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STONE BUILDINGS, LINCOLN'S INN
Historic Building Assessment
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i. INTRODUCTION: BACKGROUND TO THE DOCUMENT

This Historic Building Assessment was prepared by Donald Insall Associates for the Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn.

The intention of this document is to inform the Society of Lincoln's Inn by providing:

- an analysis of the history and construction of the building.
- an assessment of the significance of the building and of its various component elements.

ii. HISTORIC BUILDING ASSESSMENT – HOW THE DOCUMENT WORKS

The Historic Building Assessment seeks to both guide and advise on the future care, maintenance and usage of the buildings, and is divided into seven parts:

1. The Buildings

This section gives a basic introduction to Stone Buildings and the site, including chronology of development and use.

2. Assessment of Significance

This section addresses the aspects of Stone Buildings which contribute to their significance, and the hierarchy of the significance of its different parts and areas. A key part of this analysis is the Gazetteer, which is included in Section 4.

3. Vulnerability

This section addresses the various issues which make the building, and particularly its most significant elements, vulnerable, highlighting global issues such as the increasing size of contemporary Barrister's chambers and firms of solicitors, the service requirements of modern offices and residential units and the need to maintain the use of the buildings in the light of particular matters such as fire safety, access requirements, and changing weather conditions.

4. Gazetteer

This section provides a description of the buildings part by part, room by room, giving an assessment of the construction, finishes, date of execution and significance in relation to the whole building.

5. Bibliography

This section gives a list of the key secondary sources consulted in the preparation of the document.

6. The Plate List and Plates

This section contain illustrations key to an understanding of the site and buildings.

7. The Drawing List and Drawings

This section contains reference plans with the room numbers used in the report.

iii. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are indebted to the Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn for sharing with us their knowledge of the building and archival material, and are particularly grateful for the kind assistance of Guy Holborn, Librarian, and his colleagues. This document draws heavily on the work of Morgan Lear from 2004, which was kindly made available to us by the Honourable Society. We are also grateful to Pamela Morgan for facilitating access, and to all the Chambers and individuals who allowed us access to their rooms during the surveys.

Sources Consulted

The research used in this Historic Building Assessment draws mainly on material held by the Society of Lincoln's Inn; other sources consulted were:

- The R.I.B.A Library, and Drawings Collection.
- The London Library
- The London Metropolitan Archive
- The Guildhall Library and Department of Maps and Prints
- The Victoria and Albert Museum
- The National Art Library
- The National Monuments Record; English Heritage
- The Courtauld Institute
- The British Library.

SEVEN STONE BUILDINGS

18th century

The Stone Buildings were the joint enterprise of the Society and the Offices of the King's Court of Chancery with the appropriation of the Lord Chancellor. Those offices were the Six Clerks and the Sworn Clerks and also the Registers the Clerks of Enrolments and the Accountant General and their deputies whose function was to keep the records, decrees, orders and books of account relating to the business of the Court.

By an Act of 1774 provision was made for rebuilding the office of the Six Clerks and entailing offices for the Register and Accountant General and by August of that year Sir Robert Taylor's ground plan and drawings of the elevation of the buildings had been approved by the Council, the Account and General, the Registers of the Court of Chancery of the Lord Chancellor. Thomas Clarke, the Society's bricklayer was directed to proceed with the construction of a "basement storey" for 7 chambers on the garden side beginning at the south side but leaving space for a hall then intended to be built on the site of what is No 7 Stone Buildings. The sites for the offices of the Accountant General at the north end on the Chancery Lane side and the Registers of the Court at the South end (now numbered 11, 9 and 8) were purchased out of public funds and were not put up by the Society. This also happened to the Office of the Six Clerks, who negotiated independently and brought the site in the middle (now No. 10). (BBV5)

19th century

The layout of No 7 is unlike the corresponding block at the other end of the terrace – number 2 – in that it has a central atrium of some size, off which small suites of three rooms open off Italianate galleries on the first and second floors. The ground floor may have had a similar plan and the use to which the basement was originally put is unclear. Both ground floor and basement have been significantly altered. (ML)

19th century

The original plan form is interesting. The basement floor level is c600 mm below the adjoining building No 6 with the ground floor levels being the same, giving high ceiling heights at basement level. It appears from the extant cornices that this area was always enclosed. (ML)

1843-1845

Upon receiving in the summer of 1843 an inquiry whether accommodation could be found in the Inn for the Masters of the Court of the Exchequer, the council asked Mr Hardwick to consider it "with a view to the completion of the 'stone building' (as the Society's own building was then often described) as the site was no longer required for a hall". Mr Hardwick reported that, by finishing the south end in exact conformity with the north end, the twelve rooms required by the Masters of the Exchequer and other chambers could be provided, and in the following year the Bench ordered that plan to go ahead. Sir Robert's spacious design was completed during 1844-1845 but not by the hall which he had contemplated. (BBV5)

1843-1845

Stone Buildings was eventually finished off at the south end by the building of No. 7 to the designs of Hardwick between 1843 and 1845. On the garden front he copied the west façade of the north end, at last providing symmetry. The treatment most appropriate to the south and

east façades of No. 7 will not have been as obvious. Hardwick chose to carry on the giant order as pilasters on the south wall, and to repeat on the east face Taylor's giant order of attached columns but without a pediment above. The result is that the east façade of No. 7 gives some idea of what Taylor's hall would have looked like from the outside, although it would have extended two more bays to the south and would have had larger windows at the first-floor level. (AH)

1845

Built in 1845 No 7 replicates externally the corresponding building at the opposite end of the terrace No 2, though the internal plan form is very different. (ML)

1845

The ground floor central area was originally open to the east with the atrium wall above being supported on a pair of Doric columns. These are replicated at the basement level where the central area, or what remains of it, still is open to the east. There is an original lavatory to the north of this area lit and ventilated by an internal well. (ML)

1845

In the original plan there was only one WC opening off each floor level. (ML)

1880

When the Masters of the Exchequer left the Inn about 1880, their offices at No 7 were adapted for use as Common Rooms. (BBV5)

late 19th century (1880-1914)

The rooms formerly occupied by the Masters of the Exchequer had since 1880 been made available to the members of the Inn who were willing to subscribe to their maintenance. In 1912 students were excluded from membership. (BBV6)

19th-20th century

The basement is much altered having been in its time a laundry, student common room and a catering facility/common room. (ML)

20th century

There is a 20th century staircase linking three small rooms in the southwest corner of the basement to the ground floor central area. (ML)

1914-1918 War

At the outbreak of the war, the Corps used for its headquarters No 10, consisting of Drill Hall with orderly room, armoury and offices. As the war went on, the office work of the depot increased so greatly that the accommodation at No 10 soon became quite inadequate. All vacant chambers were put at the disposal of the Corps and at one time the work of the depot was being carried on not only at the old Headquarters but also in chambers at No 7, 2 and 4. (BBV6)

1915

Incendiary bomb fell on No 7 and another on the roof of No 8. (BBV6)

1915-1921

Students had petitioned in 1914 to be re-admitted as members of the Common Room, but no change was made. In 1920 the Committee recommended the provision of a common room for students in the basement of No 8, which was opened in October 1921. (BBV6)

1935

Some rooms in the basement of No 7 adjoining the Barristers' Common Room were allocated in part as a students' Common Room and in part as an addition to No 6 as chambers. (BBV6)

1938/39 – 1950s

The Barristers' Common Room was moved to the Hall. The Students' Room remained. When the war came, the accommodation in the basement of No 7 was requisitioned for war purposes. It was de-requisitioned in 1945 and reinstated as a students' common room.

In 1954 the suggestion was explored to move the students' room to the Hall adjacent to the Barristers' Common Room, which ultimately came about. (BBV6)

1945

Requisitioning of the large room in the basement of No 7, formerly in use as a students' common room. (BBV6)

1947

It was resolved that the rooms on the first floor west of No 7 be let to the Permanent Committee (charged with the Welfare of Bar Students) at a proper rent. (BBV6)

1947

New Students Union then present in the premises of the Council of Legal Education at No 7. (BBV6)

1947

Great Hall, Old Hall, Chapel, Stone Buildings and New Square were scheduled as being of special architectural or historical interest. (BBV6)

1948

No system of central heating to be provided in Stone Buildings. (BBV6)

1951

The Finance Committee recommended that Holland, Hannen and Cubitts be employed on the same terms as before for the re-building and re-decoration of Nos 5, 6 and 7 Stone Buildings and that a contract be entered into for the sum of £63,400. (BBV6)

1952

Stone Buildings scheduled as being of special architectural or historical interest. (BBV6)

1980s onwards

The first floor rooms open off to the east, south and west of the arcaded atrium... in the last twenty years all the arcades have been filled in to provide a lobby to each suite of rooms and a lavatory and tea making point. (ML)

1989

The roof over No 7 was overhauled though the structural system was maintained. (ML)

1990

The exterior of the building benefited from comprehensive external repair, and the roof overhauled but not replaced. (ML)

1991

First floor southwest suite was refurbished in 1991. (ML)

1995

In 1995 new lavatories were built into the stairwell which was already enclosed at one level and a doorway opened up through the party wall to link the ground floors of numbers 6 and 7. (ML)

1996

External repair programme carried out excluding the roof area. (ML)

2003

The basement was in collegiate use until late 2003. (ML)

2004

Refurbishment of the basement for the tenants of number 7 with the communal lavatory which was built into these rooms being converted back into an office. The refurbishment was to provide four rooms for practitioners. Small areas of rising damp were treated in the south basement. (ML)