

# Gainsborough Old Hall Lincolnshire

## **Conservation Plan**

Oxford Archaeology  
Second draft text  
*October 2003*

Lincolnshire County Council



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# Gainsborough Old Hall Conservation Plan

## Executive Summary

### **Part One: Significance**

To establish an understanding of the historic site, the Conservation Plan reviews the sources for the history of Gainsborough Old Hall and sets out twelve chronological phases for its development, from before the building or occupation of the site to the present day (*Sections 1.1 and 1.2*).

It establishes criteria for assessing the significance of the site and its elements – house and grounds - and proposes areas of exceptional or other degrees of significance (*Section 1.3*). In terms of statutory designations, Gainsborough Old Hall is a Grade I Listed Building.

Assessments are organised broadly chronologically. Gainsborough Old Hall is identified as a complex historic site of exceptional value and significance, deriving from the importance of particular features or phases, and from the factors which make up its overall heritage merit and interest:

- Overview: setting and associations
- The 15th century house
- The post-medieval Old Hall
- 19th century features
- 29th century features and values

### **Part Two: Conservation Policies**

After a review of factors which affect the site's significance now, or which may do so in the future (*Section 2.2*), the Plan provides policies for its conservation. Eight principal areas of policy are set out (*Section 2.3*), which aim to protect and in some cases enhance the significance of the site as a whole and realise its potential for public use, access and understanding:

- Principles and approaches
- Conservation, repair and maintenance
- Protection of fabric and setting
- Information, recording and research
- Access and visitor services
- Presenting and interpreting the site
- Collections management
- Site management

These Principal Policies are supplemented by more detailed subsidiary policies, by which they may be implemented. They are listed in summary on the pages following.

### **Part Three: Gazetteer**

The final section of the Plan is a schedule of the individual elements of the site, in the building and its setting. It attempts to develop a more detailed understanding of the site, including for each element its own particular development and significance, its principal features, the collections displayed, the risks and vulnerabilities which affect it, and the specific policies for its conservation or other treatment, reflecting the overall policies for the site set out in *Part Two*.

### Summary of Policies for the Conservation of Gainsborough Old Hall

[to be detailed after approval]

- A      PRINCIPLES AND APPROACHES**
- B      CONSERVATION, REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE**
- C      PROTECTION OF FABRIC AND SETTING**
- D      INFORMATION, RECORDING AND RESEARCH**
- E      ACCESS AND VISITOR SERVICES**
- F      PRESENTING AND INTERPRETING THE SITE**
- G      COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT**
- H      SITE MANAGEMENT**



# Gainsborough Old Hall Conservation Plan

## INTRODUCTION

### **Background and purpose**

Gainsborough Old Hall was built after 1460 for the powerful Burgh family. It was added to by the Burghs and their successors and is remarkable for the preservation of its medieval kitchen and great hall. It is sited just north of the centre of the town of Gainsborough which has since grown around it; until the late 19th century it lay on the town's northern edge. The Old Hall draws tourists from around Britain and abroad as well as local visitors and is an important focus for local cultural activity.

The Conservation Plan for Gainsborough Old Hall was commissioned by Lincolnshire County Council in 2003. Its purpose is to provide a basis of policy and guidance to inform both day-to-day management and consideration of development proposals for the site. It draws together existing information about the Old Hall and establishes an understanding of its development through time; assesses the significance of the site and its component elements; defines issues which impact on the site; and proposes policies for guiding future management and protecting significance.

### **Basis and structure**

Organisation of the plan is based on the model brief set out as the Appendix to *Conservation Plans in Action*, English Heritage, 1999, and on *Conservation Plans for Historic Places*, Heritage Lottery Fund, 1998. The underlying principles are derived from *The Conservation Plan*, James Semple Kerr, 1996. It also takes into account the series of international charters, summarised in the *Guide to International Conservation Charters*, Historic Scotland, 1997. The principal ones are the *Charter of Venice* 1964; the *UNESCO Recommendations*, 1976; the *Charter of the European Architectural Heritage*, Council of Europe, 1975, and the *Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance*, Australia ICOMOS, 1999 (the Burra Charter).

Though these charters are not incorporated into UK legislation, the principle of understanding historic sites as a necessary basis for decision making is well recognised. The requirement to protect significance during processes of change or conservation is enshrined in Government's Planning Policy Guidance Notes PPG 15: *Planning and the Historic Environment* and PPG 16: *Archaeology and Planning*.

The Plan has also been able to take account of general policies contained in *Power of Place, the future of the historic environment*, (English Heritage, 2000), and *Informed Conservation* (English Heritage, 2001).

The Plan follows a three-part structure:

***Part One: Significance*** summarises the evidence for the site and its historical development. It identifies the key phases of development and sets out the elements of significance for these and for the site overall.

***Part Two: Conservation Policies*** develops principles for protecting and enhancing the elements of significance and making them accessible to public understanding and enjoyment.

***Part Three: Gazetteer*** is a schedule of individual buildings and features which make up the site, setting out their particular historical development and significance, identifying risks and vulnerabilities, and providing policies and recommendations for their conservation or other appropriate treatment.

### **Acknowledgements**

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For consultation, advice and information, grateful acknowledgement is due to:

[to be listed]

# Part One: Significance

## 1.1 UNDERSTANDING THE SITE

### 1.1.1 SCOPE OF THE SURVEY

The survey area of the Gainsborough Old Hall Conservation Plan is essentially the extent of the property of English Heritage in the care of Lincolnshire County Council, as seen in its historic and landscape setting.

The subject of the study comprises the house and its curtilage, the historic town with its church and river wharves. In addition to the existing buildings and landscapes the scope includes the 'lost' features that have been removed, but of which buried remains may survive. The historical records of the house over 600 years are also included as significant elements informing our understanding of the property and themselves become material to be conserved, even if not present on the site.

The study is not directed at any specific proposals currently being developed for the site, but looks at the issues for the conservation of the special interest of the site and its future sustainability. The monument is in public ownership, giving a double obligation to protect it for future users, while promoting its enjoyment and understanding for the present. As with all such assets it can be used and exploited to the detriment of its fabric, or so overprotected that it can rarely be enjoyed by those for whom it is being kept. A reasonable balance must be kept between these demands, allowing conservation of its significant aspects, while recognising their role in drawing the interest and support of new generations to the historic environment, and encouraging a local sense of ownership and involvement.

This broad range of concerns, for the considerable variety of features within the site, has informed the approach to the Plan, and the scope of the Gazetteer.

### 1.1.2 REVIEW OF SOURCES

There is a considerable quantity of primary evidence and secondary material relating to the history and archaeology of Gainsborough Old Hall (see Appendix for Sources and Bibliography). The primary source is the Hall itself, including the buried remains of lost buildings, and its townscape setting. Some phases of the Hall's existence are better recorded than others, but there are adequate historical records for most periods. Topographical views and early photographs record the changes in the appearance of the exterior and environs, while the archives of English Heritage, the Friends, and Lincolnshire County Council are now a key historical source.

## 1.2 HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

### 1.2.1 TOPOGRAPHY AND SETTING

The hall is set in the small town of Gainsborough on the Lincolnshire bank of the Trent. Historically it lay on the northern edge of the town but became surrounded by urban expansion in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

On early illustrations and maps it is clear that the Hall lay on the very northern edge of the town and was enclosed within the town ditch. To the south lay the Mart Yard (now built over) and the town beyond, and to the north lay a landscape of small fields and orchards.

The banks of the Trent lie to the immediate west of the house and for many centuries it was this important river connection which made the town prosper as a trading centre and port.

### 1.2.2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

#### **Phase I**                      **Gainsborough before the Conquest**                      *before 1066*

The early history of Gainsborough remains largely unknown, though like the nearby borough of Torksey it must owe its origin to its riparian setting. It came into prominence in 1013 when it was used as a base by the Danish King Sven Forkbeard during his raid on England (and so must already have been in existence for some while). Despite the apparent significance of Gainsborough in the century or so before the Conquest, there is little physical evidence for a Danish presence in the immediate area, and none for any activity on the site of the Old Hall itself. The site appears to have been only the second centre for the post-Conquest manor, with an earlier manorial centre possibly at the site of the old castle (Castle Hills) to the north of the town (though actually within a separate manor).

#### **Phase II**                      **Before the present Hall**                      *1066 - 1470*

The owners of Gainsborough were lords of the medieval town. The descent of the manor passed from the d'Albini family in the 12th century to the Talbots in the 13th century, and a series of feudal magnates in the 13th and 14th centuries, including the Valence and Percy families. When the manor was established on the northern edge of the medieval town is not certain, though it may have come from a desire to be closer to the communication links, developing urban centre and trade opportunities of the present site by the river. Gainsborough seems to have obtained a certain degree of autonomy, and even had a Gild Merchant, but was not a very prominent town in the late medieval period, beyond its local market status (Platts 1985).

The Hall was enclosed within the town ditch (unlike the church) and the presence of earlier buildings on the site of the Old Hall is suspected. By the 15th century the manor was in the hands of the Percy family and through Elizabeth Percy, married to Thomas Burgh, was inherited by their son Thomas. His own marriage to a noble and wealthy widow was one stage in his rise to importance and political

power in the service of the Yorkist king Edward IV (as an esquire for the King's body, and later as knight of the chamber and Master of the Horse), and the probable impetus to begin the building (or possibly rebuilding) of a manor house on the present site. In 1469 or 1470 Sir Thomas's Lancastrian enemies attacked and 'pulled down his place and took all his goods and chattels that they might find'.

### **Phase III                      The 15th century Hall                      1470 - 1596**

Sir Thomas Burgh, however, continued to prosper under Edward IV and his successor Richard III, and the house at Gainsborough, whatever the extent of the 1469-70 destruction, seems to have been completed (on the evidence of dendrochronology) by about 1490. There is evidence from the excavations in the 1980s for earlier buildings on the same site and alignment as the present Great Hall and West Range. Though there is as yet no agreed or firmly dated sequence for the individual parts of the house, it seems that building (or rebuilding) began with the Great Hall and its east and west wings, probably together with the East Range, in the 1460s, followed by the addition of the West Range in the 1470s, and the building of the Tower in the 1480s. The date of the brick Kitchen is less clear, though it would rationally be built with the Great Hall, and the building over of the intervening gap above the Servery seems to have happened very shortly afterwards.

The house was thus built in a relatively short period, and to a single overall design. If a fully courtyard house was ever intended, its southern range was never built. It is possible that the main front initially was intended to be on the north side, approached across a northern moat. The complex was described by Leland in the 1530s as 'the moated manor place by the west end of the church yard'.

The Hall must have been a chief residence for Sir Thomas, with his growing county status as Constable of Lincoln Castle, and then as Knight of the Shire, while his survival in troubled times is perhaps even more remarkable than his rise, and as a king's councillor he was ennobled by Henry Tudor in 1487. The Hall remained in the Burgh family for a century, with Thomas' successors more or less maintaining his status at court and in the county (Gunn 1991). William Lord Burgh ceased to reside at Gainsborough in 1540, but his son Thomas, the 5th Lord Burgh, seems to have built the highly decorative three-bay stair and gallery addition to the Hall range on its south side, before selling the estate in 1596.

### **Phase IV                      William Hickman's House                      1596 - 1625**

Purchase of the manor by the London merchant William Hickman initiated a phase of remodelling in the house. Hickman (knighted in 1603) was fiercely Protestant and keen to use his manorial position to dominate the political and commercial life of Gainsborough and exploit its trading connections. Gainsborough's rise as an important entrepot on the River Trent meant that the town flourished at the point where the inland barge trade met the sea-going ships. The creation of a mart yard close by the Hall reflected the continuing relation of the lord to the profits of the town, and also changed the relationship of the mansion house by bring it nearer to the town.

Hickman's work at the Old Hall centred on the East Range, modernising and extending the accommodation to create three floors of private chambers at the

south end, encasing the south and east walls in brickwork and possibly also building the two brick bay windows towards the east. He also built a wall between East and West Ranges, creating a courtyard with a gateway entrance, that linked to the adjacent Mart Yard.

Internal decoration included the wall paintings of c.1600 which partially survive in the Lower Inner Chamber and the panelling in the ground floor room at the south end. The probate inventory made on Hickman's death in 1625 provides an idea of the layout, use and furnishing of his house and the range of ancillary buildings associated with it.

**Phase V                      Willoughby Hickman and the Civil War      1625 - 1649**  
William's son Willoughby Hickman was lord of the manor during the Civil War. He attempted to stay neutral through the warlike events of 1642-43 when Gainsborough was initially garrisoned for Parliament but changed hands through two sieges and was severely damaged. The Old Hall escaped the destruction of the town but Sir Willoughby's trade and wealth were severely affected, and he became unpopular with the townspeople for failing to discharge his manorial duties of repair and maintenance. During his time (he died in 1649) and that of his successor Sir William Hickman it seems little new work was done at the Hall.

**Phase VI                      Later Stuart Gainsborough                      1649 - 1720**  
Sir William was active in public life and served in Parliament as did his son and successor Willoughby Hickman. Both used the Old Hall as their Lincolnshire base. The surviving features related to this phase are mostly cosmetic and include doors and the small stair in the East Range. The next holder of the estate, Sir Neville Hickman, inheriting in 1720, declined to follow the family tradition. Instead, regarding the old building as beyond fashionable conversion, he abandoned it in favour of a new house built nearby at Thonock Hall.

**Phase VII                      Varied fortunes and uses                      1720 - 1826**  
While Gainsborough flourished with its expanding river trade in the century before the coming of the railways, and the family estates no doubt benefited from the prosperity of the town, the Old Hall became less important, and entered a century-long phase of mixed uses which was the occasion for considerable physical changes to the building. The East Range was let as a residence to Lord Abingdon and his family until 1753, while the West Range was divided into tenements and eventually also workshops. The Tower was let as a self-contained house, with an entrance created on the north-east. The precise use of the Kitchen during this period is unclear - by the end of the phase it may have been divided by a brick wall into two areas - but in the winter of 1816-17 it served as a soup kitchen for the local poor.

The Great Hall remained as a public space for the town, where John Wesley preached on a number of occasions from 1759. In 1760 William Hornby took a lease of the Old Hall as a linen factory but in 1790 sublet the Great Hall to a Mr West for conversion as a theatre. The hall screen was possibly removed at this time, and a new gallery and seating were installed. The oriel, partitioned off,

became the green room for the theatre.

**Phase VIII                      The Bacon family: revival and repair                      1826 - 1872**

Frances Hickman, daughter of Sir Neville George Hickman, died without heirs in 1826, and the estate passed to a cousin, Henry Bacon, on condition that Hickman was added to his name. Sir Henry Hickman Bacon was keen to convert the Great Hall to Corn Exchange, though the theatre remained in place until 1849 while the tenements in the West Range continued in use. The Hall was able to function as a significant public building in a town that continued to grow with the opening of the iron works, and the coming of the railway.

On closure of the theatre the Great Hall was now to become a place ‘for the purpose of holding tea-meetings and similar assemblies’. Its condition was causing concern and a programme of repairs was undertaken. Denzil Ibbetson, railway engineer on the line recently completed through Gainsborough, was commissioned to oversee the work, using iron castings at the lower end of the arched roof trusses. The decorative overdoor panels in the hall commemorate the work. At about the same time the Great Upper Chamber in the East range was converted as an assembly room/ballroom, involving the raising of its ceiling and a new roof to the range, with a battlemented brick parapet on the east side. In the West Range the tenements continued in multi-occupation and by 1851 a public house, the Queen Adelaide, had been set up at the centre of the range. By now the Hall was completely open to the Mart Yard on the south side.

**Phase IX                      Conversion and public uses                      1872 - 1945**

Sir Henry Hickman Becket Bacon inherited in 1872, continuing to live at Thonock throughout his long life while carrying out further repairs and alterations at the Old Hall and encouraging its public uses. There were works in 1878 to remove the C18 brick building north of the services wing, and provide supports in the Kitchen/Servery and in the basement below the buttery. The northern stack of the West Range lodgings was also rebuilt about this time.

By the early C20 the Old Hall had already assumed a community role, and from 1896 to 1952 the Gainsborough Freemasons had their Masonic Temple in the East Range (ground floor), and their caretaker had an apartment in the 1590s chambers at the south end of the range. During the First World War the Hall was used to store furniture from bombed houses, and some of the Bacon family furniture and portraits were also still in the Hall at this time. In 1938 a major step was taken to protect the setting of the Old Hall from development, with the establishment by Sir Henry of a restrictive covenant under the aegis of the National Trust.

**Phase X                      Community involvement                      1945 - 1969**

Shortly after inheriting the estate in 1945 Sir Edmund Bacon, recognising the poor condition of the Old Hall and the threats to its survival, agreed to the formation of a local group to save, repair and promote it. The Friends of the Old Hall Association took over management in 1949, arranging a programme of exhibitions and beginning a collection with the aim of setting up a local museum in the Hall. Urgent repairs were carried out by FOHA in the 1950s, 1960s and early 1970s (when the Ministry of Works took over responsibility for repair

work), with a major programme of roof repairs to the Great Hall, beginning in the mid-1950s and completed in the early 1960s.

**Phase XI                      In public ownership                      1969 - 1979**

In 1969 Sir Edmund Bacon gave the Old Hall to the nation and it was placed in the care of the Ministry of Works. There were major repairs, especially in the 1970s on the East Range, and the modern kitchen and lavatories were created in the Parlour and the basement below. In 1979 the Friends of the Old Hall Association invited Lincolnshire County Council to assume management of the Old Hall as part of its museum service

**Phase XII                      Partnership                      1979 - present**

The West Range repairs came in the 1980s, with its opening to the public for the first time in 1989. In 1988 an agreement was signed by Lincolnshire County Council with English Heritage, on the responsibility for care and protection of the building, with a further lease agreement signed in 1994. The Friends maintain their role in supporting the museum through guiding, lecture programmes, fund-raising and development of the gardens, and the Bacon family continues to support the Old Hall through its generous loan of the furniture and portrait collections to furnish the house.



### 1.2.3 DESCENT OF GAINSBOROUGH OLD HALL

c.1100	Nigel d'Albini
1138-41	Roger d'Albini his son (confiscated by King Stephen)
1141-56	William de Roumare, Earl of Lincoln
? -1175	William Talbot
c.1175	Roger Talbot (son of WT)
?	Simon Talbot (brother of RT)
?	Ermengardis Talbot (daughter of ST)
fl.1205	Robert Talbot (son of WT)
? - 1255	William Talbot (son of RT - remained in Normandy)
? - 1250	John Talbot (brother of WT)
1250-c.1252	Gerard Talbot (brother of JT)
c.1252-?	Richard Talbot (son of GT)
?	Robert & Thomas Talbot (brothers of RT)
? - 1265	William de Valence (no relation)
1265-1326	Aymer de Valence
1326-?	Joan (daughter of AV), married to John Comyn
? - 1335	Joanna (their daughter), married to David Earl of Athol
1335-?	David Comyn Lord Badenoch (their son)
?	David Comyn, Lord Badenoch (son of DC)
	(Elizabeth (daughter of DC), married Thomas Percy)
?	Sir Henry Percy (their son)
	Elizabeth (daughter of HP), married Thomas Burgh I; died 1455
1455-1496	Sir Thomas Burgh II (son of TB I)
1496-1528	Edmund Burgh (son of TB II), 'distracted'.
1510-1515	(in King's hand)
1515-1550	Thomas, Lord Burgh (son of EB)
1550-1584	William, Lord Burgh (son of TB)
1584-1596	Thomas, Lord Burgh (son of WB)
1596-1625	Sir William Hickman (by purchase from TB)
1625-1649	Willoughby Hickman (Bart 1642) (son of WH)
1649-1682	Sir William Hickman (MP) (son of WH)
1682-1720	Sir Willoughby Hickman (MP) (son of WH)
1720-1733	Sir Neville Hickman (son of WH)
1733-1781	Sir Neville-George Hickman (son of NH)
1781-1827	Frances Hickman (daughter of NGH) [osp]
1827-1862	Henry Bacon (cousin of FH) [osp]
1862-1872	Henry Hickman Bacon (nephew of HB)
1872-1945	Sir Hickman Beckett Bacon [osp]
1945-1969	Sir Edmund Bacon (nephew of HBB)
1969-	Secretary of State for Culture, etc.

## 1.3 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

### 1.3.1 BASIS OF THE ASSESSMENT; VALUES EMPLOYED

Fundamental to the management of a site where competing issues may arise is an understanding of relative significance, so that a proportionate weight may be given to the care of the more important elements. The assessment of significance relates to the intrinsic interest of the feature and a number of factors such as rarity, association, or documentation.

In establishing categories of significance, it has been useful to employ a relatively wide range of values. These qualitative criteria define the nature of significance for the site and its individual elements. To give the assessments a practical value, it is also sometimes appropriate to specify degrees of significance. The criteria are set out in the following section.

Major types of significance, for buildings and landscape features, are established by the statutory designations and the criteria on which they are based, as set out in the Planning Policy Guidance notes, PPG 15 and 16:

- ***special architectural or historic interest*** - for Listed Buildings<sup>1</sup>
- ***character and appearance*** - for Conservation Areas<sup>2</sup>
- ***national significance*** - for Scheduled Monuments<sup>3</sup>

These designations provide a formal framework of significance and protection, but are rather too broad to reflect alone the cultural and historical interest of a particular site. A range of more detailed and specific values is needed to assess general site significance and the importance of individual elements, and to serve as a basis for comparison, with other sites and within the site itself. These additional values may be drawn from existing sets of assessment criteria, or further developed to suit the circumstances of the site in question.

Particularly useful for assessing significance in more precise terms are the criteria employed for listed building designation. These are:

- ***architectural interest*** design; decoration; craftsmanship; building types and techniques; significant plan forms
- ***historic interest*** important aspects of the nation's social, economic, cultural and military history
- ***historical association*** with nationally important people or events
- ***group value*** where buildings comprise an important architectural or historic unity

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<sup>1</sup> PPG 15: Planning and the Historic Environment, 1994, Section 6.10

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., Section 4

<sup>3</sup> PPG 16: Archaeology and Planning, 1990, Annex 4.

A further group is represented by the Secretary of State's non-statutory criteria for scheduling monuments under the Monuments Protection Programme, including:

- *ability to characterise a period*
- *rarity of survival*
- *extent of documentation*
- *association with other monuments in a group*
- *survival of archaeological potential, above and below ground*
- *fragility/vulnerability*
- *diversity - the combination of high quality features*

These values can be extended to cover other categories of material survival, in landscape, archives and collections. For less tangible values, spiritual and social, and for those deriving from social or historical processes observable in a site, it is useful also to adopt values deriving from the Conservation Plan approach developed for Australian sites.<sup>4</sup> These additional values are:

- *representative value* - ability to demonstrate social or cultural developments
- *historical continuity* in buildings and activities
- *literary and artistic values*
- *evidence of social historical themes*, household life and work, social activities
- *contemporary communal values*, amenity, local identity and pride
- *power to communicate values and significance*
- *formal, visual and aesthetic qualities*

Combining approaches and standards in this way has, it is hoped, produced a workable set of criteria for evaluating the complexities of the site.

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<sup>4</sup> James Semple Kerr, *The Conservation Plan*, 1998

### 1.3.2 DEGREES OF SIGNIFICANCE

The criteria above have also helped to define degrees of significance, the relative importance of key elements or phases, and the judgements on individual elements of the site at Gazetteer level.

The degrees adopted are:

- **exceptional significance**

elements of the site which are of key national or international significance, as among the best examples (or the only surviving example) of an important class of monument or artefact, or outstanding representatives of important social or cultural phenomena, or of very major regional or local significance. In terms of Listed Building designation, this assessment will equate with Grade I or II\*, and would also include all Scheduled Ancient Monuments.

- **considerable significance**

elements which individually constitute good and representative examples of an important class of monument or feature, have particular significance through association (although surviving examples may be relatively common on a national scale) or are major contributors to the overall significance of the site. The degree of importance would equate with Grade II in terms of Listed Buildings.

- **moderate significance**

elements which show some cultural significance, or contribute to the character and understanding of the site, or help to provide an historical or cultural context for features of individually greater significance. This may include buildings and features not individually listed but where the presumption is towards protection and enhancement as part of the site's essential character.

- **low significance**

elements which are of individually low value in general terms, or have little or no direct significance in promoting understanding or appreciation of the site, without being actually intrusive.

- **intrusive**

items which are visually intrusive or which detract from or obscure understanding of significant elements or values of the site. Recommendations may be made on removal or other treatment.

Lower degrees should not be taken to imply that elements thus assessed can be lost or damaged without having impact on the significance of the site as a whole. Each element contributes to the overall values and character of the site and should not be sacrificed without assessing the broader implications.

### 1.3.3 ASSESSMENTS OF SIGNIFICANCE

**Assessments of significance** are set out from three perspectives:

**1) Overall significance**

a statement of what is special about Gainsborough Old Hall as a whole.

**2) Chronological assessments and key elements of significance**

an assessment of the site through time, identifying what is important about each principal stage, and why

**3) The Gazetteer**

identification of the components which make up the site and their individual significance (built structures, landscape features, buried or lost elements) setting out for each entry :

- development/documentation
- description
- significance
- condition/risks
- vulnerability/issues
- policies/recommendations

#### 1.3.4 OVERVIEW OF SIGNIFICANCE - **what is special about Gainsborough Old Hall**

Gainsborough Old Hall today has a powerful presence as a splendid example of a late medieval aristocratic house in a rather unusual urban setting. Before looking at the importance of individual elements, it is worth trying to establish what it is about the site as a whole which makes it special and constitutes its overall significance.

The Hall is remarkable for a number of reasons. The architectural and archaeological significance of the Old Hall is of exceptional importance both locally and nationally. The survival of the kitchens (despite later mostly external alterations) is a rare chance to observe arrangements for the functioning, administration and feeding of a late medieval household. The lodgings range, the east range and the small tower all retain their domestic interiors and are invaluable insights into the hall's living arrangements and private spaces. The public and social status of the house is amply demonstrated by the survival of the impressive Great Hall with its elaborate oriel window and un-trussed roof. The value of all these elements in illustrating the life of all those living in and using the hall; from the lord and his immediate family in the private range, through guests and senior servants housed in apartments in the west range, to the kitchens, buttery, pantry and servery which would have been staffed by clerks, scullions and sewerers.

Although the survival of so many medieval elements may be one of the most significant aspects of the Hall, its later development retains historic significances which are themselves considerable. The developments and additions of the later Burghs and the Hickmans continue to demonstrate how the house was used and how it functioned. Later uses such as the Queen Adelaide public house, the coarse linen factory and the theatre have left less obvious evidence but are still integral parts of the story of the Hall which retain their own significance.

The Victorian repairs and re-ordering although seemingly obtrusive by modern standards probably saved the Hall from destruction, and are an exceptionally significant example of the C19 movement, romantic and nostalgic, to revive the middle ages through 'restoring' its buildings. It thus also represents an important stage in the early development of buildings conservation. These are interesting historic features in their own right, and are an important part of the significance of the Old Hall.

Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of the hall is the fact that it survives at all. It is a large timber framed building surviving in an area with few such structures of any kind. Although the hall has undergone phases of repair and alteration these have not greatly effected the buildings general layout or design and it remains essentially an almost intact late medieval large house.

Despite the seeming integrity of the surviving buildings however it may be misleading to refer to the Old Hall as being unaltered. Our knowledge of the standing structure and more so of any lost buildings is very incomplete and there are possibilities that the surviving structures were only a part of a larger complex.

Gainsborough Old Hall represents:

- **One of the most interesting and little understood of England's great medieval houses**
- **An exceptional survival of a 15<sup>th</sup> century lordly house**
- **The power to evoke a sense of contact with people of the past**
- **A place with compelling royal and non-conformist associations**
- **A major monument accessible to the public in the care of Lincolnshire County Council**

#### 1.3.5 SIGNIFICANCE: THE FIFTEENTH-CENTURY HOUSE

- **An exceptional survival of a single period 15<sup>th</sup>-century great house**  
Gainsborough is an unusually complete late medieval high-status house of timber-framed construction.
- **Power to evoke the social life and functions of the Hall**  
The planning of the Hall interior vividly reflects, in detail, the daily life of a major medieval household.
- **The survival of both formal and domestic and service buildings**  
The survival of the kitchen and the (west) range of apartments is significant for providing the full architectural context of the aristocratic hall and chambers.
- **An evocative demonstration of medieval lordly aspirations and symbolism**  
The architectural ambition of the Hall (e.g. in the Great Hall) is a significant example of late medieval building by a powerful courtier and magnate.
- **The only major surviving element of the medieval town & port**  
With the rebuilding of the parish church and the continual change in the town, the Hall has significance in being the only surviving structure from the medieval town.
- **Good archaeological potential**  
Despite what is known of the building there remains much hidden evidence in the structure, while the grounds also have significant potential for buried remains of associated features and structures.

### 1.3.6 SIGNIFICANCE: THE POST-MEDIEVAL OLD HALL

- **The transformation of the medieval rural house into an urban mansion**  
The transformation of the Hall from a great hall on the edge of the town into an urban mansion next to the Mart yard is significant as an example of changes to a medieval house carried out by a representative of the new gentry (Hickman) succeeding old medieval nobility.
- **Extent of documentation and illustration**  
The documentation, in written records and illustrations, of the Hall is of importance for understanding its appearance and use, the changes that have taken place, and the appearance of lost features.
- **The re-use of a grand medieval building for less auspicious functions**  
The descent of the Hall from an aristocratic house to a public building through many and varied uses is an exceptionally significant example of a historical process, whereby high status buildings in towns descend the social scale
- **Evocative detail of users and inhabitants**  
The historical documentation of former owners, users and their activities, and the archaeological record of activities in the Hall are significant for evoking the variety of past uses of the Hall.
- **The association with the Pilgrim Fathers and later non-conformity**  
The association with William Hickman and the Separatist movement is of special significance in the link with that congregation and the Pilgrim Fathers who sailed to New England in 1621, a significance enhanced by the later association of the Hall with the preaching of John Wesley.

### 1.3.7 SIGNIFICANCE: 19th - CENTURY FEATURES

- **An example of a romantic Victorian re-creation of a medieval house**  
The phases of restoration of the Hall demonstrate the interest in late medieval buildings, and the efforts expended in re-creating lost elements.
- **Early public use and awareness of the building as historic monument**  
The concerns in Gainsborough for the preservation of the Hall show a significant awareness of the importance of the monument and exemplify early stages in the history of conservation.
- **Fine examples of 19th century craftsmanship**  
Some elements of the repairs to the Hall are themselves of significance as examples of 19th-century craftsmanship.
- **The use of railway technology and materials on a timber framed building**  
The use of cast-iron features and supports by the railway engineer gives



added interest and significance to the Victorian repairs.

#### 1.3.8 SIGNIFICANCE: 20th - CENTURY FEATURES AND VALUES

- **High visual quality**  
The Hall makes a significance contribution to the historic environment of Gainsborough and to the visual and aesthetic qualities of its own area of the town.
- **Community involvement and sense of place**  
The Hall has significance for the continuing involvement of the local community in the support of the historic building and in its importance to a local sense of place.
- **A site in public ownership**  
The Hall has a major regional significance as a publicly owned resource for education and understanding
- **Potential importance to cultural life and tourism in Gainsborough**  
With the anticipated regeneration of the town, the Old Hall has significant potential for making a contribution to the cultural life of Gainsborough and to creating economic benefit through the encouragement of cultural tourism



## Part Two: Conservation Policies

### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

The second part of the Plan proposes policies for protecting and making accessible the significance identified in the first part, based on the understanding of the site set out there. Some policies are for long-term development, others aim to meet more immediate concerns. The overall aim is to ensure that what is valuable about the place survives for the future as well as serving the uses and enjoyment of the present. In applying the policies it is desirable that a balance is sustained between conservation, interpretation and public expectations.

#### 2.1.1 CONSERVATION PLAN POLICY AIMS

Policies are intended to encourage care and protection of the building to high standards, as well as to provide a framework for decision making and a benchmark against which to assess future proposals. In particular policies aim to:

- preserve the significance of Gainsborough Old Hall for future generations
- define policies for the care and maintenance of the site
- encourage the further development of understanding about the place
- provide guidance in the processes of site development and management
- promote public access and appreciation

#### 2.1.2 EXISTING POLICY FRAMEWORK

A policy framework for the statutorily designated buildings and setting of Gainsborough Old Hall already exists in national and local policies and in guidance notes. The statutory policy framework is contained in:

***Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) 15: Planning and the Historic Environment;*** government guidance on the historic environment, including listed buildings, conservation areas and historic landscapes

***Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) 16: Archaeology and Planning;*** government guidance on Scheduled Ancient Monuments and archaeological remains.

These are supported and extended at local level by the **Gainsborough Conservation Area** designation (which includes the Old Hall), and by the policies of the **West Lindsey District Local Plan** (First Review, First Deposit 2003).

Relevant general policies of the Local Draft are those covering buildings and areas of architectural or historic interest (Natural and Built Environment (NBE), General Aims and Objectives) and the value of tourism (Culture, Recreation and Tourism) In para. CRT16 it is said ‘The Council is keen to promote tourism throughout West Lindsey in the interests of boosting the local economy, providing job opportunities and providing facilities for the enjoyment and satisfaction of visitors and residents alike’.

[\[Lincolnshire County Council: Development Plan and strategic plan objectives - to come\]](#)

The broad expectations of all these documents and designations is that proposals for Gainsborough Old Hall and its setting should protect or enhance the character, national importance and architectural/ historic interest of the buildings and their setting and be based on relevant key information.

### **English Heritage Responsibilities and Policies**

As a site in state ownership and under the guardianship of English Heritage, it is also desirable that English Heritage policies and objectives are implemented where appropriate, with respect to the care and protection of the site, buildings and associated collections, and the securing of public access and enjoyment. The role of English Heritage is set out in the National Heritage Act (1983), where its duties include:

- securing the preservation of ancient monuments and historic buildings situated in England,
- promoting the preservation and enhancement of the character and appearance of conservation areas in England, and
- promoting the public's enjoyment, and advancing their knowledge of, ancient monuments and historic buildings in England and their preservation

Subsidiary functions expressed in the Act may be summarised as:

- shall provide education facilities and information;
- may give advice;
- may carry out or promote research;
- may make and maintain records

English Heritage has summarised its national role in the Strategic Plan for 2001-2004: 'English Heritage protects the best of this country's unique legacy of historic buildings, landscapes and archaeological sites for the benefit of this and future generations. We are determined to ensure that England's heritage contributes widely to the social and economic health of the communities of today. The past belongs to everybody - English Heritage exists to help people, wherever they live and whatever their background, to enjoy and appreciate our rich and diverse history'.

English Heritage also has its internal policy documents, such as the Collections Management Manual and Collections Strategies, in addition to its own procedures with regard to Health and Safety, Fire Protection, etc..

## 2.2 MANAGEMENT ISSUES

### **Factors affecting significance**

Policies need to be informed by an understanding of factors which affected the significance of the site in the past, or which may do so now or in the future. This section sets out the concerns and issues in each area of management responsibility which the policies are framed to address.

Issues have been identified during the assessment of the building and its significance, and through a programme of consultation, with staff and representatives of relevant bodies, and with individual members of the public. The latter exercise involved visitors to the Old Hall being invited to submit written views and concerns over a two month period, with a sequence of sample interviews over a weekend in September 2003.

*{Note - Following approval, policy references will be attached to the following entries}*

### 2.2.1 BUILDING CONDITION, RISKS & PROTECTION

#### **Building condition**

The Condition Survey of 2003 judged the property to be in generally sound condition, but identified some areas of concern for priority repair - particularly the roof coverings and the need for regular long-term maintenance programmes. A particular problem has been the use, of necessity in the 1950s, of sherardised nails for tile-fixing, which is now resulting in rusting and the cracking of tiles. Overall an approach to repairs is required which maintains weathering capacity for an economically viable period, but which also retains visual and historic character.

#### **Visitor wear & tear within the building**

Most of the surviving floors of the Old Hall are of C18 or C19 date (both softwood boards and brick or tile floors) and both are visibly suffering from visitor footfall and lack of maintenance and repair. Stair treads are similarly becoming worn. It is important that all these are returned to a sound and safe condition, with protective measures and future monitoring of condition.

Stud and plaster infill walls are also vulnerable to wear and tear from visitors brushing against them. There is a particular concern for the painted wall panels in the cafeteria (Lower Inner Chamber), which require early protection and a possible change in room use to ensure safety of the painting..

#### **Risks of damage to furniture**

Most furniture displayed in room settings is at some degree of risk from visitor wear-and-tear, and items are damaged from time to time. Measures are in place to protect main room settings behind rope barriers, though these can be visually intrusive and are not always effective. Seat furniture throughout the house requires a standard means of deterring visitors from sitting on them.

A more serious risk to furniture is represented by the special events organised in the Hall, especially bi-annual craft fairs. These create risk of damage from crowded conditions within the rooms and from visitors placing things on surfaces, but there is also a threat involved in the regular moving of furniture from room to room to clear spaces for the events. A concentration of people in the Hall also exacerbates the general risk of damage to the fabric of the building.

#### **Bird and animal damage**

Pigeons threaten efficient rainwater run-off from the roofs and guttering, and measures are needed to deter them, and to prevent the nesting of jackdaws etc in the chimneys. Measures are generally in place to achieve this but need to be regularly checked as part of regular maintenance programmes.

One particular area of the building has suffered major pigeon infestation in the past (the

northern roof space of the Kitchen), and action is in hand to clear the space and prevent future access to pigeons. Before major protection measures are introduced, it may be advisable to check this roof space for bats, as part of a wider bat survey (*see 2.2.4: Ecological Survey*).

### **Protection of exterior, Hall and grounds**

Grounds are open to unrestricted access at all times, with no surveillance outside normal opening hours. Though intentional damage or vandalism to the building or to features of the garden are rare, the accumulation of litter overnight can be a nuisance and the use of grassed areas for e.g. ball games constitute a risk to windows and to the building generally. The creation of a lockable barrier around the site is highly undesirable, and the possibility of security floodlighting to discourage after-dark activities may be unwelcome to the surrounding properties, but it may be necessary to consider some protection or deterrence measures in the future.

## **2.2.2 REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE**

### **Maintenance regimes**

Regular maintenance programmes, with time-tabled schedules of tasks, inspections, monitoring and repairs are designed to prevent problems arising or to catch them before minor damage becomes major. In the long term they save expenditure on repairs. The carrying out of works of maintenance or repair usually in response to problems occurring, as is current practice at Gainsborough Old Hall, is not an adequate regime for a historic building, and the standards applied to the maintenance of modern LCC buildings will not be appropriate. Division of responsibility for maintenance between English Heritage and Lincs CC may need to be redefined, and proper standards and procedures drawn up with EH advice and involvement. There has been in the past a lack of long-term consistency of professional supervision for maintenance and minor repairs, and a lack of appreciation of historic buildings' needs on the part of those carrying out the maintenance work.

### **Lack of information on earlier repairs**

Though a good deal of information exists for the more recent phases of repair work (1950s - 1980s) and has been most helpfully made available in compiling the Conservation Plan, it remains in private hands or personal memory and there is no centrally based or readily accessible permanent archive of information on past building works. Earlier records of repair and adaptation may exist also in the archives of the Estate, and of the Friends of the Old Hall Association, and in County Records (Lincolnshire Archives). There has also been very little formal recording or analysis of historic building fabric associated with repair or conversion works (with the exception of the West Range in the 1980s, and this was strictly limited). As a result, understanding of the development of the significant historic buildings is very imperfect. It would be of great value in developing a basis for future building analysis and the planning of future repairs if all material or copies of it could be brought together in an historical site archive for Gainsborough Old Hall.

### **Past approaches to conservation**

Inevitably in a building which has seen campaigns of building repair and conversion going back well over 150 years, there are considerable variations in approaches and techniques employed, especially for brickwork repairs and pointing, timber repair or replacement and the treatment of smaller wooden elements such as doors, doorways, windows and panelling. In some cases these variations will be of archaeological interest as a record of changing technique, but they have led to a very variable and patchy appearance in some areas which is in conflict with the presentation of authentic historic

interiors and can be visually intrusive. In some places modern materials have been used (e.g. concrete screed flooring) which conflict with the character of historic spaces, and the return of such elements to a more consistent and historically authentic appearance may be desirable.

#### **Consistent approach to future repairs**

Under the lease agreement of 1995 between English Heritage and Lincolnshire CC, each party is responsible for different specified categories and scales of repair work. While this is sound in practical terms, there is a risk of different standards and techniques being applied to different categories of repairs, and uncertainty about responsibility for commissioning works. It is desirable that a coherent approach is adopted to every type or scale of work, that consistent advice and control are available for all categories, and that an explicit philosophy of conservation is defined and agreed by all parties.

### **2.2.3 CONTEXT & SETTING**

#### **Presentation of grounds**

The present appearance and layout of the grounds derives from the early 1950s when a scheme by Claude Phillimore was partially implemented, with subsequent tree planting and the establishment by FOHA of the raised herb garden on the south front. The overall effect is pleasant and serves as a valued amenity for residents of the area, but it lacks purpose as a setting for the historic building, and the trees, now grown up, are beginning to impede views of the Hall.

#### **Intrusive elements and overall setting**

The main intrusions in external perceptions of the Hall are partly visual (parked cars against the periphery of the site; the growth of trees concealing aspects of the Hall) and partly conceptual (in the powerful stamp of Edwardian suburb which inhibits understanding of any earlier setting for the Hall). The character of the location overall, however, has considerable aesthetic and visual qualities as recognised in its Conservation Area designation.

#### **Development control and traffic issues**

Apart from the presence of parked cars against the periphery of the site, traffic movement in the adjacent streets is not in itself intrusively heavy. Current plans for expansion and remodelling of the Guildhall, however, will not only introduce a degree of visual intrusion in the broader setting of the Hall, but will increase traffic flows along Cobden Street to the south of the Hall, producing an unwelcome deterioration in the character and quality of the immediate setting.

#### **Control over small-scale erosion of character**

Despite the Conservation Area controls on building alterations affecting the character of the environs, and the restrictive covenants on properties facing the Old Hall across the grounds, there is a constant risk of minor repairs and replacements to surrounding houses eroding the character of the setting in detail. The risk calls for vigilance in the application of the controls, and good relationships with neighbours to try and influence changes and encourage respect for the setting.

### **2.2.4 GAPS IN UNDERSTANDING**

#### **Lack of understanding of the development of Gainsborough Old Hall**

For a building of the interest and national importance of GOH, there has been little planned or professional investigation, although leading specialists have examined and commented on it and offered interpretations of its development. Only in connection with

the 1980s repairs in the West Range has any detailed recording and analysis been done, and even so insufficient time or space was allowed for full investigation. Apart from this, a series of dendrochronological dates was secured from sampling in the late 1980s, which helped to establish an outline development sequence for the C15 house. Overall considerable potential was demonstrated for an investigation of the standing structure. A research design is needed to define questions to be addressed, with a clear understanding of the need for providing time and resources to take advantage of future repair programmes; large scale replacement of roof tiles, for example, will provide invaluable opportunities for recording and sampling this important aspect of the structure.

#### **Archaeological potential: the Hall**

Of particular importance is the possibility of further evidence for the construction of the present Hall or its predecessors, surviving beneath the present building or within the grounds; the 1980s investigations demonstrated the existence of features of considerable interest beneath the Great Hall and West Range. Opportunities for further investigation will be created by works to floors or drainage works, and sufficient time should be allowed to pursue research questions and record evidence. Hidden elements of the standing structure can also be regarded as archaeological deposits in the same way as buried remains.

#### **Archaeological potential: grounds and setting**

In the grounds, little archaeological recording has taken place but the potential could be considerable. Geophysical survey may be used as a non-destructive means of revealing evidence for buried walls and other structures as well as garden features, and detail can be confirmed by selective excavation. Such information will be of value in interpretation and will also guide any future development schemes for the garden.

Beyond the grounds the adjacent housing occupies important areas of the former historic setting, especially the buildings of the Mart Yard and the possible location of the moat. Good relations with neighbours would help secure information and allow access for survey and recording.

#### **Ecological survey**

Though the Hall and its grounds are of potential value for wildlife, they are not currently protected by designations and there is little detailed information available on the ecology of the site on which to base detailed conservation policies. Habitat surveys and species listing would allow more detailed policies to be developed for protecting the wildlife value of the site, and allow an informed resolution of any conflict.

#### **Lack of an accessible archive**

Studies of the Hall are inhibited by the lack of a central resource of information on which to draw and into which the results of any investigation may be deposited. The valuable records of programmes of repair from the 1950s to 1980s have been generously made available and interpreted through discussion, but held in private hands are at risk without copies held elsewhere. Other significant records of interventions will exist in English Heritage files, but are untraceable without special search being made.

### **2.2.5 VARIETY OF EXPECTATIONS**

#### **Public and community expectations**

Users' expectations seem to be predictably diverse and depend to a degree on where they originate from and how regularly they might be able to visit or use the Hall. Visitors from further afield tend to look for high quality and well-organised interpretation, and would like to see the site well-promoted and well-visited. More local users value the educational provision and many would like to see a greater range of activities at the Hall



(music and performance events); some older visitors would value the sort of community use (banquets, wedding receptions) which they remember from the past. All categories expect good quality services - refreshments, shopping opportunities, good quality printed and audio guides, the chance to observe or be involved in activities or interactive events, good parking facilities. A considerable number want to see good provision for people with disabilities, and the maintenance of high standards in conservation of the building.

### **Educational users**

The success of the educational provision, with high booking levels for available sessions for some time ahead, suggests that expectations are largely being met and good levels of service maintained. The lack of use by schools in the immediate vicinity, however, may imply that some provision is lacking or that the Hall is too near home to provide a worthwhile excursion. It may be that expectations outside mainstream National Curriculum studies are also being to a degree downplayed; there could be opportunities still to be taken for working with other educational and special interest groups, life long learners, disadvantaged groups etc., as far as pressures on staff time to develop and provide would allow.

### **Local interest and activities**

The local amenity provided by the Gainsborough Old Hall managed area is clearly of great value to local residents. While the open access to the property seems currently not to create major additional impact on the site, some erosion may be caused by out-of-hours site access, and the problems of security or vandalism which could threaten the building and site as a whole must be kept under review.

### **Audience development and promotion**

There is a general perception that GOH is not as well known as it ought to be, locally or nationally, and that better promotion is needed to correct the situation. The site is in reality fairly well-promoted, in the EH Handbook, widespread leaflet distribution, special events leaflets and in regular and extensive local press and magazine coverage. There seems to be a view, however, that the Hall should first of all improve its quality of visit and then promote itself vigorously to wide audiences, including the national and international.

## **2.2.6 ACCESS AND PRESENTATION**

### **Access to site - signage, vehicle access & parking**

Signage to the site (brown signs) is adequate without being extensive and delivers visitors to the site without any advice on parking. Car-parking adjacent to the site is inadequate - mostly one hour - and intrusive. Alternative parking nearby is not well sign-posted. Delivery of coach parties directly to the site is intrusive and awkward, and improved set-down points further away may be preferable.

Arrival at the Hall, by whatever means, always has a degree of sudden discovery about it, though it is not easy to register which of the doors may be the entrance. The present entrance is not well signalled, and welcoming directional signage on the main and subsidiary approaches would be valuable.

### **Limited access within the building**

Most important rooms within the building are publicly accessible, though access to the upper floors is difficult for people with impaired mobility. The space taken by staff and administrative areas is modest, though it does occupy a small number of rooms which have significance in the C15 house and ought to be made accessible if their functions can be transferred elsewhere (Upper and Lower Tower Rooms, Upper West Chamber, adjacent Chamber over the Services).

### **Access for visitors with disabilities**

The Disability Access Audit by the Lincolnshire Association of People with Disabilities (LAPD, 2003) identified the main problems at GOH and recommended a range of improvements in access for visitors with disabilities, and to meet obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act, 1995. The principal difficulties for visitors with mobility impairment are the irregular and variable floor levels, lack of access to the upper floor, and lack of adequate lavatory facilities; inadequate signage was a general problem. Some improvements for all kinds of impairment were possible as short term measures, but significant improvements can only really be made as part of a wider scale of development within the Hall.

### **Visit sequence and interpretation**

The current sequence for a visit (through the Gift Shop, into the Great Hall and Kitchen and eventually into the East Range rooms and refreshment in the Lower Inner Chamber) does not seem to aid understanding and can leave visitors feeling confused. Partly because of lack of signage or a portable plan, it is possible to miss the Kitchen entirely. Even with a guidebook or audio guide, visitors can be uncertain about what they are looking at and where they should go next. To begin with the Great Hall and end with the rooms of the East Range can be an anti-climax.

### **Intrusive elements and bars to understanding**

Intrusive elements within the Hall are on the whole fairly minor - mostly modern or otherwise anachronistic features which create visual intrusion and which are referred to in Gazetteer entries: brightly coloured carpets on ramps, inappropriate lighting in the Great Hall, window blinds in the Hickman rooms etc.. The main example of intrusiveness which affects understanding of the historic building is in the Gift Shop where the style and scale of the display units is out of sympathy with the plain timber frame of the building, and extensively conceals the integrity of the C15 space and its historic fabric, especially the decorative octagonal centre post.

## **2.2.7 INTERPRETATION**

### **Preservation *versus* presentation**

Conflicts between preservation and presentation are common to all monuments, where the theoretical ideal of maximum protection has to be balanced against reasonable visitor expectations for access to common cultural property. There will always be some tension between the economic and social necessities of managing a property for maximum visitor enjoyment and understanding, and aspirations for conservation and protection.

### **Problems of presentation on a multi-period site**

Presentation of the Old Hall has naturally focussed on the C15 period of construction and household life, though the need to cover other periods represented in the building introduces possibilities for confusion and conflict - the Hickman phase, C18 mixed uses and C19 medieval re-creation. This is especially acute where, as e.g. in the Great Hall, the space carries significance for more than one of the main periods.

### **Scope of presentation**

The Old Hall has intrinsic interest and importance because of its own history of development, but is also able to represent broader themes on a local and national scale - the Wars of the Roses, medieval society, C17 gentry and religion, the story of Gainsborough etc. These also provide context and enhance understanding of the Hall itself, but the multiplicity of potential themes can confuse visitor understanding and enjoyment.

### **Relationship to other museums**

Areas of interest represented by the Old Hall relate closely to themes and topics for which other museums also have a responsibility to interpret - C15 life and society in the county at the new Lincoln City and County Museum, or life and trade in the market town at the Museum of Lincolnshire Life. There are thus dangers of duplication of effort, but also opportunities for linking interpretation between museums to the benefit of public understanding and promotion of all the museums together.

### **Presentation of interiors; authenticity and risks**

The high quality of available documentation for room uses and furnishing at GOH in the probate records of the 1490s and the 1620s allows an unusual degree of authenticity and realism in the presentation of rooms, rather than the more usual generalised attempt to re-create period. The Transformation Project was a valuable exercise in research-based presentation, though there are risks of confusion in showing and using replica material alongside old and authentic collections.

### **Interpretation of lost elements**

There are difficulties involved in interpreting important features of the Old Hall which are now lost - the screen in the Great Hall, the West Range lodgings, the presumed C15 domestic chapel, early garden features etc.. Some may be partially reconstructed (lodgings, garden features) but others cannot be without destroying significant later arrangements and character which replaced them, as in the Great Hall. In the case of the Chapel, small scale reconstruction of a substitute provision (as in the Oriel) may carry the risk of misleading visitors and is not effective.

### **Visitor access to information**

Not all visitors require maximum information presented in a uniform way, and it is valuable if interpretation can be tailored for differing levels of interest and knowledge. A degree of choice in what is explored and in what depth can help stimulate interest and encourage return visits. Access to additional information about the house, personalities and collections, through online access to background information or in conventional room files, can be a valuable part of this.

### **Methods of guiding - guidebook, audio guide, personal guide**

The range of available means to assist exploration is potentially wide, and a number have been used to good effect in the house. Much the most effective are the interpreters in costume and in character who lead the education sessions, and some more informal version of this would be valuable for general visitors too. The audio-guide is a useful substitute, and some visitors find the printed form of this a useful way to guide themselves round the house. The present guidebook tends to be used as a souvenir rather than an on-site guide, and its visual emphasis on re-enactment makes it less useful than its predecessor, which carried a better range of information, more usefully presented. Despite the range of aids available, there remains uncertainty among visitors on what there is to see and how to find it, and a simple guide leaflet with plans would be invaluable.

## **2.2.8 COLLECTIONS**

### **Value and purpose of collections**

The collections at Gainsborough Old Hall are variable in significance and value to an interpretation of the building. Some material has important historical associations with the house and its owners (the Bacon Loan Collection of portraits and the small collection of fragments of early fabric such as the louvre); others have an intrinsic significance and an important role in interpretation through supplying room furnishings (Bacon Loan Collection of furniture); the value of the social history collections is in interpreting

context for the house; and the Transformation Project material has value principally through its re-creation of C15 household life.

### **Status of Bacon Loan Collections**

The background to the presence in the Old Hall of the two loan collections, of portraits and of mostly C17 oak furniture, is not well understood, though the close association between family and house gives the collections a special significance. While most the material is of great value in interpreting the Hall and its human history, not all items can be accommodated in displays or room furnishing, and might best be returned rather than merely stored. Other items might be available in their stead. The collections seem not to be covered by a formal agreement, and this seems to be a priority before any further changes are made to the composition of the loans.

### **Social History Collections**

The material, all collected through the Old Hall by the Friends organisation from the 1950s and subsequently by the County Council's Heritage Service, is now numerous though variable in quality. Much of it will be valuable in interpreting the local context of the Hall, but all of it requires improved documentation to make it fully useful. The collection occupies significant historic spaces (*see below: Reserve Collection Storage*) and what is not required on site might best be transferred off-site to free the rooms for public access.

### **Transformation Project**

Material was commissioned and assembled during the early 1990s to support interpretation of the C15 house and household through demonstration and role play. The original intention to base the collection firmly on research and the evidence of the 1495-6 Burgh will and inventory was weakened and the collection is less valuable in consequence. However it is a good collection of high quality pieces which are becoming important and valuable in their own right and therefore merit protection rather than being regarded as expendable.

### **Reserve collection storage**

Reserve collections, mostly of social history material and furniture, are stored in rooms of considerable significance to which they thus deny public access. Two of these rooms, the Upper Western Chamber and adjacent chamber over the services, were formerly accessible. Environmental conditions are anyway inadequate for their care, and good collections management standards and ease of consultation by the public suggests they should be transferred to general Heritage Service stores as soon as these are available.

### **Conservation**

There are difficulties in maintaining collections, whether on display or in store, in adequate environmental conditions, with little control over conditions of relative humidity anywhere in the house. This and other threats to collection material (pests, pollutants) are monitored in housekeeping procedures by site staff, but more time is needed to carry out all procedures for preventative conservation effectively. There are also requirements for remedial work and repairs which housekeeping measures cannot always deal with quickly. Damaged furniture might be taken off display for repair, and the important displayed set of painted cloths needs cleaning, repair and ongoing protection as a priority.

### **Risk factors**

Displayed material, especially furniture, is at risk from visitor wear and tear unless protected, particularly during special events held within the Old Hall. The transfer of material out of rooms in advance of such events is itself a source of risk and damage. Much furniture in room settings is protected behind post and rope barriers but elsewhere

furniture in rooms and in corridors is at some risk. Seat furniture in particular seems prone to damage and a uniform system of protection is necessary.

## 2.2.9 SITE MANAGEMENT

### **Management ethos and partnerships**

Inevitably, not all those involved in the operation of the Old Hall see its importance or purposes in precisely the same light, and while they share a sense of value and concern for the historic building, they view it from within different contexts and traditions. Of the three principal stakeholders, English Heritage representing the freeholder perhaps looks principally to the protection of the historic asset and its appropriate and authentic presentation to a wide audience; the County Council is concerned to serve a mainly local constituency by meeting educational, cultural, social and to a degree economic needs, and to celebrate the Hall's contribution to the county's heritage; the Friends' organisation shares these interests, but is also concerned to retain a continuing role in development, and to celebrate the rescue of the building in which it was prime mover by ensuring continuing use for broader community functions.

These are differences of emphasis, but there is potential for conflict without discussion, agreement and a shared vision for the future and its priorities.

### **Partnerships and the availability of advice**

Potential conflicts will be most readily resolved through good and regular working relationships between the principal partners for the site (Lincs CC, EH, FOHA) with opportunities for seeking specialist advice from statutory or voluntary bodies. Of particular value in the future development and management of the site will be regular relationships and consultation with the National Trust, West Lindsey District Council, Gainsborough PC, County Archaeologist, Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust etc...

### **Conflicts in site management**

On a practical level the necessary legal and operational provisions, for health and safety, fire protection, access for visitors with disabilities, lighting requirements etc. may conflict with the expectation of minimal intervention in historic fabric and respect for the integrity of historic spaces.

### **Administrative requirements: staff and office accommodation**

Current staff accommodation is inadequate in terms of space and is somewhat scattered, though mostly housed in the East Range and the Tower. The desire to open as many significant rooms of the Hall to public access as possible creates a conflict with the aspiration for adequate office space within the building. A solution might be to look outside, to space in a nearby property, though the budgetary consequences would not be welcome when resources will be needed to effect improvements in care and provision. Extra space can be created within the Hall by reconstructing the Second Floor of the West Range, though administrative uses here perpetuate a problem of inaccessibility and isolation.

### **Fire protection, physical security and disaster planning**

There have been concerns about fire safety at Gainsborough Old Hall, principally to do with the effectiveness of fire escape provision and the rating of fire partitions and doors, which need to be taken up with fire officer advice, and comprehensive improvements made where necessary. To secure good solutions which reflect the buildings importance, it would be valuable also to have the advice of English Heritage specialists if this can be made available.

A major issue which is straightforward of solution is the presence of combustible stored material in roof spaces (East Range) and basements (below the services in the Great Hall range). The fire detection system does not cover all areas and might be extended.

### **Health and safety issues**

Despite the inherent difficulties of working within an ancient structure, management of the site to the requisite standards of health and safety is assessed as generally excellent (Health and Safety Audit of GOH, August 2001) as regards the control of risks for staff and contractors working on site and the maintenance of safe systems for electrical and fire risks etc. The principal risks for users of the building would seem to come from uneven floors and staircases, variable floor levels and the presence of ramps. Guard or warning measures can be intrusive, but this must be weighed against safe operating; careful consideration needs to be given to making the building safe in a way which does not impact unacceptably on historic spaces and their character.

### **Good management practice**

Desirable outcomes for the long-term protection and public enjoyment of the historic site will be delivered by effective site management, based on understanding and empathy. Good practice must be seen through and constantly promoted, with provision for monitoring and review, so that the process remains effective into the future. The needs for security against the risks of criminal activity or fire, along with other considerations of Health and Safety, are additional to those of maintaining high conservation standards and excellent provision of services for all visitors.

### **Available resources**

Many high quality projects at Gainsborough Old Hall in the past have been achieved with low budgets and considerable imagination, and a number of further improvements can probably be realised at relatively modest cost through changes in management practice or working in partnership with others.

Other worthwhile undertakings, such as the Transformation Project, have required the allocation of sizeable sums, and such sums are rarely available on the regular yearly basis needed to allow steady improvement of standards across all areas of provision. The future availability of increased revenue funding and the possibility of securing capital sums will determine the speed at which any improvements can be implemented, as has been the case in the past. Developments and improvements can, however, normally be phased, and funding support secured from outside agencies for worthwhile projects. The key will be the exercise of effective and imaginative management to make the most of all resources. The first call on available finance will be to protect the basic asset of the Hall and to maintain good quality standards in public provision until further funding can be secured to push forward some of the hoped for schemes of care and improvement.

## 2.3 POLICIES FOR THE CONSERVATION OF GAINSBOROUGH OLD HALL

### 2.3.1 POLICY OBJECTIVES

This part of the Plan sets out policies for protecting the significance of Gainsborough Old Hall, and realising its potential for public access, enjoyment and understanding. After statements of general principle (Section A), policies are set out in seven main areas of responsibility and activity (Sections B - H).

- A Principles and approaches*
- B Conservation, repair and maintenance*
- C Protection of fabric and setting*
- D Information, recording and research*
- E Access and visitor services*
- F Presenting and interpreting the site*
- G Collections management*
- H Site management*

Within each of these sections, individual policies are proposed, with recommendations on ways to implement them and achieve their policy objectives. Most of them are of general application, relating to the site as a whole or its place in the town and region. More detailed recommendations which relate to individual elements of the site are contained in Gazetteer entries in Part Three of the Plan. Where relevant these are cross-referenced to the principal policies set out here.

### Definitions

Words used in the Plan have meanings as defined by the Burra Charter 1988:<sup>5</sup>

*Conservation* means all the processes of looking after a place so as to retain its significance. It includes maintenance, preservation, restoration, reconstruction, and adaptation, and will often be a combination of processes.

*Maintenance* means the continuous protective care of the fabric, contents and setting of a place.

*Preservation* means maintaining the fabric of a place in its existing state, and retarding deterioration.

*Restoration* means returning existing fabric to a known earlier state by removing accretions or re-assembling existing components, without introducing new material.

*Reconstruction* means returning a feature as nearly as possible to a known earlier state, with the introduction of additional materials, new or old, into the fabric.

*Adaptation* means modifying a place to proposed appropriate uses.

*Protection* is not defined by the Burra Charter. The meaning as used in the Plan is the guarding of significant fabric or values against actual or potential damage, which might arise from planned activity or accidental events, or from the normal processes of decay.

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<sup>5</sup> *The Australia ICOMOS Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance, 1988*

## The Policies

### **A Principles & approaches**

***POLICY A1: To place the conservation of Gainsborough Old Hall at the heart of planning for future uses and the day to day management of the building.***

***POLICY A2: To secure the repair of the historic asset and provide for its future maintenance to high standards of conservation care.***

***POLICY A3: To promote public enjoyment and understanding of the Old Hall, and extend access as far as is practicable.***

***POLICY A4: In securing these policies, to manage the site so as to make best use of financial and other resources.***



## **B Policies for conservation, repair and maintenance**

### ***POLICY B1: To establish regular, effective and funded programmes for buildings maintenance and repair, where necessary revising existing arrangements***

The key to successful buildings conservation is the regular cycle of maintenance and inspection which prevents the development of crises from quite minor problems. The present maintenance arrangements for Gainsborough Old Hall include the building within the general stock of Lincolnshire CC properties and takes little account of its special vulnerabilities or significance as a historic structure. Maintenance or repair tasks tend to be done in response to problems occurring, rather than trying to avoid the problem in the first place.

It is essential that the status and significance of the historic building are recognised in the regularity and standard of specified regimes of maintenance and inspection.

*Policy B1.1: The 2003 Condition Survey commissioned by English Heritage should be completed to include roofs, guttering and other high level features omitted from the original report.*

*Policy B1.2: On the basis of the Survey, a schedule of maintenance tasks should be drawn up and agreed with English Heritage, specifying a timetable for performance and an agreed set of standards and techniques. A contract for the specified work should be let for a defined period to a contractor with experience of work on historic buildings.*

*Policy B1.3: The schedule should set out arrangements for regular monitoring, with a full quinquennial inspection to review effectiveness and make adjustments.*

*Policy B1.4: Separate from regular maintenance, responsibility for identifying the need for and commissioning works of repair to the building may need to be clarified between EH and LCC to ensure adequate specifying and timely performance.*

*Policy B1.5 As major repairs to areas of the building are carried out, their monitoring and maintenance should be included in the regular schedules*

***POLICY B2: To ensure that all works to the Old Hall, whether new work or repair, are informed by a clear understanding of the site, are preceded by appropriate investigation of the historic fabric and are fully recorded.***

Although Gainsborough Old Hall has been subject to major programmes of repair for more than 150 years, there is a great shortage of detailed records for large parts of the house and a lack of understanding of its development. Planned research and survey (as proposed in Policy D1) will help redress the situation; it is also vital that future works of repair are preceded by full recording and analysis so that the affected fabric is fully understood and that works can be designed to minimise or eliminate impact.

*Policy B2.1 All works of maintenance, repair or alteration affecting historic fabric, however minor, should be preceded and accompanied by detailed record and analysis in accordance with good archaeological practice and statutory legislation. This should not merely gather information but should be used to inform the detail of works proposed.*

*Policy B2.2 Where significant fabric is unavoidably to be removed from an original location, it should be carefully recorded in situ and if practicable retained within collections as part of the Site Archive (Policy D2). No element of the building should be destroyed unrecorded.*

*Policy B2.3 Explicit records should be made of any intervention in the historic fabric of the site (above and below ground) by written, drawn and photographic means, with summaries and conclusions incorporated in the Site Archive.*

*Policy B2.4 The interpretation strategy for GOH (proposed in Policy F1) should include provision for explaining building and conservation works in progress, encouraging public interest and support.*

***POLICY B3: To ensure that all works are carried out to high standards of historic building conservation and are based on the best available professional advice and quality of workmanship***

Some future works at GOH will aim to repair the effects of progressive decay and put the building in good heart for the future. Others works may adapt buildings or areas to new uses. It is important that these separate processes are distinguished in developing specifications and that both are based on sound principles of building conservation. It is also important that minor pieces of maintenance or repair observe the same high standards as major conservation projects, and are fully recorded.

*Policy B3.1: All works of conservation or repair should be based on the best specialist advice and quality of workmanship, with continuity of professional supervision.*

*Policy B3.2: Systems should be set up to control the need for and quality of workmanship for minor repairs, ensuring that no risk is involved to historic fabric through sporadic small-scale repairs.*

*Policy B3.3 Where decayed or defective fabric is to be removed, replacement should be as far as practicable be in the same material as that removed. New materials are to be preferred to re-use of old, with all replacements recorded and date-marked.*

*Policy B3.4 Historically accurate techniques of working should where practicable be followed for repairs and maintenance.*

*Policy B3.5: Works, particularly of alteration, should as far as practicable be reversible.*

## **C Policies for protection of fabric and setting**

### ***POLICY C1: Risks of damage to the historic fabric and contents of the Old Hall, from normal public access and from arrangements for special events, should be minimised***

Day to day risks come through cumulative wear-and-tear from visitor access to the site. Evidence for damage needs to be monitored and risks reduced by changes in management practice or by physical protection measures. A particular problem relates to floors, with areas of abraded and split softwood boarding and loose or defective brick and tile flooring. Following repair and rehabilitation, floors may need protecting by the use of druggets or other floor coverings. Some areas of walling are also vulnerable to damage.

Displayed furniture is at risk, from abrasion or handling. The danger of damage from special events held within the Hall are a particular concern, from overcrowding and possible misuse at busy times, and from the frequent moving of furniture to prepare rooms for use. While the advantages of attracting large gatherings to enjoyment of the Hall are clear, the resultant risk or reality of cumulative damage to significant historic material cannot be justified. Thought needs to be given to maintaining popularity and high levels of use while revising the nature of events so as to minimise risk. The siting of eg. events marquees within the grounds may also constitute a threat, to buried archaeology.

*Policy C1.1: After repairs to damaged floor surfaces (boarded and brick/tile ) future wear and tear may be minimised by use of floor coverings on heavily used sections, with monitoring to check on condition.*

*Policy C1.2: Vulnerable wall surfaces should be protected from risks of abrasion or other damage. In particular the painted wall decoration in the Lower Inner Chamber should be given physical protection as a matter of priority, with consideration to securing long-term safety by a change in room use.*

*Policy C1.3: The special events programme should be reviewed, changing emphasis away from potentially damaging activities towards more appropriate types of seasonal event, able to sustain high levels of use with much reduced risks to building and contents.*

*Policy C1.4: An implications study for buried features, drawn up as part of the recommended geophysical surveys of the grounds, should identify archaeologically vulnerable areas where all ground disturbance, from special events or from other activities, is to be avoided.*

***POLICY C2: To ensure that the historic fabric and contents of the Old Hall are maintained in acceptable conditions of environment and security***

Environmental conditions within GOH can be very variable, with background heating only in some areas providing a degree of control on relative humidity. Variability of RH% outside acceptable limits is likely to be affecting displayed and stored collections, though is not likely to be a serious risk for the timber structural elements of the building. Further risk to collection material is caused by excessive light levels (from daylight and artificial lighting) and exposure to pests or pollutants. Monitoring of some risks is already in place to provide information on which to base protection measures and procedures for housekeeping.

- Policy C2.1 Specialist advice should be taken on strategies for dealing with variable levels of relative humidity and ensuring that all areas housing collection material are maintained to safe standards. Solutions may be partly provided by the extension of background heating to new areas of the building.*
- Policy C2.2 A specialist lighting and light protection strategy should be commissioned for GOH to ensure a consistency and adequacy of lighting to acceptable levels throughout the building (see also Policy F3.7).*
- Policy C2.3 Re-housing in better conditions of collection material from rooms in the tower and over the service areas should be pursued, allowing public access to the spaces freed and less stringent RH requirements in those areas.*
- Policy C2.4 Current housekeeping regimes may need to be strengthened to allow for monitoring of environmental and physical conditions of furniture etc, and more time for remedial action.*

***POLICY C3: To observe effective regimes for fire and security for the site, buildings and collections, and maintain counter-disaster systems***

The Staff Security Manual for GOH sets out a regular system of rules and recommendations for protection of the building, contents, staff and visitors. Planning for new developments will provide an opportunity for a thorough review of fire and security systems and counter-disaster planning, with specialist advice, but in the interim there are some areas in which provision may be improved.

- Policy C3.1 To ensure that all fire officer concerns are currently being met, fresh advice should be sought and procedures and manuals revised to reflect any changes suggested. Any further physical protection measures proposed should be considered with the review of other changes recommended in this section.*
- Policy C3.2 In order to minimise risk, all spaces containing stored combustible materials (roof spaces, basements, etc) should be cleared as a matter of priority.*
- Policy C3.3 The protection rating of fire-partitions and doors should be re-assessed and if necessary upgraded or preferably replaced.*
- Policy C3.4 To improve response in the event of fire, regular training and practise should be provided in fire drills and the use of portable extinguishers.*
- Policy C3.5 Hose reels in the East Range corridors should be removed if no longer part of regular response arrangements.*
- Policy C3.6 The practicality of introducing additional fire compartmentation into areas of the house should be pursued. Fire compartment walls in the roof should be assessed and if necessary improved.*
- Policy C3.7 The existing ban on hot work should continue to be rigidly applied.*
- Policy C3.8 Levels of warding in public rooms should be kept under regular review and if possible extended, in order to safeguard collections on display and help secure public safety*
- Policy C3.9 Procedures should be reviewed for controlling access to the building during the open period and at opening up and closing down times, with proper surveillance of all entrances and exits.*
- Policy C3.10 Specialist advice on all fire and security issues should be a major part of the re-planning of interpretation, access and space uses as proposed in Policies F1 and F2.*

***POLICY C4: The setting of the Hall should be protected and where appropriate enhanced, removing intrusive elements and guarding against inappropriate future development***

The early character of the area around the Old Hall has been lost with the development of housing in the early C20 and the sequence of changes to the use and layout of the grounds. The present setting of Edwardian suburbia provides an unusual context for the C15 Hall with an enjoyable element of surprise and discovery, but it does little to assist understanding of the former topography. However, the area has a spacious, dignified and coherent character of its own, recognised in the Conservation Area designation, which it is important to retain. The open views between Hall and Church are particularly valuable. The 1938 Covenant set up by Sir Hickman Beckett Bacon under the aegis of the National Trust recognises the importance of protecting the immediate setting of the Hall, supported by more detailed restrictions for individual properties in the adjacent streets, and by the general policies of the Gainsborough Conservation Area. In addition to these legal and statutory protections, however, it is desirable to enlist the active support of the Local Planning Authority and of the site's immediate neighbours in protecting the detailed character of the setting.

The adjacent car parking is useful for visitor access to the Hall (though inadequate) but as currently set out is highly intrusive in the setting.

*Policy C4.1: Active contact should be maintained with West Lindsey DC over application of the Conservation Area controls, and over broader planning issues as they affect the wider setting of the Hall, including traffic issues.*

*Policy C4.2: To help support Conservation Area restrictions on alterations to buildings, boundaries etc as they affect the immediate setting, neighbours of adjacent properties might be approached to establish good relations and enlist support for the Hall and its interest in protecting the character of the setting.*

*Policy C4.3: Regular discussions with the Planning and Highway authorities should be held to investigate the re-organisation of car-parking areas so as to avoid intrusive parking along the roadside immediately adjacent to the site itself. These should be part of the wider exploration of adequate parking nearby for visitors' cars and provision for coaches.*

*Policy C4.4 With unrestricted site access, the potential problem from vandalism will need to be monitored. Specialist advice should be taken on deterrence and security measures for the building and it may be necessary in reviewing the uses and layout of the gardens to introduce measures of protection, discouragement or management.*

***POLICY C5: The ecological value of Gainsborough Old Hall and its grounds should be understood and protected.***

The site has no designations for its natural history value, but as a pleasant green space north of the town centre it has considerable amenity value and may provide valuable habitat for a number of plant and animal species, especially for birds. It would be well to be aware of these and sensitive to their protection under any schemes for remodelling the grounds. The building itself is clearly a potential habitat for pigeons and rooks, and measures are needed to control these to minimise potential damage to the building, but it may also provide a habitat for bats, which have a particular statutory protection. Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 2000 there is a requirement to demonstrate that any projected works will not cause disturbance to roosts. A bat survey is needed to check on their possible presence in the building.

*Policy C5.1: A habitat survey should be undertaken to establish species present on site and indicate the need for any measures of protection.*

*Policy C5.2: Pigeons may be controlled or deterred within the guidelines of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 2000. Nesting of jackdaws within e.g. chimneys should be prevented by maintenance checks on the grilles installed.*

*Policy C5.3: A bat survey of the roof spaces etc should be carried out to clarify any responsibilities for their protection during projected building repair works.*



## **D Policies for information, recording and research**

### ***POLICY D1: Future research should be promoted, with a planned agenda for investigations and an ability to respond to opportunities as they arise***

Research and investigation of the Old Hall has been limited to matters of immediate concern related to particular repair episodes, and there is still potential for further studies to elucidate remaining uncertainties. It is important to point the way with an indication of known problems and unanswered questions, even if there seems to be little opportunity to obtain answers quickly. Unexpected opportunities will always arise where it will be useful to have already identified significant research questions in advance, while it is equally certain that important material may always be discovered unexpectedly.

*Policy D1.1: The results of past historical research, and both architectural and archaeological investigations should be assimilated and published. This would involve a detailed examination of the historical and archive sources, such as record of the Friend's building works.*

*Policy D1.2: An agenda for continuing research should be formulated as a framework for future investigation (especially archaeological, above and below ground), and this should especially bear in mind the potential for making unexpected discoveries.*

*Policy D1.3: Full advantage should be taken of opportunities presented by inspections and building works to answer research questions and record detail of fabric not normally accessible, and to incorporate information in the site archive.*

*Policy D1.4: Further programmes should be developed for investigation, sampling and analysis, linked to the requirements of conservation and interpretation. These might include dendrochronology, mortar/plaster analyses, and the possibility of geophysical (resistivity or radar) survey of the grounds to enhance existing understanding of the historic garden areas and other buried features.*

*Policy D1.5: Consideration should be given to the possibility of further small area excavations to locate and identify lost parts of the building – perhaps conducted as public displays of archaeological techniques and to improve interpretation of the site.*

***POLICY D2: A formal archive or information base relating to Gainsborough Old Hall should be created and maintained, distinct from working files and records of current transactions, to include a record of all interventions in the site***

The Registry files of English Heritage are public records subject to weeding and destruction followed by deposit at the PRO Kew (or the NMR Swindon). They are therefore unsuitable as places for the permanent deposit of historical information with a recurrent need for access and interrogation (and conversely their weeding should be conducted with some understanding of their significance). Similar considerations would apply to Lincolnshire County Council's records, while the Friends' records are privately held.

For the purposes of curation there is need for an accessible repository of historical information, with secondary copies of records and archives. It would be distinct from the formal archives of conservation and archaeological records, but would include the log or register of interventions.

*Policy D2.1: An information base for Gainsborough Old Hall should be established, as the front end of the site archive, to form a basic tool for management, research and site interpretation.*

*Policy D2.2: The scope of the information base would include copies of archival and visual material about changes to parts of the property. This would include summaries of past interventions and discoveries; copies of current records or photographs; research questions relevant to the Hall and grounds, with a comprehensive index and bibliography of all source material, published and unpublished, as brought together in the Gazetteer of the present Plan.*

*Policy D2.3: A formal register of interventions should be kept with the information base, recording the occasion and scope of work, and summarising any discoveries, especially for minor events not subject to a recording programme.*

*Policy D2.4: The information base, itself likely to remain a paper record, could selectively be copied or scanned to provide public access to its information.*

*Policy D2.5: The site archive will consist of primary materials including the conservation records (see Policy B2.3) and archaeological archives. Records should be curated in a secure site archive maintained under appropriate conditions, and perhaps to be housed in a new visitor facility.*

*Policy D2.6: Site records, including archaeological records, should be recovered from working or registry files and secured or copied from other sources) for incorporation in the archive.*

*Policy D2.7: A pro-active attitude should be adopted to the preservation of Registry files which may contain relevant material, with procedures for assessing and where necessary preserving significant contents*

## **E Policies for access and visitor services**

### ***POLICY E.1: Enjoyment and understanding of Gainsborough Old Hall should be made accessible to all, as far as is practical within site constraints***

The full range of visitor needs at Gainsborough Old Hall, as at all heritage sites, is potentially very wide, and it will require a broad variety of provision if maximum access is to be a genuine objective. Intellectual access across the spectrum of visitors (specialist, general visitor, socially or educationally disadvantaged), may be as difficult to achieve as full physical or sensory access, and both will be limited by the nature of the site itself, the need to protect historic fabric and the available resources. The objective should be that no significant group of visitors is prevented from enjoyment of the site without a thorough attempt being made to meet legitimate needs or to create alternative means of provision. Maximum access for the maximum number of people should be the objective, and this will carry through into interpretation, publication and education policies, and into site management and improvement. This is a key requirement of the Disability Discrimination Act, 1995.

The Access Audit of February 2003 by the Lincolnshire Association of People with Disabilities (LAPD) advised on provision for visitors with disabilities within the meaning of the Act. It acknowledged the excellent attitude of staff, but drew attention to the factors inhibiting physical access: the uneven and variable floor levels of the Ground Floor, inaccessibility of the First Floor, and the lack of adequate lavatory facilities, together with general problems of signage. The audit also made more detailed recommendations on improvements to GOH as currently laid out.

These recommendations have been the basis for consideration by the GOH Access Group, which has produced a prioritised list of Access Improvements. The policies which follow attempt to provide some general guidance on accommodating improvements within the historic building, and support in general the recommendations made by the Group. They also respond to proposals on the provision of lifts and lavatories.

*Policy E1.1: Improvement of access should inform a complete re-planning of visitor facilities, with interpretative aids for visitors with disabilities*

*Policy E1.2: A Disability Access Plan should be drawn up for the site, reflecting the Access Audit recommendations and the National Disabilities Council Code of Practice, to ensure that obligations under the Act can be met by October 2004*

*Policy E1.3 Any new introduction of e.g. lift or lavatory provision to the historic building is only acceptable in locations which have minimal impact on historic fabric or the integrity of historic spaces, or are in locations already significantly degraded.*

*Policy E1.4 In line with this, a location for a lift in the East Range might, with English Heritage advice, be considered at the south end of the corridors, where a series of alterations and loss of early fabric has already occurred and where little visual impact would be caused.*

*Policy E1.5 In the West Range, a lift position within the northern chamber (?or its C19 rebuilt wardrobe stack) at each level is worth examination, but would depend on detailed examination, assessment of impact and English Heritage advice.*

- Policy E1.6      The adaptation of the basement lavatories is not able to create adequate facilities for mobility impaired visitors. A location at Ground Level should be sought and, subject to English Heritage advice, may be proposed within the present lobby space to the modern Kitchen (former Parlour, (Gazetteer 3.04) as an area already significantly degraded.*
- Policy E1.7      Consideration might be given to improving public access to the Hall by use of the Parnell Street door in the East Range. Difference in level might be overcome sensitively by a ramp laid close along the face of the building (north or south of the door), with the flower border brought forward to provide a degree of concealment.*
- Policy E1.8      In planning future development, the needs of visitors with sensory (sight and hearing) as well as mobility impairment will need to play an important part in the provision of interpretation, as recommended in the Access Audit, and in access arrangements to all areas of the building. Where actual access to upper areas of the house is not possible, virtual access and visualisations may have to be considered.*
- Policy E1.9      Forward plans should include improved interpretation for adults and children with learning disabilities, through supplemental interpretation and the development of educational programmes. Full advantage should be taken of the contribution which education can make in addressing the needs of socially or educationally disadvantaged groups.*

***POLICY E2: Public access and enjoyment should be extended to all significant areas of the historic building, where practicable by reconstructing lost features***

A small number of significant spaces in the historic building are currently inaccessible to the public (Upper West Chamber, Chamber over the Servedy, Upper and Lower Tower Rooms), because of administrative and storage uses. There is a strong case for stored collection material to be moved off site, where it can be housed in improved conditions with better public access, in order to bring these spaces into public use and enhance understanding and enjoyment of the Hall.

- Policy E2.1: When conditions allow, all reserve collection material not required on site might be relocated off-site to join other Heritage Services reserve collections.*
- Policy E2.2: Staff uses of the Lower Tower Room might be relocated as part of the re-ordering of spaces recommended in Policy F2.*
- Policy E2.3: Spaces thus freed should be included in the range of rooms accessible to the public, their precise uses defined by the overall interpretative plan recommended in Policy F1 and as determined by research.*
- Policy E2.4: The cellar beneath the Buttery (Gazetteer 3.07) should be cleared of stored material and made occasionally accessible to visitors as part of guided tours.*
- Policy E2.5: Consideration should be given to reconstructing (at least in part) the First and Second Floor areas of the West Range, with replacement of flooring and partitions to demonstrate the original function of the lodgings (with at least one complete lodging suite), and to provide more usable spaces.*

***POLICY E3: To manage access and site operations for minimum impact on the site, by the sensitive location of visitor services and administrative areas***

The current disposition of visitor services and of educational and administrative uses is somewhat scattered within the building. In some cases, uses conceal valuable detail and inhibit understanding (as in the Gift Shop), prevent access to an important room (Lower Tower Room) or produce conflicting or intrusive juxtapositions (Cafeteria and Schools/Meetings Room). In addition there is a concern that the wide separation of Gift Shop (East Range) and Cafeteria (West Range) creates isolation and risk to staff and prevents efficient use of staff time.

Recommendations set out some guidance on the future location and relationship of spaces to minimise these difficulties. They are adopted in developing the options for re-ordering room uses in Policy F2.

- Policy E3.1      Consideration should be given, when circumstances allow, to discontinuing use of the West Range Ground Floor as Museum Gift Shop in favour of a use which better respects the integrity and detail of the historic space.*
- Policy E3.2      Gift Shop and Cafeteria might be brought together to allow a more flexible, efficient and secure operation.*
- Policy E3.3      Cafeteria and Schools/meetings Room should be separated to prevent sound overspill between the two.*
- Policy E3.4      Both cafeteria and Gift Shop should be accessible from outside, independent of a general visit, in order to maximise use.*
- Policy E3.5      Administrative uses should be withdrawn from significant spaces in order to facilitate public access (e.g. Lower Tower Room).*
- Policy E3.6      For security reasons, staff opening up and closing down routes should reflect the location of control panels for fire and intruder alarms and main lighting switch panels.*

***POLICY E4: To consider the promotion of Gainsborough Old Hall for a broad range of appropriate community and cultural activities***

Community expectations expressed during the consultation period identified a range of functions not currently provided, though some had been in the past. These included civil weddings and wedding receptions, banquets, corporate hospitality, and performance events: music, speech and drama. Some general observation and guidance may be offered.

Consideration of community use should acknowledge that since the mid-C18, Gainsborough Old Hall has had a strong tradition of public and community use (Wesley's preaching, the C19 theatre, the 1850s Assembly Room, the 1940s rescue of the Hall for community purposes) and that this is a significant element in its historic character. To set against this is the need to respect other aspects of historic significance and integrity, to avoid the confusion of public understanding of the building and to minimise risks to historic fabric or contents through inappropriate uses.

*Policy E4.1: The use of the Great Hall for performance events by local groups or others should be further considered. Drama, speech and musical events could make good community use of the building outside normal opening hours and reflect the traditional use of the hall as theatre and public meeting place. Heating (whether fixed or portable) would be needed and all arrangements would need to fall on the group organisers rather than the staff of the Hall.*

*Policy E4.2: Use of the School Room/Lecture Room (wherever situated) for appropriate external club meetings or educational events might be encouraged, as well as its continuing use by FOHA for lecture series and other activities.*

*Policy E4.3: Costs of staff administration and security for use of Great Hall or School Room would need to be covered for all users, with external users paying a realistic hire fee in line with local charges for such use.*

*Policy E4.4: In considering the scope and benefits of receptions at GOH (whether banquets, corporate hospitality or eg civil weddings and/or wedding receptions) the vulnerability to damage of all areas of the house should be borne in mind, not only those to the room or area most directly involved.*

The potential for damage, loss or erosion to historic fabric and contents would need to be very carefully considered, with a risk assessment for all areas of the house likely to be affected. These factors are relevant:

- Any such event held during normal opening hours would deny enjoyment of parts of the Hall to the general visitor.
- The probable frequency of use by Gainsborough residents seems hardly to justify the setting up of the necessary infrastructure.
- To broaden and encourage use would require a separate administrative system and could conflict with management and presentation of the Hall for general visitors or educational groups.

## **F Policies for presenting and interpreting the site**

### ***POLICY F1: To develop presentation of the Old Hall within a clear and coherent interpretation plan which encourages full visitor enjoyment and understanding***

Current interpretation at Gainsborough Old Hall includes a range of topics of interest, some based on an exploration of the building supported by furnished period rooms and occasional re-enactment, some based on more formal graphic interpretation, and with some areas used for conventional, cased ‘museum’ displays of social history and other material.

Such a range of offerings without structure or coherent plan, however, can lead to visitor confusion and uncertainty, and the loss of opportunity for fuller enjoyment and understanding. What is required is a comprehensive scheme of interpretation which identifies the topics to which the site gives rise and matches them to spaces, interpretative techniques, and available collection material. Interpretation should aim to facilitate understanding through two routes: exploration of the building and an appreciation of the context of people and activity which created it. The main themes and topics for interpretation might be:

#### **The story of the house**

Builders of the Hall; the Burgh family ( <i>central topic</i> )	C15-C16
Jacobean improvements; the Hickman family	C16-C17
Decline & division; mixed uses, theatre and tenements	C18-C19
Revival & repair; the creation of public uses	C19-C20

#### **Related topics**

Religion and the Old Hall:

Burghs and medieval worship  
Hickman Protestantism & the Pilgrim Fathers  
John Wesley and Methodism

The Hall in the town: Gainsborough people, trade, the river and industry

Building the Hall: construction; materials; skills and techniques; modern conservation

#### **Tour of the Building - three main periods**

C15	the Burgh Household ( <i>central topic</i> )	Tower rooms, Solar, Great Hall, Services, Upper West Chamber, Kitchen, W Lodgings
C17	Hickman Family	Panelled Room, Bedchamber
C19	Victorian Public Uses	Ballroom (Upper Gt. Chamber) and Banqueting Chamber (Schoolroom)

Each of these sets of topics will lend itself to interpretation by different means.

*Policy F1.1: A clear set of topics should be developed which reflects the principal areas of significance and interest relating to the Old Hall*

*Policy F1.2: Topics should be matched to means of interpretation. An effective approach would include conventional graphic and object displays to introduce and set out a topic coherently, linked with exploration of*



*relevant areas of the house presented as furnished room settings*

- Policy F1.3: Methods of interpretation in both areas might be varied, to stimulate interest and suit differing levels of knowledge. Techniques for interpreting room uses and activities might include printed or audio guide, interpretative panels within rooms, accessible room notes, personal guides (potentially in costume or character) and full scale re-enactment for larger spaces such as the Great Hall and Kitchen.*
- Policy F1.4: Room settings should be based securely on research and make full use of the exceptionally good documentation for the two principal periods, the Burgh will and inventory of 1495-6 and the 1625 Hickman inventory. This approach will continue to make best use of the C17 Bacon loan collection and the Transformation Project reproduction material, though both will need reviewing.*
- Policy F1.5: The portrait collection might be best used to illustrate the story of the house and its people - builders, residents, family connections - rather than as a formal hang. Information on individual portraits would still be available in printed guides or room notes.*
- Policy F1.6: Access to additional information about collection material should be encouraged, with the possibility of online access to information on individual items and portraits or their broader background.*
- Policy F1.7: The Guidebook which will probably be used as a souvenir for later browsing rather than an on-site guide, should be revised to set out the main themes in an informative way; the present guide gives too much weight to modern re-enactment at the expense of other, particularly buildings-related topics.*
- Policy F1.8: Information and research about GOH should be published and shared with a wider public as a means of promoting interest in the Old Hall. Production should be to a uniform high standard with other print material, and will need to come within a single production process.*
- Policy F1.9 The current principle of temporary exhibitions should be maintained, as a means of exploring a range of topics connected with the house and with the history and people of Gainsborough. Such a programme will maintain variety, encourage return visits and underline the Old Hall's role in the cultural life of the local community.*

***POLICY F2: To consider a re-ordering of room uses and circulation to make best use of the building for interpretation and visitor services***

Current patterns of visitor circulation within GOH are unfocussed and confusing and visitor services are scattered throughout the building. Re-ordering of room uses and sequences would make for a more coherent visit which reflects the main topics of interest, while still allowing a good degree of visitor choice. Detailed consideration of spatial needs and relationships is required to produce a fully workable plan, but the following is offered in summary as one possible option for further discussion. It will leave some problems unresolved, but appears to meet a number of the requirements set out in Policy E4 as well as criteria for access and protection of significance.

1	Main entrance	Parnell Street door in East Range
2	Entrance control, orientation, introduction to themes and topics	Lower Inner Chamber Lower Tower Chamber
3	Gift Shop; cafeteria	Schools Room
4	Start of tour (Hickman topic)	Lower Corridor, to Panelled Room and via stair or ?lift to Bedchamber
5	Main interpretative exhibition on history of house; the Victorian Public Hall; Temporary exhibition space	Upper Great Chamber and Louvre Room, united to re-create Ballroom
6	<i>Central topic:</i> the Burghs and C15 household life  'The medieval experience'	Tower Middle & Upper Chambers; Roof Upper Corridor to Upper Stair Gallery, Solar (view of Hall) Stair down to Great Hall, Services, Upper West Chamber; Kitchen, reconstructed Lodging in West Range, First Floor
7	Schools/meetings/ lecture room (separate access from outside)	Ground Floor of West Range
8	Staff & administrative areas	West Range, 2nd Floor (partially reconstructed) East Range, 2nd Floor (as at present)

Use of the West Range for Schools Room and Lecture/Meetings Room, with out-of-hours independent access, requires lavatory provision, which might be accommodated in the Northernmost Chamber at 1st Floor level (present store), together with simple refreshment arrangements. Access to Second Floor by lift (for access to possible

reconstructed Lodging and, via existing door, to Upper Western Chamber) might be accommodated in the late C19 garderobe stack, subject to assessment of impact on historic fabric.

***POLICY F3: To improve the quality of presentation of the Old Hall to a consistent high standard***

In some areas the standard of presentation of the fabric of the building is of variable quality and lacks consistency. This relates to treatment and finishes for historic elements of the site, and to the quality of introduced modern features such as fire-partitions, floor ramps, carpeting and handrails, signage and interpretation panels, methods of lighting etc. The recommendations below aim to achieve a uniformly high standard across the site as a whole which reflects historical authenticity.

- Policy F3.1: Woodwork throughout the building might best be returned to an assessed 'original' appearance and treatment (or as near as can be achieved) for the relevant room or feature, following analysis to chart its decorative history. This will include structural timber, doors and panelling, and mean that the structural timbers of the Great Hall (C15) may be presented with a different appearance to the 1849-50 doorcases. This is more historically honest and should assist visitor understanding.*
- Policy F3.2: In line with this policy, the wainscoting in the E Range panelled room, after sampling and analysis, should be returned uniformly to an assessed early C17 scheme with removal of the C19 dark varnish*
- Policy F3.3: Boarded floors, which can currently look neglected, should be treated for maximum ability to withstand wear, and may in addition need protection.*
- Policy F3.4: Repairs to brick and tile floors and their maintenance to a consistent appearance will do much to raise the perceived standard of maintenance in the Hall.*
- Policy F3.5: Floor ramps and associated hand-rails should be standardised throughout the building to ensure consistency and improve appearance. Floor coverings should be carefully chosen to minimise intrusiveness.*
- Policy F3.6: The need for and location of fire-partitions and doors should be re-examined with fire officer advice, and where possible redesigned or adapted to improve appearance and minimise the intrusive separation of historic spaces.*
- Policy F3.7: Lighting throughout the building is inconsistent and can be intrusive. A specialist lighting and light protection strategy should be commissioned independently as part of future improvements within the building.*
- Policy F3.8: A coherent system of well designed signage should be developed in a recognisable house style and applied consistently, to external signage in the grounds, as well as to internal directional signage and for any interpretative room labelling or panels.*

***POLICY F4: To consider development of the grounds to create an appropriate setting and to aid historical understanding***

The immediate setting of the Old Hall within its own grounds is largely the product of the 1940s and 1950s, with the partially implemented scheme of Claude Phillimore succeeded by the informal planting of a variety of trees, mostly now reaching maturity.

None of this is based on known earlier schemes for the environs of the Hall, though the development of the raised parterres by FOHA is a praiseworthy attempt to provide some relevant setting and context for the building.

Trees are now reaching maturity and are already obscuring significant views of the Hall. They may also be damaging below-ground evidence for earlier features or structures.

Some management of trees is necessary, but there is also a case for re-thinking the future setting of the Hall, in association with the National Trust because of its responsibility for the covenanted restrictions on developments within the curtilage.

Surveys of the grounds to explore the possibility of below ground evidence, together with interrogation of maps and illustrations may allow a partial account to be compiled of development of the area to modern times. This will be of value in interpreting the site history and may also provide information on garden features, walls etc. on which decisions about future treatment can be based.

It will probably not be advisable to return the garden to any specific period. A more useful approach might be to reveal the significance of a sequence of development phases as a counterpart to the development of the house, and to restore selected aspects of earlier character to the setting.

- Policy F4.1 Geophysical survey with some limited excavation may be required to establish the extent and condition of evidence for earlier features within the grounds. It will also indicate areas at risk from tree roots or ground disturbance.*
- Policy F4.2: On the basis of the evidence, plans might be drawn up in consultation with the National Trust for partial recreation of some historic features, to reflect earlier developments and re-create aspects of earlier character - brick walls, orchards, line of pathways, possible parterres etc.*
- Policy F4.3: Plans will need to reflect access routes to the building, as well as the position of the main entrance door. If new public access is created via the East Range, the East front will take on a new public significance.*
- Policy F4.4: Enhancement of the curtilage of the Hall should include a review of external signage. A main sign board is needed on the principal approach to identify and name the site and carry site information, perhaps with subsidiary boards on alternative approaches, as well as an indication of the route to the main entrance.*

***POLICY F5: To continue to develop the range of educational provision for school and other groups, as an important element in interpretation and the promotion of access***

Gainsborough Old Hall has great potential for educational achievement at all levels, and high standards of attainment in its work with schools reflected in the award, now on two (?3) occasions, of the Sandford Award for Heritage Education. The encouragement to variety, change and activity which characterises educational provision at Gainsborough can be of great potential value in maintaining general interest and encouraging repeat visits.

Educational provision can also be one of the most effective foundations for developing major policy objectives, promoting social inclusion, and addressing the needs of socially or educationally disadvantaged groups.

It is, however, important that work with educational groups, operated at a high level of take-up at Gainsborough, does not conflict with informal enjoyment of the site by casual visitors, and policies may be needed to allow time and space for such visitors.

- Policy F5.1 Education should be seen as fundamental to interpretation at GOH, encouraging a wide spectrum of formal and informal use, from school groups to life-long learning.*
- Policy F5.2: Despite the full take-up of available sessions for schools for some time ahead, it is important that local schools (from the Gainsborough area) are encouraged to make better use of the educational programmes and help to secure the Old Hall's place in the local community*
- Policy F5.3: Provision for role play, which is the basis for educational work at GOH can provide a useful element in general interpretation (as in the furnishing and equipping of rooms), but care should be taken that evidence does not overwhelm room sets and that minor equipment is cleared away between sessions.*
- Policy F5.4: Opening times should reflect the needs of schools, but also protect the interests of general visitors in exploring unhindered. Efforts might be made to keep afternoons free of school groups after 2 pm each afternoon.*
- Policy F5.5: The development of child-centred provision can be extended into broader provision for families, encouraging informal learning, high visitor levels and more focussed use of the site.*

***POLICY F6: To develop Gainsborough Old Hall's role in local cultural provision and tourism and secure good levels of usage through effective marketing***

Although educational provision at GOH is well and extensively used, levels of use by family groups and other casual visitors from the locality and region and from further afield are capable of development. There is a general perception that the Hall is not effectively promoted and that a valuable heritage asset is not as well-known within or outside the region as its importance and attraction merit.

With re-planning, expansion and gradual improvement of interpretation and visitor services, as proposed elsewhere in this Policy Section, opportunity can be taken to work vigorously with regional, national and international tourism agencies and travel groups to secure the levels of visitation which the interest and significance of Gainsborough Old Hall should command.

*Policy F6.1: Close partnerships with related local attractions should help GOH benefit from linked visiting arrangements e.g. Lincoln Castle, new City and County Museum, Museum of Lincolnshire Life, and local historic churches.*

*Policy F6.2: The site's significance may be promoted to encourage destination visiting from further afield, exploiting its value and interest nationally as one of the very best late C15 great house in the country, and internationally, for North American visitors, for its Pilgrim Father and early Methodism connections.*

*Policy F6.3: An expanded events programme, featuring re-enactment events, well-advertised cookery sessions in the Kitchen and developed programmes of seasonal activities should be widely advertised to attract new audiences from the locality and further afield.*

*Policy F6.4: Gainsborough and other nearby schools should be encouraged to make more use of GOH educational services. This may mean reserving sessions for future bookings and encouraging local schools to take them up, but it is important that the Hall is well used and well integrated in the life of its local school community.*

## **G Policies for collections management**

***POLICY G1: The status of all collections at Gainsborough Old Hall should be confirmed, with the updating of agreements on loan material***

The four main categories of collection material stored and displayed at Gainsborough Old Hall are:

- the Bacon Loan Collections, of furniture and of family portraits
- general social history collections, begun by FOHA c.1950 and now since 1979 in the ownership of Lincolnshire CC Heritage Services
- archaeological collections relating to GOH
- material of the Transformation Project used in educational role play and re-enactment

It is important that the status of these various collections is clear and understood, for consistent collections management and in view of possible future changes in their content and uses. Opportunities should be taken to improve the documentation of material generally and to confirm arrangements on loan material.

*Policy G1.1: An up-to-date schedule of items in the Bacon Loan Collections should be confirmed in a formal loan agreement. Advice on the form of the agreement may be sought from English Heritage Collections Unit*

*Policy G1.2: Searches in the archives of FOHA and in early records of Lincs CC collections administration would help to confirm the source and status of material in main social history collections. This will improve documentation generally, but importantly will confirm title to the material if any disposals are contemplated in the future.*

*Policy G1.3: Archaeological collections (from above and below ground contexts at GOH) should be brought together as a special collection for incorporation into the Site Archive recommended in Policy D2.*

*Policy G1.4: It should be confirmed that Transformation Project material, acquired during the 1990s for use, does not form part of main collections and that individual items may be disposed of if no longer required following re-assessment of the collection for future needs.*

***POLICY G2: Documentation for all categories of collection material should be enhanced, so that informed decisions may be made on their future use and location***

The variety of collections at Gainsborough Old Hall makes it essential that the contents of each are well understood in order to assess future usefulness to planned displays at the Hall, seek their return to lenders or determine transfer to reserve collection storage elsewhere. As a preliminary to new schemes of interpretation and display, and ensure quality of information for future public access, it will be necessary to develop the standard of current documentation.

*Policy G2.1: Documentation of all collections should be improved through searches in available sources, including FOHA archives and Bacon family or estate records.*

*Policy G2.2: On the basis of improved documentation, independent assessments of significance in each category can be made, reviewing material for its potential value to interpretation at the Old Hall.*

*Policy G2.3: Documentation of furniture and portrait loan collections might be improved through searches in FOHA archives and, through agreement, in Bacon family and estate records.*

*Policy G2.4: Enhanced information on collections material may be made available to the public in future schemes of interpretation through online access or other means.*



## **H Policies for site management**

***POLICY H1: Statutory and legal requirements for protection of the site, the health and safety of individuals and the requirements of disabilities legislation should be met, by means which ensure minimum impact on the significance of the site***

### **Statutory requirements for protection of the site**

#### ***Listed Building Consent.***

*(Town and Country Planning Act, 1990)*

Controls normally apply to all works, internal and external, that would affect a building's special interest; consent is not normally required for repairs, except where repairs (including painting) would affect the character of the building. Local authorities seeking consent for works to properties for which they have management responsibility need to send applications directly to the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport for determination.

#### ***Planning Consent***

*(Town and Country Planning Act 1990; Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas ) Act 1990*

English Heritage enjoys limited exemption for its own works as 'permitted development' under the *Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995* (SI 1995, No 418) Article 3 and Schedule 2, Part 26, which permits development by EH and others for a) maintenance repair and restoration, b) protection and safeguarding, c) stabilising ground conditions.

Change of use of any buildings, with associated traffic implications, will require planning consent from West Lindsey District Council. Applications by English Heritage for Listed Building Consent for proposed works affecting the fabric of Gainsborough Old Hall (listed Grade I), are determined by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. Consent will also be required for any works affecting structures within the curtilage of the listed building, if constructed prior to 1 July 1948. Approval under the Building Regulations should be obtained from the local authority.

Under the provisions of PPG 15 *Planning and the Historic Environment* (1994) consideration should be given to a range of matters including the landscape setting and the investigation and recording of works on buildings.

### **Health and Safety Requirements**

*(Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974; Fire Precautions Act, 1971)*

Policies and procedures for ensuring good H & S standards and fire protection for staff and users at Gainsborough Old Hall are enshrined in site-specific sets of regulations formulated by Lincolnshire County Council.

*Policy H1.1: The Health and Safety Policy for staff and public should be reviewed regularly and enforced, in line with LCC policies and instructions. (Lincs CC Educational and Cultural Services, Our Health and Safety Policy Statement, Gainsborough Old Hall; supplemented by LCC Heritage Services Staff Security Manual)*

*Policy H1.2: Policies and procedures contained in the Fire Precautions Manual should be regularly rehearsed and periodically reviewed.*  
Arrangements for means of escape for staff and visitors in the event of fire need to be approved by the local authority advised by the fire officer.

The CDM Regulations (1995) require the appointment of a Planning Supervisor to ensure that the execution of the works is designed so that the risks on site from construction operations are recognised and fully addressed.

Contractors are expected to sign up to the Health & Safety Regulations for GOH as they apply to working on site.

### **Requirements under disabilities legislation**

*(Disabilities Discrimination Act, 1995)*

Provision for staff and visitors with disabilities will need to accord with the requirements of the DDA, as applied to historic buildings. Adjustments or alternative provision must be made by October 2004 to meet the requirements of the Act and avoid the effect of less favourable and discriminatory treatment of disabled people in the provision of services. The National Disability Council's Code of Practice recommends establishment of a positive policy on the provision of goods, facilities and services, with arrangements to monitor the policy, staff awareness training and consultation with disabled people. In the case of Gainsborough Old Hall, particular care will need to be exercised in developing alternative provision, since parts of the site are only with difficulty accessible to visitors with limited mobility. The Code of Practice will help to ensure that alternative arrangements (e.g. access through interpretation) are consistent with obligations under the DDA.

*Policy H1.3: Early planning should be put in hand to ensure that the adjustments necessary to accord with the Act are made within the timetable set down, and that the NDC Code of Practice is adopted and implemented for the site.*

In addition to its legal obligations, Lincs CC should seek to achieve the highest practicable standards for staff and visitors with disabilities at Gainsborough Old Hall.

***POLICY H2: Management arrangements at the Old Hall should aim to safeguard its historical integrity and the public interest in access, through shared aims and objectives and consistent methods of working in partnership***

Current management arrangements for Gainsborough Old Hall reflect the way in which the site and building have developed and perceptions of its role have changed over the period since the late 1940s. Three major stakeholders have continuing active involvement: English Heritage, Lincolnshire County Council and the Friends of the Old Hall Association. It is vital that these three bodies share a vision for the site, work effectively together, and have a clear idea of respective responsibilities so that ambiguity and misunderstanding are avoided.

English Heritage as freeholder on behalf of the Secretary of State has a local management lease agreement with Lincolnshire County Council (signed 1995) for day to day administration, covering a defined range of responsibilities for the building, including aspects of regular maintenance. Together these two bodies share executive responsibility for protection and management of the building. FOHA, the body largely responsible for saving the building from destruction in the late 1940s and steering its repair and development for community uses until 1979, continues strongly to support the Old Hall and its role in Gainsborough.

- Policy H2.1: Division of responsibilities between EH and LCC might usefully be clarified and confirmed, especially as regards buildings maintenance and any changes in practice resulting from the present Conservation Plan.*
- Policy H2.2: Consultation on the draft Conservation Plan might also be the occasion for all parties to signal support for a shared view of future projects and priorities at Gainsborough Old Hall, and a commitment to work in partnership to agreed policies.*
- Policy H2.3: There would be benefit in redefining areas of responsibility, to reflect the County Councils legal responsibility and public accountability for operations at GOH and protection of the building, and FOHA's valuable role in supporting and extending activities within defined areas.*
- Policy H2.4: To maintain favourable public perceptions of the Hall and promote its successful development, all activities with a public profile should be guided by a single unified principle. Press publicity, public relations and publications, from whatever source, should be developed to agreed standards and approved within a single forum.*
- Policy H2.5: Current discussions on ways of operating in partnership and avoiding the possibilities of conflict might be made the subject of a formal agreement between LCC and FOHA, establishing good working relationships for the future and supplementing the FOHA Constitution.*

## **2.4 IMPLEMENTATION**

*[To follow, after discussion]*

Report for Lincolnshire County Council

# Gainsborough Old Hall, Lincolnshire

## Conservation Plan

### Part Three : Gazetteer

Oxford Archaeology  
Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford OX2 0ES

Second draft, October 2003



# Gainsborough Old Hall, Lincolnshire

## Conservation Plan

### Part Three : Gazetteer

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# Introduction

## Arrangement of the Gazetteer

***Part Three : The Gazetteer*** is a schedule of the individual components of the building in its setting, establishing for each element its historical development, current description and significance, together with present condition and vulnerability to factors which could affect it now or in the future. Recommendations are made for protection, conservation or other treatment, and where relevant referenced to the principal policies set out in Part Two.

Following an overview of the site as a whole, elements are arranged in eight sections, covering the overall setting and structure of the building, the detail of its main constituent parts, and the associated material and archival collections which are housed at the Hall, or which, although housed elsewhere, are valuable to an understanding of the site.

***Section 1: The local context and setting for the Hall***

***Section 2: Structure and materials***

***Section 3: The Hall Range***

***Section 4: The Kitchen Block***

***Section 5: The West Range***

***Section 6: The East Range***

***Section 7: The Tower***

***Section 8: Associated Collections***

The individual entry for each element includes a sequence of information:

- **development/documentation** – a phase by phase summary of its historical development and the principal sources of information on which it is based
- **description** - including both surviving elements and lost features, with a summary of selected material displayed within the rooms of the house
- **significance** – particularly as reflecting the main categories of significance set out in Part One
- **condition/risks** – physical condition and actual or potential damage noted; requirements for protection or conservation
- **vulnerability/issues** – less material concerns or potential conflicts, relating particularly to the issues identified in Part Two
- **policies/recommendations** – proposals for action which address the risks and vulnerabilities. Where these aim to implement general policies set out in Part Two, policy references are given
- **references** – published or documentary sources, or principal reports commissioned by English Heritage or Lincolnshire CC.

## Key Development Phases

<b>Phase I</b>	<b>Gainsborough before the Conquest</b>	<i>before 1066</i>
<b>Phase II</b>	<b>Before the present Hall</b> <i>The Percy and Burgh families</i>	<i>1066 - 1470</i>
<b>Phase III</b>	<b>The 15th century Hall</b> <i>Sir Thomas Burgh and successors</i>	<i>1470 - 1596</i>
<b>Phase IV</b>	<b>William Hickman's House</b> <i>Sir William Hickman</i>	<i>1596 - 1625</i>
<b>Phase V</b>	<b>Willoughby Hickman and the Civil War</b> <i>Sir Willoughby Hickman</i>	<i>1625 - 1649</i>
<b>Phase VI</b>	<b>Later Stuart Gainsborough</b> <i>Sir William, Sir Willoughby and Sir Neville Hickman</i>	<i>1649 - 1733</i>
<b>Phase VII</b>	<b>Varied fortunes and uses</b> <i>Sir Neville George and daughter Lady Frances Hickman</i>	<i>1733 - 1826</i>
<b>Phase VIII</b>	<b>The Bacon family: revival and repair</b> <i>Henry Hickman-Bacon</i>	<i>1826 - 1872</i>
<b>Phase IX</b>	<b>Conversion and public uses</b> <i>Sir Henry Hickman Beckett Bacon</i>	<i>1872 - 1945</i>
<b>Phase X</b>	<b>Community involvement</b> <i>Sir Edmund Bacon and the Friends of the Old Hall</i>	<i>1945 - 1969</i>
<b>Phase XI</b>	<b>In public ownership</b> <i>Ministry of Works, Department of the Environment</i>	<i>1969 - 1979</i>
<b>Phase XII</b>	<b>Partnership</b> <i>DoE, English Heritage and Lincolnshire County Council</i>	<i>1979 - present</i>

# Gazetteer: Schedule of elements included

**Overview:** Gainsborough Old Hall

## ***Context and setting***

- 1.01 Overall setting & visual context
- 1.02 Boundaries and designations
- 1.03 Archaeological and Historical background
- 1.04 Gainsborough Parish and the Gainsborough Estate
- 1.05 Gainsborough Town and Borough
- 1.06 All Saints Church
- 1.07 Curtilage and Gardens

## ***Structure and materials***

- 2.01 General arrangement
- 2.02 Categories of fabric
  - roof coverings
  - brickwork
  - stonework
  - carpentry
  - joinery; panelling
  - wall plaster and decoration
  - ceilings
  - doors and doorways
  - windows and glazing
  - staircases

## ***Hall range***

- |          |      |                                       |
|----------|------|---------------------------------------|
| General  | 3.01 | Main structure                        |
| Internal | 3.02 | Great Hall                            |
|          | 3.03 | Solar                                 |
|          | 3.04 | Parlour/kitchen                       |
|          | 3.05 | Basement below Parlour                |
|          | 3.06 | Upper West Chamber                    |
|          | 3.07 | Services: Buttery, Pantry and Passage |
|          | 3.08 | Basement below Services               |
|          | 3.09 | Principal Stair                       |
|          | 3.10 | Upper Staircase Gallery               |
|          | 3.11 | Lower Staircase Gallery               |

## ***Kitchen block***

- |          |      |                           |
|----------|------|---------------------------|
| General  | 4.01 | Main structure            |
| Internal | 4.02 | Kitchen & ancillary rooms |
|          | 4.03 | Servery                   |
|          | 4.04 | Chamber over the Servery  |

### ***West range***

General	5.01	Main structure
Internal	5.02	Stair
	5.03	Second Floor
	5.04	First Floor (exhibition gallery & store)
	5.05	Ground Floor (northern room)
	5.06	Ground Floor (Museum Shop)

### ***East range***

General	6.01	Main structure
Internal	6.02	Stair
	6.03	First Floor passage
	6.04	Upper Great Chamber
	6.05	Northern Chamber (Louvre Room)
	6.06	Ground Floor passage
	6.07	Schools Room
	6.08	Lower Inner Chamber (Cafeteria)
	6.09	Second Floor rooms (offices)
	6.10	Bedchamber, with former closet
	6.11	Panelled Room, with closet

### ***Tower***

General & exterior	7.01	Main structure
	7.02	Roof
Internal	7.03	Stair
	7.04	Upper chamber
	7.05	Middle chamber
	7.06	Lower chamber

### ***Collections***

8.01	General Description
8.02	Furniture and Textile Collections
8.03	Paintings and drawings
8.04	Social History Collections
8.05	Transformation Project
8.06	Archaeological Collections and Archive
8.07	Archives
8.08	Modern Curation: Archives and Records

## Abbreviations

In the Gazetteer entries, reference is made by date or abbreviated description to the following sources. Some of the plans are illustrated as Figures in Volume One.

Clark, 1991	M V Clark, ‘The West Range: Survey and Analysis’ in <i>Gainsborough Old Hall</i> , ed. P Lindley, (Society of Lincolnshire History and Archaeology, 1991)
Faulkner	Patrick Faulkner <i>The Old Hall, Gainsborough, Lincolnshire</i> , Unpublished draft report for Ministry of Works (nd, but late 1950s)
Field, 1991	Naomi Field, ‘Excavations and the West Range’ in <i>Gainsborough Old Hall</i> , ed. P Lindley, (Society of Lincolnshire History and Archaeology, 1991)
Garner and Stratton	T Garner and A Stratton, <i>Architecture in England during the Tudor Period</i> (1929)
JGP Condition Survey 2003	A Condition Survey of Gainsborough Old Hall, for English Heritage; JGP Associates, Northampton, 2003
Lindley, 1991	Philip Lindley ‘Structure, Sequence and Status: the Architectural history of Gainsborough Old Hall to c.1600’ in <i>Gainsborough Old Hall</i> , ed. P Lindley, (Society of Lincolnshire History and Archaeology, 1991)
Patrick drawing, c.1800	<i>The Courtyard of the Old Hall</i> , by J Patrick, c.1800 (Lincolnshire Museums)
Stark, 1843	Adam Stark, <i>The History and Antiquities of Gainsburgh</i> , with plan, (London, 2 <sup>nd</sup> edition 1843) (1st edn. was 1817)
Vernon, 1991	Jennifer Vernon, ‘A Fine Wreck of the Feudal age: the Later History of Gainsborough Old Hall and its Owners’ in <i>Gainsborough Old Hall</i> , ed. P Lindley, (Society of Lincolnshire History and Archaeology, 1991)
Ibbetson Plan, 1851	‘Map of the Town and Port of Gainsborough drawn up in accordance with the requirements of the General Board of Health for the local board at Gainsborough’ D J H Ibbetson 1851(Lincolnshire Archives Office, Brace 6/2)
Hickman Inventory 1625	Probate inventory of Sir William Hickman 1624-26, LAO INV 130/278
Burgh Inventory, 1496	Inventory of Sir Thomas Burghe, 1496, PRO PROB 2/124 (PCC Inventories pre-1661); his will of 1496 is in PRO PROB 11/10, f.241-2 (PCC Wills 30 Vox). Copies in LAO, Foster Library, and at Gainsborough.



# Overview :

## Gainsborough Old Hall





## Overview: Gainsborough Old Hall

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### *Development / Documentation/Description*

#### **1) Phase I-II (pre-Conquest to 1470):**

Despite the apparent significance of Gainsborough in the century or so before the Conquest, there is little physical evidence for a Danish presence in the immediate area, and none for any activity on the site of the Old Hall itself. The site appears to have been only the second centre for the post-Conquest manor, with an earlier manorial centre at the site of the old castle (Castle Hills) to the north of the town.

When the move to the northern edge of the medieval town took place is not certain, though it may have come from a desire to be closer to the communication links, developing urban centre and trade opportunities of the present site by the river. By the 15th century the manor was in the hands of the Percy family and through Elizabeth Percy, married to Thomas Burgh, was inherited by their son Thomas. His own marriage to a noble and wealthy widow was one stage in his rise to importance and political power in the service of the Yorkist king Edward IV, and the probable impetus to begin the building (or possibly rebuilding) of a manor house on the present site. In 1469 or 1470 Sir Thomas's Lancastrian enemies attacked and 'pulled down his place and took all his goods and chattels that they might find'.

#### **2) Phase III (1470 -1596)**

Sir Thomas Burgh continued to prosper under Edward IV and his successor Richard III, and the house at Gainsborough, whatever the extent of the 1469-70 destruction, seems to have been completed, (on the evidence of dendrochronology) by perhaps 1490. There is evidence from the excavations in the 1980s for earlier buildings on the same site and alignment as the present Great Hall and West Range. Though there is as yet no agreed or firmly dated sequence for the individual parts of the house, it seems that building (or rebuilding) began with the Great Hall and its east and west wings, probably together with the East Range, in the 1460s, followed by the addition of the West Range in the 1470s, and the building of the Tower in the 1480s. The date of the brick Kitchen is less clear, though it would rationally be built with the Great Hall, and the building over of the intervening gap above the Servedy seems to have happened very shortly afterwards.

The house was thus built in a relatively short period, and to a single overall design. If a fully courtyard house was ever intended, its southern range was never built. It is possible that the main front initially was intended to be on the north side, approached across a northern moat. A change in favour of the southern main front and approach may have been confirmed by the building, in the early 1590s, of the highly decorative three-bay stair and gallery addition to the Hall range on its south side by the 5th Lord Burgh.

#### **3) Phase IV (1596 -1625):**

Purchase of the manor by the London merchant William Hickman initiated a phase of remodelling in the house. Hickman (knighted in 1603) was fiercely Protestant and keen to use his manorial position to dominate the political and commercial life of Gainsborough and exploit its trading connections. His work at the Old Hall centred on the East Range,

modernising and extending the accommodation to create three floors of private chambers at the south end, encasing the south and east walls in brickwork and possibly also building the originals for the two brick bay windows towards the east (though the existing fabric of these is entirely C19). Hickman also built a wall between East and West Ranges, creating a courtyard with a gateway entrance.

Internal decoration included the wall paintings of c.1600 which partially survive in the Lower Inner Chamber and the panelling in the ground floor room at the south end. The probate inventory made on Hickman's death in 1625 provides an idea of the layout, use and furnishing of his house and the range of ancillary buildings associated with it.

#### **4) Phases V-VI (1625 -1733):**

William's son Willoughby Hickman was lord of the manor during the Civil War. He attempted to stay neutral through the warlike events of 1642-43 when Gainsborough was initially garrisoned for Parliament but changed hands through two sieges and was severely damaged. The Old Hall escaped the destruction of the town but Sir Willoughby's trade and wealth were severely affected, and he became unpopular with the townspeople for failing to discharge his manorial duties of repair and maintenance. During his time (he died in 1649) and that of his successor Sir William Hickman it seems little new work was done at the Hall. Sir William was active in public life and served in Parliament as did his son and successor Willoughby Hickman. Both used the Old Hall as their Lincolnshire base, but the next holder of the estate, Sir Neville Hickman, inheriting in 1720, declined to follow the family tradition. Instead, regarding the old building as beyond fashionable conversion, he abandoned it in favour of a new house built nearby at Thonock Hall.

#### **5) Phase VII (1733 -1826):**

The Old Hall entered a century-long phase of mixed uses which was the occasion for considerable physical changes to the building. The East Range was let as a residence to Lord Abingdon and his family until 1753, while the West Range was divided into tenements and eventually also workshops. The Tower was let as a self-contained house, with an entrance created on the north-east. The precise use of the Kitchen during this period is unclear - by the end of the phase it may have been divided by a brick wall into two areas - but in the winter of 1816-17 it served as a soup kitchen for the local poor.

The Great Hall remained as a public space for the town, where John Wesley preached on a number of occasions from 1759. In 1760 William Hornby took a lease of the Old Hall as a linen factory but in 1790 sublet the Great Hall to a Mr West for conversion as a theatre. The hall screen was possibly removed at this time, and a new gallery and seating were installed. The oriel, partitioned off, became the green room for the theatre.

Frances Hickman died without heirs in 1826, and the estate passed to a cousin, Henry Bacon on condition that Hickman was added to his name.

#### **6) Phase VIII (1826 -1872):**

Sir Henry Hickman Bacon was keen to convert the Great Hall to Corn Exchange, though the theatre remained in place until 1849 while the tenements in the West Range continued in use. On closure of the theatre the Great Hall was now to become a place 'for the purpose of holding tea-meetings and similar assemblies'. Its condition was causing concern and a programme of repairs was undertaken. Denzil Ibbetson, railway engineer on the line recently completed through Gainsborough was commissioned to oversee the work, using iron castings at the lower end of the arched roof trusses. The decorative overdoor panels in the hall commemorate the work. At about the same time the Great Upper Chamber in the East range was converted as an assembly room/ballroom, involving the raising of its ceiling and a new roof to the range, with a battlemented brick parapet on the east side. In the West Range the tenements continued in multi-occupancy and by 1851 a public house, the Queen Adelaide, had been set up at the centre of the range.

#### **7) Phase IX (1872 -1945):**

Sir Henry Hickman Becket Bacon inherited in 1872, continuing to live at Thonock throughout his long life while carrying out further repairs and alterations at the Old Hall and encouraging its public uses. There were works in 1878 works to remove the C18 brick building north of the services wing, and provide supports in the Kitchen/Servery and in the basement below the buttery. The northern stack of the West Range lodgings was also rebuilt about this time.

From 1896 to 1952 the Gainsborough Freemasons had their Masonic Temple in the East Range (ground floor), and their caretaker had an apartment in the 1590s chambers at the south end of the range. During the First World War the Hall was used to store furniture from bombed houses, and some of the Bacon family furniture and portraits were also still in the Hall at this time. In 1938 a major step was taken to protect the setting of the Old Hall from development, with the establishment by Sir Henry of a restrictive covenant under the aegis of the National Trust.

#### **8) Phases X, XI, XII (1945 - present):**

Shortly after inheriting the estate in 1945 Sir Edmund Bacon, recognising the poor condition of the Old Hall and the threats to its survival, agreed to the formation of a local group to save, repair and promote it. The Friends of the Old Hall Association took over management in 1949, arranging a programme of exhibitions and beginning a collection with the aim of setting up a local museum in the Hall. Urgent repairs were carried out by FOHA in the 1950s, 1960s and early 1970s (when the Ministry of Works took over responsibility for repair work), with a major programme of roof repairs to the Great Hall, begun in the mid 1950s and completed in the early 1960s.

In 1971 Sir Edmund Bacon gave the Old Hall to the nation and it was placed in the care of the Ministry of Works. There were major repairs, especially in the 1970s on the East Range, and the modern kitchen and lavatories were created in the Parlour and basement below. The West Range repairs came in the 1980s, with opening to the public for the first time in 1989.

FOHA invited Lincolnshire County Council to assume management of the Old Hall in 1979 as part of its museum service, and in 1988 an agreement was signed by LCC with English Heritage, on the responsibility for care and protection of the building. The Friends maintain their role in supporting the museum through guiding, lecture programmes, fund-raising and development of the gardens, and the Bacon family continues its support the Old Hall through its generous loan of the furniture and portrait collections to furnish the house.

#### **References**

- P Faulkner, *The Old Hall, Gainsborough* (1950s)
- P Lindley 'Structure, sequence and Status...' (1991)
- A Stark, *History and Antiquities of Gainsburgh*, 1843
- D J Cathcart King, *Castellarium Anglicanum*, 1983



# 1 Context & setting



## Overall setting & visual context

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### *Development / Documentation*

**Phase III (1470-1596):** Gainsborough Old Hall was built on the northern edge of the medieval town of Gainsborough, and has remained in an urban setting.

**Phase IV-VI (1596-1733):** The building of a Mart Yard next to the Hall gave the manorial centre a more direct link to the function of the market town.

**Phase VII-VIII (1733-1872):** The removal of the north side of the Mart Yard made a more open setting for the Hall.

**Phase IX (1872-1945):** The houses around the hall and the new streets to the north were created over the former Mart yard, gardens and open fields. Several historic buildings near the hall were demolished and a number of minor accretions were removed from the Hall itself. During the Second World War the grounds were used as allotments for food production

**Phase X (1945-1971):** About 1950 a layout for the grounds was prepared by Claude Phillimore, and tree planting and laying out of paths was begun by the local authority. The trees are seen on photographs of the Hall taken in the 1950s.

**Phase XI-XII (1971-present):** The herb garden was planted in front of the Hall by the Friends of the Old Hall Association

### *Description*

Gainsborough is situated on the River Trent in the western lowlands of north Lincolnshire (Parts of Lindsey). The settlement history of the area can be traced back through the archaeological record (Gaz. 1.03), and the Old Hall was one of a series of manorial centres in the parish of Gainsborough (Gaz.1.04), being located on the edge of the historic town (Gaz.1.05), and next to the parish church (Gaz.1.06). The Hall and its immediate curtilage (Gaz.1.07) are protected by a number of designations (Gaz.1.02).

There are few long-distance views of the Hall. It sits within a small grassed enclosure bordered on every side by streets. Virtually nothing remains of the once extensive gardens (as indicated for example on the 1851 Ibbetson map of the town) apart from a narrow strip of grass running around the house, planted with trees and shrubs and enclosed by a post and rail fence with low hawthorn hedge. The Hall now survives almost as an island surrounded by late 19th and early 20th century roads and housing; only the north east corner (facing the church) remains almost open. On the streets around the hall the houses are villas of moderate size, many of which retain original features including low garden walls, iron railings and sash windows. To the south lies a number of civic buildings including the elaborate facade of the small but elegant Carnegie Library of 1905.

Views of the Hall are limited by the surrounding buildings and it only becomes visible when one is almost upon it. The north east corner presents the most easily accessible views from a distance (across the open churchyard) and offers some excellent views of the tower, now to an increasing degree limited by the increasing size of the trees. Views of the courtyard from the library include the timbered fronts of all the ranges but exclude the kitchen and much of the tower.

***Significance*** Despite the constricted nature of views of the Hall, the main easily accessible views are of considerable historical value and importance: the courtyard seen from the Library, the tower from the churchyard, and the two sides of the building seen from the south end of Morley Street (east side) and Parnell Street (west side). Although some of the elevations were formerly hidden by now vanished walls and gardens, the architecture of the Hall was designed to be seen, and the visual setting is part of the architectural significance.

The Old Hall and its setting have an exceptional amenity value for the town of Gainsborough, providing a focus with high visual and aesthetic qualities to the riverside area and northern parts of the central town area, recognised in the Gainsborough Conservation Area designation, and a powerful reminder of the town's importance in the past.

***Issues/vulnerability***

Important views of the hall are likely to be adversely effected by any major developments particularly those which may block or mar views of the courtyard elevation or the views across the churchyard. Alteration of the external appearance of the houses and properties around the hall will also detract from the historic appearance of the area. Replacement of any features in unsuitable materials, the removal of garden walls and the creation of driveways will all detract from the historic setting of the Old Hall.

Car parking in the streets immediately around the Hall is visually intrusive in the setting of the listed building, but is very necessary for visitors to the Hall.

***Policies/recommendations***

- The setting of the Hall should be preserved and where possible enhanced [Policy X].
- Regular contact should be maintained with West Lindsey DC as planning authority, to ensure vigilance in applying Conservation Area regulations [Policy X].
- Long-term solutions to parking and traffic management issues should be sought through discussion with West Lindsey DC [Policy X]. Current discussions will need to concentrate on proposals for the Guildhall area.



## Boundaries & designations

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### *Description*

Gainsborough Old Hall lies in the ancient parish of Gainsborough, and within the town of Gainsborough in West Lindsey District, Lincolnshire (until 1974 it was a separate borough in the Parts of Lindsey).

### *Status*

The house is unusual in being in the ownership of the Secretary of State and in the Guardianship of English Heritage, though maintained and managed by Lincolnshire County Council. The curtilage is maintained under a covenant with the National Trust. The Hall and land around it were formerly Scheduled as an Ancient Monument, though this was revoked in 19XX and has not been reinstated. The Old Hall is a Grade I listed building, and lies within the Gainsborough Conservation Area, designated October, 1983.

### *Current Use*

The Old Hall is open to the public as a historic house, museum and visitor attraction, and is used for both recreation and education. There is a particular emphasis on use by local schools, with a strong and well-used education programme. The property is also used for occasional events and entertainment and for meetings by local groups and societies. In the recent past it has been used to house wedding receptions and similar events.

### *Significance*

The current designations adequately reflect the significance of the Hall and its setting.

### *Condition/risks*

The Hall is well maintained, but is generally at risk from the wear and tear of frequent use. The open and unprotected nature of its setting places it at risk from accidental or intentional damage.

### *Issues/vulnerability*

The management regime must at all times respect the significance of each part of the Hall, so that damage does not occur, and that change is fully informed.

Changes in the environs of the Hall (e.g. to traffic circulation, or new building) could have an impact on the setting of the Hall.

The de-scheduling of the Hall does not detract from the archaeological significance of buried remains in and around the building.

### *Policies/recommendations*

- There is no need for any change to designations, but the management regime must respect the listed status of the Hall and the historical and archaeological significance of the fabric, buried remains, and the setting of the Hall.



## Archaeological background

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### ***Development / Documentation***

#### **Prehistoric**

There are no prehistoric sites (or finds) within 1km of the hall although there are a number in the general locality (Lincolnshire Sites and Monuments Record). The siting of the town on clays and gravels next to a large river may indicate that prehistoric sites have been obliterated by changing river patterns. Any evidence of Prehistoric utilisation of the floodplain, within the Site, would be buried beneath later alluvium. It is also unclear what appearance the floodplain had in the Prehistoric period and it is likely that it may have been a marsh or wetland perhaps unsuitable for habitation. Nearby sites include an Iron Age fort at Beacon Hill in Gringley on the Hill (Notts) and a number of findspots of prehistoric artefacts.

#### **Roman**

There are no Roman sites or Roman findspots within 1km of the Hall (Lincolnshire SMR), despite the fact that a number of important roads run near to Gainsborough, radiating out from the Roman city of Lincoln (*Lindum*) across the surrounding landscape. The modern A15 is the nearest survivor and lies some 15km to the east of the town, where it runs north to the Humber. Another road ran from Lincoln to Doncaster (via Bawtry) and crossed the river at Littleborough (possibly *Segeloci* in the Antonine Itinerary, Margary 1967). This paved ford survived intact (with its timber piles) until 1820 when it was demolished (*Britannia* 1970, 284).

#### **Saxon and Danish**

Perhaps the most important pre-Conquest event to take place here was the encampment of the invading Danish army under King Swein Forkbeard and his son Canute in 1013. According to the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* Swein sailed with his fleet from Sandwich (Kent) ‘very quickly round East Anglia into the mouth of the Humber, and so up along the Trent until he reached Gainsborough’, and demanded blood money for the murder of the King’s sister and other Danes at Oxford. It was here that the Danes received the submission of much of England and from here that the army set out to attack places as far away as London. The king died at Gainsborough in February 1014, and it was there that Canute was elected King by the fleet, while the English King Ethelred sacked Lindsey in revenge for its support of the Danes. While Gainsborough must already have existed as a named settlement, no remains of the Danish camp have been discovered, although a large ditched enclosure at Thonock was long identified with it (Allen, 27).

The area around Gainsborough is rich in Anglo Saxon architecture including a number of impressive parish churches (Marton, Littleborough). The magnificent Saxon Minster church at Stow to the south of Gainsborough is one of the most important Anglo-Saxon structures in northern England, and effectively was the administrative centre in the north of the huge diocese of Dorchester-on-Thames (later transferred to Lincoln by the Normans).

The medieval history of the parish, estate, and town of Gainsborough is described below (Gaz.1.04 - 1.05). Archaeological investigations in Gainsborough have revealed the remains of several large demolished warehouses and wharf buildings all along the riverfront.

### **Archaeological Investigation of the Old Hall**

The great age and obvious historical importance of the building has long made it a focus for archaeological and historical interest. The local antiquary Adam Stark published drawings and histories of the building in the early part of the C19. This was followed by later antiquarian descriptions in the later C19 and early C20. Archaeological investigation of the site and the building has been more limited and more recent. The major phase of archaeological activity was that on the West Range in the 1980s (see Lindley ed. 1991). This included excavation and detailed recording and structural analysis. A number of watching briefs and small scale excavations have also taken place in and around the Hall since the 1980s. Some additional building recording has also taken place, including detailed recording of the oriel window in the Great Hall, and some photogrammetric survey for English Heritage.

### ***Significance***

The archaeological potential of the Hall for remains of the archaeology of early settlement in Gainsborough is uncertain, but likely to be significant, while the archaeological potential of the Hall itself (for both below and above-ground archaeology) is certainly significant.

### ***Policies***

The historical and archaeological background to the Hall should be fully exploited in planning for future interpretation.

The archaeological implications of any ground disturbance should be considered.

### ***References:***

Thomas Allen *History of the County of Lincolnshire*, (1830)  
*Lincolnshire County SMR (search of 1km radius around Gainsborough Old Hall)*.

## Gainsborough Parish and the Gainsborough Estate

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### *Development / Documentation*

**Phase I-II (pre-Conquest-1470):** The parish is an ancient one, of pre-conquest origin. A Norman manorial centre at the site of the old castle (Castle Hills) is likely to have been associated with the manor of Gainsborough.

**Phase III-VI (1470-1733):** The castle was replaced as manorial centre by the Old Hall.

**Phase VII-X (1733-1969):** The Old Hall was abandoned by the Hickman family, in favour of a new house at Thonock, within the parish; in 1969 the Hall was sold, while the family has retained its other estates around Gainsborough.

### *Description*

Gainsborough is a relatively small parish situated next the River Trent, and rising from the river to a height of over 40 m above sea level. The Hall and the medieval town lie on an island of gravel within clays and silts, in a narrow riparian plain. The higher land contains area of woodland.

The manorial estate was perhaps first centred on Castle Hills, a surviving earthwork to the north of the town consisting of a ringwork and two baileys (King *Castellarium* i, 261). The town presumably grew up on or near a river crossing, and the second manorial centre, the Old Hall, is adjacent to the church (Gaz. 1.06) on the north side of the town (Gaz.1.05), and may have been established in this location even from before the Norman conquest, even though the present building of the Hall dates from the 15th century.

King Stephen expressly conveyed the castle along with the manor to William Earl of Lincoln (Allen, 23), and it may have remained in occupation until the 15th century. The manor later passed to the Earls of Pembroke, and descended to the Percy and Burgh families. Sir Thomas Burgh built the present Hall in the late 15th century. Under the ownership of the Hickmans the Hall was occupied and partly rebuilt, but it was abandoned by the Hickman family as a place of residence in the 1720s, in favour of a new house built at Thonock Hall, immediately north-east of the town. This was itself abandoned in the 20th century, and the Georgian house was demolished during the 1960s. The Bacon family seat remains at Raveningham Hall, Norfolk, while they maintain an interest in the surviving estate around Gainsborough.

The historic manorial estate of the Percy - Burgh - Hickman - Bacon families included a substantial area of land in the parish and town, and has survived into the present century. An important estate map of c.1690 shows the disposition of land in the parish, including the extent of the open field arable (Lincs Record Office Brace 17/8).

***Significance***

The historical continuity of ownership of the land around the Hall has a significance for the maintenance of estate records and archives.

***Issues/vulnerability***

The Hall needs to be understood and presented in relation to the historical context of the land ownership of its surrounding estate.

***Policies/recommendations***

The history of the estate and both the preceding and succeeding manorial centres should form part of the presentation of the Hall.

***References:***

J. Hodson and M. Whitworth, *A seventeenth century plan of Gainsborough* (nd)

## Gainsborough Town & Borough

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### ***Development / Documentation***

#### **Origins**

Nothing is known of the primary layout of Gainsborough. When the Danes sailed up the Trent to encamp here in 1013 there was presumably an existing settlement, since it was named in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. It is likely that the settlement related to the river (both wharfage and river crossing), as the primary reason for Gainsborough's location was its being the furthest point on the river Trent that sea-going vessels could reach (Platts 1985, 187). No definite remains of any Danish occupation have been located.

#### **Medieval Gainsborough**

Little is known of the layout of the early Medieval town, though the road pattern and market place suggest the extent of the central area. The castle was outside the town on the north (see Gaz.1.04), and the medieval parish church was on the north edge of the town, adjacent to the Old Hall, possibly suggesting the location of a manorial centre down by the river pre-dating the market town. The 14th-century church tower is the only remaining part of the church (see Gaz.1.06), while the location of an early medieval bridge is uncertain.

The Medieval town presumably lay to the south of the church around the later historic core with built up areas along the river side, along the north-south axis of Church Street/Market place, and the east-west axis of Lord Street/Market Street. There was an ancient market at Gainsborough, and the town was regarded as a borough from the early 13th century (a fair was chartered in 1242) (Letters, 2003). The widening at the north end of Market Place would seem to be a classic market place developed organically on the primary north-south route through the town.

There was a defensive ditch around the town that partly survived until the 1830s (Allen) by which time it had become a common sewer leading into the Trent.

The town developed as an inland port, if not a very prominent one, especially after the decline of Torksey with the silting of the Fossdyke in the 14th century.

#### **Post-medieval and modern**

The continuing position of Gainsborough as a market centre is demonstrated by the creation of the Mart Yard immediately south of the Old Hall, which may be seen as a 17th-century commercial enterprise by the lord of the town, near to the docks (royal confirmations of the market and fairs were obtained in 1637). Although the manor continued to have influence over the town, it town was governed by a Court Leet drawn from the burgesses. The town was a place of some significance during the Civil War, changed hands several times, and was apparently severely damaged by the parliamentary rebels. Indeed, the scale of the Civil War destruction was allegedly so great that major rebuilding took place during the commonwealth and restoration and there appear to be no secular town buildings (apart from the Hall) datable from before the mid-late 17th century. A timber shop of c1640, with living accommodation

over, was in existence in the SE corner of the Market Place until the early 1970s (pers. comm. Neil Taylor).

Much of the surviving historic housing stock of Gainsborough dates from the later 17th or early 18th century and may relate to the supposed rebuilding in the decades following the slighting of the civil war. Interestingly the Old Hall and the church tower appear to be the only survivors from Medieval and Tudor Gainsborough. During the C18 and C19 the town increased in importance as a trade centre for the change from river barges to sea-going vessels, and a number of large warehouses were constructed along the river (some of which remain).

The growth of the town in the 18th and 19th centuries depended on agricultural improvement and the expanding river trade (and with road communications aided by the opening of the Trent bridge in 1791), and is observable in the expansion in the built area of the town, especially in the riverside warehousing (and also the earlier rebuilding of the parish church). The town was prosperous in the Napoleonic Wars, suffered from the post-war depression, and revived with steam navigation on the Trent. While the arrival of the railway, and the opening of the Britannia ironworks led to another phase of expansion, with Gainsborough also holding the major Lincolnshire grain market in the 1840s, and trades such as ship building, rope making, milling and malting, the river trade (and the fairs) were severely affected by the railways.

### ***Significance***

The Hall's siting close to the river and just on the edge of a small but important town with strong trade links is a significant feature which demonstrates the interest of a late-medieval noble family in involvement in trade. It may also help to explain the early plan of the Hall, part urban merchant's house and part noble country house. The changing arrangements for the markets and the development of the Mart Yard represent significant changes that may have led to the abandonment of the Hall as a place of residence in the 18th century.

### ***Issues/vulnerability***

The Hall needs to be understood and presented in relation to the historical context of the life and economic growth (or decline) of the town.

### ***Policies/recommendations***

The history and topography of the town should form part of the presentation of the Hall.

### ***References:***

Thomas Chafer, 'The Economic and Social development of Gainsborough with special reference to the 18th and 19th centuries', unpublished MA Dissertation, Sheffield University, 1956.

G. Platts, *Land and People in Medieval Lincolnshire* (1985)

Samantha Letters, *Gazetteer of Markets and Fairs in England Wales to 1516* (2003)



## All Saints Church

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### *Development / Documentation*

**Phase I-VI (pre-Conquest-1733):** The medieval parish church, which may have been a pre-conquest foundation, was first mentioned in 1185. The church was extended in the 13th to 15th centuries, and included chantry chapels of the de Burgh family. The large building has been replaced except for the impressive 14th-century tower.

**Phase VII (1733-1826):** The church was rebuilt by Smith of Warwick between 1736 and 1744 in a metropolitan classical style.

### *Description*

The medieval church was illustrated by Samuel Buck prior to its destruction, and appears largely to have been a 15th-century rebuilding. The fine classical church building is on a slightly different plan from the medieval church, which extended further east (as is marked out). According to Leland, Sir Thomas Burgh lay 'richely buried' in the church.

The existing churchyard is of greater extent than the medieval one, an extension to the graveyard being consecrated in 1794 as the earlier graveyard was very small and 'the dead were literally buried in heaps' (Stark, 239). There are not large numbers of memorials in the church or churchyard (but two to members of the Hickman family), though the parish registers will include the inhabitants of the Hall.

### *Significance*

The church is a significant component in the manorial topography, and in the early history of the town. Its records are a significant component of the history of the Hall and town. There is an exemplary historical guidebook (Veale 1968).

### *Condition/risks*

The church appears to be in good and well-maintained condition.

### *Issues/vulnerability*

The date and origins of the church are not fully understood, nor its relationship to the site of the Old Hall.

### *Policies/recommendations*

Further research is required on the origins of the church, and its relation to the manor house and town.



## Curtilage and Gardens

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### ***Development / Documentation***

**Phase I-IV (pre-Conquest-1625):** The medieval Old Hall may have been bounded by a moat (at least part of which survived into the C19). This may have survived from an earlier manor on the site and have been later incorporated the northern part of the town ditch.

**Phase IV-VI (1625-1733):** The Mart Yard was created by the Hickmans to the south of the hall, and perhaps partly within the curtilage of the Hall. This open area was bounded by new buildings and served a twice yearly fair.

**Phase VII-VIII (1733-1872):** The later grounds are shown on old drawings, maps and photographs as lying to the north and east of the house. A particularly important record is the map drawn up by Denzil Ibbetson, which shows in some detail the immediate and wider setting of the Hall in 1851. Later photographs show a series of spaces divided by brick walls and made up of orchards, gardens and paddocks. These grounds are shown as being covered by mature trees, shrubs and hedges, and a number of small sheds and lean-to buildings are built against the garden walls. Stark mentions that the moat still partially survived when he was writing (Stark 1817 and 1843).

**Phase IX (1872-1945):** The creation of the new roads and the Edwardian housing around the hall left the building isolated on a rather featureless grass strip bounded by metalled roads. Almost all the trees which once surrounded the house were felled (*Country Life* 1914). During the Second World War the grounds were turned over to allotments for food production.

**Phase X-XII (1945-present):** Following the scheme drawn up by Claude Phillimore c.1950, the grounds around the Old Hall have been planted with a number of trees from the 1950s onwards, and paths have been laid out.

**Current Use:** The curtilage is constantly accessible by the public and is used for leisure and recreation and as a public park. Special events are sometimes held in the grounds.

**Description** The curtilage is limited to the grassed area around the Old Hall, now extensively grown up with trees and shrubs, and with decorative borders. In the centre of the courtyard is a modern re-creation of a herb and flower garden built on raised brick beds, established by the Friends in 1990. Parts are bordered by an iron fence with openings to allow access. At the north east corner is the war memorial set in a small, partially fenced area. Little or nothing remains of the historic grounds and gardens and the walls which subdivided them have been removed (though traces may survive below ground). Aerial photographs in the collection of the National Monuments Record (dating from the 1950s) show that the trees were planted after this date, as the curtilage then was covered by scrubby grass.

These modern grounds do not reflect the historic setting or curtilage of the house and are the creation of the late C19-early C20 changes in the immediate area.

We are fortunate in having a large number of 19th-century drawings and photographs which show the last phase of the gardens in some detail. Among these is a number drawn or taken from the roof of the church which clearly show the gardens on the east side of the hall. These are shown as a lawn bordered by brick walls with an orchard to the east. In some representations wooden planking fences subdivide the garden.

The small yard to the north of the Great Hall is shown on numerous early drawings and photographs. Many of these show that the yard is bordered by a brick wall pierced by at least one door. In the later years of occupation this seems to have been used for storing firewood, hanging washing and other utilitarian uses by the Hall's occupants. An interesting C19 photograph in the collection of the Old Hall shows a view of the Hall looking from the west towards the kitchen and its (now demolished) adjoining building. This photograph shows numerous small paddocks bounded by plank fencing and sparse hedges and trees.

Reconstructing the form of earlier phases of gardens and grounds is problematic as there is very little evidence to investigate. The C19 gardens may of course have been the remains of much earlier gardens but at this time this is purely speculative.

#### **Features:**

The War Memorial dates from just after the First World War and sits in the north-east corner of the grounds in a small enclosure.

The Herb Garden lies in the centre of the south facing courtyard, a modern structure built on symmetrical raised brick beds and planted with flowers and herbs. Other planting and beds are found throughout the grounds.

*Lost features:* Brick garden walls

#### ***Significance***

The curtilage is of significance as the immediate setting of the historic buildings, but has in its present form no great significance, apart from the modern herb garden. The grounds nevertheless have considerable potential for the buried remains of buildings or other features.

#### ***Condition/risks***

The grounds are well maintained and cared for. The grounds and house are overlooked by a large number of residential properties which may act as a deterrence to vandalism.

#### ***Issues/vulnerability***

The question of appropriate divisions, layout, and planting need to be considered for the ground around the hall, so that it does not merely appear as an historic building set in a municipal park. The National Trust covenant on the grounds of the Hall remains a factor in their use and maintenance.

The progressive growth of major trees over the last 50 years (in what was formerly an open area of grassland) has impeded visibility of the Hall and raises the question of risk to below-ground archaeology. Events held in the grounds may also impact on below-ground features. The grounds of the Hall may contain buried evidence both for earlier garden features and for medieval or earlier structures (as well as for known buildings now demolished).

There are a number of loose architectural fragments lying in the grounds and particularly around the herb garden (including a C17 escutcheon). Some of these have already been vandalised and they should be moved to a place of safety.

#### ***Policies/recommendations***

- As part of an overall research strategy for the site, geophysical surveys are required for the whole area of the curtilage to determine the location and extent of survival of structures or early garden features, with selective excavation to confirm detail.
- On the basis of information thus gathered, plans can be formulated for the future treatment and presentation of the area as an appropriate context for the historic building.

## 2 Structure & materials



## General arrangement

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### ***Development / Documentation***

The layout of Gainsborough Old Hall is that of a complex which has grown by accumulation over a period, though the period was relatively short and the building was conceived as a whole from the outset. This method of building by blocks may reflect the realities of the time, with development of a noble house apparently interrupted by an episode of attack and partial destruction in 1469-70, and resumed afterwards with the continuing rise to power and influence of Sir Thomas Burgh. It is possible to associate some at least of the phases of growth with the stages of his political advancement.

Five major building blocks can be identified: the central Great Hall, timber framed and open to its impressive roof, with symmetrical two-storeyed cross wings to house services at one end and private chambers at the other; a timber-framed West Range containing suites of lodgings, attached to the west wing of the Hall; an East Range also timber framed, though now much encased with brick, which contained the principal apartments. The two remaining elements were built wholly in brickwork from the start: the great Kitchen on the north-west side of the Hall and initially detached from it to protect against the spread of fire, and a three-storey Tower built on the north-east corner of the East Range<sup>1</sup>.

A sixth element may have been considered by Thomas Burgh: a south range to connect west and east ranges and create a courtyard house, more capable of defence than the open fronted house as built. Although some provision appears to have been made for its construction in the design of the side ranges, it was never built. The courtyard was eventually enclosed by a curtain wall and gatehouse as part of the remodelling works of William Hickman, who bought the Hall and estate in 1596, but his works on the whole were modest, confined to modernising parts of the house rather than greatly extending it or changing its basic layout.

The chronological relationship of the main C15 elements has been the subject of much debate over a long period - both as regards their absolute dates and their sequence of construction<sup>2</sup>. Documentary evidence for building works to the Hall is almost entirely lacking, and the debate depends on the physical evidence in the historic fabric of the house itself, on comparison with other fifteenth century houses which provide the architectural context for Gainsborough, and on the accumulation of dendrochronological dates for the structure of the house. More work is needed in all these areas, and will help to establish a reliable chronology and development for the Burgh manor house and its later evolution. Meanwhile, a date range for the building of the Hall between about 1460 and 1490 fits most of the available evidence.

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<sup>1</sup>M W Thompson 'The Architectural Context of Gainsborough Old Hall' in ed. Philip Lindley, *Gainsborough Old Hall* (Society of Lincolnshire History and Archaeology, 1991)

<sup>2</sup>Summarised by Thompson op cit. and by P Lindley 'Structure, Sequence and Status: The Architectural History of Gainsborough Old Hall' in *ibid*.





## Categories of Fabric

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### *Description*

<b>Roof coverings</b>	Almost all the ranges of the Hall are roofed with traditional local pantiles, with differing phases of patching and repair visible. All the roofs were re-tiled in a programme from the 1950s (the roofs to the W of the Great Hall) until the early 1980s (the roof of the West Range). Initially sherardized nails were used from necessity, and have caused some cracking of tiles though rusting, with the need for patch repairs. The roofs of the tower, bay windows and stone oriel are covered with lead sheeting over timber decking.
<b>Brickwork</b>	<p>Large parts of the hall are made up of brickwork with numerous patches of rebuild and repair. Apart from the tower and kitchen, brick was also used in the C15 house primarily for chimneys, but successive phases of repair and remodelling have substituted it extensively for timber frame, especially in the E and W ranges. The most impressive original uses of brick are in the tower, the kitchen and in the garderobes and chimneys of the West Range, with moulded and carved brickwork used decoratively.</p> <p>In places the phasing in the brickwork is clear, whilst in others it is less easy to define. Successive phases of restoration and rebuilding have also contributed to the complexity of the brickwork and there has been little attempt at analysis. Brick sizes vary, but seem to bear little relationship to building phases.</p>
<b>Stonework</b>	<p>The only substantial areas of stonework are the rough walls of the Services basement and the spectacular limestone oriel window serving the Great Hall.</p> <p>Stone is also used in connection with brickwork, especially in the door and window dressings, string courses and plinth and parapet cappings of the E range, and has been shown by excavation to have been used for the foundations of the W range and Great Hall.</p>
<b>Carpentry</b>	The original house was primarily of timber-framed construction in oak, with a storeyed hall block and jettied side ranges; much of this survives, including floors and ceilings, despite the amount of later rebuilding in brick. The Great Hall is notable for its open roof without tie beams, and the unusual system of timber buttresses on the principal posts, while the two-storey east range is notable for having a very early example of corridors built as part of the primary framing. The roof of the east range has largely been replaced (although the ceiling is original), but the west range has a clasped purlin roof with diminished principals (as do the surviving bays of the east range).

The west range has three storeys, with a minimal jetty on the first floor and storey posts for the upper floors. The kitchen, while largely built of brick, has a purlin roof with curved queen struts. The side ranges have close studding, and there are other surviving elements such as doors, windows and stairs. There is a substantial number of original floor joists. Later carpentry includes the rebuilt south end of the east range (c.1600), and the new softwood roof of the 1840s in the east range.

**Joinery; panelling**

The only wall-panelling to survive (if indeed it is original to the room) is that of c.1600 in the Panelled Room (Gaz. 6.11), though it is probable that it occurred formerly also in the contemporary rooms above (Gaz. 6.09 and 6.10). Panelling may also have been introduced into the earlier rooms of the C15 house, originally perhaps left bare for hangings, though it is unlikely that any evidence for either arrangement will have survived later repairs and re-pointing.

**Wall -plaster & decoration**

Many internal walls are plastered, whether as infill panels between studding or area plaster on brickwork or laths, and much of this is clearly modern. There are however substantial areas of historic plasterwork surviving. Painted wall surfaces may be found throughout the building and may survive under later limewash. There are the fragile remains of decorative wall paintings in the Parlour (modern kitchen) and in the cafeteria area. There is a high potential for other unrecognised wall painting elsewhere in the hall.

**Ceilings**

Ceilings vary from plain exposed joists with the underside of boarded floors visible or with panels infilled with plaster, to soffit boards inserted between joists (as in the Tower Middle Chamber and in the Great Hall itself) and to elaborate traceried and moulded panels (as in the Upper Great Chamber). There are also C18 and C19 lath and plaster ceilings concealing joists.

**Doorways and doors**

There is a great variety of styles and shapes of doorway and door throughout the Hall. There are a limited number of whole or fragmentary medieval doorways (many altered and restored). There is a far greater number of Post-medieval doorways (many altered and restored); these include a number of elegant late 17th century panelled doors which have been moved and hidden behind later plank doors (these are found on some of the doorways leading from the Great Hall).

Victorian reproduction medieval doorways and doors are found throughout the Old Hall. These range from simple planking doors in plain frames to the elaborate doorways with carved inscriptions and heraldic devices above. As well as these there are a number of plain C19 doors and doorways.

Throughout the Old Hall may be found a number of undated utilitarian doorways mostly of simple plank construction.

There are numerous modern doorways, including some based on medieval styles, and a number of fire doors.

## **Windows and glazing**

There are numerous types of window to be found throughout the Old Hall many of these have been altered or inserted in the 19th and 20th centuries and very little original fenestration remains. There are a number of surviving Medieval timber windows although all have undergone alteration and repair. More common are Medieval brick windows (particularly in the kitchen and tower) as discussed elsewhere however there is some reason to doubt the authenticity of some of these windows. Medieval stone windows survive in the oriel and tower although once again the latter of these may have undergone extensive alteration.

There are a number of Post-medieval timber windows ( again mostly altered and restored) and these may be found throughout the hall. Post-medieval brick windows, post-medieval stone windows and Post-medieval timber framed windows may be found throughout the Hall the best examples being in the East Range, almost all however have undergone C19 and C20 restoration.

C19-C20 utilitarian windows may be found in a number of places particularly on the west wall of the west wing where they replaced earlier sections of timber framing. There are several C19-C20 reproduction medieval windows. At least some of these were inserted into new openings and there should be no presumption that any of these were built to replace or replicate earlier windows.

The glazing itself was only cursorily examined but there appears to be small areas of medieval and early modern glass. Most glass and glazing however is later C19 or C20 replacement. Small areas of medieval stained and painted glass remain, although this appears to have almost all been reset.

## **Staircases**

The main newel stair is built around a massive central post and lies on the south side of the hall range.

The west wing newel stair is a smaller version of the above and is sited to the north of the West Range, moved here during the C16 from the external SE corner of the range.

The staircase at the S end of the E range is an entirely modern stair which allows access to the exhibition space on the First Floor.

The East Range stair with its delicate barley sugar twist stair balusters gives access to the First Floor. From this a narrow winding stair allows access to the second storey at the south end of the east range.



## 3 Hall range



## Main structure

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### *Development / Documentation*

**1) Phase III (1470-1596):** The Hall range was built entirely of timber although there are some later minor brick additions. In plan it is a standard late medieval arrangement of a hall flanked by buttery and pantry at one end and parlour and solar at the other. The solar is matched by a handsome chamber over the services.

Dendrochronological samples from the hall (although only a small sample) suggest a construction date in the 1460s, which may immediately precede the Lancastrian raid of 1469/70. Although the stone oriel may be contemporary with the building of the hall, there is evidence also to suggest a later insertion, and further analysis is needed to resolve the question.

The projecting newel stair on the south is clearly an addition and must belong to the latest phases of Burgh ownership; the Burgh livery badge (a vambrace) is carved at the junction of the stair gallery gables.

**2) Phase IV (1596-1625) :** Changes introduced by the Hickmans are not easily traced within the hall range but this may be because they have been removed or hidden by later alterations or restorations or have remained unidentified. The small area of surviving wall painting in the parlour (modern kitchen) is probably a Hickman addition from the first part of the 17th century.

**3) Phase V (1625-1649) :** The role of the Hall during the civil war is unknown but it seems very likely that a large space such as the Great Hall was used in some capacity during the many actions that took place within and around the town. The survival of the Hall after the complete slighting of the rest of Gainsborough is interesting and merits further historical research.

**4) Phase VI (1649-1733):** The later use of the Hall range up until the departure of the Hickman family by the early 1730s is poorly understood

**5) Phase VII (1733-1826) :** During the long period when the Old Hall underwent varying uses the Great Hall itself was a convenient space for public entertainment and meetings. Most notably it was used as a theatre with raked seating installed at the west end (shown on early plans). The stage was at the east end and the seating was accessed by an external stair(now lost), which is shown in a number of contemporary illustrations. The Hall was also used as a meeting place and corn market. John Wesley preached here on a number of occasions.

**6) Phase VIII (1826-1872):** The work of Denzil Ibbetson, the railway engineer who worked at the Old Hall from 1849-1851, can be found throughout the Hall range and are the most noticeable physical remains of a period of extensive change and restoration. The iron corbels in the Great Hall are the most celebrated Ibbetson addition, associated with repairs to the roof, but other work includes the extensively altered cellar under the Services, the elaborate carved

doors and much of the interior woodwork of the Great Hall and the reproduction medieval casement windows on the north elevation.

**7) Phase IX-XII (1872-present):** Later alterations include the reduction in size of windows on the north elevation of the Great Hall (they appear larger on the *Country Life* photographs of 1914) and the removal of the louvre, with its supporting brackets resting on a moulded beam (also seen on early 20th century photographs) in 1959. The Great Hall was widely used as a civic space for meetings, wedding receptions and functions. More recent additions include the modern basement lavatories (in the old cellar space beneath the Parlour), the modern kitchen (in the old Parlour), modern fire doors and screens in the upper and lower staircase galleries and numerous minor fittings and fixtures.

**Current Use:** The core of this range is the Great Hall forming the centrepiece of the entire property. It is mainly used as an educational resource and is furnished with a mixture of reproduction and modern furniture and items. The old Parlour is used as a modern kitchen. The Solar room above is furnished as a late medieval bedroom and is again used as an educational space accessible to visitors, as are the Buttery and Pantry. The Upper West Chamber is used as museum collection storage and is not open to visitors.

## Description

### Structure and plan

The Hall range is the centrepiece of the medieval household and one of the few areas where we can identify the early function of individual rooms with any certainty. The range is a largely conventional arrangement with services at the low end and domestic rooms at the high, though some problems of interpretation remain such as how the Upper West Chamber was accessed from the rest of the building.

### Roofs

The impressive open roof of the Great Hall is supported by a complex external timber frame with buttresses, though its louvre has been removed. The original roof structures of the end chambers survive in part though extensively rebuilt (the east end has a brick fire partition, and the Upper West Chamber retains a few original timbers but it too is largely C19).

### Elevations

**North** The north elevation is dominated by the Great Hall with its wooden buttresses and high windows. At the east end of the hall is the fine limestone oriel with its delicate window tracery, crenellations and buttresses supporting small crocketed pinnacles. To the east of this lies the gable end of the solar and parlour cross wing, partly obscured behind the C17 brick chimney stack and small outshot building. The remains of a passage linking the oriel and the cellar may be seen on the ground floor elevation.

*Lost feature* The C18 brick range built on the N side of the western cross wing, removed 1878

**East and West** Both these elevations are entirely encased in the adjoining ranges

**South** The south elevation faces onto the open courtyard and is one of the most attractive views of the Hall. The western end is the south wall of the Great Hall, made up of timber framing supported on a low brick plinth. There are is only slight traces of the stair which once gave access from here to the C18 theatre. Towards the east lies the semicircular projecting newel stair, with a brick base (replacing timber studding in the mid C19) supporting a timber structure



topped with a gable. To the east of this is a pair of gables topping a half-timbered first storey with decorative ogee bracing. The ground floor is C19 brick with C19 doors and window.

### ***Significance***

The hall range has considerable significance as a clear example of the conventional late medieval plan, expressed on an impressive scale and in timber framed construction. Well-preserved examples are less common survivals than those in stone.

Significance is mitigated to a degree by loss of the screen and cross passage, and by conversion of the high end Parlour to modern uses.

### ***Condition/risks***

The roof tiles are suffering from the use of iron nails, used of necessity in the 1950s, which threaten to split the tiles, and from delamination.

There are areas in need of minor repair both to brickwork and timberwork, and limewashing is required in places.

A more rigorous regime of maintenance and repair is required particularly on the oriel window where moss and other plants are effecting the stonework.

Roof timbers above the solar are damp and there is evidence of woodworm.

### ***Issues/vulnerability***

There is no safe access to the crawl space above the Great Hall.

### ***Policies/recommendations***

(In addition to recommendations for individual elements - see below).

- Renew roofing tiles with use of copper nails.
- Create safe access to roof spaces above Great Hall and Solar.
- Dendrochronological sampling to help establish date and sequence for construction of Hall Range, as part of an overall research strategy for the building
- Provision of public access to Upper West Chamber
- Interpretation of the uses of the Great Hall and associated spaces, in situ and through printed and audio guides, including function of the 'lost' areas as part of overall strategy for interpretation.

<b><i>References:</i></b>	P Faulkner,	<i>'The Old Hall, Gainsborough'</i> (1950s)
	A Stark	<i>History of Gainsborough</i> (1843)
	Michael Thompson	<i>The Medieval Hall</i> (1995)
	Margaret Wood	<i>The English Medieval House</i> , (1965, repr.1981)
	<i>Country Life</i> , 1914	Gainsborough Old Hall'
	JGP	<i>Condition Survey</i> (2003)



## Great Hall

Room Number:        - -  
Other names:

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### *Development / Documentation*

**1) Phase III (1470-1596):** The Great Hall is the primary structure of the C15 house, with dendrochronological dates suggesting construction during the 1460s. Although it is structurally separate from the cross wings at each end, the three units were conceived and built as an entity. The stone oriel may be contemporary with the building of the hall, though there is some evidence for a later insertion into the existing frame; further analysis is needed to resolve the issue.

**2) Phase VII (1733-1826):** Following the migration of the Hickman family, the Great Hall became a public space, where John Wesley preached on a number of occasions from 1759. After the failure of Hornby's linen factory, it was sublet as a theatre from 1790, with a stage at the dais end, seats in the body of the hall and a gallery, shown on Stark's plan of 1843, which involved destruction of the Screen. The oriel became a changing room.

**3) Phase VIII (1826-1872):** The theatre was closed by Henry Hickman Bacon, with the intention of establishing a corn exchange. Repairs were carried out by Denzil Ibbetson in 1849-51, using cast iron elements, including corbels to terminate the arched roof braces. The hall became a space for banquets and other public events. It was visited by George Elliot in September 1859.

**4) Phase IX (1872-1945):** During the Second World War the hall was used to store furniture etc. from bomb-damaged houses.

**5) Phase X:** By the 1950s the roof was severely dilapidated; the newly founded Friends of the Old Hall Association concentrated on its repair, and replacement works were carried out in the later 1950s and early 60s. The wooden louvre was removed along with the single tie beam and posts which appear on early photographs to have helped support it. A lower range of windows on both sides of the hall was closed and the wall studding reconstructed. The Oriel vault and entrance arch were rebuilt and repaired.

**Current Use:** Public display and events; a central area for education events and re-enactments.

### *Description*

Floor	Red and black clay tiles laid in geometric patterns. E end with raised softwood staging, representing dais. Some herringbone brickwork at W end. An early underfloor heating duct remains concealed beneath the tiled floor.
Walls	Oak timber close-studding with plastered infill panel on W (lower end) and E (upper end) of Hall, and below and between windows on N and S sides. Lower side walls with studding, introduced in 1950s to replace lower range of windows installed in C19. Projecting panelled dado, hiding services.

Roof	<p>The hall has a six-bay roof with arch-braced collars and without tie beams; there are two tiers of windbraces rising to butt-purlins. The seven trusses stand on wall posts, which have the unusual feature of external timber buttresses tenoned into the backs of the posts, while iron tie bars (possibly medieval) have been used to pin the lower arch-braces to the posts and principal rafters. Internally there are cast iron corbels, installed in 1849, on the wall posts at the base of the arch braces. The soffit boards between the common rafters are a modern replacement,<sup>3</sup> and the original louvre was removed (and is preserved in the East Range).</p>
Windows	<p>Three 3-light timber framed mullion and transome windows with diamond leaded lights, at high level on N and S sides of hall, in bays 2, 3 and 4 from W end. At N end of former screens passage, three light mullion and transome window with trefoil-cusped heads, inserted 1849 to block former doorway</p>
Doors	<p>Softwood, vertically planked door to Lower Staircase Gallery (Gaz. 3.11) in rounded four-centred arched doorway. Overdoor panel with arms and devices of Bacon family flanked by oak leaves.</p> <p>Double oak-faced fire-doors in wide arched doorway to modern Kitchen (Gaz. 3.06).</p> <p>Double door in SW (former principal entrance door to Screens Passage) vertically planked, battened externally. Overdoor panel with arms, devices and motto of Bacon 'Toujours Fidelle'.</p> <p>Cross passage door on N side replaced (1849) by window with panel above, relief-carved with inscription in red and gilt : <i>This Ancient Hall, the successive Residence/ of the Earl of Pembroke and the Talbot/Burgh and Hickman Families was restored/ and repaired in the year 1849 by Henry/ Bacon Hickman of Thonock Hall/ youngest son of the late Sir Edmund Bacon/Premier Baronet of England.</i></p> <p>(for doors to Services see Gaz. 3.07)</p>
Oriel	<p>The oriel is attached on the N side of the hall in the area of the dais, of fine-grained creamy limestone ashlar. A five-sided bay with buttresses and crocketed pinnacles at the angles and two light windows between, with single transoms and Perpendicular septfoil traceried heads. The structure has an elaborate stone vault with a central pendant and a high, wide arch towards the Hall, with hollow mouldings; there is a doorway on the NE side (surmounted by a carved lion) giving access to the external stair to the former basement beneath the Parlour. The quarry tile floor of the hall extends into the oriel.</p> <p>There are indications that the oriel was inserted after the frame of the hall was erected, and although it may have been intended as part of the structure from the beginning, there is also the possibility that it was done after a considerable lapse of time, re-using a complete structure brought in from elsewhere. Detailed analysis is required to help resolve the question.</p>
Lost features:	<p><i>The former Screen to the W ( low) end of the hall, removed during the conversion to Theatre in 1790. The mortices for its attachment to the wall posts N and S remain visible</i></p>

<sup>3</sup> Using oak salvaged from Lowther Castle, Cumbria, 19XX. Pers. comm. Neil Taylor

**Collections**     Furnished with reproduction items of the Transformation Project:

In the body of the Hall:	Trestle benches and tables; chest; central hearth feature. Fragmentary medieval glass depicting the Yorkist arms removed from the oriel windows in 1972 and reset in a light box on the north wall.
On the dais:	Trestle table; large joined panelled-back armchair beneath canopy; buffet with four plate shelves;
In the Oriel:	cupboard with painted door panels; standing crucifix; table with cloth; two painted panels on stands; pewter chalice and pricket candlestick; free-standing, octagonal, pedestalled stone piscina

### ***Significance***

The hall as built is one of the finest examples of a timber framed lord's hall remaining in the British Isles, and is of exceptional interest and significance, mitigated somewhat by loss of the screen and north doorway to the cross passage. The roof is a fine example of a late-medieval open roof with unusual construction features. The oriel window is one of a small number of such structures to survive in almost intact condition.

Of considerable significance also is the hall's demonstration of C19 antiquarian restoration and medieval revivalism, including the use of modern materials and the elaborate commemorative panels

[The significance of displayed collection material is treated in Section 8 of the Gazetteer].

### ***Condition/risks***

Roof	Apparently sound though there has been some roof spread from earlier decay of the framed structure. There is evidence for former beetle infestation and water damage (both since controlled).
Walls	Loose plaster especially over screens at west end and at top of south and north walls
Floor	Many of red and black clay tiles cracked, with some areas replaced in concrete screed.

### ***Issues/vulnerability***

Absence of screen inhibits understanding of the hall's original form and functions

Central hearth feature is unconvincing

Loss of louvre

Wall hangings conceal structure and inhibit full appreciation of the Hall as built

Presentation of Oriel as Chapel is misleading

The staging is unrepresentative of the full extent of the original dais

Authenticity of furnishing and its arrangement, and of the hanging banners, is uncertain.

Green-painted rods for suspending hangings are intrusive

Plastic replica food on tables inhibits quality of interpretation

Lighting: sodium uplighters in red troughs above wall plate are intrusive.

### ***Policies/recommendations***

- Floor repairs and protection to mitigate risk of damage
- Careful repairs, cleaning and treatment of studding and infill panels to improve appearance
- Replacement of central hearth feature with more convincing replica

- Discontinue presentation of oriel as chapel
- Review and redefine presentation of hall with further research, in line with overall interpretation strategy
- Consider means to draw or loop back wall-hangings to afford viewing access to framed walls
- Provide hidden storage of eg. reproduction food items when not in use
- Interpret plan and functions of hall on site and in printed and audio guides, in line with overall interpretation strategy.
- Develop new lighting design for Great Hall as part of overall lighting strategy
- Consider removal of hanging banners
- Investigate, with specialist advice, the possibility of safe portable heating to allow use of hall for lectures and performance events.

**References:** P Faulkner, *The Old Hall, Gainsborough* (1950s)  
*Country Life, 1914* Gainsborough Old Hall'  
P Lindley 'Structure, Sequence and Status' (1991)  
A Stark *History of Gainsborough* (1843)  
Michael Thompson *The Medieval Hall* (1995)  
J Vernon 'A Fine Wreck of the Feudal Age...' (1991)  
Margaret Wood *The English Medieval House*, (1965, repr.1981)

JGP *Condition Survey* (2003)

## Solar

Room Number: F8  
Other names:

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### *Development / Documentation*

**1) Phase III (1470-1596):** Built as upper element of eastern cross wing to Great Hall, and probably at same time, though structurally separate. Principal private space at the high end of the hall, accessed by a stair direct from the Parlour below, or externally on S side of cross wing.

**2) Phase V/VI (1625-1733):** Provided in the C17 with a fireplace and chimney on the N side

**3) Phase VII/VIII (1733-1872):** Possible use in association with theatre in Great Hall

**Current Use:** Furnished with reproduction furniture and hangings as a C15 bedchamber, with visitor access and educational group use.

### *Description*

Floor	Wide softwood boards
Walls	Oak timber close-studded with plaster infill panels on all but E wall; E wall flush plastered on C19 brick wall (replacing former cross-frame), with painted finish. Walls concealed behind hangings
Ceiling	Plain plastered below joists, with painted finish
Windows	Oak framed and mullioned window in N wall. Evidence was found that this had been moved from the centre when the fireplace was built.
Doors	Doorway with four-centred arch and moulded jambs, repaired with modern timber; door missing
Features	Fireplace on NE, brick surround in radiating gauged work, tuck-pointed; chimney breast, plastered and painted. Squint to overlook body of Hall, set in opening double doors which simulate close studding on both sides, in softwood

**Collections**      Furnished with reproduction items of the Transformation Project:

Bed with tester and hangings  
small coffer; large chest; livery cupboard; oval table; X-frame chair; painted lidded boxes (one large, one small) bench seat with lattice back; embroidery frame; circular woven basketry firescreen; small trestle table; arched, hinged towel rail by window; modern cheval glass.  
Reproduction ceramic and pewter items; pendant chandelier

### ***Significance***

The Solar is an integral and important part of the medieval house. Few historic features remain in this room although the past restorations do not appear to have been unsympathetic.

[The significance of displayed collection material is treated in Section 8 of the Gazetteer].

### ***Condition/risks***

Some minor cracking to plasterwork of walls and ceiling

Evidence of substantial water penetration and damp-affected plaster in south-east corner of room

Boarded floor uneven with some gaps and loose boards

Cracked hearthstone to fireplace, with one half loose. Crack to left of centre of brick arch, continued in plaster above.

### ***Issues/vulnerability***

Authenticity, density and layout of furniture.

Lighting by uplighters is intrusive.

Floor covering may be necessary.

### ***Policies/recommendations***

- Repairs to plasterwork and brickwork of fireplace; resolve problem of water ingress
- Protection to boarded floors by use of floor covering (modern or reproduction medieval)
- Review and redefine presentation of room with further research on authenticity and range of furniture displayed, and on variety of bed and wall hangings, in line with overall interpretation strategy
- Develop new lighting design for Great Hall as part of overall lighting strategy

### ***References:***

P Faulkner, *The Old Hall, Gainsborough* (1950s)

P Lindley 'Structure, Sequence and Status' (1991)

JGP *Condition Survey* (2003)

Margaret Wood *The English Medieval House*, (1965, repr.1981)



## Parlour (kitchen)

Room Number: G9  
Other names: Solar Undercroft  
Modern kitchen

### *Development / Documentation*

**1) Phase III (1470-1596):** Built with the Solar above as the E cross wing to the Great Hall, for use as a private withdrawing space immediately off the dais end. Possibly the site of the stair to the Solar.

**2) Phase VIII (1826-1872):** Used as annex to Great Hall for public banquets and other events.

**3) Phase XI (1872-1945):** Converted during the 1970s as a modern kitchen for supplying catering to events and activities organised by FOHA

**4) Phase XII (1979-present)s:** Asbestos-based ceiling replaced 1993 with non-asbestos board

**Current Use:** Continuing use as kitchen for catering events.

### *Description*

Floor	Concrete platform, constructed 1976 over basement area, vinyl-tiled. Floor level raised to give headroom in lavatories below; 3 steps up inside door from Lower Staircase Gallery (Gaz.3.11).
Walls	S wall of oak timber close-studding with plaster infill panels. Other walls with plastic faced panelling, concealing: N wall: brickwork of fireplace and stack, with studded wall at E end E wall: brickwork (C19, replacing earlier cross-frame and studding) W wall: studded, with plaster infill panels and wide double-door access to Great Hall
Ceiling	Suspended ceiling panels, hiding earlier ceiling; at S end above doorway, ceiling plastered and painted
Window	Oak framed window in N wall, 4-light, C19 within earlier frame.
Doors	Folding modern hardwood door, modern reproduction in medieval style, in original arched doorway opening
Features	On studding and panels at SE corner, sketch of heraldic mantling in hard black curvilinear line

*Lost features:* Except for the S wall, all traces of the former arrangement and decoration of the space have been concealed by the conversion works of 1976.

***Significance***

The parlour was one of the most important spaces in the medieval house and would have been one of the most important private spaces for the lord and his family. The room has been obviously much effected by the modern alterations and these have obscured almost all the historic fabric. The fragment of wall painting however may signify significant elements hidden by the modern coverings.

***Condition/risks***

Some peeling and flaking to paint finishes though otherwise in sound condition

***Issues/vulnerability***

Current function of room is highly visible to visitors in the Stair Lobby area, and is intrusive. Some screening is required

Any thought to reconstruct the room to its earlier form is probably negated by the raised floor level and the necessity for the public services created below it. Some thought might be given to means of interpreting its earlier form and function

***Policies/recommendations***

- Devise permanent baffle screening to hide activity within room from public view from the Lower Staircase Gallery
- Consider means to interpret room's former use, appearance and significance, in situ and in printed or audio guide

***References:***

- . P Faulkner, *The Old Hall, Gainsborough* (1950s)
- JGP *Condition Survey* (2003)

## Basement below Parlour

Room Number: B1/B2/B3  
Other names: Modern lavatories

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### ***Development / Documentation***

**1) Phase III (1470-1596):** Area probably formed an original cellar below high-end Parlour of the C15 house. Cellar accessed from outside on the N, perhaps using door in E side of oriel.

**2) Phase XI (1971-1979):** Conversion to men's and women's lavatories in 1976 with access down new stair from the East Range passage. Boiler house constructed within northern section. Part of original cellar (now inaccessible) survived the reconstruction.

**Current Use:** Public lavatories with adjacent boiler house.

### ***Description***

Two areas, men's and women's lavatories:

Floor	Solid concrete floor with vinyl covering
Walls	Variously new brickwork, plastered partitions and ceramic tiling
Ceiling	Plastered and emulsion painted
Doors	Three oak veneered access doors (two to lavatories one to boiler house).
Features	Cubicles, with urinals and wcs; stainless steel washbasins etc. Boiler Room plant in B3

***Lost features*** *Prior to conversion works, the rectangular foundation platform for a stair remained in the SE corner of the former basement. The stair, which would have connected Parlour with Solar, may also have descended to the basement*

### ***Significance***

Though the cellar formerly had significance as a functioning element of the historic house (and possibly one of the earliest surviving parts of the C15 Hall), such significance has been eclipsed with its conversion to new uses

### ***Condition/risks***

Generally in sound condition; surviving portion of former basement is inaccessible and in poor condition

### ***Issues/vulnerability***

Lack of visitor understanding of earlier form and function  
Lavatory provision for disabled visitors is inadequate

***Policies/recommendations***

- Consider means of interpreting the former character of this space through in situ explanation and mention in printed and audio guides
- If provision for visitors with impaired mobility cannot be provided here, an alternative location must be pursued

***References:***

E A Gee *Notes on Gainsborough Old Hall* (unpublished, 1972)  
JGP *Condition Survey* (2003)

## Upper West Chamber

Room Number: F6  
Other names: Chamber over services

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### ***Development / Documentation***

**1) Phase III (1470-1596):** A spacious and high status chamber in the C15 house, though situated at the low end in the W cross wing of the Great Hall, and built at the same time in the 1460s. Its position over the Services may suggest use by the Steward of the Burgh household.

**Current Use:** Collections storage, inaccessible to visitors.

### ***Description***

Floor	Softwood boards
Walls	Oak timber close-studded and braced at corner positions, with plastered infill panels
Roof	The chamber is open to the roof, which has queen-post trusses, with flat purlins, appears to have been extensively renewed in the 19th century (and was only minimally repaired in the 20th).
Windows	Oak framed, mullion and transome window in N wall, C19 5-light with cusped heads Small single-light modern window in SW corner.
Doors	Nine-panelled oak door, with raised and fielded panels, to Chamber over the Servery (Gaz. 4.04) <a href="#">?Door on S side to E range First Floor, concealed behind shelving.</a>
Features	Brick fireplace with four-centred arch and chimney stack; bricks laid in herringbone pattern to back of fireplace. Stone surround to hearth

**Collections** Stored reserve collection material on free-standing metal racking

### ***Significance***

A significant room of the medieval house and in the life of the household, and a rare example in timber frame of a characteristic element associated with a medieval Great Hall, the Chamber over the Services.

### ***Condition/risks***

Some split timbers and evidence of former beetle infestation in roof timbers. Minor shrinkage cracks around rendered wall panels.

Oak boarded floor worn though in reasonable condition

Small diagonal crack at top right hand corner of fireplace.  
Some corrosion in metal sub-frames of opening lights to north window

***Issues/vulnerability***

Lack of public access to a significant space of the C15 Hall  
Lack of environmental control for storage of collections

***Policies/recommendations***

- Repairs to minor areas of damage and inclusion in future maintenance programmes
- With eventual transfer out of the building of stored collections, public access (as formerly) can be provided, with inclusion of room within overall interpretation strategy for the house

***References:***

P Faulkner, <i>The Old Hall, Gainsborough</i> (1950s)	
JGP	<i>Condition Survey</i> (2003)
Margaret Wood	<i>The English Medieval House</i> , (1965, repr.1981)

## Services: Pantry, Buttery, Servery Passage

Room Numbers: G3/G4

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### ***Development / Documentation***

**1) Phase III (1470-1596):** the conventional late medieval arrangement beyond the Screens Passage at the low end of the Great Hall, and built within the W cross wing at the same time in the 1460s.

**2) Phase IV (1596-1625):** *Butterie* listed in Hickman's 1625 Inventory, with equipment which implies continuing use. Associated with it in the listing are *both the Sellors*, - presumably the one below the services and also that below the Parlour.

**3) Phase VII/VIII (1733-1872):** Operated as support facilities to the theatre in the Great Hall, shown in Stark's 1843 plan.

**Current Use:** Public display. Current presentation of rooms has reversed their original functions, so that the former Pantry is presented as 'the Buttery' and vice versa. *Note that the Gazetteer keeps name and historic function together, using **Buttery** for the space south of the passage (G3), and **Pantry** for that to the north (G4).*

### ***Description***

Floor	Buttery (G3): concrete below woven straw matting. Timber ramp with vinyl surface and steel handrail both sides Pantry (G4): Brick, laid in herringbone pattern Passage: Sheet vinyl ramp from Servery to Great Hall, laid over sloping stone-flagged floor
Walls	Oak timber close-studding with lime washed plaster infill panels
Ceiling	Exposed oak joists and underside of softwood boards to floor above
Windows	Buttery: 2-light oak framed and mullioned window in W wall with diamond leaded lights. Pantry: 4-light oak framed and mullioned and transomed window in N wall.
Doors	From Great Hall: Three doorways, to Pantry, Passage and Buttery, flat, four-centred arches unified within tri-partite chamfered frame, medieval with some later repairs. Double doors to Passage softwood, vertical planked, with push bars. Double doors to Pantry, with vertical softwood planks over C17 double oak panelled doors; single door to Buttery, vertical softwood planks over 4-panelled late C17 door.
Features	In W wall of Buttery, access to external door to basement, with steep stone steps down.

<b>Collections</b>	Mixed displays of old and modern reproduction furniture and equipment:
Pantry:	Furnished as Buttery, with: reproduction large oak cupboard; modern reproduction items - barrels; ceramic jugs and drinking vessels; lanterns; stave-built buckets and flagons
Buttery:	C18 oak cupboard ; modern reproduction items - baskets; modern table; cast cauldron on trivet

### ***Significance***

The rooms are well preserved and have seemingly undergone only slight alteration. They are an important part of the medieval hall and house. The three medieval door surrounds through which the hall is accessed are interesting and significant survivals.

[The significance of displayed collection material is treated in Section 8 of the Gazetteer].

### ***Condition/risks***

Condition of ceiling and walls is reasonably sound, with some minor shrinkage cracking to rendered panels.

Brick floors worn though reasonably sound; some loose or missing paviors in G4 Pantry. Doors from Pantry, Buttery and Passage are worn and require attention. None of the three doors is fire-resistant.

### ***Issues/vulnerability***

Push bar and instruction on doors to Kitchen Passage are visually intrusive

### ***Policies/recommendations***

- Careful repairs to doors and doorway framework to protect historic fabric
- Reset loose paviors in Pantry
- Review and redefine detail of presentation of the Services rooms, with further research on equipment, in line with overall interpretation strategy
- Investigate possibilities for replacing fire-escape provision of passage doors with less intrusive but acceptable alternative.

<b>References:</b>	P Faulkner, <i>The Old Hall, Gainsborough</i> (1950s)
	P Lindley 'Structure, Sequence and Status' (1991)
	J Hodson & M Whitworth <i>The contents of Gainsborough Old Hall in 1625</i> (nd)
	JGP <i>Condition Survey</i> (2003)



## Basement below Services

Room Number: Below G2/G3  
Other names:

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### ***Development / Documentation***

**1) Phase III (1470-1596):** Probably a cellar space below the W cross wing of the C15 house from the beginning, though evidence of its origins is largely concealed by the later works of Phase IX. It may have been a survival from an earlier arrangement in this position pre 1460s.

**2) Phase IV (1596-1625):** the 1625 Inventory mentions *both the Sellors* (containing 20 hogsheads) , of which this must be one. The other cellar was presumably that below the Parlour.

**3) Phase IX (1872-1945):** The present arrangement of jack arches with iron beams supported by iron columns was introduced in a late 1870s phase of work (date '1878' on cast columns)

**Current Use:** Storage of furniture etc

### ***Description***

Full examination of the space is limited by stored material

Floor	Brick
Walls	Partly brickwork, with some stone rubble walling
Ceiling	Brickwork jack arches on iron beams, with supporting cast iron posts, dated '1878'
Door	Of thick oak planks, diagonally boarded on inner face, vertical externally
Features	Access steps on north side, from outside

### ***Significance***

The basement is a significant associated element of the medieval hall range but has undergone much alteration in the 19th century. Victorian features such as the iron columns and hand pump are of interest as they remain largely unaltered by any later phase of repair.

### ***Condition/risks***

Dense storage of material prevents full examination of the space and represents a fire risk. The basement has flooded in the past, though not recently.

### ***Issues/vulnerability***

The condition of basement walls may be significant, since they form the foundation to external walls

***Policies/recommendations***

- The basement should be cleared of stored material to allow inspection, carry out any necessary repairs and minimise fire risk.
- The basement should be connected to the fire detection system.
- Public access to the basement should be considered, at least on an occasional, guided basis.

***References:***

- J Hodson & M Whitworth  
*The contents of Gainsborough Old Hall in 1625* (nd)
- JGP                      Condition Survey (2003)

## Principal Stair

Room Number: F7  
Other names:

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### ***Development / Documentation***

**1) Phase III (1470-1596):** Built towards the end of the phase to replace an earlier stair, which must have been in the same general location. This grander stair was built probably 1584-96 for the 5th Lord Burgh rather than in the Hickman period, with the Burgh device of a vambrace at the junction between the two gables of the stair gallery.

**2) Phase VIII (1826-1872):** Shown on Stark 1843 plan as *Great Oak Staircase*, with direct connection to the Great Hall theatre and an opening to the courtyard on the S, though separated by a partition from the Lower Stair Gallery

**Current Use:** Visitor access and circulation

### ***Description***

Central newel post of large diameter, with solid baulk treads of oak morticed into studs of timber-framed enclosure, now covered by softwood boards, connecting Lower Staircase Gallery (Gaz 3.11) with Upper (Gaz 3.10). The central mast is built-up from four sections, possibly in the manner of a ship's mast.

Walls	Lower half of brickwork (replacing former studding in mid C19) , internally plastered and painted. Upper half with oak timber close-studding and plaster infill panels
Ceiling	Lath and plaster ceiling, painted
Doors	Single wrought iron gate at foot of stair, C18/C19, closing against newel, with independently operating upper and lower sections.
Features	Understair cupboards with C17 panelled wainscot doors. Cupboard divided internally by brick wall supporting underside of stair

### ***Significance***

A highly unusual and defining feature of the Late Elizabethan house and a significant part of the main view of the Hall from the south.

### ***Condition/risks***

Stair treads generally worn but in sound condition.

Doors to under-stair cupboards slightly damaged. Doors do not lock. Internal brickwork to cupboard spalled in places.

Newel split and variously repaired; some plaster filler loose.

***Issues/vulnerability***

Softwood treads conceal character of original oak baulk treads

Stair presents no possibilities of adequate access for mobility-impaired visitors.

***Policies/recommendations***

- Consideration should be given to protecting or replacing softwood treads, possibly with means to indicate the character of the original oak baulks.
- The newel post should be carefully repaired, with unobtrusive, uniform means of treating cracks and areas of damage
- Alternative means of access to 1st Floor needs to be identified elsewhere. The stair and its associated Upper and Lower Galleries would not be able to accommodate eg a lift installation without unacceptable impact visually and on historic fabric.

***References:*** P Faulkner, *The Old Hall, Gainsborough* (1950s)  
P Lindley 'Structure, Sequence and Status' (1991)  
JGP *Condition Survey* (2003)

## Upper Staircase Gallery

Room Number: F7  
Other names:

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### *Development / Documentation*

**1) Phase III (1470-1596):** Built with Principal Stair at end of the phase (c.1584-96) to create access to the Solar and to other private and state apartments in the E Range

**2) Phase XII:** Fire doors and partition wall installed to create separation from East Range Upper Passage (Gaz. 6.03).

**Current Use:** Visitor access and circulation

### *Description*

Floor	Softwood boarded floor
Walls	Oak timber close studding with plaster infill panels on N and S sides. East wall is modern partition with modern solid timber/partially glazed doors to E Range
Ceiling	Lath and plaster ceiling, emulsion painted; downstand beam running N-S.
Windows	Oak framed and mullioned windows, 4 x 4 lights, on S side, forming continuous band of fenestration.
Doors	Double fire doors in solid partition wall on E side to E range passage (Gaz. 6.03), set within wide 4-centred archway (C19)
Features	C18 oak balustrade to stair

<b>Collections</b>	C18 joined oak settle with 5-panelled back and scrolled arms Oak box settle with C17 elements; scrolled cresting and lifting seat  C17 oak chest Reproduction joined settle in C17 style
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### *Significance*

An important element of the late Elizabethan house, both in terms of its plan and the improvements in access which it allowed, and the contribution which it makes to the view of the house from the south.

[The significance of displayed collection material is treated in Section 8 of the Gazetteer].

***Condition/risks***

Walls and ceilings with minor hairline cracks.

Softwood floor worn though generally in sound condition. Some gaps between boards, and evidence of beetle attack especially at western end.

***Issues/vulnerability***

Density and quality of displayed furniture

Fire doors and partition are intrusive and inhibit understanding of the space

Is interpretative label re E Range on wrong side of door?

Uplighters are intrusive

***Policies/recommendations***

- Consider protective measures for softwood floor.
- Consider redesign and replacement of fire partition and doors, with specialist advice, to reduce visual impact and separation from E Range passage, while retaining necessary fire protection.
- Review presentation of Gallery with further research, particularly as to type and density of furniture, in line with overall interpretation strategy.

***References:***

- . P Lindley 'Structure, Sequence and Status' (1991)
- JGP *Condition Survey* (2003)

## Lower Staircase Gallery

Room Number: G8, Area A  
Other names:

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### *Development / Documentation*

**1) Phase III (1470-1596):** An important space built together with the Principal Stair at the end of the phase (c.1584-96), connecting the Great Hall with the Solar, Parlour and important rooms at both levels in the E Range. If not initially, it may eventually have come to replace the entrance to the Screens Passage as the principal point of entry to the house.

**2) Phase VIII (1826-1872):** Shown on Stark 1843 plan as an entrance hall, though without obvious connections to other areas, and partitioned off from the foot of the Stair.

**Current Use:** Visitor access and circulation

### *Description*

Floor	Solid floor with carpeting; modern ramp leading to Great Hall with sheet vinyl finish and handrail both sides
Walls	North wall is of oak close studding with plaster infill panels on oak laths. South wall is of brickwork plastered internally
Ceiling	Plastered, emulsion painted
Windows	3-light oak framed and mullioned window in S wall, C19 replacement
Doors	Double doors on S wall from outside, with two steps down, framed and vertically planked Single planked door to Great Hall. Folding door (modern in medieval style) to modern kitchen, (Gaz. 3.04).
Features	Modern timber and wired glass fire partition and doors (c 1970-71) running N-S at centre of space.

**Collections** Press cupboard against S wall (made up from C17 fragments).  
Pendant lantern

### *Significance*

An area of considerable historical and archaeological interest, in charting the development and operation of the house, though modern additions for fire protection and ramped access have affected its historic integrity.

[The significance of displayed collection material is treated in Section 8 of the Gazetteer].

***Condition/risks***

Some minor hairline cracks to plasterwork walls and ceiling  
Indications of rising damp on south wall due to high external ground level.  
Apart from general wear and tear, all doors appear to be in fair condition

***Issues/vulnerability***

Variations in floor level conceal original arrangement and are to a degree intrusive.  
Fire partition and doors are intrusive.

***Policies/recommendations***

- Careful repairs to plasterwork and doors, with resolution of damp problems on S wall.
- Thought should be given to redesigning the fire-partition and access ramps, with specialist advice, to reduce visual impact and help recover the integrity of the space.
- Review presentation of Gallery with further research, particularly as to type and density of furniture, in line with overall interpretation strategy.

***References:***

P Lindley        ‘Structure, Sequence and Status’ (1991)  
JGP        *Condition Survey* (2003)



## 4 Kitchen block



## Main Structure

Room Number: G5; G6  
Other names:

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### ***Development / Documentation***

**1) Phase III (1470-1596):** The earliest phases of the kitchen block appear to belong to the first stage of building in the 1460s or 70s, initially as a structure detached from the hall range. The building is dominated by its two great brick chimneys which were used for roasting. Brears (2003) has identified a boiling house, charcoal range and pastry within the building although other elements of food preparation may have taken place elsewhere. The kitchen also contains a clerk's office and a small accommodation room with fireplace all of which are primary. It is clear that a galley (now lost) must have linked some of the small rooms built around the chimneys.

The Servedy (Gaz. 4.03), initially an open space between hall and kitchen, was overbuilt shortly afterwards; the garderobe and timberwork of the upper room are identical to those found elsewhere in the Hall.

**2) Phase IV (1596-1625):** There is little evidence of later alteration to the kitchen and it may have continued to be used in much the same manner as before. The pastry oven on the west wall is traditionally given as early C17 (Brears 2003, Lindley 1991, etc) and may have replaced an earlier structure.

**3) Phase V-Phase VI (1625-1733):** The later use of the kitchen is unclear. It seems likely however that it continued its former uses although the furniture and fittings associated with it were removed in later restorations.

**4) Phase VII (1733-1826):** The Old Hall was subdivided and used for a number of purposes. The function of the old kitchens during this period is unknown although there is some evidence to indicate that they remained at least partly in use as kitchens for providing food to the parish poor (Stark 1843).

**5) Phase VIII-X (1826-1971):** C19 plans (Stark, 1843 and Ibbetson, 1851) show the kitchen as being subdivided by a (now vanished) internal wall running diagonally from the north fireplace to the pastry door. On Stark's plan the block is labelled as *Kitchen and Offices*. A major reworking of the roof structure in the later C19 may have introduced the distinctive but anachronistic louvre, which does not appear on earlier photographs. Repairs to the roof by the Friends of the Old Hall largely consisted of re-tiling the exterior.

**Current Use:** The servedy, clerk's office, boiling house, pastry and main kitchen are all open to the public. The small spiral stair in the Servedy is used to access the upper chamber (Gaz 4.04) which serves as storage space and is not currently open to public access. The small upper rooms in the kitchen are inaccessible and are partly used as museum storage. The kitchen is used as an educational space and occasionally for small-scale cooking demonstrations.

### **Description**

**Structure and plan:** Though seemingly intact, the kitchen block has undergone considerable alteration and repair. A number of interior details are difficult to understand (particularly the function and relationship of the small 1st-floor rooms. The extent of C19 rebuilding and re-fenestration is also unclear, many of the windows and doors not corresponding to those shown on early plans, drawings and photographs and whilst some may be rebuilt in former positions, others may have been added. The two buildings formerly attached on the west and north sides (until 1878) have left suspiciously little trace on the fabric and the extent to which the external walls were rebuilt on these sides is unknown. It is difficult to judge the scale and extent of alteration in the absence of any detailed survey or analysis.

### **Roof**

The roof is open to the rafters. There are three principal trusses with tie beams and arch-braces to the collars (these rise from queen posts that are asymmetrically placed in relation to the wall tops). There are three purlins with windbraces (in long and short pairs). The common rafters meet at the apex with no ridge piece, and the laths are visible with the underside of the tiles. Two trusses span either side of the glazed louvre which is an octagon supported in a square frame. This louvre arrangement is C19 and the extent to which it followed pre-existing fabric is unknown. The upper chamber over the servery (Gaz. 4.04) has two more bays identical in style to the hall range.

### **Elevations**

North	The north elevation is complex. At the centre lies the massive bulk of the northern chimney stack flanked by a small outshot with round-headed windows to the east and three round headed windows to the west. On the east end of the building is a problematic timbered projection supported on a vertical post. This holds the garderobe for the chamber (Gaz. 4.04) and beneath it is a large round-headed window. This projection and the stonework around it is unusual and would once have been encased (at least partially) by the lost range to the north. This area may be the result of inventive C19 rebuilding and further analysis is required.
South	The south elevation is simpler with the central chimney flanked by a number of doors and windows. The placing of these does not in every case match the doors and windows those shown on historic plans and analysis is required to establish their date and sequence.
East	The east wall abuts the hall range and is partially obscured by it. The gable is timber whilst the lower part is brick and lit by small round-headed windows. The unusual projecting garderobe supported on a post sits on the north side. This face was long hidden by the (now lost) north wing and it is unclear how much of this wall was rebuilt after its demolition in 1878.
West	The west wall has a large timbered gable over a brick lower half which is pierced by round-headed windows of varying sizes. The elevation was formerly largely hidden behind a (now lost) range and as with much of the kitchen the historical authenticity of the fenestration and much of the gable itself is in doubt until analysis is carried out and evidence gathered from early photographs and other illustrations. At the foot of the W wall in the centre is the low brick structure housing the domed bread ovens.

<i>Lost feature</i>	<i>Brick range on N side of cross wing, with associated yard, removed c.1878 in Phase IX.</i>
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***Significance***

The kitchen block is an unusually intact and significant example of a late medieval domestic kitchen. Although there are later elements of addition and repair these do not detract from the considerable importance of this range and its internal arrangements.

***Condition/risks***

(see individual elements)

***Issues/vulnerability***

Lack of understanding of the detailed form as built and the history of development of the complex.

***Policies/recommendations***

- Detailed survey and analysis is needed to elucidate the original designed form of the building and its relationship to the hall range, together with the detail of adaptation and remodelling, particularly during C19 works.

***References:***

- |                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| P Faulkner,         | <i>The Old Hall, Gainsborough</i> (1950s) |
| P Brears            | Letter re Kitchen (Feb. 2003)             |
| A Stark             | <i>History of Gainsburgh (1843)</i>       |
| <i>Country Life</i> | 'Gainsborough Old Hall' (xxx 1914)        |
| JGP                 | <i>Condition Survey</i> (2003)            |



## Main Kitchen

Room Number: G6  
Other names:

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### ***Development / Documentation***

**1) Phase III (1470-1596):** Kitchen block probably constructed 1460/70, separate from Great Hall range. Shortly afterwards (within the early part of the phase) the intervening servery area was built over, with the creation of the chamber above (Gaz. 4.04).

**2) Phase IV (1596-1625):** William Hickman apparently carried out little remodelling; the *Kitchen*, with *scullery*, *two larders* and *the chambers about the kitchen* are mentioned in the 1625 inventory

**3) Phase VII-VIII (1733-1872):** Main kitchen divided diagonally to separate the bake ovens from the area between the opposing fireplaces (shown on Stark 1843 plan through to Garner and Stratton plan of 1929).

**Current Use:** Displayed furnished and equipped; a central element in visitor access and educational activities

### ***Description***

Floor	Brick and tiles laid in regular lines, possibly C18, with some areas of modern concrete patching.
Walls	Oak close studding at upper levels above brickwork
Ceiling	The roof space is open to the rafters (see 4.01), with the laths and underside of the pantiles visible.
Windows	The kitchen is lit by a number of windows some of which may be original whilst others are replacements. In W gable two windows light the hall, these are C19. Similarly the lights of the glazed louver are entirely C19. The main brick core of the kitchens is lit by a number of small brick arched lights and some rectangular brick windows these vary from C15 to C19.
Doors	Doorway to Servery (Gaz 4.03) , originally exterior door to Kitchen, with stone jambs and lintel, roll moulded with low chamfer stops. Housing for door to close from kitchen side, with pintles and bolt-holes.
Features	Fireplaces; two great roasting fireplaces sited on N and S walls of kitchen. Baking ovens, on W side with oven chambers exterior to the building. Subsidiary offices with chambers over, located at NE, NW and SW corners within the space of the Kitchen, originally accessed and connected by galleries though now inaccessible. Minor features include fragmentary boiler bases and an undated pulley on the south wall.

*Lost features:* Internal dividing walls (shown on Stark's plan) have been removed and virtually no trace remains of them.

**Collections** In main body of kitchen:  
C19 oak kitchen table; 2 other tables; C19 butcher's chopping block; ladder;  
modern reproduction osier baskets; wooden bowls and trenchers; ceramic  
jugs and bowls; stave-built buckets and bins; stave-built churn

In subsidiary offices:  
3 C18 chest fronts, one in each

In fireplaces:  
Modern reproduction spits, spit racks, andirons; iron cauldrons on trivets;  
chimney crane, spoons and ladles; stools; logs

### **Significance**

The kitchen is one of the finest within a house at this level to have survived relatively unaltered from the late medieval period. The retention of so many features including elements that can be related to the differing functions of the kitchen (boiling house, clerk's office etc) are of exceptional architectural and archaeological interest.

[The significance of displayed collection material is treated in Section 8 of the Gazetteer].

### **Condition/risks**

Walls generally sound. There are stepped cracks over both main fireplaces and the oak lintels are deflected; this indicates some past movement, though it does not appear to be worsening. Some efflorescence in walls to rear of south fireplace.

The brick floor is extensively worn and in places has broken up completely. This erosion extends to the subsidiary rooms at the NE, NW, and SW corners of the Kitchen.

Rear walls of both fireplaces, protected by sheet iron fire-backs are little eroded since last repairs in 19XX

### **Issues/vulnerability**

Condition of floor constitutes a health and safety risk for visitors and school users, though furniture has been re-arranged to protect the worst sections. Repairs to the historic fabric of the floor are necessary to arrest further deterioration and minimise risk to users.

### **Policies/recommendations**

- Relaying of brick floor on well-prepared base, with additional paviors where necessary.
- Review and revise presentation of kitchen with further research, including base date at which it is shown and the range and type of equipment appropriate.

### **References:**

- P Brears Letter re Kitchen (Feb 2003)  
P Faulkner, *The Old Hall, Gainsborough* (1950s)  
T Garner and A Stratton,  
*Architecture in England during the Tudor period* (1929)  
A Stark *History of Gainsborough* (1843)  
JGP *Condition Survey* (2003)



## Servery

Room Number: G5  
Other names:

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### *Development / Documentation*

**1) Phase III (1470-1596):** Initially the area of the Servery represented an open fire-break between Kitchen and hall range. Early in the phase, the area was built over with a chamber above, perhaps accessed by ladder. The W wall of the cross wing may have been rebuilt at the same time, incorporating a chimney stack to serve fireplaces in the new chamber and in the existing Upper West Chamber of the cross wing.

**2) Phase IV (1596-1625):** Servery not individually mentioned in 1625 Inventory

**3) Phase VIII (1826-1872):** Servery shown on Stark (1843) plan and on 1851 Ibbetson map of Gainsborough with a through passage from NE to SW of the hall buildings

**4) Phase XII (1979-present):** Concrete floor (replacing limeash and stone flags) introduced for health and safety reasons in 1980s.

**Current Use:** Public access, circulation and display.

### *Description*

Floor	Modern solid concrete floor, with stone flagged area to the Main Kitchen entrance and some brick paviors by the kitchen and at foot of stair to 1st Floor.
Walls	Brickwork, flush pointed.
Ceiling	Oak joists and underside of softwood boarded floor above
Windows	The space is lit by arched brick windows on the north and north-east walls
Doors	There is a modern planked door on the south wall giving access to the outside.
Features	Servery hatch from Kitchen, lined with heavy oak planking; head supported by single old timber centre post, with additional support from two cast-iron columns dated 'HBB 1878. On E side, paired brick piers, with arched space between, support chimney stack to fireplaces in rooms above.

**Collections** C18 dough bin (lid missing)

### ***Significance***

An area of considerable historical and archaeological interest, in charting the development and operation of the kitchens and contributing to the exceptional significance of the complex. Although this area has undergone 19th and 20th century alteration and repair many significant elements remain in place.

[The significance of displayed collection material is treated in Section 8 of the Gazetteer].

### ***Condition/risks***

Walls generally sound, though with extensive hard mortar pointing

Timber of serving opening is generally sound, though with two iron supports (1878) to the oak planked head.

Floor generally sound, though with area of eroded brick paving by entrance to main kitchen.

### ***Issues/vulnerability***

Dough bin might be removed, or missing lid replaced

Possibility of renewing hard cement pointing could be considered and also removing concrete floor and replacing with an appropriate and sympathetic material (limeash and stone flags).

### ***Policies/recommendations***

- Consideration should be given to replacing hard concrete floor with an appropriate material, preferably the lime ash and stone flags formerly in this location before the late 1980s.
- Consideration also to replacing hard cement pointing with more appropriate lime mortar, in line with general policies.

### ***References:***

P Brears	Letter re Kitchen (Feb 2003)
P Faulkner,	<i>The Old Hall, Gainsborough</i> (1950s)
T Garner and A Stratton,	<i>Architecture in England during the Tudor period</i> (1929)
D Ibbetson	<i>Map of the Town and Port of Gainsborough, (1851)</i>
A Stark	<i>History of Gainsborough</i> (1843)
JGP	<i>Condition Survey</i> (2003)

## Chamber over the Servery

Room Number: F5

Other names:

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### *Development / Documentation*

**1) Phase III (1470-1596):** Formed with the building over of the space between Kitchen and Hall range, shortly after primary building period; newly built chimney stack shared with adjacent Upper West Chamber.

**2) Phase VIII-IX:** The stair to the Chamber seems to be a 19th or 20th-century insertion or rebuilding

**Current Use:** Collection storage; inaccessible to public

### *Description*

Floor	Softwood boarded floor
Walls	Lower wall against Kitchen, and on E side to N of stack is of brickwork in irregular English Bond Above brickwork, and on N side, oak timber close studding with infill plaster panels.
Roof	Room open to the roof, which is arch-braced with double purlins, continuing the pitch of the main Kitchen roof. The roof members are all exposed, as is the underside of the pantiled roof.
Windows	Two oak framed and mullioned windows to N side of stack (one at high level one at low); one brick framed window on W side.
Doors	To Upper Western Chamber [Gaz.3.06] large oak 6-panelled door (?date) To garderobe, oak ledged and panelled door
Features	Brick fireplace, stack in English bond, with relieving arch above oak lintel. Stone surround to hearth Stair, from ground floor Servery (Gaz 4.03), narrow spiral stair with solid oak baulk treads, partially supported by brick at turn of stair, and with a brick vault. Brick paviors at foot of stair, oak baulk treads, and oak balustrade (C19 in C17 style) at stair head Garderobe accessible on northern side, with brick-built chamber. Brick wall, with flue, behind seat terminates at c. 1.5 metres in height, allowing long view down under-eaves space on northern side of kitchen, with northern chimney stack.

**Collections** Stored collection material

### ***Significance***

The room is an impressive and significant element the medieval house. The garderobe and fireplace are both well preserved reminders of the room's domestic function.

### ***Condition/risks***

The tiled roof covering shows daylight gaps, though there are not significant problems of leaks.

The brickwork is generally in sound condition, though there are some areas of spalled brickwork and mortar erosion.

Under-eaves space, accessible only from garderobe, is subject to pigeon infestation and extensively invaded by guano, carcasses etc.

### ***Issues/vulnerability***

Consideration of public access to chamber, and through it to adjoining Upper West Chamber. (Gaz 3.06) as significant spaces of the early Hal.

Lack of environmental control for collections storage.

### ***Policies/recommendations***

- Clearance of under-eaves space on N of kitchen, with measures to control pigeon infestation
- With transfer out of the building of stored collections, public access can be provided, with inclusion of room in overall interpretation strategy.

### ***References:***

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| <i>A Stark</i>    | <i>History of Gainsburgh</i> (1843)                           |
| Stratton & Garner | <i>Architecture in England during the Tudor period</i> (1929) |
| JGP               | <i>Condition Survey</i> (2003)                                |
| Ecolab            | Report to Lincs. CC on Bird infestation (July 2003)           |

## 5 West range



## Main Structure

Room Number:  
Other names:

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### ***Development / Documentation***

The W Range is the only part of the Old Hall which has been the subject of relatively detailed survey and analysis, with investigation of the standing structure and the below-ground archaeology by the North Lincolnshire Archaeological Unit in 1982 and 84. The results are set out in Clark, 1991 and Field 1991, and are the basis for the following summary.

- 1) Phase III (1470-1596):** W Range built against Buttery S wall in the 1470s/80s (dendrochronological date, Clark, 1991), as a lodgings range with twelve individual units making up four apartments. The range, which seems to have re-used the foundations of an earlier building, reflects the growing importance of the Burgh family at court; Richard III stayed at Gainsborough in 1484.
- 2) Phase IV (1596-1625)** (or late in Phase III): An external brick wall was built against the S end, enclosing the timber frame. The external newel stair at the SE corner was taken down, and re-used in present position inside the building at N end [Gaz. 5.02]. A curtain wall with gatehouse was possibly built early in the C17 between W and E ranges, creating a courtyard.
- 3) Phase VI (1649-1733)** (or early in Phase VII): Ground Floor external wall on E side rebuilt in brick to replace decayed timber frame.
- 4) Phase VII (1733-1826):** Porch built in NE corner against Hall (replacing an earlier, medieval structure), with stair above to theatre gallery (c.1760-90). Brick wash-houses built on W side to serve tenements established in W range. N garderobe probably demolished at this time. External stair built at SE corner to access First Floor (Patrick drawing c.1800).
- 5) Phase VIII (1826-1872):** *Queen Adelaide* public house established in centre of range. Phase III external stair at SE corner removed. In c.1849-51, extensive repairs to the Old Hall included demolition of porch and theatre stairs at NE corner.
- 6) Phase IX (1872-1945):** Between c.1878 and 1900 W wall frame studding between the stacks was largely replaced in brickwork, and N garderobe rebuilt. Wash-houses on W side demolished. The wall plates on the W side may also have been cut away from the hearths to prevent damage to the brickwork as the frame pulled away.
- 7) Phases X and XI (1945-1979):** Use of W range for builders' and carpenters' workshops.
- 8) Phase XII (1979-present):** Extensive repairs began in 1982 with stripping of roof and structural frame. Recording of building and below-ground archaeology in advance of works, with subsequent monitoring through 1980s. Frames carefully repaired, using resin adhesive and old oak, anchored and part braced with steel, and some new brickwork; new stair internally at SE corner. Ground and First Floors opened to public, but lime-plaster floors above were removed and not replaced (to minimise further repairs, leave the structure visible and obviate need for stairs).

**Current Use:** Ground Floor: Main visitor entrance to Hall, with Reception and Shop.  
First Floor: Special Exhibitions gallery; store in northern room

### ***Description***

#### **Structure:**

The W Range is a four-bay, three-storey timber framed structure, creating twelve individual chamber units, two united to form a ground floor hall. Each unit had its own fireplace and adjoining garderobe, grouped together in four paired brick stacks on the W side. As designed, however, the chambers were organised into four varied apartments on the three floors, with differing means of access by internal or external stair and by corridors along the E side of the range. This was a significantly early use of the corridor to create access along a wing rather than through interconnecting rooms.

This individuality extends also to the stacks on the W side, with a variety of plan and of detail in the brickwork. Chimneys and garderobes are not bonded together, but were built within a short time of each other, with the garderobe pits lying partially beneath the chimney stacks.

The basic structure is of five cross frames, the N frame built against the W cross wing of the Great Hall. The frames are braced at each level, with an accommodation for the side passages. The S end-frame is enclosed (since the late C16 or early C17) by a brick gable end wall built against it. Brickwork was also introduced in the late C17 or early C18 to replace the decayed Ground Floor frame on the E; this and water penetration on the W side has allowed the whole structure to sink towards the E, pulling away from the stacks. On the W side the timber studding between the stacks was replaced with brickwork between c.1878 and 1900.

#### **Roof:**

The five cross-frames incorporate roof trusses with tie beams, principal rafters and collars, with provision for single clasped purlins; there are arched wind braces to the purlins at the gable ends. There were close-studded partitions above the tie beam in every frame except the northernmost. The roof slopes beneath the tiles are lined with plywood sheet material (mid 1980s); the roof was covered with clay pantiles at the same time.

#### **Elevations**

**East:** Three storey elevation, upper two close-studded with plaster infill panels. The Ground Floor is brickwork in irregular English bond, late C17 to mid C18 (renewed in the 1980s) to replace decayed timber wall frame. The 1st Floor has a shallow jetty, with a substantial and heavily moulded jetty plate, suggesting that this was an important front for the house. Two 1st Floor windows, of five lights each, remain in original positions and, though much repaired, are decoratively treated, with moulded mullions and frames.. All four doors and associated windows at Ground level are in C18 or C19 positions, with modern oak doors replicating the originals.

##### *Lost features:*

*C15 external newel stair at S E corner*

*C15 external doorway at N end of range*

*C15 porch to Screens Passage and to E Range, at N end*

*Late C18 stair to theatre in Great Hall*

**South** Brick gable end wall, built late C16/early C17 against S end frame. Irregular English bond with brick relieving arches to the windows (one at 1st Floor, two at 2nd Floor level). Windows are oak framed and mullioned, with leaded lights and mesh guards. At level of stone kneelers to gable, there is a rectangular stone panel with [carved arms \(of ???\)](#), much eroded. Four iron wall ties of fleur-de-lys form.



West    Dominated by four paired chimney and garderobe stacks of the original build, (N garderobe a rebuild of c1878-1900). Between the stacks the original framed walling is replaced with brickwork. Doors and windows at Ground level are modern softwood, replicating late C19 windows in same positions.

### ***Significance***

An exceptionally important example of a late medieval timber-framed lodgings range. Of particular interest is the passage arrangement on the E side, an unusually early example of access along a range which is more characteristic of urban buildings at this period, though unusual in rural great houses with which Gainsborough is otherwise comparable

### ***Condition/risks***

Brickwork of S wall is spalled, at the top of the gable and at Ground level. Limestone coat-of-arms panel in poor condition, with continuing erosion.  
Some roof tiles broken.

### ***Issues/vulnerability***

Despite the original function of the C15 range, no part is currently presented as a lodging. Current use conceals rather than elucidates the purpose of the range in the operation of the house.

### ***Policies/recommendations***

Measures to arrest decay of gable coat-of-arms,  
Repairs and repointing where necessary to eroded areas of brickwork.  
Continue with further studies on the base of information and understanding gained during the investigations of the 1980s.  
Consider partial reflooring of 2nd floor, while retaining some open visual access to the timber frame structure of the range.  
Consider revised use of spaces within the range as part of overall review of circulation, access and interpretation [Policy x]. As part of this, consider reconstruction of one or more bays as a C15 apartment with public access and interpretation to demonstrate original purpose of range.

### ***References:***

M Clark	‘West Range, Structure and Analysis’ (1991)
P Faulkner,	<i>The Old Hall, Gainsborough</i> (1950s)
N Field	‘Excavations and the West Range’ (1991)
J Vernon	<i>Guidebook</i>
JGP	<i>Condition Survey</i> (1998)



## Newel Stair

Room Number:        - -

Other names:

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### *Development / Documentation*

**1) Phase III (1470-1596):** There was a stair in this position in the W Range as built early in the 1480s, against the N wall leading from an external door to an apartment on the first floor of the range. The fabric of the present newel stair is also of this phase, though as first constructed it was an external stair at the SE corner of the range, serving both 1st and 2nd Floors.

**2) Phase IV (1596-1625):** In this phase (or late in Phase III) the newel stair was taken down and built into its present position in the northernmost bay of the range, perhaps still with an external access.

**3) Phase VII (1733-1826):** By 1843 (Stark plan) the stair was accessed internally from the northern room, (Gaz. 5.05) as it remains.

**Current Use:** Staff access to Store Room at N of 1st Floor; no public access (apart from fire-escape use to Ground Floor).

### *Description*

Newel stair rises from Ground to First Floor (from North Chamber (Gaz 5.05) to passage adjacent to Gaz 5.04, F4) constructed of solid oak treads (with modern vinyl coverings) mortised into timber newel, contained within timber stud and plaster enclosure.

### *Significance*

An unusual and interesting example of early carpentry, and of the recycling of a structural element to serve in a new position.

### *Condition/risks*

Minor wear to treads and handrail, though generally in sound condition.

### *Issues/vulnerability*

Lack of public understanding of the function and development of the lodgings range.

### *Policies/recommendations*

- Attention might be drawn, through in situ interpretation and in printed and audio guides, to this interesting survival of the C15 house.

**References:** M Clark        'West Range, Structure and Analysis' (1991)  
                  N Field        'Excavations and the West Range' (1991)  
                  J Vernon        *Guidebook*

JGP    *Condition Survey* (2003)



## Second Floor

Room Number: - -

Other names:

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### *Development / Documentation*

**1) Phase III (1470-1596):** The present roof is that of the original build and has been little altered other than repair work since. The stud walls between chambers and passage are also in their positions as built, though the passage access arrangements changed with introduction of the newel stair in this or the next phase.

**2) Phase IV (1596-1625):** With new access from the newel stair at the N end of the range, the S chamber was approached from the N along the passage, and chamber and passage at the southern end were amalgamated.

**3) Phase VII (1733-1826):** Building of external stair at S end of range created new access to 2nd Floor.

Rooms at this level were incorporated into separate tenements within the E Range.

**4) Phases IX and X(1872-1971):** Stripped of former lime ash and reed flooring before 1948 (N Taylor pers. comm.), and these were not replaced. Upper part of newel stair at N end was removed as part of works, destroying access to 2nd Floor.

**Current Use:** Unused, and inaccessible except by ladder

### *Description*

Floor	The lime ash flooring of the second storey of the west range has been removed (before 1948) and not replaced, though the oak joists for it remain, running E-W on each side of the central bridging beam. The absence of flooring provides excellent visual access to the structure of the range and its roof.
Walls	The wall running between chambers and passage survive with doorway openings in the two central bays, of oak close studding with plastered panels on riven laths. Dividing walls survive between all the bays.
Ceiling	The level is open to the underside of the roof, as it was from its origins. The length of surviving passage in the central two bays, however is ceiled with lime ash on reeds. The roof of the range has principal rafters, purlins and collars of oak, with arch wind braces at gable ends N and S.
Windows	There are modern softwood windows to the S side of the stack in each of the southern three bays. Single two-light window on E side of Bay 2.
Doors	Doorways remain between the passage and two central chambers, though without doors.

Features            Fireplaces in each of the four stacks on the W side, with garderobes attached on their northern sides, currently inaccessible.

***Significance***

An area of considerable historical and archaeological interest, in demonstrating the construction, development and operation of the lodgings range.

***Condition/risks***

No defects apparent in the roof structure, though there is evidence of former beetle infestation, as also in the timbers of the wall structures.

***Issues/vulnerability***

No current access by stair to this level.

Possible public misunderstanding of the range as built.

Questions of re-instating room uses in the 2nd Floor must be balanced against the value of keeping the structure of the range open to visual examination and appreciation.

***Policies/recommendations***

- Consideration might be given to partial re-flooring to provide closer access to the roof and to create useable additional space within the house. It would be valuable however to retain some view of the whole framed structure, as now.

***References:***

M Clark	‘West Range, Structure and Analysis’ (1991)
N Field	‘Excavations and the West Range’ (1991)
J Vernon	<i>Guidebook</i>
JGP	<i>Condition Survey</i> (2003)

Gazetteer  
Gainsborough Old Hall:  
West Range  
**First Floor**  
**(exhibition gallery)**

5.04

Room Number: F1, F2, F3, F4  
Other names:

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***Development / Documentation***

**1) Phase III (1470-1596):** Parts of three separate lodgings at this level were served by three stairs, internal at the N end and on the E side of Bay 2, with the external newel stair on the SE corner.

**2) Phase IV (1596-1625):** With the transfer of the newel stair to the N end, the S chamber could be accessed from the passage on its N side, and the former passage at the S end of the range was thrown in with it, as it has remained.

**3) Phase VII (1733-1826):** Rooms at this level were incorporated into separate tenements within the E Range, with access retained along passage on E side.

**4) Phase XII (1979-present):** Rooms stripped out for major repair works in 1982. Floor joists repaired or replaced, new oak boards laid; divisions between rooms retained and repaired, remaining partitions towards passage removed, except at north end where northern bay became store room. Main space set up as special exhibitions gallery with access by a new stair in SE corner.

**Current Use:** F4 used for storage  
F1, F2, F3 used as special exhibitions gallery

***Description***

Floor	Modern oak boarded floor, flush with bridging beam; former floor was lime ash on reeds and packing was needed to make up the level for boarding (1980s).
Walls	Oak timber close-studding with mix of old and modern plaster infill panels in wall on E side and in subdivision walls. W wall is interrupted by chimney and associated garderobe stack in each bay, between which original timber framing has been replaced by brickwork above and below windows. S wall has the main structural elements of its frame (without studs) set against brick gable end wall
Ceiling	Bridging beam and joists of 2nd Floor, lime ash floor removed
Windows	Modern softwood windows to S of each stack on W side. On E side, two 2-light windows in bays 1 and 4, and two 5-light mullioned windows with traceried heads and diamond leading, in bays 2 and 3.
Doors	No significant doors remain at this level.

Features C15 newel stair down to ground floor from passage at N end (Gaz. 5.02).  
Modern stair (installed 1980s), with oak treads and balustrade, down to  
Ground Floor, at S end of passage on E side  
Fireplace and garderobe on W side in each bay. Fireplaces of brick with  
shallow-curved timber lintels, hollow chamfered jambs; garderobe on N side  
of each fireplace, with stone slab seat and heavy oak-boarded floor

*Lost features:* Wall divisions between chambers and passage.

### ***Significance***

An area of considerable historical and archaeological interest, demonstrating the development and operation of the lodgings range.

### ***Condition/risks***

Construction is generally sound though there is evidence for past beetle infestation to timbers. Some mortar erosion and spalled brickwork to fireplaces

### ***Issues/vulnerability***

Fixings for special exhibition screens and cases to ceiling joists in F1-F3 are highly intrusive  
Difficulty of interpreting original designed arrangement of individual lodgings chambers.

### ***Policies/recommendations***

- Repairs to brickwork and mortar of fireplaces.
- Review the use of this floor as temporary exhibition space when developing revised circulation and interpretation planning [Policy X].
- If present use is to continue, screen support system should be replaced with one less intrusive.

### ***References:***

M Clark	‘West Range, Structure and Analysis’ (1991)
N Field	‘Excavations and the West Range’ (1991)
J Vernon	<i>Guidebook</i>
JGP	<i>Condition Survey</i> (2003)



## Ground Floor (northern room)

Room Number: G2

Other names:

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### ***Development / Documentation***

**1) Phase III (1470-1596):** This N room as built had an external door in its NE corner and a stair to the 1st Floor on its N side, forming a two-storey apartment.

**2) Phase IV (1596-1625):** The introduction of the newel stair in the NE corner and creation of a passage on its E side took away a good deal of its space.

**3) Phase VI (1649-1733):** Demolition of the N garderobe stack allowed access to the room from the W

**4) Phase IX (1872-1945):** Rebuilding of garderobe c.1878-1900 blocked access from the W.

**5) Phase XII (1979-present):** Repair and conversion works of 1980s introduced solid floor, with ramp from door to Buttery on N allowing visitor circulation

**Current Use:** Visitor circulation

### ***Description***

Floor	Solid concrete floor (1980s), exposed; ramp with vinyl sheet flooring and steel handrail on outer side.
Walls	Brickwork on E side; S wall underbuilt in brickwork, incorporating wall posts. N wall with end frame (without studding) against S wall of Buttery. W wall with fireplace and garderobe.
Ceiling	Oak joists to bridging beam (N-S), set off centre to accommodate C15 stair on N side, (and now accommodating re-used newel stair in present position) [Gaz. 5.04]. Underside of First Floor boards visible.
Windows	3-light window with diamond leading above close studding to S of stack on W side; 3-light mullioned window in E wall.
Doors	Wired glass door to Shop area introduced post-1983 (Gaz. 5.08)
Features	Fireplace on W side with hollow-chamfered jambs and shallow-curved timber lintel. Associated garderobe (built 1878-1900) to N, with ventilation slot (now glazed) and single piece stone seat. Underside of solid oak planks of Second Floor garderobe visible.

*Lost features* C15 stair with external access, set against N wall

### ***Significance***

Part of ground floor of lodgings range, an area of considerable historical and archaeological interest in demonstrating the construction, development and operation of the range. It has particular structural significance as the site of an early stair and of its (remaining) C15 replacement.

### ***Condition/risks***

The joints of the joists into the bridging beam have opened with movement of the building, with some furring up of joists to bring boards to level of bridging beam (see Gaz. 5.04, Floor)

### ***Issues/vulnerability***

Garderobe in this position is not interpreted to visitors as such, and has come to be used as a wishing well. This room is the only remaining West Range lodging chamber still defined by its walls and available to view, though it is not interpreted as such, and use as a passageway makes interpretation difficult.

### ***Policies/recommendations***

- Visual if not physical access might be provided from here to the C15 newel stair (Gaz. 5.02), with interpretation of its age and significance.
- This may be an appropriate place (subject to review of circulation and interpretation) to draw attention to the arrangement and function of lodgings in this range, and to the provision of fireplaces and garderobes.

### ***References:***

- |          |   |
|----------|---|
| M Clark  | ‘West Range, Structure and Analysis’ (1991) |
| N Field  | ‘Excavations and the West Range’ (1991)     |
| J Vernon | <i>Guidebook</i>                            |
| JGP      | <i>Condition Survey</i> (2003)              |

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***Development / Documentation***

**1) Phase III (1470-1596):** In the 1480s range the southern two bays made up a double-space Ground Floor hall, with the decorative octagonal post at its centre, and access into the external newel stair at its SE corner. The bay to its N contained an internal stair on its E side, to the 1st Floor.

**2) Phase IV (1596-1625) :** The double room was divided on the line of the octagonal post (as it was to remain until the Phase XII works of the 1980s).

**3) Phase VI - VII (1649-1826):** Eastern external wall, and wall towards Northern room, supported with brickwork.

**4) Phase VIII (1826-1872):** Four external doorways, to separate tenements/workshops, cut in E wall.

**5) Phase IX (1872-1945):** Divisions between bays removed prior to 1948.

**6) Phase XII (1979-present):** Works in 1980s repaired framing and rebuilt E external brick wall. Concrete floor laid. Access ramp installed to create main public entrance in SE corner. Stair to 1st floor exhibition gallery built at S end of E wall.

**Current Use:** Museum shop, bookstall and reception

***Description***

Floor	Solid concrete floor, covered by carpet. Ramp up to entrance doorway in SE corner, with substantial oak handrails each side.
Walls	Brick on E side, replacing timber close-studding (renewed 1980s). Original S cross frame visible against brick gable-end wall on South.
Ceiling	Central longitudinal bridging beam N-S supported on line of cross frames at bay divisions by two substantial oak posts, that on the S octagonal chamfered, that on the N roughly squared, and at each end by a wall post of the N and S end cross frames. Underside of First Floor with modern oak boards visible
Windows	Modern softwood windows in each bay on S side of stack, with door in addition in two central bays.

Doors	Wired glass door to northern room (Gaz. 5.05) installed 1980s. External entrance door at S end of E side, of oak (modern, replacing earlier oak door). Other external doors on E side hidden internally behind shop units.
Features	Fireplaces with associated garderobes (as in North Chamber Gaz. 5.05) in each of three bays of Ground Floor space, two now concealed behind shop units. Each fireplace with hollow-chamfered jambs and straight timber lintel; garderobe with single piece stone seat. Shop display units to high level on all walls, around central posts and freestanding.

*Lost features:* Division walls from between bays 2 and 3 from S  
C15 stair against E wall in Bay 3

### ***Significance***

The once open medieval lower hall at the S end is an important feature, not only of this range but the Old Hall in general, and a rare occurrence. It survives almost intact, though hidden beneath modern additions.

### ***Condition/risks***

Structure is sound; deflection of the First Floor has caused sagging (with some furring up) and the opening up of joints between joists and beams; joists packed up to bring boards to level of bridging beam.

Some erosion to brickwork over fireplace lintels; some cracking and associated loose brickwork to centre stack on W.

### ***Issues/vulnerability***

The bookstall units are in themselves highly intrusive in this significant space, and conceal important elements and detail of the structure (especially the octagonal centre post and much of the walling on all sides).

### ***Policies/recommendations***

- Repairs to brickwork
- Review use of area as museum shop under a revised circulation, access and interpretation strategy [Policy X]. Uses should be found for this space which respect its historic and archaeological significance and allow full appreciation of its character.

### ***References:***

M Clark	‘West Range, Structure and Analysis’ (1991)
P Faulkner	<i>The Old Hall, Gainsborough</i> (1950s)
N Field	‘Excavations and the West Range’ (1991)
J Vernon	<i>Guidebook</i>
JGP	<i>Condition Survey</i> (2003)

## 6 East range



## Main Structure

Room Number:        - -  
Other names:

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### *Development/Documentation*

**1) Phase III (1470-1596):** The E Range (unlike the West), seems to have been built at the same time as the cross wing of the Hall Range which it adjoins: the two structures share a centre post on the N side and their northern gables seem designed to be seen together. The passage at their junction runs the full length of the range and creates access to the high status apartments on both floors. Dendrochronological samples from the range (although only a small sample) suggest a date for construction of the mid 1460s, about the same as the Great Hall and the Solar. The Tower was built on the NE corner of the E range in the 1480s.

**2) Phase IV (1596-1625):** William Hickman introduced considerable changes to the range shortly after his purchase in 1596. The S end was converted to three storeys, with a new stair, and the S end of the range was encased in brick, extending also to the E front. If a location is sought for a C15 domestic chapel, this SE corner of the house is possible in contemporary plan terms, and might explain the Protestant Hickman's enthusiasm to remodel this part in particular of his new house.

The S gable was ornamented with a sun-dial with the initials WH and date 1600 (Stark 1843). It is possible that the brick bay windows on the E front, though remodelled with renewed brickwork and new softwood window frames c.1849-50, were also created by Hickman in the early C17. Stark also believed that Hickman built the curtain wall and gatehouse between E and W ranges. His Inventory of 1625 gives details of room names and contents, including those of the E range.

**3) Phase VI (1649-1733):** Following the Hickman family move to Thonock and abandonment of the Old Hall by 1733, the E range was let as a grace and favour apartment to Lord Abingdon until 1753.

**4) Phase VII (1733-1826):** E Range possibly part of the house let to William Hornby from 1760 as a coarse linen manufactory.

**5) Phase VIII (1826-1872):** Works in the mid C19 (probably at the same time as Ibbetson's work of 1849-50) raised the ceiling of the two-storey section to create one high undivided space on the 1st Floor, with the roof and E wall also raised in height. The new room was intended as an assembly room and ballroom for the town, in a consciously medieval style with a gothic fireplace (sporting the Burgh vambrace) installed in the stack between the bay windows.

Brick walling was introduced to replace the cross frame between the N end of the range and the cross wing of the hall range to its W.

**6) Phase IX (1872-1945):** E Range used as Masonic Temple by Gainsborough Freemasons from 1896 to 1952, and around 1900 was lived in by the Freemason Frederick Baines and his wife. Later in the period the masons' caretaker Charles Baker lived in an apartment formed from the 3-storey S end followed by Edmund Dawber and his wife. By 1920s the N end of the range was in poor condition.

**7) Phase X (1945-1971):** The Friends of the Old Hall, formed in 1949, met initially in the ballroom, later converting the Lower Inner Chamber for use as a kitchen and lavatories.

**8) Phase XI (1971-1979):** An extensive programme of repairs in the N end of the range was carried out by the Friends in association with the Ministry of Works. The large First Floor ballroom was divided by a partition into the present Upper Great Chamber and Louvre Room.

**Current use:** Mixed public and administrative uses: displays in the Upper Great Chamber [Gaz. 6.04], furnished rooms in the S end chambers with offices above, a Schools Room/Lecture Room in the Lower Great Chamber (Gaz. 6.07) and public cafeteria in the Inner Lower Chamber (Gaz. 6.08).

### *Description*

#### **Structure and plan**

The E Range has undergone more extensive alterations since first building than any of the other ranges. Built in timber frame to overlap the Hall Range, it has elevations on all four sides which demonstrate later changes in planning and materials. Internally there remain a number of questions (especially as to the original plan) which will require detailed analysis to address.

The range is of ten bays though only two C15 cross-frames have survived in relatively unaltered form - the N end external frame (reconstructed in 1970s) and that between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> bays from the south, though elements of others survive within the side walls. A particularly significant remaining C15 element are the passages, at Ground and 1st Floor levels, which run the full length of the range on the W side. The close-studded walls of the passage survive on both external and internal sides on the 1st Floor; on the Ground Floor the external W wall has been replaced in brickwork.

Brickwork also masks the S (gable-end) and E walls, associated with the major alterations of c.1600 converting the two bays at the S end of the range to three storeys, with a new staircase. The form of the projecting bay windows on the E are also of this period (they appear in drawings of 1793) though the fabric of both, in brick and stone, was renewed in the mid C19.

#### **Roof**

The form of the roof structure reflects the alterations to the spaces below. The oak trusses of the two S bays over the remodelled three-storey section are possibly C15, with collars and clasped purlins, as in the W Range. They may have been altered, but it is an early alteration. The remaining trusses over the eight bays of the Upper Great Chamber through to the N end of the range are queen-post trusses of softwood of C19 form, introduced when the roof was raised. One truss of the same type was also inserted into the first bay on the S.

#### **Elevations**

- North The only largely unaltered C15 elevation of the E Range, built as a pair with the adjacent gable of the cross wing to the Hall, though the frame was altered in the C19 and returned to its earlier form in the 1970s. The 1st Floor is jettied forward, with a heavily moulded jetty plate. The stack is C17, as is also possibly the small outshut building.
- East South of the Tower the E elevation is now wholly of brick, with a stone plinth capping, a single string course over the Ground Floor windows and stone cappings to the battlemented parapet. The brickwork is C17, with the exception of the two window bays and the parapet (which is C19) and the stack (which is C15, though the flues are C17). Windows in the flat walling are stone mullioned (at Ground and First Floor with transomes) and are of C17 moulded form, though C19 date. The bay



- windows are of moulded softwood timber, C19 replacements. Below the Ground Floor windows at the S end are four small bee boles, C17.
- South Of brickwork with a brick-capped plinth, built c.1600 by Wm Hickman, with a window each side of the central stack at 1st Floor level and (blocked) at Second Floor also. The present windows are C19.
- West The upper (1st Floor) wall towards the courtyard is of oak timber close studded with plaster infill panels, framed into transoms at half height between the main posts. Like the opposing face of the W Range it may have been jettied. There are two 1st Floor windows of six lights with moulded heads, sills and side frames; they are restored but probably follow substantially their original C15 form with reset medieval glass depicting Yorkist motifs and livery badges.  
The Ground Floor wall is brickwork (replacing timber in the ?mid C19). Door and window positions may not reflect any earlier arrangement.

**Significance** The E range represents all the major phases of development at the Old Hall and has a number of fine surviving architectural features from the medieval, C16-C17 and C19 phases. Interior details such as the panelled room hint at the once grand interior decoration of the house which has been largely lost.

#### **Condition/risks**

Pantile roof coverings mainly in good condition, though fixed with iron nails which will need replacement.

Timber roof structure throughout is damp with signs of mould growth and woodworm infestation.

Storage of bundled reeds in roof space constitutes a fire risk.

Some brickwork of walls and parapet is spalled and eroded.

#### **Issues/vulnerability**

Dating and development of the range is not understood and requires a full programme of survey and analysis.

Publicly accessible rooms in the range represent three main periods (C15 build; c.1600 remodelling; C19 repair and conversion) and, without interpretation, are potentially confusing to visitors.

Access within the range (in common with other parts of house) is difficult or impossible for people with impaired mobility, and needs addressing, including access to administrative areas.

#### **Policies/recommendations**

- Renew tile fixings as part of overall programme.
- Undertake full survey of damp and beetle infestation problems in roof, with remedial works and subsequent monitoring.
- Remove stored material from roof space as a matter of urgency.
- Monitor areas of damaged brickwork, with repairs as necessary.
- Establish research programme for the range, with dendro. sampling, survey and analysis of carpentry and brickwork etc., to help resolve questions of dating and building sequence.
- Identify research questions where advantage could be taken of maintenance or repair works.
- Develop comprehensive strategy for circulation, access and interpretation within the range as part of overall planning.

#### **References**

- |            |   |
|------------|---|
| P Faulkner | <i>The Old Hall, Gainsborough</i> (1950s) |
| P Lindley  | 'Structure, Sequence and Status' (1991)   |



## Stair

Room Number:        - -  
Other names:

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### ***Development / Documentation***

**1) Phase IV (1596-1625):** Stair built to serve new rooms and levels created by William Hickman's conversion of two storeys to three at the S end of the range c.1600. The nature of this stair is not clear (it was later altered) but it was probably in this position.

**2) Phase VIII (1826-1872):** The stair was given its present configuration around the mid C19, (perhaps as part of Ibbetson's works?) with apparent remodelling of the upper portions to the Second Floor, and rebuilding of the lower section in the Ground Floor Passage, though using some of the earlier material

**Current Use:** Staff access to upper floors, with visitor access to First Floor

### ***Description***

Timber quarter-turn stair rising from Ground Floor Passage (Gaz. 6.06) to Second Floor Garrets (Gaz. 6.11). Lower two flights with turned newel and balusters to handrail; upper flights within enclosure formed by walls of adjacent rooms.

Barley sugar twist balusters, newel post, handrails and string cappings of lower stair are late C17; remainder is of C19 and C20 remodelling.

### ***Significance***

This fragile structure is one of the few surviving elements of the 17th and 18th century Hall and represents a little understood phase of the hall's history, though the stair has suffered too many alterations to constitute a major example of 17th century construction or planning.

### ***Condition/risks***

Condition sound. The structure of the lower stair is lightweight and delicate and may be at risk of damage from normal wear and tear.

### ***Issues/vulnerability***

The raised floor of the Ground Floor Passage conceals the lower two treads of the stair and its newel, destroying appreciation of its form and proportions.

The floor area below the stair at Ground Floor level is awkward, with ramps, low headroom and trip hazards

### ***Policies/recommendations***

Check condition of stair and ensure its ability to carry visitor traffic without damage; repair and strengthen as necessary.

As part of review of access and circulation, consider dispensing with the raised floor at the foot of the stair.

### ***References:***

JGP     *Condition Survey* (2003)



## First Floor Passage

Room Number: F13  
Other names:

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### *Development / Documentation*

**1) Phase III (1470-1596):** Passages at both levels were part of the original plan, as indicated by the framing of the external N cross frame. They are an advanced plan form for the time (?1460s), allowing communication along the range without passing through intermediate chambers, and they also have more in common with design for an urban situation rather than with rural manorial houses of an equivalent status. The decorative vaulted dome in its ceiling may also be a C15 feature, as may be the location of the opening into the Upper Great Chamber (Gaz. 6.04).

**2) Phase IV (1596-1625):** The passage required some alteration at its S end with the creation of three floors, but retained its floor level through to the S end.

**3) Phase VIII (1826-1872):** The passage was remodelled with new or enlarged doorways on its E side to the ballroom created in the Upper Great Chamber (Gaz. 6.04) in the mid C19. The S end was formerly used as a bathroom for the caretakers apartment associated with masonic use from 1896-1952. Brick walling was introduced to replace the cross frame between the N end of the passage and the Solar of the hall range cross wing on its W side.

**Current Use:** Display and visitor circulation

### *Description*

Floor	Softwood boarded, two steps down towards S end.
Walls	Northern section: brickwork on W, towards Solar (C19 replacing earlier cross frame); oak close-studding on E, towards Louvre Room, with plaster infill removed from panels. Oak timber close-studding with plaster infill panels on N (external) wall Southern section: oak timber close-studding on E and W walls, with plaster infill panels. Modern fire resistant plasterboard partition with double fire doors on W against Upper Staircase Gallery (Gaz. 3.10).
Ceiling	Plastered ceiling below joists, painted. Domed and vaulted area adjacent to entrance to the Upper Great Chamber (Gaz. 6.06) with timber ribs and central carved rose boss.
Windows	Oak framed and mullioned window on N end wall, retaining grooves for internal sliding shutters; C19 glazing. Two 6-light windows oak-framed and mullioned on W wall of southern section, both with traceried heads containing fragments of medieval painted glass with Yorkist motifs and livery badges. Parts of both windows are of surviving medieval fabric.

Doors Doorway (C19) with softwood planked door across S end of northern passage.  
In sequence on E side of southern passage (N to S):  
Doorway to Upper Great Chamber (C19, in earlier location) planked softwood doors in wide arches.  
Arched opening, without doors.  
Two medieval framed doorways with 4-centred arches  
On W side, towards Upper Staircase Gallery (Gaz. 3.10), double fire doors in solid partition wall (modern) set within wide 4-centred archway.

### ***Collections***

Northern passage: One of series of C17/C18 painted cloth friezes, mounted on frame (see also below and Gaz. 6.09 for others in set)  
Limewood carved swag of marine still life in display case (by William Hollingworth of Louth, exhibited Great Exhibition, 1851).  
Uncompleted ditto, in display case  
Small oak press cupboard  
Southern passage: C17 oak press cupboard  
C18 long-case clock (James Pitts, Epworth).  
two panels of painted cloth frieze (see also above and Gaz. 6.09)

### ***Significance***

An early example of corridor access along a range in the context of a great house, and as such of exceptional significance in the development of plan forms. The windows and doors off the corridor retain a number of C15 features.

[The significance of displayed collection material is treated in Section 8 of the Gazetteer].

### ***Condition/risks***

Studding between Passage and Louvre Room split and showing evidence of past beetle infestation. Studwork braced by exposed horizontal timber bolted across.  
Some shrinkage and other cracks visible in plastered panels of S section.

### ***Issues/vulnerability***

Partition wall and doors to Upper Staircase Gallery (Gaz. 3.10), while necessary, are intrusive and inhibit understanding of the adjacent spaces. There is uncertainty on the fire resistant values of the partition.  
Open studwork wall between Passage and Louvre Room is not interpreted and may confuse understanding of the original arrangement. The step over the sole plate is difficult for visitors with limited mobility.  
Fire hose reel is intrusive and creates risks of water damage

### ***Policies/recommendations***

- With advice, discontinue use of hose reel and close off supply.
- Consider the replacement of infill panels to open studding between northern Passage and Louvre Room (Gaz. 6.05), perhaps using opportunity to demonstrate techniques if this accords with overall circulation and interpretation strategy.
- Review use of passage for display of C17 and later furniture, as part of overall planning.
- Consider redesign and replacement of fire partition and doors, with specialist advice, as part of review of fire protection, to restore integrity of divided spaces.

***References:*** P Faulkner      *The Old Hall, Gainsborough* (1950s)  
P Lindley      'Structure, Sequence and Status', (1991)  
JGP              Condition Survey (2003)

## Upper Great Chamber

Room Number: F12  
Other names:

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### ***Development / Documentation***

**1) Phase III (1470-1596):** Persistence of the name indicates its use in the C15 (Burgh Inventory 1496), though the form or extent of the early room here is not clear;. It may have been the same plan area as at present, since the chimney stack to its fireplace is C15 and is likely to have been central to a large room occupying a number of bays.

**2) Phase IV (1596-1625):** This will also, then, be the *greate Chamber* of the 1625 Inventory, though its furnishings were not numerous.

**3) Phase VII (1733-1826):** Part of the E range apartments let to Earl of Abingdon from 1730s to 1750s

**4) Phase VIII (1826-1872):** Conversion to assembly room/ballroom for the town, together with adjacent northern chamber (Gaz. 6.05). Reconstruction in new brickwork of E bay windows and introduction of 'gothic' fireplace. Large entrance doors formed to Passage.

**5) Phase IX/X (1872-1971):** Use of assembly room abandoned during late C19, early C20.

**6) Phase XI (1971-1979):** Programme of repairs by Friends in association with Ministry of Works

**Current Use:** Display area and furnished room

### ***Description***

Floor	Softwood boarded; turkey carpet behind post-and-rope barrier
Walls	Painted plaster over brickwork on E wall, lath and plaster over studwork on W and S walls. N wall, against Louvre Room, is a partition wall inserted 1970s on line of arched truss.
Ceiling	Longitudinal oak bridging beam with joists running E-W, all moulded, with lath and plaster panels between joists and trefoil traceried heads against central beam and original wall plate. Timber stained black.
Windows	Bay windows to each side of stack, oak mullioned and transomed windows, 8-plus-1 lights to rectangular bay on N of stack, 8 lights in four 2-light sections to canted bay on S.
Doors	Double doors of vertical softwood planks in wide elliptical arched doorway to Passage (Gaz. 6.03), with clustered columns each side. Coat of arms overdoor panel on Chamber side.

Features      Fireplace in gothic style, installed ?1849-50, with wide elliptical arch to fire opening, having vambrace and gauntlet of Burgh in the spandrels and bands of cusped and foliated ornament below a flat battlemented top. Recently painted red.  
Lighting: two branched gilt pendant chandeliers, electric.

### ***Collections***

Furniture etc	N wall:	Display cabinet with misc. social history material Dolls' house Display cabinet (dolls' house and fairground material)
	E wall: (LH bay window)	Butterfly display 2 child's chairs Display cabinet with tea wares Case of ptarmigan Hall chair 2 cradles (by fireplace) Draped female figure (bronzed plaster) Pair of lion-and-claw stands Button-back chair with footstool Scroll arm chair (RH bay window) 2 square pianos Piano stool 3 mantel and bracket clocks
	S wall	Square piano, with musical box Piano stool Inlaid bureau Broadwood grand piano with stool Corner cupboard with shell inlay Sewing box on stand
	W wall	Ebonised and gilt display case with tea and souvenir wares Small folding card table Long-case clock Tall display cabinet with blue and white wares, Delft tiles, Blue Wedgwood wares etc. Modern reproduction sideboard in C17 style
Portraits	N wall	Sir Nathaniel Bacon Male portrait (Friar Bacon) William Cecil George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford Sir Francis Bacon, Baron Verulam Sir Neville Hickman, Bart. Thomas Windsor Hickman
	E wall (over fireplace)	Elizabeth, wife of Sir Henry Hickman, Bart
	S wall	Elizabeth, Lady Hickman Willoughby Hickman, Bart Elizabeth Willoughby, Lady Hickman



	Sir William Hickman, Bart
	Anne, Lady Hickman
	Sir William Hickman, Kt (1596)
	Rose Lock, wife of Anthony Hickman
	Frances Elizabeth, Lady Hickman
	Frances, wife of Sir Neville Hickman
W wall	Female portrait (C19)
	Walter Hickman
	Sir Edmund Bacon [NB not hung/resting on floor]
	Sir Henry Hickman Bacon Bart.
	Elizabeth, wife of Sir Henry Hickman Bacon

### ***Significance***

This room represents the principal element of the Victorian adaptation of the Hall, and is a highly significant example of C19 antiquarian medieval revival. It retains a number of high quality gothic features and fittings, both authentic C15 and reproduction C19.

[The significance of displayed collection material is treated in Section 8 of the Gazetteer].

### ***Condition/risks***

Some settlement cracks are evident in both bay windows. There is some superficial damage to the joinery of the double doors.

### ***Issues/vulnerability***

This room, although partially furnished and presented as a domestic room, was created as a major public space and appears too imposing for its contents.

The displays of furniture, on both sides of the rope barrier, appear random and uncoordinated (eg. 4 pianos etc.), and do not constitute a coherent room setting.

The individually fine display cabinets contain unrelated and unlabelled collections of miscellaneous material.

Some displayed furniture is in poor condition and might be repaired or withdrawn.

The sofa provided for public seating is not differentiated from other furniture in the room.

The red-painted fireplace is visually intrusive, and thought might be given to determining and re-creating its original appearance (Note - is it stone or plaster?)

This space was designed and created as one with the present Louvre Room [Gaz. 6.05], and there may be arguments for re-uniting them.

### ***Policies/recommendations***

- The future use and treatment of this space needs to be considered together with that of the adjacent Louvre Room, since the two were united to form the C19 ballroom.
- In planning future uses, consideration should be given to re-uniting the rooms and recreating this highly significant space for the development of the house.
- Whether or not reunited with the Louvre Room, uses should be identified under revised circulation and interpretation plans which reflect the scale, significance and public nature of the Upper Great Chamber.
- Consideration should be given to returning the chimneypiece to its original treatment and colour.
- Under revised plans for interpretation, more purposeful uses should be identified for the important loan collection of portraits and for selected items of furniture.
- An appropriate lighting scheme for this important room should be developed within an overall lighting strategy for the house.

- References:** P Faulkner      *The Old Hall, Gainsborough* (1950s)  
P Lindley      'Structure, Sequence and Status' (1991)
- JGP      *Condition Survey* (2003)

Gazetteer  
Gainsborough Old Hall:  
**East Range**  
**Northern Chamber**  
**(Louvre Room)**

6.05

Room Number: F10  
Other names:

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***Development / Documentation***

**1) Phase III (1470-1596):** An important room of the C15 house, at First Floor level, accessible by stair from the high end of the Great Hall, and providing access to the high status rooms in the Tower.

**2) Phase VIII (1826-1872):** United with Upper Great Chamber to create public assembly room in mid C19, involving the lifting of its ceiling.

**3) Phase XI (1872-1945):** The room was in poor condition by 1950s, and subjected to extensive repairs in 1970s, when the north wall was rebuilt as found, and the interior was left opened up for display purposes. Separated by partition wall from Upper Great Chamber, on line of arched roof truss.

**Current Use:** Access to Tower and display (including remains of Great Hall louvre).

***Description***

Floor	Softwood boards
Walls	<p>N wall: of oak timber close-studding with plastered infill panels; panel of stud and plaster over door to Tower Middle Chamber (Gaz. 7.05)</p> <p>E wall: Brickwork including chimney on E wall; rough construction suggests an original intention for hangings or panelling. Wall top made up with brickwork to level of raised ceiling.</p> <p>W wall: oak timber studding with plaster infill to panels removed (probably not in original state)</p> <p>S wall; modern partition dividing this space from the Upper Great Chamber (Gaz. 6.04)</p>
Ceiling	<p>Moulded oak bridging beam with moulded joists running E-W; panels with lath and plaster, with some traceried heads remaining, as in ceiling to adjacent Upper Great Chamber.</p> <p>The ceiling has been raised (see Phase VIII above) and the W side is supported on timber blocks resting on the W wall frame.</p>
Windows	<p>Oak framed and mullioned window in N wall, C20 replica of original, destroyed in C19; traceried top with coloured glass lights.</p> <p>3-light stone mullion and transom window in E wall, with leaded lights and opening iron casements. Possibly C17 in date.</p>
Doors	Doorway to Tower Middle Chamber (Gaz. 7.05), wood frame with flattened 4-centred arch head.

Features      Fireplace on E wall, stone, 4-centred arch. Fire-cheeks of yellow stock brick, with remnant medieval brick chimneyhood.

### ***Collections***

2 C17 carved front chests  
C16 Adige chest with punched-work panels  
Sections of tracery and window mouldings displayed with tools in case  
Armchair, formed from 2 decayed medieval bench ends  
Hatchment (over fireplace), of Sir Henry Hickman Bacon (died 1872)  
Royal arms (George I) oil on canvas, framed (on S wall)  
Remains of louvre from over Great Hall (removed in 1950s): the braced base frame and eight posts supporting the ogival rafters, with mid-rail and windows.  
Elaborate gilt chandelier

### ***Significance***

As with the adjoining Great Chamber this room represents the Victorian remodelling of the Hall for public purposes and is a reminder of this important phase. The visible propping for the raised ceiling is of architectural and engineering interest.

[The significance of displayed collection material is treated in Section 8 of the Gazetteer].

### ***Condition/risks***

Significant water penetration to top left of N wall.

Eroded masonry to stone chimneypiece.

Eroded frame and transome to E window; external timber lintel largely absent.

### ***Issues/vulnerability***

Storage of collapsible tables in SE corner

Contents of display case of considerable interest but displayed without context or interpretation

Open studwork wall between Passage and Louvre Room is not interpreted and may confuse understanding of the original arrangement. The step over the sole plate is difficult for visitors with limited mobility (see also Passage Gaz. 6.05)

This space was remodelled in Phase VIII as one with the present Upper Great Chamber [Gaz. 6.04], and there may be arguments for re-uniting them. (A reason for the original separation was the generally inferior standard of decoration and finish in the Louvre Room, and this contrast will still apply).

In current circumstances, the louvre, unexplained, is an inappropriate display item here.

### ***Policies/recommendation***

- Repairs and maintenance as indicated by 2003 Condition Survey.
- The future use and treatment of this space needs to be considered together with that of the adjacent Upper Great Chamber.
- Consider the replacement of infill panels to open studding between northern Passage and Louvre Room, perhaps using opportunity to demonstrate techniques, if this accords with overall circulation and interpretation strategy.
- This room, with its revealed detail of construction in timber and brickwork, might be considered as an excellent location for interpreting the processes of building and alteration.
- As in the Upper Great Chamber, a more purposeful role in interpretation might be found for furniture and structural details displayed here.

**References:** P Faulkner *The Old Hall, Gainsborough* (1950s)  
JGP *Condition Survey* (2003)

## Ground Floor Passage

Room Number: G8, G15  
Other names:

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### *Development / Documentation*

**1) Phase III (1470-1596):** An original and advanced element of the plan of the C15 house, and reminiscent of urban house plans. Connecting Great Hall with important apartments of the E range.

**2) Phase IV (1596-1625):** Remodelled at S end to accommodate alteration in floor levels above with the building of a new stair.

**3) Phase VIII (1826-1872):** West (external) wall of passage underbuilt in brick in mid-C19.

**4) Phase IX (1872-1945):** S end of passage altered to form kitchen and pantry for caretaker's accommodation, accessible through external door at S end of W elevation.

**5) Phase XI (1971-1979):** N section of Passage re-formed as stair down to basement lavatories (1970s).  
Raised floor and ramps installed in central and S section.

**Current Use:** Public circulation and display. Wall panel display relating to the Pilgrim Fathers at S end.

### *Description*

Floor	Herringbone brickwork, overlaid in central section by modern raised floor to create ramped connections external W door and Panelled Room, carpeted. The extent of the earlier floor is delineated by a blue brick band, N of this is 1970s floor.
Walls	E walls of oak timber close studding with plaster infill panels. W wall is brickwork, plastered.
Ceiling	Central section N of stair lath and plaster below the joists; S of stair has arrangement of beams and struts to support altered floor levels of the floor above (see Phase IV above and Main Structure (Gaz.6.01). Modern brick pillar introduced 1970s to provide additional support.
Windows	One oak framed mullion window in W wall S of stair. One oak framed and mullioned window in W wall above stair
Doors	Oak planked and battened external door (C19) on W wall N of stair (up two steps) within 4-centred arch; glazed 3-light window above.. External door on W wall at S end, oak-planked and battened. Double door, softwood planked beneath 4-centred arched doorway on E side into Schools Room (Gaz. 6.07).

Features      Stair at S end to upper levels (see Gaz. 6.04).  
                  Stair at N end down to lavatories in basement [Gaz. 3.07]; oak treads, with  
                  quarry tiles at foot. Surviving wallplate/main post joint visible on E side.

### ***Collections***

At S end	Two C17 oak chests Joined table with drawer Low seat with double drawer and bulbous legs
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### ***Significance***

Shares with First Floor Passage (Gaz. 6.03) an exceptional significance as an early example of corridor access along a range. Significance is mitigated to a degree by extensive alterations at each end of the passage in the C19/C20, though the main structure survives extensively.

[The significance of displayed collection material is treated in Section 8 of the Gazetteer].

### ***Condition/risks***

Brick paviers worn but generally sound  
 Plasterwork generally in sound condition with minor cracking. some areas of plaster missing, with some loose plaster on E wall.  
 Some evidence of continuing beetle attack to timber members in E walls.

### ***Issues/vulnerability***

Extensive area of raised floor and ramps inhibits understanding of the historic space, and is intrusive especially with respect to the foot of the stair [Gaz. 6.04].  
 The use of the S end for wall display is not appropriate; the topics covered are important and require adequate designated space.  
 The pendant light fitting from Gainsborough Station is inappropriate in this space. The St John's Ambulance box, early telephone, and radiator are also intrusive.  
 The understair storage of stacking tables is visually intrusive

### ***Policies/recommendations***

- Repairs to plasterwork as indicated by 2003 Condition Survey.
- Review necessity for the raised floor and ramps, while retaining adequate access under any revised circulation and access plans.
- Discontinue display or use of inappropriate or intrusive material in future planning for this spaces.
- In responding to requirements under DDA, if access by lift to 1st Floor level is considered, it might be accommodated in the S end of the Passage, in an area where historic integrity is already extensively compromised and where visual intrusiveness can be minimised.

**References:**    P Faulkner      *The Old Hall, Gainsborough* (1950s)  
                      P Lindley      'Structure, Sequence and Status...' (1991)  
                      JGP      *Condition Survey* (2003)

## Schools Room

Room Number: G12  
Other names: East Great Chamber

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### *Development / Documentation*

**1) Phase III (1470-1596):** It is unclear what form or function this space had in the C15 house. It may have been divided into its constituent bays to create smaller chambers.

**2) Phase IV (1596-1625):** If undivided, this may be the Great Parlour of the 1625 Inventory.

**3) Phase VII (1733-1826):** Part of the E Range apartment let to the Earl of Abingdon from 1730s until 1753.

**4) Phase VIII (1826-1872):** Formed as part of public rooms, below ballroom, with renewal of windows and brickwork of E bays. 'Banqueting Room' on Stark Plan (1843)

**5) Phase IX (1872-1945):** Masonic Temple 1896-1952, accessed through nearby E door.

**6) Phase X (1945-1971):** Meetings Room and headquarters for Friends of the Old Hall Association.

**7) Phase XI/XII (1971-present):** Repair works and conversion to current use.

**Current Use:** Schools Room for visiting educational groups; lecture room for Friends' and public events.

### *Description*

Floor	Suspended timber floor beneath carpet tiles, laid on former hardboard floor surface
Walls	S and W walls of oak timber close studding with plaster infill panels E wall brickwork, plastered and papered, with dado rail
Ceiling	Plain lath and plaster ceiling, on underside of deep softwood joists of the ballroom above.
Windows	Bay window of brickwork on each side of chimney stack; windows with oak frames (cream-painted internally) and diamond set leaded lights, C19 on C17 pattern.. Windows are 8-plus-1 lights to rectangular bay on N of stack, 8 lights in four 2-light sections to canted bay on S. (all needs checking)
Doors	Double doors from Passage on W [Gaz. 6.06]; modern timber folding doors on N towards Cafeteria (Gaz. 6.10); oak-framed door on S towards Panelled Room (Gaz. 6.11). C19 panelled door with small Judas window in NE corner towards internal porch (see Gaz. 6.08)

Features	Fireplace on E side, C19 in C17 style, moulded stone jambs and lintel with brick fire-back and hearth
<b>Collections</b>	One from set of four painted cloth friezes displayed on W wall (see also Gaz. 6.05]

### ***Significance***

This space has suffered from some loss of historic character (including loss of panelling during 1970s) and from its conversion to public use during the late C19 and early C20. Its function and status within the earlier house is difficult to determine, though it will have been an important room in a high status position.

[The significance of displayed collection material is treated in Section 8 of the Gazetteer].

### ***Condition/risks***

Ceiling plaster cracked, though retained by lining paper  
Some cracking from shrinkage and movement in plastered wall panels

### ***Issues/vulnerability***

The space has lost historic character from C19 conversion works and current uses. There is a degree of visual intrusiveness from the red-painted folding doors and track lighting  
The painted cloth may be at risk from current room uses. There is a strong case for bringing the group of cloths together for their care, protection and presentation.

### ***Policies/recommendations***

- Current use is acceptable for this space, although a review of room uses and circulation may need to allocate a fresh role. Its level of significance will not unduly limit future uses, though what survives (studding on W side) will need to be respected and protected.
- The painted cloth frieze should be considered for proper display elsewhere.

**References:** P Faulkner *The Old Hall, Gainsborough* (1950s)  
P Lindley 'Structure, Sequence and Status' (1991)  
JGP *Condition Survey* (2003)



## Lower Inner Chamber (cafeteria)

Room Number: G11

Other names: Cafeteria

### *Development / Documentation*

**1) Phase III (1470-1596):** Probably represents an original room space of the C15 house, though the position of the doorway from the passage is unclear.

**2) Phase IV (1596-1625):** Perhaps? the Garden Parlour of the 1625 Inventory

**3) Phase IX (1872-1945):** Used as Ante-room or assembly area for Masonic Temple in Schools Room (Gaz. 6.06).

**4) Phase X (1945-1971):** Chamber was used during 1950s as kitchen, lavatories and passageway, with removal of section of the W wall to form doorway; doorway also created in S wall. Arrangement of partitioned closets on S side of space was recorded by Patrick Faulkner in 1950s.

**5) Phase XI (1971-1979):** Works by MoPBW to repair N end of range, replacing timber braces as found; earlier match board partitions removed at this time, and doorway in W wall closed.

**Current Use:** Visitor refreshment area.

### *Description*

Floor	Carpet over suspended timber floor
Walls	N and W walls of oak timber close studding with plaster infilled panels. Sole plates on dwarf walls, stone and brick on N side, modern brickwork on W. Some plaster is modern (1970s) but there is a considerable survival of earlier studwork and plastered panels on the W side, some with fragmentary remains of a decorative painted scheme, of peacock feathers and foliage, c.1600.
Ceiling	Modern replacement timber joists with plaster infill to N half of room; S half with C19 lath and plaster ceiling.
Windows	Three light stone mullion and transome window in E wall. Window to N (C19) with four lights and traceried heads with coloured glass (C19).
Doors	Door in NE corner to Tower Stair and Lower Chamber (Gaz. 7.03, 7.06), vertical oak boarded and battened with strap hinges. C15 door frame, flat 4-centred arch, leaves in spandrels. Modern oak door.

Features            Decorative wall painting on surviving early stud and plaster of W wall, principally visible at S end.  
                          SE corner of space occupied by internal porch to E front doorway  
                          Fireplace, stone, C19 in C17 style. Small grate with broad brick cheeks.  
                          Cast iron fireback.

### ***Significance***

An important domestic space with a rare surviving area of internal decoration. This room has however suffered from regular phases of reordering and remodelling.

### ***Condition/risks***

Some shakes in ceiling joists. Some shrinkage around plastered panels of N and W walls  
 The painted plaster panels are at risk of abrasion from movement of people and furniture, and from the variable humidity associated with the room's use.

### ***Issues/vulnerability***

The room, which is of considerable significance for its wall paintings and its sequence of uses within the house, is not presented as a historic space.

The surviving sections of wall paintings need to be carefully protected and interpreted for public appreciation

### ***Policies/recommendations***

- It is essential that the important areas of surviving wall painting are both adequately protected and properly interpreted, and that the room use respects their historical significance. This will mean discontinuing the room use as cafeteria.

### ***References:***

- P Austin & E Hirst  
                          'Conservation of English Domestic Wallpaintings and the  
                          Gainsborough Old Hall Murals' in P Lindley ed.  
                          *Gainsborough Old Hall* (1991).  
 P Faulkner        *The Old Hall, Gainsborough* (1950s)  
 P Lindley         'Structure, Sequence and Status' (1991)  
 JGP                 *Condition Survey* (2003)

## Second Floor Offices

Room Number: S2, S3  
Other names:

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### *Development / Documentation*

**1) Phase III (1470-1596):** Part of the upper space in 2-storey S end of East Range in the C15 house.

**2) Phase IV (1596-1625):** Floor raised along with that of chamber below to create a 3-storey end to the range, c.1600. Arrangement probably similar to the rooms below it, with a subsidiary closet on the N side. Possibly the *Nursirye* of the 1625 Inventory.

**3) Phase VII (1733-1826):** Part of E Range apartment let to Earl of Abingdon from 1730s to 1753.

**4) Phase IX (1872-1945):** The chamber formed part of the accommodation occupied until the 1970s by Edmund Dawber.

**Current Use:** Administrative office, together with closet on N, both accessed from the E range Stair

### *Description*

#### **Main Room**

Floor	?Softwood boards, concealed beneath carpet.
Walls	Close studded on N and W sides. Plastered brickwork on E and S. Chimney stack on S unplastered.
Ceiling	Plastered beneath joists. Downstand softwood tie-beam of Queen post truss runs E-W.
Window	Stone mullioned window, 5-lights, on E side
Door	Softwood, vertically boarded, C18.
Features	Fireplace in stack on S side, concealed by furniture.

#### **Closet on north**

Floor	Carpeted over ?softwood boards
Walls	Close studded on N, S and W sides (with cross frame visible on N side); plastered brickwork on E.
Window	3-light stone mullioned window on E.

***Significance***

These rooms share significance with the chambers below as part of the improved domestic arrangements created by William Hickman in the 1590s, forming a sequence of three bedchambers with associated closets.

***Condition/risks***

Not included in JGP Condition survey 2003

***Issues/vulnerability***

Although a significant room in the C17 development of the house, the room is not accessible to the public.

***Policies/recommendations***

- If a location for a lift installation at the S end of the East Range Passage is acceptable, access could be secured also to this space, for public or continued administrative uses.

***References:***

JGP     *Condition Survey* (2003)

## Bedchamber with former closet

Room Number: F14, F15

Other names:

### *Development / Documentation*

**1) Phase III (1470-1596):** In the C15 house, the space was occupied by the First Floor room at the S end of the range, to be replaced in converting two floor levels into three during Phase IV. Its former floor level is represented by the First Floor Passage (Gaz. 6.03) which remained from the earlier arrangement, now about 1 metre above the floor of the Bedchamber.

**2) Phase IV (1596-1625):** William Hickman c.1600 converted the original two-storeyed S end of the E range into three, creating the present Bedchamber at the new 1st Floor level. An additional stair was built to connect the three floors, and the S gable end and E wall of the range were enclosed in brick. F14 was presumably the subsidiary closet to the main bedchamber, though no connecting doorway is now discernible in the remaining length of studded wall.

The room may be the 'Sir William his bedchamber' (with a little chamber) of the 1625 Inventory.

**3) Phase IX (1872-1945):** The chamber formed the main bedroom in the accommodation at the S end of the range occupied until the 1970s by Edmund Dawber, with a kitchen in the Ground Floor Passage area, a bathroom on the 1st Floor above.

**Current Use:** Presented since the 1970s as a C17 Bedchamber, furnished principally with items from the Bacon Loan Collection, summarised below.

### *Description*

Floor	Lime and ash plaster laid on reed support (reconstructed 1970s) over floor joists, partially covered by woven rush matting behind rope and post barrier; modern closely woven matting on visitor side. Revealed section of plastered reed flooring to right of fireplace
Walls	N and W walls of oak close studding with plastered infill panels; E and S walls brickwork, unplastered.
Ceiling	Bridging beams framed in H plan; plastered panels between oak joists.
Windows	One in E wall, stone mullion and transome, five lights; one on each side of chimney on S, oak framed, mullioned with three lights each, with diamond-set leaded lights. Perspex secondary glazing and modern green roller blinds.
Doors	One on N wall, of softwood, to stair. Doorway on W side, at head of stairs into Passage, C15 door frame with 4-centred arch.

**Features** Fireplace on S wall, possibly original to the c1600 room; of creamy white stone in restrained classical style, fluted pilasters with simple lintel; projecting block at centre bearing graffiti: '1613' and 1643'.  
Steps up to First Floor Passage, hardwood with open risers (C20)  
Lighting: 5 spot lights from ceiling joists.

*Lost features:* Plastered wall finish removed during 20th century restorations

**Collections** Displayed behind post and rope barrier, against E wall and around fireplace; mostly Bacon Loan Collection, C17 oak furniture with some modern reproduction pieces:  
C17 Oak tester bedstead with modern reproduction hangings; warming pan on bed; oak livery cupboard, with easel to display portrait of Henry VIII; one large and one small oak chest; C17 cradle; reproduction livery table with carved oak desk box with initials RH; pair of cane-backed walnut chairs; early C18 back stool with urn splat; panel back armchair; joined stool; firegrate with cast fireback.

### ***Significance***

The room shares considerable significance in the development of the house, as one of the group of rooms at the south end of the East range conceived and created by William Hickman in the 1590s.

In presentation terms it is important as the only C17 bedchamber surviving in the house (and one of only two C17 rooms) to be shown as such.

[The significance of displayed collection material is treated in Section 8 of the Gazetteer].

### ***Condition/risks***

Cracks in the S window sill and to the lintel of the fireplace .

Matting stained and abraded.

### ***Issues/vulnerability***

Definition is needed as to the period at which the room is presented and its relationship to the overall interpretative scheme. The quantity of furniture displayed may inhibit public understanding; there may be a case for basing the room display on the 1625 Inventory, and determining the proper density of displayed furniture.

The absence of a W wall to the chamber, and the modern stair arrangement to the Passage must lead to some confusion in the mind of the visitor.

Bare brickwork is unlikely finish for C17 bedchamber and gives false idea of room as used.

### ***Policies/recommendations***

- Renew matting to display the room and protect floor.
- Review use of intrusive green roller blinds to reduce visible and UV light levels. Investigate other means to achieve protection.
- Review presentation of the room with further research on furnishing, in line with overall interpretation strategy, with particular attention to type and density of displayed material and the value of the 1625 Inventory
- Consider wall treatment as an important aspect of presenting the historic room; reproduction wall hangings may be an appropriate introduction.

**References:** P Faulkner      *The Old Hall, Gainsborough* (1950s)  
P Lindley      'Structure, Sequence and Status' (1991)  
J Vernon      'A Fine Wreck of the Feudal Age' (1991)  
JGP      *Condition Survey* (2003)

## Panelled Room & Closet

Room Number: G13, G14  
Other names: Panelled Parlour  
G14 - Tyrwhitt Room

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### *Development / Documentation*

- 1) Phase III (1470-1596):** The southern Ground Floor room in the C15 E range, possibly from the beginning with a closet on its N side, partly now taken up by the stair.
- 2) Phase IV (1596-1625):** Room created in its present form by William Hickman c.1600. Although now presented as an eating room, it is likely to have been intended as a bedchamber with closet.
- 3) Phase VII (1733-1826):** Included in apartment let to Earl of Abingdon from 1730s to 1753.
- 4) Phase VIII (1826-1872):** Shown on Stark (1843) plan as a single space including the S end of the Passage, titled *Private Sitting Room or Library*, though it is difficult to square this with the surviving fabric.
- 5) Phase IX (1872-1945):** Living Room in apartment at S end of range occupied by Edmund Dawber into the 1970s

**Current Use:** Displayed furnished as a dining chamber.

### *Description*

Floor	Softwood boards; closet has raised floor, one step up over threshold in doorway.
Walls	Main room: oak wainscot panelling (dark stained/painted) on all walls; flat unfielded panels, frieze with strapwork ornament. panels over fireplace are raised and fielded. Fireplace on S wall flanked by fluted pilasters, with one matching at centre of N wall. Closet: oak close studding visible on N, W and S sides; E wall is of plastered brickwork.
Ceiling	Main room: two bridging beams N-S, with lath and plaster ceiling beneath joists. Ceiling of Closet: single beam N-S with oak joists and plaster infill between.
Windows	5-light stone mullion and transome window on E side of main chamber; three-light stone mullion and transome window in subsidiary chamber.
Doors	Four-panelled softwood door, (C19) between the rooms. Main room: 8-panelled door in W wall, at S end (4-panelled leaf on external side). At N end, 6-panelled door reveals section of studding and plastering

on oak laths, to demonstrate the technique. 8-panelled door to N towards Schools Room. The two latter doorways have surrounds with fluted jambs and carved friezes with cornice on the lintels.

Features Fireplace in Main Room, moulded stone surround with high set vase stops; stone hearth and brick fireback.  
Graffito in plaster of S wall of Closet '*Trust truth only/P Tyrwhitt*' (Tyrwhitt was nephew of Lady Agnes Burgh, wife of 3rd Lord Burgh)

### ***Collections***

Furniture	Panelled Room	<p>Cast fireback, dated 1658 Central table (softwood) with table carpet Ten backstools, mixed collection</p> <p>Cupboard on stand Press cupboard 2 armchairs with solid, carved backs Small joined table (in window) Cane backstool Late C17 oak chest of drawers Writing box, 1679 Reproduction ceramic items on table Reproduction wine glasses on press cupboard</p>
	Closet	<p>2 press cupboards Joined stool Cane-seated squab stool Cane-backed armchair Cane-backed backstool Framed armchair</p> <p>Armchair with upholstered seat and splat</p> <p>Reproduction ceramics</p>
Portraits	Panelled Room	<p>Sir Nicholas Bacon Lady Anne Wentworth as a child Portrait of a man</p>
	Closet	<p>Henry VIII Sir Francis Bacon (as Keeper of the Privy Seal)</p>

### ***Significance***

These rooms share significance with the chambers and closets above as part of the improved domestic arrangements provided by William Hickman in the 1590s. The retention of the panelling (the only significant surviving area in the entire house) adds considerably to the rooms importance within the Old Hall.

There is also significance in presentational terms in the opportunity to compare this private dining space with the communal household arrangements of the Great Hall 120 or so years earlier.

[The significance of displayed collection material is treated in Section 8 of the Gazetteer].



### ***Condition/risks***

Shrinkage cracks in panelling, some decay at feet; panelling has been over-varnished, with some chipping and abrasions

Block door in W wall is warped and binds

All elements in closets generally sound. Part of skirting has decayed at SE corner.

### ***Issues/vulnerability***

Boarded floor at risk from visitor wear and tear

Squab stool in poor condition - requires repair or removal

Inconsistent means for deterring visitors from sitting on chairs

Inconsistent treatment of wall panelling

Security of portraits

Lack of interpretation

### ***Policies/recommendations***

- Cleaning and treatment of panelling to remove dark paint/stain and return wood to more historically appropriate and visually uniform appearance.
- Introduce use of druggets to protect floor.
- Upgrade security protection for, especially, displayed portraits.
- Develop uniform system, applied throughout the house, to deter visitors from sitting on chairs.
- Remove any damaged items of furniture for repair.
- Review presentation of the room with further research on furnishing, in line with overall interpretation strategy, with particular attention to type and density of displayed material and the value of the 1625 Inventory.

***References:*** P Faulkner      *The Old Hall, Gainsborough* (1950s)  
P Lindley      'Structure, Sequence and Status' (1991)  
JGP      *Condition Survey* (2003)



## 7 The Tower



## Main Structure

Room Number:        - -  
Other names:

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### *Development / Documentation*

**1) Phase III (1470-1596):** The date for the construction of the octagonal brick tower is difficult to determine, though it was plainly after the building of the 1460s East Range, on the NE corner of which it partially encroaches (by truncating the timber-frame), and before the Inventory of 1496 with its mention of a tower chamber. An appropriate context for its building as a expression of pride and status can be found in Thomas Burgh's election as a Knight of the Garter under Richard III or his summons to the House of Lords in 1487. Stylistically, too, in its diapered brickwork on the W face and stone dressings, a date in the 1480s would be appropriate. The tower was intended to extend the lord's private apartments of the E range, and any defensive purpose seems secondary. After building, subsequent alterations have been very modest, confined to the remodelling of windows and some changes in access arrangements.

**2) Phase IV (1596-1625):** With Hickman's rebuilding of the S end of the range to create more fashionable apartments, the Tower rooms lost some of their importance. The 1625 Inventory mentions only one *Towar Chamber* though other named rooms may be located here too.

**3) Phase VII (1733-1826):** The Tower may have been included in the E range apartments let to the Earl of Abingdon from the 1730s until 1753, but at some point during the century it seems to have been divided off with a separate dwelling with its own access.

**4) Phase VIII (1826-1872):** The Stark plan of 1843 shows this arrangement, with the Tower Ground Floor separated by a partition from the E range northern chamber and an external doorway formed between Tower and the N wall of the range.

**Current Use:** Ground Floor: administrative office. First Floor: public display, furnished with reproduction material as a C15 bedchamber. Second Floor: collections storage.

### *Description*

#### **General structure**

The octagonal tower is built on three floors with a single chamber at each, connected by a stair turret which also provides access to the flat, battlemented roof. Ground and 1st Floor rooms are also accessible from the adjacent rooms of the E range. A stack on the E side provides garderobes at each level and there are chimneys on the NW, N and NE sides. A further stack, built in with the stair turret, serves fireplaces in the N rooms of the E range. Construction is wholly in brick with the exception of stone door and window dressings, plinth cappings, string courses between the main floors and cappings to the battlements. The brickwork is in irregular English bond with much decorative use of moulded and carved bricks for courses of trefoil corbelling, below the battlements on the tower and stair turret and, especially, on the northern chimney stack to the E range.

Internally the wall is stepped back at each level to carry the bridging beam and wall plates for the joists of the chamber floors and roof.

### **Roof**

The flat roof is of lead, laid on boards over the joists and beam above the upper chamber.

### **Elevations**

The elevations express the tower's overall function of display and the importance of the spaces within. Although fairly small compared with other contemporary brick towers, the complexity of the plan produces a variety of impressive elevations from different angles and an imposingly elaborate roof-line of turrets and battlements with the fashionable domestic addition of chimney stacks. The elevations have been little altered since built, with some remodelling of one window at ground level on the SE face, and to one at First Floor level. The windows express the growing status of rooms from bottom to top, with an increase in size from small, single light windows at Ground level, with a larger window under a square hood at 1st Floor (originally two-light though now altered) and two large, three-light windows with arched and traceried heads for the high status Upper Chamber on the 2nd Floor. The stair turret has slit windows at three levels, and in the garderobe stack the vents are formed as arrow loops.

### **Significance**

The tower is a well preserved and largely intact example of a small class of mid- to late-C15 brick towers, and of national importance in the historical development of English architecture. Significance is enhanced by the survival intact of most other elements of the C15 house which give the tower its architectural context. (See also *Significances* in Part One)

### **Condition/risks**

Brickwork generally is in good condition, with some areas of eroded brickwork, more pronounced at parapet level.

Stonework of string courses and plinth with isolated erosion.

Window dressings and surrounds generally sound, with some localised cracking and erosion.

### **Issues/vulnerability**

Problems of physical access to upper levels of the Tower are common to other areas of the Hall, though perhaps more difficult to resolve here.

Use of the Upper Chamber for museum storage prevents access to an important space of the C15 house; the Lower Chamber is also inaccessible, through administrative uses.

### **Policies/recommendations**

- Monitor erosion to brick and stonework with remedial action where necessary. Carry out repairs to cracked areas of brickwork.
- Relocate administrative and storage uses and open Upper and Lower Chambers to public access.
- Review and develop presentation of all three chambers together with roof under revised plans for circulation, access and interpretation.
- If problems of physical access to upper levels cannot be overcome, secure alternative means of access and understanding for visitors with impaired mobility.

### **References:** J Hodson and M Whitworth

*The contents of Gainsborough Old Hall in 1625*

P Lindley 'Structure, Sequence and Status' (1991)

MW Thompson 'The architectural context of Gainsborough Old Hall' (1991)

JGP *Condition Survey* (1998)

## Roof

Room Number:        - -  
Other names:

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### ***Development / Documentation***

**1) Phase III (1470-1596):** Roof of tower as built 1480s, with extensive views over town and its hinterland, and of the course of the Trent, signalling Burgh's local domination and interests in trade.

**Current Use:** Accessible to public during dry weather.

### ***Description***

Roof area of 1480s' tower remains much as built, with flat leaded platform enclosed by crenellated brick parapets capped with stone. On the S, the upper stage of the stair turret (with planked softwood door in brick arched doorway) and incorporated chimney stack from the E range northern rooms; on the N, NW, and NE the chimney stacks from the fireplaces of the tower rooms. On the E the roof extends over the garderobe stack, with the projecting top of the shaft.

Leads now covered by wooden duckboards.

Iron guard rails across the back of the parapet. Flag pole on stair turret.

### ***Significance***

The commanding views from the tower over the town, hinterland and river system symbolise both the political and social power of the Burgh family within the county, and the importance of their trading activities through the port of Gainsborough.

### ***Condition/risks***

The lead roof appears to be sound, though there is increased erosion to brick- and stone-work at parapet level.

The duck boards over the leads can become slippery and dangerous when wet.

### ***Issues/vulnerability***

Possibilities for safe and regular public access to roof - the view from the tower greatly aids understanding of the planning and building of the hall, and the power of its owners locally and further afield

### ***Policies/recommendations***

- Monitor condition of brick- and stonework of the parapet.
- Replace or treat duckboards to provide a safe surface.
- Secure public access to roof as part of regular visitor circulation. Further measures for safety and protection may be necessary.
- Include the significance of views from the roof in interpreting the location of the Old Hall and the successive families' concerns in trade.
- Consider introduction of telescope and interpreted panorama.

- The flagpole might occasionally carry a flag: Lincolnshire or English Heritage

***References:***

P Lindley 'Structure, Sequence and Status' (1991)

MW Thompson 'The architectural context of Gainsborough Old Hall' (1991)

JGP *Condition Survey* (1998)



## Stair

Room Number:        - -  
Other names:

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### ***Development / Documentation***

**1) Phase III (1470-1596):** The stair of the 1480s tower as built and little altered since.

**2) Phase VII (1733-1826):** The stair permitted access within tower independent of the adjoining E Range, allowing tower to be let as a separate dwelling from C18 - C19

**Current Use:** Primarily staff use, with occasional public access

### ***Description***

Spiral staircase from Ground Floor to Roof, with single-piece stone treads in brick turret; iron handrail on outer side. Stair brickwork white painted internally.

Access into stair is from Lower Inner Chamber (Gaz. 6.08) with access from stair to Lower, Middle and Upper chambers of Tower, to the Roof and to the roof space above the E range {Gaz. 6.0X}.

At the foot of the stair, the lobby from the Tower Lower Chamber has a quadripartite vault with brick ribs and moulded and carved brickwork tracery. At the head of the stair, the turret is vaulted with 16 ribs radiating from a central rose boss, all in oak.

### ***Significance***

A well-preserved integral element of the primary design and construction of the tower. The notched inner end of the stair treads is an interesting feature.

### ***Condition/risks***

The top landing slab is cracked and there is some individual brick failure throughout the height of the Tower.

### ***Issues/vulnerability***

Adequacy of stair if upper levels of tower (ie. Upper Chamber and Roof) are to be made accessible to public and schools use; DDA issues of access and understanding

### ***Policies/recommendations***

- Repairs to landing slab to secure its integrity and public safety
- Seek to secure access to upper levels by alternate means for visitors with limited mobility, using virtual access and other means of interpretation

### ***References:***

J Hodson and M Whitworth  
*The contents of Gainsborough Old Hall in 1625*  
JGP *Condition Survey* (2003)



## Upper Chamber

Room Number: S1  
Other names: Tower, 2nd Floor Room

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### *Development / Documentation*

**1) Phase III (1470-1596):** The most private and high status of the three apartments created within the 1480s tower. Possibly to be identified with the *Tower chamber* of Thomas Burgh's Inventory of 1496

**2) Phase IV (1596-1625):** If so, it would also be the *Towar chamber* of William Hickman's 1625 Inventory. Within his time the tower chambers lost their primacy as the best rooms to his new chambers at the S end of the East range.

**3) Phase VII (1733-1826):** Possibly part of the E range apartments let to the Earl of Abingdon from 1730s to 1753. Included in the independent dwelling house in the tower from the ?mid C18

**Current Use:** Storage of collections

### *Description*

Floor	Softwood boards
Walls	Brickwork in irregular English bond
Ceiling	Single bridging beam N-S. Oak joists with boards form deck to flat Tower roof above
Windows	On W and SE sides, two large three-light windows with cusped heads, within wide flat super-arches
Doors	Accessed from the stair by a large heavily boarded door (a small door to the west of which gives access to the roof. This door is not quite large enough for the opening and appears to be a later replacement of the original. A small doorway gives access to the garderobe but this lacks its door.
Features	Brick-arched fireplace with stone surround to hearth. Garderobe in turret on E, brick vaulted and floored with single-piece stone seat; window and arrow loop.

**Collections** Extensive stored collections on metal racking, against all walls

***Significance***

A well preserved and integral element of the primary design and construction of the tower, of particular significance as the principal chamber of the lord's apartment in the C15 house.

***Condition/risks***

Some cracking to brickwork, especially on W side.  
Stored collections limit area accessible to examination

***Issues/vulnerability***

The room, representing historically the grandest and most private of the Tower chambers, is denied to visitor access by its current use.

Extension of public access is desirable, but perhaps difficult to achieve for visitors with limited mobility.

***Policies/recommendations***

- With transfer of stored collections, include chamber in future planning for presentation of the tower, with research to ensure appropriate furnishing.
- Seek to secure access to chamber by alternate means for visitors with limited mobility, using virtual access and other means of interpretation

***References:***

J Hodson and M Whitworth  
*The contents of Gainsborough Old Hall in 1625*

JGP                      *Condition Survey* (2003)

## Middle Chamber

Room Number: F11  
Other names: Tower Bedroom

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### *Development / Documentation*

**1) Phase III (1470-1596):** The second most important of the new chambers created by the tower, and the most immediately accessible from the apartments on the E range, 1st Floor.

**2) Phase IV (1596-1625):** Possibly to be identified as the Tower Chamber of both the 1496 and 1625 inventories, if not the Upper Chamber

**3) Phase VII (1733-1826):** Possibly part of the E range apartments let to the Earl of Abingdon from 1730s to 1753. Included in the independent dwelling house in the tower from the ?mid C18

**Current Use:** Displayed to public and used for educational group activities as a late-medieval bedchamber, furnished with material of the Transformation Project.

### *Description*

Floor	Softwood boarded floor
Walls	Brickwork in irregular English bond with struck pointing
Ceiling	Bridging beam NE-SW; oak joists with softwood soffit boards with moulding each end, and no plaster infill.
Windows	Two one-light windows with brick surrounds, to W and NE. Window to SE, possibly ? originally two light, now united into one wide single-light. Iron casements with leaded lights.
Doors	To Tower stair, oak plank and batten door, in arched-head doorway. To garderobe, arch-headed doorway, door missing. From Louvre Room (Gaz. 6.05), C15 oak framed doorway with 4-centred arch, door missing.
Features	Brick-arched fireplace with stone surround to hearth. Garderobe in turret on E, brick vaulted and floored with single-piece stone seat; window and arrow loop.

**Collections** Furnished with Transformation Project items since 1994:  
Bed with half-tester, behind post-and-rope barrier; red and blue hangings and coverings; reproduction chest; trestle table with writing slope; X-frame chair; woven osier fire-screen; wall and door hangings

C19 boarded elm chest  
Pair of andirons, copper alloy

***Significance***

A well preserved and integral element of the primary design and construction of the tower.

[The significance of displayed collection material is treated in Section 8 of the Gazetteer].

***Condition/risks***

Evidence of beetle infestation in exposed timbers.

Cracks to brickwork of all three window heads and to head of door to Louvre Room (Gaz. 6.05). Three cracks in fireplace arch, running to high level.

Some damage to floor boards. Some corrosion to ironwork of windows.

***Issues/vulnerability***

Modern furniture not differentiated from older collection items.

Pointing of brickwork not uniform.

Post-and-rope barrier is intrusive, and may not be necessary.

Uplighters slightly intrusive

No indication or suggestion of original wall covering or finishes.

***Policies/recommendations***

- Repairs to areas of damaged brickwork.
- Consider protection of boarded floor by use of druggets in public areas.
- Include chamber in future planning for presentation of the tower as a suite of C15 apartments, with research to ensure appropriate furnishing.

***References:***

J Hodson and M Whitworth  
*The contents of Gainsborough Old Hall in 1625*

JGP    *Condition Survey* (2003)

## Lower Chamber

Room Number: G10  
Other names: Tower Office

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### ***Development / Documentation***

**1) Phase III (1470-1596):** The first in the suite of the three new chambers created by the building of the tower in the 1480s.

**2) Phase IV (1596-1625):** Brears (2003) suggests that this may be the *Stille house* of the 1625 Inventory.

**3) Phase VII (1733-1826):** Possibly part of the E range apartments let to the Earl of Abingdon from 1730s to 1753. Included in the independent dwelling house in the tower from the ?mid C18

**Current Use:** Administrative office/ Staff Room

### ***Description***

Floor	Brick paved floor in herringbone patter; carpeted.
Walls	Brick walls in English bond.
Ceiling	Oak bridging beam E-W; oak joists with plaster infill panels.
Windows	On NW, NE, and SE (last now blocked). Timber frames and casements (C19) Arched recess in E wall of garderobe with window with iron casement frame.
Doors	[to complete]
Features	Moulded brick-arched fireplace with stone surround to hearth; fire opening blocked in brickwork Garderobe in turret on E, brick floor and tunnel vault (to full height of adjacent chamber); with single-piece stone seat; window and arrow loop.

### ***Significance***

A well preserved and integral element of the primary design and construction of the tower, and the first of the sequence of three rooms of the lord's apartment.

If as suggested (Brears 2003), this can be identified as the still house of the 1625 inventory, it has a considerable significance, in social/historical and architectural terms, as one of the earliest examples so far suggested.

### ***Condition/risks***

Cracks to brickwork over two window heads; cracking also to walls and to exterior side of entrance door (towards Lower Inner Chamber Gaz.6.08. The slate hearth surround has been set incorrectly and is in a parlous state with areas damaged by knocks and by spalling.

***Issues/vulnerability***

As an important chamber of the C15 Hall, the room is currently inaccessible to visitors.

***Policies/recommendations***

Repairs to areas of damaged brickwork and to hearth area..

Secure public access to room by relocation of administrative uses.

Within future planning for access and interpretation, research historical use of room as basis for appropriate treatment and furnishing. Keep open the possibility of presenting the room as a C17 still room, if this accords better with overall planning for the E range

***References:***

- P Brears            Letter re Kitchen (Feb 2003)
- J Hodson and M Whitworth
- The contents of Gainsborough Old Hall in 1625*
- JGP                    *Condition Survey* (2003)



## 8 Collections



## Collections: General Description

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### ***Development/Description***

Gainsborough Old Hall houses a range of collections, mostly used on display to furnish room settings and other spaces of the Hall with authentic historic pieces, with other equipment and furniture (mostly reproduction) creating contexts for interpretation, re-enactment or educational role play in defined areas of the Hall.

The historic collections consist principally of furniture (Gazetteer 8.02, with a preponderance of C17 and C18 oak furniture), and an extensive group of portraits, of the Hickman and Bacon families (Gaz.8.03). These two groups are mostly represented by the Bacon Loan Collection, initially placed on loan by Sir Edmund Bacon in 1949/50, with the loan continued, after the death of Sir Edmund in 1982, by Sir Nicholas Bacon. There are also additional items of furniture, borrowed in from other museums or acquired separately by the Friends of the Old Hall Association (FOHA) after 1949. The Friends' collecting activities also extended to general social history material from the town and further afield (Gaz. 8.04), now mostly stored in reserve, though some items are displayed in the Upper Great Chamber. Also held at the Hall are finds from site archaeological investigations and structural or decorative fragments from the Hall itself (Gaz. 8.06).

The reproduction material used in interpretation and educational activities (Gaz. 8.05) is displayed in the Great Hall, Solar, Tower Middle Chamber, Buttery, Pantry and Kitchen. It was mostly commissioned through a planned 'Transformation Project' in 1994, though additional pieces have been added since.

The main concern of the Conservation Plan is with the collections of historic material present on site, though important categories for the history and development of the Old Hall exist elsewhere and are included in the Gazetteer. These are primarily the historical archives of the house and estate, deposited in Lincolnshire Archives or retained by the Thonock and Somersby Estate Office (Gaz. 8.07). The records of the various bodies which have managed the site from 1949 (FOHA; Ministry of Works; DoE; English Heritage, Lincolnshire County Council) also represent a valuable if scattered resource, considered as Modern Archives and Records (Gaz. 8.08).

### ***Significance***

Overall the significance of the collections is variable. Some material has an important historical association with the house and its owners, some has no documented connections but does have considerable intrinsic significance, and other material has much potential for interpreting the Old Hall and its local context.

No independent evaluations of significance have been undertaken for any categories of collection. Assessments proposed here are based on the criteria set out in Part One - representative value, quality of documentation, rarity or uniqueness, extent of associated research and, most importantly, closeness of association with the site and building.

### ***Condition/risks***

Environmental conditions on display or in store, especially in terms of Relative Humidity, fall short of the ideal. Risks to material are a source of concern to collections staff and close monitoring of the physical condition of material will need to be maintained.

Standards of security for displayed material are not uniformly high, and a review of protection measures and procedures would be valuable.

Some items on display are at risk of damage during public events in the Hall, and from their regular moving in preparation for such events.

A small number of items which have sustained damage remain on display, and should be removed and/or repaired.

### ***Issues/vulnerability***

Collections are not well documented as to provenance, acquisition details etc., though this would greatly assist assessments of significance. Useful records may exist in a number of places and would repay further research.

An important issue for the collections overall is the mix of authentic collection items with modern reproduction material, and the varying dates at which rooms and spaces are presented. Without explanation or guidance this may be very confusing to visitors. Furnished rooms appear in some cases very crowded and may represent a wish to display as much good material as possible, rather than an attempt to create authentic room settings based on research.

Storage of reserve collection material on site makes inaccessible to the public a number of significant rooms.

### ***Policies/recommendations***

- Documentation of all collections might be improved through searches in available resources, including FOHA archives and Bacon family or estate records.
- In particular, it is important that an up to date list of items in the Bacon Loan Collections is agreed and incorporated in a formal Loan Agreement, to confirm the legal status of the material and to serve as a basis for any negotiations on varying the future content of the loan.
- On the basis of improved documentation, assessments of significance in each group could be undertaken, reviewed for their potential value in future interpretation, and matched against the current Acquisition and Disposals Policy.
- Transfer off-site of material stored in reserve collections would improve its care and the ease of public consultation, as well as freeing up significant spaces of the house for public access.
- Specialist advice should be sought in resolving areas of environmental concern for collection material. This should cover all aspects: Relative Humidity, natural and artificial lighting, dust, pollutants and pests.

<b><i>References:</i></b>	Messrs. Christies,	Old Hall, Gainsborough; Valuation for Probate, Sept. 1982: The Pictures
	Messrs. Bowring,	Old Hall, Gainsborough; Valuation for Probate Aug 1984: Furniture
	Victor Chinnery	Inventory and Valuation: the early oak furniture etc. March 1994

## Furniture & Textile Collections

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### *Development / Documentation*

The development of the furniture collections is difficult to trace from the paucity of records for the period when the collections were traditionally thought to have been assembled. This includes the relatively recent period until the early 1980s when, with the death of Sir Edmund Bacon, inventories and valuations were compiled for material on loan at the Old Hall from the Bacon family. The furniture loan material was again listed in 1994, as part of a valuation of all the furniture then housed within the Hall (Chinnery, 1994).

**The Bacon Loan Collection** of furniture consists principally of C17 English oak furniture, though the circumstances of its assembly are not known with any certainty. There is a tradition that it represents the contents of the Old Hall when the Hickman family departed for Thonock Hall in the 1720s, the furniture being abandoned as too old and unfashionable for the new house. Though this may apply to some of the material, the composition of the collection as a whole suggests that it was mostly brought together at a later period, as a consciously antiquarian attempt to re-furnish the Hall and emphasise its antiquity. A context for this may have been the adaptation of the Hall by Sir Henry Bacon Hickman in the 1850s. In addition to the old oak furniture a number of pieces in the Collection are of C18 and C19 date, probably relocated from Thonock when the 1720s house was demolished in 1964.

**Additional Collections** The Bacon Collection has been joined at Gainsborough by material from other sources. One such source was the transfer on loan from Abbey House, Kirkstall (Leeds City Museums) of the oak tester bed currently on display in the E range Bedchamber (Gaz. 6.10), together with other material. In addition, from 1949 until the agreement with Lincolnshire CC in 1979, the Friends of the Old Hall were actively collecting and probably adding items of oak and other furniture to displays in the house.

**Textiles** Until c.1994 the Old Hall housed, though did not display, a group of Italian or Spanish embroideries, C16 and of ecclesiastical character, with a smaller group of C19 Persian embroideries. There is little information on either group, though they would seem to have no connection with the house and may have been acquired to help furnish rooms at a relatively late date. The textiles are now in the care of the Usher Gallery, Lincoln. One group of textiles of exceptional significance, however, remains on display in the building, though it has no historical association with Gainsborough. The rare set of four painted cloth hangings, of late C17 or early C18 date and apparently intended as a unified frieze above wall panelling, was purchased in the 1950s, having come originally from Brandeston Hall, Suffolk (now demolished).

### *Significance*

The strength of the collections lies in the Bacon Loan, of mainly C17 oak furniture (around 60 items). The group appears to have been assembled in order to furnish the building, rather than having a documented association with the house through use, and now forms a reasonably good and representative collection in its own right.

Not all items are of equal quality. Some have considerable merit and significance (especially seat furniture and press cupboards) though there are also modern reproduction and composite items incorporating earlier woodwork. The collection has been reliably identified and listed by Victor Chinnery in 1994.

The smaller non-loan collection of furniture is similar in content. Associated with this group, the painted cloths are an important survival of a form of interior decoration now rare, and are of exceptional significance.

### ***Condition/risks***

Items of furniture on display are at risk of damage during public events in the Hall, and from regular moving in preparation for such events.

Furniture is also at risk from normal wear and tear. Seat furniture in particular is threatened, and a uniform method to deter use is required.

Some items of furniture are damaged with parts missing, and should be removed and repaired, or taken into reserve collections.

The painted cloths are damaged and abraded, and need repair and cleaning as a priority.

### ***Issues/vulnerability***

A main issue for the display of collections is the mix of authentic items with the modern reproduction material, and the varying dates at which rooms and spaces are presented.

Furnished rooms appear in some cases crowded and may represent a wish to display as much good material as possible, rather than an attempt to create research-based room settings.

There is a degree of uncertainty about the status (loan, gift or purchase) of some few items, which needs to be resolved.

### ***Policies/recommendations***

- Documentation of furniture collections should be improved through searches in available resources, including FOHA archives and Bacon family and estate records.
- An up to date list of items in the Bacon Loan Collection should be agreed and incorporated in a formal Loan Agreement, confirming the legal status of the material and serving as a basis for any negotiations on varying the future content of the loan.
- An independent assessment of significance (individually and overall) should be commissioned for furniture collections.
- Items for furnishing of period rooms (C17 Bedchamber and Panelled Room) should be identified on the basis of research into Old Hall historical sources (especially the 1625 inventory) and comparison with other relevant sites.
- A collection of high quality material might be formed from the remaining material and utilised on display to present themes about C17 furniture history.
- All displayed furniture should have a purposeful role; the display of items as space fillers in circulation spaces should perhaps be discontinued.
- Loan material remaining without a clear role, or of less than the general high quality, might be discussed for offer to other museums or agreed for return to the lender.
- Future care of the painted cloths should be secured, taking advice on repair, conservation and appropriate display. The cloths should be better known.

### ***References***

- |                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| Messrs. Christies, | Old Hall, Gainsborough;<br>Valuation for Probate, Sept. 1982: The Pictures                    |
| Messrs. Bowring,   | Old Hall, Gainsborough;<br>Valuation for Probate Aug 1984: Furniture                          |
| Victor Chinnery    | Inventory and Valuation: the early oak furniture etc.<br>March 1994                           |
| Linda Woolley      | 'Vestments and other Textiles....' in P. Lindley (ed.)<br><i>Gainsborough Old Hall</i> (1991) |

## Paintings & Drawings

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### ***Development / Documentation***

The Bacon Loan Collection of Paintings and Drawings is more securely associated with the family and with the Hall than is the collection of furniture, consisting almost exclusively of portraits of the Bacon and Hickman families from the C16 to the C19. The portraits are currently displayed, in the Upper Great Chamber (Gaz. 6.04) and in the Panelled Room and associated closet (Gaz. 6.11) of the E Range; a summary list of the paintings is set out in the Gazetteer entries. There are about 30 portraits in all.

However, the background to their presence at the Hall remains unclear. It seems unlikely that any portraits celebrating the antiquity of the family would have been left behind on removal to Thonock in the 1720s, and a more likely explanation may be that the paintings were transferred to the Hall in groups over a period from c1850 onwards, with the bulk of the collection coming to the Old Hall with the closure and eventual demolition of Thonock Hall in the mid 1960s. Documentary searches may be able to throw some light on the detail of the process. The Christies' probate valuation of 1982 confirms the contents of the loan.

Also displayed (in the Louvre Room Gaz. 6.05) are a Royal Arms of George III and a Bacon family funerary hatchment.

### ***Significance***

The collection is of considerable importance to an understanding and interpretation of the Old Hall, and of considerable significance also as a coherent set of one family's portraiture (with related individuals) over a long period. In terms of intrinsic quality the collection is not of the first rank. Many items appear to be contemporary or possibly later copies, of known or unknown originals, including copies of Bacon family portraits currently at Raveningham Hall. A large number of portraits are of similar size, inscription method and framing, forming an apparent set. None are attributable to major artists; attributions by Christies in 1982 are mostly '*after*', '*follower of*', or '*in the manner of*': Holbein, Gheeraerts, Mytens, van Dyck, Kneller, etc..

The portraits do, however, have very considerable potential in interpreting the story of the Old Hall and the people associated with it.

### ***Condition/risks***

Environmental conditions for paintings on display fall short of the ideal, and close monitoring of the condition of material will need to be maintained.

Standards of security for paintings need also to be kept under review, with consideration of additional protection measures and procedures.

Light levels for material on display are controlled to a degree by window blinds in some rooms, though visible and UV light levels will need to be regularly monitored and controls maintained or improved.

### ***Issues/vulnerability***

Portraits on display are not labelled or interpreted in other ways within the rooms, and the sitter's place in the history of the Old Hall is not drawn out.

Current display of portraits principally in the Upper Great Chamber appears to represent an early hanging scheme (?1940s), which places most material safely out of visitor reach but renders many portraits difficult to see.

Sir Nicholas Bacon is prepared to consider varying the content of the loan, and the opportunity may be taken to secure relevant items in planning future schemes of interpretation.

### ***Policies/recommendations***

- Documentation of the portrait collections should be improved through searches in available resources, including FOHA archives and Bacon family and estate records.
- In particular, an up to date list of items in the Bacon Loan Portrait Collection should be agreed and incorporated in a formal Loan Agreement, to confirm the legal status of the material and to serve as a basis for any negotiations on varying the future content of the loan
- An independent assessment of significance for the portrait collections (individually and overall) should be commissioned, with the advice of the National Portrait Gallery. A list of loan items once agreed should be sent to NPG archives to make the collection better known.
- Ways of making best use of portraits should be reviewed in planning future interpretation. Portraits may be used as means of telling the story of the house and its people, as well as in furnishing a room.
- Adequate access to information on individual portraits should be provided in future schemes of interpretation.
- Standards of security for paintings should be reviewed with the aim of improving methods of fixing and of other protection measures and procedures.

### ***References:***



## Social History Collections

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### ***Development / Documentation***

Collections were assembled primarily by the Friends Association in the period after 1949, following exhibitions of local material from the early 1950s onwards and in pursuit of the ambition to set up in the Old Hall a museum for the town and district. After Lincolnshire CC took over management responsibility in 1979, collecting of local material continued, occasionally with the involvement and support of the Friends, though under the current Acquisitions Policy, collecting is confined to material directly related to the Hall.

The existing collection reflects the normal local history museum range of domestic, personal, occupational and community life material of the C19 and earlier C20, from both town and countryside; there is a good representation of trade tools (blacksmiths and carpenters), dolls and dolls houses, shoes and clothing, and agricultural tools. There are also items of furniture, both early oak furniture and later items, which supplement the Bacon Loan Collection on display, with some pieces also in reserve storage. Material from chance finds and from excavation on site, together with structural fragments of the building are covered in Gazetteer 8.06. A further valuable source for the study and understanding of the house is the collection of original or copy illustrations, including historic photographs, prints and drawings.

The greater proportion of the social history material is in reserve collection storage in the Upper Tower Chamber, Upper West Chamber and adjoining room over the Servery. Selected groups of material are displayed in the Upper Great Chamber and are summarised in its Gazetteer entry (Gaz. 6.04). They include items of furniture not part of the Bacon Loan, including pianos, clocks and seat furniture.

### ***Status***

Acquired through gift and purchase, and whether collected pre- or post- 1979, all general history collections not on loan are now in the ownership of Lincolnshire CC.

### ***Significance***

Though not assessed in detail, social history collections seem to have significance and interest on a local or county-wide scale, with little being of wider regional importance. The material, as it was intended to do, reflects the activities and concerns of a town and its district. In terms of the Hall, however, some of the material is of considerable importance and potential for interpreting social and historical context.

### ***Condition/risks***

General risks from inadequate standards of environmental control apply, for material on display and in store.

The condition of some material in the collections is poor.

### ***Issues/vulnerability***

The social history collection partly reflects the early aim to represent local life and traditions of the Gainsborough area and not all items are of relevance to the Old Hall and its presentation. Some, however, have valuable potential for placing the Old Hall in its local and social context.

Display of social history items in the Upper Great Chamber appears random and uncoordinated

Storage of social history reserve collections in particular makes inaccessible to the public a number of significant rooms.

### ***Policies/recommendations***

- Documentation of the social history collections should be improved through searches in available resources, including FOHA archives. Archival material relating to accessioned objects should be transferred or copied into LCC documentation systems.
- A full survey and assessment of significance of the collection is required, including state of documentation and physical condition.
- Specialist advice should be sought in resolving areas of environmental concern for collection material, with recommendations implemented.
- In planning future schemes of interpretation, selected social history material should be identified which can help create a coherent interpretation of the Old Hall in the social context of Gainsborough.
- Social history material not required on display might be transferred, as soon as circumstances allow, to a store off-site, providing improved environmental conditions and enhanced public access for collections.

### ***References:***

## Transformation Project

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### ***Description/Documentation***

The Transformation Project was initiated in 1994 as an attempt to improve the interpretation of the medieval house by furnishing and equipping a number of rooms with reproduction furniture and equipment. The central idea of the project was to base the furnishing of the rooms firmly on the detailed evidence for the Old Hall of the 1496 will and inventory of Sir Thomas Burgh.

Commissions for the project were researched from a number of sources and a file detailing the research is retained by the Old Hall. The furniture and furnishings were based on examples shown in 15th century illustrations and on surviving examples. Reproduction furniture was mostly commissioned from Stuart Interiors of Barrington Court, Somerset. Fittings such as the woven wall hangings in the Great Hall, the Tower room and the Solar were made specially to authentic patterns. Smaller items came from various sources, including some blacksmith-made pieces (fire irons etc), a large amount of reproduction pottery made by the specialist potter John Hudson, various reproduction wooden bowls and plates and pewter ware. Some items are genuine old pieces, including a number of pewter bowls and plates. There is also a number of items of replica food and provisions, ranging from high quality stuffed boars and deer and convincing meats and pies to poor quality and unconvincing vacuum-formed plastic items. It is unclear how these items relate to the original Transformation Project collection.

The initial project was overseen by Dr Charles Kightley who has carried out similar projects at a number of sites (notably Barley Hall in York and the Judge's Lodgings, Presteigne).

### ***Significance***

The collection of reproduction items is valuable in interpreting the medieval house and supporting educational work, but also has an intrinsic significance as a collection of mostly high quality commissions of growing historic interest in its own right. Whereas much material acquired 'for use' may be regarded as having a finite life, it is suggested that much of this collection is worthy of protection and preservation.

### ***Condition/risks***

The Transformation Project material is at risk from the same factors as the main furniture collections - normal visitor wear and tear and the particular threats from special events. It also suffers, perhaps inevitably, from regular use for educational sessions and re-enactment.

### ***Issues/vulnerability***

Failure to carry through the original idea of the project (to base room furnishings firmly on the evidence of the 1496 inventory) together with a scattering of material throughout the house, has somewhat weakened the effectiveness of the project.

Some of the furniture is used inappropriately, particularly the religious items in the oriel. A major issue for the collections overall is the mix of authentic collection items with the modern reproduction material of the Transformation Project, and the varying dates at which

rooms and spaces are presented (variously C15 for rooms furnished with Transformation project , C17 and C19 elsewhere) which must be confusing for visitors.

***Policies/recommendations***

- Within future interpretation planning, rooms to be presented through reproduction material should be reviewed and redefined, and the detail of their furniture and equipment based very firmly on a fresh examination of the evidence.
- Existing material in the Transformation Project collection may be matched against the requirement, and re-used if appropriate. Unused material may be disposed of, with fresh commissions where necessary.
- While reproduction material need not be given the same status of long-term preservation as main collections, every effort should be made to protect it from misuse. Activities which place it at risk should be discouraged, and clear regulations issued for its care.
- Rooms in which Transformation Project material is employed should be clearly defined, and visitors should be made aware of the varied range of techniques used in presenting the rooms of the house, and the dates at which they are presented.

***References:***

## Archaeological Collections & Archive

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### ***Development / Documentation***

Within the general collections are some categories of material with direct relevance to the study of the Old Hall and its archaeology. The first category is of excavation finds and associated archive from the investigations carried out inside and outside the West Range in 1982 and 84 (to date the only controlled excavation to have been undertaken on the site) along with a small number of chance finds of early material from the area of the Old Hall. The second group is of items of historic fabric, structural and decorative, which have been recovered from the various phases of repair and restoration work from the mid-C19 onwards and which represent an invaluable resource for a study of the building's above-ground archaeology.

Some items from this latter group are displayed in the Louvre Room, including the Louvre itself, saved after its removal from the Great Hall roof in 1972, and the largest single item in the category. It is unclear how well documented these various items may be, and whether any of them derive, as claimed, from the lost screen of the Great Hall, but the potential of the group for study of the building development and for public interpretation is plainly considerable. Related closely to both these groups are the records of works carried out on the building (plans, photographs and written records) which are included in Modern Curation, Gazetteer 8.08. An important constituent of these records will be plans and work files held by English Heritage including National Monuments Record at Swindon, but it does not appear that English Heritage holds any archaeological or other object collection material from Gainsborough Old Hall.

### ***Significance***

Though the material is at present modest in quantity, it represents a vital component of the historical archive for the site and building and has potential for growth as material (finds and archive) is added from future surveys and investigations. It also has considerable potential for interpretation.

### ***Condition/risks***

Material is curated as part of the main collections and is at risk from the same sources. A major risk is of failure to identify its value and importance before it can be brought into the collections for preservation.

### ***Issues/vulnerability***

Three dimensional material in this category (not all of it recovered from planned excavation or survey) will be closely associated with paper records and other data relating to works on the property or to related research activities.

### ***Policies/recommendations***

- Material recovered from the site through planned investigation, building works or chance discovery should be saved and brought together into a coherent site archive, related to the Modern Records (Gaz. 8.08).

- Existing finds and examples of fabric (as eg. louvre and minor carved oak fragments displayed in Louvre Room, from former works), should be brought into this system and properly documented.
- Material in this category will have considerable potential in interpreting the processes of building and conservation, as well as being primary study material.

***References:***

Naomi Field     ‘Excavations and the West Range’  
in P. Lindley (ed.) *Gainsborough Old Hall* (1991)

## Historical records

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### *Development/Documentation*

The records of Gainsborough comprise a variety of materials in national and local archives, deposited material from the Bacon family archives, and current estate records of the Thonock and Somersby Estate of Sir Nicholas Bacon.

### *Description*

The national records are in the Public Record Office (Kew), but do not contain extensive materials for Gainsborough beyond the normal occurrences in records series. There are also some relevant items in the British Library.

Local records (including deposited Bacon records) are mostly in the Lincolnshire Record Office (Lincoln), described in outline in Appendix A, Bibliography and Sources. The Bacon material includes some estate maps and leases for the Old Hall, but not an extensive estate archive (of e.g. court rolls and rentals).

Town and parish records include material on the courts, port and schools which may touch on the Old Hall. More modern records of curation are kept by Lincolnshire County Council and English Heritage [see 8.3], while the Bacon estate office contains more recent estate records.

### *Status*

The majority of relevant historical sources for Gainsborough are in public collections.

### *Significance*

The historical sources for Gainsborough are significant for understanding the context in which the house was built and functioned, and of importance for the history of the borough.

### *Condition*

The records in public repositories are well maintained.

### *Issues/vulnerability*

There is undoubtedly scope for increasing understanding of the monument by further research into the national, estate, and town records. Copies of the more significant and relevant records relating to the Hall could be obtained for the site archive, and where appropriate made available to visitors.

### *Policies/recommendations*

- Further research on the historical records should form part of the research aims for the Hall.

### *References:*





## Modern Curation: Archives & Records

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### ***Development / Documentation***

The records of the Friends of Gainsborough Old Hall, Lincolnshire County Council, and English Heritage form an important modern archive both of works on the property and of associated research and investigation. From the point of view of their date, content and location they are distinct from historic archives (Gaz. 8.07), but in many respects they will form a continuum with earlier archives.

### ***Description***

The records (for which see the Appendix A, Bibliography and Sources) include:

- Friends' records of management, and architectural records of maintenance and repair in the 20th century.
- English Heritage plans room, now curated at the National Monuments Record Swindon; current registry files at Northampton or in storage elsewhere (including Job files and associated Information Files, both of which may contain primary and secondary information of importance, photographs and copies of historic records).
- Lincolnshire County Council records of maintenance.

### ***Status***

The Friends records are privately held. EH records are covered by the Public Records Acts, and are liable to be weeded prior to deposit in the Public Record Office.

### ***Significance***

The modern records of curation are of considerable significance as sources of information for the future understanding and management of the property.

### ***Condition/risks***

Records are properly maintained, but are always at risk from future selection or weeding; none are in an archive formally associated with the building.

### ***Issues/vulnerability***

There is a need for the long-term curation of the FOHA records. English Heritage and Lincolnshire records must be regarded as vulnerable unless securely protected against weeding and destruction.

There is a need for a formal record of ongoing maintenance and repairs.

### ***Policies/recommendations***

- Consideration should be given to the inception of a formal biographical file for the recording of works, interventions and discoveries in the monument, related to the drawn, photographic and written records of such events. This is part of a general need for similar records for major houses, churches and monuments, which could be promoted by English Heritage.
- All primary records of archaeological interventions in the building or below ground should be treated as archaeological archives and separately curated in the existing system for archaeological finds and archives.

