

**Results of Archaeological Works at**  
**10 & 11 Lower Gate Street,**  
**Conwy**



**NGR SH 78186 77716**

**Project Number CR135-2016**



**C.R Archaeology**  
Compiled by Catherine Rees  
On Behalf of Ms Jan Tyley

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**Specification for Archaeological Works at  
10 & 11 Lower Gate Street, Conwy**

<b>Planning Application Number:</b>	N/A
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<b>Client:</b>	Ms Jan Tyley
<b>Report Author:</b>	Catherine Rees
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## 1.0 Introduction

C.R Archaeology were instructed by Ms Jan Tyley to conduct archaeological recording works at 10 & 11 Lower Gate Street, Conwy (figure 1).

The houses are built against one of the towers on the outside of the Medieval Town Walls of Conwy (SAM CN014), which were built following the conquest of Wales by Edward I. The building of the town wall was begun in 1283 and the town walls incorporate Conwy Castle. They were built to protect the new town borough and are constructed from Silurian grit and Ordovician rhyolite. They measure approximately 1.3km in length and enclose an area approximately 22 acres. As built, they vary in height because of the sloping ground but are at least 6m high on the outer face. With three twin-towered gates and twenty-one D-shaped towers at regular intervals, originally with a ditch around the outside, the town walls of Conwy share many constructional and architectural details with the castle.

The Town Walls and area of the town of Conwy within the original circuit of the Town Wall is considered to form part of the essential setting of the World Heritage Site (Ref 374) and the historic town core is a Conservation Area.

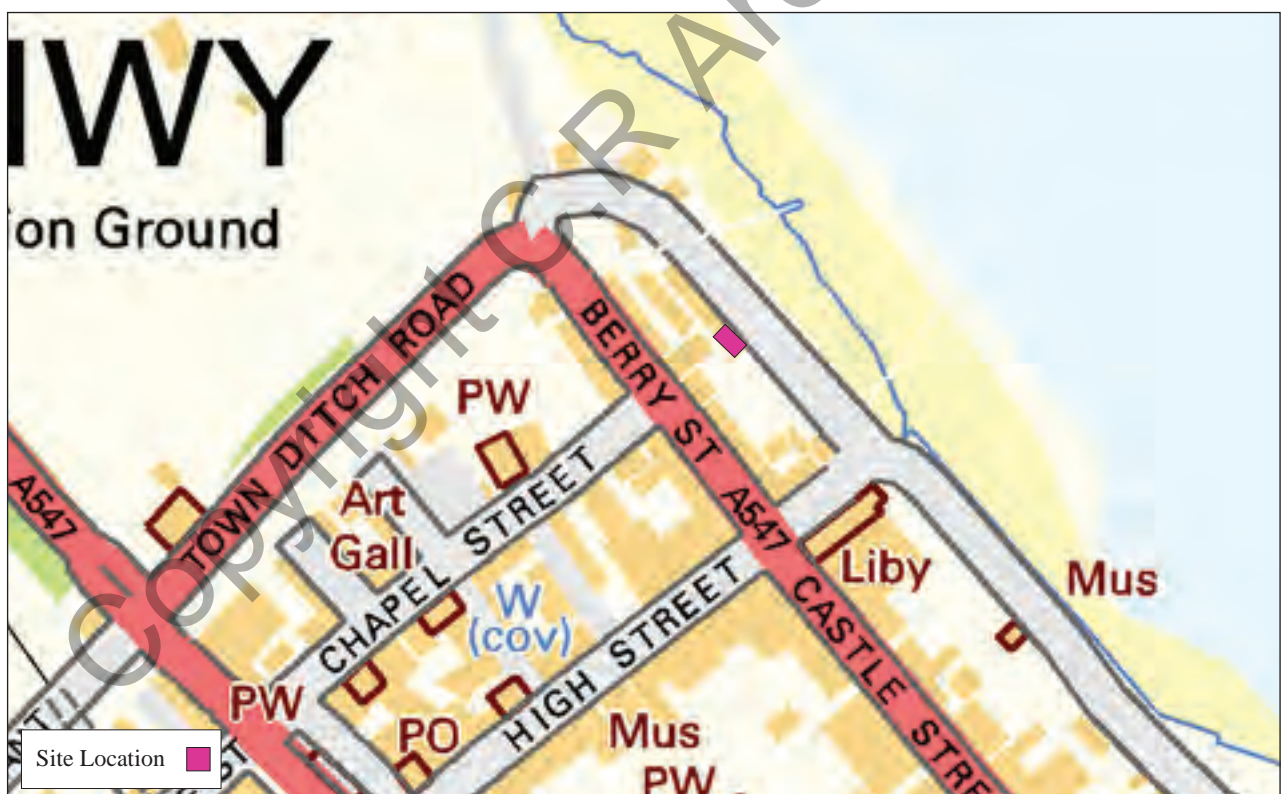
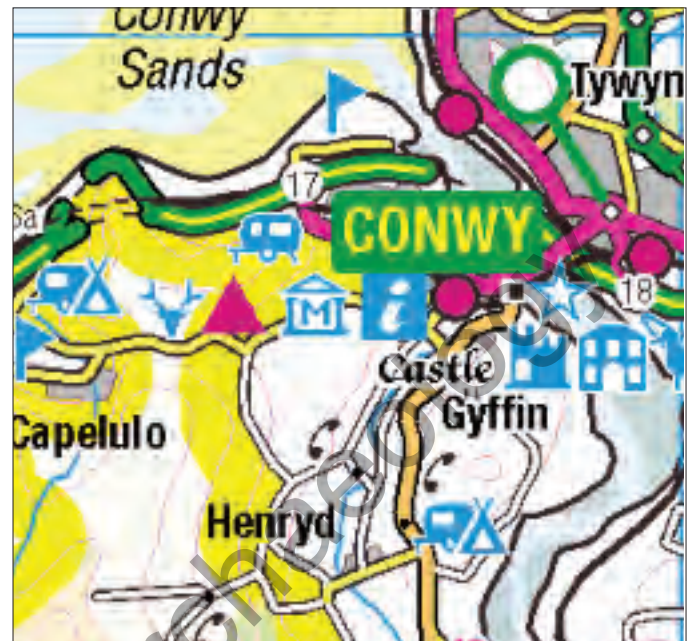
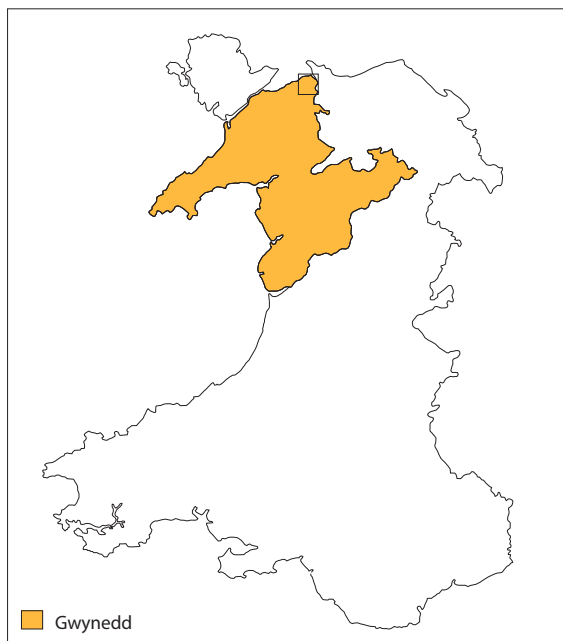
Numbers 10 & 11 Lower Gate Street are both Grade II Listed Buildings (Cadw ID: 3317). The Smallest House (Number 10) is described as *“well-preserved small C19 cottage, an exceptional survival of special social-historical interest as the humblest of a former long row of quayside dwellings, and of additional interest as one of the town's oldest tourist attractions. It is part of a well-preserved group, with Nos 11 and 12, of C18 - C19th quayside dwellings”*. The building is currently in use as a museum and is a tourist attraction.

Number 11 (Cadw ID: 87359) is recorded as *“An early C19 cottage with characteristic later C19 facade detail”* and was Listed as *“a C19 cottage retaining original character, and as part of a group with Nos 10 and 12 of well-preserved quayside dwellings”*.

In January 2016 a “Faults Survey” of Nos 10 and 11 Lower Gate Street was undertaken by Hampson Lewis Chartered Building Surveyors (included in appendix a). This report details repairs to be undertaken at the two properties and having examined the document it was determined by Cadw's Inspector of Ancient Monuments and Archaeology that *“The works to number 10 may expose a previously unrecorded section of the Town Wall Tower and as such suitable recording methodology must be in place and an archaeologist appointed to ensure an appropriate record of any areas of exposed masonry”*.

A specification for works was prepared and approved by Ian Halfpenney of Cadw and is included as appendix a. It outlines the methodology to be employed in the recording of features of archaeological/historical interest uncovered following the removal of the existing plasterwork or other materials which expose the Town Wall Tower.

The works undertaken were a Level 2/3 Building Recording of the of the building interior following the removal of the existing plasterwork. Detailed historic research into the site was not undertaken and it was considered that the SAM entry for the Conwy Town Walls and the Listed Building description for the house are sufficient to provide the context needed for the project.



**Figure 1. Site Location Map** - Source: OS Open Data  
(Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2016)

## 2.0 Project Aims & Objectives

The aim of this programme of works was to create a Level 2/3 Building Record of Number 10 Lower Gate Street, Conwy with particular emphasis on the recording of any areas of the Town Wall Tower exposed following the removal of the existing plasterwork. This was expanded to cover Number 11 Lower Gate Street as a small area of stonework was exposed at the attic level.

It aimed to fulfil the mitigation criteria for undertaking an Archaeological Building Recording as specified in the CIfA Standard and Guidance documents (2014).

The objectives of the archaeological programme were to provide an archive record of the building; to increase understanding of the site's history, development and significance and to make available information about the archaeological resource existing on the site.

## 3.0 Scheme of Works - Methodology

### 3.1 Scheme of Works – Methodology for Building Recording

The methodology employed conformed to the requirements for a Level 2/3 Building Record as specified in *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice* (Historic England 2016) and The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists: *Standard and Guidance for the Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures* (2014).

The following points are detailed in *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice* (Historic England 2016).

The record created for the site consisted of:

Written Account	Points 1-3, 5-8, 11
Drawings	Points 2, 5 & 6
Photography	Points 1-2, 4-5, 7-8.

#### 3.1.1 Desk Based Research

A detailed history of the site was not deemed to be a necessary component of this programme of works. Limited research was however conducted to aid further interpretation/discussion.

The works were conducted in accordance with the CIfA Standards and Guidance for the Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures (2014) and will include the information required to fulfil points 1-3, 5-8 and 11 as specified in *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice* (Historic England 2016).

#### 3.1.2 Drawn Survey

Architects plans of the site were not produced due to the nature of the works. Measured drawings were produced to fulfil points 2 & 5-6 as specified in “*Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice*” (Historic England 2016). No additional drawn records to illustrate undiscovered features were necessary.

#### 3.1.3 Photographic Survey

A photographic survey of the building was undertaken. This included:

- 1) A photographic survey of the building exterior including general shots of the site environs
- 2) A photographic survey of the interior of the building with particular emphasis on the area of the town wall tower exposed by the works

The methodology employed conformed to the requirements of photographic recording to the equivalent of a Level 3 Survey, as specified in *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice* (Historic England 2016) and includes works specified in points 1-2, 4-5 & 7-8.

### **3.1.3.1 Equipment**

The photographic survey was undertaken using 20.1 mega-pixel Sony Alpha 58 and 13.1 mega-pixel Sony Alpha 350 digital cameras with a variety of standard and other lenses using a tripod where necessary. Images were captured in RAW format for later processing into high resolution JPG and TIFF files.

Where possible all exterior and interior elevations of the building were photographed with scales from ground level. Additional photographs were taken detailing important architectural features and the general setting of the site.

### **3.2 Archive Compilation**

All records created during the fieldwork were checked for consistency and accuracy and will form part of the *Primary Site Archive (P1)* (EH 2006). The archive contains all data collected. It is ordered, indexed, adequately documented, internally consistent, secure, quantified, and conforms to standards required by the archive repository and signposted appropriately to ensure future use in research, as detailed in the English Heritage *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (MoRPHE) methodology.

The archive was assembled in accordance with the guidelines published in, *Standards in the museum care of archaeological collections* (Museums & Galleries Commission 1994), *Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage* (United Kingdom Institute for Conservation, 1990) and *Archaeological Archives: A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation* (AAF 2007).

Copies of the digital archive will be deposited at the RCAHMW and at Conwy Archives, Llandudno.

### **3.3. Timetable for Proposed Works**

An initial record was made on October 29<sup>th</sup> 2016 prior to the commencement of works. Follow up visits were made on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> November 2016 to record the buildings during the works. Cadw were informed of the exact site days to allow monitoring of works.

#### **3.3.1 Staffing**

The project was managed by Catherine Rees (MCIfA, BA, MA, PgDip HEC, MCIfA). Site works were conducted by Catherine Rees and Matthew Jones (BA, MA).

All projects are carried out in accordance with CIfA *Standard and Guidance* documents.

#### **3.3.2 Monitoring**

The project was subject to monitoring by Cadw. The monitor was given prior notice of the commencement of the fieldwork. Cadw were notified in writing of the commencement dates for archaeological site work.



### **3.3.3 Health and Safety**

A risk assessment was conducted prior to the commencement of works and site staff were familiarised with its contents. A first aid kit was located in the site vehicle.

All staff were issued with appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for the site work. This consisted of:

- Safety Helmets (EN397)
- Hi-visibility vests (EN471)
- Safety footwear – steel toecap and mid-sole boots and Wellingtons (EN345-47)

All staff have passed at least a CITB health and safety test at least operative level and will carry a Construction Related Organisation (CRO) White Card for Archaeological Technician (Code 5363) or a Site Visitor card.

C.R Archaeology staff also complied with all Health and Safety Policy and specific on-site instructions provided by the client and their appointed Principal contractor or H&S coordinator.

### **3.4 The Report**

This report clearly and accurately incorporates information gained from the programme of archaeological works. The report contains a site plan showing the locations of photographs taken.

The report includes:

- a copy of the design brief and agreed specification
- a location plan based on current OS mapping at an appropriate scale
- full dimensional and descriptive detail of significant features identified
- a full bibliography of sources consulted
- an archive compact disc

The report details the results of the Level 2/3 Building Recording and combines the results of the photographs/drawings taken/made following the stripping out of the plasterwork, the drawn record and the results of the limited archival research undertaken.

Copies of the reports in Adobe PDF format will be sent to the appropriate monitoring archaeologist for approval before formal submission. A bound paper copy and PDF digital copy of the report will be submitted as part of the formal submission. A digital Adobe PDF version and a bound paper copy of the final report and will be lodged with the Gwynedd Historic Environment Record within six months of completion of fieldwork.

A summary of the work will be published in the Archaeology in Wales Journal.

#### **3.4.1 Copyright**

C.R Archaeology and sub-contractors shall retain full copyright of any commissioned reports, tender documents or other project documents, under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved; excepting that it hereby provides a licence to the client and the local authority for the use of the report by the client and the local authority in all matters directly relating to the project as described in the Project Specification.



## 4.0 Brief Historical Background

The following section is through necessity brief and is intended merely to provide a basic outline of the history of the property. Further research is not required within the scope of this project.

**The site is located against the Medieval Town Wall of Conwy. The following passage is taken from the Scheduled Monument description for the walls (CN014):**

*“This monument comprises the remains of the medieval town walls of Conwy. Begun in 1283 by King Edward I, the town walls incorporate Conwy Castle and were built to protect the new town borough. The walls are constructed from Silurian grit and Ordovician rhyolite and measure approximately 1.3km in length and enclose an area approximately 22 acres. As built, they vary in height because of the sloping ground but are at least 6m high on the outer face. With three twin-towered gates and twenty-one D-shaped towers at regular intervals, originally with a ditch around the outside, the town walls of Conwy share many constructional and architectural details with the castle. The towers stand up to 15m high, and apart from the gates and Tower 16, are all roofless and open backed, originally with only a timber platform at the same level as the main wall-walk. The towers and wall-walks of the intervening stretches of wall are built with crenellations, and, as on the castle, the merlons contain arrowloops alternating between low and high levels, allowing a field of fire in both the near and middle distance. The Lower Gate was built to give access into the town from a quay on the riverside. The gate itself, like the Upper Gate at the opposite end of the town, is twin-towered and protected with a portcullis. The Mill Gate gave access to the royal mill on the nearby River Gyffin. Unusually, the two towers that comprise the gate do not form a pair; one is round and one is D-shaped. It is this distinction that helps identify the building as the location for the King’s wardrobe. The Upper Gate is located to the south of the watchtower (Tower 13) and forms the main landward entrance to the town. Like the Lower Gate it consists of two drum towers flanking a central carriageway and protected by a drawbridge, portcullis and wooden gates. An additional spur wall projecting beyond the wall circuit into the river, was built to protect the landing place for ships, either from storm or attack. It originally ended in a round tower which no longer exists. A number of later modifications to the walls have occurred. A hole was created in the northern section of wall close to the castle to accommodate the road that used Thomas Telford’s suspension bridge built in 1826. In addition, the wall between Towers 17 and 18 was largely rebuilt in 1847 to accommodate a broad arch for the Chester to Holyhead railway which closely skirts the walls and castle. The monument is of national and international importance for its potential to enhance our knowledge of medieval defensive organisation and the growth of towns. This is reflected by its designation as a World Heritage Site. Significantly, the town walls constitute one of the best-preserved and most imposing medieval defensive schemes in Europe. The monument forms an important element within the wider medieval context and the structure itself may be expected to contain archaeological information in regard to chronology, building techniques and functional detail. The scheduled area comprises the remains described and areas around them within which related evidence may be expected to survive”.*

**The Cadw Listed Building Description for Number 10 Lower Gate Street (Cadw ID 3317) records:**

*“Probably C19 and inserted into a narrow space between pre-existing cottages, and built as a lean-to against the town wall. It was inhabited until 1900 and was saved from demolition, unlike the houses on its L side, by being turned into a tourist attraction.*

*A very narrow single-fronted two storeyed house of red-painted roughcast front, lean-to slate roof and brick stack on the R against the town wall. A higher rubble-stone wall to the L is the rebuilt wall of a former adjoining cottage demolished in the first decade of the C20. A split boarded door is on the L and fixed window on the R. In the 1st floor is a small 4-pane horizontal-sliding sash window. The lower storey has a lintelled fireplace and cupboard bench. Walls are boarded and the floor is laid with red and black tiles. The upper storey is reached by ladder stair, has a corner C19 fireplace and cupboard built into the rear wall.*

*Listed as a well-preserved small C19 cottage, an exceptional survival of special social-historical interest as the humblest of a former long row of quayside dwellings, and of additional interest as one of the town's oldest tourist attractions. It is part of a well-preserved group, with Nos 11 and 12, of C18-C19 quayside dwellings”.*

**The Cadw Listed Building Description for Number 11 Lower Gate Street (Cadw ID 87359) records:**

*“In a row of houses built against the town wall, facing the quayside.*

*An early C19 cottage with characteristic later C19 facade detail.*

*Interior Not inspected.*

*A 2-storey double-fronted cottage of whitened pebble-dash, black-painted smooth-rendered plinth, architraves, quoin strips, 1st-floor sill and eaves band. The roof is slate (stacks have been removed). Openings have segmental heads in the lower storey. The central boarded door is flanked by 16-pane horned sash windows in the ground floor and 1st-floor 12-pane hornless sash windows. The rear is built against the town wall.*

*Listed as a C19 cottage retaining original character, and as part of a group with Nos 10 and 12 of well-preserved quayside dwellings”.*

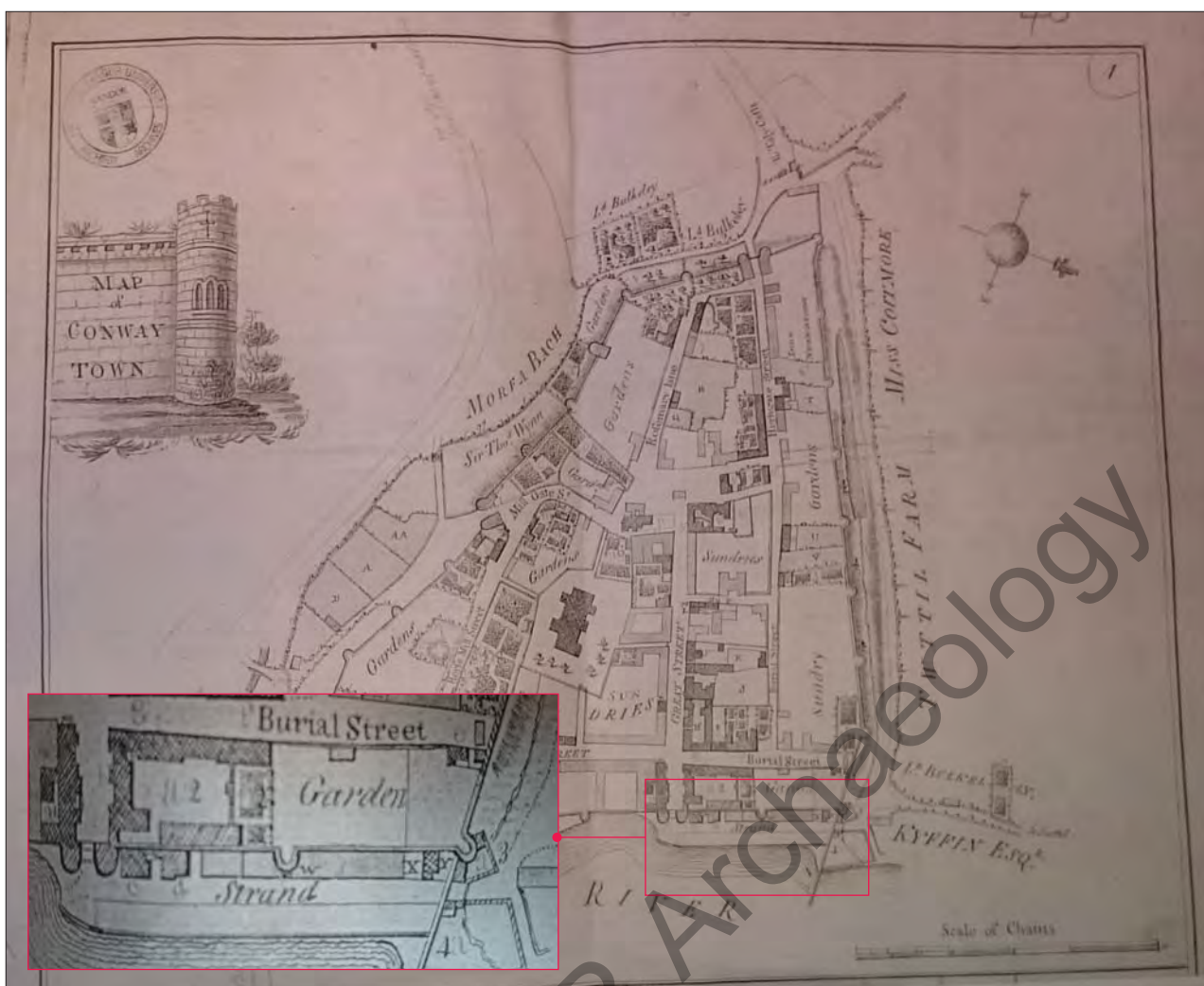
**Limited Archival Research**

A limited number of historic sources were consulted in an attempt to refine the date of the approximate erection of the two houses. The earliest detailed source showing houses outside the town walls on Lower Gate Street was produced by an unknown artist around 1600 (Cadw 1997: 12). This source shows a row of houses between the Lower Gate (Porth Isaf) and the now vanished wall spur but there are no houses shown against the tower itself. These houses would presumably have all been destroyed during the Civil War (1642 – 1651) although the below ground remains of these properties may survive below the current structures.

No further detailed maps could be sourced prior to the production of the Holland Estate Map in 1776 (figure 2) which clearly shows that both properties have been erected by this date. Due to possible inaccuracies in the mapping one cannot be certain as to whether the highlighted property is Number 10 (The Smallest House) or the now demolished adjacent property (see figure 3). It is recorded as “w” on the map schedule which is listed as a “house and garden” although it is difficult to see where a garden would be located within the plot and it is presumably located within one of the large gardens shown within the town walls.

The presence of these two properties on a source dated 1776 allows the dating of both houses to be shifted back from the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century into the later 18<sup>th</sup> Century. The use of brick in the Smallest House is a good indicator that this structure is unlikely to be significantly earlier than this date as the brick making industry in North Wales did not emerge until the 1760's (Hankinson, Britnell and Silvester 2012: 10). Brick would not have been utilised in a lowly property such as this prior to the commencement of mass production although it is possible that the bricks used in the construction of the house had been salvaged from elsewhere rather than being specifically purchased for this project.

Number 11 is clearly earlier than the Smallest House and is of stone construction. This house is likely to have been built in the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century although it is not out of the question that the house dates back into the early 18<sup>th</sup> Century.



**Figure 2.** 1776 Holland Estate Map of Conwy (Source: Bangor University Archives BM55/23/83)



**Figure 3.** Photograph from c.1900 Showing Now Demolished Cottages to the South-East Of the Smallest House, the Smallest House and Number 11 (Source: Williams 2008:22)

Following the cessation of hostilities in the Civil War, and after a short period where it had been decided that Conwy Castle should remain operational, in 1655 the Council of State ordered that Conwy should be slighted and made indefensible (Cadw 2015: 18-19). The house may well have been constructed utilising building material salvaged from the town walls.

## **5.0 Results of Archaeological Works**

A site visit was conducted on October 29<sup>th</sup> 2016 prior to the commencement of works. Follow up visits were made on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> November 2016. During this a comprehensive record of the affected site areas was compiled prior to and following the works being undertaken at the two properties. The exterior and any accessible interior features were photographed.

The two properties are shown on the 1776 Holland Estate Map of Conwy and must therefore predate this. The Smallest House (Number 10) is of brick construction and has been inserted between Number 11 and the now demolished property to the south-east. It is not thought that the property significantly predates this as brick is not mass produced in North Wales prior to the 1760's. Before this date brick is rarely used outside of the large estates in the area. The brick used in the construction of the smallest house could quite conceivably have been reused from another source.

No elements of the Town Wall were exposed during the works to the Smallest House as it was found that the chimney breast covers part of the wall and the remaining area had been obscured by the creation of a recessed cupboard space – the rear of which was the tower wall. It was not clear as to whether the rear of the cupboard had been created through the removal of stones belonging to the tower as the area to the rear of the recess was unaffected by the works. This would however seem likely to have been the case.

Number 10 was inhabited until around 1900 when it became a tourist attraction, which it continues to be utilised as to this day. Number 11 is a traditional quay side dwelling which currently has a dual function. The ground floor is used as storage and as an administration/staff area for the Smallest House with a kitchen housed in the rear extension. The first floor and attic rooms were used as accommodation and storage with a bathroom housed in the rear extension. Following the current works at the property the first and attic levels will be renovated as living quarters.

Number 11 is of stone construction and predates Number 10. The exact construction of the house is unknown but it is likely to be of mid 18<sup>th</sup> Century date, although an early 18<sup>th</sup> Century date could not be ruled out. The house incorporates a small section of the tower wall into its south-western corner and this was partially uncovered in the works to the attic area.

For ease of discussion the following section has been divided between the two properties with Number 10 (Smallest House) discussed first, followed by Number 11. Plates are divided into before and after sections.

### **5.1 Drawn Record**

Architects plans of the site were not produced due to the nature of the works. Measured drawings were produced from measurements taken on site. These have been annotated to show key architectural features and the location and direction of photographic plates.





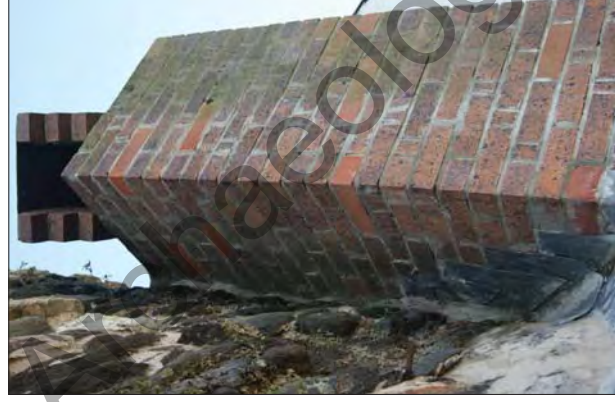
**Plate 1.** 10 & 11 Lower Gate Street Front Elevation



**Plate 2.** 10 & 11 Lower Gate Street (Facing South-East)



**Plate 3.** 10 & 11 Lower Gate Street (Facing North-West)



**Plate 4.** Smallest House  
Brick Chimney Stack



**Plate 5.** Number 11  
Chimney Stack





**Plate 6.** South-Eastern Gable  
Of 10 Lower Castle Street



**Plate 7.** First Floor Bedroom in  
10 Lower Castle Street Prior to Works



**Plate 8.** First Floor Bedroom in  
10 Lower Castle Street Prior to Works



**Plate 9.** First Floor Bedroom in  
10 Lower Castle Street Prior to Works

## 5.2 Results of Photographic Survey (Plates 1 - 38)

A comprehensive photographic survey was conducted and the full photographic archive has been included in TIFF format on an accompanying disc at the back of this report. These photographs are subdivided by interior and exterior and by property. Within this they are divided into photographs taken before the commencement of works and those taken following the stripping out of the affected areas. Relevant photographs are incorporated into the main text as numbered plates and the positions of these are marked in appendix b.

### 5.2.1 Building Exteriors (Plates 1 - 6)

Due to the location of the properties not all exterior elevations were exposed or accessible.

The rear and north-western elevations of the Smallest House adjoin other structures - the rear of the property is against the Town Walls and Number 11 adjoins the property to the north-west. The south-eastern gable elevation, although exposed is not strictly speaking the gable of the smallest house. It is the surviving gable of the demolished adjacent property which was left standing so as not to damage the structural integrity of the Smallest House. The surviving gable is of stone construction (plate 6).

The front elevation of the smallest house is shown in plates 1-3. The Listing entry describes it as *“a very narrow single-fronted two storeyed house of red-painted roughcast front, lean-to slate roof and brick stack on the R against the town wall. A higher rubble-stone wall to the L is the rebuilt wall of a former adjoining cottage demolished in the first decade of the C20. A split boarded door is on the L and fixed window on the R. In the 1st floor is a small 4-pane horizontal-sliding sash window”*.

There is little to add to this legacy text other than the brick chimney stack (plate 4) was rebuilt to the earlier design in the 1960's or 1970's. The window at first floor level is currently a small 4-pane casement window rather than a horizontal sash and it would seem more likely that this is a replacement, which is roughly contemporary with the chimney stack, than an error in the Listing description. It was heavily overpainted and could not be examined in detail. The change in window design had proved problematic as the casement window has leaked over an extended period of time causing damage to the area below the window. This has been rectified during this phase of works.

Number 11 occupies a mid-terrace position and therefore only the front and rear elevations were visible. The front elevation is described in the Listing text as *“A 2-storey double-fronted cottage of whitened pebble-dash, black-painted smooth-rendered plinth, architraves, quoin strips, 1st-floor sill and eaves band. The roof is slate (stacks have been removed). Openings have segmental heads in the lower storey. The central boarded door is flanked by 16-pane horned sash windows in the ground floor and 1st-floor 12-pane hornless sash windows. The rear is built against the town wall.*

This description is largely accurate although the comment on the stacks having been removed needs qualification. The fireplace within this property is located at the rear of the south-eastern bay of the main cottage and there is a chimney stack which runs up the side of the Town Wall tower. Figure 3 shows the full height of this stack which previously stood at almost the full height of the tower. This height has been significantly reduced but the lower section of the stack still survives (plate 5). Only the extension to the rear of the property is actually built against the Town Wall and there is a small yard area to the building rear. The extension is shown on the 1889 First Edition Ordnance Survey map of Conwy.





**Plate 10.** 10 Lower Gate Street First Floor Before Works



**Plate 11.** 10 Lower Gate Street Ground Floor Before Works



**Plate 12.** 10 Lower Gate Street Ground Floor Before Works



**Plate 13.** 10 Lower Gate Street Ground Floor Before Works



**Plate 14.** 10 Lower Gate Street Ground Floor Before Works





**Plate 15.** Front (North-Eastern) Elevation Following Removal Of Plaster

**Plate 16.** Alcove in South-Eastern Gable. The Purpose of The Space Is Uncertain but it May Have Simply Been Created to Allow A Bed to Fit Within the Space

**Plate 17.** Front (North-Eastern) Elevation Following Removal Of Plaster

**Plate 18.** Front (North-Eastern) And Gable (South-Eastern) Elevations Following Removal Of Plaster. Demonstrates That House has not Been Constructed By Simply Adding the Front Wall And a Roof

**Plate 19.** Gable (South-Eastern) Elevation Following Partial Removal of Plaster





**Plate 20.** South-Western Elevation  
Following Removal of Plaster



**Plate 21.** Fireplace and Chimney Breast  
Following Removal of Plaster



**Plate 22.** South-Western Elevation  
Following Removal of Plaster

### **5.2.2 Building Interior – The Smallest House (Plates 7-22)**

The Listing description for the Smallest House records that “*the lower storey has a lintelled fireplace and cupboard bench. Walls are boarded and the floor is laid with red and black tiles. The upper storey is reached by ladder stair, has a corner C19 fireplace and cupboard built into the rear wall*”.

Plates 7 – 14 detail the property prior to the commencement of works and show the water damage to the first floor. Plates 15 – 22 detail the first floor following the stripping back of the plaster. No works were undertaken to the ground floor level.

When areas of the plaster were removed from the first floor level the smallest house was found to be of brick construction. The house had been inserted between two existing structures but it had been built as a complete shell rather than simply consisting of a front wall and roof as has been suggested elsewhere.

The rear elevation housed a stone chimney breast which ran up the tower of the Town Wall and a recessed cupboard. The cupboard in the rear wall backed onto the tower but the plaster at the rear of this recess was not removed. The nineteenth century cast iron fireplace is a later addition and a large stone lintel was revealed during the works (plates 20 – 21).

An interesting feature is a large wooden horizontal beam in the south-eastern gable (see plates 7, 16, 18 & 19). It is unclear as to the reason for its use but it has possibly been utilised to create more floor space within this small area. It could conceivably have been a feature of the neighbouring property which had to be incorporated into the design although there is no hint of this when examining historic photographs (figure 3).

### **5.2.3 Building Interior – Number 11 Lower Gate Street (Plates 23 – 38)**

A basic photographic record of the ground and first floor of the property was made which is included on the accompanying CD. Although this work is outside of the scope outlined in the original specification it was felt that this would be beneficial as a supplement to the Listed Building description. No structural works were carried out at ground or first floor level.

The ground floor features were largely obscured by the tools/materials for the works being carried out and by the storage of materials and gifts related to the use of the Smallest House as a tourist attraction. The main building is divided into two rooms and is entered through a small vestibule. There is a small extension to the rear of the building which houses the kitchen. There is a small yard at the rear of the building.

The stairs are located between the two main ground floor rooms and alongside the stairs is an area of original wooden panelling leading to the first floor (see plates 36-7). The second ground floor room is in use for storage.

At first floor level the two rooms in the main building are connected by a narrow central corridor which also leads to the stairway to the attic. The two main rooms are in use as bedrooms and there is a bathroom in the rear extension. There is also surviving wooden panelling between the first floor and the attic (plate 38) although as is to be expected it is of much poorer quality than that used in the ground floor.

The attic was the only level at which works were taking place and a photographic record of the space was made both before (plates 23 – 26) and after (plates 27 – 35) the clearing of the attic and the removal of some areas of plaster.





**Plate 23.** 11 Lower Gate Street, Attic Level Facing Towards North-Western Gable Showing Wooden Room Division



**Plate 24.** 11 Lower Gate Street, Attic Level Facing Towards North-Western Gable Showing Wooden Room Division



**Plate 25.** 11 Lower Gate Street, Attic Level Room Facing North-Western Gable



**Plate 26.** 11 Lower Gate Street, Attic Level Room Facing South-Eastern Gable. Conway Town Wall Tower in Corner





**Plate 27.** Gable (South-Eastern)  
Elevation Following Removal  
Of Plaster

**Plate 28.** Rear (South- Western)  
Elevation Following the  
Removal of Plaster



**Plate 29.** Small Portion of  
Medieval Tower Visible in  
Corner of Room

**Plate 30.** Small Portion of  
Medieval Tower Visible in  
Corner of Room

**Plate 31.** Small Portion of  
Medieval Tower Visible in  
Corner of Room





**Plate 32.** Junction Between Town Wall and  
Number 11 Lower Gate Street



**Plate 33.** Junction Between Town Wall and  
Number 11 Lower Gate Street



**Plate 34.** Attic Level Front (North-Eastern) Elevation

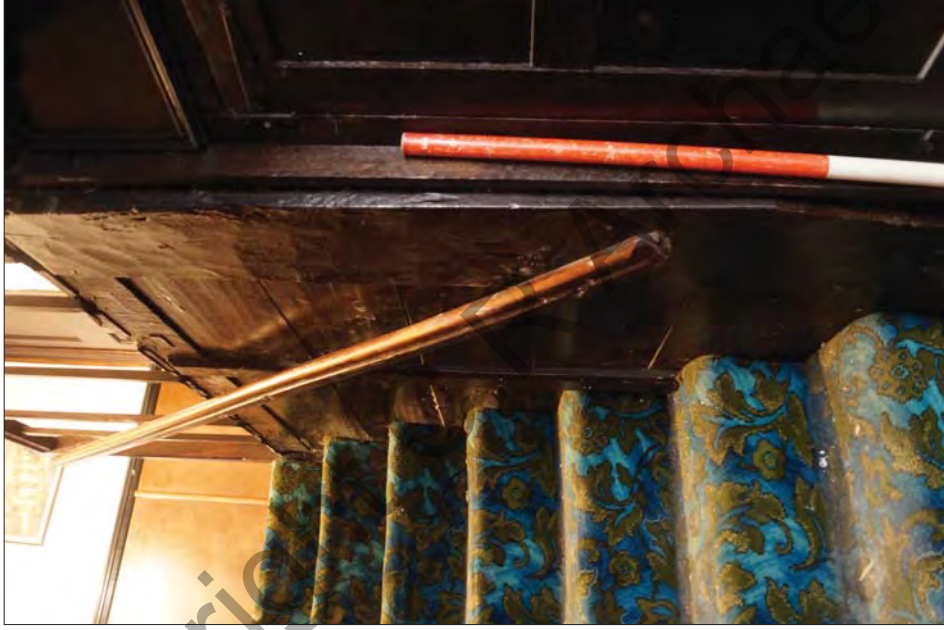


**Plate 35.** Attic Level Space Between Roof and  
Lath and Plaster Room Division





**Plate 36.** Number 11 Lower Gate Street  
Stairway From Ground to First Floor Level



**Plate 37.** Original Wooden Division  
At Ground Floor Level



**Plate 38.** Continuation of Original Wooden  
Division Leading from First Floor to Attic

The attic is divided into two rooms by a wooden partition (plates 23-4). Lathe and plaster had been utilised to form low walls within the eaves of the roof structure on the front and rear elevations, other than the rear wall in the room against the Smallest House which was rendered stone. The space created under the eaves in the front elevation was likely to have been utilised for storage and could be accessed via an opening shown in plate 34. The lathe and plaster on the rear wall was almost flush against the stone.

The roof structure is a through purlin construction with the roof blades crossed at the ridge (see plates 23-4). Splayed queen posts have been utilised and wooden pegs have been used throughout the roof structure. This particular design allowed for the insertion of a doorway between the two bays allowing more effective use of this space. The use of wooden pegs rather than iron fixings would be consistent with an 18<sup>th</sup> century construction date.

There appears to have been some infilling in the rear elevation (see plate 28) and it is possible that there is a blocked fireplace here. There is a sky light in the rear elevation and although it may be an original opening the current window is not an original or particularly early feature.

There was a small area of the Town Wall tower identified in the south-eastern corner of the attic (plates 26 – 31). No architectural features were identified on this structure and the wall construction does not differ from that observed elsewhere around the wall circuit.

## **6.0 Conclusion**

No architectural features related to the Town Wall were uncovered during these works and the tower wall was only exposed in Number 11. Limited archival research was able to establish that the Smallest House and Number 11 both predate 1776. Interesting architectural features survive in both properties.

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[www.coflein.gov.uk](http://www.coflein.gov.uk)

[www.historicwales.gov.uk/](http://www.historicwales.gov.uk/)

**Bangor University Archives**

BM55/23/83 1776 Holland Estate Map

## **Appendix A.**

Specification for Archaeological Works

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**Specification for Archaeological Works at**

**10 & 11 Lower Gate Street,  
Conwy**

**NGR SH 78186 77716**

**Project Number CR135-2016**



**C.R Archaeology**  
Compiled by Catherine Rees  
On Behalf of Ms Jan Tyley

Copyright C.R Archaeology

**Specification for Archaeological Works at  
10 & 11 Lower Gate Street, Conwy**

<b>Planning Application Number:</b>	N/A
<b>National Grid Reference:</b>	SH 78186 77716
<b>Client:</b>	Ms Jan Tyley
<b>Report Author:</b>	Catherine Rees
<b>Report Number:</b>	CR135-2016
<b>Date:</b>	08/10/2016

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### **Appendix A. Fault Survey Report**



## 1.0 Introduction

C.R Archaeology have been instructed by Ms Jan Tyley to conduct archaeological recording works at 10 & 11 Lower Gate Street, Conwy (figure 1).

The house is built against one of the towers on the outside of the Medieval Town Walls of Conwy (SAM CN014), which were built following the conquest of Wales by Edward I. The building of the town wall was begun in 1283 and the town walls incorporate Conwy Castle. They were built to protect the new town borough and are constructed from Silurian grit and Ordovician rhyolite. They measure approximately 1.3km in length and enclose an area approximately 22 acres. As built, they vary in height because of the sloping ground but are at least 6m high on the outer face. With three twin-towered gates and twenty-one D-shaped towers at regular intervals, originally with a ditch around the outside, the town walls of Conwy share many constructional and architectural details with the castle.

The Town Walls and area of the town of Conwy within the original circuit of the Town Wall is considered to form part of the essential setting of the World Heritage Site (Ref 374) and the historic town core is a Conservation Area.

Ten Lower Gate Street (The Smallest House) is a Grade II Listed Building (Cadw ID: 3317) and is Listed as a *“well-preserved small C19 cottage, an exceptional survival of special social-historical interest as the humblest of a former long row of quayside dwellings, and of additional interest as one of the town's oldest tourist attractions. It is part of a well-preserved group, with Nos 11 and 12, of C18-C19 quayside dwellings”*. The building is currently in use as a museum and is a tourist attraction.

In January 2016 a “Faults Survey” of Nos 10 and 11 Lower Gate Street was undertaken by Hampson Lewis Chartered Building Surveyors (included as Appendix A). This report details repairs to be undertaken at the two properties and having examined the document it was determined by Cadw's Inspector of Ancient Monuments and Archaeology that *“The works to number 10 may expose a previously unrecorded section of the Town Wall Tower and as such suitable recording methodology must be in place and an archaeologist appointed to ensure an appropriate record of any areas of exposed masonry”*. This specification outlines the methodology to be employed in the recording of any features of archaeological/historical interest uncovered following the removal of the existing plasterwork or other materials which expose the Town Wall Tower.

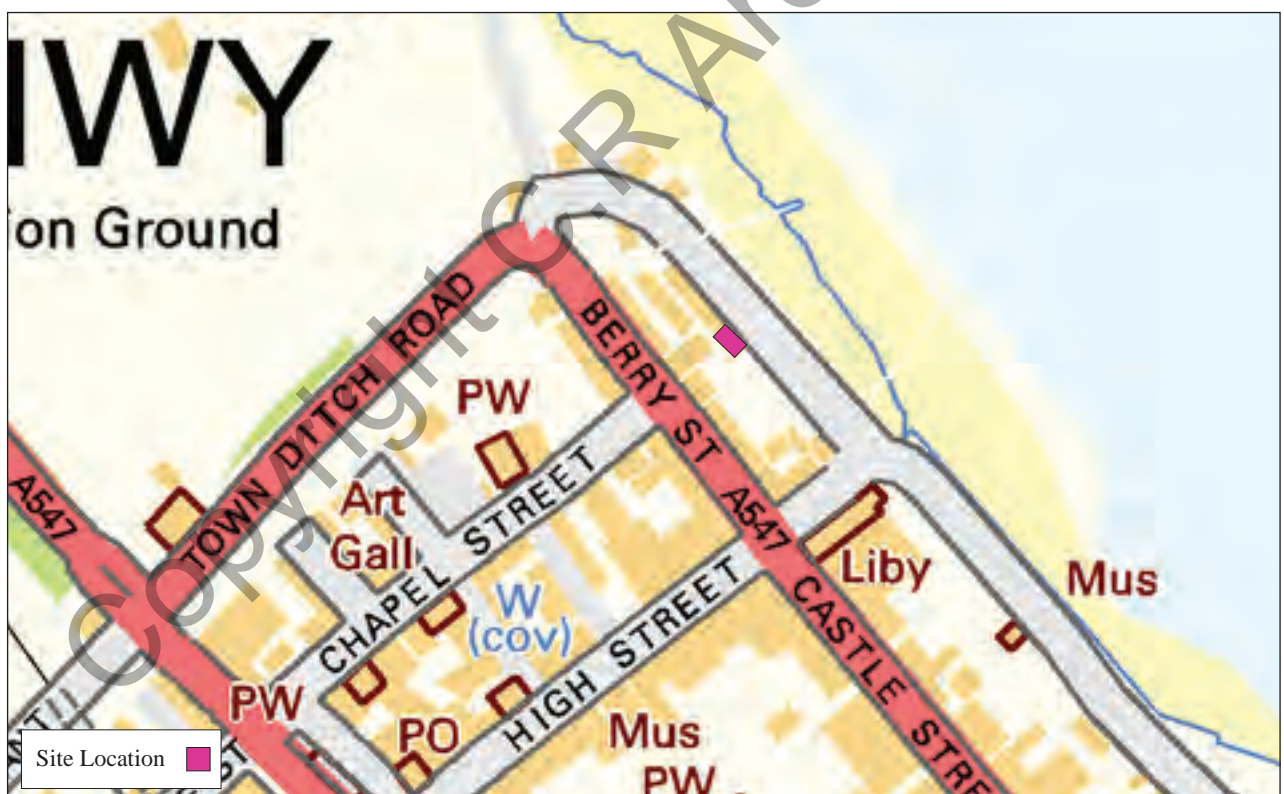
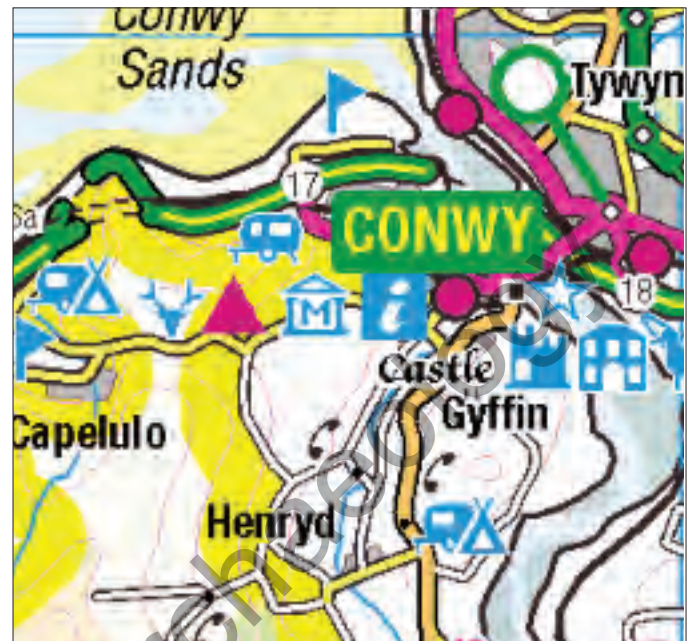
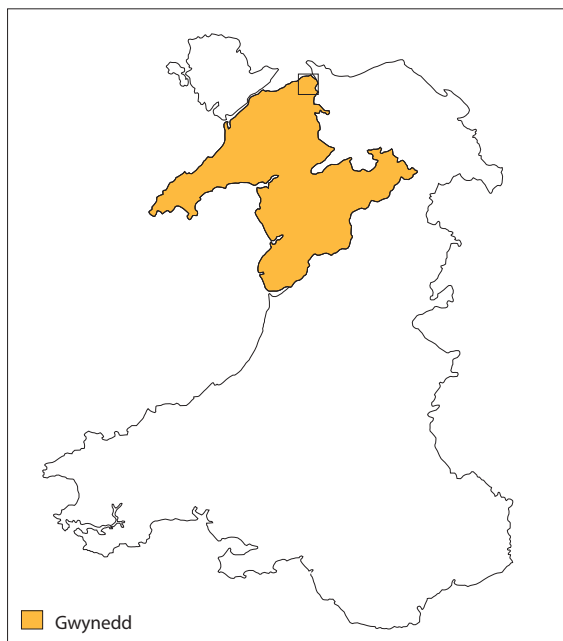
The works to be undertaken are a Level 2/3 Building Recording of the of the building interior following the removal of the existing plasterwork. Historic research into the site will not be undertaken unless a significant discovery is made during the works. It is considered that the SAM entry for the Conwy Town Walls and the Listed Building description for the house are sufficient to provide the context needed for the project.

## 2.0 Project Aims & Objectives

The aim of this programme of works is to create a Level 2/3 Building Record of Number 10 Lower Gate Street Conwy with particular emphasis on the recording of any areas of the Town Wall Tower exposed following the removal of the existing plasterwork.

It aims to fulfil the mitigation criteria for undertaking an Archaeological Building Recording as specified in the CIfA Standard and Guidance documents (2014).

The objectives of the archaeological programme are to provide an archive record of the building; to increase understanding of the site's history, development and significance and to make available information about the archaeological resource existing on the site.



**Figure 1. Site Location Map** - Source: OS Open Data  
(Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2016)

### 3.0 Brief Historical Background

This section is through necessity brief and is intended merely to provide a basic outline of the history of the property. Further research is not required within the scope of this project.

The site is located against the Medieval Town Wall of Conwy. The following passage is taken from the Scheduled Monument description for the walls (CN014):

*“This monument comprises the remains of the medieval town walls of Conwy. Begun in 1283 by King Edward I, the town walls incorporate Conwy Castle and were built to protect the new town borough. The walls are constructed from Silurian grit and Ordovician rhyolite and measure approximately 1.3km in length and enclose an area approximately 22 acres. As built, they vary in height because of the sloping ground but are at least 6m high on the outer face. With three twin-towered gates and twenty-one D-shaped towers at regular intervals, originally with a ditch around the outside, the town walls of Conwy share many constructional and architectural details with the castle. The towers stand up to 15m high, and apart from the gates and Tower 16, are all roofless and open backed, originally with only a timber platform at the same level as the main wall-walk. The towers and wall-walks of the intervening stretches of wall are built with crenallations, and, as on the castle, the merlons contain arrowloops alternating between low and high levels, allowing a field of fire in both the near and middle distance. The Lower Gate was built to give access into the town from a quay on the riverside. The gate itself, like the Upper Gate at the opposite end of the town, is twin-towered and protected with a portcullis. The Mill Gate gave access to the royal mill on the nearby River Gyffin. Unusually, the two towers that comprise the gate do not form a pair; one is round and one is D-shaped. It is this distinction that helps identify the building as the location for the King’s wardrobe. The Upper Gate is located to the south of the watchtower (Tower 13) and forms the main landward entrance to the town. Like the Lower Gate it consists of two drum towers flanking a central carriageway and protected by a drawbridge, portcullis and wooden gates. An additional spur wall projecting beyond the wall circuit into the river, was built to protect the landing place for ships, either from storm or attack. It originally ended in a round tower which no longer exists. A number of later modifications to the walls have occurred. A hole was created in the northern section of wall close to the castle to accommodate the road that used Thomas Telford’s suspension bridge built in 1826. In addition, the wall between Towers 17 and 18 was largely rebuilt in 1847 to accommodate a broad arch for the Chester to Holyhead railway which closely skirts the walls and castle. The monument is of national and international importance for its potential to enhance our knowledge of medieval defensive organisation and the growth of towns. This is reflected by its designation as a World Heritage Site. Significantly, the town walls constitute one of the best-preserved and most imposing medieval defensive schemes in Europe. The monument forms an important element within the wider medieval context and the structure itself may be expected to contain archaeological information in regard to chronology, building techniques and functional detail. The scheduled area comprises the remains described and areas around them within which related evidence may be expected to survive”.*

The Cadw Listed Building Description for Number 10 Lower Gate Street (The Smallest House, ID 3317) records:

*“Probably C19 and inserted into a narrow space between pre-existing cottages, and built as a lean-to against the town wall. It was inhabited until 1900 and was saved from demolition, unlike the houses on its L side, by being turned into a tourist attraction.*

*A very narrow single-fronted two storeyed house of red-painted roughcast front, lean-to slate roof and brick stack on the R against the town wall. A higher rubble-stone wall to the L is the rebuilt wall of a former adjoining cottage demolished in the first decade of the C20. A split boarded door is on the L and fixed window on the R. In the 1st floor is a small 4-pane horizontal-sliding sash*

window.

The lower storey has a lintelled fireplace and cupboard bench. Walls are boarded and the floor is laid with red and black tiles. The upper storey is reached by ladder stair; has a corner C19 fireplace and cupboard built into the rear wall.

Listed as a well-preserved small C19 cottage, an exceptional survival of special social-historical interest as the humblest of a former long row of quayside dwellings, and of additional interest as one of the town's oldest tourist attractions. It is part of a well-preserved group, with Nos 11 and 12, of C18-C19 quayside dwellings”.

## **4.0 Scheme of Works - Methodology**

### **4.1 Scheme of Works – Methodology for Building Recording**

The methodology employed will conform to the requirements for a Level 2/3 Building Record as specified in *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice* (Historic England 2016) and The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists: *Standard and Guidance for the Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures* (2014).

The following points are detailed in *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice* ( Historic England 2016).

The record created for the site will consist of:

Written Account	Points 1-3, 5-8, 11
Drawings	Points 2, 5 & 6 (if necessary), 8
Photography	Points 1-2, 4-5, 7-8.

#### **4.1.1 Desk Based Research**

A detailed history of the site is not deemed to be a necessary component of this programme of works. Research will however be conducted should significant remains be uncovered which require further interpretation/discussion.

The works will be conducted in accordance with the CIfA Standards and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-based Assessment (2014) and will include the information required to fulfil points 1-3, 5-8 and 11 as specified in *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice* ( Historic England 2016).

#### **4.1.2 Drawn Survey**

If available architects plans of the site will be utilised to fulfil points 2, 5-6 and if necessary 8 as specified in “*Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice*” ( Historic England 2016). Should such drawings not be available then C.R Archaeology will produce measured drawings of the affected rooms.

Drawn records of any undiscovered features will be produced by C.R Archaeology as necessary.

#### **4.1.3 Photographic Survey**

A photographic survey of the building will be undertaken. This will include:

- 1) A photographic survey of the exterior including general shots of the site environs
- 2) A photographic survey of the interior of the building with particular emphasis on the area of the town wall tower exposed by the works

The methodology employed will conform to the requirements of photographic recording to the equivalent of a Level 3 Survey, as specified in *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice* ( Historic England 2016) and will include works specified in points 1-2, 4-5 & 7-8.

#### **4.1.3.1 Equipment**

The photographic survey will be undertaken using a 20.1 mega-pixel Sony Alpha58 digital camera with a variety of standard and other lenses using a tripod where necessary. Images will be captured in RAW format for later processing into high resolution JPG and TIFF files.

Where possible all exterior and interior elevations of the building will be photographed with scales from ground level. Additional photographs will be taken detailing important architectural features and the general setting of the site.

#### **4.2 Archive Compilation**

All records created during the fieldwork will be checked for consistency and accuracy and will form part of the *Primary Site Archive (PI)* (EH 2006). The archive will contain all data collected, including records and other specialist materials. It will be ordered, indexed, adequately documented, internally consistent, secure, quantified, conforming to standards required by the archive repository and signposted appropriately to ensure future use in research, as detailed in the English Heritage *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (MoRPHE) methodology.

The archive will be assembled in accordance with the guidelines published in, *Standards in the museum care of archaeological collections* (Museums & Galleries Commission 1994), *Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage* (United Kingdom Institute for Conservation, 1990) and *Archaeological Archives: A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation* (AAF 2007).

Copies of the digital archive will be deposited at the RCAHMW and at Conwy Archives, Llandudno.

#### **4.3. Timetable for Proposed Works**

It is envisaged that initial works at the site will commence as soon as possible. Site work (photographic building recording) is to take place over one day. Cadw will be informed of the exact site days to allow monitoring of works.

##### **4.3.1 Staffing**

The project will be managed by Catherine Rees (MCIfA, BA, MA, PgDip HEC, MCIfA).

All projects are carried out in accordance with CIfA *Standard and Guidance* documents.

##### **4.3.2 Monitoring**

The project will be subject to monitoring by Cadw. The monitor will be given prior notice of the commencement of the fieldwork. A projected time-scale and copy of the risk assessment can be provided on request to the monitoring body prior to the commencement of works. Cadw will be notified in writing of the commencement dates for archaeological site work.

##### **4.3.3 Health and Safety**

A risk assessment will be conducted prior to the commencement of works and site staff will be familiarised with its contents. A first aid kit will be located in the site vehicle.

All staff will be issued with appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for the site work. Initially this is anticipated to consist of:

- Safety Helmets (EN397)
- Hi-visibility vests (EN471)
- Safety footwear – steel toecap and mid-sole boots and Wellingtons (EN345-47)

Any further PPE required will be provided by C.R Archaeology

All staff will have passed at least a CITB health and safety test at least operative level and will carry a Construction Related Organisation (CRO) White Card for Archaeological Technician (Code 5363) or a Site Visitor card.

C.R Archaeology staff will also comply with any Health and Safety Policy or specific on-site instructions provided by the client or their appointed Principal contractor or H&S coordinator.

#### **4.4 The Report**

The report will clearly and accurately incorporate information gained from the programme of archaeological works. The report will contain a site plan showing the locations of photographs taken.

The report will include:

- a copy of the design brief and agreed specification
- a location plan based on current OS mapping at an appropriate scale
- full dimensional and descriptive detail of significant features identified
- a full bibliography of sources consulted
- an archive compact disc

The report will detail the results of the Level 2/3 Building Recording and combine the results of the photographs/drawings taken/made following the stripping out of the plasterwork, the drawn record and the any archival research undertaken.

Copies of the reports in Adobe PDF format will be sent to the appropriate monitoring archaeologist for approval before formal submission. A bound paper copy and PDF digital copy of the report will be submitted as part of the formal submission. A digital Adobe PDF version and a bound paper copy of the final report and will be lodged with the Gwynedd Historic Environment Record within six months of completion of fieldwork.

A summary of the work will be published in the Archaeology in Wales Journal.

##### **4.4.1 Copyright**

C.R Archaeology and sub-contractors shall retain full copyright of any commissioned reports, tender documents or other project documents, under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved; excepting that it hereby provides a licence to the client and the local authority for the use of the report by the client and the local authority in all matters directly relating to the project as described in the Project Specification.

## 5.0 Bibliography

AAF. 2007. *Archaeological Archives: A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation*

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[www.coflein.gov.uk](http://www.coflein.gov.uk)

[www.historicwales.gov.uk/](http://www.historicwales.gov.uk/)



## **Appendix A. Main Faults Survey**

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**HAMPSON LEWIS**



Chartered Building Surveyors - Syrfewyr Adeiladau Siartredig

5 Wynnstay Road  
COLWYN BAY  
Conwy  
LL29 8NB

Telephone: 01492 536611  
Fax: 01492 535345  
E-mail: [dilwyn@hampsonlewis.co.uk](mailto:dilwyn@hampsonlewis.co.uk)

Nantporth Stadium  
Holyhead Road  
Bangor  
LL57 2HQ

[www.hampsonlewis.com](http://www.hampsonlewis.com)

Your Ref:

Our Ref: DPJ/JB

Please reply to: Colwyn Bay

**MAIN FAULTS SURVEY**

UPON

**THE SMALLEST HOUSE**

**&**

**11 LOWER GATE STREET**

**CONWY**

**LL32 8BE**

ON BEHALF OF

**Ms Jan Tyley**

ON

*26<sup>th</sup> January 2016*

**REGULATED BY RICS**

## **INSTRUCTIONS**

Instructions have been received from Ms Jan Tyley to carry out a Building Survey upon the properties known as **The Smallest House** and **11 Lower Gate Street, Conwy**. The purpose of the inspection is to identify any main faults affecting the building, together with works that should be considered appropriate to alleviate the majority of the problems.

## **DESCRIPTION**

The property comprises an end-of-terrace property, a mid-terraced main house, probably built around 1800. Briefly, the accommodation comprises of the following:-

### **The Smallest House**

**Ground Floor:** Living Room;

**First Floor:** Bedroom;

### **11 Lower Gate Street**

**Ground Floor:** Entrance Vestibule; Living Room; with fireplace. Dining Room; Kitchen; with sink unit and built-in cupboards.

**First Floor:** Bathroom; Bedroom 1; Bedroom 2;

**Outside:** Enclosed courtyard to the rear.

## **CIRCUMSTANCES AND LIMITATIONS OF THE INSPECTION**

The property was inspected on an overcast day with very heavy rainfall. The main house remains fully furnished and carpeted throughout, with a mixture of stored items and general household furniture. An inspection within the roof space area was restricted by plaster linings to the underside of the majority of the supporting roof timbers. The services have been visually examined only. The water has been switched off and the system drained down.

## **CONDITION**

### **EXTERNALLY**

#### **ROOF**

The main roof to N<sup>o</sup> 11 consists of a traditional pitched roof covered in slates with clay ridge tiles. To the rear there is a centre skylight of traditional metal construction. To the right hand side there is a raised gable belonging to N<sup>o</sup> 12 with the junction between the two buildings formed using a render finish and lead flashings.

At the rear of the property there is a bitumen felt flat roof over the two storey extension. An inspection of the front roof slope revealed three loose and dislodged slates which require attention. An inspection of the rear roof slope was possible from the skylight, approximately 6-8 loose and displaced slates were noted, mainly to the rear left side abutting the chimney and in line with the flat roof. Due to the condition of some of the internal structural timbers to the rear

roof slope, a localised repair is not possible and re-covering of the rear roof area is recommended.

The junction between the rear sloping roof and the chimney is also formed using a lead valley. There are loose slates in the vicinity of the valley.

The flat roof to the rear of the property shows signs of impact damage from adjacent slates. Whilst the roof does not appear to be leaking at present, this is likely to be imminent. Bearing in mind the level of repairs required to the rear roof, it is recommended to re-cover the flat roof at the same time.

### **CHIMNEYS**

There is one main chimney stack serving N<sup>o</sup> 11 with a further chimney backing onto the party wall serving the Smallest House. The main chimney located to the rear of the property is not an original construction and has been built up against the town walls. The upper portion of the chimney is of brick with a modern clay pot. However, the lower portion has a smooth rendered finish. Heavy cracking was visible around the chimney and the render was found to be loose and hollow, and is allowing water penetration to take place. The chimney will need to be re-rendered and the flashings overhauled and replaced.

The chimney serving the Smallest House is of brick construction and is of more modern type brickwork to the original part of the building.

### **RAINWATER FITTINGS**

The rainwater fittings to the rear of the property were found to be of plastic. The gutters require general cleaning and overhaul. To the front there is a metal cast-iron OG gutter. This was found to be in poor condition where the fixing bolts have corroded and the gutter is leaking in the centre. The gutter will need to be replaced with a similar cast-iron gutter.

### **WALLS**

The main walls of the building are of solid stone construction with a smooth render coating to the front and a render coating to the rear. The extension at the rear of the property is of cavity block construction with a render finish to the courtyard face and exposed blockwork against the town walls. There was no evidence of any progressive or serious structural movement affecting the main structure of the building during the survey. The rendered finishes to the front of the property were found to be hollow in places and this is mainly due to water penetration and deterioration from leaking rainwater fittings resulting in the render to lose its bond from the stone backing. Localised repairs are necessary.

To the rear of the property the junction between the extension and the town walls is partially filled with debris and requires cleaning. The rear wall to the Smallest House abuts the town wall watch tower, which is of random stone construction. Whilst no specific defects were noted within the walls of the building, the shared party structure forming the town wall is showing signs of deterioration above the roof line with evidence of heavy vegetation and deterioration of the lime mortar.

The property does not have a physical damp proof course although there is evidence of an electro-osmosis damp course system installed within the stone wall to N<sup>o</sup> 11. The effectiveness of this damp proof course is limited.

The walls to the extension appear to contain a horizontal damp proof course. There is no form of damp proofing within the Smallest House.

Ground levels at the front of the property are high in relation to internal floor level and this will encourage water penetration into the building. A reduction in ground levels is not possible although existing drainage directly in front of the door to N<sup>o</sup> 11 is currently blocked.

### **EXTERNAL JOINERY**

The windows to the front of the property are a mixture of softwood sliding sash and traditional softwood casement. The windows to the rear of the extension are of modern softwood casement single-glazed type. The windows to the front of the property require general overhaul and easing. The pair of windows in the Smallest House are poorly fitting and require easing.

The timber entrance door to the Smallest House requires easing as the base of the door is sticking to the frame.

The modern softwood door to the rear kitchen is showing signs of rot attack to the sill section and requires overhaul and repair.

Timberwork around the perimeter of the rear extension roof is showing early signs of weathering.

### **EXTERNAL DECORATIONS**

The external decorations to the rear of the property are showing signs of weathering and redecoration will be required in conjunction with any necessary repairs.

### **INTERNALLY**

#### **Roof Space**

The roof space over N<sup>o</sup> 11 consists of a traditional timber frame with traditional torching to the underside of the slates. To the centre of the roof is a main supporting truss with timber cross-purlins. The main supporting frame shows no signs of any roof spread or movement. However, an inspection of the rear left hand corner revealed that the first four rafters and the end of the purlin embedded in the left hand gable wall with the Smallest House is suffering from progressive rot attack and deterioration. These timbers will need to be replaced and to undertake this work will involve stripping the roof and re-covering the area concerned. The remainder of the roof timbers appear to be structurally satisfactory although high damp readings were obtained on the perimeter of the wall where it meets N<sup>o</sup> 12 and may require further treatment and repair.

#### **Ceilings**

The ceilings within N<sup>o</sup> 11 are mainly of traditional lath and plaster with open-beam style to the ground floor and lath and plaster to the first floor with more modern plasterboard to the attic room and the extension. Internal plaster finishes were found to be in poor condition to the rear left corner of the lounge ceiling, rear left corner of Bedroom 1 and within the attic room. These areas will need to be re-plastered following treatment of the external part of the building to



prevent water penetration. The ceiling finishes within the Smallest House are also showing signs of damp penetration and will require localised re-plastering at ground and first floor levels, mainly adjacent to the chimney breasts.

### **Fireplaces**

There are two solid fuel fireplaces within the Smallest House and a further fireplace within the ground floor lounge of N<sup>o</sup> 11. Soot deposits were noted within the flue openings and any flues should be overhauled and swept prior to further use. There is evidence of significant dampness on the chimney breasts within the Smallest House and N<sup>o</sup> 11 at ground and first floor levels, which will require re-plastering following external repairs. Any re-plastering work should be undertaken using a lime-based plaster.

### **Floors**

The ground floor to N<sup>o</sup> 11 appears to be of solid construction assumed to be of quarry tiles or similar traditional construction. This type of floor will not contain any damp proof membranes. The floor to the kitchen extension is of concrete. The first floors are of timber suspended construction with softwood boarding. A number of floorboards have been affected by woodworm and evidence of general wear and tear, and will require localised repairs. The floor within the Smallest House is of quarry tiled construction and is showing signs of general dampness. The first floor is of timber construction and is generally serviceable although treatment of the cross-timber and floor joist adjacent to the chimney breast will be necessary.

### **Walls & Partitions**

Internal plasterwork within the property is mainly of traditional lime plaster to the main support walls with a plasterboard dry-lining to the ground floor of the living room and dining room to N<sup>o</sup> 11. There are areas of damp-affected plasterwork at both ground and first floor levels in N<sup>o</sup> 11 which will require complete re-plastering. There are areas of damp plaster within the ground and first floor levels to the Smallest House, which again will require re-plastering. A timber cladding was also noted to the base of the walls within the Smallest House, which will require treatment and repair.

### **Internal Joinery**

Internal doors are a mixture of panel and flush type. The doors require minor overhaul and easing. The staircase in the main house is of traditional timber construction. The treads and parts of the timber are showing signs of wear and tear consistent with their age.

The kitchen units are generally in serviceable condition.

Joinery within the Smallest House at ground floor level is showing signs of damp penetration and decay and will require localised repairs.

### **Internal Decorations**

Internal decorations and paintwork are generally moderate only and redecoration will be required upon completion of any necessary repairs.

### **Insulation**

Roof spaces have not been insulated.

### **Dampness**

Moisture tests undertaken internally within N° 11 revealed very high damp readings to the ground floor walls, mainly within the living room and at high level to the rear wall of the living room and the bedroom above.

There is also evidence of dampness at first floor level mainly to the rear left corner adjacent to the chimney breast.

The main cause of dampness within the building at ground floor level is rising damp due to the external high ground levels and high water table. Further internal treatment will become necessary as part of a general renovation scheme. Re-plastering of damp-affected plasterwork will also be necessary to the chimney breasts at ground and first floor levels although this can only be undertaken following repairs to the external parts of the building.

High damp readings were obtained throughout the Smallest House with a mixture of condensation, rising dampness and penetrating dampness from the roof coverings and chimney. A scheme of internal repair and re-plastering is necessary using traditional materials.

### **Timber Defects**

An examination of exposed timbers within the property revealed scattered infestations of woodworm to the majority of floor and roof timbers within both buildings. At ground floor level there is evidence of rot attack to the timber cladding within the Smallest House and to the skirting boards within the living room of N° 11. Rot attack was also noted to various roof timbers as previously described.

### **SERVICES**

#### **Electricity**

The electrical supply to the property was found to be in plastic cabling. There are no current test certificates available for examination and full independent testing of both installations is necessary. It is likely that upgrading of the systems will be required in both buildings.

#### **Gas**

There is no supply.

#### **Water**

Internal plumbing within the property was found to be in copper and where possible to examine is satisfactory. A copper Fortic tank was noted within the airing cupboard supplying both hot and cold water. The sanitary fittings appear to be serviceable although it should be noted that both hot and cold water systems have been drained down and could not be checked.

### **Heating**

The solid fuel fires within the property should be fully tested by a HETAS engineer prior to further use.

### **Drainage**

The visible drainage system to the rear of the property was found to be satisfactory with no evidence of any blockages. Surface water drainage to the front of the building requires overhaul and cleaning although this is likely to be the responsibility of the local authority.

### **BOUNDARIES & GROUNDS**

The rear boundary is the outer face of the town walls.  
The rear yard requires cleaning.

### **LOCAL AUTHORITY & LEGAL MATTERS**

We understand the property is being sold on a freehold basis with vacant possession. We are unaware of any recent alterations carried out to the property that will be covered by current Building Regulation or Planning Legislation.

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The property is of traditional construction and design, and located on the quay in Conwy. The property will be at risk of potential flooding and this does have a bearing on the type and level of repairs that should be undertaken internally at ground floor level. In addition, the property is a listed building and has certain constraints in relation to any repair or refurbishment work required.

The following basic works are recommended to the property in relation to maintaining its condition:

#### **Roof**

1. Strip off rear roof coverings, retain slates for re-use. Re-cover with new breathable underfelt. Overhaul and re-rust skylight, treat and make good. Renew rear lead valley to the rear of the chimney.
2. Strip existing bitumen felt finishes to extension, renew with single ply covering to grey finish.
3. Remove rendered finishes to rear chimney, overhaul flashings, make good brick and stonework, re-render installing adequate lead flashings and weatherings up to pot area.
4. Repair approximately 8 N° loose and dislodged slates to the parapet wall detail and main roof over the Smallest House. Overhaul flashing detail and pointing with the stonework around the town walls. Any re-pointing work to be undertaken using a lime mortar.



5. Replace the cast-iron gutter to the front elevation of N° 11 with a new cast-iron gutter to match existing details. Gutter to be fully primed and undercoated prior to fitting.
6. Overhaul and ease all windows to the front of the property.
7. Replace structural timbers including a minimum of 4 N° rafters, cut out rot-affected end section to the purlin, splice in new end section bolted with 8mm treated metal plates or other to engineer's specification.

#### **Internally**

8. Remove damp-affected plasterwork to rear left corner of lounge and bedroom above, re-plaster in new lime plaster, approximately 8sqm.
9. Remove damp-affected plasterwork to the Smallest House, approximately 5sqm. Re-plaster in lime plaster to match existing.
10. Remove timber cladding to the base of the left hand wall within the Smallest House, make good timber grounds with new treated timbers, pressure-treated, reinstate timber cladding utilising existing timber work, replacing remaining joinery. New timber to be stained to match existing colouring as far as practicable.

#### **Services**

11. Provide full independent tests upon the electrical installations. Carry out any appropriate recommended work to ensure adequate safety.

We would recommend that you obtain competitive estimates and undertake any recommended further investigation.

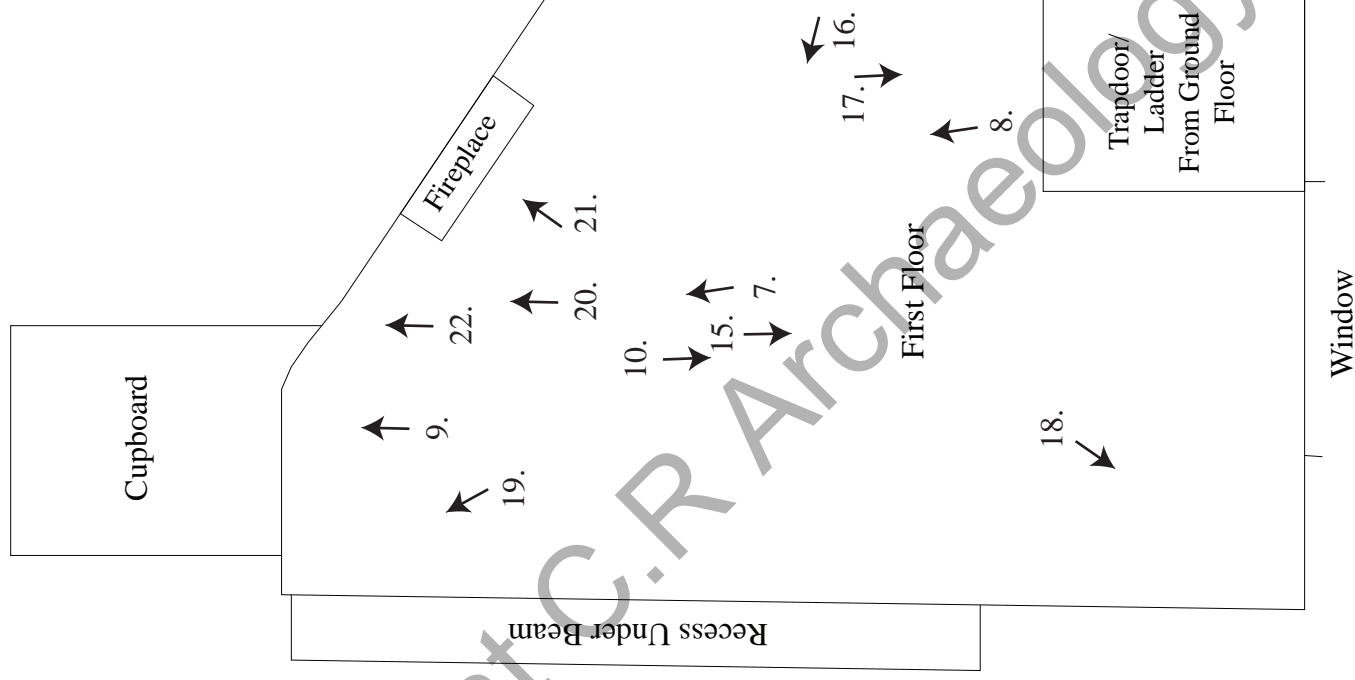
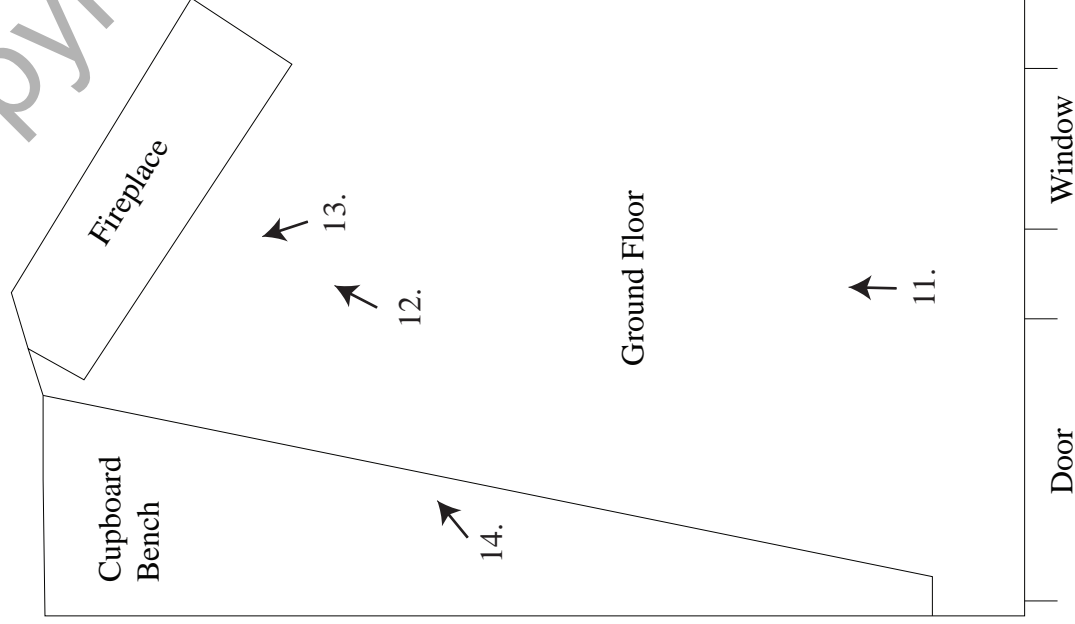
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**DILWYN JONES B.Sc; FRICS**  
**HAMPSON LEWIS**

**3<sup>rd</sup> February 2016**

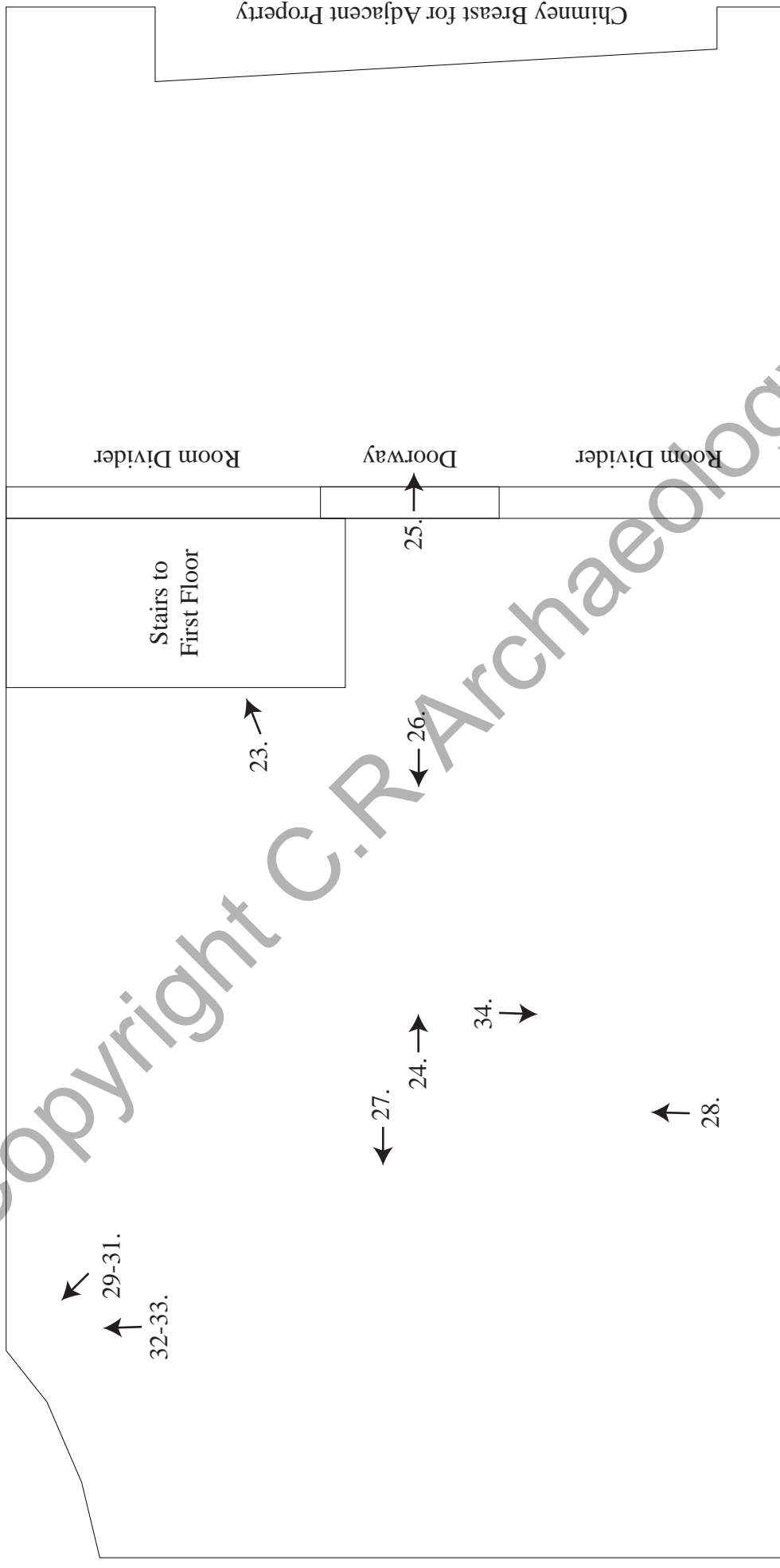
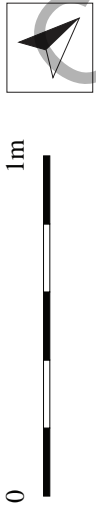
## **Appendix B.**

Location and Direction of Photographic Plates

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**Appendix B.** The Smallest  
House (Number 10)  
Location & Direction  
Of Photographic Plates



**Appendix B.** Number 11 Lower Gate Street - Location & Direction of Photographic Plates (Second Floor/Attic Room)