

JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

BUILDING RECORDING

ON

52 AND 53 HIGH STREET,

WALLINGFORD

NGR SU 39960 87900

On behalf of

Mr I Pentecost

SEPTEMBER 2011

REPORT FOR Mr I Pentecost

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53 Flint Cottage, High Street, Wallingford

Building Assessment

SUMMARY

A building assessment was carried out on Flint Cottage, High Street, Wallingford (NGR SU 39960 87900). This confirmed that details in the building were of the 16th and 18th century primarily, but suggested that the structure originated with a far more humbler origin than a Hall House.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location

1.1.1 The building is located in High Street, Wallingford (NGR SU 39960 87900), a road heading east from the market square.

1.1.2 The local geology consists of the 1st flood plain terrace (BGS sheet 254).

1.2 Commission

1.2.1 Catherine Hall commissioned this report on behalf of her client Ian Pentecost.

1.3 Aims of Investigation

1.3.1 Planning permission is sought for basic improvements to the listed building Flint Cottage on Wallingford High Street. The aim of the investigation is to produce a short report to accompany this refurbishment.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Designations

2.1.1 The building is listed and its designation includes the following description by English Heritage:

2.1.2 'House, now museum and dwelling. Probably mid C16 with later alterations. Flint and stone mixture with stone dressings; plain-tile roof; C20 rebuilt brick ridge stack to left with diagonally set outer flues, various brick stacks. Probably originally double-ended Hall house with cross-wings, indicated by continuation of quoins of cross-gables visible to centre first floor wall. 2 storeys and attic; 3-window range. 6-panel door with overlight and rusticated round-topped stone surround to left of centre. 6-panel door with decorative overlight and flat hood to right of centre. Tripartite unhorned sashes with glazing bars and plain stone surrounds to left and centre. 3-light casements with painted stone surround to right. Three 4-light stone mullion and transom windows with hood moulds to first floor. 3 cross-gables have stone dressings. Centre cross-gable has brick dressings continuing into first floor wall. 2-light stone mullion windows to left and right cross-gable, that to left having hood mould. 3-light stone mullion window to centre. Rear: large timber framing with some angle

bracing to first floor with painted infill. Interior: C20 alterations to form museum. Areas of timber framing visible. Flint Cottage noted as having portions of canted bay window with diamond mullions. Single-storey wing to right, 2-window range. Probably late C18. Red brick with flared headers in Flemish bond; old plain-tile roof.'

- 2.1.3 The building lies inside the Wallingford Conservation area that essentially covers the area of the Anglo-Saxon defensive burgh.
- 2.1.4 There are a significant number of listed buildings in this conservation area of which those mentioned here lie on the High Street. The listed buildings include 13/14/15 (SU 60849 89485), 21 (SU 60813 89487), 25/26 (SU 60771 89485), 88 (SU 60834 89508), 95/96 (SU 60899 8951), 92/93 (SU 60873 89513), Calleva House 6 (SU 60893 89483), Eagle House (SU 60840 89481), 100 (SU 60927 89502), Careers Office 60 (SU 60568 89488), Stoney's Restraunt 4 (SU 60926 89479), The George Hotel 83 (SU 60772 89509), Ye Olde Bakery 12 (SU 60855 89486).
- 2.1.5 An assessment of central Wallingford is given in the Buildings of England series which gives a brief description of the Museum or House and Cottage (Tyack, Bradley *et al.* 2010, 573-84, esp. 582).

2.2 History of Development

- 2.2.1 Wallingford lies in a parallelogram defensive system, the dates of which have been much debated (VCH 1923, 517-31). Prehistoric activity has been noted in the area of Wallingford and the street plan was claimed at one time to have taken on a Roman model of a series of parallel streets with others set at right angles. The town is known to have developed as an Anglo-Saxon burgh. The shape of the initial defensive ditch and street plan was disrupted by the construction of the priory and castle.
- 2.2.2 The High Street, on to which Flint Cottage fronts, is considered to originate as a primitive track running towards a ford in the River Thames (VCH 1923, 517-31). In 1415 this track had become the major road from London running to Gloucester and South Wales.
- 2.2.3 In 1086 Wallingford is accounted first in the Berkshire section as being the only recognised borough in the county (Morgan 1979, B1-11). The initial entry refers to an estate of 8 virgates (1 hide) with 276 sites that paid £11 tribute. The subsequent passages give an indication of Wallingford's past position. Eight houses were destroyed for the construction of a castle. A moneyer is mentioned who does not pay normal dues to the king. The sites or rather the properties are not all located in the borough but some are simply attached to it, while some of those located in the borough are attached to other manors. A number of church officials can be noted as having holdings in the borough including Bishop Walkelin (Winchester), the abbot of Abingdon, the abbot of Battle, Bishop Peter (Lichfield ?), Bishop Remigius, Bishop Osmund (Salisbury), Archbishop Lanfanc (Canterbury), the abbot of Saint Alban's, there are then a group of people identified as priests: Reinbald, Aelmer (x 2), and Lambert. Any of these references could mask the fact that there was an early church in Wallingford.
- 2.2.4 In the 11th century the castle at Wallingford was at the centre of a large caput (VCH 1923, 531-9). The borough was important in 1086 and received a further royal grant from Henry II in 1155-6. Henry III (1216-72) created the position of mayor along with two bailiffs. The manorial holdings passed to the holdings of the Dukes of Cornwall until 1330 when it passed to Edward the Prince of Wales/Black Prince in 1337.
- 2.2.5 Wallingford in the middle ages had some 10 churches and three chapels within its fortifications (VCH 1923, 539-46). The earliest recognised church in the town is that of Saint Mary's, which was partially given to the Abbey of Saint Alban's at an early date. Subsequently all of the church was given to the abbey, 1077-93, and subsequently a priory was formed dedicated to the Holy Trinity (VCH 1907, 77-9). The confirmation grant of

1160 to Saint Alban's and Holy Trinity mentions the following churches as possessions in Wallingford: Holy Trinity, Saint John, Saint Martin and Saint Mary. The outlying church of Hendred was also held by them as was 2/3 of the tithes of Moulsoford. Tithes were also held in Chersville, Donnington, Earley, Moreton, and Sotwell. There were further churches and pensions outside Berkshire, for example Mongwell. The tithes from Moreton and Sotwell (and possibly Chersville and Mongwell) may indicate that there was once a larger parochial system in the area. The church of Saint Alban's must also have had some holdings in the churches of Saint Leonard, Saint Peter and All Hallows. In 1535 it is known that the chapel of Stowell was annexed to the church of Saint Leonard (VCH 1923, 539-46). In the aftermath of the civil war a number of the churches in Wallingford had been damaged or destroyed thus in c. 1650 the tithes of Saint Leonard, Saint Peter and All Hallows were annexed to the church at Sotwell. There was also an attempt to establish a church dedicated to Saint Lucian, which proved unsuccessful and by 1291 this church was united with Saint Leonard's. Surviving medieval documentary sources indicate that if a parish was unsuccessful or not profitable enough to maintain the priest and church that it was often reunited with the parish it was carved out of.

- 2.2.6 Holy Trinity priory is known to have been located near the west gate of Wallingford in the vicinity of Flint Cottage (VCH 1923, 539-46). The site of the priory was granted to Cardinal Wolsey in 1528, who settled it on his Oxford College. In 1546 the site was passed to John Norreys, and in 1553 it passed to Christopher Avelyn and his wife Joyce.

3 DESCRIPTION OF 52 AND 53 HIGH STREET, WALLINGFORD

3.1 Introduction and general description

- 3.1.1 The present building is interpreted as a winged hall structure, although from looking at the interior of no. 53, Flint Cottage, it is not overly apparent that the building developed in the suggested manner of previous architectural assessments. The building does have a central range with two wings in its plan, but it is not apparent with the remaining evidence that the wings were attached to the central range.
- 3.1.2 The premises at present are divided into two, but there is no clean break down the centre of the building, instead there is a confusing partition and areas of void.
- 3.1.3 There is a further extension of the building on the east side.
- 3.1.4 No elevations have been produced as none are to be altered, only photographs of details included.

3.2 The South or front elevation

- 3.2.1 The south elevation faces the High Street, and is the dominant and front facade. Its design shows some complicated development features set in what would now be described as a three storey building with an upper attic containing three dormer gables.
- 3.2.2 The west and east dormer gable show indications that they were constructed before the area was infilled in the middle. Each of these flint and limestone gables show indications of quoins and of the central section being built over this original wall line. The west gable, now part of the museum, has a mullioned window on the 1st and 2nd floor. The window in the ground floor is a later sash window insertion (Plate 1).
- 3.2.3 The east gable is of a lesser height than the western counterpart, and it like the west gable has mullioned windows on the 1st and 2nd floor (the latter attic Plate 6). The 1st floor window shows signs of being enlarged. On this side the ground floor window is also a mullion window, and below it there is evidence of a flint plinth (Plate 2).
- 3.2.4 The centre of the building is perhaps more difficult to fathom as to all intent and purpose on the visible evidence it could be a later insertion. On the ground floor it is noticeable

that the wall must have been constructed and reworked as indicated by the quoins now set in the wall for no apparent purpose. The central dormer gable has a mullion window set into its gable and also a mullioned window below it on the 1st floor. The ground floor window is a later sash insertion of the Georgian period. The central dormer gable is edged with brick and one can see that its original line continued below the present eaves and that the walls between the dormer gables have been raised. Two doorways also probably of a Georgian date have been inserted, in both cases this is just outside the line of the gable ends in the front wall. The doorway to the left or west into the museum is more elaborate with a round head arch with keystone below the porch, a window light above the door. The east door is square headed with a window light.

- 3.2.5 To the east of this two single storey extensions have been added with different height attic space. Both have a chequered blue and red brick pattern and brick corbelling. It is only the taller extension near the house that has two windows in its ground floor. Both of these have mullion windows.

3.3 The West elevation

- 3.3.1 The west wall of the museum shows a number of distinct features and evidence for a number of phases. The south end has evidence of a ground floor buttress, alongside which is a chimneybreast. This does not project from a gable end but looks like a lateral chimney serving the front room. The chimney is edged with brick and has a large brick stack although the lower part is built of stone. The central part of the building contains the remains of a doorway on the ground floor with areas left either side for adjoining window space. Above this door are two windows; the north one has brick quoins to match the rest of the building, while the other, though of a similar size, looks inserted. This section of the building is ended by a series of brick quoins.
- 3.3.2 The rear part of the building looks like a later construction beyond the brick quoins. The lower part of the wall is constructed of stone, while the upper part of the building is heavily rendered.

3.4 The North or rear elevation

- 3.4.1 The north or rear elevation contains the remains of two gables. The west one is of two stories with a door on the ground floor and window in the 1st floor. This is heavily rendered.
- 3.4.2 The east gable on the rear of no. 53, Flint Cottage, contains a gable end with a large projecting brick chimney. Much of this wall would now appear to be a brick construction, but some of this may well have been inserted initially into a timber frame. The west wall of this gable has a brick and flint lower wall with a timber framed upper wall.
- 3.4.3 The building between these two gables is a timber-framed wall with brick infill. On the museum side there is a brick lean-to against it.
- 3.4.4 The extension on the east side has a brick rear wall with a window to the west and door to the east. The roof contains a dormer window.

3.5 The East elevation

- 3.5.1 The east elevation is of 53 High Street, Flint Cottage, and at the north end there are indications that there is a timber framed and brick outshoot alongside the chimney located on the gable end (Plate 7). The only reason for this being here is to carry a staircase around the rear of the chimney.
- 3.5.2 The wall to the south of this chimney and outshoot is in its lower courses a flint wall, above the wall is of brick. The ground floor window is a segmental arched feature with considerable evidence of reworking. There is a modern porch passageway constructed on

the side of the building. On the 1st floor there are two smaller sash windows with flat heads set under the eaves. A smaller window lies to the south of these.

3.6 The Roofs

- 3.6.1 The roofs are all covered with red clay tiles (except the lean-to that is slate), with all of the gables having a conventional design. There is a short area of pitched roof associated with the lateral chimney. Three large chimneys are also apparent in the line of the roof of no. 52 (the museum), one of these is square to the building while the two outer chimneys are placed at an angle to the building. A further chimney can be seen for no. 53 (Flint Cottage) rising from the front roof between the central and east dormer gables.
- 3.6.2 The eastern roofline for dormer gable and subsequent back wing is lower than the roof of the central range, thus there is a space for a gablet.

3.7 The interior of no. 52 (museum)

- 3.7.1 This part of the building was not inspected.

3.8 The interior of no. 53 (Flint Cottage)

- 3.8.1 The ground floor contained a hall, front room, a central area with access to a cellar, a back room, and a small new lobby area providing access to the eastern extension. A spiral staircase extended upwards from the hall (Fig. 1).
- 3.8.2 The hall started off as a passage running from the front door to the stairwell, and had evidence of a substantial wall on its east side. Towards the ceiling in this wall there was evidence of a chimney projection at the first floor. The stairwell is located in an area where part of the original wall of the building has been removed. Here the hall runs at an angle to a passage running east to west, heading towards a timber framed doorway. There is a small central room in the building, with evidence of timber frame walls with wattle and daub infill. Alongside this a small flight of brick built stairs descends to a brick cellar. There is a blocked window in the east wall, and an arch set in each of the other walls. The floor is covered in a brick tile with dimensions 230-240mm square.
- 3.8.3 Above the cellar is the front room, which has a fireplace and chimneybreast in its west wall. This is now of an 18th century design or replica of, but may mask a far older fireplace. A mullion window lies in the south wall facing out onto the High Street. In the west wall of this room are the covered remains of a further mullioned window, probably untouched since the 18th or 19th century. The door into the room is panelled and the room before renovation had also been panelled.
- 3.8.4 The rear room on the ground floor contains two major crossing roof timbers, which now need supports. The transverse beam was probably the location of an earlier wall. This was taken down and the room widened. The new wall on the south side is of timber with a Georgian style door. The north wall contains the remains of a fireplace (Plate 4), but it can be seen that the present feature is a later insertion and that the fireplace here was once far larger in the past. The wall to the east adjacent to it may contain the remains of a staircase. The east wall is flint with a sash window. The west wall is also probably flint with evidence of timber framing with brickbat infill.
- 3.8.5 The old original door at the end of the passage contained a timber-framed area to its south and timber framed area above. This has to be part of an original doorway. The porch or passage into which this leads is 20th century and continues on into the eastern extension through a large doorway with a segmental arch. Three beams are evident in the ceiling of which two are probably medium chamfers of a 17th century style, while the third is a later addition, perhaps of the 18th century. The area was previously divided into two rooms. The

south wall contains two windows of different sizes. The north wall two doorways, one original (already mentioned) and the other a smaller door (perhaps later). The floor of the western part of this room has brick tiles measuring 230-240mm.

- 3.8.6 The stairwell has been placed along the line of the earlier wall, behind it there is a smaller passage, where the timber framing of the rear wall of the central part of the house can be seen. It is apparent that there is a butt joint between this wall and the wall which was thought of as the wall of the east wing.
- 3.8.7 On the first floor the east wing is divided into three rooms and the stairs enters into the central part of this building. This wall has evidence of timber-box framed construction in at least three of its walls. The east wall has two windows and was probably rebuilt in brick.
- 3.8.8 The rear or north room has a fireplace in its north wall, and a window in its east wall. Timber-box framing is apparent in its west and south walls. The room also contains the remains of a truss that extends down below the present ceiling joists. The truss contains a collar-beam with queen struts and also has the remains of two braces.
- 3.8.9 The front room on the first floor contained a fireplace on the west wall (Plate 5), with a shallow perpendicular style (Tudor). There was a mullion window in the south wall, which extended above the line of the joists and must be a later insert. The east wall is gone but in the ceiling are the remains of part of a canted bay window also called an oriel window with diamond patterns. This was removed so that access could be obtained to the attic space in the eastern extension. There is one truss in this extension with these being set close the wall.
- 3.8.10 The stairs continue up into the attic space, in these areas there is a mixture of old and new timbers due to fire damage. A truss in the east wing has previously been described, in the central range no complete trusses survive and the only old timbers are the purlins.

4 ASSESSMENT (FIGURE 1)

4.1 Phase 1 & 2: 16th century

- 4.1.1 The building is a complex one to interpret, especially on the bases of viewing the structure from outside and only seeing no.53 (Flint Cottage) internally. The claim that this started off as a two-winged central hall house is difficult to reconcile with the evidence that exists in the Flint Cottage. Externally it is apparent that there are two gables, which later become dormer gables. Internally it is evident that the back wall of the central range seems to butt up to the flint and brick wall of the eastern wing (Plate 3). If this is indeed the case then we have to consider that the eastern wing was probably constructed before the central range.
- 4.1.2 If this is the case it is likely that the western wing may also have been constructed before the central range was added. Thus it is possible that the building started as two separate houses running north to south. There is, therefore, the probability that the building initially had two phases, the east wing as the lower building may have been constructed first.
- 4.1.3 The initial design of no. 53 can easily be worked out. It was probably a three-celled unit with a central lobby area. This type of building is recognised as a standard 16th century plan. The south unit had a lateral chimney with a protruding chimney on the west wall. Upstairs there was a Tudor fireplace and an oriel window. The central unit, which has been considerably damaged, contained an entrance on the east side, but any evidence of an opposing entrance has long since gone. We may suspect that there was one as we end up with part of the passageway running east to west across the central part of the central unit. The north unit would have contained a gable end-protruding fireplace alongside which enough space survives for the remains of a spiral staircase.

4.1.4 This building is probably of the 16th century; the oriel window would indicate that the date was the latter part of the 16th century (Brunskill 2000, 145), though this would only be the case if the window were not part of a later insertion. The fireplace opposite can not be so precisely date and may belong to a broader range of the 16th or even later 15th century.

4.2 Phase 3: 16th–17th century

4.2.1 The visual appearance of the gables in the front wall and the apparent butt of the back wall to the east wing mean that the range in-between the two wings has to have occurred as Phase 3. The new space between the two earlier houses may have started out as a hall strung between the two buildings. The details on the front show that this central section previously had lower walls and that these were added onto. It is possible that a detail such as the oriel window may have been inserted during the move to this phase.

4.2.2 This secondary Tudor phase could also account for the alteration in the size of the mullion window.

4.2.3 Providing an exact date for these early phases is difficult but one should remember that a series of dates exist for transfer of the Holy Trinity estate (see above). There could thus be building work on the site associated with 1528, 1546 and 1553. It is even possible that some of the flint walls may belong to even older structures associated with the priory.

4.3 Phase 4: 18th century

4.3.1 There were a number of alterations to the premises that would seem to fit best into the 18th century. These would include the insertion of the front doors of the two properties and the two windows on the ground floor containing sash components. The removal of part of the wall of the central unit of the three-celled central lobby house. This was so that the stairwell could be inserted centrally into the building, a feature apparent in 18th century structures. The moving of one of the internal walls to make the north room larger and reduce the width of the passage.

4.3.2 The cellar must also have been added at this time as the brick sizes are probably more indicative of this phase and it must also have occurred so that the cellar window on the east could receive light.

4.3.3 The east façade was probably rebuilt at this time and its timbers removed.

4.4 Phase 5: 18th century

4.4.1 The final major phase must have seen the addition of the single story extensions to the east. This contained chequered brick patterns and a segmental arch. To produce the blue and red chequered pattern the end of the bricks were made vitreous. This type of brickwork, using blue (glazed) and red brick is evident in other Berkshire buildings of the early 18th century, for example West Hanney House (Pevsner 1966, 263-4). Brick production is known to have commenced in Berkshire in the 17th century (Hammond 1998, 4), an example of this is the Jesus Hospital at Bray, 1623-8, by Thomas Baldwin, which uses a chequered design of blue and red brick. It is apparent that buildings of the earlier 17th century use English bond predominantly not Flemish, for example West Woodhay House of 1635 (Tyack, Bradley et al. 2010, plates 43, 44), thus implying a later date here.

4.4.2 The window on the ground floor was reworked at this time.

4.5 Phase 6: 20th century

4.5.1 The final phase must include the 20th and 21st century tinkering with the details of the building. This would chiefly include roof reconstruction after the fire and the construction of the porch on the east facade.

4.6 Listed status

4.6.1 The building is a listed building; and it contains many notable features of the 16th century.

4.7 Historic and Architectural Assessment

4.7.1 The building has a number of important architectural details, which should be retained.

5 THE CURRENT PROPOSAL

5.1 The current proposal is not to drastically alter the building but simply to refurbish the building to make it habitable again.

6 CONCLUSIONS

6.1 An assessment of the building has suggested that the phasing of the building could be altered, although this was only based on the analysis of the eastern component of the structure. Three 16th century phases were suggested on the physical evidence of the relationship of the east wing to the central range. This suggestion is that the two wings originated as separate buildings and that the central range was created to turn these two smaller buildings into a larger hall structure.

6.2 Phases 3 and 4 may both be of the 18th century, which saw the revamp of the premises.

6.3 The building is worthy of its listed status and retains a number of interesting features of the 16th century, such as the Tudor fireplace and the fragments of the oriel window. Fire and water has damaged some of the building, thus making repair work essential. Damaged structural members may have to be replaced.

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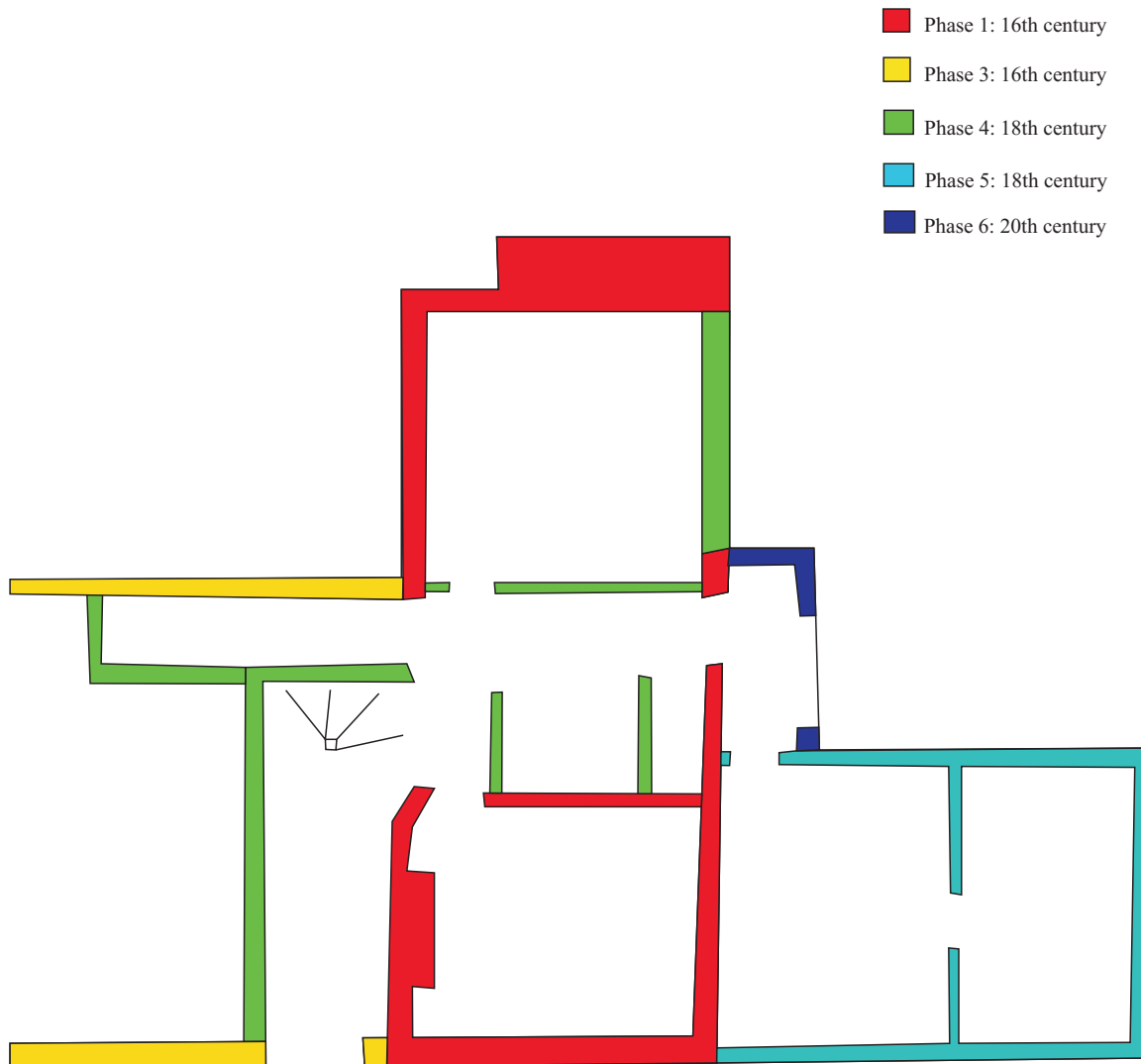


Figure 1. Phased ground floor plan of Flint Cottage



Plate 1: Gable of West Wing



Plate 2: Gable of East Wing



Plate 3: Butt in back wall between East Wing and back wall



Plate 4: Blocked up fireplace at rear of building



Plate 5: Tudor fireplace



Plate 6: Mullioned window in attic

Plate 7: Outshoot containing fireplace
and possible stairs



Plate 8: Door frame and side window





Plate 9: Projecting first floor chimney, originally external feature



Plate 10: Blocked up window in the cellar