

CARY CASTLE, TORQUAY, TORBAY, DEVON

(SX 91605 65950)

Architectural Assessment

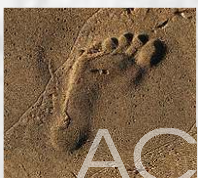
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On behalf of:
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AC archaeology

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The views and recommendations expressed in this report are those of AC archaeology and are presented in good faith on the basis of professional judgement and on information currently available.

An OASIS entry has been created using the unique identified 274901.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** This architectural assessment has been prepared by AC archaeology in December and January 2016 as supporting documentation for a planning application for the proposed restoration of Cary Castle, Torquay, Torbay, Devon (SX 91605 65950; Fig. 1) together with alterations and improvements to adjoining flats (improving and reducing the numbers of flats from 14 to 9) together with the formation of new car parking to serve the 9 flats.
- 1.2** The property is currently undergoing restoration and is also in use as a family home whilst a number of the flats are also currently occupied. It is located within the St Marychurch Conservation Area. A substantial suburb of Torquay, St Marychurch is situated on high ground about 2 km (1½ miles) north of the town centre; it is a long-established and distinct community with a parish that originally included part of Torquay. The 19th-century former town hall is a reminder of its separate administration before it was subsumed into the much larger Victorian resort, which now overshadows it. Cary Castle is situated approximately 200m to the west of the historic core at the end of a long tree-lined private drive (shared with other more recent dwellings), with the house positioned within mature gardens on a plot of approximately 0.8 ha (2 acres). It lies at a height of 82m aOD. The underlying geology consists of Devonian Limestone of the Norden Formation; there are no superficial deposits recorded (British Geological Survey online viewer 2017).
- 1.3** The scheme involves the re-establishment of the main house, which presently has no internal access between the ground and first floor. This will require the building of a staircase to replace the original which was removed by a previous owner after listing in 1975. The eastern courtyard wing of the building will be partly reconfigured to improve accommodation and to make a distinct separation from the main house, and will provide nine apartments. A pair of lantern roof lights will be added to provide natural light in areas which otherwise would be poorly lit. Some minor change to the current footprint is proposed which comprises the demolition of a modern porch attached to the east side of the original tower porch and which was built to house stairs to the first floor of the main house; this stair access will be surplus to requirement when internal stairs are re-established. The arrangement of the fenestration will remain largely unchanged except in the southeast elevation of the east courtyard wing where blocked windows and doors in a modern extension will be re-established and other openings will be reduced in size.

2. AIM

- 2.1** The principal aim of this document is to provide an historic evaluation of the application area, in particular the built form of Cary Castle, to assess the significance of the building and to determine the impact of the development on the significance of the building and the St Marychurch Conservation Area.

3. METHODOLOGY

- 3.1** The assessment was prepared in accordance with a specification produced by the Torbay Council Senior Historic Environment Officer (Bishop 2016). The preparation of this document has drawn on records for the area including documentary sources held at the Devon Heritage Centre, Torquay Library, and online mapping and reference sources.

3.2 A site visit was carried out by Andrew Passmore and Paul Rainbird on 23 December 2016, which included an internal and external inspection. A small number of the apartments in the east courtyard wing are currently occupied, and were not entered. However, enough of the other rooms were recorded to be able to understand the development of the building and its significance.

4. DOCUMENTARY BACKGROUND AND CHARACTER OF THE LOCALITY (Figs 2-4)

4.1 There has been human activity and settlement in the St Marychurch area since prehistoric times; within the parish and no more than 1 km southeast of the conservation area boundary is the remarkably well preserved prehistoric field system of Walls Hills. The urban centre today has its origins in the Saxon settlement from the 8th century onwards; the pre-Conquest manorial structure, recorded in Domesday, was probably established here by the 10th century. St Marychurch is first mentioned during Bishop Leofric's occupation of the see of Exeter 1050-1072; in 1086 the Domesday Book recorded two manors at St Marychurch: that at Combe Pafford held by Osbern Bishop of Exeter and the other, which we can identify as St Marychurch proper, was held by Richard son of Thorulf from its tenant-in-chief, the Count of Mortain. Both forms of the placename imply the presence of a church of some antiquity. It is one of the few churches in Devon mentioned in Domesday and is also the mother church of the adjoining parishes of Kingskerswell and Coffinswell, itself indicative of a large Saxon estate (Bishop 2005). There is now no above-ground evidence of the early settlement apart from the presumed Saxon location of the church on the hilltop. The present church is at least the fourth, if not the fifth on the site, with the current building completed in 1956 in a traditional gothic style in the local grey limestone. The church is located 250m to the east of the application area.

4.2 The present urban topography reflects the mainly 19th century patterns of settlement. An estate map compiled in 1775 for the Carys (Lords of the manor since 1595) shows the axis of settlement as stretching southwest down what was West Hill (now Barewell Road) and across Blacks Hill (confusingly now Westhill Road) into Chatto Road; some buildings are situated on the south side of Church Road; and others are located on the east side of Fore Street south of the curtilage of the Snooty Fox Public House. Here four parallel blocks between Petitor and Rowley Roads – remnants of burgage or other tenement plots – are preserved in the present land boundaries and curtilages (Bishop 2005).

4.3 From the end of the 18th century a considerable quarrying industry grew up in the area between Barton and the coast at Petitor; this activity contributed to the earlier development of St Marychurch compared with elsewhere in Torquay. The use of limestone extended from the coarse, as building material and its burning down as an agricultural improver, to the fine, as marble for smaller household goods (Bishop 2005).

4.4 Prior to the building of Cary Castle the area was farmland on the Cary Estate, owned by Robert Shedden Sulyarde Cary. The St Marychurch 1840 tithe map depicts the area as a group of small fields, with the application area being located within parts of several plots (Fig. 2). The house is located largely within plot 1008 described in the 1841 tithe apportionment as *Park*, a typical field name, occupied by Edward Perring.

4.5 Cary Castle appears to take its name from the nearby Castle Cary Farm, which was located on Barewell Road (formerly West Hill, see above). The farm was part of the Cary estate, hence that part of the farm name, although the 'Castle' part of the name is more difficult to explain. There is no obvious link with the small town of Castle Cary in

Somerset and no record of any fortified building in this location. Of note is that the farm (plot 1251) and fields behind (plots 1252 and 1013) were occupied by George Thorne according to the 1841 tithe apportionment. Plot 1013, forms part of the application area and is described as *Garden and Shade*, with the 'Shade' being the building shown on the tithe map, which was some form of shed.

- 4.6** In the mid to late 1850s the Cary estate was suffering significant debt and as a consequence a large amount of estate land was released for building (Rhodes 2015, 97). This may provide the context for the construction of Cary Castle, but previous commentators have preferred a slightly earlier date of c. 1850 for its construction. Sales particulars for 2009 state that the house was built in 1854 for Lucius Cary, brother of Robert, but at this time Lucius, who was born in 1839, could have been no more than 15 years old. Also, at this time, he was in the Royal Navy and serving in the Crimean War, so the association with Lucius would appear to be spurious. George Thorne, previously noted as tenant of Castle Cary Farm in 1841 (see above), is listed in *White's 1850 Devon Directory* as resident of Cary Castle in St Marychurch, with the change in the order of the name perhaps being significant (see below). The fortunes of the Carys did return, and on retiring from a long military career, Lucius took up residence in the luxury villa of 'The Quinta' near Babbacombe (now the site of the modern development of Quinta Close off Quinta Road), before returning to the family seat of Torre Abbey in 1906 (Rhodes 2015, 20).
- 4.7** The 1841 census has the Thornes at Castle Cary, which given the information of the tithe returns must be the farm, while in 1851, they were at 'Cary Castle', with the switching of the name indicating that they had moved to the new house. The farm in later mapping becomes Cary Farm, but this address is not present in census returns, although Cary Barton Farm is present in 1871, and that this is the location of the former Castle Cary Farm appears confirmed by a publication of 1886, which gives the position of Cary Barton as the 'farm buildings at the bottom of Westhill' (Brownlow 1886, 147). In 1871 these were occupied by the farmer Nicholas Short, who is presumably related to the Shorts of nearby Westhill Farm. Further support that the change from 'Castle Cary' to 'Cary Castle' indicates a move to the new house is derived from the differences between the households recorded in 1841 and 1851 census returns. In 1841 Castle Cary was occupied by two adults, Harriet Thorn(e), wife of George Thorne (who was absent in the navy), and Ann Netherton (a relative, see below), who is recorded as being of independent means. The remaining members of the household are two teenage servants. In 1851, now at Cary Castle, George is still not at home on census date, but his wife Harriet is, along with her sister and her baby child, and they are now supported by three servants, one of whom is described as a carpenter. Harriet's sister is described as a Marchioness, and also of note is that her child was born in Malta; the sister is probably Caroline Netherton (indicating that Ann Netherton, above, is a close relative of Harriet Thorne) who married Count Gustavo Crispo Barbaro of Malta in 1839. Although absolute proof is not forthcoming, there is definitely a sense that the household recorded in 1851 better suits the new house, in preference to the old farm. It is easy to imagine that John Lear, the servant carpenter, was still fitting out some of the fixtures and fittings at the time of the census. The last word on the origins of Cary Castle should go to Leslie Pateman, a compiler of a history of St Marychurch, which for the year 1850 states 'Cary Castle was built as a private house for G. Thorne esq and was never the home of the Cary family although they owned the land and the adjacent farm' (1980, 199; 1991, 56).
- 4.8** Cary Castle was Grade II listed in 1975 (National Heritage List for England no. 1293194). The listed building record is as follows:

Large villa, used for holiday flats. Late 1840s/early 1850s with late C20 additions. Plastered; roof concealed behind parapets; stacks with rendered shafts with embattled, corbelled caps, some with octagonal shafts. Picturesque Gothic style. PLAN: Double-depth plan, the original block north-facing with east service wings that have been developed and extended. EXTERIOR: 2 storeys. 4-stage entrance tower. Embattled parapets; angle buttresses with battered set-offs and gabled finials. High-transomed, moulded, mullioned casement windows, those on the front elevation with hoodmoulds with carved label stops. 3-bay entrance front, the projecting tower in the centre with buttresses to the lower 2 stages and pilaster strips above. Moulded Tudor-arched outer doorway with Gothick panelled door with fanlight. Upper stages of tower decorated with blind traceried friezes between the pilaster strips. Embattled parapet with corbel table and embattled pinnacles. To right, a shallow projecting stack with embattled cap. 2 windows to left, 3 to tower. Other original elevations in a similar style with 2- and 3-light windows and embattled parapets, some rising in the centre. INTERIOR: Not seen in detail but noted as having original plasterwork, joinery and original stair.

- 4.9** The Torbay Council St Marychurch Conservation Area boundary has a distinct and deliberate extension to its west taking in the Cary Castle Drive and the house and grounds. The house lies within St Marychurch Conservation Area character area 3, which has the following description (Bishop 2005, 5):

(3) 19th Century Villas

The main concentration of villa development lies on the west and southwest sides of the conservation area, some sited to take advantage of the outward views. There are also two isolated groups, one in Petitor Road to the east, the other in York Road to the southeast.

- 4.10** The same report describes Cary Castle in the following paragraph (Bishop 2005, 8):

Another local landmark Cary Castle is situated in a commanding but isolated position on a spur at the western edge of the conservation area; it was built in the 1840s in the picturesque stuccoed neo-Gothic style with tall casement windows. The house and its outbuildings have suffered to some extent from being subdivided into flats and the addition of extensions which are out of place with the spirit of the original although some original joinery, plasterwork, and a staircase survive.

- 4.11** The earliest published detailed map depicting Cary Castle is the first edition 25-inch Ordnance Survey map of 1890 (Fig. 3). Although the area for the map was surveyed between 1862-1887 it is unfortunate that the house was already approximately a half century old by the time of publication and is undoubtedly shown in a developed form with east wing courtyard and large greenhouse (or conservatory/orangery) to the southeast. The grounds are landscaped and a fountain is marked in front of the southeast elevation. Two drives are shown, with the main drive shown as tree lined, as today, and approached via a lodge at its northeast end. The second drive approaches from West Hill (later Barewell Road) to the southeast and passes a walled garden which is now lost beneath the Barewell Close residential development.

- 4.12** The second edition 25-inch Ordnance Survey map of 1906 (surveyed 1904) records few obvious changes (Fig. 4); these are principally the establishment of the parallel pitched-roof service block immediately to the east facing the courtyard wing, now No. 30 Castle Cary Drive. There is no change between that date and the 1933 Ordnance Survey map (not illustrated), although the walled garden is denoted as Market Garden, suggesting commercial rather than domestic use. By 1952 (not illustrated) the Ordnance Survey 1:2500 map records an extension to the northeastern corner of the service wing and an extension of the main building to the west of the greenhouse (conservatory/orangery), whilst the east end of the greenhouse has either been roofed or the east range of the east courtyard wing has been re-built on a different footprint, as the distinct northwest to southeast alignment of this range is shown for the first time; neither Blake nor Barewell Closes have yet been developed. The separate pair of parallel blocks to the east have been extended and are named as The Community of Our Lady St Mary, presumably a religious community.

- 4.13** In 1984 plans were approved to install a bar and toilets in the basement for use by the occupants of the holiday apartments. This was approved with the condition that a passage be constructed on a level to the garden beneath the terrace on the west side of the house (Torquay Borough Council P/1984/2724; the passage does not appear to have been built). In same year an application to build a swimming pool to the west of the house was rejected as was an application to build two houses within the grounds. Both proposals were rejected (after appeal) on the basis of a perceived detrimental effect on a listed building (P/1984/2883). The current pool to the south of the house was approved in 1985 (P/1985/0050). The proposal for the construction of a separate dwelling in the southeast corner of the grounds was refused (and appeals dismissed) in 1998 and 1999 on the basis of adverse effect to the listed building and the conservation area (e.g. P/1998/0142 & P/1999/0319). A 1999 planning application for change of use from holiday apartments to residential apartments was approved (P/1999/1202). In 2002 more extensive plans were submitted (and later withdrawn) to convert Cary Castle into four houses (P/2002/1153 & P/2002/1154). This was to be achieved by the demolition of the majority of the east range and re-building on the site to create two houses and the conversion of the historic house into two houses. As part of the planning application Kay Elliot Architects produced a plan of the surviving primary fabric of the house and this shows the ground floor in the west of the house comprising six formal areas, porch, hall (with stairs off), drawing room (comprising the large room on the west side (current lounge/diner), a reception room (space largely currently taken up by the kitchen) and a further reception room at the south (currently a bedroom) with to the east of this a wing extending beyond the formal areas of the building and comprising of a scullery/kitchen with the main kitchen hearth at the east end. The division of formal and functional space is largely mirrored in the arrangement of the first floor. Although based on limited evidence their plan of the surviving primary material matches well the findings of the current report.
- 4.14** An undated photograph of Cary Castle is presented by Pateman (1980, 60). It is a distant view of the house from the southwest and is rather grainy making interpretation difficult. However, some significant information can be gleaned. The southwest corner of the tower appears to sport a small turret now lost, and the far end of the southeast elevation shows a greenhouse with a low sloping roof (suggestive of a functional structure rather than a conservatory or orangery). Most significant is that in front of the greenhouse is a two storey projection from the southeast elevation with what appear to be straight (rather than crow-stepped) gables facing southwest and southeast, with a single large window facing west under the gable and other large openings on the ground floor, matching those that survive elsewhere in the main house. This subsequently demolished part of the house was not predicted by the Kay Elliot Architects reconstruction plan and provides a slightly more complicated picture of the development of the house. The photograph dates to after 1871 as the church tower behind is of this date and prior to 1887, the latest date for the survey for the first edition 25-inch Ordnance Survey map of 1890, which, in common with more recent historic maps, does not show this projection.

5. CARY CASTLE (Fig. 5; Plates 1-23)

The exterior

- 5.1** The property is two storeyed (except for a four storey porch tower) under a shallow roof with a basement under the western part of the building. It is rendered in stucco and in places this is revealed as covering red brick or local stone rubble. The plan is formed by a roughly square formal villa with neo Gothic details and protruding entrance porch tower central to its northwest elevation (Plate 1). To the east of the main house is a less formal mixture of primary build, extensions and rebuilds of varying heights with

some effort made to maintain the neo gothic character in relation to the formal house. This wing is joined to the main house by a narrower waist and surrounds a small attractive courtyard and together these buildings form the east courtyard wing.

Northwest elevation

- 5.2** The main house is entered through a central tower that has a double door set in a pointed arch with deep ovolo moulding (Plate 2). There are angle buttresses topped by miniature gables and a chimney stack-like finial on each corner of the main house. The windows are of variable size, but usually of 2 or 3-lights (for the larger ones) with taller windows having thin glazing bars, generally square of mullion and transom type with lower sashes and fixed upper panes. They are ornamented by a drip mould which on the upper levels are finished with headstops (Plate 3). The ground-floor window to the east of the entrance has a cross in shield design above and simple protruding stops (Plate 4). Cracks beneath this window indicate that it has been modified and was originally deeper to ground level matching those existing on the southeast and southwest elevations (see below). The parapet is crenelated and on the east side has a central crow-stepped gable, incorporating a blank plaque. On the west side a tall plain projecting chimney stack largely fills the space; it is topped by a corbelled projection and small crenelations. Beneath the stack is an external stairwell providing access to the basement. The west ground floor window of the tower is stained glass with the corresponding window in the east side blocked during the construction of a modern single-storey flat-roofed porch (Plate 5), which provides access through an eight-panelled wooden door with three lights above to stairs which formerly served two self-contained apartments on the first floor of the main house (it is proposed that this unsightly addition will be removed during the current works). The tower has angle buttresses on each external corner matching those on the main house. At the top it is decorated with blind quatrefoil banding below corbels supporting protruding crenelations with small crenelated tower finials in each corner.
- 5.3** To the east of the main house is a collection of modern additions comprising a small porch with door to the current kitchen, a wall enclosing a small courtyard which contains a stairwell for access to the basement and, to the east of this, a modern two-storey stair tower with door central to two windows and a mullion and transom window above (Plate 6). Above the kitchen porch the northeast elevation of the main house reveals a pair of windows, one an inserted horned sash, the other a smaller modern replacement window, with central to these at roof height a crenelated chimney stack.
- 5.4** The northwest front of the east courtyard wing is two storeyed with one rectangular and four square casement windows arranged asymmetrically (see Plate 1). The parapet is crenelated with a central crow-stepped gable to match the main house (concealing a flat roof). On the west side, closest to the main house, is a single storey extension with a flat roof, behind which the first floor of an earlier phase of building is revealed (Plate 7); this has rendered brick crenelations above a deep projecting band, below which is a square casement window in a modern opening. To the west of the window is a projecting small possible flue or chimney stack although there was no internal indication of this and it would be at a peculiar height.

Northeast elevation

- 5.5** The northeast side of the east courtyard range continues the crenelated theme of the main house, but in an understated and decorative style. All windows in this elevation are casements, although the one on the ground floor closest to the northeast corner appears to fill a former arched opening (Plate 8). The courtyard is paved with recently laid stone slabs, all of the walls on the north, east and south of the courtyard are modern with modern casement windows. The west wall is of variable phases, with, in particular, the southwest corner showing elements of the original building, incorporating

heavy crenelation above a deep projecting moulded band, a boarded first-floor window and two plinths at ground level (Plate 9).

Southeast elevation

- 5.6** The southeast side of the east courtyard wing continues the crenelated parapet (concealing a flat roof) and is largely of two storeys with a single-storey extension at the west end. All windows in this elevation are casements and there are three sets of French windows at ground level; each servicing a self-contained apartment (Plate 10). The single-storey extension has scars for blocked windows either side of the French windows and in the west side wall. Above and behind the single storey extension the first floor of the primary building is visible with a crow-stepped gable incorporating a blank plaque, with a replacement window set centrally below. At the southeast corner of the east courtyard wing is a square limestone pier attached to the house by a short length of wall, there is no corresponding pier to form a gateway.
- 5.7** The southeast side of the main house was covered in enclosed scaffolding on the occasion of the site visit. This elevation is two storeyed and although continuing the style of the northwest elevation is of two distinct builds. To the west of the single storey extension the central area, which may have formed the service wing of the primary building, is set back from the line of the main house. It is of much slighter construction compared to the primary building and this section of wall is later than the original house and in the location of a demolished projection to the south (see section 4.13). Further support of this is the presence of an air brick within the bottom plinth (original vents are of metalwork). Its fenestration is different to that of the main house with windows arranged symmetrically with narrow single light tall windows on each storey flanking a pair of rectangular windows on the first floor and on the ground floor the easternmost of these is a French window. On the ground floor the westernmost tall window is filled with stained glass matching in design that within the entrance porch (Plate 11).
- 5.8** The southeast side of the house proper has a pair of symmetrically placed three light sash windows. These serve the principal rooms and are tall reaching from ground to ceiling. In front of these are decorative stone steps to a terrace (the westernmost of these contains metal vents to the basement), but the windows are fixed and do not open as might be expected, using a French door for example (Plate 12). The first floor has a pair of symmetrically placed two light windows with drip moulds and headstops matching those on the northwest elevation.

Southwest elevation

- 5.9** The southwest side of the main house was covered in enclosed scaffolding on the occasion of the site visit. This elevation has at ground floor level three sets of three light windows with steps to the terrace matching those described for the southeast side as described in section 5.8 above. Above are three sets of two light windows with drip moulds and headstops matching those on the northwest and southeast elevations.

The interior

- 5.10** The site visit took place after works to remove modern partitions within the first floor of the main house had already started. To an extent this aided interpretation as building fabric was exposed and the coherence of primary rooms had been re-established. The plan (Fig. 5) presents the arrangement of the building prior to these works beginning showing the ingenious dividing of the historic building to allow for self-contained apartments. In this regard the numbering of many of the spaces on the first floor is redundant, however, they are retained as useful for understanding the recent history of the building. Where partitions have been removed the numbering of the new space is presented in the manner (65/66), which means that the partition that had formed the

two rooms 65 and 66 has been removed to leave a single room designated for this report as (65/66).

The ground floor

- 5.11 The modern porch (13) and stairwell (15) with wooden stairs formerly provided access to self-contained apartments on the first floor. The upper floor has been reinstated and the stairs are now defunct. In the west wall of the modern porch a recess matching the blocked window in the ground floor of the tower porch of the main house is present.

Lobby (1) and entrance hall (2)

- 5.12 The lobby (1) has a wooden parquet floor, tall skirting board, dado rail and false ceiling. It is lit in the west wall by a stained glass window (Plate 13). The lobby opens to the hall (2) through late 20th century doors in a glazed partition inserted within a pointed arch. To the south is a modern lower arch which cuts the cornice formed of rose detail topped by crenelations. A second pointed arch has ovolo mouldings, beyond which is a false ceiling and inserted cupboard (5), which in part blocks the location of the original staircase, removed by a previous owner after listing in 1975. The flooring in the hall and principal rooms is wooden floorboards throughout. Original doorways off the hall have wide moulded architraves and panelled reveals. The doors are 9-panel with chunky 19th century hinges (Plate 14).

Dining room (3) and lounge (4)

- 5.13 Opening to the west of the hall (2) is principal room (3), currently a dining room, which is connected through sliding doors in an arched opening to a further principal room (4) which is currently a lounge. These rooms share tall skirting boards and high quality cornices of quatrefoil sections, a middle band of flower panels and curving upper sections to acorn pendants (Plate 15). The windows have shutters in fully panelled reveals. Dining room (3) contains a blocked fireplace in the north wall – the slate hearth stone survives – whilst the lounge (4) has a modern marble surround in the position of the original fireplace, within a stack projecting from the east wall.

Southeast reception room (6)

- 5.14 The southeast reception room (6) is currently a bedroom. It has an oval plaster ceiling with additional floral decoration in the corners and a double moulded cornice and double picture rails. The walls have plaster frames with external roses at the corners (Plate 16). A hearth for a blocked fireplace is present in the east wall. Either side of the fireplace are inserted doors, one to a bathroom (10), lit by a stained glass window and the other to a small lobby (7) providing access to a corridor (9a).

Corridor (9a), bathroom (8), storeroom (9) and rooms (11) and (12)

- 5.15 Corridor (9a), bathroom (8) and storeroom (9) are divided by modern partitions and would formerly have formed a single space for stairs and corridor. Access was gained to the void above a false ceiling in the west end of 9a which showed a surviving cornice matching that in the hall (2) and on the outside of the north wall of the southeast reception room (6) the scar for a staircase rising to the east. The door to lobby (7) is panelled and probably original, those to recently divided rooms (11) and (12) are modern; these rooms are currently used as bedrooms and no historic features were observed. The door to room (12) opens on to a modern cement bridge covering the void above the eastern stairwell to the basement. The original building appears to stop at a position where the 9a label is positioned on the plan as at this point there is a distinct change in character. The north wall of room (12) was originally an external wall.

Northeast reception room (16)

- 5.16 The northeast reception room (16) is currently used as a kitchen. The room originally incorporated bathroom (14) and part of stair well (13) and below stair cupboard (15).

The partition between kitchen (16) and bathroom (14) divides the window in the northwest elevation, and its alteration from a tall window (see section 5.2 above) may have occurred at the time of the division of this former reception room. The room was heated by a fireplace in the east wall where the current stove range is positioned.

The first floor

- 5.17 Currently access to the upper storeys of the main house is through a modern porch and stairwell (19 and 20). This is accessed either by an external door or internally from corridor (9a).

Tower room (57/58) and upper hall (56/60/61)

- 5.18 An open space is now present forming the first floor of the tower (57/58) and opening south through a pointed arch into an upper hall (56/60/61) (Plate 17). The tower room houses functional narrow wooden stairs to the upper storeys of the tower; these have the appearance of 20th-century replacements. A small fireplace with rusticated stone hearth sits uncomfortably in the southeast corner of the hall (56/60/61) adjacent to a modern inserted square arch providing access to the main landing/corridor (62/63/64/67).

Northwest room (59)

- 5.19 The northwest room (59) has a shuttered, panelled walk in window in the west wall and an indistinct decorated cornice of lower ?ribbon bands and upper band of fruit. There was no evidence for the probable position of the fireplace in the north wall. An original door has been reinserted in the southeast corner providing access to the main landing/corridor (62/63/64/67). A more recent doorway has been blocked in the northeast corner, although this blocking was not visible.

Southwest room (65/66)

- 5.20 The southwest room (65/66) has shuttered, panelled walk in windows in the west and south walls (Plate 18). A projecting stack on the east wall shows the position for a blocked fireplace. An original doorway is located in the northeast corner, providing access to the main landing/corridor (62/63/64/67).

Northeast room (68/69)

- 5.21 The northeast room (68/69) has a walk in window in the north wall (no panelling or shutters surviving) and a pair of later inserted windows on either side of a projecting stack for a blocked fireplace in the east wall. The floorboards are replacements. An original doorway with deep panelled architrave is located in the southwest corner, providing access to the main landing/corridor (62/63/64/67).

Southeast room (73/75/76)

- 5.22 The southeast room (73/75/76) has a walk in window in the south wall, the frame is a new replacement and no panelling or shutters survive. There is an indistinct decorated cornice of possible leaf design. There is a blocked fireplace in the east wall, indicated by ceramic hearth tiles. A door has been inserted in the north wall, providing access to the main landing/corridor (62/63/64/67). A doorway to the north of the fireplace in the east wall has been blocked, although this blocking was not visible.

Main landing/corridor (62/63/64/67) and room (70)

- 5.23 Landing area (62) has a boarded area on the floor marking the former position of the stairwell for access to the ground floor. A small area has been partitioned off to form a separate area (70) with an inserted modern window in its east wall. This was formerly an open space as indicated by the complete ornate cornice, which matches that found in the entrance hall (2) below. To the west a pointed arch gives access to a probable former lobby area (63) and beneath a heavy ornately plastered ceiling bar access is

gained to the westernmost area, which probably existed as a partitioned off space (64), as this has an off-centre walk in window in the west wall, although no shutters or panelling survives (Plate 19).

Easterly rooms (71) and (72/80)

- 5.24** The lower central part of the house is accessed down a short flight of stairs in corridor (77). This corridor is largely a modern addition to the primary building. Access to the easterly rooms was via the original doorway in the north wall of room (71) which has a deep panelled architrave (Plate 20). The south wall is the later section (see section 5.7) with walk in and narrow windows. The east wall is a modern partition. The flooring is a modern replacement.
- 5.25** Room (72/80) was formerly part of a much larger space (with 71 and 87/88), which may have been partitioned to provide servants' quarters. The south wall is part of the later rebuild with walk in and narrow windows. The door is a modern insertion. The niche for a blocked window is present on the external face of the north wall. The east and west walls are modern partitions. The flooring is a modern replacement.

East courtyard wing

- 5.26** The north two-storey range, east single-storey range and south range of the east courtyard wing are either in total or very large part 20th century structures and not discussed further. However, parts of the west range belong to the primary structure of the house and a probable early extension. Description of this part of the building begins with the upper floor as at the time of the visit these rooms were only accessible via the first floor of the main house, while the ground floor could in part only be accessed externally.

East courtyard wing, west range, upper storey

- 5.27** Modern corridor (77) gave access through a (removed) lobby area (78) and modern entrance in old fabric to a collection of rooms in various stages of renovation at the time of the visit. The southernmost room (79/87/88) had a large chimney stack projecting from the east wall, a boarded-up narrow window to its north (Plate 21) and a reduced height walk in window with modern frame and no shutters in the south wall. A probable blocked window in the north wall as shown on the plan was not observed. The flooring is a modern replacement. The roof structure was open and comprised a king post truss with struts fixed using mortice and tenon joints, and supporting back purlins on small rafters. In the west side over a partition wall is a smaller king post roof with struts and back purlins.
- 5.28** Short corridor (83) provides access down a short flight of wooden stairs to rooms (84), (85) and (86), which originally together may have formed a larger space, but there is evidence for significant changes in floor and roof heights in this area. Exposed wall fabric in room (84) shows that it is constructed of mixed local limestone and breccia rubble. The north wall has a low blocked splayed opening with wooden lintel and is filled with brick; this is probably a former window and shows a change in floor height, presumably at the time it was blocked. It has a modern inserted window above (Plate 22). The east wall is of stone with a splayed window filled with a modern replacement. The east wall of rooms (85) and (86) are modern and constructed of concrete block and brick. Scars in the south wall of room (86), and in the partition between rooms (85) and (86) show that the pitch of the roof in this room has been raised.

East courtyard wing, west range, ground floor

- 5.29** Although largely of the same build as the first floor and originally part of the main house, at the time of the visit the 20th-century modifications meant that the ground floor could only be accessed externally. The west range is entered via a corridor (35)

and at the time of the visit was used for storage making the rooms difficult to access. The corridor begins in old work at the north, passes through a modern section and enters the primary structure through an arched pinch point. At the far end the corridor provides access to room (33) whose east wall contains a large chimney breast with blocked fireplace; this almost certainly indicates that this was the east wall of the original kitchen. Above a false ceiling in this room is a pair of RSJs which follow the line of the southeast wall of the primary building, the ground floor part of which has been removed to extend this room for the modern extension which extends to the south including a further area (34), where French windows open on to the terrace.

Tower – Upper Stories

Second floor

- 5.30** This room is lit by small square stained glass windows in the north, east and west elevations. The south wall contains a small door opening on to the roof. On the east side are the stairs to access the third floor room. These have slender stick balusters and a slightly chamfered newel post. The top part is enclosed by tongue and groove panelling.

Third floor

- 5.31** This room is lit by sash windows in all elevations. Stairs on the east side of the room lead to the flat roof of the tower and are of the same design as on the second floor.

The basement

- 5.32** The basement is entered via a flight of steps, either from the east via a modern porch (17) opening on to an open stair well (18), or externally from the northwest side of the house (to the west of the tower). It is T-shaped and matches the footprint of the principal ground floor rooms (3) and (4) and the hall and former stairs area made up of all or parts of ground floor areas (2), (5), (8), (9) and (9a). The Kay Elliot plan of the original structure indicates internal stairs accessing the cellar beneath the main house stairs, and this would make sense, but this part was difficult of access during the site visit (being used for storage, boiler and electricity supply) and it was not possible to observe evidence to confirm such an arrangement. A brick pier has been inserted to support original ground floor joists, which are also supported by an RSJ. Entry to the area beneath the principal rooms, (3) and (4), is through a brick arched doorway fitted with a fire door. This western part of the basement is formed of three rooms with whitewashed stone walls. The south room has a vent chute from ground level, masonry to support the chimney stack above in the east wall and additional piers and joists to support the ground floor. The west wall of the central room contains an arched niche. The north room has eight brick wine bins set against the east wall, with the top four labelled 'S Whisky', 'Champagne', 'Burgundy' and 'Brandy'. The door in the north wall leading to the external steps access appears to be inserted. These three basement rooms are currently used for storage and as a games room. Fire exit signs indicate that it previously had some formal use.

The roof

- 5.33** The pitch of the roof is so shallow that there was no roof space to investigate. The roof of the formal part of the house, as observed from the tower, has a central east-west aligned valley with long pitches over west, south and north rooms, with the latter being slightly longer. There are six chimney stacks, all in crenelated style, matching the primary building, and all of which can be accounted for by the evidence from within the house.

The grounds

- 5.34** The grounds to the west and south of the house have been landscaped with historic evidence indicating that this was part of the design of the original house. To the north, is a tarmacked parking area at the end of the long tree-lined driveway with a block of modern garages facing the house. To the east is the drive, initially tarmacked and then gravelled, which exits the grounds to the southeast.

6. DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROPERTY (Fig. 5; Plates 24-26)

- 6.1** Cary Castle was constructed in the middle of the 19th century as a private house on former farmland (Phase 1). In terms of plot size, and position within the plot, along with the boundary treatment of mature trees the property stands out as a landmark in the area, although it has been significantly encroached upon by residential development through the second half of the 20th century. The style of the building is unusual in that its neo Gothic design contrasts with the more typical Italianate style of the large villas constructed in the locality during the mid to late 19th century.
- 6.2** The original plan of the house can be established with some confidence since it survives largely intact, although the function of some rooms has changed (e.g. the movement of the kitchen from (32/33) to (16). The only significant doubt concerns the arrangement of the east end of the service range as it survives both within the central section (where demolition and re-build has occurred in the late 19th century) and the west range of the east courtyard wing. However, if, as the plan indicates, there is a blocked window in the north wall of room (79/87/88) then the old fabric to the north in room (84) must represent an extension at an early date (Phase 2). In regard to the more formal part of the main house an odd arrangement involving the tower and the northwest wall of the northeast reception room leads to an uncomfortable juxtaposition where the wall junction cuts the drip mould and headstop of the first floor tower window (Plate 24). This design also leads this window to being placed off-centre in the east wall of the tower, although this works well in relation to the stairs to the upper storeys of the tower. No evidence was found to indicate that this is an alteration to the primary building and may show a late change in design during the original build. This would have resulted in a larger northeast reception room than originally planned.
- 6.3** At some point in the late 20th century, prior to 1975, the house underwent conversion from a single dwelling to holiday apartments (Phase 3). The most significant change was the conversion of the building to form 14 self-contained apartments, which necessitated the re-building of the majority of the east courtyard wing, which will have removed extensions shown on historic mapping to have existed by the end of the 19th century. During this period the most damaging of these changes was the removal of the formal staircase; this served to destroy the coherence of the formal areas of the original house, removing internal access between the ground and first floor (and tower), and eliminating a significant decorative feature at the heart of the house. Also, at this time, it is possible that the central part of the southeast wall was rebuilt again with windows arranged to better suit the internal partitions for apartments. One of these windows, a single light on the ground floor, accommodated a panel of stained glass removed from the east window from the tower porch when that was blocked for the addition of a porch on the east side of the tower. The angle buttress on the southeast corner of the main house may have been added at this time as it is not illustrated on historic mapping. If so, it was built to match extremely well the original buttresses.
- 6.4** Later 20th-century (or early 21st-century) changes mainly relate to rebuilding of the apartments at the southeast corner of the house.

7. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

- 7.1 Guidance on the assessment of significance has been taken from Historic England's document *Conservation Principles* and from the Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF). The building is assessed according to the heritage values outlined in these documents, including the extent of the contribution of setting to the assessed asset's significance.
- 7.2 Evidence from historic mapping indicates that the area has low potential for below-ground archaeology (see section 4.4 above), with known removed elements of the house having been subsequently been built on in the later 20th century. This gives it low evidential value.
- 7.3 The building has medium-high architectural value, based on its design and plan form, including surviving historic fittings. Of particular note is the exceptional plasterwork in the principal rooms and public areas of the house. Overall, the external style and detailing of the main house is an elaborate evocation of an imagined period piece. There are echoes of the Cary family home at Torre Abbey, itself a mixture of several different periods by the mid-19th century. Of particular note are the similarity of the crenellations, several examples of which at Torre Abbey date to the early 19th century (Rhodes 2015, 88), and the style of a re-used medieval window with square dripmould and headstops comparable to those of the main house first-floor windows (Plates 25 and 26). The design of the house gives it high aesthetic value, although this is partially reduced by the poor rebuilding of the east courtyard wing. This architectural value was further diminished by 20th-century alterations many of which will be removed in the proposed restoration. The building has little potential for further analysis to understand its form, and low potential to contribute to regional research objectives.
- 7.4 The building has historical illustrative value in that it can be read (from both the outside – within its grounds and where visible further away – and inside) as a mid-19th century villa. It has historical associative value based on the local interest of the property forming part of the mid to late 19th century development initiated by the landowner. It can also be compared with contemporary villa developments elsewhere in Torquay.
- 7.5 The building is not considered to have any communal or artistic value.
- 7.6 The setting of the building is its grounds, and various longer distance glimpses from surrounding areas in all directions except the east, these being the areas in which it can be *experienced*. The building does not have any designed views. It is interesting to consider whether it was designed to be observed from specific viewpoints, as the original drives both approach the house from the less impressive service wing end. The most impressive view of the house would be from the grounds and more distantly from the west and southwest, although clearly the entrance tower on the northwest side was built to impress, and may have been more visible in a less developed 19th-century landscape.
- 7.7 In summary, the significance of the building is mainly derived from its architectural, historical and aesthetic values as well as its setting, with a lesser contribution from its evidential value. The building can be considered to be of medium significance, being a designated asset with low potential to contribute to regional research aims, but which provides a positive contribution to the St Marychurch Conservation Area.

8. COMMENTS

8.1 Cary Castle is a mid-19th century villa located within landscaped grounds. The building is Grade II listed and situated within the St Marychurch Conservation Area. It is considered to be a building of medium significance. These factors will need to be considered when the proposals for restoration are considered.

8.2 The property was designed as a house, but was later converted into holiday lets and from 1994 14 self-contained apartments. The proposal seeks to return the formal historic part of the building back to residential use as a single house. This will involve the re-establishment of the majority of original arrangement of the principal rooms and areas and the reconnection of the ground and upper floors, through the putting in of a staircase in the original position. The remaining buildings, all of 20th century date and forming the north, east and south ranges of the eastern courtyard wing will be retained, although reconfigured, as self-contained flats, with access completely separate from the main house.

Impact on Cary Castle

8.3 The proposed reconfiguration of the building involves no new extensions. The footprint will remain unchanged except for the demolition of the modern porch on the east side of the tower; this will have the benefit of restoring the original footprint to this elevation. In addition, it is proposed to reinstate the blocked window with stained glass matching that on the west side of the tower.

8.4 A major positive impact is the careful removal of modern partitions from within the historic structure, which has the benefit of restoring the proportions of the principal rooms and spaces. This, along with the ceiling plasterwork, which has survived remarkably undamaged considering the number of modern partitions that had been constructed, allows the original design to once again be experienced. Removed internal architectural features such as doors and their architraves will be replaced based on existing original templates.

8.5 More difficult to achieve, but what should ultimately be a substantial positive impact, is rebuilding of the missing staircase connecting the ground floor and first floor of the main house. It has not been possible to establish the character and configuration of the original staircase, but a replacement sympathetic to the period is proposed. The opening up of the stairwell will also have the benefit of revealing parts of the decorated plasterwork cornice currently hidden by false ceilings.

8.6 Lantern roof lights are proposed over stairwell (20) and single storey room (33/34), both of which are modern structures. If these are of appropriate design they will serve to enhance parts of the building which are architecturally uninteresting. It is also proposed that windows and French doors are restored to the west and south walls of room (33/34) in a modern extension. The proposed refenestration will better match that of the historic structure and no adverse impact is predicted.

Impact on the St Marychurch Conservation Area

8.7 The architecture of the St Marychurch Conservation Area is extremely variable and at its historic core is dominated by the tower of the parish church and spire of the neighbouring Catholic church. These buildings are located at the high point of a ridge to the east of Cary Castle and the towers are landmarks and seamarks visible from great distances.

- 8.8** Cary Castle is set within grounds planted with mature trees which are protected by tree preservation orders. This means that the house, although prominent, is often seen as glimpses through trees and neighbouring residential developments.
- 8.9** The architectural character of Cary Castle will remain intact, with the proposals meaning that the property should remain viable for the foreseeable future. In this regard there is no predicted adverse impact on the St Marychurch Conservation area.
- 8.10** The scheme involves restoring the building which provides a positive contribution to the Conservation Area. The principal external changes are the replacement of windows matching those of the original building, where appropriate, and two new lantern roof lights. The property will be subdivided to create separate entrances; the existing drive will be used for the main house, while the currently underused drive from the southeast will be restored and off of which will be a discrete parking area and access to the flats. This is of minimal impact and will be in keeping with the historic arrangement of approaches to the property. The wider Conservation Area will benefit as traffic for the (reduced number of) flats will enter the property from outside of the Conservation Area through modern residential development rather than through the narrow streets of the Conservation Area as required at present.

Summary

- 8.11** The scheme will return Cary Castle back to a major residence as was its original purpose, which, with the retention of a smaller number of self-contained apartments, is a viable and long-term sustainable use for the designated heritage asset. The scheme will involve significant internal changes including reordering and removal of walls; however the principal spaces where the more significant original architectural fittings survive will be maintained and enhanced. There will be minimal change to the footprint of the building, which maintains aspects of its original construction, but also illustrates additions and modifications over the intervening years.
- 8.12** There will be no significant visual change observable from the Conservation Area, and there will be no adverse effect to the character of the area. The scheme has an environmental benefit by retaining a building that provides a positive contribution to the Conservation Area, and through a viable long-term (residential) use that may actually (e.g. though a reduction in vehicle traffic) provide a minor benefit to the area.

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Devon Heritage Centre

St Marychurch tithe map (1840) and apportionment (1841)

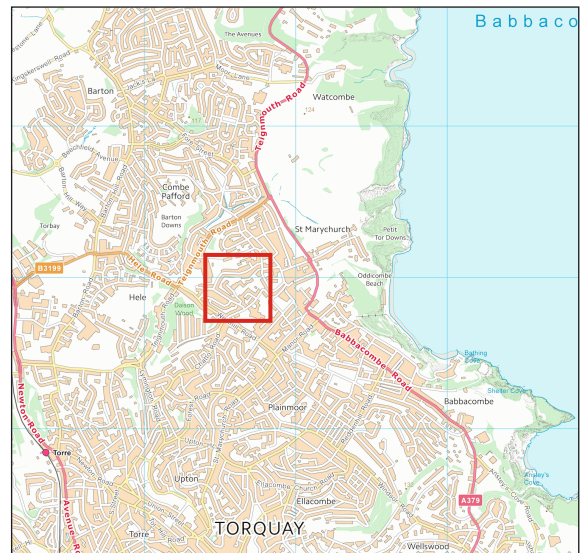
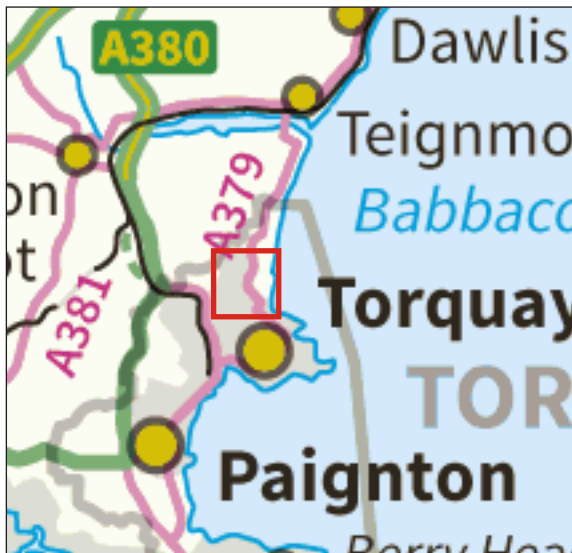
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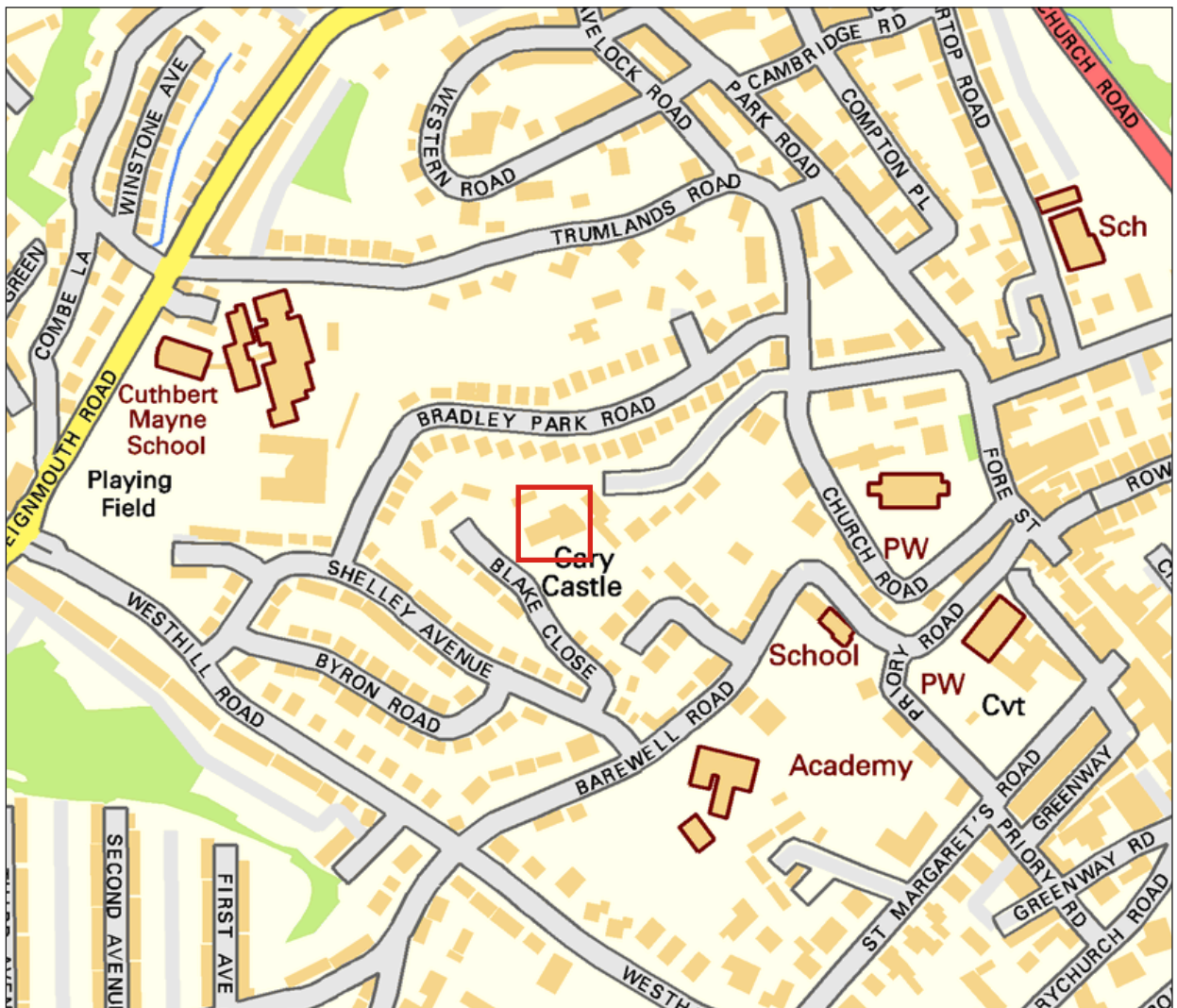
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PROJECT

Cary Castle, Torquay, Torbay, Devon

TITLE

Fig. 1: Site location





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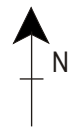
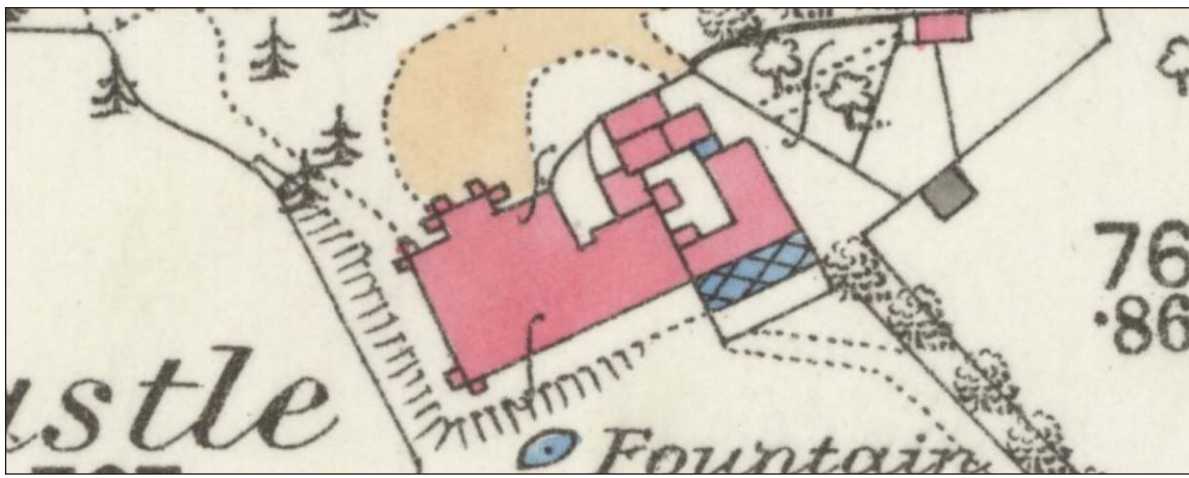
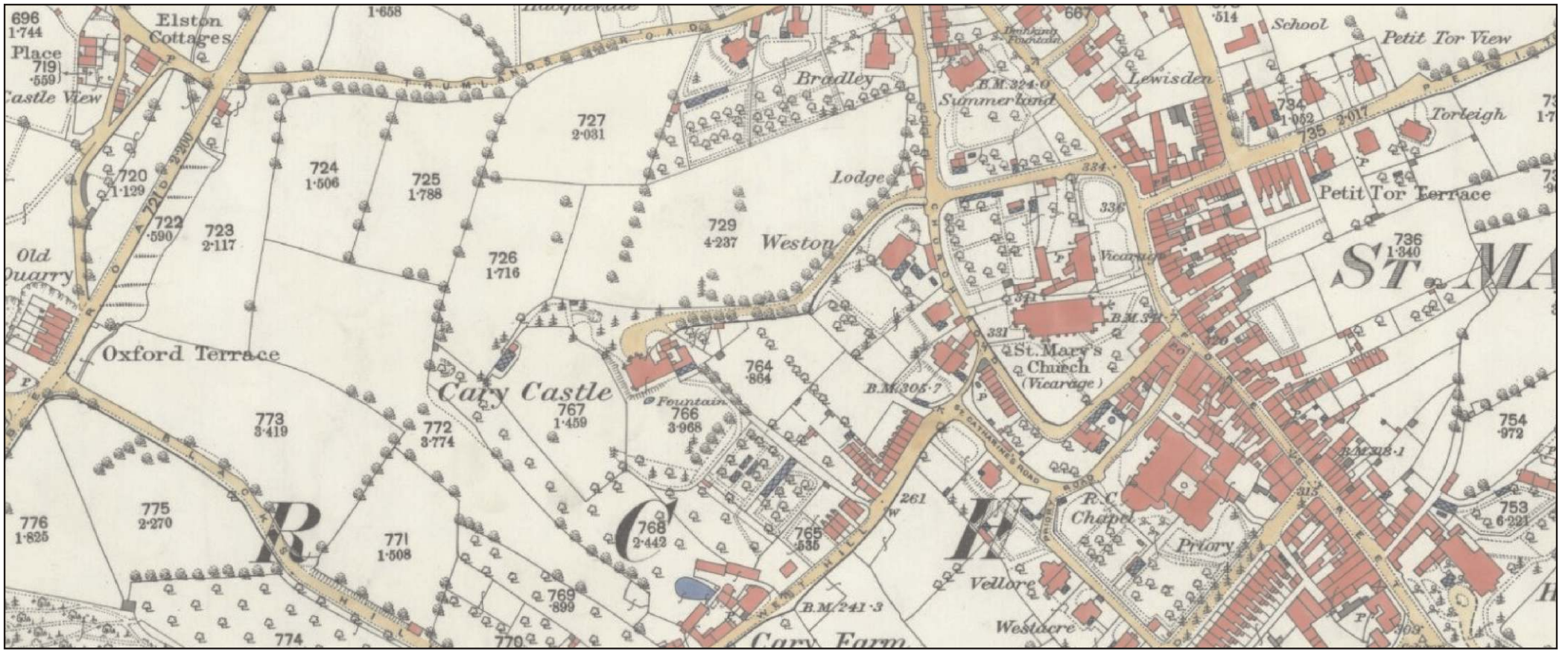
Cary Castle, Torquay, Torbay, Devon

TITLE

Fig. 2: Extract from the
St. Marychurch tithe map, 1840



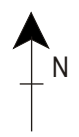
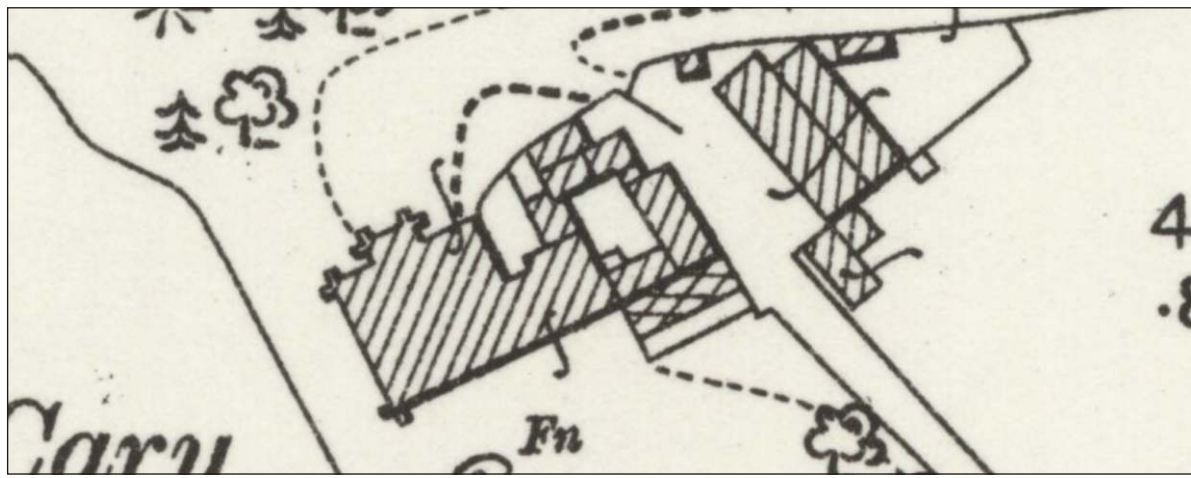
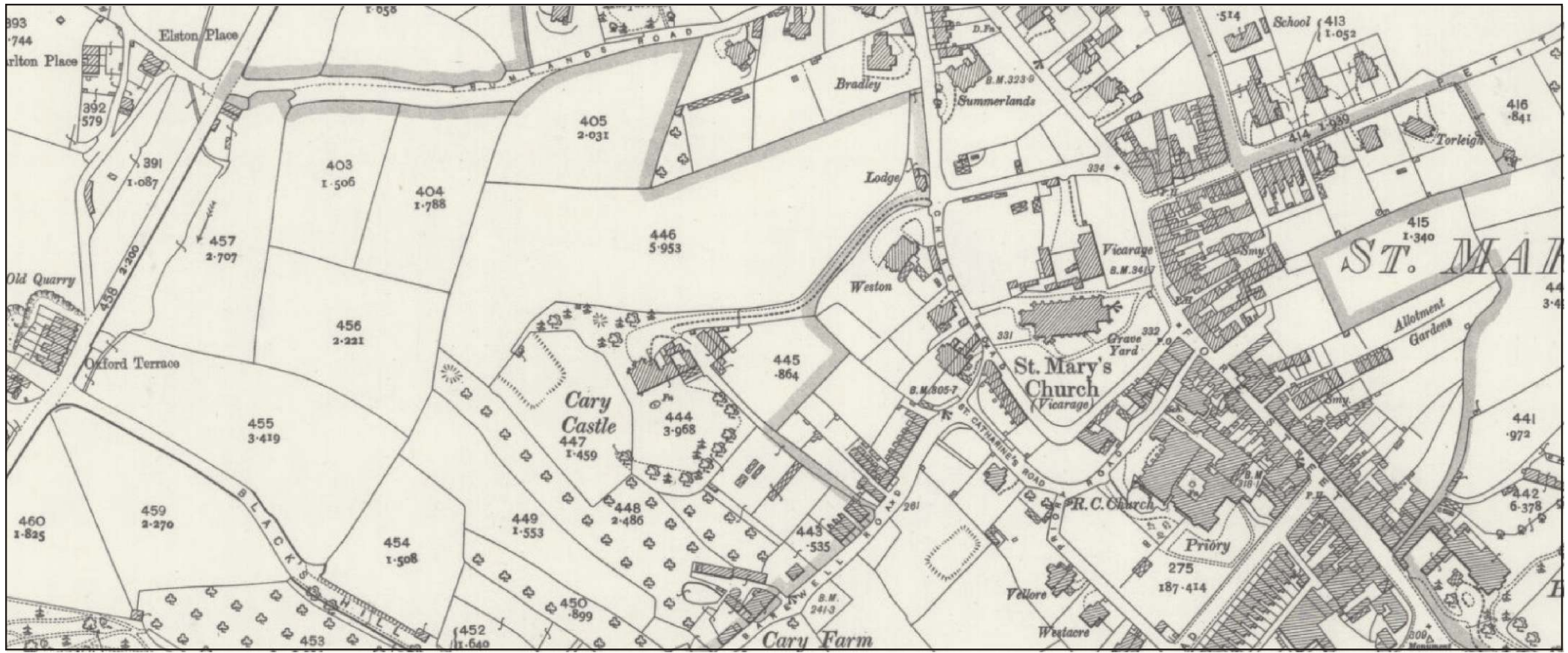
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 Cary Castle, Torquay, Torbay, Devon

TITLE
 Fig. 3: Extract from the first edition
 Ordnance Survey 25-inch map, 1890

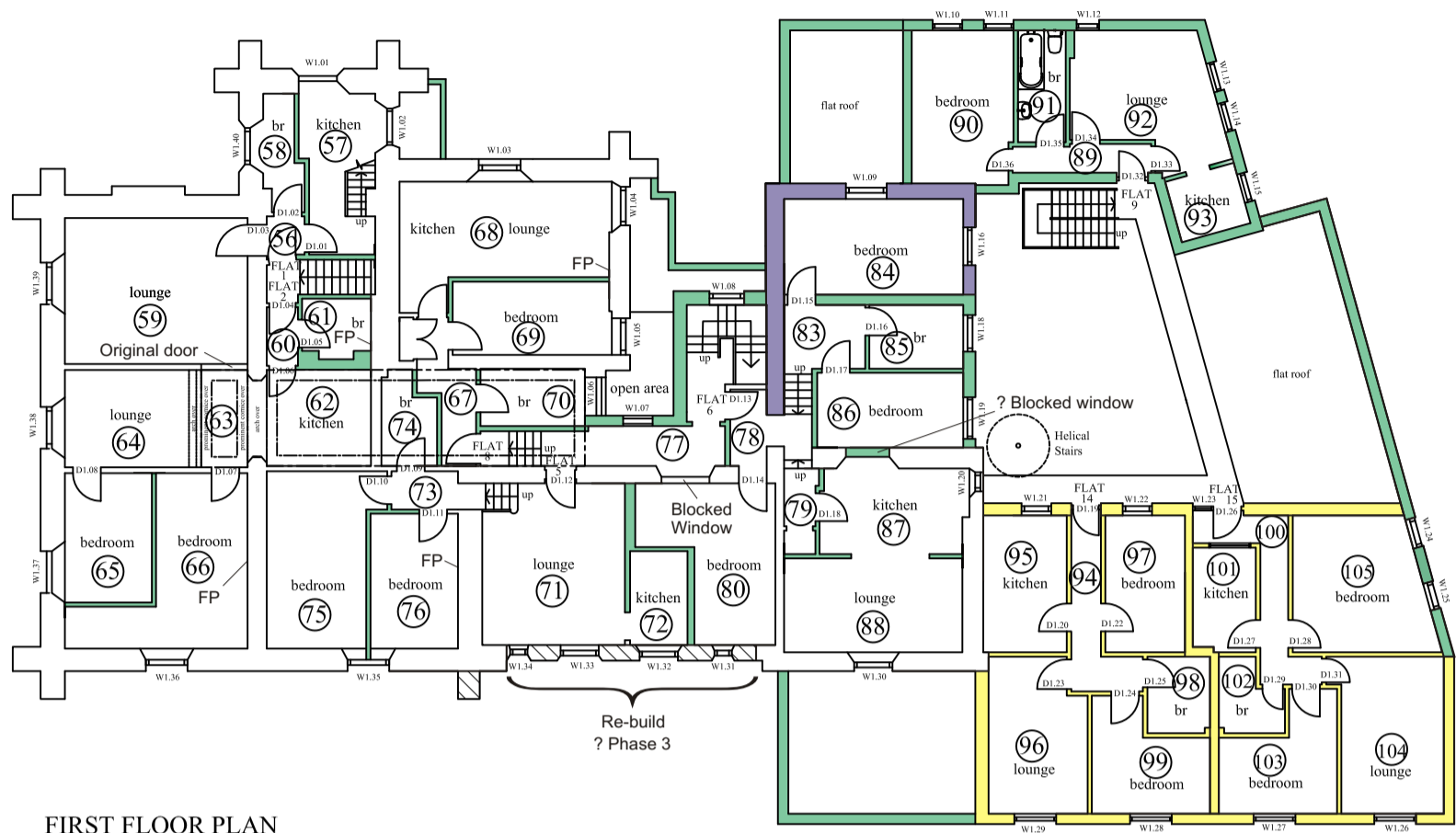




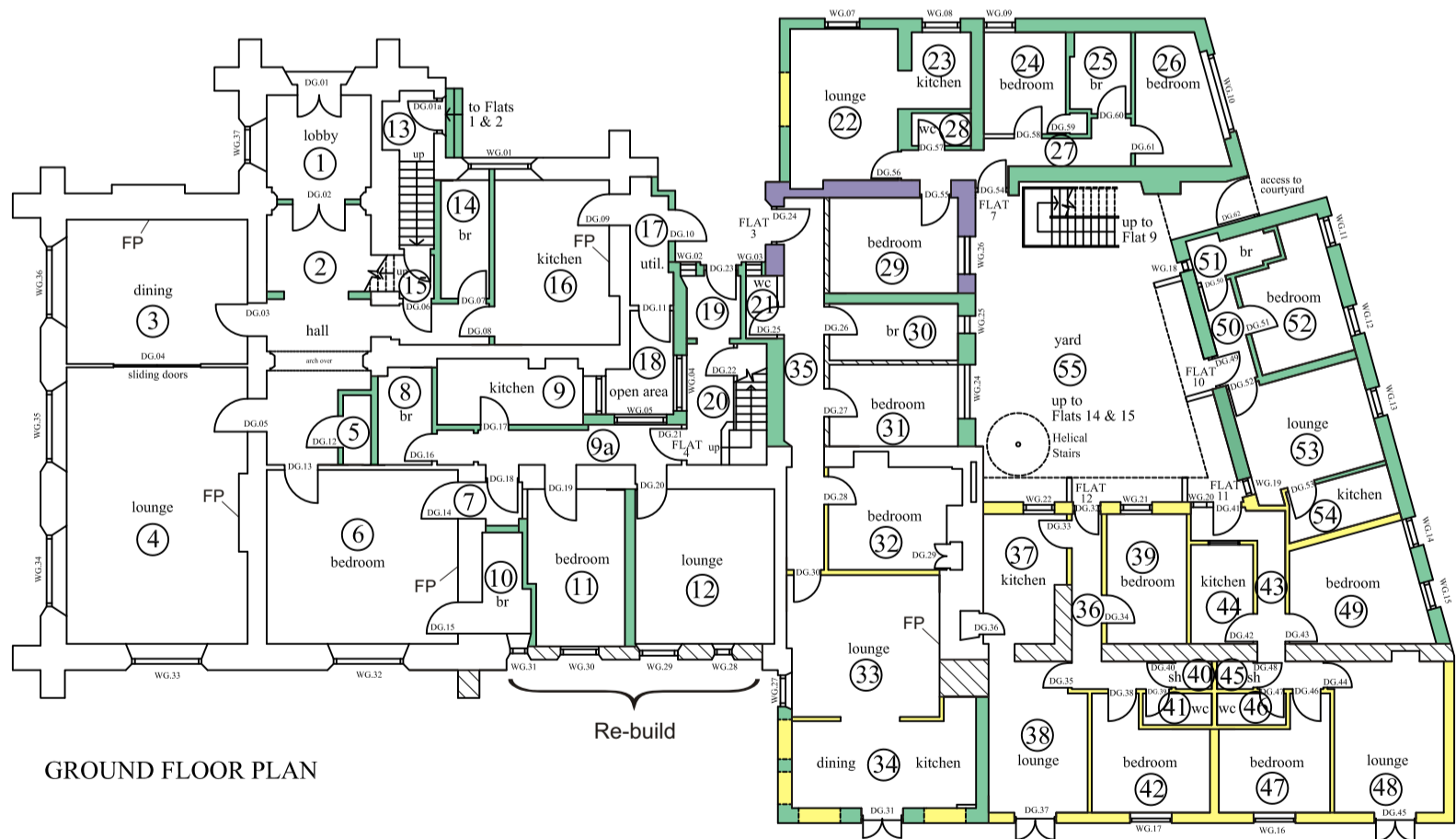
PROJECT
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TITLE
 Fig. 4: Extract from the second edition Ordnance Survey 25-inch map, 1906








FIRST FLOOR PLAN



GROUND FLOOR PLAN



Key

- | | | | | | |
|---|---------|---|---------|--|-----------|
|  | Phase 1 |  | Phase 3 |  | Unphased |
|  | Phase 2 |  | Phase 4 | FP | Fireplace |



PROJECT

Cary Castle, Torquay, Torbay, Devon

TITLE

Fig. 5: Phased floor plans



Plate 1: The house viewed from the approach along the drive, looking west



Plate 2: The northwest side of the house showing the main entrance, looking south. (1m scale)



Plate 3: The northwest elevation showing the second-floor tower window and scallop shell in niche above the main entrance to the house



Plate 4: The ground floor window with a cross in shield design above and simple protruding stops to the drip mould with vertical cracks indicating the former larger opening, looking southeast. (1m scale)



Plate 5: Modern porch added to east side of entrance tower and formerly providing stair access to first-floor apartments, looking west. (1m scale)



Plate 6: The central area of the northwest side showing the modern additions between the main house (right) and the east courtyard wing (left), looking southeast. (1m scale)



Plate 7: The northwest first floor of the east courtyard wing showing an early extension to the original building, looking southeast.



Plate 8: The northeast elevation of the east courtyard wing showing ground floor window in blocked arched opening and entrance to courtyard beyond, looking southwest. (1m scale)



Plate 9: East courtyard wing showing primary work in southwest corner beyond the black drain pipe, looking southwest



Plate 10: The southeast elevation with primary work with crow step gable visible above the single storey extension, looking northeast



Plate 11: Stained glass window in the southeast elevation. (0.2m scale)



Plate 12: Westernmost window to the principal rooms in the southeast elevation, looking north. (1m scale)

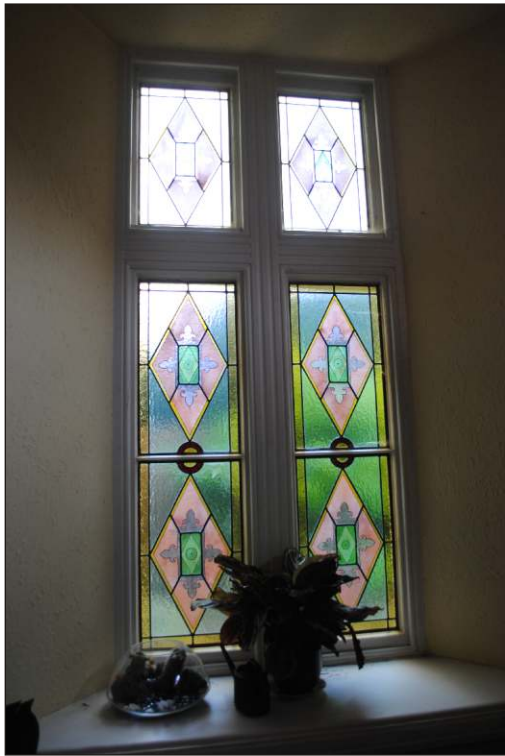


Plate 13: Stained glass window in the west wall of the lobby (1)



Plate 14: Original internal door between hall (2) and lounge (4)



Plate 15: Cornice in dining room (3)



Plate 16: Plasterwork in southeast reception room (6)



Plate 17: First floor hall (56/60/61) and tower room (57/58) with access stairs to upper storeys of tower, looking northwest



Plate 18: Shuttered and panelled walk in window in the south wall of the first floor southwest room (65/66)



Plate 19: First floor lobby (63) and room (64) viewed from landing (62)



Plate 20: Original doorway in the north wall of room (71), looking northwest



Plate 21: East wall of room (79/87/88) on first floor of the east courtyard block west range, showing chimney breast and boarded-up window, looking northeast



Plate 22: North wall of room (84) on first floor of the east courtyard wing west range, showing modern inserted window and blocked window below, looking northwest.



Plate 23: Corridor (35) on ground floor of the east courtyard wing west range, showing the arched insertion through the wall of the primary building, looking southeast



Plate 24: First-floor tower window showing uncomfortable arrangement where the wall junction cuts the dripmould and headstop



Plate 25: Brewery Yard wall at Torre Abbey, constructed in the early 19th century utilising earlier architectural details from the Abbey buildings, looking west



Plate 26: Detail of medieval dripmould with headstops in the early 19th century Brewery Yard wall at Torre Abbey, looking west

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