

# The Talbot Hotel Oundle Northants.



**Historic Building Recording  
And Archaeological Monitoring**



**April 2012**

**Client: The Bulldog Hotel Group**

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## **The Talbot Hotel, Oundle, Northamptonshire**

*Historic Building Recording and Archaeological Monitoring*

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## Summary

*In August 2011 Oxford Archaeology East carried out a historic building survey at the Talbot Hotel in Oundle, Northamptonshire. The work was undertaken in advance of a number of minor internal and external alterations to the Grade I listed former medieval coaching inn. A photographic, descriptive and drawn record was created equivalent to an English Heritage Level 3 survey on the elements of the hotel due to be altered, all of which date to the mid 20th century. The survey has served to record the alterations made to the historic building fabric during the 20th century including bricked-up doorways and insertion of partitions.*

*A second phase of work was undertaken in November 2011 as an archaeological watching brief was required following the demolition of a single storey restaurant in the courtyard area and during ground reduction in the garden area at the rear of the hotel. There were no surviving archaeological remains noted at the rear of the building during monitoring, however a cobbled surface, wall foundations and a well were recorded in the courtyard area. Decorative floor tiles were also revealed in the courtyard area which are thought to be from the 1949 extension or from the the 1917 "icehouse" which was also previously located here.*

*The Talbot Hotel is located on New Street which lies within the core of the historic market town. It is widely believed that the inn was redeveloped in 1626 and documented in many historical works as having made use of a staircase and windows from the nearby Fotheringhay Castle which had fallen into decline around that time. What is less well documented or researched however, is the existence of an inn, its size or associated buildings on the site prior to this date.*

*Architect's and historian's appraisals suggest that a hotel existed on the site prior to the current Talbot Hotel and an early timber-framed building located within the south wing may represent the earliest phase due to the nature of construction and the material used which stands out in the local oolitic stone setting.*

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Scope of Work

- 1.1.1 The proposed alterations to the Talbot Hotel in Oundle, aim serve to unify the property as a functioning hotel while being respectful to the building's history and origins. A key aspect of the proposed alterations is to reinstate features which have been lost or overshadowed in previous alterations, while other aspects of the proposals emphasise existing features which have become confused by its adhoc expansion in the second half of the 20th century. The proposals are fully outlined in the Design, Access and Justification Statement (Horsley Townsend & Heron Design 2010).
- 1.1.2 The first phase of work was a historic building survey equivalent to an English Heritage Level 3 survey which focussed purely on the elements of the buildings historic fabric scheduled to be altered/removed as part of the proposed development. The second phase of work was a watching brief following the demolition of a single storey building in the courtyard area of the hotel and ground-reduction in the gardens at the rear.
- 1.1.3 The work was undertaken in accordance with two separate Briefs issued by Liz Mordue of Northamptonshire County Council (Mordue 2011a and 2011b), supplemented by a Specification prepared by OA East (Fletcher 2011).
- 1.1.4 The site archive is currently held by OA East and will be deposited with Northamptonshire County Council Stores (Accession Code TBA) in due course, when further storage facilities are made available.

### 1.2 Location, Geology, Topography and Setting

- 1.2.1 The Talbot Hotel is located in New Street within the core of the historic market town of Oundle in East Northamptonshire (Figure 1).
- 1.2.2 The site lies at 36mOD and is located approximately 400m north of the River Nene. The underlying geology is Great Oolitic Limestone from which many of the local buildings are constructed.
- 1.2.3 The urban topography of Oundle survives in a remarkably intact form; the basic layout of the town changed little over the 18th and 19th centuries and any changes that did occur have been preserved in the built fabric of the town. The central area of Oundle around West Street, Market Place, New Street and North Street in particular has retained the vast majority of its buildings - most of which are of stone. Buildings in the area include high-status houses (17th to 19th century), smaller cottages, religious, educational and municipal buildings. A very large number of the buildings are listed and the area was designated a Conservation Area in June 1970 (Foard and Ballanger 2002).

## 2 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY : HISTORIC BUILDING SURVEY

### 2.1 Aims and Objectives

- 2.1.1 The aim of this investigation was to carry out a historic building survey equivalent to English Heritage Level 3 (English Heritage 2006) on the mid 20th century elements of the building due to be altered during the course of the development work.

### 2.2 Site Conditions

- 2.2.1 The building was still in use as a hotel at the time of recording and conditions within and around the site were good, allowing measured and photographic survey to take place. Access was possible into all parts of the hotel.
- 2.2.2 Halogen lamps were used in some locations to provide additional lighting for photographs.

### 2.3 Methodology

- 2.3.1 New background research was not undertaken for this phase of works as the research carried out for the Desk-Based Assessment (Fletcher 2009) contains a thorough background to the site. This is summarised in Section 4.
- 2.3.2 The measured survey was carried out using basic equipment. All building recording work carried out complied with standards and guidance set out in by the IfA (2001) and was undertaken by an experienced buildings archaeologist. Scaled architect's drawings, supplied by the client's architects were used for field notes and were annotated and amended on site as necessary. With permission, these plans and elevations have been reproduced for figures at the end of the report.
- 2.3.3 Photographic survey (equivalent to English Heritage Level 3) was carried out by James Fairbairn using a 35mm camera (monochrome and colour) and a Medium Format Camera supplemented by additional digital photographs using a high resolution Canon EOS 450D digital SLR camera taken by the author. Digital photographs are used to accompany descriptive text at the back of this report. An additional CD containing all digital images and all other printed images from the medium format and SLR cameras are to be included with the site archive.



### 3 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY : ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING

#### 3.1 Aims and Objectives

3.1.1 The specific aims of this phase of investigation as set out in the Brief (Mordue 2011b) are as follows;

- continuous observation of excavation of foundation trenches for the new restaurant followed by the investigation of any archaeological features that are revealed
- continuous observation of reduction of ground levels outside the 1930s block followed by the investigation of any archaeological features that are revealed

#### 3.2 Site Conditions

3.2.1 Both areas were monitored between 21st and 25th November 2011. Site conditions were good and the weather was cold with bright, almost continuous sunshine.

#### 3.3 Methodology

3.3.1 The area at the rear of the hotel was excavated using a mini-digger with toothless bucket, the spoil was moved and stored within the garden area with the use of a conveyor belt (Plate 1).

3.3.2 During the removal of foundations of the 1949 restaurant, the design plan of the new foundations was amended and it was agreed that no archaeological remains would be disturbed during further works. However, during the lifting of the concrete floor, other features were revealed and recorded within the courtyard area. These are discussed in Section 7.

3.3.3 Spoil, exposed surfaces and features were scanned with a metal detector. There were no archaeological artefacts recovered during the monitoring work other than a small number of pig bones found within subsoil which were considered to be modern and subsequently discarded.

3.3.4 All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using OA East's *pro-forma* sheets. Plans and sections were recorded at appropriate scales and colour and monochrome photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits.

## 4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The historic background of the site has already been researched and presented in The Desk-Based Assessment (Fletcher 2009) and a comprehensive background to Oundle and its archaeology and historical development can be found in The Oundle Extensive Urban Survey (Foard and Ballinger 2002). A summarised historical background of the sites development is presented below.

### 4.1 The Historic Environment Record (HER) and Listed Building Designation

4.1.1 The HER research was conducted within a small radius of the development area, primarily encompassing the buildings and sites around the Talbot Hotel and the junction of New Street, West Street and Market Place. This generated 60 records, summarised in Appendix A of the Desk-Based Assessment (Fletcher 2009). Such a high return of entries is not surprising within the core of a historic town and particularly as the Talbot Hotel is located within the heart of the Oundle conservation area with many listed and protected buildings.

4.1.2 Only one archaeological investigation has taken place on land approximately 50m to the west of the rear of the Talbot Hotel and comprised a number of buildings believed to have dated to the late 18th and early 19th centuries. (Tingle 2003). This evaluation did not find any evidence of surviving archaeological remains. The depth of topsoil varied and any evidence which may have existed had been disturbed by modern activity. The investigations, carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology, included a survey of a group of buildings at the rear of the hotel prior to demolition. These buildings included a row of four early to mid 19th century stables, a later carthouse and a late 17th to early 18th century barn which had been re-roofed in the 19th century. These buildings, located within such close proximity may have been part of the out-buildings and storage for the hotel. Eight of the entries relate to sites and events recognised through documentary research such as fairs and markets. Two entries relate to roads and infrastructure and the remaining entries refer to buildings ranging from the medieval to modern period, however the majority are post-medieval to modern.

4.1.3 The Talbot Hotel itself accounts for six entries; the Talbot Inn (2416/22), the hotel, mounting block, stables and barn (2416/22/1, 2, 3 and 4) and as a listed building (2416/0/230). The archaeological investigation to the rear comprises three entries: two for the buildings recorded (92416/0/395 and 396) and one for the archaeological investigation (Tingle 2003).

4.1.4 The Talbot Hotel, stables, barn and mounting block (which stands at the front of the building) are all Grade I listed. The full listing entry is as follows:

“18.6.55. The Talbot Hotel, including ranges of stables and barns at rear. Mounting block near main carriage entrance.

Established in 1552 on earlier site and rebuilt 1626. It is popularly believed that stone from Fotheringhay Castle was used in the rebuilding and that the fine C16 staircase was brought from there also. There are some good fireplaces and original C17 panelling, and much work in 'style' of a more recent date. The plan of the main building is roughly L shaped with modern extensions at the rear, and an extensive range of stables and barns reaching back to and along Drumming Well Lane. The New Street block is 2 storeys and attics in ashlar with very steep stone slate roofs with ball finials on the kneelers and apex of all gables including

the 3 dormers on the front. Massive chimneys with 6 flues, 2 by 3, with entablature topping. All windows have stone mullions or mullions and transoms except the window over the archway in the main front. The main front is asymmetrical, there being 1 extra window to both main floors at the south end, 3-light to the ground floor and 6-light mullioned and transomed to the 1st floor. Band at eaves and above ground floor openings. Apart from the windows already noted, the rest of the openings are symmetrically disposed. Two 3 storey canted bays with 5-light window to the ground floor, 10-light mullioned and transomed window to the 1st floor with a raised lozenge below, above is a massive gabled dormer with a flush face (not canted) the full width of the bay with deep up-cut and curving shoulders, where it spreads beyond the width of the front face of the bay. The attic windows are 3-light with heavy label and there is a raised lozenge above and below. 3-light window to semi-basement in north bay. In the centre another dormer similar in detail to those above the bays rises flush with the main face; semi-circular headed window with architrave and archivolt to 1st floor, the architrave reaching down to the band above the ground floor; carriageway with a curved head through the ground floor. Lower 2 storey extension to the north end, roughly in style, appears to be a new face on an old restored wing. Also stone mounting block to left of centre carriage archway on main front elevation."

## 4.2 Archaeological And Historical Background of Oundle

This section draws entirely on the Oundle Extensive Urban Survey (Foard and Ballinger 2002) summarised in the Desk-Based Assessment for the site (Fletcher 2009), which provides an outline of the history and development of the town by period. The Desk-Based Assessment provides a fuller summary/description.

### Prehistoric and Roman

- 4.2.1 Unlike a number of other locations in the county where central places of Roman, Saxon and medieval date lie in close proximity, no Iron Age hillfort site is known in the Oundle area. However, the most defensible location by far is the site of Oundle itself, lying as it does on a narrow spur encompassed by the river on three sides. The most likely location for a hill fort, which might then have been re-occupied in the post-Roman period, is then the eastern end of the ridge, close to the site of the later church and manor. No evidence has been recovered of Iron Age activity in this area but there has been very little archaeological work in the town. The small undefended Roman town which lies on the opposite bank of the river to Oundle, in Ashton parish, is almost certainly related in some way to the later, Saxon importance of Oundle. The Roman town is discussed in detail in a separate EUS report by Jeremy Taylor.
- 4.2.2 It appears likely that one of the metalled roads from the Ashton town, after crossing the Nene, ran up onto the spur which Oundle now occupies and then westward to join a road presumed to have run on the west side of the valley. A possible alignment for such a road on the west side of the valley might be provided by the road recorded in the 16th century running from Biggin into the Back Lane on the north side of the town, close to the ridge top, and whose line is projected to the river by boundaries of ancient closes. Between this lane and the church a few Roman sherds and tile fragments were recovered in 1985 and adjacent a few Roman sherds were also found by chance during housing development to the north of the lane in the 1970s and in the 19th century a Samian or Arretine cup was found in Oundle churchyard. This road and the probable

associated settlement may have had some impact on the later layout of the Saxon and medieval settlement.

### **Early Saxon**

- 4.2.3 There is at present little evidence of either Iron Age or Roman activity in the heart of the medieval settlement to support an argument for continuity between Roman and Saxon periods, at least in the area of the Saxon manor and church. The general association of Roman, Saxon and medieval urban and administrative centre is however very strong, mirroring that seen at the other two major Saxon foci in the county at Kings Sutton and Northampton.
- 4.2.4 Small quantities of 6th, 7th and 8th century pottery have been found to the north of the present churchyard in small scale archaeological investigations. During the 1985 excavations to the south of Blackpot Lane (formerly Dwell Wong Lane) only a very small area was investigated and no Early Saxon features were identified, but two early 6th century sherds and 100 residual sherds dated from the mid 6th to the mid 7th century were recovered. The sherds recovered would appear to derive from some form of occupation in immediate proximity. Other Early Saxon occupation has been recovered just beyond the western edge of the medieval town, less than a kilometre from the church. This may be part of what is expected to be a dispersed pattern of early-middle Saxon settlement. This would extend over the whole of the area of permeable geology along the Nene valley, but is likely to be completely excluded from the clayland which covers the plateau beyond the valley, much of which will have been wooded in the Early and Middle Saxon period.

### **Middle Saxon**

- 4.2.5 It would appear likely that a major royal administrative site and possibly also a monastery existed at Oundle in the Middle Saxon period. One or other of these, most likely the administrative centre, could lie in the area beneath and to the north of the medieval church.
- 4.2.6 The archaeological evidence for Middle Saxon activity in the area around the churchyard may not at first appear to be strong. Three Middle Saxon sherds were recovered from observation of trenching in 1983. Only six unstratified sherds of later 7th to early 9th century pottery, including one Ipswich type ware sherd, were recovered from the 1985 investigation. However if the evidence is considered in more detail it becomes apparent that the finds indicate Middle Saxon occupation in close proximity.
- 4.2.7 If a monastery existed at Oundle it will have been destroyed in the later 9th century Danish conquest, but Oundle probably remained an important administrative focus, though it was perhaps at this time that it first came to be overshadowed by Stamford.

### **Late Saxon/Early Medieval**

- 4.2.8 Following the re-conquest by the Danes, which took place in the 920s, Oundle appears to have recovered its ecclesiastical importance for in about 957 archbishop Wulfstan was buried at Oundle. Then, at the time of the great monastic revival, Oundle was chosen as the site for an important foundation and in the 960s St Aethelwold began to build a monastery there. However, he soon abandoned the work, in 966, in favour of the site at Medeshamstede, which later became known as Peterborough.
- 4.2.9 The site of the present church is a good candidate for the monastery at Oundle, although the archaeological evidence from the adjacent area could simply relate to

what was presumably until the 1960s an important royal estate centre. High status pottery of the 10th century has been recovered during small scale excavation in the area to the north of the churchyard in 1985.

- 4.2.10 From the topographical arrangement of the Rectory, Rectory tenements, churchyard, Burystead manor and former parcels of the manor garden, all discussed below, it is possible that in the early medieval or late Saxon period there was a single plot with a distinct curving boundary which was held by the lord and included all the manorial and ecclesiastical functions.
- 4.2.11 At present it must remain a very strong probability, supported by the limited archaeological investigation which has so far been carried out, that the Middle Saxon provincial administrative centre and possibly also the monastery were located in this same area at the centre of the later town, defined by the curving boundary that has been identified as a dominant topographical feature in the layout of the town.
- 4.2.12 Within Oundle township however there was only one settlement other than the town itself. This was the Wodehouse, a single, possibly moated farm with at some point an associated dovecote.

### **Medieval and post-medieval**

- 4.2.13 In 1086 Oundle was one of only four settlements in the area with a recorded market, all of which had been important Saxon administrative foci. The layout of the core of the town had probably been established by this date, as an agricultural village attached to the administrative and ecclesiastical centre. By 1086 the settlement had lost its importance as a monastic centre and was probably primarily an agricultural village.
- 4.2.14 The development of the settlement as an urban centre was undoubtedly promoted by the abbots of Peterborough as part of their profit driven capital investment in their estates. There is no record of burgesses in the town in 1086 but by the early 12th century there were a number of tenants holding burgages there. It is likely that the market place was established at this time, outside the gates of the manor and church, but it is possible that it was of earlier origin and related to the existence of the Late Saxon market. Oundle grew substantially as the medieval economy expanded in the 12th and 13th centuries.
- 4.2.15 Oundle rode out the economic recession of the 14th and 15th centuries and is revealed again in the 16th century as the dominant local marketing centre. Unlike Higham Ferrers or Rothwell, Oundle did not have successful nearby 'new towns' which survived the recession to challenge its dominance. As a result, and given the high agricultural wealth and population levels of the townships of the middle Nene valley, Oundle remained in the top level of the small towns of the county throughout the post-medieval period. In 1712 it was described by Morton as '*a fair, well built, pleasant and Healthy Town advantageously and Sweetly Situated. Its situation encourages trade.*' Thus it continued in use as a market town through the 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries.
- 4.2.16 Although the town had some industrial production, with production of leather goods in the 16th century and brewing and malting in the 18th and 19th centuries, the main basis of its wealth and success seems to have rested on the commercial servicing of its local hinterland. It never developed an industrial specialism which, like boot and shoe production on Wellingborough or woollen cloth production in Kettering, could provide a sound base for its expansion in the industrial era. Although the town was on the Nene navigation and thus its economy was enhanced to a limited degree by the growth of

heavy trade that this enabled, it was bypassed by the main rail routes in the mid 19th century and this was undoubtedly a major factor in its relative decline thereafter.

- 4.2.17 The town is focussed on a core around the church and manor, an area with a curving boundary which it appears may have an Early or Middle Saxon, if not earlier, origin. On the western side this may have originally extended beyond New Street as far as Drumming Well Lane, where there is a distinct break in the plan form of the settlement. This area lies on the spur end mainly on limestone geology. During the Late Saxon or early medieval period this area seems to have been subdivided into three, with the church and rectory occupying the eastern half and the manor occupying the western half. The northern boundary of the putative enclosure may also have been restructured as there is distinct step in the boundary against Blackpot Lane between the manor and the rectory plots.
- 4.2.18 Whereas the distribution of the burgages and of the virgates reveals a pattern which may indicate the chronology of the evolution of the town plan, the lesser fees and free tenements do not appear to yield a clear pattern, other than the fact that they were concentrated in the double row of West Street. This may reinforce the argument that this was a primary component of the late Saxon village.
- 4.2.19 The Late Saxon re-planning of the settlement will be a key issue in the development of the town as it is unclear whether the market place was established at the same time. The market, which was in existence before the 1086, and probably in 971, lay immediately to the south of the manor and church. The expansion over much of the early market place by shops and their conversion to permanent tenements took place progressively from the 11th to 17th centuries. It is conceivable that a large open area existed adjacent to the manorial/ecclesiastical focus from a very early date and that this was used for periodic exchange or simply as a green. Thus the market square may have been simply a conversion of an existing open space. Alternatively a very large market place, comparable in size to the market square in medieval Northampton, may have been laid out at the time of the conjectural 10th century re-planning. If however the market was a slightly later insertion into the village plan then it may have involved the removal of existing peasant tenements, although this seems unlikely given the plan form of the double row to the west of the market place. The conjectural original market extent (see below) would appear to have a similar depth up to the church and manor as the length of the tofts of the northern tenement row along West Street, perhaps suggesting a common origin for the two.
- 4.2.20 Within the centre of the original market place there is clear documentary evidence demonstrating that the tenements between the present market place, Church Lane and New Street lay on part of the original market. Some at least of these tenements were in origin shops which were only later converted to tenements. While some were converted before the 13th century, when one shop in this area of later tenements on the south side of Church Lane is documented as such, the Wool Market remained an open trading area until the mid 16th century, only later seeing a final conversion to tenements.
- 4.2.21 The majority of the growth of the town in the medieval period seems however to have been accommodated by the subdivision of the existing tenements, whether virgate, cottage, burgage or freehold, to create a much large number of tenements. This resulted by 1400 in many tenements with two or even four separate component holdings.

- 4.2.22 The road network was substantially altered in the Oundle area by the Abbot of Peterborough in order to further promote the growth of the town. He built two new bridges, the north and south bridges, in order to bring travellers through the town and to make access to the market from all directions far easier.

## 5 SITE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND DEVELOPMENT

Using available sources and historical accounts, this section hopes to provide a chronological development of the site.

### 5.1 Pre 1626

- 5.1.1 It is widely documented and accepted that the present Talbot Hotel, as viewed from New Street (Plate 2) was built, possibly on the site of a previous inn in 1626. During this study it was not possible to locate any documentary sources or maps which described the site prior to this date. Therefore the background of the site prior to 1626 is derived from secondary sources and accounts. What is of particular interest, however, is a two storey timber-framed building, still in use as part of the hotel, which may pre-date 1626 and be part of the earlier coaching inn on the site prior to redevelopment.
- 5.1.2 The earliest date suggested for the inn on the site comes from the listed Building description which was presumably written when the current hotel was given its listing status in 1955. This description begins; “established in 1552 on earlier site and re-built in 1626”. Unfortunately the sources or references for this 1552 date are not given in the report.
- 5.1.3 The earliest dated source consulted for this study was the Austell survey, carried out in 1565. This survey gives an account of frontages within the town at the time, street by street. At the time of this survey, New Street was called Bury Street and a short entry describes a number of buildings there, however, this survey does not reference the Talbot Hotel in any detail and simply references “The Tabret” as it was then known.
- 5.1.4 The hotel once belonged to the Guild of Our Lady of Oundle, an association of merchants and traders of the town who united for mutual help and protection. The site was sold at the break up of the guild in 1551 to Thomas Power (notes in Oundle museum) and when Thomas Power died in 1572 the inn was called The Tabbard. Notes collated about the guild properties in the museum state that records of 1613 referring to the messuage of Henry Denys and an inn called Le Talbot.
- 5.1.5 The main entrance to the Talbot has always been from the street, however, it was recognised early on that a way out was needed. When the guild were in ownership of the inn they arranged for an easement or right of way through the property at the back for “quests to come into this corner field with carts, horses and cattle” (King 1934). The ground through which this right of way existed was known as Dobs Yard (now Drummingwell Lane)

### 5.2 The Timber-Framed Range

- 5.2.1 This element of the hotel is located just inside of the entrance arch on the left (with New Street behind), on the southern range (Plate 3).
- 5.2.2 This part of the range stands out from the rest of the southern wing and surrounding buildings in the courtyard as it is the only obvious timber-framed structure, the rest are constructed from stone. A report by Dr Gee from the Royal Commission for Historical Monuments (RCHM) in 1963 described this part as the earliest element of the present site. Although this phase of investigation did not allow for a full survey and phasing of the buildings, a brief inspection was made which supports the description and



interpretation made by Gee. His description of this structure is summarised as follows:

“..timber-framed range has posts with enlarged heads supporting trusses with cambered tie-beams, chamfered on the lower sides, principals, collars and king posts above the collars. The purlins rest on the collars and are braced from the ties. The range is of four bays.”.....“The later roof, based on the older one had Collyweston slates fixed with wooden pegs to the laths.”

“The timber-framed range continues forward into the main range and joins it at the level of the timber wall on the inner side of the main staircase. The head of the bar on the ground floor and near the inner end of the timber-framed range, is the bressumer of a great open fireplace with stopped chamfered reveals, perhaps the sixteenth century fireplace.” (Plate 4).

- 5.2.3 It has been suggested that the later construction of the stone building on the street frontage may have shortened this range by two bays (Parker 1989). It is therefore possible that this timber-framed range is surviving evidence of the pre-1624 redevelopment and pre-dates the second half of the sixteenth century when traditional vernacular buildings were replaced with stone.
- 5.2.4 From the first floor landing level an exposed leaded window was noted with timber frame, plain mullions and jambs representative of an early 16th century window (Plate 5). A window in this location also suggests the gallery area from where the photograph was taken was a later addition.
- 5.2.5 It should also be considered that this building may not be in its original location. It is possible that this building was part of the remodelling which took place in 1626 and like much of the interior of the hotel, brought to the site and reconstructed there.
- 5.2.6 To fully understand and accurately date this part of the site, further survey and investigation would be required including dendrochronology.

### **5.3 1626 Redevelopment by William Whitwell**

- 5.3.1 The main front to the hotel was added during redevelopment in 1626 and has been attributed to William Whitwell. It is claimed by Smalley Law in his book (Smalley Law, 1922) that it was Whitwell who gave the Talbot its name; the “talbot” being the crest of his wife's family, the Griffins.
- 5.3.2 King (1934) writes in his account of this phase of redevelopment that the block formerly occupied by the Talbot was pulled down in 1626 and rebuilt: “The frontage of the inn was increased by six feet”. The large corner house which included the post office, two shops in New Street and two in West Street with courtyard at the back was probably occupied by Whitwell himself. A panel with inscription WW 1626 is still visible on the southern gable end of this range (although the post office building is clearly later).
- 5.3.3 The main building stone used is Weldon limestone ashlar, sawn and dressed (Oundle Museum Trust) and the roof is covered with Collyweston slate. The chimneys and ball finials at the top of the gables are characteristic of the period.
- 5.3.4 From the front, the building has two storeys and attics in ashlar with very steep stone slate roofs with ball finials on the kneelers and apex of all gables including the three dormers on the front. All windows have stone mullions or mullions and transoms except the window over the archway in the main front. The main front is

asymmetrical, there being one extra window to both main floors at the south end, three-light to the ground floor and six-light mullioned and transomed to the 1st floor. Two three storey canted bays with five-light window to the ground floor, ten-light mullioned and transomed window to the 1st floor with a raised lozenge below, above is a massive gabled dormer with a flush face (not canted) the full width of the bay with deep up-cut and curving shoulders, where it spreads beyond the width of the front face of the bay ([www.lbonline.co.uk](http://www.lbonline.co.uk)).

- 5.3.5 Much of the history of the hotel and what makes it attractive to visitors and historians alike is the suggestion that the stairs and windows viewed from the courtyard derive from the nearby Fotheringhay Castle. The stairs (Plate 6) have moulded rails, turned symmetrical balusters and square newels with tall shaped finials. Similar local examples have been recorded at Apethorpe and Kirby Hall. An architectural drawing was found during the research which shows a section through the staircase (Figure 2). The window facing into the courtyard (Plates 7 and 8) has ovolo moulded members. There is debate amongst historians as to whether this window came from Fotheringhay; it has almost certainly been re-used and is contemporary with and respects the layout of the staircase.
- 5.3.6 The first floor of this building boasts the “Whitwell Room”, currently used for functions and conferences. This room is panelled throughout and has two impressive fireplaces (Plate 9). The panelling is also rumoured to have come from Fotheringhay. This room appears to have once been two separate rooms; one with large lateral fireplace and a smaller one (the solar) with a transverse fireplace; both fireplaces dating to the 17th century (Gee 1963). The panelling is also different, respecting the layout and suggestion of two separate rooms. On the ceiling the crossbeams of the original hall can still be seen.

## 5.4 17th / 18th Century Coaching Inn

- 5.4.1 Sources of information for this period are few, however, most references and mentions of the Talbot Hotel are associated with its function as a coaching inn and the daily coach service to London.
- 5.4.2 It is likely that it was around this period that many of the additional buildings within the courtyard area and at the rear were built to accommodate more guests, horses, stable staff, servants and associated activities. The first available cartographic source for this study, dated 1725 (Figure 3) is the Fisher and Saunders estate map. This map shows a range of buildings very similar to the current layout. There are clearly ranges on the north and south side and although the alignments are not exactly the same, this may be due to the fact that it is a representative drawing to show presence rather than a scaled, accurate one to represent detail. This map shows that the site appears to be owned or occupied by “Smith Esq”, whether this refers to the John Smiths brewery of Oundle is unclear however, quite likely as it was a prominent brewery and employer in the town at this time.
- 5.4.3 There is evidence within the façade of the current Tabret Rooms (Plate 10) which extends along the southern wing from the timber-framed building, that this once had wider openings and different windows to the current horizontally sliding Yorkshire sashes, typically dating to the 18th and 19th century. The datestone on this elevation is misleading and is explained further in Section 5.6.5.
- 5.4.4 Opposite, on the northern range, is another stone building, also covered with Collyweston slate (Plate 11). Although internal inspection was not possible at this stage,

from the image of the external elevation, it is clear that this building originally had a wider opening and has had replacement windows and doors. Although it is difficult to be certain without further inspection, it is likely that this building stored coaches or carts, especially given its secure location within the courtyard.

- 5.4.5 At the rear of the site, now named “The Westgate Suite” is a two-phase range of buildings with dormers and small replaced windows (Plate 12). This range appears to have been former stables. It is clear that there had been much wider openings originally which have been blocked up and smaller windows inserted. If these buildings were stables associated with the inn, they would have been accessed from the rear via Drummingwell Lane which was a right of way to the inn from the 17th century. Also, evidence has indicated that the inn had more land associated with it, probably to the rear, and which may have been the location of further outbuildings and fields.
- 5.4.6 A newspaper advertisement in the Northampton Mercury in June 1790 announced the forthcoming sale of the Talbot Inn at auction. It included a brief description of the lot which included outbuildings, large garden, stabling for a hundred horses and two acres of land lying in the open field of Oundle. This suggests the inn was very prosperous and busy at this time, offering stabling for so many horses.
- 5.4.7 A further article placed in The Oundle Mercury in 1796 advertises a “new light coach” from the Talbot Inn to London, every Sunday, Wednesday and Friday mornings; the service also offered the delivery of parcels. It is not clear if this service superseded a previous one or whether it was the first from the town, however, it indicates the importance of the hotel in the town as a destination for this service into London.
- 5.4.8 Further mention of the site in this period is available from the day books of carpenter John Clifton who makes frequent references to the Talbot when carrying out small pieces of repair work there. The Talbot is also mentioned in Clifton’s diaries when events and meetings took place there, suggesting the building had an important function within the town. The Talbot is mentioned as being used for the Duke of Montague’s court, for drawing of the names for and for the swearing in of the militia, as well as a venue for local meetings and dances (Parker 1998).

## **5.5 19th Century Development / Cartographic and Photographic Evidence**

- 5.5.1 There are more useful and available sources for this period which aid the study of the hotel in more detail, in particular with the introduction of the Ordnance Survey and photography in the latter part of the century. From the sources available it appears that little alteration or construction within the hotel site took place during this period, however, a detailed internal survey would be required to confirm this.
- 5.5.2 The earliest map from the period is the 1810 Inclosure Map (Figure 4). This map is difficult to interpret the layout or boundary division between buildings or land. The accompanying apportionment relating to the number 236 drawn on the site on this map states that it belonged to John Smith Jnr; presumably still as part of Smiths Brewery at this time.
- 5.5.3 The investigations carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology in 2003 (Tingle 2003) included a survey of a group of buildings at the rear of the hotel prior to demolition. The site investigated was approximately 50m to the west of the rear of the Talbot and comprised a number of buildings believed to have dated to the late 18th and early 19th centuries. These buildings included a row of four early-mid 19th century stables, a later carthouse and late 17th-early 18th century barn which had been re-roofed in the 19th

century. These buildings, located within such close proximity may have been part of the out-buildings and storage for the hotel.

- 5.5.4 An engraving of the hotel by B. Rudge (Figure 5) is the earliest dated source showing the hotel's exterior appearance, it shows the façade almost the same as it appears today. The street and area around the hotel appear bustling and a horse can be seen within the archway. Above the arch is the name of William Reachlou who is known to have held the licence there between 1813 and 1841. The reason for the engraving is unknown and the fact that it was created in the same year that the Talbot changed licence holder may be linked.
- 5.5.5 There are many picture postcards from this period which depict the site as it looked around the end of the 19th / beginning of the 20th century (Figures 6a and 6b).
- 5.5.6 The next available map is the sewerage and drainage plan of 1877 (Figure 7). This map shows many of the present buildings and alignments as well as a row of what appear to be small houses or stables at the rear along Drummingwell Lane, it is unclear however which properties were associated with the hotel. The map shows that there were no existing drains on the site or in close proximity, however, the blue blocks indicate water closets.
- 5.5.7 The next available map is the First edition 25" to 1 mile Ordnance Survey map (Figure 8) dated 1885 which shows very similar detail to the previous map, however it does show more information about the divisions between buildings and also the names of streets and yards. The Second edition map dated 1901 (Figure 9) was only available at a 6" to 1 mile scale. As a result, it shows less detail of buildings and the division between buildings is unclear as are the names of minor streets, yards and lanes which have been omitted due to scale.
- 5.5.8 The Talbot Hotel continued to prosper during this century and a regular service to the railway station ran from there. A photograph found during the research (Figure 10) shows a Talbot Hotel horse and carriage. Although undated, the name of Henry Lolan over the door indicates it was taken c.1863 – 1903.

## 5.6 The Talbot in the 20th Century

- 5.6.1 A number of alterations were made in the last century, most notably the addition of a plant room, reception area and accommodation block. There were also many internal rearrangements.
- 5.6.2 Immediately to the north of the 1626 building (Plate 13) is a later building which had a shop frontage in the 19th century (Parker 1989). This building (remodelled internally) was incorporated into the hotel with the addition of new windows on both floors and ball finials on the north gable. Architects drawings for the design of this work were dated 1902 (Figure 11). A picture postcard of the Talbot Hotel (c.1863-1901) shows the building prior to the alterations to the façade (Figure 10, which can also be seen in Figures 5 and 6b).
- 5.6.3 Another addition in this century was a single storey glass extension added onto the north wing, facing the courtyard, around 1917. This extension was to form the residents lounge and became nicknamed "the icehouse" as icicles would form on the glass roof during the winter (J. Irving *pers comm.*). This addition on the northern wing, just inside the courtyard (on the right with New Street behind) was made mostly of glass on a brick plinth (Figures 12 and 13) It was later demolished and replaced by the current single storey building in 1949 (Plate 14). An undated photograph (Figure 14) shows the corner

of another structure (on the left) in the same position which juts forward too far to be the “icehouse” and may be an earlier structure or perhaps the edge of the icehouse following removal of the porch shown in the forefront of the photograph (Figure 13). The image in Figure 14 also shows what appears to be a glass shelter against the arch. It is understood that the reception “hatch” was once located on the left as you entered through the archway, where guests would check-in; this shelter may have been erected to offer protection from the rain. Figure 15, an undated image, shows the courtyard prior to any of these additions. Although undated, it was probably taken towards the very end of the 19th century, but certainly prior to the construction of the “icehouse” in 1917.

- 5.6.4 During the 1930s a plant room was built within the courtyard. Cartographic sources including the 1885 Ordnance Survey and 1877 drainage and sewerage maps indicate that this new building did not replace any pre-existing structures other than a pump or water-closet (Figure 7). The extension was later converted into staff accommodation with the addition of bathrooms and bedrooms (client *pers. comm.*)
- 5.6.5 Many of the more recent repairs and alterations are remembered by Jim Irving who was employed by John Smith and Co., an established and important brewery in the town up until the late 20th century. Mr Irving worked as a manager for the brewery and had involvement with the Talbot Hotel from the mid 1950s. Mr Irving recalls a number of alterations and improvements during his time working for the brewery including the relocation of the dining room from the Whitwell room to its present location on the ground floor. He also recalls the placing of the datestone into the wall of the stone building on the southern wing in 1963 (Plate 15). The datestone came from one of Smiths breweries on New Street which was demolished in this year and it was placed at the Talbot (an action which appears to have tricked many a historian and architect since!). The datestone reads J S 1775 and has the three barrels symbol of the brewery. Mr Irving also has a letter relating to the placing of the mounting block to its present position at the front of the hotel in 1955 (its original location is not known).
- 5.6.6 A plan of proposed alterations for the hotel dated 1956 (Figure 16) shows an opening within the archway, on the right as entered from New Street, which has been since blocked-up in accordance with the architects plan. The re-opening of this doorway is proposed by the current developers. This plan also shows a revolving door into the residents lounge which has since been removed as well as indicating the function of various ground floor rooms at that time.
- 5.6.7 A photograph in the possession of Mr Irving shows some alterations taking place in 1966 (Figure 17). This work was undertaken to create new toilets and office accommodation in what may be the earliest timber-framed part of the hotel. Alterations also included the insertion of a door into this elevation which was not present on a photograph taken around the turn of the last century (Figure 18).
- 5.6.8 In 1979 (client *pers comm*) an L-shaped block was added at the rear (western end) of the hotel. This extension provided more rooms and modern facilities to the hotel. Built from the same local stone and covered with Collyweston slate, this building fits in well with the rest of the hotel and local building stock (Plate 16)

## 6 RESULTS : HISTORIC BUILDING SURVEY

The results of the historic building survey are presented below. As the aim was to record each element of the building prior to alteration or demolition, each element is described separately below. The corresponding figures and plates are presented at the end of the report; Figure 19 shows the location of plates and elevations referenced. All buildings have been numbered for ease of reference throughout the report (numbers 1 to 13) (Figure 20). These numbers correspond to the proposed alterations as laid out in the client's design statement. Figure 21 shows the location of each of the recorded positions with the numbers which correspond to the items set out in the client's Design, Access and Justification Statement (Horsley Townsend and Heron Design 2010). Figure 22 shows the suggested phasing of the hotel buildings.

### 6.1 Buildings Group 1 : 1626 New Street Block

#### **Background**

- 6.1.1 This element of the building comprises the main front to the hotel which was added during redevelopment in 1626 and has been attributed to William Whitwell (Figures 19 and 21). The building is constructed of Weldon limestone ashlar, sawn and dressed (Oundle Museum Trust) and the roof is covered with Collyweston slate. The chimneys and ball finials at the top of the gables are characteristic of the period. It comprises the two main bars of the hotel (at ground floor level) and forms the symmetrical street frontage of the building flanking either side of the archway which leads into the inn yard. Much of the history of the hotel and what makes it attractive to visitors and historians alike is the suggestion that the stairs and windows viewed from the courtyard derive from the nearby Fotheringhay Castle. The stairs (Plate 6) have moulded rails, turned symmetrical balusters and square newels with tall shaped finials and similar local examples have been recorded at Apethorpe and Kirby Hall. An architectural drawing was found during the research which shows a section through the staircase (Figure 2).

#### **Alteration 1a**

*"The proposed alteration in this area is to reinstate the archway access as the principal point of access to the hotel. By opening up a previously blocked doorway, the timber staircase will become a dominant feature on the circulation route."*

- 6.1.2 The proposed new entrance is located within the covered alleyway on the right-hand side upon entering from New Street (Figure 21). The former entrance in this location (Plate 17) was blocked up as part of the alterations which occurred in 1956 - these can be seen on the architect's drawing from that time (Figure 16).
- 6.1.3 The doorway had been bricked-up and externally rendered in contrast to the surrounding painted ashlar stone with a noticeboard partly obscuring it (Figure 23, Elevation 1; Plate 17). The doorway measured 1.10m wide. Internally, there was no evidence of the original doorway.
- 6.1.4 During a return visit for archaeological monitoring in November 2011, work had commenced on the unblocking of the doorway and although not part of the required works, photographs were taken for the site record. Where the render had been

removed, red bricks were exposed which surrounded the former opening with a wide arched brick header above (Plate 18). Closer inspection of the render to the left of the doorway suggests there may have been an earlier, much wider opening which was later made narrower using brick, all prior to 1956.

### **Alteration 1c**

*"It is proposed to re-open up the doorway thus reinstating covered access to the building, thus enhancing the relationship to this part of the covered way and the circulation through it."*

- 6.1.5 As late as 1956 the easterly ground floor room housed the servery for the hotel bar, and the westerly ground floor room housed the kitchen for the first floor 'Whitwell Room' dining room. Changes dating from 1956 onwards included the closing up of a doorway linking the covered archway and the eastern-most room.
- 6.1.6 When the doorway was blocked-up as part of the 1956 alterations a window was inserted in its place (Plate 19). The window is a two-part vertical sliding sash with eight panes in each part. The window measures 1.36m by 1.14m and spans the width of the former opening. The window here appears to be contemporary with the fenestration of the canted bay to the immediate right, suggesting the windows were all replaced as part of the 1950s phase of alterations. The window has a wooden frame with wooden glazing bars and three of the panes of glass used have a "bullseye" effect often seen in early blown glass. Internally, there is little additional detail of note (Plate 20). Figure 23, Elevation 2 shows the north-facing façade of the southern range.

### **Alteration 1d**

*"To reinstate internal openings at the foot of the main stair, between the main stairwell and the single ground floor reception room...This proposal would reinstate the connection between the principle staircase of the hotel with a key ground floor reception room."*

- 6.1.7 The current doorway is situated in a splayed section of wall constructed as part of the 1956 alterations. The majority of the current wall construction dates back to the 1956 modifications, however a 900mm-wide infill panel adjacent to the external wall is of different brickwork and would appear to pre-date the 1956 plan; the brickwork appears to date from the latter half of the 19th century and not from the original building.
- 6.1.8 On the staircase side of the partition (Plate 21) there is a moulded wooden chair rail and skirting board. The wall was painted orange on the upper half and blue on the lower. Along the right side of the wall and continuing along the ceiling was a boxed-in area for pipes or beams.
- 6.1.9 On the bar-side of the partition (Plate 22) there is the same moulded chairrail and skirting board as well as a radiator with vented wooden cover.
- 6.1.10 During a return visit for archaeological monitoring in November 2011, work had commenced on unblocking the doorway and although not part of the required works, photographs were taken for the site record. The boxed area over the wall had been removed to reveal pipes and the original brick wall was exposed (Plate 23).

### ***Alteration 1e***

"To remove the entrance lobby to the head of the cellar stairs"

- 6.1.11 As part of the 1949 rationalisation works a new porch was formed along the rear of the 1626 New Street Block to afford protection to draymen making deliveries. This entrance porch, and subsequent new personnel door opening created in 1956, enabled the building to be split into different use zones. It had the effect of covering part of the 1626 elevation and much of the elevation to Building 4. It resulted in the loss of historic fabric and an intrusion into the courtyard, this is represented on Figure 23, Elevation 3 which shows the extension obscuring part of the earlier 1626 phase rear elevation. By reinstating the original main entrance doorway beneath the archway it will be possible to remove this 1949 porch. It will then be possible to reinstate some of the original fabric lines thereby enhancing the rear 1626 elevation to Building 1, the 18th century elevation to Building 4, and the openness of the courtyard.
- 6.1.12 Undated photographs (Figures 15 and 18) show the courtyard prior to the construction of the single storey restaurant and also the exposed access to the cellar with what appears to be an open-fronted mono-pitched roof/shelter above. The 1956 architect's plan (Figure 16) shows the proposed entrance and cellar cover.
- 6.1.13 The entrance lobby (Plate 24) was constructed using Barnack stone with a mono-pitched Collyweston slate roof. It appeared to be contemporary with the single storey restaurant to the immediate left. The doorway into the lobby area had a Gothic style depressed arch (flattened and slightly pointed at the top). To the immediate right was the entrance to the cellar (Plate 25). A set of double doors which opened inward provided access to the cellar and the stonework behind had been cut at the top to allow the doors to be fully opened for loading. From inside the cellar it was possible to see where red brick had been used to create a narrower doorway. The style of the door and the bricks surrounding indicate this occurred during the mid-late 20th century (Plate 26) and the original architects plans from 1956 show the insertion of these proposed doors.
- 6.1.14 During a return visit for archaeological monitoring in November 2011, work had commenced on removing the lobby entrance (Plate 27). Plate 27 shows the cut stone above the cellar entrance and the ghostline of the mono-pitched lobby roof. The original stonework of the wall behind the lobby was also left exposed showing where 20th century brick and rolled steel joists had been inserted into the stone to support the lobby addition.

## **6.2 Building 2 : Timber-Framed Range**

### ***Background***

- 6.2.1 This element of the hotel is located just inside of the entrance arch on the left (with New Street behind), on the southern range (Figure 23, Elevation 2; Plate 3).
- 6.2.2 This part of the range stands out from the rest of the southern wing and surrounding buildings in the courtyard as it is the only obvious timber-framed structure, the rest are constructed from stone. A report by Dr. Gee from the RCHM in 1963 described this part as the earliest element of the present hotel. Although this phase of investigation does not include a full internal survey, a brief inspection was made which supports the description and interpretation made by Gee. His description of this structure and



background is summarised in Section 5.2.2 – 5.2.5.

- 6.2.3 Parker (1989) suggests that the later construction of the stone building on the street frontage may have shortened this range by two bays. It is therefore possible that this timber-framed range is surviving evidence of the pre-1624 redevelopment and pre-dates the second half of the 16th century when traditional vernacular buildings were replaced with stone.

#### **Alteration 2a**

*"To remove existing internal toilet partitions to allow the timber-framed screen to be appreciated from the inside; and reinstate clear glazing panes in timber casements to reflect an earlier arrangement."*

- 6.2.4 The internal toilet partitions were all created as part of the 1956 alterations (Figure 16). They comprised a number of thin plasterboard partitions which subdivided the former kitchens (as shown on Figure 16, 1956 plan) to create separate male and female toilets.
- 6.2.5 The removal of the partitions allows for the full exposure and view of a timber framed screen (Plate 28). The screen comprised panels of applied beaded moulding, concealed beneath several layers of paint. The date of this screen could not be ascertained.
- 6.2.6 The removal of the panels will also fully expose the fenestration from the inside of the building (Plate 29a) and as part of the proposed plans, the "dimpled" effect panes will be replaced with clear glass. These timber casement windows with bottom-hinged opening top lights (Plate 29b) were added during or after 1966 as shown on a photograph taken at that time (Figure 17) which shows side-hinged fully opening casements.

#### **Alteration 2b**

*"To link Bedrooms 30 and 31 by removing plaster lining within timber frame."*

- 6.2.7 As part of the client's investigations the existing small power cover plates were removed to examine and record the composition of the plaster. The wall comprises modern 12.5mm plasterboard; with softwood studs and noggins and rockwool insulation.
- 6.2.8 The proposed alteration will see the opening-up of a pre-existing doorway as shown to the left of the bed in Plate 30. The full timber frame is exposed and continues in the corridor outside of the room where it is also exposed and viewed (Figure 24). The frame spans the width of the original first floor part of the building and this now concealed doorway would have been the access between these two areas/rooms prior to the erection of the external corridor which now links the 1626 New Street block.
- 6.2.9 The additional corridor forms the "jettied" part of the building as viewed from outside (Plate 3). Although not part of the survey, there were etched inscriptions on the glass, dated to 1755 which are worthy of note and future recording (Plates 31 and 32). The inscriptions read "My pretty Polly Winter of Cork in Ireland, no girl can stitch so well

1755" and "My dear Miss Fanny Nunn off Enniscorthy Ireland 1755"

- 6.2.10 There is also an original window which would have once been external (Plate 5); this is protected behind a screen.

#### **Alteration 2c**

*"Extend existing ensuite by removing late C20th partition and existing built in wardrobes; forming new partition."*

- 6.2.11 The partitions are all fairly recent, late twentieth century additions of plasterboard construction. The removal of the partition and built in wardrobes will not reveal any fabric or detail of note.

### **6.3 Building 4 : In-fill behind the New Street Block**

#### **Background**

- 6.3.1 This part of the hotel was not recognised as a separate phase of building during the Desk-Based Assessment produced in 2009. Considered to be possibly 18th century in date, this phase of construction links the rear of Building 3 and Building 5, the east - west range which faces into the courtyard.
- 6.3.2 Immediately to the north of the 1626 building, Building 3 is a later building which had a shop frontage in the 19th century (Parker 1989). This building (remodelled internally) was incorporated into the hotel with the addition of new windows on both floors and ball finials on the north gable. Architects drawings for the design of this work were dated 1903 (Figure 11). A picture postcard of the Talbot Hotel (c.1863-1901) shows the building prior to the alterations to the façade (Figure 10) which can also be seen in Figures 5 and 6b.

#### **Alteration 4a**

*"It is proposed to remove the 20th century partitions, whilst maintaining service runs and drainage from high level"*

- 6.3.3 At the time of the survey, this part of the ground floor area served as male and female toilets. The 1956 architects plans (Figure 16) indicate that this area was partitioned off differently as part of the alterations made at that time. The 1956 plans served to create separate office, store and service areas, however there has clearly been further sub-division since then to create the present layout (Figure 21, modern floor plan). The proposed alterations will create a new bar and seating area.
- 6.3.4 The partitions were tiled on the inside of the toilet areas concealing all building materials. All doors were modern as were the toilet and sink fixtures and fittings.

#### **Alteration 4b**

*"Reinstate opening between the infill Building (4) and the building on the north side of the hotel (Building 3)"*

- 6.3.5 The architect's drawing proposal plans from 1956 (Figure 16) shows the proposed

opening between these two building phases which was subsequently blocked up when the toilets were added. Architects plans from 1902 (Figure 11) show how this area appeared following the changes made 50 years previously - this was most likely when the shop as shown in Figure 6b occupied Building 3 and plans were drawn up to incorporate it into the hotel.

- 6.3.6 The area to be opened up does not create a new link between these two parts of the building (at the time of the survey the bar and male toilets). From the bar-side of the partition the three phases of alteration of this wall can be seen, indicated by the recess which correspond to the architect's drawings and a post-1956 amendment (Plate 33). On the opposite side of the wall, from the male toilets, the corresponding recesses are also visible.
- 6.3.7 During a return visit for the archaeological monitoring in November the opening had been reinstated (Plate 34).

#### 6.4 Buildings 5, 6, 7 and 9 : East-west range

*Five bayed 18th century inn yard building (5), single storey restaurant (6), infill building to north-west of inn yard (7) and former coach store (9)*

##### **Background**

- 6.4.1 **Buildings 5 & 7:** It is likely that during the 18th century many of the additional buildings within the courtyard area and at the rear were built to accommodate more guests, horses, stable staff, servants and associated activities. The first available cartographic source for this study, dated 1725 (Figure 3) is the Fisher and Saunders estate map. This map shows a range of buildings very similar to the current layout. There are clearly ranges on the north and south side and although the alignments are not exactly the same, this may be due to the fact that it is a representative drawing to show presence rather than a scaled, accurate one to represent detail. Buildings 5 and 7 are clearly two separate phases indicated by the change in roof pitch (Plate 34), however, building materials used, style and proportions would suggest they are relatively close in date.
- 6.4.2 **Building 9:** on the northern range, is another stone building known as the "Westgate Suite", also covered with Collyweston slate (Plate 11). Internal inspection revealed that this building had been entirely modernised for use as a kitchen and no original features or architectural fixtures or fittings were visible. The external elevation shows that this building originally had a wider opening and has had replacement windows and doors. Although it is difficult to be certain, it is likely that this building stored coaches or carts, especially given its secure location within the courtyard.
- 6.4.3 **Building 6:** During the early part of the 20th century a single storey glass extension was added onto the north wing, facing the courtyard around 1917. This extension was to form the residents lounge and became nicknamed "the icehouse" as icicles would form on the glass roof during the winter (J. Irving pers comm.). This addition on the northern wing, just inside the courtyard (on the right with New Street behind) was made mostly of glass on a brick plinth (Figures 12 and 13) It was later demolished and replaced by the current single storey restaurant building in 1949 (plate 14). An undated photograph (Figure 14) shows the corner of another structure (on the left) in the same position which juts forward too far to be the "icehouse" and may be an earlier structure. This image also shows what appears to be a glass shelter against the arch. It is

understood that the reception “hatch” was once located on the left as you entered through the archway, where guests would check-in, this shelter may have been erected to offer protection from the rain. Figure 15, an undated image, shows the courtyard prior to any of these additions. Although undated, it was probably taken towards the very end of the nineteenth century, but certainly prior to 1917.

#### **Alteration 5a**

*"Reinstate opening between Inn Yard Building (5) and infill building on north-west side of yard (7)"*

- 6.4.4 To the immediate left of the fireplace at the rear of the restaurant area (located within Building 5) is a blocked-up doorway (Plate 35). This was indicated by a variation in the stonework and the presence of a wooden lintel above. This former doorway may have provided external access to Building 5, prior to the construction of Building 7 which no longer required a doorway or access between the two buildings. The stone used to block up this access has been selected to maintain use of the same materials and is therefore not possible to date the time it was blocked up from building materials alone, however it most likely occurred when Building 7 was constructed in the 18th century.

#### **Alteration 5b**

*"To reinstate the circulation pattern between the two ground floor rooms of this building"*

- 6.4.5 This proposal requires the removal of a timber and glass partition located between the restaurant and the foot of the stairs in the reception area of the hotel (Plates 36 and 37). This partition appears to have been inserted after the 1956 alterations as it does not appear on the existing or proposed plans. From the materials used it is considered to be later 20th century in date. Its removal will not expose any early or original building material as all of the sub-divisions within this part of Building 5 are 20th century in date.

#### **Alteration 5c**

*"Remove post 1956 hotel reception fixtures etc. from the East room reinstating this area as a single room"*

- 6.4.6 All fixtures and fittings of the hotel reception area are considered to be post-1956 in date. The architect's plans from 1956 show that the area most recently occupied by the reception was a sitting room accessed only from a door at the foot of the stairs and the proposed plans of that time were to convert its use to a writing room.
- 6.4.7 The entire reception area is considered to post-date the 1956 hotel alterations. The fixtures comprised a large reception counter with screens and large key-cupboard behind, all constructed from wood and stained/painted dark brown. The area behind the counter was accessed via a heavy wooden door to the immediate right and the main reception counter was a lighter coloured solid oak (Plate 38). There were moulded pillars either side of the door and along the tongue and groove panels beneath the reception desk. Large wooden screens behind the reception desk concealed shelving (Plate 39) and another housed a contemporary key-cupboard with drawers below (Plate 40).
- 6.4.8 Interestingly, the plans from 1956 show that this room had a small recess on one wall.

This was most recently used to accommodate a safe within the reception area. During the return visit during building alteration works in November 2011, closer inspection of this recess around the safe revealed the remnants of glazed green tiles which were presumably part of a 19th or early 20th century fire surround (Plate 41). On the opposite wall, more timber-frame was exposed as part of the building works (Plate 42). Although previously partially visible prior to the alteration works (Plate 38), the removal of the reception desk and cupboards exposed more of it. The main support in the frame corresponds with the position of a stop-chamfered beam which was previously concealed behind the reception desk, and possibly indicates an original partition within Building 5.

#### **Alteration 5e**

*“To provide male and female toilet accommodation at first floor. It is proposed to modify an existing bedroom and housekeepers room on the first floor above the current reception”*

- 6.4.9 This proposal will involve the opening up of two blocked doorways. One of these blocked doorways is located within the housekeepers room on the left side on entering. A recess is visible as well as a lintel above the former door. On the opposite side, from the hallway, only a slight difference in plasterwork can be seen. The second blocked-up doorway is located between a guest bedroom and the top of the staircase. No more than a slight difference in plasterwork was noted.
- 6.4.10 As the building materials used to block up the doorways were concealed by plaster, it is difficult to establish the date when it was no longer required and blocked up. As there are no available architects plans for any first floor alterations from 1956 there is no telling if it was part of these works. However, the odd proportions of the housekeepers room and *en suite* of the guest bedroom would indicate this was once a single room and the access routes were altered when these rooms were created.

### **6.5 Building 6 : 1949 Single Storey Extension**

- 6.5.1 For background see Section 6.4.3

#### **Alteration 6a**

*“To replace the existing structure to allow all the adjoining buildings to be read individually”*

- 6.5.2 The single storey extension was constructed in 1949 with two elements; the main building with entrance constructed from brick with a Weldon limestone block façade (Plates 14 and 43) and a slightly recessed element constructed from re-used (?) stone. It measured 18.80m long and 3.65m wide and concealed the ground floor level frontage of the earlier buildings behind (Figure 23, Elevation 5). It had a flat roof which encompassed both elements of the building (Plate 44). The limestone block part of the building contained a former formal entrance to the hotel with depressed Tudor arch (flattened and slightly pointed at the top) with chamfered mouldings on either side (Plate 45). Above the doorway, "HOTEL ENTRANCE" was engraved into the stone. The entrance appears to have been in use in the 1950's and is present on the architect's

"hotel as existing plan" created in 1959 (Figure 16) and even appears to have a revolving door inside, providing access to the "residents lounge". The windows had hinged opening top lights, moulded stone mullions and surround with applied lead glazing bars and dimpled glass (Plate 46).

- 6.5.3 Internally, this addition was being used as a restaurant at the time of the survey and was still in use (Plate 47). Parts of the original external wall of the buildings behind (Buildings 5 and 7) were exposed. Sections of this wall had been removed (prior to 1956) to allow for a larger space/circulation area to be created. There was no evidence of any original doorways or windows within the remaining stonework. Large wooden panels encased the lintels of the openings above. The floor was carpeted, the ceiling was plain, white plasterboard with dark stained wooden chair rails and skirting boards spanning the outer walls of the room (Plate 47).
- 6.5.4 During the return visit in November 2011, the single storey addition had been demolished exposing both floor surfaces and the original façades of the buildings behind (Plate 48; Figure 25, Elevation 6).

## 6.6 Building 7 : Infill Building on north-west of Inn yard

### **Background**

- 6.6.1 Buildings 5 and 7 (Figure 20) are clearly two separate phases indicated by the change in roof pitch (Figure 25, Elevation 6; Plate 48), however, building materials used, style and proportions would suggest they are relatively close in date. It is likely that during the 18th century many of the additional buildings within the courtyard area and at the rear were built to accommodate more guests, horses, stable staff, servants and associated activities. The first available cartographic source for this study, dated 1725 (Figure 3) is the Fisher and Saunders estate map. This map shows a range of buildings, very similar to the current layout. There are clearly ranges on the north and south side and although the alignments are not exactly the same, this may be due to the fact that it is a representative drawing to show presence rather than a scaled, accurate one to represent detail. The architects plan dated to 1956 shows that this part of the building (one room on ground floor and one above) was used as a store room with a connecting corridor behind and was not affected by the proposed alterations at that time (Figure 16). At some point since 1956 alterations within the hotel resulted in the creation of a wider opening for the restaurant area and removal of the rear access corridor.

### **Alteration 7a**

*"Reinstate façade at ground floor level including a window opening, a personnel door opening; and a second personnel door opening that previously led via a passageway to the rear of the premises."*

- 6.6.2 The addition of the "icehouse" in 1917 and the subsequent replacement in 1949 obscured the ground floor façade of Building 7 as shown on Figures 15 and 17. The internal alterations within the 1949 extension to enlarge the reception area to create a restaurant on two levels spanning parts of Buildings 5, 6 and 7 involved the "opening up" of sections of the original façade of Building 7 and the creation of wide steps for access.

- 6.6.3 Reinstating the door and window onto the original façade will not affect any existing fabric as they will be inserted into current widened spaces and it was therefore not necessary to record this area in detail. The earlier arrangement is described above. Figure 25, Elevation 6 is the client's design drawing of how the façade will appear with the proposed added window and door opening.
- 6.6.4 Plate 48 shows the enlarged opening (left) which was created to allow access, removing any evidence of the original ground floor openings. This photograph was taken following the demolition of the 1949 extension, during the building alteration works in November 2011.

### **Alteration 7b**

*"To dismantle an existing concrete blockwork/brick passageway wall"*

- 6.6.5 The doorway to be reinstatement which previously led to the rear of the premises will involve the removal of a modern cupboard and store (Plate 49) and removal of a set of double doors (Plate 50). These features post-date 1956 as they do not feature on the plans "as existing" of that time. These features were most likely added when the restaurant area was created for which a date is not known, but was possibly during the 1980s. Unfortunately access was not possible to the inside of the store cupboard during the survey. Interestingly, the ceiling in this part of the building has exposed chamfered beams (Plate 49) and reportedly exposed elements of the ceiling with original reedwork continue inside of the cupboard (Horsley, Townsend, Heron 2010).

### **Alteration 7c**

*"Lower internal floor level"*

- 6.6.6 The proposal involves the removal the late 20th century floor within this room. The floor was concealed beneath carpet and as the hotel was still in use, it was not possible to lift and inspect. However, the floor was made up of concrete (Horsley, Townsend and Heron 2010) and did not warrant further recording or investigation.

## **6.7 Building 8 : Tabret Rooms**

### **Background**

- 6.7.1 During the 17th and 18th century many of the additional buildings within the courtyard area and at the rear were built to accommodate more guests, horses, stable staff, servants and associated activities including the building known as the Tabret Rooms. The first available cartographic source for this study, dated 1725 (Figure 3) is the Fisher and Saunders estate map. This map shows a range of buildings, very similar to the current layout. There is evidence within the façade of the current Tabret Rooms (Plate 51) which extends along the southern wing from the timber-framed building, that this once had wider openings and different windows to the current horizontally sliding Yorkshire sashes, typically dating to the 18th and 19th century. This may have been additional rooms for guests. The datestone on this elevation is misleading and is believed to have been added as part of later alteration works in the 20th century.

### **Alteration 8a**

*“To form a bedroom suite....to form a ramped access to this area”*

- 6.7.2 This alteration involves the addition of several new partitions within the "Tabret Suite" to create an access corridor and bedroom with *en suite*.
- 6.7.3 The Tabret Room was most recently in use as a function room and at the time of the survey was used to store associated chairs and furniture. It measured 9.33m by 4.62m and was painted in an off-white (Plate 52). The floor was covered with underlay from a recently removed carpet and the ceiling comprised a plasterboard covering with modern square shaped light fittings and spot lights. There are four exposed beams spanning the width of the room: their locations are clearly shown on the 1956 architect's drawings (Figure 16). All beams were chamfered with stops at each end (Plate 53).
- 6.7.4 There was a recess in the wall at one end (Plate 52). This partition wall was clearly present on the plans of 1956 (Figure 16). On the other side is a small room with built-in cupboards on one side. This access to this room was via a door which is typically 1930s-40s in style comprising four panels, two larger, dappled glazed panels on the top half with two smaller ones on the bottom section with a rounded Bakelite handle (Plate 54). On the other side of this room, within the Tabret Rooms was another small room which was used to house a boiler (Plate 55). This small room was not accessible due to the machinery inside, however, a window set within a larger opening was visible at the far end of the room. The height and positioning of the arch above the window indicates the position of a former doorway. This corresponds to a blocked-up door noted on the external elevation (Plate 56). The architect's plans from 1956 (Figure 16) shows this room was subdivided, although the text is illegible and function cannot be determined.
- 6.7.5 Since 1956, an internal partition has been added at the other end of this room, which is to be retained and a personnel door inserted. There was little detail of this partition to be recorded other than that it was constructed of a thin plasterboard and formed an obvious recess (Plate 57).

## **6.8 Building 9 : Former Coachstore**

### **Background**

- 6.8.1 This element of the hotel comprises another stone building, also covered with Collyweston slate (Plate 11). From the external elevation, it is clear that this building originally had a wider opening and has had replacement windows and doors. It is likely that this building stored coaches or carts, especially given its secure location within the courtyard and is likely to date to the 17th/18th century. The building was converted to a Billiards Room during the 19th/20th century and was still in use as such at the time of the 1956 plans (Figure 16). At the time of the survey it was being used as the hotel's main kitchen.

### **Alteration 9a**

*“Reinstate existing external personnel door openings to north flank wall (previously an external wall).”*

- 6.8.2 The doorway was blocked up at some point after the 1965 plans were created. This



doorway was not visible from within the building (in use as the hotel kitchen) as it was obscured by plasterboard which concealed all original internal detail of the building (Plate 58).

### **Alteration 9b**

*“Removal of the ground floor extension, (Building 6), will expose the much altered east gable wall...It is proposed to reinstate the gable wall at ground floor, the original fabric lines and the openness of the courtyard”*

- 6.8.3 The east-facing gable wall of Building 9 / coach-store was obscured by the addition of the 1949 single storey extension which was later incorporated into the restaurant. The removal of the restaurant will result in the exposure of an internal doorway which, at the time of the survey, linked the hotel restaurant and kitchen. The opening was plain and plastered around with no evidence of the original external stonework. The doorway was not present at the time of the 1956 survey (Figure 16) where it would have been positioned between the Billiards Room corridor and the gentlemen's toilets on the other side (within the 1949 extension). It must therefore have been inserted when the restaurant area was created/opened up in the later part of the 20th century.
- 6.8.4 An additional visit to the site in November 2011 during the watching brief phase of works within the courtyard area allowed for the observation of the exposed east-facing gable wall of Building 9 / coach-store. The “ghostline” of the removed 1949 single storey extension was exposed, evidenced through exposed painted plaster and the steel joists and later 20th century bricks used to create the opening were also visible (Plate 59).

### **Alteration 9e**

*“Create level access with restaurant areas. It is proposed to raise a portion of the existing kitchen floor. This will be an additive alteration; and will be fully reversible.”*

- 6.8.5 At the time of the survey, the kitchen floor was covered with a modern linoleum. There was no other detail to be noted.

## **6.9 Building 11 : Stable Buildings (south range)**

### **Background**

- 6.9.1 This building is positioned between the timber-framed range (Building 2) and the Tabret Rooms (Building 8) (Figure 20). Considered to be part of the early 18th century development of the site, Building 11 is clearly a separate phase to the Tabret Rooms denoted by the subtle variation in stonework and also by the change in the roof-line (Plate 56). However, the courtyard development is all thought to be part of the expansion or re-development of the site during the early 18th century coaching era. The

original function of Building 11 is difficult to determine from the existing fabric and available record, however it is likely given the expansion of the site as a coaching inn at this time this building may have provided stables. There is a suggestion in the existing external elevation of wider openings which may have accommodated horses or coaches/wagons.

### **Alteration 11a**

*“Dismantle existing staircase. Form new timber staircase to first floor.”*

- 6.9.2 The timber staircase scheduled to be removed was not present on the 1956 architect's drawings (Figure 16), indicating they post-date this phase of development, although there does appear to be a smaller staircase shown. At that time this part of the building had not been as sub-divided as it appeared at the time of the survey and comprised a “scullery” and “cold store”.
- 6.9.3 The staircase to be removed was of a simple timber construction and covered with carpet. It was in two parts (unlike the former one shown on the 1965 plan). On entering Building 11 from the external doorway, a small flight of three steps gave access to the bottom of the main staircase to the right (Plate 60).
- 6.9.4 The main staircase comprised an additional ten steps providing access to the first floor landing area (Plate 61). There was a handrail on either side and a screen of wooden turned balustrades at the top. On the left hand side on ascending the staircase was evidence of a sawn timber (Plate 62). It is possible that this may have supported the original staircase or perhaps supported an earlier floor level.

### **Alteration 11b**

*“Reinstate existing personnel opening. Form new disabled ramp.”*

- 6.9.5 On the immediate left of the first small set of three steps was a cupboard with shelves set within a wide archway (Plate 61). From the inside of the cupboard, the space beneath the main staircase could be seen, allowing a view of the height from the ground level of the building to the level of the suspended stairs to be seen. It appeared that the archway was a previous doorway and the raised height of the stairs in the building rendered it unusable and therefore was consequently turned into a cupboard. This suggestion is supported by the presence of a set of steps and a doorway in the location of the cupboard on the 1956 plan which connected the scullery and the kitchen (Figure 16).
- 6.9.6 The cupboard is therefore a post-1956 addition. It comprised three internal shelves and a set of plain wooden doors with simple recessed handles and modern security bar allowing for a padlock to be secured. The area on the opposite side of the wall was in use as a barrel store at the time of the survey. The walls were tiled and there was no obvious evidence of the corresponding doorway visible (Plate 63).

### **Alteration 11c**

*“Create new toilets (including disabled) to serve reception”.*

- 6.9.7 This proposal does not involve the removal or alteration of any existing fabric. The room to be used to create new toilets was a staff office/storage area at the time of the survey (Plate 64). The architects plans from 1956 indicate this was a “cold store” at that time. There was a large brick/stone feature at one end of the room into which cupboards have been added on the other side. This may have been a bricked-up fireplace or perhaps a cooking range.

## **6.10 Building 13 : 1930's Staff and Guest Accommodation Block**

### **Background**

- 6.10.1 A number of alterations were made in the last century, many internally. The addition of three principal parts of the hotel expanded its capacity for the number of guests it could accommodate. During the 1930s a plant room was built within the courtyard. Cartographic sources including the 1885 Ordnance Survey (Figure 8) and 1877 drainage and sewerage map (Figure 7) indicate this new building did not replace any pre-existing structures. The extension was later converted into staff accommodation with the addition of bathrooms and bedrooms. This block is one of a number of buildings which enclose an inner garden courtyard situated towards the rear of the site.

### **Alteration 13a**

*“Form new openings in west facing external wall and install new double door sets”.*

- 6.10.2 The west-facing façade of Building 13 is partially obscured by the reduced/sunken ground level and ivy and shrubbery (Plate 65). Constructed using a dark buff coloured brick laid mostly in a Flemish bond, this building has a flat roof and chimney located at the rear. There is evidence within the brickwork of three blocked-up window openings, one of which is larger and has had two windows inserted within it and a door, possibly a former fire escape (Figure 25, Elevation 7). All fenestration comprises wooden framed one, two and three part casements painted in black and white and is thought to be contemporary, perhaps added when the block was converted to accommodation.
- 6.10.3 The ground level has been significantly reduced for the construction of this building and the proposed alterations will involve removing more of the ground in front of this elevation to allow for a sloped access. During the watching brief phase of investigations outside of the building in November 2011, more of the elevation including rendered foundations and brick-built drainage covers were exposed (Plate 66).
- 6.10.4 The new double door sets will be located at the reduced ground level where the presently concealed arrangement of windows is located. These windows are likely to be mid-late 20th century in date when the building was converted and although will be lost at this level, those on the first floor will be retained to represent this phase of the development.

### **Alteration 13b**

*“Remove internal masonry and stud partitions thus providing a link at ground floor to other food and beverage trading areas.”*

- 6.10.5 Building 13 was constructed to provide a plant room for the hotel and was later converted to provide accommodation for staff by inserting a series of internal partitions at ground and first floor level. The stud partitions used are by far the easiest way of sub-dividing one large room into small enclosed areas without the use of substantial building material – in most cases comprising wooden frames with a plasterboard finish. Unfortunately, access to these areas was not possible during the survey, but the positioning of these divisions can be seen in Figure 21 which represents the record of their locations prior to removal.
- 6.10.6 The 1956 architect's drawings show that this area had a slightly different arrangement at that time and provided ladies toilets and storage. It also shows the arrangement of the boiler rooms and coke store which occupied a significant space on the ground floor at this time. It is likely that this arrangement remained until the conversion into staff accommodation in the 1970s.

### **Alteration 13c**

*“Reduce external ground levels and form new stone steps.”*

- 6.10.7 Archaeological monitoring was undertaken during the reduction of the ground in this location, the results of which are discussed in Section 7.2.

### **Alteration 13d**

*“Render existing elevation.”*

- 6.10.8 The rendering of this elevation will conceal the brickwork as described in Section 6.10.2 and shown in in Figure 25, Elevation 7.

### **Alteration 13e**

*“Remove internal masonry and stud partitions at first floor, replacing four existing bedrooms with two double bedrooms.”*

- 6.10.9 A brief inspection was available of one of the rooms during the survey, however access and photography was not possible in other rooms as these were still occupied by staff working in the hotel. As Figure 21 shows, internal partitions have been added to create four individual bedrooms, each with *en suite* bathroom. Each room is accessed from a central corridor and a door has been added at the end to link this building to the earlier part of the hotel. At the opposite end of the corridor access is made via a door to the later 1970s accommodation block.

*“Modify current external window arrangement, enlarging existing openings to replicate their original size.”*

- 6.10.10 This alteration presumably refers to the first floor windows as those at ground floor level are to be removed to allow for new access doors. The current first floor fenestration arrangement is shown on Plates 65 and 66 and represented in the client's architect's elevation drawing (Figure 25, Elevation 7). The windows are thought to date to the 1970s when Building 13 was converted into accommodation from a plant room. This alteration would require the insertion of windows which respect the arrangements of rooms created internally.
- 6.10.11 The windows on this elevation are thought to be contemporary, comprising wooden one or two-part casements set within wooden frames with plain or dimpled-effect glass and painted black and white.

### ***Alteration 13f***

*“Form new fire escape from second floor to ground.”*

- 6.10.12 The current fire escape comprises two sections; stone steps which presumably previously allowed first floor access from outside (possibly as an earlier fire escape) and an additional flight of galvanised steel steps which lead up to a suspended walkway area connecting the roofs of Buildings 9 and 13 (Plate 67 and Figure 25, Elevation 7).
- 6.10.13 During the return visit in November 2011, the fire escape was being removed.

## 7 RESULTS : ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING

### 7.1 Demolition of Single Storey Extensions

- 7.1.1 The single storey extension was being removed during return visits to the site in November 2011. The Brief required that monitoring was carried out during the excavation of footings for the new extension (Mordue 2011b). Although the Brief did not require monitoring of the demolition or entire courtyard area, an inspection of the area was made. This revealed a number of interesting features and remains as noted in the following sections. Figure 26 shows the location of the areas monitored and the features exposed.

#### ***Single Storey Extension Tiled Floor***

- 7.1.2 The remnants of a decorative tiled floor were noted within the location of the single storey extension. This was revealed during the removal of the concrete floor which had until demolition covered the floor of the restaurant area (Plate 68). The tiles were comprised terracotta, yellow and black colours and created an octagonal pattern with diamond borders (Plate 69). These tiles are likely to have formed the original floor covering of the 1949 extension (entrance and residents lounge), later concealed with concrete – perhaps during the later 20th century when the restaurant was created.

#### ***Well***

- 7.1.3 A stone-lined well was encountered by the ground workers (Plate 70). It had been covered over with large slabs of stone and was not under threat from development it was decided to leave *in-situ* and cover back over. The well measured approximately 1 metre in diameter and despite the use of a mechanical excavator, only 2 metres of its rubble backfill could be removed. No dating evidence was retrieved, however, the well does not appear on any of the historic maps consulted.

#### ***Building Foundations***

- 7.1.4 A small area of surviving stone wall foundations was exposed following the removal of the concrete and tiled floor beneath the 1949 single storey extension. The foundations measured 1.2m by 3m and were located in front of an exposed doorway on the south-facing elevation of the north courtyard range (Plate 71) (Figure 26). These foundations may have been for a small porch or sheltered area in front of the doorway as shown exposed in Plate 72. This is likely to be the same doorway as is shown on a photograph of the courtyard taken in the late 19th/early 20th century (Figure 18) which would have provided an entrance to this building range prior to the addition of the 1949 extension.

#### ***Cobbled Surface***

- 7.1.5 A small area of cobbled surface was also exposed following the removal of the concrete and tiled floor beneath the 1949 single storey extension (Plate 73). Located at the same level as the foundations, and only present in a small exposed area, this may have been the remnants of a path leading to the doorway as noted above or perhaps the remains of an early courtyard surface. A small amount of investigation revealed that these small rounded pebble stones were pressed into a firm, sandy surface below and were extremely compacted. Although no dating evidence was recovered during cleaning or the removal of a small area of stones, this surface will not be removed as part of the alterations and will remain protected *in-situ*. Plate 74 shows how the cobbled surface, foundation stones and location of earlier doorway relate to each other.

## **7.2 Reduction in Ground Level of Hotel Gardens**

- 7.2.1 Monitoring of the ground reduction in the rear hotel gardens did not expose any significant archaeological remains.
- 7.2.2 An area measuring approximately 4.5m by 2.75m was removed under constant observation using a mini digger. Spoil was removed and stored on site with the use of a conveyor (Plate 1). All spoil was scanned using a metal detector.
- 7.2.3 Up to 0.80m of topsoil and subsoil was removed to a point where natural sands and gravels were exposed (Plate 75).
- 7.2.4 There is no available cartographic evidence to suggest there were buildings on this site after 1725 and all maps consulted show this part of the hotel as garden with trees (Figure 8).

## **7.3 Exposed Fireplace in Snug Bar, Building 1**

- 7.3.1 Although not part of the required monitoring, a fireplace was exposed within the former “snug” bar of Building 1 which was worthy of an additional note. The fireplace was previously concealed behind late 20th century bar fixtures and fittings. Constructed using decorative brick and tile with a carved wooden surround this fireplace is thought to be late 19th/early 20th century in date (Plate 76).

## 8 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1.1 The Talbot Hotel in Oundle is one of the landmarks within the town and known by all who have lived and stayed there. It has an impressive frontage and an equally intriguing and impressive interior comprising a number of phases. The hotel is described by Pevsner as “the finest building in Oundle” (Pevsner 1973) and has been used for a number of important functions, meetings and events during the town's long history.
- 8.1.2 The hotel developed on a typical early plan, around an internal courtyard into which the stagecoaches could be driven to discharge their passengers and goods. As with many early country coaching inns, there was an archway from the street, and many such examples have a second archway on the farther side leading into the stables (Middleton undated). With the Talbot Hotel the courtyard plan began to alter as the use of the horse-drawn coach declined. The courtyard began to in-fill based on the earlier lines, narrowing and reducing the inner, once more important courtyard space.
- 8.1.3 Various alterations and repairs have been carried during the life of the hotel both to the interior and exterior to accommodate the changing needs of the business and its patrons. This latest series of alterations will not only allow the building to develop and provide better access, but will also reflect the needs of visitors to the hotel for the future with changes that are sympathetic to the building's history. They will allow the exposure of original features and lines and better movement and flow throughout the internal and external spaces.
- 8.1.4 Although the survey of the areas affected by the building alteration has added little to the understanding of the hotel's historic development, it has added to current understanding of the more recent 20th century changes and alterations. The aim of this survey was to record the elements of the building scheduled to be altered which dated on the whole to the mid 20th century. In addition, a presence on site during the building alterations has added to the record and understanding of some of the mid-20th century changes.
- 8.1.5 The archaeological monitoring has, however revealed the survival of archaeological remains within the courtyard area which possibly date to the late 18th/early 19th century. The record created adds to the history of the site, and as the remains are not threatened by immediate work in this area, they remain undisturbed for future investigation.
- 8.1.6 In the past, the town has always had a number of inns, hotels and pubs which reflect the importance of Oundle as a centre for a range of economic and social activities and the Talbot Hotel has always been at the centre of it. Despite having a number of hostelryes, the Talbot was used for the most important of these holding meetings, inquiries, dances and celebrations. This latest phase of essential works hopes to see the revival of the hotel to its former glory and its ability to provide facilities for residents, visitors and staff for many more years.



## 9 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to thank Kevin Charity of the Bulldog Hotel Group and Ross Macaulay on behalf of the hotel owners for commissioning and funding the report. Thanks are also expressed to the staff at the Oundle Museum and also to Jim Irving who kindly assisted in making valuable sources available from the original research for the Desk Based Assessment in 2009. The author carried out both phases of the work, assisted by James Fairbairn who undertook all Medium Format photography. The Brief for both phases of the work were written by Liz Mordue of Northamptonshire County Council who also visited the site and monitored the works.

## APPENDIX A. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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## MAPS CONSULTED

Description	Year	Northamptonshire Office (NRO) Reference	Record
Fisher and Saunders Estate Map	1725	NRO MAP1725	
Oundle Inclosure Map	1810	NRO MAP2858	
Oundle Sewerage and Drainage Plan	1877	NRO MAP 5949	
First Edition Ordnance Survey	1886	First Edition OS Northamptonshire XIX.5	
Second Edition Ordnance Survey	1901	Second Edition Northamptonshire XIX.5	OS
Tithe Map	Date unknown	T114	

## SOURCES CONSULTED

Description	Date	Northamptonshire Record Office (NRO) Reference
Engraving by B. Rudge	1841	P/5503
Sketches of the Talbot Hotel	Unknown	P/987
Picture Postcard "New Street"	1902	P/5246
Picture Postcard "Courtyard Talbot Hotel"	Unknown	P/5245
Picture Postcard "Talbot Hotel"	Unknown	P/5244

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Photograph of the Stairs at The Talbot Hotel	1944	P/7263
<b>Description</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Source/reference</b>
"Proposed Internal alterations for Messers Smith & Co (Oundle Ltd)"	1956	Supplied by client
Photograph of Talbot Hotel	?	National Monument Record : OP.01832

## APPENDIX B. OASIS REPORT FORM

All fields are required unless they are not applicable.

### Project Details

OASIS Number	oxfordar3-119757		
Project Name	Historic Building Survey and Monitoring at The Talbot Hotel, Oundle, Northamptonshire		
Project Dates (fieldwork)	Start	01-08-201	Finish 30-11-2011
Previous Work (by OA East)	Yes	Future Work No	

### Project Reference Codes

Site Code	XNNTHO11	Planning App. No.	EN/10/01551/FUL&01552/LBC
HER No.	n/a	Related HER/OASIS No.	n/a

### Type of Project/Techniques Used

Prompt	Listed Building Consent
--------	-------------------------

### Please select all techniques used:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Annotated Sketch	<input type="checkbox"/> Photogrammetric Survey
<input type="checkbox"/> Dendrochronological Survey	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Photographic Survey
<input type="checkbox"/> Laser Scanning	<input type="checkbox"/> Rectified Photography
<input type="checkbox"/> Measured Survey	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Survey/Recording Of Fabric/Structure
X Archaeological Monitoring	

### Monument Types/Significant Finds & Their Periods

List feature types using the [NMR Monument Type Thesaurus](#) and significant finds using the [MDA Object type Thesaurus](#) together with their respective periods. If no features/finds were found, please state "none".

Monument	Period	Object	Period
Bldng -Coaching Inn	Post Medieval 1540 to 1901		Select period...
Bldng -Coaching Inn	Modern 1901 to Present		Select period...
Surface - yard	Post Medieval 1540 to 1901		Select period...

### Project Location

County	Northamptonshire	Site Address (including postcode if possible)
District	East Northamptonshire	The Talbot Hotel, New Street
Parish	Oundle	Oundle
HER	Northamptonshire County Council	Northamptonshire
Study Area	500 sq m	PE8 4EA
National Grid Reference	TL 04066 88126	

## Project Originators

Organisation	OA EAST
Project Brief Originator	Northamptonshire County Council
Project Design Originator	Liz Mordue
Project Manager	Taleyna Fletcher
Supervisor	Taleyna Fletcher

## Project Archives

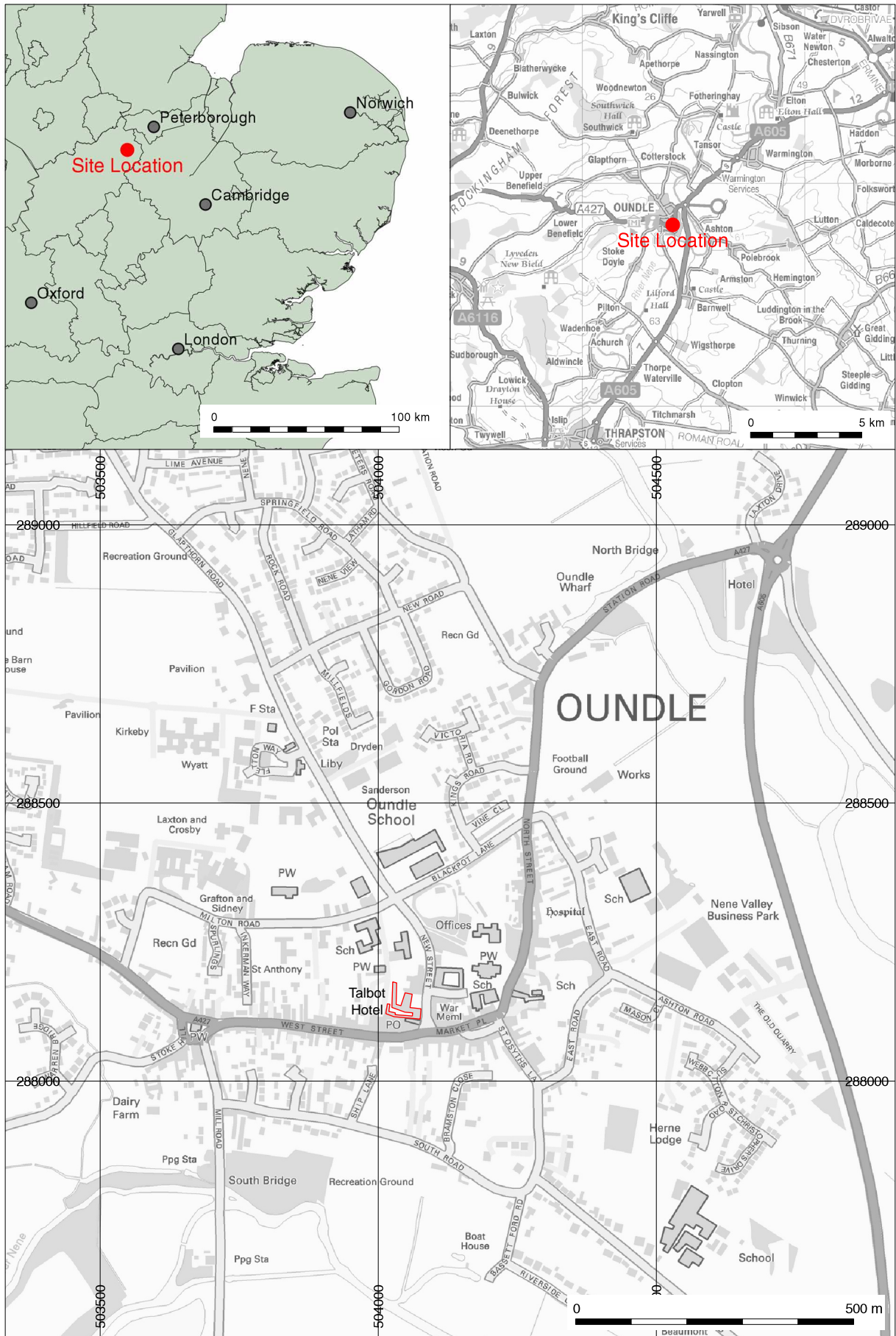
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Northamptonshire Museums - TBA	OA East Offices	Northamptonshire Museums - TBA
XNNTHO11	XNNTHO11	XNNTHO11

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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Report
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sections
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Survey

### Notes:



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2011.

Figure 1: Site location (red)

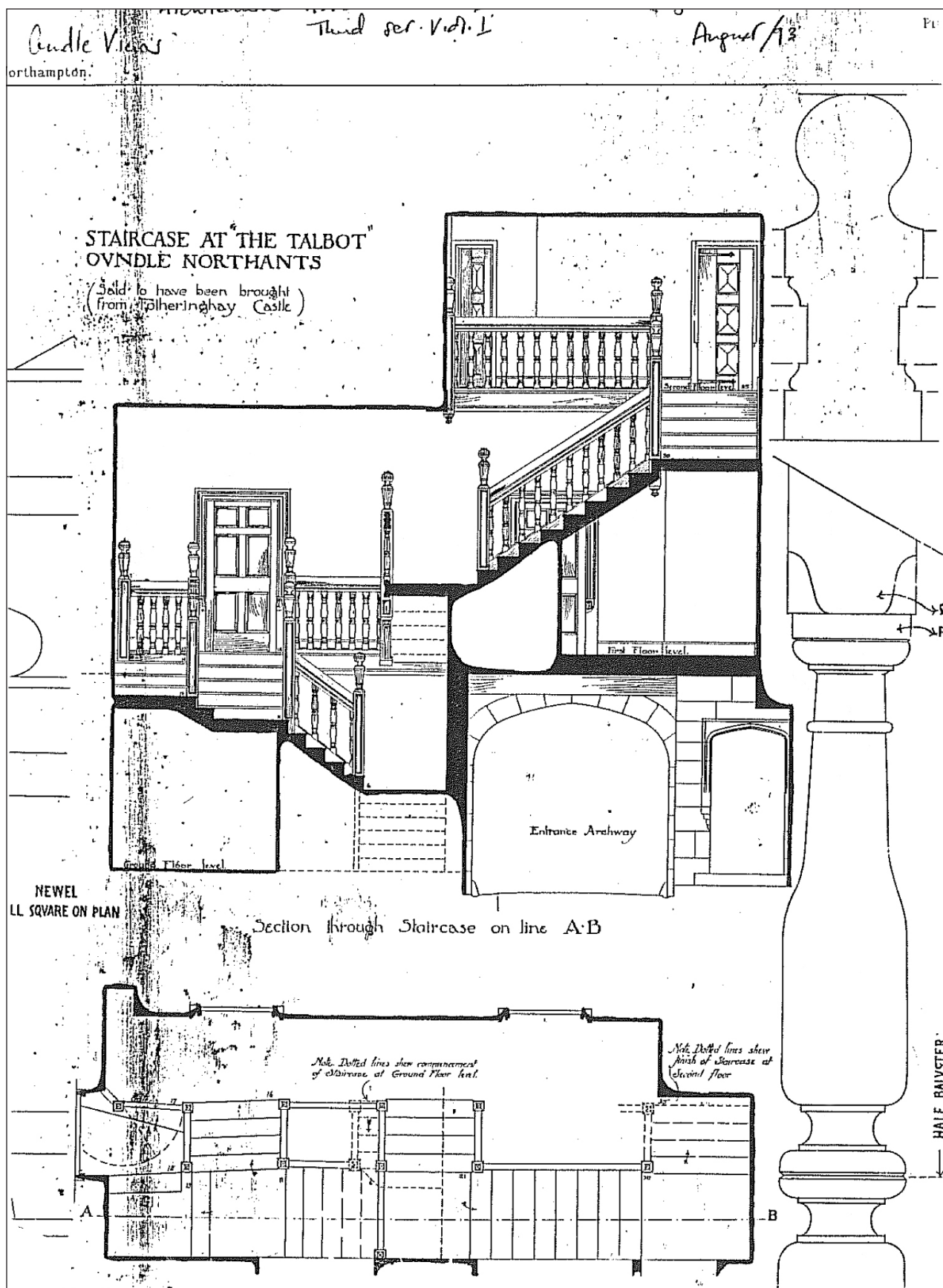


Figure 2: Architectural drawing of the staircase of the Talbot Hotel (from notes held in Oundle Museum), reproduced with kind permission from Oundle Museum



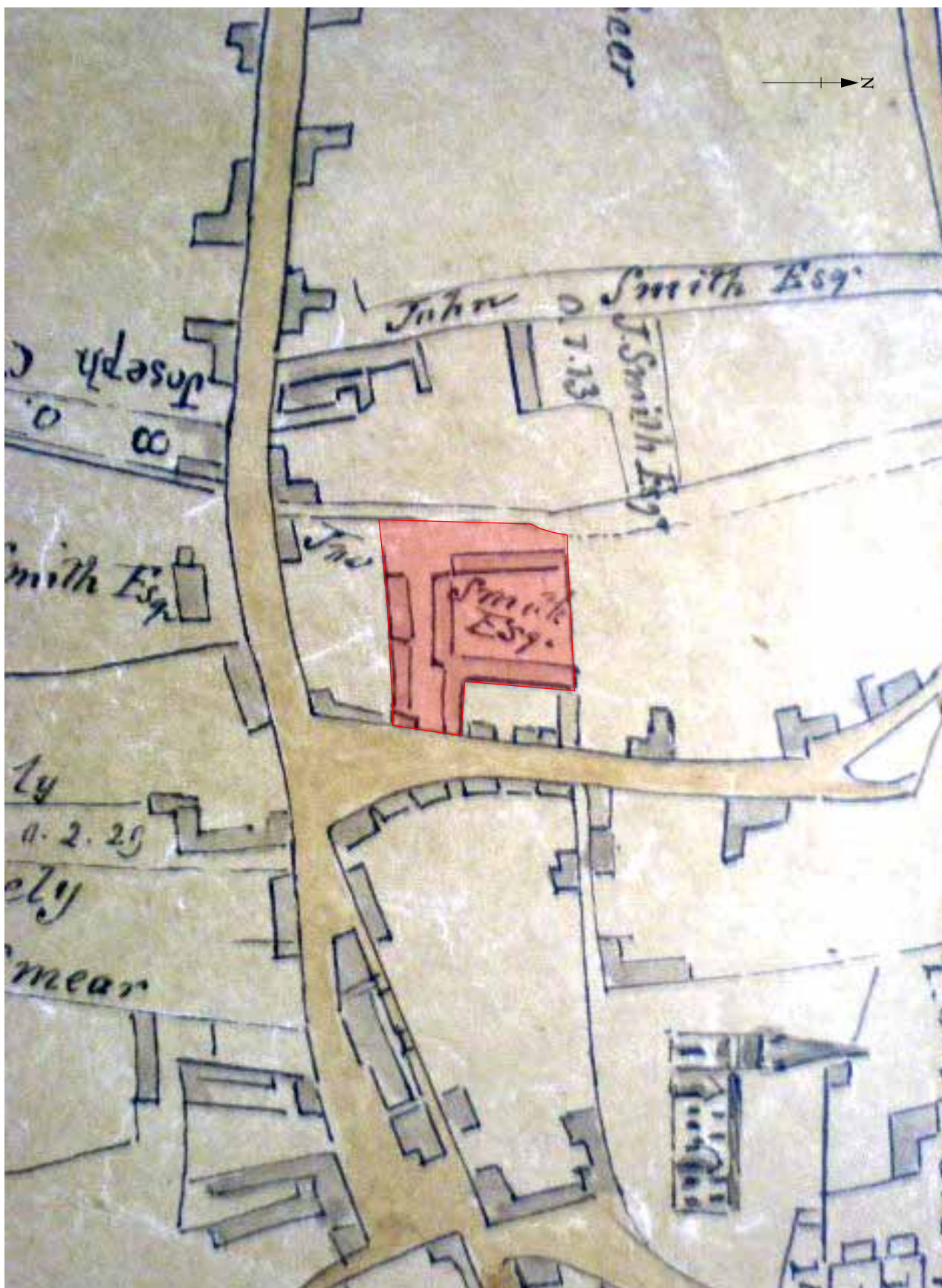


Figure 3: Fisher & Saunders estate map, 1725, showing study area in red (NRO MAP1725)



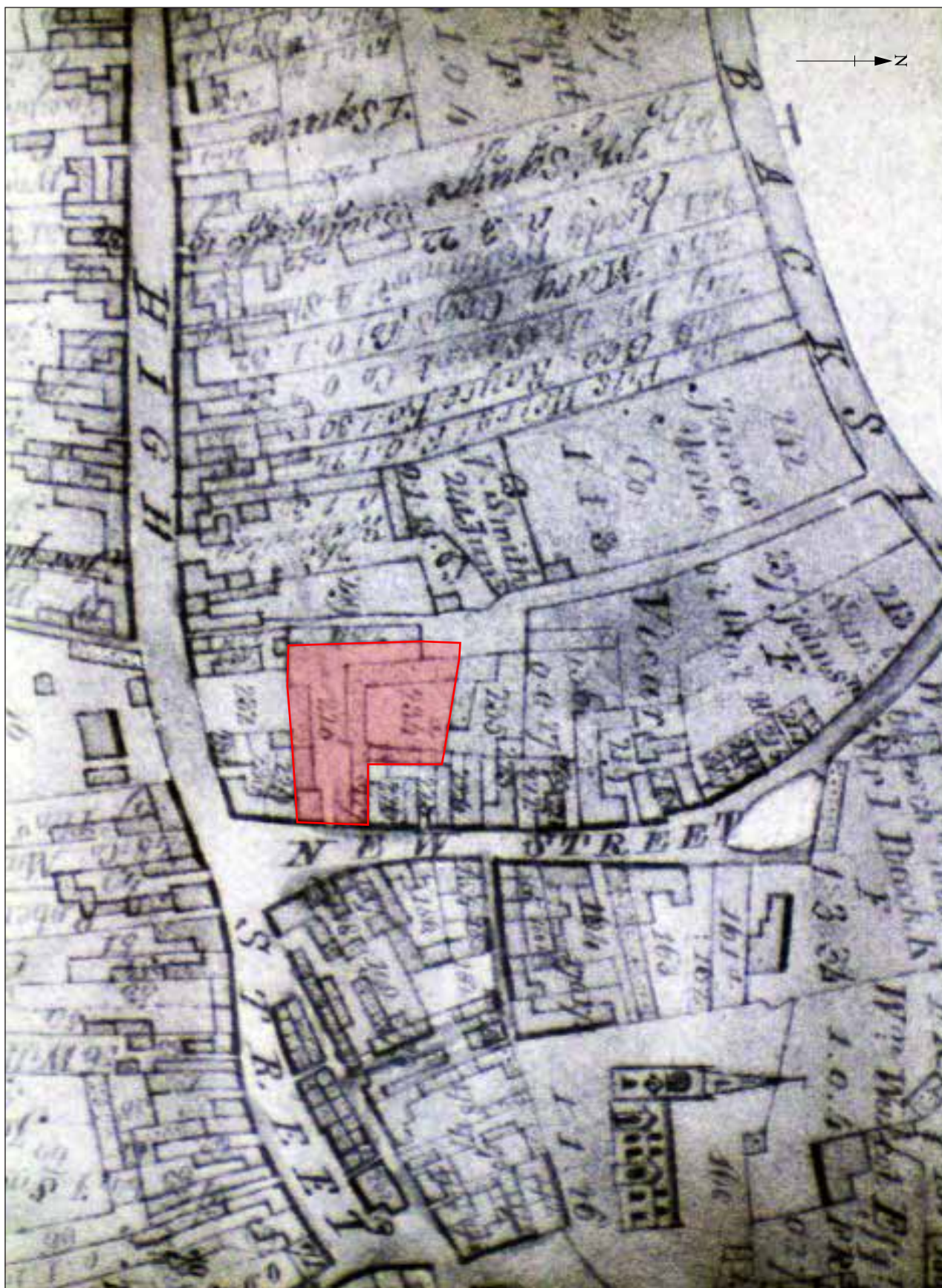


Figure 4: Enclosure map, 1810, showing study area in red (NRO MAP2858)



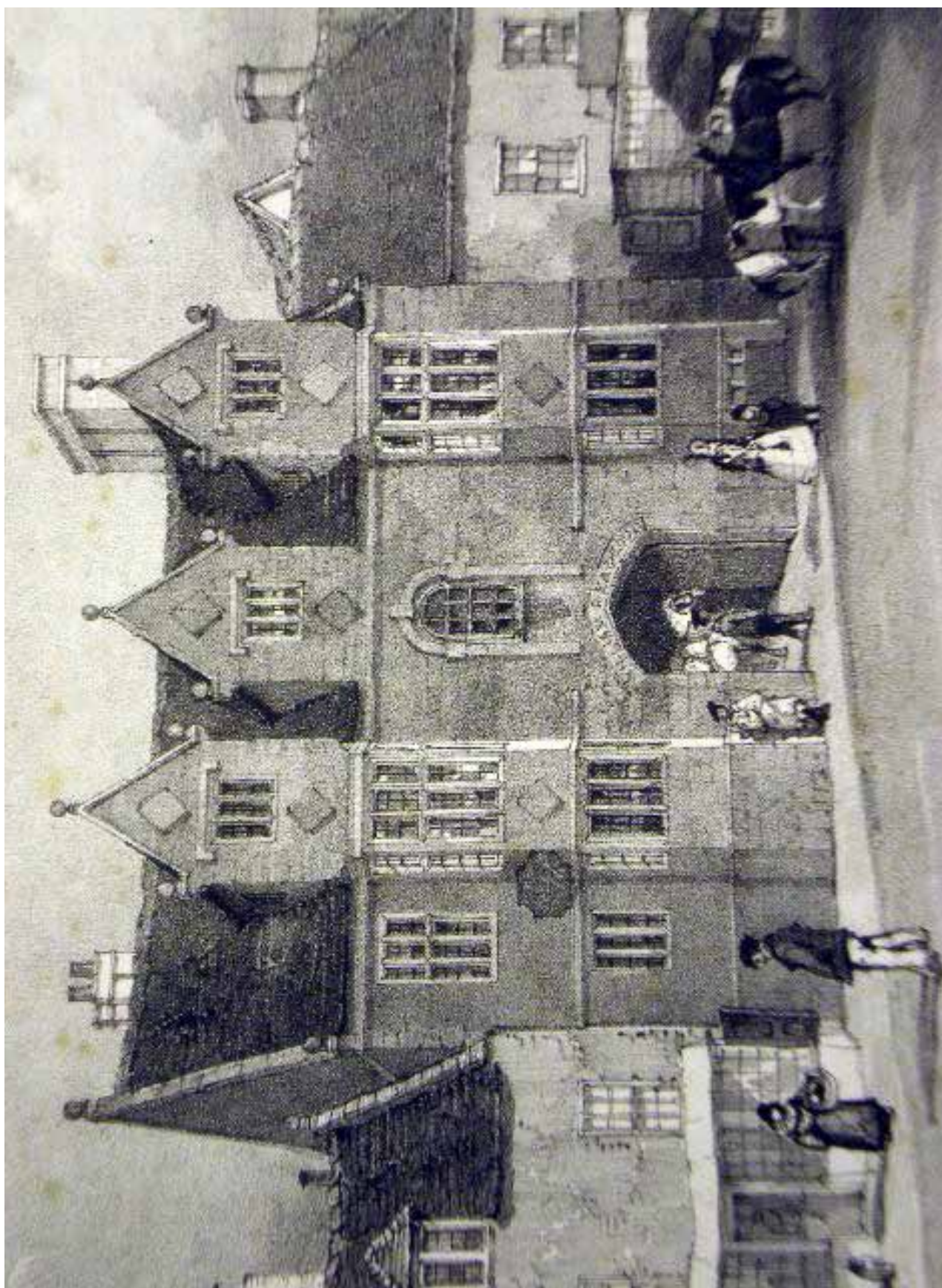


Figure 5: Engraving of the Talbot Hotel by B. Rudge, 1841 (NRO P/5503)





Figure 6a

Figure 6b



Figure 6: Picture postcards of the Talbot Hotel, dates unknown (NRO P/5246 and P/5244)



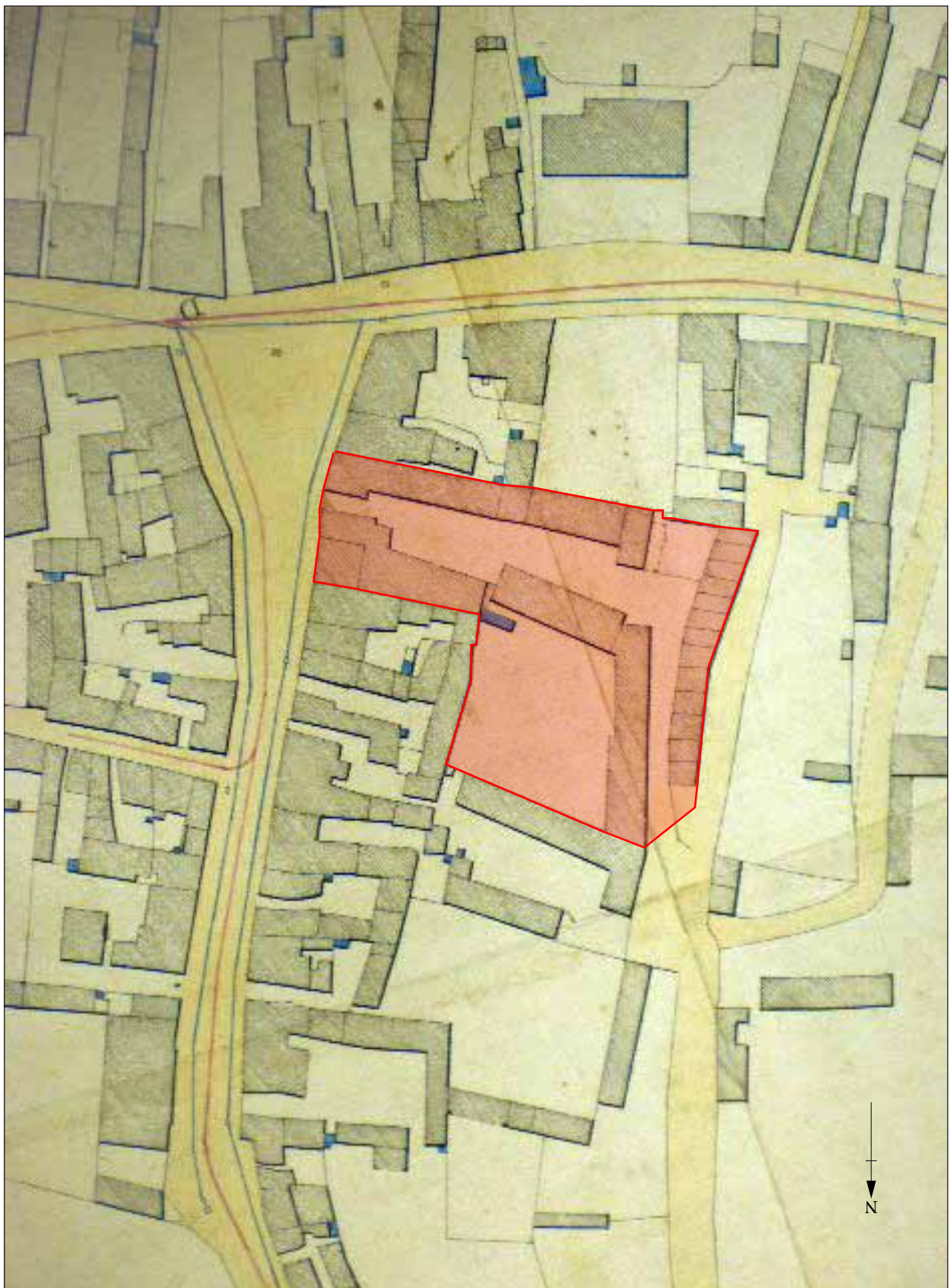


Figure 7: Sewerage-drainage plan, 1877, showing study area in red (NRO MAP5949)



Report Number 1293



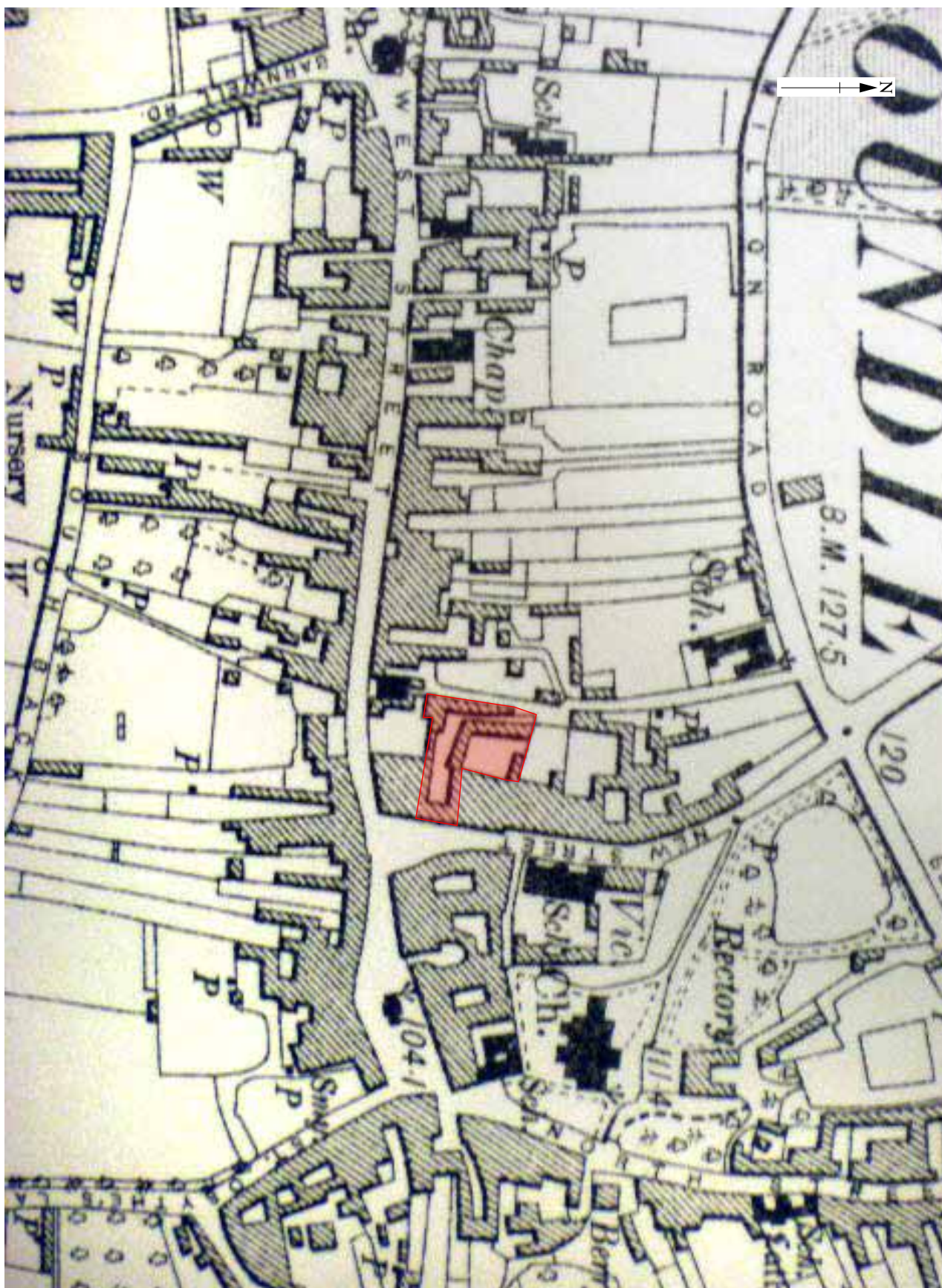


Figure 9: Second edition Ordnance Survey map, 1901 (6" to 1 mile), showing study area in red





Figure 10: Photograph of Talbot Hotel with horse and carriage, c.1863 (from client)



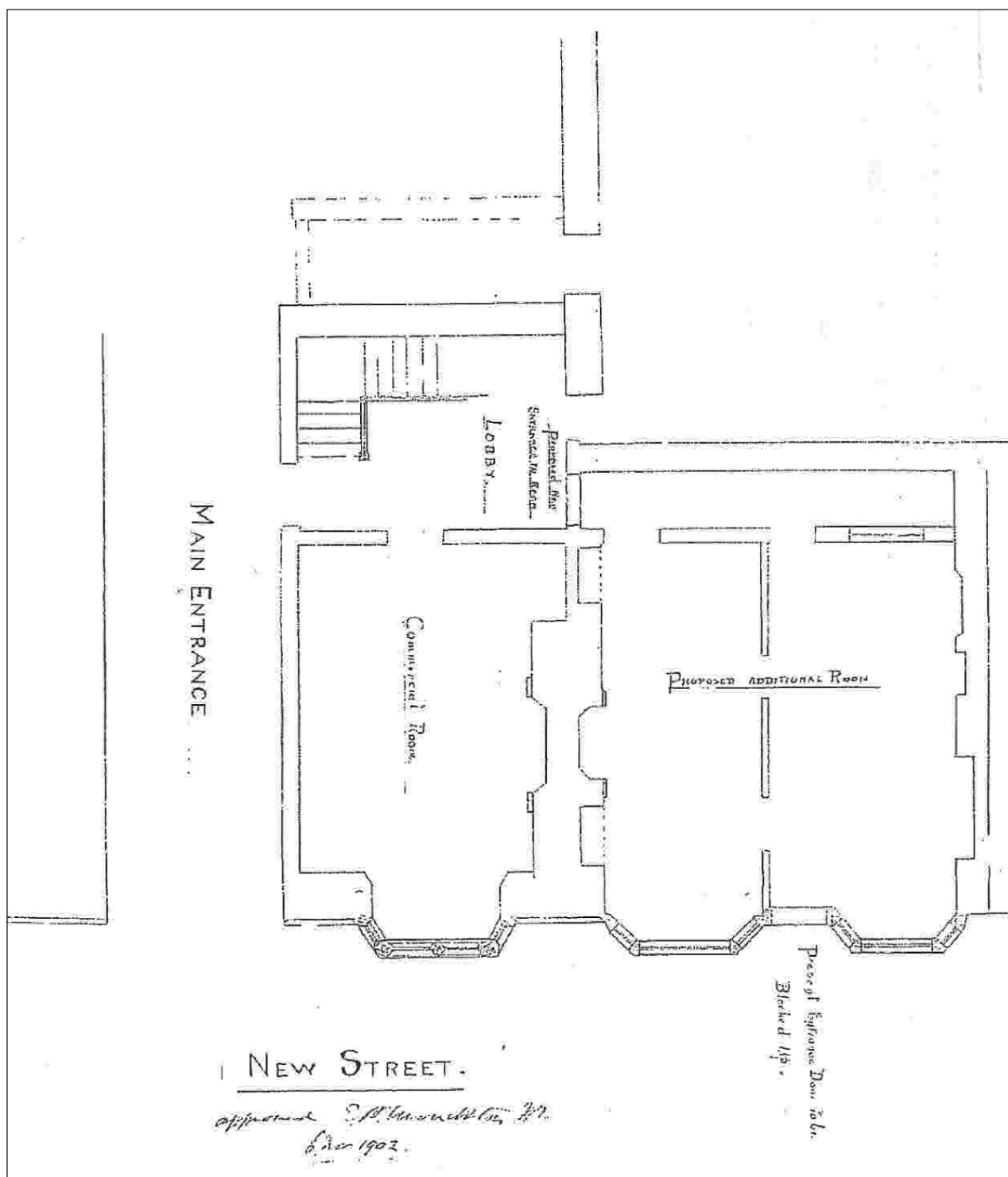


Figure 11: Architects plan for extension, 1902 (from J. Irving)

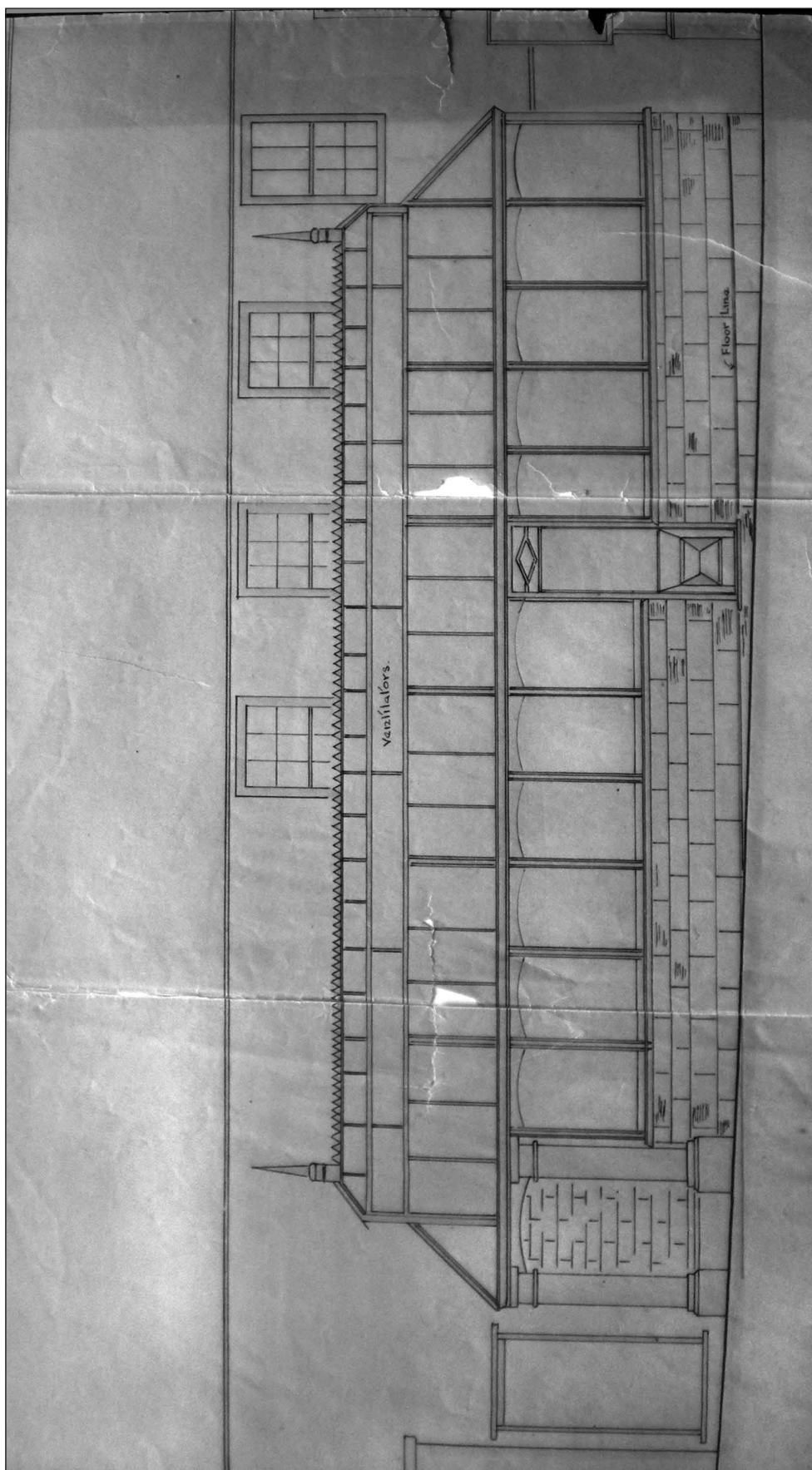


Figure 12: Architects drawing for extension to north wing within courtyard, 1917 (from J. Irving)



Figure 13: Photograph of the courtyard of the Talbot Hotel with "Icehouse" on left, undated (from client)





Figure 14: Undated photograph of courtyard showing “shelter” inside archway and corner of a conservatory building (left), prior to construction of 1917 “icehouse” (NMR OP.01832)



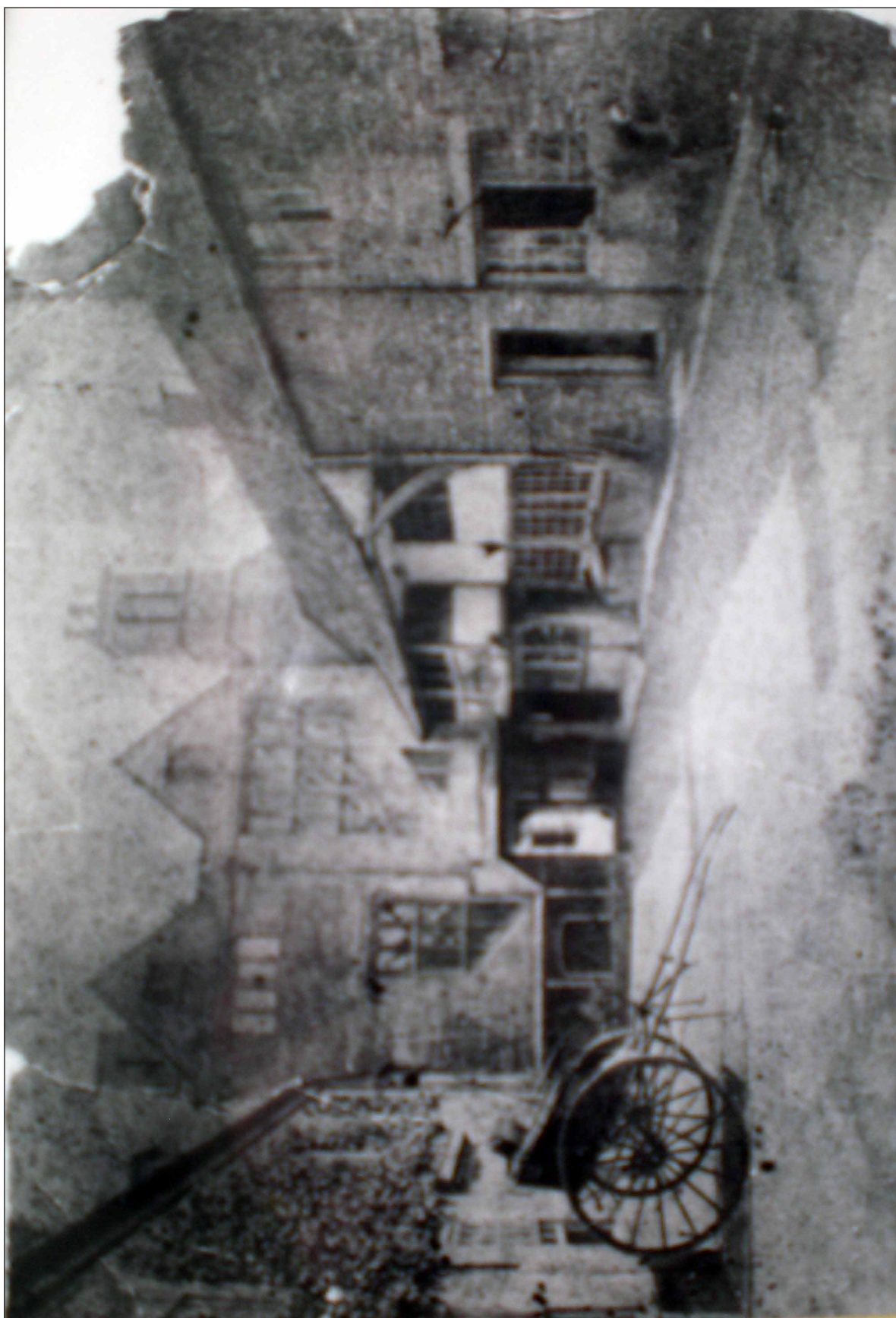


Figure 15: Undated photograph of the courtyard of the Talbot Hotel (from J. Irving)

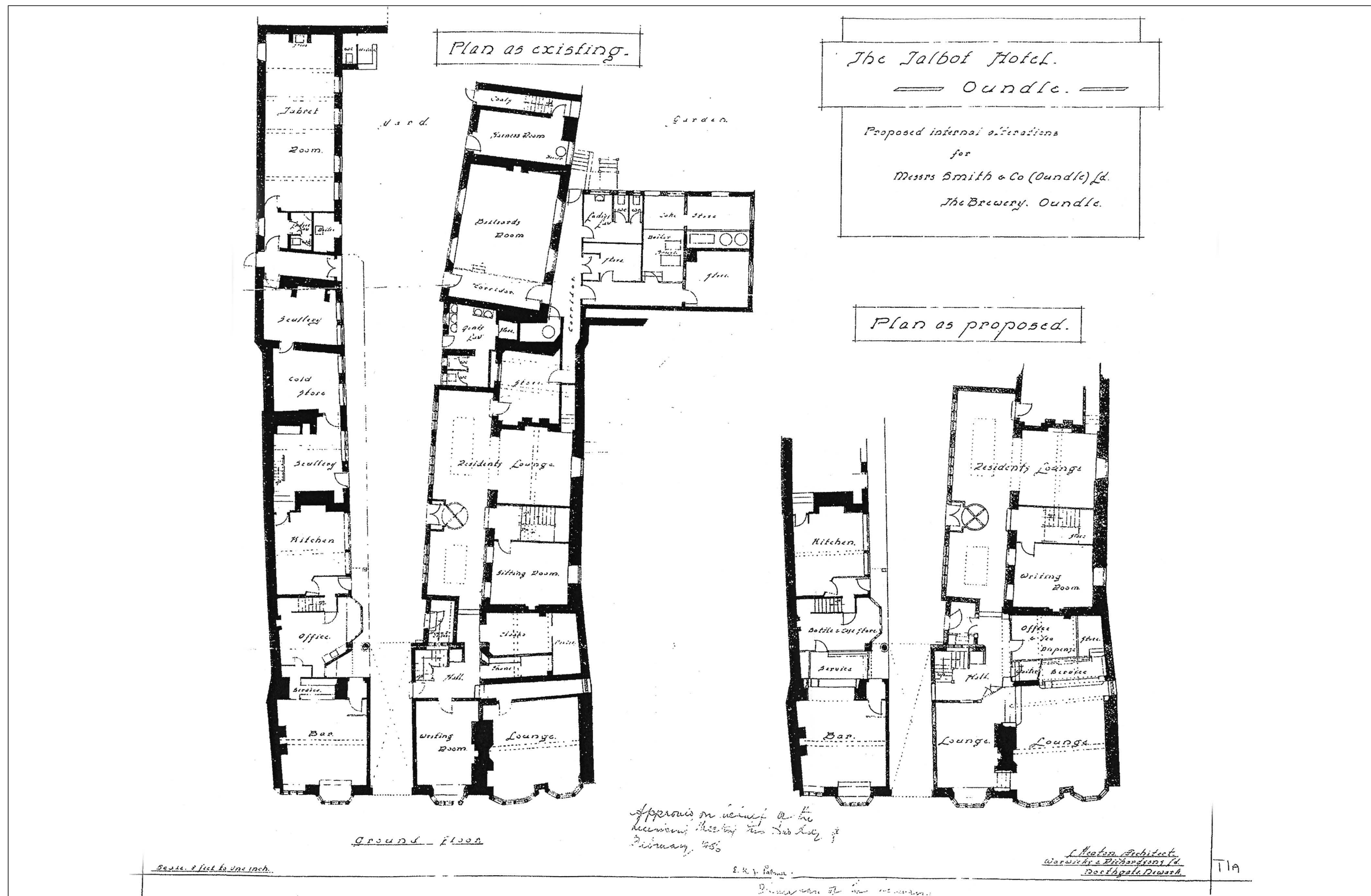


Figure 16: Architects plans of proposed alterations to the ground floor, 1956 (from client)





Figure 17: Photograph of building alterations taking place, 1966 (from J. Irving)



Figure 18: Photograph of the courtyard at the Talbot in the late 19th/early 20th century (from client)



12 ↘

16 ↓



Figure 19a: Ground floor plan showing locations of plates and elevations (from data supplied by client)

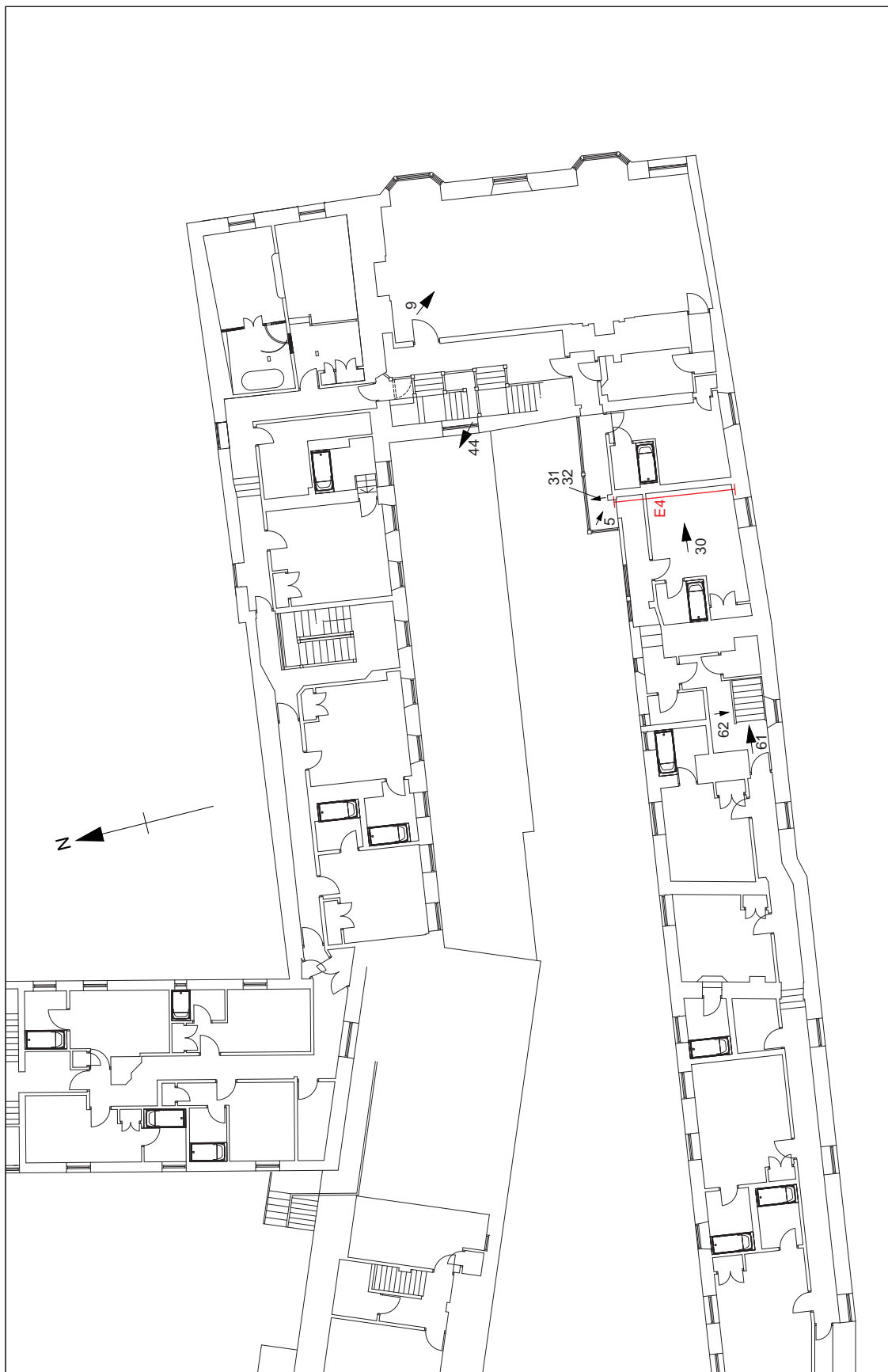


Figure 19b: First floor plan showing locations of plates and elevations (from data supplied by client)



Figure 20: Key to building numbers as referenced in report



Figure 21a: Ground floor plan of the Talbot Hotel with location of areas recorded prior to proposed alterations (from data supplied by client)



Figure 21b: First floor plan of the Talbot Hotel with location of areas recorded prior to proposed alterations (from data supplied by client)



Figure 22: Ground and first floor plans of the Talbot Hotel with suggested phasing (data supplied by client)



Figure 23: Elevations 1, 2, 3 and 5 (from data supplied by client)

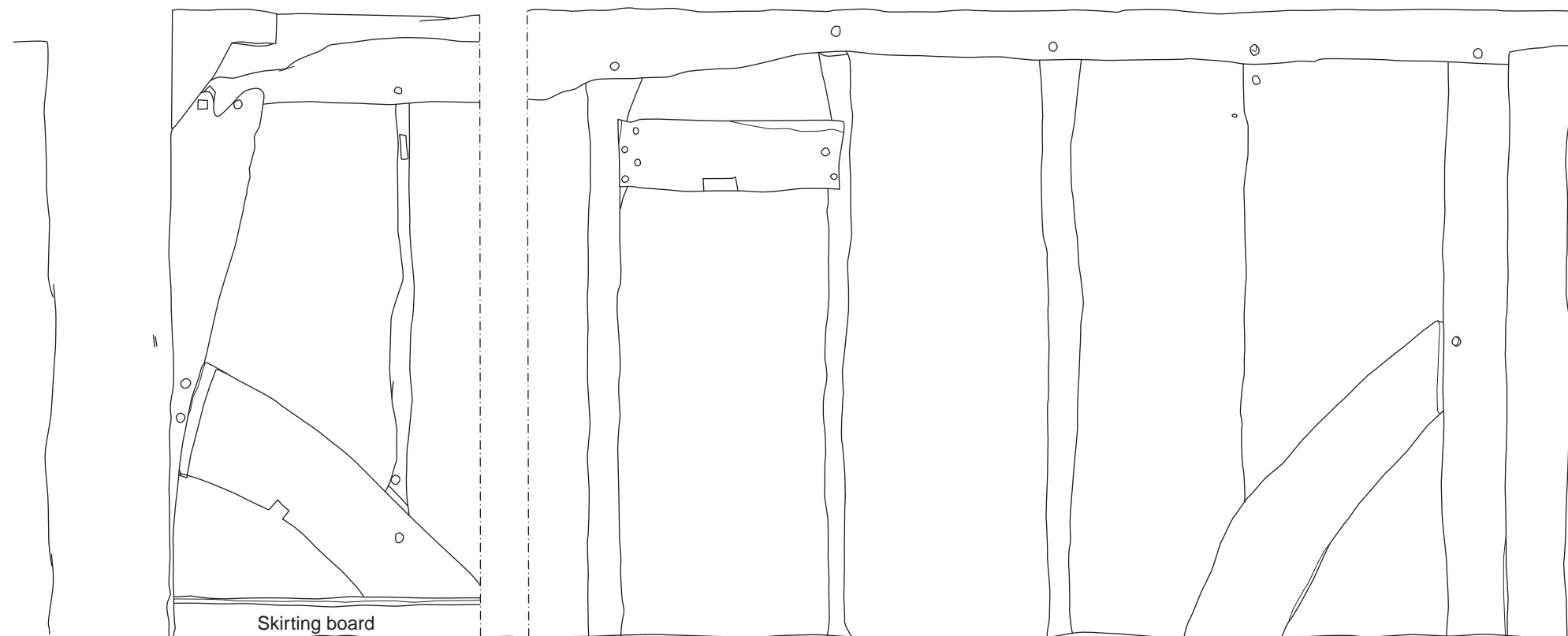


Figure 24: Elevation 4 showing exposed timber-frame in first floor bedroom and corridor



Elevation 6



Elevation 7



Figure 25: Elevations 6 and 7 (from data supplied by client)



Area A: Rear of hotel



Area A: Well



Area B: Courtyard



Area B: Courtyard

Figure 26: Location of areas of archaeological monitoring





Plate 1: Ground reduction at the rear of the hotel



Plate 2: The Talbot Hotel, from New Street





Plate 3: Timber-Framed building on southern wing (from courtyard)



Plate 4: Large bressumer, viewed from front bar



Plate 5: Window within the timber-framed range



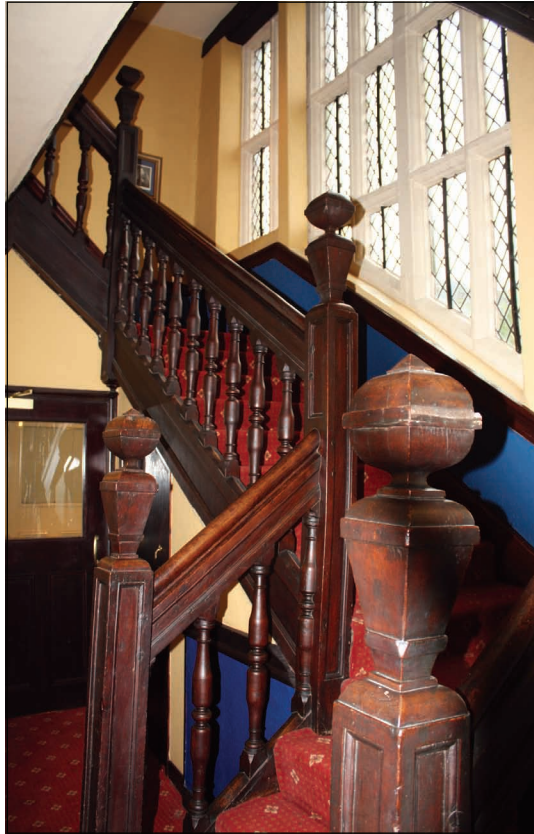


Plate 6: Staircase, thought to have originated from Fotheringhay Castle



Plate 7: Detail of window, as viewed from staircase



Plate 8: Window, from courtyard



Plate 9: The Whitwell Room, first floor





Plate 10: The Tabret Rooms



Plate 11: Former coachstore (?)





Plate 12: The Westgate Suite, former stables



Plate 13: Building on north side of hotel, viewed from New Street





Plate 14: Hotel entrance, 1949



Plate 15: Datestone reused from Smiths Brewery in 1963



Plate 16: 1979 building, viewed from Drummingwell Lane

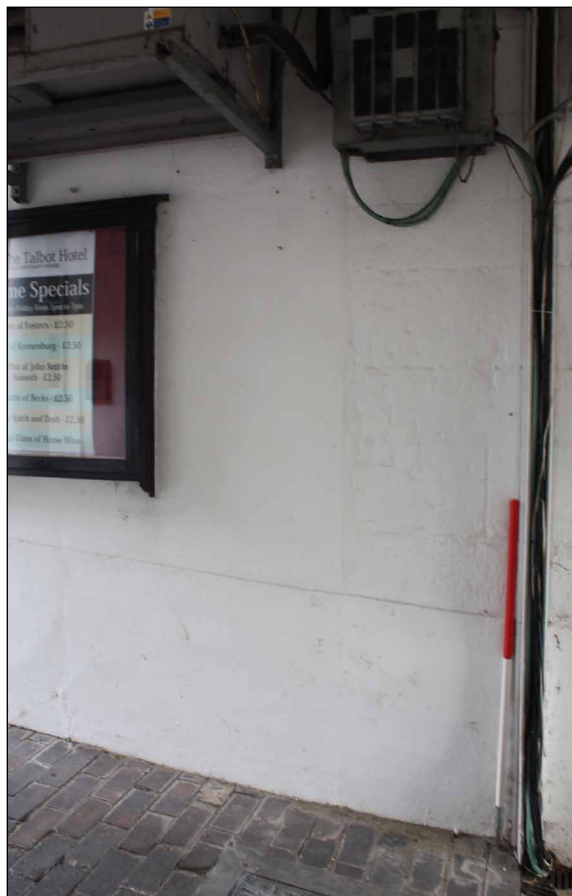


Plate 17: Position of bricked-up former entrance





Plate 18: Re-opened former entrance



Plate 19: Former doorway with window inserted



Plate 20: Internal view of window

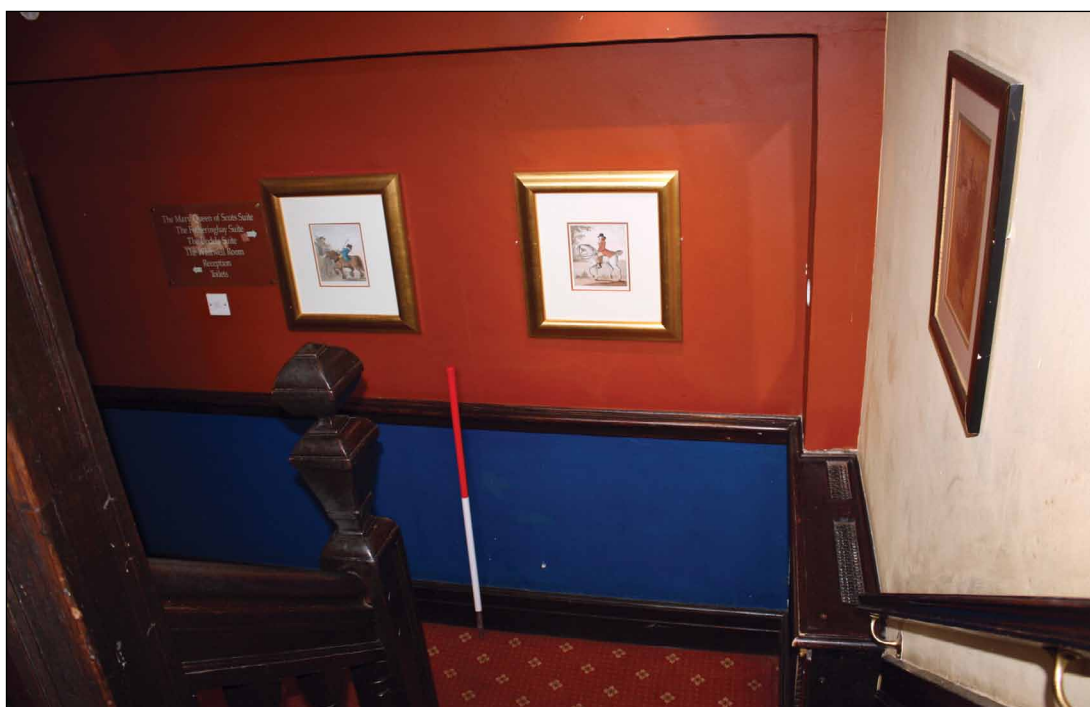


Plate 21: Location of former opening at foot of staircase





Plate 22: Location of former opening as viewed from bar



Plate 23: Reinstated opening between stairs and bar, taken during alteration works



Plate 24: Hotel entrance porch



Plate 25: Detail of stone arch over access to cellar





Plate 26: Access doors as viewed from inside of cellar



Plate 27: Access to cellar (right) and to hotel (left) as exposed during building alterations



Plate 28: Screen located between toilet access and bar



Plate 29a: Window as viewed from inside of ladies toilets





Plate 29b: External view of window of ground floor bar toilets



Plate 30: Exposed timber frame in first floor guest bedroom



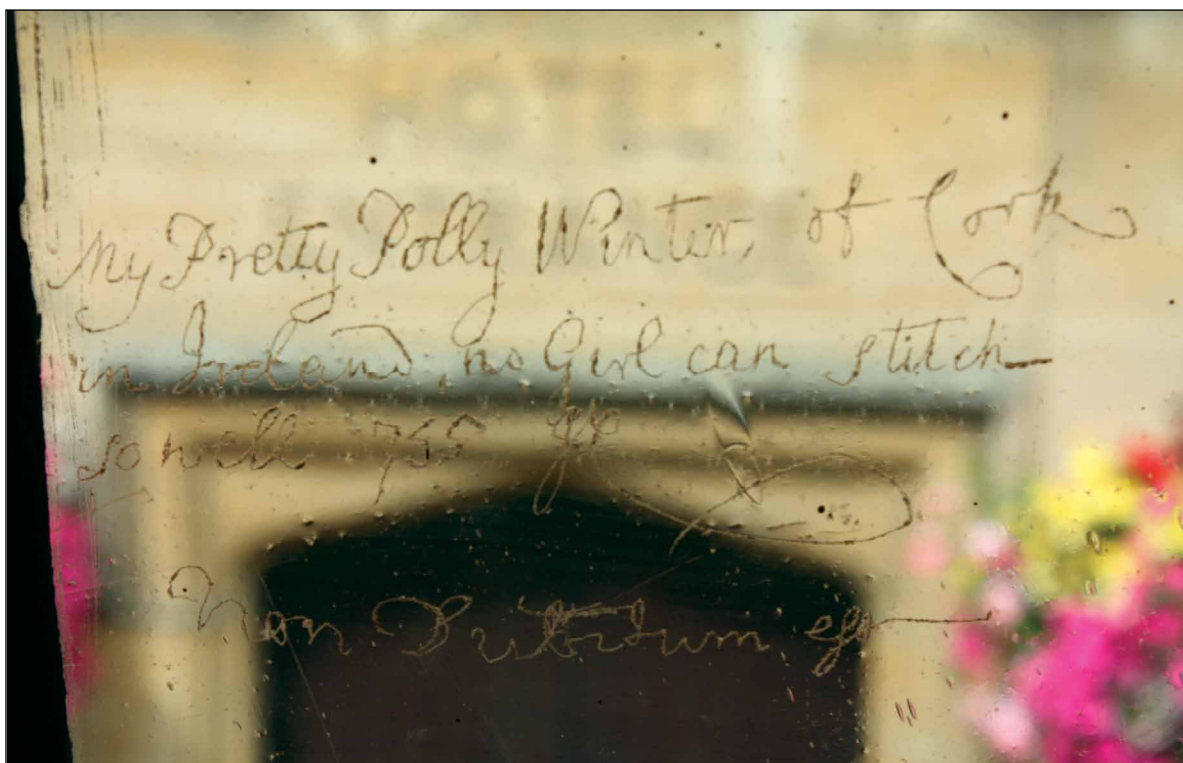


Plate 31: Etched inscription on first floor jetty window

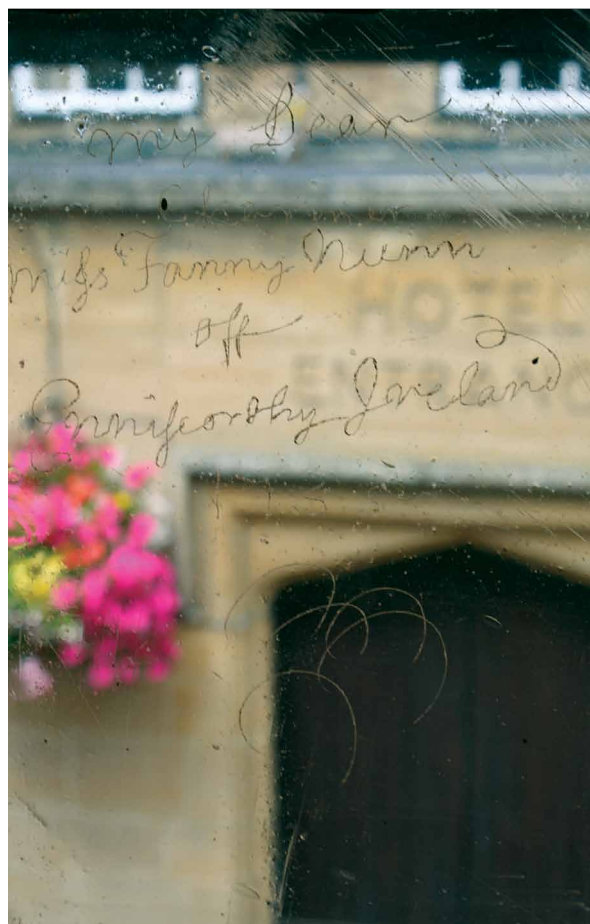


Plate 32: Etched inscription on first floor jetty window



Plate 33: Recess within wall, viewed from bar



Plate 34: Reinstated opening between bar and reception area as viewed during alteration works





Plate 35: Blocked up doorway and later fireplace within restaurant



Plate 36: Glass and wooden screen, viewed from reception area



Plate 37: Glass and wooden screen, viewed from restaurant

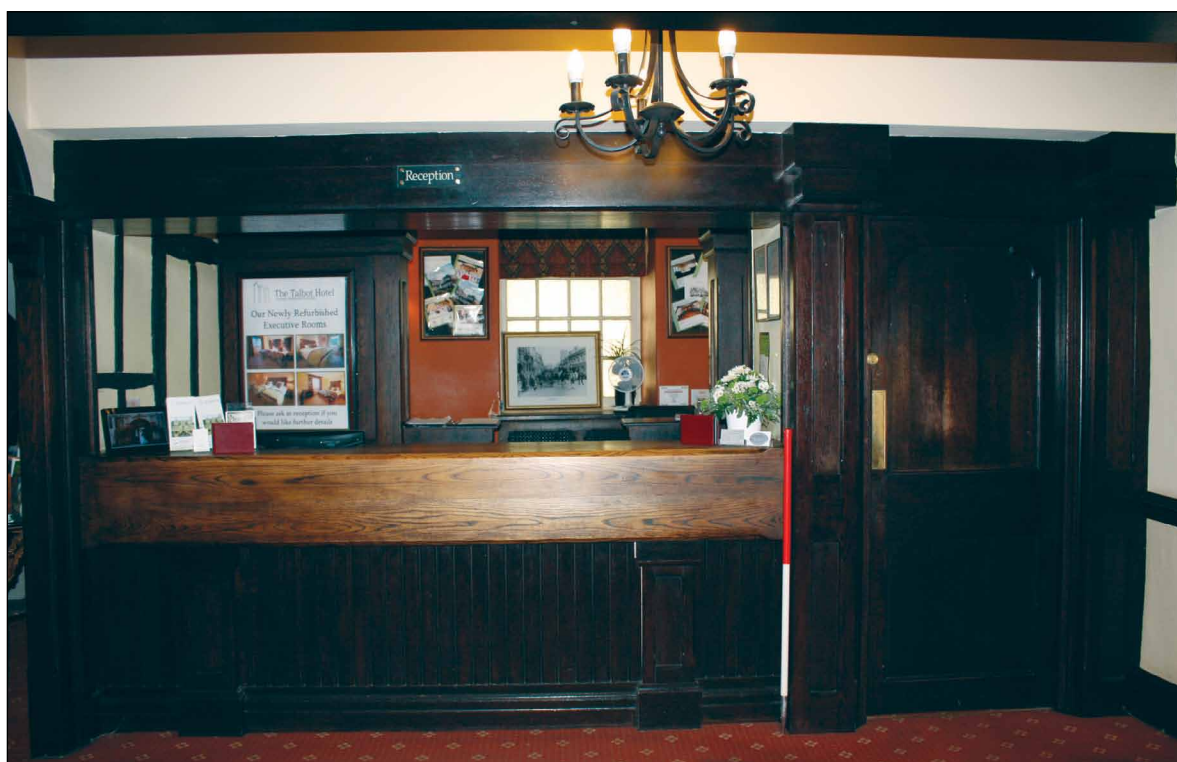


Plate 38: Hotel reception desk



Plate 39: Shelving within reception



Plate 40: Key/letter cupboard within reception





Plate 41: Safe inserted into former fireplace, exposed during building alterations



Plate 42: Timber screen in reception area, exposed during building alterations



Plate 43: Detail of brick construction and stone façade of 1949 single storey extension



Plate 44: Flat roof of 1949 extension with Buildings 5 and 7 behind





Plate 45: Former hotel reception doorway



Plate 46: Detail of window in 1949 extension





Plate 47: Restaurant interior



Plate 48: Exposed façades of Buildings 5 and 7 following removal of 1949 extension





Plate 49: Large storage cupboard within restaurant



Plate 50: Double doors within restaurant



Plate 51: Tabret Rooms exterior



Plate 52: Tabret Rooms interior



Plate 53: Detail of stop-chamfered beam in Tabret Room

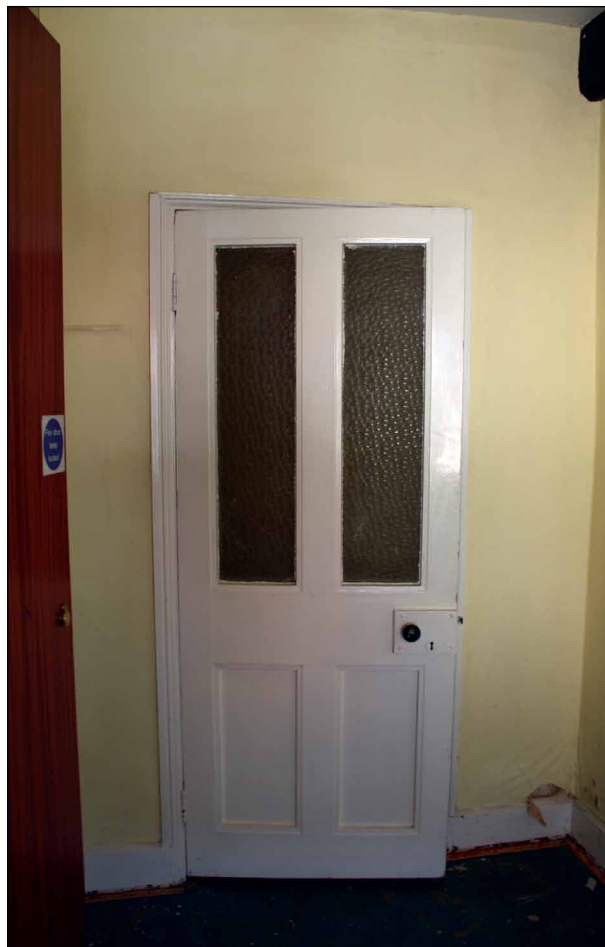


Plate 54: Door of storage room/cupboard





Plate 55: Boiler room



Plate 56: Detail of rooflines; Building 8 and 11





Plate 57: Tabret Rooms interior



Plate 58: Westgate Suite / hotel kitchens interior



Plate 59: Exposed east-facing elevation of “Westgate Suite” during building alterations



Plate 60: Stairs within Building 11



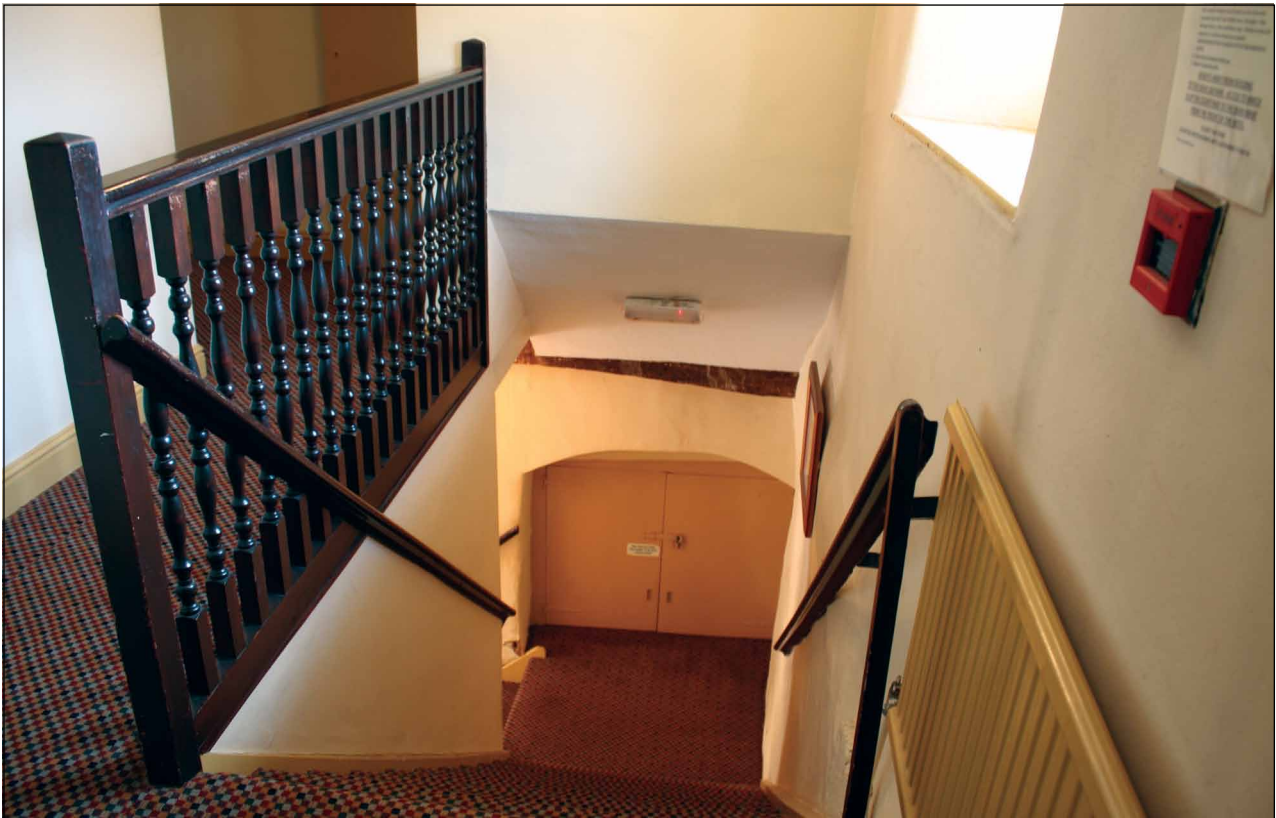


Plate 61: Cupboard set in archway, viewed from top of stairs - Building 11



Plate 62: Remnants of sawn timber adjacent to stairs, Building 11



Plate 63: Store cupboard



Plate 64: Staff office with large brick/stone feature





Plate 65: West-facing elevation of 1930's former plant room



Plate 66: West-facing elevation of 1930's former plant room during ground reduction works





Plate 67: Fire escape and stone stairs



Plate 68: Exposed floor tiles within footprint of former extension, exposed during building works





Plate 69: Detail of exposed tiles



Plate 70: Well exposed during groundworks in courtyard





Plate 71: Foundations and cobbled surface in courtyard exposed during external alterations



Plate 72: Detail of foundations and former doorway of Building 5





Plate 73: Detail of cobbled surface



Plate 74: Façade of Building 5 and remains exposed during groundworks in courtyard, from south-west





Plate 75: South-facing section exposed during ground reduction at rear of hotel



Plate 76: An exposed fireplace in the "snug" bar



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