

Building record of the former Woodcolliers Arms, Bewdley, Worcestershire



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Tim Cornah

Summary

Building recording was required to meet a planning condition relating to the redevelopment of the former Woodcolliers Arms public house, Bewdley, Worcestershire.

A brief for the works was produced by the Planning Advisory Section of Worcestershire County Council which specified that the buildings should be recorded to English Heritage standards. This required photographing the exterior and interior of the building and annotating existing survey drawings. This produced an archive of The Woodcolliers Arms before any changes were made to the building.

An element of historical research and synthesis was also carried out. Original records relating to The Woodcolliers Arms were studied at Worcestershire Archives along with historic maps. Census records were accessed along with digitised historic mapping, aerial photographs and other online sources.

Analysis of the buildings was based upon the recorded fabric and documentary research. The development of the buildings was reconstructed and illustrated on phased ground plans and elevations. These have been reproduced at the end of the report along with relevant photographs.

The buildings at the Woodcolliers Arms were a complex set of structures that dated from the 17th century, with changes and alterations up until the point of the pub's closure in 2016. In total, nine separate phases of these buildings were identified.

The earliest elements of the buildings dated to the 17th and 18th centuries, surviving within one of the cellars and as an element of a roof. Additional structures were added in the 18th and early 19th centuries as two houses forming the extant frontage of these buildings. These are thought to have functioned as a pub from around 1831 and were further extended to the south and west in the later 19th century, primarily adding accommodation.

The buildings saw extensive internal changes within the 1980s as part of a refurbishment, along a number of structural changes such as roof replacements.

Report

1 Background

1.1 Reasons for the project

Recording of a historic building was undertaken Woodcolliers Arms, Bewdley, Worcestershire (NGR SO 78385 75313). It was commissioned by Mr and Mrs Coleman, who propose the conversion of the public house to three residential dwellings for which a planning application has been submitted to Wyre Forest District Council (reference number 16/0007/FULL).

The building is a designated grade II listed heritage asset, within the terms used by the *National Planning Policy Framework*. The building is also registered with the Worcestershire Historic Environment Record (HER; WSM17651).

The project conforms to a brief prepared by Planning Advisory Section of Worcestershire County Council (WCC 2016) and for which a project proposal (including detailed specification) was produced (WA 2016).

The project also conforms to the *Standard and guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures* (ClfA 2014), *Standards and guidelines for archaeological projects in Worcestershire* (WCC 2010).

The event reference for this project, given by the HER is WSM67777.

2 Aims

The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists defines the aims of building recording as 'a programme of work intended to establish the character, history, dating, form and archaeological development of a specified building' (*Standard and guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures*, ClfA 2014a).

The aims and scope of the project, as detailed in the Brief (Section 3), are as follows:

- A programme of Archaeological Building Investigation and Recording to Historic England (formerly English Heritage) Level III standard is required prior to the conversion of the Public House in order to ensure the preservation by record of this designated heritage asset in its current form. The aim of this survey is to:
 - Provide a descriptive and illustrative account and interpretation of the public house, including discussion of its local, regional and national significance.
- A Level III record is defined as follows:-
 - '... An analytical record, and will comprise an introductory description followed by a systematic account of the buildings origins, development and use, The record will include an account of the evidence on which the analyses has been based, allowing the validity of the record to be re-examined in detail. It will also include all drawn and photographic records that may be required to illustrate the buildings appearance and structure to support an historical analysis'. (*Understanding Historic Buildings – A guide to good recording practice*. Historic England 2006 p. 14).

3 Methods

3.1 Personnel

The project was undertaken by Timothy Cornah (BA (hons.), MSc); who joined Worcestershire Archaeology in 2006. The project manager responsible for the quality of the project was Tom Rogers (BA (hons), MSc). Illustrations were prepared by Carolyn Hunt (BSc (hons.); PG Cert; MCIfA).

3.2 Documentary research

Prior to fieldwork commencing a search was made of the Historic Environment Record (HER).

3.3 List of sources consulted

Cartographic sources

- 1785 Plan of the Manor of Bewdley (WRO BA4600/737)
- c1830 Plan of Bewdley (WRO BA 965)
- 1837 Plan of the Borough of Bewdley (WRO BA5662/1)
- 1845 Tithe Map, Figure 2
- 1883 Ordnance Survey Map 1:10,560
- 1903 Ordnance Survey Map 1:10,560, Figure 2
- 1926 Ordnance Survey Map 1:10,560

Aerial photographs

- EPW03443 St Anne's Church and Welch Gate, Bewdley, 1930

Documentary sources

Published and grey literature sources are listed in the bibliography.

3.4 Fieldwork strategy

A detailed specification has been prepared by Worcestershire Archaeology (WA 201X).

Fieldwork was undertaken between 22nd and 23rd of February 2016. The site reference number and site code is WSM 17651.

Building recording consisted of a photographic survey of the interior and exterior of the buildings, analysis of their development and annotation of existing survey drawings. All photographs were taken with photographic scales visible in each shot. The photographic survey was carried out with a Sony α350 digital SLR camera. All photographs were recorded on a pro-forma Photographic Record Sheet. Annotation of existing ground plans and elevations, and completion of pro-forma Building Record, complemented the photographic record.

The project conformed to the specification for a level 3 survey as defined in the English Heritage document *Understanding historic buildings: a guide to good recording practice* (EH 2006). This level of survey is described as 'an analytical record' comprising of 'an introductory description followed by a systematic account of the buildings origins, development and use' (EH 2006). This required the following elements of survey.

Survey and drawings

- Plans of all main floors and elevations as existing (provided by client).

Photography

- Overall appearance of rooms and circulation areas.

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- Detailed coverage of the building's external appearance.
 - Any detail, structural or decorative, relevant to the building's design, development and use, which does not show on general photographs.

3.5 Building analysis

Analysis of the building was based on the study of the photographic record, building recording forms and annotated drawings. It was also informed by the documentary sources listed above. This allowed plans to be drawn up showing the structural development of the building.

The building as recorded is depicted in Plates 1-47. Ground plans, phase plans and an elevation have been reproduced as Figures 3-4.

3.6 Statement of confidence in the methods and results

The methods adopted allow a relatively high degree of confidence that the aims of the project have been achieved. Having said this, the buildings retained internal wall coverings such as plaster and paint, so a large amount of the buildings fabric could not be closely inspected. It is possible that there are other elements of structures contained within these buildings that were not apparent at the time of recording.

4 Context

The town of Bewdley stands on the west bank of the River Severn a slopes from a height of about 90m AOD on its western side, down to the river which is at a height of about 20m AOD. The bedrock geology of the west of Bewdley is Etruria Formation with Bridgnorth Sandstone Formation in the east.

The town has been the subject of a of a recent(?) study (Buteux 1996), from which the following summary derives. Although Bewdley (Beaulieu) is not mentioned by name until 1304, the manor may have been in existence by 1086 when Wribbenhall was recorded in the Domesday survey. A ferry was operating across the Severn by 1336. An early focal point, Wyre Hill, occupies the higher ground to the west and a market was granted here in 1376. The market place in Load Street probably dates to the mid-15th century. The focus of the town probably shifted from the hill to the west towards the river when the first bridge was built in 1447. The town prospered during the 16th and 17th centuries as a result of its value as an inland port linking the Upper Severn Valley, the Black Country and Bristol and its exploitation of the natural resources of the Wyre Forest. Its importance for trans-shipment of goods was enhanced by connections with Wales and the West Country in the 18th century. The development of the canal system reduced the town's importance but this relative decline led to the excellent preservation of the form and structure of elements of the medieval and post-medieval town.

Ten buildings of known medieval date are to be found in Wyre Hill, Sandy Bank, Welch Gate, High Street, Lax Lane and Wribbenhall. By the 17th century the use of brick was supplementing the medieval timber-framed building tradition (Morriss in Buteux 1992-6).

The following summary of the buildings contemporary with the construction of Wood Colliers Arms is derived from the Worcestershire Historic Environment Record (HER) data, unless stated otherwise. The HER data was searched within a 500m radius of the site and contained 230 listed buildings and a further 62 unlisted buildings along with numerous monuments and archaeological events. Buildings within the vicinity of the Welch Gate and Wyre hill were prioritised. Selected monuments were also considered for this summary.

To the west, south and north in proximity to Wood Colliers Arms along Sandy Bank and Welch Gate are a number of properties which were either already standing and underwent some alteration or were built around the same time (17th to 18th century). The earliest of these is 38 and 39 Sandy Bank (WSM17635) a late 15th-century house, now divided, which was extended in the late 18th century. Numbers 5 and 6 Sandy Bank (WSM17637) comprises a late-17th century one-

storey building on basement with attic. 6 and 7 Sandy Bank (WSM10817) comprises an early 18th-century two-storey brick building. A number of two-storey buildings with attics such as 43, 44, and 45 Welch Gate (WSM 17645) exist and date to the early 18th-century. Of these, number 43 has a brick corner fireplace similar to that at the Woodcolliers Arms, as outlined below.

Numbers 41 and 42 Welch Gate (WSM17644), 38 Welch Gate (WSM17643) are mid-18th century whereas numbers 73 and 74 Welch Gate (WSM17652) and 53 Winbrook (WSM17654) are all late 18th-century. 43 and 44 Sandy Bank (WSM17752) were an 18th-century 2-bay unit. They may be the survival of an 18th-century timber-framed hall house which included some re-used timber elements. To the south-east is 79 Welch Gate and 1 and 2 Sandy Bank (WSM17636) and 80 Welch Gate (WSM10843) which formed a four-bay timber framed building of probable late 15th-century date re-fronted in the late 18th century.

To the east along south of Welch Gate can be found numbers 81 and 82 (WSM17650) a two-storey mid-18th century brick dwelling; number 84 (WSM10844) an early 18th century dwelling re-fronted in the late 18th century; 85 (WSM17649) a late 18th-century brick dwelling; 87 and 88 (WSM17648) a mid-18th-century two-storey brick dwelling with attic; 89 and 90 (WSM17647) an early eighteenth century two-storey brick dwelling; 91 (WSM10845) and 92 (WSM10846) an early 17th century two storey timber-framed dwelling with brick infill re-fronted in the 19th century; 93 (WSM17646) a late 18th-century two-storey dwelling with attic. At the east end in Load Street number 40 (WSM10742) is an early 17th-century three-storey timber framed dwelling; 37 (WSM33126) an 18th century brick public house and 35-36 (WSM10740) is an early 17th-century three-storey timber framed dwelling.

On the north side of Welch Gate the earliest extant buildings are timber-framed dwellings of the late 16th century; numbers 8 (WSM10830) and 9 (WSM10831), and the 17th century; number 7 (WSM10829) and number 5 (WSM10827). Much of the rest of this row, built in brick, dates to the later 18th century: number 18 (WSM10840), 17 (WSM10839), 12 (WSM10834), 11 (WSM10833), 10 (WSM10832), 4 (WSM10826), 3 (WSM10825), 2 (WSM10824) and 1 (WSM10823). Numbers 16 (WSM10838), 14 (WSM10836) and 13 (WSM10835) may date to earlier in the 18th century. Most of these buildings have undergone notable alteration during the last two centuries. Number 10 Welch Gate also contains a brick corner fireplace.

Wyre Hill is thought to be an early urban focus with several timber-framed buildings of the 15th century. Numbers 1-4 (WSM10798) with three framed bays was originally two houses, 12-14 (WSM41838) also three framed bays, 19 (WSM10803) a two-storey dwelling and 50 a two storey structure. A number of brick buildings are of the 18th century: number 5 (WSM10801), 6 (WSM10802), 9-10 (WSM41836), 15 (WSM41839), 46 (WSM17657), 52, (WSM10806), 53 (WSM17660) and 56-58 (WSM17661).

Within the immediate vicinity of the Woodcolliers Arms were two further buildings that are likely to have been of significance to the economy of an inn. The first was a toll house with gate to its east at the top of the Welch Gate. This shown on the 1845 tithe map, Figure 3, as well as in a photograph, probably dating to the late 19th century (Purcell, Purcell and Hobson 1996). The site of this toll house and gate would make the Woodcolliers Arms one of the last inns before paying the final turnpike road charge upon entering the town from the west. A further building is shown on the tithe map to the east of the Woodcolliers Arms that is suggested to have been a stable (Coleman 2015). The stabling of horses is likely to have been important for an inn though it is not certain that they were used by the inn discussed here.

To the west of Structure 2 was a timber framed building shown in a late 19th century photograph (Purcell, Purcell and Hobson 1996). This was in the position of number 50 Sandy Bank, as discussed by Coleman (2015). The framing of this building suggest that it was of 17th century date at least and aligned east to west along sandy bank. It was demolished in the 1920s.

5 The building

5.1 Historical information

Historical information relating to the building has been collated previously (Coleman 2015) and will not be repeated here. Coleman notes that Structure 3 of Phase 4, as discussed below, was previously known as Well House and may not have been part of the inn. A well is shown in front of the house in a photograph in the 1880s, immediately in front of the railings (Purcell, Purcell and Hobson 1996).

The occupiers and publicans of this building have been researched elsewhere. Scaplehorn (2004) suggests that the building became a pub in 1831 and was at this point called the Black Boy. It was known as the Woodcolliers Arms from 1871 and its occupiers were named as both inn keepers and victuallers up to 1901.

The building is grade II listed and is described as follows:

Wood Colliers Arms public house and attached railings 2.10.75 GV II Probably three houses, now public house. Probably late 18th century with early 19th century and some mid 20th century alterations. Pebble dashed brick and brick with hipped slate roof. Main front to east, with house incorporated to rear, and store-room to left. Two storeys, central gable end to right, gabled storeroom projects to left, dentilled brick cornice; two windows: 4-pane sash to left 9-pane sash to right; ground floor: to left two 4-pane sashes flank an entrance with wooden architrave and panelled door, to right a glazing bar sash under flat arch with stepped voussoirs, to right-hand corner an entrance approached by two brick steps with overlight, stepped voussoirs to head and a half-glazed door. Railings to front are of wrought iron with spearheads and acorn finials to the standards (NHLE 1348313)

5.2 Building development

5.2.1 Phase 1:17th to 18th century

The earliest standing structure within these buildings was Structure 9, [this](#) was a cellar complete with a fireplace within its north-west corner (*Plate 4*). This structure was dated by the dimensions of the bricks which are about 2 and third inches in width and the style of the corner fireplace which is seen in some other buildings of 18th century date in Bewdley. The walls within this room had been refaced within subsequent phases using wider bricks, and in places these coverings were hiding stone constructed elements of wall, particularly in the western wall. It is possible that these stone elements were part of an earlier structure. A raised brick plinth (*Plate 5*) is likely to have been for later barrel storage. This brick plinth partially covered a blocked doorway which led into an open space to the north.

How structure 9 related to any other buildings is unclear, though it was built with a first floor, as seen from the chimney breast which extends through the Phase 5 Structure 11 (*Plate 7*). There were no certain surviving roof or wall elements above the level of the cellar, though three horizontally set timbers built into Phase 2 Structure 12 may have related to the building, possibly being first floor joists (*Plate 8*). It is also possible that the wall below these related to Structure 9, though this could not be clearly asserted. Structure 9 may have been part of the 17th Century building suggested to have been part of number 50 Sandy Bank, as discussed in section 4.

Within the western wall of Structure 2, some elements of stone were visible in a small test hole. It is not clear as to which building this related.

5.2.2 Phase 2 18th century

Structure 12 was built to the east of Structure 9, as seen by a set of common rafters (*Plate 9*). This roof ran in a broadly north to south direction, and is likely to have been lower than that of Structure 9. This roof only survived on its western side and no gables remained. An approximate projection of this roof line can be seen on Figure 4. The common rafters were of oak, horizontally set and had been converted by pit saw and hewing. They were originally attached to the wall plate using

large square headed nails (*Plate 10*) and were attached to a purlin using the same method. Neither of the original wall plate or purlin survived but the nails show their positions. This type of roof construction is likely to be of an 18th century date, as the common rafters of 17th century buildings were more usually attached using wooden pegs. A 19th century roof is more likely to have had vertically set timber and machine conversion.

Whether the wall on the western side of Structure 12 (*Plate 9*) relates to this or structure 9 is unclear. The timbers visible may relate to a timber framed wall.

It is unknown exactly how Structure 12 related to Structure 1 as discussed below, either in terms of exact date or in terms of building fabric as the evidence had been removed.

5.2.3 Phase 3 Mid to late 18th century

Structure 1 (*Plate 11*) was originally (?) a house that faced east down Welch Gate is likely to have been added within the mid to late 18th century. This was a brick building of at least 1 bay, though may have had more where the later Structures 2 and 3 were constructed. It was aligned broadly north to south with its central doorway being flanked by a window to its north that was of a shape not un-typical of an 18th century house. It had a further first floor window. The windows themselves are 19th century replacements. The window to the south of the door was added later, possibly during Phase 9.

The extant fire place at the northern end of the ground floor room (*Plate 12*) was an addition associated with Structure 3. It is possible the original fireplace was located at the southern end of this room, where the wall was later removed (*Plate 13*). This position is suggested by a chimney stack visible on a photograph, probably of the late 19th century (Purcell, Purcell and Hobson 1996), and was broadly in this position. The original floor joists were visible within this room (*Plate 14*) though had been truncated on their western end for an unknown reason. A further staircase previously existed at the southern end of this room, though this probably related to Phase 6. How the first floor was accessed was unclear. This structure had one first floor room (*Plate 15*) later divided. It had no known fireplace and had only one known window facing to the east. The floor above this room (*Plate 16*) is likely to have been a Phase 8 replacement as is the roof. It is therefore difficult to assess whether this structure had an attic room. The owner suggests that this building had a slightly lower roof than that of Structure 3 (Coleman pers comm) though the dentilled eaves detailing visible from the outside suggest that they at least had the same wall plate level (*Plate 11*). The overall form and appearance of this building is domestic.

5.2.4 Phase 4 Late 18th century to 1845

Structure 3 is likely to have been added to the northern end of Structure 1 in the late 18th century. It is clearly shown on the 1845 Tithe Map, Figure 3.

This building was shown on a photograph dating to the 1880s (Purcell, Purcell and Hobson 1996) and had a central door with sash windows on both sides and further windows above these. It had a chimney on its northern end, is shown un-rendered and constructed with Flemish Bond brickwork and continued the dentilled eaves of Structure 1. The building was truncated in Phase 7 with its corner being cut off from the right hand side of the door (*Plate 17*).

The ground floor was split originally into two rooms, probably either side of a passageway, though this only remained on one side (*Plate 18* and *Plate 19*). Both of these had fireplaces, and a further one was added into Structure 1. Below the southern room was a cellar which was constructed from brick on its east and west walls but stone on its northern and southern walls. The stone walls were later additions to the brick structures (*Plate 21*). The cellar had steps leading up a passage in the north-west corner that probably led into the northern room. It is likely that the original staircase to the first floor was above this.

The cellar also had a chute added from the front of the building at a later date (*Plate 20*) and a low wall ran along the southern and eastern sides, respecting the chute. In the context of a pub this

feature is likely to have for keeping barrels off the ground. These barrels were probably lowered in through the chute.

The first floor of this building was entirely remodelled during Phase 7 with the roof having been replaced and what was probably originally two first floor rooms being turned into one (*Plate 22*). The floors were replaced in Phase 8.

5.2.5 Phase 5 1845 to 1883

Structure 7 was added to the west of Structure 3 between the time of the 1845 Tithe map and the 1883 OS map, along with structures 5 and 6.

Structure 7 was also aligned north-south, with two low arch-headed windows visible on the first and second floors (*Plate 23*). It was constructed from brick using an English Garden bond and had a tile roof, though this was a Phase 8 replacement. It had one associated chimney stack with two pots visible. Chimney breasts remained on the first and second floors (*Plate 24*). It would therefore appear that the ground floor room had no fireplace and may have been used as storage for the inn. The Phase 8 changes removed much of the evidence of exterior doors, apart from one blocked doorway next to the stairs (*Plate 25*). A formerly exterior window is also visible within this wall. A further doorway led into Structure 10 which was a vaulted brick cellar fitted with raised areas for barrel storage (*Plate 26*). This underbuilt Structure 12 from Phase 2. Whilst this was not closely dateable, it is likely to have been broadly contemporary with Structure 7.

How the first floor of Structure 7 was accessed is unclear given later alteration, its staircase was probably close to those seen on the first floor which retained the original position (*Plate 27*). The first floor probably only had one room as the wall next to the extant staircase was of light stud construction. This and the room above are likely to have been bedrooms (*Plate 24* and *Plate 28*).

Structure 6 was added after Structure 7 and was also brick constructed with three rooms over three floors. This was a self-contained structure originally, as shown by the fact that the only extant access onto the first floor was from Structure 8, which was not built until Phase 8. This suggests that there was either an internal staircase or the first floor was accessed from separate stairs from the yard, which seems unlikely. The ground floor room was accessed from a doorway facing onto the street (*Plate 29*) whilst the first and second floor rooms were bedrooms (*Plate 30* and *Plate 31*). Whilst the fireplace at ground floor level was a later addition (*Plate 32*) it was probably constructed soon after the structure. It was of a width that is suitable to have held a range.

Structure 5 was a small joining structure was built between structures 4, 7 and 6 (*Plate 33*). How this changed the internal layout is unknown given the Phase 8 changes within this area.

5.2.6 Phase 6 1883 to 1903

Structure 2 is not depicted on the 1883 OS map but can be clearly seen in 1903. It was also shown on an undated photograph, probably late 19th century [date](#)(Purcell, Purcell and Hobson 1996). It was a small brick built structure on the southern end of Structure 1 with a hipped tile roof on the east end, but gabled on the west end (*Plate 34* and *Plate 35*). It was accessed externally from a now blocked door in the east end and a further door in the south side. The door in the east end was at the internal floor height of Structure 1 and its lintel was situated at a height of about half way up the southern door. This height discrepancy was solved in Phase 8 by the addition of a mezzanine level when it was converted into a kitchen, though how it was laid out originally is unclear (*Plate 36* and *Plate 37*). The blocked door had a fireplace immediately behind it, as shown by a late 19th century photograph (Purcell, Purcell and Hobson 1996). The southern door had windows either side, with further windows above that were part of a second floor room (*Plate 38*) and also formerly had a window on the east end. This was probably accessed through Structure 1. The function of this building may well have been commerce or industry given its lack of first floor heating. A sliding door can be seen on the western gable of the property in 1948 and it was substantially rebuilt in around 1985 (Coleman 2015).

5.2.7 Phase 7 1903 to 1920s

Structure 4 consisted of the destruction and rebuild of the northern end of Structure 3 for the realignment of Welch Gate. This change certainly happened after the 1903 OS map but before a photograph taken in the 1920s (Coleman 2015). It consisted of a curved gable wall (*Plate 39*) with windows that continued the style of Structure 3 on the first and second floors. New fireplaces were added on the first and second floors, replacing that which had been removed (*Plate 40*). The roof of Structure 3 was removed at this time with two new roof trusses being added over a single first floor room which with the earlier divisions having been removed (*Plate 22*). A vent was added in the roof, presumably to allow smoke out, clearly suggesting the use of this space as part of the pub (*Plate 17*).

The sash windows of Structure 3 were also changed at this time given that they are the same style with the same catches (*Plate 41*).

5.2.8 Phase 8 1920s to 1980s

Structure 11 was probably built during this phase, but was not closely dateable by style. It appears not to have been built by the time of an aerial photograph in 1930 (EPW03443), as this appears to show two small roofs which would be consistent with structures 9 and 12. However, this photograph is far from clear and this structure could relate to either of the preceding two phases. It is clearly shown on a photograph of the within the 1930s (Purcell, Purcell and Hobson 1996). It consisted of a brick built structure butting Structure 7 with a gable on its north and south sides (*Plate 42*). It was split into two rooms which had two separate levels, the eastern room of which was accessed from Structure 7 (*Plate 43* and *Plate 44*). After a later alteration, it also had an external door (*Plate 42*). How the western room was accessed is unclear given that the extant staircase led in from the later Structure 8 (*Plate 9*). There was a possible blocked door within the south west corner of the eastern room, though this would have required a set of stairs from within the eastern room, as there was no evidence for former stairs at this point within Structure 9 below. Both of these rooms may have had doors in the southern gable which was later rebuilt. Whether these led into the 17th century structure or not is unknown given that this as the photographic evidence suggests this was removed within the 1920s (Purcell, Purcell and Hobson 1996). The function of these rooms is likely to have been commercial of some form as the eastern room was unheated and it is likely that the Structure 9 chimney was also blocked by this point.

5.2.9 Phase 9 1980s to present

The latter half of the 20th century saw a number of significant changes including the addition of a flat roofed toilet structure that filled in the former yard area (*Plate 45* and *Plate 46*). This probably dated to significant renovations dating to the 1980s (Coleman 2015). Whilst the extant bar area probably remained from an earlier phase, this was extended at this time as seen by the steel joists that were partially covered by imitation woodwork (*Plate 47*). This created a single open space from the doorway of Structure 3, extending as far as Structure 6. The imitation timber framing seen through many of the structures also dates to this time (*Plate 40*). The set of staircase leading away from structure 8 is of this date along with the staircase into the western room of Structure 11 (*Plate 9*). The roofs of Structures 1, 2, 6 and 7 were also changed at this time, as shown by their modern thin scantling timbers.

6 Discussion

The town of Bewdley grew up to some extent from the settlement to west of the Woodcolliers Arms on Wyre Hill. The current core of Bewdley developed from the 15th century and reached its peak within the 18th century when the town was increasingly linked with trade from the west and became a thriving river port town. The 18th century nature of the town is well represented by an extensive number of buildings of this period.

The buildings of represented at the Woodcolliers Arms to some extent predate Bewdley's 18th century development, as seen by a single cellar of 17th century date that may have related to a

demolished building of similar date to its south. A further small building was added in the 18th century, of which only the roof is known to partially survive.

The 18th and early 19th centuries saw the addition of two structures that faced east onto Welch Gate, the latter of which was known as Well House. These buildings are consistent in style with a number of other such structures in the town of this date appear to have been domestic in character. It was not until 1831 that a pub or inn was suggested to have been on the site, and is thought to have been called the Black Boy. By 1871, it was known as the Woodcolliers Arms.

Trade from the west is likely to have been directly important to the Woodcolliers Arms. Given its position immediately outside of a 19th century toll house and gate, it is likely to have been one of the last inns before payment was required to use a turnpike road.

Two further additional structures and some internal changes were seen in the late 19th century that consisted of extra accommodation and a beer cellar. Within the early 20th century, the north end of the building was truncated to fit with a realignment of the Welch Gate and at this time some internal changes were made, including the addition of a large first floor room, complete with new roof trusses. At some point, the two small 17th and 18th century structures were covered by a single structure that may have been used for commercial storage.

The late 20th century changes consisted mainly the opening up of the ground floor in the 1980s to make a larger bar area and the re-roofing of a number of the structures. Much of the internal appearance of the pub relates to this period with features such as faux timber frame effect decorations having been added. A toilet block was also added at the rear at this time. These buildings continued in use as a pub up until its closure in early 2016.

7 Publication summary

Worcestershire Archaeology has a professional obligation to publish the results of archaeological projects within a reasonable period of time. To this end, Worcestershire Archaeology intends to use this summary as the basis for publication through local or regional journals. The client is requested to consider the content of this section as being acceptable for such publication.

Building recording was undertaken on behalf of Roger Coleman at Woodcolliers Arms, Bewdley, Worcestershire (NGR SO 78385 75313; HER WSM WSM67777).

The buildings at the Woodcolliers Arms were a complex set of structures that dated from the 17th century, with changes and alterations up until the point of the pubs closure in 2016. In total, nine separate phases of these buildings were identified.

The earliest elements of the buildings dated to the 17th and 18th centuries, as seen within one of the cellars and a surviving element of a roof. These were added to in the 18th and early 19th centuries by two houses remaining clearly visible as the extant frontage of these buildings. These are thought to have functioned as a pub from around 1831 and were further extended to the south and west in the later 19th century, primarily adding accommodation.

The buildings saw extensive internal changes within the 1980s as part of a refurbishment, along a number of structural changes such as roof replacements.

8 Acknowledgements

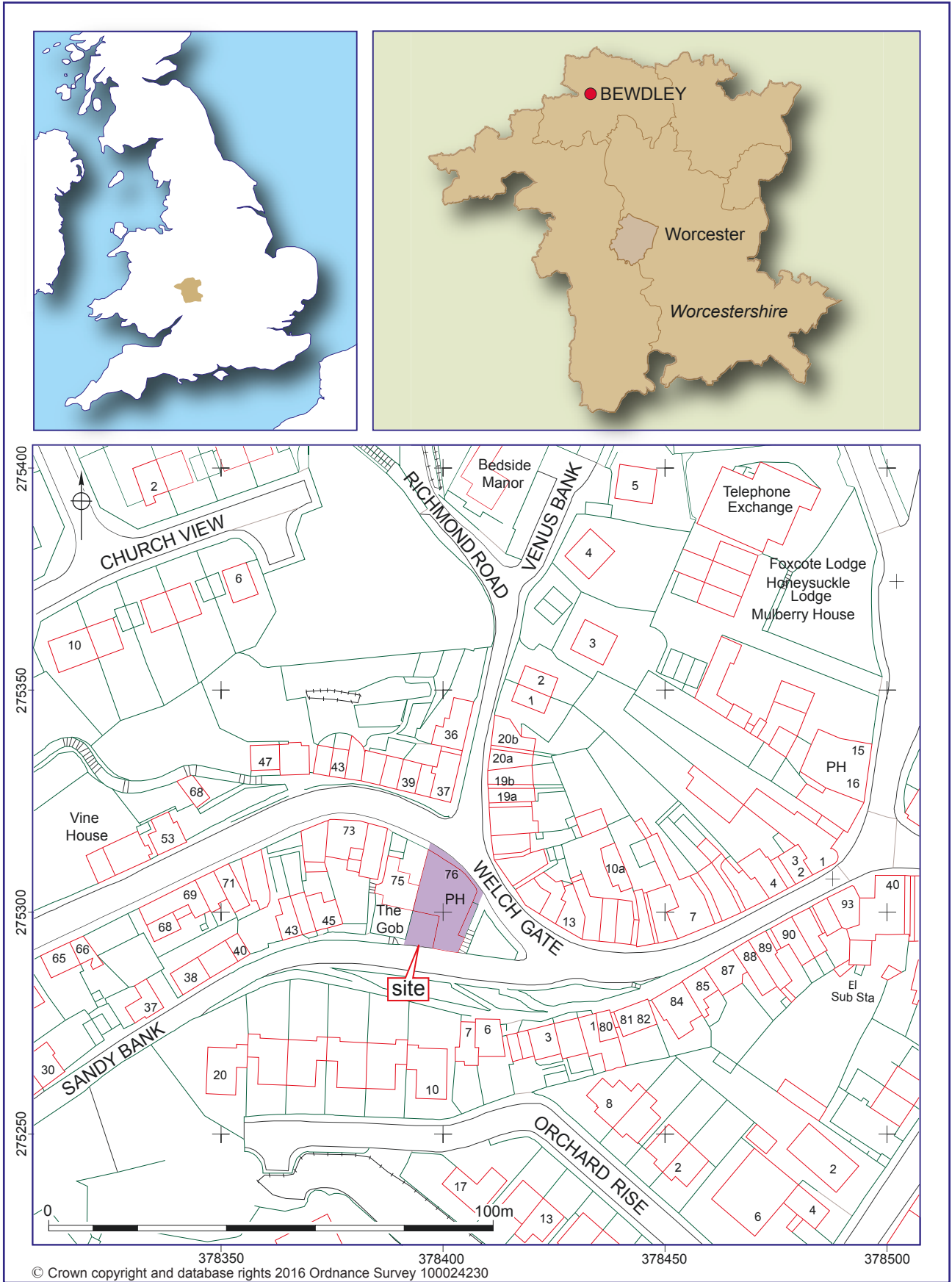
Worcestershire Archaeology would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project, Roger Coleman and Adrian Scruby the Historic Environment Planning Advisor for Worcestershire County Council.

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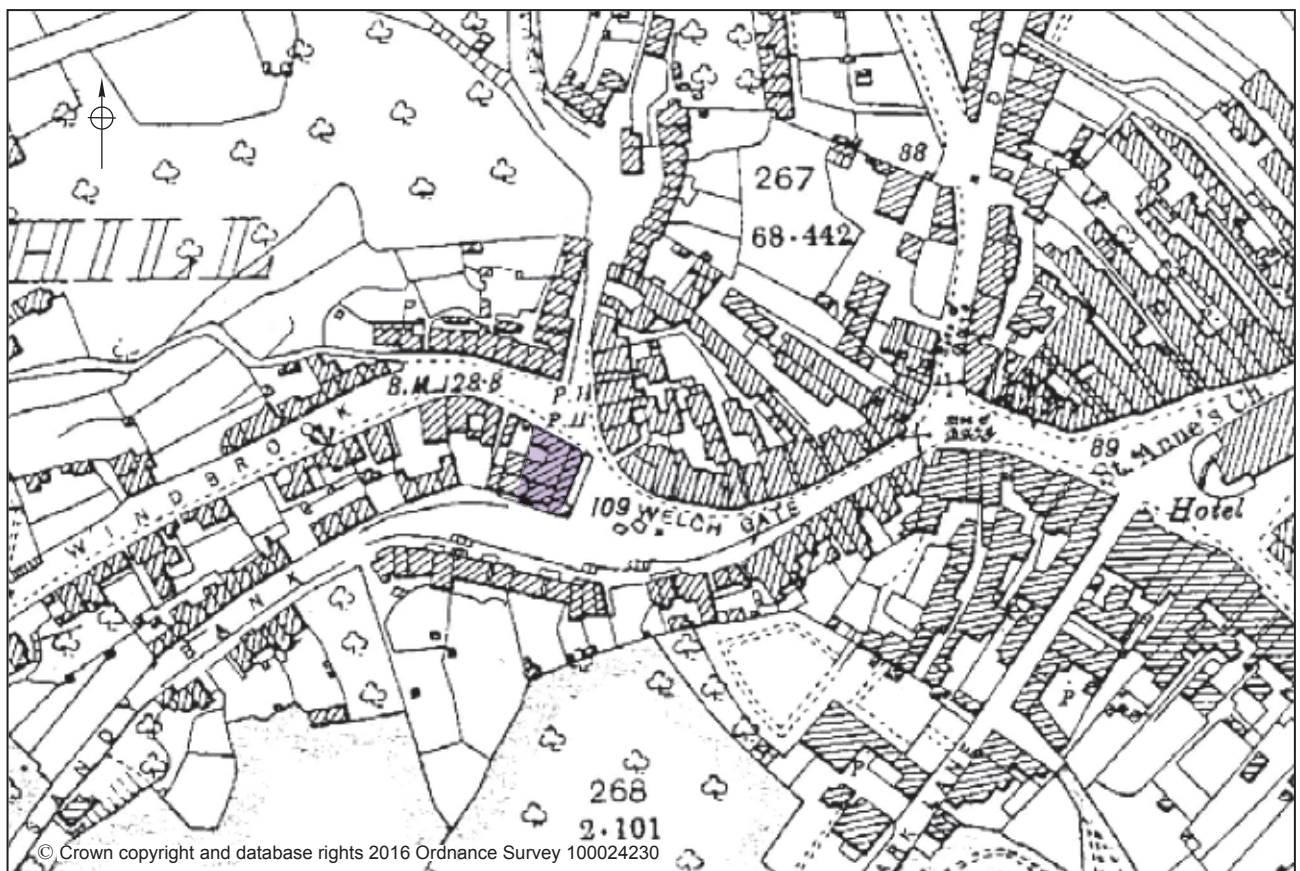
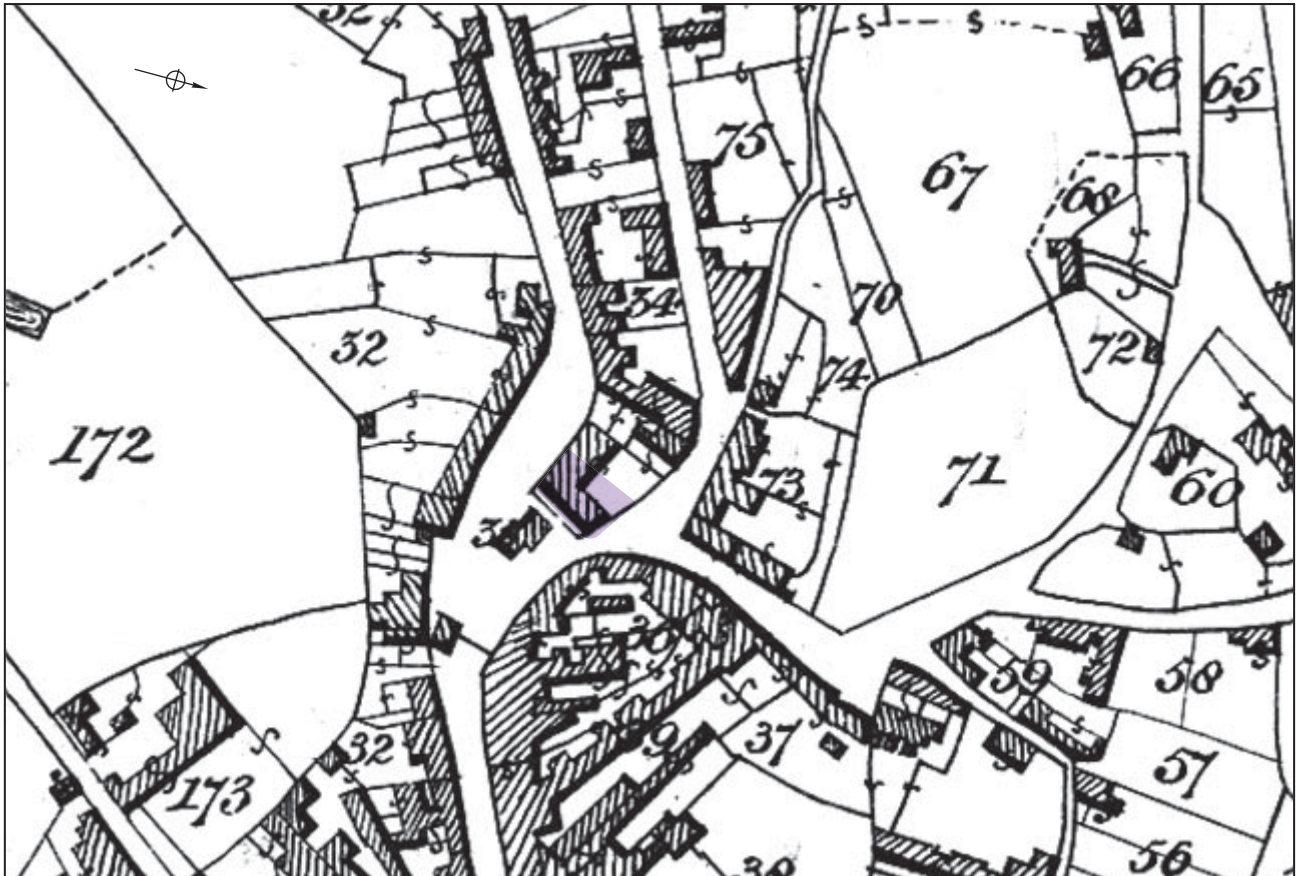
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Figures



Location of the site

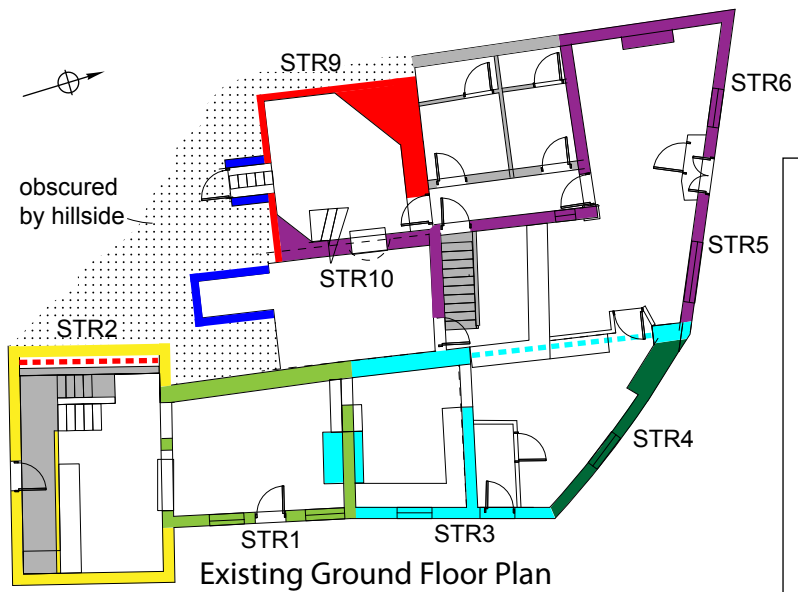
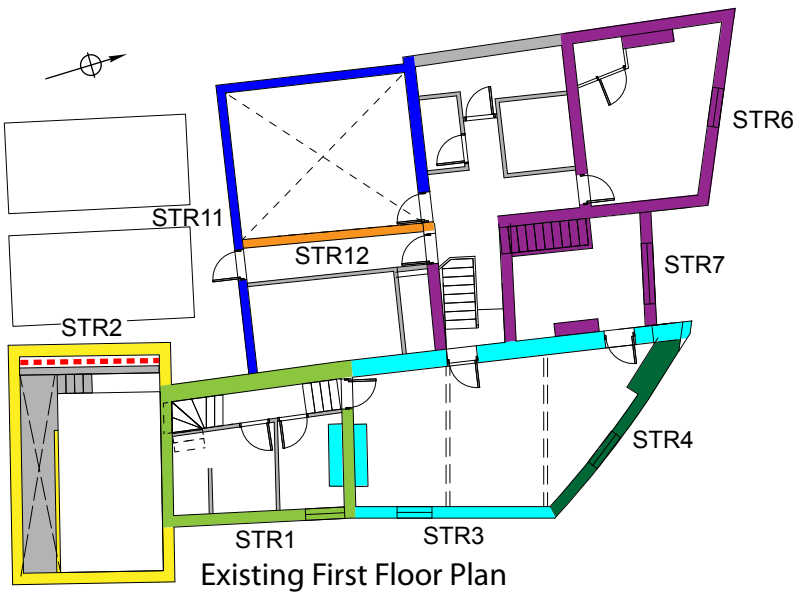
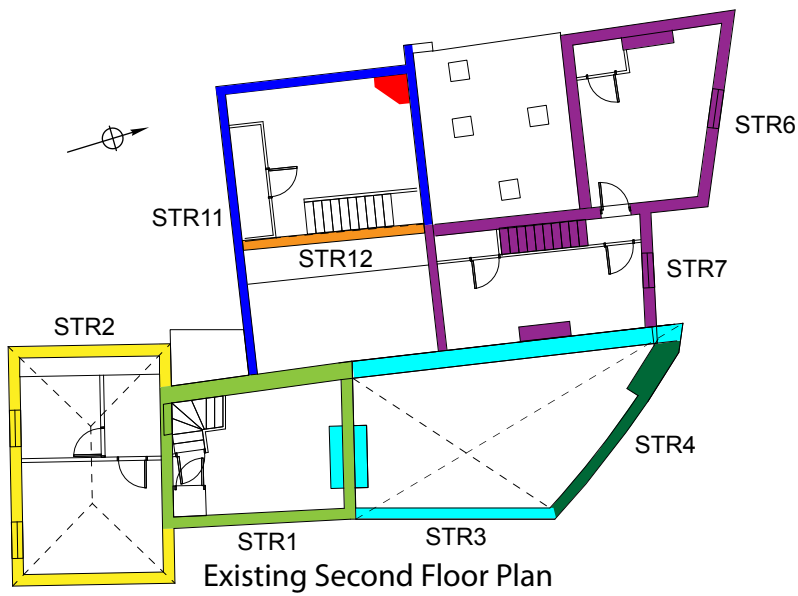
Figure 1



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Extract from 1845 Tithe (above) and 1903 OS

Figure 2

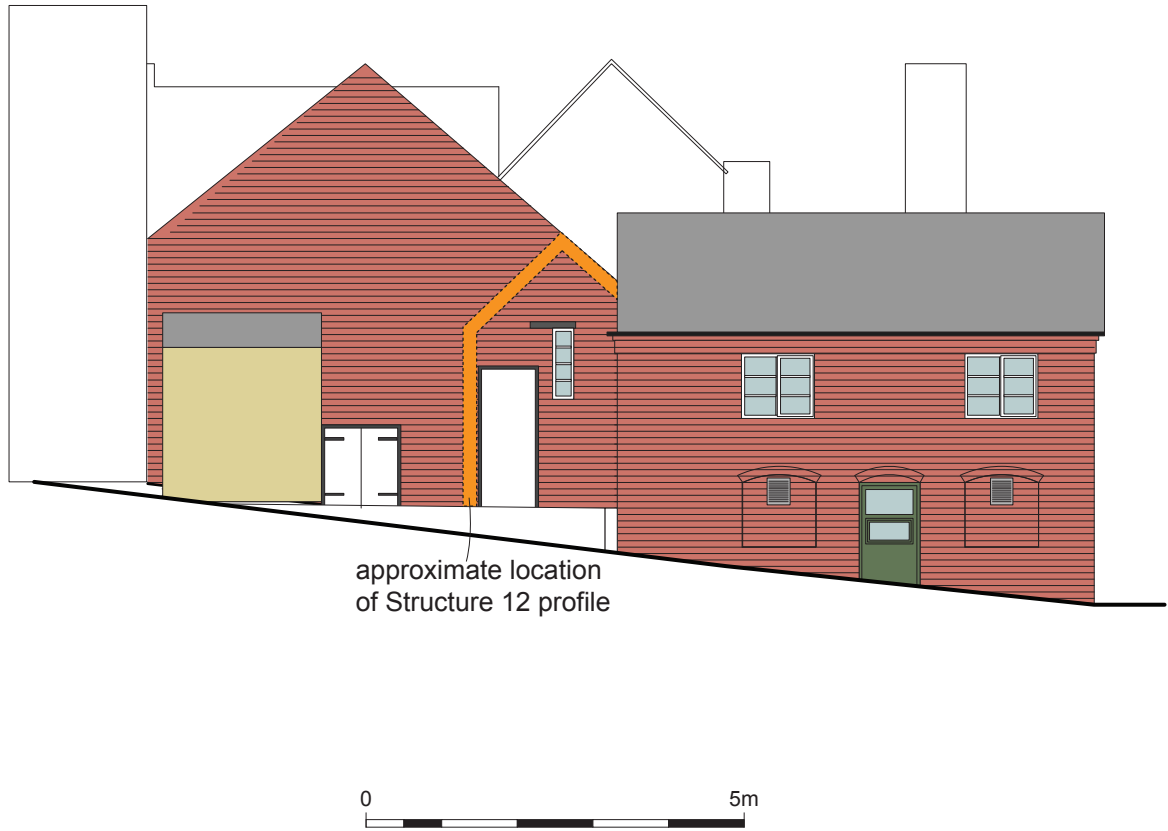


KEY	
■	Phase 1: 17th to 18th century
■	Phase 2: 18th century
■	Phase 3: mid to late 18th century
■	Phase 4: late 18th century to 1845
■	Phase 5: 1845 to 1883
■	Phase 6: 1883 to 1903
■	Phase 7: 1903 to 1920s
■	Phase 8: 1920s to 1980s
■	Phase 9: 1980s to present

Phase plans (based upon R&A Developments Drg No 100)

Figure 3

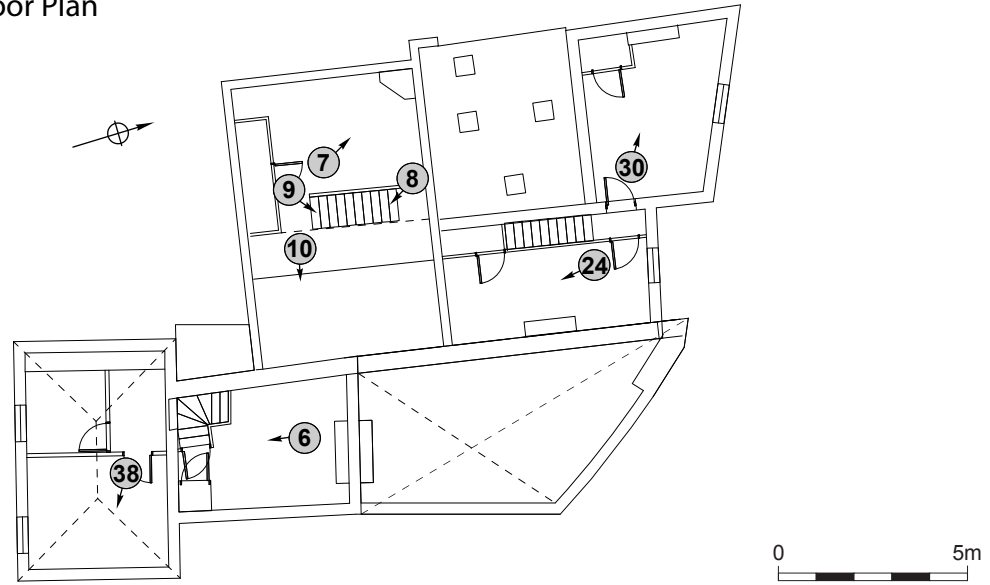
Existing Side Elevation Towards Wyre Hill



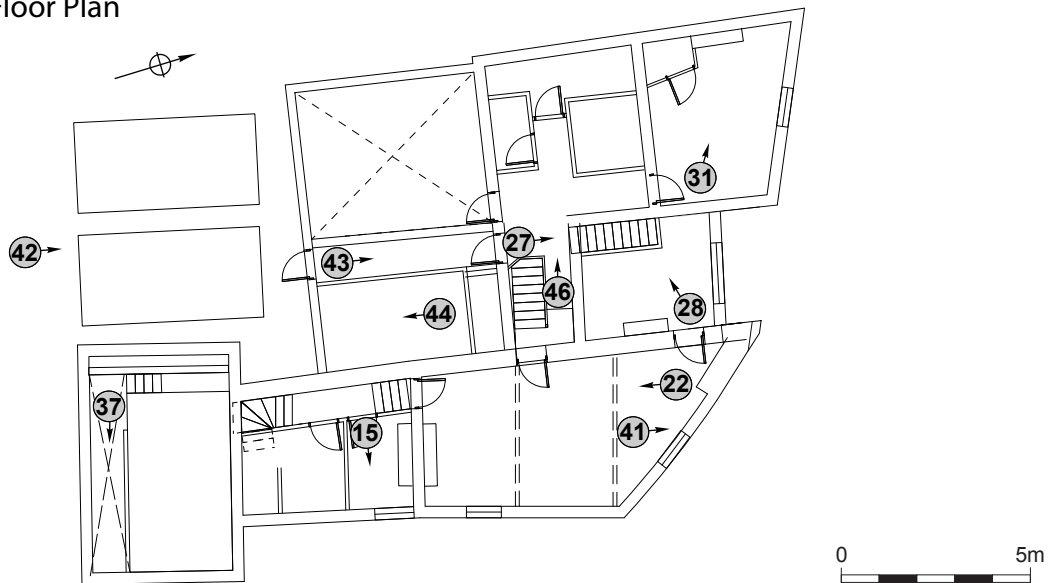
Projection of Structure 12 profile (based upon R&A Developments Drg No 101)

Figure 4

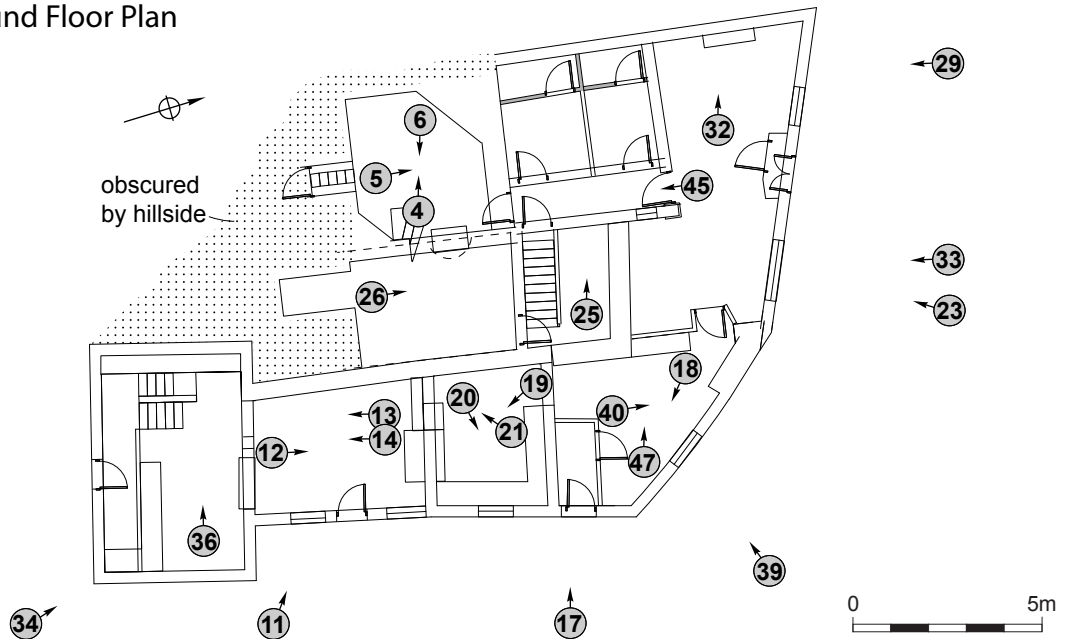
Existing Second Floor Plan



Existing First Floor Plan



Existing Ground Floor Plan



Photolocations (based upon R&A Developments Drg No 100)

Figure 5

Plates



Plate 1 Woodcolliers Arms and Welch Gate, looking west



Plate 2 Woodcolliers Arms and Sandy Lane, looking east



Plate 3 Woodcolliers Arms and Winbrook, looking south-east



Plate 4 Phase 1 Structure 9, looking north-west



Plate 5 Phase 1 Structure 9, looking north



Plate 6 Phase 1 Structure 9, looking south-east



Plate 7 Phase 1 Structure 9, looking north-west



Plate 8 Phase 2 Structure 12, looking south-west



Plate 9 Phase 2 Structure 12, looking north-east



Plate 10 Phase 2 Structure 12, looking east



Plate 11 Phase 3 Structure 1, looking north-west



Plate 12 Phase 3 Structure 1, looking north



Plate 13 Phase 3 Structure 1, looking south-east



Plate 14 Phase 3 Structure 1, looking south-east



Plate 15 Phase 3 Structure 1, looking east



Plate 16 Phase 3 Structure 1, looking sout



Plate 17 Phase 4 Structure 3, looking west



Plate 18 Phase 4 Structure 3, looking south-east



Plate 19 Phase 4 Structure 3, looking south-east



Plate 20 Phase 4 Structure 3, looking north-east



Plate 21 Phase 4 Structure 3, looking south

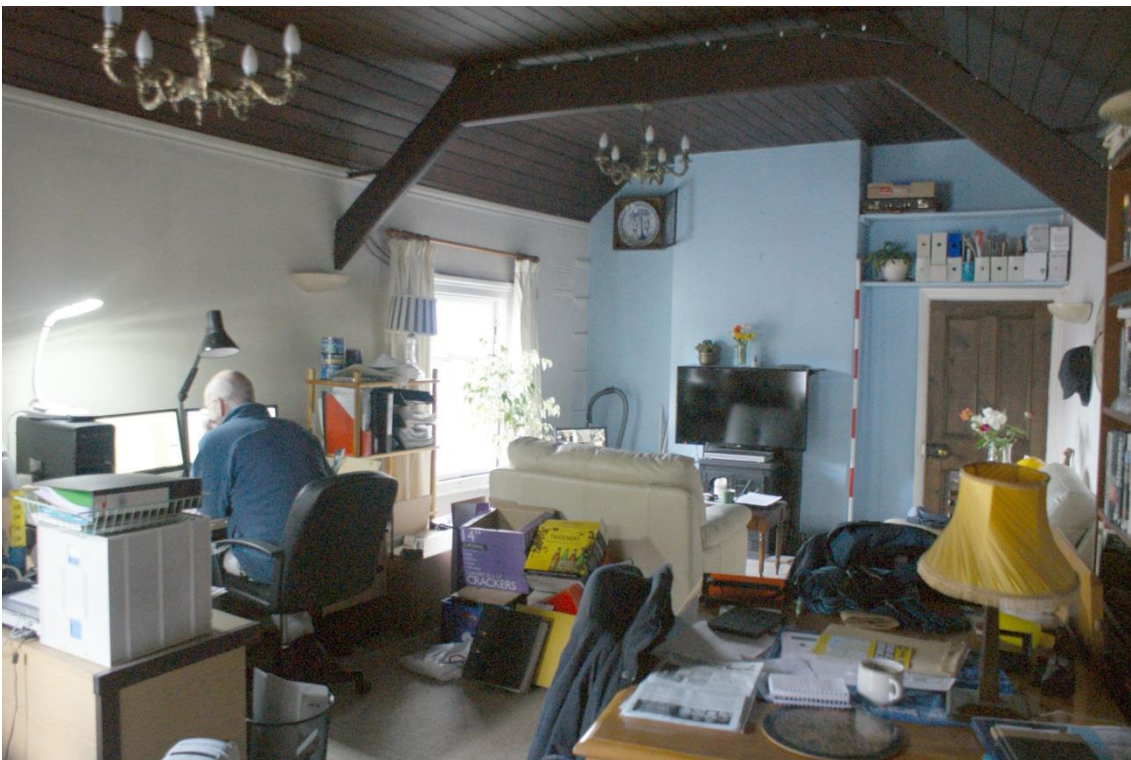


Plate 22 Phase 4 Structure 3, looking south



Plate 23 Phase 5 Structure 7, looking south-west



Plate 24 Phase 5 Structure 7, looking south



Plate 25 Phase 5 Structure 7, looking west



Plate 26 Phase 5 Structure 10, looking north



Plate 27 Phase 5 Structure 7, looking north



Plate 28 Phase 5 Structure 7, looking west



Plate 29 Phase 5 Structure 6, looking south



Plate 30 Phase 5 Structure 6, looking west



Plate 31 Phase 5 Structure 6, looking west



Plate 32 Phase 5 Structure 6, looking west



Plate 33 Phase 5 Structure 5, looking south



Plate 34 Phase 6 Structure 2, looking north-west



Plate 35 Phase 6 Structure 2, looking north-east



Plate 36 Phase 6 Structure 2, looking west



Plate 37 Phase 6 Structure 2, looking east



Plate 38 Phase 6 Structure 2, looking east



Plate 39 Phase 7 Structure 4, looking south-west



Plate 40 Phase 7 Structure 4, looking north-west



Plate 41 Phase 7 Structure 4, looking north



Plate 42 Phase 8 Structure 11, looking north



Plate 43 Phase 8 Structure 11, looking north



Plate 44 Phase 8 Structure 11, looking south



Plate 45 Phase 9 1980s toilet block, looking south



Plate 46 Phase 9 1980s toilet block, looking west



Plate 47 Phase 9 1980s changes to the bar area, looking west

Appendix 1 Technical information

The archive (site code: WSM 67777)

The archive consists of:

- 1 Field progress reports AS2
- 6 Photographic records AS3
- 12 Building Record Forms
- 435 Digital photographs
- 1 CD-Rom/DVDs
- 1 Copy of this report (bound hard copy)

The project archive is intended to be placed at:

Worcestershire County Museum
Museums Worcestershire
Hartlebury Castle
Hartlebury
Near Kidderminster
Worcestershire DY11 7XZ
Tel Hartlebury (01299) 250416