
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD

72 HIGH STREET, STEVENAGE
HERTFORDSHIRE

HISTORIC BUILDING PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORDING

Authors: Tansy Collins BSc	
NGR: TL 2333 2517	Report No: 4168
Borough: Stevenage	Site Code: n/a
Approved: Claire Halpin MfA	Project No: 5030
Signed:	Date: October 2012

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OASIS SUMMARY SHEET

Project details			
Project name	<i>72 High Street, Stevenage Hertfordshire</i>		
<p><i>In October 2012, Archaeological Solutions Ltd carried out an historic building photographic survey at 72 High Street, Stevenage, Hertfordshire in advance of internal alterations to the building. The survey was undertaken as part of a condition imposed on listed building consent.</i></p> <p><i>The objective of the project was to photographically record features of historic interest within the building. The earliest visible historic features date from the mid-18th century and include a rare chinoiserie staircase which is of much interest. Other elements are slightly later, perhaps late 18th or early 19th century in date, while refurbishment in the 20th century has seen modernisation with dry-lining and similar which may conceal other early features.</i></p>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	<i>4th October 2012</i>		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>	Future work	<i>?</i>
P. number	<i>5030</i>	Site code	<i>n/a</i>
Type of project	<i>Historic building photographic recording</i>		
Site status	<i>Grade II Listed</i>		
Current land use	<i>Retail, offices and residential</i>		
Planned development	<i>Refurbishment and conversion to residential</i>		
Main features (+dates)	<i>Late 17th or early 18th century house and shop</i>		
Significant finds (+dates)	<i>n/a</i>		
Project location			
County/ Borough/ Parish	<i>Hertfordshire</i>	<i>Stevenage</i>	<i>Stevenage</i>
HER/ SMR for area	<i>Hertfordshire HER</i>		
Post code (if known)	<i>SG1 3EA</i>		
Area of site			
NGR	<i>TL 2333 2517</i>		
Height AOD (max/ min)	<i>c.90m AOD</i>		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	<i>-</i>		
Project supervisor/s	<i>Tansy Collins</i>		
Funded by	<i>Basra Investments Limited</i>		
Full title	<i>72 High Street, Stevenage Hertfordshire: historic building photographic recording</i>		
Authors	<i>Collins, T.</i>		
Report no.	<i>4168</i>		
Date (of report)	<i>October 2012</i>		

72 HIGH STREET, STEVENAGE HERTFORDSHIRE

HISTORIC BUILDING PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORDING

SUMMARY

In October 2012, Archaeological Solutions Ltd carried out an historic building photographic survey at 72 High Street, Stevenage, Hertfordshire. The survey was undertaken in advance of internal alterations to the building as part of a condition imposed on listed building consent.

The objective of the project was to photographically record features of historic interest within the building. The earliest visible historic features date from the mid-18th century and include a rare chinoiserie staircase which is of much interest. Other elements are slightly later, perhaps late 18th or early 19th century in date, while refurbishment in the 20th century has seen modernisation with dry-lining and similar which may conceal other early features.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In October 2012, Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out an historic building photographic survey at 72 High Street, Stevenage, Hertfordshire (NGR TL 2333 2517). The recording was carried out in order to comply with a condition of planning / listed building consent for internal alterations (SBC Ref. 12/000237/LB). This included the photographic recording of the existing building prior to the commencement of the planned works.

1.2 The historic building assessment conformed to a specification prepared by AS dated 27th September 2012 following advice issued by BEAMS as conservation advisors to Stevenage Borough Council. The project also conformed to guidance laid out in the English Heritage document *Understanding Historic Buildings: a guide to good recording practice* (2006).

1.3 The programme of work defined in the specification comprised the photographic recording of the assessment structure and any features of historic interest within in order to produce a captioned photographic record.

Planning policy

1.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2012) states that those parts of the historic environment that have significance because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest are heritage assets. The NPPF aims to deliver sustainable development by ensuring that policies and decisions that concern the historic environment recognise that heritage assets are a non-renewable resource, take account of the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits of heritage conservation, and recognise that intelligently managed change may sometimes be necessary if heritage assets are to be maintained for the long term. The NPPF requires applications to describe the significance of any heritage asset, including its setting that may be affected in proportion to the asset's importance and the potential impact of the proposal.

1.5 The NPPF aims to conserve England's heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, with substantial harm to designated heritage assets (i.e. listed buildings, scheduled monuments) only permitted in exceptional circumstances when the public benefit of a proposal outweighs the conservation of the asset. The effect of proposals on non-designated heritage assets must be balanced against the scale of loss and significance of the asset, but non-designated heritage assets of demonstrably equivalent significance may be considered subject to the same policies as those that are designated. The NPPF states that opportunities to capture evidence from the historic environment, to record and advance the understanding of heritage assets and to make this publicly available is a requirement of development management. This opportunity should be taken in a manner proportionate to the significance of a heritage asset and to impact of the proposal, particularly where a heritage asset is to be lost.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 The site was visited on the 4th October 2012 in order to carry out the photographic recording of the building. The photographic recording was carried out by Tansy Collins using a Canon 1000D (10 megapixels) digital camera and included general internal and external views with detail shots of features of historic interest. External lighting and weather conditions were good at the time of the survey and a scale was used wherever possible.

2.2 The digital photographs have been included as colour plates, together with location plots shown on general plans provided by the client. These have been partially altered with sketch outlines of some areas of the building (Fig. 2). Room numbers have been ascribed for ease of description and can be seen on Fig. 2.

3 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE (Fig. 1)

3.1 Nos. 70 and 72 comprise a large contiguous property lying on the west side of High Street, in Old Stevenage. An alleyway divides this property from No. 68, a Grade II listed late 17th century / early 18th century building to the north, while a single-storey retail unit adjoins to the south.

3.2 The building under consideration occupies No. 72 and is Grade II listed (Appendix I). The listing describes the building as a whole (Nos. 70 and 72) as late 17th or early 18th century in date, and Pevsner notes a date of about 1700 (Pevsner 2002). Many internal features of No. 72 are consistent with a date towards the middle of the 18th century and more detailed investigation in the future could elucidate the development of the building more accurately. It is possible that the northern range is earlier with this range added or entirely remodelled in the middle of the 18th century.

3.3 The principal frontage faces east onto the street and is now divided so that the ground floor contains two retail units, given access through a central round-arched doorway with panelled reveals and a fine fanlight. A second doorway at the north end leads to a corridor and stair case which gives access to the first and second floors of the building. The inspection focused on this area and the first floor rooms which are subject to alteration. The second floor was not accessible though a small cellar underlies the north-east corner of the building and was

briefly viewed. A modern extension has been added to the rear, enclosing the original back door.

3.4 Early features are visible throughout the building and seem to indicate two or three principal phases. The earliest features indicate a mid-18th century phase, with a phase of remodelling carried out in the late 18th or early 19th century. The 20th century saw various piecemeal phases of work including replacement of earlier elements and subdivision of existing spaces.

3.5 Of most importance is the staircase. Chinoiserie staircases are rare but were much inspired by Chippendale's furniture patterns published in the 1740s as well as a second wave of popularity sparked by William Chambers in the 1760s. This example is fairly robust but well-constructed and properly pegged, with newels of hardwood, perhaps mahogany, and infill panels of softwood which would have been painted originally (these elements retain a good paint history). A date range of 1750-1770 may be suggested. The staircase continues to second floor level but is entirely boxed in. Inspection at second floor level may reveal further elements of interest.

3.6 Other features of a similar date include the front door case and original back door which is robust and retains a number of fittings for safety measures. Otherwise a single window at the rear retains elements from this period. A second phase of work is discernible in the late 18th or early 19th century which saw the general refurbishment of the building with new shuttered windows and doors at first floor level, of which one or two examples survive along with a fireplace which is consistent with this date.

3.7 As noted, extensive modernisation in the 20th century saw wide shop front glazing inserted, replacement sashes on the upper windows and new internal doors. The installation of modern suspended ceilings, however, along with some modern dry-lining of the walls, may conceal further historic elements.

4 PHOTOGRAPHIC SURVEY



DP 01 Street façade of the assessment building, taken from the east



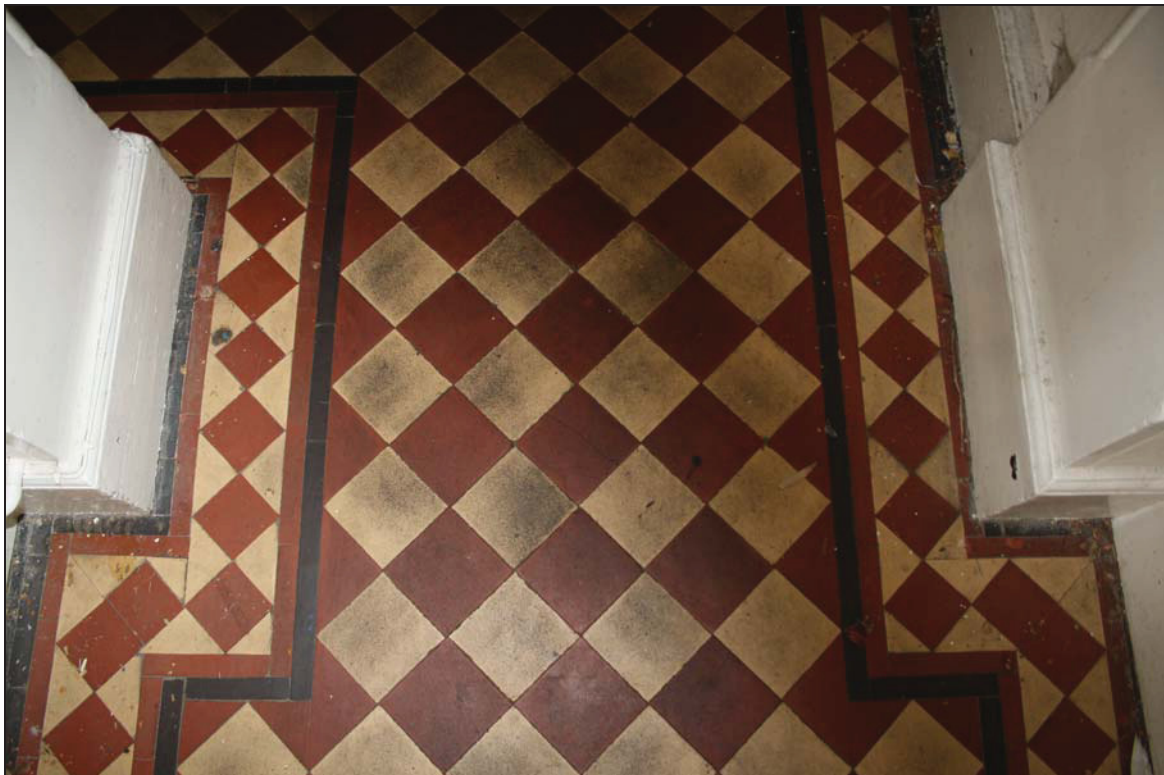
DP 02 Detail of the fanlight over the south doorway, probably late 18th – early 19th century in date, taken from the east



DP 03 Entrance hall (GF01) showing rear face of the doorway, taken from the west



DP 04 View of the entrance hall (GF01), taken from the east



DP 05 Detail of the entrance hall showing 19th century geometric tiling (GF01), taken from the east



DP 06 Stair vestibule (GF02) showing chinoiserie staircase, taken from the east



DP 07 Stair vestibule (GF02) showing original back door, taken from the east



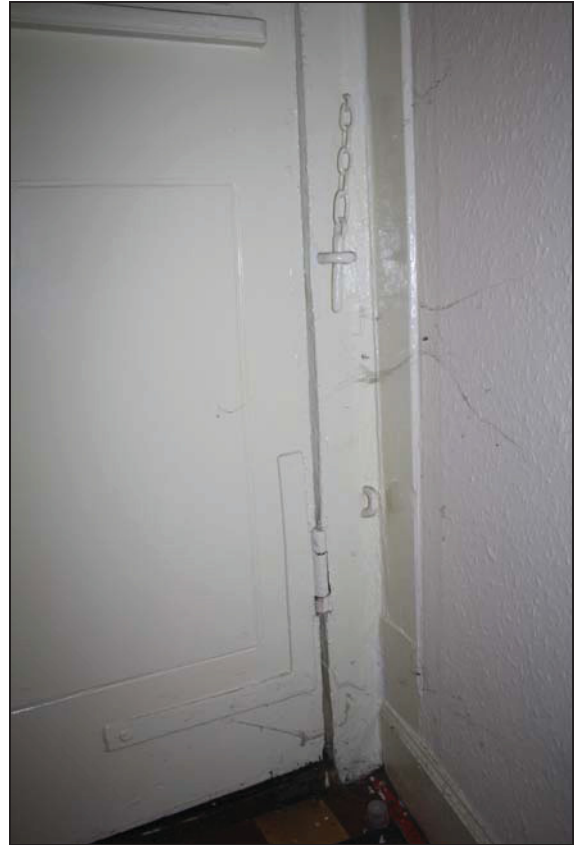
DP 08 Detail of the stair balustrade (GF02), taken from the south



DP 09 Detail of the stair balustrade (FF01), taken from the north



DP 10 Inner face of the original back door (GF02), taken from the east



DP 11 Detail of the back door showing H-L hinges with loops and chains for safety measures, taken from the east



DP 12 Detail of the back door showing upper glazing and ledges for a removable shutter, taken from the east



DP 13 Rear face of the original back door, taken from the west



DP 14 First floor landing (FF01) showing stair balustrade, taken from the east



DP 15 18th or 19th century sash window lighting the first floor landing (FF01), taken from the south-east



DP 16 Full height window embrasure with probable late 18th or early 19th century shutters and surround (sashes replaced) in FF02, taken from the west



DP 17 First floor room fronting the street which retains a number of early features including the window surround and shutters, doorway and fireplace (FF02), taken from the north-west



DP 18 Detail showing shutter form and surround (FF02), taken from the west



DP 19 Doorway between FF02 and FF03, probably of late 18th or early 19th century date with replaced door furniture, taken from the north



DP 20 Detail of the architrave between Rooms FF02 and FF03 showing reeding and square paterae, taken from the north



DP 21 Detail of the fire surround in Room FF02, taken from the north



DP 22 Late 18th century – early 19th century fireplace in Room FF02, taken from the north



DP 23 View of Room FF03 with early 20th century inset tiles but a modern replacement chimneypiece, early doorway to Room FF02 and windows with replacement sashes, taken from the south-west



DP 24 Overlight in Room FF03 to the central corridor, possibly replaced but following an earlier form, taken from the east



DP 25 Blocked aperture in the central corridor to Room FF04, may conceal earlier fabric, taken from the east



DP 26 Partially renewed window in Room FF05. 18th century elements survive, for example the upper sash with characteristic 18th century glazing bars, while the lower sash may be early but stripped of all paint history, taken from the north-east



DP 27 Window in Room FF04. 19th century sashes with some early glass, though the frame has been modified, taken from the north-east



DP 28 Rear west elevation of the assessment building, taken from the west



DP 29 Security doors to the basement underlying the north-east corner of the building, taken from the east



DP 30 Security door to the basement, taken from the north-east



DP 31 Manufacturer's sign on the door to the basement. The company originated in the early 19th century, with this example dating to perhaps the first two decades of the 20th century.



DP 32 Detail of the dado rail on the first floor landing (FF01) showing the original rail on the left with the later replacement on the right, taken from the west



DP 33 View of the staircase at first floor level, this probably continues to second floor level now boxed in, taken from the south-west

DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE

Copies of the final report will be issued to BEAMS, local planning authority and Hertfordshire HER.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions Limited would like to thank Mr Sukhdev Singh Basra of Basra Investments Limited for funding the work and for his assistance and Mr Jonathan Humphrey of RAK Group for commissioning the project and for his assistance.

AS would also like to acknowledge the advice of Mr Graham Tite of BEAMS.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Gurney, D. 2003 *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper no. 14

English Heritage (EH) 2006 *Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practise*. EH, Swindon

Pevsner, N. & Cherry, B. 2002 *The Buildings of England; Hertfordshire*. Penguin, London

Websites

[http://www.gracesguide.co.uk/Milners Safe Co](http://www.gracesguide.co.uk/Milners_Safe_Co)

APPENDIX 1 BUILDING LISTINGS

List entry Summary

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.

Name: No name for this Entry

List entry Number: 1307806

Location: 70 AND 72, HIGH STREET

The building may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County	District	District Type	Parish
Hertfordshire	Stevenage	District Authority	

National Park: Not applicable to this List entry.

Grade: II

Date first listed: 18-Feb-1948

Date of most recent amendment: Not applicable to this List entry.

Legacy System Information

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System: LBS

UID: 158070

Asset Groupings

This list entry does not comprise part of an Asset Grouping. Asset Groupings are not part of the official record but are added later for information.

List entry Description

Details:

1.5257 HIGH STREET

(West Side)

Nos 70 and 72

TL 2325 SW 1/39 18.2.48.

II GV

2.

Late C17 or early C18. Red brick house now divided into 2 dwellings. Tiled roof with gabled dormer. 2 storeys and attics, modillioned wooden cornice. Full height canted bay has round arched doorway with fanlight in panelled reveal. Similar doorway on right with 6 panel door. 3 nearly flush Windows on left, shop window on right.

Nos 60 to 72 (even) and No 72A form a group.

Listing NGR: TL2331725177

APPENDIX 2 HER SUMMARY SHEET

Site name and address:	<i>72 High Street, Stevenage Hertfordshire SG1 3EA</i>
County: Hertfordshire	District: <i>Stevenage</i>
Village/Town: <i>Stevenage</i>	Parish: <i>Stevenage</i>
Planning application reference:	SBC Ref. 12/000237/LB
Client name/address/tel:	Basra Investments Limited
Nature of application:	Renovation and conversion for apartments
Present land use:	Commercial / office / residential
Size of application area:	Size of area investigated:
NGR (8 figures):	<i>TL 2333 2517</i>
Site Code:	n/a
Site director / organisation:	Archaeological Solutions Ltd
Type of work:	Historic building photographic recording
Date of work:	October 2012
Location of finds/Curating museum:	
Related SMR Nos: -	Periods represented: 18 th century and later
Relevant previous summaries/reports: -	-
Summary of fieldwork results:	<p><i>In October 2012, Archaeological Solutions Ltd carried out an historic building photographic survey at 72 High Street, Stevenage, Hertfordshire. The survey was undertaken in advance of internal alterations to the building as part of a condition imposed on listed building consent.</i></p> <p><i>The objective of the project was to photographically record features of historic interest within the building. The earliest visible historic features date from the mid-18th century and include a rare chinoiserie staircase which is of much interest. Other elements are slightly later, perhaps late 18th or early 19th century in date, while refurbishment in the 20th century has seen modernisation with dry-lining and similar which may conceal other early features.</i></p>
Author of summary: Tansy Collins	Date of Summary: October 2012