

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1991
THE REGISTERED BUILDINGS (GENERAL) REGULATIONS 1991

To: The Directors
Messrs Heron & Brearley Ltd
Brewery Offices
Kewaique

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that at a meeting held on the 29th June, 2001, the PLANNING COMMITTEE of the Department of Local Government and the Environment, in pursuance of its powers under the above Acts and Regulations REGISTERED

The Douglas Hotel, North Quay, Douglas

as represented by the buildings shown outlined in red on the plan hereto attached, in the PROTECTED BUILDINGS REGISTER by reason of its special architectural and historic interest.

THE EFFECT OF THIS REGISTRATION IS IMMEDIATE and prohibits the alterations or demolition of the structures or appearance of any part of the buildings except in compliance with an obligation imposed by or under any statutory provision or with the prior written consent of the Planning Committee.

Dated this 26 day of July, 2001
By Order of the Committee



E J Callow
Secretary, Planning Committee

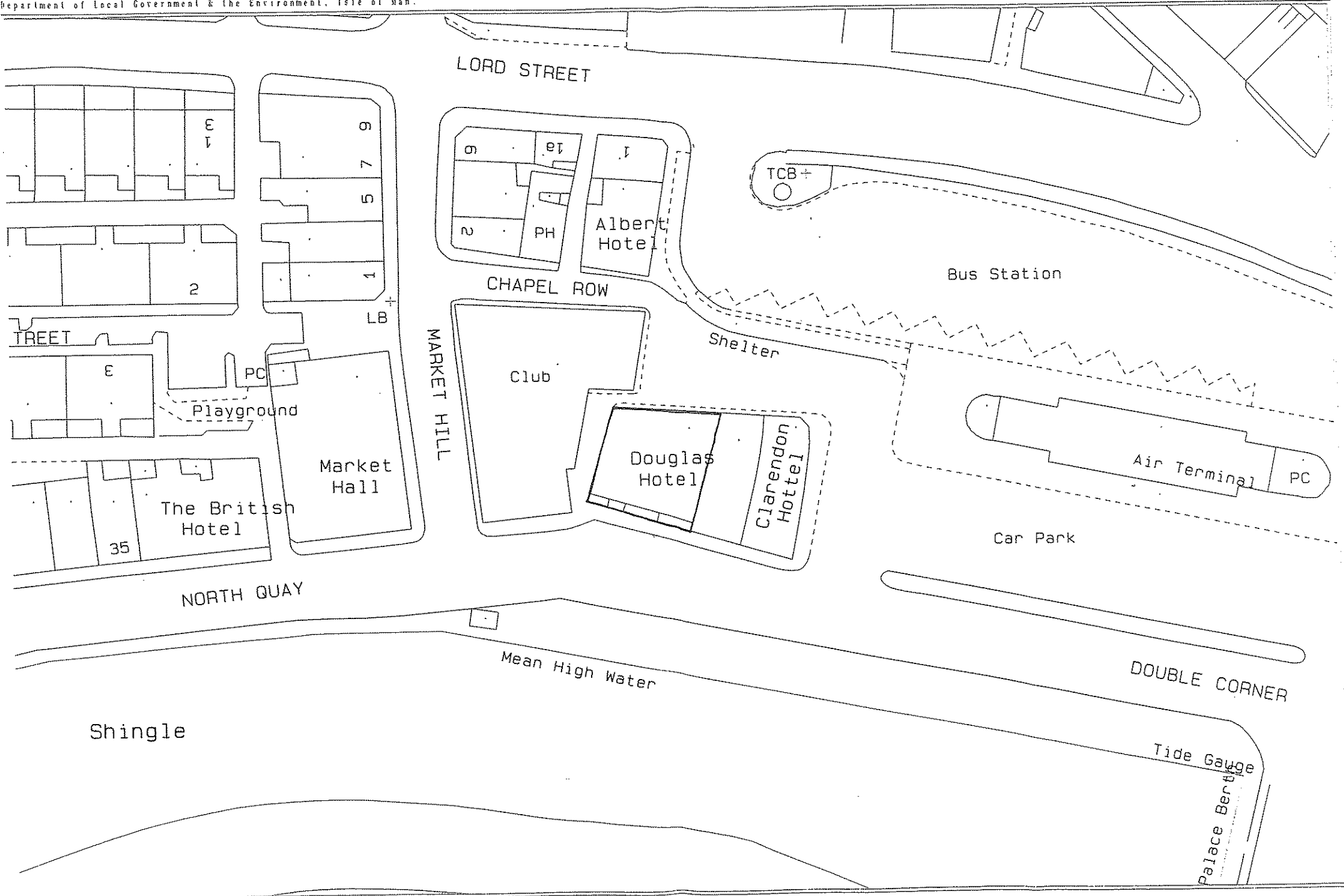
3rd Floor, Murray House
Mount Havelock
Douglas

NOTE: Rights to de-registration of the building are provided under the Registered Buildings Regulations and in summary are that:

Application in writing for de-registration may be made by the owner or occupier of, and any other person having an interest in the building, within a period of 28 days of service of this notice. Such application should be sent to the Secretary, Planning Committee, 3rd Floor, Murray House, Mount Havelock, Douglas.

In the event that de-registration is not requested by any party within the 28 day period described above, then de-registration may not be requested within a period of 3 years.

- cc
- 1) Manx National Heritage, Kingswood Grove, Douglas
 - 2) Douglas Corporation, Town Hall, Ridgeway Street, Douglas
 - 3) The Advisory Council on Planning & the Environment, 52 Alberta Drive, Onchan



DOUGLAS HOTEL, NORTH QUAY, DOUGLAS

The Douglas Hotel dates back to 1759, when an Ulsterman called Robert Black leased a parcel of land, with a frontage of 64 feet to the quay, from the Duke of Athol. He then built an extremely imposing residence on this leased plot. Black was a leading merchant who traded in wines and spirits from Bordeaux. He brought these to the Island, paying only the minimal duty levied, then running his goods to England to avoid the much higher duties that were levied there.

In 1765, however, his trade was brought to an end when the Island passed into the hands of the Crown and its customs' officers moved to the Island. Black sold the property to Dr Curphy in 1774, but it was occupied by Peter John Heywood, at one time a Deemster and also owner of the Nunnery, who sold the same to the Taubmans of Castletown. Following his death, his widow occupied the property until 1791.

The property then stood empty until 1793, when the 4th Duke of Athol acquired the lease from Dr Curphy, and used it as his residence on the Island during the building of the Castle Mona. In 1808, the Duke disposed of the whole block to his Receiver General, William Scott. It was described as: 'the dwelling house formerly called Black's House but lately called the Duke's house... with the Lord's old warehouse... and the new storehouse'. Scott carried out considerable redevelopment to the property. He constructed two additional, large dwellings fronting the quay; these remain as the Clarendon Hotel and Isle of Man Farmers. Scott let the Duke's former house to the Imperial Customs Service and it became known as Customs House. It is shown as the Custom House on Wood's plan of Douglas of 1833.

Around 1862, the Customs Service vacated the building, it became licensed and was known as the Old Customs House Inn, the name being changed to the Douglas Hotel before 1867. In 1867, Scott's trustees sold his properties by auction, the Douglas Hotel being purchased by Thomas Fleming. An application to Douglas Corporation for alterations in 1893 showed Fleming to still be the owner, but by the time of the next located application in 1935, Heron & Brearley had become the owners.

The property which extends over basement, ground, three upper floors and attic has an impressive five-bay frontage to North Quay, with a four-bay side elevation which would have looked out over the Market Place until construction of the Fish Market at the turn of the century. These principle elevations give the impression of a vast structure, but the limitations of the original site are made clear from the rear elevation. It is considered likely that the reason the building was built with such an irregular rear elevation was to fit around buildings already occupying this part of the site.

Documentation from the 17th century refers to the Lord's stable and 'cellar' or storehouse. It appears that these buildings were erected in the late 1660s, and were a long narrow structure approximately 23 feet deep externally. They were situated along the northern boundary of the site, which is today occupied by the Douglas and Clarendon Hotels and the Isle of Man Farmers. It is considered likely that these buildings were the ones that influenced the irregular rear boundary referred to above. This likelihood is reinforced on site by two pieces of evidence.

Firstly, the cellars of the 1759 building have regular level ceilings, with timber joists supporting the floors above. There is, however, access through these cellars to a series of vaulted cellars which are at a lower level. These cellars are situated below the Victorian rear extension which has suspended timber floors and derive no support from the vaulting as would a flagged floor. The vaulted cellars run at right angles to the quay. There would seem to be no obvious reason to construct cellars at a different level and in a different style to those adjacent. There is also no reason for them to be vaulted, when the building above them makes no use of this vaulting. The most likely conclusion is that the vaulted cellars substantially pre-date the 1759 building and may in fact date to the mid seventeenth century, the date of similar forms of cellars found in Peel. There is every reason to believe that these storage areas formed part of the Lord's cellar.

The presence of earlier building forms is further re-enforced by findings at the half-landing level between the first and second floors. Here there is access to a roof void over the Victorian extension. In the void are three rearward facing windows to the second floor of the 1759 building; these have now been blocked. Below them is a distinct marking on the rear wall indicative of the roofline of a building long removed to facilitate construction of the extension.

In order to determine if the vaulted cellars do, indeed, form part of the Lord's cellar dating from the 1660s, it would be necessary to inspect any adjacent cellars of the Isle of Man Farmers and Clarendon Hotel. The special historic interest of this aspect of the building is also considered to be of such importance as to warrant specialist archaeological advice on the importance of the cellars and to accurately date them. At the time of inspection the cellars in question were flooded to a depth of approximately 6 inches and contained much debris. It is understood, however, that the cellars do dry.

The Douglas Hotel is constructed principally in local stone, but in the cellars and roof void to the rear extension evidence of the use of brick was noted. External wall surfaces are rendered with a spa-dash finish, the side elevation having only been recently applied. There is a smooth rendered plinth at ground floor level.

There are rendered quoins at each corner of the building and a parapet on the front elevation obscures accommodation at attic floor level. During its recent past the slate roof finish has been replaced with concrete tiles, whilst rainwater goods are of cast iron and PVCu sections. There are railings to the front of the building that appear to be modern.

The quayside elevation of the building can be seen on Meredith's engraving of 1805, this shows the five-bay arrangement that we see today. There are apparently windows in the gable then visible, but now obscured by the adjacent building. The front elevation has changed little since the first photographs of the building taken in the late 19th century. The detailing around the main entrance door and cornice above remain, although string course mouldings below first floor windows have been removed. The cill height of the first floor windows has been lifted and their style changed from 6 on 9, Georgian, to simple 2-pane sliding sash. On the second floor, four of the five windows retain Georgian-style glazing bars, whilst on the third floor the style has again been changed. The secondary access on the front elevation has been blocked up in recent years.

The side elevation has been extensively altered. Victorian photographs show four windows at each level above the ground floor. Several of these have today been blocked up, as has a door at ground floor level. Recently a fire escape, which is totally out of sympathy with this historic building, has been installed with an escape door at first floor level.

The rear elevation has been the subject of extensive alteration over the years. There is a two-storey rear extension that must have been built prior to 1882, when the concert room was said to be: 'the most handsome and largest on the Island.' W J Rennison on behalf of Thomas Fleming, submitted plans on 30th January 1893, to make minor alterations to this rear extension. At the time these plans were drawn, there were two rear entrances. These entrances now house window openings, whilst a window opening has been enlarged to provide double entrance doors into a hallway that was formerly the smoke-room.

At ground floor level, the layout today is essentially as it was following the 1935 alterations. On the upper floors, what are believed to be original components can be seen, these include the staircase, roof trusses, 10 inch wide floorboards and possibly skirting boards, architraves, doors and some rear windows.

On the third floor, the condition of the building deteriorates markedly. There has been extensive water penetration that has brought down plasterwork to ceilings. This has created ideal conditions for timber decay, which has occurred in some areas. These problems require urgent attention.

Externally, although the property has been subject to many changes during its life, it still retains its imposing presence on the Douglas Quayside. The Douglas would benefit greatly from a programme of careful refurbishment. Encouragement should be given as part of any such programme to return the principle elevation to the quay to its original appearance.

The Douglas Hotel is judged worthy of addition to the Register of Protected Buildings on the following grounds:-

- 1 Age - the property above ground is known to date from 1759: the vaulted cellars are believed to date from the late 1660's. These would be much the oldest surviving properties in Douglas.**
- 2 Historic interest - the building has played an important part in the historical development of the town and port of Douglas. The building represents one of the most substantial legacies of the 'Running Trade' and is a genuine survival of this part of the Island's history. The property also has historical links with persons of national importance including Peter John Heywood (1739 - 1790) and the Duke of Athol who each used the property as their dwelling house for some time.**

- 3 Substantial retention of original fabric which is capable of conservation and repair.
- 4 Possible links with the Lord's cellar that requires further investigation.

SOURCES

Mr N G Crowe Chartered Surveyor
'Manx Inns' Suzanne Cubbon 1977 p 50
Isle of Man Natural History and Antiquarian Society Proceedings
Volume V 1942-56 p 419



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