

JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

HISTORIC BUILDING ASSESSMENT

ON

16 MARKET SQUARE, ABINGDON,

OXFORDSHIRE

NGR SU 49794 97115

On behalf of

RSA Architects

OCTOBER 2012

REPORT FOR RSA Architects
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16 Market Square, Abingdon

Historic Building Assessment

SUMMARY

This is a report on 16 Market Square (SU 49794 97115) and a further property that is now part of that premises but which originated as a unit fronting Stert Street. The buildings are a grade II listed building and form part of the conservation area of Abingdon, being located in the old core of the town around the Market Square which was established outside the abbey possibly in the 11th century. The ground floor of the building has been considerably compromised architecturally with the removal of internal walls. The first floor has been extensively altered, although some original features can still be found. The second floor also has extensive alteration, but with some surviving details.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location

The property lies in the heart of the historic market town of Abingdon (Fig. 1), which was formerly in the historic county of Berkshire and has subsequently been placed in Oxfordshire. The town is located in the Vale of the White Horse District.

Topographically the settlement is located on a raised terrace above the River Thames. The underlying geology is the second gravel terrace of the Thames (BGS 1971, sheet 253).

1.2 Commission

The report has been commissioned by John Fenton of RSA Architects.

1.3 Aim of Investigation

The aim is to provide a simple historical assessment of the building as part of a planning application.

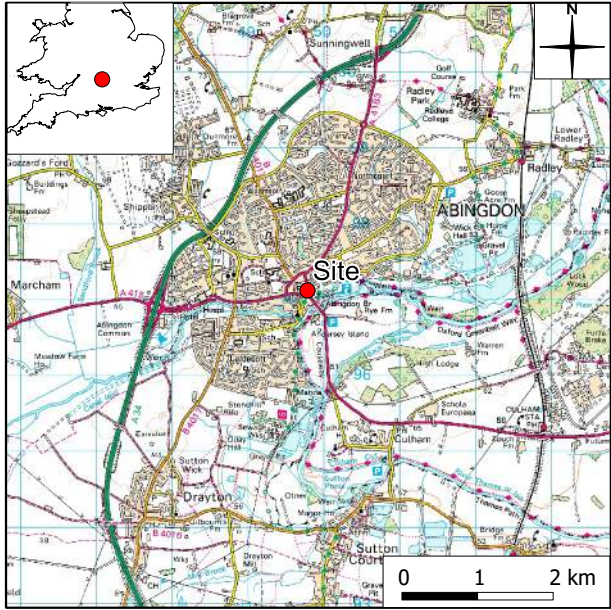
2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Designations

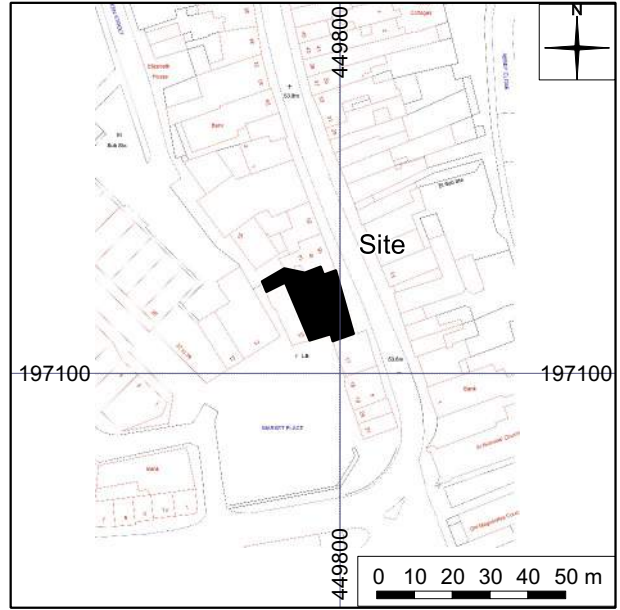
The following designation covers no. 16 Market Square (EHBID 250409: SU 49794 97115).

C18, timber framed. L-shaped corner premises. Three storeys. Rough rendered. Slate roof with iron eaves brackets. Three windows, two: one, wooden flush frames with frieze and cornice, double hung sash with glazing bars. Modern ground floor shop.

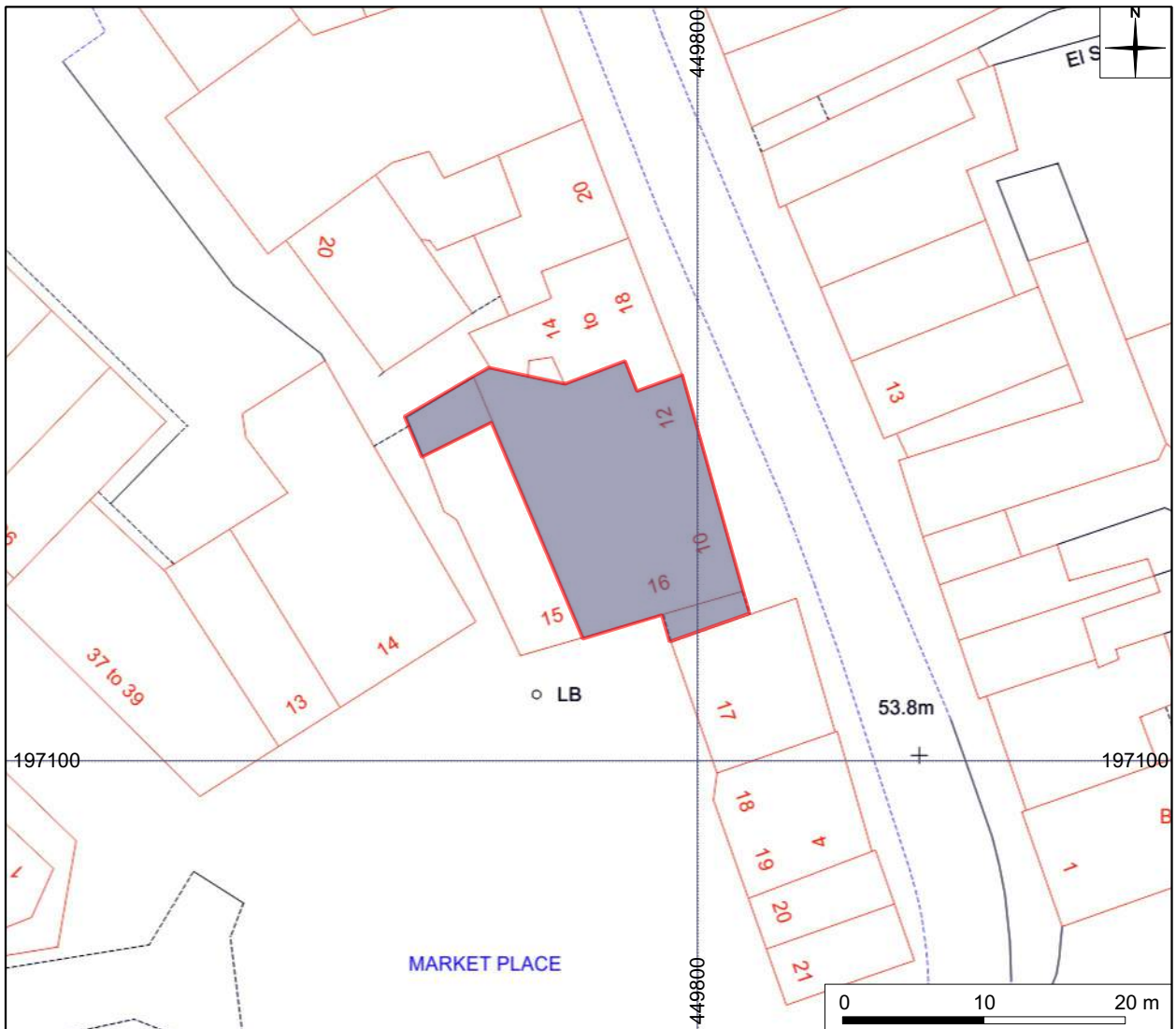
The associated description appears to describe only one part of the premises which fronts onto the Market Square. The other parts of the structure that front on to Stert Street are not fully described or listed, although the following description may cover some of the properties.



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Figure 1. Site location

Late C18. Tile roof. No. 14 red and blue brick, Nos. 16 and 18 are red brick. Three windows, flush frames, double hung sashes, only No. 18 has glazing bars, Nos. 14 and 16 have C19 and modern shop fronts, brick stall risers, tiled pilasters supporting curved fascia board. Modern ground floor shop to No. 18.

2.2 History of Development

Occupation is known to have occurred at Abingdon from the Iron Age and Roman period, but textually recorded settlement is only known from much later. The abbey chronicles claim that the place had been a great city in Roman times (Gelling 1974, 433). Historically the settlement of Abingdon was claimed to date to the 7th century, when the abbey or rather minster was claimed to have been founded (VCH 1924, 430-51). The site of the minster was destroyed by the Danes in the 9th century, and the abbey was refounded in the 10th century. The abbey is mentioned as a significant land holder in 1086 (Morgan 1979, 7; 7.8) and a priest is also mentioned in the manor of Barton in a statement concerning three hides.

The name Abingdon is first recorded for 699 but only from textual sources dated *c.* 1200 in the form *Æbbandune* (Gelling 1974, 432-4). The name has been interpreted as being *Æbba or Ebbe's hill*. However, it is also possible that the name does not contain a personal name at all but that it is related to the word *abbod* (Gelling 1976, 769), as a reference to the father or head of a minster or abbey. A reference in the Abingdon cartulary *c.*960 implies that Saint Helen was associated with the early monastic site, and that this was located at *Helnestoue*, a holy place of Helen (Gelling 1974, 438-9). The English word *stow* in Wales is interchangeable with *Llan*, which refers alternatively to the enclosure of a church and the church itself. It may originally denote an enclosure around Saint Helen's church.

The medieval parochial arrangements in the area are indicative of the minster church at Abingdon once controlling an extensive area. The church of Saint Helen is first mentioned in 995 (VCH 1924, 430-51). In 1284 the vicar is known to have had chapels at Radley, Drayton, Shippon and Dry Sandford. Other churches were founded in Abingdon, amongst them the church of Saint Nicholas. The church of Sunningwell had chapels at Bayworth and Kennington (VCH 1924, 410-6, 423-27), which were interconnected with the Abingdon churches. The church of Sutton Courtney seems to have been a royal church with chapels at Milton and Appleford (VCH 1924, 361-5, 369-79). The relationship that Abingdon abbey had with the church of Appleford is indicative of these churches already being interconnected before William II gift to the abbey in 1090.

The old market place was known as the Bury (VCH 1924, 430-51). A charter survives from the reign of Edward the Confessor making Abingdon a liberty, but no charter survives for the claimed foundation of the borough at that date. In 1086 the settlement of Abingdon is not mentioned but the manor of Barton contains 64 villagers and 36 smallholders, and most significantly 10 merchants dwelling in front of the church gate paying 40d (Morgan 1979, 7.6, 8) and also a goldsmith.

Abingdon's borough status was put on a more secure footing in the reigns of Henry I and Henry II (VCH 1924, 430-51). In the late 13th century to the 15th century there was considerable conflict between the abbot and the townsfolk over the market its location and distribution of revenue.

A number of antiquarian maps exist for Abingdon from before the first series Ordnance Survey map of 1875. The earliest identified to date is a map of *c.* 1600 (BRO T/M 17) that shows a stretch of the River Thames (Fig. 2). The town is drawn as a pictorial showing Saint Nicholas' church, a market cross and some five houses of one and half or two stories, with large

chimneys. The houses are not specifically located on this map. The next map of the town (BRO T/M 16) is dated to the reign of James I, 1603-25; this shows the Thames with the major bridge crossing (Fig. 2). Two roads diverge from the bridge, one heads down towards the Ock, while the other must be Bridge Street. This street splits at the Market Square, one of these must be Bury Street and the other Market Place, a further street is seen heading in the direction of the abbey and skirting the precinct. From this map it is apparent that the present town was laid out around the market square, which itself was located outside the abbey gate and gate chapel of Saint Nicholas. It is possible that the building as it is located around the market square be on the site of a medieval or very early post-medieval structure. This can only be recognised through adequate assessment of structure or archaeology, and depends to what extent the market square was encroached.

The next map recognised covering Abingdon in any detail is Rocque's Berkshire County map (1761). This shows a series of buildings along the north side of Market Square and also a series of buildings between Market Square and Stert Street. The alley way or passage is not shown, neither is the other alley way or passage to the west of the property (not adjacent). This map indicates that a property was constructed in some form at that date.

The Inclosure map of 1801 has no surviving map, while that of 1842 has a map that does not cover the area (BRO Q/RDC/30B). There are two further maps of 1842 (Fig. 3) the tithe map of Saint Helen's (BRO D/D1/1) and of Saint Nicholas' (BRO D/D1/2). Both maps show the centre of the town including the Market Square, but do not categorise the individual properties in that area for tithes, one can presume the residents were predominantly exempt. What is of interest is that the area of the building is shaded pink in both cases, and that the walkway to the south of the property is left uncovered, perhaps indicating that this was a later covering.

The first series Ordnance Survey map of 1875 (BRO D/EP7/222) shows 16 Market Square in its current form for the first time (Fig. 3). The passageway to the south of the building is shown covered over.

3 DESCRIPTION OF 16 MARKET SQUARE

3.1 Introduction and General Description

The property would seem from the outside to have had three distinct components and, one could assume developed from two or three properties (Fig. 4). These would be categorised as 16 Market Square (the west or Market Square unit) and the Stert Street structures (Stert Street unit and the Unit between Stert Street and Market Square). The Market Square property can be divided into two components, one between the Market Square and Stert Street, and the main part that fronts onto the north side of the Market Square. The first is part of a listing that makes sense, while the latter listed designations encountered seem confused. The ground floor and the first floor have been badly defaced over time, to the point that each of the premises has lost its individual integrity.

3.2 The Stert Street frontage

The façade can be divided into two component parts, on the left is a timber framed structure, which is rendered and coloured white (Fig. 5 E1, Fig. 6 S3, S4, plates 6-8). The ground floor has a walkway underneath. The other part of the ground floor is shop frontage with a large window pane fronting onto Stert Street and a corner door. The large glazing continues the other side of the door and along the alley. There is a slight jetty between the ground and first floor. The first floor has two square-headed sash windows with twelve panes. The first floor also has square-headed sash windows, but these are smaller in size than those on the lower floor.

The right hand side of the property is of red brick, probably against a timber frame (see interior description). The ground floor contains a central door with a shallow four-centred arched head in a Perpendicular or late Tudor style. This is set into a square-headed moulding with drip mould with blank terminals. The door is panelled. There is a black painted plinth that is broken by the line of the door. The two flanking windows are square-headed with a central mullion, and also drop moulding. The windows have been blanked out. The first floor shows a series of windows forming three bays with similar designs to the windows on the ground floor. The compound windows use mullion and sash features, the sash windows each have eight panes. The second storey also has three bays, the window casements are of a similar design with drip moulding, but the size of the windows are shortened from the other floors. A plain band runs below the eaves.

To the north of this there are the remains of the brick gable end. This has a chimney at the apex of the roof and also one at the rear corner.

3.3 The Market Square frontage

The Market Square frontage consists of two walls (Fig. 5 E2, E4, Fig. 6 S1, S2, S3, plates 3-5). The first of these is south facing. The ground floor contains a shop frontage with a central inset door flanked by large panes of glass. There are timber pilaster style designs flanking either end of the windows and a roller awning with iron or steel supports. There is a name board above. There is a black band between the ground and the first floor. The first floor contains two square-headed sash windows with wooden framed architrave. The windows contain twelve panels. The upper storey has two similar windows, but each of the windows has nine panes. There is a cornice, while the cornice of the neighbouring building fits uncomfortably below the line of this structure.

The west facing wall onto the Market Square has a walk-through on its ground level, and on its first floor a window similar in design to that of the first floor of the south facing façade. The second floor window and the white cornice match that of the second storey. On both walls the cornice is supported by angle brackets.

3.4 The Rear facades

The rear elevation to the Stert frontage shows a small wall space, with a lean-to roof forming the first floor (Fig. 5, E3, E4, E5). There are two irregular sized windows on the first floor, and a door or dropped window on the second.

The rear of the Market Square frontage also has two irregular sized windows. The second storey in the rear is an attic story with a roof light.

3.5 The Roofs

The roofs are of slate and cover two properties (Figs. 5-6). The Market Square property has an L-shaped roof with gable standing above other properties to the south that lie between the Market Square and Stert Street. There is a chimneystack at the west end of the roof. There is a lower roof leading to a gable to the rear. The brick property that faces onto Stert Street has a simple two pitch roof with a chimneystack at each end.

3.6 The ground floor

The ground floor has been extensively gutted with most internal walls removed (Fig. 6, S1, S2, S4, plate 9). This blurs the distinctive divisions which would have existed between the two properties. The only indication of where the division between the properties would have been

is in the surviving walls of the street frontage. With the Market Square property the two doors and the large windows mark out this part of the property. On the Stert Street frontage an apparent timber frame survives behind the brick façade (plate 10). The ground floor features, a door flanked by two blocked windows (described above), is evident. A series of modern supports maintain the weight of the timber structure. On the north side of the ground floor are the remains of two rooms, one of which has been turned into a washroom. No original features survive.

The stairwell contains a series of mixed components (plates 11-12). There is the remains of a framed newel style staircase. However, the reference to style questions the complete originality of the stairs. The posts and balustrades are not square; a feature associated with late 18th to early 19th century stairs, or elaborately carved, which one could attribute an earlier date. They contain simple chamfered corners, a design not common, but perhaps matching ceiling beams of the 17th and 18th century, less so the 19th century. However, it is possible that this may replace earlier features. On the left hand side as one progresses up the staircase there are two panelled doors in architrave, which lead into shallow cupboards, these could be original. The staircase above the first floor level has been replaced with new and non traditional materials.

There were a number of rooms on the northwest side of the ground floor, which provide access to a private tenement that was not observed.

3.7 The first floor

The stairwell is located in the northern unit that overlooks Stert Street. Above the stairwell, providing some light onto that and the landing is the remains of a square-headed sash window, with bars. There is access of the stairwell through an opening with a round headed arch, into a small lobby with an opposing panel door, with modern architrave, that goes through into a room with toilet facilities.

The landing is at the end of a long corridor (plate 14), which runs along the back of the properties fronting onto Stert Street. There are various steps as levels alter between the two properties and some of the flooring is decidedly unsound. There is a door on the east side of the landing, with original architrave (plate 13), which leads into a small lobby from which three doors lead into three rooms. These rooms form the basis of the Stert Street unit. The door on the north side leads into a room with a combination window in the east wall and a chimneybreast with plaster moulded fireplace in the north wall (plate 25). The door on the east side leads into a room with a mullioned sash combination window in the east wall. The door on the south side was blocked. A second door on the east side of the landing, new, leads into a room with a chimneybreast in the south wall and a mullioned combination window in the south wall. The fireplace survives and the surround plain (plate 26). There is evidence of an earlier blocked door back onto the landing. On the west side of the landing a passageway is blocked.

The main passage running to the rear of the properties from the Stert Street frontage continues through a round-headed opening, which is presumably where the Stert Street unit and the unit between Stert Street and Market Square were joined, towards the remains of a square-headed doorway that has been removed. In the unit between Market Square and Stert Street there is a door in the east wall (plate 15) that leads to a room (a fire-door but with original moulding). There is a square-headed sash window in the east wall (plate 16) and modern fireplace in the north wall. In the south wall there are two blocked panel doors (plate 17-18).

The landing-corridor has a small square area along its course, while the corridor continues along to another room at the south-end of the building. The panelled door with architrave opens up into a room with a blank opposing wall and a square-headed sash window in the west

wall. There is an architrave band surviving below the line of the ceiling. There is a further small panelled door in the north wall leading into a small room that must have connected through another door into one of the earlier rooms. The opening on the east side leads to a further small room with a square-headed sash window in the east wall. There is an opening through a timber framing (plate 18), part of which can be seen in the east wall, while other parts of this feature are boarded over. There is a small panelled door in the north wall, again leading back through to the earlier described rooms.

In the room immediately to the south of the corridor the floor boards were removed for inspection. Here it was noted that the floor was supported by beams about 5in square, and that these were also supported by timbers about a 1ft square. On top of one of the 1ft timbers and between the 5in beams that it supported there was evidence of a limestone rubble wall, with mortar (plate 28). The only logical way that it would make sense to build such a feature is if the alleyway below did not exist and that in the 15th or 16th century there had been a wall below, of which only the top survives. The 5in beams extending over this beam probably formed part of a jetty of a 16th century (or at the latest early 17th century) building.

The square area in the corridor may have been the location of an earlier stairwell and has two further rooms leading off it. These structures are located in the western unit fronting onto the Market Square. The one in the north wall is modern and leads into a small square room with no features. The door in the east wall is panelled (not original) but has original architrave (plate 19), this leads to the best preserved room seen on the first floor. There is an original fireplace in the west wall (plate 21) with roundel decorations in the corners separating the vertical and horizontal mouldings. There are two square-headed sash windows in the south wall (plate 20). The lower part of the wall has original skirting and panelling. There is architrave around the ceiling (plate 22). The ceiling also has a square wooden structure, which is a later addition as it blocks the view of the architrave. Lifting of the floorboards above the street frontage revealed that the old joists had been replaced with modern ones. It is, therefore, not possible to ascertain if there was an earlier structure here, or if this 18th century structure was infill of an extension of the market square.

The majority of doors on the above part of the first floor have been removed with fire-doors inserted. Some but not all of the architrave has been removed.

To the rear of 16 Market Square access is obtained to flats over the roof space. The majority of the rooms associated with these flats are to be found located on the second floor, but there are four rooms on the first floor. These rooms have on the whole been relatively modernised. Access to the western flat is through a modern half panel and glass doorway, into an east to west passage. There is a door in the east end, again of a modern design, and a further door on the south side. The east door enters a cupboard. The west door enters a passage operating as a hall. There is a room on the west side accessed through a modern door, into a bathroom that has modern fittings. In the southern part of the hall is a staircase (orientated east to west), with panelled doors underneath (possibly of an 18th century date) but containing a rail and other fittings that do not appear to be original. These stairs lead up to the second floor.

3.8 The second floor and attic

The staircase in the western unit (Market Square) is a dogleg one. On the bend there is a small landing with a door in the north wall. This leads to an attic room with a slanting roof south to north. A chimneybreast is evident in the south wall (plastered over) and a dormer in the north wall (of modern origin). There is a beam in the sloping roof with chamfers suggesting an 18th century date, although a slightly later early 19th century is possible. The beam is sagging drastically under the weight of the tile roof and there is a modern wooden support to brace this.

At the top of the landing there is a door facing in the east wall. This leads into a modern revamped kitchen; the only visible old feature is the archway in the east end of the west wall (plate 29). This leads into a small alcove, behind which there is a wall that has been blocked off leaving part of the floor inaccessible. There is a modern window in the north wall.

Also at the top of the stairs is a door in the south wall that leads into a small lobby area of modern origin. There are doors in the east and west leading into two rooms. The door on the east side leads into a room with a modern built in cupboard in the northeast corner and an original sash window in the south wall (plate 31). The west door leads into a room with original details in the west and south wall. There is a chimneybreast in the west wall with an original 18th century moulded fireplace surround (plate 30). There are alcoves either side, one of which contains original details (shelving). There is an original sash window in the south wall. The dividing wall between these is modern plasterboard.

Access to the other flat, located in the buildings overlooking Stert Street, is also obtained from the flat roof to the rear of the properties. A short extension in brick contains a modern door, from which there is a short flight of stairs leading onto the second floor. The stairs lead into a lobby or hall, with a door at the north end leading into modern toilet facilities. The hall continues south along the back of the Stert Street building, through the old wall between the two properties (which has been widened and covered in plasterboard). In the northern Stert Street part of the property the major surviving old walls are those that separate the basic blocks of the individual buildings, the vast majority of internal walls have been replaced with timber and plasterboard and are of a modern date. Hence at either end of the property the chimneybreasts survive although the fireplaces have been removed. The two windows overlooking Stert Street are original (plate 32). Though much of the central internal wall has been replaced, the very top of the wall probably has the remains of a significant beam.

The southern end of the passage lies in the unit of the property located between Market Square and Stert Street. Much of this area has also been gutted and replaced by modern plasterboard walls, although the wall almost in-line with the front of the western Market Square unit is more substantial. However, it should be noted that this wall does not align with any of the walls on the first floor below, or the early timber frame associated with the jetty (evident below the first-floor floor). On the east side of the passage there are two doors. The northern one leads to a room with a boarded north wall in which a chimneybreast is located and in the east wall there is an original sash window. The southern door leads into an L-shaped room, through which an opening can be seen through the larger more substantial wall (indeed with apparent alterations if this was an older wall there can be very little left of it). Through this opening there is a window in the east wall, an original sash, with square head. The door at the south end of the passage enters through the substantial internal wall, the door location has probably moved, so this end of the wall has probably seen a number of alterations. There is an original window in the west wall overlooking the Market Square.

The roof structures were viewed for the two units that overlook Stert Street. In the northern unit that only looks over Stert Street, the roof is supported by trusses with king-posts with side struts (plates 33, 36). The roof over the unit between Stert Street and Market Square and the Market Square unit started off as a larger L-shaped attic. The two unit attics have now been separated by a plasterboard wall (unplastered). The roof is supported by a variety of trusses, some with a collar beam supported by queen struts (plates 34-35). The others with collar beams forming an A-frame truss.

3.9 The cellar

The staircase to the cellar entered through the rear of the surviving stairwell (plate 23). The stairs twisted in two runs between old stone walls and new brick walls. The wooden treads on

the stairs were worn. There was a partial segmental arch at the base of the stairs and a new fire-door. This opened up into a square room with a wooden shutter in an opening in the east wall, almost certainly the remains of a coal shoot. In the floor on the north side there was a large rounded stone of unknown purpose or use. There are parts of the west wall that have been rebuilt, perhaps to join the cellars through a passage. This rebuild meant that much of the base of the central stairwell had been rebuilt or underpinned.

The other cellar was a large rectangular shape with stone and brick walls (plate 24). There are indications of window lights previously existing, now blocked on the south side. This cellar is divided by a later brick wall.

4 ASSESSMENT

4.1 Phases

Both 16 Market Square and the Stert Street property contain three storey timber framed buildings divided into three historical units. They are conservatively placed in the 18th century. It is now apparent that the earliest recognisable Phase 1 of the buildings can be identified in the unit between Stert Street and the Market Square where substantial timbers were revealed beneath the floor along with the remains of a rubble limestone wall. This appears to be the line of an earlier wall that has been removed below. These large 1ft timbers would have supported a jetty, and it is this that would date the building, a 16th century (Tudor) date is more likely, but it could be slightly later or even earlier. Though the beams were viewed it was not possible to ascertain how they were worked. This unit, thus contains part of an earlier structure, and this investigation has increased our knowledge of this unit of the building. No evidence of a jetty was located in the western unit because the floor joists had been replaced by modern ones.

The buildings are on Rocque's map of 1761; though this does not indicate when in the 18th century the earlier structure was transformed into a Georgian building, Phase 2. Internally there are some original features in 16 Market Square on the first floor, for example the fireplace in the Market Square unit, the window casements, some door mouldings though not all and wall panelling. The fireplaces in the Stert Street property are original. There are also a lot of the original features that have been lost, for example panel doors for fire doors or newer panel doors. The ground floor has been gutted and practically nothing of any note survives there apart from the later frontages. What we can recognise in the gutting of the ground floor is that the original staircase and well of the Market Square property has been completely or partially removed, where as that of the Stert Street property has been partially removed. The second floor and roof structure retains a few original features, but this floor would have never been as grand as the features in the *piano nobile*. One fire-place, adjacent cupboards and external windows survive in some form.

Phase 3 alterations would relate to the 19th century phases of the property. These probably include the front of the Stert Street property, which appears to contain more Gothic components and is presumably to be dated post 1833 when Loudon's *Encyclopaedia of Cottage, Farm and Villa Architecture and Furniture* was released, which reintroduced Gothic to the building profession (Ferry 2010, 66). The shop frontages are certainly a 19th century insertion as demonstrated by the two antiquarian photographs (plates 1-2).

Phase 4 saw the removal of the features of the downstairs in the 20th century, alterations to the stairwells, and also the probable connecting of the two cellars so that only one access stairs was required. This is dated to sometime in the 20th century.

4.2 Listed Status

The buildings are listed, grade II, as stated above; this is primarily due to their surviving facades with some internal detail, the best of which is in the largest room of the first floor of the Market Square property.

The buildings are also in a conservation area. This is so that the general historic character of Abingdon's historic core is maintained.

4.3 Historic and Architectural Assessment

Though the building(s) are of a general 18th century Georgian light classical design, there is now evidence under the first floor floorboards that the unit located between the Market Square and Stert Street has a possible 15th century origin, if not slightly earlier. This would imply that timbers in the external walls of this unit on the first floor could be far older than the suspected 18th century. The roof of this building would have been far steeper and it is probable that the roof was lessened and the second story added. This implies that the alleyway in the corner of the Market Square was inserted either in the 18th century, or just as likely in the 19th century when the shop frontage was inserted.

There are Victorian alterations to these buildings, and a later 20th century reworking that has removed the internal integrity of the structure on the ground floor and caused considerable mutilation to the fabric on much of the first floor.

5 THE CURRENT PROPOSAL

The current proposal is to refurbish the property, and create living and shop facilities. The main dividing walls of the three major components are to be retained, however some features are to be lost, but hopefully this can be kept to a minimum.

The ground floor has previously had most of its internal walls removed; the external walls are to be kept. The major loss here is the removal of the current stairwell to the first floor, those to the cellar will be retained. The stairs and stairwell to the first floor is not original and is an unimpressive mid 20th century insertion. The significance of this to the listing of the building is minimal. The stair is to be replaced by a new one located outside but adjacent to the old walls of the former building. Archaeological remains of a Bronze Age to an early post-medieval date may be destroyed. Mitigation strategy would include a watching brief for the excavations of the foundations.

The Stert Street unit is to have practically all of its surviving old fabric on the first and second floors retained. The mullioned windows on the street frontage will be retained or refurbished. The fireplaces on the first floor are to be retained, and the chimneybreasts on the second floor retained (the fireplaces have already been removed). The building is a three celled unit on the first floor, the old internal wall dividing the central room from the south room is to be maintained, the other walls are modern plasterboard insertions, and they will be removed.

The back wall of the north section of this unit will be lost, as will the area to the west to the north of the present stairwell. These are 18th century walls, but these contain few architectural features other than a round-headed archway (plate 37). The main reason for their loss is that the room has a floor that lies between the ground and the first floor properly. The back wall is also to be removed between the rooms to the north of the old stairwell and the new stairwell to be inserted outside the building.

On the second floor the surviving old walls are the shell, internally the old walls have been removed and replaced by plasterboard walls of modern origin. To the west of this, the roof on the lean-to structure and the stairwell will be removed and the walls and floors raised. There is

little or no surviving architectural details that would date the building in this area.

The chimneys are to be rebuilt or reinstated.

In the unit that lies between Stert Street and the Market Square, the outer structure is to be maintained on both the first and second floor, including the chimneybreast (though no original fireplaces survive). The street frontage is to be retained along with windows, as is the internal evidence for this part of the building having an earlier wall line and jetty that was subsequently removed. Some of the internal walls that survive on the first floor are to be retained (that wall requested to survive by the conservation officer), though others are to be removed. This will cause the loss of three small doors with mouldings (plates 17, 38), which have been photographed.

The second floor has already been refurbished at a recent date and no ornamental details survive, much of the internal wall here is of a plasterboard construction.

In the west unit facing onto the Market Square the significant features on the first and second floor are to be retained in those rooms overlooking the Market Square. On the first floor only a partial piece of panelling will be lost as a new door is inserted (plate 27). On the second floor the modern internal plasterboard walling is to be removed, and the fireplace and chimneybreast in the west wall retained.

The back part of this unit will still undergo major alterations. On the first floor the basic layout will be retained, though the back wall and the walls around the new stairwell will be replaced. The stairs are to be removed, these are a dogleg stairs that do not contain any characteristics attributed to the 18th century origins of the building, although it is possible that the cupboard door under the stairwell does.

On the second floor the lean to roof will be removed. This will mean the raising of the floor. There is only one feature that survives here that demonstrates an 18th century origin and this is the chamfered beam. However, this has a considerable sag or bow in it, and is propped up by an upright beam. The timber is at present unable on its own to maintain the weight of the tile roof above. There is a chimneybreast in this room that has lost its original fireplace, while the construction in the dormer window alcove is of a plasterboard construction, and if not a more recent insertion has been considerably reworked. The proposed alterations will see the staggered floor effectively removed and the floor layer and roof altered to standardise the floor layers.

The main roof structures above all three units are to be retained and their timber frames preserved.

The cellars are to be retained as they are.

The rear entrance is to be reworked, this only contains modern walling.

6 CONCLUSIONS

The building is a grade 2 listed building and lies in the Abingdon conservation area. The building has been badly treated in the past, but having said this still retains some surprises and original features, some of them older than the previously postulated 18th century origin for the structure.

The current proposals are a reworking of the original proposals, which attempts to take into account the wishes of the conservation officer. Though many original features have already

been lost there are a number that are still retained, the current proposal attempts to retain the majority of these features, though there will be some losses to the rear of the building.

The losses in the rear of the Stert Street unit include the stairwell and any feature on the staggered level. The stairs are not old, but the area does contain the remains of a round-headed arch.

The early features being lost in the unit between Stert Street and Market Square include two small doorways.

The losses in the Market Square unit include the removal of a small stretch of plaster panelling from the front room of the building on the first floor. The stairwell in the rear part will be removed. The staggered attic level in the lean-to will be removed; the only datable feature is the chamfered beam sagging under the weight of the roof.

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BRO D/D1/2 1842 Tithe Map of Saint Nicholas' Parish

BRO D/EP7/222 1875 First Series Ordnance Survey Map

BRO Q/RDC/30B 1842 Inclosure Map

BRO T/M 16 1603-25 Map of Abingdon from the Reign of King James I

BRO T/M 17 c.1600 Map of the River Thames around Abingdon

Stephen Yeates

John Moore Heritage Services

8th October 2012



BRO T/M/17 c. 1600

Not to scale



BRO T/M/16 1603

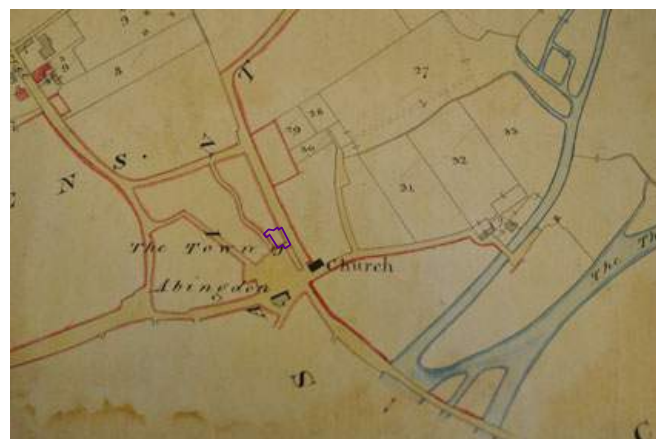
Not to scale

Figure 2. Antiquarian maps



BRO D/D1/1 1842

Not to scale



BRO D/D1/2 1842

Not to scale



BRO D/EP7/222 1875

Not to scale


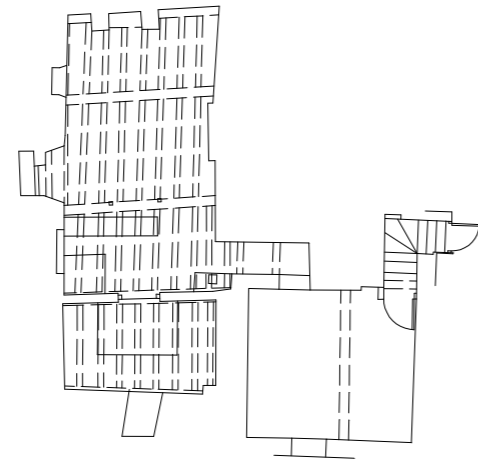
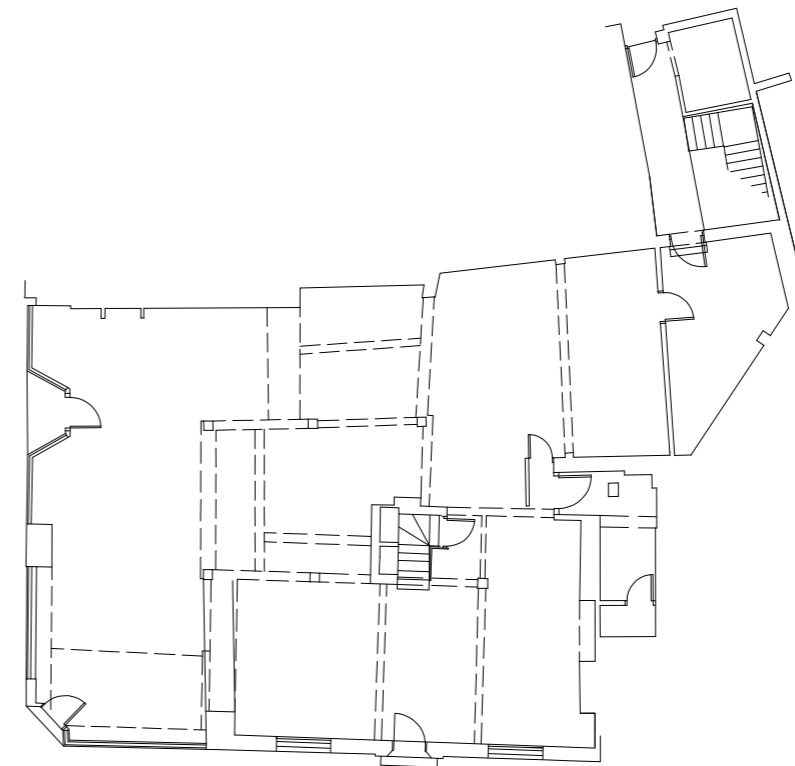
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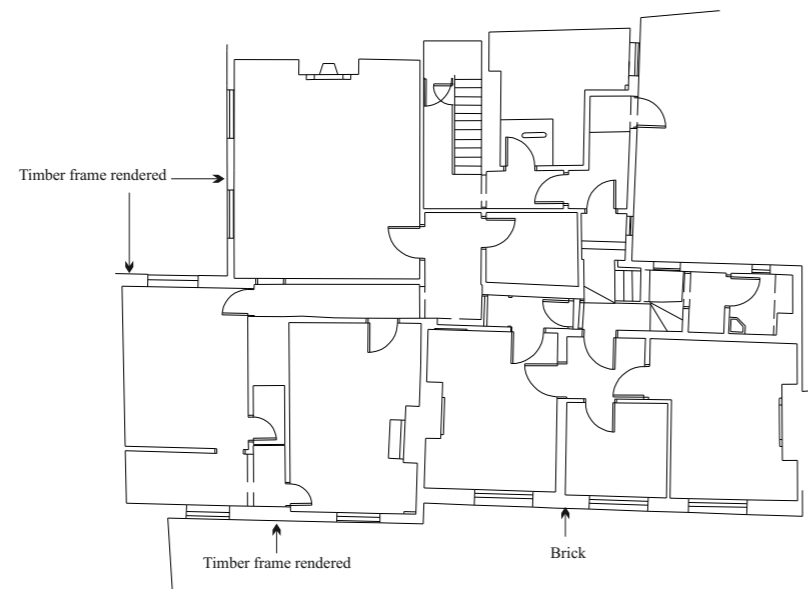
Figure 3. Antiquarian maps



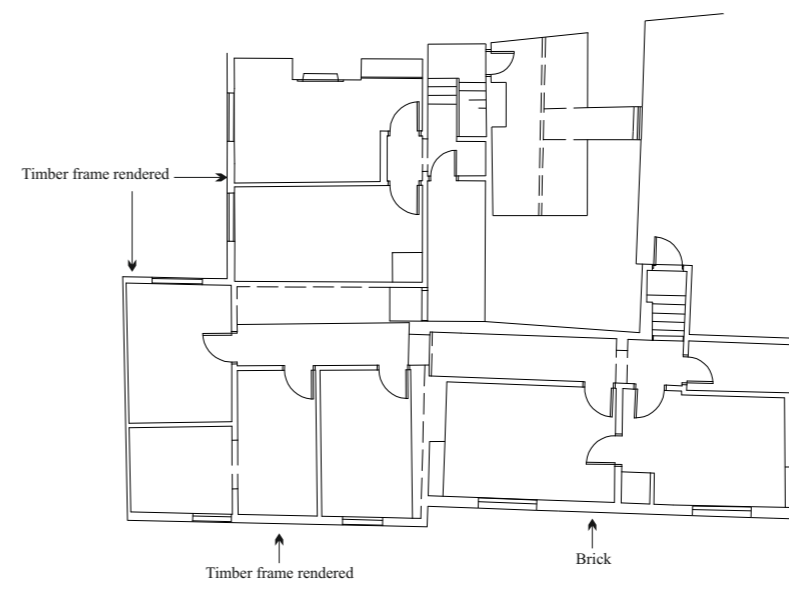
Plan 1. Basement



Plan 3. Ground floor



Plan 3. First floor



Plan 4. Second floor

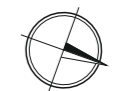


Figure 4. Floor plans



Figure 5. External elevations

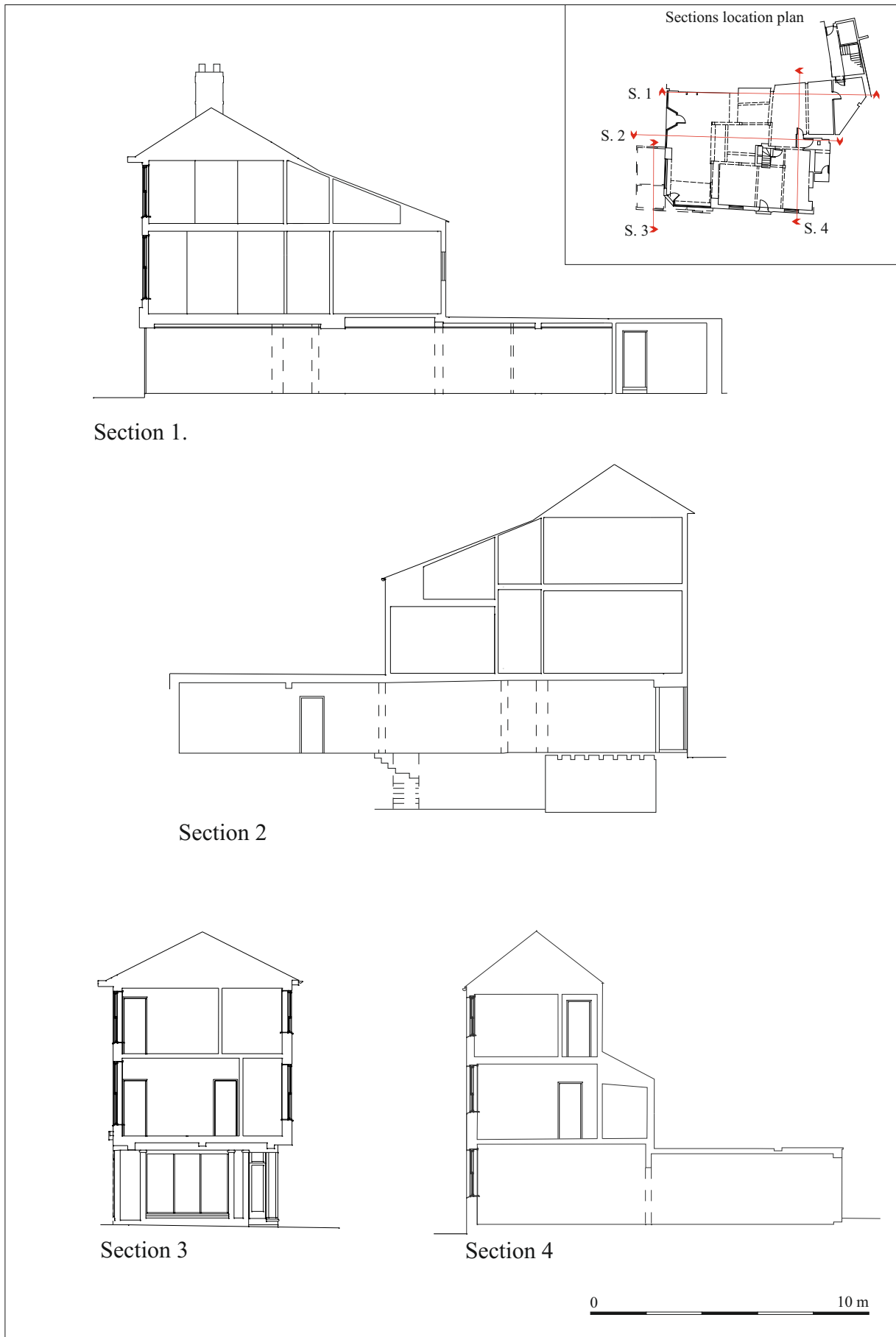


Figure 6. Sections



Plate 1. The Market Square in c. 1893



Plate 2. The Market Square in 1900



Plate 3. The present Market Square facade



Plate 4. Component of Market Square facade



Plate 5. Component of Market Square facade



Plate 6. General view of the Stert Street facade



Plate 7. Component of the Stert Street facade



Plate 8. Component of the Stert Street facade



Plate 9. General view of gutted ground floor



Plate 10. Ground floor, apparent wooden frame behind the Stert Street brick facade



Plate 11. Stairwell



Plate 12. Stairwell



Plate 13. Moulding details



Plate 14. Central corridor



Plate 15. Door moulding details



Plate 16. Window details



Plate 17. Door details



Plate 18. Area where timber frame has been partially removed



Plate 19: Door moulding and new door



Plate 20: Window details



Plate 22. Ceiling moulding



Plate 21. Fireplace and panelling



Plate 23. Stairwell into cellar



Plate 24. South cellar



Plate 25. First floor, Stert unit, north fireplace



Plate 26. First floor, Stert unit, south fireplace



Plate 27. First floor plasterwork, Market Square unit



Plate 30. Second floor west fireplace, Market Square unit



Plate 28. First floor, Market-Stert unit, Limestone rubble wall surviving



Plate 29. Second floor, Market Square unit, round-headed arch



Plate 32. Second floor mullioned window, Stert unit



Plate 31. Second floor, sash window
Market Square unit



Plate 33. Attic Stert Street unit



Plate 34. Attic Market Square units



Plate 35. Attic Market Square units



Plate 36. Attic Stert Street unit



Plate 37. Archway to be lost adjacent to stairwell

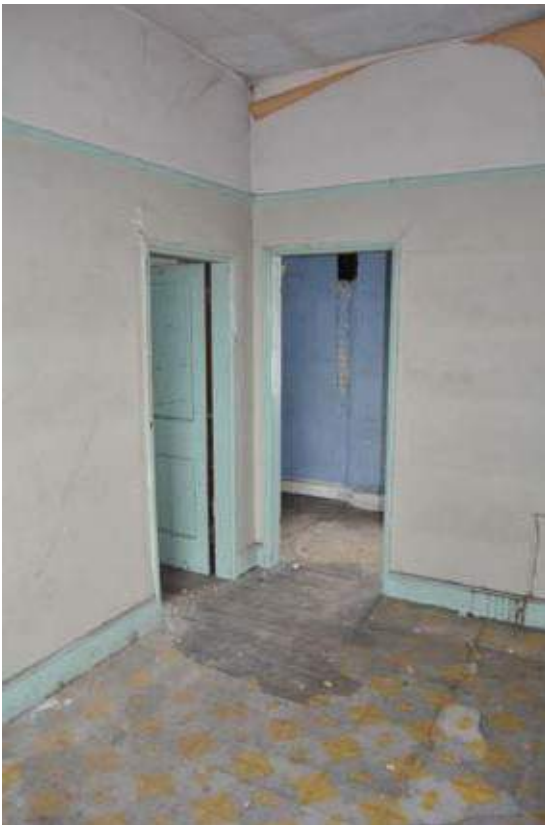


Plate 38. First floor Market Square-Stert Unit panelled door