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Sent: 14 April 2025 12:43
To: Paul Grundy
Cc: Matt Jedruch
Subject: 23/00711/FUL | The Blue Bell Inn 39 High Street Desford
Attachments: Photographic Survey_Part1.pdf

Hi Paul,

I hope you are well.

I am emailing in relation to the above application in Desford, for the change of use from existing cafe and residential building to a convenience foodstore. We have received a photographic survey of the building from the applicant's archaeological consultant and thought it would be useful to share the results with you.

The results of the survey reveal an earlier origin for the building than concluded from external observations in the Archaeological Desk Based Assessment. Exposed timbers and former wall lines identified during the survey suggest a possible 17th century box-frame construction, rather than the 19th century origin indicated by the external appearance. This is illustrated by the tentative phasing plan within the report, noting the general outline of the probable building phases.

The results of the survey indicate that the building contains a greater significance than concluded by the initial assessment, which was only able to consider external aspects of the building. The proposed alterations entail a significant level of change to the building (removal of internal walls, instillation of services/other related functions etc.), given the heightened significance of the structural remains this therefore introduces a greater risk from the development than previously appreciated. As such we would advise that further investigation of the building during the development phase would be appropriate, to ensure satisfactory and proportionate investigation and recording of heritage assets impacted upon by the development proposals.

We have responded to the consultant recommending that this additional work could include further observations to observe building stripping required to enable the development. The removal of wall material could reveal currently masked openings whilst the exposure of bricks could also allow for more precise dating to support the phasing plan included within the report, for example. We have also suggested that opportunities for further analysis should also be considered, such as the application of scientific dating (e.g. dendrochronology), as shown necessary by the initial results.

We would welcome any thoughts you may have on the results of the survey and the proposed scope of additional investigation. We will of course keep you updated with our further correspondence with the applicant's archaeological consultant. Please do feel free to get in touch if you have any further queries in the meantime.

Best wishes,

Will

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**A Level 2 Historic Building Survey at
37 High Street and 2A main Street,
Desford,
Leicestershire
NGR: SK 47878 03357**

A Hyam



ULAS Report No 2025-026

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Project Type:	Historic building survey Level 2
Site Name:	37 High Street and 2A Main Street, Desford, Leicestershire
Grid Ref:	SK 47878 03357
Author:	A Hyam
Date:	March 2025
Client:	Central Cooperative
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Accession No:	X.A14.2025
OASIS Ref:	universi1-532565

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Cover photo: The buildings seen from Main Street, looking north-east

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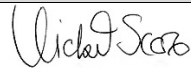


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OASIS Information

PROJECT DETAILS	Oasis No	universi1- 532565		
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	Start/end dates	25/02/2025		
	Previous/Future Work	Not known		
	Project Type	Historic Building Recording		
	Site Status	None		
	Current Land Use	House and cafe		
	Monument Type/Period	18th century and later		
	Significant Finds/Period	18th century and later		
	Reason for Investigation	Planning regulation NPPF		
	Position in the Planning Process	Condition		
PROJECT LOCATION	Planning Ref.	23/00711/FUL		
	County	Leicestershire		
	Site Address/Postcode	37 High St and 2A Main St, Desford, Leicestershire. LE9 9JF		
	Study Area	135m ²		
	Site Coordinates	SK47878 03357		
PROJECT CREATORS	Height OD	130.1m		
	Organisation	University of Leicester Archaeological Services		
	Project Brief Originator	Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council		
	Project Design Originator	University of Leicester Archaeological Services		
	Project Manager	A Clapton		
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A Level 2 historic building survey at 37 High Street and 2A Main Street, Desford, Leicestershire

A Hyam

Summary

This report details the results of a Level 2 historic building survey carried out by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) at 37 High Street and 2A Main Street, Desford, Leicestershire. The work was undertaken on the 25th of February 2025 on behalf of Central Cooperative in advance of a change of use from a café and residential building into a convenience store.

The site consists of a two-storey building facing westwards onto Main Street. The building was in use as a small community café and a domestic residence. Externally the rendered structure appears to be of 19th century origin however it is likely that the render masks earlier elements and window layouts. Internally there are a number of exposed timbers and former wall lines which suggest a possible box-frame and 17th century date along with re-used timbers from earlier structures. There is also evidence of extension and enlargement of the building.

The digital archive will be deposited with the Archaeological Data Service (ADS), under the accession number accession number X.A14.2025

Introduction

This document is a report on historic building recording at 37 High Street and 2A Main Street, Desford, Leicestershire, in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF): Section 16 Enhancing and Conserving the Historic Environment (DLUHC 2023).

This work was carried out by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) on behalf of Central Cooperative.

Planning Permission (Ref: 23/00711/FUL) has been granted for a change of use from cafe (Class E(b)) and residential (Class C3) to convenience foodstore (Class E(a)). Construction of single storey side extension, two-storey and single storey rear extensions (following the demolition of existing single-storey element to rear of 37 High Street/2A Main Street and store to rear of public house) with associated car parking, landscaping and other works at the Blue Bell Inn. The planning permission includes a condition for archaeological work.

Due to the historical nature of the building, the Planning Archaeologist for Leicestershire as advisor to Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council planning authority, has requested a Level 2 Historic Building Survey of the two-storey building in advance of the proposed building conversion.

Location, topography and geology

The village of Desford lies approximately 11km to the west of Leicester. Despite having addresses on both High Street and Main Street both buildings (which form a continuous structure) are accessed from Main Street. The building is located on the north side of High

Street at its junction with Main Street. At the corner, to the west of the building is a roundabout which forms the junction between High Street, Main Street, Manor Road and Kirby Road. (Figs 1 and 2). The site lies at around 130m aOD on a very gentle slope down towards the south and the east.

The British Geological Survey identifies the geology of the area as Edwalton Member Mudstone. This is a sedimentary bedrock formed between 237 and 228.4 million years ago during the Triassic period. Superficial deposits consist of Glaciofluvial Deposits: Mid Pleistocene sands and gravel. Sedimentary superficial deposit formed between 860 and 116 thousand years ago during the Quaternary period (BGS; <https://www.bgs.ac.uk/map-viewers/bgs-geology-viewer/> accessed 15/01/2025).

The Soilscape website indicates that the soils, will be slowly permeable seasonally wet slightly acid but base rich loamy and clayey soils with impeded drainage (Soilscape 18 <http://www.landis.org.uk/soilscales/> accessed 15/01/2025).



Figure 1: Site Location, within UK, county, and local

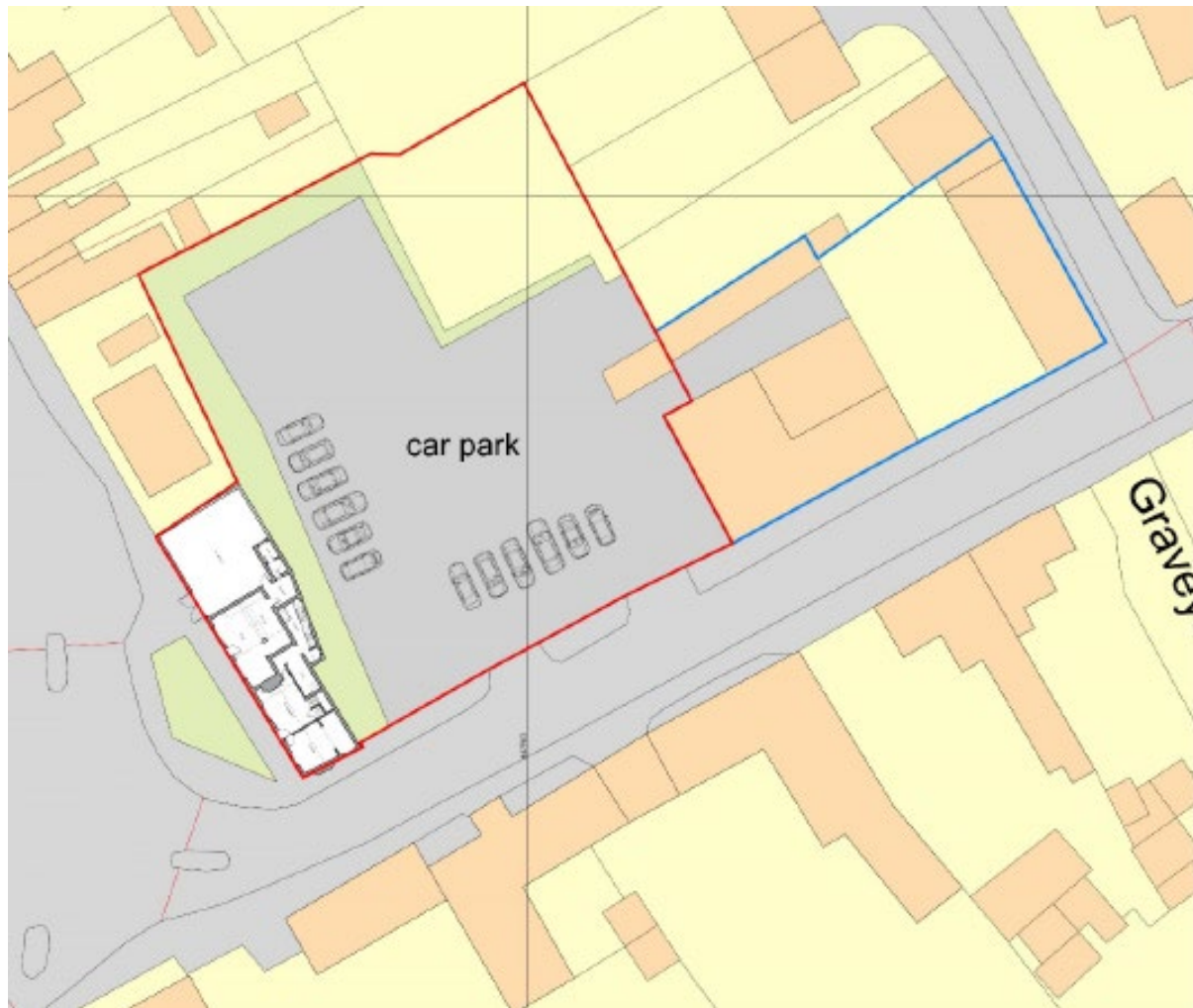


Figure 2: Detailed site location plan showing extent of the PDA
Plan provided by client. The surveyed buildings are located in the bottom left of the site

Historical and Archaeological Background

The site is situated within an area of archaeological interest as identified within the HER for Leicestershire and Rutland. The site is located within the historic core of Desford, south of the Medieval Church of St. Martin and its associated churchyard. 37 High Street and 2A Main Street are both visible on late 19th century OS mapping and have been identified as “Significant Local Buildings” on the Desford Conservation Area map. A heritage statement and desk-based assessment notes that the buildings appear to date to the Victorian period (Froneman, 2022 and Abrams, 2023). However, these documents did not have the opportunity to enter the building and the results of this survey indicates that at least some significant parts of the building are likely to be older than this.

The earliest available map which shows any buildings on the site is the 1814 hand-drawn Ordnance Survey map which is shown in the desk-based assessment, this map however lacks any detail other than showing the outline of a building which may or may not be the present building. The first map which shows any useful detail of the site is the 1886 First Edition 25 inch to 1 mile Ordnance Survey map (Figure 3). This map appears to show the footprint of the

building very much as it survives at the time of this survey. The road layout is different on this map and a row of houses are shown along High Street to the south-east of the surveyed buildings. Subsequent editions of the OS maps continue to show the same building details although by the time of the 1959 edition the road layout has changed and the buildings to the south-east have gone. The available Google Earth images show no change from this date with the 2011 image being the clearest (Figure 4).

The buildings are not listed but have been identified as *significant local buildings* in the Desford Conservation Area appraisal (Hinckley and Bosworth BC, 2010).

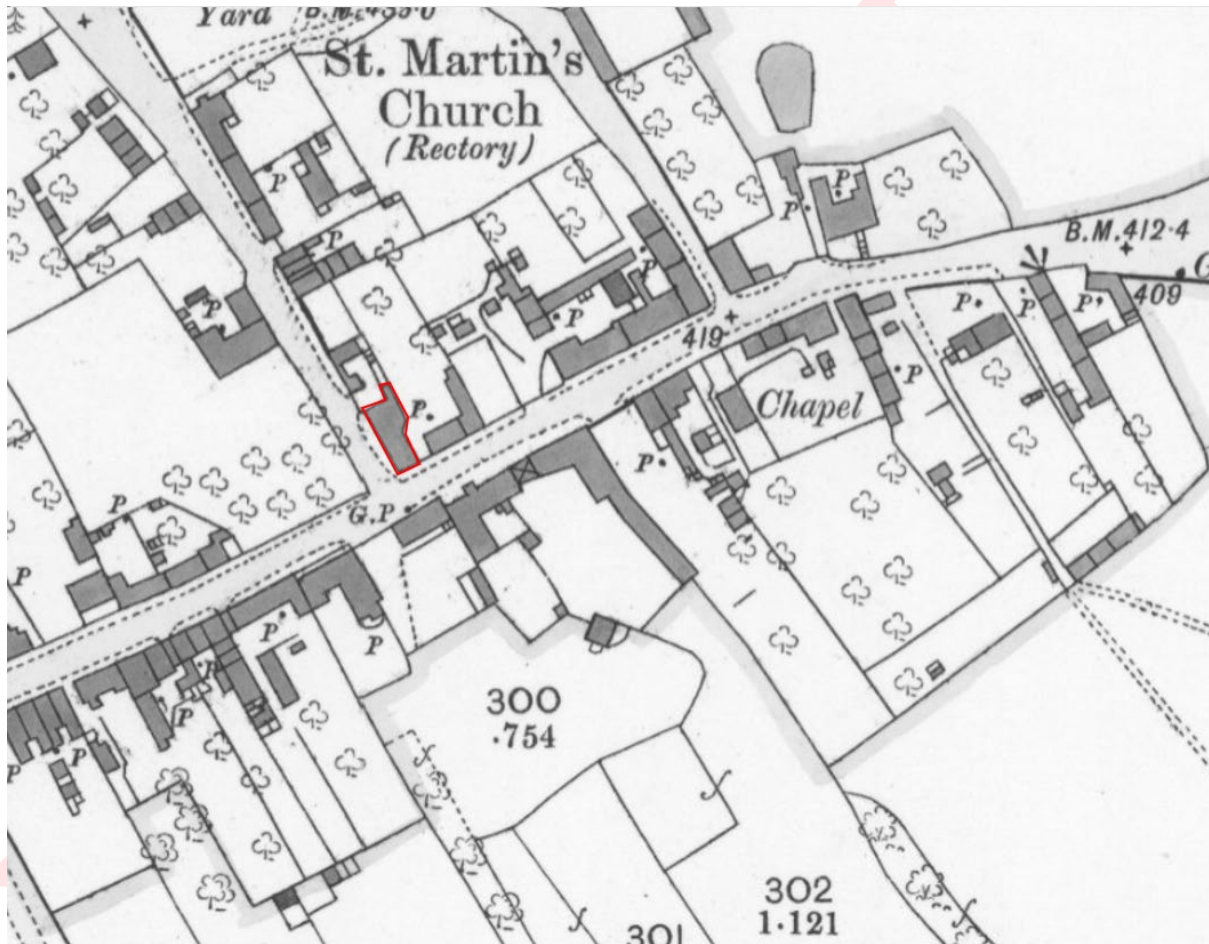


Figure 3: Detail from the 1886 First Edition Ordnance Survey map
Surveyed building highlighted. Sheet XXX.14 Original scale 25 inch: 1 mile



Figure 4: 2011 Google earth aerial view of the site
Surveyed buildings highlighted. Image ©2025 Bluesky

Aims and Objectives

The main aim of the building recording was to provide a photographic, written and drawn record of the historic building and associated structures prior to the commencement of any redevelopment or demolition work, to mitigate the impact of the development using preservation by record.

The main objectives of the archaeological work set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation (ULAS 2025) as follows:

- To provide a photographic, written and drawn record of all the affected parts of the historic building prior to the commencement of works.
- To ensure the long-term preservation of the information through deposition of the record and a summary written report with an appropriate depository.

Research Objectives

The site had the potential to add to research objectives mainly from the post-medieval and modern periods, identified within the *East Midlands Historic Environment Research Framework*.

<https://researchframeworks.org/emherf/introducing-the-research-agenda/>

The buildings surveyed are from the post-medieval and/or modern periods. There was therefore potential for recording the structure that could contribute to the following Research Objectives:

Post-medieval (1485-1750)

- **8C** Establish a typology of regional building traditions

Modern (1750-present)

- **9C** investigate the landscape resource for the early industrialisation of agriculture;
- **9I** Explore evidence for continuing non-factory trades and industries

These research aims have been identified based on the current state of knowledge within the area of the scheme and were re-assessed and updated during the course of the fieldwork.

Methodology

The fieldwork followed the procedures set out in the approved *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) for the project (ULAS WSI Ref 25-336, 2025).

All work was carried out in accordance with the Historic England's guidelines *Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice* (2016) and the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Standard and guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings and structure* (rev. 2023) and *Code of Conduct : professional ethics in archaeology* (rev. 2022) <https://www.archaeologists.net/codes/cifa> . The accession number X.A14.2025 was used to identify all records.

The sitework was carried out by ULAS on the 25th of February and was followed by analysis and reporting.

Level 2 is a descriptive record, and normally comprises of an introductory description followed by a brief account of the building's origins, development and use. The record at this level also includes any readily available drawn and photographic records required to illustrate the building's appearance and structure and to support the analysis. The Historic Building Survey involves the preparation of written, drawn and photographic records as discussed in the WSI.

All Plans and elevations were supplied by the client and adapted for the requirements of this report.

Monitoring

Internal monitoring procedures were undertaken with the Project Manager, to ensure that project targets were met and professional standards maintained. No monitoring visits were undertaken, but descriptions of the results were shared with the Planning Archaeologist during the work.

Results

The site was visited on the 25th of February 2025. The weather was dry and varied between full sun and full cloud. The former café portion of the building had recently been vacated and the dwelling had been vacant for a few years. Both areas of the building were in reasonable states of repair although suffering from severe damp in places. Access was from the Main Street side of the buildings. The building is built on a generally north-west to south-east alignment following the line of Main Street.

The Site

The building is located on the corner of Main Street and High Street and opens directly out onto the street (Figure 5). Despite having the addresses 37 High Street and 2A Main Street the building is a continuous range facing westwards across a mini-roundabout joining Main Street, High Street, Kirkby Road and Manor Road. There are no other entrances to the buildings.

To the south, on the opposite side of High Street is the brick-built early 17th century Grade II* listed Manor House. On the north-western side of the surveyed building is a small walled yard belonging to the property beyond which is a modern house. To the rear (north-east) of the building is a narrow bank of grass which drops down to the car park belonging to the Blue Bell pub (Figs 6 to 8).



Figure 5: View of the surveyed building seen from Manor Road

Looking east. Main Street on the left High Street centre right. The white painted surveyed building consists of Number 2A Main Street on the left and 37 High Street on the right. The grade II* listed Manor House can be seen on the right of the picture



Figure 6: View from Main Street
Looking south-east. White painted surveyed building centre left



Figure 7: View from High Street
Looking west towards the mini-roundabout. White painted surveyed building in centre of picture. Blue Bell pub on the right



Figure 8: View from the Blue Bell car park
Looking south-west. Manor House on the left

The Outside

All elevations of the building are coated with thick layers of cement render which potentially hide earlier blocked doors and windows. A number of horizontal cracks in the render close to the top of the ground floor windows. In some areas of the wall the render has broken away revealing a brick construction. This may simply be due to settlement or might suggest remnants of timber-framing which seems likely given the evidence seen inside. Unfortunately, without removing the render it is not possible to verify this. The building has a slate roof and brick chimneys at each end along with a more substantial centrally located chimney. The chimney stack on the northern end is built within the building whereas the chimney on the southern end stands proud of the building. Two different styles of chimney might suggest different construction dates.

All of the windows are wood-framed casement windows with leaded panes at first floor level. The two ground floor windows belonging to Number 2A Main Street have been enlarged to create large single panes with smaller openings above. This is likely to have happened when this part of the building became a bank. The single-paned door still retains the Rampant Horse logo of Lloyds Bank despite not being a bank for a number of years.

To the rear of the building (north-east facing) is a single storey flat-roofed extension built at an angle to the house but at a right angle to the car park and the buildings which used to occupy that area. This extension is shown on the First Edition OS map. A narrow single storey extension with a slate roof extends to the north-west of this extension into the small yard

area. It has a pitched roof at a lower level which suggests a different (later) construction date to the rear extension although it too is shown on the first OS map.

South-west facing elevation

The south-west facing elevation is the principal elevation of the building. There is a clear difference between the two halves of the building made more prominent by the conversion of Number 2A to a bank and, latterly, a café. Number 37 High Street (the southern end of this elevation) has three first floor windows with its central window not quite centrally located which suggests a possible difference internally. Between the doorway of 37 and the ground floor window to the north are two parallel cracks in the render which may hide structural alterations or, possibly, timber framing.



Figure 9: South-west facing elevation

Modified from drawing supplied by client. The small northern extension is hidden in this drawing by the gate and brick wall on the left (see plans later in this report)



Figure 10: South-west facing elevation

Looking north-east. Number 2A Main Street with the large ground floor windows is the range to the left of the road signs, 37 High Street is to the right. The first floor of Number 37 extends for the full length of the building



Figure 11: SW facing elevation, Number 2A Main Street

Looking north-east. 1m scale. The single storey pitched-roof extension on the north-west gable end is behind the wooden gate on the left



Figure 12: SW facing elevation, No 2A, ground floor window and door detail
Looking north-east. 1m scale. Note the Lloyds Bank logo on the door



Figure 13: SW facing elevation, No 2A, ground floor door logo detail
Looking north-east



Figure 14: SW facing elevation, first floor window detail above 2A (left window)
Looking north-east



Figure 15: SW facing elevation, first floor window detail above 2A (right window)
Looking north-east



Figure 16: Central chimney stack seen from SW elevation
Only one pot belonging to No 37 remains despite being a double flue stack



Figure 17: SW facing elevation of Number 37 High Street
Looking north-east. 1m scale. High Street can be seen on the right



Figure 18: SW facing elevation of No 37, ground floor window detail to left of door
Looking north-east. 1m scale. Note the parallel cracks in the render which may point to joints, or possible timberwork, within the wall structure



Figure 19: SW facing elevation of No 37, door detail
Looking north-east. 1m scale



Figure 20: SW facing elevation of No 37, ground floor window detail to right of door
Looking north-east. 1m scale



Figure 21: SW facing elevation of No 37, first floor window detail
Looking north-east. As with No 2A these first floor windows have leaded panes



Figure 22: SW facing elevation of the extension on the NW side of the building
Looking south-east. Note how it joins with the flat-roofed rear extension

South-east facing elevation

The south-east facing gable end of the building faces out across High Street. Unlike the north-west facing elevation gable end the chimney breast of this elevation projects out beyond the wall line. At ground floor level the sides of the chimney breast are widened which suggests the presence of a substantial fireplace in the ground floor room. The chimney, unlike the other stacks on this building, is slightly offset from the centreline of the roof ridge. There is a low and small casement window at ground floor level and a single casement window at first floor level. Unlike the other first floor windows this is not leaded.

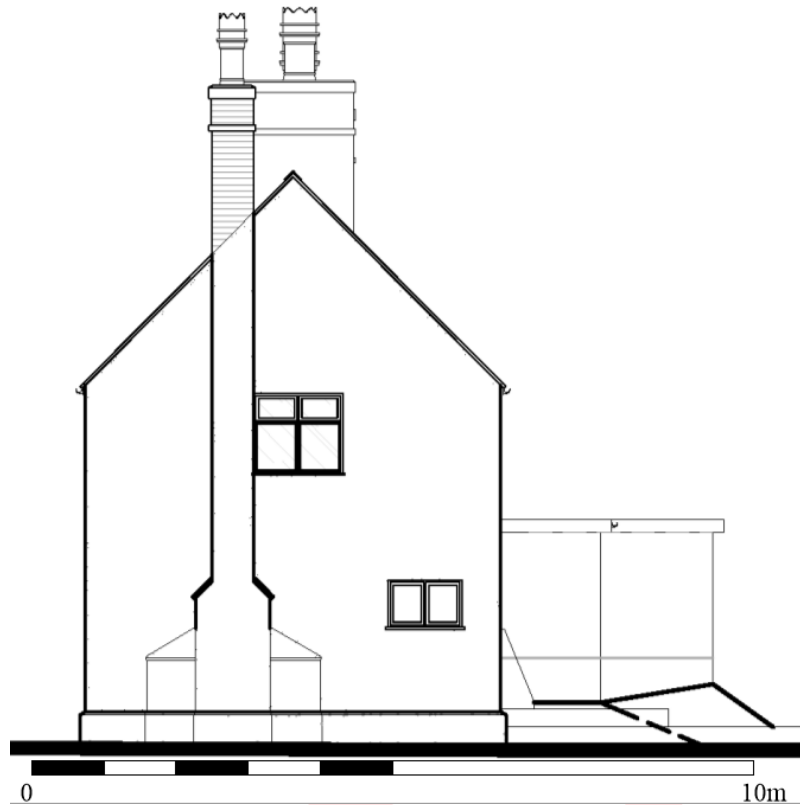


Figure 23: South-east facing elevation of 37 High Street

Modified from drawing supplied by client. This elevation faces out across High Street. Note the chimney stack which extends beyond the wall line



Figure 24: South-east facing elevation of 37 High Street

Looking north-west. 1m scale. Main Street on the left



Figure 25: SE facing elevation chimney breast detail
Looking north. 1m scale

North-east facing elevation

The north-eastern facing elevation faces out across the Blue Bell pub car park and will be where the proposed new Coop building will be constructed. Three small buttresses support the wall following a reduction in the ground level of the adjacent car park. Subsequent exploratory excavations against the wall showed that the buttresses have been built on a shallow concrete plinth acting as underpinning for the wall. This probably happened following the demolition of the adjacent houses in the 1950s.

Most noticeable about this elevation is that only the single storey flat-roofed extension has a ground floor window along with a single first floor small window above Number 2A. The Heritage Statement concludes that the lack of windows and openings is due to the fact that this building backed onto a small yard created by the now-demolished buildings fronting onto High Street. This may be the case but it is also possible that the render masks any evidence of any possible blocked openings.

This elevation appears to have been extended at some time as there is a small step in the wall line close to the southern corner of the building. Further evidence of this is seen internally. The flat-roofed extension is built at a different angle to the rest of the building and follows the alignment of the now-demolished range in the car park. At first floor level just above the southern end of the extension is a second step out in the wall line and a slight change in the

roof eaves level which again indicates another phase. Internally this step can be seen as a thickening of the wall of the northern end of the building and where some timberwork ends. The smaller pitched-roof extension extending out from the north-west facing gable end can just be seen through dense vegetation.

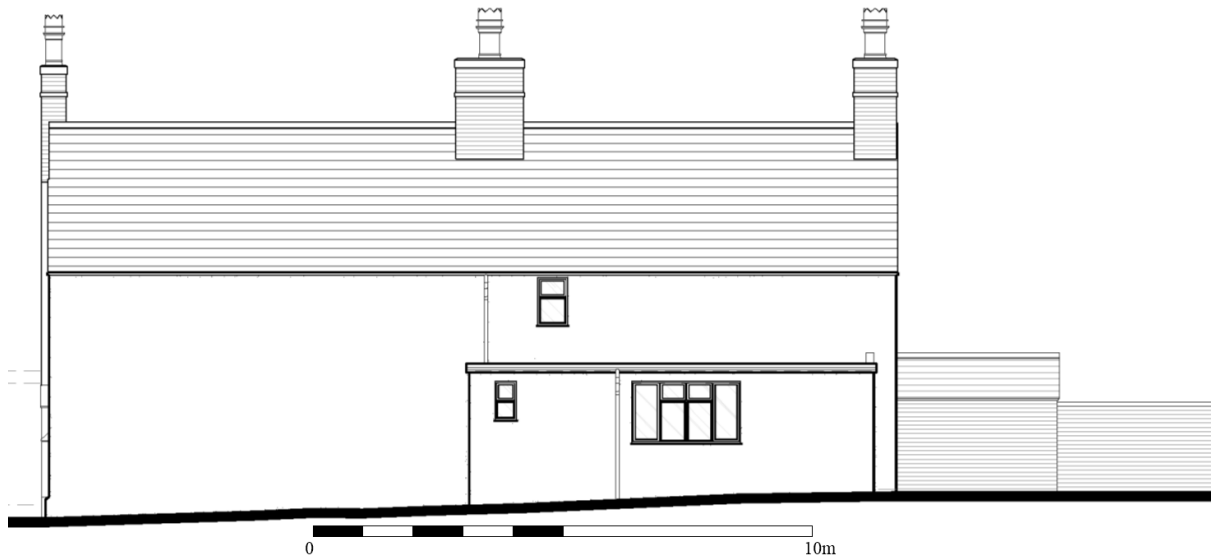


Figure 26: North-east facing elevation
Modified from drawing supplied by client



Figure 27: North-east facing elevation
Looking south-west. Note the single storey extension to the right and lack of window and door openings on this elevation



Figure 28: NE facing elevation, southern end with step in the wall line
Looking south. The step can be seen as a line just beyond the left hand buttress. 1m scale



Figure 29: NE facing elevation, flat-roofed extension
Looking north-west. Note the step in wall and eaves line to the right of the first floor downpipe. 1m scale



Figure 30: NE facing elevation and extensions

Looking south. The extension extending from the NW facing gable end can be seen in the vegetation on the right. 1m scale

North-west facing elevation

The rendered gable end of the main building has a single first floor window although it is possible that the render masks other blocked openings. The gable faces out into a small enclosed yard which is surrounded by a brick wall with a gateway onto Main Street. The yard was not accessible during the survey but could be viewed over the wall.

The single storey pitched-roof extension is similar in appearance to a 19th century domestic outbuilding and has a slate roof. It is shown on the First Edition OS map.

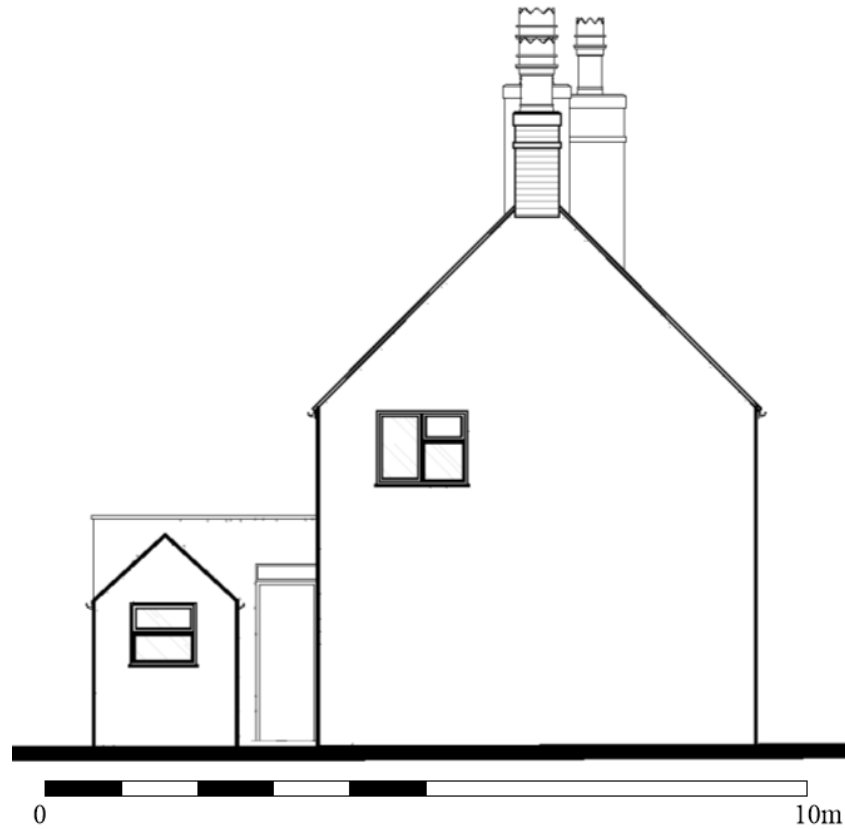


Figure 31: North-west facing elevation
Modified from drawing supplied by client



Figure 32: North-west facing elevation
Looking south-east. Note the small extension on the left

Inside the Building

At ground floor level the building has been divided into Numbers 2A Main Street, at the northern end of the building, and Number 37 to the south. At first floor level Number 37 occupies the entire length of the range and includes the rooms above Number 2A. Reference ground floor room numbers G1 to G7 and first floor room numbers F1 to F8 have been allocated for ease of recognition during this survey but do not relate to any earlier room uses or designations. The single room small cellar is reached from Room G4 and has not been given any designation.

Cellar

The cellar is reached via a set of brick steps from Room G4 and forms a small rectangular structure following the line of a supporting wall running the length of the building. It extends beneath Room G6 and is the same width as the first floor landing corridor.

It has a brick-vaulted roof and brick walls. A brick-arched thrall runs along the western and northern ends. The cement floor may be modern.

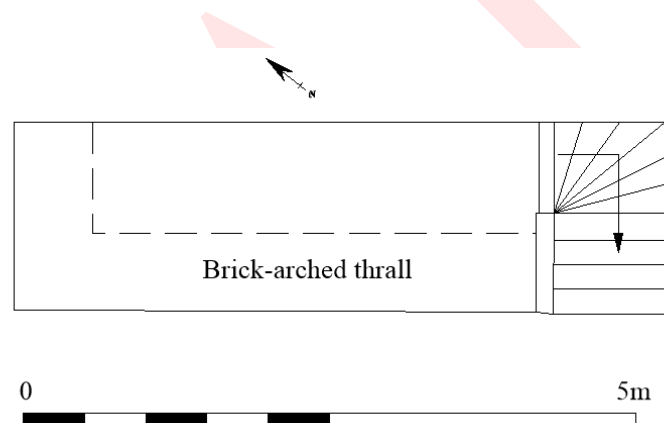


Figure 33: Cellar plan

The cellar is accessed via a set of brick stairs from Room G4



Figure 34: Cellar steps seen from ground floor Room G4
Looking north-east. 0.5m scale



Figure 35: Cellar, general view
Looking north-west. 0.5m scale



Figure 36: Cellar steps
Looking south-east. Note brick-arched thrall on the right. 0.5m scale



Figure 37: Cellar thrall detail
Looking south. 0.5m scale

Ground floor

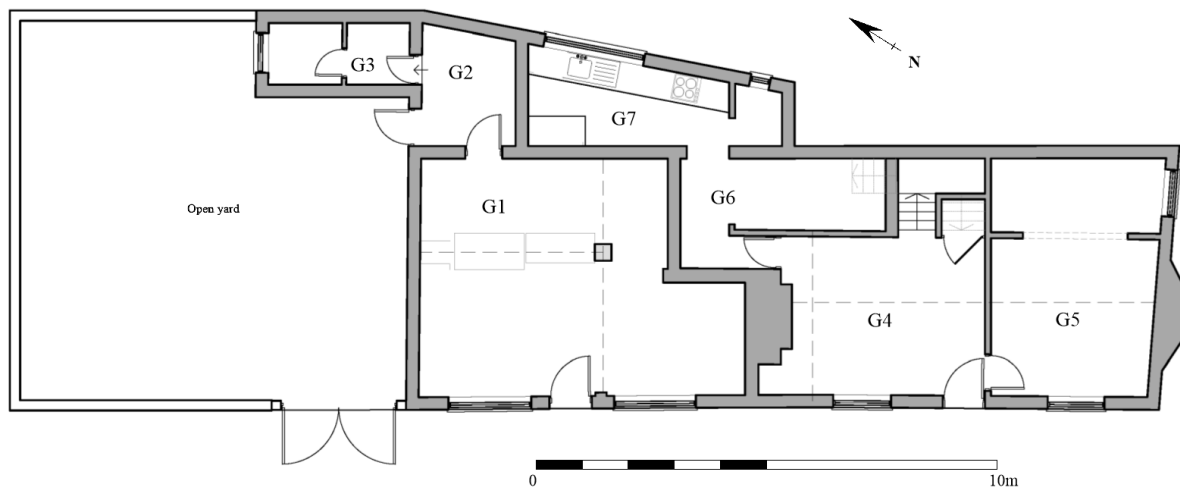


Figure 38: Ground floor plan

Modified from plan supplied by client. Room reference letters refer to this survey and do not relate to any previous uses. Note that this plan does not show alterations and steps in wall lines etc.

As noted, Number 2A Main Street is located at the northern end of the building. It is entered from Main Street and is formed of a single large room G1 and two smaller rooms G2 and G3 which are located in the rear extensions.

Room G1

Until recently Room G1 formed the main room of the Lloyds Bank branch and, more recently, the dining area of the café. Apart from the horse logo on the front door there is no evidence of the building being used as a bank. There are no reinforced walls or evidence of the location of a safe etc.

The single large room appears to have been created from at least three smaller rooms with stumps of wall and supporting beams showing where these would have been located. A staircase, to the southern side of the entrance doorway would have led up to the first floor but only a square of wood in the ceiling shows where this was located. Many of the ceiling joists have been reused from other locations or other buildings with evidence of redundant sockets, sawn off pegs and planks being seen across the ceiling. The fireplace on the northern wall has been removed leaving only the cut-off cheeks of the chimney breast high up on the wall. A doorway in the north-east corner of the room leads out into Room G2 which is located in the single-storey extension on the rear of the building.

The floor consists of a single layer of red bricks laid directly onto clay which is sat on top of the natural substratum. Later exploratory excavation beneath the brick floor by the client showed the external brick wall to be laid on a course of large unshaped stones set directly into the natural sand and gravel.

Rooms G2 and G3

Room G2 is a small kitchen area located at the northern end of the single-storey flat-roofed extension which runs behind Number 37. The fittings are all modern and there is no evidence of any connection to the rest of this extension. On the north-western wall of this room is a doorway leading out into the yard and another leading into the pitched-roof extension. For the purposes of this survey the extension has been given a single number – G3 but is in fact two small rooms which have been modernised to contain a toilet and cloakroom. There are no original fixtures or fittings visible.



Figure 39: Room G1 general view

Looking east. The front door is on the right behind the sanitizer station. Note the board between the ceiling joists which marks the location of the former staircase. A former dividing wall behind the 1m scale has been truncated. Another truncated wall (slightly offset) can be seen at the end of the counter



Figure 40: Room G1 general view

Looking north. Note the truncated chimney breast and now-removed fireplace above the 1m scale



Figure 41: Room G1 general view

Looking west. 1m scale. Note the truncated dividing wall and supporting beam to the left of the door



Figure 42: Rear of Room G1

Looking north. The doorway to G2 and G3 is on the right. The former wall line is seen in the large supporting beam top left. 1m scale



Figure 43: Room G1, reused timbers as ceiling joists

Looking west. Note the slight chamfer in the main beam on the right and the boarded opening for the stairs in the foreground



Figure 44: Room G1, location of former staircase up to first floor
Looking east



Figure 45: Room G2 seen from the doorway of G1
Looking north-east. Doorway to Room G3 on the left



Figure 46: Room G3 seen from Room G2
Looking north

Room G4

Room G4 forms one of the two main ground floor rooms of Number 37 and is entered directly through the door from the street.

The room has a substantial axial beam running from south-east to north-west across the room. As well as being shaped there is evidence of some working by an adze or similar tool but no evidence of any formal chamfered work. There are a number of sawn-off wooden pegs indicating former use elsewhere. Many of the ceiling joists appear to be machine sawn replacements but some have evidence of being reused from elsewhere with evidence of redundant sockets. There is also a substantial bressumer beam running across the fireplace which suggests that the room originally had a significantly larger fireplace and hearth. At the time of the survey the fireplace was a modern reproduction.

The internal walls are plastered, as are all rooms, so that any former openings or structural timbers are hidden. Doorways lead to Room G5 to the south, the cellar, stairs to the first floor and G6 to the north-east. There is a step in the thickness of the wall on the eastern side of the room which corresponds with a step on the outer wall the other side of the cellar.



Figure 47: Room G4, fireplace on northern wall.
Looking north-west. The original fireplace was much larger. Doorway to G6 on the right. 1m scale



Figure 48: Room G4, doors to first floor stairs and cellar
Looking north-east. Note the change in wall thickness to the right of the 1m scale



Figure 49: Room G4, doors to first floor stairs and cellar
Same view as previous picture but with doors closed. 1m scale



Figure 50: Room G4, southern wall
Looking south. Doorway to Room G5 to right of 1m scale. Front door on far right. Stairs and cellar doors are on the left



Figure 51: Room G4, western wall
Looking south-west. 1m scale



Figure 52: Room G4, axial beam detail
Looking north-west south-east