

BUILDING RECORDING OF  
THE WHITMORE,  
SADLER ROAD,  
COVENTRY

Shona Robson-Glyde and Elizabeth Curran

Illustrations by Shona Robson-Glyde

7<sup>th</sup> May 2010

© Historic Environment and Archaeology Service,  
Worcestershire County Council

Historic Environment and Archaeology Service,  
Worcestershire County Council,  
Woodbury,  
University of Worcester,  
Henwick Grove,  
Worcester WR2 6AJ



Project 3498  
Report 1758  
Fieldwork code WH'10

# Contents

## Part 1 Project summary

1

## Part 2 Detailed report

<b>1. Background</b> .....	<b>3</b>
1.1 Reasons for the project .....	3
1.2 Project parameters .....	3
1.3 Aims .....	3
<b>2. Methods</b> .....	<b>3</b>
2.1 Documentary search .....	3
2.2 Fieldwork methodology.....	3
2.2.1 Fieldwork strategy .....	3
2.3 Building recording methodology.....	4
2.3.1 Building analysis .....	4
2.4 The methods in retrospect.....	4
<b>3. Topographical and general context</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>4. Results</b> .....	<b>8</b>
4.1 Historical background .....	8
4.2 The Whitmore.....	8
4.3 Building development .....	10
4.3.1 Phase 1 Construction 1931 .....	10
4.3.2 Phase 2 Modifications prior to 1960s and in 1961 .....	11
4.3.3 Phase 3 Modifications 1961 to 1990 .....	11
4.3.4 Phase 4 Modifications in 1991 .....	12
<b>5. Synthesis</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>6. Publication summary</b> .....	<b>13</b>
<b>7. Acknowledgements</b> .....	<b>13</b>
<b>8. Personnel</b> .....	<b>13</b>
<b>9. Bibliography</b> .....	<b>13</b>

---

## **Building recording of The Whitmore, Sadler Road, Coventry**

**Shona Robson-Glyde and Elizabeth Curran**

### **Part 1 Project summary**

Archaeological building recording was undertaken at The Whitmore, Sadler Road, Coventry (NGR SP 32338131). It was undertaken on behalf of Care Development Ltd, who proposed the demolition of the Whitmore Public House and construction of a nursing home on the same site, for which a planning application was submitted and approved. The project aimed to identify the historic nature of the structures on the site and provide a record of the buildings prior to their demolition.

The survey of The Whitmore public house, and the following documentary research, shows the building was constructed on a plot of land which used to form part of late medieval 'lammas' land, that was used as common grazing ground. This area was also adjacent to an enclosed field system, forming part of Whitmore Park lands and estate. The building on the site dated to 1931 when it was constructed as part of the 'Hill Farm housing estate', on Whitmore Park Lane and Foster Road. Many of the features present within are characteristic of its neo-Elizabethan style, including leaded lights and stained glass designs in all the windows in the public areas of the building. There was very little change to the external structure, although some refurbishment and alterations to the servery took place several times in the later part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The external alterations were mainly concentrated to the rear and included an extension to create a bagatelle room on the site of the former verandah, with a new verandah being constructed outside the bagatelle room. Of note were the alterations to the north western frontage on Sadler Road to create a new 'off-sales' and window display area. A final phase of alterations occurred after 1991 when a single storey extension was constructed to provide a new block of men's toilets.



---

## Part 2 Detailed report

### 1. Background

#### 1.1 Reasons for the project

Archaeological building recording was undertaken at The Whitmore (NGR SP 32338131), Sadler Road, Coventry (Fig 1), on behalf of Care Development Ltd. The client intends to demolish the Whitmore Public House and construct a nursing home on the same site and has submitted a planning application to Coventry City Council (reference 16226/B) which has been approved. The Curator considered the building to be of 20<sup>th</sup> century date; constructed between 1925 and 1936, and was an 'interesting example of an inter-war 'improved' public house'.

#### 1.2 Project parameters

The project conforms to the *Standard and guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures* (IfA 2008).

The project also conforms to a brief prepared by Coventry City Council (CCC 2010) and for which a project proposal (including detailed specification) was produced (HEAS 2010).

#### 1.3 Aims

The aims of the archaeological building recording were to provide a 'record of the public house and its grounds prior to demolition and produce a report and archive of the survey'.

In particular the following aims have been identified:

- To seek to understand the history and development of a building
- To compile a lasting record of the building ahead of demolition or alteration
- To disseminate the results of the recording and analysis

### 2. Methods

#### 2.1 Documentary search

A search was made of the Historic Environment Record (HER). In the following sources were also consulted:

##### *Cartographic sources*

- Ordnance Survey maps of 1888, 1905, 1914 and 1936

##### *Documentary sources*

- Coventry History Centre refs: CCD/CD/46/4/12/133, CCD/CE/46/4/12/133, CCD/3/BYE/14806, PA 1691/23/1310-1312
- County histories (VCH 1989).

#### 2.2 Fieldwork methodology

##### 2.2.1 Fieldwork strategy

A detailed specification has been prepared by the Service (HEAS 2010).

Fieldwork was undertaken between 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2010. The fieldwork code is WH'10.

Building recording consisted of a photographic survey of the interior and exterior of the buildings, analysis of their development, annotation of survey drawings and measured survey. All photographs were taken with photographic scales visible in each shot. The photographic

survey was carried out with a Sony  $\alpha$ 350 digital camera. All photographs were recorded on pro-forma Photographic Record Sheets. Annotation of existing ground plans and elevations, and completion of pro-forma Building Record sheets, complemented the photographic record along with notes completed whilst on site.

### 2.3 **Building recording methodology**

The project conformed to the specification for a level 3 survey as defined in the English Heritage document *Understanding historic buildings: a guide to good recording practice* (EH 2006). This level of survey is described as 'an analytical record' comprising of 'an introductory description followed by a systematic account of the buildings origins, development and use' (EH 2006). This required the following elements of survey:

Survey and drawings

- Plans of all main floors and elevations as existing (provided by client).
- Measured drawings showing the form of any architectural or functional detail not more readily captured by photography.

Photography

- Overall appearance of rooms and circulation areas.
- Detailed coverage of the building's external appearance.
- Any detail, structural or decorative, relevant to the building's design, development and use, which does not show on general photographs.

#### 2.3.1 **Building analysis**

Analysis of the building was based upon the study of the photographic record, building recording forms, annotated and measured drawings. It was also informed by the documentary sources. This allowed plans to be drawn up showing the structural development of the building. Figures 2 - 4 show the plans of the building and photographs have been reproduced as Plates 1-33. Further figures have been included showing maps or relevant documents (Figs 5-13).

### 2.4 **The methods in retrospect**

Having undertaken the project the following comments may be made with regard to the methods adopted. During the building recording only minor problems were encountered accessing small areas of the building, as noted in Figure 2. However historic measured plans showed the form and function of these areas as well as evidence for their successive phases of development. Therefore, it is considered that the aims of the project have been achieved.

## 3. **Topographical and general context**

This section is based upon information contained in the Coventry HER and on recent accounts of Coventry's history and archaeology (Lancaster 1975, Soden 2005, VCH 1969).

The Whitmore is situated within the parish of Radford on the southern side of Sadler Road, just to the east of Radford Road (Fig 1) in the northern suburbs of the Coventry. Coventry is situated in the north-east of Warwickshire County.

Coventry probably began as a Saxon settlement, and its name appears to refer to a watery area by a hill (Lancaster 1975, 2). It is possible that the first settlement grew around a Saxon nunnery which had been founded *c*700 AD. In 1043 a Benedictine monastery dedicated to St Mary was built on the remains of the Saxon nunnery. At the conquest, some of the land passed to the Earl of Chester who built a castle. Shortly after this, the Bishop of Chester transferred his seat to Coventry and seized the abbey. The division of the lands between these two institutions resulted in the city being divided between the Prior's Half to the north, excluding the castle, and the Earl's Half that lay to the south. By the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century the town had developed a wool and cloth industry and by the 14<sup>th</sup> century, Coventry was exporting its fine blue cloth to Europe. It was granted a charter of incorporation in 1345, and in 1451 became a county, which re-united the two halves of the City. Economic decline in the

---

late medieval period was widespread but Coventry seems to have suffered acutely (Soden 2005, 35). A survey of 1522 states that there were 525 empty properties in the city and the dissolution of the monasteries in 1539 further depressed the economy. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century the population of the city rose as new industries emerged (Lancaster 1975, 12). This put pressure on land outside the city and pasture was fiercely protected. For nearly 400 years the county of the City was in existence, until the charter of 1451 was annulled in 1842, and the county of the City was dissolved and incorporated into the administrative structure of Warwickshire.

In 1888 Coventry became a county borough of Warwickshire and in 1890 the boundary enlarged creating the districts of Earlsdon and Radford, although Radford was still separated from Coventry by fields. Other districts consisted of scattered farms with a few large houses in their own grounds. There was no further expansion of Coventry until immediately after the First World War when a number of factories, hostels for factory workers and corporation housing were built. A major contribution to the expansion of Coventry was made by these corporation housing schemes, laid out for the most part at lower densities than the earlier terraced streets. The first estate was started during the war itself to accommodate munitions workers at the Ordnance factory. After 1925 further large estates were built and many estates were also built by private developers, one of the largest being on the site of Radford aerodrome.

The Coventry Historic Environment Record holds a number of records in the area of Sadler Road around The Whitmore. These records are detailed below in Table 1 and consist of documentary and cartographic evidence for the surrounding area, in particular that of Whitmore Park. The historical background of Whitmore Park is given in the (VCH 1989, 50-57)

The earliest records for the area surrounding The Whitmore consist of late medieval land and boundaries within the parish of Coundon mentioned in the 1410-11 St Mary's Priory Cartulary. The boundaries of the village at this time were virtually the same as those of the 19th-century parish and included a number of lanes still surviving as roads today.

Following the Dissolution, several land holdings in the area were granted to the corporation of Coventry. The biggest holding consisted of the Mot House (MCT 2515) which was situated to the north east of the site on the opposite side of the Radford Road. The estate survived almost unchanged to the 20th century. The property was known as Moathouse Farm until at least 1848 when it became known as Manor House Farm.

The present site of The Whitmore was once an enclosed field in the ownership of the Trustees of Thomas White's Charity, called Holloway Field (MCT 7009 and 9080). This was within the boundary of common land or 'lammas' land (MCT 16664), as indicated on the Coventry Enclosure Map of 1860. 'Lammas' land was used as common grazing land, following the last hay cut of the year in August, until Lady Day in March.

The site of the Whitmore abuts the former boundary to the Whitmore Park estate (MCT 9922). In 1332 the priory obtained a licence to enclose 436 acres of wood and waste, within a network of elaborate ditches and fencing, and added it to earlier acquisitions to form the manor and park of Whitmore. Newhouse (MCT 16573) was built in 1586 on Whitmore Park land, on the opposite side of the Sadler Road from the site of The Whitmore. A survey of the Newhouse and Parks in 1675-94 showed that within the grounds were three outbuildings (MCT 16578, 16579 and 16580). The estate also included ornamental gardens and moats (MCT 16574, 16576, 16577, 16581, 16590), as well as several enclosed fields (MCT 169582, 16583, 16584, 16585). The house was demolished in 1778 and another erected on the site by 1800, New House or Moat House farm (MCT 16587).

By the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the estate of New House or Moat House farm incorporated additional arable and pastoral lands to the east and south (MCT 9920, 9072, 9808, 9809, 9810 and 9811). During and following the First World War a corporation housing estate was built on the east part of Whitmore Park, as well as a number of factories and hostels for their workers, including the Dunlop Rim and Wheel Company. Following the Second World War the remainder of Whitmore Park was occupied by housing including a large corporation estate of over 300 houses that won a housing medal (VCH 1969, 50-57).

Table 1: HER records in the area of the site

HER no	Name	NGR	Type	Date	Description
MCT2287	Le Priorsfeld	SP 3168 8093	Enclosure	Late medieval	An enclosure field that is recorded in the 1410-11 St Mary's Priory Cartulary
MCT2292	Tenement and 2 field	SP 3194 8146	Enclosure Tenement	Late medieval	Mentioned in 1410-11 St Mary's Priory Cartulary
MCT2317	Scotteslane or Bokkervillance	SP 3208 8124	Road	Late medieval	A road or lane mentioned in 1410-11 St Mary's Priory Cartulary
MCT2515	Mot House	SP 3189 9139	Farmhouse Moat Platform	Late medieval to 18 <sup>th</sup> century	A moated house which may be the tenement that is mentioned in 1410-11 St Mary's Priory Cartulary. The moat was out of use by 1789 with one arm depicted on the Survey of Sir Thomas White's Estate plan.
MCT6980	Moathouse Farm	SP 3190 8135	Farm Settlement	18 <sup>th</sup> century	Farm. Tenancy Thomas Eaves. Land ownership Trustees of Thomas White's Charity
MCT6983	Road	SP 3177 8156	Road	18 <sup>th</sup> century	
MCT6984	Road	SP 3209 8147	Road	18 <sup>th</sup> century	
MCT7009 MCT9080	Holloway Field	SP 3232 8112	Common Land Enclosure	18 <sup>th</sup> century 19 <sup>th</sup> century	Enclosed field. Land ownership Trustees of Thomas White's Charity. Depicted as Lammass land
MCT7028	Radford Green	SP 3241 8082	Settlement Village Village Green	18 <sup>th</sup> century	Source: Edward Phillips. 1808. Survey of Thomas White's Charity Estate
MCT9072	Lands and premises in Whitmore Park	SP 3266 8072	Site	16 <sup>th</sup> to 19 <sup>th</sup> century	Agricultural. Tenant Mark Spencer and Land Owner Samuel Alcock
MCT9808	Mill Pool Field	SP 3251 8173	Pasture	1879	Sale of Whitmore Park Estate
MCT9809	Far Marl Pit Field	SP 3264 8146	Pasture	1879	Sale of Whitmore Park Estate
MCT9810	Near Marl Pit Field	SP 3267 8161	Arable	1879	Sale of Whitmore Park Estate
MCT9811	Calves Close	SP 3268 8174	Pasture	1879	Sale of Whitmore Park Estate
MCT9922	Boudary of Lands in Whitmore Park	SP 3283 8078	Boundary	1849	Holy Trinity Tithe Map and Apportionment
MCT10246	Site of house, yards, gardens and outbuildings	SP 3192 8136	Garden House Outbuildings Settlement Yard	1844	Coundon Tithe Map and Apportionment. Land ownership Trustees of Thomas White's Charity
MCT16564	Part of the Park	SP 32138 81548	Field	17 <sup>th</sup> century to Unknown	Enclosed field depicted on the survey of the Newhouse and Parke (1675-94). Belonging to Newhouse estate
MCT16565	Road	SP 32080 81686	Road	17 <sup>th</sup> century to Unknown	Road or track running from the Radford Road eastward to the avenue which ran through the Newhouse Park
MCT16566	Avenue	SP 32229 81638		17 <sup>th</sup> century to Unknown	A tree-lined avenue running through the park associated with Newhouse. May have been viewing mound
MCT16567	Part of the Park	SP 32186 81781	Field	17 <sup>th</sup> century to Unknown	An enclosed field forming part of the park associated with Newhouse



MCT16568	Part of the Park	SP 32317 81630	Field	17 <sup>th</sup> century to Unknown	An enclosed field forming part of the park associated with Newhouse
MCT16571	Road	SP 32248 81445	Road	17 <sup>th</sup> century to Unknown	A road running from eastwards from Radford Road to the avenue through Newhouse Park
MCT16572	Ornamental Garden at Newhouse	SP 32208 81303	Garden Path Lawn Ornamental Garden	17 <sup>th</sup> century to Unknown	Marked on the 1675-94 survey, may have been laid out at an earlier date
MCT16573	Newhouse	SP 32189 81353	Courtyard Greathouse Yard	16 <sup>th</sup> to 18 <sup>th</sup> century	Newhouse was built by John Hales II in 1586 but may have incorporated an earlier medieval house. Demolished 1778
MCT16574	Ornamental Garden and moat at Newhouse	SP 32256 81372	Moat Ornamental garden	16 <sup>th</sup> to 20 <sup>th</sup> century	Lay behind Newhouse and which was surrounded by a moat. Moat was created as a feature of the garden and does not have earlier origins.
MCT16575	Ornamental Garden at Newhouse	SP 32311 81397	Garden Path Ornamental Garden	17 <sup>th</sup> century to Unknown	Situated to the east of the ornamental moat
MCT16576	The Wilderness	SP 32340 81441	Ornamental Garden	17 <sup>th</sup> century to Unknown	Part of the ornamental gardens at Newhouse, may have been an area of trees
MCT16577	Ornamental Garden at Newhouse	SP 32194 81396	Ornamental Garden	17 <sup>th</sup> century to Unknown	Part of the ornamental gardens at Newhouse
MCT16578	Outbuilding at Newhouse	SP 32168 81243	Outbuilding	17 <sup>th</sup> century to Unknown	In the grounds of Newhouse, southwest of the house
MCT16579	Outbuilding at Newhouse	SP 3213 81365	Outbuilding	17 <sup>th</sup> century to Unknown	In the grounds of Newhouse, northwest of the house
MCT16580	Outbuilding at Newhouse	SP 32164 81383	Outbuilding	17 <sup>th</sup> century to Unknown	In the grounds of Newhouse, north of the house
MCT16581	Ornamental Garden at Newhouse	SP 32161 81300	Garden Path Garden Wall Ornamental Garden	17 <sup>th</sup> century to Unknown	Ornamental garden to the west of Newhouse
MCT16582	The Greate Closse	SP 32463 81391	Field	17 <sup>th</sup> century to Unknown	An enclosed field recorded in the 1675-94 Survey of the New House and Parke
MCT16583	The ground next Holloway Field	SP 32463 81160	Field	17 <sup>th</sup> century to Unknown	An enclosed field recorded in the 1675-94 Survey of the New House and Parke
MCT16584	The Meadow	SP 32623 81151	Field	17 <sup>th</sup> century to Unknown	An enclosed field recorded in the 1675-94 Survey of the New House and Parke
MCT16585	Farthest Lammas Ground	SP 32650 81327	Field	17 <sup>th</sup> century to Unknown	An enclosed field recorded in the 1675-94 Survey of the New House and Parke
MCT16586	Orchard	SP 32192 81401	Orchard	17 <sup>th</sup> century to Unknown	An orchard recorded in the 1849 Tithe Survey for Keresley, and part of the New House estate.
MCT16587	New House or Moat House farm	SP 32172 81351	Farmhouse	1801-1930	New House later re-named Moat House Farm, was built in the early 1800's on site of former New House (see MCT16573)
MCT16588	Outbuildings	SP 32142 81319	Outbuildings	1801-1930	Associated with New House/Moat House Farm, which are shown on the Keresley Tithe Map and the apportionment.

MCT16589	Homestead plot – Moat House farm	SP 32182 81309	Croft Garden Yard	1801-1930	A croft, gardens and yards associated with New House/Moat House Farm is shown on the Keresley Tithe Map and the apportionment
MCT16590	Moat House Farm garden path	SP 32226 81330	Garden path	1801-1930	A path at New House/Moat House Farm is shown on the Keresley Tithe Map and the apportionment
MCT16664	Lammas land located in Holy Trinity and St Michael's parishes	SP 32346 79956	Open field Lammas land	Late medieval to 1860	One of ten records of Lammas land as indicated on the Coventry Inclosure Map of 1860

## 4. Results

### 4.1 Historical background

The Whitmore is situated on the southern side of Sadler Road, just to the east of Radford Road (Fig 1). Radford lay within the bounds of the county of the City in 1451. It anciently included an area of arable and waste land and from 1332 the manor of Whitmore Park. Whitmore was administered independently and by 1410 the area was described as having two houses and a lodge, but until 1538 it was still thought to be part of Radford. Following the dissolution of the county of the City, Radford was to remain a rural area outside the municipal borough until 1890 (VCH 1969, 71-77).

Radford Road was maintained as a causeway by Coventry Corporation in the 17th century and in 1761-2 it was turnpiked. In the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Radford had become one of the weaving districts of Coventry, later to introduce plush weaving. It was estimated that by 1838 two thirds of the population were weavers while the rest were agricultural labourers. During the rural decline of the hand-loom weavers, many districts, including Radford, began to turn automatically to Coventry as their economic and social centre and the building of the canals and the railways, began to draw trade into Coventry.

In 1920 most of Radford still consisted of agricultural land but following the construction of a new main road, Moseley Avenue, between Radford Road and Holyhead Road, and a complex of streets laid out on both sides of it. To the north the Hill Farm estate was constructed and included the site of the Whitmore. By 1927 there were 1,000 houses built and by the Second World War the district had been completely built up with the only remaining open areas being playing fields and allotments (VCH 1969, 71-77).

### 4.2 The Whitmore

The site of what would be The Whitmore, within the parish of Radford, is shown on various maps of the area. The 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey map of 1888 (Fig 5) shows the site of The Whitmore occupied within an enclosed field system, although the HER information shows that these fields formed part of Whitmore Park around Moat House. The plot of land that The Whitmore was constructed upon was part of 'lammas' land, which was used as common grazing ground after the last hay was cut each year.

A public footpath bisects the field that later contained The Whitmore, connecting two roads. The first road is running north westerly with additional public footpaths either side, following the line of the present day Radford and Keresley Road. The other road is depicted, running north easterly which was formerly known as Whitmore Park Lane but is now Sadler Road. The 1<sup>st</sup> edition map (Fig 5) shows an additional road running west, likely to be Brownhill Green Road. At the junction of these roads the map depicts a large L-shaped building lying directly on the eastern frontage of Radford Road. This building, marked as '*Lodge*', is surrounded by several smaller square buildings situated to the north and south. To the east of this is a much larger building, 'Moat House' with the remains of a moat shown to its east. These structures are recorded on the HER as Newhouse with associated outbuildings and were surrounded by ornamental gardens. A corporation housing estate was constructed on Whitmore Park land during and immediately following the First World War (VCH 1969 71-

77). The houses of the estate consisted of terraces of small properties each with a small front garden and a long rear garden (Fig 6). Coventry was the fastest growing City in Britain in the 1920s and 1930s and many of these housing estates were constructed in semi-rural areas that lacked any community buildings. Often the estates would incorporate a public house, providing a clean leisure-place away from the City centre that could also be used for community events (CCC 2010).

The Whitmore was constructed on a plot of land whose original boundaries, as shown on the 1888 Ordnance Survey map (Fig 5), were retained once the property was constructed (Fig 6 1936 OS). The building was built in 1931 and has been known as The Whitmore, or The Whitmore Hotel since it was first constructed on the corner of Foster Road and Whitmore Park Lane. Whitmore Park Lane has been known as Sadler Road since at least 1936, when it is shown as such on the Ordnance Survey map (Fig 6).

Coventry trade directories of the 20<sup>th</sup> century have a number of entries relating to The Whitmore. From these it is possible to trace some of the history of the property as the licensee or manager changed, as well as the name of the street. The entries from the directories are listed below in Table 2. It seems as if there was very little change at The Whitmore, as the trade directories show it to have had only five different proprietors from 1931 to 1970. It is possible that the housing estate provided enough income for the brewery owner, not to require a change in management of the public house and hotel.

Table 2: Trade directories of Coventry

Directory	Year	Page no.	Address	Licensee/ Proprietor etc	Notes	
Coomberlands Ltd	1931-2	472-3	Whitmore Park Road			
	1933-4	517	Whitmore Hotel; on the south side of Whitmore Park Lane		Radford Ward	
	1935-6	222	The Whitmore Hotel, Foster Road	C. S. Coulson	Street Listing:Radford Ward, Radford Parish	
		448	Whitmore Hotel, Sadler Road (formerly Whitmore Park Lane)		Street Listing:Radford Ward, Radford Parish	
		1130	Whitmore Hotel, Sadler Road Whitmore Hotel (The) 1 Foster Road		Radford Ward, Radford Parish	
		1219	Whitmore Hotel, Sadler Road Whitmore Hotel (The) 1 Foster Road		Listed under Hotels and Restaurants	
	1937-8	256	Whitmore Hotel, 1, Foster Road	C. S. Coulson	Street Listing:Radford Ward, Radford Parish	
		499	Whitmore Hotel, Sadler Road (formerly Whitmore Park Lane)		Street Listing:Radford Ward, Radford Parish	
		1383	Whitmore Hotel, Sadler Road Whitmore Hotel (The) 1 Foster Road		Listed under Hotels and Restaurants	
	1939-40	284	Whitmore Hotel, 1, Foster Road	C. S. Coulson	Street Listing:Radford Ward, Radford Parish	
		557	Whitmore Hotel, Sadler Road (formerly Whitmore Park Lane)		Street Listing:Radford Ward, Radford Parish	
		1553	Whitmore Hotel, Sadler Road Whitmore Hotel (The) 1 Foster Road		Listed under Hotels and Restaurants	
	Wright's Directory	1955	55	Whitmore Park Hotel, Sadler Road, Radford	Louis F Atkin Edna, M Straw	Alphabetical Trade
			159	Whitmore Park Hotel, Sadler Road, Radford		Classified Trade
			S187	Whitmore Park Hotel, Sadler Road, Radford		Classified Trade

Barrett's	1957	73	Whitmore Park Hotel, Sadler Road, Radford	Louis F Atkin Edna, M Straw	Alphabetical Trade
		194	Whitmore Park Hotel, Sadler Road, Radford		Classified Trade
		S187	Whitmore Park Hotel, Sadler Road, Radford		Classified Trade
	1960	53	Whitmore Park Hotel, Sadler Road, Radford	L W Brown	Alphabetical Trade
		122	Whitmore Park Hotel, Sadler Road, Radford		Classified Trade
		S193	Whitmore Park Hotel, Sadler Road, Radford		Classified Trade
	1961	61	Whitmore Park Hotel, Sadler Road, Radford	L W Brown	Alphabetical Trade
		122	Whitmore Park Hotel, Sadler Road, Radford		Classified Trade
		S193	Whitmore Park Hotel, Sadler Road, Radford		Classified Trade
	1962	54	Whitmore Park Hotel, Sadler Road, Radford	L W Brown	Alphabetical Trade
		50	Whitmore Park Hotel, Sadler Road, Radford		Classified Trade
		193	Whitmore Park Hotel, Sadler Road, Radford		Classified Trade
	1970	160	Whitmore Park Hotel, Sadler Road, Radford. Coventry. Tel: 86148	Albert, G Douglas	Alphabetical Trade
		84	Whitmore Park Hotel, Sadler Road, Radford		Classified Trade
		451	Whitmore Park Hotel, Sadler Road, Radford		Classified Trade

### 4.3 Building development

#### 4.3.1 Phase 1 Construction 1931

The Whitmore was constructed in 1931. The Coventry History Centre holds original planning documents, from the application to construct the building, dating from June and July 1931 and showing that the public house was to be built on Whitmore Park Lane and Foster Road as part of the 'Hill Farm housing estate' (CCD/3/BYE/14806). The construction of the building was proposed by Atkinsons Brewery Limited, of Birmingham. The documents include original plans and elevations (Figs 7-10) and also show that the building appears to have been designed by Atkinson's in-house estates team.

The Whitmore public house was a brick built two-storey structure with a tiled hipped roof (Plate 1). The building was designed in a neo-Elizabethan style with mullioned windows. The pubs of the inter-war period were often designed in a distinct style, particularly those of the suburban areas which were intended to be suburban in character. In the West Midlands, Mitchell and Butler's pubs are noteworthy for being mock-Tudor in style (Haydon 1994, 287).

The Whitmore consisted of a main section, facing Sadler Road, of three bays with a central door flanked by double windows (Plate 2). The elevation to Foster Road was designed to be narrower but the same style as the Sadler Road elevation (Plate 3). Flanking the Foster Road entrance were low single storey sections with decorative angled corners (Plate 4). The decorative door surrounds (Plate 5), of 1930s style (Plate 6 and Fig 11) and all cills were of limestone with limestone plaques above the doors and a limestone pentice with cast iron lamp (Plate 5). To the rear of the main section was a large function room (Plate 7) with dormer gables and a bay window (Plate 8). East of the main section was a single storey hipped structure with an attached enclosed yard area (Plate 9). Limestone drip and cill courses also run across each elevation.

Once the building was constructed it formed an integral part of the housing estate by providing a community focus for leisure and events. The plans, which also give details of the original function of the rooms, show that the building incorporated a large function room, marked as an assembly room (Fig 7), which was open to the roof and had decorative raised trusses (Plate 10) resting on brackets (Plate 11) carved into the shape of faces (Plate 12). The

main feature of the room was a large bay window with leaded lights and stained glass (Plate 13).

The building contained other features that were also decorative and characteristic for its neo-Elizabethan style, although they are atypical for their age. All the windows in the public areas of the building had leaded lights with stained glass designs (Plate 14). As did some of the internal fanlights and door surrounds (Plates 15 & 16). The tops of the walls were finished with moulded cornicing (Plate 17) and the bottom of the walls with simply moulded skirting boards (Plate 18). The top of the stairs also had a decorative balustrade (Plate 19). The gentlemen's toilets had 'Adamant' automatically flushing urinals (Plate 20) and, typical for the time, there was an over abundance of facilities for men in comparison to those supplied for women. The ladies toilets were only situated to either side of the assembly room whereas the gent's facilities were arranged around the building, including in the garden (Fig 7). This shows that the bar and smoke room were meant for the use of men only, a practice that was not uncommon in public houses at this time of construction.

The Whitmore was constructed also as a small hotel, with a living room and sitting room in the single storey wing and four bedrooms and a bathroom upstairs in the main section of the building (Figs 7-10).

#### 4.3.2 **Phase 2 Modifications prior to 1960s and in 1961**

There was very little change to the structure that can be tied to a specific date until 1961. Planning documents from 1961 have a proposed plan of the building (Fig 12). This shows that Mitchell and Butler's had gained ownership of the building by this time, possibly by a merger with Atkinson's brewery. The number of breweries in the country reduced dramatically from 6,390 in 1900 to 1,418 in 1930 and only 885 by 1939 (Haydon 1994, 292) that a number of changes to the building had already been carried out prior to the alterations proposed. The former verandah had been changed to a bagatelle room with a new verandah being constructed outside the bagatelle room. The original external verandah posts were still visible within the new wall (Plate 21). Between the verandah and the cellar stairs a new lobby and bar area had been created, including a new bar within the bagatelle room (Fig 12). The lobby and verandah bar had large glazed windows with leaded lights. The windows in the verandah bar were sashes in order to provide a serving hatch for the verandah (Plate 22). There were also some changes that had taken place in the private yard area (Fig 12).

The planning application, by Mitchell and Butler's brewery, proposed to construct 'a new servery to assembly room and conversion of the hall into off sales, and existing off sales into a wines and spirits store, and alterations to the smoke room servery'. The major work for these proposals involved creating a new 'off-sales' and window display area. This was effectively a brewery shop, which the original building already had provision for. In reality this required a removal of wall sections on the Sadler Road elevation (Plate 23) including two doors and their decorative limestone surrounds. The walls were replaced with a large plate glass display window and shop door providing access to the off sales department. Internally a serving counter was added. Alterations to the smoke room servery involved constructing a serving counter, where previously a door had led from the service area into the smoke room, to allow for table service. In the assembly room a curved serving counter was proposed to be constructed in place of possible table service. Of these proposed changes, it is only certain that the new off-sales shop was added as the glass window had survived.

#### 4.3.3 **Phase 3 Modifications 1961 to 1990**

A number of small changes had taken place within the building by the time of a further planning application in 1991 (Fig 13) but very little of consequence. The major change had been the removal of the walls to either side of the fireplace in the bar (Plate 24), therefore joining the bar and the smoking room together. This allowed the former smoking room to be used for playing pool and darts. Seating had been inserted into the assembly room for the room to be used as a lounge (Plate 25) and the verandah was being used as a children's room. Other small changes can be seen on Figure 2.

#### 4.3.4 **Phase 4 Modifications in 1991**

The planning application made in 1991, by Bass Inns and Taverns Ltd, proposed to construct a 'single storey extension to the east elevation to create a male toilet and a new entrance door'. This involved the construction of an entirely new brick built structure (Plate 26) to provide new men's toilets. This structure was planned to be built with matching materials, however this obviously did not occur. The building did respect the adjoining structure, however, and the detail of one of the original verandah posts is visible at the building break between the two structures (Plate 27). The addition of a new lounge entrance door (Plate 28) into the west, Foster Road, elevation caused the removal of the original ladies toilets adjoining the assembly room. The size of the toilets was cut down to a small cleaning cupboard, although the tiles on the walls survived and the stained glass windows (Plate 29). In order to make up for the loss of this toilet, the former urinals off the bar were converted into a ladies toilet.

Other small changes were also made to the structure but mainly involved functions of rooms being altered as can be seen by comparing Figures 2 and 12.

### 5. **Synthesis**

The Whitmore was constructed at a time when large estates of houses were springing up all over the country. Between 1911 and 1939 5,000,000 new homes were built (Haydon 1994, 287). This was happening around Coventry due to its major expansion as an industrial town, with large suburbs replacing the rural villages on the outskirts of the City. Numerous large factories were being constructed in the area of The Whitmore and housing was needed to cope with the influx of people the industry was bringing in. These suburban housing estates, however, lacked the community infrastructure that long established areas of housing had. The construction of public houses amongst these housing estates provided a community focus and places for leisure. However, the construction of these suburban public houses was at the expense of inner city pubs, and more of these were lost than were built in the suburbs. The buildings were designed in their outside appearance as well as internally, in order to blend in with their surroundings. This can be seen in the attention to detail on the exterior of The Whitmore, with decorative rain water spouts (Plate 30) and tile detail on the chimneys (Plate 31). Even the limestone drip course, carved lintels and cills (Plate 32) are very domestic architectural features.

This period was a time of 'social improvement' and the design of the new pubs reflected this. The small rooms of the Victorian pubs were gone and in their place were larger rooms with attached facilities and assembly or function rooms. There was also a large pull-up area to attract motorists and a large garden, all features that were seen at The Whitmore.

The Whitmore appears to have developed relatively little in its almost 80 year existence. The only changes made to the building have been minor, with the exception of the removal of the Sadler Road elevation walls to construct a new off-sales shop. Even this, since it was constructed in 1961, has only been changed by the addition of an illuminated sign (Plate 33) and the removal of the serving counter. The number of surviving architectural features from the original construction of the building is therefore unsurprising.

#### 5.1 **Research frameworks**

The late date of this building, 1931, means that archaeological research frameworks do not apply. The Whitmore was a large public house serving a working-class housing estate in the 1930s. *The English Pub: a history* (Haydon 1994) has a study on the economic and social reasons behind the construct of these 1930s 'improved' pubs and the laws that governed the selling of alcohol at this time. CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale, has recently carried out a joint project with English Heritage, the National Inventory of Historic Pub Interiors. This aimed to discover, and produce a list, of those pubs that had remained substantially unaltered since 1945. Of the 60,000 pubs in Britain only around 200 of these were able to be included on the list. The list includes only a small number dating to the interwar period that have survived (<http://www.heritagepubs.org.uk/pubs/national-inventory-intro.asp>) and only one pub of any date in the whole of Warwickshire, The Peacock in Rugby.

Architecturally, the study of public houses tends to concentrate on the Victorian highly decorated buildings (*Victorian public houses*, Spiller 1973) rather than the later constructed

buildings. The history of public houses is a popular subject and numerous books have been produced concentrating on the social and economic side to their development as well as their architectural interest. As well as Haydon (1994) others of note are *The English alehouse* (Clark 1983), and *The Local: a history of the English pub* (Jennings 2007).

## 6. **Publication summary**

The Service has a professional obligation to publish the results of archaeological projects within a reasonable period of time. To this end, the Service intends to use this summary as the basis for publication through local or regional journals. The client is requested to consider the content of this section as being acceptable for such publication.

*Archaeological building recording was undertaken on behalf of Care Development Ltd at The Whitmore Sadler Road, Coventry (NGR SP 3233 8131; HER ref WH'10). The survey of The Whitmore public house, and the following documentary research, shows the building was constructed on a plot of land which used to form part of late medieval 'lammas' land, that was used as common grazing ground. This area was also adjacent to an open field system, forming part of Whitmore Park lands and estate. The building on the site dated to 1931 when it was constructed as part of the 'Hill Farm housing estate', on Whitmore Park Lane and Foster Road. Many of the features present within are characteristic of its neo-Elizabethan style, including leaded lights and stained glass designs in all the windows in the public areas of the building. There was very little change to the external structure, although some refurbishment and alterations to the servery took place several times in the later part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The external alterations were mainly concentrated to the rear and included an extension to create a bagatelle room on the site of the former verandah, with a new verandah being constructed outside the bagatelle room. Of note were the alterations to the north western frontage on Sadler Road to create a new 'off-sales' and window display area. A final phase of alterations occurred after 1991 when a single storey extension was constructed to provide a new block of men's toilets.*

## 7. **Acknowledgements**

The Service would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project, J. D. Wormald (Director, Care Development Ltd), Chris Patrick (Planning Archaeologist, Coventry City Council), Paul Thompson (Archaeology Officer, Coventry City Council).

## 8. **Personnel**

The fieldwork and report preparation was led by Shona Robson-Glyde. The project manager responsible for the quality of the project was Hal Dalwood. Fieldwork was undertaken by Elizabeth Curran and Shona Robson-Glyde. Carolyn Hunt produced Figure 1 and all other illustrations were produced by Shona Robson-Glyde.

## 9. **Bibliography**

CCC, 2010 *Brief for an historic building recording: The Whitmore PH, Sadler Road, Coventry*, Coventry City Council unpublished document dated March 2010

Clark, P, 1983 *The English alehouse: a social history, 1200-1830*, Longman

EH, 2006 *Understanding historic buildings: a guide to good recording practice*, English Heritage

Haydon, P, 1994 *The English Pub: a history*, Robert Hale

HEAS, 2010 *Proposal for the recording of the historic building The Whitmore Public House, Sadler Road, Coventry*, Historic Environment and Archaeology Service, Worcestershire County Council, unpublished document dated 17<sup>th</sup> March 2010, **P3498**

IfA, 2008 *Standard and guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures*, Institute for Archaeologists

Jennings, P, 2007 *The local: A history of the English Pub*, The History Press Ltd

Lancaster, J, C, 1975 'Coventry' in Lobel, M, D, (ed) *The Atlas of Historic Towns Vol 2: Bristol, Cambridge, Coventry, Norwich* Scholar Press/Historic Towns Trust, 1-13

Soden, I, 2005 *Coventry: The Hidden History*, Tempus Publishing Ltd

Spiller, B, 1973 *Victorian public houses*, Arco Pub Co

VCH, 1969 'The City of Coventry and Borough of Warwick', *A History of the County of Warwick, Vol 8*, Victoria County Histories



## **Figures**

---

## **Plates**

---



*Plate 1: The site from the west in the 1930s (CRO PA 1691/23/1310-1312)*



*Plate 2: NW elevation of The Whitmore, and main entrance off Sadler Road*



*Plate 3: Main entrance to The Whitmore off Foster Road*

---



*Plate 4: Detail of the decorated angles on the western elevation*



*Plate 5: 1930's decorative door surround and cast iron lamp*

---



*Plate 6: Detail of the decorative limestone door surround*



*Plate 7: The western elevation, showing the large function room and dormer windows*

---





*Plate 8: Detail of the southern elevation and bay window of the large function room*

---



*Plate 9: Northern elevation of the single storey hipped structure and private yard*



*Plate 10: The large function room which was open to the roof and had decorative raised trusses*



*Plate 11: Detail of the decorative trusses, resting on brackets*



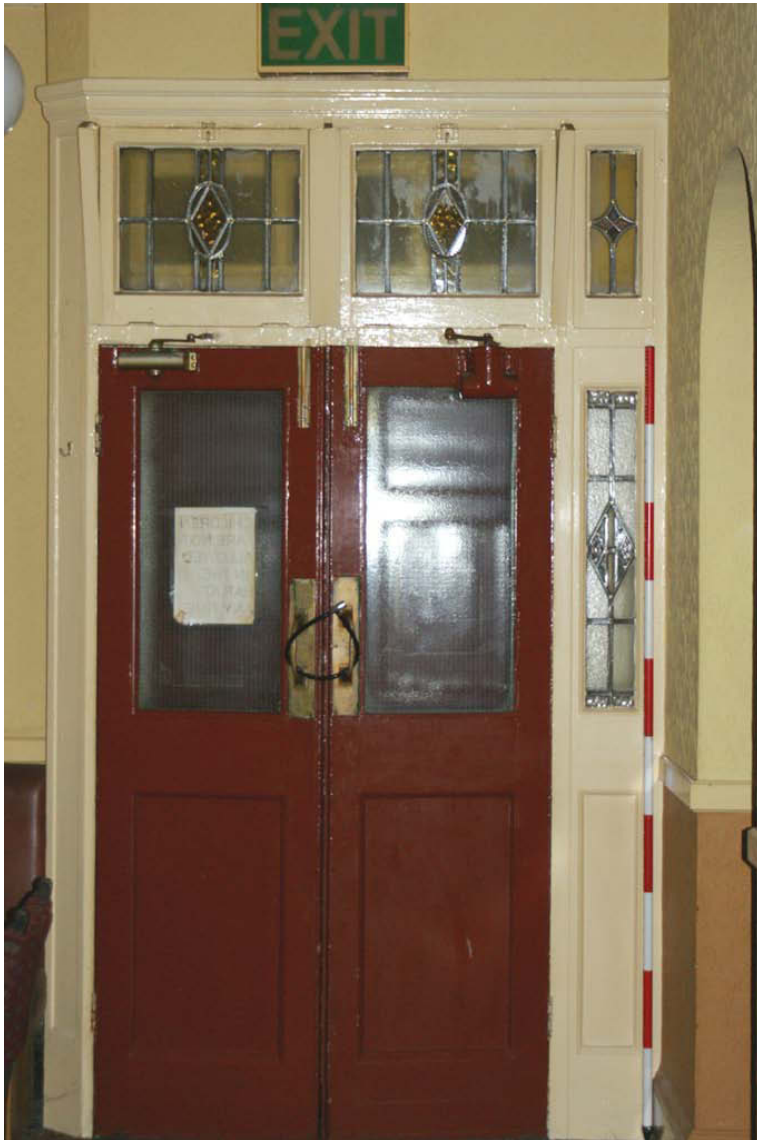
Plate 12: Example of the carved face on the truss bracket



Plate 13: Detail of the large bay window with leaded lights and stained glass



*Plate 14: Example of a window within the public areas with its leaded lights and stained glass design*



*Plate 15: Example of the door surround with the stained glass design*

---



*Plate 16: Detail of an internal fanlight showing the stained glass design*



*Plate 17: Detail of the moulded cornicing*

---



*Plate 18: Detail of the decorative skirting board*

---





*Plate 19: The decorative balustrade at the top of the stairs*

---



*Plate 20: Row of 'Adamant' automatically flushing urinals*



*Plate 21: External verandah post and the serving hatch in the verandah bar*

---



*Plate 22: The sash window providing a serving hatch for the verandah*



*Plate 23: The 'off-sales' and window display area visible on the north west elevation on Sadler Road*



*Plate 24: Fireplace in the bar with position of removed walls allowing access to former smoking room*



*Plate 25: Seating inserted into the assembly room for use as a lounge*



*Plate 26: Extension creating the new men's toilets*



*Plate 27: Building break between original structure and the men's toilets extension*

---



*Plate 28: Additional lounge entrance*

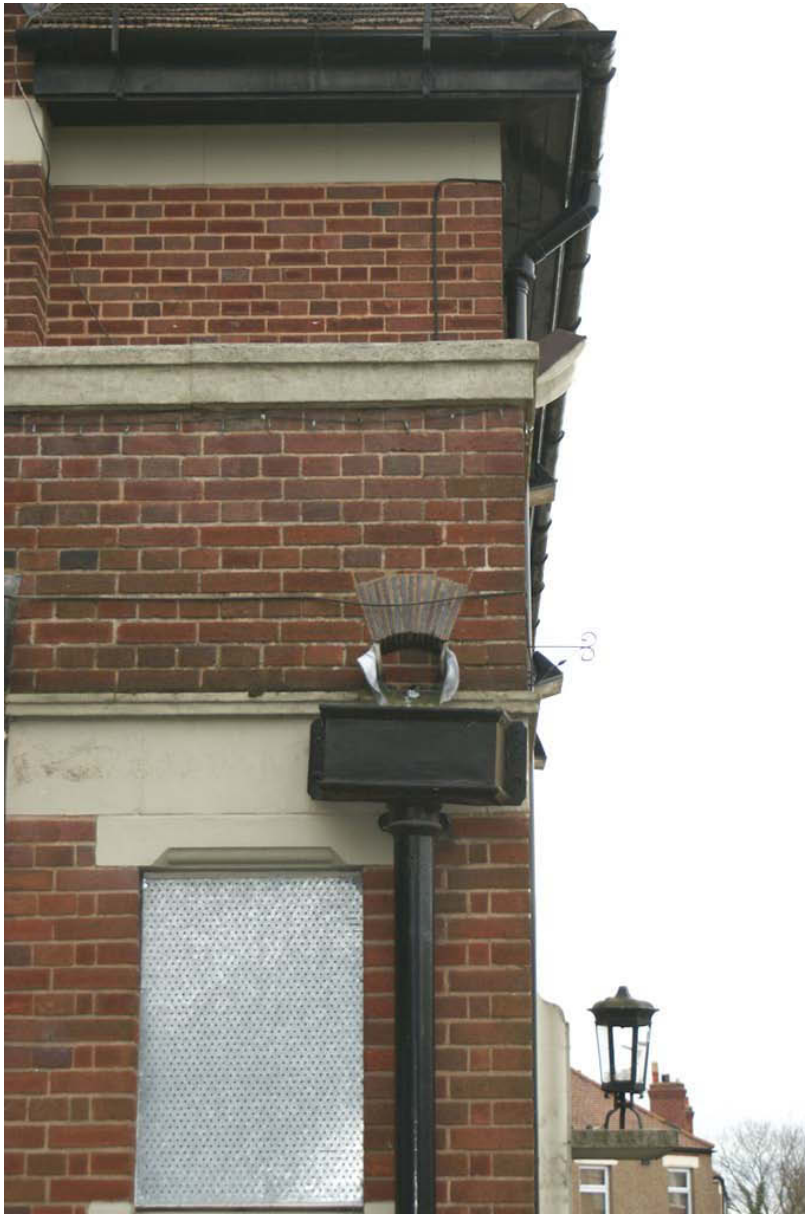
---



*Plate 29: Former ladies toilets, reduced to a cleaning cupboard*

---





*Plate 30: Rain water spout detail*



*Plate 31: Tile detail on chimney*

---



*Plate 32: Drip course and carved lintel and cill*

---



*Plate 33: Illuminated off-sales shop sign*

---