

Site Inspection Note

BRUCE CASTLE MUSEUM		Job No	7440
Enabling Works			
To	Chris Hill, Haringey Council	SIN No	04
From	Grace Lam, Rodney Melville and Partners	Date	15.03.24

Inspection Date Friday 29th February & 8th March 2024

Present

David Cattell	Rodney Melville and Partners
Grace Lam	Rodney Melville and Partners

Action

- 1.0 **GENERAL**
- 1.1 The following opening up and investigation works were scheduled to support the asbestos removal works undertaken in the MEND funded areas at Bruce Castle Museum.
- 1.2 This Site Inspection Note has been prepared to document the findings following removal of skirtings to the partitions and lifting of floorboards for asbestos removal works in first floor rooms F6, F7 and F8. This SIN should be read in conjunction with drawings 7440/134/E, and 542 to 546.
- 1.3 This Site Inspection Note and associated drawings has been issued to the Haringey Planning Department for discharge of condition no. 2 under LBC ref HGY/2023/2828.
- 2.0 **ASBESTOS REMOVAL AND OPENING UP WORKS**
- 2.1 Refer to drawing 7440/134/E for proposed asbestos removal strategy and sequencing of board liftings to first floor rooms F6, F7 and F8.
- 2.1.1 Due to the significance of the historic fabric and the sensitivity of the historic structure, it was proposed that the floorboards be lifted in zones (approximately 4 boards in width) with bands of boards retained in-situ, so

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that the structural integrity of the floor could be maintained.

2.1.2 It was judged that boards passing beneath the partitions might require cutting and if so, these would be cut on the centre of the closest joist bearing, being retained in-situ to ensure the partition remained supported during the works. In the event no cutting of boards was required, due to the 'as found' arrangements described below.

2.1.3 Where boards were retained un-lifted, asbestos cleaning was undertaken from the adjacent board openings.

2.1.4 The following notes describe the findings of the opening up works.

2.2 **Partition support** (Refer to Photo sheet 7440-543)

2.2.1 Following removal of the skirtings to the partitions between F6, F7 and F8 and lifting of the first boards, it was observed that the partitions are constructed off earlier floor boards positioned approximately 65mm below the current floor level. These boards were previously cut so that they survive only beneath the partition structure. As a result of this arrangement it was no longer necessary to cut the floorboards forming the current floor finish and all boards were lifted as a complete length.

2.2.2 This finding suggests the current floorboards post-date the internal timber stud partitions, which are suspected to be C19th alterations, installed to create residential accommodation in this wing.

2.3 **Floor structure and earlier boards** (Refer to Photo sheet 7440-543)

2.3.2 In F6, these earlier remnants of boarding appear to be slightly lower than the primary floor joists, suggesting that this element of the structure has been altered or re-set in order to help with levelling the floor generally. The provenance of this change is undetermined.

2.4 **Historic brick hearth** (Refer to Photo sheet 7440-544)

2.4.1 The brick base of a possible earlier hearth has been exposed against the west wall of room F6. This possibly dates from the 'Parlour Chamber'

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described on the 1682 plan recorded in Nicholas Cooper's 'Report 03' and appears to relate to a similar ground floor layout of the 'Great Parlour' immediately below this room (G6), indicated on the ground floor plan of the same date (Conservation Plan - Purcell 2008. Fig.9).

- 2.5 **Shaft in ground floor room G6** (Refer to Photo sheet 7440-544)
 - 2.5.1 A full height shaft in the form of a possible ventilation riser can be seen in the North-west corner of the ground floor room G6 and this opens into the floor void of F6 above. There is evidence of a grille connection between this riser shaft and the adjacent ground floor Main Gallery G4, although it is not clear what else this shaft served. The inside of the riser has an area of plaster finish at high level on the north wall, which may pre-date the formation of the shaft and relate to the 1682 room layout referred to above.
- 2.6 **Historic ventilation ductwork** (Refer to Photo sheet 7440-545)
 - 2.6.1 A circular metal plenum can be seen within the floor void of room F8, adjacent to the partition wall to room F7. The remains of a metal ductwork can be seen, leading to the partition and suggesting a vertical duct rising within the partition structure. Evidence of cut laths to the ceiling of room G6 below and the central position of this plenum suggests it may have served as means of providing fresh air from a roof top 'ventilator' to the ground floor space, possibly through a decorative ceiling feature.
- 2.7 **Objects within floor voids** (Refer to Photo sheet 7440-545)
 - 2.7.1 During the asbestos cleaning works, various miniature lead soldiers, spoons and forks, that appear to be children's toys, were found within the floor void. These were handed to the Museum Team for safe keeping and archiving.
- 2.8 **Earlier beams and floorboards** (Refer to Photo sheet 7440-546)
 - 2.8.1 An earlier timber beam was discovered at the south end of room F6, in front of the doorway to room F5 (Office). The beam runs east-west and appears to have been cut short and disconnected from the rest of the structure; to the extent that its original purpose and current function is unclear.

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- 2.8.2 Within room F7, earlier floorboards were also present on top of the existing primary beam, appearing to assist with levelling of the later floorboards. Evidence of earlier repairs to the primary beam using metal strapping can also be seen.
- 2.9 **Asbestos containing materials** (Refer to drawing 7440/134/E)
- 2.9.1 Asbestos containing corrugated board was found and removed from the floor void, near the south wall of room F7, as located on the plan. The asbestos removal contractor, Ayerst, has provided copies of certificates recording the removal of this material.

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