

# WHITE ROCK COTTAGE SIMONSBATH EXMOOR SOMERSET

REVISED Desk-Based Assessment &  
Historic Building Recording



South West Archaeology Ltd. report no. 151105



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# White Rock Cottage, Simonsbath, Exmoor, Somerset

## Results of a REVISED Desk-Based Assessment & Historic Building Recording

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Report Version 05  
05 November 2015

Work undertaken by SWARCH for Robert-Wilson North  
Exmoor National Park Authority

### Summary

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*South West Archaeology Ltd. was commissioned by Rob Wilson-North of Exmoor National Park Authority to revise the existing SWARCH report on a redundant building at Simonsbath, known as White Rock Cottage. The aim of the project was to amend and augment the existing report in the light of new discoveries following the removal of a substantial amount of external render and internal plaster. The work is intended to inform future conservation or consolidation works.*

*White Rock Cottage was built in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century as a pair of worker's cottages within a designed garden landscape. It was later converted to use as a school within the newly established community of Simonsbath; the building has been used in the later 20<sup>th</sup> century as a research and study centre but has been closed for a considerable time.*

*Also covered by the scope of the report is the toilet block, south-east of the main former school building, and a small underground building, with vaulted roof and arched windows, possibly a former 'picturesque' grotto, converted into a cold store for game when one of the cottages within the complex of buildings was occupied by a game-keeper for the estate.*

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

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<b>Location:</b>	White Rock Cottage
<b>Parish:</b>	Simonsbath
<b>District:</b>	Exmoor
<b>County:</b>	Somerset
<b>NGR:</b>	SS77343939
<b>Planning No.</b>	n/a
<b>SWARCH ref.</b>	ESW15

### 1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) was commissioned by Rob Wilson-North of Exmoor National Park authority (the Client) to undertake desk-based research and conduct a programme of historic building recording on the structure known as White Rock Cottage at Simonsbath, Somerset, in order to aid understanding of the historical development of this building and its curtilage. SWARCH reported on this structure in 2012 (report no.120924), and extensive remedial works have now taken place at the property; this revised version of that report contains additional information with revised phasing and interpretation, in order to inform the next stage of the conservation process.

### 1.2 SITE DESCRIPTION, LOCATION AND TOPOGRAPHY

The building or group of buildings here described as 'White Rock Cottage' is situated within the settlement of Simonsbath in the heart of Exmoor (Somerset). The complex is accessed via a lane or track leading north from the B3223 road, leaving the road at a point some 100m to the east of the Exmoor Forest Inn. At the end of the lane or track is a car park on the west side of the approach, flanked by a long building now in use as public toilets. White Rock Cottage, formerly the Somerset County Council Field Studies Centre, and before that a school, lies to the west of the toilets. The valley beyond the parking area is known as Ashcombe. The Ashcombe stream flows out of the valley and past White Rock Cottage, joining the River Barle at a point below Simonsbath Bridge.

The cottage has grown organically into a rather sprawling complex of connected buildings that now form a T-shaped block with a flat-roofed building in the north-east angle. Until 1970 the complex housed Simonsbath Primary School, and after its closure became a Somerset County Council Field Studies Centre. Abandoned some years ago and currently in a derelict state, the buildings were bought by Exmoor National Park in 2013. The surrounding land is largely overgrown with scrub and trees, but clearance work is now being undertaken. To the west is an overgrown garden, beyond which lie the Exmoor Forest Inn and the major part of the settlement including the Simonsbath House Hotel.

Between the building and Ashcombe Stream lies a partly-subterranean structure, perhaps originally a grotto, later modified as a cold store (for meat and/or dairy products), and built into the bank of the stream. To the south stands a free-standing two-cell building, possibly the gardener's tool shed. To the north-east is a long single-storey building now in use as public toilets.

### 1.3 METHODOLOGY

The building survey was undertaken by C Humphreys, B Morris, S Walls and L Blampied between 29<sup>th</sup> May and the 20<sup>th</sup> June 2012. The recording work was carried out with reference to ClfA and English Heritage guidelines on the recording of standing buildings. Photographic and written records were

produced. Subsequent recording work was undertaken by B Morris, E Wapshott and C Humphreys in the spring and summer of 2015. An electronic measured survey was undertaken in 2015.

The desk-based assessment was undertaken by Terry Green, with reference to ClfA guidelines on the preparation of Historic Environment Desk-based Assessments (2014). Printed and unpublished material in the Somerset HER, North Devon Record Office (NDRO), the Somerset Archives and Local Studies Library, and the ENPA HER was consulted as part of this work.

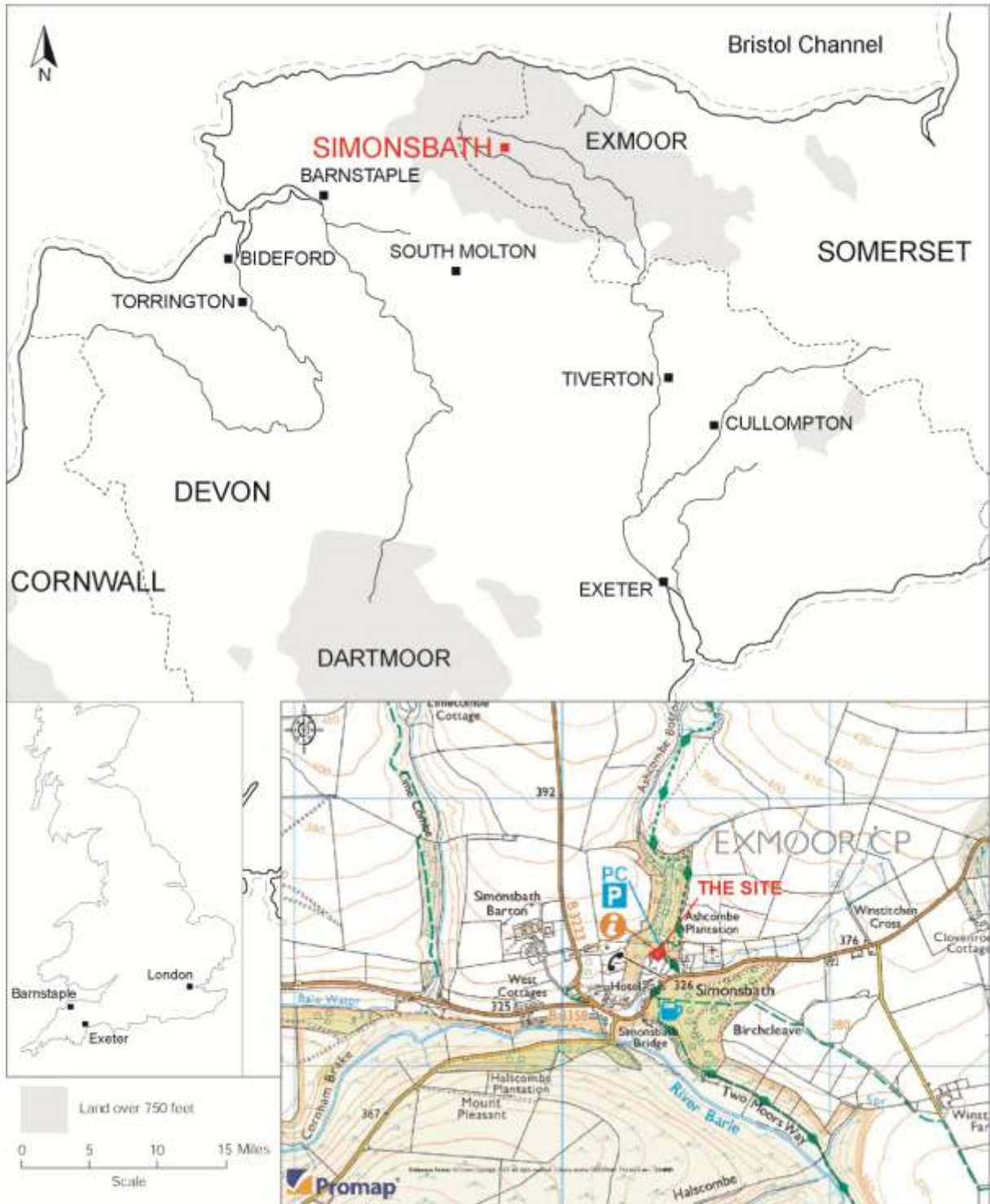


Figure 1: Regional and site location map.

## 2.0 THE DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT

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### 2.1 THE ORIGINS OF SIMONSBATH

The earliest record of the name Simonsbath occurs in Leland's account of his travels in 1540 when there was probably no more than a wooden bridge here over the Barle. Simonsbath lay within the Royal Forest of Exmoor, which in 1652 – as a result of the sequestration of Crown lands after the Civil War – was sold as a freehold to James Boevey, a London merchant. Probably in 1653/4 Boevey began building a house at Simonsbath. This was completed by 1657 when it was described by Robert Pollard of South Molton as 'most convenient...' (Siraut 2009, 89). After the restoration of Crown lands to the King in 1660, Boevey's freehold was converted to a leasehold but as leaseholder and now Warden of the Forest he enclosed 118 acres of land at Simonsbath, creating the first farm in the Forest. On his death in 1696, Boevey left his mark on Exmoor in the shape of Simonsbath House, which until 1815 was the only dwelling house in the Forest.

In June 1818, the Crown decided to sell the forest, and by May 1819 the Royal Forest ceased to exist, having been divided into allotments, the largest reserved to the Crown. This was purchased by John Knight, an iron-master of Worcestershire, for £50,000. Knight also bought Simonsbath House and farm. Both the Crown allotment and Simonsbath House and farm were finally conveyed to John Knight in 1820.

John Knight had ambitions to become accepted as a member of the landed gentry, a prerequisite of which was the possession of a fine country residence. Simonsbath House fell far short of such status, and Knight conceived a plan to build a new mansion in contemporary neo-Gothic style set within its own grounds, which were probably to be laid out in the fashionable 'picturesque' manner in line with contemporary developments on other estates in Somerset and Devon. It is necessary to interject 'probably' because his ambitious plans for a mansion were never fulfilled and correspondingly his intentions for the grounds are conjectural and must be reconstructed from clues in the surrounding landscape. What is certain is that between 1820 and 1830 John Knight directed operations from his home at Lynton, during which period construction of the new house began and certain ancillary buildings were put in place.

With progress on the mansion slow and thwarted by failure to secure an expected inheritance, John Knight nevertheless moved to Simonsbath in 1830, residing in the old Simonsbath House. In 1837 however, he moved away to Jersey and by 1841 had handed over control of the Exmoor estate to his son Frederic. While John Knight's plans had been guided by aspirations of land ownership and agricultural improvement, Frederic Knight saw that the estate could only be developed through being commercially farmed. Unlike his father he saw the necessity to develop a farming community, central to which was the creation of a village centre and parish with its social infrastructure. Thus between 1841 and 1860 the parish of Exmoor was created with Simonsbath at its centre. In 1856 the parish church was built together with a vicarage and shortly afterwards in 1857 the school was opened. A post-office was established, as was a smithy, cottages and a 'Refreshment House', a probable precursor to the Exmoor Forest Hotel, providing for locals and travellers alike.

In 1886 the Exmoor estate was sold to Lord Fortescue. For some years Frederic Knight continued to live in Simonsbath House, but died in Bath in 1897. Under the Fortescues further additions were made to the buildings of Simonsbath. Most secondary documentary sources state the uncompleted mansion was finally pulled down late in the 19<sup>th</sup> or early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century; however, a substantial backblock at Simonsbath House appears to be part of the mansion house, and more work is required to establish whether this is, in fact, the case.



**Acknowledgement:** *A large proportion of what follows draws on the report produced for Exmoor National Park in 2004 by Caroline Garrett and entitled 'An Envious Possession: The Somerset Seat of the Knight Family'.*

## 2.2 WHITE ROCK COTTAGE

It is evident from the Exmoor enclosure map of 1818 (Figure 2) that at this date there were no buildings (at least none recorded) at the location of White Rock Cottage. Mr Thomas Timmins is listed as living at White Rock Cottage, Exmoor, in 1830 (Savage 1830, iii), and his son (Thomas Theophilus Timmins) was baptised in Exford Church in 1822, where it is noted Mr Timmins was a land surveyor resident at Simonsbath. Thomas senior went on to have two further children, in 1824 and 1826; his wife Mary died in 1828 and is buried at Exford. From this we may surmise White Rock Cottage was extant by 1822. The earliest detailed record of the White Rock Cottage is found in an estate inventory of 1833 (SHC: A/BAZ/1/6). Among the appointments and features at Simonsbath the list includes 'White Rock Cottage etc.'. Apart from Simonsbath House itself, White Rock Cottage was the only residential building listed. The 'etc.' after the name of the cottage is expanded to list the contents of the 'Gardener's Tool House' as well as the features and contents of 'White Rock Garden'. Since the cottage was there in 1830, it is probably safe to assume that it was built in the early 1820s, presumably to house staff attached to Simonsbath House. Considering the associated list of gardening equipment, it seems most likely that it was to be the Head Gardener's cottage. In fact Burton (1994, 24) states that before 1840 the cottage was occupied by a land surveyor and gardener.

According to Burton (1989, 66) around 1840 John Knight brought in a shepherd from Wiltshire to tend his experimental flock of Merinos. Knight is quoted as writing in a letter 'I am doing my best to fit up the White Rock Cottage for this family.'

It is notable that reference to White Rock Cottage is always in the singular, but the structural evidence (below) would suggest it always housed two families. A letter of May 1852 (WRO: Acc: 10470/Ref:899:310/P: 122/Doc: 10130) from John Knight to his son Frederic confirms that at that date White Rock Cottage was occupied by William Howchin, who is recorded in the 1851 census as butler at Simonsbath House. The possibility that Howchin shared the accommodation with other staff is borne out by the recollection of Rev. Thornton, the first vicar of Exmoor, that before the establishment of the school (see below) a Dame School was held in the kitchen of one house and the sitting room of another; he was apparently referring to White Rock Cottage (Burton 1989, 95).

A document dated 22<sup>nd</sup> October 1857 certifies the satisfactory completion of the school (SHC: A/BAZ 1/4), which we know to have been established on the south side of White Rock Cottage. The first school mistress was probably Annie Cullen (Irish), who is noted in the 1861 Census as a teacher, residing together with her husband John Cullen (Scottish), Civil Engineer, at White Rock Cottage. It is quite clear that by this date the title encompassed two residences, because also living at White Rock Cottage was John Steer, Agricultural Labourer, together with his family.

The census records indicate that John Steer remained in residence until at least 1891, apparently running the White Rocks small holding of 27 acres. He died in 1892 (Burton 1989, 242). Meanwhile what was now referred to as the School House was occupied in 1871 by William and Sarah Richards, school mistress, and in 1881 by Harriet and Zena Carpenter, school teacher. In 1891 the school mistress was Ellen Buttercase who is recorded as occupying Primrose Cottage and (recorded in brackets) the School House. One Fred Wayham is also recorded as resident at White Rock Cottage, so it looks as if at that date the School House part of the complex was sub-tenanted. However both 1901 and 1911 census returns have Sidney and Lena White, schoolmistress at School House. In 1901 White Rock Cottage was occupied by John Blackmore, gamekeeper and in 1911 by Richard Jones, woodman.





Figure 2: Extract from the Exmoor Enclosure map of 1818. Arrowed are A: the approximate location of White Rock Cottage, B: Simonsbath House (Somerset Archives and Local Studies).

What this seems to indicate is that from its construction in the 1820s until around 1850 White Rock Cottage comprised one or two units housing estate staff. In the 1850s it clearly comprised two units, one of which was regularly used after 1857 as accommodation for the teacher at the new school.

In her study of the Simonsbath estate Caroline Garrett remarks (page 20) that the modesty and simplicity of Knight's early buildings is puzzling when one considers his ambition to impress. Her suggestion is that the early structures were kept simple for the sake of speed in getting the enterprise up and running. On this basis it would seem logical that during the initial high pressure phase, if it was found necessary to include a cottage, its purpose would likely have been to accommodate someone important to the development of the mansion or its landscape. Considering the proximity of the structure interpreted as a 'Gardener's Tool House' and the features of the adjacent garden (see below), it is probable that Burton's claim that before 1840 the cottage was occupied by a land surveyor and gardener is likely to be correct.

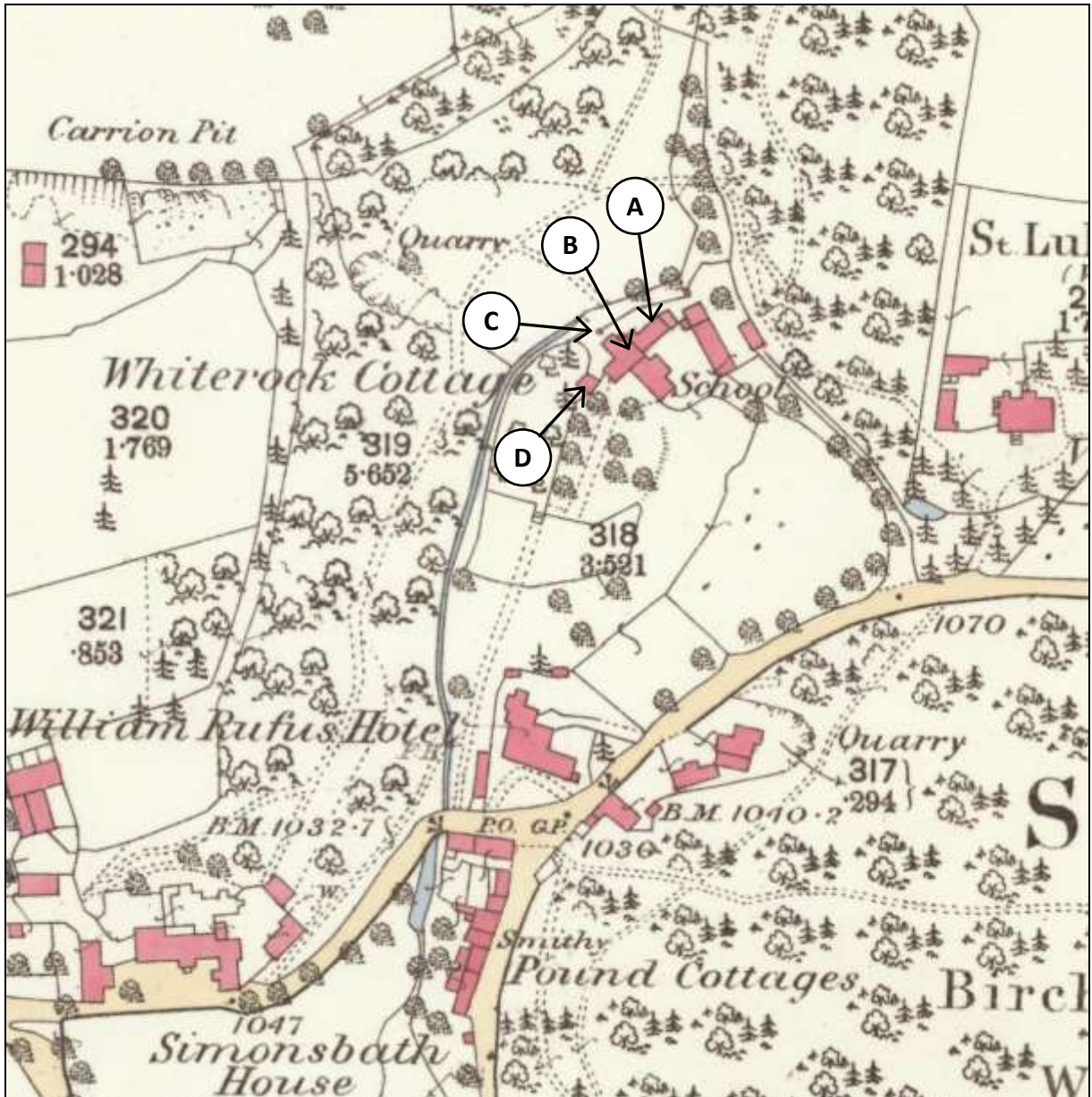


Figure 3: Extract from the Ordnance Survey 1<sup>st</sup> Edition map at 1:2500 published 1888 showing: A: White Rock Cottage, B: The School House, C: The approximate location of the Cold Store, D: The Tool House (Exmoor National Park Authority).

### 2.3 WHITE ROCK GARDEN

The inventory of 1833 names two gardens: The ‘Garden by the River’ and ‘White Rock Garden’. Garrett argues that the ‘Garden by the River’ represents the land on the west of the Ashcombe Stream, while ‘White Rock Garden’ represents the area on the east side of the stream between White Rock Cottage and what is now the Exmoor Forest Hotel. On the Ordnance Survey 1<sup>st</sup> Edition map of 1888 (Figure 3) and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition of 1902 (Figure 4) this is the area numbered 318 comprising c.3.5 acres, an area connected by paths, steps and a footbridge to Simonsbath House. The features and contents of the garden are comprised in the 1833 inventory under the ‘etc.’ attached to White Rock Cottage, so clearly they go together. The contents include, as well as the Gardener’s Tool House, two large and one small hotbed frame. This represents much more than a simple cottage garden: these are the paraphernalia of an estate garden, specifically the means for bringing on plants out of season and/or exotics.



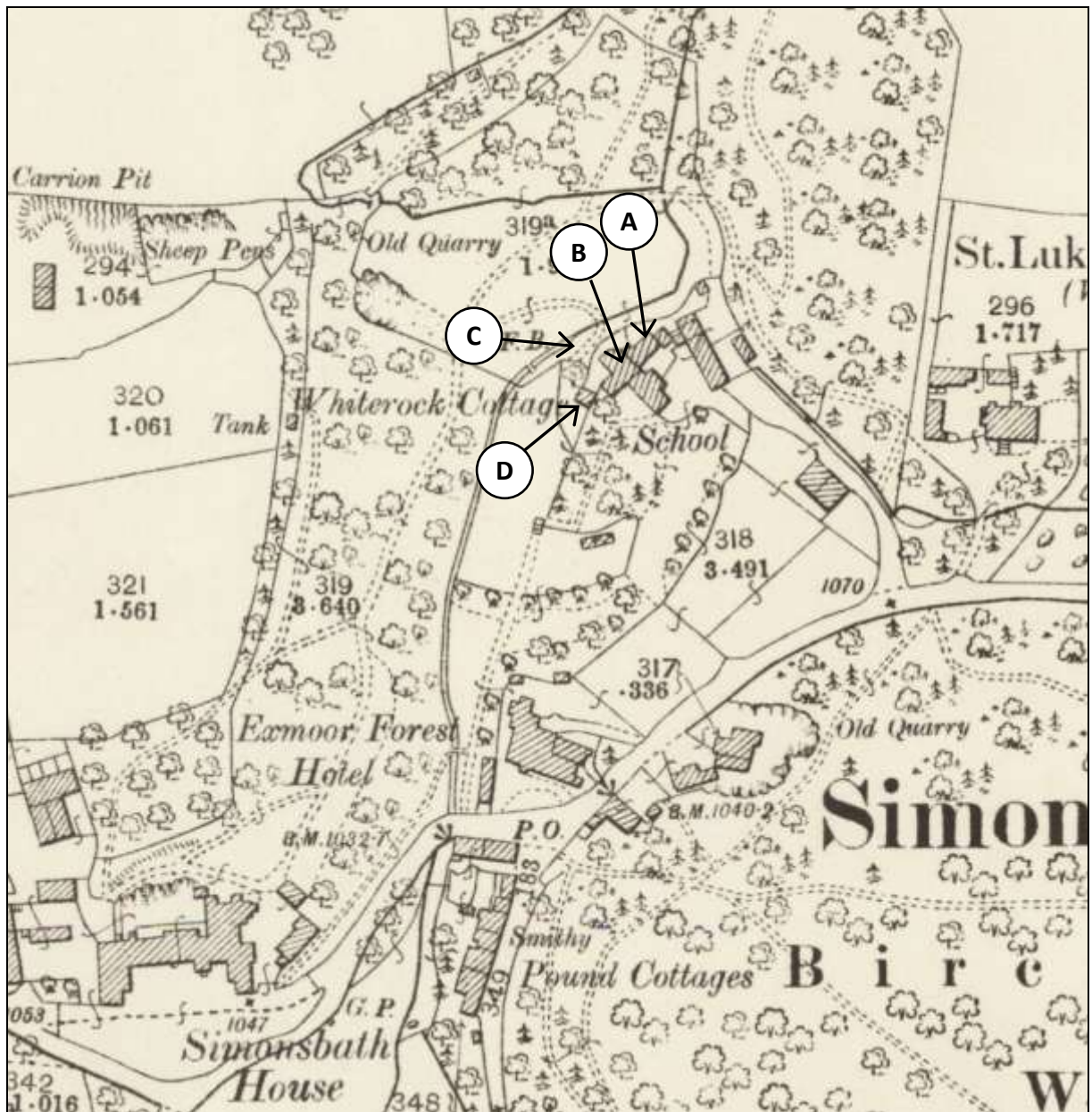


Figure 4: Extract from the Ordnance Survey 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition map at 1:2500 published 1902 showing A: White Rock Cottage, B: The School House, C: The approximate location of the Cold Store, D: The Tool House (Exmoor National Park Authority).

Looking at the contents of the Tool House, the provision of 9 dung forks, 5 rakes and 6 watering cans indicates a team of gardeners who would be those listed as paid in John Knight's accounts of 1835 (WRO ACC: 10470/Ref: 899:310P: 122/Doc: 10128). This all suggests that the cottage accommodated a head gardener overseeing the early development of the gardens around the new mansion.

Apart from the inferences to be drawn from the presence of the hotbeds, the status of White Rock Garden is difficult to determine. If in 1833 it was the nursery where plants for garden development were brought on, by the 1880s it (the area numbered 318 on the OS map) had been landscaped with a degree of formalism, being divided into compartments with steps, lawns, shrubs and an orchard (see Figure 4). By 1902, when the OS 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition was produced, further changes had taken place, the orchard having disappeared, paths having been altered, a greenhouse erected and a new boundary introduced to the west of the tool shed (Figure 5).

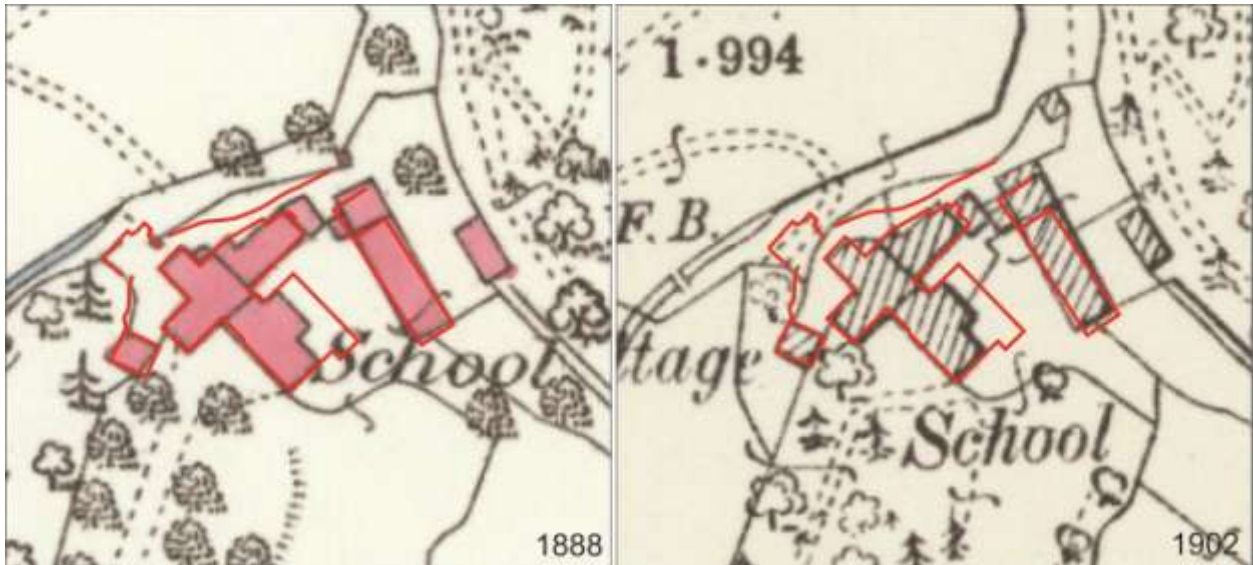


Figure 5: A comparison of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> edition OS maps with the current survey (overlain in red).

## 2.4 THE GROTTO

Located between the south-western end of White Rock Cottage and the Ashcombe Stream is an underground structure reached by stone steps and comprising two barrel-vaulted chambers with stone shelves and alcoves. This is said by Caroline Garrett to have been a meat store, though the absence of hooks for hanging meat argues against this; a dairy is another possibility. In any case, its final purpose appears to have been to provide cold storage, being below ground and with an opening (now blocked) to the river.

An unusual element of the building's structure is its vaulted ceilings and arched alcove and arched original entrance. This indicates an earlier function for the building prior to the conversion to a cold store, possibly as a grotto or 'picturesque' structure, within the wider designed landscape. Visual examination of the banks of Ashcombe stream below the possible 'grotto' suggests the remains of bridge abutments; a footbridge is indicated near here on the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition OS map (Figure 5). There is also the possibility that in the last 100 years erosion has destroyed any remains of the original path by which the building was accessed\*. It is worth noting that in 1901 White Rock Cottage was occupied by a gamekeeper, so it is possible that it was at this point the 'grotto' was converted and extended to form a cold store, holding game.

A cold store of this size seems designed to serve a big house rather than a cottage, but the means of access for anyone coming from the kitchens of Simonsbath House is not obvious from an examination of the 1<sup>st</sup> Edition OS map. The paths leading north from Simonsbath House are shown to diverge to the north of the quarry. One branch of the path heads towards White Rock Cottage, but it hits the Ashcombe Stream without any indication of a footbridge or a continuation on the eastern side of the stream. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition OS map also shows a branching of the path heading north from the house, although it branches at a different point. It is shown crossing the stream – by no obvious means – and turning back to head straight for, and over, the store. This may support the theory that the cold store was to be accessed by the game-keeper directly from his home in the White Rock Cottage buildings, and he then took the meat up to the house himself via other routes.

\*Examination of the early OS maps suggests that from roughly this point, and as far as the road, the stream was canalised or at least the banks were revetted. Much, if not all of this work has been washed away.



## 2.5 TOILET BLOCK

Immediately to the east of White Rock Cottage is a long building now in use as public toilets. It has been suggested that this was formerly a stable block. Stables are recorded in the 1833 inventory, but there is nothing (available to this study) to indicate their location until a comment by Viscount Ebrington in 1899 when he refers to gardens 'at the back of the house up to the stables' (Garrett 2004, 25). These are referred to by Caroline Garrett as the 'Upper Stables' as opposed to stables adjoining Simonsbath House. A photograph from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (Figure 6) is the only early picture that we have. Stables at this distance from the house might have been inconvenient, but may have been located here to serve the Knights' Exmoor stud to which an article in the Illustrated London News of 22<sup>nd</sup> October 1853 refers (Garrett 2004, 18). Prior to 1856, the land destined for the building of a church was used for horse and pony sales.

The maps of 1888 and 1902 as well as the early 20<sup>th</sup> century photograph seen in Figure 6 show that opposite the 'stables' stood a small rectangular building. The cartographic record and extant remnants of the structure indicate that this was built over the leat which runs beside the car park access track. The leat is shown on the OS maps as canalised and may have been culverted to pass beneath the building. The purpose of the building is unknown.



Figure 6: Early 20<sup>th</sup> century photograph of the Upper Stables (Caroline Garrett 2004).

## 2.6 QUARRY

Within the area numbered 319 on the OS maps is a large quarry. In 1888 this is labelled simply 'Quarry', while in 1902 it is 'Old Quarry', possibly implying that in the 1880s it was still in use or had been until recently. The inventory of 1833 lists two quarries together with their tools, including frames for cutting stone. Clearly the quarries were supplying stone for the estate, probably including the new mansion.

## 2.7 THE NAME OF WHITE ROCK

The name 'White Rock' first appears in conjunction with the cottage in 1833. It is probable it relates directly to the large white quartz boulders found along the Ashcombe Valley (see Riley 2014). Indeed, a large (1m+) quartz boulder is located immediately to the rear of the cottage, between the tool store and the 'grotto'. The decorative use of quartz may have been a feature of this designed landscape, and perhaps this boulder, or one similar, was visible from the garden on the other side of the stream. Despite the fact that several individuals or families lived at White Rock Cottage, the site is only once referred to in the plural.

## 2.8 CONTEXT

It is worth noting that White Rock Cottage and the Stables are not the only long narrow single-storey structures in Simonsbath. For example, Pound Cottage and The Old Pottery flank the road south of the Exmoor Forest Inn, and these structures are similar in both size and scale. There is clearly a shared design principal at work, and this presumably reflects the influence of John Knight. It has been suggested his use of Scottish shepherds, and a familiarity with Scottish building types, may have influenced his choice, but this has yet to be demonstrated. Similarly, certain structural features – most notably the round-headed arches – are used across the settlement, and point to an overarching aesthetic.

## 2.9 TIMELINE

Date	Event
1820	John Knight purchases the Crown Allotment
1822-26	Thomas Timmins listed as living at Simonsbath
1830	Thomas Timmins listed as living at White Rock Cottage, Exmoor
1830	John Knight moves to Simonsbath from Lynton
1833	First mention of 'White Rock Cottage etc.'
1837	John Knight moves to Jersey
1840	John Knight brings a shepherd from Wiltshire to Simonsbath, 'fitting up' White Rock Cottage for his family
1841	John Knight hands control of the estate to Frederic Knight
1851	William Howchin, butler, resident at White Rock Cottage
1850s	Dame School held in the kitchen of one cottage, and the sitting room of another
1856	Church and Vicarage completed
1857	School completed
1861	Annie (school mistress, Irish) and John Cullen (engineer, Scottish); and John Steer (agricultural labourer) and family in residence
1871	Harriet and Zena Carpenter (School House); and John Steer and family in residence
1881	John Steer and family in residence
1891	Ellen Buttercase (Primrose Cottage née School House) Fre Wayham; and John Steer (d.1892) and family in residence
1901	Sidney and Lena White; and John Blackmore (gamekeeper) in residence
1911	Sidney and Lena White; and Richard Jones (woodman) in residence

## 3.0 THE RESULTS OF THE BUILDING SURVEY

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### 3.1 GENERAL DESCRIPTION

A complex of stone and brick former domestic and school buildings set to the south side of Ashcombe stream on gently-sloping land on the northern side of the valley of the River Barle, at Simonsbath on Exmoor. The buildings date from the early 19<sup>th</sup> to the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century, the T-shaped group having expanded to the south, west and east over its history. The exterior of the buildings are rendered both in lime and cement and painted, with composite slate roofs. To the west of the T-shaped group is a small square building, possibly a tool shed or former toilet block, of stone, rendered under a slate composite roof. To the east of the T-shaped group is a further stone rubble building, again with a composite slate roof that is now a public toilet but is believed to have been a former stable block. Below the complex of buildings at White Rock is a small underground structure, with two chambers with barrel-vaulted ceilings and arched openings and alcoves; possibly a former 'grotto' within the surrounding designed landscape that was later converted into a cold store, possibly for game, accessed via a stone staircase, forced through the wall of the original structure.

The revised interpretation and phasing of the structure (see below) would suggest that the first phase at Whiterocks consisted of two roughly-symmetrical cottages, which is in accordance with the early records. This rather simple structure was then modified with the addition of a gabled outshut to the rear (north) facing across the Ashcombe stream, the outbuilding and – probably – the grotto. These additions would appear to represent a deliberate attempt to enhance the visual appeal to the two cottages.

### 3.2 EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION

(**Note:** the cardinal points have been adjusted; NW = N)

#### 3.2.1 NORTH ELEVATIONS

Facing onto the stream, the single-storey north elevation comprises the main range with a later service outshut within a gabled extension; another 19<sup>th</sup> century extension built onto the western part of the outshut, and a 20<sup>th</sup> century brick corridor built up against the eastern end.

The north elevation of the main range is of rubble stone construction, lime rendered with the upper  $\frac{3}{4}$  painted white with the lower  $\frac{1}{4}$  painted black, possibly tarred, under a composite slate roof, with terracotta ridge tiles and a blue painted timber fascia board. The render conceals a build of stone rubble, roughly coursed, in a lime-rich clay bond. The eastern end of the elevation is obscured by the later 20<sup>th</sup> century brick extension and by the integral outshuts, visible largely only to the western end. There is an air-vent to the lower part of wall to the western end and adjoining concrete access ramp and step, with metal railing. There is a doorway into R6 at the western end, seemingly forced into and through an earlier round-headed opening, the remnants of which may be observed to the right of the opening.

A later 19<sup>th</sup> century service extension (R12/R13) forms a northern half-gable, single-pitch roof, sloping to the west. This has been rendered in a white painted textured render, possibly pebble-dash, with the lower portion painted black (the plinth to the base of the wall, painted black, projects 50mm). The removal of the render revealed a very poorly constructed mixed stone rubble build, with a blocked doorway in the east elevation. A blue painted timber barge board lines the eaves to the slate composite roof, with a blue painted iron downpipe. There are a number of air vents to the bottom of the wall. In the centre of the elevation is a single boarded window with a slate sill.



The 19<sup>th</sup> century service extension conceals the western half of a gabled service outshut (R7-R9); the exposed half has a blue painted timber barge board and pitched roof of composite slates. Built of rubble stone and abutting the main range, this elevation is rendered in lime. The elevation is possibly repaired with sections of pebble-dash and/or cement render? To the west, and central to the original gabled elevation, is a doorway with a round-headed arch and simple fanlight over; to its east there is a forced rectangular window opening with modern casement, with an overhanging concrete sill. To the east, where the slope of the roof drops, the elevation is abutted by a later brick structure.



Figure 7: The north-facing elevation of the 20<sup>th</sup> century flat-roofed, brick-built school buildings in 2012, viewed from the north-west.

The eastern end of the main north elevation of the building is obscured by the addition of a white-painted brick-built access corridor, under a shallow mono-pitch corrugated iron roof, sloping to the north, with blue painted timber fascia boards. There is loose and damaged plastic guttering. In the centre is a partly-boarded doorway, with a blue painted modern plank door, with a square window opening to the east, boarded, with a thin, possibly slate, sill.

### 3.2.2 EAST ELEVATIONS

Facing onto a level grassed area with low stone walls to the north and south, the eastern elevation comprises the east gable-end of the main range (R1), the eastern elevation of the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century school room extension and the modern 20<sup>th</sup> century brick-built toilet block extension to the southern end.

The eastern gable-end of the main range is of one and a half storeys height to the gable apex. This is built of stone rubble rendered in a thick layer of lime, with later (cement?) repairs to the north and south corners. The roof is of composite slate, with terracotta ridge tiles and blue painted timber barge boards. There is a large air vent within the gable apex, possibly leading into an enclosed roof

void. This vent is built into a small blocked rectangular opening, presumably a former window opening. The elevation has a large chimney stack, off-set to the north side; this is a large square-profiled structure which projects considerably from the elevation and is not tied into the wall. The stack narrows just above the roof line with a slate drip course to the north and south sides. To the south of the stack at the base it appears damaged and partially hacked away, as does the gable wall, with the burnt stone and brick lining to a chimney visible; this could represent the removal and blocking of a bread oven (Figure 8). At the southern end of this elevation, the removal of the render demonstrated the gable wall abuts the southern wall; the south wall stops abruptly, and originally appears to have continued to the east, indicating that this part of the structure has been truncated.



Figure 8: View of the disturbed stonework next to the eastern chimney stack (scale 1m).

The eastern elevation of R11 is abutted at its southern end by the 20<sup>th</sup> century brick built, flat-roofed toilet building and it abuts the earlier stone elevation of the main range to the north. The room is of single-storey height, built of stone rubble rendered in a thick lime mix and painted white with blue painted timber fascia boards under a pitched composite slate roof with terracotta ridge tiles. To the centre of the elevation is a shallow projecting chimney stack, integral to the structure; this has been reduced and blocked, slated with the roof.

The eastern elevation of the brick-built, white painted, flat-roofed extension is set into the slope of the ground by approximately 1-1.5m. The southern end of the building rises to two storeys, to house the water tanks for the flush toilets. The building is roofed in tarred felt and is built of modern red brick in a white mortar. It has black plastic gutters with a blue painted iron downpipe to the centre of the elevation. There are seven blocked and boarded openings, three of which appear to be doorways and four small windows with sloping concrete sills.



### 3.2.3 SOUTH ELEVATIONS

Facing onto the valley to the south, over gently-sloping land, the south elevation of the main range is obscured at the centre by the long southern extension containing R10/R11 and the main school hall (R14) and toilet block; to the eastern end R1 abuts the main range with large chimney stack to the east. There are two axial stacks, one to the east and one to the west; both stacks are rendered but not painted.

The south elevation of the main range and the eastern single-celled structure are of stone rubble, single-storey in height, rendered in a variety of smooth and textured lime and patched with cement, with an upper  $\frac{3}{4}$  painted white, with the lower  $\frac{1}{4}$  portion painted black, possibly tarred. The removal of the render demonstrated the southern wall of R1 abuts the main range. The roof is pitched, of composite slates with terracotta ridge tiles and blue painted timber fascia boards. To the east, the roof over R1 is of a different pitch to R2-R6.



Figure 9: The eastern end of the south-facing elevation of the main range in 2012, viewed from the south-east (scale 2m).

To the east are four windows, all boarded, with either thin slate or thick sloping concrete sills. Proceeding from east to west: there is a blocked doorway into R1 at the gable end, with a window forced through the wall next to it. Of the two windows into R2, the eastern window was once a rounded-headed doorway, and the other window appears original but raised. The window into R3 has been widened considerably and the reveals rebuilt in brick. All casements are modern.

To the west are two large, tall hornless sash windows with narrow slate sills; these windows sit within window openings that have been widened and raised, but even though the windows are secondary, the casements are the only ones in the building of any historical value. To the west end is what appears to be a blocked doorway with a round-headed arch, surviving as a niche in the elevation, with cast iron guttering and a cast-iron downpipe.

The south elevation of the main school hall (R14) is gabled, of one and half storeys to the gable apex, rendered in smooth lime or cement render, painted white to the upper  $\frac{3}{4}$  and black to the lower  $\frac{1}{4}$ . The roof is of composite slate, with terracotta ridge tiles and white painted timber barge boards. The east side of the elevation is abutted by a later brick-built structure. The centre of the elevation is dominated by two matching, full height gothic arched windows, the lower portion boarded and the windows blocked above with air vents where a ceiling has been inserted. Both windows have thin slate sills. Remedial works have demonstrated that the west and south walls of this structure have been rebuilt in concrete block (Paul Quinn, *pers. comm.*)



Figure 10: The western end of the south-facing elevation of the main range in 2012, viewed from the south.

The south elevation of the brick-built 20<sup>th</sup> century extension, containing the toilet block, is painted white, with a flat roof. There are two small window openings, boarded on the ground floor, with concrete sills and a large central recessed porch with a flat roof and with two large wooden boarded double doors leading to the interior. There is a large concrete step leading up to the doors and the elevation has black plastic guttering.

#### 3.2.4 WEST ELEVATIONS

The west elevation faces onto steeper sloping ground with the detached outbuilding to the north-west. The elevation incorporates the western elevation of the west service outshut to the north and the further extension, the western gable-end of the main range, the west elevation of the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century school room and the west elevation of the large school hall extension to the south.

North of the main range, the western elevation is of low, single storey height, under slate roofs of differing pitches, with blue painted timber fascia boards. The elevation includes the northern outshut (R9) and the extension (R12/R13); both elevations are of rendered stone rubble. There is a steeply-pitched slate-gabled porch, supported on shaped brackets, over a boarded doorway (into R9) at the south end. This doorway has been forced through a blocked window. The door is approached via a



sloping concrete ramp and step with a railing. There is a boarded window to the north with a sloping concrete sill.



Figure 11: The south-facing elevation of the school hall and 20<sup>th</sup> century water tower in 2012, viewed from the south-east (scale 2m).

The western gable of the main range is of stone rubble, of one and a half storeys to the gable apex, with no openings, rendered in white painted lime mortar, with the upper  $\frac{3}{4}$  painted white and the lower  $\frac{1}{4}$  black. The roof is of composite slates, with terracotta ridge tiles and blue painted timber barge boards. The western elevation of R10 is of one storey, under a steeply-pitched composite slate roof, with terracotta ridge tiles and blue painted timber fascia boards and black plastic guttering. The elevation is of stone rubble, rendered with a thick layer of smooth lime, painted black and white as seen on other elevations. There are two boarded window openings: a larger rectangular opening with sloping terracotta tile and concrete sill, and a small round-headed arched window, also with a terracotta tile and concrete sill. The latter sits within a former doorway blocked with brick. To the south the wall of the school hall (R14) steps forward; where the line of the R14 wall begins to step out the stonework appears disturbed, with a clear build-line to the south for a rebuild in concrete block. The (concealed) east wall of R14 also steps out from the line of the R10/R11 wall, and the relationship between R14 and R10/R11 is far from clear. The phasing (discussed below) assumes R10/R11 was built first, and when R14 was built the gable wall of R10/R11 was dismantled. However, it is equally possible that R14 was built first, followed by R10/R11 to link it to the rest of White Rock Cottage. Alternatively, the disturbed stonework might respect an earlier structure that pre-dated R14 (or, if the reverse is true, R10/R11). The evidence is entirely equivocal.

The western elevation of the main school hall (R14) is of one storey, with a high roof under a pitched composite slate roof with terracotta ridge tiles, plastic grey guttering and white painted timber fascia boards. The elevation is of concrete block, rendered and painted white. There are two large boarded centralised window openings.



Figure 12: East wall of R1 in 2015, showing the thin timber lacing (top) and the blocked fireplaces and disturbed flue stonework; viewed from the west (scale 2m).

### 3.3 GENERAL INTERIOR DESCRIPTION

(Numbering as phased plan (Figure 16); for detailed interior description see Appendix 2)

The main range is one room wide, containing four rooms (R2, R3, R4 and R6), divided into two semi-detached cottages (R2 and R3, and R4 and R5). The easternmost room (R2) has a higher floor level, with steps down to the level of the other three. There are two axial stacks, one for each cottage, and two of the four main rooms would have been heated by the fireplaces in these disproportionately large stacks. There are two small single rooms (R7) and (R9), with a small lobby between them (R8), in a single projecting gabled outshut attached to the north elevation. The doorways between R3 and R8, and between R8 and the exterior, have round-headed arches. The windows in the four main rooms face south, with a forced doorway in the north wall of R4 leading onto the northern outshut. There is a central transecting wall between R3 and R4 with no direct access between.

At the eastern end of the main range is a single heated room (R1), with an eastern gable-end chimney stack. This abuts the main range structure, and the structural and cartographic evidence indicates this part of the structure formerly extended further to the east. R1 is connected to the northern outshut by a brick passage extension (R22) accessed through a doorway in the north wall. The western half of the northern outshut has a 19<sup>th</sup> century extension to its northern elevation, containing two small rooms (R12 and R13). To the south, and abutting the centre of the main range, is a large square heated extension with an eastern chimney stack; this is now divided into two rooms (R10 and R11). To the south of this is a large open room (R14), formerly the main school hall, with a further extension built in brick to the east side, containing modern toilets and stores (R15 - R21).





Figure 13: The south wall of R2 in 2015, showing the blocked round-headed arched doorway with forced window; viewed from the north (scale 2m).



Figure 14: The external door to R9 in 2015, with blocked window splay to the left; viewed from the east (scale 2m).





Figure 15: The stack in R3 in 2015, showing the blocked fireplace with segmental arch, the rebuilt upper stack with dressed stonework, and the forced doorway to the left; viewed from the west (scale 2m).



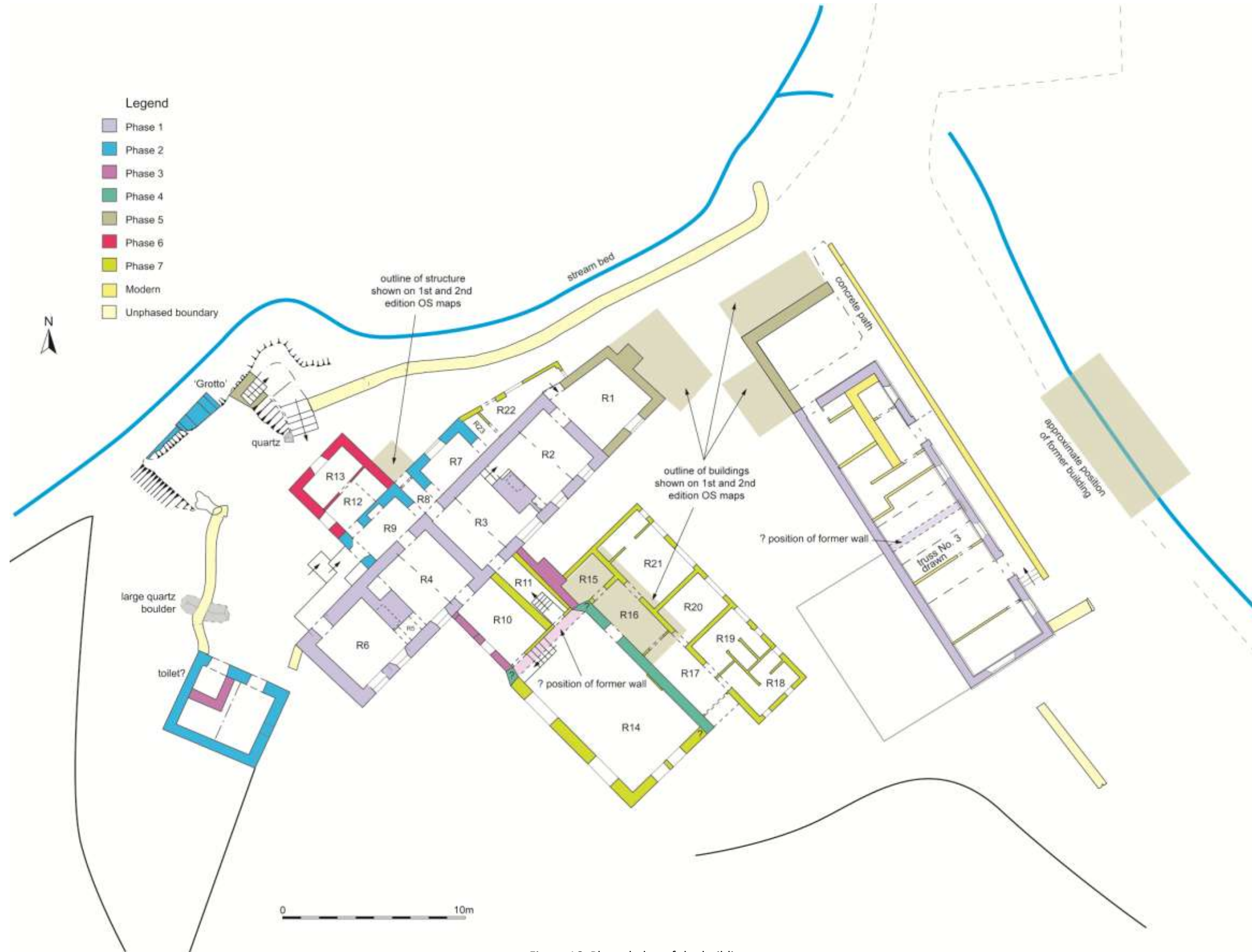


Figure 16: Phased plan of the buildings.

### 3.4 PHASING DISCUSSION

(See Figure 16)

It should be made clear from the outset that White Rock Cottage is a complex multi-phase structure constructed and modified over a relatively short period of time, and which had reached its maximum extent before we have good cartographic sources. The basic structure and relative phasing of the Cottage can be established with some certainty. However, absolute dating and, in particular, attempts to phase elements for which no physical relationships exist (i.e. between the cottage and the grotto, or the stable) must remain, to some degree, speculative.

#### 3.4.1 PHASE ONE – 1833 ESTATE INVENTORY, EARLY 1820S CONSTRUCTION DATE?

Two narrow semi-detached cottages of stone rubble construction under a slate roof, one room wide and of a single storey, possibly with axial stacks providing heating to one room of each cottage. These cottages form the core of the extant building, forming a main range of four rooms (R2-R6). These were accessed by doors in the south wall of R3 and R4, and probably doorways with round-headed arches in R2 and R6. None of the contemporary window openings survive: all but one (in R2) has been widened and raised.

The similarity of its footprint to that of the toilet block would suggest they were contemporary, and these structures were estate cottages, workshops or both. It is possible the axial chimneys in White Rock Cottage were inserted later, or that it originally comprised four separate single rooms. The 1833 estate record lists gardening tools and a gardener's tool house, and this might suggest it was a cottage for the gardener or possibly the estate surveyor.

##### *Evidence*

The walls of the northern outshut (R7-R9), R1 and R10/R11 abut this core structure. The door between R4 and R9 is forced through. The round-headed doorways in R2 and R3 appear original.

#### 3.4.2 PHASE TWO – LATER 1820S?

The outshut (R7-R9) to the north/rear of R3 and R4 was constructed, and the outbuilding to the west and grotto built. These elements are all characterised by architectural flourishes, most notably their round-headed arches. The arched doorway into R8 beneath the apex of the gable would constitute a strong visual composition, as would the arched doorway of R6 in relation to the arched opening in the outbuilding when viewed from across the stream to the north. It is likely this can be associated with the development of John Knight's garden in the Ashcombe valley.

The grotto, built into the banks of the stream, was probably accessed from the stream, if at all.

##### *Evidence*

The walls of the northern outshut (R7-R9) abut the Phase One structure. The round-headed arch between R3 and R8 appears forced through in R3, but this may simply reflect a later inset door frame. On the basis this represents one element in a programme of designed elaboration, the outbuilding and grotto also belong to this phase, but there is no corroborating evidence.

#### 3.4.3 PHASE THREE – 1840S

Both cottages were used as a Dame School, described in the documentary sources as being in the kitchen of one cottage, and the sitting room of the other. If we assume these rooms were adjacent, logically the sitting room could only be the large heated room (R10 and R11) added on the south side

of the main range. This room could have been added for the benefit of the shepherd John Knight refers to in 1840. The exterior walls of this room are lined with studwork with lathe and plaster, indicating some gentrification, perhaps for the benefit of a subsequent and more genteel resident: William Howchin the butler. The only other room to feature studwork with lathe and plaster to external walls is R6, which also features a vaulted ceiling, moulded plaster work and a mid 19<sup>th</sup> century cast-iron fireplace, all secondary to the original build. This again points to a resident of more elevated social status.

#### *Evidence*

The walls of R10/R11 abut the south elevation of the Phase One cottage; the western wall is lined with studwork with lathe and plaster. The documentary evidence indicates the school room was completed by 1857. The only other room with lathe and plaster over studwork is R6, which also features a moulded plaster ceiling; this indicator of status could be associated with the butler or the arrival of the school teacher. However, as noted above, the physical evidence is equivocal: it could equally be the case that R14 was constructed first, and R10/R11 was then built to link it to the Cottage.

#### 3.4.4 PHASE FOUR – COMPLETED 1857

A large school hall (R14) was built to the south of R10/R11, creating a long southern wing; this was constructed in rubble slate stone, under a slate roof, rendered to the exterior. As the school grew and expanded more space and better facilities may have been required. The line of R14 steps out from R10/R11 on both sides; it is unclear what significance this holds. Note that the 1888 map shows an apparent extension to R14 on its eastern site. This may be integral to the build or belong to a later phase.

An estate document records a date of October 1857 for the completion of the school room (R14) and in the 1861 census a school mistress by the name Annie Cullen and her husband, John Cullen, are recorded as living at White Rock, John being a civil engineer. Also recorded as living at White Rock was John Steer (agricultural labourer) with his family, who remained until 1892; this confirms the dual occupancy of the main range.

It seems likely that the outbuilding to the north-west was modified at this time, with an internal stone rubble partition created for a probable toilet. A second door (a former window?) was forced through the eastern wall adjacent to the first to provide access to the rest of the structure.

#### *Evidence*

The south gable wall of R10/R11 is missing, the room opens directly onto R14 and the walls of the two structures meet at odd angles. The level of the floor in R14 is c.0.8m below that of R10/R11. R14 is shown on the 1888 OS map. However, as noted above, the physical evidence is equivocal: it could equally be the case that R14 was constructed first, and R10/R11 was then built to link it to the Cottage.

#### 3.4.5 PHASE FIVE – BEFORE 1888

Built up against the east wall of R2 was a small stone structure with a slate roof. This originally extended further to the east, but has been reduced to a single cell and a stack built up against its east wall. This was probably another cottage with sleeping loft over, as there is a small window high in the gable adjacent to the gable-end chimney stack. The addition of this somewhat ramshackle structure to the original and structured design might suggest a utilitarian function, and can perhaps be associated with the additional room on the northern end of the toilet block, and changes to the

grotto. The Census for 1891 lists a third resident at White Rock Cottage – Fred Wayham – and perhaps this extension housed his family. Alternatively, the historic OS maps appear to show part of R3 belonged to the school, perhaps as a corridor linking R10/R11 to R8. The loss of space in R3 – the main heated room of eastern cottage – may have led to the construction of R1, and a new fireplace forced into the back of the stack in R2.

The grotto was modified to create a cold store (see Figure 17); new access to the store was created, with a flight of steps leading to a doorway forced through the east wall of the original chamber. The northern alcove was blocked and a wall was built to vault-height across the original opening. Stone rubble piers were built in both chambers for benches/shelves. Alternatively, this modification could have occurred a little later (1890s) when John Blackmore the gamekeeper was in residence at the cottage. Equally, as the stream seems to shift course after 1902 (see Figure 5) the side of the grotto may have collapsed into the stream at some later date.

#### *Evidence*

The walls of R1 abut those of R2. The ramshackle character of R1 would suggest a more functional use, and one less concerned with appearance. The extension is shown on the 1888 OS map, but as part of White Rock Cottage; Fred Wayham's house might be the lost structure immediately to the east of R1. On the basis R1 represents a utilitarian rather picturesque phase, then by extension the grotto could have been converted during this or subsequent phases.

#### 3.4.6 PHASE SIX – AFTER 1860, BEFORE 1888

The westernmost of the two cottages in the main range received a small extension to its northern service building (R9), creating two further small service rooms (R12 and R13). This extension was originally accessed by a door (now blocked) in the eastern wall, and the style of the extension is unusual with a full-height windowless wall to the eastern side, blocking any view into the new rooms from the adjoining cottage. It was subsequently modified to be accessed from R9, perhaps indicating a shift from non-domestic to domestic use; alternatively, it may have been accessed from the posited corridor built through R3 and shown on the historic OS maps. Several structures that no longer survive are shown on the 1888 map to the east of R1, and may be contemporary with this phase.

#### *Evidence*

The walls of R12/R13 abut those of the Phase Two outshut. The walls are of very poor quality, being comprised of poorly-sorted and roughly-coursed stone rubble, very dissimilar to the stonework of the other structures. The extension is shown on the 1888 OS map.

#### 3.4.7 PHASE SEVEN – 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY 1950S/1960S?

A large, brick-built, flat-roofed extension (R15-21) was built to the west of the school hall containing stores, toilets and an access corridor, with locker/coat-hook space. The south and west walls of R14 would also have been rebuilt in concrete block during this period. The school was closed in 1970 and the style of brickwork suggests a mid 20<sup>th</sup> century date for the structure. The small brick access corridor built to the north of the buildings (R22 and R23) was probably built at this time as it is very similar in style. This would suggest that the entire complex of buildings at White Rock was given over to school use at this point.

#### *Evidence*

The character of the building – engineering brick with flat roofs – indicates a late date, as does the rebuild in concrete block.

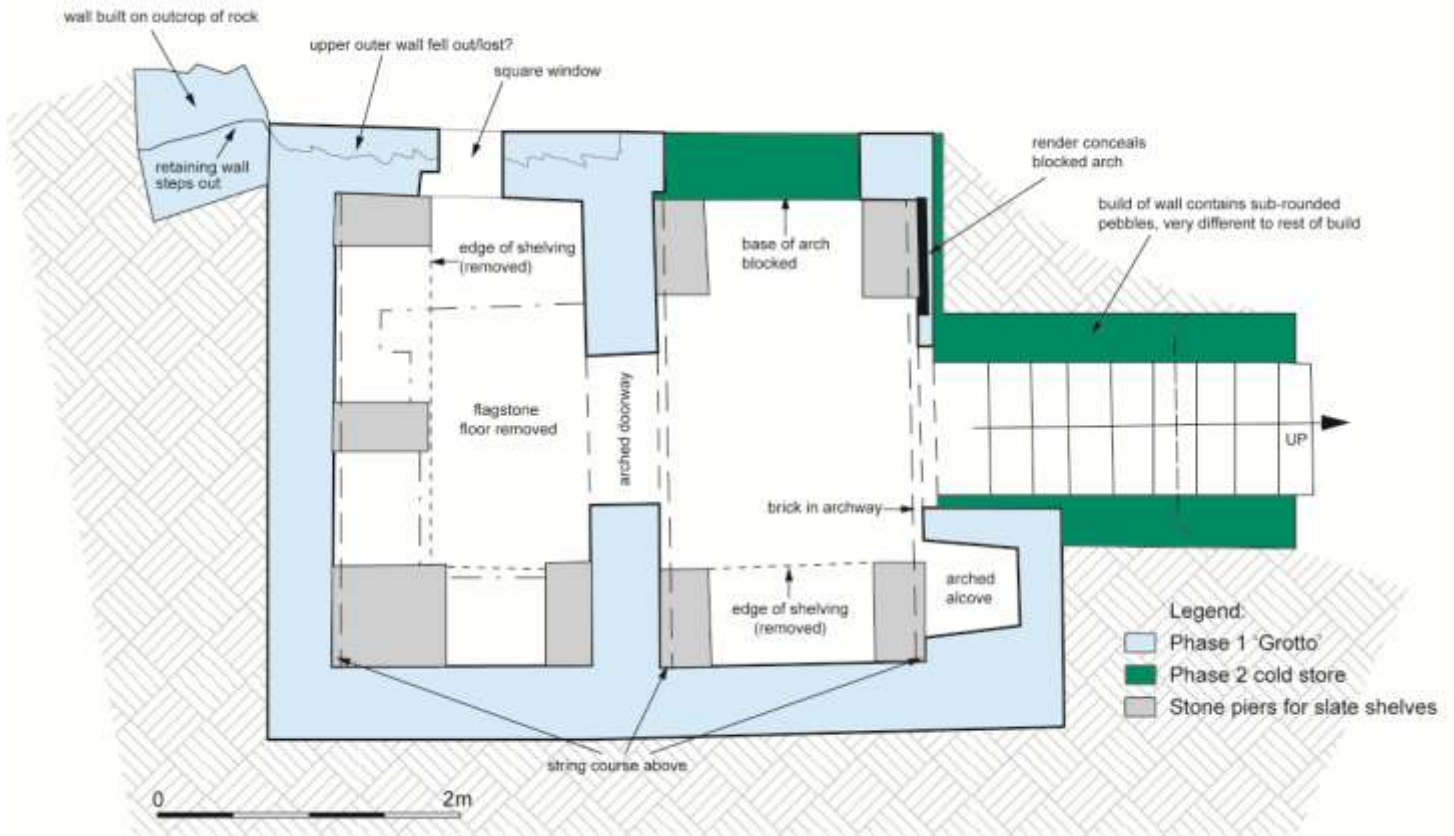


Figure 17: Phased plan of the former grotto.

### 3.5 THE TOILET BLOCK

Adjacent to the school and to the east, but seemingly unconnected (see Figure 16), this structure may have been converted from a former stable block. However, it is superficially similar enough to White Rock Cottage to suggest it might have been domestic in origin. The building is mostly constructed of stone rubble but with the inclusion of dressed stone, possibly originally meant for a more prestigious building. The building also sits on a projecting clay-bonded plinth, which may be associated with an earlier structure on the same footprint (see Figures 18-19). It is therefore unclear as to whether this building replaced an earlier structure, possibly with a different function, on the same spot. Stables are mentioned in the estate inventory in 1833, but their location is not disclosed; a second documentary reference from 1899 mentions stables at this location (see Figure 6).

The west-facing elevation contains no openings or structural details. The gable elevations are also very simple: the north-facing elevation contains a single door, forced through, for the male toilets, and the south-facing elevation contains a single window at eaves height. The east-facing elevation, in contrast, contains six openings: two doors and four windows, arranged symmetrically, all with stone lintels. The stonework around the two doorways projects slightly, and incorporates large iron hinges and catches. The windows have dressed hard purple sandstone sills, but have the appearance of being forced through or otherwise modified. They contain modern timber two-light windows. Sawn or dressed stone is used sporadically around the doorways and in an unbroken single line below the eaves. In the centre of the elevation is a vertical stack of dressed stones within the build of the wall, perhaps marking the position of an internal partition. Abutting the northern gable are the ruined walls of an open-fronted extension.





Figure 18: The east-facing elevation of the toilet block in 2012; from the north.

North-East facing elevation - toilet block

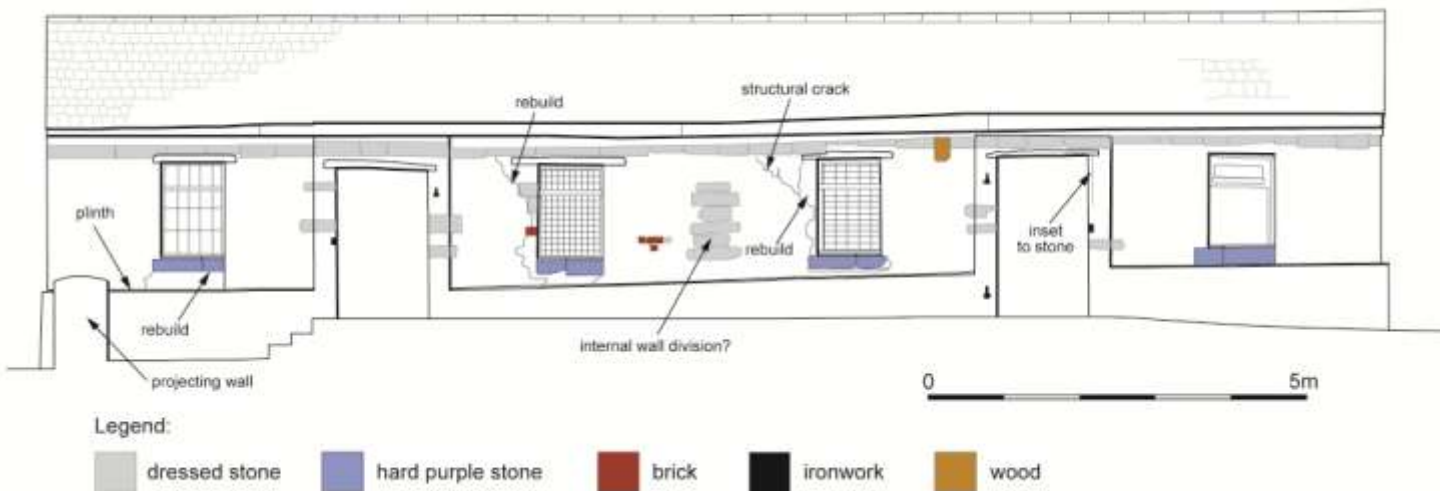


Figure 19: The east-facing elevation of the toilet block.

The 19<sup>th</sup> century roof structure is unusual in a number of ways. It has an asymmetric profile, with a shorter pitch to the west, and the supporting timber structures are complex and very well constructed. The offset A-frames have heavy tie beams and queen posts, with struts bracing the central straining beam between the two. Each pair of principal rafters is jointed and bolted at the apex and with bolts and bolted metal ties securing each element. The insubstantial ridge pole is supported on a slight timber crudely nailed to the face of the jointed apex of each truss, possibly suggesting that formerly the ridge pole was set into the apex of the trusses. There were four roof trusses visible at the time of the survey within the southern portion of the building, the west face of the third truss (from the south) was measured and drawn (see Appendix 3).



The northern half of the building was converted into toilets in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, and the southern half was used as a research and study centre. The original purpose of the structure is difficult to determine, particularly as the plinth implies at least two phases. The documentary research would indicate that this could be the stables mentioned in the Inventory of 1833. The use of dressed stone and the very clear 'presentation elevation' imply a building with more than a simple utilitarian function, and this might very well accord with stables at a stud farm (mentioned 1853). However, several details point to a heightened desire for security. The heavy iron hinges and catches, and the fact that apart from the four windows in the east-facing elevation – three with the appearance of being forced through or altered – there are very few original openings, might suggest that the building was modified for use as a stable and that it originally served as a secure lockup, perhaps associated with the quarries nearby.

### 3.6 THE OUTBUILDING

South-west of the main building is a small two-storey single-cell outbuilding. Built of stone rubble with a pitched slate roof, this structure is fairly plain, with two round-headed doorways in the east elevation, and a small round-headed window in the south elevation. The interior was originally accessed by a door in the east wall, with a window to the south; when a wall was built internally (to create a privy?) the window was forced through as a door. In the west elevation at its southern end, there is a suggestion that the south wall of the outbuilding was built abutting an existing low wall, and there is a platform adjoining to the south, shown as a flowerbed in historic photographs.



Figure 20: The south and west elevations of the outbuilding in 2015, with the former flowerbed in the foreground (scale 2m).



Figure 21: The east elevation of the outbuilding in 2015, viewed from the east (scale 2m).

## 4.0 CONCLUSIONS & SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BUILDING

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### 4.1 DISCUSSION

When John Knight bought the Crown Allotment and Simonsbath House in 1819 he rapidly set about creating a country estate in the late Georgian fashion, and in the 1820s work began on a new mansion within landscaped grounds. White Rock Cottage appears to have originated as a long narrow building comprising two semi-detached cottages, variously extended and elaborated over time and as the need arose. The documentary sources appear to indicate it was constructed in the 1820s to accommodate the head gardener. The adjoining garden was in early use as a nursery. It is also possible there was accommodation for shepherds.

The cottage was then (quite quickly?) modified to serve as a functioning part of the picturesque landscape John Knight was creating around his house at Simonsbath, to be viewed from his gardens along Ashcombe. This phase probably saw the creation of the gabled northern outshut, the outbuilding and the grotto.

During the 1840s a large heated room was added on the southern side, perhaps for the shepherd mentioned in 1840, and the cottage slightly gentrified for Knight's butler, William Howchin, resident in 1851. The adjoining White Rock Cottage was occupied from about 1860 until the early 1890s by the Steer family. John Steer was a smallholder.

In 1856/7 a school room was built next to White Rock Cottage, the school mistress being accommodated in one of the two cottages, now known as School House. In 1901 White Rock Cottage was occupied by a gamekeeper and in 1911 by a woodman. The School closed in 1970 and subsequently became a Somerset County Council Field Studies Centre. The whole complex was bought by Exmoor National Park in 2013.

Adjacent to White Rock Cottage is an underground structure, possibly used for meat, game or for dairy products. It seems probable this structure was converted to this function from a small ornamental or 'picturesque' grotto, part of a designed landscape surrounding the new Simonsbath mansion. The store was apparently accessed from Simonsbath House via the ground west of the stream, quite possibly by means of a bridge which is no longer extant. Also adjacent to White Rock Cottage is an outbuilding ('tool shed') that may date from the 1820s and apparently housing equipment for the early development of the gardens. To the east of White Rock Cottage is the toilet block, possibly domestic in origin, or perhaps stables placed here so as to be convenient to the Knights' stud on the site of the parish church. The present structure has probably been (partly?) rebuilt. The large quarry to the west of the Ashcombe Stream was active in the 1820s and may have supplied stone for John Knight's mansion project.

It is clear that the buildings at White Rock Cottage have a relatively short but complex and multi-phase history of development.

### 4.2 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BUILDINGS

White Rock Cottage is highly significant, both to the history of Exmoor and that of Simonsbath itself. Under normal circumstances, a range of much-altered 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings would be of no great interest. In this instance the wider significance of the place is threefold:

Firstly, it would appear the original cottages were adapted into a *cottage orné*, together with what seems to have been a grotto, to form one element within a wider picturesque landscape surrounding John Knight's nascent mansion at Simonsbath. John Knight was the son of an ironworks magnate from Worcestershire, with close relatives – the Knights of Downton Castle, Herefordshire – who were intimately involved in the Picturesque Movement. What John Knight had intended for Simonsbath remains largely unknown, as no plans or correspondence relating to the site appear to have survived. However, the close similarities between the landscape of Simonsbath and Downton Castle strongly imply John Knight had a grand scheme in mind. In the absence of documentary or cartographic evidence it is the landscape of Simonsbath itself that must provide the necessary clues, and White Rock Cottage plays an important role in that search. Indeed, before this survey took place it was widely understood that John Knight's mansion was demolished c.1900, when in fact parts of the structure survive behind Simonsbath House. This clearly demonstrates the value of fieldwork in understanding the development of historic settlements.

Secondly, Simonsbath was to be an estate centre housing the necessary staff to administer his Exmoor lands, along with its new roads, farms, and mineral prospection activities. As well as the school teacher, White Rock Cottage successively housed a shepherd, a land surveyor, the butler, gardeners and later a gamekeeper. These men helped to build and maintain the Knight's estate, and simultaneously performed a role within Simonsbath as expected adjuncts of a successful and profitable estate.

Thirdly, White Rock Cottage was later converted into a school for the growing settlement at Simonsbath, along with the church, 'refreshment house' and post office. As such it played an important role in the social development of the community, and, as the school only closed in 1970, it still has links with local residents.

In summary, White Rock Cottage has played an unusually important role in the development of Simonsbath, and forms an integral part of both the modern settlement and the landscape aspirations of John Knight. Structurally, White Rock Cottage reflects the changing priorities of John and Frederic Knight in microcosm, and, as such, is of wider interest. However, while it might represent the structural development of Simonsbath in microcosm, the lack of cartographic and photographic sources make dating the early development of the structure difficult, and thus it must be seen in terms of its wider structural context.

#### 4.3 FURTHER WORK

This necessarily-preliminary programme of building recording has highlighted how much remains to be understood about John Knight and his plans for Simonsbath. The discovery of part of the Knight's 'demolished' mansion behind Simonsbath House, and the apparent parallels with Downton Castle and, to a lesser degree, Lea Castle (Wolverley), make Simonsbath ripe for further inquiry on both a historic building and landscape level.

Subsequent consolidation work at the Cottage should be subject to monitoring and recording, as further historic elements are likely to be revealed.

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## Appendix 1:

# PROJECT DESIGN FOR DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT AND HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING AT WHITE ROCK COTTAGE, SIMONSBATH, SOMERSET.

**Location:** White Rock Cottage  
**Parish:** Simonsbath  
**District:** Exmoor National Park  
**County:** Somerset  
**NGR:** SS77343939  
**Date:** 24<sup>th</sup> May 2012

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This document forms a Project Design which has been produced by South West Archaeology (SWARCH) at the request of Rob Wilson North of Exmoor National Park Authority (ENPA) (the Client), and sets out the methodology for desk-based research and historic building recording and for related off site analysis and reporting. The Project Design and the schedule of work it proposes has been devised in consultation with ENPA.

### 2.0 AIMS

2.1 The principal objectives of the work will be:

2.1.1 To undertake desk-based research to place the building in its historical and archaeological context.

2.1.2 To make a record of the historic building prior to any future conversion or building works and investigate and record any historic building fabric or architectural detail that may be obscured, removed or otherwise affected by any development;

2.1.3 To analyse and report on the results of the project as appropriate.

### 3.0 METHOD

3.1 Health and Safety requirements will be observed at all times by any archaeological staff working on site, particularly when working with machinery. As a minimum: high-visibility jackets, safety helmets and protective footwear will be worn.

3.1.1 Appropriate PPE will be employed at all times.

3.1.2 The site archaeologist will undertake any site safety induction course provided by the Client.

3.2 The desk-based assessment:

A desk-based assessment of the site will be undertaken to place the development area into its historic and archaeological context. This work will consist of map regression based on the Ordnance Survey maps and the Tithe map(s) and Apportionments. An examination will also be made of records and aerial photographs held by the ENPA HER. In addition, it will involve the examination of other *known* relevant cartographic, documentary and photographic sources held by the Devon Record Office, West Country Studies Library, the County Historic Environment Service and the North Devon Record Office.

3.3 Historic building recording:

An examination will be made of the building in order to produce an illustrated, scaled, phased plan and exterior elevations (as appropriate) of the extant building and identify the original and later elements of the building, as well as any fixtures, fitting or features of special architectural interest. Existing architect's plans will be utilised for the production of the phase plan provided they are of appropriate accuracy and scale. A detailed written description of the existing building will be made, discussing the setting, construction and development of the building and identifying any features of historic interest.

3.4 SWARCH will agree monitoring arrangements with ENPA and give two weeks notice, unless a shorter period is agreed, of commencement of the fieldwork. Details will be agreed of any monitoring points where decisions on options within the programme are to be made.

### 4.0 ARCHIVE AND REPORT

4.1 An ordered and integrated site archive will be prepared in accordance with *The Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage, 1991 2nd edition) upon completion of the entire project, in a format to be agreed with the ENPA. This will include relevant correspondence together with field drawings, and environmental, artefactual and photographic records.

4.2 An illustrated summary report will be produced within three months of completion of the fieldwork of fieldwork, and submitted to the ENPA. One hard copy and one PDF copy of the report will be provided to the ENPA on the understanding that the hard copy will be deposited for public reference in the HER.

The report will include the following elements:

4.2.1 A report number;

4.2.2 A copy of this Project Design;

4.2.3 A summary of the project's background;

4.2.4 Description and illustration of the site location;

4.2.5 The methodology of the works undertaken;

4.2.6 Plans and reports of all documentary and other research undertaken;

4.2.7 A description of the project's results;

4.2.8 An interpretation of the results in the appropriate context;



- 4.2.9 A site location plan at an appropriate scale on an Ordnance Survey, or equivalent, base-map;  
 4.2.10 Plans, elevations and images to illustrate the historic building appraisal;  
 4.2.11 Site matrices where appropriate;  
 4.2.12 Photographs showing the general site layout and exposed significant historic building fabric referred to in the text. All photographs will contain appropriate scales, the size of which will be noted in the illustration's caption;  
 4.2.13 A consideration of the evidence within its wider context;  
 4.2.14 Specialist assessment or analysis reports were undertaken;
- 4.3 ENPA will receive the report within three months of completion of fieldwork, dependant on the provision of specialist reports, radiocarbon dating results etc, the production of which may exceed this period. If a substantial delay is anticipated then an interim report will be produced. The report will be supplied to the ENPA on the understanding that one of these copies will be deposited for public reference in the HER. In addition to the three hard copies of the report, copies will be provided to the ENPA in digital format on the understanding that it may in future be made available to researchers via a web-based version of the HER.
- 5.0 CONFLICT WITH OTHER CONDITIONS AND STATUTORY PROTECTED SPECIES (BATS)**
- 5.1 It is SWARCH's responsibility - in consultation with the ENPA - to ensure that the undertaking of the required archaeological works does not conflict with any other conditions that have been imposed upon the consent granted and should also consider any biodiversity issues as covered by the NERC Act 2006. In particular, such conflicts may arise where archaeological investigations/excavations have the potential to have an impact upon protected species and/or natural habitats e.g. SSSI's, Habitat Regulations (The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) (Amendment) Regulations 2007), National Nature Reserves, Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, Ramsar sites, County Wildlife Sites etc.
- 6.0 PERSONNEL**
- 6.1 The project will be managed by Colin Humphreys; the building survey will be carried out by suitably qualified SWARCH personnel. Relevant staff of the ENPA will be consulted as appropriate. Where necessary appropriate specialist advice will be sought, (see list of consultant specialists in Appendix 1 below).

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## Appendix 2: Detailed Interior Descriptions (refer to drawings in Appendix 3)

### Room 1 - Small heated room of unknown function, probably domestic

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#### *Ceiling:*

- Modern plaster.

#### *Walls:*

- All with modern plaster with a plain skirting board, over stone rubble bonded with lime-rich clay. Gable-end stack is not tied into the stonework and is clearly an addition. East wall is complex with multiple openings and blockings, and abuts south wall, indicating this is a reduction/rebuild. There is a single timber in this wall, just below ceiling height, that crosses above the fireplaces, presumably timber lacing that predates the fireplaces. This section of wall, to the right of the fireplace, appears different in character to the other walls and may be a later insertion or blocking related to the building shown on the historic OS maps immediately to the east. Walls abut those of R2.

#### *Floor:*

- Solid with a vinyl covering.

#### *Openings:*

- Forced doorway in north wall giving access to rear lobby, R22. Both the doorframe and door are modern.
- Forced doorway in west wall opens inwards and gives access to R2 with late 19<sup>th</sup> century moulded doorframe and modern door.
- Forced window in south wall: modern, with 2 casements and central mullion and modern sill. The opening is splayed on the west side only.
- Blocked doorway in south wall, east of the window.

#### *Other:*

- Blocked fireplace with crude stone segmental arch over an iron bar lintel (similar to the fireplace in R3); fireplace blocked in brick, with a smaller inset fireplace, which has also been blocked in brick. Stonework above is very disturbed, but there is a vertical join above the right-hand edge of the larger blocked fireplace.
- A second, narrow fireplace to the left of the main blocked fireplace, with blocked very crudely in small stone, with brick and stone (including a large stone set on edge) used in the build of the flue wall. The flue rises diagonally from left to right, crossing the disturbed stonework above the primary fireplace.

### Room 2 - Small room of unknown function, not originally heated, probably domestic

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#### *Ceiling:*

- Modern plasterboard, rises in shallow vault to respect collars of roof trusses, the feet of which project into the room to the north and south. This ceiling is an insertion, as the plastered walls rise to the apex. Significant change in ceiling height from R1.

#### *Walls:*

- Plastered, with wood chip wall-paper with plain 6 inch skirting board, over stone rubble bonded with lime-rich clay.

#### *Floor:*

- Suspended timber with a vinyl covering.

#### *Openings:*

- Forced doorway in east wall, to R1. Late 19<sup>th</sup> century moulded doorframe survives but door is modern.
- Forced doorway in west wall, to R3, of modern construction, with brick and cement rebuild to chimney stack.
- Blocked doorway to south of the chimney stack, blocked in brick, now a cupboard with an early 19<sup>th</sup> century ledged and beaded plank door.
- There are two windows in the south wall, both with timber plank sills.
- Window 1, to the west, is a composite; it has an upper six pane hopper casement, with narrow moulded late 19<sup>th</sup> century glazing bars and below is a casement of two-lights of three panes each with chunky moulded glazing bars and moulded central mullion. It has been forced into a round-headed doorway, blocked in brick to the west, and in stone below.
- Window 2, to the east, is also a composite. With modern upper and lower opening casements set in a thick chamfered transom window frame. The higher casement, of awning form, hinged at the top, is of six panes, the lower is of nine panes. This opening may be of original width, but has been raised to create a taller opening (original height c.1m).

#### *Other:*

- Chimney stack on west wall, fireplace with beaded surround and moulded mantle-shelf (M1-M3). Fireplace has been forced into the back of the stack, rebuilt in stone rubble. Original opening has been reduced in size and spanned by a flat iron bar. An old timber surround, of early/mid 19<sup>th</sup> century date, has been reused to serve the new box-hearth, with a modern brick and iron grate firebox, forming a hob-grate style fireplace.

### Room 3 - Central large, formerly heated room, of unknown function, probably domestic

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#### *Ceiling:*

- Plasterboard, presumably replace lathe and plaster, which has collapsed to the north side. To the north and south the ceiling rises in a shallow vault to respect the collars of the roof trusses the feet of which project into the room. The wall between R3 and R4 is plastered and painted up to the apex, indicating the ceiling is secondary.

#### *Walls:*

- Plastered and wall-papered, with black vinyl skirting boards. Originally plastered with a cob mix and whitewashed. Stone rubble bonded with lime-rich clay.

*Floor:*

- Solid.

*Openings:*

- Doorway to west of south wall, giving access to R11. This has been narrowed with concrete and brick to take a modern door.
- Forced doorway in west wall, to R2, modern, with brick rebuilt to the edge of the stack.
- Blocked doorway to south of chimney stack, blocked in brick.
- Doorway to R8 in north wall. Mid/late 19<sup>th</sup> century door, of four panels, opening inwards, with a semi-circular beaded frame, formerly glazed. With a thumb latch and surface mounted lock, with cast-iron butt hinges. a fine segmental arch, over the fanlight above the moulded door frame. The door frame is set back into the wall thickness, and may have disturbed the stonework as a result.
- Window in south wall, four light opening casement, set in thick chamfered composite window frame with transom and central mullion. The upper and lower casements to the east open; to the west they are fixed. Upper casements of six panes and lower of nine panes, styles of mouldings differ between lights. The left-hand reveal is of modern brick, the right-hand reveal appear partly authentic. Timber lintel with rebuilt stonework in grey cement above.
- A small truncated blocked opening at chest height to the right of the large window.

*Other:*

- Chimney stack on east wall with blocked fireplace. The upper portion of the stack appears to have been repaired or rebuilt using dressed stones similar to those seen in the stable block. The lime mortar used has a noticeably-different yellowish hue.
- The fireplace in the stack has a blue-brown brick segmental arch, with cut brick keystone. This is over an iron lintel. The fireplace has then been blocked with two phases of modern brickwork, the hearth initially being reduced in size before being blocked, then plastered over (similar construction to fireplace in R3).
- Large area forced into the south side of the stack, rebuilt in modern brickwork, forming a hollow area or chamber. No access for smoke or from fire. Purpose/function unclear.

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**Room 4** - A large, heated room of unknown function.

*Ceilings:*

- Lathe and plaster ceiling rises in a rounded vault of irregular barrel style, to respect enclosed roof trusses, the feet of which project into the room to north and south. The truss has dropped due to the failure of the simple collar.

*Walls:*

- Plastered; the south wall is plank boarded to dado height, with black vinyl skirting to all walls. Stone rubble bonded with lime-rich clay.

*Floors:*

- Suspended timber floor, in poor condition.

*Openings:*

- Forced doorway in north wall, opening inwards to R9. Plain frame, with metal number "nine" above, door (off hinges) is planked and ledged with a thumb latch and strap hinges.
- Doorway in south wall, formerly the exterior door, opening into R10. Door, of four panels, slight raised field to plain panels, beaded to south side (M5). Iron surface mounted lock and modern handle.
- Doorway in west wall, to R5. 19<sup>th</sup> century moulded architrave and four panel door, with moulded beaded panels to both sides, with iron thumb latch and decorative moulded iron coat hook and metal number "five" above, large surface-mounted wooden lock to rear side. The opening has been widened, with a very crude lathe and plaster infill between the large timber lintel and door frame, and rebuild/repair and timber tie to the stack.
- Window to south wall, a six over six hornless sash, with narrow moulded glazing bars and beaded frame, in shallow splayed opening, with wide planked sill. Lower sash has been removed from sash box. The window opening appears to have been widened on the right-hand side, and raised to accommodate the sash window (original height c.1.08m)

*Other:*

- Blocked fireplace to the centre of the west wall, with inset metal air vent. Fireplace has been reduced in size, partly blocked with brick then recut for a boiler flue, for a later heating appliance.
- Large, double height cupboard to west wall. Moulded architrave with full height four panel ogee moulded door, with small cupboard above with beaded two panel door (M6). Wooden beehive knob to upper door, metal catch to lower door.

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**Room 5** - Enclosed short section of access corridor, connecting R4 and R6.

*Ceiling:*

- Lime plaster over lathe and plaster.

*Walls:*

- Lime plastered, with beaded skirting boards.

*Floor:*

- Suspended timber.

*Openings:*

- Doorway to the east wall, to R4 (described with that room) and doorway to west to R6. Doorway to west is a beaded moulded 19<sup>th</sup> century doorframe (M8), without a door.

**Room 6** - Large heated room, possibly of raised status, with surviving architectural details.

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*Ceiling:*

- Lathe and plaster, rising in a steep box-vault, with a beaded moulded cornice to the top of the wall (M9) and to the apex of the vault (M10) and a central beaded ceiling rose (M11).

*Walls:*

- Lathe and plaster, with beaded skirting (M9). The walls of this room have been lined, with original cob-plastered and whitewashed walls set back c.100mm.

*Floor:*

- Suspended timber planks

*Openings:*

- Doorway in north wall, leading to exterior, opening is beaded and respected by skirting but door frame and door are both of modern fire safety construction. This doorway lies within a blocked round-headed doorway, a trace of which survives externally on the western side.
- Doorway in the east wall as described with R5.
- Blocked round-headed doorway in the south wall to the west side, leaving an alcove on the exterior.
- Window in the south wall, to the east, a 'six over six' sash; with narrow moulded glazing bars and beaded frame, in a wide splayed opening with a timber plank sill.

*Other:*

- Fireplace with cast iron arched mid-Victorian fire grate in the east wall with a plain timber surround with corbelled brackets to a mantle-shelf. If this is like R2, this may be inserted into the back of the stack.

**Room 7** - Single-roomed northern outshot, part of a gabled extension, containing two showers, connecting R8 and R23.

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*Ceiling:*

- Modern inserted plasterboard, above this there is an earlier lathe and plaster ceiling within the roof void, indicating the room was open to the roof.

*Walls:*

- The south wall is lime plastered to gable height, with whitewash, indicating it was open to the roof. The north, east, and west are of modern plaster. All of stone rubble bonded with lime-rich clay. Walls abut those of R3.

*Floor:*

- Solid floor, with modern tile covering.

*Openings:*

- Doorway in west wall to R8, door of modern fire safety construction, frame of moulded beaded 19<sup>th</sup> century architraves (M4)
- Doorway in east wall to R23. This has been forced through a blocked window. Moulded modern door frame, no door survives.
- Forced window in the north wall, of modern date, two-light, with inset air vent/fan; opening is splayed to only one side.

*Other:*

- Two modern shower cubicles to the east and west end of the north wall.

**Room 8** - Lobby area, connecting R7, R9 and R3; access to roof void.

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*Ceiling:*

- Modern plaster, with access hatch to roof void. Gable wall plastered to apex, but the back of the lathe and plaster ceiling of R7 would be visible from this space, indicating a first-floor store room?

*Walls:*

- The south (formerly exterior) wall is lime plastered to gable height; the north, east and west are all of modern plaster. Stone rubble bonded with lime-rich clay.

*Floor:*

- Solid.

*Openings:*

- Doorway to the exterior in the north wall with semi-circular fanlight above of three lights with thick moulded glazing bars and beaded moulded frame; iron security bars have been fixed to the exterior of the fan light. Planked and framed door, with large plain panel below and upper narrow glazed panel, of three panes, with thick moulded glazing bars; plain beaded door frame. The door frame is set back into the wall thickness.
- Opposing doorways to the east and west walls, both with moulded beaded 19<sup>th</sup> century architraves (M4) and modern fire doors, leading to R7 and R9.
- Doorway in south wall leads back into (and is described with) R3.

*Other:*

- There is a modern water tank suspended above the corridor.

**Room 9** - Single-roomed northern, later heated outshut, to the west, of unknown function, connects R4, R8 and R12.

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*Ceiling:*

- Modern plaster, with raised gable to exterior door to the west.

*Walls:*

- The south is of lime plaster and plastered to gable height the north, east and west are of modern plaster. Walls of all stone rubble bonded with a lime-rich clay, except where noted otherwise.

*Floors:*

- Solid.

*Openings:*

- Forced doorway in north wall, leads to the extension, R12 and R13. Modern door frame, with a re-used ledged and planked 19<sup>th</sup> century door, with thumb latch.
- Doorway in east wall, to R8, described with that room.
- Forced doorway in south wall, to R4, described with that room.
- Doorway in west wall, to exterior, set in a wide splayed opening. This doorway has been forced through a blocked window opening, visible on the south side of the current opening. Raised, pointed gable above door with inset timber formerly glazed frame. Frame to door is modern, plain with modern planked fire door, with modern "Yale" lock.

*Other:*

- Alcove to the north wall, a former fireplace with concrete lintel. The inset flue, in brick, is visible to the west of the alcove. The reverse of the fireplace (visible in R12) is rebuilt in brick. Location of copper?

**Room 10** - Large narrow room, created by modern partitions, connecting R4 and R14.

---

*Ceiling:*

- Modern plaster/plasterboard, raised in a vault to respect the collars of the roof trusses, divided to the east by a modern partition wall.

*Walls:*

- The south and east are modern partitions inserted to create the corridor, Room 11, to the east. The north is the plastered former south exterior wall of the main range. The west is lathe and plaster over the exterior wall of the south extension; this wall is also plastered. All with moulded skirting boards partly covered in black vinyl. The north and west walls are of stone rubble bonded with a lime-rich clay.

*Floors:*

- Suspended timber, in very poor condition.

*Openings:*

- Doorway in north wall, to R4, described with that room.
- Doorway in south wall, to R14, both door and frame are plain, of modern date.
- Window in west wall, to north end. Thick modern beaded glazing bars, frame and central mullion set in a wide splayed opening, with thin modern planked sill. The opening is forced or widened, with modern brick rebuild to north.
- Window in the west wall, to south end, set in a small arched opening; with a rounded rough edge to the opening and a thick planked sill. The window is arched, seemingly of composite form, with four lights, two small upper curved lights set with iron security bars and two large lower lights, the northern light fixed, the southern, an opening casement. Two panes to each lower light with very thick glazing bars and simple moulded frames. This is set within a narrow doorway blocked with old brick.

*Other:*

- The east wall has an inset light-well at the top of the wall, running its entire length, of six glazed panels of wire-reinforced security glass.
- The north wall has a small cupboard inset into the former exterior wall, with a wide triple beaded moulded frame with single bead to the opening and a single-panelled stepped ovolo moulded door, with inset lock and small metal knob.

**Room 11** - Access corridor, formed of modern partitions, connecting R3 and R14.

---

*Ceilings:*

- Single pitch slope formed from divided vault to R10.

*Walls:*

- The west and south are modern inserted partitions, the east is boarded with modern plasterboard over woodchip wallpaper. The north is the former exterior wall of the main range. Plain skirting, with some black vinyl covering, several forms of skirting to stairs at south end.

*Floors:*

- Suspended timber, with vinyl covering, level drops to south to staircase, in poor condition.

*Openings:*

- Door in north wall, to R3, described with that room.
- Doorway in south wall, to R14. Plain modern frame, no door.

*Other:*

- Light-well to west wall as described with R10.
- Staircase rising at south end, with five steps, covered in vinyl, as the floor.
- Blocked fireplace visible in the east wall, concealed behind asbestos sheeting and bead-moulded planks.



**Room 12** - Narrow room, accessed via Room 9, of unknown function.

---

*Ceiling:*

- Modern plaster. Slopes from west upwards towards the centre of the room.

*Walls:*

- To the south, former exterior wall of the north outshut is lime plastered. The north, east and west are all of modern plaster. Beaded skirting to south and west. Walls of poorly-sorted and badly-constructed stone rubble. Wall to south as described for R9, with brick rebuild to back of fireplace.

*Floors:*

- Solid, with a vinyl covering.

*Openings:*

- Forced doorway to R9 in the south wall, described with that room.
- Doorway in north wall, to R13. Moulded door frame, with planked and ledged door with thumb latch.
- Blocked doorway in east wall, blocked with brick.
- Window in the west wall, in shallow splayed opening, of two lights, narrow awning casement above a large single pane lower light, set in a modern plain window frame.

*Other:*

- In the east wall is a full height modern cupboard with three shelves.

**Room 13** - Narrow room, accessed via R12, converted into a bathroom.

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*Ceiling:*

- Modern plaster. Single pitch, sloping from the west to the centre of the room.

*Walls:*

- All of modern plaster. Some tiled in places, above the bath etc.

*Floors:*

- Solid, with a vinyl covering.

*Openings:*

- Doorway in south wall, to R12, described with that room.
- Window in north wall of late 19<sup>th</sup> century form, set in a splayed opening, with thick plank sill. Of two lights, both formerly of three panes, two narrow small outer panes and one large central pane. Narrow moulded glazing bars and moulded window frame, glazing bars only survive in the upper sash.

*Other:*

- Modern bath, toilet, and sink unit.

**Room 14** - Large room, formerly the main school hall.

---

*Ceilings:*

- Modern inserted plasterboard, lifted to accommodate the stairs at the northern end.

*Walls:*

- Modern plaster, with plain skirting partly covered in black vinyl. The south, east and west are the former and existing exterior walls. The west and south walls are rebuilt in concrete block; the east wall is of stone rubble with hard cement plaster. The north is the inserted modern partition which forms R10 and R11. The east and west are diagonally boarded at the northern end, to meet this inserted partition. The east is planked and boarded to dado height.

*Floors:*

- Suspended wooden planks with a vinyl covering, in very poor condition.

*Openings:*

- Doorway in the north wall, to the west, to R10, to the east, to R11, both described with respective rooms.
- Doorway in the east wall, to R16. Modern beaded door frame and plain modern door.
- Windows in south wall, two positioned close together to the centre of the elevation. Both windows are metal, of four lights; with two small upper lights, single pane opening casements and long fixed lower lights of three panes.
- Windows in the west wall, both identical; modern timber four light casements, with two large outer opening lights, large fixed central light with small hopper casement above.

*Other:*

- Staircase in north-west corner, with five steps.
- Brick projection in centre of east wall, potentially a blocked fireplace.

**Room 15** - Small unheated, un-fenestrated larder, accessed via R16.

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*Ceilings:*

- Modern plaster.

*Walls:*

- The north, south and east are of exposed white-washed brick. The west is made up of the former exterior wall and projecting chimney stack of the southern extension. Brick shelves have been built up against the lower portion of this wall and it has been partially plastered and white-washed.

*Floors:*

- Concrete.

*Openings:*

- Doorway in the south wall, to Room 16, with a modern door and plain frame.

*Other:*

- Air vent in the north wall.
- Wooden cupboard fixed to the south wall with three shelves. The north wall also has three fitted timber shelves, the bottom of which wraps around to the west.

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**Room 16** - Small lobby area, accessed via R14, giving access to the larder, stores and toilets (R15, R18-R21).

*Ceilings:*

- Modern plaster.

*Walls:*

- The west is plastered and painted, the north and east are of painted, exposed brick. The south is a timber and part glazed partition with a central door.

*Floors:*

- Solid, with modern tiled covering.

*Openings:*

- Doorway in the north wall, to R15, described with that room.
- Doorway in the west wall to R14, described with that room.
- Doorway in the east wall, to R18-R21. Modern door in beaded frame.
- Doorway in south wall, to R17. Modern two panel door, in modern frame, door with lower timber panel and upper glazed panel.

*Other:*

- Fixed timber planks to north, east and west walls fitted with modern coat hooks.

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**Room 17** - Further lobby area, giving access to the toilets and exterior (R18-R21).

*Ceilings:*

- Modern plaster.

*Walls:*

- The west is plastered; the east and south are of white-washed brick. The north is timber and part glazed partition to R16.

*Floors:*

- Solid with modern tiled covering.

*Openings:*

- Doorway in the south wall with a large pair of external doors. Doors are modern, of two panels, with deep moulded lower timber panels and large glazed upper panels, of six panes.
- Doorway in the north wall, to R16, described with that room.
- Doorways in east wall, three in number, all with modern frames and doors, leading to R18, R19 and R20.

*Other:*

- There is a small vent in the west wall, respecting the fireplace in R14.
- There is a fixed wooden cupboard housing electrical units and meters, built into the west wall.

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**Rooms 18, 19, 20 and 21** - Toilets within extension built to the west of the main school hall (accessed via R16 and R17).

*Ceiling:*

- Modern plaster.

*Walls:*

- Whitewashed brick.

*Floors:*

- Solid, with modern tiled coverings.

*Openings:*

- Modern doors in west wall opening back onto R16 and R17.
- Windows in south and east walls all modern, single light, four panes, with upper hopper opening casements.

*Other:*

- Modern sinks, toilet, and urinal fittings.

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**Room 22** - Single storey passage to the shower block; connecting R1 and R23.

*Ceiling:*

- Plasterboard (soft-board), single pitch sloping to north.

*Walls:*

- North, east and west walls of white-washed brick. The south, formerly the exterior wall of the main range, is lime plastered.

*Floor:*

- Solid concrete.

*Openings:*

- Doorway to exterior in north wall, of modern fire safety/fire exit construction. Doorway in south wall at east end, to R1, described with that room.
- Doorway in the west wall, to R23. Modern door in plain modern frame.
- Window in north wall, single large pane, of wire-reinforced security glass.
- Window in east wall, small single pane security window as to north wall.

**Room 23** - Small lobby, housing water tank, formed by partition within Room 22.

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*Ceiling:*

- The plasterboard has collapsed, but is of single pitch, sloping to the north.

*Walls:*

- The north, east and west are all of modern plaster. The south, formerly the exterior wall of the main range is of lime plaster.

*Floor:*

- Solid concrete.

*Openings:*

- Doorway in the east wall to R22, described with that room.
- Doorway in the west wall to R7, described with that room.

*Other:*

- A large water tank is positioned to the north side of the room.

Appendix 3: Annotated Plans and Sections

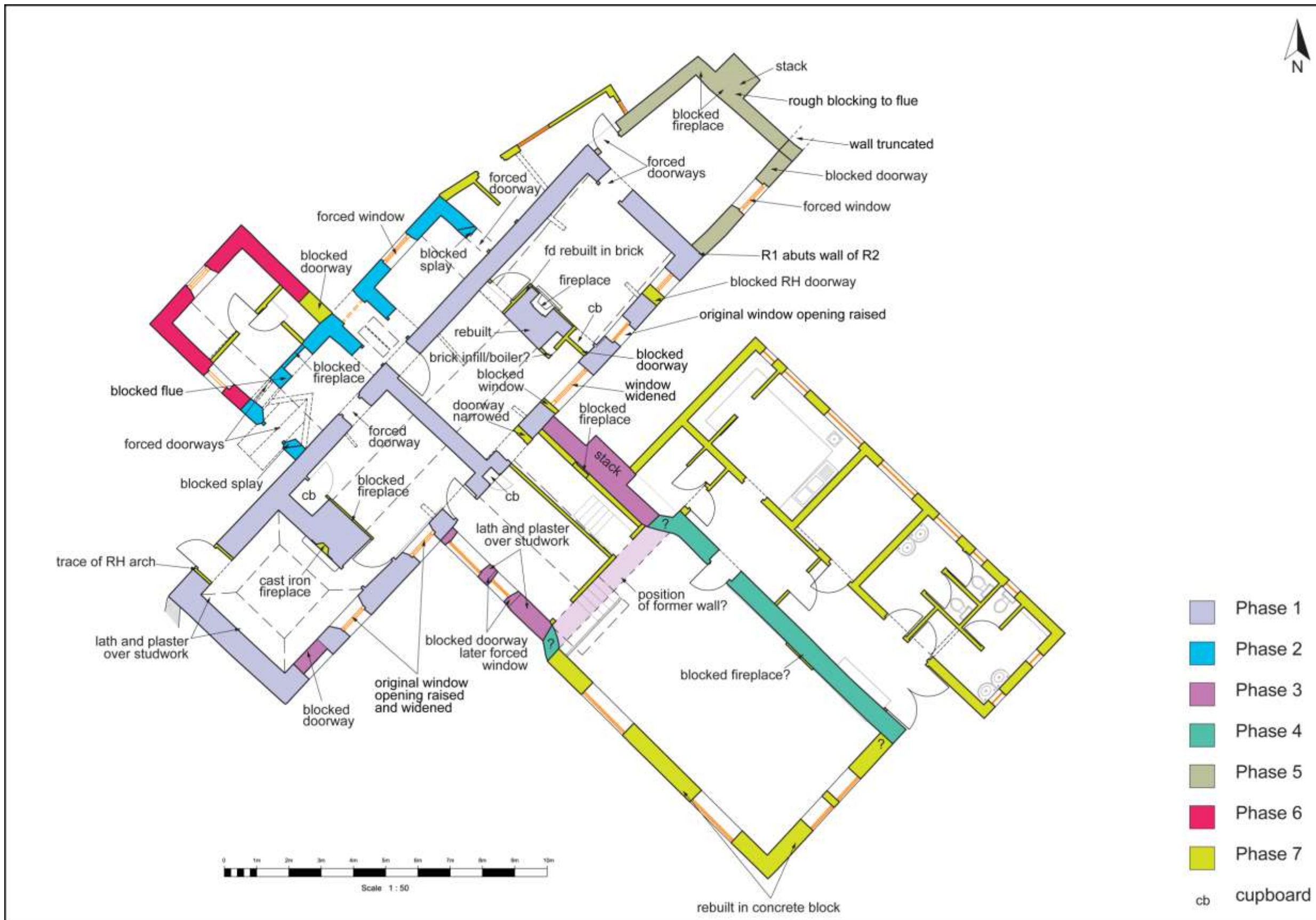


Figure 22: Annotated plan, based on an electronic measured survey (DANDOSurveying Ltd.).



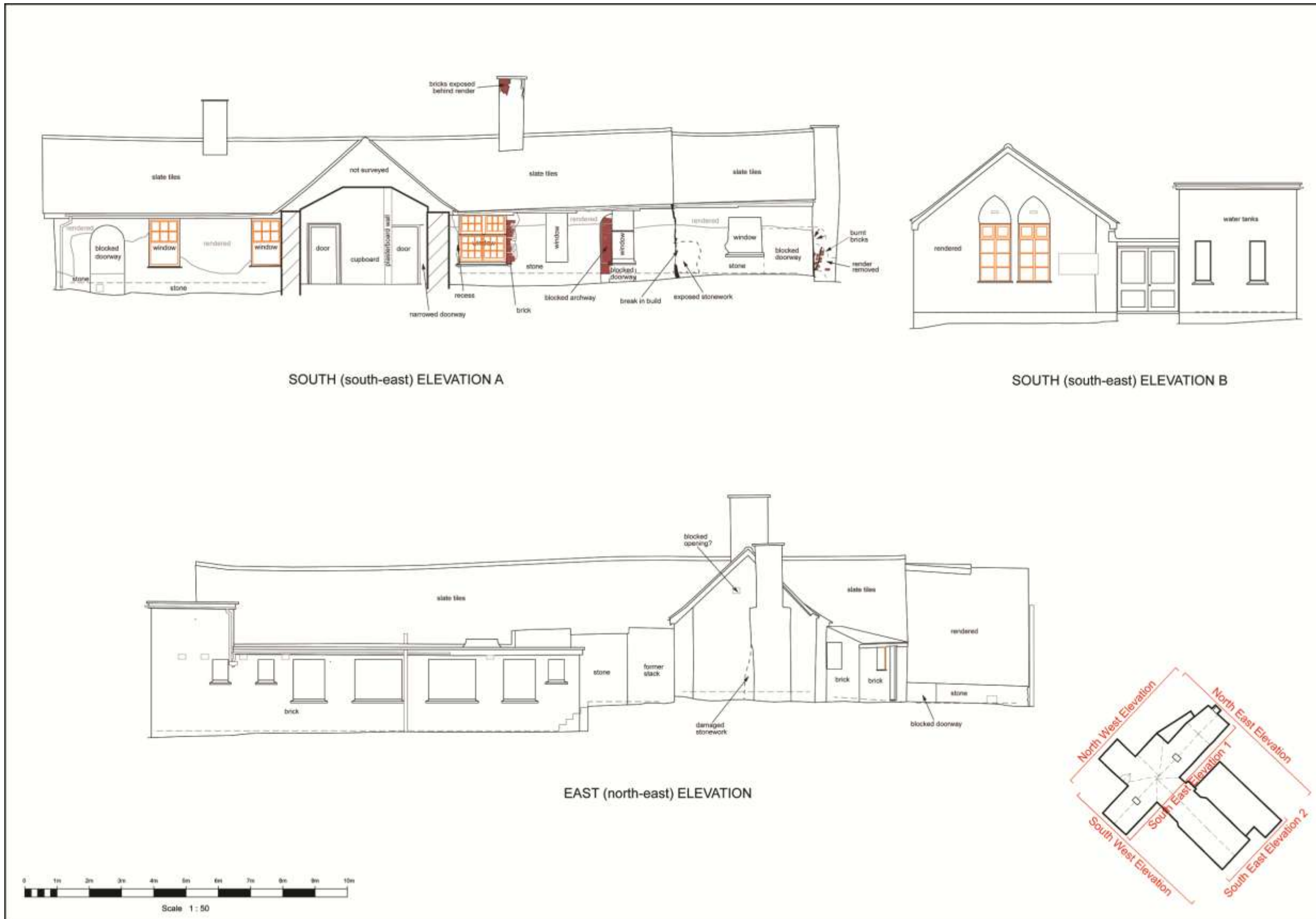


Figure 23: Annotated sections, south and east elevations, based on an electronic measured survey (DANDOSurveying Ltd.).

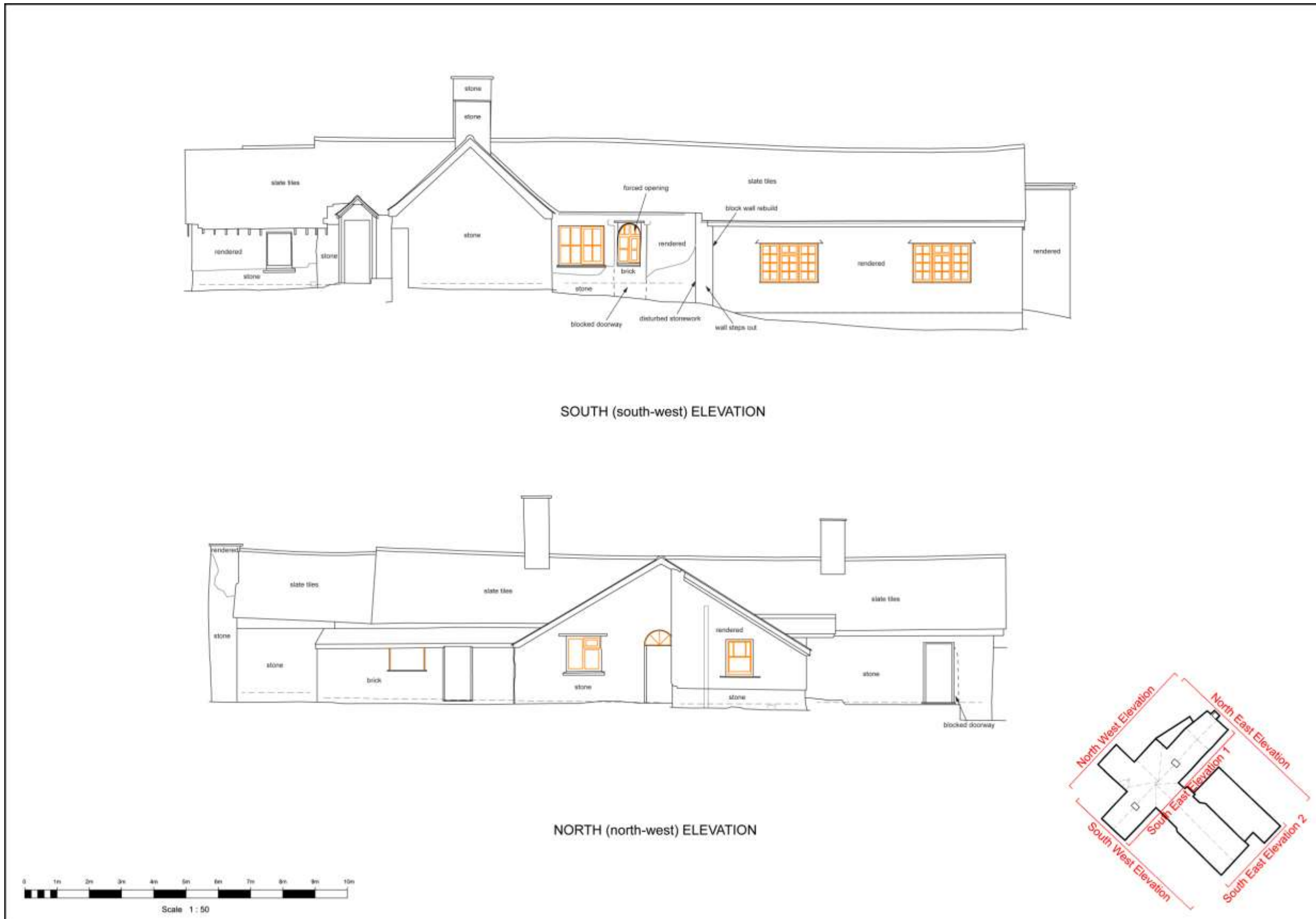


Figure 24: Annotated sections, north and west elevations, based on an electronic measured survey (DANDOSurveying Ltd.).

Appendix 4: Roof Structure in the Toilet Block

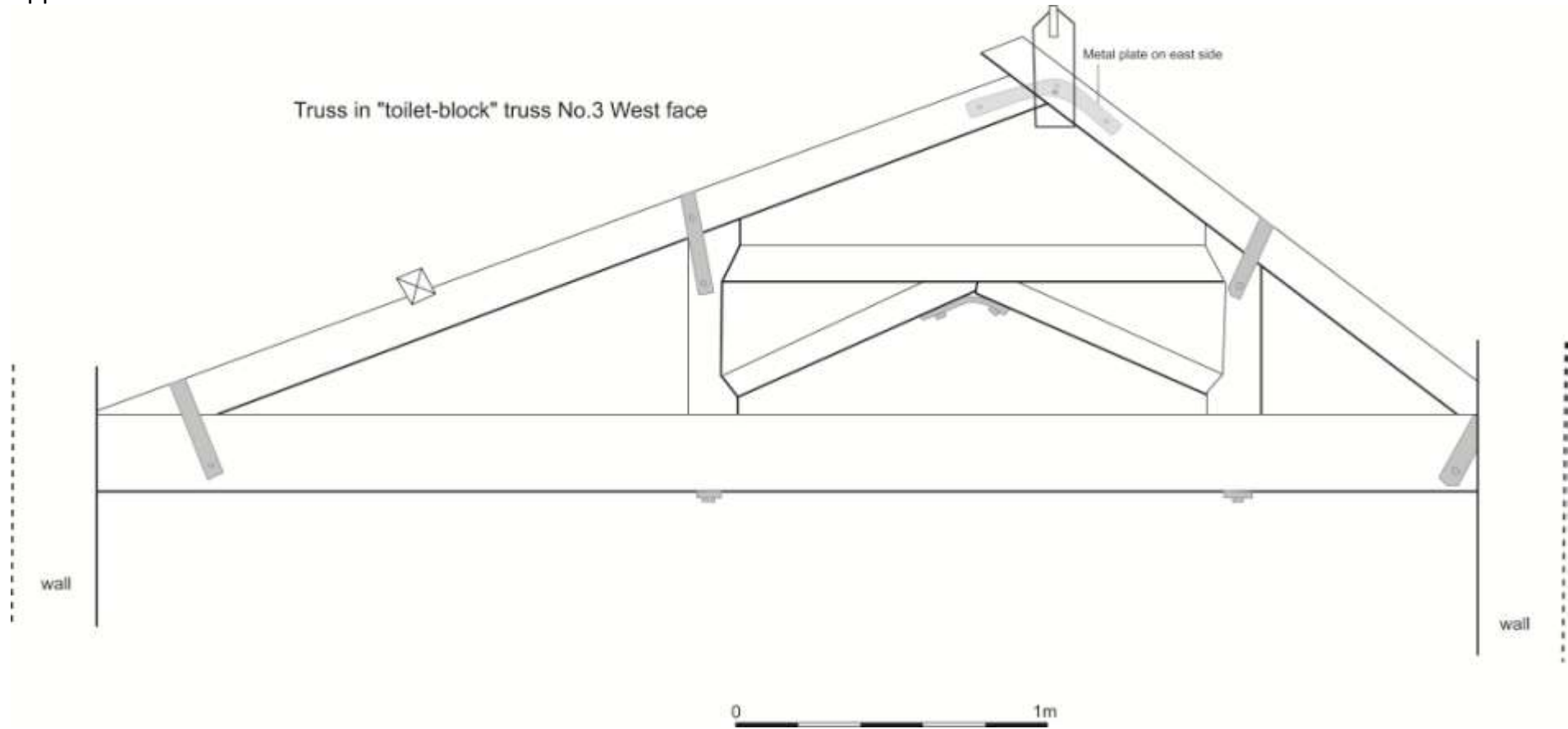


Figure 25: West-facing profile of Truss no.3 in the toilet block.

Appendix 5: Mouldings in the Cottage

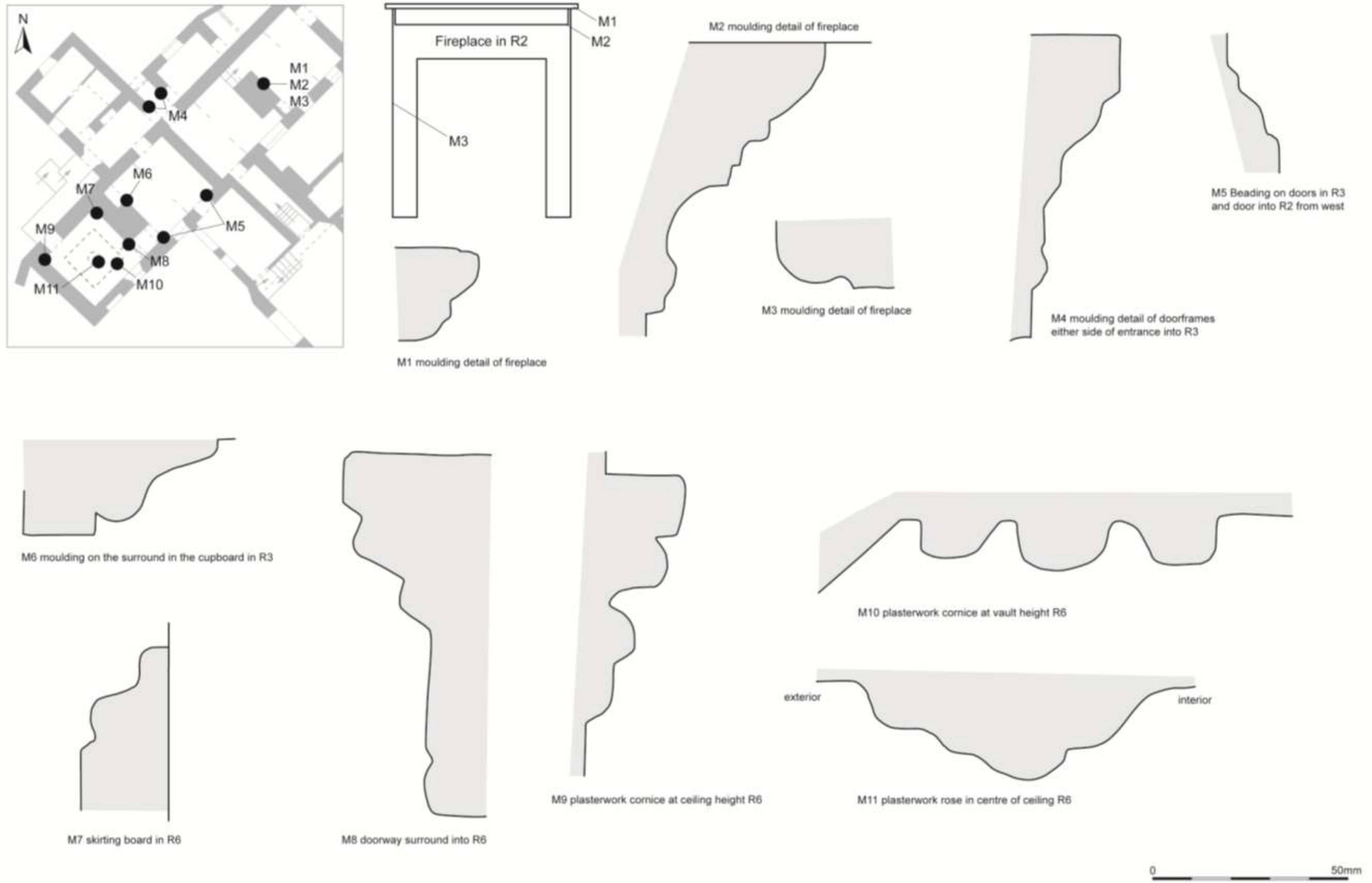


Figure 26: The mouldings from the Cottage (also see Photographs 139-146).





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