

# CONSERVATION IN NOTTS.

Autumn

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# NOTTINGHAMSHIRE BUILDING PRESERVATION TRUST LIMITED

The Old Bowls Pavilion,  
Bridgford Road,  
West Bridgford,  
Nottingham NG2 6AX  
Tel. (0602) 819622 (24 hour answer)



## The Work of the Trust

The Trust - as a limited company with charitable status - operates within a legal framework, designed to protect buildings of historical and architectural interest and to maintain the character of towns and villages in Nottinghamshire. The Trust was formed in 1965 and has over the past years built a fine reputation for its assistance both financial and technical in helping preserve the heritage of the County. However in recent years the Trust has lost, because of Government cutbacks, the financial assistance of some of the local councils. The Trust will therefore concentrate on:

- (a) Advising local planning authorities on applications to alter or demolish listed buildings, and on applications affecting conservation areas;
- (b) Presenting evidence on the same issues if and when they come to public inquiry;
- (c) The Trust is anxious to extend its work in two other directions. It is prepared to offer technical advice to owners who, without proposing to alter a building, wish to maintain its essential character and possibly to restore historic features. Such advice calls for professional knowledge and skills. Owners will therefore be expected to pay a modest charge for such advice. This advice is available not only for buildings listed or in conservation areas, but for any building of age;
- (d) The Trust is particularly anxious to resume its policy, carried out successfully in Windles Square, Calverton of acquiring old buildings, restoring them suitably and then selling. The Trust has limited capital funds for this purpose, but hopes to be able to borrow the additional funds from the Civic Trust or from local authorities.

The Trust has accumulated a large collection of photographs and reports, and they are important for reference. Recently the Trust has surveyed a number of farm buildings because they are often now redundant. They differ from one part of the county to another, and it is impossible to advise on, for instance, a proposal to convert a barn into a house unless its historical character is understood. Recently the Trust has extended this by arranging surveying weekends for members. At these members learn the technique of measuring buildings whilst acquiring a valuable record for the Trust of the important buildings in a particular village.

## FINANCE AND ESTABLISHMENT

The Trust depends for its finance on voluntary donations. The largest source of voluntary help is supplied by local authorities. From 1980 and for the foreseeable future, owing to cutbacks in Local Government expenditure, the amount of this help will be much reduced and a greater emphasis on help from private individuals and voluntary organisations will be needed.

The Trust invites subscriptions from those who wish to associate themselves with this work; the rates are as follows:

Individual membership	= £2.00
Corporate membership	= £2.50
Life membership	= £20.00

Much of the work is done by volunteers from the Trust's new headquarters at the Old Bowls Pavilion, West Bridgford, which the Trust is restoring. If you are interested in finding out more about us please contact Janet Blenkinsip at the above telephone number.

## Subscriptions

Our subscription level has stayed the same for many years despite a huge increase in administration costs. The annual subscription barely covers the cost of the newsletter and postage. Our income from local authority grants has been drastically reduced and so we must rely on dramatically increasing our membership to survive. So, please try to enlist a new member this year - leaflets advertising our work are available from the Trust's offices - or why not take out a subscription to the newsletter for a friend who has moved away from the area.

## NEWSLETTER

Additional copies of the newsletter can be provided either singly @ 25p + p+p, or in bulk:-

10 copies	£2.00 post paid
50 or more copies	£1.75 per 10 post paid

or sent to any part of the U.K. for £1.50 a year.

## The Heritage of the County is in Your Hands



# Wollaton Hall

There are several ways of looking at Wollaton Hall. First you can look at it as a piece of architectural design in stone: a massive square block with corner turrets; large windows with mullions and transoms; an elaborate roofscape with decorated gables, figures and chimneys. It has not been altered at all on the outside except for additions on the west side and this makes it almost unique among great houses of Elizabethan times.

Another unique feature is the raised Prospect Hall with lofty windows. This shows that it was conceived as a hunting lodge, not just an ordinary house. From the Prospect Hall you could watch hunting going on in the park. It is a pity that the Prospect Hall has been spoiled by the insertion of steel trusses to support the ceiling of the great hall below.

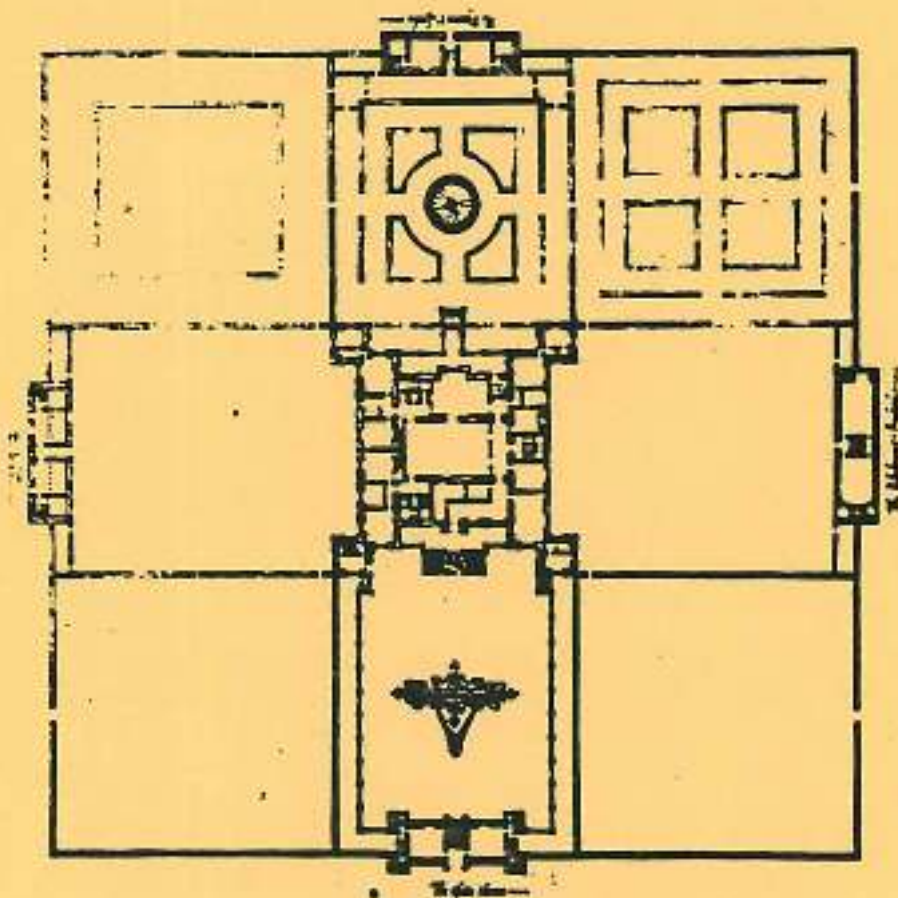
Robert Smythson's original design shows a large gatehouse on the north side, leading into a forecourt with a covered walk or cloister round it; the stables were to be built across a courtyard to the east, a bakehouse balancing the stables to the west, and beyond the formal garden to the south was to be the laundry. We simply do not know whether any of these outbuildings were actually built; since none have survived, presumably they were not. If so where were the stables before the present block was built in 1794? Some outbuildings must have disappeared.

As far as the house itself is concerned, how was it meant to work? Smythson's plan was novel for its compactness, and he achieved this by putting the kitchen and other service rooms in the basement. The kitchen is still there, structurally unaltered, though you have to peer behind an enormous central heating boiler to see the fireplace. Wollaton Hall is thus the ancestor in a way, of all those houses with basement kitchens. A house four hundred years old inevitably has been altered by successive generations of owners. The interior was refurbished after a fire in 1642. In 1801-7, Jeffrey Wyattville modernised the interior, and the Elizabethan staircases, fireplaces, doorways and decoration disappeared then, if they had not already gone. The present staircases are in the same positions as the originals, but of different design. Rooms had changed their names and use; what had been the great chamber originally had become the library in 1809.

The plan of the house printed in Pevener's Nottinghamshire (revised 1971) is wrong in that it shows kitchen, pantry and buttery on the main floor. They never were there. The best idea of the original rooms is a survey by Wyattville before his alterations; it is printed in Sheila Strauss, Short History of Wollaton Hall, p.19, and is reproduced here.



In the 19th century the house was not much used and so was never modernised again. There are no bath rooms or other sanitary arrangements for instance. When the house was built, garderobes were out of fashion, and the bedchambers would be provided with close-stools. The original supply of fresh water came as every visitor learns, from a spring below the house reached by passages cut in the rock, but whether it was the only supply from the beginning to the end of the life of the house is one of many unexplored aspects of its history.



1/25 (1) Robert Smythson. Plan for Wollaton Hall (Nottinghamshire)

Photograph by kind permission of Nottingham City Arts Dept.

Plan by kind permission of University of Nottingham



# A. G. M.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 16th, 1982 COMMENCING AT 7 p.m.

in

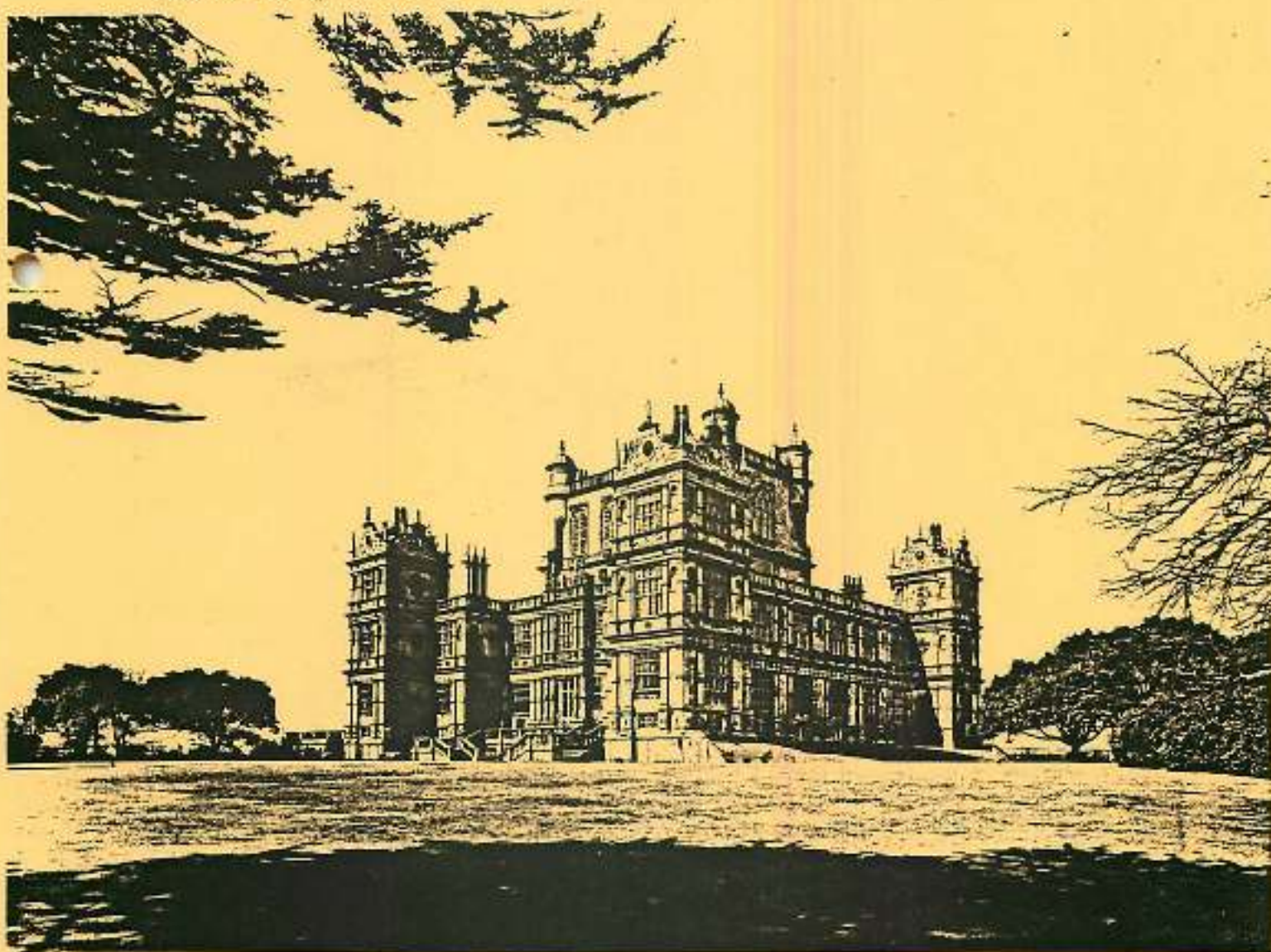
THE GREAT HALL, WOLLATON

Wollaton Hall is one of the finest Elizabethan houses in the County and we are very priveleged indeed to be allowed to hold our 1982 A.G.M. in its Great Hall. This will give members the unique opportunity to visit the building outside normal hours.

Professor Barley, who has written an article for this Newsletter, will give a short illustrated talk on Wollaton's colourful history. This will take place after the formal business of the evening.

The use of Wollaton for private functions is seldom granted and the Trust would like to thank the Nottingham City Council Leisure Services Committee for their consent.

Members should use the usual entrance for cars, and stewards will be on hand to direct you to the parking area which will be close by the Hall.





# Bleasby Dovecote

J. Severn

Bleasby's dovecote, situated at Manor Farm appears large and impressive by the side of the road. Originally called Manor House Farm and before that the Manor House (see the First Edition of the one inch ordnance Survey of England and Wales) this dovecote confirms the status of the buildings to which it belongs.

Originally free standing, it is now surrounded by other farmyard buildings and these later structures have encroached to the point of connection on the South East side.

Here I must point out that the buildings are on private property and on a working farm. They are therefore not accessible without permission. In this instance however a study of the dovecote, at least externally, can easily be made from the road.

The building is square on plan measuring 22'-6" overall and is about 18' high from ground level to the eaves. The eaves comprise one course of projecting stretchers, one course of saw tooth decoration and a further course of stretchers over, all surmounted by a projecting course of headers. Four courses measure about 11" and the red bricks are 9½" long, about 4½" wide and 2½" thick. The bricks are hand made in a lime mortar.

The bricks most certainly would be of local clay and fired either on site or nearby. A check with the First Edition O.S. map shows that at Goverton there was a brick kiln and Brickyard Farm is still in existence. Clearly this does not prove that brick-making in this area took place at the time when the dovecote was built, but it does suggest the availability of materials.

From outside we can see that the structure is covered by a pyramid roof, which in turn is surmounted by a square timber Glover also with a pyramid roof. All the roof slopes are finished with plain red clay tiles.

The size of the building suggests that it originally housed many nests and the fact that one can see two dormer Grovers as well confirms that more than the usual number of flight holes was required. The dormers are situated on the South and East sides, one hipped and gabled. An inside investigation will prove this point, and by counting the nesting boxes in the top tier one can establish the quantity by the overall height of the structure.

We can see little else from the road except for two inserted windows on the South West elevation.

To answer the question "how do we know the windows were inserted?", I would suggest that the following points be considered:-

1. First there is a lintol over the higher window of stone, whereas it is brickwork over the other windows and this is either arched or it runs straight across the opening. The arched openings would require either the window or some other form of support whereas the stone lintol would allow the brickwork underneath to be removed without collapse. The stone lintol is also foreign to this brick building.
2. Secondly, the jambs or sides of the window opening show irregular slices of brick. If the window had been built into the brickwork the jambs would show properly set out bricks comprising full stretchers, headers or closers in order to preserve the bonding of the wall. These jambs show bricks cut anywhere to produce vertical junctions into which a window can be inserted.

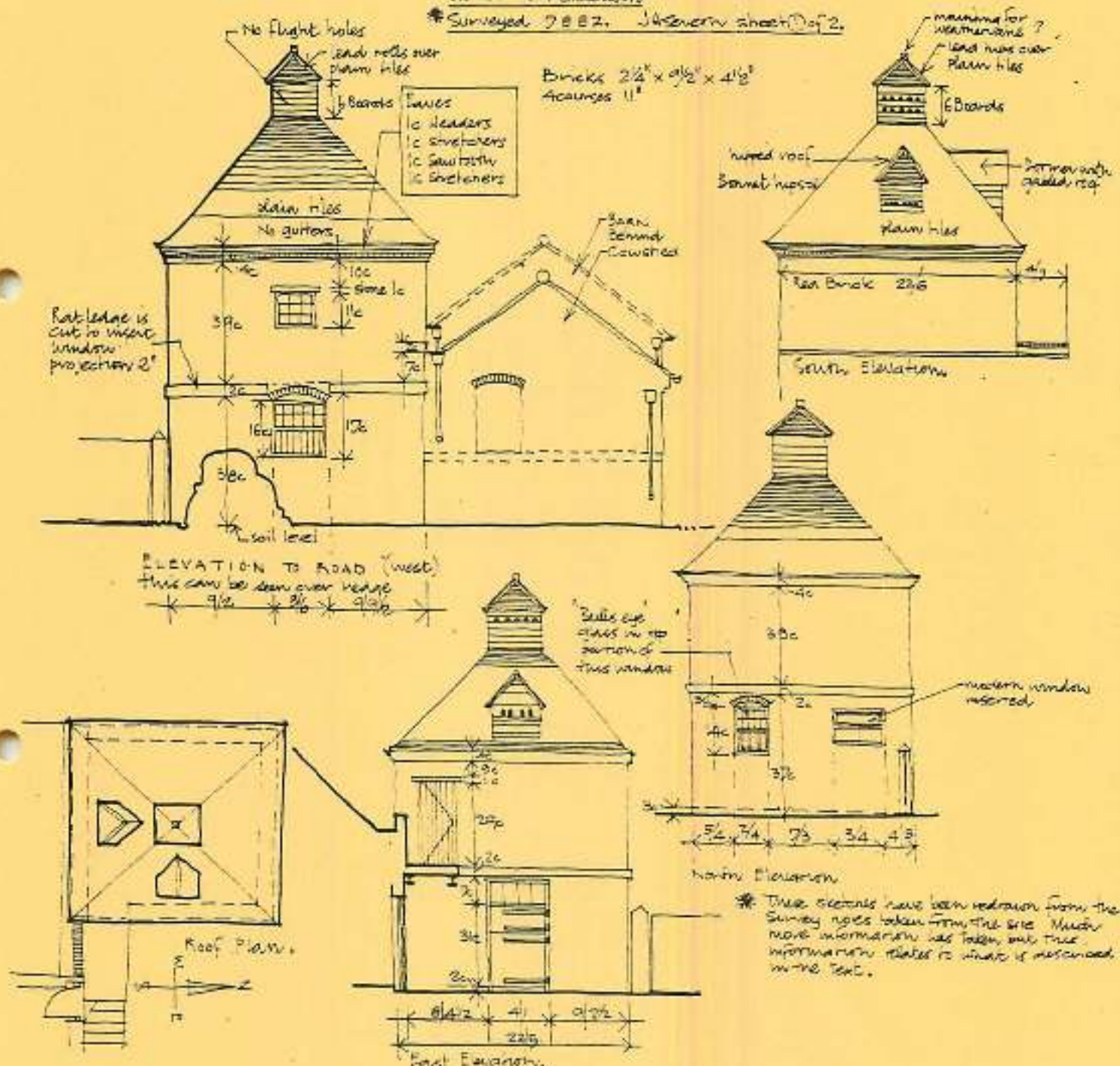


3. Thirdly, the lower window breaks through the rat ledge. This is the projecting band of bricks seen half way up the wall and the reason for this dovetail feature was to deter vermin from climbing up the wall and entering the dovecote via the eaves. A rat can climb a brick wall easily, but it cannot reach over backwards to surmount a projection without falling off. Therefore the rat ledge must be continuous to form an effective barrier.

Dovecote Manor Farm, Bleasby Notts

Owner MR Goodwin

\* Surveyed 2002. J & Severn sheet D of 2.



Incidentally, the presence of the rat ledge reinforces the argument to support the theory of the free standing building. If one looks closely one can see the rat ledge running inside the building connected to the dovecote. If this adjacent building were there in the first instance there would be no point in having the ledge, as vermin could get in by other means.

The foregoing do, I think, demonstrate just how much information can be gleaned from a visual inspection of a building from outside sources.



In this instance I was fortunate in having the permission of the owner to go inside the farmstead and measure the building.

In completing the outside investigation I noticed that the rat ledge continued around the other two sides, that one later window had been inserted on the North elevation, but that what appeared to be an original window was also to be seen on this wall. The opening was most certainly original, but was the window and was the arched brick window head? Here one can only make a guess, as there is no proof and I would suggest that the opening originally existed, but in a different form.

The opening has always been there, I believe, because the jambs are constructed with a finished brick face. The head is not original, I guess, because the bricks over the arch seem to have been cut away to allow the brick on edge arch to be inserted. Also I do not think the building would only allow for a cut brick course underneath the rat ledge. To run the head so near to the projecting brickwork would not in my view be good practice. I suggest that the original opening was formed over a built-in frame and that the brickwork continued over the opening without any arch at about two courses below the projecting rat ledge.

The window is itself very interesting but again I think not original. It comprises a frame with a round arched top fixed to support the brick arch under construction and divided horizontally in the middle. The upper portion comprises ten small panes, all fully glazed and the lower portion a sliding ventilator unit on the "hit and miss" principle, the joints to the frame are pegged.

This would be an excellent unit for a stable but hardly for a dovecote. Firstly the ventilators would be extremely draughty, would encourage the pigeons to try and use them as openings, and more importantly this device would negate the object of the rat ledge. Why have a rat ledge if one provides openings below it? What there was originally in this opening I do not know and can only guess that some form of fixed glazing was installed.

The present glazing is most interesting. Nine out of the ten panes are of Crown Glass and comprise the "bulls eye". The tenth pane is a modern replacement.

Before the nineteenth century most clear glass was crown glass. This is a kind made from blown glass spun at high speed until it spreads by centrifugal force to a large thin disc, very slightly bellied. The centre of the disc is known as "bottle glass" and was used in the windows of attics and other unimportant rooms. Very few of these "bottle glass" centres remain today and many people pay high prices for cheap copies with which to adorn their windows. (Unfortunately) There are now two doorways on the elevation facing the house. The upper doorway above the rat ledge has a timber lintol and cut brick jambs and has been inserted. The ground floor doorway has, I think, been enlarged into a stable door from the original small dovecote door which would face the Manor House.

Access to the upper doorway is via an outside flight of steps up the side of the adjacent building but these only give access to the inserted first floor.

As there is no other evidence externally of the dovecote door, one can only assume that it was lost with the opening up of the ground floor which was to become a stable.

Much more information is to be gleaned therefore from the fact that one could walk all the way around the building and one now hopes that an investigation inside will add to the record. The inside investigation will be the subject of a further article.



#### SMALL GRANTS \*\*\*\*\*

Everyone knows that public money can be provided for the repair and maintenance of historic buildings of most kinds, but it is as well to understand the peculiarly British way in which the system of financial assistance works. Some buildings, such as country mansions and church'es, are considered to be of national importance, and so decisions about grants - whether they should be made and how much - are made in London. Since 1962 under the Local Authorities (Historic Buildings) Act, local authorities (i.e. both county and district councils) were given power to make grants. The powers are permissive, not obligatory. The Trust was set up to act as an agency for local authorities in the county, but the situation is very uneven, in that some district councils make grants themselves, others subscribe to the Trust to enable it to make grants; yet others do neither. This sort of unevenness is the price we in Britain pay for the deeply held conviction that local authorities should be free, within limits, to decide what sort of service to provide for ratepayers.

When the County Council in 1979 cut the Trust's grant from £2,950 to £600, the Trust was obliged to abandon its policy of making small grants. Now the Trust, receiving a larger grant again from the County Council, has resumed its original policy, and in the first six months grants amounting to £800 have been offered to owners, averaging £300, for work such as repairing the windows of a Georgian farmhouse (Barnby in the Willows), reroofing with pantiles (Fleet House, Collingham), and repairing the roof and windows of a textile mill dated 1790 (Bath Mill, Mansfield).

However the Trust cannot assist in all cases and special funds are made available for religious buildings therefore it was felt that the parish church at Granby should be aided from other sources. In another case it was considered that the proposed work was more extensive and expansive than necessary. Yet other applications have been deferred to enable the Trust's technical advisers to consult with applicants to devise more suitable renovations. Finally some applicants have been advised to apply to the County Council where it was felt that a larger grant was more appropriate.

The most important thing is the opportunity for members of the Trust's Panel - volunteers who receive only modest expenses, in return for time and professional skills - are once again in touch with individual house owners and can influence what is done to their houses. This work depends greatly upon Graham Beaumont of the Conservation Section of the County Council Planning Department.

#### HOUSES IN BEESTON AND CHILWELL \*\*\*\*\*

On Saturday 28th August, members of the Trust, together with members of the Beeston Local History Society, made a start on surveying some of the oldest houses in Beeston and Chilwell. House owners were, as they usually are, particularly welcoming and interested, providing coffee, tea and even a glass of wine to parties who spent the day wandering round their homes with tape measures and notebooks, opening every door, peering into cupboards and asking questions. It is hoped that a future number of the Newsletter will contain an account of the houses the oldest of which may be Tudor in date and the others were built in the 17th or 18th centuries.



## *Fishy Business at the Ossington !*

When the Ossington Coffee Palace went up for sale in April 1981, 'Newark's outstanding Victorian building' as Nickolaus Pevsner describes it faced an uncertain future. Donated to the town by Vicountess Ossington in 1882 in memory of her husband, a former Speaker of the House of Commons, in a gesture of support for the merits of coffee as an alternative to the evils of alcohol, the building had won a secure place in the affections of Newark, even if the good lady's philanthropic gesture had failed to supplant beer as the town's most popular beverage.

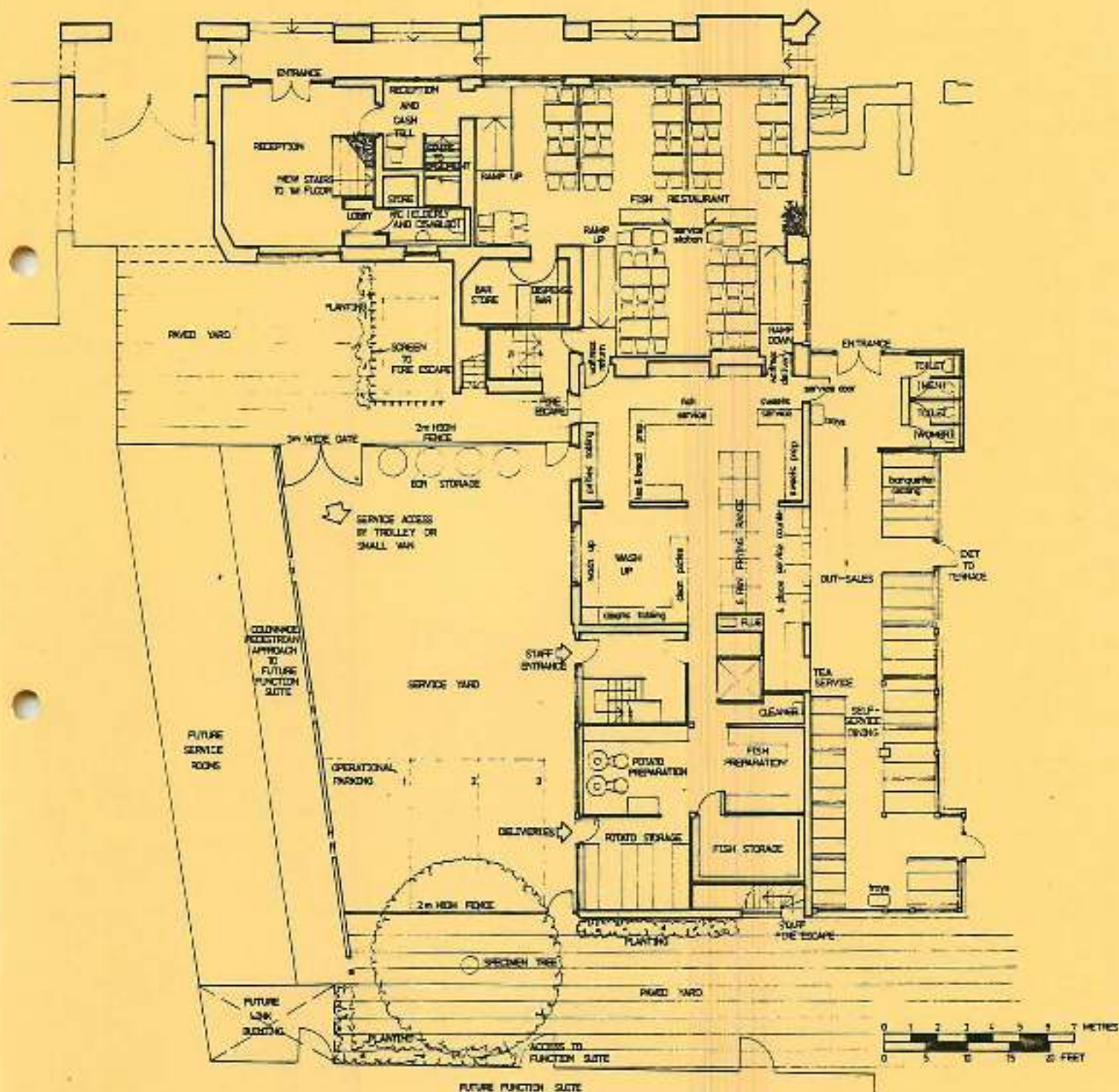
Approaching its centenary, the Ossington suffered the indignity of being used as the local social security and VAT office. Faint-hearted souls might have found even this a preferable alternative when the proposal to convert the building into a fish restaurant was first made. Fish and chips in the Ossington - what an outrage! Yet the original purpose of the Ossington had a decidedly popular flavour. In addition to the ground floor coffee room, on the first floor was an assembly room for market dinners and other large gatherings, also a reading room library and club room for Masonic and other Benefit Societies. On the second floor was a billiard room and dormitories for travellers. There was stabling for 40 horses with cart sheds etc for farmers on market days, a tea garden for refreshments in summertime and a bowling alley! (contemporary Newark Advertiser description). When we stripped the lining of the Coffee room walls, white and brown glazed brickwork was uncovered. The main staircase was similarly lavatorial in finish and the flavour of the ground floor must originally have been distinctly proletarian.

Pevsner describes the building designed by Ernest George as a 'happy, very ingenious composition with manifold gables and chimneys, the first floor all of those oriel windows which Norman Shaw had just made popular. The handwriting is heavier than Shaw's although equally deft. Towards the river a terraced tea garden bounded by a curving wall in stripes of stone and brick which preserves the line and level of the mediaeval town wall.'

Our main concern in conversion was to avoid altering the exterior in any substantial way and to restore the main public rooms to their original volumes. All of them had been crassly partitioned to form offices, and having studied the original uses, we decided to match them as closely as possible with new uses that would be sympathetic. Thus the Coffee room has become a family fish restaurant, the assembly room a restaurant which doubles as a banqueting room, the reading room and library, lounge and bar. The tea rooms have become a fish and chip shop with simple garden furniture where you can eat in or outside on the river terrace. Sculleries and stables have been comprehensively converted to form modern kitchens, preparation and storage areas. On the second floor, bedrooms and dormitories have been converted into staff residential accommodation and the billiard room is now a management office. The rear stables are being converted into staff training rooms.

We have been particularly careful to integrate modern services without inflicting harm to the appearance inside or out. Ground and first floor restaurants are air conditioned, the plumbing and electrical systems have been completely renewed, and a new heating system installed. All this has been achieved by careful planning to avoid the unsightly pipes, ducts and flues which mar so many conversions. The existing chimneys were lined to carry the new boiler







flues, a service lift slotted into a dormer roof window, and the fryer flues grouped unobtrusively on the reverse slope of the roof out of public view. An experimental method of handling the building contract which involved our full time presence on site as managers of 52 specialist contractors without a main contractor brought its reward in attention to detail, and better quality of workmanship, and has convinced us that the direct involvement of the architect in the building operation is well worthwhile in the conservation of old buildings.

Today the Ossington in its centenary year has a secure future and public access that it has not enjoyed for many years. Lady Ossington may be turning in her grave because you can get a drink in the place, but I think she would have approved of its family restaurant use.

Andrew James  
James McCartney Partnership



Photographs and plans by kind permission of James McCartney Partnership



## *The Manor House, Costock.*

*existing*



*proposed*



One of the most rewarding ways to observe old buildings is to carry out a measured survey. In the past, successful measuring weekends have been carried out, and a small nucleus of specialists are actively recording buildings and developing our understanding of the built form.

If any members are interested in joining in with this fascinating activity yet are unsure of how to proceed, training can be given on 'live' projects. Please write to the Pavilion if you can help.



## THE MANOR HOUSE, COSTOCK

This formal building located south of the village church, reflects the many periods of historic development in an old structure, and disguises the early plan form of Great Hall with two storey cross wings at each end, characteristic of the early 16th C.

The illustration shows the garden elevation which has evidence of alterations to the skerry sandstone wall, suggesting the possible infill of a large window which would light the Lord's High table. The roof which would have been thatched during its earlier period, is now finished in Swithland stone tiles, laid in diminishing courses to the roof.

During the 17thC, the first major change occurred when stone mullioned windows were added, to be coincident with the inserted first floor and attic of rush and gypsum construction. Partitions are close-studded timber frame giving the cellular plan form of the present day. In the 18thC, the building was extended in brick with service rooms and chapel, and the internal plan re-organised. The south elevation was also adapted to accept fashionable sash windows, yet the original stone hood mould above each opening was left intact.

Finally in the 19thC, the windows were changed again when ungainly timber bays were added at ground floor level. The owner approached the Trust for advice on the appropriate form of repair, and the sketch drawing illustrates the proposals where mullioned windows are reintroduced.

Arrangements have been made for members of the Trust's Survey Group to carry out a measured drawing of the building, when the history of the house can be examined in greater detail, and reported later.

Bryan Cather

## LINBY LANE - progress report

The proposals for the renovation of the house and the conversion of the barn are now well under way and the Builders, Messrs R. J. Coleman and Sons of Nuthall Road, Nottingham have already re-roofed the barn and are presently working on the roof of the main building at the corner of Linby Lane and Moor Road.

Reproductions of the ground and first floor plans are published with this note and readers are able to see that both properties, when completed, will provide interesting accommodation for those lucky enough to purchase them.

As many of the Original features as possible will be incorporated into the finished scheme and generally all materials are being salvaged for reuse on site. Additional pantiles will be required for the house as the slate roofing is to be replaced to match the barn.

Originally it was hoped to have most of the work completed by the end of the year, but unfortunately the acquisition of the property was not complete until the middle of 1982, which delayed the start. However the Builder is making every effort to complete both properties by the end of March 1983.

Readers will be aware that both these buildings were threatened with demolition and following their listing by the Department of the Environment, the Trust successfully negotiated the purchase from the Cooperative Society. The Cooperative Society still owns the adjacent land and Planning Permission has been granted in outline for three new dwellings on the site.

The completion of the development on this site will do much to improve the visual quality of Papplewick and it is hoped that eventually the successful sale of these conversions will provide the Trust with funds to continue its commitment to saving further buildings at risk in Nottinghamshire.