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FORM NO.

263

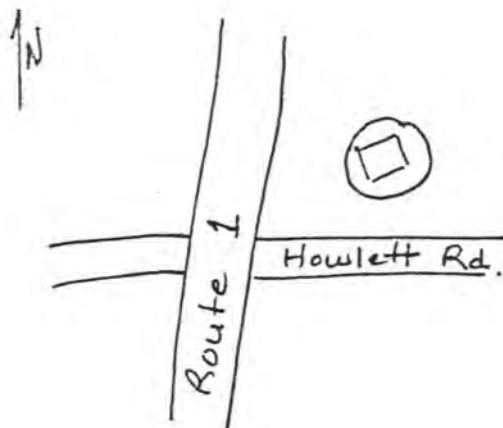
61

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
80 BOYLSTON STREET
BOSTON, MA 02116

photos

- 75:5 Rear wall, right-hand chamber
75:8 Right-hand room
75:9 Left-hand room
75:13 Rear corner post, right-hand chamber
75:15 Detail fireplace trim, left-hand room
75:19 Exterior view

Sketch Map:

Town Topsfield

009

Address 86 Howlett RoadHistoric Name French-Andrews HouseUse: Present ResidentialOriginal Residential

DESCRIPTION

Date c. 1718Source Cummings, Mass. & its First PeStyle First Period Houses, p.187Architect UnknownExterior Wall Fabric ClapboardsOutbuildings Garage / Barn - early 20th c.newer late 20th c. animal shelterMajor Alterations (with dates) Lean-toadded: 1919; rear, east extension:Condition good 1950sMoved no Date n/aAcreage 3.8 acresSetting rural, narrow winding road.Fields and woodlands surround houseon south slope below route 1Recorded by A.G.Organization B.U.Date June 1986TM REFERENCE Z E N
19 / 341-080 / 4722-740CGS QUADRANGLE Georgetown (now Ipswich)SCALE 1:25,000

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: TOPSFIELD	Form No: 61
Property Name: French-Andrews House	

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

SIGNIFICANCE

The French-Andrews House retains integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship and feeling in its late First Period frame and finish which embody distinctive characteristics of form and construction eligible under Criterion C. The c. 1718 frame, characteristic of late First Period treatment in its minimal decoration, nevertheless embodies certain features which link it to earlier buildings in the Topsfield area and even to the earliest buildings in Massachusetts. The massiveness of the frame and the use of beams which are deeper than they are wide relate the structure to the Parson Capen house of 1683. The deeply jowled corner posts are found also in the Stephen Foster house and the Zaccheus Gould house of c. 1700, suggesting a persistent local style of post treatment. The framing of door posts for interior doors into chimney girts and tie beams is a structural technique found in the earliest houses in Massachusetts including the Fairbanks house and directly derived from English practises. Normally superseded by other methods of framing doors in later houses, the use of such door posts in the French Andrews House is a rare and conservative expression of direct transfer framing practices.

The house is also significant for the survival of original finish in situ. The fireplace trim in the left-hand room and particularly the wide board feather-edged sheathing in the right-hand chamber are noteworthy and up-to-date examples of late First Period finish.

On the basis of these features and the minimal chamfering of the frame, Cummings felt that the house was built after Joseph Andrews of Boxford acquired the property in 1718, although earlier there was a single cell house on the site owned in 1693 by John French Sr.

EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION

The French-Andrews house is 5 bays wide, 2 1/2 stories in height and one room deep with a lean-to added in 1919 and a rear ell dating from the 1950's. Originally a double cell, central chimney, plan house, the structure was restored in 1919 under the direction of George Francis Dow to its present First Period appearance. Diamond-paned, leaded glass casement windows were installed and the chimney rebuilt from the attic floor with a decorative exterior pilaster modeled after the one on the Parson Barnard House in North Andover. The simple doorway has a small hood.

MAJOR FIRST PERIOD FEATURES

First Period features are found in all four front rooms and the lobby. During the 1919 restoration later finishes were removed and the framing exposed. Remaining original finish was carefully preserved and new finishes matching the old ones were installed in many areas. The frame is a particularly massive one, the summer beams and tie beams being c. 8 inches wide and 12 inches deep. The framing system includes bridging

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(longitudinal) summer beams and transverse tie beams. In both upstairs and downstairs rooms, front, rear and end beams show peg holes for the studs which flanked the original windows. The original windows at the center of each wall were approximately 28 inches wide. Joist spacing in the first floor ceilings is 21 inches on centers, while those of the second floor are spaced 25 inches on centers.

In the left-hand room, the large kitchen fireplace with rear ovens appears to retain its original trim. Boards with a wide bead at the edge cover the jambs and lintel of the fireplace which is recessed about 8 inches, and is 58 inches high by 107 inches wide. The chimney girt and post are covered with boards also finished with a broad bead in this case almost a quarter round, at the edge. The rest of the framing is exposed. The summer beam has 2 inch wide flat chamfers and taper stops, while the girts are plain. The horizontal feather-edged sheathing which covers the outer walls was presumably installed during the restoration in 1919.

In the lobby, vertical feather-edged sheathing enclosed the staircase, again presumably restoration finish of 1919. Cummings noted that posts for interior doors are framed into the chimney girts and tie beams, a very conservative construction technique. The door posts are molded along the outer edge.

In the right-hand room, the summer beam is decorated with 2 inch wide flat chamfers and taper stops. Vertical feather-edged sheathing on the walls and the trim of the fireplace in this room was installed in 1919.

In the left-hand chamber, early plaster is preserved on the outer walls. The vertical sheathing of the fireplace wall was put in during the restoration. The summer tie beam and chimney tie beam have flat chamfers and taper stops. In the right-hand chamber, the summer tie beam is also finished with flat chamfers and taper stops. In both chambers other framing members have minimal flat chamfers or none at all. Posts are deeply jowled like those of several other Topsfield houses surveyed. The rear wall of the right-hand chamber preserves its original finish of very wide horizontal boards with feather edges each more than 30 inches wide and 18 feet long. This original wall was apparently the source for the design of the restoration finish in the rest of the house. The front and side walls of the right-hand room are covered with horizontal feather-edged dating from 1919. The inner wall which has no fireplace is finished with vertical feather-edged sheathing.

The attic displays a principal rafter, common purlin roof. In the cellar, there are two massive spanning beams each similarly decorated with 2 inch wide flat chamfers but for unexplained reasons running in different directions. There is a large fireplace with ovens in the right-hand cellar. Much of the firebox appears to have been rebuilt during the 1919 work. Because of the slope of the land, the right-hand cellar is at ground level.

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HISTORICAL INFORMATION

The house is associated with the early preservation movement, having been restored in 1919 under the supervision of George Francis Dow for Thomas Emerson Proctor. Dow, who was restoring the Parson Capen house further down Howlett St. at the same time was associated for many years with the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities. Dow made careful observations of the structure during restoration, recording the presence of early red paint or stain on the cover board of the plate hidden under a later cornice and the presence of an original attic window frame, "nailed to the exterior underboarding through horns at the corners of the frame." [2] Dow installed a great deal of feather-edged sheathing in the house, both horizontal and vertical which resembles the surviving original finish to the extent that it is sometimes difficult to tell new from old. Most of what appears to be new sheathing, however, has an extra small molding on the feather-edge. Possibly Dow was sophisticated enough to add the extra molding as a label so that the new sheathing could be readily distinguished from the old. Further research in SPNEA's archives should be undertaken to document this important early restoration.

REFERENCES

1. Abbott Lowell Cummings, Massachusetts and its First Period Houses, Boston: Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 1979: 187-188.

John H. Towne, "Topsfield Houses and Buildings," The Historical Collections of the Topsfield Historical Society 8(1902): 22.

HABS drawings.

2. Cummings, Framed Houses of Massachusetts Bay, 1625-1725. (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1979): 153.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic GroupName First Period Buildings of Eastern Massachusetts TR
State _____

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

21. Foster, Stephen, House

Entered in the
National Register

Keeper

Attest

for Delores Byrum 3/9/90

Sub 22. Foster, William, House

Substantive Review

Keeper

Attest

for Beth L. Savage 3/9/90

23. Fowler, Rea Putnam, House

Entered in the
National Register

Keeper

Attest

for Delores Byrum 3/9/90~~24. French--Andrews House~~~~Entered in the
National Register~~~~Keeper~~~~Attest~~*for* Delores Byrum 3/9/90

Sub 25. Friend, James, House

Substantive Review

Keeper

Attest

for Beth L. Savage 3/9/90

26. Frye, Samuel, House

Entered in the
National Register

Keeper

Attest

for Delores Byrum 3/9/90

Sub 27. Fuller, Joseph, House

Substantive Review

Keeper

Attest

for Beth L. Savage 3/9/90

28. Fuller, Lieut. Thomas, House

Entered in the
National Register

Keeper

Attest

for Delores Byrum 3/9/90

29. Giddings, George, House and Barn

Entered in the
National Register

Keeper

Attest

for Delores Byrum 3/9/90

30. Giddings--Burnham House

Substantive Review

Keeper

Attest

for Beth L. Savage 3/9/90

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY French--Andrews House
NAME:

MULTIPLE First Period Buildings of Eastern Massachusetts TR
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Essex

DATE RECEIVED: 1/24/90 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 2/07/90
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 2/23/90 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 3/10/90
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 90000263

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 3/9/90 DATE Entered in the
National Register

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA _____
REVIEWER _____
DISCIPLINE _____
DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

CLASSIFICATION

___ count ___ resource type

STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

FUNCTION

___ historic ___ current

DESCRIPTION

___ architectural classification
___ materials
___ descriptive text

SIGNIFICANCE

Period Areas of Significance--Check and justify below

Specific dates Builder/Architect
Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

___ summary paragraph
___ completeness
___ clarity
___ applicable criteria
___ justification of areas checked
___ relating significance to the resource
___ context
___ relationship of integrity to significance
___ justification of exception
___ other

BIBLIOGRAPHY

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

___ acreage ___ verbal boundary description
___ UTM's ___ boundary justification

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

___ sketch maps ___ USGS maps ___ photographs ___ presentation

OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

_____ Phone _____

Signed _____ Date _____



86 Howett Street,

Topsfield, MA 7519

French-Andrews House

86 Howett Road

Extension view

1985

1st period Building of E. M. MPA



Topstfield, IVA
French-Andrews House
86 Hewlett Road
right-hand turn
1985

75:08

1st Period Buildings of E. Ma MRA



Topsheld, MA
French-Andrews Hs
86 Howlett Road
rear wall, right-hand chamber
1985 75:05

1st Period Buildings of E. M., MRA



7S:15-

Topsheld, TA
French-Andrews Ho.
86 Howlett Road
detail fireplace trim
1985

4th Period Buildings of Mo NRA



Topfield, ITA
French - Andrews Ho.
86 Howlett Road
rear corner post
1985

75:13

Period Buildings of E. Mo, 1985



Topsfield, MA
French-Andrews House
86 Howlett Road
Left-hand room
1985

75!09

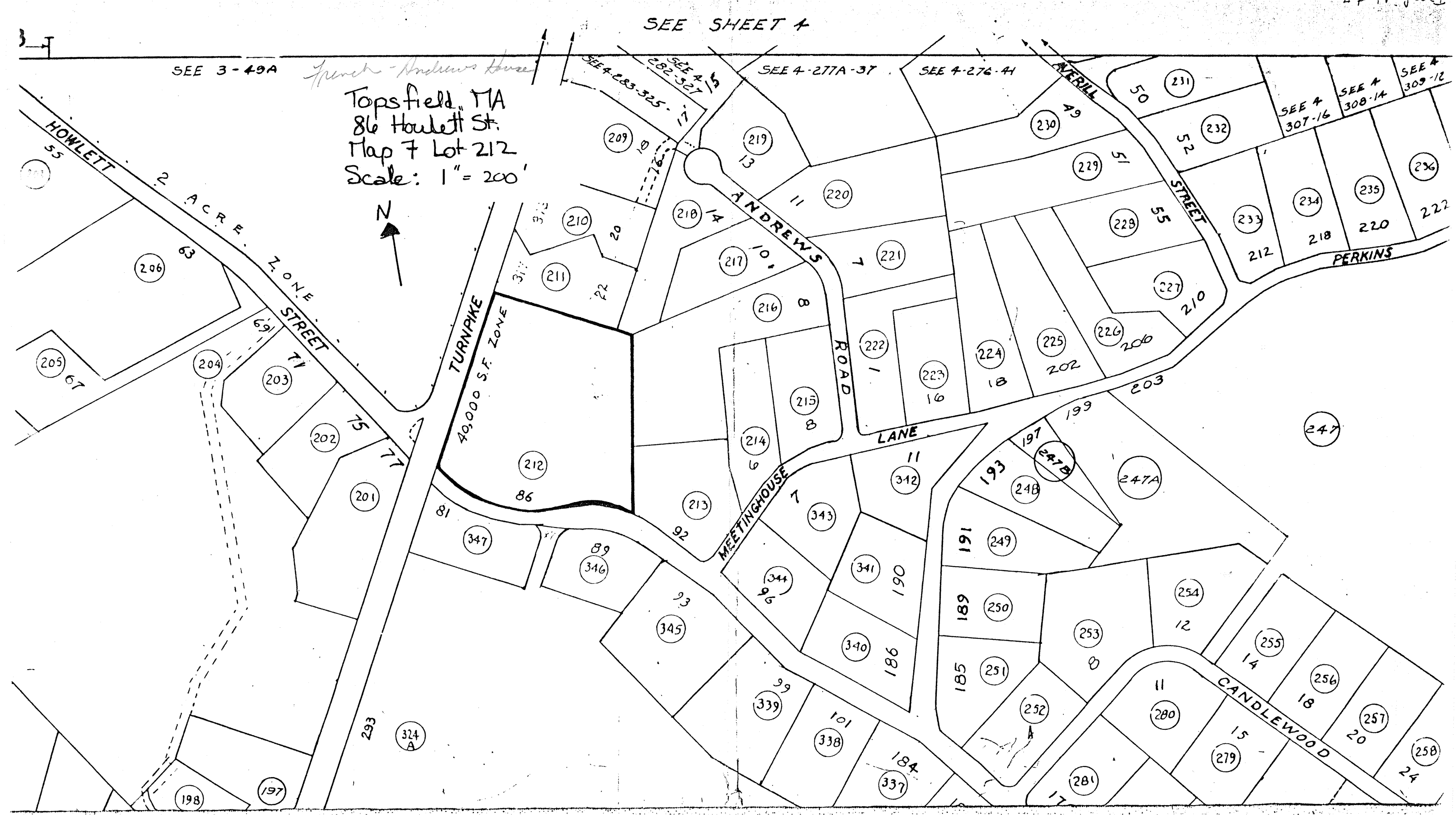
1 Period Buildings of E. Ma. NRA

SEE SHEET 4

SEE 3-49A

French-Andrews House

Topsfield, MA
86 Houlett St.
Map 7 Lot 212
Scale: 1" = 200'



Please refer to the map in the
Multiple Property Cover Sheet
for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000281