

CPAT Report No. 1933




Pentre Saeson Foundry, Wrexham

Historic Building Survey



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CLWYD-POWYS ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

Organisation	Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust
Client Name	Mr & Mrs G Wright
CPAT Project No	2684
Project Name	Pentre Saeson Foundry, Wrexham
Project Type	Historic Building Survey
Project Manager	Tim Malim
Project Supervisor	Will Logan
Grid Reference	SJ 27852 53195
County/LPA	Wrexham County Borough
Planning Reference	P/2021/1049
CPAT Report No	1933

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Summary

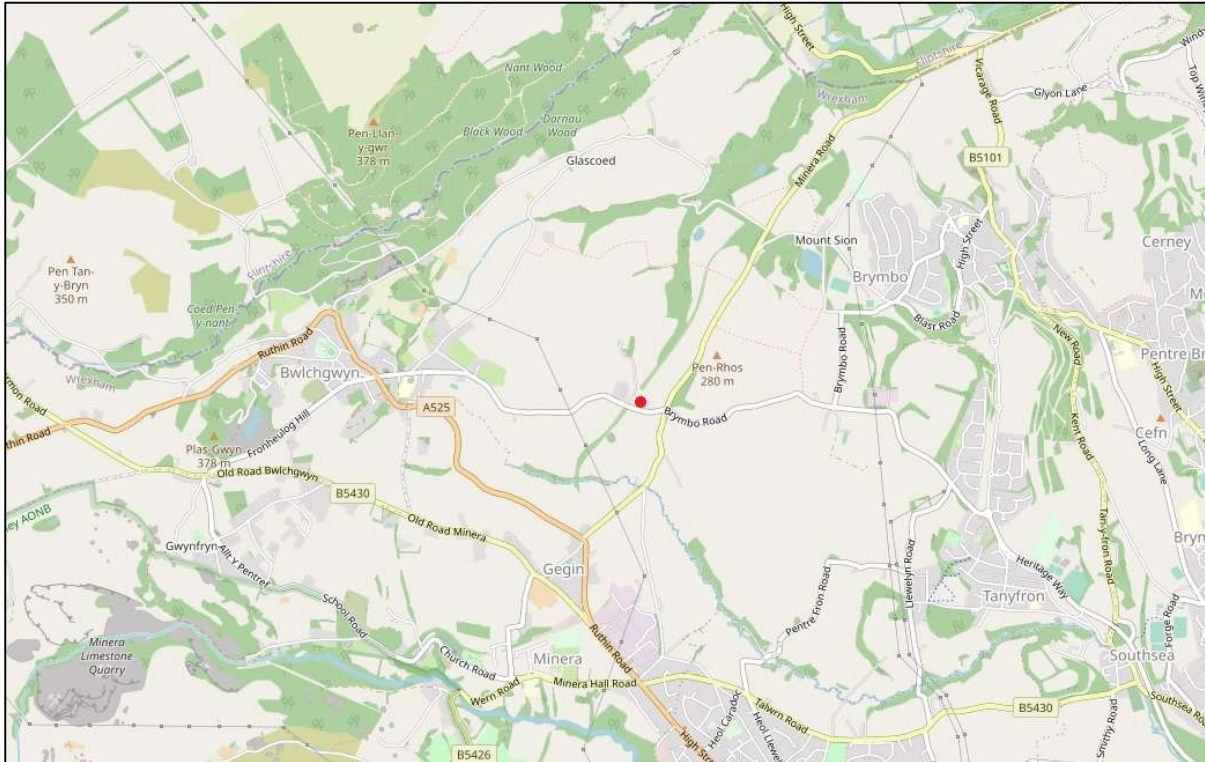
In February 2023 the Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust carried out a historic building survey of an outbuilding at Pentre Saeson Foundry near Wrexham. The building was in a poor state of preservation, but appeared to have been a single storey building with a mono pitched roof, constructed on two levels. A small chimney stack at the northern end suggests that this area was a worker's room or bait shed, with the unlit rooms to the south used as storerooms.

Crynodeb

Fis Chwefror 2023, bu Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Clwyd Powys yn cynnal arolwg adeilad hanesyddol o adeilad allan yn Ffowndri Pentre Saeson ger Wrecsam. Roedd yr adeilad mewn cyflwr gwael, ond roedd yn ymddangos mai adeilad un llawr oedd hwn, gyda tho ar un goleddf, wedi'i adeiladu ar ddwy lefel. Mae corn simnai bach yn y pen gogleddol yn awgrymu mai ystafell gweithwyr neu sied abwyd oedd yr ardal hon, gan ddefnyddio'r ystafelloedd diolau i'r de fel ystafelloedd storio.

1 Introduction

- 1.1. In February 2023 the Field Services Section of the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust undertook an archaeological building survey on behalf of Glyn Wright in connection with a planning application (P/2021/1049) for the restoration and conservation of an outbuilding at Pentre Saeson Foundry, Wrexham (NGR: SJ 27852 53195). The foundry is Grade II listed (1718) as is the large chimney stack (1717), the outbuilding is listed via curtilage.



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2018

Fig. 1 Location of Pentre Saeson Foundry (circled in red)

- 1.1 Mark Walters, the regional development control archaeologist suggested the following archaeological condition in respect of these proposals;

No development shall take place until a programme of building recording and analysis, equivalent to a Historic England Level 2 building survey, has been secured and implemented, in accordance with a brief issued by the local planning authority and a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To allow an adequate analytical record of the building to be made, before it is converted, to ensure that the buildings origins, use and development are understood and the main features, character and state of preservation are recorded.

2 Historical Background

- 2.1. Paragraph 2.2 is reproduced from the Heritage Statement (Real Planning, 2021, p 8-10).
- 2.2. The settlement of Brymbo first appears in the archival record in 1339, the name is believed to derive from the Welsh 'Bryn Baw' meaning 'mud hill'. Early settlement in the area consisted of a township and several scattered settlements. As far back as the 15th century the area was associated with coal mining with rights to dig being granted as early as 1410. The earliest coal pit in the area is believed to have been sunk on the common land at Harwood, at the centre of the current village at the end of the 15th century. By the 1600s, records in the area reference occupations of residents as 'collier' suggesting that there were professional miners operating in the area.
- 2.3. The origins of the foundry at Pentre Saeson are somewhat unclear. One source records that the foundry site was purchased and founded by John Wilkinson during the 1790s, and that it was in operation during the early 19th century (britishlistedbuildings.co.uk, accessed March 2023). However, the foundry is not recorded by the 1839 Tithe Apportionment, which records the site as Gate Field, owned by Robert Roy and others and occupied by Margaret Hughes (Fig. 2).



Fig. 2 Extract from the 1839 Tithe Map with the approximate location of the foundry complex circled in red

- 2.4. The earliest cartographic source that records the foundry is the 1879 Ordnance Survey Map, which was surveyed in 1873 (Fig. 3). This depicts the main foundry building and another smaller building to the east of it, with the outbuilding to the west, with another detached building to the north of it. The Wrexham and Minera railway line runs immediately to the west of the site and there is a colliery served by a spur line to the north-west.



Fig. 3 Extract from the 6" Ordnance Survey Map of 1879 showing the foundry complex (centre)

3 Building Survey

- 3.1. The building survey was conducted on February 27th 2023 in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' (CIfA) (2014) *Standard and Guidance for the Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures*. An annotated plan and elevations of the building are presented in Dwg.1, a photograph location plan is presented in Dwg. 2, Dwgs. 3 and 4 comprise the contact sheets for the photographic survey.
- 3.2. The outbuilding comprised a long narrow rectangular single storey outbuilding measuring 22.5m in length and 4m wide, and oriented broadly north-south, on a parallel alignment with the foundry building some 22m to the east. The outbuilding was constructed on two levels, with the floor level in the northern half on the building some 0.6m higher than that to the south.
- 3.3. The walls were constructed using handmade unfrosted brick laid to an English Garden Wall bond with a greyish white sandy or ashy mortar. Some of the bricks were in poor condition, and had spalled. The brickwork of two of the internal subdivisions, the end walls and portions of the east elevation had been rebuilt, some of the repairs used modern engineering bricks and blockwork.
- 3.4. The roof frame was almost completely missing with only a section of wall plate and a single rafter still in situ (Fig. 6). The flooring on both levels of the building was concrete and probably a later alteration. The external doorways into the building were located on the east elevation. The two rooms on the lower level were accessed by two doorways, both with wooden lintels made from railway sleepers. There were a series of internal doorways allowing access through the entire building.

- 3.5. The access into the upper level was via a single wide opening, which appeared to be a later alteration. There were the remains of several partition walls running from east-west visible in the fabric of the west elevation, indicating that this area had been subdivided into several small rooms (Fig. 7). There was a chimney stack with a small fireplace at the north end of the west elevation (Fig. 8). There was a single voussoir window in the west elevation which had been infilled with buff coloured fire bricks, which had greenish vitreous residues adhering to them, suggesting they had been subjected to high temperatures. Fire bricks had also been used to repair the internal face of the west elevation and one of the partition walls.



Fig. 4 Outbuilding viewed from the south-west Photo CPAT 5040_003



*Fig. 5 Outbuilding viewed from the north-east showing the large later opening in the east elevation
Photo CPAT 5040_006*



Fig. 6 View west of the southern end of the building showing the remnant roof structure Photo CPAT 5040_010



Fig. 7 Internal partition within the northern section of the building Photo CPAT 5040_024



Fig. 8 Chimney stack at northern extent of the building Photo CPAT 5040_028

4 Conclusions

- 4.1. The outbuilding at Pentre Saeson was one of several outbuildings constructed to the west of the foundry complex and the only one to have survived. Despite having been largely rebuilt it still retains much of its original layout and appearance.
- 4.2. Map regression suggests that the outbuilding was built at some point between 1839 and 1873, and is therefore broadly contemporary with the foundry itself.
- 4.3. The southern end of the building had evidently been two storerooms, as suggested by the large doorways and the lack of windows. It is unclear whether they had originally been an internal doorway between these two rooms or whether this was a later addition.
- 4.4. The northern end of the building may have been a workers communal room or bait shed, as suggested by the presence of a fireplace. There was a second room adjacent to this lit by a window in the west elevation, which may have been an office or working area. Internal subdivisions to the east of this suggest the presence of two small rooms to the south of this, but it is unclear what these were used for.

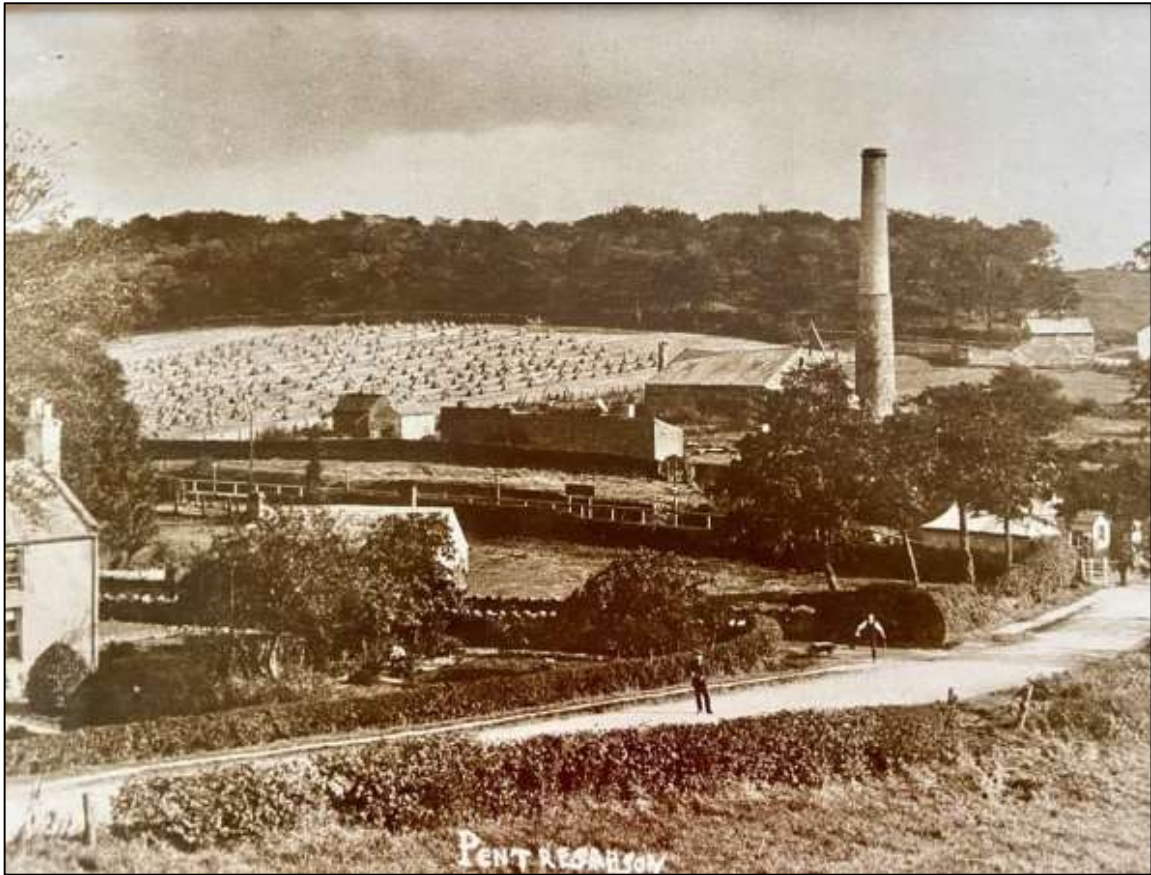


Fig. 9 View east towards Pentre Saeson foundry during the late 19th or early 20th century with the outbuilding to the centre of the image

5 Sources

Online sources

britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/300001718-pentre-saeson-foundry-building-brymbo (accessed March 2023)

Unpublished sources

Real Planning, 2021, *Pentre Saeson Foundry, Brymbo Road, Bwlchgwyn, Wrexham; Heritage Impact Statement.*

Cartographic sources

1839 Tithe Map of Brymbo Township in the Parish of Wrexham

1879 Ordnance Survey 6" 1st edition Denbighshire Sheet 28









6 Archive deposition Statement

- 6.1. The project archive has been prepared according to the CPAT Archive Policy and in line with the CIfA *Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives guidance* (2020b).

Archive Summary

Archives Officer	Sophie Watson
HER Enquiry No	N/A
HER Event PRN	215555
OASIS Reference No	N/A
Digital Archive Repository	RCAHMW
Documentary Archive Repository	N/A
Finds Archive Repository	N/A
Accession Numbers	N/A

Digital Archive

Sub folder	Contents	Retained by CPAT	Selected for Archive
 Finds data	N/A	0	0
 GIS data	N/A	0	0
 Metadata	2684_Metadata.docx 2684_RCAHMW_Archives_Deposit_Agreement.docx	1 1	1 1
 Photography		0	0
 Film_0000	5040-0001.jpg	35	35
 Report	2684_CPAT_Report_1930.docx 2684_CPAT_Report_1930.pdf	1	1
 Site data	N/A	0	0
 Survey data	N/A	0	0

Appendix 1: CPAT WSI 2684

1 Introduction

- 1.2 The Field Services Section of the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust has been invited by Gerry Kellett acting on behalf of Glyn Wright to undertake an archaeological building survey in connection with a planning application (P/2021/1049) for the restoration and conservation of an outbuilding at Pentre Saeson Foundry, Wrexham (NGR: SJ 27852 53195).
- 1.3 The foundry is thought to have been constructed during the late 18th century by industrialist John Wilkinson who purchased the Brymbo Estate in 1793. It is Grade II Listed (1718). The outbuilding is currently in a poor state of repair with no surviving roof structure.
- 1.4 Mark Walters, the regional development control archaeologist has suggested the following archaeological condition in respect of these proposals;

No development shall take place until a programme of building recording and analysis, equivalent to a Historic England Level 2 building survey, has been secured and implemented, in accordance with a brief issued by the local planning authority and a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To allow an adequate analytical record of the building to be made, before it is converted, to ensure that the buildings origins, use and development are understood and the main features, character and state of preservation are recorded.

2 Objectives

- 2.1. The objectives of the survey are:
- To produce a descriptive and photographic record of the exterior and interior of the building.
 - To examine the building in order to produce an analysis of its development and use.
 - To produce plans and other drawings if required to record historical details and other features of interest.
 - To prepare a report outlining the results of the survey;
 - To prepare a final publication of the results in an appropriate regional or national journal, depending on the nature and significance of any archaeology.

3 Methodology

- 3.1. The archaeological works will be conducted according to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' (CIfA) *Standard and Guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures* (2020) and *Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-based Assessment* (2020).

Building Survey

- 3.2. The archaeological works will be conducted according to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' (CIfA) *Standard and Guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures* (2020b).
- 3.3. The survey of the outbuilding will take the form of a Level 2 building survey as defined by Historic England *Understanding Historic Buildings: a guide to good recording practice* (2016). This level of survey is intended to create a descriptive record of the building, and will include:
- Description and photographic record of the exterior and the interior
 - Detailed account of type, construction, form, function
 - Phasing
 - Past and present use and relationship with setting
 - Identification and recording of original fixtures and fittings
 - Conclusions regarding the building's development and use
- 3.4. The drawn record will be created using either annotated accurately measured plans supplied by the architect or conventional measured survey/total station surveying as appropriate. The end result will include:
- Accurate measured ground plan, elevations and cross-sections as appropriate
 - Phase plans showing the development of the structure

4 Photography

- 4.1. The photographic survey will be conducted using digital photography with a minimum resolution of 12 mega pixels to include:
- Views of all elevations
 - Views of external appearance of building group/setting
 - Views of all internal rooms
 - Internal and external structural detail
 - Fixtures, fittings, machinery, related contents

5 Report

- 5.1. Following the on-site work an illustrated report will be prepared containing conventional sections to include:
- Non-technical summary in both Welsh and English
 - Location and NGR
 - Statutory designations
 - Date of record and archive deposition
 - Introduction
 - Site location
 - Topography and Geology
 - Methodology
 - Summary of the form, function, date and development of the building
 - Desk-based study, including copies of historic images where permitted
 - Summary description of the building
 - Past and present usage
 - Evidence for former existence of demolished structures, removed fittings etc
 - Site Plans and Elevations (annotated architects plans may be used where they are seen to be an accurate representation of the existing building/s)

- Conclusions
- References

- 5.2. The digital report will be submitted by the applicant to the Local Planning Authority, and the Development Control Archaeologist at Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (Mark Walters mark.walters@cpat.org.uk). On approval the report as a high resolution pdf will be sent to the HER via <https://cpat.org.uk/heddos.html>, Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust, The Offices, Coed y Dinas, Welshpool, SY21 8RP for inclusion within the Historic Environment Record.

6 Site archive

- 6.1. The overall archive will conform to guidelines described in Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE), Historic England 2015, the CifA (2020) *Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives* and *The National Standard and Guidance to Best Practice for Collecting and Depositing Archaeological Archives in Wales* (NPAAW, 2017) and *Guidance for the Submission of Data to the Welsh Historic Environment Records (HERs) V1* (July 2018).
- 6.2. The archive will be deposited with the National Monuments Record (NMR), RCAHMW. This archive will include all written, drawn, survey and photographic records relating directly to the investigations undertaken. NMR Digital archives will follow the standard required by the RCAHMW (RCAHMW 2015). A copy of the digital archive only will also be lodged with the Historic Environment Record, Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust, within two months of the approval of the project report.

Data management plan

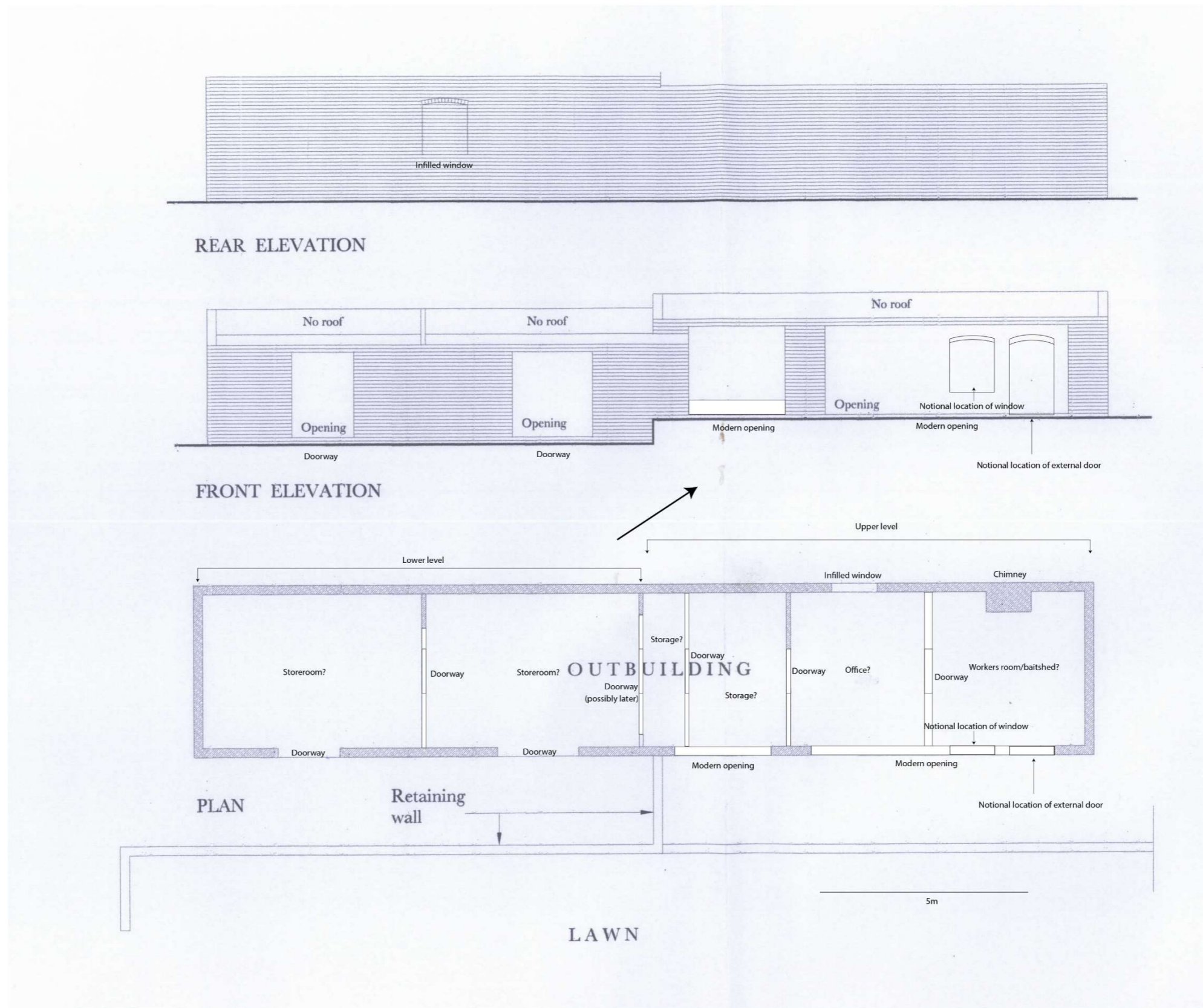
- 6.3. The project will be conducted in accordance with CPAT's data management policy. All paper records will be collated, catalogued and labelled with the unique project code. All digital data will follow strict file naming, to include the unique project code, and be sorted into a standard series of sub-folders. The digital data will be catalogued, including a list of file types and relevant software.

7 Resources and programming

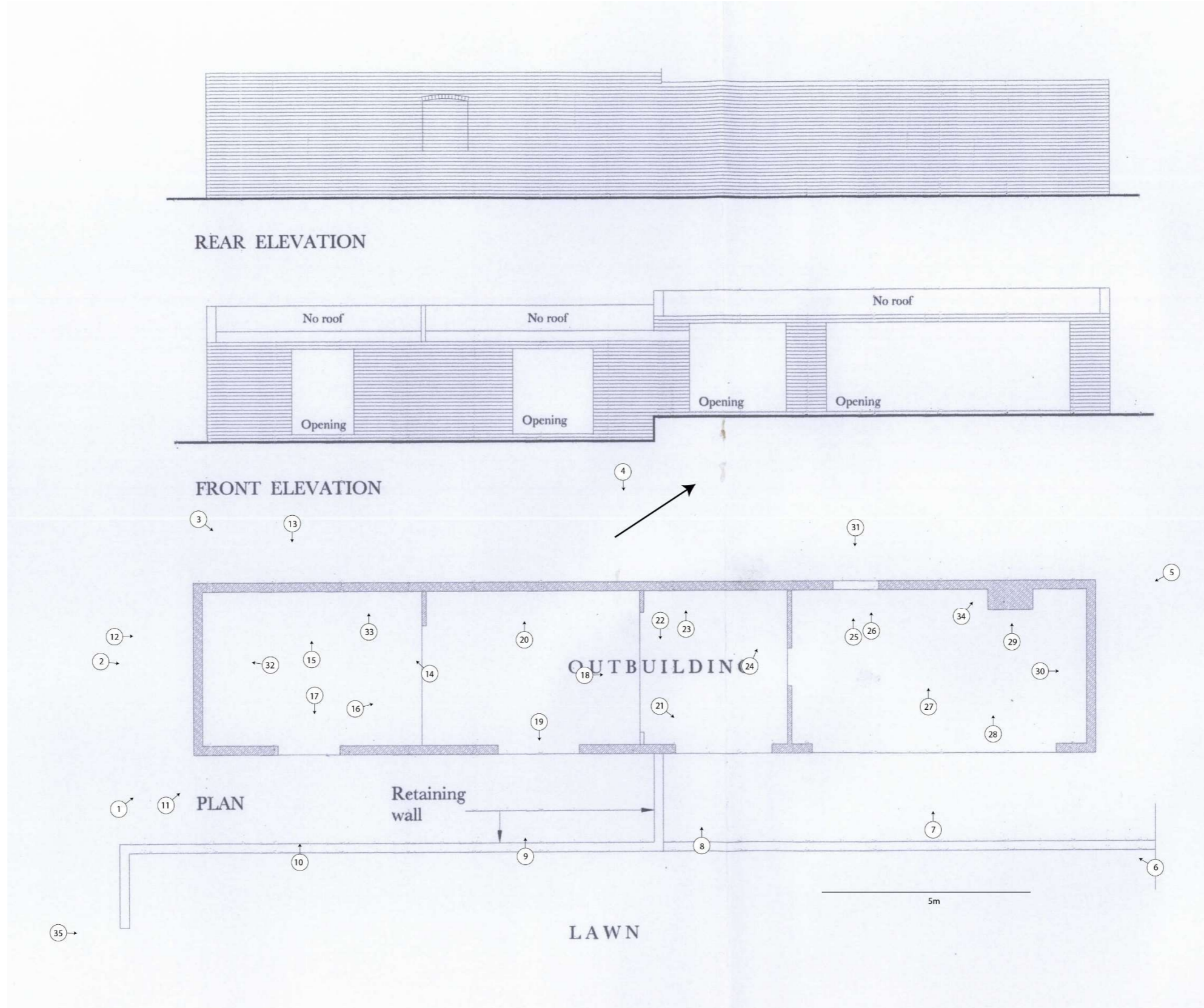
- 7.1. The survey will be undertaken by a single skilled archaeologist under the overall supervision of Tim Malim, CPAT's Principal Archaeologist who is also a member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CifA). CPAT is also a CifA Registered Organisation and as such agrees to abide by their *Code of Conduct* (2020).
- 7.2. All report preparation will be carried out by, or with the assistance of, the same field archaeologist(s) who conducted the fieldwork and completed within two months of the commencement of the survey.
- 7.3. Requirements relating to Health & Safety regulations will be adhered to by CPAT and its staff.
- 7.4. CPAT is covered by appropriate Public and Employer's Liability insurance, as well as Professional Indemnity insurance. A project-specific Risk Assessment and Method Statement (RAMS) will be prepared prior to the commencement of fieldwork.

W Logan

17th February 2023



Dwg. 1 Annotated plan and elevations of the outbuilding



Dwg. 2 Photograph location plan



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Dwg. 3 Contact Sheet 1

Dwg. 4 Contact Sheet 2