

**Historic building recording
at Rectory Cottage, Rectory Road,
Tolleshunt Knights, Essex**

October 2013



**report prepared by
Chris Lister**

**commissioned by
Flight Timber Products
on behalf of
Mr P Sacker**

CAT project ref: 13/09i
NGR: TL 9183 1466 (c)
ECC HE code: TKRC13
Colchester and Ipswich Museums
accession code: 2013.56



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CAT Report 734
October 2013

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1 Summary

A programme of building recording was carried out by the Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) on Rectory Cottage, Rectory Road, Tolleshunt Knights, Essex in October 2013. The work was commissioned by Flight Timber Products on behalf of the owner, Mr P Sacker. The building is a two-storey, timber-framed cottage constructed in the late 18th century or early 19th century, with 20th-century extensions.

2 Introduction (Fig 4)

This is the archive report on the historic building recording of Rectory Cottage, Rectory Road, Tolleshunt Knights, Essex, prior to its demolition and subsequent redevelopment. The work was carried out on behalf of the owner, Mr P Sacker, by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) in October 2013. The cottage is a two-storey, timber-framed structure dating to the late 18th century or early 19th century, with 20th-century extensions, located at NGR TL 9183 1466.

A planning application (MAL/00504/12) for the demolition of the cottage and subsequent redevelopment was submitted to Maldon District Council in August 2012.

Given the impact of the proposed works upon the historic integrity of the cottage, a full archaeological condition was recommended to be attached to the planning consent. This recommendation followed the advice given in the National Planning Policy Framework.

A brief detailing the required work (historic building recording and monitoring of groundworks) was written by the Historic Environment Officer (Maria Medlycott HE 2013). All work was carried out in accordance with a WSI (Written Scheme of Investigation) produced by CAT in response to the Historic Environment brief and agreed with the Historic Environment Officer (CAT 2013). The monitoring of the groundworks will be commented upon in a separate report once that phase of work has been completed.

All work was carried out according to standards and practices contained in the Institute for Archaeologists *Standard and guidance for archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures* (2008) and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (2008a). The documents *Management of research projects in the historic environment* (MoRPHE), and *Standards for field archaeology in the East of England* (EAA 14) were also followed.

3 Aims

The aim of the building recording was to compile a record of the historic portions of Rectory Cottage, (referenced to a simple block plan) prior to its demolition. The level of building recording was carried out to Level 2 (English Heritage, 2006).

4 Building recording methodology

The following are included in this report:

- A brief documentary and cartographic survey of the evidence pertaining to the history and evolution of the building.
- A large-scale block plan of the cottage.
- A fully phased floor plan using the English Heritage (2006) Level 3 conventions at scale 1:50 of the cottage. Doors, windows, partitions, truss positions and any surviving fixtures/fittings are shown, together with evidence of phasing. The plans show all major structural additions to the building and any internal divisions, particularly where the alterations are associated with a change of function.
- A digital photographic record of the exterior and interior of the historic building, including details of the façade and historic fixtures and fittings. Selected examples of the photographic record are clearly tied into the drawn record and reproduced as fully annotated photographic plates supporting the text (Appendix 1). The photographic record is accompanied by a photographic register detailing location and direction of shot (Appendix 2). These are referenced on the plans as P1, P2 etc with an arrow denoting the direction of the shot.

5 Historical background (Figs 1-3)

A documentary and cartographic search was undertaken to assess the evidence pertaining to the history of the cottage.

Rectory Cottage is located down a private drive off Rectory Road in the small village of Tolleshunt Knights and is believed to date to the 18th century, possibly originally comprising two farm labourers' dwellings. The surrounding landscape is characterised by open fields with scattered isolated dwellings. The cottage is not shown on the Chapman and André map of 1777 (Fig 1), which indicates its location would have been on Paternoster Heath. According to the parish records, Paternoster Heath was enclosed in the 1820's and the land 'brought under the plough' (A Brief Introduction to the History of Tolleshunt Knights - www.tolleshuntknightsparishcouncil.org.uk/history). If the belief that the cottage was formally farm labourers' accommodation is accurate, and the land did not start being cultivated until the early 1820's, this might suggest an early 19th-century date for the cottage, rather than an 18th-century one.

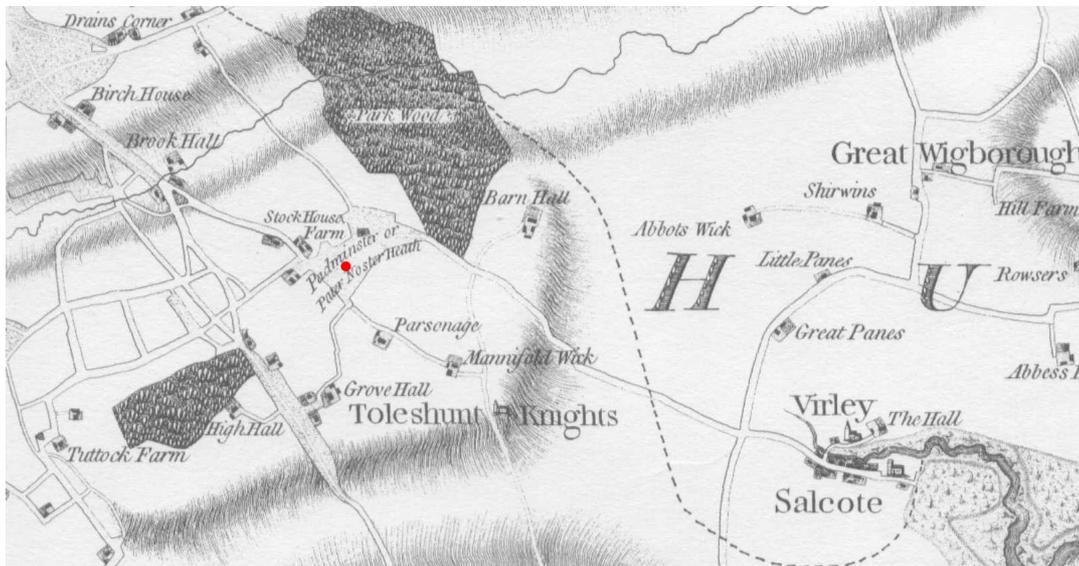


Fig 1 Chapman and André map of Essex, 1777 (Plate XIV) with the location of Rectory Cottage shown as a red dot.

An early 19th-century date for the cottage is supported by two maps held at the Essex Records Office (ERO). The first, entitled 'A Map of the 'Waste Lands on and near Tiptree Heath, Sadler's Heath, Messing Heath, Uxley Green and Paternoster Heath' (ERO D/DBs P5A) from 1833, shows the cottage as part of Tollesbury Hall Manor, with the cottage itself owned by Joshua Kent. The tithe map for 1840 (ERO D/CT 365B, Fig 2) shows a building in the centre of parcel 61, with a second structure, probably an outbuilding, on the northern boundary of the plot. The tithe award records this as a cottage and garden owned by Joshua Kent. This cottage and garden, along with the small field to the north-east was rented to Hannah Brunwin. Hannah Brunwin was a widow who, in 1835, was ordered to be removed from Tolleshunt Knights to the parish of Tolleshunt D'Arcy along with her children, Eleanor aged 14, Eliza aged 12, Elizabeth aged 10, Henry aged 7 and William aged 3 (ERO Q/SBb 521/69/1). Clearly by 1840 Hannah Brunwin and her family had returned to Tolleshunt Knights.

The tithe award groups this property with the rectory, located to the south-east of the cottage in parcel 57. This was owned and occupied by the Reverend Charles William Cawardine, rector of the parish. White's Directory for 1848 records that, as the incumbent, Reverend Cawardine held 63 acres of glebe land, valued in 1831 at £493. The proximity of the cottage to the rectory (labelled 'Parsonage' on the Chapman and André map, but 'Rectory' on the later Ordnance Survey editions) combined with the very name of the cottage, suggest a connection with the rectory.



Fig 2 1840 tithe map with Rectory Cottage circled (ERO D/CT 365B).

The 1st edition 6" OS map of 1881 (Fig 3) differs little to the 1840 tithe map. The cottage appears in the same location, as does the outbuilding. The overall plan form of the cottage appears to then remain unaltered until extensions were added in the 20th century.



Fig 3 1st edition 6" OS map, 1881 (sheet 46) with Rectory Cottage circled.

6 Assessment of the historic features (Figs 5-6)

In the following text the rooms of the cottage have been described according to perceived function with photographs cross-referenced to corresponding floor plans (Figs 5-6).

The evolution of Rectory Cottage can be considered as three distinct phases: Phase 1 comprises the original 18th/19th-century structure, which forms approximately one third of the modern building; Phase 2 consists of a ground floor extension to the original range, dating to the mid 20th century; Phase 3 comprises a two-storey extension to the south of the original structure and additional first floor rooms above the Phase 2 extension.

Phase 1

The original structure is rectangular in plan, aligned roughly north-south, measuring 7.5m x 3.65m, and comprises two storeys with a gabled roof of plain tiles (Plate 1). Much of the original structure has been obscured by the application of a modern render, painted pink, applied when the Phase 3 extension was built in 1979. Where the original structure is exposed, it can be seen that the building is timber-framed and has two bays. The frame is of hand-sawn oak with the corner posts having flared bases. No trace of a sill beam or plinth was observed due to the presence of a modern concrete floor, but if these elements exist they are below modern ground level.

On the ground floor the frame is exposed only on the east wall (Plate 2). The corner posts and a central main post are original timbers and support the original girding beam, or girt, which is single-pegged to the posts (Plate 3). A straight brace falls from the main post and there are the remains of original studs above and below this (Plate 4). There is a chiselled carpenter's mark (II) on the main post at the joint with the south girt (Plate 3) and a scratched (II) where the brace passes through one of the studs (Plate 5). The remaining studs of the frame are modern replacements. The studs of the south wall have been removed entirely to provide access to the 1979 extension. The frame of the north and west walls is obscured by modern plasterboard, but a projection in the west wall suggests there are studs surviving behind. Modern timber casement windows have been inserted into these walls, although it is not possible to say if these are through original openings.

There is greater survival of original timbers in the frame of the first floor. In the east wall, nearly all of the original studs have survived (Plates 6, 7), exceptions being where studs have been removed to create doorways with the Phase 2 extension. Where this has occurred, empty mortices can be seen in the underside of the wall plate (Plate 8). The frame of the east wall of bedroom 3 has a lightly curved brace falling from the corner post and passing through the studs, terminating at the base of the fifth stud from the corner post. The lower end of a second brace survives, rising from the sixth stud to the central main post, although this has been truncated by the inserted doorway to bedroom 3. The studs are nailed to these braces. At the north end of the east wall, there is a straight brace rising from the corner post and terminating at the head of the fifth stud from the corner post. Removal of modern plasterboard in bedroom 3 shows that the frame of the north wall has been rebuilt below the wall plate. However, above the wall plate the gable has an original collar beam with studs above and below. The exterior of the gable is clad in lath and plaster (Plate 9). Exposure of the roof space also shows the survival of the original rafters, carried on clasped purlins supported by collars. The bases of the rafters have furring pieces nailed to them to lessen the slope of the eaves (Plate 10). Bedroom 3 has a tie beam spanning the structure (Plate 11). This is not part of a truss; it does not sit above the main posts, nor does it have principal rafters rising from it. Instead it sits on the wall plate in a shallow notch, abutting one of the common rafters (Plate 10). This is a result of the insertion of a chimney stack in the centre of the structure. The tie beam has been moved from its original position, central to the structure, and relocated to the immediate north of the inserted stack. To provide support for the tie beam, re-used timbers (possibly from an original dividing wall) have been inserted between the floor and the underside of the beam. The west wall has few original timbers below the wall plate. One further point of interest is the presence of diagonal wind braces nailed to the underside of the common rafters.

Carpenters' marks are visible on the exterior of the east wall frame to bedroom 3. The bases of five of the studs each have a chiselled mark (I-V) ascending from south to north (Plate 12). There is also a scratched (III) across one of the junctions of the brace and studs. The exposed end of a floor joist abuts the base of each stud (Plate 12). These joists

are exposed in the ceiling of the living room, although they have been planed smooth and chamfered. The wall plate of the east wall has a bridled scarf joint located above the entrance to bedroom 4 (Plate 8).

The wall frames of bedroom 3 are obscured by lath and plaster but the wall plate is visible, suggesting there may be good preservation of the framing behind.

The south gable is preserved where the Phase 3 extension abuts the original structure (Plate 13). This shows that the exterior of the south gable was weatherboarded, although it was not possible to say if this was the original cladding or a later addition.

Phase 2

At some point in the 20th century, but prior to 1979, a brick-built single-storey extension was added to the east side of the original structure (Plate 14) and a chimney stack inserted through the centre of the cottage. The extension provided a kitchen to the cottage and included an external chimney stack on the north wall. This extension may have replaced an earlier/original kitchen area as there is no apparent hearth location in the Phase 1 structure.

The flooring throughout the first floor of the Phase 1 structure dates to renovations carried out when the 1979 extensions were built but there is small area of flooring in the cupboard of bedroom 3 that is contemporary with the construction of the Phase 2 chimney stack. The construction of this chimney stack necessitated the relocation of the original tie beam.

Phase 3

In 1979 a block-built, two-storey extension aligned east-west was built onto the south ends of Phases 1 and 2, along with a timber-framed second floor above the Phase 2 extension (Plates 15, 16). On the ground floor, the extension removed the frame of the south wall of the original Rectory Cottage whilst, on the first floor, the frame and gable were completely obscured. Doorways from the extension above the kitchen cut through the framing of the original cottage's east wall.

The date of the original Rectory Cottage is difficult to confirm. Map evidence provides a date range of 1777-1833. As the cottage is not depicted on the Chapman and André map, the logical conclusion is that it was not present at the time of their survey, although a late 18th-century date is feasible. The date of the cottage is further complicated by some of the architectural details. The pegging of the girts to the posts suggests an early date, but the braces passing through the studs and the nailing of the studs to the braces is a later technique. These differences in construction methods may illustrate that the structure was erected at a time when the knowledge necessary to construct a timber-framed building was being lost in favour of a turn towards new materials and techniques.

The name of the cottage strongly suggests a connection to the nearby rectory. No evidence has been found indicating the cottage originally stood on glebe land, built by an incumbent as a means of increasing his income, but this is a possibility. It is more likely that the cottage, like the road, took its name from the proximity of the rectory. This might argue for an 18th-century date for the cottage, as the rectory is depicted on Chapman and André.

It is possible that the structure originally comprised two dwellings, later converted into a single cottage. There is no direct evidence for this, only supposition based on the fact that the building has two bays and could have been divided centrally. Similarly, if the position of the windows in the west wall reflect original openings, then there would be ample space in the wall for two entrances, one either side of the central post. However, the tithe award lists the cottage as a single property, owned by one individual and rented to another, so if this hypothesis is correct then the structure was converted into one dwelling relatively early on in its history.

The significance of the cottage is difficult to assess. What survives of the original frame does not display any great architectural merit, and the question of its exact date is a problem. If it dates to the 18th century then it has a local significance for Tolleshunt Knights as an historic building in the vernacular tradition. If it is later in date then the cottage is a social curiosity, a timber-framed throwback constructed in a time when brick was becoming the building material of choice.

7 Acknowledgments

Colchester Archaeological Trust would like to thank Mr P Sacker for funding the building recording.

The building recording was carried out by Chris Lister.

The project was monitored by Maria Medlycott on behalf of Essex County Council Historic Environment Branch.

8 References

Note: all CAT reports, except for DBAs, are available online in .pdf format at <http://cat.essex.ac.uk>

| | | |
|--------------|-------|--|
| CAT | 2013 | <i>Written Scheme of Investigation for Historic Building Recording and Archaeological Monitoring at Rectory Cottage, Rectory Road, Tolleshunt Knights, Essex</i> |
| DoE | 2010 | <i>Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment</i> |
| EAA 14 | 2003 | <i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England</i> , East Anglian Archaeology, Occasional Papers, 14 , ed by D Gurney |
| IfA | 2008 | <i>Standard and guidance for archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings and structures</i> |
| IfA | 2008a | <i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i> |
| Lovell, K | 1991 | <i>In the Land of the Tolles</i> |
| Medlycott, M | 2013 | <i>Brief for Historic Building Recording and Archaeological Monitoring of Rectory Cottage, Rectory Road, Tolleshunt Knights</i> , Essex County Council brief |
| MoRPHE | 2006 | <i>Management of research projects in the historic environment</i> (English Heritage) <i>A Brief Introduction to the History of Tolleshunt Knights</i> - www.tolleshuntknightsparishcouncil.org.uk/history accessed 01-11-13 |

9 Abbreviations and glossary

| | |
|---------------|---|
| CAT | Colchester Archaeological Trust |
| ECC | Essex County Council |
| EHEN | Essex Historic Environment Record, held by the ECC |
| girt | a principal horizontal timber marking a storey height on the exterior of a timber frame |
| HE | Historic Environment |
| IfA | Institute for Archaeologists |
| medieval | period from AD 1066 to Henry VIII |
| modern | period from the 19th century onwards to the present |
| NGR | National Grid Reference |
| post-medieval | after Henry VIII to around the late 18th century |
| purlin | a longitudinal timber running below the rafters to strengthen the roof |

10 Archive deposition

The paper and digital archive is currently held by the Colchester Archaeological Trust at Roman Circus House, Circular Road North, Colchester, Essex CO2 7GZ, but it will be permanently deposited with Colchester and Ipswich Museums under accession code 2013.56.

11 Contents of archive

One A4 document wallet containing:

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Copy of ECC brief
- 1.2 Copy of WSI produced by CAT
- 1.3 Risk assessment
- 1.4 Copies of existing plans (1 x A1 sheets)

2 Site archive

- 2.1 Digital photographic record.
- 2.2 Digital photographic contact sheet.
- 2.3 Attendance register
- 2.4 Site photographic record on CD

3 Research archive

- 3.1 Client report

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Appendices
Appendix 1
Selected photographs



Plate 1 Rectory Cottage, with the 1979 extension to the right - view east



Plate 2 The exposed frame of the east wall, with the surviving girt, main post, studs and brace – view south-west



Plate 3 Girding beams single-pegged to main post, with carpenter's mark (II) at the top of the post – view south-west



Plate 4 Surviving timbers of the east wall - view west



Plate 5 Carpenter's mark (II) on brace and stud – view west



Plate 6 Surviving timbers of the first floor frame - view south-west



Plate 7 Surviving timbers of the first floor frame, with modern replacements to the left - view north-east



Plate 8 Mortices for removed studs in underside of wall plate with bladed scarf joint to the left – view south-east



Plate 9 The interior of the north gable with original studs above and below a collar beam and the original purlins and rafters - view north



Plate 10 Original rafter with firing piece nailed to it and end of relocated tie beam – view north-west



Plate 11 The relocated tie beam in bedroom 4 - view south

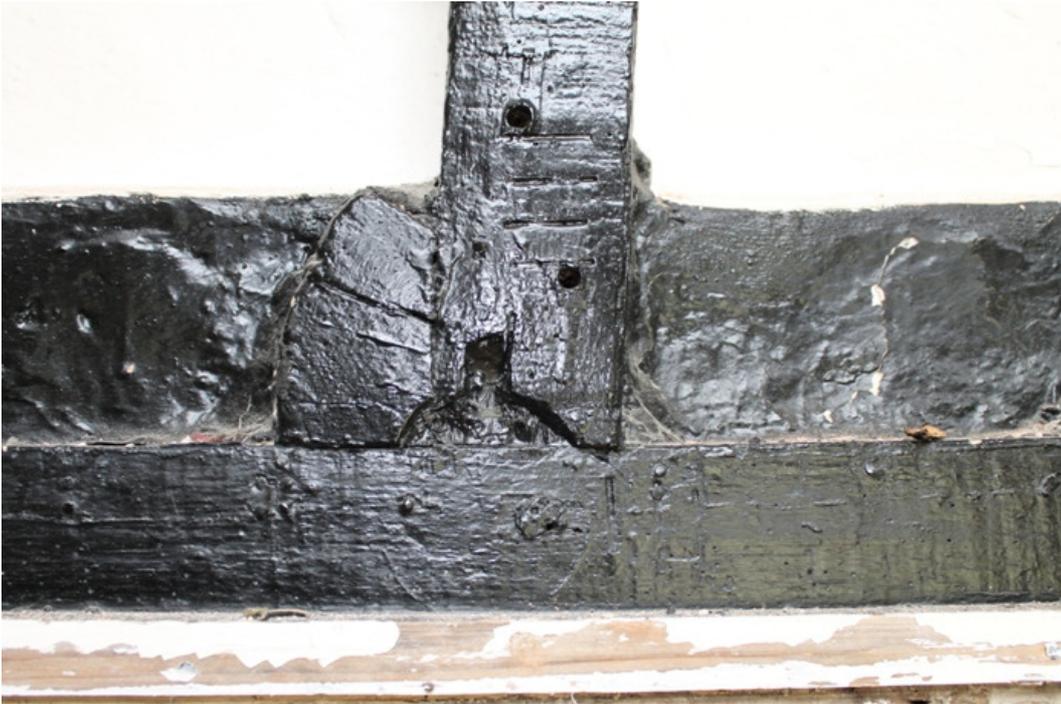


Plate 12 Example of a carpenter's mark (III) on the base of a stud in the east wall of the first floor frame, with the butt end of a floor joist carried on the girt - view west



Plate 13 The south gable with 1979 extension to the left – view west



Plate 14 Phase 2 single-storey extension with the Phase 3 second storey extension above – view south-west



Plate 15 Phase 3 extension with the original structure to the rear – view north-east



Plate 16 The Phase 3 extensions to the left of and above the Phase 2 extension, with the original structure in the background – view west

Appendix 2

Full list of digital photographic record (images on accompanying CD)

- 001.jpg Rectory Cottage with 1979 extension in the foreground and the original structure behind - view north-east.
- 002.jpg South elevation - view north-west.
- 003.jpg West elevation - view east.
- 004.jpg Roof of the original cottage - view east.
- 005.jpg North elevation - view south-east.
- 006.jpg North-east corner with 20th-century ground floor extension and 1979 first floor extension in the foreground - view south-west.
- 007.jpg North-east corner with 20th-century ground floor extension and 1979 first floor extension in the foreground - view south-west.
- 008.jpg East elevation - view south-west.
- 009.jpg East elevation - view west.
- 010.jpg East elevation with the 1979 extension to the left - view west.
- 011.jpg The dining room looking into the living room beyond - view south-west.
- 012.jpg View from the living room with the dining room to the right and the kitchen visible in the background - view north-east.
- 013.jpg View from the 1979 living room into the original structure - view north.
- 014.jpg The interior of the original structure with inserted chimney stack - view north.
- 015.jpg The interior of the original structure with the inserted chimney stack - view north-west.
- 016.jpg The inserted chimney stack and the exposed timbers of the first floor joists - view north-east.
- 017.jpg The inserted chimney stack with the surviving timbers of the east wall in the background - view south-east.
- 018.jpg The east wall of the original structure showing the surviving wall plate, studs and bracing, with later replacement timbers - view south-west.
- 019.jpg The east wall of the original structure with the 20th-century kitchen to the right - view north-west.
- 020.jpg Surviving timbers of the east wall, with main post to the left, straight bracing falling from the post and studs above and below the brace - view south-west.
- 021.jpg Surviving timbers of the east wall - view west.
- 022.jpg Chiselled carpenter's mark (II) on surviving brace and stud - view west.
- 023.jpg Detail of surviving stud tenon and wall plate mortice.
- 024.jpg Detail of girding timbers single-pegged to main post
- 025.jpg Detail of main post with single-pegged girding beams.
- 026.jpg Exposed timbers of the original structure's east wall - view north-west.
- 027.jpg Exposed timbers of the original structure's east wall - view south-west.
- 028.jpg Surviving rafters of the original structure concealed by the 1979 roof extension - view south-west.
- 029.jpg Chiselled carpenter's mark (III) across brace and stud of original first floor east wall.
- 030.jpg Chiselled carpenter's mark (I) at junction of stud and girding beam of original first floor east wall.
- 031.jpg Chiselled carpenter's mark (II) at junction of stud and girding beam of original first floor east wall.
- 032.jpg Chiselled carpenter's mark (III) at junction of stud and girding beam of original first floor east wall.
- 033.jpg Chiselled carpenter's mark (IIII) at junction of stud and girding beam of original first floor east wall.
- 034.jpg Chiselled carpenter's mark (V) at junction of stud and girding beam of original first floor east wall.
- 035.jpg Detail of iron cramp on girding beam of east wall
- 036.jpg Surviving timbers in first floor east wall of original structure, with 1979 bathroom in the foreground - view north-west.
- 037.jpg Surviving timbers of the first floor east wall, including wall plate, studs and straight brace - view north-west.

- 038.jpg Original rafter with furring timber and the end of the relocated tie beam - view north-west.
- 039.jpg Mortices for removed studs in underside of wall plate and scarf joint.
- 040.jpg Surviving timber frame of the first floor east wall displaying marks left by original lath and plaster - view north-east.
- 041.jpg Apex of north gable showing original collar and studs, covered by lath and plaster - view north.
- 042.jpg Detail of wind brace - view west.
- 043.jpg South wall of bedroom 3 showing the inserted chimney stack and the relocated tie beam; the studs are re-used timbers - view south.
- 044.jpg Surviving timbers of the first floor east wall - view south-west.
- 045.jpg Interior of bedroom 3, although the original wall plate is visible any surviving studs are obscured by modern plasterboard - view west.
- 046.jpg Interior of bedroom 3 with fire place and cupboard to the left of the stack - view north-east.
- 047.jpg Floorboards of cupboard in bedroom 3, possibly original to the structure.
- 048.jpg South gable of the original structure, showing the gable to have been weatherboarded prior to the 1979 extension - view west.
- 049.jpg South gable of the original structure, showing the gable to have been weatherboarded prior to the 1979 extension - view west.
- 050.jpg The corner post and wall plate of the original structure with straight bracing falling from the post - view west.
- 051.jpg Detail of the weatherboarded south gable of the original structure with the 1979 extension to the left - view west.
- 052.jpg The exposed joists of the first floor - view north.

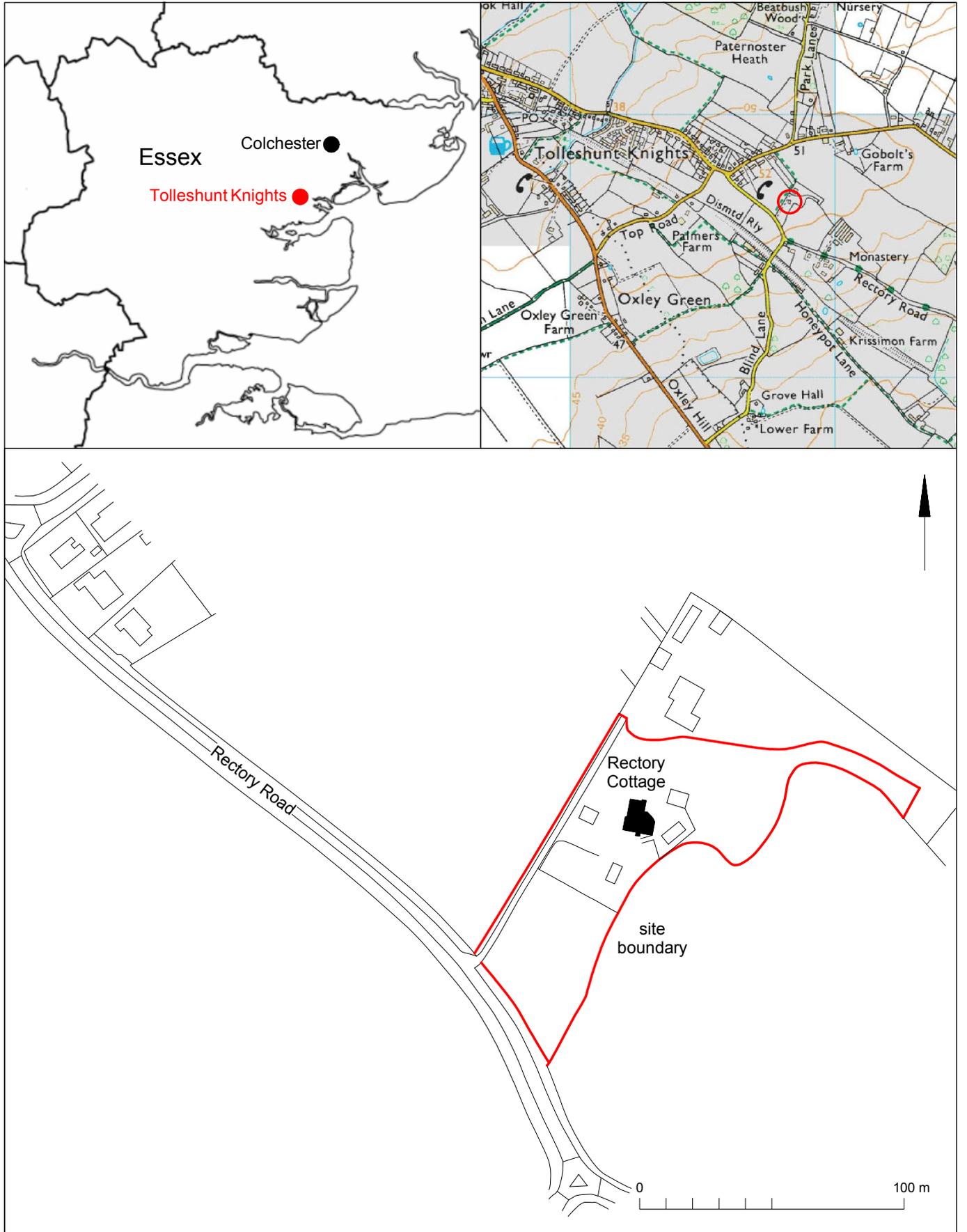


Fig 4 Site location.

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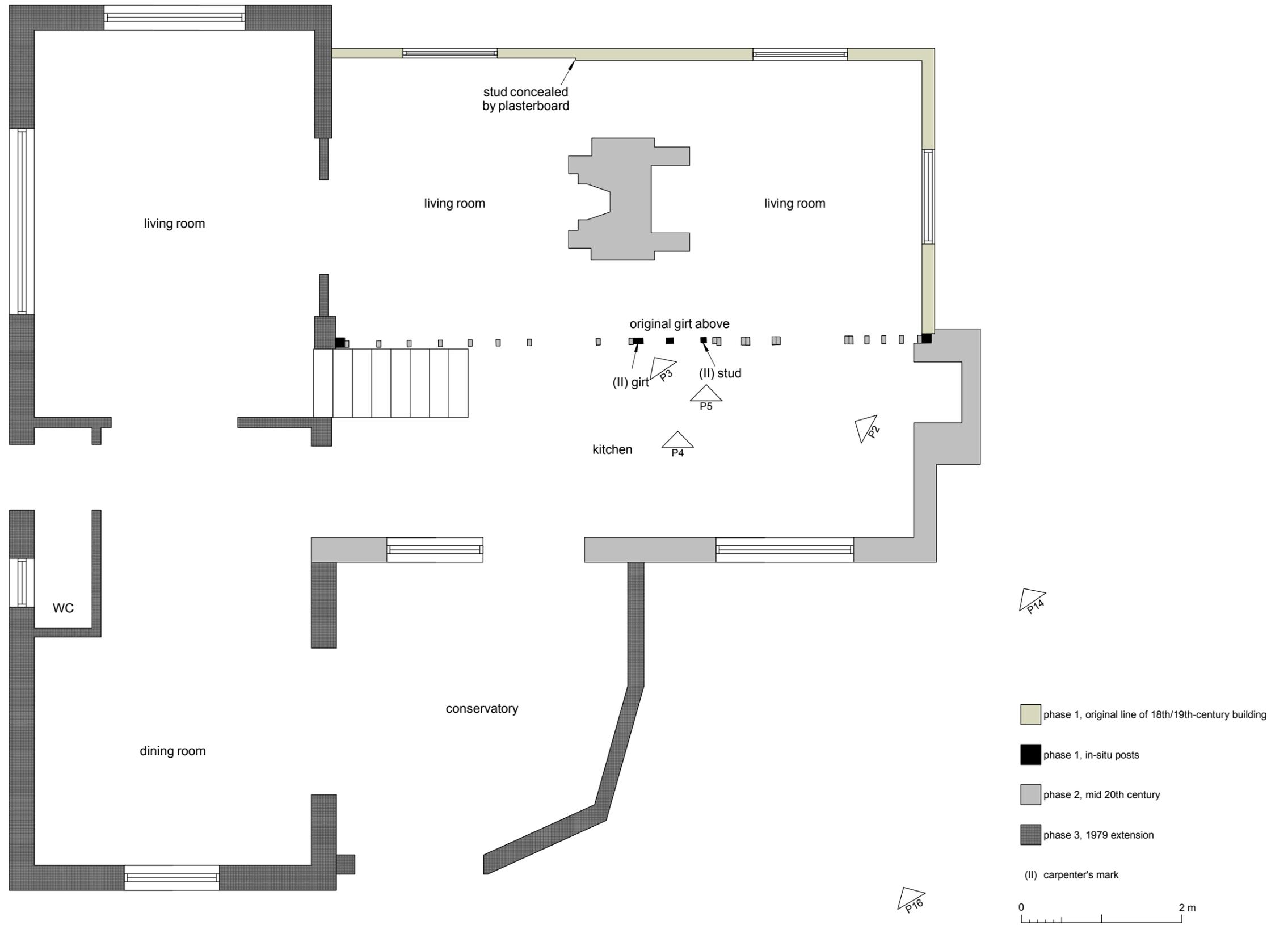


Fig 5 Ground floor plan of Rectory Cottage, showing the location and orientation of photographs included in this report.

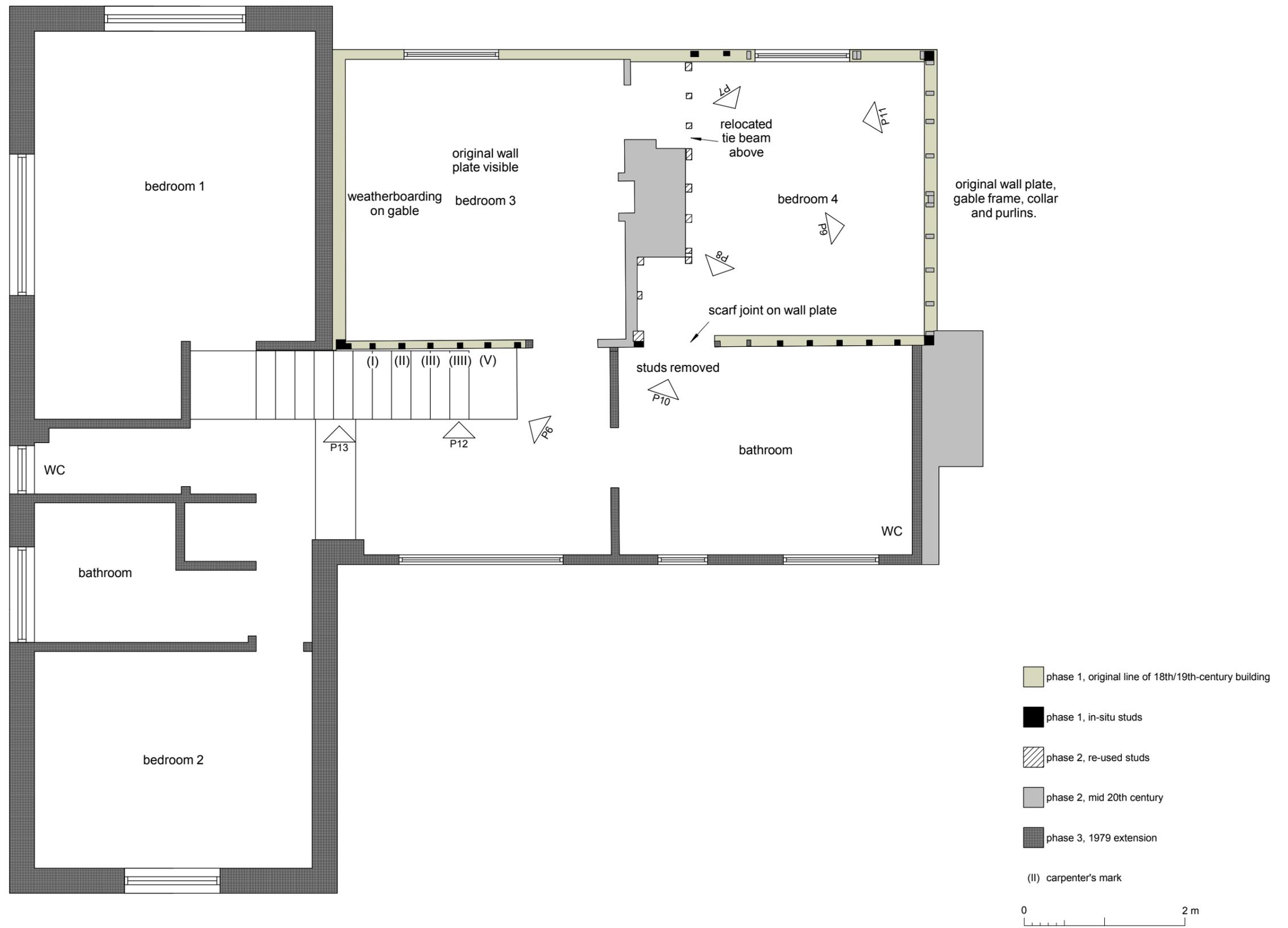


Fig 6 First floor plan of Rectory Cottage, showing the location and orientation of photographs included in this report.

**Essex Historic Environment Record/
Essex Archaeology and History**

Summary sheet

| | |
|--|---|
| Address: Rectory Cottage, Rectory Road, Tolleshunt Knights, Essex | |
| Parish: Tolleshunt Knights | District: Maldon |
| NGR: TL 9183 1466 (c) | Site codes: CAT project – 13/09i ECC HE code – TKRC13 Colchester and Ipswich Museums accession – 2013.56 |
| Type of work: Building recording | Site director/group: Colchester Archaeological Trust |
| Date of work: October 2013 | Size of area investigated: n/a |
| Location of curating museum: Colchester and Ipswich Museum | Funding source: Client |
| Monitored by: Maria Medlycott of Essex Historic Environment | |
| Further seasons anticipated? Yes | Related EHER numbers: - |
| Final report: | CAT Report 734 |
| Periods represented: | 18th-20th century |
| Summary: <i>A programme of building recording was carried out by the Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) on Rectory Cottage, Rectory Road, Tolleshunt Knights, Essex in October 2013. The work was commissioned by Flight Timber Products on behalf of the owner, Mr P Sacker. The building is a two-storey, timber-framed cottage constructed in the late 18th century or early 19th century, with 20th-century extensions.</i> | |
| Previous summaries/reports: none | |
| Keywords: cottage, timber-framed | Significance: * |
| Author of summary: Chris Lister | Date of summary: November 2013 |