



The Tors Hotel, Tors Park Lynmouth, Devon

Historic Building Record



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Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by William Bowden Architecture and Design Services, on behalf of Tors Park Estate Ltd, to create an historic building record of the former Tors Hotel, Tors Park, Lynmouth, Devon prior to the redevelopment of the site. Conditional planning permission has been granted by Exmoor National Park Authority (ref: 62/41/17/009) to redevelop the existing hotel to include the creation of 31 apartments together with incorporation of three previously converted apartments and include demolition. The building is not listed, but it is located within the Lynmouth Conservation Area.

The aim of the project was to create an analytical record of the building prior to its demolition. This was achieved through background research, measured survey and a digital photographic record as well as on-site analysis. The site survey incorporated existing survey drawings supplemented and enhanced on site survey by Wessex Archaeology. The site survey was carried out between 8th and 10th April 2019.

The Tors Hotel has its origins in the late 19th century. William Bevan, a local builder and developer, purchased Tors Park Estate from the lady of the manor in 1885 and built the Tors Park Hotel, which opened in 1886. During its lifetime the property was extended several times and has been altered internally many more. Principal extensions to the hotel include a single-storey dining room built by 1903 and a second-storey to the north-west range together with a first floor addition to the dining room by 1913. The entrance lobby was the subject of major reorganisation in the late 1960s. Most recently the hotel was owned by Martin Miller the founder of Miller's Antique Guides. The building has lain empty since 2014 and the north-east four-storey tower has been the subject of refurbishment in more recent years with many of the existing spaces used for construction storage and offices.

The historic building recording exercise has ensured that a lasting record of this hotel and local landmark has been documented for future research and interest.

Acknowledgements

This project was commissioned by William Bowden Architecture and Design Services, and Wessex Archaeology is grateful to Will Bowden in this regard. The assistance of the staff of the Devon Archives and Local Studies Centre is also acknowledged.

The background research was undertaken by Grace Flood and the site survey was carried out by Bob Davis and Grace Flood. This report was compiled by Bob Davis and Grace Flood and the project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Matt Rous.



The Tors Hotel, Tors Park, Lynmouth, Devon

Historic Building Record

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project and planning background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology has been commissioned by William Bowden Architecture and Design Services, on behalf of Tors Park Estate Ltd (hereafter 'the Client'), to produce a historic building record of the former Tors Hotel, Tors Park, Lynmouth, Devon prior to the redevelopment of the site.

1.1.2 Conditional planning permission has been granted by Exmoor National Park Authority (ENPA) (ref: 62/41/17/009) to redevelop the existing hotel to include the creation of 31 apartments together with incorporation of three previously converted apartments to include demolition. The building is not listed, but it is located within the Lynmouth Conservation Area.

1.1.3 With regards to the heritage interest of the site, Condition 5 states:

Prior to commencement of the development hereby approved, the implementation of a programme of archaeological work shall be secured in accordance with a written scheme of investigation that has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the site has provision for a full record to be made.

1.1.4 The historic building record was created out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) (Wessex Archaeology 2019), which was submitted to and approved by the Conservation Officer (Historic Environment) ENPA in advance of the work.

1.2 Previous studies

1.2.1 A Historic Building Report was created in 2017 (Bowden 2017) and a Design and Access Statement incorporating a Heritage Statement was produced in March 2018 (Bowden 2018).

1.3 Site location and description

1.3.1 The Tors Hotel stands in a prominent position on a rocky outcrop above the north bank of the east Lyn River overlooking the village Lynmouth, North Devon. It is accessed from Tors Park, a steep zig-zag road leading from the A39 Countisbury Hill road. The hotel is situated in an area of mature trees at a height of approximately 34 m a OD and is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 272518 149502 (**Figure 1**).

1.3.2 The Tors Hotel consists of a large, late Victorian property of two, three and four storeys built into a man-made terrace into the hillside. There are two principal elements; a north-east to south-west front-range and a north-west to south-east side wing forming an L-shape in plan. The two main elevations are multi-gabled and face out north-west towards

the sea and south-west overlooking Lynmouth. The property has been extended many times now covering an area of approximately 1,000 m² (0.1 hectares).

- 1.3.3 The building is identified on the Exmoor National Park Historic Environment Record (ENPHER) no. MEM22387. The building is described as ‘the Tors Hotel opened in 1886 in a baronial style, with plain render elevations, slate roofs and decorative barge-boards, and including a circular corner turret with conical roof. Early 20th century additions were in the then characteristic style of half-timbered gables and plain tile roof’.

2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

2.1 Aims

- 2.1.1 The aims or purpose of the historic building record, in line with the ClfA’ *Standard and guidance for archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures* (ClfA 2014a) and the Historic England (HE) *Understanding Historic England: a guide to good practice* (HE 2016), are to:

- Establish the character, history, dating, form and development of a specified building or structure.
- Provide a better understanding of the building or structure (where possible within the confines of the works), compile a lasting record, analyse the findings/record and then disseminate the results.

2.2 Objectives

- 2.2.1 The aims were achieved by making an analytical record of the Tors Hotel, commensurate with the requirements as set out in the WSI.
- 2.2.2 The recorded data from the building record will be made publicly available via this report (and if warranted publication) and the project archive.

3 METHODS

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 The methodology used to achieve this level of building record is presented in the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2019) which is reproduced below.

3.2 Documentary research

- 3.2.1 Prior to the commencement of survey, research was undertaken to provide an outline of the historic development of the property using map regression and other documents to support the interpretation of the development of the building. This utilised existing information contained within The Tors Hotel, Lynmouth Historic Building Report (Bowden 2017), which was augmented by research undertaken at the Devon Heritage Centre (Exeter) as well as available historic Ordnance Survey mapping and archive images gathered through research or provided by the Client.

3.3 Written record

- 3.3.1 The written record of the Tors Hotel, commensurate with the requirements of the Brief, is presented in this report. The written report includes the following:
- The building’s location (NGR and address);

- Any statutory or non-statutory designations;
- The date of the record, the names of the recorders and, if an archive has been created, the location of the archive;
- Detail of the building's form, function, date and sequence of development;
- Detail of the building's structure and materials, evidence of repair, alteration or adaptation (where possible); and
- Where possible, detail of the relationship to other buildings and structures

3.4 Photographic record

3.4.1 A comprehensive photographic record of the Tors Hotel was compiled, based on the requirements as set out in the WSI. It comprises items 1-9 in section 4.4.8 of the publication *Understanding Historic Buildings: a guide to good recording practice* (HE 2016, 19-20). This includes:

- A general view or views of the building (in its wider setting or landscape if 2 (below) is also to be adopted).
- The building's external appearance. Typically a series of oblique views will show all external elevations of the building, and give an overall impression of its size and shape. Where individual elevations include complex historical information it may also be appropriate to take views at right-angles to the plane of the elevation.
- The overall appearance of the principal rooms and circulation areas.
- Any building contents which have a significant bearing on the building's history (for example, a cheese press, a malt shovel).
- Copies of maps, drawings, views and photographs, present in the building and illustrating its development or that of its site. The owner's written consent may be required where copies are to be deposited in an archive.

3.4.2 The photographic record consists of high-quality digital format images taken with a Canon EOS 5D MkIII full frame digital camera (with 21 megapixel capability).

3.4.3 A photographic scale of an appropriate size was included in all general and detailed views. The location and direction of photographic views was recorded on copies of the survey plan (below) or marked on the 'as existing' floor plans (drawings provided by the client). Accompanying photographic registers record, as a minimum, the direction of the view and a brief description of the subject and location.

3.4.4 The full photographic record, together with annotated plans and photographic registers, form part of the project archive. Selected images from the photographic record have been used to illustrate this report.

3.5 Survey and drawn record

3.5.1 A measured and drawn record has been made of the Tors Hotel, commensurate with the requirements as set out in the WSI. The record was taken entirely from the 'as existing' drawn record (plans and elevations) provided by the client in CAD (.dwg format). These were taken onto site and checked, augmented/amended where necessary with archaeological/architectural information gathered during the site visit.

3.5.2 The measured survey data has been enhanced to appropriate standards (in line with HE 2016 guidelines) to produce the plan and elevation drawings presented in this report at an appropriate scale. Hard copies of the drawn record will be included in the project archive.

3.6 Record date

3.6.1 Sources held at the Devon Heritage Centre were consulted on 14th March 2019. The site visits were carried out between 8th and 10th April 2019.

4 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

4.1 Historic context

4.1.1 Lynmouth probably originated in the medieval period as a fishing settlement, likely based around the present harbour. It is mentioned in the Assize Rolls of 1282 and in the Subsidy Rolls of 1330. However, many of the buildings from the medieval settlement were lost in a flood in 1607 (ENP 2018, 6-7).

4.1.2 There are few buildings in Lynmouth that date to before the 19th century. In the early 19th century, the lack of access to the continent as a result of the Napoleonic Wars was one of the catalysts for the development of Lynmouth as a resort. The first hotels were built in 1807. The popularity of the settlement as a tourist destination led to its expansion and the construction of up-market villas and hotels, some with delicate Regency features (ibid, 8).

4.1.3 The Countisbury parish and Lynton and Lynmouth Tithe maps (1839 and 1840 respectively) identifies the plot of land now occupied by the Hotel as a copse called 'The Tors', owned by the Reverend Thomas Roe.

4.1.4 The majority of Lynmouth's buildings originate in the late Victorian and Edwardian era, spurred on by the tourist trade and improved transport links. Initially visitors arrived to Lynmouth by boat but from the 1830s road access improved and by the mid-19th century there were regular horse-drawn coach services. Lynton and Lynmouth came to prominence as a holiday destination in the 1890s with the opening of first, the cliff railway connecting Lynton and Lynmouth and in 1898 the Lynton to Barnstaple narrow gauge railway which provided access to the wider rail network. Hydro-electric power was also introduced to Lynmouth in the 1890s (ibid, 9).

4.1.5 In addition to the new hotels and guest houses which came with the increase in tourism, a number of large detached villas were built, most on the sides of the valley as well as some terraced housing along the East Lyn River. Tors Park has a collection of large late 19th-early 20th century villa style buildings, most of which were probably built as hotels (ibid 9, 19 and 24).

4.1.6 On 15th August 1952 Lynmouth was hit by a devastating flood in which, 30 people died and more were missing believed drowned. The flood damaged or destroyed many of the bridges, roads and buildings in Lynmouth around the river and harbour. This included the destruction of The Beach Hotel and damage to the Lyndale and Lyn Valley Hotels. The Tors Hotel escaped damage, due to its location on the hillside. About 150 people took shelter from the flood there. The two banks of the river were cut off from each other for five days following the flood and the roads into Lynton and Lynmouth were closed for several weeks. Lynmouth was officially reopened on the 13th September.

4.1.7 In the early 21st century the hotel was bought and run by Martin Miller. Martin Miller was, arguably, most famously known as the name behind the famous 'Miller's Antique Price

Guide'. He also owned many hotels and furnished them in his unique style. The Tors Hotel was no exception. Whilst he owned the hotel it was known as 'Millers at the Tors' and was 'crammed full of bespoke oddities and antiques'. Mr Miller died on 24th December 2013.

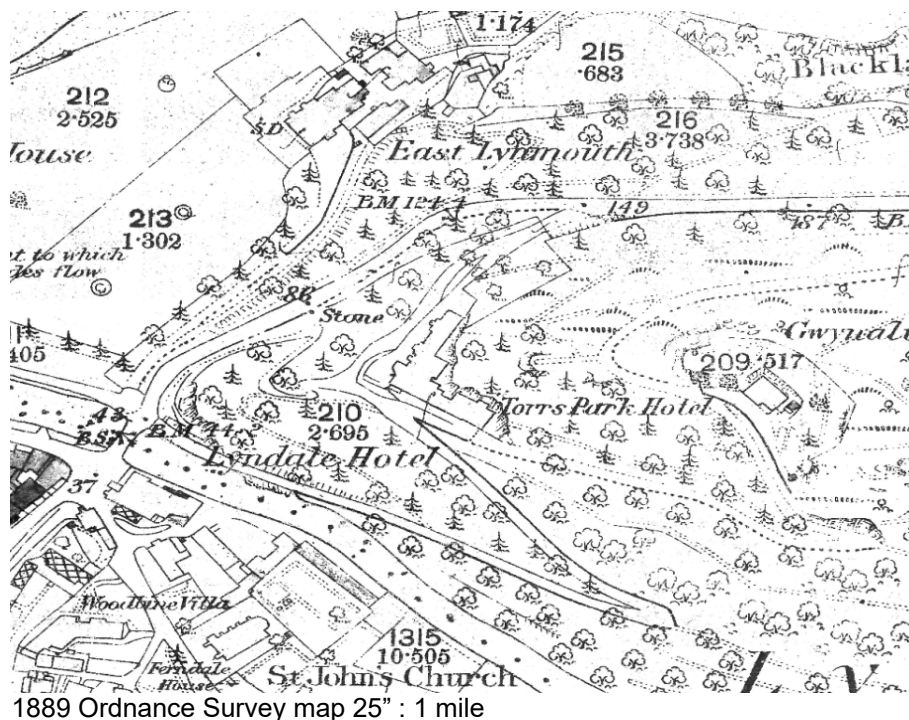
4.2 Origin of The Tors Hotel

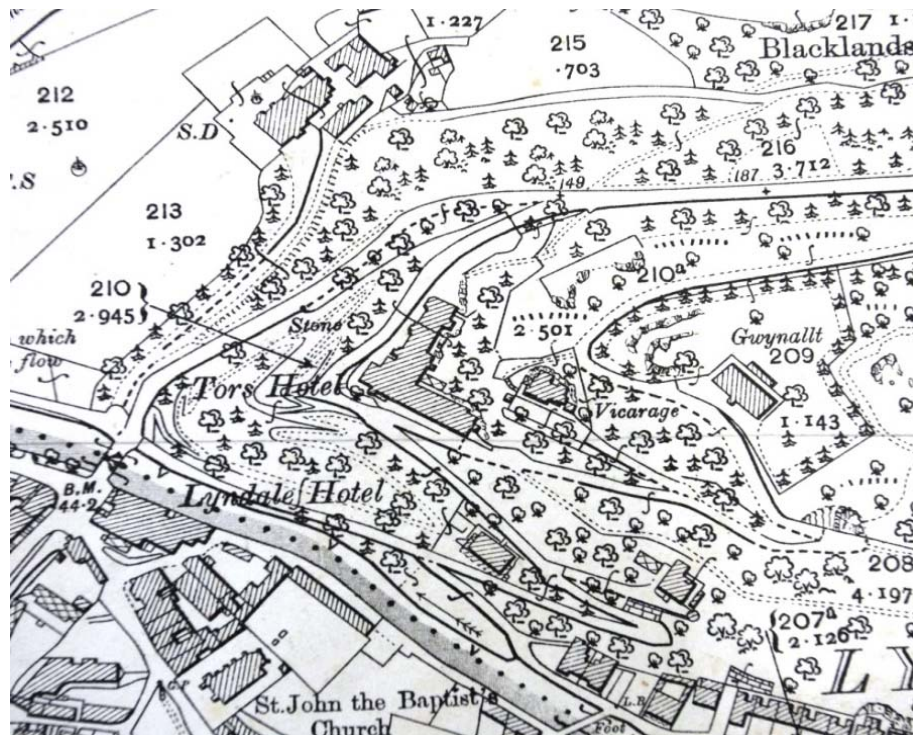
4.2.1 William Bevan a local builder and developer purchased Tors Park Estate from the lady of the manor in 1885 and advertised 50 building sites on what he called Tors Park. He immediately built the Tors Park Hotel, which opened in 1886 (ENP 2018, 10, 12 and 19 and Binding et al 2001, 75 cited in ENPHER no. MEM22387).

4.3 Development

4.3.1 The property has been extended several times and has been altered internally many more. The property grew to 48 bedrooms at its height before customer expectations dictated that more bathrooms were added. This reduced room numbers down to 36 at the point when the hotel closed in October 2014, 32 of which were in a usable condition (Bowden 2017, 3).

4.3.2 The building is shown on the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey (OS) map (published 1889, see below) denoted 'Torrs Park Hotel' and on the 2nd Edition map (published 1904) by its current name 'Tors Hotel'. These OS maps illustrate that the dining room extension at the south-west corner of the building was constructed at some point between 1888 and 1903.





1904 Ordnance Survey map 25" : 1 mile

- 4.3.3 Pillars within the dining room correspond to the south-west corner of the earlier gable end as seen in a photograph of the Hotel not long after it opened (below). The external steps to the Hotel have been remodelled since this photo was taken.



The Tors Hotel probably taken soon after opening (Bowden 2017, 5; photographer unidentified)

- 4.3.4 Other changes in this period include the construction of the north 'tower' at the end of the west range and the extension of both ranges to the rear. These may relate to a 'New

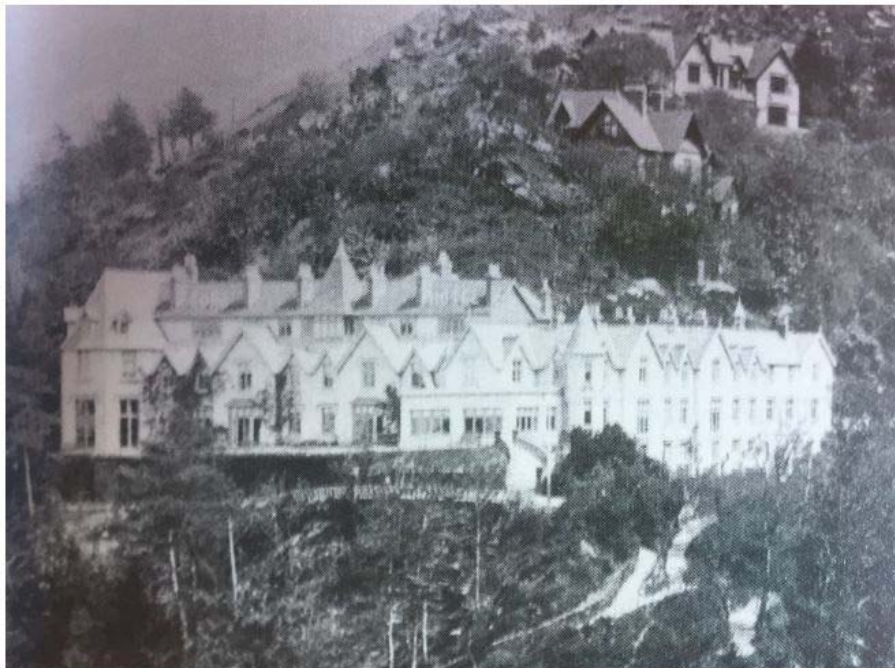
Motor Garage, New Drawing Room And New Bedrooms' at the hotel which were advertised in 1906 (Sutton Town Council guidebook).

- 4.3.5 A photograph listed as 'Edwardian' (below) show the north 'tower' as only two-storeys in height with rooms in the roof space. Evidence of this earlier roofline was found during the recent conversion of this tower and was left intact behind dry lining (Bowden 2017, 6).



'Edwardian' photograph (Bowden 2017, 6; photographer unidentified)

- 4.3.6 A later photograph (below) shows the extension and expansion of the west range.



Undated early 20th century photograph (Bowden 2017, 7; photographer unidentified)

- 4.3.7 It illustrates that the dining room extension at the south-west corner of the building was initially single-storey with a flat roof, the external steps had been re-aligned to their current elliptical arc plan form and the second floor had been added above the west range.
- 4.3.8 A postcard loosely dated circa 1900 (DHC ref. 2546Z/Z19) shows a view of Lynton and Lynmouth from Summerhouse Hill, with the roof of the Hotel in the foreground after the second floor was added. By mid-1913 the dining room extension had been increased to two-storeys high (postcard below).



Postcard sent 30 July 1913 (F. Frith & Co. Ltd. card no. 58395)

- 4.3.9 Subsequently, a circa 1920s postcard (DHC ref. 1846Z/1/2/1) and 1922 advert (source unidentified) show the north tower expanded to four-storeys. The new gables are decorated with timber framing, which has since been rendered. The advert lists the proprietors as W and R Riddell.
- 4.3.10 By 1930, a single-storey extension had been added to the north end of the west range, beyond the north tower (Britain from Above ref. EPW033145). A postcard sent 1934 and photographs from the same year (19588 and 19589 in DHC ref. 1578Z/Prints/Lynmouth) show it in elevation.



Postcard sent 10 April 1934, produced by Reeves, Printer. Lynton.



1934 Photograph produced by Chapman & Sons (no. 19588)

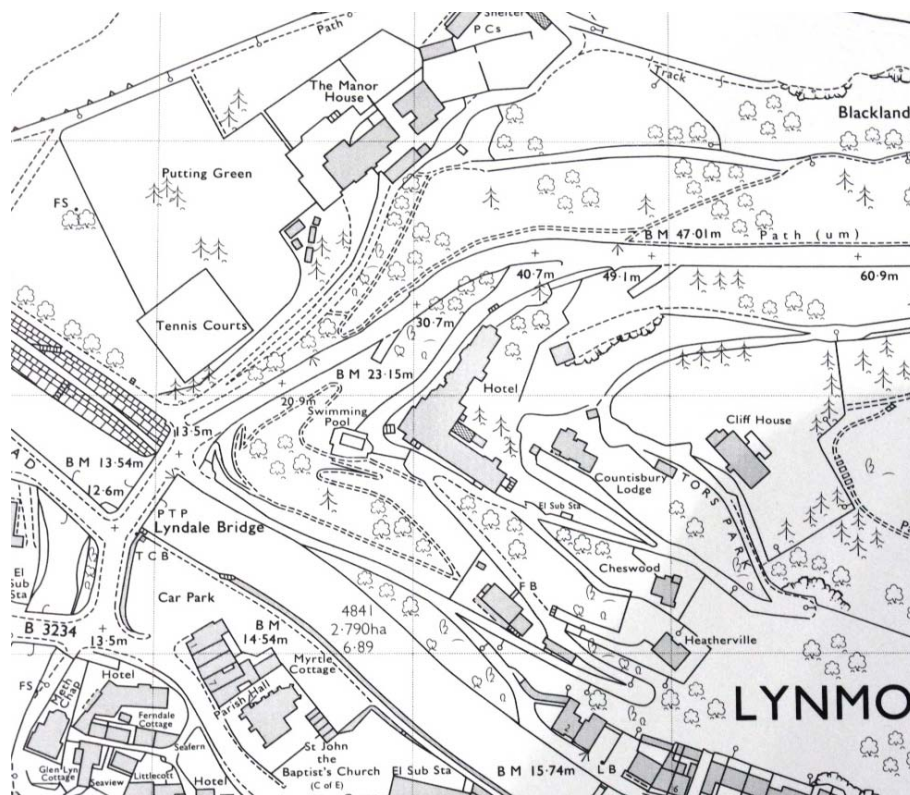
- 4.3.11 Planning applications related to the Tors Hotel from 1949 onwards are listed on the ENPA website. Most of the applications relate to changes or continued display of signage. Approved applications not related to signage are listed below:



Date Registered	Decision Date	Application no.	Description
16/11/1960	2/1/1961	NE 291	Proposed car park and alterations to access at the junction of Countisbury Hill road (north of the Hotel); including demolition of a garage to form the parking area
1/11/1961	3/1/1962	NE 320	Proposed wooden garage (private) to the east of the Hotel
12/3/1964	26/5/1964	NE 411	Proposed private bathing pool to replace a car park (to the south-west of the Hotel)
17/11/1966	28/11/1966	NE 531	Proposed extensions to dining room and entrance (concrete block walls and pink chip asphalt roof)
13/11/1973	14/12/1973	NE 891	Proposed passenger lift, private bathrooms and repositioning of bedrooms forming an extension to the rear of The Tors Hotel (concrete block walls rendered and coloured to match existing and roofs blue/black asbestos slates)
22/9/1976	8/11/1976	*62/41/76/017	First floor extension of the north end of the west range to form 3 bedrooms; also a new linen store within the first floor of the north tower
7/12/1977	9/2/1978	*62/41/77/044	Extension to laundry at the south-east corner of the south range (decision delayed until February 1978)
18/1/1978	10/3/1978	*62/41/78/003	Extension to car park to the north-west of the Hotel
2/2/1979	22/3/1979	*62/41/79/006	Extension to car Park to the north-west of the Hotel
20/12/2011	31/1/2012	62/41/11/045	Proposed replacement of 2 no. windows with doors together with construction of an external terrace.
17/9/2012	13/8/2013	62/41/12/024	Proposed change of use of part of hotel to 8 dwellings (4 open market and 4 local needs). As per amended plans 25.01.13, additional information 31.01.13 and amended plans 05.02.13.
5/10/2015	18/2/2016	62/41/15/033	Proposed amendments to previously approved scheme 62/41/14/035 to allow changes to the internal layout of the approved dwellings (specifically, units 2, 3 and 4) and alterations and additional openings as well as balustrading. Part retrospective. (Amended description). As per amended plans and information 10.02.16.
3/4/2017	24/1/2019	*62/41/17/009	Proposed re development of existing hotel to create 31 apartments together with incorporation of 3 previously converted apartments (to include demolition). (Amended description to clarify)

Date Registered	Decision Date	Application no.	Description
			proposal). As per additional information dated 08/08/17 and amended plans and additional information dated 10.10.17. As per additional information dated 31/10/17 and amended information dated 15.12.17

4.3.12 The 1975 OS map is the next available edition to show the building in detail. It was published a year before the last major extension of the building, when an extra floor was added to the north end of the west range (planning application *62/41/76/017).



1975 Ordnance Survey map 25" : 1 mile

4.3.13 In the 21st century, the north end of the west range including the north tower has been converted to apartments, as proposed in planning applications 62/41/12/024 and 62/41/15/033 (approved in 2013 and 2016 respectively). The Hotel closed in 2015 and has since remained vacant.

5 BUILDING DESCRIPTION

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 The Tors Hotel is a large eclectic building that dominates the eastern side of Lynmouth standing in a prominent position overlooking the quay and town on Countisbury Hill (**Front cover, Plate 1**). The north-eastern end of the building, incorporating the four storeyed 'tower', has been the subject of recent refurbishment and modernisation and is to be retained. It was not accessible during the site survey. Therefore, this building report focusses on the rest of the building to the south-west which is due to be demolished, although for context the development of the north-east area has been included in the general descriptions.

5.1.2 For ease of description the large 'L' plan form of the hotel has been broken down into a north-west range and a south-west wing. For clarity, each of the principal rooms and or circulation areas has been given a unique identifier (UI). For the Lower ground floor level the room numbers start at LG01, for the ground floor numbers start at G01, the first floor at F01 and the second floor S01. These unique identifiers are shown on the respective floors plans (**Figures 5-8**).

5.2 Exterior

North-west elevation

5.2.1 The north-west face of the building is characterised by a broad frontage with multiple gables and roof pitches (**Figure 2, Plate 2**). The present building is accessed via a low path leading from the car park and under the main front (**Plate 3**). An upper terrace has been latterly constructed at the west end which is supported by concrete columns which has created a somewhat austere experience when approaching the hotel from this direction. Historically, the main path to the hotel from Lynmouth was situated on the south-west side of the hill. This is shown on historic mapping as a long meandering path to cope with the gradient.

5.2.2 The 1960s swimming pool appears to have been abandoned for a number of years and was full of green water during the site visit. Together with the terrace the view of the hotel from this aspect appears dilapidated and diminished when compared to its late Victorian heyday. The sweeping stone staircase leading up to the hotel level is accessed from under the dark cover of the later terrace (**Plate 4**). However, the steps still retain their stone piers and one is still surmounted by a cast iron lamp post with the maker's mark of 'R A Farel & Co Ltd of Barnstaple' (**Plates 5-6**).

5.2.3 The front of the hotel is rendered and painted pale green (**Plate 7**). The various stages of build at the hotel are best reflected along the main front where the original building has been 'overbuilt' by the four-storey tower to the north-east, the second floor and the modern flat roofed entrance lobby (**Plates 8-9**).

5.2.4 This irregular appearance has partly masked the original symmetry of the structure. The original frontage was constructed to present a series of alternate bays consisting of recessed double bays with gables and projecting double bays with bay window and single gable. Each of the small gable roofs is covered in slate and each retains their original decorative barge boards and finials. The south-west dining room extension gable has also been fitted with a decorative barge board, although of different design. This part of the building has been developed over the years as it clearly offers the best view point overlooking Lynmouth. The gable of the south-west corner was originally embellished with applied vertical timbers to give a timber-framed effect, which has since been removed.

- 5.2.5 The roof of this corner extension is covered with slate. When the upper floor of the north tower was built the gabled roof was also fitted with a matching barge board to that on the south-west corner extension.
- 5.2.6 The original north-west front terminated at the south-west end in a corner turret. This feature has been retained (**see Plate 7**). This two-storey turret is fitted with narrow windows to both floor levels. Originally this would have given wide views across the bay, but has become confined by the later dining room extension. The windows were also fitted with window hoods to match those on the front. However, the hood mouldings have been removed from the turret windows. The conical roof is covered in slate.
- 5.2.7 The ground floor bay window doors have been replaced with modern double glazed units and the timber framed casement windows to the first floor appear to be largely original, if not, they have been replaced at some point with matching examples to those that are shown on early photographs. The early photographs of this front also indicate that the original windows had window hoods above them. These have all been removed. The north tower was designed to fit with the design of the original façade in that it was constructed as a projecting bay also with window hoods.
- 5.2.8 The second floor of the hotel has been set back from the first floor and has a pitched roof covered with red clay tiles. There is also a central projection, a reference to those seen on the earlier building topped with a conical roof (**see Plate 2**).
- 5.2.9 The existing hotel sign, mounted along the roof of the second floor may well be the original sign but moved from the lower roof when the second floor was added in the early 20th century. The late 19th century image of the front terrace appears to show the sign frame to the left of the image. The sign at this time was positioned between the two front projecting bays.

South-west elevation

- 5.2.10 This side of the building has been reduced in status to that of a service wing. Given the fact that the meandering path from Lynmouth led up and past this side of the building, it would have been presented better in the early years of the hotel. Various photographs and postcards do show this side of the building as a well presented frontage not overgrown and darkened by trees. As this side of the building faced Lynmouth village in the valley the roof was fitted with a large 'Tors Hotel' sign from at least the 1930's.
- 5.2.11 Originally, the symmetrical pattern of the north-west front was followed along this elevation. This can still be seen although, at the south-east end some of the door and window openings have been altered (**Figure 3, Plates 10-11**).
- 5.2.12 This elevation has also been rendered but retains original features such as decorated barge boards and some of the casement windows frames are original. It is not known if the windows had moulded hoods to match the north-west elevation but, it is likely and they were probably removed when the walls were rendered.

South-east elevation

- 5.2.13 To be able to construct the hotel in its location on a steep west facing slope, the underlying rock has been cut away to form a level platform. This means that, at the rear south-east side of the building the walls been built close against the rock face (**Plates 12-13**). This has meant that externally, only a few window openings have been created. Most of these relate to the interior corridors which have been deliberately located at the rear of the building in order to form the guest rooms and public areas where there is more natural

light. Survey was only possible of the north-east and south-west sides of the north tower building (**Figure 4**).

5.3 Interior

Sub-basement

5.3.1 The sub-basement occupies the lowest level of the three-storey south-west range (**Figure 5**). This is referred to as a lower ground floor level as it was not entirely underground. The topography along this side of the hill allowed for a lower level before the ground floor level could be carried around from the north-west side of the building. This floor was formerly part of the hotel accommodation with possibly four original bedrooms LG02, LG03, LG04 and LG05 (**Figure 5**). These rooms were originally accessed via a rear corridor leading from a staircase (now demolished) LGO6 (**Plate 14**).

5.3.2 At the south-east end of the lower ground floor is the laundry room LG01 and boiler room LG02 (**Plates 15-16**). These rooms appear to have been altered from their original use. The present laundry would appear to have been always a utility room but the boiler room may have originally been a guest room as it has two sash windows, now hidden behind boilers.

5.3.3 The remaining guest rooms on the lower ground floor have also been subject to change. The current staff room LG03 has seen major changes with little remaining to indicate its original use. Room LG04 has been partitioned into two small bedrooms last used for staff sleeping quarters with no en-suite facilities. Room LG05 contained a small bedroom (**Plate 17**) with separate shower and toilet possibly with shared use for the other staff rooms. Room LG07 would also appear to have been originally used as a store. Located as it is at the north end of the range, it lacks windows.

Ground floor

5.3.4 The ground floor forms the main circulation hub around which the rest of the building operates with key features and areas such as main entrance, reception and offices, kitchens, dining room, lounges, guest rooms and main staircase all located on the ground floor.

5.3.5 When the location of Tors Hotel was considered it is clear that, due to both the slope of the ground and the impressive view to be gained, a decision was made that the main entrance and high-status rooms should be orientated along the north-west facing side of the building.

5.3.6 The historic photographs taken in the late 19th and early 20th century, suggest that the main entrance was originally located in the south-west corner. This area has been subsequently redeveloped with much of the original entrance removed. This has also affected part of the north-west frontage.

5.3.7 The existing ground floor main entrance was remodelled in the second half of the 20th century and recently 'embellished' as part of the Millers ownership (**Plate 18**). The single storey, flat roofed lobby dates to the 1960s and probably acted as the main reception from this time (**Figure 6, G02**). Constructed with large windows this area led to the inner lobby G01. The now internal window at the south-west end of the lobby is thought to be a sole survivor of the building shown on the photograph of the Hotel shortly after opening (**Plate 19**). This opening was retained to provide light into the extended dining room.

5.3.8 This broad area provides access to the central main stair, the south-west corner dining room and north-east lounges located along the north-east end (**Plate 20**). To the north-

east of the inner lobby there are three areas not separated by any doors (**Figure 6, G03**) accessed via wide archways leading off the inner lobby (**Plate 21**). The early photographs taken along the north-west terrace would suggest that these rooms were always intended as lounge rooms with access to the terrace in fine weather. The PVCu bay window with French doors at the north-east end has replaced the original seen on the early photograph. The other bay window seen on the photograph has been removed when the entrance was modified, possibly in the 1960s.

- 5.3.9 There is a modern bar in the south-west corner of the lounges with original rooms G05 and G06 to the rear. The original purpose of these two rooms is unclear; their low status appearance suggests that they may have been used as storage areas.
- 5.3.10 To the side of the main stairs are the most recent reception and office (**Figure 6, G04, Plate 22**). This small space appears to have been adapted from an earlier unknown use. At the rear of room G04 are two small storage areas built close to the rock face (**Figure 6**). These rooms were originally outside and were accessed via a narrow corridor (**Plate 23**). The rear limewashed stone wall of the hotel was visible. The two rooms are thought to be original food stores. The presence of slate shelves in one of them suggests that it was possibly used as a larder to keep food cool (**Plate 24**). Their location, under the shade of the rock face, would also have assisted with this function.
- 5.3.11 The south-west corner of the building, including the restaurant (G08), appears to have been subject to the most change. Although the corner turret has been retained, the rest of this corner of the building has been extended out. It is clear that this was carried out to exploit the wide ranging views over the bay. This part of the building was first extended by 1903 as a single-storey dining room. The first floor of the original two-storey structure was retained and the ground floor north-west and south-west walls were knocked through (**Figure 6**). The south-west wall was moved out in line with the corner turret and a new north-west wall was built further to the north-west (**Plates 25-26**).
- 5.3.12 The south-west wing has also been changed from its original layout at ground floor level. However, some guest rooms have been retained and the south-east rooms altered for kitchen use. There are four surviving guest rooms along the south-west side of the wing (**Figure 6, G13, G14, G15 and G16**). The remaining rooms have been turned into kitchen areas including G11 store, G09 kitchen and G10 cold store (**Plates 27-28**).
- 5.3.13 In order for the guest rooms to be kept separate from the kitchen area, the north-east side of the wing has been enclosed and a corridor formed leading from the restaurant to the kitchens without the need to use the guest room corridor. This meant that a splayed window opening, which would have provided some natural light to the guest room corridor, was blocked (**Figure 6, Plates 29-30**). A second kitchen area with servery has been formed at the north-west end (G18, **Figure 6**). This has removed any original features from this area.
- 5.3.14 The remaining guest rooms have been modified to some degree with ensuite partitions and modern décor but retain their original casement windows. Within room G13 the original late 19th century fire surround has been retained (**Plate 31**). In order to maintain a separate access route for the guest bedrooms from the kitchen access, a small room was partitioned off in the south-east corner of the restaurant (**Figure 6**).

First floor

- 5.3.15 The first floor circulation pattern largely follows the ground floor, although it appears to have been reserved solely for guest accommodation (**Figure 7**). The main dog-leg

staircase (F01) has a half landing leading to 'the garden room', (F02) a large rectangular building with low walls, glazed panels along both sides and pitched roof. A similar building is shown in this location on the 1904 Ordnance Survey map with a glazed roof. It would seem that this structure was built in the late 19th or very early 20th century as a conservatory (**Plates 32-33-34**). The glazed roof was not visible; the underside had been vaulted out with plasterboard.

- 5.3.16 The upper landing area of the main staircase has been enclosed for fire protection, although the turned hand rails and decorative elliptical arches and pilasters are still present (**Plate 35**). From the upper landing there are two main corridors running the lengths of the north-west range (F04) and the south-west wing (F05) (**Figure 7**). These corridors run generally behind the outward facing guest rooms. Allowing for modernisation and some room adaption and alteration, the bedrooms are arranged as they were intended. The only exception being the south-west corner where the addition of a first floor above the restaurant has created rooms (F17 and F18) with large windows to exploit the views over the harbour.
- 5.3.17 At the north-east end of the north-west range, rooms F26 and F25 have been formed from an original large single room. Each of these smaller rooms has a casement window (**Plate 36**). A more typical room layout is represented by room F24. Here, the casement window remains centrally placed and the room is still quite spacious. At the rear, an ensuite bathroom has been inserted (**Plates 37-38**).
- 5.3.18 The general decorative scheme of the floor appears to have been changed frequently in line with changing tastes, however, there are small areas of original embellishment that remain in-situ. Once such area is to the south of the main staircase. Here could be found three arches with sills (**Plate 39**). Originally the arches would have been open as well as a wider arch on the south side of the staircase. The arches have been infilled with plaster board and a storage room (F20) formed in this space.
- 5.3.19 When the south-west wing kitchen corridor was created on the ground floor an additional room (F09) was constructed on the first floor (**Plate 40**). Along the rest of the south-west wing the rooms have all been fitted with later ensuite bathrooms.
- 5.3.20 The addition of the first floor in the south-west corner in the early 20th century created two well-lit rooms with views over the harbour (**Figure 7, F17-F18, Plates 41-43**). When these rooms were created the surviving first floor rooms above the original entrance lobby were demolished and the roof removed.

Second floor

- 5.3.21 The addition of the second floor to the north-west range was probably carried out at the same time as the addition of the south-west corner first floor - in the early years of the 20th century. Access to the second floor is via an inserted open-well staircase on the north-east side of the main stair (**Figure 7, F28, Plate 44**).
- 5.3.22 The north-west 'front' wall of the second floor is set back from the front wall of the first floor in order to preserve the multiple gables along this side of the building (**Plate 45**). This narrow construction is only located above the north-west range. The plan form flows the pattern of the lower floors with a rear access corridor (S01) leading north-east along the floor level. At the time of the survey there were five rooms, some of which had been used recently for construction material storage and some which had been recently modernised.

- 5.3.23 At the south-west end, room (S08) is arranged as a large double sized room with separate large bathroom at the rear (S09) (**Plates 46-47**). The central room (S06), although for storage, was also fitted with large windows to highlight the view (**Plate 48**).

6 DISCUSSION

- 6.1.1 The Tors Hotel was built at a time of increasing popularity of Victorian middle class holidays. Its elevated position, dug into the face of a steep slope, created the impression of an alpine landscape and, with this in mind, the original hotel appears to have been designed to look not dissimilar to an alpine or Scottish baronial resort with multiple gables, a turret and sun terraces.
- 6.1.2 The prominence and appearance of the hotel, its location by the sea and stunning views proved very popular with holiday makers and within a short period of time the hotel was expanded to meet demand. With the lack of level ground to increase the room capacity the only viable way of creating more space was to add an extra storey. This was achieved by setting-back the second floor from the front of the hotel, thereby maintaining the distinctive gabled frontage and enhancing its size and prominence. The scale and visibility of the building has led it to become a significant local landmark in Lynmouth.
- 6.1.3 During the late 19th and 20th centuries, the Tors Hotel proved to be very popular, however, changing fashions and a demand for the guaranteed sunshine of continental European holidays during the mid-late 20th century led to a drop in numbers staying at large hotels in traditional English seaside resorts. The building is large and expensive to maintain with tired, creaking services, obsolete systems and a rambling layout making continued use an unviable proposition.
- 6.1.4 The survey has been able to identify the original core of the building and identify the general level of change. This has been assisted by the fact that it has always been used as a hotel. Its plan form and circulation patterns are largely as they were with ground floor reception providing the usual 'hub' for access to all other areas. The central main stairs are located to provide access to the upper floors and the ground floor lounges and dining area are located along the front range. Original features and areas of decoration are visible throughout the interior, although the hotel has undergone numerous changes and modifications in line with changing tastes and requirements, so that it is a vastly different building to that originally designed in the 1880s.
- 6.1.5 The historic building recording exercise has ensured that a lasting record of this hotel and local landmark has been documented for future research and interest.

7 STORAGE AND CURATION

7.1 Archive

- 7.1.1 The complete project archive, which includes drawn, written and photographic record, both physical and digital, is currently held at Wessex Archaeology Salisbury Office and will be deposited with the Museum of Barnstaple and North Devon in due course. All archive material will be prepared in line with current recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; CifA 2014; Brown 2011; ADS 2013).
- 7.1.2 An OASIS online record (<http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main>) will be initiated with key fields and a .pdf version of the final report submitted. Subject to any contractual requirements on confidentiality, copies of the OASIS record will be integrated into the relevant local and



national records and published through the Archaeology Data Service ArchSearch catalogue.

7.2 Copyright

- 7.2.1 The full copyright of the written/illustrative archive relating to the site will be retained by Wessex Archaeology under the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988* with all rights reserved. The Client will be licenced to use each report for the purposes that it was produced in relation to the project as described in the specification. The museum/ RO, however, will be granted an exclusive licence for the use of the archive for educational purposes, including academic research, providing that such use shall be non-profitmaking, and conforms to the *Copyright and Related Rights Regulations 2003*.
- 7.2.2 Information relating to the project will be deposited with the Historic Environment Record (HER) where it can be freely copied without reference to WA for the purposes of archaeological research or Development Control within the planning process.
- 7.2.3 This document, the report and the project archive may contain material that is non-Wessex Archaeology copyright (e.g. Ordnance Survey, British Geological Survey, Crown Copyright), or the intellectual property of third parties, which Wessex Archaeology are able to provide for limited reproduction under the terms of our own copyright licences, but for which copyright itself is non-transferable by Wessex Archaeology. Users remain bound by the conditions of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with regard to multiple copying and electronic dissemination of such material.

7.3 Security copy

- 7.3.1 In line with current best practice (e.g. Brown 2011), on completion of the project a security copy of the written records will be prepared, in the form of a digital PDF/A file. PDF/A is an ISO-standardised version of the Portable Document Format (PDF) designed for the digital preservation of electronic documents through omission of features ill-suited to long-term archiving.



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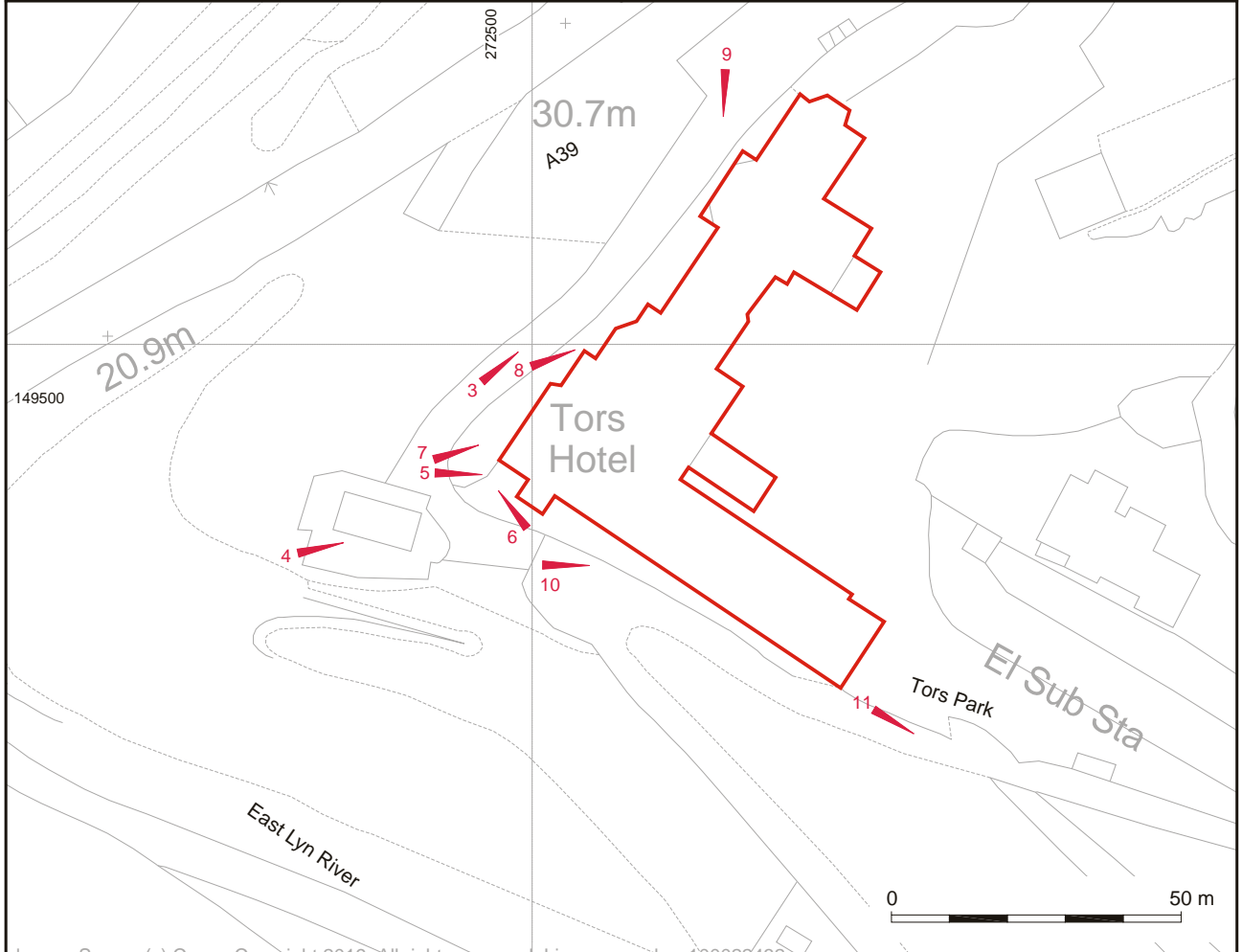
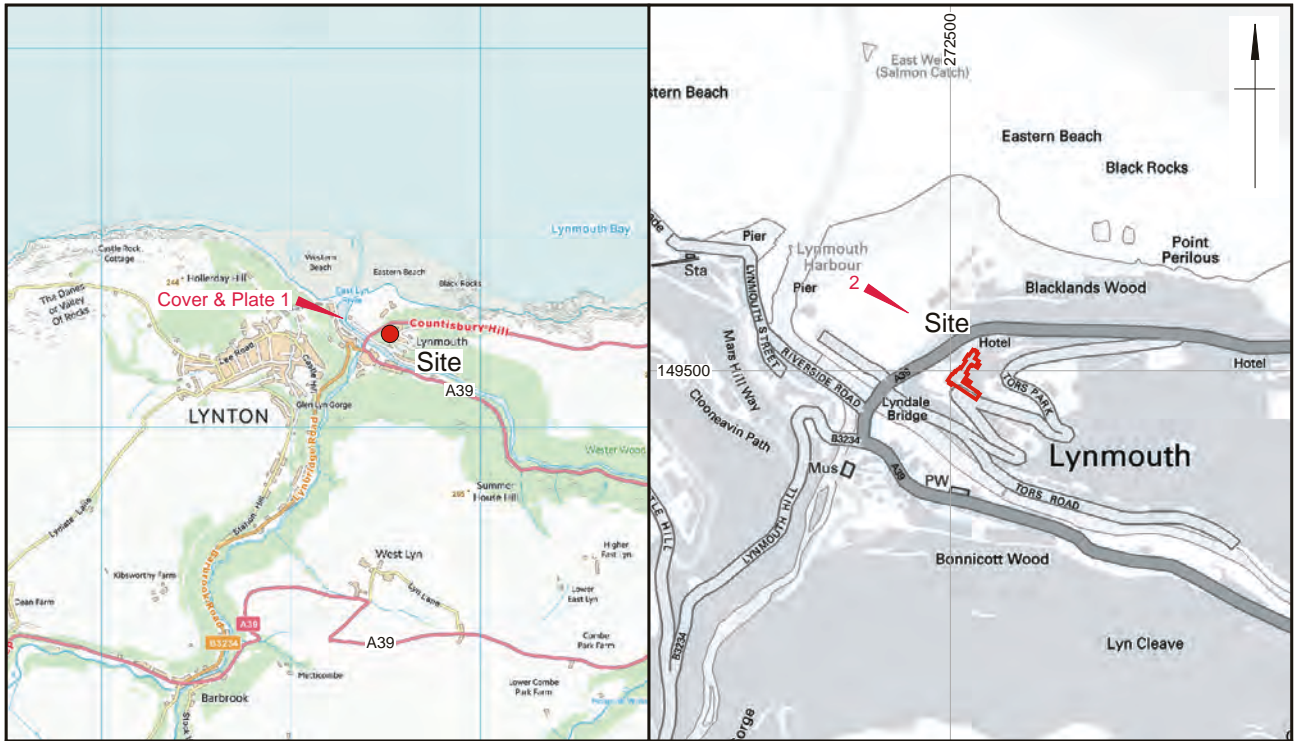
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Documentary and cartographic sources

1906 advert for the Tors Hotel from *Sutton With its surroundings. The Town Councils Official guide 1906*. Homeland Handbooks.



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Site location

Figure 1



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Tors Hotel North West Elevation

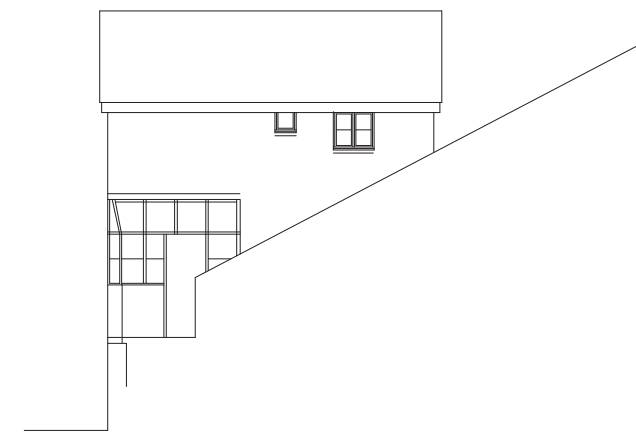
Figure 2



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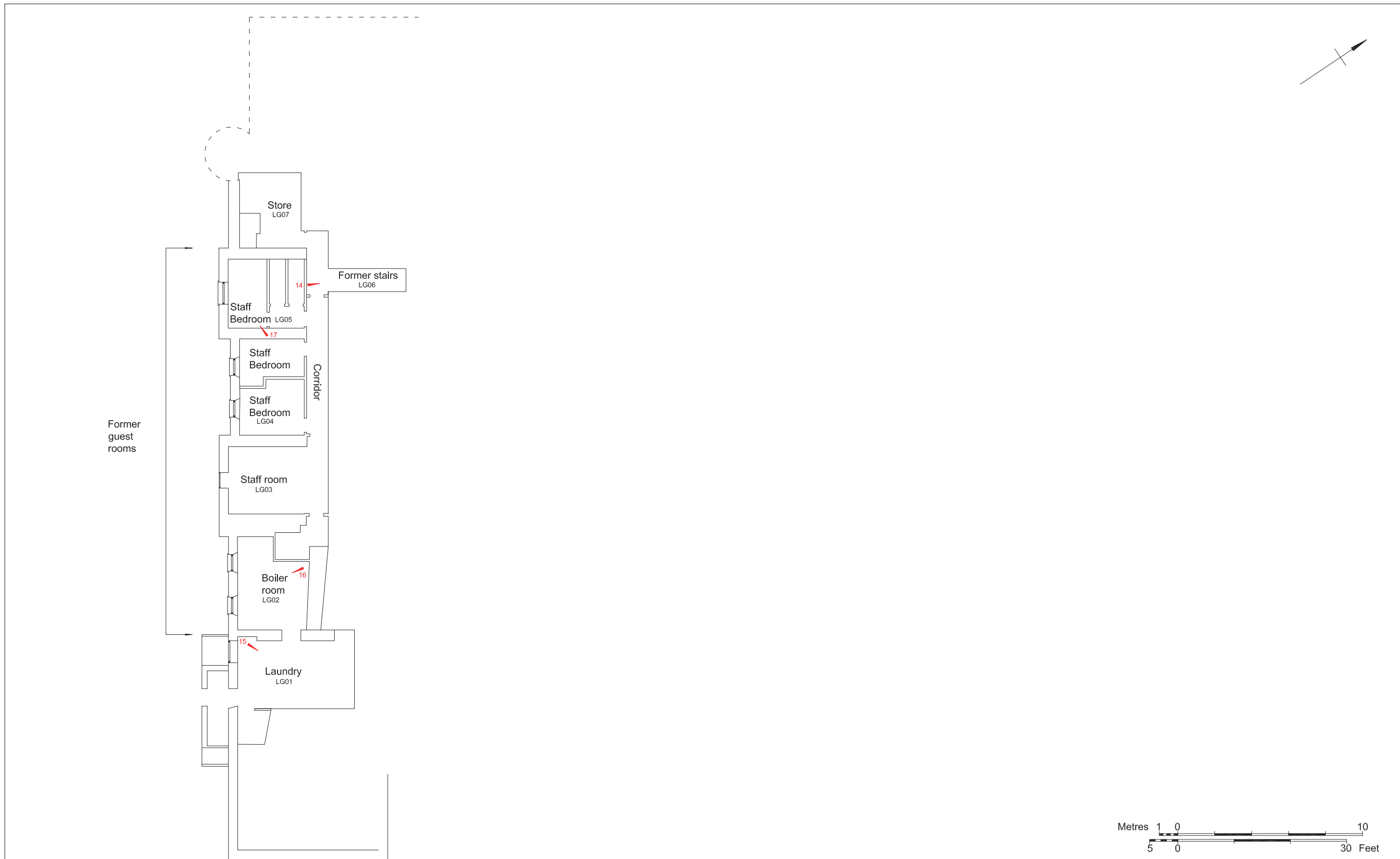
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Tors Hotel North-East and South-west Elevations of north-east tower

Figure 4

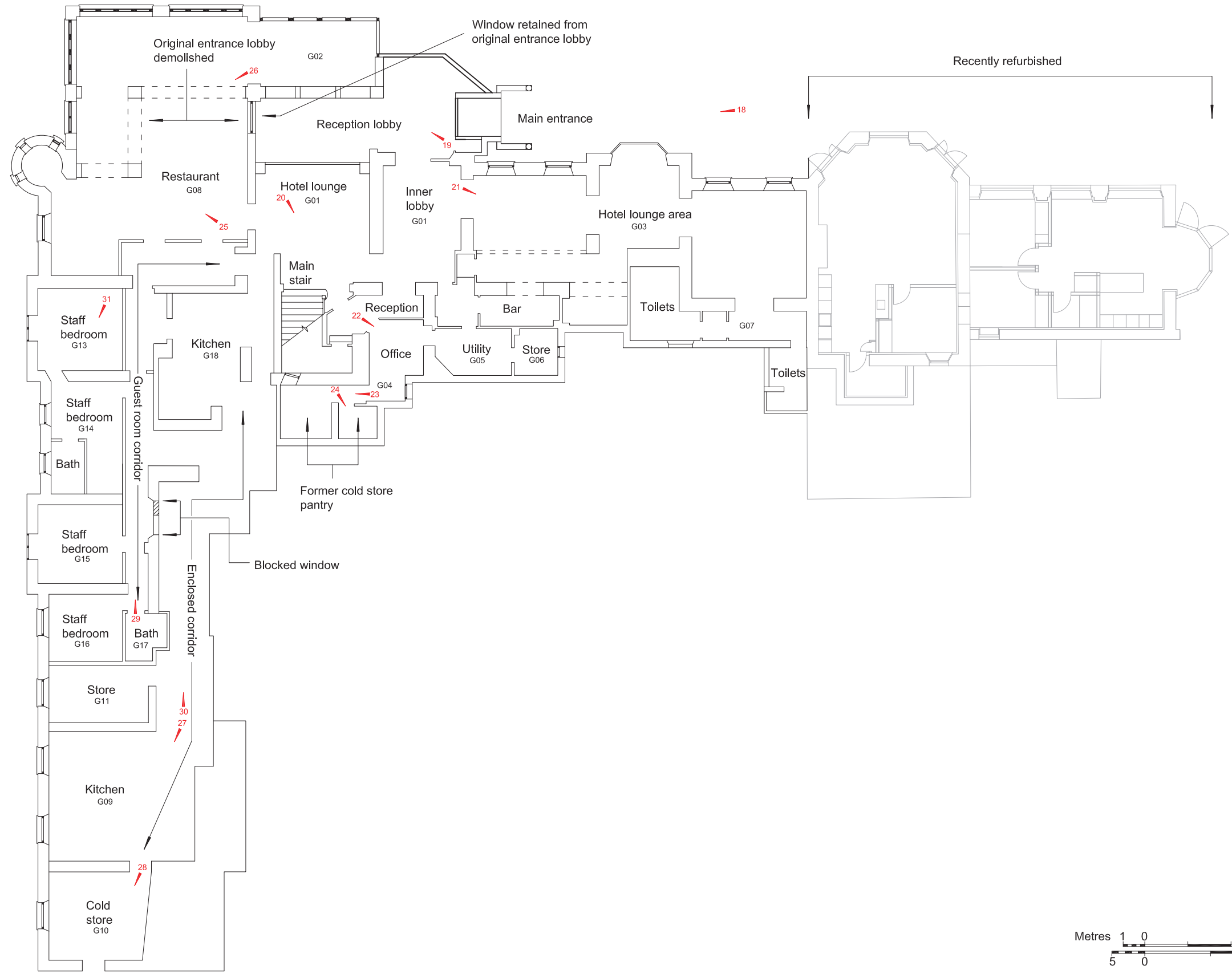


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Tors Hotel Lower ground floor plan

Figure 5

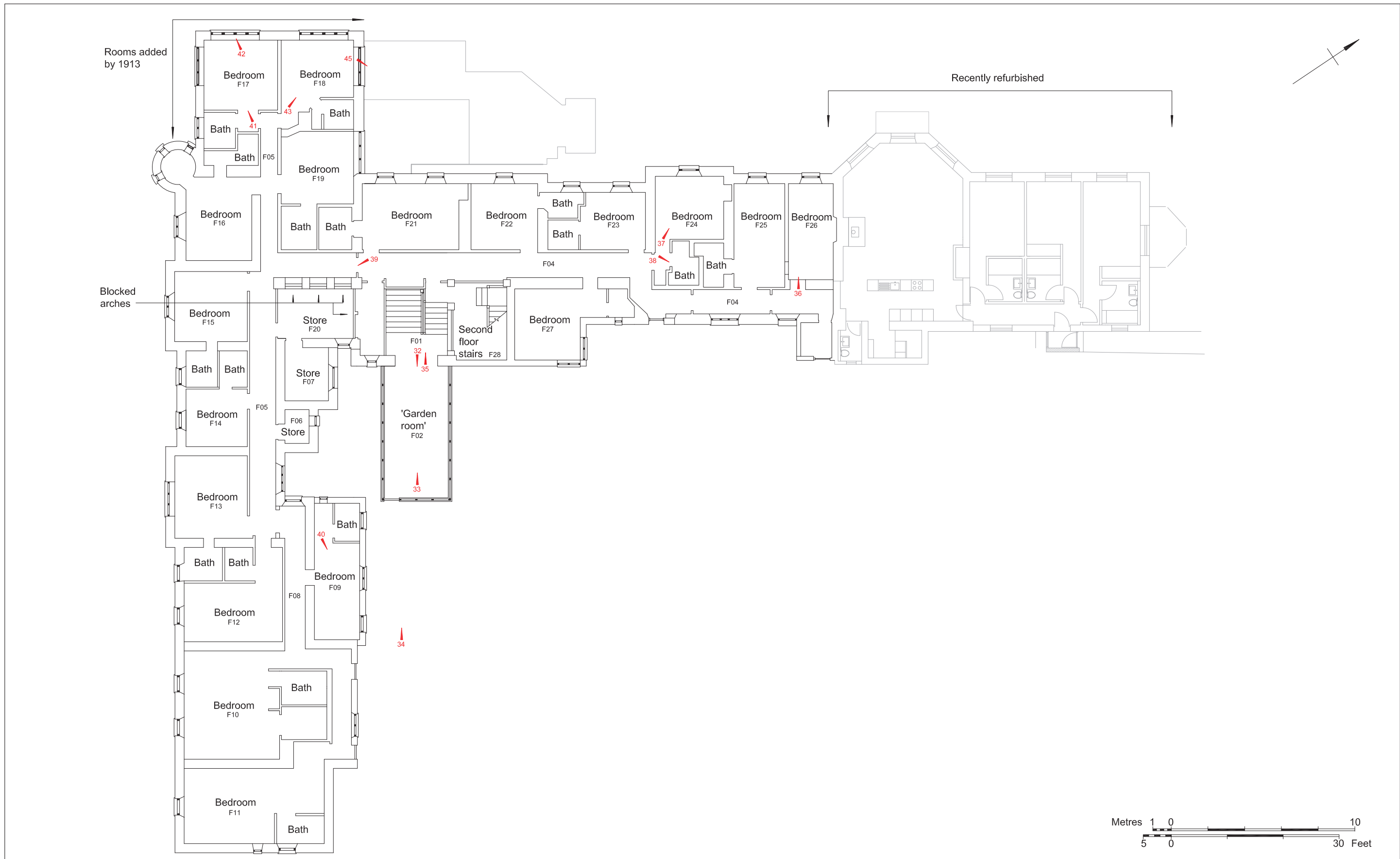



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Tors Hotel Ground floor plan

Figure 6

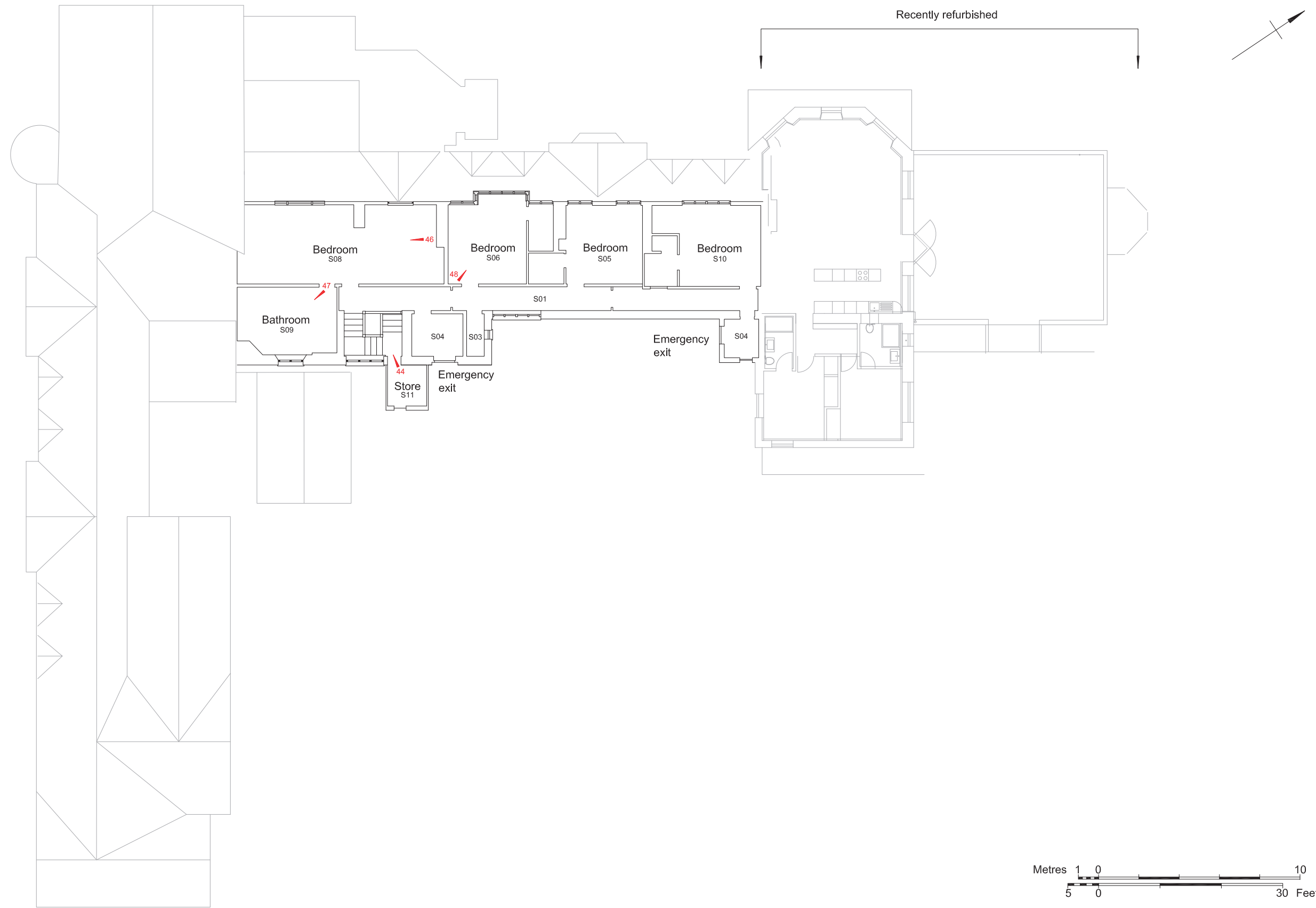


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Tors Hotel First floor plan

Figure 7



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Tors Hotel Second floor plan

Figure 8



Plate 1: Elevated view of Tors Hotel from the west



Plate 2: Low level view of north-west elevation from the west


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Plate 3: North-west access path from carpark viewed from the south-west



Plate 4: Hotel viewed from the south-west showing 1960's swimming pool and terrace covering access path


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Plate 5: Main access steps and piers

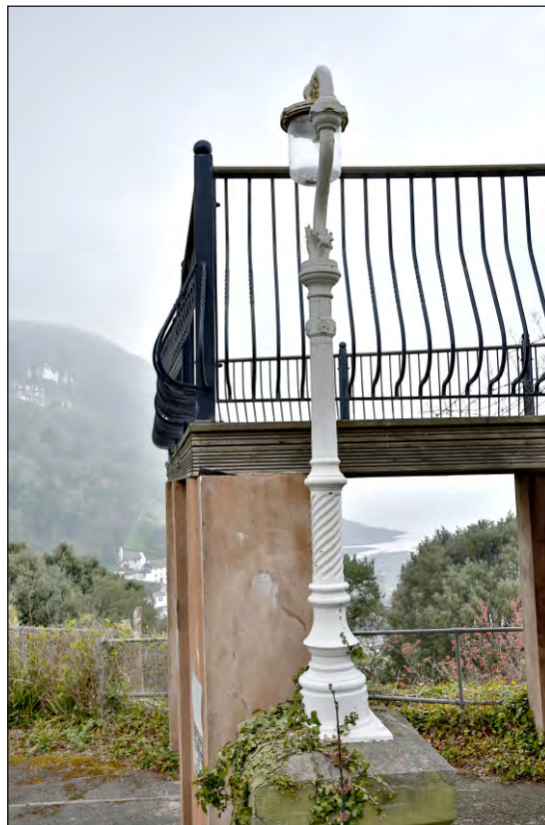


Plate 6: Cast iron lamp post on step pier


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Plate 7: North-west elevation viewed from the west



Plate 8: North-west elevation showing multiple phases of build viewed from the south-west


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Plate 9: North-west elevation showing refurbished north-east tower



Plate 10: South-west elevation viewed from the west


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Plate 11: South-west elevation viewed from the east (service buildings)



Plate 12: Rear of north-west range close up against rock face


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Plate 13: Overlooking the rear north-west range

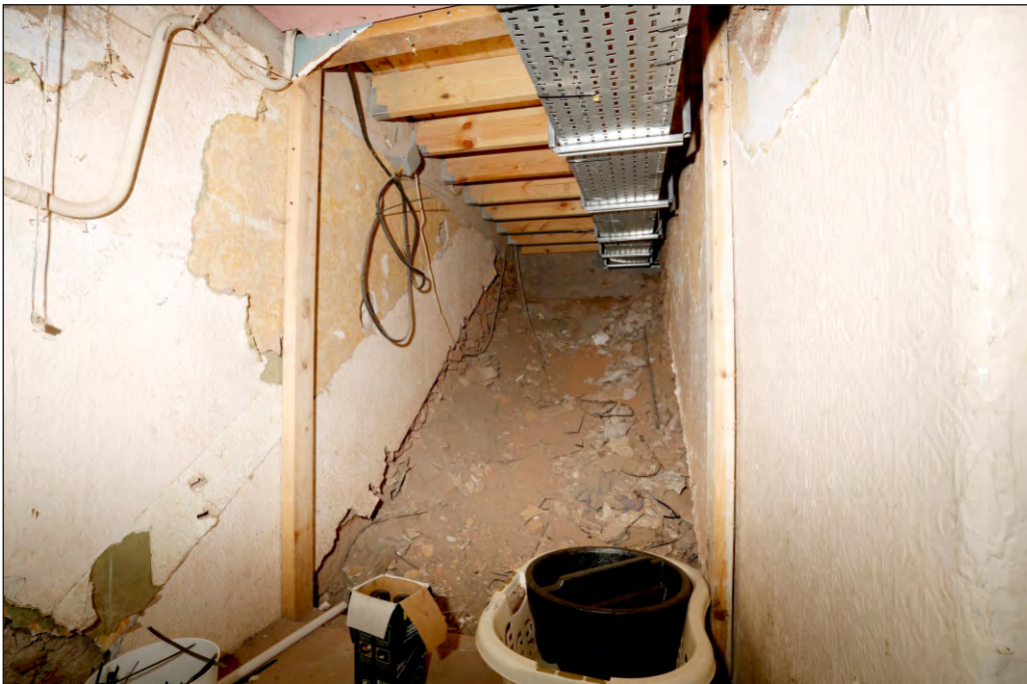


Plate 14: Former access stairs to lower ground floor rooms (stairs now removed)


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Plate 15: Lower ground floor laundry LGO1



Plate 16: Lower ground floor boiler room LG02


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Plate 17: Lower ground floor room LG05



Plate 18: Main entrance north-west side


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Plate 19: Ground floor 1960's entrance lobby. Original window in rear wall of lobby



Plate 20: Ground floor Inner lobby area showing main staircase


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Plate 21: Ground floor lounges G03



Plate 22: Ground floor office G04


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Plate 23: Ground floor rear passage to food stores G04



Plate 24: Ground floor food store slate shelves G04


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Plate 25: Ground floor restaurant G08



Plate 26: Ground floor restaurant G08


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Plate 27: Ground floor kitchen G09



Plate 28: Ground floor kitchen cold store G10


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Plate 29: South-west wing guest room corridor.
Note blocked window to centre right of image



Plate 30: South-west wing enclosed kitchen corridor


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Plate 31: Ground floor guest room G13 original fire surround



Plate 32: 'Garden room' F02


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Plate 33: 'Garden room' F02



Plate 34: 'Garden room' F02 exterior viewed from south-east


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Plate 35: Main staircase F01



Plate 36: Typical partitioned room F26


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Plate 37: Typical guest room F24



Plate 38: Typical ensuite facilities F24


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Plate 39: Late 19th century blocked arches in first floor landing



Plate 40: Bedroom F09 constructed on top of Kitchen corridor


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Plate 41: Early 20th century room F17



Plate 42: View from room F17


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Plate 43: Early 20th century room F18



Plate 44: Inserted second floor stairs F28


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Plate 45: View of second floor set back from first floor gables



Plate 46: Second floor double room S08



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Plate 47: Second floor bathroom S09



Plate 48: Second floor central guest room S06

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