

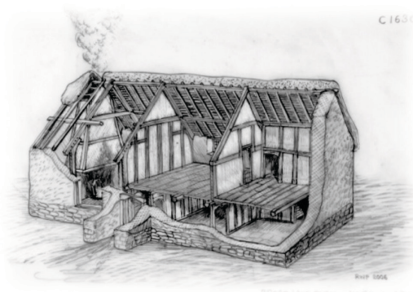
Historic Building Survey

Of

**THE CRAWFORD HOTEL,
FORMERLY 'LION HOUSE',
ALPHINGTON ROAD, EXETER**

By R. W. Parker

For Southern Co-operative Retailers Ltd.



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Fig. 1 Location of site, reproduced from the 1905 revision of the OS 1:2500 map sheet LXXX.10, showing the original tenement coloured pink and the existing footprint of the buildings in black.

1. INTRODUCTION

This report describes the results of an archaeological building survey undertaken at the Crawford Hotel, No. 107 Alphington Road, Exeter (Fig. 1), a former hotel and public house lying on the eastern side of Alphington Road within the ancient ecclesiastical parish of St Thomas, Devon (SX 91539 91211). The building was originally an early 19th-century neo-classical villa known as 'Lion House'. The report was commissioned by Philip Newman, Consultant Building Surveyor, on behalf of the Southern Co-operatives Ltd., the current tenants of the site, who propose to convert the hotel into a convenience store and apartments. Although not a Listed Building, the property is recognised as of considerable architectural merit and is classed as a 'locally listed' heritage asset. The proposed works will involve alterations and repairs to the building and the demolition of a derelict outbuilding within the curtilage. A programme of archaeological works was therefore commissioned as part of the project, which aimed to clarify the date and sequence of development of the building to inform the planning process and to provide a record of the building prior to the alterations.

1.1 Method

The archaeological works on site were carried out in April 2013 by Richard Parker Historic Building Recording and Interpretation. The works included a rapid archaeological survey of the building, production of a photographic record and limited documentary research. Phased plans showing the suggested phasing of the fabric were produced, based upon existing survey drawings provided by Rebecca Hucker of Evolve Retail Project Services, the architect of the scheme. The survey was non-invasive and involved no stripping of existing decorative plasters or investigation of concealed or inaccessible fabric, though much of the ground floor including most of the interior had been stripped out in earlier phases of work. The conclusions and suggested phasing of the building may need to be revised in the light of any future investigation or research work.

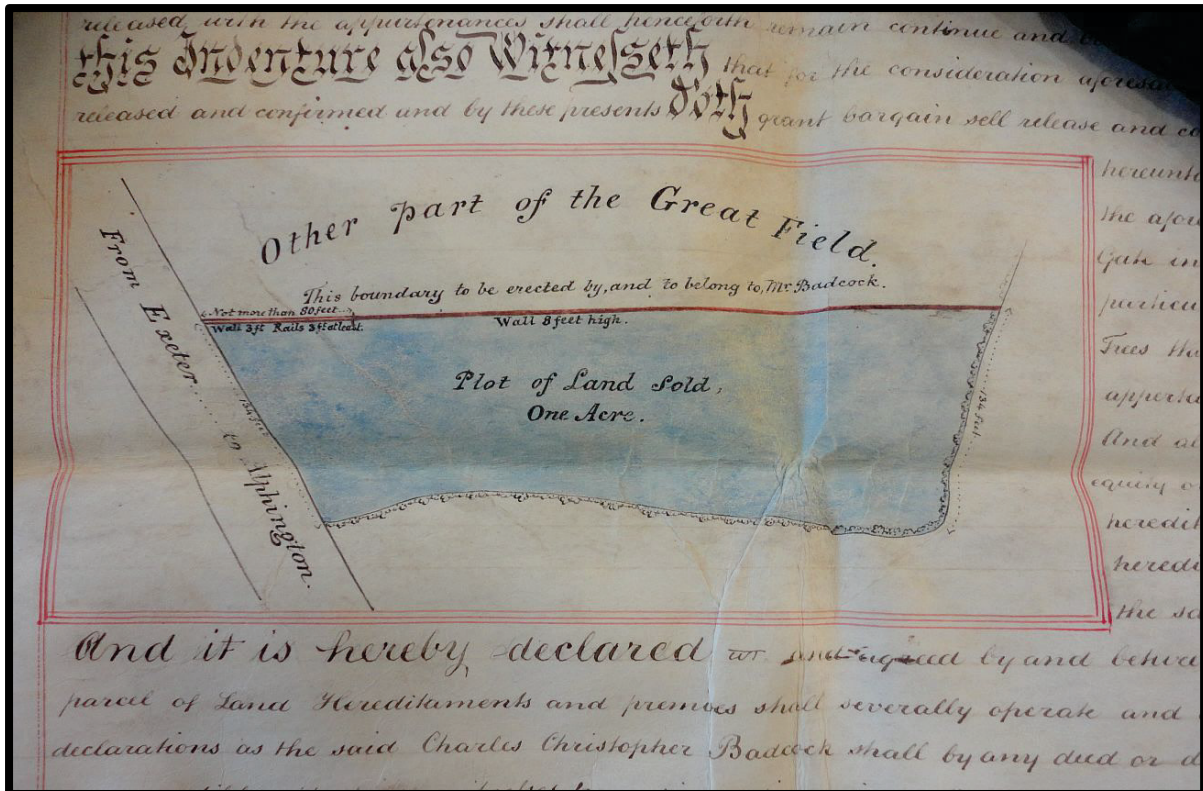


Fig. 2 Detail of the indenture between George Henry May and Charles Christopher Badcock, dated 5th-6th April 1836, showing the plot of land forming part of the Great Field sold for the development of the buildings later known as 'Lion House' (DRO D7/158/2b).

2. DOCUMENTARY AND MAP RESEARCH

2.1 The site

The site of the Crawford Hotel is described in a lease dated 24th March 1828 as a 'close piece or parcel of meadow land situate lying and being near the Alphington Turnpike gate in the Parish of St Thomas the Apostle...commonly called or known by the name of Great Field'. It was 'formerly part of a farm called Floyer Hayes and is now in the occupation of Robert Hookes as tenant thereof' (DRO D7/158,1a). Floyer Hayes was an ancient estate on the west bank of the river Exe belonging to the Floyer family, whose mansion stood at the junction of Alphington road and Haven road, approximately half a mile north of the site. The indenture, agreed between James Templer, Abraham Gould and James Vinnicome leased the land to George Henry May of St Thomas (*ibid.*). A further indenture of the 5th of April 1836 (DRO D7/158/2b) conveyed the land, which as yet contained no buildings, from George May to Charles Christopher Badcock, who began the construction of the buildings soon afterwards.

The indenture (*ibid.*) contains a plan showing the site prior to development (Fig. 2). It consisted of the southern part of the Great Field, forming a strip of land lying at an angle to Alphington Road, extending as far as the Alphington parish boundary on the south east. The plot measured an acre, and was bounded on the south and east by hedges and on the north by a 3 foot high wall surmounted by railings, which extended some 80 feet from the roadside to the east, where the wall was to rise to eight feet. The wall was constructed by Christopher Badcock to divide his section of the field from the remaining area. It still survives in part, forming the northern boundary of the present site, though the lower section of walling has since been raised twice, in two clear phases of 19th-century stonework.

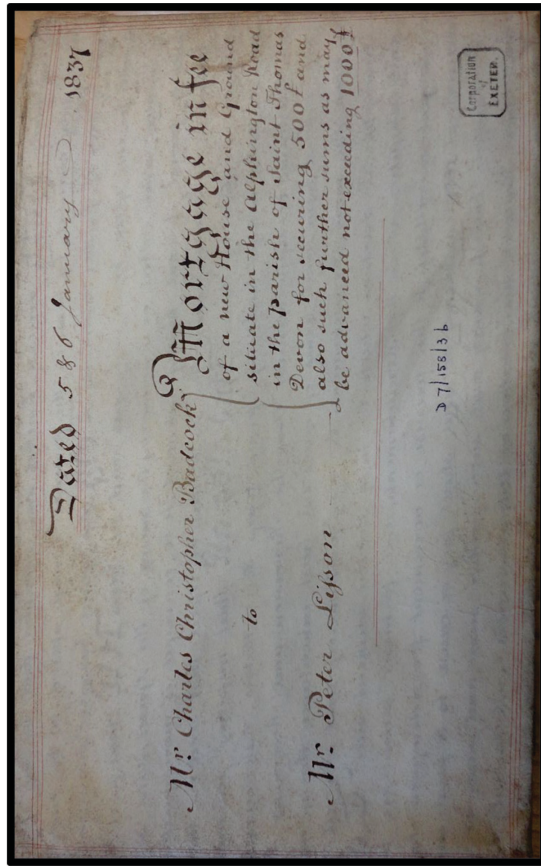


Fig. 3 Part of the mortgage dated 5th and 6th January between Christopher Badcock and Peter Lisson, by which Badcock raised £500 or more to fund the construction of the buildings (DRO D7/158/3b).

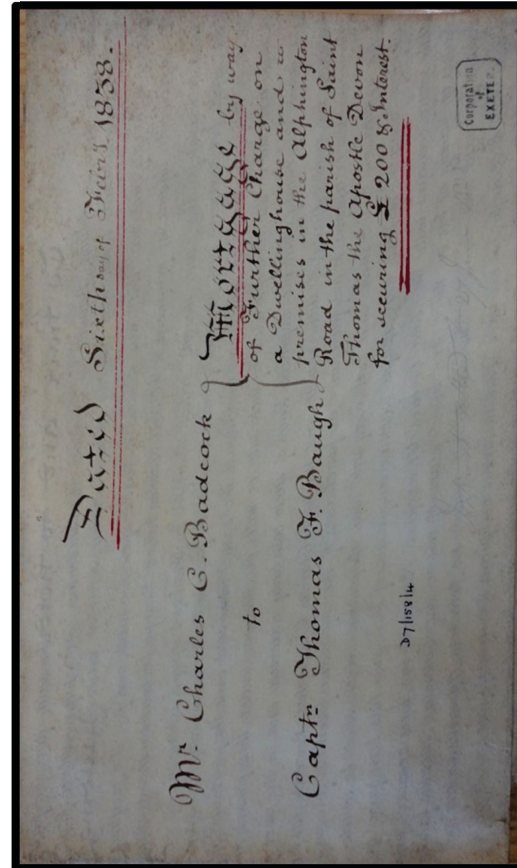


Fig. 4 Mortgage agreement between Charles Badcock and Thomas Baugh raising a further £200 (DRO D7/158/4)

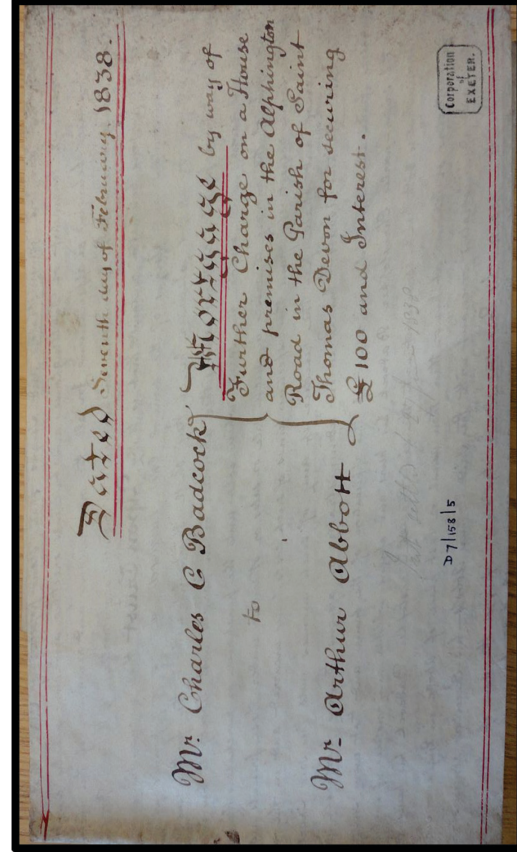


Fig. 5 Mortgage agreement between Charles Badcock and Arthur Abbot raising £100 (DRO D7/158/5).

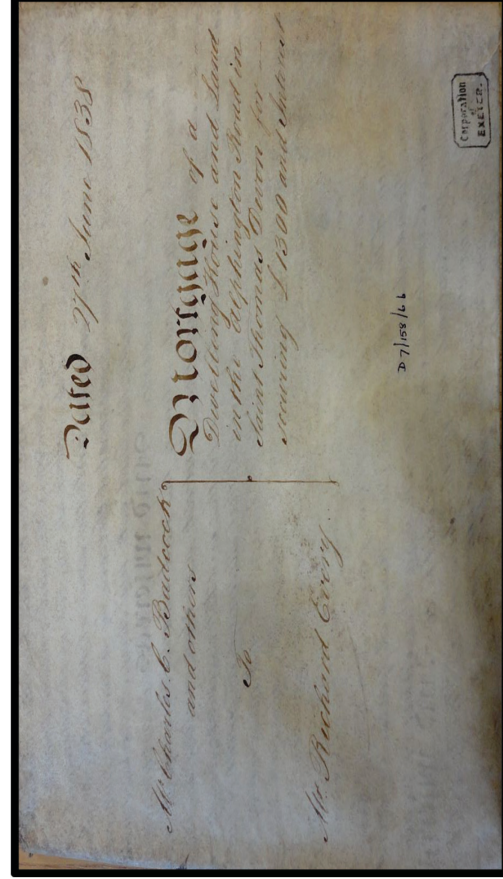


Fig. 6 Mortgage agreement between Charles Badcock and Richard Every, for £1,300 (DRO D7/158/6b).



Fig. 7 Extract from the St Thomas tithe map, probably made to accompany the tithe apportionment of 1838, but stamped '1841', showing the layout of the site and buildings at that time, when the property may have been newly completed.

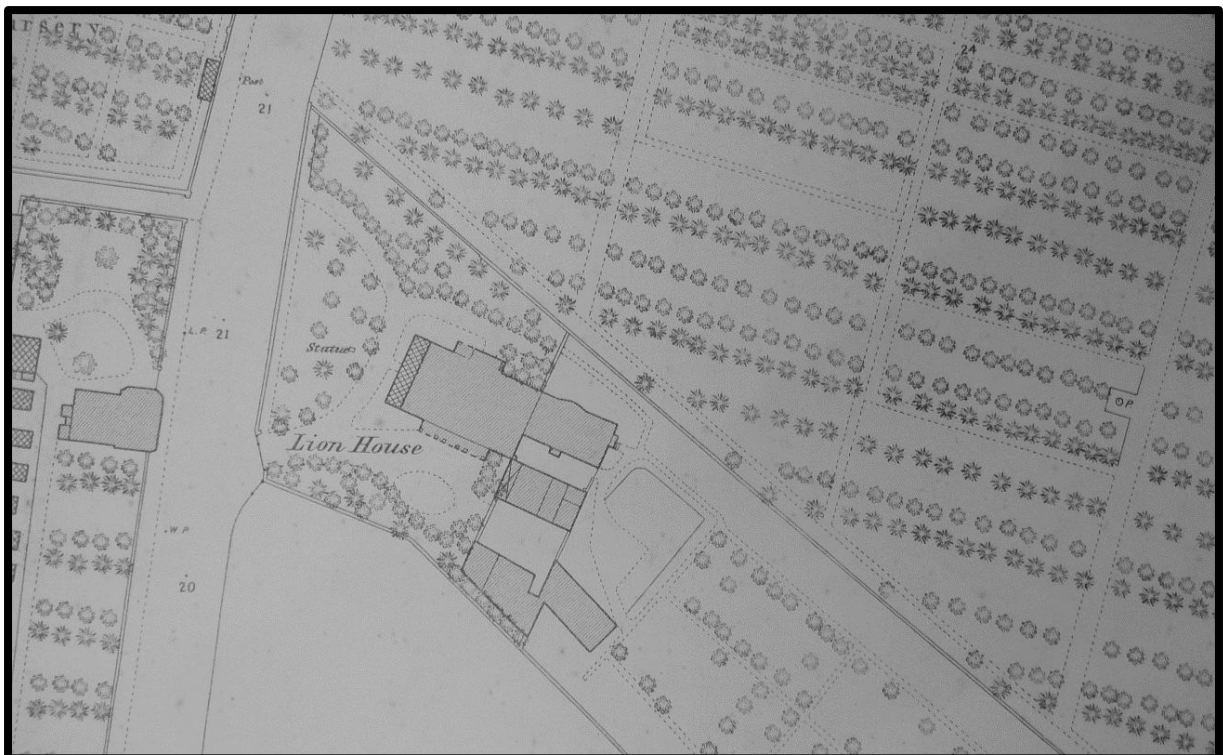


Fig. 8 Extract from the OS 1st-edition 1:500 map Devonshire sheet LXXX.10.11, surveyed in 1876, showing the footprint of the buildings little altered from their original state in 1838.

2.2 The Construction of the Buildings

Badcock appears to have raised the funds for his development by a series of mortgages on the land. A mortgage agreement dated 5th & 6th January 1837 between Badcock and Mr Peter Lisson, an Innkeeper in the Parish of St Sidwell, secured £500, plus further sums up to £1,000 on a 'House then erecting' on the site (DRO D7/158/3b; Fig. 3). Lisson is listed in the *Exeter Pocket Journal* for 1838 as the keeper of the Acland Arms in Sidwell Street, at the corner of what later became York Road. It is possible that Badcock overstretched himself financially during the construction of the building, since he proceeded to mortgage the property two more times in the early months of 1838. Badcock secured £200 from Captain Thomas Baugh of St Leonards on the 6th of February 1838, at which time the house is described as 'now nerely (sic.) completed' (DRO D7/158/4; Fig. 5) and a further £100 from Arthur Abbot on the 7th of February 1838 (DRO D7/158/5; Fig. 6). The house may have been complete by June 1838 when a mortgage agreement for £1,300 between Badcock and Richard Every describes the property as 'a house lately erected'. The St Thomas tithe apportionment of the same year lists the property under the numbers 332 and 333 as a house and garden in the ownership of Charles Badcock, but it was at that stage 'void' or unoccupied. Soon afterwards the Every family moved in.

The St Thomas tithe map, presumably made at the same time as the apportionment, but later stamped with the date '1841', must show the property much as first constructed. The map (Fig. 7) is unfortunately damaged, but shows the main house as a large rectangular block, coloured pink, with three smaller blocks to the rear, linked by walls and separated by two small courtyards. These are coloured grey, and appear to have been service ranges. A fourth grey block beyond the eastern wall is offset slightly from the east end of the southernmost service block and extends along the boundary of a narrow strip of ground, coloured blue, which appears to have been a long narrow garden. All but two of these structures survive today.

2.3 Occupants during the 19th century

Frederic Every appears to be the first of that family to occupy the house. He was succeeded in the property by Richard Every, by Richard's widow and after that by his son Frederic. The Every family remained in occupation until Richard's death in 1857, after which, in 1858, Frederic Every leased the property to the Myers family, a Jewish family originating from London but who had for a short while previously been living at Richmond Grove in Heavitree. Benjamin Joel Myers is listed in the *West of England & Exeter Pocket Journal* for 1858 as living at 'Lion House', Alphington Road. This is the first record of the use of that name for the property. Frederic Every sold the house to Mr Myers in 1863 (DRO D7/158/9) and the Myers Family remained in possession until 1883.

During the residence of the Myers family the house appears to have changed very little. The OS 1st-edition 1:500 map, Devonshire sheet LXXX.10.11, surveyed in 1876 (Fig. 8) shows the house occupying a walled plot, the eastern part of which was occupied as pleasure grounds, with a driveway approached from gates at the southern end of the street frontage. Semi-circular paths surrounded a statue on the lawn in front of the house, which had a glazed verandah on its western façade and an open porch on its southern side, supported by single and paired columns. To the north a projection, with an open sided porch alongside seems to betray the site of the main staircase. East of the main house the three service buildings are visible, separated by open courts. The northernmost range must have been a kitchen and service wing and has a shallow bowed section in its northern wall, perhaps a canted bow window maximizing the available light to the kitchens. The kitchen court appears to have been approached through a covered passage through the central range, which communicated with the southern courtyard and the ranges south of this. It is likely that this southern court was a stable yard. The southernmost building is recognisable as the surviving stable by the angle of its southern wall, which gives the building a trapezoidal footprint. To the east of this range is a further building, projecting into the rear gardens, which does not survive and whose function is uncertain. The rest of the site is occupied as gardens and it is interesting to note the absence of the glasshouses or horticultural buildings which might be considered usual for a property of this status at this period. There may have been no need for these: the land surrounding the property was almost entirely occupied as nursery gardens.

In 1883 Albert Myers conveyed the property to Morris Hart (DRO D7/158/13). Besleys *Exeter Directory* for 1883-4 lists Lion House, Alphington Road, as unoccupied (*ibid.*, 105), but by 1887 Morris Hart was in residence (*ibid.*, 115). In 1888 Hart sold the house to Mary Ann White and she in turn sold it to Henry Turner in 1892 (DRO D7/158/14,16). By 1908 Besley's *Exeter Directory* lists Henry Peter Channing and the Revd. Laurence Cecil Mallet BA, Curate of St Thomas' Church, at Lion House.

The house had been altered by this time, but was still a commodious villa. It is shown on the 2nd Edition OS 1:2500 map sheet LXXX.10, surveyed in 1904-1905, as having a very large conservatory built against its north wall, extending to the northern boundary of the site (Fig. 9). Further glasshouses stood against the northern garden wall and the kitchen court is shown hatched and had clearly been infilled with a building. The other outbuildings, including the stable court, survived. The long, colonnaded porch on the south front is not shown, though it is difficult to be certain whether the porch had been demolished or simply omitted from the survey. The verandah on the western façade is also not shown hatched, but its outline is still present and it is assumed that this is simply an omission or inaccuracy in the mapping. The scale of the map may well have restricted the level of detail. For example, none of the new suburban houses lining Alphington Road are shown with projecting bay windows, though these were certainly primary features. The nursery gardens to the north of the house had by this time given way to terraces of late 19th-century housing, lining Fortescue Road and Courtenay Road. Percy road had not yet been constructed and there was no access though the northern boundary of the garden. One of the new rows of houses took the name 'Lion Terrace', referencing the nearby mansion, though this name has not survived.

During the first third of the 20th century Lion House remained a very prestigious and handsome dwelling. By 1938 Besleys *Exeter Directory* lists it no longer as Lion House, but simply as No. 107 Alphington Road, occupied by Charles Richard Claridge. At this time the 1932 revision of the OS 1:2500 map sheet LXXX.10 (Fig 10) shows that there had been some alterations to the building. The verandah on the western facade is no longer shown and there are no projections at all on the south façade. At the rear, north-eastern corner of the kitchen wing a small projecting structure has been constructed. The conservatory is still present and the service ranges are otherwise unaltered, but the structure to the east of the stables has been demolished and a new structure has been built against the north wall of the stables, within the stable yard.

2.4 Conversion to an Hotel

The 'Crawford Hotel' first appears in Besleys *Exeter Directory* for 1940. It seems the house was acquired by the City Brewery and converted in 1938-9, perhaps to form a 'Roadhouse' or refreshment facility for motorists on what was then the main road out of the city to Plymouth and the west. The building was considerably enlarged in the neo-Georgian style, with a relatively sympathetic treatment of the exterior for the period. The main block of the house was permitted to remain the dominant element of the site. The conservatory and main entrance were replaced by large new, single-storey buildings to the north and south of the original house. These contained porches serving the lounge and public bars and also lavatories and other facilities. All the windows seem to have been replaced with new sashes with shaped horns, and it is presumed that the gardens in front of the house were converted into hard-standing for vehicles. The horticultural ranges in the rear garden were demolished, but the original service range and the stables remained.

The treatment of the interior was much less sympathetic, though even this featured new plaster cornices in a reduced classical style. These may have been thought to reflect the original character of the building. The original main staircase was removed and many of the internal spaces were knocked together to form large, new open areas. It is no longer possible to determine how the ground floor was divided into separate public bar, lounge bar and function areas, since subsequent alterations in the later 20th century have removed further partitions and has left little evidence of these arrangements. Some evidence for the plan of the original house can be recovered by inspection of the ceilings. On the first floor, apart from some reconfiguration of the rooms to provide extra hotel bedrooms the original plan of the house is still discernible and will be described in the following building survey.

21

WATERLOO ROAD

PERCY ROAD

COURTENAY ROAD

Lansdowne Nurseries

1950

F.W.

Fig. 10 Extract from the 1932 revision of the OS 1:2500 map sheet LXXX.10, showing alterations to the service ranges and the glasshouses.



Fig. 11 The main elevation of the house from the south west, showing the unusual proportions of the ground floor, which were formerly resolved by the sloping roof of a verandah.



Fig 12 Detail of the pedimented aedicule and attic masking the chimneys on the south front of the house and showing the unusual 'basket-work' character of the capitals of the columns.

3. BUILDING SURVEY

3.1 The Main Building

Exterior

The core of the original house is still discernible as a large, rectangular stuccoed block two storeys high, lying parallel to the northern and southern boundaries of the tenement and thus at an angle to Alphington Road. This alignment is a consciously picturesque element of the planning of the site, typical of a period when formal, symmetrical arrangements of buildings and garden alleys typical of the 17th and 18th centuries were superseded by studied informality, and the relationship of buildings to the landscape was emphasised and enhanced. The position of the building also emphasised both the west and south façades, which contained the principal rooms and the main entrance respectively. The north façade, though also visible from the gardens and from some distance along Alphington Road, was of lesser importance, but due to its prominence in the landscape the upper storey of this façade was given the same architectural treatment as the south and west fronts.

The unusual proportions of the west front; tall and narrow, with a particularly high and prominent lower storey (Fig. 11), was both necessitated and resolved by a single-storey verandah, which does not survive. The sloping roof of this verandah would have masked the high-waisted appearance of the ground floor. All three ground-floor windows were originally full-height French windows opening onto the verandah. They were partially blocked in 1938-9 at the conversion of the building. The central bay is brought forward into a projecting two-storey aedicule crowned by a pediment, with square piers supporting the entablature and a pair of tall cylindrical columns with highly unusual 'basket-work' capitals decorated with anthemion (honeysuckle) motifs framing the central window. These capitals (Fig. 12) may reflect ancient theories about the origins of the Corinthian order (a funerary basket overgrown with foliage and covered by a tile) as first described by Vitruvius in *De Architectura Libri Decem IV*, chapter I (Fletcher, 1950, 113) and popularised in the 18th and 19th centuries by William Chambers' *Treatise on Civil Architecture*, published in 1759 and re-published in 1791 and 1825. (Summerson 1980, 135, 138;). These capitals are extremely rare: these are the only examples of this type known to the author.

The wall on either side of the central aedicule is slightly recessed, giving the effect of piers at each corner and forming recessed panels framing the windows. All the windows are replacement sashes of c.1938-9. The cornice of the entablature of the central aedicule originally ran around the entire building but has been damaged and very crudely repaired, surviving only in the pedimented sections of the three façades. Above the cornice the high parapet is treated with recessed panels defining the angle piers and further recessed panels within these. It is highly likely that there was a further cornice above this and that the angle piers were crowned with urns or finials, but these do not survive: the wall is now capped by a plain coping dating from 1938, or perhaps a subsequent repair.

The southern front had similar details, but is of five, rather than three bays. The lower part was originally masked by an open colonnade with paired columns defining the central doorway. Above first-floor level some of the windows on this elevation were probably always blind, and were echoed by shallow blind panels within the parapet. One of the windows has been enlarged, probably in the late 19th or 20th century. The central projecting aedicule defining the main entrance extends vertically above the pediment and roofline into a very large architectural feature with end piers and a central recessed blind panel, resembling an attic storey, but in fact forming a large chimneystack into which the flues serving the principal rooms were gathered and rather ineffectively concealed as part of the architecture. Their presence is betrayed by a number of spiky chimney pots (Fig. 12). The lower part of this façade is now obscured by the late 1930s single storey porch and lavatory wing, which has a row of tall Georgian-style sash windows with slightly segmental heads and a high parapet which attempts to replicate the plat band running around the original façade (Fig. 13). The entrance is in the west side of this addition and features a very handsome door case with a deeply-coved architrave surmounted by a flat porch canopy with an ornately curved outline. The style of this door case might be described as Art-Deco, but has more in common with the ecclesiastical Baroque practised at the period by architects like Martin Travers and Laurence King.

The original façade of the service wing to the south is wholly concealed by a later two-storey building infilling the kitchen yard, with a high pitched roof ending at a gable on the rear

elevation. The lower storey of this projects in the manner of a lean-to structure with a relatively low-pitched slate roof. This lower structure may incorporate parts of the original range of service buildings which divided the kitchen from the stable yard. Though all the existing windows are modern replacements the configuration of the openings is strongly suggestive of the layout of the rooms shown on the 1876 OS map. The narrow window at the west end of the lean-to (Fig 13), for example, may reflect the doorway to the covered passage originally communicating with the kitchen yard. If this conjecture is correct, it is likely that only the southern wall of this building retains original fabric, since the internal walls and roofs of the range must all have been replaced when the large two-storey extension was built within the kitchen yard.

The eastern elevation of the house shows very clearly the development of the building (Fig. 14). This was the least significant elevation of the building and was not treated architecturally. The original main service wing, of two storeys, with a low-pitched hipped roof can be clearly discerned today as the northern part of the elevation, though its fenestration has been much altered. Adjoining it to the south is the large gabled two-storey extension infilling the original kitchen yard. This was perhaps added in the late 19th or early 20th century to increase the domestic accommodation by the addition of extra reception rooms and bedrooms. The lean-to structure adjoining this perhaps represents the remains of the original central service range, though it is likely that this has been extensively rebuilt, since the large two storey extension must have encroached upon it. Both the gabled extension and the lean-to structure have large ground floor windows designed to connect the house with the garden. The large bay window in the gabled range has leaded upper lights and a moulded cornice and might well be as early as *c.*1900, but it is also possible that it was added later in the century, at the conversion of the house to an hotel. The French windows in the adjoining lean-to have similar leaded glazing, but seem more likely to belong to the later period, after the internal partitions shown on the 1932 OS map were removed and the area converted to a long reception room with direct communication with the gardens

The north façade of the house is also partially obscured by lower extensions added in *c.*1938-9, but must already have suffered some alteration in the late 19th century through the addition of the large conservatory. Many of the 'windows' in this elevation were built as blind, since this was not one of the principal façades, but the upper levels were relatively prominent and were thus given an architectural treatment similar to that of the main façade. There is a large architectural chimneystack and a pedimented aedicule surrounding the central window. This aedicule has lost its columns, if it ever had them; they have been replaced by a shallow projecting bay within the aedicule, with a window at a lower level than the other windows at first-floor level. There can be little doubt that this lower window related to the original main staircase. There may indeed have been no columns on this façade, but instead a tall window, rising between the storeys from a half landing and lighting the staircase. At the eastern end of this façade a small additional chimneystack is visible, now capped at the level of the parapets. This is almost certainly a late 19th-century addition intended to serve the furnace for the conservatory.

After 1938 a low, 'L'-shaped building was added in place of the conservatory. This has a porch facing west with a door-case like that previously described, and a further porch facing east, with a much simpler door-case featuring a convincingly Greek-Revival moulded cornice but less convincing square pilasters. This may have been a garden door or an alternative entrance for patrons coming from Percy Road. This wing was later extended, after 1960, by the addition of a square building at the north-western corner of the complex. This is now the beer cellar and is a virtually featureless, though not unsympathetic addition which blends with the 1930s additions.

Interior

Entering the building through the south-western porch one formerly entered a short corridor between the lavatories on the south and the south wall of the original house. It is likely that the original main doorway, which retains a large arched opening, was utilised as the entrance to the hotel and reception areas, whereas the doorway to the east led to the lounge or public bar areas, or function rooms connected with the hotel. This doorway retains a fanlight with margin lights which dates from *c.*1938-9. The lavatories had been demolished at the time of the survey but, since several of the partitions lay across window openings, it is likely that they had suffered many phases of alteration. The large, coved cornices masking the junction of walls and ceiling showed that there had been considerable attention



Fig. 13 The south elevation seen from the stable yard, showing the nucleus of the original house rising above the later 1930s porch extension added against its entrance façade (centre) and the lean to structure which might represent parts of the original central service range (right).



Fig. 14 The eastern elevation, showing the lean-to structure representing the remains of a further service range (left), the gabled elevation of the late 19th- or early 20th-century extension (centre) and the end of the original service wing (right).



Fig. 15 Interior of the parlour of the original house, showing the plasterwork.



Fig. 16 Detail of the plasterwork.



Fig. 17 View of the ground-floor rooms looking from the presumed site of the dining room to the site of the conservatory and the 1930s wing to the north, showing the remains of a chimney breast featuring a very large 'architectural' fireplace with a ovolo-moulded stone mantel shelf (arrowed), probably added as a feature in 1938-9.

to the architectural detail, even in this area, which might have formed part of the hotel reception area before conversion to lavatories. Alterations and discontinuities in the plasterwork also revealed successive phases of replanning of this area, the sequence of which could not be determined with confidence. Drawings for these alterations are likely to survive in the possession of the brewery company or with the City Council's Building Control Department, but these are likely to post-date 1938 and could not be examined in the time available for this project.

The main surviving room on the ground floor relating to the original house is a large room in the western part of the building. This has been severely altered and a large part of its walling has been removed, but it retains elaborate and very rich plasterwork cornices and a ceiling rose featuring anthemion (honeysuckle) motifs (Figs 15, 16). The room originally opened onto the verandah by three tall French windows, but these have been partially blocked and replica Georgian sashes have been inserted in their place. There was originally a fireplace in the east wall, probably central to the room, but this has not survived and its opening is blocked. This room was probably the drawing room or parlour; the principal reception room of the original house.

The rest of the floor area of the main wing has been completely gutted. There is some evidence that the original layout consisted of a long, narrow and tall staircase hall dividing the centre of the wing, perhaps opening off an entrance lobby within the main door. The staircase presumably rose against the east or west walls of this hall, returning in a half landing against the north wall of the house lit by a tall window. A corridor, of which traces remain in the ceiling, led eastwards from the hallway to the service rooms and, to the north of this corridor were originally small, narrow rooms, probably a butler's pantry or housekeeper's room. By the late 19th-century this area had been altered as a result of the addition of the conservatory and later in the 20th century it was incorporated into a large bar area. Apart from a replica fireplace utilising the presumed chimney of the conservatory, no other features of archaeological interest remain.

South of the corridor to the service wing was formerly a larger room, roughly square in plan, which may have served as a dining room in the original house. This was heated by a fireplace in the west wall, of which only the opening and chimney breast remains (Fig. 17). The fireplace occupied a curious recess and retained the remains of a very robustly ovolo-moulded mantelshelf of stone. This probably shows that the original fireplace was replaced in the 1930s by a 'feature fireplace' of massively architectural character, possibly as a feature in the lounge area of the hotel or one of the bars. This whole area has been opened out into the adjoining rooms and no fixtures or fittings survive.

The existing modern staircase rises to the first floor within the area of the presumed entrance lobby, returning against the west wall. This staircase (Fig. 18) has a decorative balustrade of wavy horizontal bars and newels crowned by ball finials. It was probably added in 1938 to provide access from the reception area to the hotel bedrooms.

The corridor to the service rooms led to a lobby leading to a rear external door, and the kitchen. This was a large room occupying the whole width of the original service wing and heated by a large fireplace. Most of the north wall has been removed to provide access to a later addition in the form of a single-storey extension fitted with Crittall windows, which appears to have been added to improve the catering areas in the mid-to late 20th century. This replaced the large, slightly bowed feature in the north wall which is shown on the 1st-edition OS map (Fig 8). As previously suggested, this may have been a large bow window providing good light for food preparation. No other visible features of archaeological interest remain in this area. Two blocked doorways led from this room on either side of the fireplace to a scullery or pantry in the eastern part of the wing, and the back stairs, which has stick balusters, columnar newels and a ramped handrail in the manner of the late 18th and early 19th century. The first floor landing of this staircase originally curved, the handrail curving with it, but a later 19th- or 20th-century section of balustrade supported by turned newels with ball finials had been substituted, possibly when the adjacent two-storey extension was added (Fig. 19).

Other rooms may have existed on the ground floor of the large two-storey extension, added in the late 19th or early 20th century, but these were probably cleared away in 1938-9 to create a very large room with a bay window looking into the garden. This was almost certainly the hotel dining room. The area to the south was formerly part of the primary central service wing. This had also been cleared of partitions and incorporated into the bar and function area. No evidence of the original functions of these rooms remained.

On the first floor the modern main staircase rises within an area, roughly square in shape, with a ceiling defined by a plaster cornice. Although this is extremely plain this cornice may be an original feature. The ceiling is divided from the rest of the main landing by a boxed in beam which may represent the line of a partition. This area was formerly approached from the room immediately to the west (room 2) through a blocked doorway, now visible as a recess in one of the ensuite bathrooms. It is highly likely that this area was originally a dressing room or closet serving the large bedroom in the front of the building.

The main first-floor landing also has a plaster cornice, though this has much heavier mouldings, as might befit one of the main circulation areas. It is probable that there was a broad opening or archway to the north looking onto the stairwell of the main stair, which seems to have occupied the site of the ensuite bathrooms now attached to the rooms to the north (rooms 1 & 3). A long corridor extends to the east from the landing, terminating at the service stair, and the lesser bedrooms (rooms 3-8) are disposed on either side of this corridor. The moulded cornice is continuous throughout. The principal room, as on the ground floor, lay to the west and seems to have occupied the whole width of the house. This area is now occupied by two separate rooms (rooms 1 and 2). The partition between these rooms is clumsy, with a sudden change of angle to prevent interrupting the central window in the west front, and it is highly likely that it was added in the 1930s to divide a larger room and maximise the number of hotel bedrooms. Room 2 has a cornice respecting this wall, but this seems to be a late addition. Neither room has a surviving fireplace: it is probable that the original fireplace was positioned centrally in the east wall, backing onto the landing, with flues extending horizontally to meet the chimneys in the north or south walls. The position of the original entrance to this room cannot now be determined.

Rooms 3 and 5, on the north side of the corridor, also seem to have originated as a single room. These are now divided by a partition and both rooms have simple plaster cornices which respect this partition. Although these cornices are of early 19th-century character it is perfectly possible that the original plasterwork has been replicated or extended to finish the rooms suitably. On the opposite side of the corridor Room 4 is now a single room but has clearly been divided for a period into two. There are clear signs of alteration and repair to the plaster cornice, and the skirting boards in the corridor betray the position of a blocked doorway. The room may have been subdivided in 1938-9 to provide small hotel bedrooms and then enlarged again to provide a more luxurious bedroom.

A doorway in the corridor defines the limit of the main house and beyond this lies the service wing. This area has been altered both since the conversion of the hotel and before, at the addition of the late 19th-century two-storey extension. To the north of the corridor is a linen closet, possibly occupying the position of a dressing room or water closet and beyond this a large room which, alone among the hotel bedrooms, retains its original fireplace. This has a plain, bracketed mantelshelf and an arched cast-iron insert. Beyond this is a further small room, perhaps a servant's bedroom, at the head of the back stairs, now a bathroom. This basically completes the accommodation in the original house.

Since the house, though impressive, was never a large one it is not surprising to find that additional rooms were added. The extension basically contains two large bedrooms (rooms 6 & 8), one very large, overlooking the gardens and one, smaller, overlooking the stable court. Both have been divided to provide ensuite bathrooms and, in the case of the rear room, the moulded plaster cornice has been replicated around these areas of the ceiling. This room was heated by a fireplace in its south wall, but Room 6 does not appear to have been heated, unless a flue was cut into the rear wall of the original house. Neither room retains an original chimneypiece and all the doors, throughout the building, have been replaced with modern fire doors.

Roofs

There are four distinct roof structures over the main house. All of these are typical of their period of construction. The main roof structure is supported by trusses formed with tie beams supporting principal rafters and diagonally-braced king-posts with expanded feet. There is a plank ridge and a single set of purlins on each side of the trusses, passing over the backs of the principals and either notched over or housed within notches in them. The only unusual feature here is the asymmetrical



Fig. 18 Detail of the 20th-century main stair added within the original entrance lobby in 1938-9.



Fig. 19 Detail of the service stair, from first-floor level, showing the original balustrade with columnar newels curtailed by a late 19th-century section with ball finials.



Fig. 20 View of the stables from the north west with the entrance to the stable yard on the left.



Fig. 21 Interior of the stables, looking east, showing the collapsed cob walling and the position of the washing copper in the south-eastern corner.

form of the bracing; those on the outer side meeting the king posts at a higher level. This is probably explained by the configuration of the roofs, which describe a 'C'-shape, extending around four sides of a central well, with a gap in the southern side covered with a flat roof concealed behind the southern chimney. The purpose of this flat area is uncertain, but it is possible that this central well and flat area, supported by the lower braces on the inner side of the roof trusses, allowed the rainwater to drain into the central well for collection in a tank to augment whatever other supplies were available.

The roof of the main service wing is a simpler structure, hipped at its eastern and western ends, and supported by diagonally-braced king-post trusses on either side of the large kitchen chimney. This roof is contemporary with the roof over the main house, but independent of it.

The roof of the late 19th-century extension is a much simpler and later structure formed by 'A'-frame trusses with applied collars. This part of the roof appears to have been extensively renewed in recent years. The fourth section of the roof lies over the lean-to structure south of the 19th-century extension. This roof structure could not be inspected and is unlikely to be any earlier in date than the late 19th or early 20th century, but it incorporates a skylight which must have had a specific function, providing light for a top-lit room, perhaps a billiard room or some other facility.

3.2 The Stables

Exterior

This small, rendered building, although much rebuilt, is one of the primary structures on the site. It formed one of the service ranges, and appears on the tithe map of 1838. The building is constructed on a trapezoidal plan, partially of stone and partially of cob. The cob walling rises only to first-floor level, above which is timber-framed studwork covered in lath and plaster. The stone wall to the south rises to the full height of the building and may represent 19th-century reconstruction of a failing cob wall, though no dating evidence remains to confirm this. The western façade of the building features a pair of modern double doors suitable for a vehicular entrance (Fig. 20). The jambs of these doors are of concrete and have certainly been rebuilt. There is no evidence of a vehicular entrance here on the 1st-edition OS map, which shows a shrubbery against this wall. All access to this building must therefore have been from the stable yard. Above this the gable is blind and there are no signs of blocked openings either internally or externally.

The north wall of the building probably contains the earliest fabric, which probably dates from 1837-8, but has recently partially collapsed. The lower part of the wall contains two doorways and a window. The two westernmost openings (one of the doorways and the window) are both now blocked in bricks, which seem to be of late 19th- or early 20th-century date. It is probable that the openings were blocked between 1905 and 1931, when a small structure was built against the north wall of the building. The north eastern corner may also have been rebuilt at this time, providing another doorway to the interior and a water closet within a small brick enclosure. The upper part of this wall is timber framed, rendered externally and boarded within. There is a first-floor loading door, and a small window to the west. It is likely that this walling dates from the 19th century, when the roof of the building was replaced. This might have been undertaken in an earlier phase than the blocking of the openings, though a likely context for all these alterations is the demolition, by 1931, of the building which stood to the north east, and impinged upon this corner. Perhaps the new building shown on the 1931 OS map was added to replace accommodation in the demolished structure.

The eastern gable is largely obscured by foliage, including a magnificent fig tree which might survive from the 19th-century gardens. This wall is also partially of cob and partially of timber framing, with a substantial patch in the corner where the demolished building stood. There are two windows, lighting the ground and first floors but both appear to date from the 20th century and have little architectural or historical merit.

Interior

The interior of the building is now a single volume (Fig 21), but it is clear from the historic maps and from the paving of the floors that the building was originally divided into two parts. The two doorways and the number of windows, plus the loading door at first floor level all strongly suggest that this building was originally a stable, though no stable fittings remain and it has most recently been employed as a garage and store. The only surviving fixture on the ground floor is an early 20th

century washing copper at the south-eastern corner. This is a rare survival as it is complete, including its wooden lid and bowl, and with a brick flue rising in the corner of the building. The copper suggests that the building was employed as a laundry before the conversion of the house to an hotel.

The first floor joists are boarded underneath and could not be inspected. There is an aperture in the floor near the collapsed section of walling which shows the position of the stair or stair ladder to the first floor. Upstairs, the building is divided into two rooms by a timber partition, lath-and-plastered on the west side but boarded to the east. This is fitted with two doors, one of which (Fig 22) is reused and of 18th-century date, with two raised and fielded panels. This is of high quality and may have come from a domestic building. The other is a crude, four-panelled door, of 19th-century date, which may be *in situ*. There are no surviving fixtures and fittings in these rooms. It is suggested that the eastern room was originally a hayloft and that the western room, which was somewhat better appointed, though unheated, may have been a dormitory for stable hands, gardeners or odd-job men employed on the property.

Roofs

The roof timbers have been renewed in the late 19th or early 20th century. Only the simple diagonally-braced king-post trusses (Fig. 24) seem to have been retained from the original roof.

4 CONCLUSION

The Crawford Hotel, formerly Lion House, was constructed in 1837-8 by Charles Badcock of St Thomas as a private residence. The house is an interesting example of a large villa of the period reflecting contemporary conceptions of the picturesque and of primitive classical virtue. There is a deliberate tension between the formality of the architecture and the informal planning in relation to the surrounding landscape. The house was conceived of as an elegant classical pavilion, but the ancillary buildings were attached in no formal arrangement, with the stable yard and out buildings appearing to one side of the main entrance, masked only by planting. The house was entered from the side, rather than the front and lay at an angle to the street, presenting two very different façades. The glazed verandah and French windows on the western front would have been architecturally less formal than the colonnade attached to its southern façade, stressing the different functions of the entrance and garden fronts and softening the relationship of the house with the landscape.

Many leafy new suburbs were created in Exeter by speculative builders during the first part of the 19th century. Initially these suburbs developed in formal terraces or rows of houses like those of Southernhay and Colleton Crescent but increasingly, after 1810, at Pennsylvania, St Leonards, Heavitree and in The Friars, these were laid out with individual stuccoed villas set in formal and informal patterns within a landscape of winding avenues and pleasure grounds. Lion House is perhaps more architecturally ambitious than the plain white villas built in the 1830s and 40s by the Hooper family on the Mount Radford estate (St. Leonards Road), but it had many features in common with them and was perhaps designed for a similar social class: bankers, attorneys, medical doctors and retired military officers. The house was probably begun as a speculative development, and it is possible that, had the project run smoothly, the rest of the Great Field and perhaps other parts of the Floyer lands would have been divided into similarly-sized strips and developed with detached neo-classical villas in ample gardens. Some development of this type did take place in Alphington Road, as witnessed by the now mutilated terrace of plain white semis on the opposite side, closer to the city, but Lion House was of better quality than these.

The principal losses to the House are its landscape setting and the decorative elements of the colonnade and verandah. It is a pity that these have not survived, because the forms of the surviving architecture, particularly the bizarre capitals to the pillars, suggest an unusual degree of creativity and inventiveness on the part of the designer. The interior has also suffered major losses, such as the main staircase, fireplaces, doors, window shutters and much of the original plan. The surviving plasterwork shows the quality of what has gone. Though sadly treated in the 20th century and robbed of its garden setting, the house is still recognisably a high-quality building and this is reflected by its Locally-Listed status. The stable block was always a modest building, with no architectural pretensions. Although it is a primary element of the development it has been substantially rebuilt in the 19th century and is not of high architectural or archaeological significance.



Fig. 23 Detail of the washing copper in the south-eastern corner of the stables showing the stokehole, flue and the timber lid.



Fig. 23 Interior of the stables at first-floor level, showing a reused 18th-century door with two raised-fielded panels hung in the dividing partition.



Fig. 24 The roof of the stable block, showing primary king-post trusses but later 19th- or 20th-century purlins, rafters and sarking boards.

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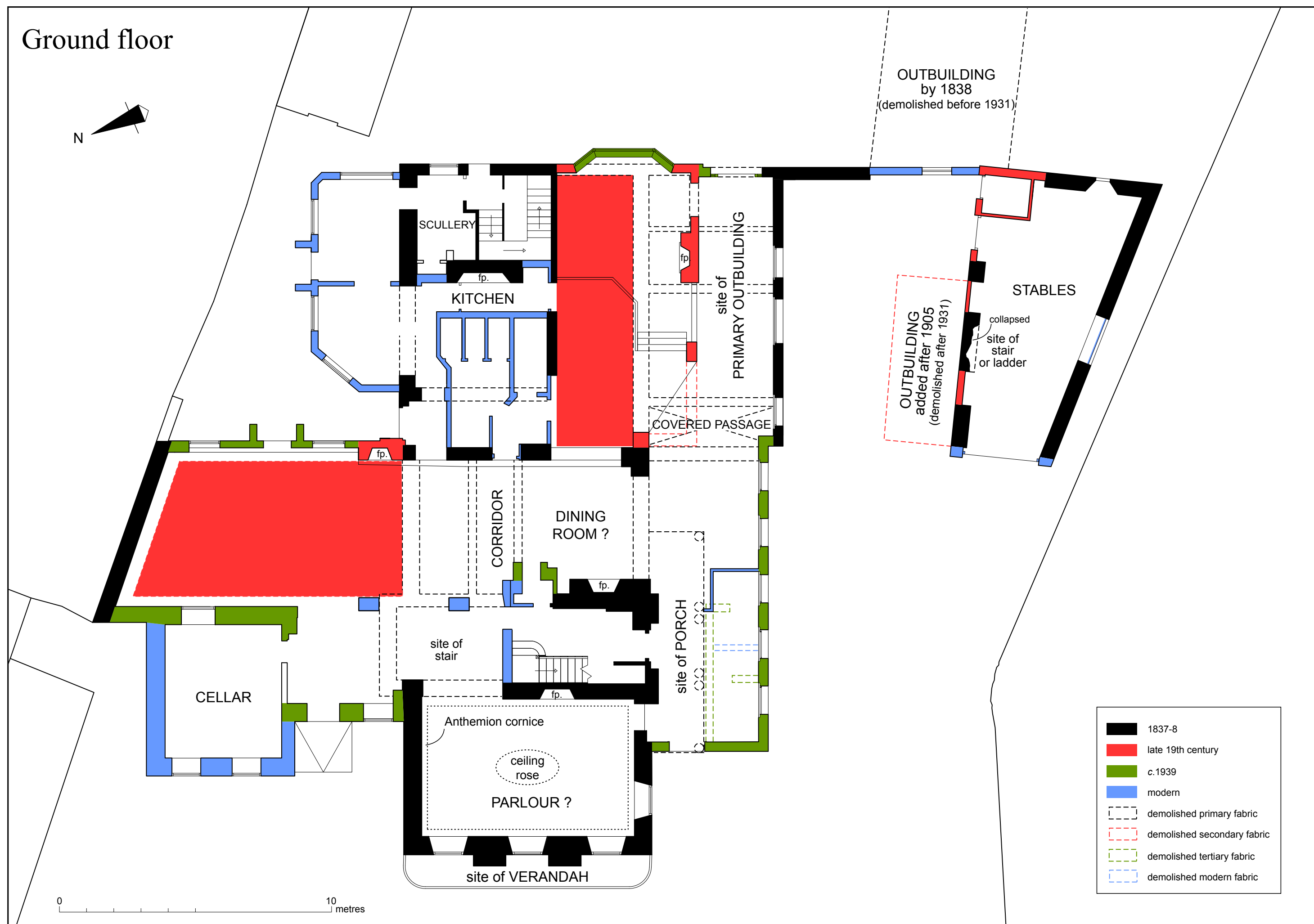
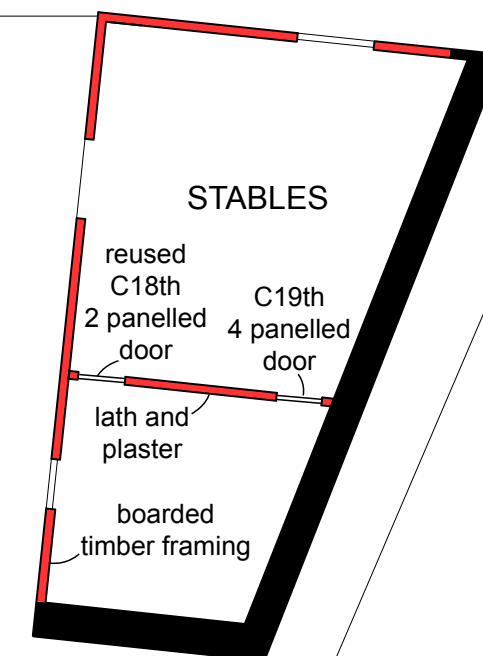
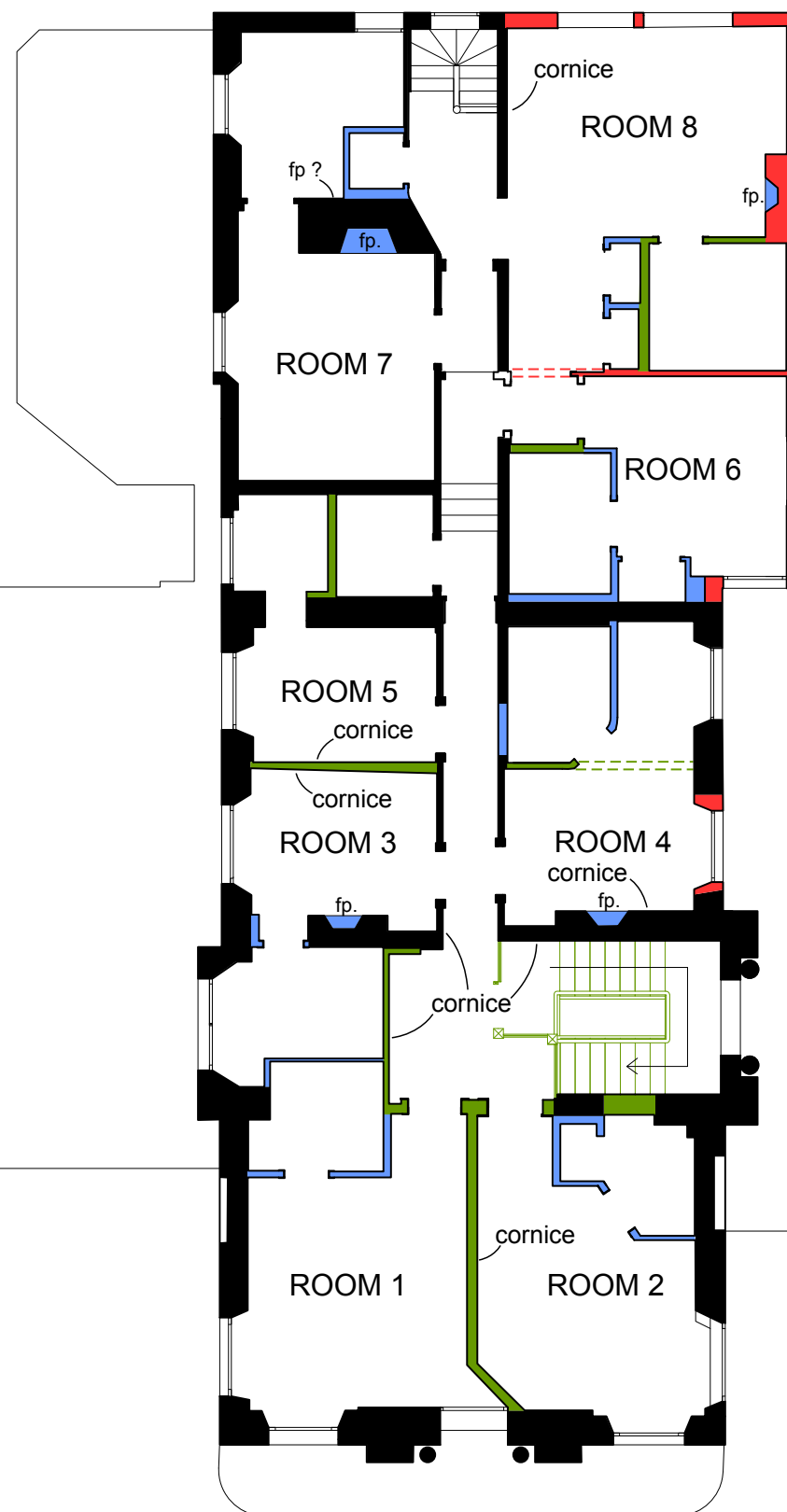


Fig. 25 Plan of the ground floor, showing the probable sequence of development of the buildings. Based on drawings by Evolve Retail Project Services (digitised by Tony Ives).

First floor



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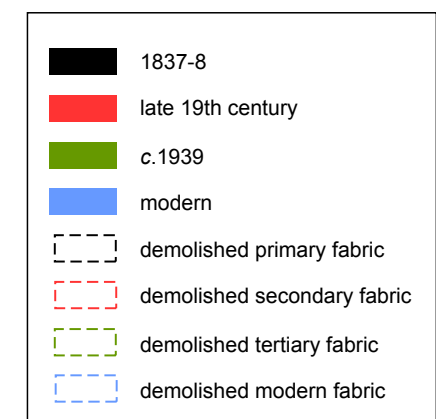


Fig. 26 Plan of the first floor, showing the probable sequence of development of the buildings. Based on drawings by Evolve Retail Project Services (digitised by Tony Ives).