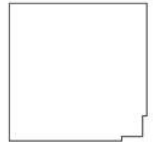


MESH



architects



Proposed Developments at Frankfort Castle and Frankfort Lodge,
Dundrum, Dublin 14

Conservation Report and Heritage Impact Assessment

March 2021

ARCHITECTURE

CONSERVATION
ARCHITECTS

69 MIDDLE ABBEY STREET
DUBLIN 1

T: 01-563-9021
E: info@mesh.ie
W: mesh.ie

Tom McGimsey MRIAI
BArch(Hons) MSc.

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Chapter 1. Background History of the Property

It is believed that a house existed on the site of the present Frankfort Castle from the last quarter of the 18th century, being shown as a simple rectangle on the Taylor and Skinner map of 1783. No such structure was shown on John Rocque's map of County Dublin, published in 1760. John Taylor's map of 1816 also depicted a rectangular structure in the same general location, but labeled it as *Frankfort Lo.*

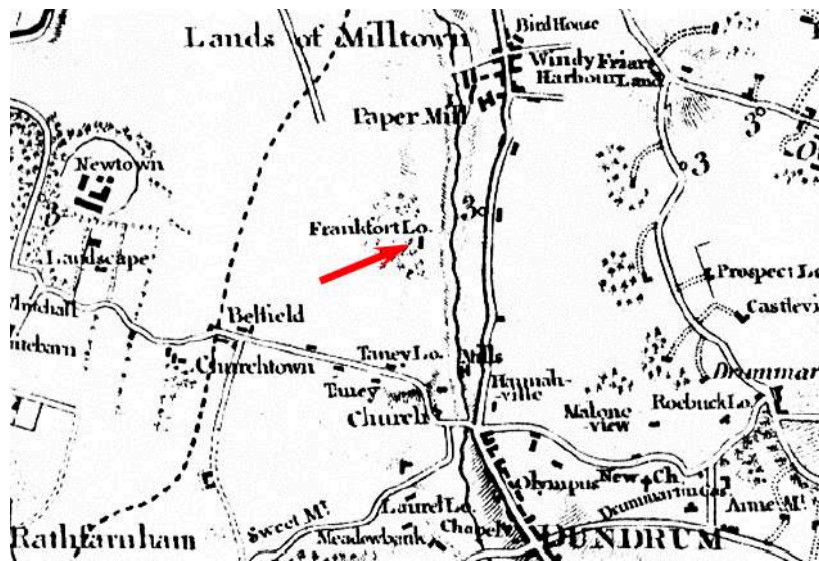


Plate No. 1. Portion of John Taylor's Map of 1816.

A more elaborate depiction of the property is shown on the first six-inch map of the Ordnance Survey, published in 1843. The property is labeled Frankford Lodge, and is shown to consist of a medium sized house with attendant stableyard, set in a small parkland with curved entrance drive.

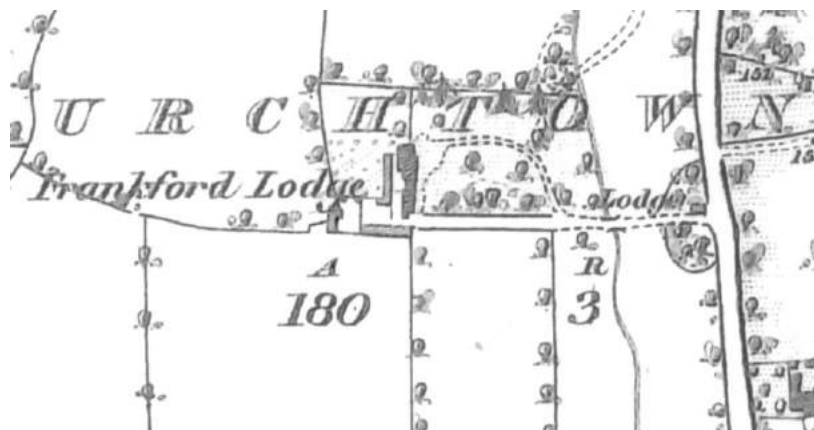


Plate No. 2. Detail from the first six-inch map of the Ordnance Survey, published 1843. Frankford Lodge is clearly shown, with its landscaped grounds and stableyard.

The next edition of the Ordnance Survey, published in 1864 to a scale of 1:2500, shows the same property labeled as Frankfort Castle. The larger scale of this map

allowed it to portray the house and stableyard in far greater detail to the previous OS map, and shows a substantial amount of obvious changes to the property. The creation of the railway line close to the western side of the house has required some redevelopment of the stableyard. More significantly, while the main house was shown with a similar layout, with the house to the north, and the stableyard attached to the south end, it is clear that the house was substantially reconfigured.

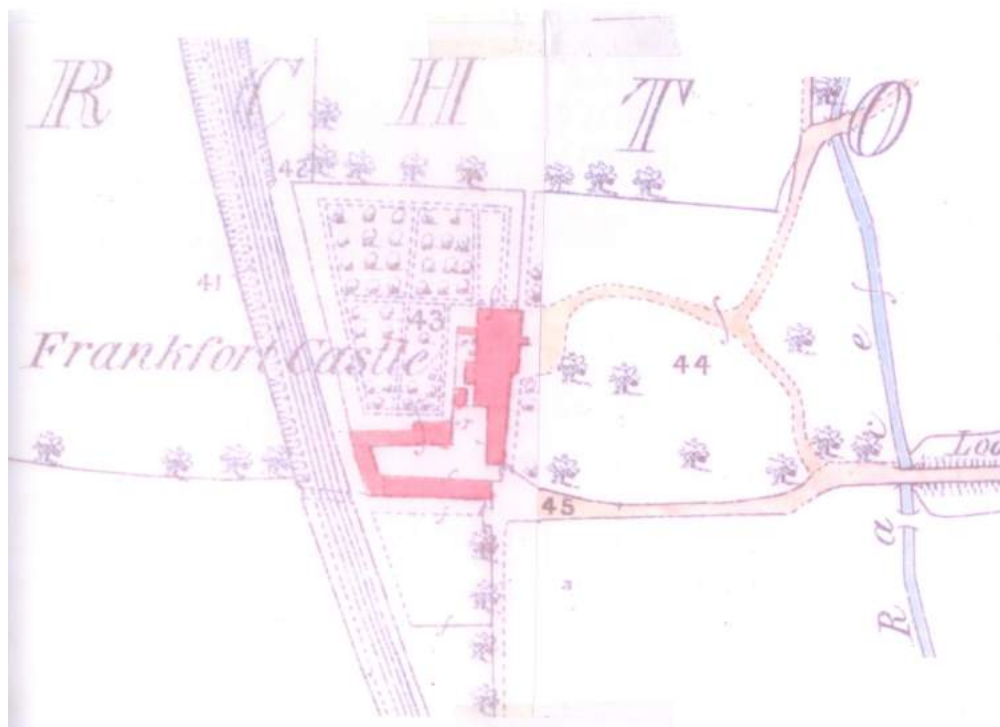


Plate No. 3. Detail of the 1:2500 Ordnance Survey map, published in 1865-66, showing Frankfort Castle, after extensive rebuilding works from ca. 1859.

Historic Building Consultant Rob Goodbody, in a report prepared for the current owners of Frankfort Castle, found several references to that reconstruction. He quoted Hugh Oram's book about the history of Dundrum:

Frankfort Castle

This was built in 1858-59 on the site of what had been Frankfort Lodge. It has simple castellations on its front elevation, but no historical significance.

Mr. Goodbody also found a reference to the property in *The Dublin Builder*, from 1860, which reported briefly on a law case between John Meighen, builder, and Arthur Baker, solicitor. Mr. Meighen had taken legal action to obtain the outstanding balance due to him for work on a new house at Frankfort Castle, Dundrum.

No plans, drawings or photographs have been found that show Frankfort Castle prior the mid-19th century reconstruction, but a close examination of the currently existing structures at Frankfort Castle strongly suggest that the earlier house was either totally demolished or heavily rebuilt during the ca. 1859 redevelopment. The rebuilt house was a large suburban house, with ordinary but good quality internal features. Externally, the house was wrapped in simple Victorian Tudor details, including crenellations and label mouldings, all covered with lime washed patent cement render.

The property remained more or less unchanged from that date until the second quarter of the 20th century, when the three separate houses were created within the house and part of the stableyard, and portions of the remaining grounds were sold off for development of suburban houses. The 1938 edition of the Ordnance Survey shows the property subsequent to those developments. Around 1930, the main house was split into two houses, called Nos. 1 and 2 Frankfort Castle, with some small extension to the rear elevations. A third house was created by an extensive reconstruction of a portion of the stables, attached to the south end of the main house. That house was subsequently called Frankfort Lodge.

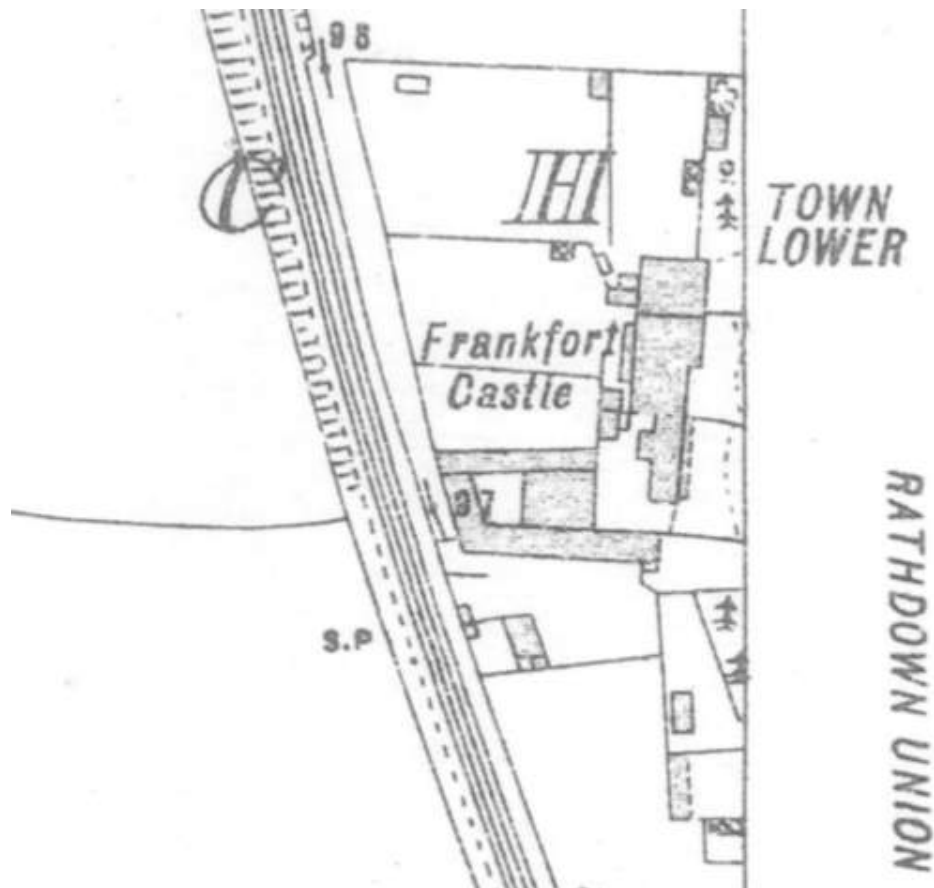


Plate No. 4. Detail from the 1:2500 Ordnance Survey Map, published in 1938, showing the property after it was subdivided around 1930. It appears that a large portion of the stableyard survived after the subdivision, as a further separate property.

Further modifications and extensions were carried out to Nos.1 and 2 Frankfort Castle around 2000, when a large extension was added to the north end of the original house. The current development site has been assembled by the current owners, and includes some of the former lands around the 19th century house that had been subsequently developed as private homes.

Chapter 2. Architectural and Cultural Significance

General Architectural Description

As stated in the previous chapter, physical and archival evidence strongly suggests that the structure known as Frankfort Castle represents the replacement or nearly total reconstruction in 1859 of an earlier house called Frankfort Lodge. No records have been found that describe the plan or external appearance of the previous house, and a close examination by the author has revealed any obvious building fabric or architectural feature that predates the mid-19th century redevelopment of the site.

Despite having been subdivided and extended during the 20th century, the 19th century Frankfort Castle remains legible as a medium sized Victorian suburban gentleman's estate. The main two storey body of the house was split roughly down the centre, requiring the replacement of the original entrance door with two new doors. The principal east facing elevation consisted of a recessed central entrance, originally having some kind of projecting porch or covered portico, set back between a pair or two-bay two storey sections. The larger windows are all sliding sash windows, having a single vertical glazing bar in each sash, of a type that was becoming fashionable around the time of construction. More unusually, the house was given a superficial veneer of Victorian Tudor detailing in keeping with its new title of Frankfort Castle. The Tudor details included horizontal string courses and label moulds over the windows. Around the east front, and two side elevations, the wall heads were decorated with simple battlements and corner turrets. The external masonry walls were all covered with smooth patent cement render, now all obscured under crudely applied dashed Portland cement render.

Inside there was a good quality entry, stairwell and two reception rooms, all relatively intact and serving their respective houses. Besides the two stone mantelpieces in the reception rooms, all of the other internal features are relatively common examples of Victorian detailing, suggesting the lack of input from any notable architect or architectural stylist.

The subdivision of the main house into two self-contained house around 1930 required surprisingly few new internal partitions. The former central front door was replaced by a symmetrical pair of arched doors, leading into their respective entrance lobbies. The original large square entry was simply split in half with a new partition, leaving the original stairs and stairwell wholly inside Frankfort Castle No. 1, the northern house. To the south, a new timber staircase was installed in an existing corridor in house No. 2, to provide access to the first floor. Small single-storey rooms were added to the west elevation on both houses to provide additional space for kitchens, boiler houses, etc. A small garage was formed at the southern end of the original single storey southern wing that became the southern end of house No. 2. Around 2000, a large two-storey extension was added to the north end of house No. 1, closely copying the external details of the Tudor inspired original house.

The attached annotated photo survey at the end of this report provides a thorough photographic record of all of the internal and external features of Frankfort Castle.

Frankfort Lodge

As covered above, the third private residence created from the original 19th century property is called Frankfort Lodge. It is believed that this house represents the total reconstruction of a portion of the stable block into a relatively ordinary mews-type house. As the photo survey shows, Frankfort Lodge was not a particularly noteworthy structure after its redevelopment, and it is currently in a ruinous condition after many years of neglect.

Statement of Significance

Frankfort Castle, upon its mid-19th century redevelopment, was an attractive suburban Gentleman's residence, most likely representing the extensive reconstruction or replacement of an earlier rural house. It was not a particularly large or grand structure, and no connection to a noteworthy owner or architect has been found. The house originally stood within a small parkland setting, well set back from the main road, and so it never contributed to the local architectural setting of Dundrum as part of the streetscape or townscape. Since the subdivision of the house and surrounding lands around 1930, the house and its lands have been much diminished through alterations, extensions and the encroachment of houses from all sides. The house contains some interesting qualities from the middle decade of the 19th century, and it has retained a portion of its original front entrance parkland.

While none of the properties that comprise the current application for development are on the Record of Protected Structures, in the opinion of the author of this report, the remaining 19th century core of Frankfort Castle has retained architectural qualities that would warrant its retention and reuse. It is recommended that the original domestic portions of Frankfort Castle, minus the 20th century extensions, be refurbished to serve as the core of the proposed new residential development, and that a significant portion of the original open space to the east is retained to provide a meaningful setting for the former house.

Frankfort Lodge, due to its ruinous condition and lack of historical or architectural interest, does not warrant retention.

Chapter 3. Proposed Developments and Heritage Impact Assessment

To address the current shortage of housing in the greater Dublin area, a sizeable development site has been assembled around and including Frankfort Castle. The properties include both halves of the subdivided Frankfort Castle and their respective front and rear gardens, the derelict Frankfort Lodge, and several adjacent properties. The lands thus assembled will form the site for a development of multi-storey block of apartments. As can be seen in the Architects' drawings and other planning documents, virtually all of the mid-19th century Frankfort Castle structure will be retained and sensitively repaired to form the visual centre of the development. The proposed development and the impacts to Frankfort Castle are described and assessed below.

General Description of the Proposed Development

As illustrated in detail on the Project Architects' planning documents, the proposed development will include three-to-five storey blocks of flats, around the perimeter of the overall site. The general arrangement of the site has been carefully considered, to balance the requirements of vehicular and pedestrian access to the development, set-backs and screening of the development from the adjacent properties, retention of as many mature trees and other elements of the existing landscape as possible, and retention of the existing 19th century Frankfort Castle at the centre of the development. A substantial open space has been retained to the front of Frankfort Castle, including several large mature trees. This will allow the primary elevation of the old house to be seen within a landscaped setting, and provide an important link to the house's historic suburban setting.

Heritage Impact Assessment: The once extensive grounds around the 19th century Frankfort Castle have been incrementally subdivided and developed over the last century, as Dundrum village has grown into a dense suburb of Dublin. The building density required by the current development standards presents a challenge to any development, to make sure that impacts to adjacent residents and infrastructure are intelligently managed. The architects for the proposed development at Frankfort Castle have worked hard to retain as much open space around the new apartment blocks, and have succeeded in retaining a meaningful portion of the original parkland to the front of Frankfort Castle. On balance, the proposed development has managed a fine balance between current required densities and retention of quality open space.

Modifications to Frankfort Castle

The proposed developments at Frankfort Castle itself are quite modest, and will see the retention of virtually all of the building fabric that survives from the mid-19th century. Beginning around 1930, when Frankfort Castle was subdivided to form three separate houses, several programmes of extension and modification have occurred to the individual properties. A portion of the 19th century stables was rebuilt to form the now derelict Frankfort Lodge. The main house was subdivided and extended to the north and west, with regular internal modifications along the way. The current proposals for development include the demolition of the ruinous Frankfort Lodge and the removal of the 20th century extensions to the main house.

The first floor, and the northern half of the ground floor of the main house are to be sensitively converted to four self-contained apartments, with virtually all of the internal spaces and significant features retained. A second internal stair was added to the house when it was subdivided during the 1930's. This stair will be retained to serve the southern first floor apartment. The southern half of the ground floor will be set up to serve as amenity spaces for the residents of the development. This facility will include a meeting room, a large lounge, a gym, an accessible toilet, and concierge's office.

It is important to note that the external appearance of Frankfort Castle will remain largely unaltered, other than to make good to the elevation where 20th century extensions are to be removed. The primary front elevation will remain unchanged, with all doors and windows to be sensitively repaired and retained. The rear of the original 19th century house has been modified many times since the middle of the 19th century, and the current development will bring some consistency and order to that elevation's appearance. No balconies or new openings were deemed to be appropriate, in order to protect the historic character of the structure.

It is proposed to demolish Frankfort Lodge, to accommodate the vehicular entrance to the site. Frankfort Lodge contains some stone walls that appear to date from the mid-19th century, when it most likely formed part of the stables for the suburban Frankfort Castle house. When the property was subdivided around 1930, Frankfort Lodge was created from remains of the stables, and formed a third separate domestic property from the original property. This structure has been vacant for many years, and has become thoroughly derelict and ruinous.

Heritage Impact Assessment: The proposed works to the mid-19th century Frankfort Castle will largely remove all of the extensions and internal modifications that were made after the house was subdivided around 1930. The proposed uses will make good use of the original house's spaces, on both floors, and will allow the house to be well used and well maintained well into the future. The significant features internally and externally will be sensitively repaired, following conservation best practice, to allow the house to be appreciated as the centrepiece of the new development. The demolition of the separate structure known as Frankfort Lodge will not have a negative impact on the remaining Frankfort Castle structure. It is in very poor condition and its 19th century origins have been totally obscured by substantial rebuilding in the mid-20th century.

Conservation Repairs to the house will include the following:

- General repairs and refurbishment to the roofing, valleys, rainwater goods.
- General repairs to the chimneys and period details at roof level, including chimneys and Tudor finials.
- General conservation repairs to all external masonry finishes and details, including removal of the cement and sand dash finish to the walls, and repair of the original lime based renders.
- Repairs and refurbishment to the timber framed sash windows, with double glazing added where possible to enhance energy efficiency in the house.
- Repairs to the house where extensions have been removed, to improve the appearance externally.
- Retention and sensitive repairs to the internal architectural fabric, including the stairs, fireplaces, plaster coving and internal joinery.

General Conservation Repairs

Several individual repairs are required to the property. The timber sash windows have survived in most locations, but require skilled repairs. Where possible, the single glazing will be replaced by slim double glazing, to improve thermal efficiency. Where this is not feasible, secondary internal glazing panels will be used to improve the heat retention of the windows.

The external render requires attention on all elevations. When originally built, the house was covered with a smooth render consisting of patent Roman cement and sand, and finished with a ruled final coat of lime putty and sand, and lime wash. During the late 20th or early 21st century, a layer of sand and cement dash was applied to the face of the old render. This material is not compatible with the breathable historic renders and will be removed. The lime renders will then be carefully repaired under the supervision of the project's conservation advisor. Similarly, the roof will be re-roofed using natural slates and lead or copper valley linings.

Summary

MESH Architects have carefully considered the potential impacts to the structure's significant features and its original design and details. We believe that the proposed developments strike an appropriate balance between the carefully repair and retention of the property's significant elements, and the minor modifications required to accommodate its new identity as the centrepiece of a new contemporary development of flats and apartments.

It is important to note that Frankfort Castle existed as a fine suburban house for only seventy years, from its construction around 1860, until it was subdivided around 1930. Since that time, the structure has consisted of two separate houses, both within the original structure, plus additional extensions to the sides and rear. The current proposals for development seek to remove the architecturally uninspired extensions from the original mid-19th century house, and to sensitively subdivide the internal space to create two additional living units. These modifications will retain the second staircase and the double front entrance doors, both dating from the 1930's.

Conclusions

- Frankfort Castle, a medium sized 19th century suburban house, stands in a residential area beside the Luas tracks in Dundrum.
- Archival and physical evidence strongly suggests that the house dates from around 1859. The presence of a structure on the site on maps from the late 18th and early 19th century suggest the possibility that some portions of the existing structure date from an earlier house.
- Frankfort Lodge is a derelict house attached to the southern end of Frankfort Castle. It most likely represents a mid-20th century reconstruction of a mid-19th stableyard structure, but is currently in a ruinous condition.
- Neither Frankfort Castle nor Frankfort Lodge is included on the Record of Protected Structures. Frankfort Castle is a structure of some significance, but it has been subdivided and heavily extended during the 20th century. Good quality internal features have survived in many of its rooms.
- The current proposals for development have been carefully considered to provide an excellent balance between retaining and repairing all of the property's architectural elements, while making necessary modifications that will allow the house to be retained as part of a development of new apartments.
- The proposed development has been designed to retain a significant amount of open space to the front of Frankfort Castle, allowing it to retain its architectural identity at the centrepiece of the property. Most of the 20th century extensions will be removed from the original house, and it will be sensitively renovated to contain four high quality self-contained apartments, as well as communal spaces for the development's other residents.
- The ruinous Frankfort Lodge will be demolished to allow for the overall development to proceed.

Appendix A – Annotated Photo Survey



Plate No. 5. View of Frankfort Castle from the south-east. The single storey section at the left is believed to date from ca. 1860, along with most of the two store main structure.



Plate No. 6. View of Frankfort Castle from the west, showing the southern end of the structure. The glazed kitchen extension dates mostly from the late 20th century, except for the ornamented gable, which is believed to possibly date from the ca. 1930 subdivision of the house.



Plate No. 7. View of Frankfort Castle from the north-east, showing the northern end of the structure. The original symmetrical east front can be seen at left, having been subdivided around 1930. The recessed two storey extension at the right dates from the late 20th century.



Plate No. 8. View of Frankfort Castle from the north-west, showing the late 20th century north extension.



Plate No. 9. Detail view showing the east front door to the northern half of the original house. There is a similar door on the opposite side of the thick hedge at left, leading into the southern half of the original house. Historic Ordnance Maps show a small entry portico or porch attached to the front of the house in this location, probably with a single grand central entrance door.



Plate No. 10. Detail view showing the mid-19th century mock Tudor details on the east elevation. All of the patent cement renders and moulded features were covered with Portland cement dashing during the 20th century. Some of the dash has fallen off revealing the 19th century patent cement render beneath.



Plate No. 11. Detail view showing some of the windows on the east elevation of the original house. Note the cementitious dashed render, and the precast sand and cement ornament.



Plate No. 12. Detail view showing the north elevation of the original house, with the 20th century extension at the right. Note the original patent cement moulded string course below the battlements, exposed by the failed cementitious dashed render. It appears that the earlier brown patent cement render had been finished with a yellowish finish coat.



Plate No. 13. Detail view showing one of the rendered masonry corner battlements, on the primary east elevation to Frankfort Castle. This photo clearly shows the original brown coloured patent cement render under the late 20th century sand and cement dashing. Note the late 20th century cast sand and cement moulding over the window at the left.



Plate No. 14. Internal view in the ground floor stairwell in the northern half of the original structure. It is believed that most of the features seen in this view date from the ca. 1860 reconstruction of the house. The glazed entrance door and transom date from the ca. 1930 division of the house into two separate properties. The floor tiles date from ca. 2000 when the northern half of the house was extended and refurbished.



Plate No. 15. Detail view showing the stair landing in the northern half of the former Frankfort Castle. It is likely that the arched window originally extended nearly to the landing floor, but was partially blocked by the double pitch roof over an early 20th century extension to the rear.



Plate No. 16. Detail view showing the stairwell in the southern half of the structure. This narrow stair likely dates to ca. 1930 when the original house was subdivided.



Plate No. 17. Detail view showing the ca. 1930 staircase in the southern half of the property.



Plate No. 18. Detail view showing the ceiling in the entry hall in the northern half of the property. Close examination reveals that the wall at right, and the plaster coving above that wall, were later insertions into the original larger entry.



Plate No. 19. Detail view in the southern sitting room, showing the internal joinery and plasterwork dating from ca. 1860. Note the damage to the ceiling from leaking bathroom plumbing.



Plate No. 20. Detail intern view showing the sitting room in the northern half of the original house. This room retains mid-19th century joinery, plaster coving and marble chimneypiece.



Plate No. 21. Detail internal view showing the fireplace in the sitting room in the southern half of the original house. Like its northern counterpart, this room has retained its mid-19th century joinery, plaster coving and white marble chimneypiece.



Plate No. 22. Detail internal view showing the internal window joinery in the first floor roof over the original entrance.



Plate No. 23. General View showing Frankfort Lodge, attached to the south end of Frankfort Castle.



Plate No. 24. General View showing the current internal conditions at Frankfort Lodge. The entire structure is derelict and ruinous. The lodge was the result of extensive reconstruction of one of the former stable building, dating from ca. 1930.