

Archaeology Wales

Llanelly House, Llanelli, Carmarthenshire

Part 1 - Report Text -

(Part 1 of 4)

Archaeological Building Investigation and Recording
& Watching Brief



By

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Report No. 1296



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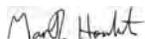
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Prepared for: Carmarthenshire Heritage Regeneration Trust

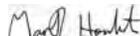
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December 2014



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Due to the size of this report, in order to make it more manageable it has been divided into four (4) individual parts.

PART 1 - Report Text, Bibliography and References.

PART 2 - Appendix I - Figure and Illustrations

PART 3 - Appendix II - Photo Plates (Volumes 1 and 2)

PART 4 - Appendix III - Finds, Contexts and Levels Registers and Archive Cover Sheet

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Non Technical Summary

The following report is the result of work undertaken by Richard Scott Jones on behalf of Archaeology Wales Ltd for Carmarthenshire Heritage Restoration Trust (CHRT). It details the results of a program of archaeological standing building investigation and recording and an archaeological watching brief during a program of restoration of the Grade I Listed building of Llanelly House, Llanelli, Carmarthenshire, between 2011-2013.

The initial archaeological work in 2011, guided by the on-going restoration programme, focused firstly on a program of standing building recording on the interior of the house following the removal of deteriorated plasterwork from a number of internal elevations. This first phase of on-site work managed to record a number of very interesting features within the standing fabric of the exposed internal and external elevations, especially those at ground floor level, which included a number of blocked in, enlarged and reduced doorways, windows and fireplaces, that pre-date the 18th century house.

Following this initial building inspection and survey work, contractual ground work began in April 2011, with the lifting of existing floorboards for the insertion of new floor supports and services, from four of the ground floor rooms, the former Sir Thomas Stepney's Study (Room G2), the Great Hall (Room G1) and the two parlour rooms that occupy the south-western range of the house (Rooms G5 and G6). Following completion of ground work in these rooms, continued work then began in Rooms G3 (The Common Hall), G4 (The Stair Hall), G8 (The Kitchen) and G9 (The Dining Room).

In general, the archaeological results appear to marry very well with the available historical documents about the house, its occupants and general events from the 16th century through to the present day. Generally, each phase of apparent extensive building work seems to have occurred at the same time as inheritance and intermarriages between family groups, such as that between the Lewis and Vaughan families in the late 16th century and the Vaughan and Stepney families in the late 18th century.

Excavations have revealed that the north-western part of the ground floor, the former Great Hall (Room G1) is the oldest part of the house, with parts of the underlying foundations and the far eastern slanted wall probably being 16th century in date, therefore late Tudor.

Medieval documents seem to suggest that it is very possible that the present Llanelly House lies within early medieval monastic land and may possibly have started life as a glebe house for a residing priest. If this was the case, then it may mean that the church and monastery formed part of a lesser monastery dissolved by Henry VIII in the years 1536-1541, resulting in the house becoming Crown Land, which was later auctioned off to help fund Henry's military campaigns in the 1540s.

This late medieval building would probably have started life out as a two-storey, two-unit and end chimney gabled house, perhaps with a small byre building or extension attached to the west. Unfortunately access to this western area is not possible, but perhaps in the future, any work in this area will shed some light on this possibility.

Not soon after, the west range was added (Drawing Room and Best Parlour) along with a series of out buildings, including the east range that probably served as a stable block. Also, the building investigation and excavation work suggest that an extension was attached to the east side of the house at some time in either the mid-late 16th century or the very early 17th century, which was later enlarged in the early 17th century.

In the early 17th century, perhaps as a result of damage from the Great Flood of 1606, as well as the marriage of Anne Lewis to Walter Vaughan of Golden Grove, an eastern range of buildings (former Sir Thomas Stepney's Study and the present West Credit Union building) was added to the old house, thus creating one long 'L' shaped 2-storey building with a gabled roof, possibly with dormer windows in the roof space. Investigation of the standing fabric in the second floor rooms suggest that the roof line of the western extension was originally slightly lower in height from that of the main house.

In the late 17th century, at some time between the years 1660–1680 the floor level of the ground floor was raised across the whole house, thus forming one complete level ground floor with the creation of a common or service hall with a now low basement area and the creation of the Stair Hall.

The raising of the entire ground floor was a huge undertaking and must have taken a considerable time to complete. Why this floor raising project was undertaken is not known. As well as creating a complete one level on the ground floor with all rooms at the same height, which would have been both attractive and fashionable, the raising of the floor height may also have been prompted by flooding concerns. The floor in the eastern side of the house was raised by approximately 1 ½ feet, and the western end of the house, which was considerably lower than the rest of the house, was raised to the same height, which entailed the barrowing in of a huge amount of demolition and construction material, which resulted in raising the floor level here by just under 3ft.

In response to this building project, the ceiling heights also appear to have been raised some 0.40-0.50m on the ground floor. The interior walls of the house at this time would have all been plastered with no wooden wall panelling, just cream painted plaster. The earliest oak wall panelling was most probably added in the early 18th century, with pine ones added much later.

In the early years of the 18th century, post 1705, Margaret Vaughan inherited Llanelly House from one of her elder sisters on her deathbed. In 1691 Margaret had already married Sir Thomas Stepney (5th Baronet), thus the Stepney lineage at the house had begun. Thomas Stepney was most likely responsible for the commissioning of the new house's front façade with its present third floor with hipped roof in a

Queen Anne style, work that probably wasn't fully completed until 1714, as is evident from a date on one of the surviving lead drainage hoppers. The date 1714, as well as probably marking the completion of the building project, also heralds in the new Georgian dynasty with the coronation of King George I.

The archaeological results at Llanelly House have not only been extremely exciting, having revealed much of the form and character of the 17th century house and potentially parts of the 16th century and even late Tudor house, but the appearance of and good preservation of the 17th century floor surfaces, particularly the extent of cobbled surfaces, have also been very unexpected.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The following report is the result of work undertaken by Richard Scott Jones on behalf of Archaeology Wales for Carmarthenshire Heritage Regeneration Trust (CHRT). It details the results of a program of archaeological standing building investigation and recording and an archaeological watching brief at the Grade I Listed building of Llanelly House, Llanelli, Carmarthenshire, during a program of full restoration on behalf of Llanelli Town Council.

Site Location and Description

- 1.2 Llanelly House is an outstanding historic building in the heart of the town of Llanelli. The building is Grade I listed, and is considered to be one of the most important early Georgian townhouses in Wales. It is listed by CADW as the most outstanding domestic building of its type to survive in South Wales and is described as 'an extraordinary house' in Pevsner 'Buildings of Wales' (Thomas Lloyd and others, 2006).
- 1.3 The house is situated in the heart of the town of Llanelli, Carmarthenshire (NGR: SN 50675 00500), at the corner of Vaughan Street and Bridge Street, an area which is now totally built-up, but once comprised an extensive private park and gardens. Both Vaughan Street and Bridge Street are currently paved and used as a pedestrian way.
- 1.4 The overall footprint of the house is essentially square in plan, although the two principal ranges (north and west) form an 'L' shape, with the imposing front elevation facing north, on to Bridge Street. This is one of the medieval streets of Llanelli, taking its name from Falcon Bridge which once crossed the Lledi river just beyond the south-east corner of the churchyard. There has never been a garden or other form of enclosure on the north side of the house, the façade rising from the edge of the pavement. Directly opposite, on the north side of the street, is the medieval parish church of St Elli, which is situated in an elevated churchyard, bounded by a stone wall and iron railings. The house is a prominent feature of the town centre, but whilst restoration work was being undertaken the house was inaccessible to the public. This restoration work has now been completed and the house is now an outstanding asset for the local community, which will assist in the urgently needed regeneration of Llanelli town centre.
- 1.5 The house has had a chequered history and has been misused for over 100 years, suffering from multiple occupancy, unsympathetic commercial use, poor maintenance, inappropriate alterations, and even the threat of demolition. The house was rescued from developers by Llanelli Town Council, which purchased the property in 1998, and William Wilkins, C.B.E., was appointed as Project Director for its restoration. The Council also assembled a team of professional consultants to investigate the history and archaeology of Llanelly House, to report upon its structural condition,

to draw up a viable scheme for its restoration, and to secure a long-term, beneficial use within the local community.

- 1.6 In 2003 Llanelly House was chosen to appear in BBC2's, *Restoration* series, where it was voted the winning entry for Wales.

Development Proposals and Planning Background

- 1.7 Following the purchase of the house by Llanelli Town Council in 1998, an initial project proposal and a conservation management plan were compiled between 2002-2004 in order to gauge the potential long term use of the property as well as to inform any future potential development and restoration proposals.

- 1.8 In 2004 a preliminary archaeological and architectural assessment was undertaken by archaeologist and architectural historian Warwick Rodwell, following the systematic stripping out of most of the 20th-century finishes, fixtures and fittings inside the house, in order to reveal and facilitate study of the historic fabric and finishes.

- 1.9 Following this early archaeological work, from 2004-2008 several phases of on-site preliminary restoration work were undertaken by Welsh Heritage Construction Ltd (WHC). Once the surviving historic fabric was fully exposed and accessible for recording, an accurate set of floor plans and wall elevations were undertaken by On-Centre Surveys Ltd.

- 1.10 In 2009 on-site restoration work at Llanelly House ceased temporarily, whilst Carmarthenshire Heritage Regeneration Trust (CHRT) organised leasing Llanelly House from Llanelli Town Council for 999 years and John Weavers Construction Ltd (JWL) were assigned the restoration project under the guidance of the new architects Austin-Smith: Lord.

- 1.11 In 2011 Richard Scott Jones (*BA, MA, MCIfA*), on behalf of Archaeology Wales Ltd was commissioned by CHRT to undertake the remaining archaeological work at the house.

- 1.12 In summary, the 2011 development proposals at the house included:

- Exterior walls to be entirely stripped of cement rendering, and re-rendered in lime.
- Much of the internal wall-panelling to be removed for access and repair.
- Window frames, shutters, etc are to be dismantled.
- The roofs will be stripped of poor existing modern lead and re-covered. However historic roof timbers do survive in the back ranges. These are thought to be late 17th century in date.
- Renewal of the floors at ground level, and the installation of below-ground services.
- Excavation for the footprint of the 18th century external chimney.
- Potential insertion of a disabled lift shaft through the Victorian red brick cellar

- 1.13 Planning Application references relevant to the above restoration proposals at Llanelly House include: Planning Application No's. S/20556; S/20557; S/13866; S/24496; S/24837.
- 1.14 As part of the restoration programme at the house, it had been proposed to insert a disabled lift in Room G3 (The Common or Service Hall), which was to be positioned in the far south-western corner of Room G3, directly above the existing cellar/basement area. However, in order to incorporate the design of this lift, an approximate 2m square section of floor was to be cut away, along with a 2m square area of the underlying red brick vaulted ceiling and walls of the Victorian cellar.
- 1.15 Following several meetings with the Llanelly House design team, including representatives from Llanelli Town Council and Cadw, it was recommended that, prior to any groundwork for the insertion of the proposed lift shaft through the Victorian red brick cellar, a program of standing building recording and investigation should be undertaken and all groundwork for the insertion of the lift shaft should be undertaken under archaeological watching brief conditions, in order to make a lasting record of the existing cellar.
- 1.16 HRS Wales was commissioned by CHRT to undertake the program of building recording and the watching brief for this work. The results of this work exist as an independent report by HRS Wales (HRS Wales Report No. 135), but they have also been included in this report in order to offer a complete assessment of the house.

Brief Historical & Archaeological Background

- 1.17 For a comprehensive history and archaeology of Llanelly House, there are two primary sources, the first being an historical, archaeological and architectural assessment undertaken by Richard Morris & Associates in 2001 and the other being an appendix in the *Llanelly House Conservation Management Plan (2007 and revised 2009)*, prepared for the Carmarthenshire Heritage Regeneration Trust (CHRT) by William Wilkins Associates. The following is a summary of these two histories.
- 1.18 In the late Middle Ages and the Tudor period a landowning family, descended from Cadwgan Fychan of Gwempa lived at the House. The earliest historic reference to an individual living at the house is one Thomas Lewis, who in death left the house and the estate to his daughter Anne Lewis. Anne Lewis married Walter Vaughan, the younger son of Walter Vaughan of Golden Grove by Mary Rice of Dinefwr before 1608.
- 1.19 Walter Vaughan who was the first of his family to live at Llanelly House, served as High Sheriff in 1626 and died in 1635. Llanelli House was described as being particularly commodious and in 1670 the house apparently contained 12 hearths.

- 1.20 The last of the Vaughan's was Walter Vaughan, JP, DL who was High Sheriff in 1683. Walter Vaughan died unmarried on 12 October 1683 aged 34 and the estate, consisting of 101 messuages, 6 water corn mills, and several cottages, was partitioned between his four sisters in 1705.
- 1.21 Llanelly House was among the properties that passed to Mrs Anne Lloyd of Cwmgwili, and on her death without issue, she left the property to her youngest sister, Margaret Vaughan, who had married Sir Thomas Stepney 5th Baronet, in 1691. In Richard Morris & Associates assessment, it states that at '...around 1714 Sir Thomas pulled down the older house and built a new residence which has lasted to the present day.' However, it is more likely that it was around 1710 that Sir Thomas Stepney pulled down the front of the house and undertook significant architectural changes to the northern elevation and the roof and completed this work in 1714, as is evident from a date on a lead rain hopper fastened to the north facing elevation. This date also happens to coincide with the beginning of the reign of George I. Sir Thomas Stepney died in 1744.
- 1.22 In the 17th and 18th centuries extensive grounds reaching as far as Falcon bridge formed its demesne, but with the coming of the industrial revolution, filled with financial opportunities for land owners, businessmen and entrepreneurs, these lands were soon built over and it wasn't long before the house became completely surrounded and hemmed in by 19th century industrial and urban development.
- 1.23 On 13th May 1776, Sir John Stepney 8th Baronet, then living at Fludyer Street, St Margaret's, Westminster, granted a lease for seven years at £27 per annum to Hildebrand Oakes of Hampton Court Park, of Llanelly House with stables, gardens and closes of land, in Llanelly Parish together with certain furniture (specified) except the 'stove garden' and 'pinery stoves', glasses and implements, adjoining to the courtyard of the house, which were reserved to the lessor.
- 1.24 From 1768 to 1788 John Wesley, the Methodist Minister, preached to the people of Llanelli on eight occasions and often stayed in Llanelly House until Sir Thomas Stepney 7th Baronet died in 1772. Wesley was 'hospitably entertained' by the Stepney household and he lamented the death of Sir Thomas Stepney, writing in his diary that it was a 'tremendous loss to the community.'
- 1.25 Sir Thomas Stepney's son, John Stepney, inherited the Mansion, but he lived abroad and Agents managed his estate. The Mansion was rented out to workmen and their families and by 1800 the property had fallen into disrepair and was no longer used as a gentry residence.
- 1.26 In 1803 the traveller Malkin noted it as 'an old mansion of the Stepney family, an old deserted seat of Sir John Stepney, in a state of dilapidation, inhabited principally by fishermen and colliers'.
- 1.27 In 1804 the house was said to have 'for years wept for the loss of its respectable owners, and is now

dividing into three distinct family messuages and the out-offices are converting into comfortable tenements’.

- 1.28 The antiquary Richard Fenton makes a brief mention – ‘A House at Llanelly was lately the Seat of John Vaughan Esq.’ Also in 1804 *The Cambrian* newspaper reported that the venerable old mansion of the Stepney family of Llanelly, which had been empty for years was converted into three separate family dwellings. The outbuildings were also converted into ‘comfortable tenements’ and the accommodation was described as ‘much wanted from the increase in the population in the neighbourhood’.
- 1.29 Sir John Stepney, 8th Baronet, died in 1811 without issue and the house passed to named friends.
- 1.30 By 1827 William Chambers senior was in possession and he took steps to restore the house, converting the conservatory into a market for the townspeople.
- 1.31 By 1833 Llanelly House had been renovated and converted slightly to suit William Chambers style and taste. When William Chambers Senior died in 1855 his son, another William Chambers jnr, who had established the Llanelli Pottery, found he was unable to retain the estate, because his mother and father’s marriage was not recognised under British law.
- 1.32 After a period of lengthy litigation the Mansion passed to the line of Sir John Cowell Stepney’s sister, Maria Justina, and eventually came to Catherine Meriel Cowell Stepney, who married Sir Edward Stafford Howard in 1911.
- 1.33 At the beginning of the 20th century, Lady Howard-Stepney thoroughly restored the two upper floors, the ground floor having been previously transformed in the late 19th century into commercial business premises, one particular enterprise being ‘*Margraves Brothers Spirit and Wine Merchants*’, who occupied the eastern end of the ground floor and used the basement/cellar for storing merchandise.
- 1.34 Documentary records and accounts suggest that the red brick cellar at Llanelly House was constructed in the late 19th century, following the requirements by the former wine and spirit merchants, the Margrave Brothers, who occupied the northeast end of the ground floor at the time, with their primary office occupying the former Sir Thomas Stepney’s study (Room G2). The red brick cellar was used for storage of their fine wines and spirits and acted as a presentable display area for sales.
- 1.35 One of the most intriguing features within Room G2 was the discovery in the last few years, of a concealed cupboard incorporated within the wooden panelling against the east wall, alongside the fireplace. Within the cupboard was a series of ply-wood constructed pigeon-holed shelving, each occupied by the remains of several hundred wine and spirit bottle labels, detailing the wines and

spirits sold by the former Margrave Brothers in the late 19th and early 20th century. Several hundred bottle labels were recovered from this cupboard, which included bottle labels for a '*Tintara*' wine, with dates of 1884 and 1887 perforated through them. *Tintara* wine was an expensive Australian burgundy wine marketed by the PB Burgoyne wine merchants, which became very popular in the late 19th century. Chalk markings identifying the *Tintara* Wine brand were found on several of the bay walls of the Victorian red brick cellar.

- 1.36 The Margrave Brothers exhibited at the Cardiff Exhibition in 1896.
- 1.37 Other shop uses over the decades have also included a sweet shop, a toy shop, a post-office and a haberdashery.
- 1.38 The interior of the house contains several wooden panelled rooms and a few panel pictures, once in storage but now returned to the house and on permanent display. One of the first floor rooms, an antechamber, also contains the remains of extensive 18th century paintings, once hidden beneath layers of paint, but now fully exposed for all to see.
- 1.39 By the 21st century the spacious grounds surrounding Llanelly House have long since disappeared under tarmac and redevelopment but the house itself has now been fully restored to its 18th century identity.
- 1.40 Thus, Llanelly House was not a single-period construction of early 18th century architects, but a complex structure which had evolved and been remodelled on several occasions. To elucidate this, a programme of systematic archaeological investigation was put in hand in 2002 under the supervision of Professor Warwick Rodwell.
- 1.41 In the first phase (November 2002), the majority of the intrusions and surface finishes, which dated from the second half of the 20th century were removed. The interior was recorded at this stage. In the second phase (September 2003), most of the intrusions dating from the first half of the 20th century were removed, it having been agreed by all parties concerned that these were of no intrinsic merit. Also, the heavy cement rendering that covered the internal walls of the staircase hall was stripped.
- 1.42 In the third phase of investigation more of the modern finishes were cleared and targeted opening-up operations were carried out in order to examine the structure, for example by carefully removing sections of panelling, lifting floorboards, etc. An unexpected revelation was the survival of much 17th century fabric in the walls of the main range, which was hitherto presumed to be wholly of 1714. Once the surviving historic fabric was fully exposed and accessible for recording, an accurate set of floor plans and wall elevations to a large scale was commissioned from On-Centre Surveys Ltd. A full photographic record was also made, both before and during the process of stripping modern accretions.

- 1.43 Three small trial excavations were also undertaken at this time beneath the timber floors in three of the ground floor rooms, to ascertain whether archaeological deposits were present. Remains of the 17th century house were encountered, including much moulded plasterwork from a highly ornate ceiling. In June 2006, another excavation was carried out under the pavement of Bridge Street, in front of the original main entrance, to determine whether there had ever been a portico; the result was negative.
- 1.44 When strengthening of the floors was carried out in 2007–08, the opportunity was taken to make an archaeological record of the construction of the floor framing at first and second floor levels. Several periods of construction were observed from the early 18th century. In addition to the later materials, in places the floors incorporated reused timbers of the 17th century. Dr Nigel Nayling from the Dept. of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Wales, Lampeter, took many timber samples for potential dating by dendrochronology. Unfortunately, after analysis of the cored samples, although a number of samples had significant suitable ring counts, none of the samples taken had any ring sequences wherein a felling date could be ascertained.
- 1.45 The roof structures of the east and west wings clearly pre-date the general rebuild of the early 18th century. Both roofs are probably 17th century in date, although of different constructions.
- 1.46 In 2011 a fourth phase of restoration began at the house, with John Weaver Construction taking over the restoration work, with Austin: Smith Lord as the resident architects. Since 2011, all on-site archaeological work was undertaken by archaeologist Richard Scott Jones (*BA, MA, MifA*).
- 1.47 Continuing archaeological involvement during the restoration of the house has been essential, which has led to this definitive account of the history, archaeology and architecture of Llanelly House.

Recent Historical Research

- 1.48 Whilst undertaking the archaeological work at Llanelly house during 2011 – 2013, several very significant historical documents came to light following research from the author, local historians and other volunteers working with CHRT.
- 1.49 Probably the most significant of these historical documents is a reference to the 6th Century Saint Elli in a medieval manuscript detailing the Life of St. Cadog. This document was translated from its Latin by historian Wade-Evans in the 1940s and transcribed in his *Lives and Genealogies of the Welsh Saints*, or the *Vitae Sanctorum Britanniae et Genealogiae* (1944). In this document it states that Elli was a disciple of St. Cadog and after his education and instruction he built a church and houses which are referenced as being a Monastery near the cross.

“May it be known to all in accordance with the changableness of times and of the successions of the kings of this world, that Elli, disciple of the blessed Cadog, having been diligently educated by him from an early age and eminently instructed in sacred literature,

was the dearest to him of all his disciples. And Elli declared, saying, 'Lo, I have built a church and houses in the name of the Lord, and I and all my successors of the familia of Cadog will be obedient, subject, and kindly disposed to the familia of Cadog.'.....Wherefore assembling at the monastery of Elli, they confirmed this agreement with the kiss of peace in the sight of Elli near the cross, which is on the road to many. Of this thing are witnesses, Cadoc, Elli, Clephas, Samson, Iacob, Boduan, Conocan Mach. They went each of them to his place from blessing to blessing. Amen" (Wade-Evans 1944, pp 131-133).

- 1.50 This reference to St. Elli and his monastery would suggest that around the parish church of Llanelli there may well have been several monastic houses.
- 1.51 A further reference to Saint Ellii is also made in F. Seebohm's *Tribal System of Wales (1895)*, where he discusses the monastic church of Llanelli and Elli's annual payment (*pensio* or *census*) to Saint Cadog and his followers (family), wherein he agrees payment of *gwestfa*, of three nights in summer and winter, along with prayer, hymns, thanks and joy, in other words accommodation and entertainment for six nights a year (Seebohm 1895).
- 1.52 Interestingly, only twenty or so years later following the dissolution, Llanelli in the 1560s began emerging as a port for the outlet of coal. This emergence coincided with Queen Elizabeth I appointment of groups of Permanent Piracy Commissioners for each of the maritime counties of the realm. The commissioners appointed to Carmarthen were the Bishop of St, David's, Thomas Vaughan and David Morgan, who recorded Llanelli as being a village of 12 households on the creek of Burrey, whose Governor, John Vaughan, was empowered to grant licences for loading and unloading. Llanelli also had one ship of 8 tons named the 'Jesus'. At this time Llanelly House, then most probably known as 'Ty Mawr', was probably in the hands of the Lewis family (Morgan, 1962).
- 1.53 One other piece of recent research focused on the Great Flood of 1607 and to what extent this flood may have had on the village of Llanelli and in particular Llanelly House.
- 1.54 On 30 January 1607, floods resulted in the drowning of an estimated 3,000 or more people, with houses and villages swept away, an estimated 200 square miles (518 km²) of farmland inundated and livestock destroyed, wrecking the local economy along the coasts of the Bristol Channel and Severn Estuary, in what was then the Kingdom of England.
- 1.55 The devastation was particularly severe on the Welsh side, extending from Laugharne in Carmarthenshire to above Chepstow in Monmouthshire. Cardiff was the most badly affected town, with the foundations of St Mary's Church destroyed.
- 1.56 A number of commemorative plaques still remain, up to 8 feet (2 m) above sea level, showing how high the waters rose on the sides of surviving churches. For example at Goldcliff near Newport the church has a small brass plaque, inside on the north wall near the altar, about three feet above

ground level today at this point, marking the height of the flood waters. The plaque records the year as 1606 because, under the Julian calendar in use at that time, the new year did not start until Lady Day, 25 March.

- 1.57 The cause of the flood remains disputed, insofar as contemporary explanations blamed God. Subsequent scientific explanations ignored much of the written evidence and blamed bad weather, until recent research suggested a tsunami. Traditionally it had been believed that the floods were caused by a storm surge, a combination of meteorological extremes and a high tide.
- 1.58 Written evidence from the time describes events that were similar to those that unfolded in the 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami, including a wave of water that rushed in faster than men could run, sparks coming off the top of the wave, a crowd of people who stood and watched the wave coming towards them until it was too late to run, and the sea receding before the wave arrived. Some of the most detailed accounts also state that it had been a sunny morning.
- 1.59 A 2002 research paper, following investigations by Professor Simon Haslett of Bath Spa University and Australian geologist Ted Bryant of the University of Wollongong, suggested that the flooding may have been caused by a tsunami, after the authors had read some eyewitness accounts in the historical reports which described the flood just like a tsunami.
- 1.60 The BBC made a programme exploring the theory (The Killer Wave of 1607) as part of the Timewatch series. Although made prior to the 2004 tsunami disaster, it was not broadcast until 2 April 2005 and was repeated on 24 January 2007.
- 1.61 The British Geological Survey has suggested that as there is no evidence of a landslide off the continental shelf, a tsunami would most likely have been caused by an earthquake on a known unstable fault off the coast of Ireland, causing the vertical displacement of the sea floor.
- 1.62 Haslett and Bryant found significant evidence for the tsunami hypothesis. This included: massive boulders that had been displaced up the beach by enormous force; a layer up to 8 inches (20 cm) thick composed of sand, shells and stones within an otherwise constant deposit of mud that was found in boreholes from Devon to Gloucestershire and the Gower Peninsula; and rock erosion characteristic of high water velocities throughout the Severn Estuary (Bryant and Haslett 2002).
- 1.63 There are also similarities, however, to descriptions of the 1953 floods in East Anglia, which were caused by a storm surge. Some of the original sources frequently referred to the high spring tide and strong winds from the south west - classic conditions for a storm surge. Horsburgh and Horritt have shown that the tide and probable weather at the time were capable of generating a surge that is totally consistent with the observed inundation (Horsburgh and Horritt 2006).

- 1.64 Furthermore, the same original sources make it clear that flooding occurred in Norfolk on the night of the same date (at local high water). There is no plausible candidate tsunami that could have affected the Bristol Channel and also have propagated into the North Sea with any significant amplitude (Bryant and Haslett 2002).
- 1.65 Given this fact, it seems far more likely that the Great Flood of 1606 was as a result of a serious storm surge in conjunction with a high tide and a full moon, giving the ideal ingredients for a major flood.
- 1.66 With regards to Llanelly House, the archaeological work found no stratigraphic evidence in any of the excavation work suggesting any major flood. However, the archaeological work did reveal that at some time in the early 17th century a major building program appears to have been undertaken at the house, with the construction of an extension to the east end of the house. Whether this work was in response to flooding however is unknown.

2 Aims and Objectives

- 2.1 The aims of the watching brief, as defined by the IfA (2001) were to:
- allow the rapid investigation and recording of any archaeological features that were uncovered during all groundwork.
 - provide the opportunity, if needed, for the watching archaeologist to signal to all interested parties, before the destruction of the material in question, that an archaeological find has been made for which the resources allocated to the watching brief are not sufficient to support the treatment to a satisfactory or proper standard.
- 2.2 The watching brief was not intended to reduce the requirement for excavation or preservation of known or inferred deposits, and it was intended to guide, not replace, any requirement for contingent excavation or preservation of possible deposits. The objective of the watching brief was to establish and make available information about the archaeological resource existing on the site.
- 2.3 The aims of the Standing Building Recording, as defined by the IfA (2008) were to examine the standing building and its setting, in order to inform:
- the formulation of a strategy for the conservation, alteration, demolition, repair or management of the building and its setting and to seek a better understanding, compile a lasting record, analyse the findings/record, and then disseminate the results.

3 Methodology

- 3.1 All work was conducted in compliance with the *Codes of Practice* of the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA 2000).
- 3.2 For the standing building recording and investigation work at the house, a photographic record was made using a digital SLR and where possible rectified photographs were appropriated of all accessible elevations. Following investigation of all fabric exposed external and internal elevations, existing scaled On-Centre Survey plans were annotated with all newly exposed architectural features, which were later scanned and all features digitised onto scaled archaeological drawings. Any further architectural features that became exposed following groundwork were also investigated, recorded and added to these drawings in order to offer completeness.
- 3.3 All of the proposed groundwork at the house was undertaken under watching brief conditions. All digging work during ground reduction for the insertion of new floor joist supports, or else the insertion of new services, was undertaken manually by hand using a shovel. Each shovel full of dirt was inspected for finds and any significant finds recovered and retained.
- 3.4 For the removal of the modern concrete floors in Rooms G3 and G7, a heavy duty electric hammer drill was used to puncture and break up the overlying concrete. This work was undertaken in sections. For the floor in Room G3, the Common Hall, following each section of concrete removal, an exposed steel grid frame was cut using a disc cutter and the underlying red brick ceiling of the Victorian cellar was dismantled by hand and all of the bricks were cleaned back and kept for future use. All of this ground work was undertaken under watching brief conditions.
- 3.5 On the discovery that the original construction of the red brick cellar had dug well below the foundations in this area of the house, it was eventually decided for reasons of safety, to dismantle the entire red brick cellar in order to construct a ring of concrete supports each reinforced with steel. As such, the earlier basement walls became exposed. These newly exposed walls were all recorded photographically and subsequent elevation plans were created.

Photographs

- 3.5 All photographs appropriated during the building recording work and the watching brief was undertaken using a 10MP Olympus SLR in RAW and Super High resolution JPG format.

4 Results of the Archaeological Standing Building Investigation (I) & Recording and Watching Brief (II) *(See Figures 1- 11 in Appendix I and Plate No's. 1- 26 in Appendix II)*

General Description of Llanelly House prior to 2011-2013 Restoration

- 4.1 At the beginning of the 2011 – 2013 restoration, Llanelly House was in a very poor state of repair having been significantly altered over the last 250 years and considerable deterioration over the last 20 years. The setting of the house has also suffered inexorably, being completely surrounded by urbanism, to such an extent that the large gentry house once set in an expanse of formal and informal gardens is now choked by commercial and industrial buildings, the only true wider setting still remaining being the view toward the parish church.
- 4.2 The southern side of Llanelly House is attached to a building presently used by 'Careers Wales', and the eastern side of the house is attached to a building presently used by the 'Credit Union'. Prior to the 2011-2013 restoration program, there were suspicions that this eastern range of buildings may have once been associated with Llanelly House in the 18th century. The north and west facing elevations are open to pedestrians via Bridge Street and North Street.

Externally

- 4.3 Externally, both the north and west facing elevations had commercial shop-fronts inserted at their ground floor levels, the north facing elevation retaining a former Victorian shop-front inserted in the late 19th century and the western elevation a more modern late 20th century one.
- 4.2 All of the external elevations at the house had unfortunately been rendered in cement several decades earlier and as a result water had seeped behind the render, which had forced the render to *blow*, the result being that all of the external wall faces were becoming damp as the fabric was unable to breathe. Because of this, all of the external cement render on the entire house had to be removed in order to re-render in lime. This gave the opportunity to investigate and record any potential exposed architectural features that may offer up some information as to the evolution and development of the house. Following the erection of a complex of scaffolding, removal of this cement render began in June 2011 and was completed by December 2011.
- 4.3 Most probably, the development proposal that caused the most anxiety throughout the whole program of work, was the removal of the Victorian and modern shop-fronts in both the north and west facing elevations and the re-instatement of the 18th century walls and windows in these areas, which had obviously been previously removed in order to insert these shop-fronts. This exercise was an especially worrying time for the engineers and all concerned parties, given that

in the Victorian period when the northwest corner shop-fronts had been inserted, they had used large oak timber Bessemer beams and cast iron columns to support the first and second floor stone walls. Unfortunately, following removal of the cladding shop-fronts in this area, it was observed that one of these timbers in the north facing elevation was in a very poor condition and was suffering from both rot and damp, which made work in this area very precarious. As such, a complex of heavy duty industrial supports was constructed whilst work began to rebuild or re-instate the original 18th century walls and window openings, which would eventually, on completion, hold the full weight of the above fabric. To repair and compensate for the poor state of the oak timber Bessemer beam in this area, the timber was also injected with an industrial polymer resin, which strengthened the timber enormously. It wasn't until this resin had set to its required strength and the 18th century walls, window openings and central doorway had been completed, that the industrial supports were removed.

- 4.4 The roof of the house prior to the 2011 – 2013 restoration work was, again, in a very poor state. Once all of the existing roofing slates had been removed, of which many were not original, it became clear that the roofing timbers and a number of the timber joists in many area across the roof were in very poor condition, with many of the oak joists, particularly those in the far south-eastern part of the roof/ceiling, needing to be completely replaced with new oak timber.
- 4.5 The roof base was also completely re-covered in protective lead as the quality of the workmanship on the existing roof base was not deemed to be of a good enough quality.

Internally

- 4.6 With regards to the interior of the house, as already mentioned, the house has suffered and the ground floor altered considerably over the last 120 years or so, especially after its complete abandonment and the eventual disuse of the shops in the ground floor in the last 20 years. The first and second floors however have suffered less. Although these floors were altered slightly when they were turned into tenements in the very early 19th century before William Chambers undertook his renovation work, they haven't suffered significantly. However, this good preservation can also be attributed to the fact that these upper floors were used as accommodation in the early 20th century by Lady Howard-Stepney.
- 4.7 However, the ground floor of the house was a different matter altogether. Following work by previous contractors in 2002-2006, the ground floor was left in rather a mess, with building waste material scattered throughout the house and artefacts, such as parts of wooden panelling, loose doors, fireplace surrounds, cornice sections and decorative plasterwork, being left uncatalogued with no inventory to hand informing the original place and position of the artefacts. As a result, following an initial photographic record of the inside of the house in March 2011, a photographic inventory was compiled of all of the loose items and artefacts in the house and all

of these items were moved to one of the rooms on the first floor (Room F10) for storage until they were needed for relocation during restoration work.

- 4.8 Once cleared of all loose items of furniture and artefacts, proposed work began on the ground floor of the house with the removal of the shop-fronts, the lifting of the floorboards and all proposed ground works.
- 4.9 The following sections begin with the results of the Archaeological Standing Building Investigation and Recording, starting with the external elevations and then the internal elevations. Once these have been described and interpreted, the next section will offer the results of the archaeological watching brief. Following this will be a summary section and then a discussion and interpretation section.

I) Results of the Standing Building Investigation and Recording

External Elevations *(see Figures 15, 16, 17 and 18)*

- 4.10 Removal of external cement render from the house began in June 2011, with initial focus on the north facing front elevation of the house and the west facing elevation. Removal of the remaining render on the south and east facing elevations continued until November 2011.

North Facing Elevation (see Figure 15)

- 4.11 The north facing elevation is characterised as being the front of Llanelly House, directly facing the parish church looking over Bridge Street.
- 4.12 In the 18th century this elevation would have appeared much as it did prior to this 2011-2013 season of restoration, but without the Victorian shop-front at the western end, with a central doorway and without the inclusion of the former Margrave Brothers doorway and window opening alterations at the eastern end. In the 18th century the north facing front elevation would have held a total of 21 tall sash windows, seven on each floor, with a central entrance on the ground floor. Framing this elevation into three separate divisions are three projecting extrusions that extend from ground floor level to roof height. Each of these extrusions has a projecting decorative entablature at first floor level above each window. Above the windows at the second floor level are a series of seven recesses, each of which may have held some form of decorative plaque. These recesses appear to have been constructed with each having a leaded base, each slanting at a slight sloping angle so as to channel water away from each of the below windows.

- 4.13 Other than the exposure of the oak timber Bessemer that had been used to support the fabric of this elevation at the west end during and following the insertion of the Victorian shop-front, the removal of the modern cement render from this elevation exposed surprisingly few interesting features. It had been hoped that the newly exposed stone fabric would have revealed a former roof-line of an earlier 17th century house. However, this was not to be the case. Instead, removal of the modern render only revealed phases of repair work undertaken in the Victorian period and more recent repairs undertaken a couple of decades ago when the modern cement render was applied to the house.
- 4.14 The Victorian repairs appear to have included the insertion of a number of Victorian red bricks in the positions of most of the former timber lintels above each of the windows. Unfortunately, only two of the original timber lintels still remain, both at second floor level. All of the other window lintels are modern concrete ones inserted as part of the re-rendering work in the 1990s. The insertion of 19th century red bricks in a number of small areas obviously suggests that this front north facing elevation also had an external render removed in the 19th century, likely at the time that William Chamber *Snr* undertook his renovation work on the house.
- 4.15 The only other significant features exposed in the first and second floor levels of this elevation are a series of former put-log holes originally used for 18th century scaffolding.
- 4.16 At ground floor level, the removal of the external render essentially exposed the methods used in the insertion and construction of the Victorian shop-fronts and the insertion and alteration of existing window openings and doorway openings. The most significant feature exposed at ground floor level was the position of the former 18th century central doorway, identified by the edge of the former opening on the eastern side as well as the fact that investigation of the joint between the external north facing elevation and the skewed cross wall that divides Rooms G1 and G2 is a butt joint and is not keyed in.
- 4.17 This elevation is also surmounted by a series of eight large sandstone urn ornaments, each believed to represent the core and cap of a pineapple, once a symbol of wealth and status.
- 4.18 One last but very significant feature of the north facing elevation are a pair of two lead drain pipes and rain hoppers running either side of the former 18th century central doorway. Both these drainage pipes and hoppers are embellished with heraldic symbols associated with the Stepney family. These symbols include the Stepney *sigil* of three *owls* on their heraldic shield on the rain hoppers at roof height and a number of prancing lions, lions faces and possibly bears embellished along the length of the lead pipes and mounting points. These drainage pipes were completely removed from the elevation for conservation work.

Summary of results and Interpretation of North Facing External Elevation

- 4.19 Investigation and recording of the north facing elevation of Llanelly House following the removal of the modern cement render, has revealed that the majority of the former 18th century window lintels on both the first and second floors have been replaced with modern concrete lintels. This process probably took place in the 1990s. As well as these modern concrete lintels, the removal of the external render also revealed that an external render had also been removed in the 19th century and repair work undertaken which included the use of red brick to make a number of repairs. The positions of a series of 18th century put-log holes were also exposed.
- 4.20 It had been anticipated that removal of the external cement render would have revealed the position of a former roof line associated with an earlier 17th century house. However, this was not to be the case. Instead, the absence of a former earlier roof-line would suggest that the earlier 17th century north facing elevation was probably completely demolished and the new 18th century elevation built onto its foundations.

South Facing Elevation (see Figure 16)

- 4.21 The south facing external elevation overlooks a car parking and lorry unloading area that serves a series of commercial buildings to the south and west.
- 4.22 This elevation incorporates the central part of the house, the eastern and western ranges and the far eastern part of the house.
- 4.23 With regards to the far eastern part of the house, the removal of the external render from this part of the house exposed very few features of any significance, other than what appeared to be the remains of a former window opening positioned at the far eastern end at ground floor level. This feature is blocked in with stone and red brick. However, the red brickwork appears to have been a later blocking in probably associated with some form of pipe-work. The character, size and position of this feature would suggest that it was once a window opening associated with part of the earlier 17th – 18th century house.
- 4.24 The only other features noted in this part of the south facing elevation are a series of put-log holes and an area of red brick repair that likely represents the position of a former 19th century drainage pipe, both in a position above the blocked in window feature mentioned above.
- 4.25 As with the north facing elevation, the removal of the cement render in this part of the south facing elevation did not reveal any obvious evidence for a former 17th century roof-line. This would suggest that the blocked in small window opening at ground floor level is probably late 17th century to early 18th century in date and may be associated with once giving light to a former basement area or else giving light to a basement access area beneath an 18th century service

stairs.

- 4.26 Removal of the external render from the central part of the south facing elevation exposed features associated with the 18th century tall window that served light into the Stair Hall (Room G4). Other exposed features associated with this window are also described and interpreted in the internal elevation section associated with Room G7 (Courtyard).
- 4.27 Visible features in the external elevation however, include a number of areas that had been repaired using Victorian red brick, including a section in the lower area that appears to mark the position of a former window *cill* associated with the 18th century tall window. Below this point removal of the external render revealed that this tall window once continued all the way to ground level (*see also Figure 59*), subsequently blocked up in the early 20th century when a new staircase was installed.
- 4.28 Directly above this tall window removal of the external render from this part of the south facing elevation revealed a supporting or relieving arch of stone. This relieving arch is also reflected in the internal north facing elevation of Room G4 (The Stair Hall).
- 4.29 Other than the above feature and a small number of put-log holes, no other features became evident in the central or far west end of this south facing external elevation.

Summary of results and Interpretation of South Facing External Elevation

- 4.30 Investigation and recording of the south facing external elevation of Llanelly House, following the removal of the modern cement render, has revealed that this elevation appears to be contemporary in date to the construction of the front north facing elevation *i.e.* it is part of the Stepney rebuilding of the early 1700s.
- 4.31 Two significant features became exposed in this elevation; the position of a former blocked in small window at ground level at the far east end, suggesting a window that may have served light to a former basement access area; and the character of the tall 18th century window in the central part of this elevation. The exposed fabric in this area revealed that this window appears to have been extended to ground level at some time in the early to mid 19th century and was later blocked up in the early 20th century. The extending of this window would have occurred during William Chamber *Snr* renovation of the house.

West Facing Elevation (see Figure 17)

- 4.32 The west facing external elevation includes the western range and the west facing elevation of the northern range of the house and overlooks Vaughan Street.
- 4.33 The western range elevation is characterised by a series of four tall sash windows at first floor level. The ground floor level is occupied by modern shop-fronts, originally inserted in the late Victorian and early 20th century.
- 4.34 In the 18th century the ground floor level would have had windows a series of windows positioned directly below those at the first floor level. It is also very likely that this elevation would also have had a door or a pair of doors positioned equidistantly between each pair of ground floor windows.
- 4.35 A c.1870s photograph of the house looking northeast shows an oblique view of the west facing elevation of the house. This photograph suggests that at this time a shop-front had already been inserted in the west facing elevation of the northern range. However the projecting external chimney was still in place above the shop-front, supported by a row of timber supports. This photo also shows an apparent doorway to the southern side of the shop-front.
- 4.36 Removal of the modern render from the western range west facing elevation revealed very little of any significance, apart from the position and character of a pair of timber Bessemer beams that were used to support the west wall for the insertion of the early 20th century shop-fronts, and a number of areas where Victorian red brick had been used to make repairs, particularly at roof height. This would suggest that an earlier external render had been removed from the west facing elevation previously in the 19th century, probably as part of William Chamber *Snr's* renovation.
- 4.37 All of the original timber lintels above the windows had been replaced with modern concrete lintels.
- 4.38 With regards the west facing elevation of the northern range, the removal of the modern cement render on this elevation revealed the position and extent of the former 17th century and 18th century external chimney, which had been removed in the late 19th century or early 20th century as part of the insertion of the Victorian shop-fronts. Removal of the external render revealed that following the demolition of the former projecting chimney the resulting void had been filled using red brick.
- 4.39 As well as this major alteration work in the late 19th century, a number of other small areas

across the wall surface had also been repaired using the same red brick. These areas were mostly along the edges of the window openings, suggesting that the window frames had been replaced or else repaired in the late 19th century.

- 4.40 Unfortunately, due to the extent of the red brick repair in the west facing elevation of the northern range there was not clear evidence that this elevation was a remnant of an earlier 17th century house. However, with the *eye-of-faith* there was a very slight change in the stone type and the direction of the stone coursing at the second floor level at the northern end that, if traced, did give the impression of a possible former steep roof-line. A similar story also existed on the other southern side of the red brickwork repair that formed the extent of the former projecting chimney, however, this evidence was very slight and very hard to discern at close quarters and suggested that the builders in the 1700s had keyed the stonework together well.
- 4.41 Also apparent was a long structural crack at the far northern end of the northern range which appeared to be linked to the line of the former roof-line, which further supported the likelihood that the original north facing elevation had been completely demolished and re-built in the 18th century and an attempt had been made to key in the new stonework to the existing west facing elevation.

Summary of results and Interpretation of West Facing External Elevation

- 4.42 Investigation and recording of the west facing elevation of Llanelly House, following the removal of the modern cement render, has revealed that the northern end of this elevation underwent significant repair work following the insertion of the Victorian shop-front, which had forced the external projecting chimney to be removed and the resulting void repaired using red brick.
- 4.43 Other Victorian repairs using red brick were also evident in the west elevation of the western range.
- 4.44 The investigation of the west facing elevation of the northern range at second floor level also revealed the position of a former steeply angled 17th century roof-line either side of the Victorian red brickwork.

East Facing Elevation (see Figure 18)

- 4.45 The east facing elevation includes the far east end of the northern range and the east facing elevation of the eastern range.
- 4.46 With regards to the east facing elevation of the northern range only a small area is visible, as the

rest of the elevation is hidden behind the Credit Union building.

- 4.47 Regarding the east facing elevation of the eastern range, removal of the external render revealed that this elevation had undergone significant alteration and repair over the centuries. This work appears to have always revolved around the position and character of a series of openings or doorways variously blocked up over the years, mostly using red brick, which would suggest that these openings were blocked up in the 19th century.
- 4.48 A drawing of the early 19th century (*see Figure 11(c)*), presumed to be of the east facing elevation of the eastern range, appears to show that the ground floor of this range was formerly used as a coach house and a stable block, until it was transformed into a breakfast and kitchen room in the mid 19th century by William Chambers *Snr*.
- 4.49 All of the existing and recently blocked in openings in this elevation have had their former timber lintels removed and replaced by concrete ones.
- 4.50 Investigation and recording of the upper regions of this elevation show the outline and extent of the work that was undertaken to insert the 19th century dormer windows.
- 4.51 No other features other than those described above were recorded in this elevation.

Summary of results and Interpretation of East Facing External Elevation

- 4.52 Investigation and recording of the east facing elevation of Llanelly House following the removal of the modern cement render, has revealed that the existing openings and blocked in openings prior to this seasons proposed restoration, have been in existence at least from the early 19th century. However, these openings have been altered and repaired on many occasions to suit the current occupier of the house and its proposed use at the time. This is confirmed by an early 19th century drawing of the east facing elevation of the eastern range, which depicts the ground floor of the eastern range as having been used as a coach house and a stables at this time until it was changed into a kitchen and breakfast room in the mid 19th century. This being the case, it is also highly likely that the eastern range was also used as a stable block in the 17th and 18th century.

Internal Elevations (see *Figures 4, 5 and 6 for Room location*)

Key: Basement (B1); Ground Floor (G1-G9); First Floor (F1-F10); Second Floor (S1-S9)

Ground Floor

- 4.53 At the time of the 2011-2013 investigation and recording of the internal elevations at the house, *most* of the internal walls at ground floor level had already had all of the wall plaster removed in the previous season of work. A number of internal walls at ground floor level however still had wainscot or wooden panelling in place and these panels were not removed and remained in place throughout the restoration work.
- 4.54 The wall plaster on all of the internal elevations in the Stair Hall from floor to ceiling was also removed in the previous season of work.
- 4.55 On the first floor only one room, Room F5, had stone fabric fully exposed, with no wooden panelling. All other elevations in all other first floor rooms were covered by panelling, apart from the south facing elevation of Room F1.
- 4.56 On the second floor none of the rooms had their internal elevations covered by wooden panelling. Instead they were all plaster covered and only a few of these rooms had had elevations where they had had their wall plaster removed in the previous season of work.
- 4.57 The following section presents the results of the investigation and recording of all of the internal elevations during the 2011-2013 season of work. These results are presented in order of Room number starting with the ground floor and working upwards to the first and second floors. A brief summary of these results is offered at the end of the complete section rather than at the end of each room.
- 4.58 Following this section the results of the archaeological watching brief are then presented, again, in order of Room number starting with the ground floor and working upwards to the first and second floors.

Room G1 - The Great Hall (see *Figures 20, 22, 23, 24 and 25*)

- 4.59 In February - March 2011, the existing floor surface of Room G1 was comprised of various different surfaces, including modern concrete at the far west end and modern stone tiles and floor boards and oak timber floor joists at the east end.

- 4.60 In front of the existing central front door of this room a trial trench was excavated in 2002 by another party as part of earlier preliminary investigations. However, the results from this excavation were never recorded or fully interpreted archaeologically. This trench was re-opened and investigated on 24th February 2011. Since its initial excavation the trench had been used subsequently as a 'rubbish' pit, being filled with a variety of building materials, including soil, cement, resin, newspaper, timber etc.
- 4.61 Following the removal of the built-up waste material from the existing trench, all of the trench sections were cleaned and straightened as best as was possible considering the loose character of the greater part of the exposed underlying deposits. Following this, the trench and its exposed sections were drawn and photographed.
- 4.62 The trial trench was sunk through a series of thin modern stone tiles (G1-100), which appear to have been formerly laid directly over a pair of 18th century oak floor joists (G1-117), which had unfortunately been sawn through and removed to allow access to the trench for digging purposes. The trench measured approximately 1.5m x 1.4m at its upper limit and approximately 1.4m x 1m at its base. At the base of the trench a small 0.30m square investigation slot had been cut through the lowest deposit. This was a compact grey/orange clay with charcoal flecks (G1-112). This was positioned alongside the exposed footings of the north wall of the house (G1-125) and its cut (G1-133), in order to confirm that the deposit (G1-112) was indeed the earliest deposit, which it was.
- 4.63 In the east facing section of this trial trench (see Figure 20), the oak joists were formerly lain north-south directly on top of a loose soil deposit made up of small fragments of plaster, soil, ash and charcoal fragments (G1-104(a + b)). The depth of this deposit was approximately 0.80m. This deposit lay directly over another deposit of lime plaster with decorative stucco work fragments and remains of plaster cornice, architrave and fireplace mantel (G1-106). This deposit averaged approximately 0.15m in depth and was interpreted as being a former demolition deposit associated with the construction of the 18th century re-building of the house by Thomas Stepney.
- 4.64 This demolition lay directly over a compacted earth and clay deposit (G1-107) approximately 0.12m in depth. This compact layer was interpreted as being the original 17th century floor surface. Below this compact deposit was a further deposit approximately 0.12m in depth. This consisted of clay, earth, sand with coal (1%), mortar fragments (5%) and irregular stone fragments, no larger than 0.15m in size. Directly below this was a natural orange/beige clay, with coal and mortar flecks at surface from above deposit.

4.65 The west facing section of this trial trench, although similar in make up to the east facing section, was different in that the boundaries between deposits (G1-104, G1-105 and G1-106) were not as clearly defined as in the east facing section, which gave the impression that they were in fact one deposit and not three separate individual deposits. Reasons for this may be that the deposits in the east facing section are positioned almost directly opposite the former late 17th century front door, a position that would have seen a lot of activity and traffic from workmen during the re-building program. However, this section did reveal that the underlying deposits indicate a period of significant demolition and construction, which resulted in the raising of the floor level from the earlier 17th century floor surface (G1-107).

4.66 *Room G1 - North Facing Elevation*

4.67 This elevation is characterised by a pair of wide arched openings, one at the far east end, one almost central and a further standard doorway opening at the far west end that adjoins Room G1 with Room G5. Between the two arched openings is a further small narrow opening or alcove with a curving wall on its western side, suggesting that this opening may have been used as an alcove during the 18th and 19th centuries. This opening is screened off on its southern elevation by wooden panelling in Room G4 (The Stair Hall). However, at sometime in the 20th century a small rectangular opening was cut through the wooden panelling as if to create a small *peeping* or security window. At the time of the recording this small window was made from modern plastic or Perspex.

4.68 The central arch opening at the time of the recording exercise was blocked in with red brickwork but plaster covered and only one brick thick, thus creating a recessed arch used for shelving. Documentary sources have suggested that this arch opening was inserted into this wall in 1911, following the marriage between Lady Catherine Meriel Stepney and Sir Edward Stafford Howard.

4.69 Removal of the wall plaster from this elevation during the previous season of restoration work, exposed a number of interesting features in this elevation.

4.70 The first of these features was inevitably the method used in the construction of the central arch inserted in 1911, which entailed cutting through the existing fabric of the wall and tidying up the exposed core of the wall and forming a supporting arch using red brick.

4.71 A further exposed feature was the character and form of the narrow curved opening or alcove positioned between the two archways. Investigation of this feature has suggested that it seems possible that this feature may well have once been a narrow window slit at some time in the 17th

century, which was enlarged in the 18th or 19th century. However, another interesting aspect to this opening is the fact that the face of this section of wall is set back at least 0.10m from the main face of this elevation and the eastern edge is not keyed into the eastern part of the wall but is in fact a butt joint. This implies that the section of wall on the east side of this narrow opening was not *attached* to the western range, suggesting *either* that they are two separate phases of build or else they are contemporary in date and there was formerly a narrow opening extending from the ground floor to the first floor. If the latter interpretation were to be the case, then this may be evidence for the position of a former narrow stairway accessed from this room in the 17th century or possibly earlier.

- 4.72 East of this narrow opening alongside the eastern arch, removal of the wall plaster exposed the position of an oak timber lintel used to support the walling for the construction of the wood panelled archway in the 19th century, a creation of William Chambers *Snr's* renovation work post 1827. Another feature positioned directly below this 19th century oak timber is the stump remains of a former timber lintel that is very likely the original timber lintel of the original 17th century doorway opening that allowed access between Room G1 and the area of Room G4.
- 4.73 Further significant evidence associated with this elevation was exposed during the excavation work of this room and is described in Section 5.7.

Room G1 - South Facing Elevation

- 4.74 This elevation represents the western end of the front of the main northern range and is characterised by the remains of a Victorian shop-front with a central doorway and a tall sash window on the eastern side.
- 4.75 Removal of the wall plaster from this elevation exposed the construction method and materials used for insertion of the late 19th century shop-front. It also exposed the timber oak Bessemer beam used for supporting the north wall of the house.
- 4.76 As explained earlier in Section 4.3, the exposure of this timber caused considerable concern when it was discovered that the timber was in a poor state and would need temporary support and attention whilst the new walling was re-constructed in this elevation. However, as well as revealing this issue, removal of the wall render did offer some information regarding the extent of the late 19th century shop-front insertion. This work it seems completely demolished this section of the original 18th century elevation, but reused the original 18th century front door and reinserted into its new position.

- 4.77 At the time of the recording work, a trial trench (Trial Trench 1), which had already been inserted alongside the edge of this existing doorway in the 2004, revealed that directly below this doorway was the remains of the 18th century and 17th century house foundation. Investigation and recording of this section of exposed internal elevation face revealed that slightly to the east of this Victorian doorway there had once been an opening, possibly a window or a doorway. The interpretation of what the 18th century north facing elevation would have looked like, suggests that this opening was most probably a former window opening and not a doorway. However, this may not actually have been the case in the 17th century when the floor level appears to have been much lower than the 18th century house.
- 4.78 Further significant evidence associated with this feature and this elevation was exposed during the excavation work of this room and is described and discussed in 5.7.

Room G1 - East Facing Elevation

- 4.79 At the time of initial recording and investigation before any groundwork took place, the east facing elevation of Room G1 was characterised by the remains of a Victorian shop-front with a doorway at its northern end.
- 4.80 Removal of the wall plaster and internal render from this elevation only exposed the character and extent of the timber oak Bessemer beam used for supporting the northern end of the west wall of the northern range of the house.
- 4.81 When compared to the exposed oak timber Bessemer beam in the north elevation, the condition of this beam was found to be good. However, the cast iron supporting columns and further support props were added to this timber to offer further support whilst re-construction of the 18th century walling was undertaken.
- 4.82 No further significant features were exposed in this elevation. However, further significant evidence associated with the former 17th and 18th century elevation was exposed during the excavation work of this room and is described and discussed in Section 5.7

Room G1 - West Facing Elevation

- 4.83 At the time of the initial recording and investigation, before any groundwork took place in this area, the west facing elevation of Room G1 was completely screened by wooden panelling with a small Victorian fireplace inserted just off-centre of the elevation on the southern side. It was believed that this fireplace had been inserted in a former 18th century doorway that linked Room

G1 (The Great Hall) with Room G2 (Sir Thomas Stepney's Study).

- 4.84 As part of the restoration proposals, part of the wooden panelling and the Victorian fireplace was removed. Removal of these items revealed that this opening had also been blocked in (this was also plainly evident in the east facing elevation of Room G1). Removal of this block-in confirmed that this opening had indeed once been a doorway in the 18th century.
- 4.85 No further features were exposed in this elevation. However, further evidence associated with the former 17th and 18th century elevation was exposed during the excavation work of this room and is described and discussed in Section 5.7

Room G2 - Sir Thomas Stepney's Study (see Figures 28, 29, 30 and 31)

South Facing Elevation (see Figure 28)

- 4.86 At the time of the recording and investigation of the south facing elevation of Room G2 part of the wall was covered by the remains of wooden panelling and its timber frame. However, the western side of this elevation and the join between the north wall and the skewed wall that divides Rooms G1 from G2 were visible.
- 4.87 Originally both windows in this elevation had probably mirrored the windows in the first and second floors. However, as had already been shown in the external elevation of this wall, these windows had been considerably altered in the late 19th century to form part of the front office windows of the former Margrave Brothers Wine & Spirit Merchants. This alteration had caused the original 18th century windows to have been enlarged and altered into stepped or graded windows using yellow bricks to reform the new edges.
- 4.88 Investigation of the join between the north wall and the skewed wall that divides Rooms G1 from G2, showed that the stonework of the north facing elevation had not been keyed into this skewed wall, but was instead just abutting it. Because of this fact, this adds further weight to the interpretation that the original 17th century north facing elevation had been completely demolished to make way for the new 18th century elevation.
- 4.89 No further significant features were exposed in this elevation. However, further significant evidence associated with a former 17th century elevation was exposed during the excavation work of this room and is described and discussed in Section 5.42

Room G2 - North Facing Elevation (see Figure 29)

- 4.90 This elevation is characterised by a wide arched doorway positioned centrally to the room with a further standard arched doorway at the far western end, which appears to have once given access to a small store room, partitioned from the rest of the room by a short section of wooden panelling.
- 4.91 At the time of initial recording and investigation, before any groundwork took place in this room, the north facing elevation of Room G1 was completely screened by painted wooden panelling.
- 4.92 No further features were noted in this elevation. However, further evidence associated with the former 17th and 18th century elevation were exposed during the excavation work of this room and is described and discussed in Section 5.42

Room G2 - East Facing Elevation (see Figure 30)

- 4.93 This elevation of Room G2 is the east facing elevation of the skewed wall that divides Rooms G1 and G2. It is mainly characterised by a blocked in doorway just off centre of the elevation that once linked Room G1 with Room G2 and an 18th century fireplace opening at the far northern end.
- 4.94 At the time of initial recording and investigation in March 2011, before any groundwork had taken place in this room, this wall had had all of its former wooden panelling removed. As such the fabric of this elevation was completely exposed.
- 4.95 When precisely this removal had occurred is uncertain and where the resulting framework and panelling disappeared to is also unknown. During the recording of the loose artefacts and furniture found in the house for the Inventory no wooden panelling associated with this elevation was to be found.
- 4.96 As no wooden panelling was covering this elevation no existing wall plaster had been removed in the previous season of work and therefore all of the features behind the former wooden panelling must pre-date the *last* fixing of the panelling onto the wall. When this occurred is hard to say. It is generally believed that this elevation had wooden panelling covering it in the 18th century. However, it is also generally believed, that the former 18th century doorway that linked Room G1 with Room G2 was blocked up in the Victorian period, post 1827 when William Chambers *Snr* undertook his renovation work. The problem with this interpretation however, is that on investigation of this elevation it was found that the remaining wall plaster on this entire elevation was identical to the wall plaster covering the surface of the blocked in doorway. This

would suggest that the blocked doorway between Room G1 and G2 occurred before the Victorian period, probably at sometime in the 18th century. It also suggests that at some other time in the 18th century this elevation did not have any wooden panelling covering it, but was simply plastered and painted only.

- 4.97 The eventual fixing of the panelling onto this elevation, probably in the 19th century, had deliberately removed and inevitably cut a number of channels through the wall plaster in order to satisfactorily fix the wooden panelling timber framework to the wall. Where plaster hadn't been removed the original timber frame had left a residual mark on the stone fabric, thus leaving a complete outline of the framework design visible.
- 4.98 Other than a put-log hole, the 18th century fireplace opening and a possible line at ceiling height denoting the position of a former ceiling height, the only interesting feature in this elevation was the fact that investigation of the join between this elevation and the north wall was a butt joint, which again, offers further evidence that the 17th century north wall of the house had probably been completely demolished to make way for the new early 18th century façade.
- 4.99 No further features were exposed in this elevation. However, further evidence associated with the former 17th and 18th century elevation was exposed during the excavation work of this room and is described and discussed in Section 5.42

Room G2 - West Facing Elevation (see Figure 31 and 32)

- 4.100 At the time of initial recording and investigation in March 2011, before any groundwork had taken place in this room, this elevation was completely clad in wooden panelling, with a fireplace positioned centrally to the room and a 19th century Safe at the northern end. This Safe was used by Margrave Brothers Spirit and Wine Merchants in the late 19th century. Above the fireplace, but stored away from the house undergoing conservation work, the removal of a panel painting had left a bare area of plastered walling.
- 4.101 All of the wooden panelling in this room had been painted at different times in various shades of paint including mustard yellow, brown and a gloss green.
- 4.102 As no stone fabric was exposed in this elevation other than the plastered area exposed behind the former panel painting above the fireplace, no hidden features were readily evident.
- 4.103 However, several years previously it had been discovered that one of the wooden panels on the south side of the fireplace, at chest height, was actually a small hinged door hiding a recessed

cupboard.

- 4.104 The inside of this cupboard was occupied by 2 separate shelves, each holding a hand-made pine box of *pigeon-holes* and within each of these pigeon-holes were stacks of Victorian spirit and wine bottle labels associated with the former Margrave Brothers Spirit & Wine Merchants who occupied this room in the late 19th and early 20th century.
- 4.105 Unfortunately this cupboard was literally filled with rat droppings and the skeletal remains of three rats who had been using the pigeon-holes as nests, which had completely ruined a great number of the bottle labels. Being aware of potential *Weil's* disease from cleaning out of the cupboard, precautions were made using protective clothing and equipment.
- 4.106 Unfortunately, the rats had destroyed a great many of the bottle labels and these were ultimately discarded. However, although a great many of these labels had been lost, a great many were also recovered. A photo inventory of all of the recovered bottle labels is included in Appendix III. A plan of the inside of this cupboard was also made and this is shown in Figure 32. This plan also acts as an index to the original positions of each of the bottle label types. These types included bottle labels for the expensive spirits and wines in the lower pigeon-holes, such as 'Tintara', 'Bordeaux' and 'Sauvignon' and the cheaper house wines and spirits in the upper pigeon-holes.
- 4.107 Once all of the bottle labels had been removed and the cupboard cleaned, the Margrave Brothers pigeon-holes were dismantled and also removed from the cupboard, which left the original wooden shelves still in place, but also revealed hand-painted floral wallpaper lining both the back and the sides of the cupboard. This wallpaper appeared to be 18th century in date, which would suggest that this cupboard was 18th century in date. However, inspection of the cupboard side walls revealed that the southern side wall was exposed wall core with no face, which would suggest that this cupboard/hole post-dates the construction of the east wall itself, with the cupboard being a later insertion.
- 4.108 A fragment of this wallpaper was retained once the cupboard was cleaned out and the cupboard has been left preserved in situ, presently concealed behind the proposed shop shelving. A printed scanned copy of this wallpaper is included in Appendix III.
- 4.109 No further features were exposed in this elevation. However, further evidence associated with the former 17th and 18th century elevation was exposed during the excavation work of this room and is described and discussed in Section 5.42.

Room G3 - The Common Hall (*see Figures 35, 36, 35 and 36*)

- 4.110 The former 18th century Common Hall (Room G3) is positioned at the south-eastern side to the house, giving access to the majority of the ground floor rooms, including access to the Common Stairs that give access to both the first and second floors.
- 4.111 Access to the cellar or basement area is gained via an opening in the modern concrete floor that covered the entire floor area of Room G3, at the far eastern end of the room, from where a flight of stone steps lead downward.
- 4.112 At the time of the initial building recording and investigation in 2011 all of the internal wall plaster and render had already been completely removed from all of the internal elevations in Room G3. This exercise exposed a number of significant features within the stone fabric.

Room G3 - North Facing Elevation (see Figure 43)

- 4.113 The north facing elevation of Room G3 holds two existing doorways, one that leads into Room G8 (The Kitchen) positioned at the western end of the elevation and the other doorway leading to the outside rear courtyard/parking area.
- 4.114 At the far east end of this elevation is the common service stairs that gives access to the first and second floors.
- 4.115 At the far west end of Room G3, alongside the opening leading to the Kitchen area (Room G8) is a small curved niche or alcove that probably once acted as an alcove to hold or display shelving, furniture or an ornament in the 18th century.
- 4.116 Removal of the wall plaster from this elevation exposed two previously hidden features. The first of these was the position of an earlier doorway opening that once gave access to Room G8 prior to the insertion of the existing opening at the west end. This earlier opening had been blocked up using red brick, suggesting that this work was either undertaken in the 19th century as part of William Chambers *Snr's* renovation work, or else it was an early 20th century insertion.
- 4.117 The other feature exposed was the position of a former small window at the far east lower end of the elevation, directly below the lower landing area of the common service stairs. This window opening has already been discussed in the external elevation section for the south facing elevation. This small window very likely once offered light into an earlier basement access point.

Room G3 - South Facing Elevation (see Figure 44)

- 4.118 The south facing elevation of Room G3 is characterised by two openings, one standard arched doorway at the far west end that gave access to a former narrow hallway or a former storage cupboard, and the other a wide arched opening inserted centrally to the wall that gives access to Room G2 (Sir Thomas Stepney's Study)
- 4.119 With the internal wall render/plaster removed a number of features became exposed. These features included a number of put-log holes and areas of former lath that had once covered the void between the wooden arched openings and the horizontal timber lintel opening supports above each doorway.
- 4.120 However, a far more significant feature in this elevation was an apparent blocked in section of wall at the far east end of the elevation, which suggested the position of a former wide opening. An opening of a similar size exists in the same position in the first floor directly above, which is presently used as a storage cupboard.
- 4.121 As part of the restoration it had been proposed to unblock this area of walling in order to investigate and record what was behind it. It had also been proposed to install part of the downstairs toilet in this potential recess.
- 4.122 Removal of this stone block-in in June 2011, revealed that this feature was indeed a former opening that appeared to have once allowed access to the eastern building range attached to Llanelly House, presently occupied by the 'West Credit Union'.
- 4.123 Complete removal of the stone used to block up this opening revealed that a further narrower opening leading to the 'West Credit Union' building was also blocked up, but this time with modern concrete blocks. These were obviously left in situ.
- 4.124 Investigation of this newly exposed opening revealed that at a lower ground level there appeared to be a half buried and therefore partly concealed diagonal or skewed passageway with a curved or arched roof. The walls of this feature were still covered in painted plaster. From its position, at a lower floor level, and its character this passageway is most certainly the remains of a former 17th century service passage leading to the far eastern building range attached to Llanelly House, which would suggest that the ground floor of this building range was very probably occupied by the 17th century kitchen.

- 4.125 Unfortunately, the present ground level of this opening had been filled at some time with concrete, stone and red and yellow fire bricks. Lying across these bricks was discovered a pair of curved wrought iron arched fireplace opening supports, which suggested that this lower area may well have once held a bread oven warmer hole, once accessed from the Credit Union building side in the 19th century. This feature was left in situ.
- 4.126 From the presence of the above feature and the character of the stone block-in, it seems very likely that this opening was most probably blocked up during William Chambers *Snr*'s renovation, when a new Kitchen was moved into Room G8.
- 4.127 Further investigation of the exposed side walls of this former opening also revealed that it had been covered in wooden panelling at some time as was evident from the remains of former iron panel hanging hooks positioned in regular intervals across the wall. There were also residual marks of a former timber frame visible.
- 4.128 Another significant and informing residual mark was found against the west facing side wall, where marking suggested that there had once been a banister rail leading upwards. As an identical opening exists on the first floor directly above this opening, presently used as a cupboard, this residual mark suggested that this opening was probably also a former service stairs as well as a service passage to the eastern building range in the 17th century.
- 4.129 As well as all of these features, a further interesting feature was the remains of a length of cornice at ceiling height on the western side. The character and form of this cornice suggested that it was probably 17th century in date and very probably pre-dated the wooden panelling that had once occupied this passage and stair well, thus a remnant of the 17th century Llanelly House.
- 4.130 The unblocking of this opening also managed to recover two interesting artefacts, one of these was a large chunk of beige sandstone, which appeared to have been deliberately shaped into a love heart shape. The other recovered artefact was the remains of what appears to be an Elizabethan roundel made from architectural terracotta. This artefact had unfortunately been broken into four pieces, but the relief on it is very well defined and preserved. The relief appears to represent a Daisy Wheel set within a wheel of poppy heads. Both these finds were found within the stone rubble used to block in this opening, which may suggest that these artefacts have a different original provenance. From the character and the religious symbolism of both of these artefacts, it seems likely however that they may have come from a church, perhaps from Llanelly Parish Church directly opposite, but this is speculative. Both of these finds were retained and a photo of each is included in Appendix ?

Room G3 - East Facing Elevation (see Figure 45)

- 4.131 At the time of the initial recording work in March 2011, this east facing elevation of Room G3 had had all of its internal wall plaster removed. This exercise had exposed only one significant feature, the apparent edge of an earlier opening positioned approximately 0.30m south of the present arched opening, but its extent continuing from floor to ceiling. The insertion of the later arched doorway had filled up this apparently wider opening with stone and as well as serving as a throughway, its construction also offered support for the first floor hallway (Room F4).
- 4.132 The only other features noted in this elevation at this time were a few areas of repair, some modern where the upper floor joist had been replaced with a reinforced steel joist in the previous season of work and a small area of red brick repair, most likely 19th century in date and associated with William Chambers *Snr's* renovation work.
- 4.133 No further features were exposed in this elevation. However, further evidence associated with the earlier 17th and 18th century house was exposed during the dismantling of the Victorian basement red brick walls. This work is described and discussed in Section 5.61.

Room G3 - West Facing Elevation (see Figure 46)

- 4.134 At the time of the initial recording work in March 2011, this west facing elevation of Room G3 had had all of its internal wall plaster removed.
- 4.135 In June 2012 the 20th century landing stage and stairs at ground floor level, positioned at the southern end of this elevation were also removed. The removal of this staircase revealed a feature in the fabric that had previously been unknown.
- 4.136 This feature was an apparent blocked in small arched opening approximately 0.85m in width (G3-106). The arch of this opening had been partly fabricated with red brick. The base of this opening was not visible at the time of the recording work as it was hidden below the modern concrete floor of Room G3. However, a further extension of this opening was revealed following the removal of this concrete during the dismantling and excavation of the Victorian red brick cellar, the results of which are discussed in Section 5.61.
- 4.137 The height and position of this opening appeared to mirror the opening found in the north facing elevation. This opening was interpreted as being a window that offered light into an access point into an earlier basement level below Room G3. As such, it is possible that this blocked in opening may represent the former access point to the lower basement area in the 18th and early

19th century.

- 4.138 Above this feature was a blocked up former 18th century window opening that once offered light onto the common stairs (G3-107).
- 4.139 Between these two features was a 20th century drainage sewage pipe serving the extension of the Credit Union building.
- 4.140 Immediately north of these two features is a former doorway now blocked up (G3-105) that formerly gave access to the rear of the eastern range of buildings attached to the present Llanelly House.
- 4.141 No further features were exposed in this elevation. However, further evidence associated with the earlier 17th and 18th century house was exposed during the removal of the modern concrete floor. This work is described and discussed in Section 5.61

Room B1 - The Basement/Cellar (*see Figures 35 - 41*)

- 4.142 In May 2011 a small investigation trench was cut through the floor of Room G3. The purpose of this trench was to gain information on the character and extent of the fabric of the Victorian cellar ceiling and the threshold point between the red brick cellar side wall and the north wall of the Kitchen/Breakfast Room (Room G8), with the aim to gather further evidence toward the theory that the late 19th century red brick cellar *hides* an earlier late 17th to early 18th century cellar.
- 4.143 The interim report for this work concluded that the 19th century red brick cellar did indeed hide or 'skin' over an earlier basement area. The interim report further concluded that in respect to the design and engineering of the proposed disabled lift access through the floor of Room G3 at the far southwest end, and therefore also through the vaulted red brick ceiling of the cellar and walls, the proposal would inevitably compromise the integrity of the mid 19th century red brick cellar, not only by removing part of the ceiling, but also potentially the loss of two red brick bays.
- 4.144 In response to this potential threat, the report recommended as a mitigation strategy that, prior to any development work taking place, a programme of archaeological recording and investigation should be undertaken in order to create a lasting record of the condition and character of the existing Victorian cellar. The report also advised that an archaeologist will need to be on site as part of a watching brief to supervise the proposed work and record any archaeological features that may become exposed, such as the Victorian red brick vaulted ceiling itself and the earlier basement walls hidden behind the red brickwork.

- 4.145 In response to these recommendations, on 26th September 2011, a programme of archaeological investigation and recording work was undertaken of the cellar. As well as creating a lasting graphic and descriptive record of the Victorian cellar, based on the investigative work, an interim report concluded that the present cellar appears to have been party to periodic flooding over the decades, so much so that two drainage pipes were inserted into the far west end of the cellar floor at some time in the early to mid 20th century. Earlier clearance of the cellar floor had revealed that the floor was covered at the far eastern end in silt to a depth of approximately 0.20m in places and a number of miniature glass spirit bottles, positioned approximately 0.30m above the floor level were also filled with flood water.
- 4.146 Also noted during this investigation work and clearance was an apparent collapse of one course of red bricks from the easternmost southern vaulted bay (Bay No. 11), which appeared to have been caused by subsidence of the ground surface in this area, which consisted of natural grit, sand and alluvial gravels. This south-eastern corner of the cellar had also been suggested as possibly being the position of an earlier cellar access point. This is evident by the presence of a small blocked in window in the southern wall and an apparent blocked in doorway in the east wall, both block-ins positioned directly beneath the present common stairs allowing access to the first and second floors. The presence of these openings may suggest that originally access to an earlier basement may have been had beneath an earlier staircase in this area.
- 4.147 The interim report recommended that a small trial evaluation trench be undertaken in the area beneath the present staircase in Room G3 in order to inform the existence or absence of an earlier cellar access point in this area. The results from this evaluation trench are also included in this report in Section 5.72.
- 4.148 The late Victorian cellar measured approximately 6.20m x 3.13m, with a ceiling to floor height of approximately 2m. All of the walls, including the vaulted ceiling were constructed from hand-made red bricks, with the floor surface consisting of a mixture of large slate flagstones at the far west end and alternating and interlocking hexagonal and square stone tiles at the far east end, with the change in floor styles beginning approximately two-thirds of the way across the floor (see Figure 35).
- 4.149 Along the length of both the north and south facing walls were a series of red brick built bays, five bays along the northern wall and six bays along the southern wall. Each of these bays had been further divided by an arch of red brick and mortar shelving into a two storey bay, which gave a total of twenty-two (22) individual bays. Each of the lower eleven vaults measured approximately 1.10m wide x 0.95m in height, with one vault measuring approximately 0.45m wide x 0.95m in height. This smaller vault was positioned at the far south-eastern end of the

cellar, which had been built to accommodate the extra space available against the southern wall, given that the northern end of the west wall was reduced by the presence of an apparent return or former support wall. Each of the largest upper vaults was approximately 1.10m wide x 0.60m high.

- 4.150 Along the southern wall of the cellar, directly in front of the vaults at ceiling height was the remains of a former domestic gas pipe that fed gas to two brass gas light fittings.
- 4.151 At the far eastern end of the cellar, alongside the existing cellar access steps, a modern concrete block support wall had been constructed against the southern wall of the access stair. This wall appears to have been built fairly recently, possibly in the last decade or so and appears to have been built to help support this end of the red brick cellar ceiling, where a series of significant structural cracks were found to be present against the eastern side wall of Bay No. 11. These cracks appeared to be as a result of ground subsidence, possibly as a result of former flooding in the basement, given that there was a thick layer of silt covering the basement floor, being deepest at the far south-eastern end.
- 4.152 Again, at the time of the investigation and building recording, Bay 6 was being supported by a series of construction props and plywood, which had been inserted earlier as a precautionary measure prior to the cutting of an earlier trial trench in Room G3 in the area of the proposed lift shaft.
- 4.153 As well as the clearing of silt from the floor surface, a large number of miniature Victorian/Edwardian glass bottles, in the hundreds, were removed from Bay 9. These were retained and put in storage. At far east end of the cellar and still in place in Bay No.11, were a number of small wine bottles still stacked and covered in silt. These bottles were not accessible due to a modern concrete block support pillar which is partly blocking the opening to Bay No. 11. However, they were recovered later and retained.
- 4.154 With regard to each of the individual bays, because each had been constructed from hand-made red brick, each bay was almost identical in character and form as the other, except for the smaller bay at the far south-western end of the cellar.
- 4.155 For ease of description and navigation, each of the red brick bays were numbered 1-11 on the drawn plans, with Bays 1-5 along the north wall from numbered from east to west and Bays 6-11 along the south wall numbered from west to east. Although in fabric and build type each of the bays were identical, there were however identifying marks within each bay written in either white chalk or white paint, numbering and describing the former Victorian storage *bin* content of each bay. Each of the bays will be described in numerical order below. For the position of each bay

please see Figure 5.

Bay No. 1

- 4.156 This bay was positioned at the far eastern end of the cellar against the north wall and alongside the stone access steps. There were no significant identifying marks on either the upper or lower vaults of Bay No.1

Bay No. 2

- 4.157 This bay is positioned next to Bay No.1 against the north wall. There were several chalk markings in this bay written on the west facing side wall of the lower vault. Although most of the chalk marks were indecipherable on this side wall, one chalk mark spelt the word '*H. Burgundy*', likely synonymous with the red wine known as '*Harvest Burgundy*', for which wine bottle labels were recovered from the concealed cupboard in Room G2.

Bay No. 3

- 4.158 This bay is positioned next to Bay No.2 against the north wall. There were several chalk markings in this bay written on the east facing side wall of the lower vault. Written in chalk, decipherable markings included the words '*Bin 6*', '*Sherry*' and '*H. Burgundy*', again the latter likely synonymous with the red wine known as '*Harvest Burgundy*', for which wine bottle labels were recovered from the concealed cupboard in Room G2.

Bay No. 4

- 4.159 This bay is positioned next to Bay No.3 against the north wall. There were several chalk markings in this bay written on the east facing side wall of the lower vault. Written in chalk and white paint, decipherable markings included the words '*N6*' and '*Port*'.

Bay No. 5

- 4.160 This bay was positioned next to Bay No.4, at the far north-western corner of the cellar, against the north wall. Several chalk markings were decipherable in this bay, including the chalked word '*TINTARA*' written on the front of the red brick arch which divides both the upper and lower vaults. Other decipherable words painted on the east facing back wall include '*56*', '*7*' and in chalk the word '*Tintara*', written three times.

Bay No. 6

- 4.161 This bay was positioned at the far south-western corner of the south wall, in the area of the proposed disabled lift shaft. There were no significant decipherable identifying marks on either the upper or lower vault of Bay No.6. A significant structural crack in the red brickwork was noted in the upper vault of Bay No.6.

Bay No. 7

- 4.162 This bay was positioned next to Bay No.6 against the south wall. There were no significant identifying marks on the lower vault of Bay No.7. However, decipherable marks were present on the upper vault. These included the words 'Sherry' and 'XX'.

Bay No. 8

- 4.163 This bay was positioned next to Bay No.7 against the south wall. There were several chalk markings on both the upper and lower vaults of Bay No. 8. These included the words 'H. Burgundy', 'Olde', '- - anelly', 'Redsock', 'Bin 88' and 'Bin 16'. Also on the front of the red brick shelf dividing the upper and lower vaults was the chalked word 'H. BURGUNDY', along with a number of chalk strokes, possibly marking off the number of bottles in stock.
- 4.164 Between Bay No. 8 and 9 were the remains of a former gas light fitting made of brass with decorative scrollwork along its main stem.

Bay No. 9

- 4.165 This bay was positioned next to Bay No.8 against the south wall. There were several chalk markings on both the upper and lower vaults of Bay No. 9. These included the words 'Harvest Burgun—', '18', 'Harves-' and 'Bin-'. Also on the front of the red brick shelf dividing the upper and lower vaults was the chalked word 'SUAVIGNON', a popular French white wine.

Bay No. 10

- 4.166 This bay was positioned next to Bay No. 9, against the south wall. There were no significant decipherable identifying marks on either the upper or lower vault of Bay No.10.

Bay No. 11

- 4.167 This bay was positioned next to Bay No. 10, against the south wall. This bay was smaller than all of the other bays and was positioned at the far south-eastern end of the cellar, alongside the cellar access steps. There were no significant decipherable identifying marks on either the upper or lower vault of Bay No.11.

Basement/Cellar Floor

- 4.168 The cellar floor consisted of a mixture of large slate flagstones at the far west end and alternating and interlocking hexagonal and square stone tiles at the far east end, with the change in floor styles beginning approximately two-thirds of the way across the floor. The fact that these two different floor types had been used, may suggest that both are of a different age. All of the floor surface slabs lay directly below the red brickwork of the vaulted side bays and all of the side walls, which further suggested that the Victorian red brick cellar had been built over

an earlier already existing basement area.

- 4.169 At the time of the site visit, in the floor at the far west end of the cellar, a series of flagstones had been lifted for inspection of the underlying ground surface. This inspection had exposed the remains of a former drainage pipe that appeared to run northward beneath the cellar wall. It was later concluded, following excavation work in Room G2, that this drainage pipe was in fact a flood drain, which appears to have been inserted at some time in the mid 20th century, likely in response to continual periodic flooding in the cellar.

Room B1 – Summary of Results

- 4.170 The investigation and building recording work of the cellar/basement area at Llanelly House managed to create a lasting record of all of the internal red brick elevations, floor and red brick vaulted ceiling of the Victorian red brick cellar, prior to proposals for the insertion of the disabled lift shaft.

Room G4 - The Stair Hall (see Figures 49, 50, 51 and 52)

- 4.171 The Stair Hall is positioned centrally to the main house. It can be accessed from all ground floor rooms and holds the main stairs serving the whole house. Both the first and second floor balconies overlook the Stair Hall from the south facing side, which allows the room its open space. Probably the most significant and outstanding features in the Stair Hall are the tall window in the north facing elevation and the decorative plaster ceiling and cornice.
- 4.172 At the time of the initial recording and investigation in March 2011 all of the internal wall plaster had been completely removed from all of the elevations in this room. The floor was boarded with timber flooring and the existing staircase was accessed from the centre of the room. The character and form of this staircase was Edwardian, which had presumably replaced the earlier Victorian and Georgian staircases. From its central access position the staircase ran anti-clockwise, passing an opening in the west facing elevation that gave access to the first floor attic room in the eastern range, and then onwards to the balconied first floor hallway (Room F4). Below this staircase was an access point that led through a diagonal service passage to the former Kitchen and Breakfast Room (Room F9).
- 4.173 It is generally believed that this stair hall was built as part of Thomas Stepney's renovation in the early 1700s.

Room G4 – North Facing Elevation (see Figures 49)

- 4.174 The main characteristic of the north facing elevation is of course the tall 18th century window that offered light to the Stair Hall and the first and second floor balconies. At the time of the recording the central and lower parts of this window had been blocked up with modern concrete blocks and covered in wall plaster. This had obviously occurred at some time in the late 20th century, possibly as a result of a decaying and rotten window frame.
- 4.175 Removal of the internal render from this elevation exposed the position of a series of wooden chucks that lined both sides of the window and two former put-log holes on the east side of the window.
- 4.176 It also revealed that the original timber lintel had been replaced with a modern concrete one and above this was the position of a relieving arch.
- 4.177 On the west side of the window a series of wrought iron 'L' brackets had been bolted through the walling, tying it to the east facing elevation. Presumably these brackets had been installed by the previous contractors during the 2002-2004 season of work.
- 4.178 In July 2012 the Edwardian staircase was removed in order to replace it with a new staircase sympathetic to the Georgian house. Removal of this staircase now exposed the lower part of this elevation. The now visible wall plaster was subsequently removed.
- 4.179 Removal of this plaster revealed that the tall window had once extended down to ground level. This was evident from the remains of a former blocked in opening, blocked with red brick and stone rubble. Behind this rubble was found the remains of a former window frame, attached to the above tall window. Closer examination of this timber frame revealed that it had been cut or joined at some time previously.
- 4.180 Further examination of the block in material managed to recover a few small fragments of stained window glass. Colours included red, green, orange and yellow. These fragments of glass suggested that this lower part of the tall window very probably once held a decorative stain glass window in the Victorian period. This being the case, as well as the fact that the blocking in material at the lower level included early 20th century material that this lower part of the window was blocked up in the early 20th century.
- 4.181 Inspection of the fabric of the tall window in this elevation has suggested that in the 18th century this window did not extend to ground floor level and it wasn't until the Victorian period during William Chambers *Snr's* renovation work post 1827 that this window extension occurred. This may suggest that this lower portion of window in the early-mid 19th century was in fact a glazed

doorway that gave access to the rear garden or courtyard area, but was subsequently blocked up in the early 20th century when the Edwardian staircase was installed. It may be also that further repair blocking in occurred in the later 20th century given that a number of facing bricks used in the block in were 20th century air-bricks?

- 4.182 No further features were exposed in this elevation. However, further evidence associated with the tall window was exposed during the removal of the modern concrete floor in Room G8. This work is described and discussed in Section 5.90.

Room G4 – West Facing Elevation (see Figure 50)

- 4.183 The west facing elevation of the Stair Hall is mainly characterised by a series of arched openings, one at ground floor level that gives access to the Common Hall, another less wide one that gives access to the attic room in the eastern range (inserted in the 19th century as part of William Chambers *Snr*'s renovation), another one that provides access and support to the first floor hallway and a further small opening that allows access from the overlooking balcony room (Room S7) on the second floor to a parlour room (Room S8).
- 4.184 Another dominating characteristic revealed following the removal of the wall plaster, is the large timber frame packed with red bricks nestled or packed into a recessed area of wall. It is most likely that this recess was used to display large paintings and other wall furniture so as not disturb the travel up and down the stairs. This original recess is very likely 18th century in date and is a consequence of Sir Thomas Stepney's rebuild in the early 1700s. However, it seems that William Chambers *Snr* preferred to have this recess hidden and preferred a full flush wall and so he commissioned it to be filled in. The bricks are all hand moulded and vary greatly in size.
- 4.185 Other than the positions of a number of put-log holes in this elevation, the only other features that are of significance include, a structural crack positioned directly below the line of the red brick packed recess at the far southern end, and the scarring in the lower part of the elevation that may represent the position of an earlier staircase.
- 4.186 The crack mentioned above appears to run down the wall and probably represents the position of the original joint of the former external wall of the eastern range, before this building was *joined* to Llanelly House in the early 1700s as part Sir Thomas Stepney's rebuild and the construction of the Stair Hall.
- 4.187 The other feature mentioned above is an area of scarring that was found beneath the Edwardian staircase. This scarring is characterised by what appears to possibly have been the position of a

series of steps, with each scar void having been filled with red brick and a dark grey cement, both characteristics that have been found across the entire house and have been interpreted as repair work undertaken by builders during William Chambers *Snr's* renovation work post 1827.

- 4.188 Because this scarring had been repaired using materials from William Chambers *Snr's* period, it would suggest that this scarring probably represents the position of part of the 18th century staircase.
- 4.189 No further features were exposed in this elevation. However, further evidence associated with the earlier 17th and 18th century house was exposed during ground work for the insertion of new floor supports and services. This work is described and discussed in Section 5.90.

Room G4 – East Facing Elevation (see Figure 51)

- 4.190 This elevation is characterised by two doorways at ground floor level, both giving access to Room G5. Between these two doorways is a fireplace, inserted in either the Victorian or Edwardian period, which had made use of the same chimney used by the fireplace in Room G5.
- 4.191 Above the ground floor doorway on the southern side is a narrow opening, generally referred to as the 'Juliet' balcony window. This window overlooks the Stair Hall and is accessed from Room F8.
- 4.192 To the north of this internal balcony window is the wide arch opening that supports the ceiling above the first floor hall (Room F4). Above this arch is the balcony that overlooks the Stair Hall on the second floor.
- 4.193 The east facing elevation of the Stair Hall had also had most of its internal render removed in the previous season of work, although much of the area at lower ground floor level was still covered by wooden panelling and this remained in situ as it marked the course of an earlier staircase. Removal of the internal render had revealed a number of interesting features that have helped to inform on the evolution of Llanelly House.
- 4.194 As well as the positions of eight put-log holes spread across this entire elevation, investigation revealed three other significant features. The first of these was the work that had been undertaken for the insertion of the 'Juliet' balcony window. Around the edge of this window opening was found red brick and dark grey cement, again, as mentioned previously, a clear signature of William Chambers *Snr's* work on the house post 1827. However, although the builders undertaking William Chambers' work do appear to have played a part in the present form of this window, it is very probably a remnant first floor window from the earlier western range of the 17th century house. To offer support to this interpretation, a similar sized blocked in opening was found to exist at the same height above the ceiling of Room G7, which would have once served light into Room F10 (The Best

Chamber) in the 17th century. Given the once full extent of the east facing elevation of the western range in the 17th century, before the construction of the Stair Hall, it would seem appropriate that another window would have been positioned in the same position as is now the 'Juliet' balcony window.

- 4.195 Directly above this balcony window another significant feature noticed was the apparent slight change in stone fabric. Although the stone itself was the same as that used in the lower part of the wall, the workmanship was clearly different and this difference extended all the way across the wall from south to north. This line represents the roof line of the former 17th century western range. Directly north of here a relieving arch was clearly evident along with a small niche, that was too large to have once been a put-log hole and was very probably a deliberately constructed niche to hold an item in. Unfortunately this niche has now been filled in.
- 4.196 The last significant feature in this elevation was an apparent edge of an earlier opening in the same position as the existing opening at the far northern end of the ground floor. Associated with this edge was the stump end of an earlier door lintel, which had obviously been sawn off in the 18th century in order to insert a new and higher doorway opening in the same position.
- 4.197 No further features were exposed in this elevation. However, further evidence associated with the earlier 17th and 18th century house was exposed during ground work for the insertion of new floor supports and services This work is described and discussed in Section 5.90.

Room G4 – Summary of Results

- 4.198 The archaeological standing building investigation and recording of Room G4 (The Stair Hall), prior to any groundwork investigation, managed to record several features relating to the 17th, 18th and 19th century house.
- 4.199 These features included the position of an earlier staircase, probably 18th century, the fact that the tall 18th century window had been extended all the way to the ground floor in the 19th century, with a suggestion that at ground floor level this section of window may have held a door to the outside courtyard area (Room G7). Also, it appears that part of this victorian window may have held coloured stain glass.
- 4.200 Investigation also suggested that the Juliet balcony window in the east facing elevation may have once been the position of a former 17th century window opening.

Rooms G5 & G6 (The Parlour Room)_(see Figures 53, 54, 55, 56 and 57)

- 4.201 The two parlour rooms of G5 and G6 were divided only by a timber frame partition. At the time of the recording exercise however, this partition was absent except for a small part still attached to the west facing elevation.
- 4.202 At the time of the initial recording and investigation in March 2011 both of these rooms floors were entirely boarded with 19th and 18th century floor timber. At the far south-eastern corner were the remains of the footprint for an earlier modern staircase that once gave access to the room above (Room F10). Presumably this staircase had been removed in the previous 2002-2006 season of work.
- 4.203 At the far northwest corner of Room G5 a trial trench had been opened in 2002 in order to evaluate the potential archaeological deposits that may be encountered during any future groundwork. As with the other trial trenches dug in 2002 in Rooms G1 and G2, the results from the excavation were never recorded or fully interpreted archaeologically. In response to this, this trench was re-opened and investigated in March 2011. Since its initial excavation the trench had changed very little, having been kept covered over since its initial creation with scaffold planks. Unfortunately the original excavators had sawn through a number of historic timber floor joists to allow easier access (see Figure 53).
- 4.204 The trench measured approximately 0.60m x 0.70m and averaged a depth of approximately 0.90m from the existing floor surface.
- 4.205 Directly below the existing wooden floor (G5-100) and floor joists (G5-101) was exposed a deposit of broken stone slabs with brick remains, averaging a depth of approximately 0.15m. These stone fragments appear to have been the remnants of a former stone pier floor support (G5-106). Directly below this deposit was a demolition deposit (G5-102) consisting of a mixture of soil, mortar and ash intermixed with stone rubble with stones averaging approximately 0.10m – 0.20m in size. This deposit averaged approximately 0.25m in depth. Directly below this was a compacted layer of clay and earth only approximately 0.05m in depth, suggestive of former compacted clay floor (G5-105). Below this former floor level was a further loose deposit, again only approximately 0.05m in depth, consisting of dry earth intermixed with coal pieces (10%) and ash. (G5-107). Directly below this deposit was a deposit of compacted lime mortar, approximately 0.03m thick (G5-108). Directly below this and approximately 0.20m in depth was a deposit of loose stones (shale) containing grit and occasional flecks of coal.
- 4.206 The results from this trench concur with the trial trench in room G1 that an earlier floor surface

probably of the 17th century house lies between 0.70m- 0.90m below the present floor surface, with a record of demolition and construction deposits of the 18th and 19th centuries well preserved in the stratigraphic sections.

Rooms G5 & G6 – West Facing Elevation (see Figure 57)

- 4.207 At the time of the initial investigation and recording of this elevation, prior to any groundwork having taken place, this elevation still had significant sections of wooden panelling still in place at both the northern and southern ends. The only section of panelling that was missing, thus exposing the fabric of the wall behind was the northern section of Room G6. Also exposed was the 18th century fireplace opening.
- 4.208 With regard to the northern part of this full elevation, the east facing section of Room G5 is characterised by a doorway at the far northern end, which allows access to the Stair Hall (Room G4). This doorway is of particular interest as it is one of the doorways in the house which has a significant slant to its lintel, so much so that it suggests that this part of the house has suffered some subsidence at some time. This slant is also very apparent in first floor hallway window that overlooks Vaughan Street. The reason for these slanted openings is unknown, as is the date on which the apparent subsidence occurred. However, strangely for some unknown reason, the carpenters over the years have not attempted to compensate or adjust this slant in the wooden panelling, almost as if they are attempting to draw attention to this slant?
- 4.209 The fireplace opening in this elevation in Room G5 appears to be an original 18th century opening with a stone lintel. This opening has been reduced slightly in the 19th century, as is evident from the inclusion of an arch of red bricks.
- 4.210 The northern end of the east facing elevation of Room G6 is the most interesting and significant area of this elevation, as it has features present in the fabric associated with the earlier 17th century house. The main feature here is the remains of a former square window opening, blocked in with stone covered in wall plaster. There is also evidence at its edges of the remains of wall plaster on its side walls still in situ. The position of this window is also evident, but not as clearly, in the east facing elevation of Room G7. The timber lintel associated with this opening is also still in place.
- 4.211 Directly above this blocked in 17th century window, but slightly to the south, are the remains of two further horizontally lying timbers, which may represent the position of a former ceiling height in this room. Immediately south of the blocked in window is a further stump end of another timber lintel, which again, probably represents the position and height of a former 17th century doorway that once gave access to this room from Room G7 (Courtyard), which has since also been enlarged in the 19th century. Unfortunately the area of walling around this feature has recently been repaired (2002-2006 season) and it appears that this timber stump may have been removed and re-inserted by the

builders in its present position. It is presumed that its present position at a low height is the same height as it was originally found, which would suggest that the 17th century floor level was considerably lower than the 18th century and today's floor level.

Rooms G5 & G6 – East Facing Elevation (see Figure 56)

4.212 At the time of the initial recording in March 2011, this full elevation was essentially almost completely occupied by window shop-fronts, which had originally been inserted in the late 19th century and the early 20th century in both Rooms G5 and G6. Between both of these shop-fronts and at each end small sections of original wooden panelling still remained, with only a small section of dividing partition remaining.

Room G5 – South Facing Elevation (see Figure 55)

4.213 This elevation is characterised by a doorway on its western side that gives access to Room G1 (The Great Hall) and a blocked up wide arched opening, believed to have originally been inserted post 1911, following the marriage between Catherine Meriel Cowell Stepney and Sir Edward Stafford Howard.

4.214 At the time of the initial investigation and recording of this elevation, prior to any groundwork having taken place, the blocked in wide arch was still blocked up, but it had had most of the wall plaster removed. This had revealed that the entire opening had been blocked up using early 20th century red bricks. However, it was also evident that at some time in the early 20th century that a doorway had been inserted through the blocking in, but this also had been blocked in again. The timber lintel for this doorway was still evident and still in place.

4.215 As well as details showing the development of this arched opening, recording and investigation of this elevation also revealed that the doorway opening at the west end had also been present in this location in the 17th century, but it had been raised in the 18th century following the raising of the floor level. This was evident from the exposed section of walling in the trial trench inserted in 2002, which revealed a former doorway edge.

Room G5 – North Facing Elevation (see Figure 54)

4.216 This elevation is characterised by the positions of two former 18th century window openings, each flanking a central fireplace opening. Both of these windows have inevitably been blocked up as this elevation is presently attached to the building that houses 'Careers Wales'.

4.217 In the 18th century these two windows would have allowed views to the south across the Llanelly House gardens.

4.218 At the time of initial recording the central area of this elevation still had its original wooden panelling covering the wall, however, the original fire surround had been removed and this had revealed that the original 18th century fireplace opening had been reduced in size using 19th century red bricks. This work had presumably been undertaken as part of William Chamber *Snr's* renovation work post 1827.

Rooms G5 & G6 – Summary of Results

4.219 The initial building recording and investigation of Rooms G5 and G6 prior to any proposed ground-works, had revealed a number of features associated with the earlier 17th century house. The most significant of these features, was a blocked in square window opening in the west facing elevation that would have once allowed light into Room G6 from the courtyard area.

4.220 Investigation and recording work also revealed that the doorway that links Room G5 with Room G1 had a threshold that was once much lower. This fact suggested that the floor level in this room of the earlier 17th century house had originally been much lower than the present floor surface, a fact mirroring and confirming the results from Rooms G1, G2, G3, and G4.

Room G7 (The Courtyard) (see Figures 58, 59, 60, 61 and 62)

4.221 At the time of the initial recording work in March 2011, prior to any proposed ground-works, this area was occupied by toilet cubicles and a passageway that ran along the west wall and around the south wall and then to the exit doorway in the east wall of the eastern range and out into the rear courtyard/car parking area. This room was roofed over with a modern opaque plastic roof.

4.222 This area is generally known as a former courtyard area. Essentially, in the 18th century this area, now a *room*, would have been a small patio area that began the walk toward the rear gardens of the house. A photograph of Llanelly House (see Figure 12) dated c.1870-1880, shows a view of Llanelly House looking northeast and clearly shows that this former 18th century courtyard area was once roofed crudely in the Victorian period, with what appears to have been a tin-roof. The front of this lean-to also had windows, which give the impression that in the late 19th century this area was used much like a rear porch, to house coats, boots etc.

4.223 Following the removal of the modern toilets and cubicles and the demolition of the modern roof, the deteriorating wall plaster was also removed from all of the internal elevations of this room. The removal of this plaster revealed several interesting and significant features associated with the 17th, 18th and 19th century house.

Room G7 – South Facing Elevation (see Figure 59)

- 4.224 This elevation represents the lower part of the former external wall of the Stair Hall, which is characterised by the tall 18th century window. The results of the investigation and recording of this elevation have already been partly described and discussed in Section 4.21 of the External Elevation section. This wall and its features are also discussed in Section 4.174 of the *Room G4 – North Facing Elevation* section.
- 4.225 However, removal of the internal wall render at this lower level revealed several characteristics of the tall window of the Stair Hall that were not apparent in the north facing elevation of Room G4.
- 4.226 With the internal render fully removed from this elevation, it soon became apparent that the 18th century tall window had obviously been extended all the way to the ground floor at some time in the 19th century, probably during William Chambers *Snr's* renovation work between 1827-1855. However, this lower opening appears to have been subsequently blocked up in the early 20th century with a hap-hazard course of red brick and a number of timber lintels, which were acting as a retainer for the core of the block-in, which consisted of a mixture of stone rubble, including several large river pebbles and broken bricks. Examination of this core fill managed to recover several fragments of coloured stained glass, of red, green, orange and yellow. Being found in this position may suggest that this lower window section and possibly the upper section may have held a stain glass window of some form in the 19th century. This interpretation is supported by a 1902 account of the house by John Innes, which states that,

'Inside the house are several panelled rooms, a few panel pictures of no great merit; and reports say that there was very fine stained glass windows.....it is in very sorry state of repairs with bill posters pasted on some of the windows, and could really do with restoration, as one of Llanelli's finest homes' (INNES 1902)

- 4.227 Immediately west of this extended window block-in, the removal of internal render revealed that the doorway linking the Stair Hall (Room G4) with the Courtyard (Room G7) was a much later insertion, probably inserted in the early to mid 20th century. It is entirely plausible that this insertion prompted the crude blocking in of the lower part of the tall window.
- 4.228 Immediately east of this former window extension is a skewed part of walling. This wall feature represents the southwest side wall of a diagonal service passage that was inserted in the 19th century as part of William Chambers *Snr's* renovation work between 1827-1855. The creation of this diagonal passage was as a result of a new doorway having been inserted above the former staircase in the Stair Hall (Room G4) in the west facing elevation in order to allow access to the attic room in the eastern range (Room F7). The insertion of this new opening resulted in an original 18th century chimney in the former Kitchen (Room G8) being destroyed. As such the insertion of this

opening made this chimney obsolete and this resulted in the former Kitchen Room being partitioned and a new diagonal service passage created running beneath the staircase, which also resulted in still further damage to the fireplace in the Kitchen (Room G8).

Room G7 – North Facing Elevation (see Figure 60)

- 4.229 This elevation is an early 20th century stone and red brick build that eventually cut off Llanelly House's former southern views of its gardens, by joining the western range of the house with the somewhat shortened eastern range.
- 4.230 With the internal wall render removed from this wall only one feature became apparent, a blocked in 19th century small arched opening, seeming to represent a former small fireplace opening. However, following subsequent groundwork (see Section 5.111), it seems that this opening may in fact have been a small doorway through a section of walling in the late 19th century or early 20th century?

Room G7 – East Facing Elevation (see Figure 61)

- 4.231 With the internal wall render completely removed from the entire surface of this elevation, a number of significant features became exposed. The most significant was the position of a former tall opening, probably a former 18th century window complete with its original timber lintel. This opening was positioned almost directly above the ground floor doorway into Room G6. This former window would have given light into Room F10, the Best Chamber on the first floor. Interestingly, inspection of this blocked in window also revealed that it was reduced in width at some time, possibly implying that the smaller opening is 18th century and the wider opening is 17th century. Immediately north of this feature, at floor level of the former window, was also an area of red brick repair, which suggests that this area of repair may once have held a water out-pipe. The fact that the former hole has been blocked up with Victorian red brick would suggest that this elevation was un-rendered previously. These two features, particularly the former window opening, would suggest that the wooden panelling in Room F10 in this area is a replacement panel, possibly 19th century in date.
- 4.232 Above this blocked in window, the removal of wall render revealed a length of roof repair, where a change in stone fabric and mortar suggested that the roof of the western range had been raised very slightly, only approximately 0.25m, at some time.
- 4.233 A last significant feature exposed in this elevation was exposed at ground level at the far northern end alongside the opening that gives access to Room G4. Here, the blocked in remains of a former 17th century square window was exposed. This window is in the same as the blocked in window already discussed in the section on Room G6.

4.234 The fact that this former window continues across the threshold of the doorway into the Stair Hall (Room G4), offers further evidence that the east to west cross wall that forms the elevation that holds the tall window in the Stair Hall is 18th century in construction. This is further supported by the fact that this wall only abuts the east elevation of the western range, and is not keyed in stonework.

Room G7 – West Facing Elevation (see Figure 62)

4.235 This elevation represents the southern or central section of the west facing elevation of the eastern range of Llanelly House.

4.236 The complete removal of wall render from this elevation revealed several interesting and significant features that shed further light on the original form and character of the 17th century eastern range.

4.237 The most significant of these exposed features was the position of a blocked in former doorway (G7-114), positioned directly north of the hallway passage that links Room G7 to Room G9. In Room G9, this former doorway has been adapted into a fireplace and used as a chimney.

4.238 Close inspection of this exposed feature revealed that the blocking in fabric had been disturbed and altered on a number of occasions, as was evident from the presence of three timber lintels, all at different heights and positions in the opening. The fabric used for the blocking in was stone and red brick. Chronologically, it would seem logical to assume that there was a door in the elevation in the 17th century and then it was raised as a consequence of the floor level having been raised in the 18th century. Following this it may be possible that a very small opening was also put in during the 19th or early 20th century, which may have been a small fireplace, as is evident from the low positioned timber lintel.

4.239 Above and to the north of this blocked in doorway at eave height, the removal of the wall render revealed the position of a former window opening (G7-113). However, this opening had been blocked up with stone.

4.240 At the far southern end at eave height was also an area of red brick repair, which appears to represent the position of a 20th century chimney flue that occupies Room F7.

Room G7 – Summary of Results

4.241 The investigation and recording of the elevations in Room G7 (Courtyard) following the removal of wall render, revealed several significant features associated with the 17th and 18th century house. The most important and interesting of these features was the position of a former window opening at first floor level that would have offered light into Room F10 (Best Chamber). Investigation of this former opening suggests that it may be 17th century in origin, but was also open in the 18th century

as well, but it had been reduced in width, possibly to mirror the size of the other 18th century external windows in the house.

4.242 The other important feature was the position of a former 17th century and 18th century doorway into the eastern range at ground level, which appears to have been blocked up in the 19th century.

Room G8 - The Kitchen (see Figures 63, 64, 65 and 66)

4.243 This room is positioned at the far northern end of the eastern range of Llanelly House and at the time of initial recording and investigation work, was accessed via a flight of three stone steps downwards from the Common or Service Hall (Room G3).

4.244 At the time of recording, the floor of this room was covered in varying sizes of flagstone.

4.245 The main characteristics of this room include two blocked in windows in the west facing elevation, a large former inglenook fireplace in the east facing elevation, a blocked in doorway in the south facing elevation and a timber frame packed with red bricks used to form a partition which divides Room G8 from Room G9. This partition wall was inserted in the 19th century between 1827-1855 as part of William Chambers *Snr's* renovation and alteration work.

Room G8 – South Facing Elevation (see Figure 66)

4.246 This elevation is characterised by two openings, one at the western end, which is open and allows access to the Service or Common Hall (Room G3) via a small flight of stone steps. This opening appears to have been inserted in the 19th century as its western edge is lined with red bricks and the eastern edge has the wall core exposed. Presumably there were once red bricks along this edge as well, but they have since been removed.

4.247 The other opening is positioned immediately east of this opening, and is presently blocked in with red brickwork only one course thick and used as shelving alcove. This opening was very probably 18th century in date and seems to have replaced an earlier 17th century doorway in the same position but at a lower floor level. This is apparent from the stump end remains of an earlier doorway lintel a third way up the wall on both sides of the opening.

4.248 At the base of this opening is an area of further block-in, which probably covers an earlier small flight of stone steps that once offered access to the Service Hall (Room G3) in the 18th century.

Room G8 – North Facing Elevation

4.249 This elevation of Room G8 is represented by a timber frame packed with red bricks acting as a

partition that now divides Room G8 from Room G9. This partition was erected during William Chamber *Snr*'s renovation and alteration work between the years 1827-1855. Before this, Room G8 and G9 formed one long room and was most probably used as a stable and coach house in the 18th century.

Room G8 – East Facing elevation (see Figure 64)

- 4.250 The removal of internal wall render in the previous 2002-2006 season of work had exposed the position and extent of different phases of fireplace opening in this elevation.
- 4.251 The earliest of these openings appears to have been a tall and wide arched opening approximately 2.80m in width and reaching approximately 2.60m in height from the present floor level. The arch itself has been constructed with handmade red bricks, which would normally suggest that it is 19th century in date, but in this case it is earlier and 18th century in date and feeds part of the large square chimney on the southern part of the roof of the house, the flue now collapsed and obsolete. Given that there are two further subsequent reduced fireplace openings in this original earlier opening, an 18th century date could well be the case here, with all other subsequent fireplaces being 19th century and even early 20th century in date.
- 4.252 Directly above the large fireplace opening in this elevation is the base of the short length of timber staircase that gives access from the staircase in the Stair Hall (Room G4) to the attic room of the eastern range (Room F7) on the first floor. This doorway and staircase was inserted during William Chambers *Snr*'s program of alterations between 1827 and 1855. Unfortunately the insertion of this doorway cut through the existing 18th century chimney and as a consequence this forced the greater part of this chimney to become obsolete and a new section of chimney had to be constructed in Room F7 in the attic room of the eastern range
- 4.253 Directly above the arch of the largest 18th century opening is the remains of a timber lintel, which probably represents part of the fabric used for the re-routing of the chimney in the 19th century.
- 4.254 Immediately south of the fireplace in this elevation is the timber and brick dividing wall/partition between Room G8 and G9. This boundary marks the start of the skewed diagonal service passage that demolished a large section of the west facing elevation of the eastern range in the 19th century, including the southern end of the fireplace in Room G8. The insertion of this skewed passage leading to Room G9 was prompted by the insertion of the doorway and short stair that linked the Nursery Room in Room F7 on the first floor of the eastern range to the Stair Hall (Room G4).

Room G8 – West Facing elevation (see Figure 65)

- 4.255 This elevation is represented by two former tall window openings, now blocked with red brick and

plastered over. Both of the edges of each of these windows are lined with 19th century red bricks, which would suggest that these openings have been altered in the Victorian period. Further areas of red brick repair are also to be found directly above these two doorways, possibly indicative of a raise or repair of the above floor joist timbers, or else further evidence suggestive of an alteration of a former opening in this elevation.

- 4.256 A close inspection was also made of the joint between this west facing elevation and the south facing elevation, in order to confirm that the two walls were keyed together. This inspection confirmed this interpretation, meaning that both walls are contemporary in date.

Room G8 – Summary of Results

- 4.257 The investigation and recording of the elevations in Room G8 (The Kitchen) following the removal of wall render, revealed several significant features associated with the 17th, 18th and 19th century house. This included several phases of fireplace openings in the east facing elevation, the earliest probably being 18th century in date with subsequent reduced fireplaces.
- 4.258 Another feature was the existence of an earlier 17th century doorway in the south facing elevation, positioned at a lower ground level than the existing floor level in this room. This opening was very probably the original 17th century opening into the eastern range from this side.

Room G9 – The Breakfast Room (see Figures 63, 64 and 65)

- 4.259 This room is positioned at the far southern end of the eastern range of Llanelly House and at the time of initial recording and investigation work, was able to be accessed from two doorways, from the diagonal service passage from the Stair Hall (Room G4) and from a doorway in the west facing elevation accessed from the courtyard/car park area.
- 4.260 At the time of recording, the floor of this room consisted of red quarry tiles that had been laid diagonally. Both the north and the south facing elevation of this room were timber frame built partitions, packed with red bricks. Both of these partitions were erected between 1827-1855 as part of William Chambers *Snr's* renovation work.

Room G9 – West Facing Elevation (see Figure 65)

- 4.261 This elevation of Room G9 is essentially a continuation of the west facing elevation in Room G8, given that the rooms are only divided by a timber frame packed with red bricks for insulation.
- 4.262 As with this elevation in Room G8, this elevation in this room is somewhat similar. It is characterised by a blocked in window with a doorway alongside, still active. The window is blocked in with both red

brick and modern concrete blocks. However, the removal of the internal render from this elevation has revealed that the blocked in window and doorway appear to both be later inserts, both occupying an earlier wide opening, possibly a 17th or 18th century remnant of a former double door cart entrance. If this is the case, then this would confirm the early 19th century sketch drawing of this elevation (see Figure 11(c)).

Room G9 – East Facing Elevation (see Figure 64)

- 4.263 As with the west facing elevation, this east facing elevation of Room G9, is essentially a continuation of Room G8, but it was divided using a timber frame packed with red bricks between the years 1827-1855 as part of William Chambers *Snr's* renovation work.
- 4.264 The exposed fabric of this elevation is entirely red brick, which is covering or cladding the earlier stone wall behind. This red brick wall is punctuated by a 1930s fireplace surround. Immediately north, alongside this fireplace is the skewed diagonal service passage that links this room with the Stair Hall (Room G4).
- 4.265 As already mentioned in section 4.238, this fireplace was inserted into a former 17th and 18th century doorway opening in the 19th century, using a chimney inserted into the first floor attic room of the eastern range (Room F7). In order to comfortably accommodate this new fireplace, the width of the existing stone wall was made wider by increasing its width using red bricks, hence the reason why the entire surface of the elevation is made of red brick.

Room G9 – North Facing Elevation

- 4.266 This elevation of Room G9 is represented by the timber frame packed with red bricks, which acts as a partition that divides Room G9 from the corridor in Room G7. This partition was erected during William Chamber *Snr's* renovation between the years 1827-1855.
- 4.267 Inspection of this timber frame partition itself revealed that at the eastern end is the position of a blocked in former doorway that once must have given access to the corridor in Room G7.

Room G9 – South Facing Elevation

- 4.268 This elevation of Room G9 is represented by a timber frame packed with red bricks acting as a partition that now divides Room G8 from Room G9. This partition was erected during William Chamber *Snr's* renovation between the years 1827-1855. Before this, Room G9 and G8 formed one long room and was most probably used as a stable and coach house in the 17th and 18th century.

Room G9 – Summary of Results

- 4.269 The investigation and recording of the elevations in Room G9 (The Breakfast Room) following the removal of wall render, revealed several significant features associated with the 17th, 18th and 19th century house. This included evidence that suggests that the west facing elevation probably once held a wide double door cart entrance in the 17th and 18th century.
- 4.270 Another fact revealed was that the fireplace in this room in the east facing elevation was occupying an earlier 17th and 18th century doorway.

First Floor (see Figures 67-74)

- 4.271 The first floor of Llanelly House may be accessed from two stairways, firstly, by using the main staircase in the Stair Hall (Room G4) and secondly, by using the secondary service stairs accessed from the Service or Common Hall (Room G3) at the far south-east corner of the house.
- 4.272 In total there are ten (10) rooms on the first floor, each accessed from along the main long corridor with rounded archways (Room F4), commonly known as the Great Gallery.
- 4.273 For a comprehensive description of each of the rooms on the first floor please see Richard K Morris' desk based assessment on the outline history, archaeology and architecture of Llanelly House (Morris 2002), as this best describes the first floor rooms as they were found in 2002 and much the same as they were in 2011, but with one or two modern partitions removed.
- 4.274 At the time of the building investigation and recording in 2011, except for Rooms F5, F6 and F7, all of the elevations in all of the other first floor rooms were dressed in 18th and 19th century wainscot or wooden panelling and very little, if any, of this was removed during the 2011-2013 restoration work.
- 4.275 Also, along the length of the Great Gallery there were a number of areas where sections of wooden box cornice at ceiling height were missing, or else they had been removed since the 2002 assessment. The absence of these sections had revealed that behind them was an earlier plaster cornice, either early 18th century or else 17th century in date. A brief description and discussion of this find is also provided in the following section.
- 4.276 Each of the rooms mentioned above will be described and discussed individually in order of room number, starting with Room G4, the Great Gallery.
- 4.277 A brief description of Room F9 is also given following the removal of layers of 19th and 20th century paint from the wainscot by conservationists, which revealed significant 18th century artwork.

Room F4 – Great Gallery (*see Photos 362 - 366*)

- 4.278 Room F4 or the Great Gallery corridor is fully panelled with wainscot, with raised and fielded dado and wall panels, topped by a wooden box cornice. Some sections of the wainscot and bits of the dado rail appear to have been renewed at some time. At the far west end of the gallery a slanted tall sash window. As with the doorway in Room G5, the reasons for this slanted window are unknown, but it would appear that subsidence has occurred at some time. When this occurred however is also unknown. However, it is plain to see that all of the wainscot and architrave appears to have been cut to accommodate this subsidence rather than to adjust it and hide it, which would suggest that the subsidence must have occurred before the erection of the *existing* wainscot and architrave.
- 4.279 At the far east end of the gallery is a blocked in window opening, which must have been open at some time in the 18th century, given that the gallery corridor at the east end is fairly dark. This blocking in must have occurred at the same time as the southern extension was built to the building attached to Llanelly House at its east end, now occupied by the Credit Union.
- 4.280 Immediately north of this blocked in window at the east end of the gallery is a small cupboard or closet. As investigations have already shown, during the unblocking of an area of wall in the ground floor room directly below this closet (Room G3), this closet was once part of the 17th and probably early 18th century service stairs that linked the existing northern range of Llanelly House to the Credit Union building. A remnant of this service stairs is shown by a nailed up *jib* door to the west in the same closet.
- 4.281 Examination of the wainscot in the north and south facing elevations of the wainscot that cover the Great Gallery, revealed a number of interesting features.
- 4.282 The first of these features is an apparent small jib door that has been cut through the wainscot and timber framework dividing Room F5 from the Great Galley. A small peep- hole has also been cut through the wainscot at eye level. The quality of the workmanship in the cutting of this jib door and the bored peep-hole, is fairly poor, which may suggest that this work was undertaken in the early 19th century when the first floor had been split into tenements, or else it was undertaken even later still.
- 4.283 The other significant feature noted in the Great Gallery was the apparent remains of a length of plaster cornice that had previously been hidden from view behind the wooden box cornice at ceiling

height in the eastern section of the gallery. This length of cornice obviously pre-dates the covering wainscot and it may be that this cornice is in fact a remnant of the 17th century house. An identical section of cornice with the same profile and colour was exposed at ceiling height in the exposed alcove/service passage linking Llanelly House to the Credit Union building, following the removal of the stone block-in from the northeast corner of Room G3.

Room F5 – Laundry? (see *Figure 67 and Photos 367-371 and 374*)

- 4.284 This small room is positioned directly opposite the head of the service stairs at the east end of the house. In 2002 this room had a series of toilet cubicles and it was closed off with a partition wall running north to south, joining the wainscot of the Great Gallery (Room G4) with the north wall of the eastern range.
- 4.285 In the 18th century this room was most probably used as a laundry room.
- 4.286 As part of the 2011-2013 conservation proposals it had been proposed to remove the floor space of this room in order to accommodate a disabled lift shaft.
- 4.287 With all of the cubicles and the internal wall render removed a number of interesting features became exposed in the stone fabric of the north facing elevation.
- 4.288 This included the position of a blocked fireplace opening, blocked up with red brick, a series of put-log holes and a blocked in window at ceiling height.
- 4.289 The blocked in fireplace was most probably inserted in the 19th century and was later blocked up in the early 20th century. However, the blocked in window at ceiling height may well be an original 17th century feature, which may once have served light to the attic room in the eastern range prior to the construction of the 18th century house and the conversion of the attic room into a nursery in the 19th century, and the creation of Room F6. As this former window is blocked in with red brick, which appear to be 19th century in date, it is probably safe to suggest that this window was probably blocked up at the same time as the insertion of the doorway into Room F6 between the years 1827-1855.
- 4.290 Another interesting feature is the jib door cut into the wainscot at the far northwest end of this room. The back of the jib door is panelled in wooden planks each positioned at a diagonal. This style is identical to the style of panelling used in the 18th century front door re-used in Room G1. This may suggest that this door is 18th century itself. However, given its position in the wainscot, it is possible that this door is an original door from elsewhere in the house which has been cut down to fit in its

present location.

Room F6 –Corridor (*see Photos 373 and 374*)

- 4.291 This room is positioned at the far north end of the eastern range located between Room F5 and Room F7. Originally this room or space formed part of the attic room above the Kitchen and Breakfast Parlour (Room G8 and G9), until a doorway opening was inserted in the west wall of the east range from the main Stair Hall and a timber partition created in the 19th century. A further doorway was also inserted through the north wall of the east range, thus linking the newly created Room F6 with Room F5 and the secondary service stairs.
- 4.292 Removal of internal render from all of the elevations in Room F6 revealed few new and previously unknown features. However, it did still manage to shed light on a number of known features, such as the manner in which the doorway linking Room F6 to the Stair Hall had been inserted and constructed in the 19th century. This had entailed the use of bricks to form the arch and straighten the edging of the walls once it had been cut through.
- 4.293 In the west facing elevation of this small room there is a modern skylight inserted in through the roof. Directly below this however, the removal of render did manage to reveal the outline of an earlier window opening in this same position and the form and character of its position in the fabric seems to indicate that there was once a dormer window in this position, no doubt similar to the dormer window in the adjacent attic room (Room F7). The original cut in the fabric for this former window opening had been blocked up with stone and red bricks of Victorian or early 20th type.

Room F7 – Nursery (*see Figures 68-74 and Photos 375 and 396*)

- 4.294 This room is the attic room of the eastern range of the house. At the time of the initial recording in March 2011 the room had a timber floor and was clear of any debris except for a few modern items that were being stored. The main characteristics of this room are a series of three historic timber 'A' frames each complete with cross brace.
- 4.295 At the far southern end of the room, the north facing elevation is constructed from stone and red brick. This wall is a partition wall that splits the continuation of the east range from the next door property, presently occupied by 'Career Wales'.
- 4.296 Due to the potential historic nature and character of this room each elevation will be described and interpreted in the following section. This will also include a description of each timber 'A' frame.

Room F7 – South Facing Elevation (see Figure 69)

- 4.297 This elevation represents the timber frame partition that divides Room F6 from Room F7. It is characterised by a central doorway complete with door. The partition is covered in lath and plaster with red brick used as packing material to insulate. Immediately west of the doorway at head height is rectangular framed area itself plastered. What this area was used for is unknown.
- 4.298 Immediately above the central doorway and this frame is a timber 'A' frame (Frame No.1) with cross brace. This 'A' frame is an integral part of the partition itself. Examination of this 'A' frame revealed that the cross brace had been fixed to the 'A' by slot joints and wooden pegs. Inspection of the cross brace showed of adze marks and cut slots indicating that the cross brace once held a wooden plank floor at ceiling height.
- 4.299 The western side of this elevation is occupied by a stone brick chimney with fireplace, inserted in the 19th century to accommodate for the destruction of part of the chimney in former Kitchen (Room G8) following the insertion of the doorway into Room F6. The construction of this chimney in this position had also warranted the cutting of the timber 'A' frame on this side.

Room F7 – North Facing Elevation (see Figure 70)

- 4.300 This elevation is a stone and brick built partition wall between the eastern range and the neighbouring property. The eastern range in the 17th and 18th century once continued further south.
- 4.301 Just off centre in this elevation is a doorway that has since been blocked up with modern concrete blocks.
- 4.302 East of this former doorway is a dormer window, which is probably 19th century in origin, which has been altered in the 20th century.

Room F7 – East Facing Elevation (see Figure 71)

- 4.303 This elevation is characterised by a small central window, a stone built chimney to the north and a small red brick chimney to the south. Directly below the small window is a wallpapered wooden panel covering the stone fabric of the low wall. Examination of the wallpaper on this panel showed that there were in fact two wallpaper types, both hand-painted and probably mid 19th century in date.
- 4.304 Examination of the stone built chimney at the far northern end of this room showed that it had

undergone some repair work using red bricks at some stage. However, this may have been as a result of the later insertion of a fireplace in this chimney.

Room F7 – West Facing Elevation (see Figure 72)

- 4.305 This elevation is characterised by a 19th century dormer window on its northern side and another modern dormer window on its southern side. Between the two of these windows, recording of the fabric revealed that there appears to have been a further 19th century dormer window here as well, shown only by an area of blocked in walling. The fact that evidence for a former dormer window exists in this area, as well as in Room F6 in the west facing elevation, would suggest that it seems likely that the west elevation in the 19th century may well have held a total of four dormer windows.
- 4.306 Each of the feet or the cruck of the 'A' frames had been nestled into the stonework in this elevation, with each having been offered support from a timber upright slotted into each timber.
- 4.307 Examination of the timber purlins in this elevation revealed that the roof space had inevitably once been lath and plaster covered.

'A' Frame No.1 (see Figures 68 and 69 and Photos 376, 379 and 385)

- 4.308 This 'A' frame is located at the far northern end of the attic room and forms an integral part of the timber partition. This 'A' frame is described in section 4.297.

'A' Frame No.2 (see Figures 68 and 73 and Photos 386, 389 and 390)

- 4.309 This 'A' frame is positioned south of 'A' frame No.1. Its western cruck has been cut through to accommodate the construction of the stone built chimney. As with 'A' frame No.1 the cross brace for this timber is a pegged tenon or slot joint. On its south facing side at the point where the cross brace joins the western cruck there are matching carpenters fitting marks on both the cross brace and the cruck. No marks are on the eastern side. Again, as with 'A' frame No.1, the cross brace has evidence of former ceiling planking along one edge.
- 4.310 The eastern cruck of this 'A' frame is partly enclosed within the stone fabric of the east facing elevation of the eastern range. This cruck is also supported by a short timber brace resting in a cut slot in the cruck.

'A' Frame No.3 (see Figures 68 and 74 and Photos 375, 380, 382, 383, 391 and 392)

- 4.311 This 'A' frame is positioned at the southern end of Room F7 with the eastern cruck positioned alongside the modern dormer window and the western cruck alongside the red brick chimney.
- 4.312 As with both 'A' frame No's. 1 and 2, this 'A' frame also has its cross brace tenon jointed with wooden pegs at each end. There were no carpenters fitting marks noted on this 'A' frame. The only feature worth noting was a cut slot in the north facing side indicative of a former timber, possibly a former ceiling.
- 4.313 Both the crucks on this 'A' frame are enclosed within the stone fabric of the east and west facing elevations. Both of the crucks are supported by a short timber brace resting in a cut slot in each cruck.
- 4.314 Unfortunately, examination of the eastern side of this cruck discovered that it was in a severely poor condition, so much so that the base of the cruck was damp and rotten and covered in an oak fungus. Initially it had been hoped to cut away the infected area and create a lap joint with new timber. However, it was decided by the conservation team that the only way to ensure full stability was to completely replace the cruck with a new oak timber carved identical to the existing cruck. The original cross brace was still retained.

Room F7 – Summary of Results

- 4.315 Dendrochronology samples were taken from specific parts of all of the timbers and the floor joists in this room, in order to try and get at least a felling date for some of the roof and floor joist timbers, so that a potential date could be gained for the eastern range. Unfortunately, although there were enough ring sequences in many of the samples taken none of these samples had any correlations.
- 4.316 However, from just the character of the roof timbers in the attic room, it seems fairly safe to say that none of the timber are earlier than the 17th century and most of them are very probably 18th century in date, with later 19th century repairs. However, the floor timber joists may be earlier in date, possibly 16th century, but this is speculative.
- 4.317 The eastern range has suffered a great deal of alteration over the centuries, with both east, west and northern facades having been altered significantly by major building phases in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries.
- 4.318 Further evidence associated with the eastern range following groundwork in Room G8 and G7 is

found in Sections 5.109 and 5.116, which seems to suggest that the earliest standing remains in the eastern range, if not 16th century, are 17th century in date.

Room F9 – Dressing Room (see Photos 397 – 402)

- 4.319 In the 2002-2006 seasons of work sections of wainscot panelling above the doors into Room F9 had had several layers of beige coloured paint removed. This work revealed three significant 18th century hand-painted decorative friezes depicting mythological type scenes. These scenes included a depiction of a Pan like character linked with garlands of flowers.
- 4.320 In Greek mythology, Pan is the god of the wild, nature, shepherds and flocks, hunting, rustic music, a companion of the nymphs and often associated with fertility and sexuality.
- 4.321 The other two friezes both depict facial portraits, each framed by a scallop shell linked by garlands of flowers.
- 4.322 The scallop shell throughout antiquity have symbolised the feminine principle, hence the use of the scallop shell in many paintings of Venus, the Roman goddess of love and fertility.
- 4.323 Because of these significant friezes attached to the 18th century Stepney's the 2011-2013 season saw further conservation being undertaken to remove all of the overlying paint layers on all of the wainscot panels, in the hope that further friezes would become exposed.
- 4.324 Although this painstaking work did reveal further hand-painted frieze, it was not as extensive as was hoped.
- 4.325 This work only exposed evidence of artwork, identical in style to the garlands of flowers on the door panel friezes, at the corner and along the edges of each of the central wainscot panels, as if they were there to offer a frame to something or other and nothing else.

Second Floor

- 4.326 The second floor of Llanelly House can be accessed from two stairs, firstly, by using the secondary service stairs immediately opposite Room F5 on the first floor and, secondly, by the steep stairs leading to Room S5 from Room F8 and the first floor.
- 4.327 In total there are nine (9) rooms on the second floor, each accessed from along a main long corridor with rounded archways (Room S4).

- 4.328 For a comprehensive description of each of the rooms on the second floor please see Richard K Morris' desk based assessment on the outline history, archaeology and architecture of Llanelly House (Morris 2002), as this best describes the second floor rooms as they were found in 2002 and much the same as they were in 2011, but with one or two modern partitions removed.
- 4.329 At the time of the initial building investigation and recording in 2011, except for Rooms S1, S2, S4 and S5, all of the other elevations in all of other second floor rooms had had all wall render removed exposing the stone fabric. Rooms S1 and S2 had wooden panelling covering a number of the walls and a few of these panels were removed for repair and as a result the exposed fabric was investigated and recorded. Room S4, the long corridor was still rendered and painted in cream paint. Room S5 in the western range still had lath and plaster covering the sloping walls/ceiling and was painted white.
- 4.330 Each of the rooms mentioned above will be described and discussed individually in order of room number, starting with Room S1.

Room S1 (see Photos 404 – 407)

- 4.331 This second floor room is positioned at the far northwest end of the house. It is divided from Room S2 on the east side by a wooden panelled partition. Both the north and east facing elevations were rendered in wall plaster, which was not removed as it was in good condition, suggesting that this work had been done in previous years, probably in the early 20th century. In the east facing elevation is a small Victorian fireplace complete with raised iron grate.
- 4.332 The wainscot fixed to the south facing elevation was painted cream at the time of the initial recording work. However, traces of an earlier pale leaf green paint were visible beneath this cream paint.

Room S2 (see Figure 75 and Photos 408 – 413)

- 4.333 This room is divided from Room S1 by a timber partition covered in lath and plaster. At the time of the initial recording work in 2011, all of the walls, except for the dividing wall, were covered in wooden panelling. Inserted into the west facing wall was a Victorian fireplace complete with iron grate but missing its surround. A wooden panel above the fireplace had also been removed for inspection. This had been stored in the house for later insertion.
- 4.334 In 2013 the wooden panelling on the northern side of the fireplace in the west facing elevation was

removed for repair to the timber frame. Inevitably the removal of this panel exposed the stone fabric behind, which resulted in the recording of the position of the former 17th century house's gabled roof line.

Room S3 (see Figure 76 and Photos 415 – 416)

- 4.335 This room is positioned at the far northeast end of the house. At the time of the initial on-site recording work, the south facing elevation was covered in wainscot. However, both the east and west facing elevations had no wooden panelling covering them and had also had their wall render removed. Although no significant features became exposed in the west facing elevation, removal of render from the east facing elevation of Room S3 had revealed a few interesting and significant features associated with both the former 18th century house and the 17th century house.
- 4.336 Within the east facing elevation of Room S3 is a Victorian fireplace complete with a raised iron grate and fire surround. Immediately above this fireplace within the exposed fabric of the wall is the remains of an apparent arch of red bricks, with further red bricks on the southern side. Close inspection of this brick arch seems to suggest that in this position, prior to the insertion of the fireplace, there was once an arched recess in the early 19th century, not an opening as there is no evidence of this on the other side of the wall, so just an arched recess most probably inserted during William Chambers *Snr's* time.
- 4.337 Immediately south of the existing fireplace is the scarring of what appears to be the former roof line of an extension building that was once attached to the east facing elevation. This scarring most probably represents the former roof gable of the early 17th century extension to Llanelly House, before the roof was altered and raised in the late 17th and early 18th century as part of Sir Thomas Stepney's alterations.

Room S4 (see Photos 419 – 421)

- 4.338 At the time of the initial recording work in 2011 all of the internal walls of the corridor (Room S4) were plastered and painted in cream paint. The only feature of interest was an apparent small area of shallow cut architrave scored into the side walls of the arched doorway opening leading from the corridor into the balcony room of Room S7. This architrave is hardly discernable and was only noticed because of temporary work lighting, which had been positioned at an advantageous oblique angle to the wall.

Room S5 (see Figures 77 – 80 and Photos 423 – 431)

- 4.339 This room is positioned at the far northern end of the western range of Llanelly House and being on the second floor, it shares the former attic space with Room S6 immediately to the south.
- 4.340 The main characteristics within this room are the two oak timber 'A' frames (No's. 4 and 5) and the secondary stair access point in the floor at the far south-eastern end that leads to Room F8 on the first floor below.
- 4.341 Each of these timber frames have been assembled using a 'locking lap-joint' type fixing to fix each diagonal to the cross brace or tie-beam. There is also evidence on each cross brace of cut timber slots, which suggests that there may have once been a lower ceiling with only a slight roof space. Each of these 'A' frames is likely 18th century in date.
- 4.342 At the time of the initial recording work, none of the timber purlins were visible as these were hidden behind lath and plaster.
- 4.343 At the roof apex height in the south facing elevation of this room is the remains of a timber stump that extends through the wall and projects out slightly into the hallway (Room S4). This timber stump is a remnant of the former 17th century roof that once joined with the gabled roof of the northern range before Sir Thomas Stepney's alterations.
- 4.344 The north facing elevation of Room S5 is characterised by a lath and plaster covered timber partition with two doorways that give access to Room S6.

Room S6 (see Figures 77 – 80 and Photos 423 – 431)

- 4.345 This attic room occupies the far southern end of the western range. It is characterised by a series of three timber 'A' frames each equally spaced across the room running east to west. The far north facing elevation is occupied by a small Victorian fireplace complete with an iron grate. This fireplace has been constructed from stone and red brick, which suggests that it is probably originally an 18th century construction with later 19th century modifications.
- 4.346 Only two of the timber 'A' frames are completely visible in this room (No's. 1 and 2), as the other (No.3) is partly hidden by the partition wall that divides the room from Room S5.
- 4.347 Both of the accessible 'A' frames have been constructed using a 'locking lap-joint' fixing the diagonals to the tie-beam or cross brace. Each of the locking lap-joints have been cut in a particular

style and shape unique to the carpenter who installed the timber frames, each fixed using a series of three wooden pegs on each side. Both of these locking lap-joints are different in style to those used in Room S5, which may suggest that either they were constructed by a different carpenter or else they were constructed at different time, possibly later given that the style of the locking lap-joint in Room S6 is less complex.

- 4.348 As with the tie-beams in Room S5, recording and investigation of the tie-beams in Room S6 showed that there was evidence in the form of cut slots that the ceiling of this room was lower.
- 4.349 At the time of the initial recording of Room S6, both the east and west facing elevations had had their lath and plaster removed from their walls and all of the timber purlins and rafters were visible. This revealed that a significant number of the rafters had been replaced in recent years.
- 4.350 Investigation and recording of the timbers in Room S6 suggests that the 'A' frames are likely late 17th century or possibly early 18th century in date.

Room S7 (see Figures 50 – 51 and Photos 447 – 450)

- 4.351 This room is the balcony area overlooking the Stair Hall (Room G4). It is accessed via the main corridor on the second floor and may also be accessed from Room S8.
- 4.352 Only part of the east and west facing elevations are described and interpreted in this section, as these elevations have already been discussed in sections 4.183 and 4.190.
- 4.353 The west facing elevation in Room S7 is hidden behind an early 19th century screen of timber frame with red brick in-fill. However, from visibility of the same wall on its east facing side, this part of this elevation has a relieving arch in this position.
- 4.354 Removal of all of the internal render from the east facing elevation of Room S7 revealed a similar relieving arch as found in the west facing elevation. A further feature revealed in this elevation was a small niche, seemingly too large for a put-log hole.

Room S8 (see Figures 87 – 89 and Photos 453 – 456)

- 4.355 Room S8 is positioned west of the secondary stairs at the eastern end of the second floor.
- 4.356 Removal of internal render from all of the elevation in this room revealed a few significant features.
- 4.357 In the east facing elevation a relieving arch became exposed, as already mentioned in section 4.353.

- 4.358 In the north facing elevation, above the existing fireplace, removal of wall render exposed the position of the remains of a timber lintel. The original purpose of this lintel is unknown, as there is no evidence for any former blocked in window in this position. However, it may have something to do with the chimney that serves the fireplace.
- 4.359 In the south facing elevation of Room S8, removal of wall render revealed an apparent joint in the wall that appears to show that the northern wall of Room S9 was once shorter in length, perhaps an indicator that the second floor floor-plan at the east end of the house was slightly different in plan in the early 18th century than it was later, or else the floor plan was changed and this additional walling was an original building alteration.

Room S9 (Photos 453 – 456)

- 4.360 Room S8 is positioned at the far south-eastern corner of the second floor, alongside the secondary stairs.
- 4.361 Removal of internal render from all of the elevations in this room revealed no features of any significance.

5 Results of Archaeological Watching Brief *(see Figures 19-66 in Appendix I and Photo Plates in Appendix II)*

Internal Investigations

1) Room G1 – The Great Hall *(see Figures 19-25 and Plates 106-156)*

- 5.1 Initial ground investigations in Room G1 (The Great Hall) began in 2002/2003 with a small engineers trial trench (1.5m x 1.5m) positioned in front of the former Victorian shop-front central doorway in the north facing wall. Unfortunately, the insertion of this trench in this position caused the contractor to shamefully cut through one of the few remaining 18th century timber floor joists in this room. As well as this unfortunate damage, this earlier groundwork does not appear to have been undertaken under archaeological watching brief conditions and as such no investigations or records were created of the results. However, from this earlier groundwork several small fragments of decorative ceiling plasterwork were recovered and retained. Inspection of these pieces suggested that they were 17th century in date. In the following years this trial trench became used by subsequent contractors and others as a dumping area and as such it had become back-filled with building material and other waste debris.
- 5.2 In March 2011, when the new season of restoration work began with CHRT and John Weavers Construction taking the lead, it was agreed to re-open this trial trench (Trial Trench 1), reasons

being, firstly, to get a better understanding of the underlying deposits in order to inform future design and engineering proposals in this room, and secondly, to inspect and record the exposed stratigraphy and recover any further pieces of plasterwork and other potential finds in the hope of ascertaining some form of chronology for this part of the house.

Trial Trench 1 (Room G1)

- 5.3 The trial trench in Room G1 was dug several years ago by another party as part of earlier preliminary investigations. However, the results from the excavation were never recorded or fully interpreted archaeologically. This trench was re-opened and investigated on 24th February 2011. Since its initial excavation the trench had been used subsequently as a 'rubbish' pit, being filled with a variety of building materials, including soil, cement, resin, newspaper, timber etc.
- 5.4 Following the removal of the built-up waste material from the existing trench, all of the trench sections were cleaned and straightened as best as was possible considering the loose character of the greater part of the exposed underlying deposits. Following this, the trench and its exposed sections were drawn and photographed. The following text describes and interprets the deposits exposed in the sections (numbers enclosed in ()) are context numbers assigned to each deposit as illustrated in Figures 19-25).
- 5.5 The existing floor surface of Room G1 was made up of various different surfaces, including modern concrete at the far west end and modern stone tiles and floor boards at the east end. Each of these surfaces appears to have been laid directly over the remains of former oak floor joists. The trial trench appears to have been sunk through a series of thin modern stone tiles (G1-100), which appear to have been formerly laid directly over a pair of 18th century oak floor joists (G1-117), which had unfortunately been cut through and removed to allow access to the trench for digging purposes. The trench measured approximately 1.5 x 1.4m at its upper limit and approximately 1.4m x 1m at its base. At the base of the trench a small 0.30m square investigation slot had been cut through the lowest deposit, a compact grey/orange clay with charcoal flecks (G1-112), alongside the exposed footings of the north wall of the house (G1-125) and its cut (G1-133), in order to confirm that the deposit (G1-112) was indeed the earliest deposit, which it was.

Room G1 Trial Trench 1 - East facing Section A-B (see Figure 20)

- 5.6 The oak floor joists (G1-117) were formerly lain north-south directly on top of a loose soil deposit made up of small fragments of plaster, soil, ash and charcoal (G1-104). The depth of this deposit was approximately 0.20m. This deposit lay directly over a compacted surface (G1-103) made up of soil, ash, plaster fragments, lime and small stones. This deposit averaged approximately 0.12m in depth and was interpreted as being a former construction deposit, most likely associated with the early 18th century re-building of the house by Thomas Stepney. This deposit lay directly over what appeared to be a former demolition deposit (G1-106) made up of large stones, large fragments of

ceiling plaster, soil, ash and charcoal. This deposit averaged a depth of approximately 0.20m. This deposit was interpreted as being a former demolition deposit associated with the clearance of the earlier 17th century house prior to the early 18th century re-build. Below this deposit was a fairly loose deposit consisting of orange/beige clay with small plaster and lime fragments, with the occasional charcoal pieces (G1-108). This deposit again averaged approximately 0.20m in depth. Directly below this deposit the base of the trench (G1-112) was reached with a compact deposit made up of grey/orange clay with charcoal and lime flecks embedded within its upper compact surface. This implied that this compact deposit was a former exposed surface associated with the construction of the earliest house.

Room G1 Trial Trench 1 - West facing section

- 5.7 This section although similar in make up to the east facing section, was different in that the boundaries between deposits (G1-104-106) were not as clearly defined as in the east facing section, which gave the impression that they were in fact one deposit and not three separate individual deposits. Reasons for this may be that the deposits in the east facing section were positioned almost directly opposite the former late 17th century front door, a position that would have seen a lot of activity and traffic from workmen during the re-building program. However, it still revealed that in this area the underlying demolition and construction deposits used to raise the floor level were of some depth, in the region of 0.50-0.60m deep before reaching the earlier 17th century floor surface (G1-107).

Room G1 Trial Trench 1 - South facing section (see Figure 23)

- 5.8 This exposed section is represented by the north wall of the house. Significant features exposed here include the position of a former gas pipe, the footings for the former 17th century house north wall and the remains of a former doorway with threshold, blocked in with stonework and covered at its upper limit by a covering of wall plasterwork. This former doorway is positioned immediately below and to the right of the existing front door to the house, which was formerly, in the 1714 re-build, utilised as one in a series of windows in the house's front façade.

Room G1 Trial Trench 1 - North facing section

- 5.9 This exposed section is almost identical in terms of its stratigraphic sequence to that exposed and recorded in the east facing section.

Results of full Watching Brief in Room G1 (see Figures 19 – 25)

- 5.7 In June - July 2011 groundwork in Room G1 began by removing the Late 19th Century shop-fronts, in both the north and west elevations. Removal of the west facing shop-front and excavation of the concrete floor in this area, alongside Vaughan Street, exposed the footprint of a former hearth or fireplace opening (G1-119), which happened to be positioned centrally to the former west wall.

- 5.8 Inspection and excavation of this feature revealed that this former fireplace opening originally measured approximately 6ft wide x 2 ½ ft deep, with splayed sides. Closer inspection revealed that there were remnants of plasterwork on the east face and on both the north and south faces of the opening. The character, position and extent of this fireplace opening suggested that it was a much earlier fireplace than the existing fireplace openings in all of the other ground floor rooms of the house, apart from the remains of the large hearth in Room G8, the former early 19th Century Kitchen in the east range. This being the case, this small excavation alone suggested that this fireplace was at least 17th Century in date, possibly even 16th Century, with continual use through to the late 19th Century when the initial Victorian shop fronts were constructed which warranted the demolition of this part of the west wall of the house for the insertion of an oak timber Bessemer support beam.
- 5.9 Following discussion with CHRT and the architects the decision was made to re-construct a new fireplace opening on top of the foundations of this earlier fireplace using the same footprint dimensions.
- 5.10 Whilst the contractors were undertaking consolidation work on the remains of both of the oak timber Bessemer support beams in both the north and west wall in Room G1, the floorboards at the far east end of the room were lifted, removed and retained. This boarded area only occupied a quarter of the existing remaining floor surface in this room, the other central and western areas being a mix of modern concrete, modern floor tiles and the remains of 18th century timber floor joists.
- 5.11 The lifting of the floorboards from the underlying timber floor joists in this part of the room revealed that directly beneath was a series of loose deposits (G1-104 to G1-106) of dry loose earth intermixed with dry crumbling lime plaster and general debris and waste material that had accumulated under the floorboards over a period of over 300 years. Surface debris and lengths of obsolete 19th Century gas pipe and water pipe suggested that the floorboards had been lifted on many occasions throughout these years.
- 5.12 Following discussions with the design team, it was concluded that this underlying deposit (G1-104 to G1-106) had to be removed to a depth where solid ground was reached in order to accommodate the construction of new timber floor joist supports piers. As such groundwork in this area began by recording the position and then removing and retaining the timber floor joists. Once this was completed, work continued by reducing the ground surface by removing the underlying deposits. No sooner had this work begun, when it became clear that this deposit was only approximately 0.40m in depth and was lying directly on top of a former cobbled floor of a former corridor (G1-115). The level of this floor surface was contemporary with the compacted earth floor deposit (G1-107) already exposed in the trial trench, which suggested that this cobbled floor is 17th century in date.

- 5.13 Once all of the overburden deposits had been completely removed from covering this surface, the cobbles were cleaned back with a trowel and brush and then recorded. Closer examination of the cobbled floor at the far southern end revealed that the cobbles in this area appeared to have been laid in a deliberate fashion so as to create a rectangular frame of cobbles (G1-130), framing some kind of picture that had been arranged using cobbles. Following recording work and consultation with all interested parties, it was concluded that the cobble picture *may*, when viewed from the east looking west, be a representation of 'two prancing horses' running southwards, but this interpretation was in no way unanimous, as the picture is very ambiguous. However, the interpretation of 'two prancing horses' was the most the most popular one.
- 5.14 If this interpretation is correct then it may suggest that this area of cobbles was formerly marking the position of an access point, possibly even the start position of a former flight of stairs leading to the first floor in the 17th century. Other pieces of standing building evidence from Room G1 in the north facing elevation also suggest this as a possibility.
- 5.15 Unfortunately, the west side of this cobbled floor was hidden from view, being obscured by an 18th century mortar & stone floor joist support wall (G1-126). Because of this wall the full western extent of this cobbled corridor was not accurately ascertained and as such the cobbled floor was not fully recorded.
- 5.16 Complete cleaning of the exposed cobbled surface also revealed the position of two post-holes at the far northern end (G1-128 and G1-129). Both these post-holes are very likely post-holes made in the late 19th century to support the scaffolding during the insertion of the Victorian shop-front in the north wall of Room G1.
- 5.17 Following all recording work, the cobbled floor was preserved in situ and a protective plastic sheet was laid down to protect it and a series of new timber floor supports were constructed.
- 5.18 During November to December 2011 the entire modern concrete and tiled floor surface (G1-100 and G1-101) still covering the central and western side of Room G1 was removed in order to reduce the floor level for the insertion of new floor support piers, the insertion of new services and for the construction of a large concrete base to support the proposed display case which was to hold the Stepney armorial dinner service.
- 5.19 Initially the heavy industrial north wall supports were still in place when this work began, as the process of curing for the timber Bessemer beam was still underway. After a few weeks however, the supports were removed. This allowed full access of the floor area for the proposed groundwork.

- 5.20 Once all of the modern concrete and tiles had been removed, a deposit of granular grit mixed with iron slag became exposed. This deposit measured approximately 0.10m in depth and covered the complete western and central area of the floor. This deposit was likely imported from a local spoil tip associated with the coal and iron industry.
- 5.21 Directly below this deposit there were a number of thin patchy deposits, which included a pale brown/beige sand/silt (G1-103), a dark brown sand/silt with occasional mortar fragments, approximately 0.80m thick (G1-104a), and a similar but paler deposit, which measured only approximately 0.05m in depth (G1-104b). Below these deposits was a further dark brown sand/silt, with occasional mortar fragments, averaging approximately 0.80m in depth (G1-105) and similar to G1-104a + b.
- 5.22 Directly below this sandy deposit was a deposit (G1-106) of beige coloured dry soil intermixed with lumps of lime ceiling plaster, many fragments decorative, with 'egg and dart' and 'rose' motif designs. Other pieces recovered included large pieces of plaster cornice, architrave and possible fireplace mantel. All of this material was 17th century in date and suggests a demolition deposit, which would further suggest that the overlying deposit (G1-104/105) are probably contemporary in date. This demolition deposit averaged approximately 0.30m in depth.
- 5.23 Once this deposit was removed, a compacted earth and clay floor became exposed (G1-107). This surface was interpreted as a former occupation or floor level, being early – late 17th century in date. Careful cleaning and inspection of a number of small areas of this compacted floor revealed possible impressions in the deposit of a former flagstone floor, very shallow impressions and not entirely conclusive. The pattern of these impressions suggested a flagstone floor with flagstones laid out diagonally to the walls of the room. This compacted surface covered only 80% of the room, terminating at the far east end where the strip of contemporary cobbled or pitched stone floor surface extends north to south creating a narrow hallway.
- 5.24 Due to the apparent significance of this deposit, being that it was early 17th century in date and therefore Jacobean, the entire floor space was cleaned back to this compacted deposit. As well as allowing the recovery of large quantities of 17th century decorative ceiling plaster, architrave and cornice, which included further large fragments of 'egg and dart' cornice, a large number of fluted architrave fragments and several pieces of ceiling plaster stucco work representative of bunches of grapes, the full exposure of this surface also revealed the remains of an early 17th century hearth (G1-118), positioned in front of the re-discovered fireplace opening in the west wall.
- 5.25 This hearth was identified by a wide spread of soot and charcoal lying alongside and over a series of deliberately laid irregular shaped flagstones. Examination and a small excavation of the charcoal spread managed to recover a small fragment of 17th century slipware pottery that had become

lodged between two of the hearth flagstones.

- 5.26 Inevitably, the complete removal of the overburden covering the 17th century floor surface (G1-107), also further exposed the opening and the character of the early 17th century fireplace. As well as this, it also exposed the remains of the lime plaster base or feet of the former 17th century fireplace surround (see Photos 138 – 141), which had unfortunately been hacked off, probably in the 18th century when the Stepney rebuild was being undertaken.
- 5.27 As well as the remains of the 17th century hearth and its associated fireplace opening, clearance of all of the overburden to this earlier floor level also exposed several other significant features relating to former door and window openings.
- 5.28 In the north wall, the clearing of overburden down to the early 17th century level, exposed the position of a former 17th century window opening, which had been blocked in. Closer investigation of this opening suggested that the 17th century opening originally had a slight recess with splayed sides. Further east from this former opening a former wide door opening became exposed, which added to and affirmed the evidence already revealed from the trial trench in this room.
- 5.29 Removal of the loose deposit overlying this 17th century floor also revealed the lower section of two blocked in doorway openings, one in the southwest corner of the room in the southern wall (still in use) and another adjacent to this in the west wall alongside the former fireplace, the latter indicative of a possible doorway leading to the outside. A rapid evaluation pit was inserted against the external west wall to confirm this opening at a later date, and it did indeed confirm that there was once an opening in this position in the 17th century, until it was blocked up in the 18th century.
- 5.30 Removal of the overburden from the 17th century floor surface also revealed that a narrow slot (G1-131) had been cut through the compacted floor at some time against both the south wall and part of the west wall. Both these narrow slots were filled with a mixture of soil and flakes of lime plaster, indicative of either demolition or construction work. As these slots obviously post date the 17th century floor, it seems likely that they may represent former 18th century scaffolding slots given that they were filled with building material.
- 5.31 At the foot of the exposed standing fabric of the north wall at the head of the apparent cobbled passage way, excavations revealed the position of the former 18th century central doorway opening, but the threshold to this doorway was positioned somewhat higher than cobbled surface, which further suggested that the cobbled passage way did pre-date the insertion of the central doorway to the house in the early 18th century.
- 5.32 All of the 17th century features are still preserved in situ beneath the new floor in this room.

- 5.33 In order to accommodate a concrete support base for the proposed display cabinet that is to hold the Stepney armorial dinner service, a large trench had to be excavated in the centre of the room, which offered the opportunity to evaluate the floor deposits below the 17th century floor level (G1-107) more thoroughly than was possible for the already re-opened trial pit in this room.
- 5.34 Directly below the compacted 17th century floor was an approximately 0.12m thick deposit (G1-108) of clay/earth/sand with coal (1%), mortar fragments (5%) and irregular stone fragments, no larger than 0.15m in size. Several finds were recovered from this deposit including the remains of a corroded wrought iron (Fe) axe blade and fragments of local Dyfed Gravel tempered Green glaze ware, most likely late 16th century in date. This deposit was interpreted as a rubble core for the foundation of the compacted clay/earth floor. Directly below this deposit was a deposit (G1-109) consisting of lumps of orange clay intermixed with coal and mortar flecks. There were also occasional irregular stone fragments. This deposit was approximately 0.10m in depth. Below this deposit was a thin lense of lime mortar, only 0.01m in depth (G1-134). Directly below this there was a deposit of orange clay/lime mortar, approximately 0.08m in depth (G1-135). Below this there was a Deposit of orange clay with charcoal flecks making up 30% of deposit (G1-136), which was approximately 0.12m thick.
- 5.35 However, directly below these apparent construction deposits was a further compacted clay floor (G1-110). This was very similar in make-up to (G1-107), but earlier in date and probably late medieval in date, probably 15th – 16th century. This clay floor covered the whole of the base of this central trench for the concrete base. The surface was undulated, as if subsided from overburden. This compacted surface was made up of compacted clay/silt with mortar and coal flecks trodden into its surface. The whole of the trench was cleaned back to fully expose this surface and in so doing it revealed that the central part of the clay floor had suffered at some time from severe heat from a fire as there was a substantial ring of heated orange clay, which had turned pink (G1-127). In the centre of this heated area were found fragments of charcoal and several cockle shells. As the depth of this clay floor was the proposed depth for the concrete base, a small investigative slot was inserted through this clay floor at the far southwest corner. This revealed that the clay floor was approximately 0.10m thick. Directly below this surface there was a deposit of dark coloured stone rubble approximately 0.15m – 0.20m thick (G1-110). This deposit was intermixed with thick wall plaster fragments (approx. 0.04m in size) and black soot. Finds recovered from this deposit included a pottery fragment of a jug handle with part of the upper jug lip. This fragment is a local gravel tempered ware with a green/yellow glaze splattered over parts of fragment and incised with two strike marks as if by a knife for decoration. The fabric and glaze is suggestive of the late medieval (*see Finds Registry Part II – Photo Inventory – Room G1 No. B18*). This dark rubble deposit was interpreted as a rubble foundation for the clay floor and reached a depth of only 0.10m.

- 5.36 Again, by sheer luck, positioning of the small trial pit happened to be have been positioned directly over a small post-hole (G1-113), which was approximately 0.20m in diameter and 0.30m deep. This post-hole was filled with the same dark loose soil and stone material (G1-111) and had also been sunk into the natural orange clay (G1-112). This post-hole obviously predated this earlier Tudor floor, but it may well be associated with an initial late medieval building phase. Directly below the dark soil and rubble deposit was the natural clay (G1-112).

2) Room G2 – Sir Thomas Stepney’s Study (see Figures 26 – 33 and Plates 157 - 193)

- 5.37 At the time of initial groundwork, all of the furniture and artefacts from the floor area had already been removed and all of the existing elevations had already been recorded.

Trial Trench 1 (Room G2)

- 5.38 The trial trench in Room G2 was also dug several years ago (2003-2004) by another party as part of earlier preliminary engineering investigations. However, as with the trial trench in Room G1, the results from the excavation were never recorded or fully interpreted archaeologically. This trench was re-opened and investigated on 24th February 2011. Since its initial excavation the trench had changed very little, having been kept covered over since its initial creation. For the original trench inspection by engineers, unfortunately a number of existing large oak floor joists had again been sawn off to allow easier access for groundwork operations.
- 5.39 With the floor-boarding lifted in the area of the trench, it was clear to see that the original engineers trench was dug at the far west end, up against an early north to south running stone built cross wall (G2-103).
- 5.40 The trial trench alongside this cross wall managed to dig down to only approximately 1 metre below the present floor surface due to space constraints. The material removed from this trench and the exposed south facing section, revealed that the underlying deposits (G2-104) beneath the present floor surface and those built up against the cross wall and the east to west internal walls are entirely one deposit made up of what appears to be demolition rubble, consisting of a mixture of sand, grit, mortar and small to medium sized stone rubble.
- 5.41 The character and depth of the deposit (G2-104), in conjunction with the exposed north to south cross wall, implied that the material was being used to increase the floor height as well as to fill an apparent large void, possibly an earlier basement area.

Results of Watching Brief in Room G2

- 5.42 The complete removal of the floor-boarding in Room G2 (*Sir Thomas Stepney's Study*) revealed that there were in fact two parallel north to south aligned cross walls (G2-103), partitioned by a further east to west cross wall two thirds of the way across the room towards the southern wall. Each of the tops of the walls was surmounted by wooden planks (G2-102), which were themselves supporting the existing oak floor joists. Between each of the apparent partition and floor support walls and the internal elevations, was an overburden (G2-104) whose surface was covered in both Edwardian and Victorian debris.
- 5.43 The poor condition of the timber floor joists and the fact that none were resting on any timber framework or ring support and the further still that all were resting directly on the overburden (G2-104), suggested that the floorboards and the joists had been lifted fairly recently and had been returned in a very hap-hazard and uncaring fashion, so much so that the angle of the floor is higher in the centre of the room than it is at the east end. It appears that this was done when the floor level was raised to correspond with the raising of the floor when the Victorian cellar was inserted in Room G3. However, on doing this there was the problem that the floorboards still had to be returned to rest beneath the lower positioned wooden panelling on the internal walls, the result being a disfigured floor level. This probably occurred in the late 19th century when Margrave Brothers were in occupation of this part of the house.
- 5.44 Groundwork for a series of three proposed north-south floor support channels, through the overburden (G2-104) revealed that the overburden reached a depth of approximately 0.90m in depth and at this depth was the remains of another stone pitched or cobbled floor surface (G2-105), which appeared to cover the entire floor between the two floor joist support walls and the area between the internal west wall of Room G2 and the western floor support wall (G2-103). Unfortunately, it was impossible to discern any hard stratigraphic divisions of deposits within the overburden, as the deposit as a whole was very dry and very loose. However, a rough chronology of the overburden was ascertained by the character and age of the finds recovered from the deposit *i.e* the older datable material recovered was from the lower regions of the deposit.
- 5.45 Datable material recovered from the apparent demolition deposit (G2-104) from this room included three clay pipe tobacco bowls, one dateable to between 1660-1690 and the other two dateable to between 1680-1690. The earlier clay tobacco pipe bowl had a gloved hand motif impressed into its heel, indicative of the renowned Gauntlet family of clay pipe tobacco makers of Amesbury in Wiltshire. One of the other clay pipe bowls had the motif 'EL' on its heel. The other had no mark at all. As well as these clay pipe bowls, a total of 46 clay pipe tobacco stem fragments were also recovered (*see Finds Registry Part II – Photo Inventory - Room G2 No's. F01 and F02*). All of these

clay pipe fragments, including the bowls were recovered from between the floor support walls (G2-103) and the an apparently retained low basement area, suggesting the possibility that during construction work for the apparent raising of the floor in this part of the house between the years 1660-1690, that the workers used this area for having rest breaks and the area where the resulting broken clay pipe stems and bowls were recovered represented a kind of 'toss-drop-zone'.

- 5.46 As well as these clay pipe fragments several large fragments of 17th century decorative plasterwork, predominantly architrave, were also recovered (*see Finds Registry Part II – Photo Inventory - Room G2 No. A01 - 20*). Other finds within the overburden included and an almost completely intact tall necked octagonal green glass wine bottle dated to between 1660-1700 (*see Finds Registry Part II – Photo Inventory – Room G2 No. C01*) and a largely intact earthen ware jug with partial yellow glaze dated to around the 1700s (*see Finds Registry Part II – Photo Inventory - Room G2 No. B02*).
- 5.47 At the far southern end of the room further excavation revealed that the short partition wall dividing the two stone cross walls, was in fact the remains of a low basement area, which appeared to have been retained when the floor level had been raised in this room. Former access to this low basement or storage room appears to have been gained through an opening at the far south-western corner of the room via a flight of stone steps (G2-110) also exposed during ground work. Finds recovered from within this retained basement area were no earlier than the early 19th century, which would suggest that this low basement area was still in use during William Chambers *Snr's* period and possibly in use even by Margrave Brothers.
- 5.48 Once the area of this low basement had been cleared of overburden deposit, a number of interesting and significant features became apparent. Cleaning and inspection of the cobbled floor revealed the position of a small post-hole (G2-120) that had been inserted through the cobbles. A similar, but slightly larger post-hole (G2-118) was also exposed in the earthen floor at the far eastern end of the room on the other east side of the floor support wall (G2-103). Both these post-holes have been interpreted as the positions of former scaffolding when the east range of the house was first built, probably in the early 17th century.
- 5.49 Another interesting feature exposed in the cobbled floor of the retained low basement, was the remains of a former east to west running drainage channel constructed within the cobbled floor itself. This small channel appears to be contemporary to the cobbled floor, and probably represents the remains of a former external drainage channel prior to the construction of the eastern range.
- 5.50 Clearance of this low basement also revealed that the west side floor support wall had been built directly onto the cobbled floor. However, the east side support wall had had a foundation trench dug for its construction (G2-122). This had been dug directly along the eastern edge of the cobbled floor, at the threshold between the cobbles and the compacted earthen floor at the east. Reasons

for this were probably to position the wall equidistant across the floor area and the eastern wall just happened to be positioned on the threshold between floor surfaces, but in order to attain a satisfactory hard surface, a small foundation trench was dug.

- 5.51 A similar foundation cut through the cobbled floor was also apparent along the edge of the east to west internal elevation wall (G2-112).
- 5.52 All of these features revealed in this low basement area imply that the cobbled floor pre-dates all of these later features, suggesting that the cobbled floor is probably Late Medieval in date.
- 5.53 Clearance of the overburden deposit along the western length of the room also revealed further cobbles, but also, unexpectedly, the remains of a series of stone steps (G2-110) at the southwest corner, at the entrance point between the Service or Common Hall (Room G3) and the narrow corridor into Room G2.
- 5.54 There were a series of three stone steps which had once led down to the cobbled floor. Clearance of the overburden deposit, also fully exposed the access point to the retained low basement area to the east. It also exposed the position of a short brick built cross wall (G2-115) that closed off the rest of this small access part of the room. This short wall suggested that the stone steps once gave access to a small storage room, with further access to the retained low basement room to the east (G2-105). Once this area had been cleaned and inspected, it became clear that these stone steps were a later late 17th century addition, which had been inserted at the same time as the raising of the floor level in Room G2, when the floor level of the entire ground floor of the house had been made level. This interpretation was also supported by the fact that there was evidence of plasterwork on the east facing internal wall that was continuing behind the edge of the stone steps. This further suggests that the plasterwork on the east facing wall pre-dates the stone steps and is probably a remnant of the early 17th century eastern range when the ground level for this part of the house was considerably lower.
- 5.55 Unfortunately, the cobbled floor, including the lower step, at the base of the stone steps had been completely destroyed by a deep cut trench that appears to have been inserted in the early to mid 20th century to accommodate a large drainage pipe that was to help alleviate flood water from the red brick cellar below the Common Hall (Room G3).
- 5.56 Close examination of the wooden panelling that divides the main study of Room G2 from this small storage or cupboards area, revealed that within the frame itself there is the remains of a pulley system with pairs of metal sash rollers still in situ within the panel framework. This pulley system lies directly above the opening or access point that leads from the storage space alongside the stone steps through into the low basement area. The existence of these sash pulleys would suggest

that at some time in the wooden panelling's life, there had been a pulley system that lifted and dropped down a 'secret' panel in the panelling, which gave access to the retained low basement room. This suggests that this low basement room was used during this time as a secret storage space.

- 5.57 Lastly, one other interesting feature in Room G2, following the part removal of the overburden deposit, was the presence of a projecting stone ledge (G2-116) that encircled the south, east and northern walls of the room. This projecting ledge appears to have formerly been the height of the original timber floor joist supports prior to the construction of the floor joist support walls that run the length of the room. This projecting stone ledge is integral to each of the internal walls, except for the ledge that abuts the east facing internal wall, which has been constructed against the wall. Given that the stone ledge is an integral part to all of the internal walls, bar the east facing wall, suggest it is contemporary in date with the walls themselves and as such must represent the height of the floor joists at this time in the early 17th century.
- 5.58 The results from the excavation work in this room along with further investigation and recording of the standing fabric have shown that the cobbled floor exposed in this room is almost certainly Tudor in date. How early in the Tudor period this is however, is still uncertain. However, an indication, has been provided by the fact that the internal west wall of Room G2, which is aligned at a slight diagonal to the rest of the walls in the house, appears to have been built *directly* on top of this exposed cobbled floor, which suggests that this diagonal wall is later in date to the cobbled surface in this room, and as such, this further suggests the possibility that the exposed cobbled floor may have been part of an external courtyard area in the Tudor period. Potential dating for the foundations of this slanting cross wall may have been provided by the recovery of a large fragment of medieval partly lead glazed pottery in the form of a slashed jug handle, found below a compacted clay floor horizon in Room G1 (the *Great Hall*) during recent excavations, which has a date range of between 14th-16th century (*see Appendix ??? – Finds Photo Inventory – No. B18*)
- 5.59 Further investigations undertaken on the exposed standing fabric, following excavations in Room G2 (*Sir Thomas Stepney's Study*), have revealed that the east to west walls and the east wall of this room and very likely the eastern building as a whole, presently occupied by the West Credit Union, post-date the cobbled surface and the slanted internal west wall, and given the recovered late 17th century material from the overlying demolition deposit in this room, it would seem likely that this part of the house was most probably constructed in the early 17th century, perhaps post 1606, the time of the Great Flood, but certainly before the Civil War in 1642.
- 5.60 Investigation of the standing fabric on the second floor in Room S3 suggest that this extension in the early 17th century was originally a two-storey building with a sloped roof. This is evident from the scarring of a former roof line in this second floor room (*see Figure 76*).

3) Room G3 & Cellar /Basement (see Figures 35-36 and Plates 194-268)

5.61 A small investigation trial trench had already been undertaken in the area of the proposed disabled lift shaft in Room G3 in May 2011. The purpose of this small trench was to gain information on the character and extent of the fabric of the modern concrete floor, the cellar ceiling and the threshold between the Victorian red brick cellar side wall and the north wall of the kitchen (Room G8), with the aim to gather further evidence toward the theory that the mid 19th century red brick cellar hides an earlier late 17th – 18th century cellar. The interim report for this earlier work concluded that the 19th century red brick cellar did indeed cover or ‘skin’ over an earlier 18th century cellar or basement area. The interim report further concluded that with reference to the design and engineering of the proposed disabled lift access through the floor of Room G3, at the far southwest end, and therefore also through the vaulted red brick ceiling of the cellar and walls, this proposal will inevitably compromise the integrity of the mid 19th century cellar, not only by removing part of the ceiling but also potentially the loss of two red brick bays as well.

Results of watching brief during groundwork for lift shaft in Room G3

5.62 Prior to the cutting of the modern concrete floor and the removal of the required section of red brickwork from the top of Bay No.6 and 7, the interior vaulting of the cellar was propped.

5.63 Following the cutting of the modern concrete (CN: B-101) to the required size for the proposed lift shaft, all of the concrete and sections of steel support mesh (CN: B-102) were removed from the 1.7m square area, which exposed the top of the red brick vaulting (CN: B-104) of Bay No. 6 and partly Bay No. 7 and the southern and western side walls of the basement. The exposed surfaces were cleaned back, investigated and recorded.

5.64 At the far southwest corner of the opening, the remains of the stump end of a former timber floor joist (CN: B-117) pre-dating the Victorian red brick cellar became exposed. This joist was found to be resting in a stone built slot resting on top of the southern retaining wall (CN: B-114). Also, it became apparent that there was an approximate 0.20m void (CN: B-121) between the back west wall of the red brick cellar and the main west stone wall, which had been filled with loose soil and broken pieces of Victorian glass bottles, likely inserted at the time of the red brick cellar construction.

5.65 Following the recording of this section of exposed red brick ceiling of the cellar, the watching brief continued whilst the red brick vaulting and side walls from both Bays No. 6 and 7 was removed. All of the removed red bricks were retained.

- 5.66 The complete removal of the red brickwork vaulting and side walls from Bay No's. 6 and 7 exposed sections of the surprisingly well preserved plastered and white lime-washed timber floor support walls (CN: B-114) of the earlier *basement* or former room level, which pre-dated the late 19th century red brick cellar. However, disappointingly, these plastered and lime-washed walls only appeared to reach a depth of approximately 1.30m from the present existing floor level in Room G3. Below this depth, the original footings of both the southern and western side walls became exposed, along with a further 0.50m of natural clay (CN: B-122) and alluvial gravels (CN: B-123). This fact suggested that the existing basement area in Room G3, immediately prior to the insertion of the red brick cellar, was also formerly a low basement area, no higher than 1.20-1.30m in height with a timber ceiling supported on timber joists, each resting on timber floor support walls, each built up against the existing external northern and southern walls of Room G2 and Room G8. This fact suggests that this initial low basement area with floor joist support walls was probably constructed in the late 17th century and was still in use in the early 19th century (William Chambers' period). However, prior to these floor support walls being constructed, this room appears to have been a Common Hall room in the early 17th century house, with its floor level raised in the late 17th century, an interpretation supported by artefact evidence recovered from excavations in Room G2 (Sir Thomas Stepney study).
- 5.67 Close inspection of the exposed plastered and lime-washed walls revealed that, as well as revealing the likely original floor height in the earlier basement and most probably the floor level of the room in the early 17th century, there was also evidence for some partitioning or shelving, in the form of two narrow vertical channels, which had left impressions in the plaster/lime-wash. Further inspection also revealed the existence of three patches of scoring or scratch marks in the lime-wash paint toward the ceiling area against the back southern wall, each mark appearing to show an 'IXI' mark. These scored marks were most probably made by the early 19th century builders, marking the positions of a series of new floor joists that were to span over the earlier retained basement area.
- 5.68 Also of great interest was the partial exposing of the *apparent* return wall (B-115b) that runs against the west wall of the cellar directly below the opening connecting Room G2 (The Common Hall) to Room G4 (The Stair Hall). Although only a small part of this wall had been made visible behind the removed brickwork as a result of the lift shaft work, previous interpretations had suggested that this return wall, or 'dog leg' was possibly a continuation of the skewed or tapered wall that divides Rooms G1 and G2, and the red brickwork of the Victorian cellar had merely squared the wall off, which also gave the appearance that this section of wall may also have been a separate feature. However, the partial removal of the red brickwork from the southern corner of this section of wall, now clearly showed that this section of stone wall was indeed a separate feature and appeared to be acting as both a timber floor support wall in this area, as well as a strengthening wall built against the opening adjoining Rooms G3 and G4. Structural evidence exposed following excavations in

Room G3 revealed that this section of wall appeared to be covering an earlier opening that once gave access between rooms in the early 17th century, but prior to the floor raising in the late 17th century. Given this fact, it is very likely that this section of walling was also constructed at the same time in the late 17th century to offer further structural support in this area.

- 5.69 A significant issue now raised from the insertion of the lift shaft however, was the fact that the initial construction of the Victorian red brick cellar had dug approximately 0.50m below the former southern and northern wall foundations, thus exposing the underlying clay deposit. This of course raised some concern as to the structural integrity of these walls foundations and also, strongly suggested that the same situation would exist behind the entire length of each of the elevations of the Victorian red brick cellar. Added to the fact that this Victorian groundwork had dug down into the natural clay and onto the natural alluvial sand and gravel, which appears to have caused periodic phases of flooding over the decades, as has been demonstrated by the build up of silt that once covered much of the basement floor prior to the recent building recording work at the far east end of the basement, the fact that the wall foundations are also well exposed, this concern was all the more significant.
- 5.70 Following careful discussion and deliberation with the Llanelly House design team, the structural engineer, *Cadw* and Llanelli Town Council, it was concluded that for structural and safety reasons the entire red brick cellar would have to be carefully dismantled under archaeological watching brief conditions and all of the exposed earlier wall elevations of the earlier basement will have to be fully investigated and a further programme of standing building recording will also need to be undertaken, thus a lasting record and archive created to compliment and add to the already existing standing building recording of the existing red brick cellar.
- 5.71 Inevitably, the removal of the remaining Victorian red brick cellar walls and ceiling would also expose an opposing former floor joist retaining wall against the north wall and would also expose the western face of the return wall or dog-leg wall that exists at the west end of the cellar. It was hope that this would offer up further archaeological information as to the earlier 17th century form of the house in this area.

Results of watching brief during groundwork for dismantling of Victorian Cellar and ceiling in Room G3

- 5.72 In response to the new proposals, the archaeological watching brief work for the further dismantling of the Victorian red brick cellar began on 15th Nov 2011.
- 5.73 Due to restrictions from other on-going restoration work at the house, as well as limited space for

dismantling work, it was decided that the Victorian red brick cellar and the modern concrete floor was to be removed in four sections or strips, starting at the far west end, alongside the already prepared lift shaft area. Following the complete dismantling of each section, the engineering solution to the issue of the exposed wall foundations, was to run a ring of steel mesh and concrete around the exposed foundations against all walls, thus acting as a wall foundation support. Once fully constructed, the existing basement flagstone floor was to be re-laid over the ensuing new area of floor.

- 5.74 Removal of the entire Victorian red brick cellar over a period of weeks, re-confirmed that the entire late Victorian red brick cellar had indeed been constructed or *grafted* over an existing low basement room covering almost the same footprint area as the red brick cellar. This implied that this earlier basement with floor support walls was likely constructed in the late 17th century when the initial floor level was raised, until in the late 19th century Margrave Brothers Wine and Spirit Merchants made the decision to excavate the basement area a further 0.50m down into the natural clay and gravels in order to install a new easily accessible and more *presentable* red brick cellar to display their products.
- 5.75 The walls of this earlier basement area were entirely plastered and painted with lime-wash (CN: B-114 and B-115). Scored into the lime-wash paint of both the southern and northern floor joist support walls were several more 'IXI' marks, which would support the interpretation that these markings *do* represent the positions of the timber floor joists when this earlier basement was constructed (*see Figure 43*).
- 5.76 Two further large circular impressions, each approximately 0.70m in diameter, were also noted in the lime-wash paint against the dog-leg wall in the west wall, directly below the opening to Room G4. These circular marks may well represent scores in the paintwork from former wine or beer barrels (*see Figure 45*).
- 5.77 Inspection of the north wall of the basement revealed that the floor joist support wall appeared to have been built onto an already existing projecting ledge, which appeared to form part of the original foundations of the north wall. The height from the present floor level of this ledge appeared to reflect the level of the former floor level in Room G3 in the early 17th century (*see Figure 44*).
- 5.78 Following the further removal of the red brickwork from the area alongside the opening to Room G4, a further remnant of a former timber floor joist (CN: B-117) became exposed, likely a continuation of the stump end (CN: B-117) already exposed in the initial lift shaft groundwork.
- 5.79 At the far east end of the basement, alongside the bottom of the basement access steps, on the northern side, the removal of the red brickwork exposed a further short section of floor joist support

wall (CN: B-116) that was also acting as a retaining wall, holding a demolition/fill deposit on its eastern side (CN: B-126). This section of wall was also covered in plaster and lime-wash paint and also rested on the natural clay (CN: B-125) and alluvial gravel/sand (CN: B-123). Closer inspection of the boundary stratigraphy between the base of this support/retaining wall, revealed that there was still the remains of the earlier 17th century floor surface in place, as was evident from the remains of a pair of stone floor tiles or flagstones still visible (CN: B-118) jutting out from beneath the wall. This suggested that the early 17th century floor surface may well still be intact eastwards of this wall (CN: B-116), directly below the in-fill deposit (CN: B-126). Unfortunately the removal of this overburden in order to expose this earlier floor surface (CN: B-118) was not within the remit of the current development proposals and as such this surface currently remains *preserved in situ* below the proposed toilet block in Room G3.

- 5.80 With regards to the section of wall itself, at its southern end was what appeared to be the remains of a short section of return wall that had been demolished, thus leaving only the core fabric exposed. This probably occurred at the same time as the construction of the late Victorian red brick cellar.
- 5.81 The partial removal of the red brickwork from the southern side of the basement access steps revealed a further section of floor joist support wall (CN: B-116), which was also acting as a retaining wall, holding back demolition fill that had been used to raise the floor level beneath the area of the common stairs. This section of walling also had the remains of a short return wall running westwards, but on this side of the access steps, this length of wall had not been demolished. This short return wall displayed an enclosed opening with tapered sides (*see Figure 11*). This wall was lime-washed and plaster covered. Unfortunately, because there had been evidence of subsidence in this part of the room, it was decided that only a few courses of red brick should be removed from this area and a further concrete block supporting wall was built covering the brickwork, which was to act as further cautionary support.
- 5.82 Complete removal of the modern concrete floor from the far east end of Room G3 revealed that all of the ground surface to the east beyond the two retaining walls (CN: B-116) was in-fill deposit (CN: B-126) laid down at some time in the 19th century when the basement area was constructed, the present access steps were installed and the former doorway between Llanelly House and the adjoining building to the east, presently occupied by the West Credit Union, was eventually blocked in (CN: B-128). Finds from the surface of this deposit were all 19th century in date and included shards of broken glass bottles and pottery fragments.
- 5.83 Unfortunately it wasn't within the remit of the current development proposals to remove this in-fill. However, a small investigation trench was inserted, but this only managed to reach a depth of approximately 0.50m, wherein, because the in-fill deposit was a loose material the sides of the trench kept collapsing in. As such, it was decided to merely probe the in-fill in order to ascertain the

possible depth of the deposit and hopefully encounter the preserved 17th century floor surface (CN: B-118). A hard surface was reached at approximately 1.3m, which appeared to be at the same depth as the remains of the stone tiles (CN: B-118) encountered at the base of the north-eastern retainer wall (CN: B-116).

- 5.84 As well as the partial ground plan and form of the earlier floor becoming exposed at the north-eastern corner of Room G3, alongside the former doorway between Llanelly House and the adjoining building to the east, the building presently occupied by the West Credit Union, the removal of the modern concrete floor and its slight reduction also exposed two further blocked in openings, one, a small arched doorway in the east wall directly below the position of the present common stairs, and the other, an earlier doorway in the position of the existing blocked in doorway that once adjoined the rear of the building to the east. As well as revealing the fact that there was an apparent doorway or opening here in the 17th century, the block-in also suggested that the same opening had been also been reduced in size, possibly into a former window (*see Photo plates 69, 70, 71 and 72 and Figure 11*).

Evaluation trench below Common Stairs

- 5.85 The small evaluation trench inserted directly below the existing back stairs in Room G3 measured approximately 1.8m in length x 0.5m in width. Following the removal of the modern concrete layer, a slot was put in against the existing southern side wall of the cellar steps. This revealed that directly below the concrete in this area the ground surface was filled entirely with soil intermixed with clay, fragments of molten iron and fragments of Victorian debris including glass bottle and pottery fragments.
- 5.86 At the same time as this trench was being dug, the groundwork for the proposed lift shaft was also been undertaken. Following the discovery that the late 17th century low basement floor appears to have only been approximately 1.10 – 1.20 metres below the present floor surface, it was decided to dig a smaller investigative slot in the evaluation trench at its north end down to the same 1.10-1.20m depth, with the understanding that, if the original floor level in this room was at this depth, then it could well still be there at this depth in this area given that the Victorian cellar ground plan is further to the west. However, after having reached a depth of 1.20m, no original floor surface became apparent. As such, the exposed deposit at this depth was then probed further and no hard surface became apparent even at a 1.6m depth. This may suggest that when the groundwork took place for the insertion of the Victorian cellar, the entire floor area of this room may have been dug out down to an approximate 2m depth and the cellar layout designed afterward.
- 5.87 Although this evaluation trench did reveal the back edges of the later Victorian cellar steps, it did not reveal any solid evidence for the existence of an earlier basement access point, such as earlier

steps. However, given the results from the watching brief during the lift shaft insertion, which has shown that the earlier late 17th and 18th century cellar was merely a low basement area, no higher than 1.20m, similar to that already exposed in Room G2, and it may be that access to the basement was actually gained from outside via the blocked in arched opening in the east wall, positioned directly below the common stairs.

5.88 Below is a table giving a summary of the likely chronological development of Room G3 and the basement following the results of the building recording and watching brief work.

Table 1. Likely chronological development of Room G3 and Basement following results of building recording and watching brief		
Date	Event	Use
Early 1600s	Llanelly House extended to the east, with north wall of Room G3 built and the new building presently occupied by the West Credit Union. Floor level difference in Room G3 from rest of west side of house.	Possible internal passage or else external courtyard passage courtyard
1660-1700	Due to the difference in topography and likely periodic flooding, the floor level was raised in Room G2 and G3 to same level as western part of house, thus allowing the creation of a low basement area.	Basement used for storage of wines and spirits and other. Above floor area used as Common Hall passage giving access to all parts of the house. Basement possibly accessed from arched opening in external east wall, directly below present back stairs.
Early 19 th century (William Chamber period)	Blocking in of doorway opening to West Credit Union building. This opening was likely formerly used as a service stairs and passage, implying that the east side of the house may have been occupied by kitchen and servants quarters.	Basement used for storage of wines and spirits and other. Above floor area used as Common Hall passage giving access to all parts of the house. Basement possibly accessed from arched opening in external east wall, directly below present back stairs.
Late 19 th century	Construction of red brick cellar by Margrave Brothers. Periodic flooding in cellar due to groundwork having dug below natural water table and into alluvial gravels at far east end of basement.	Commercial use of new and enlarged cellar.

4) Room G4 – The Stair Hall (see Figures 47-51 and Plates 269 - 304)

5.89 Prior to any ground work having been undertaken in the Stair Hall, this room had already been prepared with only the main Edwardian staircase and the floorboards remaining still in situ. Due to the need to insert new services beneath the floorboards and the necessity to inspect the condition of the sub-floor, all of the floorboards (G4-100) were lifted and stored on the 10th January 2012. The main staircase remained in situ for several months after this, but this was eventually removed in July 2012, in order to insert temporary scaffolding whilst the new staircase was being produced.

Results of Watching Brief in Room G4 - The Stair Hall

- 5.90 Once the floorboards had been completely removed it became clear that the sub floor was completely filled with what appeared to be a demolition or construction fill (G4-102) between the floor timber joists (G4-101). This fill consisted of a dry loose soil intermixed with lime mortar, flecks of coal, ceiling and wall plaster. This loose fill deposit was removed from between the joist timbers. The timber joists were resting on top of a series of N-S running crudely built stone and mortar walls (G4-104A, B and C). Recovered finds from this deposit included a few fragments of late 17th century decorative stucco work, glass bottle fragments and pottery fragments all dateable to the late 17th century and the early 18th century.
- 5.91 During the process of removal of the sub-floor fill (G4-102) it soon became apparent that only approximately 0.60m below the present floor surface was another cobbled floor (G4-103). Complete removal of the overburden or sub-floor fill (G4-102), revealed that this cobbled surface covered almost the entire northern end of the room, from the base of the north wall to about 1 meter from the first step of the existing staircase. The cobbled surface also extended from the entrance to Room G5 and onwards to the entrance to Room G3 or the Service Hall. Given that recovered finds from the overburden (G4-102) were predominantly late 17th century in date, this cobbled floor was very almost certainly earlier, probably 16th century in date and identical in character and form to the already exposed cobbled floors in Rooms G1 and G2.
- 5.92 The cobbled surface covered an area of approximately 3.5m x 4.5m. Following cleaning and inspection of this cobbled surface, it became clear that the cobbled floor at the east end, in the area between the entrances to Room G1 and G3 was much damaged with many of the cobbles missing. However, although much of this former cobbled area was damaged, a large flat flagstone did become exposed (G4-111). Although cracked and damaged itself, it was clear that this flagstone was probably originally a threshold stone serving the doorways to the opposing rooms. This flagstone and the whole cobbled surface had been placed or embedded directly onto a compacted orange clay and sand sub-base (G4-113).
- 5.93 Further removal of the overburden (G4-102) from the area of the doorway into Room G3, the Service Hall, revealed that contemporary with the cobbled floor and the flagstone, was the position of a former short flight of two stone steps (G4-119) going downwards into the former service hall. These steps had been filled with overburden material (G4-102) up to the level of the existing floor and the material held in place by the stone built retaining or east facing return wall in Room G3 (G3-116). This would suggest that this work and construction of the wall itself was probably undertaken when the floor level was raised in the late 17th century – early 18th century in order to create one completely level and flowing ground floor. Given this fact, the presence of these earlier steps, which are probably 16th century in date, formerly gave access to original lower level room in the Service Hall (Room G3).

- 5.94 Complete removal of the overburden (G4-102) from above the cobbled surface revealed several other interesting features associated with the form and character of the 17th century house. This included evidence that the existing doorway into Room G5 that abuts the north wall is an original 17th century feature, but the threshold was obviously lower and accessible from the cobbled floor. Also apparent was the remains of the original 17th century wall plaster still preserved on the elevations behind the overburden. Another feature that became clearer following the complete removal of the overburden was the character of the doorway leading to Room G2, the so called 'Great Hall'. Presently this doorway is characterised by a wide arched entrance with 19th century wooden panelling. However, the removal of the sub-floor overburden back to the cobbled floor surface revealed the original 17th century doorway footings complete with impressions within remnants of wall plaster of the original 17th century doorframe (*Photo plates 291 and 292*).
- 5.95 South of the cobbled surface, toward the existing Edwardian staircase at the west end, the cobbled floor stops with a narrow gully or cut slot, that may have once held a timber frame or partition (G4-117). Whatever the purpose of this slot, it nevertheless marks the end of the cobbled floor. Further south from here the floor surface was a mixture of orange clay intermixed with sand and grit (G4-114). This floor surface only extends for approximately 1 meter, wherein the stump remains of a stone built mortared wall exists running east to west (G4-106). A cut for this wall (G4-116) is filled by rubble stone and mortar (G4-115). Inspection of the stone wall showed that it abuts the east facing elevation of Room G4, but it is still partly covered by wall plaster identical to that covering the lower parts of all of the elevations in this room. Which would suggest that this stump wall is also originally 17th century in date, but it was cut and utilised as a support wall for the late 17th and early 18th century staircase as well as for the later early 20th century staircase.
- 5.96 With the floorboards removed, another interesting feature that became exposed was the remains of a small under stair basement area (G4-112) that had been sealed off beneath the existing staircase. Given that the eastern end of the E-W running stone wall (G4-106) had obviously been cut away or removed, would suggest that this low basement is probably an original later 17th – early 18th century feature that would have existed below the 18th century staircase, which was later sealed up. The character and form of the flagstones in this basement are identical to those that exist in Room G8, the 18th century Kitchen.
- 5.97 In July 2012 the existing staircase was removed in order to consolidate the existing floor and in preparation for the new 18th century staircase which was to replace the Edwardian stairs and therefore sympathetic to the 18th century house. Removal of these stairs gave access for recording and investigation work of the hidden elevations and the character and form of the E-W running stair support wall (G4-106). This only confirmed that this wall remnant was very probably the remains of an earlier 17th century wall which had been cut off to accommodate the new staircase, but it does

give further evidence from which to draw an interpretative ground plan of the 17th century house.

5) Room G5/G6 – Drawing Room & Best Parlour (see Figures 52-57 and Photo plates 306-319)

5.98 Prior to the watching brief work in this room, all of the furniture and building materials had been removed from this room. Originally these rooms had been partitioned. However, at some time during the life of these rooms as shops in the mid – late 20th century, the partition had been completely removed, with only a small section remaining against the east wall and the door way that gives access to the service corridor below the main staircase in Room G4. As such, both these rooms are included as one room in this section to aid description and interpretation. In the 2003-2004 season of work a trial trench had already been excavated in this room through the floor at the far northwest corner of Room G5, alongside the doorway into Room G1, the so called ‘Great Hall’. However, none of the results from this trench had been written up.

Results of Trial Trench in Room G5

5.99 The trial trench in Room G5 was also dug several years ago (2003-2004) by another party as part of earlier preliminary engineering investigations. However, as with the trial trenches in Rooms G1 and G2, the results from the excavation were never recorded or fully interpreted archaeologically. This trench was re-opened and investigated on 1 March 2011. Since its initial excavation the trench had changed very little, having been kept covered over since its initial creation with scaffold planks. For the original trench inspection by engineers, unfortunately a number of existing floor joists had been sawn off to allow easier access for groundwork operations.

5.100 This trench was positioned at the far northwest corner of Room G5, adjacent to a doorway leading to Room G1 and immediately alongside the edge of the former shop window. The trench measured approximately 0.60m x 0.70m and averaged a depth of approximately 0.90m from the existing floor surface.

5.101 One of the most significant features in this trench that was of immediate interest was the remains of a former wall stub, which appeared to mark the position of the original 18th century north to south running west wall of Llanelly House alongside Vaughan Street. This feature occupies a large portion of this trench.

5.102 From the investigation of the west facing section in this trench, the stratigraphy appears as follows. Directly below the existing wooden floor (G5-100) and floor joists (G5-101) is a deposit of broken stone slabs with brick remains, which average a depth of approximately 0.15m (G5-106). These stone fragments appeared to be the remains of former floor support piers. Directly below this

feature was a loose soil mixed with rubble, dust and dirt, probably a former demolition and construction deposit (G5/6-102). This deposit was approximately 0.40m in depth. Directly below this and only approximately 0.05m – 0.10m in thickness was a deposit of compacted clay earth intermixed with coal and ash fragments (G5/6-105). This context was interpreted as evidence of a former compacted floor. Below this deposit was a further grey/black coloured compacted deposit approximately 0.05m thick. This deposit consisted of dry earth intermixed with coal pieces (10%) and ash (G5-107). Directly below this deposit was a thin deposit of lime mortar (G5/6-108), approximately 0.03m in thickness. Directly below this apparent construction deposit was a layer of loose stones (shale) with grit and occasional flecks of coal. This deposit was approximately 0.20m deep (G5/6-109). Directly below this deposit was the natural orange clay (G5/6-112).

- 5.103 The results from this trench concurred with the trial trench in Room G1 that the original floor surface of the 17th century house lies considerably below the present floor surface, with a record of demolition and construction deposits of the 18th and 19th centuries well preserved in the stratigraphic sections above the compacted floor surface. This trench also revealed that below this 17th century compacted floor surface were several other earlier deposits which are probably medieval in date.

Results of Watching Brief in Room G5/G6

- 5.104 Removal of the timber floorboards in both Rooms G5 and G6 revealed that a large number of the floorboards were either 18th century or early 19th century in date, given that the method in which they had been fixed to the oak floor joists was using a traditional 'tongue' and 'groove' design, with the occasional use of wooden pegs or dowels to fix them to the oak joists. Once lifted these floorboards were retained and stored with the intention to reuse them once the timber joists had been inspected and all necessary modern services installed.
- 5.105 With the floorboards fully removed, it became clear that they had been fixed to a series of oak timber floor joists, which had all been joined by being slot and pegged, with each resting on a series of equally spaced stone piers (G5/6-106) constructed from stone (limestone, slate, brick) and dry mortar. The oak joist appeared to be the original 18th century timbers, but they were in fairly poor condition in a number of areas, not from damp or rot, but they were broken or cracked in a number of places and temporary support battening had been used to offer support. As such, it was decided that a series of modern concrete floor support piers would have to be built across the entire floor area, to offer further support to the existing oak timbers. However, in order to undertake this work, the sub-floor overburden deposit (G5/6-102) had to be partly removed in order to create a channel for the new floor supports. Of course this entailed finding a hard adequate sub base.
- 5.106 Removal of part of the overburden (G5/6-102) confirmed the results from the trial trench, that a hard compacted surface lay approximately 0.60m below the present surface. However, although the

same compacted earth and clay floor (G5-106) became exposed at the base of all of the newly cut channels through the overburden in Room G5, in Room G6, at the same height as the compacted floor was yet another cobbled surface (G5/6-102). Removal of the overburden in the area of the required channels in Room G6 had managed the recovery of several lumps of 17th century decorative plasterwork and a number of several other late 17th century finds, including a complete small glass 'onion' bottle dated to around 1680-1700 and other late 17th century pottery fragments, such as fragments of 17th century red earthen ware of the Surrey/Hampshire border ware type. As with the overburden in the other ground floor rooms, the overburden lying above yet another similar cobbled surface, again suggests that this cobbled floor is very probably 16th century in date.

- 5.107 Interestingly the cobbled surface stopped exactly where the original 18th century room partition would once have stood, which suggest that even in the 17th century these rooms were also partitioned. This was also evident from the remains of a former cut timber slot in the floor running E-W (G5/6-104).
- 5.108 Other than the fact that Room G5 had formerly had a cobbled floor and Room G6 had been an earth floor in the 17th century, no other significant features became exposed. Unfortunately due to damage to the west wall of these rooms from the insertion of Victorian and modern shop-fronts, the only evidence along the internal base of this wall were fragments of 17th century wall plaster with a cream lime-wash paint.

7) Room G7 – The Courtyard (see *Figures 58-62 and Plates 321-332*)

- 5.109 At sometime in the late 1980s or 1990s this former external courtyard area, *sandwiched* between the eastern and western ranges of Llanelly House and a later Victorian building to the north, was roofed over with a corrugated plastic roof and a modern toilet and kitchen was built. At the beginning of the 2011 season of restoration work, these modern additions were completely removed, including the plastic roof, in order to accommodate part of the external scaffolding, leaving only a modern concrete floor across the entire area, with an access ramp leading to the rear entrance of the eastern range alongside Room G9.

Results of Watching Brief in Room G7 – The Courtyard

- 5.110 Removal of the modern concrete floor (G7-100) from the courtyard area began on 15th January 2013. Directly below this 0.10m thick concrete, covering the entire floor area was a deposit of loose overburden intermixed with lime mortar and broken red bricks (G7-101). The depth of this deposit varied from between 0.30-0.40m, deeper at the far east end. This deposit was interpreted as a likely former demolition fill used to raise the floor level equal to the rest of the interior of the house. Dateable material recovered from this overburden was predominantly 19th century in date, and

included fragments of pottery, glass and red brick.

- 5.111 This sub-base deposit was reduced by approximately 0.20m-0.30m across the entire floor area to a required height over a period of 2-3 days, with the objective being to eventually insert a series of three long concrete floor supports in a N-S line in order to support the new floor for the proposed new kitchen. Whilst this ground reduction work was being undertaken, a small evaluation pit was sunk through the overburden in order to ascertain the character of the underlying deposits and to inform the contractors of the potential depth of the significant archaeology as well as a suitably hard surface to build onto for the new floor supports. This small trial pit was inserted against the blocked in doorway (late reused and adapted as a fireplace) that formerly led into Room G9.
- 5.112 This small trench measured only approximately 0.70m x 0.50m. Directly below the overburden (G7-101) was a thin band of lime mortar only approx. 0.05m in thickness (G7-102). This was interpreted as a construction deposit. Directly below this deposit was a further deposit of buff coloured clay, approximately 0.05m in depth (G7-103). Directly below this deposit was a thin band of soil/silt intermixed with coal fragments, ash and lime mortar (G7-104). This deposit measured only approximately 0.10m in depth. Directly below this deposit were the remains of a cobbled surface (G7-105). This exposed area of cobbles was much damaged with only a small patch of cobbles still remaining at the base of the trench (see Section A-B in Figure 58). The presence of a cobbled surface at approximately 0.30m below the modern concrete would suggest that this surface is very likely the remains of the earlier 17th century external floor level, given that this room former part of the rear courtyard of the house that gave access to the former stable and coach house and other parts of the gardens.
- 5.113 With the results of the small trial pit used to inform the limits of the depth of the new floor support channels, a series of three long trenches (TR1, TR2 and TR3) were each dug into the overburden (G7-101) down 0.20m so as not to potentially damage any possible cobbled surface. Interestingly, no other cobbles became exposed in any of these trenches other than those already exposed in the trial trench.
- 5.114 The reduction of the overburden (G2-101) also managed to expose a number of former floor supports, including the rotten remains of an old timber joist (G7-107), stone wall (G7-106) and a low red brick wall only two courses high (G7-108). Each of these floor supports probably represented fragments of an earlier 18th and 19th century floor support.
- 5.115 Other features that became exposed during the ground reduction and the excavation for the floor support trenches included a series of thin slate stone flagstones running alongside the west wall of Room G7. Given that this room was formerly an external courtyard area, it is possible that these stones represent the remains of possible culvert or a gutter running N-S. Another feature that became exposed was a series of fairly thick flagstones at the base of the southern wall of of the room. However, these appear to be part of the former 18th /19th century fireplace (blocked-in) in

southern wall, which forms part of the neighbouring property that eventually closed off this courtyard area from the landscape beyond to the south.

8) Room G8/G9 – The Kitchen/Dining Room (see Figures 63-66 and Plates 335 - 352)

- 5.116 This room essentially represents the ground floor of the eastern range of the house. At some time in the mid 19th century, during William Chambers Snr's residence, this long room was divided into two rooms, generally believed to have been the Kitchen (Room G8) and the Dining Room (Room G9). However, in the 18th century, these two rooms formed one long room with a series of equidistantly placed doorways in the east wall. It is generally believed that this room was formerly used as a Stable and Coach House. The existing floor height in both of the rooms was considerably lower than the existing floor height across the rest of the ground floor of the house, some 0.62m lower.
- 5.117 Room G8 (The Kitchen) is characterised by a regular flagstone floor, a large inglenook fireplace in the west wall, two windows in the east wall, a doorway and a former blocked in doorway in the north wall and a mid 19th century timber and red brick partition to the south dividing this room from Room G9. Room G9 is characterised by a blocked in window and doorway in the east wall, a timber and red brick partition at the north and south end and a small 1930s/40s open fireplace in the west wall. The floor surface of this room was red quarry tiles.
- 5.118 At the time of the 2011 season of work, Room G8 was being used as an office area by the former contractors and Room G9 was being used as an area to store house furnishings, including a number of cast iron backing plates for one of the fireplaces in the ground floor rooms.
- 5.119 Development proposals intended to utilise Room G8 as a power room storing the house boiler and all other main electrical power units. Room G9 was to be used as part of the new Kitchen area. To undertake this work the floor height of both rooms needed to be raised to the same level as the floor level in the rest of the house. This was undertaken by constructing a new raised timber floor in both rooms with the original floor surfaces being unharmed and remaining preserved in situ.
- 5.120 The only ground work required in this long room was in the floor of Room G8, where there was a need to insert a new service drain at the far NE corner of the room and the insertion of a temporary Radon gas detector in the centre of the room. Prior to this work being undertaken these two areas in Room G8 were excavated manually by hand. The following details the results from these two trenches (TR1 and TR2).

Results from evaluation Trench 1

- 5.121 Trench 1 was inserted at the far northeast corner of Room G8. It measured approximately 0.80m x 1m, which was the approximate dimension left when three of the flagstones (G8-100) were lifted in

order to expose flagstones bedding deposit (G8-101). This was a fairly compacted mid dark buff coloured deposit intermixed with earth, lime mortar, coal fragments and stones, all characteristics indicative of a former demolition deposit used to raise the original floor level in this room. The removal of this deposit revealed that it averaged approximately 0.30m in depth and was lying directly over an earlier cobbled floor surface (G8-102). The overburden (G8-101) was removed from above this cobbled surface and the exposed floor was cleaned, inspected and recorded. The cleaning process exposed an apparent square shaped post-hole (G8-103), measuring approximately 80mm x 80mm. Following removal of much of the fill (G8-101) of this post-hole, a measuring rod was inserted into the hole and the depth of the post-hole was approximately 0.30m. This post-hole very likely once held a vertical timber post and may have formed part of a much larger timber frame.

- 5.122 Another feature that became exposed in this trench was an apparent stone ledge (G8-108) which projected outwards from the base of the blocked in window in the east wall. The cobbles butted up to the edge of this stone ledge. Given that the area directly in front of this stone ledge is a former blocked in opening and that the standing building investigation had already revealed that the base of this opening appeared to have once been much lower, the presence of this stone ledge may suggest that the opening was formerly a doorway and the ledge is in fact the remains of an earlier stone step contemporary with the cobbled floor, which was probably covered over in the late 17th century – early 18th century when the floor level was raised across the whole house. However, this would also suggest that this cobbled surface was laid down at a much earlier time, probably 16th century.

Results from evaluation Trench 2

- 5.123 Trench 2 was positioned toward the centre of the room. This trench only required one small flagstone to be lifted measuring approximately 0.45m x 0.45m square. As with Trench 1, the same fairly compact mid buff coloured bedding deposit consisting of earth mixed with lime mortar, coal fragments and stones became exposed (G8-101). This deposit was removed down to a depth of approximately 0.30m, wherein the same cobbled surface already exposed in Trench 1 became exposed (G8-102). From this trench only a small fragment of local gravel tempered earthenware became exposed. Again, this cobbled surface was interpreted as being probably 16th century in date and then covered over in the late 17th – early 18th century during the first Stepney renovations.

9) Results of Watching Brief during the lifting of floorboards on the First and Second Floors

- 5.124 One of the many significant requirements of the restoration process at Llanelly House was the lifting of the floorboards on both the first and second floors, in order to inspect the condition of the timber

joists as well as to insert the new electrical services. Although this work didn't reveal anything of any great significance beneath any of the first floor rooms, it did however expose several interesting finds from beneath the floorboards in Room S5 on the second floor (see Finds Register in Appendix III). This included a small, sadly broken, late 17th century amethyst coloured perfume bottle, an almost intact 19th century sponge-ware type bowl, two 19th century clear glass bottles, a few fragments of hand written letters with references to Llanelly, a few fragments of sheet music, and a 19th century playing card. All of these finds were found amongst the dirt beneath the floorboards at the far south-eastern corner of Room S5. Why these artefacts were beneath the floorboards isn't known, but one theory is, that many of the finds may have been swept beneath the floorboards deliberately when cleaning the attic room in the 19th century when the floorboards may have been lifted at some time or other. However, this still doesn't offer an explanation as to the reason the late 17th century perfume bottle was found in this location?

Summary of Results and Interpretation

5.125 The initial archaeological work in 2011, guided by the on-going restoration programme, focused firstly on a program of standing building recording on the interior of the house following the removal of deteriorated plasterwork from a number of internal elevations. This first phase of on-site work managed to record a number of very interesting features within the standing fabric of the exposed internal elevations, especially at ground floor level, including a number of blocked in, enlarged and reduced doorways, windows and fireplaces, that pre-dated the 18th century house.

5.126 Following this initial building inspection and survey work, ground work began in April 2011, with the lifting of existing floorboards for the insertion of new floor supports and services, from four of the ground floor rooms, the former *Sir Thomas Stepney's Study* (Room G2), the *Great Hall* (Room G1) and the two rooms that occupy the south-western range of the house (Rooms G5 and G6). Following completion of work in these rooms, in 2012-2013 work then began in Rooms G3, G4, G8 and G9.

The Great Hall (Room G1)

5.127 The room known as the Great Hall, which formerly occupied the north-western part of the ground floor, has suffered inexorably over the years, especially from the insertion of shop-fronts in the mid to late 19th century, which unfortunately destroyed all of the north and west facing elevations at ground level and also removed much of the former timbered floor having being destroyed and replaced by concrete in the 20th century.

5.128 Following the removal of the concrete floor, excavations in the Great Hall (*Room G1*) for the insertion of a proposed new floor exposed the surface of the 17th century floor, lying approximately

0.40m below the present floor level. Loose material covering the full extent of this floor surface was removed, which exposed a compacted earth floor covering only the western two-thirds of the room. Faint impressions in this earthen floor suggested that it may have once been covered in stone flagstones laid diagonally. Removal of the floorboards from the eastern side of this room exposed a demolition fill that was covering an earlier 17th century cobbled floor surface, which was forming a narrow corridor. At the far southern end of this cobbled floor, alongside the archway into the Stair Hall, a rectangular area of cobbles have been laid to create a picture of what could be two prancing horses or possibly two horses' heads.

- 5.129 Fortunately, the partial lower remains of the former 17th century fireplace surround became exposed during these excavations, against the west wall along with the footprint of the former 17th century fireplace opening and the remains of the hearth. These features are still preserved beneath the new timber floor in this room. Removal of the loose deposit overlying this 17th century floor also revealed the lower section of two blocked in openings, one in the southwest corner of the room in the southern wall and another adjacent to this in the west wall alongside the former fireplace, the latter indicative of a possible doorway either leading to a former building to the west, now absent, or else a doorway to the outside. Another interpretation for this apparent opening may be that it is a blocked in alcove alongside the 17th century fireplace. Because of the number of possibilities for this blocked in opening, this feature needs further investigation undertaken in the future in the form of excavation on the outside of the building to shed some light on its character.
- 5.130 Also exposed in this room were the positions of two of the 17th century window. At the foot of the exposed standing fabric of the north wall at the head of this apparent cobbled passage way, the excavations revealed the position of the former 18th century central front doorway opening, but the threshold to this doorway was positioned somewhat higher than cobbled surface, which further suggested that the cobbled passage way pre-dated the insertion of the central doorway to the house in the early 18th century. Finds recovered from the overburden covering the 17th century floor included a large amount of 17th century decorative plasterwork, including fragments of cornice, architrave and fireplace surround detailing.
- 5.131 In order to accommodate a concrete support base for the proposed display cabinet that was to hold the Stepney armorial dinner service, a large trench had to be excavated in the centre of the room, which offered the opportunity to evaluate the floor deposits below the 17th century floor level more thoroughly than was possible for the already re-opened trial pit in this room. Excavations for this trench revealed that approximately 0.35m below the 17th century floor was an earlier floor level of compacted orange/buff coloured clay that had evidence of a former hearth area central to the room. This hearth was only evident from the fact that the clay floor in this area had turned a pinkish colour from heat and the fact that there were occasional burnt cockle shells. Initially it was thought that this compacted clay floor was the natural clay, however a small trial pit was sunk through this deposit,

which showed that the compacted clay floor was approximately 0.10m thick and was covering a dark soil intermixed with irregular shaped stones. Luckily, positioning of this small investigative pit happened to be fortuitously positioned directly over a small post-hole, approximately 0.20m in diameter and 0.30m deep, filled with the same loose dark soil material. Providence also allowed the recovery of a large fragment of medieval glazed pottery in the form of a jug handle from this underlying deposit, with a date range of between the 14th-16th centuries, suggesting that the above clay floor was probably late Tudor in date.

Sir Thomas Stepney's Study (Room G2)

- 5.132 The complete removal of the floor-boarding in Room G2 (*Sir Thomas Stepney's Study*) revealed two parallel north to south aligned cross walls, partitioned by a further east to west cross wall at the southern side. Each of the tops of the walls was surmounted by wooden planks, which were themselves supporting the existing oak floor joists. Groundwork for a series of three proposed north-south floor support channels, through the 0.90m deep demolition deposit below the existing floor, exposed the remains of another stone pitched or cobbled floor surface, which appeared to cover almost the entire area of the room. At the far southern end of this room further excavation revealed that the short partition wall which was dividing the two stone cross walls, was in fact the remains of a low basement area, which appeared to have been retained when the floor level had been raised in this room. Former access to this low basement or storage room appears to have been gained through an opening at the far south-western corner of the room via a flight of stone steps also exposed during excavations. Dateable material recovered from the apparent 0.90m deep demolition deposit from this room included three clay pipe tobacco bowls, each dateable to between 1660-1680, several large fragments of 17th century decorative plasterwork and an almost completely intact tall necked octagonal green glass wine bottle, again dated to between 1660-1700.
- 5.133 The results from work in this room have shown that the cobbled floor is almost certainly late Tudor in date. However, how early in the Tudor period this surface is, is still speculative. An indication has been provided by the fact that the internal west wall of Room G2, which is aligned at a slight diagonal to the rest of the walls in the house, appears to have been built *directly* on top of this exposed cobbled floor, which suggests that this diagonal wall is later in date to the cobbled surface in this room, and as such, this further suggests the possibility that the exposed cobbled floor may have been part of an earlier external courtyard area at some earlier time in the late Tudor period.
- 5.134 Potential dating for the foundations of this slanting cross wall may have been provided by the recovery of a large fragment of medieval glazed pottery in the form of a slashed jug handle, found below a compacted clay floor in Room G1 (the *Great Hall*) during recent excavations, which has a date range of between 14th-16th century.
- 5.135 Further investigations undertaken on the exposed standing fabric, following excavations in Room

G2 (*Sir Thomas Stepney's Study*), have revealed that the southern wall and the east wall of this room and very likely the entire eastern building as a whole, presently occupied by the West Credit Union, post-date the cobbled surface and the slanted internal west wall, and given the recovered late 17th century material from the overlying demolition deposit in this room, it would seem likely that this part of the house was most probably constructed in the early 17th century, perhaps post 1606, the time of the Great Flood, but certainly before the Civil War in 1642. However, it is entirely possible that there was a small intermediary extension attached to the east facing elevation of the house before this early 17th century extension that had a lower roof line than the main house.

Common Hall & Cellar (Room G3)

- 5.135 In the 18th century this room was formerly a central service or common hall that gave access to most parts of the house, including a flight of service stairs leading to the first and second floors, *Sir Thomas Stepney's Study*, a low basement or cellar and access to the far eastern building presently occupied by the West Credit Union. As such this room was, in the 18th century, a busy thoroughfare. In the mid to late 19th century however, when the Wine Merchants, the Margrave Brothers, occupied the former *Sir Thomas Stepney's Study*, as an office, they inserted a red brick cellar below the hall with a number of brick built bays with vaulted ceilings to display and store a selection of their quality wines. However, the 19th century ground-work for the insertion of this Victorian cellar happened to puncture through the floor of an existing 17th and 18th century low basement room and as a consequence also excavated down to the natural alluvial gravels, which has had fairly dire consequences over the years with problems of flooding and slight subsidence.
- 5.136 In the late 20th century, the ceiling of the cellar, on its upper side in the Service Hall, was covered in its entirety in steel mesh and concrete to act as further support for the vaulted ceiling and a supporting floor for the room itself. A problem that arose from the insertion of this concrete floor however, was the fact that it had raised the floor in this room above the rest of the house ground floor level by several inches, an issue that needed to be addressed by removing all of the concrete.
- 5.137 Excavations in this room, for the insertion of a proposed disabled lift shaft, had already revealed that behind the Victorian red brick cellar was the earlier basement or cellar, which had had its original floor level removed and extended in the Victorian period to accommodate the new cellar design. Prior to this work however, the earlier 18th century and early 19th century basement appears to have been a low basement approximately 1.3m in depth. In the early 17th century however, it is very likely that this basement area would have been absent, but the floor space itself would have acted as a thoroughfare, allowing access to the main house via small flights of wooden stairs.
- 5.138 Further building work in this room has revealed evidence to corroborate the idea that Llanelly House was once linked to the building to the east of the main house, which is presently occupied by the West Credit Union. Evidence for this emerged following the removal of a stone built block-in wall

from the far northeast end of this room, which exposed a skewed cross passage leading to the building next door, remnants of 17th century plasterwork, including the remains of a section of cornice and the outline for the position of a former wooden staircase that linked the two buildings floor levels. From the removal of this blocking in, a large fragment of decorative Elizabethan architectural stone fabric was recovered, decorated by a 'daisy wheel' motif interspersed with poppy heads. This fragment has been interpreted as possibly part of one of the shoulders of a former fireplace surround, perhaps from the *Great Hall*.

The Stair Hall (Room G4)

5.139 This open room occupies the central core of the house and is characterised by the tall Georgian window that reaches to the ceiling at the top of the house and lights the main staircase that allows access to the first and second floors. As with the other rooms in the house, groundwork in this room was confined to the reduction of floor levels for new floor supports and services. This work revealed a continuation of the 17th century cobbled floor already exposed in the *Great Hall (Room G1)*, with evidence of a small room, possible a storage room and an access corridor that appears to have been gained from a flight of wooden stairs from the *Service Hall (Room G3)*. Another feature exposed during ground-works was a short length of wall with an internal plastered face, which appears to have been used at a later date in the late 17th and early 18th centuries as a support wall for the main staircase.

5.140 An interesting Victorian feature in this room became exposed when plasterwork was removed from the north facing elevation below the tall window. This work revealed an apparent continuation of the same tall window to ground level. However, closer inspection of the standing fabric and the carpentry work of the hidden window frame have confirmed that the former Georgian window sill appears to have been removed at some time and the existing window frame extended to ground level. The scarred walling that remained from this work happened to have been in-filled with red brick and stone. This repair with red brick suggests that this work occurred in the early to mid 19th century during William Chambers *Snr* period and sheds some light on the appearance of the *Stair Hall* window at this time. A few shards of orange, green and red stain glass were also recovered from the in-fill, suggesting the possibility of a former stained glass window here. Closer inspection of the later blocking in of this extension suggests that the earliest period of blocking in of this window extension occurred at some time in the early 20th century, perhaps when the Edwardian staircase was installed.

Drawing Room and Best Parlour (Rooms G5 & G6)

5.141 The removal of floor-boarding and the excavation of a series of channels for the insertion of new floor supports exposed the remains of an earlier stone *pitched* or cobbled floor in the former *Drawing Room (Room G6)* and a compacted earth floor in the former *Best Parlour (Room G5)*, the latter possibly once having been covered in a stone flagged floor, now absent. Further evidence for

the division of these two rooms was provided by the remains of a timber slot in the floor, which most probably formed part of a larger wooden partition between the two rooms. The overburden covering both of these earlier floor surfaces appeared to be all one demolition deposit. As well as surface finds dating to the early 20th and 19th centuries directly below the floorboards, dateable finds recovered from the underlying demolition deposit included a complete hand blown green glass *onion* shaped wine bottle, which can be dated to between 1660 – 1700. Other pottery and clay tobacco pipe fragments recovered, also suggested that the demolition deposit, covering both the exposed cobbled floor and the compacted earth floor, dates to the late 17th century, which implies that the cobbled floor and earthen floor are earlier in date, probably 16th century.

Breakfast Parlour (Room G8-G9)

- 5.141 In the 19th century this building range appears to have been used as the Llanelly House Kitchens. However, in the 18th century archaeological investigations from other parts of the house have revealed that it is possible that an earlier kitchen range existed to the east of the main house and may have occupied the building now occupied by the West Credit Union. As such it is very likely that this east wing was used as the Breakfast Parlour. However, given the character and form of this building, in the 17th century this range was most probably used as a stable block.
- 5.142 Archaeologically, very little groundwork has taken place in this room other than a series of small trial trenches undertaken prior for the insertion of new services and Radon gas testing. These trenches revealed that approximately 0.40m below the existing stone flagged floor was a well preserved cobbled floor. One of these trenches also exposed the remains of a rectangular post-hole contemporary with the cobbled floor that reached a depth of approximately 0.60m below the cobbles.

6 Conclusions

- 6.1 Although there has been a considerable amount of historical research undertaken on Llanelly House over the years, comprehensive archaeological investigations did not begin until March 2011. These investigations have revealed that Llanelly House, rather than being exclusively the remains of a significantly well preserved Queen Anne and Georgian gentry house with a colourful history completed in 1714, Llanelly House also has foundations and significant standing remains that date back to both the Tudor and Stuart periods.
- 6.2 In general, the archaeological results appear to marry very well with the available historical documents about the house, its occupants and general events from the 16th century through to the present day. Generally, each phase of apparent extensive building work seems to have occurred at the same time as inheritance and intermarriages between family groups, such as that between the Lewis and Vaughan families in the late 16th century and the Vaughan and Stepney families in the

late 18th century.

- 6.3 One unusual characteristic regarding Llanelly House, is the fact that such a large Welsh gentry house has been built so close to a parish church. Given that medieval documents seem to suggest that Saint Elli had built a monastery here by the cross, it is very possible that the present Llanelly House lies within this early medieval monastic land. However, in the 6th century, it is more likely that any vernacular buildings in this immediate area surrounding the church itself would have been simple timber built structures. However, it is also entirely possible, given its close proximity to the church and the fact that archaeological work confirms that the house has late medieval origins, that the later stone house may well have formed part of a glebe, or land belonging to a benefice, and so by default to an incumbent priest. In other words, the glebe is land, in addition to or including the priest's house and grounds, which was assigned to support the priest. So, it is entirely possible that in the early Tudor period, the house was in fact a glebe house, which *may* earlier have formed part of a lesser monastery dissolved by Henry VIII in the years 1536-1541. If this were to be the case, then it is entirely possible that the house became part of Crown Land, which was later auctioned off to help fund Henry's military campaigns in the 1540s. This is all speculation however.
- 6.4 This late medieval building would probably have started life out as a two-storey, two-unit and end chimney gabled house, perhaps with a small byre building or extension attached to the west. Unfortunately access to this western area is not possible, but perhaps in the future, any work in this area will shed some light on this possibility.
- 6.5 Not soon after, the west range was added (Drawing Room and Best Parlour) along with a series of out buildings, including the east range that probably served as a stable block. Also, the building investigation and excavation work suggest that an extension was attached to the east side of the house at some time in either the mid-late 16th century or the very early 17th century, which was later enlarged in the early 17th century.
- 6.6 In the early 17th century, perhaps as a result of damage from the Great Flood of 1606, as well as the marriage of Anne Lewis to Walter Vaughan of Golden Grove, an eastern range of buildings (former Sir Thomas Stepney's Study and the present West Credit Union building) was added to the old house, thus creating one long 'L' shaped 2-storey building with a gabled roof, possibly with dormer windows in the roof space. Investigation of the standing fabric in the second floor rooms suggest that the roof line of the western extension was originally slightly lower in height from that of the main house.
- 6.7 In the late 17th century, at some time between the years 1660–1680 the floor level of the ground floor was raised across the whole house, thus forming one complete level ground floor with the creation of a common or service hall with a now low basement area and the creation of the Stair

Hall.

- 6.8 The raising of the entire ground floor was a huge undertaking and must have taken a considerable time to complete. Why this floor raising project was undertaken is not known. As well as creating a complete one level on the ground floor with all rooms at the same height, which would have been both attractive and fashionable, the raising of the floor height may also have been prompted by flooding concerns. The floor in the eastern side of the house was raised by approximately 0.50m, and the western end of the house, which was considerably lower than the rest of the house, was raised to the same height, which entailed the barrowing in of a huge amount of demolition and construction material, which resulted in raising the floor level here by just under 0.90m.
- 6.9 In response to this work, the ceiling heights also appear to have been raised some 0.40-0.50m on the ground floor. The interior walls of the house at this time would have all been plastered with no wooden wall panelling, just cream painted plaster. The earliest oak wall panelling was most probably added in the early 18th century, with pine ones added much later.
- 6.10 In the early years of the 18th century, post 1705, Margaret Vaughan inherited Llanelly House from one of her elder sisters on her deathbed. In 1691 Margaret had already married Sir Thomas Stepney (5th Baronet), thus the Stepney lineage at the house had begun. Thomas Stepney was most likely responsible for the commissioning of the new house's front façade with its present third floor with hipped roof in a Queen Anne style, work that probably wasn't fully completed until 1714, as is evident from a date on one of the surviving lead drainage hoppers. The date 1714, as well as probably marking the completion of the building project, also heralds in the new Georgian dynasty with the coronation of King George I.
- 6.11 The archaeological results at Llanelly House have been extremely exciting, having revealed much of the form and character of the 17th century house and also parts of the late Tudor house. The 17th century remains on the ground floor have extremely good preservation, particularly the cobbled floor surfaces, whose discovery was much unexpected within an internal context. These internal cobbled surfaces in conjunction with the grandeur of the house's 17th century gentrification demonstrate how close the relationship was between high social standing and rural life, the house being the home of gentry as well as being a working farmhouse with responsibilities to the wider rural community.
- 6.12 Thankfully Llanelly House has now been rescued and restored to its former 18th century glory. The house has suffered an incredible amount of alteration and change over what is probably a period of over 500 years, perhaps longer, and it is staggering that a house that was once of such high status in both the 17th, 18th and early 19th centuries eventually became so adulterated by industrial process and then eventually becoming part of a commercial high street.

6.13 However, although this shameful corruption occurred, this event has effectively only added further to the rich character and colourful history of the house and its many occupants who both resided and worked there. Effectively, it is this rich and varied history that makes Llanelly House so unique and so special. The house now stands completely restored in all of its former 18th century splendour, having miraculously survived the rigours of time and misfortune, but now within an alien 21st century environment and we can only hope that the house survives another 500 years.

7 Acknowledgements

A great many thanks to; Llanelli Town Council and the Carmarthenshire Heritage Regeneration Trust for allowing access to the house for recording and investigation works. Thanks also to staff from: John Weavers Construction, Opus Engineering and Architects Austin-Smith: Lord.

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