



**Archaeological building recording
of alterations at 23-24 St George's Street
Stamford, Lincolnshire
May 2015**

Report No. 15/102

Author: Yvonne Wolframm-Murray

Illustrator: James Ladocha



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Author: Yvonne Wolfram-Murray

Illustrator: James Ladocha

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MOLA
Bolton House
Wootton Hall Park
Northampton
NN4 8BN
01604 700 493
www.mola.org.uk
sparry@mola.org.uk

STAFF

Project Manager: Amir Bassir BSc

Fieldwork: Yvonne Wolframm-Murray BSc PhD

Text: Yvonne Wolframm-Murray

Illustrations: James Ladocha BA

OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		Oasis No. molanort1-213010	
Project title	Archaeological building recording of alterations at 23-24 St George's Street, Stamford, Lincolnshire		
Short description	A programme of archaeological building recording was undertaken by MOLA Northampton on the 12th May 2015 for Ross Thain & Co in advance of the internal conversion of the buildings, specifically the area of the reinstatement of a staircase at 23-24 St George's Street, Stamford, Lincolnshire in preparation for the separation of the two properties. The houses date to the 18th and 19th centuries. Old straw and daub walls were noted along the attic walls and newer joist at the back wall.		
Project type	Archaeological building recording		
Site Status	-		
Previous work	-		
Current land use	house and retail space		
Future work	unknown		
Monument type and period	18th and 19th Buildings		
Significant finds	-		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County	Lincolnshire		
Site address	23-24 St George's Street, Stamford		
OS co-ordinates	TF 03192 07181		
Area (sq m/ha)	16 sqm		
Height aOD	-		
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation	MOLA Northampton		
Project brief originator	South Kesteven District Council		
Project Design originator	MOLA Northampton		
Director/Supervisor	Yvonne Wolfram-Murray		
Project Managers	Amir Bassir		
Sponsor or funding body	Ross Thain & Co		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date	12/05/2015		
End date	12/05/2015		
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no.)	Contents	
Physical		-	
Paper		Site records (1 small archive box)	
Digital		Client report PDF	
BIBLIOGRAPHY	Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (NA report)		
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Abstract

A programme of archaeological building recording was undertaken by MOLA Northampton on the 12th May 2015 for Ross Thain & Co in advance of the internal conversion of the buildings, specifically the area of the reinstatement of a staircase at 23-24 St George's Street, Stamford, Lincolnshire in preparation for the separation of the two properties. The houses date to the 18th and 19th centuries. Old straw and daub walls were noted along the attic walls and newer joist at the back wall.

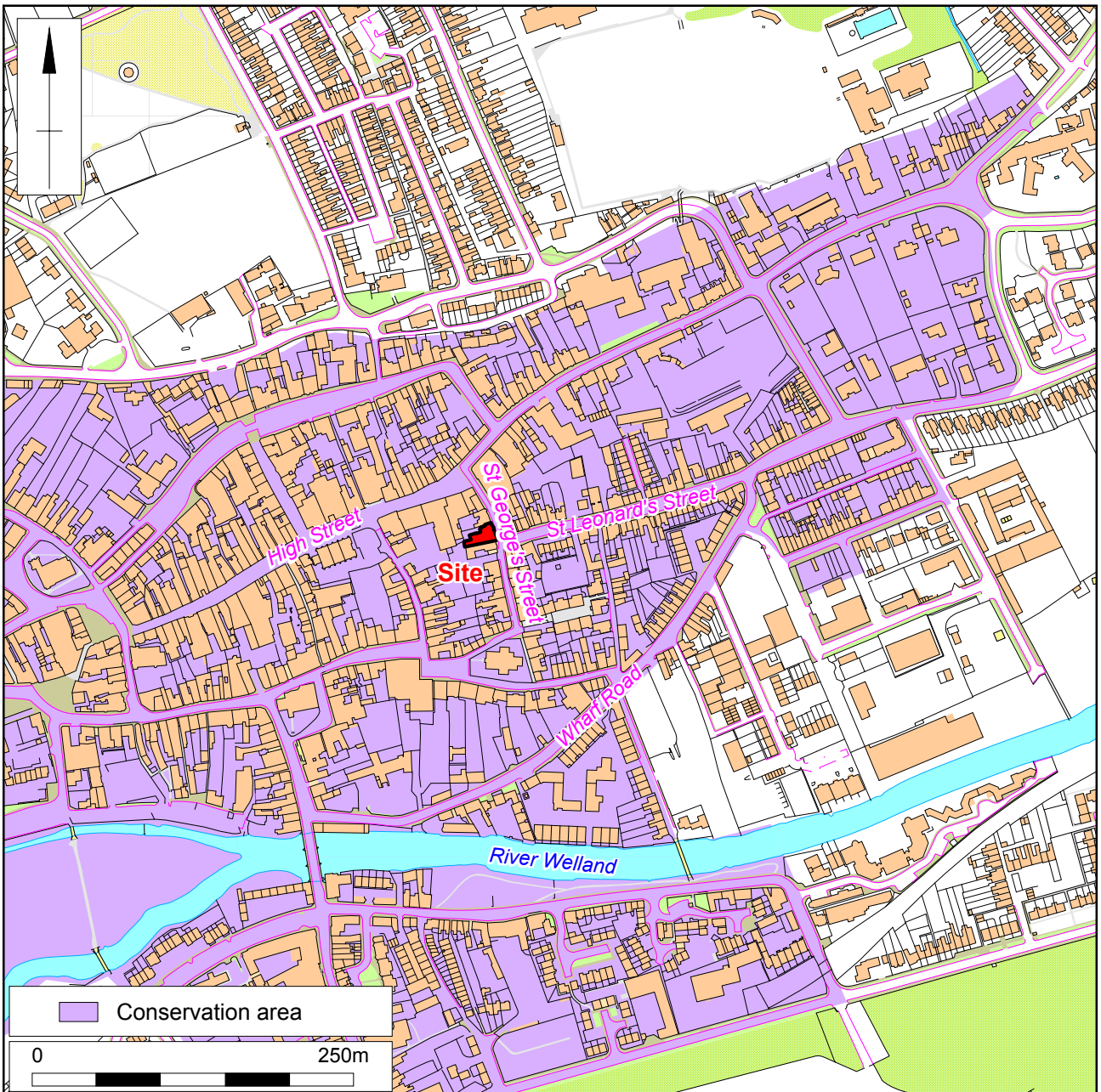
1 INTRODUCTION

MOLA was commissioned by Ross Thain & Co to carry out archaeological building recording at 23-24 St George's Street, Stamford, Lincolnshire (NGR TF 03192 07181, Fig 1) on the 12th May 2015. This was in advance of the reinstatement of a stair case in preparation for the separation of the two properties.

South Kesteven District Council (SKDC) made the following requirement:

"In order to fully inform the assessment of the applications (and thus validate the submissions) – and to facilitate the consultation process with English Heritage and the other amenity societies (given that demolition is involved) - further information and justification is required in relation to the proposed internal works – specifically in relation to the alterations/loss of historic built fabric that would arise in relation to the installation of the new staircase and the alterations to the interior cupboard. Indeed it would appear that in the light of the information received to date that these works need to be informed by a building archaeology survey. "

A Written Scheme of Investigation was produced by MOLA Northampton (Bassir 2015), prepared in accordance with current best archaeological practice as defined in the Institute for Archaeologists' Standard and Guidance for the *Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings Or Structures* (ClfA 2014) and the Historic England procedural document *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (HE 2015). MOLA is a Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' (ClfA) registered organisation.



Scale 1:5000

Site location Fig 1

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Location

Numbers 23-24 are located within the Stamford conservation area, on the west side of St George's Street, at the intersection with St Leonard's Street (Fig 1). The Stamford Conservation Area Draft Appraisal (SKDC 2011) describes St George's Street as having mixed commercial and residential character with eleven Grade II listed buildings dating mainly to the 18th and 19th centuries.

The site comprises two attached dwellings of which the lower ground floor of 23 has latterly been used as retail premises. Number 24 was residential with a flyover freehold over number 23 (Fig 2).



St George's Street, looking north-west Fig 2

2.2 Historical and archaeological background

By the early 18th century, Stamford had a thriving malting industry with a prosperous coaching trade, with stage coaches travelling north from London. Prior to this, in the 16th century, the town relied on the wool trade which declined as the focus of the wool industry moved to East Anglia. This was accompanied by a silting up of the River Welland, making water navigation and trade more difficult. The construction of the Welland Navigation Canal in the mid-late 17th century reopened access to the town and renewed trade and improvements to the road infrastructure allowed the town to become a major staging point on the Great North Road, boosting the local economy. The renewed economy left its mark on the buildings of the town with the redevelopment of derelict sites and re-facing of the timber-framed buildings.

The construction of the Great Northern Railway which bypassed Stamford led to the rapid decline of the coaching trade, forcing the closure of many of the coaching inns, though the town's markets benefited from the railway.

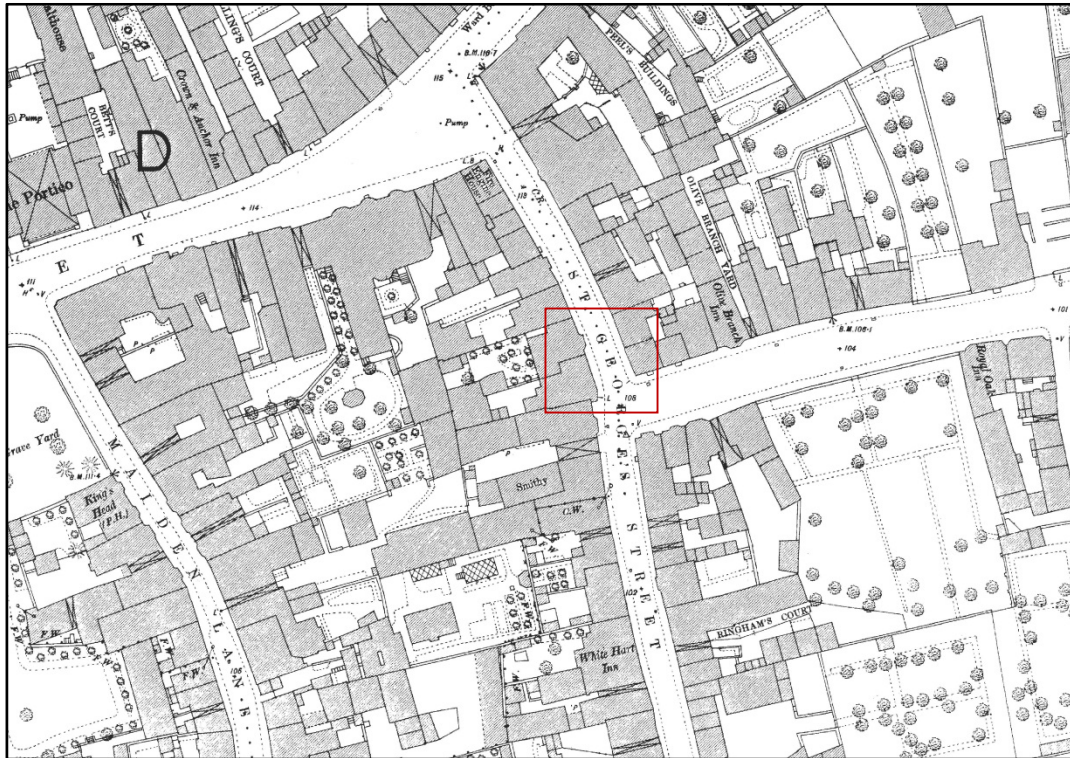
The increasing population of the 19th century resulted in the expansion of the town with terraced housing being constructed on former common land and civic improvements being undertaken throughout the town.

The buildings of 23-24 St George's Street were originally timber-framed, cased in stone in the early 17th century leaving the rear timber-framed. The two-storey mullioned bay window was later added to the hall. The hall had an internal chimney

stack backing against a cross passage, this made the passage its only access and part of the house (BHO accessed 17 May 2015).

2.3 Historical map evidence

The Ordnance Survey map of 1886 depicts 23-24 St George's Street as two separate buildings (Fig 3).



1886 Ordnance Survey Map Fig 3

2.4 Listed buildings and Lincolnshire Historic Environment (HER) entries

In St George's Street are eleven buildings Grade II listed dating to the 18th and 19th centuries (Stamford Conservation Appraisal). The buildings are Grade II listed (ID: 193639) as follows:

Partly rubble, partly stone, but all of early date, somewhat altered, No 23 is coursed rubble. Welsh slate roof. Modern door. One C19 shop window. Other windows have C19 glazing, one being of 3 lights. No 24 has a C19 splayed bay, rendered stone, with 9-light windows to each storey with moulded stone mullions, under gabled capped label. Plain door.

Nos 23 to 28 (consec) form a group.

The Lincolnshire Historic Environment Record (HER) entry is as follows:

Name: 23 and 24 St George's Street, Stamford

HER Number: 38628

Type of record: Building

Summary: 23 and 24 St George's Street, Stamford

Grid Reference: TF 031 071

Map Sheet: TF00NW

Parish: STAMFORD, SOUTH KESTEVEN, LINCOLNSHIRE

Full description

PRN 38628

This house is partly built of rubble and partly of stone and is of an early date although somewhat altered. No. 24 has a 17th century splayed bay window. No. 23 has a 19th century shop window. For the full description and the legal address of this listed building please refer to the appropriate List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. {1}This house originated as a timber framed building, of which the rear wall survives. It was cased in stone in the early 17th century and later a two storey mullioned bay window was added to the hall. The hall has a chimney stack backing against a cross passage. {2}

Monument Types

HALL HOUSE (Medieval to Post Medieval - 1500 AD? to 1599 AD?)

HOUSE (Medieval to Modern - 1500 AD? to 2050 AD)

TIMBER FRAMED HOUSE (Medieval to Post Medieval - 1500 AD? to 1599 AD?)

SHOP (Post Medieval to Modern - 1800 AD? to 2050 AD)

Associated Events: Site visit to 23 and 24 St George's Street, Stamford

Protected Status: Listed Building and Conservation Area

3 OBJECTIVES

The buildings were recorded in accordance with the standards, conventions and specifications defined in Historic England, *Understanding Historic Buildings, A guide to good recording practice* (2006). The building recording conformed to Level 1.

- The objective of Level 1 building recording is to provide a descriptive record of an extant structure, often before demolition or conversion, where the building is known or strongly suspected to retain limited historic significance.
- Level 1 will provide conclusions regarding the building's development and use but will not discuss in detail the evidence on which these conclusions are based.
- Measured plans and other drawings, based upon existing survey drawings were be produced as appropriate.
- A comprehensive photographic record ensured the preservation by record of the area to be affected by the insertion of the stair prior to the work.

4 METHODOLOGY

Site recording included the following elements:

- An accurate archaeological record of the area to be affected by the proposed works to English Heritage Level 1 (HE 2006, section 5);
- A basic photographic survey of the areas to be affected by the works in their present condition comprising general and detailed shots taken in black and white with a high quality camera as well as digital photographs for reporting purposes;

- Written notes on the building's construction, present and former use and where appropriate, the buildings past and present relationship to its setting in the wider landscape;
- A measured plan with the plans indicating the position and orientation of photographs included.

All works were carried out in accordance with the *Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Code of Conduct* (CIfA 2014a), and *Standard and Guidance for the Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures* (CIfA 2014b). All works conformed to English Heritage procedural documents *Management of Archaeological Projects 2nd edition* (1991b) and Historic England's *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (MoRPHE) (HE 2015). All site recording procedures are detailed in MOLA Northampton's in-house manual (MOLA 2014), which is issued to all staff.

5 THE BUILDING RECORDING

It is proposed to reorganize 23-24 St George's Street into two separate properties by building a wall across the landing on the first floor and inserting a staircase to provide access from the ground floor of number 23 to the first floor (Fig 4).

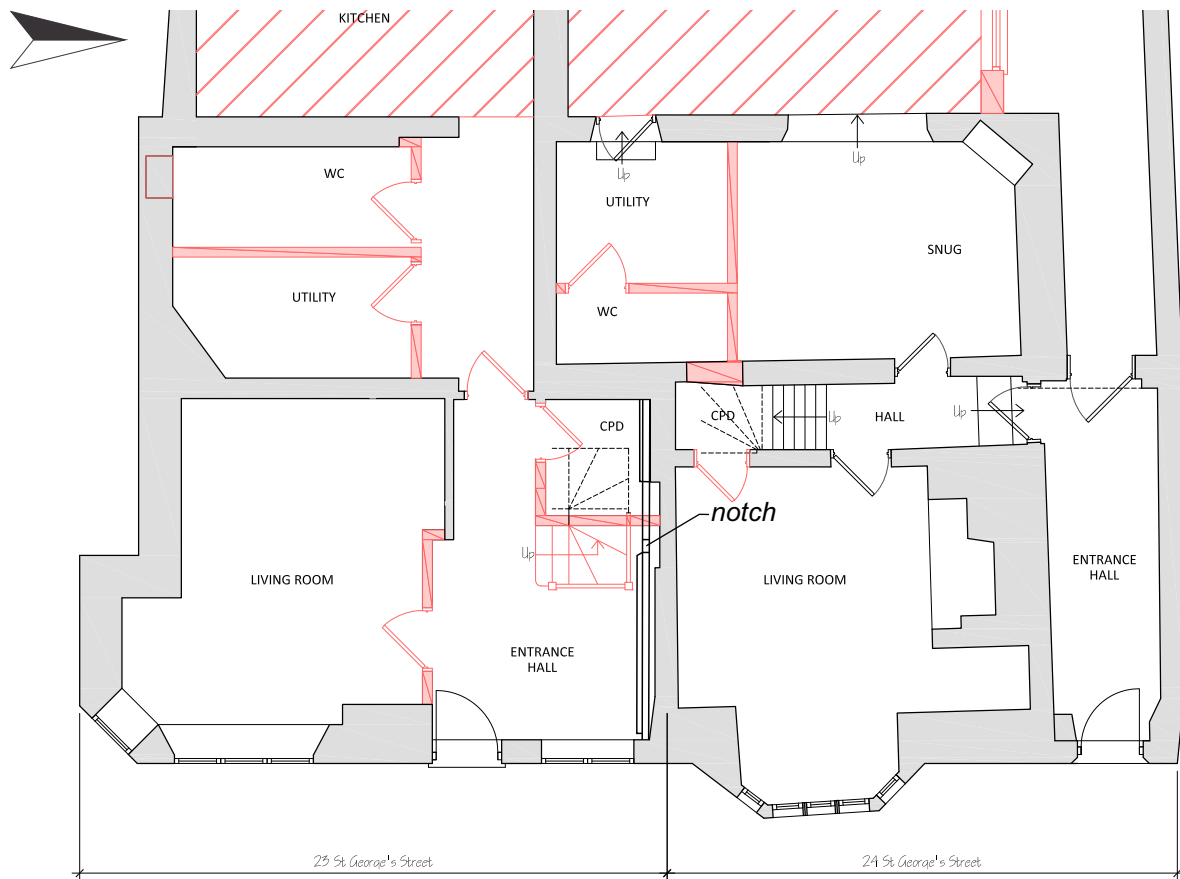
The area under investigation comprised the back right corner of the front sales room of the travel shop, number 23, and part of the landing immediately above. At the time of the survey the landing spanned almost the length of both houses on the first floor (Fig 4).

Permission was granted to investigate underneath the modern plasterboard and flooring on the first floor.

5.1 Ground floor

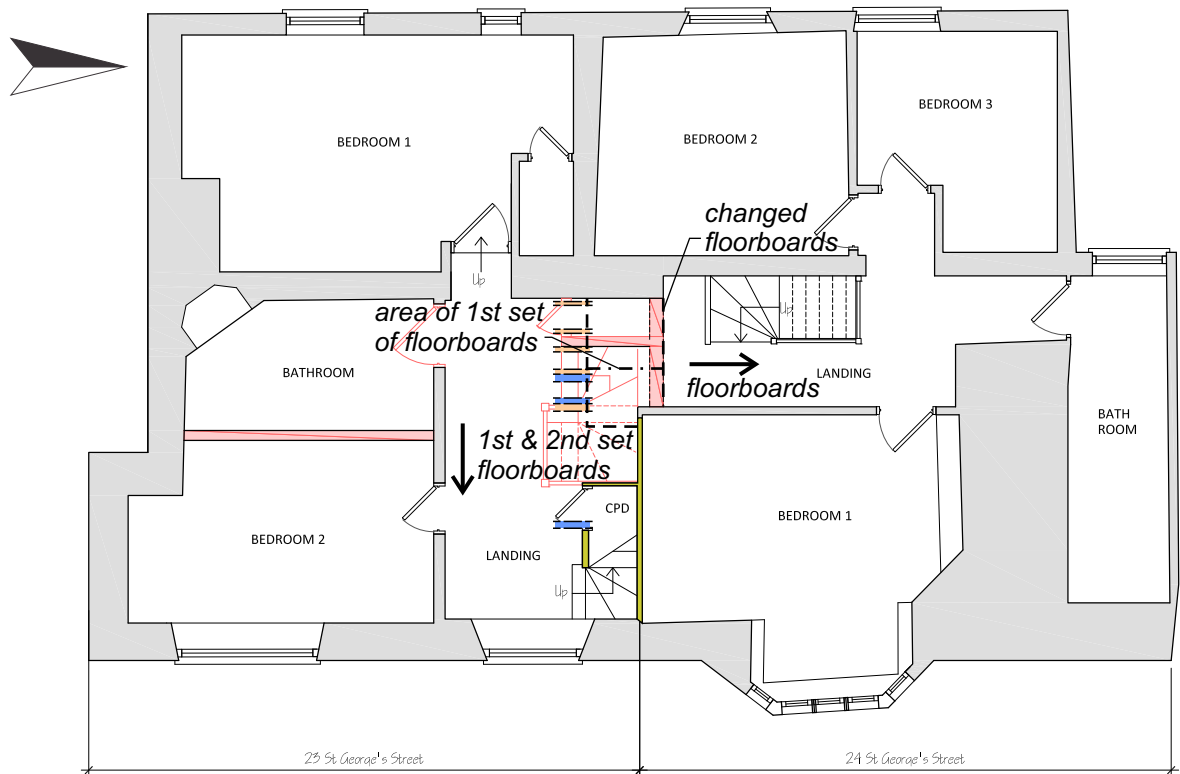
Currently the ground floor of number 23 St George's Street is utilised as a travel shop. The flooring is of pine boards, the walls are plastered and painted, and the ceiling is of white painted boards.

At the proposed location of the reinstated stairs the beam has a notch where a post or a joist would have been inserted. In line with the notch there is also a change in the ceiling boards. Additionally, there is an alcove near the back right corner of the room (Figs 4, 5 and 6).



Ground floor

■ New additions



First floor

0 5m

■ Earlier straw & daub walls
 ■ Earlier joists
 ■ New joists



Section of beam on the ground floor at location of reinstatement of stairs Fig 5



The area of stair reinstatement Fig 6

5.2 First Floor

The first floor of number 23 St George's Street has been a flyover freehold as part of the residential property of numbers 23-24 St George's Street. At the time of the survey the landing floor was covered in plywood and purple carpet tiles. The walls are plastered, wallpapered and painted (Figs 7 to 9).

The inspection of the walls did not reveal any indication of a previous stairwell. However, it did reveal straw and daub walls under the chipboard along the wall just short of the wooden post (Figs 4, 10 and 11). The walls forming the cupboard under the attic stairs showed internally the construction of posts with straw and daub, which externally had been covered in wallpaper (Fig 12). The wall forming the returning wall of the bedroom was entirely constructed of plasterboard (Fig 13).

It was possible to remove a line of floorboards from the landing wall to the front window in number 23 that had been previously removed for the electric cabling (Fig 14). This revealed a set of new joists, four in total, by the back wall (Figs 4, 15 and 16). Only older joists could be seen in the gaps in the floor nearest to the window (Figs 4, 17 and 18).

Under the current floorboards it was revealed that an older set of floorboards, running in the same direction, had been left in place with batons fixed across them. These batons increased in thickness from the back wall towards the windows at the front to level the floor. The older floorboards appeared to be absent in a small area by the back wall (Fig 4).

An area of floorboards, c1.4m by 1m, at the location of the proposed stairwell, have been replaced or removed at some point (Fig 4). The floorboards of number 24 are orientated in a different direction and are 30mm thick in contrast to the 20mm thick floorboards at number 23.



The investigation area, looking north-west Fig 7



The investigation area, looking north Fig 8



The floor at the investigation area Fig 9



The investigation area after exposure of the fabric, looking north-east Fig 10



Detail of the straw and daub below the plasterboard Fig 11



Older plaster under modern woodchip wallpaper Fig 12



Modern plasterboard wall Fig 13



Joists and floorboards underneath the current floorboards, looking west Fig 14



The newer joists, looking north Fig 15



Newer joist, looking west Fig 16



Older joist below 1st set of floor boards, looking east Fig 17



Older joist below 1st set of floor boards, looking west Fig 18

5 DISCUSSION

The two interconnected houses of 23-24 St George's Street are to be converted into two individual properties. As part of the work Number 23 will have a stair case reinstated within the investigation area.

The adjoining wall between the attic stairs and the bedroom of number 24 has its original straw and plaster fabric with wooden post surviving *in situ* on the side of number 23, reaching just short of the upright post in the landing corner. The remainder of the wall is missing as it was removed when the first floors were joined.

Within the investigation area the floor had a squared area of boards, possibly indicating a change or repair of the floor area. Further investigation under the floor within a strip from the back landing wall to the front window revealed four newer joists in a space of 1.3m from the back landing wall towards the front. It was also noted that an older set of floor boards were preserved below the current floor surface. Batons were placed over the earlier floor to level the floor. In the right corner at the back of the landing of number 23, in an area of c1m², the older set of floorboards could be found.

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MOLA

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MOLA
Bolton House
Wootton Hall Park
Northampton
NN4 8BN
01604 700 493
www.mola.org.uk
sparry@mola.org.uk