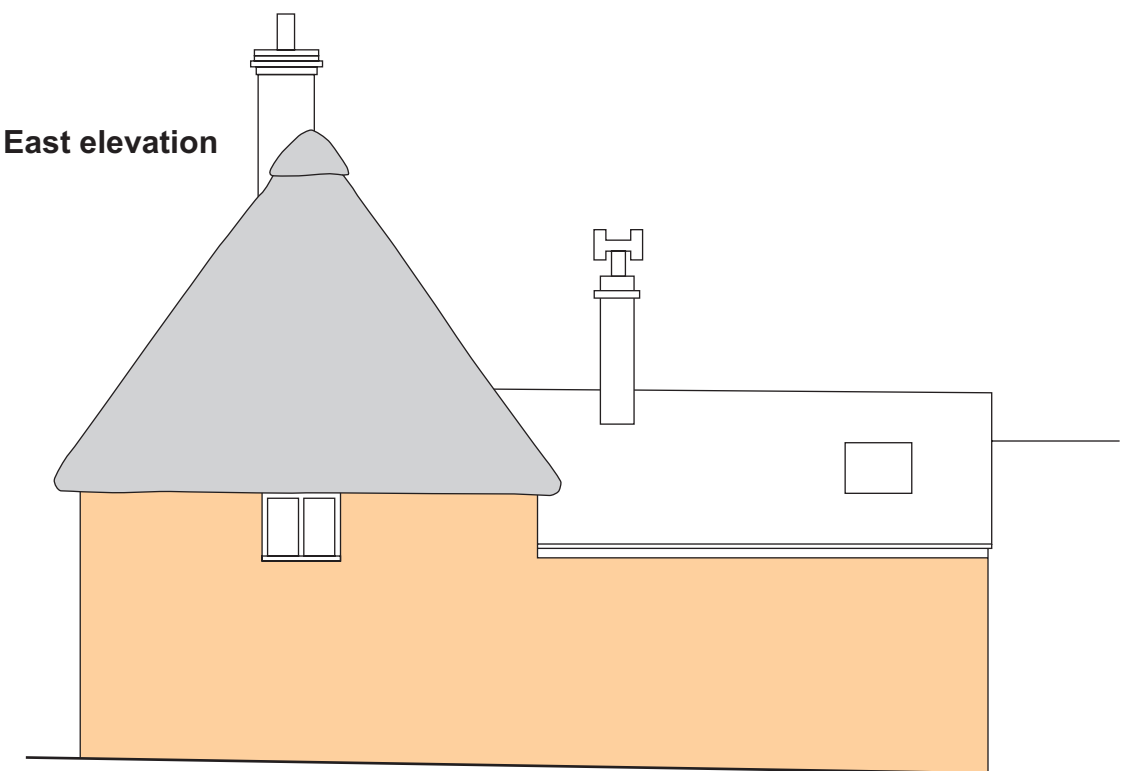
West elevation



South elevation



East elevation



Areas of 19th-century brickwork  
 Thatch

0 

 5m

## 5 CONCLUSION

Sunny Hill Farmhouse provides an interesting mix of historic fabrics from the 17th-century through to the present day. Roughly coursed stone, lath and cob, lath and plaster, timber bond, stud partition and brick can be found in the structure. Alterations in 1842 saw a complete re-build of the south and east elevations in red brick as well as the upper extent of the west gable.

The ground floor partition shows several phases of work. It was originally a lath and cob wall, probably contemporary with the original construction of the farmhouse. The central portion of the wall was demolished and re-built in lath and plaster to accommodate the insertion of the Bathroom-Dressing Room partition. An area of brick with timber bond was inserted at an unknown date. The purpose of this rebuilding is unclear. The 1842 re-facing of the building saw the partial demolition of this brickwork in order to accommodate the new works. Wallpaper of an early-mid 20th-century date, on plaster, covered the wall, stopping at the 1842 join which was left bare. The whole wall was then thickened with breeze block.

The brick chimney in the garage and associated fireplace in the Kitchen can be dated to the 19th century phase of works. Due to extensive rebuilding in this area there is little of the original historic fabric surviving from which to draw conclusions regarding the pre 19th-century layout of this part of the farmhouse.

The Hall between the Snug and Dining Room seems to be a later addition to the structure, possibly pre-dating the 1842 re-facing. The close proximity of the trapdoor to the east wall of the Snug suggests that this wall was built at a later date than the trapdoor which was blocked as a result of the construction of this wall.

As part of the current renovation works to the building, the western ground floor partition walls and the north wall of the Kitchen including fireplace and chimney will be removed.

Evidence seems to suggest that the building may once have been divided in two either as house and barn or as two dwellings. However, the evidence for the purpose of this division is equivocal due to lack of surviving evidence. Structural evidence suggests a former division of the building into east and west halves as seen in the vertical joins on the north and south elevations. This division can also be seen in the central chimneys. The inglenook fireplace and its chimney are of a later date than the western chimney they abut. The inglenook fireplace and chimney are constructed from red brick with breeze blocks in the jambs. This is in contrast to the rough coursed stone fabric of the western chimney. Within the attic, the eastern chimney has a stepped construction in comparison to the plain structure of the west chimney. The difference in date suggests that the parts of the eastern half of the ground floor may originally have had a functional use and were then converted to domestic use. This can also be seen in the trapdoor of Bedroom 2 and the stepped floor of Bedroom 1.

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