

CHJB/01



CLARENCE HOTEL, BEDFORD, BEDFORDSHIRE

Historic Building Recording

commissioned by EDP
on behalf of MBK Contracts Ltd

13/02450/MAF

September 2014

CLARENCE HOTEL, BEDFORD, BEDFORDSHIRE

Historic Building Recording

commissioned by EDP
on behalf of MBK Contracts Ltd

13/02450/MAF

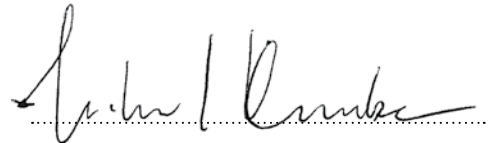
September 2014

project info

HA JOB NO. CHJB/01
HAS NO. 1041
NGR TL 05117 49313
LOCAL AUTHORITY Bedford Borough Council
OASIS REF. headland3-190730

project team

PROJECT MANAGER Mike Kimber
AUTHOR Jacob Streatfeild-James
FIELDWORK Jacob Streatfeild-James
GRAPHICS Caroline Norrman – Illustrations
Anna Sztromwasser – Typesetting
APPROVED BY Mike Kimber – Project Manager



© 2014 by Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd



Headland Archaeology
Midlands & West

Unit 1, Premier Business Park, Faraday Road
Hereford HR4 9NZ

01432 364 901
midlandsandwest@headlandarchaeology.com

www.headlandarchaeology.com



CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	1
2	SITE LOCATION	2
3	OBJECTIVES	2
4	METHOD	2
	4.1 HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING	2
5	DOCUMENTARY RESEARCH	2
6	HISTORICAL BACKGROUND	2
	6.1 ST JOHN'S STREET, HISTORIC MAP PROGRESSION	2
	6.2 CLARENCE HOTEL, AUCTION PAPERS, INVENTORIES AND LEASES	3
7	BUILDING SURVEY	3
8	RESULTS	3
	8.1 SETTING OF BUILDINGS	3
	Streetscape and position on frontage	3
	Curtilage and grounds	3
	8.2 THE CLARENCE HOTEL	4
	Exterior 4	
	Interior 4	
9	WATCHING BRIEF	9
10	DISCUSSION	9
	10.1 PHASE 1 (C17TH–1841)	9
	10.2 PHASE 2 (1841–1881)	11
	10.3 PHASE 3 (1881–1904)	11
	10.4 PHASE 4 (1920–)	11
11	CONCLUSION	11

12	SOURCES	12
12.1	BIBLIOGRAPHY	12
12.2	COUNTY RECORDS OFFICE	12
12.3	HISTORIC MAPS	12
12.4	ONLINE SOURCES	12
13	APPENDICES	13
APPENDIX 1	SITE REGISTERS	13
	Photographic register	13
APPENDIX 2	SITE GAZETTEER	14

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

ILLUS 1	VI
Site location	
ILLUS 2	5
Annotated architects plan	
ILLUS 3	10
1807 Survey of Bedford	
ILLUS 4	10
1841 Survey of Bedford	
ILLUS 5	10
Ordnance Survey 1st Edition, 1881	
ILLUS 6	10
Ordnance Survey 2nd Edition, 1901	
ILLUS 7	10
Ordnance Survey, 1926	



ILLUS 1
Site location

CLARENCE HOTEL, BEDFORD, BEDFORDSHIRE

Historic Building Recording

Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd was commissioned, by the Environmental Development Partnership acting as Agents to MBK Contracts Limited, to undertake a programme of historic building recording and documentary research at the former Clarence Hotel, St John's Street, Bedford.

The original structure, which appears to include the cellars and the core of the structure on the street frontage, appears to date from the Georgian period or earlier. This building has a timber-framed core, built out of re-used timbers from earlier, possibly medieval, buildings. Two later additions, in the form of the existing street frontage, an east-west range, and a first floor extension to the rear elevation are of 19th and 20th century date.

1 INTRODUCTION

Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd was commissioned by the Environmental Development Partnership (the agent) to undertake a programme of historic building recording and documentary research in response a planning application by MBK Contracts Ltd (13/02450/MAF), in relation to the demolition of the Clarence Hotel, 13 St John's Street, Bedford (Illus 1).

The proposed demolition would include the complete removal of the hotel, in advance of redevelopment of the plot at 13 St John's Street, and the construction of new community facilities. The buildings affected by the proposed redevelopment are considered heritage assets of local interest. In light of this the following condition was attached to planning permission (ref. 13/02450/MAF):

'No development shall take place until a building recording strategy has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The strategy shall include a timetable and the following components (the completion of each to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority will result in a separate confirmation of compliance for each component):

- building recording fieldwork;
- a post-recording assessment report (to be completed within six months of the completion of recording); and
- preparation of a site archive ready for deposition at a store approved by the Local Planning Authority, completion of an archive report, and submission of a publication report (to be completed within two years of the completion of the recording).

The recording strategy shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and timings.'

The Archaeological advisor to the planning authority (Mr Geoff Saunders) recommended a programme of historic building recording and documentary research relating to the requirement for a Level 3 Historic Building Recording in conjunction with *Understanding Historic Buildings – A Guide to Good Recording Practice*, (English Heritage 2006), be undertaken.

'Level 3 is an analytical record, and will comprise an introductory description followed by a systematic account of the building's origins, development and use. The record will include an account of the evidence on which the analysis has been based, allowing the validity of the record to be re-examined in detail. It will also include all drawn and photographic records that may be required to illustrate the building's appearance and structure and to support an historical analysis. The information contained in the record will for the most part have been obtained through an examination of the building itself. If documentary sources are used they are likely to be those which are most readily accessible, such as historic Ordnance Survey maps, trade directories and other published sources. The record will not normally discuss the building's broader stylistic or historical context and importance at any length. It may, however, form part of a wider survey – thematic or regional, for example – of a group of buildings, in which additional source material contributes to an overall historical and architectural synthesis. A Level 3 record may



also be appropriate when the fabric of a building is under threat but time or resources are insufficient for detailed documentary research, or where the scope for such research is limited.'

The written Scheme of Investigation (Kimber 2014) was submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning Authority's archaeological advisor. Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd carried out the approved programme of historic building recording works and documentary research at the end of April 2014.

2 SITE LOCATION

The site is approximately centred at National Grid reference TL 05117 49313 at an average height of 25m AOD, situated to the south of the River Ouse, within the medieval core of Bedford. The proposed development area is approximately 566m² in extent, and comprises the hotel buildings, as well as a small plot to the rear.

The solid geology of the site comprises sands and gravels of the Felmersham Group (www.bgs.ac.uk).

3 OBJECTIVES

The objective of the building survey was to produce annotated plans, a photographic record of the structure and gather primary and secondary historical information that would place the building in its architectural, social, and economic context.

4 METHOD

4.1 HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING

An historic building survey commensurate with English Heritage Level 3 was undertaken. A descriptive record with annotation of existing scaled plans and general internal and external photography combined with detailed analytic records, where appropriate, including brick measurements and phasing relationships alongside the documentary assessment. The scope of the work is summarised in the following points:

- general external and internal photographs of the main building and outbuildings that were affected by the development;
- a descriptive written record of these structures;
- annotated plans showing detail relevant to the interpretation of the main building and phasing;
- photographic records of details within the standing historic building fabric that either assist in its interpretation or may be lost during development;
- documentary research using readily available primary and secondary sources to assist in the interpretation of the history and phasing of the building;
- drawn records produced by annotation of existing architects' plans based on measurements taken in the field;

- existing drawings checked for accuracy while locations of photos were plotted on plans of each floor;
- phasing was recorded and illustrated on the final plans where it occurred within the structure;
- the structure was visited at two points during its demolition to collect further information.

5 DOCUMENTARY RESEARCH

A full archaeological desk-based assessment (which included the area occupied by the Clarence Hotel) was conducted by the agent (EDP, 2014) the relevant results of which are briefly summarised below:

To date the site of the Clarence Hotel has not been subject to any form of archaeological investigation. However the adjacent site to the south has been subject to a suite of archaeological works. Although the street frontage has been visibly occupied, with structures recorded on Early Modern town plans, there is no evidence for a construction date for the Hotel itself.

Although the lot occupied by the Hotel is not within the Bedford town conservation area, trial trenching has shown that there is a significant potential for archaeological preservation in the area. Previous work by Albion Archaeology, to the south of the current site, revealed concentrations of Saxo-Norman industrial activity, characterised by pit-digging and the deposition of metalworking debris and horn cores.

6 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

6.1 ST JOHN'S STREET, HISTORIC MAP PROGRESSION

The Clarence Hotel plot is first identified on the 1807 plan of Bedford, which shows structures on the street frontage, as well as a double plot of land. At this point no outbuildings are visible in the back yard. These had been added by the time of the 1836 survey, which clearly shows a long, narrow extension from the rear elevation of the range on the street frontage, along the northern edge of the yard. There is also a stand-alone structure at the western end of the plot. The 1836 survey records two structures standing side by side along the street frontage.

The subsequent plan of Bedford, published in 1841, shows no additions or subtractions to the site. The three ranges of buildings survived in the same form as before. However, by the time of the first Ordnance Survey in 1881, there had been a significant change.

The second structure which formerly occupied the street frontage with the Hotel had disappeared, in order to allow access to the hotel yard from St John's Street. The square structure thought to be the original hotel, with the range of outbuildings extending into the yard, had been augmented with an E-W aligned range, while the outbuildings themselves had been extended to run the

entire length and end of the plot. Two further ancillary structures were added to the south side of the yard.

Access to an area of pasture has also been extended at the SW corner of the back yard. This land is described as part of the 1904 leasehold between Benskins' Watford Brewery, and the tenant, Roy Pope. The 1901 Ordnance Survey shows the property at its zenith, in terms of development and the size of the lease-hold. The building and outbuildings are as they were in 1881, aside from an extension to the rear elevation of the main Hotel. By 1926, the pasture next to the king's ditch no longer appears to have been accessible from the hotel yard, suggesting that ostlery side of the hotel business no longer functioned.

6.2 CLARENCE HOTEL, AUCTION PAPERS, INVENTORIES AND LEASES

The history of the Clarence Hotel is recorded in a number of documents available in Bedford and Luton Archive and Records Service. The earliest mentions of the hotel are in two posters advertising the auction of leases to two properties in Up End, Kempston, Bedfordshire, in 1867, and again for two other properties in St Mary's Bedford, in 1871 (SF33/2/1 and SF6/18/1). The occasion of public auctions at the hotel suggest that it was acknowledged as a public meeting place and had the capacity to facilitate such an event.

Two inventories detail the internal fixtures, fittings and items of furniture at two important junctures in the history of the building. The first is dated 1876 (BMB4/1/6/7/1) and records the inventory of the hotel upon the occasion of Mr Solomon King taking up the tenancy. At this point the owner of the property was listed as Mr Edward Smith. The list of items is laid out room by room, covering the bar, the billiard room, the smoking and 'commercial' rooms, kitchen, scullery, pantry, wine cellar, beer cellar, coal house, tap room, six bedrooms, two attic rooms, a back room and several ancillary buildings, including a cow house, boiling house, brew house and stabling.

The detail of the bar and hotel interior demonstrates that it was well decorated, with oils, prints and engravings. Two stuffed buffalo heads were apparently on display in the downstairs passageway, the furniture is overwhelmingly described as mahogany, or stained mahogany, the smoking room alone was equipped with eleven iron spittoons. By 1876 the hotel was equipped with gas fittings throughout, while the smoking room and the guest bedrooms were equipped with a system of bell-pulls.

The outbuildings were also mentioned in the inventory produced for Solomon King. Their names, listed on the document, suggest that they were foci of industrial and agricultural activity, and that their purpose was to supply the hotel. The fact that The Clarence Hotel had a cow-house, brew-house and laundry, all involving a considerable amount of labour, demonstrates the integration of late 19th century commerce and production.

A further inventory of the property was taken in 1898 (SF6/27/2), as the Hotel passed from its owner, Mr Neil McVicar, to the Benskins

Watford Brewery. The 1898 document suggests a broadly similar layout, with the addition of the first floor extension to the rear of the building. A reconfiguration must have taken place at some point, as one of the bedrooms appears to have been transformed into an upstairs billiard room. A small parlour is also mentioned in this document, suggesting space for the tenant being added within the new extension.

Benskins Watford is mentioned again in correspondence between their solicitors and the solicitors of the then tenant, Roy Pope (HF53/13/3; HF53/13/16). Along with this correspondence is a plan of the lease-hold and the lease agreement (HF40/3/2/5), which show that the pasture to the West of the hotel yard was definitely within the bounds of the lease.

The buildings (as illustrated by the map progression) have been in constant use as a hotel since at least 1867. The information identified in the inventories suggest that for the majority of their life, the main range and outbuildings were used as a hotel, with the outbuildings serving as a laundry, brewery and ostlery.

7 BUILDING SURVEY

Survey of the Clarence Hotel took place on Tuesday 22nd April 2014. Access was granted to all areas of the property by the tenant. The interior survey of the property followed the guidelines set out for a level three building survey (English Heritage, 2006). An 18 megapixel digital single lens reflex camera, with an 18–55mm lens was used to record the interior and exterior, while a medium format camera was used to record the exterior elevations, using 120 black and white 400ASA film. A Leica disto was used to cross reference measurements as drawn in the architect's floor plans.

8 RESULTS

8.1 SETTING OF BUILDINGS

Streetscape and position on frontage

Despite the fact that St John's Street is within the medieval core of Bedford, the Clarence Hotel is unique in its survival from the 19th century. The pace of development has meant that its contemporary structures have been subsumed by late 20th century buildings. The nearest medieval structure is the nearby parish church of St Mary's which lies to the NE of the current site. To the south of the development site there is an empty lot, while to the north there is a range of modern shops and apartments.

Curtilage and grounds

The hotel yard exists as a temporary tarmac surface. The range of buildings on the south side of the yard has been removed, as has the range at the western end. The northern range of outbuildings survives as a flat roofed structure, conjoined with the rear elevation of the hotel building, although it no longer extends the entire



length of the yard plot. This small range houses the cellar, carbon dioxide and barrel store, as well as a small store for wood. The flat roof, which is felted, has begun to collapse due to the disintegration of its supporting timbers.

8.2 THE CLARENCE HOTEL

Exterior

The late 19th century frontage of the building has survived in its contemporary form, with the exterior of the street level walls finished in salt-glazed brickwork. A street-level entrance is visible at the north end of the front elevation, although this has been blocked in and no longer functions. The rear elevation of the building has been harled, obscuring the form of the structure. Elsewhere the exterior has been left as exposed red brick. Modern signage has been added to the external elevation, with additional lighting, advertising the hotel in its current format. An extension to the first floor is betrayed by a change in the colour of the brickwork. It was constructed partially over the kitchen/store/scullery block of the second phase, and partially over the yard, supported by structural ironwork and brick columns. A cast iron staircase and banister attached to the rear elevation affords access to this portion of the building. The structural ironwork which holds up the overhanging portion of the extension is marked Dorman Long, Middlesbrough.

General form

The structure is L-shaped in plan. The ground floor is taken up by the contemporary bar and lounge area, with toilets, a ground floor kitchen and store, and the cellar area. The first floor includes eight guest rooms, a kitchen, bathroom and boiler room, while the second floor contains two guest rooms, and a WC.

The roof itself is of gabled construction; under the northern gable there is an obviously exposed area of weatherboarding which may be a relic of the original structure. The short roof at the rear elevation, finished in slate in common with the rest of the structure, is hipped towards the rear, with the east end intersecting with the roof of the main range. The frontage of the structure includes three sash windows which are most likely contemporary with the second phase of the hotel. A single Palladian window, with a central arched section and flat headed sections to either side, is situated at the northern end of the front elevation.

Two chimney stacks (01 and 02) are present on the front elevation of the hotel, with a further single stack on the rear (03). Where the two frontage stacks appear inside the structure on the second floor, they are constructed with 2.5inch x 9inch bricks. The stack at the north end of the front elevation (01) is situated below the ridge of the roof, in line with the apex of the weatherboarding on the North elevation (see 000), while the others (02 and 03) are slightly offset from the ridge, suggesting that stack 01 belongs to an earlier phase of the structure.

West elevation (rear)

The rear elevation is masked with a harled render, in direct contrast with the rest of the structure, which is characterised by brickwork.

The ground floor entrance to the bar area is through a modern fire door, which is set into a porch. Internal windows inside the porch are leaded glass, suggesting that this rear access to the hotel was formerly more elaborate.

Two sash windows are visible on the rear elevation of the core structure: on the ground floor the sash window has been altered to swing open, and has been fitted with security bars, while the example on the first floor, guest room 5, survives intact with its original mechanism fully functioning. On the first floor, guest room 7 has kept an original single pane latch window, with cast iron fittings. The window in guest room 7 sits above and to the left of its predecessor, suggesting that the original floor of the room was at the same height as the others on the first floor. The roof has been altered with the addition of two dormer windows to the second floor attic rooms.

East elevation (street facing)

The east facing elevation consists of salt glazed bricks terminating in a decorative cornice at the first floor. The first and second floors are constructed from plain brickwork, which in the hotel's current guise, is painted red. On the first floor, four sash windows have survived: two are located through the earlier frontage; the second pair is located within the second phase building. Along the ground floor there are three sash windows, and a more ornate Palladian style window at the north end of the elevation.

There are two entrances set into the frontage of the structure: a central set of double doors, opening into the lobby area, and a single door (now blocked up) opening into the bar. The central doors are protected by a pair of substantial weather doors enclosing a porch area.

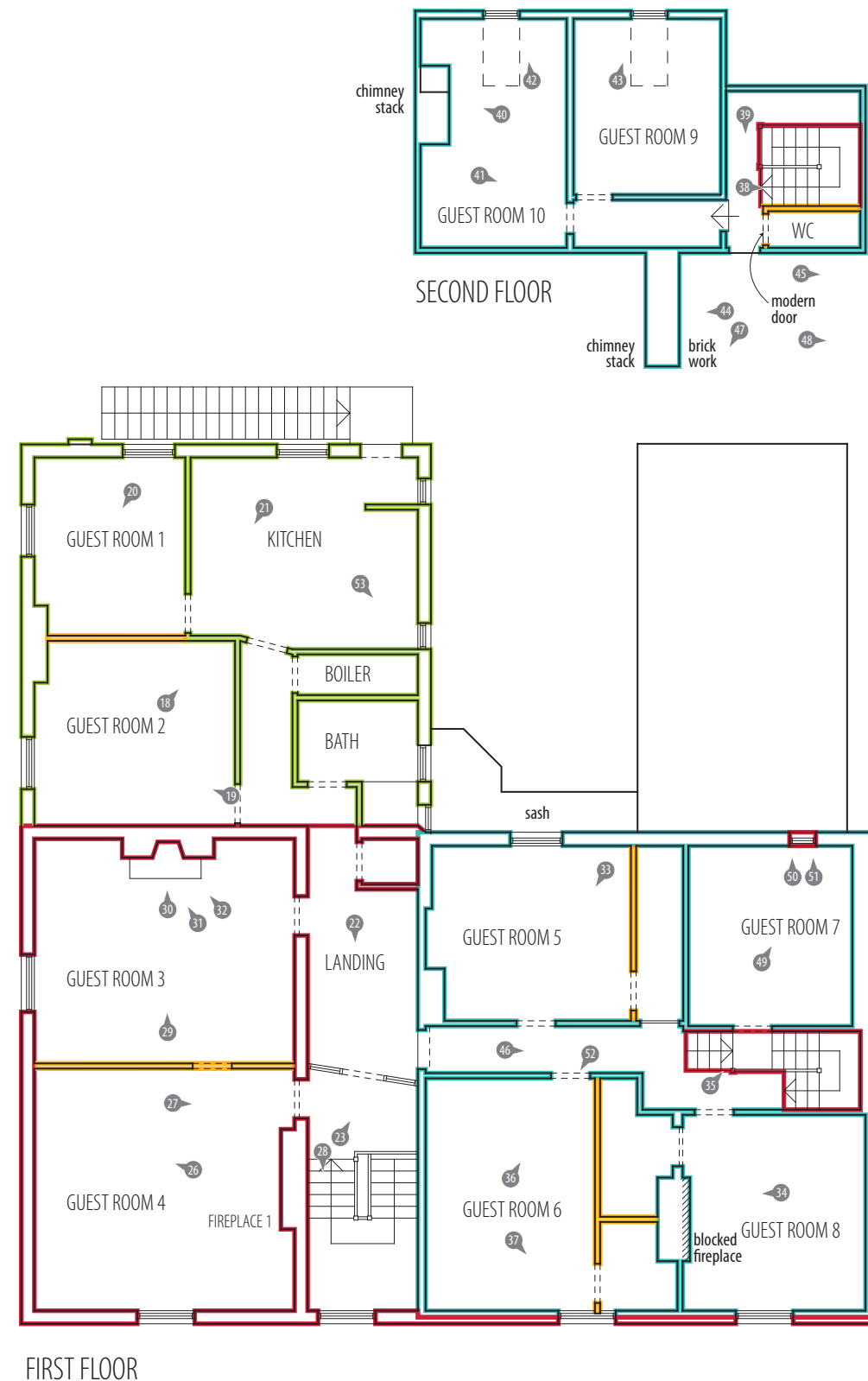
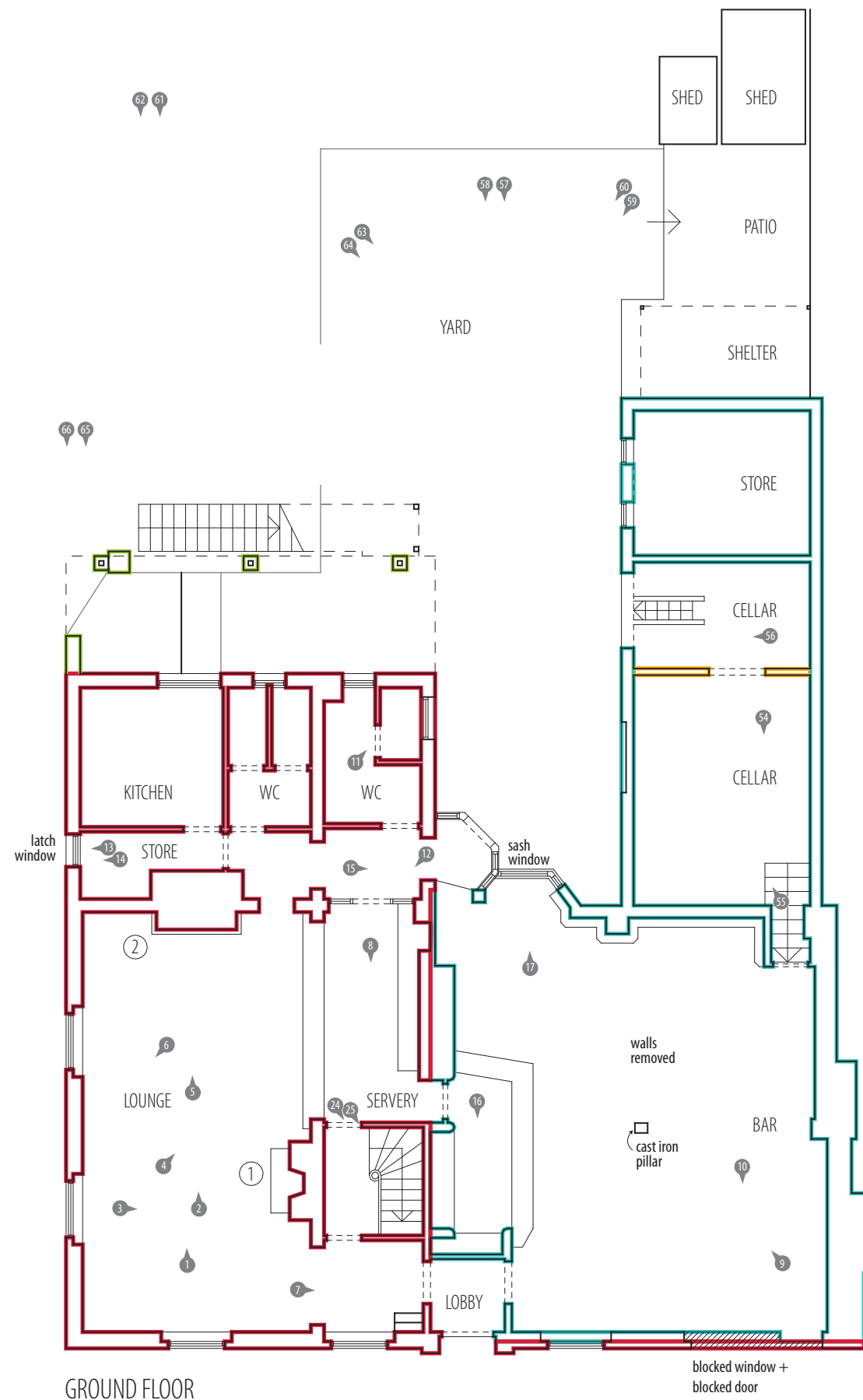
South elevation

The south facing elevation faces onto the access to the rear of the hotel and the yards; it is constructed from regular 2.5inch x 9inch red bricks, which have been left clean. There is evidence of a single blocked in window on the ground floor, which would have let light into the space which is currently used as a kitchen. The former kitchen window has been replaced by a smaller sash window – opening into the kitchen store. It is likely that the blocking of the larger window came about as a reaction to increased loading on the exterior wall of the kitchen, as the first floor extension was inserted over this space.

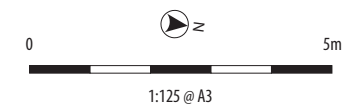
Interior

Lobby

The entrance to the building from the street frontage is through a set of double doors, protected by a set of storm doors all of which are finished with brass handles, lock mechanisms and escutcheons. The space between forms a small porch, the floor of which is tiled; the porch opens into a small lobby space, with an entrance into the lounge to the left, and the bar to the right. The wall directly in front, as one walks into the entrance, separates the lobby from the main staircase.



- KEY
- phase 1 (1807–41)
 - phase 2 (1841–81)
 - phase 3 (1881–1904)
 - phase 4 (1920–)
- photo directions



Illus 2
Annotated architects plan

Bar

The bar is a square space, taking up the entire northern half of the ground floor. There is a single supporting column in the centre of the space. The server is on the south side of the room. The sash window mentioned on the rear elevation occupies the SW corner, while in the NW corner of the room there is access to the cellars, down a short flight of stairs. Several internal partition walls appear to have been removed from the bar area, in order to provide an open space. The remains of the partition walls are visible as stubs, while their positions suggest they once divided the single space into three separate spaces, which may account for the smoking room, billiard room and commercial room on the 1876 inventory of the property.

The original floor surface has been obscured by carpeting and lino, and was not visible during the visit. Elsewhere on the ground floor, the surfaces are a mix of pine floorboards and ceramic tiles. The ceiling of the bar area has been significantly altered to incorporate a sprinkler system, lighting rails, and associated fireproofing materials. Unlike the lounge (see below) none of the original fixtures and fitting have survived. The room is furnished with modern bar furniture and a single pool table, which occupies the centre of the room.

Cellars

The cellars are accessed from an entrance and stairs in the NW corner of the bar area. Leading down into the cellar area, directly opposite the entrance, a breeze-block wall has been inserted half way across the space dividing the cellar into a barrel store and a sealed carbon dioxide store with a galvanised steel door. Inside the CO₂ store there is an additional entrance into the cellar from the yard with a set of stairs and a barrel ramp.

Service passage

The service passage runs from the rear entrance of the bar, accessing the serving space, the lounge, toilets and kitchen. Egress into the beer garden and yard is at the north end of the passageway. The ceiling is decorated with a plain plaster cornice, while the floor is finished with lead glazed, 6inch square red earthenware tiles. These run the length of the passage and into the toilets, kitchen and kitchen store. The rear entrance juts out from the main structure, enclosing the end of the passageway. Here, the space either side of the door is taken up with glazed windows, complementing the door, the top half of which also has glass panels.

Toilets

The male and female toilets are situated on the rear elevation of the phase 2 structure. The male toilets retain a white stoneware urinal and toilet, with underglaze stamped makers marks, while the female toilets have more modern fittings. Two explanations could account for this difference: either that the female toilets have been recently replaced, or that they are a more recent addition. If they are a more recent addition, it could account for the disappearance of the scullery, which is mentioned on the 1876 inventory, but is not in evidence today.

Kitchen

The kitchen is roughly square in plan, and is complemented with modern fixtures and fittings, including gas burners, a large stainless steel flame hood, and a plethora of fridges and freezers. The interior surfaces have been covered with white stoneware tiles, obscuring

any structural modifications, such as the blocked in window on the southern elevation.

Kitchen Store

The kitchen store has been heavily adapted, with MDF shelving units obscuring the single casement window. This window retains its ironwork fittings.

Lounge

The hotel lounge is rectangular in plan, and includes the server space which occupies the northern side of the room. The floor has been preserved as bare pine floorboards, measuring 4.5inch across, with lengths ranging between 8 and 12 feet. On the eastern side of the lounge, sash windows have been retained, whereas on the southern side they have been replaced with UPVC units. The ceiling is decorated with a plaster relief pattern, with decorative plaster friezes around the chandelier mounts and a simple cornice around the ceiling border.

Two fireplaces remain in situ, one of which, at the west end of the room, has been blocked up. Both retain a protective cordon made up of lead glazed red earthenware tiles, each measuring 9inch square. The intact fireplace is brick construction with a simple tile arch. The grate appears to be a contemporary 19th century design. The bar furniture comprises a number of stools and chairs with lathe-turned legs, although there is no definite evidence which would suggest a 19th century date. A single round lounge table with a mahogany surface was recorded, the body of which is of decorated ironwork, consistent with objects mentioned in the 1876 inventory.

Staircase and landing

The staircase and landing are located at the eastern end of the lounge serving area. Here, the other side of the wall which was visible upon entry into the lobby is visible, and appears to have been blocked in, with the space under the stairs re-purposed as a storage cupboard. Access in order to inspect these elements was not possible during the HBR survey.

The staircase itself appears to be of masonry construction, with an ironwork banister and mahogany rail. The balusters are a simple square profile design, but there does appear to have been some elements of decorative plasterwork, forming a border around the stairs themselves. This is obscured in some parts by the modern cupboard, which appears to have been made using MDF or a similar material.

On the first floor, the staircase opens onto a small landing, where access to the rest of the first floor is blocked by a thin glazed stub wall, with a large glazed doorway. Through the door, the landing continues leading right into a range of guest rooms, and straight on to the domestic space to the rear of the building. On the left of the landing are the entrances to GR3 and GR4.

Upstairs kitchen

The upstairs kitchen, accessed through the landing and passageway running E-W from the main staircase, appears to have been a domestic space, as opposed to the downstairs kitchen, which is a commercial workspace. It has been fitted with MDF and Formica worktops and units, a stainless steel sink and other late 20th century



fixtures and fittings, some of which are at odds with the late 19th century architecture. For example, the worktops were above the level of the window sills. In the south eastern corner of the room, a serving hatch opens into GR2.

Guest rooms 1 and 2 (GR1/GR2)

GR1/2 was formerly a larger room, broken into two guest rooms, GR1 and GR2, by a modern stud partition wall. The shared hatch with the kitchen suggests an extension of domestic space, possibly as a dining room and living room, before the insertion of the partition wall.

Bathroom/boiler room

A bathroom and boiler room are situated across the hallway from GR2. A modern boiler has been fitted into a room which had previously been used as a storage cupboard. Bare pine floorboards making up the floor surface measure 7.5inch across, distinctly different to those on the ground floor lounge. The bathroom has been updated recently with modern stoneware and plastic fittings.

Guest rooms 3 and 4 (GR3/GR4)

GR3/4 has been split along its short access to form two smaller guest bedrooms GR3 and GR4. The main feature of GR3 is the neoclassical fireplace situated on the western wall, sharing the chimney-stack with the blocked in fireplace in the lounge area. The decorative elements of the fireplace in GR3 include strings of hanging garlands arranged around a central urn. This motif is a feature of Georgian interior design, and appears out of step with the map evidence for this phase of the building. However, it is possible that the decorative surround has been relocated from a location in the earlier phase of the building.

GR4 also includes a large chimney breast, which was obscured by a double bed during the original survey, but appears to have been blocked up. This fireplace would have shared a stack with the open fireplace in the lounge. Both rooms share another feature in common: their doors into the common hallway include a small viewing portal, which may have doubled to show a 'duty' sign, suggesting that members of the hotel staff were allocated these rooms. GR3 and GR4 also maintain their original sash windows.

Passageway

This passageway leads from the first floor landing, taking a step down, and running along the central N-S axis of the hotel. The ceiling in the passageway is around 3.5m high, until, just before reaching the stairs at the north end, it drops, connecting the partition wall between GR6 and GR8 with the partition between GR5 and GR7, for the second floor forming a load bearing arch for the second floor.

Guest room 5 (GR5)

This room overlooks the hotel yard from the first floor rear elevation. Roughly rectangular in plan, it has an adjoining bathroom at the north end, which is accessible through an entrance which appears to be a modern insertion. The partition wall between the guest room and the bathroom appears to be a 19th century addition to the structure, as the bathroom has previously been accessible from the main passageway. This suggests that the bathroom attached to GR5 is the WC mentioned in the 1898 inventory, which evidently would have been accessible from the passage. The estimate of a

19th century date for the wall suggests that it is constructed from lath and plaster.

Floor surfaces are carpeted, although wear and tear to the fabric allowed inspection of the floorboards underneath, which appear to be pine, measuring 7.5inch across. In the south eastern corner of the room, the corner is taken up by the chimney breast. It is impossible to tell whether this room could have held a fireplace, although there is no sign of a fireproof surface protecting the floorboards directly in front of the fire. This chimney reappears in the attic rooms, where it is again without a fireplace, suggesting that the original hearth connected to this flue was situated on the ground floor, and removed as part of the opening up of the bar area.

A single sash window looks out from the rear elevation of the building. The fixtures to the window appear to be intact, and the mechanism is in working order. A mahogany side table was noted in GR5, similar in description to items mentioned in the 1876 inventory.

Guest room 6 (GR6)

GR6 and the adjacent GR8 have both been heavily modified during the latter half of the 20th century. In order to provide en-suite bathrooms to both rooms, a partition has been inserted into the northern end of GR6, accommodating toilets and showers. This alteration is most obvious in GR6, where it is apparent that the internal partition, constructed of plasterboard, has been inserted into the space with little sympathy for the original layout of the building.

The ceiling of GR6 is decorated in a similarly plain fashion to that elsewhere in this part of the building, with a simple plaster cornice. Wallpaper appears to be a late 20th century design, and where it is disintegrating, there did not appear to be any previous designs surviving underneath. GR6 lacks a fireplace, in its current layout. The insertion of the bathroom into its north end, where it shares a chimney breast with GR8, is obscured by modern bathroom fittings. A single sash window looks out from the front elevation of the building. A wooden sash window with metal fixings was noted, looking out from the street facing elevation of the building. No original furnishings are present in GR6.

Guest room 7 (GR7)

GR7 is accessible from a landing on the flight of stairs leading up to the second floor of the core structure. The room is undecorated with a plain ceiling and walls. A single window looks out onto the rear elevation of the building, and has 19th century cast iron handles and a latch. A second, blocked in window is visible, lower and adjacent to the current window, which suggests that GR7 was formerly on the same level as the other rooms on the first floor. The change in the level of the floor, and the apparent movement of the window, is discussed below.

Guest room 8 (GR8)

GR8 is located facing out of the frontage of the building. The southern wall of the room is occupied by a large chimney breast within which there is a blocked in fireplace. The room is roughly square in plan. A single sash window faces out onto St John's Street; otherwise there appear to be no original features or fittings

surviving. The entrance to the en-suite bathroom has knocked through one of the original walls of the structure – making the en-suite effectively inside GR6.

Guest room 9 and 10 (GR9/GR10)

GR9 and GR10 are situated on the second floor of the structure inside the roof space. Inspection of the hallway on the second floor revealed a small door with potentially 18th century ironwork fittings, allowing access into the roof space. It is possible that the door has been re-used and cut down to fit (Julie Franklin pers. comm.). There is a distinct change between the structure of the roof, which was found to be made up of sawn beams, and the structural elements visible in the interior of the second floor which appear to have been split down the grain.

Split timbers included a cross-beam visible on the second floor stairs, two beams running along the length of the building, inside the hall, GR9 and GR10, and the timbers supporting the plaster and lath walls of the hall, GR9 and GR10. Both GR9 and GR10 are rectangular in plan, each has a single dormer window facing onto the rear elevation of the structure. Each also has ledged doors, with a set of three hooks attached to the inward face. The south wall of GR10 is dominated by a large chimney, constructed from 2.5inch x 9inch bricks, but lacking a fireplace. GR9 lacks any form of internal heating whatsoever. A modern toilet has also been added to the second floor.

9 WATCHING BRIEF

The hotel was visited after the removal of the roof, fixtures and fittings of the building, allowing observations to be made of the building fabric, and the alterations made to the original structure. A clear change in the building materials was recorded on the boundary between the north and south halves of the main building. The wall behind the lounge and the bar was shown to consist of unfrogged bricks, while the remainder of the lounge included frogged, machine-made bricks bonded with cement mortar.

The fireplace in GR3, which was originally interpreted as an early 19th century fitting had been removed by the demolition team at the time of the second visit, and was found to have been covering over a more modern, early 20th century fireplace surround (photo 77). The supposition in this case is that the earlier fireplace surround was recovered from the ground floor around the time that the bar area was remodelled, and inserted upstairs.

Several patches of block printed wallpaper survived, one showing a grape vine motif, and the other – behind the staircase leading from first to second floor - a more complicated architectural design (photo 78).

Removal of wall render within the bar area showed timber framing with brick infill beneath in the north gable wall (photo 79). Further demolition of the structure (photo 80) uncovered the remains of a timber-framed building, comprising the north gable wall and the western wall of the bar area. The building appears to have been constructed in two bays of at least two storeys in a post and beam construction, using mortice-and-tenon jointing. The panels in the north elevation were square, railed and infilled with brick;

those in the western elevation had been heavily affected by later alterations but appeared to have narrower spacing between the studs (photo 81). Brick in-fill appeared to have been removed (if ever present), some panels on the western elevation had lath and plaster cladding on both exterior and internal faces (photo 82) – a technique that became popular in the eastern counties of England from the early seventeenth century onwards (Brunskill 1994, p.110). A stop-chamfered timber was used as a vertical post (photo 81) on the rear elevation of the building.

10 DISCUSSION

The structure was found to consist of four phases of construction. The first, detailed in plans of Bedford published in 1836 and 1841 and probably dating to the 17th century or later; consisted of a timber-framed structure with a square plan. The second included an E-W extension to the south end of the original core, while the third included a late 19th century first floor extension to the rear of the building. The fourth phase consisted of an internal re-ordering of space, and dates to the early/mid 20th century.

10.1 PHASE 1 (C17TH–1841)

The surviving timber fabric of this phase appears to have been limited to the northern and western elevations. The southern wall of the bar has been so heavily altered that it is difficult to relate to the timber structure, however the use of hand-made bricks in places suggests it may also be contemporary.

The bar area appears to have had a series of internal walls removed, evidenced by the remains of stubs visible in the internal elevations. At least one of these original internal walls must have served as a load bearing part of the structure – possibly with a timber tie-beam – as it has been replaced by a central cast iron pillar, supporting the first and second floors on a steel joist.

On the first floor, the first phase includes guest rooms 5–8. The route of the stairs appears to have changed as the first phase was modified and incorporated into the latter structure: this change is visible in GR7, where the floor surface has been raised to respect a new entrance opening onto the stair landing and where an older layer of wallpaper was covered by the new stairs. Further evidence for the floor level change in GR7 is shown by the re-positioning and raising of the window overlooking the back yard.

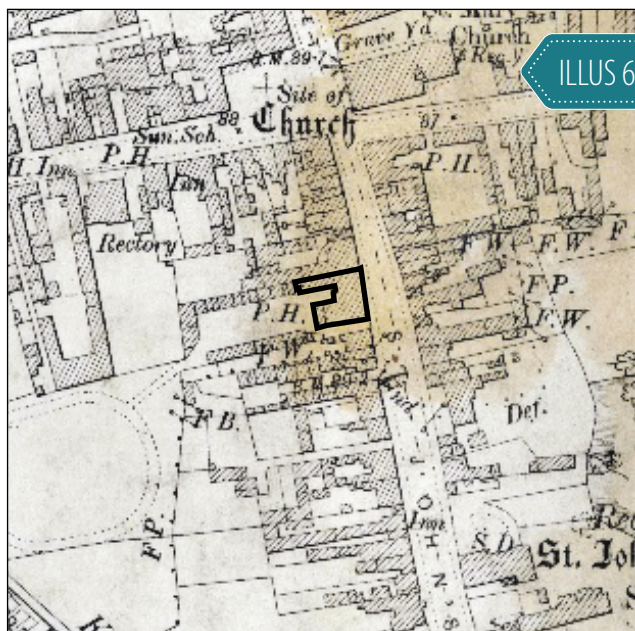
The second floor demonstrates the strongest evidence for a pre-19th century date for the first phase of the structure: here the structural timbers are visible and show evidence of modification, allowing access for the new set of stairs from the first floor, and a distinct change in carpentry techniques between the longitudinal beams and plaster and lath walls, which include split timbers, and the roof (thought to be a late 19th century addition), which is entirely made up of sawn timber. The tenons visible in the first/second floor stairwell suggest a possible re-use of timber from an even earlier structure, while the presence of a stop-chamfered timber in the rear elevation of the bar was noted during the watching brief on the demolition works. Stop chamfered timber beams of this size are primarily found in buildings dating to the 16th century or earlier, and



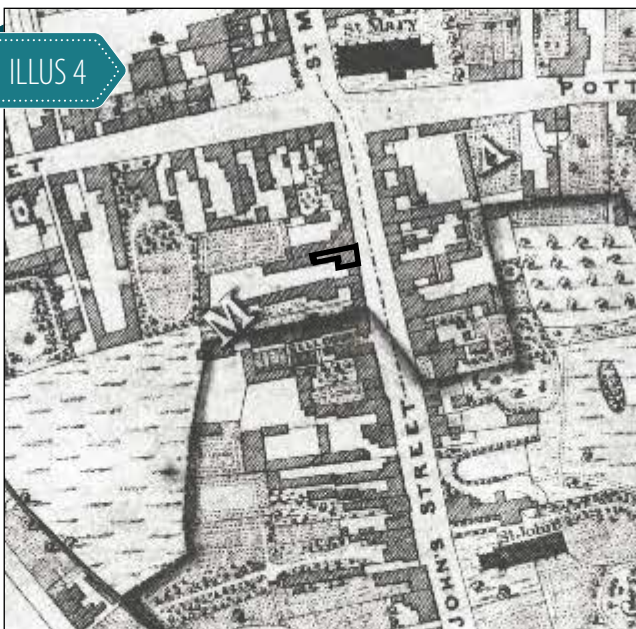
ILLUS 3



ILLUS 6



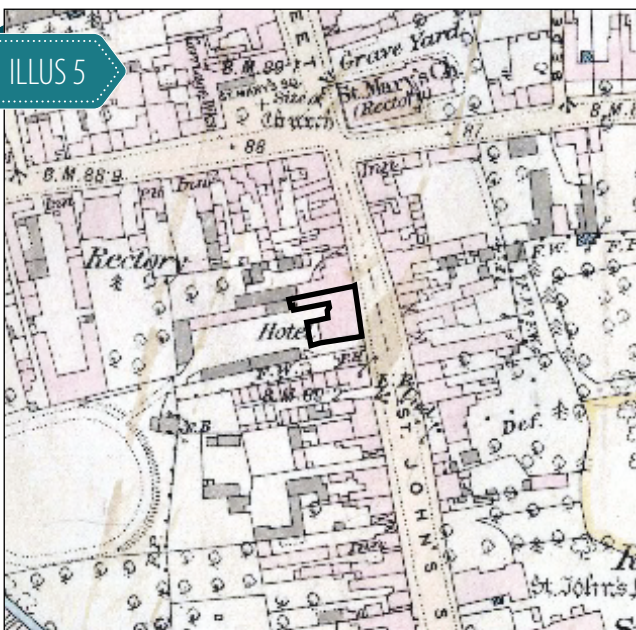
ILLUS 4



ILLUS 7



ILLUS 5



ILLUS 3

1807 Survey of Bedford

ILLUS 4

1841 Survey of Bedford

ILLUS 5

Ordnance Survey 1st Edition, 1881

ILLUS 6

Ordnance Survey 2nd Edition, 1901

ILLUS 7

Ordnance Survey, 1926

are commonly used as ceiling beams, not uprights. This suggests that the phase 1 structure incorporated timbers recycled from at least one late-medieval structure.

Further evidence of an early date for phase 1 is suggested by the presence of a door on the second floor with wrought strap hinges attached with at least one wrought nail, a style which is present in English vernacular architecture from the medieval to the early 19th century (Julie Franklin pers. comm.).

10.2 PHASE 2 (1841–1881)

The second phase of construction, consisting of a red-brick extension to the south and west of the phase 1 structure, appears to have followed the demolition of another building which shared the frontage onto St John's Street, to the south of the phase 1 structure. Demolition of the southern structure would have allowed access to the yard from the street, enabling the development of the ancillary areas around the yard, such as stabling, the brew house and wash house, which supplemented the hotel. The homogeneity of the frontage suggests that the entire elevation was re-constructed enveloping the frontage of the early core structure, however the difference in style between the sash and Palladian windows could suggest some elements of the original structure were incorporated into the second phase.

The interior of the second stage includes the lounge, which is finished with typically late 19th century mass produced earthenware tiles, brick and ironwork, the downstairs kitchen, kitchen store and toilets. In GR3, there is a well preserved neoclassical fireplace, which has been re-used, possibly salvaged from the phase 1 structure or its demolished sister building which stood to the south. The correspondence between the room descriptions in the 1876 and 1898 inventories and the modern floor plan is not immediately clear. The 1876 inventory describes a smoking room, as well as a billiard room and a commercial room, while the 1898 description suggests the addition of an extra billiard room upstairs. Some of this could be accounted for by the removal of partition walls in the bar area, combining one of the billiard rooms and the smoking room. The upstairs billiard room may have been divided into GR3 and GR4, alternatively GR6, less its modern en-suite bathroom, could have housed a billiard table, with enough room around the side for movement and selection of shots.

10.3 PHASE 3 (1881–1904)

The third phase is easier to tie down chronologically, as it appears as an addition between the 1881 and 1904 ordnance survey maps. On the 1901 sheet it is clearly marked with the contemporary convention for an above-ground extension. The structural steelwork was provided by Dorman Long, a fabricator based in Middlesbrough, who later provided the components for the Tyne and Sydney Harbour Bridges (www.dormanlongtechnology.com). The extension is currently used as a domestic space, having been fitted with a modern kitchen. Guest rooms 1 and 2 appear to have been one single room, with a server hatch to the kitchen, suggesting a former use as a dining room.

10.4 PHASE 4 (1920–)

The fourth phase consisted of a series of modifications to the interior, throughout the hotel, including the removal of all the interior walls inside the bar area, producing an open plan space. Upstairs, in an attempt to ensure that all guest rooms were supplied with en-suite facilities, a series of partition walls were inserted into GR5, GR6, and GR8, while GR3 and 4 were created by dividing a larger room into two smaller units. The same procedure was used to create GR1 and GR2.

11 CONCLUSION

Survey and documentary research into the Clarence Hotel has demonstrated that the building consists of three major phases of development: a hitherto undated core structure, which includes potentially 17th to early 19th century fittings, and a split timber-frame construction, a mid 19th century extension along the street frontage, and a late 19th century extension to the 1st floor rear elevation. Documentary evidence in the Bedford and Luton archives has provided an idea as to how the building was furnished in the late 19th century. The documentary and survey evidence point to an apparent rise in the fortunes of the Clarence Hotel, its owners and tenants in the 19th century. By the time of the first surviving inventory, The Clarence Hotel appears to have been finished to a high standard with a new extension to the original building, complementing the new ranges of outbuildings supplying the hotel.

The removal of the partition walls in the contemporary bar, and the dividing up of the upstairs rooms to provide more guest rooms in the 20th century can be seen as a change in the expectations of modern hotel guests, if also a decline in the fortunes of the Clarence Hotel as a commercial enterprise. In 1867 it was clearly afforded the status of a desirable public meeting place, so much so that it was a venue for property auctions. Much of the trade for the Clarence Hotel must have come from its position on the main road from London, and Bedford's position as a crossing point over the River Ouse leading towards Peterborough and the north. Its location probably ensured a constant influx of relatively wealthy patrons for whom space and facilities were at a premium.

With the advent of the train and the motor car, it is evident that the nature of the Clarence Hotel was irreversibly changed, the emphasis changing from the quality of the facilities on offer to the number of guests the hotel was able to accommodate. Following the turn of the century, and the purchase of the Hotel from Mr Neil McVicar by the Benskins Watford Brewery, The Clarence Hotel appears to have ceased functioning as a coaching stop, with stabling and associated outbuildings. These disappeared from the historic maps, until by 1926 the hotel stood alone and arrived in its present state.



12 SOURCES

12.1 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Brunskill, RW 1994 *Timber Building in Britain*, Victor Gollancz, London.

English Heritage 2006 *Understanding Historic Buildings – A Guide to Good Recording Practice*.

12.2 COUNTY RECORDS OFFICE

SF33/2/1 – Auction Poster 1867 *Sale of Two Brick and Slate Cottages by George Greene*.

SF6/18/1 – Auction Poster 1871 *Sale of Brick and Slate Dwelling House by George Greene*.

BMB4/1/6/7/1 – 1876 *Inventory of Valuation Furniture and Fixtures at the Clarence Hotel, Bedford, Property of Mr Edward Smith and Taken by the Incoming Tenant, Mr Solomon King*.

SF6/27/2 – 1898 *Inventory of Valuation of Fixtures and Fittings, Mr Neil McVicar to Messrs. Benskins*.

HF53/13/3 – *Letter from Benskins Watford Brewery*.

HF53/13/16 – *Letter from Roy Pope*.

HF40/3/2/5 – 1904 *Lease Agreement Between Blenkins Watford Brewery and Mr Roy Pope*.

12.3 HISTORIC MAPS

1807 *Brayley Map of Bedford* <<http://www.bedfordshire.gov.uk/CommunityAndLiving/ArchivesAndRecordOffice/CommunityArchives/Bedford/BrayleyMapOfBedfordOf1807.aspx>> (accessed 12/05/2014).

1836 *Untitled Map of Bedford* <<http://www.bedfordshire.gov.uk/CommunityAndLiving/ArchivesAndRecordOffice/CommunityArchives/Bedford/BedfordMapOf1836.aspx>> (accessed 12/05/2014).

1841 *Reynolds Map of Bedford* <<http://www.bedfordshire.gov.uk/CommunityAndLiving/ArchivesAndRecordOffice/CommunityArchives/Bedford/ReynoldsMapOfBedfordOf1841.aspx>> (accessed 12/05/2014).

1881 *Ordnance Survey Map of Bedford* <<http://www.bedfordshire.gov.uk/CommunityAndLiving/ArchivesAndRecordOffice/CommunityArchives/Bedford/OrdnanceSurveyMapOfBedfordOf1881.aspx>> (accessed 12/05/2014).

1901 *Ordnance Survey Map of Bedford* <<http://www.bedfordshire.gov.uk/CommunityAndLiving/ArchivesAndRecordOffice/CommunityArchives/Bedford/OrdnanceSurveyMapOfBedfordOf1901.aspx>> (accessed 12/05/2014).

1926 *Ordnance Survey Map of Bedford* <<http://www.bedfordshire.gov.uk/CommunityAndLiving/ArchivesAndRecordOffice/CommunityArchives/Bedford/OrdnanceSurveyMapOfBedfordOf1926.aspx>> (accessed 12/05/2014).

12.4 ONLINE SOURCES

BGS 2012a 'Geological Map of Great Britain' in *The British Geological Survey*, <<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>> (accessed September 2014).

Dorman Long Technology <www.dormanlongtechnology.com> (accessed 12/05/2014)

13 APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 SITE REGISTERS

Photographic register

Photo	Description
01	Chandelier and plasterwork in lounge
02	Chandeliers in lounge area
03	Open fireplace in lounge
04	Servery in lounge
05	Blocked fireplace in lounge
06	Extractor fan
07	Lounge entrance from street
08	Lounge servery interior
09	Bar general view
10	Blocked window and door in bar
11	Gents toilet – appears original
12	Lounge servery entrance showing interior glass and leadwork
13	Latch window – kitchen store (detail)
14	Latch window – kitchen store
15	Interior glazing – back entrance
16	Bar servery, interior
17	Altered sash window – bar area
18	Seving hatch and inserted partition wall – GR2
19	General shot – GR2
20	Inserted partition wall – GR1
21	Servery hatch – upstairs kitchen
22	Hotel entrance – first floor
23	Light fitting – stairwell
24	Main staircase – ground floor, from lounge servery
25	Main staircase – ground floor, from lounge servery
26	Inserted partition wall – GR4
27	Door to GR4 showing detail
28	Main staircase – first floor
29	Fireplace GR3
30	Fireplace detail GR3

Photo	Description
31	Fireplace detail GR3
32	Fireplace detail GR3
33	Possible exterior wall in GR5
34	Fireplace GR8
35	Entrance to GR7
36	Interior partition GR6
37	Interior partition obscuring window GR6
38	Structural beam showing in stairs to second floor
39	Entrance to roofspace second floor
40	Chimney flue, GR10
41	Reverse of ledged door, GR10
42	Dormer window GR10
43	Dormer window GR9
44	Flue brickwork inside roofspace
45	roofspace showing structural timbers
46	first floor hall interior
47	Structural timber in roofspace
48	Interior of roofspace
49	Interior of GR7 showing two phases of window
50	Detail of GR7 latch
51	Detail of GR7 latch
52	Door name plate – GR6
53	Sash window in upstairs kitchen
54	Interior of cellar
55	Interior of cellar
56	Interior of carbon dioxide store – barrel chute
57	Rear elevation exterior
58	Rear elevation exterior
59	Rear elevation exterior showing phase 3
60	Rear elevation exterior showing phase 3
61	Rear elevation exterior showing phase 3
62	Rear elevation exterior showing phase 3
63	Exterior of cellar
64	Exterior of cellar
65	Detail shot of Ironwork in phase 3 extension
66	Detail shot of Ironwork in phase 3 extension
67	S facing elevation of building
68	S facing elevation of building

Photo	Description
69	Detail shot of Ironwork in phase 3 extension
70	Detail shot of Ironwork in phase 3 extension
71	S facing elevation of building
72	S facing elevation of building
73	Street frontage
74	Street frontage
75	Street frontage
76	Street frontage



APPENDIX 2 SITE GAZETTEER



PHOTO 004
Servery in lounge

PHOTO 008
Lounge server interior



PHOTO 009

Bar general view

PHOTO 012

Lounge server entrance showing interior glass and leadwork



PHOTO 017

Altered sash window – bar area

PHOTO 018

Serving hatch and inserted partition wall, GR02



PHOTO 020
Inserted partition wall, GR01



PHOTO 021
Servery hatch – upstairs kitchen

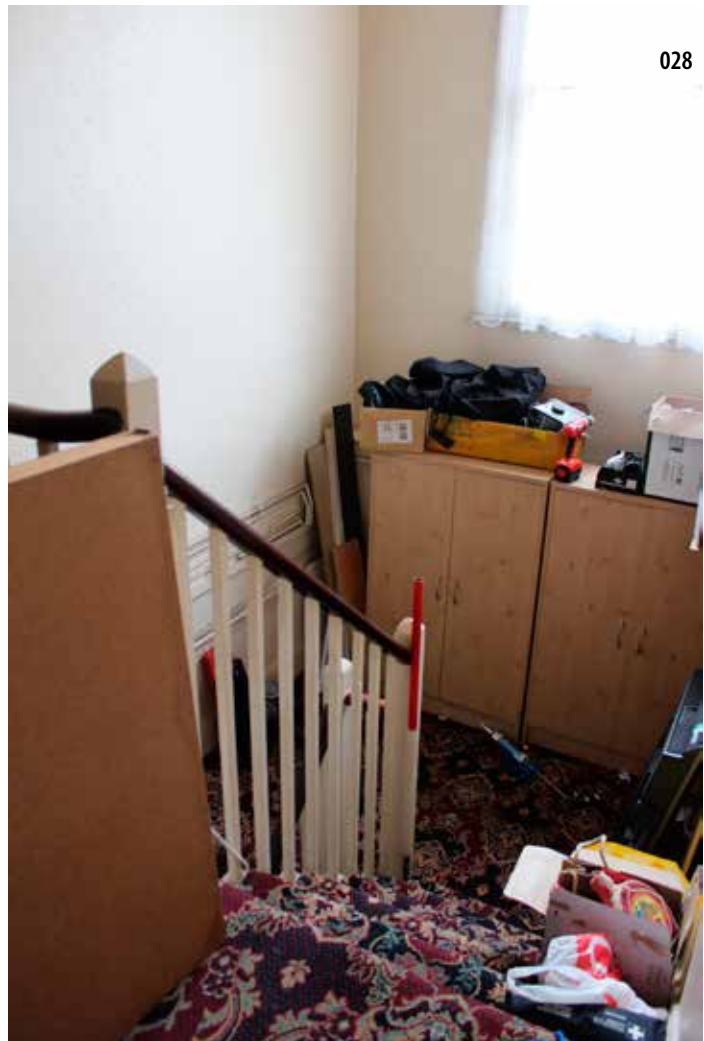


PHOTO 022
Hotel entrance – first floor

PHOTO 025
Main staircase – ground floor, from lounge servery



026



028

PHOTO 026
Inserted partition wall, GR04

PHOTO 028
Main staircase – first floor



PHOTO 029
Fireplace, GR03

PHOTO 030
Fireplace detail, GR03

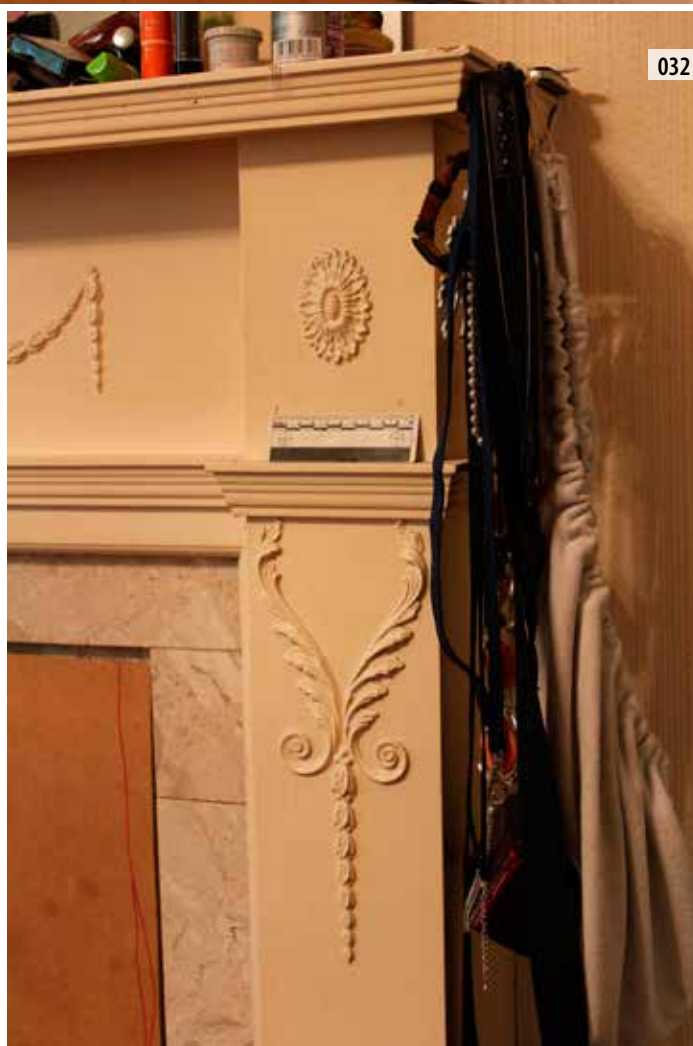


PHOTO 031
Fireplace detail, GR03

PHOTO 032
Fireplace detail, GR03



PHOTO 033
Possible exterior wall in GR05

PHOTO 034
Fireplace, GR08



PHOTO 035

Entrance to GR07

PHOTO 036

Interior partition, GR06



PHOTO 037

Interior partition obscuring window GR06

PHOTO 038

Structural beam showing in stairs to second floor





PHOTO 039

Entrance to roofspace second floor

PHOTO 040

Chimney flue, GR10



PHOTO 050
Detail of GR07 latch

PHOTO 051
Detail of GR07 latch

PHOTO 056

Interior of carbon dioxide store – barrel chute

PHOTO 058

Rear elevation exterior





059



063



PHOTO 059

Rear elevation exterior showing Phase 3

PHOTO 063

Exterior of cellar



PHOTO 065

Detail shot of ironwork in Phase 3 extension

PHOTO 067

S facing elevation of building



PHOTO 073
Street frontage

PHOTO 076
Street frontage



PHOTO 077

Guest Room 3 showing previously obscured 20th century fireplace

PHOTO 078

Block printed wallpaper behind inserted staircase to second floor



PHOTO 079

Bar area showing timber panelling on north wall

PHOTO 080

View of bar area during demolition



PHOTO 081

Interior of bar area during demolition

PHOTO 082

Detail of timber framing in bar area showing lath and plaster cladding



© 2014 by Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd

**Headland Archaeology
North East**

13 Jane Street
Edinburgh EH6 5HE

0131 467 7705
northeast@headlandarchaeology.com

**Headland Archaeology
North West**

10 Payne Street
Glasgow G4 0LF

0141 354 8100
northwest@headlandarchaeology.com

**Headland Archaeology
Midlands & West**

Unit 1, Premier Business Park, Faraday Road
Hereford HR4 9NZ

01432 364 901
midlandsandwest@headlandarchaeology.com

**Headland Archaeology
South & East**

Building 68C, Wrest Park, Silsoe
Bedfordshire MK45 4HS

01525 861 578
southandeast@headlandarchaeology.com

www.headlandarchaeology.com