

**FORMER ABERAERON HOSPITAL,
CEREDIGION**

HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING

(NGR SN 46119 62980)



Prepared by DAT Archaeological Services
For: T. Richard Jones (Betws) Ltd



DYFED ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

REPORT NO. 2021-60
EVENT RECORD No. 126367

May 2021

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By
Hubert Wilson



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**FORMER ABERAERON HOSPITAL, CEREDIGION:
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Client

T. Richard Jones (Betws) Ltd

Event Record No

126367

Report No

2021-60

Project Code

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**FORMER ABERAERON HOSPITAL, CEREDIGION:
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FORMER ABERAERON HOSPITAL, CEREDIGION: HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING

SUMMARY

DAT Archaeological Services were commissioned to undertake an archaeological scheme of historic building recording of the former Aberaeron Hospital (PRN 5665) on Princes Avenue, Aberaeron, Ceredigion, centred on NGR SN 46119 62980.

The building was originally a Union Workhouse erected in 1839, and converted into a hospital initially in 1914 with other amendments occurring during the course 20th century, leaving little of the original workhouse features intact. It is mainly T-shaped in plan with two-storey ranges and one-storey projecting wings to the front. The main elevation contains three sets of triple gables symmetrically arranged and a four-pointed arch door. At the rear are two yards containing a modern brick mortuary and a single storey extension. The hospital closed in the late 2010s.

CRYNODEB

Comisiynwyd Gwasanaethau Archeolegol YAD i ymgymryd â chynllun archeolegol o gofnodi adeiladau hanesyddol o hen Ysbyty Aberaeron (PRN 5665) ar Princes Avenue, Aberaeron, Ceredigion (NGR SN 46119 62980).

Tloty'r Undeb a godwyd ym 1839 yn wreiddiol oedd yr adeilad, a'i drawsnewid yn ysbyty i ddechrau ym 1914 gyda diwygiadau eraill yn digwydd yn ystod yr 20fed ganrif, gan adael dim ond ychydig o nodweddion gwreiddiol y wyrchw. Yn bennaf, mae ar ffurf siâp T gydag ystodau deulawr ac adenydd taflunio unllawr i'r tu blaen. Mae'r prif ddrychiad yn cynnwys tair set o dalcenni triphlyg wedi'u trefnu'n gymesur a drws bwa pedwar pwynt. Yn y cefn mae dwy iard sy'n cynnwys marwdy brics modern ac estyniad unllawr. Caeodd yr ysbyty ddiwedd y 2010au.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

- 1.1.1 DAT Archaeological Services, in response to a request from T. Richard Jones (Betws) Ltd, were commissioned to undertake an archaeological scheme of historic building recording works on the former Aberaeron Hospital (PRN 5665, NPRN 23273) , Princes Avenue, Aberaeron, Ceredigion SA46 0JJ centred on SN 46119 62980 prior to the demolition of the former hospital and in advance of a residential development and associated works (Planning Application Nos. A200729 and A200730). Conservation Area Consent and Planning permission had been granted subject to conditions including, within the Conservation Area Consent, condition 4 which states:

Development shall not begin until an appropriate photographic survey of the existing building(s) has been carried out in accordance with guidelines provided by the Local Planning Authority's archaeological advisors – Dyfed Archaeological Trust-Heritage Management. The resulting photographs should be approved by the planning authority prior to the commencement of development and deposited with the regional Historic Environment Record, held and maintained by the Dyfed Archaeological Trust, Corner House, Carmarthen Street, Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire, SA19 6AE.

Subsequent to further discussion with the Local Planning Authority's archaeological advisors, it was agreed that a Level 2 Building Survey would be an appropriate level of recording for this site.

- 1.1.2 The main building is not listed, but lies within a Conservation Area. It was originally built as a workhouse in 1839. The building was converted for use as a hospital in 1914, and became a cottage hospital in 1930. From 1946, after the advent of the NHS, further additions and alterations were made throughout the 2nd half of the 20th century. The hospital closed in the late 2010s.
- 1.1.3 The historic building recording scheme has been undertaken to a Level 2 standard as defined in the Historic England 'Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice' (2016), which is described thus:

Level 2 is a descriptive record, made in circumstances similar to those of Level 1 (basic photographic survey) but when more information is needed. ... The record will present conclusions regarding the building's development and use, but will not discuss in detail the evidence on which these conclusions are based. A plan and sometimes other drawings may be made ...

- 1.1.4 The historic building recording has been undertaken in accordance with the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological investigation and recording of Standing Buildings and Structures* (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA), 1996, revised 2001 & 2008).
- 1.1.5 The photographic survey was undertaken on the 11th and 12th of May 2021.

1.2 Site Location

- 1.2.1 The former hospital is situated in the NE of Aberaeron. It is bounded to the west by Princes Avenue (A482), to the north by Bryn Road, to the east by Bryn y Mor and to the south by a residential property. Tall stone walls enclose the north, east and south sides of the site.

- 1.2.2 The land slopes down from east to west and the rear of the hospital and associated yards have been benched into the hillside. It lies roughly on the 15mOD contour.
- 1.2.3 The underlying solid geology of the area is represented by sedimentary mudstone and sandstone of the Mynydd Bach Formation.

1.3 Scope of the Project

- 1.3.1 The building recording was designed to record the existing fabric of the structures (at the time of the survey) through a combination of a photographic survey, along with site notes, drawings and historic research.

1.4 Report Outline

- 1.4.1 This report describes the location of the site, its known archaeological and historical background and photographs of the site. Sources are referenced within the text or as footnotes.

1.5 Abbreviations

Regional Historic Environment Record – HER; Primary Record Number – PRN; National Grid Reference – NGR; Written Scheme of Investigation - WSI.

1.6 Illustrations

Record photographs are included to the rear of the text. Printed map extracts are not necessarily reproduced to their original scale and are illustrative only.



Figure 2: Detailed site location plan (red outline). Not reproduced to scale.

2 METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 The historic building recording scheme has been undertaken to a Level 2 standard as defined in the Historic England 'Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice' (2016). This level of recording is described thus:

Level 2 is a descriptive record, made in similar circumstances to Level 1 [basic photographic survey] but when more information is needed.....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 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 not normally be comprehensive...

- 2.2 To supplement the on-site survey a review of information held at the DAT HER and readily available online source was undertaken. A Heritage Impact Statement has been prepared previously (Holland 2020), which details the history of the site. The on-site survey completed the relevant tasks outlined below, where possible, to complete the record to Level 2 guidelines. Only photos taken during this survey will be included within the site archive and report.
- 2.3 Based on the Level 2 record as defined in the Historic England guidelines (2016) the following has been undertaken:

Written Record

- The building's precise location, as a National Grid reference and in address form.
- A note of any statutory designation (listing, scheduling or conservation area) and non-statutory designations (historic parks and gardens registers, local lists etc).
- The date of the record, the name(s) of the recorder(s) and, if an archive has been created, its location.
- A summary of the building's type or purpose, historically and at present, its materials and possible date(s). The names of architects, builders, patrons and owners will be given if known.
- An introduction briefly setting out the circumstances in which the record was made, its objectives, methods, scope and limitations, and any constraints.
- Any evidence for the former existence of demolished structures or removed features associated with the building.
- Copies of historic maps, drawings, views or photographs illustrating the development of the building or its site (if readily available and permissible).

Drawn Record

- Measured plans (to scale) as existing
- A site plan, typically at 1:500 or 1:1250 relating the building to other structures and to related topographical feature and landscape features.
- A plan or plans identifying the location and direction of accompanying photographs
- Copies of earlier drawings throwing light on the building's history, if available

Photographic Record

- A general view or views of the building (in its wider setting or landscape).
- The building's external appearance. Typically a series of oblique views will show all external elevations of the building, and give an overall impression of its size and shape.
- The overall appearance of the principal rooms and circulation areas.

3 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 Aberaeron was the first planned town in Wales. Before 1800 there was very little in the way of a settlement, the town as it stands was founded in 1807 by the Rev. Alban Thomas Jones Gwynne who saw the commercial possibilities of building a harbour and associated town. To this end he employed the architect Edward Haycock of Shrewsbury whose Regency styled houses are grouped around the harbour. By the 1860's the planned town was almost complete.
- 3.2 The construction of Aberaeron Workhouse in 1839 was necessitated by the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834, known as the New Poor Law, the aim of which was to reduce the cost of looking after the poor by providing 'indoor relief', where people would be put to work in a workhouse, as opposed to 'outdoor relief' in which the poor received payments, which was becoming very costly and prone to corrupt practices. Parishes were grouped into unions and, unless a suitable building could be found, they were obliged to build their own workhouse. Fourteen parishes were associated with the Aberaeron Workhouse, these were: Cilcennin, Ciliau Aeron, Cydplwyf, Dihewid, Henyfnw, Llanarth, Llanbadarn Tref Eglwys, Llandewi Aberarth, Llandisilio Gogo, Llanwchaeron, Llanfihangel Ystrad, Llanina, Llanllwchaiarn, Llansantfraed and Llannon. The workhouse was designed to hold 80 inmates; during the Rebecca Riots of 1843 soldiers were billeted here as well.
- 3.3 The workhouse was designed in the 'Tudor style' by the architect George Wilkinson who also built other workhouses in Wales at Bridgend, Abergavenny, Pembroke and St Dogmaels. The builder was William Greene who also worked on Aberaeron harbour.
- 3.4 The T-shaped plan of the workhouse, complete with wings, is shown in the 1839 parish Tithe map (Figure 4). The landowner is Rev. Alban Thomas Jones Gwynne, the founder of Aberaeron, who also owned the majority of the land surrounding the workhouse.
- 3.5 The 1890 1st edition OS map (Figure 5) shows that both yards to the rear of the building have been divided into two, thus creating four yards. This would be in keeping with the ethos of separating the inmates of the workhouse into four groups: children, able bodied males, able bodied females and the aged and impotent, with each group having its own yard.
- 3.6 Apart from the addition of a few more outbuildings at the rear, the 1905 2nd edition OS map (Figure 6) is similar to the 1st edition. Neither yard now show these divisions, the southern yard being a patio and lawned area whilst the mortuary and other buildings occupy the north and east sides of the north yard.
- 3.7 The building was converted for use as a cottage hospital in 1914 by the architects David Davies and Sons Penrhiwllan, and during the 1st World War became a Red Cross Auxillary hospital caring for the returning wounded. From 1948, after the advent of the NHS, further additions and alterations were made throughout the 2nd half of the 20th century. The hospital closed in the late 2010s.
- 3.8 Judging by an inter-war photograph of Aberaeron Hospital in the Heritage Impact Statement (Holland 2020) the present chimneys are rebuilds.



Figure 4: Inmates of Aberaeron Workhouse early 20th century (Courtesy of Stephan Thomas) © www.workhouse.org.uk



Figure 5: Aberaeron Board of Guardians 1914 (Courtesy of Stephan Thomas)
© www.workhouse.org.uk



Figure 6: Extract from the 1839 Tithe map (hospital site arrowed)

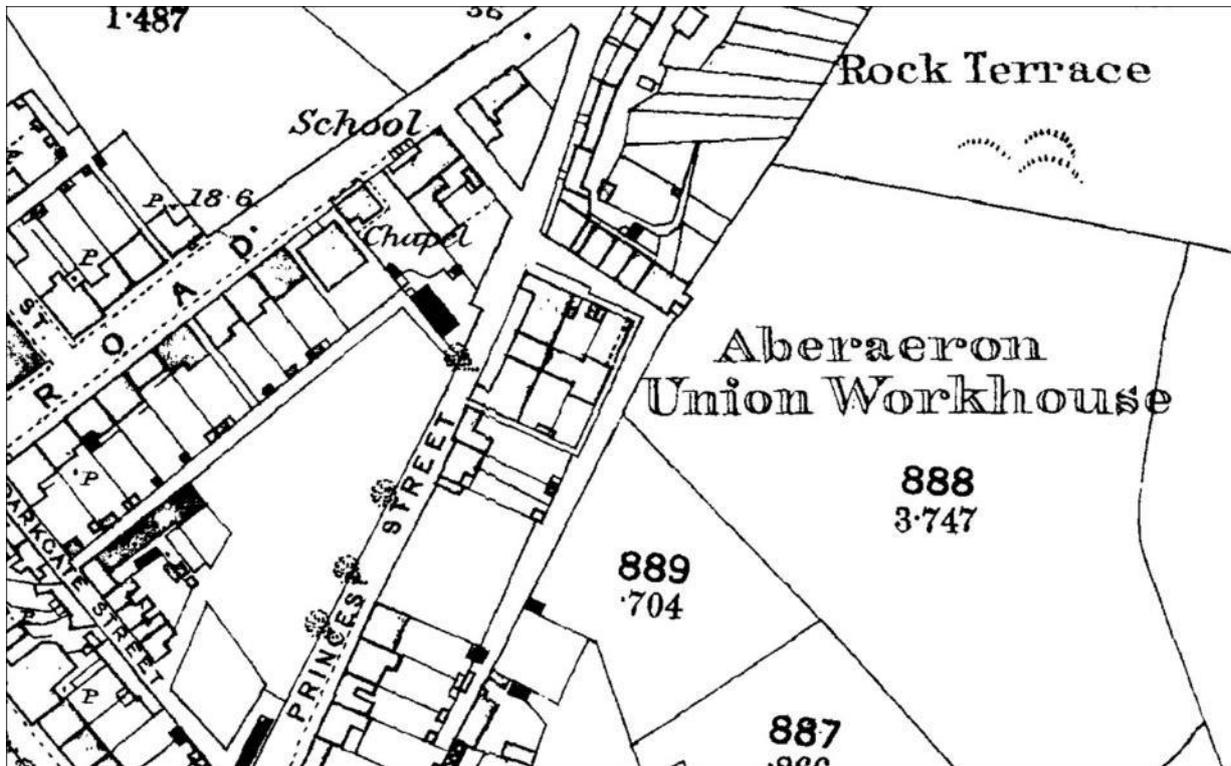


Figure 7: Extract from the 1890 OS 1st edition map.

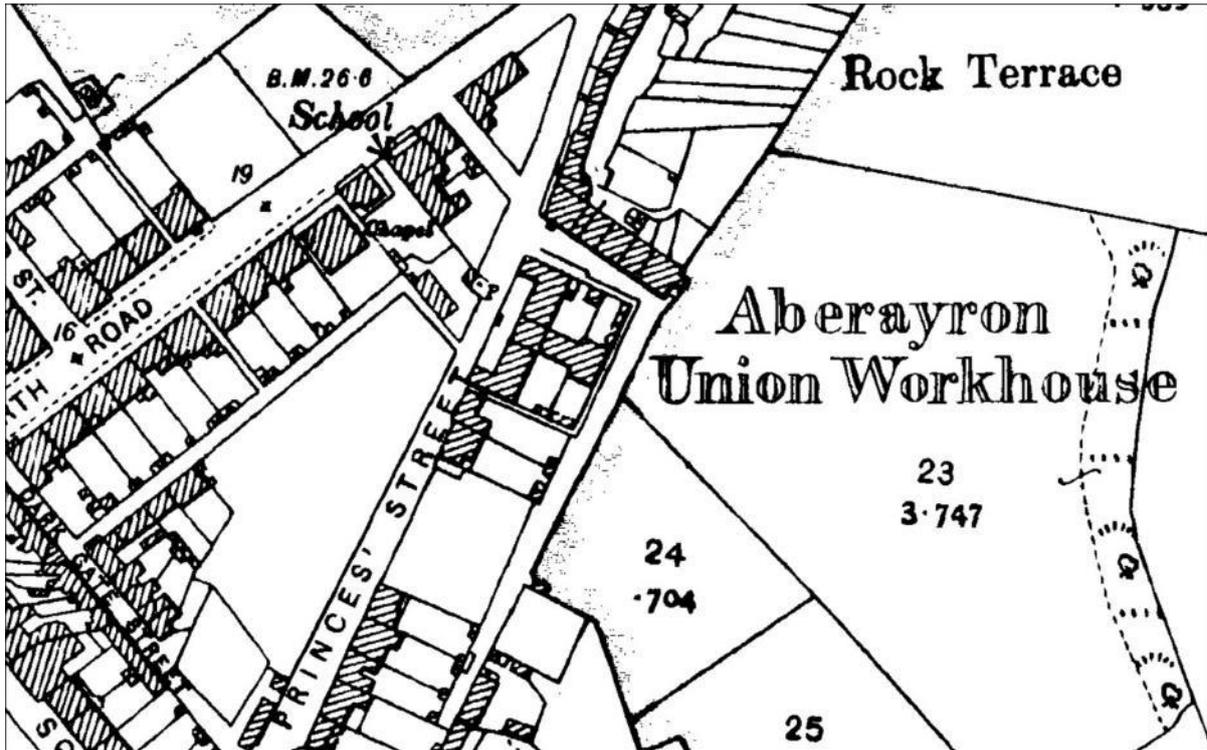


Figure 8: Extract from the 1905 OS 2nd edition map.

BUILDING DESCRIPTION

4.1 Exterior (Figures 9 & 10)

- 4.1.1 The building is T-shape in plan, consisting of two, two-storey ranges with one-storey, projecting wings on either side. It stands above the road and is set back 6.35m. The west walls of the wings border the pavement and a retaining wall between the wings encloses the front. Behind this wall are two small lawns and paths leading to the wings. The walls are rubble-stone with a roughcast finish (Photos 1 - 3).
- 4.1.2 The front door is approached via a pair of wrought iron gates, supported by stone piers with pyramidal tops, and concrete and slate steps (Photo 4). The door opening is a four-centred (Tudor) arch with chamfered reveals but the door is of modern design. All the window openings in the front elevation also have chamfered reveals. The front elevation, excluding the projecting wings, is approximately 27.8m long and consists of nine gabled bays grouped into threes, each gable has decorative bargeboards but the finials have been lost. The gables for the middle three bays are especially steep. A cement skirt 0.32m high and projecting 0.05m from the wall, runs the whole length of the front (Photos 4 - 6).
- 4.1.3 The wings on either side of the frontage project out approximately 6.35m and are 7.05m wide. Each has a four-centred arch door opening (Photo 7).
- 4.1.4 At the rear are two yards separated by the E-W range (Photos 8 - 14); the 1st and 2nd edition OS show that both yards were once divided in two. The roof of the E-W range is composed of welsh slate and the four, brick-chimney stacks present have all probably been rebuilt.
- 4.1.5 The northern yard consists of a concrete floor enclosed by the N-S and E-W ranges that has been terraced into the hillside and enclosed by a tall stone wall. The N-S range is fitted with a fire escape. At the eastern side

of the yard is the modern brick-built mortuary and also, in the E-W range, the entrance into the boiler room (Photo 10).

- 4.1.6 The window casements have in the main been replaced by modern metal frames but the few timber, side-hung casements present were probably inserted during the 1914 conversion into a hospital. An example can be seen in the north yard (Photo 12).
- 4.1.7 A number of external doors that probably originated during the 1914 conversion still survive. These include arched boarded doors in the projecting wings (Photos 7 and 29) and the door with the three-paned overlight set in a splayed corner in the north yard (Photo 11).
- 4.1.8 The elevations seen from the southern yard consist of a single storey modern extension built in front of the N-S and E-W ranges (Photo 13). The wooden casement windows are probably associated with the conversion into a hospital in 1914. The southern yard, which has been terraced into the hillside, consists of a paved area and lawn with the original workhouse stone wall enclosing its southern and eastern sides (Photo 14).
- 4.1.9 The east gable of the E-W range is the only wall that does not have a roughcast finish and shows the rubble stone wall of the workhouse. Within this wall is possibly the only remaining feature associated with the workhouse, a twenty-paned, casement window with brick voussoirs (Photo 17).

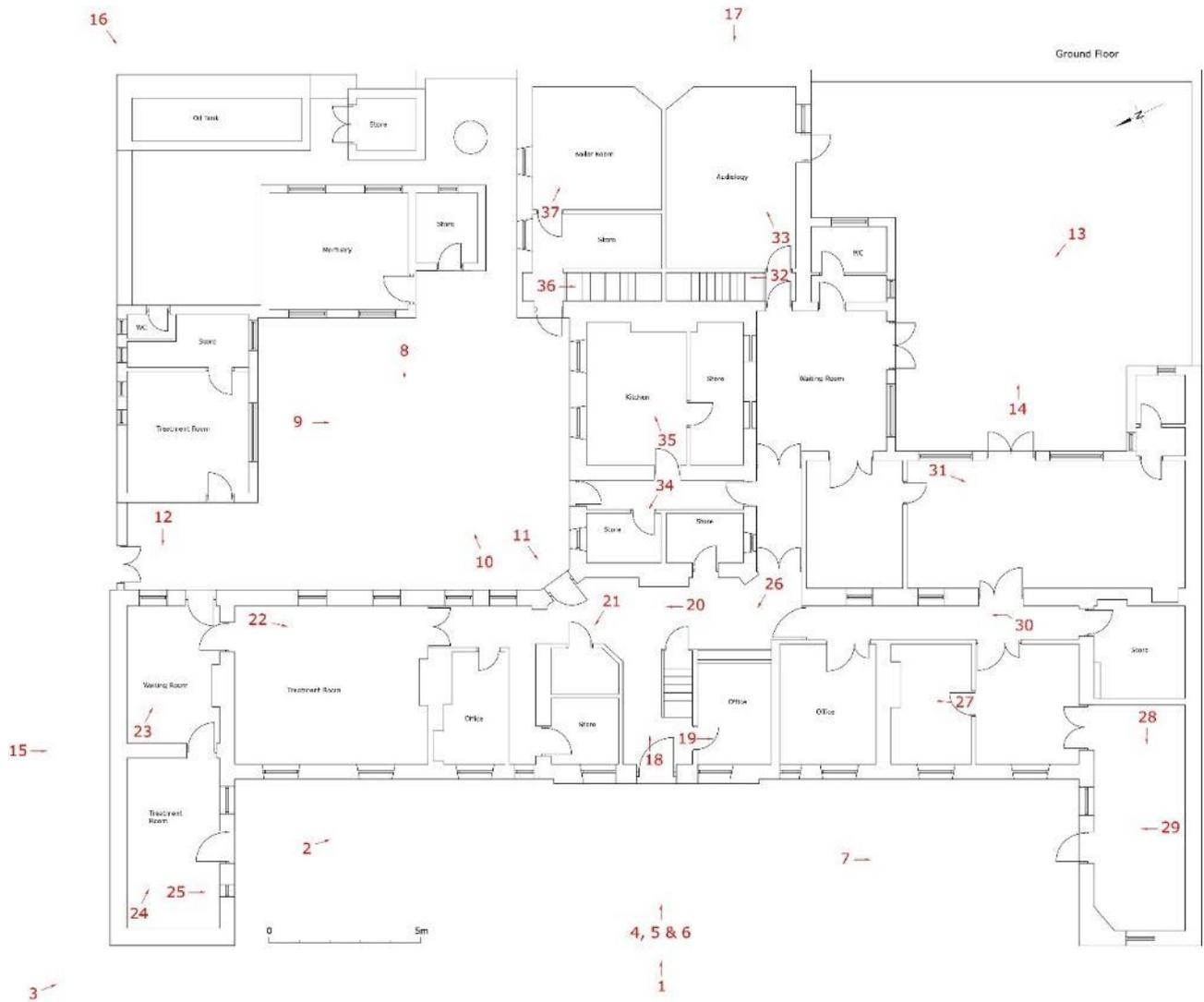


Figure 9: Location and direction of exterior and ground floor photographs.



Figure 10: Existing front elevation of the former Aberaeron Hospital. Drawing produced by Chaberlain Moss King Architecture (Drawing No.A015, date 25.11.2019). Not reproduced to original scale, but additional scalebar added.

Exterior Photographs



Photo 1: West (front) elevation of hospital



Photo 2: Oblique (south) view of hospital front .



Photo 3: Looking south toward hospital in street setting



Photo 4: Iron gates and steps leading to main entrance.



Photo 5: Main entrance with four-centered arch; door and window reveals are chamfered.



Photo 6: Central gabled bays with decorative bargeboards and missing finials



Photo 7: Southern projecting wing (1m scale)



Photo 8: East facing (rear) elevation in north yard and fire escape



Photo 9: North facing elevation in north yard with splayed corner



Photo 10: East facing shot of mortuary and entrance into boiler room/attic in north yard



Photo 11: Splayed corner at junction of ranges in north yard.



Photo 12: Window (in north yard) probably associated with conversion to hospital in 1914.



Photo 13: View of modern extension (bottom) and original range (top) from south yard.



Photo 14: View east of south yard



Photo 15: View south of long wall of projecting wing with gable of N-S range behind



Photo 16: View west of rear of hospital from Bryn Road



Photo 17: East facing elevation of rubble stone wall and window possibly associated with workhouse.

4.2 Ground Floor (Figure 6)

- 4.2.1 The main entrance of the hospital opens to the stairs that lead to the upper floor (Photo 18). To the right of the entrance is the Enquiry Room containing a four-panneled cupboard door (Photo 19) whilst to the left of the stairs the passageway leads to the ground floors of the N-S and E-W ranges and the yards to the rear.



Photo 18: View of stairs and passageway from front entrance



Photo 19: Four-panelled cupboard door in Enquiry Room



Photo 20: View north along corridor at the rear of the stairway; door on left leads to north yard.

- 4.2.3 The entrance passageway leads to the N-S corridor (Photo 20) at the north end of which is situated the Physiotherapy and Lymphoedema Department and Waiting Room. Also along this section of the corridor is the entrance to the north yard, opposite which is the door to the former Strong Room (Photo 21).

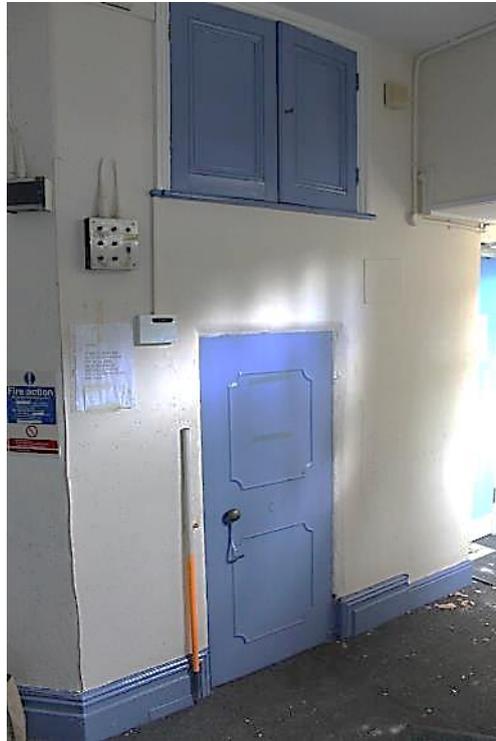


Photo 21: Door to the former Strong Room.



Photo 22: View of probable fireplace in south wall of Physiotherapy and Lymphoedema Dept.

- 4.2.4 The Physiotherapy and Lymphoedema Dept. measured 6.35m by 5.25m. All the windows had modern aluminium casements on the west side and modern wooden casements on the east side. The northern window on the east side might once have been a doorway. A chimney breast and probable fireplace stood on the south wall which now supported a wash basin (Photo 22). The ceiling was plain and the floor vinyl-tiled. All the walls were painted plaster with decorated skirting board (torus?). In the north wall a modern door opened to the waiting room which measured 4.55m by 2.00m. The east wall contained a window and boarded door from the former 1914 hospital (Photo 23) and the south wall a chimney breast and probable blocked fireplace.
- 4.2.5 A door in the west wall of the Waiting Room led to the north wing which measured 5.70m by 3.05m. The south wall featured a four-pointed arch doorway and boarded door and a small, high window complete with the original blind (Photos 24 and 25).



Photo 23: SE corner of waiting room with original hospital door and window on the left.



Photo 24: South wall of north wing with original arched door



Photo 25: Original hospital window complete with blind and sash



Photo 26: *Panelled cupboard doors on ground floor to the left of the staircase probably associated with the former hospital.*

- 4.2.6 At the rear of the stairs was a small four-panelled door for a 'below stairs' cupboard, to the left of which stood a shelved recess with panelled doors. These are more than likely associated with the former 1914 hospital (Photo 26).
- 4.2.7 At the southern end of the N-S corridor a chimney breast and probable blocked fireplace could be seen in the north wall of one of the small rooms (Photo 27). This is the 'twin' of the chimney breast seen in the Physiotherapy Dept.



Photo 27: Chimney breast and probable blocked fireplace in a room at the southern end of the N-S corridor (1m scale)

- 4.2.8 The southern wing measured 7.50m by 2.95m. The east wall contained a wash basin and the west wall a window opening with a modern casement and a splayed northwest corner (Photo 28). The north wall had a four-pointed arch doorway with an arched boarded door and a window to the right. The reveal for the window goes down to the floor suggesting a former doorway but considering the arched door is to the left this cannot be the case (Photo 29). The floor is vinyl-tiled and the long sides of the ceiling edges angle down in line with the roof trusses, the bottoms of which are visible between the ceiling and the wall-plate.



Photo 28: Looking towards west wall of southern wing (1m scale)



Photo 29: Arched doorway and window in north wall of southern wing (1m scale)

4.2.9 A lifted floorboard situated in the corridor near the entrance to the modern extension showed it was adhered to the mortared base with a thin layer of bitumen (Photo 30).



Photo 30: *Lifted floorboard showing thin layer of bitumen beneath (0.5m scale).*

4.2.10 The west wall of the modern extension at the southern end of the hospital was formerly the outside wall of the N-S range. A modern entrance has been inserted in the wall, connecting the extension with the N-S corridor. At the south end of the wall a blocked doorway (converted to a shelved recess) is visible (Photo 31).



Photo 31: *Looking towards SW corner of modern extension showing blocked doorway - converted to a shelved recess (1m scale)*



Photo 32: *Wooden stair case leading to room above Audiology Dept (1m scale)*

- 4.2.11 Immediately to the west of the entrance to the Audiology Dept. a wooden staircase leads to the room above. The lower half of the side walls are stone built and the upper half lathe and plaster. The staircase is probably associated with the workhouse (Photo 32).
- 4.2.12 The Audiology Dept. situated at the east end of the hospital measures approximately 6.05m by 4.35m. The plain ceiling contains a painted timber beam aligned N-S. The NE corner is splayed (Photo 33) and the south wall contains a modern window and doorway. The floor is carpet-tiled.
- 4.2.13 In the E-W range a quarry-tiled cross-passage leads to a storeroom with a louvred opening above its door (Photo 33). Opposite is the entrance to the hospital kitchen, measuring 4.70m by 3.25m. It contains a quarry tiled floor and two splayed windows with modern casements in the north wall. A chimney breast and blocked fireplace are situated on the east wall (Photo 34). The south wall is modern behind which is a storeroom with blocked windows in the south wall associated with the former hospital.
- 4.2.14 The Boiler Room and an adjacent staircase is accessed via a doorway in the north yard. The lower half of the side walls of the staircase are stone built and the upper half lathe and plaster (Photo 35). The Boiler Room contains two oil-fired boilers (Photo 36) its west wall is a later addition separating the Boiler Room from the emergency generator.



Photo 33: NE corner of Audiology Dept. (1m scale)



Photo 34: Modern door, louvered opening and storeroom beyond



Photo 35: East wall of kitchen with chimney breast/blocked fireplace (1m scale)



Photo 36: Wooden staircase, probably associated with the workhouse, leading to attic above Boiler Room (1m scale)



Photo 37: East facing shot of Boiler Room

4.3 First Floor

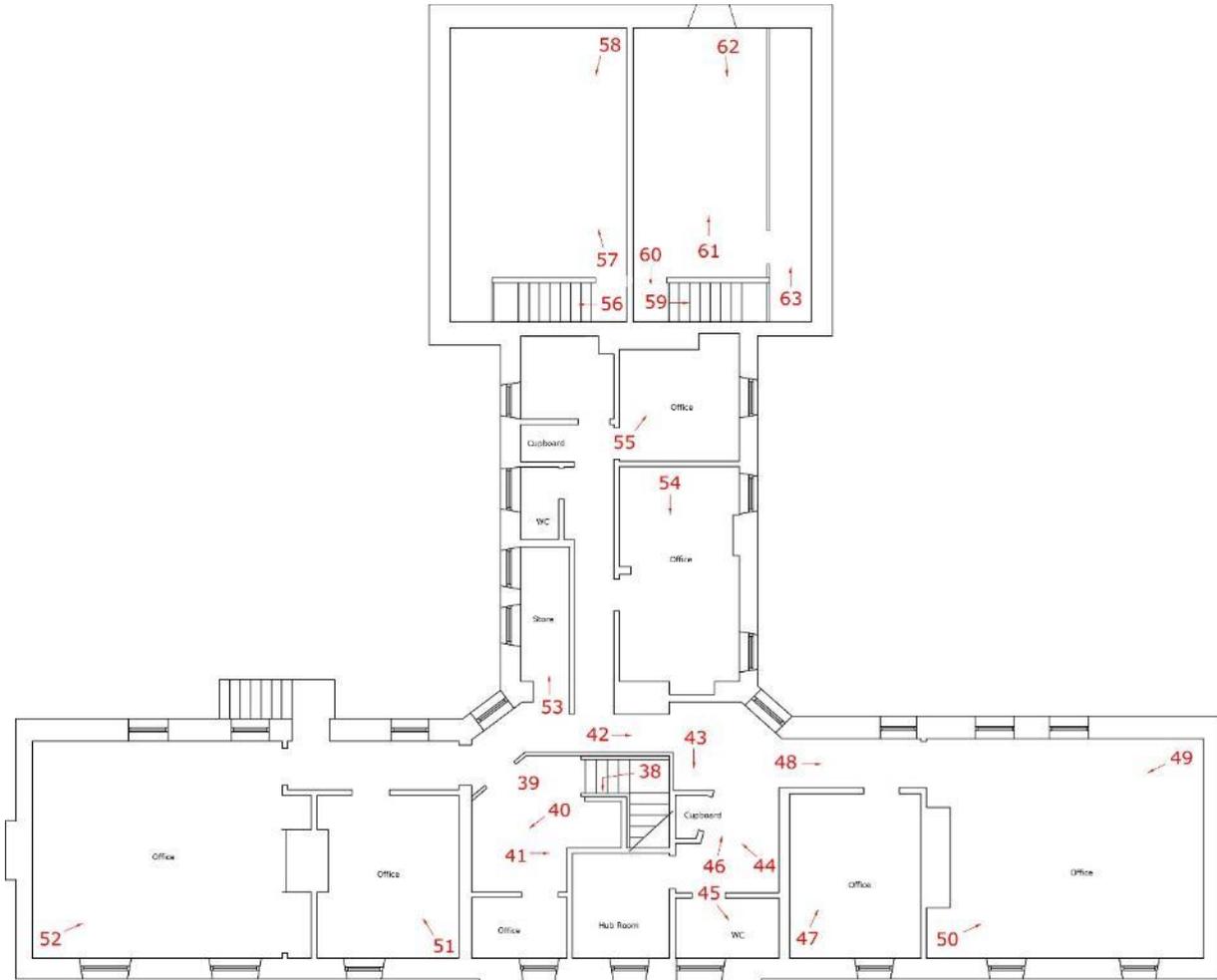


Figure 11: Location and direction of first floor photographs

- 4.3.1 Aside from the attics at the east end of the building, the first floor is accessed via the stairs situated directly in front of the main entrance, comprising plain, square newel posts with bullnose tops, a moulded handrail and, concealed behind painted hardboard, turned spindles (Photo 38). At mid-landing the stairs turn left; the right turn having been blocked (Photo 39); a small flight of steps can be seen in the adjoining corridor where the floorboards have been lifted (Photo 43).
- 4.3.2 Separating the landing and the corridor is a reinforced glass and timber frame partition (Photo 39). The landing, on the north and west side, is enclosed in lathe and plaster walls (Photo 40) and the skirting board (seen almost throughout the building and, when different, is indicative of later work) has a torus moulding (Photo 41).
- 4.3.3 Both ends of the corridor adjacent to the landing have chamfered corners with window openings where the two ranges meet. This would have enabled the workhouse staff to monitor the yards below (Photos 42 and 46)
- 4.3.4 A small cupboard with a four-panelled door is situated in the corridor on the south side of the stairwell. This is possibly a feature of the original hospital (Photo 44).

- 4.3.5 A WC measuring approximately 2.50m by 1.40m is situated in the centre of the N-S range, its sloping ceiling reflecting the roof angle (Photo 45).
- 4.3.6 To the south of the WC is an office measuring 4m by 3.35m containing a blocked fireplace, a four panelled door and a splayed window opening with a modern casement. All the interior walls are lathe and plaster and the ceiling on the west side of the room slopes in line with the roof showing the bases of exposed roof timbers (Photo 47).
- 4.3.7 A small corridor (Photo 48) leads to a large office (6.65m x 5.25m) at the southern end of the N-S range. A four panelled door and chimney breast with probable blocked fireplace is situated in the north wall which is of lathe and plaster construction (Photo 49). The east and west walls contain two windows each, with metal casements in the west and timber casements in the east. Exposed roof timbers are visible in the ceiling and the ceiling slopes in line with the timbers. The beams have been clad in tongue and groove (Photo 50).
- 4.3.8 At the northern end of the N-S range are two offices and a small corridor. The corridor contains a small door that opens to the fire escape; the door is probably an enlarged former window. The smaller of the two offices (4m by 3.40m) contains a four panelled door and a blocked fireplace. All the interior walls are lathe and plaster. The west side of the ceiling slopes, reflecting the roof angle and there is a single splayed window with a modern casement (Photo 51). The larger office measures 6.70m by 5.25m and contains a blocked fireplace in the south wall. East and west walls contain two splayed window openings apiece with modern casements. The ceiling slopes, reflecting the angle of the exposed roof timbers which are clad in tongue and groove. The floor, like all the offices in the building, is carpet tiled (Photo 52).
- 4.3.9 At the west end of the E-W range, is a narrow room measuring 3.70m by 1.20m. It contains two splayed windows with timber casements and tiled sill and a tiled east wall. This room is more than likely associated with the original hospital conversion (Photo 53).
- 4.3.10 Across the corridor from the room above is an office measuring 5.15m by 2.90m. Two splayed windows with timber casements with old fittings probably date from the hospital conversion. A recess in the west wall could be a blocked doorway, albeit a small one. The skirting board is small and plain. And the north wall is modern (stud and plasterboard) (Photo 54)
- 4.3.11 To the east of the above is a smaller office measuring 2.90m by 2.70m (Photo 55). A projection at the NW corner of the room conceals a small flight of steps which connected with the stairs leading to the southernmost room in the E-W range (see Photo 60). The window in the south wall has a timber casement and probably originates from the hospital conversion. The east wall to the right of the projection is lathe and plaster but the north and west walls are stud and plasterboard demonstrating that this office and the one above are of modern origin.
- 4.3.12 Access to the two easternmost rooms is via symmetrically opposed wooden staircases (Photos 56 and 59). The northern staircase is only accessed through the yard and the southern staircase would have been the same except it is now inside the modern extension. Before the conversion to a hospital in 1914 access to the southern room was also possible via an entrance (now blocked) at the top of the stairs leading to the south room (Photo 60).
- 4.3.13 The north room lies above the Boiler Room and was the men's bedroom, as shown in the Aberaeron Hospital Heritage Impact Statement (Holland

2020), which contains a photograph of a boarded door and the words 'Men's Bedroom' in Victorian script across the top. By the time of the present photographic survey the door had been removed (for preservation). The room measures approximately 7.35m by 4.35m. North and east walls are painted stone; the east (gable) wall contains a linear projection between 0.4 – 0.6m wide, protruding c. 0.15m out and spanning the height of the wall, with breeze block infilling to the east. This could be the possible remains of a chimney breast although there is no evidence of a chimney in the roof above. The floor is linoleum with timber floorboards and the ceiling is painted hardboard with exposed roof timbers (Photos 57 and 58). It is odd that this room does not contain a window like its twin on the other side of the south wall.

- 4.3.14 Opposite the top of the stairs leading to the south room are some wooden steps leading to a blocked entrance (Photos 59 and 60). This would have led to the west side of the E-W range. The other side of the blocked entrance is seen in Photo 55.
- 4.3.15 The southern room at the east end of the E-W range measures approximately 7.35 by 4.34, similar to the northern room opposite. A 20-paned, splayed, casement window sits in the east (gable) wall (Photo 61). This window, more than likely, was part of the original workhouse; a better view can be seen in Photo 17. The ceiling is painted hardboard and the floor carpet-tiled. The west side of the room contains a built-in tongue and groove cupboard and a boarded door leading to the stairs (Photo 62). The south side of the room has been turned into a narrow store room by partitioning with tongue and groove boards (Photo 63).

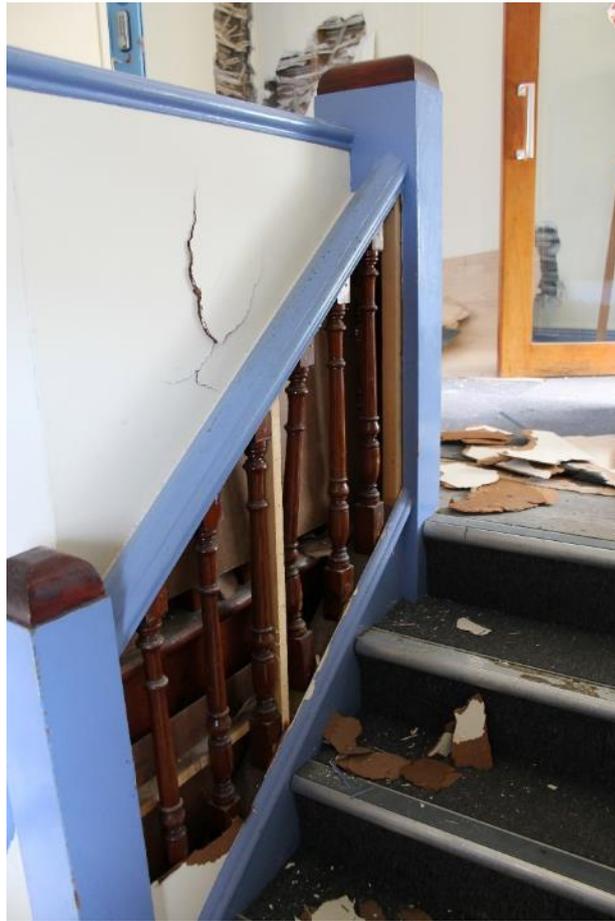


Photo 38: Original (1914 conversion) balustrade



Photo 39: Reinforced glass and timber framed wall beside landing (blocked stairway right of 1m scale)



Photo 40: Lathe and plaster walls in landing (1m scale)



Photo 41: Typical (original) skirting board profile seen throughout building (0.5 scale)



Photo 42: South facing shot along corridor adjacent to landing towards chamfered corner with window overlooking south yard.



Photo 43: Lifted floorboards reveal blocked stairs leading to mid-landing (see photo 39)



Photo 44: Four-panelled cupboard door in south corridor



Photo 45: SW corner of WC showing angled ceiling (1m scale)

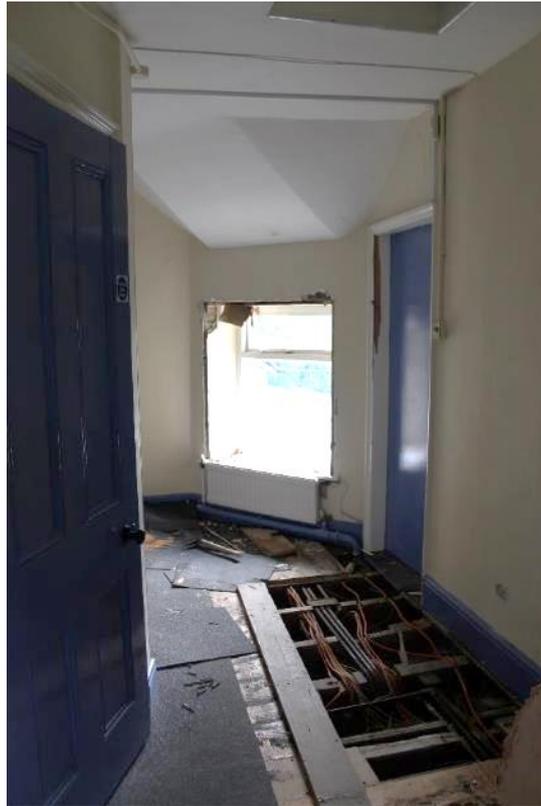


Photo 46: Looking east at splayed corner in southern corridor with window overlooking south yard



Photo 47: Four panelled door in office at south end of building

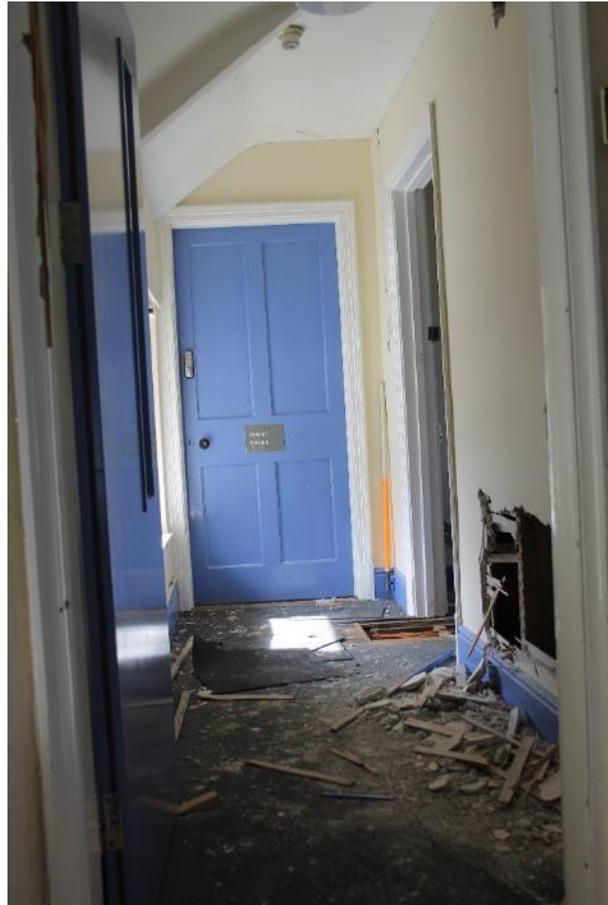


Photo 48 Four pannelled door leading to large office at south end of building



Photo 49: Chimney breast and blocked fireplace in large office at south end of building (1m scale)



Photo 50: Ceiling and roof timbers in large office at south end of building.



Photo 51: Blocked fireplace and four panelled door in office at north end of building (1m scale).



Photo 52: View south; blocked fireplace and exposed roof timbers in room in north end of building (1m scale)



Photo 53: View east; narrow room in E-W range associated with first hospital (1m scale)



Photo 54: Office in E-W range – recess possible blocked doorway (1m scale)



Photo 55: Small office in E-W range – wall projection on left is blocked staircase (1m scale)



Photo 56: Looking down from staircase leading to 'Men's Bedroom' (attic)



Photo 57: View east of north attic in E-W range (1m scale)



Photo 58: View west of north attic in E-W range (1m scale)



Photo 59: Looking down from top of stairs leading to south attic in E-W-range (1m scale)



Photo 60: *Wooden steps leading to blocked entrance; opposite entrance to south attic in E-W range (1m scale)*



Photo 61: *View east of south attic in E-W range*



Photo 62: View west of south attic in E-W range - door on right leads to top of stairs (1m scale)



Photo 63: View east along narrow storeroom in south attic.

5 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The former Aberaeron Hospital was originally constructed in 1839 in the 'Tudor style' as a Union Workhouse for 80 inmates and designed by the architect George Wilkinson of Oxford. It served 14 parishes and was built on land owned by the Rev. Alban Thomas Jones Gwynne, the founder of the planned town of Aberaeron which began in 1807; although the workhouse was not part of the original design of the town. It is set back from and above the road and built with rubble stone with a roughcast finish – apart from the east gable, which is unrendered. The design is mainly T-shaped in plan, consisting of two 2-storey ranges and one-storey wings projecting to the front. The main elevation features three sets of gables and a central four-centered arch door. Only one possible window from the workhouse survives, the rest either date from the conversion into a hospital or are later mid 20th century insertions.
- 5.2 The building was converted into a hospital in 1914, by the architects David Davies and Sons Penrhiwllan, and for a number of years cared for wounded soldiers returning from the 1st World War. This conversion and later modifications made during the advent of the NHS in 1948 and beyond means very little of the former workhouse remains, with wards and offices replacing the internal layout. It is assumed that the panelled doors, torus-moulded skirting boards, the staircase at the front and the wooden, side-hung casements probably originate from the 1914 conversion and possibly all that remains of the former workhouse are the wooden staircases leading to the attics in the east range and the aforementioned window in the south attic (east gable).

6 Bibliography

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