

31 BRIDGELAND STREET BIDEFORD DEVON

Results of a
Historic Building Assessment



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**31 Bridgeland Street
Bideford
Devon**

**Results of a
Historic Building Assessment**

For

Mal Brown

Of

EMA Planning and Building Regulation Consultants

By



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Summary

South West Archaeology Ltd. was instructed to undertake an historic building assessment of 31 Bridgeland Street, Bideford, Devon.

The building was constructed towards the end of the 17th century as a two storey merchant house in the newly developed part of the town as a result of the increase in trade with America. No 31 is the central part of the building that formerly included 30 & 32.

Much of the interior is of a 17th century date however the front was remodelled when the building was subdivided in the 19th century.

The first floor consists of 5 17th century rooms and a stair landing. Late 20th century work removed some of the original fabric and subdivided the rooms in an inappropriate manner.

The proposals are to re-establish the 17th century layout removing most of the 20th century alterations; this work is not seen to have any detrimental effect on the historic fabric of the building.

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1.0 Introduction

Location: 31 Bridgeland Street
Parish: Bideford
County: Devon

1.1 Project Background

Colin Humphreys of South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) was commissioned by Mal Brown of EMA Planning and Building Regulation Consultants on behalf of The Bridge Trust, Bideford the Client) to conduct a building assessment of 31 Bridgeland Street, Bideford (Figure 1). The work was undertaken to attempt to understand the date, form, function and development of the building from its origins, with the aim of understanding the impact of the proposed development on the historic elements of the building. This report represents the results of a historic building survey undertaken.

Number 31 is sited on the south side of the lower part of Bridgeland Street, Bideford. It is currently occupied by an estate agent and hairdresser on the ground floor and an occupied flat on the second floor.

The first floor; the subject of this report, was previously poorly converted for office use late in the 20th century.

The proposal is to remove most of the 20th century partitions; to return the floor to its late 17th century layout and change the use from office to domestic accommodation.

1.2 Methodology

The building survey was undertaken by Colin Humphreys and Emily Wapshott in April 2014 in accordance with English Heritage and IfA guidelines on the recording of standing buildings and structures. The survey was based on a level 2 survey, using architect plans supplied by the client to provide an initial assessment of the first floor flat and offer guidance on any future planning application.

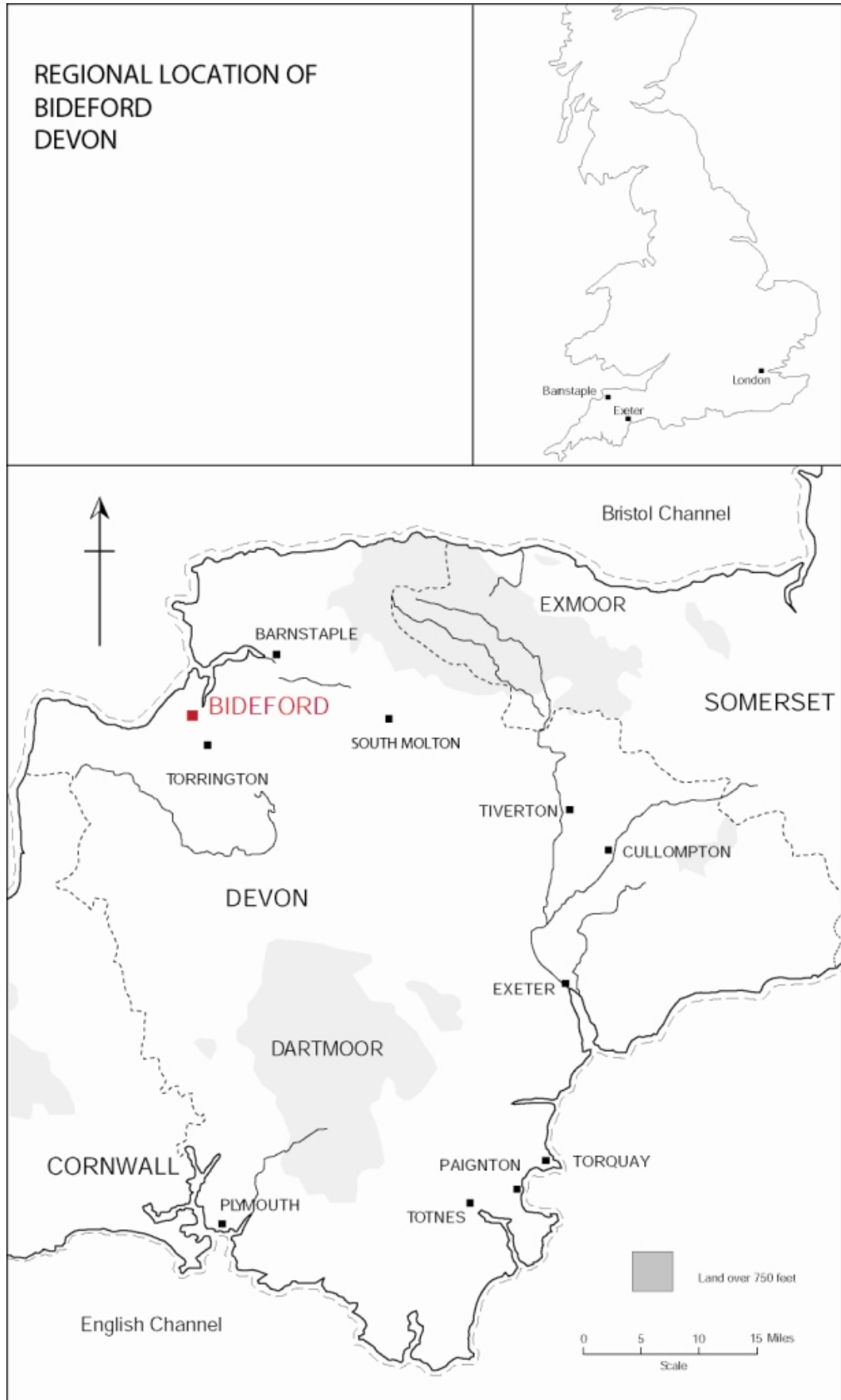


Figure 1: Location map.

2.0 Results of a Desk-based Assessment

2.1 A Brief History of Bideford

Originating at a fording point over the River Torridge, Bideford was, from the time of William Rufus (1087-1100) until 1744, the property of the Grenvilles. Richard Grenville created the borough in the early 13th century and a market charter was granted in 1271, but until the late 16th century Bideford remained overshadowed by its neighbour Barnstaple. In 1573 Sir Richard Grenville enabled the town to receive a charter of incorporation and through his influence a trade with the American colonies was established which brought prosperity to Bideford until well into the 18th century. The town was at the height of its prosperity at the end of the 17th century when it had a large share in the Newfoundland trade, sending more ships in 1699 than any other port except London and Topsham. The major contributor to the success of the Bideford merchants between 1680 and 1730 was the tobacco trade with Maryland and Virginia. During this period Bideford surpassed Barnstaple as the premier trading port of North Devon. However, by the early 19th century the focus of North Atlantic trade had moved away to Bristol and Liverpool, and only coasting trade remained. During the 19th century the town's fortunes revived, as local industries flourished and transatlantic traffic was boosted by Bideford's role as a port of departure for emigrants and the import of timber.

In the 19th century the railway came to Bideford and along with the rest of North Devon it profited from an increasing holiday trade. In the 1960s this link with the rest of England was removed, the main motoring routes into Cornwall passed the town by, and further decline set in. It remains however, the centre of Torridge District and a shopping centre for north-west Devon (The above based on Hoskins 1992, 335-7).

2.2 Bridgeland Street

Towards the end of the 17th century Bideford was at the height of its prosperity and was inhabited by merchants who had become wealthy through the tobacco trade. Late in the 1680s the Feoffees of the Bideford Bridge Trust, looking to suitably accommodate and profit from the newly wealthy, conceived a plan to build a new street in the northern part of the borough and in 1690 Nathaniel Gascoyne was commissioned to produce a design. (Beacham 1995, 123). The street was to be 40feet wide; the houses of two stories, the whole to be finished within two years (see Figure 3). An application by the Feoffees for letters patent dated 4th May 1699 (NDRO BBT add1/92) records in detail the great and glorious work that had been completed and was now Bridgeland Street. The document gives an account of what formerly occupied the ground on which the street was laid out. Here was formerly a ruinous old house or messuage standing, in which one Vallett did formerly dwell and inhabit with an old cellar or two and a courtlage of the land belonging, of latter years known by the name of Carpenter's Yard And there was likewise a small orchard or two and a certain little meadow ... which of latter years was converted into gardens, all which was formerly known and called by the name of Vallett's tenement....

When Daniel Defoe passed through Bideford in 1724 he remarked on *a new and spacious street ... broad as the High Street of Exeter, well built, and, which is more than all, well inhabited with considerable and wealthy merchants, who trade to most parts of the world.* (Chope 1967, 172)

2.3 Cartographic History

2.3.1 Bridge Trust plan 1745

The line of the street having been determined, individual plots were leased out, the lessees then submitting designs and specifications for the house that they would build there. The building which is now numbered 31 was originally number 15, as can be seen from a plan of 1745 (Figure 2) (NDRO 4274 add/1).



Figure 2: Extract from the Bridge Trust plan of 1745.

The plan shows the building (No 15) extending to the corner of Little lane; renamed Queen Street by 1886, and although the plan layout is similar to that shown on the later Ordnance Survey map the corner plot to the east and the plot to the west are separated from the main building by 1886.

2.3.2 First Edition Ordnance Survey 1:500 1886

The First Edition OS map shows the ground floor bay windows to the street side of the building (Figure 3) and divisions within the original building layout, creating separate buildings from the eastern, western and rear areas of the original building.

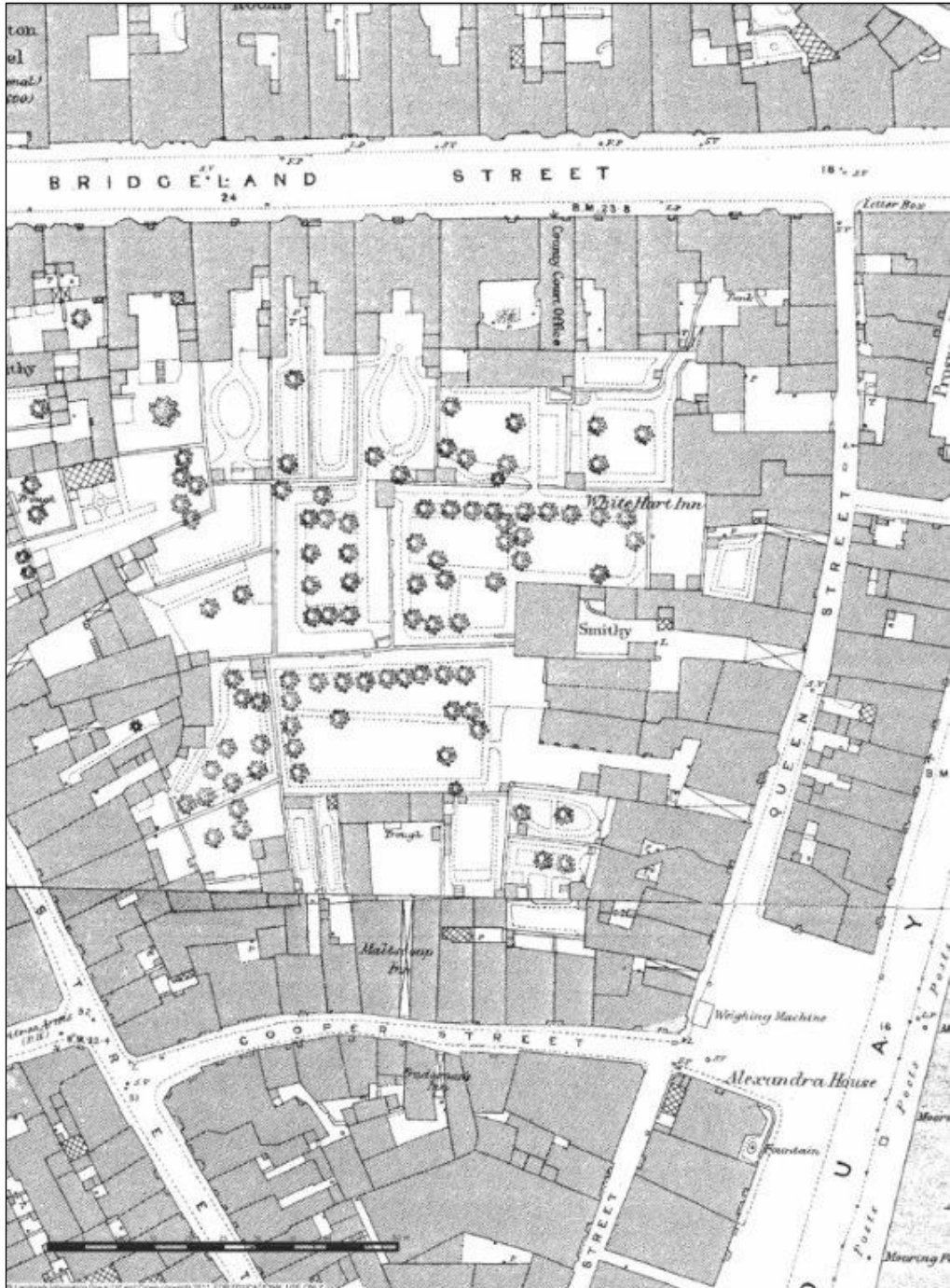


Figure 3: First Edition Ordnance Survey 1886 1:500

3.0 The Building Assessment

3.1 Exterior Description

The street elevation (south) consists of a mid-20th century shop front with a central door and a second door to the left (west). The first floor is slightly jettied and supported on corbelled side walls with a pair of forward fixed hornless sash windows. Mock quoins have been added to the first floor to left and right (Figure 7). Above, large chimney stacks project from the walls to left and right. The doorway in the centre of the elevation gives access into the shop (R2 & R3), that to the left accesses a passageway that leads to the rear of the building (R1).



Figure 4: View from Bridgeland Street

To the rear (north) of the building is a small yard, to the left (west) of which is a two storey extension with a pitched roof (Figure 8). To the right (east) there is another similar extension, but not as deep, that overlaps the former plot boundary (Figure 9). Between these extensions is a more modern two storey build with a flat roof.

Further north, to the rear of the yard, are outbuildings, but these were not surveyed as they are outside the remit of this survey.



Figure 5: Plan of the first floor of the building.

3.2 Interior description

31 Bridgeland Street is part of the 1690s development of the street into grand merchant houses. It lies at the eastern end of the street, nearer to the quay. It is Grade II* listed for its architectural value, age, preservation and interior details; of particular note are the plaster ceilings, stair, panelling to the ground floor and a number of surviving doors and doorcases. The house is entered through an opening with a pedimented doorcase and pillars in the north, street-facing elevation. A 19th century lobby partition now divides the ground floor hallway which has doors leading to the west and east to ground floor reception rooms, which are now individual shop/retail units.

The hallway has an elaborate moulded ceiling with rectangular panels, with beading and bolection moulding and a deep plaster cornice. The stairs are an exceptional example of 17th century architecture, with ramped moulded handrail and classically-inspired turned balusters; the undersides of the cantilevered sections of the stair have moulded plaster panels which match the ceilings. The arched stair window is a hornless sash which probably dates to the early 19th century and replaces the original window. The stair rises to the first and second floor, with landings on each floor and half landings between. The second floor of the building is already converted to a residential flat.

The flat assessed occupies the entire first-floor, accessed directly off the main stair through a lobby. It comprises five main rooms, with the majority of the space lying to the north side of the building, overlooking the street, and one small WC to the north side also leading off the stair. The space was used as an office in the later 20th/21st century and several of the rooms have been divided by modern plaster board/chipboard partitions. The space is now empty.

Room Descriptions/Walk-through

On the first floor landing the historic south wall of the staircase (room 6) has been removed and replaced with an obscured glass and timber partition with central doorway. This leads into a small lobby (room 1) with solid east wall and plaster board and half-glazed partitions to the west and north. There is a low plaster board ceiling which obscures the 17th century moulded plaster ceiling above and the floor is carpeted obscuring the flooring below. Rooms 5 and 2 are accessed through doors in the west and east walls respectively.

Room 2 is the largest within the flat; high status, formerly the grandest of the first floor reception rooms, overlooking the street. The ceiling is 17th century, with a large central scalloped panel and four panels, one to each corner, with scalloping mimicking the central panel on their inner sides. Two small rectangular panels lay within the alcoves either side of the stack to the western end of the ceiling. The panels are defined by deep beaded and bolection mouldings. The central panel has a later 19th century addition of a central 'acanthus leaf' style ceiling rose, with ventilation and an attachment for a gas light. There is also a deep moulded plaster cornice. The lower part of this cornice has been altered, in the 19th century, with the lower part being cut out and appliqué acanthus leaves being overlaid into the created cavetto space. These appear to have been pre-made plaster shapes which have been curled over at the end and project down slightly from the square section of surviving moulding. Both the work to the cornice and the ceiling rose are of 19th century date but appear to take inspiration from the original elaborate 17th century leaf moulded cornice in the ground floor reception room to the east of the hallway, which is now a retail unit. A 19th century moulded narrow picture rail has been applied to the top of the walls. Modern office strip lighting has been attached to the plaster ceiling.



Figure 6: View across Room 2, towards Room 1 and Room 1A, showing how the historic wall of the original lobby has been removed and modern partitions inserted, also showing the large 19th century window in the north wall; from the south-west.

The walls are plastered and wall-papered. The north wall has one large 19th century window opening with sloping shallow reveals and an exceptionally large sash window; narrow moulded glazing bars and large panes. There are two blocked 17th century window openings of smaller size, which survive behind boarding either side of this extant window. These were blocked when the frontage of the building was replaced in the 19th century. It is expected that the building, at first floor level would have resembled the one opposite, with the same five window arrangement. The room is heated, with a central symmetrically positioned projecting stack on the west wall and alcoves to the south and north; the timber fireplace surround is a late 19th century addition. There are a number of surviving bell-pull mechanisms to the front of the stack and within the alcove to the south. The majority of the skirting has been replaced with various 19th and 20th century styles which differ from wall to wall. The floor is carpeted, but is boarded; the planks were not viewed in order to age them. There is a door in the south wall, to the western end, which leads south into room 3. This doorway is relatively modern and the scarring on the wall under the wallpaper demonstrates that the doorway infills a larger, more generously proportioned historic doorway.

Room 3 is the smallest historic room within the flat, lying to the south side of the building, west of the stair and overlooking the yard areas to the rear. The only historic detail in this room is a short section of 17th century cornice, of simpler style than in the large rooms, with a large curving bolection mould and some bands of simple beading. This runs along the north wall of the room and turns around the corners to the west and east where it is cut off. This shows the space is correct for the original plan although the south wall may have been replaced in the 19th century. This wall includes a large window opening with a forced opening and appears to be of 19th century date. There is also an opening forced into this wall from which a small fire escape leads down to the yard below. The walls are all solid, plastered and wall-papered. In the west wall there is a shallow cupboard, with replacement doors and the wall is fitted with a sink and units. The skirting is all of 20th century date. The floor was viewed in one loose corner and is lino over boarding which is of 19th century date, with 20th century alterations.



Figure 7: Room 3, the north wall showing the surviving section of cornice and the scar around the door opening; from the south.

Room 4 is accessed via the former lobby space, where another small partitioned room (room 1A) and short section of open corridor have been created by forcing the historic wall between the lobby and the reception room to the west (room 2). There is a false plasterboard ceiling here and a section of this allowed a view into the space above which showed the 17th century plaster ceiling survives intact here. Upon the conversion works this may be exposed and can be fully recorded. No other historic details appear to survive here apart from a stump of the original historic wall, there is a large boxed in section below the 19th century window which has been created out of the original 17th century window opening. The walls are plastered and wall-papered, the floor carpeted, the south and west walls are modern partitions, the wall to the east is solid. A single modern door in the south partition leads out into the corridor area. A door in the historic east wall of the lobby leads into Room 4.



Figure 8: View through the open corridor between rooms 1 and 1A, back into room 2; from the east.

Room 4 lies to the north and appears to have been divided into two offices and a lobby area. The lobby area is dark with little natural light and runs along a solid wall to the south, with a door to the north into a small office, a door to the east into a larger office and a door to the south into the large south-eastern reception room. The ceiling is plastered and displays surviving 17th century plaster cornice, of bolection mould and beading to the south wall and the west wall, within the lobby area - the modern partitions can be seen to be built up and over this cornice. There is another blocked window in the front north elevation of the small office to the north and surviving 17th century corncicing to the west and north walls, which are plastered and wall-papered. The walls to the south and east are both modern partitions. The floor is carpeted. The walls of both the lobby and office to the north are plastered and wall-papered, boarding to dado height on the south wall, which appears to be associated with accommodating modern wiring. A 19th century moulded narrow picture rail has been applied to the south and north walls. The office to the north-east has the other very large 19th century window opening which matches that in room 2, this also has shallow sloping reveals. It has a brick stack on the east wall, the hearth infilled with later brick and set with a mid-19th century cast-iron arched grate, with part surviving painted slate surround. There is an original slate hearth and the carpeting was pulled back to reveal wide pine boards, of uneven width. These are possibly original, seeming to run under the partitions and respect the stack and hearth. They may be 18th century replacements but are older than 19th century in date, being too wide. There is surviving 17th century corncicing to the south wall which is solid, plastered and wall-papered. The ceiling to the east side is boxed in but some planking was removed and the cornice can be seen to survive here and respect the stack, returning to run along the east, then north walls. On the north wall it is cut away at the lower edge, around the forced 19th century window, but the upper part runs across the opening, still attached to the ceiling. The west wall is a partition with a modern door. The skirting in here is of mixed dates and does not appear to be original.

A door back in the lobby leads into room 5. This is the second of the large receptions on this floor, but lies to the south side, overlooking the yard to the rear of the building. The room has elegant proportions, like room 2 and has an elaborate 17th century plaster ceiling, although it is less detailed than its western counterpart. There is a central oval panel and long rectangular panels run down the length of the room on the north and south sides. A short rectangular panel lies at both the west and east ends of the ceiling, with a small oval panel in each corner of the room. The rectangular panels echo the oval corner panels, with relieved curving ends. There is a small alcove to the south of the fireplace and this has its own small rectangular moulded panel, as seen in room 2.



Figure 9: Room 5, the 17th century plaster ceiling; from the east.

The panels have the same deep beading and bolection mouldings. The room also has the same deep moulded cornice in its original 17th century form. This cornice has an off-set corner to the south-west, where the ceiling may not have been straight. Here, the cornice running along the south wall drops down and runs under that along the west wall. Above the window to the south the cornice dips, where there has been some historic damage to the former lintel and water damage. This ceiling has recently been restored after some extensive water damage. The walls are solid, plastered and wall-papered with surviving, very simple, 17th century skirting, deep with a small cut bead moulding, along the north and east walls. The south wall has 19th century skirting and the west has modern skirting, of an old style. There is one central window to the south wall; a 19th century replacement, of hornless sash form. The opening here is shallow and no shutters or panelling have survived. The brick stack is on the east wall, contiguous with the structure in room 4. There is an original 17th century timber surround, with shallow relieved classical pilaster-style jambs to the side and wide beading to the mantle, with a cornice and corner panels. This fits around the large square firebox, which is boarded but may be brick. The fireplace is slightly offset with the wall to the south side of the stack which slopes. This area does appear disturbed and possibly reduced in width towards the base. It may be that the fireplace, which is slightly wider, is of the correct period but has been removed here from elsewhere in the house, as no other 17th century fireplace

surrounds survive. There is an original, 17th century cupboard built into the stack to the north of the fireplace, with a wide beaded frame and wide plank panelled doors with moulded panels, decorative H-hinges and small catch. Inside the cupboard the shelves themselves have been replaced but the shelf fitments are very decorative, shaped and scalloped and there are three rows of large hand-carved timber pegs. Those to the short north and south sides of the cupboard may be original but the long set to the east wall may be a 19th century addition. There is a modern doorway in the north wall, through which the room was accessed and another modern door in the east wall. The historic doorway opening into this room would have been opposite the fireplace, leading directly off the stair and landing. A scar survives on the wall here indicating its former location. There may have been a wider door in a similar position on the north wall, to that which is extant as the skirting is cut and replaced and there is some disturbance to the east of the current doorframe. The floor is boarded beneath carpet but was not properly viewed. Leading off the stair hall, to the south, through an original 17th century opening is a small extension (room 7); a modern toilet and bathroom fitted within. This structure appears to be a 19th century rebuild of a possible earlier projection or wing of unknown function.

3.3 The Building Phasing

Some of the walls to the rear of the building within the yard area may represent the earlier medieval plots but there is certainly no evidence seemingly surviving of any earlier structure within the building at 31 Bridgeland Street.

3.3.1 Phase 1: 17th Century Construction

The building has one key dominant historic phase, its 17th century construction (1690s). Details within the building, such as the stair, plaster moulded ceilings and many of the large double panel doors all survive from this period as does the majority of the internal layout. The house is arranged in the same way on the ground and first floors, with main reception rooms leading east and west off a central main hallway or lobby; with two rooms to the east on both floors and one larger room to the west on both floors. The stair serves all floors, positioned to the south-west of centre. There was possibly a now demolished rear range to the south. The second floor layout cannot be recovered but may have followed a similar pattern to other houses on Bridgeland Street, with a larger room to the west and smaller service rooms to the east. There appears to be a small cellar area under the stairs, but this was not accessed.

The house was built for the merchant classes, who traded in tobacco and timber in this period. The ground and first floor rooms may have had a mixed use function of domestic, reception and possibly administrative. The indication of the status of various rooms is given by the differences within the details of the cornicing. There are three main styles; the deep cornice with square drip-mould style central band, which is a feature of several of the houses of this period on Bridgeland Street, and one on Queen Street of the same age. This high status cornice is used in the north-east front reception room on the ground floor, the north-west front reception room on the first floor (room 2) and the south-east rear reception room on the first floor (room 5). There is a simpler version of this cornice with a central bolection mould band, with less bands of beading, but with some ogee moulding. This cornice is used in the ground floor hallway, stair (room 6) and all landings, on the first floor, in the small room to the south-west (room 3), and the front room to the north-east (room 4); on the ground

floor, to the rear reception to the east. In the ground floor front room to the west side of the hallway, now a shop/retail unit, there is an elaborate cornice of completely different style.



Figure 10: View of the high status 17th century cornice in the front ground floor room to the west, now a retail unit; from the north-west.

This is an original 17th century leaf moulded cornice, with additional banks of beading. This cornice has acanthus style leaves which are clearly formed by hand from the plaster; an earlier form of work, irregular in shape and original to the cornice, obviously a sign this room was of increased status compared to the rest of the house. The first floor rooms retain their surviving plaster moulded ceilings with decorative panels. It is not clear if the ground floor rooms also had decorative ceilings, if so, these have not survived and only the cornices remain. The ground floor rooms to the east of the hallway have retained their 17th century wide plank panelling, with shallow chamfered panels. There are also surviving arched alcove cupboards either side of the fireplace in the north-east front room, with modern replacement doors; the stack being encased in panelling, but with no surviving fireplace surround. Another identical cupboard is now to be found on the second floor in the largest room to the west; this was probably moved here in the 19th century and may come from the ground or first floor of the building.

3.3.2 Phase 2: 19th Century Makeover

The front wall of the building was altered in the 19th century. Four of the five first floor windows were infilled and boarded with two large windows forced into the wall and a re-shaping/reuse of the central window above the main door in the north elevation. The front of the building was rendered and painted. The ground floor at this time was possibly already used for separate retail units, with shop fronts cut into the walls, framed and panelled with flat pilaster mouldings and bow windows.

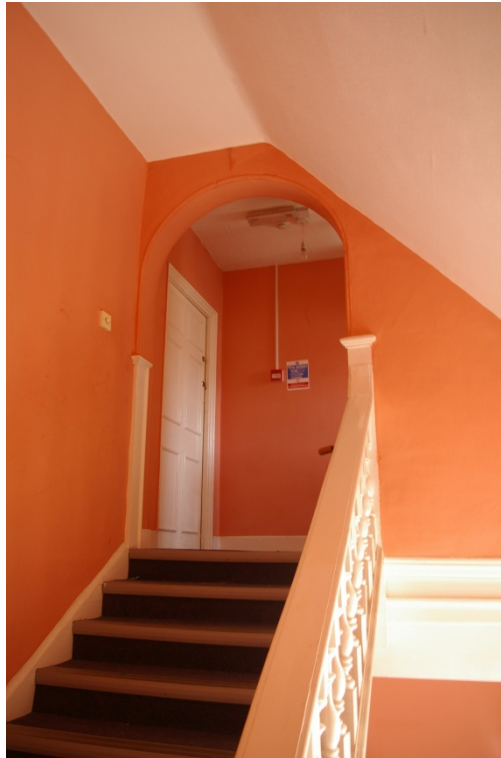


Figure 11: View up to the second floor landing within the stair, from the half landing between the first and second floors; from the south-west.

The 17th century stair runs up to a panelled room on the second floor, possibly for storage. Several 17th century large two-panel boarded and moulded doors survive on this floor in original frames with small glazed sections above. It was raised in height, creating an additional full storey, with large 19th century hornless sashes, giving a date of pre-1850 for this work. This was converted from the possible 17th century mixed domestic and service use of the eaves. The original 17th century A-frames are visible within the internal partitions between rooms on this floor, indicating the original roof line was similar to the opposite building, possibly with dormer windows. Current details on this floor include small blocked fireplaces which may retain grates sealed inside and large alcoves with beaded surrounds, beaded and moulded 19th century doorcases and panelled doors. All the windows on this floor are of 19th century date, with a bow window to the eastern end of the southern wall. Further 19th century alteration is seen in the cornice and ceiling in the west first floor reception (Room 5), which has had the lower part of the cornice chopped out and inlaid with acanthus leaves in reference to the earlier cornice immediately below on the ground floor. The ceiling rose was also applied in this period for gas lighting.

It is possible that the rear range was demolished in the 19th century. The window in room 3, with shallow sloping reveals, is similar to the large windows now inserted into the north elevation; the projections and extensions to the east of the ground floor are all of various 19th century styles, suggesting extensive work to the southern part of the building and the yard. When viewed from the rear there are a number of significant scars to the wall and changes in roof height with two semi-modern dwarf projections leading away from the building to the east and west. The one to the east accessed via an original 17th century doorway off the main stair clearly replaces a structure and the one to the west leading off room 3 which has a part surviving 17th century section of cornice. These various changes and alterations coincide with the decline of Bideford and the trades it relied upon and the conversion and extension of the buildings living space may have opened it up to mixed use development more suited to the time, instead of as one large single dwelling for the social elite.

3.3.3 Phase 4: Modern

The building has undergone development on the ground floor to further convert the shop/retail units at the front, with modern street signage and fittings. This has changed the facade of the building beyond recognition and the further modernisation of the updated 19th century exterior features belies the age of the structure and its original status. On the first floor the rooms have been divided in the later 20th century by partitions forming several offices and an entrance lobby with a number of security doors. This area was previously used as offices for the Citizens Advice Bureau. These alterations have largely enclosed features rather than destroyed or removed them, with the ceilings in the lobby area (rooms 1 and 1A) and the north-eastern reception (room 4) all being boxed in. The light fittings and panelled areas are all surface mounted; however some considerable damage has occurred to the plaster ceilings within the lobby, to the northern end adjacent to the window, where wires have been forced through the ceiling. The majority of the ceiling survives intact in the rest of the space. Room 3 has been partially converted to provide a service/kitchen space and has water and other services installed; here, almost all historic details apart from a short section of cornice have been removed.

4.0 Conclusions

4.1 Conclusion

The conclusion of this survey is that 31 Bridgeland Street is of late 17th century origin and the central part of a much larger building.

In the mid-19th century, the building was subdivided and the front wall mostly rebuilt. In the late 20th century the first floor was subdivided by poorly organised partitions in the process of which a 17th century wall was removed.

The proposed works would mostly re-instate the 17th century layout of this floor.

4.2 Recommendations

It is recommended that the current space be used to form a single dwelling; restoring the original proportions of the rooms and retaining the historic layout. It is not envisioned or advised that the two largest rooms (rooms 2 and 5) could be divided; their ceilings and cornices are some of the key details in the building, responsible for its Grade II* listed status, and are fundamental to our understanding of the function and status of the building and Bridgeland Street as a wealthy development as a whole.

The wall to the main stair should be reinstated with a centrally positioned doorcase, leading into the flat. It is expected that the surface mounted partitions will be fairly simple to remove, opening up the space (room 1). The stubs of wall which survive to the west of the former historic lobby (room 1A) could be reinstated, creating a central hall. A doorway could be centrally positioned leading to the west into the large reception room (room 2), opposite the fireplace. This makes a large and light living area, retaining the current window but during the renovation works if the boarded up windows are revealed they could be recorded as part of a monitoring program, in order to make a full record. Room 3 would make a suitable kitchen space, with considerable 20th century works having already been conducted converting it to provide services. This also has a fire escape and rear access to the yard, providing an additional access, which should/could be retained. The partitions within room 4 could be removed and then partially reinstated, this area having been more heavily altered in the 19th and 20th centuries than anywhere else within the current space. This therefore means it is less sensitive to a reorganisation of the space and provided protection is given to the historic features which do survive, the 19th century cast-iron grate and the 17th century cornice, there is considerably more flexibility with this space than elsewhere. This room could provide either one large bathroom and a bedroom or two small ensuite bathrooms and one small bedroom. The large reception to the south-east (room 5) cannot be partitioned without compromising the important historical details and losing an understanding of the space and fundamentally changing the experience of the building; whether this is used as additional living space or as a large bedroom, the proportions of this room must be maintained. As stated above this reception room and the reception room to the west are the areas most sensitive to change and development. The door to the west wall should be retained as access off the main lobby and the doorway to the north wall could be retained providing access to the bathroom or possibly a short corridor and ensuite, minimising any breaches to the historic fabric within this room. The fireplace could be opened up and may be suitable for reinstatement depending on the state of the chimneystack, the fireplace and surround and cupboard to the north must all however be retained, as they are all important 17th century details. It is

suggested the current toilet/bathroom accessed off the stair may make a very large lockable storage area for the first floor flat.

It is advised that when the modern partitions are removed more historical details, such as the windows in rooms 2 and 4, may be revealed and the removal of the false ceilings in room 1/1A and room 4 will expose the 17th century plaster ceilings and cornices. During any conversion works any disturbance to the historic fabric should be archaeologically monitored and recorded.

4.3 Impact statement

The proposals suggested in the planning application are not seen to have any detrimental effect on the historic structure of the building and are seen to only enhance the understanding of the original layout.

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Appendix 1

Details of the DoE Building listing

SS4526 BRIDGELAND STREET
842-1/5/47 (South side)
06/05/92 No.31

GV II*

Centre part of a large house, originally including Nos 30 and 32 (qv); now divided into shops, offices and flat. 1692, front remodelled early C19, minor C19 and C20 additions at rear. Solid rendered walls (probably of brick underneath). Slate roof. chimney on each side-wall: red brick to right, rendered to left.

Double-fronted, double-depth plan: 2 rooms at front with central entrance passage to staircase compartment in centre of rear part.

3 storeys; 3-window range. Top storey is an early C19 heightening, concealing original garret (right-hand side of rear wall has not been heightened). Front is entirely early C19, with giant reeded pilaster-strip at left-hand end; a matching pilaster-strip has probably been removed at the right-hand end, since the eaves-cornice breaks forward at that point.

Centre doorway with wooden doorcase; attached columns supporting entablature with modillioned cornice. Round-arched doorway with moulded archivolt springing from moulded impost; panelled reveals. 6-panelled door, the 4 upper panels raised and fielded, the 2 lowest panels flush; rear plate of old knocker, the striker itself missing. Flanking the doorway a pair of projecting, mirrored shop fronts, probably late C19 or early C20. Each has a canted display window with shop door adjoining the house-door.

Left-hand shop has panelled and fluted pilaster-strips at either side of shop-door and at left-hand end of display window with cornice across whole front; original half-glazed shop door; right-hand shop altered, but shop door still has 2 fluted pilaster-strips. Upper storeys have sash windows, the older ones with recessed box-frames; all have small panes, except for the lower sashes in the second storey. Outer second-storey windows have been enlarged (probably in early C19) and have 8-paned sashes. Other windows have 6-paned sashes. Moulded eaves-cornice.

INTERIOR: has 3 ceilings with shaped panels formed by plaster bolection-mouldings.

Entrance-passage has ceiling with oblong panels; moulded cornice. Several boarded-in doors with moulded architraves. Main staircase (rising to third storey) is a wooden dog-leg with heavily-moulded closed strings and square newels, heavy turned balusters (boarded in; between ground and second storeys) broad flat handrail sweeping up to the newels at the landings; oblong bolection-moulded panels on underside of the flights. At rear of second-storey landing an early C19 six-panelled door.

Shop to left of ground storey has in front room raised-and-fielded, 1-fillet ovolo-moulded panelling (probably early C18) with box-cornice. Later doorway cut through rear wall. 6-panelled door (probably C18 or early C19) to entrance-passage. Display window has early C19 reeded surround with carved flower in top right-hand corner. 2 round-headed, semi-circular niches flanking chimneybreast to left. Rear room has moulded cornice.

Right-hand shop has in front room a foliated cornice; early C19 6-panelled door to entrance-passage. Rear room not inspected.

Second storey sub-divided by late C20 partitions, but original arrangement easily distinguishable. Right-hand front room has ceiling with shaped panels and coved foliated cornice; foliated boss in centre panel. Mid or late C19 chimneypiece (now painted) to right; mantelshelf with carved brackets; Rear room has remains of moulded cornice. Back stairs

plain, without balustrade. Left-hand front room has moulded cornice. Rear room has ceiling with shaped panels and box-cornice; in left side-wall a wooden chimneypiece (probably early C18) with panelled pilasters and entablature; to left of chimneybreast is an original cupboard with panelled bolection-moulded doors having shaped H-hinges; inside, old wooden coat-pegs. Third storey has 3 original 2-panelled, bolection-moulded doors leading to left-hand front room and middle and right-hand rear rooms. 2 early C18 doors with 6 raised-and-fielded panels; a third, plainer 6-panelled door to rear closet, possibly remodelled. Front right-hand room has, to left of chimneybreast, an early C18 round headed cupboard with moulded architrave; double plank doors underneath with H-hinges. This was part of a larger Bideford Bridge Trust property originally comprising Nos 30-32. The first lease of 1692 was to Thomas Power of Bideford, merchant; the site was then 92ft wide with a little lane (now Queen Street) on the east. It appears to have been a U-shaped house; the remains of the rear wings now lie behind Nos 30 and 32 (qv). (Bideford Bridge Trust leases).

Listing NGR: SS4546026796

Appendix 2 Supporting Jpegs



View of the 17th century panelling and alcove cupboard and cornice within the ground floor front reception room to the east, now a retail unit; from the north-west.



View back up to the first floor landing within the stair; from the half landing between the ground and first floors; from the north-west.



View of one of the 17th century truss blades, now within an internal partition, showing how the roof to the north side has been raised; from the south-east.

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View of part of one of the 17th century trusses and purlins within the second floor; from the north-west.



View of the small panelled room at the top of the stairs, on the second floor landing; from the north-west.



View of the moulded plaster panels on the cantilevered sections of the stair, visible from the first floor landing; from the east.



View down the stairs from the first floor landing (Room 6); from the north-east.



Detail of the deep but very simple skirting in room 5, along the north wall; from the south-west.



Detail of the decorative shelf stays within the cupboard in room 5; from the north-west.



Detail of the pegs within the cupboard, in room 5; from the north-west.



The cupboard in the east wall in room 5; from the west.



The fireplace in room 5, where it can be seen to project slightly away to the south from the south side of the chimney stack; from the west.



Room 5, the 17th century plaster ceiling; from the east.



Room 5, the west wall with door to the lobby, room 1 and door in the north wall to room 4; from the east.



Room 5, the east wall with the cupboard and fireplace, with the alcove to the south; from the west.



View of the 17th century cornice within the small north office within room 4; from the south-east.



View of the section of 17th century cornice in the lobby within room 4; from the west.



Room 1A, the stub of the historic wall of the lobby and the reuse of the 17th century window opening, now with a 19th century sash; from the south-west.



Room 2, the 19th century ceiling rose; from the south.



Room 2, the detail of one of the small ceiling panels in the southern alcove and the small bell pulls which survive, also showing the later 19th century addition of the acanthus leaves to the cornice; from the east.



Room 2, the 19th century fireplace surround; from the east.



Room 2, the 17th century plaster ceiling; from the west.



Room 2, showing the door to Room 3 in the south wall and the chimney stack to the west; from the north-east.



View into the rear yard from Room 3; from the north.



Room 3, showing the cupboard in the west wall and the south wall with large window opening; from the north-east.



Room 3, showing modern kitchen fitments; from the south-east.



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