

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

To: Mr. M. Roddy, Arch Tower House, South Quay, Douglas.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that at a meeting held on the 20th December 2002, the PLANNING COMMITTEE of the Department of Local Government and the Environment, in pursuance of its powers under the above Acts and Regulations REGISTERED

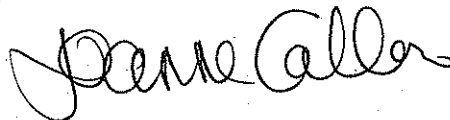
Arch Tower House, South Quay Douglas

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 alteration or demolition of the structure or appearance of any part of the building 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 day of, 27th January, 2003

By Order of the Committee



J Callow
Secretary, Planning Committee.

1st Floor, Murray House,
Mount Havelock,
Douglas,
IM1 2SF.

NOTE:

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

Applications in writing for the de-registration of the building may be made by the owners or occupier of, 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, 1st Floor, Murray House, Mount Havelock, Douglas, IM1 2SF.

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.

c.c.:-

- Town Clerk, Douglas Corporation, Town Hall, Douglas
- Director of Manx Museum and National Trust, Kingswood Grove, Douglas, Isle of Man;
- Advisory Council for Planning and the Environment, 52, Alberta Drive, Onchan, Isle of Man.

Scale 1:500



jurisdiction

Douglas Corporation

code

DU/H/H/A

location

37857509

ownership

Private

origin



description

Arch Tower House, South Quay, Douglas

recommendation

ARCH TOWER HOUSE SOUTH QUAY, DOUGLAS.

INTRODUCTION (1.0)

1.1

Arch Tower House was built as a private residence in 1853. The house is built onto solid rock and it is situated adjacent to a cliff-face on the South Quay where it is constantly damp. It is a cube-shaped, two storey stone-built structure with a smaller off-centre tower at the back which has excellent views of Douglas harbour. The walls contain random stones of varying shapes and sizes, the window surrounds are brick and on the front elevation there are limestone quoins. A main feature of the house and garden are the castellated wall-tops which give the property an unusual appearance.

1.2

The property is currently empty and is being extended on the ground floor at the front in order to enlarge the existing rooms. The present owner is Mr. Roddy (662142) who bought Arch Tower House in 1998 after the suicide of the previous owner. Following years of neglect, the property was found to be in a very poor condition and Mr. Roddy is yet to move into the house, as there is still much work to be done. He needs to know whether or not the property will be Registered in order to carry out essential works, such as roof repairs with or without the aid of a Grant.

ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST (2.0)

2.1

At the front entrance of the property there is a large gate plus a high entrance wall and pillars. A characteristic which is immediately apparent is the castellated wall tops in the garden and on the house. An archive photograph of Arch Tower House shows that in the intervening years various alterations have been carried out and adjacent properties have been demolished. In the photograph, the house was situated on the same level as the front garden but since then the garden has been dug out and steps now lead up to the property. These steps are located slightly to the right of the front door and Mr. Roddy plans to move the steps so they are level with the entrance. To the right hand side of the house there is a 'secret garden' situated in-between a wall and the cliff-face. However we were unable to access this garden during our visit due to the fact that it was overgrown. There is also a small back garden, surrounded by a wall which is located up a series of stone steps from the back of the house. There is a high entrance wall, pillars and a large gate at front entrance.

2.2

A ground floor extension is currently being added onto the front of the property. Prior to the construction of this extension the front wall was bulging and unsafe and it does still appear to 'dip' in the middle. This is because the

left-hand corner at the front had become saturated, water was coming in and the weight was pulling the wall away from the rest of the house, towards the harbour. There are now structural steel ties extending the entire length of the house from front to back which are holding the front wall in place. These are clearly visible on the exterior of the property and on the first floor interior, but there are plans to conceal these. Mr. Roddy had the option of knocking down and rebuilding the front wall or building an extension which would stabilise the bulging wall. It suited Mr Roddy better to build an extension because he needed the extra room anyway. Inside the house the extension will make the two downstairs front rooms (the living room and kitchen) much larger. In order to complete these alterations, the lower part of the old front wall still needs to be removed. The stones found on the new arch doorway previously belonged to St. Mary's Church in Port St. Mary; the door from the church will also be placed here.

2.3

The main roof is in a very poor condition. Although none of the slates have fallen off, the roof is leaking and the ceiling on the first floor is badly damaged as a result. There is a flat lead roof on top of the tower and this is also leaking, damaging the ceiling below. Mr. Roddy is reluctant to carry out any of the internal repairs until the roof is fixed and for this he could use the help of a Grant which Registration would provide. Externally the repairs involve removing the pea-dash render and leaving the property bare stone with lime pointing.

2.4

The original front entrance has panelling on the walls and ceiling which is different in appearance to the panelling found in the rest of the house. The old door looks identical to the door shown in the archive photograph of the property. There is currently no back entrance, the former back door was blocked up but it is planned to reopen this entrance which is located next to the rock face. Access to the back of the house is from the front, alongside the rock face and past the blocked up back door.

2.5

Inside the entrance hall many floorboards are missing. Mr. Roddy does not want to replace these until the major repairs such as the roof have been completed. A noticeable feature here is the attractive spiral staircase which features a spiral-shaped newel. There is a small corridor inside the entrance which leads to the living room to the left and the kitchen to the right. These are very small rooms which are now in the process of being extended. Behind these rooms there are two even smaller rooms and in the room on the right-hand-side the back door has been blocked up but there are plans to unblock this entrance.

2.6

Throughout the property there is a high standard of detailing and many original features have been retained. These features include the timber sliding sash windows with the exception of the arched replacement on the back of the house. There was formerly a very large rectangular window here

but the opening has been partially blocked up and replaced with a smaller, arched window and this can be viewed best from the outside. Other remaining features include doorframes, timber panelling, skirting boards, cornices plus the two spiral staircases. Despite a large number of characteristics still remaining in the property, all of the original fireplaces have been removed or replaced.

2.7

The basement is found underneath the whole of the house, with the exception of the extension. A door hides the entrance to the basement which is via small wooden steps which lead down from behind the main spiral staircase. The basement consists of small rooms and there is a small coalbunker behind a door in a wall. The owner was informed that there was once an underground passage which led from the harbour to Arch Tower House which had been frequently used for smuggling, but we have found no evidence to support this.

2.8

On the first floor there is a small bathroom to the left and a small toilet to the right. At the front of the house there is a large bedroom which has three windows on the front elevation. The ceiling in the main bedroom has been extensively damaged by damp through the leaking roof and it will probably need to be replaced. It is likely that this room was once two separate rooms as it is much larger than the other rooms in the house and there is also a blocked up doorway adjacent to the bedroom door which is now a cupboard. This is recognisable as a doorway as the panelling is still visible inside the cupboard. Inside the main room there are some interesting pieces of furniture including a number of large chests and an old mirror with an unusual frame featuring the three legs symbol, this is possibly a commissioned piece. The structural steel ties are clearly visible inside this room and in the first floor bathroom but Mr. Roddy plans to conceal these.

2.9

On the second floor there are two small bedrooms and again the ceilings are in a very poor condition. The smaller of the two has a 1930's fireplace which is soon to be replaced with a small Victorian style. The larger room has panelling around the windows and doors which would have been too ornate for a maid's room. There is also a box-room, perhaps a dressing room attached to this bedroom.

2.10

A small staircase leads from the second floor up to the tower. The tower contains a small box-shaped room with four walls which have timber panelling, as does the ceiling. On each wall there is a window and from this room there are excellent views of the harbour. The flat leaded roof above is leaking and needs repair, it has caused the timber ceiling to rot and it will now need to be replaced. A hole in the centre of the ceiling marks the position for a flagpole. There is a small, Victorian, wrought iron spiral staircase which is very ornate and this gives access to the roof. The wall tops of the tower are

castellated. There is some vegetation growing here and the flat leaded roof is holding water which is damaging the ceiling below.

HISTORIC INTEREST AND ASSOCIATION (3.0)

3.1

Thomas Heywood of the Nunnery owned all of the land south of the river in Douglas. Historically Arch Tower House was located on Archway Road, South Quay and today it is the only property which has survived on that road. There was a row of houses facing the bridge on the harbour which had an archway through them, leading to a number of small dwellings and onto the Howe. *"Demolished within recent memory and also known as The Arches, it was opposite the Stone Bridge at the top of Douglas Harbour. It led from South Quay to the Towers, and on to the Howside or Nunnery Howe. Also known as Philip Quirk's Archway after a local property owner, it included a small court with six cottages."* (Slack S., 1996, p.16). Eccentric Frenchman Pierre Baume resided in one of the properties on Archway Road. He was well known as a miser and it has been said that he would lower down a tin on a string for the locals to fill up with snails for his meals.

3.2

It was reported in the Manx Sun on January 22nd 1853 that many properties on the South Quay were to be sold at auction. These properties all belonged to the estates of the late Mr. William Perrie and Mrs. Jane Perrie. One of these properties was likely to have been Arch Tower House because it was described as *"...all and singular that newly erected CASTELLATED BUILDING at the rear thereof, with the GARDEN thereto belonging, and lately in the occupation of the late MRS. PERRIE."* (The Manx Sun, January 22nd 1853, p.8).

3.3

On the 6th September 1947, Mrs. Margaret Ellen Taylor, widow, made a deed confirming that she had been tenant of Arch Tower House between 1914 and 1941. A tenancy which she held from the Trustees of the Will of Miss Annie Harris deceased. In this deed (copy attached – Braddan 1947 – no. 2236), she asserts that throughout her tenancy, all the land marked pink on the deed plan was taken to be part of the property, and was never contested at any time.

LANDMARK QUALITIES (4.0)

4.1

Arch Tower House is located on an elevated position next to the cliff face on the South Quay, Douglas. The property is visible from the North Quay and the tower is a landmark feature of the inner harbour area.

GROUP VALUE (5.0)

5.1

Following the demolition of Archway Road there are no longer any neighbouring properties. There could be buildings on the South Quay which also belonged to the estates of William and Jane Perrie but we have found no information to suggest which properties these may be. Arch Tower House is no part of an immediate group of similar properties but it is part of the history of the South Quay.

AGE AND RARITY (6.0)

6.1

Arch Tower House was constructed in 1853 and at that time it was located up Archway Road, upon which various other properties were found. The property seems rather out of place today as these other houses were demolished and have been replaced by businesses and a car park. An old street lamp beside the gate to Arch Tower House is a little reminder of the former streetscape.

CONCLUSION (7.0)

7.1

When considering including Arch Tower House on the Protected Buildings Register, the following points should be considered:

- The building dates from 1853 and is therefore of a significant age.
- It is part of the history of the South Quay.
- Many of the surrounding properties have been demolished, including the archway over Archway Road which led up to the property. Arch Tower House is precious because it has survived.
- The unusual style of the building, such as the castellated wall-tops and tower.
- Many of the original features remain within the property.
- The property is located adjacent to the cliff-face on the South Quay and it is a landmark feature of this area.
- The extension on the front of the property could have saved it from future demolition but it does alter the character of the house.

SOURCES AND REFERENCES

BOOKS AND ARTICLES

Slack S., 1996, Streets of Douglas Old and New, The Manx Experience, Douglas.

Pigot's Directory 1837 (www.isle-of-man.com/manxnotebook).

Pigot and Slater's Directory 1843 (www.isle-of-man.com/manxnotebook).

The Manx Sun, Saturday, December 3rd, 1853, p.4, **Manx National Heritage**.

The Manx Sun, January 22nd 1853, p.8, **Manx National Heritage**.

MAPS AND PLANS

1870 Ordnance Survey Map, Scale 1:2500 (25" = 1 mile), **Manx National Heritage**.

OTHER SOURCES

Current photographs and site visits.

Archive photographs and drawings, **Manx National Heritage**.

Deeds – Braddan (2236) September 1947.

Notes by Patricia Tutt.

Information from the current owner, Mr. Roddy.









