

5. BUILDING DESCRIPTION & DEVELOPMENT

5.1 Introduction

The Site comprises three principal parts, the two pre-1787 townhouses fronting Chester Road, and the 1842-3 Bridgewater Trustees office extension on Crown Street.

The following current floorplans of Bridgewater House visually identify approximate changes to the original fabric and planform. The room numbers used are used throughout this report.

The blue and magenta outlines denote the approximate original footprints of both original dwellings, whilst the green outlined area denotes the original extent of the 1842-3 office. The pink shaded areas illustrate the approximate elements of the building fabric which have since been removed.

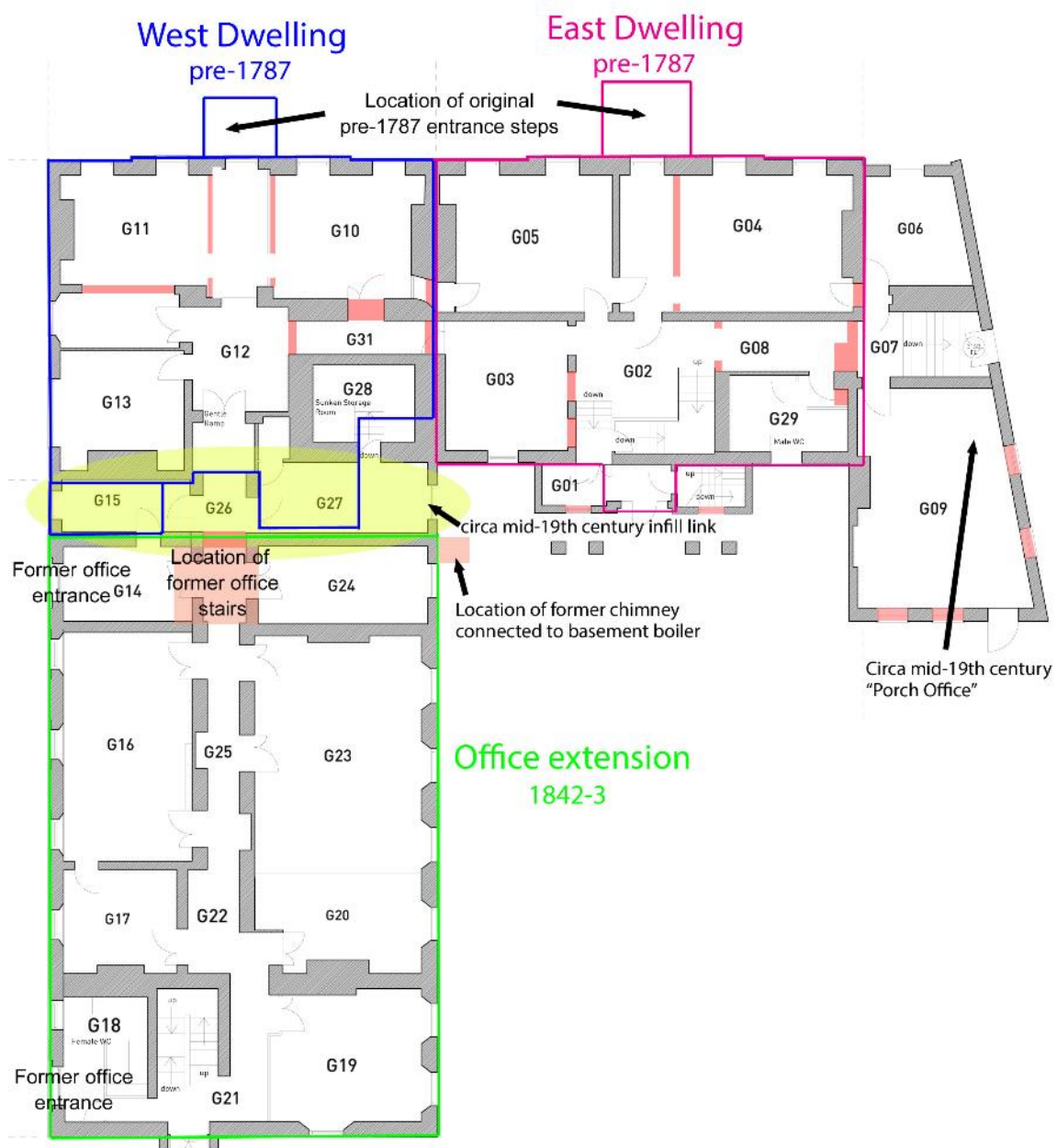


Figure 30: Ground floor morphological plan

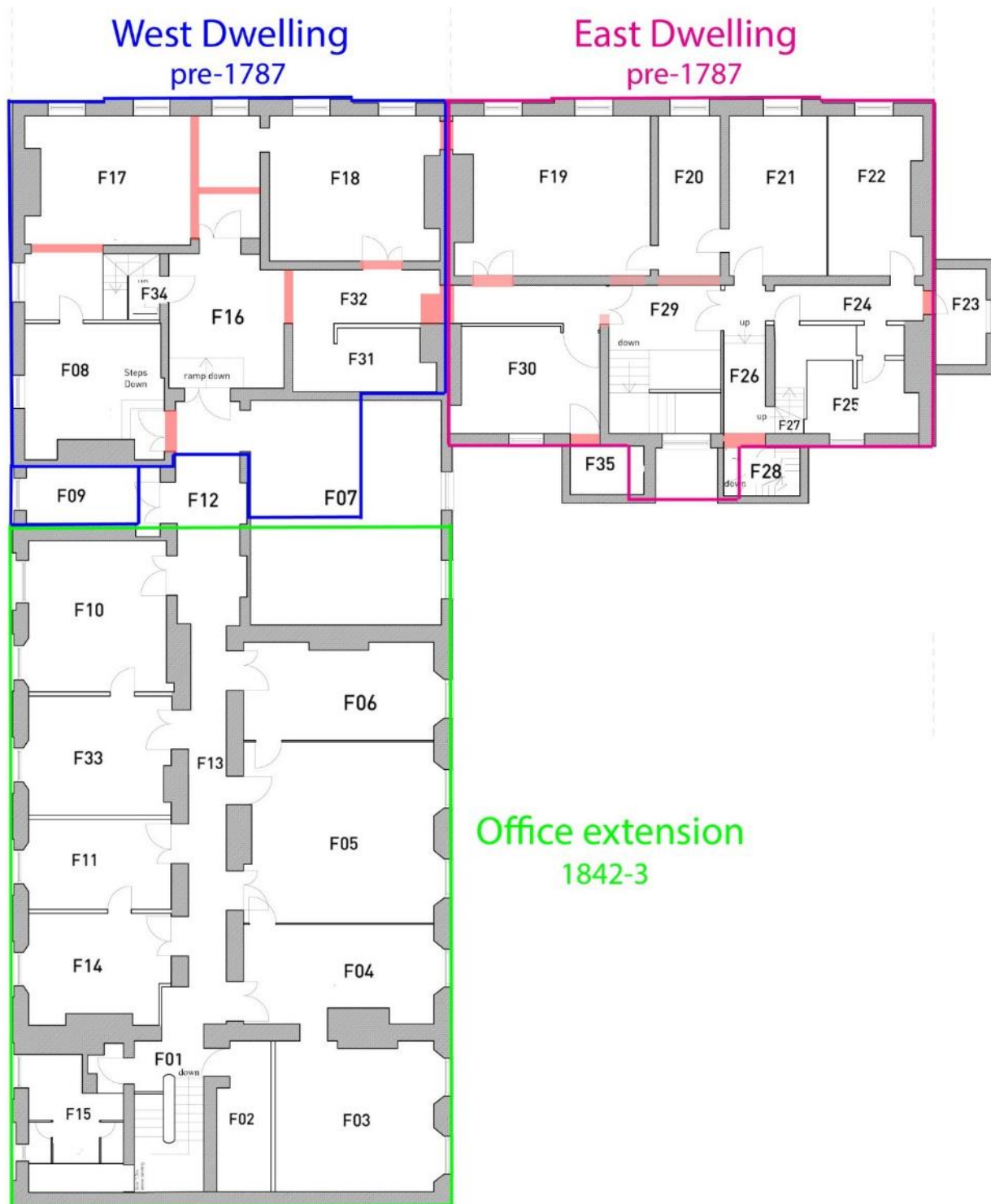


Figure 31: First floor morphological plan

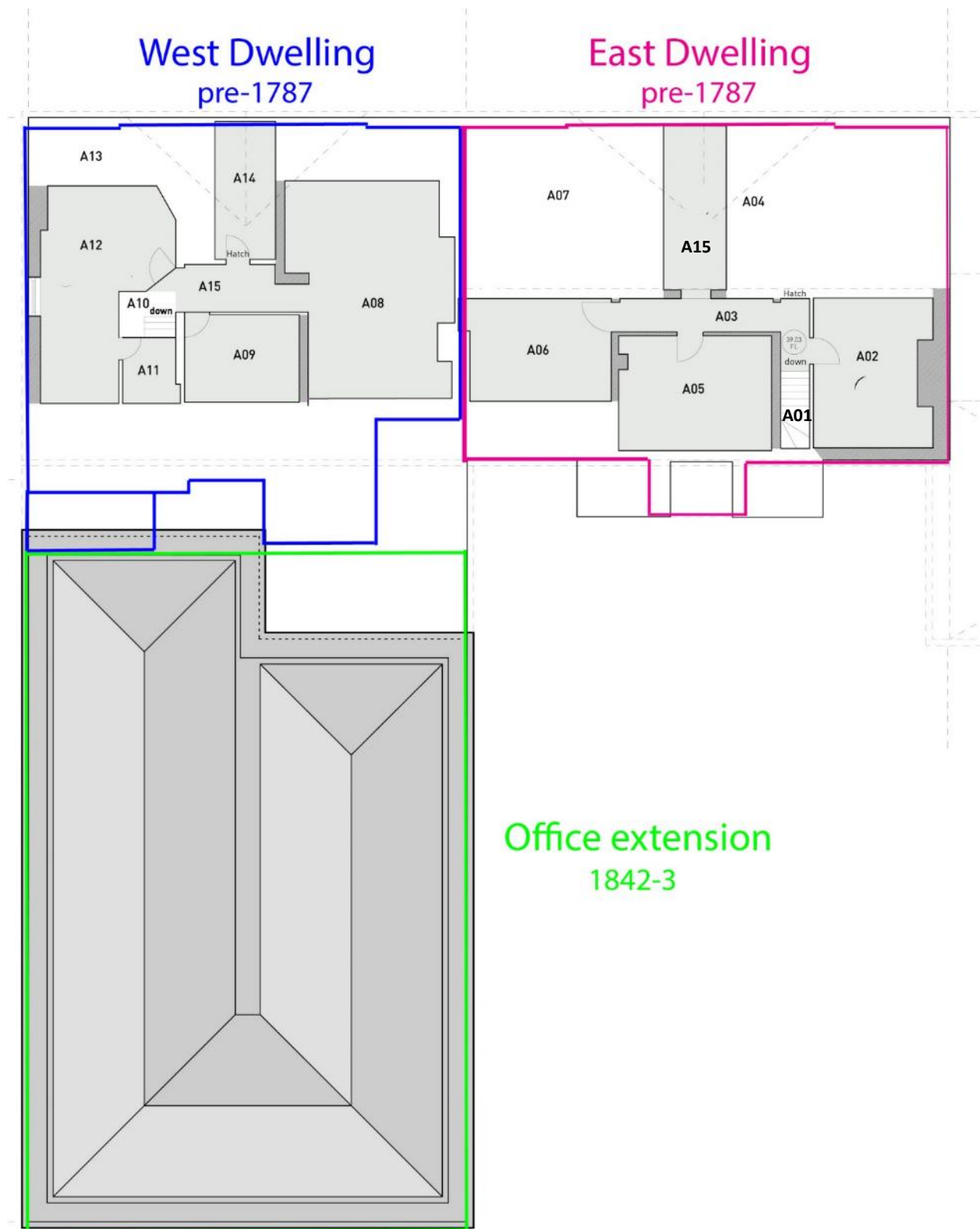


Figure 32: Second floor (attic) morphological plan



Figure 33: Basement floor morphological plan

5.1.1 Building description - Former “Hulme Place” townhouses – Exterior

Note - Due to the building being partially covered by hoardings and window coverings for the last circa 10 years, photographs have been supplemented with those previously taken by SLHA since 2006.

The two original townhouses are of two-storeys, each with partially below-ground basements and attics storeys. The principal front elevation fronting Chester Road is constructed in an orange/red handmade brick laid in a Flemish bond.

It appears that following the completion of the dwelling to the east, the second dwelling to the west was constructed shortly after. However, due to the smaller plot on which the second dwelling was constructed, this building is marginally less wide than the first dwelling, which resulted in the design of its principal front elevation (north) on Chester Road having to be cleverly designed to create the illusion of a pair of perfectly proportioned and symmetrical houses (**Figure 34**).

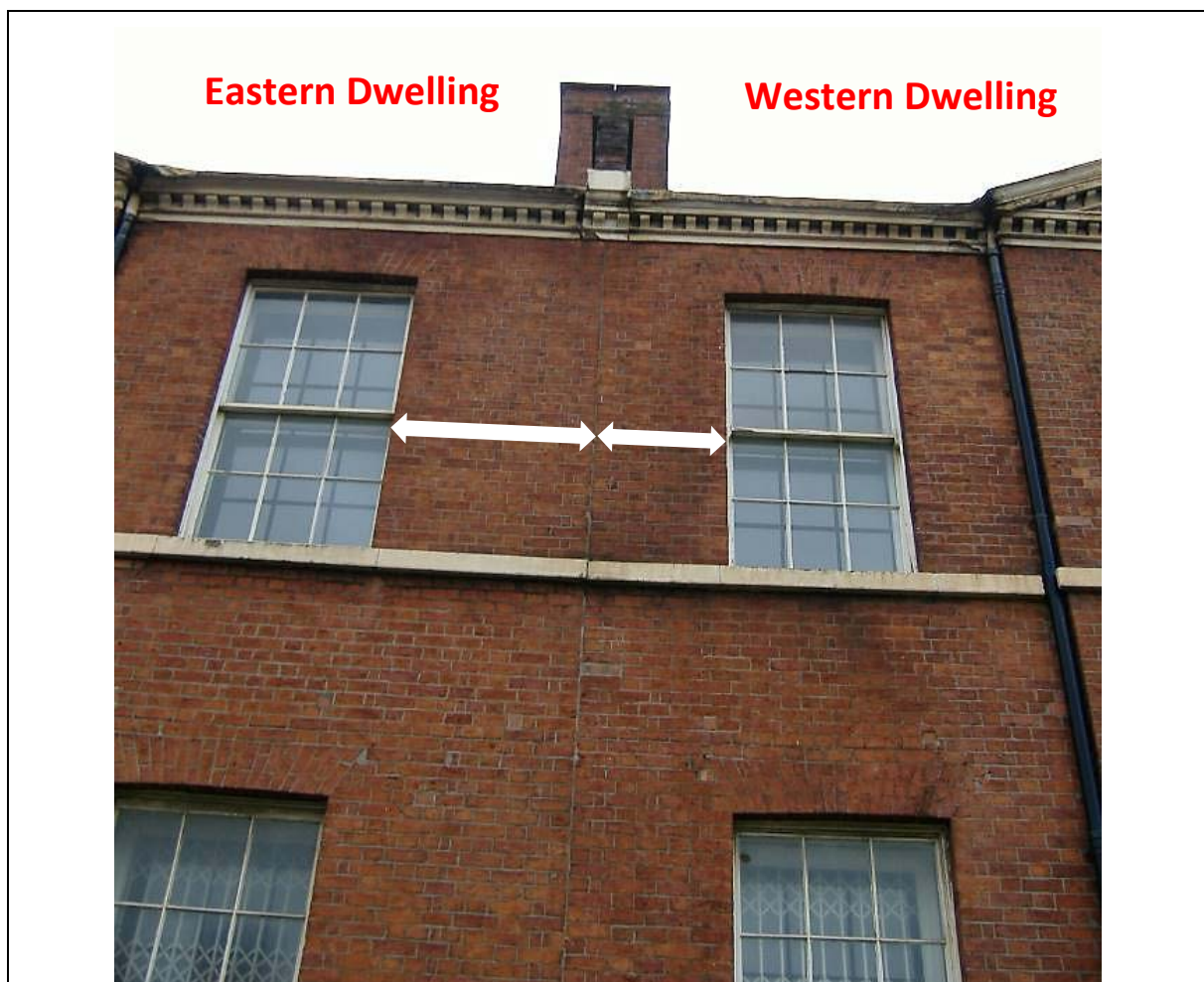


Figure 34: A view taken in 2007 in order to show the original fenestration pattern, illustrating the junction on the north elevation between the original eastern dwelling (left) and the later, western dwelling (right) showing the vertical join between the two 18th century dwellings.

The image illustrates the clearly different proportions in window piers and window sizes when compared to one another (see white arrows between windows), highlighting the two separate phases of construction. (Source: SLHA 2007 – Note the current condition of the building has since worsened)

This was achieved on the principal north (front) elevation by the newer, western dwelling, being designed with its window openings located closer to the existing eastern dwelling, adjacent to the party wall and the use of slightly narrower sash windows in order to create the illusion of symmetry. The use of slightly narrower timber brackets along the eaves level and pediment was also part of this design.

As previously stated, the two dwellings were not originally connected internally. Both houses were originally entered via an entrance door located to the centre of each house to the front, north elevation fronting Chester Road (**Figure 35**). The original front entrances would have formed either stone or timber door cases in a classical style, with pilasters either side and a pointed pediment, accessed from a short flight of stone steps. Although there is no visual evidence for these doors, their former ghosted outline can be seen in subsequent photographs taken in the 1960s/70s (**See Figures 24-25**).

The two entrances survived until being removed at some time between 1883 and 1891 by the Site's new owners; the Bridgewater Navigation Company Ltd, when the residential uses of the dwellings ceased, and the buildings became part of the wider offices, and the two doors were subsequently replaced by sash windows. Internally, the dimensions of the original wide entrance hall into the western dwelling survives, whilst the original entrance hall to the eastern dwelling was redesigned to form a large new board room (Room G04).



Figure 35: The north elevation as seen in 2007, showing the location of the original front entrances into both dwellings shaded red. (Source: SLHA 2007 – Note the current condition of the building has since worsened)

The north elevation as a whole is ten bays wide with sandstone coping to the parapet/eaves, sills, string course and plinth. The eaves level is formed by a decorated timber cornice with brackets, which extends up to a central pediment to the centre of each building. The window openings have flat arches

with hand-rubbed soldier courses and six-over-six sash windows which are largely of an original/early date.

There are two chimney stacks on each side of the central party wall between the two dwellings. Two further chimney stacks, originally located on the eastern gable end of the eastern dwelling, were removed in the 1960s, along with an attic window looking east onto Great Jackson Street. Another stack was also removed from the western gable end of the western dwelling during the same period.

To the east of the eastern dwelling is a mid-to-late 19th century single-storey extension, which was historically known as the “Porch Office”. This building utilised the original 18th century garden wall to the east (fronting Great Jackson Street).

On Crown Street, the west elevation of the western dwelling contains an unusual design of fenestration, with four, large window openings to the ground and first floor levels. The two openings to the north were designed to be blind as these have chimney breasts directly behind them. The two openings to the south originally contained two pairs of six-over-six sash windows, with the first floor opening subsequently altered to contain a single sash window in a reduced opening, whilst the bottom opening retains its original dimensions and contains two replaced/restored multi-pane sash windows inserted in 1977 (**Figures 36-37**). To the attic level is a single window opening containing a window also replaced in 1977.



Figure 36: Existing west (Crown Street) elevation of the western dwelling 1977. (Source Manchester City Council)

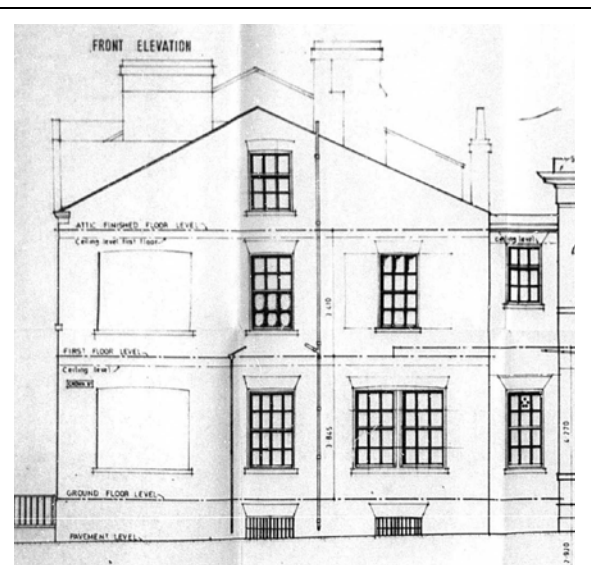


Figure 37: The proposed 1977 elevation showing the restoration of four windows (Source Manchester City Council)

The south elevation of the 18th century east dwelling (**Figure 38**) originally contained a short, central projecting outrigger, which was likely to have been a rear entrance porch at ground floor level (**Figure 39**). In the c1850s a similarly dimensioned outrigger was constructed to the western side of this central porch, which provided a WC accessed from the mid-landing level of the main staircase, and a further WC at ground level. At some time after (and before 1879) the matching outrigger to the east was constructed to provide a service staircase from basement to attic level, with ground floor external access also provided.

This elevation was substantially altered in 1977 with the alteration of the central outriggers, including the removal, filling and insertion of window openings, and the extension of the west outrigger up to roof level to provide a room at first floor level (**Figure 40**).

The late-19th century glazed lean-to was removed from the west of the elevation, and this part of the elevation was restored back to its original appearance. The alterations were finished with a new projecting canopy supported on square brick columns and landscaping of the car park area.



Figure 38: The south (rear) elevation of the eastern dwelling as seen in 2007, showing the alterations undertaken in 1977. (Source: SLHA 2007 – Note the current condition of the building has since worsened)

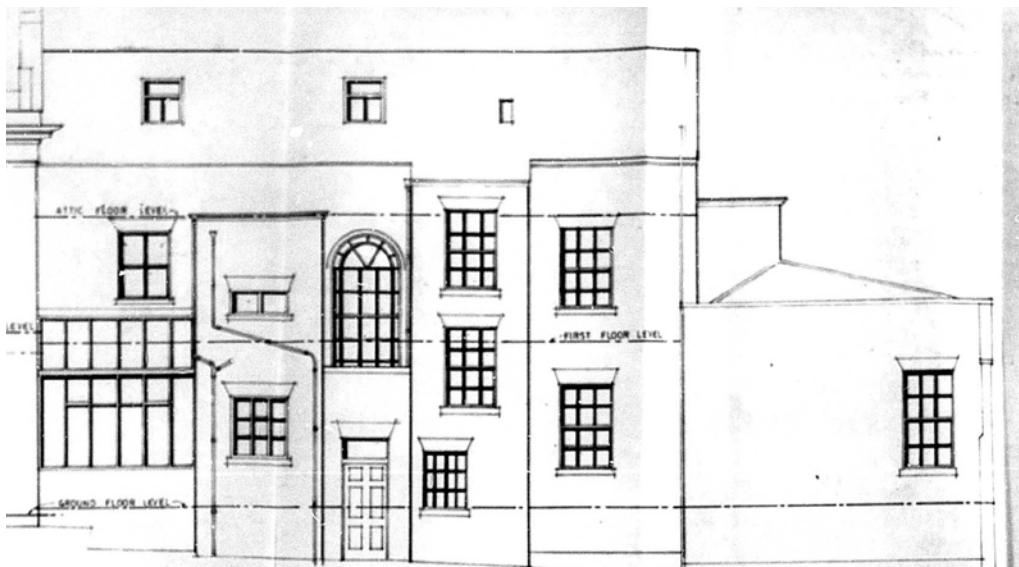


Figure 39: The south elevation of the eastern dwelling as it appeared following its purchase by Securicor Ltd in November 1976, showing its early appearance and window arrangement, which included a number of now removed openings to the rear outriggers and glazed lean-to linking with the western dwelling (Source: Manchester City Council).



Figure 40: The proposed November 1976 southern elevation of the eastern dwelling, showing the alterations undertaken by Securicor Ltd, including the infilling of outrigger windows, the removal of a later glazed lean-to and restoration of original window openings, the construction of a rear canopy and double doors, the removal of three dormers/skylight and the conversion of a window into a door (right). (Source: Manchester City Council)



Figure 41: The southern aspect of the mid-to-late 19th century single-storey extension, which formed the "Porch Office". The door to the single storey wing was inserted in 1977, whilst the two window openings were inserted in 1985. (Source: SLHA 2007 – Note the current condition of the building has since worsened)

The roof of the original 18th century dwellings was covered in large Welsh slates fixed to battens on a traditional rafter and purlin gabled roof construction. These slates were removed in 2008 and are now stored at basement level, the roof was subsequently covered with blue plastic sheeting.

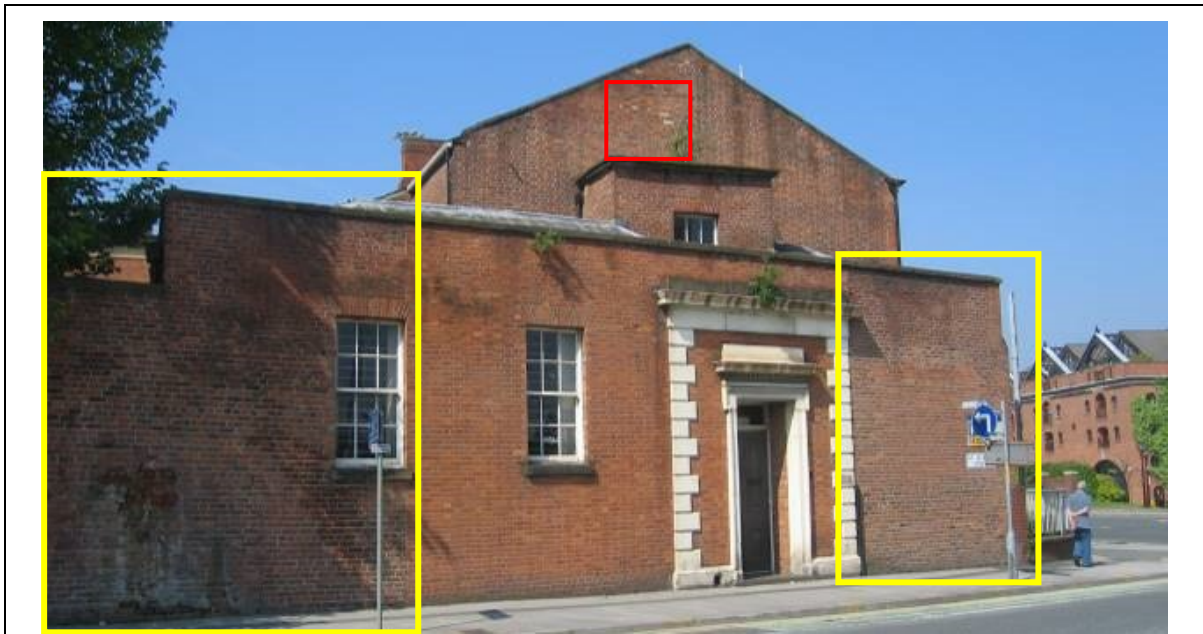


Figure 42: The east elevation on Great Jackson Street, showing the two clear phases of construction, with the left and right sides of the external wall being of an early/original date forming the original garden boundary wall (outlined yellow), whilst the middle section containing the stone entrance portal and one modern window opening dates to the mid-to-late-19th century.

An early-20th century window opening to the right of the door was infilled in 1977, whilst the two windows to the left were inserted in 1985. The red outline denotes an original attic window since blocked (see **Figure 91**) (Source: SLHA 2007 – Note the current condition of the building has since worsened).

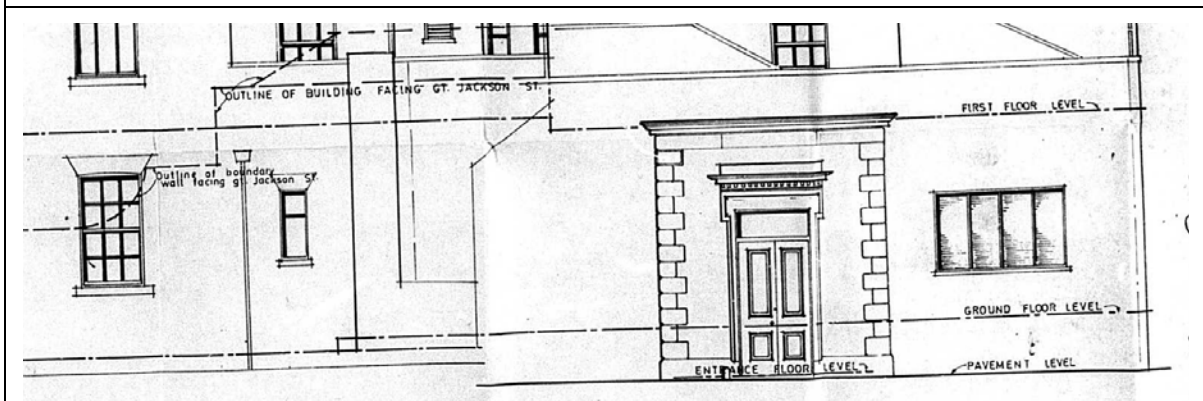


Figure 42: The 1977 existing, partial cut away, east elevation. (Source: Manchester City Council).

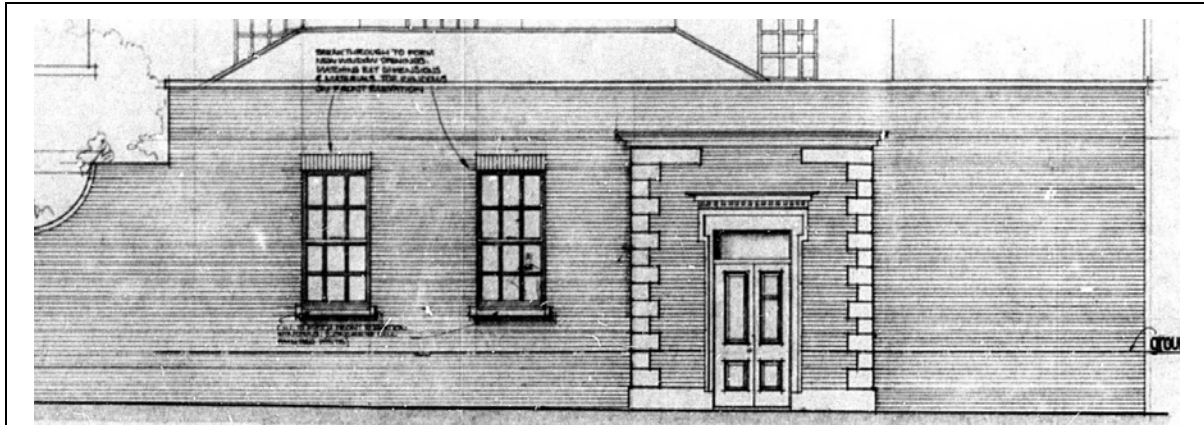


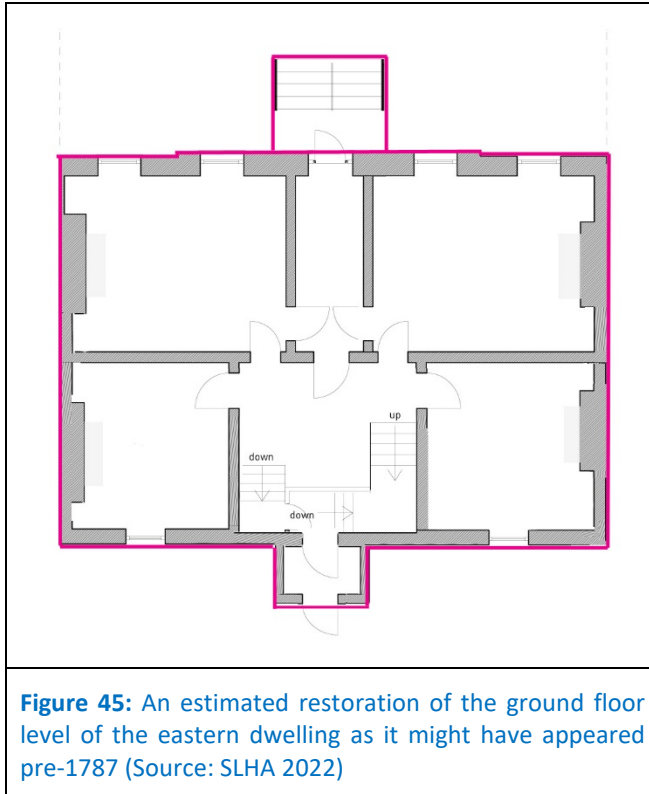
Figure 43: The proposed 1985 east elevation showing the insertion of the two windows to the left (Source: Manchester City Council).



Figure 44: The remains of the original garden boundary wall from the eastern dwelling onto Great Jackson Street. (Source SLHA 2007).

5.1.2 Building description - Former townhouses “Hulme Place” – Interior

The earlier dwelling to the east was originally designed with a largely symmetrical planform (See **Figure 45 below for an estimated restoration of the ground floor level**), with two large reception rooms either side of the central entrance and hallway accessed from Chester Road, and two further rooms behind these looking south into the rear garden. The central entrance hall opened out onto a separate staircase hall to the rear of the building, which is still in its original location.



The present staircase appears to have been altered in the 19th century, and possibly originally consisting of cast iron spindles, which can still be found to the basement stairs below.

The large round-headed staircase window appears to have been relocated/repositioned to its current position, possibly relocated from the adjoining dwelling to the west or repositioned during 19th century alterations at some time following the construction of the Bridgewater Offices in the 1840s. It is likely that the simple plaster cornice within the room was also installed at this time.

The long corridor which runs east-west through both buildings was inserted later to connect both dwellings in the c1880s, and

now passes through an original chimney breast to the eastern side of the building and an alcove to the west. The western dwelling is largely similar to the eastern dwelling in terms of planform, but built slightly later and is narrower in width.

The dwelling to the west underwent several major alterations during the c1880s in order to link it internally into the c1842-3 office extension, which is likely to have included the removal of the original staircase to this dwelling at this time.

Due to the survival of original flagstone floors and original decorative 18th century plaster cornicing in this former entrance hall (Room G12), it demonstrates that the staircase was not located within the room itself, but within an adjacent room to the south which has since been demolished.

However, an original 18th century staircase remains intact at first floor level, which leads from the former landing area (Room F16) into the former servant accommodation in the attic. This staircase retains much of its original 18th century joinery and panelling including early paint scheme., indicating the high status of the house and its original owners.

The ground floor level of both dwellings retain several examples of original cornicing. This cornice is of very high quality and includes highly decorative and figural plaster cornice, featuring classical urns

and cherubs faces, particularly in Rooms G10, G11, G12 and F16. The ground floor windows retain original panelled shutters to the ground floor windows, which have been painted shut and partially concealed with c1970s security bars.

Table 1: Ground Floor Gazetteer – 18th Century Dwellings (*N.B It should be noted that since 2007 the condition of the building has become significantly worse and full access to the building is now limited due to health and safety reasons*).



Figure 46: Room G11 (looking north) – Formally one of two reception rooms within the western dwelling, the room retains all its 18th century plaster cornice of urns and wreaths. (Source: SLHA 2017)



Figure 46a: A detail of the 18th century cornice in Room G11. (Source: SLHA 2017)



Figure 47: Room G11 (looking north) – This room was the original entrance hall and was originally divided from the room pictured above by a dividing wall (indicated by red shading). The window was inserted following the removal of the front entrance door in the late-19th century.

This room retains most of its original plaster cornice featuring urns, which is of a different design to the western part of the room, and which matches the cornice found in the adjacent former hallway (Room G12) which originally formed an extension of this room (See Figures 48-50) (Source: SLHA 2017)



Figure 48: Room G12 (looking north) – This room was the original 18th century hallway for the western dwelling, which opened out into the entrance hall shown in Figure 47 above. To the south was originally a now demolished separate staircase hall. The room retains parts of its 18th century cornice, which features urns, laurel leaves and brackets with indentations from former, now removed plaster rosettes, surviving examples of these can still be seen in Room G11 (see Figures 49-50) (Source: SLHA 2017)



Figure 49 & 50: The original cornice surviving in Room G12 showing missing rosettes (left), and surviving cornice with rosettes within the adjacent Room G11 (right) (Source: SLHA 2017)