



# Comhairle Contae Chill Mhantáin Wicklow County Council

**Pleanáil, Forbairt Eacnamaíochta agus Tuaithe  
Planning, Economic and Rural Development**

Áras An Chontae / County Buildings  
Cill Mhantáin / Wicklow  
Guthán / Tel (0404) 20148  
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The Alfred Beit Foundation  
Russborough House  
Blessington  
Co. Wicklow

*2<sup>nd</sup> OF APRIL 2026*

**RE: Declaration in accordance with Section 5 of the Planning & Development Acts  
2000 (As Amended) -EX33/2026**

A Chara,

I enclose herewith Declaration in accordance with Article 5 (2) (A) of the Planning & Development Act 2000.

Where a Declaration is used under this Section any person issued with a Declaration under subsection (2) (a) may, on payment to An Coimisiún Pleanála of such fee as may be prescribed, refer a declaration for review by the Coimisiún within four weeks of the date of the issuing of the declaration by the Local Authority.

Is mise, le meas,

  
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER  
PLANNING DEVELOPMENT & ENVIRONMENT.





# COMHAIRLE CONTAE CHILL MHANTÁIN Wicklow County Council

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## DECLARATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE 5 (2) (A) OF THE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT ACT 2000 AS AMENDED

**Applicant:** The Alfred Beit Foundation

**Location:** Russborough House, Russborough Demense, Blessington, Co. Wicklow

**Reference Number:** EX 33/2026

### CHIEF EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. CE/PERD/2026/359

A question has arisen as to whether “*the conservation, repair and stabilisation of historic flooring within the principal ground floor rooms*” at Russborough House, Russborough Demense, Blessington, Co. Wicklow is or is not exempted development.

#### Having regard to:

- (a) The Conservation Condition and Method Statement and details submitted with the Section 5 Application,
- (b) Architectural Heritage Protection: Guidelines for Planning Authorities
- (c) Record of Protected Structures Ref 09-08 Russborough Country House
- (d) Sections 2, 3, 4 and 57(1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

#### Main Reasons with respect to Section 5 Declaration:

- i. The conservation repair and stabilisation of historic flooring would be operations of repair and therefore works having regard to the definition set out in Section 2 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).
- ii. The works would come within the definition of development having regard to the provisions of Section 3 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).
- iii. The conservation repair and stabilisation of existing historic flooring would come within the scope of Section 4(1)(h) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) being works of maintenance which would only affect the interior of the structure and would not materially affect the character of the structure or any element of the structure which contributes to its special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest.

**The Planning Authority considers that “the conservation, repair and stabilisation of historic flooring within the principal ground floor rooms” at Russborough House, Russborough Demense, Blessington, Co. Wicklow is development and IS exempted development.**

Signed: D. O'Garra  
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER  
PLANNING DEVELOPMENT & ENVIRONMENT

Date: 02/04/2026



WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT ACTS 2000 (As Amended)  
SECTION 5

CHIEF EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. CE/PERD/2026/359

Reference Number: EX 33/2026

Name of Applicant: The Alfred Beit Foundation

Nature of Application: Section 5 Referral as to whether "*the conservation, repair and stabilisation of historic flooring within the principal ground floor rooms*" is or is not development and is or is not exempted development.

Location of Subject Site: Russborough House, Russborough Demense, Blessington, Co. Wicklow

Report from: Edel Bermingham, T/SP

With respect to the query under Section 5 of the Planning & Development Act 2000 as to whether "*the conservation, repair and stabilisation of historic flooring within the principal ground floor rooms*" at Russborough House, Russborough Demense, Blessington, Co. Wicklow is or is not exempted development within the meaning of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended)

**Having regard to:**

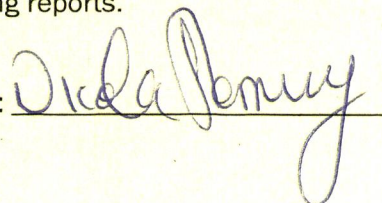
- (a) The Conservation Condition and Method Statement and details submitted with the Section 5 Application,
- (b) Architectural Heritage Protection: Guidelines for Planning Authorities
- (c) Record of Protected Structures Ref 09-08 Russborough Country House
- (d) Sections 2, 3, 4 and 57(1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

**Main Reasons with respect to Section 5 Declaration:**

- i. The conservation repair and stabilisation of historic flooring would be operations of repair and therefore works having regard to the definition set out in Section 2 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).
- ii. The works would come with the definition of development having regard to the provisions of Section 3 of the Planning and Development Act 2000(as amended).
- iii. The conservation repair and stabilisation of existing historic flooring would come within the scope of Section 4(1)(h) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) being works of maintenance which would only affect the interior of the structure and would not materially affect the character of the structure or any element of the structure which contributes to its special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest.

**Recommendation**

The Planning Authority considers that "*the conservation, repair and stabilisation of historic flooring within the principal ground floor rooms*" at Russborough House, Russborough Demense, Blessington, Co. Wicklow is development and is exempted development as recommended in the planning reports.

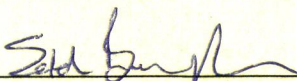
Signed: 

Date: 

**ORDER:**

**I HEREBY DECLARE:**

THAT *"the conservation, repair and stabilisation of historic flooring within the principal ground floor rooms"* at Russborough House, Russborough Demense, Blessington, Co. Wicklow is **development** and is **exempted** development within the meaning of the Planning & Development Acts 2000 (as amended).

Signed: 

T/Senior Planner

Planning, Economic & Rural Development

Date: 24/2026

33

**Section 5 Application : EX 26/2026**

Date : 27/3/2026.

Applicant : The Alfred Beit Foundation

Address : Russborough Blessington, Co. Wicklow.

Exemption Whether or not

the conservation repair and stabilisation of historic flooring within the principal ground floor rooms at Russborough, Blessington, Co Wicklow

constitutes exempted development within the meaning of the Planning and Development Acts, 2000(as amended).

**PLANNING HISTORY:**

There is an extensive Planning history associated with the site; the facility is permitted for use as an attraction with gardens, a café, car parking etc.

**Section 5 References :**

EX 47/2025

EX 39/2024

EX 36/2024

EX 56/2022

EX 48/2020

EX 61/17

EX 48/17

EX 15/14

EX 61/16

**HERITAGE:**

Protected structures/ NIAH

PS REF: 09-08 Russborough Country House-

One of the most important houses in Ireland, designed by Richard Castle for the Earl of Milltown. Complex Palladian composition and superb craftsmanship. (National monument)

NIAH ID: 16,400,503- Detached seven bay two storey Palladian style mansion built 1741-48.

PS REF: 09-09 Russborough Entrance Arch

Triumphal arch flanked by pedimented, side gates.

NIAH ID: 16,400,504- Classic style gate screen (constructed in granite) at main entrance to Russborough House built c.1745.

Monuments

WI005-067- Designated landscape feature.

**LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT:**

**Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended)**

"structure" means any building, structure, excavation, or other thing constructed or made on, in or under any land, or any part of a structure so defined, and—

(a) where the context so admits, includes the land on, in or under which the structure is situate, and

(b) in relation to a protected structure or proposed protected structure, includes—

(i) the interior of the structure,

(ii) the land lying within the curtilage of the structure,

(iii) any other structures lying within that curtilage and their interiors, and

(iv) all fixtures and features which form part of the interior or exterior of any structure or structures referred to in *subparagraph (i) or (iii)*;

"works" includes any act or operation of construction, excavation, demolition, extension, alteration, repair or renewal and, in relation to a protected structure or proposed protected structure, includes any act or operation involving the application or removal of plaster, paint, wallpaper, tiles or other material to or from the surfaces of the interior or exterior of a structure.

Section 3 :

3.—

(1) In this Act, except where the context otherwise requires, "development" means—

(a) the carrying out of any works in, on, over or under land, or the making of any material change in the use of any land or structures situated on land, or

(b) development within the meaning of Part XXI (inserted by section 171 of the Maritime Area Planning Act 2021).

Section 4 :

4.—

(1) The following shall be exempted developments for the purposes of this Act—

(h) development consisting of the carrying out of works for the maintenance, improvement or other alteration of any structure, being works which affect only the interior of the structure or which do not materially affect the external appearance of the structure so as to render the appearance inconsistent with the character of the structure or of neighbouring structures;

3) A reference in this Act to exempted development shall be construed as a reference to development which is—

(a) any of the developments specified in subsection (1), or

(b) development which, having regard to any regulations under subsection (2), is exempted development for the purposes of this Act.

(4A) Notwithstanding subsection (4), the Minister may make regulations prescribing development or any class of development that is—

(a) authorised, or required to be authorised by or under any statute (other than this Act) whether by means of a licence, consent, approval or otherwise, and

- (b) as respects which an environmental impact assessment or an appropriate assessment is required, to be exempted development.

**57.—(1)** Notwithstanding *section 4(1)(a), (h), (i), (ia) (j), (k), or (l)* and any regulations made under *section 4(2)*, the carrying out of works to a protected structure, or a proposed protected structure, shall be exempted development only if those works would not materially affect the character of—

(a) the structure, or

(b) any element of the structure which contributes to its special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest.

**Details Submitted in support of Application:**

- Supporting letter.
- Application form.
- Site location plan.
- Conservation Condition and Method Statement
- Photographic Record of Floor Condition .

**Background**

The Section 5 is for works at Russborough House, located within the Russborough Estate.

*Russborough House is described as a detached seven-bay two-storey over basement Palladian style mansion, built 1741-48 to designs by Richard Castle, with quadrant Doric colonnades linking to seven-bay two-storey pavilion wings, themselves linked to outbuildings by walls with rusticated arches topped with cupolas. The walls are of dressed granite, with a central feature to the main block consisting of a pediment supported by four three-quarter Corinthian columns with swag mouldings between the capitals, whilst the wings have three-bay breakfront centres with Ionic pilasters. Each of the three blocks and the colonnades has a parapet surmounted with urns, and behind each parapet is a slated hipped roof with broad granite chimneystacks to the main blocks. Within the colonnades are arched niches with Classical statues. The entrance consists of a largely glazed timber door with semi-circular fanlight-like eyebrow window above, and is reached by a grand flight of stone steps with the piers of the balustrade topped with urns and heraldic lions. The windows are generally flat-headed and filled with three over three and six over six timber sash frames. Cast-iron rainwater goods. The house is surrounded by an extensive, but largely unadorned, demesne and approached at a right angle from the main avenue to the north-east.*

**Assessment :**

The applicants seek confirmation that the conservation repair and stabilisation of historic flooring within the principal ground floor rooms at Russborough, Blessington, Co Wicklow is development and is exempted development.

The submitted conservation report identifies the works, the approach to such works, and the overall methodology to be implemented to carry out such works. The overall works/ approach would accord with the Architectural Heritage Protection – Guidelines for Planning Authorities. On discussion with WCC Conservation Officer she indicates that the approach is appropriate.

The first assessment must be whether or not the proposal outlined above constitutes development within the remit of Section 3 of the Planning and Development Act 2001.

In this regard the operations are considered to come within the definition of works as set out in Section 2 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) as they involve works of repair. These works are development given the provisions of Section 3 of the Act.

Having regard to the details set out in the conservation report, it is considered that the proposed works are for maintenance, which affect only the interior of the structure and would therefore come within the scope of Section 4(1) (h) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

Section 57 (1) provides that notwithstanding section 4(1) (h) and any regulations made under Section 4(2), the carrying out of works to a protected structure, or a proposed protected structure, shall be exempted development only if those works would not materially affect the character of –

- (a) The structure
- (b) Any element of the structure which contributes to its special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest

Having regard to the details submitted, The proposed works would not materially affect the character of the protected structure or any element of the structure which contributes to its special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest, therefore in this instance section Section 57 (1) does not apply and the works are within the remit of Section 4(1)(h).

The proposed works are considered to be exempt.

**Recommendation :**

With respect to the query under Section 5 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), as to whether :

the conservation, repair and stabilisation of historic flooring within the principal ground floor rooms at Russborough House, Rusborough, Co. Wicklow

is exempted development under the provisions of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended)/ Planning & Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).

The Planning Authority considers that the conservation, repair and stabilisation of historic flooring within the principal ground floor rooms at Russborough House, Russborough, Co. Wicklow  
**is Development and is Exempt development**

**Main Considerations with respect to Section 5 Declaration:**

- (a) The Conservation Condition and Method Statement and details submitted with the Section 5 Application,
- (b) Architectural Heritage Protection : Guidelines for Planning Authorities
- (c) Record of Protected Structures Ref 09-08 Russborough Country House
- (d) Sections 2, 3, 4 and 57(1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

**Main Reasons with respect to Section 5 Declaration:**

i. The conservation repair and stabilisation of historic flooring would be operations of repair and therefore works having regard to the definition set out in Section 2 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

ii. The works would come with the definition of development having regard to the provisions of Section 3 of the Planning and Development Act 2000(as amended).

ii. The conservation repair and stabilisation of existing historic flooring would come within the scope of Section 4(1)(h) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) being works of maintenance which would only affect the interior of the structure and would not materially affect the character of the structure or any element of the structure which contributes to its special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest.

*J. L. Cunningham*

27/3/2026

# MEMORANDUM

## WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

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**TO: Edel Bermingham  
A/Senior Planner**

**FROM: Nicola Fleming  
Staff Officer**

**RE:- EX33/2026 - Declaration in accordance with Section 5 of the  
Planning & Development Acts 2000 (as amended)**

I enclose herewith for your attention application for Section 5 Declaration received 111/03/2026.

The due date on this declaration is the 07/04/2026.



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**Staff Officer  
Planning Development & Environment**

# MEMORANDUM

## WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

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**TO: Sophie Kelliher  
ACO**

**FROM: Nicola Fleming  
Staff Officer**

**RE:- EX33/2026 - Declaration in accordance with Section 5 of the  
Planning & Development Acts 2000 (as amended)**

I enclose herewith for your attention application for Section 5 Declaration received 11/03/2026. Edel Bermingham, A/SP is the Planner assigned to his application.

The due date on this declaration is the 07/04/2026.



\_\_\_\_\_  
**Staff Officer  
Planning Development & Environment**



Comhairle Contae Chill Mhantáin  
Wicklow County Council

Pleanáil, Forbairt Eacnamaíochta agus Tuaithe  
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The Alfred Beit Foundation  
Russborough House  
Blessington  
Co. Wicklow

12<sup>th</sup> of March 2026

RE: Application for Certificate of Exemption under Section 5 of the Planning and  
Development Acts 2000 (as amended). – EX33/2026

A Chara

I wish to acknowledge receipt on 11/03/2026 full details supplied by you in respect of the  
above Section 5 application. A decision is due in respect of this application by  
07/04/2026.

Mise, le meas

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Nicola Fleming  
Staff Officer  
Planning, Economic & Rural Development



Planning Department  
Wicklow County Council  
County Buildings  
Station Road  
Wicklow  
Co. Wicklow  
Monday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2026

Re: Section 5 Declaration Request – Conservation Repair of Historic Timber Floors, Russborough House (Protected Structure RPS No. 09-08)

Dear Sir / Madam,

Please find enclosed an application under Section 5 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) seeking a declaration as to whether the proposed conservation repair and stabilisation of historic timber flooring within the principal ground-floor rooms of Russborough House constitutes development or exempted development.

The works relate to the Entrance Hall, Staircase Hall, Saloon, Music Room, Tapestry Room, Library, Dining Room and Drawing Room within the principal floor of the house. The floors include historic walnut and satinwood parquet flooring in the Saloon, oak parquet flooring in the Entrance Hall, Staircase Hall, Music Room, Tapestry Room and Library, and oak board flooring and threshold boards at the Dining Room, Drawing Room and internal door openings between the principal rooms.

The proposed works comprise a programme of conservation-led repair and stabilisation of these historic floors. The works include limited opening-up to investigate the condition of the underlying timber floor construction where required, stabilisation of the subfloor where necessary, the careful lifting and reinstatement of loose parquet elements, repair of damaged blocks using matching timber species, and the conservation repair of oak boarded floors and threshold boards.

The works are limited to repair and maintenance of historic fabric and will not alter the layout, pattern, or character of the floors. Their purpose is to stabilise areas of deterioration and prevent further loss of historic material while ensuring the continued safe use of the principal interiors of the house.

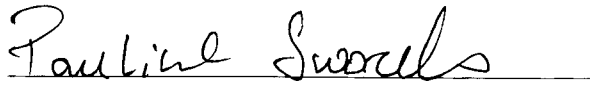
Russborough House is a Protected Structure (RPS No. 09-08). The works are described in detail in the accompanying Conservation Condition Assessment and Method Statement prepared by Sven Habermann, Timber Conservator.

The following documentation is enclosed in support of this request:

1. Section 5 Application Form
2. Cover Letter
3. Conservation Condition Assessment and Method Statement – Historic Timber Floors
4. Ground Floor Plan indicating locations of works
5. Site Location Map
6. Photographic record of floor condition#

Should you require any further information in relation to this application, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Pauline Swords". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Pauline Swords

Head of Collections & Conservation

For and on behalf of

The Alfred Beit Foundation

Wicklow County Council  
County Buildings  
Wicklow  
0404-20100

10/03/2026 16 51 35

Receipt No L1/0/360280

ALFRED BEIT FOUNDATION  
RUSSBOROUGH HOUSE  
BLESSINGTON  
CO WICKLOW

EXEMPTION CERTIFICATES	80 00
GOODS	80 00
VAT Exempt/Non vatable	

Total 80 00 EUR

Tendered  
Credit Card 80 00  
RUSSBOROUGH HOUSE

Change 0 00

Issued By Ruth Graham  
From Customer Service Hub  
Vat reg No 0015233H



Wicklow County Council  
County Buildings  
Wicklow  
Co Wicklow  
Telephone 0404 20148  
Fax 0404 69462

Office Use Only

Date Received \_\_\_\_\_

Fee Received \_\_\_\_\_

**APPLICATION FORM FOR A  
DECLARATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 5 OF THE PLANNING &  
DEVELOPMENT ACTS 2000 (AS AMENDED) AS TO WHAT IS OR IS NOT  
DEVELOPMENT OR IS OR IS NOT EXEMPTED DEVELOPMENT**

**1. Applicant Details**

- (a) Name of applicant: The Alfred Beit Foundation (CHY 5940)  
Address of applicant: Russborough House, Blessington, Co. Wicklow

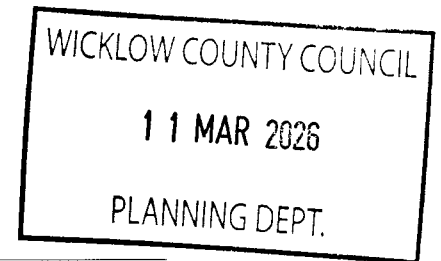
Note Phone number and email to be filled in on separate page.

**2. Agents Details (Where Applicable)**

- (b) Name of Agent (where applicable) \_\_\_\_\_ N/A

Address of Agent :

Note Phone number and email to be filled in on separate page.



**3. Declaration Details**

- i. Location of Development subject of Declaration  
Russborough House, Russborough Demesne, Blessington, Co. Wicklow. Works relate to the Dining Room, Entrance Hall, Drawing Room, Music Room, Tapestry Room, Saloon, and Library within the principal ground floor of the central block.

- ii. Are you the owner and/or occupier of these lands at the location under i. above ?  
Yes
- iii. If 'No' to ii above, please supply the Name and Address of the Owner, and or occupier
- iv. Section 5 of the Planning and Development Act provides that: If any question arises as to what, in any particular case, is or is not development and is or is not exempted development, within the meaning of this act, any person may, on payment of the prescribed fee, request in writing from the relevant planning authority a declaration on that question. You should therefore set out the query for which you seek the Section 5 Declaration

Whether the proposed conservation repair and stabilisation of historic timber flooring within the principal ground-floor rooms of Russborough House constitutes development or exempted development under the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), having regard in particular to Section 4(1)(h), which provides an exemption for works affecting a protected structure that do not materially affect the character of the structure or any element of it which contributes to its special interest.

The proposed works comprise conservation-led repair and stabilisation of historic parquet and timber floors forming part of the principal interiors of the house.

The works include:

- Localised opening-up and investigation of the timber floor construction
- Lifting and reinstatement of limited parquet elements to allow inspection of the subfloor structure
- Stabilisation and localised repair of the timber subfloor where required
- Re-seating and stabilisation of loose parquet elements
- Removal of failed historic repairs
- Replacement of isolated missing parquet elements using matching timber species
- Conservation repair of oak boarded floors
- Conservation repair of oak threshold boards at internal door openings between the principal rooms

The floors comprise walnut and satinwood parquet flooring in the Saloon and oak parquet flooring in the Entrance Hall, Tapestry Room, Music Room and Library, with oak board flooring and threshold boards at the Dining Room and Drawing Room and at internal door openings between the principal rooms.

The works are limited to conservation repair and maintenance and will not alter

the layout, pattern, or character of the historic floors.

*Additional details may be submitted by way of separate submission*

- v. Indication of the Sections of the Planning and Development Act or Planning Regulations you consider relevant to the Declaration

Section 3 – Definition of Development.

Section 4(1)(h) – Exempted Development relating to works affecting a protected structure.

Architectural Heritage Protection – Guidelines for Planning Authorities.

*Additional details may be submitted by way of separate submission.*

- vi. Does the Declaration relate to a Protected Structure or is it within the curtilage of a Protected Structure (or proposed protected structure)?

Yes – Russborough House is a Protected Structure (RPS No. 09-08).

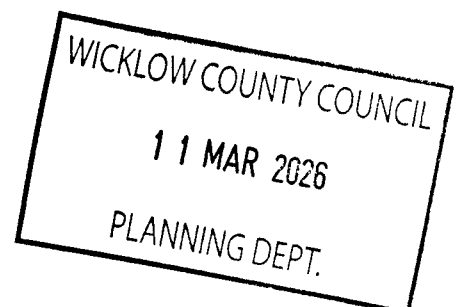
- vii. List of Plans, Drawings submitted with this Declaration Application

1. Cover Letter – Section 5 Application
2. Conservation Assessment and Method Statement – Historic Parquet Floors
3. Ground Floor Plan indicating locations of works
4. Site Location Map
5. Photographic record of floor condition

- viii. Fee of € 80 Attached? Yes

Signed: Pauline Jewels Dated: 9/3/26

**Additional Notes :**



As a guide the minimum information requirements for the most common types of referrals under Section 5 are listed below :

A. Extension to dwelling - Class 1 Part 1 of Schedule 2

- Site Location Map
- Floor area of structure in question - whether proposed or existing.
- Floor area of all relevant structures e.g. previous extensions.
- Floor plans and elevations of relevant structures.
- Site Layout Plan showing distance to boundaries, rear garden area, adjoining dwellings/structures etc.

B. Land Reclamation -

The provisions of Article 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) now applies to land reclamation, other than works to wetlands which are still governed by Schedule 2, Part 3, Class 11. Note in addition to confirmation of exemption status under the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) there is a certification process with respect to land reclamation works as set out under the European Communities (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Agriculture) Regulations 2011 S.I. 456 of 2011. You should therefore seek advice from the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

Any Section 5 Declaration should include a location map delineating the location of and exact area of lands to be reclaimed, and an indication of the character of the land.

C. Farm Structures - Class 6 -Class 10 Part 3 of Schedule 2.

- Site layout plan showing location of structure and any adjoining farm structures and any dwellings within 100m of the farm structure.
- Gross floor area of the farm structure
- Floor plan and elevational details of Farm Structure and Full details of the gross floor area of the proposed structure.
- Details of gross floor area of structures of similar type within the same farmyard complex or within 100metres of that complex.

# Conservation Condition Assessment and Method Statement

Historic Timber Floors – Principal Ground Floor Rooms  
Russborough House, County Wicklow

Prepared for: The Alfred Beit Foundation by Sven Habermann Ac-ICRI, Timber conservator



## 1. Description of Floors

The floors within the principal ground floor rooms comprise of Walnut (*Juglans nigra*) and most likely satinwood (*Chloroxylon swietenia*) parquet flooring in the Saloon, and oak (*Quercus* spp.) parquet flooring in the Entrance Hall, Tapestry Room, Music Room and Library.

Oak board flooring and oak threshold boards are present at the Dining Room and Drawing Room, and at several internal door openings between the principal rooms, where they provide transitional elements between the parquet floors.

The parquet floors are laid in geometric patterns and form an integral component of the historic interiors. The floors sit over a suspended timber floor construction typical of historic buildings of this period, with joists and pine floorboards supporting the parquet layer.

Evidence of historic repairs and localised interventions is visible across the floors, indicating a long history of maintenance and repair.



Detail Parquetry floor decoration Saloon

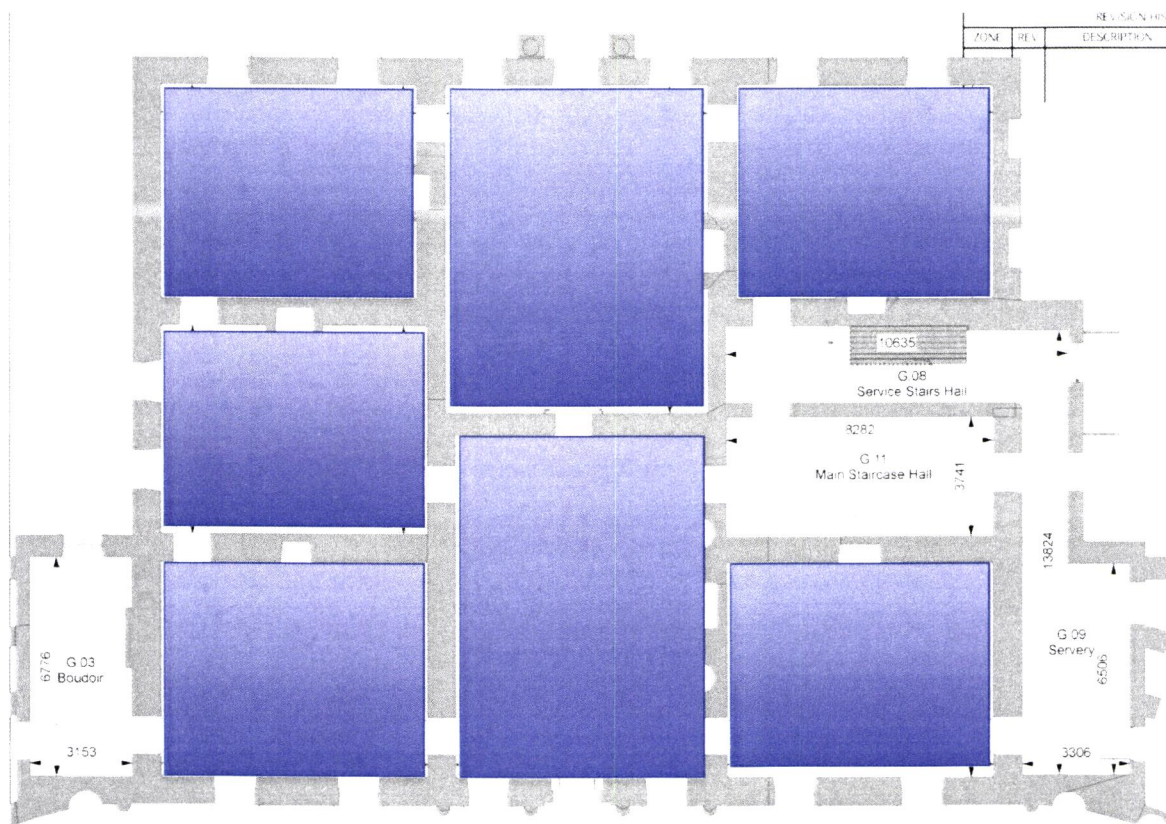


## 2. Significance of the Historic Floors

The timber floors of the principal ground-floor rooms at Russborough House form an important component of the architectural and historic character of the interiors. The parquet floors of the Entrance Hall, Saloon, Music Room, Tapestry Room and Library, together with the oak board flooring and threshold boards at the Dining Room, Drawing Room and internal door openings, represent historic interior fabric that contributes to the authenticity and material integrity of the house.

The geometric parquet floors form part of the carefully composed interior schemes of the principal rooms and are integral to the experience of the historic interiors. The threshold boards and boarded floors provide transitional elements between rooms and circulation routes and reflect the traditional construction and carpentry practices used in the building.

Although the floors have undergone repairs over time, they remain largely intact and retain a high proportion of original historic materials. Their continued conservation and maintenance are therefore important to the preservation of the historic character and material fabric of Russborough House.



### **3. Condition Assessment**

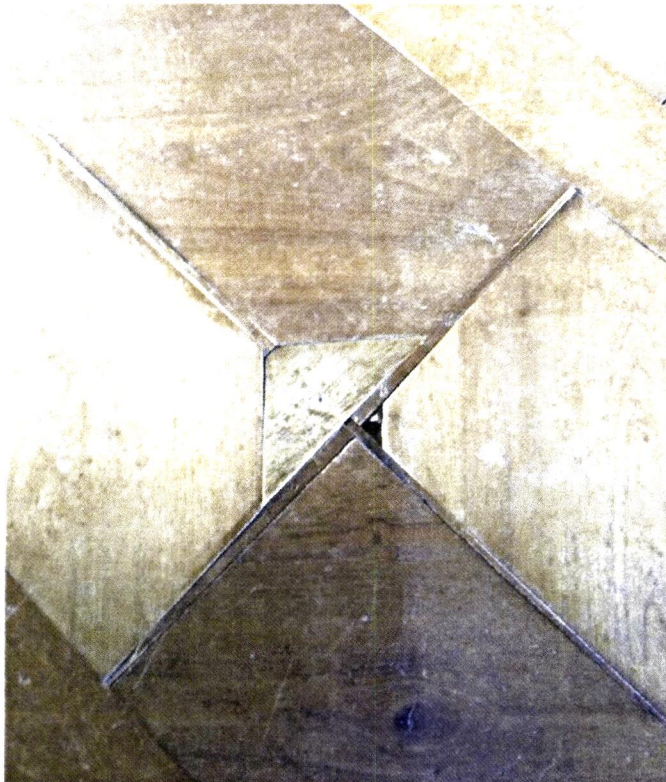
#### General Condition

The floors display dispersed deterioration across the rooms rather than concentrated damage in a single location. Areas of wear are particularly evident along circulation routes and at door openings and thresholds, where foot traffic is greatest. To ensure protection from visitors and minimizing wear and tear, the most vulnerable sections are protected by druggets.

The principal issues identified include:

- open joints due to shrinkage within parquet fields
- loose or lifting parquet elements
- losses along the grain at the tips of triangular parquet components
- failed historic gap-filling repairs with mismatching timber species
- water staining and light bleaching in localised areas
- wear and deterioration to oak threshold boards at door openings and transition areas

In several locations the floors show minor softness underfoot, suggesting possible movement or deterioration within the underlying timber structure. This will require limited opening-up to confirm the condition of the supporting floor construction.

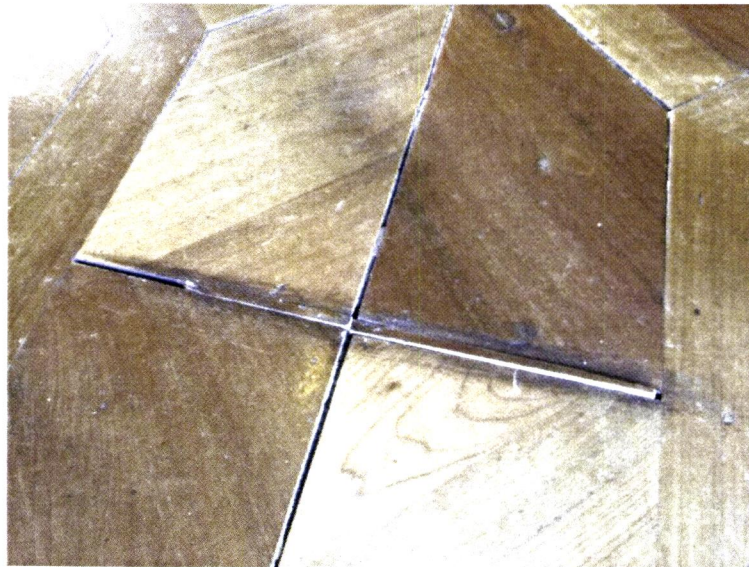


Details of old inappropriate shrinkage repairs

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL  
11 MAR 2026  
PLANNING DEPT.



Misalignment of timbers indicating distortion of substructure

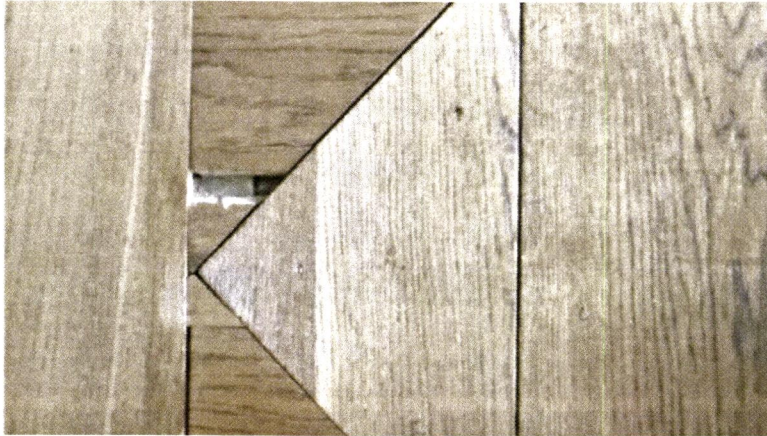


Poor repairs with incorrect timber species and direction

## Entrance Hall

The oak parquet floor in the Entrance Hall displays dispersed deterioration across the floor field. Localised water staining is evident near the external doorway. Several parquet blocks show minor movement and areas of earlier repair are visible.

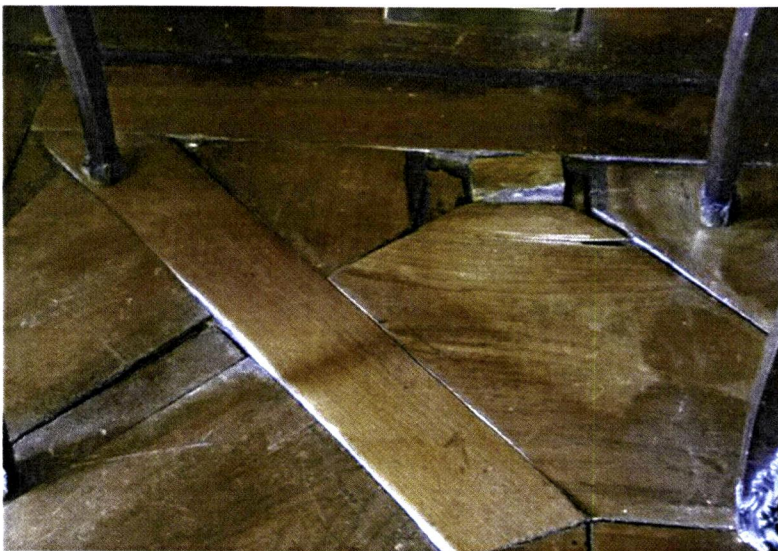
Losses at the tips of triangular parquet elements occur in places and some historic repairs have begun to fail. The floor requires stabilisation to prevent further loss of material.



## Saloon

The parquet floor in the Saloon, comprising walnut and satinwood elements, shows areas of joint opening and localised movement within the parquet field. Several historic repair inserts are present and some of these have deteriorated.

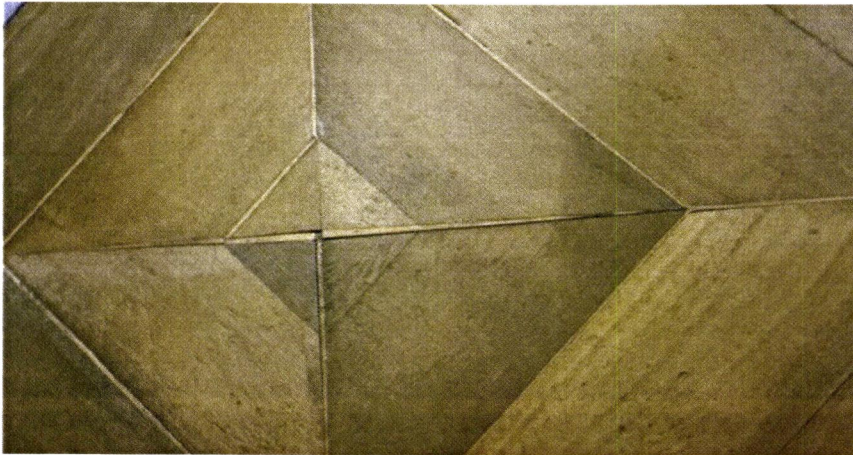
Structural issues and wear are most evident along the perimeter and circulation routes through the room. While the floor remains largely intact, conservation repair is required to stabilise loose elements and address failing repairs.



### **Music Room**

The oak parquet floor in the Music Room displays open joints across the floor surface and areas where individual parquet elements have been lost or displaced. Slight movement underfoot is present near door openings.

These conditions suggest possible localised deterioration of the underlying structure and require investigation prior to repair.



### **Tapestry Room**

The oak parquet floor in the Tapestry Room displays dispersed deterioration similar to that seen in adjacent rooms. Loose parquet elements are present and joint opening is visible within the geometric pattern.

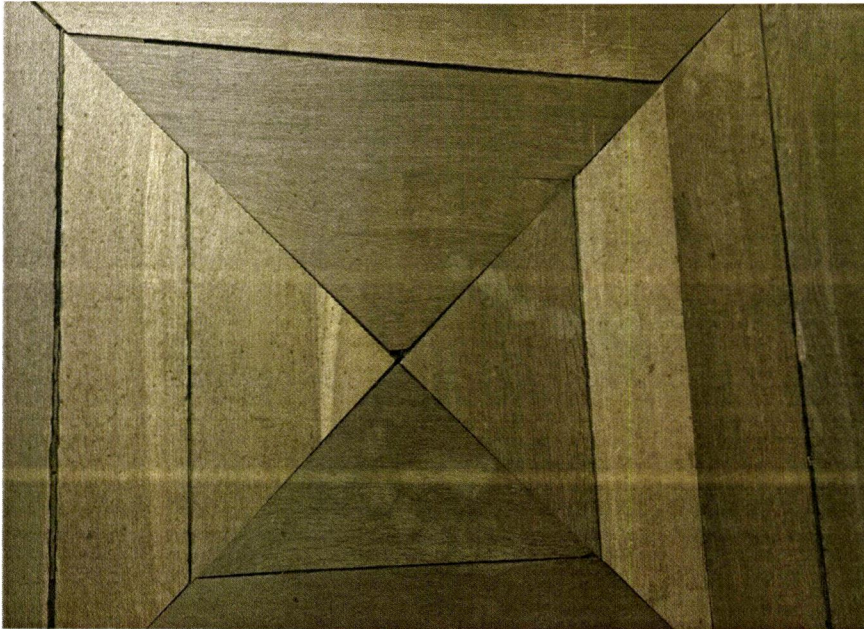
Localised weakness is suspected near the doorway connecting to the Music Room and stabilisation works will be required.



## Library

The oak parquet floor in the Library displays localised wear and deterioration, particularly along circulation routes and at the doorway threshold.

Some parquet elements appear loose and historic gap-filling repairs are visible in several locations. As with the other rooms, limited opening-up will be required to assess the condition of the underlying floor structure prior to undertaking conservation repairs.



## 4. Conservation Method Statement

### Conservation Approach

The proposed works relate to the conservation repair and stabilisation of historic timber flooring within the principal ground floor rooms of Russborough House.

The objective is to stabilise loosened elements, address areas of deterioration and ensure the continued safe serviceability of the floors while retaining the maximum possible amount of historic material.

The works will follow established conservation principles including:

- minimum intervention
- repair rather than replacement
- retention of historic material wherever possible

- use of compatible materials and traditional carpentry techniques

All works will be undertaken by Conservation Letterfrack under the supervision of accredited timber conservator Sven Habermann.

#### Pre-Works Documentation

Prior to any intervention the floors will be documented to ensure that historic fabric is properly recorded and reinstated.

This will include:

- photographic recording of the floors in each room
- recording of areas of deterioration and the measurement of level throughout the room
- marking and numbering of parquet elements where lifting is required
- recording of historic repairs identified during inspection

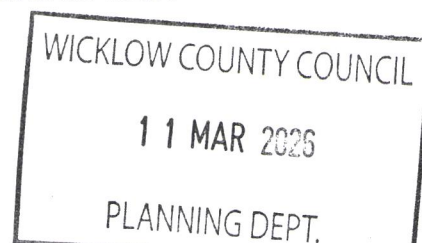
#### Protection of Surrounding Fabric

Protective measures will be implemented to safeguard surrounding historic fabric including skirting boards, panelling, architraves and fireplaces.

Temporary protection will also be used to ensure that the interiors are protected during the course of the works.



Example of Protection in place during previous projects in the house



### Investigation of Floor Construction

A limited programme of opening-up will be undertaken to assess the structural condition of the timber sub-floor construction beneath the parquet.

This will include:

- lifting small sections of parquet flooring where required
- inspection of underlying boards and joists including moisture measurement
- identification of any structural movement or deterioration
- identification origin of moisture or environmental causes of damage

Opening-up will be restricted to the minimum area necessary.

### Lifting and Storage of Parquet Elements

Where loose or damaged parquet blocks are present they will be carefully lifted by hand, marked individually with a unique place coordinate number for correct return to original area.

During this process:

- individual elements will be labelled/ marked with grid reference number per room
- elements will be lifted with minimal disturbance to surrounding flooring
- historic elements will be retained wherever possible

All lifted elements will be stored safely for reinstatement.

### Structural Repairs to Subfloor

Where deterioration within the underlying timber structure is identified, a programme of remediation and repair will be developed.

Such repairs may include:

- Consolidation of timber floorboards with Paraloid B72 reversable consolidant
- localised repair of joists where deterioration is present
- stabilisation of weakened areas of the floor structure by adding new sections

Replacement timber used in structural repairs will be compatible with the existing materials and construction.

### Repair of Parquet Flooring

Following structural stabilisation the parquet flooring will be repaired and reinstated.

Repair works will include:

- re-fixing loose parquet elements with reversable fishg glue adhesive
- re-laying displaced blocks
- where historic repairs have failed replace repairs with suitable timbers
- addressing open joints where these present a maintenance issue

Where blocks are missing or beyond repair, replacement pieces will be introduced only where necessary and will match the existing timber species, dimensions and grain direction. A protective finishing coat will match the colour and sheen of the original

### Repair of Oak Board Flooring

Oak boarded flooring in the Dining Room and Drawing Room will be inspected for movement, wear and structural stability.

Where required, repairs will include:

- re-fixing loose boards with reversable fishg glue adhesive
- localised repair of damaged boards using matching oak inserts
- stabilisation of underlying supports where necessary

### Repair of Threshold Boards

Oak threshold boards located at the Dining Room, Drawing Room and internal door openings between the principal rooms will be inspected for wear and deterioration.

Where repairs are required they will include:

- consolidation of loose boards
- localised spliced repairs using matching oak inserts
- re-fixing boards where movement is present

Where boards are beyond repair, replacement will be undertaken using seasoned oak matching the existing boards in species, dimension and grain direction . A protective finishing coat will match the colour and sheen of the original



## **5. Impact on Protected Structure**

The proposed works comprise conservation repair and stabilisation of existing historic timber flooring within the principal ground-floor rooms of Russborough House.

The works involve limited opening-up, structural stabilisation of the subfloor where required, and the careful lifting, repair and reinstatement of existing flooring elements. Replacement of material will occur only where elements are missing or beyond repair and will be carried out using matching timber species and traditional carpentry techniques.

The works do not involve alteration to the layout, pattern, appearance or character of the floors, nor do they involve removal of significant historic fabric beyond that necessary to undertake conservation repairs.

As such, the proposed works constitute repair and maintenance of historic fabric and will not materially affect the character of the protected structure.

## **6. Conclusion**

The proposed works represent a carefully considered programme of conservation repair intended to stabilise areas of deterioration affecting the historic timber floors of the principal ground-floor rooms at Russborough House.

The methodology prioritises retention of existing historic fabric, addresses the structural causes of movement where present and ensures that repairs are undertaken using compatible materials and traditional joinery techniques.

The works are limited in scope and will not alter the historic layout, pattern or character of the flooring. By addressing dispersed deterioration within the parquet floors, boarded floors and associated threshold boards, the works will support the long-term preservation and continued safe use of these important historic interiors.

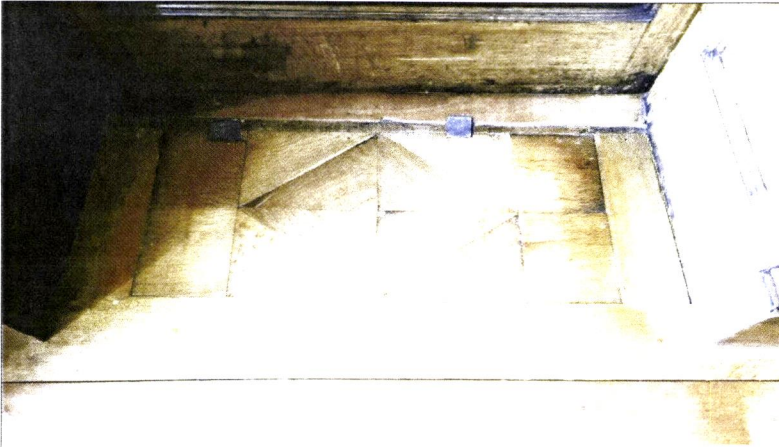
## 7. Bibliography

- Building Pathology , D Watt, Blackwell publishing 2007
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- Conservation of Historic Buildings , Bernard Feilden
- Timber Decay in Buildings, Brian Ridout, Spoon Press , 2000
- Understanding Wood ,Bruce Hoadley, The Taunton Press, 1989
- Identifying Wood, Bruce HoadleyThe Taunton Press, 1990
- Historic Floors: Their History and Conservation, Jane Fawcett ,1998

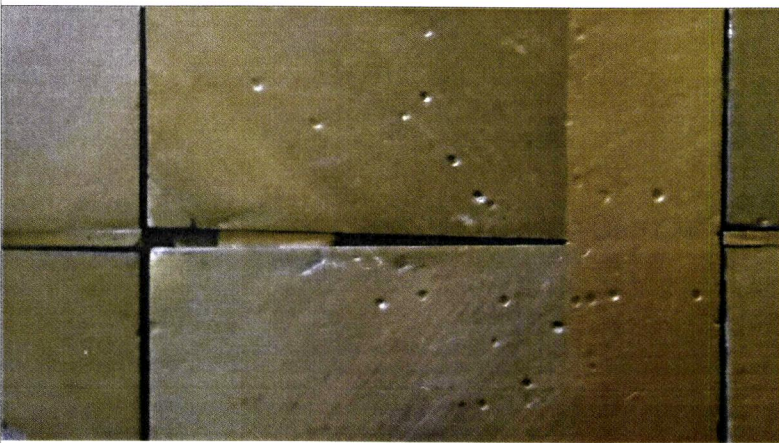
Timber identification reference library <https://insidewood.lib.ncsu.edu/search?0>  
<https://buildingconservation.com/>



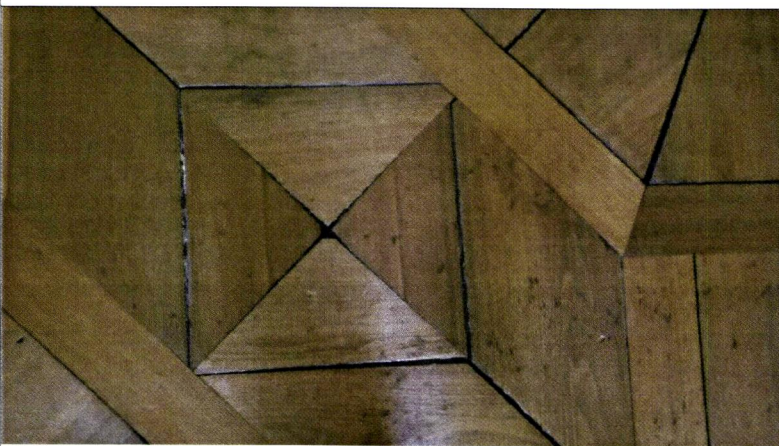
# ● Photographic Record – Historic Floors, Russborough



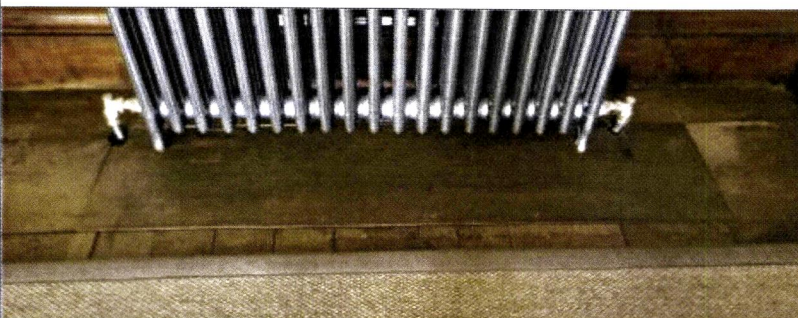
Entrance Hall – threshold to Dining Room, water and light damage



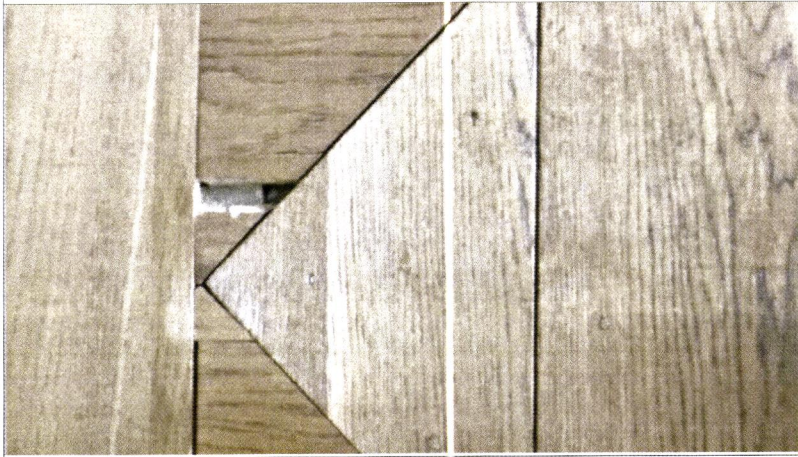
Entrance Hall – failed previous filler repair and impact indentations



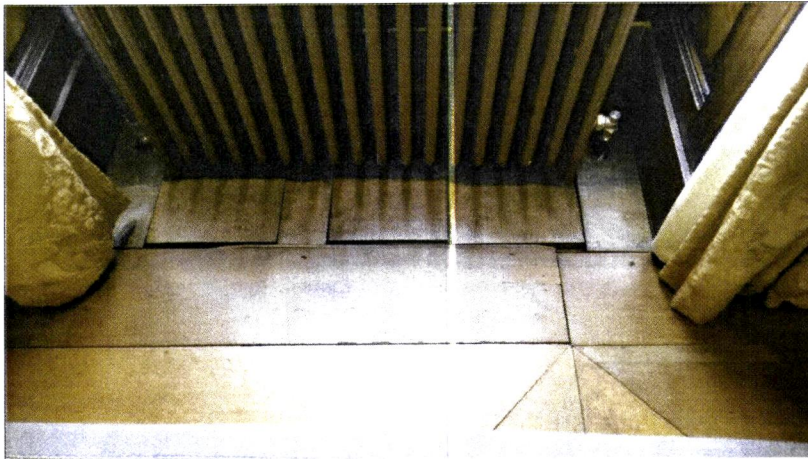
Entrance Hall, shrinkage gaps in geometric patterns



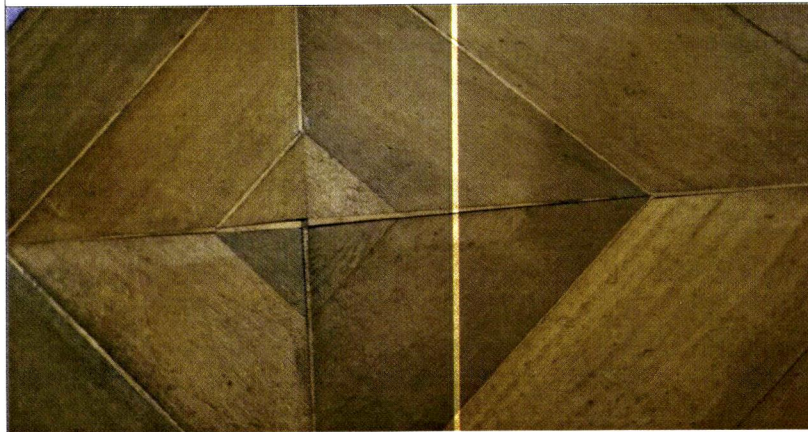
Entrance Hall – radiator zone



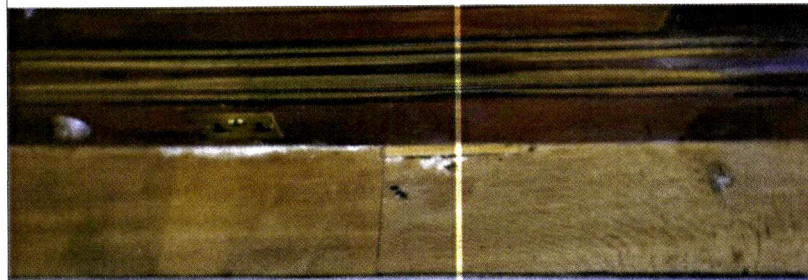
Entrance Hall - losses



Music Room - radiator zone with loose and distorted floor sections



Music Room - previous filler repair failing



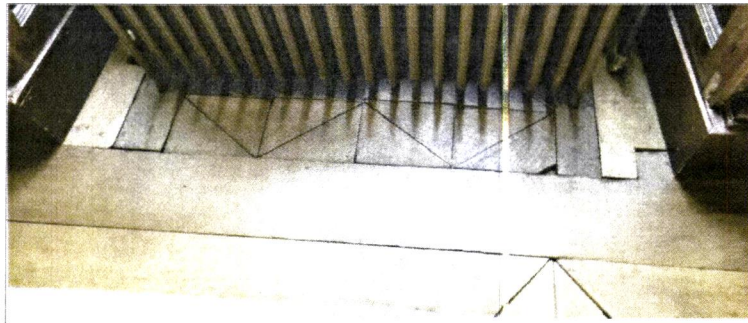
Music Room - damages on edge boards on the visitor route



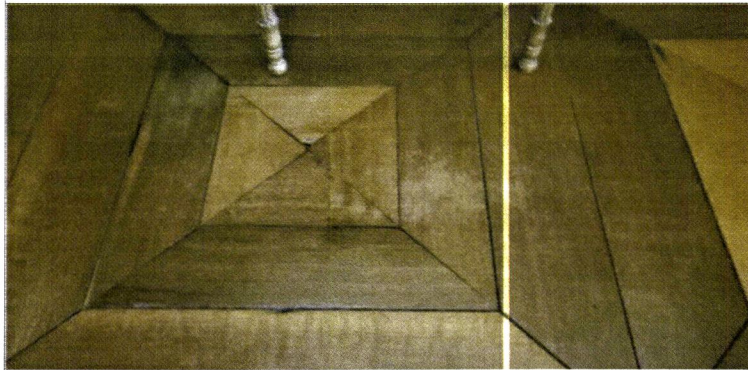
Music Room – threshold with shrinkage gaps and wear patterns



Music Room – historic water damage



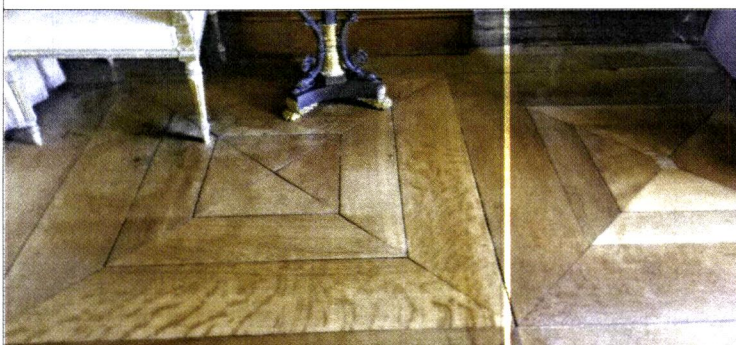
Tapestry Room – radiator zone with loose and distorted section



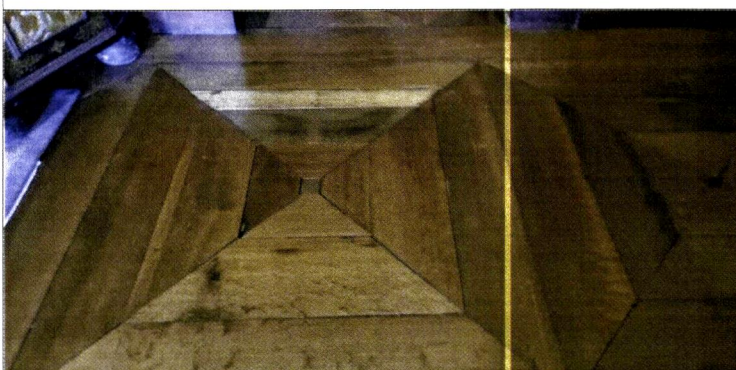
Tapestry Room – water damages and losses



Tapestry Room – shrinkage and inappropriate previous repairs



Tapestry Room – wear and tear, losses, shrinkage, water damage from leak c. 2005



Tapestry Room – losses, inappropriate repairs



Library – damages, losses



Library – radiator zone



Library – shrinkage, inadequate repairs, water staining



Drawing Room - threshold



Drawing Room - radiator zone



Dining Room - radiator zone



Dining Room – threshold



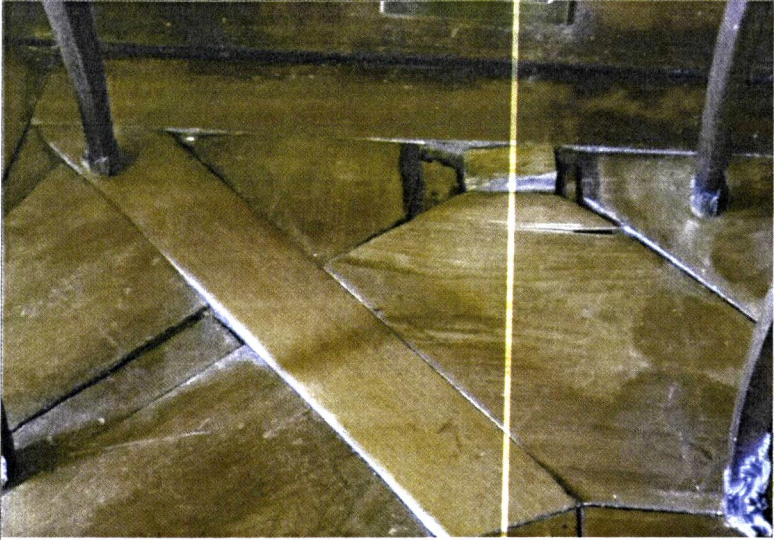
Saloon – radiator zone



Saloon – radiator zone beneath window



Saloon – doorway to back lawn



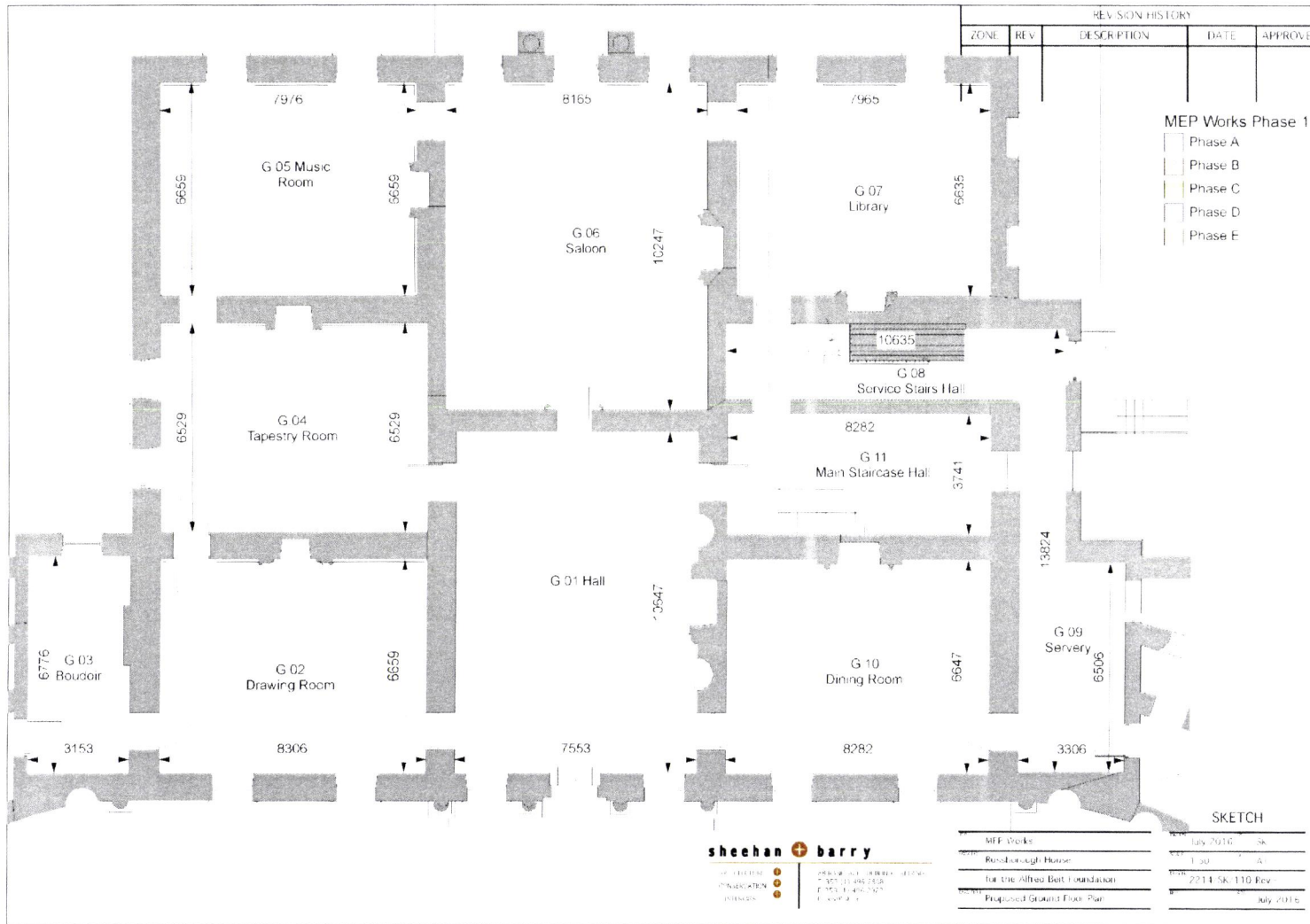
Saloon - structural deflection and loose pieces



Saloon, shrinkage, losses, inappropriate and failed repairs

	Staircase Hall
	Staircase Hall

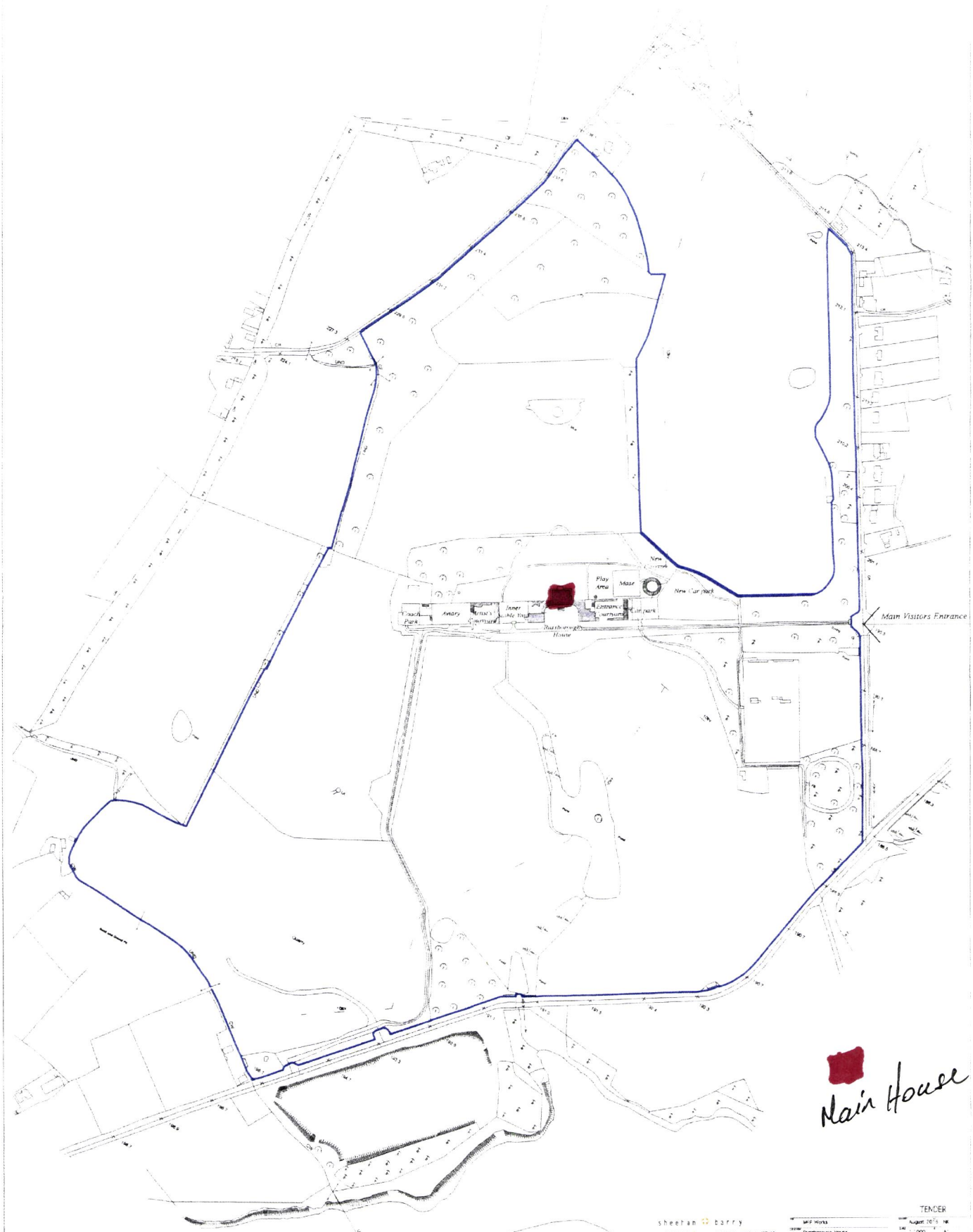
*Note: Due to carpets the Drawing Room, Dining Room, Library, and Staircase Halls have been surveyed at edges only*



1. Proposed Work Areas G.01, 02, 04, 05, 06, 07, 10, 11

379 sq m

REVISION HISTORY				
LINE	REV	DESCRIPTION	DATE	APPROVED



 *Main House*

sheehan & carry

MP Works  
 CHAIRBOROUGH HOUSE  
 THE NEW ATHLETIC FOOT FOUNDATION  
 SHEET 10/11

TENDER  
 August 16/19 18  
 1:000  
 27/22 47/79/11 Rev  
 August 2011