

BROOK COTTAGE, PRESTON, TORBAY

(SX 89037 61731)

Results of historic building recording

Torbay Council planning reference P/2015/0342, condition 4

Prepared by:
Stella De-Villiers MA ACIfA

On behalf of:
Mr Mark Bowen

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archaeology

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Summary

Historic building recording was carried out by AC archaeology in November 2015 at Brook Cottage, Preston, Torbay during conversion of the house into two properties.

The cottage comprises elements of two buildings that were formerly part of a larger farmstead. The northern range represents the remains of an early, probably early post-medieval house, remainder of which demolished in the late 19th century, and in the early 20th century when Upper Manor Road was constructed. The southern range was originally a farm building, and was converted into a house in the mid-late 19th century. The cottage was refurbished several times during the 20th century when extensions were added to the front and rear. Internally, there are few surviving fixtures and fittings, mainly the fireplaces and the doors.

1. INTRODUCTION (Fig. 1)

- 1.1 This document presents the results of historic building recording undertaken by AC archaeology in November 2015 at Brook Cottage, Manor Crescent, Preston, Torbay (SX 89037 61731). The investigation was commissioned by Mark Bowen and was required under condition 4 attached to the grant of planning permission (Torbay Council reference P/2015/0342) to "convert single dwelling to two dwellings. Replace single storey extension with two storey extension". Guidance on the scope of works was provided by the Torbay Council Senior Historic Environment Officer (SHEO).
- 1.2 Brook Cottage is located within Manor Crescent at its junction with Upper Manor Road, and is situated within the historic core of Preston. The site is situated at a height of approximately 20m aOD. The underlying geology comprises Permian breccia and sandstone of the Torbay Breccia Formation overlain by Quaternary head deposits of clay, silt, sand and gravel (British Geological Survey online 2015).

2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND (Figs 2-5)

- 2.1 The property is located to the northeast of Oldway Mansion, which dates to 1873 and is a Grade II* Listed Building (National Heritage List no. 1195207). Its grounds are designated as a Registered Park and Garden (National Heritage List no. 1001368). To the northeast of Brook Cottage, several properties on Old Torquay Road are also designated as Listed Buildings: nos 6, 6A and 6B (a former single house of 18th-century or earlier date; National Heritage List no. 1298234), The Old Manor Inn (a mid 17th-century or earlier house; National Heritage List no. 1208092), an unnamed c. 1840s house (National Heritage List no. 1208087), and an unnamed mid 17th-century or earlier house (National Heritage List no. 1195235).
- 2.2 The 1840 Paignton tithe map (Fig. 2) depicts the area prior to the residential expansions of the later 19th and early 20th centuries. Brook Cottage is located within plot 296 situated at the west end of the hamlet of Preston, to the north of Old Torbay Road, which then passed to the north of the present A3022 Torquay Road. The property sits opposite the junction with another road running south towards, and east of, the historic core of Paignton. Plots with shapes characteristic of medieval strip fields are aligned onto both these roads. Plot 296 appears to have been taken out of several of these plots, implying a late medieval or early post-medieval foundation date for the property. The map depicts the site as two ranges of roughly east-west aligned buildings, coloured as houses, along with a further three structures probably representing outbuildings. The accompanying apportionment describes the plots as a

house and garden owned by the Diocese of Exeter, leased from them by Henry Distin.

- 2.3** The first edition 25-inch Ordnance Survey County map of the area, surveyed 1862, shows that some of the outbuildings had been incorporated into either end of the house adjacent to the street, which is labelled as Brook Cottage. Small extensions are also depicted to the front and rear of the property (Fig. 3). Towards the southwest end a path leads through a garden from the road to the house. The layout of the overall building and this garden may indicate that the property was divided into two dwellings. The fields behind (to the north) were depicted as orchards.
- 2.3** In 1904, survey date of the second edition Ordnance Survey County map, the larger eastern part of the cottage had been demolished, leaving its original western end and the smaller, former outbuilding element of the house to the west (Fig. 4). To the north a new C-shaped range of agricultural buildings, including a threshing barn and attached engine house, had been constructed.
- 2.4** By 1933 (Fig. 5) the landscape had changed dramatically with all of the surrounding agricultural land having been developed for housing. The road layout was also significantly altered. Torquay Road had replaced Old Torquay Road, and Upper Manor Road had been constructed connecting Torquay Road with other (old and new) residential streets to the northwest. This road was built through the Brook Cottage property, and involved the loss of the northeast corner of the house. The detached rear farm buildings were separated from the house, and one was partially demolished.

3. AIM

- 3.1** The development had the potential to remove, obscure or expose evidence relating to the architectural history of Brook Cottage. The aim of the investigation was therefore to prepare a record of the building to an appropriate level during the construction works.

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1** All works were undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by AC archaeology (Passmore 2015), the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures* (revised 2014), and the AC archaeology *General Site Recording Manual, Version 2*. The historic building recording was carried out to levels 2/3 as set out in *Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice*.
- 4.2** A rapid desk-based appraisal, comprising an assessment of the relevant historic maps, was undertaken.
- 4.3** A site inspection was carried out on 9 November 2015, and included:
- A written description of the building;
 - Annotated architect's drawings of existing floor plans, showing builds of different date and architectural fittings and features; and

- A photographic record including the overall character of the building, as well as detailed views of exposed architectural features and fixtures and fittings.

5. THE BUILDING (Fig. 6; Plates 1-9)

5.1 The exterior

The main elevation (on the southern range) fronts onto Manor Crescent (Plate 1). It is rendered, with asymmetric fenestration. However, the central core of the building is symmetrical, with a pair of windows flanking a central doorway. This has six panels with the top two being stained glass with flower decoration. It is covered by a wooden porch with a pitched slate roof. There is a further window in the west room, and there was a large curving window in the modern east extension. There are four windows on the first floor, located directly over the ground-floor openings. All of the windows are modern replacements. The modern eastern extension was single storeyed with a flat felt roof. It projected out slightly from the main elevation, and in addition to the window in the south elevation featured an external door in the west elevation.

The west elevation of the southern range, along with the east elevations of the southern and northern ranges are also rendered, although the finish on the former is a recent addition and the breccia stonework was formerly exposed. There are no openings or features in this elevation. In the east elevation there is a single first-floor window in the southern range along with two windows on the ground floor of the northern range (Plate 2).

In the north elevation of the southern range (Plate 3) and the west elevation of the north range (Plate 4) the stonework is exposed, although some areas have been painted white. Two phases of masonry are visible in the main fabric of the north elevation, with the block to the west being an addition. Both builds are constructed in local breccia laid in rough courses with a pinkish white cement mortar. In the western masonry is a vertical break that does not extend the full height of the building. A possible horizontal break is also visible and these may be evidence that much of this elevation has been rebuilt. The whole elevation contains five modern windows of varying shapes and sizes, along with modern double doors on the ground floor of the west block. There are two extensions and a lean-to store. The eastern extension is a single storey and contains a window in what was previously a doorway opening. This is modern, and was a 20th-century porch. The western extension is earlier, two storeyed, constructed of painted stonework, and contains windows on each floor. Prior to conversion, this extension contained toilets on both floors, and it was probably constructed for this function. The store is modern, and is attached to the west of side of this extension. It is single storeyed and contains a window and a wooden door.

The west elevation of the north elevation incorporates a projecting chimney stack, with openings (all with modern fittings) to either side. On the ground floor there is a doorway into the former porch along with two windows; one has arched breccia voussoirs, whilst the other has an arched brick head. On the first floor there is a pair of windows, one with a flat brick head and the other with an arched brick head.

The whole building has slate pitched roofs. On the southern range it is gabled to the east, and hipped at the west end in the extension. The southern part of the northern range has a hipped slate roof aligned east-west, with the northern section having a flat roof. The chimney stack is capped with two flat limestone slabs and topped with a short pot.

5.2 The interior

The building has modern finishes throughout, with few surviving historic fixtures and fittings. The conversion involved minimal impact on historic fabric and therefore little masonry was exposed.

On the ground floor the southern range contained two principal rooms either side of a central corridor that incorporated the staircase to the first floor. Early 20th-century doors survive, and will be retained. Two of these are four- and six-panel doors, whilst the other three have additional simple moulding around the four or six panels (Plates 5 and 6). There are two large fireplaces on the ground floor. The eastern fireplace is wide, and has been heavily repointed, with a new wooden lintel added (Plate 7). The western fireplace is grander and retains its original polished dark blue marble surround and mantelpiece, along with a slate hearth defined by a brass rail (Plate 8). Either side of this fireplace there were formerly two arched recesses, probably originally for display cabinets. The southern recess has been converted into a doorway providing access into the western extension.

In the northern range there is an exposed fireplace in the west elevation. This has a slightly curved breccia head laid onto a cast-iron support plate (Plate 9).

On the first floor there are no surviving historic fixtures or fittings. However, the positions of two possible fireplaces above those on the ground floor could be identified, although any evidence for the western fireplace in the southern range had been removed when the upper floor was reconfigured during the 20th century.

6. DEVELOPMENT AND USE OF BROOK COTTAGE

- 6.1** The early origins of the building now known as Brook Cottage are unknown. However, the northern range represents the western end of a large house depicted on the 1840 Paighton tithe map. Given the length of this building, it is possible that it was a traditional, vernacular cross passage house. The present northern, flat-roofed section would appear to be a later rear extension, but there is currently no architectural evidence for this. It is possible that the west elevation of this range has been rebuilt.
- 6.2** In 1840 the southern range was depicted in non-domestic use, presumably an agricultural outbuilding. The western extension had been added by this date. There is no architectural evidence for its function.
- 6.3** By 1862 there had been many changes to the property, and the southern range had been converted into Brook Cottage. It is possible that the earlier agricultural building was entirely rebuilt, but since the cottage occupies the same footprint as the earlier building, and there are architectural features, such as the rear extension (see below) and differences in wall sizes, it is more likely that the earlier building was converted into a cottage. The layout appears to have comprised two principal rooms on each floor, separated by a corridor on the ground floor and a landing on the first floor. On the ground floor the kitchen was to the right of the entrance with the parlour to the left. The small extension on its north side (housing toilets) was probably added when the building was converted. The northern range probably remained part of the earlier house.
- 6.4** By 1906 the larger eastern part of the building had been demolished, leaving Brook Cottage with a rear extension (the west end of the original house). The western extension was probably converted into domestic accommodation at this time. These

works seem to have coincided with a reorganisation of the associated farm buildings, with new barns, including a threshing barn and attached engine house, being constructed.

- 6.5** Brook Cottage was further reduced in size in the early 20th century (by 1933) when Upper Manor Road was driven through the rear extension. The surviving fittings, such as the doors, may date to a reorganisation at this time, as may the former rear porch. Later 20th-century alterations included the construction of a new front extension, and internal reorganisation of the first floor.

7. ARCHIVE AND OASIS ENTRY

- 7.1** The paper and digital archive is currently held at the offices of AC archaeology Ltd, at 4 Halthaies Workshops, near Exeter, Devon, EX5 4LQ, and will be deposited with Torquay Museum.
- 7.2** An OASIS entry has been created using the unique identifier 238117, and includes a digital copy of this report.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 8.1** This report was commissioned by Mark Bowen, and managed for AC archaeology by Andrew Passmore. The fieldwork was carried out by Stella De-Villiers. The report and illustrations were prepared by Stella De-Villiers.

9. SOURCES CONSULTED

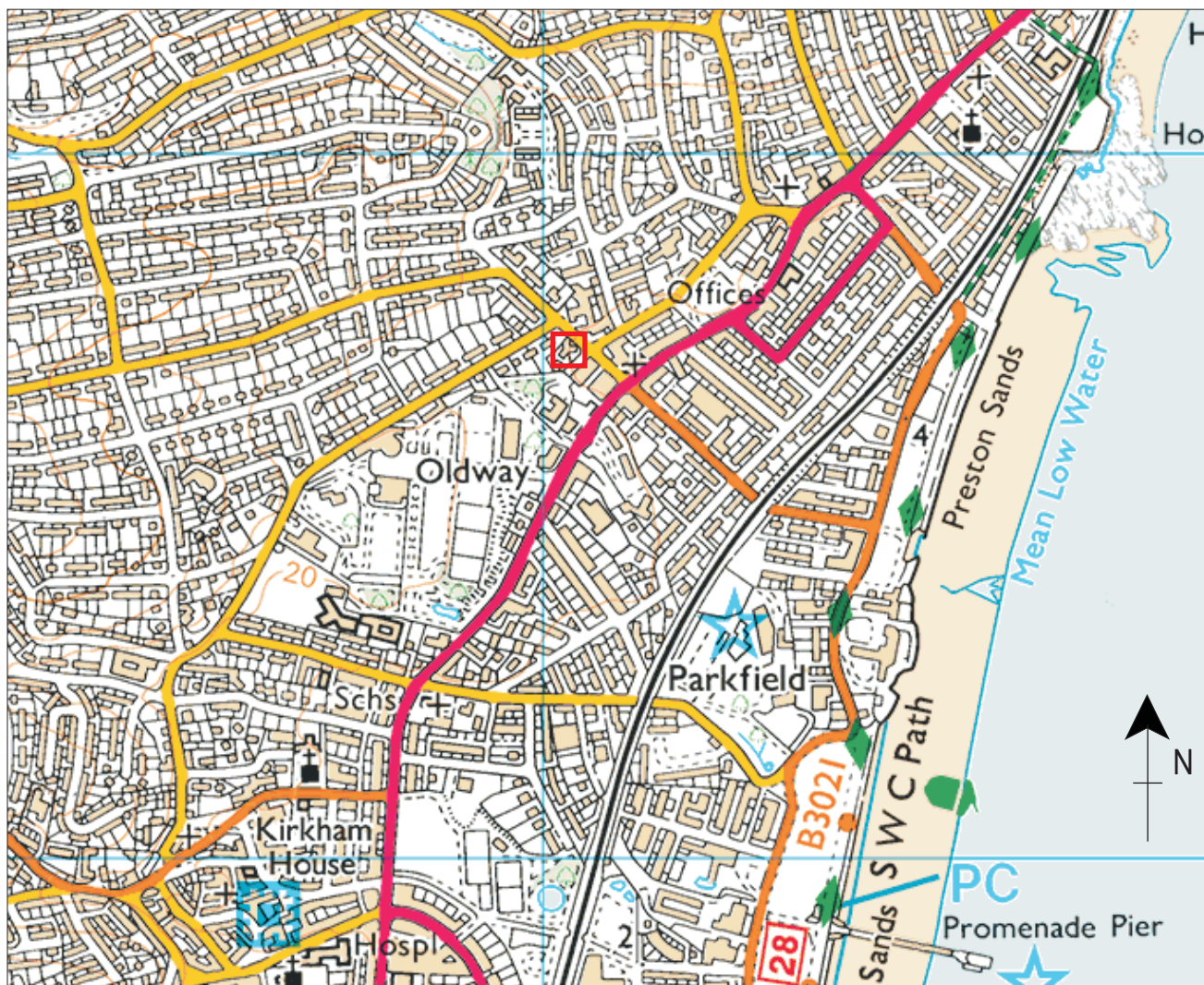
Ordnance Survey 25-inch edition map, surveyed 1862

Ordnance Survey 25-inch edition map, published surveyed 1904, published 1906

Ordnance Survey 25-inch edition map, published 1933

Paignton tithe map (1840) and apportionment (1840)

Passmore, A., 2015, *Brook Cottage, Preston, Torbay, (NGR SX 89037 61731), Written Scheme of Investigation for historic building recording, Torbay Council planning reference P/2015/0342, condition 4*, AC archaeology document no. **ACD1261/1/0**



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Scale 1:10,000@A4

PROJECT

Brook Cottage, Preston, Torbay

TITLE

Fig.1: Site location



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PROJECT

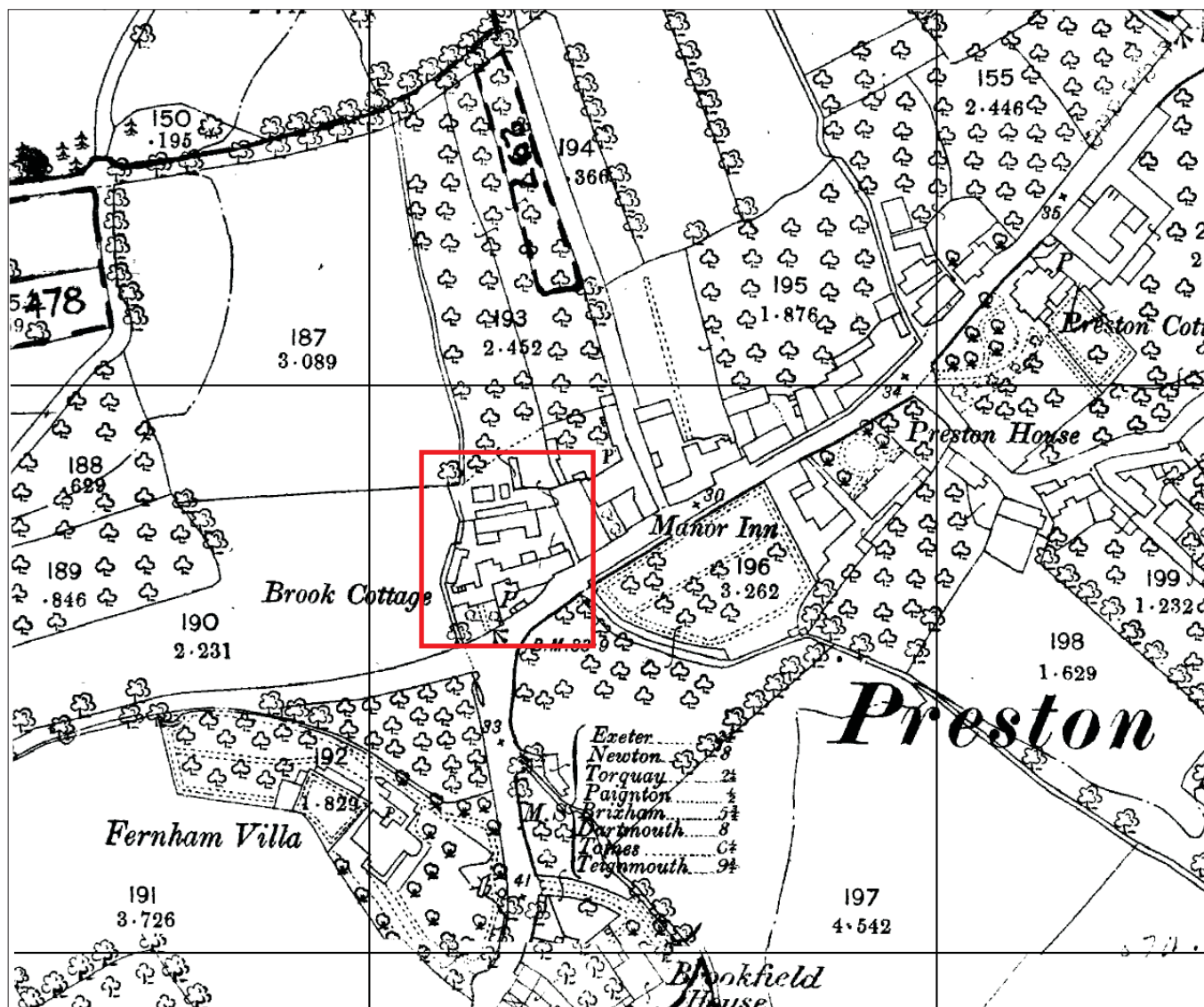
Brook Cottage, Preston, Torbay

TITLE

Fig. 2: Extract from the Paignton
tithe map of 1840



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County: DEVONSHIRE, Date(s): 1873-1886 Survey scale: 1:2,500 (c) Crown copyright and Landmark Information Group Limited 2015. All rights reserved.

PROJECT

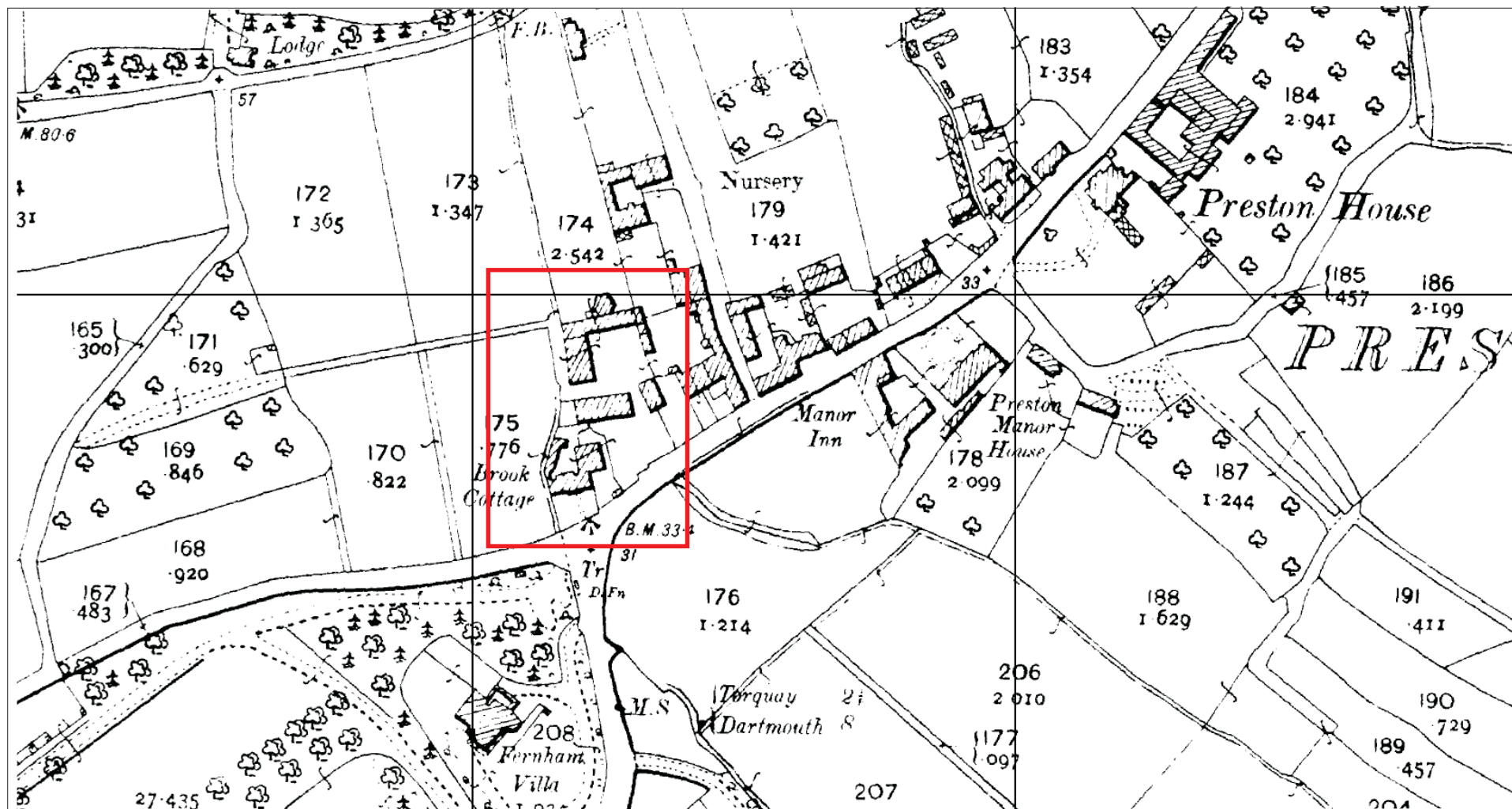
Brook Cottage, Preston, Torbay

TITLE

Fig. 3: Extract from the 25-inch
Ordnance Survey map,
surveyed 1862



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County: DEVONSHIRE, Date(s): 1906 Survey scale: 1:2,500 (c) Crown copyright and Landmark Information Group Limited 2015. All rights reserved.

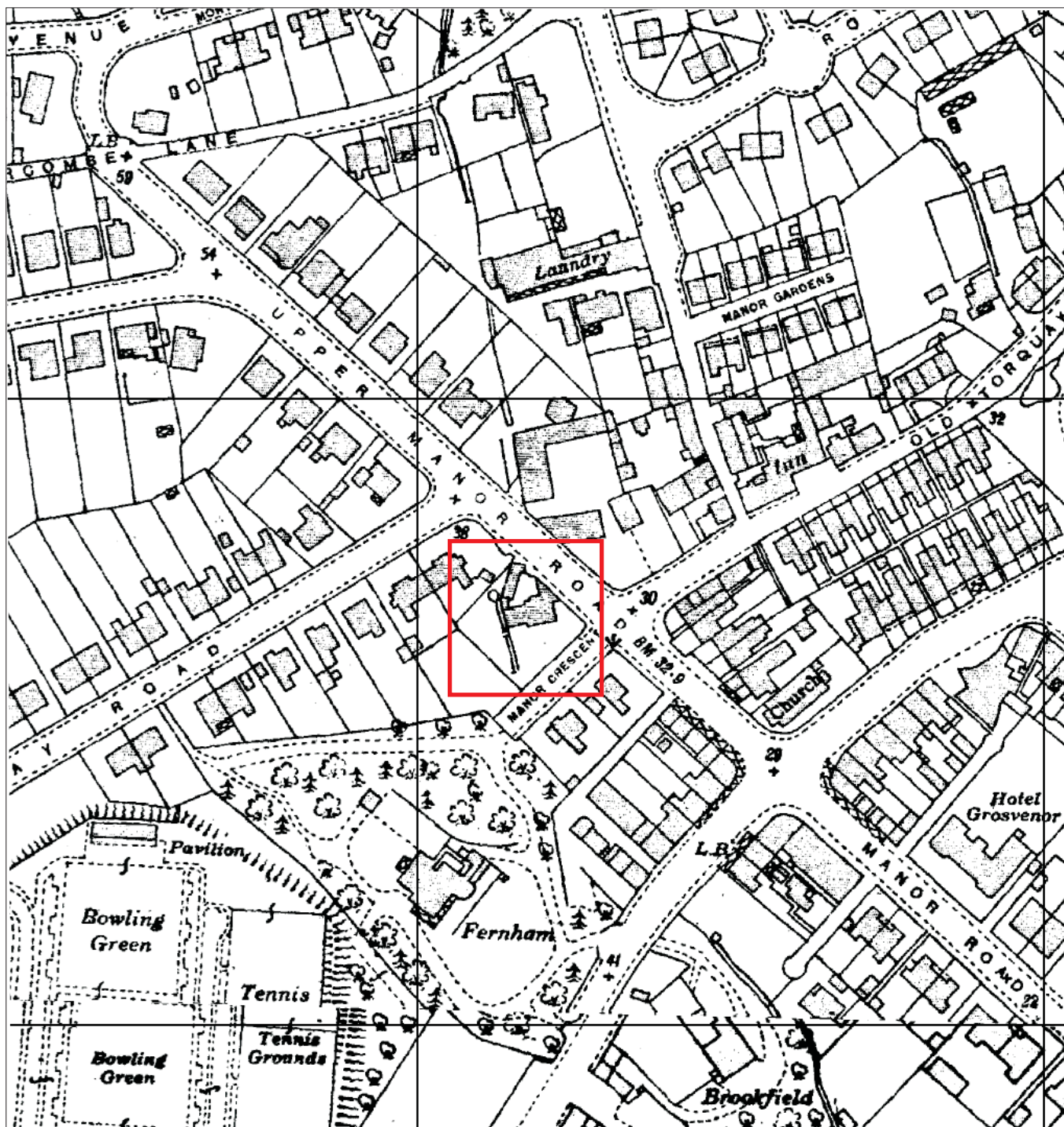
PROJECT

Brook Cottage, Preston, Torbay

TITLE

Fig. 4: Extract from the 25-inch
Ordnance Survey map,
surveyed 1904





County: DEVONSHIRE, Date(s): 1933 Survey scale: 1:2,500 (c) Crown copyright and Landmark Information Group Limited 2015. All rights reserved.

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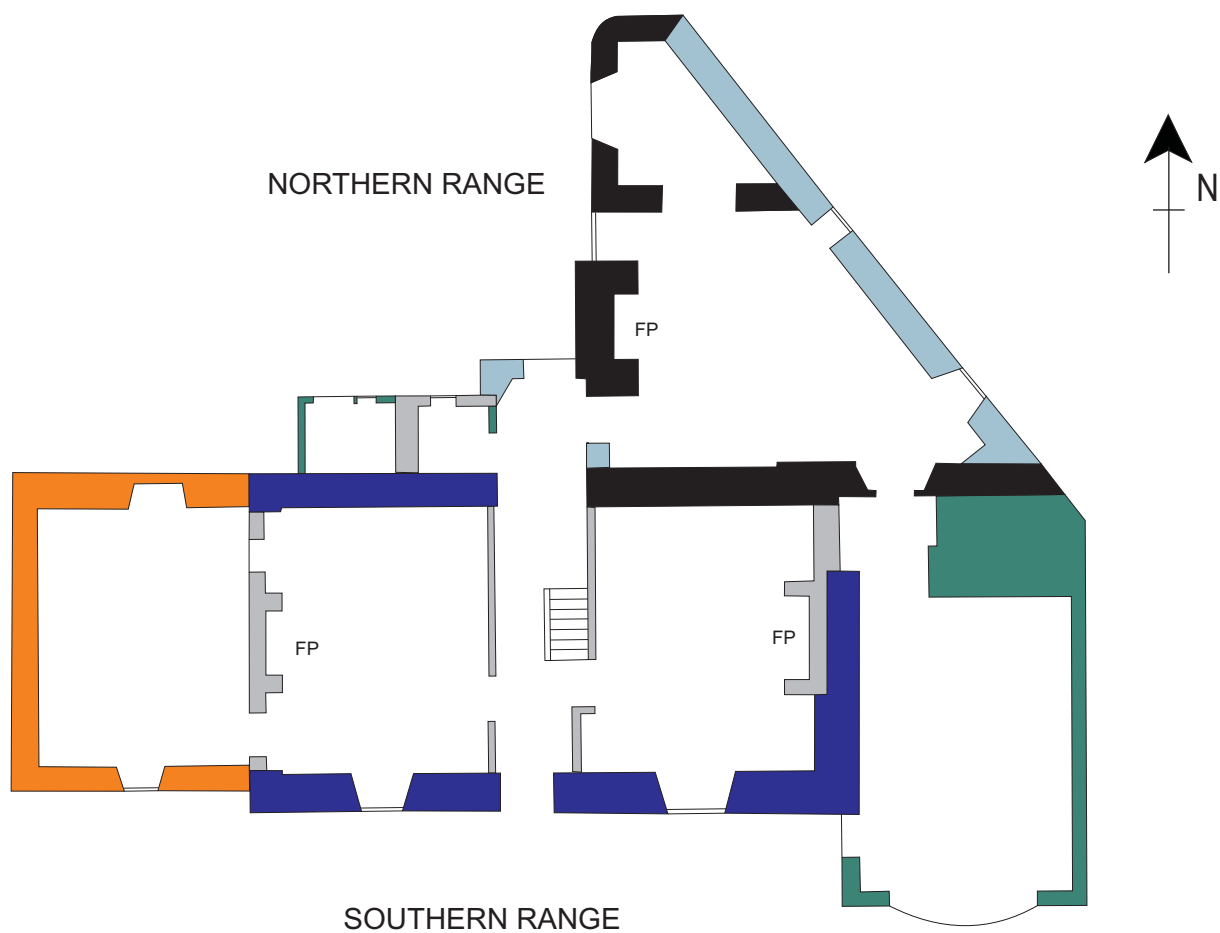
Brook Cottage, Preston, Torbay

TITLE

Fig. 5: Extract from the 25-inch
Ordnance Survey map,
published 1933



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Key	
	By 1840 (? 17th century)
	By 1840 (?18th century)
	By 1840 (?early 19th century)
	Late 19th century
	Early 20th century
	Late 20th century

Not to scale

PROJECT

Brook Cottage, Preston, Torbay

TITLE

Fig. 6: Phased ground-floor plan



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Plate 1: General view of the main elevation, looking north



Plate 2: General view of the cottage, showing the east elevation, looking south



Plate 3: The north elevation of the southern range, looking south



Plate 4: The west elevation of the northern range, looking east



Plate 5: An example of one of the simple panelled doors



Plate 6: An example of one of the panelled doors with simple moulding



Plate 7: The fireplace in the former kitchen, looking southeast



Plate 8: The fireplace and recesses in the former parlour, looking northwest



Plate 9: The fireplace in the northern range, looking west

Devon Office

AC archaeology Ltd
Unit 4, Halthaies Workshops
Bradninch
Nr Exeter
Devon
EX5 4LQ

Telephone/Fax: 01392 882410

Wiltshire Office

AC archaeology Ltd
Manor Farm Stables
Chicklade
Hindon
Nr Salisbury
Wiltshire
SP3 5SU

Telephone: 01747 820581
Fax: 01747 820440

www.acarchaeology.co.uk