

JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

**HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING
AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

ON

23-25 BROAD STREET, OXFORD

NGR SP 51398 06421

On behalf of

Housing and Property Services, Oxford City Council

SEPTEMBER 2014

REPORT FOR Housing and Property Services
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23-25 Broad Street, Oxford

Historic Building Recording and Archaeological Watching Brief

SUMMARY

John Moore Heritage Services was asked to carry out an Archaeological Watching Brief and Historic Building Recording during refurbishment works on 23-25 Broad Street, Oxford (NGR SP 51398 06421). An initial assessment of the building was carried out by Billam (2013). This means that the general descriptions of the buildings are not as full as a normal report would be but detail is provided where new details were observed. The building is a grade II listed structure located in the central Oxford Conservation Area.

The site was visited on three different occasions, with various parts of the building being recorded. An initial visit in January observed a wall in the basement where the new electrical supply was to enter the building. The external watching brief was carried out in February, which only observed made levels in Turl Street and the roof of the stone vaulted chamber. Further observations in June noted a number of timber framed walls that were uncovered.

The analysis of the phasing of the building in Billam (2013) was not significantly detailed. A new assessment is here suggested that properly phases the building into six phases with its initial development (Phase 1) probably of the late 16th or more likely early 17th century. Phase 2 is of the mid 17th century. Phase 3 generated the general exterior of the building as it now is and is attributed to the 18th century. Phase 4 is associated with the 19th century and Phase 5 with the 20th century. Phase 6 is associated with the 1960s alterations.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location

The site is located in central Oxford on the north side of the city wall. Parochially the site is located in the parish of Saint Michael, the church that formed part of the north gate of Oxford City. The parish boundary runs to the north of the building along the south side of Broad Street, with the majority of that thoroughfare being in the parish of Saint Mary Magdalen. Though Saint Michael at the North Gate is regarded as a historic parish, it is apparent from the presentation in 1122, and rights held by Saint Frideswide's church in that of Saint Michael (VCH 1979, 369-412) that the parish was originally part of the larger Oxford parish associated with the mother church. The site was in the historic county of Oxford. It is now located in Oxford City.

The north side of the property fronts onto Broad Street, with the east side of the property facing on to Turl Street. On the south side the shop is jointed to other premises facing on to Turl Street. To the southwest of the site the remains of the city wall and a bastion lie on a small courtyard. The passageway to the courtyard runs down the west side of the building, above the passageway the site is joined to another property fronting onto Broad Street at first floor level.

The site is set on the plateau of a river terrace at a height between 60m and 65m Ordnance Datum.

The underlying geology is the Oxford Clay Formation and West Walton Formation, undifferentiated mudstones laid down some 156 million to 165 million years ago in the Jurassic period (mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html). Overlying the bedrock is the Summertown-Radley Sand and Gravel Member, part of a river terrace formed 3 million years ago in the Quaternary Period.

1.2 Commission

The report was commissioned by Ian Gordon, Senior Building Surveyor, Housing and Property Services for Oxford City Council.

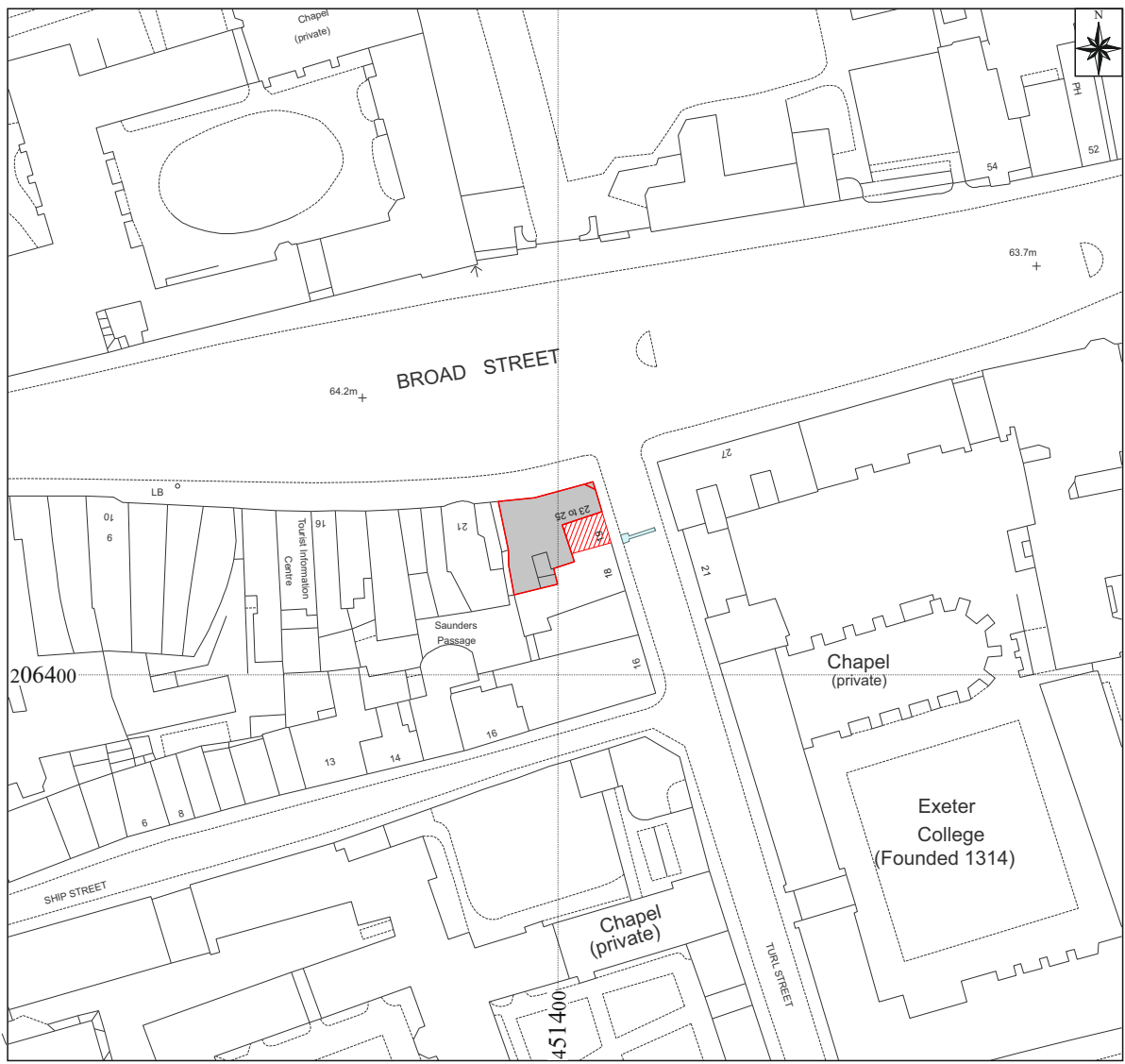
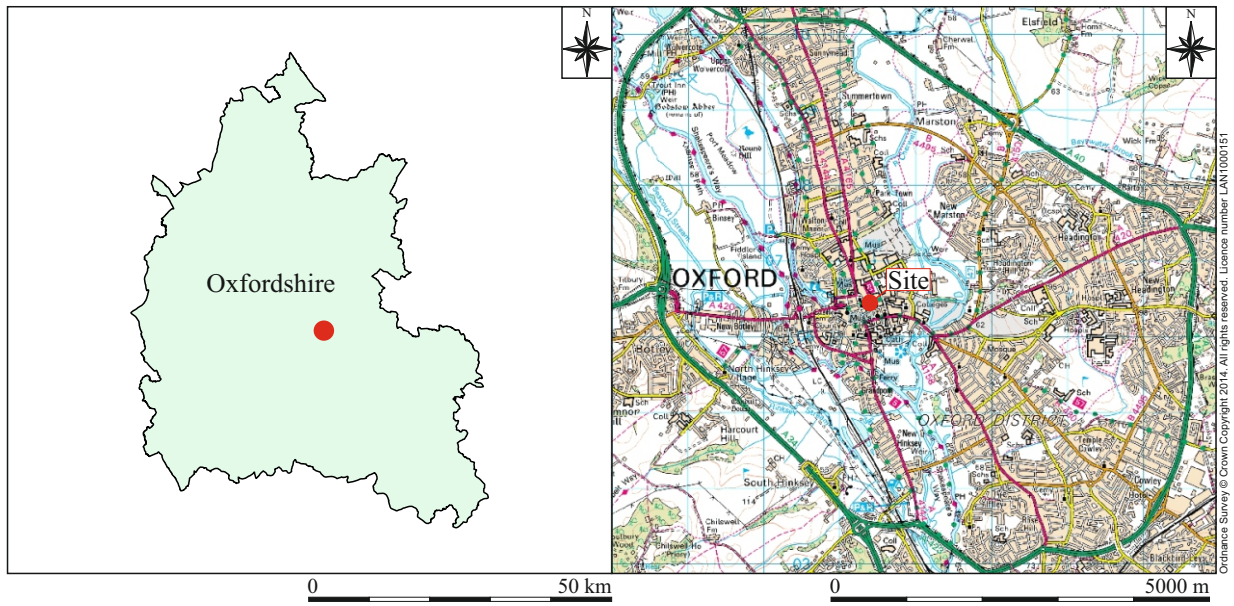
1.3 Aim of Investigation

The aim of the report was to carry out a watching brief on the alterations and excavations carried out at 23-25 Broad Street, Oxford. This monitoring resulted in the recording of archaeological and architectural details that were identified in the building in accordance with procedure set out by English Heritage and the Institute of Field Archaeologists (1999).

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Designations

The building is a Grade II listed structure (EHID 245359: SP 51398 06421) that was designated as such in 1972.



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Key ■ Study building(s) ■ Area of excavation ■ Further area of basement

Figure 1: Site location

No 23. Probably late C18. 5-storeyed timber-framed with a band at the 2nd floor and a moulded cornice at the 23rd floor. The top floor is a later addition (? C19). There is a small moulded cornice, a parapet and a Welsh slate roof. In each floor is a 3-sided bay window with sashes. No 24. Probably late C18. 4-storeyed timber-framed with a band at the 2nd floor, a moulded cornice and a parapet. In each floor are 3-sided bay windows with sashes in moulded frames. No 25 On the corner of Turl Street, late C18. 4-storeyed stuccoed timber framed with a moulded cornice and parapet. In the 1st floor is a sash window with a moulded wood architrave and to the west of it is an oval lunette in a moulded wood frame. In the 2nd floor is a sash window and a lunette to the west. In the 3rd floor is a wood window frame with sliding lights. The elevation on Turl Street is mainly similar. Continuous modern shop front to whole.

The building is also located in the central conservation area of Oxford, which was so designated in 1971. The conservation area has been subsequently extended on four occasions in 1974, 1981, 1985 and 1998.

2.2 History of Development

A more detailed history of the refurbishment site was put forward by Billam (2013). Subsequently this is just a shorter overview of the development of Oxford and Broad Street in general. The name *Oxnaforda* is first recorded in c 925, and refers to the Oxenford (Gelling 1953, i.19).

In 1086 the account of Oxford refers to 243 houses that pay tax, and another 478 that were accounted as being derelict (Morris 1978, B.4). A number of the buildings were referred to as wall dwellings, which were responsible for repairing the wall (Morris 1978, B.5). A subsequent list of house holders is made, but on the whole it is probably difficult to locate these unless it was a religious house that was later associated with the foundation of a college. It is stated that the priests of the church of Saint Michael's held two dwellings (Morris 1978, B.10).

Broad Street is a name of post-medieval origin. Historically the street is called *Horsmongeres-streta* in c. 1235, with three subsequent recordings of the name *Horsmongharestrete* in 1245, *Horsmongerestrete* in c 1245, and *Horsmangerstret* in 1250 (Gelling 1953, i.38). The name is self explanatory in that it refers to the street of the horse-monger. A subsequent medieval name is the high road of *Candich* in 1379. The *Kanditch* is referred to in 1371, and in the early 17th century there is reference to the Towne Ditch called the *Canditch*, and in 1661-6 reference to the *Canditch* (Gelling 1953, i.20). It has been suggested that the name is derived from a Middle English *cante*, which has an etymology of edge or border. The line of the ditch must be located under 23-25 Broad Street, as the structure backs on to the line of the city wall.

The earliest recorded name for Turl Street is *St Mildred's Street* in 1363. The name *Turl Gate Street* was first recorded in 1661-6 (Gelling 1953, i.44). The name is associated with a word *tirl*, the etymology of the name referring a revolving piece of mechanism like a turnstile. The relevant gate was where Turl Street cut through the line of the city wall. A reference in c. 1590 referred to *the hole in the wall near the Turle*.

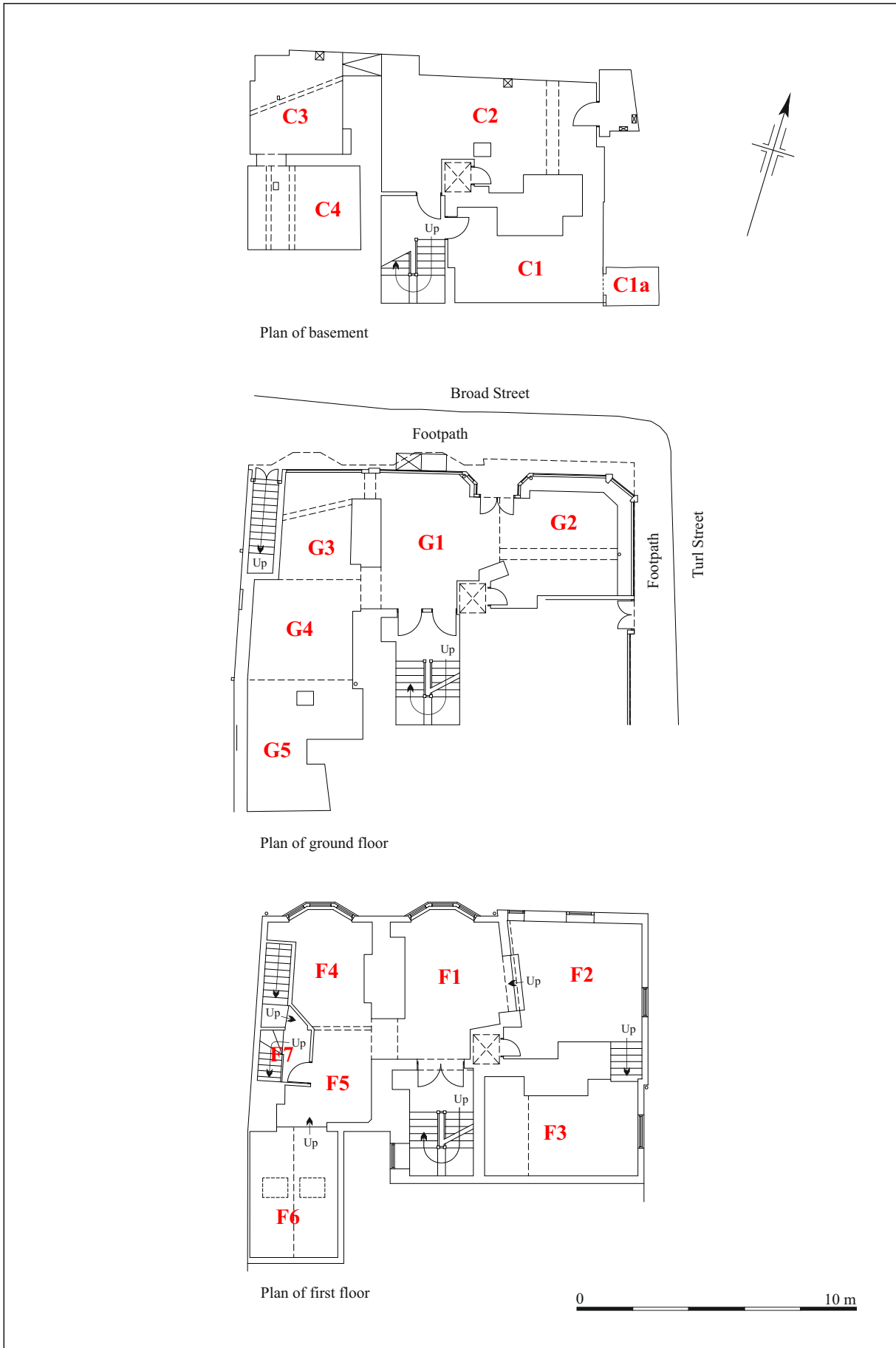


Figure 2: Basement, ground floor and first floor plans

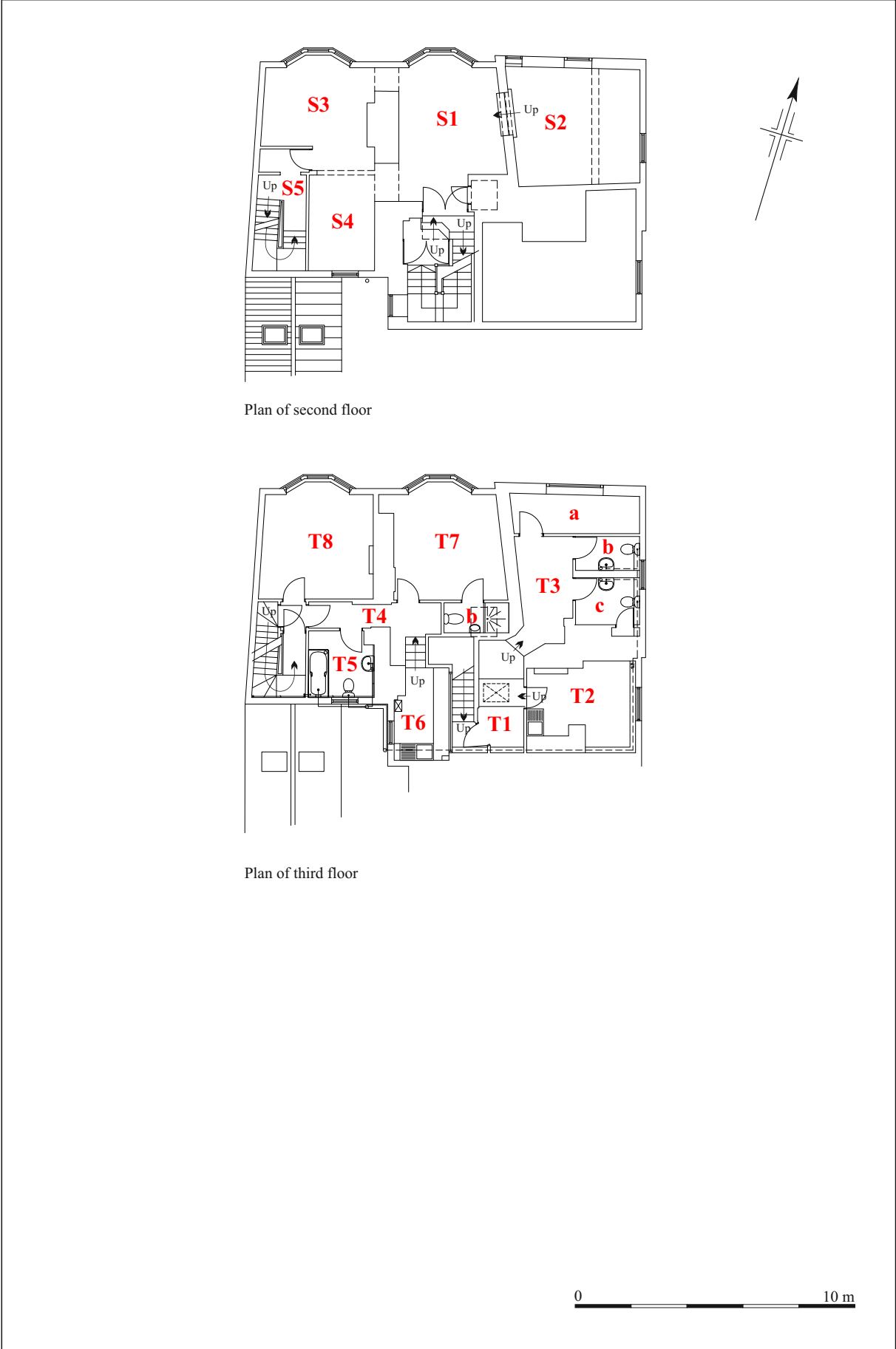


Figure 3: Second and third floor plans



Figure 4: Front and side external elevations

These names imply that the area of the site was an open ditch in the early 17th century and that at this time there was an opening through the city wall, which had a rotating gate in Turl Street.

Map evidence indicates that there was no building on the site in 1578 (Biddam 2013). However, a map dated 1650 (CH/XXIII/3) shows the site occupied by a structure with three steeply pitched north to south roofs and of only 2 storeys.

3:1 DESCRIPTION OF 23-25 BROAD STREET

3.1 Introduction and General Description

The building is located at the corner of Broad Street with Turl Street and contains five levels including a basement. Much of this has been reworked internally on many occasions. There is a side alley. The building was originally more than one structure. The ground floor contains a shop frontage, while the first, second and third floors contain bay windows. The roof is slate behind a parapet front.

3.2 Façades



Plate 1 Broad Street façade

The principle façade is that which faces onto Broad Street (Fig. 4, Plate 1). The ground floor contains glass windows of a shop frontage. There is an angle on the corner between Turl and Broad Street. Off centre and to the left there is a further door. This ground floor is a modern shop frontage insertion. Above the window line there are probable false beam ends as if indicating an earlier jettied arrangement.

On the first, second and third floors the structure has three window bays of which the right hand two are bay windows of a composite design. On the first and second floor the windows are 4-panes high, while on the third floor the composite windows are 2-panes high. The first floor bays have cornices. There is a moulded cornice above this above which is a pediment with copping. To the left the building frontage projects slightly and centrally located on the first and second floor are 12-pane sash windows.

The first floor window has an architrave above. To the right and slightly below each of these windows there is a small oval window, perhaps indicating earlier staggered floor layers. On the third floor there is a mullioned and transomed window with three compartments. The cornice continues to run above this and above is the pediment with coping.

On the east façade on the ground floor there is a large shop window between the corner angle door, and a door which presumably was an earlier access to the area above (Fig. 4, Plate 2). The same jettied arrangement is above. To the left the shop window is higher, and belongs to a different shop. Above this the frontage is of two parts. On the right hand side there are three windows in three storeys, with the lower two sash windows and the upper a smaller mullioned and transomed frame. The lower sash window has a cornice. On the left hand side the building extends over another shop frontage and here there are two storeys, both sash windows of 12-pane and 9-pane, with the lower having a cornice. The remains of a cornice and pediment continue along this side.



Plate 2 East façade

On the west side of the building part of a blank façade can be seen extending over a structure to the right.

3.3 Interior

Much of the interior has been stripped at various times (Figs 2-3). The double front doors open up into a long formerly divided unit (G1 and G2), with large windows on the north and east. There is a double door in the south wall that opens up into a

stairwell. The remains of a chimneybreast still survive in the west part of the room, but the walls either side are removed to provide access to a long narrow open area in which further original wall lines have been removed (G3, G4 and G5). The large shop window continues to the north of this area.

The stairwell has access up and down. The cellar contains four main rooms two of irregular shapes (C1 and C2). Of the southeast room, east wall south side, there is access to a small rectangular stone built vault (C1a). The back wall of the vault was drawn stone by stone as damage would have been caused to the stone vault (Fig. 5, Plate 3). The stones are of a rough limestone rubble bonded with a sand mortar of a yellow to pink hue. In the northeast room (C2) there is a side door in the east wall into a further side chamber under the road. The two smaller western rooms contain the remains of timber beams. In the northern room (C3) the timber is rough and chamfered, part of the ceiling was opened up during the refurbishment (Plate 4). In the southern room (C4) there is evidence of a wider earlier wall, a timber beam in the ceiling, and newer supporting beam.



Plate 3 Stone wall and vault under the pavement

The first floor is also accessed from the new central stairwell. The double doors open up into a central room (F1) with bay window ahead and chimneybreast to the west. There are steps down to a lower floor level on the east. This room (F2) has a sash window in the east and one in the north. There is a further oval window low in the north wall, covered over initially but opened up. In the south wall there is a chimneybreast with an adjacent stairs. There is an iron grate set in the fireplace and the feature has a panel surround. The stairs lead to a room (F3) on a further staggered level with chimneybreast in the north wall and a sash window in the east wall. From the

central room a gap alongside the chimneybreast leads into a long narrow space (F4 and F5). A bay window is located in the north wall and stairwell against the west wall (F7). There is a room to the south with roof lights (F6).



Plate 4 Chamfered beam in C3

The central stairs lead up onto the second floor (Fig. 3). The doors open up into the central room (S1) with a bay window in the north wall and a chimneybreast in the west wall. In the east wall there are steps down to a sub-rectangular room (S2) with a sash window in the east wall, and a sash and oval window in the north wall. There is a chimneybreast in the south wall. The wall between S1 and S2 was stripped back to some extent revealing two timber framed walls of which the west wall still contained red brick infill (Fig. 5, Plates 5 and 6). This presumably had been an external wall back in the 18th century. This also shows that building 25 (S2) was part of a later build as it had a timber frame with lathe and plaster and a gap between them of 0.1-0.15m. Either side of the chimneybreast in room S1 the walls have been removed so as to provide access to a long L-shaped space (S3 and S4). From these rooms there is access to the west stairwell (S5).

The upper flight of the central stairwell leads up onto a passageway (T1) in part of the third floor. There is a door in the east wall leading to room (T2), which has a sash window in the east wall and a chimneybreast in the north. Stripping of the room uncovered the remains of damp timbers in the northeast side of the room. The passageway leads round to the room (T3) in the north east part of the third floor. This was divided into an office (a), male toilets (b) and female toilets (c). This whole area was stripped out revealing the remains of timber panelling in the southeast corner (Fig. 6, Plate 7) and also along the north wall (Fig. 6, Plate 8). There are mullioned and

transomed windows in the east and north wall. In the south wall the remains of a chimneybreast were revealed (Plate 9).



Plate 5 Wall between S1 and S2 from the west



Plate 6 Wall between S1 and S2 from the east



Plate 7 Timber framing in south of room T3



Plate 8 Timber framing in wall on north side of T3

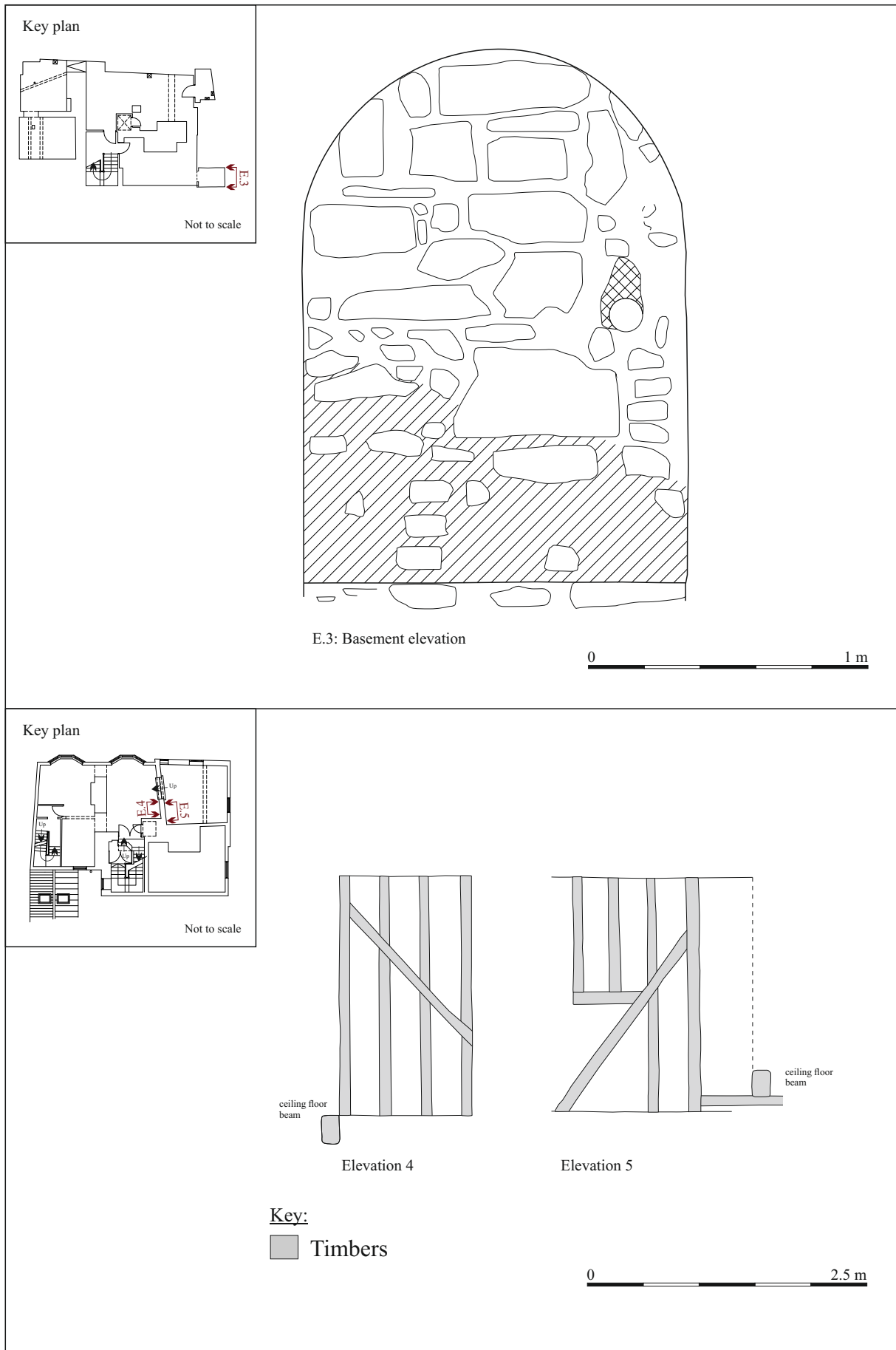


Figure 5: Basement and second floor internal elevations

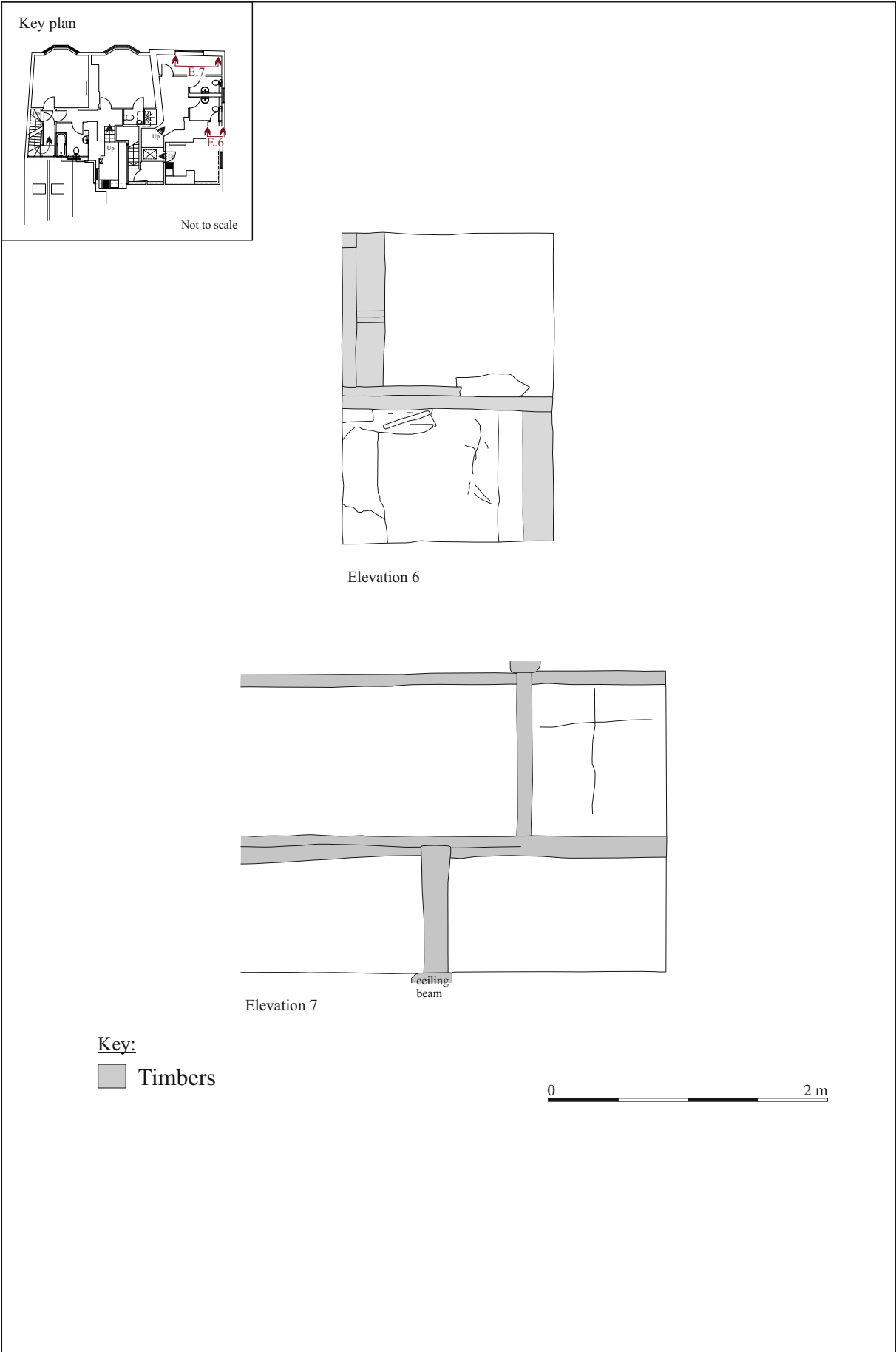


Figure 6: Third floor internal elevations



Plate 9 Chimneybreast in south wall of T3

The western staircase also leads up onto the third floor, but in this case the western part that formed a flat. The stairs enter a passageway or hall (T4), in which an en-suite (b) was inserted at the east end. On the north side of the passage two doors open up into rooms (T8) and (T7). Room (T8) has a bay window in the north wall and a chimneybreast in the east wall. Room (T7) has a bay window in the north wall and a chimneybreast in the west wall. A door on the south side of the hall (T4) enters room (T5) a bathroom, while stairs lead down to a kitchen (T6) with a window in the west wall.

3:II ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

3.4 Results

The lowest deposit seen was a layer (06) that was a very firm mid grey yellow coarse sand clay that was over 0.2m thick. The deposit lies in the vicinity of the city ditch and it is possible that if this is the natural that it could be located on the shoulder of the ditch cut or that this may simply be a layer running in the top of the ditch cut or above it. Agas map of 1578 shows the remains of an undeveloped site outside the city wall (Billam 2013). It is thus proposed that the earliest layers on the site must relate to this 16th century date.

Cut 09 is an irregular cut for the cellar, which is believed to have been inserted into layer (06), but this was not categorically proved. Masonry 08 is a limestone rubble wall with ashlar blocks forming the top of the vault. This is a cellar wall bonded with a

yellow pink sand mortar. A map of Oxford for 1650 (CH/XXIII/3) shows that there is a building constructed on the site of 23-25 Broad Street and that the structure is drawn with three bays. The roof arrangement is different on this view and it can thus be assumed that the original construction of the house is at least of the 17th century and that these features are probably at least of that date. The maps of 1768 by Jefferys and that of 1797 by Davis of Lewknor (CH/XX/2) show the site as being occupied. The current structure would appear to be of an 18th century design and it has thus undergone a reworking sometime at this date.



Plate 10 Deposits in watching brief

Above layer (06) was layer (05), a cemented red white grey with chalk, stone, brick and mortar fragments some 0.26m deep. This may be an early road surface of Turl Street of the 17th or 18th century. Layer (04) was a firm grey black stone silt deposit that was an early tarmac. John Loudon McAdam c 1800 and John Henry Cassell in 1834 developed early forms of MacAdam Road surfaces in the 19th century.

The remains of a service cut could be noted as being cut into the top of layer (06) at least, but probably truncated layer (05) and (04). The fill (07) was a highly compact light brown stone hardcore some 0.38m wide and 0.8m deep. Service trenches originate in the later part of the 19th century and continue into the 20th century.

Cut 10 was a linear feature measuring 0.15m deep cut through the earlier road surface (04) to embed the kerb stones. The fill (03) was a friable mid to light yellow coarse sand. The embedded kerbing 02 was of stone c 150mm x 110mm x 90mm that were roughly squared. Butting the kerb is tarmac (01) a black layer some 0.1m thick.

4 ASSESSMENT

4.1 Phases

An initial and very brief assessment of the phasing of the building was given by Billam

(2013) in her historical assessment of the structure. This stated that the Agas map of 1578 showed the site open and undeveloped. The line of the ditch is not shown on this map so it is highly likely that it was silted up at this date. A map of 1650 (CH.XXIII/3) shows the site occupied by a building or buildings with three steeply pitched roof lines running roughly north to south. From these map details it is possible to suggest that the initial Phase 1 of construction, which probably included the construction of the cellar or basement commenced at some date between 1578 and 1650. The building is shown with a door on the ground floor and windows on the first floor. This implies that the earliest structures were three buildings of the early 17th or late 16th century that were two storey (ground and first floor excluding a basement) and had steeply pitched roofs. The internal wall configuration at the building may indicate that there is in fact more than one phase associated with Phase 1. Buildings 23 and 24 appear to form more of an homogenous construction and may originally represent the corner of Turl and Broad Streets with Turl Street being far wider and with a splayed entrance. Building 25 appears to be a further infill addition on the end, but it evidently created prior to 1650 in some form. The timbers in the cross passage are considered to have been reused. That these buildings had their different frames was apparent on the second floor between nos. 24 and 25, where two timber frames (one with a brick infill) indicated that two walls were built some 0.1-0.15m apart.

It is noticeable that on Loggan's map of 1675 (Billam 2013) that the roof configuration is different and that the roof runs from east to west and turns at the corner of Broad Street and Turl Street. This plan implies that by the mid to late 17th century the roof of the structure had been altered, and this may have involved the raising of the height of the structure to a three storey building. Whatever the exact alterations at this time it is apparent that there should be a Phase 2 of the building associated with the late 17th century. That the ditch was reopened in the Civil War seems unlikely from the 1650 map.

Phase 3 must concern the reworking of the facades of the building as they are of an 18th century date. One could suspect a unity of ownership of nos. 23-24 as design-wise they appear to be part of a pair of matching bays. No. 23 had a fourth above ground floor level with a further bay window with an 18th century design. At present we only have enough evidence to suggest that there was one phase of this century but it is probable that there were as many as three phases as each building was reworked. It is difficult on present analysis to suggest a way in which this would be carried out, but one can assume that either 25 or 24 were the first buildings to be upgraded. The phasing of the alteration of building 23 must have occurred after 24 to replicate its bay windows and insert a further floor level.

Phase 4 must be associated with the late 19th century. It is known that in 1861 buildings 23 and 24 were combined as premises at this time. This would have meant alterations to the site, possibly with the shop area on the ground floor and probably further insertions between the two structures.

In the early 20th century the upper storey of building 23 was removed. This would constitute phase 5 of the building.

Phase 6 saw various small alterations from the 1960s. This is when building 25 was amalgamated with the other two premises. This occurred in 1969. Subsequent

alterations have taken place from that date.

4.2 Listed Status

The building is a grade II listed building.

4.3 Historic and Architectural Assessment

The building originated as a structure of the early 17th century or late 16th century and has indications of alterations at various dates. These alterations can be dated to the 17th century, the façade in the 18th century, and later 19th and 20th century. The façade gives the building an overall Georgian appearance.

5 THE CURRENT PROPOSAL

The building has recently been renovated. The alterations saw the insertion of new service links, which were monitored. This involved the recording of a stone wall and the monitoring of a trench in Turl Street.

The stripping of the internal part of the building uncovered various areas of internal timber framework that were monitored and photographed. These features were observed on the 2nd and 3rd floor.

6 CONCLUSIONS

An initial assessment of the history and description of the building was carried out by Billam (2013). This essentially interpreted the structure as being of a 17th century origin with 18th century façades. Here it is possible to suggest that there are at least six major phases to the structure, though some of this is ascertained from portrayals on early map evidence.

The map of 1650 shows a building which is probably two storey and with three north to south orientated steeply pitched roofs. The map of 1675 shows that the roof line of the buildings has been altered. The façades are a product of the 18th century. Further alterations have been associated with the 19th and 20th century (Phases 4-6).

Recording work was carried out in the basement and in Turl Street adjacent to it; for the insertion of new services.

Parts of the timber frame from building 25 were recorded on the 2nd and 3rd floors.

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