

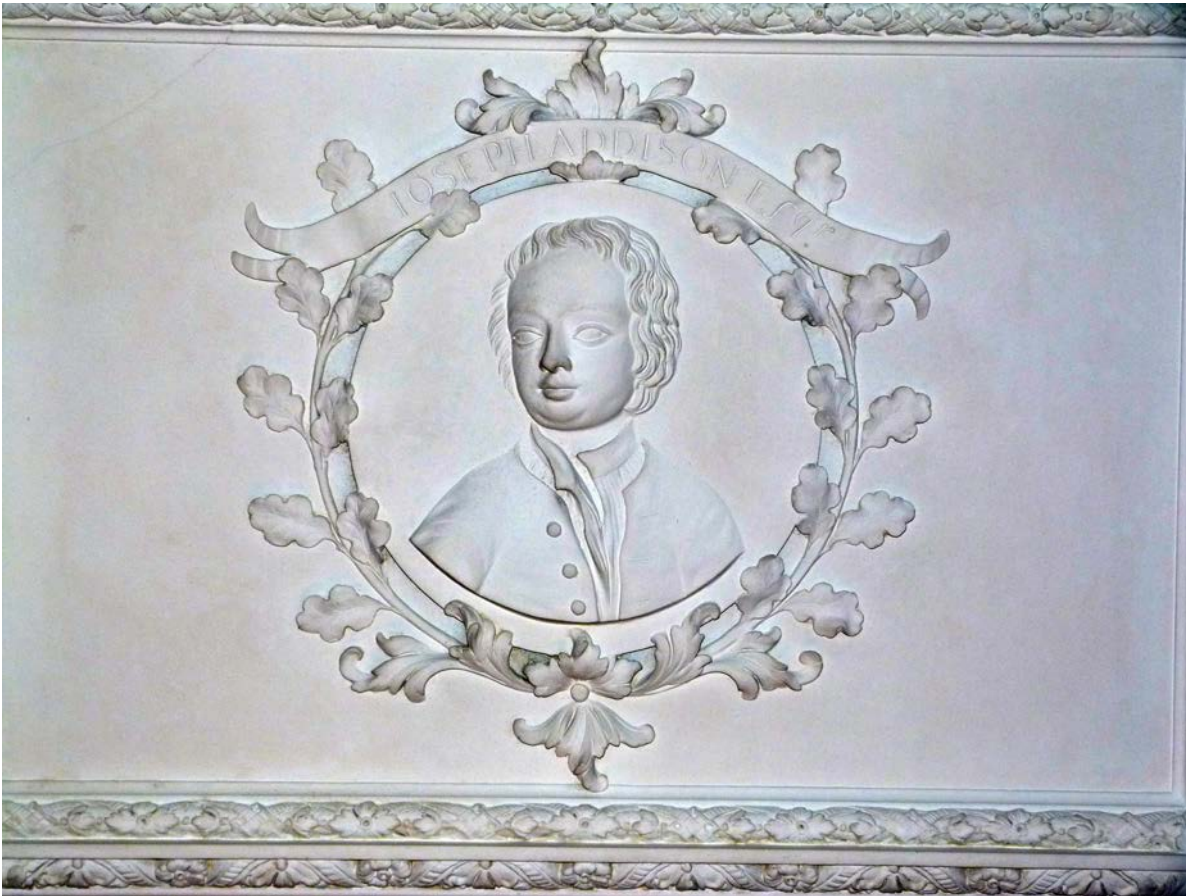
PURCELL

FAIRFAX HOUSE

CONSERVATION STATEMENT

July 2014





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INTRODUCTION

1.1 OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

Fairfax House is a Grade I listed building dating from the mid-18th century. It is situated in the heart of the historic city centre of York and is an excellent example of a Georgian town house with elaborately decorated interiors. It is now run as a historic house museum, following an extensive restoration by the York Civic Trust in the 1980s.

The Trust has commissioned this Conservation Statement as a starting point for a planned project to refurbish and reinterpret the museum.

1.2 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The report will cover Fairfax House and the adjoining entrance block to the north-west (part of the adjacent former cinema), as well as the small courtyard area to the north and north-east of the building. The Fairfax House Museum Board is also considering acquiring No. 29 to the south-east of the main house to provide additional facilities for the museum. At this early stage, the Conservation Statement will make mention of the property but has not investigated its history, significance or issues in great detail.

The setting of Fairfax House will be discussed in order to put the building into its physical and historical context. Details of similar examples of town houses of the same period in York will also be summarised in order to place the building in its architectural context.

The Conservation Statement does not cover the collections contained within the house. A separate Statement of Significance of the collections has been prepared by the museum.

There is debate about the historic room uses within Fairfax House, with queries over whether the current names and functions that some rooms have been allocated are historically correct. For ease of reference the current room names have been used throughout this report. However, a discussion is given in section 5.2 about the alternative room uses/names which require further research and may result in renaming in any future interpretation scheme.

1.3 CONTENTS OF THE REPORT

The report contains six sections. After the first introductory section are the following chapters:

Understanding: which provides the background information about the asset, including a description, relevant statutory legislation and the current management and use of the building;

Historic Development: which gives an overview of the history of Fairfax House;

Significance: which provides an assessment of why and to what extent Fairfax House has cultural and heritage value and importance, as well as describing comparable examples;

Issues and Opportunities: which identifies what threats to the building exist and where there may be scope for change and improvement; and

Recommendations: which gives guidelines for the next steps which need to be taken for the future care, conservation and managed change of Fairfax House, including identifying where further work needs to be carried out.

1.4 AUTHORSHIP

This Conservation Statement has been prepared by Purcell, a firm of conservation architects and heritage consultants. Specifically it has been prepared by:

Alex Holton	Heritage Consultant	BA (Hons), MA (Distinction), PhD
Sally Humphries	Heritage Consultant	BA (Hons), MSc, IHBC
Hettie Dix	Historic Researcher	BA (Hons)
Chris Cotton	Partner/Architect	BA (Hons) Arch, DipArch, RIBA AABC

1.5 EXISTING INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

The research in this report has mainly been based on secondary sources and inspection of the existing historic fabric. General book, journal and online sources included Pevsner's Buildings of England series, articles in *Country Life*, the RCHME *Inventory of Historical Monuments in the City of York* and the Victoria County History. Guidebooks produced by the museum also contain fairly detailed information on the history of the building.

The Fairfax House/York Civic Trust archive was consulted, which included photographs and plans of the 1980s restoration, as well as miscellaneous documents on the history of the building.

It was decided that at this initial stage the extensive Fairfax Collection of archival documents held at the North Yorkshire Record Office, which contains original documents relating to the history of the family, would not be consulted. However, the museum has recently carried out a piece of work on the historic furnishings in the building: *Fairfax House: York, England: Furnishing Plan: A review of Room use, Presentation & Furnishings Based on Archival Research*. This document contains research and extracts from the Fairfax Collection which were felt to be sufficient for the purposes of the Conservation Statement at this stage.

A full bibliography is included in appendix A.

1.6 GAPS IN KNOWLEDGE

Various questions remain regarding the original uses of the rooms within the house. Further research may assist in identification and this has been detailed in section 5.2 and appendix B.

1.7 CONSULTATION

The first and second drafts of the Conservation Statement were submitted to the Museum Board for review and comments received from them were incorporated into a final draft.

2

UNDERSTANDING

2.1 OWNERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The building is owned by the York Conservation Trust and governed by the Fairfax House Museum Board. It is run as a museum by the Director and Management Board; a sub-committee of the York Civic Trust Board. The museum's management team consists of the Director; Senior House Steward, Director's PA, Curatorial Assistant and Shop Manager. Other staff members include a house steward, a front of house receptionist, a maintenance and cleaning

assistant, and a shop assistant. 150 volunteers also assist with the running of Fairfax House. The Friends of Fairfax House has around 480 members. The group supports the museum through fundraising activities for maintenance of the house and collections, and contributing to the costs of annual exhibitions.

2.2 LOCATION AND SETTING

Fairfax House is located in the city of York. It is situated on Castlegate, which lies towards the south of the historic city centre. Nearby to the south is Clifford's Tower, the surviving

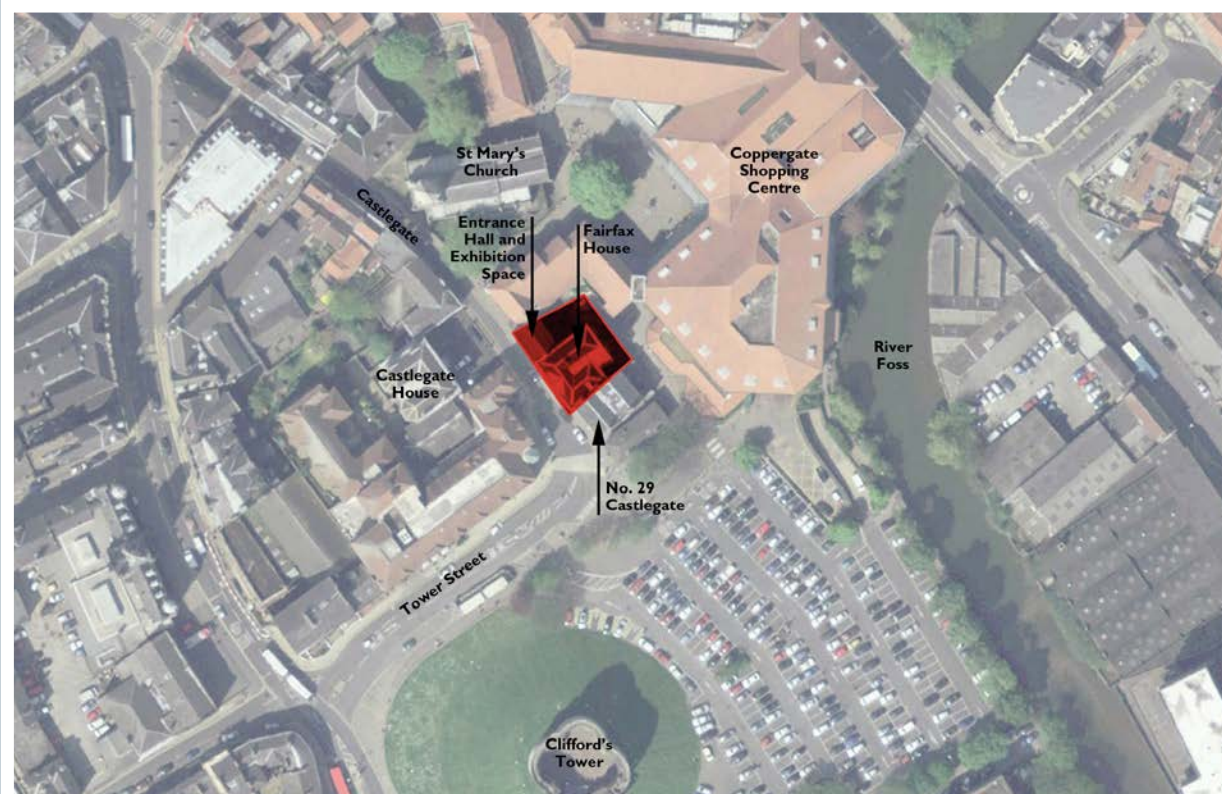
remnant of York Castle, and the York Castle Museum. Clifford's Tower is separated from the end of Castlegate by a car park whose redevelopment to improve the setting of the Castle remains under discussion.

The road is fairly narrow, with a mixture of buildings on either side which include Victorian and Georgian buildings now used as shops and restaurants. Another large John Carr townhouse, Castlegate House, is on the opposite side of the street to Fairfax House, set back from the road behind railings and a forecourt. St. Mary's Church is situated to the north-west, surrounded by a small churchyard.

Fairfax House lies at the southern end of the street which leads into Tower Street running to the south-west. There is a large open space formed by the castle hill and adjacent car park.

There are modern buildings directly opposite and to the north-west of Fairfax House. Materials used throughout the street are mainly red brick, with stone (or painted stone) dressings to the older buildings. St. Mary's Church, however, is a stone built structure.

To the rear of Fairfax House is a courtyard area, raised from the surrounding ground to the north-east and enclosed with iron railings. The current design of the courtyard, with stone paving, planting and steps down to the north, was part of the 1980s restoration of the building. The courtyard area is surrounded on all sides by modern development of three to four storeys.





- 1 Fairfax House on Castlegate, looking north-west, 29 Castlegate is to the right
- 2 St. Mary's Church on Castlegate
- 3 The rear courtyard area and steps down to the lower surrounding ground
- 4 The car park and castle mound to the south-east of Castlegate
- 5 Castlegate House roughly opposite Fairfax House
- 6 The rear courtyard area with three to four storey modern development adjacent
- 7 Fairfax House on Castlegate, looking south-east

2.3 DESCRIPTION

2.3.1 EXTERIOR

Fairfax House is a substantial Georgian town house, considerably extended in the mid-18th century by John Carr; the noted York architect, from an existing house on the site. It is known as one of the finest examples of Georgian architecture in York. Its architectural significance is discussed in more detail in section 4.

The main elevation of Fairfax House faces Castlegate. The entrance block, formerly the entrance to a cinema (now demolished), abuts the main house to the left.

The three storey main house is a grand Georgian building, with elegant proportions and regularly spaced windows. It is constructed of red brick with painted stone dressings. The central three bays of the five bay wide house project slightly and are topped with a triangular pediment containing a stone oculus in a carved stone surround. The main door of the house (little used at present) is located in the central bay of the ground floor under a Classical doorcase.

The entrance block is three storeys with windows on the first and second floor which line up with those on the main house. The ground floor, however, has an elaborate wide doorway which is accessed up a flight of six steps and decorated with fluted columns, acanthus scroll details and floral swags. No.29, of c.1840¹, is a plainer two storey brick building to the right of the main house.



The rear elevations of Fairfax house are simpler in design to the front. The elevations are all red brick, which were completely refaced in the 1980s restoration. There are a number of sash windows, with a larger Venetian window (consisting of two small windows flanking a central arched window) over the rear door to the main house. This door has a Classical stone doorcase. A second rear door is situated in the back of the former cinema block, up a short flight of steps.

- 1 The main elevation of Fairfax House (courtesy of Fairfax House)
- 2 The two entrances to the rear of the building



¹ As noted in the list description: <http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/resultsingle.aspx?uid=1259340&searchtype=mapsearch>



- 3 The rear elevation within its setting
- 4 No.29
- 5 The rear elevation of the entrance block
- 6 The front elevation of the entrance block
- 7 The rear elevation of Fairfax House
- 8 The Classical doorway to the front elevation of the main house

2.3.2 USE

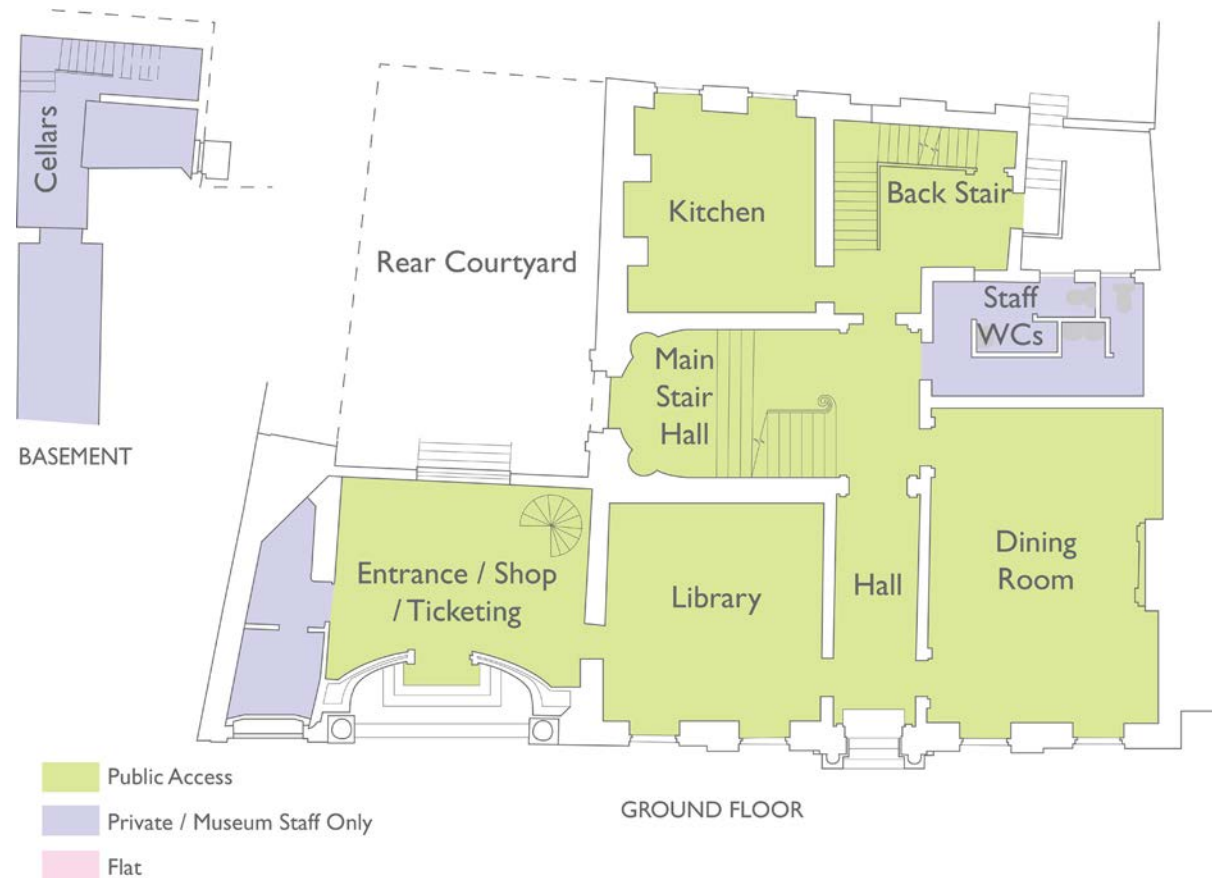
Fairfax House operates as an historic house museum. The public areas include the principal rooms of the town house on the ground and first floor; and the entrance hall/shop and exhibition space above within the former cinema entrance attached to the north-west. Fairfax House is an Accredited Museum, a scheme run by the Arts Council to recognise and support museums that have attained certain standards of management for their collections.

Visitors are charged £6.00 for entry (£5.00 concession) and opening times are 10.00am to 5.00pm Tuesday to Saturday, as well as on Bank Holiday Mondays. There are shorter open hours on Sundays and on normal Mondays entrance is only for guided tours at 11.00am and 2.00pm. Fairfax House closes during January for its annual winter clean and maintenance works.

There is a large group of around 150 dedicated and trained volunteers who provide valuable assistance in the running of the museum. They act as room and tour guides and are extremely knowledgeable about the house. Visitor surveys often highlight the quality of the volunteer team at Fairfax House. The volunteers also assist with tasks such as caring for the collection during the winter clean.

A programme of planned tours is held at the property, such as the recent advertised special tour: "A behind-the-scenes glimpse of Fairfax House during its winter clean". Regular events, including lectures, exhibitions, concerts, symposiums and workshops, are also held throughout the year. These focus on Georgian themes, such as 'What was a Duchess Without Diamonds: Jewellery and Power in 18th century London' (July 2013) and 'An Evening of Georgian Dance' (July 2014), and provide a valuable educational resource. Fairfax House also runs an educational programme, including school visits, lectures and special tours.

The museum staff has offices on the second floor at the front of the building. To the rear of the second floor is a staff flat. At the time of the creation of the flat following the 1980s restoration staff tenancy was required for insurance and security reasons. However, this is no longer a fixed requirement of the insurance policy.



- Public Access
- Private / Museum Staff Only
- Flat



FIRST FLOOR

SECOND FLOOR

2.3.3 INTERIOR

2.3.3.1 Former Cinema Entrance Block

Entrance Hall

The entrance hall on the ground floor where the visitor first arrives is decorated with modern materials throughout. However, references to the adjacent Georgian property are made by a simple cornice and a Classical architrave to the door from this room into the main house. The reception desk is to the south-east, adjacent to a spiral staircase up to the exhibition room.

Exhibition Room

The exhibition room on the first floor is also decorated with modern materials. It is furnished with built in glazed display cases which hold the exhibition items. The cases are a high specification and meet National Museum lending criteria. Again there are Georgian references with the cornices, a dado rail and skirting, and moulded frames to the display cases. The north-west wall has a curve to it and the spiral staircase is set in the east corner of the room.

Attic Store

The space above the exhibition room is an attic store set within the roof void. The roof timbers of the 1920s cinema building are exposed. Modern blockwork walls have been added under the eaves of the roof. The south-east wall is formed of the formerly external brick wall of the main house. Parts have been rendered over but some of the brick wall and the moulded stone cornice (though in poor condition) is also visible.

2.3.3.2 Ground Floor - Main House

Library

The library is the first room of the main house which visitors enter. It is one of the reception rooms within the house and features typical details from the period, such as a marble fireplace, finely carved skirtings, dado rail, doorcases and window surrounds, a dentil cornice and elaborate plaster ceiling. The library use of the room dictated the decoration depicted on the ceiling: there are medallions containing busts of John Milton, Joseph Addison, John Locke and Alexander Pope.



- 1 The entrance hall, looking towards the reception desk, door through to the main house and staircase up to the exhibition room
- 2 The first floor exhibition room looking north-west (courtesy of Fairfax House)
- 3 The attic store showing the formerly external wall of the main house with stone cornice
- 4 The library looking north

Hall

The hall also features Classical Georgian decoration with a large arched doorcase and fanlight over the main front door. The ceiling has delicate original plasterwork decoration. The stone floor tiles were installed over a new concrete surface in the 1980s. A modern metal grille is set across the main entrance door for security.

Dining Room

The Dining Room, on the opposite side of the hall to the Library, has another grand Classical decorative scheme. The plasterwork ceiling has the subject of Abundance, with a central figure carrying a basket of fruit, bowls of grapes and swags of flowers and fruit. The plasterwork also features guttae around the perimeter, which were a common Carr motif.

WCs

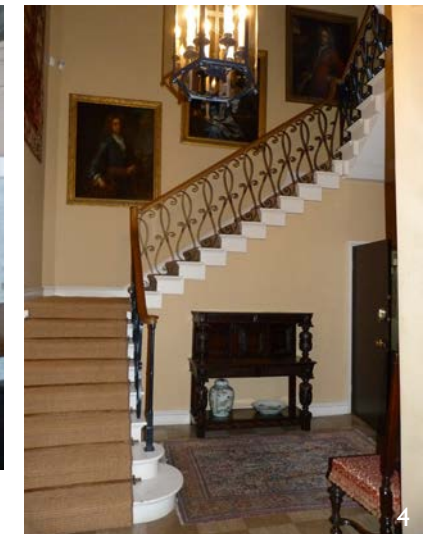
Staff WCs were inserted into the small room to the north-east of the Dining Room during the 1980s restoration. Partition walls have been added to divide up the space and all the décor is modern. The dropped ceiling may conceal historic comicing.

Kitchen

The historic kitchen display in the rear room of the ground floor was created in the 1980s restoration in a room unlikely to have been used for this function in the original building, as it was far more likely that the kitchen would have been located in the service wing to the rear (now demolished) where the main house could be protected from cooking smells and risk of fire. An historic fireplace with 19th century cast iron range (loaned by Temple Newsam) was built on the northwest wall. The rest of the room is decorated with relative simplicity but includes historic style shutters and a flagstone floor.

Rear Stair Hall

The back stairs (which were rebuilt in the 1980s) stretch from the ground to second floor. The cantilevered staircase has a balustrade with scroll design iron baluster. The ground to first floor section of the staircase, including the balustrade, dates from the 1980s restoration, as it was removed in the 1920s by the cinema company. At the top floor a partition wall has been added for the creation of a contained unit for the flat, while at ground floor level the cantilevered stair was infilled with a wall to create space for a new staircase entrance to the cellar. Access to the basement was originally underneath the main staircase.



- 1 The hallway 1 (courtesy of Fairfax House)
- 2 The Dining Room looking north-east (courtesy of Fairfax House)
- 3 The kitchen with recreated fireplace
- 4 The back stairs at ground floor level

Main Stair Hall

The main stair hall is a very grand double height space with a cantilevered dog-leg staircase joining the ground to first floor. There is fine detailed wood carving throughout. The magnificent Venetian window is a key feature on the half-landing and has an elaborate surround which features four marble columns. The Fairfax coat of arms is displayed above the window. Once again, the ceiling has extensive detailed plasterwork decoration, this time making reference to military campaigns and the implements of war, and possible other hidden messages. Busts of Shakespeare and Newton (reproductions of the originals) sit opposite each other on decorative brackets on the two side walls. The ironwork balustrades, by Leeds ironsmith Maurice Tobin, feature figure of eight patterns. The detailing of the balustrade to the landing features rosebuds, which are not present on the balustrade to the stair.

2.3.3.3 First Floor - Main House

Saloon

The Saloon on the first floor is accessed off the main stair hall and from a jib door through to the exhibition room. This is the largest room in the house with grand proportions and elaborate plasterwork decoration and wood carving. The ceiling features fruit, flowers and musical instruments. A sheet of music is depicted and has been identified as a song called 'Belinda and Amelia', published in the late 1750s.

Drawing Room

The Drawing Room is accessed off the Saloon. This would have originally been the only entrance but a jib door was inserted into the adjacent bed chamber during the 1980s works to provide a circulatory visitor route. The room features a deep coffered coving and a central motif depicting Amicitia (friendship) from Ripa's Iconologia (1645).

Viscount's Bed Chamber

This room has been presented as the Viscount's Bed Chamber, though documentary evidence to date has not confirmed that this was the original use. It is more simply decorated than the grand public rooms, with a simpler cornice and joinery. This underpins the interpretation of this room as a bedroom.



- 1 The main stair hall seen from the half-landing
- 2 The Saloon on the first floor looking north-west (courtesy of Fairfax House)
- 3 The Drawing Room looking north-east (courtesy of Fairfax House)
- 4 The Viscount's Bed Chamber looking west (courtesy of Fairfax House)

Anne's Bed Chamber

This has also been speculatively decorated as a bedroom. Chinoiserie style wallpaper was chosen because of an historical reference to 'mock Indian' wallpaper ordered by Anne Fairfax in 1762. The pattern was chosen from an example displayed at the Temple Newsam exhibition of 18th century wallpapers held in 1983. Again the detailing is simpler than the main entertaining spaces within the house.

2.3.3.4 Second Floor - Main House

Offices and Corridor

The second floor offices are situated at the front of the main house and are divided from the flat at the rear by a corridor spanning the width of the building. The space would have originally been divided up differently and the current room partitions were added in the 1980s, though sections of simple historic cornices and joinery on the perimeter walls do survive, together with fireplaces on the two far end walls.

Flat

The flat on the second floor consists of a hallway (accessed off the back stair and from corridor adjacent to the offices) a kitchen, bedroom, sitting room and bathroom. All but the latter are original rooms but the bathroom has been created by the insertion of partition walls into the hallway at the top of the back stairs. The rooms have a number of historic features, such as skirting boards, cornices, doors and mantelpieces. Modern bathroom and kitchen fittings are old-fashioned and secondary glazing has been added to all the windows.

2.3.3.5 Attic - Main House

The attics of the main house are accessed via a central staircase on the second floor. They are laid out in a 'U' shape around this central staircase. The exposed roof timbers are a mixture of original and 20th century replacements. Some historic brick partitions and chimney stacks are visible. The inside face of the pediment on top of the main elevation of the house is also visible. It is clear that it has been rebuilt in the 1980s as it is constructed in blockwork. There is evidence of an original window on the south-east wall, now blocked up. The attics are currently used for storage.

2.3.3.6 Cellars - Main House

A series of narrow vaulted cellars are located under the main house, accessed from under the rear stairs. These are brick barrel vault construction with a brick floor (re-laid over concrete in the 1980s). Historically, these were likely to have been used for storage, possibly for coal and for wine which needed to be kept at a cool temperature. The current entrance under the back stairs was created in the 1980s. The original entrance was under the main stairs and the original opening can be identified.



- 1 Anne's Bed Chamber looking north-west (courtesy of Fairfax House)
- 2 The north-western office on the second floor
- 3 The living room in the second floor flat
- 4 The vaulted brick cellars under the main house
- 5 The attic above the main house

2.4 STATUTORY DESIGNATIONS

2.4.1 LISTED BUILDINGS

Fairfax House is a Grade I listed building. This means it is in the top 2.5% of all listed buildings and is “of exceptional interest, sometimes considered to be internationally important”.² No.29 adjacent is also a Grade II listed building.

Listed buildings are buildings of special architectural and historic interest which make up England’s historic environment. They are protected under the Planning (*Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas*) Act 1990 and alterations or demolitions require Listed Building Consent from the local planning authority before they can proceed. National and local planning policy also recognises that changes to other buildings or sites within the vicinity can affect the special interest of listed buildings.

The full list descriptions are included in appendix C.

2.4.2 CONSERVATION AREAS

Under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 local planning authorities also have a duty to designate and form policies to protect areas of special architectural and historic interest, called conservation areas.

Fairfax House is within the Central Historic Core Conservation Area, as designated by City of York Council. This covers the whole of the historic city centre. The special interest of the conservation area is summarised in the Conservation Area Appraisal:

- a compact, densely-developed place, laid out on –
- a street plan combining Roman, Viking and medieval elements, with Georgian and Victorian interventions; streets are therefore a visible expression of the invisible archaeology, and overwhelmingly intimate, comfortable and on a human scale
- contrast and surprises in the twists and turns of streets, alleys, squares and hidden courts and places, opening up sequences of ever-changing views, in which the Minster often plays a part
- a tremendous diversity of architectural styles and phases causing constantly changing variety and juxtapositions in the townscape
- but an overriding harmony through materials – plastered timber-frames, brick and Magnesian Limestone – and continuous street frontages and constant roofscapes
- the relationship between the glorious, dominating presence of the Minster and the scale of the rest of the townscape: viewed from the walls and other high points, the great white mass of the Minster sails on a choppy sea of pantile roofs

2.4.3 NATIONAL AND LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

National planning policy relating to heritage is contained within chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework, which can be accessed via this link: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/60777/2116950.pdf.

Local planning policy is contained within City of York Council’s Local Plan, 2005 (currently under revision by the council). A list of the relevant policies is given below and can be accessed in full via the council’s website: http://www.york.gov.uk/downloads/file/2388/view_the_local_plan_main_document

- SP3: Safeguarding the Historic Character and Setting of York
- HE1: Designation of the Conservation Area
- HE2: Development in Historic Locations
- HE3: Conservation Areas
- HE4: Listed Buildings
- HE5: Demolition of Listed Buildings and Buildings in Conservation Areas
- HE8: Advertisements in Historic Locations
- HE10: Archaeology

² <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/caring/listing/listed-buildings/>, accessed 24/01.13

3

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

3.1 TIMELINE

The following information has been taken from the York Civic Trust's guide book to Fairfax House unless otherwise referenced.

Early History of York¹

The city of York was established under the Romans in 71 AD as Eboracum on the confluence of the Rivers Ouse and Foss. A large military fortress constructed of timber dating from the Roman occupation of York was built on the present site of York Minster. Several Roman emperors held court at York but the most notable was Constantine the Great, who was proclaimed emperor whilst he was at the city's fortress. The city thrived under the Romans until the 5th century AD, at which time it was gradually abandoned. The numerous roads ending – gate in York indicate roads emanating from entrance points in the city's defensive walls and are therefore some of the oldest thoroughfares in York.

The city was revived briefly in the 7th century AD when the first church on the site of the Minster was built for the baptism of the Saxon King Edwin of Northumbria. The Vikings raided and captured York in the mid-9th century, at which time the city thrived as a river port connecting the busy Viking trade routes.

Medieval York saw the construction of the Minster from 1080 and the city began to thrive once more as a trade hub. The Tudor period through to the Civil War marked a slight decline for the city before its revival as a northern hub for gentry in the 18th century.

¹ <http://www.historyofyork.org.uk/timeline/>

11TH - 15TH CENTURY

Norman

Castlegate was originally part of Nessgate and existed long before the Norman Castle was built.

1358

The name Castlegate Street first appeared in this year.

1381

The Lay Poll Tax Returns for the City of York gives 65 households for Castlegate. The inhabitants at that time came from a variety of occupations, including merchants, brewers, drapers, locksmiths and weavers.¹

¹ Webb, 2001, p.129

1599-1646

The first identifiable owners of the land on which Fairfax House now sits are referenced in a lease of 13th March 1599 where Thomas Gibson leases the 'house and garth' to George Penrose for 21 years. The site went through a series of owners and occupiers over the next hundred years:

1631 - Thomas, Son of James Gibson, sold the house to George Penrose, who had already been leasing the house.

1638 - After a gap in which we do not know the ownership, the house was sold by Thomas Harrison to William Robinson the Elder and William Robinson the Younger.

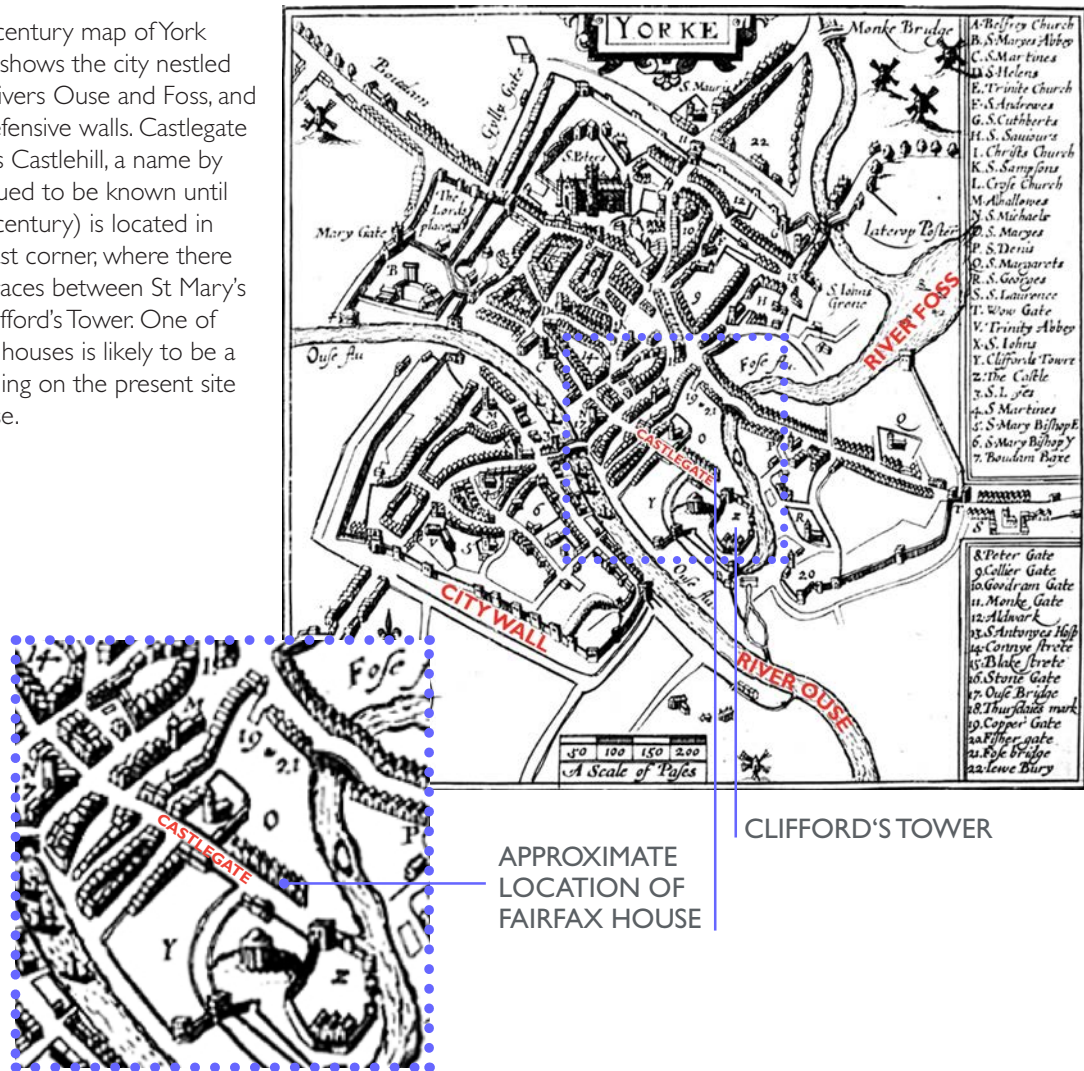
1646 - A Deed of Purchase shows the owner as John Mason, who sold the property to Robert Scott, a merchant.²

² All cited in Webb, 2001

17TH CENTURY

1617

An early 17th-century map of York by John Speed shows the city nestled between the Rivers Ouse and Foss, and bounded by defensive walls. Castlegate (then known as Castlehill, a name by which it continued to be known until after the 18th century) is located in York's south-east corner, where there is a row of terraces between St Mary's Church and Clifford's Tower. One of these terraced houses is likely to be a preceding building on the present site of Fairfax House.



18TH CENTURY

1704

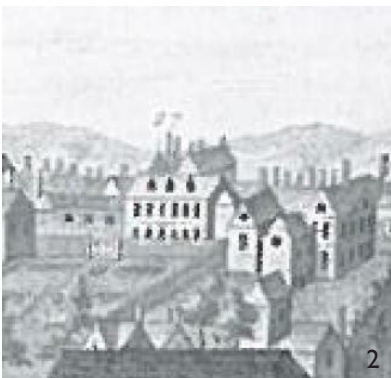
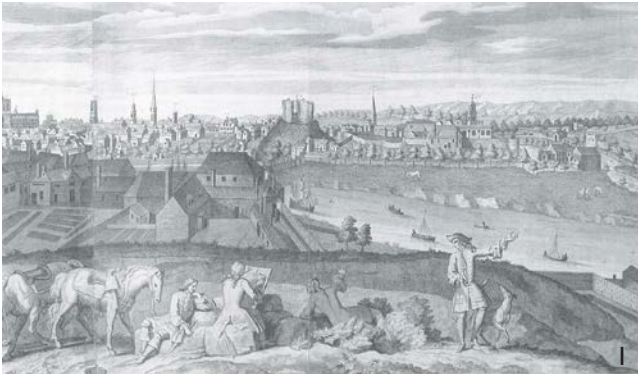
In this year Thomas Barker, a lawyer, purchased the site and house on it. Further deeds and purchase agreements dating from the following four years show that Barker made improvements to the house and lands, including adding walls, purchasing land on the opposite side of the road and adding new drains.²

² Cited in Webb, 2001, p.136

18TH CENTURY (continued)

1735

Thomas Barker's house on Castlegate is specifically labelled on Buck's Prospect of York. The image depicts a large two storey property with attics and a pitched roof, which was likely to have had a timber framed structure. Thomas Barker had died in 1724 but left his property to his nephew Edmund Laycon (who as a condition of the will had to change his surname to Barker) and it seems that over 10 years later the legacy of Thomas Barker was still continued in the map as the house is marked 'Lawyer Barker's house'.



- 1 Buck's Prospect of York, 1735
- 2 Detail showing 'Lawyer Barker's house' (marked '27')

1750: John Rocque

A map of York surveyed by cartographer John Rocque shows the north side of Castlegate as heavily built up with large gardens extending north-eastwards towards the River Foss. The area opposite the house was laid out as a series of allotments or garden plots. The house which was later turned into Fairfax House as we know it today is marked in red on the plan.



1752-60

Edmund's brother Thomas Laycon Barker lived in the house until 1752. The ownership then passed to Joseph Marsh Esq, a coal merchant. From 1759-60 the house was occupied by Boynton Wood Esq (though it was probably still owned by Marsh).

Barker's house was rebuilt sometime in the early 18th century, though exact dates are unknown. However, roof timbers inscribed 1755 indicate that the building was probably completed in this year.

18TH CENTURY (continued)

1760-62

Charles Gregory, 9th Viscount Fairfax bought Marsh's house for around £2,000. The house was purchased for Anne as indicated in a letter to his banker in 1762: 'My Daughter[']s] house, which is just finished and paid for, drains me of all my money'. Anne's name appears on the Land Tax Register for 1760-61. Upon acquiring the house the Viscount set about commissioning a major rebuilding campaign, which appears to have involved a new Classical façade and total refurbishment of the interiors. The architect hired for the works was John Carr, the leading northern architect of his time. See section 4.3 for more details on Carr.

1761

Unidentified alterations to the rear wing were carried out by Richard Swale (bricklayer) and William Grant (joiner and carpenter).

1762

Work on the house was completed by 1762 (as evidence in the Viscount's letter quoted under 1760). In addition to Carr, Swale and Grant, the Viscount also employed:

- Daniel Shillitoe (carving)
- Maurice Tobin (wrought ironwork)
- George and Mary Reynoldson (upholstery)

It is also thought that Joseph Cortese (also known as Guiseppe Cortese) carried out the stucco work. Though Cortese is not explicitly referenced in the surviving accounts of work carried out at Fairfax House but his involvement in the decoration of the Viscount's country seat at Gilling Castle make it likely that he was also employed here.

On the following page is a summary of the decoration in the principal rooms of the house when it was newly built.

CHARLES GREGORY, 9th Viscount Fairfax of Emley (d. 1772)

Charles Gregory was a British aristocrat. He was born overseas and inherited the Fairfax title from his father in 1738. The Fairfaxes were a long established Catholic family in Yorkshire and maintained a strong Catholic allegiance following the Reformation.³ He married Viscountess Dunbar in 1720 but was widowed in the same year. A second marriage to Mary Fairfax (a distant cousin) went ahead in 1722 and nine children followed. Mary Fairfax died only two years after the birth of their last child and Anne was the only child to survive through to adulthood. The Viscount became very protective of his only surviving daughter:

In 1755 Anne was engaged to be married to William Burton of Burton Constable Hall in East Yorkshire; this was to be the third inter-family marriage between the Burtons and the Fairfaxes, and would ensure the survival of the Fairfax estate within the larger Burton estate. The Viscount, a staunch Catholic, became suspicious of his future son-in-law's faith, noting his poor attendance records at Mass, and duly reported this to his daughter. The engagement was called off and Anne remained with her father. In the late 1750s they leased a house on Coney Street in York before moving again to High Petergate. These houses were in addition to the family's main residence at Gilling Castle.



³ <http://www.fairfaxhouse.co.uk/?idno=726>, accessed 24/04/14

18TH CENTURY (continued)



The Viscount's Newly Decorated House

The **Library** was originally painted yellow⁴ and ornamented with medallions containing likenesses of John Milton, Joseph Addison, John Locke and Alexander Pope – all learned men admired by the Viscount. Tall bookcases lined the walls.

The **Hall** was decorated with a medallion containing *Roma Aeterna* ('Eternal Rome'), which is believed to have been an affirmation of the Fairfax family's Catholic faith (Roma being a female deity representing the city of Rome and its empire, and, by extension, the Roman Catholic faith). Similar allegorical representations are included in the decoration of several prominent rooms, including the first floor **Drawing Room**, where *Amicitia* (friendship) is represented in the centre of the ceiling.

The theme of abundance is explored in the decoration of the **Dining Room**, in anticipation of the great meals to be served there. A personification of abundance set within a medallion was taken from a print in the 1645 text *Iconologia* by Cesare Ripa. The house cook, Martha Brown, received a healthy annual salary of £11 and four out of the seven members of staff were employed in the kitchen, perhaps an indication of a high standard of food in the Fairfax household.⁵

The centrepiece of the **principal staircase** was a Venetian window flanked with marble columns and stuccoed coats of arms. Consoles on the walls originally held busts of William Shakespeare and Isaac Newton, more learned men admired by the Viscount, by sculptor William Cheere. Maurice Tobin's iron balusters are copies of those at Aske Hall in Richmond. In the ceiling is a stucco representation of *Architettura Militaire* – an allegorical figure representing military architecture, an intelligent blend of knowledge and function – from *Iconologia*. This allegory is likely to demonstrate the Viscount's strong interest in military campaigns of the day and suggests a strong sense of patriotism.

The first-floor **Saloon** was centrally located at the front of the house, overlooking Castlegate. The ceiling was decorated in the Rococo style adopted by Carr in the early years of his career. The themes of abundance and entertainment echoed that displayed in the Dining Room, indicating that hospitality was not restricted to that one room, but spread throughout the house. In 1762 the walls were hung with red Flock but the space was re-hung in 1766 with "Skye mixt Damask".

The family **bedrooms** were likely to have been located on the first floor with guest bedrooms on the second floor. The current locations of the bedrooms within the house were estimates made during the 1980s restoration. Anne's bedroom was hung with 'Mock India' wallpaper (indicative of the fashionable 18th century *chinoiserie* style) and an adjoining dressing room had 'Green Flock'.⁶

It is believed that there were two parlours within the configuration of the house, since a receipt dated 1764 referenced 'ye *Little Parler*' and 'ye *Great Parler*'. However the location of these rooms is not known and the accuracy of the room names in the receipt is questionable.⁷ The ambiguity surrounding the location of these rooms in the original house lies in the ever changing names applied to each room and also the demolition of the rear section (see 1920: *Cinema and Dance Hall*).

4 Fairfax House, Castlegate, York, undated guidebook, 0.6.

5 Compared to the housekeeper's salary, which was £9 per year.

6 Furnishing Plan.

7 Furnishing Plan.



18TH CENTURY (continued)

19th April 1763

A report in the York Courant noted:

"Last Thursday, being the Anniversary of the Birth of the Right Hon. Lord Viscount Fairfax, his Lordship gave an elegant Entertainment and a Ball to above 200 Gentlemen and Ladies at his magnificent new House on the Castlehill in this City which is just finished."

York Courant, 19 April 1763

1763

After 1763 the tax rate for the house was raised to £20 10s, which was the highest rate on the street.⁸

⁸ Webb, 2001, p.200

1765-66

Although Carr's remodelling of Fairfax House had been completed several years, further cosmetic works were carried out, including painting and soft furnishings, as well as changes to the stabling.

1766

By this time the Saloon had been re-hung and its furniture re-upholstered with Skye mixt Damask, 275 yards of which was purchased from Mary Reynoldson for the princely sum of £96. The room was furnished with eight chairs, two armchairs and a large sofa, all of mahogany. Hanging on the walls were two pier glasses 'with gold and burnished frames'.⁹

⁹ Furnishing Plan

1772

The Viscount died and Anne retired to Gilling Castle, the family's country seat near Oswaldkirk, North Yorkshire.

Subsequent Occupants of Fairfax House:

Walter Vavasour of Hazelwood (1780)

William Danby (1787)

Peregrine Wentworth (1792)

Mrs Ann Mary Pemberton (1840-65)

19TH CENTURY

19th Century

York became a rail network hub, causing the city to extend even further than its Roman boundaries.

1852

A mid-18th-century map of York shows Fairfax House with a long service wing at the back, to which there was access via an alley. The garden shown in Rocque's map appears to have been mostly built over. Railings in front of the main elevation are just visible, surrounding the lightwells in front of the house. These were designed by Tobin, who also produced the ironwork balustrade to the main stair.

The wall of York's prison, built in 1835, can be seen at the south end of Castlegate (with the plan of the prison within the walls blank for security reasons). This must have changed the setting of Fairfax House considerably as the wall was only 30 yards away from the house. The wall and prison buildings were demolished in 1934 prior to the development of the car park and York Castle Museum.



1865

Fairfax House ceased to be a private family residence and the first floor was leased by a gentlemen's club.

An early 20th century photograph could show the building in this use as the first floor Saloon is shown as a billiard room (note the cues lined up on the wall).



19TH CENTURY (continued)

1879

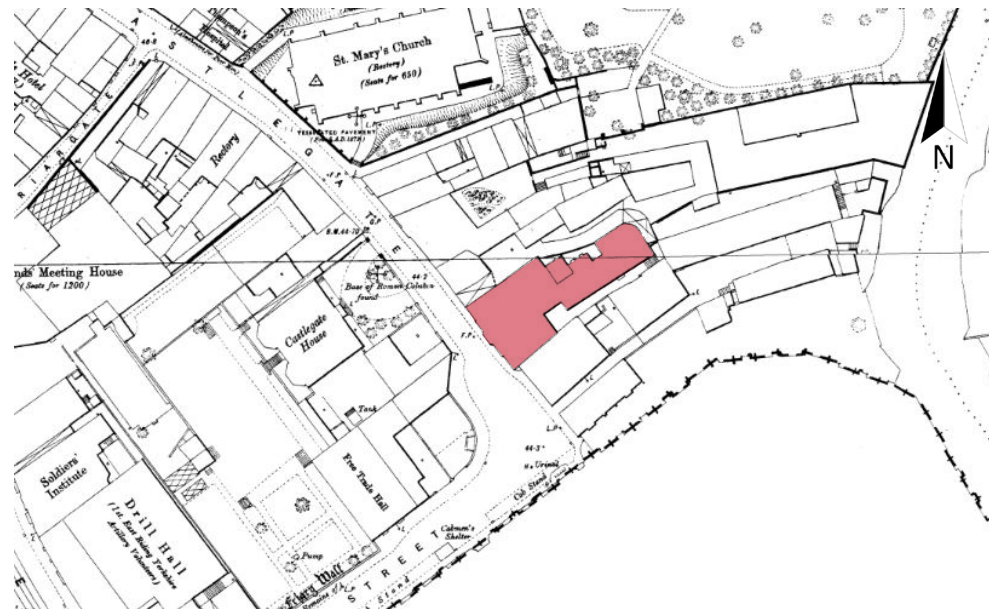
Castlegate was widened, necessitating the removal of the railings in front of Fairfax House. This work also involved the alteration of the main entrance portico to make it shallower.

1884

Clifford Street, a busy thoroughfare into the city from the south-east, was laid out in 1884, rendering Castlegate a minor secondary route.

1891

An 1891 map shows Castlegate and the main house with extensive service wing to the rear. This had been altered at the far end and a lean-to or other structure has been built at the right-angled junction where the main house meets the service wing.



20TH CENTURY

Early 20th Century

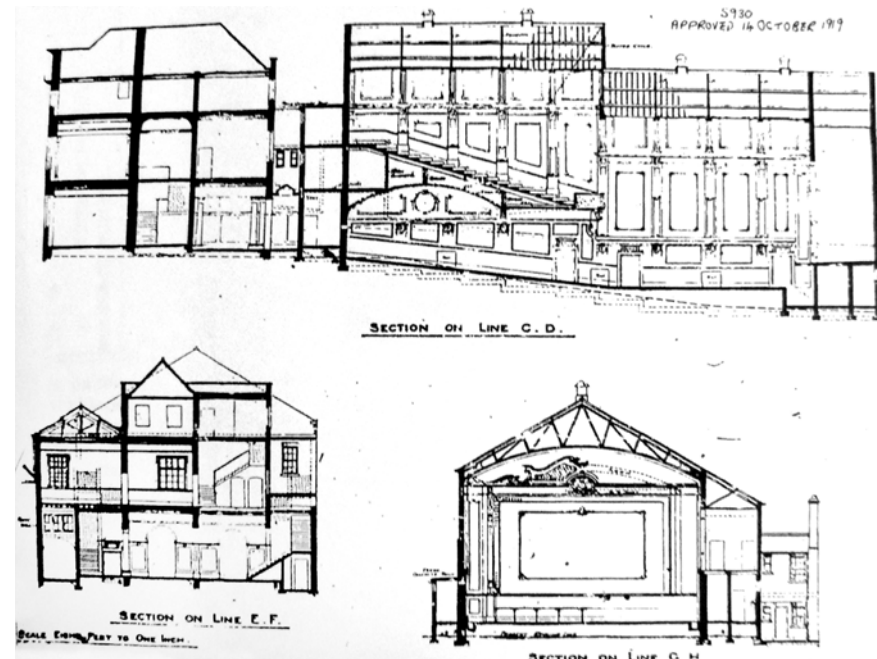
A photograph of the principal staircase shows the Venetian window before it was bricked up in 1919 because of the cinema extension constructed adjacent. (see *1919: Cinema and Dance Hall*).



Venetian window, early 20th century (York Civic Trust)

1919: Cinema and Dance Hall

Plans submitted by the St George's Hall Cinema Company were approved for a new 1,000-seat cinema next door to and behind Fairfax House. Additionally, a dance hall was created in the first floor rooms at Fairfax House, the partition walls of which were knocked down, connecting the Saloon and Drawing Room with the new neighbouring building. The resulting space was painted in dark colours to reflect its new night-time function. The rear portion of the house was razed to make room for the cinema theatre, causing the loss of the original kitchens and servants' quarters.



Additionally, what is now dressed as Fairfax's bedroom was transformed into the WCs. The room currently used as Anne's bedroom was a refreshment area and an entrance was knocked through the west wall into the new cinema building, the entrance to which was via a new foyer built adjacent to Fairfax House. The extension up against the north elevation also necessitated the bricking up of the Venetian window to the main stairs, with opaque glass added to disguise the infill.¹⁰

Custom-built cinemas were becoming increasingly popular in the 1920s as the advent of the film industry took hold of Britain.

¹⁰ York Civic Trust, 2009. p. 7

20TH CENTURY (continued)

1921

St George's Cinema and Dance Hall officially opened.

1931

Fairfax House and the adjacent cinema are clearly labelled Picture Theatre in this 1931 map. The rear portion of the building has been significantly altered and is noticeably wider. The new entrance foyer on the north side of Fairfax House is also evident.



20TH CENTURY (continued)

1939-45

Soldiers were billeted in Fairfax House during World War Two, where a NAAFI (an Armed Forces recreational facility) was established. Their time here is little recorded save for a letter from the York Georgian Society to the presiding colonel:

'Among the many and more urgent matters on your plate, I wonder if I might, on behalf of the York Georgian Society, just lay before you our hope that, as far as possible, the men billeted in St George's [Fairfax] House, Castlegate (next door to the Cinema) will be encouraged to preserve from damage the very elegant features of this old house? This house – misused as it has been for four years – contained some of the finest Georgian wood carving in the North of England. The doors and windows in most of the rooms are beautifully carved, and the staircase is, of its kind, very fine. Sometime, it is the hope of the York Georgian Society to see that it is restored to some appropriate use.'

(York Civic Trust Archives)

1959

The busts of Shakespeare and Newton by William Cheere that had originally been placed on consoles on the principal staircase walls were sold.¹¹

¹¹ Cornforth, John, 7 March 1985, 'Fairfax House, York - I', *Country Life*, p.573

1960s: York City Council

Realising its significance as a historic building in the city, York City Council acquired Fairfax House in the 1960s for £22,000. At the time it was tenanted by the Regency Dance School,¹² for whom the large open space on the first floor was ideal.

¹² *The Antique Collector*, Nov 1985

1970s

Fairfax House was in a poor state of repair and in need of attention. Pile driving in the area immediately behind Castlegate had shaken the building and weakened its structure further to the ravages of time and its use as a dancehall.¹³

¹³ *Observer*, 8 April 1990

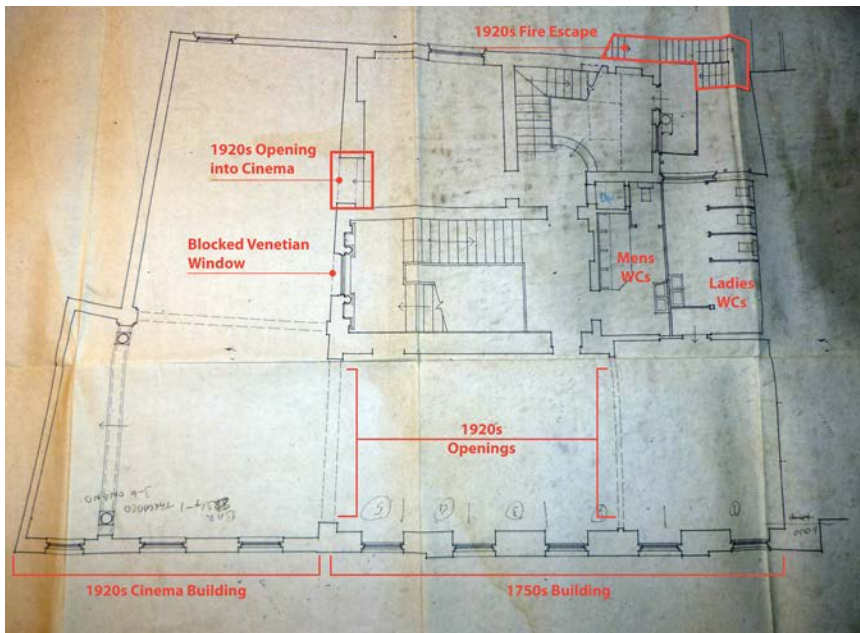
20TH CENTURY (continued)

1980

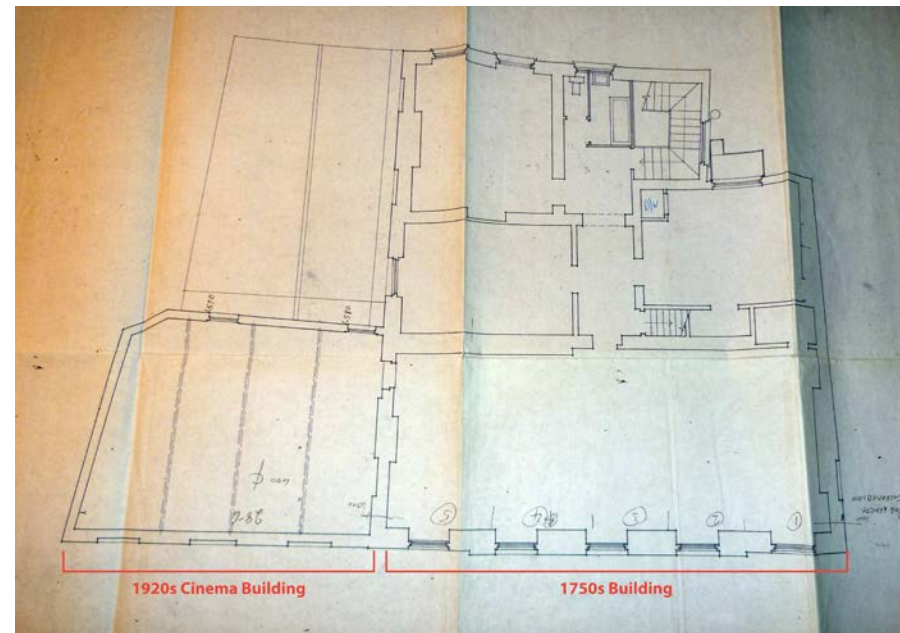
York City Council arranged for the sale of Fairfax House to the York Civic Trust, who purchased the site for £30,000 on the understanding that public funds would be raised for its restoration.

A survey of the building in 1982 shows the heavily altered configuration of the first and second floors before restoration.¹⁴

The York Civic Trust was established in 1946. The Trust recognised that the historic city was at risk of losing some of its most important features and set about raising funds for preservation projects around York. These have included: the restoration and re-gilding of the gas lamps around the Minster; the installation of commemorative plaques around the city; and the restoration of the Mansion House on St Helen's Square.



First floor as existing, 1982 (York Civic Trust)



Second floor as existing, 1982 (York Civic Trust)

¹⁴ Note that no ground floor survey plan from this date was found in the Fairfax House archives

20TH CENTURY (continued)

1982-84

Following a successful fundraising campaign headed by Chairman Dr John Shannon and the acquisition of the important Noel G. Terry Collection restoration work got under way. In total around £730,000 was raised, with contributions from the Leche Trust, J. B. Morrell Trust, the Pilgrim Trust and Rowntree Mackintosh.

The work was carried out under Bridlington-based architect Francis Johnson, who brought together a team of local craftsmen to carry out the extensive programme of work. Further details about the restoration are given on the following pages.

The house was furnished with the Noel G. Terry Collection which contained numerous pieces of period furniture and art. To supplement this, Johnson also designed two reproduction beds to occupy the restored bedrooms, there being a dearth of beds in the collection.

30th October 1984

Fairfax House was officially re-opened by HRH The Duchess of Kent following its restoration. From its earliest days, the museum focussed on depicting everyday life at Fairfax House, hosting an exhibition in 1992 that recreated an 18th century Christmas.

1980s Restoration: Decoration

An estimated 20,000 hours were devoted to cleaning the decorative plasterwork; £45,000 was spent stripping the ceilings and cornices alone. The intricate carving throughout the house had become clogged with decades of thick paint and the relief all but lost. This was stripped back to reveal the bare carving before being repainted. Restoration documents make reference to paint scrapes which implies that paint analysis was carried out at this time to inform the redecoration work, though any results of this analysis were not found during the research for this Conservation Statement.¹⁵

The Dining Room fireplace, which had previously been painted over, was stripped back to its original marble and damaged areas replaced, including the central relief depicting a wolf and crane.



¹⁵ York Civic Trust, undated, p. 12 and 'How the building was saved', document in Fairfax House archives, Folder 4, by Francis F Johnson, October 1983, p. 6

- 1 A second floor room before restoration (York Civic Trust)
- 2 Drawing Room before restoration (York Civic Trust)
- 3 Damage paintwork (York Civic Trust)
- 4 Dado rail restoration in progress (York Civic Trust)



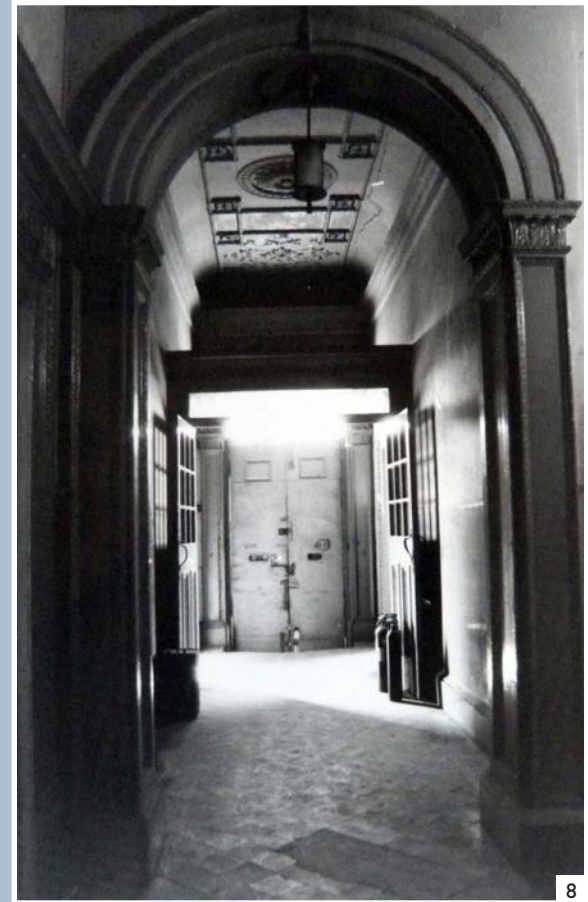
5



6



7



8

- 5 Library before restoration (York Civic Trust)
- 6 Dining Room before restoration (York Civic Trust)
- 7 Viscount's bedroom before restoration (York Civic Trust)
- 8 Hall before restoration (York Civic Trust)

1980s Restoration: Structure

The opening up of the first floor to create a dance hall on the Castlegate side of the building had weakened the 18th-century structure and meant that original walls, doorframes, cornices and two fireplaces had been lost. The lost partitions were re-instated, together with new mahogany doors, and period-appropriate fireplaces were installed in the Drawing Room and Saloon. The men's WCs on the first floor were removed and the room restored to its original dimensions to create a reproduction bedroom (the Viscount's bedroom today). The principal staircase, worn and weakened by decades of dance hall patrons, was repaired and reinforced with RSJs. Portions of the secondary staircase at the back of the house were also repaired.

The west wall of the room now set out as an 18th-century kitchen was re-built as the additions behind and adjacent to the original building had compromised its structural stability. The floorboards throughout the first floor were also replaced where necessary as decades of dance hall activity had severely weakened the mid-18th-century floor structure. In spite of this, the plaster ceilings on ground floor remained in relatively good condition.

The rear elevation was a confusion of 20th-century demolitions and additions. A section of the 1920 cinema was demolished as part of the restoration work in order to re-open the mid-18th-century Venetian window and permit natural light into the house from this angle once more. Sections of the rear elevation were re-built in reclaimed 18th-century bricks and a terrace was also created. A replica Georgian-era kitchen was created in a rear ground floor room, the original kitchens having been lost when the cinema was built over the site of the service wing.

The front elevation was severely weathered in places, most notably where a soft stone had been used in the detailing and had subsequently worn away. The 1920 cinema had been built in a sympathetic style, echoing the 18th-century fenestration, and a clue to the building's former use survived in the form of a large painted sign on the north gable end. Part of the ground floor façade was, however, rebuilt, which altered the entrance way from a flat screen to a curved one (see image 3).



- 1 Reinstating the portion of second staircase (York Civic Trust)
- 2 The Exhibition Room before the Saloon wall was re-instated (York Civic Trust)
- 3 The cinema entrance façade before the 1980s restoration and replacement of the flat door screen with a curved version (York Civic Trust)
- 4 Re-opening the Venetian window (York Civic Trust)



5



6



7

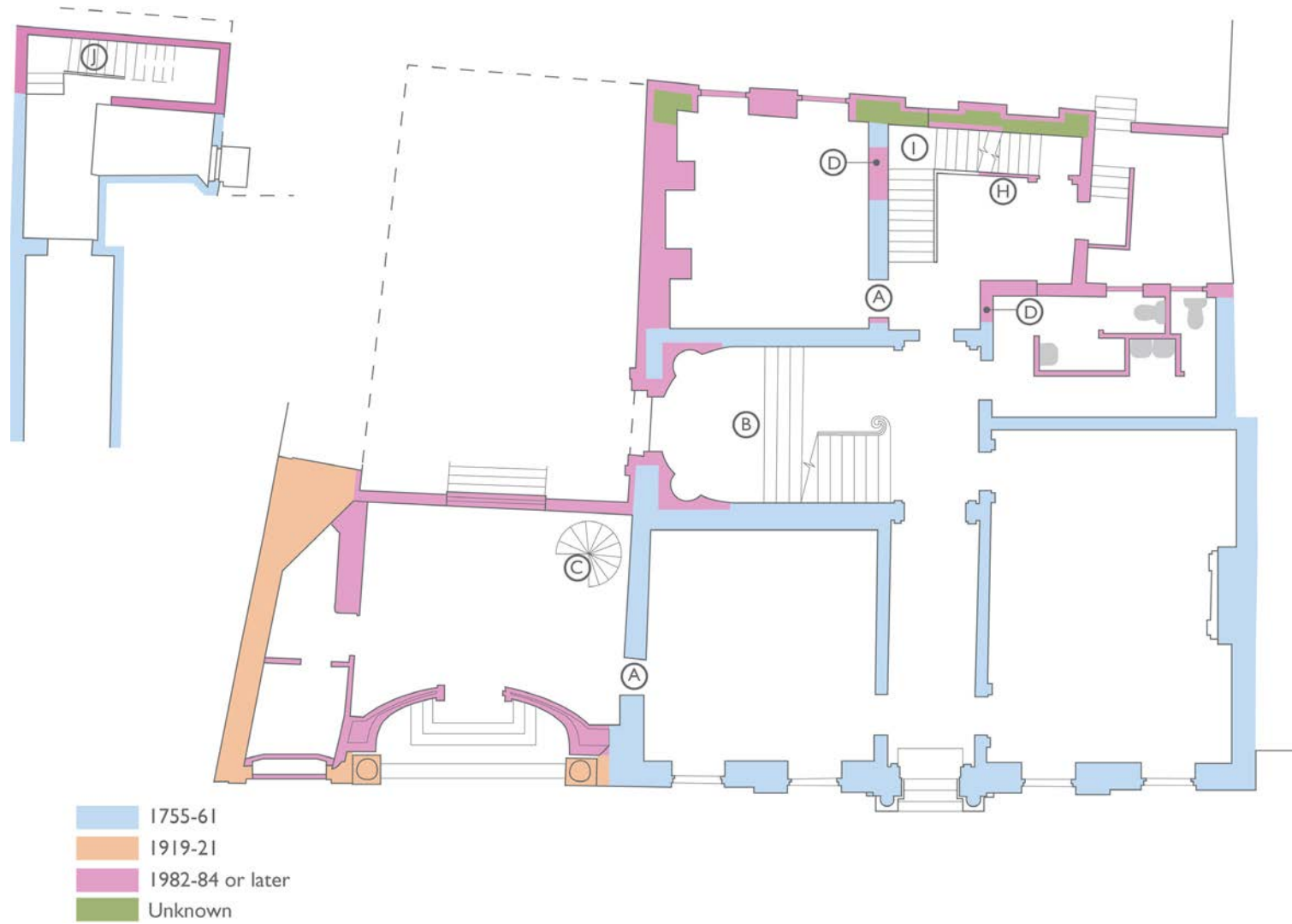


8

- 5 Re-enforcing the principal staircase (York Civic Trust)
- 6 Saloon through to the Drawing Room (York Civic Trust)
- 7 Revealed brick and timber wall (York Civic Trust)
- 8 1919-20 rear elevation before partial demolition (York Civic Trust)

3.2 HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT PLANS

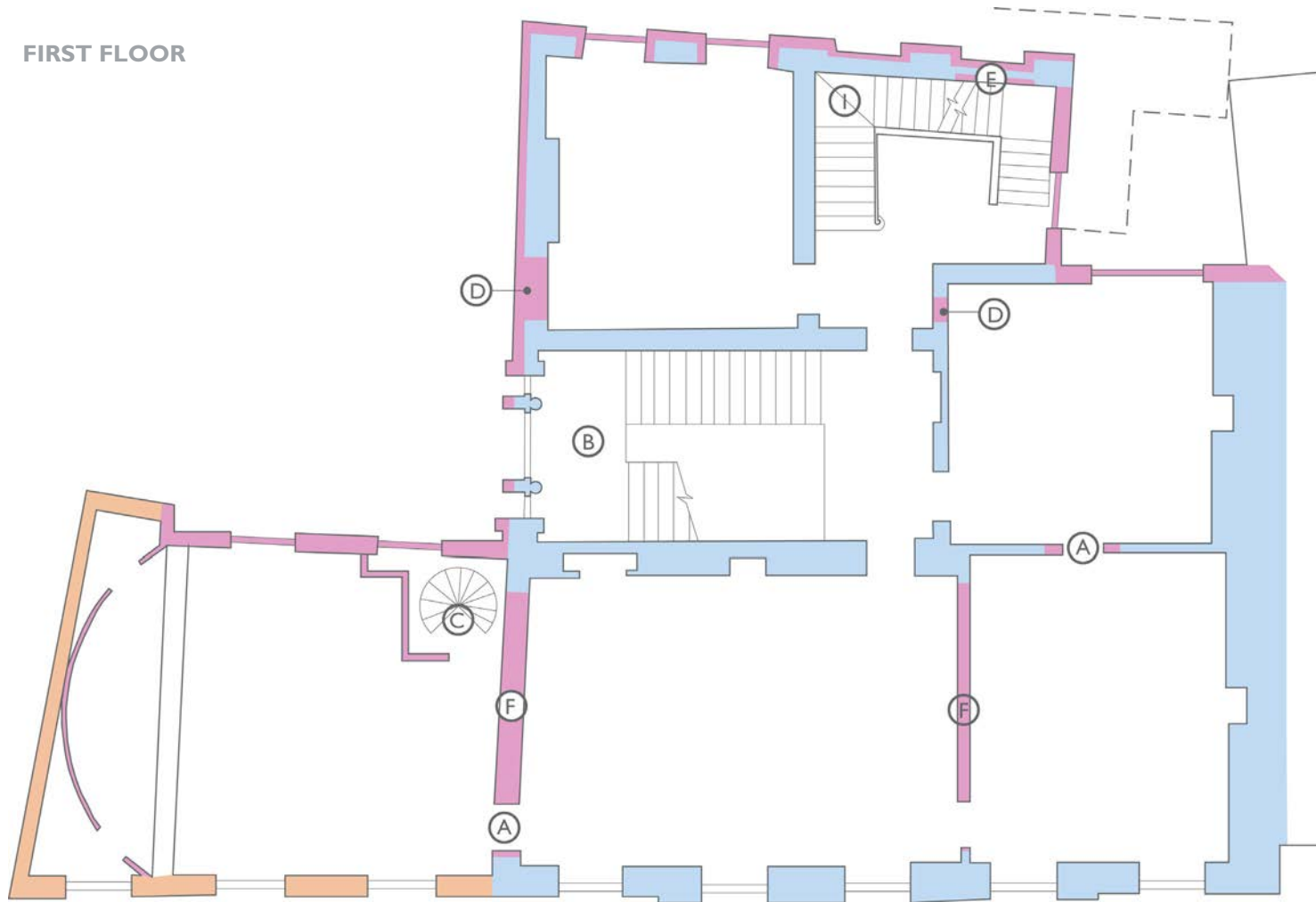
GROUND FLOOR



- 1755-61
- 1919-21
- 1982-84 or later
- Unknown

- (A)** Door opening created 1980s
- (B)** Staircase substantially repaired 1980s
- (C)** Staircase inserted 1980s or later
- (D)** 1980s blocking of a window
- (E)** Door created 1920. Blocking up of later windows
- (F)** 1980s walls to replace those removed in 1920s
- (G)** Front half of second floor; original layout partitions removed 19th or early 20th century to form large gallery area. Current partitions 1980s
- (H)** Indicates partition wall inserted under earlier staircase
- (I)** Lower Flights of the back stair removed 1920s and replaced 1980s
- (J)** Staircase added in 1980s restoration

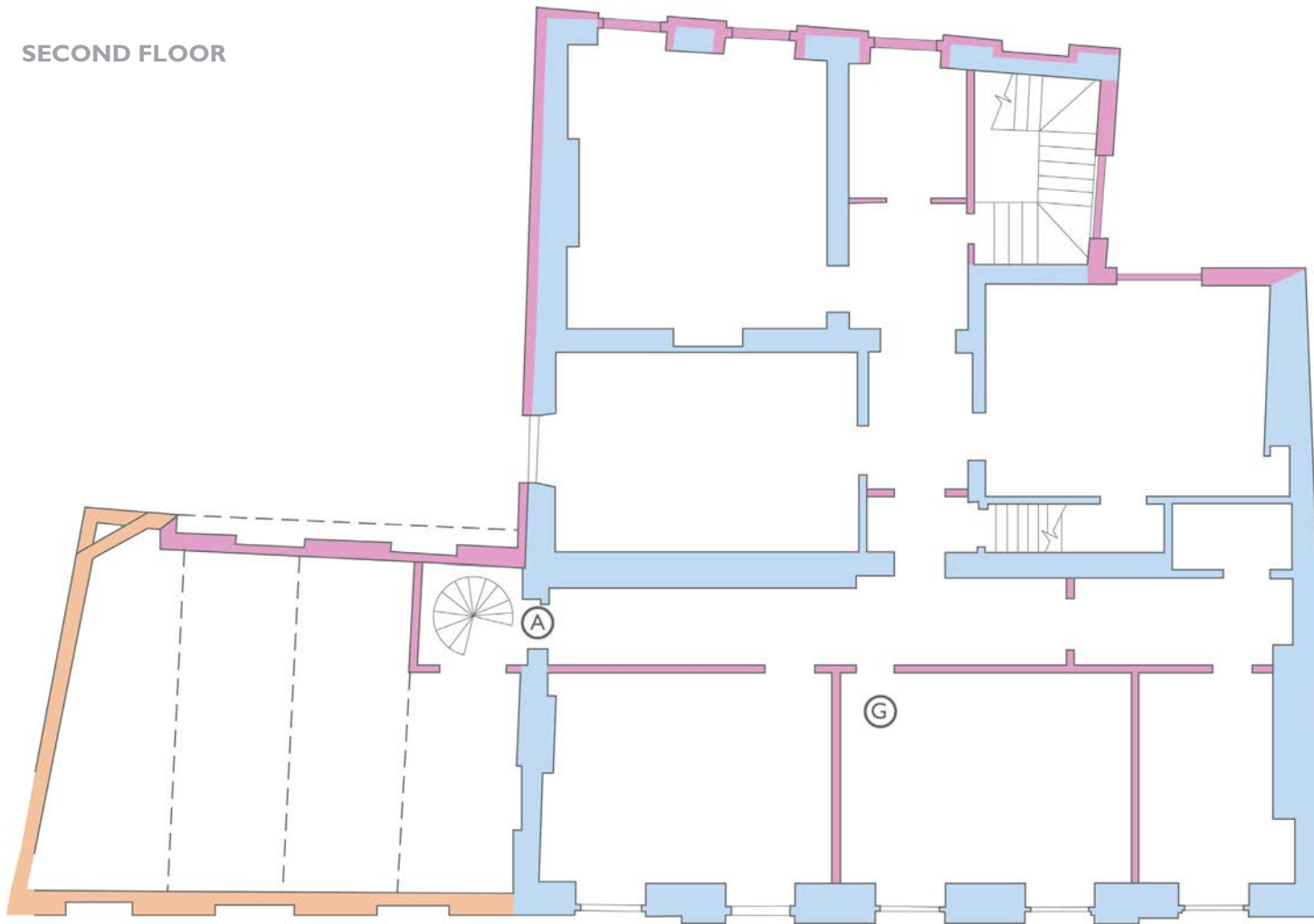
FIRST FLOOR



- 1755-61
- 1919-21
- 1982-84 or later
- Unknown

- A Door opening created 1980s
- B Staircase substantially repaired 1980s
- C Staircase inserted 1980s or later
- D 1980s blocking of a window
- E Door created 1920. Blocking up of later windows
- F 1980s walls to replace those removed in 1920s
- G Front half of second floor; original layout partitions removed 19th or early 20th century to form large gallery area. Current partitions 1980s
- H Indicates partition wall inserted under earlier staircase
- I Lower Flights of the back stair removed 1920s and replaced 1980s

SECOND FLOOR



- 1755-61
- 1919-21
- 1982-84 or later
- Unknown

- A Door opening created 1980s
- B Staircase substantially repaired 1980s
- C Staircase inserted 1980s or later
- D 1980s blocking of a window
- E Door created 1920. Blocking up of later windows
- F 1980s walls to replace those removed in 1920s
- G Front half of second floor; original layout partitions removed 19th or early 20th century to form large gallery area. Current partitions 1980s
- H Indicates partition wall inserted under earlier staircase
- I Lower Flights of the back stair removed 1920s and replaced 1980s

4.1 ASSESSING SIGNIFICANCE

Significance can be defined as the sum of the cultural values which make a building or site important to society. As well as the physical fabric, age and aesthetic value and more intangible qualities such as communal value, association with historic people and events and former uses are all important in defining the significance of a place.

Cultural significance is unique to each place. The following assessment considers the values outlined in English Heritage's Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance (2008) which recommends making assessments under the following categories: Evidential, Historical, Aesthetic and Communal Value. These characteristics have been considered when providing the assessments of significance in this section and are defined below. Guidance on assessing significance in the Heritage Lottery Fund's Conservation Plan Guidance (2012) has also been used as a guide.

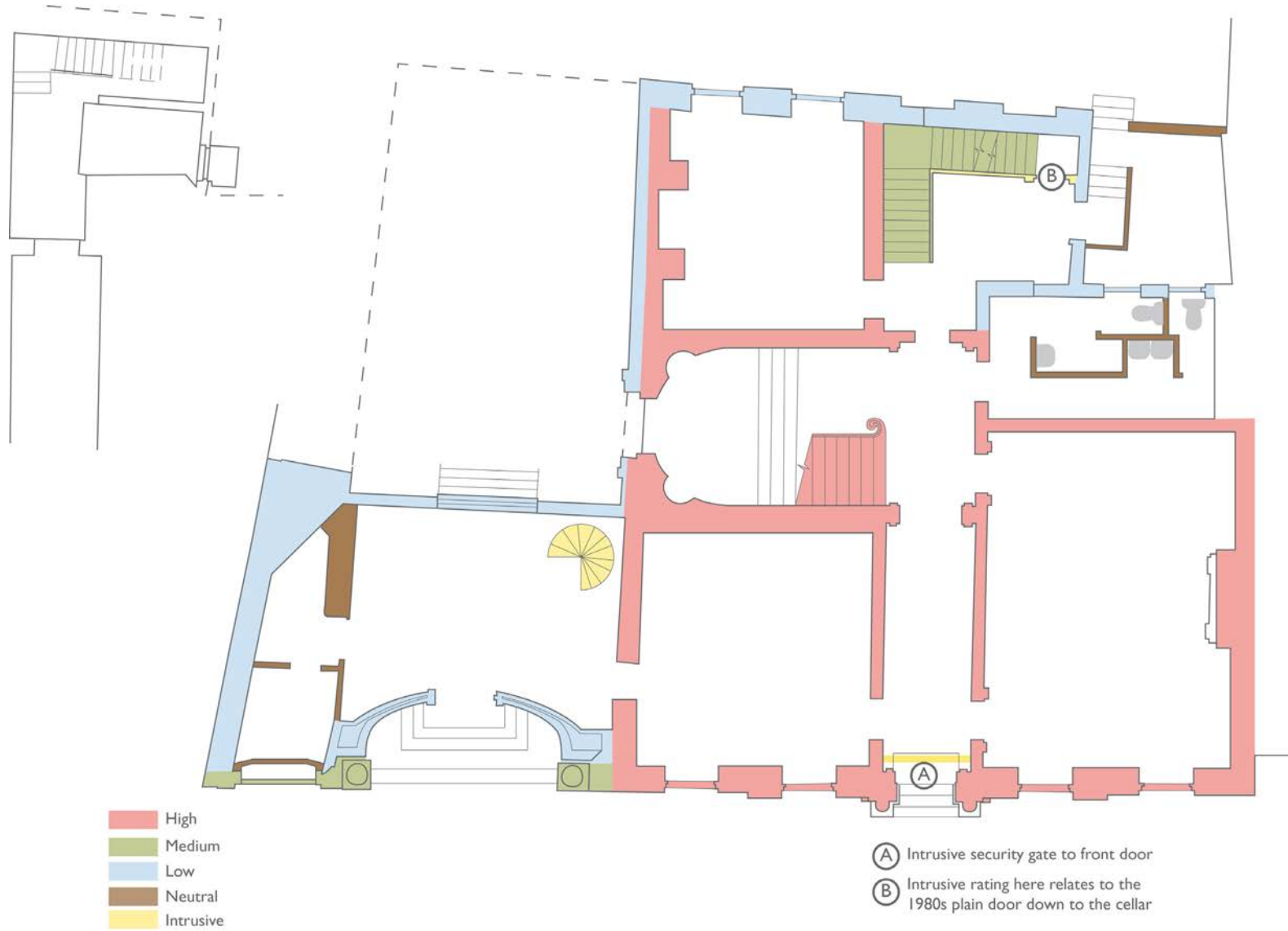
Evidential value	derives from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity.
Historical value	derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present.
Aesthetic value	derives from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place.
Communal value	derives from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory.

The significance of the study area is assessed using a number of significance ratings: High, Medium, Low, Neutral and Intrusive. The definitions of these ratings are provided below. Also provided is a significance plan, which gives a broad understanding of the overall significance the built fabric.

<p>High Significance</p>	<p>This is attributable to a theme, feature, building or space which has a high cultural value and forms an essential part of understanding the historic value of the site, while greatly contributing towards its character and appearance. Large scale alteration, removal or demolition should be strongly resisted.</p>
<p>Medium Significance</p>	<p>This is attributable to a theme, feature, building or space which has some cultural importance and helps define the character and appearance of the site. Efforts should be made to retain features of this level if possible, though a greater degree of flexibility in terms of alteration would be possible.</p>
<p>Low Significance</p>	<p>This is attributable to themes, features, buildings or spaces which have minor cultural importance and which might contribute to the character or appearance of the site. A greater degree of alteration or removal would be possible than for items of high or medium significance, though a low value does not necessarily mean a feature is expendable.</p>
<p>Neutral Significance</p>	<p>This relates to themes, spaces, buildings or features which have little or no cultural value and neither contribute to nor detract from the character or appearance of the site. Considerable alteration or change is likely to be possible.</p>
<p>Intrusive Significance</p>	<p>This relates to themes, features or spaces which actually detract from the values of the site and its character and appearance. Efforts should be made to remove these features.</p>

4.2 SIGNIFICANCE PLANS

GROUND FLOOR



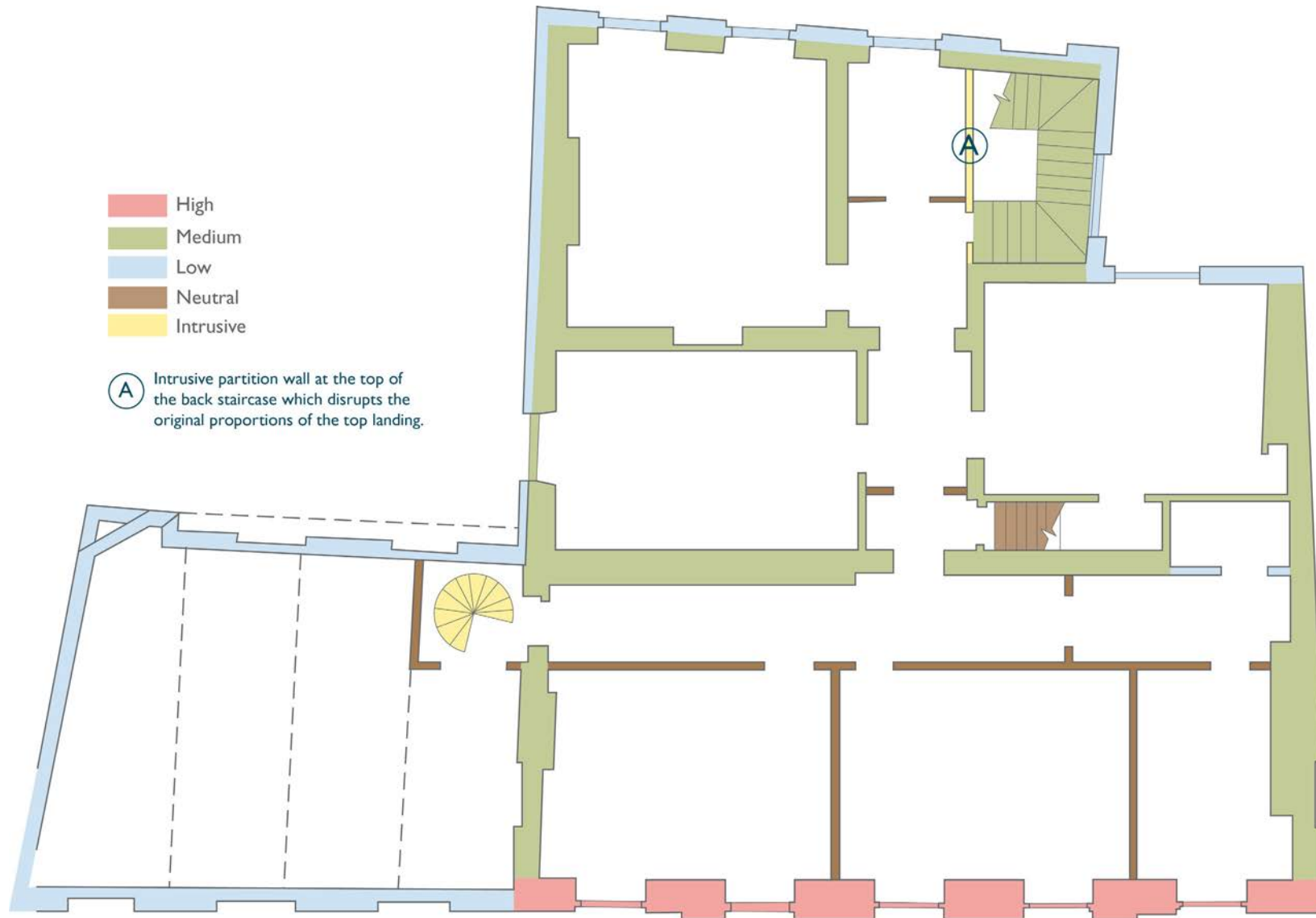
FIRST FLOOR

(A) Gib door inserted in 1980s could be described as intrusive as it confuses the original layout but has been assessed here as neutral since the gib design is sympathetic to the appearance of the rooms.

- High
- Medium
- Low
- Neutral
- Intrusive



SECOND FLOOR



4.3 SIGNIFICANCE STATEMENT

Fairfax House is a particularly fine example of an 18th century town house in York. It is a grand and elegant building with spectacular interiors. It was designed by a leading Yorkshire architect of the time, John Carr. The interiors remain substantially intact from their original 1760s design, resulting in a 'time capsule' for Georgian style, decor and taste. The building has an important history as a family home, particularly associated with the Fairfax family who lend the building its name today. Its later uses as a dance hall and cinema contribute to a rich history, while the story of its conservation and subsequent conversion to a museum demonstrate the skill of modern craftsmen and the importance of Fairfax House to the local community.

4.4 SIGNIFICANCE DISCUSSION

4.4.1 GEORGIAN ARCHITECTURE

Key Points

- 250-300 years old
- Built during a time of prosperity in York
- A particularly fine example of Georgian architecture in York

Fairfax House as we know it today dates from the 1760s refurbishment, though has a slightly older core dating from earlier in the 18th century. The building is therefore around 250-300 years old. It was built during the Georgian period when there was a marked increase in York's prosperity, which is reflected in the large number of fine Georgian buildings, both public and private, from this period. Fairfax House is always quoted as one of the finest town houses to survive.¹ The exterior is designed in typically restrained, yet elegant, Georgian manner. It had a prominent position on Castlegate, an important thoroughfare into and out of York (until Clifford Street later took over this role).

Typical Georgian houses in York were built of red brick with stone dressings. They used Classical proportions with regular façades containing sash windows and Classical detailing. The Mansion House is one such example. It was built as a house for the Lord Mayor in 1725 and is constructed of painted brick with painted stone dressings. Like Fairfax House the building is three storeys high and five bays wide. Both feature sash windows, quoins and a central pediment, though Mansion House is slightly grander because of its high status as a public building.



1 The Mansion House, St. Helen's Square, York, 1725 (© Stanley Howe)
2 The principal façade of Fairfax House



¹ For example, Jenkins, 2003, p.905

4.4.2 JOHN CARR

Key Points

- Associated with John Carr who redesigned the external façade and the interiors of the house

John Carr (1723-1807) was a Yorkshire-born architect. He is believed to have trained as a stonecutter under his father before joining the family business as a building contractor. He worked as the county surveyor to both the West Riding and North Riding of Yorkshire. Carr was mostly Yorkshire-based, where his most significant work includes the interiors at Kirby Hall and the grandstand at York Racecourse. He was invited to join the London Architects' Club in 1791, an indication of his status as a well-respected architect. His designs took their influences from the classical design books of Sebastiano Serlio, Andrea Palladio and Sir William Chambers, and are typified by Carr's minute attention to detail in their construction.



The Conservation Area Appraisal describes Carr's work in York: "Local architects, none more so than John Carr, oversaw the construction of houses characterised inside and out by high-quality detailing such as joinery and plasterwork, produced by highly-skilled local craftsmen according to identifiable local styles. For example, a 'York School' of plasterers, some of whom were Italian craftsmen, produced exuberant 'Rococo' plasterwork."²

A number of other buildings in York have been attributed to Carr, such as:

- Peasholme House, St. Saviour's Place, 1752
- York, No. 47, Bootham, 1752
- York, Castlegate House, Castlegate, 1762-3
- York, Garforth House, No. 54 Micklegate, c. 1755-7

Externally each displays the typical Georgian characteristics and are built with red brick and stone dressings.



- 1 Castlegate House by John Carr, 1762-63
- 2 Garforth House, attributed to John Carr, c.1755-57
(© Gordon Hatton)

2 *York Central Historic Core Conservation Area Appraisal*, p. 47

4.4.3 INTERIORS

Key Points

- Aesthetic value from the highly decorative and dramatic interior schemes
- Potential association with Joseph Cortese
- High quality of craftsmanship for joinery, plasterwork and wrought iron work
- The interiors are a time capsule of a set of 1760s interiors

The interiors of Fairfax House with their highly decorative plasterwork and joinery schemes are one of the key significances of the building. They provide a dramatic setting and survive largely intact. The quality of the craftsmanship of the plasterwork and joinery is still evident today. The rooms provide a time capsule of a set of 1760s interiors. The stripping back of the joinery paintwork in the 1980s has revealed the particularly fine detail of the decorative carving. The dramatic main staircase is the focal point of the house, around which the other decorative rooms are arranged. The double-height space with Venetian window, framed by Siena marble columns, and elaborate plasterwork is highly dramatic. It was described by historian Gervase Jackson-Stops as “a minor architectural masterpiece of its age”.³ The wrought ironwork on the main staircase, by Leeds ironworker Maurice Tobin, has an elegant figure of eight and interlacing scroll pattern, similar to an example seen at Aske Hall near Richmond, Yorkshire.

Elaborate interior decoration was evidently a typical feature of Carr designs, as can be demonstrated at Garforth House⁴ (1757) on Micklegate where many of the interiors display similarities with Fairfax House. For example the main staircase also has a Venetian window similar in appearance to that at Fairfax. Links to images of the interior are given below (images not reproduced due to copyright restrictions).

Doorcases	http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=125659
Doorcases	http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=125660
Fireplaces	http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=125664
Fireplaces	http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=125666
Staircases	http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=125681
Ceilings	http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=125763
Venetian Window	http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=125683

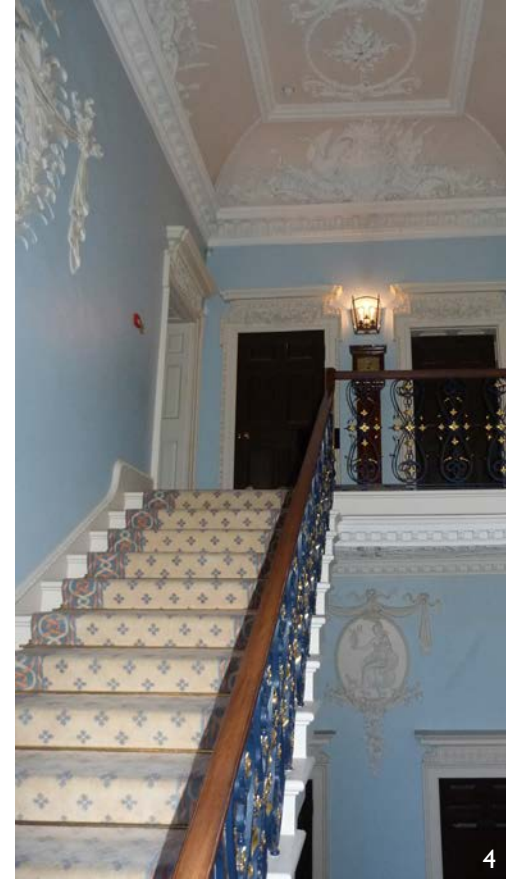
The plasterwork at Fairfax House is thought to have been carried out by Stuccoist Joseph Cortese who spent most of his career working in Yorkshire, often with Carr. Other works attributed to him include:

- The Entrance Hall at Gilling Castle, Yorkshire
- The Dining Room at Burton Constable, East Yorkshire
- The Grand Salon at Somerset House, Halifax (another Carr House)
- The Courtroom at the Guildhall, Beverley
- Heath Hall, Wakefield

These examples demonstrate Cortese's skill as a craftsman. As known examples of his work they provide an important evidence base for further study in the future to confirm whether or not the interiors at Fairfax are also by him.

3 <http://www.fairfaxhouse.co.uk/?idno=712>, accessed 24/04/14

4 For further details see <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=125587>, accessed 10/02/14



- 1 Plasterwork in the Library at Fairfax House
- 2 Neptune, Somerset House, Halifax, by Cortese (© Humphrey Bolton)
- 3 Britannia, Somerset House, Halifax, by Cortese (© Humphrey Bolton)
- 4 Detail of the carving above one of the doors on the main stairs.
- 5 The Guildhall Courtroom, Beverley, by Cortese (© Mjr511)

4.4.4 THE FAIRFAX'S HOUSE

Key Points

- Key historical association with the family and a link to their beliefs through symbolism in the decoration of the house.
- Used as a house for the first hundred years of its life and built fabric that is still very much recognisable as this use.

Fairfax House is important historically because of its association with the Fairfax family who created the house that we know today. Their name is now strongly associated with the building due to the naming of the museum after the family in the 1980s. The Fairfaxes were a prominent family in the local area and have been the most influential family associated with the house, having commissioned the building and the elaborate interior decorative schemes.

Their beliefs and ways of life are enshrined in the decoration of the interiors, through symbolic references to their Catholic faith and support for the King. For example:

- the closed rosebud in the plasterwork of the main staircase is thought to symbolise the unfulfilled potential of the Stuart, 'Jacobite' cause
- The figure of Architecture Militaire is occasionally used to symbolise support for King and Country

- A putto holding a pair of hearts with a rose is a metaphor for the Catholic faith and a flaming torch held in the putto's other hand casts light on the 'true faith'⁵

The early history of the building was as a house, initially for the Fairfaxes but also for others throughout the 18th and 19th century. This was the use it was originally designed for and which is evident in the remaining rooms of the house.

4.4.5 LATER HISTORY

Key Points

- Other uses later show changing nature of the city centre and fashions over time
- The dance hall and nightclub use is within living memory and some may have fond memories of the use
- 20th century uses resulted in the loss of some original fabric
- An interesting and inspiration story of restoration and conversion into a museum

The later history of the building as a gentlemen's club, cinema and dance hall and a museum all show how changes to society and the fashions of the time influence the use of buildings. In the 19th century the suburbs of cities were growing, meaning large city centre town houses were often converted to other uses.

Gentlemen's clubs were popular leisure facilities of the 19th century and Fairfax House would have lent itself well to the purpose. The dance hall and attached cinema shows a new type of entertainment venue established in the early 20th century. The house is even associated with WWII, since soldiers were billeted there during this time, showing how widespread the effect of the war was on buildings in England.

The post war use of Fairfax House as a dance hall and nightclub is within living memory and there are people who have nostalgic memories of the place. This use may be fondly remembered but it did leave a destructive mark on the building, in the form of the removal of walls and damage to decorative features. These have now been replaced with sympathetic reproductions of the original walls, though still means that some original fabric has been lost.

The history of the building's conservation in the 1980s is also important, showing how a Civic Trust can rescue an historic building and turn it into a successful museum. It also demonstrates that the building is loved and valued highly by local people who contributed to its restoration and value it as a heritage attraction within the city of York.

4.4.6 EXTERNAL APPEARANCE

Key Points

- The main façade is restrained, elegant and finely proportioned
- The cinema entrance is opulent, yet sympathetic to the main house
- The rear façade is a sympathetic Georgian style

The principal front façade of Fairfax House has important aesthetic value. It has an appearance of grandeur and elegance due to its Georgian design. Its height and position at the end of Castlegate make it a prominent building in the streetscape. As with most Georgian townhouses, all the effort of design went into the front façade, meaning the parts of the side elevations that are visible and originally the rear elevation are plainer in design.

The current rear elevations of both the main house and the 1920s extension were refaced in the 1980s. This was done in a Georgian style sympathetic to the house and does not detract from the building.

The cinema extension from the 1920s has an elaborate ground floor, which demonstrates some of the opulence and enjoyment of visiting the cinema. The upper floors were designed in a Georgian style and matched the proportions of the adjacent main house, meaning the extension is sympathetic to the original block.

5 York Civic Trust, 2009, p.26



1 The front elevation of Fairfax House on Castlegate (courtesy of Fairfax House)

2 The 1920s cinema entrance

4.4.7 SETTING

Key Points

- An historically significant thoroughfare which retains a number of fine historic buildings
- Some 20th century development on Castlegate and the appearance of the neighbouring car park mar the setting of Fairfax House.
- Some complementary historic buildings on Castlegate
- Pleasant courtyard garden to the rear is marred by the large scale late 20th century shopping centre which overlooks Fairfax House

Fairfax House sits on Castlegate, once a main thoroughfare into and out of the city. The thoroughfare was in existence before the Norman castle was constructed and afterwards become the main route to the castle. Though rebuilding of the structures on the street has taken place, the narrow medieval, or even earlier, building plots still survive.

Clifford Street to the west has taken over the role of Castlegate as a more major thoroughfare for vehicles in this area of the city but Castlegate still remains a key pedestrian and tourist route from the city centre to the Castle and of course Fairfax House. There has been some deterioration

of the streetscape scene in the 20th century, including some plain modern buildings and the large car park to the south-east. There are, however, other attractive historic buildings which add interest to the street scene, such as Castlegate House (also by Carr) and St. Mary's Church. No.29 adjacent to Fairfax House to the right is built in red brick and also uses Georgian sash windows and a cornice. It is therefore sympathetic, yet subservient in its simpler design and smaller size, to Fairfax House.

No.31, now a restaurant, is the unusual surviving design office of the important early Victorian York architect, G.T. Andrews.

To the rear of the house is a small courtyard which provides something of a buffer between the house and the modern development beyond. However, the shopping centre is large and bulky, giving a poor setting in general to the rear of Fairfax House.

4.4.8 EVIDENTIAL VALUE

Key Points

- Documentary research has the potential to find more about the uses of the rooms.
- Built fabric is relatively clearly datable.
- Low potential for archaeology of the rear service quarters. Evidence of these is lost and little understood.

There is potential to learn a lot more about the history and function of Fairfax House. There are a number of questions relating to room uses (described in more detail in section 5.2 below). Documentary research could provide more data in order to more clearly understand how the building originally functioned. While the existing built fabric is relatively clearly datable, the extent and form of the demolished rear service wing is not known. Further research into this part of the building could also provide a better understanding of the original 18th century house.

Following the substantial intervention for the Coppergate development and the previous cinema block, there remains low potential for archaeology to the rear of the building. There has been less disturbance to the ground underneath the house itself so there may be higher potential for below ground archaeology. However, these areas are unlikely to be disturbed by any future development.

5

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The following section provides an outline understanding of the risks and vulnerabilities currently affecting Fairfax House, or which would imminently have an impact on the building with regards to potential future change to the built fabric or to uses. These are based on observations while on site and discussions with Hannah Phillip, the Director of Fairfax House. This assessment is not intended to be a detailed study on all aspects of the management, use and potential future development of Fairfax House. It is, however, intended to form a foundation for understanding the general risks with regards to conservation, management and other issues and as such form the basis for Conservation Aims discussed in the following section. This section should also be referenced in advance of any feasibility studies or options appraisals to be carried out for the building.

5.1 USE

The historic house museum use of Fairfax House is appropriate for the building. However, there are some areas which could benefit from improved facilities or additional space:

- The office accommodation for museum staff is limited and outdated. It also takes up valuable space within the main house which could otherwise be used for exhibitions.
- There is only one room available for exhibition space and interpretation.
- There is no lecture theatre or space for events.
- There is no education space.
- There is no café.
- There are no visitor WCs.
- There is no lift.

The current space within the existing building is limited for the provision of these additional facilities. However, the possible acquisition of No.29 Castlegate would mean the office space could be moved out of the main house. Additionally, the flat on the second floor is no longer an insurance requirement for security purposes. This means that it could also be eliminated, freeing up space for alternative facilities on the second floor.

The poor setting to the rear of the building, the fact that the whole of the rear façade has been refaced and the precedent provided by the historic service wing means that it would be possible to provide an extension to the rear of Fairfax House in order to provide more space for additional facilities, without compromising historical authenticity or aesthetics.

5.2 INTERPRETATION AND GAPS IN KNOWLEDGE

During the 1980s refurbishment of the property some assumptions were made about the original room uses within Fairfax House. The main questions that still exist with regards to room use are outlined below.

- The ground floor kitchen is a mock-Georgian kitchen constructed in in the 1980s. The kitchen would have previously been located in the rear service range (demolished in the 1920s). The original use of this room is unknown.
- It is possible that the Saloon on the first floor was actually the Dining Room. However, that raises the question of the alternative use of the current 'Dining Room' on the ground floor. Both of these rooms have motifs in the plasterwork ceilings of vines, fruit and general 'abundance' themes that would be appropriate for Dining Rooms.
- It is known that there was a chapel somewhere in the building but it is not known where.
- It is not certain whether the two rooms on the first floor currently designated as bedrooms were actually used for this function. An extract from the Fairfax papers (see the Furnishings Report) also describes dressing rooms and a closet somewhere in the building but these are not apparent on the current floor plan. Were the bedrooms actually on the second floor with the servants' bedrooms in the rear range?
- At the time of the 1980s restoration the front half of the second floor plan had been opened up into one large 'gallery' space. It was subsequently divided into the corridor and office arrangement that exists today. The original layout of this area is not known.

These gaps in knowledge could be filled with more detailed research into typical Carr/Cortese room decorations, typical Georgian town house layouts and potential service wing plans.

Other gaps in knowledge include the following:

- What is the extent of the surviving fabric of the house which John Carr adapted to form the building we see today? Detailed building fabric analysis by a buildings archaeologist or possibly through localised opening up works could reveal further information about the historic fabric.
- Little is known about the previous buildings that stood on the site or their occupants. Further archival research could reveal more information.

- Though the woodwork in the house was subject to very thorough stripping of paint in the 1980s, there is the potential for traces of historic paint to remain. Surface analysis could give clues as to the historic decorative schemes within the interiors.

This research would then inform any future reinterpretation strategy. Further sources for investigation are outlined in appendix B.

5.3 CONDITION

The external fabric of the building is subject to a maintenance programme by York Conservation Trust which includes external painting, gutter and downpipe maintenance. This also includes regular inspection of services, such as for the boiler. Fairfax House Museum is responsible for interior building maintenance including painting works, cleaning of the collection and building, PAT testing of electrical equipment, fire and security safety checks and so forth. A regular maintenance programme has not been drawn up into a single itemised document or maintenance plan as the various responsibilities fall under two different bodies (the Trust and the Museum) who have different schedules of works. This would be beneficial in the future in order to provide a checklist and for ease of transfer should staff members change.

A Dilapidation Survey was carried out in 2012.¹ While the interior was noted as well maintained and in fair condition there were nevertheless important issues which needed addressing, especially with regards to cracks in the stucco works. Items requiring further attention were noted as follows:

Within a 2 year period

- Tenon joints of the heavy Saloon doors are pulling apart
- Back stair sisal stair runner edge is fraying
- The effectiveness of Ultra-Violet Filter screen to the windows requires checking
- Investigation as to whether movement cracks are historic or new
- Further investigation into the bearing of some of the ceiling/floor structures and adhesion of the plaster, together with tower scaffold access to the underside of a number of ceilings to test for movement and observe if cracking is a result of vertical shear or historical 'stretching'.

¹ Purcell, Dec 2012, *Fairfax House, Castlegate, York, Interior Dilapidations Survey and Report on the Public Spaces of the House*

Within a 3-5 year period

- A planned programme of repair, refurbishment and redecoration
- Cracks to the plaster ceilings repaired by a conservation specialist
- Replacement of inappropriate brass switch sockets and reduction of trailing cables
- Consideration of a replacement smoke detection system which is less visually intrusive

Though the current environmental conditions are generally stable, there are issues with the heating system which cannot be easily controlled, resulting in higher temperatures that dry out the collection. As noted in the Dilapidation Survey the UV filters on the window panes require checking as to their effectiveness.

5.4 COLLECTIONS

Fairfax House has a *Collections Statement of Significance* and an *Acquisitions and Disposals Policy* (both recently updated) for the items of furniture and other household artefacts that are held by the museum. It is not within the scope of this Conservation Statement to provide details of the condition of the collection. However, of relevance is the display of the collection in relation to the room uses. At present some items may not be appropriate for the current room use. As part of further research into original room uses and decoration, further analysis of the collection and redisplay, including introducing a rotations policy where there are duplicate items of furniture, could give a more accurate presentation of the furniture collection.

5.5 PUBLICITY AND AWARENESS

Fairfax House is within York's central pedestrian-friendly streetscape and benefits from the Castle car park being located adjacent and St. George's Field car park (with coach parking) being located nearby. There is also a park and ride drop off at Clifford's Tower. Therefore access to the museum for tourists is good and many pass Fairfax House as they pass along Castlegate, on their way to the city centre. However, there are issues with Fairfax House's street presence on Castlegate. Due to the building being listed, there are restrictions on signage which makes visibility difficult. The main entrance in the 1920s extension is also set back under an arch and up steps, which reduces its visibility.

The museum markets itself through a variety of initiatives. There is a good website which gives information for visitors, notification of events and details of the education programme, group visits and hiring spaces in the building. Fairfax House also has links with Visit York, the Historic Houses Association and Yorkshire Great Houses, Castles and Gardens. These organisations all offer joint tourist trails, two for one offers and pass systems for visiting more than one property. Fairfax House also takes part in local events such as the York Food Festival and Illuminating York.

5.6 ACCESSIBILITY

Fairfax House lacks any level access into the building. All the entrances require negotiation of flights of steps. There is also no lift to give ease of access to other floors of the house. Once on each floor, however, the levels are flat and doors relatively wide.

Given the substantial rebuilding of the rear of the house during the 1980s and the relatively poor setting, it could be possible to provide a sensitively designed lift to the rear of the property which gave access to all three floors. This would enable visitors and staff to use all floors of the building. The issue of gaining access from the street would have to be sensitively thought out. Ideally disabled visitors should enter the building through the same entrance point as the able bodied. A platform lift would be more appropriate at the entrance within the 1920s extension rather than the main front door. However, this will still have to be designed carefully to avoid visual intrusion into the main façade and street scene.

As part of a refurbishment and reinterpretation programme additions could also include a hearing loop and accessible interpretation materials, such as tactile displays.

5.7 MANAGING SENSITIVE CHANGE

Within historic buildings there are often conflicts between the conservation of important built fabric and the need to upgrade the building to perform a new function or improve an existing one. Changes may be necessary in order to achieve better visitor facilities, better staff accommodation, enhanced exhibition provision and improved access for all.

The challenge will be to carry out these changes in a sensitive, limited and potentially reversible manner in order to maintain the heritage values and significances of Fairfax House. As a general rule, those areas which are of high significance (as identified in section 4) will have less flexibility for change, while those with medium, low or neutral significance will be able to accommodate more change, as long as this is sympathetic to the heritage values of the building and contributes to keeping it in a long term sustainable use.

6

CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT AIMS

The following section provides a set of general conservation and management aims, which are intended to act as a foundation for any future change and development of Fairfax House. These aims have been written based on the risks and opportunities discussed in section 5 above, as well as from discussions with the client and an understanding of the proposed future use of the site. Fairfax House has its own Vision Statement for the future operation of the museum and a Project Vision for the expansion plan. These are reproduced adjacent and should be used as a basis for decisions regarding the conservation and future care of the Fairfax House.

ACTION PLAN

The conservation and management aims contained within the table on the following page gives a series of recommendations and next steps for the conservation and enhancement of the overall heritage value of Fairfax House. The aims for Fairfax House contained within the action plan should be referenced and implemented when considering any future change to the building. It should be noted, however; that this is not a detailed set of guidance or recommendations for the site. These should be developed and should form part of a more detailed Conservation Management Plan at a later date. The Action Plan is a list of considerations which are a top priority in the overall management, maintenance and development of the museum.

VISION STATEMENT

Recognising the national significance of Fairfax House and the Noel Terry collection contained within it, and acknowledging the House's important connections with the Fairfax family and architect, John Carr, our vision is to be a leading historic house museum and inspiring educational resource, promoting and enabling the understanding, appreciation and study of the 18th century and the Georgian townhouse within the regional context of York.

PROJECT VISION

Our vision is to unlock the stories within Fairfax House by opening up to public access more historic areas within this remarkable Georgian townhouse to reveal its and York's rich eighteenth century heritage. By relocating auxiliary activities and office spaces into the adjacent property (29 Castlegate), the project will also enable the conservation of this nationally significant, grade I listed building, while creating a vibrant and engaging museum that allows this special place to be accessed by new and diverse audiences, and enjoyed through greater opportunities for participation, education and engagement.

Using its unique architectural features, important York city-centre townhouse setting, outstanding collections and archival resources, Fairfax House will establish itself as a nationally-recognised centre for the presentation and study of 18th century urban life that will be underpinned by a rich public and education programme.

ACTION PLAN

STANDARDS

When planning alterations to Fairfax House, works should be informed by the assessment of significance contained within this Conservation Statement to ensure that change retains and if possible enhances the significance of the building.

Works to Fairfax House should be carried out using best practice conservation methods and materials.

All conservation/repair work should be undertaken by suitably qualified professionals familiar with historic buildings.

Any future refurbishment of Fairfax House should provide accessible solutions in order to prevent barriers to movement and ensure access for all. Accessible solutions should be designed to be sympathetic to the character and appearance of the historic building.

Changes to the building should be adequately researched beforehand to ensure that proposals respect the historic fabric.

Changes to the building should be recorded, documented and stored in an appropriate archive so future generations are aware of the alterations that have occurred.

ACTIONS

Carry out the recommendations for maintenance and repair which were outlined in the 2012 dilapidation survey.

Commission additional detailed research on the uses and presentation of the rooms, both of Fairfax House specifically and of comparable Georgian town house examples, to understand the historic functions of each of the spaces as fully as possible. Use this research to inform a reinterpretation strategy of Fairfax House that is as accurate as possible.

When preparing an HLF Stage 2 bid, commission a full Conservation Management Plan using this Conservation Statement as a foundation. This should include:

- A more detailed assessment of significance for the building
- A gazetteer of all rooms within the building, incorporating the information included within section 2.3.3 of this report
- Incorporate the additional research on the historic uses and presentation of the building
- Expansion of the issues and risks associated with any proposed change
- Detailed conservation policies and recommendations

Commission a buildings archaeologist to investigate in more detail the extent of the fabric remaining from the original pre-Carr house.

Investigate whether the dropped ceiling in the staff WCs conceals historic cornices above. This may have to involve limited opening up works.

Commission paint research to see if any fragments of historic paint colours survive which can contribute to the reinterpretation and representation of the rooms.

Commission any other relevant reports which would be useful in managing future change at Fairfax House. If not already prepared this should include:

- Interpretation Strategy
- Financial and Business Plan
- Management and Maintenance Plan
- Activity Plan

Engage with stakeholders and the local community. This will include, for example, English Heritage, the Local Authority Planning Department, Georgian Society, local history societies or interest groups, and any other relevant interested parties. Engagement may take the form of workshops, publications, website or any other viable source of obtaining information. This process will inform delivery of objectives for Fairfax House and its future use as a museum and visitor attraction.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: BIBLIOGRAPHY

APPENDIX B: ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

APPENDIX C: LISTED BUILDING DESCRIPTIONS

APPENDIX A: BIBLIOGRAPHY

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APPENDIX B:

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Borthwick Institute

This archive has been contacted regarding any possible additional sources that might shed further light on the history of Fairfax House. A response from archivist Dr Paul Dryburgh in January 2014 is outlined below:

The Borthwick does hold the archive of the firm of Atkinson Brierley which, as you may know, emanated from the business of John Carr, the architect of Fairfax House. Frustratingly, there are no plans or correspondence concerning the house in that archive. There also appears to be nothing bar company records in our Terry's archive that might relate to the use of Noel Terry's furniture. We do hold the archive of the York Georgian Society whose minutes might throw something up about the building's state and future in the early 20th century. Otherwise, I'm afraid we don't hold anything on Fairfax House as far as we know.

York City Archives

From January 2014 until the end of the year York City Archives are closed for an extensive programme of refurbishment. It is possible that there may be some additional material not listed on the online catalogue, however the card catalogue has been removed for storage and the archivists have therefore been unable to check for any relevant holdings. The Archives re-open in September 2014 and may be a possible repository for material that informs a historical understanding of Fairfax House.

North Yorkshire County Record Office

A continued in-depth search of the Newburgh Priory Archive at the County Record Office may highlight additional historical sources relating to Fairfax House. Although a great deal has already been gleaned from this collection (Ref. ZDV) there may still be more to find.

RIBA Archives

A search of the Royal Institute of British Architects Archives catalogue does not return any known John Carr drawings relating to Fairfax House. There are, however, a number of drawings relating to other known Carr buildings, a study of which may be beneficial to understanding the architect's approach to the design of town houses.

English Heritage Archives

English Heritage have collated a building file (BF060283) on Fairfax House, which contains a measured drawing, a report and photographs (dates not listed in the catalogue). This is not likely to reveal any new information but may be worth consulting. Additionally, the Red Box collection at the archives is likely to contain historic photographs of the building.

Name: FAIRFAX HOUSE

List entry Number: 1259337

Grade: I

Date first listed: 14-Jun-1954

Date of most recent amendment: Not applicable to this List entry.

Two houses, now amalgamated. No.27 c1744, remodelled 1760-62; No.25 probably early C19. Both houses amalgamated and remodelled as cinema and ballroom in 1920; restored as two houses 1982-84. No.27 remodelled in C18 possibly by John Carr for the 9th Viscount Fairfax of Emley; C20 restoration by Francis Johnson for the York Civic Trust. MATERIALS: No.27 of orange brick in Flemish bond on stepped plinth of painted stone; painted stone doorcase, quoins and dressings. Rear rebuilt in C19 clamp bricks in English bond. Brick stacks at each side of hipped slate roof. No.25 has ground floor of white terracotta and upper storeys of Flemish bond brick painted to match brick of No.27; modillion eaves cornice of timber to slate roof. EXTERIOR: both fronts are 2-storeyed with attics. No.25 has 3 bays; No.27 5 bays, 3 centre bays breaking forward beneath closed pediment. Cinema front retained in No.25, of sunk-panel pilasters enriched with fruit pendants carrying architrave and frieze of recessed panels between acanthus consoles. Original entrance, flanked by fluted and garlanded Ionic columns, altered to concave screen, approached by steps, containing glazed and panelled double doors beneath radial-glazed fanlight; to left, former doorway now blocked by small-pane window with semicircular fanlight, in moulded arch with shell keyblock. Treatment of upper storey windows and other detail matches that of No.27. No.27 has central pedimented doorcase of attached Doric columns on tall stepped pedestals. Double doors of fielded panels beneath radial fanlight, approached by steps, are recessed in round-arched architrave with moulded impost band. Ground floor windows are 12-pane sashes in quoined surrounds with flat arches of stepped voussoirs, over sill band. On first floor, similar windows in plain architraves over sunk panels, have pulvinated friezes, moulded cornices and projecting sills extending as flat sill band. Attic windows are squat 6-pane sashes in plain surrounds with sills. Flat band at first floor; moulded cornices beneath attic storey, and to eaves and pediment, beneath plain parapet. Pediment tympanum filled by radial-glazed oculus enclosed in renewed cartouche surround carved with palm fronds. Left return: rainwater head dated 1984 and stamped with the badge of The York Civic Trust. At rear, reset pedimented doorcase of panelled pilasters with fluted imposts beneath swagged frieze on acanthus consoles, and moulded cornice: fielded panelled double doors and radial fanlight in elliptical-arched opening. Right return: ground and first floors obscured by adjoining building (No.29, qv). Main front attic cornice returned as brick dentilled band beneath blind window openings with flat arches of gauged brick. Eaves cornice from front returned as plain brick band beneath parapet. INTERIOR: No.27: ground floor: renewed stone flagged floor extends from entrance hall to stairhall. Moulded skirting enriched with flower and ribbon carving

APPENDIX C:

LISTED BUILDING DESCRIPTIONS

carries through to top of main staircase. Entrance hall: front doorcase is round-arched, with panelled soffit, on enriched sunk-panelled pilasters with acanthus leaf capitals. Similar moulded round-arched opening leads to stairhall. 2 original doorcases with enriched architraves, carved pulvinated friezes and cornice heads contain original 6-panel doors. Plaster ceiling, coved above cornice enriched with palmette, moulded into medallions and scrolls of foliage and flowers. Front room to left (Library): original marble fireplace with insets of Sienna marble. Doorcase with architrave carved with shells and rosettes, acanthus frieze and dentilled cornice. Skirting carved to match doorcase architrave. Window architraves enriched with foliage and husk carvings, and fitted with shutters of enriched fielded panelling. Dado moulded with bands of bead and reel and rosettes and foliage. Ceiling coved above paired modillion cornice, decoration incorporating four portrait medallions and looped strapwork and foliage trails. Front room to right (Dining-room): restored original marble fireplace with Ionic columns. 2 doorcases with pulvinated friezes carved with scrolled foliage beneath broken pediments, and architraves enriched with egg, shell and flower carvings, repeated on window architraves. Windows have shutters of enriched fielded panelling. Skirting and dado carved with foliage and husk motif. Doric cornice to plaster ceiling of foliage trails entwining baskets of fruit and medallions of Abundantia, wine glasses crossed with tobacco pipes, and musical instruments. Stairhall: 3 doorcases with enriched architraves, friezes carved with guilloche mouldings enclosing rosettes, and cornices enriched with egg and flower. One doorcase, leading to secondary staircase, is set within round arch which repeats front doorcase and entrance hall arches. Plaster ceiling panelled in guilloche mouldings enclosing acanthus roundels. Draped stucco medallion representing Roma with floral pendant on wall opposite foot of stairs. Secondary staircase: rises from ground to second floor: bottom flight reconstructed. Cantilevered stone treads with ironwork balustrade of elongated intersecting scrolls and flat moulded and ramped-up handrail. Main staircase: rises around well to first floor with cantilevered cast treads, the under sides panelled and decorated with attached floral carvings. Balustrade of scrolled ironwork panels with moulded handrail wreathed at foot around fluted column newel on scrolled curtail step. Venetian staircase window of enriched Corinthian order on blind balustraded plinth, beneath moulded double arch containing painted heraldic cartouche. First floor: Landing: flanking walls of upper part of stairwell have plaster consoles supporting replacement busts, enclosed in cartouches of swags and palm leaves. Plaster ceiling is coved above enriched cornice on acanthus consoles, and depicts martial theme. Four doorcases with eared architraves enriched with egg and flower pattern, friezes carved in high relief with garlands of fruit and flowers between foliate volutes, and enriched moulded cornices. Small front room (Drawing Room): replacement fireplace and doorcases; partly renewed skirting carved with rosettes and foliage, and dado rail with Greek key frets and rosettes. Window architraves enriched with foliage trails and fitted with shutters of enriched fielded panelling. Plaster ceiling coved in radiating

coffers above enriched dentil and modillion cornice with central figurative medallion encircled by entwined palm leaves and foliage. Large front room (Saloon): replacement fireplace. Two original doorcases flank fireplace, with enriched architraves, pulvinated friezes carved with foliage, and enriched dentilled cornices. Window architraves are eared and carved with shell, flower and egg mouldings, and fitted with shutters of enriched fielded panelling. Skirting and dado rail enriched with foliage and fan carvings. Lavish cornice with dentils, paired acanthus modillions interspersed with rosettes, and paired lion masks, above plaster frieze of foliage trails. Ceiling incorporates central rose, medallions of music and musical instruments, and corner baskets of fruit and flowers set in trails of vine and wreaths of oak leaves. Both rooms at rear have replacement fireplaces, and doorcases with architraves carved to match skirting, carved pulvinated friezes with flowering rose centrepiece, and cornices: one room has egg and flower dado and dentilled ceiling cornice; the other has renewed dado and stepped cornice moulded with foliage garlands and rosettes, and shells and flowers. (Brown P: Fairfax House, York: An Illustrated History and a Guide: York: 1989-; City of York: RCHME: The Central Area: HMSO: 1981-: 112-113).

Listing NGR: SE6046351578

Selected Sources

1. **Book Reference** - *Title:* An Inventory of the City of York V Central - *Date:* 1981 - *Page References:* 112-113
2. **Book Reference** - *Author:* Brown, P - *Title:* Fairfax House York An Illustrated History and a Guide - *Date:* 1989

Name: No name for this Entry
List entry Number: 1259340
Location: 29, CASTLEGATE
Grade: II
Date first listed: 24-Jun-1983
Date of most recent amendment: Not applicable to this List entry

House, now gallery. c1840, renovated 1991. Front of orange-brown brick in Flemish bond on painted moulded stone plinth; timber doorcase and moulded eaves cornice on small mutules. Stone coping and brick kneelers and stacks to double span slate roof; roof valley on right return masked by flat parapet. EXTERIOR: 2-storey 4-bay front to Castlegate: entrance in right return. All windows are 12-pane sashes with slender glazing bars, painted stone sills and flat arches of gauged brick. Right return: central doorcase of sunk panelled pilasters, Doric entablature hood and panelled reveals, with recessed 6-panel door and overlight, approached by steps. 12-pane window in centre of first floor. To left, fluted bowl rainwater head. INTERIOR: entrance hall has enriched dentilled cornice. Ionic arch of fluted columns and entablature leads to stairhall. Floors of both halls of encaustic tiles, and all doorcases are reeded with angle roundels. Open string winder staircase with shaped treadends, slender bobbin balusters and moulded serpentine handrail, wreathed at foot around turned newel. Rooms to left have moulded skirtings and moulded cornices, one with floral paterae, one with foliar paterae. Window and doorcases are reeded with angle roundels, and windows have panelled shutters and reveals. Both rooms have marble chimneypieces, one with curvilinear mantelshelf and cast-iron fire surround with chrysanthemum tiles, the other with plain mantelshelf on heavy moulded brackets. First floor: landing has moulded ceiling cornice: radial-glazed circular lantern, rising from moulded surround, lights stairwell. Both main rooms have moulded skirtings and moulded cornices. Window and doorcases plain, but interconnecting door has reeded architrave with angle roundels, panelled reveals and folding panelled doors. One room has moulded chimneypiece with angle roundels and moulded mantelshelf. (City of York: RCHME: The Central Area: HMSO: 1981 -: 113).

Listing NGR: SE6047451568

Selected Sources

I. Book Reference - Title: An Inventory of the City of York V Central - Date: 1981 - Page References: 113

