



Historic Building Record Level 2

86 – 87 Broad Street,
Reading, RG1 2AP

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1. Introduction

Project Background

- 1.1** This report presents a Level 2 Historic Building Recording of Nos 86 – 87 Broad Street, Reading, RG1 2AP (hereafter referred to as ‘the Building’). James Meek MCIfA, Director (Archaeology) of HCUK Group, has prepared the document on behalf of Toucan Finance % APAM. The Buildings (Figures 1 & 2) are centred at National Grid Reference SU 71379 73440 and, administratively, lies within the remit of Reading Borough Council (RBC) as the local planning authority.
- 1.2** The proposed development scheme seeks to comprehensively redevelop the site to provide a series of 16 residential units following the demolition of the existing buildings on the site excluding the Broad Street frontage which is to be retained (revised plans in September 2021). The replacement built form is a five storey structure broadly separated into two components, the north building fronting onto Broad Street and the south building facing towards the grade I listed Church and which is linked to the north block by a glazed corridor above ground floor. The scheme has been subject to and informed by extensive pre-application discussion with RBC (LPA ref: 210058/PREAPP) and in March 2021 it was presented at the Reading Design Review Panel.
- 1.3** The requirement for a Level 2 historic building record prior to demolition and rebuilding was requested by the Conservation Officer. The Level 2 survey refers to the guidelines laid out in ‘Understanding Historic Buildings’ (Historic England 2016)¹.

- 1.4** A Heritage Statement for the buildings has already been prepared by the Heritage Team of the HCUK Group². This report includes relevant information from that report.
- 1.5** The Buildings are not listed and do not lie within a Conservation Area, but have been identified as non-designated heritage assets by RBC within the pre-application advice. The site is also located within the setting of a number of listed buildings including, among others, the grade I listed Church of St Mary. The site is located close to the boundary of the St Mary’s Butts/Castle Street Conservation Area.
- 1.6** A programme of historic building recording is in line with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph 191, which requires “*developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible*”.
- 1.7** This report has been guided in its composition by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) Standard and guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures (CIfA 2020), the Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment issued by Historic England (Historic England 2015) and adheres to the procedural document National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (DCLG 2012 – revised July 2021).

¹ Historic England, 2016, Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice

² HCUK Group 2021

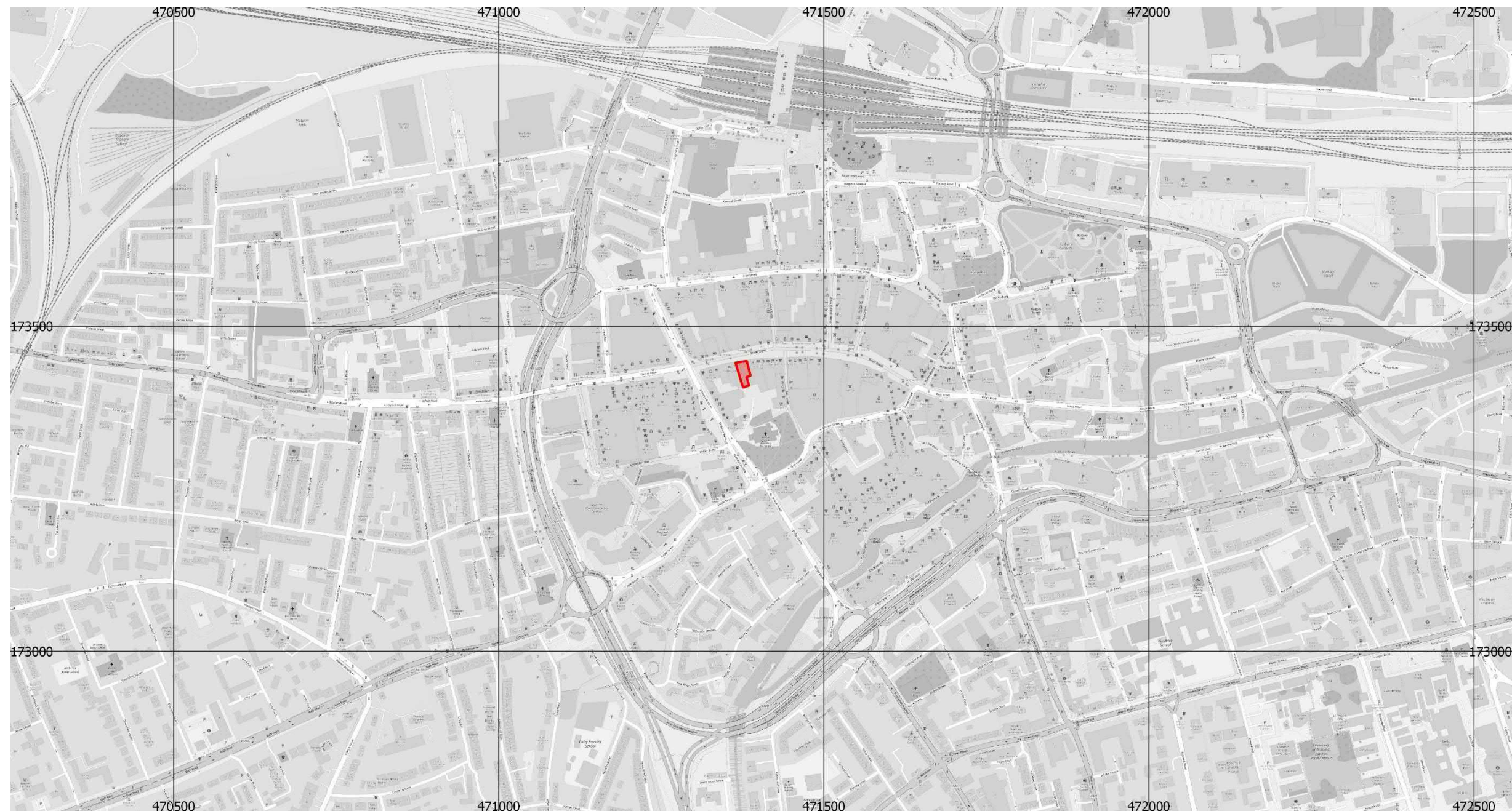


Figure 1: Site location plan (OpenStreetMap) showing centre of Reading with Nos 86 – 87 Broad Street shown in red outline

2. Project Aims and Methodology

Historic Building Investigation and Recording

- 2.1** The general aim of the Historic Building Investigation and Recording is to provide an appropriate record of the Buildings, prior to their proposed demolition and redevelopment of the site, and create a permanent archive and record of the archaeological information collected during the historic building investigation.
- 2.2** The specific aim of the recording project is to produce a Level 2 descriptive record in line with the guidance set out in Understanding Historic Buildings (Historic England 2016). The record comprises both exterior and interior examination of the buildings, including descriptions and photographs.
- 2.3** The objectives of the project are:
- to undertake a Level 2 descriptive survey of the Building, including identification of any significant features, fittings or fabric;
 - to provide a visual record of the Buildings prior to their proposed demolition/alteration, as they have been determined to be non-designated heritage assets;
 - to produce a Level 2 record to include annotated drawings, photographs, brief written account and historic background;
 - to disseminate the findings of the work in an illustrated report, integrating the findings of the recording work to produce an appropriately detailed record;
 - to provide a high quality, fully integrated archive suitable for long-term deposition in order to 'preserve by record' the buildings in their current form prior to demolition and redevelopment.
- 2.4** The historic buildings recording has been undertaken in accordance with professional guidance including the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Standard and Guidance for the Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures (2020) and with the Historic England publication Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice (2016).

- 2.5** The survey was undertaken on 28/04/2021 and 11/05/2021 by the author and Charlotte Vallance ACIfA, Associate Director (Archaeology) of HCUK Group. It was possible to access all areas of No 87 including the building located to the rear. No 86 was in use as a shoe retailer and only its exterior was visible. It was possible to briefly view the interior of No 88 to the east of No 87 which is likely to be laid out mirrored to No 86.
- 2.6** A Level 2 record is defined in Understanding Historic Buildings as follows:
- 'This is a descriptive record, made in similar circumstances to Level 1 but when more information is needed. It may be made of a building which is judged not to require a more detailed record, or it may serve to gather data for a wider project. Both the exterior and interior of the building will be seen, described and photographed. The examination of the building will produce an analysis of its development and use and the record will include the conclusions reached, but it will not discuss in detail the evidence on which this analysis is based. A plan and sometimes other drawings may be made but the drawn record will normally not be comprehensive and may be tailored to the scope of a wider project.'* (Understanding Historic Buildings – A guide to good recording practice. Historic England. 2016. P.26).
- 2.7** Plans used in this report are based on information supplied by the client.
- 2.8** Based on Understanding Historic Buildings the following was included in the survey.
- Photographic Record: high-resolution digital photographs have been taken showing general views of the Building in its wider setting and landscape; the external appearance of the Building; and internal; views of all areas, including details.
 - The Drawn Record: annotated existing survey drawings.

- The Written Record for a Level 2 survey requires the following information:
 - i. The precise location of the buildings as an address: 86-87 Broad Street, Reading RG1 2AP;
 - ii. National Grid reference: SU 71379 73440;
 - iii. The Buildings are not listed or locally listed but are considered a non-designated heritage asset;
 - iv. The Buildings are not located in a Conservation Area;
 - v. The record was made on 28/04/2021 and 11/05/2021 by James Meek and Charlotte Vallance.
 - vi. The purely digital archive will be deposited with OASIS;
 - vii. The following sections provide descriptions of the Buildings' form, function, date and sequence of development;
 - viii. A brief historic background has been included within the report;
 - ix. An OASIS record ID has been obtained for the project and the report will be made available:
OASIS ID - archaeol34-421617;
 - x. A copy of the report will be sent to the Berkshire Historic Environment Record.

3. Historical Background

- 3.1** The Heritage Statement prepared by the heritage team of HCUK Group provides a detailed historic background which is reproduced here for completeness, with additional elements added from information gathered during the site visits and subsequent research.
- 3.2** Reading originated as a Saxon settlement, its name derived from the Old English *Reada ingas* ('the people of Reada'). Its position close to the confluence of the River Thames with the Kennet facilitated riverine trading links with both London and the wider Thames Valley. The settlement was first documented by the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle in AD 871, when it was occupied by a Viking army, shortly before the Battle of Reading, in which the Saxon King of Wessex, Aethelbert, was defeated. The Vikings subsequently erected a defensive earthen rampart between the two rivers east of the settlement. Documentary sources record a second Viking incursion in 1006, when the settlement was burnt to the ground.
- 3.3** The Norman taxation document known today as the Domesday Book, which documents the period 1066 - 1086, records two manors in Reading. Within the principal manor, held by the king, there were 55 villagers and 30 smallholders. In addition to the farmland and meadow there was woodland sufficient to support 100 swine, together with four mills and three fisheries³. The smaller manor, which belonged to Battle Abbey (St Martin), comprised nine villagers and eight smallholders. In addition to their farmland there was woodland sufficient to support five swine, two mills and 2½ fisheries together with a church⁴. The Normans are thought to have built a castle on Castle Hill, initially an earth and timber motte and bailey castle, later replaced in stone, which was probably demolished c.1152 during the civil war in the reign of King Stephen.
- 3.4** Reading Abbey, a royal monastery, endowed by Henry I in 1121-5, was one of the largest monasteries in Europe. The surviving abbey gateway and extensive ruins of the abbey church and abbey complex within its precinct wall lie close to the River Kennet on the east side of the town. In addition to its religious functions, the abbey attracted and promoted commerce not only along the Thames and Kennet rivers but also as a

result of its location at the intersection of major roads linking London with Bath, and Oxford with Southampton. In addition to its religious and royal significance, the abbey developed a planned new town with new streets and burgage plots together with a market place immediately west of its precinct; the principal streets being Friar Street, Broad Street, London Street and the Market Place itself, which attracted visitors and pilgrims from all over Europe. The town prospered in the medieval period and there are numerous documents illustrating friction between the guilds and merchants on the one hand and the Abbot on the other⁵.

- 3.5** A House of Franciscan friars (Grey Friars) had first been established in the town in 1233, at the opposite (west) end of the street leading westwards from St Laurence's church (built in the 1120s adjacent to the abbey) towards Caversham, a street which had been known as New Street (later Friars Street) since at least 1224. The Friary site was enlarged in 1285 because the original site closer to the river was seasonally flooded⁶. The approximate site of the Greyfriars House lies in the vicinity of No. 65 Friars Street.
- 3.6** Following the dissolution of the monasteries by King Henry VIII in 1538, the abbey was given to the Duke of Somerset as a private house, but having been left vacant was quickly robbed of building stone by the townspeople. Nevertheless some of the buildings, such as the abbot's lodgings were retained for use as occasional royal accommodation. The King gave the town its independence from church authority at this time, and the friary house was given to the mayor and burgesses of Reading as a new guildhall. Although the town initially suffering an economic downturn following the dissolution owing to the lack of pilgrims and visitors, nevertheless the town prospered as a centre of the wool and cloth trade.
- 3.7** As a major thoroughfare and part of the planned medieval town, both sides of Friar Street would have been occupied by shops and houses throughout the medieval period.

³ Morris 1978: 1.41; 1.42.

⁴ Morris 1978: 15.2.

⁵ Ditchfield & Page 1923.

⁶ Ditchfield & Page 1907.

3.8 John Speed's 1611 Map of Reading shows the major elements of the medieval town (Figure 3). The Friary site (marked A) stands at the western end of the street (now known as Friars Street) leading to St Laurence's Church (marked D), with the Abbey beyond on the east side of the town (marked H). The approximate location of the Site is ringed in red. Reading had become a thriving and prosperous cloth town by this date, with a population of over 5000⁷.

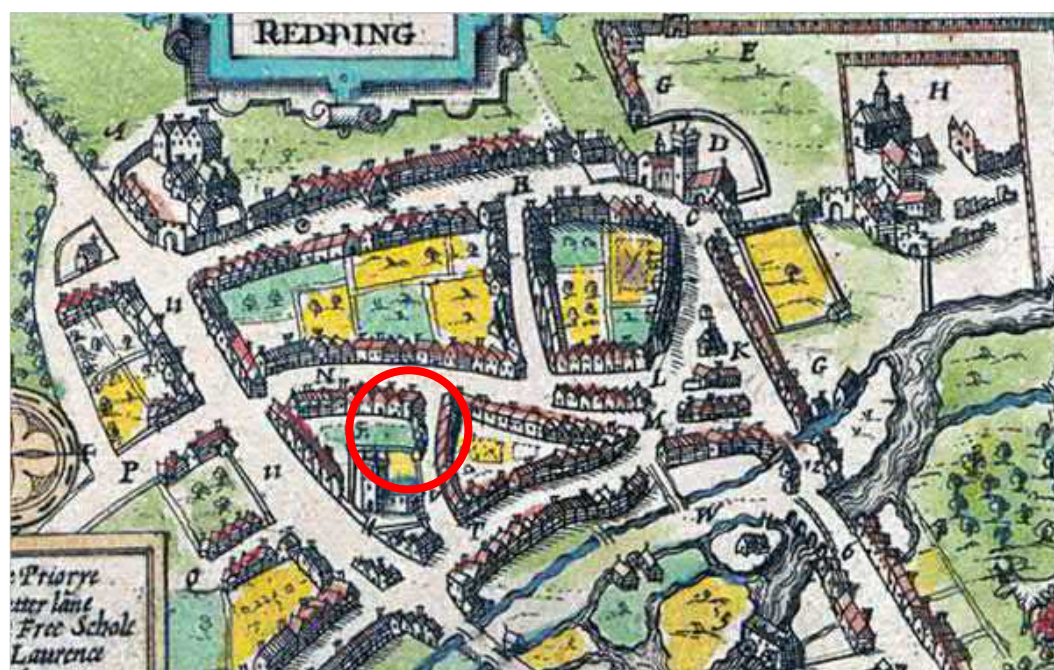


Figure 3: 1611, John Speed's Map of Reading

3.9 As a result of the Siege of Reading in 1642, during the course of the English Civil War, in which the royalist garrison of the town was defeated, the town was penalised by heavy taxation. The cloth trade was particularly badly hit. The Kennet Navigation, completed in 1723, enabled barges and boats to travel as far as Newbury. Although an iron works had been built in the 18th century, and Simonds' Brewery, the first of several successful breweries for which the town became famous, opened in 1785, the town's prosperity did not fully return until the beginning of the 19th century (1810) when the Kennet and Avon Canal was completed, connecting London via the Thames at Reading with Bristol and the Bristol

Channel. Two large companies were established in the town at this time: Suttons Seeds (1806) and Huntley & Palmers Biscuits (1822).

3.10 Transport links were further improved by first the arrival of the Great Western Railway in 1840, followed by the South Eastern Railway in 1849 and The London and South Western Railway in 1856. Reading railway station opened in 1840. A contemporary map by Edward Weller shows the site of the newly built station and approach together with a new road linking the station with Friar Street (Figure 4). The approximate location of the Site is ringed in red.



Figure 4: 1840. Edward Weller's Map of Reading

3.11 The censuses show an expanding population throughout the second half of the 19th century, increasing almost threefold from 21,500 in 1851 to 59,000 by 1901⁸. Reading became a county borough under the Local Government Act of 1888. Buildings to accommodate the expanding population included not only a proliferation of terraced suburban dwellings, but also commercial landmark building in the town such as the Board Schools, banks and shop premises, mainly utilising coloured brick with terracotta dressings⁹.

⁷ Ditchfield & Page 1923.

⁸ ancestry.co.uk

⁹ Tyack, Bradley & Pevsner 2010.

3.12 Based on an assessment of their character and appearance, the buildings on the Broad Street site appear to date from the late 19th century. However, buildings of a similar footprint are visible on earlier mapping suggesting that the site has been continually occupied for a long period.

3.13 The earliest map to show the site area roughly as exists today on the Broad Street frontage is the 1879 OS Map (Figure 5). The 1:500 scale map (not reproduced) shows the same layout but with more detail. The map shows a formal rear garden to No 86 and the buildings added to the rear of the No 87 frontage. The implication is that the frontage structures had already been constructed and the additions added to the rear of No 87. The plan shown indicates a covered passageway through No 87 to reach the buildings to the rear (X shown on the western side of the building. This map also shows the Independent Chapel set back from the road edge with different structures to that which exist on the frontage in front of it. A late 19th century photograph shows this arrangement but does not include the site itself (Figure 6). The 1:500 scale map notes that the open area to the south of the rear building of No 87, directly west of the chapel, was used as a grave yard.



Figure 5: 1879 OS Map (surveyed 1875). Reproduced with permission of the National Library of Scotland



Figure 6: Late 19th century photograph of the adjacent Independent Chapel © Berkshire History

3.14 A review of available trade directories for Reading shows that in 1874 the Webster's Trade Directory¹⁰ No 86 was occupied by William Hiscock, a cutler and No 87 by Edwin Awmack, his trade recorded as a warehouseman. An advert in the rear of the directory (Figure 7) indicates that his premises on Broad Street was also used as a shop selling a range of goods.

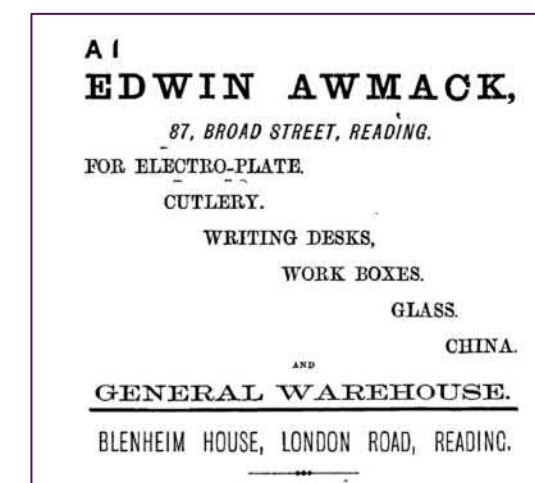


Figure 7: Advert in Webster's Reading Directory, 1874¹¹

¹⁰ <http://specialcollections.le.ac.uk/digital/collection/p16445coll4/id/112888>

¹¹ <http://specialcollections.le.ac.uk/digital/collection/p16445coll4/id/113148/rec/7>

3.15 The 1895 Goad Insurance Fire Plan (Figure 8) provides more information and shows No 86 as a relatively small building on a square footprint on the street front and with 'cutler' written within it. No 87 is a larger building with the additional structures to the rear as shown on the 1879 OS map and 'fancy' written within the building. A dotted line on the western side of No 87 may also represent the covered passageway through the building shown on the 1879 map.



Figure 8: 1895 Charles E Goad Ltd. Insurance Plan © British Library

3.16 By 1895 the Independent Chapel to the east of the site has been redeveloped and the 'school room' had been built to the west on top of the

former grave yard. The buildings on the Broad Street frontage that presently exist had been built in front of the chapel by this time.

3.17 The Kelly's Directory of Berkshire of 1899 records Mrs Eliza Nicoll, cutler at No 86, and E.B and F.E Awmack at No 87, described as Birmingham & Sheffield warehousemen. Based on Census records of 1881 available through the Genealogist website, F.E (Florence Emily) Awmack (was the daughter of Edwin (described as scholar on the census).

3.18 The Kelly's Directory for Reading of 1914 records W. A. Lea & Co. fancy drapers at No 86 and E.B and F.E Awmack are still recorded at No 87, described as wholesale hardware and china, glass and fancy goods dealers . This is repeated in 1915. There are no Trade Directories available beyond this point.

3.19 A single sketch and two historic photographs of the site have been sourced (Figures 9-11). These demonstrate the high levels of alteration undertaken to the wider area throughout the 20th century and some changes to the building. Of particular relevance are the following points:

- The terrace containing the site was originally longer and included No 88 (the façade of which has been significantly altered and is no longer visually in keeping with Nos 87 and 88) and No 85 to the west, which has been completely altered;
- The original shopfronts have been replaced with modern detracting shopfronts at ground floor level;
- The rear of No 86 has been partially eroded through the provision of a large scale rear extension. Additions have also been added to No 87, but the majority of the buildings may be of late 19th and early 20th century date.



Figure 9: Sketch of c.1885 showing part of the terrace of the application site and, to the left, the location where the current 1892 frontage of the Congregational Chapel now sits (source: Reading Library – Archival Photos). Note that the illustration contains the name Edwin Awmack on No 87 and Nicholl on No 86, corresponding with the 1899 Kelly's Directory

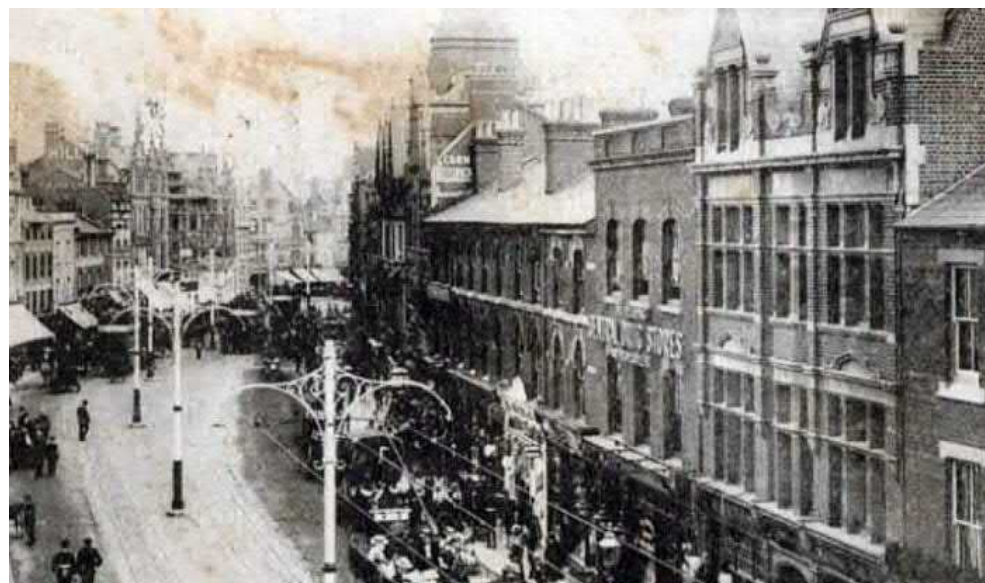


Figure 10: Historic photograph (c.1905) showing the application site and wider street view – including Nos 88, 87, 86 and 85 as a matching terrace



Figure 11: Historic photograph (early 20th century) showing the application site – including Nos 88, 87, 86 and 85 (on right hand edge) as a matching terrace

3.20 Though further development to the rear of the site and in the wider area is present, the site remains broadly as per mapping from the 1934 OS Map (Figure 11) and later.



Figure 12: 1934 OS Map (surveyed 1931) showing the site boundary in red.
Reproduced with permission of the National Library of Scotland

4 Historic Building Investigation and Recording Results

Broad Street Facade

- 4.1** The Broad Street frontages of Nos 86 and 87 are matching in style above the ground floor shop fronts (Photos 1, 2 and 3). The first and second storeys were brick built with round headed sash windows at first floor and swept head sash windows to second. A widely spaced dentil course was visible below the eaves of the slate roof, with grey ceramic ridge tiles.
- 4.2** There was a projecting string course between the two floors painted white. The window heads were all quite ornate comprising moulded projections mirroring the arch of the first floor and swept head windows of the second floor (Photo 4). Each had a decorative moulded key stone centrally placed in the window heads and raised outer edge leading down to ornamental projecting label stops. These were all vegetal in style and comprise a number of different designs. A further string course joined the bases of the moulded window heads from the label stop.



Photo 1: View southeast across the Broad Street facade of Nos 86 and 87 with red brick frontages with former elements of the original terrace (No 85 to right and No 88 to left) with later square headed windows and rendered facades



Photo 2: View of the Broad Street facade of No 87



Photo 3: View of the Broad Street façade of No 86



Photo 4: Detail of window arrangement on upper part of Broad Street façade, with round headed, 3-light sash window to first floor and swept head 4-light sashes to second floor. Also visible are the projecting hood moulds and vegetal label stops.

- 4.3** To the east and west of Nos 86 and 88 the facades of the adjacent structures had been rendered and the windows replaced with square headed ones (Photos 5 and 6). The rendering on these buildings had the appearance of early 20th century additions, possibly attempting an art deco finish. The finishes of the two buildings do not match.



Photo 5: Broad Street façade of No 85



Photo 6: Broad Street façade of No 88

- 4.4** The roof lines of Nos 85, 86, 87 and 88 all corresponded as would be expected as they were originally all of the same terrace design as shown in the early 20th century photographs and illustration above. This was further evident in the fact that the design of the chimneys of all of the properties also matched (Figure 13).
- 4.5** Based on early maps and observation of the facades of the building it was seen that the structures were separated into similar sized buildings with pairs of windows for Nos 85, 86 and 88. No 87 was constructed as a double fronted building comprising a run of four windows at first and second floor (Figure 13).



Figure 14: Site Plan of Nos 86 (yellow) and No 87 (blue) Broad Street showing external photograph directions (Base plan Surveyed and drawn by MK BIM Solutions)s

Rear of the Properties

4.6 The general areas to the rears of Nos 86 and 87 Broad Street were visible from the area to the north of the church. There were no clear views of the actual rear of the frontage properties, as they were obscured by 19th century and later additions, including the three storey structure to the rear of No 87, the School Room addition to the Chapel (lying on the former grave yard area) and a modern single storey store room extension behind No 86 (Photos 7, 8 and 9).



Photo 7: View north from the churchyard towards the rears of Nos 86 and 87 Broad Street, with only the partially rendered rear of No 86 visible on the left hand side of the photo, the building to the rear of No 87 left of centre and the school room for the chapel directly in front



Photo 8: View north along passageway leading to rear ground floor door of No 87 located in modern extension, with later 19th century building visible behind and with the modern store room for No 86 to left and the former school room for the chapel to the right

4.7 The rear of the frontage building of No 87 was only visible from within the three storey building behind it (as shown on the 1879 OS map). This building comprised a number of large windows, although modern replacements, on its southern façade suggesting it has been used as a workshop or for manufacturing (Photos 7 and 8; Figure 15).



Figure 15: Rear elevation showing the rear of the storeroom behind No 86 and the three storey structure behind No 87 and later corridor between the storeroom and former school room for the chapel that was built on the former graveyard (Elevation Surveyed and drawn by MK BIM Solutions and amalgamated for this illustration)

4.8 The rear of No 86 was not clearly visible from any angle during the site visit. Based on the elements of photographs that just show its rear elevation and the elevations drawn by MK BIM Solutions, at first floor level modern additions covered the former window layout. On the western side of the façade was a large window between first and second floor probably representing a light to an internal staircase. At second floor were two identical windows on the eastern side of the façade (Figure 16, Photo 9). All were square headed windows and the elevation had been painted.



Figure 16: Rear elevation of upper two storeys of No 86 Broad Street (Elevation Surveyed and drawn by MK BIM Solutions)



Photo 9: View of part of rear elevation of No 86 Broad Street, with single storey modern extension in front

- 4.9** The southern elevation of No 87 was visible from within the three storey building to its rear (Photos 10 and 11). This indicated that the building had a roughly symmetrical façade at first and second floor levels with square headed four-light sash windows. One of the windows was not visible with an extension projecting out from it. The windows had simple brick heads. Those of the second floor were slightly wider than those at first.



Photo 10: View north from second floor of three storey building to rear of No 87 showing the eastern half of its southern elevation

- 4.10** Down the centre of the elevation was a slightly projecting brick column possibly a narrow chimney (Photos 10 and 11). This had the effect of splitting the windows of the elevation into two, with the four to east and three to west with the projection.

- 4.11** Between No 87 Broad Street and the three storey building behind was a single storey extension with a saw tooth roof (Photo 12).



Photo 11: View northwest from second floor of three storey building to rear of No 87 showing the western half of its southern elevation, including projecting toilet block and part of the rear of No 86



*Figure 17: Rear elevation of upper two storeys of No 87 Broad Street
(Elevation Surveyed and drawn by MK BIM Solutions)*

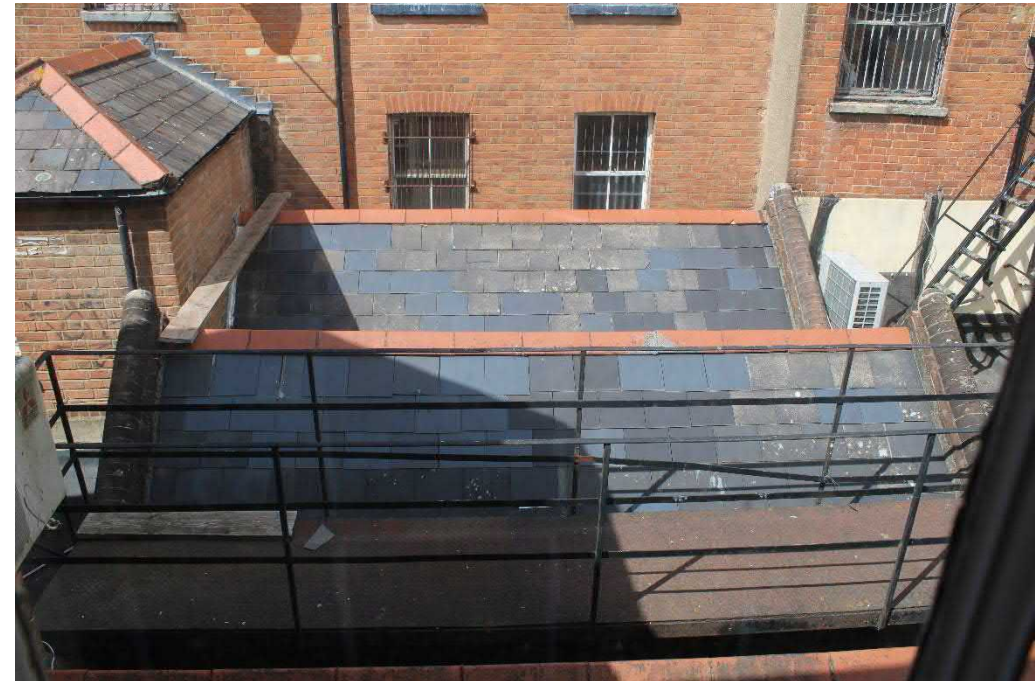


Photo 12: View north from second floor of three storey building to rear of No 87 showing roof of the single storey extension linking the main building with that to the rear

Interior of No 87 Broad Street

Ground Floor (Figure 18)

- 4.12** The eastern side of the ground floor of No 87 was accessed via the adjacent property of No 88, as the ground floor retail space combined both areas. The western side was a further retail unit running the full length of the property to the rear door.
- 4.13** The eastern side of the ground floor of the original No 87 was defined by the former dividing wall which had been cut through in a number of places to provide access into the area of No 88 (Photos 13 and 14). The room area had been gutted and modernised so that no original features survived. Little could be seen of the roof structure within the voids in the roof. In the room to the rear (Photo 15) a saw tooth roof line (VVV) could be seen through gaps in the ceiling tiles. This was also located within the area of No 87. Part of this room lay beneath the three storey building to the rear of No 87.



Photo 13: View south along western side of retail unit accessed from No 88, which is the ground floor of part of No 87

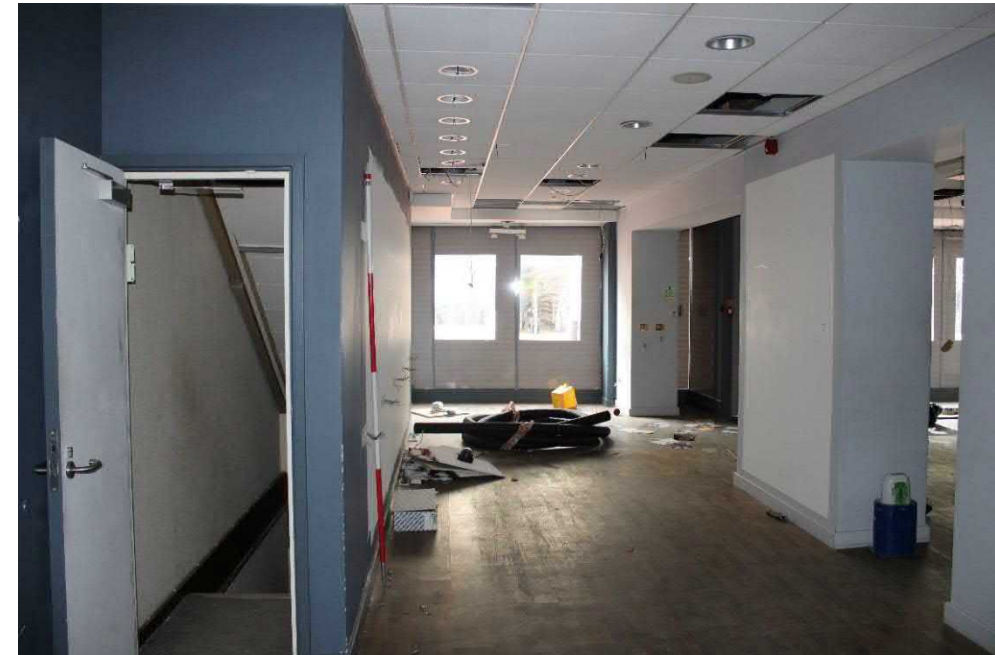


Photo 14: View north along western side of retail unit accessed from No 88, which is the ground floor of part of No 87 viewing towards Broad Street, with steps to basement to left and steps to first floor above



Photo 15: View north along rear room behind eastern part of shop floor with saw tooth roof line above visible through missing ceiling tiles

- 4.14** The western retail area below the rest of No 87 was again a large open space running from the shop front to the location of the three storey building to the rear of No 87 (Photos 16 and 17).
- 4.15** The main retail area had been modernised and gutted and no original features survived. At the southern end of the retail area was a single doorway leading into the ground floor of the three storey structure to the rear of No 87. Part of the southern end of this retail area also incorporated part of its ground floor. This is discussed separately later on.
- 4.16** The stair to the first floor of No 87, accessing the full width of the property lay between the two retail units with the stair lying directly above the steps to the cellar seen in Photo 14 (Photo 18).



Photo 16: View south along retail unit below the majority of No 87 Broad Street

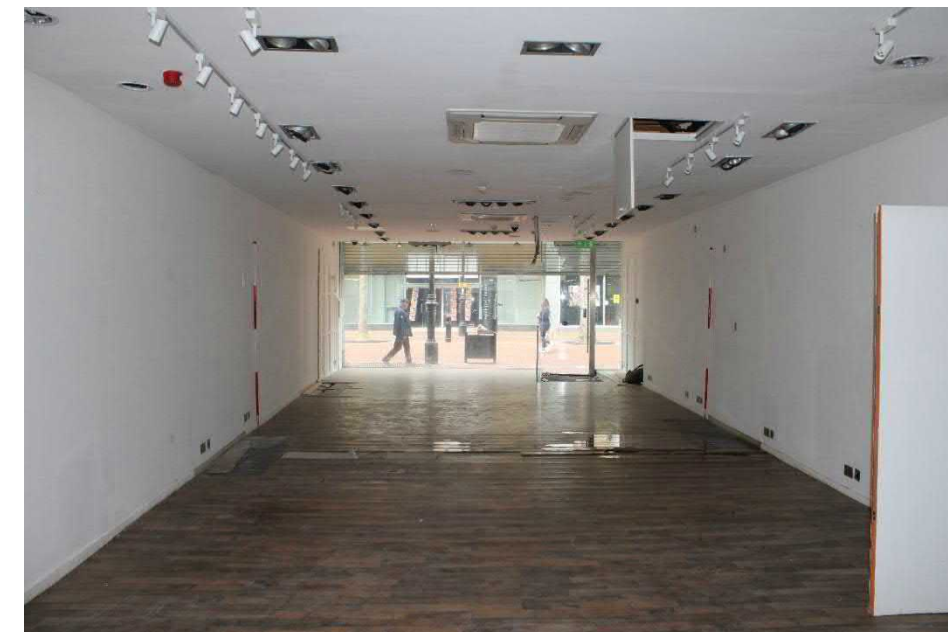


Photo 17: View north retail unit below the majority of No 87 Broad Street

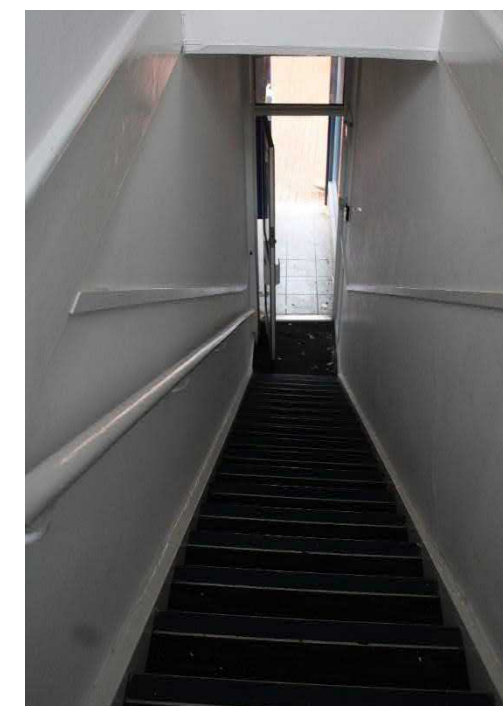


Photo 18: View down the stairs leading to the first floor of No 87 looking towards Broad Street



Figure 18: Ground floor plans of Nos 86 and 87, showing photograph directions ((Plan Surveyed and drawn by MK BIM Solutions)

First Floor (Figure 19)

- 4.17** The first floor of No 87 was accessed via the stairs noted above (Photos 18 and 19) which led up to an entrance vestibule, a modern addition to the building. The entrance vestibule had a raised area over the rising stairs with glass partitions and doors separating the floor from the stairwell (Photos 20 and 21).

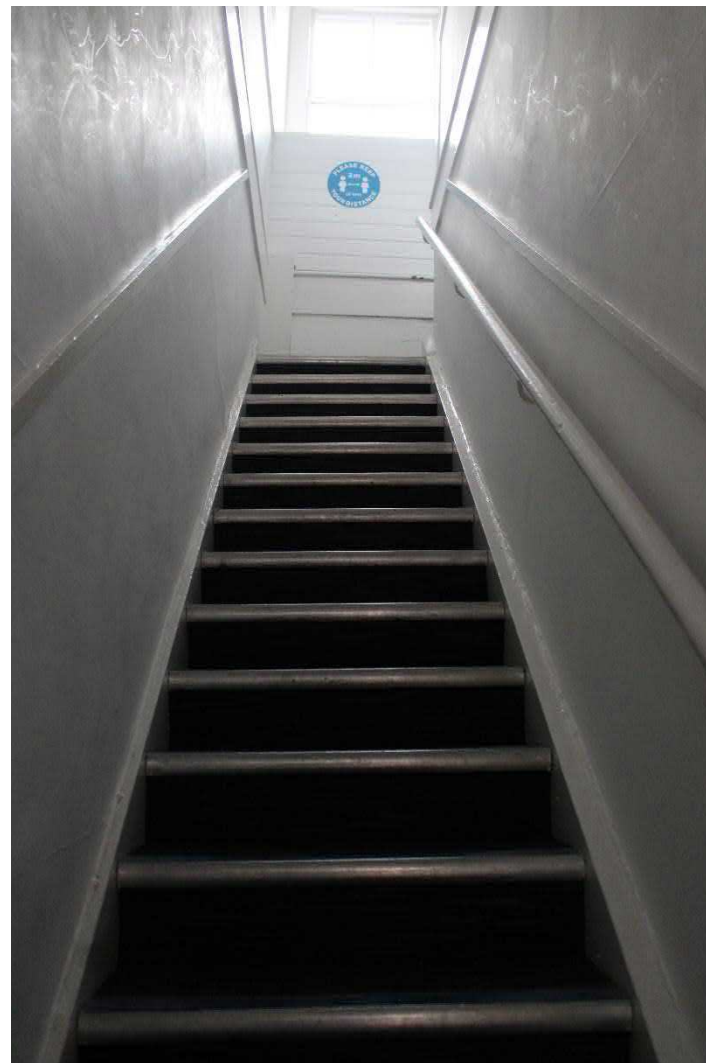


Photo 19: View up the stairs leading to the first floor of No 87 Broad Street



Photo 20: View south of entrance vestibule to first floor of No 87 Broad Street accessed from the entrance stair, with window to rear

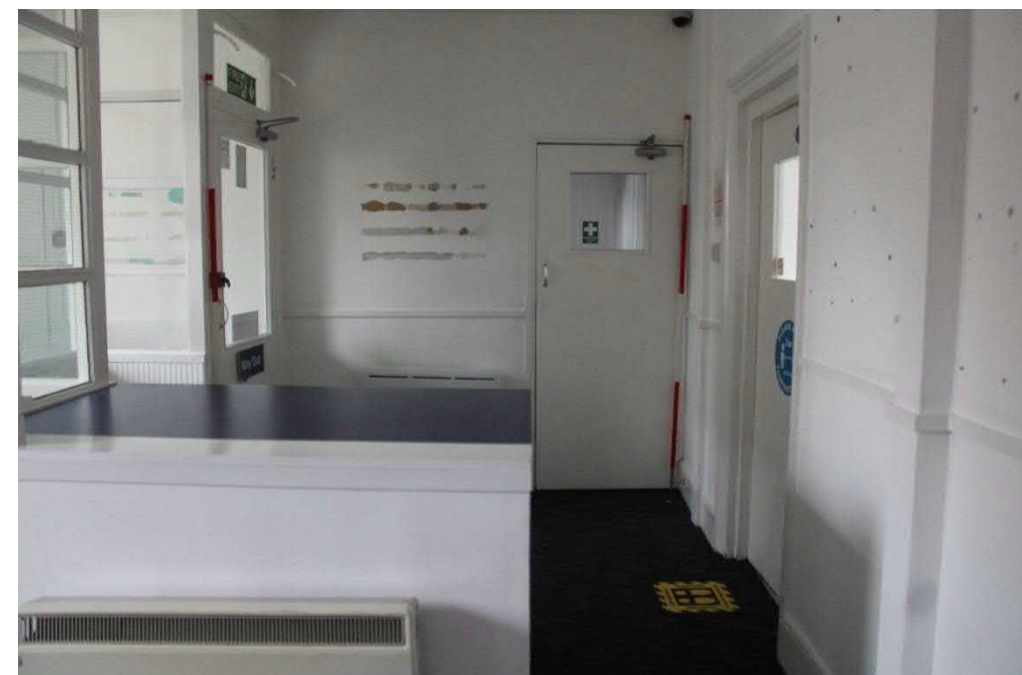


Photo 21: View west across entrance vestibule with doors leading to western side of the building in front and to main first floor room to right

- 4.18** To the east of the vestibule was an open space with window to the south (Photo 22) and a small narrow cupboard between the chimney breast and the end wall (Photo 23). The fireplace that would have been present had been covered over (possibly removed).



Photo 22: View south across eastern room leading off entrance vestibule with window to south elevation and three storey rear building visible through it

- 4.19** Leading to the north of the vestibule was a doorway leading into a large open room that covered the entire first floor frontage looking onto Broad Street. The chimney breasts survived at either end, but fireplaces had been covered over (possibly removed) (Photos 24 and 25). All four of the first floor round headed sash windows were visible within this room, with large glass panes and stops on the sashes (Photos 26 to 29).

- 4.20** The location of a former dividing wall in the room was visible just west of centre in the room which had been removed to create a single large open space (Photos 24 and 25). The room itself was clearly not square and angled in the Broad Street frontage corners.

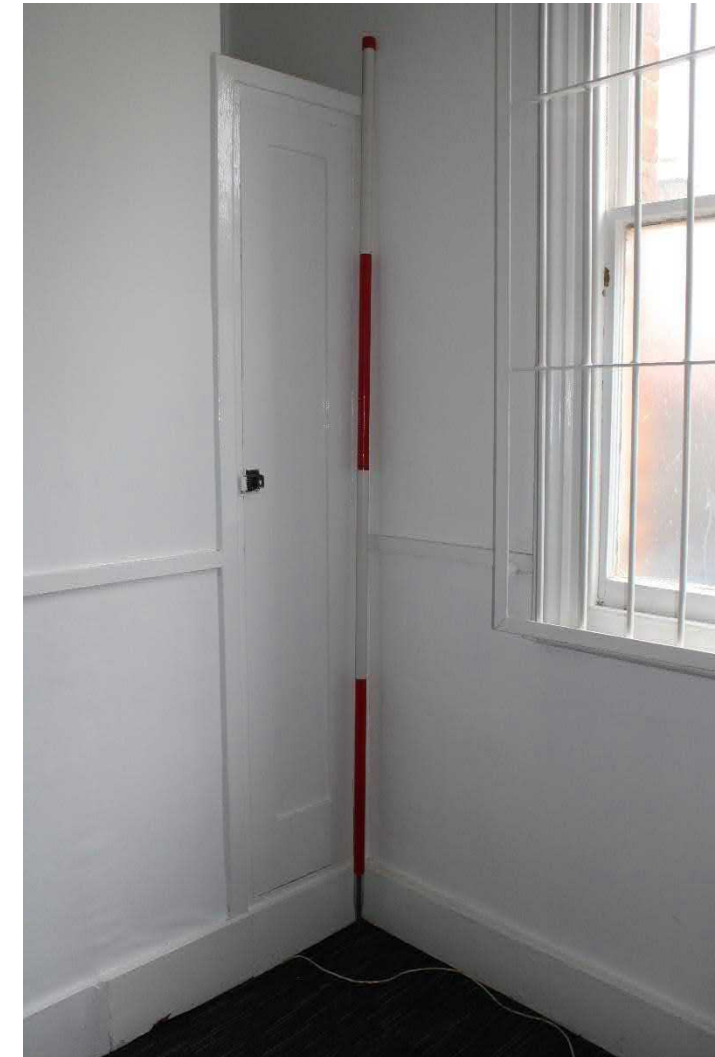


Photo 23: View southeast across eastern room showing window in south elevation and detail of cupboard between chimney breast and end wall



Photo 24: View east across front room of first floor of No 87 towards chimney breast, with former dividing wall location visible in foreground



Photo 25: View west across front room of first floor of No 87 towards chimney breast, with former dividing wall location visible in foreground



Photo 26: Western window



Photo 27: West of centre window



Photo 28: East of centre window



Photo 29: Eastern window



Photo 30: Surviving element of coving in western half of first floor front room fronting Broad Street

- 4.21** On the western half of the first floor room fronting Broad Street was a small area of surviving coving. This had evidently been painted over many times and detail was difficult to see (Photo 30).
- 4.22** Access from the eastern door from the vestibule or eastern door to the south from the front room was a hallway with stairs (Photo 31) leading to second floor, a doorway to a further room to the east and to the projecting corridor seen on the rear elevation of the building (Photo 32). This contained two toilets, one to the south and the other on the western side with frosted windows to southern and western elevations. A small under stairs cupboard was also present.
- 4.23** The stairs were of fairly plain design with thin pairs of balusters to each step and rounded newel post. The hand rail was nearly rounded with rounded end and curved from the base to the main run leading to the first landing. The banisters then stopped and resumed again for the final flight of stairs to the second floor.

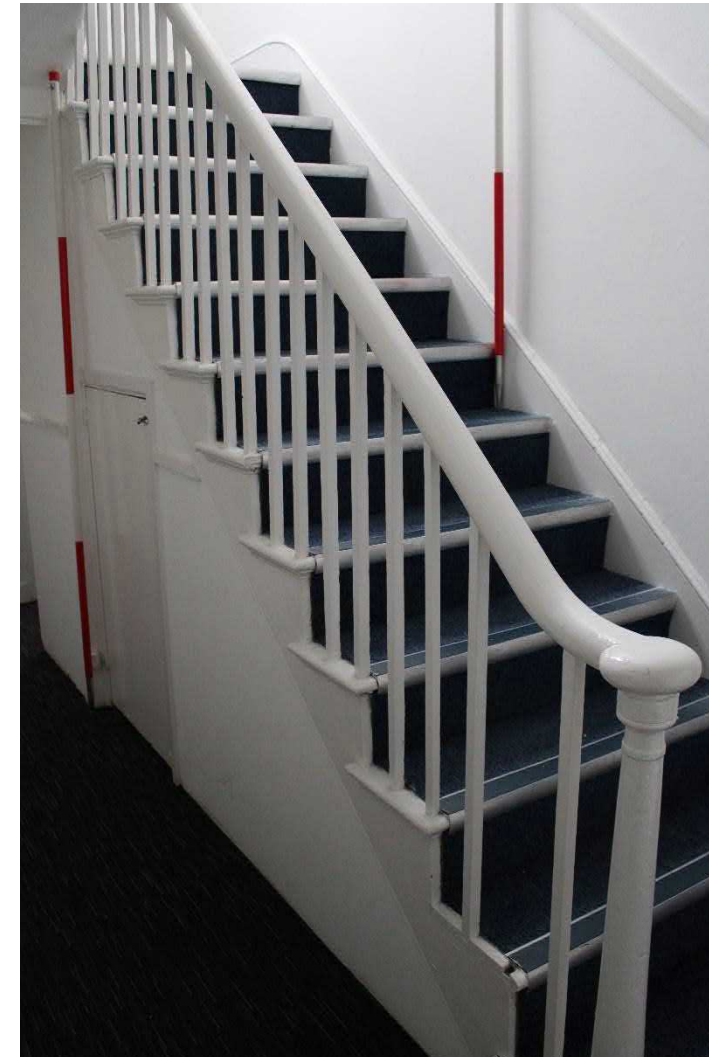


Photo 31: View southwest of stairs to second floor in corridor

- 4.24** Leading to the east from the corridor was a further door leading into an area formerly used as a kitchen area by the previous occupiers (Photos 33 and 34). The room included a surviving cast iron fireplace within the chimney breast (Photo 35), with built in cupboards to either side. The southern cupboard was modern, but it is possible that the low cupboard on the northern side may have been original (Photo 36).

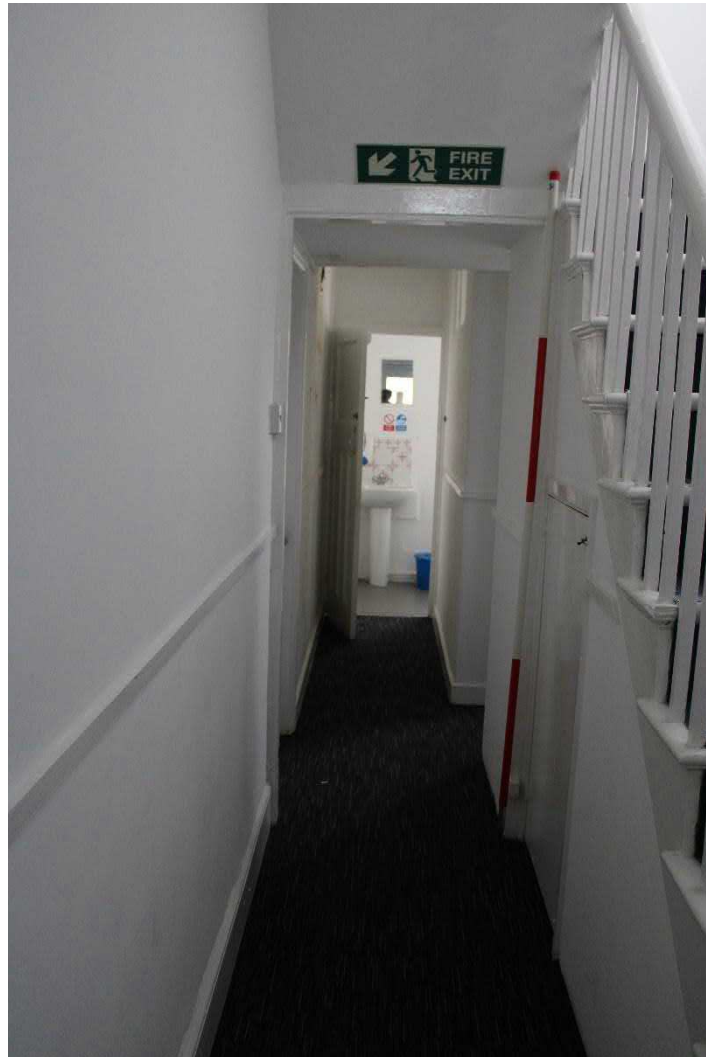


Photo 32: View south along corridor with stairs to right and into rear projecting extension visible on southern elevation of property containing two toilet rooms



Photo 33: View south through kitchen area on southwestern side of first floor of No 87 Broad Street showing window to rear and tall cupboard to right

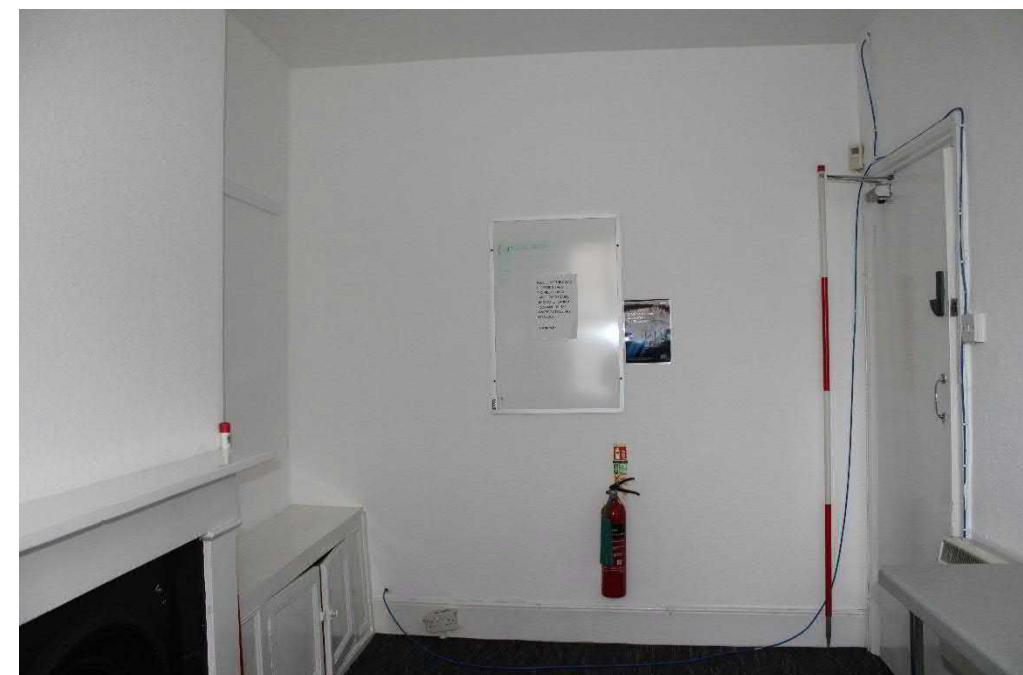


Photo 34: View north through kitchen area on southwestern side of first floor of No 87 Broad Street showing low cupboard to left and door back to hallway to right



Photo 35: View west of cast iron fireplace in kitchen area on southwestern side of first floor of No 87 Broad Street



Photo 36: View west of low cupboard north of chimney breast in kitchen area on southwestern side of first floor of No 87 Broad Street

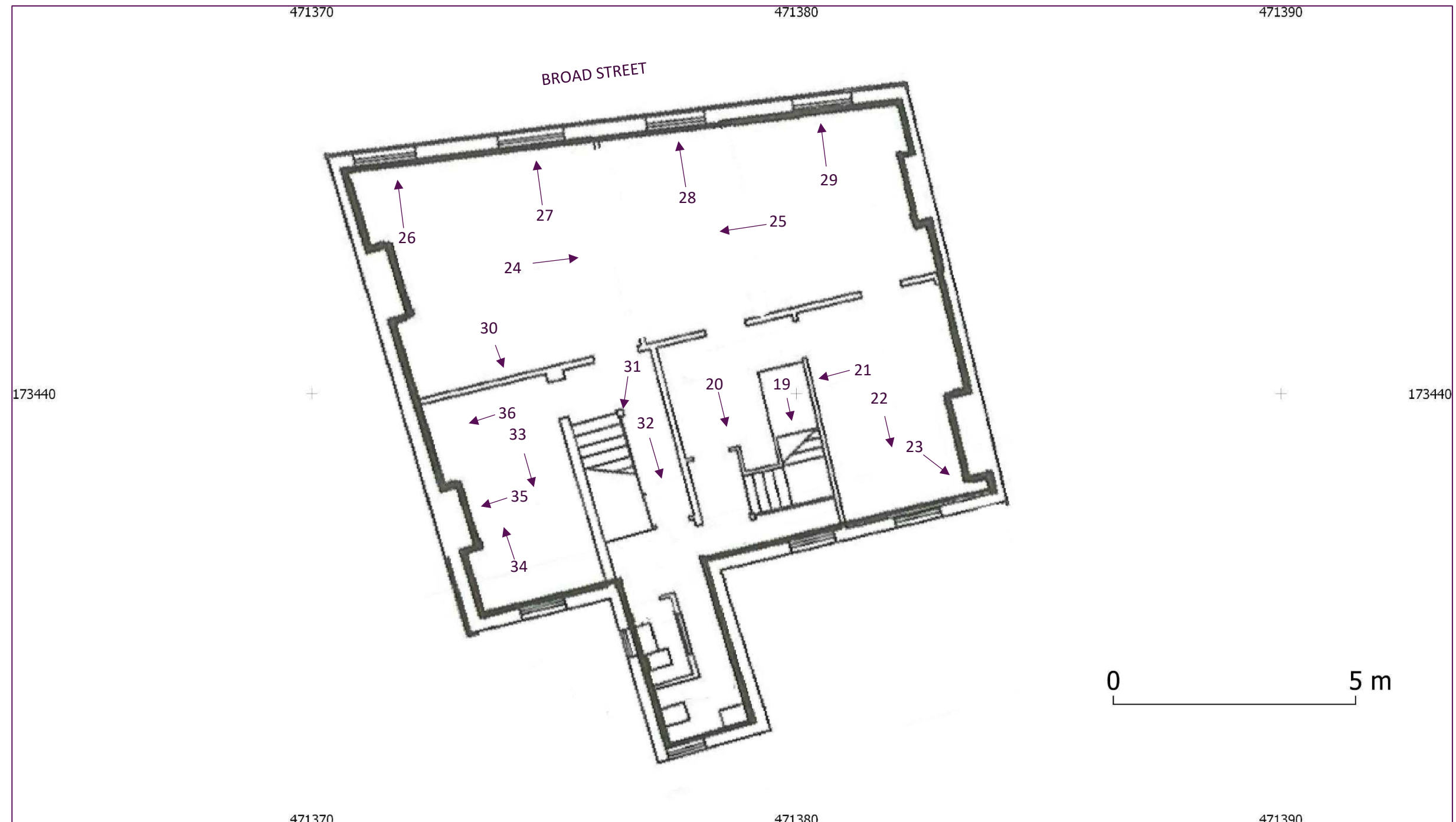


Figure 19: First floor plan of No 87, showing photograph directions (adapted from former lease plans supplied by MAPP)

Second Floor (Figure 20)

4.25 The stairs led to a small landing just over half way up its rise, with a window on the southern elevation above (Photos 37 and 38). The banisters in this section matched those below (Photo 38 and 39), being of relatively simple design and in a number of separate sections.

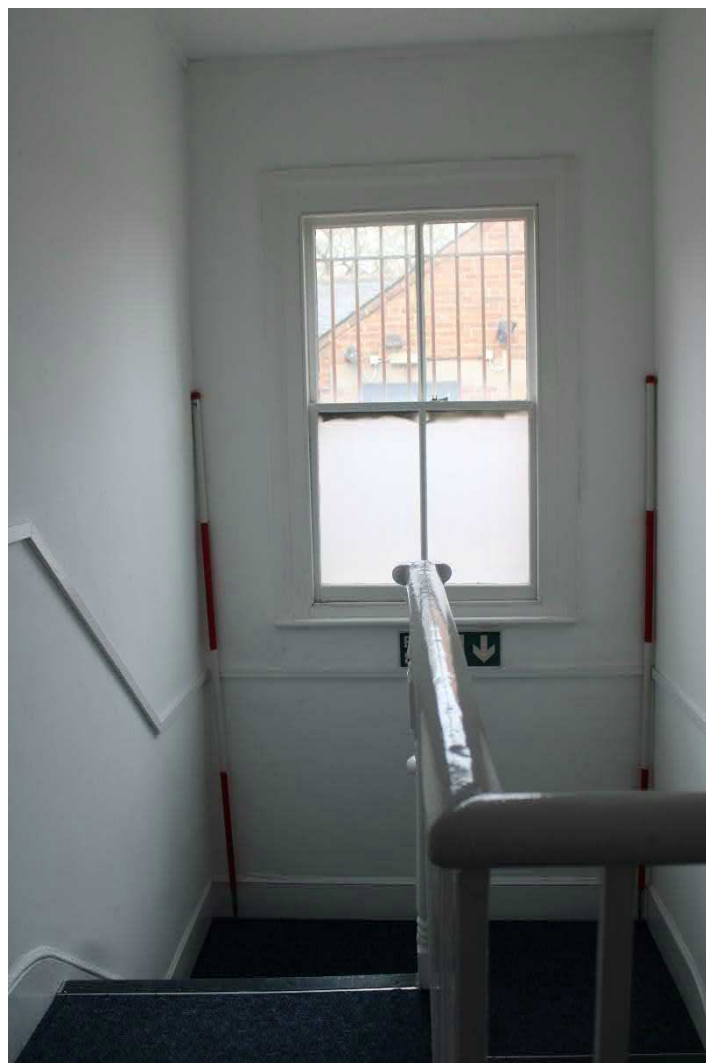


Photo 37: View south from second floor to landing area between first and second floor with window behind



Photo 38: View north down the stairs to first floor landing



Photo 39: Detail of banisters at top of staircase leading to second floor

- 4.26** The landing at the top of the stairs on the second floor provided access to a room to the west above the kitchen area below, into a room on the directly to the east and a corridor leading further to the east with doors onto the room overlooking Broad Street and one to the southeastern room of the second floor.
- 4.27** The room east of the stairwell was fairly small with window to the south elevation (Photo 40). The window was located adjacent to the partition wall between this room and that to the southeast. The southern wall had a thin projection jutting into the room (Photo 40) which could potentially have been associated with a further fireplace and chimney breast aligned with the projecting brick column seen on the southern elevation (Photos 10 and 11) and gives more credence to it being a chimney stack.
- 4.28** The door to the room was panelled on the exterior but had been flat boarded over on the interior (Photo 41) suggesting some form of fire proofing.



Photo 40: View south of window and end wall in room adjacent to top of stairs on second floor landing

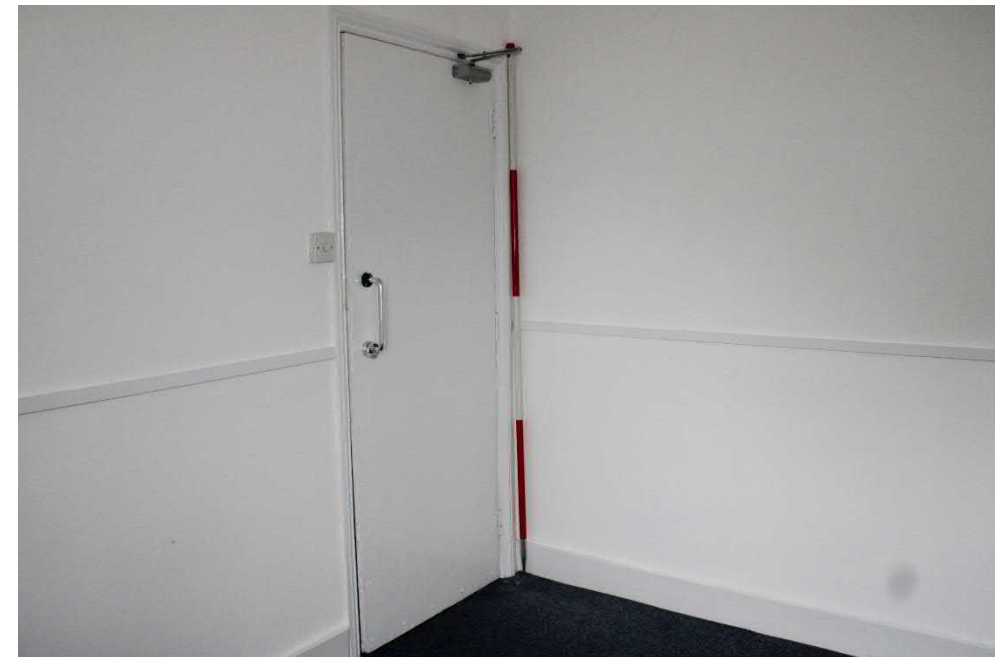


Photo 41: View northwest of entrance door into room adjacent to stairs on second floor landing

- 4.29** The southwestern room was accessed via the landing at the top of the stairs with window to the south and chimney breast to the east, with no fireplace surviving (Photos 42 and 43). The door was again panelled to the exterior but flat boarded on the interior.

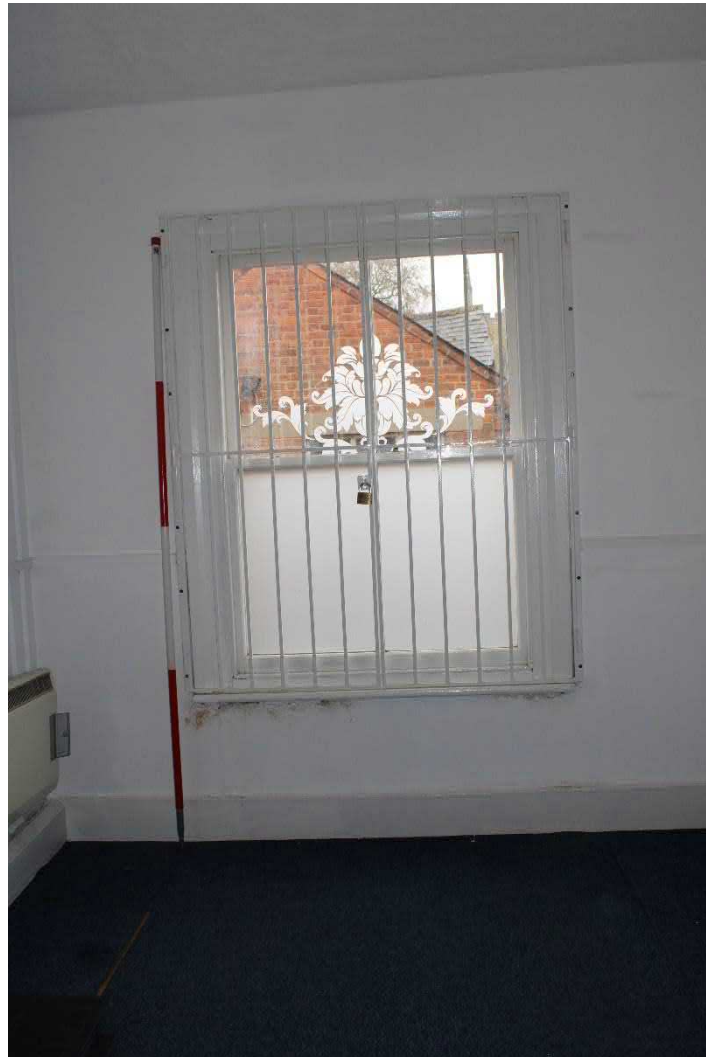


Photo 42: View south of window in southwestern room of second floor of No 87 Broad Street leading

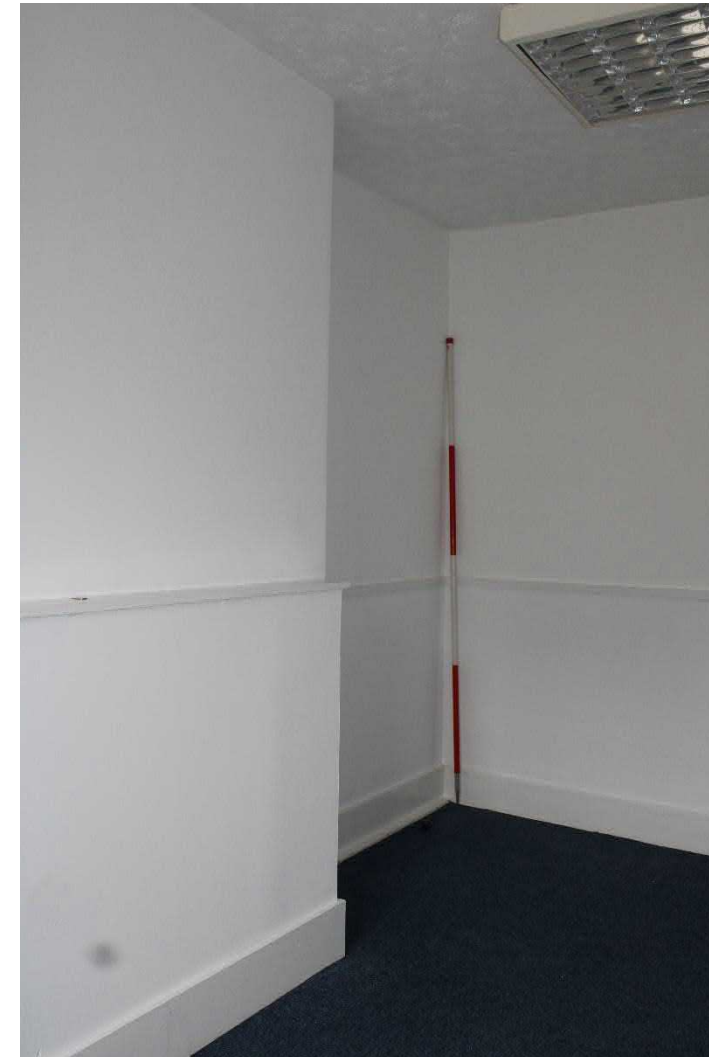


Photo 43: View northwest across southwestern room of second floor of No 87 Broad Street showing chimney breast



Photo 44: View south across southeastern room of No 87 Broad Street towards three storey rear building behind

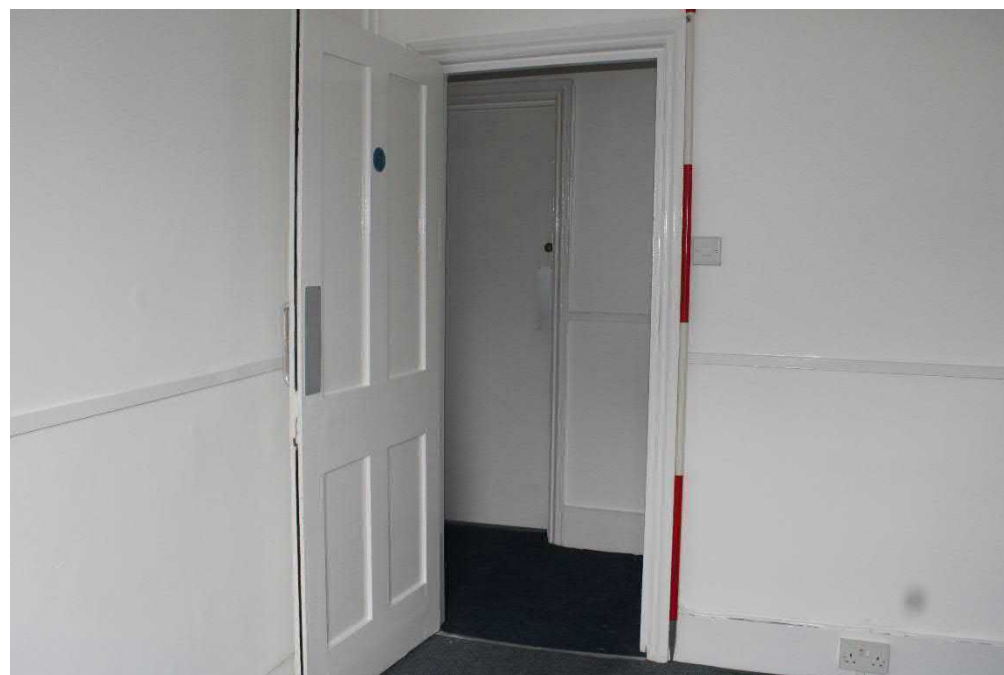


Photo 45: View north across southeastern room of No 87 Broad Street towards corridor and doorway into northern room overlooking Broad Street



Photo 46: View southeast of chimney breast of southeastern room of No 47 Broad Street

- 4.30** The southeastern room was accessed via the corridor to the east from the landing. It was again quite a small room with window to the south and chimney breast to the east, with no fireplace surviving (Photos 44, 45 and 46).
- 4.31** The door to the room was panelled on the exterior but had been flat boarded over on the interior (Photo 45) again suggesting some form of fire proofing. The plain appearance of the door suggests it was a modern replacement.

4.32 The corridor leading from the second floor landing provided access to the southeastern and northern rooms (Photos 47 and 48). There was a single door for that to the southeast and two leading in to the northern room at either end of the corridor. A loft hatch was present at the eastern end of the corridor but this was not accessed.

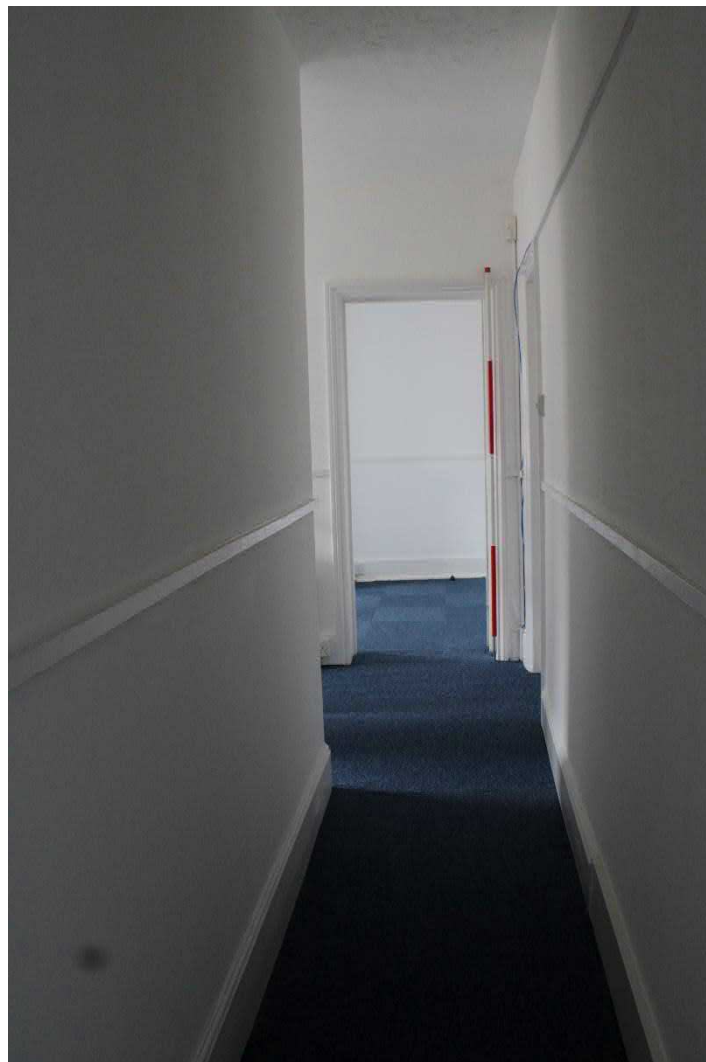


Photo 47: View west along corridor of second floor of No 87 Broad Street

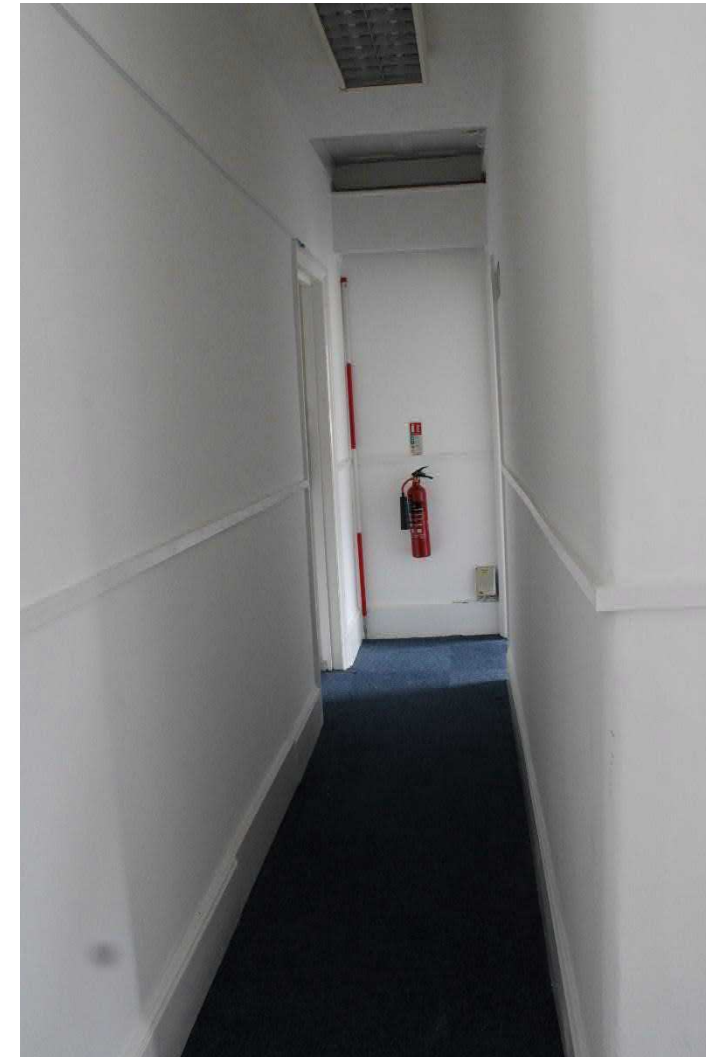


Photo 48: View east along corridor of second floor of No 87 Broad Street

- 4.33** The northern room was again an open area across the full Broad Street frontage of the building with chimney breasts to east and west but with no fireplaces surviving (Photos 49 and 50).
- 4.34** The four swept head sash windows to the frontage were all of four lights, with stops on the sashes (Photos 51, 52, 53 and 54).
- 4.35** The room had evidently been formerly divided into at least two parts, with walls projecting from its southern wall which had been converted into a cupboard (Photo 55). A small cupboard was also present in the southeastern corner of the room (Photo 56).



Photo 49: View east along northern room of second storey of No 87 on the Broad Street frontage



Photo 51: View north of western window of second storey room overlooking Broad Street frontage



Photo 50: View west along northern room of second storey of No 87 on the Broad Street frontage



Photo 52: View north of west of centre window of second storey room overlooking Broad Street frontage



Photo 53: View north of east of centre window of second storey room overlooking Broad Street frontage



Photo 55: View southeast across cupboard built between the former dividing walls of second storey room overlooking the Broad Street frontage



Photo 54: View north of east window of second storey room overlooking Broad Street frontage



Photo 56: View southeast across eastern end of second storey room overlooking the Broad Street frontage towards storage cupboard

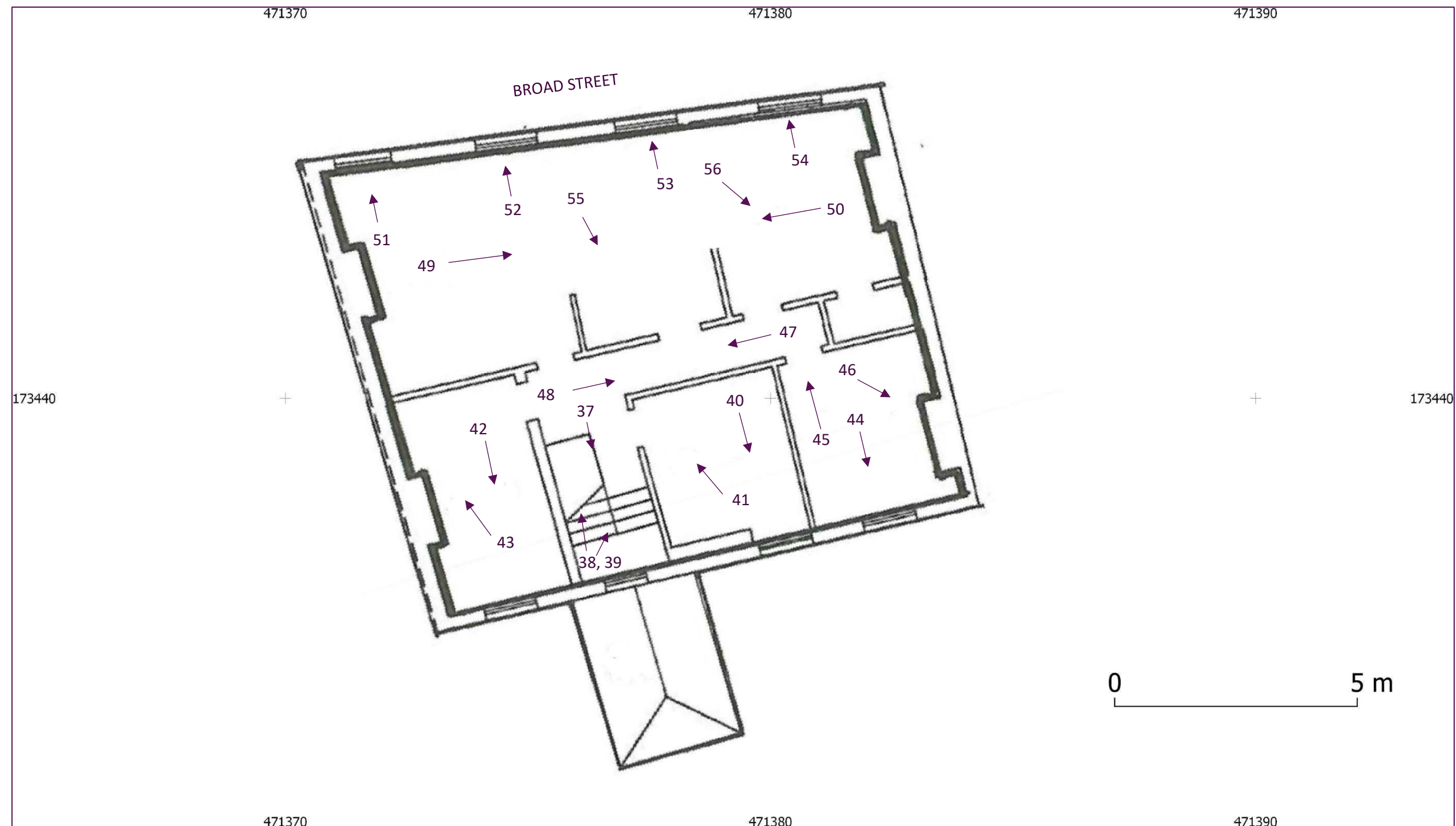


Figure 20: Second floor plan of No 87, showing photograph directions (adapted from former lease plans supplied by MAPP)

Three Storey Rear Building

External (Figure 21)

- 4.36** The three storey rear building to the rear of No 87 Broad Street was an L shaped structure connected to the frontage building at ground floor level as discussed above. The northern elevation of the upper two floors was visible from the rear windows of No 87. The elevation comprised the northern projection gable end of the L-shape with two square headed windows at first floor level and a single window and fire escape door at second floor (Photos 57, 58 and 59, Figure 21). The two windows on the first floor had a single continuous wooden sill above and door and window to second floor had a concrete sill. All of the windows were modern replacements, those at first floor being two paned casements and that at second floor being a metal framed casement window.
- 4.37** The eastern side of the elevation contained two symmetrically placed windows to both floors, with pairs of 8 light wooden framed casements to first floor and 6 light casements to second (Photo 57 and 58). The brick work on this frontage was neatly bonded with a mix of styles to fit with the window layout, using symmetrical mixes of headers, stretchers and closers. The bonding may have also originally been neat on the north facing gable end but modern alterations had disturbed any such patterning.
- 4.38** The roof of the three storey building was of slate with grey ceramic ridge tiles.
- 4.39** The first floor of No 87 projecting to the building was covered with a saw tooth roof with two apexes (Photo 60) lying partially adjacent to the toilet extension projecting from the southern façade of No 87 (Photo 60). Both of these structures had grey slate roofs with red ceramic ridge tiles.
- 4.40** The southern elevation of the building was mostly obscured by the chapel school room and no windows were present in that part of the elevation. On the visible part, seem from the yard area rear of the building accessed from the church, there were large single windows to the two upper floors (Photo 61). These were later insertions with wooden frames and three large panes in each with small top opening lights. Continuous concrete sills lay above these windows. The ground floor was covered by a short modern extension leading to the rear door of No 87.



Photo 57: View southwest from second storey rear window of southeastern room of No 87 Broad Street (not shown on a plan)



Photo 58: View south from second storey rear window of southeastern room of No 87 Broad Street (not shown on a plan)



Photo 59: View south from second storey rear window of room west of stairs of No 87 Broad Street (not shown on a plan)



Photo 60: View south from second storey rear window of southeastern room of No 87 Broad Street showing part of saw tooth roof and projecting toilet extension (not shown on a plan)



Photo 61: View north of rear part of three storey building to rear (not shown on a plan)

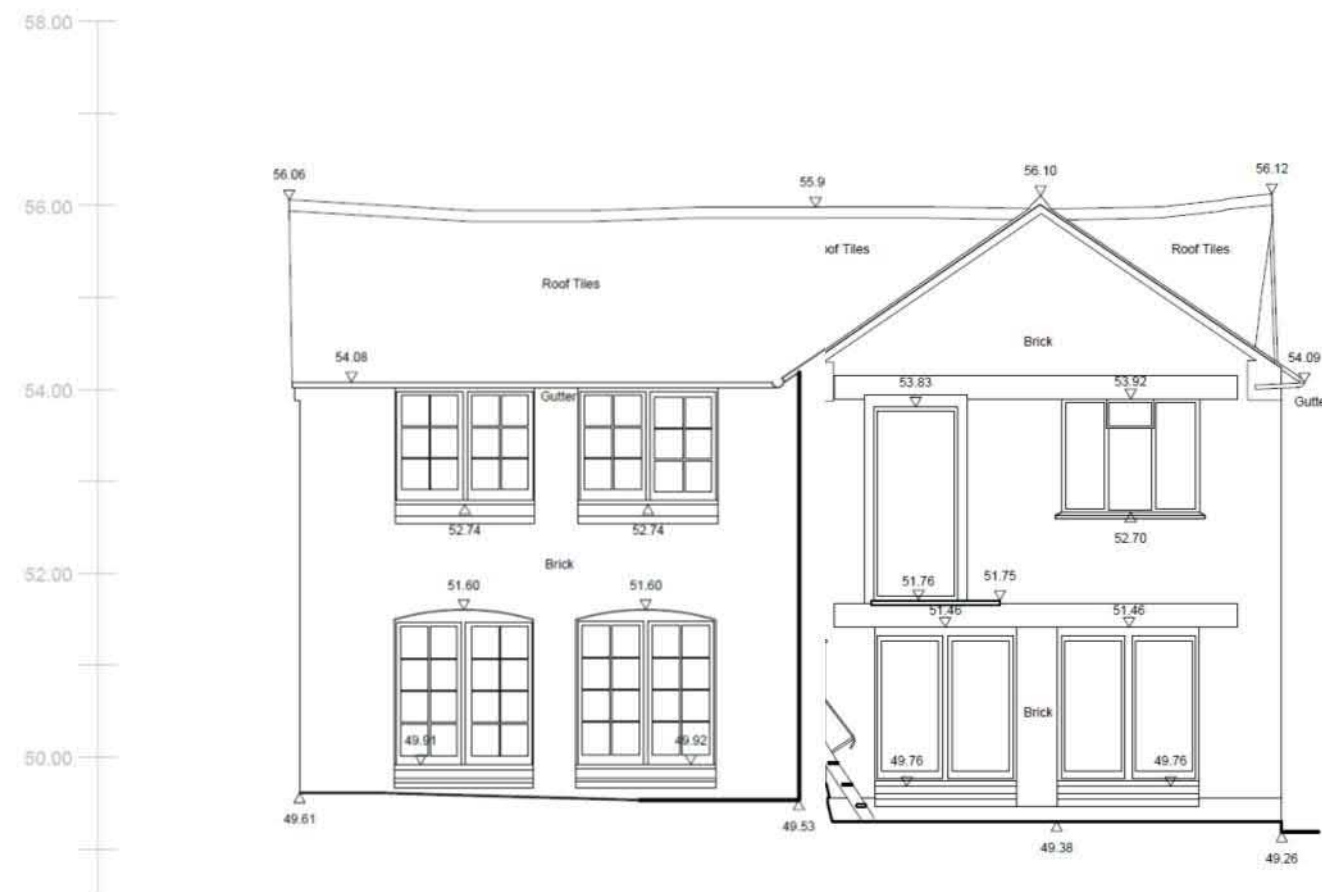


Figure 21: Northern elevation of the upper two storeys of the three storey structure behind No 87 (Elevation Surveyed and drawn by MK BIM Solutions and amalgamated for this illustration)

Internal

Ground Floor (Figure 22)

4.41 The ground floor of the three storey building comprised part of the frontage retail areas of No 87 and are mentioned above. A door led from the shop front into a rear lobby with dog leg stairs leading to the first floor (Photo 62). To the east of the stair was a windowless open area (Photos 63 and 64) leading to a storage cupboard under the stairs (Photo 65). A small hatch was present in the floor leading to a small cellar area. This was viewed into but not accessed.



Photo 62: View of stairs on ground floor of three storey rear extension looking southeast



Photo 63: View east across foot of stairs showing trap door to small cellar area (not accessed)

4.42

To the west of the stair was a doorway leading into the modern extension to the rear of the building accessing the yard area north of the church (Photo 63). The western wall was modern, but the eastern wall had doorways leading into small rooms that are likely to have been earlier outhouses amalgamated into the later entranceway.



Photo 64: View southeast of entrance to cupboard below stairs



Photo 65: View west of cupboard under stairs

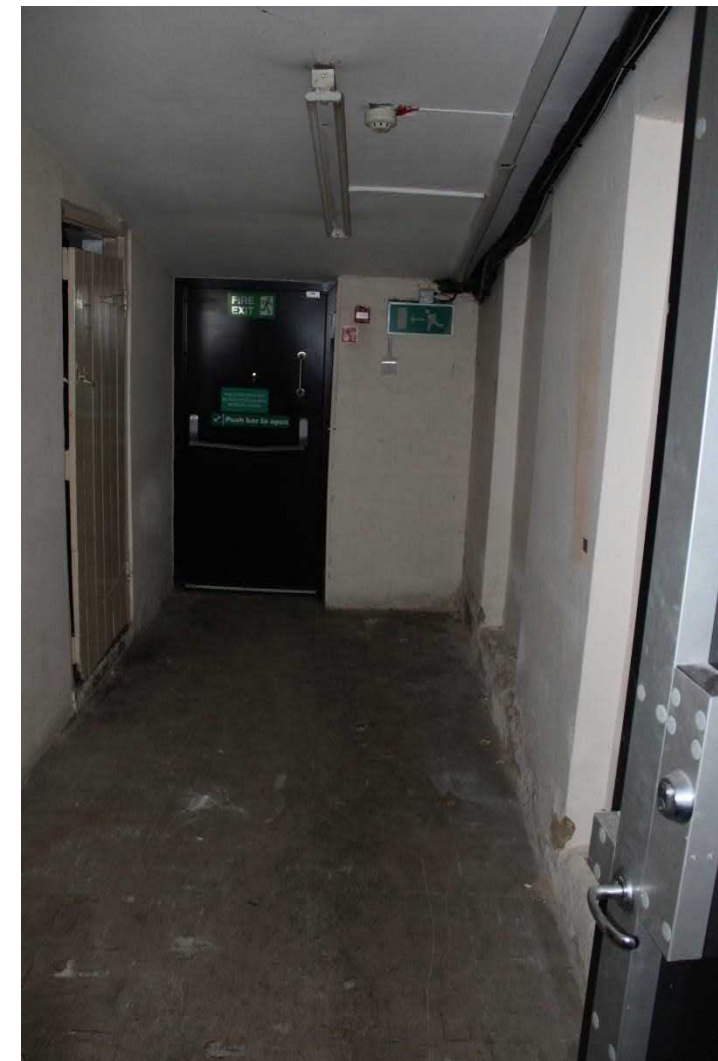


Photo 66: View south along modern extension to rear of three storey building, possibly with earlier out houses incorporated to left

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First Floor (Figure 23)

- 4.43** The stairs led to a small landing on the southern side of the building (Photo 67) with doors leading to rooms to the east and west (Photos 67 and 68).
- 4.44** The eastern room had the two eight light casement windows on the northern elevation (Photo 69). The room was L-shaped with shelves to the west (Photo 70) and featureless walls to the south (Photo 71).



Photo 67: View west across top of stairs at first floor level across landing



Photo 68: View east across first floor landing



Photo 69: View north across eastern room at first floor level



Photo 70: View southwest across eastern room at first floor level with doorway leading to landing level



Photo 71: View south across eastern room at first floor level with doorway leading to landing area

4.45 The western room was larger running the length of the building with windows to the northern and southern elevations (Photo 72 and 73). The northern windows were the single light modern casements visible on the northern projection gable end although the eastern window was half covered by an inserted wall (Photo 72), and the southern windows were those visible from the yard area (Photo 73). The stairwell from the ground floor projected into the southeastern corner of the room (Photo 74).

4.46 On its eastern wall was a doorway leading to a stairwell accessing the second floor (Photos 72 and 74).

4.47 There was no evidence of any fireplaces within the building.

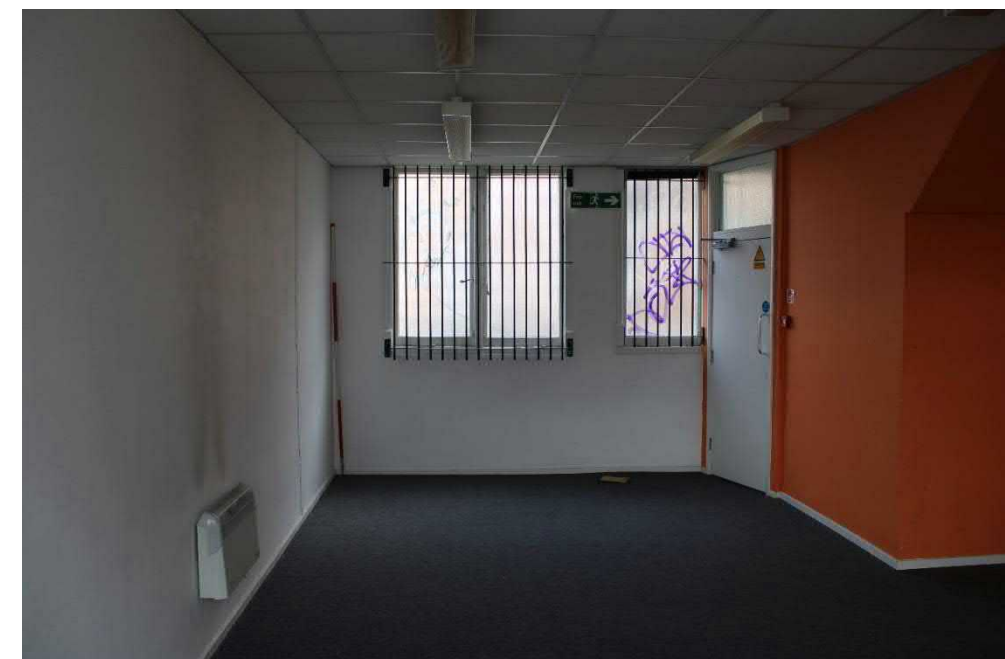


Photo 72: View north across western room at first floor level



Photo 73: View south across western room of first floor level



Photo 75: View northeast across western room at first floor level showing door to stairwell to second floor



Photo 74: View southeast across western room at first floor level to landing area

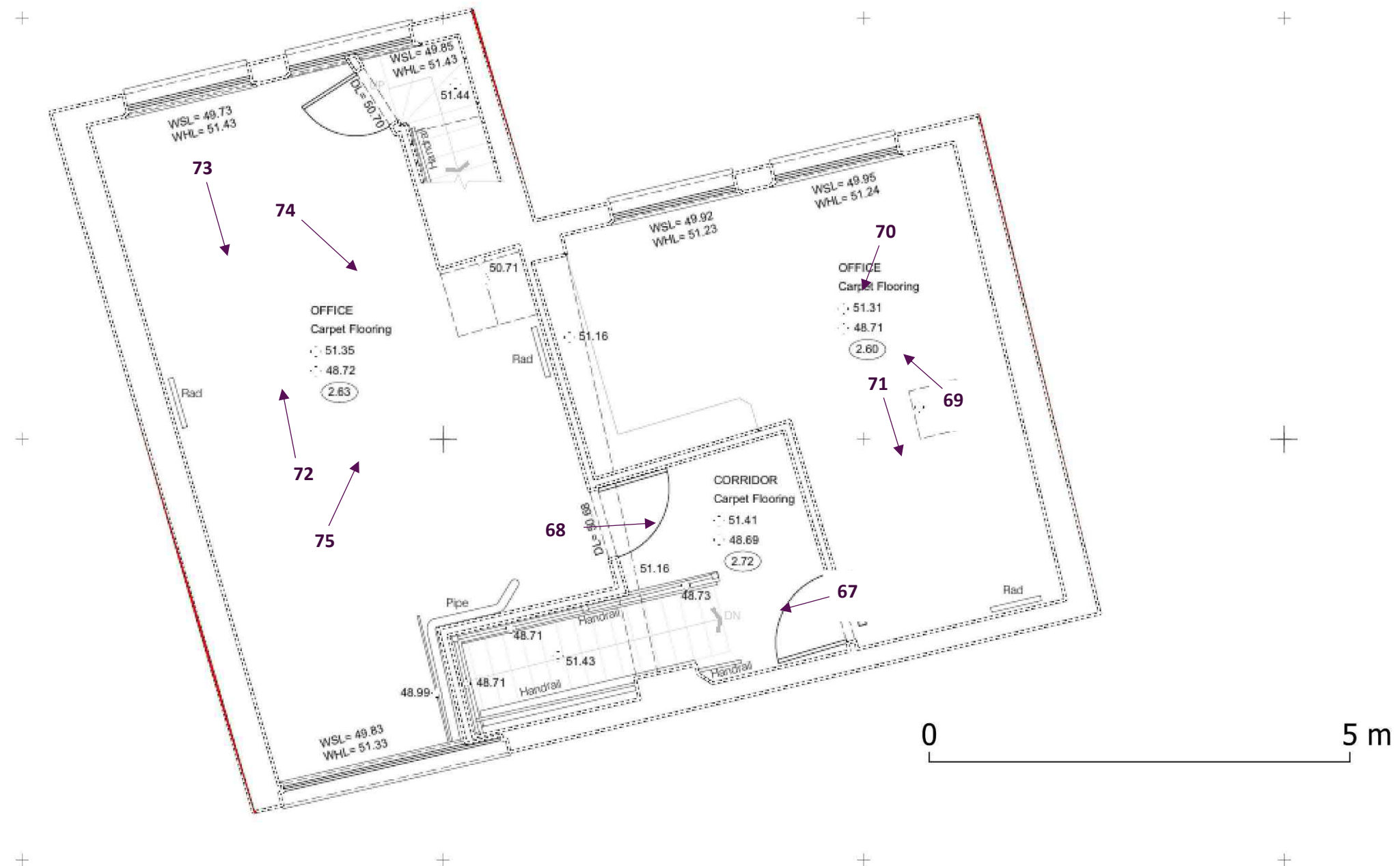


Figure 23: First floor plan of three storey building to rear of No 87 Broad Street showing photograph locations (Surveyed and drawn by MK BIM)

Second Floor (Figure 24)

- 4.48** The stairwell led up to the second floor with a light to the north formed by half of the eastern window on the northern projection gable end (Photo 76). This led to a small landing area with doors to four rooms.



Photo 76: View north from second floor landing down the stairwell to first floor level

- 4.49** The northwestern room was a small area with the metal framed casement window to the northern elevation and fire escape doorway to the east of that (Photos 77, 78 and 79). A doorway was located to the south opposite the doorway into this room (Photo 80). This accessed a windowless space on the western side of the building, with shelves on the western wall (Photos 82 and 83).

- 4.50** At the southern end of the second floor landing was a small kitchen and bathroom area (Photo 83).

- 4.51** A further room was present to the east containing the two large windows on the northern elevation of the building (Photo 84). The room was otherwise featureless (Photo 85). As with the first floor, there was no evidence for any fireplaces.



Photo 77: View west of northwestern room at second floor level

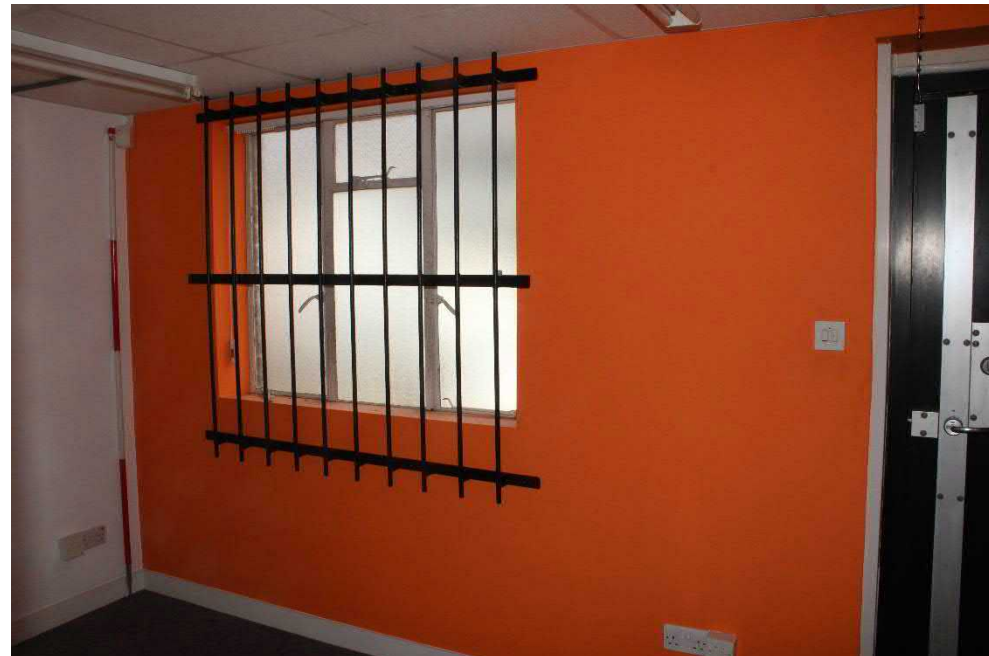


Photo 78: View northwest across northwestern room at second floor level



Photo 79: View northeast across northwestern room at second floor level to fire-escape doorway



Photo 80: View south from northwestern room towards western office area of second floor with stairs to left



Photo 81: View north across western office at second floor level

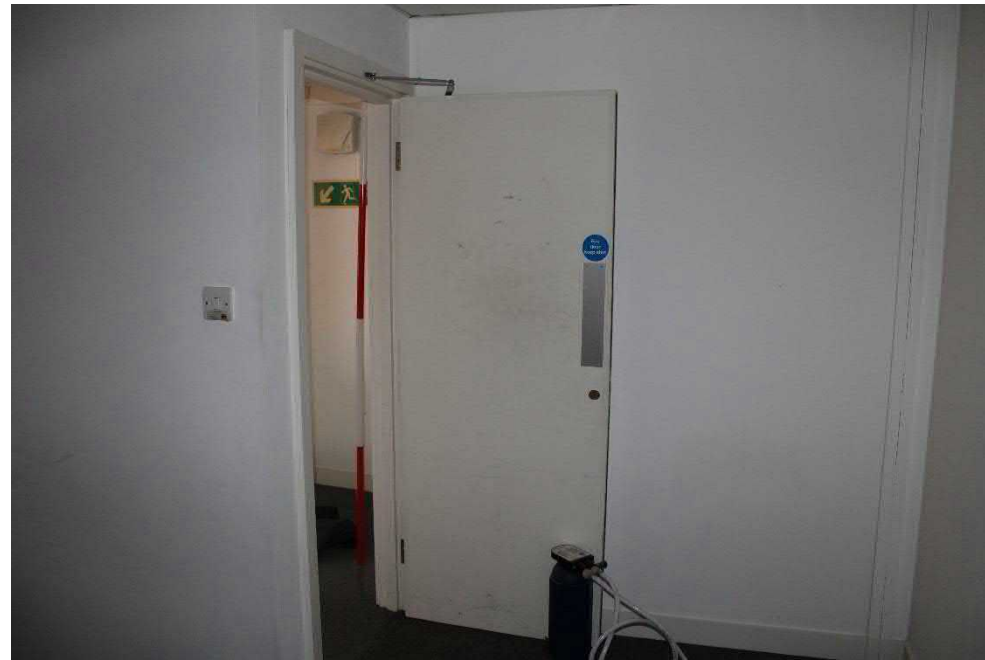


Photo 82: View east across western office at second floor level

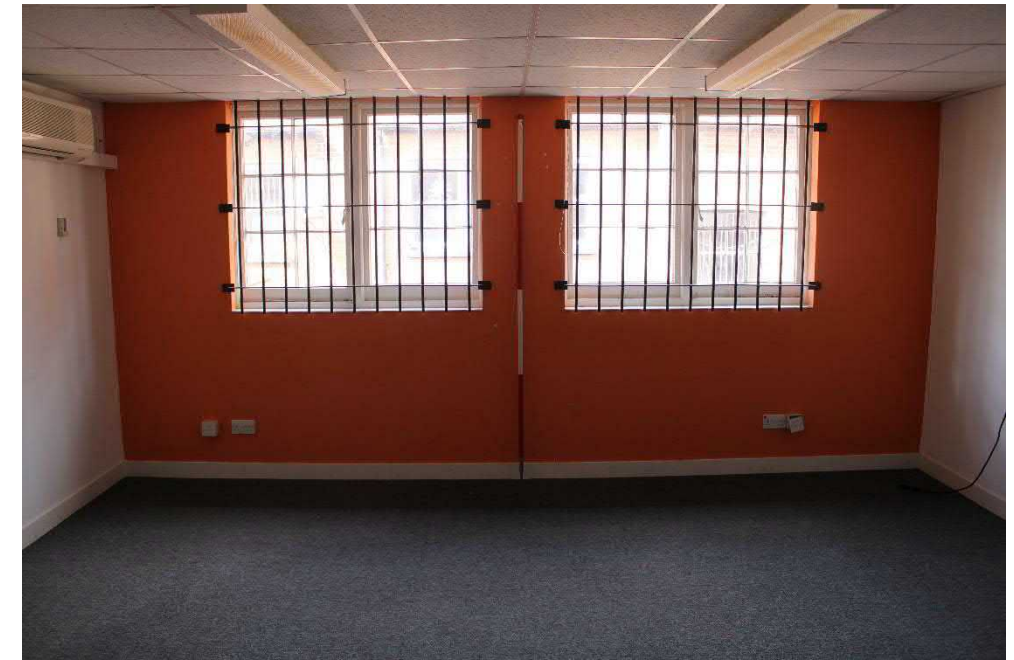


Photo 84: View north through eastern office at second floor level



Photo 83: View west along kitchen and bathroom areas in southwestern part of second floor



Photo 85: View west through eastern office at second floor level

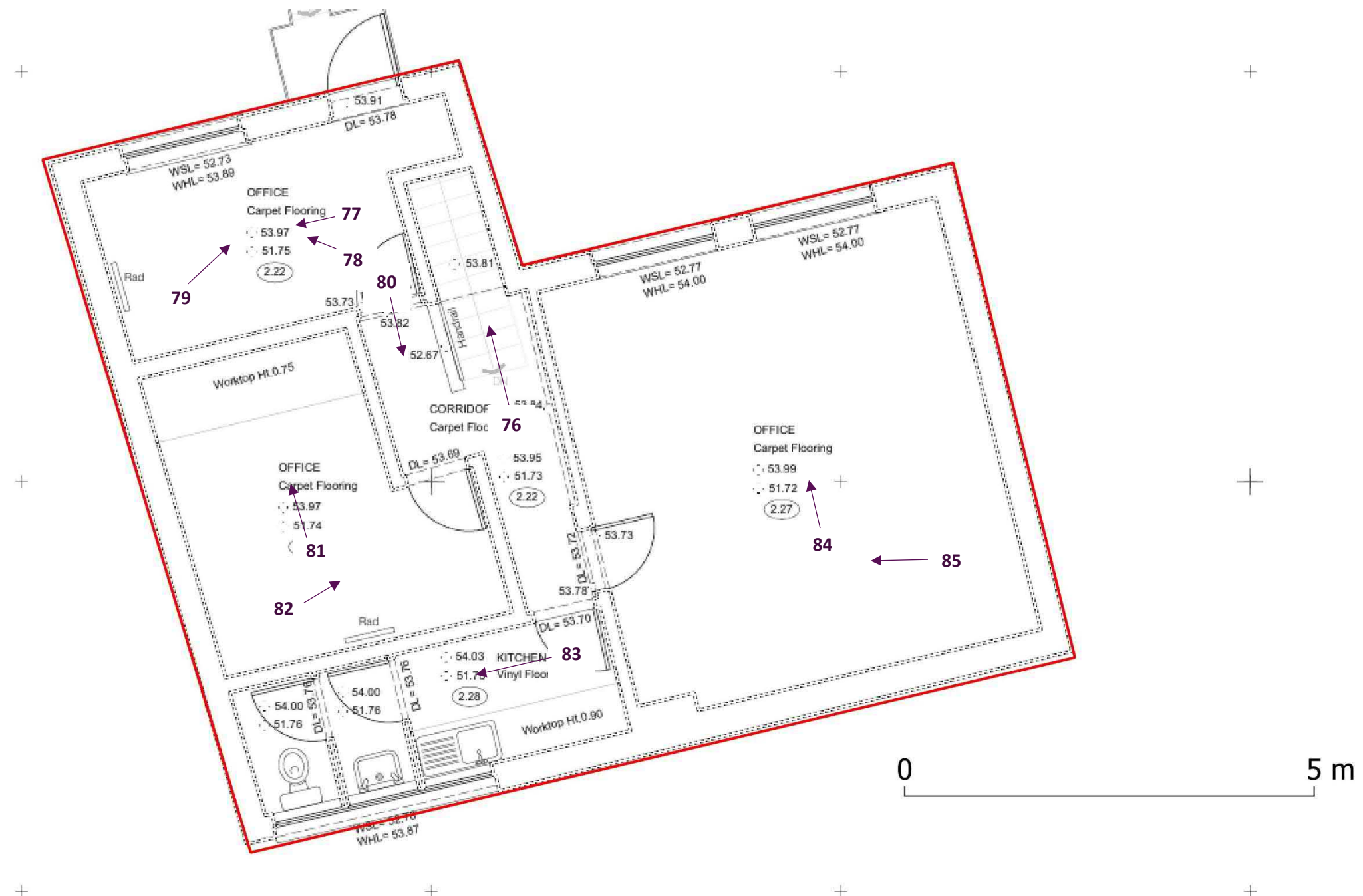


Figure 24: Second floor plan of three storey building to rear of No 87 Broad Street showing photograph locations (Surveyed and drawn by MK BIM)

No 86 Broad Street (Figures 13, 14, 16, 18, 25 and 26)

4.52 Although No 86 could not be accessed internally the layout of the building has been surveyed (Figures 13, 16, 25 and 26) and the elevations also surveyed (Figures 14 and 18). The building remains in use as a retail area and store rooms.

4.53 The layout of the building would appear to be similar to that of No 88 to the east, although the front windows of the upper floors of No 88 had been replaced. No 88 had a stair leading to first floor on its western side with a southern window providing light to a half landing before rising to first floor. This would be the same internal layout and window arrangement as seen on the southern elevation of the building (Figure 16). The building would have been modified in a similar way to the adjacent properties. The ground floor retail space was completely modern.

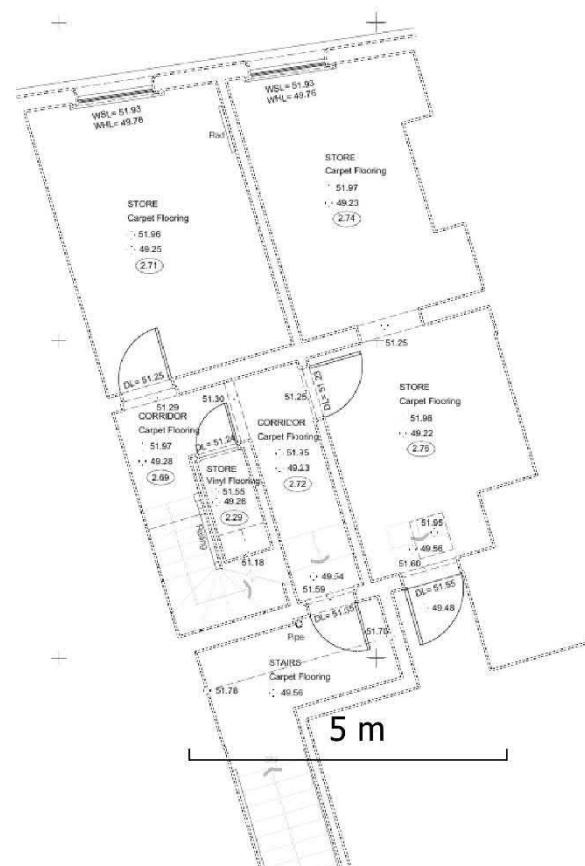


Figure 25: First floor plan of No 86 Broad Street (Surveyed and drawn by MK BIM)

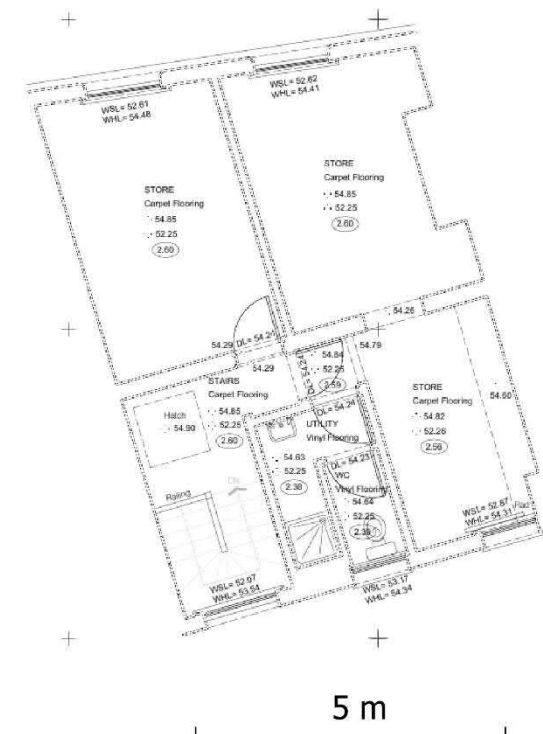


Figure 26: Second floor plan of No 86 Broad Street (Surveyed and drawn by MK BIM)

5. Conclusions

- 5.1** This Level 2 Historic Building Record of Nos 86 and 87 Broad Street, Reading RG1 2AP provides an appropriate record of the buildings prior to the demolition of the rears of the building and redevelopment. The Broad Street frontage is to be retained.
- 5.2** No 86 could not be accessed internally but it is considered that enough detail is available for the building from information already recorded for the structure and through internal record of the adjacent buildings.
- 5.3** The row of terraces, including Nos 85, 86, 87 and 88 would appear to have been first built some time before 1874 and were certainly present by 1879. The terrace comprised three smaller buildings (85, 86 and 87) each with pairs of windows to the frontage at first and second floor levels and similar width buildings behind.
- 5.4** The internal floor plans of Nos 86 and No 87 are not square and have a few odd angles on the Broad Street frontage. It is likely that this was the case as the buildings were erected within earlier plot boundaries which may have been post medieval or even medieval in date. The rears of the buildings were also slightly staggered such that No 87 projected slightly further south than No 86 and No 88 slightly further south than No 87. These all suggest the terrace was built on earlier plots and also that the Broad Street frontage has a slight curve to it.
- 5.5** A cellar was present beneath part of No 87 which was briefly accessed, but had also been significantly altered with rendered walls and numerous partition walls. The floor plan of this did not fit closely with the upper buildings which could suggest it was a modern insertion or alternatively was a very much altered earlier cellar.
- 5.6** Nos 85 and 86 evidently had gardens in 1879, which followed long narrow plots, as might be expected as a fossilisation of medieval burgage plots running back from the main street frontages in towns.
- 5.7** No 87 was a double width structure with four windows to first and second storeys and the evidence would suggest this was always the case. The buildings to the rear of No 88 are shown on the 1879 OS map, although the full detail is difficult to judge, but it is possible that they were built at the same time or very soon after. The Trades directories indicate that

No 87 was owned by Edwin Awmack and that the building was used both as retail for 'fancy' goods and that the owners were also classed as warehousemen. It is possible that the three storey building behind was constructed for the Awmacks to provide warehouse space or even manufacturing space for some of the goods they sold. The large windows on the northern and part of the southern elevation would fit with this. The lack of fireplaces and chimneys in the building may on the other hand suggest the building was used for storage.

- 5.8** The upper storeys of the buildings would fit with having been used as residential space, presumably for the owners of the retail areas below. The census returns for No 87 would certainly indicate that this was the case, with occupiers including the Awmack family and also a domestic servant in 1881.
- 5.9** No 87 Broad Street retained its original staircase between first and second floor, although this was of quite simple design. Part of the stairs from ground to first floor may have been original near the top, but the layout had been altered in modern times.
- 5.10** The layout of the first floor had been affected by the construction of the entrance vestibule from the stairs leading up from ground floor. It is likely to have originally contained at least two rooms to the front and two the rear based on wall and window layouts. The second floor may have had three rooms to the south as presently exists and three to the front.
- 5.11** Within the building very few original features survived. Doorways had some moulded surrounds, but due to recent conversion and room alteration to office space, these are likely to have been replacements.
- 5.12** The doors were a mix of modern flat fire doors and panelled doors with flat boards to the inside of the rooms. Most of these panelled doors were modern replacements. A small amount of decorated coving was visible within the northwestern part of the front room on the first floor, possibly indicating a formal sitting room or reception room. The skirting boards had all been replaced or were originally very plain and square edged.
- 5.13** Two fireplaces would have been present on the east and west walls of the building as seen by the surviving chimney breasts. Only one cast

iron fireplace survived which is possibly original. All others had been sealed and boarded over, with no evidence for fireplaces or mantelpieces surviving. All walls had been replastered and painted over.

5.14 The windows within No 87 Broad Street may be original, being sash windows, round headed to first and swept head to second. The first floor windows had three lights with large lower pane and two above. The stops on the window would suggest they date from the latter part of the 19th century. The glass in some of the windows was quite wavy on the surface possibly indicating original glass. The second storey windows were four light sashes, again with some older appearance glass surviving. The windows of the southern elevation were a mix of possible original sashes and later casement replacements associated with fire exits.

5.15 The three storey building to the rear did not retain any original features internally except possibly the stair well between first and second floor. Many of the walls appeared to be later partition wall inserts. The windows on the eastern side of the northern elevation are likely to be original, but the others were all modern replacements. It is possible that originally this building comprised open floor areas whether as workshops or as store rooms. The buildings linking the three storey building to No 87 on the frontage did appear to be a mix of styles suggesting they had been altered. The southern extension leading to the rear door appears to have incorporated two earlier outhouses.

5.16 No 86 Broad Street would have been a residential dwelling to the first and second floors, with retail space at ground floor level as indicated by the Trade Directories and layout of the buildings. As noted above, Nos 86 and 85 are shown to have had gardens behind on the 1879 OS map rather than any store buildings. The existing building to the rear of No 86 is a modern building.

5.17 The buildings may be considered of local interest to the development of retail spaces on the Broad Street frontage but are of no particular architectural merit. They do not retain many features of note at ground floor level. Although the facades of the building are quite nicely laid out at first and second floors, they have been compromised by the changes to the end elements (Nos 85 and 88). No 86 also appeared to have been sandblasted or cleaned, where as No 87 had not. It is intended that the Broad Street frontage will be retained to keep the layout of the existing round headed windows, string courses, window hood moulds and vegetal label stops.

5.18 Internally the buildings have been significantly altered removing the original floor layouts and features to create office spaces used throughout the latter part of the 20th century until relatively recently (as the COVID-19 safety signs indicated).

6. Bibliography

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