

Project **18 Church Row
Hampstead
NW3 6UP**

Client **Edward & Reka Schmidt & Family**

Date **4 February 2008**

Subject **Design Statement for proposed alteration/ expansion of the doorway
between front and back room at first floor**

General Description

18 Church Row is a Grade II* listed Georgian terrace house (c.1717-20) of three brick stories above a lower ground floor basement with front light-well, and attics under a tiled and slated mansard roof with small projecting dormers front and back (five stories total).

The interior has seen only minor alteration to its layout during this century, and while the configuration of the interior holds obvious and great historic interest, it is not in all aspects perfectly suited to the needs of a 21st century (expanding) family.

Proposed Alteration to Stair

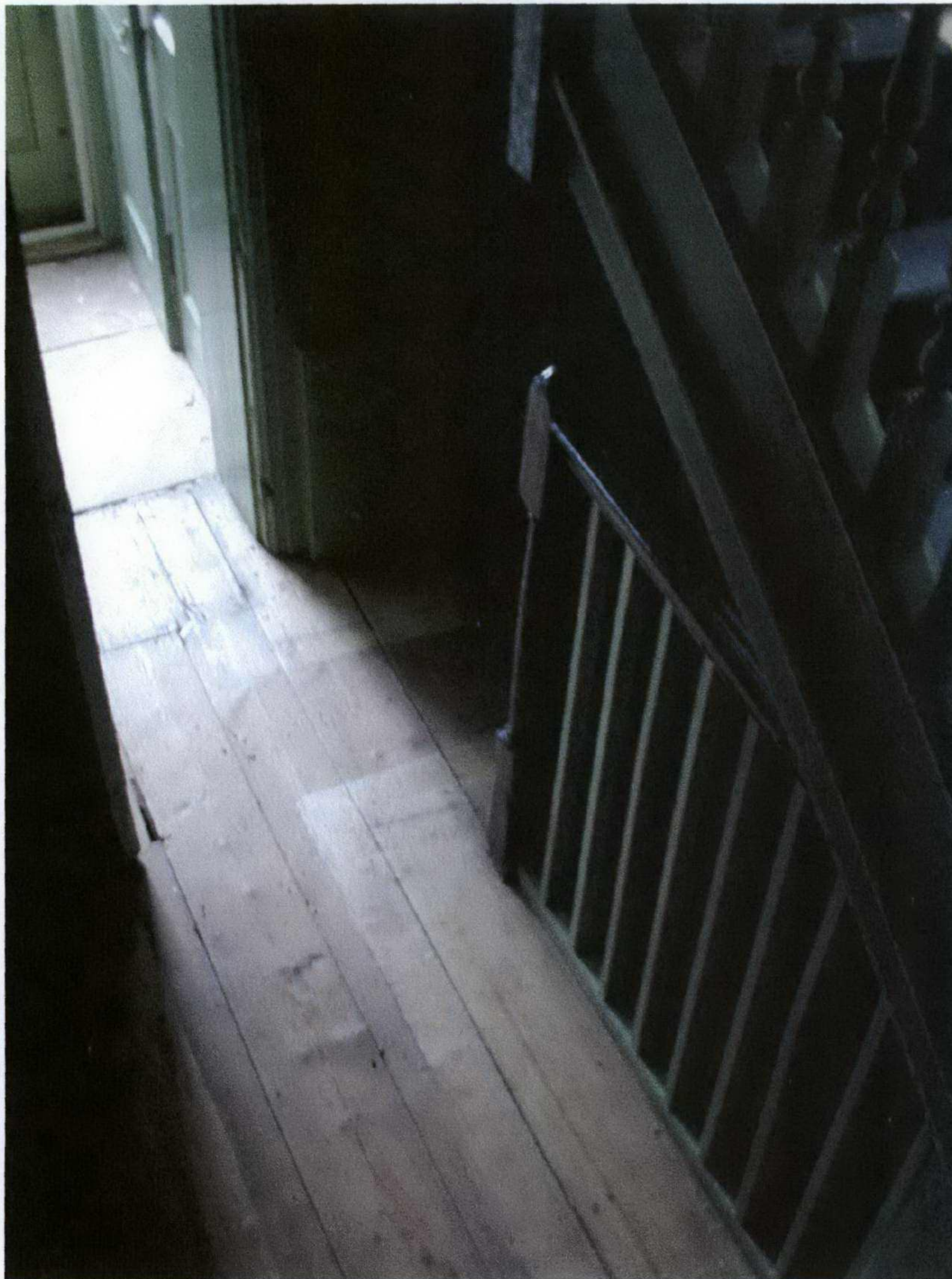
Whilst the perimeter walls of 18 Church Row have remained relatively level to this date, significant settling is apparent at the wall between the stair and the second room at each floor.

Investigation by our project engineers has revealed the main cause of this deformation to be a failing (original) beam at the level of the ceiling of the lower ground floor (see accompanying engineer's report). A secondary cause is a long term water leak at the back drains which has seriously eroded the wall beneath this beam as well as parts of the adjacent lowest run of stair, disolving its ability to offer backup support to the beam. The condition of this portion of wall (the partition wall between the back room and stair hall at the lower ground floor) is so bad as to require dismantling and rebuilding. The dismantling of the lowest run of stair is an inevitable part of this conservation work.

A detailed plan for introducing a new steel beam beneath the existing original beam follows as part of the engineers' report. The lower ground portion only of the wall between the stair and the back room will be rebuilt in a like manner using like materials and thicknesses. Likewise the lowest run of stair will be reconstructed, reusing as much original material as possible.

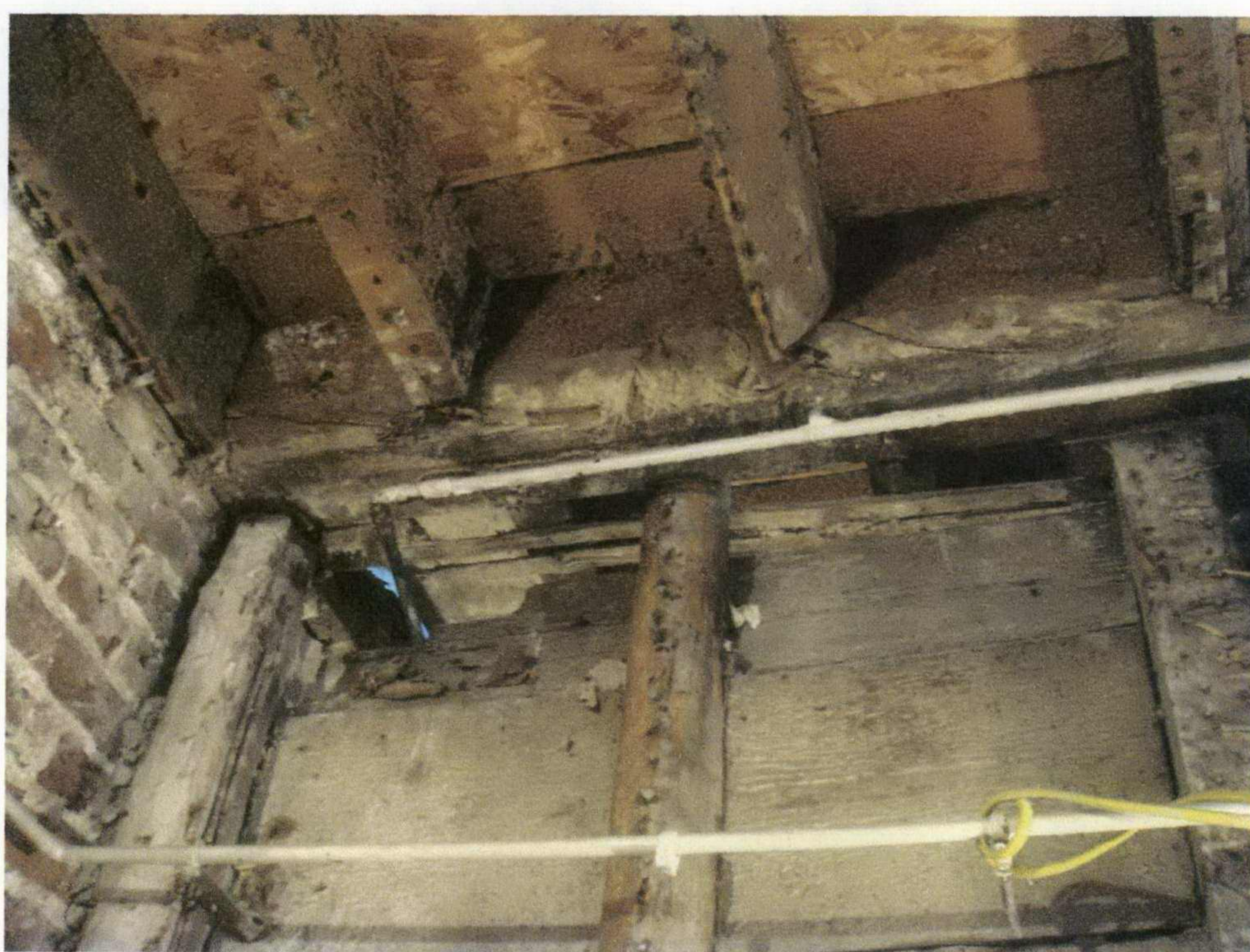
This application seeks consent to reconstruct the stair at this level with a minor change to the run of risers and treads. Starting from the ground floor and moving down, in its original form the first riser occurs on a 30 degree turning off the stair hall timber flooring (a 4-part 90 degree winder minus the top step). In our proposal, the stair would be reconstructed with the top step down in line with the timber of the hall, effectively shifting the entire stair down by one step.

The new arrangement will be built of new material where necessary, and where possible using the material of the original stair, which was set aside when dismantled. The new layout will blend well with the original, in fact will match the turning pattern of runs of stair above, and will have two benefits: 1) the head-height of the stair will be improved significantly 2) the landing at the bottom of the stair will be larger by one tread width.



A

Photograph showing the top of the stair from the ground floor hall. The Dark line from the post to the back wall would be the first step down in the proposed new arrangement.



B

Above is a photograph of the beam as it meets the inside wall.



C

Timber within the wall is rotting, while masonry is only fill, not capable of offering support to the beam.



D

A broader view of the corner of the stair wall from the room side. Outside the far corner is the drain which caused the damage to the fabric.