

BUILDING RECORDING
at
**Lichfield Street,
Stourport-on-Severn,
Worcestershire**

Tim Cornah and Tom Vaughan



Building recording at Lichfield Street, Stourport-on-Severn, Worcestershire



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Tim Cornah and Tom Vaughan

Illustrations by Carolyn Hunt

Summary

Building recording was required to meet a planning condition relating to the redevelopment of a building at Lichfield St, Stourport-on-Severn, Worcestershire.

The planning condition specified that the building should be recorded to Historic England specified standards. This required photographing the exterior and interior of the building and annotating existing survey drawings, to produce an archive of the building before any alterations.

An element of historical research and synthesis was also a condition planning approval. Online digitised historic mapping and Historic Environment Record data were considered during this project. Analysis of the building was based upon the recorded fabric and research. The building is illustrated on ground plans which have been reproduced at the end of the report along with relevant photographs.

This building is located on the south side of Lichfield Street, off the former Coal Wharf, off Lichfield Basin. It was built between 1884 and 1903 by the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal Company. It is a small brick building comprised a single ground floor room below and a single upper floor above. There was no internal access between floors, which would indicate that they had separate functions. The first floor room, which contained a fireplace, and was accessed from an external staircase on the north side is considered to have been an office. The unheated ground floor room was probably used for storage or warehousing. The building was subsequently used by J Corbett and Son Ltd, timber merchants, probably after nationalisation of the canals in 1947. Although the internal walls were largely obscured by plaster and/or plaster board associated with the current development, the exterior walls indicate that the building was of a single phase of construction, and had not been altered. The only apparent change prior to the present development appears to have been the widening of the fireplace at some point in the 20th century.

Report

1 Background

1.1 Reasons for the project

Recording of a historic building was undertaken Lichfield Sreet, Stourport-on-Severn, Worcestershire (NGR SO 81177 71140). It was commissioned by Central Homes, who intends conversion of the present offices into a residential dwelling, for which a planning application has been submitted to Wyre Forest District Council (reference number 17/0785/FUL).

The building is an undesignated heritage asset within the terms used by the *National Planning Policy Framework*. The building is also registered with the Worcestershire Historic Environment Record (HER; WSM69908).

The project conforms to a brief prepared by Worcestershire County Council (WCC 2014) and for which a project proposal (including detailed specification) was produced (WA 2018).

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

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 2014).

The aims and scope of the project were to create a Level 2 record of the building prior to alterations associated with the development, as per correspondence from the Historic Environment Planning Officer, Worcestershire County Council, to the Planning and Environment Division, Wyre Forest District Council, dated 3 January 2018.

3 Methods

3.1 Personnel

The fieldwork was undertaken by Timothy Cornah (BA (hons.), MSc; ACIfA); who joined Worcestershire Archaeology in 2006 and has been practicing archaeology since 2003. The report was prepared by Tim Cornah and Tom Vaughan (BA (hons.); MA; ACIfA). The project manager responsible for the quality of the project was Tom Vaughan. 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

- 1883 1st edition Ordnance Survey Map 1:10,560
- 1884 Ordnance Survey Map 1:2,500
- 1903 Ordnance Survey Map 1:10,560
- 1929 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 2018).

Fieldwork was undertaken on 6 June 2018. The site reference number used by the Historic Environment Record to record archaeological "events", and site code used in the archive is WSM70290.

Building recording consisted of a photographic survey of the interior and exterior of the building, analysis of its development and annotation of existing survey drawings (where available). All photographs were taken with photographic scales visible in each shot where possible. The photographic survey was carried out with a Canon digital SLR camera. All photographs were recorded on a pro-forma Photographic Record Sheet. Annotation of existing ground plans and completion of pro-forma Building Record sheet complemented the photographic record.

The project conformed to the specification for a level 2 survey as defined in the Historic England document *Understanding historic buildings: a guide to good recording practice* (HE 2016):

A level 2 record is a descriptive record. This is a visual record supplemented by the minimum of information needed to identify the building's location, age and type. The record will produce enough information to produce conclusions about the buildings development and use.

The record will include the following elements of survey:

Photography

- General view or views of the building in its wider setting or landscape
- External appearance of the building, using oblique and right angle shots
- Overall appearance of the principal rooms and circulation areas

Drawings

- Roughly dimensioned sketched plan, section, or elevation
- Measured plans as existing
- Measured drawings recording the form or location of other significant detail (when required)
- Measured cross-sections, long sections or elevational sections illustrating the vertical relationships within the building (when required)
- Measured drawings showing the form of any architectural decoration (when required)
- Measured elevations (when required)

Written account

- A summary of the building's form, function, date and sequence of development, including builders, architects, owners or patrons names where known

3.5 Building analysis

Analysis of the building was based on the study of the photographic record, building recording form 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 photographed is depicted in Plates 1-15. The photo locations are indicated on the annotated ground plan (Figure 2).

3.6 Statement of confidence in the methods and results

Having undertaken the project the following comments may be made with regard to the level of success. The building was made available to record only after the works associated with the development were underway.

On the first floor the north, south and west internal walls had been replastered. The east wall, upper south gable end and chimney breast had possibly been repointed. Within the roof a number of timber ties appear to have been inserted or replaced, steel collar supports and wall plates had been inserted (Plates 5-7, 9). On the ground floor (Plates 3 and 4) the south, east and west internal walls had been replastered and/or plaster boarded, and the north internal wall partially obscured by ongoing insulation works. The floor was covered by plastic sheeting within the northern half and cement over plastic sheeting within the southern half. The ceiling had been cut through and a new staircase inserted.

4 Context

The following information is taken from the Worcestershire Historic Environment Record search of c 500m radius of the site (dated 12 April 2018).

The town of Stourport did not exist until the canals and basins were started in the late 1760s. Prior to that, a collection of houses next to the crossing of the river Stour to the east of the site were known as Lower Mitton (English Heritage 2007).

The canal basins to the south and west of the site were completed between the 1770s and 1801 along with the canal which headed off to the north (WSM12001). The earliest buildings of the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal Company were warehouses to the south of the site (WSM32856, WSM17450) along with the Tontine Hotel (WSM12797) with buildings such as the Angel Inn (WSM14748) constructed soon after. The buildings on Mart Lane which lie to the immediate west of the building were started in the 18th century as offices and warehouses of the company (WSM17469 and WSM12833) and added to in the 19th century at the northern end of the range (WSM32854) (Plate 2).

The present built character of much of Stourport started in the later 18th and early 19th century, constructed along Bridge Street, High Street and York Street to the west and north-west of the present building. The residential buildings on the northern side of Lichfield Street also started at broadly this time (WSM12823, WSM19631, WSM19632, WSM12824, WSM17464). To the immediate east and south of the building was the Coal Wharf (WSM19657), constructed in the 18th century as a spur off Lichfield Basin, although the spur was filled in in the latter part of the 20th century.

5 The building

5.1 Historical information

The building was originally built and owned by the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal Company and is thought to have been an office and store (WSM69908). The 1883 Ordnance Survey map shows a smaller building slightly to the south of the position that would be expected for this current structure. This is clarified on the edition of 1884 which depicts it as an addition to the rear of the buildings facing onto Mart Lane. The current building is first shown in its present position on the map of 1903, indicating that it was constructed between 1884 and 1903.

At some point within the 20th century, the building was taken over by J Corbett and Son (Timber) Ltd, as shown on the repainted sign on the northern gable end at front of the building (Plates 1 and 9). This presumably took place after the nationalisation of the canals in 1947 and the closing of the company.

5.2 Building development

Two phases were identified during the investigation of the building.

5.3 Phase 1: 1884 -1903

This building consisted of a roughly north to south aligned brick built structure with a single room on the ground and first floors, accessed externally from doors on each floor at the north end. No internal staircase existed originally. The ground floor room had two windows, one in the northern

gable end and a further in the western elevation. The first floor room had a fireplace roughly centrally on its eastern wall, flanked by two windows, with a further window in the northern gable end. The timbers of the common rafter roof were of softwood, as were the floor joists and boards. The roof was covered with slate. The windows had wooden mullion frames. The doors were of simple wooden plank construction (Plates 3-15).

5.4 Phase 2: 20th century

The fireplace was altered, being rebuilt and apparently widened (Plate 9).

6 Discussion

This structure was built between 1884 and 1903 by the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal Company. It is a small brick building comprised a single ground floor room below and a single upper floor above. There was no internal access between floors, which would indicate that they had separate functions. The first floor room, which contained a fireplace, and was accessed from an external staircase on the north side is considered to have been an office. The unheated ground floor room was probably used for storage or warehousing. The building was subsequently used by J Corbett and Son Ltd, timber merchants, probably after nationalisation of the canals in 1947. Although the internal walls were largely obscured by plaster and/or plaster board associated with the current development, the exterior walls indicate that the building was of a single phase of construction, and had not been altered. The only apparent change prior to the present development appears to have been the widening of the fireplace at some point in the 20th century.

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 required to meet a planning condition relating to the redevelopment of a building at Lichfield St, Stourport-on-Severn, Worcestershire (NGR SO 81177 71140, HER; WSM69908).

This building is located on the south side of Lichfield Street, off the former Coal Wharf, off Lichfield Basin. It was built between 1884 and 1903 by the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal Company. It is a small brick building comprised a single ground floor room below and a single upper floor above. There was no internal access between floors, which would indicate that they had separate functions. The first floor room, which contained a fireplace, and was accessed from an external staircase on the north side is considered to have been an office. The unheated ground floor room was probably used for storage or warehousing. The building was subsequently used by J Corbett and Son Ltd, timber merchants, probably after nationalisation of the canals in 1947. Although the internal walls were largely obscured by plaster and/or plaster board associated with the current development, the exterior walls indicate that the building was of a single phase of construction, and had not been altered. The only apparent change prior to the present development appears to have been the widening of the fireplace at some point in the 20th century.

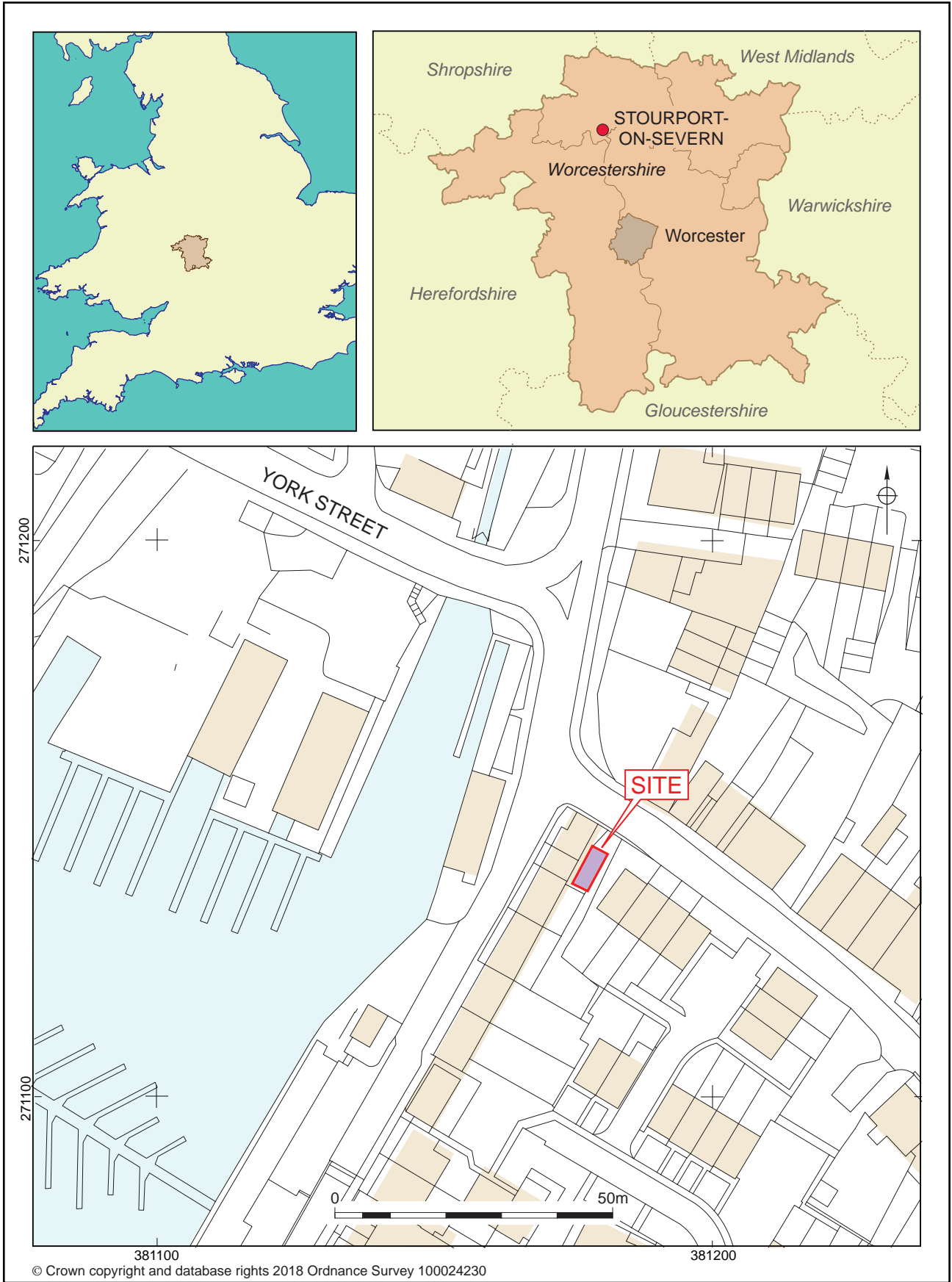
8 Acknowledgements

Worcestershire Archaeology would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in this project, Shaun Nash (Central Homes (Midlands) Ltd) and Adam Mindykowski (Historic Environment Advisor, Worcestershire County Council).

9 Bibliography

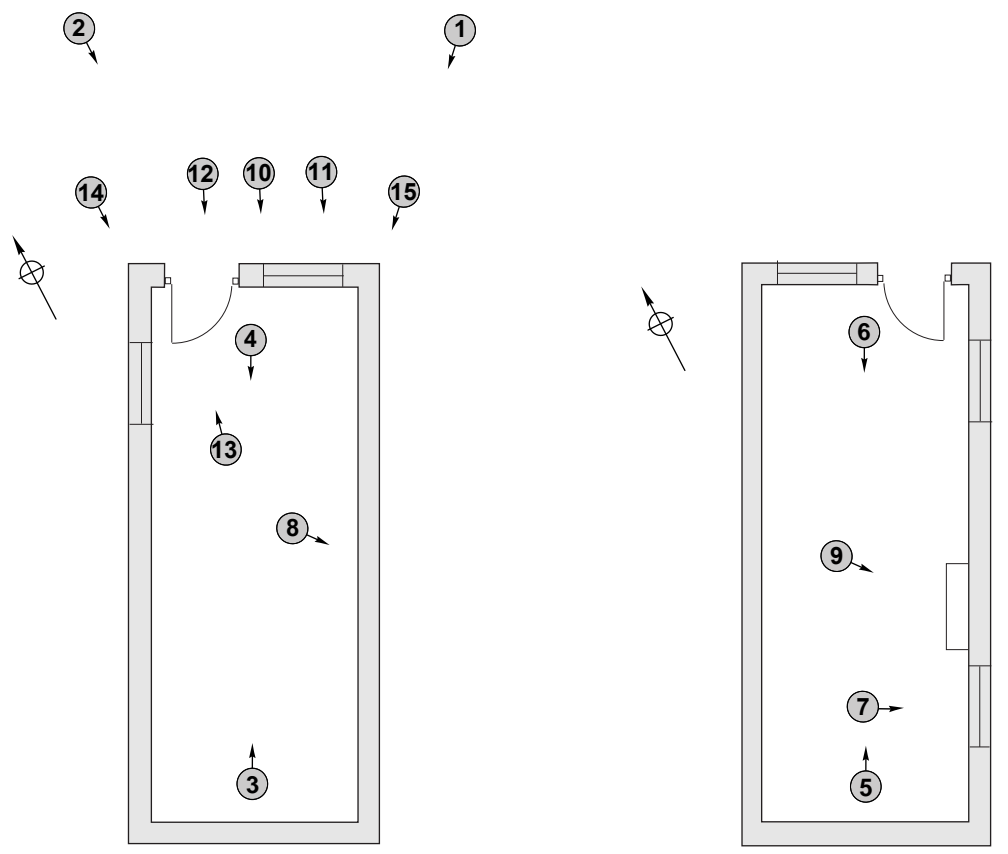
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Figures



Location of the site

Figure 1



GROUND FLOOR PLAN

FIRST FLOOR PLAN



Ground Floor and First Floor plans with photo locations

Figure 2

Plates



Plate 1 General view south-west, 1m scale



Plate 2 General view south-east from the junction of Lichfield Street and Mart Lane, 1m scale



Plate 3 Ground floor interior, view north-east, 1m scale



Plate 4 Ground floor interior, view south-west, 1m scale



Plate 5 First floor interior, view north-east, 1m scale



Plate 6 First floor interior, view south-west, 1m scale



Plate 7 First floor interior, detail of southern window in east wall, 1m scale



Plate 8 Ground floor interior, detail of ceiling joists below fireplace on first floor above, no scale



Plate 9 First floor interior, detail of fireplace, looking south-east, 1m scale



Plate 10 J Corbett and Son (Timber) Ltd sign on the north gable end, no scale



Plate 11 Exterior ground floor window detail, view south-west, 1m scale



Plate 12 Exterior ground door detail, view south-west, 1m scale



Plate 13 Interior ground floor door detail, view north, 1m scale



Plate 14 Exterior ground floor, view south-west between the building (left) and no. 1, Mart Lane (right), 1m scale



Plate 15 Exterior ground floor, looking south-west (left), 1m scale

Appendix 1 Technical information

The archive (site code: WSM70290)

The archive consists of:

- 1 Field progress report AS2
- 1 Building Record Form
- 1 Photographic records AS3
- 45 Digital photographs
- 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