



UNIVERSITY OF
OXFORD



**3 Mansfield Road
Conservation Plan**

Building No. 159
December 2012

Estates Services
University of Oxford
December 2012

3 MANSFIELD ROAD, OXFORD

CONSERVATION PLAN



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INTRODUCTION

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1 INTRODUCTION

3 Mansfield Road was constructed in 1897-98 as a private house for Rev. John Henry Mee by Symm & Co. to a design by C.J. Phipps and A. Blomfield Jackson. It was occupied by the University of Oxford's School of Geography in 1922 and since 2005 has been occupied by Queen Elizabeth House, the University of Oxford's Centre for International Development. Substantial extensions to the east of 1936-37 and 1965-68 were replaced in 2007-9 by a modern extension. A 1965-68 library extension to the north is extant. The building continues to serve as the headquarters for Queen Elizabeth House.

1.1 Purpose of the Conservation Plan

The University has an unrivalled portfolio of historic buildings, of which it is rightly proud. It has traditionally taken a thorough, holistic approach to building conservation, seeking to understand all the varied factors that make historic buildings significant to their diverse stakeholders, and using this to inform necessary change. It has become clear that this approach is vital to the conservation culture of an institution where so many of its historic buildings that are valued for their function also have extensive historical or architectural significance. This Conservation Plan represents the continuation of this tradition of seeking to understand what makes the University's buildings cherished assets, and of seeking ways to conserve these most important features for the enjoyment of future generations.

The success of this approach is such that it has now become codified in government policy: First in March 2010's *Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historical Environment* then in its replacement, March 2012's *National Planning Policy Framework* (hereafter: NPPF). NPPF provides useful guidance on approaching the conservation of heritage assets, and postdates the University's existing literature. NPPF defines a heritage asset as:

'A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).'

This designation clearly applies to 3 Mansfield Road.

The purpose of this Conservation Plan is to update 3 Mansfield Road's conservation policy to take into account the new guidance provided by NPPF. It will be of use both for informing responsible regular maintenance and in the preparation of future planning applications, as specified in NPPF paragraph 128.

The Conservation Plan should form the basis for 3 Mansfield Road's conservation policy and exists as part of an ongoing process. It will be renewed and updated at least every five years or following any major alterations or legislative changes.



Figure 1. Map showing 3 Mansfield Road and the surrounding area, orientated with North at the top of the image. The original portion of the building is highlighted in red, the 1965-68 library extension is highlighted in blue, the 1987-88 courtyard infill is highlighted in yellow, and the 2007-9 extension is highlighted in green

1.2 Scope of the Conservation Plan

This plan will cover the interior and exterior of 3 Mansfield Road, a Grade-II-listed building on the corner of Mansfield Road and Jowett Walk in Holywell Ward in central Oxford.

The building has been referred to as Holywell House, the School of Geography, and Queen Elizabeth House at different points in its existence. In this document it will be referred to as 3 Mansfield Road unless the specific historical context demands otherwise.

This plan is not a catalogue and to facilitate its practical use will concentrate only on the most vulnerable aspects of the building's significance, suggesting how they should be approached and conserved in the future. A brief list of the most significant architectural features can be found in **Appendix 4** and should be referred to when planning any repair or alteration work.

1.3 Existing Information

There are various forms of useful information available regarding 3 Mansfield Road:

A conservation statement was produced for the building by Hawkins Brown Architects LLP in 2007, prior to the redevelopment of the building's extensions. This contains useful information on the development of the building to this point.

Oxford University Archives contains various useful historic plans and correspondence regarding this building.

The original 1972 listed building description (**Appendix 1**) is characteristically brief but gives some indication of the features that were thought to make up the particular character for which the building was originally listed.

Some planning applications have been made during the building's recent history and these provide a fragmentary indication of the changes that have occurred over time.

There are a variety of published sources regarding the architectural development of late 19th-century Oxford and the history of the city and University. These publications provide an important resource for studying this building.

This document draws on statutory guidance from NPPF prepared by HM's Department for Communities and Local Government in March 2012.

1.4 Methodology

The Conservation Plan is a document that assesses the current and predicted conservation needs of 3 Mansfield Road and attempts to address them with a view towards maintaining or enhancing the significance of the heritage asset. Its formulation to supersede any existing literature is a response to the requirements of NPPF, and it is prepared in accordance with the policies contained therein.

1.5 Constraints

- CP.3 – Limiting the Need to Travel: New development will be limited to accessible locations on previously developed sites.
- HE.2 – Archaeology Area: Where archaeological deposits that are potentially significant to the historic environment of Oxford are known or suspected to exist anywhere in Oxford but in particular in the City Centre Archaeological Area, planning applications should incorporate sufficient information to define the character and extent of such deposits as far as reasonably practicable.
- HE.9 – High building Areas: Planning permission will not be granted for any development within a 1,200-metre radius of Carfax which exceeds 18.2m in height, except for minor elements of no bulk.
- TR.3, TR.11, TR.12 – Car Parking Standards: The City Council will not allow any significant increase in the overall number of car-parking spaces in the Transport Central Area or development that provides an inappropriate level of car-parking spaces. It will attempt to reduce the level of non-residential car parking.
- The City of Oxford Smoke Control Order No.2: It is an offence to emit smoke from the chimney of a building, from a furnace, or from any fixed boiler if located in a designated smoke control area.

- HE.7 – Conservation Areas: The Central (City and University) Conservation Area: Planning permission will only be granted for development that preserves or enhances the special character and appearance of the conservation areas or their setting.



2

UNDERSTANDING THE SITE

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2 UNDERSTANDING THE SITE

2.1 History of the Site and University¹

The site of Oxford has had a sporadic history of settlement since the Neolithic period. Bronze Age barrows have been found in the University Parks (linear barrow cemetery) and in the Science Area (double-ditched barrow). Oxford has had a continuous history of occupation since at least the 8th century AD. The University of Oxford itself has a long-standing tradition of exceptional education. Able to trace its roots to the 11th century, it is known to be the oldest university in the English-speaking world.

Mansfield Road and its surrounding area have a long history of occupation. Neolithic and Bronze Age pits and ditches have been found just to the north, at the corner of Mansfield Road and South Parks Road. This is overlain by a Romano-British landscape of ditched enclosures and pits, suggesting a settlement focus nearby in this period. In the same area there is evidence for a massive ditch which formed part of Oxford's Civil War defences.²



Figure 2. 1876 Ordnance Survey map with the location of 3 Mansfield Road superimposed in red. Park Place corresponds roughly to the eventual location of the southern portion of Mansfield Road

Mansfield Road is located on the site of the mediaeval suburb of Holywell, near the 11th-century Holywell church. This settlement grew up to the east in a piecemeal fashion around

¹ A short chronology of 3 Mansfield Road can be found in **Appendix 3**.

² Urban Archaeological Database:

http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=1801270&resourceID=964, accessed 4th December 2012.

the location of the holy well from which it takes its name. Holywell was nominally a suburb of Oxford, but resembled a country village with its church, townhouse (of 1516), farm buildings, a few cottages, and Holywell green or Common. A cock-pit and two bowling greens provided entertainment for Town and Gown by the 18th Century, but the pastoral scene remained largely undisturbed. Holywell village was accessed via Holywell Lane with an offshoot to Holywell Mill and a foot path link to the University Parks.

St. Cross Road and Manor Road were constructed to the east of the site of 3 Mansfield Road at some point between 1831 and 1876. The rapid Victorian growth of Oxford made an impact on the area in 1848, when part of the Holywell Green was enclosed to form Holywell cemetery. Mansfield Road was constructed in 1887-93, running between the existing Holywell Street and South Parks Road. This partly followed the line of the existing Park Place and cut through the sites of several post-mediaeval houses on Holywell Street but was designed to provide access to (Harris) Manchester College and Mansfield College, which were both then under construction. Prior to the construction of the road, the site of 3 Mansfield Road was formed from parts of several long, linear gardens associated with Holywell Street properties (**Figure 2**).

The immediate area surrounding the site has not experienced a great deal of new construction since 3 Mansfield Road was built in 1898: this having come after the major collegiate developments on the road. Two neo-Georgian houses (5 and 6 Mansfield Road) were constructed to the immediate north (in what had been the garden of 3 Mansfield Road) in 1925 for Balliol to designs by E.P. Warren.³ These houses lie between 3 Mansfield Road and the King's Mound, built in 1892-3 to a design by Thomas Graham Jackson as the Master's Lodgings for Balliol College. Merton College's Holywell Buildings were constructed to the east in 1994 and Balliol College's Jowett Walk Buildings were constructed in two phases in 1996 and 2004. The Oxford University Club was constructed to the north in 2002-4. The area to the north of South Parks Road has undergone extensive development since the second half of the 19th century, with the gradual but near-continuous construction of the University Science Area.

Mansfield Road now serves as a key component of the academic inner suburb of Holywell, located within Oxford City Council's Central (City and University) Conservation Area. It is a transitional space between the Science Area, which dominates South Parks Road to the north, and the city's historic core to the south.

2.2 History of 3 Mansfield Road

The site of 3 Mansfield Road was part of a larger plot of land held by Merton and Balliol Colleges. This plot of 89,090 sq.ft. ran in a long, narrow wedge from Mansfield Road in the west to Holywell Lane (roughly now Manor Road) to the east (**Figure 3**). The Merton-owned elements of the plot were purchased in December 1894 by a joint syndicate of Rev. J.H. Mee, J.L. Stracham-Davidson, and Sir John Conroy, all of Balliol College, consolidating the ownership of the whole plot. The 3 Mansfield Road plot was purchased by Mee, whilst

³ Pevsner, N., and Sherwood, J., *Buildings of England: Oxfordshire* (Harmondsworth, 1974) 330.

the other parts of the larger plot (the area now occupied by Balliol's Jowett Walk Buildings) were assigned to Balliol.⁴ Mee, Stracham-Davidson and Conroy also undertook to pay between them half the costs of the construction of the new road running along the southern boundary of this plot, which would become Jowett Walk.

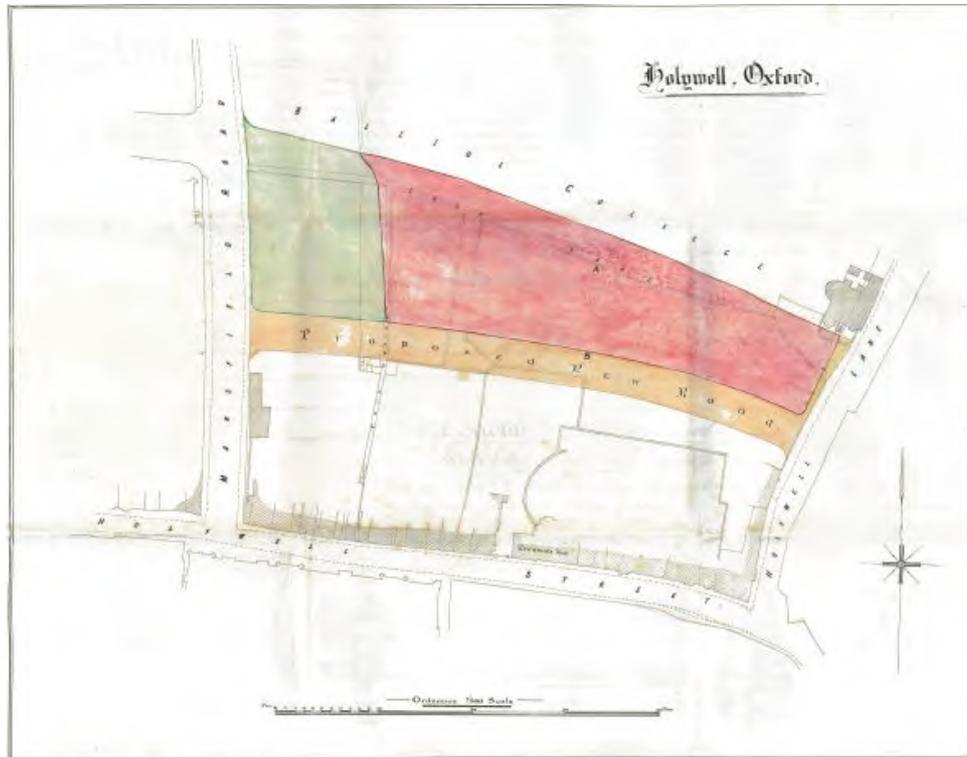


Figure 3. The large plot, consolidated for Balliol by Mee, Stracham-Davidson and Conroy. The portion purchased by Mee is coloured in green and the Balliol portion in red. The new road is in tan

Mee was Coryphaeus of Oxford University, a former Fellow of Merton, and the Lecturer of Ancient History at Worcester College.⁵ He had been living at Kettell Hall on Broad Street since 1884. Kettell Hall had been purchased by Trinity College in 1883 and though it was let out to Mee as a senior member of the University it was still used for teaching, being fitted with a new lecture room in 1886.⁶ 3 Mansfield Road was intended as a permanent private home for Mee, though the size of the hall and music room would suggest that he still planned to do some teaching from his new home.

3 Mansfield Road was constructed by Symm & Co. in Deddington stone and Broseley tiles. C.J. Phipps and Arthur Blomfield Jackson were the architects. Blomfield Jackson was Phipps' son-in-law and junior partner in the firm, which he joined at some point after 1891. Blomfield Jackson was primarily a church builder, but the firm under Phipps specialised in

⁴ Oxford University Archives, ref. GE 17, letter from J.L. Stracham-Davidson and John Conroy to J.H. Mee, dated 27th November 1893.

⁵ Howard, J.J., and Crisp, F.A., *Visitation of England and Wales* Vol.6 (Privately printed; London, 1898) 63.

⁶ Headington.org.uk: <http://www.headington.org.uk/oxon/broad/buildings/north/54.htm>, accessed 5th December 2012.

designing large theatres in both London and the provinces, e.g. the Theatre Royal in Nottingham (1865). Phipps died suddenly in 1897, the year before 3 Mansfield Road was completed. Although both names appear on some of the plans, this was one of the firm's smaller projects and it seems likely that the design was wholly that of the junior partner, Blomfield Jackson.

Mee lived at 3 Mansfield Road until his death in January 1918. It was briefly retained as a private house by his daughter, Bridget Eleanor Mee. Miss Mee left the house for 90 Banbury Road when she married William Henry Macintosh in September 1918.⁷ In June 1921, the building was purchased by the University of Oxford and in 1922 it was occupied by the School of Geography.⁸ When Geography occupied the building they installed new heating and electric lighting, and made some changes to internal partitioning.⁹

3 Mansfield Road had been designed to function as a private house rather than as a university department and the School of Geography soon found it insufficient for its needs. Originally the building had a single-storey service wing arranged around a courtyard at the rear (this can be seen at the top right of **Figure 4**). In 1936-38, the services wing was demolished and a new lecture theatre, designed by Sir Hubert Worthington, was constructed in its place against the eastern elevation of the main building. This was constructed in brick and faced with stone. The façades were angular and unadorned, suggesting a particularly-restrained classicism. The extension necessitated some alteration to the roofline of the eastern elevation, where a tower of the demolished service wing had originally extended the full height of the building.

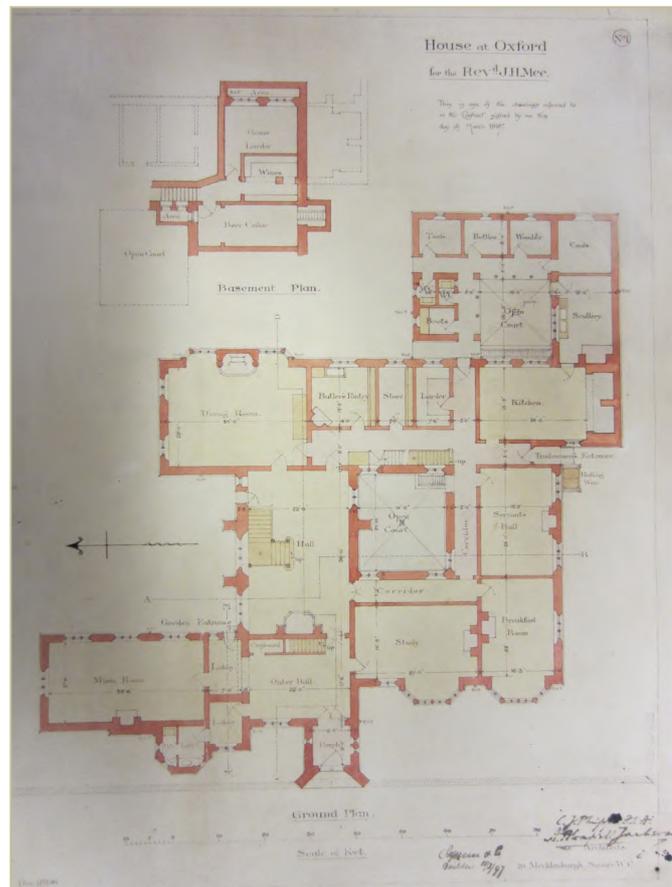


Figure 4. The original ground-floor plan for 3 Mansfield Road. Orientated with north at the left-hand side of the image

⁷ Oxford University Archives, ref. GE 17, letter from Dr. R. Bryce-Smith to Prof. E.W. Gilbert, dated 14th April 1961.

⁸ Conveyance documents, copies held by Estates Services.

⁹ Hawkins Brown Architects LLP, *Lecture Theatre Redevelopment: Appendix B: Conservation Statement* (Report, July 2007).

There was a small extension constructed to the north of the music room at some point between 1938 and 1957. This may have been a single-storey war-time structure, as during World War II the building was occupied by the Naval Intelligence Division.

The building was again extended in 1965-68. These additions were designed by the University Surveyor, Jack Lankester. A tile-hung extension was constructed on top of the 1936-38 lecture theatre, adding an additional floor. At the same time, a buff-brick library extension was constructed to the north of the main building (this is presumably when the probably-war-time northern extension was demolished). The library was built in brick but the lift shaft, where it connected to the original building at the northern end of the music room, was externally clad in stone to ease the transition between the two phases. The construction of the library extension resulted in the unfortunate partitioning of the original music room and entrance hall in order to create a librarian's office and a corridor from the entrance hall to the new extension. Several of the other large rooms were also partitioned to provide smaller offices. The library extension now primarily houses D.Phil study spaces.



Figure 5. 3 Mansfield Road, orientated with East at the top of the image. The original portion of the building is highlighted in red, the 1965-68 library extension is highlighted in blue, and the 1987-88 courtyard infill is highlighted in yellow. The location of the 2007-09 extension is highlighted in green, though the image still shows the 1936-38 lecture theatre with Lankester's 1965-68 tile-hung cap

The ground floor of the central courtyard/lightwell was infilled with lavatories at some point before 1972, when these were modernised and refurbished.¹⁰ In 1987-88 the upper portion of this lightwell area was infilled to form a computer room (now a video-screening room) and

¹⁰ *Supra.* No. 9.

study room, with the infill reaching to the second-floor level. The first-floor seminar room (the original drawing room, at the northeast corner of the 1898 house) was refurbished at this time.

In 2005, the School of Geography vacated the building for quarters in the Dyson Perrins Laboratory.¹¹ Queen Elizabeth House occupied 3 Mansfield Road shortly afterwards. Queen Elizabeth House is a postgraduate institution and did not require the large lecture room or open-plan teaching spaces favoured by the School of Geography, which had a large undergraduate teaching commitment. Equally, Queen Elizabeth House did not require the laboratory spaces which had been fitted during the School of Geography's occupation. In 2005-06, several internal partitions were removed, returning some of the original large spaces to their original dimensions and some exposed services were concealed. In 2007-09, Worthington's 1936-38 lecture room extension (including Lankester's 1966-68 additions to it) was demolished and replaced with a modern, three-storey extension. This new extension, designed by Hawkins Brown Architects LLP, connects to the eastern elevation of the original building, in a similar location to the 1936-38 lecture theatre and the original service wing. The connection between the new wing and the original building is clad in bronze (as are the roof and chimneys), easing the transition between the two phases with a distinct but sympathetic material. This new extension provided offices, open-plan works spaces, and seminar rooms. The 1966-68 library block to the north was also refurbished at this time.

Queen Elizabeth House continues to occupy 3 Mansfield Road and this serves as its primary site. When it occupied the building 2005, the institution formally applied its name to 3 Mansfield Road, which is now referred to as Queen Elizabeth House.

¹¹ Estates Services, University of Oxford, *Dyson Perrins Laboratory: Conservation Plan* (Report, May 2012), available online: http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/media/global/wwwadminoxacuk/localsites/estatesdirectorate/documents/conservation/Dyson_Perrins_Laboratory.pdf, accessed 6th December 2012.



SIGNIFICANCE

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3 SIGNIFICANCE

NPPF paragraph 128 specifies that in assessing planning applications:

‘Local planning authorities should require an applicant to provide a description of the significance of any heritage assets affected including any contribution made by their setting.’

The significance of 3 Mansfield Road has been publically recognised by its designation as a Grade-II-listed building in 1972 (see **Appendix 1**). It was also included in Oxford City Council’s designation of its Central (City and University) Conservation Area in 1971 and its subsequent revisions in 1974, 1981, 1985, and 1998 (see **Appendix 2**).

3.1 Significance as part of Mansfield Road and Holywell Ward

3 Mansfield Road contributes significantly to the character of Mansfield Road and central Holywell Ward. The character of Holywell Ward is that of a leafy, academic suburb an area for serious research and study unimpeded by pomp and ceremony. This is a less striking feature than the grand stone edifices of Broad Street, but one as central to the image of academic Oxford. The character created within the area provides an agreeable setting for the students and readers who live and work here, and a pleasant surprise for the tourist who wanders upon it by accident.

Mansfield Road’s late Victorian buildings, notably Mansfield College, Harris Manchester College, and 3 Mansfield Road, are central to its character. 3 Mansfield Road is a defining factor in the character of the southern end of the road. As one looks northwards up Mansfield Road from its junction with Holywell Street, the two defining visual features are 3 Mansfield Road on the eastern side of the road (**Figure 6**) and the chapel of Harris Manchester College on the west. This is achieved through a combination of their heights, hard lines, and ashlar construction. The scale of 3 Mansfield Road is impressive: despite its domestic character it feels more in character with the nearby collegiate buildings than the smaller, domestic buildings on the road, even the King’s Mound.

As one moves along the street, 3 Mansfield Road remains an imposing visual feature, defining the corner of Jowett Walk.



Figure 6. 3 Mansfield Road looking north-eastwards from the southern end of Mansfield Road

3.2 Architectural and Aesthetic Significance

3.2.1 Exterior Elevations

*'In the Elizabethan style. Ashlar. 2 storeys and attics. 2 and 3-light mullion and transom windows; 2 2-storeyed bays. Projecting 2 storey porch on street front. Gabled tiled roof with moulded copings.'*¹²

The style of this building has been variously called 'Elizabethan', 'Cotswold' and 'Queen Anne.'¹³ It is certainly an eclectic piece, notably the western elevation, though 'Cotswold' is perhaps the fairest of the stylistic descriptions. The primary, western elevation is the building's most significant architectural feature, and it has changed little since its initial construction (**Figure 7**). The main change is the addition of the library extension to the northern end. The main façade possesses substantial aesthetic value, contributing greatly to the pleasant character of Mansfield Road.



Figure 7. Phipps and Blomfield Jackson's original scheme for the western façade of 3 Mansfield Road

The southern elevation is also of some aesthetic value. This is a simpler affair than the western elevation, consisting of three bays: two are defined by gables and the easternmost by the massive chimneybreast of the original kitchen. This elevation runs along Jowett Walk, a road historically defined by the southern boundary of this plot and planned alongside the construction of this house. This elevation is now abutted by the 2007-09 eastern extension, which integrates relatively well with the original elevation, being distinct but not jarring.

¹² List description (**Appendix 1**).

¹³ *Ibid*; Pevsner, N., and Sherwood, J., *op. cit.*, 274; and *Jackson's Oxford Journal* (1899, volume unknown) respectively.

The northern elevation and the exposed elements of the original eastern elevation are of some aesthetic value. The courtyard remains a pleasant space which is dominated by the northern elevation of the main hall and its imposing windows. The eastern elevation is of a similar quality to the southern elevation but has been obscured by later construction. The surrounding landscaping to these elevations has suffered to a greater extent than the primary elevations, with a car park replacing the original garden.

The external elevations of the buff-brick 1965-68 library extension are relatively unassuming. They do not contribute to the aesthetic value of the Mansfield Road façade, but are certainly not as obtrusive as they could be. The 2006-09 eastern extension is an attractive piece, which references the gables and chimneys of the original building.

3.2.2 Interior Spaces

The interior portions of the building have undergone extensive alteration since 3 Mansfield Road was constructed, though the original floor plan can still be traced in most cases. Notably the central light well has been infilled in two stages, forming lavatory accommodation on the ground floor, a video-screening area on the first floor, and office accommodation on the second floor. Surface-mounted trunking is present in many spaces in the building, but this is generally, with a few exceptions, used in relatively unobtrusive manner.

The building has been well treated and contains several spaces that retain substantial aesthetic and illustrative value. The main hall is the most significant space within the building, notable for its impressive fireplace, windows, staircase, and gallery (**Figure 8**). The tie-beam ceiling is an attractive feature and the room is in a similar state to that suggested by the original contract drawings. The stone-mullioned windows possess extensive aesthetic value and show, running west to east, the arms of Rev. Mee, his wife (Alice Anne Mee), and his daughter (Bridget Eleanor Mee). There are window seats integrated into the sills, running up the stairs. There is a dining room off the hall (beneath the drawing room), which is a pleasant space with an impressive carved and tiled fireplace.



Figure 8. The main hall looking westwards

The double-height, apsed drawing room (**Figure 9**, now seminar room 2) on the first floor is another significant space. The character of the room, running towards the apse at the northern end, suggests a chapel, perhaps not surprising from a church builder like Blomfield Jackson.

The music room, a distinct wing projecting from the north of the main building, was once probably one of the more impressive spaces in the building. It was subdivided with the construction of the library extension in 1965-68. It has since been opened up somewhat but retains little of its original character.

There has been some subdivision in the office spaces, but in most cases the original floor plan can be easily discerned. In some cases, the original floor plan has resulted in interestingly-proportioned offices with a unique character, e.g. the lobby-lavatory configuration at the north-western end of the first floor which creates a cosy triple-suite of offices.



Figure 9. The first-floor drawing room looking northwards

3.3 Archaeological Significance

3 Mansfield Road is situated within Oxford City Council's Archaeology Area and the surrounding area has a long history of occupation. Considering nearby discoveries, there is a high potential for significant archaeological material on the site. De Gomme's 1644 plan shows that Oxford's Civil War defences do not stretch to this point, though they do cross the northern part of Mansfield Road.¹⁴ The 17th-century King's Mound, Charles I's earthwork from where he apparently reviewed his troops, runs through the gardens just north of the building. Several mediaeval houses were demolished for the construction of Mansfield Road, and elements of these may be extant in the surrounding area. Equally, the 1876 OS map shows that at that time there were several buildings of uncertain date in the location of 3 Mansfield Road itself (**Figure 2**), features of which may well survive beneath the present building.

¹⁴ Lattey, R.T., Parsons, E.J.S., and Philip, I.G., 'A contemporary map of the defences of Oxford in 1644' in *Oxoniensia* I (1936) 161-172.

3.4 Historical Significance

3 Mansfield Road has some illustrative value as an unusually southerly-located late 19th-century suburban Oxford house. It was built on a grand scale in a desirable location for a senior member of the University of obviously-ample means.

3.5 Significance as a functioning University department

3 Mansfield Road was designed as a private house and is not necessarily well suited for use as a University building; however, the scale of building means that it does have some spaces, e.g. the main hall, that are appropriate to public use. Equally, over its c.90-year history of University occupation it has been extended and altered to take into account its use in this way. The latest, 2007-09, extension has brought the building in line with the current needs and requirements of Queen Elizabeth House, a postgraduate institution devoted to social-science research. It remains significant as the base of operations of this important institution.

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VULNERABILITIES

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4 VULNERABILITIES

The ability of 3 Mansfield Road to fulfil a contemporary function

3 Mansfield Road was designed as the private house of a senior member of the University who, judging from spaces like the main hall, obviously intended it to be able to fulfil some public functions. As a result, the building has a useful mix of large and small areas, which are amenable to use as teaching/seminar spaces and offices. The 2007-09 extension offers facilities that could not be obtained without undesirable alteration within the main building and 3 Mansfield Road is now in a state where to a great extent it fulfils the needs and requirements of its occupants. The use of extensions means that the significant character of the internal spaces has largely been retained. The external elevations have been compromised to some degree, but the primary western and southern elevations have not been obscured or diminished by later construction: The important exterior character and several key interior elements of the building have survived to this point and this has only been possible because the building has remained in use and has been maintained and cared for.

The building possesses aesthetic and historic value; however, it is by no means a static monument. By retaining a modern and relevant use, the upkeep and conservation of the heritage asset is funded and its continued existence and significance ensured. Under the current usage, the most important elements are not threatened, and its listed status ensures that any further alterations operate within the constraints of an accepted understanding of the building's value as a heritage asset.

4.1 Accessibility

The ability of 3 Mansfield Road to be accessed and enjoyed by anyone who has a legitimate right to use the building is central to its value as a heritage asset. The significance of the building is lessened if any person who wishes to legitimately use and enjoy the building is hampered in doing so by inadequate access provision. Unfortunately, as is commonly the case in buildings of this age, access provision to the 3 Mansfield Road is hampered by its original design. Access to the main entrance is via two steps (the second of which is a recent addition) with a handrail. A disabled ramp is available on request, but there is no intercom. Fortunately, there is level access via the 2007-09 extension at the rear of the building and from here there is lift access to each floor of the



Figure 10. The main entrance from Mansfield Road

building. Some of the circulation spaces, notably on the second floor, are quite narrow, and the design of the original service corridors makes some of them unsuitable for wheelchair use.

Ideally all users should be able to access the building through the same point and move throughout the building without disadvantage. Unfortunately, it is unlikely that a permanent ramp or other provision could be provided at the main entrance to 3 Mansfield Road without detracting from the composition of one of the building's most significant elements, its primary façade. Equally, it is unlikely the irregular and narrow spaces in the upper portion of the building could be made more accessible without adversely affecting their unique character.

4.2 Maintenance

4.2.1 External elevations and setting

The external elevations of 3 Mansfield Road are of substantial significance, especially the southern and western elevations, which define the character of the Jowett Walk and the southern portion of Mansfield Road. The western elevation (**Figure 11.1**) is in Deddington stone and is defined by a series of gables and mullioned and transomed bay windows. There is a projecting gabled porch onto the street. The elevation north of the porch is less uniform than that to the south and has quite a different character. The gable end and lift shaft of the 1965-68 extension abuts the northern end of the western elevation. The extension does not suit the space particularly well (and the newer eastern extension is far more successful in this respect) but its simple buff-brick construction does not greatly detract from the significant elevation.



Figure 11. 11.1, left, the western elevation. 11.2, right, the southern elevation

The southern elevation (**Figure 11.2**) is a simpler configuration consisting of 3 gabled bays, the easternmost of which is defined by the large, projecting chimneystack of the original kitchen. The 2007-09 extension which connects to this elevation is more successful than the northern extension. Its bronze cladding, which has developed a dull patina, blends well with the Deddington stone of the older elevations, whilst remaining a distinct phase of

construction. The new extension references the gables and the chimneys of the original southern elevation and fits the character of the space well.

The external elevations have aged well due to a good maintenance regime throughout their lifetimes; however, the heritage asset's elevations remain open to weathering and erosion, potential vandalism, and pollution; damage which could detract from their significance in the future. Consideration could be given at some point to the sympathetic cleaning of some of the external stonework, notably on the western elevation of the porch in order to better reveal its detailing.

The landscape settings of the western and southern elevations are relatively effective, consisting of narrow lawns leading onto the street. The northern and eastern elevations have suffered from the loss of the gardens and their hard landscaping does not create attractive spaces.

4.2.2 Internal spaces

The interior spaces of the building are of substantial aesthetic and illustrative value. There are several extant examples of original joinery and glass. Original fireplaces are extant in many of the former bedrooms, as well as in the hall and former dining and drawing rooms (e.g. **Figure 12.3**). In many cases these have been recently unblocked and are in all cases attractive pieces. Many of the windows contain their original glass and several of the former bedrooms retain their picture rails. There is surface-mounted electrical trunking at the dado-rail level in most of the offices and also in some of the circulation spaces, but in most cases this is quite restrained and certainly compares well to buildings of a similar age and use.

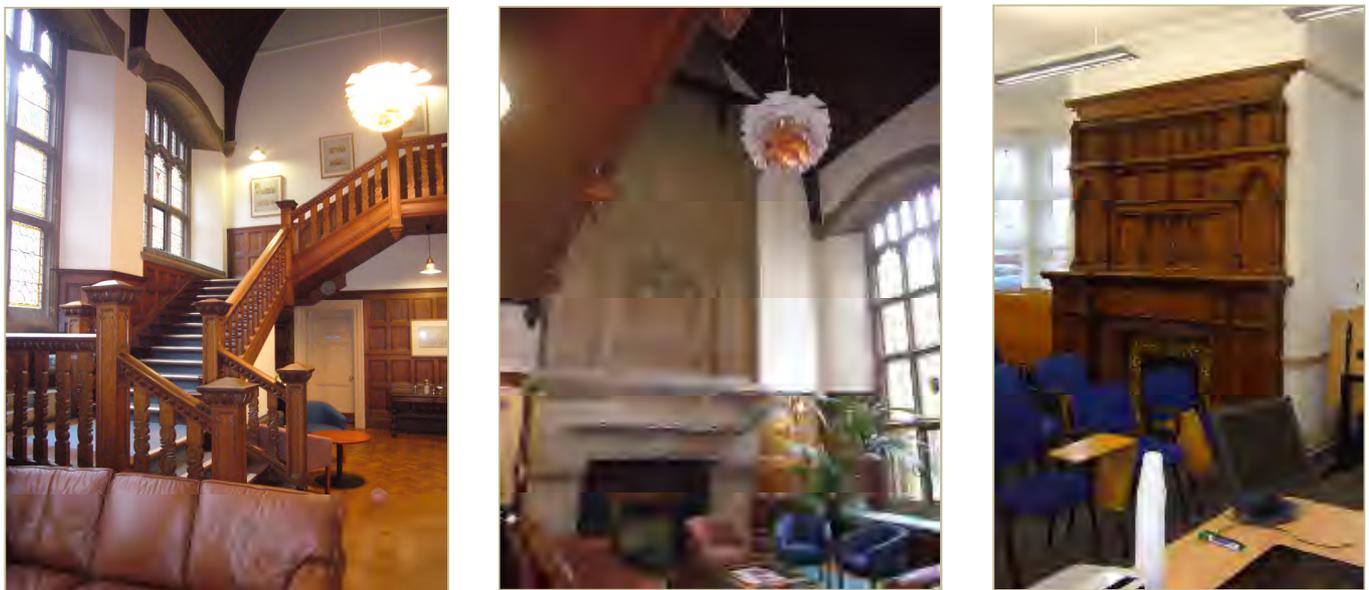


Figure 12. 12.1, left, the hall looking northeast. 12.2, centre, the hall, looking northwest. 12.3, right, the fireplace in the former dining room

The double-height hall is the most significant of the heritage asset's internal spaces. Its tie-beam ceiling possesses substantial aesthetic value, as does the grand staircase, with its carved newels and banisters, leading to the first-floor gallery (**Figure 12.1**). The tall windows that dominate the northern wall of this space are a striking feature, as is the huge stone fireplace and projecting chimneybreast reaching to ceiling height (**Figure 12.2**). There is timber panelling on the ground floor and running up the stairs.

The double-height former drawing room at the north-eastern corner of the first floor has an interesting panelled, barrel-vaulted ceiling. At some point, this has been pierced in three places by ventilation grates, perhaps related to the aluminium chimney fitted to this roof. The stone apse over the northern window is an interesting feature (**Figure 8**).

As the interior features are in regular use and for the most part experience greater human interaction than the external structure of the building, they are vulnerable to accidents, vandalism, and general wear and tear. Some of these issues should be mitigated assuming adequate security and maintenance regimes are in place, but ultimately these significant elements will have limited lifespans. These lives can be lengthened as much as possible through regular, adequate monitoring and maintenance.

As a Grade-II-listed building, any alteration, or repairs made with non-original materials, will require listed building consent.



CONSERVATION
POLICY

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5 CONSERVATION POLICY

Having established the significance of 3 Mansfield Road as a heritage asset, and having identified ways in which the significance of 3 Mansfield Road is vulnerable to harm, it is necessary to recommend policies to reduce the probability of such harm occurring and thereby conserve the significance of the site. In essence, these policies set parameters for managing the fabric of the site.

The Conservation Plan is intended to be an active tool for the regular maintenance and long-term management of 3 Mansfield Road. It needs to be reviewed regularly, and revised as appropriate to take into account additional knowledge and changing priorities.

5.1 **3 Mansfield Road's continued use in a contemporary function is important to its continued significance. Permit, in line with NPPF paragraphs 131, 132, 133, and 134, alterations intended to facilitate its continued use in this way**

The continued use of 3 Mansfield Road in a contemporary function is important to its continued significance. Limited alterations will inevitably be required to allow it to retain this significance in line with modern usage standards and requirements. If alteration is required in the future it should be permitted with the following provisos:

- Any alterations must be sympathetic to 3 Mansfield Road's significance as a heritage asset and, in line with NPPF paragraph 134, any proposals that involve 'less than substantial harm to the significance' should deliver 'substantial public benefits.' In line with NPPF paragraph 132, any proposals that involve 'substantial harm or loss' should be 'wholly exceptional.'
- Any changes should: '...preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset' (NPPF paragraph 137).

5.1.1 **In order to ensure that 3 Mansfield Road can operate to modern standards, and that its significance can be maintained by making access as wide as possible, special concern should be applied to ensuring that disabled access is adequate**

Ensuring that the heritage asset can be enjoyed as widely as possible will have a major positive impact on its significance. As noted in **Section 4.1**, whilst the accessibility of the building has been improved in recent years by the 2007-09 extension, access to the building is still hampered by its historic design. Access will remain a concern in any plans developed for the site; a vigorous effort should be made to improve access to the site in any future plans, with the University seeking to exceed its statutory obligations and always viewing this as part of an ongoing process.

5.2 Note that 3 Mansfield Road is a Grade-II-listed building and ensure that appropriate consents are obtained for works to the interior and exterior of the building

In order to ensure the heritage asset's significance, alterations may be required in the future, and due to the listed status of the building, even minor routine repairs may need consent. Caution should be applied in order to ensure that any statutory duties are fulfilled. In cases of doubt **Estates Services should be contacted in the first instance**, and if necessary they will refer queries on to Oxford City Council.

5.3 Ensure proper consultation in advance of any work to the building with the Local Authority conservation officer (through Estates Services) and any other interested parties

It is important to guarantee that the best advice is obtained at an early stage of any proposal to alter any part of the building in order to ensure that the significance of the building is respected.

5.4 Refer to this Conservation Plan when considering repairs or alterations in any space

The Conservation Plan gives an overview of which aspects of the building are significant or vulnerable. Where original or significant material is extant, repairs should be carried out using the same materials and techniques and should not affect the significance of the asset without providing substantial public benefits in line with NPPF paragraph 134.

5.5 Any alteration or redevelopment must respect the character of Banbury Road and the surrounding area

3 Mansfield Road's position on the southern end of Mansfield Road and defining the entrance to Jowett Walk is central to its significance. Any plans for alterations should take into account the relationship between the streetscape and the buildings, both listed and non-listed, in this area.

5.6 Conservation of specific factors contributing to overall significance

3 Mansfield Road possesses various external and internal features of some significance (**Sections 3.1 and 3.2**). An effort should be made to identify and conserve original or significant architectural features and keep these in use where possible in line with **Section 5.1**; however, it is accepted that all materials have a natural lifespan and some degree of change must be permitted to keep the building safe, usable, and generally fit for function. Some material will have a very long life expectancy if given routine maintenance; others are impermanent and may need periodic replacement. Within the framework of understanding and valuing what is present in the building a degree of ongoing change is inevitable.

5.6.1 Any alterations to be made to the external elevations will respect their significance and the contribution they make to the setting

The exterior elevations of 3 Mansfield Road, primarily the Mansfield Road and Jowett Walk façades, are its most significant features. The visual character of the external elevations has

not changed greatly since the building's construction and should be maintained. That being said, the replacement of the western façade of the 1965-68 northern extension with a more sympathetic elevation, of a quality more in line with the 2007-09 extension, could enhance the primary face. If alterations are considered these should be undertaken only in the context of this significance and in line with **Section 5.1** and **5.1.1**.

5.6.2 Any alterations to be made to the interior spaces will respect the significance of both the individual elements and the building as a whole

The interior spaces of the building contain various significant elements, such as historic joinery, windows, and fireplaces. Original items such as the window glass and settings, fireplaces, banisters, and panelling contribute to the character of the building and should be retained.

Any internal alterations planned in the future should only be undertaken with a full understanding of and respect for the character of the internal spaces in line with **Section 5.1** and **5.1.1**.

5.7 In conformity with NPPF paragraph 110, efforts should be made to ensure that 3 Mansfield Road's contribution to climate change is as minimal as is feasible for a building of its age, size, materials, and use. Any proposals for alterations should assess the feasibility of incorporating low and zero carbon technologies

Ensuring that the building is sustainable will be crucial to its long-term survival and significance. As stated in NPPF paragraph 110, development should seek to 'minimise pollution and other adverse effects on the local and natural environment.'

5.8 If during any subsequent renovations or alterations any excavation work is carried out beneath 3 Mansfield Road, an archaeological assessment will be made of the potential for significant finds, and if appropriate an archaeologist will be given a watching brief as excavation takes place

It is possible that there is significant archaeological material beneath 3 Mansfield Road (see **Section 3.3**). Should any excavation work be carried out in this area, an assessment of the archaeological potential should be made. This should include at least a desk-based assessment, but possibly geophysics and trial trenching. A watching brief will almost certainly be required for any excavation.

5.9 A good practice of routine recording, investigation, and maintenance will be enacted and sustained. Such an approach will minimise the need for larger repairs or other interventions and will usually represent the most economical way of maintaining an asset

5.9.1 Estates Services (or its agents) will ensure that a senior member of staff has responsibility for the administration and recording of a routine maintenance programme for the building

All buildings need to routinely be maintained if they are to stay in good condition. This requires a detailed maintenance programme and, critically, someone who is responsible for ensuring that routine operations are carried out. A proper record of the repair and maintenance work in a maintenance log is a useful management tool. Such information will be recorded in the estates management software package *Planon*.

5.9.2 The Conservation Plan will be circulated to all senior staff who work in 3 Mansfield Road and to all other members of the University who have responsibility for the building

The value of the heritage asset needs to be appreciated by all senior staff managing or working in the building. Only in this way will the heritage asset be properly treated, repaired, and maintained.

5.9.3 The Conservation Plan will be made available to Oxford City Council, English Heritage, and any other party with a legitimate interest in the building

The Conservation Plan is intended to be a useful document to inform all parties with a legitimate interest in the building.

5.10 The Conservation Plan will be reviewed and updated from time to time as work is carried out on the building or as circumstances change. The recommendations should be reviewed at least at five-yearly intervals

Policy changes, building alterations, or other changes of circumstance, will affect the conservation duties and requirements of the building. The policy recommendations in the Conservation Plan will inform the future of the building and should be a useful tool for people carrying out maintenance work or where more significant alterations are being considered. The recommendations need to be kept up to date if they are to remain relevant.



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6.5 Other documents

- Conveyance documents, copies held by Estates Services.

- Historic plans, photographs, and documents courtesy of Oxford University Archives, refs: GE17A-D, HE18A, C, E, and F.
- Listed building descriptions courtesy of English Heritage (see **Section 6.6**).

6.6 Websites

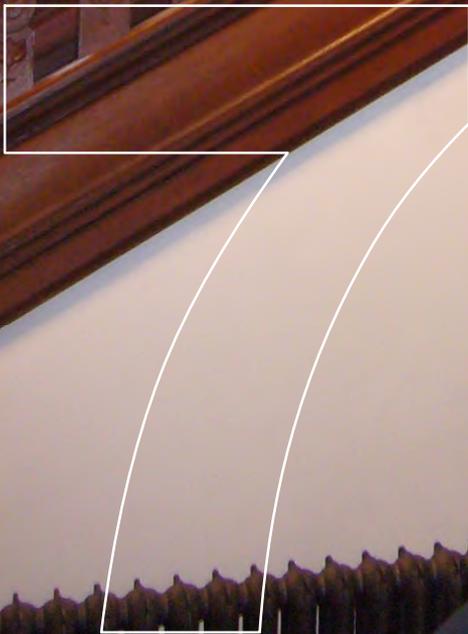
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6.7 Image Credits

- Cover and chapter covers: By author for Estates Services.
- Figure 1: Adapted from Google Maps (see **Section 6.6**).
- Figure 2: Adapted from 1876 OS Map (see **Section 6.6**).
- Figure 3: From conveyance documents.
- Figure 4: Phipps and Blomfield Jackson's original plan, Oxford University Archives: ref. GE17D 1.
- Figure 5: Adapted from Bing Maps (see **Section 6.6**).

- Figure 6: Photograph by author for Estates Services.
- Figure 7: Phipps and Blomfield Jackson's original plan, Oxford University Archives: ref. GE17D 6.
- Figure 8-12: Photograph by author for Estates Services.

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APPENDICES

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Appendix 1 Listed Building Description

List Entry Summary

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.

Name: SCHOOL OF GEOGRAPHY

List Entry Number: 1107880

Location

SCHOOL OF GEOGRAPHY, MANSFIELD ROAD

The building may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County: Oxfordshire

District: Oxford

District Type: District Authority

Parish:

National Park: Not applicable to this List entry.

Grade: II

Date first listed: 28-Jun-1972

Date of most recent amendment: Not applicable to this List entry.

Legacy System Information

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System: LBS

UID: 245642

Asset Groupings

This List entry does not comprise part of an Asset Grouping. Asset Groupings are not part of the official record but are added later for information.

List Entry Description

Summary of Building

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

Reasons for Designation

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

History

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

Details

MANSFLELD ROAD

1.

1485

(East Side)

School of Geography

SP 5106 NE 6/764

II

2.

Late C19. By Jackson. In the Elizabethan style. Ashlar. 2 storeys and attics. 2 and 3-light mullion and transom windows; 2 2-storeyed bays. Projecting 2 storey porch on street front. Gabled tiled roof with moulded copings.

Recent rear extension.

Listing NGR: SP5177306604

Selected Sources

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

Map

National Grid Reference: SP 51773 06604

The below map is for quick reference purposes only and may not be to scale. For a copy of the full scale map, please see the attached PDF - [1107880.pdf](#)



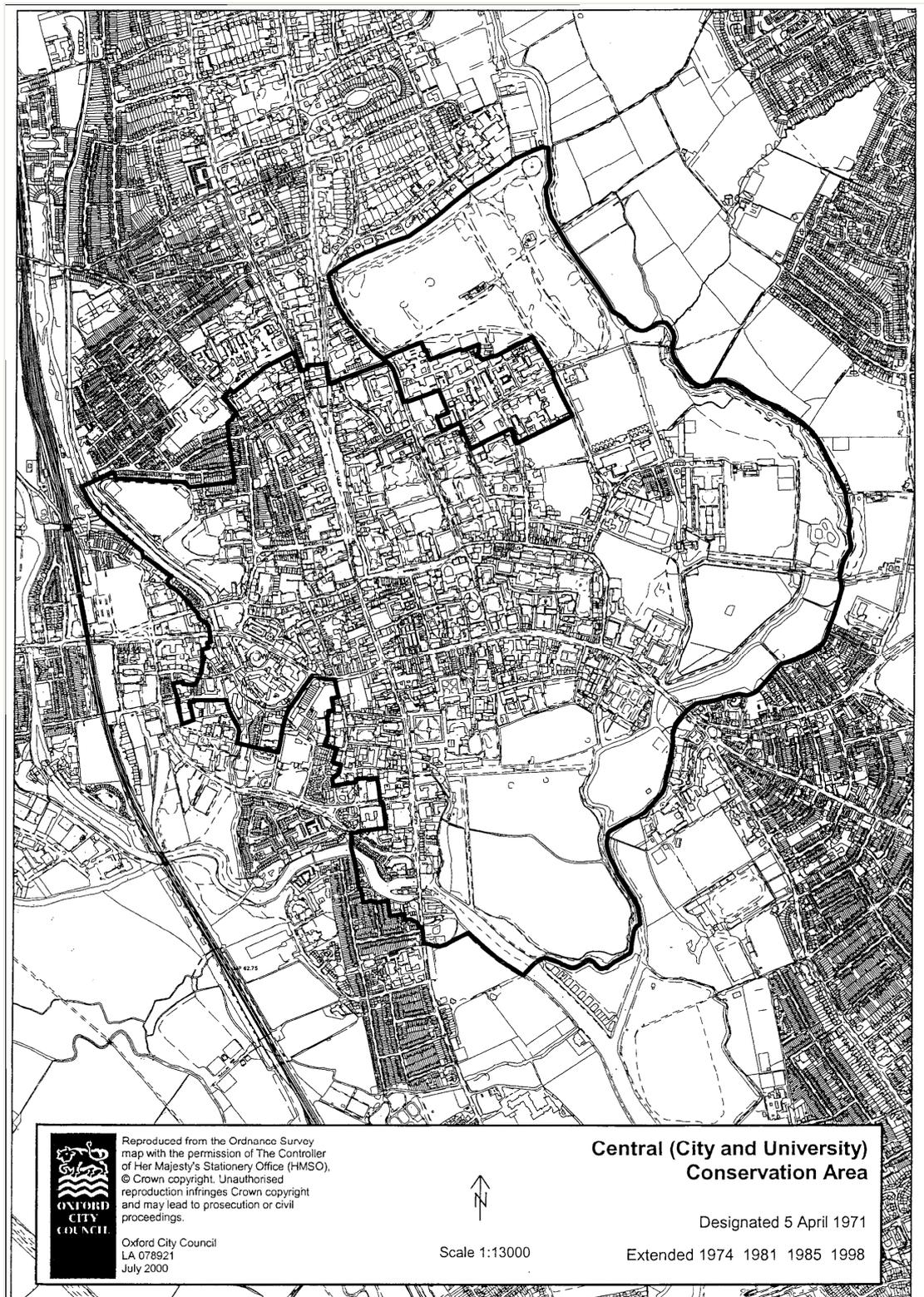
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Appendix 2 Conservation Area Description



Central Conservation Area, No. 5

The historic centre of Oxford forms one of the masterpieces of European architectural heritage. It is also a major regional commercial centre. Many of its historic buildings still function for the purpose for which they were built, and provide accommodation for the University of Oxford and its colleges.

From small beginnings as a settlement in the Saxon period, Oxford grew by the 11th century into one of the largest towns in England and a major trade centre. The Norman conquest brought the construction of the Castle and the establishment of major religious houses. The infant University arose in the 12th century and gradually grew into a major force in the city's life. The Saxons' rigid street layout and the fixed line of the 13th century defensive walls, together with the floodable river valleys, largely determined the plan of the historic centre as it is today. The gentle curve of the High Street, the great market place of St Giles and the older churches, together with the post-medieval timber-framed houses, belong to the town rather than the gown.

The University as it expanded, colonised the eastern half of the town with colleges and halls, building quadrangles of medieval and post-medieval gothic buildings, both within and without the walled town. The growth of the University's central institutions is well shown by the magnificent group of buildings situated between Broad Street and St Mary's Church. This group began in the 15th century with the building of the Divinity School and the Duke Humfrey's Library, a nucleus which expanded in the 17th century with the addition of the Schools' Quadrangle, Convocation House and Sheldonian Theatre. The group was further extended in the 18th century by the addition of the Old Clarendon Building and Radcliffe Camera to form a sequence of buildings and spaces of the highest architectural and historic interest, that today form the visual heart of the conservation area. Aspects of Oxford's 19th and 20th century change and growth may be illustrated by the considerable additions made to University and College buildings in Victorian and recent times, by the vigorous commercial and shopping centre, and by the welcome fact that the presence of the University ensures that many upper floors of buildings in the conservation area are in use for residential purposes, rather than unoccupied as in some historic towns.

Thomas Sharp, in his report to the City Council, published in 1948 as *Oxford Replanned*, set out and defined Oxford's special physical and architectural character and stressed its virtues and problems in a 20th century context. The Council, in its Review of the Development Plan, approved in 1967, approved much of the central area as an area of great historic value, and since 1962 the Council has protected the prospect of the city's unique skyline with its high buildings policy. The complementary views out of the city to its open country background have been similarly protected by the Green Belt and other policies.

The Council designated a large part of the central area as a conservation area in 1971. An extension taking in the Folly Bridge riverside was designated on 28th May 1974, a second extension covering part of Walton Street, Fisher Row and lower St

Aldate's was designated on 23rd February 1981, while a third covering Cornmarket and Queen Street was designated on 29th April 1985. On 9th December 1998, a fourth extension was made to the conservation area taking in part of the St Thomas' area, the University Observatory adjacent to University Parks and Magdalen College School playing field.

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Appendix 3 Chronology of 3 Mansfield Road

1894	Rev. John Henry Mee and his associates purchase the plot for 3 Mansfield Road
1897-98	3 Mansfield Road is constructed by Symm & Co. to designs by Arthur Blomfield Jackson and possibly C.J. Phipps
1918	Rev. Mee dies in January and his daughter, Bridget Eleanor takes on the house until her marriage in September
1921	The building is purchased by the University of Oxford and occupied by the School of Geography in the following year
1922	The School of Geography installs new heating and electrical lighting when it occupies the building, as well as fitting some new internal partitions
1936-68	The single-storey service wing at the rear of the building is demolished and replaced with a single-storey lecture theatre extension to a design by Sir Hubert Worthington
1938-57	At some point in this time a small extension (since demolished) was constructed to the north of the music room. This was possibly a war-time structure
1965-68	The building is extended to designs by Jack Lankester with a large library extension (extant) to the north and the addition of a second storey to the 1936-38 lecture theatre
1972	By this point the light well had been infilled at the ground-floor level only. These lavatories are modernised and refurbished
1987-88	The upper portion of the light well is infilled to the second-floor level
1988	The first-floor seminar room (the former drawing room) is refurbished
2005	The School of Geography vacates the building and it is occupied by Queen Elizabeth House
2005-06	Several internal partitions are removed, exposed services concealed, and the building generally refurbished
2007-09	Worthington's eastern extension is demolished and replaced with a modern wing. The 1965-68 library is refurbished at this point

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Appendix 4 Checklist of Significant Features

This checklist is intended for the use of those working or planning work on the site or buildings. It highlights features of architectural significance within 3 Mansfield Road; these may be original features or new additions that nevertheless contribute positively to the character of the building. As this is a Grade-II-listed building any repair or alteration work to factors that contribute to the significance of the building will require listed building consent in order to avoid prosecution under the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990. **If planned work will likely affect any of the aspects featured in the list below advice should immediately be sought from the Building Conservation Team at Estates Services.**

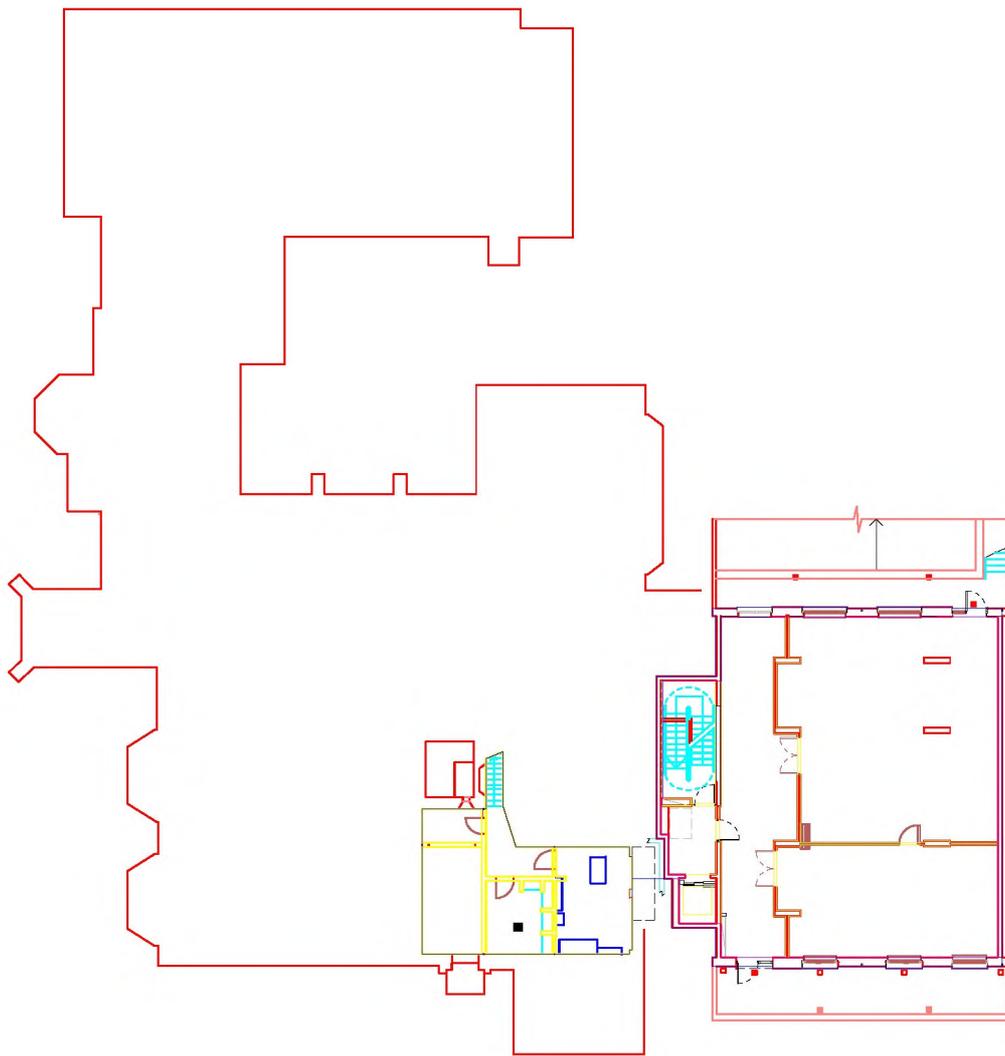
The checklist lists both general significant features that affect the building as a whole and which should be held in mind if working in any space, and specific features of particular significance that should receive special regard if working in these particular spaces. The Further Information column refers to the relevant page reference in the Conservation Plan proper.

3 Mansfield Road, Building #159		
SIGNIFICANT FEATURE	✓	Further Information
General:		
External elevations, chimneys, and roof		p.21-23, 29-31, 36-37
Any carved stonework		p.21-23, 29-31, 36-37
Windows throughout		p.21-23, 29-31, 36-37
Joinery and fireplaces throughout		p.23-34, 31-32, 37
Staircases		p.23-34, 31-32, 37
Specific Features:		
External Elevations		
-Deddington stone elevations		p.21-23, 29-31, 36-37
-Tiled roof		p.21-23, 29-31, 36-37
-Chimneys including projecting chimneybreast		p.21-23, 29-31, 36-37
-Window settings, including stone mullions and transoms, and windows		p.21-23, 29-31, 36-37
-Pedimented porch, including arch and carved coat of arms		p.21-23, 29-31, 36-37
-Turret, dormer windows, and gables		p.21-23, 29-31, 36-37
Internal Spaces		
-Staircase in reception		p.23-24, 31-32, 37
-Staircase and gallery in hall		p.23-24, 31-32, 37
-Fireplace in hall		p.23-24, 31-32, 37
-Windows, notably stained glass, and window cases and seats in hall		p.23-24, 31-32, 37

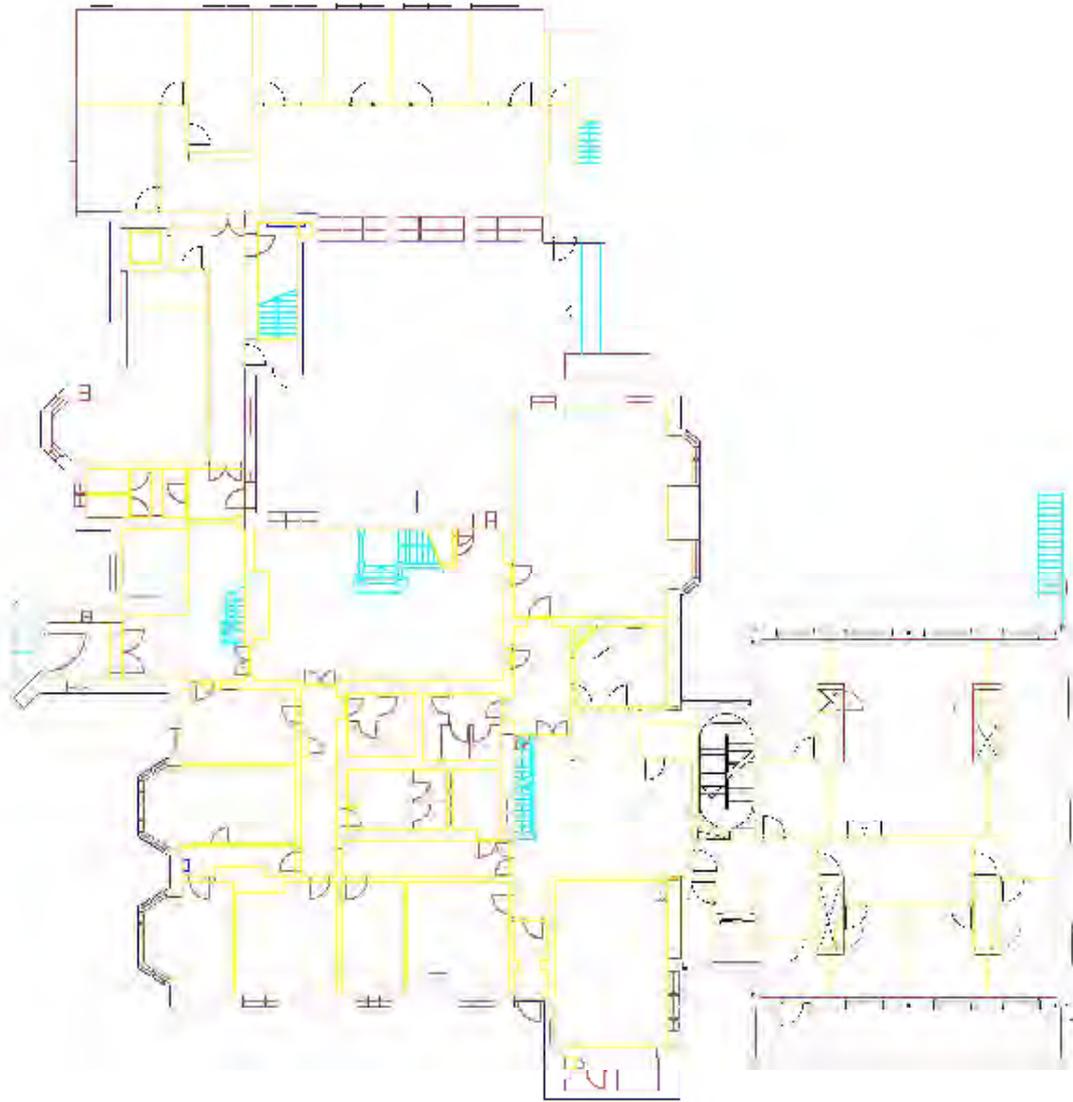
-Panelling in hall	p.23-24, 31-32, 37
-Tie-beam ceiling in hall	p.23-24, 31-32, 37
-Window surrounds to former light well	p.23-24, 31-32, 37
-Fireplaces in dining room, drawing room, and offices	p.23-24, 31-32, 37
-Panelled, barrel-vaulted ceiling in former drawing room	p.23-24, 31-32, 37
-Windows surrounds and apse in former drawing room	p.23-24, 31-32, 37
-Window surrounds and mullions/transoms throughout	p.23-24, 31-32, 37
-Doorcases throughout	p.23-24, 31-32, 37

PRIOR TO UNDERTAKING ANY REPAIRS OR ALTERATIONS ON THE ABOVE-LISTED ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES, CONTACT THE CONSERVATION TEAM AT ESTATES SERVICES ON (01865) (2)78750

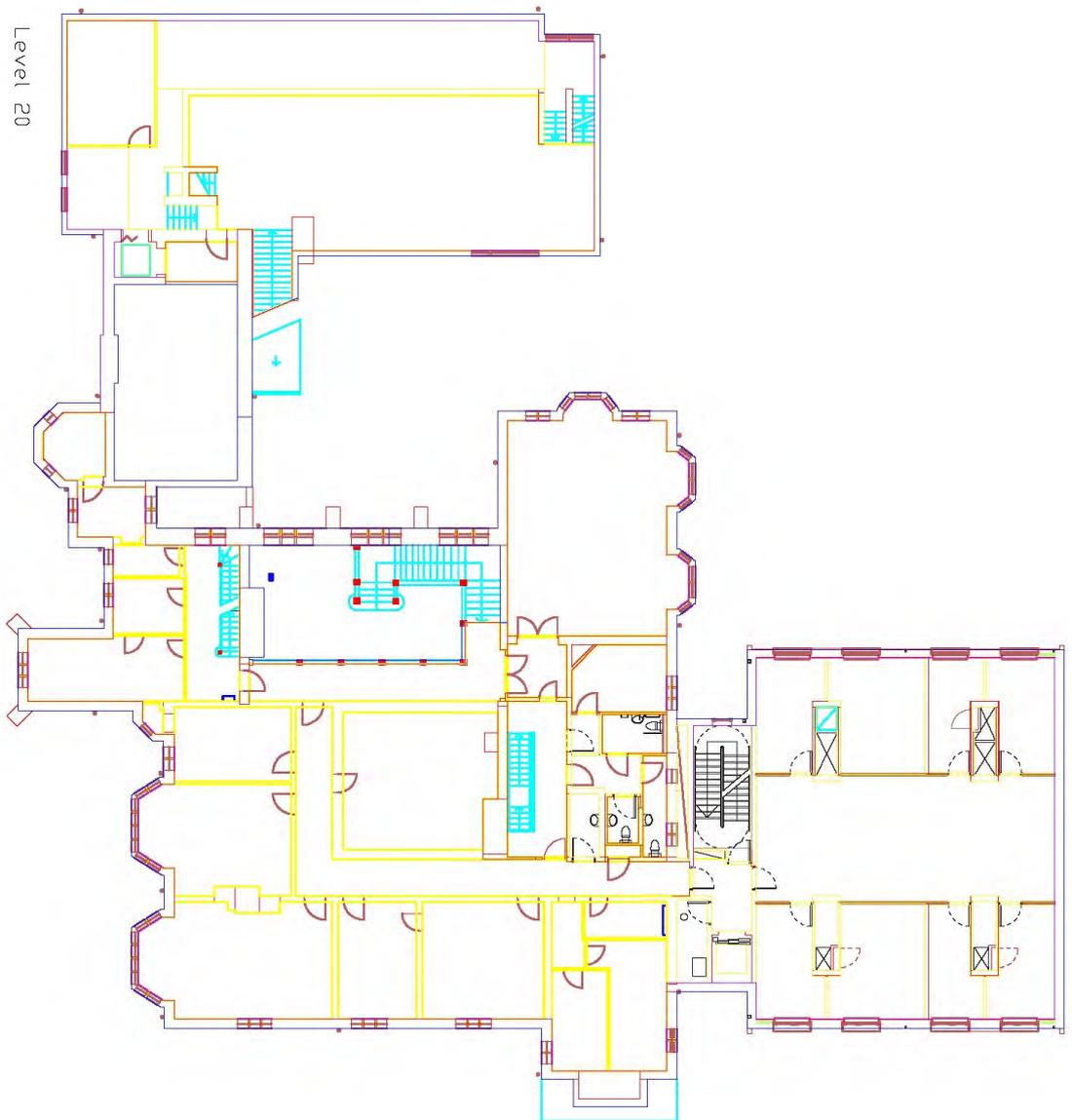
Appendix 5 Floor plans



Basement plan, orientated with north at the top of the image

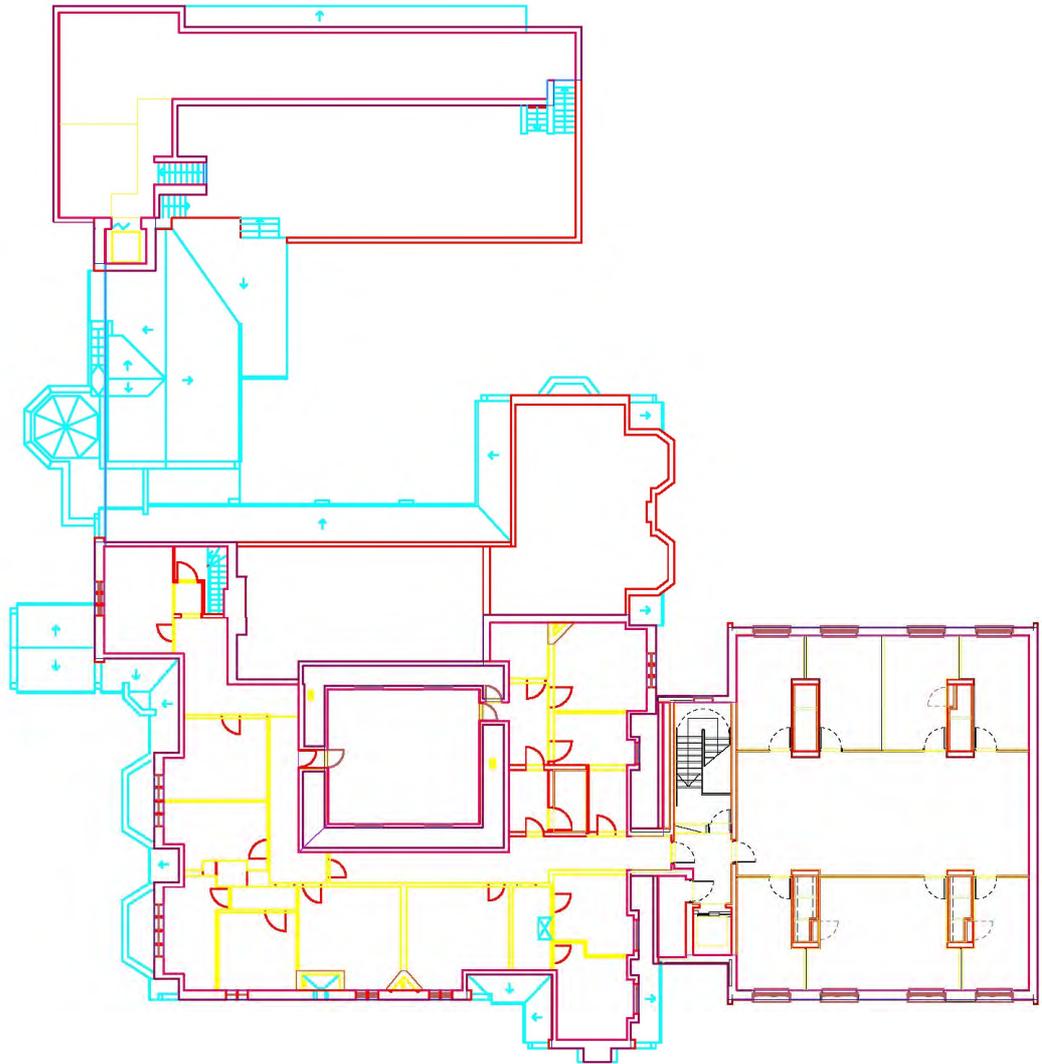


Ground-floor plan, orientated with north at the top of the image



First-floor plan, orientated with north at the top of the image

Level 30



Second-floor plan, orientated with north at the top of the image

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