

28 November 2022

Jack Porter  
Estates Coordinator  
SGN  
St Lawrence House  
Station Approach  
Horley, RH6 9HJ

Dear Jack

EMSWORTH ABANDONED RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY: STRUCTURAL BUILDING ASSESSMENT

## 1 Introduction

Advisian was appointed by SGN to carry out a visual structural assessment of the abandoned residential property located at the SGN Place owned site in Emsworth. The objective of the works was to assess the structural soundness of the building.

## 2 Site Setting & History

The SGN Place site is irregular in shape and is located off Palmer's Road, Emsworth, Hampshire PO10 7DL. The site is located in a residential and light industrial setting. The land uses surrounding the site are as follows:

- North – Residential properties to northwest and commercial / industrial properties to northeast.
- East – SGN Regulated landholding followed by the River Ems with Brook Meadow (Local Nature Reserve) beyond.
- South – Residential properties to southwest and commercial / industrial properties to southeast.
- West – Residential properties.

The site has been mostly cleared of built structures except for a small electrical kiosk in the centre of the site, and the abandoned residential property on the north-western part of the site. There are also two electrical substation compounds on the site, one immediately to the west of the residential property and one to the east.

The residential property is shown on the earliest available ordnance survey map from the late 1860s although with a slightly different footprint to present day. The property appears to have been either rebuilt or extended in the late 1890s. A small gasholder is shown to be present to the immediate east of the residential property from the late 1860s and is no longer shown on the ordnance survey map from 1909. The wider SGN Place site was used as a gasworks / gasholder station site from the late 1890s until c.2012 when the last remaining gasholder onsite (Gasholder no.5) was decommissioned. Gasholder no.5 was subsequently demolished in the late 2010s.

A site location plan is included as Figure 1 and the site layout is shown on Figure 2. An archive plan of the property has also been obtained and is appended to this report.

### 3 Details of Inspection Visit

The building inspection was carried out by Allen Murray of Advisian on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2022 in the company of Scott Harvey of SGN.

### 4 Findings

The building was found to comprise a two-storey structure under a pitched slated roof. The majority of the main structure is rendered with flints set into the render, with brickwork reveals and arched brick lintels to the door and window openings, and brick quoins to the corners. The western end of the north wall of the house, from the western reveal of the last window up to the gable wall, is of facing brick construction, as is the western gable wall and the southern wall from the gable to the projecting rear “extension”. This appears to be a later alteration. In addition, the rear “extension” is of a different, redder, facing brick, and may be a later addition.

Various defects were noted during the inspection as described below. However, the lower part of the main staircase has been removed and it was not possible to access the first floor.

Selected photographs from the building inspection are included as an attachment to this letter report.

A plan showing significant defects is included as Figure 3.

#### 4.1 External Defects

- 4.1.1. Vertical cracking above both ends of brick arch lintel to eastern ground floor window to north elevation (Plate 9).
- 4.1.2. Cracking observed to/above brick arch lintel to western ground floor window to north elevation (Plate 10).
- 4.1.3. Stepped diagonal cracking to western gable wall at south-west corner below eaves level (Plate 13).
- 4.1.4. Stepped diagonal and vertical cracking to western gable wall parallel to south-west corner at mid-height (Plate 14).
- 4.1.5. Vertical crack from centre line of western window to southern wall of main house up to eaves (Plate 16).

- 4.1.6. Vertical crack parallel to eastern reveal of western window to southern main wall of house (Plate 17).
- 4.1.7. Low level cracking between western corner of southern wall of main house and window reveal (Plate 18).
- 4.1.8. Loss of pointing between window reveal and south-west corner of rear “extension” at eaves level (Plate 21).
- 4.1.9. Cracking to corner of garden wall running south from rear “extension” (Plate 22).
- 4.1.10. Loss of pointing at low level with stepped diagonal cracking above to south-east corner of rear “extension” (Plates 23-26).
- 4.1.11. Cracking and distortion of eastern wall to rear “extension” between window reveal and south-east corner (Plates 27 and 29).
- 4.1.12. Stepped diagonal cracking running up from south-east corner of rear extension above window level to north (Plate 28).
- 4.1.13. Cracking above lintel to ground floor window to eastern wall of rear “extension” and slight bowing of wall (Plate 30).
- 4.1.14. Cracking to/beneath first floor window cill and slight ‘kick-out’ to eastern wall of rear “extension” (Plate 31).
- 4.1.15. Cracking to brick arch lintel over door to east wall of rear “extension” (Plate 32).
- 4.1.16. Vertical cracking above both ends of brick arch lintel to ground floor window to eastern end of main house (Plates 33 and 34).
- 4.1.17. Cracking to cill to ground floor window to eastern end of main house (Plate 35).
- 4.1.18. Cracking, loss of pointing and slight outward lean-to boundary wall to north side of site to east of property (Plates 36-38).

## 4.2 Internal Defects

- 4.2.1. Extensive damage/theft/vandalism was noted within property (Plates 40, 41 and 44).
- 4.2.2. Two parallel full height vertical cracks to the eastern wall of the main house at ground floor level (Plate 43).
- 4.2.3. Evidence of water damage to walls generally to ground floor (Plates 42 and 43).
- 4.2.4. Diagonal cracking to the east side of the western ground floor window reveal to the rear wall of the main house in (Plates 45 and 46).

## 5 Conclusions & Recommendations

The pattern of cracking observed is indicative of settlement of the south-west corner of the main house and also of the south-east corner of the rear “extension”. There is also evidence of multiple failures of the brick arch lintels around the perimeter of the property, and of loss of pointing to the brickwork of the rear “extension”. Internally there is extensive damp penetration and also damage to finishes, which may be the result of theft and/or vandalism. The removal of the staircase to the first floor may also be indicative of concerns relating to the condition of the first floor structure.

Advisian (then WorleyParsons) previously surveyed the property in 2010 as preparatory work for the proposed demolition of the house, although this was subsequently cancelled due to access difficulties, Gasholder no. 5 still being extant at the time. A comparison has been made between the current condition and that shown on record photographs from the previous visit and the fabric appears to have noticeably deteriorated over the past 12 years. A copy of the photographic plates from 2010 is appended to this report.

Whilst it would theoretically be possible to repair the property, this would involve extensive reconstruction, including underpinning, and given the current condition, is unlikely to be economically viable. It is therefore recommended that consideration be given to demolishing the structure.

The following recommendations are made with respect to the future demolition works:

- The property appears likely to have the potential for bats and appropriate ecological surveys will be required prior to demolition.
- A demolition and refurbishment asbestos survey will be required prior to demolition.
- Due care and attention will be required when accessing the property to carry out pre-demolition surveys, including creating safe access to the first floor and roof void.
- The status of the services to the property should be confirmed. The electricity and gas meters have been removed but it is not known how the incoming services have been terminated, or if the water supply is still live.
- The status of the two substations adjacent to the house should be checked to see if they are still operational and, if so, appropriate protective measures agreed/provided during demolition works.
- The northern boundary will require resecuring with new fencing on completion of the demolition works. It may also be prudent to extend the demolition works to include the boundary wall to the north-east of the site.

In the short-term, prior to the demolition works being undertaken, it is recommended that the property remain secured to prevent unauthorised access.

We trust that this is of assistance, and addresses your concerns, but if you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Yours sincerely

Allen Murray  
Technical Director

Enc

1. Figures
  - Figure 1 – Site Location Plan
  - Figure 2 – Site Layout Plan
  - Figure 3 – Plan of House Showing Significant Defects
2. Plates
3. Archive plan of property
4. Plates from previous survey visit on 14 January 2010

## Attachment 1 – Figures

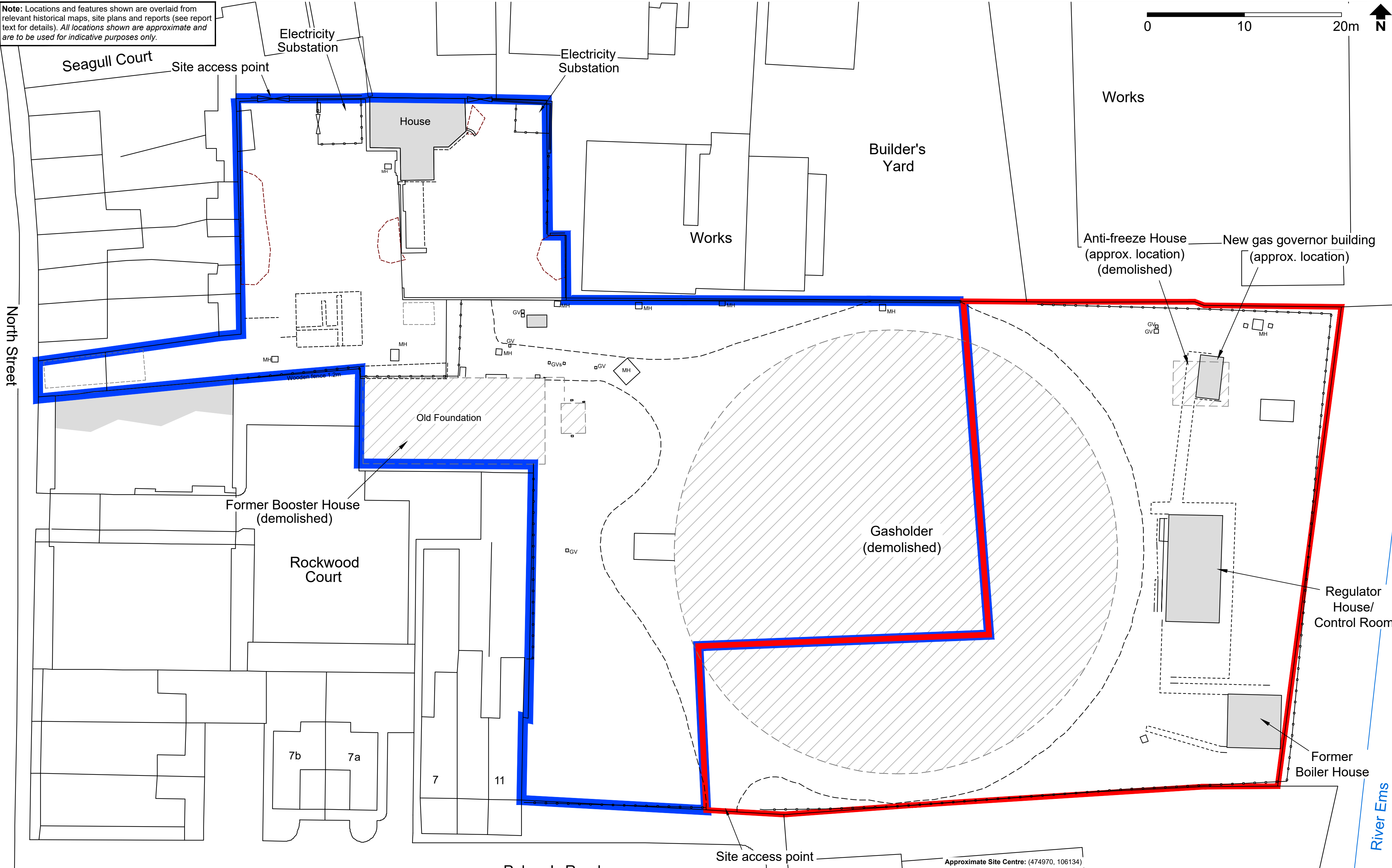


|                                          |                 |               |                  |                  |                   |                                                                                                       |                                                                                 |                   |
|------------------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| PROJECT: 15303<br>NORTH STREET, EMSWORTH |                 |               |                  |                  |                   | SGN                                                                                                   |                                                                                 |                   |
| SITE LOCATION                            |                 |               |                  |                  |                   | <br>Worley Group |                                                                                 |                   |
| DRAWN BY<br>WM                           | STATUS<br>DRAFT | APPROVER<br>- | PAPER SIZE<br>A4 | DATE<br>NOV 2022 | SCALE<br>1:25,000 | OFFICE<br>LONDON                                                                                      | T +44 (0)117 925 1304<br><a href="http://www.advisian.com">www.advisian.com</a> | FIGURE 1<br>REV - |

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**Note:** Locations and features shown are overlaid from relevant historical maps, site plans and reports (see report text for details). All locations shown are approximate and are to be used for indicative purposes only.



**Legend**

- SGN Regulated site boundary
- SGN Place site boundary
- Current structures
- Demolished structures
- Fenceline

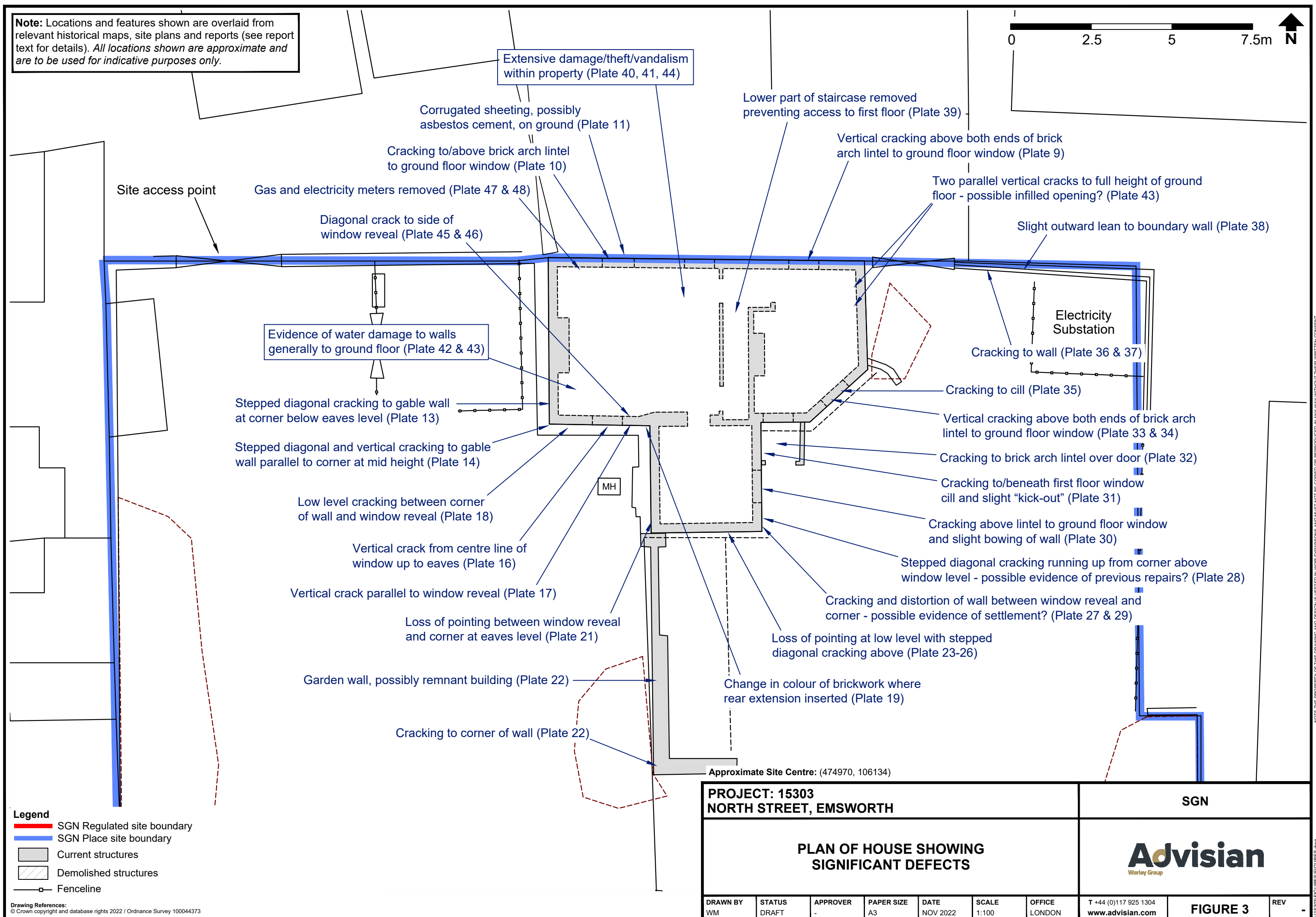
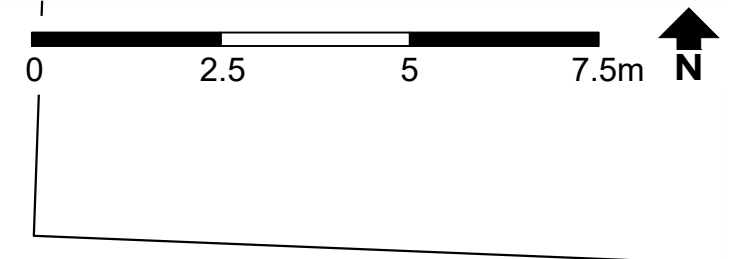
**Drawing References:**  
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Approximate Site Centre: (474970, 106134)

|                                          |                 |               |                  |                  |                |                                                                                       |                                           |          |
|------------------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|----------|
| PROJECT: 15303<br>NORTH STREET, EMSWORTH |                 |               |                  |                  |                | SGN                                                                                   |                                           |          |
| SITE LAYOUT                              |                 |               |                  |                  |                |  |                                           |          |
| DRAWN BY<br>WM                           | STATUS<br>DRAFT | APPROVER<br>- | PAPER SIZE<br>A2 | DATE<br>NOV 2022 | SCALE<br>1:250 | OFFICE<br>LONDON                                                                      | T +44 (0)117 925 1304<br>www.advisian.com | FIGURE 2 |
|                                          |                 |               |                  |                  |                | REV<br>-                                                                              |                                           |          |

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**Legend**

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**Drawing References:**  
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**PROJECT: 15303**  
**NORTH STREET, EMSWORTH**

SGN

## PLAN OF HOUSE SHOWING SIGNIFICANT DEFECTS



|                |                 |               |                  |                  |                |                  |                                                                                 |                 |          |
|----------------|-----------------|---------------|------------------|------------------|----------------|------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|----------|
| DRAWN BY<br>WM | STATUS<br>DRAFT | APPROVER<br>- | PAPER SIZE<br>A3 | DATE<br>NOV 2022 | SCALE<br>1:100 | OFFICE<br>LONDON | T +44 (0)117 925 1304<br><a href="http://www.advisian.com">www.advisian.com</a> | <b>FIGURE 3</b> | REV<br>- |
|----------------|-----------------|---------------|------------------|------------------|----------------|------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|----------|

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Attachment 2 – Plates from Nov 2022



PLATE 1: View on north elevation of house from the north-west



PLATE 2: House viewed from access road to west



**PLATE 3:** View on west elevation of house – note substation compound immediately adjacent



**PLATE 4:** West elevation of house viewed from south-west



**PLATE 5:** South elevation of house viewed from south-west with rear "extension" to right of view



**PLATE 6:** South elevation of rear "extension" viewed from south-east



**PLATE 7:** East elevation of house viewed from south-east with rear “extension” to left of view



**PLATE 8:** View on north elevation of house from the north-east, looking west along access road



**PLATE 9:** Vertical cracking above both ends of brick arch lintel to eastern ground floor window in (8) above



**PLATE 10:** Cracking to/above brick arch lintel to western ground floor window in (1) above



**PLATE 11:** Corrugated sheeting, possibly asbestos cement, on ground in front of western end of north elevation



**PLATE 12:** Closer view of southern end of west elevation in (4) above

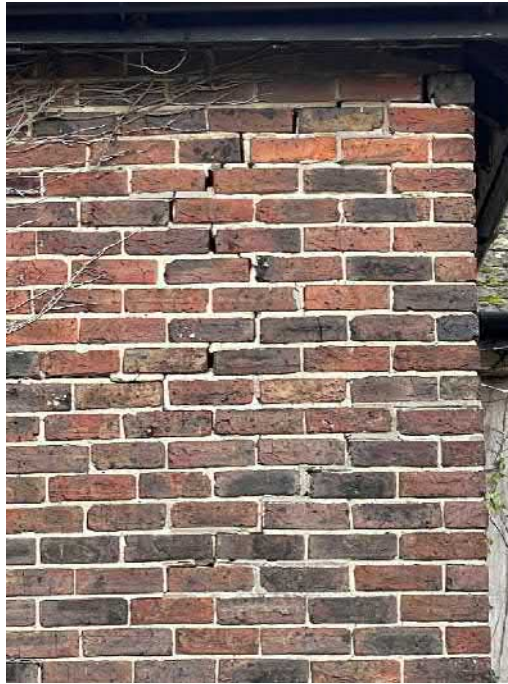


**PLATE 13:** Close-up on (12) above showing stepped diagonal cracking to gable wall at corner below eaves level



**PLATE 14:** Stepped diagonal and vertical cracking to gable wall parallel to corner at mid height immediately below view in (13) above



PLATE 15: View on western end of south elevation of house



PLATE 16: Vertical crack from centre line of window up to eaves in (15) above



**PLATE 17:** Vertical crack parallel to window reveal in (15) above



**PLATE 18:** Low level cracking between corner of wall and window reveal in (15) above



**PLATE 19:** Detailed view of corner return in (15) above – note change in colour of brickwork where rear extension inserted



**PLATE 20:** Western elevation of rear "extension"



**PLATE 21:** Close-up on (20) above showing loss of pointing between window reveal and corner at eaves level and around vent



**PLATE 22:** Garden wall, possibly remnant building, running south from south-west corner of rear "extension – note cracking to corner of wall



**PLATE 23:** More detailed view of eastern corner of south elevation of rear “extension”



**PLATE 24:** Close-up on (23) above showing stepped diagonal cracking between first floor and eaves level



**PLATE 25:** Further view on (23) above showing loss of pointing at low level with stepped diagonal cracking above

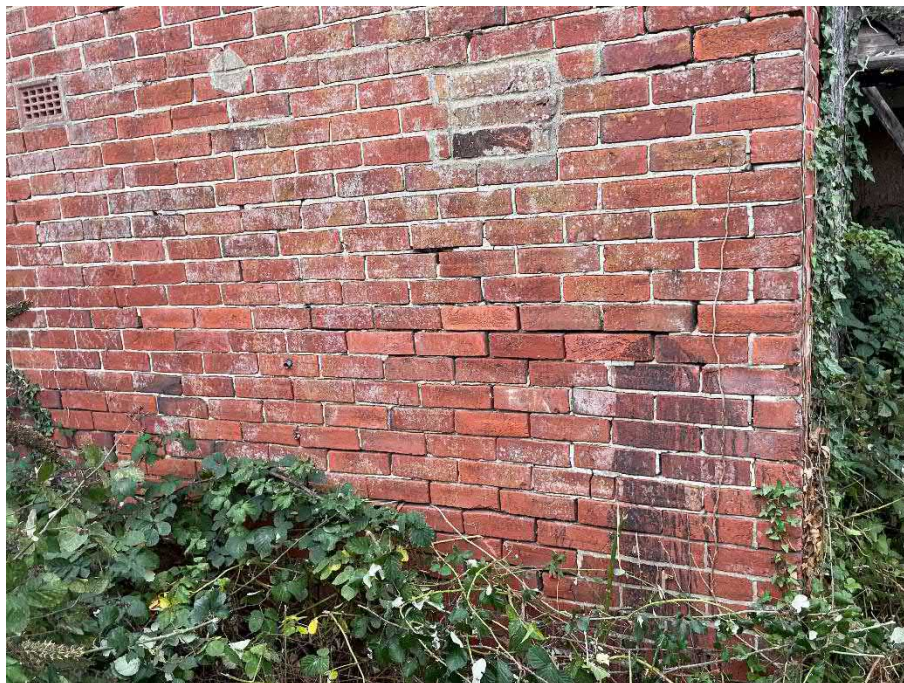


**PLATE 26:** Close-up on base of wall in (25) above showing extensive loss of pointing



PLATE 27: Eastern elevation of rear "extension"



PLATE 28: Close-up on (27) above showing stepped diagonal cracking running up from corner above window level – possible evidence of previous repairs?



**PLATE 29:** Cracking and distortion of wall between window reveal and corner in (27) above – possible evidence of settlement?



**PLATE 30:** Further view of (27) above - note cracking above lintel to ground floor window and slight bowing of wall



**PLATE 31:** Cracking to/beneath first floor window cill and slight "kick-out" in (30) above



**PLATE 32:** Cracking to brick arch lintel over door in (30) above



PLATE 33: Eastern corner of southern elevation of house



PLATE 34: Vertical cracking above both ends of brick arch lintel to eastern ground floor window in (33) above



**PLATE 35:** Cracking to cill of ground floor window in (33) above



**PLATE 36:** Boundary wall on north side of site to east of house – note distortion to line of wall and loss of pointing



**PLATE 37:** Close-up on damage to wall in (36) above showing diagonal cracking to wall – note timber fence to substation to right of view



**PLATE 38:** View along north side of boundary wall in (36) above looking east – note slight outward lean to wall



**PLATE 39:** Lower part of staircase removed preventing access to first floor



**PLATE 40:** General view of interior of eastern side of house at ground level



PLATE 41: Damage from removal (theft?) of fireplace



PLATE 42: Evidence of water damage to walls generally to ground floor



**PLATE 43:** View on eastern wall of house showing two parallel vertical cracks to full height of ground floor – possible infilled opening?



**PLATE 44:** Extensive damage/theft/vandalism within property



PLATE 45: View on south-west corner of house at ground floor level



PLATE 46: Close-up on (45) above – note diagonal cracking to side of window reveal

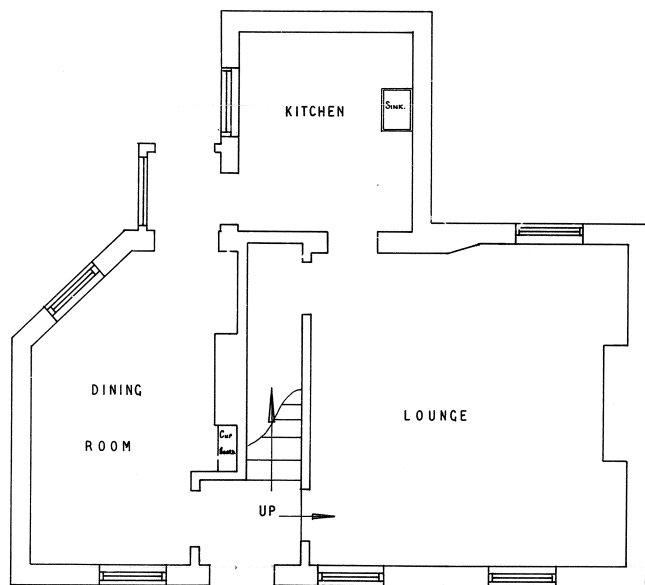


PLATE 47: View on north-west corner of house at ground floor level

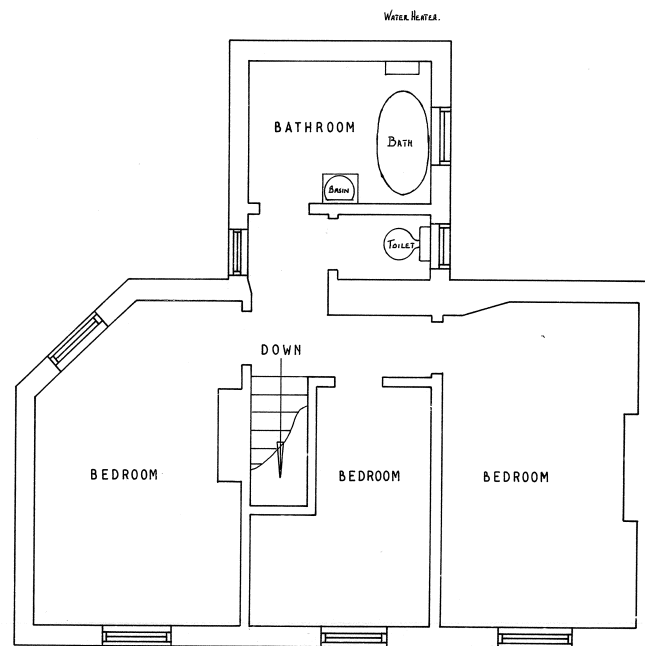


PLATE 48: Close-up on (47) above – gas and electricity meters removed

Attachment 3 – Archive Plan



GROUND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR

SOUTHERN GAS BOARD

PREMISES

PORTSMOUTH REGION

NEG No 275/5

FLOOR PLANS OF HOUSE AT  
69 NORTH STREET EMSWORTH

SCALE 1:50 METRIC

DATE 31.3.71

DRG No PS/500/5

DRAWN BY A.H.B.

Attachment 4 – Plate from Jan 2010



**Plate 1.** 69 North Street viewed from driveway to Seagull Court to west.



**Plate 2.** Front (north) elevation of house - note gate to engineering works to right of view.



**Plate 3.** Eastern half of front elevation of house.



**Plate 4.**  
Front elevation of house viewed from eastern end.



**Plate 5.** Close-up on north-east corner of house.



**Plate 6.** Eastern elevation of main house.



**Plate 7.** Rear elevation of house with later rear extension to left of view.



**Plate 8.**  
Close-up on (7) above showing cracking  
to rear corner.



**Plate 9.** South-west corner of house - note sub-station compound to left of view.



**Plate 10.** Close-up on sub-station in (9) above.



**Plate 11.** Close-up on (9) above showing failed lintel over ground floor window.



**Plate 12.**  
West elevation of house showing  
proximity of sub-station compound.



**Plate 13.**  
Close-up on south-west corner of house  
in (12) above showing cracking at  
eaves.



**Plate 14.** Second sub-station compound in north-eastern corner of site.



**Plate 15.** Former access off North Street.



**Plate 16.** Close-up on (15) above showing brick wall to end of "lane".



**Plate 17.** "Access" in (16) above viewed from North Street.



**Plate 18.** Close-up on (17) above - note lamp post and telegraph pole.



**Plate 19.** North Street viewed from entrance to Seagull Court, looking south.



**Plate 20.** Seagull Court with private driveway to right of view.



**Plate 21.** Private driveway to Seagull Court viewed from east.



**Plate 22.** Light vehicular and pedestrian access to site via Seagull Court.



**Plate 23.**  
Room off rear door of house - note water damage to walls.



**Plate 24.** Further view on room in (23) above showing damage caused by removal of fireplace.



**Plate 25.** Main room at ground floor level.



**Plate 26.**  
Close-up on (25) above showing gas  
and electric meters in corner of room.



**Plate 27.** Missing floor boards at top of stairs to first floor.



**Plate 28.** First floor room.



**Plate 29.** First floor room - note damage to lath and plaster internal walls.



**Plate 30.**  
Gas plant stored in first floor room.



**Plate 31.**  
Gas boiler in bathroom.



**Plate 32.** Ceiling cracking at first floor level.