NOS 38 and 39 GREAT JAMES STREET, CAMDEN

An Assessment of the Historic Farbric

by

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Contents

List of figures

Intro	duction		1
1	The I	historical background to the Great James Street houses	2
	1.1	The area prior to building	2
	1.2	The building of Great James Street	2
	1.3	The building of Nos. 38 and 39	3
	1.4	The builders of Great James Street	3
2	The o	original form of the Great James Street houses	3
	2.1	The plan	3
•	2.2	The facade	4
	2.3	The interiors	4
3	The l	later history	6
4	The 1	listing of the Great James Street houses	8
5	The 1	recent programme of works	8
6	A ro	om by room description of No 38 Great James Street	10
	6.1	The exterior	10
	6.2	The third floor	10
	6.3	The begins the contract of the	11
	6.4	The first floor	12
	6.5	The ground floor	13
	6.6	The basement	14
7	A roo	om by room description of No 39 Great James Street	16
	7.1	The exterior	16
	7.2	The third floor	16
	7.3	The second floor	17
	7.4		18
	7.5		20
	7.6		21

List of figures

Figure 1	Nos 38 and 39 looking north-west,		Figure 38 No 38, ground floor back room lo-	oking
•	photographed in 1946, English Heritage,		north-west	41
	London and South-east Photographic		Figure 39 No 38, fireplace in ground floor by	
	Collection	22	room	42
Figure 2	Nos 38 and 39 looking north-west,		Figure 40 No 38, ground floor closet looking	
	photographed in 1960, English Heritage,		Figure 41 No 38, ground floor closet looking	
	London and South-east Photographic		Figure 42 No 38, ground floor hall, front do	
	Collection	23	Figure 43 No 38, ground floor hall looking e	
Figure 3	No 38, facade	24	Figure 44 No 38, ground floor hall looking v	vest 44
Figure 4	No 38, front door	24	Figure 45 No 38, ground floor rear hall look	
	No 38, rear facade upper floors	25	west	45
Figure 6	No 38, rear facade ground floor	25	Figure 46 No 38, ground floor rear hall look	
_	No 38, roof looking south-east	26	east	45
	No 38, roof looking south-west	26	Figure 47 No 38, ground floor stair detail	46
Figure 9	No 38, third floor front room looking		Figure 48 No 38, ground floor stair detail	46
	south-east	27	Figure 49 No 38, basement front room, door	
Figure 10	No 38, third floor front room looking		area	47
	north-west	27	Figure 50 No 38, basement front room looking	
Figure 11	No 38, third floor back room looking		south-east	47
	south-west	28	Figure 51 No 38, basement back room looking	
Figure 12	No 38, third floor back room looking		south-west	48
	east	28	Figure 52 No 38, basement stairwell looking	west 48
_	No 38, third floor landing looking west	29	Figure 53 No 38, basement staircase looking	40
Figure 14	No 38, third floor window on half		north-west	49
	landing looking north-west	29	Figure 54 No 38, north cellar off front area	49
Figure 15	No 38, second floor front room looking	20	Figure 55 No 38, south cellar off front area	50
	south-east	30	Figure 56 No 38, north cellar off back area	50 51
Figure 16	No 38, second floor front room looking	20	Figure 57 No 39, facade	
	west	30	Figure 58 No 39, facade ground floor windo	w 51 52
Figure 17	No 38, second floor front room looking	21	Figure 59 No 39, front door	52
	north-west	31	Figure 60 No 39, roof looking north	53
_	No 38, second floor closet looking west	31	Figure 61 No 39, roof looking north-west Figure 62 No 39, roof looking south	53
~	No 38, second floor closet looking east	32	Figure 63 No 39, rear facade closet wing loo	
Figure 20	No 38, second floor landing looking	32	south-west	54
r: 21	No. 28 accord floor londing window	32	Figure 64 No 39, third floor front and back i	
rigure 21	No 38, second floor landing window looking north-west	33	looking east	54
Ciaura 22	No 38, first floor front room looking	33	Figure 65 No 39, third floor front and back i	
riguic 22	south-east	33	looking west	55
Figure 23	No 38, first floor front room looking	33	Figure 66 No 39, third floor, floor-frame loo	
riguic 23	west	34	south	5
Figure 24	No 38, first floor front room looking	2.	Figure 67 No 39, third floor stairwell looking	
1 .64.0 2 .	north-west	34	north-east	56
Figure 25	No 38, first floor back room looking		Figure 68 No 39, second floor front room lo	oking
0	south-west	35	south-east	56
Figure 26	No 38, first floor back room looking		Figure 69 No 39, second floor front room lo	oking
	north-west	35	south	57
Figure 27	No 38, first floor closet looking east	36	Figure 70 No 39, second floor looking north	57
	No 38, first floor closet looking north-		Figure 71 No 39, second floor front room lo	oking
Ū	east	36	west	58
Figure 29	No 38, first floor closet looking west	37	Figure 72 No 39, second floor front room lo	oking
Figure 30	No 38, first floor landing looking west	37	south-west, photo Alan Baxter Asse	
Figure 31	No 38, first floor landing looking south-		3/4/96	58
	west	38	Figure 73 No 39, second floor back room lo	
Figure 32	No 38, ground floor front room looking		west	59
	north	38	Figure 74 No 39, second floor back room lo	
Figure 33	No 38, ground floor front room looking		east	59
	north-west	39	Figure 75 No 39, second floor back room lo	-
Figure 34	No 38, ground floor front room looking		north-east	60
	west	39	Figure 76 No 39, second floor closet looking	
Figure 35	No 38, ground floor front room looking		Figure 77 No 39, second floor landing looking	
	south-east	40	west	61
Figure 36	No 38, ground floor back room looking		Figure 78 No 39, second floor landing looking	-
	south-west	40	west, phot Alan Baxter Assocs. 3/4	
Figure 37	No 38, ground floor back room looking		Figure 79 No 39, second floor landing looking	
	east	41	west	62

rigure 80 No 39, first floor front foom looking	
east	62
Figure 81 No 39, first floor front room looking	
south-east	63
Figure 82 No 39, first floor front room looking	
south	63
Figure 83 No 39, first floor front room looking	
west	64
Figure 84 No 39, first floor front room looking	0.
,	
south-west, photo Alan Baxter Assocs.	- 4
3/4/96	64
Figure 85 No 39, first floor back room looking	
east	65
Figure 86 No 39, first floor back room looking	
south-east	65
Figure 87 No 39, first floor back room looking	
west	66
	00
Figure 88 No 39, first floor back room looking	
north	66
Figure 89 No 39, first floor landing looking west	67
Figure 90 No 39, first floor landing looking south-	
west	67
Figure 91 No 39, ground floor front room looking	
north	68
	00
Figure 92 No 39, ground floor front room looking	60
east	68
Figure 93 No 39, ground floor front room looking	
south-east	69
Figure 94 No 39, ground floor front room looking	
south	69
Figure 95 No 39, ground floor front room looking	
	70
west	70
Figure 96 No 39, ground floor front room looking	
west, photo Alan Baxter Assocs. 3/4/96	70
Figure 97 No 39, ground floor back room looking	
south-east	71
Figure 98 No 39, ground floor back room looking	
south-west	71
Figure 99 No 39, ground floor back room looking	· -
_	72
north-west	72
Figure 100 No 39, ground floor back room	
looking north-east	72
Figure 101 No 39, ground floor closet looking	
north-east	73
Figure 102 No 39, ground floor closet looking	
east	73
Figure 103 No 39, ground floor closet looking	
	74
west	/4
Figure 104 No 39, ground floor hall looking	
north-east	74
Figure 105 No 39, ground floor hall entrance door	
looking east	75
Figure 106 No 39, ground floor hall looking west	75
Figure 107 No 39, ground floor hall rear hall	
looking west	76
-	,0
Figure 108 No 39, ground floor hall looking	7.0
north-west	76
Figure 109 No 39, basement front room, looking	
south-east	77
Figure 110 No 39, basement back room looking	
south-west	77
Figure 111 No 39, basement stairwell looking	
west	78
71 491	

Introduction

This report is based on a survey of the two houses carried out on 27/3/97 and 1/4/97. The survey was requested by Delcia Keate, English Heritage Buildings at Risk Coordinator. This followed a chance visit to the site by Delcia Keate with Robin Harper, Senior Conservation Officer, Camden Council. Both were alarmed at what appeared to be unauthorised works being carried out to buildings listed grade II and II*.

The two houses were built as part of a single development c 1720-1. The terraces on both sides of the street were built to one design. The street is a remarkable survival from the early eighteenth century, being so complete and uniform. The scale of the development and its uniformity makes it appear advanced for its period.

The report includes a description of the surviving historic fabric, a brief account of its historic development and a brief assessment of the impact of the recent programme of works. It is written from an archaeological, art historical point of view and refers only in passing to structural and engineering works.

It includes notes on the houses as first built, their later history, mostly alterations in the 1810s, 1930s and 1960s, their listing in the 1950s, and a brief assessment of the impact of the current programme of works on the historic fabric. This is then followed by a room by room description for both houses. In these descriptions, work described as original is considered to date from the 1720s and work described as modern probably dates from the 1930s or 1960s. Work described as new is considered to belong to the current programme of works which began in September 1996.

Also included are over one hundred 35mm colour photographs (Figures 3 - 111), chiefly showing the interiors. These were taken on 27/3/97 and 1/4/97.

1 The historical background to the Great James Street houses

1.1 The area prior to building

The area under discussion lay to the north of Theobalds Road (known in the late 17th century as the King's Way), opposite the elegant avenues of Gray's Inn Walks. To the north-west stood Lamb's Conduit, an important source of water for the growing West End that had been formed from a tributary of the River Fleet and named after William Lamb, the City cloth-worker who caused the conduit to be constructed in 1577. Early leases for the area reveal that the future site of Great James Street lay on what was previously known as Gravel Pit Field, or, more commonly, the 'Assefielde'.

Gravel Pit Field was among the last areas on the northern fringes of London north of Holborn to be developed: the West End, rather than the northern periphery, was the more fashionable area of residential expansion in the late 17th century. Eight acres in size, it lay to the west of Gray's Inn Road, south of Lamb's Conduit Field and Dunghill Field, and north of Gray's Inn Walks, extending across Theobalds Road and including Jockey Field to the west of the Walks.

In 1674 it was given by lease dated 27 April to Margaret, wife of William Brownlow, who thereby gained the opportunity to grant sixty year leases on this ground. The neighbouring area owned by the Dukes of Bedford was developed by Nicholas Barbon from 1686 onwards, but activity north of Theobalds Road was more spasmodic. Barbon's holdings were taken over by Sir Nathaniel Curzon following Barbon's death on 1698, and from 1700 the general development of this area commenced.

1.2 The building of Great James Street

Margaret Brownlow had remarried, and by 1716 was the widow of Sir Thomas Skipwith, Bart. On June 1 of that year Dame Margaret Skipwith granted a sixty-year lease to John Metcalfe of Grays Inn for Gravel Pit Fields, at an annual rental of £62; she had in the previous month let the Jockey Field to George Devall and Robert Burford for building, where in 1717-19 they built what was to become the east side of Bedford Row, immediately to the south of Great James Street.

Metcalfe was not as quick off the mark as Devall and Burford. He granted leases for plots along the new street from 1720. The southern part of the street, up to the present no. 32, were let between June and September 1720; the more northerly part followed with the final leases being granted in March 1724. The whole of the east side was let in 1720.

An elaborate cartouche on the front of no. 16 is inscribed GREAT JAMES STREET 1721: 1721 does appear to have been the single most important year in the building of the street, but it ought to be remembered that not all of the west

side was finished at that date. The name of James Street is believed to refer to James Burgess, who assisted the ground landlords with the development of their property in Holborn.

1.3 The building of Nos. 38 and 39

The leases for both houses were granted on 6 September 1720. That for 38 was acquired by John Hunsdon, painter of St Giles in the Fields (MDR 1720/6/279). That of 39 went to two joiners: Thomas Wadsworth and George Marshall (MDR 1721/6/173). Both leases were for a period of 56 years from the previous Michaelmas, a period chosen so their expiry would coincide with that of Metcalfe's head-lease in 1775.

Neither Hunsdon nor Wadsworth and Marshall were engaged elsewhere in the building of Great James Street, nor do their names occur elsewhere in the lists of lessees for this area drawn up by Frank Kelsall. Hunsdon was however involved in the lease of no. 36, which was built by Michael Fleetwood, mason, and completed by the time of its letting to one Richard Lowe in June 1722 (MDR 1722/2/95).

1.4 The builders of Great James Street

The overwhelming majority of leases granted by Metcalfe, a Gray's Inn lawyer, in Great James Street went to men employed in the building trades. Out of the 37 references to persons named in the 35 identified leases for Great James Street in 1720-4, only three were to non-builders; they were to Michael Allam, Gentleman. Of the other 34, twelve went to carpenters, five to joiners, four to bricklayers, three to plumbers, plasterers and slaters, two to masons and one to a smith and a painter. Thus were almost all branches of the building trades represented in the development of the street: only glaziers and paviours are absent.

Hunsdon, Wadsworth and Marshall were relatively minor figures in the street's construction, taking only one plot each. The largest number, four, were acquired by a bricklayer named Thomas Gorham. Three were taken by John Phillimore, carpenter; Edward Dennis, slater; and Robert Easton, carpenter. Three carpenters each took two leases apiece.

2 The original form of the Great James Street houses

2.1 The plan

The original room layout for both houses was standard for all the houses in the street. It is a conventional Georgian town house plan with two rooms and a light closet at the back. The dogleg staircase is located in the back half of the house. The stacks in the front of the house are located on the party wall, the stacks in the

back room and closet are diagonal corner stacks, back to back. At basement and ground floor there is an additional closet off the stairwell.

In these and in many other houses in the street there is now direct access between the front and back rooms. In the original house plan, the rooms were probably separated by panelled partition walls. None of the surviving openings in the partition walls between front and back rooms in the survey appear to be original.

The houses on the west side of the street are uniform in size. Those on the east side, even though they appear uniform, vary in the width of frontage and therefore presumably in class.

The distribution of left and right handed layouts varies on the east side of the street without any obvious reason. The paired houses, that is left and right handed pairs, generally occupy the centre of the terrace. Perhaps it was intended that the paired houses were would be seen as double sized units

Both the houses in the survey had cellars at the front, under the pavement, and at the back against the rear property boundary. It is not clear, however, from these two houses how the area above the back cellars was used. It was probably used to house additional service accommodation which was accessed from the door in the back of the house at ground floor level.

2.2 The facade

The four storeys vary in height and in the facade this is expressed in the sizes of the windows on each floor. The resulting hierarchy, measured by the numbers of brick courses for each window, is as follows, first floor thirty, ground floor twenty nine, second floor twenty seven, third floor twenty two. This establishes the first floor as a piano nobile although the ground floor clearly runs a close second. This balance in the hierarchy was maintained in the fitting out of the interiors.

The windows have segmental arched heads with the sash frames set flush with the wall face. Although, it was required by the London Building Acts of 1707 and 1709 that the frames should be set back 4" from the wall surface, this arrangement is typical of houses immediately outside the City of London as late as the 1740s. By this date it had become fashionable in this area to set the windows back by the depth of one brick although it was not required by the Building Acts until 1774.

The door-cases in the street are remarkably uniform. All, except where clearly altered, have deep cantilevered porches supported by richly carved console brackets.

2.3 The interiors

With the exception of the basements, the interiors were panelled throughout. The variation in the detailing of this panelling reflects the status assigned to each room. If the different types of panelling are graded according to the complexity of the moulding and tabulated according to their room locations, the hierarchical system becomes apparent (Tables 1 and 2).

Hierarchy of panelling types, with 1 as the most complex and therefore expensive to produce:

Type 1	ovolo moulded, raised and fielded panelling
Type 2	ovolo moulded plain panelling
Type 3	plain panelling with dado rail
Type 4	plain panelling without dado rail or cornice

Table I distribution of panelling types in No 38

		·			
	Hall	Front	Back	Stair	Closet
Third floor		4	4	4	?4
Second floor		2	3	3	3
First floor		1	1	1	1
Ground floor	1	1	1	1	1

Table II distribution of panelling types in No 39

Hall	_			
rian	Front	Back	Stair	Closet
	?4	?4	?4	?4
	3	3	3	?3
	1	2	2	?3
1	1	2	2	3
	1	3 1	3 3 1 2	3 3 3 1 2 2

The hierarchical treatment of mouldings is continued in the doors, ranging from the most complex six panel ovolo moulded raised and fielded down to plain two panel doors. The same aesthetic is apparent in the treatment of the stairs where the most complex treatment consists of open tread construction with candy-stick balusters and carved newels down to closed string construction with turned balusters.

The uniformity in the carving of the tread ends and the turning of the stair balusters suggests that the same joiner was employed for both houses. This suggests that the work was contracted through the developer. However, the variations in the distribution of the panelling types, the treatment of the stairs and pilasters in the hall, suggest that the tenant had some say in the fitting out of the houses.

3 The later history

3.1 Later History

The leases expired in 1775. The estate by that time had become the property of Henry Doughty: he inherited it through George Brownlow Doughty, Elizabeth Doughty, and her father William Brownlow. Henry Doughty renewed the leases, but for the fairly short period of thirty six years, to expire in 1810-1. The adjoining Rugby Estate, similarly, adopted a policy of granting forty-year repairing leases when their property reverted to their control in 1779. Both estates evidently regarded the houses on their land as being in sufficiently good condition to attract future tenants: this has proved to be the case.

Holborn declined as a residential district from the mid 19th century onwards: this was probably the salvation of the street's historic fabric, since it discouraged the remodelling that one would expect to have taken place in a more affluent area such as Mayfair. Parts of Holborn were occupied by notorious slums, which had a depressive effect upon property values.

The only substantial alteration to the street has been the replacement of the building on the south-west corner: the taller red brick and Portland stone replacement is dated 1879 on its corner.

3.2 Alterations to the fabric

Both houses were subject to a series of alterations which appear to date from the early nineteenth century. These are probably the results of upgrading works and repairs by the leaseholder c 1810 which follow the expiry of the second set of leases.

A reeded architrave with blocks or paterae was applied to the ground floor windows throughout the street. No 39 is no exception but at No 38 the facade was rebuilt in the 1930s and the windows replaced with steel frames. The architraves may indicate replacement of the original sash frames. Windows from the 1720s commonly had solid frames pegged at the joints and only the inner sash

counterbalanced. An example of this type survives in the ground floor closet of No 38. It is possible that the facade windows were originally of this type and converted to box construction in the c 1810.

Several fireplaces in both houses date from this period and are of one pattern. With timber reeded surrounds and paterae, they survive in the first floor front and back, ground floor back at No 38 and in the first floor front room of No 39. The cast iron grate in the ground floor back room of No 38 is probably contemporary with the surround. This alteration was not simply due to changing fashion, it reflects the move away from wood burning hearth of the early eighteenth century to the more efficient coal burning small grate.

The houses on both sides of the street have fanlights installed above the front door. In 1720, the doors were probably eight or ten panel and rose full height without a fanlight. The surviving fanlights in the street all appear to date from c 1800. The variations in design, however, suggest that they may not have been the work of the leaseholder.

The remarkable survival of so much historic fabric in so many houses from the 1720s in one street is perhaps due to the control exerted by the head leaseholder over the alterations made by his tenants.

The next major wave of alterations to both houses appears to date from the 1930s. Again this could be related to the expiry of a set of leases. Perhaps the most significant work from this period was the rebuilding of the facade of No 38 and its refenestration with steel frame windows. Internally, the alterations are concerned with providing access from the front to the back room on the ground and first floor in both houses. Several fireplaces appear to date from this period, including a mahogany surround in the ground floor front room of No 38 and the elaborate surround with a mirror in the first floor front room of No 39. On the third floor of No 38 some of the panelling was replaced with thin plywood which probably also dates form this period.

In the 1960s the removal of the timber roof structure and its replacement with a flat roof suggests common ownership. The alterations to the roof appear to accompany alterations to the stacks which indicate which rooms still had functional fireplaces. For No 38 the stack for the closet wing has three chimney pots which indicates that in the 1930s the stack was reduced to three flues. This suggests that three floors in the closet wing were left with working fireplaces. The panelling and floorboards suggest that the fireplaces were removed from the basement and ground floors. At No 39 the closet wing was rebuilt above ground floor level in yellow stock brick. The rebuilding did not include a stack. The floors of the new wing were level with the strengthened and firred upper floors in main block. The floors in the main block had sagged and this was remedied on the ground, first and second floors by the insertion of timber posts. The third floor was received additional support from steel rods suspended from a steel girder at roof level.

4 The listing of the Great James Street houses

The listing of the Great James Street houses appears to have taken place on the 24th of October 1951. The entry for the houses on the east side is dated the 24th of October 1957 but this is surely a typing error.

Nos 3-16 on the east side of the street and Nos 26-40 with the exception of No 38 were listed grade II* in 1951. No 38 was not considered grade II* because its front had been rebuilt. It was however listed grade II on account of its doorcase, interior and group value.

5 The recent programme of works

The current programme of works began on site in September 1996. They have involved structural repairs to the floors which required the replacement of some of the joists.

The repairs have also required the stripping out of modern wall finishes, This has resulted in the exposure of original panelling. It has also incurred the removal of doors, cornices and dados some of which remain on site. Without an inventory, a full assessment of the total loss cannot be made.

Most of the ceilings in No 38 are now new plasterboard. Some are applied over plaster on lath which may be original. The basements of both houses have been completely replastered.

Most of the panelling has now been stripped of paint with blow torches. Some panels, especially those in No 38, have been primed and filled ready for painting. It is clear from the unpainted areas of panelling that the stripping has not been carried out in a sensitive manner. The removal of so much paint has resulted in the loss not only of the historic fabric but also of much of the evidence for reconstructing the original and later paint schemes.

The quality of workmanship evident in the new joinery falls far short of the original. This is especially evident in the joinery of the new panelling. Mouldings are only poorly and approximately made to replicate the originals, see for example the dado rail in the rear hall of No 39. The use of medium density fibreboard for panelling is not normally accepted in conservation work on buildings listed Grade II*.

It is difficult to understand why feathered panels of medium density fibreboard have been applied to the plain panelling on the second floor of No 38. It is a crude simulation of raised and fielded panelling and therefore is perhaps an attempt to upgrade the appearance of the room but the reasoning and the workmanship is poor. This runs contrary to the original hierarchical system of panelling and decoration.

It appears that the stack in the closet wing of No 39 has been removed from the upper three floors. It is difficult without any photographic evidence to determine the condition of this stack prior to the recent works programme. It is likely that it had been modified in some way but the evidence contained within the present panelling and flooring suggests that the stack did survive fairly substantially.

Some, but surprisingly few, windows have been replaced in the recent programme of works and these are confined to the rear elevations. It appears that the steel frame windows are to be retained.

6 A room by room description of No 38 Great James Street

6.1 The exterior

6.1.1 The facade The facade has been rebuilt in red brick. The windows have been rebuilt with flat heads in place of the original segmental arches. The original sash windows have been replaced with steel frames. This rebuilding probably took place during the 1930s or 1940s. It must have occurred before 1946 when the house was first photographed (Figure 1).

The original timber doorcase with carved brackets is similar to those at 26-37. The fanlight with its metal glazing bars probably dates from the late eighteenth century. This very popular design was included in Joseph Bottomley's catalogue of c 1795 as design No 30 (Soane Museum). The original door was probably a tall eight panel door and the top two panels were removed for the creation of the fanlight. This alteration appears to have been made to all of the houses in the street.

- 6.1.2 The rear facade The original rear facade of the original house is now obscured by new render and the addition of a closet wing on the north side. Where the brick is exposed, the windows are recessed which indicates that rebuilding or at least refacing has taken place. The sash boxes for the ground and first floor back rooms are set flush with the wall face which suggests that they are set in the original brickwork.
- 6.1.3 The roof The stack above the front rooms rises to its original height but it has been rendered since the 1946 photograph was taken (Figure 1). The original valley construction has been removed and replaced by a flat bitumenized roof. The stacks for the back rooms and closet wing have been reduced and rebuilt above the flat roof. These alterations probably date from the 1960s.

6.2 The third floor

6.2.1 The third floor front room Ceiling: new plasterboard. Cornice: plain board, the original panelling did not have a moulded cornice. Panelling: the original plain panelling survives around the fireplace. The rest is a mixture of modern and new. The modern consists of plywood and plasterboard, the new panelling is in medium density fibreboard with pine stiles and rails. Dado: no dado moulding, the original panelling probably did not have a separate dado rail. Skirting: plain not moulded. Doors: the door is not in-situ, the panel partition around the door is new. The original was probably a plain two panel door, matching the wall panelling. Windows: modern steel frame windows. The originals probably matched that in the back room. Fireplace: the fireplace retains its original stone slips, the cast-iron grate is gothic, probably late C19. Floor: some of the floorboards are wide and appear to be original.

- 6.2.2 The third floor, back room Ceiling: new plasterboard on top of the original plaster on lath. Cornice: modern pine board, probably deeper than the original. Panelling: the original plain panelling survives on the diagonal corner stack. Dado: there probably was no original moulded dado rail. Skirting: small plain board, not moulded, original survives next to fireplace. Doors: neither door insitu, originally probably a plain two panel door to match the panelling. Window: six over six sashes with horns but sash boxes and linings are probably original or early. Fireplace: a diagonal corner stack. The grate is missing. There are impressions of modern tiles set in a hard cement, surrounding the hearth. The brickwork of the original curved back hearth is original. Floor: the floorboards are new.
- 6.2.3 The third floor closet Ceiling: new plasterboard. Cornice: none, panelling removed. Panelling: the panelling has been removed and the walls are now covered in new plaster. The panelling was probably plain, matching that in the other rooms on this floor. Dado: panelling removed. Skirting: panelling removed, no skirting in place. Doors: no door in-situ, the original was probably a plain two panel door matching the panelling. Windows: the sash window is new and the arrangement of the sash box set back from the exterior wall face probably dates from the C19 or C20. Fireplace: the corner stack has been removed, probably in the recent works. Floor: new floorboards.
- 6.2.4 The third floor landing Ceiling: probably the original plaster. Cornice: plain board, possibly the original, stripped of paint. Panelling: original plain panelling, partially stripped, filled and primed. Dado: new moulding, probably more elaborate than the original. Skirting: plain board, new in places. Doors: not insitu, originals probably had simple cyma reversa architraves. Window: sash frame recessed and box construction therefore probably C19 but the panelled lining of the window appears to be original and incorporates cupboards on both sides. Staircase: original closed string construction with original handrail, turned balusters and newel. Floor: original floorboards and treads.

6.3 The second floor

original timber cornice, with part stop returns above the windows *Panelling:* original ovolo moulded plain panelling. Original cupboards and doors survive either side of the chimney breast. The panelling has been newly altered by the addition of feathered MDF panels screwed onto the originals to simulate raised panelling. The original partition wall between the front and back rooms has been removed. The presence of a section of what appears to be a rusting 'L' section steel spanning the opening suggests that this intervention occurred during the 1930s or 1940s. *Dado:* the original rail survives mostly in-situ. *Skirting:* plain board, not moulded *Doors:* original ovolo moulded two panel doors to landing and to cupboards survive in-situ. *Windows:* modern steel frame windows. The brick columns between the windows were enlarged when the facade was rebuilt,

- consequently there is now no void for the installation of original type of shutter arrangement. *Fireplace:* Victorian or Edwardian timber surround with cast iron grate *Floor:* original wide floorboards.
- 6.3.2 The second floor back room Ceiling: new plasterboard ceiling. Cornice: original timber box, upper section newly replaced in part with oversized moulding. Panelling: east wall removed (see front room), other walls retain original plain panelling newly altered by the addition of feather edged MDF boards to simulate raised panelling screwed onto the original. Dado: dado rail appears to be original. Skirting: plain board not moulded. Doors: original two panel doors to landing and closet survive in-situ. Windows: the linings to the window are modern, the sash boxes are set towards the exterior wall face which suggests that they are original. Fireplace: diagonal stack survives with panelling, C19 cast iron grate, simple timber Grecian cyma architrave around opening. Floor: original wide floorboards.
- 6.3.3 The second floor closet Ceiling: new plaster ceiling. Cornice: original, partly newly replaced on west wall, follows plan of original diagonal stack. Panelling: original plain panelling, newly replaced in area of original diagonal stack. Dado: mostly modern and newly replaced with a plain unmoulded batten, profile could be original. Skirting: mostly newly replaced, original possibly survives in south-west corner. Doors: original plain two panel door to back room. Windows: new sash box, window in north wall infilled with brick and cupboard with glazed doors, although the doors have thick glazing bars and the cornice, which appears to be original breaks forward above the cupboard. Fireplace: removed, floorboards and panelling suggest that this has occurred recently. Floor: mostly original wide floorboards but newly replaced in the area of the removed fireplace.
- 6.3.4 The second floor landing Ceiling: new plaster. Cornice: original moulded timber, stripped. Panelling: rising flight, plain panelling, descending flight original raised and fielded ovolo-moulded panelling with ramped handrail. Dado: original moulded rail, ramped. Skirting: plain unmoulded board. Doors: original cyma moulded architraves, original two panel doors survive in-situ. Window: window on half landing converted to door to rear addition, new panelling above. Staircase: original candy-stick balusters two per tread, handrail and turned newels. Closed string construction upwards, open tread with carved tread ends downwards. Floor: original wide floorboards.

6.4 The first floor

6.4.1 The first floor front room Ceiling: new plasterboard. Cornice: plain board, modern replacement of original timber box cornice. Panelling: original raised and fielded ovolo-moulded panelling survives except on the fireplace wall, which has been replaced with modern plain board. The plain panelling in the recesses either side of the chimney breast is the original, plain because it formed the lining of cupboards. The panel wall between the front and back rooms is missing. A new wall is in construction. The original wall was probably removed in the 1930s and

- replaced with a double door to the back room. *Dado:* ovolo moulded board, modern, not new *Skirting:* bead moulded board. *Doors:* six panel door matches panelling. *Windows:* modern steel frames. The rebuilding of the facade wall removed the shutters. *Fireplace:* reeded timber surround with paterae, c 1810. *Floor:* boards a mixture of old and modern.
- 6.4.2 The first floor back room Ceiling: new plasterboard ceiling Cornice: original timber box cornice survives except for east wall. Panelling: raised and fielded ovolo moulded panelling survives except for east wall. A new wall is in construction. Dado: ovolo moulded, modern not new. Skirting: original bead moulded board. Doors: original six panel door to landing in-situ matches panelling in room. Windows: shutters probably remain in-situ. Fireplace: reeded timber surround with paterae, same as that in the front room, c 1810. Floor: mixture of old and new.
- 6.4.3 The first floor closet Ceiling: new plaster ceiling. Cornice: original timber box cornice follows plan of the original diagonal corner stack. Panelling: raised and fielded ovolo moulded panelling, mostly intact. Diagonal corner stack removed and walls lined out with new medium density fibreboard panelling. Dado: original moulded dado survives in part. Skirting: Doors: The door has raised and fielded and ovolo moulded in two panels to match the wall panelling. It is hung on 'H' hinges which are probably original. Modern glazing has replaced the upper panel. Windows: the west window box seat and linings appear original although the shutters have been removed. The sash box is new. The window in the north wall has been infilled and shelving and a cupboard below the dado were probably installed in the later C19. Fireplace: original diagonal stack removed probably in the 1920s. Floor: wide floorboards, probably original.
- 6.4.4 The first floor landing Ceiling: original raised and fielded ovolo moulded panelled soffits to staircase. Cornice: original timber box cornice. Panelling: raised and fielded ovolo moulded panelling. Dado: original moulded dado, ramped. Skirting: original bead moulded. Doors: six panel raised and fielded ovolo moulded to match panelling. Windows: original window on half landing between ground and first floor altered to become a door to a modern addition. Presumably at the same time, the panelling to the side was altered for the insertion of the replacement window. Staircase: candy-stick balusters two per tread, newel posts carved as Corinthian columns, open tread construction with carved tread ends. Floor: original floorboards.

6.5 The ground floor

6.5.1 The ground floor front room Ceiling: new plasterboard. Cornice: original timber box cornice. Panelling: original raised and fielded ovolo moulded throughout, newly stripped and primed. There has been some alteration around the door to the hall and for the insertion of double doors to the back room. These alterations probably date from the later C19 or possibly 1930s. Dado: moulded

- dado survives in places. Skirting: original bead moulded board. Doors: original six panel door to hall matches wall panelling, doors to back room match original panelling but are probably C19 Windows: modern steel frame, no shutters, lined with plain board and no box seats. Fireplace: 1930s mahogany surround with pulvinated frieze and glazed ceramic tiles. Floor: probably original floorboards.
- 6.5.2 The ground floor back room Ceiling: new plasterboard. Cornice: original timber box cornice. Panelling: original raised and fielded ovolo moulded panelling survives throughout, except where double doors have been inserted into the wall with front room. Dado: original moulded dado mostly still in-situ Skirting: bead moulded board Doors: Windows: the shutters have been removed and the linings replaced with modern board, the south reveal is now splayed. A structural timber has been inserted into the shutter box void on the north side. Fireplace: reeded timber fire surround with paterae, same type as those on the first floor, c 1810, cast iron grate probably contemporary with the surround. Floor: mixture of old and new boards.
- 6.5.3 The ground floor closet Ceiling: new plasterboard. Cornice: original timber box cornice, altered following the removal of the diagonal corner stack. Panelling: original raised and fielded ovolo moulded panelling, altered in area of stack. The panelling in this area appears to be original but rehung. It was possibly taken from the east wall of the back room when the double doors were inserted. Dado: modern ovolo moulded rail passes over joint between original and rehung panelling. Skirting: bead moulded board. Doors: two panel raised and fielded to match the wall panelling. Window: the window in the west wall was converted to a door. Fireplace: removed with stack probably in the 1930s. Floor: modern floorboards.
- original timber box cornice. Panelling: raised and fielded ovolo moulded panelling with Corinthian pilasters supporting panelled segmental arch, and segmental arched recess in flank wall, all newly stripped and primed. Dado: moulded dado survives. Skirting: bead moulded board. Doors: original six panel flush back front door with 'HL' hinges, probably cut down from original eight panels (see exterior description above). Original raised and fielded ovolo moulded two panel door to rear addition with glazing inserted in place of upper panel. The presence of this door in this location suggests that there was a ground floor closet. Windows: fanlight c 1810 (see exterior description above). Staircase: open tread with carved tread ends, candy-stick balusters two per tread with moulded handrail, curtail termination supported by a carved Corinthian newel, soffit panelling intact. Floor: original wide floorboards.

6.6 The basement

6.6.1 The basement floor front room Ceiling: new plaster board. Wall surfaces: new plaster, original probably plaster. Skirting: new pine board. Doors: original door

- to area with original door handle and latch, later glazed panel inserted in top. Windows: modern steel frame windows, all linings removed. Fireplace: removed, C19 or C20, brick hearth only. Floor: new concrete.
- 6.6.2 The basement floor back room Ceiling: new plaster board. Wall surfaces: new plaster throughout, original probably plaster. Skirting: new pine board. Doors: none in-situ. Fireplace: Victorian cast iron fire surround. Floor: new concrete.
- 6.6.3 The basement floor closet Ceiling: new plaster board. Wall surfaces: new plaster throughout, original probably plaster. Skirting: new pine board. Doors: none in-situ. Window: the sash frame is original, solid construction, pegged at the corners, with a stay for the upper sash, the whole set flush with wall face. Fireplace: diagonal stack removed. Floor: new concrete.
- 6.6.4 The basement floor stairwell Ceiling: new plaster board Wall surfaces: new plaster throughout. Skirting: new pine board. Doors: none in-situ. Staircase: closed string construction with thick turned balusters, moulded handrail and turned newel. Floor: new concrete.
- 6.6.5 The cellars under the pavement Two elliptical tunnel vaults, the southern vault has been lined out with a new hard cement render, the northern vault, brick possibly retains its original vertical board door.
- **6.6.6** The cellars off the back yard Two elliptical tunnel vaults, both lined out with new hard cement render.

7 A room by room description of No 39 Great James Street

7.1 The exterior

7.1.1 The facade The four storey with basement facade is original. The segmental arched windows have red brick dressings. The ground and first floor windows are the same heights and proportioned as double squares. The sash frames are set nearly flush with face of the brickwork. A reeded moulding with paterae has been added as a fascia to the sash boxes. This feature has been applied to most of the houses in the street and probably dates from c 1810. The paterae applied to some of the other houses incorporate sunk discs, others are left plain.

The original doorcase has been replaced, probably in the first half of the C19 with a simple timber surround with simple cyma reversa mouldings and small box cornice. The eight panel door probably dates from the insertion of the metal fanlight c 1810.

- 7.1.2 The rear facade The upper three stories of the closet wing have been rebuilt in yellow stock brick. The lower two stories are probably original but have been covered in render. The windows in the closet wing are set flush with the wall face.
- 7.1.3 The roof The original valley roof construction which survives on other houses in the street, has been replaced by a modern bitumenized flat roof which probably dates from the 1960s. Since the 1946 photograph (Figure 1) was taken, the front stack has been reduced to two flues. In the same brick and therefore apparently at the same time, the rear stack was capped off. The closet stack does not survive above roof level. The alterations to the stacks probably date from the 1960s.

7.2 The third floor

Third floor front room Ceiling: plasterboard ceiling probably from the 1960s. 7.2.1 Cornice: removed (see panelling notes). Panelling: the room has been stripped of its original plain panelling and the walls refinished in plaster. The panelling was probably identical to that in No 38, with plain boards for cornice and skirting and no separate dado rail. The existing plaster appears to date from the 1960s when the shelves and cupboards were installed either side of the chimney breast. The wall between the front and back rooms has been removed. Given the continuity of the modern floorboards, the strengthening of the floor and the insertion of a large steel girder in the roof, the missing wall was probably rebuilt in the 1960s. Dado: none in-situ (see panelling notes). Skirting: modern, 1960s. Doors: none in-situ, but probably 1960s. Windows: probably Victorian sash boxes, all linings removed and replaced in 1960s plaster. Fireplace: small modern opening in 1960s plaster, no surround in-situ. Floor: modern floorboards on deep firrings. The floor frame appears to be original but it has sagged in the middle. This has been stabilised by steel rods tied to the steel roof beam. The central floor beam joint has been

- strengthened by the addition of large steel straps, screwed in place with square headed screws.
- 7.2.2 The third floor back room There are new repairs to the brickwork of the west wall. Ceiling: plasterboard ceiling probably from the 1960s. Cornice: removed (see panelling notes). Panelling: like the front room, this room has been stripped of its original plain panelling. Dado: none in-situ (see panelling notes). Skirting: 1960s, see panelling notes. Doors: none in-situ. Windows: modern sashes with horns and no glazing bars. Fireplace: the diagonal corner stack has been removed, the rectangular chimney breast is plastered, probably in the 1960s. Floor: modern floorboards, as in the front room, the floor has been levelled with firrings.
- 7.2.3 The third floor closet Ceiling: new plasterboard. Cornice: see panelling notes. Panelling: like the front and back rooms, this has been stripped of its original panelling, the present plaster probably dates from the 1960s. Dado: none in-situ (see panelling notes). Skirting: modern (see panelling notes). Doors: none in-situ. Windows: modern sash window. Fireplace: the diagonal corner stack has been removed. Floor: the floor of the closet is level with the level of the firred floor of the back room. This indicates that the closet wing was rebuilt when the third floor was repaired, probably in the 1960s.
- 7.2.4 The third floor landing Ceiling: 1960s plasterboard. Cornice: no cornice (see panelling notes). Panelling: plain dado panelling survives beside the rising stair. Around the half landing the dado panelling is taller which suggest alteration. The walls above the dado are plastered and appear plastered in the photograph of 3/4/96 by Alan Baxter Assocs. The walls were probably originally panelled throughout their full height but altered in the 1960s. Dado: no dado rail, only a modern capping to the dado panelling. Skirting: none in-situ, original probably plain board. Doors: none in-situ Windows: modern sashes with horns and no glazing bars. Staircase: 1960s staircase to flat roof, original closed string stairs with turned balusters down to half landing. Floor: 1960s floorboards, but half landing has original wide boards.

7.3 The second floor

7.3.1 The second floor front room Ceiling: modern plasterboard. Cornice: original timber box cornice in-situ except on west wall. Original stop returns around the heads of the windows. Panelling: original plain panelling survives on all walls and includes cupboards either side of the chimney breast. The framing of the door from the front to the back room matches the others and therefore appears to be original, although the door itself is not in-situ. All panelling newly stripped and primed. This wall was photographed by Alan Baxter Assocs. on 3/4/96. Dado: original moulded dado comprising a bead and an applied torus survives on all walls except west. Skirting: original plain board survives in places. Doors: original plain two panel doors to landing and cupboards. Windows: sashes have horns and no glazing bars, the shutter boxes survive but the shutters are not in-

- situ, the outer two windows retain their original box seats, the central box seat has been recently removed. *Fireplace:* original cream coloured stone surround with Victorian cast iron grate. *Floor:* mixture of old and new floorboards.
- 7.3.2 The second floor back room A substantial timber post has been inserted between the floor and third floor frame next to the door to the front room. Ceiling: modern plaster board. Cornice: original timber box cornice survives in-situ. Panelling: original plain panelling, stripped and primed, altered around the chimney breast, following the removal of the diagonal chimney stack. Dado: simple moulded rail as in the front room. Skirting: plain board. Doors: plain two panel doors to landing, front room and closet. Windows: modern sashes with horns and no glazing bars. Fireplace: Victorian cast iron grate. Floor: mixture of old and modern boards.
- 7.3.3 The second floor closet Ceiling: new plaster board. Cornice: none in-situ (see panelling notes). Panelling: the room has been stripped of panelling, the walls are now finished in plaster, which probably from the 1960s. Dado: see panelling notes. Skirting: modern plain board, see notes on panelling. Doors: plain two panel door, C18 but not in its original location. The door is smaller than the opening and has been widened and its lack of height has been compensated by the insertion of a board in the upper part of the doorway. Windows: modern sashes with horns and no glazing bars. Fireplace: the diagonal stack has been removed, probably in the 1960s. Floor: a mixture of old and modern floorboards.
- 7.3.4 The second floor landing Ceiling: original plaster on lath. Cornice: original timber box cornice survives, stripped. Panelling: original plain panelling. Dado: simple dado rail for descending flight of stairs as in second floor rooms. Skirting: torus moulded board, probably modern. Doors: a door has been installed across the landing, probably in the 1960s. The door itself is not in-situ. The original doors to the front and back rooms are plain two panel doors with a simple cyma reversa architrave. Windows: linings, possibly shutters, and box seat survive intact. Sashes have horns and no glazing bars, probably modern. Staircase: closed string construction for the rising flight but the hand rail and balusters were removed probably when a partition wall was installed in the 1960s (see photograph by Alan Baxter Assocs. dated 3/4/96). The descending flight is of open tread construction with candy-stick balusters alternating one and two per tread, carved tread ends, moulded handrail and turned newels. Floor: modern but original wide boards on half landing.

7.4 The first floor

7.4.1 The first floor front room Ceiling: original plaster containing animal hair, on lath. Cornice: original timber box cornice continued across window heads. Removed from west wall and stored in closet. Panelling: original raised and fielded ovolo moulded panelling. The straight cornice and plain panelling at the back of the recess west of the chimney breast indicates a cupboard in the original

design. The west wall has two doors which open into the back room. The doors, photographed in-situ by Alan Baxter Assocs. on 3/4/96, were cyma moulded plain three panel doors with the panels picked out with a small half round applied moulding. The surrounding architrave is a simple cyma reversa. The double doors were probably inserted in the 1920s. The sagging lintel, shown in the Alan Baxter photograph, disguised by the refixed architrave, suggests that they pre-date the installation, probably in the 1960s, of the substantial timber post in the middle of the double door. The sagging of the floor-frame above, may have been due, at least in part, to the insertion of the double door. Dado: original moulded dado survives in-situ. Skirting: bead moulded skirting survives in places. Doors: none in-situ (see panelling notes). Windows: linings, ovolo, raised and fielded shutters and box seats still intact. Fireplace: elaborate Edwardian lugged timber surround with overmantel mirror with dentil cornice above. Small cast iron grate, c 1810. Floor: floor-frame original, floorboards mostly original.

- 7.4.2 The first floor back room Ceiling: new plasterboard not yet skimmed. Cornice: original timber box cornice still intact. Panelling: ovolo moulded plain panelling, newly stripped of paint. Altered where diagonal chimney stack has been removed, alteration consists of raised and fielded panelling whereas rest of room is plain ovolo moulded. The west wall has been altered by the insertion of the double doors (see notes on the front room). Dado: original moulded cornice survives on the east and south walls. Skirting: bead moulded board on the south and east walls. Doors: doors to landing and closet not in-situ. Doors to front room, see notes on front room panelling. Window: the window was altered to full length six over nine sashes with narrow ovolo moulded glazing bars probably in the early C19. Retains original shutters but box seat removed. Fireplace: no fireplace opening, corner stack removed and panelled over. Floor: floor-frame and floor boards original.
- 7.4.3 The first floor closet Ceiling: modern plaster. Cornice: no cornice in-situ.

 Panelling: original panelling removed, whole room probably rebuilt c 1960?.

 Dado: no dado, removed with panelling. Skirting: plain board, modern. Doors: none in-situ. Windows: modern sash. Fireplace: no sign of original diagonal corner stack. Floor: mixture of old and modern floorboards.
- 7.4.4 The first floor landing Ceiling: original plaster containing animal hair on lath, ovolo moulded plain panel soffits to staircase. Cornice: original timber box cornice. Panelling: ovolo moulded plain panelling, partly stripped of paint. Dado: original moulded rail. Skirting: bead moulded board. Doors: none in-situ, architraves cyma reversa. Windows: on half landing to ground floor has been converted to a door to the rear addition. Staircase: open tread construction with candy-stick balusters alternating one and two per tread, carved tread ends, moulded handrail and turned newel. Floor: mixture of old and modern boards.

7.5 The ground floor

- The ground floor front room A large square section post with chamfered 7.5.1 corners has been inserted between the main ground and first floor beams. This is probably contemporary with the insertion of the post in the middle of the double door on the first floor in the 1960s. Ceiling: original plaster on lath. Cornice: original timber box cornice replaced by Adamesque frieze consisting of composition on timber. Panelling: original ovolo moulded raised and fielded panelling, stripped of paint on the east and north walls, only partly stripped in the south wall. The west wall has been altered by the insertion of an elliptical arched recess with a door to the back room. The composition decoration applied to the pilasters either side of the recess suggest that this alteration is contemporary with the addition of the frieze, probably in the 1920s. A cupboard with glazed doors was installed in the recess west of the chimney breast probably in the 1920s. Dado: large moulded dado survives on south side of room only. Skirting: original bead moulded board survives on south side of room only. Doors: to hall, not insitu but ovolo moulded raised and fielded six panel doors, stripped of paint are stored in the room. Door to back room ovolo moulded raised and fielded four panel probably dates from 1920s. Windows: original shutters survive, apparently original linings do not have box seats. Fireplace: timber reeded surround with paterae, c 1810. Floor: original floor frame and floorboards under cork floor tiles.
- 7.5.2 The ground floor back room Ceiling: modern plaster board. Cornice: original timber box cornice survives but altered around projection in east wall and where the original diagonal corner stack has been removed. Panelling: original ovolo moulded plain panelling has been altered where the original diagonal corner stack has been removed. East wall has been altered by the insertion of the arched recess in the front room. Dado: original moulded dado survives except on north wall. Skirting: modern plain board which respects the alteration the east wall. Doors: to hall not in-situ. To front room four panel, in this room, ovolo moulded and plain to match the wall panelling, probably 1920s. To closet, original covered in modern board. Window: sashes with horns and no glazing bars, shutters missing. Fireplace: timber surround with dentil cornice, Victorian cast iron grate. Floor: original floor-frame with trimmer for diagonal corner stack. Floorboards mostly modern.
- 7.5.3 The ground floor closet Ceiling: modern plaster board. Cornice: original timber box cornice altered following the removal of diagonal stack. Panelling: original plain panelling, altered following the removal of the diagonal corner stack. Dado: plain board on south and east walls, torus and bead on north and west, probably not original. Skirting: plain board. Doors: door covered in hardboard, possibly original. Windows: window in west wall converted to a door to back addition, currently in process of reverting to window. Window in north wall, retains original box seat but sash has been extended downwards Fireplace: diagonal

corner stack converted to flat fronted chimney breast, Victorian cast iron grate. *Floor:* mixture of original wide and modern floorboards.

7.5.4 The ground floor hall and landing Ceiling: modern plaster ceiling. Cornice: original timber box cornice. Panelling: ovolo moulded raised and fielded panelling with Doric fluted pilasters supporting a flat arch with a panelled soffit, and a segmental arched recess in the flank wall. Dado: original large moulded dado rail. In the rear part of the hall the moulding is new and very crude. Skirting: original torus moulded board. Doors: the eight panel front door is flush backed and appears to be hung on its original hinges. It may date from the insertion of the fanlight c 1810 or from the 1720s, cut down and possibly inverted when the fanlight was installed. The doors to the front and back rooms are not insitu but were probably six panel raised and fielded ovolo moulded (see doors stored in front room). Door to rear addition not in-situ. Windows: fanlight above front door of c 1810. Staircase: open tread construction with candy-stick balusters alternating one and two per tread, moulded handrail and turned newels Floor: mixture of old wide boards and modern.

7.6 The basement

- 7.6.1 The basement floor front room Ceiling: modern plaster board. Wall surfaces: new plaster throughout. Doors: modern door to area. Windows: sashes with horns and no glazing bars. Fireplace: blocked. Floor: new concrete.
- 7.6.2 The basement floor back room Ceiling: modern paster board. Wall surfaces: new plaster throughout. Doors: none in-situ. Windows: none. Fireplace: diagonal stack removed completely. Floor: new concrete.
- 7.6.3 The basement floor closet Ceiling: modern plaster board. Wall surfaces: new plaster throughout. Doors: none in-situ. Windows: sashes with horns, no glazing bars. Fireplace: removed completely. Floor: new concrete.
- **7.6.4** The basement floor stairwell Ceiling: modern plaster board. Wall surfaces: new plaster throughout. Staircase: closed string construction, balusters and handrail removed. Floor: new concrete.



Figure 1 Nos 38 and 39 looking north-west, photographed in 1946, English Heritage, London and South-east Photographic Collection



Figure 2 Nos 38 and 39 looking north-west, photographed in 1960, English Heritage, London and South-east Photographic Collection



Figure 3



Figure 4 No 38, front door



Figure 5 No 38, rear facade upper floors

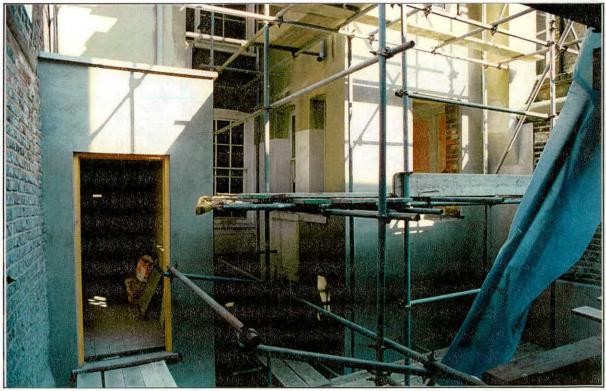


Figure 6 No 38, rear facade ground floor



Figure 7 No 38, roof looking south-east

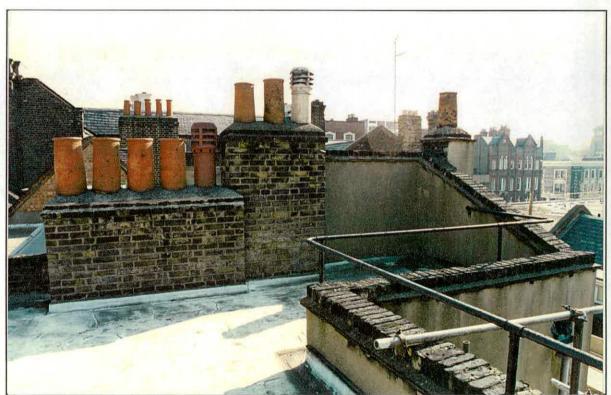


Figure 8 No 38, roof looking south-west



Figure 9 No 38, third floor front room looking south-east



Figure 10 No 38, third floor front room looking north-west



Figure 11 No 38, third floor back room looking south-west



Figure 12 No 38, third floor back room looking east

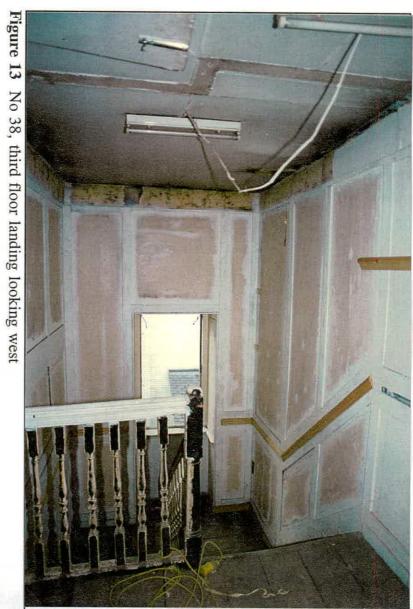




Figure 14 No 38, third floor window on half landing looking north-west



Figure 15 No 38, second floor front room looking south-east



Figure 16 No 38, second floor front room looking west



Figure 17 No 38, second floor front room looking north-west



Figure 18 No 38, second floor closet looking west





Figure 20 No 38, second floor landing looking west



Figure 21 No 38, second floor landing window looking north-west



Figure 22 No 38, first floor front room looking south-east



Figure 23 No 38, first floor front room looking west



Figure 24 No 38, first floor front room looking north-west



Figure 25 No 38, first floor back room looking south-west



Figure 26 No 38, first floor back room looking north-west



No 38, first floor closet looking east



Figure 28 No 38, first floor closet looking north-east



Figure 29 No 38, first floor closet looking west

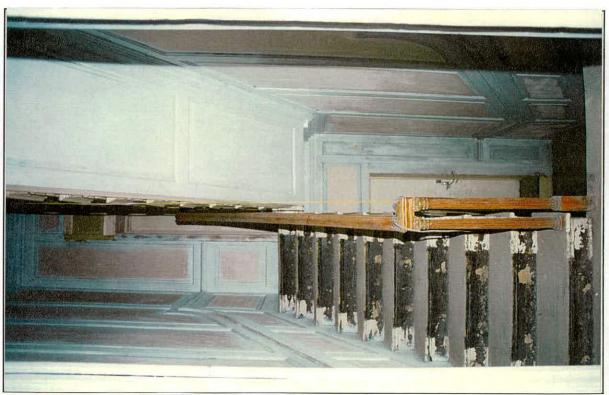
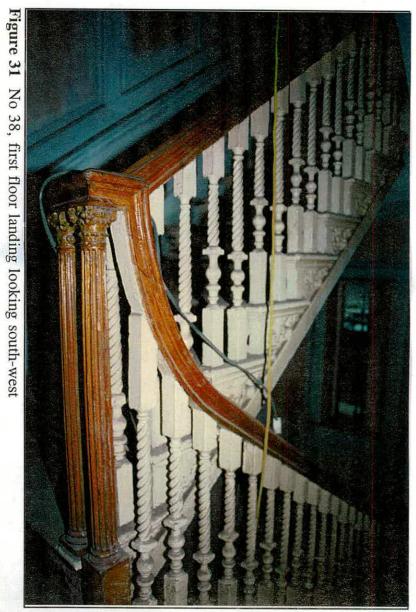


Figure 30 No 38, first floor landing looking west



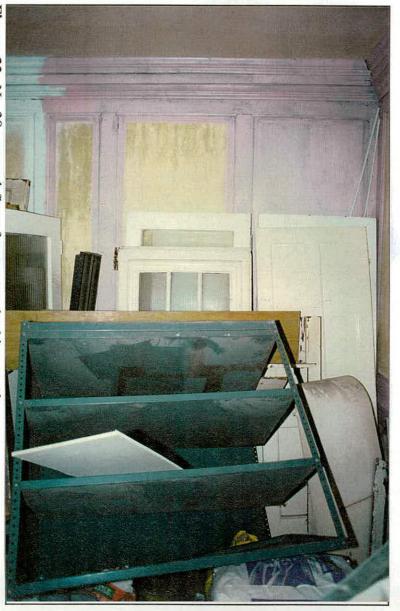


Figure 32 No 38, ground floor front room looking north

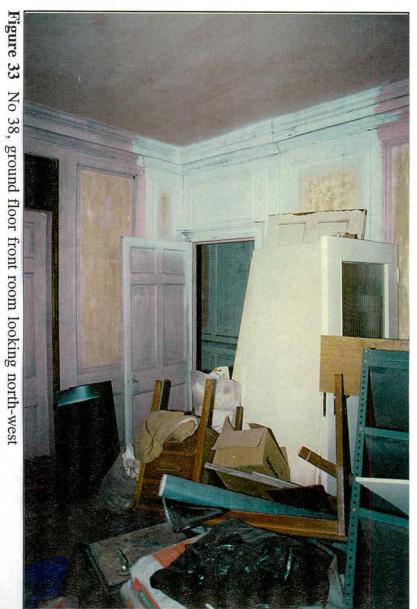




Figure 34 No 38, ground floor front room looking west



Figure 35 No 38, ground floor front room looking south-east



Figure 36 No 38, ground floor back room looking south-west



Figure 37 No 38, ground floor back room looking east



Figure 38 No 38, ground floor back room looking north-west



Figure 39 No 38, fireplace in ground floor back room



Figure 40 No 38, ground floor closet looking east



Figure 41 No 38, ground floor closet looking west

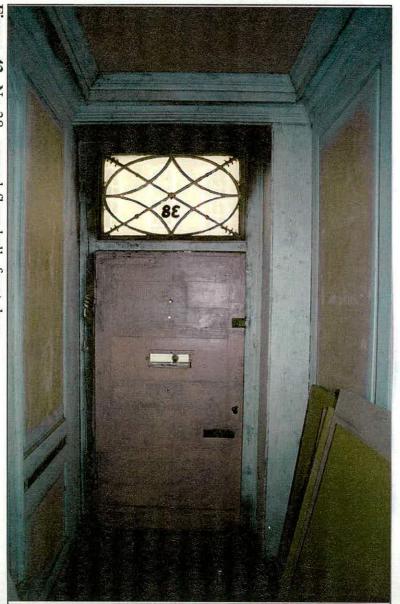


Figure 42 No 38, ground floor hall, front door



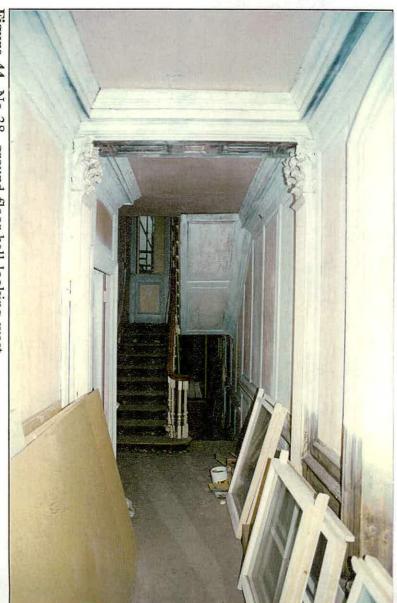


Figure 44 No 38, ground floor hall looking west



Figure 45 No 38, ground floor rear hall looking west

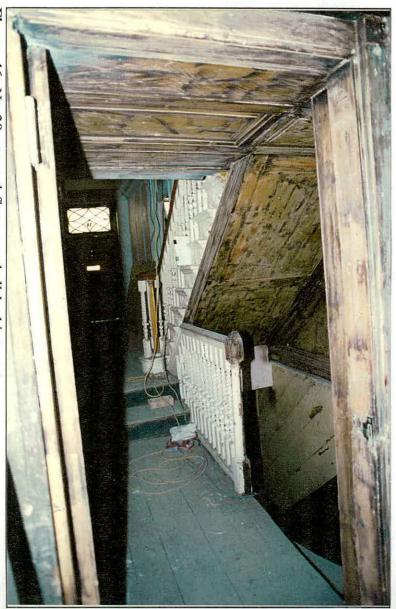
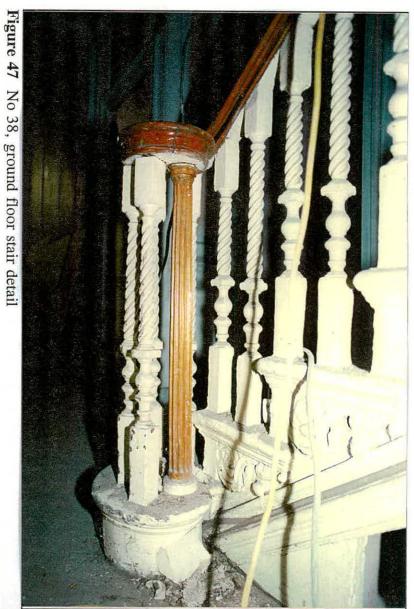


Figure 46 No 38, ground floor rear hall looking east



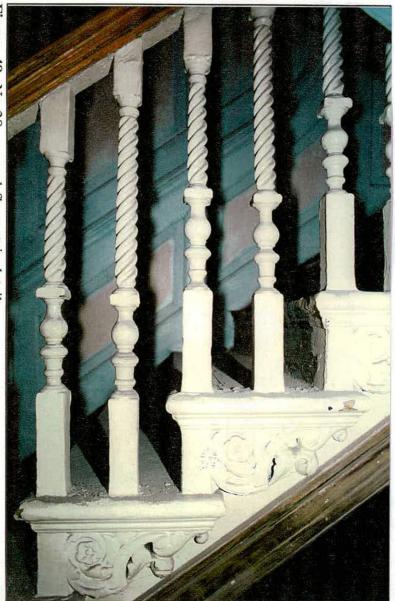


Figure 48 No 38, ground floor stair detail

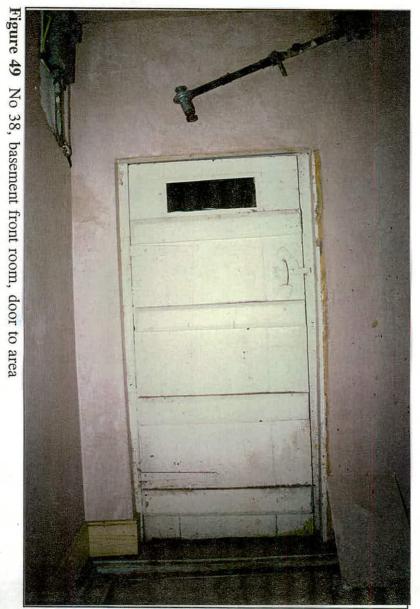




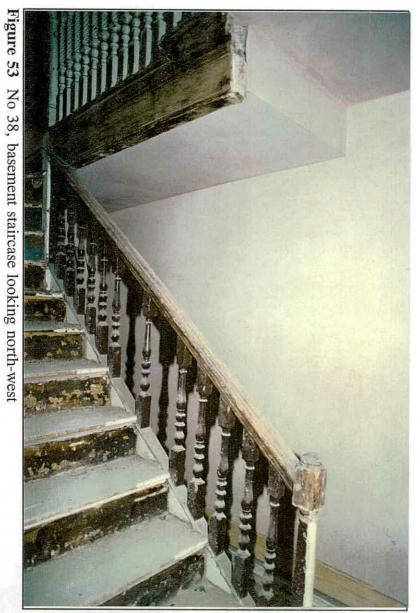
Figure 50 No 38, basement front room looking south-east



Figure 51 No 38, basement back room looking south-west



Figure 52 No 38, basement stairwell looking west



No 38, basement staircase looking north-west

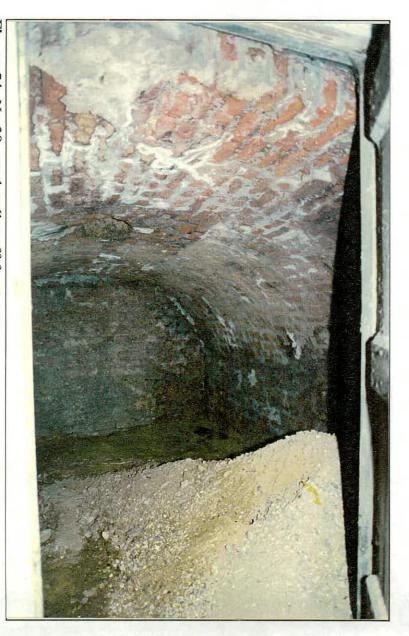
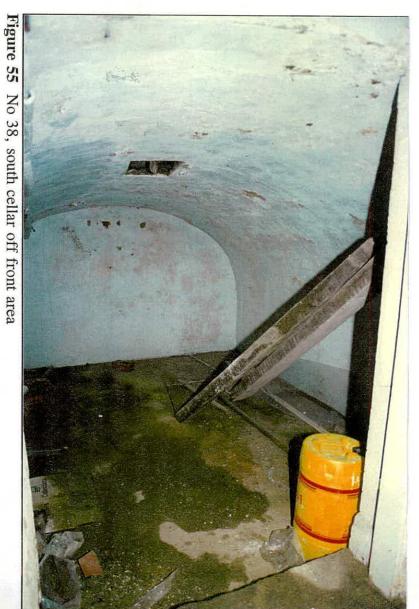


Figure 54 No 38, north cellar off front area



No 38, south cellar off front area



Figure 56 No 38, north cellar off back area



Figure 57 No 39, facade



Figure 58 No 39, facade ground floor window



Figure 59 No 39, front door



Figure 60 No 39, roof looking north



Figure 61 No 39, roof looking north-west



Figure 62 No 39, roof looking south

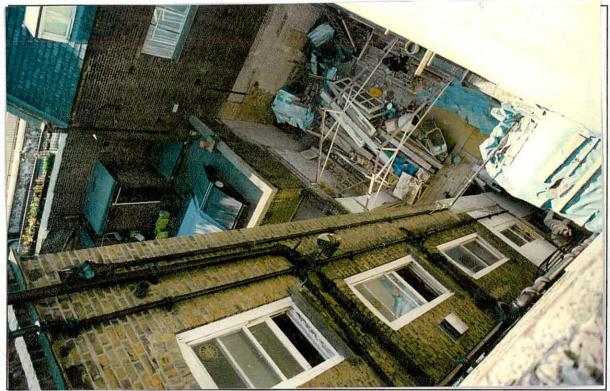


Figure 63 No 39, rear facade closet wing looking south-west

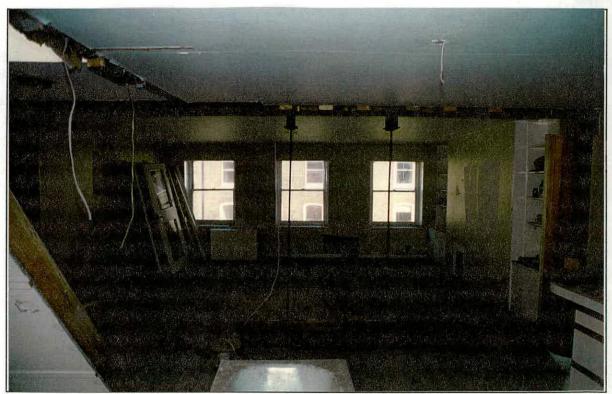


Figure 64 No 39, third floor front and back rooms looking east



Figure 65 No 39, third floor front and back rooms looking west



Figure 66 No 39, third floor, floor-frame looking south



Figure 67 No 39, third floor stairwell looking north-east

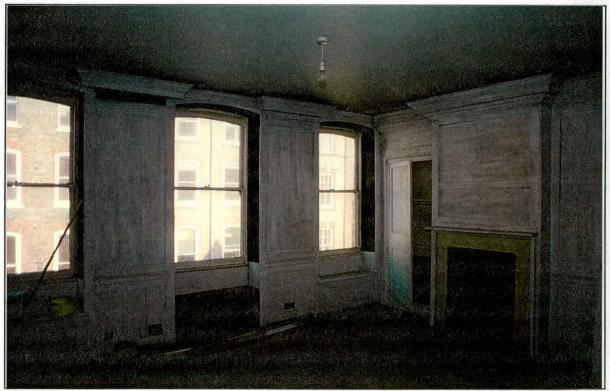


Figure 68 No 39, second floor front room looking south-east



Figure 69 No 39, second floor front room looking south

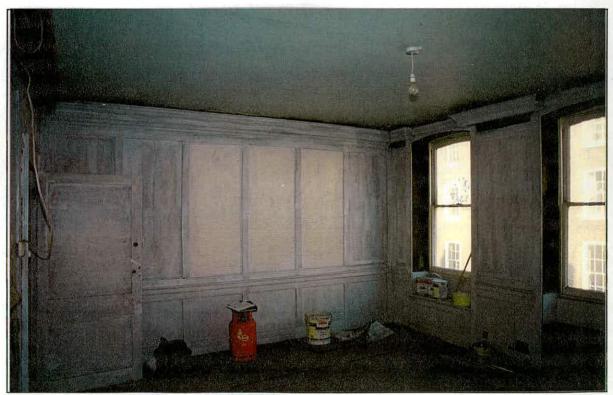


Figure 70 No 39, second floor looking north



Figure 71 No 39, second floor front room looking west



Figure 72 No 39, second floor front room looking south-west, photo Alan Baxter Assocs. 3/4/96



Figure 73 No 39, second floor back room looking west



Figure 74 No 39, second floor back room looking east



Figure 75 No 39, second floor back room looking north-east



Figure 76 No 39, second floor closet looking east



Figure 77 No 39, second floor landing looking west



Figure 78 No 39, second floor landing looking west, phot Alan Baxter Assocs. 3/4/96



Figure 79 No 39, second floor landing looking west



Figure 80 No 39, first floor front room looking east



Figure 81 No 39, first floor front room looking south-east



Figure 82 No 39, first floor front room looking south





Figure 84 No 39, first floor front room looking south-west, photo Alan Baxter Assocs. 3/4/96



Figure 85 No 39, first floor back room looking east



Figure 86 No 39, first floor back room looking south-east



Figure 87 No 39, first floor back room looking west



Figure 88 No 39, first floor back room looking north



Figure 89 No 39, first floor landing looking west



Figure 90 No 39, first floor landing looking south-west



Figure 91 No 39, ground floor front room looking north



Figure 92 No 39, ground floor front room looking east



Figure 93 No 39, ground floor front room looking south-east



Figure 94 No 39, ground floor front room looking south



Figure 95 No 39, ground floor front room looking west



Figure 96 No 39, ground floor front room looking west, photo Alan Baxter Assocs. 3/4/96



Figure 97 No 39, ground floor back room looking south-east



Figure 98 No 39, ground floor back room looking south-west



Figure 99 No 39, ground floor back room looking north-west



Figure 100 No 39, ground floor back room looking north-east

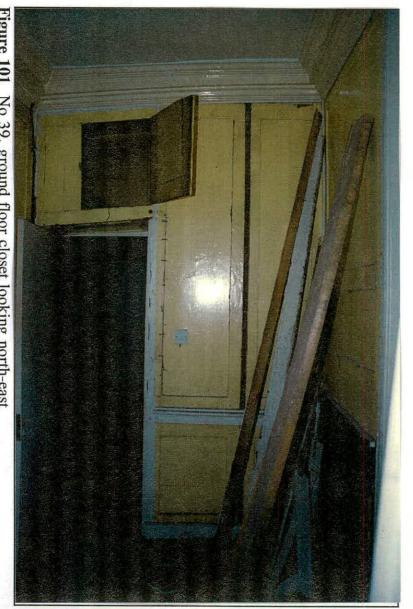


Figure 101 No 39, ground floor closet looking north-east



Figure 102 No 39, ground floor closet looking east

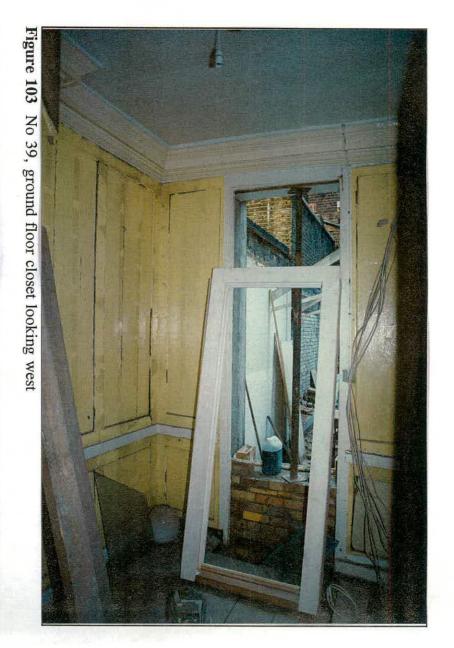




Figure 104 No 39, ground floor hall looking north-east

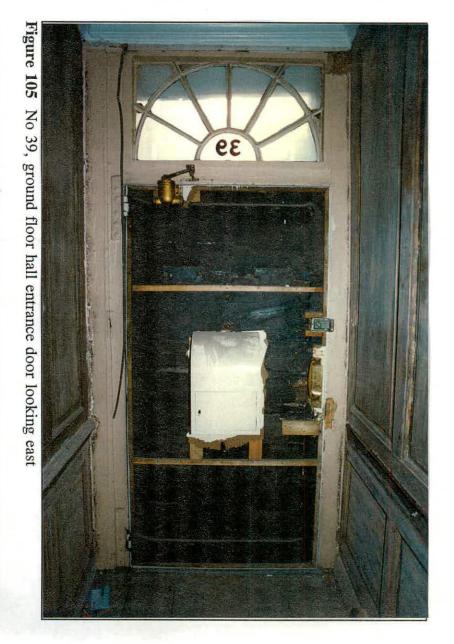




Figure 106 No 39, ground floor hall looking west



Figure 107 No 39, ground floor hall rear hall looking west



Figure 108 No 39, ground floor hall looking north-west



Figure 109 No 39, basement front room, looking south-east



Figure 110 No 39, basement back room looking south-west



Figure 111 No 39, basement stairwell looking west