

# ASH HOUSE HENSTRIDGE SOMERSET

Historic Building Recording



South West Archaeology Ltd. report no. 190326



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## Ash House, Henstridge, Somerset Historic Building Recording

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By E. Wapshott & N. Boyd

Report Version: **FINAL**

Date: 03.06.19

Work undertaken by SWARCH on behalf of a Private Client

### *SUMMARY*

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*South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) was commissioned by a private client to undertake retrospective recording at the Grade II Listed Ash House, Henstridge, Somerset, that has undergone initial renovation works. This appraisal was undertaken in order to assess the significance of the buildings prior to further work taking place.*

*Ash House forms one half of a short range of cottages, formerly a free-standing cottage that was awkwardly linked to the Old Bakehouse in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The soft strip that has taken place has resulted in the loss of some 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century fabric but has revealed historic features and blocked openings and facilitated the understanding of the structure. The building is Listed as early 19<sup>th</sup> century, but this appraisal has determined that the earliest parts of the structure are 17<sup>th</sup> century in date. The cottage was then comprehensively rebuilt in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, perhaps following a catastrophic event. In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century it was split into two smaller dwellings. In 1839 the whole range was owned by Hugh White; he lived in the Old Bakehouse and it is tempting to suggest Ash House was an investment rental property. In the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century the two halves of the cottage were reunited and a two-storey concrete block extension built to the rear.*

*Further work on the property should be subject to monitoring within a programme of work drawn up in consultation with the Conservation Officer.*

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THE CLIENT

## PROJECT CREDITS

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

**Location:** Ash House  
**Parish:** Henstridge  
**County:** Somerset  
**NGR:** ST 72186 20154  
**SWARCH Ref:** SHAH19

### 1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) was commissioned by a private client to undertake a programme of historic building recording at Ash House, Henstridge, Somerset, a Grade II Listed cottage [Listed structure no. 1056307]. Last renovated in the 1960s, this work was undertaken to assess the significance of the structure prior to renovation and conservation works.

### 1.2 TOPOGRAPHICAL AND GEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The site is located next to the crossroads north of the historic core of Henstridge in the former hamlet of Henstridge Ash, next to the A30. The site is relatively level at an altitude of c.80m AOD. The soils of the area are the slowly-permeable seasonally-waterlogged clayey soils and similar fine loamy over clayey soils of the Denchworth Association (SSEW 1983), overlying the sedimentary limestones of the Cornbrash Formation (BGS 2019).

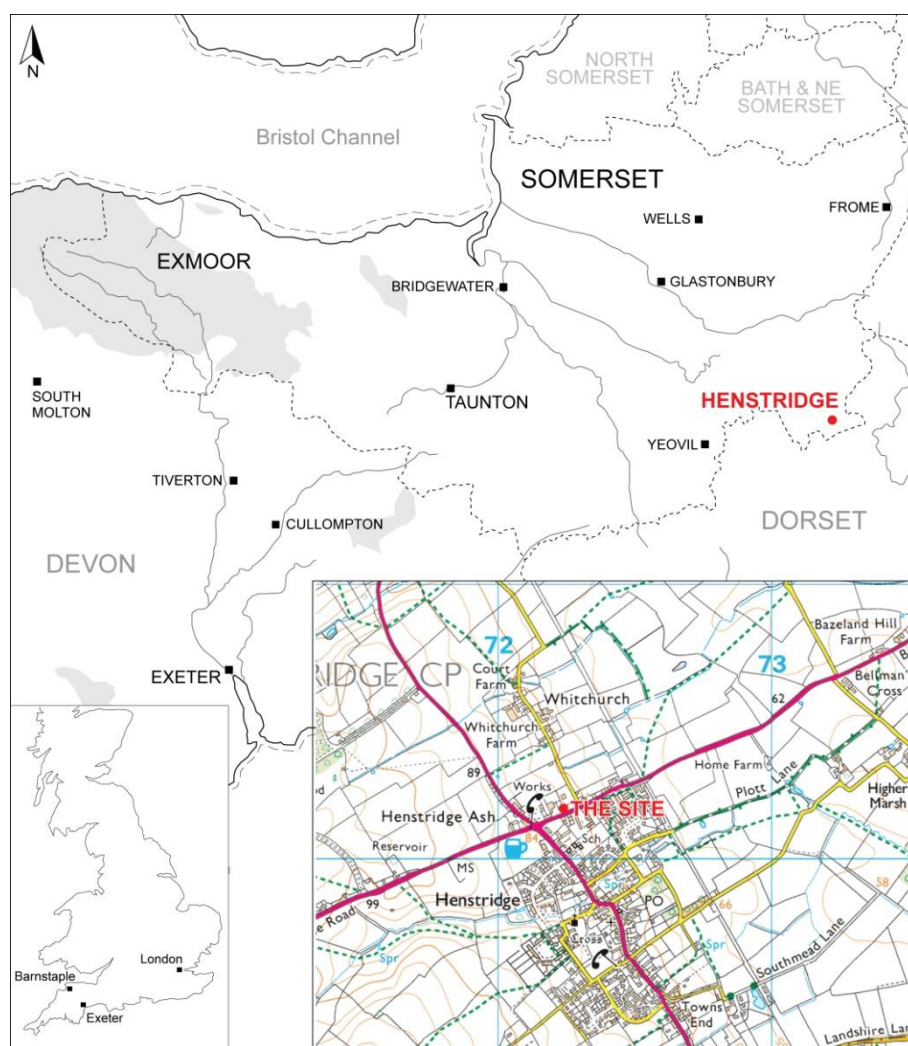


FIGURE 1: LOCATION MAP.

### 1.3 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The hamlet of Henstridge Ash is located in the parish of Henstridge, the south-eastern edge of the Somerset on the border with Dorset. Henstridge was a Royal manor in 1066/86, and several sub-manors developed over the course of the medieval period; it is unclear to which of these manors the areas around Henstridge Ash belonged. The hamlet of Henstridge Ash grew up around a crossroads, away from the old centre of the parish. The east-west road (A30) is first mentioned as *a muddy way* in 1411, as *decayed* in 1647, and as the *Causeway* or *London Road* in 1707; it was turnpiked in 1752-53. The north-south road (A357) was turnpiked in 1824. Not unexpectedly, Henstridge Ash featured an inn, carrier's yard and smithy; the Ash or Virginia, later Virginia Ash Hotel, dates to the middle 18<sup>th</sup> century but was reputedly the inn where Sir Walter Raleigh first smoked in England and was doused with a bucket of water by a helpful local (see Baggs & Siraut 1999, 108-119).

The tithe apportionment that accompanies the tithe map (Figure 2) records the cottages were owned by Hugh White; the western cottage (no.622 The Old Bakery) was owned and occupied by one Hugh White, noted in the 1841 census as a *Yeoman*. The eastern cottage (no.621 Ash House) was itself divided into two properties also owned by Hugh White: leased to John Kenniston (listed in the Census as a *Farmer*) and John Garratt (*Ind. i.e. of independent means*). The order in which they appear in the 1841 Census would suggest the middle cottage was leased by John Garratt, but the end cottage by a John Bulgin (*Labourer*). In an 1842 *rate and assessment* for contributions to the repair of the church, the house, garden and paddock occupied by Hugh White was assessed at £16 whereas the cottages of John Garrett and John Bulgin were assessed at £2 16s 8d and £1 13s 4d respectively; the value differential might imply Hugh White lived elsewhere by this date.

The available historic maps (below) show a simple rectangular range in 1839. The 1888, 1903 and 1928 OS maps (Figures 3-4) show the Old Bakery with a large extension to the rear, with a large structure built in the back garden of Ash House. These maps show Ash House as two dwellings. It is unclear when the structure in the back garden was demolished, but it had been lost by 1980 (not shown) and the concrete-block extension built.

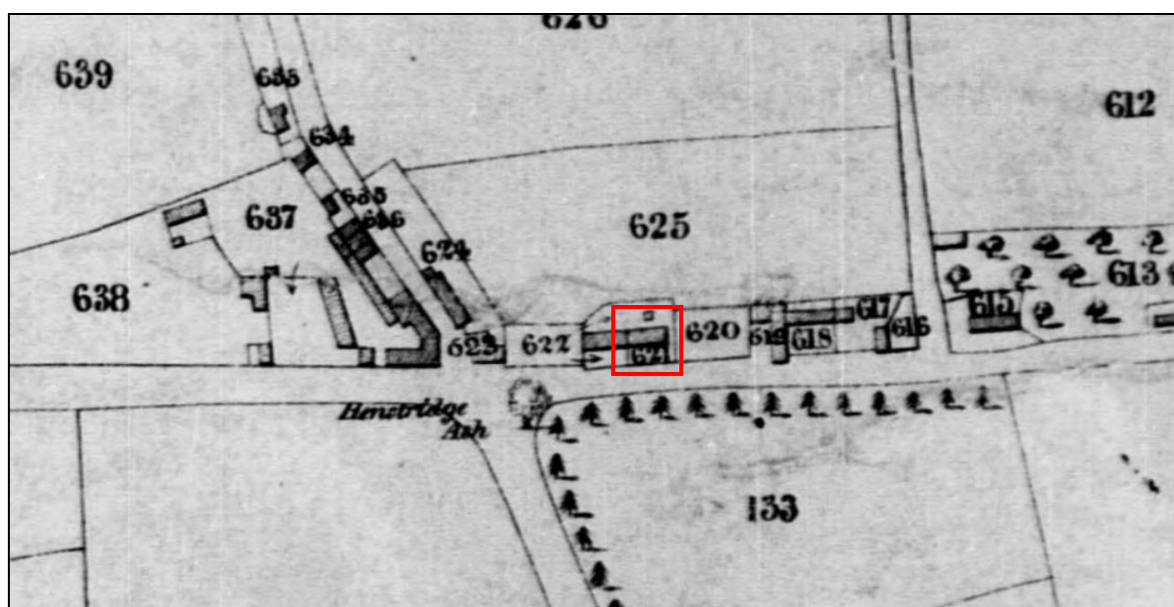


FIGURE 2: EXTRACT FROM THE 1839 HENSTRIDGE TITHE MAP (PRO); THE COTTAGE IS INDICATED.

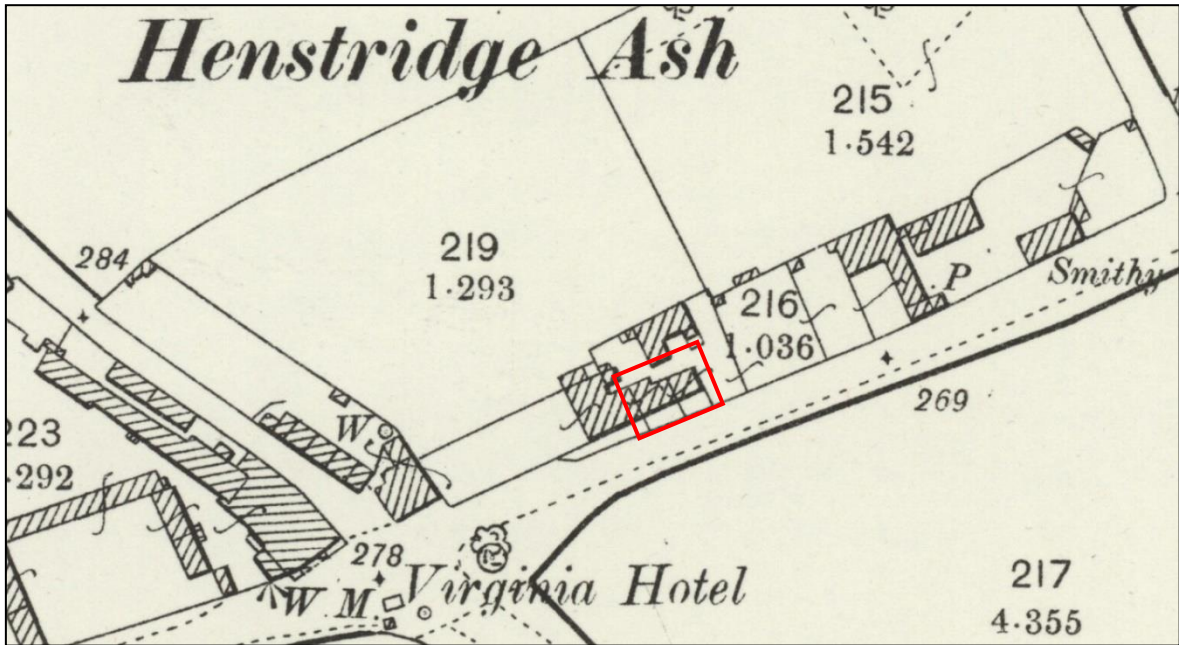


FIGURE 3: EXTRACT FROM THE OS 2<sup>ND</sup> EDITION 25INCH MAP (SOMERSET SHEET LXXXIV.8) SURVEYED 1901 PUBLISHED 1903 (NLS); THE COTTAGE IS INDICATED.

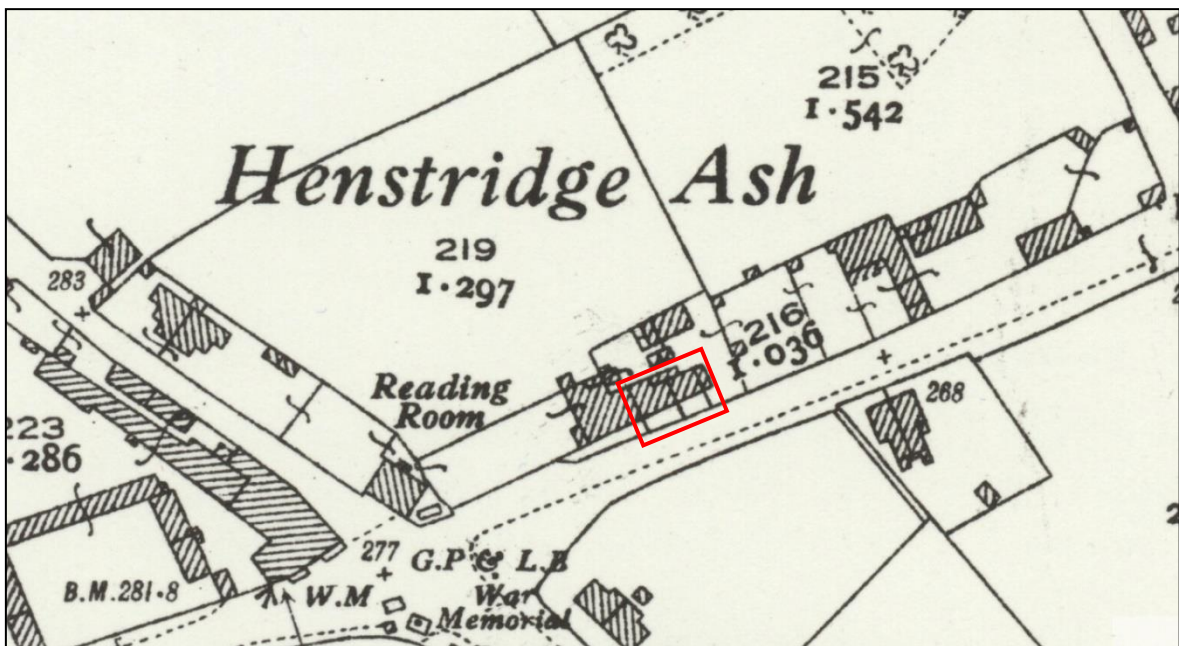


FIGURE 4: EXTRACT FROM THE OS 3<sup>RD</sup> REVISION 25INCH MAP (SOMERSET SHEET LXXXIV.8) SURVEYED 1927 PUBLISHED 1928 (NLS); THE COTTAGE IS INDICATED.



FIGURE 5: PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN C.1951 OF A CAR ACCIDENT AT THE CROSSROADS; THE COTTAGES ARE INDICATED ([HTTP://HENSTRIDGEONLINE.CO.UK/INTERACT.PHP5](http://henstridgeonline.co.uk/interact.php5) C/O BARRY LAZENBURY).

#### 1.4 METHODOLOGY

The building appraisal was conducted by Emily Wapshott in January 2019. The work was undertaken in line with best practice and follows the guidance outlined in: ClfA's *Standard and Guidance for the Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures* (2014) and Historic England's *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Processes* (2016).



## 2.0 HISTORIC BUILDING APPRAISAL

Ash House forms the eastern part of a short row of cottages that faces onto the A30. The row is Listed (*Country Cane Shop and Attached Cottage on East Side*), and the cottage has been owned by one family for many years. Restricted maintenance over the course of several decades left the cottage in need of refurbishment and the property is currently being renovated. The new owners have already undertaken a soft strip (removing plaster and wall finishes) in Rooms 2, 4, 14, 15 and 16; this report is intended to provide a baseline record of the structure prior to further works.



FIGURE 6: THE SOUTH ELEVATION; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH.

### 2.1 SITE DESCRIPTION

The cottages flank the A30, a busy trunk road between Sherborne and Shaftesbury. Ash House is attached to the cottage/former shop to the west (the *Old Bakehouse*). Immediately to the east there is a garage forecourt with a modern low steel portal-framed building set back from the road. Behind (north) of the cottage is a long narrow garden. The garden is bounded by established but poorly-maintained hedges to the east, west and north, supplemented by additional fencing as required. There are a series of modern sheds in the garden and a vegetable patch; the rest is laid down to lawn.

### 2.2 BUILDING DESCRIPTION

#### 2.2.1 EXTERIOR

The row of cottages forms a five-bay range. Ash House constitutes the eastern three bays of that range; the Old Bakehouse accounts for the two western bays. The walls of the two cottages are not on the same alignment, indicating they were built at a different date.

Ash House is a three-bay two-storey dwelling built of local stone rubble under a pitched roof of tile and slate; there are brick axial stacks to the east and west and a large stone lateral stack to the north. The south front of the house is partly enclosed by simple iron railings with raised

gravelled areas flanking the stone flagged front path to the porch. There is a two-storey rear extension of concrete block under a pitched roof of tile, and a small greenhouse sits in the angle between the extension and the main range. To the west end of the north elevation there is also a single-storey brick lean-to.

The south elevation faces onto the A30. It is an awkward composition reflecting the history and development of the house. The stonework of this wall is of neat regularised stone rubble repointed in grey cement. The wall is curving rather than straight and steps back at the western end; the projecting corner features small roughly-dressed quoins. The stonework of the last section, which links the cottage to the Old Bakehouse, is more ragged and less accomplished. There is a blocked doorway in the central bay, still addressed by its path, reflecting the fact the cottage formed two dwellings into the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century.

To the west end there is a large forced opening at ground-floor level set with a pair of 20<sup>th</sup> century timber garage doors. Above, there is an eight-over-eight horned sash window possibly set into a former first-floor loading door. To the east there is a more symmetrical arrangement of windows either side of a central door. All four windows are 19<sup>th</sup> century eight-over-eight horned sash windows with broad beaded sash boxes flush to the external wall. The central doorway contains an early 20<sup>th</sup> century (1920s-30s) 'one-over-three' type panel door with six fixed lights above the three panels, set in a heavy 19<sup>th</sup> century beaded frame. Over the door is a new tiled porch, replacing an earlier one.



FIGURE 7: THE EAST GABLE AND REAR BLOCKWORK EXTENSION; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-EAST.

The east gable of the house is blind, with an internal axial stack with rebuilt brick shaft at the apex. The wall is of well-sorted, tightly-packed and roughly-coursed stone rubble with no clear quoins; this style of stonework is replicated across the north elevation east of the rear extension. This gable wall has been repointed in lime and its eaves patched with cement. The north elevation east of the rear extension features a doorway at ground-floor level with a white PVC window above, both openings feature heavy timber lintels. The door is enclosed by a late 20<sup>th</sup> century glazed porch with mono-pitch roof.



FIGURE 8: THE NORTH ELEVATION OF THE COTTAGE WEST OF THE REAR EXTENSION; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH.

West of the rear extension, the stonework of the north elevation of cottage is heavier and more vernacular stone rubble than that seen elsewhere: the stones are larger and set in a clay bond with clay and lime mortar, now badly repointed in cement. The eaves height is lower here than to the east. The elevation features a tall tapering 17<sup>th</sup> century lateral stack with dressed stone drip moulds/weathering; a hole to inspect/clean the flue has been forced into the base of the stack and the opening patched in brick. At its western end this wall is linked to the Old Bakehouse by a stretch of rendered concrete block with a modern two-light casement window clumsily inserted at first-floor level as a dormer. Otherwise, the elevation is blind save for a doorway with a thin timber lintel at ground level; this is fitted with a 19<sup>th</sup> century frame and partly boarded over, but sits within a larger and partly-blocked opening. The rendered section of this wall is abutted by a single-storey 19<sup>th</sup> century brick extension with a mono-pitch roof of corrugated iron sheets. This extension has a door in the east wall and a narrow fixed four-light window in the north wall.

The two-storey concrete block extension is tall but narrow, with one room on each floor. There are two windows in its east wall, at ground- and first-floor level; the other elevations are blind.

### 2.2.2 INTERIOR

The interior of the cottage on each floor is divided into four principal spaces, some of which are further subdivided by partitions. The layout of the cottage has been elaborated by its conversion from one dwelling to two in the earlier 19<sup>th</sup> century and back to one in the later 20<sup>th</sup> century. The front door opens onto a small entrance hall (Room 1 (R1)). R1 is lit by the glazed panes in the front door, its walls are plastered and painted, and the floor is of quarry tiles. The low ceiling is concealed by lath and plaster. Doors provide access to R2 (left) and R4 (right), with stairs enclosed by a timber beaded plank partition rising to first-floor level in front (R8).

The doorway to R2 is set with a 19<sup>th</sup> century four-panel door in a tall moulded frame. R2 is lit by a sash window in a full-height opening in the south wall and there is a large 17<sup>th</sup> hearth in the north wall. Its heavy bresummer beam is crudely chamfered; the stack is newly repointed in lime. Prior to work starting, the hearth was narrowed in frogless brick to leave a small cupboard to the west

side, with a mid 20<sup>th</sup> century tiled fireplace to the east. Against the west wall is the second stair (R14) behind a very crude and rustic screen of 19<sup>th</sup> century planks attached to a chamfered beam. The wall was covered with asbestos boarding, removed by the Client for safety reasons, revealing the tell-tale marks of lath and plaster which had been removed at some earlier date (Client, *pers. comm.*). The beam is of good quality and probably of late 17<sup>th</sup> or early 18<sup>th</sup> century date, reused here for the stair. The stairs have thin plank and tread risers on post framing, and attached to the wall and timber plank partition, of probable 19<sup>th</sup> century date. To the south of the stair a partition has been removed; this may have framed a lobby for the blocked front door of the middle cottage. The studwork removed consisted of a very crude framework supporting asbestos panelling (Client, *pers. comm.*).

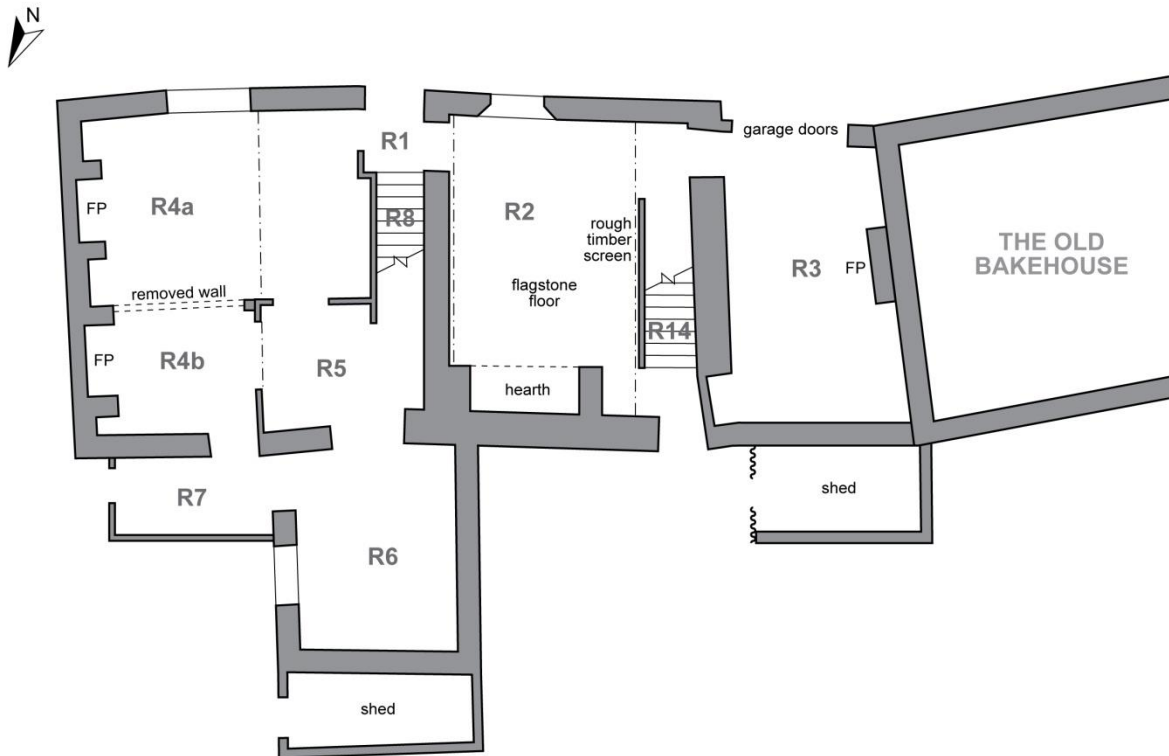


FIGURE 9: GROUND-FLOOR PLAN OF THE COTTAGE.

The room features a very fine flagstone floor of regular, squared slabs; this appears to have been patched and extended along its southern side, indicating it pre-dates a rebuilding of the south wall. The ceiling has been replaced, formerly consisting of a mix of hardboard and plasterboard with polystyrene tiles (Client, *pers. comm.*). The west wall of R2 is c.1m thick and slightly battered; the east wall is thinner and only rises to first-floor level; a rough timber beam with sockets runs along its inner face which would indicate this stone wall replaced an earlier timber partition. The walls are newly plastered and the former narrow beaded skirting boards removed; there is no sign of the blocked doorway in the south wall. Doors from this room provide access to R1 to the east, R3 to the west, and to the stairs (R14) in the north-west corner. The doorway to R3 is forced, set with a 19<sup>th</sup> century door of wide planks with ledges on 20<sup>th</sup> century hinges. The doorway to R14 is set with a 19<sup>th</sup> century four-panel door, but was formerly concealed behind asbestos panels in R2 and hardboard in R14; most of the walls in R3 and R14 were lined with hardboard (Client, *pers. comm.*).



FIGURE 10: THE WEST SIDE OF R2, SHOWING THE RUSTIC SCREEN AND DOORWAY TO R3; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-EAST.

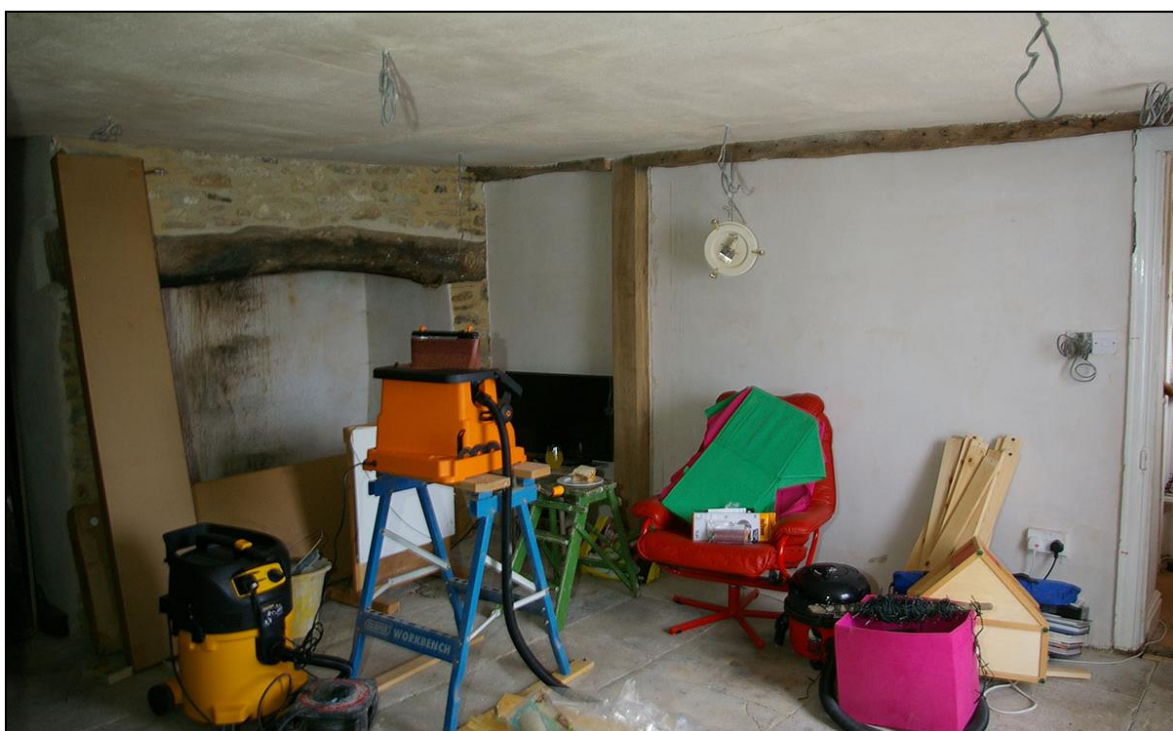


FIGURE 11: THE EAST SIDE OF R2, SHOWING THE 17<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY HEARTH AND FINE FLOOR; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.

R3, a former 20<sup>th</sup> century garage, has lime plastered and painted walls. The wall to the south features a 20<sup>th</sup> century plank boarded garage door and the north wall is of concrete block (presumably a rebuild). A brick stack of c.1800 has been built against the west wall, the gable end of the Old Bakehouse. The fireplace has a segmental arch of bricks supported by an iron plate, later partly infilled with brick with a stone lintel. There is a later boarded cupboard in the north-east corner set within a blocked doorway that opened onto the stairs (R14). The floor is a shiny dark grey cement-based mix patched with hard grey modern cement.



FIGURE 12: THE GARAGE, ROOM 3, SHOWING THE BRICK STACK ADDED AGAINST THE ADJACENT HOUSES' GABLE END WALL; FROM THE SOUTH.

The doorway from R1 into R4 is set with a fine 18<sup>th</sup> century panelled door. R4 is divisible into two parts – R4a and R4b – along the line of a 19<sup>th</sup> century brick partition that has been removed. R4a to the south is lit by the sash window in the south wall set into an opening with splayed reveals. The west wall is of wide beaded planks. It was separated from R4a by a brick partition, with both rooms accessed from R5 via 19<sup>th</sup> century four-panel doors. The ceiling, which has been replaced, is supported by a heavy chamfered beam similar to that in R2; this is now supported by a new oak post. The thin brick partition wall that was removed was largely freestanding; it was not tied into the other walls, had poor foundations, and was structurally unsafe (Client, *pers. comm.*). Where they are visible, the joists are fairly thin and sit within larger sockets. The doorway in the north wall of R4b leads to the rear porch (R7); this doorway has shallow splayed reveals and a heavy timber lintel. The floors of both rooms are of 20<sup>th</sup> century concrete. Against the east wall are two stone stacks, one to each room. Possibly of slightly different date, but both with brick segmental arches supported on iron plates. There was a set of 19<sup>th</sup> century shelves to the north of the stack in R4a. The fireplace in R4a formerly featured an early 20<sup>th</sup> century polished wood surround with inset tiled fireplace to small 20<sup>th</sup> century iron and brass grate with polished Brass smoke hood. The hearth to R4a is lower than that to the north, so it is probable this was a reception room while R4b was a kitchen. The renovation works determined that the hearth in R4b had later been narrowed and reduced in brick, with a second and lower brick segmental arch inserted.

R5 is accessed via the two doors from R4. This small space, now a hallway, links R4 via a large forced opening, to the kitchen (R6). This modern kitchen, lit by a PVC window in the east wall, also sports a doorway into the rear porch (R7). The walls in the hallway are plastered and the lower portion panelled with 20<sup>th</sup> century narrow boards. A low 20<sup>th</sup> century plank door opens onto an understair cupboard; the carriage braced structure of the stairs, with thick cut plank treads and risers also visible, identifies this as an 18<sup>th</sup> century feature.

Access to the first-floor is via stairs R8 and R18. At the top of R8 a small landing (R9) that provides access to most of the bedrooms. The wall to the west is a thick lath and plaster partition, probably of 18<sup>th</sup> century date; this is narrower than the stone wall below leaving a ledge next to the stairs. A tall 19<sup>th</sup> century door has been forced through this wall next to the 17<sup>th</sup> century stack to provide access to R10. Next to this is a small panelled door onto a cupboard set into the side of the lateral stack.

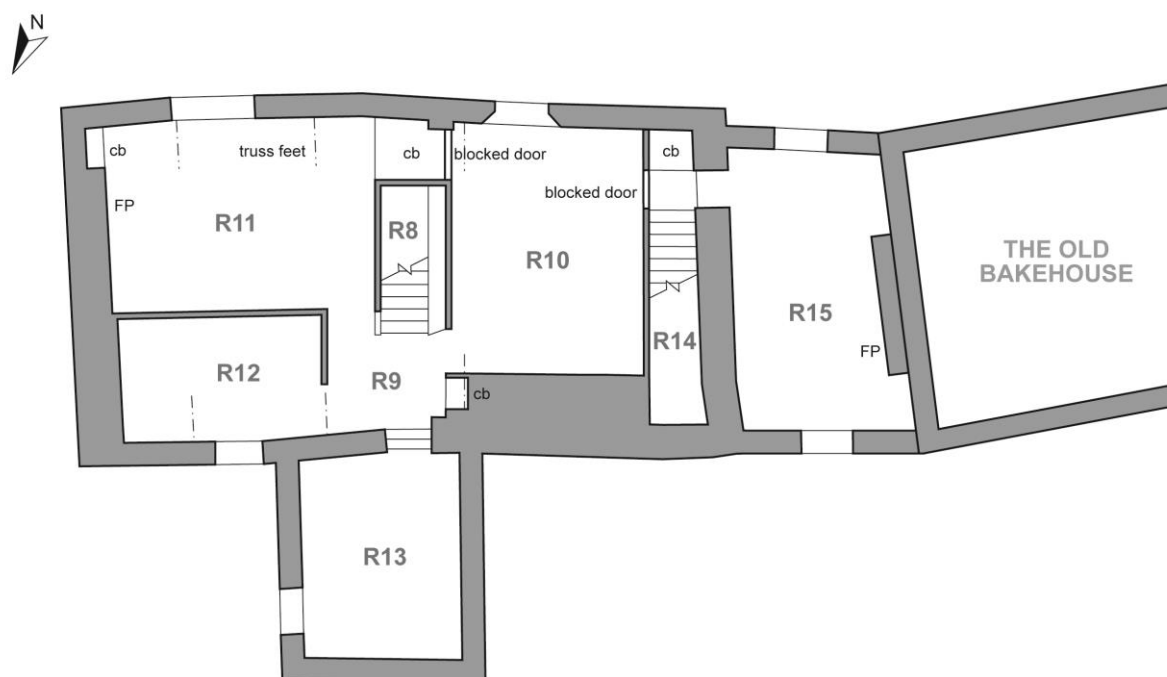


FIGURE 13: FIRST-FLOOR PLAN OF THE COTTAGE.

The bedroom to the west (R10) is lit by the sash window in the south wall; the walls are plastered and if there was a fireplace in the north wall, it has been blocked since the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The west wall is a thin 19<sup>th</sup> century lath and plaster structure formed around the second set of stairs (R14), and there is a door in the south-west corner that opens onto that stair. There is a blocked doorway in the south-east corner that opened onto a short corridor over R1 that originally linked this room with R11.



FIGURE 14: R11; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.



FIGURE 15: THE 18<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY DOOR REUSED FOR R12; VIEWED FROM THE WEST.

R13 is set up into the eaves and is lit by a good, beaded, two-light timber casement in the east wall.

At the western end of the house, R15 is accessed by the second set of stairs (R14). These stairs were formerly accessed via an external door in the north elevation, and the door in the north-east corner of R3; prior to the soft strip there does not seem to have been any access from the rest of the house. At the top of the stairs a door to R10 is nailed shut and a large cupboard formed with a good reused 19<sup>th</sup> century plank-boarded door. Access to R15 is via a forced opening containing a fine 18<sup>th</sup> century door with thick chamfered ledging bars and LH hinges. R15 is lit by the sash window in the south wall, possibly set into a former loading door, and a large modern two-light casement window in the north wall. The brick stack against the west wall (the gable end of the Old Bakehouse) rises and steps in as it does so, with an offset hob grate of c.1800. This space is open to the apex of the roof; the crude embarked purlins were boxed in and plastered recently.

There are two loft rooms (R16 and R17) set high into the roof space above the level of the collars. Access is via R15, where the apex of the gable wall was reduced in the 20<sup>th</sup> century to provide access and a modern truss installed to carry the purlins. R16 has been boarded out and plastered. R17 contains the boiler and modern plumbing but is otherwise unaltered. Three historic trusses are visible in R17: heavy, early 18<sup>th</sup> century trusses, possibly reusing some 17<sup>th</sup> century timbers and some massive 17<sup>th</sup> century purlins. The ridges of the trusses are pegged but have been braced by spiked yokes, the low collars half-lapped and spiked, with through-and-through purlins with tapering ends threaded through the blades, some very large and square in profile, others crude and embarked. There has been much 19<sup>th</sup> century patching and alteration, and the battens and rafters are all modern, the roof lined and insulated. It is of interest that the roof is the mix of vernacular techniques, with spiked joints and threaded purlins for example; this would point to a fairly early 18<sup>th</sup> century date.

R11 is accessed via a 19<sup>th</sup> century four-panel door from R9. This large bedroom is lit by the sash window in the south wall and has a ceiling that rises up into the roof space exposing the feet of the truss blades. There is a stack to the south-east corner set with a narrow Edwardian grate; the alcove next to the stack is fitted with a fine 18<sup>th</sup> century panelled cupboard. There is a low door of planks in the south-west corner that leads into a short corridor over R1 that once accessed R10.

R12 is a long narrow room separated from R9 by 19<sup>th</sup> century lath and plaster partition, probably once open to the stairs as that wall is of fibre cement boards. This room is accessed via a low doorway with a fine 18<sup>th</sup> century door with raised and fielded panels, reset back-to-front. This space was converted into a bathroom fairly early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The back of R9 features a tall, narrow, forced opening accessed via a short set of steps. The doorway is set with late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century door and opens onto the bedroom in





FIGURE 16: THE EASTERN ROOF TRUSSES IN R17; VIEWED FROM THE WEST.

### 2.3 EXPANDED LISTING TEXT (ADDITIONAL TEXT IN BLUE)

*Country Cane Shop and attached cottage on East side: II*  
*Row of Cottages, now shop and one house. With 17<sup>th</sup> century origins, formerly detached dwellings linked in a later 18<sup>th</sup> century phase and then divided into smaller units in the early C19. Now, once again two separate dwellings. Local stone coursed rubble; shop rendered and colour washed; Welsh slate roof to west dwelling and centre, the east end is covered by plain clay tile; brick and stone chimney stacks. 2 storeys, 5 bays. 16-pane sash windows set flush, with shop window and doorway to lower bay 2, having fascia overt between bays 1 and 2 an early C20 boarded door with flat timber porch hood carried on battered stone piers; under bay 3 has timber garage doors, and between bays 4 and 5 a part glazed door under hipped tiled and timber porch hood. The cottage to the east presents as a two-cell cottage with central entrance hallway and stairs rising directly to the first floor. This was extended to the west in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, attaching it to the other cottage, and extended to the north in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In origin, this plan appears to have developed from a one-and-a-half storey single cell 17<sup>th</sup> century block of unknown domestic-related function with lateral stack. The house contains some fine surviving 18<sup>th</sup> century carpentry, with beaded plank screens and raised and fielded panelled doors. There is also a good lateral stack and some cruder 19<sup>th</sup> century additions which document the division of space, such as a rough plank wall and other 19<sup>th</sup> century carpentry, such as beaded four-panel doors.*

### 2.4 FUNCTION

The building currently presents as a late Georgian/early 19<sup>th</sup> century cottage, much altered in the later 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, but with complex surviving detail and a somewhat involved layout. In brief the room functions are:

Room 1	Entrance porch;
Room 2	Sitting room [large open hearth to lateral stack];
Room 3	Garage [provided with a brick stack so domestic at some stage];
Room 4a	Living room;
Room 4b	Former kitchen;
Room 5	Back hall;
Room 6	20 <sup>th</sup> century kitchen extension;
Room 7	Modern rear glass porch/conservatory;
Room 8	Stairs [18 <sup>th</sup> century, serving the east cottage];

Room 9	First-floor landing;
Room 10	Bedroom [heated];
Room 11	Bedroom [heated];
Room 12	Bathroom;
Room 13	Bedroom;
Room 14	Stairs [19 <sup>th</sup> century, serving middle cottage];
Room 15	Bedroom [former storage loft?];
Room 16	Modern converted attic space;
Room 17	Loft space.

## 2.5 SIGNIFICANT FEATURES

Despite considerable alteration, the buildings retain some historic features (see Table 1, below).

TABLE 1: HISTORIC FEATURES.

Room Nos.	GF Features
Room 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 18<sup>th</sup> century four-panel door to R4;</li> <li>• 19<sup>th</sup> century four-panel door to R2;</li> <li>• Early 20<sup>th</sup> century quarry tile floor;</li> <li>• Early 20<sup>th</sup> century part glazed front door.</li> </ul>
Room 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 17<sup>th</sup> century lateral stack with hacked bresummer beam;</li> <li>• 17<sup>th</sup> century fine flagstone floor;</li> <li>• Rustic 19<sup>th</sup> century timber screen;</li> <li>• 19<sup>th</sup> century plank stair (R14);</li> <li>• 19<sup>th</sup> century narrow tall plain four panel door to stairs R14;</li> <li>• 19<sup>th</sup> century sash window;</li> <li>• 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century plank door to R3;</li> <li>• Fine later 17<sup>th</sup> or early 18<sup>th</sup> century chamfered beam.</li> </ul>
Room 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cupboard in north-east corner, boarded with reused door;</li> <li>• 19<sup>th</sup> century brick stack;</li> <li>• Batter to heavy party wall with R2.</li> </ul>
Room 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two shallow stone rubble with segmental brick arches;</li> <li>• Wide beaded plank partition to stairs (R8);</li> <li>• Small square partition and post framing with two plain 19<sup>th</sup> century four-panel doors to R5;</li> <li>• 19<sup>th</sup> century sash window;</li> <li>• Tall doorway with massive timber lintel to north wall, shallow sloping sides, 18<sup>th</sup> century.</li> </ul>
Room 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beaded plank boarding around stair (R8), 18<sup>th</sup> century stair;</li> </ul>
Room 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>
Room 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>
Room 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 18<sup>th</sup> century stair.</li> </ul>
Room Nos.	FF Features
Room 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 18<sup>th</sup> century small panelled cupboard set into the side of the lateral stack;</li> <li>• Good plank 19<sup>th</sup> century door to R11;</li> <li>• Fine raised and fielded panelled 18<sup>th</sup> century door to R12 on reset LH hinges.</li> </ul>
Room 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nailed shut good 19<sup>th</sup> century plank door to R14;</li> <li>• 19<sup>th</sup> century sash window.</li> </ul>
Room 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 18<sup>th</sup> century truss bases seen to south wall at eaves.</li> <li>• 18<sup>th</sup> century plank door, boarded over to deep cupboard;</li> <li>• Fine 18<sup>th</sup> century panelled double cupboard to south-east alcove against stack;</li> <li>• Good 19<sup>th</sup> century door to R9;</li> <li>• 19<sup>th</sup> century sash window.</li> <li>• Edwardian cast-iron open grate.</li> </ul>
Room 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>
Room 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 19<sup>th</sup> century plank tread and risers stair;</li> <li>• 19<sup>th</sup> century very crude plank screen encloses stair;</li> <li>• 19<sup>th</sup> century tall narrow plain four panel door to R2, currently off its hinges;</li> <li>• Moulded doorframe and 19<sup>th</sup> century door through north rear wall, now boarded over;</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good 19<sup>th</sup> century plank door to R10 at top of stairs;</li> <li>• Good 19<sup>th</sup> century plank door to cupboard at top of stairs;</li> <li>• Good 18<sup>th</sup> century door reused to R15, cut down to fit doorway.</li> </ul>
Room 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brick with a fine early hob grate, c.1800;</li> <li>• 19<sup>th</sup> century sash window.</li> </ul>
Room 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heavy purlins, formerly socketed into gable end but now carried by a modern truss.</li> </ul>
Room 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heavy 18<sup>th</sup> century trusses and purlins.</li> </ul>

## 2.6 PHASING

This structure is complex and betrays several fairly comprehensive phases of alteration. The soft strip undertaken has facilitated understanding of the development of this building by revealing earlier historic fabric, albeit at the expense of more recent features.

### 2.6.1 PHASE 1 – LATE 17<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

A one or two-cell domestic or service building of one-and-a-half storeys, with heavy battered walls of clay-bonded stone rubble with a lateral stack; the height of the stack might suggest the building was originally thatched. Only the stack and the east and west walls of R2/R10 survive from this structure, and the evidence is somewhat equivocal. The form and location of the stack within the building would suggest a date of 1670-1700.

#### *Evidence*

The style and character of the stonework; the lateral stack; the fine flagstone floor.

### 2.6.2 PHASE 2 – EARLY 18<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

The original building was extensively rebuilt, perhaps following a catastrophic event. The south, east and north external walls were partly or wholly rebuilt on a slightly different alignment and the internal space reordered. The new structure would have had a nearly-symmetrical and newly-fashionable elevation facing onto the road. The care and attention paid to the structure would imply a reasonably prosperous owner or intended tenant.

#### *Evidence*

The style and character of the carpentry, especially the stairs (R8) and the roof (R16-R17); reused 18<sup>th</sup> century panelled doors; the form of the south elevation.

### 2.6.3 PHASE 3 – EARLY 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

The cottage was expanded to the west to link it to the Old Bakehouse and doors forced through the former gable to address it. In its original form it may have been agricultural or have a service use, but it was later turned over to domestic use. The cottage was subdivided into two smaller units: R2 and R3 accessed via a door with lobby in the south wall, with R10 and R15 above. The stair (R14) was inserted into R2 to provide access to the first floor. The other unit was made up of R4, R5, R9, R11 and R12; R4 was subdivided to form a new kitchen, which was provided with a new hearth. The creation of two small dwellings and the poor quality of some of the materials points to a concern for economy and/or a restricted budget. Perhaps an investment property for Hugh White?

#### *Evidence*

The layout of the building, with blocked and forced doorways; the style and character of the carpentry, especially the stairs (R14) and the 19<sup>th</sup> century panelled doors.

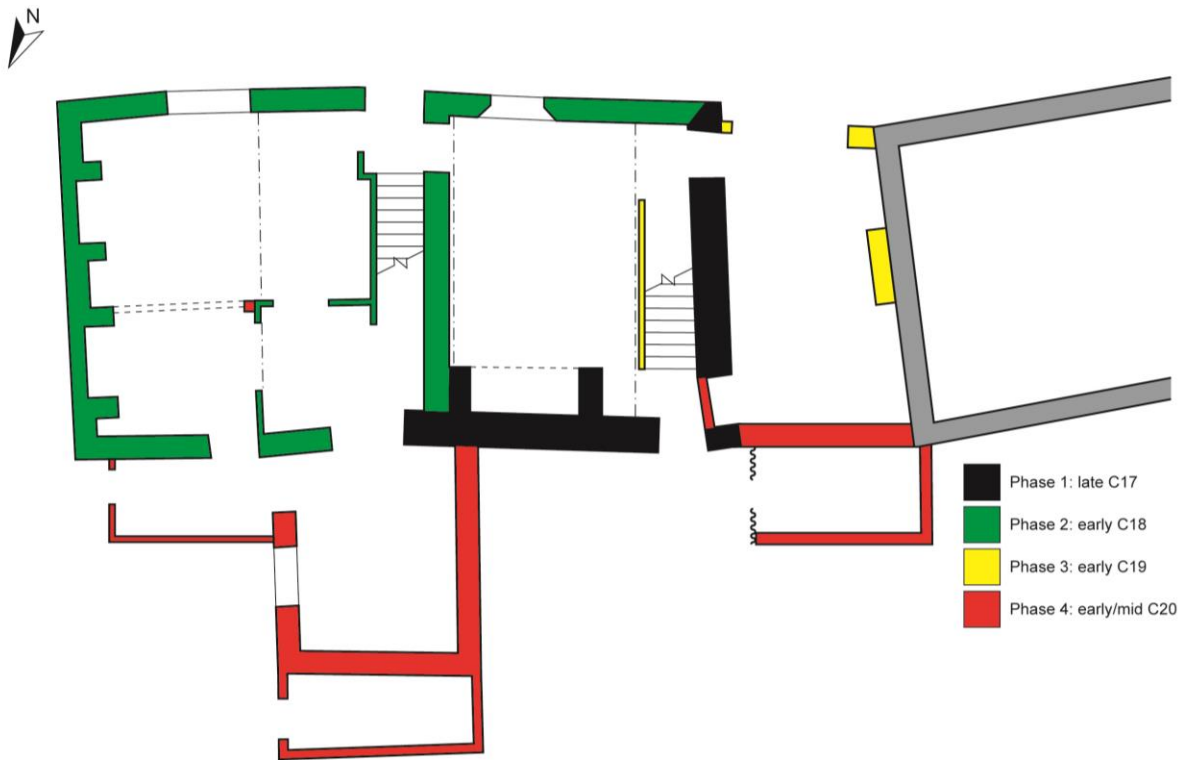


FIGURE 17: PROVISIONAL PHASED GROUND-FLOOR PLANS.

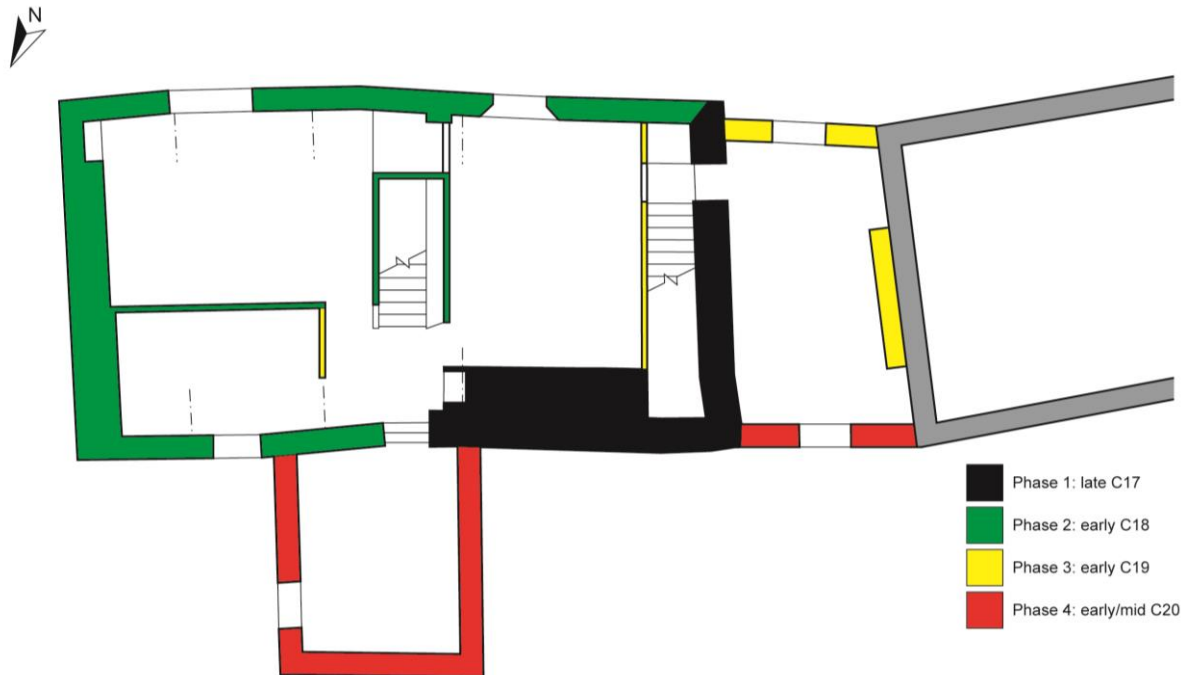


FIGURE 18: PROVISIONAL PHASED FIRST-FLOOR PLANS.

#### 2.6.1 PHASE 4 – EARLY-MID 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

The two parts of the cottage were reunited and a two-storey concrete-block extension built onto the back to provide a larger kitchen and additional bedroom. R12 was converted into a bathroom and the main fireplaces were narrowed and modernised. Double doors were forced (or installed?) in the south elevation and R3 converted into a garage; local hearsay states R15 was used by the homeowner’s chauffeur, so the doors linking R3/R15 to the rest of the building were sealed.

#### *Evidence*

The layout of the building and the materials used (concrete block, tiles).

## 3.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

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### 3.1 THE SOFT STRIP AND LOST FABRIC

In general, the bulk of the loss has been to wall coverings (plaster, wallpaper or plasterboard), all of which appear (by analogy to surviving examples) to be 19<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> century in date. This loss, while regrettable, has revealed older elements, sealed doors and structural details and thus facilitated understanding of the building in a way that would not have been possible otherwise. In that way it has better revealed the significance of the structure. The lost later 19<sup>th</sup> and mid 20<sup>th</sup> century features (in particular the fireplaces) were of no great individual merit, but they did form part of the narrative of the house.

### 3.2 CONCLUSION

Ash House forms one half of a short range of cottages, formerly a free-standing cottage that was awkwardly linked to the Old Bakehouse in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The soft strip that has taken place has resulted in the loss of some 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century fabric but has revealed historic features and blocked openings and facilitated the understanding of the structure. The building is Listed as early 19<sup>th</sup> century, but this appraisal has determined that the earliest parts of the structure are 17<sup>th</sup> century in date. The cottage was then comprehensively rebuilt in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, perhaps following a catastrophic event. In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century it was split into two smaller dwellings. In 1839 the whole range was owned by Hugh White; he lived in the Old Bakehouse and it is tempting to suggest Ash House was an investment rental property. In the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century the two halves of the cottage were reunited and a two-storey concrete block extension built to the rear.

#### 3.2.1 RECOMMENDATIONS

Like most historic buildings, this cottage has been subject to several phases of alteration in the 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The soft strip has facilitated our understanding of those changes, but there is a balance to be struck between adapting the historic structure to convenient family use, and ensuring the retention of those elements that allow the narrative of the building to be read and understood.

Consideration should be given to the retention of all the historic doors, windows and fireplaces that survive; further stripping works could be allowed under an agreed programme of monitoring and recording. More substantive alterations should be accompanied by an accurate measured survey.

## 4.0 Bibliography

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**Somerset HER** 2019

<https://www.somersetheritage.org.uk/>

APPENDIX 1: PHOTOGRAPHIC ARCHIVE



VIEW OF THE LONG RANGE OF BUILDINGS ALONGSIDE THE A30; VIEWED FROM THE EAST-SOUTH-EAST.



THE SOUTH AND EAST ELEVATIONS OF ASH HOUSE, ON THE END OF THE RANGE; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-EAST.

ASH HOUSE, HENSTRIDGE, SOMERSET



THE OLD BAKEHOUSE; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-SOUTH-EAST.



THE SOUTH ELEVATION OF ASH HOUSE; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-EAST.





THE SOUTH ELEVATION OF ASH HOUSE, SHOWING A BLOCKED DOOR OPENING TO THE WEST END (INDICATED); VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-SOUTH-EAST.



VIEW ALONG THE FRONT ELEVATION OF THE LONG RANGE, SHOWING THE DIFFERENCE IN ALIGNMENT THAT IDENTIFIES THESE AS SEPARATE STRUCTURES; VIEWED FROM THE EAST.

ASH HOUSE, HENSTRIDGE, SOMERSET



THE EAST ELEVATION OF ASH HOUSE AND ITS EXTENSION; VIEWED FROM THE EAST.



ASH HOUSE AND ITS 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY CONCRETE BLOCK KITCHEN EXTENSION; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-EAST.

ASH HOUSE, HENSTRIDGE, SOMERSET



THE NORTH ELEVATION OF ASH HOUSE TO THE WEST OF THE CONCRETE BLOCK EXTENSION; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH; SUPPLIED BY CLIENT.



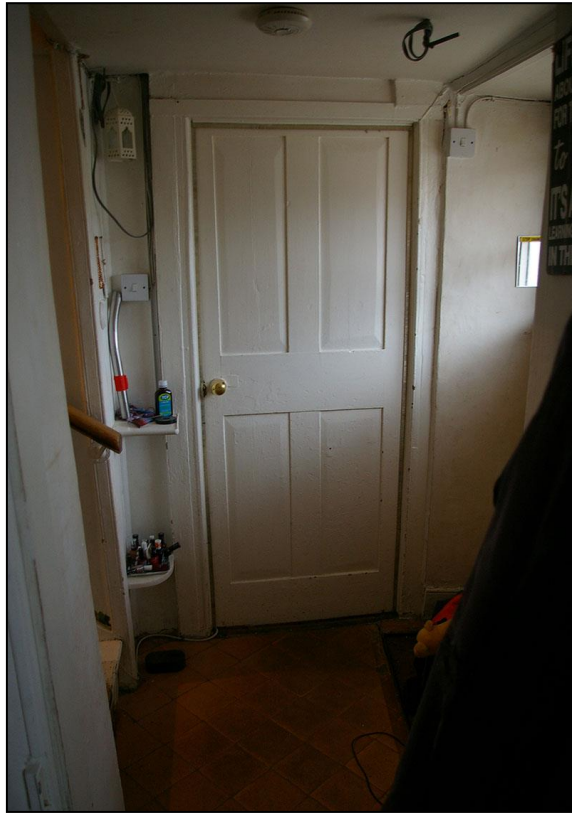
THE NORTH ELEVATION WHERE IT ADJOINS THE OLD BAKEHOUSE; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-EAST; SUPPLIED BY CLIENT.



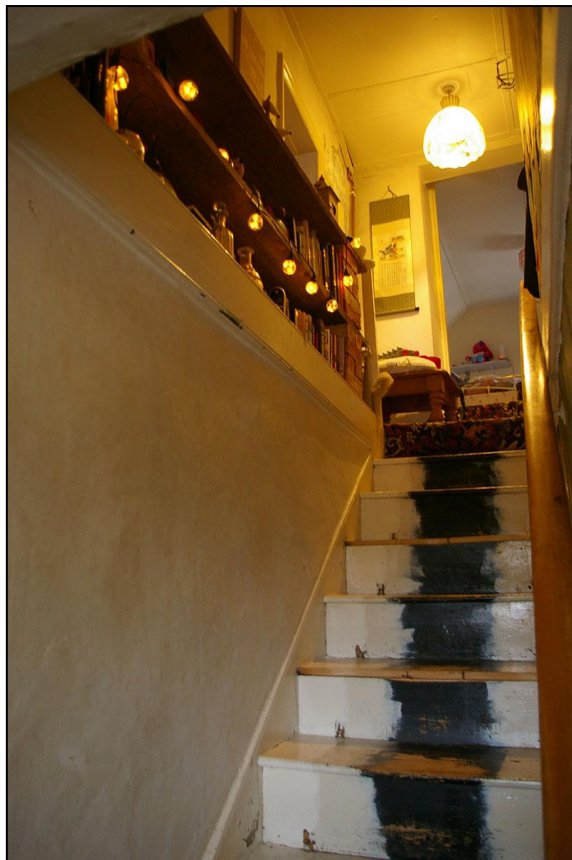
THE LATERAL STACK AND ADJACENT REDUCED OPENING ON THE NORTH WALL OF ASH HOUSE; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-WEST.



THE SMALL 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY BRICK SHED BUILT UP AGAINST THE RENDERED CONCRETE BLOCK INFILL THAT LINKS THE TWO BUILDINGS; VIEWED FROM THE EAST-NORTH-EAST.



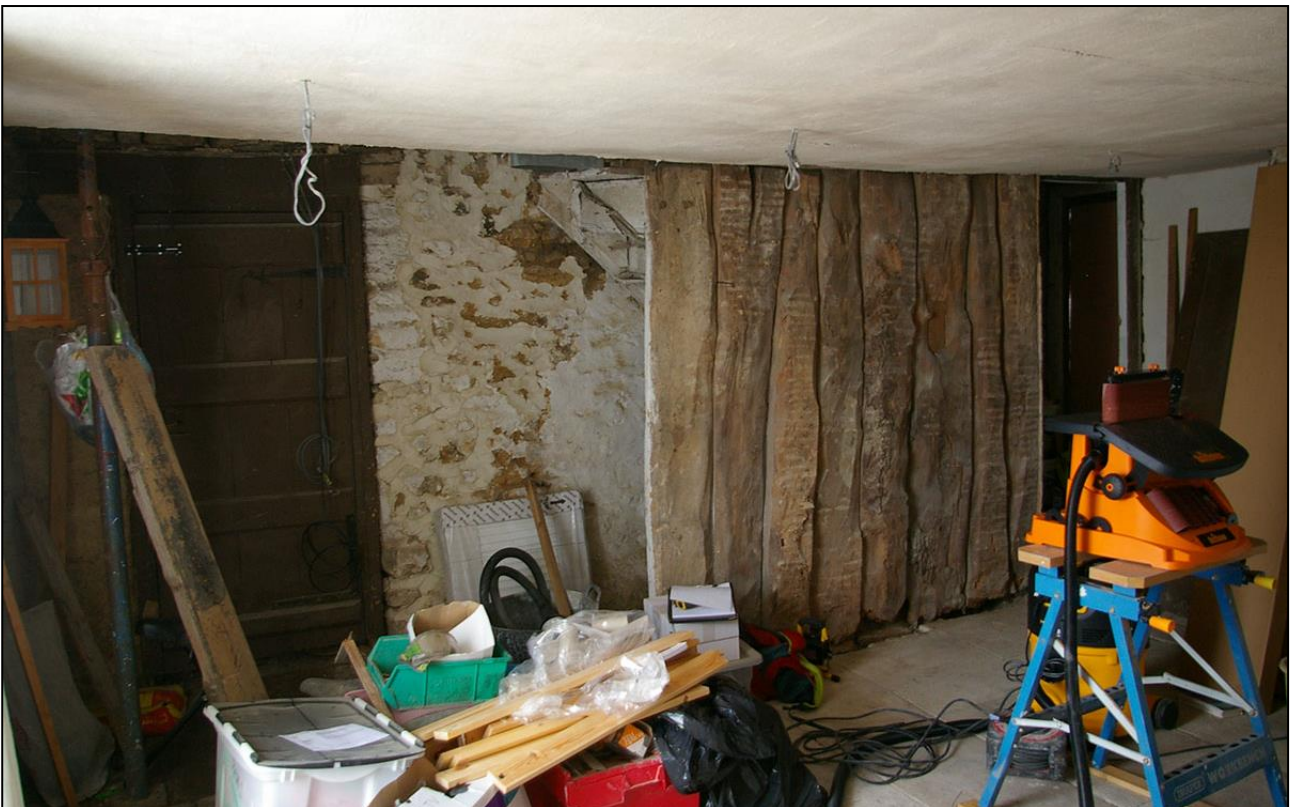
LEFT: THE ENTRANCE HALL (R1) WITH 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY PART-GLAZED FRONT DOOR AND QUARRY TILE FLOOR; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH.  
RIGHT: VIEW OF THE ENTRANCE HALL (R1) TO THE DOOR TO R4; VIEWED FROM THE WEST.



LEFT: VIEW FROM R1 UP THE STAIRS (R8); FROM THE SOUTH-SOUTH-WEST.  
RIGHT: AS ABOVE, SHOWING THE TOP OF THE INTERNAL STONE WALL; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-SOUTH-EAST.



LEFT: VIEW FROM R1 INTO R2; VIEWED FROM THE EAST-SOUTH-EAST.  
RIGHT: THE DOORWAY BETWEEN R1 AND R2; VIEWED FROM THE WEST-NORTH-WEST.



THE WEST WALL OF R2 WITH RUSTIC TIMBER PLANK SCREEN ENCLOSING THE STAIRS (R14) AND DOOR TO R3; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-EAST.



R2 FROM THE SOUTH-WEST CORNER, SHOWING THE LARGE STONE STACK WITH OPEN HEARTH; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.



R2, THE FIREPLACE, NEWLY REPOINTED AND PLASTERED, THE LARGE BRESUMMER BEAM HACKED ON THE UNDERSIDE; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH.



R2, VIEW UP THE FLUE; VIEWED FROM BELOW.



R2, THE FINE STONE FLOOR, WITH STONE AND BRICK PAVERS RESET AGAINST THE FRONT SOUTH WALL SHOWING THE ORIGINAL WIDTH OF THE ROOM, EVIDENCE THAT THE FRONT WALL HAS BEEN REBUILT AND PUSHED OUT; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH.





LEFT: R2, THE STAIRS (R14) SUPPORTED AND ENCLOSED BY A HEAVY RUSTIC SCREEN, WITH LOOSER RANDOM STONE PAVING BENEATH; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-SOUTH-EAST.

RIGHT: THE HEAVY BATTERED WALL BETWEEN R2 AND R3; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.



R3, THE HEAVY BATTERED FORMER GABLE END WALL OF THE 17<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY BUILDING, SHOWING ORIGINAL DOOR TO THE NORTH END (INDICATED), NOW FITTED AS A CUPBOARD; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-SOUTH-WEST.



R3, SHOWING THE BRICK STACK BUILT AGAINST THE GABLE WALL OF THE OLD BAKEHOUSE; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH.



R3, DETAIL OF THE BRICK STACK SHOWING THE LARGE BOX HEARTH WITH SEGMENTAL BRICK ARCH AND IRON BAR SUPPORT, WITH LATER INFILL; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-EAST.



R4, FORMED BY THE REMOVAL OF A BRICK PARTITION (INDICATED), WITH TWO STONE STACKS; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.



R4, THE NORTH WALL; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-EAST.



R4, THE TIMBER PARTITION WALL ENCLOSING THE STAIRS (LEFT), WITH DOORS TO R1 AND R5; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-EAST.



LEFT: R5, THE SMALL REAR HALL UNDER THE STAIRS; VIEWED FROM THE EAST.



RIGHT: R5, THE UNDERSTAIR CUPBOARD, SHOWING THE CHUNKY PLANK AND TREAD RISERS CARRIED ON CARRIAGE BRACES, A TYPICAL 18<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY FORM OF STAIR CONSTRUCTION; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-NORTH-EAST.



THE TOP OF THE STAIRS (R8) AND LANDING (R9); VIEWED FROM THE NORTH.



LEFT: THE LANDING (R9); VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-EAST.

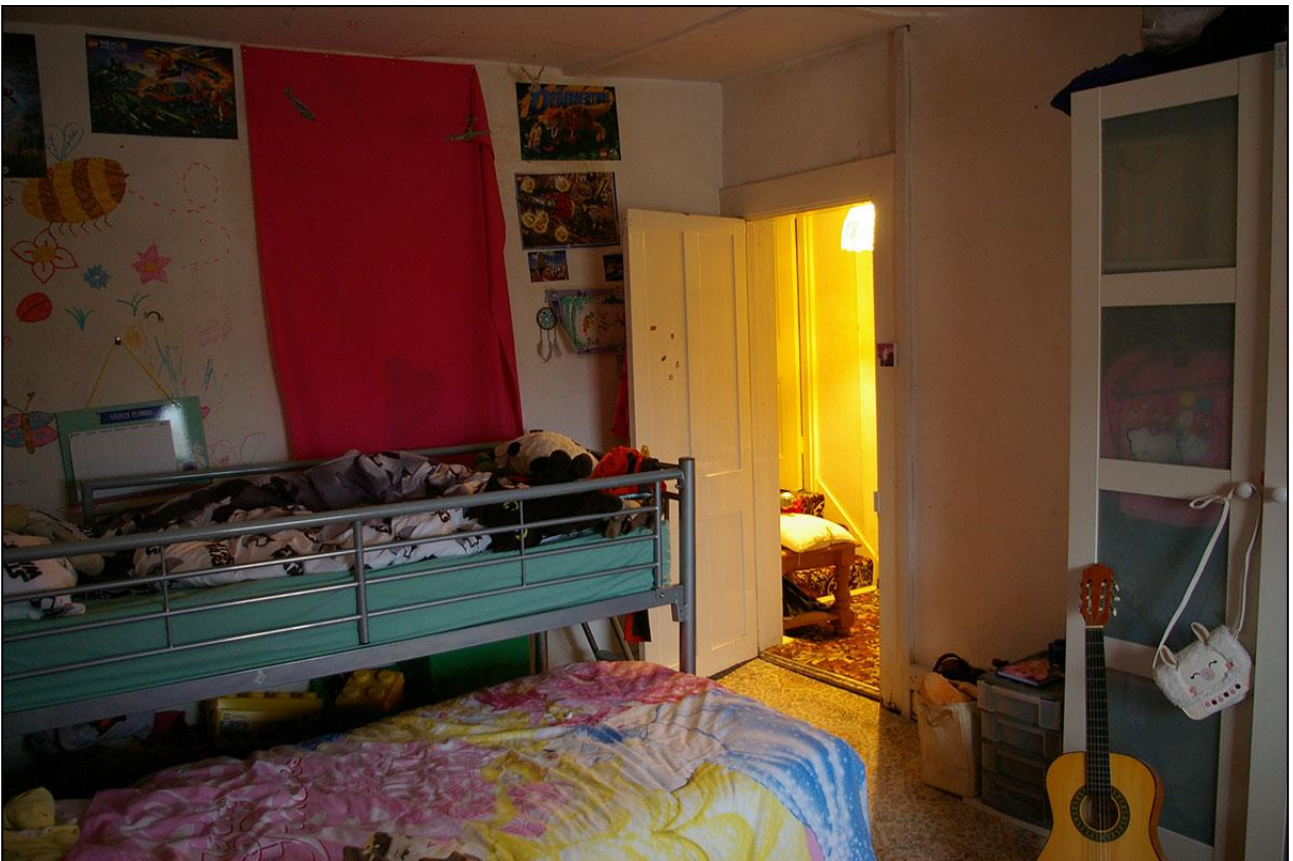


RIGHT: R9, THE SMALL CUPBOARD WITH MOULDED FRAME AND UNEVEN PLANK DOOR SET INTO THE SIDE OF THE LATERAL STACK; VIEWED FROM THE EAST.



LEFT: R9, THE INTERIOR OF THE CUPBOARD; VIEWED FROM THE EAST-SOUTH-EAST.

RIGHT: VIEW OF THE TALL PLAIN FOUR-PANEL DOOR TO R10; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.



R10; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.



R10, SHOWING THE DOOR TO R14 (INDICATED); VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-EAST.



R9, THE 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY MOULDED FOUR-PANEL DOOR TO R11; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-WEST.



R11; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-WEST (SUPPLIED BY CLIENT).



LEFT: R11, THE 18<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY PANELLED CUPBOARD SET INTO AN ALCOVE AGAINST THE STACK, AND THE SMALL EDWARDIAN GRATE INSERTED INTO THE FIREPLACE, LIKELY BLOCKING A LARGER OPENING; VIEWED FROM THE WEST-SOUTH-WEST.



RIGHT: R11, THE RAISED PANELS OF THE FINE 18<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY CUPBOARD; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-WEST.





R11, SHOWING THE LOW PLANK DOOR (LEFT) TO THE DEEP CUPBOARD THAT FORMERLY PROVIDED ACCESS TO R10; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-EAST (SUPPLIED BY CLIENT).



LEFT: R9, FINE 18<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY RAISED AND FIELDED PANELLED DOOR ON LH HINGES TO R12, NOW A BATHROOM; VIEWED FROM THE WEST.  
RIGHT: R9, THE PANELLED SIDE OF THE DOOR TO R12; VIEWED FROM THE WEST.



LEFT: R12; VIEWED FROM THE WEST.



RIGHT: R12; VIEWED FROM THE EAST-NORTH-EAST.



R13, THE FORCED OPENING IN THE BACK WALL PROVIDING ACCESS TO THE 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY EXTENSION; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-SOUTH-WEST.



R13, THE BEDROOM OVER THE KITCHEN; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.



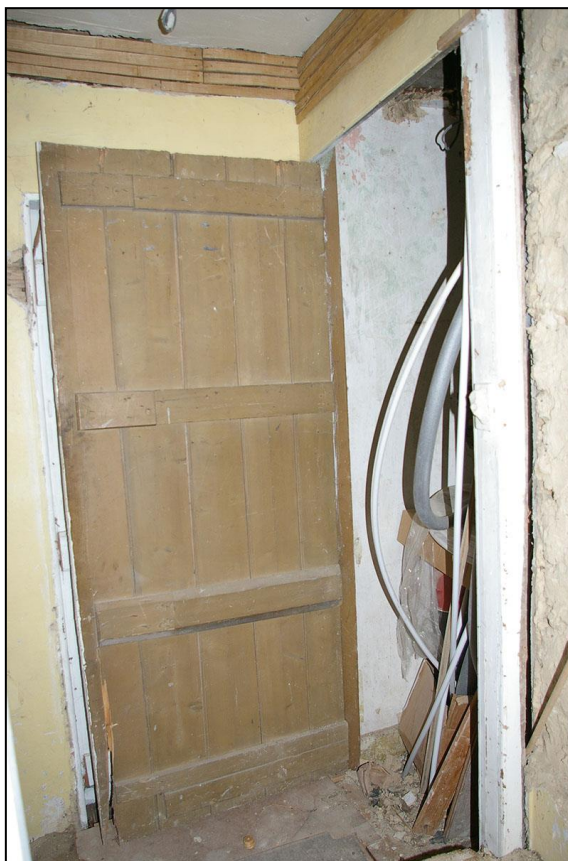
R13; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-EAST.



LEFT: R14, THE NARROW MOULDED DOOR FRAME SET IN A REDUCED OPENING IN THE NORTH WALL; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-EAST.  
RIGHT: BLOCKED DOORWAY IN THE WALL BETWEEN R14 AND R3, AT THE BASE OF THE STAIRS; VIEWED FROM THE EAST-SOUTH-EAST.



LEFT: R14, THE 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY STAIRCASE; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH.  
RIGHT: R14, THE DOOR OPENING ONTO R10 FROM THE TOP OF THE STAIRS; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.



LEFT: R14, THE CUPBOARD AT THE TOP OF THE STAIRS; VIEWED FROM THE WEST.

RIGHT: R14, THE CUPBOARD DOOR SHOWING THE THICK LEDGES; VIEWED FROM THE WEST.



LEFT: VIEW FROM R15 INTO R14, SHOWING THE FORMER GABLE WALL; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.

RIGHT: R15, THE GOOD PLANK DOOR WITH LEDGES AND STRAP HINGES THAT SERVED R15; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH.



R15, THE FORMER GABLE END WALL OF THE ORIGINAL COTTAGE, FORCED TO PROVIDE WIDER ACCESS TO THE LOFT SPACE ADJACENT; FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.



R15, THE NORTH WALL WITH MID 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY WINDOW IN LOW WALL; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH.



R15, THE BRICK STACK, BUILT UP AGAINST THE WALL OF THE OLD BAKEHOUSE; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-EAST.



R15, THE FINE SMALL LATE 18<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY OR EARLY 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY HOB GRATE; VIEWED FROM THE EAST.



R15, THE SOUTH WALL; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH.



R16, THE CONVERTED LOFT SPACE R14 AND R10; VIEWED FROM THE EAST.





R17, THE LOFT SPACE SHOWING TWO TRUSSES AND LOOKING THROUGH THE THIRD; VIEWED FROM THE WEST.



R17, DETAIL OF ONE OF THE RIDGES, WITH SPIKED YOKES BRACING THE OVERLAPPING RIDGE JOINT, ALSO CUT WITH A DIAMOND SET FOR A RIDGE POLE, ALTHOUGH REPLACED, AS THE ROOF HAS BEEN ALTERED; VIEWED FROM THE WEST.



R17, THE HEAVY SQUARE PROFILE PURLINS, AN EARLIER SET OF THROUGH-AND-THROUGH TYPES; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.



R17, VIEW BACK TO THE TRUSS BETWEEN R16 AND R17; VIEWED FROM THE EAST.



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