

# Building recording at 20-23 Horsefair, Kidderminster, Worcestershire



© Worcestershire County Council

Worcestershire Archaeology  
Archive and Archaeology Service  
The Hive, Sawmill Walk,  
The Butts, Worcester  
WR1 3PD

Status: Version 1  
Date: 11<sup>th</sup> October 2016  
Author: Tim Cornah [tcornah@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:tcornah@worcestershire.gov.uk)  
Illustrator: Carolyn Hunt [chunt@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:chunt@worcestershire.gov.uk)  
Project reference: P4635  
Report reference: 2371  
HER reference: WSM67954  
Oasis id fieldsec1-262671



<b>Contents</b>	
<b>Summary</b>	<b>1</b>

## **Report**

Illustrations by Carolyn Hunt and Laura Templeton .....	<b>1</b>
<b>1 Background</b> .....	<b>3</b>
1.1 Reasons for the project .....	3
<b>2 Aims</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>3 Methods</b> .....	<b>3</b>
3.1 Personnel.....	3
3.2 Documentary research .....	3
3.3 List of sources consulted .....	3
3.4 Fieldwork strategy .....	4
3.5 Building analysis .....	4
3.6 Statement of confidence in the methods and results .....	4
<b>4 Context</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>5 The buildings</b> .....	<b>7</b>
5.1 Historical information.....	7
5.2 Building development .....	8
5.2.1 Phase 1: Early to mid-18 <sup>th</sup> century .....	8
5.2.2 Phase 2: Mid-18 <sup>th</sup> century to early 19 <sup>th</sup> century .....	9
5.2.3 Phase 3: Early 19 <sup>th</sup> century .....	10
5.2.4 Phase 4: 1885 to c1900 .....	10
5.2.5 Phase 5: c1900.....	10
5.2.6 Phase 6: 1902 to present.....	11
<b>6 Discussion</b> .....	<b>12</b>
6.1 Research frameworks .....	12
<b>7 Publication summary</b> .....	<b>13</b>
<b>8 Acknowledgements</b> .....	<b>13</b>
<b>9 Bibliography</b> .....	<b>13</b>



---

## **Building recording at 20-23 Horsefair, Kidderminster, Worcestershire**

Tim Cornah

Illustrations by Carolyn Hunt and Laura Templeton

### **Summary**

Recording of a historic building was undertaken at 20-23 Horsefair, Kidderminster, Worcestershire (NGR SO 8334 7720). It was commissioned by Worcestershire Building Preservation Trust who have obtained planning permission and Listed Building Consent for refurbishment of 20-23 Horsefair Kidderminster to bring them back to sustainable use as dwellings, for which planning permission was granted by Wyre Forest District Council (WF/12/0760 and WF/12/0761).

Planning permission was granted subject to conditions including building recording to English Heritage specified standards. This required photographing the exterior and interior of the building and annotating existing survey drawings. This produced an archive of Numbers 20-23 Horsefair before any changes were made to the building. Further recording was undertaken during refurbishment works as historic fabric was revealed.

An element of historical research and synthesis was also a condition of planning approval. Original records relating to Numbers 20-23 Horsefair were studied at Worcestershire Archives along with historic maps and trade directories. Online 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 original buildings at 20-23 Horsefair were built in the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century with a small cottage of two domestic rooms on each floor, apart from the second floor which had one large workshop within the roof space. Buildings of this form would have been plentiful within Kidderminster and formed part of its famous cloth industry. Individual weavers would have lived and worked with their families within buildings of this form and their products such as "Kidderminster stuff" was sold to centralised dealers controlled by the guilds. Number 22 is the only such building remaining of this era and form within the town.

From the late 18<sup>th</sup> Century and throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> Century the growth of the carpet industry led to centralised production and the decline of the cottage industry. This led to the construction of housing of an entirely domestic nature such as Numbers 20, 21 and 23 which were built in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. These buildings noticeably lacked the work shop which was part of Number 22. All of the buildings were repeatedly added to throughout the later 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, broadly increasing the domestic space available to each cottage.



---

## Report

### 1 Background

#### 1.1 Reasons for the project

Recording of a historic building was undertaken at 20-23 Horsefair, Kidderminster, Worcestershire (NGR SO 8334 7720). It was commissioned by Worcestershire Building Preservation Trust who have obtained planning permission and Listed Building Consent for refurbishment of 20-23 Horsefair Kidderminster to bring them back to sustainable use as dwellings, for which planning permission was granted by Wyre Forest District Council (WF/12/0760 and WF/12/0761).

Numbers 20-22 are a designated heritage asset (Grade II listed building) within the terms used by the *National Planning Policy Framework*. Whilst number 23 is not included within this listing, it could be described as within its curtilage. The buildings are also registered with the Worcestershire Historic Environment Record (HER; WSM33616).

The project conforms to a brief prepared by Worcestershire County Council (WCC 2015) and for which a project proposal (including detailed specification) was produced (WA 2015).

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 WSM67954.

### 2 Aims

The aim of this survey as stated within the brief is to:-

- Provide a detailed measured survey of the building or elements thereof.
- Collate previous surveys and assessments and combine them with detailed recording undertaken during restoration.
- Provide a descriptive account and interpretation of the building, including discussion of its local, regional and national significance.
- To contribute to our understanding of post medieval textile manufacturing.

### 3 Methods

#### 3.1 Personnel

The project was undertaken by Timothy Cornah (BA (hons.), MSc); who joined Worcestershire Archaeology in 2006 and has been practicing archaeology since 2003. The project manager responsible for the quality of the project was Tom Rogers, (BA (hons.); MSc). Illustrations were prepared by Carolyn Hunt (BSc (hons.)).

#### 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*

- 1753 Doharty map of Kidderminster (WRO r899:31 BA3676 map 29)
- 1835 Plan of the borough of Kidderminster, J Matthews (reproduced on Rodney Melville 2012)

- c1840 Tithe map of Kidderminster (WRO S760-377)
- c1850 Drainage map (WRO r899:1370 BA13415/10)
- 1884 Ordnance Survey Map 1:10,560
- 1902 Ordnance Survey Map 1:10,560
- 1925 Ordnance Survey Map 1:10,560
- 1938 Ordnance Survey Map 1:10,560

#### *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 2015).

Fieldwork was undertaken between 2 February and 29 April 2016. The site reference number and site code is WSM 67954.

Building recording consisted of a photographic survey of the interior and exterior of the buildings, analysis of their development, annotation of existing survey drawings and measured survey. All photographs were taken with photographic scales visible in each shot. The photographic survey was carried out with a Sony  $\alpha$ 350 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).
- Measured drawings showing the form of any architectural or functional detail not more readily captured by photography.

#### Photography

- Overall appearance of rooms and circulation areas.
- 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 1-69. Ground plans, phase plans, elevations and sections have been reproduced as Figures 1-5.

### **3.6 Statement of confidence in the methods and results**

The methods adopted allow a high degree of confidence that the aims of the project have been achieved



---

## 4 Context

The Horsefair area is within the eastern side of Kidderminster, which itself lies either side of the River Stour. The area of the Horsefair is broadly flat and situated at a height of about 50.6m AOD. The bedrock geology of the area is recorded as Wildmoor Sandstone Formation, overlain by Holt Heath Sand and Gravel member (BGS 2016).

A Worcestershire Historic Environment Record search was conducted within 500m radius of the site. The following information is derived from this, unless stated otherwise. The search results included 36 listed buildings dating from between the 11<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries and 27 other unlisted historic buildings dating from between the 18<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The report also contained over 100 monument records, a number of which were considered as part of this summary.

Despite a few findspots from the area that suggest prehistoric and Roman activity, the main development of the town did not appear to begin until the medieval period. The history of Kidderminster is thought to have started in the 8<sup>th</sup> century with the founding of a minster church (WSM01303). The first documentary reference to the town was in 1086 when the manor was held by the King. Grants of burgage occurred in the 13<sup>th</sup> century and it is known that the town was producing cloth from at least this time. The success of the textile industry was due in part to the river which supplied water for washing and dyeing the wool and also, given that the local geology was sandstone, the ability to build right up to the river edge. Thus tenement plots of the medieval period ran down to the river (Buteux 1996), situated on a series of medieval roads (WSM20752) that existed to the south of the church. These roads include High Street, Church Street, Vicar Street, Mill Street, Blackwell Street, Coventry Street and Worcester Street. The HER also holds information on a number of monuments in the area dating to this period, including former buildings and a tithe barn.

The 1533 Worcestershire Cloth Act sought to protect the cloth industry in the town, and it was from this point that that it gained particular importance. Throughout the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the town population increased and by the early 17<sup>th</sup> century, the clothiers of the town dealt directly with London, where trade had previously gone through Worcester. From around this time one of the main products of the town was "Kidderminster stuff" largely used for wall-hangings and bed furniture. This product gained some fame nationally, though not always for positive reasons. It was certainly noted in the 17<sup>th</sup> century that the people "were not rich; there were among them few beggars because there common trade of stuff weaving would find work for all of them" but that the trade was generally poor (Gilbert 2004).

As a small building housing of both domestic and light industrial use, the site of the Weavers Cottages is a rare remaining example of the character and industry of post-medieval Kidderminster. During this period it is likely that buildings such as this would have been widespread, evidenced in a 1753 map of Kidderminster drawn up as part of Lord Foley's plans for the development of Orchard Street, showing 34 houses fronting the street that were mainly weavers cottages (WSM20756). This street is also adjacent to the historic Arch Hill area to the west, which contained early hand loom weaving sheds in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and was also the site of a carpet factory.

The textile heritage of Kidderminster can also be seen in the now redeveloped post-medieval tenement plots of Dudley Street (WSM20758). By the 1800s, this area consisted of around 140 dwellings and a series of industrial and commercial buildings including loom shops. The industry is also recorded in the ownership of a number of dwellings on the Horsefair (WSM40383). The 1861 census lists the occupiers of number 7 Horsefair as a draper and tailor, while number 10 was occupied by a family of wool combers and dressmakers, and number 11 by a hand loom carpet weaver. Number 23 Horsefair (WSM57046), a 19<sup>th</sup> century house that remains standing, is also considered to have links to the cloth industry, and a number of dye works were marked on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1884/85 on Church Street (WSM36833, WSM36834).

The prosperity of the town appears to have grown in the 18<sup>th</sup> century with increasing capital investment. This tied in largely with the beginning of the carpet industry which required larger looms and premises. Up to this point, weaving had largely been a domestic activity and took place in attic spaces as seen in Number 22. The emergence of the carpet industry largely coincided with the decline of the artisans weavers, with very few likely remaining in production into the early 19<sup>th</sup> century (Gilbert 2004). It is certainly the case that Number 22 was no longer used by a weaver by 1841 (Rodney Melville 2012), as outlined below. The manufacture of Bombazine, which was first produced in the town in around 1779, appears to have prolonged the life of the cloth industry into the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, though declined in the 1820s. This could be produced on small looms within attic spaces (Gilbert 2004).

The increasing growth and industrialisation of the carpet industry starting in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century meant that buildings such as Number 22 were less likely to be built. Tenements of entirely domestic nature were increasingly built for carpet factory workers and other trades people. It is likely to be within this latter context that numbers 20-21 and 23 were constructed.

The extent of the carpet industry in the 19<sup>th</sup> century is well documented in the Historic Environment Record. The 1753 map shows an area of carpet works near Pitts Lane that was still in use up to the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century as a spinning mill (WSM20711). The main industrial site for carpet production was situated between Churchfields, Clensmore Street, Pleasant Street and Broad Street. This area was a complex multi-period and multi-phased site including a number of buildings shown on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map. These buildings include a number of carpet factories (WSM36229, WSM36250, WSM10032, WSM12907, WSM19986, WSM19989, WSM19990, WSM19992, WSM19993), and a hearth rug factory (WSM36231).

HER Ref	Name	Description	Dates	OS Ref
<b>Buildings</b>				
WSM38287	Tomkinson's Carpet Factory Site, Churchfields, Kidderminster	Carpet Factory, Munitions Factory	1895-2003 1939-1940	SO8310 7714
WSM40383	2-12 Horsefair, Kidderminster	Dwelling, Shop	1836 – 2016	SO 8331 7713
<b>Monuments</b>				
WSM10032	Carpet Works, Clensmore Street, Kidderminster	Carpet Works	1801-1950	SO 8289 7740
WSM12907	Site of Carpet Factory, Churchfields, Kidderminster	Carpet Factory	1880-1950	SO 8321 7713
WSM19986	Site of Carpet Factory, Back of Mill Street, Kidderminster	Carpet Factory, Ordnance Factory	1801-2000 1939-1945	SO 8279 7697
WSM19989	Site of Hearth Rug Factory, North of Churchfields, Kidderminster	Carpet Factory	1801-2000	SO 8318 7716

WSM19990	Site of Carpet Factory, West of Orchard Street, Kidderminster	Carpet Factory	1801-2000	SO 8314 7689
WSM19992	Site of Carpet Factory at Wharf Hill, Kidderminster	Carpet Factory	1801-2000	SO 8300 7685
WSM19993	Site of Carpet Factory at Waterloo Street, Kidderminster	Carpet Factory	1801-2000	SO 8339 7685
WSM36229	Site of Carpet Factory, Mount Pleasant (South Side) Kidderminster	Carpet Factory	1801-1950	SO 8300 7712
WSM36231	Site of Hearth Rug Factory, Duke Street, Kidderminster	Carpet Factory	1801-1950	SO 8312 7710
WSM36250	Carpet Factory, Mount Pleasant (North), Kidderminster	Carpet Factory	1801-1950	SO 8303 7712
WSM36833	Site of Dye Works, Church Street, Kidderminster	Dye Works	1801-1950	SO 8306 7682
WSM36834	Dye Works, Church Street, Kidderminster	Dye Works	1801-1950	SO 8305 7680
<b>Settlement Components</b>				
WSM20711	Area of Carpet Works, Near Pitts Lane, Kidderminster	Production Complex	1753-1950	SO 8300 7685
WSM20756	Tenement Plots, South of Hall Street, Kidderminster	Planned Development	1753-1960	SO 8314 7687
WSM20758	Tenement Plots to the South of Dudley street, Kidderminster	Planned Development	1753-1960	SO 8323 7697

## 5 The buildings

### 5.1 Historical information

The historical detail relevant to these buildings has been previously covered elsewhere (Rodney Melville 2012) and will be repeated here only where particularly relevant. Emphasis will be in the mapping and any information not previously recognised.

The first detailed mapping of the site is the Doharty map of 1753. This shows two buildings in roughly the same area as those recorded here, though their exact position cannot be ascertained given the inaccuracy of the mapping. They are illustrated next to the Stourbridge Road and above an area shown as both Whorwoods Shipton and Horsefair. This triangular piece of land has a pond in its south west corner, presumably for watering horses brought to fair here. It is likely that these buildings relate to Phase 1 as outlined below with only Number 22 remaining largely extant from this time.

The mapping of 1835 shows the building as it remained at the end of Phase 3. This included Numbers 20-21 and 23. It is noticeable the difference in development of the area between 1753

and 1835 as on the earlier map, the buildings were illustrated as being on their own. By 1835, terraces can be seen in all directions leading both into and out of town.

Little recognisable change to the buildings is visible on the mapping between 1840 and 1885, with exception of a small building to the rear of 20-21 which no longer remained. By 1902, Phases 4 and 5 structures are visible to the rear of the buildings with a further Phase 6 building to the rear of number 23 being visible in 1924. A further no longer extant building is visible to the north of this, the function of which is unknown.

The census data outlined previously (Rodney Melville 2012) highlights the use of these buildings in the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century by craft and trades people. Numbers 20-21 show a variety of crafts and trades undertaken by numerous occupiers between 1841 and 1901. These include publican, gardener, cordwainer, confectioner, tailor, pig dealer, groom, butcher, fish monger, carpet weaver and shoe maker. Number 22 is noticeably different to this in that it is occupied by the Harden family from 1841 to 1891, with the primary occupation being that of tailors. It is likely that this continuation of use relates to the suitability of the attic space of the building for such a trade. No such corresponding attic spaces were present in Numbers 20-21 and 22.

The trade directories are informative in highlighting the use of Number 21 during Phase 6. A sign which read A Wakefield Confectioner was recorded on the front of number 21. This relates to Arthur Wakefield who was listed as confectioner here in 1924 and 1928, though not in 1921 or 1932 (Kellys directories). This would fit with the Fry's chocolate box found within the building, dated to between 1910 and 1925, as outlined below.

## 5.2 Building development

### 5.2.1 Phase 1: Early to mid-18<sup>th</sup> century

The earliest construction within this set of buildings was a two bay brick built structure (**Plate 1**) that contained two rooms on the ground and first floors with one large room on the second floor. These rooms were accessed from a staircase located internally in the centre of the north-west wall. This staircase also led to a cellar below the ground floor.

The ground floor room was accessed from the street from a door in the southern corner of the room, and had an opposing door in the north-western corner of the room (**Plate 2**). This room was probably lit by a window facing the south-east, though this has been removed by later changes. It also had a low window facing south-west (**Plate 3**). The function of this is difficult to ascertain, though it is unlikely to be for lighting, given its height. There is some suggestion, as outlined below, that there was an existing earlier structure in the position of number 21 when this phase was built, so this window may have been internal. This room had a large fireplace within its north-east corner of a scale consistent with cooking functions. This room is likely to have combined as both a kitchen and living room.

The staircase led down to a brick vaulted cellar which had a coal chute (**Plate 4**) and a further chute below the front of the fireplace in the room above (**Plate 5**), though this may be a later addition.

The further small ground floor room was accessed from the living room/ kitchen and had a slightly lower floor level (**Plate 6**). The room had no windows and is likely to have been for storage.

The original staircase remained extant (**Plate 7**), though the enclosing boarding and timber work may be a Phase 2 or 3 additions. The staircase was lit by a small window (**Plate 8**) and led firstly to the smaller of the two rooms on the first floor. This had a window facing the south-east and is again likely to be for storage (**Plate 9**). The larger first floor room had a smaller fireplace than the kitchen or living room below and is of a scale sufficient for a bedroom (**Plate 10**). It had a window facing south-east, though this was altered at a later date to include a low arch lintel (**Plate 1**). It had a further window facing north-west (**Plate 11**) which was later blocked but contained an original frame similar to that seen in the ground floor room (**Plate 3**).

The second floor consisted of one room only (**Plate 12**) which had direct access around the chimney breast in the middle of the room. This chimney breast may have had a small fireplace on

its south-west facing side (**Plate 13**), as seen by changes to the brickwork at this point. This room was lit by four windows (**Plate 14**) which were noticeably larger than those seen elsewhere, though the two on the north-west side were later blocked. The boarding on the ceiling is likely to date to Phase 2 or 3 so it is probable that this room was originally open to the roof, giving a large, well lit room for weaving. A high roof would have been essential for the accommodation of a hand weaving loom.

The roof structure, constructed entirely from elm, was supported by a tie beam truss which sat upon a wooden plate along the walls. The principle rafters were set well back from ends of the tie beams as is typical of a 17<sup>th</sup> century or later building and the main joints were pegged together with wood, as seen on the trusses collar (**Plate 15**). The purlins were trenched to the back of the principle rafters and the common rafters nailed to these (**Plate 16**). This combination of both wooden and metal fixings is much more typical of a building of 18<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century date than a 17<sup>th</sup> century date.

Whilst it is all constructed of elm using the same methods, there is evidence that the roof was constructed in two phases. This is apparent from the long bracing of the common rafters which extended only as far as the chimney (Plate 17 and Plate 18) and that the purlins also only extended a little beyond this and were further extended at a later date using a simple scarf joint (**Plate 19**). Whilst it has been previously suggested that the smaller bay of this building was a later addition (Robson-Glyde, Vaughan and Crawford 2004), there is insufficient evidence for this in the walls below. The more likely interpretation of the change in the roof structure at this point is that it was designed as a hipped roof. This is supported to some degree by the presence of a timber visible in the gable end at the point where a wall plate to take the common rafters of a hip may be expected (**Plate 20**). This would make the brickwork above a later addition, despite there being no visible difference in the bricks used. The similarity of both material and method would suggest this change occurred soon after initial construction, or was even a change during construction to create extra space in the second floor room. One potential problem with this interpretation is that the dentilled brick detailing seen on the eaves did not continue around the gable end. The roof was subsequently clad in ceramic tiles.

The presence of a hipped roof would suggest the end of the building. The lack of the same hip on the south-west gable suggests there was a building already existing there, though a hip at both ends would restrict the available space in the room below. Visible within the south-west gable in the second floor room was a blocked doorway (**Plate 21**). Whilst this could have been for the hoisting in of goods to the weaving workshop, it may have accessed a now demolished structure. Brickwork seen in the south-west gable end of number 20 may be part of this demolished structure (Plate 22).

A further interesting feature or discrepancy was another change in construction method between the gable ends. The walls enclosing the small room were thin compared to the rest of the structure, and were strengthened with internal brick buttresses that extended to the full height of the walls. The reason for thinner walls at this point is not clear but may relate to the need for cold storage within this space.

Within the weaving workshop, some features that may relate to its original use were seen. Numerous very small nails or tacks were seen along the tie beam on its south-west side (Plate 23). Whilst there was no obvious pattern to them, the small size of them is unlikely to be able to hold anything but light materials hung upon them, with cloth being the likely material. A number of these were directly above the small fireplace, which may discount this interpretation to some degree. On the north-eastern side of the principle rafter was a wooden peg in a position that was not part of the truss (Plate 24). This is again likely to have been for the hanging of goods.

### **5.2.2 Phase 2: Mid-18<sup>th</sup> century to early 19<sup>th</sup> century**

There is evidence for a former structure in the position of number 21, as seen from within its first floor bedroom (Plate 25). The apex of this gable is well below the blocked door seen from within the weaving workshop, so is clearly later than the Phase 1 building and not related to the

hypothesised building outlined above which it may have replaced. It is possible that a door inserted through the south-west gable of number 22 at ground floor level relates to this building (Plate 3), though it may relate to Phase 3.

### **5.2.3 Phase 3: Early 19<sup>th</sup> century**

After the Phase 2 building was removed, brick structures numbers 20-21 were built in its place (Plate 26). These were a pair of cottages with a single room on each floor. Whilst the exterior maintained some visual similarity with the Phase 1 building, such as the dentilled eaves and the window pattern the building had a lower pitch slate roof, broadly typical of a 19<sup>th</sup> century building.

Each of the ground floor rooms (Plate 27 and Plate 28) were accessed from doors onto the street and had further doors to the rear. Number 20 had a window to the front, with the equivalent window in number 21 having been removed in Phase 5. Both ground floor rooms had fireplaces (Plate 30). The staircase in number 20 led to the first floor room, an arrangement which was originally the same in 21 as seen by holes for the staircase in the brick work and floor joists (Plate 31 and Plate 32). The first and second floor rooms of 20 and 21 were bedrooms, as suggested their small scale and their fireplaces (Plate 33 and Plate 34). This is a clear departure from the large upper room of number 22 with its high ceiling, so no such function is suggested here.

The roof structure of these is also noticeably different, being of common rafter construction sat on top of purlins and probably made in softwood, though this was not confirmed (**Plate 35**).

Attached to the south west gable end of number 20 was a former chimney breast of a later date which had two fireplaces, one at ground floor level (**Plate 36**) and one at first floor level with an inbuilt cupboard next to it, suggestive of a bedroom (Plate 37 and Plate 38). This structure relates to the demolished Cock Inn which was photographed in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (Rodney Melville 2012). This also had a low pitch slate roof, with small panel sash windows more typical of the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The stepped lintels above some of its windows are more typical of 18<sup>th</sup> century buildings of the area, but carried on in use into the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

It is not clear when No 23 (Plate 39 and Plate 40), was added to numbers 20 and 21. The building has the character of a 19<sup>th</sup> century building with its dentilled eaves and low pitch roof. However, the roof was a Phase 5 replacement. The ground and first floors had two rooms each with the first floor being accessed from the northern room. The northern room (**Plate 41**) was itself accessed from a doorway in its north-west wall, with a window in the north wall. The ground floor configuration of the southern room was heavily altered in Phase 5 (**Plate 42**), leaving no trace of original doors or windows. There was no direct evidence of access between these rooms. The first floor rooms were both accessed from the top of the stairs (Plate 43 to Plate 45). It is noticeable that none of these rooms contained any evidence of a fireplace, though a chimney with three pots is visible on an undated photograph of this building (Gilbert 2014).

It is noticeable that all of the buildings discussed up to this point, excepting Phase 2, are visible on the earliest detailed mapping of the site in 1835.

### **5.2.4 Phase 4: 1885 to c1900**

In this period, an extra single storey structure was added to the rear of number 22 and had a single door, later blocked (Plate 46 and Plate 47). This had no evidence of a fireplace, so it is likely to have been an ancillary storage structure. Soon after, two further such rooms were added to the rear of numbers 20 and 21 with doors facing north-west (Plate 46, Plate 48 and Plate 49). Neither of these were built with a fireplace, so a similar function is assumed. Fireplaces were added shortly after (Plate 51 and 2), presumably converting these rooms into living rooms. The 1885 OS map shows a building in the area of these structures, but none of its walls aligned with those recorded here so it must have been demolished.

### **5.2.5 Phase 5: c1900**

Single storey kitchen or wash room and toilet structures to the rear of numbers 20-22 were constructed at this time (Plate 53), with a contemporary toilet added to the rear of number 23 (Plate 53 and 5). The kitchens had a chimney flue each, presumably for built in, no longer extant,

appliances. The old door was blocked in the addition to the rear of Number 22, with a new one inserted. It is probable that the chimney breast on the rear of number 22 was added at this time and blocking its second floor window (Plate 56), creating kitchen space to be used by number 23.

The outline of all the buildings within this and the preceding phase can be seen on the 1902 OS map.

### 5.2.6 Phase 6: 1902 to present

The 3 Phase 4 rooms to the rear of numbers 20-21 had their roofs removed, the external walls heightened, a first floor added and a single pitch roof covering all three rooms constructed (Plate 46 and Plate 50). There is some suggestion that this was done in three separate stages, as shown by external building breaks. How exactly the new first floor space was split between the properties is not clear as the floor and potential dividing walls were no longer extant. A new staircase was added at this time as part of number 21 (Plate 57), with the internal staircase at ground floor level in the living room being removed. It would appear that the ground floor level at least remained specifically part of the associated properties as there was no access between them.

One known use of number 21 at this time is given by a painted sign on its frontage (Plate 58). This reads "A Wakefield Confectioner" and refers to Arthur Wakefield who was registered here as such in 1924 and 1928. Further to this a box found within the first floor void (Plate 59) reads "Fry's Nut Milk Chocolate" on the front and "Fry's Chocolate makers to H.M. the King, H.M. the Queen, H.M. Queen Alexandra" on the rear (Plate 600). This would date it to between when King George V took the throne in 1910 and the death of Queen Alexandra in 1925. One change in the building related to this use was the insertion of a large window into the front of the property.

The rear of number 23 was extended at some point, the extant building was probably that shown on the 1924 OS map though its alignment and shape is not exactly correct. This structure extended along the back of the building and included the Phase 4 probable kitchen and toilet (Plate 61 and 2). This is likely to correspond with a large opening cut in the rear of number 23 (**Plate 40**). Whether the shop front window onto the street was created at this time or slightly later is not certain, but it may have related to its use as a chip shop in the later 20<sup>th</sup> century, with some of the machinery relevant to this use remaining within the extension at the rear. It was probably at this time that a new doorway was cut into the eastern gable of number 22 and a blocking wall added to create a small storage room for number 23 (Plate 3 and Plate 42).

Another set of features of interest were some inscriptions, symbols and drawings within number 20. On the second floor, broadly within the centre of the room, a circular symbol was painted (**Error! Reference source not found.** 5). It measured 1.50m in width and appeared to contain an inverted 5 pointed star possibly linked to the 3<sup>rd</sup> degree of Wicca or a work of dark magic. Whilst this symbol has extremely ancient origins, it was made popular in the in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century through the works of Aleister Crowley, and further still in the 1930s onwards via Wicca (Hoggard 2016). Its 20th century date is clear, but refining this date further may not be possible. The language type symbols used are described as follows:

*There may be a quantity of Greek characters present, but not enough to produce anything close to a translation. There are one or two other symbols which could arguably be interpreted as the symbols for Leo and Pisces. The remaining characters are diverse and do not appear to have been drawn from any single cohesive character set which we would expect to see used in a ritual magic context. It's possible that the missing sections could have provided further clues but unlikely. The separation of 'words' using the dots does suggest that the artist had a system of characters which was a personal creation (Hoggard 2016).*

In the stair well leading up to the second floor bedroom was a series of largely pencil drawings, some of a religious nature (Plate 63) whilst others appeared to aim at giving their viewer a sense of unease (Plate 64 and Plate 65). Others may have been nothing more than sketches (Plate 66 to Plate 68). Overall, a high level of artistic ability was employed and it seems likely that these and the pentagram were related in terms of the person who created them. A hint at the possible creator

of these may have been left in the form of the name "Angie" being painted onto the stairs (*Plate 69*), though this requires further research.

## 6 Discussion

The original buildings at 20-23 Horsefair were built in the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century with a small cottage of two domestic rooms on each floor, apart from the second floor which had one large workshop within the roof space. This form of building in itself is not particularly unusual and has been documented in detail in other parts of the country, for example by Palmer and Neaverson (2003). This building is shown on the earliest mapping as one of a pair, elements of the second building were recorded as part of this project in the gable wall of number 20.

Buildings of this form would have been plentiful within Kidderminster and played a role in its famous cloth industry. Former rows of these buildings are thought to have existed locally, such as on Orchard Street which were broadly contemporary with the earliest structures here. Number 22 is the only such building remaining of this era and form within the town, therefore marking it as significant.

From the late 18<sup>th</sup> Century and throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> Century the growth of the carpet industry led to centralised production and the decline of the cottage industry. This led to the construction of housing of an entirely domestic nature such as Numbers 20, 21 and 23 which were built in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. These buildings noticeably lacked the work shop which was part of Number 22. All of the buildings were repeatedly added to throughout the later 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, broadly increasing the domestic space available to each cottage.

The documentary evidence of the cloth and subsequent industry of Kidderminster has been covered in detail in numerous publications, but these buildings allow a different insight in that they retain the domestic and work spaces of ordinary people involved in these trades. They allow a unique view into the everyday lives of the people of Kidderminster from around the early 18<sup>th</sup> onwards. The change in form of these buildings documents the broader change from handloom weaving and the expansion of the town with the growth of the carpet industry. To some degree, the dereliction of the buildings in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century also reflects a degree of decline within the town which coincided with the decline of the local carpet industry.

### 6.1 Research frameworks

The recording of this building is likely to be useful in the context of local research into the development of the weaving industry and its social context. Given Kidderminster's national reputation in this area, it may be of interest researchers much more widely. It is certainly the case that such buildings are underrepresented in terms of research in the West Midlands. The highest level of research is within West Yorkshire and Lancashire, whilst areas such as Gloucestershire and Wiltshire have had specific studies. The form of such buildings is well known, though most date from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century into the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Palmer and Neaverson 2003)

The ritual symbol located within Number 20 is significant in as it is unique in nature and should be treated as an historical document, reflecting one of the more radical strands of modern spirituality (Hoggard 2016).

The archaeology of the West Midlands: a framework for research (Watt 2011), the publication of the West Midlands Regional Research Framework for Archaeology, is decidedly lacking in the discussion of upstanding archaeology and the recording of historic buildings. The section regarding post-medieval archaeology recognises that the archaeology of buildings is a 'well-established component' of the discipline of archaeology. However, it also regards that the recording of above ground archaeology is worthless without the excavation of the surrounding remains (Belford in Watt 2011, 226). This is a limited view of buildings archaeology and disregards the information that can be gained from investigating and analysing an upstanding structure without any excavation. Mike Hodder discusses the need to record more historic buildings and to integrate above and below ground archaeology (Hodder in Watt 2011, 251). He states that the study of buildings 'not just the exceptional but also the typical, would be useful'.



## 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.

*A historic building recording was undertaken on behalf of Worcestershire Building Preservation Trust at 20-23 Horsefair, Kidderminster, Worcestershire (NGR SO 8334 7720, WSM67954).*

*The original buildings at 20-23 Horsefair were built in the first half of the 18th century with a small cottage of two domestic rooms on each floor, apart from the second floor which had one large workshop within the roof space. Buildings of this form would have been plentiful within Kidderminster and formed part of its famous cloth industry. Individual weavers would have lived and worked with their families within buildings of this form and their products such as "Kidderminster stuff" was sold to centralised dealers controlled by the guilds. Number 22 is the only such building remaining of this era and form within the town.*

*From the late 18th Century and throughout the 19th Century the growth of the carpet industry led to centralised production and the decline of the cottage industry. This led to the construction of housing of an entirely domestic nature such as Numbers 20, 21 and 23 which were built in the early 19th century. These buildings noticeably lacked the work shop which was part of Number 22. All of the buildings were repeatedly added to throughout the later 19th and early 20th centuries, broadly increasing the domestic space available to each cottage.*

## 8 Acknowledgements

Worcestershire Archaeology would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project, Adrian Scruby, Tarnia McAlester, Andrew Hutchings and Brian Hoggard.

## 9 Bibliography

Buteux, V, 1996 *Archaeological assessment of Kidderminster, Hereford and Worcester*, Central Marches Historic Towns Survey, Hereford and Worcester County Council, unpublished report **320**

Gilbert, C.D 1990, *Kidderminster's Early Carpet Industry*, Transactions Worcestershire Archaeological Society, p.220

Gilbert, N 2004 *A History of Kidderminster*, Phillimore Publishing

Gilbert, N 2014 *Building Report Weavers Cottages, 20, 21 and 22 Horsefair, Kidderminster*, Historic Kidderminster Project Ref: 290

CIfA 2014 *Standard and guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures*, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

DCLG 2012 *National Planning Policy Framework*, Department for Communities and Local Government

DCLG/DCMS/EH 2010 *PPS5 Planning for the historic environment: historic environment planning practice guide*, Department for Communities and Local Government/Department for Culture, Media and Sport/English Heritage

EH 2006 *Understanding historic buildings: a guide to good recording practice*, English Heritage

English Heritage 2011 *The setting of heritage assets*, English Heritage

Hoggard, B 2016 *The Magical Circle- Weaver's Cottages, Kidderminster*, unpublished document dated May 2016

Palmer, M and Neaverson, P 2003 *Handloom weaving in Wiltshire and Gloucestershire in the 19<sup>th</sup> century; the building evidence*, Post-Medieval Archaeology Volume 37 Part 1 2003 p126-158

Rodney Melville and Partners 2012 *The History and Significance of Weavers Cottages 20-22, Horsefair Kidderminster Worcestershire*, Unpublished document dated July 2012

VCH I, Page, W (ed), 1913 *Victoria History of the County of Worcestershire*,

WA 2012 Manual of service practice, recording manual, Worcestershire Archaeology, Worcestershire County Council, report **1842**

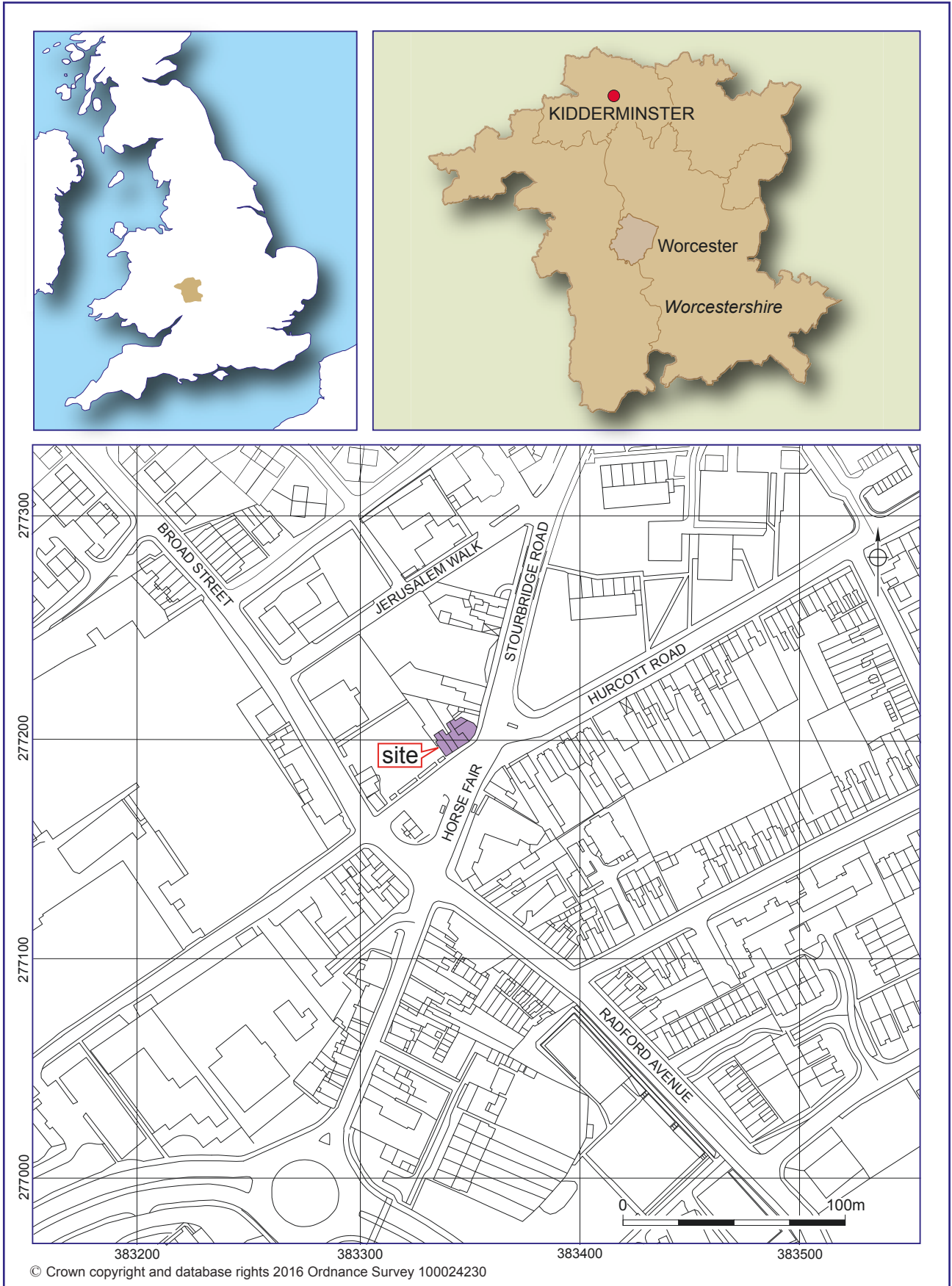
WA 2015 *Proposal for recording of an historic building at 20-23 Horsefair, Kidderminster, Worcestershire*, Worcestershire Archaeology, Worcestershire County Council, unpublished document dated 20th August 2015, P4635

WCC 2010 *Standards and guidelines for archaeological projects in Worcestershire*, Planning Advisory Section, Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service, Worcestershire County Council unpublished report **604**, amended July 2012

WCC 2015 *Requirements for historic building recording at 20-23 Horsefair, Kidderminster, Worcestershire*, Information and Advisory Section, Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service, Worcestershire County Council unpublished document dated 14<sup>th</sup> May 2015



## Figures



Location of the site

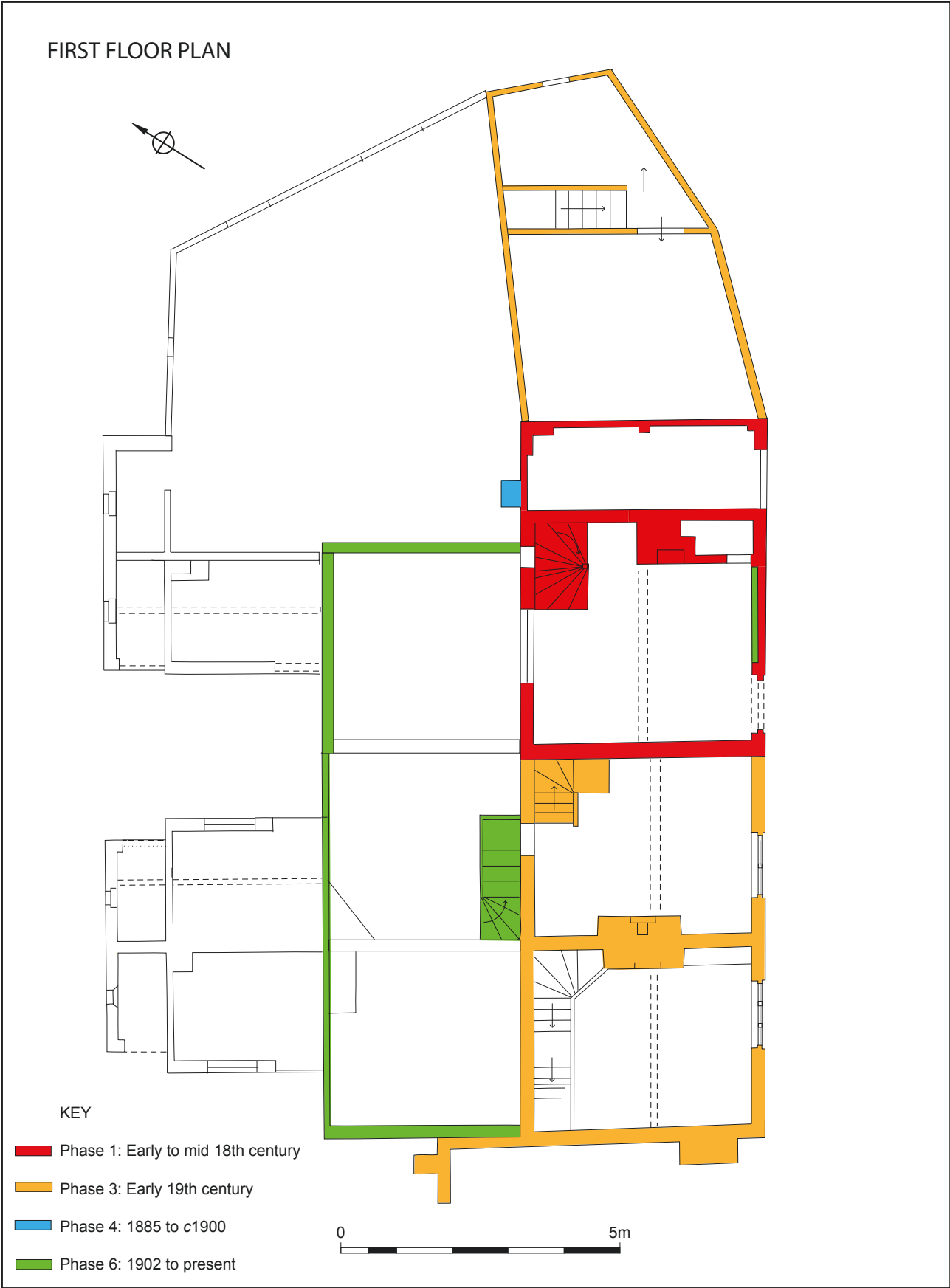
Figure 1

GROUND FLOOR PLAN



Ground floor plan with phasing (based upon Rodney Melville + Partners Drg No 11)

Figure 2



First floor plan with phasing (based upon Rodney Melville + Partners Drg No 12)

Figure 3

SECOND FLOOR PLAN



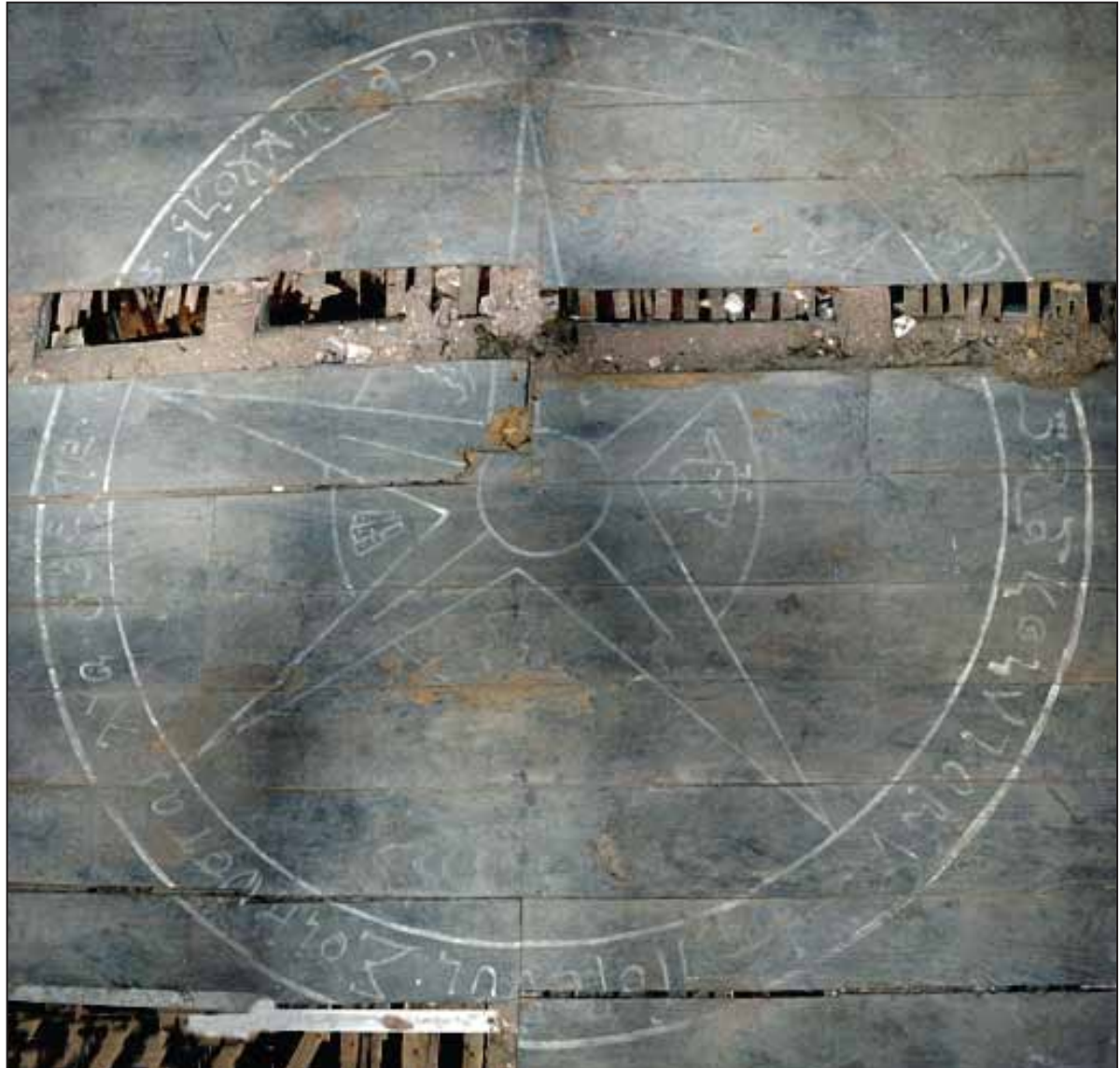
KEY

- Phase 1: Early to mid 18th century
- Phase 3: Early 19th century
- Phase 4: 1885 to c1900

0 5m

Second floor plan with phasing (based upon Rodney Melville + Partners Drg No 12) Figure 4





0 500mm

*Pentagram painted on floor*

*Figure 5*

---

## Plates



*Plate 1 The Phase 1 cottage, looking north-west*

---



*Plate 2 Phase 1 living room, looking east*



*Plate 3 Blocked window in Phase 1 gable end, looking north-east*

---



*Plate 4 Phase 1 cellar, looking north-west*



*Plate 5 Phase 1 cellar, looking south-east*



*Plate 6 Phase 1 groundfloor storage room, looking north-west*

---



*Plate 7 Phase 1 staircase, looking north*



*Plate 8 Phase 1 Staircase from the first floor, looking west*



*Plate 9 Phase 1 first floor storage room, looking south-east*

---





*Plate 10 Phase 1 first floor bedroom, looking north-west*



*Plate 11 Phase 1 blocked window, looking south-east*

---



*Plate 12 Phase 1 second floor room, looking north-east*



*Plate 13 Possible Phase 1 former fireplace, looking north-east*

---



*Plate 14 Phase 1 second floor room, looking south-east*



*Plate 15 Phase 1 roof structure, looking north-east*

---



*Plate 16 Phase 1 roof structure, looking north-east*



*Plate 17 Phase 1 roof structure, looking north-east*



*Plate 18 Phase 1 roof structure, looking south-west*



*Plate 19 Phase 1 roof structure with scarf joint joining an extra section of purlin, looking north-west*

---



*Plate 20 Phase 1 gable end, looking south*



*Plate 21 Blocked doorway in the Phase 1 gable end, looking south-west*



*Plate 22 Bricks visible in the gable end of Number 20, suggesting the presence of an earlier structure, looking north*



*Plate 23 Nails visible in the tie beam of the Phase 1 second floor room, looking north-east*

---



*Plate 24 Pegging visible in the principle rafter of the Phase 1 second floor room, looking south-west*



*Plate 25 Evidence of the Phase 2 former roofline on the Phase 1 gable, looking north-east*

---





*Plate 26 Phase 3, numbers 20 and 21, looking north*



*Plate 27 Phase 3, Number 21 ground floor, looking south*

---



*Plate 28 Phase 3, Number 20 ground floor, looking north*



*Plate 29 Phase 3, Number 21 ground floor, looking south-east*



*Plate 30 Phase 3, Number 21 ground floor, looking south-west*



*Plate 31 Phase 3, Number 21 ground floor showing evidence of former stairs, looking north-west*

---



*Plate 32 Phase 3, Number 21 ground floor showing evidence of former stairs position, looking south-west*

---



41

*Plate 33 Phase 3, Number 20 second floor, looking north-east*



*Plate 34 Phase 3, Number 21 second floor, looking south-west*

---



*Plate 35 Phase 3 numbers 20 and 21 roof structure, looking east*



*Plate 36 (Robson-Glyde 2004) Phase 3 ground floor fireplace place of the former Cock Inn, Number 20 gable, looking north-east*



*Plate 37 Phase 3 first floor fireplace place of the former Cock Inn, Number 20 gable, looking north-east*



*Plate 38 Phase 3 first floor former cupboards of the former Cock Inn, Number 20 gable, looking north*

---



*Plate 39 Phase 3 Number 23, looking south-west*



*Plate 40 Phase 3 Number 23, looking south-east*





*Plate 41 Phase 3 Number 23 ground floor, looking north*



*Plate 42 Phase 3 Number 23 ground floor, looking south-east*

---



*Plate 43 Phase 3 Number 23 ground floor, looking south*



*Plate 44 Phase 3 Number 23 first floor, looking south-west*

---



*Plate 45 Phase 3 Number 23 first floor, looking north*



*Plate 46 Phase 4 structures, after demolition of Phase 5 structures, looking south-east*



*Plate 47 Phase 4 former gable evidence, looking south-east*



*Plate 48 Phase 4 rooms, looking south -east*



*Plate 49 Phase 4 rooms, looking south*



*Plate 50 Phase 4 rooms, looking south-west*

---



*Plate 51 Phase 5 fireplace added into Phase 4 room, Number 21, looking west*

---



*Plate 52 Phase 5 fireplace added into Phase 4 room, Number 20, looking west*



*Plate 53 Phase 5 kitchens or washrooms, looking east*

---



*Plate 54 Phase 5 toilet, looking east*





*Plate 55 Phase 5 kitchens or washrooms, looking east*

---



*Plate 56 Phase 5 chimney, after demolition of Phase 6 structures, looking south-east*

---

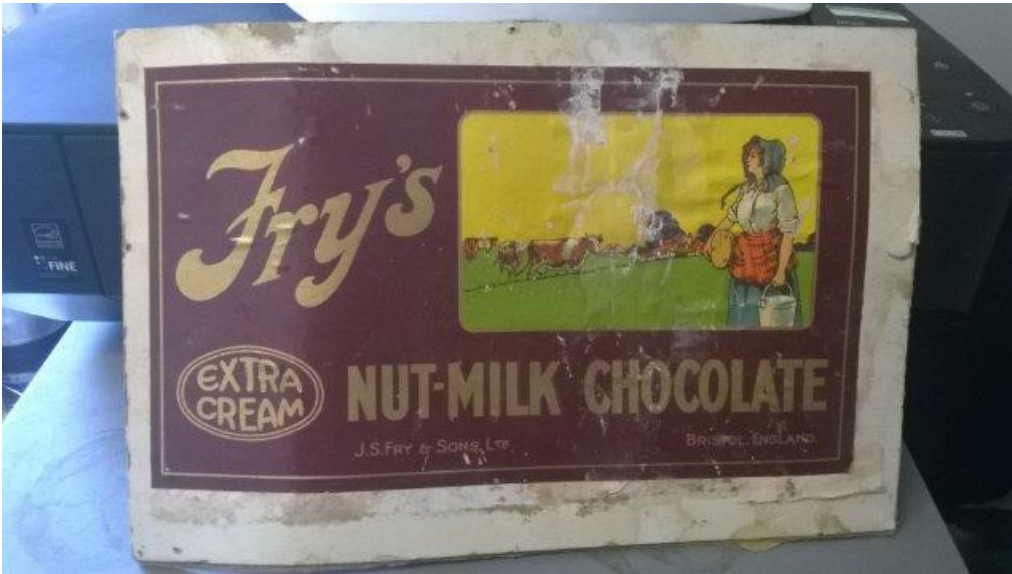


*Plate 57 Phase 6 staircase added in the Phase 4 rooms, looking east*

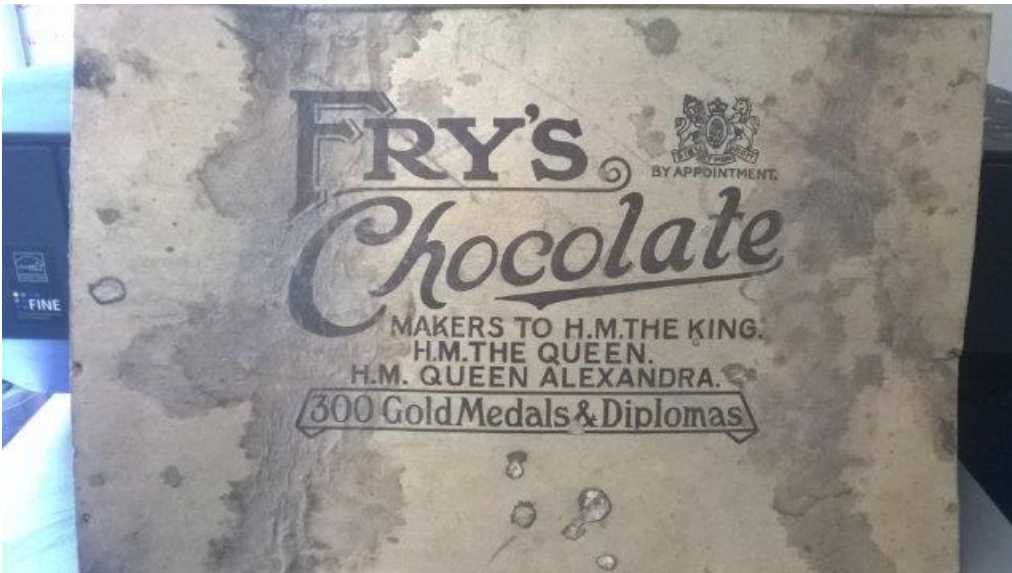


*Plate 58 Phase 6 painted sign on Number 21 first floor frontage, looking north-west*

---



*Plate 59 Chocolate box found within Number 21 first floor*



*Plate 60 Chocolate box found within Number 21 first floor*



*Plate 61 Phase 6 extension to Number 23, looking south-east*



*Plate 62 Phase 6 extension to Number 23, looking south-west*

---



*Plate 63 Phase 6 sketches in number 20 in the stair well between the first and second floor, looking north-west*

---



*Plate 64 Phase 6 sketches in number 20 in the stair well between the first and second floor, looking north-west*

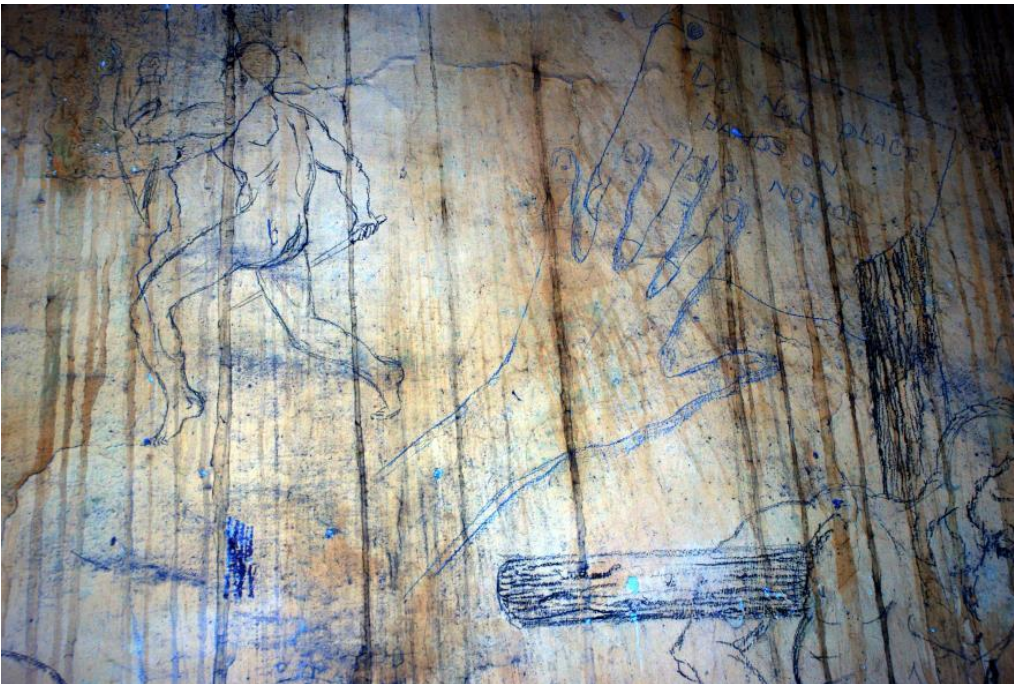


*Plate 65 Phase 6 sketches in number 20 in the stair well between the first and second floor, looking south*

---



*Plate 66 Phase 6 sketches in number 20 in the stair well between the first and second floor, looking north-west*

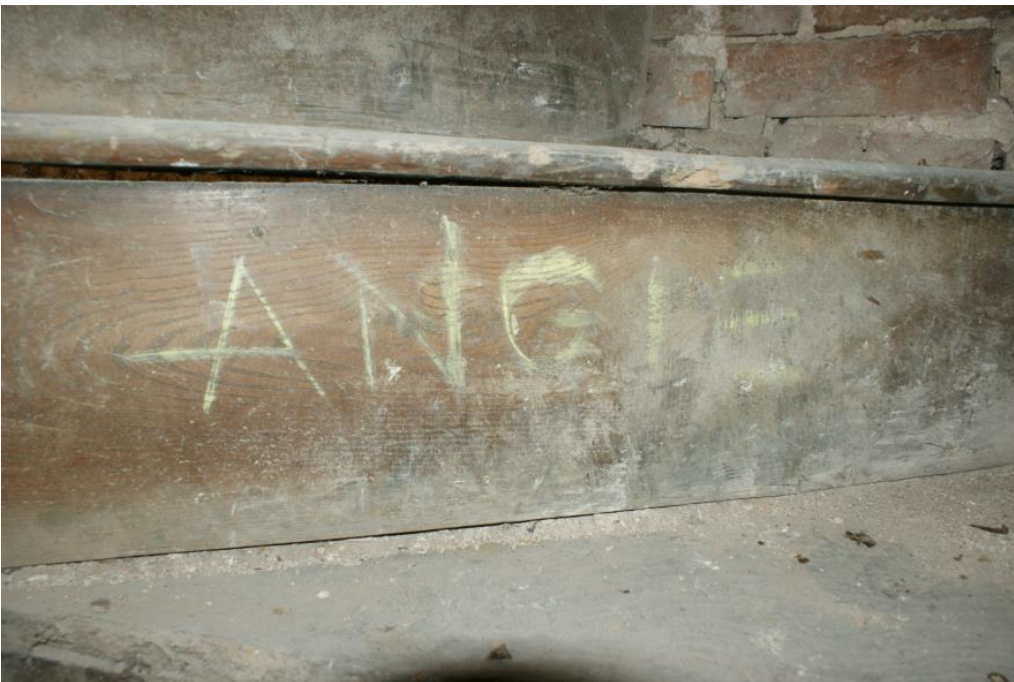


*Plate 67— Phase 6 sketches in number 20 in the stair well between the first and second floor, looking north-west*





*Plate 68 Phase 6 sketches in number 20 in the stair well between the first and second floor, looking south-east*



*Plate 69 Phase 6 sketches in number 20 in the stair well between the first and second floor, looking south*

---

## **Appendix 1 Technical information**

### **The archive (site code: WSM67954)**

The archive consists of:

- 1 Field progress reports AS2
- 19 Photographic records AS3
- 801 Digital photographs
- 6 Building Record Sheets
- 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

---

