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*Engineering Archaeological Services Ltd.*

**Siop Newydd, Dolgellau  
Standing Building Report**

**I.P. Brooks**

***EAS Client report 2017/10***



**Siop Newydd, Eldon Square, Dolgellau**  
**Standing Building Report**

**Survey Commissioned**  
**by**  
**Snowdonia National Park Authority**

**Surveyed**  
**by**  
**I.P. Brooks**  
**Engineering Archaeological Services Ltd.**

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**registered in England**

**No 2869678**

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## ***Introduction***

**NGR:** Centred on SH 72805 17730

**Status:** Listed Grade II Reference Number 4957

Within Conservation Area 465

Within the Vale of Dolgellau Historic Landscape HLW (Gw) 13

**Location:** Siop Newydd occupies a plot in the south west corner of Eldon Square, Dolgellau, opposite the entry to Finsbury Square. Whilst facing onto Eldon Square to the north it has a lane leading to yard, to the east, and to the west it links to other properties.

## ***Methodology***

The Merionethshire county archives, held by Gwynedd County Council at Dolgellau, were consulted together with those of the University of Bangor and The National Library of Wales. The online resources of the Gwynedd Historic Environment Record and the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historic Monuments of Wales were also consulted together with a general search of the internet for relevant records or images.

All available rooms were visited and photographs taken of the general impression of the room together with detailed photographs of any architectural feature considered to be of importance. This included all windows, door and fireplaces together with any other significant features. Where possible all photographs included a metric photographic scale. The photographs were taken with a Nikon D5300 Digital SLR Camera at a resolution of 24.2 MP with the photographs being taken in RAW (NEF) format. These photographs were converted into JPEG format for use as illustration in this report and TIFF for archiving.

The plans of the building were based on the drawing “MNW4” prepared for the Merseyside and North Wales Electricity Board which were checked for accuracy and modified to reflect the current layout of the building.

## ***Desk Top Study***

### **Sources**

### ***Mapping***

1901 Ordnance Survey Merioneth XXXVII.3 Map 1:2500

### ***Merioneth Archives***

1794: A survey of several estates in the county of Merionethshire belonging to Sir Rob<sup>t</sup> Williamses Vaugh Bart (ZM/3667) (Nannau Estate Map)

1820: Maps of the Llwyn Estate in the Counties of Merioneth and Montgomery in the Property of Thomas Hartley Esq. (ZM/86)

1830: Conveyance of a moiety of messuages and dwelling houses, shop, garden and premises in the town of Dolgelley, Coun. Merioneth (Subject to a mortgage affecting the sale) and release of equity (DQ18)



1868: Plan of Freehold Premises (ZM/2569)

1901: Plan of valuable freehold properties comprising choice building sites, accommodation land & several shops & dwelling houses situate in & near the town of Dolgelley in the County of Merioneth (ZDCE/9)

### ***Caernarfon Archives***

Receipt from Richard Jones, New Shop, Dolgellau. (XM 36266/314)

### ***National Library of Wales***

1760: Map of Several Estates in the County of Merioneth Belonging to Griffith ap Howell Vaughan Esq. (MS ESTATE MAPS Map 7425)

c.1800 Watercolour by J.J. Dodd

1853: Particulars of freehold properties to be sold by auction by Mr. Robert Lloyd, at the Golden Hotel, Dolgelley 22<sup>nd</sup> Sept. 1853. (Sale Catalogues Mer. 113)

1878: Dolgelley Market with Cader Idris. (<http://hdl.handle.net/10107/1129778>)

### ***Digital Resources***

<https://www.archwilio.org.uk/her/chi1/arch.html?county=Gwynedd&lang=eng>

1840 Tithe Map (<http://cynffin.archiveswales.org.uk/en/tithe-maps/>)

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/dolgellau/14801161125/in/photostream/>. Richard Jones name over shop front.

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/dolgellau/14855500704/in/photostream/>. Richard Jones name over door, possibly 1930's

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/dolgellau/14842782315/in/photostream/> 1960's Electricity Service Centre

[http://dolgellau.wales/photos/#Postcards of Dolgellau 2007:](http://dolgellau.wales/photos/#Postcards%20of%20Dolgellau%202007)

30th August 2007 Alamy Stock Photograph (<http://www.alamy.com/stock-photo/dolgellau.html>)

<http://dolgellau.wales/memories/>. Fire brigade medals in the window of Richard Jones, New Shop. Memory by Craig Parry Hughes

[http://map.coflein.gov.uk/index.php?action=do\\_images&cache\\_name=ZXh0ZW50dHlwZSxCT1hfbWlueCwyNzI3OTdfbWlueSwzMTc3MDdfbWF4eSwzMTc3NzVfbWF4eCwyNzI4OTZfc2VhcmNodHlwZSxhZHhbmNlZF9vcmlE=&numlink=33154#tabs-4](http://map.coflein.gov.uk/index.php?action=do_images&cache_name=ZXh0ZW50dHlwZSxCT1hfbWlueCwyNzI3OTdfbWlueSwzMTc3MDdfbWF4eSwzMTc3NzVfbWF4eCwyNzI4OTZfc2VhcmNodHlwZSxhZHhbmNlZF9vcmlE=&numlink=33154#tabs-4). 1820's view of Eldon Square

[https://c2.staticflickr.com/4/3849/14801161125\\_e38e552c40\\_b.jpg](https://c2.staticflickr.com/4/3849/14801161125_e38e552c40_b.jpg)

<https://www.pinterest.co.uk/pin/190347521727273347/>

<https://i.pinimg.com/736x/50/41/ed/5041edff831dc743b8f651b7b21718bc.jpg>. ?1930's

<https://i.pinimg.com/736x/0e/c4/42/0ec442c07d47b2f6c9ac17e54acffaa0.jpg>

<https://denbighshirearchives.files.wordpress.com/2011/05/plan-of-dolgellau.jpg>.  
DD/DM/1113- Plan of Dolgellau from the original diary 'Two hundred and fifty miles through North Wales on a wagonette'

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/dolgellau/14842782315/in/album-72157625778471425/>  
Dolgellau in the 1960's

[http://www.dolgellau.wales/photos/#Postcards of Dolgellau](http://www.dolgellau.wales/photos/#Postcards%20of%20Dolgellau)

1871 Census, <http://www.genuki.org.uk/big/wal/MER/Dolgellau/1871/ED3A>

1891 Census, <http://www.genuki.org.uk/big/wal/MER/Dolgellau/1891/n>.

1901 Census, <http://www.genuki.org.uk/big/wal/MER/Dolgellau/1901/N>.

### ***Newspapers***

Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald and North and South Wales Independent 24<sup>th</sup> January 1852

The North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser for the Principality 21<sup>st</sup> January 1854

The North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser for the Principality 30<sup>th</sup> December 1865.

The Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard 19<sup>th</sup> September 1873

The Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard 27<sup>th</sup> March 1874

The Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard 30<sup>th</sup> January 1874

The North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser for the Principality 1<sup>st</sup> December 1877.

Y Gwyllydydd, 6<sup>th</sup> October 1880

Llangollen Advertiser Denbighshire Merionethshire and North Wales Journal 9<sup>th</sup> September

Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald and North and South Wales Independent 13<sup>th</sup> July 1888.

Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald and North and South Wales Independent 10<sup>th</sup> October 1890

The Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard 13<sup>th</sup> March 1891

Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald and North and South Wales Independent 11<sup>th</sup> May 1900

Y Dydd 26<sup>th</sup> April 1901

The Aberystwyth Observer 21<sup>st</sup> April 1910

The Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard 14<sup>th</sup> April 1916.

### ***Secondary Sources***

Beverley Smith, J. and Beverley Smith, L. (eds.) 2001. *History of Merioneth. Volume II. The Middle Ages*. Merionethshire Historical Society.

Cadw 2001. *Register of Historic landscapes of special historic interests in Wales*. Cadw, Cardiff, 117 - 119

Cadw 2009. *Dolgellau: Understanding Urban Character*



Lewis, S. 1834. *A topographical dictionary of Wales*. S. Lewis and Co., London

Longley, D. 2012. *Plas Newydd, Eldon Square, Dolgellau Meirionnydd*. Report for Snowdonia National Park Authority

Merioneth Directory 1881

Merioneth Directory 1886

Slater's North Wales Directory 1851

Sutton's Directory of North Wales 1890

Slyfield, D.W. 1994. Dolgellau and its electricity supply 1935. *Journal of the Merioneth Historical and Record Society XII*, 197-200.

Worrall's Directory 1871

Wyn Jones, M. 2011. *Dolgellau*. Nercus, Y Bala.

### ***Discussion***

Whilst there is no direct evidence for prehistoric activity with Dolgellau the recovery of stray finds within the area, particularly of polished axes and axe hammers suggest a level of activity the area, particularly in the Late Neolithic and Bronze Ages. (<https://www.archwilio.org.uk/her/chil/arch.html?county=Gwynedd&lang=eng>). Roman Activity is also recorded by the finds of roman coins recorded by Lewis in 1834 (Lewis 1834, 229).

The town of Dolgellau emerges as one of nineteen townships within the commote of Talybont (Longley 2012, 2). The earliest direct reference to the township is within a survey of 1284 which suggests it was held by unfree tenants, probably indicating it was a modest administrative centre (Cadw 2009, 9). During the fourteen century Dolgellau became the seat of the commote, or hundred court, and it seems likely that a market was developed taking advantage of Dolgellau's position by a river crossing on the boundary between the uplands and the good arable lands of the lowlands. This market had developed sufficiently by the mid fifteenth century to claim a monopoly over the trade in the area.

From the sixteenth century, the administrative role of the town developed with hundred courts, Quarter sessions and Great Sessions being held in the town. Even if as late as the 1530's Dolgellau was still being described as a village.

The earliest maps located within this study are the 1760 and 1794 estate maps drawn for Griffith ap Howell Vaughan Esq and as part of a survey of the Nannau Estate (Figures 2 and 3). Both of these maps appear to show a remarkably similar layout to the current situation with the yard between what will become Siop Newydd and Plas Newydd already in existence. Although there are some comparisons between the current layout and these maps it would seem likely that the current shop fronting onto Eldon Square may be a replacement of an existing building.

The earliest image is a watercolour by J.J. Dodd, held by the National Library (Figure 4), which shows a one and a half storeyed building occupying the site of Siop Newydd. This presumably is the front range shown on the earlier estates maps and has another range behind it. Also, if taken on face value it would appear that there is a greater space between Plas

Newydd and the building occupying the space of Siop Newydd, however, this may just be artistic licence.

The 1820 plan from the Llwyn Estate (Figure 5) shows the “New Shop” is not part of the estate, but the property immediately to the south, and attached, is part of the estate. Once again it is not certain whether this represent the current building or an older building on a similar footprint. However, an engraving of Eldon Square from 1820 (Figure 6) possibly shows the construction of Siop Newydd underway.

An 1830 Conveyance (Merioneth archives DQ16) transferred the ownership of “New Shop” from David Davies to William Williams and his trustees for £480. The text of the conveyance would appear to suggest that William Williams was already a tenant within the property prior to purchasing it. Interesting note on the back of the Conveyance dated 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1872 transfers the right to a yearly rent of £15 from the property to the Trustees of the Charles Scholarship. The rent was payable at half year intervals on 12<sup>th</sup> May and 12<sup>th</sup> November

William Williams not only owned the building but ran a Grocers and Drapers shop in the property as is recorded in the 1835 Piggot’s Directory.

The painting by William Hughes from c. 1837 (Figure 7) shows a building of the right sort of size and shape to have been the current shop, however the accuracy of this painting can be questioned as it omits the adjacent Plas Newydd, which was certainly standing in 1837, suggesting there is some artistic licence with this painting.

The Tithe map of 1841 (Figure 8), whilst giving an outline map, gives no detail of the ownership. It is also curious that the Tithe Map does not appear to show a layout similar to the earlier mapping, however, given that the town centre was outside the Tithe system and therefore was not important as a record of who was responsible for paying the tithe the lack of accuracy is understandable.

By 1851, the Grocery and Drapers business had been taken over by William Jones, although William Williams appears to retain the ownership as shown by the 1872 memorandum and the annotation on the map attached to an 1853 sales catalogue (Figure 9). The shop was clearly an important feature on Eldon Square with the quality of its window display being praised in 1865 in a letter to the editor of The North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser for the Principality (30th December 1865). William Williams died in 1887 (The North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser for the Principality 1<sup>st</sup> December 1877), however the business had been taken over by his nephew Richard Jones before 1871 (Worrell’s Directory 1871).

Richard Jones continued to develop the business. Adding funeral direction by 1873 (The Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard 19th September 1873). He also acquired the contract to supply the uniforms for the Union Workhouse in 1874 (The Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard 27th March 1874), for the county constabulary in the same year (The Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard 30th January 1874) and for the High Sheriff’s officials at the Merioneth assize in 1888 (Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald and North and South Wales Independent 13th July 1888). The business advertised widely in both regional and local and national directories in 1881, 1886 (Figure 10) and 1890. These adverts suggest the company was established in 1825, possibly relating to the date of the formation of the original business by William Jones. An invoice dated 1873 survives (Figure 11,



Caernarfonshire Archives XM/3626/314) for good supplied to Mr Thomas Glanylllyn, which although invoiced for in March 1873 the good were not paid for until January 1874.

The engraving published by Newman and Co dated March 29<sup>th</sup> 1878 (Figure 12) shows a somewhat idealised image of Eldon Square, however, there is sufficient details to suggest that the large ground floor shop window was in place by this time. Unfortunately, however, the upper storey windows and the lack of a dormer on the elevation do not appear to be correct. It could be argued, however, that the artist has moved the large first floor window up a storey, filling the space with two standard windows instead and that the main focus of this image is Cader Idris in the background.

A plan drawn in 1890 (Figure 13) does not show any great detail of the form of Siop Newydd, but does show the lane/yard to the east. The sales catalogue map of 1901 (Figure 14) is clearly based on the Ordnance Survey 1:2500 map of the area (Merionethshire XXXVII.3, Figure 15) both of which show a layout essentially the same as that which exists today. Both maps show the presence of a bench mark on the north-eastern corner of Siop Newydd which no longer survives.

By 1900 the ownership of the shop had changed to William Davies and his brother (Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald and North and South Wales Independent 11th May 1900), although an advert from the paper Y Dydd dated 26<sup>th</sup> April 1901 (Figure 16) suggests the business was still being run as a grocer.

By 1910 the ownership had been transferred to William Allen who presented the County School with eighty French and German books (The Aberystwyth Observer 21st April 1910). By 1916 he was a JP and sending local guide books to Netley Hospital presumably for injured troops (The Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard 14th April 1916.)

Although the ownership changes it is possible that the shop retained its name. A photograph, purporting to be from the 1930's (see cover) shows the shop with Richard Jones' name still over the door.

The power for used lighting the shop can be partly documents, the Cambrian News and Merioneth Standard for 13th March 1891 reports the laying of a gas main directly outside the shop, possibly suggesting the use of gas lighting at this time. It was not, however until 1935 that Dolgellau gained a public electricity supply (Slyfield 1994, 198), thus the lighting for the shop could not have been converted until after this date.

The more modern use of the shop is shown in a series of photographs available on line. From the early 60's the shop was the "Electricity Service Centre" to at least the early 1970's. This probably morphed into the Manweb shop recorded as the occupier in 1990 when the shop was listed (Appendix 1)

By 2007 a photograph shows the shop was occupied by "The Crafty Cauldron" (<http://www.alamy.com/stock-photo/dolgellau.html>) and most recently as "Sullis" a hair dressing establishment. Currently the building is unused, except for storages and possibly as a band practice space.

## ***Building survey***

Siop Newydd consist of two basic ranges arranged in a slightly bent “L” shape. To the west, the front range, is part of a terraced range with Madryn, whilst to the south the property is linked to further properties, only separated at the ground floor level by a passageway leading to the yards of the surrounding properties.

### ***External Appearance***

Constructed of coursed, roughly shaped stone block, the range fronting onto Eldon Square is a two and a half storeyed range with a gabled dormer containing the upper window (Plate 1, Figure 17). The ground floor is dominated by the large shop window which runs either side of the central door. Although now dominated by the “Sulis” shop sign it retains decorative elements which probably relate to its nineteenth century format. On either side of the shop window the opening is defined by sunk panelled pilasters surmounted by reeded consoles and pedimented caps decorated with Tudor rose decorations (Plates 2 and 3). The blind box between the two caps is further decorated with a scallop design. The centrally placed doorway now contains a modern double opening which hides a glass panelled door set at the rear to a short internal porch. Either side of the ground floor window there are the sockets for flag supports and metal pins mounted in the stones of the façade which presumably originally supported signs.

At first floor level there is a tripartite sash window with a central sixteen-paned sash flanked by two, eight-paned sashes. This is below a massive stone lintel formed of a single block 3.3 m long. Above this an eight-paned, tripartite sash window, with a four-paned central window flanked by two-paned side lights. located only partly above the eaves, but within a gabled dormer. The cill level of this window has been raised by about 0.5 m and it is possible that the window head was at just below the eaves level, possibly suggesting that the dormer was added to a pre-existing structure. The roof of this range is difficult to see from ground level; however, it appears to be covered in regular slates with a ceramic ridge tiling, a pattern which is also reflected on the dormer.

The eastern gable of the front range (Plate 4) has only one opening, a window at second floor level. This is a six-paned casement window with upper central leaf which opens. The cill of this window also appears to have been modified and there is a blocked opening above the window which is sealed with bricks. It is most likely that this is a soot-hole for the chimney flue, however it is also possible that this acted as a socket for a block and tackle beam to raise goods into the second-floor loft. Surmounting this gable is one of the two chimneys on this range. This is constructed of squared, coursed, stone blocks and has a projecting string course and tabling. The second chimney sits over the party wall with the adjacent building and appears to be of a similar design, however it also has a projecting stone string course at cap level. The gable of this range is asymmetrical because of the arrangement between the front range, rear range and the requirement to allow access to the side lane. The roof of the front range is also extended over the transitional range, over the lean-to porch, so that the rear range, west of this point is symmetrical.

A short length of the rear elevation of the front range is exposed in the yard to the east of the building (Plate 5). This has two opening, one each at first and second floor levels. The first-floor window is a twelve-paned sash window, whilst the second-floor window is a two-

paned, non-opening window. The second-floor window, once again appears to have a raised cill. There are also two drill holes on one of the quoins to the east of this opening, the function of which is unknown, although it is probable that they held a rain pipe bracket. There are, however, two blocked openings at a lower level (Plate 6). A small blocked window is at ground floor level, whilst there is a larger opening below which would have given access to the cellars. This opening has a large stone lintel.

The front elevation of the rear range (Plates 7 and 8) faces onto the yard between Siop Newydd and Plas Newydd, it consists of a main two and a half storeyed range and a short, three storeyed, transitional, range which links the front range to the rear. This transitional range (Plate 9) appears to be contemporary with the rear range as there is no break in the stonework of the elevation. The cill of the second-floor window, in this transitional range, may have been raised, although the satellite dish partly obscures this area of the elevation, suggesting that all of the windows at this level have been modified. It is also on the same level as the other second floor windows of the front range, rather than that of the rear range. There is, however, a straight joint between the transitional range and the front range suggesting these are from separate phases of construction. It contains two windows, at first and second floor levels, and has a later, stone built, porch at ground floor level. That at first floor level was originally a twelve-paned sash window, however the lower six panes have been replaced with a single pane of frosted glass. The second-floor window is four-paned casement window with both this window and the sash below having stone lintels. The porch is constructed of squared stone blocks below a single pitched slate roof. This is clearly a later addition as it has straight joints to both the front and rear ranges.

The main elevation of the rear range (Plates 7 and 8) has openings at cellar, ground, first and second floor levels and also contains the entrance to a passageway leading to a yard behind adjacent buildings. Two, partly exposed, windows give light to the cellars, although not clear from the outside these are relatively simple, four-paned sash windows. On the ground floor there are two windows, a larger, six-paned sash adjacent to the porch and a much narrower, three-paned sash adjacent to the passageway. There were originally three windows at first floor level, however the central window has been blocked. All of these openings had large stone lintels and the two remaining windows are four-paned sashes. The two short sash windows on the second-floor level have their tops at eaves level, however there is no sign of a central opening matching the windows below. Both of these opening hold short, six-paned sash windows. There is also a chimney on the ridge of the southern gable (Plate 8) of this range which is of a similar design to those on the front range. The passage through the southern end of rear range (Plate 11) is constructed of brick using machine made bricks of nineteenth or twentieth century proportions. There is a supporting arch (Plate 12) over this passage which is also made of brick, although the function of this arch is not entirely clear as it appears to be too substantial for the structure above and its position does not suggest it is supporting any current specific structure. There is also a blocked doorway (Plate 13) at the western end of the passage which as a modern blocking.

At the time of the survey the rear elevation of rear range was covered in scaffolding making its recording impossible.

## *Internal*

Internally the layout of the building largely reflects the most recent use of the building as a ground floor shop with a maisonette above, however, some of the original layout survives, particularly around the stairwell and in the cellars.

The cellars (Figure 18) are divided into four main spaces and are accessed by a straight flight of stairs with a 90° winder at its base. These have a square section, plain, newel post with squat, pyramidal finial, plain balusters and chamfered handrail (Plate 14). This rear cellar (Cellar 1, Figure 18) has been used as a kitchen and retains its cast iron oven range (Plate 15) in the southern end of the room and its red quarry tile floor. In the south-western corner, this tiled floor runs out as the natural rock is exposed (Plate 16). The shape of the room is also irregular at this point and it is possible that the original cellar was intended to be larger, but the presence of the rock led to a re-evaluation of the cellar size.

Cellar 1 is partly lit by two windows in the eastern wall, below one of which is a built-in sink. The southern window also has iron, security bars which are not present on the northern window. There is a somewhat uncomfortable relationship between Cellars 1 and 2 (Plate 18) which reflects the relationship between the front range of the building at that point behind. The presence of a significant timber beam above the door between these two cellars (Plate 19) may hint at an early relationship between these rooms.

Cellar 2 lies under the south-western corner of the front range of the building and acts as a link between the other cellars. In its western wall there is a blocked opening (Plate 20) suggesting there was a larger complex of interconnected cellars under the front range and possibly that Siop Newydd and the house to the west were originally part of a single unit.

It is separated from Cellar 3 by a stone wall which has a straight joint between it and the western wall of Cellars 2 and 3 and is therefore a later insertion (Plate 21). The eastern end of this wall has been reinforced with machine made bricks, partly to support the rolled steel joist which supports the floor of the shop above. It is possible, however that it extended further as is shown by the change in stonework of wall between Cellars 2 and 3 and Cellar 4 (Plate 22). At the northern end of Cellar 3, there is a small cupboard cut into the wall with a wooden frame and plain door (Plate 23).

As with Cellars 2 and 3, the ceiling of Cellar 4 is supported by modern rolled steel joists which are supported on brick pillars. The wall dividing this cellar from the others is of rubble construction, however it is capped with a wooden beam (Plate 24). This would appear to have been re-used from an earlier structure, it has a moderate chamfer on its eastern side and a straight cut stop at the south-eastern end (Plate 25). There are at least two cut-out sections of this beam which would have acted as sockets for other timbers originally joined to this timber (Plates 26 and 27). It is noticeable that these joints are approximately opposite each other on opposite sides of the beam, possibly suggesting the location of a partition. There would appear to be a blocked opening in the eastern wall of Cellar 4 (Plate 28). The location of this opening is somewhat curious as would have been below ground level and at a point where the road between Siop Newydd and Plas Newydd is at its narrowest. It is therefore possible that this is a fragment of an earlier structure rather than a blocked opening.



The southern end of Cellar 4 is dominated by a short flight of stone stairs leading to the blocked opening into the yard. On either side of these steps are stone slopes. It is assumed that these were part of the use of the building as a grocer's shop and were used to move barrels in and out of the cellar.

On the ground floor (Figure 19) the building is divided into two main rooms, both opening off an entrance hall which also contains the stairwell with flight leading both down to the cellars and up to the first floor. Preserved within this entrance hall is part of the nineteenth century polychromatic tile floor (Plate 30).

The front room (Room 1, Figure 19) on the ground floor has been thoroughly modernised, reflecting its use as a shop. The windows have been replaced with modern plate glass and a suspended ceiling inserted (Plate 31). The only surviving feature is the blocked window in the southern wall which has been retained as an alcove (Plate 32). This would originally allow the monitoring of the loading of goods into the cellar as it is directly over the blocked entrance to the cellar. Similarly, Room 2 and its WC have been modernised, however there is a wooden beam partly exposed in the north-western corner of Room 2 (Plate 33) which does not appear to follow the current alignment of the room and may reflect an earlier alignment. The northern wall of this room also contains a cupboard and the door to the entrance hall, both of which retain the moulded frames of nineteenth century type and the doorway has a six-paned panelled door of a similar date.

There are more extensive ranges of rooms on the first and second floors as these floors extend over the passageway. On the first floor the front range contains two rooms (Figure 20) whilst the rear range has three rooms linked by a corridor. These two groups of rooms are linked by the stairwell and its associated landings; however, they occupy different levels, possibly suggesting different construction dates. The main staircase has differential use of balusters for each flight (Plate 35). Between the ground and first floor (Plate 36) there are turned balusters and a cushioned handrail, whilst between the first and second floors there are plain squared balusters. The newel posts (Plate 37) are turned and have ball finials.

The front room (Room 3, Figure 20) contains the large, tripartite window with a bench seat below (Plate 38). The coving around the room suggests this is part of the nineteenth century layout for the first floor (Plate 39). A similar pattern of coving and original skirting boards is also evident in Room 4 (Plate 40). Although hidden by the coving in Room 3 there is a wooden beam over the partition between Rooms 3 and 4 which projects into the landing to be supported by a corbel at its western end.

The large landing on the first floor shows the difference in status between the first and second floor in the differential use of balusters in the staircase (Plate 41). Those on the first floor the balusters are turned (Plate 42) whilst those to the upper floor are simple squared timber. The newel posts on both the first and second floor landing are turned with ball finials (Plate 44) suggesting the differential design of balusters is not temporally defined.

Within the rear range of the building, on the first floor, Rooms 5 and 6 sit somewhat uncomfortably within the building, probably suggesting they are relatively late modifications. Although both have eight panel doors of nineteenth century type it is possible that these are the re-use of features. The only earlier feature is the fireplace in Room 6, unfortunately only the chimney breast survives, but its position suggests that the current wall on the western side

of the room may be in a similar position to that for which the fireplace was originally designed. The floors in this part of the buildings are somewhat uneven. This distortion must have taken place before the skirtings were inserted as they have been scribed to take account of the distortions (Eric Edwards *pers. comm.*) This shows that any structural problems are historical and may suggest the presence of a timber framed building hiding within the current structure.

On the second floor (Figure 21), Room 7 occupies the whole of the front range. This room has a king post truss with raking struts (Plate 45, Figure 22) across the middle of the room. This is a softwood truss which is bolted together, it has graffiti reading “W24” on one of the principle rafters which may be a batch or sales number for the timber. Also on this truss is the socket for a partition which is no longer in position (Plate 47) and a series of carpenter’s marks (Plate 48). There is also an apparent half truss across the western side of the room (Plate 49) of a similar design to the full truss which has a series of marks on the underside of the collar (Plate 50). The northern end of this half truss is supported on a wooden plate embedded in the wall. The southern end of the half truss rests on a wood and glass partition (Plate 51) which separates Room 7 from the landing. It is likely that the foot of a truss (Plate 52), resting on the beam over the stairwell, is the southern end of the apparent half truss, thereby forming a complete structure. The eastern gable wall of this room has chimney breasting (Plate 53) which corbels out at the level of the lintel of the window in this wall and extends to the north. This allows for the ridge stack above. There are three windows giving light to this room, all of which have wooden lintels. It became apparent that the window to the north is the location of a series of photographs used for post-cards of Eldon Square (Plate 54).

Over the stairwell there is a large wooden beam (Plate 55), probably of oak, which has is moderately chamfered and has a straight cut stop at its eastern end. There is also the socket for a joint on the lower surface of the beam which has two blocks infilling either end of the joint. The size of this timber is much larger than anything else recorded in the building and seems too large to be contemporary with the general style of building observed.

In the Rear Wing of the building on this floor, is occupied by Rooms 8 and 9, neither of which appear to be part of the original layout of this floor and are probably related to the conversion of the top two floors into domestic accommodation. Within Room 9, however, the foot of a truss is exposed in the eastern wall of the room (Plate 56) together with the lowest of the purlins on this side of the room. The collar attached to this truss would appear to be a later insertion as it is at a different alignment to the principle rafter to which it is attached.

## ***Conclusions***

Siop Newydd consist of two distinct ranges, the front of which was constructed as a purpose-built shop, probably in 1820. The rear range, however, would appear to be of an earlier phase, possibly containing elements from a considerably earlier period. The front range incorporates a cellar which originally had barrel ramp, but now has been sub-divided and provided with a re-enforced ceiling by the use of modern rolled steel joists. It is probable, however that this cellar relates to an earlier structure on the site as it contains blocked openings, possibly to adjoining cellars. The use of softwood, bolted trusses in the front range is consistent with a nineteenth century date for the construction of this range.

The relationship between Siop Newydd and Madryn, to the west, is somewhat curious. The presence of a blocked opening in Cellar 2 would suggest a link, at least at cellar level. The differential alignment of the party wall between two properties on the upper levels suggest that the division between these two properties is somewhat idiosyncratic. On the cellar and ground floor levels there is a straight division between the properties, whilst at first and second floor levels the rear of the front range project into the outline of Madryn. Indeed, the first and second floor level project into Madryn by differing amounts with the first-floor landing projecting into Madryn by 1.63 m whilst the rear of Room 7 projects by 1.39 m. It is therefore possible that Siop Newydd and Madryn were originally built as a single, integrated structure, possibly with Madryn being the domestic part of the building and Siop Newydd as the commercial.

Internally, many of the historic details have been lost, with only the stairwell retaining much of its historic character. The differential status of the various floor level being shown by the use of decorative balusters on ground and first floors whilst a more utilitarian design has been used for the cellars and second floor. It is probable that this reflects either the public or family use of the ground and first floors whilst the cellars and second floors were used as service ranges.

It is noticeable that all of the second-floor windows in the front and transitional ranges have had their cills raised suggesting they originally held larger windows. It is probable that the “loft” of the front range was being used for some activity that required good light. It is noticeable that the original business’ occupying this shop were grocer/drapers and it is therefore possible that loft was being used sewing. However, the early nineteenth century saw a boom in the woollen industry in Dolgellau (Cadw 2009, 11) and it is possible that this floor was being used as a weaving loft.

The rear range has been modified both internally and externally. The relationship between the blocked window on the first floor and the internal arrangement rooms suggest that the range has been re-organised, possible to allow the first and second floors to be used as domestic accommodation. Other modern modifications include the blocking of the doorway into the passage to construct a toilet on the ground floor.

The date of construction of the rear range is uncertain. Although the windows and other surviving fittings are of nineteenth century type, the presence of the large timber over the stairwell and the alignment of the exposed timberwork in Rooms 2 and 9 hints at possible earlier phases of construction. Also, the timber beam in the cellar under the front range is chamfered and stopped suggesting it was re-used from a ceiling, possibly from the building which was replaced by the current building. Beams of this type are not uncommon in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and similar timberwork has been recorded from Plas Newydd, next door, which have been dated to late sixteen or early seventeenth century (Longley, 2012, 5).

### ***Acknowledgements***

The survey was commissioned by Gwilym Hughes Jones, Head of Cultural Heritage for The Snowdonia National Park Authority. Access was provided by the owner. The help of Tomos Jones, the National Park Archaeologist with the survey is gratefully acknowledged.

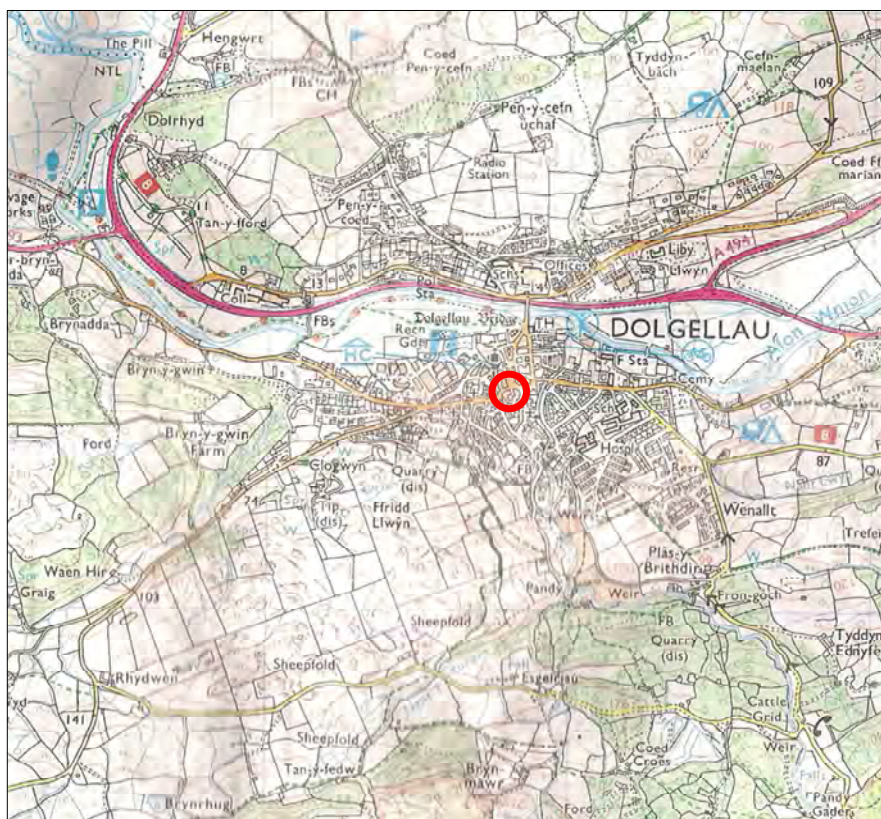


Figure 1: Location  
Scale 1:25,000

Reproduced from the Outdoor LeisureTM OL18, 1:25,000 scale  
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The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office  
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Figure 2: Extract from the 1760 Estate Map  
(National Library MS ESTATE MAPS Map 7425 )  
Not to Scale







Figure 4: Watercolour by J.J. Dodd c. 1800  
(National Library)



Figure 5: Extract from the 1820 Llwyn Estate Map  
(Merionethshire Archives ZM/86)  
Not to Scale





Figure 6: 1820 Engraving of Eldon Square  
Source: <http://map.coflein.gov.uk/>



Figure 7: Painting by William Hughes c.1837





Figure 8: 1841 Tithe Map  
Source <http://cynefin.archiveswales.org.uk/en/tithe-maps/>  
Not to Scale



Figure 9: 1853 Sales Map  
National Library SALE CATALOGUES Mer. 113  
Not to scale

ESTABLISHED 1828.

RICHARD JONES,  
General Drapery, Furnishing,  
**TEA, FAMILY GROCERY,**  
AND  
PROVISION STORES  
THE NEW SHOP, DOLGELLEY.

Real Welsh Productions Exhibited in all the Latest  
Novelties and Styles.

→ → → PATTERNS FREE. ← ← ←

Goods forwarded Carriage Paid to any Railway Station in the United Kingdom.

All Foreign Orders delivered Carriage Paid at any English Seaport.

All Goods sold at the lowest possible prices, from which no discount can possibly  
be allowed.

Figure 10: Advert in Merioneth Directory 1886



NEW SHOP.

*Delgelly. Novr 1873*

*Mr Thomas Glynllwyr.*

**Bo. of Richard Jones.**

**General Draper & Family Grocer.**

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY

**FAMILY MOURNING & REAL WELSH FLANNEL, TWEEDS, &c.**

TERMS CASH. **COMPLETE HOUSE FURNISHING WAREHOUSE.** *(144)*

(ESTABD 1825.)

<i>July 1<sup>st</sup></i>	<i>1<sup>lb</sup> Trilling</i>	<i>4/3</i>	<i>50</i>
<i>20<sup>th</sup></i>	<i>1<sup>lb</sup> Beef</i>	<i>2/0</i>	<i>200</i>
<i>Oct 2<sup>nd</sup></i>	<i>1<sup>lb</sup> Beef</i>	<i>14/6</i>	<i>14.50</i>
<i>3<sup>rd</sup></i>	<i>1<sup>lb</sup> Trilling</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>68</i>
<i>3<sup>rd</sup></i>	<i>1<sup>lb</sup> Trilling</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>46</i>
			<i>3. 10 7 1/2</i>
			<i>9 1/2</i>
			<i>3. 1 1 1/2</i>

*Robt. Jones*

*January 2<sup>nd</sup> 1874*

Figure 11: 1873 invoice

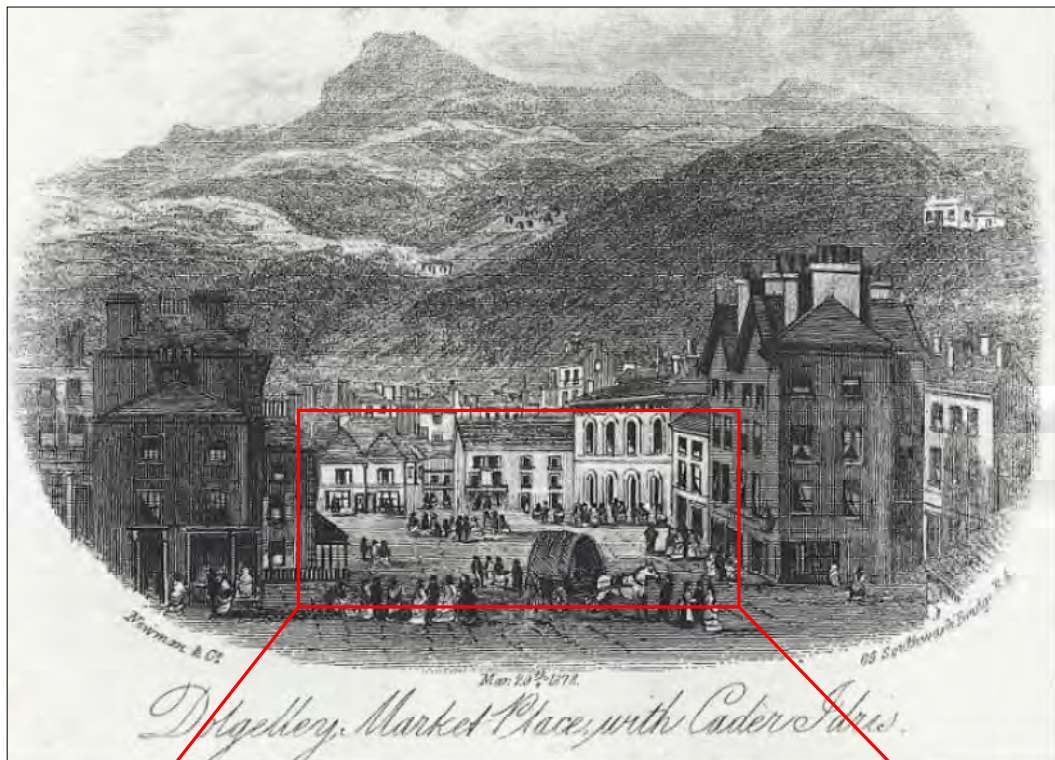


Figure 12: 1878 Dolgelley Market Place







Figure 14: 1901 Sales Catalog  
 (Merioneth Archives ZDCE/9)  
 Not to scale



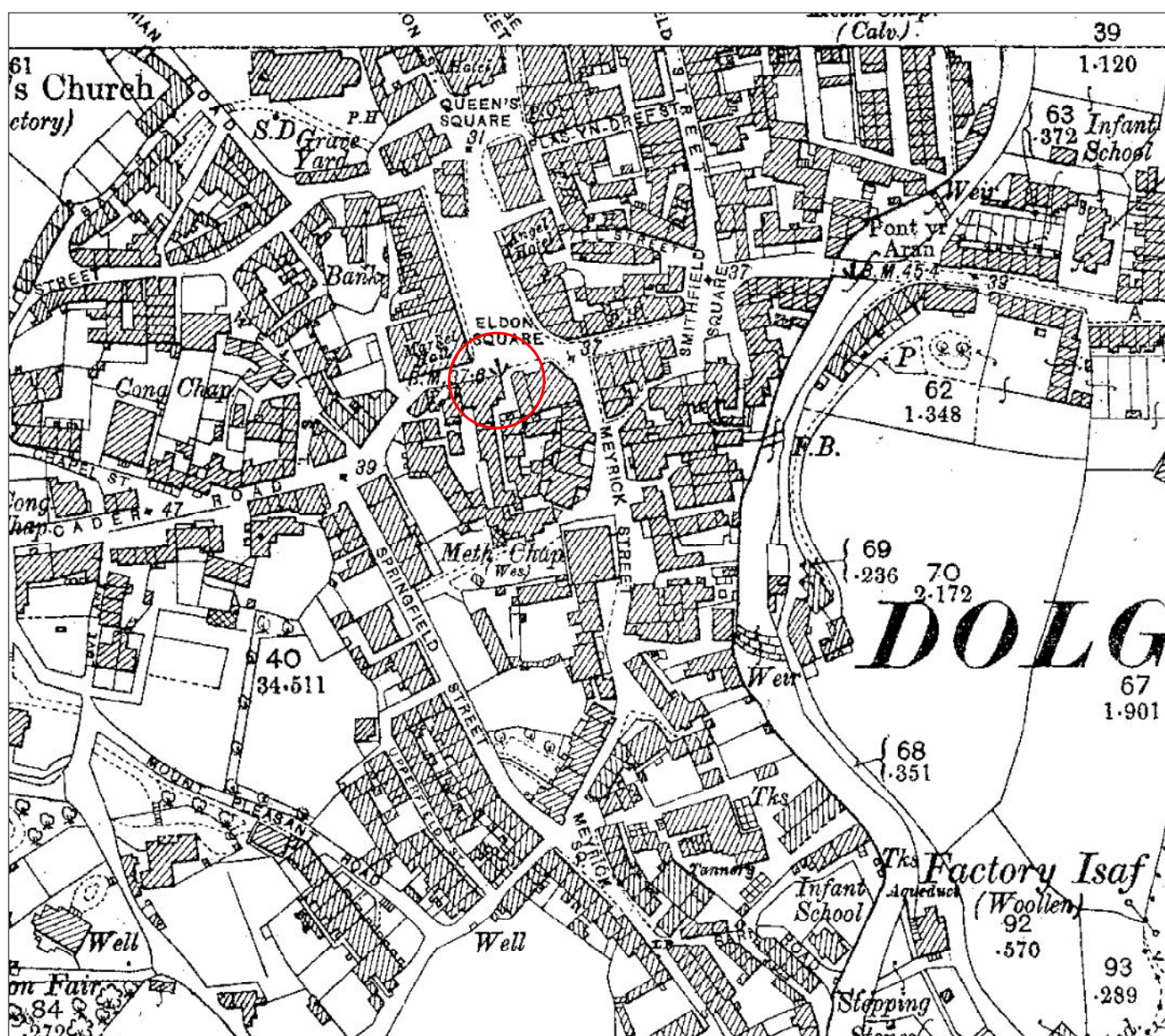




Figure 15: Extract from the 1901, Ordnance Survey  
Second Edition Map, Merionethshire XXXVII.3  
Not to Scale

**Davies & Co.**  
hysbysu eu bod yn parhau  
i brynu y

**NWYDDAU**   
 **GOREU**

am y Prisiau Rhataf posibl,  
ac felly sicrheir Bargein-  
ion Mawrion i'w cwsmer-  
iaid. Sylwch ar brisiau  
ein

**JAMS RHAD**

2lb Damson & Apple 4½c  
2lb Gooseberry & Apple 4½c  
2lb Plum & Apple 4½c  
2lb Strawberry 9½c.  
2lb Raspberry 9½c.

Prisiau Te, 1s 4c, 1s 7c,  
1s 10c, 2s, 2s 8c.  
Tolerau arbenig am 5 pwys ac uchod.

**DAVIES & Co,**  
Siop Newydd, Dolgellau.

Figure 16: Advert in Y Dydd





Figure 17: Front Elevation  
Scale 1:50

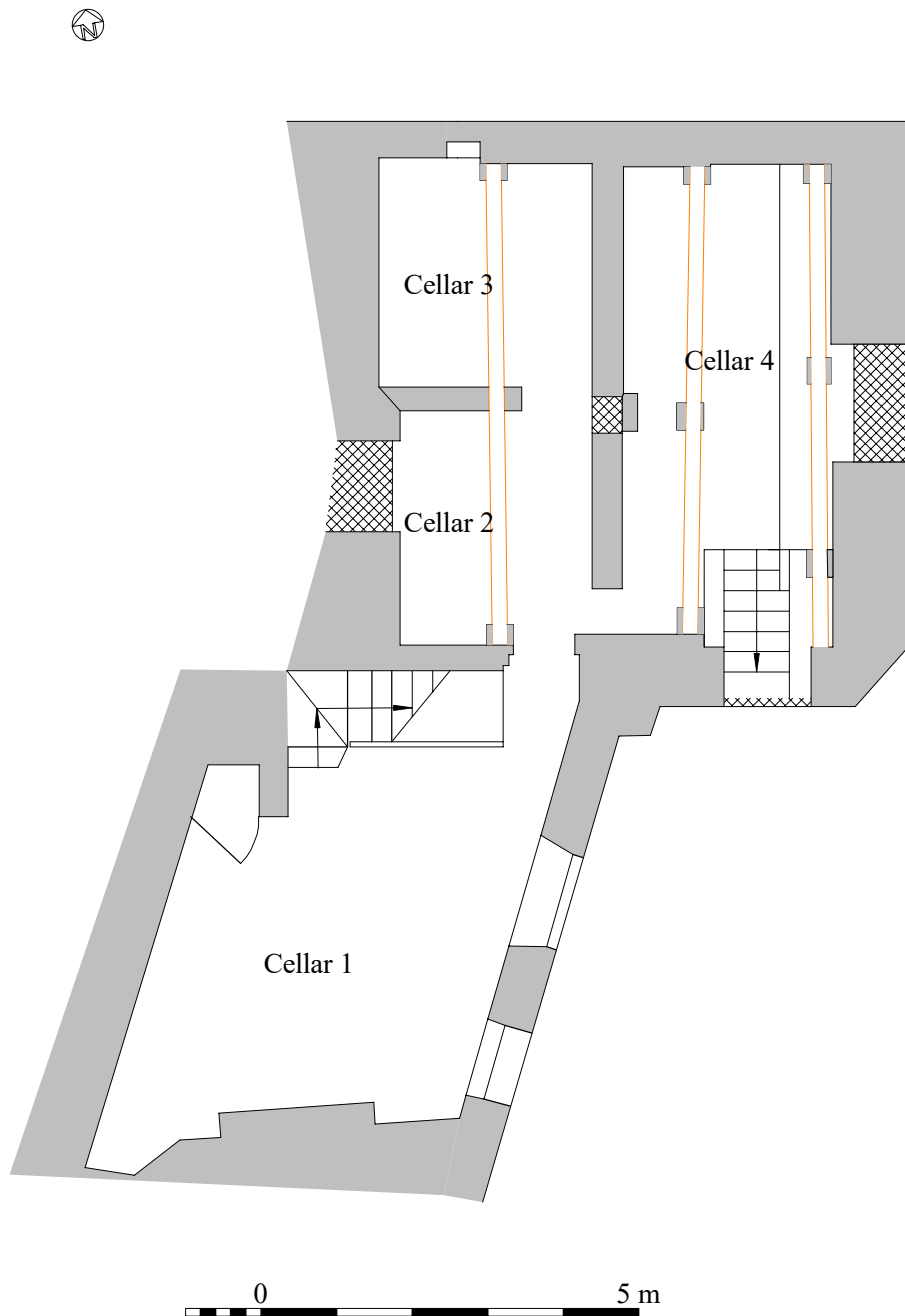


Figure 18: Cellar Plan  
Scale 1:100



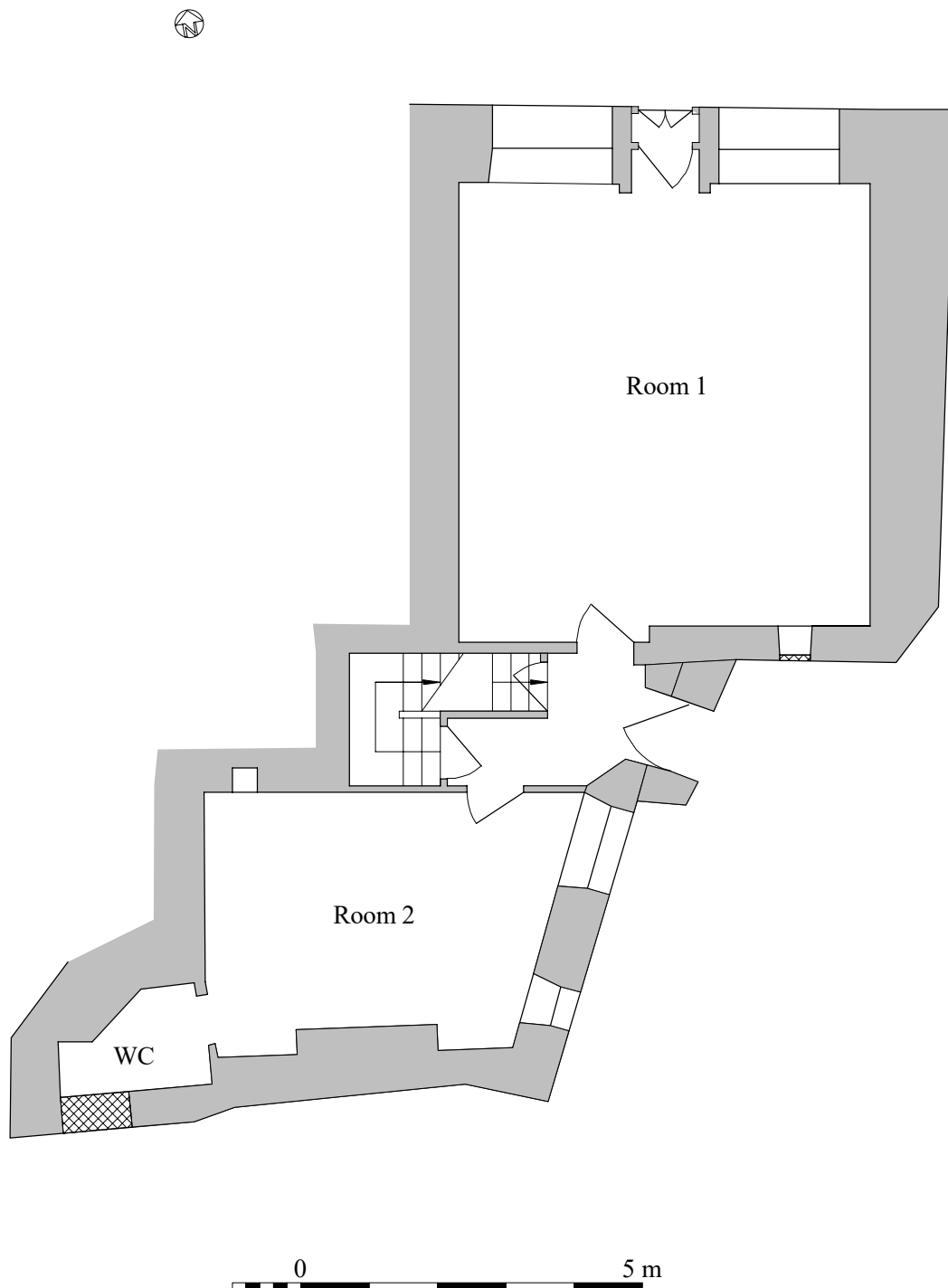


Figure 19: Ground Floor Plan  
Scale 1:100

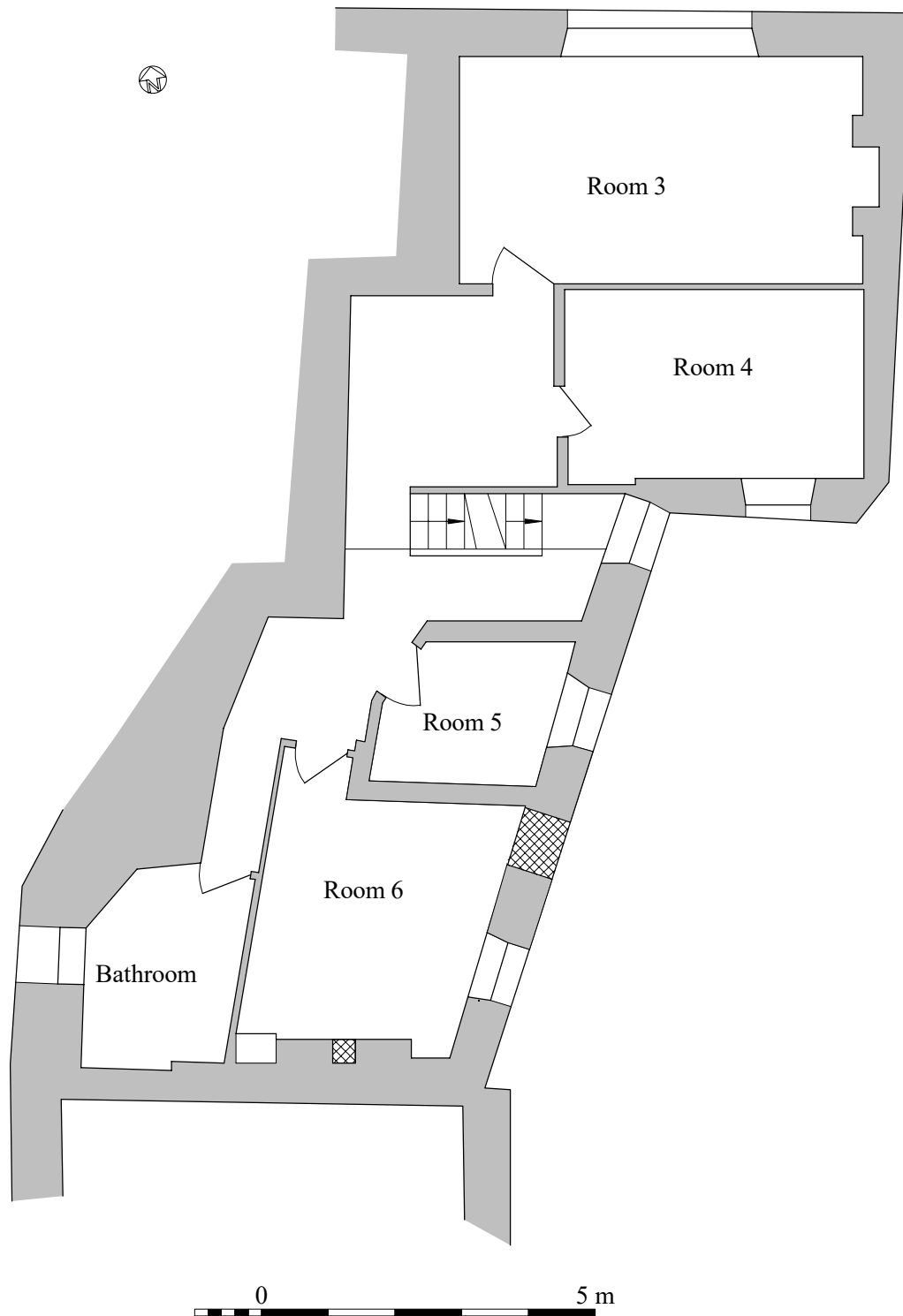


Figure 20: First Floor Plan  
Scale 1:100

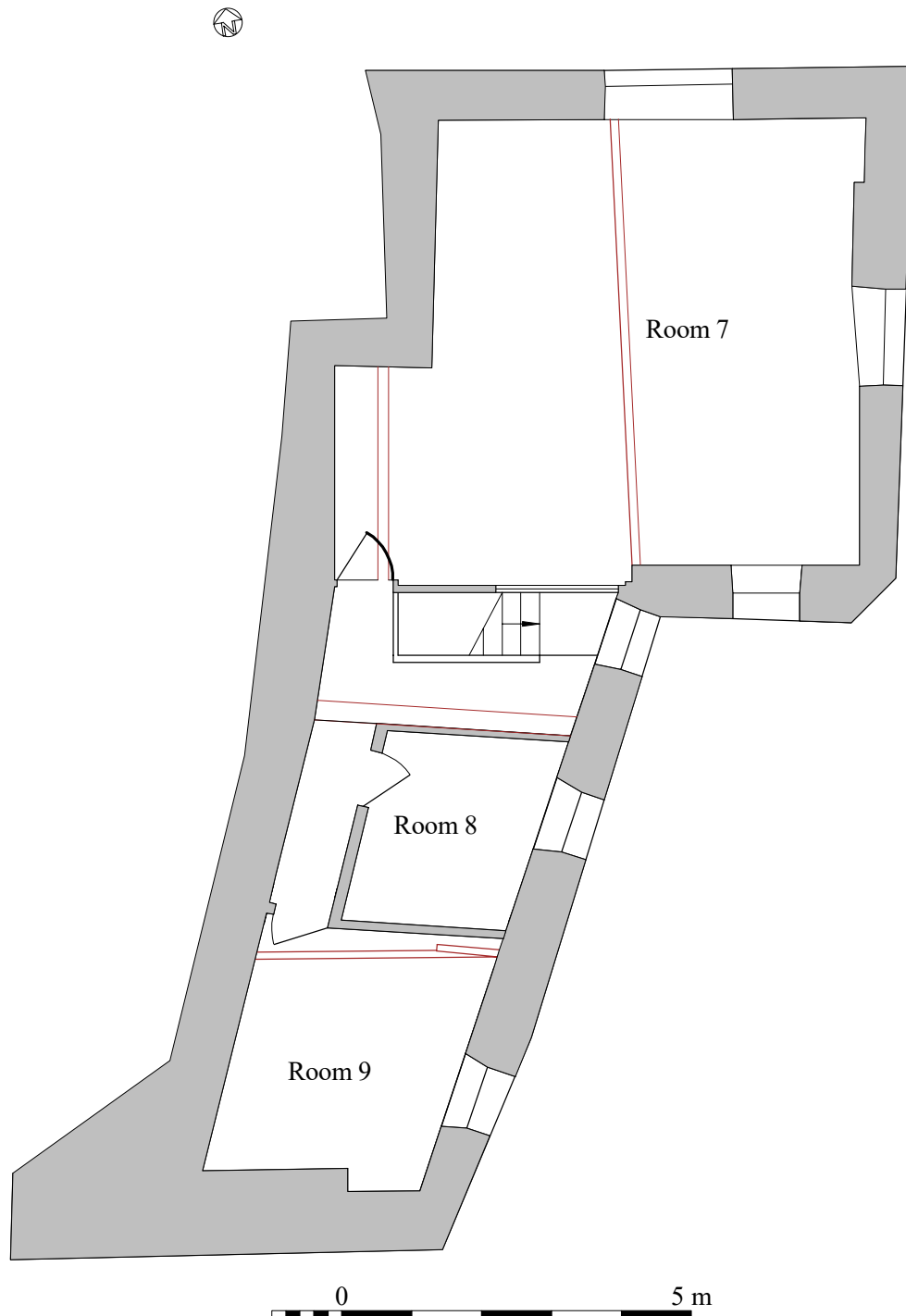


Figure 21: Second Floor Plan  
Scale 1:100

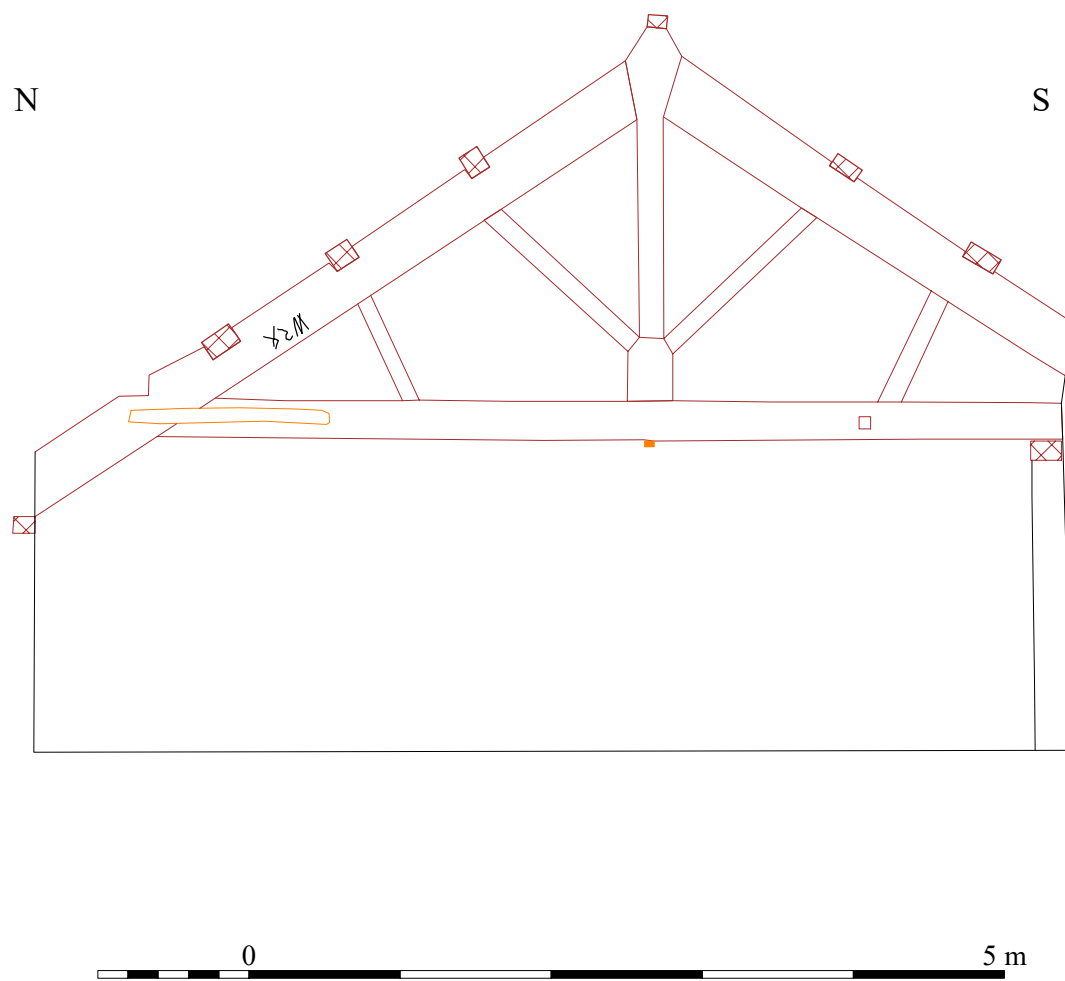


Figure 22: Truss in Room 7  
Scale 1:50

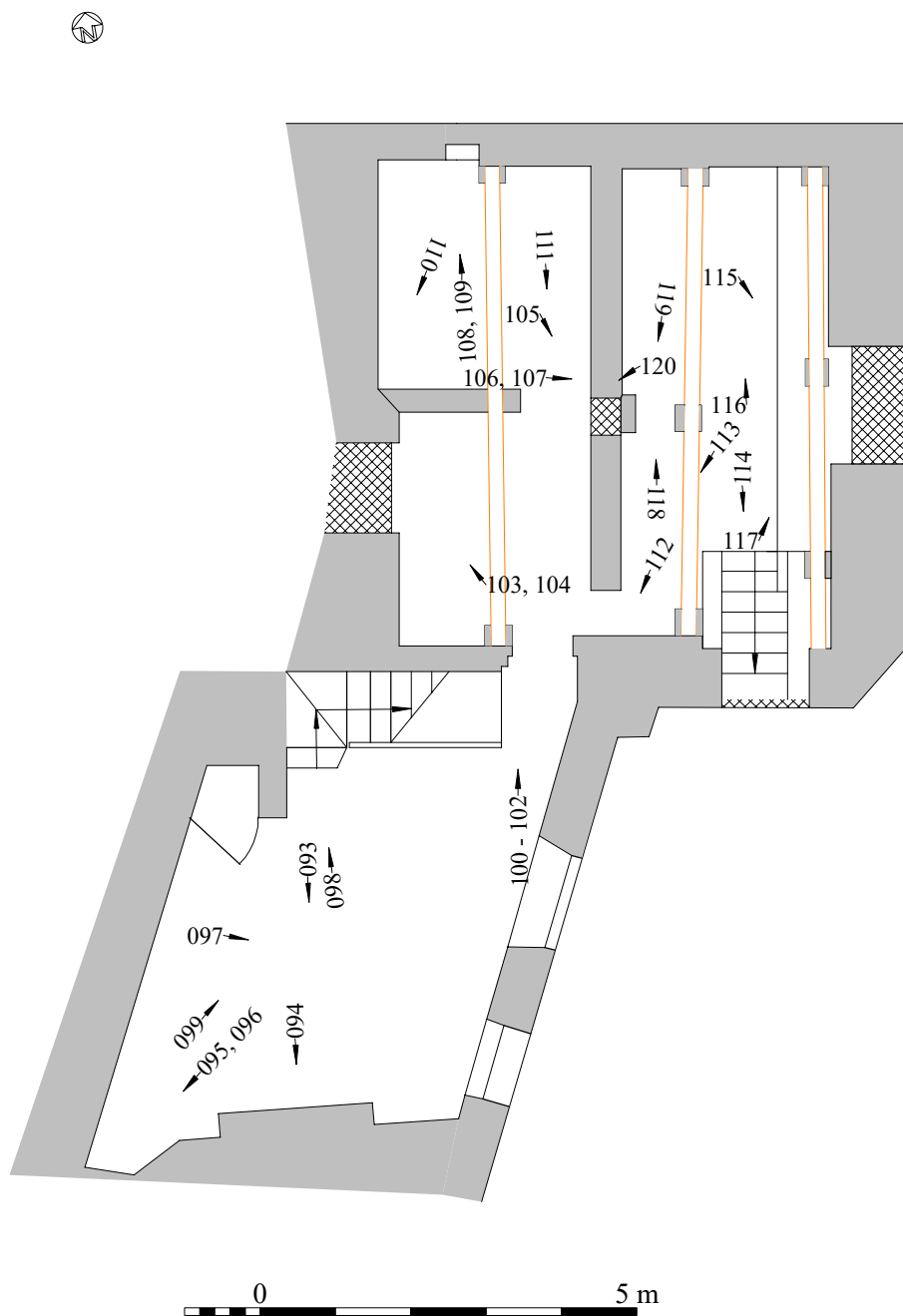


Figure 23: Location of the Photographs in the Cellars  
Scale 1:100

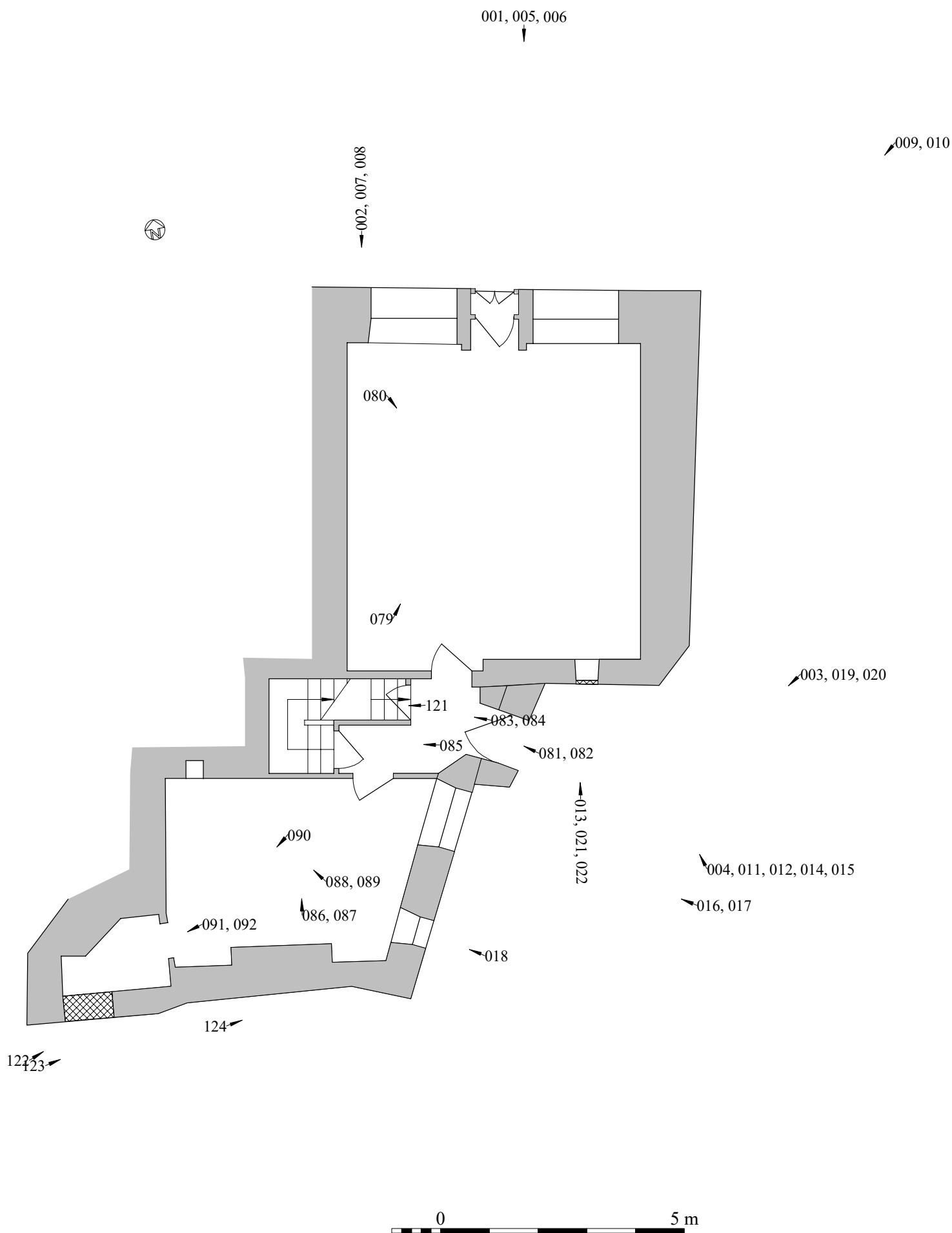


Figure 24: Location of the Photographs at Ground Floor Level  
Scale 1:100



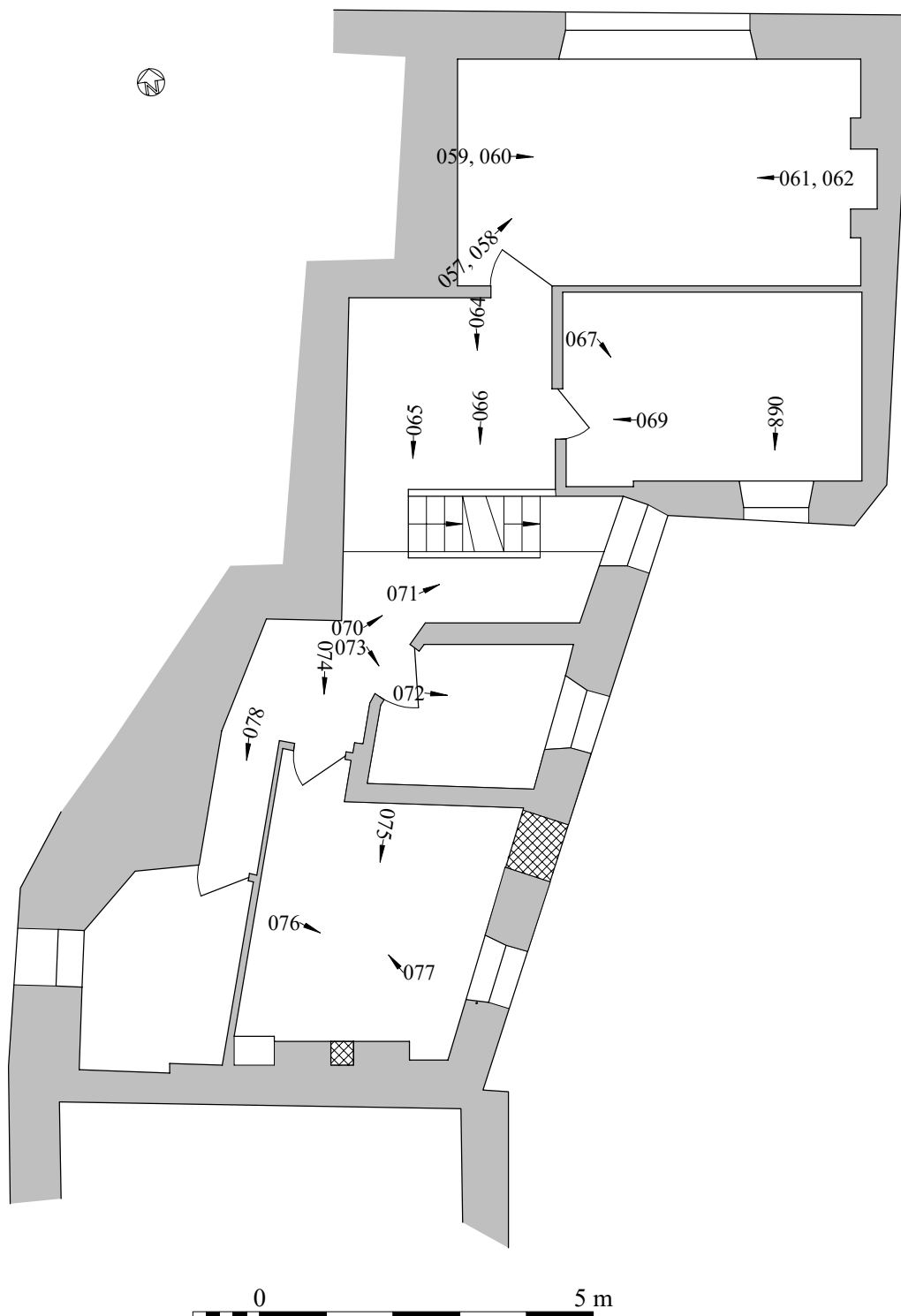


Figure 25: Location of the Photographs at First Floor Level  
Scale 1:100

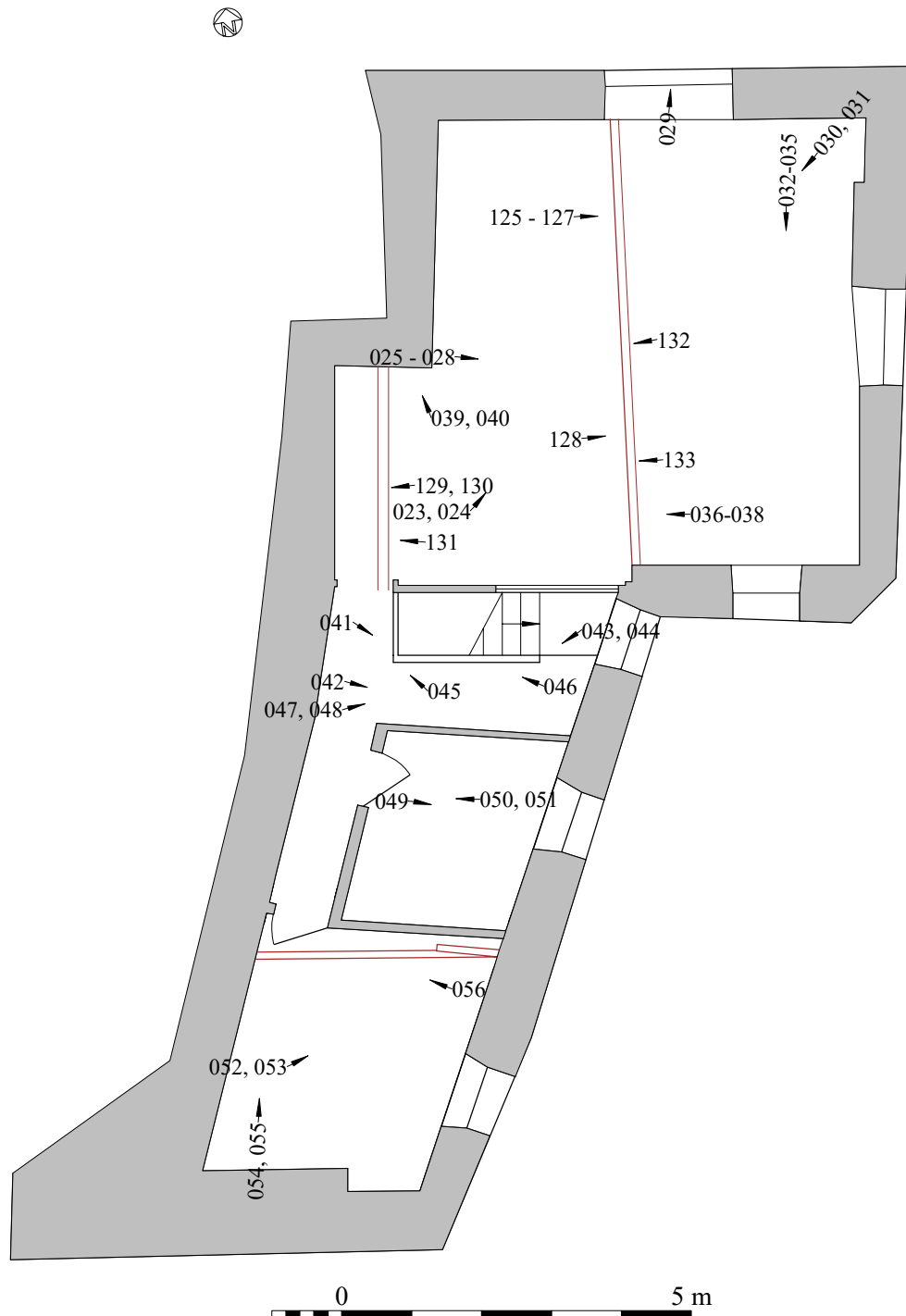


Figure 26: Location of the Photographs at Second Floor Level  
Scale 1:100



Plate 1: Front elevation



Plate 2: Detail of pilaster defining the shop window



Plate 3: Detail of the console and pedimented cap.



Plate 4: Eastern gable of the front range





Plate 5: Rear elevation of the front range



Plate 6: Blocked window and cellar entrance





Plate 7: Front elevation of the rear range



Plate 8: Southern end of the front elevation of the rear range





Plate 9: Transition range and porch



Plate 10: Blocked window in the rear range



Plate 11: Passageway, looking east



Plate 12: Brick arch in the passageway





Plate 13: Blocked doorway in the passage



Plate 14: Cellar stairs



Plate 15: Oven in the southern cellar



Plate 16: Rock outcrop in the SW corner of the rear cellar





Plate 17: Eastern wall of Cellar 1



Plate 18: Door between Cellars 1 and 2



Plate 19: Beam above the doorway between Cellars 1 and 2



Plate 20: Blocked opening in Cellar 2





Plate 21: Relationship between the dividing wall between Cellars 2 and 3 and the western wall



Plate 22: Change in the stonework in the dividing wall between Cellars 2 and 3 and Cellar 4





Plate 23: Cupboard at the northern end of Cellar 3.



Plate 24: Wooden beam capping the wall between Cellar 4 and Cellars 2 and 3





Plate 25: Detail of chamfer and stop



Plate 26: Joint on the western side of the beam in the cellars





Plate 27: Joint on eastern side of the beam in the cellars.



Plate 28: Blocked opening on the eastern wall of Cellar 4





Plate 29: Barrel ramp in Cellar 4.



Plate 30: Polychromatic tile floor in the entrance hall





Plate 31: General view of Room 1, looking NE



Plate 32: View of Room 1 looking SE, showing the blocked window





Plate 33: Beam in the NW corner of Room 2



Plate 34: Northern end of Room 2





Plate 35: Differential use of balusters between the first and second floors



Plate 36: Turned balusters between the ground and first floor



Plate 37: Newel post



Plate 38: Window in Room 3





Plate 39: Fireplace in Room 3



Plate 40: Room 4, looking





Plate 41: First floor landing



Plate 42: Balusters on the first floor





Plate 43: Balusters on the second floor landing



Plate 44: Fireplace in Room 6





Plate 45: Truss in Room 7



Plate 46: Graffiti on the truss in Room 7





Plate 47: Socket for a partition on the truss in Room 7



Plate 48: Carpenter's marks





Plate 49: Half truss in Room 7



Plate 50: Marks in the underside of the half truss collar in Room 7





Plate 51: Room 7, looking south-west



Plate 52: Foot of truss resting on main beam over the stairwell.





Plate 53: Chimney breasting in the eastern gable of Room 7



Plate 54: View of Eldon Square from Room 7





Plate 55: Beam over the stairwell



Plate 56: Foot of truss in Room 9.



## *Appendix 1: Listed Building Description*

# Full Report for Listed Buildings



### Summary Description of a Listed Buildings

**Reference Number**

4957

**Building Number****Grade**

II

**Status**

Designated

**Date of Designation**

19/06/1990

**Date of Amendment**

19/06/1990

**Name of Property**

Premises of Manweb

**Address**

### Location

**Unitary Authority**

Gwynedd

**Community**

Dolgellau

**Town****Locality****Easting**

272807

**Northing**

317736

**Street Side****Location**

On the street line opposite the entry to Finsbury Square.

## Description

**Broad Class**

Commercial

**Period****History**

Early-mid C19.

**Exterior**

2+ storey, 1 window. Coursed rubble masonry. Moderately pitched slate roof, plain eaves, close verges. Stone stacks, water tabling. Broad gabled stone dormer to top storey, plain bargeboards. Tripartite Victorian sash window with narrow sidelights Stone lintel and sill. Broad tripartite sash window to 1st floor. 16 pane sash to centre, 8 pane side sashes. Deep stone lintel. Late C19 shopfront to ground floor, Pedimented fascia ends with Tudor rose motif on reeded consoles. Sunk panelled pilasters. Moulded blind box with scalloped lead capping and bosses. Deep modern fascia. Original 6 flush panel double doors to centre, slate sill. Modern glazing, brick stallrisers.

**Interior****Reason for designation**

Group value.

## *Appendix 2: Specification*

### **Specification for the Archaeological Recording of Siop Newydd, Eldon Square, Dolgellau.**

*Specification written by I.P. Brooks 09/08/2017*

#### **1. Background**

- 1.1. Siop Newydd, Eldon Square, Dolgellau is an early to mid-nineteenth century, three-storey retail building occupying a prominent position west of Plas Newydd with a rear wing, of possible different date.
- 1.2. The building is a Grade II listed building (Cadw ref. 4957), listed for its group value.
- 1.3. The property is currently unoccupied and The Snowdonia National Park Authority wish to commission a standing building survey to advise redevelopment of the building.
- 1.4. This specification is based on discussion with Gwilym Hughes Jones of the Snowdonia National Park Authority.

#### **2. Aims**

- 2.1. To record the existing structure of Siop Newydd
- 2.2. To analyse the possible development of the building
- 2.3. To date the major phase/s of construction

#### **3. Assessment program**

- 3.1. The programme of works shall include:
  - 3.1.1. Desk Top Study
  - 3.1.2. Recording of the house
  - 3.1.3. Analysis and report preparation

#### **4. Methodology**

- 4.1. Desk Top Study
  - 4.1.1. The following archives will be consulted for relevant sources:
  - 4.1.2. The Historic Environment Record held by the Gwynedd Archaeological Trust
  - 4.1.3. The Meirionnydd Archives at Dolgellau
  - 4.1.4. The archives section of the University of Bangor
  - 4.1.5. All desk-based sources included for the purpose of interpretation and analysis will be fully referenced.
  - 4.1.6. The desk-based assessment will include:
  - 4.1.7. Relevant published and unpublished sources
  - 4.1.8. Relevant cartographic, illustrative and historical sources pertaining to the historical development of the site.
- 4.2. Standing Building Recording
  - 4.2.1. Siop Newydd will be recorded through a series of drawn plans, photographs, written descriptions and drawings of significant features. These will be compatible with a Level 3 Record described in English Heritage 2006 *Understanding Historic Buildings. A guide to good recording practice.*



- 4.2.2. The drawn record will be made using a combination of direct measurement using tape measures and a laser range finder (Leica Disto D2) and will include.
  - 4.2.2.1. Measured plan as existing.
- 4.2.3. The plans drawn in 1953 will be checked and if correct will be used as a basis for the survey.
- 4.2.4. Measured drawings recording the form or location of other significant structural details
- 4.2.5. Measured cross-sections, long sections or elevational sections.
- 4.2.6. Measured drawings showing the form of any architectural decoration
- 4.2.7. Measured elevations where these are necessary an understanding of the building's design, development or function and not more readily obtained by photography
- 4.2.8. Any elevations are required are likely to be carried out with the use of photogrammetry
- 4.2.9. A site plan, typically at 1:500
- 4.2.10. A plan or plans identifying the location and direction of accompanying photographs
- 4.2.11. Copies of earlier drawings
  - 4.2.11.1. Three-dimensional projections when these are of value in understanding the building if necessary
- 4.2.12. Reconstruction drawings and phased drawings when these are of value
- 4.2.13. Diagrams interpreting the movement of materials or people or segregation of people or activities where these are warranted. These will show the position and layout of the rooms; position, size and character of doors/windows etc.; the position and character of significant timber features and any other significant features.
- 4.2.14. The photographs will be taken with a Nikon D5300 digital camera with a resolution of 24.2-megapixel. Photographs will be taken in raw (NEF) format and converted to Tiff format for archiving.
- 4.2.15. If practical the photographs will include a suitable metric scale.
- 4.2.16. The photographs will include:
- 4.2.17. A general view or views of the building in its wider setting
- 4.2.18. The building's external setting
  - 4.2.18.1. Further views to indicate the builder's or architect's intension
- 4.2.19. The overall appearance of the principal rooms and circulation areas
- 4.2.20. Any external or internal detail which is relevant to the building's design, development or use.
- 4.2.21. Any machinery or other plant, or evidence for its former existence
- 4.2.22. Any dates or inscriptions, any signage, maker's plates or graffiti
- 4.2.23. Any building contents or ephemera
- 4.2.24. Copies of maps, drawings, views and photographs present in the building.
- 4.2.25. A written description of significant element of within the house will be produced to include:
- 4.2.26. Precise location

- 4.2.27. Note of statutory designation
- 4.2.28. Date of record
- 4.2.29. Expanded summary of building form, function, date, sequence of development
- 4.2.30. Introduction
- 4.2.31. Acknowledgements
  - 4.2.31.1. Discussion of published sources
- 4.2.32. An account of the building's overall form
- 4.2.33. An account of the past and present uses of the building with evidence of interpretations. An analysis of any circulation pattern or decorative, iconographic or liturgical scheme. An account of any fixtures, fittings, plant or machinery associated with the building.
- 4.2.34. Any evidence of former or demolished structures
- 4.2.35. Full bibliography

## **5. Reporting**

- 5.1. A summary report on the findings of the investigations will be prepared and completed within one month from completion of the project. This will summarise the results of the project including;
  - 5.1.1. Results of the Desk Top Study
  - 5.1.2. Results of the Building Recording
  - 5.1.3. A location plan at a suitable scale
- 5.2. Hard copies of the reports will be sent to The Snowdonia National Park Authority (3 copies), The Regional Historic Environment Record held by the Gwynedd Archaeological Trust, the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales and Cadw. These bodies will also be sent digital copies of the report together with the archive on optical digital disc

## **6. General**

- 6.1. IFA Code of Conduct
  - 6.1.1. All staff will abide by, and all procedures be carried out in accordance with the Institute of Field Archaeologists' Code of Conduct.
- 6.2. Health and Safety
  - 6.2.1. EAS Ltd adopt and adhere to safe working practices at all times. A copy of the company's general statement of policy is available on request.
  - 6.2.2. A risk assessment will be carried out prior to any fieldwork
- 6.3. Staff
  - 6.3.1. The project will be directed by Dr I.P. Brooks MIFA
  - 6.3.2. Project Staff will include Dr I.P. Brooks MIFA
- 6.4. Timetable
  - 6.4.1. If commissioned this work will take place after 25<sup>th</sup> August 2017 with the likelihood that collection of the data and the fieldwork taking place in the week 28<sup>th</sup> August – 1<sup>st</sup> September 2017.
  - 6.4.2. Desk top study
    - 6.4.2.1. Visit to the Meirionnydd Archive, Dolgellau: 1 day
    - 6.4.2.2. Visit to the Archives held by the University of Wales at Bangor: 1 day

6.4.3. Building recording

6.4.3.1. Fieldwork: 1 day

6.4.4. Analysis and report preparation.

6.4.4.1. Analysis and report preparation: 3 days

6.5. Insurance

6.5.1. EAS Ltd carries all necessary Public and Employee Liability Insurances.

6.5.2. EAS Ltd carries Professional Indemnity Insurance.

6.6. Copyright

6.6.1. EAS Ltd will assign copyright to the Snowdonia National Park Authority.