3 RODWELL HALL

ST THOMAS ROAD, TROWBRIDGE

Heritage Statement



November 2023 (Rev D)

1. INTRODUCTION

This document is intended to gather and present the available documentary information concerning the history and significance of Rodwell Hall, with particular emphasis on the pavilion at the south west end, now known as No.3 Rodwell Hall, to help inform future conservation planning.

The document draws upon information gathered from primary and secondary sources listed in Appendix A. Unfortunately, records were found to be far from abundant and so, potentially, much remains to be discovered. Research will continue and it is intended that the document will be updated periodically.



View of north east elevation, presumed 1920's/30's – Photograph by Houghton Brothers of Trowbridge

2. UNDERSTANDING THE SITE

Rodwell Hall is a large residential building reported to date from 1857[1], built by Jesse Gouldsmith, a partner in Salter's Mill woollen factory in Trowbridge. The statutory listing description states that the house was built for a Mr Hayward, but the 1861 census records the Gouldsmith family was in residence; and there is a monogrammed cartouche reading "JHG" (presumed to relate to Jesse H Gouldsmith), on the central south gable (fig 1). A Mr Haywood was one of the partners in Salter's Mill, along with Jesse Gouldsmith, and this may have been the cause of the confusion.

The house was built on Victoria Road, which had been laid out in 1856, in what was already a prosperous area on outside the town. The ordnance survey map of 1890 indicates a number of other large houses in the vicinity including The Cedars (now Denbigh), Northfield (now The Grange), Highfield (now Fieldways Hotel) and The Laurels.

The grounds of the house are bounded by St Thomas Road to the north-west, Victoria Road to the north-east, the grounds of The Cedars to the south-west and Henry Lane to the south-east. The House is subdivided into three separate dwellings, South Rodwell Hall, No.2 and No.3. There is a lodge house (Rodwell Lodge) at the head of what was the driveway to the main house. The grounds have been sub-divided to provide gardens for each sub-division of the main house and the lodge house; and number of newer dwellings have been built in recent times on plots derived by further sub-division.



Fig 1– Monogram of Jesse H Gouldsmith, central south-west gable

The ordnance survey map of 1890 (fig 2 - but more clearly shown on the map of 1936, fig 4) shows a number of structures in the grounds including the grotto, still in existence, and glass houses along St Thomas Road (then Middle Lane), since demolished.

To the north-west side of St Thomas Road there is a complex of former service buildings comprising coach house, stables and servant accommodation, still in existence and now providing two separate residential dwellings. The 1890 ordnance survey maps show a number of glass houses, further to the north west and the footpaths of what may have been a kitchen garden to the north-east, all since demolished. The wall around the kitchen garden running still exist, running along St Thomas Road and Victoria Road to a further lodge building.

Originally, there were parklands adjoining the Hall, stretching to the north-west, occupying the area now bounded by St Thomas Road, Victoria Road, Victoria Park and Rodwell park.

Rodwell Hall, Rodwell Lodge, the Grotto and the boundary walls along St Thomas Road and Victoria Road are all separately listed, grade II. These buildings and the land formerly comprising the grounds on the south side of St Thomas Road fall within a designated Conservation Area.

[1] Kenneth Rogers, Book of Trowbridge. Not referenced to primary source, but the house appeared in the 1861 census and was absent from the 1851 census.

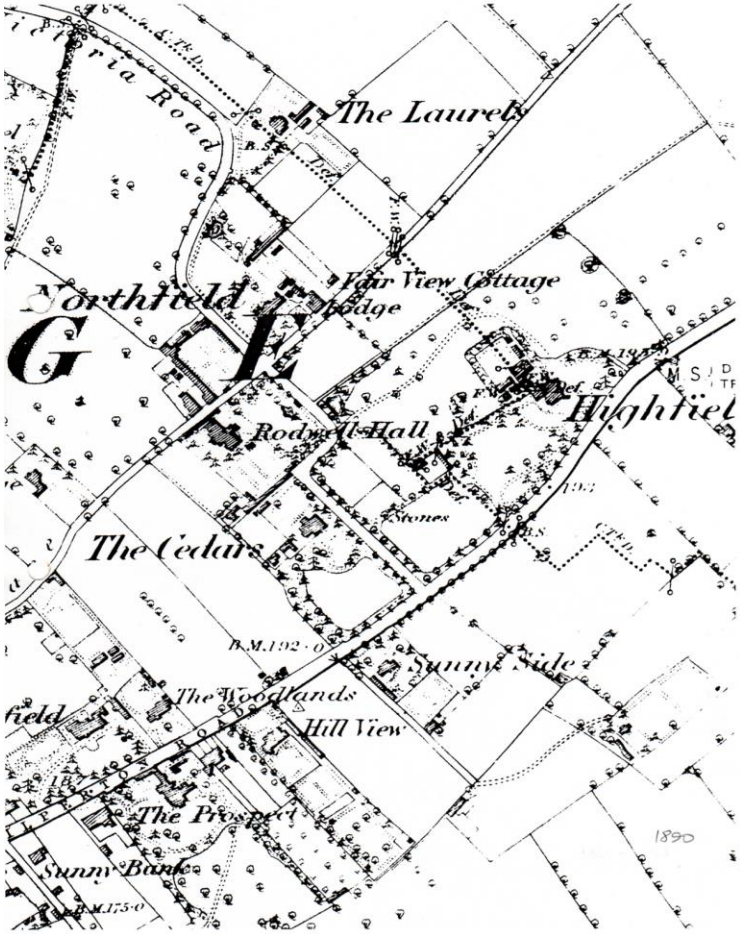


Fig 2 – Ordnance Survey map of site, 1890

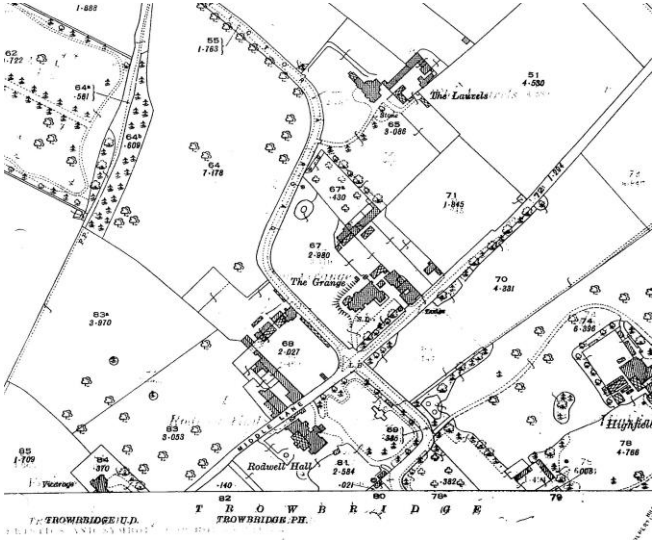


Fig 3 – OS Map 1924, showing parkland to the north

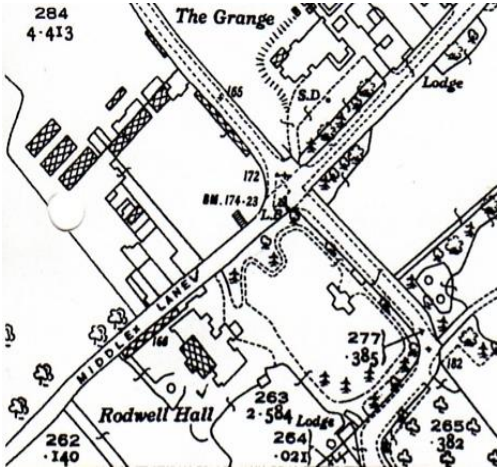


Fig 4 – OS Map 1936, which shows clearly the various glasshouses to the north west and along middle lane; and the winter garden to the south west elevation

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE BUILDING

The Main House



Fig 5 – Main House, North East Elevation

Rodwell Hall is a large mansion house built in the English gothic revival style. The building is constructed in coursed, dressed Bath stone under pitched clay tiled roof to gables. Flat roofs are in lead or bitumen felt. Chimney stacks are generally octagonal above rectangular shafts. There are decorative bands of club-head and arrow head tiles within the roof tiling.

Central to the north-east elevation there is a projecting five-sided stair tower with decorative parapet and a sizeable porte-cochere. Further to the north-west is a smaller, ten-sided stair turret with steeple. To the north-west elevation there is a prominent bay window at first floor level, with bell tower to the apex of the gable above. There is also a projecting porch with arched opening at ground floor level. There are modern accretions to the ground floor of all three houses along the south-west elevation.

No. 3 Rodwell Hall - External

No.3 comprises the two-storey pavilion described in the statutory listing. It consists of one range facing south-west and a second at 90 degrees, to the north-west. There is a single storey sun-room at the western corner, presumed to date form the 1960's, constructed in reconstituted stone and blockwork under a low pitched, part bitumen felt and part profiled concrete tiled roof.



Fig 6 – No.3, South West Elevation, 2009

No.3 incorporates the first floor bay window (fig 10), bell tower (fig 8 and 10) and projecting porch described earlier (fig 11). The north-east gable wall of the north-west range includes a moulded string course and the carved head of a bearded figure (fig 13). Below the bay window are two external stores, one historical and one contemporary with the sun-room extension. There are two corbelled chimney stacks; one to the south-west with twin octagonal shafts and one to the north-east.

The windows at first floor are twin, arch-headed casements to the south-west and north-west elevations and twin arch headed sliding sashes to the north-east. The ground floor windows are mostly replacements, with timber casements to the south west and a mixture of Crittal-type metal casements and opening, louvred glass to the north-east. There are two remaining original square casements. The sun-room windows are also metal, but contemporary to the structure. The main door within the porch is double-leaf and arched.

No. 3 Rodwell Hall – Internal

<u>Ground Floor</u>

The south-west range contains the living room and a lobby at the north-west end, within which there is a cloakroom and entrance to the sun-room extension. The north-east range includes the entrance lobby (Lobby 1) the main hallway, stairs, dining room and kitchen. Some of the internal walls are very thick and there are a number of niches where there were once windows at earlier stages of development. One window remains as a borrowed light to the staircase (fig 12).

The ceilings to the drawing room, hall and kitchen comprise exposed, stop-chamfered wrot softwood ceiling joists with a plaster infill. To Lobby 2 it is lath and plaster and in the sun-room plasterboard.

Floors are generally solid with a geometric Minton tile finish of varying quality and consistency. There are softwood suspended floors in the drawing room and sun room and a solid concrete floor with plastic tile finish in the kitchen. In the store below the bay window there are red, black and yellow quarry tiles, white crackle-glazed wall tiles and a slate shelf on iron brackets.

First Floor

The first floor area has been subdivided to form four bedrooms, a large landing space and a bathroom with attached closet.

The ceilings throughout are in plasterboard suspended from a lightweight softwood joist arrangement. These are a modern intervention, probably dating from the sub-division of the Hall in the late 1940's, and lie below the original ceiling level.

The floor in the west range is in wide pine boards of unusual thickness (75mm). These are screwed and pelleted to the floor joists and have a varnished finish both sides, suggesting they may once have been exposed on both sides. The boarding in the bay window is in standard plain-edged softwood boards, suggesting that the bay is a later addition. Boarding elsewhere on the first floor is also in plain edged softwood.

Skirtings and architraves are generally plain and date from the conversion. The doors are historic, but are in a range of styles and sizes and so are likely to be relocated or imported from elsewhere.

Roofspaces

The roofspace to the west range comprises four ornamental softwood roof trusses in the gothic style and moulded rafters with a herringbone pattern timber infill. Behind the infill, there is a blue coloured lath and plaster finish. There is evidence that the walls were once timber panelled (a feature that may once have extended down to the rooms below) and the quatrefoil windows in each gable are lined in timber panelling. One of the windows has decorative stained glazing. There are some remains of gasoliers.



Fig 7– Roofspace, showing ornamental roof trusses and stained glass quatrefoil. Note remnants of timber wall panelling around window

The roof timbers to the north range shows lath and plaster staining, describing a ceiling some 1000mm higher than the current level, which also sloped, mansard style, each side. There is evidence of a former projecting gable at the west end, to the structure of the west range, which can be seen in the Rock & Co etching of 1870 (fig 16). The roof structure of the north range is unusual and a number of alterations are evident. The wall plate/eaves beam to the foot of the south slope is distorted where it spans unsupported by masonry below (along the length of the current bathroom partition). A ladder beam runs the length of the roof, 1.00m from the eaves beam, which supports the rafters and appears to have been a later insertion to address the distortion problem. The bottom chord of the ladder beam projects unsympathetically below ceiling level and so it seems unlikely that it was part of the original design. The rafters on the north slope were supported by a series of struts from the ladder beam and the rafters of the south were supported by sub-struts that rested on the main struts (such that on elevation, the main and sub-struts appeared as a 'y' shape). Most of these struts have since been removed, with no apparent detriment to the structure. One strut has been removed from the ladder truss to allow access to the roof space. There are also purlins to both slopes, which appear to provide adequate support. There is an access platform between the ladder beam and south eaves where the water tanks sit.



Fig 8 – Bell tower, 2007; note fallen metalwork



Fig 9 – North-east elevation



Fig 10 – North-west elevation



Fig 11 – Porch, north-west elevation



Fig 12 – Former window, now a borrowed light



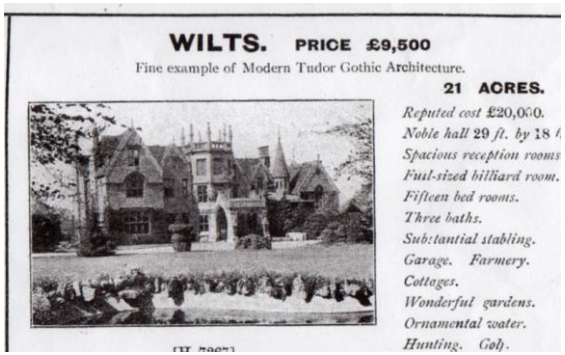
Fig 13 – carved figure, north-east elevation, 1st Floor

4. HISTORY OF OWNERSHIP

The Gouldsmith family is less well known today than some of the other local historical families. Nevertheless, they were partners in Salter's Mills, owned Stone Mills after 1862 and Upper Mill after 1879. Jesse Gouldsmith's son, also Jesse, can be credited with founding the Trowbridge Cottage Hospital, following a gift of £1,000, reported in the British Medical Journal of March 24 1883. The family was also related by marriage to the Salter and Stancomb families. Jesse (the elder) married Sarah Salter, daughter of Margaret Salter who later married William Stancomb.

Different generations and branches of the Gouldsmith family lived at Rodwell Hall, but none for a very extended period. Although having built the house in 1857, Jesse (the elder) appears not to have been resident by the time of the census in 1861, when his son, William (age 26), was identified as head of the household, with his wife Hannah (22). Jesse (the elder) appears to have moved on to Clifton Down in Bristol[2]. William and Hannah appear again in the 1871 census, together with children Madeleine, Alfred, Jesse, Eveline and Rose; but William died in September of that year. The house was left to Hannah[3] but she did not stay there and is recorded as living in South Kensington by 1876[4]. There are two unattributed notes in the Building Record that indicate that Jesse (the younger) was in residence by 1875 but, in any event, he is listed as head of the household in the 1881 census, (aged 48) in residence with his wife, Hannah (aged 40 and, confusingly, sharing a name with William's widow) and their children Louise (19) and Charles (6).

In both the 1891 and 1901 censuses, the house was occupied only by servants, John and Emily Main; although unattributed notes in the Building Record suggest that a Mrs Gouldsmith and Mr C C Gouldsmith were there in 1895 (presumably Hannah Gouldsmith and her son, Charles Cecil). Some time prior to 1905, however, the family had gone for good. A Wiltshire Times article dated 10 June 1905 reported that the house remained unsold at auction on behalf of a Mr Edward Herbert Atchley (at a price £15,000).


WILTS. PRICE £9,500

Fine example of Modern Tudor Gothic Architecture.

21 ACRES.

Reputed cost £20,000.
Noble hall 29 ft. by 18 ft.
Spacious reception rooms.
Full-sized billiard room.
Fifteen bed rooms.
Three baths.
Substantial stabling.
Garage. Farmery.
Cottages.
Wonderful gardens.
Ornamental water.
Hunting. Golf.

Fig 14 – Hampton & Sons Sales Particulars, early 20th century

A set of sales particulars from Hampton and Sons of Pall Mall lists the house for sale at £9,500. The particulars are undated but the style and 2-digit telephone number on the cover suggest an early 20th century date, possibly immediately before or after Mr Atchley's ownership.

In 1907, the occupant was Mr Charles Anthony Benn MA FGS[5], although Edward Atchley was evidently still the owner as his name appears against a covenant dated 9 November 1907 which is referred to in a conveyance document of 1951.

On 28 November 1916 the house was leased by Charles Benn to a Mr R W Kennard for a period of five years for the sum of £210[6]. It is unclear whether Mr Benn had by that time acquired the property or was sub-letting it. The lease was surrendered back from Mr Kennard to Mr Benn by an agreement dated 2 September 1929.

Sometime prior to 1929 until 1936, the resident (presumably by leasehold) was Mr Fred Marsland, a brewery proprietor from Yorkshire. Mrs Beattie Nicholas recalls working at the Rodwell for Mr Marsland as a house maid during the 1920's – and that it was hard work but very enjoyable[7].

A memoir written by John Lacey[8], who started as a junior gardner at the house in 1929, suggests that Mr Marsland was a keen gardener, reportedly having a fine collection of cacti and other exotic plants in glasshouses along the boundary wall along St Thomas Road and a conservatory on the south-west front of the house.

[2] Memories of Four-Score Years, Colonel Harington H Roberts, 1920
[3] Will of William Gouldsmith, archive ref. 974/2
[4] Conveyance of land from Hannah Gouldsmith "formerly of Rodwell Hall, Trowbridge, Wilts and now of 4 Albert Court, South Kensington", to James Claverly dated 24 June 1876
[5] Kelly's Directory 1907
[6] Document ref 1774/6
[7] At January 2010 Mrs Nicholas was a resident at a residential home in Chippenham. Her 100th birthday was reported in the Wiltshire Gazette & Herald on 6 August 2009, in which she refers to her time at Rodwell Hall.
[8] Mud on My Boots – John Lacey, unpublished memoirs, document ref 3519/1

Mr Marsland died in 1936 and the auctioneer's records of sales held in July and September of that year provide a fascinating insight into life at the house. Items sold included a billiard table, numerous items of furniture, the aforementioned cacti and plants from the gardens, as well as an extensive cellar of wine and boxes of Cuban cigars[9]

The ownership of the Hall after 1929 and residency after the death of Mr Marsland in 1936 is not entirely clear. According to a set of sales particulars produced by auctioneers John Hodge, Baker and Co. of Weston-Super-Mare on 29 April 1938, the property was offered for auction at the "upset price" of £1,250.00. This was noted as being "*less than demolition value*" and the particulars included planning proposals for demolition of the building and division of the land into 14 building plots and space for widening of St Thomas' Road.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that the property was owned and occupied at some point by a Mr Kemp of Kemp and Hewitt Limited, a textile company based at Longfords Mills. This evidence is related by the next door neighbours of Mrs Hildegarde Kemp, Mr Kemp's widow, who continued to live in a modern bungalow in the grounds of the Hall, Copper Beeches, until the 1990's. The facts are, however, somewhat difficult to determine and may have been embroidered to some extent. Mrs Kemp is reported to have claimed to have owned the Hall with her husband prior to the second world war but an article in the Wiltshire Times dated 19 September 1980, concerning a planning inquiry, reports that she claimed that her grandfather had built the house and that she had lived there since 1948. Mrs Kemp was German by birth and so it seems highly unlikely that Jesse Gouldsmith was her grandfather. It also seems most likely that she had lived in what is now South Rodwell Hall, from 1948, after the house was subdivided.

During the war, the house was reportedly occupied by the American military. One current local resident recalls being handed chewing gum by the Americans as a child. No records have been found relating to this period.

The Land Registry records that the house was conveyed from Harry Chivers and others to Hubert Edwin Bradley in December 1947. Bradley was a building contractor and it seems likely that it was he that sub-divided the house during 1947/1948[10].

Chronology of No.3, post subdivision

The land registry records a conveyance from Bradley to Charles Samuel Pearson in May 1949 and in August 1951 to Rodney Aubrey James Pearce. The conveyancing document in 1951 is the first to refer specifically to No.3. On 25 August 1970, it was transferred in part as a deed of gift to Mrs D C Pearce. On 25 August 1978 the house was sold to a Mr and Mrs K A Bines who in turn sold it to Mr and Mrs J E L Maltby on 20 August 1982.

On 29 February 1988, the end of the garden was sold to Fanact Limited for the purposes of development. A bungalow was later built there circa 1989. Under the sale agreement, the garage that had served No.3 but which was situated on the development plot was demolished soon after and a new garage built within the foreshortened garden of No.3.

Listed building consent was granted in September 2006 for some 40m of the boundary wall adjacent to St Thomas Road to be demolished and rebuilt.
The present owners are Ian James Walker and Jane Katherine Short following a sale completed on 8 November 2006.

[9] Documents ref 1895/361,362,363

[10] Notes in the conveyance dated 15 August 1951 (which was for No.3 Rodwell Hall only) refer to a covenant dated 23 May 1949 which makes reference to a development under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1947 and to Nos 1 and 2 Rodwell Hall and Rodwell Lodge and various rights and easements for drainage etc. The subdivision must have taken place prior to the conveyance of 1951 but after the Town and Country Planning Act of 1947. It is probable that the subdivision occurred shortly prior to the covenant in 1949.

5. HISTORY OF DEVELOPMENT

Main House

The earliest known image of the house is shown in Figure 15. This photograph is undated but was probably taken within a very few years of its construction in 1857, judging by the immaturity of the gardens. There are two young children in the foreground which, if they are William and Hannah's eldest (Madeline and Alfred) would date the photograph to around 1865. At that stage, the substantial porte cochere had not been built and the only part of what is now No.3 then in existence was a single storey, single-wing pitched roof off-shoot, barely visible amongst the foliage to the right of the spired tower. Note the canopy projecting from the gable wall to the left of the spired tower. This was still present in the 1940's (Fig 18) but has now gone.

The Rock & Co etching dated 1870 (Fig.16) shows the house little changed from the earlier photograph, except that the north-west extension has been enlarged to a two-storey, single-wing structure and the addition of the bell turret at the apex of the north-west gable wall.

The photograph in Fig. 17 is probably early twentieth century and shows the house, more or less, in its final form, almost unchanged to the present day. The porte cochere has now been added, along with the second wing of the north west extension (the gable end to the right of the spired tower). It seems likely that this phase of work took place during Jesse and Hannah Gouldsmith's time during the 1870's or 1880's, after they took the house over from William and Hannah. Both additions are evident in the outline of the building included on the ordnance survey map of 1890 (Fig 2). The photograph in Fig. 17 is undated but is one of a collection of images held in the Building Record that include pictures of people in early twentieth century dress. It is very similar to the image included in the sales catalogue in Fig. 14 (note the ivy around the ground floor window.

There are few images of the south-west (garden) elevation. Fig. 19 is from the Building Record collection presumed to date from the early 20th century. Note the canopy above the first floor window and tennis court fence. Fig. 20 is from a series of photographs by Houlton Brothers of Trowbridge. The series is undated but concentrates very much on the garden, so it is tempting to conclude that they were commissioned by Fred Marsland, in the 1920's/30's. This photograph shows the substantial and most ornate winter garden, which is now gone. The winter garden was probably not part of the original house, as it sits uncomfortably with some of the window openings, but is evident on the 1890, 1924 and 1936 ordnance survey maps. It is presumed that the winter garden was removed during the sub-division of the house in 1947/8.

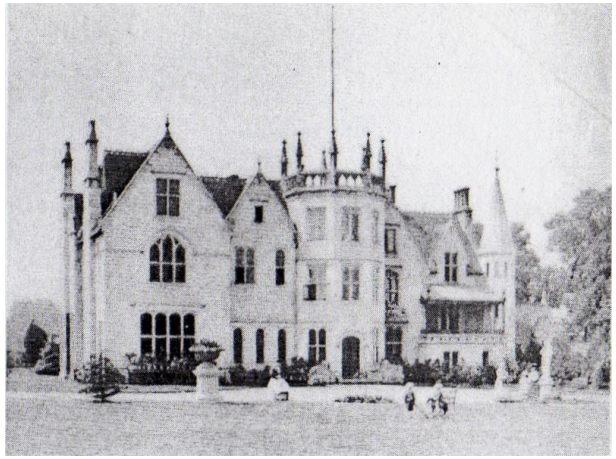


Fig 15 – North East Elevation, mid 1860's



Fig 16 – Rock & Co Etching, 1870



Fig 17 – Early 20th Century



Fig 18 – During second world war

Since sub-division of the house, No.3 has been extended to the north-west to add a sun-room; and South Rodwell Hall and No.2 have gained conservatories.

Grounds

The 1890 Ordnance Survey map indicates various structures in the grounds. Immediately to the north-west side of Middle Lane there were a range of service buildings, that remain in existence today, including a garage/coach house and what was probably servant accommodation, set around a courtyard. To the north-east were some further buildings and glass houses and the indications of a kitchen garden.

Within the garden to the house there was a range of glass houses along the garden wall bounding Middle Lane (these show better on the 1924 map). At the north-east end of the range was a structure that may have been a gateway through the wall. Looking at that part of the wall today, there are signs of an infilled opening including vertical joints in the masonry, quoin stones and the remains of an embedded iron strap (probably part of a hinge pintle). The garden wall is separately listed, grade II, but was substantially rebuilt in 2007, having been rendered unstable and partially collapsed due to invasive ivy growth.

Elsewhere, the 1890 map shows the grotto to the east of the main house adjacent to Victoria road. This remains in existence today and is separately listed, grade II. The photographs in figures 19, 20 and in the Introduction section, presumed to date from the 1920's show a pagoda and various other structures that are now gone.



Fig 19 – Undated photograph from the Building Record collection, presumed early 20th Century



Fig 20 – South west (garden) elevation – Houlton Brothers – possibly 1930's

6. SPECIFIC DEVELOPMENT OF No.3

As illustrated in the photographs in Figs. 15-17, what is now No.3 Rodwell Hall has developed in stages from what was initially a single storey out-shoot to the two-storey, two-range structure that exists today. Five principal stages of development can be discerned, as indicated in the plans in Appendix B.

Phase I – circa 1857

The single storey structure in Rogers' book (Fig 15) comprised what is now the hallway and part of the dining room. It had a pitched roof and probably a gable to the north west elevation. Three window openings from this building survive in the current structure, now within internal walls. Two of these are now blocked to form niches. The other forms a borrowed light onto the staircase.

There is no specific dating evidence for the construction of this initial building but the period between the construction of the main building (1857) and the development of Phase II (1860's) is very short and would suggest that Phase I was contemporary to the original construction.

Phase II (1860's)

The Phase I structure was raised to add a first floor. The ground floor was service accommodation comprising, primarily, a servant's dining room[11] (now the lounge) and a butler's pantry area (now Lobby 2). The upper floor appears to have been constructed as a chapel, suggested by the bell tower to the northwest gable wall, the ornamental roof trusses and exposed pine rafters with blue-painted lath and plaster infill Fig 7: this was a room intended to be open to the roof. There were also stained glass quatrefoil windows to the gables. The floor structure is most unusual, comprising wide pine boards some 75mm thick – essentially, structural floorboards – which are shellacked and evidently intended to be seen. There are niches in the south east wall which may have housed fittings. There are a few remnants of timber wall panelling in the roof space, which suggest that the whole room was once panelled. The panelling may have been removed at the time of the sub-division of the house, to be used elsewhere. It is understood that some was used to furnish a bar constructed in the cellar of No.2 in the 1960's, but this was later removed and destroyed following an outbreak of dry rot.

Use of the first floor as a chapel may have been short-lived. The blue-painted lath and plaster was overlaid with shellacked tongued, grooved and vee jointed pine boards in herringbone pattern. The bay window was a later addition, perhaps to increase light in the room. The evidence that the bay was a later addition lies in the floorboarding, which differs in the bay from the thick pine boards described to the rest of the room; and the roof of the bay cuts uncomfortably across the base of the quatrefoil window in the gable. Intriguingly, this remodelled room would have had a similar appearance to the library at Tyntesfield, albeit on a far more modest scale. This remodelling is likely to have taken place as part of the Phase III work.

Phase III (1870's)

On the ground floor, the space now occupied by the dining room and kitchen were added as an extension to the service areas. The geometric Minton tiled floor appears to run through across what is now the hallway and dining room; although the pattern is disrupted in places for reasons that are not easily explained. The Minton floor does not extend into the space now occupied by the kitchen, which is plain concrete under the modern plastic tiles. There is evidence that this room may have been a boiler room, in consideration of the chimney flue with no signs of a fireplace and the two-inch steel pipes leading to it in the first floor floor void.

The enlargement of the ground floor necessitated the demolition of the wall that once ran from the turret to what remains of the thick wall between what is now the kitchen and the dining room.

The porch was added to the north west elevation, along with the cold store (now Store 1), which

[11] As surmised from the description in the sales particulars of 1938

originally ran along the length of the gable wall and returned around the corner of south west elevation on the footprint of the current sun-room. There are remnants of the original roof of this structure within the loft space of the sun room and some ceiling joist pockets in the stonework in the sun room. A quarry tiled floor and white glazed half-height wall tiling survives in the store, along with a slate shelf on iron brackets.

The bay window at first floor level sits on the outer wall of the cold store and so it is most likely that they were built at the same time.

On the first floor, a large bedroom suite was added and it seems that this, like the chapel room, was at one time timber panelled according to the 1938 sales particulars, which describe a "suite of panelled rooms".

It is difficult to precisely date this phase of works, but it is possible that it coincided with Jesse (the younger) and Hannah's occupation of the house following the death of William in 1871.

Phase IV (1948-9)

A number of alterations date from the sub-division of the overall building in the late 1940's, including division of the bedrooms, introduction of the plasterboard ceilings at first floor level and introduction of the staircase. The openings into Bedrooms 1 and 3 must have been formed at this time and the bathroom created.

A doorway from the lounge to Lobby 2 was blocked in and fitted cupboard added along the lobby across the blocked opening.

Most of the internal joinery dates from this time and, although some doors are evidently original, they are quite mixed and matched, with alterations made as necessary to suit opening sizes.

Phase V

The final major phase of structural changes comprised the construction of the Sun Room and Store 1. It would appear that most of the ground floor windows were also replaced during this period. Contemporary softwood casement units were introduced in one of the lounge windows and a French door with sidelights in the other. Both had previously been stone mullioned (one can just be glimpsed in the photograph in fig 20). The lintols and cills were replaced with profiles that do not match the jambs.

The dining room and kitchen windows are Crittal-style steel casements with aluminium louvred top lights. One of the kitchen windows has been mostly blocked in, leaving only a fixed top light; this apparently to provide additional space internally for fitted wall cupboards. A small pantry window has been added.

At some point during Phases IV and V, the ground floor skirtings were removed, perhaps due to rot, and replaced with plain square runs of cement. The door into the Drawing Room is also a 1960's style replacement.

7. STATUTORY LISTING

Statutory Listing

With regard to No.3 Rodwell Hall, the house and the boundary wall to the garden along St Thomas' Road are separately listed:

House

House: Listed building, grade II.
Date of listing: 26 November 1976
List entry no. 1283655

VICTORIA ROAD 1. 5411 (South Side) Rodwell Hall ST 8658 10/393

II

2. Large irregular mid C19 mansion built for Mr Hayward. Gothic Renaissance and early C19 elements mixed. 2 storeys and attic. Coursed and dressed stone. Tiled roofs with fishscale bands. Many gables and gargoyles. Occasional pinnacles. The south front has central shaped gable with monogram "CH" with a lion above. Projecting gabled break to right. Lower 2 storey Gothic pavilion to left, also projecting with belfry; 2 paired lancets on 1st floor and corbelled chimney. 2 storey bay on return to west. Large 2 storey canted bay to right with 1+4+1 windows: 4 centred arch headed lights with moulded heads; decorated parapet. The north front has 5 gables at various levels of projection and a polygonal French Renaissance type staircase tower with cusped windows, an openwork parapet and a small steeple to right. Projecting slightly later (1878) Porte Cochere: Gothic with foiled open parapet, pinnacles, shield in gable; ribvaulted inside. Interior: a low pointed arch with dog-tooth in hall and Italianate door pieces. Fine ceiling in drawing room, stiff leaf corbels to arches on side walls. Pendant ceiling in dining room. Hand painted tiles of nymphs etc in lobby to Porte Cochere. Now divided into 3 houses.

n.b. it is disputed that the building was built for Mr Hayward - refer section 3 and 4, above and evidence for this has been presented to Historic England.

Boundary Wall

House: Listed building, grade II.
Date of listing: 26 November 1976
List entry no. 1021670

VICTORIA ROAD 1. 5411 (South Side) Garden wall of Rodwell Hall to St Thomas's Road ST 8658 10/393A

II

2. Mid C19. Rubble partly ashlar in curved to entrance. Heights vary from about 5ft to 10ft.

8. ASSESSMENT OF HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Architectural Significance

Rodwell Hall is clearly one of the more architecturally significant buildings in the town. Of the group of large houses in the Hilperton Road / Victoria Road area it is also unique as being the only example in the English gothic revival style.

The house is not as imposing upon the streetscape as it once would have been, due to the interruption of the views by modern housing and trees. No.3 is now not visible at all from Victoria Road and from St Thomas Road, the better views are limited to between approximately Views 1 and 2 (figs. 21) and 2 (fig. 23) – and this only if one stands in the road: the footpath is against a high boundary wall which screens the house from the pedestrian. The view becomes more obscured as one travels towards the town centre.



Fig 21 –View 1: from St Thomas Road



Fig 22–Aerial Photograph identifying locations of Views 1 and 2



Fig 23 –View 2: from St Thomas Road

Historical Significance

The historical significance of the house is less easily defined. Although built by Jesse Gouldsmith, and therefore, inextricably linked with the Trowbridge textile industry, Gouldsmith was not a Trowbridge man and lived there only briefly, if at all. Various members of the family succeeded him, each for relatively short periods. It could not easily be described as the 'family seat'. Moreover, within some 40 years of construction, the family connection with the house was severed altogether.

In the post-Gouldsmith era, the house passed through a succession of owners and leaseholders, before falling under the threat of demolition in 1938. The advent of the second world war was probably the saviour of the building: firstly, through requisition for war use and later due to the period of austerity that followed. Simple sub-division of the house into separate dwellings was a perhaps more sensible development option during a period of building materials scarcity than demolition and rebuilding. This accident of history and the adaptive reuse of the building to create separate dwellings combined to ensure the survival of the building to the present day.

The significance of the building may therefore be summarised as:

- its unique architectural style in the local area;

- as a monument to the local wealth generated by the textile industry;

- as an example of adaptive reuse ensuring survival of a redundant large house in the post-war era.

Assessment of No.3

The exterior of No.3 has suffered some modern intervention, primarily at ground floor level, where windows have largely been replaced and a sun room constructed. Otherwise, the exterior is very fine indeed, with the prominent bay window and bell tower to the north-west, the corbelled chimneys, the attractive pairs of arch-headed, windows and stone mouldings, the pretty porch housing the arched double entrance door and the tiled roofs with ornamental bands.

The interior underwent significant change at sub-division in order to convert an eclectic mix of service rooms downstairs and occasional bedrooms upstairs into a functioning, self-contained dwelling. This included the insertion of a staircase and the loss of the "suite of panelled rooms" described in the 1930's sales particulars to make way for four bedrooms, a landing and a bathroom. Much of the work has been undertaken with no great eye on sympathy. For example, flat plasterboard soffits were inserted at first floor level below the original loftier and grander ceilings; and the wall dividing the south west bedrooms sits on a beam that lies unceremoniously across the ceiling beneath. Much of the internal joinery was replaced and doors have been relocated and crudely cut or extended to suit. Some notable historical features remain, including the Minton tiled floors, the ground floor ceilings with part-exposed stop-chamfered ceiling joists, the window niches within the internal walls that indicate previous stages of development, the ornamental roof structure in what is now the loft and the wall and floor tiling and slate shelf in the outside store. Overall, however, the presentation of the interior as a whole, is 'post-war functional', rather than 'fine' and it is difficult to read much of the original layout.

In the garden, an unsympathetic garage was constructed in the early 1990's. The separately listed wall along St Thomas Road had been allowed to degrade and partially collapse due to invasive ivy growth.

In summary, the features having greatest significance are:

- the exterior generally, with the exception of the modern interventions
- the roof spaces
- the Minton tiled floors
- the ground floor ceilings
- window niches in the interior walls indicating previous stages of development
- the tiling and slate shelf in the outside store

9. ISSUES/VULNERABILITIES

Physical Condition

Despite surviving the threat of demolition the building has endured a long history of maintenance neglect. In a condition survey of No.3 in June 2006, McDonald and Chivers Chartered Surveyors stated that *"the building is in rather poor condition…a classic case of lack of general maintenance over many years".* They concluded that "*the building has reached a point now where, without appropriate repair, the structure will begin to quickly deteriorate*." They identified several key areas where work should be considered in the short term:

- Arrest of stonework decay in chimneys, bellcote and bay window
- Replacement of skylight in bathroom
- Testing and possible rewiring of electrical system
- Testing and possible replacement of the central heating system
- Damp proofing
- Overhauling of windows
- Attending to boundary wall
- Recovering bitumen felted roof to Sun Room
- Checking roof covering to bathroom

With the exception of damp-proofing, repair works to all the above backlog was carried out during 2007-2010 and so physical vulnerability has largely been addressed although ongoing maintenance is required.

Unsympathetic previous alterations

No.3 has been particularly poorly treated in previous attempts at conversion and modernisation. Much historical character was lost in the conversion undertaken in the 1940's and later attempts to improve the accommodation has resulted in further loss and the introduction of some poorly conceived accretions, both internally and externally.

Potential obsolescence – building use

No.3 was not designed as self-contained dwelling and the internal spaces are not ideally suited to the purpose. It is likely, therefore, that there will be a continued pressure to undertake further alterations to meet future requirements. The best way for securing the upkeep of an historical building is for it to be kept in use; and that adaptation is sometimes necessary to this end. Any such adaptations should be properly conceived and managed, with reversibility a key consideration.

Potential obsolescence - energy use

The use of energy has become a highly significant issue for all buildings and the existing building stock in particular where energy use (especially in heating) is generally higher. Buildings such as Rodwell Hall are becoming comparatively less and less efficient and there is a danger that this type of building will become unattractive to future owners due to the cost of heating. The opportunity to introduce sensitive measures to improve energy efficiency and alternative forms of energy should, therefore, form part of conservation planning.

Setting

The setting of Rodwell Hall as a whole has been adversely affected by a number of previous planning decisions that have allowed various modern buildings to be constructed within the grounds; the one most affecting No. 3 being the permission granted for the bungalow at the end of the garden which has resulted in the foreshortening of the garden and the construction of two garages in addition to the bungalow itself.

Buried archaeology

Ordnance survey map and historical photographic evidence suggests that a number of structures and features within the grounds have disappeared. In addition the phased development of No.3 leaves numerous questions unanswered. There remains an opportunity to uncover archaeological evidence and, in equal measure, the danger that such evidence could be lost if awareness of such evidence does not form part of conservation management planning.

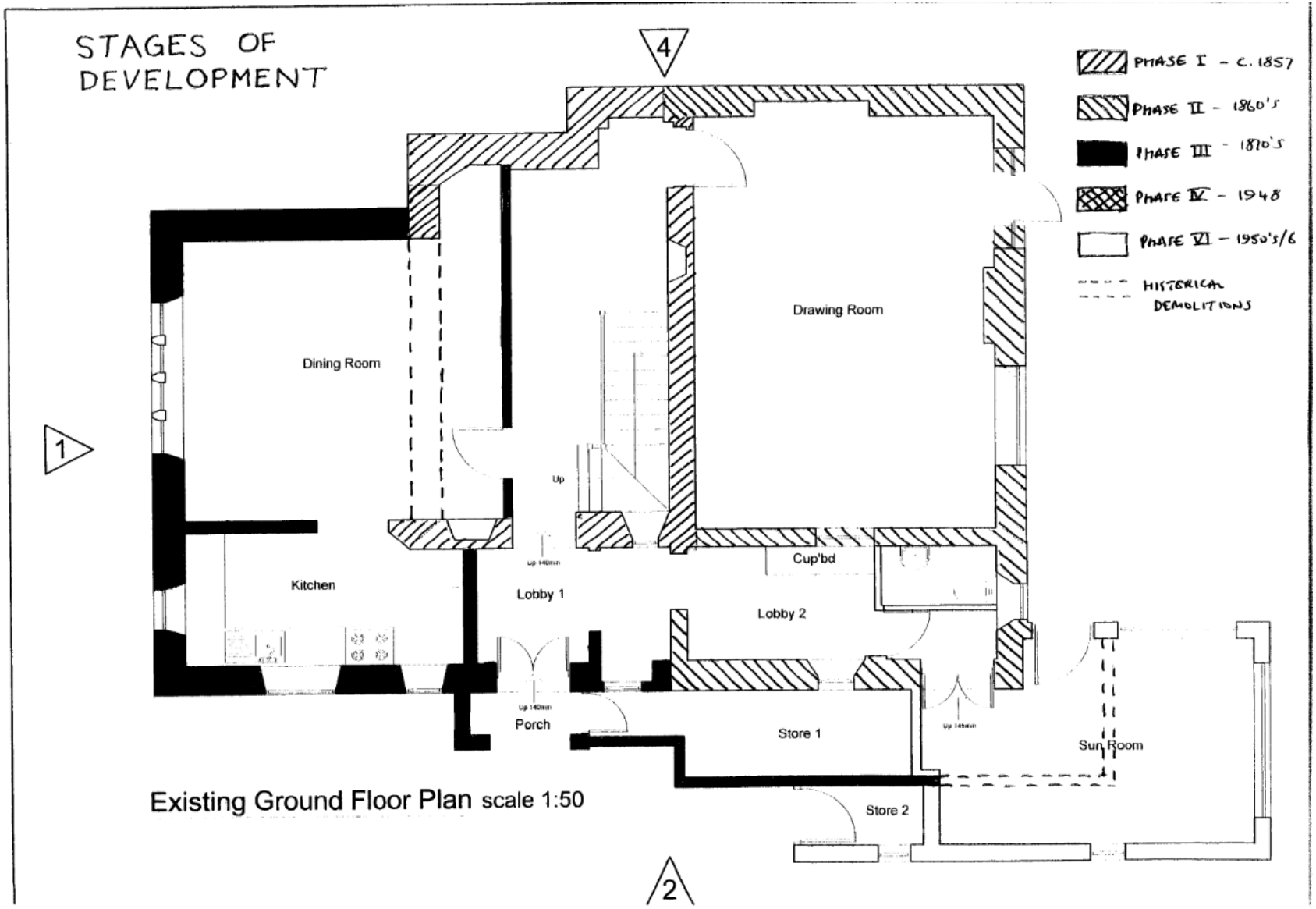
APPENDIX A

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

The Book of Trowbridge: A History – Kenneth Rogers; Barracuda Books; 1984
Wiltshire and Somerset Wollen Mills – Kenneth Rogers; Pasold Research Fund Limited; 1976
Personal Recollections of Old Trowbridge – Elsie Watts; Commercial Litho Services, Trowbridge; 1979
Memories of four-score years – Colonel Harington H Roberts; J. Lane. the Bodley Head; 1920
Mud on My Boots – John Lacey, unpublished memoirs, document ref 3519/1
Sales Particulars following death of Fred Marsland – document refs 1895/361, 362, 363
Kelly's Directory 1907
Ordnance Survey Maps of Trowbridge, 1890, 1924, 1936
Census returns 1851, 1861, 1871, 1881, 1891, 1901
Last will and testament of William Gouldsmith – document ref 974/2
Conveyance of land Hannah Gouldsmith to James Claverley ????
Lease by Charles Benn to a Mr R W Kennard, including plan of grounds; 1916 – document ref 1774/6
Wiltshire Gazette & Herald; 6 August 2009
Conveyance of property from Hubert Bradley to Charles Pearson; 1949
Conveyance of property from Charles Pearson to Doctor Aubrey Pearce; 1951
Transfer of property from Doctor Aubrey Pearce to Mrs D C Pearce; 1970
Conveyance of property from Dr and Mrs Pearce to Mr & Mrs K A Bines; 1978
Conveyance of property from Mr & Mrs K A Bines to Mr & Mrs J Maltby; 1982
Conveyance of property from Mrs J Maltby to Fanact Limited; 1982
Series of photographs by Houghton and Sons, Trowbridge
Series of unattributed photographs in the Wiltshire Buildings Record
Sales Particulars of Hampton and Sons, early 20th Century
Sales Particulars of John Hodge, Baker and Co, 29 April 1938
Plans for demolition and redevelopment; 1938 – document ref G15/760/808

APPENDIX B

PLANS OF HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT


STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT
4
PHASE I - c. 1857
PHASE II - 1860's
PHASE III - 1870's
PHASE IV - 1948
PHASE VI - 1950's/6
HISTORICAL DEMOLITIONS
Drawing Room
Dining Room
1
Up
Cup'bd
Kitchen
Lobby 1
Lobby 2
Porch
Store 1
Sun Room
Store 2
2
Existing Ground Floor Plan scale 1:50

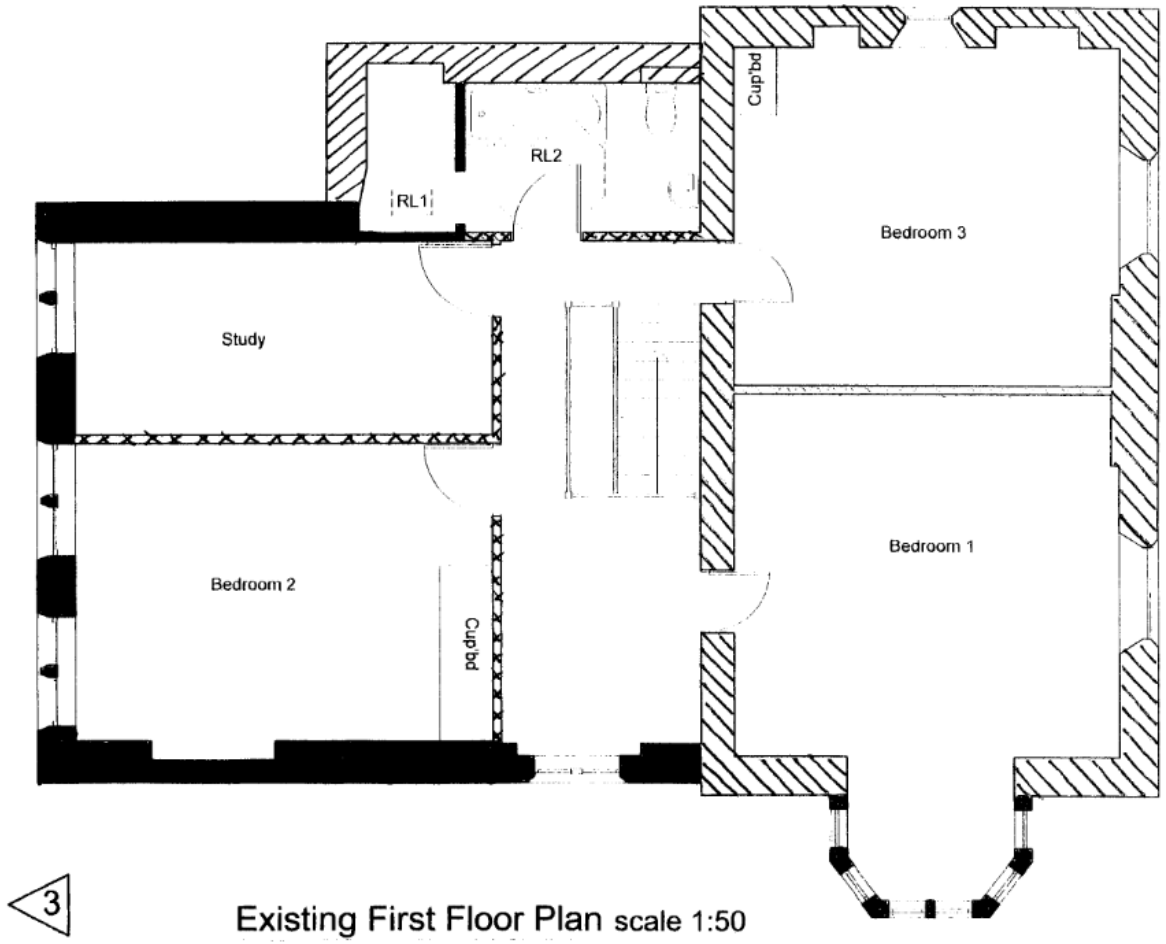
PHASE I - C. 1857

PHASE II - 1860's

PHASE III - 1870's

PHASE IV - 1948

STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT



3

Existing First Floor Plan scale 1:50