



Comhairle Cathrach
Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin City Council

Report to Arts, Culture and Recreation SPC

10th July 2017

Item No. 7

Report on the Shaw House, 33 Synge Street, Dublin 8.

1. Update

Following on from the engineer's report (appendix 2), a further visit was made to the house on 26th May, by Lenzie O'Sullivan, Conservation Architect, City Architect's Division; Charles Duggan, Heritage Officer, and Brendan Teeling, Deputy City Librarian.

The proposal under discussion during the visit was the use of the premises as Writer-in-Residence accommodation, for either one or two writers, with the added potential of use for occasional readings/launches/receptions in connection with the writer-in-residence programme.

Arising from the discussion and the findings of the visit (see appendix 1) the idea of dividing the house into two, to accommodate two artists-in-residence on a self-contained basis, was decided against.

The proposal to turn the house into accommodation for a writer-in-residence, with the added potential of use for occasional readings/launches/receptions in connection with the writer-in-residence programme, was considered to be feasible, taking into account the condition of the building, the extent of refurbishment required, and the planning permission. In addition, the possibility of accommodating two writers-in-residence on the basis of sharing refurbished kitchen and bathroom facilities should be considered.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Having considered the matter we recommend that the refurbishment of the premises so that it can be used to accommodate a writer(s)-in-residence, with the added potential of use for occasional readings/launches/receptions, be pursued.

2.2 In order to progress this recommendation the actions at 3 (below) should be pursued and a further recommendation, based on the plan of work, estimated costs, and proposed writer-in-residence scheme, be drafted.

3. Actions

3.1 City Architect's Division to draft a plan of work and costs for the refurbishment;

3.2 City of Literature Office to review the contents with a view to identifying what, if any, should be retained;

3.3 City of Literature Office, in co-operation with the Arts Office, to draft proposal for writer-in-residence programme (including selection criteria and selection process, potential for multiple shared occupancy, and management) to be based in the house;

3.4. City Law Department to review lease and advise, in association with the Development Department, on transfer of ownership.

**Margaret Hayes
City Librarian
22nd June 2017**

Appendix 1 - Notes on Inspection of 33 Synge Street, GB Shaw Birthplace

Date: 2:30 on 26th May 2017

Present: Mary McAuliffe, Failte Ireland
Lenzie O'Sullivan, Conservation Architect
Charles Duggan, Heritage Officer DCC
Brendan Teeling, Deputy City Librarian DCC

Proposed Uses discussed:

- Artist accommodation, awarded for 1 year duration also including ancillary use for occasional launches/receptions
- The option of dividing the house into 2 to accommodate 2 artists was discounted due to:
 1. the negative impact of the works on the character of the building
 2. the scale of the (likely) basement level apartment
 3. associated costs
- Residential use will require upgraded bathroom/ kitchen facilities and rewiring (see note below).

Planning & Building Regulations:

The 1992 Planning Conditions note that if No.33 ceases to be used as a museum, it shall revert to residential use only.

- Therefore Planning Permission (or Part 8) required for any non-residential or mixed use.

Fire Certificate/or Fire Safety Analysis Report (likely) Issued for 1992/3 works (change of use from residential use to museum) which should establish the permitted occupancy.

Proposed Research Approach:

Conservation Planner Paraic Fallon to be contacted to establish clarity on Planning use for Residential with occasional launches/receptions.

Copy of Fire Safety Report (or Fire Certificate) to be researched.

Peter Finnegan, Structural Engineer Report:

"Overall, the house is in good condition, and defects appear to have been rectified promptly. The present use as a lightly loaded museum is appropriate to the domestic type construction. The lack of a modern kitchen and bathroom would inhibit alternative uses at present, including a return to continuously occupied domestic use."

Building Notes (General):

- Fire Safety equipment (exit signage/door mag-locks etc.) in place for use as museum.
- All lighting to the house is controlled from a single switch at the front door (likely cost implication for residential use).
- The shortage of sockets will likely require a full re-wiring of the property.
- Heating is from electric storage heaters, low running costs advised.
- Slight movement/creaking of floorboards to Ground and First Floor (considered by LOS to easily rectified with simple timber repairs)
- Evidence of leaks (considered by LOS easily rectified)
- 200 year lease in place

Lenzie O'Sullivan, Conservation Architect

Appendix 2 – Engineer’s Report

MEMO
MEAMRAM



Structural Engineering Section, City Architects Division,
Civic Offices, Wood Quay, Dublin 8

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Declan Wallace
Assistance Chief Executive
Culture, Recreation and Economic Services
Block 4 Ground Floor
Civic Offices

8th May 2017

Re: No. 33 Synge Street – Shaw birthplace

I inspected No 33 Synge Street on Friday 28th April 2017. I was accompanied on the inspection by Ms Mary McAuliffe of Failte Ireland. The purpose of the inspection was to survey the condition of the house, and was visual and non-intrusive with no opening up. Limited access to the roofspace and external roof was possible. A record of photographs is attached with comments as appropriate.



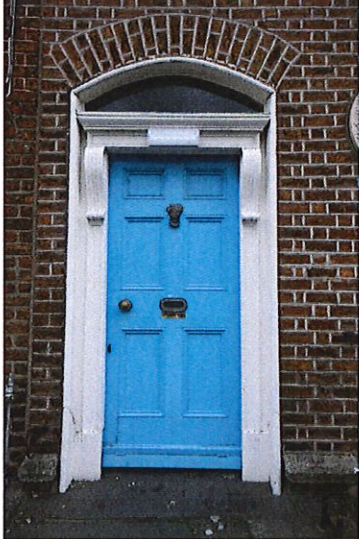
The house has been well maintained, with storage heaters constantly running. There are some localised areas of dampness, none serious. The area of dampness that has caused the most damage to finishes is at the junction of the valleys of Nos 33 and 34. The roof defects have been repaired and the wall and ceiling are drying out. I did not see any evidence of dry or wet rot in this location, though this would need to be carefully monitored. Two other locations of dampness occur at lower ground floor level, one at the porch under the front steps, and the other in the corner of the maid’s bedroom. The former of these would need some more investigation, but is not a major cause of concern.


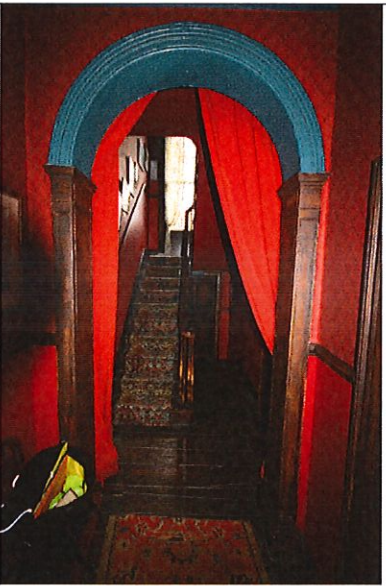

I have made a reference to springy floors and undersize floor joists. This is not unusual in such buildings, and would not need any intervention unless a change of use requires greater load capacity in the floors.

Overall, the house is in good condition, and defects appear to have been rectified promptly. The present use as a lightly loaded museum is appropriate to the domestic type construction. The lack of a modern kitchen and bathroom would inhibit alternative uses at present, including a return to continuously occupied domestic use.

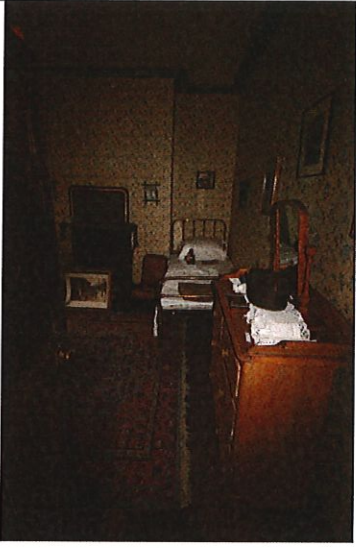


Peter Finnegan
Senior Structural Engineer

No 33 Synge Street


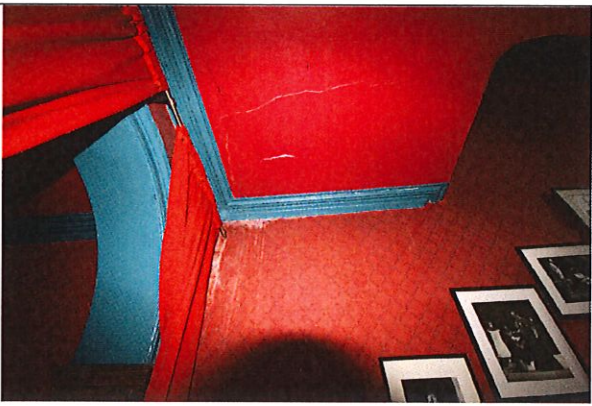

| | Photograph | Location | Comment |
|--|---|---|---------|
| |  | View of front elevation | |
| |  | Front elevation showing adjacent derelict building (No 34 on LHS) | |
| |  | Front door | |

| | Photograph | Location | Comment |
|--|---|---|---------|
| |  | View of front door from entrance hall | |
| |  | Entrance hall looking towards staircase | |
| |  | Parlour (Front GF) | |

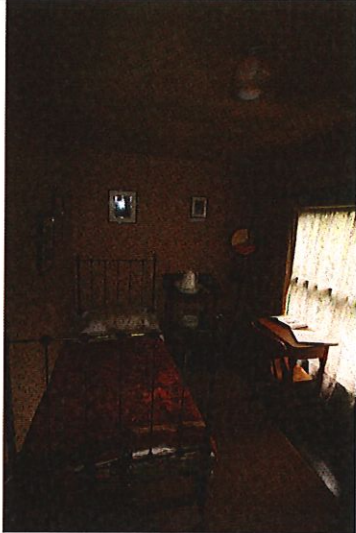

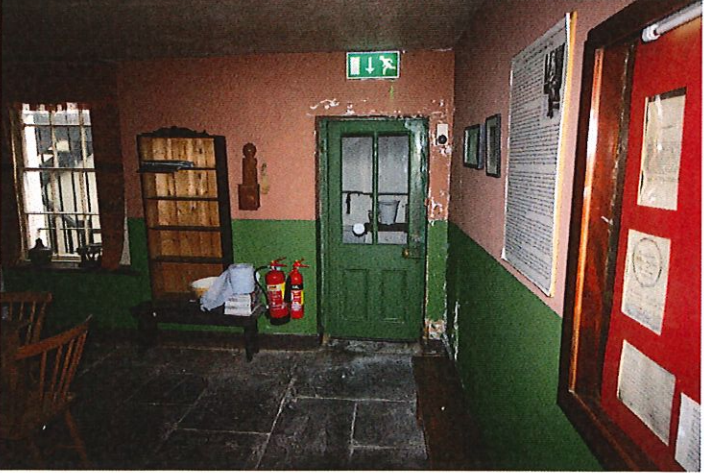
No 33 Synge Street

| | Photograph | Location | Comment |
|--|---|----------------------|--|
| |  | Nursery (Rear GF) | Floor slightly springy indicating undersize floor joists |
| |  | Nursery (Rear GF) | |
| |  | Nursery (Rear GF) | |


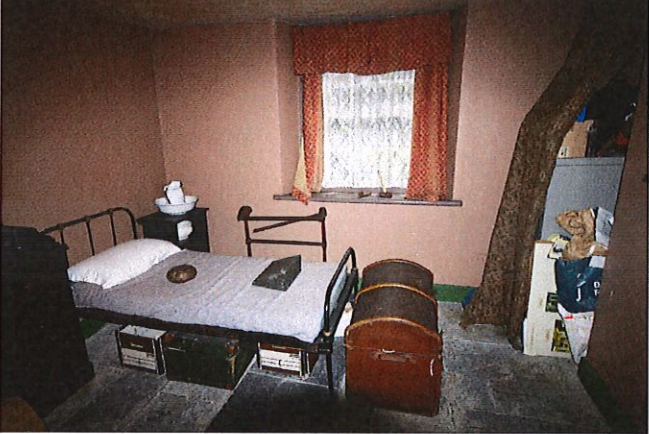
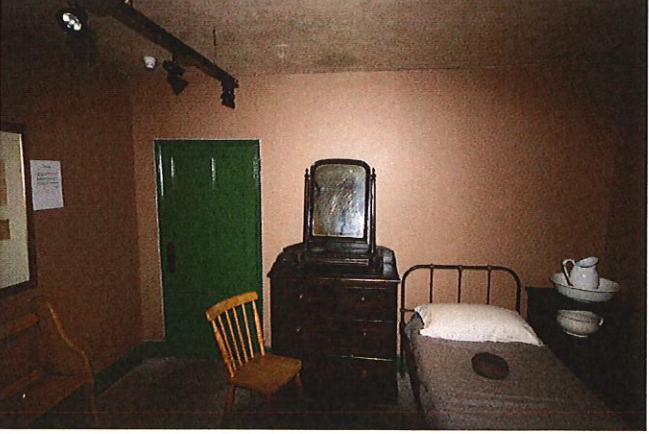
No 33 Syngé Street

| | Photograph | Location | Comment |
|--|---|--|--|
| |  | <p>Hall Former water damage top left</p> | |
| |  | <p>Hall Former water damage top left</p> | <p>Damp meter indicates drying out</p> |
| |  | <p>Rear return at GF level – GBS bedroom</p> | |

No 33 Synge Street

| | Photograph | Location | Comment |
|--|--|--|---|
| |  | <p>Rear return at GF level – GBS bedroom</p> | |
| |  | <p>Lower Ground floor to front – kitchen</p> | |
| |  | <p>Lower Ground floor to front – kitchen</p> | <p>Note previous dampness around rear door (under external front steps)</p> |

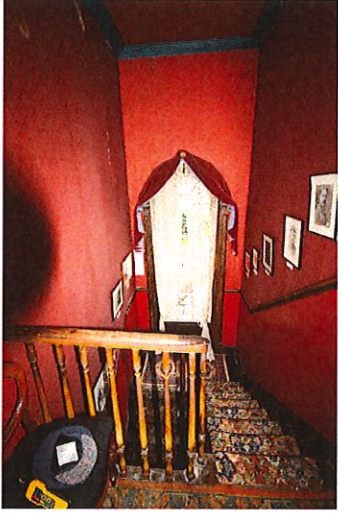
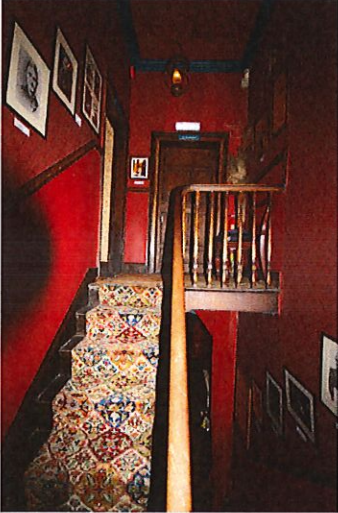

No 33 Synge Street

| | Photograph | Location | Comment |
|--|---|---|---|
| |  | <p>Porch under front steps</p> | <p>Note damage to finishes caused by dampness</p> |
| |  | <p>Rear room at lower ground floor level – maid's bedroom</p> | |
| |  | <p>Rear room at lower ground floor level – maid's bedroom</p> | |




No 33 Synge Street

| | Photograph | Location | Comment |
|--|---|--|--|
| |  | Rear room at lower ground floor level – maid's bedroom | Some dampness to skirting at RHS of chimney breast |
| |  | Rear room at lower ground floor level – maid's bedroom | Some dampness to skirting at RHS of chimney breast |
| |  | Rear room at lower ground floor level – maid's bedroom | Dampness to floor and skirting |




No 33 Synge Street

| | Photograph | Location | Comment |
|--|---|--|---|
| |  | <p>Ground to first floor half landing (looking down)</p> | |
| |  | <p>First floor landing</p> | <p>Previous dampness to ceiling and wall top RHS (adjacent to No 34 – derelict)</p> |
| |  | <p>First floor landing</p> | <p>Previous water damage – damp meter indicates some residual dampness but substantial drying out</p> |




No 33 Synge Street

| | Photograph | Location | Comment |
|--|---|--|---------|
| |  | <p>First floor rear bedroom – “parents room”</p> | |
| |  | <p>First floor rear bedroom – “parents room”</p> | |
| |  | <p>First floor rear bedroom – “parents room”</p> | |




No 33 Synge Street

| | Photograph | Location | Comment |
|--|---|---|--------------------------------------|
| |  | View over rear return from first floor rear bedroom | Roof and flashings in good condition |
| |  | View over roof of rear return | Valley clean and in good condition |
| |  | Main roof valley | Valley clean and in good condition |

No 33 Synges Street

| | Photograph | Location | Comment |
|--|---|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| |  | Roofspace | |
| |  | Roofspace | |
| |  | View of valley of No 34 | Valley shows signs of recent repair |


No 33 Synge Street

| | Photograph | Location | Comment |
|--|---|---|---|
| |  | <p>Drawing room (Front first floor)</p> | |
| |  | <p>Drawing room (Front first floor)</p> | <p>Note water damage to finishes top left over door</p> |
| |  | <p>Drawing room (Front first floor)</p> | <p>Note water damage to finishes - ceiling and wall</p> |



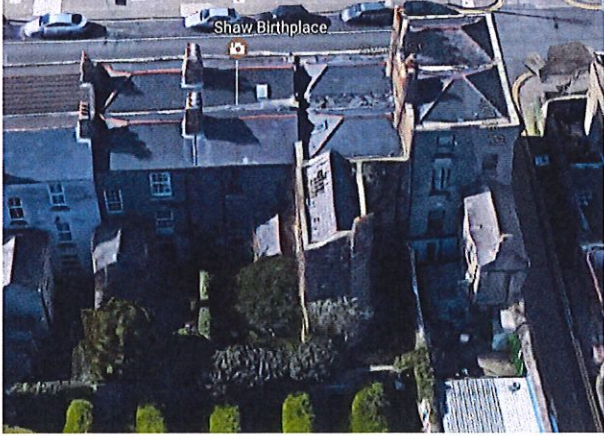
No 33 Synge Street

| | Photograph | Location | Comment |
|--|---|---|---------|
| |  | <p>Lower ground floor – entrance to toilets</p> | |
| |  | <p>Lower ground floor – toilets</p> | |
| |  | <p>Lower ground floor – toilets (window out to rear garden)</p> | |

No 33 Synge Street

| | Photograph | Location | Comment |
|--|---|---|---|
| |  | Rear elevation | Good condition, occasional damaged or displaced hanging slate |
| |  | Side elevation to rear return (Lower window is toilet, upper window is GB Shaw bedroom) | |
| |  | Rear elevation, viewed from end of garden | |

No 33 Synge Street

| | Photograph | Location | Comment |
|--|---|---|---------|
| |  | Rear return | |
| |  | View down garden | |
| |  | Aerial view of No 33 showing large rear return to No 34 | |