



Northamptonshire Archaeology

Archaeological building recording at Boston Manor, Brentford London



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Northamptonshire
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Report 11/91

April 2011



**NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY
APRIL 2011**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL BUILDING RECORDING AT
BOSTON MANOR, BRENTFORD
LONDON
FEBRUARY 2011**

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QUALITY CONTROL

	Print name	Signed	Date
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OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project name	Boston Manor, Brentford (Hounslow)	
Short description	Archaeological building recording in four rooms over three floors uncovered structural evidence of the Jacobean house and of widespread alterations which took place in the south-west wing c1670. Vestiges were recorded of former decorative schemes and early fenestration, while the surviving layouts of wall panelling have been shown to variously comprise 1670s work, 18th-century alteration and later, probably Victorian, insertions. There was evidence of repair and restoration work since the Second World War.	
Project type	Building Recording and Analysis	
Site status	Listed Building (Grade II*)	
Previous work	None related	
Current Land use	Former stately home in Local Authority ownership	
Future work	Ongoing renovation/conservation work	
Monument type/ period	Post-medieval	
Significant finds	None	
PROJECT LOCATION		
County	Middlesex	
Site address	Boston Manor, Brentford Manor Road, London Borough of Hounslow, London, TW8 9JX	
Study area	South-west wing, interior of main house	
OS Easting & Northing	TQ 1685 7835	
Height OD	c18m	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA)	
Project brief originator	Brief from Richard Griffiths, Architects (RGA), in association with Maggie Urquhart, Conservation Officer, London Borough of Hounslow	
Project Design originator	John Woodcock (RGA)	
Director/Supervisor		
Project Manager	Iain Soden (NA)	
Sponsor or funding body	London Borough of Hounslow	
PROJECT DATE		
Start date	February 2011	
End date	February 2011	
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no.)	Content (eg pottery, animal bone etc)
Physical		None
Paper		Elevation drawing, written room-based records, B&W photographs and negatives
Digital		Colour photographs
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (NA report)		
Title	Archaeological building recording at Boston Manor, Brentford	
Serial title & volume	11/91	
Author(s)	Iain Soden	
Page numbers	15	
Date	April 2011	

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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL BUILDING RECORDING AT
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Abstract

Archaeological building recording in four rooms over three floors uncovered structural evidence of the Jacobean house and of widespread alterations which took place in the south-west wing c1670. Vestiges were recorded of former decorative schemes and early fenestration, while the surviving layouts of wall panelling have been shown to variously comprise 1670s work, 18th-century alteration and later, probably Victorian, insertions. There was evidence of repair and restoration work since the Second World War.

1 INTRODUCTION

Boston Manor lies on Boston Manor Road in the London Borough of Hounslow and is set in its own grounds just west of Brentford and north of the River Thames (NGR: TQ 1685 7835; Fig 1). The fabric of the house has in recent years been undergoing some conservation work and current programme was nearing its end when structural weaknesses were observed, necessitating further selective stripping out. This record was made by Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA) after being commissioned to do so by Richard Griffiths, Architects (RGA) in line with the perceived importance of the Listed Building and its constituent parts.

The house has until recently been open to the public. The programme of works of which the current conservation work is part, is designed to stabilise and conserve parts of the building in imminent danger of decay and ensure that public access can resume within a safe, secure structure in which the historic interiors are preserved.

A single site visit was made on 16 February 2011 to assess and record the structure of the rooms being stripped out and conserved before the work to restore the interior decor and fittings had taken place. While the record conforms broadly to that of Level II of the English Heritage guidelines (EH 2006), it is very selectively targeted within four rooms to better understand and appreciate those elements which were about to be re-covered or totally lost in reconstituting the rooms as complete interiors once more. These rooms are:

- The Ground Floor Library
- The First Floor State Bedroom and adjacent Ante-room
- A Second Floor Living Room

These are presented in Figure 2.

2 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The scope of the work was set out in a summary brief from Richard Griffiths Architects as follows:

- Visit site with architect; 1 day recording work on site
- Receive digital survey drawings and site photographs and notes of work in progress from the Architect and others
- Record the evidence of the existing structure on ground and first floor levels both internally and externally in the Library and State Bedroom
- Take notes on timbers removed from the external wall at ground floor level
- Record the construction and details of removed panelling at ground and first floor levels before it is reinstated
- Note construction at second floor level
- Analyse existing structure for phasing and periods of construction
- Produce an illustrated report from drawings and photographs

The drawn record in this report was based upon the Architect's surveyed plans and elevations but incorporates Northamptonshire Archaeology's own site record.

All works were conducted in accordance with the English Heritage procedural document, *The Management of Research Projects on the Historic Environment* (EH 2006b, revised 2009) and the Institute for Archaeologists *Standard and Guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures* (IfA revised 2008).

3 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT AND CONSERVATION

The Manor of Boston, together with a manor house of uncertain location, can be traced back to the Norman Conquest. However, the core of the standing structure of the current Boston Manor House was completed in 1623 for Lady Mary Reade, whose initials and that date occur on the ornate strapwork of the plaster ceiling of the State Drawing Room, one of a suite of rooms to share contemporary plasterwork, including the State Bedroom in which some of the current recording took place (McNamara 1998, 9-13 & figs 10, 11).

Considerable alteration is known to have taken place in 1670 when the Manor changed hands and came into the Clitherow family (ibid 15). In 1786 alterations and repairs are recorded (op cit 20).

Records suggest that in the early 1830s the then owners of the house might have been averse to the general movement of improving stately country seats in the latest styles, although this might have been forced on them by the family being untitled and not of the wealthiest order, although records do indicate that in 1834 the library was newly furnished (McNamara 1998, 23-4). It is unclear, however, whether this relates to free-standing furniture or fixed bookshelves or both. Further repairs are known in 1847 (ibid, 39).

A survey of the house in 1915 led to the property having widespread alterations carried out to connect it to the mains sewerage supply (op cit 39-41). The surveyor complained that no plans existed of the house. Rising costs led to the sale of the contents in 1922 and the house itself was sold to the local authority in 1923.

From 1940 the ground floor was the home of an infants' school. It was also damaged by enemy air raids and the Ministry of Public Buildings and Works conducted a survey, noting the value of the original 1623 core (MoPBW 1951). The school finally vacated the premises in 1961. A major programme of conservation was carried out 1961-3, headed

by Donald Insall Architect, with the uppermost floor being converted into apartments (Best 1960).

In recent years the library was renovated, achieving a mid-19th-century look but with canting stylistic allusions to a Jacobean past (ibid 50).

4 BUILDING RECORDING

The recording took place over three floors and comprised written, drawn and photographic records of principally the west wall, concentrating producing an appreciation of the full interior height of the building through all three storeys which might give insight into past perceptions of how the structure worked and how the rooms were used (Fig 3). Where possible note has been made of original features and an attempt to date the introduction of new features has been made, although this has in some cases had to be tempered by the knowledge that recent conservation work of 1951, 1961-3 and 1995-6 has been carried out with the express intention of restoration to a particular period and an almost inevitable, if not intentional, misleading of the observer, even the trained one.

The structural brickwork affected was mainly in the Ground Floor Library, where the greatest chopping out had taken place but before the archaeological attendance. Where seen on the floors above, this original brickwork was less affected by new work but was also less visible, only being exposed in smaller expanses. There was no reason to consider that it differed in any appreciable way from the ground floor.

The 12-light sash windows which are found over all three floors are in the style of the 18th century (un-horned), but are in some cases more recent replacements. Careful scrutiny might ascertain which. They sit within reveals in which splays have been chiselled out; in the case of the Ground Floor Library, they extend down to the floor. Such splays are not a characteristic of periods before 1700 and may be considered part of a wholesale re-fenestration scheme in the 18th century. The shutter sizes have been made up to match the splay dimensions so are of this later date too. Pinning down the date is not straightforward. In 1724 the Building Act (which from 1709 only applied to the City of London) required all new sash windows to be set back 4 inches from the outer wall face. At Boston Manor they are not set back the required distance from the brick. However, the stipulated post-1724 distance is achieved when the exterior architrave is taken into account. Similarly the lamb's tongue glazing bars are sufficiently slender in form to suggest a period firmly in the later 18th century. That they have no horns and the house is so close to London would indicate a date well before 1850, when the practice of adding horns to the upper sash-frame had overtaken the best homes and was beginning to filter down the architectural ladder to the vernacular.

During the extensive opening-up of the Library west wall brickwork, three unrelated and badly rotting timbers were discovered, which had contributed to the separation of the leaves of brickwork. Timbers have often been used to bond walls along their length during (particularly) the 18th century and so-called bonding timbers can be found in many such buildings of every status and function, from stately homes to stables. They often top individual brick-lifts and are sometimes felt to be a belt-and-braces approach to bricklayers who did not otherwise achieve a very good line. Where such timbers are well-chosen and cut to match the brickwork they take the place of a long section of coursing, perhaps every fifth or seventh course. Where not well-chosen, they interrupt brickwork and cause weaknesses. The rarely tie different leaves together across the width of a wall. This is felt to have been part of the problem here. They were probably put in as a contemporary repair (rather than a more measured, bricklaying approach)

when the window scheme was substantially altered in the 18th-century, slotted in from the chopped-back splays. There are almost certainly more of them around the building.

There have been considerable limitations on the evidence. At the time of recording, much of the remedial work had already taken place, so to a great extent the recorders were faced with a *fait accompli*. Furthermore, scaffolding swathed the exterior, preventing presentation of a coherent picture from the outside. Despite this, and with the help of photographs taken and drawings created by the Architects, some degree of back-tracking has been possible to understand the structure when it was first dismantled for inspection. The degree of opening up on the first and second floors was more limited and as a result the scope of comment possible has been correspondingly limited.

The Ground Floor Library (Also known as Room 3 in 1951 and 1960)

The room known as the library measures 8.73m long x 4.96m wide and has a 3.4m-high ceiling (28ft 8in x 16ft 4in x 11ft 2in). Its west and south walls, stripped of their coverings, are of brick as, presumably, are the east and north walls, although these have not been stripped of their plaster covering in the current works. The orangy red, sand-faced hand-made bricks, each measuring 225mm x 105mm x 62mm (8.85in x 4.13in x 2.4in) are laid in alternate courses of headers and stretchers. This is English Bond, considered to be among the strongest bonds where walls are to take the heaviest loads, and was, until the widespread onset of steel frames, most widely considered as appropriate into the 20th century for factories (for which see further Frost and Boughton 1954). For comparative purposes four courses of the surviving original brickwork rise 300mm (12 inches / 1 foot) (for which see further Harley 1974). Approximately half of all the wall surfaces had been made good with recently stitched-in matching brickwork at the time of recording.

The brickwork was bonded by two different mortar types, different mixes of basically the same thing, neither datable. These were:

- Light grey matrix with white lime lumps and sand, horsehair with occasional charcoal
- Light grey matrix as above but also containing flint or chert, un-burnt lime and sand/ironstone

The brick of the window reveals has been chopped back all the way from floor to ceiling to create angled splays to admit the maximum light.

External brickwork had all been re-pointed in the recent past, not all of it neatly.

The three worm-eaten and degraded oak timbers found horizontally within the west wall were as follows (Fig 4): [Left to Right]

1. 600x100x80mm, of sub-rectangular section and having five holes drilled with a brace and bit in one surface, part way through. These either relate to former dowels or bars, such as are often found between stalls in stables, or are the vestiges or guide bit-holes of an unfinished mortice or groove relating to the timber's former intended use.
2. 730x90x110mm, a plain baulk of timber with edges roughly shaved or chamfered off. Such a timber might serve as a post, pile or pole if used vertically.
3. 950x100x100, a plain baulk of waney-edged timber, little more than a branch. Not straight

The windows themselves, to both west and south faces, are twelve-light sashes (standard six-over-six panes) of 18th-century style and proportions, being un-horned and

with slender glazing bars. They are plane-moulded on the interior angle and each has shutters to fit into the window splays, which are panelled below window-height. One window has been closely fitted or wedged-in using Victorian quarry tiles along its top edge (Fig 5). Conservation programmes indicate that the windows have been re-glazed since 1945, while the south window may be a modern copy of those on the west (see below). Since the 1951 note (below) that the upper glazing bar was omitted at that date, it is reasonable to suggest that the un-horned sash windows in their entirety are all modern replacements in an 18th-century style. Under each window is a sill of Portland stone, somewhat battered, as though it has been previously used elsewhere. One has cracked and been stitched with an iron cramp. Portland stone is very susceptible to Acid Rain and often looks a lot older than it actually is.

The shutters, *ex-situ* at the time of recording, have plain brass hinges and fasteners and show signs of having been removed and re-assembled previously as they contain old, hand-made, and modern, wire nails in their assembly. They are panelled where they were made to be seen (closed), fielded by the addition of a decorative bead. They bear numerous coats of paint indicating a succession of earlier paint schemes of light green, dark green, brown and ochre. All these basic colours have been popular during the 18th to the 20th centuries. Since they were cut to fit the existing splayed reveals, they are unlikely to date before the mid-18th-century.

The panelling, also *ex-situ* and stacked up on scaffolding at the time of recording, is part hardwood and part softwood and probably of mid-late 18th-century date, solidly made but restrained, having plain panels within the styles/muntins and rails rebated with a moulding plane producing a *cyma recta* profile. They appear to be mitred rather than scribed, suggesting that some saving was made where possible. The muntins are tenoned into the styles. The panels were fielded by the addition of a decorative bead (Fig 6).

The floor is of concrete and is modern. A conservation report of 1951 states that at that time the floor was boarded out (see below).

On the brick of the walls lie the vestiges of early plaster, high up, where it has survived subsequent wall treatments. No analysis of these vestiges has been possible but in places it has been damaged by the introduction of almost full-height timber uprights, also now gone (Fig 7). These would probably have been the stays of a frame over which hessian was stretched and then over which wallpaper was pasted. A small piece of a (probably) 1900s-30s wallpaper was salvaged from high on the wall where it was trapped by the dry lining of the most recent wall treatment (Fig 8).

The most recent wall finish comprised plasterboard on dry-lining, which had impinged upon the patterns of the 19th-century ceiling finish and which bore the current cornice (Fig 9).

High in the south wall is a plaster-blocked, possibly splayed opening of unknown former use (Fig 10). Its location puts it at the uppermost third of the rear of the ground floor *trompe l'oeil* window on the south elevation. Such a former reveal here might suggest a former difference in south-facing fenestration, but this cannot be proven at present. In its base height it is very similar to the lowest window which today lights the back of the stairs on the west facade (Fig 11). Since the surviving fenestration layout seems to have been in position since the late 17th century, it remains a possibility that this feature is a remnant of the original 1623 layout and may denote an earlier stair location, although this is a tentative suggestion. A blocked *oeil-de-bouef* window adjacent may also be connected to this.

Of note for understanding this room are the following (verbatim) entries in the two conservation and repair schedules and reports of 1951 and 1960; (Best 1960).

Ground Floor room no 3.

Description and condition

This room occupies the S.W. corner of the building and has two windows to the W. And one to the S. It is understood that the southern window was formerly a blank and has recently been opened.

Ceiling is of plaster papered with a modern 'Jacobean' frieze and cornice. This has recently been repaired as War Damage repair and is in good condition.

Walls are lined with fibre board distempered as a temporary War Damage repair.

Sashes are in good order but have been reglazed omitting the horizontal glazing bar to the upper sashes.

The fireplace occupies the centre of the E. wall and has a marble surround with fluted architrave and corner patera, and C.I. (cast iron) grate. The surround is fractured at its centre. It is otherwise in reasonable condition.

The floor is boarded and is in reasonable condition.

(MoPBW 1951, 18: section 55)

Ground Floor (Main house) No 3

Recommendations

The existing lighting fittings to this room should be removed, and others chosen to harmonise with the remainder.

The walls should be stripped of their temporary fibreboard linings and replastered throughout.

The marble surround to the fireplace is fractured (as noted in 1951), and a register plate installed over the existing grate.

Linings to windows should be made good.

The window pelmets should be overhauled and repaired.

The existing blocked window to the South-East should be opened and a new sash window inserted, and the finishing made good. The reveals should be plastered.

The whole room should be redecorated.

(Best 1960)

Clearly while some of the recommendations were carried out in either 1951 or 1961-3, others were not. From 1951 it is clear that the decorative 'Jacobean' ceiling was considered to be a modern aspect, although perhaps, with a conservative outlook this label might relate to something 19th-century in origin at the time, perhaps Jacobean revival in taste. The wartime fibreboard noted in 1951 was clearly still there in 1960 and has been a more recent loss, although dry-lining has been the replacement, not standard re-plastering as was preferred in 1960. The windows appear to all be post-1951, needing only re-lining in the works following 1960. The Victorian quarry tiles wedging in the top of one of the west windows were probably inserted at this time. By implication the post-1960 works account for the removal and replacement of the panelling, while the shutters have probably been removed and replaced twice for both the 1951 and 1960s works. Likewise the 1960s works probably accounted for the former boarded floor, which is now concreted in its place.

The records of the current works and the schedules of 1951 and 1960 make it clear that while the fabric of this room is part of a Grade II* Listed building, in fact little of it, other than parts of the brickwork (itself much altered in the present programme), is of any great age. Since the panelling and shutters have been moved at least once, and the south window reveal was apparently opened in the 20th century, it is questionable how much of the woodwork originates from this room.

**The First Floor State Bedroom Lobby (former wig-cupboard), State Bedroom and Ante-room
(Also known as Rooms 7, 8 and 9 in 1951 and 1960)**

The State Bedroom and the adjacent Ante-room are of a suite adjoining the State Drawing Room. The State Bedroom measures 4.9m x 4.9m x 3.87m high (16ft x 16 ft x 12ft 8 inches). The brickwork is very similar to that of the library although little of it was exposed here by comparison.

Entry to the State Bedroom is via lobby between a pair of doors which demark either side of the thickness of the spine-wall of the house, containing the chimney breasts. Either door on both sides can be closed or left open to indicate the presence and availability of the occupant to servants and guests in a pre-arranged protocol. Both doors shut usually indicate neither absence or presence but in any case unavailability.

This small lobby, which can thus be shut off, can often be used to house a commode. Here it is solidly (and fully) panelled in common with the bedroom and, although now glazed in, a ventilation-opening in the exterior wall strongly suggests that the space when fitted out thus in the late 17th century, was designed to be used as a wig- or powder-cupboard (Fig 12). Here the clouds of powder the fashion of powdered wig-wearing generated could be directly ventilated, while minimising the same to either the Bedroom or the Drawing Room to either side. Such wig- or powder-cupboards are not uncommon in developments of the period c1660-1720 and can be seen in the likes of Coombe Abbey, Warwickshire, dating from 1667 (adjacent to room 102 in Soden 2006), and at New Inn Farm, Buckinghamshire, recently recorded and from soon after 1717. Here too they have utilised accesses between two rooms at the side of a chimney breast (Soden, Prentice and Marshall, in prep).

The 1951 Conservation schedule says of this space:

First Floor Lobby between rooms No. 7 and No.8

Description and Condition

This small lobby has a plaster ceiling, its E. and W. walls formed by the doors and frames leading to Rooms 7 and 8, its N wall panelled as far as Room No.8, its S. wall panelled with low matchboard dado with a tall C.I. (cast iron) vent let into the external wall.

The plaster ceiling is in fair condition, the panelling loose and skirting damaged. The floor boards have been damaged and the paintwork is in a poor condition.

(MoPBW 1951, 15: section 45)

The room cannot be individually discerned on the 1960 schedule but it has clearly been conserved since 1951 since when all the defects noted have been rectified.

On the bedroom side of the door into the State Bedroom is mounted a typical, sturdy brass lock-case of the later 17th century (Fig 13).

On the uppermost portion of the walls is mounted a Jacobean strapwork frieze which matches that of the ceiling. This was uncovered and restored in the 1960s conservation programme, before which it had been panelled over. It dates from the original 1623 house and is a very late mainstream Jacobean manifestation, just as Inigo Jones was spearheading the introduction of Palladian ideas into architecture and decor. Originally, below this the plaster which once covered the walling brick would probably have been covered with either tapestries or Jacobean oak panelling, painted or unpainted or plain

ones bearing painted motifs between bevelled or chamfered rails and muntins. Such contemporary panelling can be seen to great effect at the likes of Canons Ashby House, Northamptonshire and Chastleton, Oxfordshire, (both National Trust) where panelling and tapestries are combined (see Gore and Gore 1991, figs 23 and 33).

The upper two thirds of the wall is covered with a fabric covering stretched over battens. This derives from the 1960s restoration. Beneath this lie the vestiges of the original plain grey plaster which once fully covered the structural brickwork, of which very little was exposed. The level at which this survives directly beneath the west window indicates that the original fenestration scheme of 1623 at this level once shared either the same sill height or was higher (Fig 14). It could not have been lower or a plaster-mark would indicate it.

The same battens which mount the stretched wall fabric also support a dado or chair-rail and below it bolection moulded fielded panelling down to a skirting board (Fig 15). Of relevance here is the 1951 Conservation Schedule for this room as follows, in full (except for the detailed ceiling and frieze descriptions):

First Floor, Room No.8 (State bedroom)

Description and Condition

The walls are panelled in oak bolection panelling with dado and cornice. The cornice to the panelling is below and forward from the plaster cornice.

The wall panels rise in single panels above the dado rail; all of these panels are missing, their space being occupied by stretched paper. Window and door architraves are bolection moulded. The space on the N. Wall previously occupied by the bed has a blank panel, cornice, dado and skirting being stopped for this length.

The fireplace surround itself is a marble bolection mould enclosing a good ribbed cast iron 19th century grate and is in good condition.

Doors and window shutters are contemporary except for window shutter furniture and in good condition with the exception of added china finger-plates to the doors.

Doors are 2 panel with bolection moulded fielded panels.

(MoPBW 1951, 14: section 43)

Relevant recommendations of that date included the replacement of the missing upper panels, instead of stretched paper, and the filling/continuation of the decorative elements of the space where a large (four-poster) bed once stood against the north wall. Otherwise the recommendations were very much to conserve as found. The panelling today is in good condition, although any tell-tale signs of alterations to mask the bed position have been lost from view.

By 1960 the ethos was to expose the plaster frieze, as is seen today, although the panelling battens over it were said to be 'incongruous' (Best 1960). Such a value judgment seems to ignore a period when bolection moulded panelling clearly covered the entire wall from floor to ceiling (popular c1660-c1715) in favour of exposing the earliest scheme. That it once panelled the entire walls from c1670 can still be seen in the surviving depth of both the dado and the door architraves, designed to match the bolection moulded panelling depth, with which they were a suite (Fig 16).

The best-surviving (as opposed to possibly most meritorious) elements of each period seem to have been selected for presentation as a result of the recommendations.

Therefore while the ceiling and uppermost wall portions present the magnificent 1623 strapwork in plaster, the lower walls still retain 1670s bolection moulded and fielded panelling, stopped at the dado or chair rail. Even the panelling has been amended to

remove evidence of the bed position against the north wall, while the shutters also retain the same raised and fielded panels – but minus the up-standing bolection-moulding which would prevent closure into the shutter box. In between the two lie expanses of wall which once held the upper panelling of the 1670s, later replaced with paper. It is a room lit by an 18th-century window scheme. The aspect is now one which is basically 18th-century in style but with a wide panoramic (and anachronistic) view of both the house's origins and the change of ownership in 1670. It presents an interesting mix of styles which would probably never have found contemporary favour.

Through the connecting doorway is the Ante-Room, possibly once used as a dressing room in terms of its purpose, or a bedroom set aside for the spouse of the occupant of the State Bedroom. Originally it was in effect a waiting-room for a select few, taken from the (relative) mass of those allowed to attend in the State Dining Room, who were then allowed to meet the Lord in near-privacy or await his call to be received in total privacy in the bedroom. It measures 4.9m by 3.6m and is 3.75m high (16ft x 11ft 9in x 12ft 4in). There is a marked difference in the door-height from this room to the bedroom next door (Fig 17). It is likely that the floor was once lower too, with a step up into the bedroom, since taken out in the conservation programmes.

In 1951 the room was described thus:

First Floor, Room No 9

Description and Condition

The ceiling is plastered and in good condition. There is a central electric light pendant

The cornice is of plaster, coved and painted. The paintwork is in poor condition.

The walls are plastered with artificial flock wallpaper over a moulded dado rail and plain wood 'painted dado' [sic: sc-panelling?]. The dado is loose near the S. Door and the moulded skirting damaged to the S. of fireplace.

The fireplace surround is in wood of classic[al] design with applied scroll carving to the frieze, the inner surround being of marble, the grate of steel. All in good order except for the paintwork.

Doors and window shutters are of 18th century date and generally in good order with contemporary furniture.

(MoPBW 1951, 13: section 41)

Recommendations at the time were limited to conserving all as found, although it is clear that heating ducts were inserted beneath the window and piping behind the panelling. By 1960 the decor had deteriorated and it was not recommended that it be preserved further, but replaced (Best 1960: Features, Rooms 11, 10 and 9).

The panelling here is not the 1670s bolection moulded but a more restrained, plain affair, with applied moulded beading denoting the panels. This may be an 18th-century replacement, contemporary with the fireplace, since the depth of the dado and door architrave are similar to the State Bedroom; the implication is that they once also sported similar panelling all the way to the ceiling (Fig 18). The shutters match those of the bedroom, implying a common fenestration scheme at least, having raised and fielded panels, but no bolection-moulding. Otherwise conservation programmes have led to a similar overall decor.

The Second floor Living Room (Also known as Room 16 in 1951 and 1960).

Above the State Bedroom lies a room which was converted in 1961-3 into a Living Room for an apartment. It measures 5.2m by 4.9m and has a 3m-high ceiling (17ft x 16ft x 8ft

8in) which also incorporates the west-facing eaves. The room contains a plain but sturdy bolection moulded stone fireplace in its east wall, although the majority of the room is neatly plastered and painted from the creation of the apartment. To the south-east it opens into a space adjacent to the fireplace which may have been a wig-cupboard as on the floor below. It too is provided with similar ventilation (now glazed over) and is of very similar dimensions.

The doors in the north and east walls are modern, as probably are the sash windows. The bricks of the openings have been chopped back to create splays and maximise light, a characteristic from the 18th century onwards.

The brickwork exposed here in the west wall has been extensively stitched and tied in mortar. A portion of brickwork in the top south-west corner has been replaced in modern times (Fig 19). Slight differences in mortaring colours and consistency at this height probably relate to the different loads of mix carried up from the ground, rather than being real changes in build. At anything above ground floor level, mortar-mixers were limited by how much they could carry up to the wall tops at any one time, so apparent 'lifts' or separate 'builds' become difficult to assess on the basis of mortar alone.

High in the west wall is a short section of timber on which the rafters of the roof appear to rest. This remnant of a former wall-plate bears diagonal lath and plaster marks, indicating the likely method of a previous wall covering (Fig 20). Of relevance to this timber is a reference in the 1951 conservation report:

Tie beams and principals rest on a continuous plate that is carried round the entire building and across the once (sic) external gable wall dividing the two portions of the building. This continuous plate is of considerable structural importance as it forms the sole effective tie to the upper portions of the walls

This plate and the end (buried) principals have been replaced in the S.W. corner and on the south gables by concrete under recent War Damage repair work.
(MoPBW 1951, 5: section 9)

This short section of timber may be the last vestige of the wall-plate mentioned. If so it has already been cut by the window in addition to the works mentioned in 1951. Observation for the present report suggests that, although specified, concrete may not have been universally used, perhaps due to the financial constraints of the immediate post-war period. Certainly the timber simply ends in the major brickwork repair which is carried right around the corner. It may be in yellow stock brick although this is not clear-cut. In other areas of the house the 1960 report notes that War Damage repairs were not always sympathetic.

It is probably not coincidental that the problems of the second floor in the south-west corner related in 1951 lie in close proximity to the problematic area of 2010-11. Unsympathetic alterations in one place may often store up related problems nearby. Not all the problems may ever have been directly related to 'War Damage'.

5 CONCLUSIONS

The relevant dating for the Ground Floor Library is as follows:

- Structural brickwork and some plaster 1623, with 2011 rebuild
- Blocked window high in south wall of uncertain date, but possibly 1623
- Window reveals, 18th-century splays
- Windows 18th century or 19th-20th century in 18th-century style
- Ceiling 19th century
- Decor modern
- Floor modern

The relevant dating for the First Floor Lobby (possible Wig Cupboard), State Bedroom and Ante room is as follows:

Lobby/Wig Cupboard

- Wig cupboard interior panelling and doors, all 1670, possibly replacing a stair location of 1623, later cast-iron grilles, subsequently glazed also

State Bedroom

- Bedroom structural brickwork and wall plaster 1623
- Ceiling and Frieze 1623
- Dado and bolection moulded panelling (conserved), fireplace surround 1670
- Wall coverings 1961-3 in 18th-century style
- Windows 18th century in 18th-century splays, contemporary shutters
- Floor 1961-3

Ante-room

- Dado and panelling, door architrave 1670, panelling reduced in 18th century, contemporary shutters
- Cornice 1670
- Wall covering 1961-3
- Fireplace 18th century with modern conservation

The relevant dating for the Second Floor Living Room is as follows:

- Structural brickwork 1623 with modern repair to the corner
- Vestiges of wall-plate 1623
- Windows 20th century
- Plasterwork and skirting board 1960s
- Fireplace 1670
- Possible wig cupboard 1670, but lacking all panelling and decor; may have replaced a former stair of 1623

The rooms in which recording was carried out reflect the input of funds in the original 1623 construction and the 1670 alterations. However, other than windows, the 18th century is poorly represented, suggesting more subdued family fortunes at a time when near neighbours such as the banker Mr Child at nearby Osterley House (National Trust) had their Jacobean homes overhauled by the likes (specifically at Osterley) of Robert Adam and the best interior decorators of the day.

The house remains very much in the 'compact' style, popularised in the first half of the 17th-century, described as cohering '*into a single dominating symmetrical mass...Houses which had been compressed into one soaring and stately whole were an irresistible advertisement of the dignity and glory of their owners*' (Girouard 1978, 114-5). This was considered to be the most prestigious form in the first half of the 17th century.

The current nomenclature used in the rooms recorded only partly suggests their original purpose, which was one of gradual and deliberate approach to the lord of the manor or principal occupant in the most controlled way (Fig 21; Girouard 1978, 128-360). The State Bedroom or *chambre* was in the later 17th century the most important room in which the owner of the estate might be approached formally by a select few in the increasingly popular French style. This room was bedroom, office, reception and for private and informal but ostentatious dining for the most privileged guests. The Ante-room or more properly *antechambre* was a formal approach to the chamber or bedroom from the stairs, less ostentatious and once removed from the occupant's chosen inner circle. The occupant might choose to meet or receive in there, but it was his selectivity which meant many could not cross the threshold (and in this case also step up) into the bedroom. He (or she) also had two opportunities to attend upon (and withdraw from) an even wider audience, by choosing to mingle with the least select groups who would meet in the State Drawing Room. He could approach from the stairs and the *antechambre* in the company of his closer circle of friends, making or reinforcing clear social distinctions in the process, or he could withdraw personally quietly and directly to his bed *chambre*, and there meet exactly who he wished on an even more individual and intimate basis via the *antechambre*.

The possibility that there may have been a second stair from what is now called the Library up to the first-floor *chambre* makes for the ideal arrangement of a private, discreet approach to the occupant's inner sanctum. This remains a tentative suggestion as there is precious little space in which to set a stair and a small landing which would have to emerge within the bedroom. The whole courtly and formal approach in such arrangements made for the opportunity for private approaches, intrigue and improper liaisons within an accepted etiquette of the day. In the immensely difficult social conditions of the period 1623-1669 (Puritan clampdowns, Civil War and The Commonwealth), when such a stair might have been in use, this short-circuit might well have been necessary to ensure private audiences and private deals were exactly that, private. In addition it also meant that servants might attend upon the Lord of the Manor without them being seen by all the attending gentlefolk, petitioners and sycophants who usually populated the approach-rooms of the first floor. When the private stair was removed, probably in the 1670 re-vamp of the interiors, the stage-managed approach to the bedroom remained.

The structural problems encountered at ground floor south-west corner have been rectified partly by chopping out the old and decayed and stitching in new brickwork in accordance with conservation reports (RGA 2005; RGA 2009). The voids and delaminated brickwork noted have been tied and grouted and the new brickwork has been noted as sufficiently different to remain noticeable for the future. The three vestiges of timbers found within the west wall appear to have been old materials haphazardly re-used from elsewhere as an early repair or as bonding timbers; they have no intrinsic merit. As very different baulks, two of them waney-edged, they do not imply or suggest any former presence of a timber frame. The incorporation of such baulks is not uncommon, especially during the 18th-century, and these may have been introduced during a re-fenestration programme.

While three floors have been covered by this brief survey, each has been seen to have been extensively covered by the 1951 and 1960s conservation programmes. These are

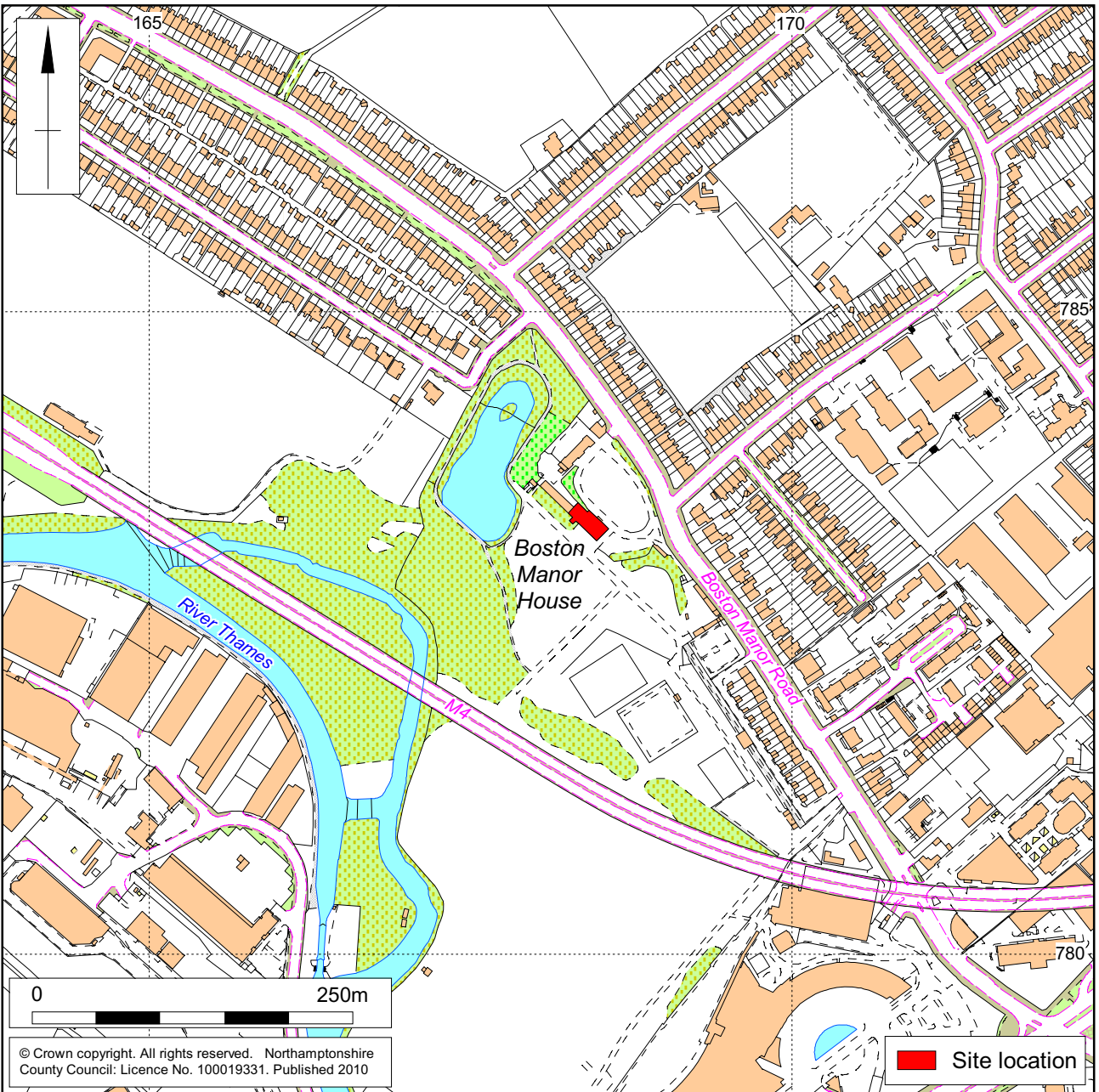
likely to continue to figure strongly in any future recording. The 20th-century ethos of 'Conserve as found' has resulted in rather a mixed bag of surviving elements of different dates. None of the rooms which are today for public consumption present a uniform or consistent period in their decor.

GLOSSARY

Architrave	Moulded frame, usually around a door or window
Bolection-mould	Moulded rim to panelling designed to stand proud of the surface
Dado	Waist-height horizontal break in panelling scheme, also called a chair-rail, since it prevented chair-backs from disfiguring the wall.
Frieze	Here a decorative panel below the ceiling cornice in the State Bedroom
Header	A walling brick having its end only visible in the finished scheme
Mortice	The female portion of a fully-housed timber joint
Muntin	Secondary upright in panelling frame
Rail	Principal horizontal in panelling frame
Reveal	Opening for a window or door
Raised and fielded	Panelling style popular c1660-1715; (see 1 st -floor shutters)
Strapwork	Angular, often interleaved linear Jacobean design, seen here in ceiling plaster of State Bedroom
Splay	Angle to a reveal, usually on windows to maximise natural light
Stretcher	A walling brick having its full side length visible in the finished scheme
Style	Principal upright in panelling frame
Tenon	The male portion of a fully housed timber joint
Wall plate	Continuous horizontal timber at eaves level, which often carries rafters of the roof
Waney-edged	Constructional timber retaining its natural bark

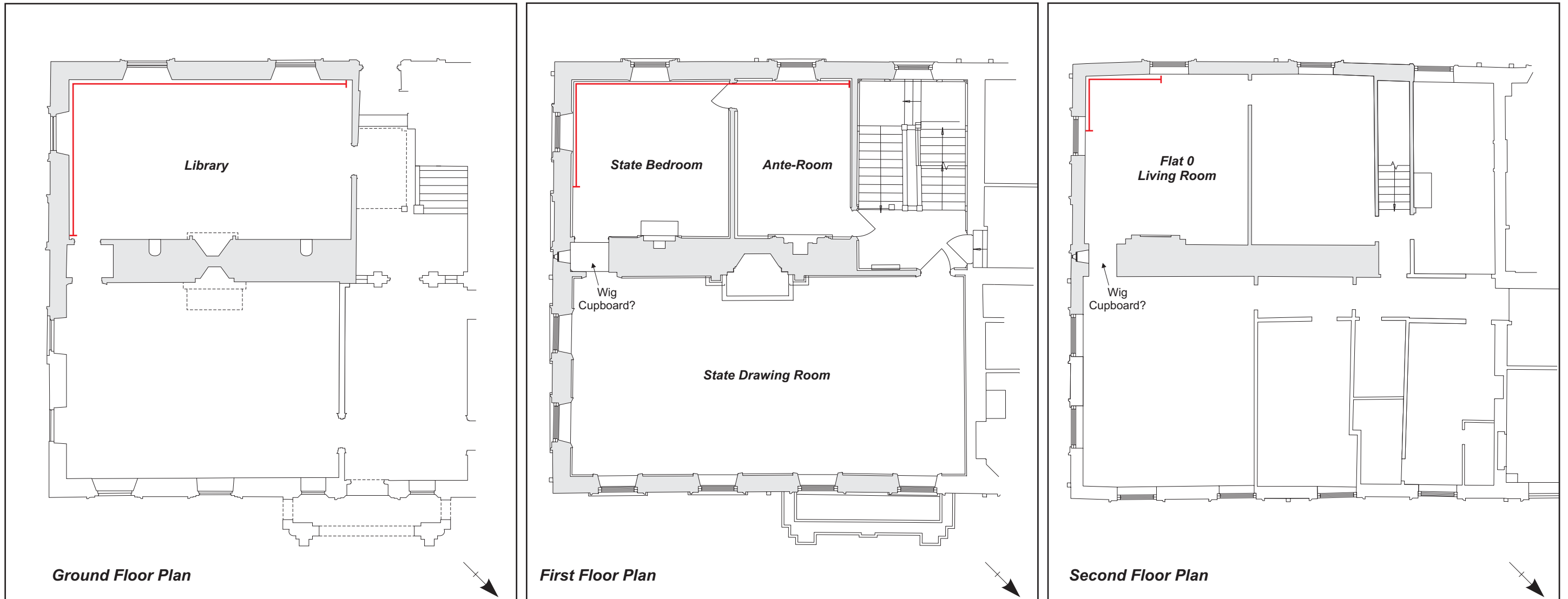
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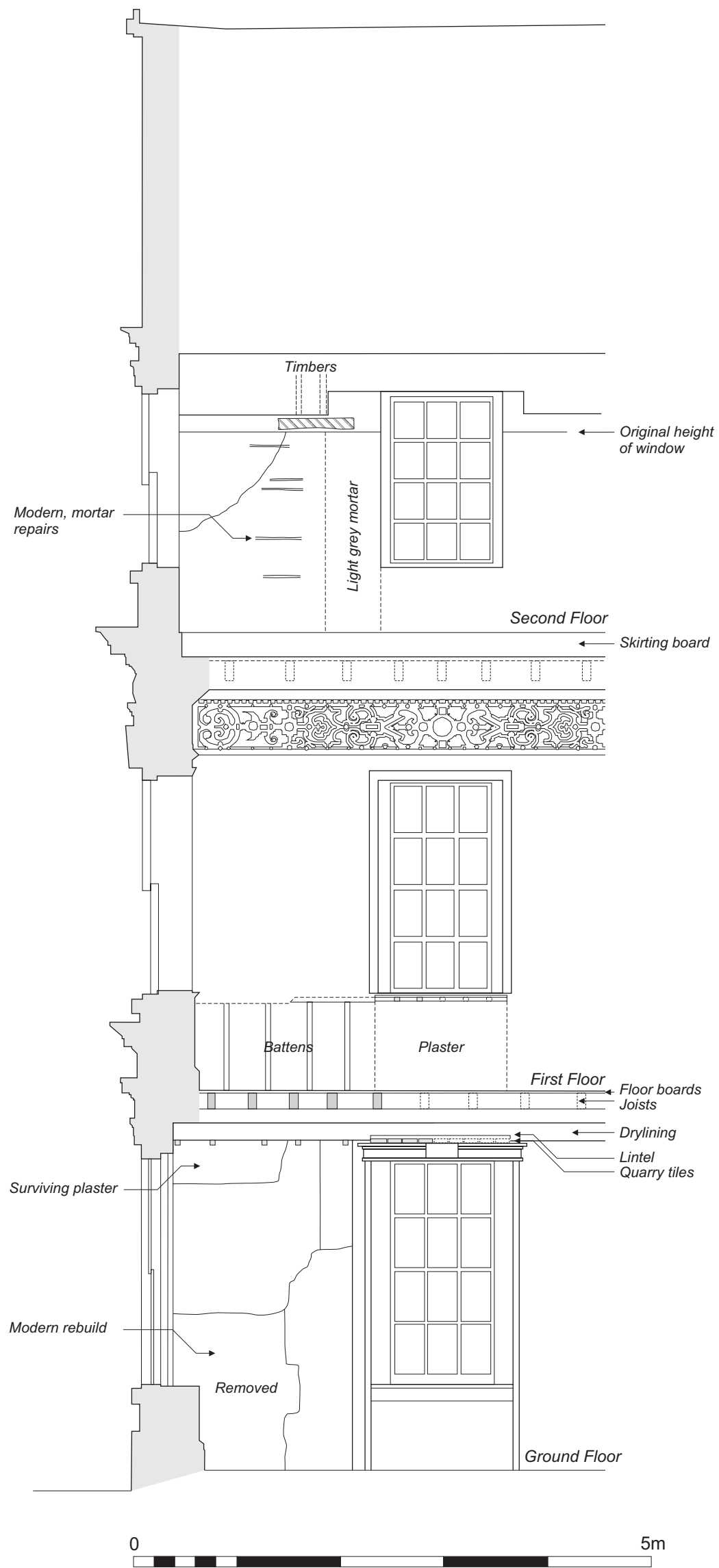


Scale 1:5000

Site Location Fig 1



 Areas under discussion in this report
Library etc Rooms discussed





Timbers found within west wall of Library Fig 4



Victorian quarry tiles wedging Library west sash window Fig 5



Panelling removed from beneath Library windows Fig 6



Mark left by removal of former panelling style Fig 7



Wallpaper fragment retrieved from high on Library west wall Fig 8



Most recent decorative scheme on Library west wall Fig 9



Blocked embrasure in Library south wall Fig 10



Stair-landing window in west front of house Fig 11



Cast iron grilles denoting possible wig cupboards Fig 12



17th- century brass lock-case in State Bedroom Fig 13



Window sill in State Bedroom Fig 14



Panelling in State Bedroom Fig 15



Fig 16



Fig 17



Fig 18



Fig 19



Fig 20

Panelling and architrave in State bedroom

Fig 16

Detail showing different door heights from State bedroom to Ante-Room

Fig 17

Dado and architrave depth in Ante-Room

Fig 18

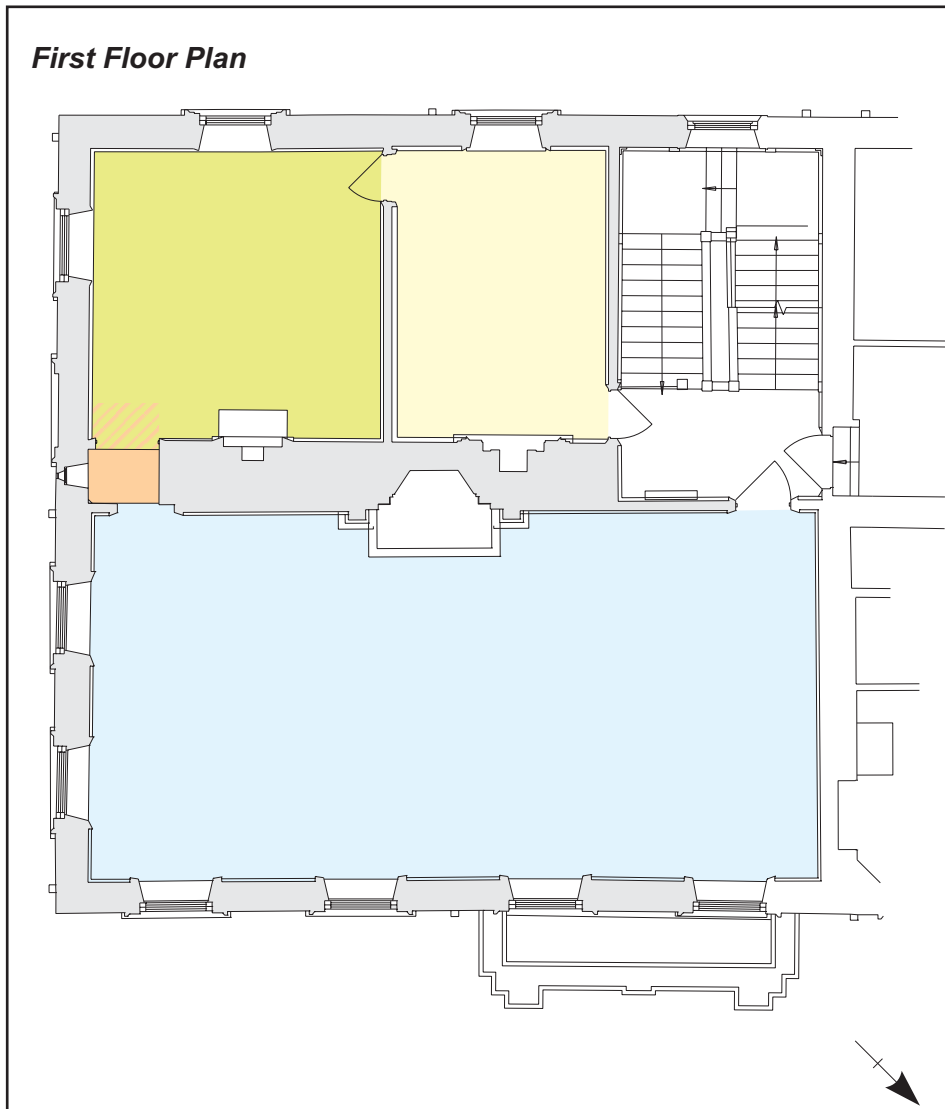
Brickwork repair in south-west corner of 2nd Floor Living Room

Fig 19





Vestige of timber wall-plate in west wall of 2nd Floor Living Room

Fig 20

First Floor Plan



0 10m

-  Access by invitation; mingling
-  Discrete, private access (Subsequently possibly a wig cupboard)
-  Private audience by personal agreement
-  Access by selection; open business



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