

JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

BUILDING ASSESSMENT

ON

THE PERCH,

BINSEY, OXFORD

NGR SP 49285 07688

On behalf of

Full City Ltd

MAY 2014

REPORT FOR Full City Ltd
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SUMMARY

The following building assessment was carried out at the request of Mike Orr of Anderson Orr Partnership, at the behest of Jon Ellse of Full City Ltd. The reason for this report was to ascertain the current state of the structure prior to permission being given for alterations made under an application for listed building consent.

Though the building is known to have been fire damaged in 1977 and 2007, it is apparent that this mainly affected the thatch and damaged the upper parts of the surviving walls. There are still architectural details that survive in the structure, and historical indications that a public house of some description has been located here from before the 17th century. The earliest indications for a medieval structure on the site are suggested by the presence of a cruck located in the first floor of the upper part of the building. There is brief reference in 1299 that seems to imply that there was a tavern or inn of some type at this early date in Binsey.

Details of a forerunner for a tavern in Binsey, probably on the site of the Perch, become more significant from the 17th century, when there are references to landlords and landladies, and the indications that from at least 1640 to 1829 the public house was associated with four families that were intermarried. The earliest recording of the first family to supply landlords, the Pricketts, however, goes back to the end of the 16th century. It is probably by the 16th century, or at the very latest, the early 17th century that the structure had coalesced from a possible earlier hall to a three celled structure. The earliest northern extension and south-wing were probably added as single storey or 1 ½ storey extensions in the 17th century, with the north extension heightened in the 18th century. The earliest two phases were undoubtedly built in timber, and the lower walling was probably replaced in the 17th and 18th centuries. In the 19th century the old buildings roof line was raised. The lean-to on the front was probably added at this date.

The furthest extension on the north and that on the south appear to be where new structures were constructed to fill in spaces between existing garden walls in the 20th century.

The alterations primarily affect parts of the building that were constructed in the 20th century. The bar is being relocated to an earlier known site. The cellar is to be relocated into the southwest wing and a new door inserted. The toilet facilities are to be relocated, but this is into an area of 20th century additions. The stairs are to be retained as they appear to be in a potentially early location, however, the plan of 1977 shows that the stairs were originally located on the west side of the chimneybreast in a location where the entrance to the current toilet facilities is located. Proposed alterations in the kitchen area will result in the removal of a reused post with chamfering, which is a lintel not in its original location. The 1977 plan shows that the area of the kitchen was altered after the initial fire and that original features were removed or relocated at that time.

A conservatory is to be added to the rear of the property that is to a plan agreed with the conservation officer. There will be an 8-10m evaluation trench cut prior to construction.

THE PERCH, BINSEY, OXFORD

Building Assessment

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location

The Perch is located in the hamlet or village of Binsey (NGR SP 49285 07688), which was a separate parish located on the western edge of the city of Oxford. Binsey lies in an historic parish, which was located in the liberty of Oxford before being incorporated into the city. Prior to this the parish may well have been located in the extensive hundred of Wootton.

To the east enclosed plots extend to a branch of the river Thames, and to the southeast is Binsey Green, a stream of the Thames previously came closer, with a large pond, presumably a fish pond, which has now been filled in and over which part of the car park extends. The car park lies to the south and west of the public house, while beyond to the west is Manor Farm, which also extends to the north.

Topographically the site is located on a slight elevation on the Thames floodplain at somewhere between 57m and 60m Ordnance Datum.

The underlying bedrock is Oxford Clay Formation and West Walton Formation, mudstone and sedimentary bedrock formed 156 to 165 million years ago in the Jurassic period (mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html). Where the Perch and the village of Binsey are located there is a superficial deposit of Northmoor Sand and Gravel Member, formed some 3 million years ago in the Quaternary. Beyond this river terrace the surrounding deposits are of Alluvium (clay, silt, sand and gravel) formed 2 million years ago.

1.2 Commission

Mike Orr, of The Anderson Orr Partnership, requested this report on behalf of Full City Ltd.

1.3 Aim of Investigation

The aim of the report is to provide a building assessment of the structure before alterations are approved with a listed building consent. The thatched roof and timbers were previously fire damaged in 1977 and 2007.

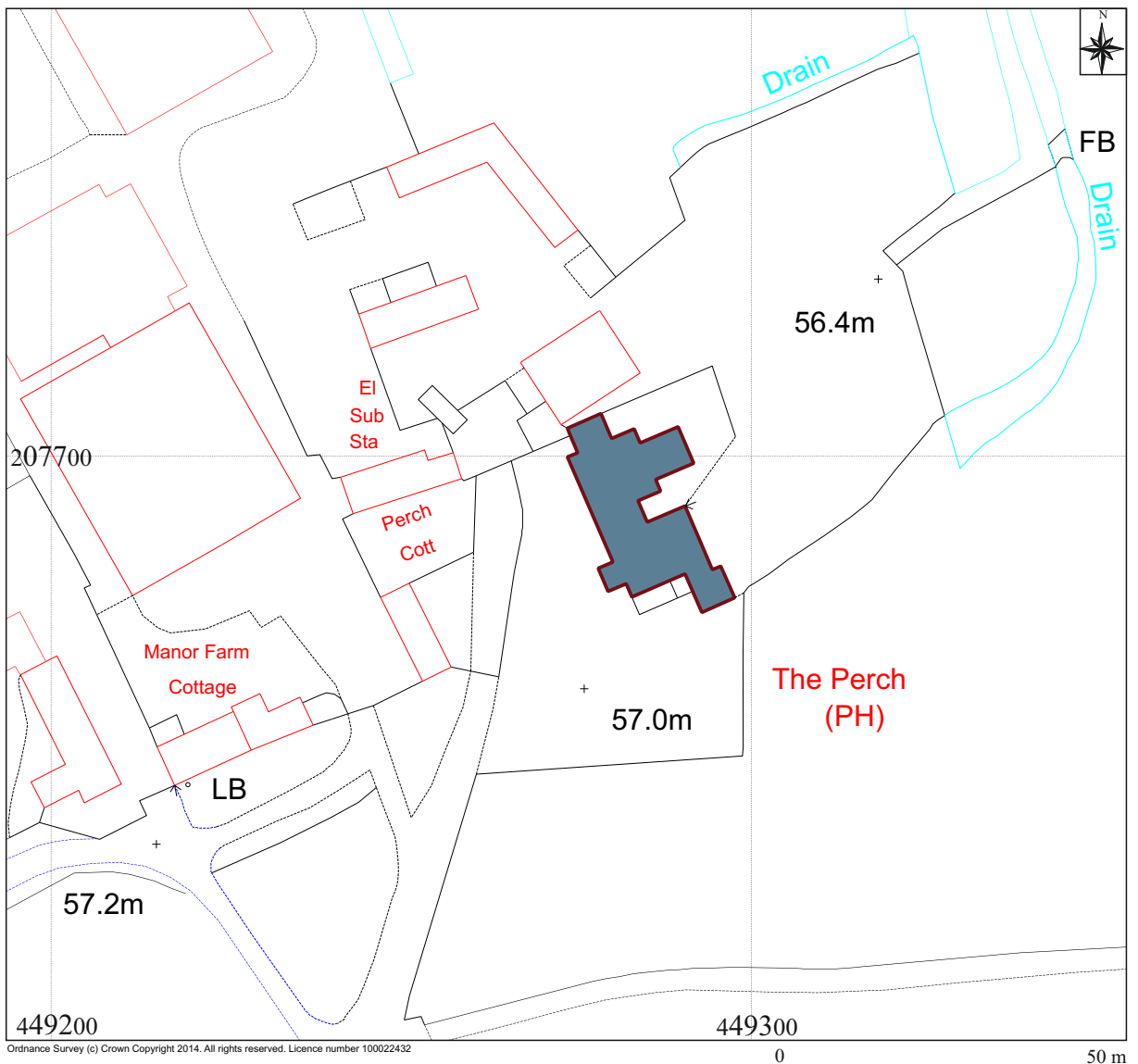
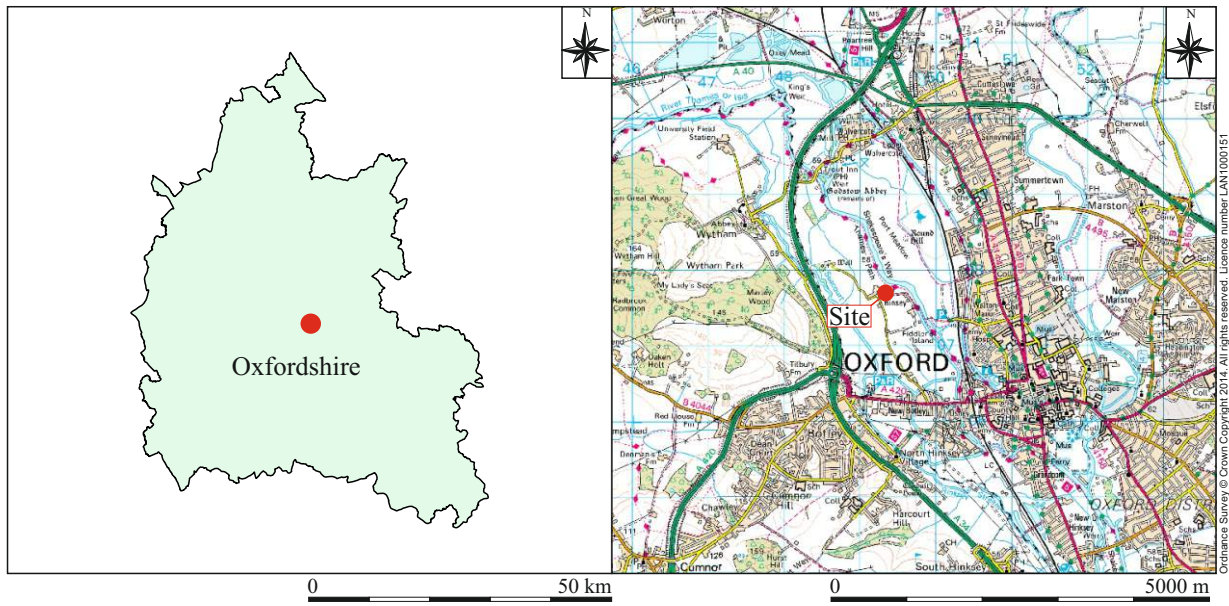


Figure 1: Site location

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Designation

The Perch Inn is a grade II listed structure (English Heritage Building ID 245330: NGR SP 49285 07688), and has the following legacy listing.

C17 in origin but has been altered and added to. 2-storeyed plastered rubble with a thatch roof, rebuilt red brick stacks and casement windows. On the east side is a projecting three-sided bay in the 1st floor with sashes and a tile pent roof over it. On the north-west is a later (probably late C18) 2-storeyed brick wing with a Welsh slate roof.

The legacy listing is taken from the RCHM (291) statement and has not been upgraded since 1954.

The structure is not listed in The Buildings of England Series (Sherwood and Pevsner 1974). The VCH (1979, 265-8) described the building as a structure that dates partly from the 17th century, but it is not known how long an inn was located on that site.

A study of Oxford described the structure as 17th century with oak beams, flagged floors and stone hearths, which was damaged by fire in 1977 (Hibbert and Hibbert 1988, 323-4) and in 2007.

The site is also in Binsey Conservation area, which includes the Perch and the village around it and adjacent fields. This was designated on 23rd February 1981.

2.2 History of Development

Binsey was attached to the church of Saint Frideswides from an early date (VCH 1979, 265-8). The village was alternatively called Thornbury, presumably from the fortified site in which the chapel was established. There was a priory cell there in c 1130.

The earliest indications of a hostelry in and around Binsey can be dated to 1299 when there is a reference to a Adam de la Wyke falling into a ditch and drowning (Davies 2014, 20). That this tavern may be on the location of the present public house is plausible as the current hostelry appears to be located in a position where it could exploit east to west trade to Oxford, and the earliest structural details in the building are a cruck of a probable medieval date. Pilgrims are known to have visited Saint Margaret's Well at Binsey from the 12th century (Hibbert and Hibbert 1988, 323-4). One should suspect that the Perch as an inn at a pilgrimage location should have a long history, but this has not been substantiated.

The present Perch is believed to have been on the site from at least the 17th century (VCH 1979, 265-8). Other references are considered to directly relate to the licensing of the forerunner of the Perch public house (Davies 2014, 15-20). In 1651 Thomas Prickett is known to have held the licence in a Binsey establishment. The earliest reference to a Prickett at Binsey is in 1598 in association with Port Meadow; this is important as the family appear to have a long running association with the Perch. In 1654 there is a licence issued in a premises at Medley to a Thomas Field. The licence was with Joan Bonner in 1659 and in 1662 with Joan England, who later married and became a Ward, holding the premises to 1669. The earliest reference in the 18th was in

1711 when John Prickett was the landlord of the Fish. Robert Tawney is known to have been landlord in 1739, if perhaps not earlier in 1735. From 1745 to 1761 Margaret Prickett was landlady, and in 1761 the position of landlord was taken over by her son Thomas Prickett. Robert Taylor was landlord in 1780, and in 1795 John Williams. In 1814 there is a reference to Backwoods and bull-baiting at Whit-Monday and this tradition is considered to explain the name of the Bulstake Stream. This implies that the Green to the south of the Perch was used for an unspecified custom, the origins of which are unknown, but the local custom would swell on such occasions. The public house is first mentioned in the local press in 1820. From 1640 to 1829 there appears to be a specific association of the public house with the Prickett-Tawney-Taylor-Williams family, which all seem to have some type of relationship.



Figure 2 Rocque's Map 1761

The earliest antiquarian maps of the Binsey area are a mixed bag. Rocque's map of Berkshire dated to 1761 (Fig. 2) appears to show the village of Binsey with many of the buildings located there already in existence. The Perch Tavern appears on this map to be a long narrow building with a possible extension on the southwest side, although this is not overly convincing. The wing on the east side of the building does not appear to be shown. There are three buildings shown to the north and northwest which would tie in with those structures standing on the earliest Ordnance Survey maps.

Jeffreys' map of 1767 (OHC CP/103/M/1) is problematic in that it shows a series of randomly placed buildings that do not appear to tie in with how the buildings are now, and what Rocque drew a few years earlier (Fig. 3).

Davis of Lewknor's map of 1797 (OHC CH.XX/2) appears to show a rectangular building at the east end of the village (Fig. 4). However, the portrayed layout of the

village is more problematic, as is the apparent row of buildings running down to the ferry. It is likely that this drawing is more problematic (schematic) than others.



Figure 3 Jefferys' map of 1767



Figure 4 Davis of Lewknor's map of 1797

Bryant's map of 1824 (OHC P345/M/1) also appears to show a linear north to south building at the east end of the village (Fig. 5).

The public house was known as the Fish in 1831 and in 1842 was described as a well known location (VCH 1988, 323-4). Textual sources available in 1830 indicate that the public house was attached to a large agricultural estate held by Richard Gee. This is undoubtedly indicative of the building being attached to an earlier estate. A sale document in 1842 called the public house the Perch in 1842. The census of 1841 indicates that William Fleetwood was the landlord, and in 1851 it was Richard Alder. In 1856 Elizabeth Burton was in trouble for breaching the licensing law. William Jennings was landlord in 1863, and William Venables in 1864 and 1867, and by 1869 this position had passed to Henry Edmonds. Henry Goatley was described as a boat-builder and victualler in 1874, the earliest reference to the combination of these trades

and perhaps hinting at a ferry being combined with the public house trade. William Doe is the landlord recorded in 1881, and Edwin Powell Thomas in 1887 and 1895, with Elizabeth Powell as landlady in 1899 and 1903. From 1911 to 1935 George Goatley is documented as the landlord, and during his term the author C S Lewis makes reference to a visit in 1922 and also during his tenure there is an out of court settlement for assault by a student from Christ Church.



Figure 5 Bryant's map of 1824



Figure 6 Greenwood's map of 1829

A map of the Oxford Borough shows the city liberty in c 1830 (OHC CH.CX/II/4) which extends out as far as Binsey. Greenwood's map of 1832 (OHC CH.XL/VII/1 (1)) of the county also shows the hamlet of Binsey (Fig. 6). The detail is not brilliant but it shows a linear north south building on the east side of the village. The buildings of the village are all shown fronting onto Binsy Green. There is also a plan of Church Farm at Binsey (OHC CJ.IX/XII/2) dated to the later part of the 19th century. However, this plan does not show the Perch.

The Ordnance Survey first edition map of 1878 at 1: 2,500 shows the main north to

south range extending from the hipped roof gable in the south to the small extension in the north. The south wing is also present, as is the small extension on the southwest of the building. The yard exists on the south side of the building but is not in its current form. There are isolated structures here, which do not appear to conform to the current arrangement of buildings. The second edition map of 1899 of the same scale shows the same basic shape as above, but shows the courtyard extending to the pond, there are two structures in the courtyard. The Ordnance Survey map of 1958 shows the brick structures in some form, it is thus the case that these structures were constructed in the early or mid-20th century.

The Perch is known to have been damaged by fire twice within recent years.

3 DESCRIPTION OF THE PERCH

3.1 Introduction and General Description

The Perch public house at Binsey is basically an L-shaped structure of two storeys. The two main ranges are constructed of a mixture of limestone rubble and brick, and contain thatched and slate roofs. There is a single storey addition on the north side, which has a clay tiled roof and also a flat roof. On the south side there is an enclosed area, possibly once a kitchen garden, with a series of C-shaped buildings constructed of a series of brick, breezeblock and other materials, along with slate roofs. There are also two smaller additions on the front of the building, one of timber and the other of rubble stone, both of which are thatched.

3.2 Exterior of building



Plate 1 Old southwest façade

The main façade is the southwest one (Fig. 9 E1), which has at its centre a two story unit with central door with timber porch clad in weatherboard, flanked by windows in the ground floor and the first floor (plate 1). The ground floor wall is of limestone rubble, while the upper wall is rendered and coated in pale yellow wash. The main door is a panel door of a more recent origin. The window to the left of the door has

three mullions creating with four lights divided into three. The window above this has one mullion with each window divided into two. Both windows on the left hand side of the door have two mullions with each of the windows divided in two. The roof above this façade is of thatch. On the north side of this central arrangement there is evidence of a staggered butt joint and an adjacent small square infilled with limestone rubble.



Plate 2 Northern extension southwest façade

On the northern part of the elevation, the elevation is higher (plate 2). The ground floor wall is also made of limestone rubble, while the upper wall is made of limestone and brick infill. The ground floor contains one window with a timber lintel. The window on the ground floor has two mullions in its casement. The first floor has a higher wall elevation than that adjacent, and has three windows; the central and northern windows are sash windows with timber lintels. The southern window is smaller with two lights, and timber lintel, but has been rebuilt around in brick, suggestive of the window size being reduced. The roof above is of slate and shallowly pitched. There are brick chimneys at either end. To the north of this is a single storey extension with a central patio door and a tile roof.

On the south side of the southwest elevation there is a limestone rubble extension, with a sloping thatched roof giving this the impression of being a lean-to with thatched roof. The timber frame visible under the thatch looks as though it has been replaced more recently, while there are timbers in the north wall that is older being weathered and gnarled (Fig. 9 E2). The west wall contains a window with timber lintel and two mullions (Fig. 9 E1).

The northwest façade contains a rubble limestone gable with shallow pitch and a gable end chimney of brick above the roof line. Below this there is a further wall not seen, which has a gable set up above a limestone boundary wall.

The northwest façade of the south range of the L-shape contains the side of a lean-to porch, and a series of external steps (Fig. 9 E2, plate 3). Adjacent to the base of the steps there is a window with timber lintel and on the first floor is a door at the top of the stairs, modern with glass window lights. The roof above is thatch.

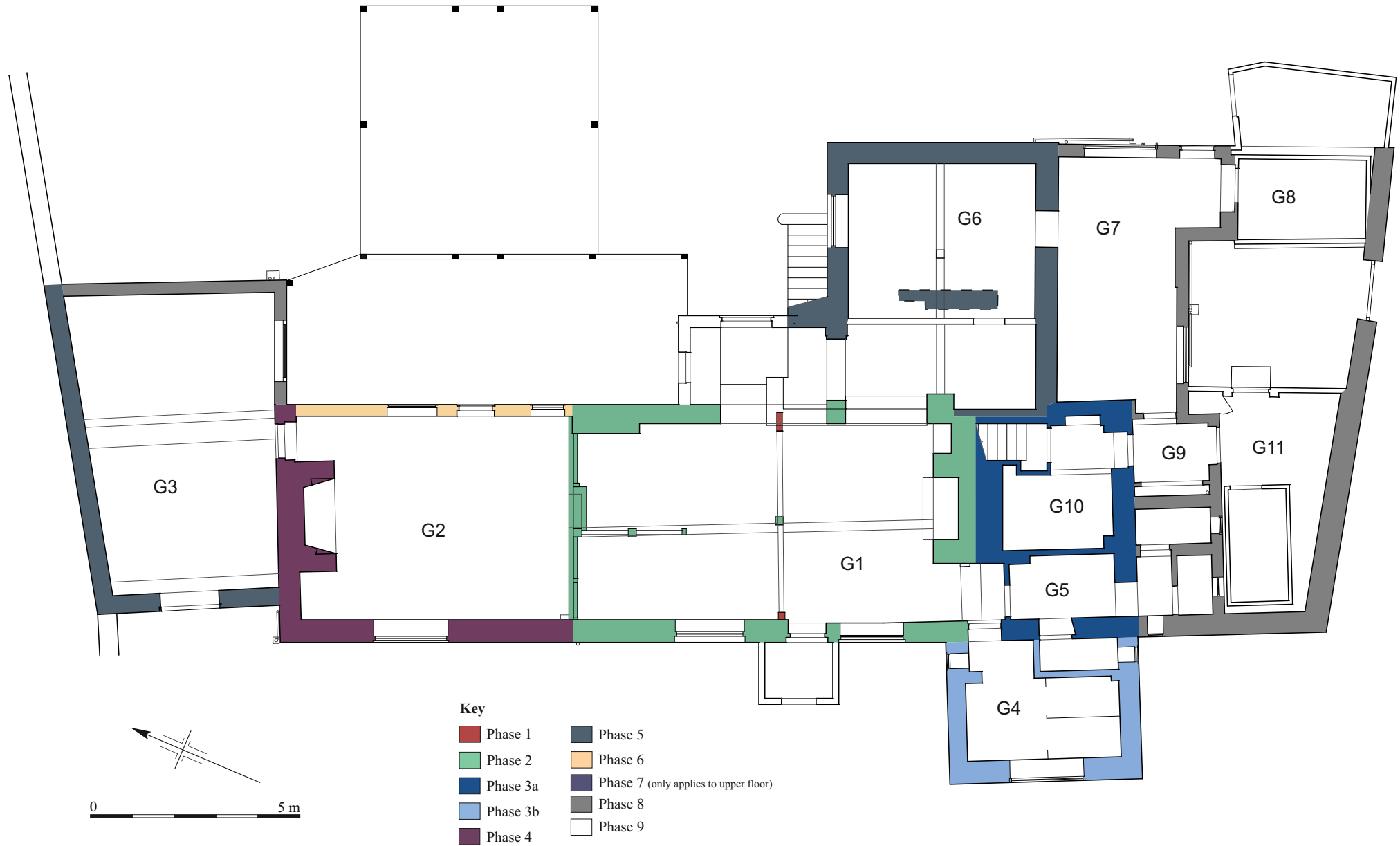
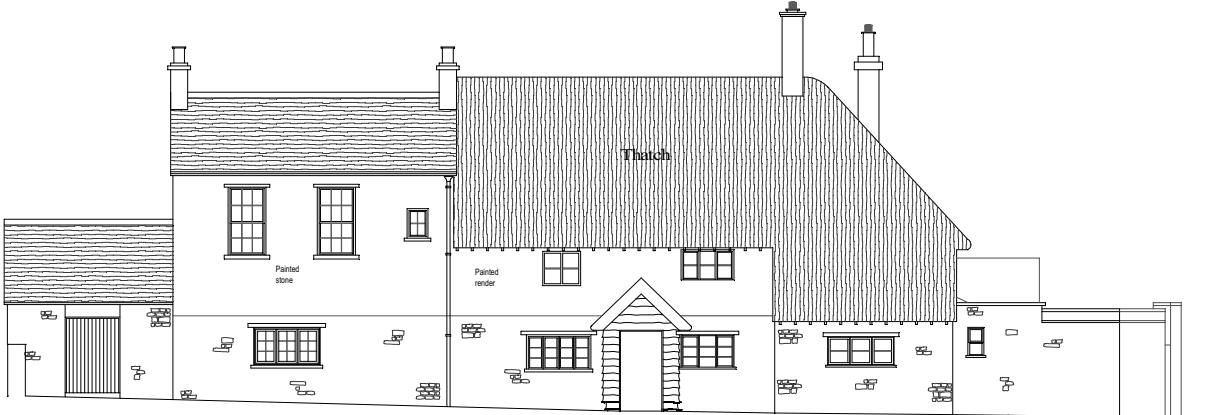


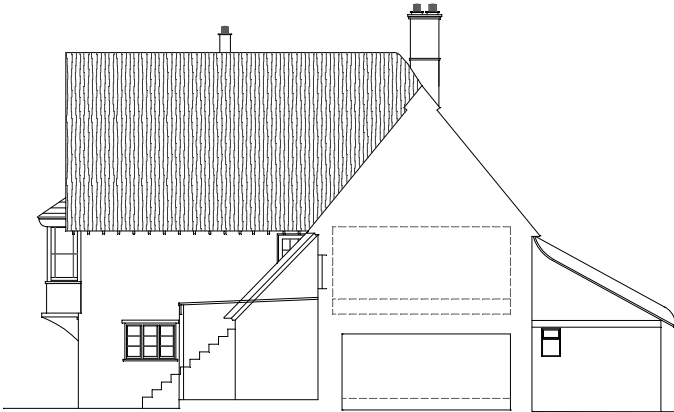
Figure 7: Plan of ground floor



Figure 8: Plan of first floor



E.1: Southwest elevation



E.2: Northwest elevation

0 10 m

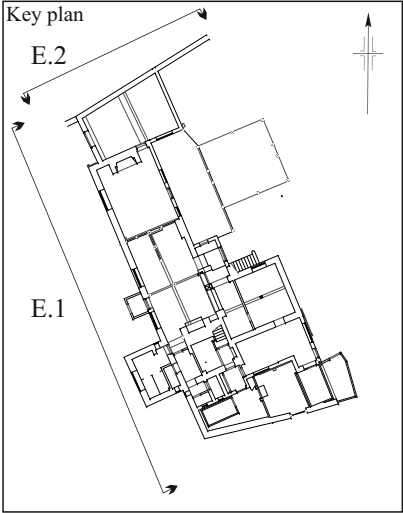
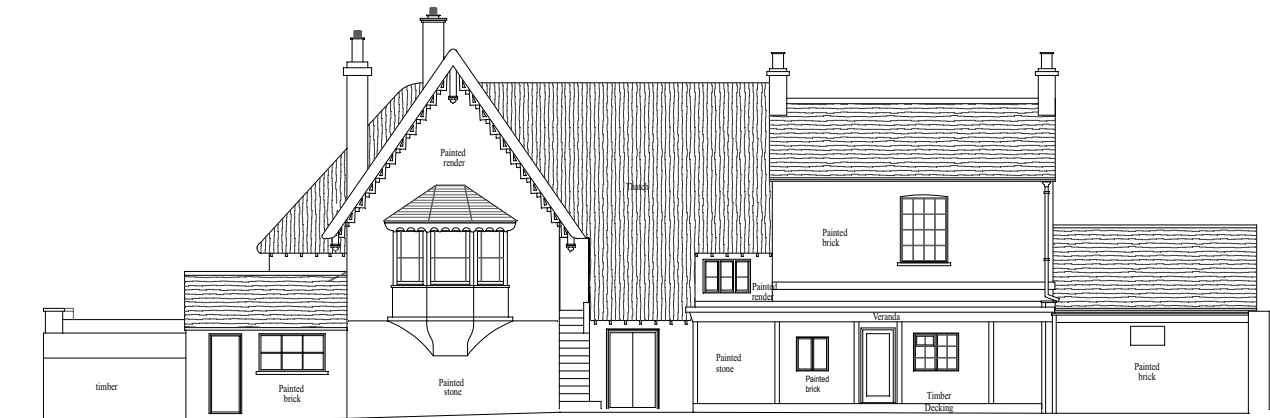
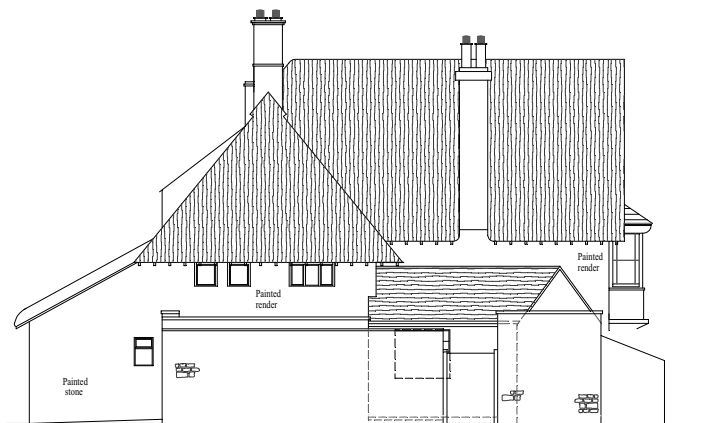


Figure 9: Southwest and northwest elevations



E.3: Northeast elevation



E.4: Southeast elevation

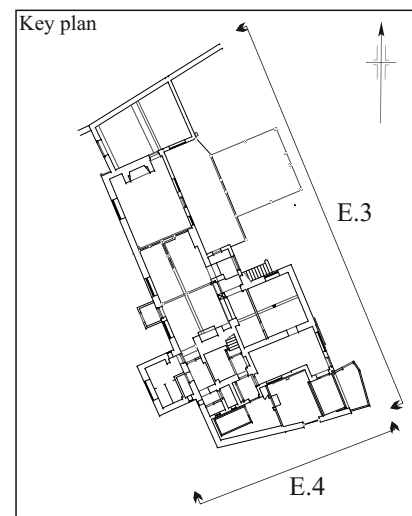


Figure 10: Northeast and southeast elevations



Plate 3 Rear or northeast side of the Perch

The northeast façade of the main range has a double door under the thatch of a lean-to porch, with a stairs to the left (Fig. 10 E3, plate 3). The wall to the north is mainly of brick, although some rubble limestone walling is evident. It has a central door with glass panels, and windows either side. The one on the right has a central mullion, and there is a sash window above also with a timber lintel. Above the window to the left of the door there is an offset window with two mullions set under the lower thatched eaves. The roof above the sash window is a slate roof with a gentler pitch.



Plate 4 Oriole window

The south part of the northeast elevation consists of a gable end with a ground floor rubble limestone wall, which has been washed (plate 4). Above this the walls are rendered. The wall is dominated by an oriole bay window with sash windows, and the gable has a decorative fascia with step type pattern and a steep pitch, perhaps imitating a Swiss chalet style. There is an extension on the south side of this gable with a steeply pitched slate roof. The wall is of brick and has a glass panel door on the left and a window with two mullions on the right.



Plate 5 Southeast facade

The east part of the southeast façade has a rubble limestone wall below the main elevation in which there is a gate, which leads into a small courtyard (Fig. 10 E4, plate 5). On the north side of the courtyard there is a brick structure with a slate roof, and window below. The west wall of the courtyard is breezeblock and contains a modern panel door. On the east side is a refrigeration unit that is set under a small brick gable. The wall above the lean-to is blank, the roof above this is thatched and there is a lateral chimney. There is a fish shape created as a decoration on the ridge of the thatch, presumably supposed to represent the perch. The remains of a hipped and thatched gable can be identified on the west side, which contains three windows, a larger two mullioned window on the east side and two smaller identical windows on the west side. To the west of the rubble limestone walls and thatched hipped gable there is a rubble limestone lean-to.

3.3 Interior of building ground floor

The front door, with a weatherboard porch, enters into a long room (Fig. 7, G1-2) which has been created with the removal of a wall and fireplace (plate 6). The room has two different levels with the north end being approached by steps. The lower southern part is larger (G1). The walls above must now be supported by RSJs. Timber framing has been inserted into the gap; presumably this is of a new date. There is a large fireplace with timber lintel at the south end, which contains a wood burner (plate 7). There is a central support running axially to the building, what is underneath part of this is not known, but presumably there was originally a timber here; part of a timber survives with cut for headroom and there is a central timber support (plate 8). The joists are roughly chamfered and may be early. The floor is of limestone slabs. In the

east part of the room there is a bar with central limestone support, alongside which is a double glazed door. To the north of this there is a rubble limestone wall with two different widths, of which the northern part is undoubtedly the stub of the internal wall that has been removed. The east wall contains the main front door flanked by two windows with timber lintels. In the southeast corner of the room there are two doors leading into the toilets (G4-G5). These have both been refurbished in the near past.



Plate 6 G1-G2 the removed wall



Plate 7 G1 fireplace

The raised area to the north (G2) has a timber floor and a fireplace in north wall (plate 9). In the west wall there is a single window with a timber lintel, and in the east wall a glass panel door with windows flanking to the left and right. There is a door to the right side of the fireplace.

The north door by the fireplace leads into a parallelogram shaped room (G3) with a limestone north wall, which was once part of a rubble boundary wall. In the east wall is a patio door, in the south wall a door and window. The ceiling contains two parts, the east part flat, and the west part extending up into the roof space.



Plate 8 G1 axial beam



Plate 9 G2 fireplace

A door behind the bar leads into the remainder of the ground floor rooms. Most of these rooms have modern or more recent finishes. The first room entered is that which occupies the east end of the south range (G6). This has a window in the north wall. The south wall and east walls have openings, the latter leads to the bar. In the ceiling there are two chamfered beams, with saw marks, and stops. A further chamfered lintel has been reset to support them. These are later insertions, but may reuse earlier material of an 18th century date or could have been produced to imitate features of that date.

This room (G6) is not in its original form, and the timbers' origins are unknown. An existing plan of the building dated August 1977 shows a ground floor survey in which room G6 and the bar area were divided into two unequal rooms. There was an off-centre dividing wall, now gone, with two exits or entrances on either side. A structure is shown on the east side and a timber running roughly in line with where the later beam was inserted. The length of timber required here is similar to that reused in the kitchen and bar, though confirmation that this is the original reused is not conclusive.

The south opening from room G6 leads into a further part of the kitchen (G7). This is a long rectangular room with modern fixtures. There is a door and window in the east wall. In the south wall there is a further door leading to the cellar (G8) and a further window. In the west wall there is a passage (G9) with openings to the north and south. The opening on the north leads into a small room with no datable features (G10), which must be located under the hipped gable. There is a cupboard here that contains the remains of a former internal staircase that lies adjacent to a large chimneybreast. The opening in the south leads into the area contained within the limestone rubble walls of the courtyard and the breezeblock walls (G11). There is a modern door in the east wall.

3.4 Interior of building first floor



Plate 10 F1 Cruck

The first floor is entered from a rear external staircase through a recent glass panelled door. This leads into a T-shaped room staggered on a number of different levels (Fig. 8, F1). In the north south orientated passage are the remains of part of a cruck (plate 10), which was shaped using adzes. The passage has been created with the insertion of a modern studded wall on the left hand or west side. There are two doors, in this wall of the passage, each leading into a room (F2-F3). In the west walls of the rooms there are windows, in the wall that partitions them there is the remains of the cruck (plate 11). On the east side of the T-shaped passage is a window and a door leading into a cupboard in the roof space of a lean-to porch at the rear of the building.

The rooms in the south part of the first floor are as followed. A door at the east end of the T-shaped hall leads into a bedroom (F4). This door enters under a modern elevated bed. In the east wall is the bay window. In the south wall there is a chimneybreast and

fireplace, which belongs to the lateral chimney of the south elevation. The current fireplace looks as if it is a more recent insertion over an earlier one. In the west wall there are two doors, the southern one leads into a small kitchen located below the hipped gable (F5). There is access into a small passage with a door on the south side leading into a bathroom (F6). The passage doubles round on itself, and there are two further doors on the west side, one to a boiler, and the other into the roof space of the lean-to on the west side of the building above the gentlemen's toilets.



Plate 11 Cruck in F2

At the north room of the T-shaped landing there are stairs leading up to two other rooms in the northern extension. Here the roof space is so much higher. There is a door on the west side of the passage, which leads into a room (F8) with two windows in its west wall, a large sash window on the north side and the smaller window on the south side. The other door at the north end of the passage leads into a rectangular room with a chimneybreast in its north wall (F7), but no visible fireplace. In the east and west walls there are sash windows.

The attic space was not accessed.

4 ASSESSMENT

4.1 Phases

The building can probably be seen to have nine basic stages of development defined.

The building is an interesting building and internal evidence may suggest that the building originated far earlier than the current listing suggests in the 17th century. In the central part of the building are the remains of a cruck, which has adze marks (phase 1). The cruck frame is the key component for dating this early material in the structure. The earliest evidence for this tradition has been identified from excavations in Buckinghamshire dating to the 4th century AD. However, they are not considered to have been common until the medieval period, and had declined in fashion by the 18th century. Timbers with adze construction are usually assigned to the 16th century or earlier. It is thus possible to suggest that the Perch public house originated as a timber

frame cruck structure, loosely datable from the 12th to the 16th centuries, probably more conservative to place it in the later part of that date range for now. It cannot be properly assessed at this time of how the chimneys, if there were any at this early date would be connected to the building.

Phase 2 probably saw the structure turned into a three cell unit of a 16th to 17th century date, although parts of the walling were probably replaced at various later phases. There are surviving ceiling timbers in the bar area, axial timber and joists also show adze working technique. The axial beam also has a recess cut upward into it, which may be for a passage or door. This feature I have seen elsewhere, for example at Braceland Farm, Gloucestershire, which is unsatisfactorily dated but is on a map of 1608 (pers knowledge). These are treated as possibly part of phase 2 primarily because the base of the cruck only survive in the bar as stumps having been removed. This may imply that these beams were part of an earlier phase or part of some reworking.

The next addition (phases 3a and 3b) saw the rebuilding in stone rubble of the southern unit which was capped by the hipped gable (plate 12). In the front of the building there is the remains of a butt joint in the wall that runs in height to roughly midway up the first floor windows in the old central range. Though it is not overly clear it is likely that the lower rubble walls of the south extension were rebuilt with the butt joint probably marking the height of the original eaves of the structure. The butt joints position implies that the old three cell structure once had eye lid dormer windows. The rubble lower walls of the wing were added at some unknown date, at present this is being added as part of phase 3a, due to the fact that we have no better knowledge. It can be noted that the walls of these structures lie at slightly different alignments, perhaps implying that there are two clear phases here. The addition of the lean-to on the southwest was also probably added as phase 3b, also probably in the 17th century. Other country public houses of this date and plan can be recognised in Gloucestershire (pers. knowledge).



Plate 12 Butt joints of Phase 3

Phase 4 of the structure can be identified in some of the butt joints (plate 13). A stone extension was added on the north side (possibly single storey), which must have initially included the insertion of a chimney, or its partial rebuild, on the north side of

the old timber framed three-cell structure. Chimneys as such developed on most domestic structures from the 16th century. The window on the ground floor of this structure is probably a later insertion. It can probably be suggested that the back or east wall of the central structure was rebuilt at this time as there appears to be no real butt joint evident between that wall and the stub of the chimneybreast wall that has been removed. This phase should probably be interpreted as being 17th century in date. The basic thickness of the wall implies that this structure would have contained some type of feature along these lines. This basic plan appears to be shown on Rocque's map of 1761.



Plate 13 Butt joint for north extension

The south wing on the east side does not appear on any maps prior to the Ordnance Survey map, but I am inclined to think that this has just been omitted and that a single storey rubble wing was likely added in the 18th century. The remaining beams are not original features used in original locations, though they could have been re-used from elsewhere. The beams have saw marks but also contain chamfers with stops, and have a possible 18th century date or are replicas of earlier timbers of that date destroyed in the 1977 fire. On a planning application plan of August 1977 it is apparent that an internal wall divided this wing into two unequal parts. A beam is marked in the larger easterly room, which is of a similar size to that of the surviving larger beam. There is a door in the southwest part of the south wall and a window in the northwest part of that wall where a later door was inserted. The addition of this wing is interpreted as phase 5. The wall between this wing and the original internal staircase was removed at this time and rebuilt in brick. The small extension on the north end also has a pitched roof and rubble walls, again this may be an extension of the 18th century. The structure was probably open on the east side and provided shelter for animals or wood storage. This structure is shown on the earliest Ordnance Survey maps.

The main part of the north extension was presumably heightened in the latter part of the 18th century (phase 6), with its mixture of rubble walls and brick walls and its larger upper sash windows. That this is later 18th century is suggested by the flatter pitch of the roof, which is designed to take slate. Welsh slate was not widely available until the later part of the 18th century.

Phase 7 saw the raising of the roof heights across the old part of the building and south range and range extensions. The date that this was done is perhaps later Victorian or Edwardian. The gable has a mock Swiss Cottage style to it.

The southern courtyard was in existence on the Ordnance Survey maps of the late 19th century; however, the internal structures are not evident. This yard originally extended to a fishpond. The map of 1878 shows that there were isolated structures in that area, but they were not attached to the present building. The map of 1958 shows the structures in the courtyard. It would seem to be the case that these were later additions to the public house possibly of the early 20th century but more likely in the mid-20th century. They are seen as phase 8.

Phase 9 saw the construction of the breezeblock wall and any later additions including the replacement and rebuilding after the fire damage in 1977 and 2007.

4.2 Listed Status

The building is quite rightly a listed building due to its longevity of development and the early features which it contains in the bar and in the living space above.

4.3 Historic and Architectural Assessment

The building is an important structure and has a national listing. It has a number of different phases, of which the earliest phase may date at any time from the 12th to the 16th century. The form of this structure at this time is not known and it is possible that this could have belonged to a hall type building. The old timbers showing in the bar areas do not appear to contain the remains of the cruck, and it is apparent that this has been truncated and that the timbers here may belong to a box frame construction, with the cruck being cut-off. Phases 3 and 4 saw the addition of a north extension and a south wing, and the replacement of what must have been a timber structure in the 17th century. The late 18th century saw the raising of the north extension, probably from a single storey structure, and the later 19th century saw the rest of the building raised. The courtyard and internal structures appear from map evidence to take on this form in the 20th century.

5 THE CURRENT PROPOSAL

Broadly speaking the alterations will have minimal affect on the historic structure of the listed building. The proposed alterations include: the moving of the bar with the dropping of the floor levels, alterations to the lean-to on the front façade of the building, and also alterations to the kitchen area and the toilet facilities.

The bar is to be re-located at a place where there is a split in the current floor levels. A wall has previously been removed here (pre-1977) that probably contained a fireplace

and other features. Any old timbers in this area have thus been moved and relocated. A photograph that survives showing the building after one of the fires at the public house, possibly 1977, shows that the floor layer in the rooms did continue through the bar area at one level or that there was previously only a slight step. It can, therefore, be shown that from the current proposal none or very little ancient fabric of the structure will be damaged. If the conservation officer believes this should be monitored and the uncovered features recorded, then this may need monitoring.



Plate 14 Picture of bar shown at same level or possibly a low step

The proposal also contains the requirement to transform the old Gentlemen's toilets into the new cellar. This will see the removal of modern internal décor and modern walls. The mullion window on the front of the building will be replaced to match the other windows in the front façade, and a new opening will be made on the northwest elevation so that access is obtained to the cellar from outside. This will have the least visual impact to the main façades and views of the public house. If the conservation officer believes this should be monitored and the uncovered features or walls to be removed recorded in greater detail, then this may need monitoring.

The toilet facilities are to be relocated into areas of storerooms that occupy the area around the current southern courtyard. This includes alterations to the area on the ground floor of the rooms under the hipped gable. The internal walls here that it is proposed to remove are undoubtedly all modern insertions. After conversation with the conservation officer it was decided to retain the redundant stairs as a feature which were difficult to date. The plan of 1977 shows that this may not be the original location of the stairs and that a narrow staircase was originally located to the west of the chimneybreast in the current entrance to the toilets. It appears to be the case that the adjacent wall to the current redundant stairs was rebuilt in brick, thus providing greater space for the stairs. New internal walls will be constructed for a disabled toilet and baby changing unit. Monitoring of the work could be carried out at the discretion of the conservation officer. The further alterations for the new toilet facilities see alterations to walls that are of a 20th century origin and do not impede on the historical assets for which reasons the building is listed.

Alterations will also be made to the area of the kitchen, food preparation, and cold

storage facilities. Alterations will be made to the ground floor of the south wing. This wing was extensively altered in 1977 after a fire. An earlier stone internal wall was removed at that time and the timber lintel in the eastern room was either lost in the fire or relocated. Here the beams in the ceiling are to be retained, with stopped chamfers probably of an 18th century date. The supporting timber post, an apparently reused beam is to be removed from its non original location. In this room a further opening is to be made in the south wall, which is covered in tile at present. The plan of the building dated August 1977 indicates that there was an earlier opening in this position, or roughly in this position, damage to the stone fabric can be avoided.

The other alterations in the kitchen and food-preparation area will see alterations in the area of 20th century structures around the courtyard, this will see the infilling of windows and doors and the insertion of new walls.

The proposals also include the insertion of two double doors into the northwest dining room. The walls here are of brick and are of a late 19th century date at the earliest but probably of a 20th century date.

On the rear of the building it is proposed to replace the rear veranda with a conservatory, which will see the digging of new foundation footings. The city archaeological officer has requested that an evaluation trench of 8-10m in length be made in the location of the foundations for the conservatory extension and that any further monitoring be carried on after this as mitigation.

6 CONCLUSIONS

The Perch Tavern is a nationally important architectural structure, due to its inclusion on the listed buildings register. There are some nine phases of activity potentially recognised, of which the earliest phase 1 saw the construction of a cruck building, of which only one main timber truss survives. The shape of the rest of this building is unknown. Phase 2 probably saw the construction of a basic three cell unit, which included the main range and the structure under the hipped gable. Phases 4 and 5 saw the addition of a northern wing and the south wing, and the rebuilding of various parts of the structure in stone rubble in the 17th century. Phase 6 saw the north extension raised in the late 18th century, while phase 7 saw the rest of the structure raised but not to the same height. The courtyard on the south side and the internal buildings are indicated by Ordnance Survey maps to be a product of the early to middle 20th century.

On the whole the proposed alterations to the building do not cause that much damage to the historic structure. After negotiation and debate it can be shown that the minimal damage has been reduced. Alterations will be seen in the bar area, where the bar will be relocated to a known earlier location. The cellar will be located to the southwest wing of the building, with a new door inserted into the northwest wall. The toilets and baby changing facilities will be relocated and altered, but the redundant staircase will be retained as a feature. Alterations to the kitchen are a further undertaking, which are key to the functionality of the public house. Research has shown that this area was altered in the period after the fire in 1977 and that original features were lost at this time. These alterations will see the removal of a chamfered post.

To the rear of the building a conservatory is to be erected with the digging of new foundations. The city archaeological officer has asked for an evaluation to be carried out in advance.

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