

**Archaeological Photographic Survey and watching
brief for 1a, The Borough & 2/2a Castle Street,
Hinckley,
Leicestershire (SP 426 937).**

Report No. ULAS 2006-071

Planning Application: 04/01470/4; 04/01471/4

For: Savage Haywood Ltd.

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1. Summary

A watching brief during the refurbishment of the Grade II listed building on the corner of The Borough and Castle Street, Hinckley, Leicestershire was undertaken by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) in May 2006. The refurbishments encompassed the conversion of upper storey offices with ancillary rooms into three self-contained flats.

The inspection of the building has provided an indication of the development sequence of this early nineteenth century building. Initial observations suggest that an original three-storey building fronted onto The Borough. To the rear of the property was a two-storey building running perpendicular to the former. The building fronting onto Castle Street appears to be a slightly later addition; renovations that included re-roofing the two buildings as one. The earlier roofline of the two-storey building was still visible to the rear of the building fronting onto The Borough. External differences in the build between the Castle Street building and The Borough building were evidenced in differences in fenestration and the moulded eaves course.

2. Introduction

The following report outlines the work undertaken for the inspection and recording of any historical features during the redevelopment of the upper floors of 1a The Borough and 2/2a Castle Street, Hinckley. The upper floors have, in recent years, consisted of six office rooms, a kitchen and two attic voids. The conversion will create three separate residential apartments. The ground and first floors, which include three separate shops, will remain unchanged.

The Watching Brief was required by the Senior Planning Archaeologist, Leicestershire County Council, as a condition of planning approval for an application to carry out refurbishment to this Grade II listed building (Planning Application Number 04/01470/4; 04/01471/4). The main aim of the inspection and recording process, as defined in the 'Design Specification for Archaeological Work' (ULAS 2006, 06/541), was to identify and record any historically significant features that may be affected by the alterations.

The building was visited by ULAS staff on the 17th May 2006, in which the photographic recording was carried out, the 22nd May for an inspection of works and on the 24th May for a further inspection and recording of exposed features.

All work was carried out in accordance with the Institute of Field Archaeologist's Code of Conduct and in adherence to their *Standard and Guidance for the Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures*.

3. Listing status

The building lies within a Conservation Area and is Grade II listed.

The listing description reads as follows:-

MILLER & SANTHOUSE OPTICIANS, 2 & 2A*, CASTLE STREET (NORTH SIDE), HINCKLEY

Shop row. Early C19. Red brick with stuccoed dressings including projecting cornice as parapet to slate roof; brick ridge stacks in centre of south and west fronts and end stack to left of west front. 4 storeys to the two left-hand bays of the south front, with reduced proportions to third floor and 3 storeys to the rest of the building. Nos. 2 and 2A stand on the corner of Castle Street and the Market Place, there being 3 bays to the west, a recessed bay curving round the corner and 2 bays to the south. The 2 left-hand bays of the west front have sashes in open boxes with 2-light casements to third floor; otherwise sashes on second floor and glazing bar sashes on first floor, except for the corner bay where the windows are blind; all windows have wedge-shaped lintels with raised key blocks. Late C19 shop front to ground storey, except to right-hand bay of south front; pilastered screen to rusticated wall surface topped by a cornice. Windows C20 to right. Late C19 double shop front to extreme right with C20 alterations, including a wide fascia.

As a Grade 2 listed building it is subject to Government policy for the protection of historic buildings, as outlined in Planning Policy Guidance 15: Planning and the historic environment (PPG15, DoE/DNH 1995). It should be noted that although only the exterior is mentioned in the listing description, the Grade 2 status allows for the protection of interior historic features.



Figure 1: Exterior view of the corner of The Borough & Castle Street looking north east.

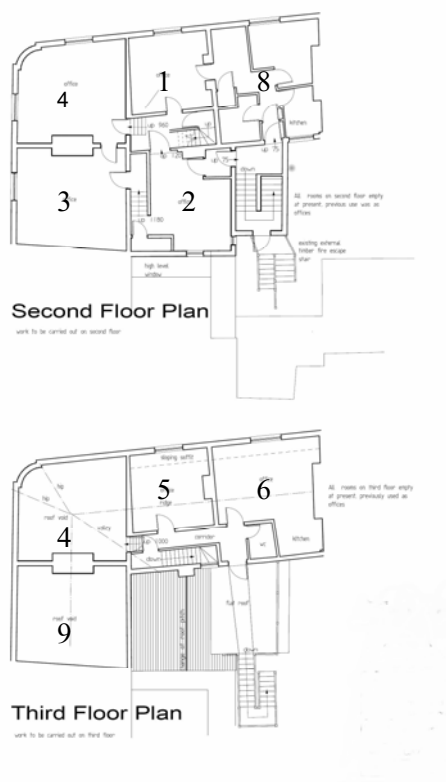


Figure 2: Second and Third Floor plan (provided by Savage Hayward Architects). The numbers in bold have been allocated to locate the room descriptions listed below.

4. Results.

The following descriptions are not exhaustive descriptions of each room, but rather observations made during the watching brief of each room and any notable historic features.

Room 1

West facing window (a pair to that seen in the adjoining room 8, see Figure 11: Measured drawing of Room 8 sash, with details of mouldings and sash lock.). Replacement sash window with each sash containing two panes of glass. Sash horns on the frame of the c.1881-3 Monmouthshire type (Hall 2005, p.80).

In centre of north wall a doorway has been inserted through the former chimney stack.

Where plaster had been removed from the east wall (opposite the window) timber wall studding could be seen, with on-edge brick infill (similar arrangement to that seen in Room 2, Figure 5, but less well-exposed). The mortar included horsehair.

The principal beam across the ceiling was peppered with mortice and dowel holes (Figure 3) with indicate that the timber has been re-used.

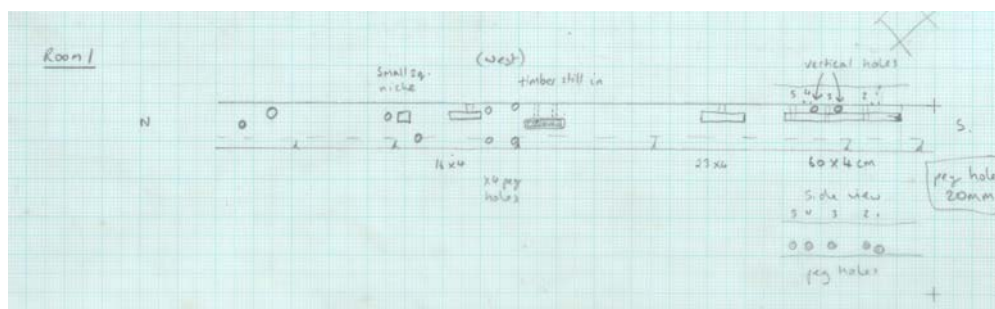


Figure 3: Measured sketch of re-used beam in the ceiling of Room 1.

Room 2

West wall – roofline of earlier two storey building visible (centre of Figure 6), aligned perpendicular to the original building fronting onto The Borough. It may even represent an extension to The Borough building. Sometime later (but not much) a three storey addition fronting onto Castle Street was erected. The roof of the Castle Street building appears to have encompassed the earlier two-storey building, creating an unusually large roof space (formerly divided, presumably into service rooms).

A modern doorway has been inserted into the lower portion of the west wall.

North wall – former ?rear of earlier two-storey property.

East wall – Exterior wall with window overlooking adjoining property. Window frame modern.

South wall – formerly timber stud partition with Room 3, timber laths above, on-edge bricks below (Figure 4 & Figure 5) . Modern staircase removed but former, probable original staircase line visible on west end of wall (to the right of the ladders in Fig.4). This would have connected rooms 2 & 3, but there was no clear evidence to suggest that this was the principal staircase for the property.



Figure 4: Room 2, looking south, stud and lath room partition.



Figure 5: Stud and on-edge brick wall, directly below wall seen in Figure 4.



Figure 6: West wall chimney stack with former roof line visible

Room 3

Sliding sash windows with no horns. Currently four panes and later fittings. Skirting is of 1849 Wiltshire type (Hall 2005, p.144 left hand example). No parallels found for dado rail, but a very plain profile.

Room 4

Has two windows (one fronting onto The Borough, the other onto Castle Street) but of a similar type to Room 3. Skirting and dado also similar but in poor condition (dado mostly removed along west wall).

Rooms 3 and 4 share a chimney breast but fire surrounds have been removed.

Room 5

Rooms 5 & 6 are both attic rooms fronting onto The Borough, with low 2-pane replacement Yorkshire sashes under the eaves (similar to Figure 7). Above the window but below the wall plate is a sandstone eaves course, dressed on its' exterior face but rough cut to the rear (similar to Figure 8).

The stone Chimney breast on north wall but no surviving surrounds.

Purlins run parallel to The Borough. They contain old holes for studding (0.10 x 0.04m, curved at both ends. *i.e.* drilled with a bit) set at an angle. The angle suggests that the timbers are re-used (similar to Figure 9).

New roofing felt is evidence that the roof slates have recently been re-laid.

Room 6

Like Room 5, Room 6 was an attic room with Yorkshire sash windows, stone eaves course and re-used purlins (Figure 7, Figure 8 & Figure 9). A chimney breast in north wall was notably wide, but with no surviving surrounds. The floorboards were hardwood and 270mm wide by 18mm deep. The window to the rear of the property is modern.



Figure 7: Horizontal Yorkshire sash in Room 6.

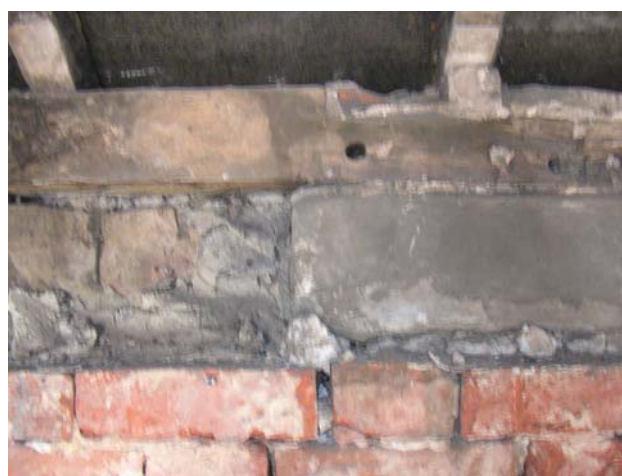


Figure 8: Re-used wall plate and rough rear face of eaves course.



Figure 9: Mortice holes to support studding on purlin, Room 6. The angle of the mortices suggests the purlins are re-used.

Room 7

'Room 7' is actually the roofspace (former loft) above Room 4. The void was unlit and still contained property belonging to the former tenants, so access was poor, but the roof timbers appeared to be original with no obvious signs of re-use (Figure 10: Roof timbers of 'Room 7'). The roof felt was new.



Figure 10: Roof timbers of 'Room 7'.

Room 8

West facing window (a pair to that seen in the adjoining room 1). Replacement sash window with each sash containing two panes of glass. Sash horns on the frame of the c.1881-3 Monmouthshire type (Hall 2005, p.80).

A very wide chimney breast in the north wall, possibly containing an additional flue from rooms below. This probably indicates the location of the original kitchen rooms, with large range.

Modern internal partition walls had been removed.

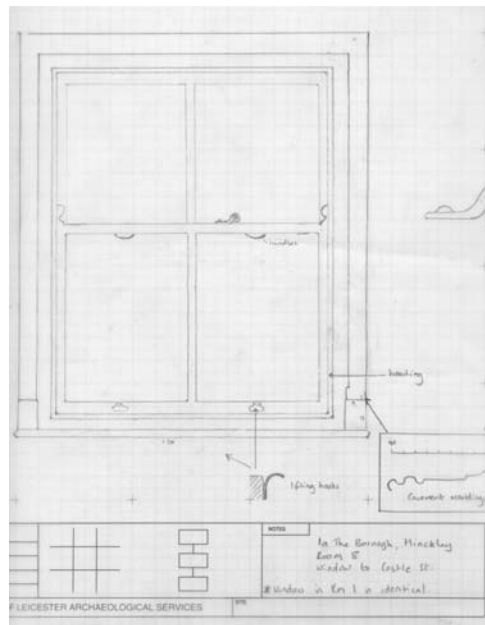


Figure 11: Measured drawing of Room 8 sash, with details of mouldings and sash lock.

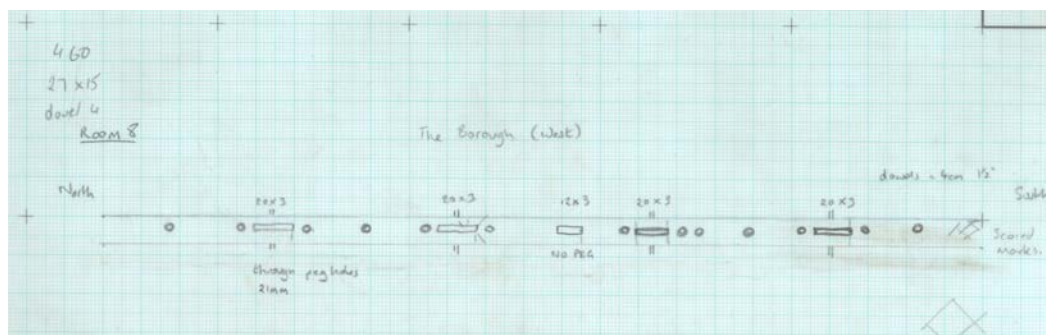


Figure 12: Measured sketch of the re-used beam in the ceiling of Room 8.

Room 9

Roof void above Room 3. Could only be accessed by stepping off the top of a set of ladders. My thanks go to Mick, the site foreman, for volunteering to do this and take some pictures while up there!



Figure 13: 'Room 9' looking down onto Room 2. Note the chimney breast which denotes an end wall for an earlier building on an east west alignment. The re-roofing of both the old roofspace and up to the ridge of the c. early 19th century three storey building fronting onto Castle Street has created an unusually large roof void.

Stairs

A simple straight flight service staircase with winder comprising a plainly turned newel, stick balusters (with a square cross-section) in a closed string. The handrail is plain; the nearest parallel being the 1986 'London' handrail (Hall 2005, Fig 4.67, p.128). The visible woodwork is all pine, painted in Victorian 'grain effect' with thick varnish, while the treads and risers are currently covered in modern linoleum. The whole is in poor condition with many balusters missing (5 out of about a dozen) and the newel post has been split (Figure 15).

There is little of historical distinction to clearly identify at what period it was constructed. The newel, balustrades and handrail are all of modest design typical of service stairs from the early 19th century onwards. It is possible that the stair fittings are all a later Victorian addition, although they are likely to have been sited where the original staircase lay.



Figure 14: Service stairs to attic rooms.



Figure 15: Split newel post .

5. Discussion

The Watching Brief at 1a The Borough, Hinckley was restricted to the interior upper floors of the building.

Bibliography

Linda Hall 2005 Period House Fixture & Fitting 1300 – 1900. Countryside Books.