



**Northaw Place  
Northaw  
Hertfordshire**

**Historic Building Appraisal**



**December 2009**

Beams Ltd  
The Castle, Hertford  
SG14 1HR  
Tel: 01992 504331 Fax: 01992 504302  
Email: [enquiries@beamsltd.org](mailto:enquiries@beamsltd.org)

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## 1.0 Introduction

In June 2009 BEAMS Ltd conducted an historic building appraisal of Northaw Place, Northaw, Hertfordshire. The appraisal was divided into four stages; research of historic sources at the archives, a site visit to assess the property and finally analysis and writing of this report.

### 1.1 Location

Northaw is a village in the Welwyn Hatfield District of Hertfordshire and part of the civil parish of Northaw and Cuffley, originally known as Northaw. Northaw lies approximately 2 miles to the north-east of Potters Bar and north of the boundary of the M25 motorway. Northaw Place is situated to the west of the village of Northaw and is accessed from Coopers Lane (B156). The parish remains well wooded with a number of lanes connecting to the Great North Road (A1000) to the west, and there is a road to the north-east leading to Hertford.

### 1.2 Site description (Fig. 1)

Northaw Place is situated within historic parkland; it has a wide tarmac drive to the front, in the centre of which is a fountain with associated circular pool. To the north of this is an area of lawn and the original ha-ha, beyond which a fence marks the northern boundary of the site; beyond the boundary is farmland and open countryside once associated with Northaw Place. To the rear of the house are the formal gardens laid to lawn. The original 17<sup>th</sup> century garden wall to the east and south boundary has wrought iron entrance gates to the south (now disused and probably 19<sup>th</sup> century), and a new iron gate allowing access from the east. Mature trees border the garden including cedars, willows and pines; two large horse chestnut trees dominate the southern part of the garden. There is a large paddock to the east. To the west are various properties once associated with Northaw Place, including the coach house and former stable block, they are now under separate ownership.

Northaw Place is a grade II\* statutory listed building. It was listed in 1952. The description reads;

House. Formerly residential school. Circa 1690. Said to have been built for Captain Moncey R.N. Altered early C19, c.1860 and late C19. Earliest part on E has 5-window N front, refaced c.1860 in cement. Banded ground floor. Square porch with detached Roman Doric columns their lower halves bossed. Balustrading. Slightly projecting centre window bay, the 1st floor window with pediment. Chamfered quoins. Sash windows with shallow-moulded surrounds. Extension on right with 3 moulded relieving arches and similar detailing. Large early and late C19 W additions. At right angles on W end is stable block of late C17 origin: C19/20 red brick with slate hipped roof. The ridge has large clock tower: square base with clock faces; dentilled open pediments; octagonal turret with columns and modillioned cornice; ogee lead hood; clock mechanism intact. Garden elevation to early house is red brick c1700. 1st floor band. Early C19 flush sash windows. Square porch has fluted Greek Doric columns and pilaster responds. C19 stucco eaves cornice. W extensions in yellow stock brick with gauged brick lintels. Interior has very good c1700 staircase hall. Canvas wall and ceiling paintings in style of Verrio, depicting scenes from classical mythology. Barley twist balustrading. Hall and ground floor rooms with contemporary fielded panelling, the NE room and vestibule with frames for paintings, now removed, set over bolection-moulded fireplaces. NE 1st floor room with Chinese style paintings on rails and mutins of panelling, now painted over. (Pevsner (1977)).

(Website 1)

The garden walls at Northaw Place are grade II statutory listed (listed 1983):

Garden walls on S side of Northaw Place. Late C17. Red brick. 3 sides of square, joining S front of house at E end. Centre S side has pair of double cast iron gates, probably C19, set between C19 square gate piers with stone cornices. Included for group value.

(Website 1)

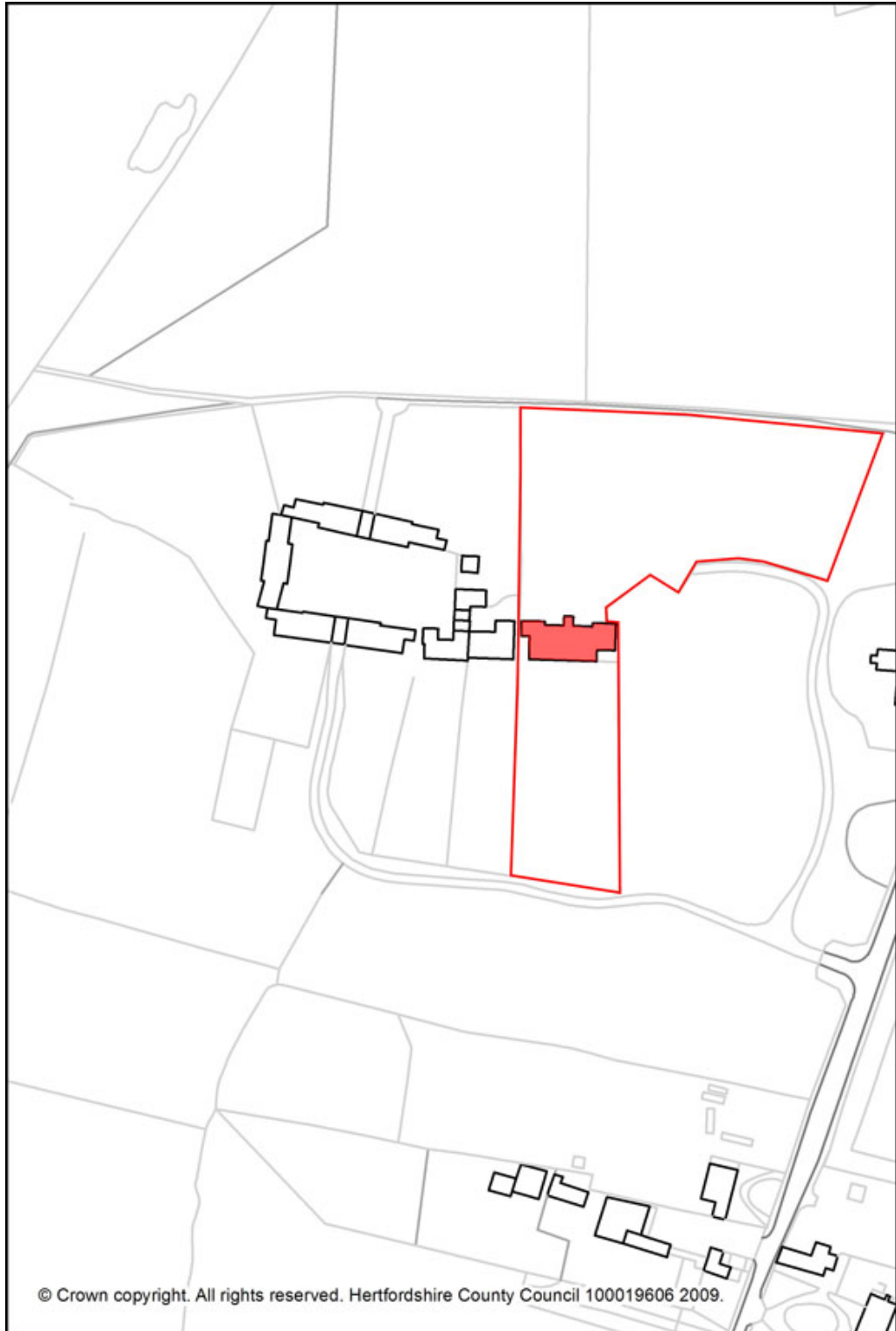


Figure 1. Northaw Place. Site plan; boundary and house are marked in red

## **2.0 Historical Background**

### **2.1 General**

In the eleventh century St Albans abbey owned an area of woodland known as North Haga which probably extended over much of the parish of Northaw. The ownership of this woodland was disputed by Robert de Valognes, but St Albans abbey managed to retain possession of this valuable area of land.

The 12<sup>th</sup> century hermit Siger frequently visited Northaw and apparently lived in the woods to the north of the village, he was the subject of legend and was according to Page 'strenuous in his subjection of the flesh, and a mighty foe of demons, who walked nightly to St. Albans, and by the potency of his prayers procured the banishment from the neighbourhood of the nightingales which disturbed his devotions.' Siger is buried in the south aisle of St Albans Abbey.

The village of Northaw was probably established in the medieval period, the first church is thought to date to the 14<sup>th</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup> century (perhaps earlier), however this (or its later replacement) was entirely destroyed by fire and replaced in 1881. Only a 15<sup>th</sup> century font remains.

Mention is made of a manor of Northaw in the 14<sup>th</sup> century; it was owned by St Albans Abbey from the 11<sup>th</sup> century and the lands leased to various wealthy landowners. During the dissolution of the monasteries (1539) the manor was seized by the crown and leased to William Cavendish. In 1576 the entire estate was granted to Ambrose Dudley, earl of Warwick, third son of John duke of Northumberland, who had been restored to the honours which he had forfeited by his support of his cousin Lady Jane Grey. Dudley died in 1589, and his wife Anne, daughter of Francis Lord Russell earl of Bedford, continued to hold the manor until her death in February, 1603–4, when it passed in virtue of a previous settlement to her brother William Lord Russell of Thornhaugh and his heirs. In 1632 the manor was sold to William Leman, wool draper of London. It stayed in his family for a number of years. In 1810 the manor was bought by Patrick Thompson.

Nyn Hall was the manor house for Northaw; the house was a medieval hall house with later additions and alterations, it was demolished in 1774. A new house, Nyn Park, was built near the site of the demolished Nyn Hall in the 19<sup>th</sup> century but it was destroyed by fire in 1963, some small ruins remain. Several other large houses and country estates were built in the area including Northaw Place (17<sup>th</sup> century) and Northaw House (also late 17<sup>th</sup> century).

## 2.2 Northaw Place

17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries



Figure 2. 19<sup>th</sup> century painting depicting Northaw Place c1690 (Website 2)

Northaw Place was built circa 1690 by Sir George Hutchins, King's Serjeant and one of the Commissioners of the Great Seal (1690 – 1693). Cussans describes the Northaw estate as having once formed part of the manorial estate but it became detached from it in circa 1690 when Sir William Leman, second Baronet, and Lord of the Manor of Northaw, gave it to his daughter Sarah, on her marriage to Sir George Hutchins. Sir George Hutchins died in 1705 and was succeeded by his son Leman Hutchins, to whose time the paintings on the stairs have been ascribed (circa 1728 – 1732). Leman Hutchins died in 1738, leaving it to his widow, who in the same year sold it to Mrs Mary Warner. Mrs Warner died in 1760 and the estate went to her niece, Miss Hussey, wife of Sir Richard Bickerton, who in 1775 sold it to Mr John Pope. John Pope died at Northaw Place on 9<sup>th</sup> April 1784; by his will it transferred to his nephew Thomas Blachford, son of John Blachford, Citizen and Goldsmith of London, who had married a sister of John Pope. On the death of Thomas Blachford (1786) the estate went to his brother Robert Pope-Blachford; the estate then passed to Mr Alexander Watts.

Northaw Place is first shown on the 1766 Dury and Andrews Map of Hertfordshire (Fig. 3); it is shown as a long L-shaped building with a formal garden laid out to the rear / south. The house appears to be divided from the surrounding parkland by a rectangular boundary wall with two entrances on its north side. There are other dwellings by the road (Coopers Lane) to the south-east.

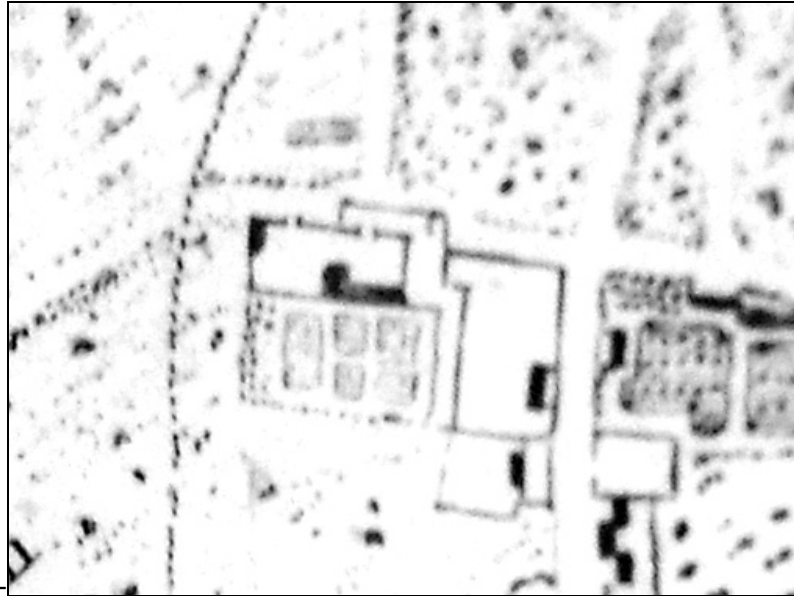


Figure 3. Extract from the Dury and Andrews Map of 1766 (HALS)

#### 19<sup>th</sup> century

Northaw Place was owned by Mr Alexander Watts in the late 18<sup>th</sup> / early 19<sup>th</sup> century; he sold it to Thomas Gould on whose death, in 1829, the estate was sold on to David Cameron Esq.

Northaw Place is first named on the 1822 Bryant map of Hertfordshire (Fig. 4) although the map is not drawn very accurately. The house and what appear to be two separate buildings nearby are shaded black; this map is different to the 1766 map, it may actually be based on an earlier layout of the site (pre 1766). To the north a lake and formal avenue of trees can be recognised and there is a square formal garden to the rear (south).

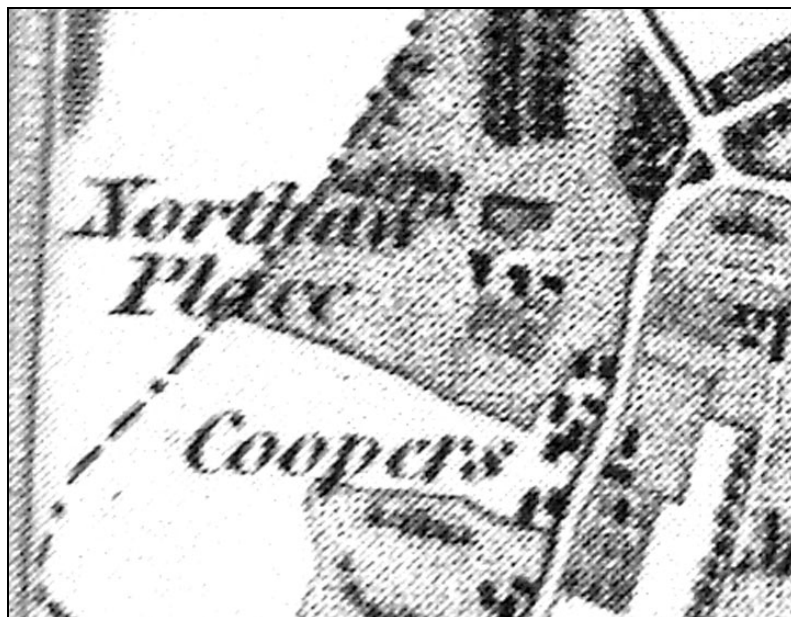


Figure 4. Extract from the 1822 Bryant Map (HALS)

The Northaw Tithe Map of 1849 (Fig. 5), and its associated Tithe Award, give clear details of the ownership and occupancy of the house and estate. The house is the long rectangular building shaded red; its series of stepped extensions to the west can be seen. The attached stables / outbuildings are shaded grey. To the west of the house is a smaller property (shaded red) with attached outbuildings (shaded grey). A driveway is shown leading to the front of the house from the east and then continues west to the stables. To the north and west are two ornamental ponds / lakes. Plot 203 was described as 'house and premises' and was owned by Ann Cameron but occupied by a James Dignam. Much of the surrounding land was in the same ownership and occupancy.

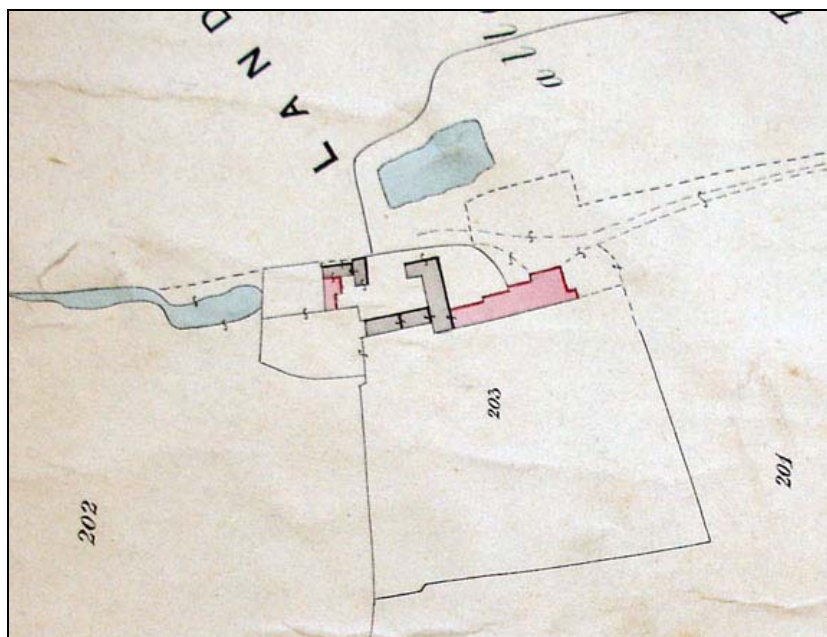


Figure 5. Extract from the 1849 Northaw Tithe Award Map (HALS)

The Northaw Place Estate was put up for sale in 1867 by David Cameron Esquire. A detailed sale catalogue was produced; it contains a great deal of interesting information about the house, its associated land and buildings and a plan of the Northaw Place Estate (Figs. 6 - 9 and Appendix 1). The estate plan shows the site in good detail and gives an impression of the parkland setting for the house. Trees are dotted about the park and a long avenue of trees is clearly visible to the north of the house, creating an attractive vista to the house. An ornamental lake is sited between the end of the avenue of trees and the house. To the south of the house and service wing is an area of lawn, a long oval fish pond, a kitchen garden and a vinery.

The sale catalogue described the Northaw Place Estate as having *an excellent residence replete with every convenience for a Gentleman's family ... a beautifully timbered park ... a carriage drive with ornamental lodge entrance ... extensive pleasure grounds and beautiful lawn ... etc.* The whole estate was about 75 acres.

The sale catalogue also included two colour washed prints of Northaw Place as it was in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century (Figs. 6 and 7). The front elevation shows the symmetrical main façade, rendered, of three storeys with a slate roof and central portico; the side extensions and stable block are concealed by the trees. A fence indicates the divide between the parkland with trees and sheep grazing and the front drive / garden. The rear elevation shows the main façade white rendered mirroring the front elevation and the lower two storey side extension of yellow brick. A brick wall is also shown

attached to the side wall enclosing the rear garden which was laid to lawn with trees and shrubs surrounding.



Figure 6. Northaw Place, front elevation in c. 1867 (HALS)



Figure 7. Northaw Place, rear elevation in c. 1867 (HALS)

The purchaser of Northaw Place was John Mounsey Esq. According to Cussans (1879) 'he (John Mounsey) enlarged and restored the house, without however making any structural alteration in the original building'. The paintings on the staircase were also 're-discovered' at this time, Cussans writes:

*'On the ceiling and walls of the principal staircase were some old paintings, apparently of little merit and in some places partly obliterated. On carefully*

cleaning them, it was found that many years ago an attempt had been made to remove the thick coat of coloured varnish ... The operator was unsuccessful and contented himself with repainting certain portions with more energy than discretion, (adding) a liberal coat of copal varnish.'

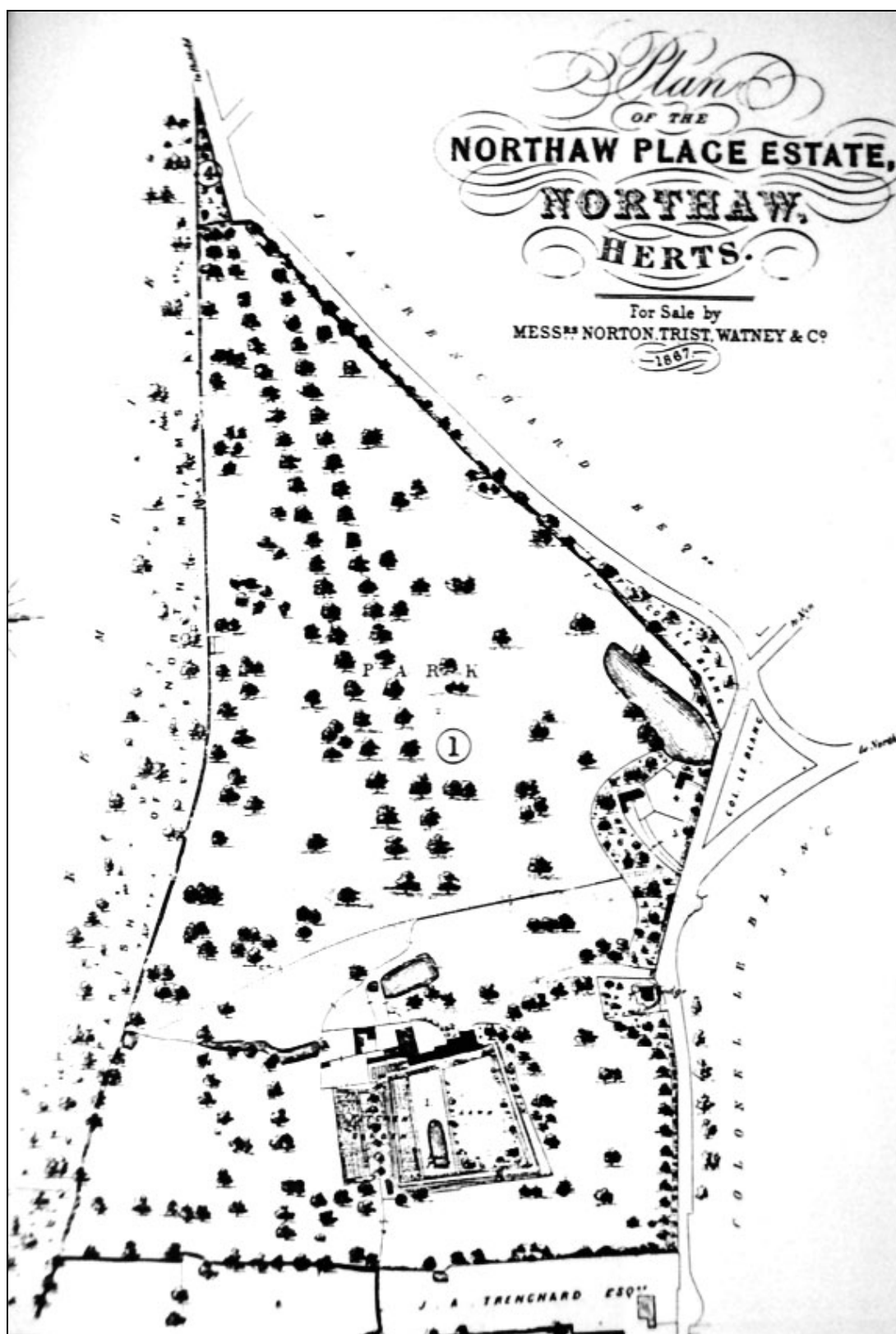


Figure 8. Plan of the Northaw Place Estate in 1867 (HALS)

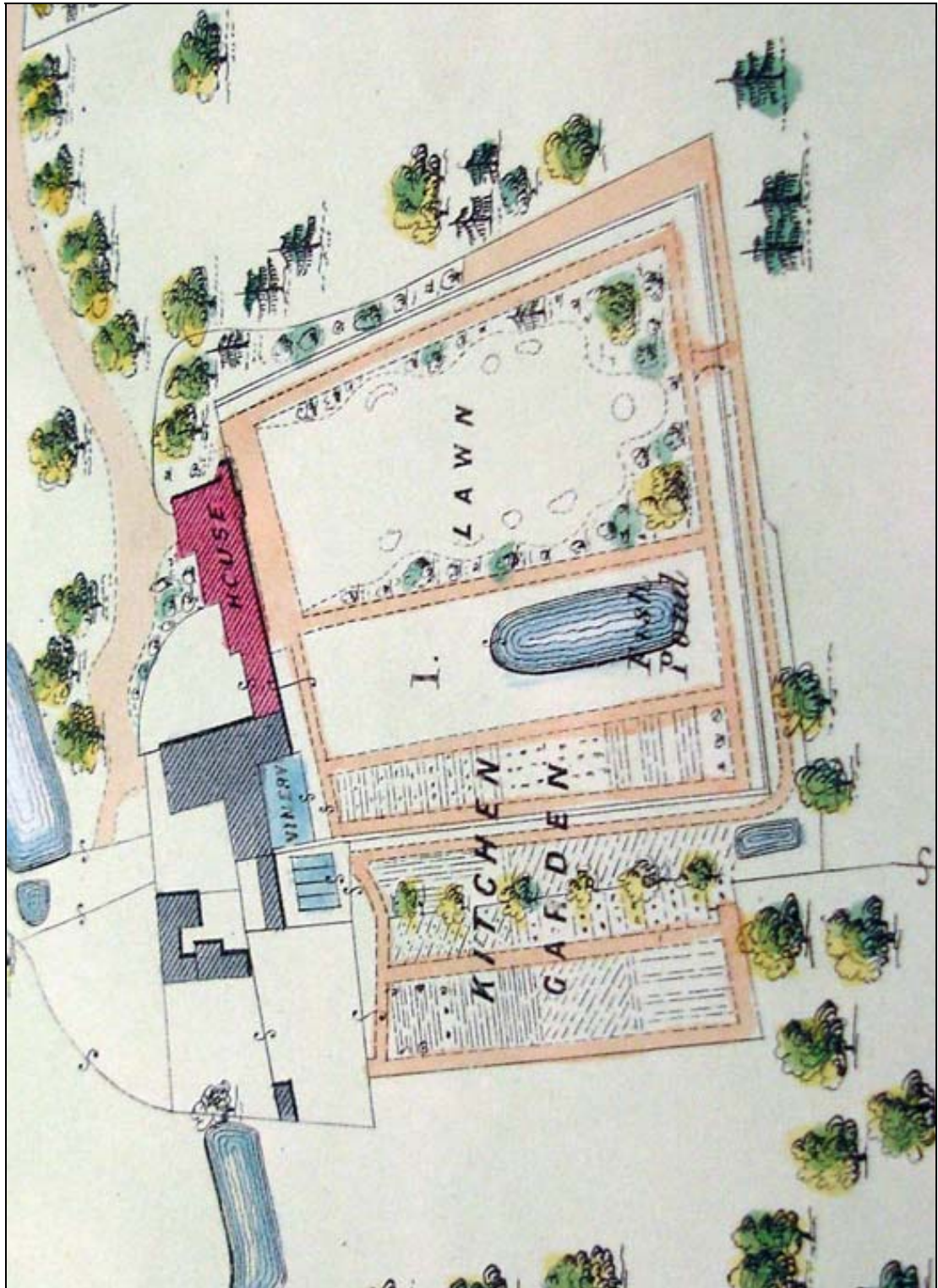


Figure 9. Detail from the 1867 Estate Plan showing Northhaw Place and its garden (HALS)

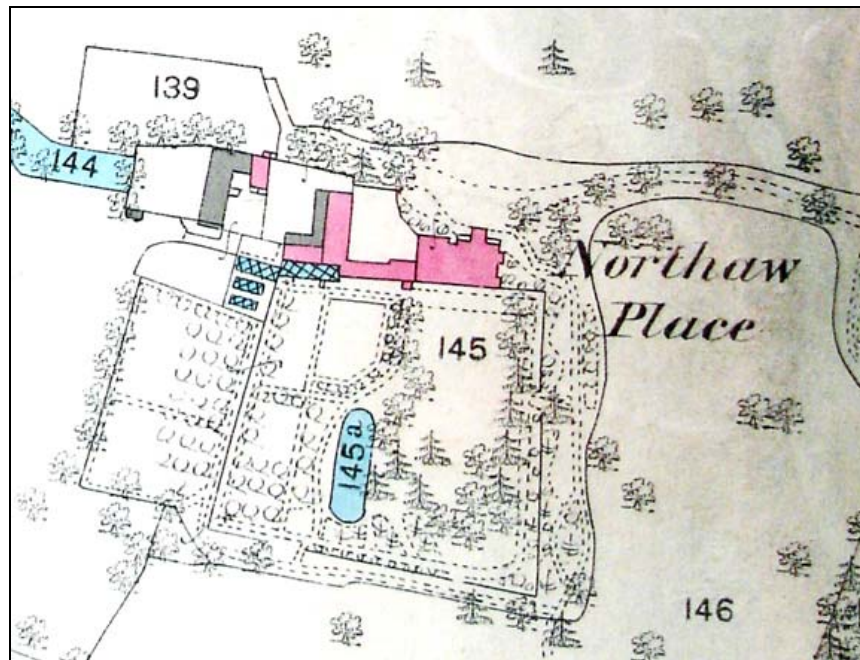


Figure 10. Extract from the 1881 Ordnance Survey Map (HALS)

The 1881 Ordnance Survey map (Fig 10) shows the house has been extended to the north-west (this wing now contains the snooker room and bedroom above). The attached stable block (to the west) is shown shaded in red, which suggests it may have been converted to residential use by this time. The 1898 Ordnance Survey map (Fig. 11) shows the main body of the house similar in appearance to the 1881 map; however some small extensions have been built to the south. The outbuildings to the west of the house have been enlarged.

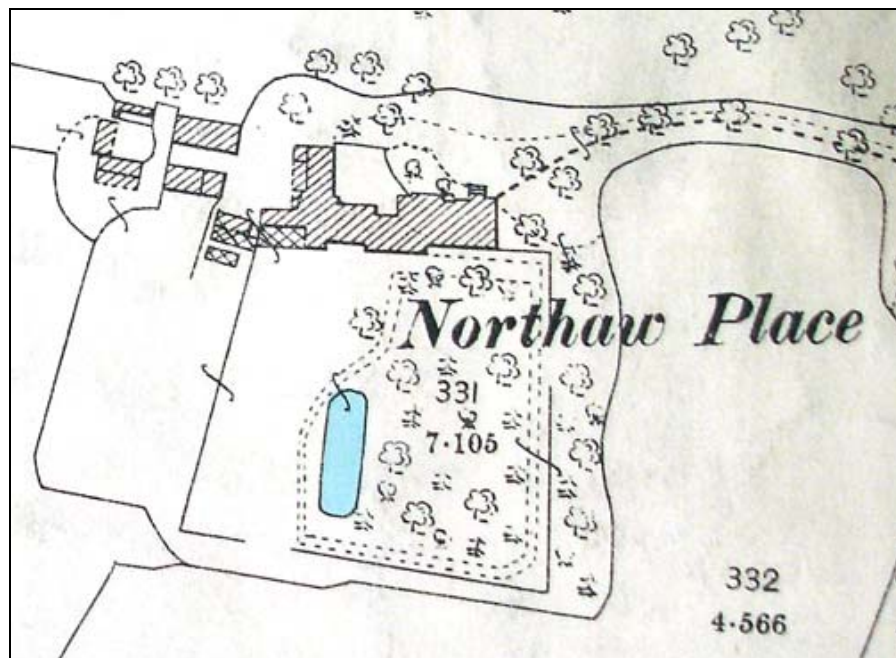


Figure 11. Extract from the 1898 Ordnance Survey Map (HALS)

### 20<sup>th</sup> century

Few alterations appear to have been made to the property in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (Fig. 12). The house became a school in the late 19<sup>th</sup> / early 20<sup>th</sup> century and was in the ownership of the Reverend F. J. Hall. In 1928 the house was reoccupied by Sir Philip Devitt as a private residence. Another extension to the far west was added before 1935. In the 1950's Northaw Place became a children's' home and assessment centre, run by the London Borough of Haringey. In the 1970's the building became disused and began to fall into disrepair; it became subject to vandalism, a fate which befell a great number of large country houses throughout Hertfordshire and the country at this time.

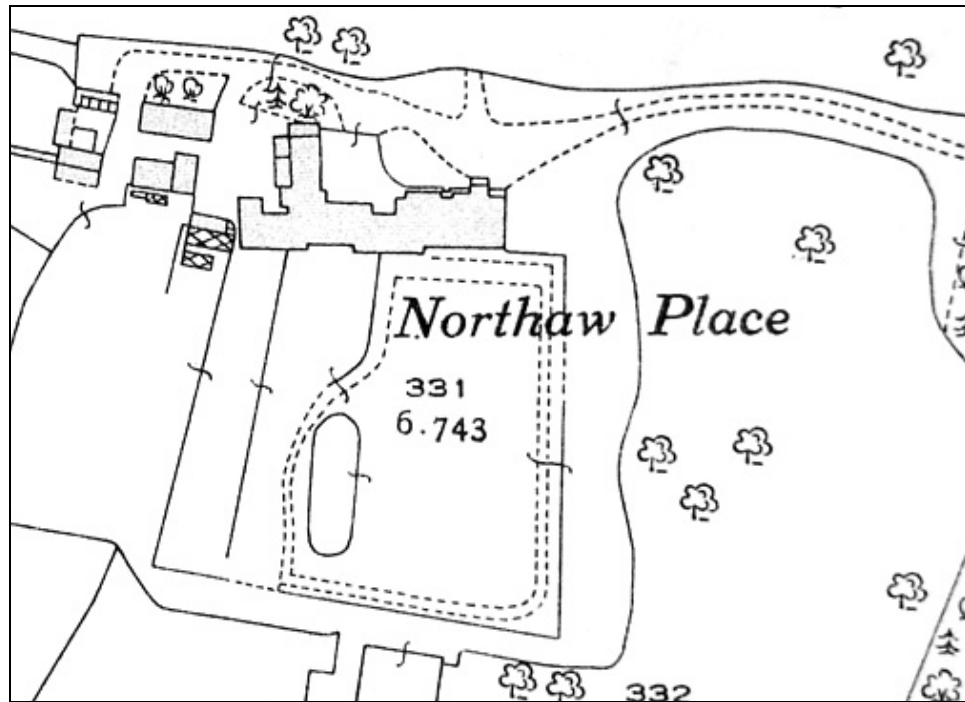


Figure 12. Extract from the 1935 Ordnance Survey Map (HALS)

In 1980 a planning application was made to convert Northaw Place (and its adjoining extensions to the west) to 10 dwellings (Ref: S6/0369/80). Permission was granted but the scheme was not implemented due to outstanding conditions of consent. A subsequent application to convert Northaw Place to offices was refused in 1982 (S6/0120/82). Another application was submitted in 1985 to convert Northaw Place to 6 dwellings (S6/0368/LB), permission was granted. In 1986 Northaw Place was bought by Hitchins (Hatfield) Ltd, a new planning application was submitted, this contained minor amendments from the previous application. As part of the conversion work the main house was divided from the stables / coach house to the west by the demolition of a link building.

### 3.0 Description

#### 3.1 External

Northaw Place is principally a three storey property with basement; it also includes later single and two storey additions. The main part of the property is constructed of red brick, rendered to the front elevation with a slate roof and a number of chimney stacks.

##### *Front (north) elevation*

Three storeys rendered brick front with banding at ground floor level, chamfered quoins and a parapet. Stone steps lead up to a square central projecting porch / portico with four detached Roman Doric columns, their lower halves bossed. Portico has dentilled cornice with balustrading above. Two 6-over-6 sash windows either side of central porch with rendered keystones. Above the porch the central window bay projects slightly, the first floor window has a pediment – all windows are 6-over-6 timber sashes with shallow moulded surrounds. At second floor level are five smaller 3-over-3 sashes with shallow moulded surrounds.

To the west is a two storey rendered brick extension set back from the front elevation. It has a slate roof set behind a parapet, 6-over-6 sash windows at first floor level, with one window surround missing an opening. Attached to the front of the two storey side extension and projecting forward from the principal elevation is a 1 ½ storey rendered brick extension with banding and a parapet. There are 3 moulded relieving arches; each contains a 6-over-6 sash window at ground floor level and two containing smaller arch-headed casement windows above.

To the east is a 1 ½ storey rendered extension which mimics the style of the single storey western extension but is a modern addition. It contains sash windows with arched rendered surrounds and a rendered parapet.



Northaw Place; front (north) elevation

#### *Rear (south) elevation*

Three storey red brick rear elevation fronting the garden, constructed in a sometimes irregular Flemish bond. Modern timber door to centre of ground floor with stepped brickwork above; much of the surrounding brickwork is modern replacement. Two flush 6-over-6 sashes either side. Projecting brick band to first floor level with five flush 6-over-6 sash windows; to the second floor are five smaller flush 3-over-3 sash windows. Above, the 19<sup>th</sup> century stucco eaves cornice partly conceals the hipped slate roof. Attached to the west side is a yellow brick two-storey side extension, constructed in Flemish bond, with a brick band between ground and first floor levels and brick parapet. Rendered quoins to the southwest corner of the wall. At ground floor level are two tall 6-over-6 sash windows, at the west end is a modern inserted door, originally a window. To the first floor are three 6-over-6 sash windows. All windows have fine gauged brick lintels above.



Northaw Place; rear (south) elevation

#### *Side (east) elevation*

The two large decorative chimney stacks can be seen partly projecting from the red brick wall of the old house, although the front elevation render carries on a little round to this side. The 1 ½ storey modern rendered extension continues part way to the rear and has garage doors set between arched openings. A smaller flat roofed modern red brick part to this extension projects to the rear with a 6-over-6 sash window.

#### *Side (west) elevation*

This elevation is rendered brick with the end of the 1 ½ storey extension protruding further west, it has two 6-over-6 sash windows on its south side. A chimney stack projects from the west wall near its south end, the upper part of the stack is exposed yellow brick.

### 3.2 Internal

For the purpose of this report it is not felt necessary to refer to each room in depth however the principal rooms will be described. Sash windows throughout the property are all modern 'like-for-like' replacements. Other features such as fire surrounds, doors, door surrounds, skirting boards, dado rails and panelling are also modern replacements but not necessarily 'like-for-like'.

#### Ground floor (Fig. 14)

The front porch and entrance lobby leads into the striking reception hall which has modern timber panelling to all its walls and a fireplace with red marble surround (late 20<sup>th</sup> century) to its west wall. According to the listing description this fireplace may once have had a frame above it containing a painting (now removed). A door in the east wall leads to the dining room. An arched opening in the west wall leads to a corridor and a wide arched opening in the south wall of the reception hall leads to the staircase hall and the main staircase. The room is lit by sash windows on the north elevation and the part glazed doorway with 19<sup>th</sup> century fanlight above.



Reception Hall



19<sup>th</sup> century fanlight above front door

The dining room is sited to the east of the reception hall; again it has modern timber panelling and cornice. A fireplace with red marble surround (late 20<sup>th</sup> century) is situated in the centre of the east wall. According to the listing description it once had a frame above it which contained a painting of the house, as seen in Figure 2, it has since been removed. Two 6-over-6 sash windows to the north elevation. It is likely that an opening was inserted in the south wall of the dining room to access the 'breakfast room', this was probably a later alteration (and is now blocked up).

The staircase hall and staircase are the oldest and most interesting surviving features within the house and are described in more detail below. Staircases became features of display within large houses from the 17<sup>th</sup> century or earlier; they were often sited opposite the front door or within a large entrance hall to make them visually important. The staircase dates to c1700 and the hall contains a number of wall and ceiling paintings, tempera on plaster, in the style of Verrio, depicting scenes from classical mythology. Other art historians have attributed the paintings to James Thornhill and Maria Verelst. Croft-Murray has dated the paintings to 1728 – 32.



Dining Room



Drawing Room



Staircase Hall



Sitting Room

A short report on the condition and proposed repair techniques for the paintings was produced in 1986 by Alan Byrne and Cicely Yudkin; they briefly described the paintings in their report. The (west) right hand wall has a scene depicting the 'Judgement of Paris' in its upper part; below this is a frieze of sculpted figures and a trompe l'oeil painting of a statue of Venus and Cupid, Venus having accepted the golden apple from Paris. Adjacent to this is a grisaille panel containing a sculpted figure. The (south) window wall has cherubs pulling aside curtains either side of the window. Below the window is the Coat of Arms of Captain Mounsey who purchased Northaw Place in 1867. He had the paintings 'restored' in 1869 by Manfred Griffin Holyoake, an established paintings restorer; it is likely the Mounsey Coat of Arms was added at this time. The left (east) wall depicts a holy figure, a king and a satyr (scene not identified). There are further figures in the background. The north wall has a cornucopia each side and painted mouldings. There are roundels containing figures above the east and west doors on the landing. The ceiling contains a scene depicting the muses of music and painting, topped by a putti crowning a figure bearing a golden lyre.

The square open well (dog-leg) staircase has large newel posts with barley twist decoration at each corner and barley twist balustrading with three balusters per stair tread, of the open string stair type, as opposed to balusters on a sloping base. Each step has an end bracket decorated with a scroll, in the centre of which is a small flower. The handrail is moulded timber.



West wall



West wall, lower grisaille panel



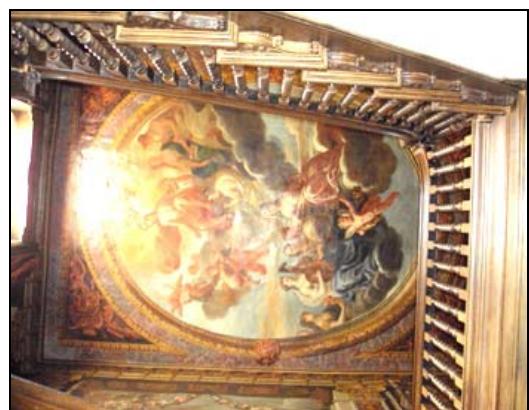
East wall



Landing looking east



Detail of stair tread bracket



Ceiling

There is moulded timber panelling below the paintings, a feature of the grander houses of the time, also with half barley twist newel posts. Much of the wooden stair and panelling is likely to be original.

To the west of the staircase hall is a small sitting room, this has a fireplace with a modern surround on its west wall and two sash windows on the north wall. All panelling and cornices are modern.

The drawing room is accessed from the corridor to the west of the reception hall; it is a very grand room with a high ceiling. The moulded cornice and panelling below dado level is modern. There are two tall sash windows and a glazed doorway (modern replacement of a sash window) within the south wall. At the west end is a fireplace with modern marble surround. At the east end are two small niches either side of a larger arched niche.

The corridor to the west of the reception hall leads to a cloakroom and stairs down to the snooker room (lower ground) and basement.

The kitchen / breakfast room is sited to the east of the staircase hall. The breakfast room is within the oldest part of the house and has two sash windows on its south wall. When the house was extended in the 1980's to create a kitchen, part of the side (east) wall of the breakfast room and base of the chimney stack was removed. A utility room adjoins the kitchen to the south and there is access to the basement, the garage and rear garden from this end of the house.

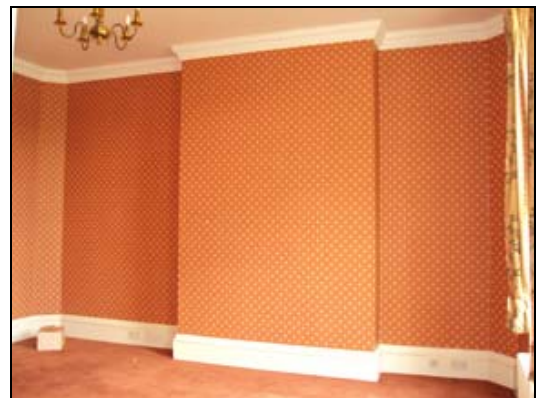
The basement contains a large boiler room, four large store rooms and smaller store areas; it was extensively renovated in the early to mid 20<sup>th</sup> century when the property was a school.

#### First floor (Figs. 15 and 16)

The first floor is accessed from the main staircase; the landing is decorated with timber panelling (possibly renewed) and above this the decorative painted scheme continues. The opening off the landing into the corridor has a curved surround with pilasters and capitals either side. On the east and west side of the landing are 2 timber panelled doors set within timber door cases one leading to bedroom 3 with en suite, the other door is now permanently shut. Wooden panelling and mouldings are painted with wood grain effect, unlikely to have been the original finish.



Landing



Study

Bedroom 3 is to the west of the landing area, a chimney breast is sited on its west wall; just to the south of the chimney stack are steps leading up to a small bathroom (within the 19<sup>th</sup> century rebuilt extension).

A corridor runs to the north from the main landing area, at the end is a window overlooking the front portico and parkland beyond. Doors at the north end of the corridor lead to bedroom 1 and its en suite bathroom (to the south) and a study (to the west). Between bedroom 1 and its en suite bathroom there is a corridor with access to the upper terrace (flat roofed area over kitchen / utility rooms) and terrace garden (over the garage). No historic features remain within either room, the chimney breast is concealed behind modern cupboards, the fireplace is almost certainly blocked up and the surround removed. This room appears to have once been decorated with painted detailing and mouldings; it was originally the most high status room at first floor level. The study to the west of the corridor has a chimney breast on its west wall; its fireplace has been removed.



Bedroom 1



Bedroom 2

A corridor leads off to the west just north of the landing area. There is a modern staircase at this point which accesses the second floor; originally the staircase would have been sited further to the west with a half landing adjacent to the west wall (by the window). At the end of the corridor are a small set of steps up to a lobby area with access through to bedroom 4 and its en suite bathroom (within the 19<sup>th</sup> century extension to the main house). A further bedroom (bedroom 2) with en suite bathroom is approached via the stairs rising from the inner hall on the ground floor. It is sited directly above the snooker room. Two modern beams run north to south, these support the ceiling and were presumably inserted when the partition wall and chimney stack were removed. The same applies to the snooker room directly below.

### Second floor (Fig. 16)

Stairs from the first floor landing rise to the second floor and the smallest floor of the house. It has a fairly regular plan, consisting of four larger rooms, sitting room and bedrooms 5, 6 and 7. The smaller rooms hall, bedroom 8, and bathrooms are spaced between the larger creating a cross plan, each has one 3-over-3 sash window, apart from the hall with a later opening being a 4-over-4 sash window. The main rooms each have two 3-over-3 sashes, all but one has a projecting chimney breast with fireplace infilled. The sitting room has a late 19<sup>th</sup> century style fireplace.



Fireplace in sitting room on second floor

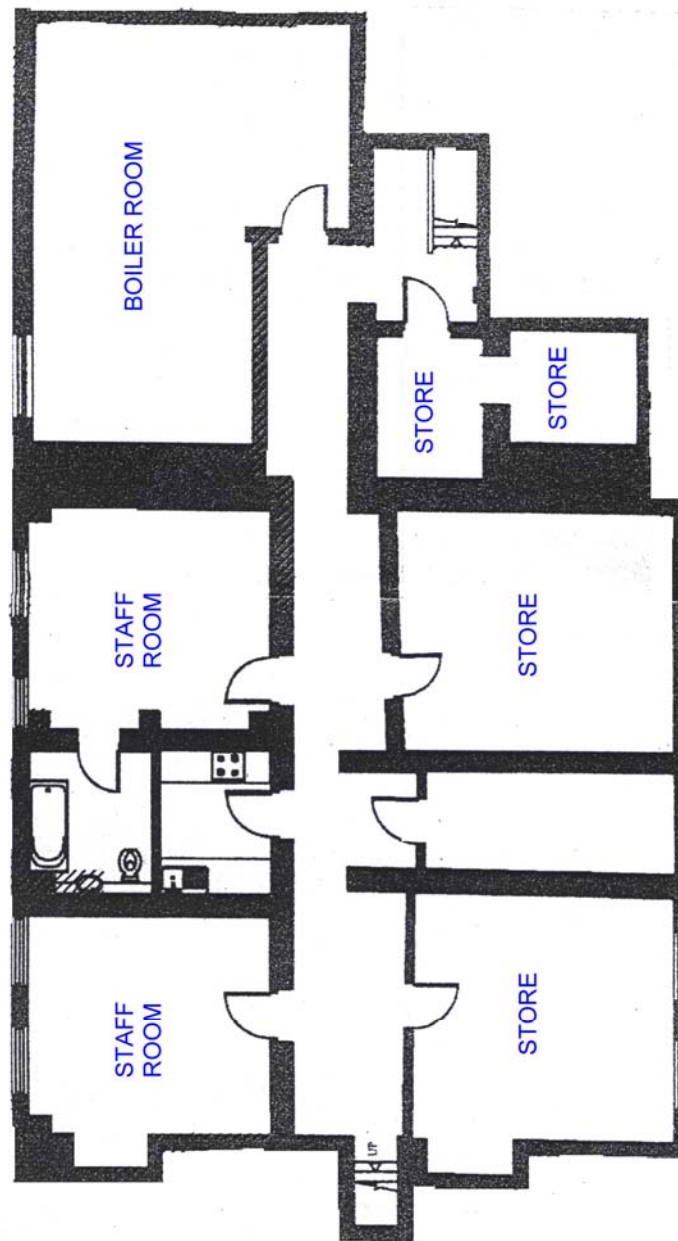


Figure 13. Northaw Place. Basement plan

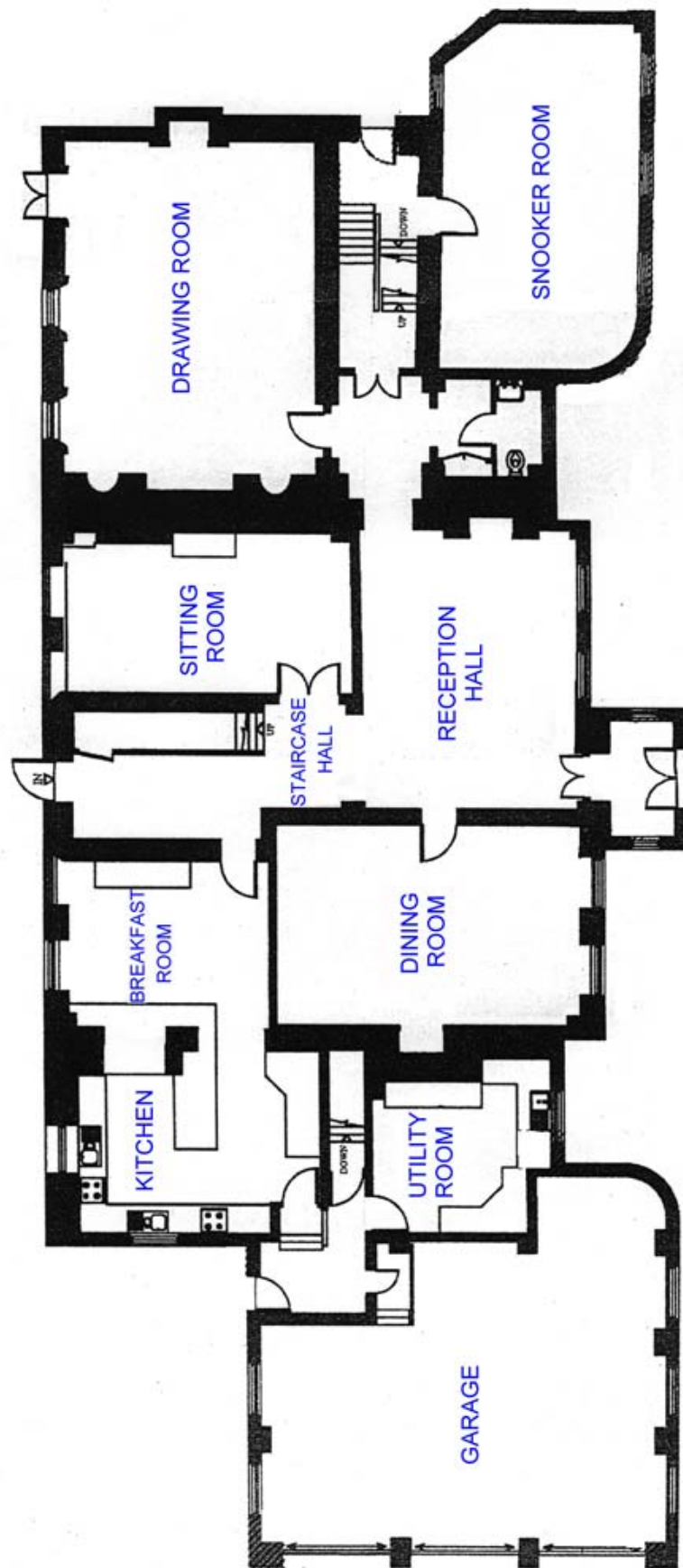


Figure 14. Northaw Place. Ground floor / lower ground floor

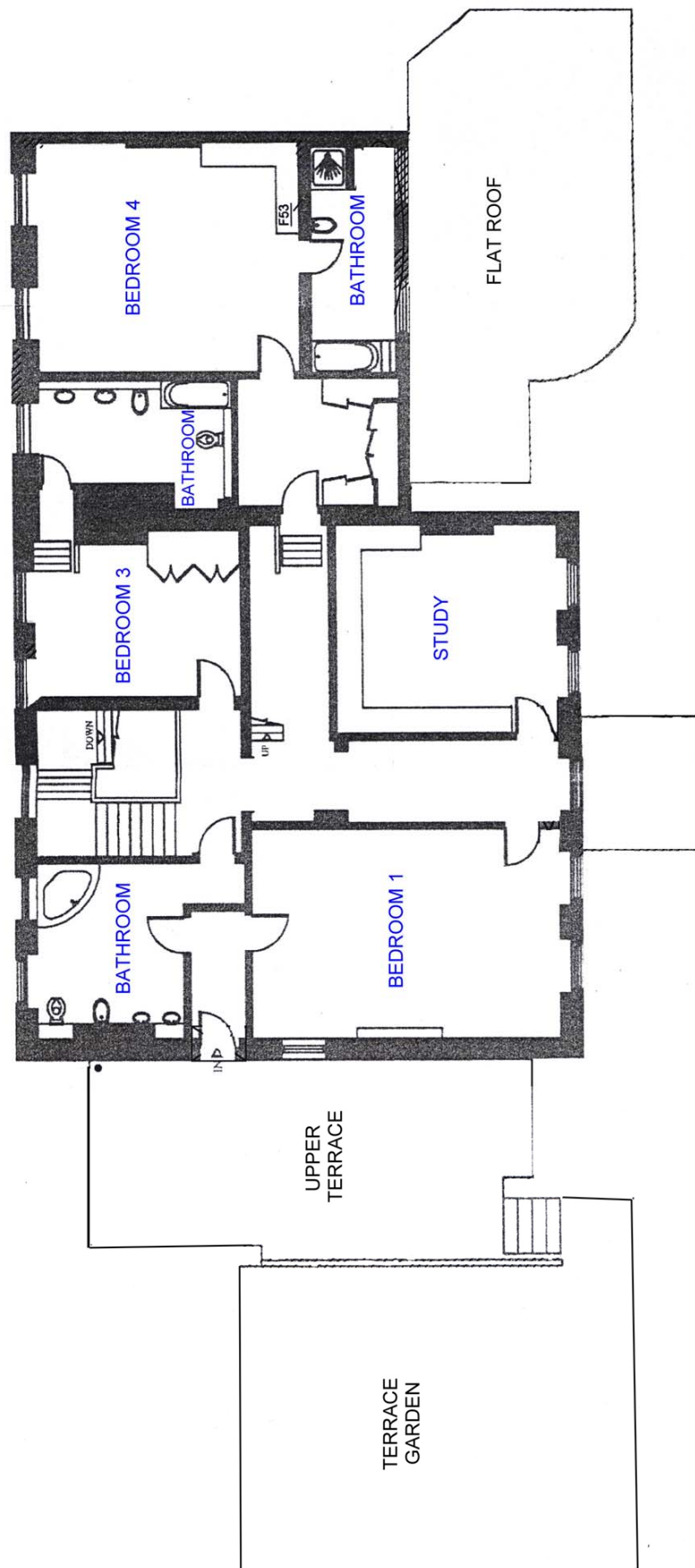


Figure 15. Northaw Place. First floor plan

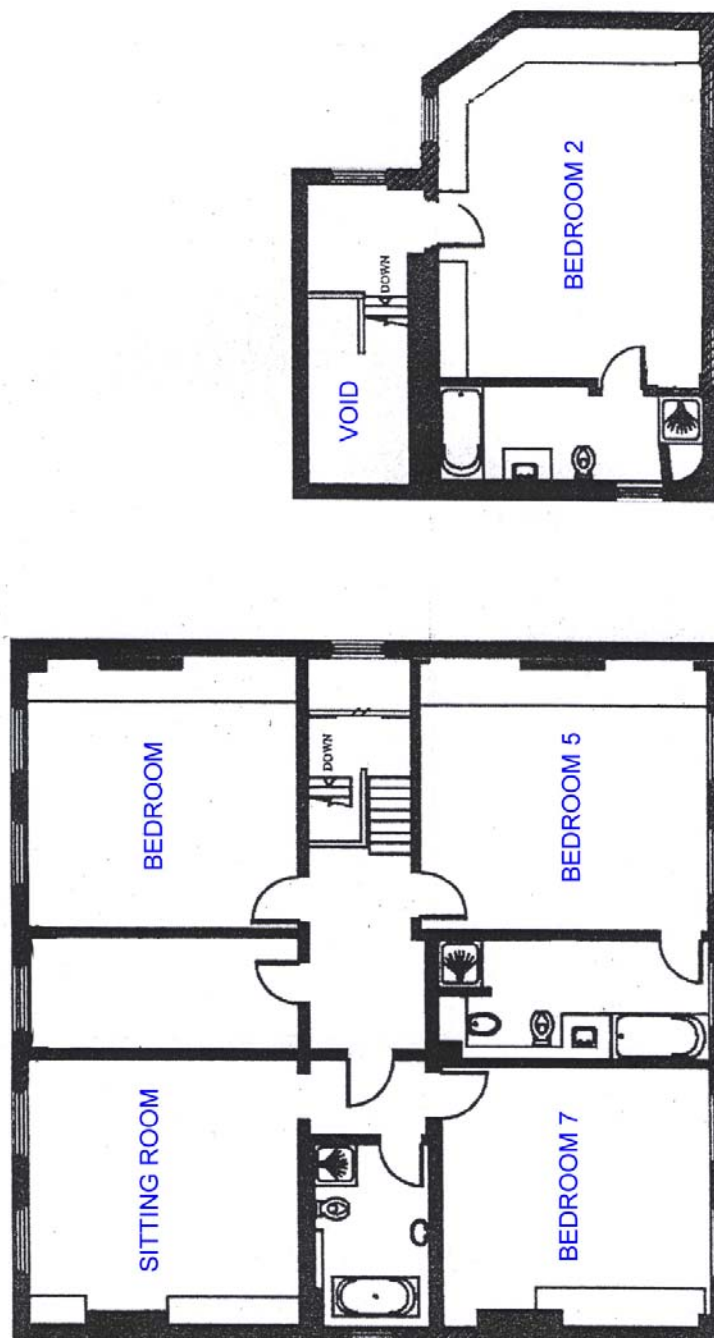


Figure 16. Northhaw Place. Second floor and first floor mezzanine (bedroom 2)

## 4 Discussion

The development of Northaw Place, Northaw can be analysed by its surviving structural details and historic fabric, and also by utilising archive material. Its phases are described below.

### 4.1 Development of the site (Fig. 17)

#### Seventeenth century

Northaw Place was built circa 1690, it is said to have been built by Sir George Hutchins, King's Serjeant and one of the Commissioners of the Great Seal 1690-3. The original house was two storeys with four principal rooms on both the ground and first floors. The kitchen may have been located within the basement; alternatively a small service wing may have been sited to the west of the house. It is most likely that the house always had two staircases, a formal stair and a servants' stair. The main access to the first floor was via the existing carved timber staircase. A separate service flight may have been located at the northern end of the current sitting room.

The National Monuments Record holds a photograph (taken 1945) of a painting of Northaw Place as it was in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century soon after it was built (Fig. 2). The painting was originally situated in the Long Room (now the dining room) of Northaw Place; it was sited above the fireplace within a timber panelled surround. The painting showed Northaw Place as a two storey residence with attics and dormer windows, the hipped roof was balustraded and the house was apparently surmounted by a large square cupola. The painting, attributed to Robert Robinson was sold in 1996 at Sotheby's auction house (website 2). The arrangement of outbuildings and detail of the design cannot be relied upon for accuracy, as it is thought to have been painted much later, perhaps a 19<sup>th</sup> century depiction. The yard wall seen in this depiction or a similar arrangement is likely to be fairly accurate as there is a piece of wall thought to survive from the earliest phase of buildings still abutting the house (south-east) in 1981, but part demolished since to make way for the extension.

#### Eighteenth century

In the early 18<sup>th</sup> century the canvas wall and ceiling paintings were added to the staircase hall; it is thought Lemman Hutchins, the owner of Northaw Place at this time, commissioned them. It is possible a single storey westerly addition, the kitchen, was also added during the 18<sup>th</sup> century, it probably survives in part although not visible. The kitchen was located on the site of / within the present drawing room until the early to mid 20<sup>th</sup> century.

#### Nineteenth century

By the early 19<sup>th</sup> century the house had undergone a significant amount of alteration, it was heightened to three storeys with parapet from the original two storeys and attic. Although un-rendered to the rear the central section of the house shows no difference in brickwork at second floor level, so it must have been re-faced at this time. Latterly further additions were made to the service block, with the kitchen heightened and refaced using yellow stock bricks. A single storey adjoining scullery was built to the west; it was most likely situated between the kitchen and the coach house but is now demolished.

There was a render applied to the north façade of the house by the earlier part of the century, but it is doubtful it ever covered the whole building, even though the 1867 sale particulars appears to show this. The colour washed prints (Figs. 6 and 7) may not be wholly accurate but they provide pictorial evidence for more than one phase of work carried out during this century.

The next substantial phase of alteration came after its sale to John Mounsey Esq. An Italianate style render was applied to the front façade which was to give the house an up to date look along with a new flat roofed extension built to the north west front elevation, before 1881. The current portico is also in the Italianate style and was probably rebuilt or altered as part of this work. The piecemeal appearance of smaller upper storeys to the Italianate northwest extension suggests they were added at a later date.

The rear view of Northaw Place seen within the 1867 print reveals much about the southwest wing; one noticeable feature were its smaller windows at ground level, perhaps indicating that it had been built in two phases. Larger windows replaced those at ground floor level later in the century. A small single storey link extension was also added to the south elevation and a doorway was inserted to the west end replacing a window.

The internal layout of the house undoubtedly changed throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century although the specific sequence is not known as many historic features (and possible clues) have been removed completely. The rough layout of the core and oldest part of the building is thought to have stayed fairly similar but divisions, stairs and doorways are likely to have been moved as the house grew and adapted throughout the century.

It is possible that a new replacement stair away from the core of the house was built along with the heightening and re-facing / replacement of the kitchen block. The basement was extended under this area at the same time.

Much panelling and interior decoration such as fireplaces are also likely to have been replaced during the nineteenth century, perhaps when items such as the painting of Northaw Place in the Dining Room were added. In the later 19<sup>th</sup> century one of the many restoration projects of the main staircase paintings was also carried out, the paintings were already of some age by this point and had been subject to previous alteration.

#### Twentieth century

Northaw Place went from being a school back to a private dwelling in 1928. It then became a childrens' home until the 1970's, after this the building was left empty and became neglected and vandalised. Certain changes would have been made to make the building appropriate for use as a children's' home, for example the addition of bathrooms and lavatories. The staircase paintings were boarded over during this time for their protection.

A great number of alterations were made to Northaw Place in the 1980s during the redevelopment of the house and its associated buildings. The development was eventually divided into two main parts with one dwelling formed from the oldest part of the house (Northaw Place) and another complex of housing focused on its western range of outbuildings; some new dwellings were also constructed. The mid 20<sup>th</sup> century layout of Northaw Place can be seen on plans dating to 1985 and those drawn by J T Smith (Appendices 2 and 3).

#### *External alterations:*

Some of the brown brick 19<sup>th</sup> century extensions to the west of the existing house were demolished, these originally linked Northaw Place to the range of outbuildings to include the coach house and stable block. These extensions had been accessed from within the house which meant some internal re-ordering and blocking up of openings / corridors was required. Monopitch extensions accessed from the west

corner of drawing room were also removed and the door at the west end of the drawing room was replaced by a sash window.

The Italianate extension in the northwest corner of the house was once higher in part but these later second and third storey additions were removed along with a chimney stack during the 1980's alterations. It seems as though the intention of much of this work was to strip the building back to an earlier form externally and create some sense of proportion re-revealing part of the original house, including a chimney stack, and the first floor of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century southwest wing. While re-exposing this section another window and blank opening were put in place of door openings to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century yellow brick façade at first floor. This section was adorned with stucco to match window openings and detail to the main house and to disguise the alteration works. Three ground floor 2-over-2 sash windows were replaced by 6-over-6 sashes to the projecting Italianate front in an attempt to re-proportion this northwest wing.

A kitchen, utility room and garage were built on to the east elevation in the 1980's; this new wing partly mirrored the Italianate side extensions to the west of the house. Various repair work was carried out externally to the failed areas of render. The pool with fountain upon the front drive also appears to be a new addition at this time.

The 1980's extension took a slightly different form at the rear, as this part is red brick, with a sash window to match the main house, it is in line with this elevation but also flat roofed. To accommodate this extension part of the garden wall that had previously abutted the house was demolished. The portico to the centre of the south elevation was also unfortunately removed and much of the surrounding brickwork replaced.

#### *Internal alterations:*

The basement on plan remained largely unchanged, a doorway and steps were added at the east end to access it from the new wing. Some partitions and doors have been moved.

At ground floor level the basic plan remained similar to its pre 1980's form and, to a degree, since it was built. The large chimney and former external wall to the breakfast room was partly opened up to provide an open plan space with the kitchen when this was added. A Victorian fireplace was removed to accommodate this. There may have been a doorway between the dining room and the breakfast room at one time.

A recess in the sitting room opposite its entrance doors is no longer present (but is shown on the 1985 ground floor plan, Appendix 3). Smith refers to this recess as square headed and almost reaching the ceiling, he suggests this was likely to have been a remnant of an earlier door leading through to the drawing room (former kitchen).

The Italianate 1 ½ storey flat roofed addition has floors at a different level to the main house, one just above basement level (lower ground, snooker room) and the other just above ground level (mezzanine, bedroom 2). A staircase once provided a separate access from the upper mezzanine floor to hall below (now removed). A central partition wall and central chimney stack was also removed during the 1980's alterations at the lower ground and mezzanine levels; beams were inserted to provide additional support to the ceilings. There was a smaller extension above the mezzanine level accessed from the east wing at first floor level; this has since been demolished. An en suite bathroom to bedroom 4 is situated to the south of this now, taking the place of an area of landing and staircase.

At first floor level a number of changes were made. The main hallway leading to the north from the staircase landing had a lobby with doorways leading to bedroom 1 and the study at the south end (doors to access these rooms are now located at the north end). The hallway contained a bathroom, probably an early 20<sup>th</sup> century insertion. The door from the main staircase landing to bedroom 1 is no longer an access, although the door remains. A partition has been added within the en suite bathroom to bedroom 1 to create a passage way leading out to the upper terrace.

The staircase within the corridor leading west from the central lobby has been replaced. It was originally located within this corridor but sited further to the west; it went from the ground floor up to the second floor and was the main service stair, although probably not original to the property. A gap is now left between the attic stair and wall to allow light from a new second floor window. The window on the second floor is in place of a passageway that did lead to a small bathroom, part of the later additions now removed.

The function of much of the western yellow brick 19<sup>th</sup> century addition was changed as the drawing room had once served as a kitchen. The stripping of historic detail during refurbishment has now removed evidence of a much earlier arrangement between possible old service stair (ground floor) and kitchen, but theories had been put forward based on earlier evidence. Smith suggests that the attic stair originally ran all the way to the ground floor. Secondly an alcove (northwest of sitting room) and seen on earlier plans is possibly a former door into the southwest wing (drawing room).

At second floor (attic) level there have been some minor alterations involving the removal and addition of partitions. The most drastic change has been the alteration to the staircase and landing area. A small extension housing WC's has since been demolished, but this was originally accessed from the landing area (see Appendix 3, second floor plan).

#### *Decorative Alteration:*

Not only were alterations in plan made but unfortunately a great number of historic internal features were destroyed during the refurbishment of the house. In many cases it would appear features were needlessly destroyed. Features such as panelling and cornicing were not always replaced 'like for like' as would have been expected for a listed building. It is not known whether these alterations were made with or without listed building consent although the 1985 application does have the following statement on one of the plans 'reinstatement of the following is planned; staircase, balustrade, fireplaces, mouldings, architraves, cornices'.

A distinctive feature of many of the rooms within the oldest part of the house at both ground and first floor levels was the bolection moulded panelling, bolection moulded fireplaces, moulded skirting boards and cornices. The National Monuments Record holds survey notes made during one of the visits made by a historic buildings inspector (undated), these provide valuable information regarding what was there in terms of decoration and detailing (see associated documentation provided with this report). Photographs taken by Herts County Council in c1981 also provide an important record of some parts of the building before its late 20<sup>th</sup> century alterations.

The doorway through to the sitting room from the staircase hall had a wide and imposing door case. It had flanking wooden pilasters above which were capitals, from these sprung a bolection moulded arch with keystone. Although the doorway remains the original detailing has been lost and the doors are modern replacements. Similarly the wide arch spanning the opening from the reception hall through to the staircase has been altered and the pilasters, capital and keystone detail lost.

Fireplaces on the ground floor are all modern / late 20<sup>th</sup> century replacements. The bolection moulded marble fireplaces in the reception hall and dining room have both been replaced with modern red marble surrounds.

Panelling within the reception hall broadly replicates what was there originally but it is clearly all modern replacement.



Northaw Place viewed from the northeast (1981)



Northaw Place viewed from the northwest (1981)



Northaw Place viewed from the north (2009)



Northaw Place viewed from the southeast (1981)



Northaw Place viewed from the southeast (2009)



Comparative photographs of the doorcase to the sitting room in 1981 (left) and 2009 (right)



Comparative photographs of the fireplace and panelling (with painting of Northaw Place in situ) in the dining room in 1981 (left) and 2009 (right)

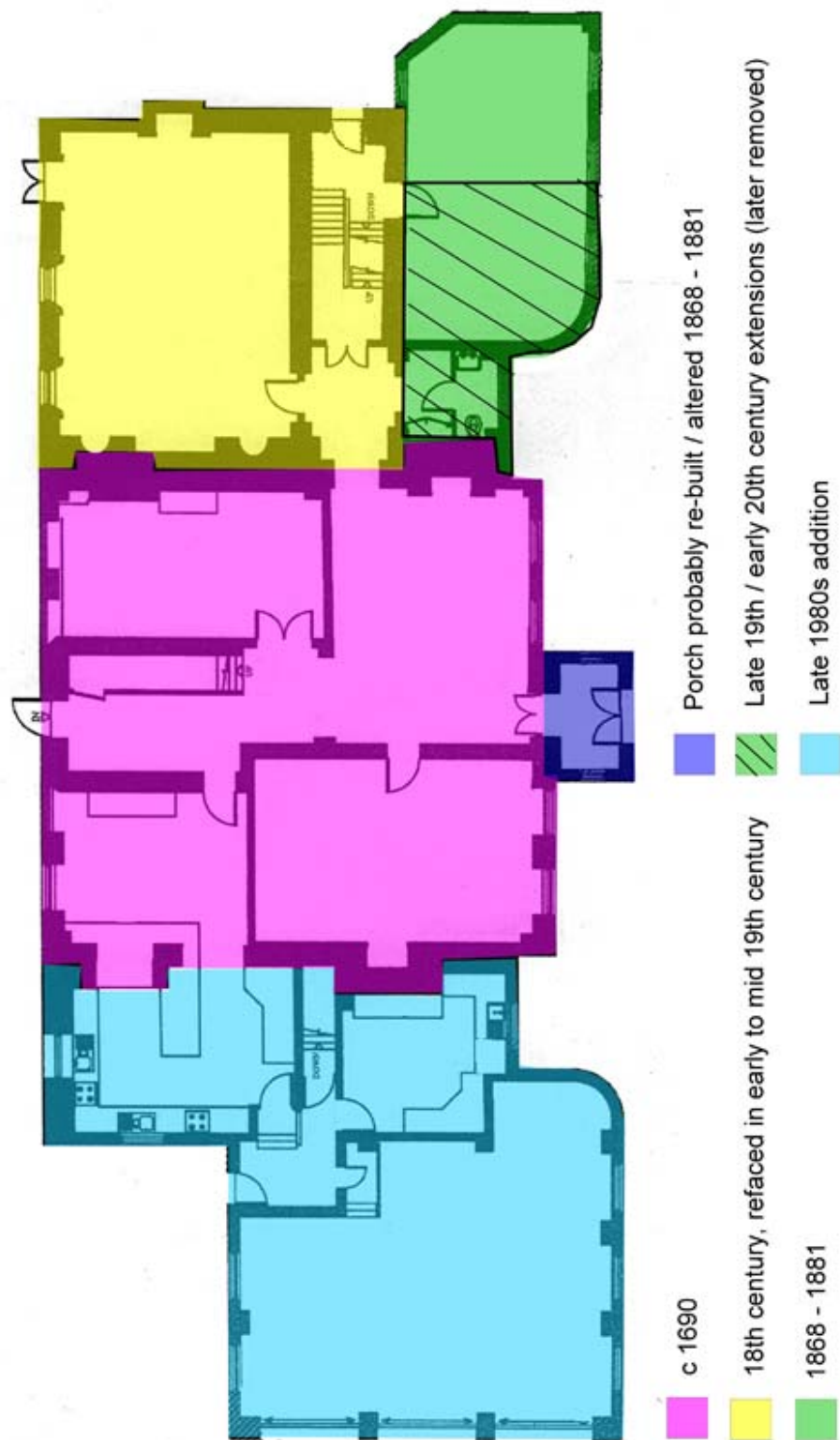


Figure 17. Northhaw Place. Phased plan

## 5.0 Conclusion

Northaw Place is a grade II\* listed building located to the west of Northaw Village, it is still surrounded by much of its historic parkland although this is no longer directly associated with the house. A length of garden wall along three sides of the garden (north, east and south) with fine wrought iron gates to the south of Northaw Place is also grade II listed. The main house (Northaw Place) is now in separate ownership from other buildings on the site such as the stable block and adjoining buildings; this change occurred in the 1980s when the site was sold and planning permission granted to divide Northaw Place into six separate dwellings.

Northaw Place was built circa 1690 by Sir George Hutchins, King's Serjeant and one of the Commissioners of the Great Seal (1690 – 1693). Cussans describes the Northaw estate as having once formed part of Northaw's manorial estate. One of the principal features of the house is its finely carved timber staircase and the associated painted staircase hall and landing; the wall and ceiling paintings, depicting scenes from classical mythology, were added in circa 1728 by Leman Hutchins (son of Sir George Hutchins).

Much of the original layout of the core of the house as it was in c1690 is thought to survive at ground floor and first floor levels. The house was heightened and refaced in red brick by the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, drastically altering it from its late 17<sup>th</sup> century appearance. Various 19<sup>th</sup> century additions and changes really left their mark on Northaw Place, with the external appearance of every part of the house changed during this century. The kitchen block (southwest range) was raised in height and refaced in a yellow stock brick. The last major change was the addition of the Italianate extension to the northwest corner of the house and rendering of the front facade. Internally there was undoubtedly some renewal of internal decoration; much of the evidence for this has since been lost due to extensive refurbishment in the 1980's. In the 1980's a large extension was also constructed to the east of the house as a garage and utility room, this was of 1 ½ storeys and followed the style of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Italianate extension to the west of the house.

## 6.0 Bibliography

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Website 2: [www.artnet.com](http://www.artnet.com)

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Local Studies, Hertford.

Research and report compiled by Anna Borovikov and Helen Cal-Fernandez

*Completed December 2009*

Northaw Place; particulars of sale (1867)

**NORTHAW, HERTS.**

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PARTICULARS OF A  
SINGULARLY ATTRACTIVE

*Freehold Residential Property,*  
PRINCIPALLY TITHE FREE, KNOWN AS

**“NORTHAW PLACE,”**

Situate in the Parish of Northaw, about half a mile from the Church, 2 miles from Potter's Bar,  
(where there is a Station on the Great Northern Railway) 4 from Barnet and Hatfield, 8 from  
Hertford, and only 15 miles from London,

COMPREHENDING

**AN EXCELLENT RESIDENCE,**

Replete with every convenience for a Gentleman's Family,

STANDING WITHIN

**A BEAUTIFULLY TIMBERED PARK,**

Richly adorned with Clumps of Sycamore, Oak, Beech and Spanish Chestnuts, commanding Extensive  
Views, and approached by

**A CARRIAGE DRIVE WITH ORNAMENTAL LODGE ENTRANCE,**

DETACHED STABLING FOR 8 HORSES,

**EXTENSIVE PLEASURE GROUNDS AND BEAUTIFUL LAWN,**

Large and very productive Kitchen and Fruit Gardens,

**COMPACT FARM BUILDINGS, TWO COTTAGES AND GARDENS,**

Dwelling House with Blacksmith's Shop and Good Garden,

**And Several Enclosures of Rich Meadow Land,**

THE WHOLE CONTAINING

**ABOUT SEVENTY-FIVE ACRES,**

Which will be sold by Auction, by Messrs.

**NORTON, TRIST, WATNEY & Co.**

At the Mart, Tokenhouse-yard, opposite the Bank of England,

**On FRIDAY, August 16th, 1867, at 2 o'clock precisely,**

**IN FOUR LOTS.**

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May be viewed by Cards only, and Particulars with Plans had at the Hotels in the  
Neighbourhood; of Messrs. Merriman and Pike, Solicitors, 25, Austinfriars; Henry Jackson, Esq.,  
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*Edged Green on Plan.*

**"NORTHAW PLACE,"**

A BEAUTIFUL

**FREEHOLD RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY,**

Situate in the Parish and close to the picturesque Village of Northaw,

Within ten minutes' walk of the Church, two miles from Potter's Bar (where there is a Station on the Great Northern Railway), four from Barnet and Hatfield, eight from Hertford, and only 15 from London,

CONSISTING OF AN

**EXCELLENT RESIDENCE,**

Replete with every convenience for a Gentleman's Establishment,

STANDING WITHIN A

**HANDSOMELY TIMBERED AND PLEASINGLY UNDULATED PARK,**

Approached by a Carriage Drive with

**ORNAMENTAL ENTRANCE LODGE.**

THE ACCOMMODATION INCLUDES

*On the Upper Floor*—Four good Bed Rooms, Dressing Room, Store Room, and Box Room.

*On the First Floor*—Three large Bed Rooms, measuring respectively 20 ft. 9 in. by 17 ft. 6 in., 23 ft. 8 in. by 16 ft. 3 in., and 18 ft. by 16 ft. 5 in.; two smaller ditto, two Dressing Rooms, square Landing, W. C., and secondary Staircase.

*On the Ground Floor*—Spacious Entrance Hall, 22 ft. by 19 ft. 8 in., adapted for a Billiard Room; Inner Hall; Handsome w oak Staircase with elaborately painted ceiling and gallery; elegant lofty Drawing Room, 26 ft. 5 in. by 19 ft. 8 in., with recesses for console table and vases; capital Dining Room, 23 ft. by 15 ft. 9 in., communicating by folding doors with a Morning Room; Library and

**Suitable Domestic Offices,**

CONSISTING OF

Servants' Hall, large and lofty Kitchen, Butler's Pantry, Scullery with Force Pump, Pantry, Extra Scullery, Larder, Dairy, Sitting Room, Wine, Wood, and Coal Cellars, and a

**CAPITAL DETACHED LAUNDRY AND BREWHOUSE,  
DETACHED STABLING,**

COMPRISING

Stable Yard, Two Four-Stall Stables, Double Coach House, &c.

*At a short distance are***FARM BUILDINGS, FARM-YARD,**

**Cow-house, large Hen-house, Barn,  
Gardener's Cottage and Drying Ground, large Tool House with Apple Room  
over, Potting Shed, Seed Room, &c.**

**Large and very productive Kitchen and Fruit Gardens,**  
(Partly walled) well stocked with Choice Fruit Trees in full bearing,

Range of Vineries, Melon Pits, &c.,

**BEAUTIFUL LAWN AND CROQUET GROUND,**

Adorned with Fine Shrubs and Evergreens, interspersed with

**TASTEFULLY DISPOSED FLOWER BEDS,**  
AND SURROUNDED BY

Broad Gravelled Shrubbery Walks, leading to a Fish Pond.

**THE PARK-LIKE LANDS**

Which immediately surround the Residence are of a highly ornamental character, richly adorned  
with Clumps of Sycamore, Oak, Beech, and Spanish Chestnuts;

AND

A Well Planted Avenue of Limes

FORMS A

**GRAND APPROACH TO THE NORTH FRONT,**

At the entrance to which is a convenient site for the erection of another Lodge.

ALSO

Two Cottages with Gardens and Outbuildings,

CONTAINING TOGETHER

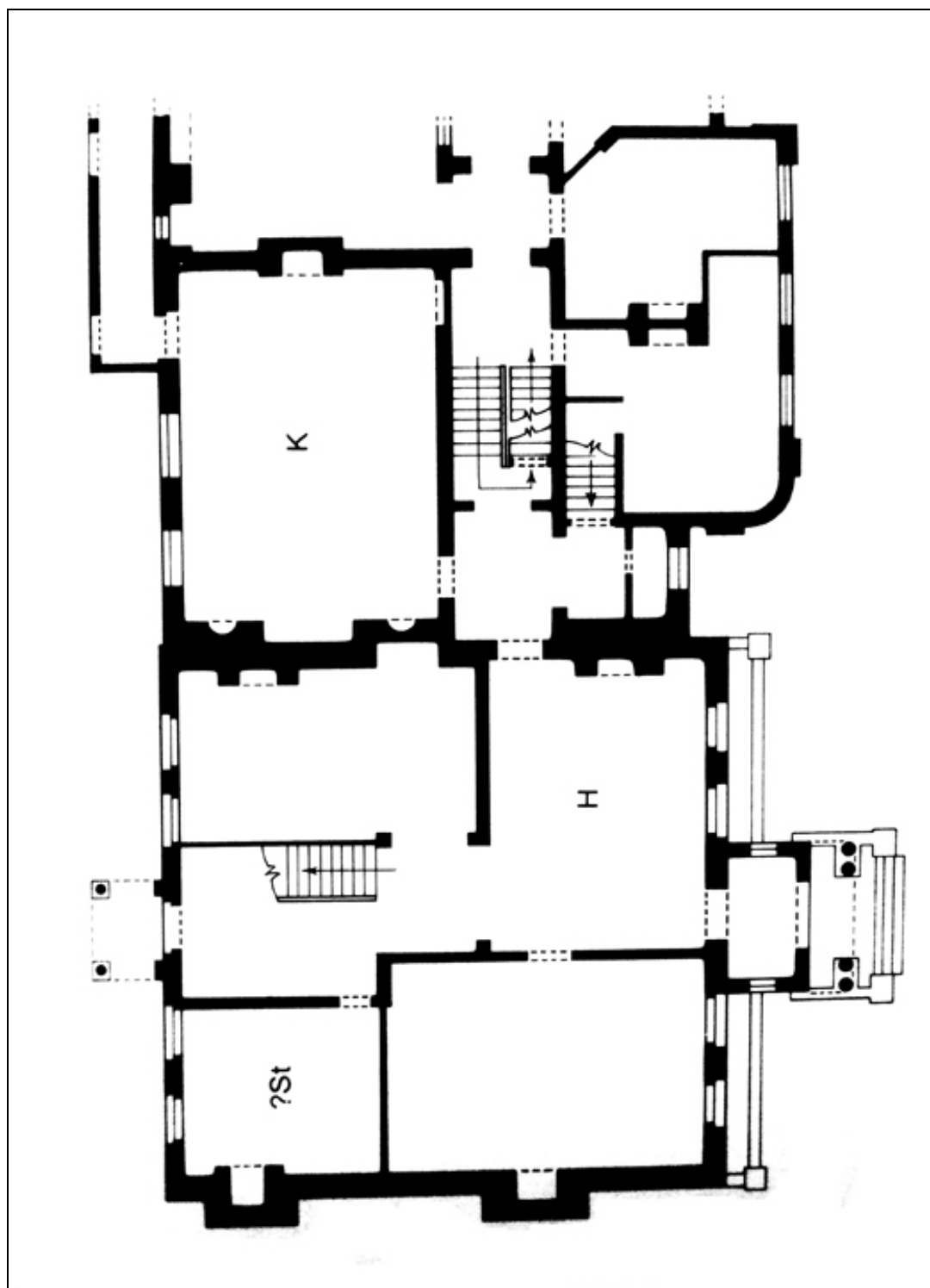
**Fifty-five Acres, Two Roods, and Six Perches,***Or thereabouts, lying as follows :*

| No. on Plan. |                                         | A.    | R. | P. |
|--------------|-----------------------------------------|-------|----|----|
| 1            | House, Buildings, Lawns and Gardens ... | 3     | 3  | 10 |
| 2            | Park and Meadow Meadow and Pasture      | 49    | 1  | 24 |
| 4            | Cottage and Garden ...                  | 0     | 0  | 32 |
| 5            | Cottage, Farm Buildings and Gardens...  | 0     | 1  | 12 |
| 6            | Wood ... Wood                           | 1     | 2  | 7  |
| 7            | Entrance Lodge, Garden and Shrubbery    | 0     | 1  | 1  |
|              |                                         | <hr/> |    |    |
|              |                                         | A. 55 | 2  | 6  |

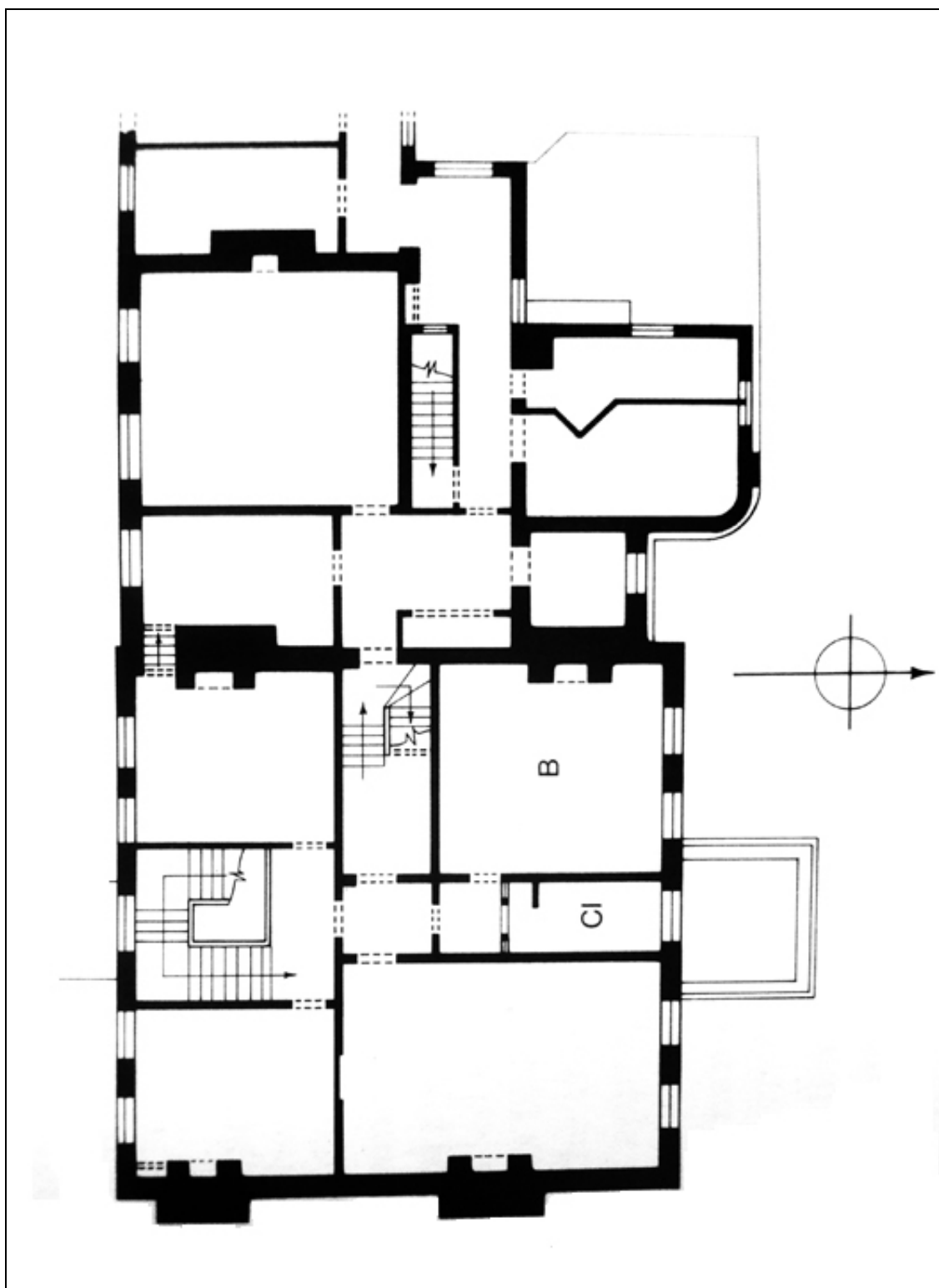
The Cottages are in the occupation of H. Lowens, at a rental of 2s. 9d. per week, and Stracy Lake  
at a rental of £9 per annum, the Landlord paying rates and taxes.

*Possession of the remainder of Lot One will be given on completion of the purchase.*

Plans of Northaw Place by J T Smith

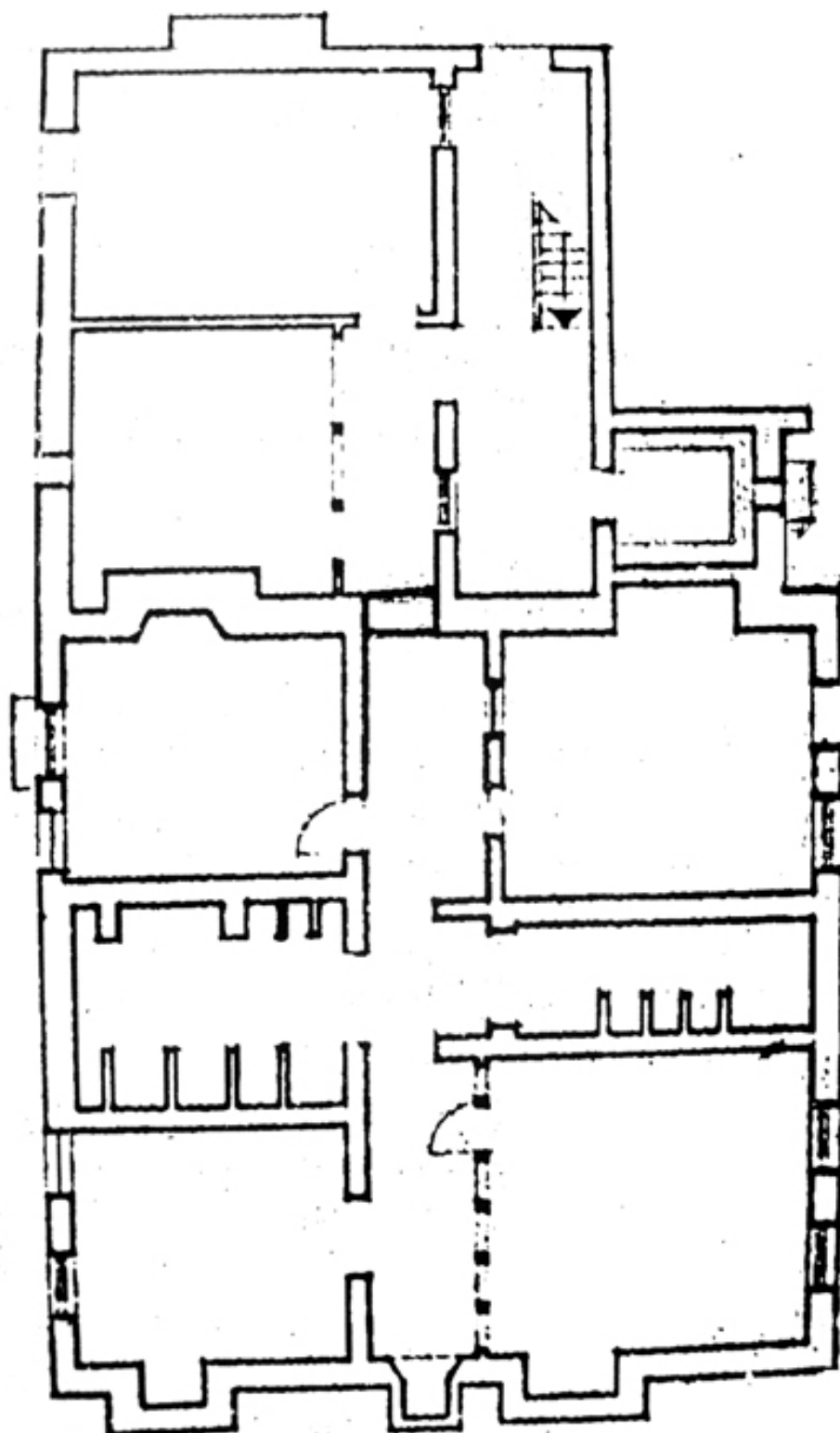


Northaw Place (ground floor plan) by J T Smith (undated but known to be pre-1980's)

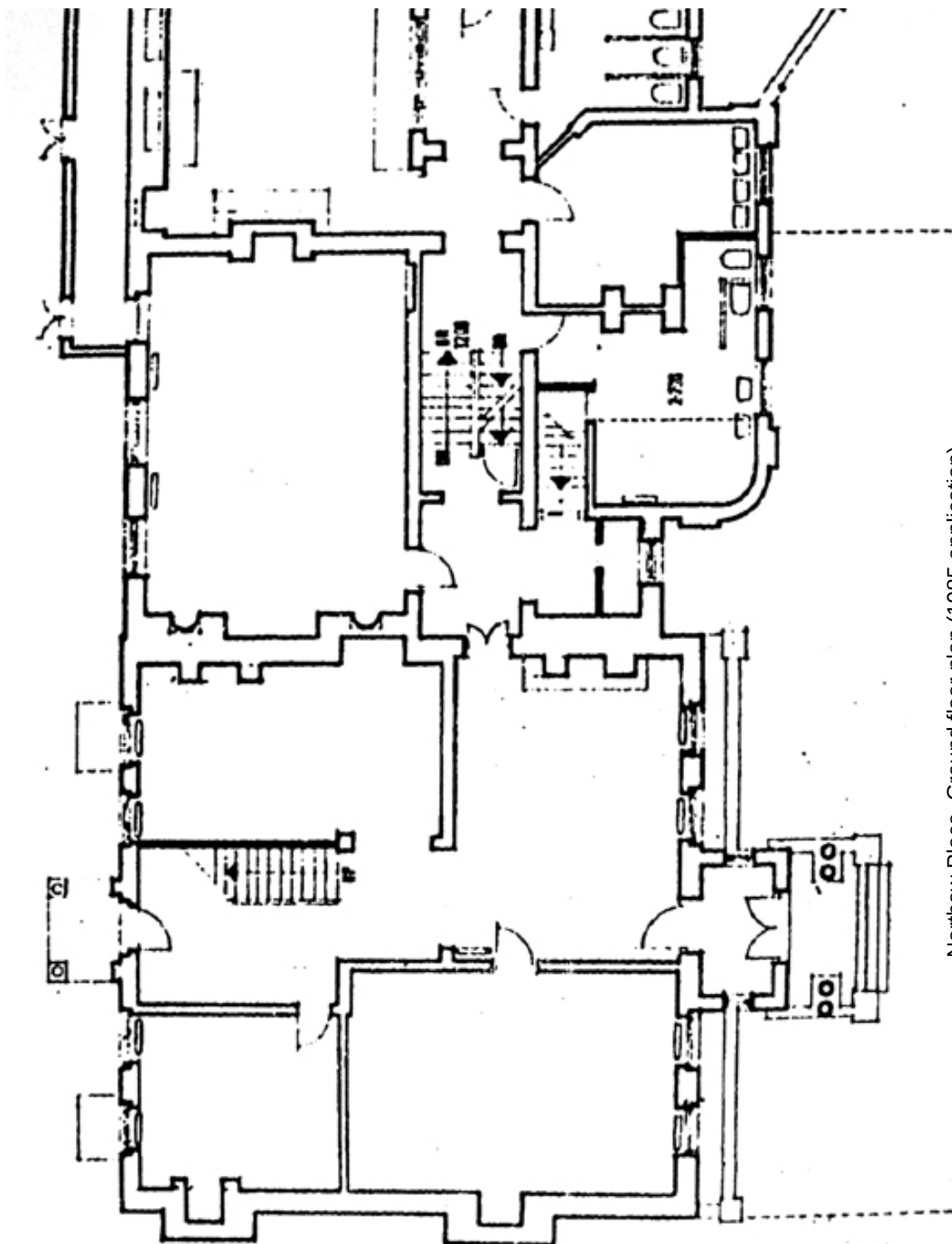


Northaw Place (first floor plan) by J T Smith (undated but known to be pre-1980's)

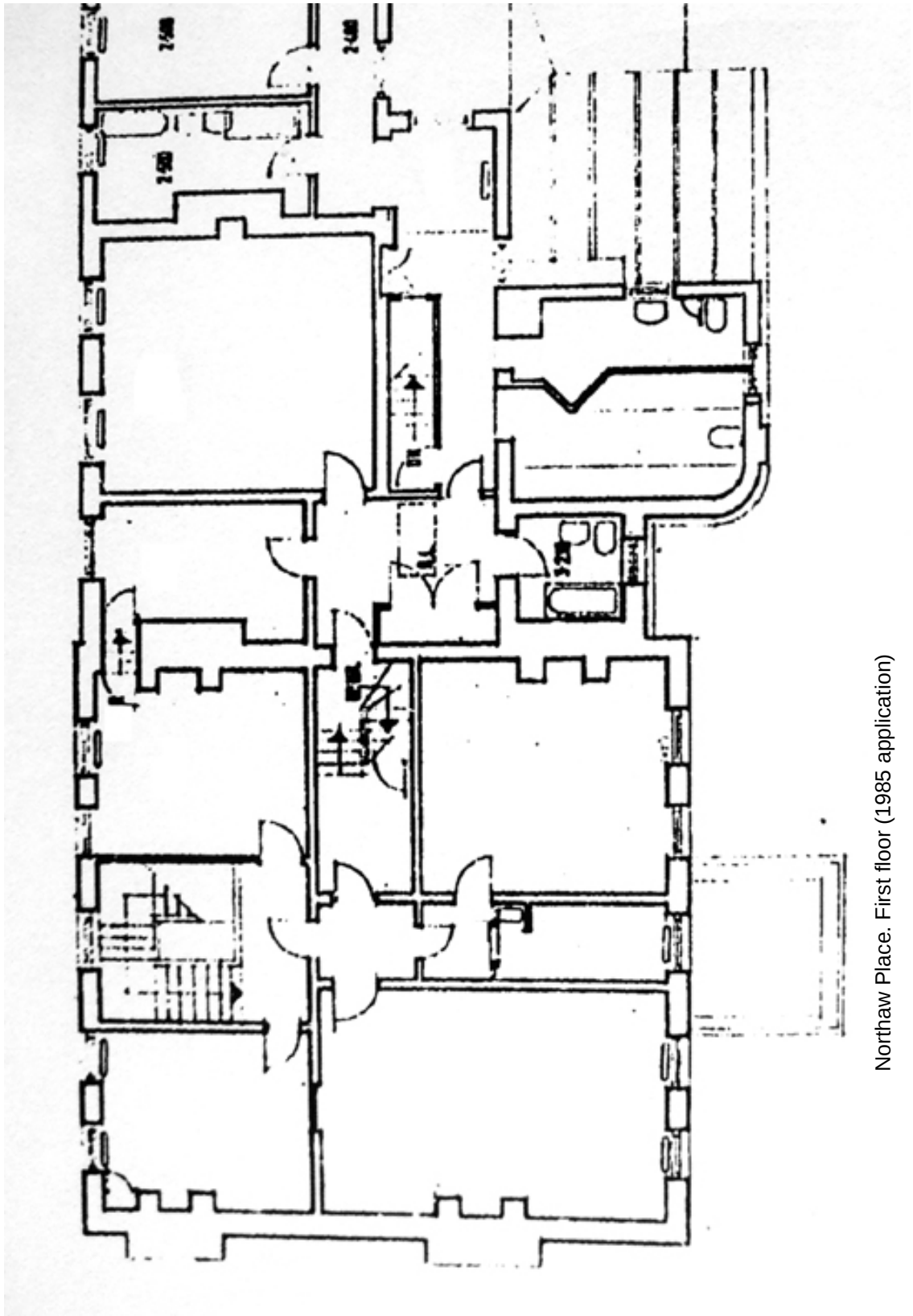
Northaw Place; plans of the house from the 1985 planning application



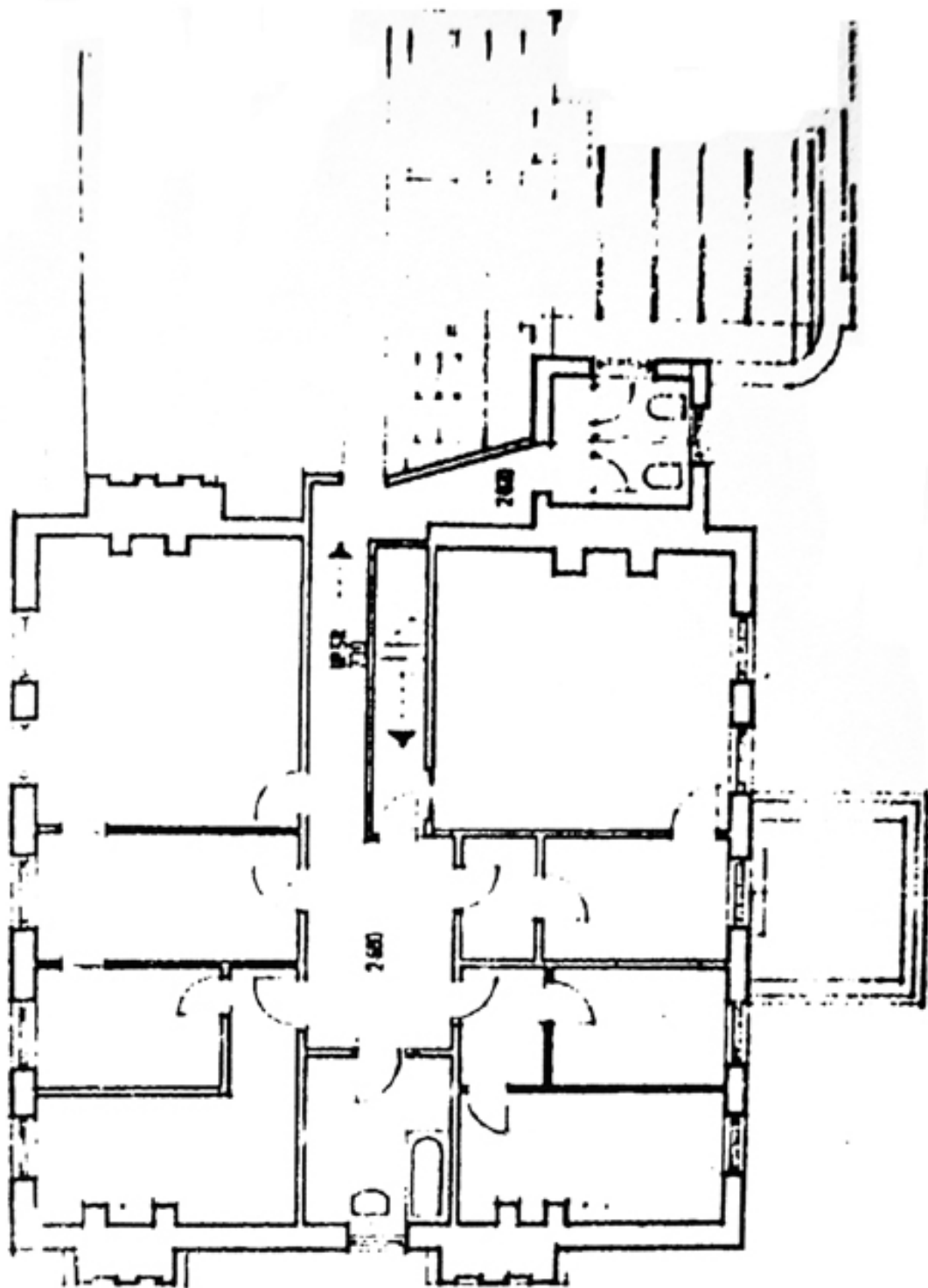
Northaw Place. Basement



Northaw Place. Ground floor plan (1985 application)



Northaw Place. First floor (1985 application)



Northaw Place. Second floor (1985 application)