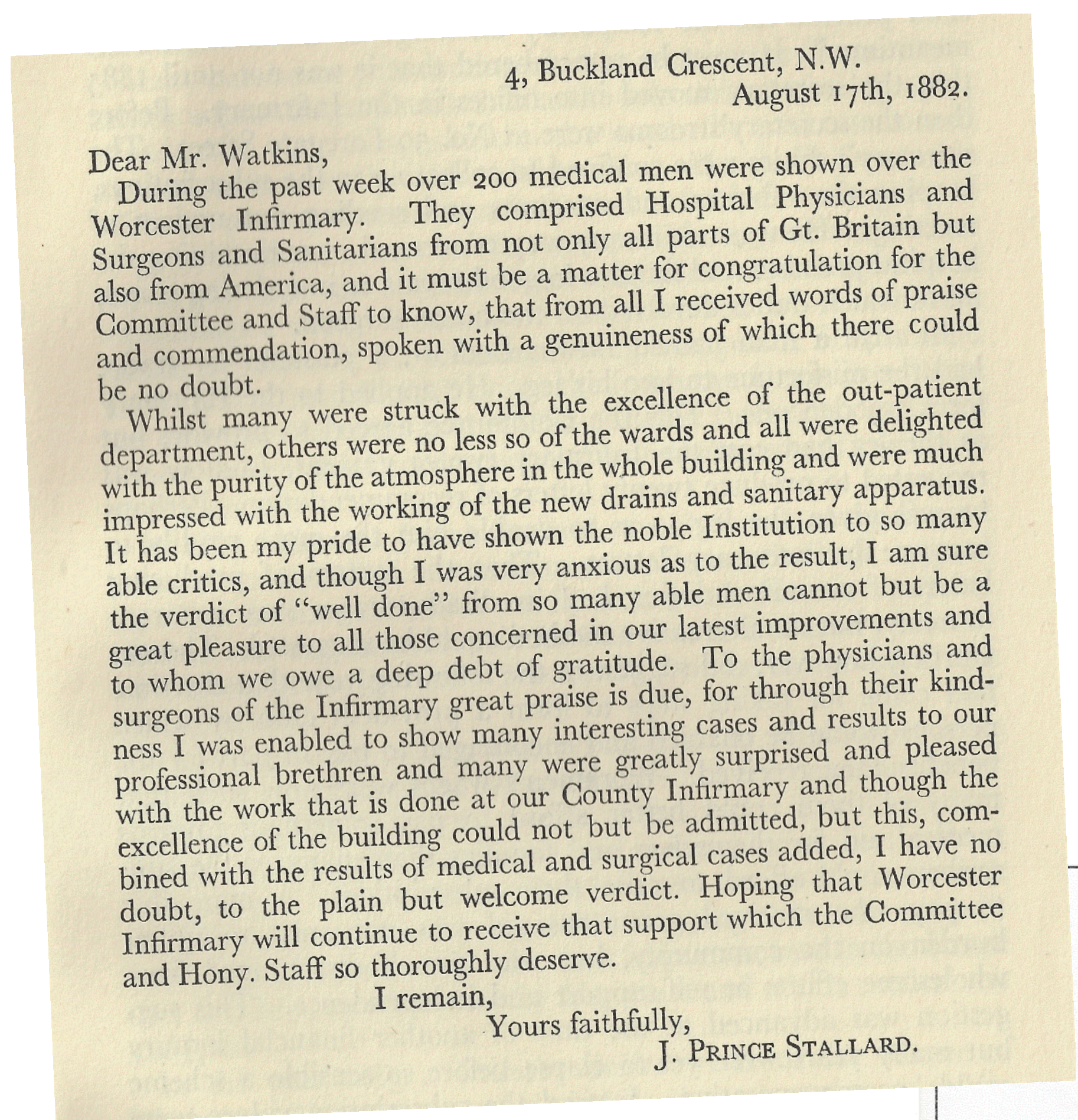


Pictured outlined in red (left), is a proposed extension to the infirmary dated c.1865-1874. This image shows the first floor and the additional ward as part of the extension is a good example of a 'Nightingale' ward. There are 20 beds proposed, an ideal number, as according to Nightingale less than 20 increased the number of attendants needed to supervise and number of corners to prevent ventilation. More than 32 beds is undesirable because this required a greater ceiling height to allow proper airflow. In this plan there is a maximum of two beds per window allowing good sunlight and air in. Also the WC and bath are at the opposite end of the ward to the entrance and on the outer wall, a strict stipulation in *Notes on Hospitals*.

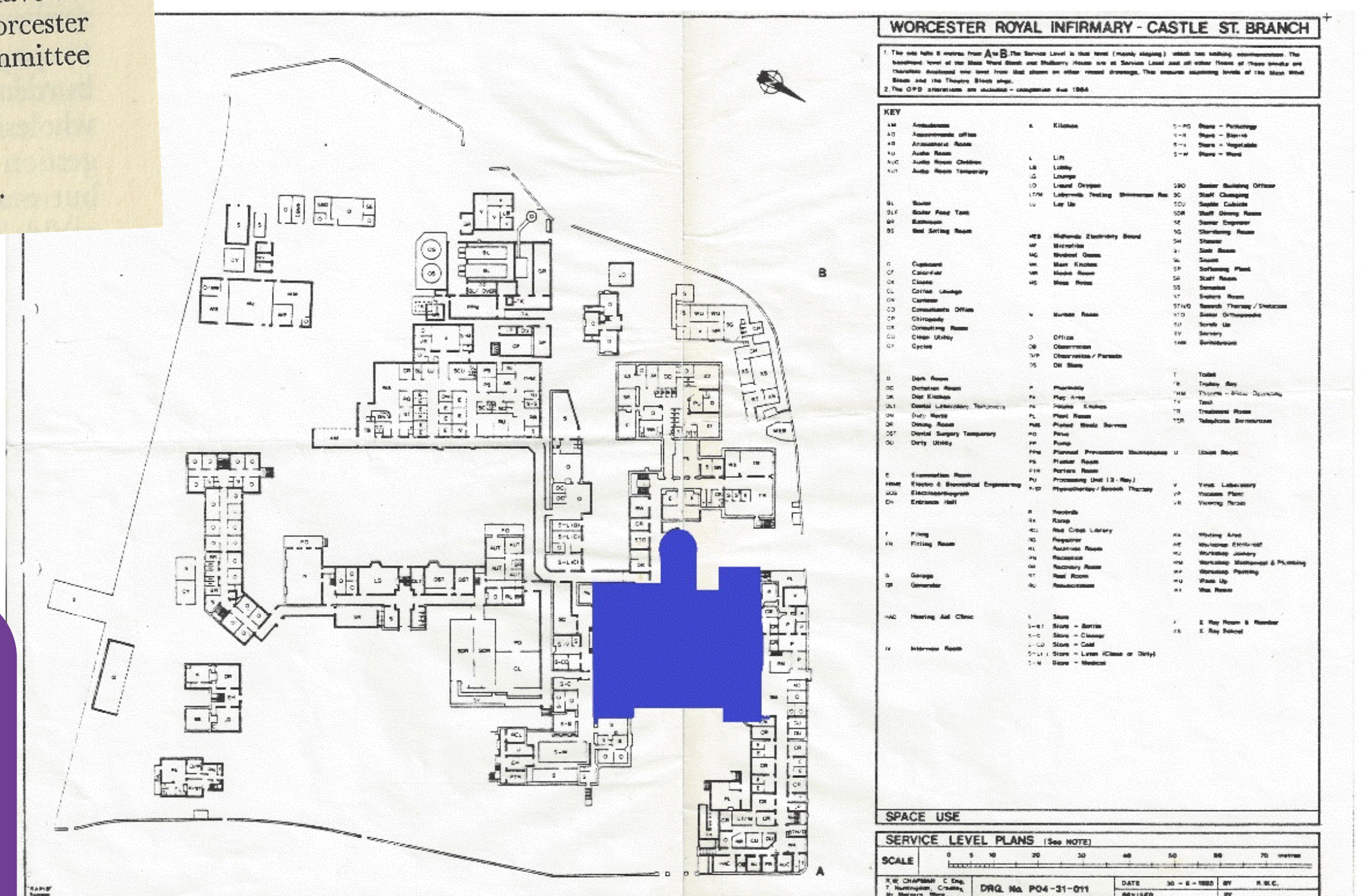
Unfortunately, these plans were rejected and this extension never built, but due to the demands on the hospital by the city's growing population, extra room was still needed. In 1865 the roof was raised creating an extra floor to accommodate the expanding hospital. Nightingale would likely have been much in favour of the extension and largely opposed to the addition of an extra storey. She also predicted these situations when she condemned the choice of city locations for hospitals:

'Land in towns is too expensive for hospitals to be built as to secure the conditions of ventilation and of light, and of spreading the inmates over a large surface-area – conditions now known to be essential to speedy recovery – instead of piling them up three or four stories high, in regions contaminated with coal smoke and nuisances'. *Notes on Hospitals*



In 1874 the outpatient department was built and around the same time the sluice towers (for waste water) were added to improve sanitation. Left is a letter from 1882, praising the infirmary's new department and the drains and sanitary equipment. It also mentions the 'purity of atmosphere' which Nightingale always held in the highest esteem.

Over the next 100 years the infirmary sprawled as hospital requirements changed and technology advanced. The plan below of the site in 1985 shows the original building (in blue) in amongst the rest of the Castle Street branch of the Worcester Royal Infirmary before this building finally closed in 2002.



What do you think about the layout of the current Worcestershire Royal Hospital? Is Florence Nightingale's *Notes on Hospitals* still relevant? Join the conversation on Facebook or Twitter.
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