

ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SERVICES
DURHAM UNIVERSITY

on behalf of
BWB Consulting Ltd

Bedford Lodge
Bishop Auckland
County Durham

archaeological assessment and
building recording

report 4400
March 2017

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1. Summary

The project

- 1.1 This report presents the results of archaeological assessment and recording project carried out in advance of the demolition of Bedford Lodge, Bishop Auckland, Co Durham. The building and site have been examined and a photographic survey has been carried out. Access to the interior was severely limited by the poor state of the structure. Sketch plans have been prepared to show the layout of the principal floors.
- 1.2 The works were commissioned by BWB Consulting Ltd and conducted by Archaeological Services Durham University.

The building

- 1.3 It is likely that Bedford Lodge was built in the early 1840s as a house for the mine agent of the Darlington company Pease and Partners. It was a substantial villa standing in grounds off South Church Road. The site appears to have changed little until the mid-1950s. By 1962, an industrial building abutted the west face of the house. Bedford Lodge was listed at Grade II in 1972. In the late 1980s, it served as offices for an electrical plant firm, BBH Windings. The factory was demolished in 2009, leaving the old house isolated in an empty plot. Its doors and windows were blocked up, but the building has been vandalised and burnt over the period that the site has been vacant. It is now in an extremely poor state of repair and has lost almost all of the internal features mentioned in the listing description.

2. Project background

Location (Figures 1 and 2)

- 2.1 Bedford Lodge is an isolated building east of the A689 South Church Road, Bishop Auckland, Co Durham. The Ordnance Survey grid reference is NZ 21384 28209. The house is a Grade II listed building, number 1292048, and lies outside the Bishop Auckland Conservation Area.

Development proposal

- 2.2 Proposals have been drawn up for demolition of the dilapidated structure, as part of a new housing development.

Objective

- 2.3 The objective of the project was to provide a record of the building in its present state, together with assessments of its historical and archaeological significance. The regional research framework (Petts & Gerrard 2006) contains an agenda for archaeological research in the region, which is incorporated into regional planning policy implementation with respect to archaeology. In this instance, the scheme of works was designed to address agenda item PMii: Industrialisation.

Specification summary

- 2.4 The works have been undertaken in accordance with a specification provided by BWB Consulting Ltd (2016).

Dates

- 2.5 The building was examined on 16th February 2017. This report was prepared for March 2017.

Personnel

- 2.6 The survey work was carried out by Richard Annis and Mark Woolston-Houshold. The illustrations were prepared by Janine Watson and Dr David Webster. Research and report preparation work was carried out by Richard Annis.

Archive/OASIS

- 2.7 The project archive is currently held by Archaeological Services Durham University and will be transferred to the Bowes Museum in due course. Archaeological Services Durham University is registered with the **Online Access to the Index of archaeological investigationS project (OASIS)**. The OASIS ID number for this project is **archaeol3-279850**.

3. Landuse, topography and geology

Landuse

- 3.1 The disused building stands in an open area formerly occupied by a factory (Photographs 1 & 2). The site was levelled after the industrial buildings were removed and until recently it was overgrown.

Site and situation

- 3.2 The house stands at an elevation of approximately 99m OD on the west side of the valley of the River Gaunless. The site is generally level but there is clear evidence that this is a recent development; at the south side of the house the ground is

considerably lower than at the north. The proposed development area is bounded to the north by gardens at the back of houses on Salisbury Place, on the west by South Church Road and on the south by the Darlington-Weardale railway line. An open area of scrub separates the east side of the site from Bishop Auckland Cemetery. To the south-east, a steep wooded bank descends to the Gaunless.

Geology and soils

- 3.3 The bedrock consists of mudstone, sandstone and siltstone of the Pennine Middle Coal Measures formation. These rocks are overlain by glacial till and river alluvium (British Geological Survey 2017).

4. Historical and archaeological development

- 4.1 The history of Bedford Lodge has been set out in an earlier report (Turnbull 2012) and a statement of significance (Hardie 2012), both prepared in support of planning application reference 3/2001/0412. In accordance with the requirements of the project specification, material from those reports is summarised here.
- 4.2 Until 1839, when the tithe map was published, the study area was an open field of grass. The tithe apportionment shows the site and the surrounding land as part of the property of the Railway Company of Auckland and Weardale. It is likely that Bedford Lodge was built shortly after this date as a house for the mine agent of the Darlington company Pease and Partners. This was a large mining and engineering firm with links to the coal and iron industries as well as to the Weardale railway, which opened in 1842. At the same time, a large iron and steel works called Wilson's Forge opened on the west side of South Church Road, close to Bedford Lodge. Its site is now occupied by the ASDA store and car park.
- 4.3 The 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1859 shows the house and grounds on a lane running east off South Church Road. This ran along the north edge of the proposed development area, behind the existing houses on Salisbury Place. There was a building, probably a stable, just west of the house and another dwelling, Down's Cottage, to the east. The front door was on the north side, facing the lane, and there were gardens to the east and south. By the 1890s there was a large glasshouse against the north wall of the garden and there were more buildings around a service yard to the west of the house.
- 4.4 At some time between 1896 and 1920, terraces of houses were erected on a new road, Salisbury Place, just north of the house. Map evidence suggests that Bedford Lodge and its grounds appear to have changed little until the mid-1950s. By 1962, industrial buildings had been put up to the west and on the site of the old stable yard; one building abutted the west face of the house. The building was listed at Grade II in 1972. By the late 1980s, Bedford Lodge was a part of a large factory building that covered much of the proposed development area. It served as offices for the electrical plant firm, BBH Windings, which occupied the site; the later buildings appear to have abutted the south face of the old house.
- 4.5 The factory was demolished in 2009, leaving the old house isolated in an empty plot. Its doors and windows were blocked up, but the building has been vandalised and burnt over the period that the site has been vacant. When it was examined in 2012, its condition was described as very poor. The first report on the house (Turnbull

2012, 6) concluded that “the building has suffered disastrously from the combined effects of neglect, vandalism and fire. It has been reduced effectively to a shell of four walls, elements of which are visibly in a precarious and unsafe condition, particularly the chimney stacks and parts of the rear elevation”. The report also listed the following features, mentioned in the listing description, that had disappeared by 2012:

- most of the roof
- front and rear doors
- virtually all glazing bars and other window fittings
- the stone staircase, iron balustrade and wooden handrail
- all internal doors and associated woodwork
- all of the fireplaces
- panelling, wainscot and skirting boards
- much of the wooden floors.

5. The building

Exterior

- 5.1 The house is built of local sandstone ashlar. It has two storeys over a semi-basement that is most clearly seen from the south side, where the level of the land falls towards the river valley. There are three bays on each face. The design, a rather plain Classical style, has a very shallow plinth, a sill band, and plain raised surrounds to the windows. There is no projecting decorative masonry at the wall heads; the eaves and gutter were carried on paired timber brackets. The hipped roof was covered with Welsh slate and has four chimney stacks, sandstone above the roof line and brick below. The internal walls are brick and there were formerly some stud partitions on the first floor. All of the original sash windows were replaced in the 20th century. A rough paved area, not an early feature, survives on the north side of the house.
- 5.2 The south face is the tallest of the four elevations (Figure 3c; Photograph 3). It has wide windows at ground-floor level, both now blocked up. Between these is a central door that once led to the garden by way of a flight of steps. The scar of this can be seen in the masonry, within the dotted outline in Figure 3c. Above the door is a tall arched staircase window (Photograph 4). There is a shallow basement window at the right of this face. The matching window at the left has been enlarged to make a door. Both have deep wedge lintels that are also seen on other faces at this level.
- 5.3 Apart from its lack of basement windows, the east elevation (Figure 3d; Photographs 5 & 6) reflects the former appearance of the north, east and west faces. The ground-floor windows, narrower than those to the south, are set in plain square-headed openings that extend down to the plinth. The lower parts of these openings are closed by slabs with sunk panels. The first-floor windows have plain surrounds rising from the sill band.
- 5.4 This east face contains the largest single alteration in the building. The right-hand window on the ground floor has been replaced with a lower and wider opening under a timber lintel. The infill above and below is finished with cement mortar, crudely marked to reflect the original ashlar. The stonework in the plinth below this ugly insertion is a different colour from that in the rest of the face. A row of holes for

an injected damp-proof course run across the face from the south corner, but stop short of the greyer stone below the new window.

- 5.5 The principal entrance was at the centre of the north face (Figure 3a; Photographs 6 & 7). The door is approached by a short flight of stone steps with plain 20th-century iron railings. There is a shallow porch with plain square columns under an unadorned frieze and cornice. Below, the shallow basement windows have deep wedge lintels and segmental heads.
- 5.6 The west face has been much altered by the attachment of the later factory building, the outline of which can be seen on the masonry (Figure 3b; Photographs 7 & 8). The middle and south ground floor windows have been altered to make doors between the two structures. At basement level, there are three openings to the former service quarters; all have deep wedge lintels. The central opening is smaller and lower than the other two.

Interior

- 5.7 The recent blockings have been smashed and access to the interior is possible, but the house is far from being in a safe condition. The photographs in this report were taken from outside the building. The basement is entirely bare and largely filled by piles of debris from the floors above. Sketch plans, reconstructing some lost elements, have been made on the basis of observations from various windows and doors (Figure 4).
- 5.8 Inside the front door there is a small lobby with a tall arch to the former staircase hall at the rear (Photograph 9). A damaged moulding is all that remains of the former decoration of this arch. In the hall, only the stone steps rising from the service quarters can still be seen. The scars in the plaster suggest that the landing cut across the head of the door way to the garden. The encaustic tile floor in the lobby is one of the few original features to survive; there is a recess for a doormat (Photograph 10). The rooms at either side of the lobby have lost most of their floors as well as their fireplaces (Photographs 11 & 12). The larger rooms at the south side are equally damaged. There is a large shallow arched recess in the north wall of the south-west room (Photograph 13); the fireplace is gone and the big window that looked over the garden is blocked up (Photograph 14). Fragments of the ceiling cornice and picture rail remain at this end of the room.
- 5.9 The floor is more complete in the south-east ground-floor room, but the ceiling has almost entirely collapsed (Photograph 15); only some parts of the picture rail remain. A back boiler is all that remains of the fireplace in the north wall (Photograph 16). The staircase hall is entirely gutted and the service rooms in the basement can be seen (Photographs 9 & 17). In the north-west room, the north window retains part of its panelled opening (Photograph 18). This is the only original woodwork that was seen in the course of this survey.
- 5.10 The loss of the floors and internal partition walls in the first-floor rooms means that there is little detail to be seen. The south-west room is now open to the landing that ran across the whole width of the house, to the room below and to the roof space (Photograph 19). Fragments of cornice are all that remains of its former decorations. The landing passed a door to a central room on the north side, which was divided by a timber partition; it is likely that this was a bathroom (Photograph 20). The south-

east room is possibly the most bare in the whole house (Photograph 21), but traces of a cornice can be seen here and in the adjoining landing. There was a cupboard in the recess south of the chimney breast in this room.

6. References

- BWB, 2016 *Bedford Lodge, South Church Road: specification for building recording*. BWB Consulting Ltd, Environment Group.
- Hardie, C, 2012 *Bedford Lodge, Bishop Auckland, County Durham: Statement of Significance*. Unpublished report for England & Lyle Ltd. Archaeo-Environment Ltd.
- Turnbull, P, 2012 *Historic Building Recording and Assessment of Bedford Lodge, South Church Road, Bishop Auckland, Co Durham*. Unpublished report for England & Lyle Ltd. Brigantia Archaeological Practice.
- Historic England, 2016 *Understanding Historic Buildings: a guide to good practice*.

Appendix 1: Listing description

BEDFORD LODGE, SOUTH CHURCH ROAD, BISHOP AUCKLAND

List entry Number: 1292048 Grade: II Date first listed: 20-Sep-1972 UID: 385744

NZ22NW SOUTH CHURCH ROAD 634-1/5/112 (East side (off)) 20/09/72 Bedford Lodge

Villa, now offices. Early C19. Coursed squared stone with ashlar plinth, quoins and dressings. Welsh slate roof with rendered chimneys. EXTERIOR: 2 storeys and basement, 3x3 windows. 5 stone steps up to central panelled door in Tuscan doorcase of pilasters with frieze, cornice and blocking course. Roll-moulded segmental heads to arched cellar openings, the left with fine glazing bars and the right with renewed glazing. Renewed pivoting lights imitating sashes in plain stone surrounds, on ground floor with aprons and on first floor with sill band. Upper left window blind. Eaves gutter cornice on paired brackets. Low pitched hipped roof with 3 tall corniced chimney stacks on front and right ridges. Left return has inserted wide ground floor window. Rear has taller basement openings, the left renewed glazing. c1980 steel spiral stair to 6 panel door with 2-pane overlight, and round-headed stair window with fine glazing bars. Right return obscured by adjacent building. INTERIOR contains a fine, single flight return, stone staircase with ornate iron balustrade and mahogany handrail, moulded staircase arch, good quality door surrounds and doors, window surrounds and shutters plus contemporary marble fireplaces.

Listing NGR: NZ 21385 29217

Appendix 2: Catalogue of digital photographs

The photographs were taken by Richard Annis on 16th February 2017, using a Nikon D3300 digital SLR. File names are **01-21 Bp Auck Bedford Lodge 4400**.


No	Subject	Looking
1	Bedford Lodge seen from the south	N
2	The house from the south-west	NE
3	The south or garden front	N
4	The upper floor and the stair window on the south face	N
5	The east face	SW
6	The house seen from the north-east	SW
7	The house from the north-west	SE
8	The east face shows the marks of the 20th-century factory	E
9	The staircase hall seen from the fanlight of the north door	S
10	The encaustic tile floor of the entrance lobby	S
11	Looking through the ground floor rooms on the north side	E
12	The same view from the east side of the house	W
13	Recess in the north wall of the large south-west room	NE
14	The south and east wall of the room shown above	SE
15	Looking west through the middle of the house	W
16	Chimney breast in the north wall of the south-east room	NW
17	The staircase hall seen from the south-east	N
18	Woodwork of a window in the north-west ground floor room	NE
19	The south-west bedroom, seen from the floor below	SE
20	Looking up to the landing from the south-east of the staircase	N
21	The south-east room on the first floor	NW

Figure 1: Site location



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 site location

0  1km
scale 1:25 000 for A4 plot

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
on behalf of
BWB Consulting Ltd

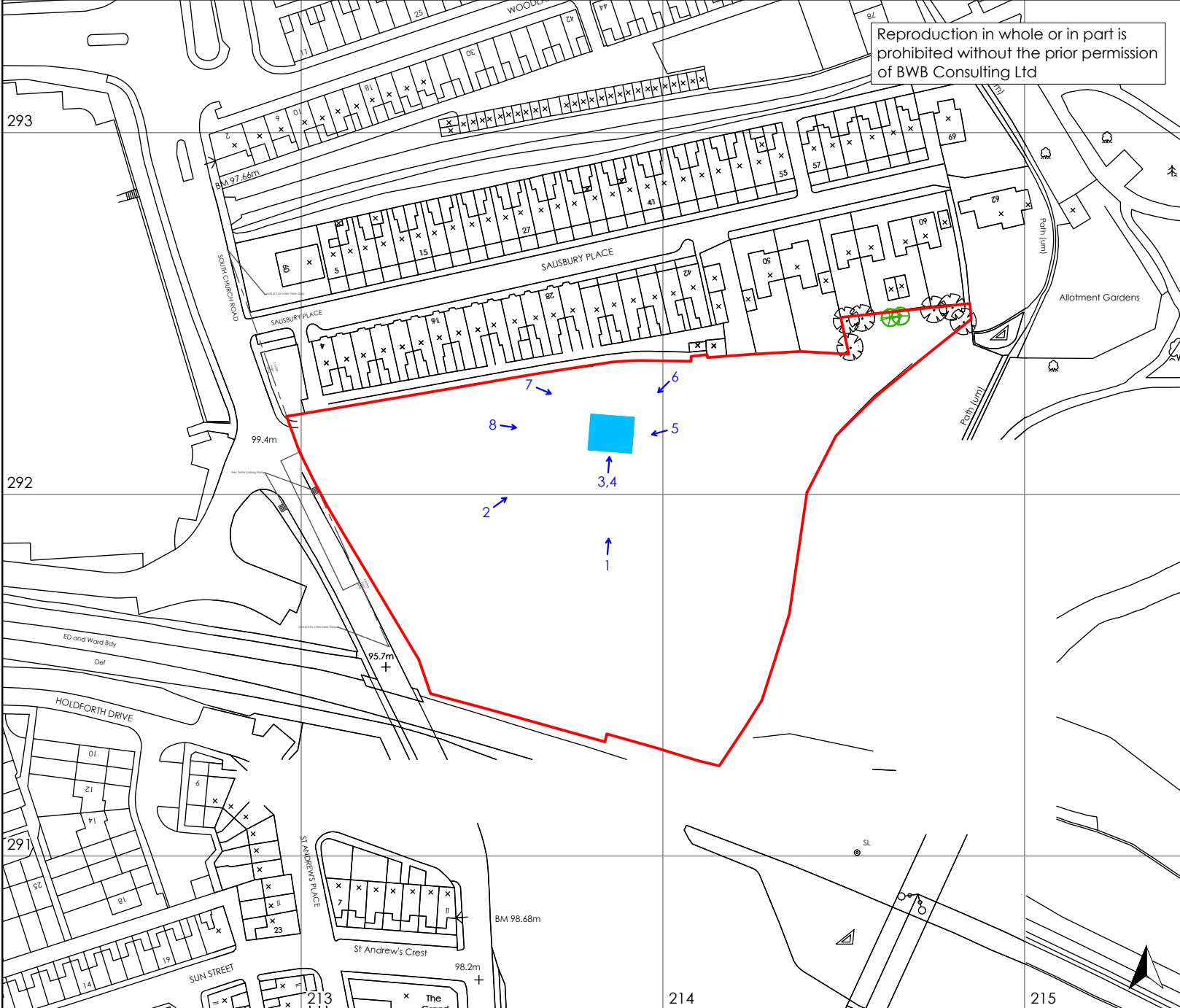
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Figure 2: Location of site and
proposed development

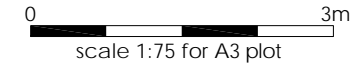
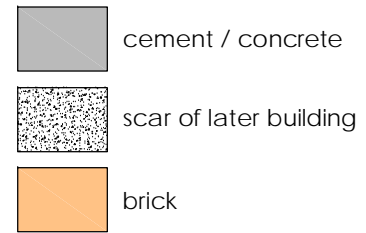


-  site boundary
-  Bedford Lodge
-  location of photographs



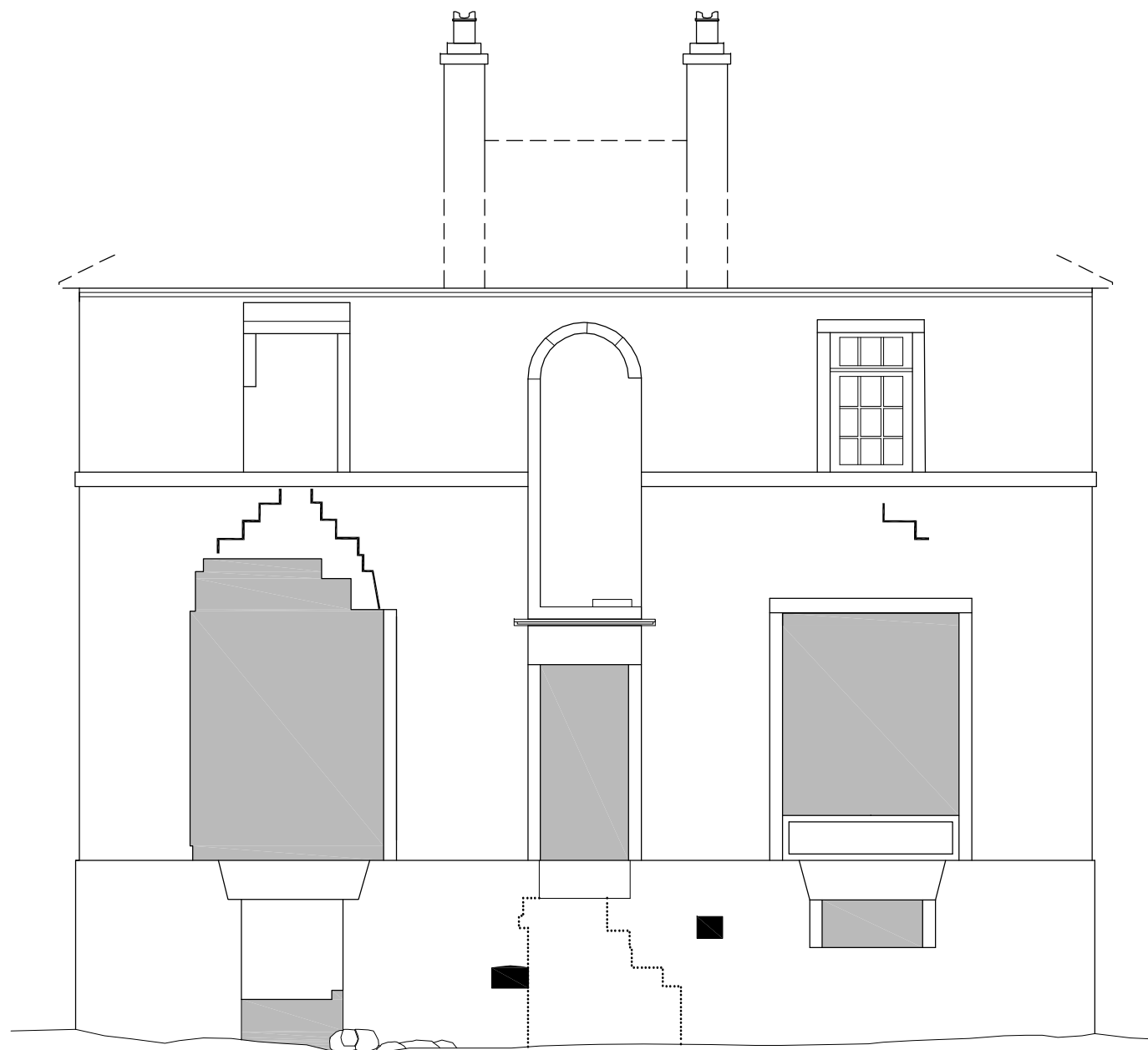


North elevation



West elevation



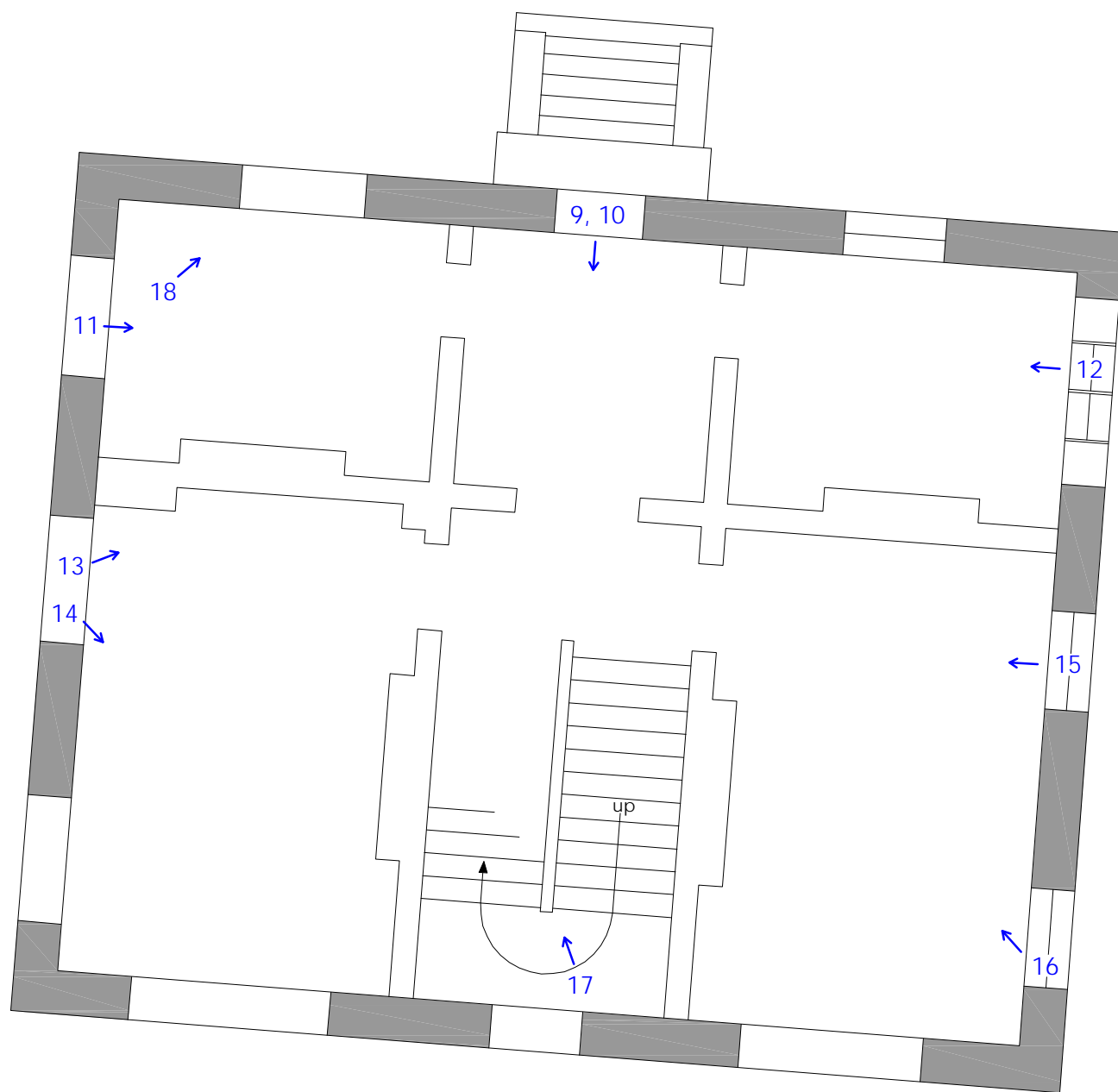


South elevation

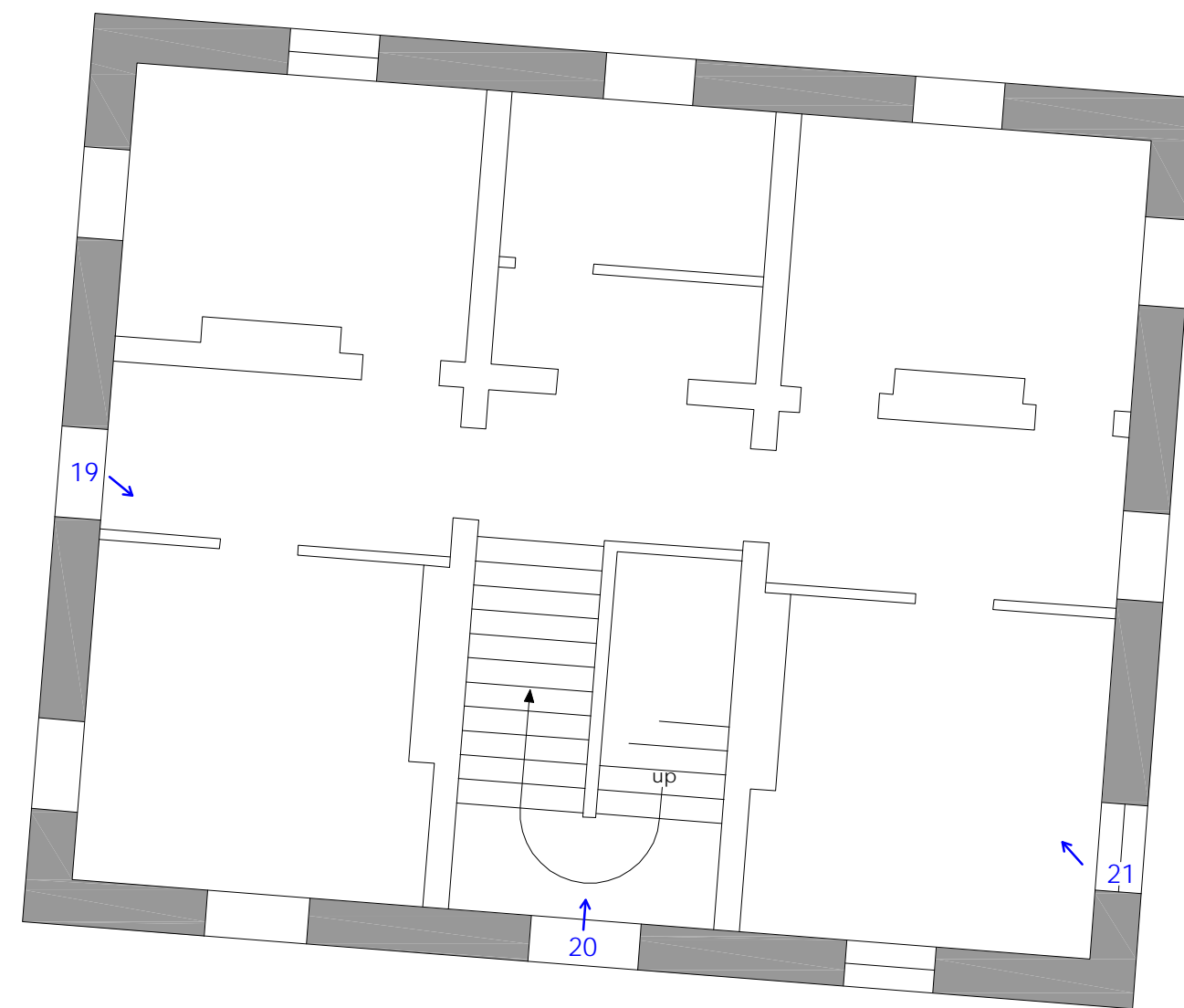


East elevation





Ground floor



First floor





Photograph 1: Bedford Lodge seen from the south. The house is isolated on a cleared site, with the backs of the houses on Salisbury Place beyond it



Photograph 2: The house from the south-west. The ground level seen here is well above the former garden, which was below the lowest point visible on the south wall of the building.



Photograph 3: The south or garden front. Note the wide ground-floor windows and the scar of the steps below the central door



Photograph 4: The upper floor and the stair window on the south face. Paired timber gutter brackets can just be seen. Note the settlement cracks between the left-hand windows



Photograph 5 (left): The east face, showing the large alteration to the ground-floor window at the north-east corner

Photograph 6 (below): The house seen from the north-east, showing the rather plain portico





Photograph 7: The house from the north-west, showing the paved area at the front



Photograph 8: The east face shows the marks of its connection with the 20th-century factory building that abutted it



Photograph 9 (left): The staircase hall seen from the fanlight of the north door. The worn stone steps rise from the service quarters in the basement. Marks in the plaster of the side walls show the position of the lost stone staircase mentioned in the listing description. Note the remaining decoration of the arch from the lobby

Photograph 10 (below): The encaustic tile floor of the entrance lobby





Photograph 11 (above): Looking through the ground floor rooms on the north side of the house. The window at the left is shown in Photograph 18, below



Photograph 12 (left): The same view from the east side of the house



Photograph 13: Recess in the north wall of the large south-west reception room



Photograph 14: The south and east wall of the room shown above. The blocked window fills most of the wall on the garden side



Photograph 15 (left): Looking west through the middle of the house at ground-floor level

Photograph 16 (below): Chimney breast in the north wall of the south-east reception room





Photograph 17 (left): The staircase hall seen from the south-east. The service rooms in the basement are choked with rubbish and debris

Photograph 18 (below): The surviving woodwork of a window in the north-west room on the ground floor





Photograph 19 (above): The south-west bedroom, seen from the floor below. A stud partition separated this room from the landing, which ran through the brick arches on either side of the staircase (left)



Photograph 20 (left): Looking up to the landing from the south-east of the staircase. Note the remains of a timber partition in the room beyond the upper door



Photograph 21: The south-east room on the first floor. The mark of the partition wall can be seen at the left of the arched brick doorway on the former landing