

Mr William Page  
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16 December 2008

Dear William

**Ivy House (HCP57): Building recording**

My colleague David Wilkinson mentioned that you had asked for a short summary letter outlining this project for your files.

In June 2007 OA were contacted by Historic Royal Palaces (William Page and Kent Rawlinson) and asked to come and record a section of vaults which had been exposed during ground works close to Ivy House at Hampton Court Palace. OA undertook this but there was no funding for a formal report.

The features comprised two brick-vaulted 'tunnels' which connected with each other (although part of the vault between them had been truncated) a short distance to the south-east of Ivy House. The principal function of the vaults appears to have been to create a raised platform for the garden adjacent to the house and to allow good views over the surrounding landscape. Immediately outside each of the vaults were retaining boundary walls and the vaults would have taken most of the outward thrust of the ground and reduced the pressure on the walls.

The vaults also had drainage features but their principal purpose was structural. Its probable that they may also have been used for storing garden equipment etc, and there was a small water tank within one vault which is likely to have been used to collect rain water and used within the garden. Its probable that the vaults are the same date as the house, which Pevsner states was rebuilt in 1776. One vault was built against a brick wall that had been pointed in black ash, and the pointing of this wall pre-dates the vault.

We completed a drawn plan of the area, cross-sections showing the vaults, photographs and descriptive notes. The site drawings, photographs and other notes have been passed to OA's Archives Department for labelling, ordering, microfiching and processing. In due course they will be passed to Historic Royal Palaces for deposition within their formal archive.

Yours sincerely

Jonathan Gill

Cc Kent Rawlinson HRP  
David Wilkinson, OA