
Heritage, Design and Access Statement

Address: The Old Rectory, Wraxall Hill, Wraxall, BS48 1NA

Proposal: Replacement of failed structural beam and associated repairs.

Date: January 2024



Fig. 1: Principle elevation of The Old Rectory

Introduction

This Heritage and Design and Access Statement has been produced by Western Building Consultants to support the application for an essential structural repair to an internal beam at The Old Rectory, Wraxall Hill, Wraxall, BS48 1NA.

This document outlines the historical significance of the site and justifies the proposed works, it should be read in conjunction with the following drawings and documents submitted as part of the application:

- (3)001 Location and Block Plans
- 3230726-WBC-XX-XX-DR-S-20001 Existing Plan (First Floor)
- 3230726-WBC-XX-XX-DR-S-20001 Proposed Plan (First Floor)
- 3230726-WBC-XX-XX-DR-S-28001 Beam Arrangement Details



Fig. 2: Aerial view of the site (Source: Google Maps 2023)

Location

The Old Rectory, Wraxall Hill is a Grade II listed detached house located within the Village of Wraxall just outside Nailsea.

The site is not within a conservation area but falls within Bristol and Bath Green Belt.

The site consists of the applicant's detached, three storey dwelling with front and rear gardens. The property can be accessed from Wraxall Hill through a gated driveway.

The surrounding area is semi-rural with other listed and historic buildings nearby including the Grade I Listed All Saints Church.

Heritage

The Old Rectory, Wraxall Hill was built in the late 17th Century and remodelled in the 19th Century.

As the name suggests, the building was constructed as a rectory for the medieval, Grade I 'All Saints Church' originating from the 12th century.

Other notable listed buildings nearby include the Grade II Listed Sunday School, Wraxall CofE Primary School, Wraxall Court and monuments within the church grounds. The Old Rectory contributes to the group value of these buildings that all have an association with the church. As a group, they hold historic

and social value as they provide insight into the role of the church and an understanding of the historic communities.

The building has three storeys with rendered walls, coped parapets and gothic style casement windows. The property appears to have been extended prior to the mid-1800s with some modern alterations.

The area of work will be within the oldest part of the building and will impact one of the historic timber beams spanning front to back. The beam is in a poor condition and shows previous repair attempts. The modern repairs are now coming to the end of their lifespan and are beginning to fail.

It has been speculated that repairs to the original beam were carried out in the 1980s. The previous repair approach aimed to retain the historic fabric of the beam in-situ and in doing so has required a lot of alteration around this area including the introduction of a steel beam bolted on top of the historic timber. Due to the additional height of the steel beam, the floor level in this room was raised and modern timber joists were installed over the original. The change in height can be seen in the step at the door threshold (figure 8). The timber beam was covered in a timber framing for a plaster moulding finish.

Details of its listing taken from Historic England can be found below;

Grade: II
List Entry Number: 1158000
Date first listed: 16-Mar-1984
Statutory Address: THE RECTORY, WRAXALL HILL

Details:

“ST 47 SE WRAXALL WRAXALL HILL (east side)

3/202 The Rectory

- II

Rectory. Early - mid C17, remodelled 1801. Rendered; pantile roof with coped raised verges; coped parapet and moulded eaves cornice; rendered stacks. 3 storeys. 3 bays: 2- and 3-light casement windows with gothic glazing and under segmental heads; the ground floor left window is a 3-light casement with pointed heads and hollow moulded freestone mullions and surrounds, under a drip mould. Projecting square porch with panelled and glazed lights. Single storey 3 bay billiard room forms a setback extension to the left; hipped slate roof, parapet and moulded cornice; 3 glazing bar sash windows with external blind boxes. Screen wall with lean-to greenhouse at right. The west gable end has a 4-light, freestone, cross window with pointed heads and hollow moulded mullions and surrounds; central first floor window to rear is a 4-light wooden casement with ovolo moulded mullions. Interior: chamfered beams with scroll stops; open well stair with turned balusters.

Listing NGR: ST4923572129”

Historic Maps



Fig. 3: Extract from 1840s Tithe North Somerset map. (Know your place 2023)

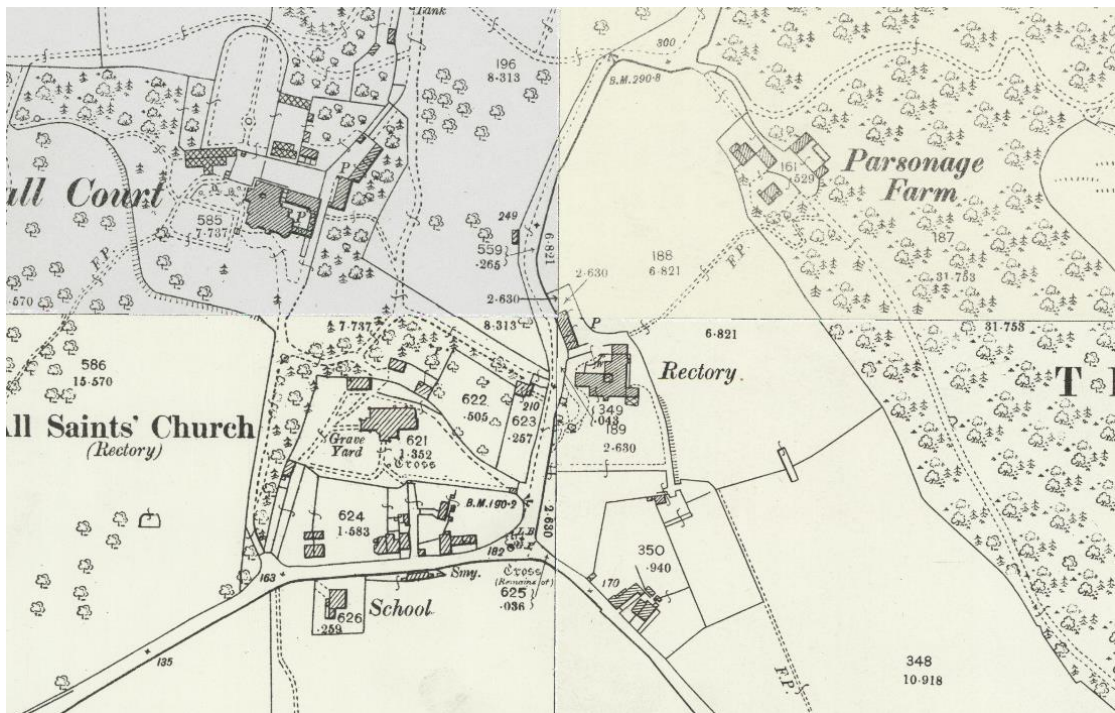


Fig.4: Extract from 1894-1903 OS 25'' 2nd Edition Somerset map. (Know your place 2023)

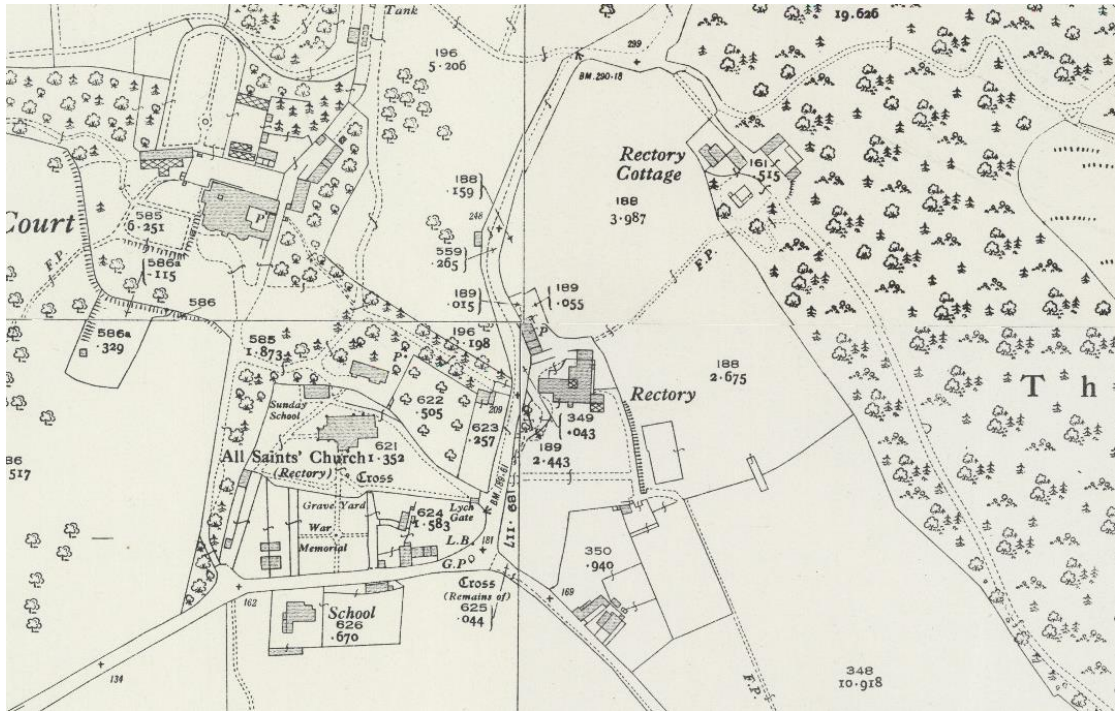


Fig. 5: Extract from 1921-1943 OS 25" Rev. Edition – limited coverage map. (Know your place 2023)

Existing Building, Usage & Condition

The Old Rectory is being used as a residential dwelling and is owned by the applicant.

The original timber beam is located within the second floor with a visible downstand in the first floor room below. The beam is sagging and is being temporarily propped after it caused cracking to the plasterwork encasing the beam.

Due to the urgent need for repair, the 1980s plaster mouldings have been removed to expose the beam in order to reveal its condition and extent of previous repairs. Figure 10 shows diagonal cracking in the beam itself.

The section details submitted with this application show the previous repairs in relation to the original beam.

Previous Applications

North Somerset online planning records indicate one previous Planning application for the site:

Application Reference: 03/P/2758/F

Description of Proposal: Change of use from church meeting room to residential use

Decision: Approve with Conditions

Decision Date: Fri 09 Jan 2004

Proposal

This application proposes essential repairs to an internal structural beam within a first-floor bedroom. There are no external alterations proposed.

It is proposed to remove the timber beam that is now in a state of disrepair and to provide support to the existing floor structure with new C section steel beams. There will be no change to the floor level or existing timber joists.

The existing inner lintel over the front window will be replaced to support the new beam.

The proposal has been designed to preserve the character of the building by retaining as much of the original structure as possible and only introducing new materials where needed for the long-term benefits of the building and occupier's safety.

Layout

There will be no impact on the layout of the property.

Scale

There will be no change to the scale.

Appearance

The repairs will be concealed within the floor so will not affect the appearance of the interior.

Access

Access will not be affected.

Justification

The existing timber beam has already failed and has undergone previous repairs in the past. Whilst there will be some harm in removing the historic beam, it is currently in a very poor condition and there would be greater harm to the Listed Building if the beam was kept in-situ.

The replacement of the beam will not have any negative impact on the visual appearance because it was previously covered in a plaster moulding and obscured within the floorspace.

We believe the structural repairs to the Listed Building are essential for the safety of the occupants and to sustain the significance of the historic asset. Intervening with the structure now will protect the building from further structural decay and potential collapse requiring more harmful repairs.

Summary

To summarise, the structural repairs to replace the second floor beam are being proposed to protect the building, people, and the historic assets. Intervention is required now to avoid the risk of failure and further damage more detrimental to the

building and public safety. The proposed beam and structural intervention will aid to increase the building's lifespan so it can be enjoyed by future generations.

Good quality materials will be used throughout, which will be detailed to a very high standard to protect the original fabric of the building. We believe that the alterations proposed are justified as there is minimal harm to the listed building and the benefit and necessity of the repairs far outweigh any negative impact.

For the reasons outlined in this Heritage and Design and Access Statement, we seek Listed Building Consent from North Somerset Council.

Photographs



Fig. 6: First Floor bedroom showing temporary propping



Fig. 7: Second floor with exposed beam



Fig. 8: Second floor door threshold showing change in floor level



Fig. 9: Exposed structural beam showing previous repair

Fig. 10: Cracking in timber beam



Fig. 11: Exposed timber beam underside



Fig. 12: Exposed timber beam first floor

Historic Drawings (1959)

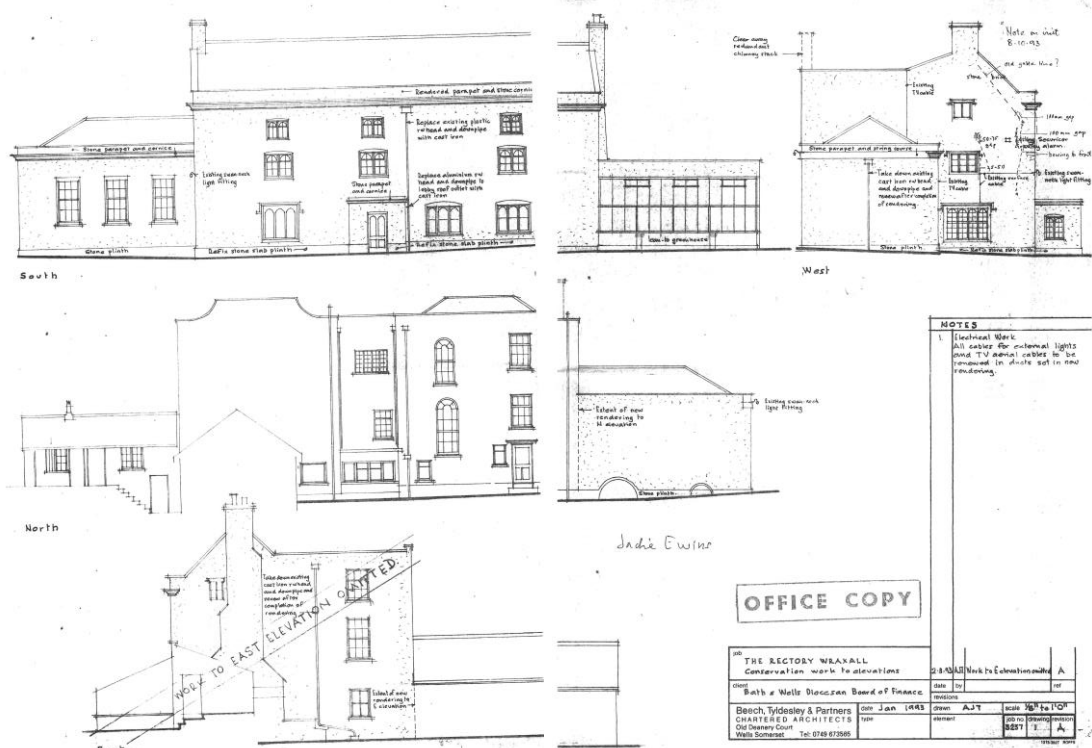


Fig. 13: Elevations

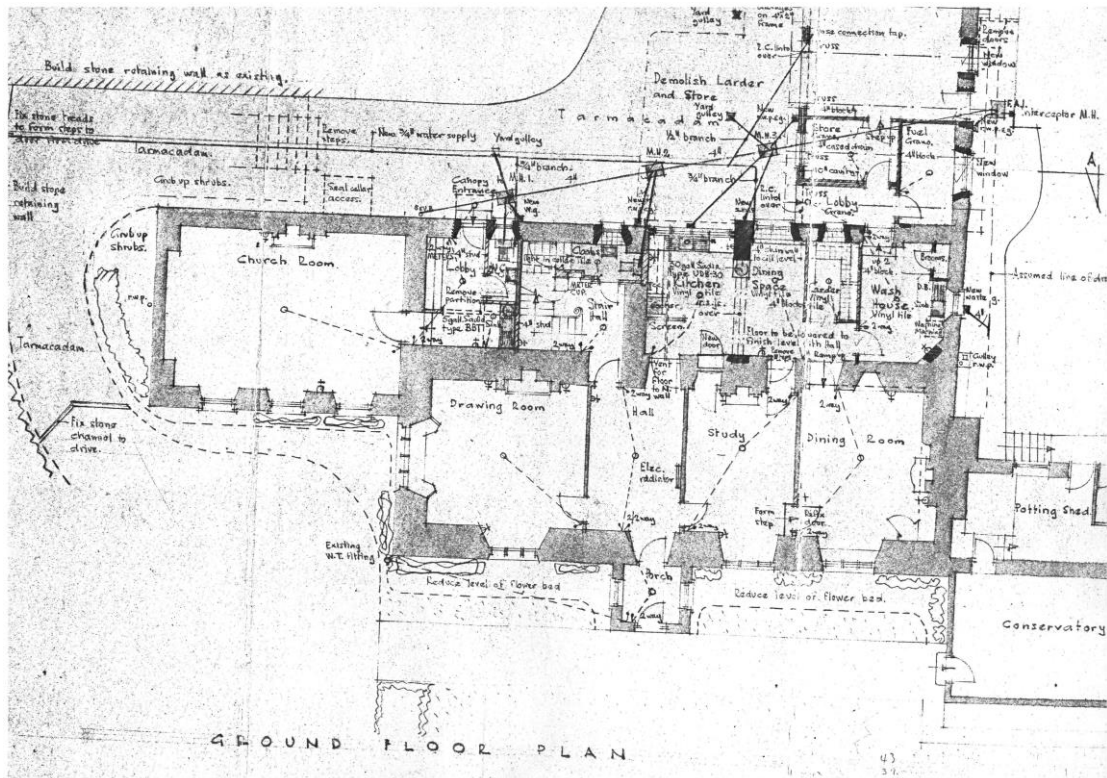


Fig. 14: Ground Floor Plan

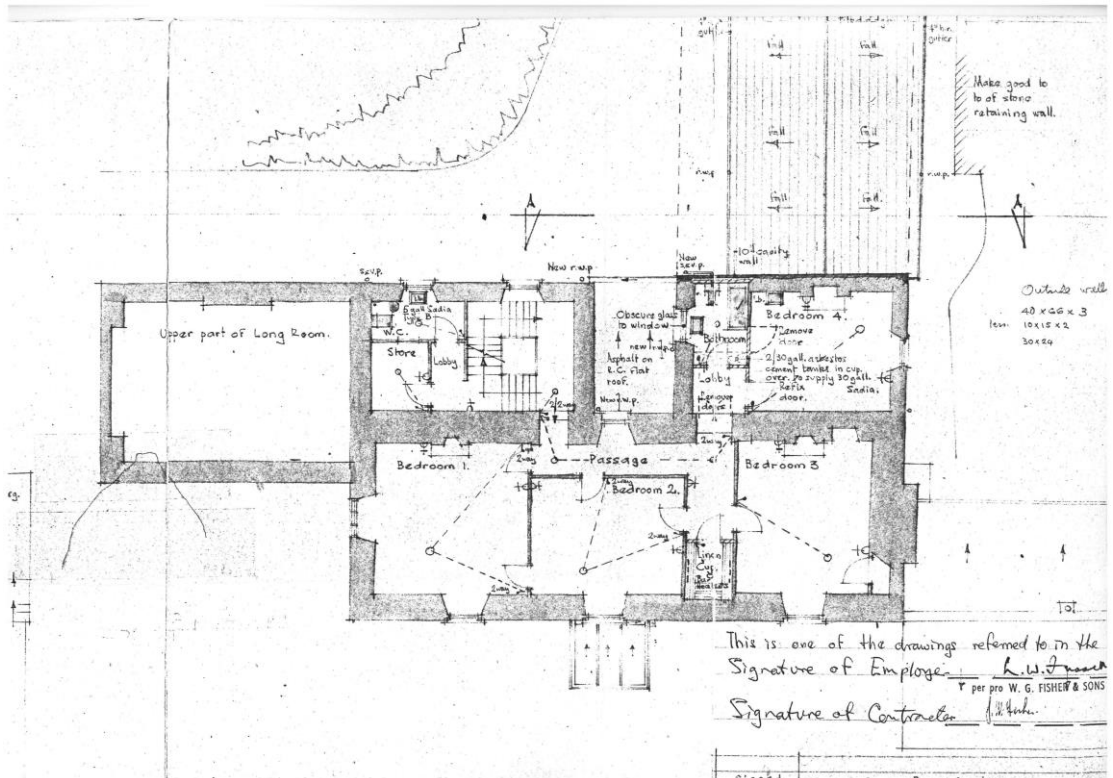


Fig. 15: First Floor Plan

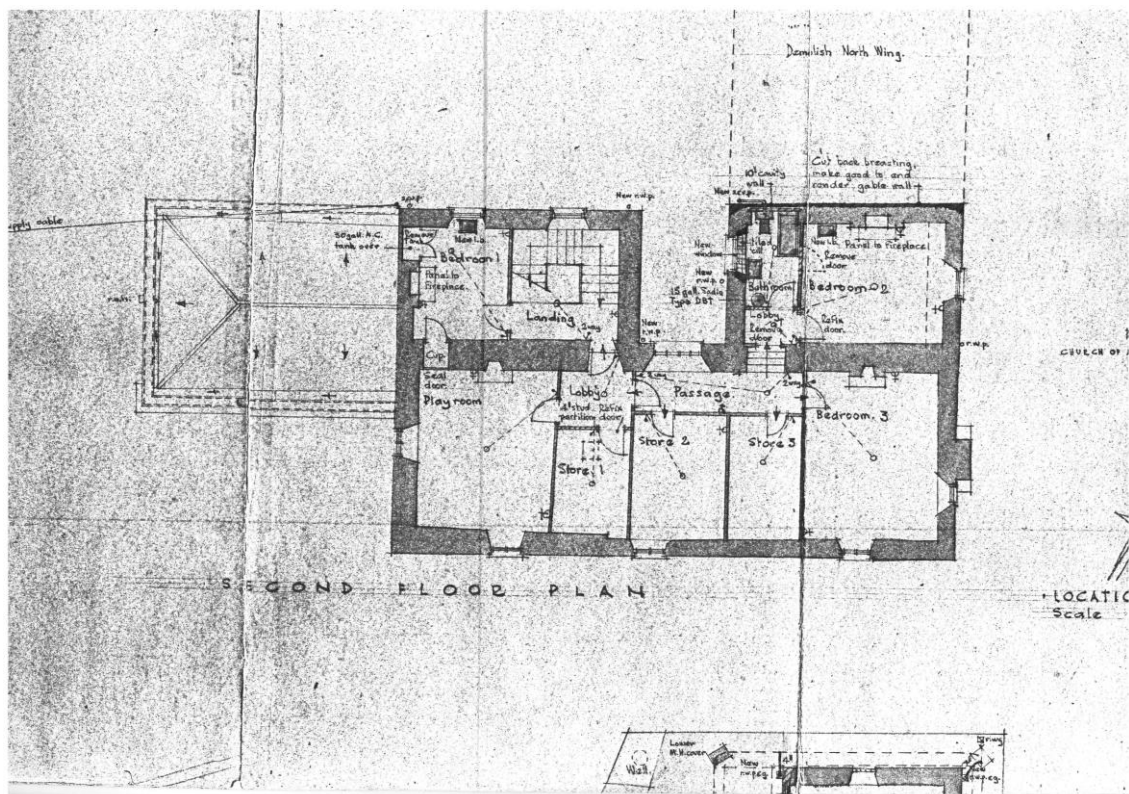


Fig. 16: Second Floor Plan

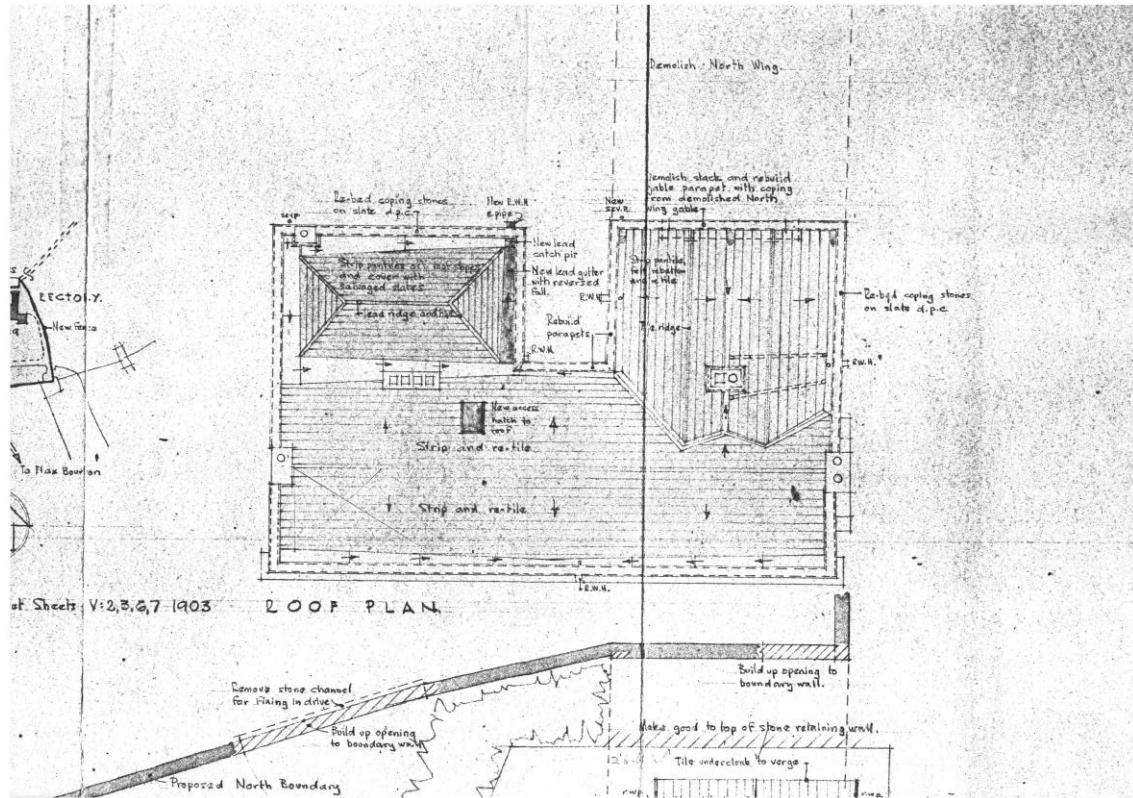


Fig. 17: Roof Plan