

DEVIZES CASTLE.

GARDEN WALLS, GATES & BRIDGE.

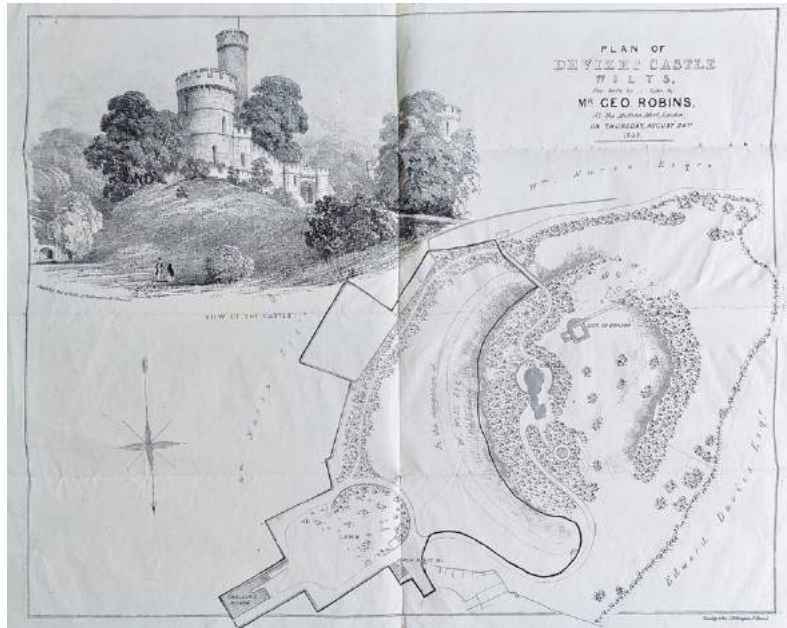


Figure 211 1843 sales particulars (© Wiltshire Museum, Devizes; MSS.2744).

- 5.177 The 1843 sales particulars include a site plan. The only garden walls depicted relates to a circular terrace surrounding the south tower; this is visible on the attached view as a low, crenelated wall.
- 5.178 This plan also shows that the drive at this time wound up from the north to the forecourt, but it did not then continue down to the south in a circuit. To the south, only a garden path ran

down from the house & across from the bridge, which is also just visible in the view, at the bottom left.

BRIDGE.

- 5.179 The original bridge was only wide enough to bear a footpath, it thus had to be widened when the drive was extended over it, sometime before 1885 (the date of the 1st edition, 25" Ordnance Survey map).



Figure 212 Bridge plan: pre-1843; post-1843.

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- 5.180 The original foot bridge remains visible from the south, where the rustic tufa-clad elevation remains exposed.



Figure 213 Bridge, south-west elevation.

- 5.181 The original north elevation is partially visible within the vaults of the later addition, & comprised an elevation of rough, but coursed stone blockwork, with three-light, round-headed windows to either side. The rear (south) of this wall is faced in brick, & was clearly the internal face.



Figure 214 Bridge, original north-east elevation, from within later addition (showing stored structure from the former *Conservatory*).



Figure 215 Within one of the vaults of the original bridge, showing the brick inner face of the original north-east elevation.

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- 5.182 The new north elevation comprised more roughly-coursed stonework, primitive, but substantial, with the central arch flanked by windows with Saxon-inspired, triangular heads; both characteristics of Robert Leach's second phase.



Figure 216 Bridge, current north-east elevation.

- 5.183 From the drive, the parapets of the two phases are quite different: the original, southern parapet has low merlons with mortared capping, with embrasures at the same level as the drive; the north elevation has embrasures well above the drive, with substantial merlons each with an arrow loop, but with a very distinctive capping. Above a narrow, projecting course, a pair of semi-circular stones bookend a series of narrow courses.



Figure 217 Bridge, view north over bridge, showing parapets; the wear in the middle of the drive, in the foreground, may possibly be the surviving top of the original north-east elevation.



Figure 218 Bridge, north-east elevation, detail of merlon construction.

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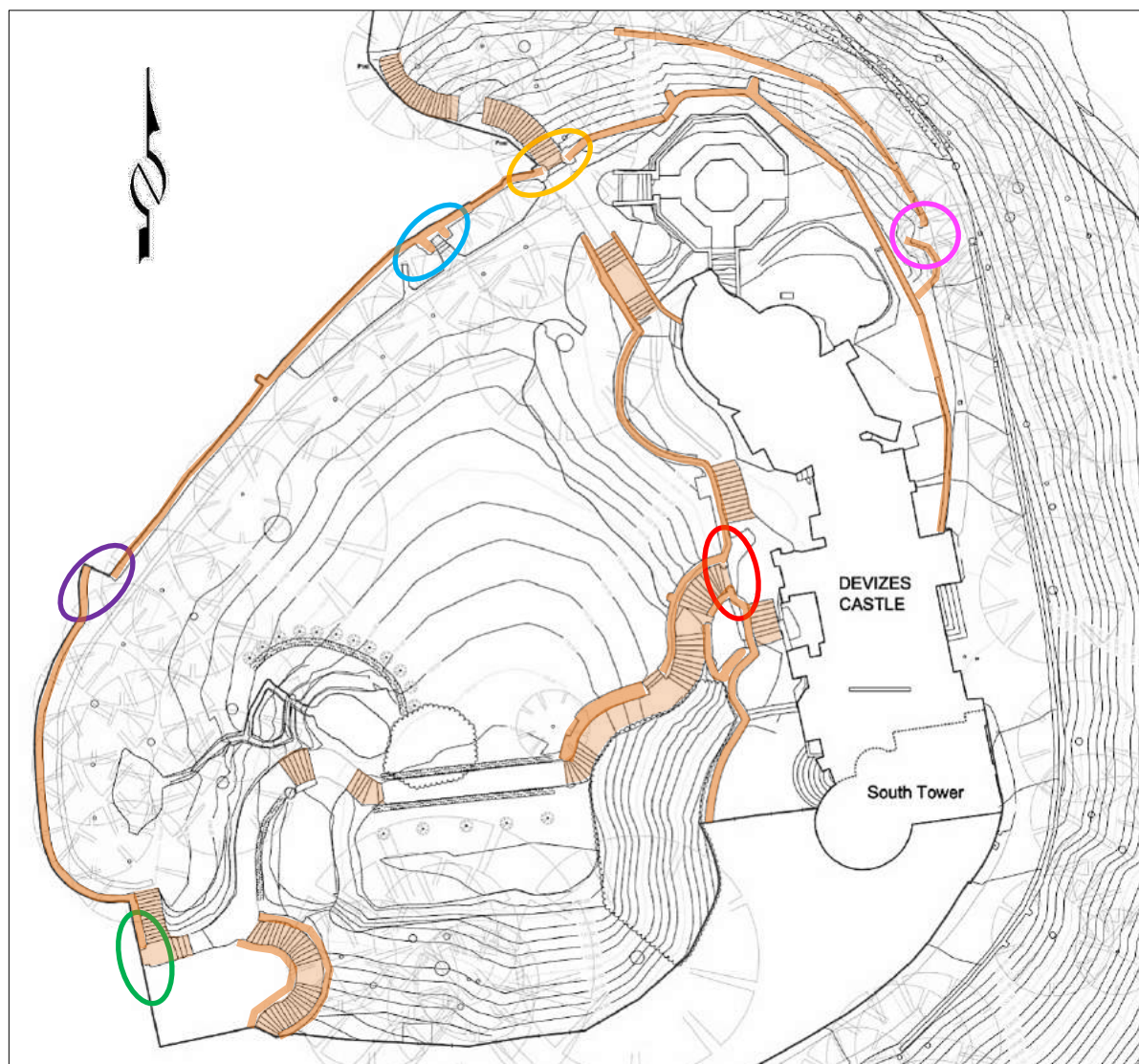


Figure 219 Plan of garden walls, steps & gates.

Stone garden walls & steps (excluding tufa-clad banks & rockeries, & steps to the house).

Ladies' Gate.

This name is given in both the 1883 & the 1914 sales catalogues.

Saint John's Gate, later Bishop's Gate.

Both names are given in *Devizes Castle, its History and Romance*, page 140, & the latter name is also given in the 1914 sales catalogue.

Unnamed northern gate.

Unnamed seat.

Unnamed garden gate.

Entrance to Conservatory undercroft.

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VALENTINE LEACH.

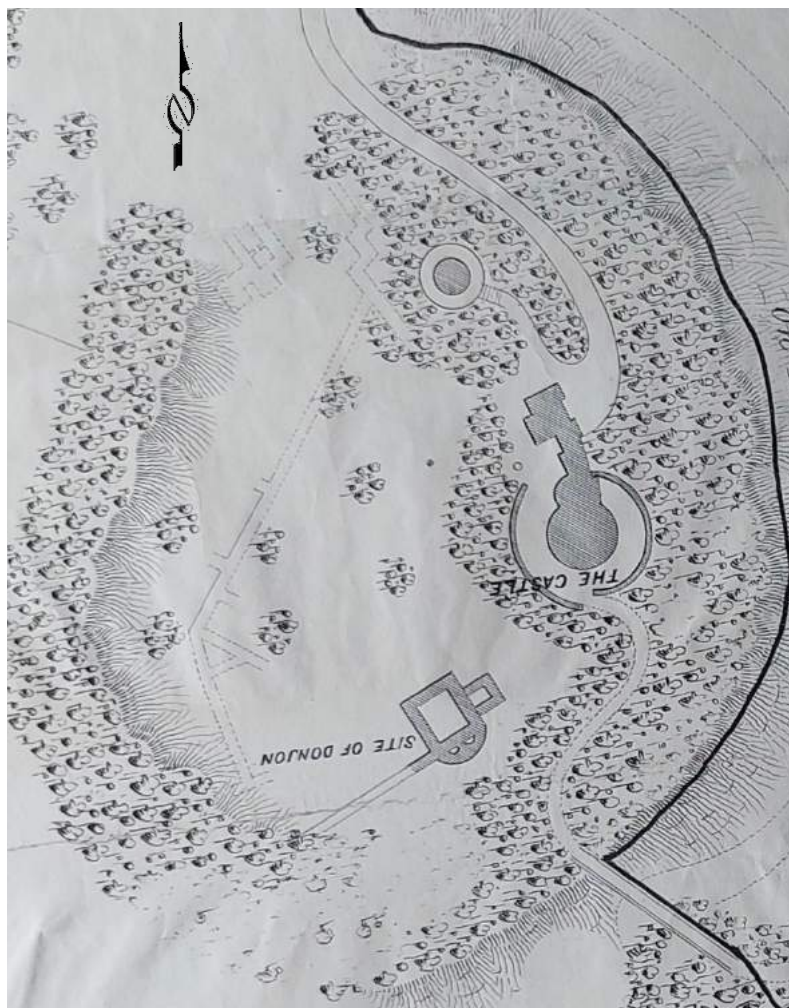


Figure 22O Detail of 1843 sales particulars, reorientated with north to top (© Wiltshire Museum, Devizes; M/S.2744).

5.184 The plan attached to the 1843 sales particulars illustrates the gardens as they were laid out during Valentine Leach's occupation. The only garden wall indicated is the crenelated terrace wall that surrounds the south tower, & the only steps illustrated lead up to the still-freestanding north tower.

5.185 The remainder of the garden is depicted as open, with clumps of planting, & a shelterbelt around the western edge. Whilst the depiction may be somewhat indicative, as is the footprint of the castle which does not accurately reflect the built evidence, the overall style of the garden is characteristic, informal picturesque Regency garden.

ROBERT LEACH.

5.186 The evidence suggests that the gardens, like the house, evolved incrementally. The earliest photograph of the house (figure 18) shows little, but the *Ladies' Gate* is noticeably absent.

5.187 In the next oldest photograph, which post-dates the construction of the east wings (the parapet of the north-east wing is visible), the west front of the house is now enclosed by low crenelated walls, but the *Ladies' Gate* is still absent; the steps that lead up to the site of the gate are visible, but as yet have no flanking walls.

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Figure 221 West front, undated, pre-1883 image, showing crenelated garden walls surrounding the house, but no *Ladies' Gate*, & the steps up to the house have no flanking stone walls.

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- 5.188 By the time of the 1880s photographs, the *Ladies' Gate* & the steps appear to have achieved their final form.

BOUNDARY WALL & GATES.

- 5.189 The boundary wall that encircles the garden appears to be contemporary with the east wings. The historic photographs of the entrance front from the 1880s show the boundary wall adjoining both wings, with the additional & matching curve of wall between the south-east (library) wing & the gate.



Figure 222 Boundary wall, typical merlon.

- 5.190 Furthermore, the merlons of the boundary wall have a method of capping identical to the north elevation of the bridge, an elevation whose window & masonry treatment matches that of the east wings.



Figure 223 Windows of bridge (left) & north-east wing.

- 5.191 The end where the boundary wall abuts the stair tower of the house was rebuilt, & realigned to suit the new additions, when the Rich alterations were carried out to the house.

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Figure 224 Boundary wall, to north-east of house.

5.192 Proceeding anti-clockwise around the boundary wall from the house, the first feature encountered is the projection of a secondary wall. This helps deal with the considerable height difference between the garden & the drive in this location, & creates an aesthetic layering effect not dissimilar in feel to the layering of the original front elevation. This projection also incorporates the entrance to a tunnel that leads to an undercroft (boiler room) beneath the former *Conservatory*: as such the walls & the *Conservatory* are likely to be roughly contemporary.



Figure 225 Northern gate, outside face.

5.193 The next feature of note is the northern gate. This is approached externally both by a shallow path, & a meandering flight of well-finished stone steps with semi-circular nosings.

5.194 The gate itself may possibly pre-date the boundary wall; the stone is more neatly rock-cut, & the gate appears to be braced by a pair of stone buttresses that are now incorporated into the wall.

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Figure 226 Northern gate, inside face.

5.195 The next is a small seat, set within an arched recess beneath a steep gable. The archivolt of the arch appears to contain salvaged fragments of a genuine Romanesque arch, presumably some of the spolia purchased by Robert Leach following the alterations to the Church of Saint John in 1862-3.



Figure 227 Seat.

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Figure 228 *Seat, detail of salvaged Romanesque voussoirs with chevron moulding.*

5.196 This is followed by a row of six merlons that are markedly taller than those to either side, & two of which contain arrow loops. There is little evidence to suggest that these raised merlons performed any other function than a picturesque feature, & break up what would otherwise be a very long, & potentially monotonous run of crenelations.

5.197 Then comes a very simple garden gate, without any decorative arch. The simple form may indicate an entrance of lower status, potentially the gardeners' entrance.



Figure 229 *Six taller merlons, with two arrow loops.*



Figure 230 *Garden gate.*

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Figure 231 *Saint John's or Bishop's Gate.*



Figure 232 Detail of archivolt.



Figure 233 *Steps & salvaged roll billet moulding to right of Saint John's or Bishop's Gate.*

5.198 Next, down a flight of stone stair where the treads are single blocks with no nosings, is *Saint John's or Bishop's Gate*, which is substantially built from spolia removed from the Romanesque Saint John's Church in 1862-3. The inner archivolt is a consistent arch with a roll moulding & a chevron, supported on capitals that rest on square jambs; the middle archivolt is pieced together from two different patterns of chevron & a lozenge moulding, supported on a pair of miss-matched colonnettes; the outer archivolt comprises two rows of miss-matched nail heads, supported on gargoyles.

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Figure 234 *Saint John's/Bishop's Gate*, outer face, from the 1914 sales particulars (Historic England Archive, JCO1216).

- 5.199 The rear face of the gate is currently inaccessible, but it is depicted on the 1914 sales particulars, & this face is also decorated with three salvaged archivolt, but no colonnettes are visible.



Figure 235 Curved stair.

- 5.200 West of the gate, a curved stair of nosed steps rises up to the southern bastion (which is now in the separate curtilage of the South Tower). The stair is positioned so that it would have given elevated views of the west front, although these are now blocked by dense vegetation.

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Figure 236 /stair up to *Ladies' Gate*, upper half.

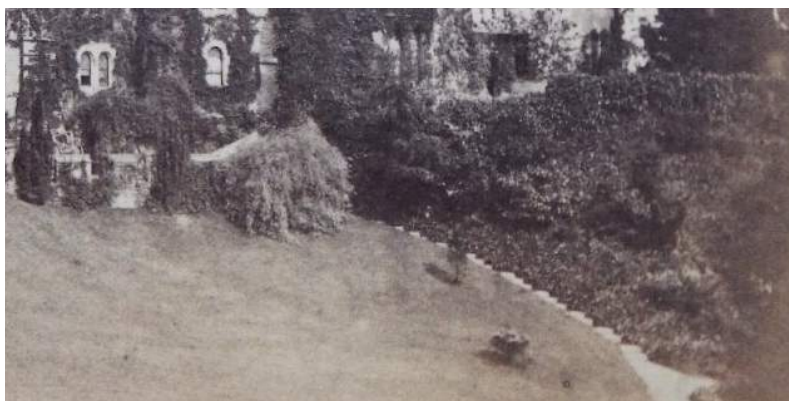


Figure 237 West front, undated, pre-1883 image, showing crenelated garden walls surrounding the house, but no *Ladies' Gate*, & the steps up to the house have no flanking stone walls.

- 5.201 The wall of the curved stair has a simple, triangular coping, with a ledge/seat on the inside face & semi-circular nosings to each step; all features repeated on the stair up to the *Ladies' Gate*, which is probably thus, in its current form, of similar date.



Figure 238 /stair up to *Ladies' Gate*, lower half.

- 5.202 The enclosing walls of the steps up to the *Ladies' Gate*, & the gate itself, (& presumably the matching curved stair) post-date the terraces around the house with their crenelated parapets, as the latter are clearly visible in the historic photograph that falls between Robert Leach's phases two & three (the parapet

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of the north-east wing is visible, but the elevation has not been enriched with the decorative balconies).



Figure 239 /fair up to *Ladies' Gate*.

- 5.203 The stair up to the *Ladies' Gate* has a rather lumpen wall at its base, which contains a circular feature whose purpose is currently unclear; above, the wall that matches the circular stair continues up to the *Ladies' Gate* itself.
- 5.204 The *Ladies' Gate* is a highly elaborate neo-Romanesque composition, which appears to be entirely 19th-century, with no incorporated spolia.

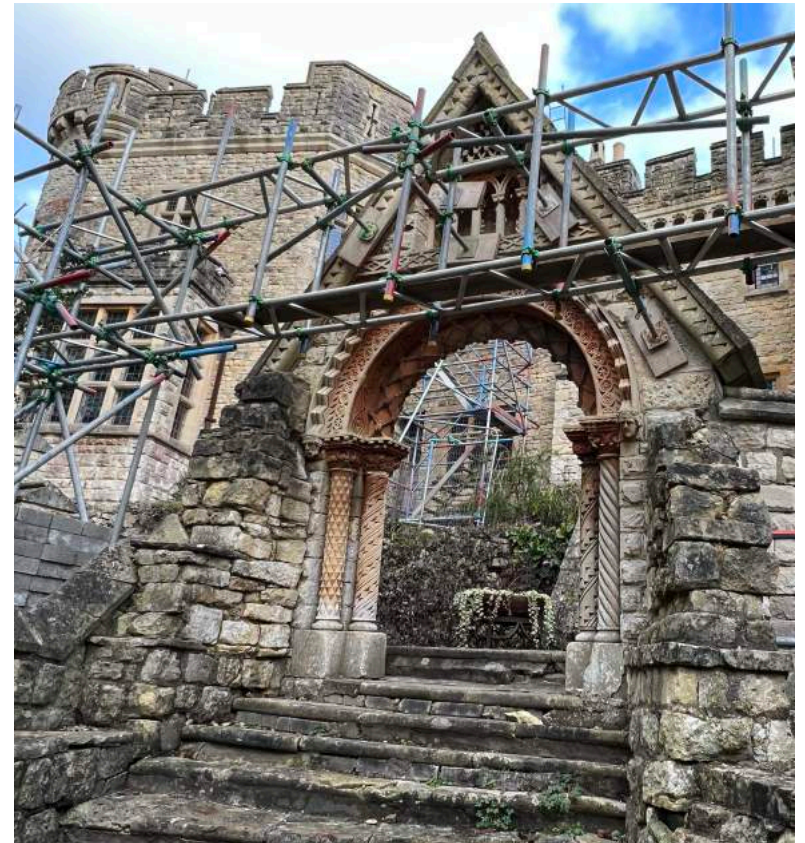


Figure 240 *Ladies' Gate*.

- 5.205 The gate is currently flanked by a pair of substantial stone buttresses, intended to brace the gate, which now leans perilously to the west; these buttresses are modern, being noticeably absent in photographs of the gate from the 1914 sales particulars.

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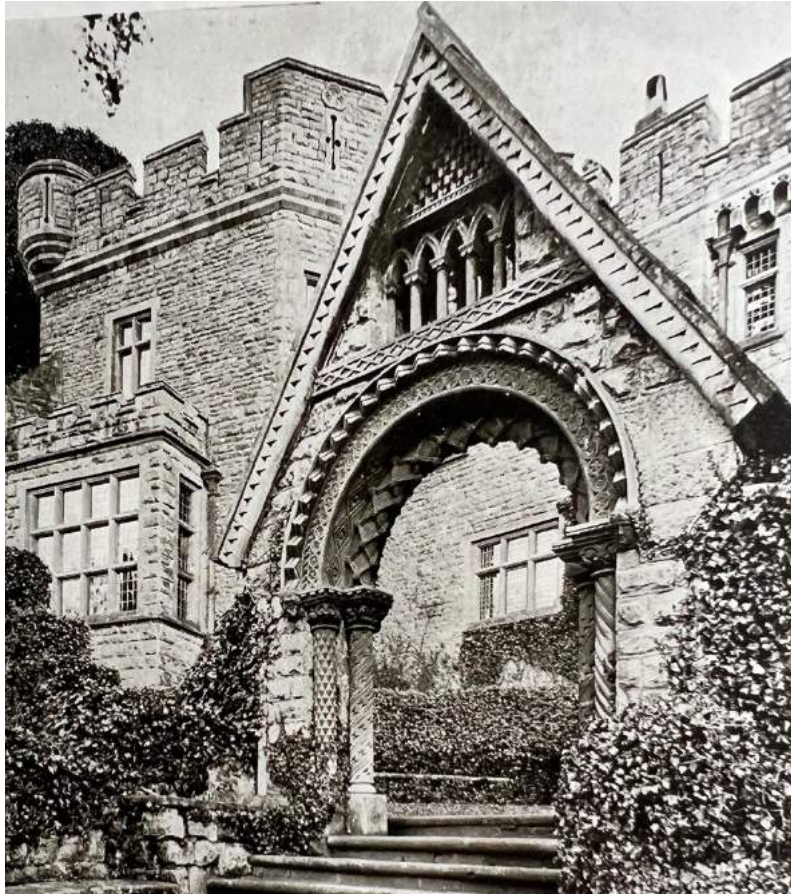


Figure 241 *Ladier's Gate*, outer face, from the 1914 sales particulars (Historic England Archive, JCO1216).

5.206 Of the terraces around the house, the oldest in origin is that surrounding the South Tower, which appears in the 1843 sales particulars; only a small portion of this falls within the current

application site; the remainder being in the curtilage of the now separate South Tower. The detailing of the merlons matches those of the remainder of the terrace around the house (& differs from the detail of the boundary wall); it is unclear whether they are the original, or altered by Robert Leach.



Figure 242 Terrace around South Tower.

5.207 The steps down from this terrace, & other steps along the terrace as far as the northern gate are formed from single blocks with no nosings. Towards the north the terrace forms a bastion, the curvature of which, on plan, appears to relate better to the.

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Ivy Tower than to the *Fernery*, which may, possibly, suggest that terrace/bastion formed part of Robert Leach's first phase.



Figure 243 View south along terrace, part the *Ladies' Gate*.



Figure 244 Terrace bastion around the *Fernery*.



Figure 245 Steps up to terrace from northern gate.

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SIGNIFICANCE.

MEDIAEVAL.

- 5.208 Evidential value, as evidence of the lives of our forebears, is generally more relevant to archaeology than it is to standing buildings; as such, the only remains of the mediaeval castle to possibly survive as part of the current house (the stone footings of the north tower) would be of very considerable evidential value.
- 5.209 As a possible above-ground fragment of the once great mediaeval castle, which occupied a very prominent role in English history, the fragment, however minor, would be of very considerable historical value.
- 5.210 The aesthetic (architectural) value, in isolation seems modest, but as a possible part of such an important & high-status building would be of a more moderate to high level.
- 5.211 Whilst in isolation the communal value of these footings seems slight, as a possible surviving fragment of a well-documented castle, the communal value would probably be moderate.

EARLY 18TH CENTURY.

- 5.212 The surviving tower of the windmill, as a fragmentary survival of the later, utilitarian use of the site of moderate evidential value.
- 5.213 The historical value of this phase, as evidence of the decline of the once mighty castle, is also moderate.

- 5.214 The survival of this phase appears to be limited to the structure of the windmill; the roof has been altered & no internal machinery survives, as such is it of a low to moderate aesthetic (architectural) value.

- 5.215 The remains of the windmill are of little communal value.

VALENTINE LEACH.

- 5.216 As this phase of the building has been so heavily altered, it is of some evidential value, but given its limited antiquity, this is of a low to moderate level only.
- 5.217 The restoration of the castle as a high-status structure, following contemporary fashion by a well-documented new owner is of considerable historical value.
- 5.218 This reconstruction of the castle, following current romantic, picturesque fashions, & with the involvement of a known & significant architect, is of considerable aesthetic (architectural) value.
- 5.219 Given the central & prominence location of the castle, which was engraved & published, this phase is of some communal value, albeit of a comparatively limited level.

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ROBERT LEACH.

- 5.220 As this phase of the building has been so heavily altered, it is of some evidential value, but given its limited antiquity, this is of a low to moderate level only.
- 5.221 The considerable expansion of the castle as a high-status structure, by a well-documented owner is of considerable historical value.
- 5.222 This phase of work was in a highly romantic, picturesque & idiosyncratic Romanesque Revival, which in many ways was more reflective of the earlier 19th century, reminiscent of the fantasy of Fonthill Abbey or the extravagant Romanesque of Penrhyn Castle, than it was of the latter 19th century. Nonetheless, the result was architecturally extraordinary & unique, & undoubtedly of the highest level of aesthetic (architectural) value.
- 5.223 Given the central & prominence location of the castle, which was engraved & published, this phase is of some communal value, albeit of a comparatively limited level.

SIR CHARLES RICH.

- 5.224 This phase was the last significant phase of work, & as such is both comparatively recent & complete, & as such of little evidential value.
- 5.225 As another key phase in the building's history, adapting it to changing patterns of life & fashions, this phase is of moderate historical value.

- 5.226 The 16th-century revival architecture of this phase is solid & sombre, but unexceptional & lacking real refinement or finesse, & it is only of moderate aesthetic (architectural) value.

- 5.227 This phase, given its age & somewhat institutional character, is of little communal value.

20TH CENTURY.

- 5.228 The 20th-century alterations, by virtue of their date & piecemeal nature, are generally of little heritage value.

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6.0 SIGNIFICANCE MATRIX

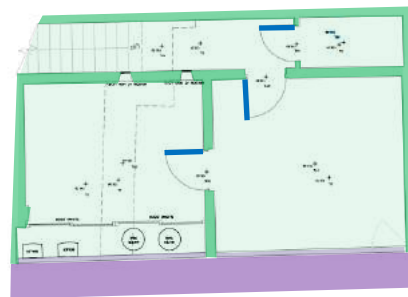
	Evidential Value.	Historical Value.	Aesthetic Value.	Communal Value.	Overall Significance.
Mediaeval.	High	High	Moderate	Moderate	High
Early 18 th century.	Moderate	Moderate	Low/moderate	Low	Moderate
Valentine Leach.	Low/moderate	High	High	Low/moderate	High
Robert Leach.	Low/moderate	High	High	Low/moderate	High
Sir Charles Rich.	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Low	Moderate
20 th century.	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low

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- Mediaeval.
- 18th century, possibly on mediaeval footings.
- Valentine Leach.
- Robert Leach 1.
- Robert Leach 2.
- Robert Leach 3
- Sir Charles Rich.
- 20th century.

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7.0 CELLAR.PHASING PLAN.

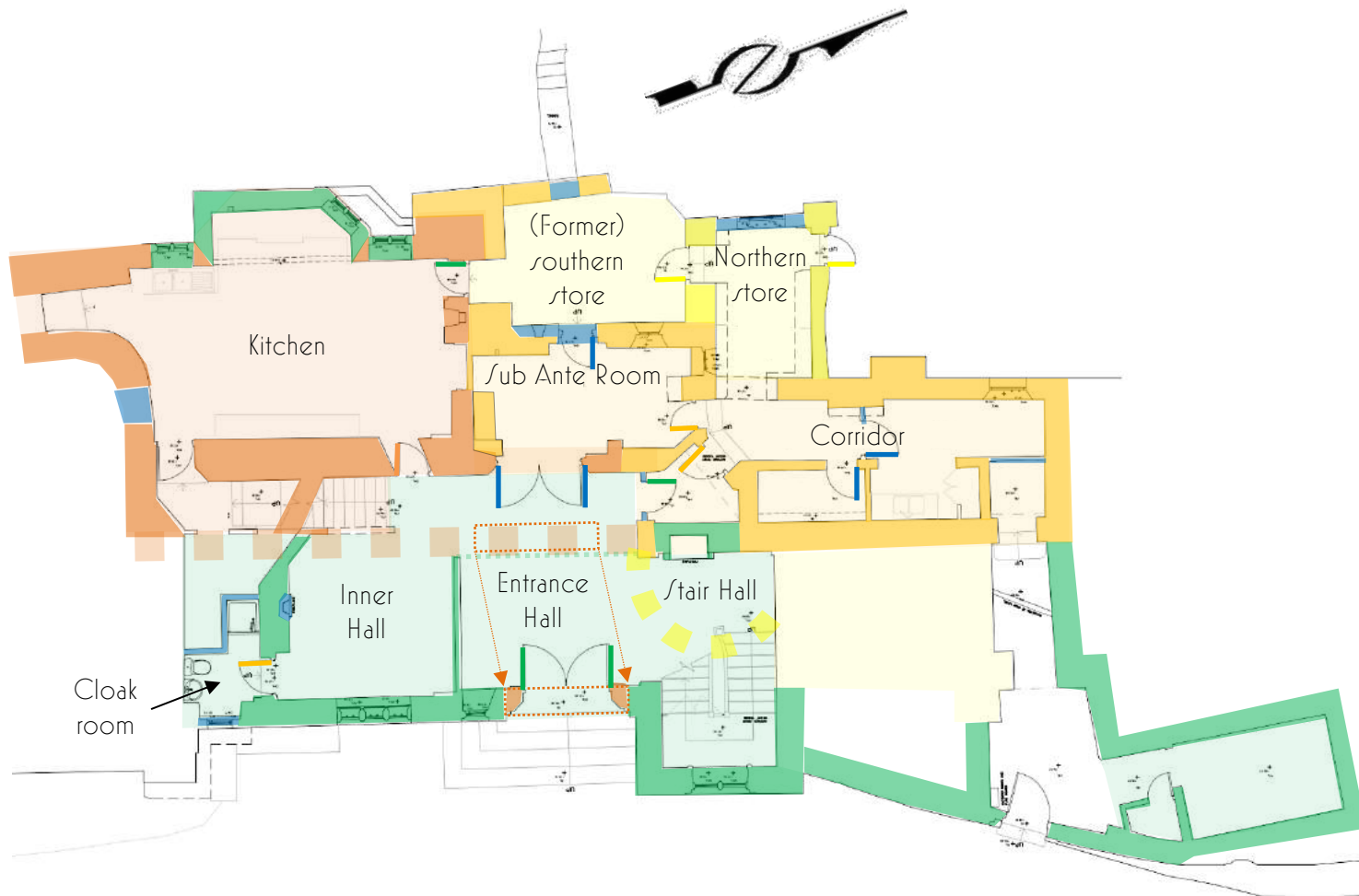


DEVIZES CASTLE.

- Mediaeval.
- 18th century, possibly on mediaeval footings.
- Valentine Leach.
- Robert Leach 1.
- Robert Leach 2.
- Robert Leach 3
- Sir Charles Rich.
- 20th century.

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8.0 LOWER GROUND FLOOR PHASING PLAN.



DEVIZES CASTLE.

- Mediaeval.
- 18th century, possibly on mediaeval footings.
- Valentine Leach.
- Robert Leach 1.
- Robert Leach 2.
- Robert Leach 3
- Sir Charles Rich.
- 20th century.

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9.0 GROUND FLOOR PHASING PLAN.



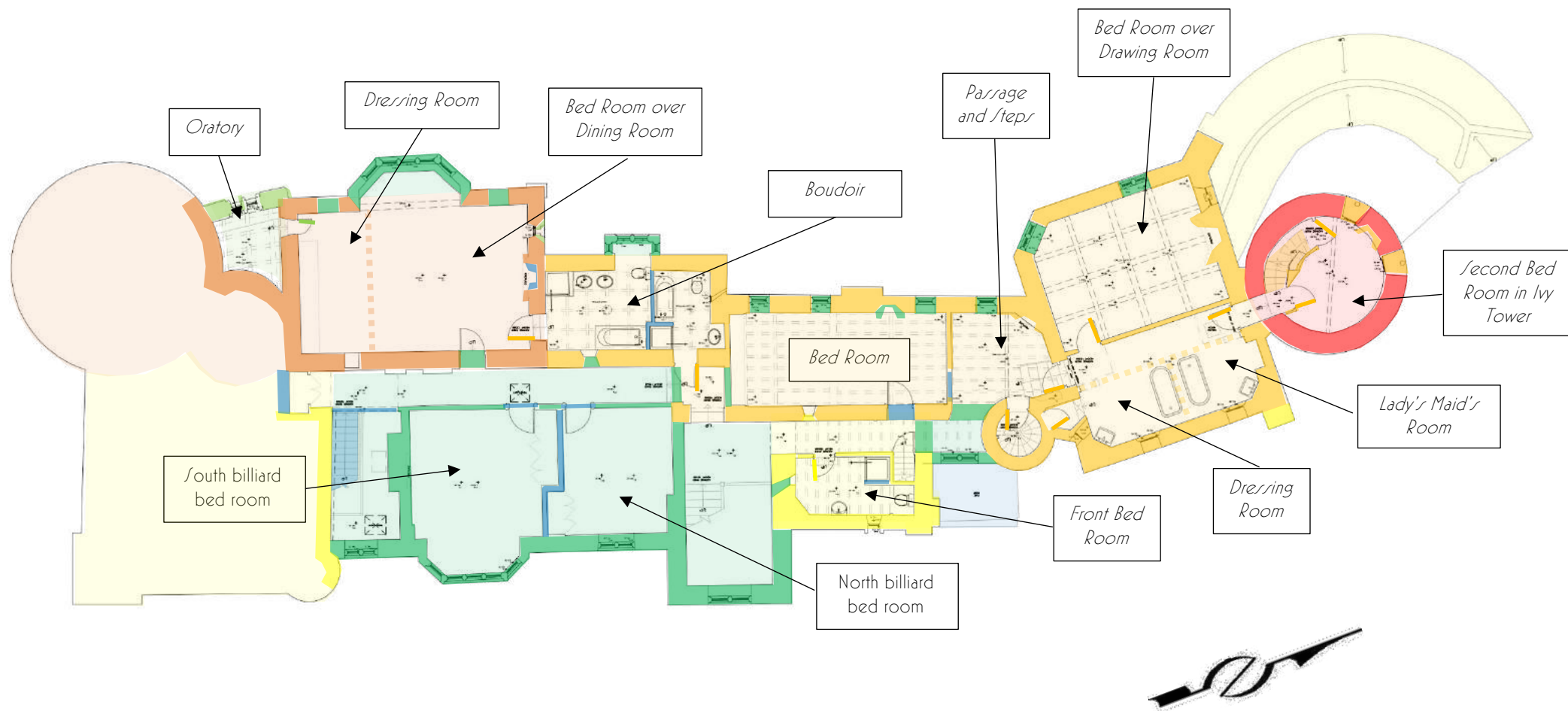
N.B.: room names in *italic* are taken from the 1880s sales particulars.

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- Mediaeval.
- 18th century, possibly on mediaeval footings.
- Valentine Leach.
- Robert Leach 1.
- Robert Leach 2.
- Robert Leach 3
- Sir Charles Rich.
- 20th century.

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10.0 FIRST FLOOR PHASING PLAN.



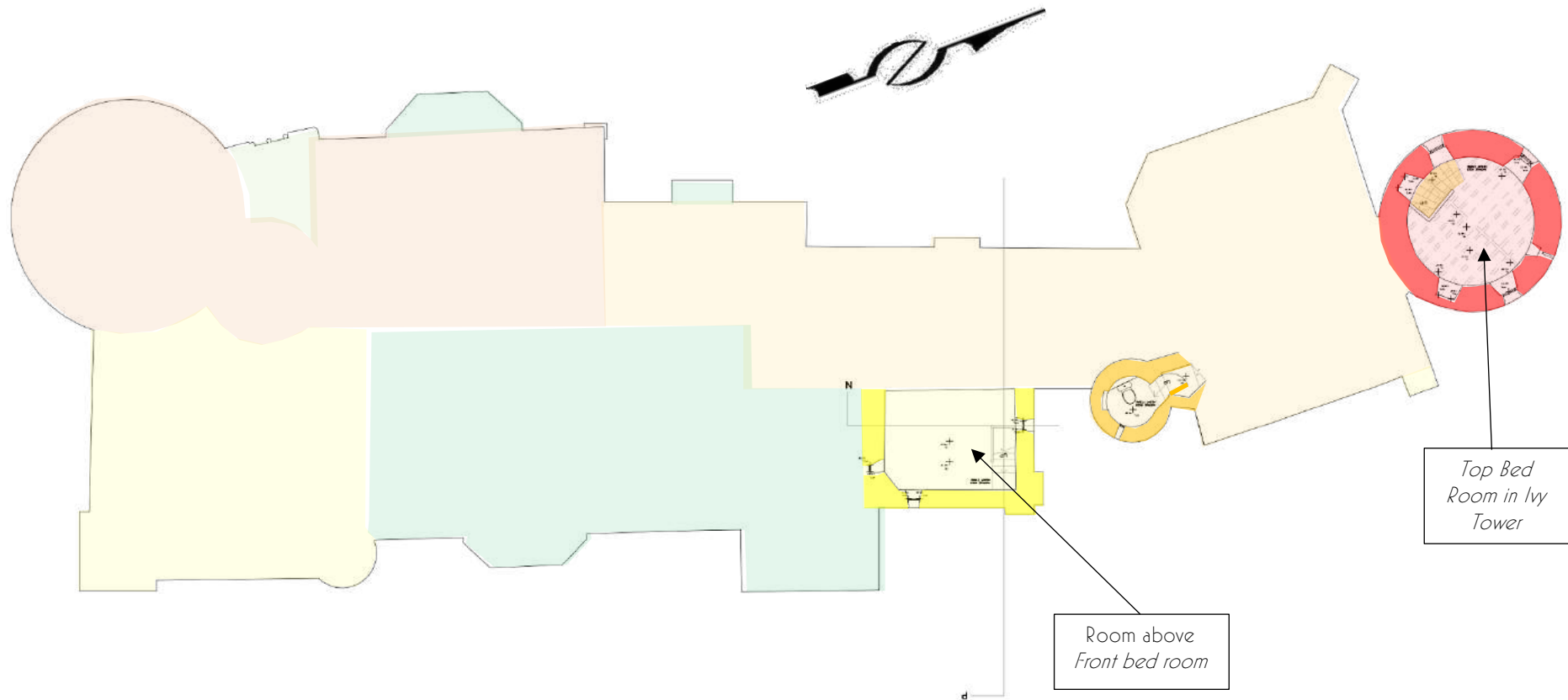
N.B.: room names in italic are taken from the 1880s sales particulars.

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- Mediaeval.
- 18th century, possibly on mediaeval footings.
- Valentine Leach.
- Robert Leach 1.
- Robert Leach 2.
- Robert Leach 3
- Sir Charles Rich.
- 20th century.

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11.0 SECOND FLOOR PHASING PLAN.



N.B.: room names in italic are taken from the 1880s sales particulars.

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- Mediaeval.
- 18th century, possibly on mediaeval footings.
- Valentine Leach.
- Robert Leach 1.
- Robert Leach 2.
- Robert Leach 3
- Sir Charles Rich.
- 20th century.

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12.0 GARDEN WALLS PHASING PLAN.



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13.0 IMPACT ASSESSMENT.

PROPOSAL.

GENERAL.

- 13.1 The proposed refurbishment of the building is heavily focused on essential repairs, such as leaking roofs & unstable masonry, which are vital for the building's longer-term survival.
- 13.2 The changes that are proposed are generally focused very much on areas of unsympathetic modern intervention, either reversing them, or trying to improve upon them.
- 13.3 Alterations to historic fabric have been considered on the basis of a careful assessment of the fabric's intrinsic significance, & its contribution to the wider significance of the listed building. Alterations to Rich-phase fabric are modest, & limited to areas that have already been compromised by modern alterations. Alterations to Leach fabric have been kept to an absolute minimum.
- 13.4 The principal works are briefly summarised below, but for greater detail please refer to the external drawings by Scott & Twine; the Design & Access Statement by BLDA Architects; & other specialist reports.

EXTERIOR.

- 13.5 The external works to the building would primarily comprise sensitive masonry consolidation & repair, including consolidating pipework & replacing plastic with cast iron. The proposed external alterations are primarily focused on areas of unsympathetic 20th-century intervention.
- 13.6 On the east (entrance) elevation, the single-storey bathroom extension at ground floor would be removed, & the historic walls behind made good.



Figure 246 East elevation, modern bathroom extension.

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Figure 247 East elevation, showing modern window to rear of *Drawing Room*.

- 13.7 The modern, square Crittal window in the east wall of the *Drawing Room* would also be removed.
- 13.8 On the west front, the modern doorway from the northern end of the *Gallery* to the garden would also be removed & the stonework made good.
- 13.9 These changes would restore these areas of the building to their appearance after the Rich phase of alterations, the last phase of any heritage value & significance.



Figure 248 West elevation, door from *Gallery* to garden.

- 13.10 In two areas, change is proposed that is not pure restoration: the northern store/proposed boot room, & the *Fernery*.
- 13.11 There is no clear record of the appearance of the historic northern store, although distant photographs & plans indicate that it had no open frontage to the garden, appearing more as part of the garden terracing & landscaping. The current frontage, inserted between two historic buttresses, is latter-20th century, as is the unsympathetic flat roof.

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Figure 249 Northern store/boot room, west front.

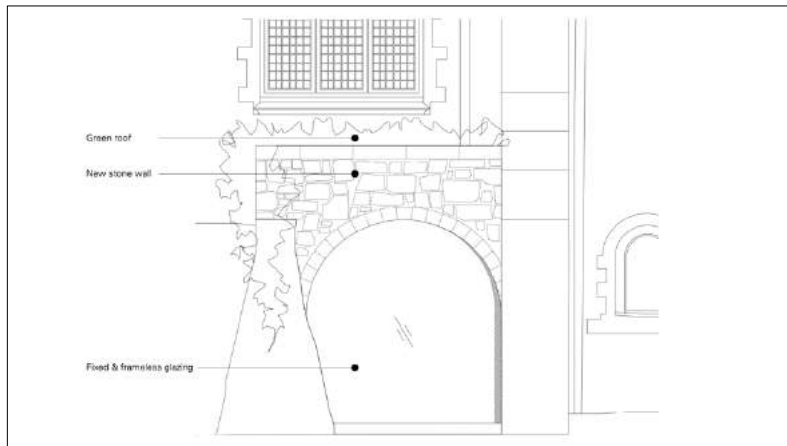


Figure 250 Northern store/boot room, proposed west front.

- 13.12 The proposal is to use this store as a principal access to the garden, retaining the historic buttresses, but replacing the modern wall between them with an arched opening. A new green roof would soften the appearance of the structure, re-integrating it with the surrounding terracing & landscaping.
- 13.13 On the *Fernery* it is proposed to replace the current, badly-decayed glazing.
- 13.14 The *Fernery* was originally a covered, external space, & as altered between 1883 & 1888 it comprised the still-extant interlaced arcading, but apparently with an iron structure at impost level that supported a series of planters, & which may also have acted as a ring-beam to resist the lateral thrusts of the convex structure.
- 13.15 This ironwork was later removed, & a somewhat utilitarian timber & glass screen inserted between the colonnettes; whilst there is no definitive record of the date of this change, is it highly likely to be part of Sir Charles Rich's alterations.

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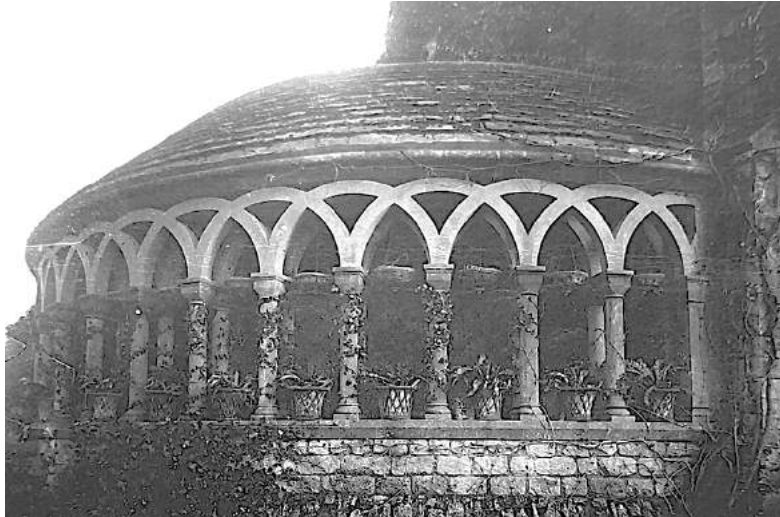


Figure 251 *Fernery*, from the 1888 sales particulars (© Wiltshire Museum, Devizes; DZ/WJ:/C.I.II).



Figure 252 *Fernery*.



Figure 253 *Fernery*, detail of arcade showing movement at impost level.

- 13.16 However, with no lateral restraint the colonettes & arcading of the *Fernery* have suffered from significance movement, bulging out at impost level. This movement has both rendered the

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structural condition of the *Fernery* parlous, & has caused significant damage to the already decayed timberwork of the glazed screen.

- 13.17 The Structural Engineer's advice is that the deflection is so severe, that the colonnettes & arcading would need to be recorded, carefully dismantled, & then reinstated vertically with lateral restraint to protect against repeat movement in the future.
- 13.18 The timber & glass screen would have to be entirely replaced due to both the deflection damage & general decay. Consequently, it is proposed to take the opportunity to install a more discrete & light-weight metal & glass screen, which would be visually less intrusive, & which would thus be more in keeping with the original, open appearance of the structure.
- 13.19 A further minor alteration is proposed to the modern window of the curved room behind the *Fernery*. This window must have replaced the original door to this space (as it is the only possibly place that a door could have existed). The existing window would be replaced by one that would be smaller, more discrete & more sympathetically-designed.



Figure 254 Window to room behind *Fernery*.

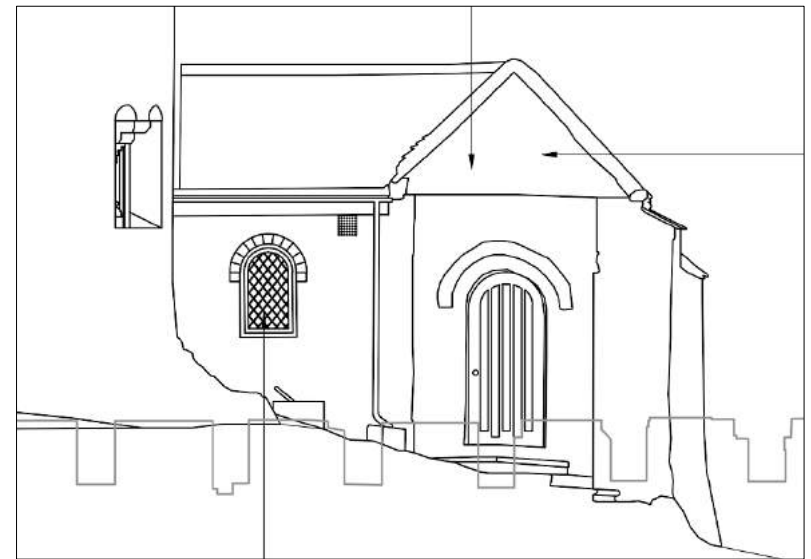


Figure 255 Proposed window to room behind *Fernery*.

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CELLAR.

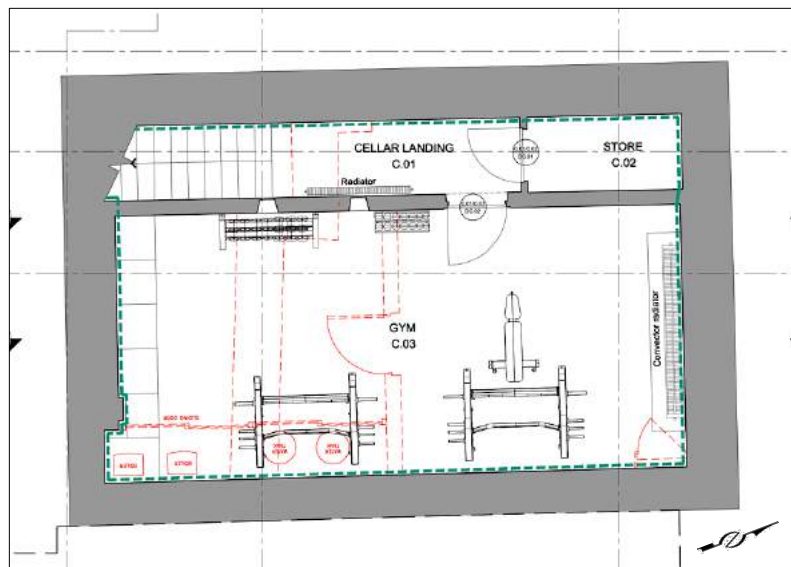


Figure 256 Proposed cellar floor plan.

- 13.20 The principal alteration in the cellar would be the removal of the transverse wall to open the space into a single room, thereby better revealing the mediaeval wall along the east of the cellar, thereby allowing its considerable significance to be better appreciated. This red brick wall appears to be integral to the Rich phase, although it comprises a utilitarian wall in a much-altered, low-status area of the building.

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LOWER GROUND FLOOR.



Figure 257 Proposed lower ground floor plan.

13.21 At lower ground floor many of the alterations are focused upon modern fabric. Modern, plasterboard partitions that enclose

the cloakroom & the smaller opening to the north of the entrance hall would be removed. The concrete block wall that

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seals the northern entrance to the lower ground floor would be removed, reopening this historic access & partially restoring the original circulation routes of the building.

- 13.22 The wall to the south of the entrance hall is proposed for removal in order to create a more spacious entrance to the building. This wall is Rich fabric, but is a plain brick wall in a room that has otherwise already been substantially opened up & altered.
- 13.23 The door to the cloakroom is Leach fabric, albeit re-sited into the Rich wing. The door & frame would be carefully removed for reuse between proposed guest bedroom & its associated dressing room. The blocked door between the kitchen & the sub-ante room/vestibule would also be reopened; this blocking is likely to date to Robert Leach's time, but comprises plain red brickwork.
- 13.24 The cloakroom LG 10 currently has a modern door; it is proposed to reuse the half-glazed door from the foot of the stair to the second floor of the Ivy Tower in this opening.
- 13.25 All the Leach-phase doors & other features that appear to survive *in situ* are being retained unaltered.
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GROUND FLOOR.

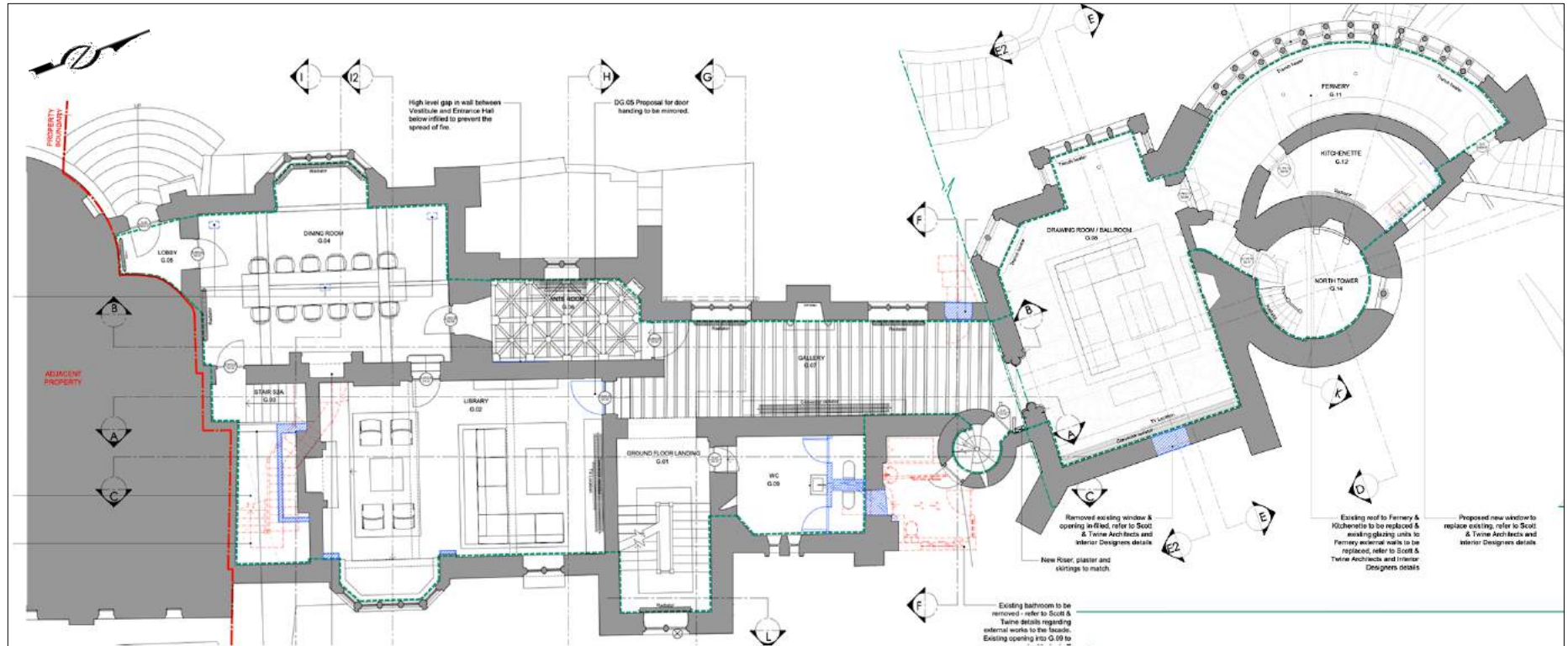


Figure 258 Proposed ground floor.

13.26 At ground floor, the proposals are also primarily concentrated on areas of existing modern intervention. It is proposed to remove the existing back stair, which opening-up works have shown to be entirely latter-20th century, but to retain the open well between ground & first floors; the modern bathroom

extension on the east front; & the door from the *Gallery* on the west front.

13.27 The room between the main stair & the *Gallery*, almost certainly identified as the *Cloak Room* in the 1883 sales particulars would be converted into a cloakroom in the

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modern sense of the word; the enclosures for lavatory cubicles being treated in a contemporary way to read as modern insertions within & distinct from the historic room.

13.28 The alterations at this floor are limited, & again are focused primarily on modern fabric. Historic *in situ* joinery, floorboards, pugging, skirtings & doors would all be retained; modern ones would be replaced. Radiators would be replaced; none of the existing appear historic or otherwise of significance.

13.29 Within the Billiard Room (now library) the salvaged bookcases & fragments of panelling, which although historic, are clearly not *in situ*, would be removed. The swing of the door would be reversed, but this door has already been altered, & is not intact, *in situ* fabric.

13.30 Within the *Dining Room*, the modern floorboards within the main body of the room would be replaced; however, the floorboards within the bay, at the lowest point of the floor, would appear to date from the Rich phase. These older boards would be retained beneath the new, level floor.

13.31 It is also proposed to remove the modern wainscot, & to replace the modern surround with a design that is more appropriate, subject to agreement on a potential design.

13.32 The remainder of the rooms, which substantially date back to the Robert Leach phase, albeit with an overlay of Rich alterations, would be very sensitively treated, with little more than a replacement & upgrading of services.

DEVIZES CASTLE.

FIRST FLOOR.

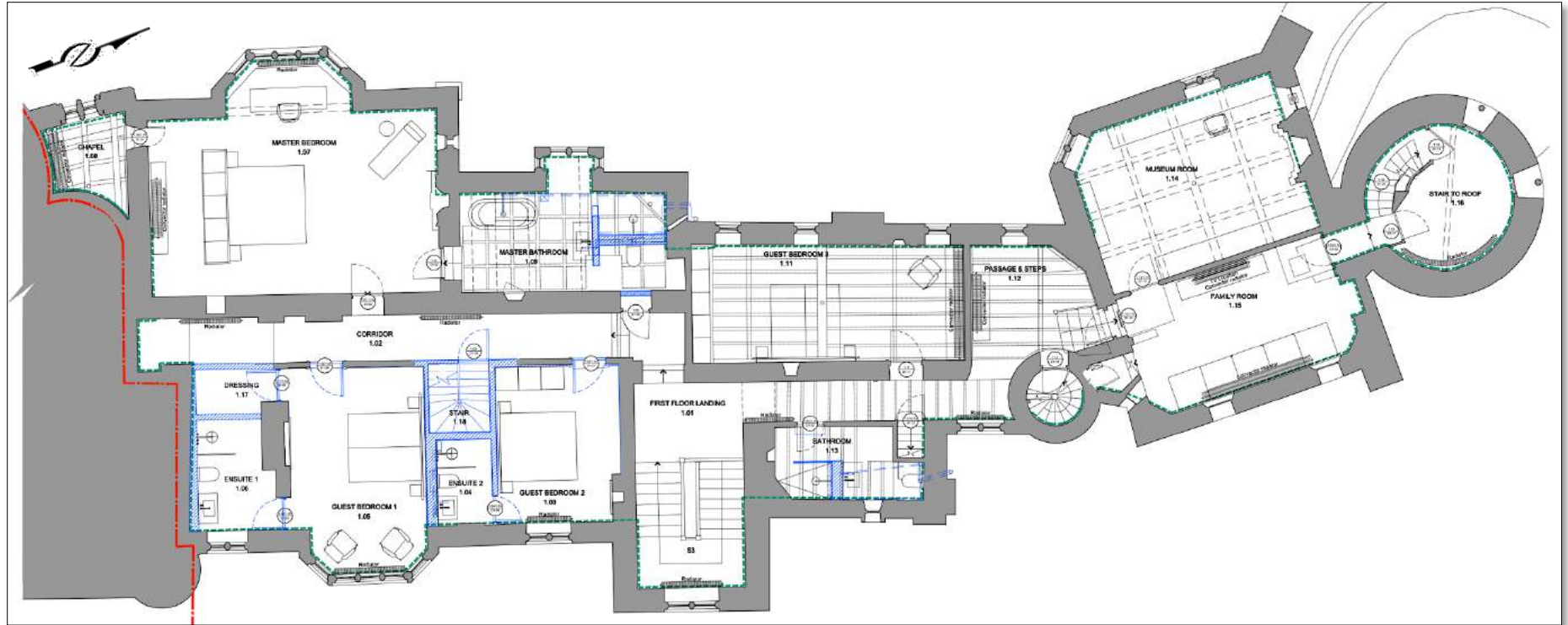


Figure 259 Proposed first floor plan.

13.33 At first floor the alterations are again primarily focused on areas of existing modern disruption. The greatest disruption would be to the two bedrooms above the Billiard Room, where the existing modern, plasterboard partitions would be reconfigured; the modern doorways to the corridor would be

moved & replaced with doors to reflect the door opposite to the master bedroom. Between the two rooms, an enclosed cupboard would contain a simple, traditional stair to access the roof. Such cupboard stairs, simple, functional stairs discreetly hidden away in cupboards or other enclosed spaces, were

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commonly used in country houses to provide access to roofs & roof spaces for general maintenance.



Figure 26O Simple 19th-century roof access stair from the second floor of an early-18th century country house in Shropshire.



Figure 26I Cupboard stairs to a roof space with roof access at an 18th & 19th century country house in Wales.

- 13.34** The removal of the modern back stair would allow for the addition of a new bathroom to serve the south billiard bedroom (guest bedroom 1).
- 13.35** Within the former *Boudoir*, which is currently subdivided into two bathrooms, the modern partitions would be removed to reopen the room as a master bathroom. The new partitions to enclose the lavatory & shower would be treated in a way that would be legibly distinct from the historic room.

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- 13.36 The bathroom in the former *Front Bed Room* would have the modern fittings reconfigured.
- 13.37 Within these bathrooms, which have timber ceilings which appear to be modern, & within the bedrooms above the Billiard Room, which have modern plasterboard ceilings, some recessed spotlights are proposed; elsewhere the lighting is generally surface-mounted so as to minimise breaches, physical & visual, to ceilings. Within these bathrooms it is also proposed to install floating floors above the historic ones, to minimise the impact of pipework & services.
- 13.38 The *Passage & Steps*, & the rooms to the north of this, generally appear less altered than the rooms to the south, retaining historic floorboards & skirtings, as well as every door appearing to survive *in situ* from the Robert Leach phase; all such historic joinery would be retained *in situ*, except for the door that closes the foot of the stair to the second floor of the Ivy Tower; this would be reused as the door to the new cloakroom in the lower ground floor. The Leach-phase door to the existing cloakroom, which it is proposed to remove, would be reused as the door from guest bedroom to its dressing room.

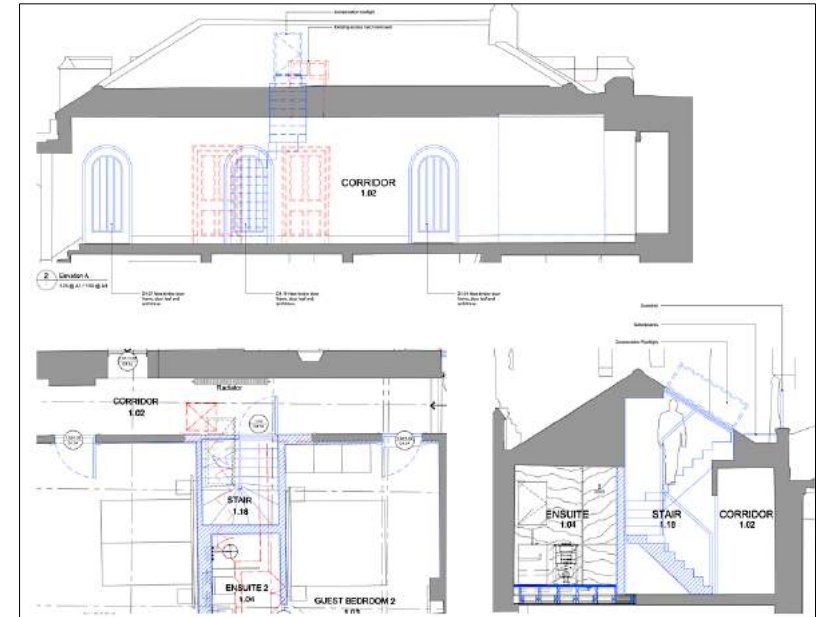


Figure 262 Proposed new cupboard stair to roof.

DEVIZES CASTLE.

SECOND FLOOR.

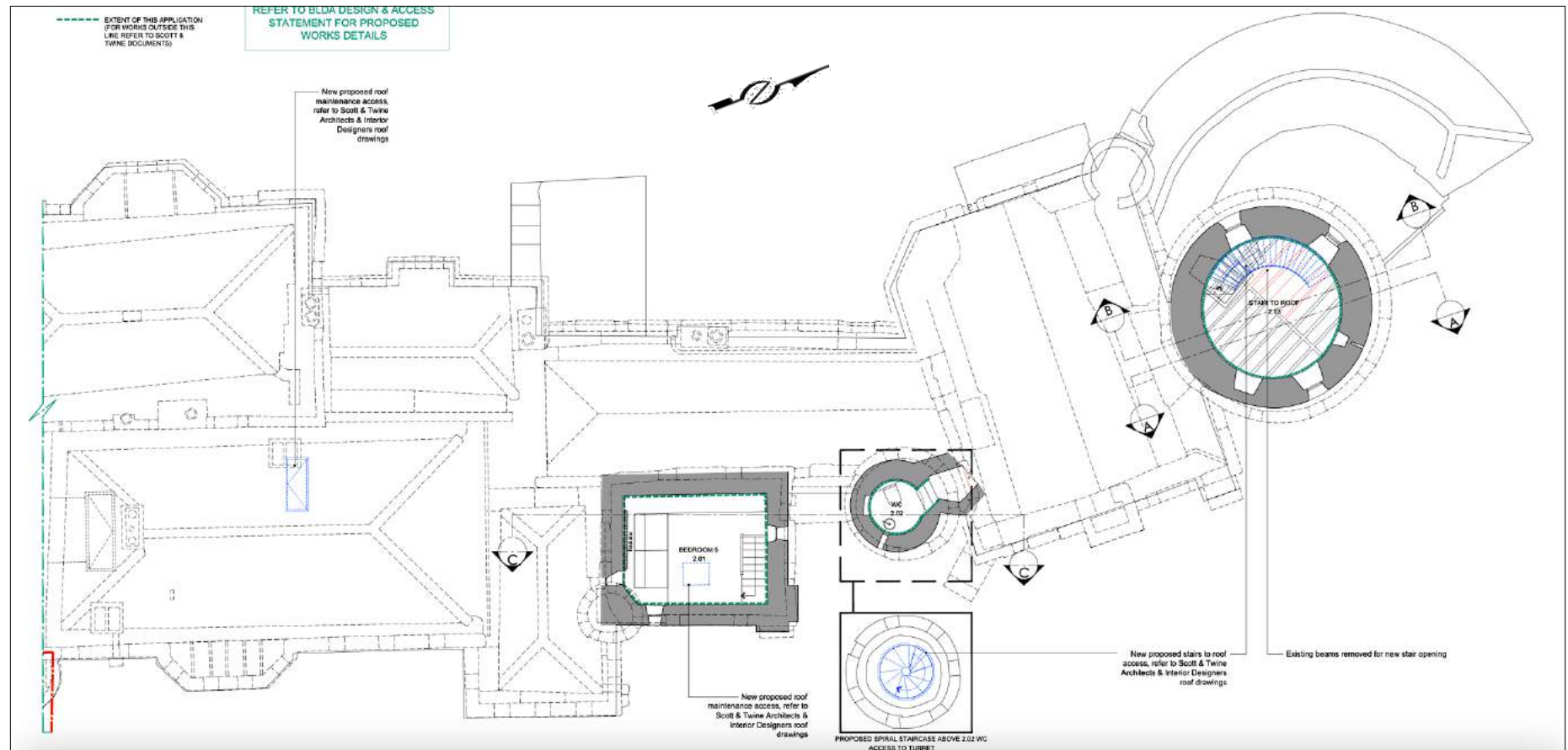


Figure 263 Proposed second floor plan.

13.39 The second floor comprises only three rooms, of which the most unaltered is the small turret chamber, which retains Leach-phase doors, floorboards, skirtings & brick domical vault;

this room would merely be refurbished & the modern sanitary ware replaced.

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- 13.40 The bedroom above the *Front Bed Room* also has a vaulted ceiling, but limited opening-up has indicated that this is plasterboard. Consequently, it is proposed to create a hatch through the ceiling to allow roof access.
- 13.41 The *Top Bed Room in Ivy Tower* retains no historic finishes other than the floor, which would be retained. A new stair would be added rising up above the two existing stairs, & a modest breach created through the exposed roof structure to gain access to the roof of the tower.

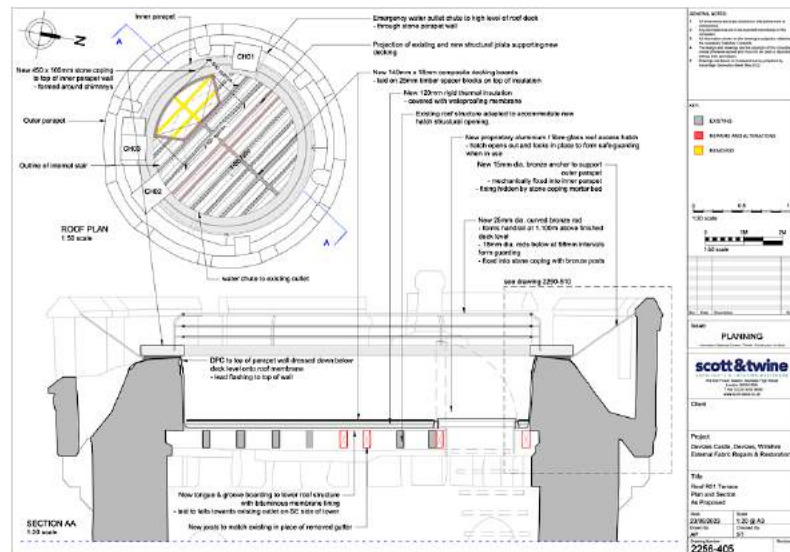


Figure 264 Detail of proposed treatment of the Ivy Tower.

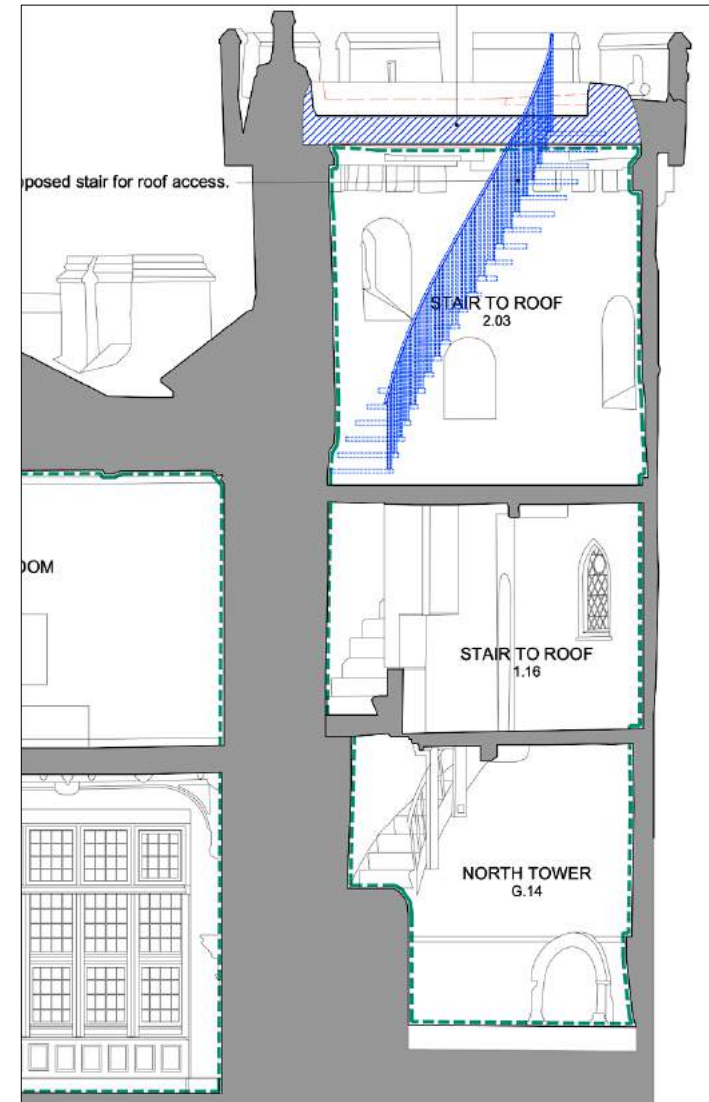


Figure 265 Detail of Section B, showing proposed stair to roof of Ivy Tower.

DEVIZES CASTLE.

ROOF.

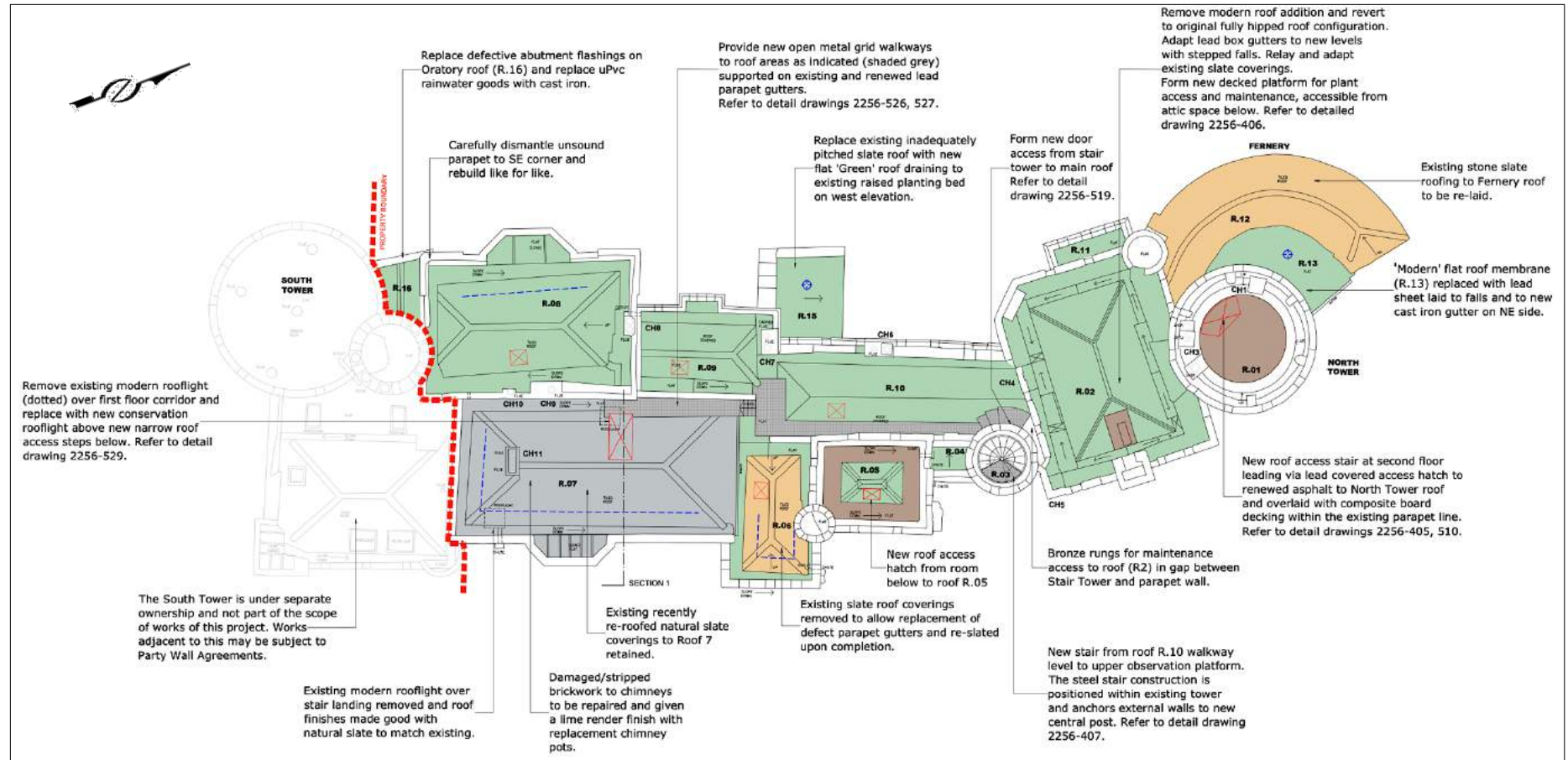


Figure 266 Proposed roof plan.

13.42 Currently, access to the roof is difficult, & this has contributed to the very poor state of repair of several of the roofs & valleys,

& the parlous condition of a number of the parapet, including the hollow upper portion of the turret.

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- 13.43 The current proposal includes both repairing the roofs & consolidating the masonry, but also providing access to the roof, which would aid ongoing maintenance.
- 13.44 The majority of the roof would be accessed for maintenance by way a rooflight at the southern end of the building, approached by the new cupboard stair (described above).
- 13.45 A discretely-placed walkway would then run along the west side of the Billiard Room roof, & the east of the *Gallery* roof to give access to the hollow turret.



Figure 267 Existing & proposed sections through turret.

- 13.46 It is proposed to create a new door into the turret. This would be above the level of the domical brick vault, which would be unaffected. The door would be of a modest scale, & placed at an angle facing north-west, so as to be visually discrete in views of the west front. This doorway would allow access into the hollow upper portion of the turret, where it is proposed to install a metal spiral stair structure. This would help brace the structure & allow access for maintenance.
- 13.47 This walkway would then allow the remainder of the roofs to be reached for maintenance with a discrete fall arrest system.
- 13.48 The only roofs intended for access that other than maintenance are the Ivy Tower, & the south-east wing.
- 13.49 The Ivy Tower, as is described above, would have a new stair rising above the existing stairs, which could penetrate the roof with minimal disruption. The design of the tower is such that any handrail to ensure safety would be both lower then, & well behind the historic parapet.
- 13.50 The south-east wing would be accessed by way of a skylight from the second-floor room below (the room above the *Cloak Room* and the *Front Bed Room*), & is enclosed by very high parapets that would negate the need for further handrails.

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- 13.51 It is acknowledged that there does not appear to have been any designed or integral access to the roofs of the building; but it is also acknowledged that the lack of maintenance that has resulted from this has caused significance harm to the building.
- 13.52 Nevertheless, it was characteristic of castles & country houses to have access to roofs. The crenelated roofs of castles, which the parapets of Devizes copy, were specifically designed for defenders to hide behind the merlons, & shoot through the embrasures.
- 13.53 Country houses from the 16th until the early-18th century were often designed for the roofs to be used as viewing platforms; something not uncommon in the picturesque architecture of the 19th century. Lansdowne Tower in Bath, by the same architect who built the first phase of Devizes for Valentine Leach, had access onto the flat roof of the domestic block, as well as up the full height of the tower to the lantern.

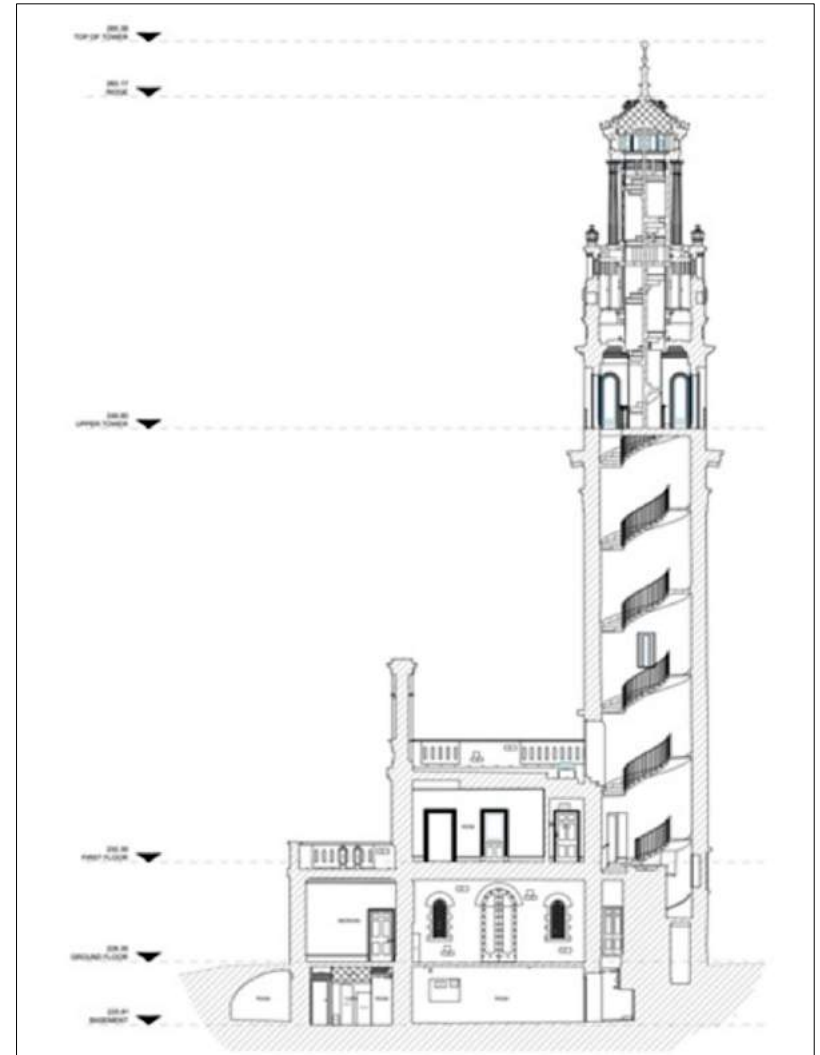


Figure 268 Lansdowne Tower ('Beckford's Tower'), Bath, Henry Edmund Goodrich, 1822-7; showing access to main roof & up tower.

DEVIZES CASTLE.

- 13.54 Penrhyn Castle, one of the few other Romanesque Revival country houses, has a door providing access to a walkway around the inside of the parapet on the keep.



Figure 269 Penrhyn Castle, Bangor, Thomas Hopper, 1822-37; roof of keep showing door from turret & walkway behind the parapet.

- 13.55 Consequently, the creation of some discrete access to the roof at Devizes would be entirely characteristic for a castle, or a

castle-style or other picturesquely designed & situated country house.

- 13.56 No permanent access is proposed to the roof above the *Drawing Room* wing, as high parapets contain it from the adjacent roofs, & the ceilings within are historic. However, it is proposed to adjust the form of this roof.



Figure 270 Eastern end of Drawing Room roof.

- 13.57 Currently the roof forms a linear range, with the ridge to east & west abutting awkwardly with the parapet structures at either end. However, aerial photographs from 1948, when the

DEVIZES CASTLE.

conservatory was still standing, clearly show that the roof, at that time & like most of the roofs on the house, was hipped with a valley all round, facilitating drainage. The current proposal is to restore the historic, hipped form.

- 13.58 At the northern end of the building, it is also proposed to provide access to the roof of the *Ivy Tower* by way of the aforementioned stair within the *Top Bed Room*.
- 13.59 No changes are proposed to the walls, gates & steps of the garden, but where necessary sensitive consolidation & repairs would be undertaken.



Figure 271 Detail of aerial photograph from 1948.

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IMPACT UPON SIGNIFICANCE.

MEDIAEVAL.

- 13.60 No works are proposed to any known mediaeval fabric, as such there would be no physical impact upon this highly important phase, the significance of which would thereby be sustained. The proposed removal of the transverse wall & modern cupboards within the cellar would both expose more of the mediaeval wall, & allow it to be clearly seen, thereby enhancing the ability to appreciate this significant phase.

EARLY 18TH CENTURY.

- 13.61 The 18th-century windmill which forms the core of the *Ivy Tower* would be retained unaltered, & the internal floor structures & the stair from ground to first floors, which may potentially date from this phase, would also all be retained. Consequently, the moderate significance of this phase would be unaffected by the proposals.

VALENTINE LEACH.

- 13.62 The parts of the building ascribable to Valentine Leach are the subsequently much altered *Dining Room* wing, potentially the stone stairs from lower ground to ground floors, & the relocated ashlar surround of the *Portcullis Gate*.

- 13.63 The current proposals would not affect any fabric or features known to be associated with this phase, the considerable significance of which would be sustained undiminished.

ROBERT LEACH.

- 13.64 The current proposal has sought to minimise impact upon fabric & features from the various Robert Leach phases, however, the condition of some of this fabric renders sympathetic repairs essential in order to ensure its longevity.
- 13.65 These repairs would encompass the external walls of the building; the parapets, many of which are currently unsafe; the leaking roofs; as well as the boundary walls, some of which are collapsing; the gates, of which the *Ladies' Gate* is close to collapse; & the steps. All such repairs, whilst intervention, are essential, & would be done to the highest conservation standards & would be the minimum reasonably necessary to secure the longevity of each structure.
- 13.66 Internally, where fabric & joinery from these phases survives *in situ*, it is to be retained unaltered, & any replacement of services is to be done as lightly & sympathetically as is reasonably possible.

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13.67 The new door into the hollow top of the turret would constitute an alteration to Robert Leach fabric, however, this is to aid future maintenance of the structure in order to help ensure its long-term survival, & the proposed new opening has been kept small & been carefully placed to minimise impact upon both historic fabric, & the appearance of the west front as far as is reasonably possible.

13.68 Consequently, the considerable significance of the various Robert Leach phases would be sustained. Any harm that would accrue, such as the new turret opening would be outweighed by the heritage/public benefit of ensuring the longer-term survival of the turret.

SIR CHARLES RICH.

13.69 The late 19th-century alterations by Sir Charles Rich which is of more moderate significance would still be treated with great care, & where it is of high status, substantially intact, & in sound condition would be carefully retained.

13.70 Limited alterations are proposed in areas that are of more utilitarian character, such as the transverse wall in the cellar, the removal of which would further reveal the significance of the mediaeval wall; in areas that have been very heavily altered, such as the entrance hall; & in areas where the fabric is badly

decayed &/or damaged, such as the glazed screen to the *Fernery*. However, as the significance of these areas is either slight, or has already been compromised, the overall impact on the significance of the Rich phase would be limited, & more than outweighed by the heritage/public benefit that would accrue from the extensive necessary repairs that are proposed to secure the future of the building.

20TH CENTURY.

13.71 The 20th-century alterations are of little if any heritage value, & in many places harmed more significant earlier phases & fabric. The impact of the proposed works to these phases on the wider significance of the listed building, such as removing the bathroom extension on the east front or the door from the *Gallery* on the west front, would be neutral, if not actively beneficial.

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14.0 CONCLUSION.

14.1 DEVIZES CASTLE comprises a 19th-century country house, incorporating an 18th-century windmill tower & some very limited fragments of mediaeval masonry, built atop the surviving earthworks of the great mediaeval castle that was to dower of many Queens of England.

14.2 The house was fundamentally the work of Valentine Leach & his son Robert, who in successive phases created a highly theatrical, sprawling Neo-Romanesque castle. On Robert Leach's death, the house was bought by Sir Charles Rich, who radically altered & extended the building, altering much of the whimsical, Neo-Romanesque fenestration & detailing with rather stolid Neo-Elizabethan style. The 20th century saw the site fragmented, & building harmed by successive piecemeal alterations of poor quality & decay through inadequate maintenance.

14.3 The current proposal, which encompasses the majority of the building excluding only the separately-owned South Tower, is to sensitively refurbish & repair the building as a family home: its optimum viable use.

14.4 The evolving proposals have been informed & guided by a careful assessment of the building's architectural evolution &

significance. Alterations have been kept to a minimum, & have been primarily focused on areas of lesser significance or pre-existing modern intervention.

14.5 The principal changes are on the more altered & lower-status lower ground floor, & in bathrooms at first floor, with an updating of services. The higher-status rooms at ground floor, & the better-preserved rooms (regardless of status) would see little change.

14.6 Many areas of the building & its curtilage structures are in need of urgent repair, & these repairs would be undertaken, sensitively & sympathetically, thereby ensuring the survival of the building for the benefit of future generations.

14.7 Consequently, the current proposals would preserve the special interest & sustain the significance of Devizes Castle as a listed building & designated heritage asset, thereby conforming to national policy, as laid out in section 16 of the NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK, & local policy as laid out in Core Policy 58 of the WILTSHIRE CORE STRATEGY, 2015, & as such, it is hoped that the proposals would be welcomed & supported.

DEVIZES CASTLE.

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DEVIZES CASTLE.

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