



KINMEL HALL

St. GEORGES

ABERGELE

CONWY

NORTH WALES

A Report on the Current Condition of the Hall

The History attached to Kinmel Hall dates back to 1311. The current Hall is the third building on that site and the remains of the first Hall are still standing in the Parkland that surrounds the Hall.

The first Hall on the current site was designed by Samuel Wyatt for the Reverend Edward Hughes whose wife was Co-heiress to part of the Parys Mountain near Amlwch. The discovery of rich veins of Copper in the mountain meant Edward could leave the church and become a large scale land owner. It was as a result of this that he bought the Kinmel Estate in 1786.

The first Hall was built between 1786 and 1815 when the Estate passed to Edward's eldest son, William Lewis Hughes who was M.P. for Wallingford between 1802 – 1826 and 1830 -31.

Princess Victoria stayed at the Hall with her mother in 1832. When she was Queen, Lord Dinorben – William Lewis Hughes was made a Baron in William IV's Coronation Peerages – was appointed her A.D.C. in 1840.

On Monday 27th September 1841, fire almost totally destroyed the Wyatt building. It was rebuilt to designs by Thomas Hopper.

On the death of Lord Dinorben in 1852 and his Son eight months after his father, the title Lord Dinorben became extinct and the Hall passed to W L Hughes' nephew – Hugh Robert Hughes. Hugh had the 'Palladian' Stable Block built before commissioning William Eden Nesfield to work on the Hopper building to which he made striking alterations.

Kinmel is the only site where William Eden Nesfield, his Father William Andrews Nesfield- the Landscape Gardener and his Brother Markham Nesfield worked on together. Markham was sadly killed in a riding accident in Regents Park shortly after completing work on the Victorian Gardens in the Park. William Eden Nesfield linked the Stable Block into the main Hall. He also built the main Hall on a steel scaffold and designed it as a Calendar House – she has 365 Windows, 365 Stairs, 7 Function Rooms, 52 State Bedrooms and 44 Chimneys.

When his father drew up the plans for the gardens they were the first formal the Hall had ever had. He brought in specimen trees from all around the Empire. There are two marble pillars that he had brought in from Carthagina. He used an 1841 Hydrostatic Ram located underneath the Gardens to power the Ornamental Fountain. His son used it to power one of the lifts in the Hall. The pump was still operational as late as 1975.

The Hall passed to Hugh's younger son - Lieutenant Colonel H.B.L Hughes - in 1911. During World War 1 the Hall was a Training Camp for the Army and at the end of the War it was used as a Transit Camp for Canadian soldiers. The Hall ceased to be a Private Home in 1929 when Lieutenant Colonel H.B.L Hughes moved into what is now Kinmel Manor Hotel just outside Abergele.

Between 1929 and 1975 Kinmel Hall was a Private Boys School. The Rheuma Spa of Wales, a Military Hospital, an Hotel and Osteopathic Clinic and finally the home of Clarendon School for Girls.

Sadly, on Monday 29th September 1975, fire ripped through most of the Hall. The design of the Hall did not help this situation. W E Nesfield had close lined the inside of the roof with wooden panelling which, over 100+ years, had dried out and went up in flames very easily.

The Hall remained empty and in ruins for 3 years. The owners of the Estate – direct descendants of Hugh Robert Hughes and the father of the current Lord Lieutenant of Clwyd – Major David Fetherstonhaugh made 3 applications to the Welsh Office to have the Hall demolished in order that he could turn the Stable Block into his own home and re-instate the 18 Hole Golf Course. The Welsh Office turned down the applications because of the Historical importance of the Hall.

In 1978 the Hall was leased to a Mr Edmund David Vince who took on the task of re-building the Hall, as close to the original plans which are held in the Victoria and Albert Museum, and turned it into the Christian Conference Centre.

On the death of Mr Vince the Hall was sold to a property Developer who spent a considerable amount of money renovating the Ground and First Floor of the Hall before selling it at Auction to Derbyshire Investments.

The Hall came up for Auction in 2011 when the owners went into receivership and the Hall was seized as part of a Mortgage Repossession. It was only at this point that it was discovered that whilst owners of the Hall they had ripped out all of the en-suite bathrooms - leaving pipes sticking out of the floor – and cutting down at least 40 of the protected trees in the grounds without permission from CADW or the Forestry Commission.

The Hall was due to be auctioned in London in December 2011. On the morning of the Auction there were at least 5 prospective buyers in the Hotel where the auction was to take place. Five minutes before it was due to be sold it was pulled from the Auction having been sold privately overnight.

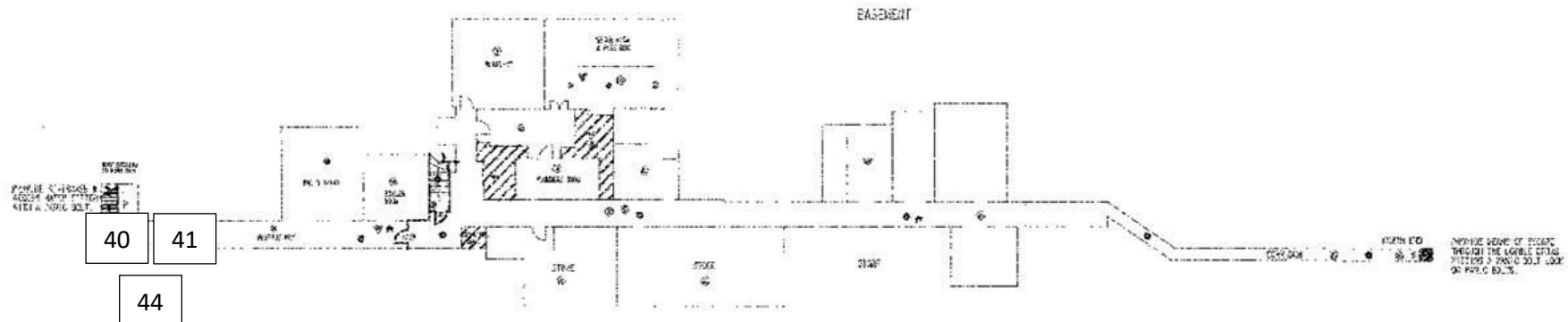
She was sold for £1.45 Million; the starting price was to have been £1.5 Million with the Hall having been valued in 2007 for apparently £17 Million. It is my understanding that the receivers wanted to draw a line under the growing costs of the responsibility of the Hall with another Winter fast approaching and the Hall being in an isolated location.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The following pages show plans of the Hall as
it appears today.

The numbers super imposed on these plans
are the page numbers that refer to the
current state of that part of the Hall.

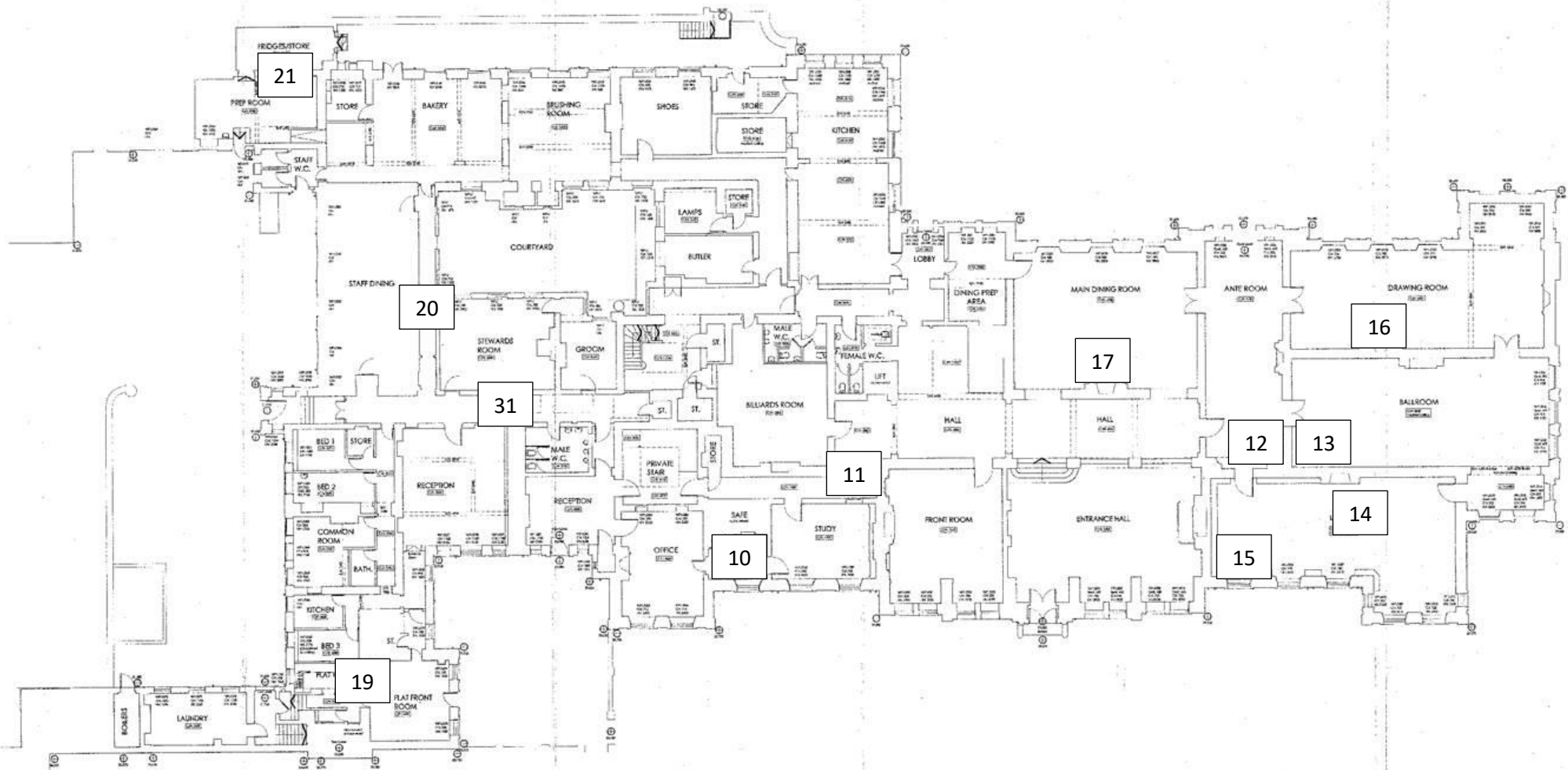
The details are not complete but go a long
way to show how the Hall has deteriorated
as a result of 14 years of Neglect, Vandalism
and Theft



40 41
44

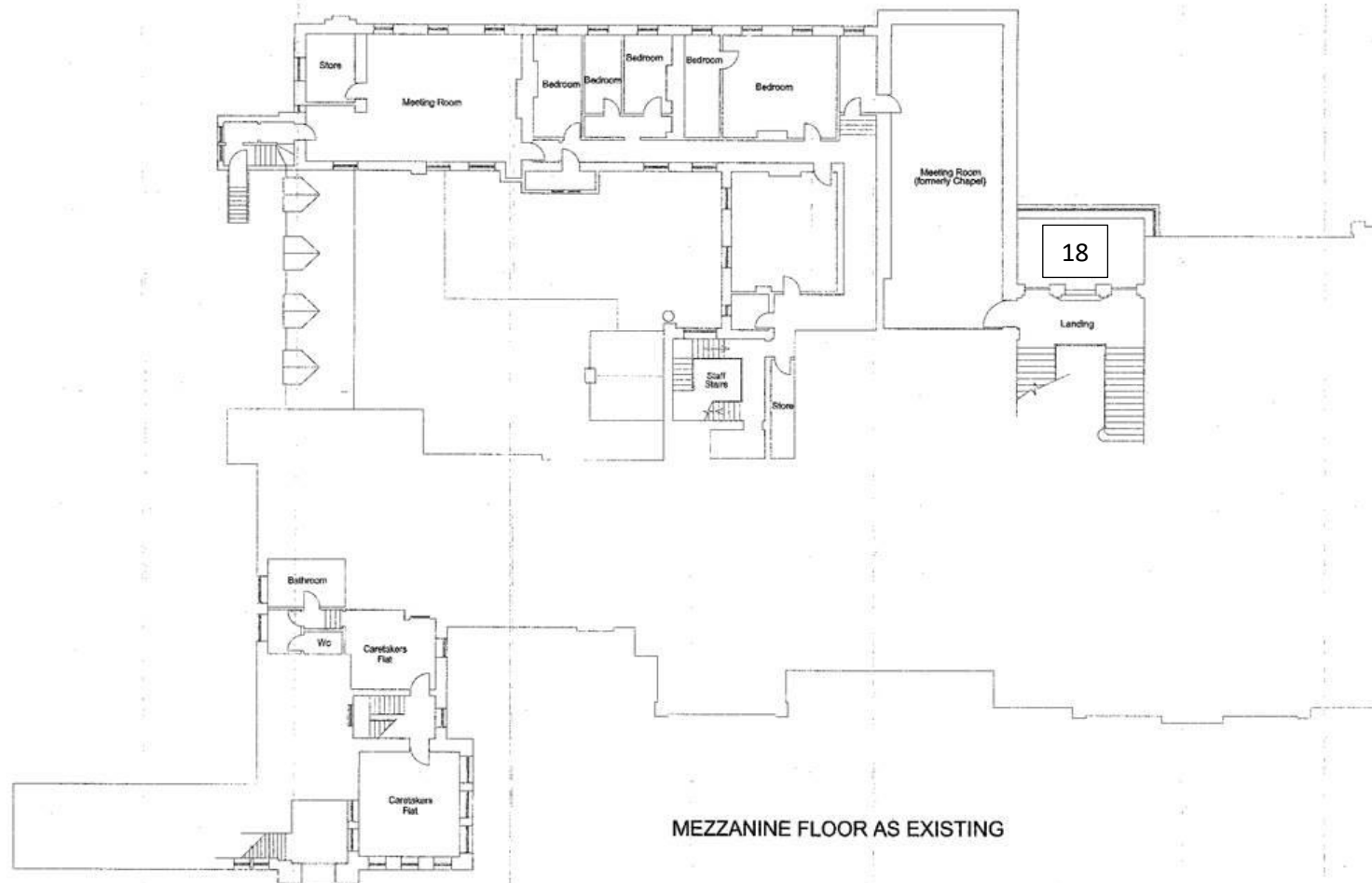
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GROUND and FIRST FLOOR PLANS - AS EXISTING Scale 1:100

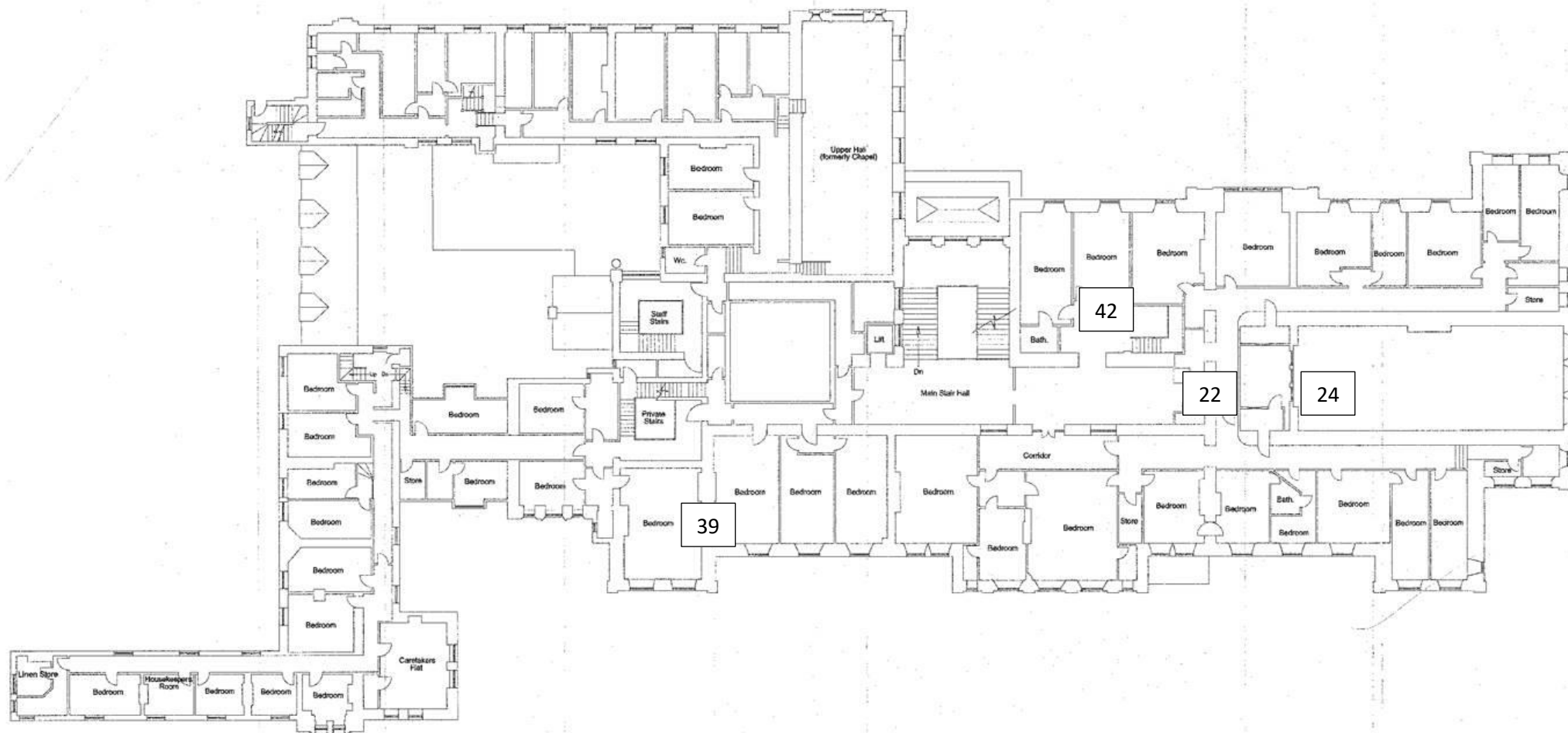


CONVERSION OF KINMEL HALL, ABERGELE to HOTEL for DERBYSHIRE INVESTMENTS LTD

<p>THE KINMEL HALL HOTEL ABERGELE, CONWY LL55 2BQ</p>	
<p>DESIGNED BY DERBYSHIRE INVESTMENTS LTD CONVERSION OF KINMEL HALL KINMEL, ABERGELE, CONWY</p>	
<p>PROJECT Main Hall Ground floor plan - existing</p>	
<p>DATE 18.01.08</p>	<p>SCALE 1:100 & A0</p>

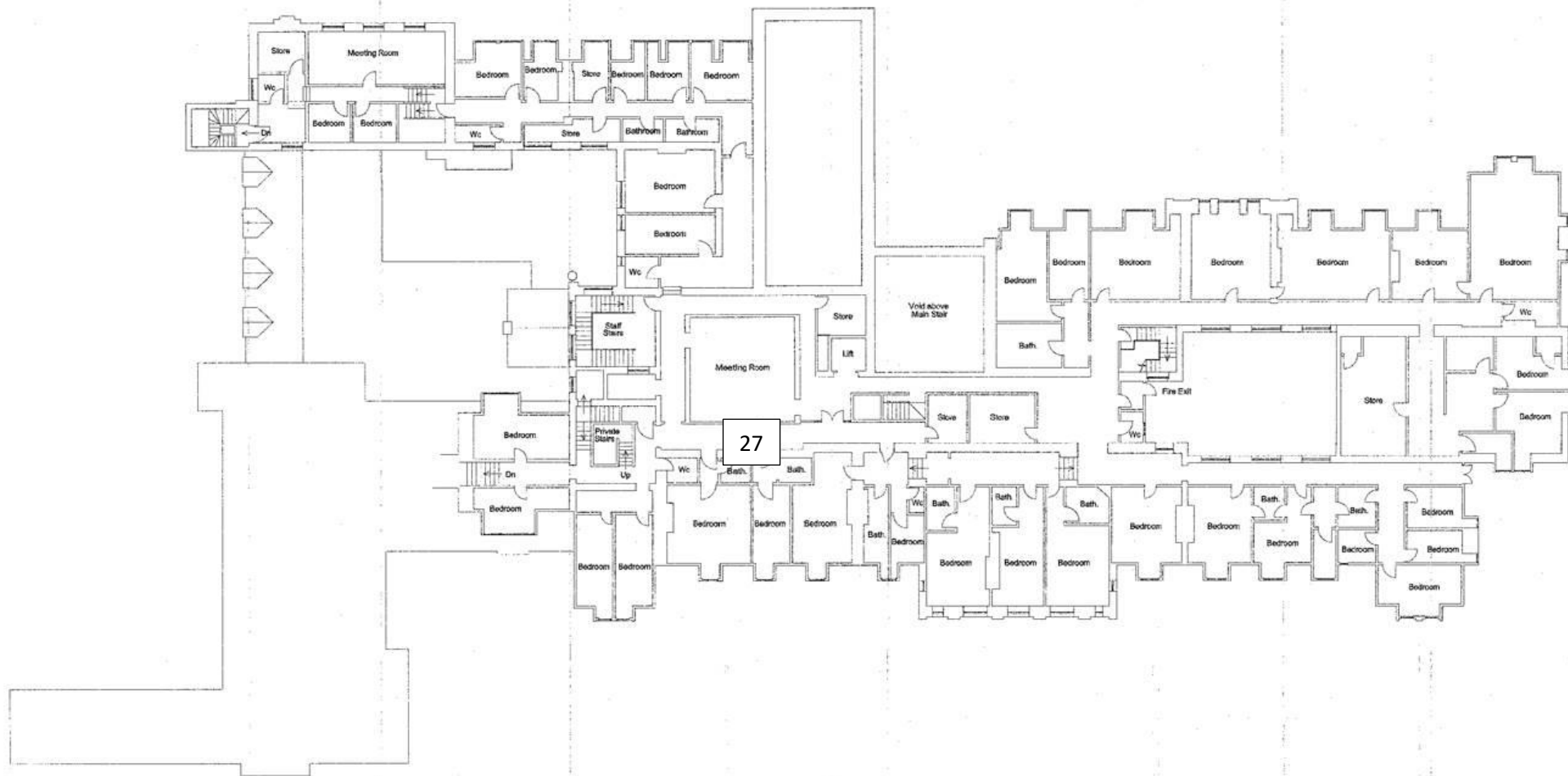


MEZZANINE FLOOR AS EXISTING

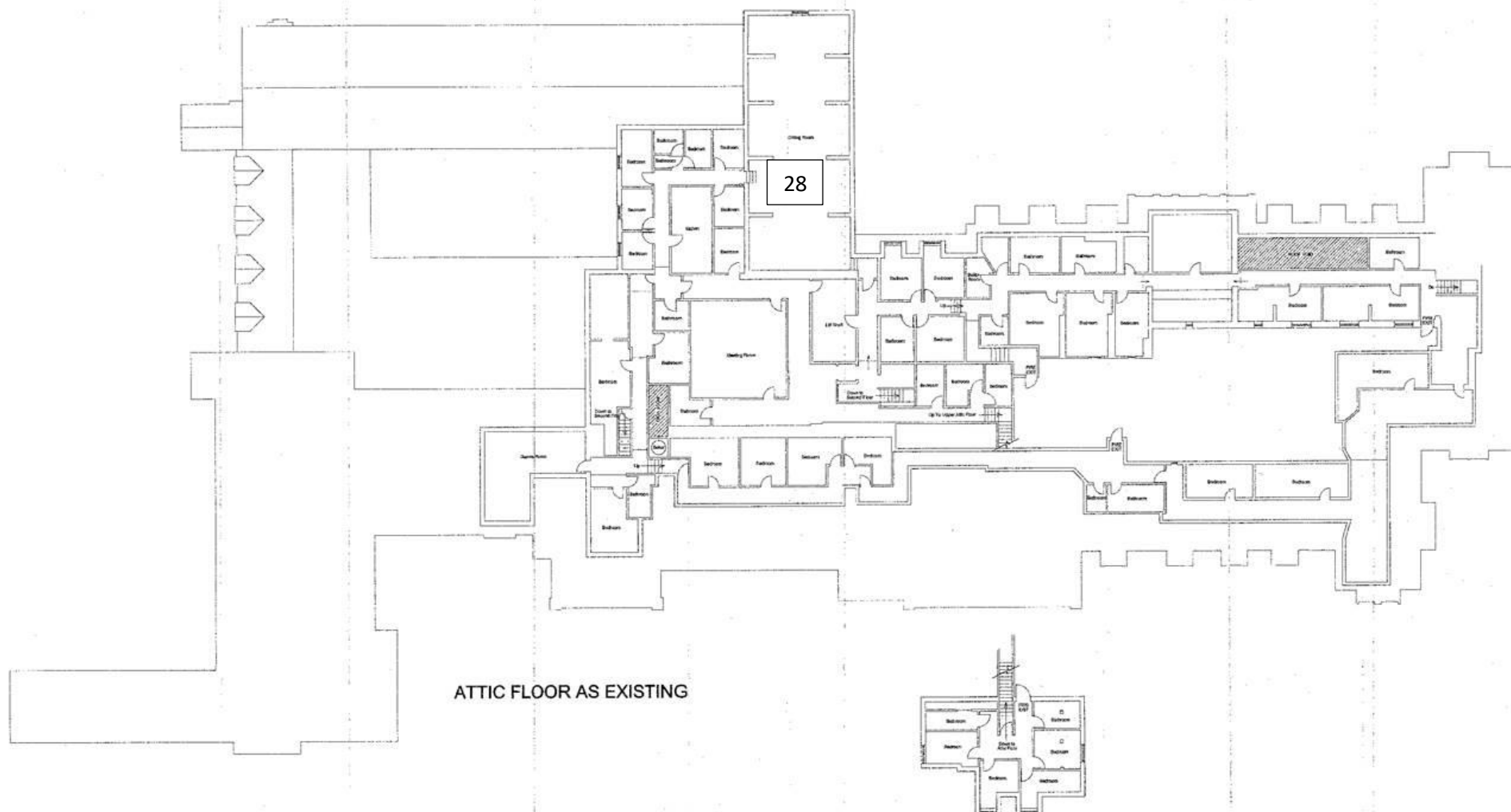


FIRST FLOOR AS EXISTING

SECOND FLOOR PLAN - AS EXISTING Scale 1:100



SECOND FLOOR AS EXISTING



35

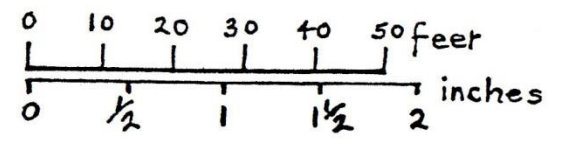
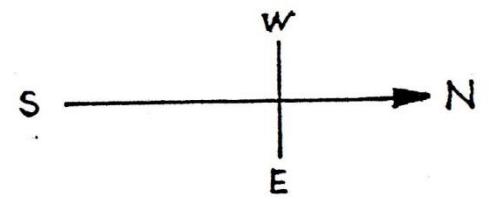
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Stables

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KINMEL HALL PLANS



This fireplace should have blue and white delft tiles on either side. They are now on the floor smashed





This is the door way from the Main Hall
leading to the Reception.



These are the doors to the Library and Ballroom (Please see details of guttering problem later in report as to cause)



This is the Ballroom. There is water damage to the underside of the Minstrel Gallery



WATER FROM BLOCKED GUTTER MAY HAVE TRACKED ALONG STEEL GIRDERS AND VOIDS TO CASEMENT WINDOWS. WHEN THE SHUTTERS ARE CLOSED THE PANELLING BEHIND IS WARPPED AND CRACKED
SHUTTERS ARE NOW CLOSED AND SCREWED SHUT INTO THE WINDOW FRAMES THEMSELVES

Queen Victoria's Coat of Arms and Hugh Robert Hughes' Coat of Arms were removed on the evening of the 9th October 2013. The people responsible tried to remove the whole Fireplace without success.



This is the Fire place on the West facing wall of the Drawing Room it was damaged at the same time as the others.



This is the Dining Room Fireplace
which was also damaged in October
2013





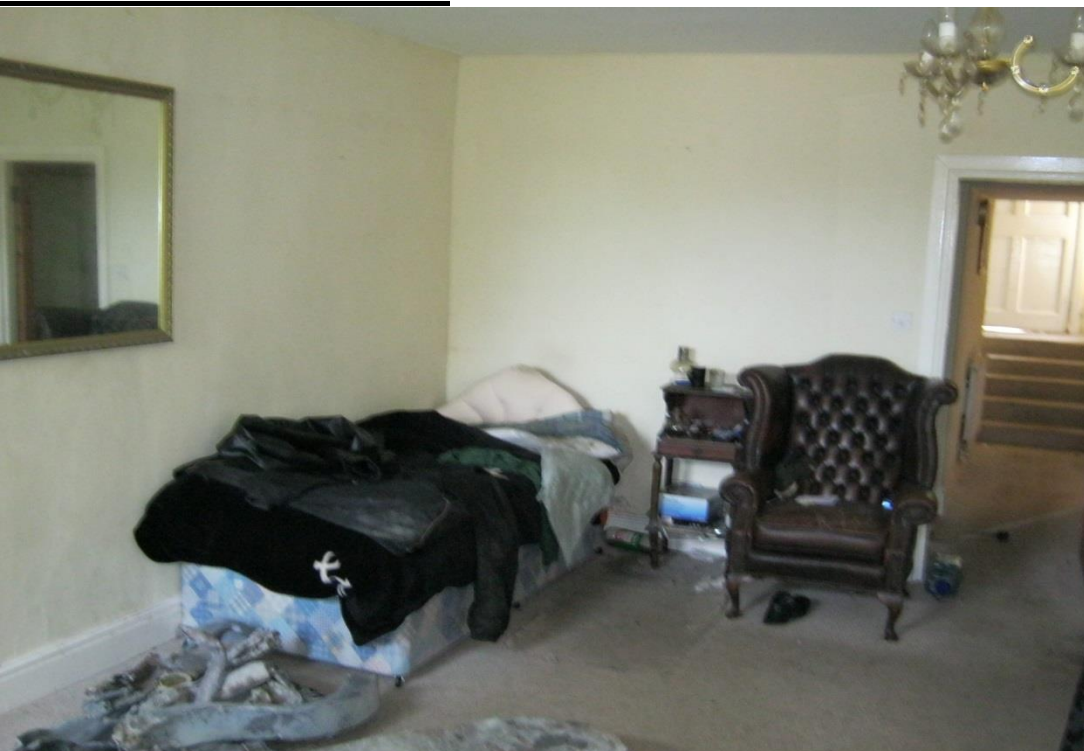
A panel of Marble installed 1936 – 40 has been smashed whilst trying to be removed

25TH OCTOBER 2011

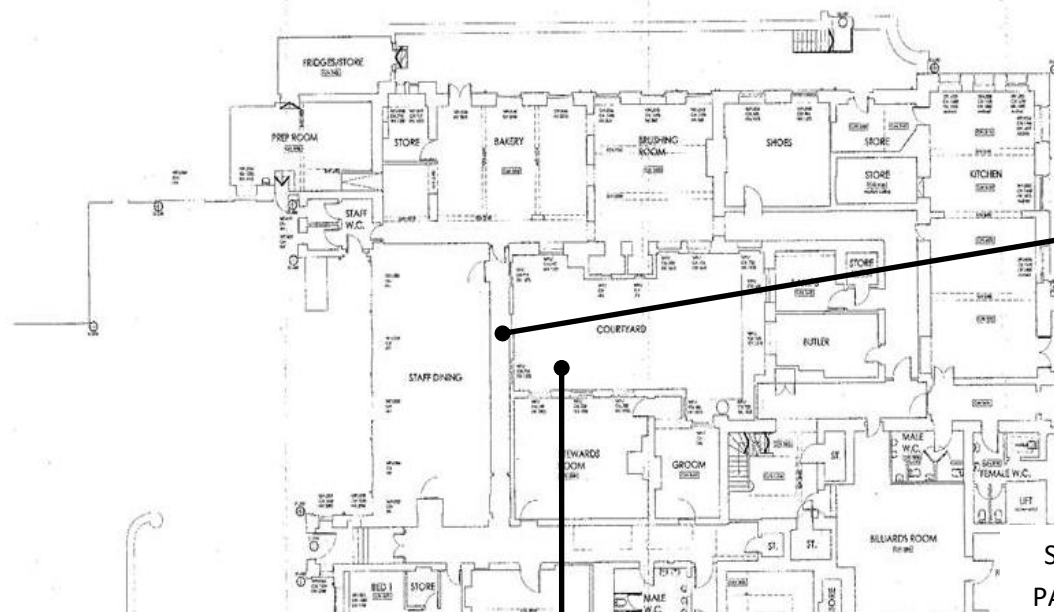


14TH AUGUST 2013

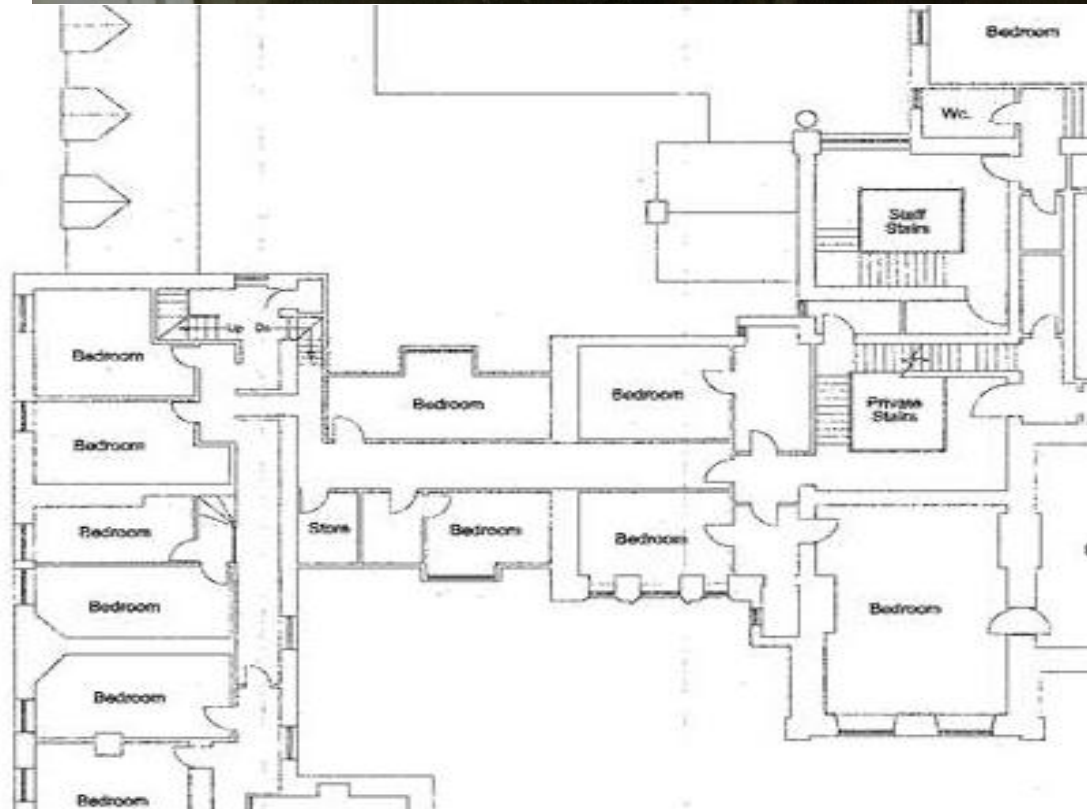
SEE PAGE 30 FOR MORE DETAILS ON THIS SECTION OF THE HALL



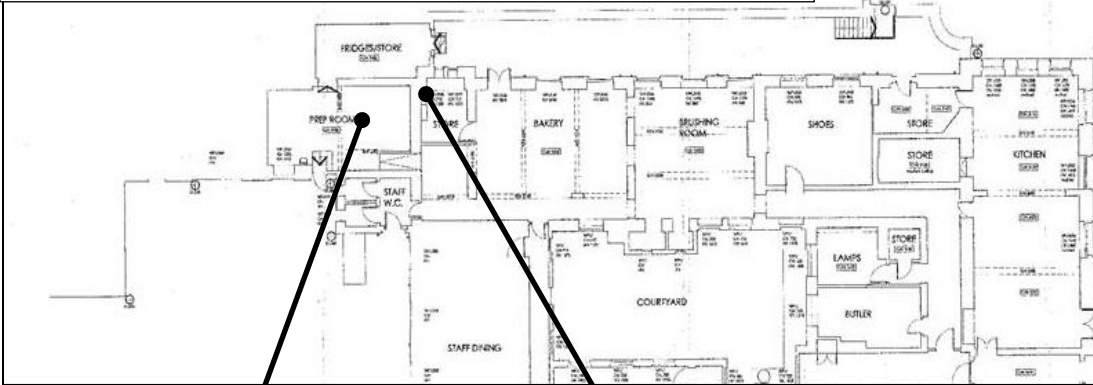
GROUND and FIRST FLOOR PLANS - AS EXISTING Scale 1:100



SEE
PAGE
30



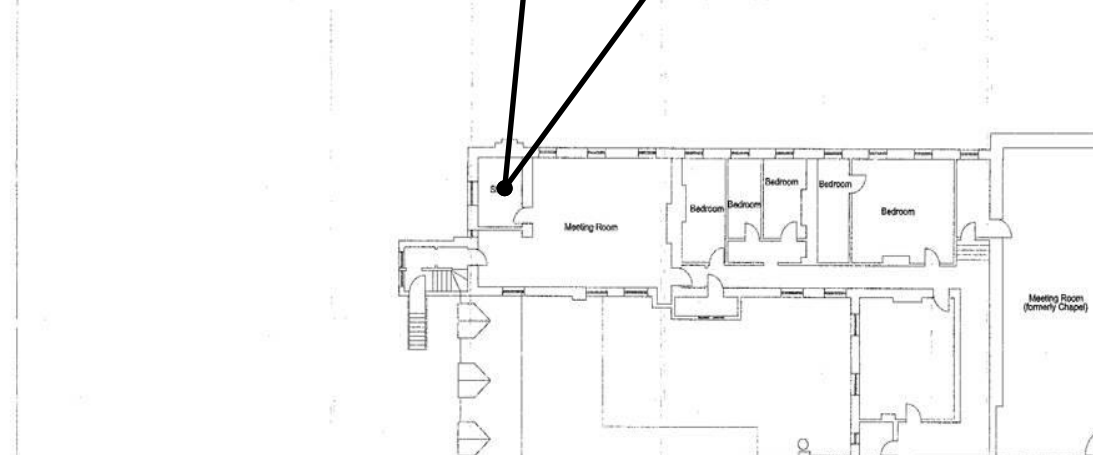
THIS IS THE GROUND FLOOR SOUTH – WEST WING WHICH RUNS PARALLEL TO THE SLOPING DRIVE WAY TO THE SPORTS HALL



THIS SECTION OF THE HALL IS THE FLAT ROOFED AREA AT THE SOUTH WEST CORNER OF THE HALL NEAR TO WHERE THE SLOPING DRIVE PASSES THE GAS TANK ENCLOSURE. AS WITH A LOT OF FLAT ROOFS THIS ONE HAS LEAKED FOR AT LEAST 20 YEARS. THE FLOOR BELOW HAS BECOME ROTTEN AND GIVEN WAY INTO THE KITCHEN AREA BELOW.



MEZZANINE FLOOR PLAN - AS EXISTING Scale 1:100



During the rebuilding of Kinmel Hall an error was made with the drainage that runs across the roof of the Ballroom adjoining the end wall of the SECOND FLOOR Corridor (as shown in the photo).

In the top end of the Down Pipe that runs down the far left hand corner at the back of the ballroom a leaf trap was inserted to stop debris getting into the pipe

Unfortunately it was put in upside down

As a result, at regular intervals, the Trap becomes blocked with leaves etc. As a result the Gutter (shown in the plans) fills with rainwater, which then seeps under the lead flashing and into the building. For the most part the water finds its way to the void containing the Down Pipe that is supposed to get rid of the water. This may also be the cause of the Dry Rot on the back wall of the Drawing Room and Ball Room.

Following a recent visit to the Hall it would appear that the damp has affected the ceiling of the First Floor Landing.

As the Hall is built on a Steel Scaffold it is possible that there are voids running through the ceilings of the hall – as there are under the floor of the Salon – allowing the damp to penetrate wider than the single wall affected directly by the blocked gutter which may be part of the reason for the Dry Rot in the casement of the Library Windows

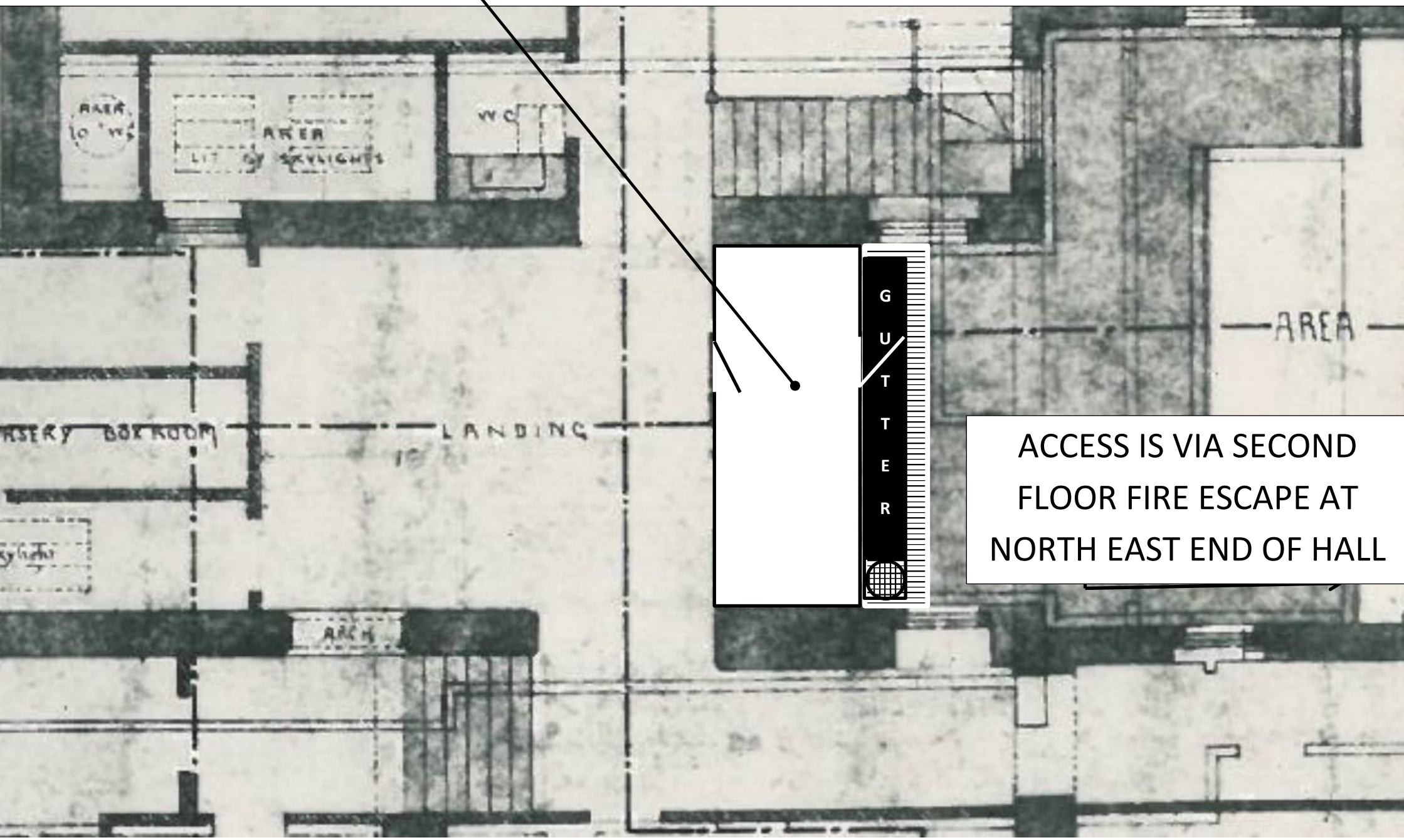
Due to Kinmel's design it is UNLIKELY that damp has penetrated from the outside unless the trenches have become water logged or blocked



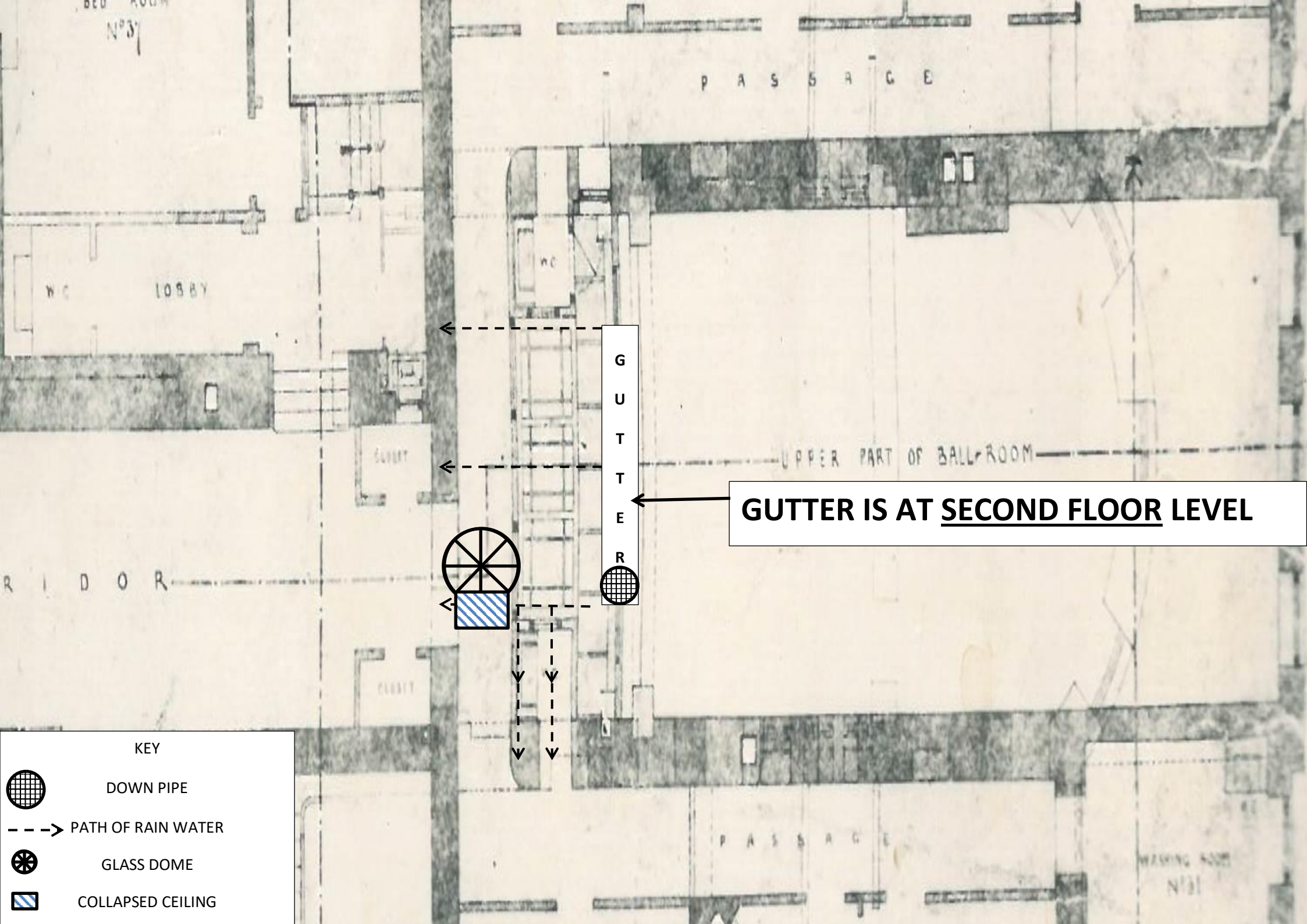
THE CEILING TO THE RIGHT OF THE DOME HAS COLLAPSED ONTO THE FLOOR REVEALING
THE LATHS UNDERNEATH

THE WALL WITH THE ARCHITRAVING IS WHERE THE GUTTER IS THAT KEEPS BLOCKING

THE GUTTER CAUSING THE PROBLEM IS UNDERNEATH THE FIRE ESCAPE ACCESSED FROM THE
SECOND FLOOR LANDING
(See photo below)



ACCESS IS VIA SECOND
FLOOR FIRE ESCAPE AT
NORTH EAST END OF HALL



GUTTER IS AT SECOND FLOOR LEVEL

THE GUTTER CAUSING THE PROBLEM IS UNDERNEATH THE FIRE ESCAPE ACCESSED FROM
THE SECOND FLOOR LANDING



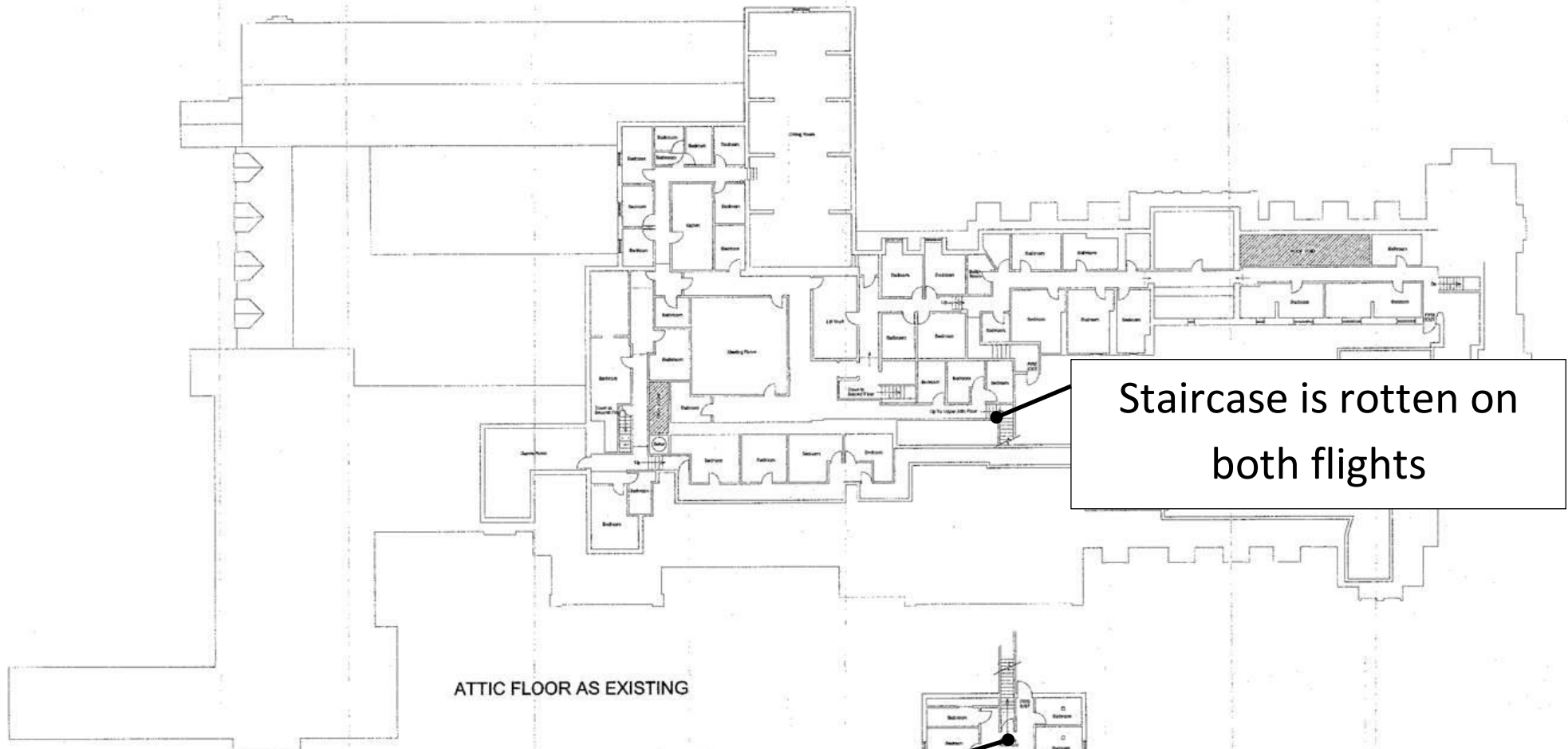


This is the Second Floor Landing on the East Front. The Collapsed Ceiling is a long standing problem due to a leak in the roof



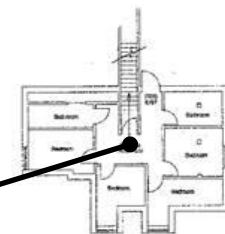
There is a collapsed section of ceiling just out of shot at the top right hand corner of this picture which shows the room in the roof of the Chapel.

THIRD FLOOR PLAN - AS EXISTING Scale 1:100



Staircase is rotten on both flights

ATTIC FLOOR AS EXISTING



UPPER ATTIC FLOOR

Several rooms in the tower show damp and exposed burnt beams that are from the 75 fire. These were checked and found to be safe in 78 -

WHEN WILLIAM EDEN NESFIELD DESIGNED THE HALL HE INCLUDED HIS OWN VERSION OF DAMP PROOFING SIMILAR TO THAT WHICH HE USED IN OTHER BUILDINGS HE HAD DESIGNED.

WHEN HE DESIGNED BUILDINGS WHICH HAD FLOORS BELOW GROUND LEVEL – IN KINMEL'S CASE TWO FLOORS – HE PUT A 'TRENCH' AROUND THE OUTSIDE WALLS OF THE BUILDING COVERED WITH 'SANDSTONE' SLABS WITH AIR PLATES IN THEM



THE IMAGES ON PAGE 19 ARE OF THE GARDEN HOUSE WHICH WAS THE ADMINISTRATORS RESIDENCE AND LATTERLY THE SECURITY FIRMS ACCOMODATION (GUARD WATCH), HOWEVER THE DAMAGE DONE TO IT WAS THANKS TO VANDALS ON THE MORNING OF SATURDAY 13TH AUGUST 2013

THE STEWARDS ROOM/LINK DINING ROOM ON PAGE 20 HAS A LATH AND PLASTER CEILING.



WHILST THE FIRST FLOOR PLAN ON THAT PAGE SHOWS TWO BEDROOMS OVER THIS PART OF THE HALL HOWEVER THERE IS A FLAT ROOF WHICH IS NOT SHOWN. IF YOU ARE STANDING IN THE GROUND FLOOR CORRIDOR WITH THE SERVANTS HALL ON YOUR LEFT THE FLAT ROOF OF THE CORRIDOR CONTINUES ACROSS THE ROOF OF THE STEWARDS ROOM/LINK DINING ROOM AND IT JOINS UP WITH THE ROOF OF THE CORRIDOR THAT RUNS DOWN THE RIGHT HAND SIDE OF THE SERVANTS HALL WHICH LEADS TO THE ENCLOSED COURTYARD AND THE CLOSE DINING ROOM. STANDING IN THE SAME LOCATION THERE IS A VOID ABOVE THE TOILETS AT THE FAR END OF THE CORRIDOR ON THE RIGHT







WHILST THE STABLE BLOCK AS SHOWN IN THE PRECEDING PAGES LOOKS THE WORSE FOR WARE IT IS IMPORTANT TO POINT OUT THAT THIS SECTION OF THE HALL HAS NOT BEEN USED SINCE THE EARLY 1990'S. IT WAS NOT EVEN SHOWN TO THE INSPECTION TEAM IN AUGUST 1995.

THIS IS NOT THE CASE WHERE THE MEWS BLOCK IS CONCERNED



THIS SECTION OF THE HALL WAS STILL BEING USED BY PAYING GUESTS AS LATE AS OCTOBER 1995 AND MAYBE EVEN LATER.

THE AREA WHERE THE ROOF HAS COLLAPSED CONTAINS BATHROOMS AND SHOWERS. WHILST I HAVE NOT BEEN IN THIS PART SINCE THE 90'S IT IS MY UNDERSTANDING THAT THIS COLLAPSE HAS BROUGHT DOWN THE SECOND FLOOR INTO THE FIRST FLOOR

IT IS ALSO ACCESSIBLE FROM THE BACK





THE SPORTS HALL AND GARAGE WERE BUILT AROUND 1932. THE BIG WHITE BUILDING HAS AN ASBESTOS RIBBED ROOF. WHEN EDDIE VINCE LEASED THE HALL BETWEEN 1978 – 2000 HE OPENED UP THE TWO BUILDINGS INTO ONE BIG BUILDING. THIS WAS SO THAT IT COULD BE USED BY THE BIGGER GROUPS WHO BOOKED THE ENTIRE HALL OR MULTIPLE SECTIONS ON BLOCK. IT WAS THE VINCE FAMILY WHO PUT THE SUSPENDED CEILING INTO THE HALL AND AN RSJ IN PLACE OF THE DIVIDING WALL.

THERE IS A CENTRAL HEATING SYSTEM AT THE BACK OF THE SMALLER HALL WHICH WAS NOT INSPECTED WHEN THE FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT WAS CARRIED OUT IN 2012 AND AS THE RECEIVERS WERE NOT AWARE OF ITS EXISTENCE IT WAS NOT DRAINED.



THE CURRENT OWNERS 'CLAIM' THEY HAVE EMPTIED IT BUT AS THEY WERE FOUND TO BE REMOVING THE ASBESTOS WITHOUT THE CORRECT PERMITS OR PROTECTIVE CLOTHING IT IS ANYONES GUESS WHERE IT WAS EMPTIED TO IF AT ALL.

IT IS OIL FIRED AND HAS ITS OWN TANK



WHEN DERBYSHIRE INVESTMENTS TOOK OVER THE HALL IT BECAME A DUMPING GROUND

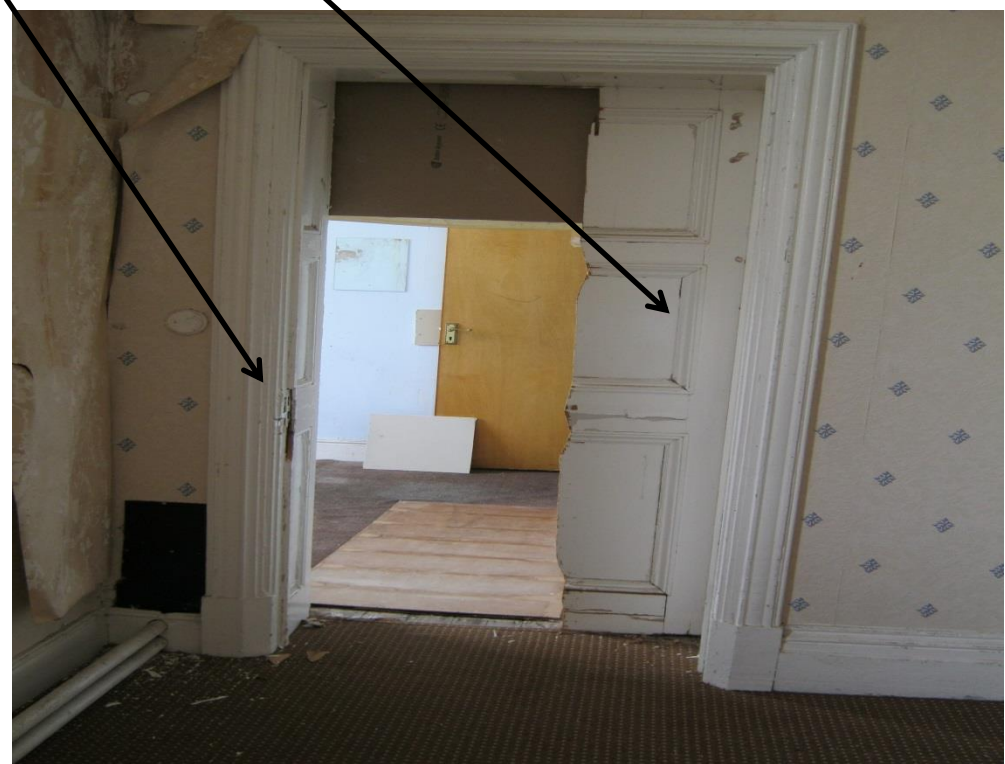




THIS DOORWAY WAS SEALED AT THE AUCTION



THIS ROOM WAS LOCKED WITH NO KEYS





THERE IS A FIRE HYDRANT POINT OUTSIDE THE SOUTH END OF THE HALL AS SHOWN BY THE MARKER TO THE LEFT OF THE WINDOW. THIS WAS THE WATER SUPPLY POINT USED BY THE VINCE FAMILY WHEN THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE HALL BEGAN IN 1978. THIS WAS BECAUSE THE MAINS SUPPLY COULD NOT BE TURNED ON WHEN THE HALL WAS AS SHOWN IN THE PICTURE

/

DURING A VISIT ON THE 14TH AUGUST IT WAS DISCOVERED THAT THE PIPE THAT SUPPLIES WATER TO THE THREE FIRE HOSE REEL POINTS IN THE MAIN HALL HAD BEEN SMASHED AND WATER WAS POURING OUT OF IT, INTO A BARREL OF FAT AND FROM THERE INTO THE GRID IN THE FLOOR OF THE CELLAR WHICH FEEDS INTO THE SEPTIC TANK IN THE PARK. AT THE NORTH END OF THE HALL THE LAST TWO GRIDS IN THE FLOOR OF THE CORRIDOR WERE UNDER AT LEAST 7 INCHES OF 'WATER' WHICH WAS A CLEAR SIGN THAT THERE IS A PROBLEM WITH THE SEPTIC TANK OR THE PIPE TO IT. (SEE NEXT PAGE)



DURING A VISIT ON THE 11TH OCTOBER 2013 IT WAS DISCOVERED THAT THE FIRE HYDRANT PIPE WAS NO LONGER POURING WATER. THE BUILDER HAD CAPPED THE PIPE OFF AND CONVERTED IT TO A DOMESTIC SUPPLY USING POLY PIPE.

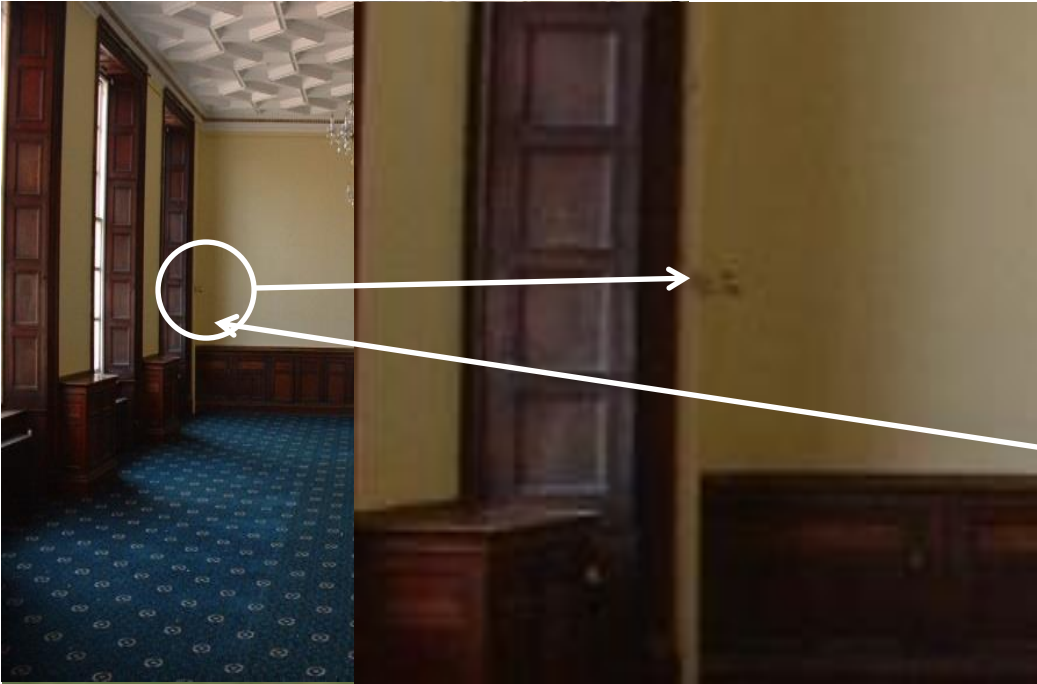
THE BLUE POLY-PIPE WAS FED THROUGH THE CELLAR AND UP TO THE FIRST FLOOR WHERE IT TERMINATED AT THE WALL MOUNTED WATER HEATER IN THE VICTORIA SUITE KITCHEN.



WHEN DERBYSHIRE INVESTMENTS REMOVED THE EN-SUITE BATHROOMS AND TOILETS THEY REMOVED ALL THE PARTITION WALLS LEAVING GAPS IN THE FLOORS BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY THEY DID NOT CAP OFF THE WATER PIPES. INSTEAD THEY SIMPLY CRIMPED THE ENDS OF THE PIPES AS IS THE CASE WITH THE PIPES IN THIS ROOM ON THE WEST FRONT OF THE HALL ON THE FIRST FLOOR.



AS A RESULT THERE IS A STRONG POSSIBILITY THAT IF THE MAINS ARE TURNED BACK ON FROM THE STOP TAP BY THE CROSS ROADS. THE HALL WILL FLOOD



THE ONLY POSSIBLE CHANCE THAT HAS STOPPED THE UPPER FLOORS OF THE MAIN HALL NOT FLOODING IS THAT THESE GATE TAPS ARE CLOSED. THEY CUT OFF THE SUPPLY OF WATER TO THE UPPER FLOORS OF THE MAIN HALL ONLY



THERE ARE FIVE SETS OF STOP TAPS LOCATED BY THE CLUMP OF TREES NEAR TO THE TENNIS COURTS OUTSIDE THE GROUNDS OF THE HALL TWO SUPPLY WATER TO THE HOUSES ON THE OPPOSITE SIDE OF THE CROSS ROADS TO THE HALL, ONE SUPPLIES WATER TO THE WATER TROUGHS ON THE PARK. ONE SUPPLIES WATER TO THE FIRE HYDRANT FOR THE HALL AND THE OTHER ONE SUPPLIES THE HALL ITSELF BUT NONE OF THEM ARE LABELLED

LOCATION OF SERVICES, LEAKS AND FLOODED AREAS AS AT OCTOBER 2013

FROM INFORMATION
RECEIVED THIS IS THE
POSSIBLE LOCATION
WHERE MAINS WATER
SUPPLY ENTERS HALL

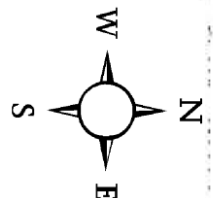
LOCATION OF FUSE BOXES
POWER SERVER UNITS
AND MAINS SUPPLY TO
HALL



FIRE HYDRANT
LOCATION

FIRE HYDRANT SUPPLY TO THE
HALL ENTERS CELLAR HERE –
BROKEN BY VANDALS AND
CONVERTED BY WORKMEN TO
DOMESTIC SUPPLY FOR
CARETAKER

FLOODED
DRAINS



30TH MAY 1978

I am directed by the secretary of state to say that he has considered the report of his inspector Mr H M Cross, ARIBA who held a public local inquiry at the Council Offices, Colwyn Bay, into your clients application for listed planning consent to demolish Kinmel Hall, Kinmel Bay, Abergele (except for the stable block). The application was referred to the secretary of state in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 4 of schedule 11 of the town and country Planning Act 1971

'I am of the opinion that Kinmel Hall is a building of Architectural merit which was, prior to the fire, capable of a very substantial life. Given renovation and possibly conversion the Hall would still have a lengthy useful life, the most likely uses being educational, institutional or conversion into good quality multiple living units. The Chapel and adjacent service wings however are heavily damaged and I consider that consent for demolition of this part of the building, if sought, could not reasonably be refused: such partial demolition would not unduly detract from the major architectural features of the hall.

I accept the view advanced at the inquiry that full restoration of the original materials and details is probably impracticable. To repair and seal the building without use would appear to defer the decision to refurbish or demolish. I am not of the opinion that the substantial cost of such such a proposal can reasonably be expected to be forthcoming whether from public or private funds. A further possibility is that of creating a romantic ruin bearing in mind the location in the middle of a private estate, also the initial cost and continued upkeep appears to me to have little merit. The renovation and future use of the Hall, assuming the demolition of the Chapel and adjacent service wing, would appear to have the best chance of success along the lines of the planning authority's scheme 4, estimated to cost £577,000. This involves the most detailed survey and estimate available, and I consider that it is reasonable to accept the cost of such works to be between £500,000 and £600,000, for a use similar to that of the former school. An improved financial balance between costs and benefits could possibly be achieved over a comprehensive scheme, including the undamaged stable block and service wing, and I consider it reasonable to assess possibilities on that basis. A hotel/conference centre use would not involve extensive alterations in my opinion.

For a prospective purchaser to acquire the property for such a use a considerable additional capital cost would be involved, including purchase costs, financing, professional fees etc. However I am not convinced that such a purchaser cannot be found, given that there is wide advertisement over a period of time, with reasonable encouragement in the shape of a feasibility study. Alternatively there is the possibility of renovation and conversion into living units, possibly as holiday homes. The possible conversion of the hall into dwelling units to sell for £25,000 to £35,000 each as discussed for an estimated return of some £500,000 to £700,000. The cost of such a conversion scheme is however not known.

On balance it is possible that an economic scheme for renovation and use of the hall may not be possible. The secretary of state may well consider that under such circumstances a sufficient case has been made to justify consent for demolition. However I consider that the importance of the building warrants every attempt to ensure its preservation, and I feel that there is in this case no over-riding urgency for demolition at this time. The building is reasonably well secure within a private estate and there should be no undue danger to trespassers or others and no unreasonable vandalism. The building has survived two winters without incurring excessive damage, and there is no reason to feel that a further delay of say one year would alter the basic structural condition.

While there has been consultation with several parties and some advertising I am not convinced that the possibilities have been explored. There could with advantage, be a feasibility study undertaken to explore the school, clinic, hotel and living unit possibilities, followed by National advertising based on some knowledge of the financial situation, presuming that this is not shown by the study to be totally unreasonable. The cost of such a study need not be large in my view , given that plans of the building exist and bearing in mind the work done on renovation by the planning authority.

On this basis I am of the opinion that the application for listed building consent to demolish the Hall should be refused'

The Inspector recommended that listed building consent for demolition of Kinmel Hall be refused.

The secretary of state has accepted the findings and recommendations of the Inspector and accordingly refuses listed building consent for the demolition of Kinmel Hall. This letter constitutes the secretary of state's official determination of the application for listed building consent.