



UNIVERSITY OF  
**LEICESTER**

Archaeological Services

**An Historic England Level 2 Historic  
Building Recording at 54 to 58 London  
Road, Leicester**

**NGR: SK 59387 03978**

Andrew Hyam



ULAS Report No. 2016-083  
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**An Historic England Level 2 Historic Building Survey at  
Numbers 54 to 58 London Road,  
Leicester**

**NGR: SK 59387 03978**

**A R Hyam**

**Planning Application PA 20150338**

**For: Abode London Road Ltd**

<b>Filename/Version</b>	<b>Checked by</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>V.1</b>	<b>Patrick Clay</b>	<b>10.05.2016</b>

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**ULAS Report Number 2016-083**  
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## CONTENTS

Summary .....	1
Introduction .....	1
Background .....	3
Objectives .....	6
Methodology .....	6
Results .....	7
The south-west facing elevation .....	10
The north-east facing elevation .....	14
Inside the buildings .....	17
The Cellar .....	19
The Ground Floor .....	23
First Floor .....	34
Discussion .....	56
Publication .....	57
Acknowledgements .....	57
Bibliography .....	57

## FIGURES

Figure 1 Site location .....	2
Figure 2 Building location .....	2
Figure 3 Site shown on Fowler's map of 1828 .....	4
Figure 4 First Edition Ordnance Survey 1885 .....	4
Figure 5 1904 Ordnance Survey .....	5
Figure 6 1930 Ordnance Survey .....	5
Figure 7 1938 Ordnance Survey .....	6
Figure 8 54 to 58 London Road .....	7
Figure 9 54 to 58 London Road .....	8
Figure 10 Rear of 54 to 58 .....	8
Figure 11 South-west facing elevation onto London Road .....	9
Figure 12 North-east facing elevation .....	9
Figure 13 Rear range extension elevations .....	10
Figure 14 South-west facing elevation .....	11
Figure 15 Doorway between 54 and 58 .....	12
Figure 16 Door handles on main doorway, south-west facing elevation .....	12
Figure 17 Number 58 south-west facing .....	13
Figure 18 Number 58 south-west facing first floor window detail .....	13
Figure 19 North-east facing elevation and extensions .....	15
Figure 20 Rear extension of Number 58 .....	15
Figure 21 South-east facing elevation of extension to rear of Number 56 .....	16
Figure 22 North-west facing elevation of second phase extension to rear of No 56 .....	16
Figure 23 North-west facing elevation of first phase extension to rear of No 56 .....	17
Figure 24 Overall plan of buildings .....	18
Figure 25 Cellar plan .....	18
Figure 26 Cellar C1 .....	20
Figure 27 Cellar C1. Boiler door at southern end of room .....	20
Figure 28 Door from C1 to C2 .....	21

Figure 29 Cellar C2.....	21
Figure 30 Cellar C3.....	22
Figure 31 Cellar C3 steps to London Road.....	22
Figure 32 Ground Floor plan .....	23
Figure 33 Ground floor G1 .....	26
Figure 34 Ground floor G2 .....	27
Figure 35 Ground floor G2 .....	27
Figure 36 Room G3 .....	28
Figure 37 G3 stair case leading up to first floor .....	28
Figure 38 G3 stairs and landing up to first and second floors .....	29
Figure 39 G6 former Greggs shop .....	29
Figure 40 G7 food preparation area .....	30
Figure 41 G8 and side rooms .....	30
Figure 42 G9 .....	31
Figure 43 G10 .....	31
Figure 44 G10 .....	32
Figure 45 G11 .....	32
Figure 46 G16 .....	33
Figure 47 G17 .....	33
Figure 48 G18 .....	34
Figure 49 First floor plan .....	35
Figure 50 F1 .....	38
Figure 51 F2.....	39
Figure 52 F2.....	40
Figure 53 F2 doorway.....	41
Figure 54 F3.....	42
Figure 55 F3 Fireplace.....	42
Figure 56 Stairs from G2 up to first floor .....	43
Figure 57 F4 landing and stairs.....	43
Figure 58 F7.....	44
Figure 59 F7.....	44
Figure 60 F9.....	45
Figure 61 F10.....	45
Figure 62 F11 .....	46
Figure 63 F12.....	46
Figure 64 F13.....	47
Figure 65 F14.....	47
Figure 66 F15.....	48
Figure 67 F15.....	48
Figure 68 Plan of second floor.....	49
Figure 69 Top of staircase to second floor.....	51
Figure 70 Second floor corridor.....	51
Figure 71 S1 .....	52
Figure 72 Roof space into Room S1 .....	52
Figure 73 S3 .....	53
Figure 74 View of roof from S5 .....	53
Figure 75 S7.....	54
Figure 76 S9.....	54
Figure 77 S10.....	55
Figure 78 S11.....	55



Figure 79 S12.....56

## **An Historic England Level 2 Historic Building Survey of 54 to 58 London Road, Leicester**

**NGR: SK 59387 03978**

**Andrew Hyam**

### **Summary**

*An Historic England Level 2 Historic Building Survey was undertaken by the University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) in March 2016 at Numbers 54 to 58 London Road, Leicester. The earliest component of the buildings is a late 18th or early 19th century two storey range set parallel to London Road. This has a number of 19th century extensions and additions attached to its northern side and early to mid-twentieth century additions on its London Road frontage. The other main component of the buildings is a two storey late Victorian house which at one time was owned by the local architect and politician Arthur Wakerley. This house has also been extensively modified and reordered. Both components have been used for commercial purposes for much of the 20th century. None of the buildings are listed but are within the South Highfields Conservation Area. It is intended that the buildings will be demolished and replaced by apartments and commercial premises.*

*The report and archive will be deposited under Accession Number A6.2016*

### **Introduction**

In accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 12 *Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment* this document forms the report for an historic building recording (at Historic England Level 2) on Numbers 54 to 58 London Road, Leicester. Level 2 historic building surveys are defined in the English Heritage (now Historic England) guidance document – *Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice* (2006). Under planning application number PA 20150338 permission has been approved for demolition of existing buildings at 54, 56 and 58 London Road, and the erection of a five to seven storey block with two retail units on the ground floor facing London Road and student flats behind and above. The application indicates that, on the London Road frontage, the building will rise to six storeys and seven on Glebe Street.

The site is located to the south-east of the city centre on the northern side of London Road and is approximately 50m to the south-east of Leicester Railway station (Fig. 1). The site presently consists of a two storey five-bay range of late 18th or early 19th century houses (54 and 56) with 20th century ground floor shop front extensions onto London Road. Attached to the south-eastern side of Number 56 is a mid-19th century red brick building (Number 58). All of the buildings have been extended back towards the north-east into a space which is presently used as a car park with access from Glebe Street. The buildings are within the South Highfields Conservation Area.



Figure 1 Site location

Site highlighted by red circle

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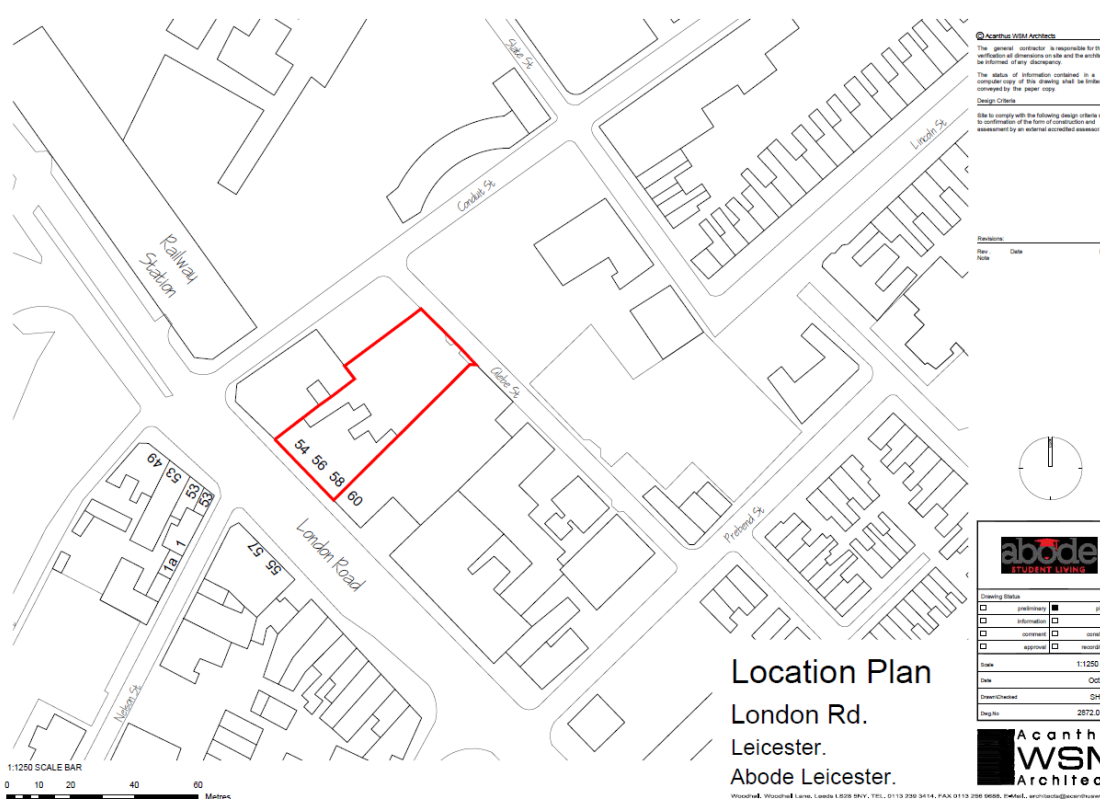


Figure 2 Building location

## Background

Records indicate that Arthur Wakerley purchased what was at the time known as Number 46 but which was later renumbered to 46A and finally to 58. Arthur Wakerley was a prominent local architect, developer and politician around the turn of the 19th and 20th century.

Historic map evidence shows the development of London Road and of Numbers 54 to 58. The first available map which show any significant detail is the map published by Fowler in 1828 (Fig. 3). This appears to show a building on the corner of Conduit Street and a longer rectangular building to the south-east. This building may be Numbers 54 and 56. To the rear of both buildings is a large ornamental garden extending to Glebe Street. Much of the surrounding area is still under cultivation. The next available map is the First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1885 which shows a significant change in the surrounding area following the construction of the Midland Railway in 1840 (Fig. 4). This map shows Number 54 and 56 with a large extension built onto the rear elevation and a number of terraced and semi-detached houses built in the former garden along Conduit and Glebe Street. The building has a small front garden at the front leading out onto London Road which had not yet been widened at this date. It also appears that Number 54 has a large bay window on the London Road side. Number 58 has also been built by this time and appears to be of a rectangular plan with a small front garden on London Road. There appears to be no division between the back yards or back gardens of 54, 56 or 58.

By the time of the next available Ordnance Survey map in 1904 Number 58 has been extended to the rear to virtually double its size (Fig. 5). A glazed structure, possibly a conservatory, has been removed from behind Number 54. A boundary dividing the back yard between 56 and 58 is shown. No major changes can be seen on the subsequent OS editions of 1912 and 1915 but by the time of the 1930 edition the back yards have been further subdivided (Fig. 6). This edition also shows that the houses to the north-west have been demolished and that a large building attached to the south-east side of Number 58 has been built. By 1938 a new building has been added to fill the corner of London Road and Conduit Street (Fig. 7). London Road has also been widened which has removed most of the former front gardens of 54 to 58. Possibly because of this loss and also to follow the building line created by the new building to the north-west, the frontage of Numbers 54 and 56 have been extended.

Between the 1938 Ordnance Survey map and the 1954 edition some of the outlines of the rear extensions to Number 54 appear to have been altered slightly and a gap between the new building on the corner of Conduit Street and Number 54 appears to have been filled in. The building to the south-east of 58 is now identified as a garage. To the rear of the buildings the land is still subdivided into small plots and the houses on Glebe Street remain. By 1964 the houses on Glebe Street have been removed, probably as part of the general slum clearance of this area. Apart from the final removal of two houses on the corner of Conduit Street and Glebe Street the plan of 54 to 58 and the surrounding locality appears to remain fairly constant until the present day.



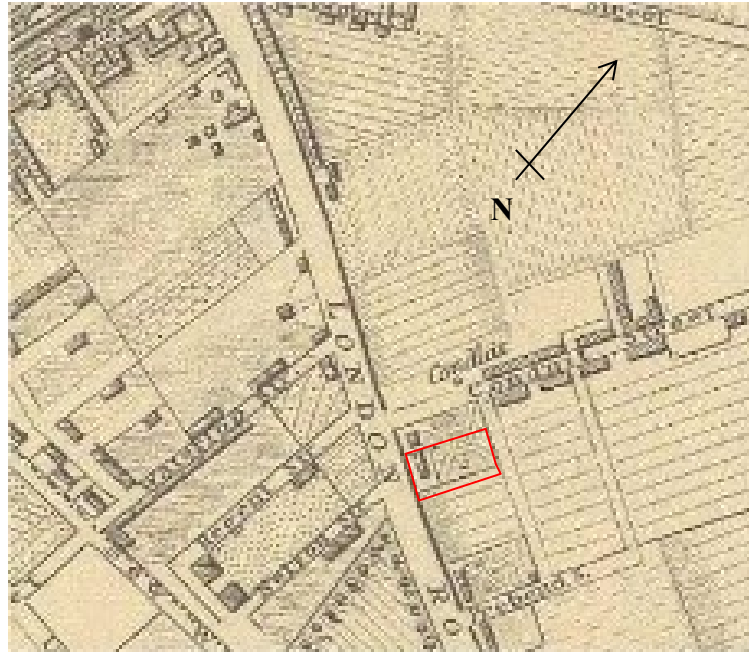


Figure 3 Site shown on Fowler's map of 1828  
Site location highlighted. Note position of north

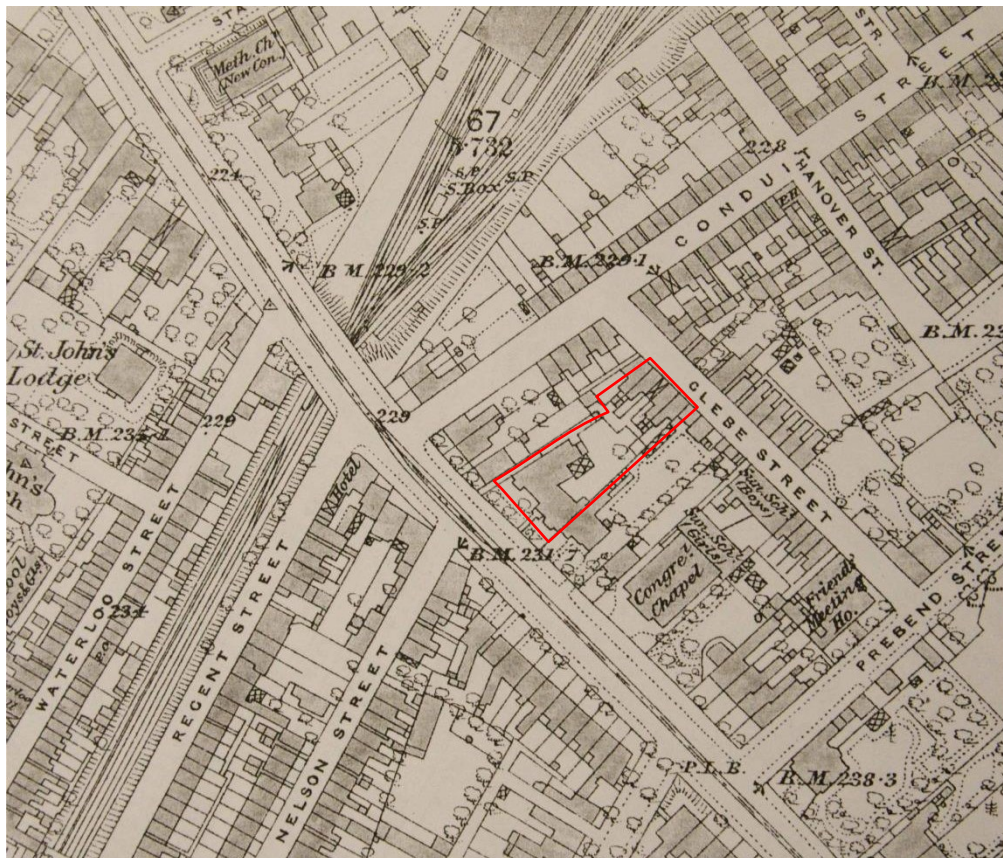


Figure 4 First Edition Ordnance Survey 1885  
Detail from Sheet XXXI.15



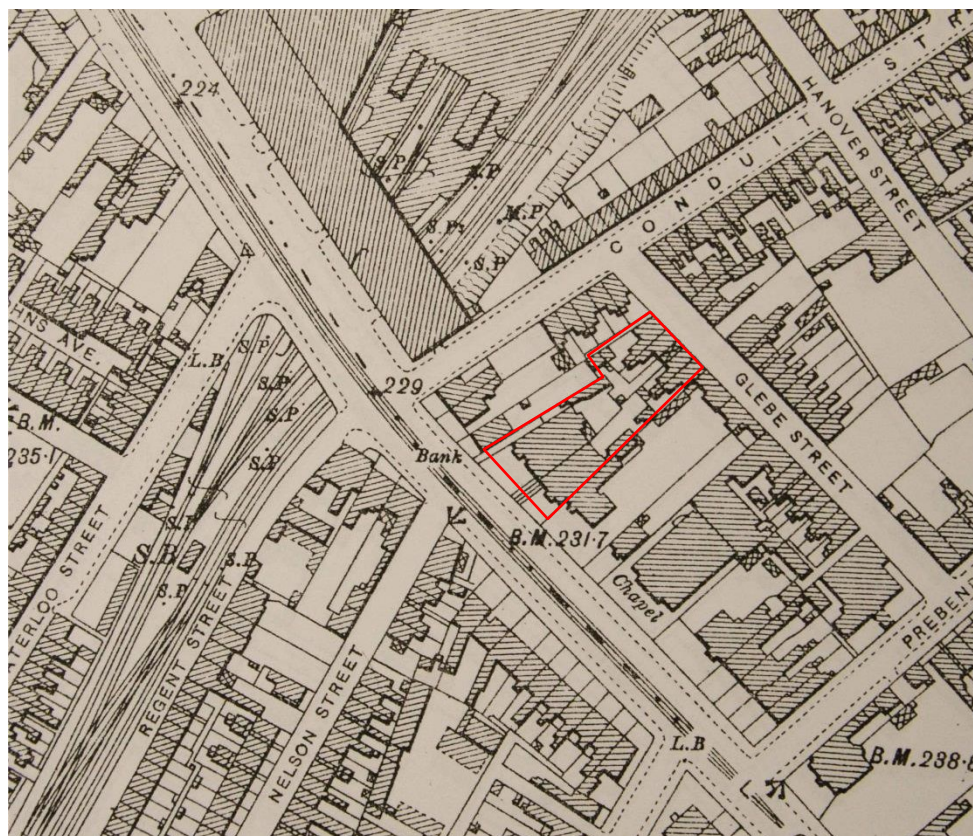


Figure 5 1904 Ordnance Survey  
Detail from Sheet XXXI.15

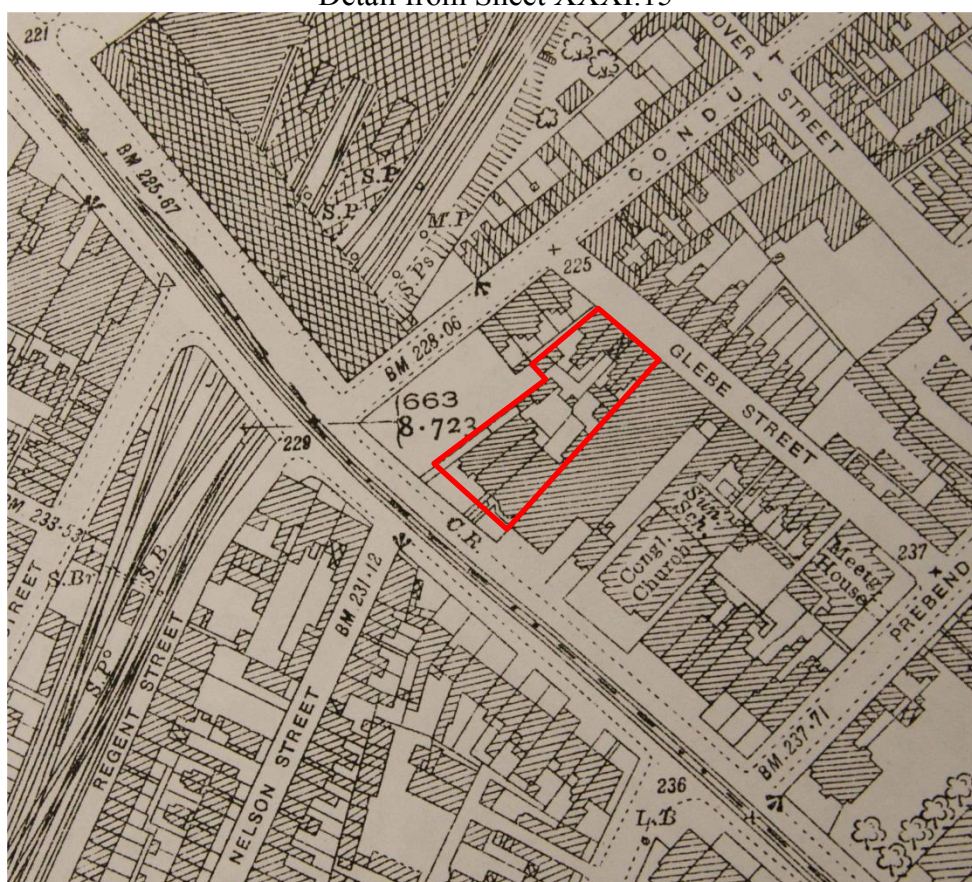


Figure 6 1930 Ordnance Survey  
Detail from Sheet XXXI.15



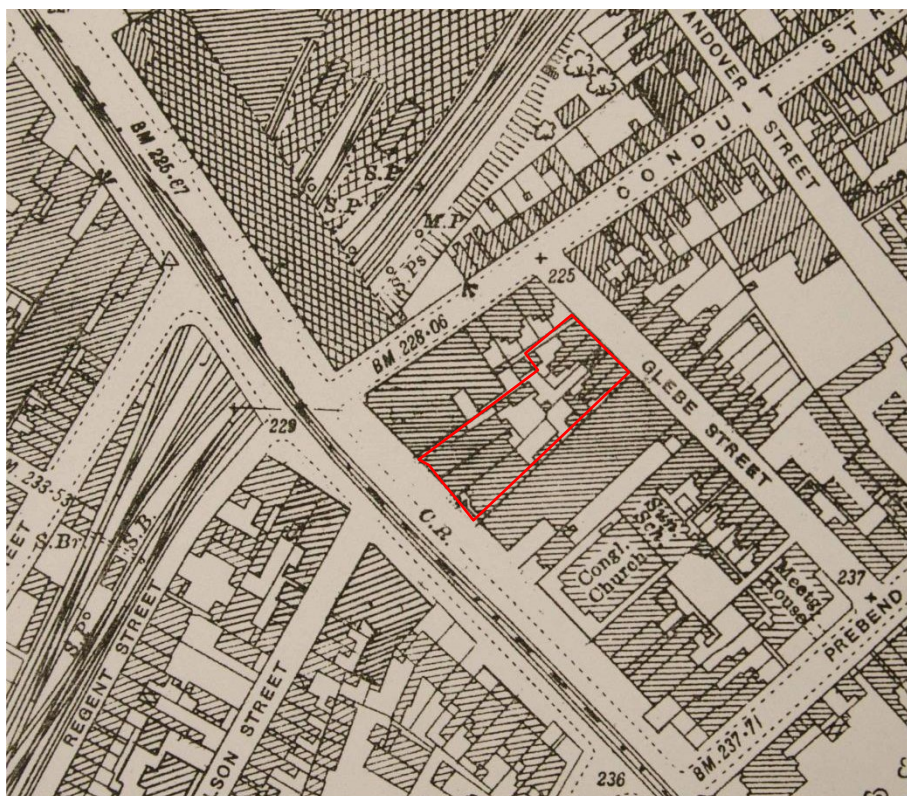


Figure 7 1938 Ordnance Survey  
Detail from Sheet XXXI.15

## Objectives

The overall objectives and research agenda are detailed in the ULAS Written Scheme of Investigation for Historic Building Recording: *54 to 58 London Road, Leicester, LE2 0QD* (hereafter the WSI).

The specific objectives of the historic building survey were:

- To provide a written, drawn and photographic record of all the buildings on site prior to the commencement of works with specific attention given to those elements proposed for demolition and/or alteration. This work to be undertaken to a standard that will allow the future interpretation of the building within the context for which it was originally designed and which subsequently evolved.
- To ensure the long-term preservation of the information through deposition of the record and a summary written report with an appropriate depository.

## Methodology

The methodology used throughout the survey is discussed in detail in the ULAS WSI and also followed English Heritage's (now Historic England) 2006 guidelines *Understanding Historic Buildings*. The Historic Building Recording for this project

was undertaken to Level 2. Elevation drawings provided by the client were modified for this report. A basic plan of each floor was produced for this survey. The plan was made to provide an indication of the room layout and was not a fully measured survey to include doors and windows.

## Results

The buildings are located on the northern side of London Road in between Lillie House to the north-west and an early 20th century building to the south-east (Figs. 8 to 13). Numbers 54 and 56 are stepped back from the street frontage but have a row of single storey 1930s shop fronts attached to their ground floor as discussed in the background section earlier. Number 58 projects further out towards the pavement line but still has a small enclosed front garden which is paved. To the rear (north-east) is a large open space which extends to Glebe Street. The open space at the rear is presently used as car park. The rear of the buildings consists of a number of extensions which extend out from the original buildings at a number of different angles.



Figure 8 54 to 58 London Road  
Looking north across London Road. Buildings highlighted





Figure 9 54 to 58 London Road  
Looking east across London Road. Buildings highlighted. Note step in frontage of 54 and 56 beneath central chimney stack



Figure 10 Rear of 54 to 58  
Looking south-east from the corner of Conduit Street and Glebe Street (part of Number 54 obscured by building on right of picture)



Figure 11 South-west facing elevation onto London Road  
Modified from client's drawing



Figure 12 North-east facing elevation  
Modified from client's drawings



Figure 13 Rear range extension elevations  
Top: south-east facing, bottom: north-west facing

### ***The south-west facing elevation***

The south-west facing elevation looks out onto London Road and is dominated by the ground floor shop frontages added in the 1930s (Fig. 14). The columns at either side of the extensions have a fluted decoration and match the Art Deco style of the parapet which is mostly obscured by modern name boards. On the eastern side of the shop fronts a stone-built archway has been constructed at the same point as the front wall of Number 58 (Fig. 15). This archway leads into the ground floor hallway of 56 where stairs lead to the first and second floors of all three buildings. Above the double doors the fanlight has *56 & 58* painted in gold lettering. The style of the doors and their Art Nouveau handles (Fig. 16) suggests a pre 1930s, if not earlier, date. If this is the case then it seems likely that the buildings were used as commercial premises from this date.

At first floor level 54 and 56 have a rendered flat wall with no traces of any bay windows suggested by the early Ordnance Survey maps. The first floor windows have sash windows with two panes in each sash although one window has been modified to a single pane. There is the appearance of a second floor with blind or blocked square windows but this is only a decorative feature as the height of the eaves and gutter can be seen by two rainwater hoppers at each end of the elevation. The western bay of this range has been added to fill in the gap between 54 and Lillie House. The overall finish of this elevation is uniform which suggests that the render is relatively modern. The building steps out slightly and changes angle between the third and fourth bays which also corresponds with a step in the roof height (see Fig. 9). The reason for this is not clear unless the building is actually two much earlier structures joined together in the late 18th century. The roof is covered in slate and has a brick chimney stack at the step in the wall and roofline. Another chimney stack is located at the joint between the first and second bays.

Number 58 is a brick-built, slate-roof building with a slightly prominent side bay which is built against the eastern side of 56 (Fig. 17). The ground floor of the bay is built front limestone with carved, or possibly cast, floral decoration on the central transom. To the east of the bay two ground floor sash windows flank the entrance doorway. A stone string course marks the division of ground and first floors. The first floor sash windows match the pattern of the ground floor but have decorative wooden panels attached to their heads (Fig. 18). With the exception of the modern signage the south-west facing elevation of this building appears to be relatively unchanged since construction.



Figure 14 South-west facing elevation  
Looking north-east. 54 to 58 from left to right





Figure 15 Doorway between 54 and 58  
Looking north-east. Note fluted column decoration on shop front to left



Figure 16 Door handles on main doorway, south-west facing elevation  
Looking north-east



Figure 17 Number 58 south-west facing  
Looking north-east



Figure 18 Number 58 south-west facing first floor window detail  
Looking north-east



### ***The north-east facing elevation***

The north-east facing elevation is an amalgamation of extensions running out from the north-eastern side of the main buildings (Fig. 19). The rear of Number 58 has a large three storey extension which has a kink in the middle to allow it to follow both the property boundary to the east and the line of the extensions extending from 54 and 56 (Fig. 20). The extension to 58 has arched lintels over sash or modern windows at first and second floor level. A mid-20th century single storey building housing a toilet block has been attached to the former ground floor back door of the extension. To the west of the back door is a large picture window which once, presumably, looked out into the garden. Much of the north-west facing elevation is obscured by a shorter two storey extension from the rear of number 56 which has two large multi-paned windows set below a wooden lintel at first floor height. This extension has a flat gable end and has three narrow toilet windows and a doorway leading into the hallway behind the doors shown in Figure 15 above. The style of the multi-paned window suggests a late 19th century date.

The three storey extension from the rear of 54 and 56 is formed from at least two brick-built phases (Figs. 21 and 22). The wider first phase has a flat gable end with a small chimney at its north corner. The second extension phase is only half as wide but shows a clear joint in the brickwork between the two. The south-east facing elevation of the extension has matching multi-paned windows at first floor level but unmatched sash windows at the second floor suggesting only a partial remodelling of the whole range. A rendered patch on the wall at ground floor level may show the location of a possible glasshouse shown on the 1904 OS map which doesn't show the second phase of extension but which is present by 1930. The north-west facing elevation of the extensions has a variety of different windows (Fig. 23). A single doorway at the south-east end gives access to most of the ground floor rooms of Number 54 and the rear extensions.

The back wall of Number 54 can be seen at this point as a flat brick wall with steps leading up to the ground floor doorway (Fig. 23). Above the doorway is a steel supporting beam with the manufacturer's name of Frodingham Iron and Steel Co. Ltd England. This Scunthorpe company appears to have changed its name at some time between 1910 and 1930. A modern single storey toilet extension has been added to the west of the doorway. At this point it is clear that Number 54 infills the original gap between 56 and the adjacent property now occupied by Lillie House. There are no first floor windows but the sloping roof is made of large panes of glass with a metal-framed glass dormer window set into it.

From Google imagery it can be seen that there are two gabled structures extending from the rear of 54 and 56. These appear to have been widened when the extensions described above were added. The initial gables and the later extensions follow a different alignment to the main building and match the alignment of the extension to Number 58.



Figure 19 North-east facing elevation and extensions  
Number 58 on left of picture



Figure 20 Rear extension of Number 58  
Looking south-west. Note kink in building line running down from the chimney stack





Figure 21 South-east facing elevation of extension to rear of Number 56  
Looking west. Arrow indicates joint of two phases



Figure 22 North-west facing elevation of second phase extension to rear of No 56  
Looking south-east. Note blocked door and window at ground floor



Figure 23 North-west facing elevation of first phase extension to rear of No 56  
Blue doorway belongs to Number 54. Note glass roof and glass dormer of 54

### *Inside the buildings*

Because the building has been subdivided with no real bearing on the individual building numbers it is easiest to describe each floor. For the purposes of identification the rooms have been given numbers as shown on the plans shown below.

It appears that much of the subdivision took place in the 1930s when the new shop fronts were added and the whole range of buildings were given over to commercial use. Because of this relatively early conversion little in the way of fixtures and fittings remains in any of the buildings.

During the survey rapid measurements of each floor were made in order to provide a basic outline of each floor. The resulting plans do not show all of the doors and windows and are not fully accurate in the thicknesses of the walls.



Figure 24 Overall plan of buildings  
Supplied by client

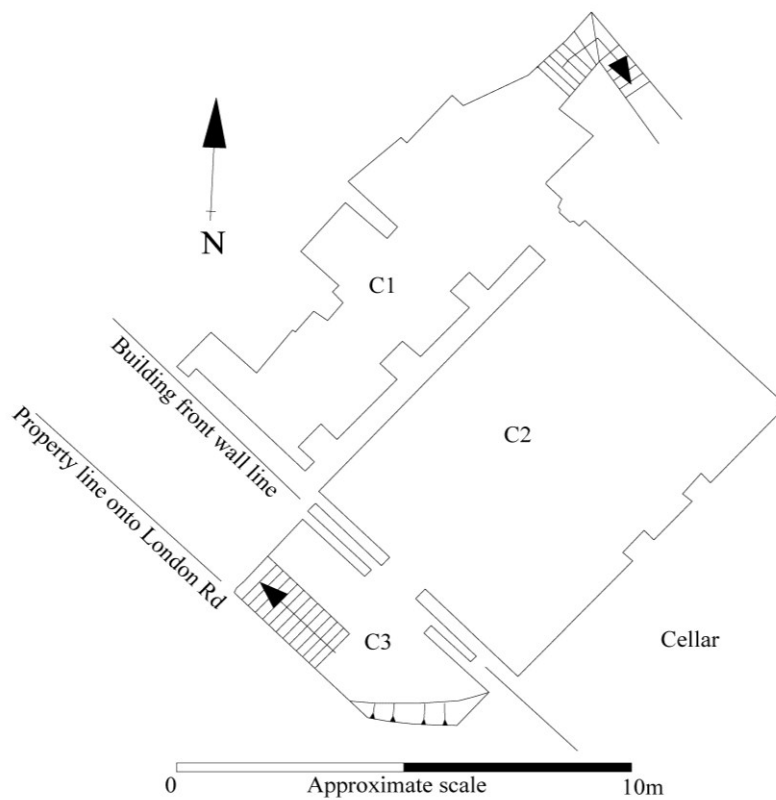


Figure 25 Cellar plan

### *The Cellar*

The cellar is built below the original part of Number 58 which fronts onto London Road. There is no cellar below Numbers 54 and 56 or any of the extension. The cellar is reached via a set of brick stairs from a short corridor with a terrazzo floor from the back room of number 58 (G10). The cellar consists of three main elements corresponding to the supporting walls of the house above (Fig. 25).

#### Cellar Room C1

C1 is a long narrow room with a vaulted brick ceiling and blind supporting arches along the side walls (Fig. 26). The floor is paved with brick. Along the western wall are the remains of the old boiler system including the cast iron door and the coal chute from the pavement on London Road (Fig. 27). A doorway in the north-east corner leads into Room C2. The door is made from vertical planks and has two substantial latches at top and bottom and three locks which suggests that something important was being stored in C2 (Fig. 28).

#### Cellar Room C2

C2 is a large rectangular room with a ceiling formed by three large chamfered north-west to south-east beams above which can be seen the floorboards of Room G10 (Fig. 29). A supporting arch on the eastern wall supports the chimney breast on the ground and first floors. A plank doorway on the south-western wall leads into Room C3. The door has the same latches and locks as the door from C1 to C2.

#### Cellar Room C3

C3 has clearly been truncated and modified as it has a blue brick south-west wall which curves in the southern corner (Fig. 30). There is also double skinned wall between C2 and C3. In the south-west corner of the room is a set of concrete stairs which would have led up to the front garden of Number 58 (Fig. 31). The stairs have now been capped off which probably took place when London Road was widened. It seems likely that the end wall of the cellar was also truncated and filled in to allow heavy traffic to use the pavement rather than collapsing into the cellar. The ceiling is supported by concrete beams which is also likely to be a later modification.





Figure 26 Cellar C1  
Looking south-west



Figure 27 Cellar C1. Boiler door at southern end of room  
Looking west



Figure 28 Door from C1 to C2  
Looking south-east. 1m scale



Figure 29 Cellar C2  
Looking south-west. 1m scale adjacent to doorway into C3





Figure 30 Cellar C3  
Looking south. Note sloping wall and double skin of south-east wall on left of picture



Figure 31 Cellar C3 steps to London Road  
Looking south-west

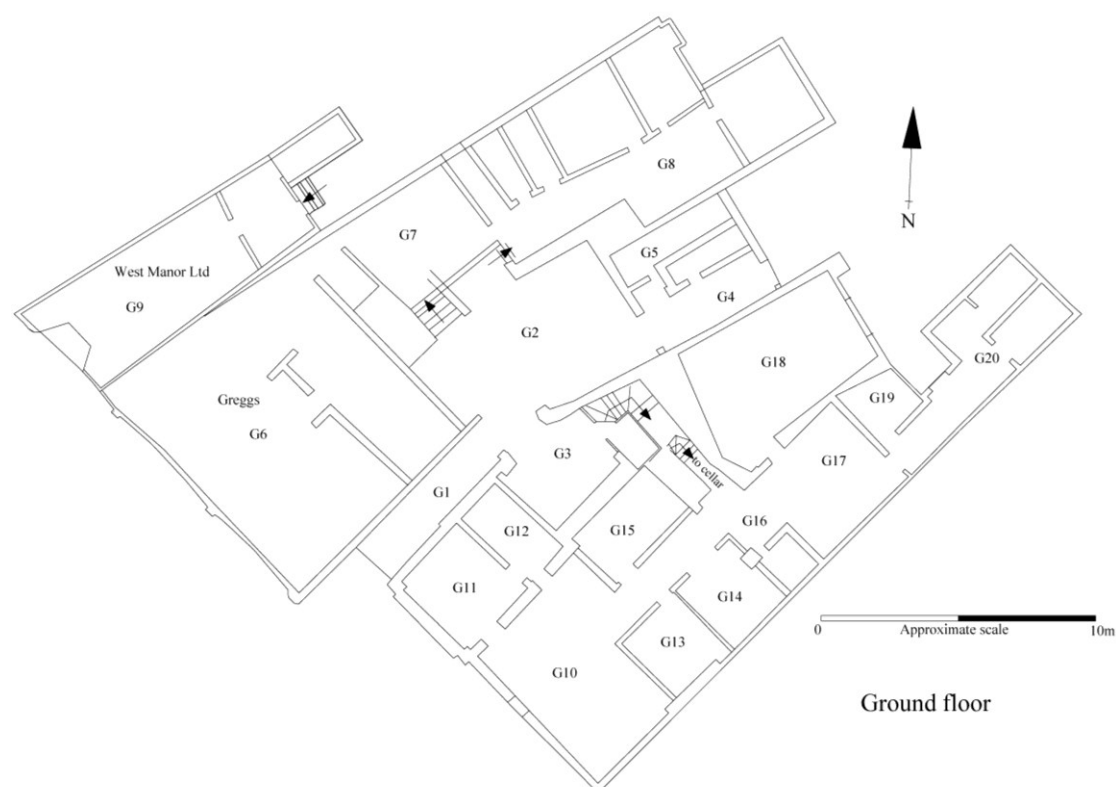
*The Ground Floor*

Figure 32 Ground Floor plan

The allocated room numbers used during this survey indicate the order in which each room was surveyed starting in the main entrance hall.

**Ground floor G1**

This forms the main entrance hall to the suites and is the only room from which access can be gained to the first and second floors of all the extensions. The hall leads in from the London Road doorway which has brass Art Nouveau handles as described above (Fig. 33). Although part of Number 56 there is no apparent doorway into the ground floor room of this building. On the south-east wall is a step in the wall line which may indicate a former doorway into Room G11 next door in Number 58. The ceiling height changes along the length of G1. The ceiling has a moulded architrave all the way around it and has a high moulded skirting board everywhere except across the possible blocked access. At the northern end of G1 the room opens out into the hall G2.

**Ground floor G2**

G2 has a set of stairs leading up to the first floor of 54 and 56 in the north-west corner. These stairs also lead up to the first floor of the rear extension. To the north of these stairs another set of stairs leads up to the second floor of the rear extension (Fig. 34). A short corridor (designated G4) runs north-eastwards to exit into the rear car park (Fig. 35). On the eastern side of G2 the wall has been knocked through to give access to the ground floor room G3 which was once part of Number 58. The north-east wall of G2 runs at an awkward angle and has a thickened end which is all that appears to remain



of the back and corner wall of Number 56. The room has a false ceiling which masks many of the alterations to wall lines.

#### Ground floor G3

G3 has wood panelled walls which have been truncated by the insertion of a wall across the south-west side separating this room from the rest of Number 58 (Fig. 36). At the north-eastern side of the room is a wood and glass partition with an arched head leading to a flight of High Victorian stairs up to the first and second floors (Figs 37 and 38). The stairs are highly decorated with a carved newel post and urn decoration at each turn. Beneath the newels are pendant decorations. The balusters have an arch and rail decoration below the moulded handrail. The stairs lead up to narrow landings at first and second floor levels.

#### Ground floor G4 and G5

G4, as noted above, is a short corridor leading from G1 out to the rear car park which initially formed part of the back garden. The south-east wall has a moulded architrave which is cut by the wall of room G5 which indicates that this is an inserted wall. Room G5 is a toilet and washroom and has the return of the moulded architrave on the north-western wall. The toilet fittings appear to be of mid to late 20th century design.

#### Ground floor G6

Room G6 forms part of the suite (Rooms G6 to G8) belonging to Greggs who were the last occupants. Most of this suite has been extensively modernised and has access either through the main shop frontage or through a doorway on the north-western side of the rear extension. There is no access to rooms G1 to G5 or any of the first and second floors.

G6 sits partially in the extended shop front area and partially within the original ground floor room of Number 56. A stub of wall indicates where the remnant of the ground floor front wall is (Fig. 39). The room has a modern low ceiling and the walls and floor are covered in modern materials.

#### Ground floor G7

G7 is a small rectangular room presently used as a kitchen (Fig. 40). It has modern ceiling and wall coverings which mask any architectural phasing details. A set of steps follow the natural drop in ground level down to Room G8.

#### Ground floor G8

G8 forms a long room with modern side rooms off to the north-west (Fig. 41). This forms the ground floor of the north-westernmost rear extension. All rooms have been modernised and nameplates on the door show that they have been used most recently as a toilet, store, staff room and changing room. A larger store room at the north-eastern end of the extension has painted brick walls but no other details.

#### Ground floor G9

G9 forms a separate long room currently occupied by a lettings agency. It is built into the ground floor of the linking structure between Number 54 and Lillie House (Fig. 42.) The frontage is formed by the 1930s shop front extensions which continue through from next door. Because of the alignment of the buildings this room tapers slightly to the north. A modern low ceiling hides any details and the walls are plain and undecorated.

A partition wall separates off a smaller room to the rear (north-east) of G9. A doorway in the north-east corner leads out down a set of steps into the rear yard. A mid-20th century extension in the north corner houses a toilet and washroom.

There is no current connection between this room and the rest of the building. There are also no stairs to any other floors.

#### Ground floor G10

Rooms G10 to G20 form the ground floor suit of Number 58. There is no link to any other ground floor rooms or to the first and second floors.

G10 is the main front room of 58 and is entered via the main front double doors on London Road (Fig. 43). It has been subdivided with plasterboard partitions to incorporate rooms G13, 14 and 15 (Fig. 44). Above the doorway is a glass panel with traces of the painted name ESG Developments Ltd scratched off. The doors are more consistent with a commercial premises rather than domestic doors and appear to be of a 1930s style. The flanking sash windows either side of the door have full height mouldings from floor to ceiling on their outer edges. The false ceiling hides the tops of the windows and the original ceiling height. The skirting boards are quite high but relatively plain.

The fireplace on the south-eastern wall has been blocked and is cut by the inserted office wall for Room G13. Two doorways on the north-west wall with moulded surrounds lead into Rooms G11 and 12.

#### Ground floor G11

G11 is a side room with the stone-built bay window on its south-western side (Fig. 45). The upper part of the bay window has been partially cut by the insertion of the false ceiling which appears to be decorated with a floral design. The window has flanking wooden panels extending down to floor level. There is no evidence of any window shutters. The doors into rooms G10 and G12 are plain modern replacements. The skirting boards are low and plain and are likely to be mid to late 20th century.

#### Ground floor G12

G12 is a small room with skylight windows on the south-west wall to light this otherwise windowless room. The skylight windows are above the height of the inserted ceiling in Room G11 and show that G11 has a moulded architrave around the original ceiling which continues into this room. This shows that the dividing wall is a later insertion. The rest of the room is plain and undecorated.

#### Ground floor Rooms G13, G14 and G15

These three rooms are all modern rooms which subdivide the formerly much larger main ground floor room of the house.

#### Ground floor G16

G16 is a small space which appears to have been made larger by the partial removal of much of the rear wall of the original Number 58 (Fig. 46). A small side room to the east currently houses computer and communication equipment. On the north-western side of G16 is the short corridor leading to the stairs down into the cellar.

### Ground floor G17

G17 is the ground floor room of the large rear extension to Number 58. Its only natural light comes from skylights set into the dividing wall between this room and G19 to the north-east (Fig. 47). The room is undecorated and has a high plain plaster ceiling possibly associated with the service area of the house.

### Ground floor G18

G18 is a large room with irregularly angled walls to accommodate the changes in alignment between the original house and the rear extension. The room has deep moulded architraves but modern skirting boards with no evidence of a fireplace. On the north-eastern wall is a large decorative window which once looked out into the garden (Fig. 48). This room was clearly of some importance but at present its only doorway is from room G17. As G17 was part of the service area it seems likely that this would be the main doorway for the household. It is possible that there used to be a doorway from Room G3 which passed beneath the main stairs (see Fig. 37).

### Ground floor G19

G19 is a small kitchen area with plasterboard walls which are likely to have been intended to subdivide the larger room G17. It has a sash window facing out onto the former rear garden.

### Ground floor G20

G20 is a single storey toilet block added to the end of the rear extension to Number 58. It sits across the former back doorway used by the staff and has a new back door set at 90 degrees to the old one. The brickwork and fixtures and fitting appear to date from the second half of the 20th century.



Figure 33 Ground floor G1  
Looking south-west. 1m scale



Figure 34 Ground floor G2  
Looking west. Entrance G1 on left, stairs to first floor of 54 and 56 centre right, steps down to stairs to rear extension on right



Figure 35 Ground floor G2  
Looking north-east. 1m scale. Stairs to rear extension on left, doorway to rear carpark in middle, G3 and stairs on right



Figure 36 Room G3  
Looking south-east. 1m scale. Note inserted wall on right of picture



Figure 37 G3 stair case leading up to first floor  
Looking north-east. 1m scale. Possible blocked entrance to Room G18 behind heater





Figure 38 G3 stairs and landing up to first and second floors  
Looking east



Figure 39 G6 former Greggs shop  
Looking south-east. Stub of original supporting front wall behind the brown panel in  
centre of picture



Figure 40 G7 food preparation area  
Looking south-east



Figure 41 G8 and side rooms  
Looking south-west





Figure 42 G9  
Looking south-west



Figure 43 G10  
Looking south-west. 1m scale





Figure 44 G10

Looking north-east. 1m scale. Plasterboard walls flanking corridor to rear of building



Figure 45 G11

Looking south-east. 1m scale. Note hole in ceiling showing upper window detail



Figure 46 G16  
Looking north-east. 1m scale. Note truncated wall behind ranging pole



Figure 47 G17  
Looking north-east. 1m scale. Note window lights into adjacent room G19



Figure 48 G18  
Looking north. 1m scale

### ***First Floor***

The first floor is divided into two non-connected areas reached via two different sets of stairs. The two areas reflect the original layout of the buildings rather more than on the ground floor. One half of the first floor rooms is above Numbers 54 and 56 and above the north-western rear extension. The other half of the ground floor rooms sits above Number 58 and its rear extension.

As with the ground floor very few fixtures and fittings survive within the rooms most of which appear to have been adapted for commercial uses rather than domestic use. Modern doors and light fittings predominate.

#### **First floor F1**

Room F1 is located at the north-western end of Numbers 54 and 56. It is built within the connecting building between 54 and Lillie House and above G9. Because it is a connecting building it has a slightly trapezoidal shape. Most of the ceiling is flat except for a sloping glass portion on the north-eastern side (Fig.50).



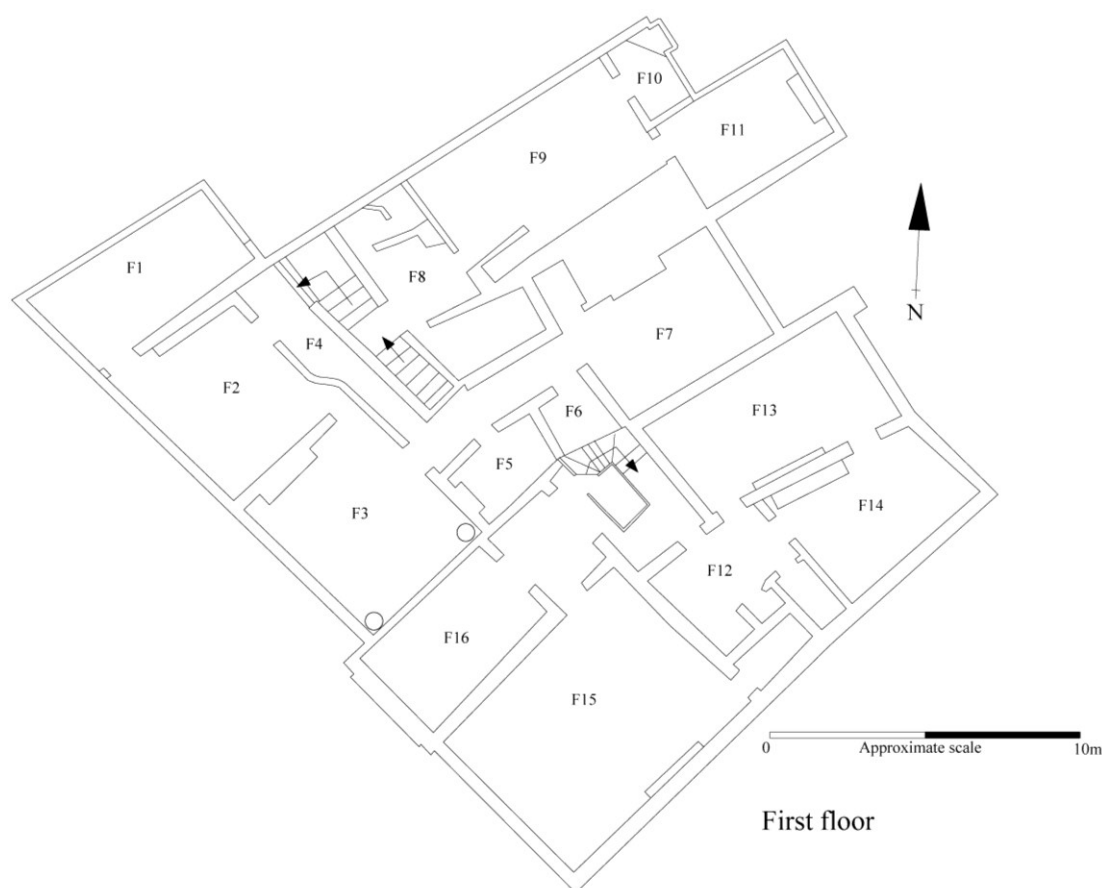


Figure 49 First floor plan

### Room F1 continued

The sloping glass ceiling has a square metal-framed dormer style window inserted. The sash window fittings on the south-western wall match those on the rest of this building despite this portion clearly being of a later date. The frame has slightly less moulding detail though. The only doorway into this room is from F2.

### Room F2

F2 is also slightly oddly angled as it is built on a different angle to adjacent room F3 hence the step in the outside wall seen from London Road (Figs. 51 and 52). It is possible therefore that this building started out as two separate phases with one being built against the end of the other. The north-east wall has a pronounced kink in it to accommodate the stairs and landing discussed below. The room has high moulded skirting boards, picture rails and architraves. There is a chimney breast on the slightly angled north-west wall which has a plain blocked fireplace. The doorways onto the landing and to Room F3 have moulded surrounds and four-panelled doors with chamfered and bevelled edges (Fig. 53).

### Room F3

Room F3 is a rather surprising room which has two plaster columns with decorated capitals at its south-eastern end (Fig. 54). The round columns are flanked by two square

pilasters with matching capitals. Above the columns at ceiling height is a deeply dentiled frieze. Between the columns, covering the whole wall is a large panel of plywood which appears to be covering a large mirror reaching across the whole width of the room.

On the opposite wall (the north-west wall) is a blocked fireplace with a heavily moulded surround (Fig. 55). The sash windows match those in Room F2. Part of the ceiling has collapsed revealing part of the roof structure above and which clearly shows that there was never a second floor despite the appearance of the street frontage.

#### Room F4

F4 is the landing and stairs serving this part of the building. The stairs lead up from hallway G2 (Fig. 56). The stairs appear to be 1930s replacements judging by their plain appearance and materials used. They are formed from two shorter flights with a small landing in the middle which leads to the first floor of the rear extension. The alignment of the stairs kinks slightly to accommodate the change in angles of the buildings. These stairs sit outside the original building line of 54 and 56. The upper landing follows the sharp kink in the wall of Room F2 and may actually be the location of the original staircase before the extensions were built (Fig. 57).

#### Room F5

F5 is presently used as a small kitchen area which appears to have been subdivided from a larger room as the moulded architraves continue out of this room into the corridor. The south-west wall has a small chimney breast with, presumably, a blocked fireplace. A moulded door surround suggests that this subdivision took place at least in the first half of the 20th century.

#### Room F6

Room F6 is now a small toilet and washroom. The continuation of the moulded architrave into the corridor and to F5 indicate that these two rooms and the corridor were all built as single room.

#### Room F7

Room F7 is a rectangular room with two large multi-paned window on the north-eastern wall (Fig. 58). There is a blocked fireplace on the north-west wall and evidence of a picture rail and low skirting boards (Fig. 59). A four-panelled door leads out into the corridor to F5 and 6. The door matches those used in Room F2 and may have been relocated from F3. A late Victorian door covers a long cupboard built into the thickness of the wall created by the various extensions.

Rooms F5, F6 and F7 fill a short extension built onto the rear of Number 56.

#### Room F8

Room F8 is the first of the ground floor rooms built into the north-western rear extension built against the rear of Number 54. It, and the rest of this suite, is approximately 1.5m lower than the floor level of Rooms F1 to F7. F8 forms a small vestibule with two side rooms housing a toilet and a storeroom. Its function appears to

be to form the junction between the two different angles of the original building and the extensions.

#### Room F9

F9 is a long room with a number of differently styled sash windows along its north-east and south-west walls (Fig. 60). The underside of the staircase up to the second floor can be seen in the north-east corner although there is no access to the second floor from here.

#### Room F10

F10 is a small end room reached from F9. It has a small corner chimney breast with a blocked fireplace (Fig. 61). As with all rooms in this extension it has a fairly low and flat ceiling with no decorative architraves or skirtings.

#### Room F11

F11 is an oblong room with a blocked fireplace at the north-east end. It has been extended to increase its length by approximately twice its length. The two windows on the south-east wall reflect this extension as they are both different having been built at different times (Fig. 62). A joint in the skirting boards also shows where this extension took place. The ceiling is a modern false ceiling which hides any evidence of this extension.

#### Room F12

Rooms F12 to F14 are part of Number 58 and are reached via the High Victorian staircase from G3.

F12 is a small hallway part way up the stairs from F3. The original rear (north-east) wall of Number 58 forms the south-west wall of this room and there is evidence of two blocked windows showing where this looked out across the former garden (Fig. 63). Because of the changes in angles of the original building and the extension this room is slightly trapezoidal in shape and has a number of cupboards and alcoves around it. This is the only access to Rooms F13 and 14.

#### Room F13

Is a large trapezoidal room with a large window at the north-eastern end (Fig. 64). The window is a modern uPVC replacement. The room has moulded architraves and a high picture rail and a high skirting board. The wooden fireplace surround and mantelpiece is crisply carved in wood and appears to match the style and date of the late Victorian staircase. A bell-push for calling a servant is located to the left of the fireplace. The door out to F12 is modern but the connecting door to Room F14 is a late Victorian six-panelled door.

#### Room F14

F14 can be entered from either Room F12 or F13 (Fig. 65). Once again this is an oddly shaped room which fits into the various angles of the extension. The uPVC window on the north-east wall is modern but the moulded wooden window surround is original. As with Room 13 this room has moulded architraves and high skirting boards but no picture rail. The carved wooden fireplace surround and mantelpiece has scroll decoration from the later 19th century.



### Room F15

Room F15 is the main room of the first floor belonging to the earliest phase of Number 58 (Figs. 66 and 67). It has wooden dado panels extending around the entire room with matching panelling around the inside of the doorways. The fireplace and chimney breast are nearly flush with the main wall and relatively plain although this may be a later modification. A modern false suspended ceiling has been added which masks any ceiling details. On the north-eastern wall is a moulded plaster frame which may have contained rear windows before the rear extension was added.

### Room F16

This room has a false ceiling and has been thoroughly modernised. At the time of the survey it was full of office equipment and could not be accurately surveyed.



Figure 50 F1  
Looking north-east. 1m scale



Figure 51 F2  
Looking west. 1m scale. Doorway to F1 to left of fireplace



Figure 52 F2  
Looking east. 1m scale. Doorway to corridor on left, door to F3 in centre. Note kink  
in north-east wall





Figure 53 F2 doorway  
1m scale



Figure 54 F3  
Looking south-east. 1m scale



Figure 55 F3 Fireplace  
Looking north-west. 1m scale



Figure 56 Stairs from G2 up to first floor  
Looking north-west. 1m scale



Figure 57 F4 landing and stairs  
Looking east. 1m scale





Figure 58 F7  
Looking north-east. 1m scale



Figure 59 F7  
Looking west. 1m scale



Figure 60 F9  
Looking north-east. 1m scale



Figure 61 F10  
Looking north. 1m scale



Figure 62 F11  
Looking north-east. 1m scale



Figure 63 F12  
Looking west. 1m scale. Note possible blocked windows





Figure 64 F13  
Looking east. 1m scale. Doorway into F14 in centre of picture



Figure 65 F14  
Looking west. 1m scale



Figure 66 F15  
Looking west



Figure 67 F15  
Looking north-east. 1m scale

### ***Second floor***

The two parts of the second floor are both separate entities as for the floor below. The second floor of the north-western extension is reached via a staircase from the ground

floor in Room G2. The second floor to the rear of Number 58 is reached via the High Victorian staircase from G3.

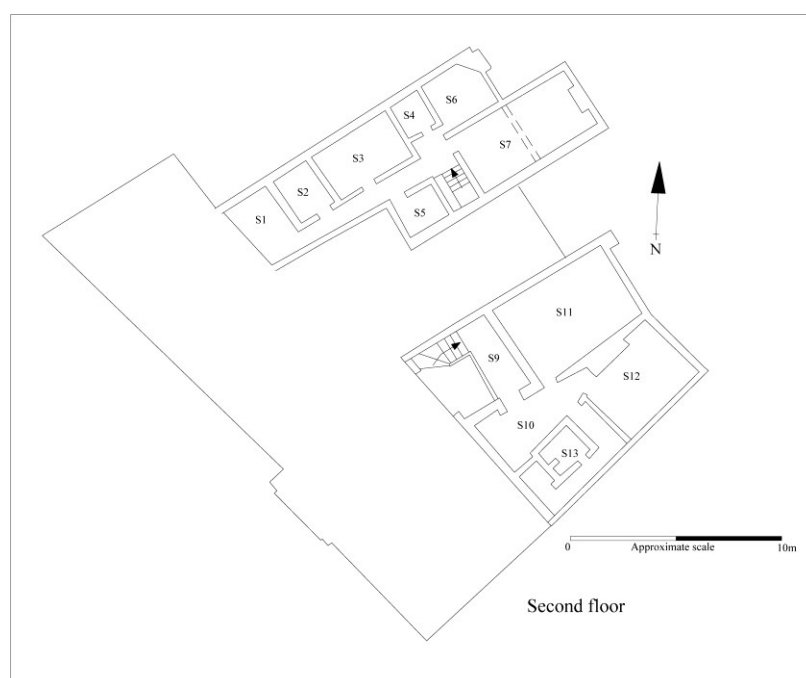


Figure 68 Plan of second floor

#### Room S1

Rooms S1 to S7 form the suite of rooms of the north-western extension to the rear of Numbers 54 and 56. They are all connected along a north-east to south-west corridor (Room S8) from the staircase (Figs. 69 and 70). The corridor alters course slightly and is wider at the north eastern end as it progresses through the different phases of extension.

Room S1 is at the south-west end of the corridor and is built against a narrow gabled extension on the rear of Number 54 (Fig. 71). The western half of the ceiling is pitched following the roof of the gable whilst the eastern side is flat. The floor is approximately 0.25m lower than the rest of this floor which gives an indication of the extent of this original gable extension. A hole in the wall gives a glimpse into the gable roof structure which has varnished sarking boards which were clearly meant to be seen (Fig. 72). The room has a modern Crittall window. The door has four panels which have been covered over with a sheet of hardboard on the corridor side, as have all doors on this floor. The doorknobs are of Bakelite.

#### Rooms S2, S3 and S4

S2 is a small rectangular room which is located at the south-west end of the next phase of extension. It has a sash window and a relatively low but moulded skirting board. The ceiling is low and flat. It is presently used as a toilet. S3 follows the pattern of S2 but has two sash windows (Fig. 73). Room S4 is a smaller room opposite the staircase down to the ground floor. As with the other rooms on this floor no fixtures or fittings remain.

#### Room S5

Room S5 is a square room on the south-east side of the corridor. To the south-west is a window which looks out across the roofscape of 54 and 56 (Fig. 74). Through the



window it can be seen that there are at least two gabled extensions on the back of 54 and 56. To these have been added at least two more phases of extension. The bricks on the gables appear to be relatively thick and may be of early to mid-Victorian date.

#### Room S6

This room matches the room F10 on the floor below and has a blocked corner fireplace. The ceiling is slightly higher than in the other rooms and slopes down on the north-west side.

#### Room S7

Room S7 is a long narrow room with a fireplace on the north-east wall. The room has clearly been extended north-eastwards as half way along the ceiling is the supported stub of the original end wall (Fig. 75). The earlier phase has a four-pane sash window whilst the window on the extended part has eight by eight panes.

Room S8 is the corridor as described at the start of this section.

#### Room S9

Rooms S9 to S13 form the second floor of the extension to the rear of Number 58. S9 is the narrow landing at the top of the Victorian staircase which descends down to ground floor Room G3 (Fig. 76). The door to the rest of the rooms is modern but there is also a window into Room S10. The ceiling height of the landing is varied but the reason is not clear.

#### Room S10

This room is roughly trapezoidal and matches the shape of the first floor room F12 in that it has to fit into the angle of the extensions. The heads of the possible blanked windows of the old back wall can be seen on the south-west wall of this room (Fig. 77). Access to Rooms S11, 12 and 13 led off from this room.

#### Room S11

Room S11 is a large trapezoidal shaped room with a sash window on the north-east wall (Fig. 78). As with the floor below this room has a large carved wooden fireplace surround and mantelpiece. There is a moulded architrave around the ceiling. Unlike the rooms below there is no connecting doorway into adjacent room S12.

#### Room S12

Once again this room follows a similar pattern to the adjacent room and to the first floor room below (Fig. 79). The large carved wooden fireplace has pendant decorations but is not quite as decorative as the other fireplaces on this floor and the floor below.

#### Room S13

Room S13 has a series of angled walls into which a pair of toilets have been added. It is not clear if this was the original intention for these rooms.

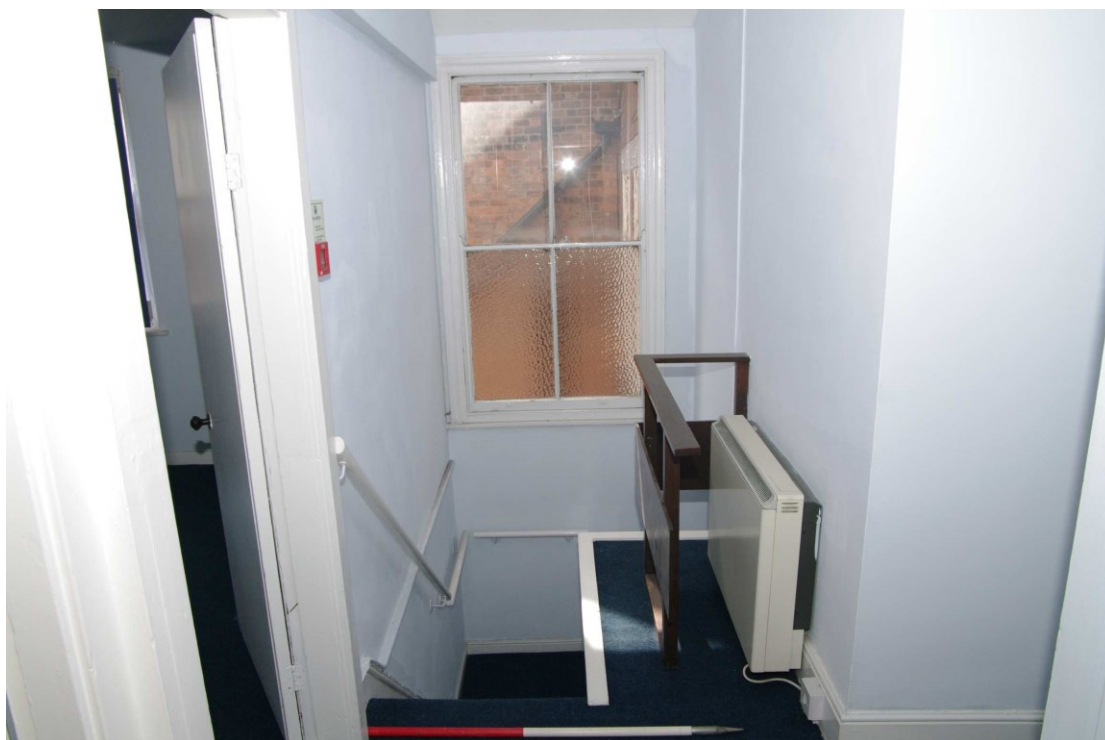


Figure 69 Top of staircase to second floor  
Looking south-east. 1m scale



Figure 70 Second floor corridor  
Looking south-west. 1m scale. Note bend in corridor



Figure 71 S1  
Looking west. 1m scale. Note pitched ceiling



Figure 72 Roof space into Room S1  
Looking west through hole in wall of S1





Figure 73 S3  
Looking north. 1m scale



Figure 74 View of roof from S5  
Looking west



Figure 75 S7

Looking north-east. 1m scale. Note original end wall cutting across the ceiling. Also note the two different styles of window



Figure 76 S9

Looking south-east. 1m scale



Figure 77 S10  
Looking south-west. 1m scale. Note tops of blanked windows either side of ranging pole



Figure 78 S11  
Looking north-east. 1m scale





Figure 79 S12  
Looking north

## Discussion

The oldest element of the buildings is the two storey range identified as numbers 52 and 54 which appear to have begun life in the late 18th or early 19th century. Despite outward appearances this was never built with a third storey and the blanked second floor windows are purely decorative. It is also curious why the building should have been constructed with a slight kink along its length. It is possible that beneath the render are two earlier buildings which have been joined together, this may explain the step in the roof height. There is no evidence of the bay windows suggested on the pre 1930s maps as all of the ground floor evidence has been swept away by the insertion of the 1930s shop fronts. It seems likely that the addition of the shop fronts took place at a similar time to some of the internal reorganisations made to create a commercial property. The rear walls of the building have also been obscured and heavily modified by the late 19th and 20th century alterations. Additional inspection of the roof space of 54 and 56 may shed some light on the sequence of construction of the various elements including the rear extensions. The removal of the render on the south-east facing elevation may also help in the understanding of the phases of the building.

Number 58 has also been heavily modified since its original construction in the late 19th century. It is curious that the later extension to the rear follows such odd angles which have been created by the extensions behind 54 and 56 rather than following the lines of number 58. As with the other building this building has been heavily modified to create commercial premises. The modifications have blurred the boundaries between all of the buildings resulting in a rather disjointed warren of rooms and suites.

Very few original fixtures and fittings survive in Numbers 54 and 56 with the exception of some panelled doors with their bevelled panels and the two plaster pillars at the

eastern end of the first floor range. The reason for such a surprising embellishment is not clear. A significant number of wood panelled rooms survive in Number 58 as do some of the late 19th century fireplaces in the rear extension.

### **Publication**

A summary of the work will be submitted for publication in the *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society* in due course. A record of the project will also be submitted to the OASIS project. OASIS is an online index to archaeological grey literature.

### **Acknowledgements**

We would like to thank the tenants in the buildings for their help and co-operation with this survey and Shawn Hancock of Acanthus WSM and Andy Ward of rg+p architects for arranging access.

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<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>	<b>Oasis No</b>	universil-xxxx		
	<b>Project Name</b>	Level 2 Building Survey at 54 to 58 London Road, Leicester		
	<b>Start/end dates of field work</b>	3/5/2016-9/6/2016		
	<b>Previous/Future Work</b>	No/ Not known		
	<b>Project Type</b>	Historic Building Survey		
	<b>Site Status</b>	None		
	<b>Current Land Use</b>	Commercial buildings		
	<b>Monument Type/Period</b>	/		
	<b>Significant Finds/Period</b>	N/A		
	<b>Development Type</b>	Residential and light commercial		
	<b>Reason for Investigation</b>	NPPF		
	<b>Position in the Planning Process</b>	Planning condition		
	<b>Planning Ref.</b>	PA 20150338		
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>	<b>Site Address/Postcode</b>	54 to 58 London Road, Leicester. LE2 0QD		
	<b>Study Area</b>	0.1ha		
	<b>Site Coordinates</b>	SK 59387 03978		
	<b>Height OD</b>	60m OD		
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	ULAS		
	<b>Project Brief Originator</b>	Local Planning Authority (LCC)		
	<b>Project Design Originator</b>	ULAS		
	<b>Project Manager</b>	Dr Patrick Clay		
	<b>Project Director/Supervisor</b>	A Hyam		
	<b>Sponsor/Funding Body</b>	Developer / Abode London Road Ltd		
<b>PROJECT ARCHIVE</b>		<b>Physical</b>	<b>Digital</b>	<b>Paper</b>
	<b>Recipient</b>	NA	LCC MusService	LCCMusService
	<b>ID (Acc. No.)</b>		A6.2016	A6.2016
	<b>Contents</b>		Photos	Field Notes
<b>PROJECT BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>Type</b>	Grey Literature (unpublished)		
	<b>Title</b>	An Archaeological watching brief...		
	<b>Author</b>	A Hyam		
	<b>Other bibliographic details</b>	ULAS Report No 2016-083		
	<b>Date</b>	2016		
	<b>Publisher/Place</b>	University of Leicester Archaeological Services / University of Leicester		
	<b>Description</b>	Developer Report A4 pdf		



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