

A photograph of Rochdale Town Hall, a large Gothic Revival building with a prominent clock tower on the left. The building is made of dark stone and features many arched windows and intricate carvings. In the foreground, there is a street with several cars parked or moving. The sky is a clear, deep blue.

Donald Insall Associates
Chartered Architects and Historic Building Consultants

The North's Greatest 'Cathedral of Commerce'

Rochdale Town Hall: Phase 2 Works

Planning, Design and Access Statement for Rochdale Development Agency

May 2020



Contact information

Simon Malam

simon.malam@insall-architects.co.uk

Chester Office

Bridgegate House

5 Bridge Place

Chester

CH1 1SA

01244 350 063

www.donaldinsallassociates.co.uk

This report and all intellectual property rights in it and arising from it are the property of or are under licence to Donald Insall Associates or the client. Neither the whole nor any part of this report, nor any drawing, plan, other document or any information contained within it may be reproduced in any form without the prior written consent of Donald Insall Associates or the client as appropriate. All material in which the intellectual property rights have been licensed to DIA or the client and such rights belong to third parties may not be published or reproduced at all in any form, and any request for consent to the use of such material for publication or reproduction should be made directly to the owner of the intellectual property rights therein.

Contents

1.0	Introduction and Background	1
2.0	The Site and its Legal Status	4
3.0	Summary Assessment of Significance and Conservation Philosophy	6
4.0	Project Brief	17
5.0	Design Statement	20
6.0	Access Statement	52
7.0	Planning Statement	54



1.0 Introduction and Background

1.1 Introduction

Donald Insall Associates were appointed in February 2019 to continue providing lead consultant and conservation architect services for Rochdale Borough Council (RBC) at Rochdale Town Hall following the successful outcome of the Heritage Fund Stage 1 bid.

The proposals have been developed collaboratively with our client Rochdale Development Agency and the project consultant team, along with specialist surveyors and contractors, which has hugely strengthened our understanding of Rochdale Town Hall and its context.

1.1.1 Summary of Proposals

The scheme of works proposed seek to restore and refurbish Rochdale Town Hall building to facilitate its continued use, incorporating civic spaces together with ancillary functions, including events, exhibition and interpretation spaces, upgraded bar and café. Works to include; glazing of porte cochere and tower link, new terraced access to building perimeter, external repair works, specialist repair and restoration of decorative interiors and selective window replacement; new services including lifts, plant and equipment; new facilities including exhibition, toilets and storage; and associated works.

The proposals have been carefully developed to respond appropriately to the significance of the listed building – guided by the key objective of preserving its exceptional historic and architectural interest, with proposals for change guided by an overarching Conservation Philosophy. The majority of change and a reduced scope of repairs is focussed in areas

of lower significance together with repairing and restoring areas of higher significance in accordance with the policies outlined in the accompanying Conservation Management Plan (CMP), and centred on four key strands of the adopted philosophy.

1.1.2 Summary of Phasing

Following the refinement of the proposals and commissioning of specialist surveys and opening up works, the overall refurbishment project has been divided into three phases of works as follows:

- Phase 1: the primary objective of Phase 1 proposals has been to reduce risks to Phase 2 Heritage Funded works and largely comprise strip-out works, structural openings and preparatory works funded by RBC.
- Phase 2: the main body of the NLHF funded works for the repair and restoration of the Town Hall, including surrounding terracing.
- Phase 3: the potential later commercial re-use phase of works following delivery of Phase 2.

This **Planning, Design and Access Statement** and suite of supporting documents have been prepared to support the applications for Full Planning and Listed Building Consent for **Phase 2** proposals - which as outlined above form part of the wider, phased refurbishment of Rochdale Town Hall. A series of public realm works, within the setting of the Town Hall are being carefully developed, but do not form part of this application.

Sections 1-6 of this statement outlines the site and its significance, sets out the aims of the project and describes the design process and proposals, it should be read in conjunction with the accompanying

drawings and reports, which are submitted as part of this application. A full assessment of the scheme can be found within the Heritage Impact Assessment. Further supporting information can be found in the CMP, which has informed the development of the proposals for the building and its surrounding environs, the key principles of which are summarised in the Conservation Philosophy - contained at **Section 3** of this report. The CMP contains a comprehensive illustrated historic background, detailed building analysis and room-by-room gazetteer; its purpose is summarised in **Section 3** and the full document can be found along with the Specialist Heritage Reports, accompanying this application.

Section 7 of this statement sets out the planning history of the building, the technical consultation carried out and the planning context in relation to these proposals.

1.2 Consultants

Donald Insall Associates

Lead Conservation Architect and Heritage Consultants

Price & Myers

Structural and Civil Engineers

Max Fordham

MEP Engineers

Redman Design

Exhibition Designers

Gillespies

Landscape Architects

Donald Insall Associates
Chartered Architects and Historic Building Consultants

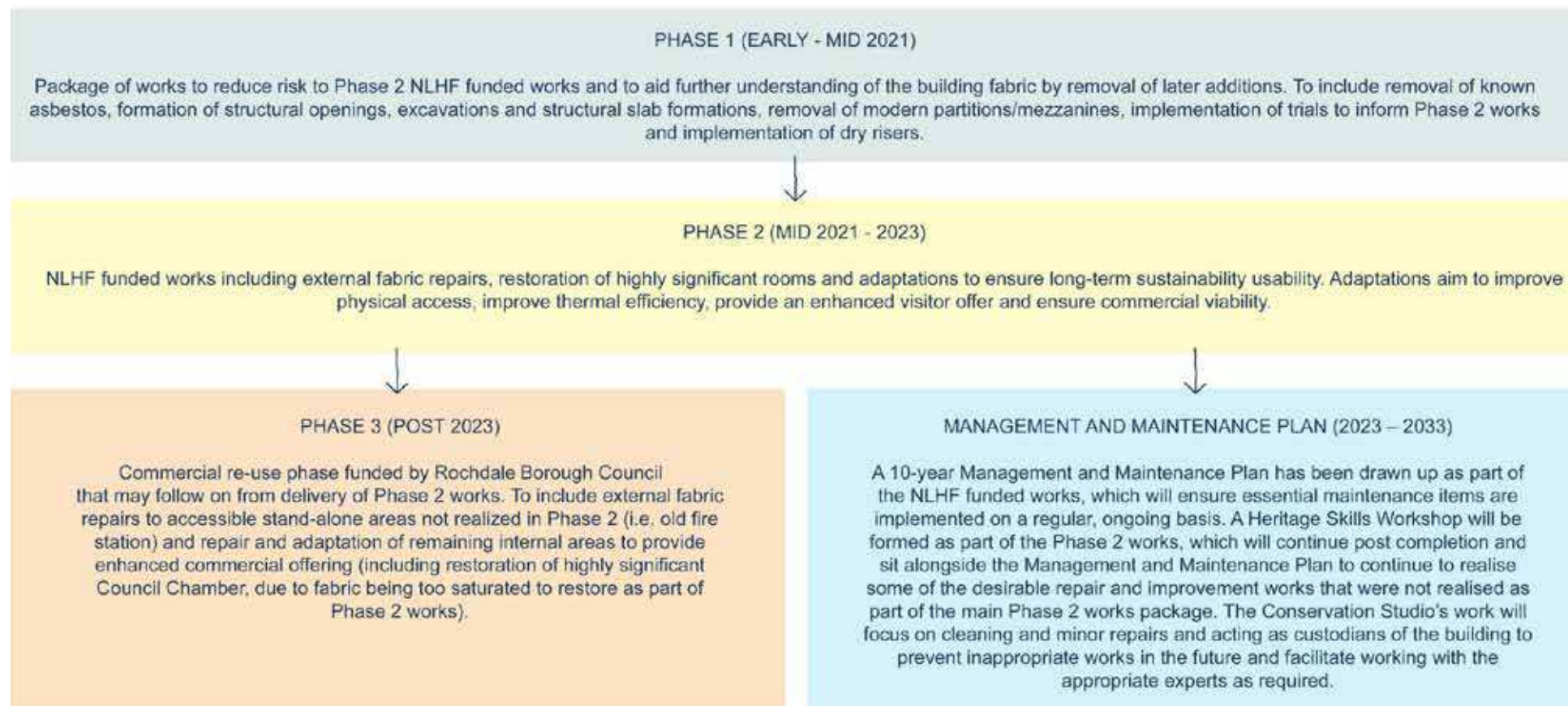
**PRICE &
MYERS**

MAX FORDHAM

Redman Design

GILLESPIES

Masterplanning | Landscape Architecture | Urban Design



Above: Phasing Strategy

2.0 The Site and its Legal Status

2.1 Location and Address

Rochdale is a town in Greater Manchester, north-east of Manchester city centre, at the foothills of the South Pennines. The site address is: Rochdale Town Hall, The Esplanade, Rochdale, OL16 1AB. The building subject to this application is approximately 2.200sqm (3,300sqm inclusive of land designated for proposed external terracing) and is bounded by land owned by Rochdale Borough Council on all sides, as shown on the site location plan. The site is flanked by:

North: Public highway

East: Public highway / Church

South: Public highway / Church

West: Public highway / commercial property.

The Town Hall is currently occupied and operated by Rochdale Borough Council. The building is in D1 use, with ancillary uses including: café, offices and events space. However a significant part of the building is given over to storage, is closed to public access and is in disrepair. The registry office is located on the west side of the building, but alterations here do not form part of this phase of works.

2.2 Summary of Legal Status

Rochdale Town Hall is a Grade I listed building located in the Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area (designated in 1980 and extended in 2011) in the Metropolitan Borough of Rochdale. It is in the setting of a number of nationally significant designated heritage assets. Directly opposite the Town Hall lies the Cenotaph (Grade I) and the old Post Office

(Grade II); to the rear, St Chads Church (Grade II*) sits at the top of the hill with Broadfield Park and Slopes (Grade II Registered Park and Garden) extending between. The recently listed Rochdale Bridge (Grade II) forms part of the NLHF funded 'Revealing the Roch' scheme. The site also lies within the Historic England designated 'Heritage Action Zone' – a 5 year programme of heritage-led regeneration. Alterations to a listed building generally require listed building consent; development in conservation areas or within the setting of a listed building or conservation area requires local authorities to assess the implications of proposals on built heritage.

2.3 Statutory List Description

The statutory list description of Rochdale Town Hall is as follows:

Town hall. 1866-1871, W.H Crossland; tower 1883 by A. Waterhouse. Ashlar, Westmorland slate roof.

The reception room, Lord Mayor's Parlour, the Small Exchange, members lounge and committee rooms are placed to either side of the entrance hall (or the Exchange). The grand staircase rises to the first floor Great Hall and small staircases terminate the essentially axial plan.

To the south west of the hall on the upper floor is the Council Chamber (formerly Court room) and retiring room. Gothic revival in an elaborate form with Continental antecedents. Facade of fourteen bays is asymmetrical but balanced with linking bay and tower added to left. Outer bays have triangular

gables and are of three storeys, although they differ in treatment. The next two on left and three on right have an arcade across the ground floor, then tiers of plate glass windows, mostly mullioned with cusped heads, and end above a corbelled balcony in a stepped gable richly panelled with blind tracery. The central seven bays (containing the Hall) are flanked to left by a slim octagonal stair turret with stone spirelet and to right by an octagonal stair tower with tall two-light pointed windows and a steep pyramidal slate roof with cresting. The central three bays have a heavily buttressed porte-cochere supporting heraldic beasts and acting as a balcony to the Hall which is lit by tall three-light windows with geometrical tracery. Battlements behind which rises an immense slate roof with central wooden fleche.

The tower, a version of that at Manchester Town Hall rises sheer from the plinth through three stages to the broader clock stage where gables surmount each face flanked by pinnacles. Above this a short octagonal lantern carries a stone spire. The whole facade is richly carved with naturalistic foliage in the style of Southwell Minster. The main feature of each return wall is a tall semi-octagonal stair tower with lead windows and pyramidal slate roofs.

The rear is comparatively plain, but the centre is occupied by the great stair hall of three bays with weathered buttresses and very tall three-light windows, roofed separately. The entrance hall is 5x3 bays with quadripartite red and white stone vaulting, fine carved capitals of Southwell



Minster type carved by Thomas Earp, polished granite columns and Minton floor tiles; it forms an undercroft to the hall and was intended as an Exchange. The reception room has three pierced diaphragm arches, two Tudor arched fireplaces with castellated mantles and heraldic panels, and wall paintings depicting the various machines used in textiles. The Lord Mayor's Parlour has a similar fireplace, chamfered beams carried on corbels representing the sections of an orchestra, William Morris stained glass depicting the seasons and months of the year, and wall paintings.

The members lounge has a vaulted ceiling carried on granite corner columns. The Small Exchange has the industries of Rochdale represented in the stained glass and ceiling paintings. The vaulted stair hall has one flight which returns in two with clustered columns rising between the flights. The heavy marble handrail rests on a stone arcade, the upper landings are supported on flying ribs and the stained glass represents the towns with which Rochdale traded. The Great Hall has a painted timber roof with angelic hammer beams: Henry Holiday's wall painting of 1870 depicts King John signing the Magna Carta, the stained glass is by Bayne of Heaton But and Bayne and includes two rose windows to the gables. A large organ is housed in three pointed arches. The Council Chamber and Court Room are elaborately decorated with carved timber fittings. Most rooms have original painted wall pattern designs by Best of Rochdale and oak linenfold panelling of varying designs.

The design was selected by competition in 1864 and is an important early departure from High Victorian heaviness.

The Builder 7:4:66, 7:10:71, and 12.2.76. B.o.E.

Listing NGR: SD8958413253

3.0 Summary Assessment of Significance and Conservation Philosophy

3.1 Summary Assessment of Significance

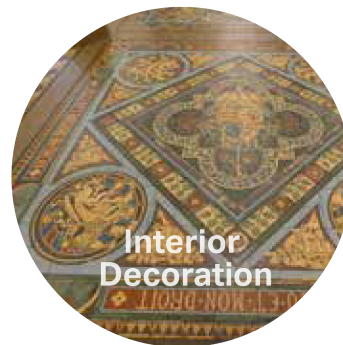
A detailed assessment of significance with guidance on the relative significance of elements of fabric and plan form and the extent to which these elements may be altered is included in Section 2 of the Heritage Impact Assessment, with accompanying significance plans. The following paragraphs are a summary explaining why the listed building and the conservation area are considered of nationally-important architectural and historical interest.

Rochdale Town Hall is a Grade I listed building of exceptional interest, its dramatic Gothic exterior and jewel-like interior are in harmony and together they exemplify not only the apex of High Victorian design and suggest the beginning of the Aesthetic movement, but also represent Rochdale's specific position on trade and politics and the building is a symbol of civic pride and as such is of national significance.

The Town Hall was designed by William Crossland, a prominent Victorian architect, and is of the highest significance in terms of its historic value as one of the finest examples of a Victorian town hall nationally. As well as being an outstanding example of the Gothic Revival, it also includes early examples of Aesthetic Movement design, then a very new movement in art.

Its original form as designed is little altered with the exception of the later tower, itself a fine example of design by Waterhouse, and the north front and tower are of the highest architectural significance. This is derived through the aesthetic value of its exterior and for the particularly outstanding decorative design of the interior. Externally, Crossland utilised the form of

Key Values



the architecture and a hierarchy of decorative detail to express separate internal functions and create a unified interior and exterior scheme, with stone carvings and stained glass of the highest quality embellishing the building, with symbolic sculpture and motifs by the leading craftsmen of their trade.

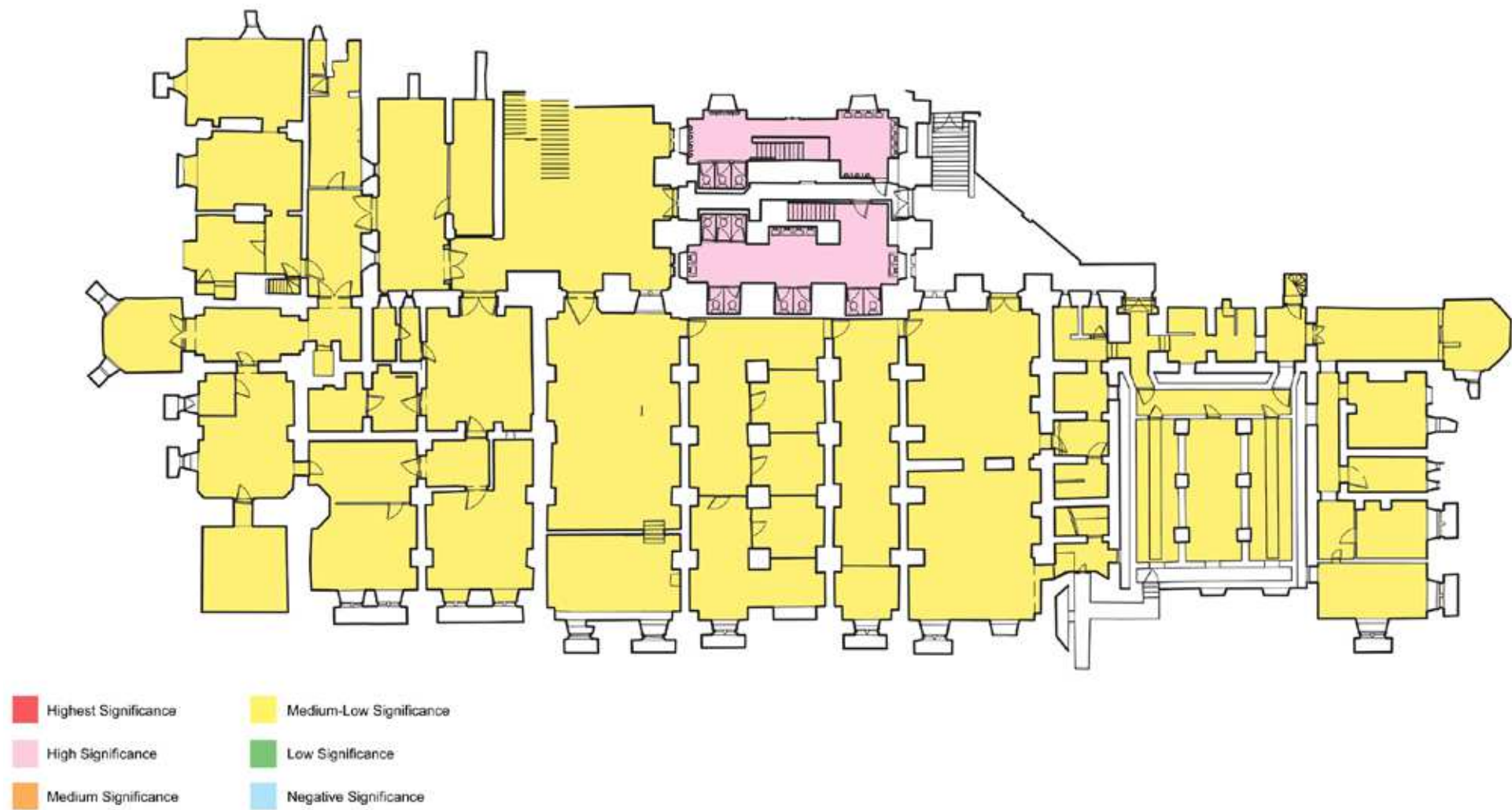
Internally the surviving rooms with intact schemes are probably unmatched as examples of Victorian polychrome decorated interiors, with one of the most elaborate examples of pictorial and heraldic decoration of this era. The building has been in continuous public use for over 140 years and has a high evidential value founded in several major phases of alteration undertaken to reflect the changing aspirations and priorities of the Council; the layers of paint and other finishes in the decorative scheme hold evidence for the original appearance and composition of paint colours and are part of the building's significance. Adaptations undertaken in the 1970s and 1990s are of low value and detract from the significance of the building.

A socially and culturally radical building, the Town Hall is regarded as a symbol of civic pride and identity in Rochdale. It has communal value for its presence in the town centre, as a focus of significant events and for the interior decoration illustrating the balance between radical politics, Victorian trade and a claim on tradition which Rochdale's entrepreneurs and politicians sought - rooted in Rochdale's heritage. The theme of interior decoration showing industrial processes and working people are extremely rare within Victorian fine art.

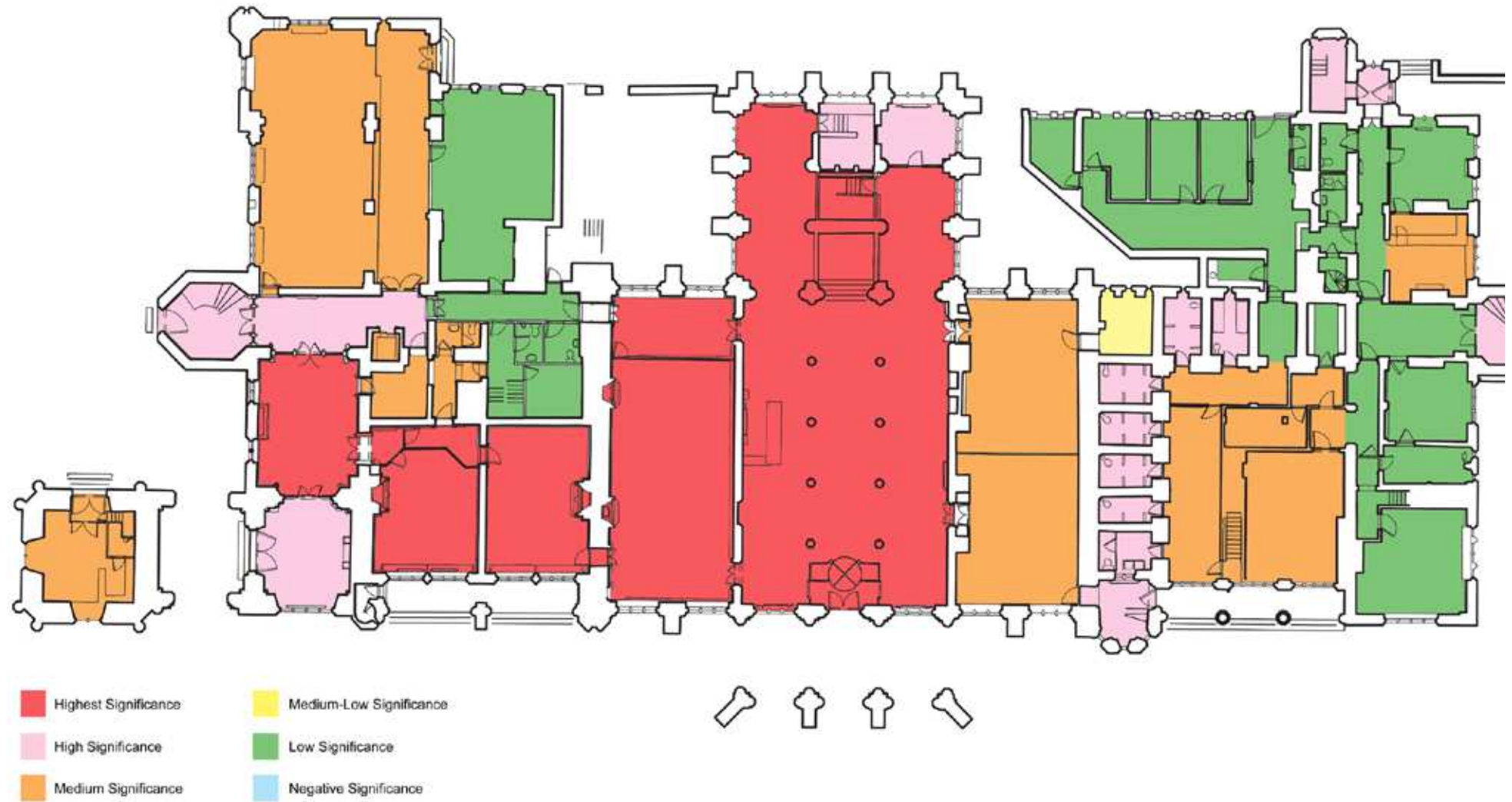
The Town Hall is the most significant building in the conservation area, lying on an island site it forms a major landmark on the Esplanade and dominates

the town centre. It forms part of an attractive group of civic and community buildings that include St Chad's Church and the Post Office set in a designed landscape that was developed in stages between the late 19th century and the mid-20th century and recently enhanced through the reopening of the River Roch. Views from the west along the Esplanade, from Park Slopes and from Memorial Gardens are of particular significance; whilst car parking, traffic and associated highway clutter detract from the Town Hall's wider landscaped setting. The following pages are taken from the CMP and visually indicate the significance of the building and its setting.

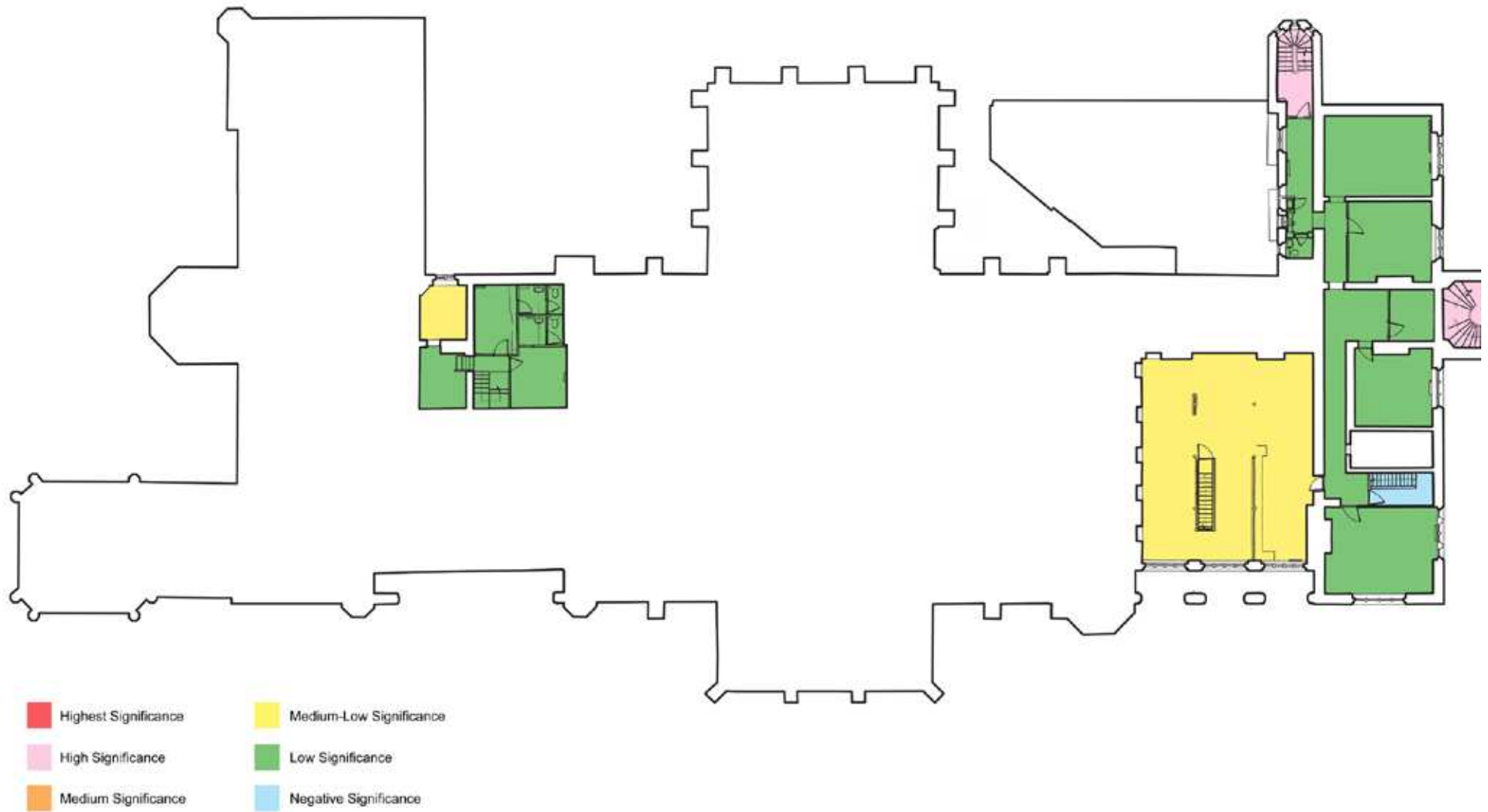
Basement Significance



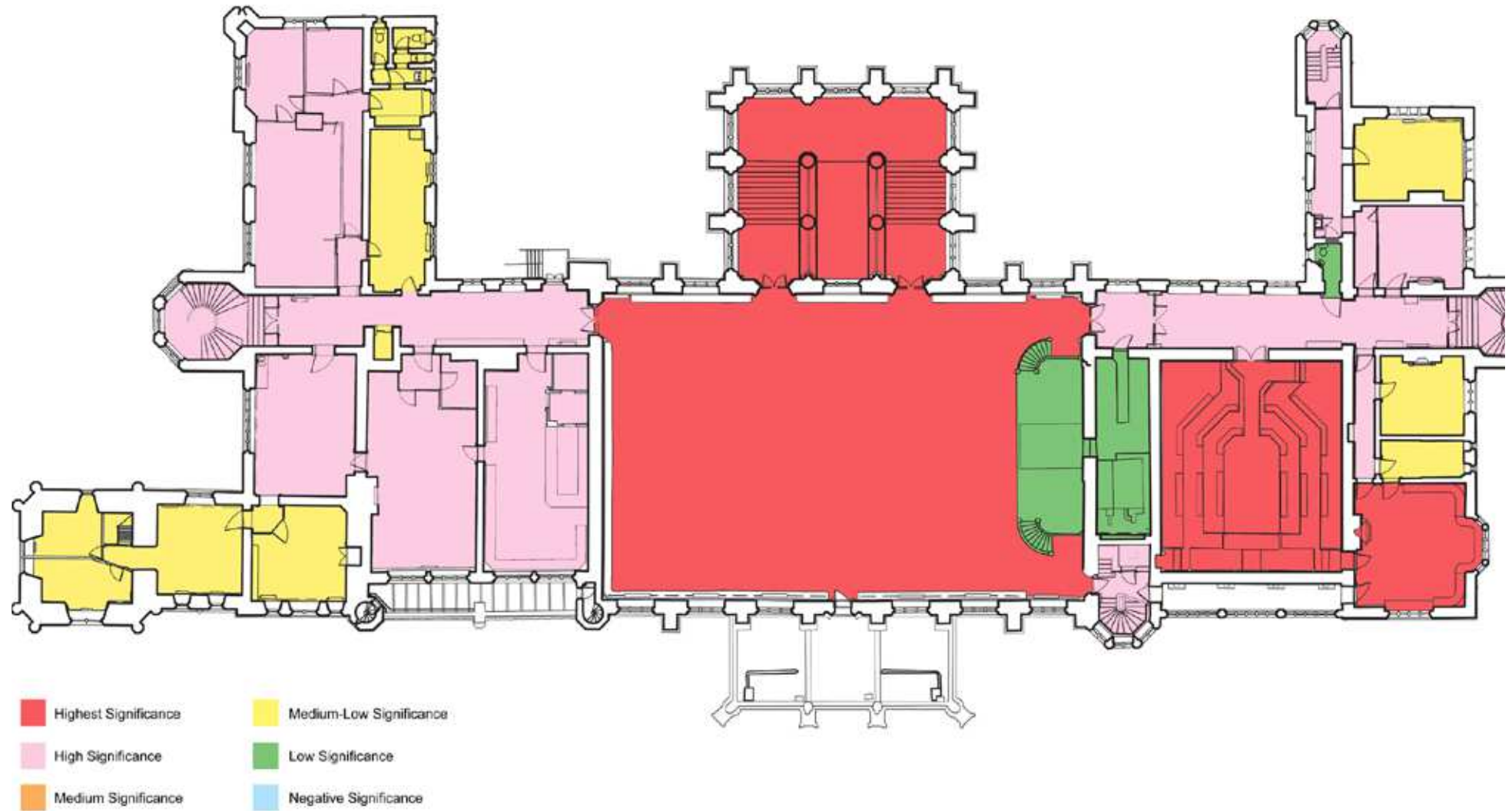
Ground Floor Significance



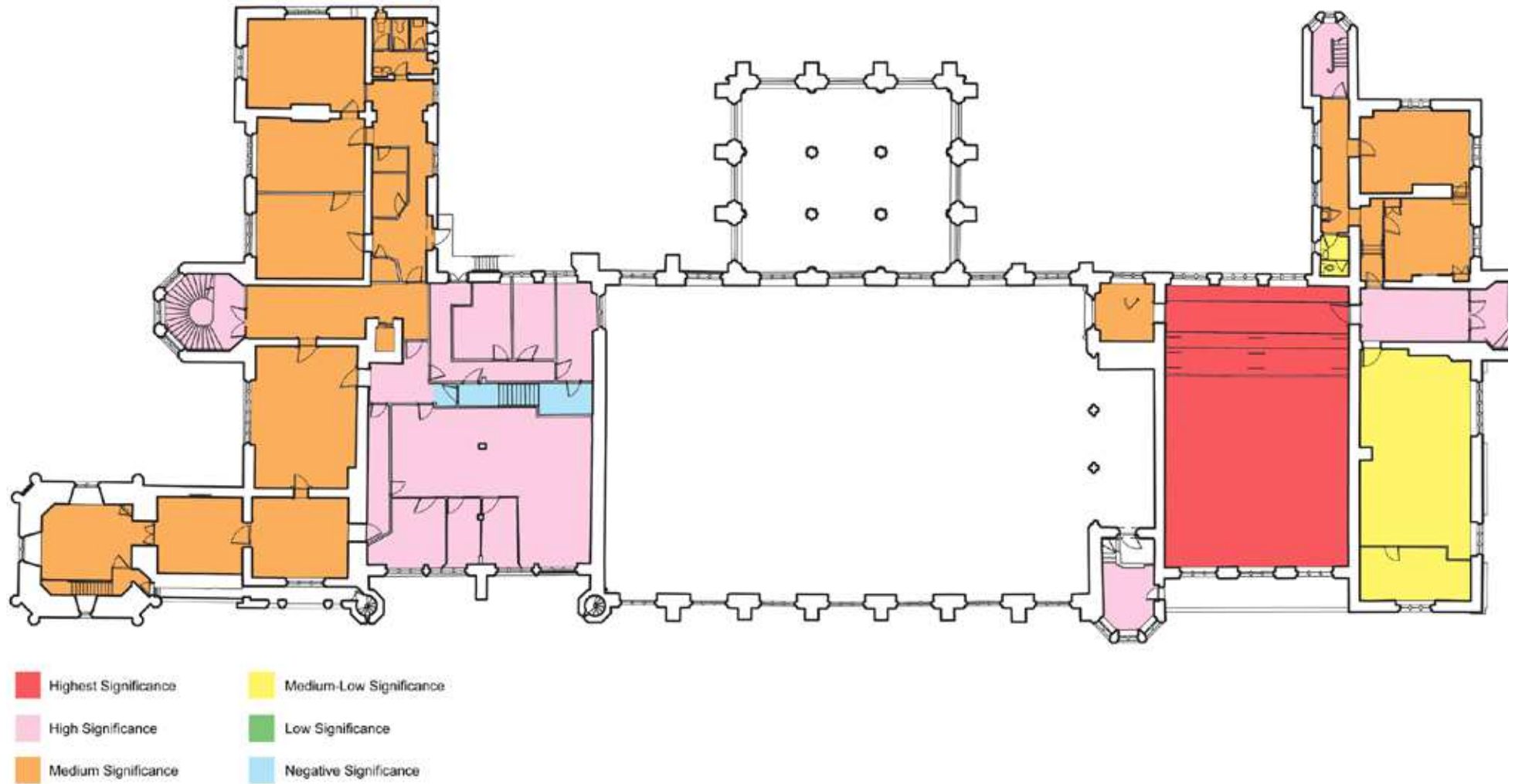
Mezzanine Floor Significance



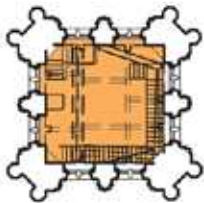
First Floor Significance



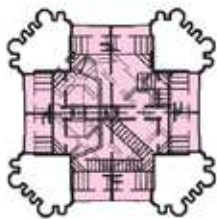
Second Floor Significance



Third Floor Significance



Fourth Floor Plan

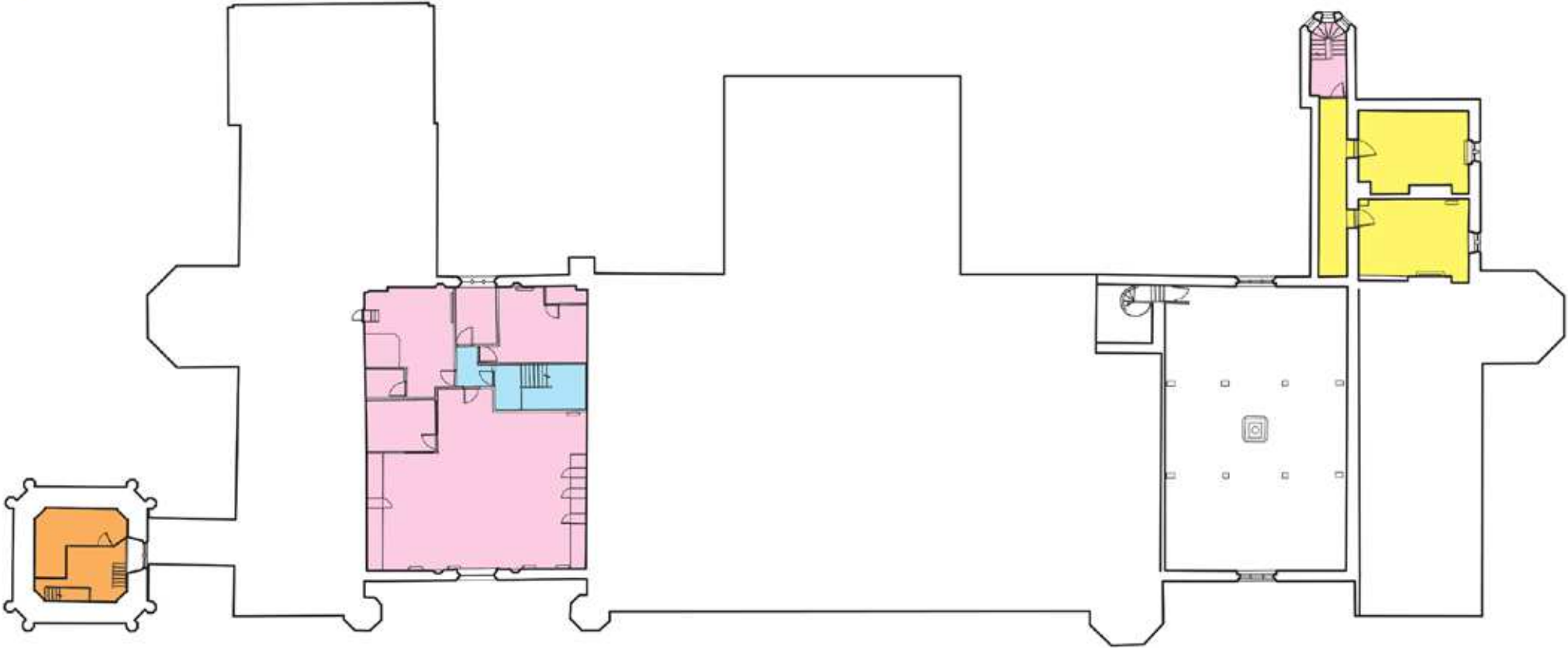


Clock Chamber



Bell Chamber

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <div></div> Highest Significance | <div></div> Medium-Low Significance |
| <div></div> High Significance | <div></div> Low Significance |
| <div></div> Medium Significance | <div></div> Negative Significance |



3.2 Conservation Management Plan

3.2.1 Its Contents and Purpose

The development of proposals for Rochdale Town Hall, the people responsible for its creation and its social, architectural and artistic context was fully researched from the beginning of the project. A full assessment of significance and analysis of the building and its contents culminated in the creation of a Conservation Management Plan (CMP) - which has underpinned the development of the brief and the scheme and its detailed proposals. The purpose of the CMP is to provide a framework to manage the heritage of the place, both for regular maintenance and repair and for when decisions about change have to be made.

The CMP has recently been updated into a c.250-page document which comprises a comprehensive Appraisal, Management Plan and Gazetteer, all combined in an easily-searchable interactive format. The document acts as a tool, providing an understanding of the significance of the building and its setting, upon which informed decisions about making changes to the building and its setting can be made, in a manner consistent with their conservation. It includes comprehensive series of policies, to guide change to the building.

The CMP is considered as a 'living document', and as such it will be updated on a quinquennial basis. But firstly, the document will be updated following the completion of works, in order to capture the latest changes to the building comprehensively and to provide policies for the management and maintenance



ROCHDALE TOWN HALL

Conservation Management Plan



Donald Insall Associates
Chartered Architects and Historic Building Consultants

of the building going forward to ensure the on-going success of the project following completion in securing the long-term conservation of the building.

3.3 Conservation Philosophy

The development of Rochdale Town Hall, the people responsible for its creation and its social, architectural and artistic context was fully researched at the beginning of the project – providing an assessment of significance and analysis of the building and its contents which formed the basis of the updated CMP and underpinned the development of the scheme. Central to this was the development of a conservation philosophy for the proposed scheme, focused on four key themes:

Continued use of the building in a manner sympathetic to its original use and function whilst allowing sensitive adaption to accommodate modern requirements

The continued and expanded use of Rochdale Town Hall as both a focus for the local community, an expression of active citizenship, and a revitalised visitor destination in its own right is required to retain the building in a manner very much in line with its original use. The original design provided all the functions then required of a new Council including an embodiment of civic pride, a place for public ceremony, entertainment, learning, administration, justice and other public services such as the fire brigade.

Many of these functions have outgrown the building, moving to larger buildings designed to meet the now very different scale of services offered by local authorities. These include housing, policing, the fire service, courts, library and council offices. But a physical focal point for local, regional and national

pride, public ceremonies, entertainment, learning and (on a reduced scale) administration can still be provided by a revitalised Rochdale Town Hall.

It is important to retain the ceremonial role of the building in relation to the mayor and council and, more importantly, as focus for local community, active citizenship and as a wider visitor attraction to allow people to experience the exceptional heritage value of a restored Rochdale Town Hall.

Retention of the building as a key cultural facility for the local community

The original Rochdale Corporation was forward looking but its sponsors, designers and craftspeople could not have imagined the values and leisure time activities of the modern era. Social inequality, however, remains a very significant problem and Rochdale Town Hall needs to serve all facets of the local community, in the spirit of Rochdale's radical 19th-century politicians and cooperative movement founders.

Just as Rochdale Town Hall originally symbolised an unprecedented vision for an emerging industrial town, now it needs to accommodate and facilitate a new vision for a post-industrial town. Just as learning and culture were part of its original agenda, and were embodied in the building, so today can they be agents of social justice and change. New facilities should therefore be inclusive to everybody from all cultures, including or perhaps even especially from the poorest families so that they can participate in and enjoy this remarkable building. As an enduring symbol of Rochdale's local identity, pride and resilience Rochdale Town Hall is the perfect building for this task; using its

inherent architectural, historic and artistic values as a foundation for greater social inclusion, regeneration and interpretation.

Repair and restoration of the building fabric and interiors

Rochdale Town Hall is an imposing and robust building externally, its character much influenced by the gritty Pennine stone of its masonry. Stylistically the exterior and interior are in perfect harmony, yet the colour, richness and joyful detail of the interior comes as something of a surprise. The interior decoration is also fragile when compared to the exterior.

As an outstanding building with nationally important interiors it is crucial that the fabric of the building is in good repair to minimise decay and ensure the conservation of the fabric, which has suffered from years of use and some past unsympathetic decoration and 'restoration'. Furthermore, the creation of a dry and weather-tight building is critical to the preservation of the interior and its decorative finishes which are extremely vulnerable to water damage and damp. Major external repairs are required alongside a programme of conservation work, to remedy years of use and some past unsympathetic decoration and 'restoration'.

Sustainable use and improved access

The challenge of breathing new life into existing buildings is rarely limited to sensitive repair alone, even in a building such as Rochdale Town Hall, which has remained in constant use. The building will need to adapt to changing circumstances whilst retaining and enhancing what makes it so special, and this will require innovative design solutions and conservation



approaches. Repairs must be completed to a high standard, significantly increasing its current lifespan and enabling the building to be inherently more 'green'. This can be achieved in a variety of ways, including specifying appropriately long-lasting materials from sustainable sources, and avoiding high carbon footprints where possible through improvements to thermal and energy efficiency. The economic advantages of repurposing this building include: full use of the embodied energy which has already been expended in its construction and decoration, thus avoiding the need for new construction elsewhere; reduced use of new materials; reduced construction periods; and enhanced use of traditional building skills.

Rochdale Town Hall is one of the very finest examples of civic architecture in the country and is a highly significant communal asset to the people of Rochdale. However, the very nature of its imposing Victorian Gothic design, with limited level access renders it inaccessible both physically and – in some cases – culturally to people within the local community. In order to allow the Town Hall to truly stand as an 'accessible' community asset, improvements to access into and within the building are required to address issues inherent with a building designed long before the advent of modern standards, whilst being sensitive to its original design. However 'accessibility' goes far beyond physical barriers and the proposed scheme should bring forward improvements to the legibility and interpretation of the building's significance, features and its historic context to improve people's knowledge, and relationship with, this iconic building – embracing the opportunity to reengage the community through the building's restoration.

4.0 Project Brief

4.1 Overall Aims

Rochdale Town Hall is owned and managed by Rochdale Borough Council. Many of the administrative functions have however relocated to the new offices at Number One Riverside Use, and therefore the Town Hall's function as council offices has almost ceased. Some areas are now underused and have reverted to storage, whilst others are crowded with surplus office furniture and equipment. There are numerous instances where the current use or management of rooms affects the significance of the building, or where aspects of the building are not well-suited to current use.

Rochdale Borough Council's challenge is to maintain and manage the building so that it meets public expectations for a civic and community building and complies with current legislation within a constrained budget, whilst protecting its exceptional significance. The principal aims of this project follow those within the Conservation Philosophy, and are as follows:

Continued use of the building in a manner sympathetic to its original use and function whilst allowing sensitive adaption to accommodate modern requirements.

Retention of the building as a key cultural facility for the local community.

Repair and restoration of the building fabric and interiors.

Sustainable use and improved access



The Town Hall project sits within wider scheme of town centre regeneration, which involves improvement works to the public realm, which do not form part of this application.

4.2 National Lottery Heritage Funding

The NLHF invest in the restoration of historic buildings only when the proposals can clearly demonstrate significantly improved long-term physical and intellectual access for the public. Whilst the capital costs of restoration can make up the majority of the grant, it is typically awarded based on what that restoration generates in terms of outputs for public engagement. The areas that will be key for the NLHF in our project are the more welcoming entrances, level and equitable access in as many elevations as possible, vastly increased physical access to a greater percentage of the building, intellectual access to the main historic rooms, increased volunteer involvement with the building and increased learning and training. The proposed Heritage Conservation Skills Studio is exactly the type of work the NLHF would like to see generated from the project and involving and engaging the wider community in this project is regarded as a huge benefit.

4.3 Opportunities and Challenges

Significance

Rochdale Town Hall is a Grade I listed building of exceptional interest, its dramatic Gothic exterior and jewel-like interior are in harmony and together they exemplify not only the apex of High Victorian design and suggest the beginning of the Aesthetic movement, but also represent Rochdale's specific position on trade and politics and the building is a symbol of civic pride and as such is of national significance.

Accessibility and Interpretation

Rochdale Town Hall is one of the very finest examples of civic architecture in the country and is a communal asset to the people of Rochdale of the highest significance. However, the very nature of its imposing Victorian Gothic design renders it inaccessible both physically and – in some cases – culturally to people within the local community.

Currently the Town Hall lacks adequate interpretation for a wide range of audiences. There is the opportunity here to reengage the community initially through the building's restoration.

At present there is no disabled access to upper floors in the west side of the building, apart from the first floor via the Great Hall.

Funding and Income

- Rochdale Borough Council has committed significant investment towards the restoration of the Town Hall despite huge budget cuts.
- The Council and its partner, Rochdale Development Agency, continues to support a full time conservation officer post and an experienced heritage projects team.
- The team have secured the North West's 2nd Heritage Action Zone in collaboration with Historic England; reopened the River Roch revealing the historic bridges (RTPI award-winning project) and undertaken extensive public realm improvements within the conservation area.
- The team are also engaged in the restoration of the 1930s Fire Station with the support of the National Lottery Heritage Fund.
- A Heritage Conservation Skills Studio will be initiated by RDA.
- Our strategy to overcome cost pressures is to thoroughly understand the existing building through early commissioning of surveys, soft market testing, opening up works and trials - all during the development phase.
- Working closely with the cost manager, we have come up with intelligent solutions to phasing and sequence of works, ensuring an efficient use of the funds available.
- Phase 1 is designed to reduce risks and unknowns during the Phase 2 NLHF funded works.

Condition

External and internal condition surveys, opening up works and specialist surveys undertaken throughout RIBA Stage 2 and 3 have highlighted a number of issues that put the building at risk, both internally and externally. The building envelope is not watertight; the roof is leaking badly in areas and many of the windows let water in. The masonry is failing in areas and the Bright Hall gable is leaning precariously outwards. The later introduction of cementitious mortar is exacerbating the failure of the masonry and open and vulnerable mortar joints are present across the building. Continued water penetration will undoubtedly encourage both dry and wet rot within the timber throughout the building - putting the structure and the highly significant historic painted interiors at further risk. A lack of building maintenance in the past combined with the inclusion of inappropriate repairs means that many features of the interior decoration are now in need of conservation. Similarly, unsympathetic building alterations require a programme of works to unveil hidden historic interiors and reverse damage caused by these modern interventions. There is imminent risk of building failure through fire, with numerous dangerous electrical faults identified and only the original wet risers still installed within the building, meaning that there is currently no way of fighting a fire within the building. The wet risers are also still live and therefore there is a risk of the building flooding should a failure of the pipework occur. The current proposals address these weaknesses and upgrade the building fabric to improve its performance and sustainability. It is crucial that the fabric of the building is left in good repair to reduce risk to the fabric.

Sustainability and Services

- The thermal and energy efficiency of Rochdale Town Hall has in recent years been poor, rated as one of the lowest possible energy efficiency categories (F) in 2015
- An EPC rating of D can be achieved following completion of the NLHF funded, Phase 2 works, reducing the energy bill by approximately 50%.
- The existing mechanical and electrical services were investigated and a significant proportion have been found to be beyond economic repair and requiring full replacement before serious damage is caused to the fabric of the building.

4.4 Proposed Use

The use of the Town Hall will remain the same – Class D1 - with ancillary uses including civic, café, bar, events and exhibition spaces and offices.

4.5 Amount of Development

The proposals do not involve increasing or decreasing the overall floor area of the property and are instead concerned with minor amendments to the internal layout to ensure the building is functioning in the optimal way for the proposed functions and external alterations that will safeguard the historic fabric against future damage. i.e. re-roofing, improving existing rainwater drainage and historic fabric repairs. The retention of the original fabric and minimising decay which would lead to the need for more extensive repair and replacement is a critical objective of the proposed scheme.

5.0 Design Statement

5.1 Approach and Methodology

The retention of the original fabric and minimising decay which would lead to the need for more extensive repair and replacement is a critical objective of the proposed scheme.

The role of the external fabric in protecting the interior means that repair is now essential. The Town Hall's roof, rainwater discharge systems and external stonework are in need of major repair; their role in protecting the interior means that this repair is now essential. In addition, previous patch repointing has been carried out in an unsympathetic manner and many areas of cementitious pointing will be replaced with a more appropriate lime mortar. At basement level the external walls are very damp with areas of failing masonry, mainly due to failing drainage; which is further exacerbated by impervious paint coatings to the walls. Parts are open to the elements with windows missing and it is overrun with poorly planned pipework and service ducts that almost entirely consume the basement. Works to create a more thermally efficient building will also take place, including replacement of the currently leaking windows with more thermally efficient double glazed units and insulation of roofs as much as it is practicable to do so. All of these works will help to achieve the aim of a dry and weather-tight interior as well as conserving the external fabric of the building and improving the sustainability credentials of the Town Hall.

The interiors of this outstanding building are of national importance and it is crucial that they are in good repair. Years of use and some past unsympathetic decoration and "restoration" mean that many features of the interior decoration are now

in need of care and conservation. Painted interior surfaces are extremely vulnerable to water damage and damp. Similarly any outbreak of timber decay, such as dry rot, could also have serious consequences for the interior finishes. It is essential that building elements that manage rainwater and help to keep the fabric dry are in full working order, so that the risk of water penetration, roof leaks and condensation are minimised, and these issues will be dealt with as part of the capital works project.

Specialists have been employed throughout RIBA stages 2 and 3 to review the condition of both the stained glass windows and the painted interiors. The stained glass was found to be on the whole in good condition, with localised repairs and rectification of localised structural issues able to be carried out in-situ as part of the capital works. It was concluded that the paintwork on the stained glass is starting to deteriorate and a solution of ventilated protective glazing was suggested to prevent further deterioration. The cost of this solution is high, and outside of current project budgets, however the design team are looking to implement this solution to selected windows as part of the capital works in order to inform a future programme of installation to further windows as part of the management and maintenance plan. This approach is in line with the specialist conservator's recommendations and represents best practice internationally. The windows within the Mayor's Parlour have been selected to install the isothermal protection to owing to their higher significance and currently poor levels of protection. In the interim, better control of the internal environment will be implemented to reduce the deterioration of the paintwork, as described below.

The painted interiors have also found to be on the whole in good condition. However, layers of modern varnish have been applied over the original artwork which is now yellowing and having a detrimental impact on the paintwork below. The varnish will be reduced as part of the capital works to restore the highly significant paintwork back to its original glory. The paint below the varnish is considered to be non-porous and durable, however the restored paintwork will be monitored as part of management and maintenance plan to ensure that the internal environment is not having a detrimental impact to areas of restored. Reduction of varnish to the more easily accessible rooms will be carried out as part of the Heritage Conservation Skills Studio upon completion of the capital works, allowing members of the public to see conservation in action.

5.2 Surveying the Existing Building

5.2.1 Historic Development

The historic development of the property is described in detail within the CMP – which is provided with this application as an accompanying Specialist Heritage Report. This understanding informed the layout of the proposals, which seek to retain original room sizes where possible.

5.2.2 Visual Survey

Condition Surveys of the building were carried out at the start of the project, which identified building defects both externally and internally. The external condition surveys included a full roof survey, carried out via use of the existing Latchways system, and a high-level inspection of the tower and fleche via a MEWP. Internal scaffold towers were also erected as part of the opening up works package in order to inspect high-level areas internally within the Great Hall and Bright Hall.

5.2.3 Metric Survey

A full laser scan of the building has been conducted for the very first time as part of the development works to accurately record the existing building and 2D drawings produced from this have provided the basis for developing the proposals.

5.2.4 Opening up Works

A series of opening up works were undertaken as part of RIBA Stages 2 and 3, which assisted the design team to gain a fuller knowledge of the Town Hall's makeup, structure and detailing. From these works RIBA Stage 3 designs could be drawn up with



the confidence that the proposals are able to be practically implemented within the confines of the existing building fabric. Full details of these opening up works can be found in the Appendix.

A number of floors were opened up to understand the primary and secondary structures, which assisted to understand loadings, existing fire and acoustic insulation methods and potential new routes for services. Existing service routes were also sought out and studied to see if there was potential to reuse these as part of the new design proposals. Toilet and

riser locations were finalised upon completion of these investigations and both acoustic and fire strategies were further refined. A number of roofs were also opened up to enable an understanding of the existing roof construction and to inform areas of re-design required to roofs with inherent design defects. These investigations also assisted to inform how much insulation it would be possible to add to each roof area.

Tower scaffolds were erected within the Great Hall to enable a closer inspection of the ventilation 'fleche', the ceiling panels and the angels which sit at the base



Opening up works

of each roof truss. From these investigations the design team gained a greater understanding of the condition of the ceiling panels and the construction of the 'fleche' and its associated damper mechanism. It was also established that it should be structurally viable to suspend new light fittings from the 'hands' of the angels, as depicted within the 1873 watercolour perspective by Edward Walker.

A further set of opening up works were commissioned at RIBA stage 3, when the design team had a more thorough understanding of the building, to inform any outstanding queries. These included opening up works to the mezzanine, further trial holes to inform structural proposals, inspection of ceiling voids and assessment of lath and plaster ceilings.

Sample cleaning trials were undertaken as part of the opening up works programme by a specialist paint conservator. These focused on rooms with highly decorated walls and ceiling panels, the angels and

roof timbers to the Great Hall and the Magna Carta mural. These trials have informed the specification of cleaning methods, along with outline indications of programme and costs for specialist cleaning works. Mortar and brick samples were also taken for strength and petrographic testing, used to inform mortar specifications and structural proposals. Finally, underground drainage surveys were also commissioned and the remedial results incorporated with structural proposals.

5.2.5 Ecology

Ecology has been a key consideration throughout the development proposals, with Rochdale Town Hall being famous amongst the local community for its resident Peregrine Falcons, which nest upon the tower each year. A preliminary ecological assessment was carried out as part of RIBA 2, which identified a single common pipistrelle bat entering the building behind the guttering of the south west elevation and a single peregrine falcon perched on the tower nesting tray, as well as the presence of feral pigeons roosting in other areas of the building. Large amounts of pigeon guano around ledges and windows are eroding the masonry and making the Town Hall appear unsightly, therefore bird protection measures will be implemented in specific areas to prevent these issues from re-occurring.

Design proposals have been developed with respect to both the bats and peregrine falcons, whilst simultaneously seeking to discourage pigeons from roosting upon the building, as these are currently causing considerable damage to the building fabric. The works will be programme accordingly to avoid

disturbance of the peregrine falcons, ensuring that erection of scaffolding and works to the tower are implemented outside of nesting season. The peregrine falcons are currently preventing adequate drainage of the tower gutters due to a build-up of guano and small bird carcasses. These gutters will be cleared as part of the proposed works and the lead work beneath assessed for any necessary repairs. Going forward high level clearance on a regular basis will be incorporated onto the management and maintenance plan to avoid problems with build-up of water within these gutters. Bat emergence surveys were undertaken in May 2020 identifying a day roost, and a further emergence survey is planned for June 2020 to establish whether or not this is a maternity roost. Appropriate licenses will be applied for as necessary and designs will be developed as part of RIBA stage 4 to take into consideration findings and recommendations of these surveys. An ecologist will also be present when works start on site to provide guidance as appropriate. Refer to accompanying Ecological Reports for further details.

5.3 Sustainable Approach

The needs of the building fabric, the significance of the building, its long-term sustainability and budget restrictions, have together informed the phasing of the main works. The Phase 3 areas of works has been allocated to the west wing of the building, to hopefully be completed as part of a later capital works reuse project funded by RBC. The split between Phase 2 and Phase 3 was carefully selected to ensure Phase 2 areas of the building could operate to be independently and commercially viable to generate enough income to fund the long-term management and maintenance of the building as a whole. Phase 3 will be developed at a later date to augment the commercial spaces within the building. It should be noted that in Phase 2, the full envelope of the building will be repaired and basic heating and emergency systems will be provided for Phase 3 areas to ensure they remain protected until the implementation of Phase 3 takes place. The approach to repair works can be seen in the following 'Repair Works Strategy' diagram on the next page.

Elements of need tied to both the repair of the building and upgrades to the thermal efficiency are the roofs and windows. Therefore, as part of the re-roofing works, it is proposed to insulate the roofs as far as practicably possible without being detrimental to the fabric of the building. The existing clear glass windows, which are not fit for purpose and leak continuously, are to be replaced with 'Slimlite' double glazed units in order to improve their thermal efficiency. A trial window is proposed for installation as part of the Phase 1 works in order to inform the design proposals for these windows. Other improvement works to increase the

energy efficiency of the building include improving and zoning both heating and electrical systems (see MEP report for further details).

Surveys were undertaken regarding the current gas and electricity consumption, targeting the highest priority energy consumers, and proposing the measures that would counter these losses most effectively.

It is clear that gas consumption for heating is the biggest consumer of fossil fuel.

To combat this, we are first reducing heating demand by insulating roofs and replacing glazing.

In order to have the heating system work more efficiently, the pipework arrangement will be rationalised, and the controls set out to work more effectively and also provide better comfort.

Gas consumption (based on an identical use profile) is estimated to be reduced by approximately 40%.

Electrical consumption is not as significant as gas consumption, and largely down to lighting. By replacing all lighting with LED sources, and providing better control, it is estimated that the electricity consumption will reduce by 60%.

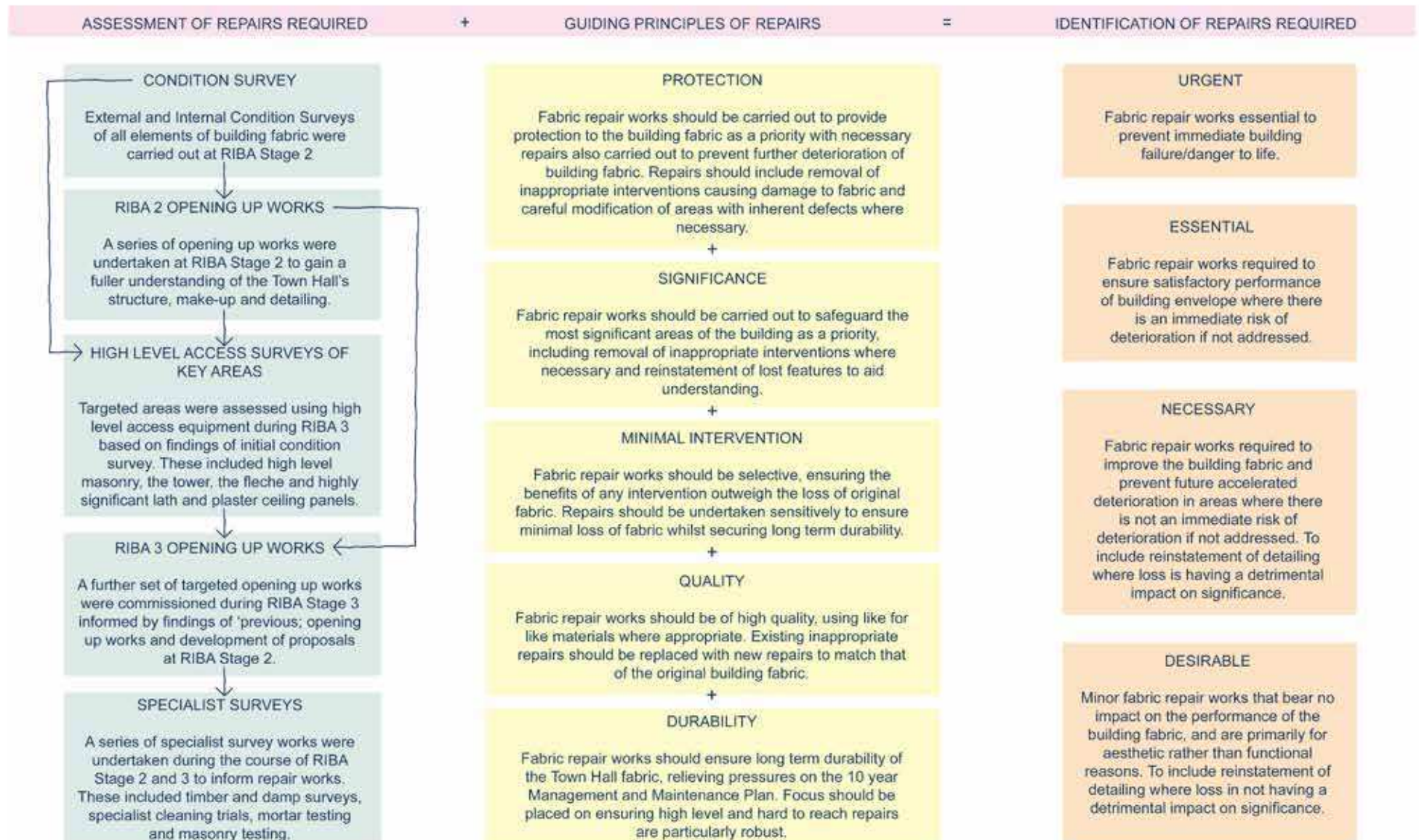
It is predicted that the DEC rating of the building will improve from its current F rating to a D rating after completion of the works to Phase 2, with energy bill reducing by approximately 50%. This is based on an identical user profile to the current profile. The expectation is that the building will be in greater use, so, energy consumption will be higher than the estimations demonstrated here.



Overall it is clear that the glazing in general is the big area of heat loss.



The above image shows the heat loss from the Great Hall roof



Above: *Repair Works' Strategy*

5.4 Overarching Proposals

The proposals have been carefully developed to respond appropriately to the significance of the listed building – guided by the key objective of preserving its exceptional historic and architectural interest, with proposals for change guided by the Conservation Philosophy outlined in Section 3.3 above.

5.5 Description of the Proposals

5.5.1 Overview of Repair and Improvement Works

Repairs will be completed to a high standard, significantly increasing its current lifespan and enabling the building to be inherently more sustainable. Alterations will be sensitively undertaken to reduce impact on building significance whilst providing beneficial outcomes in relation to the projects aims, challenges and opportunities. The 'Alteration Improvement Works Strategy' diagram on the following page expresses the methodology followed in developing all interventions for this project.

5.5.2 External Repair and Improvement Works

Rochdale Town Hall is an imposing and robust building externally; its character is much influenced by the gritty Pennine stone of its masonry and is of national significance. The external fabric of the building will be carefully repaired, restored and sensitively enhanced where it is deemed prudent to do so in order to improve the environmental performance of the building. The condition survey produced as part of NLHF Round 1 has been reviewed and updated, with resulting information developed on measured survey drawings of the building. The roof will be carefully

repaired using like for like materials and modern 'patch repairs' and inappropriate interventions will be removed, with more appropriate and sympathetic solutions implemented. Whilst carrying out re-roofing works, the opportunity will be taken to provide as much insulation as deemed appropriate into the roof spaces to improve the thermal performance of the roof. The 'fleche' to the top of the Great Hall roof will be overhauled to prevent leaks and to reinstate the damper system which controls the flow of natural ventilation down into the space below.

Where necessary, masonry will be sensitively repaired or replaced where the damage is too great to justify repair. Later inserted cementitious mortar will be removed, as this is causing damage to the masonry, and replaced with a more appropriate lime based mortar. Existing areas of lime mortar will be retained and repaired as required. The stained glass windows of the Town Hall are of exceptional significance and these will be sensitively repaired where necessary as part of the works. Existing single glazed clear windows will be replaced with 'Slimlite' double glazed windows set within a slim profile metal casement, to reduce heat loss. The modern fire escape to the south elevation removed as part of Phase 1 works will be returned to windows as part of these Phase 2 works.

In order to make Rochdale Town Hall more welcoming and accessible for all, the external porte-cochere will be glazed to bring the reception 'out' of the building and more visible to all. Approached via a ramp either side, with stone floor, the space will read as a covered external space. This proposal enables the removal of the 1930s internal lobby from the entrance foyer, which currently presents a barrier to access both physically and perceptively and impinges the appreciation of



Existing slating to Great Hall Roof in poor condition



Opening Up works carried out to establish roof build up



Example of eroding / failing masonry

the Exchange. The Phase 2 proposals will reinstate the original design intent - with a focus on the main staircase axis from the original threshold and a restoration of its interior and lighting. At the moment of arrival, visitors and the community alike will be welcomed, with clear guidance on orientation and the opportunities to enjoy the building. Externally, the porte-cochere of Waterhouse's clock tower will also be glazed, which will unlock operational circulation to the Bright Hall by linking the tower with the main building, and will provide the necessary vertical circulation for fire evacuation from the re-instated Bright Hall. New external terracing will be introduced to provide egalitarian access to each entrance of the Town Hall without the need for multiple ramps around the perimeter of the building. All of these items are discussed in more detail further on in this document.

5.5.3 Internal Repair and Improvement Works

The interiors of Rochdale Town Hall are of national importance and it is crucial that they are in good repair. Years of use and some past unsympathetic decoration and "restoration" mean that many features of the interior are now in need of care and conservation. Internally a programme of conservation work to uncover previously hidden or damaged parts of the interior decoration is proposed.



Later inserted fire escape to be removed and windows restored



Specialist cleaning trials to Great Hall ceiling



Bright Hall to be restored to original proportions

This includes:

- Reduction of modern varnish from the highly significant painted walls and ceilings (following specialist cleaning trials carried out throughout RIBA Stage 2 and 3).
- Repair and French polishing of highly significant joinery.
- Repair of the highly significant leaded lights where necessary and isothermal glazing protection added to the stained glass windows within the Mayor's Parlour.
- Specialist cleaning of the Magna Carta mural, ceiling panels and roof timbers of the Great Hall with a new oak floor and feature lighting re-positioned to hang from the hands of the angels will reinvigorate the heart of the building. The blanked off window between the Great Hall and the Bright Hall will be once again glazed to provide a visual connection between the two areas.



Original features within Bright Hall revealed during opening up works



Specialist cleaning trials to wall paintings

The opportunity is also being taken to reinstate the original spatial character and decorative elements of rooms by removing later inserted floors, suspended ceilings and partitions (during Phase 1) to better reveal the building's significance. The original volume and features of the Bright Hall will be revealed and this space will be repurposed for community and commercial use.

Throughout unsympathetic service installations will be removed and replaced with new sympathetic and more energy efficient servicing, with particular focus on minimising servicing to the highly significant rooms whilst still maintaining functionality. Further details can be found in Max Fordham's M&E report, which accompanies this application.

Access throughout the building will be improved with new sensitively located lifts to serve the Great Hall and Bright Hall, which seek to maximise use of the building at all times, whilst minimising impact on the historic fabric of the building. One of these lifts will be placed within the existing clock tower (an area previously adapted), with a new modern 'freestanding' staircase wrapped around to provide safe public access to this area for the first time and the full height circulation required to ensure suitable emergency egress from the Bright Hall. Alongside these works, new public facilities will be inserted at ground, first and second floor to provide accessible facilities at all levels whilst making best use of drainage connections through new vertical service risers, strategically placed to have the least impact possible on the building fabric.

There will be a clearer division between 'front of



New Bright Hall revealed for community use

house' and 'back of house' services, with areas of the basement sensitively waterproofed to create a more stable internal environment for storage of goods. This will enable much more of the basement to be used for 'back of house' storage, freeing up more currently unused 'front of house' spaces for public enjoyment.

5.5.4 Exhibition and Interpretation Proposals

The building will be opened up to visitors both physically and intellectually by creation of a new interpretation trail. The rooms either side of the entrance foyer will offer the main heritage exhibition and engagement zone, with innovative design and digital technology enabling flexibility in use and compatibility with the finest repaired and restored historic interiors. To the west of the entrance foyer will be the new Welcome Gallery, a new modern space with interactive exhibits for the public to enjoy. This room has been previously much altered and inappropriate interventions will be removed to reveal what remains of the historic fabric within this room. To the east of the entrance foyer sits the Mayor's suite of highly significant rooms, which will be restored to their full splendour and opened up for the public to enjoy. Removing the modern screen to the Mayors Reception Hall (retained on site for reuse) as part of Phase 1 will enable reinstatement of the original room proportions in Phase 2. Carrying out specialist cleaning of interior finishes will restore the decoration, colour and shine of these interiors of national significance. Further information on the exhibition and interpretation design can be found in Redman's report, which accompanies this application.



New Welcome Gallery opened up as part of visitor experience

5.6 Appraisal Of Key Elements

Some elements of the proposals, which are integral to the scheme have the potential to have more of an impact given the sensitivity of the areas. A series of options appraisals were undertaken to understand the best approach to take, and to ensure that any potential harm is avoided and mitigated.

5.6.1 Main Entrance Porte cochere

The Need

In order to allow the Town Hall to truly stand as an 'accessible' community asset, improvements to access into and within the building are required which both address issues inherent with a building designed long before the advent of modern standards, whilst being sensitive to its original design. Issues relating to access and arrival were identified during the early stages of the project, including the awkward arrangement of the 1930s lobby at the main entrance - providing a less than satisfactory arrival, particularly for wheelchair users. It was also noted that it detracts from the original proportions and decoration of the Exchange, which should be addressed in any proposals.

In order to maintain thermal performance of the building and for the comfort of occupants, a draught lobby / arrival enclosure is required. The arrival lobby space would allow for signage and exhibition / event advertisements to broaden the reach of the increased building use.

A barrier at the entrance to the porte cochere is also deemed to be vital for both security and counter terrorism measures during opening hours. The existing



Existing 1930s lobby restricts access for all

entrance doors are to be retained. Previously gates had been installed within the openings, showing that the enclosure / security of the port-cochère was previously required, as seen in the photo. It is not certain whether they formed part of the original design, and these gates were removed during WWII.

Informed by the local community's perception of Rochdale Town Hall, identified during the public consultation, and to make it more welcoming and accessible for all, the RIBA Stage 1 proposals sought to glaze the openings of the porte cochère to bring the reception 'out' of the building - to make it more visible and approachable to all.

As an element of the highest significance as part of the original external composition, the team are aware that alterations to the porte-cochère need to be carefully considered and detailed to avoid causing harm to the building's significance. A number of alternative solutions were assessed, in order to evaluate the alternatives, these are discussed below.

Options Appraisal

Retain existing internal lobby & no alteration to the Porte-Cochère

The existing 1930's lobby is identified as detrimental to the building due to its installation covering and damaging part of the original Minton tiled floor, damage caused to the stone columns and the effect of the lobby on the spatial character of the Exchange. These issues would only be rectified if the existing lobby is removed. To leave the arrival sequence in the same arrangement would not meet the key project requirements which seek to improve the arrival experience to the building, both in terms

of access, visibility and transparency to the public. Security issues and misuse of the spaces within the port-cochère would similarly not be addressed by this proposal.

It was therefore concluded that this was not an appropriate solution.

Remove existing internal lobby & no alteration to the Porte-Cochère

If the internal lobby was removed, then there would be an opportunity to return the Exchange to its original form and address the damage to the stone columns / capitals and the tiled floor, however this was introduced to act as a draught lobby. If this was removed and there was no alternative draught lobby introduced then the main front doors would be closed the majority of the time, which would decrease the openness of the building, both physically and perceptively, and therefore would undermine the social and visibility objectives of the project.

It was therefore concluded that this was not an appropriate solution.

Replace existing internal lobby & provide glazed lobby glass 'box' within the Exchange

Replacing the existing 1930's timber structure with a glazed version would address the thermal lobby element required to open up the existing entrance doors, however this would not allow the return of the Exchange to its original arrangement and would result in the same if not increased damage to the stone capitals / columns and the Minton tiled floor. Security issues and misuse of the spaces within the port-cochère would similarly not be addressed by this proposal.



Existing porte cochere



Former iron gates to porte cochere

It was therefore concluded that this was not an appropriate solution.

Install a glass 'box' within the Porte-Cochère

To create a lobby externally, without fixing into the stonework of the Porte-Cochère, placing a frameless glass 'box' within the space was considered. Security issues would be partially addressed by this proposal. Due to the vaulted arched ceiling within the porte-cochère, it would not be possible for the walls of the box to continue to the underside of the roof. This would therefore mean that either the walls would require structure to stand-alone, or there would be need for a 'lid' to the box, which would need to be positioned lower than the lowest part of the vaulted ceiling – making it visible externally. There would also be an ongoing maintenance / access issue with the 'lid'.

It was therefore concluded that this was not an appropriate solution.

Replace existing timber entrance doors with glass doors

To address the visibility / element of the entrance proposal glazed doors would enable views into the Exchange with the doors are closed (closed due to draught / thermal issues). This would require the removal of the historic doors, resulting in a loss of historic fabric. Security issues and misuse of the spaces within the port-cochère would similarly not be addressed by this proposal.

It was therefore concluded that this was not an appropriate solution.

Install gates to the openings of the porte-cochere

Alternative solutions such as gates (as were previously installed pre-WWII) would be aesthetically more detrimental to the appearance and would also require fixing into the fabric. In addition, this proposal would not fulfil the requirements of opening up the entrance to the public, as it would create an unwelcoming barrier.

It was therefore concluded that this was not an appropriate solution.

Remove existing internal lobby & glazing of the Porte-Cochere

The proposal to remove the 1930s lobby would restore the proportions of the Exchange and facilitate the repair of the tiles and stone columns. Its removal would also importantly alleviate the awkward arrangement for wheelchair users.

The primary function of the Porte-Cochère, as explained in the CMP, is to 'identify and express the main entrance' and as a transitional space between outside and in. Introducing glazing with fixed and opening doors and retaining stone paving here would retain its original qualities whilst enabling the public to more easily identify the entrance – enhancing its original role in the elevation. Traditionally porte-cochère's were for the arrival of carriages, and by guiding the arrival to the sides of the porte-cochère, this traditional arrival sequence would be restored.

In addition to creating a more welcoming and apparent entrance for all, the glazing to the openings of the porte-cochère would address other project ambitions relating to improved access / arrival. The external

ground level was raised and the steps between the arches were introduced in the 1980's, providing level access to the building. Removing the 1980's balustrades would also restore the original appearance of the external perimeter of the Porte-Cochère.

This proposal would retain the higher floor level, but omit the stepped access, creating a single means of entrance and making the arrival at the main entrance completely egalitarian.

Furthermore, the security issues and misuse of space would be addressed by this proposal.

It was therefore concluded that this solution should be developed to Stage 3.

Developed Design for the Porte-Cochère

As the alternative entrance proposals were discounted, the glazing of the porte-cochere openings was developed at RIBA Stage 3 and in more detail beyond Stage 3, in order to minimise the impact of the proposals. Engaging an engineer with experience of glazed structures, we have been able to form a bespoke and sensitive solution.

Liminal space quality

The main entrance porte-cochère was designed by Crossland as the main arrival point and as a covered external space. To ensure the transitional aspect of the space is retained, the external floor finishes will continue into this space, at the same curved gradient as existing. Furthermore, minimal heating of the space will ensure that it does not feel like an internal space. The transparency of the glass will allow the transitional

quality of the space to be retained and the original sense of arrival into the Exchange, will remain through the retention of the historic entrance doors.

Within the arrival space, there will also be exhibition designers free standing digital display (antique bronze finish to match frames) to advertise events / create a welcome area / avoid ad-hoc notices on the glass. The M&E documents highlight the lighting approach, which will hang from three central bosses to each vault - with a Victorian style fitting.

Reduce risk of harm to existing fabric through design of the glazed screens

The detailed design of the glazed screens has progressed to develop the technical details and fixing requirements of the screens / doors. To reduce the number of fixings and the structural load into each fixing (therefore reducing the size of fixing) a channel has been designed, to the perimeter of the frames. As can be seen in the proposals, the frame will start and stop around the stone carved capitals so no fixings are required at this detailed point. By introducing a frame, the load can be transferred around the channel, and the fixings positioned into mortar joints only, their positioning being dictated by the existing stonework, as opposed to the structural requirements.

The introduction of the steel beam within the floor build up means that most of the structural stability is performed by the base fixings and not into any perimeter fixings, the perimeter fixings are therefore primarily for restraint of the screens instead. To allow for the new structure in the ground, the porte-cochère floor build up will be new – (currently stone slabs on earth). These will be carefully removed and new



Artists impression of proposed porte cochere

concrete slab laid to prevent differential movement. The stone slabs would be relayed on top in same formation / gradient as existing.

Furthermore, the glass will not be sealed to the arches which it fills. The offset of the glazing, cut to profile around the ornate details of the capitals will have an air gap approx. 5-10mm to reduce impact of new intervention on existing decorative stone tracery.

Retain depth to ensure articulation of depth within the principal façade

Through progressing detail design of the fixings and commissioning further surveys of the profiles of the arches the design has evolved to position the glazing elements further into the depth of the openings, between the granite columns and the profiled stone.

Removing the 1980's balustrades would also restore the original appearance of the external perimeter of the porte-cochère.

Reflectivity / transparency / framed or frameless design

To reduce the appearance of the glazing within the openings, a low reflectivity finish and low-iron content glass is specified, improving its transparency and enabling a minimum number of pieces of glass (and therefore less fixings and joints).

Fixings, ironmongery and structural elements are to be in steel (stainless as noted) with a bronze / antique bronze finish. The bronze finish will allow for it to sit well with the glass more than a black or lighter finish and the warm tone will respond to the warmth of colour within the building stone. The team reviewed the appropriateness of using bronze as the material;

however, the size of structural elements would need to be increased as it would not perform as well structurally as steel.

The frame around the doors is primarily to address wind loading – to avoid thicker pieces of glass / additional fixings or structure. A frame around the doors will help with accessibility for all by making entrances subtly more evident.

By setting back position of the doors / screen within the reveal, the perimeter frame can be concealed from view from outside. The frame for the door omits the need for more commercial patch fittings. The frame around the doors will be as slim as possible as the screens / doors will be viewed 'straight on' to the narrowest part of the section.

Minimal frames and joints allow for the main focus of the porte-cochère, the decorative stone elements, to remain the primary focus of this arrival space.

Phasing

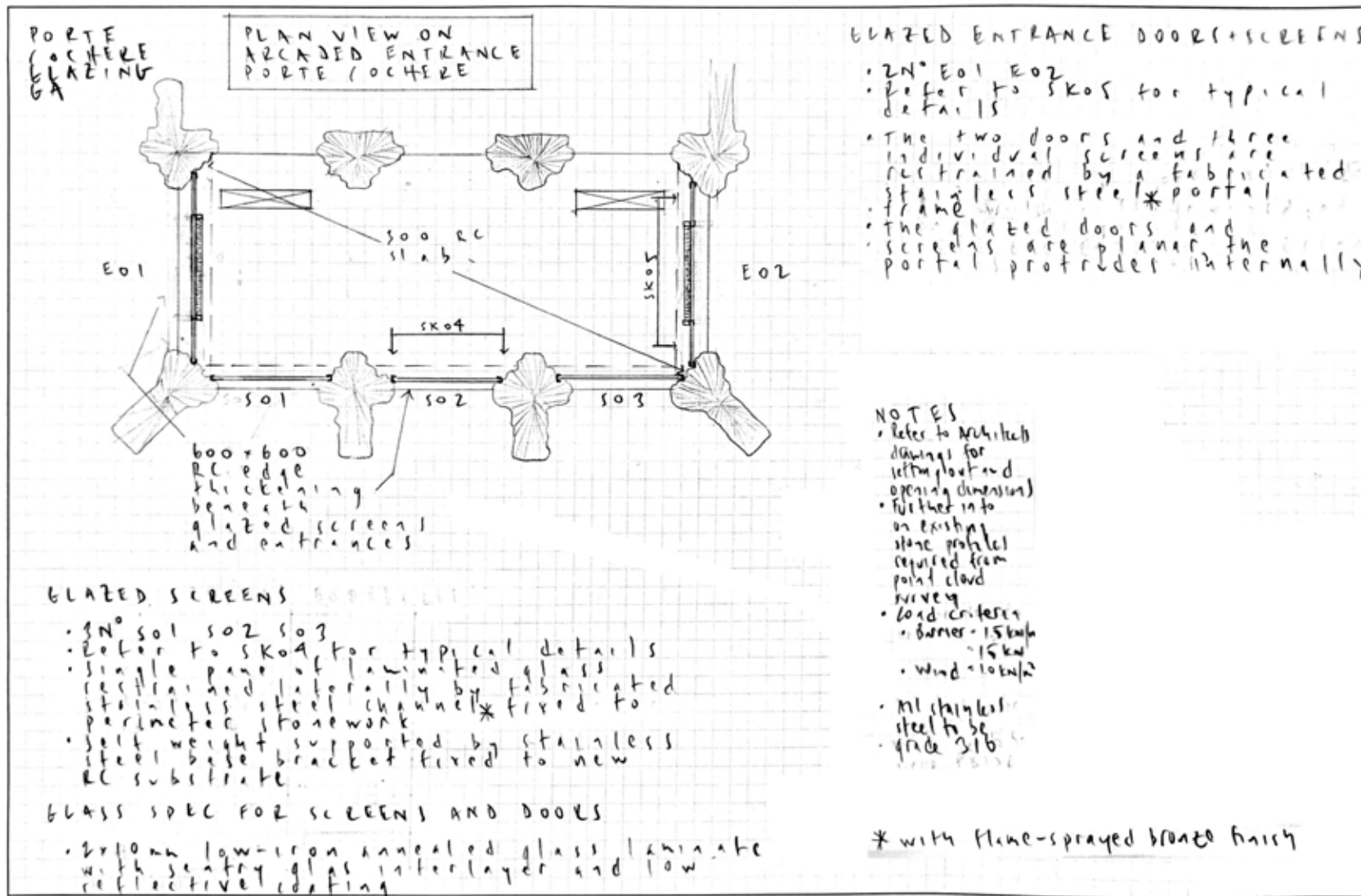
The recording and lifting of the existing stone slabs (and their storage) plus new structural slab are part of the Phase 1 works.

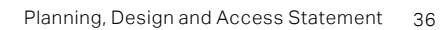
The remaining works to the main entrance porte-cochère included within these Phase 2 works as crucial element to the commercial viability of the project and security of the building.

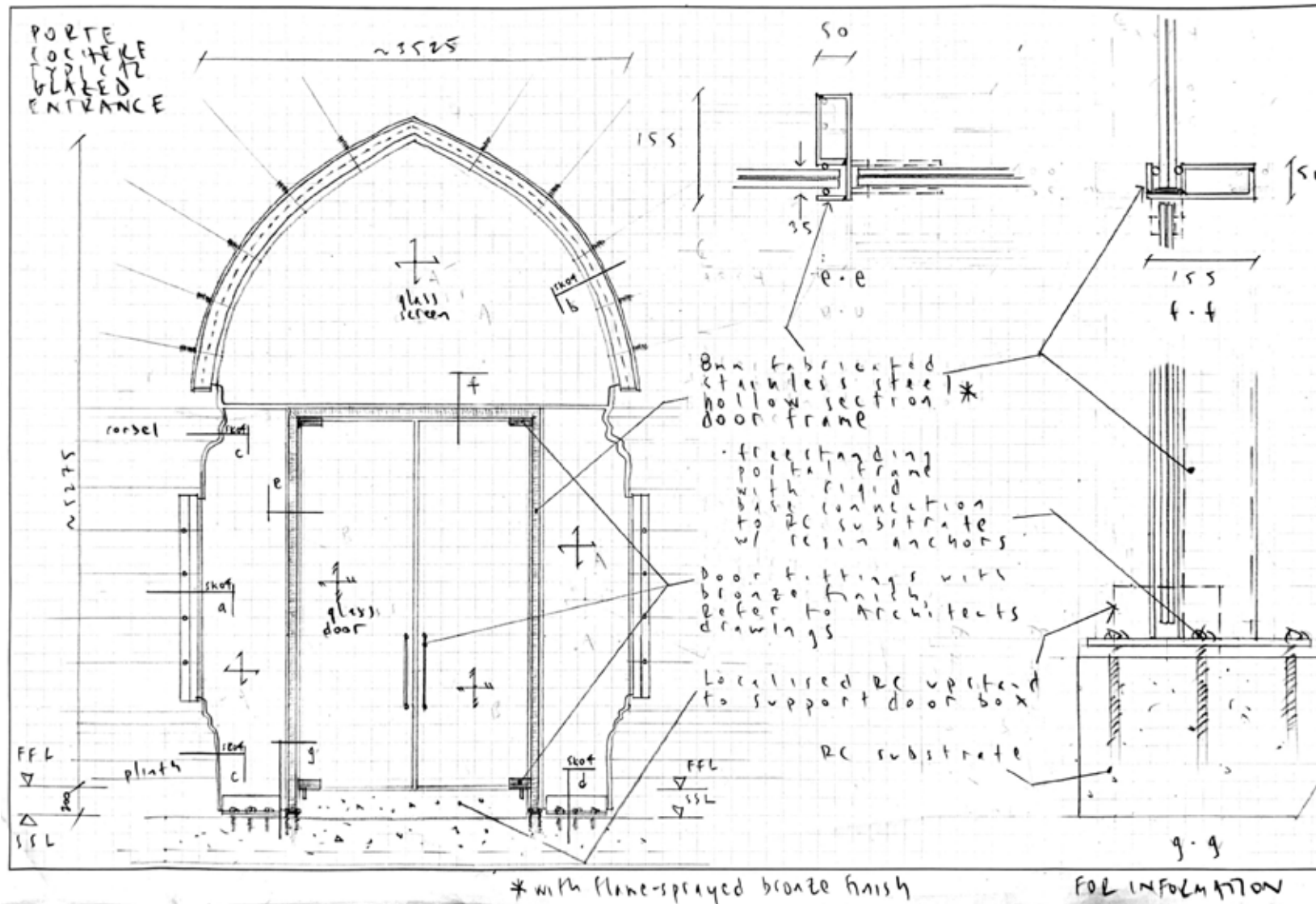
Summary Impact Assessment

As an element of the highest significance as part of the original external composition, great care has been taken to develop a proposal which does not cause harm to the special qualities of the porte-cochère or effect its role in the elevation. This proposal would

be a visually subtle intervention, retaining the unique interstitial character of the space and would be carefully detailed to ensure its reversibility. As a result, the special architectural qualities of this element – its form, role within the overall composition, intricate detailed stonework and its character as a space – would be retained and therefore any perceived harm would be limited. The public benefits this specific proposal would bring forward include creating a more egalitarian and welcoming entrance for the public whilst simultaneously dealing with issues of draught-proofing, counter-terrorism and issues surrounding the current misuse of this space.







5.7 Detailed Design: Tower Link

The Need

In order to ensure the sustainable future use the building, a review of the building's entrances, circulation and escape routes has been carried out, in order to allow multiple use of the building at any one time. This review has pointed to a need for additional circulation and escape routes.

The use of the clock tower as a new entrance point and as a revised means of vertical circulation and escape was identified early in the project. The Mayor's entrance – within the base of the clock tower – was historically used as a carriage arrival point. Today, this entrance is rarely used, and it offers an opportunity as a convenient entrance point and one which allows access to some of the most historically rich areas.

To make this a public point of access, the proposals would need to make this second entrance more noticeable. In addition, to be able to use of the clock tower as a new point of vertical circulation / escape and entrance, the levels need to be addressed to create a fully accessible solution. The ground level in the Mayor's entrance is higher than the existing external ground level and there is also variance to the ground floor level of the tower.

As with the main entrance porte-cochère, for security reasons it is not possible to allow for 'visitors' to be under / in the building when the building is unoccupied. And again, a barrier at the entrance to the Mayor's Entrance is also deemed to be vital for both security and counter terrorism measures.



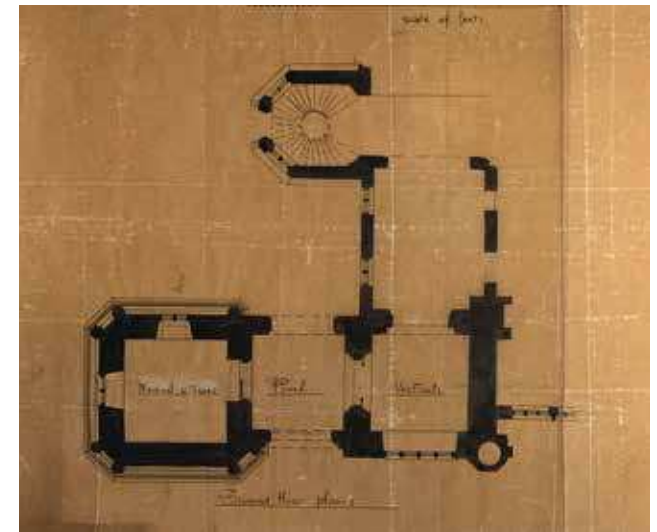
Existing Mayor's Entrance



Stepped access to Mayor's Entrance to be overcome



Existing door to south elevation of tower



Waterhouse's unrealized plans for ground floor opening to tower

Options Appraisal

Point of access at ground floor of Clock Tower

Use existing door at the base of the Clock Tower

There is an existing door at ground floor level, on the south elevation. If this doorway was to be used, then an extensive structure would be required to form a covered link to the Mayor's Entrance door which would have detrimental impact on this elevation.

It was therefore concluded that this was not an appropriate solution

New opening at ground floor in east wall of Clock Tower

To utilise the covered area as a sheltered link between the clock tower circulation and the rest of the building at ground floor level, a new opening in the east side of the clock tower was considered (as identified at RIBA Stage 2). When the tower was rebuilt by Waterhouse, and the covered carriageway introduced, an opening was indicated in the same location as proposed for this option - Waterhouse's original un-realised plans.

It was therefore concluded that this solution should be developed to Stage 3.

Enclosing / creating an arrival point (assuming in all instances a new ground floor opening in clock tower wall):

No enclosure linking the Clock Tower with the Mayor's entrance door

This option would use the covered way in its present form, but if not enclosed the security would not be improved, and it would still be possible for people to

be within the buildings perimeter out of hours. This would also not provide a comfortable weather resistant link for the public to traverse between the new main circulation core and the main building.

It was therefore concluded that this was not an appropriate solution

Install gates to the openings

As with the consideration to the main entrance porte-cochère treatment, alternative solutions such as gates would be aesthetically more detrimental to the appearance and would also require fixing into the fabric. It would also not meet the requirements of creating a point of welcoming access to the building.

It was therefore concluded that this was not an appropriate solution

Install a glass 'box'

To create a lobby, without fixing into the stonework of the building, placing a frameless glass 'box' within the space was considered. Security issues would be partially addressed by this proposal. Due to the vaulted arched ceiling (as with the main entrance porte-cochère), it would not be possible for the walls of the box to continue to the underside of the roof. This would therefore mean that either the walls would require structure to stand-alone, or there would be need for a 'lid' to the box, which would need to be positioned lower than the lowest part of the vaulted ceiling – making it visible externally. There would also be an ongoing maintenance / access issue with the 'lid'.

It was therefore concluded that this was not an appropriate solution

Install glazing to the openings

This second entrance was not intended to distract from the prominence of the main entrance. As a later addition to the scheme, but has its own heritage significance – based on its intentionally plainer architectural language. Whilst it is the intention to create a further welcoming access, the proposals are to be minimal and elegant in their execution. From the north elevation, a stepped access to the doors is required as mentioned above due to the level changes (refer to Terracing - section 14) but to the rear, the terrace finish will continue into the space, ensuring its legibility as an external area.

Introducing glazing with fixed and opening doors and external paving here would retain its original qualities whilst enabling the public to more easily identify it as an entrance – enhancing its role in the elevation.

Furthermore, the security issues and misuse of space would be addressed by this proposal.

It was therefore concluded that this solution should be developed to Stage 3.

Developed Design

Position of glazing within opening & fixing approach

The intention is to create the same aesthetic language as with the main entrance porte cochere - in terms of glazing position the and amount of frame visible from the outside, the design direction has developed with the proposal of a perimeter channel set further inside the opening. This will spread the load allowing to minimise number and size of fixing joints.

As can be seen in the proposals, the frame will start and stop around the stone carved capitals, to ensure no fixings are required at this detailed point. By introducing a frame, the load can be transferred around the channel, and the fixings positioned into mortar joints only, their positioning being dictated by the existing stonework, as opposed to the structural requirements.

As with the main entrance, the introduction of the steel beam within the floor build up means that most of the structural stability is performed by the base fixings and not into any perimeter fixings, the perimeter fixings are therefore primarily for restraint of the screens.

The frame would be fixed on the inside face of the opening, avoiding the moulded stone detailing, and would not be discernible from the outside. The glass specification fixed glazing and proposed doors will be the same as that to the main entrance porte cochère – with minimal reflectivity and low-iron content to avoid blue-green tints.

New floor

The new floor to the link between the clock tower and the Mayor's entrance will be a new construction. The existing stone slabs will be recorded and lifted for storage and then re-used elsewhere in the building. The new floor construction will raise the level to match the existing Mayor's entrance level. The stone to be installed will match that of the proposed terrace. The floor structure will stand separately from the building fabric and the level of the floor will step down in the corners towards the bases of the columns to express their detailing.

New opening in historic fabric

The new opening at the ground floor is through a wall under the existing arch, which makes a negligible contribution to the architectural effect of the exterior, though is historic fabric.

The size of the structural opening has been designed to be smaller than the existing door into the Mayor's parlour, to ensure that in comparison, this door is subservient. The minimum width of the opening is set by the fire escape constraints, and the height has been established to achieve relative appropriate proportions. Allowance is also made for the required structure above the door (supporting the tower above) and the temporary propping structure during the works, whilst making the opening.

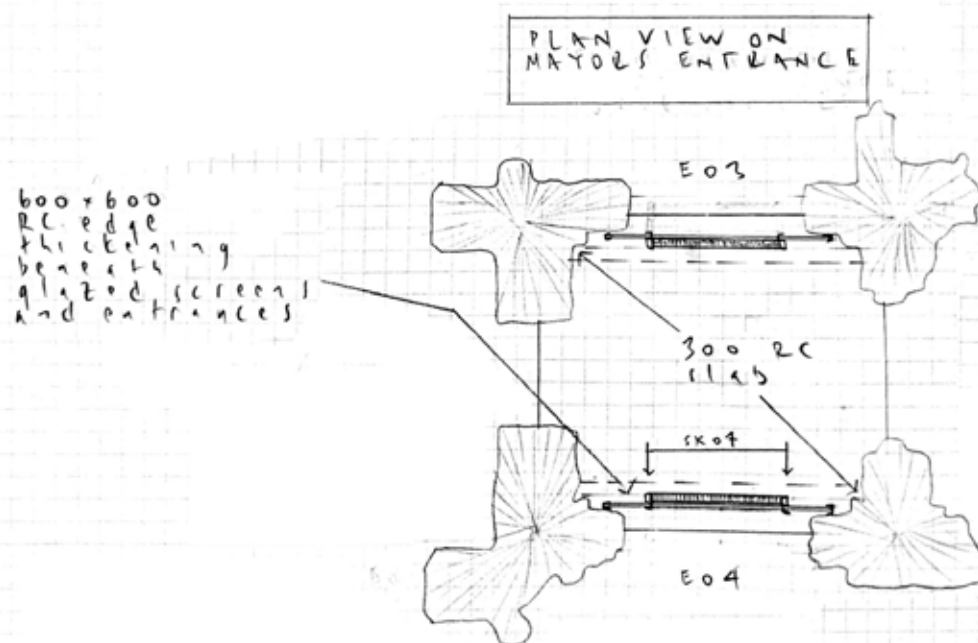
The new doors to the opening take reference from the Mayor's entrance door opposite; timber with raised panels. These doors also need to provide fire separation to the Clock Tower. The flat head to the opening is partly dictated by the structural requirements supporting the tower above, but also as a 'secondary' door takes its reference from the registry office door opening.

Summary Assessment of Impact

As an element of the highest significance, alterations to Waterhouse's Clock Tower have been carefully developed and detailed to avoid causing harm to the building's significance. This proposal would be a visually subtle intervention, retaining the unique interstitial character of the space and would be carefully detailed to ensure its reversibility. As a result, the special architectural qualities of this element – its form, role within the overall composition and its

spatial character - would be retained and therefore any perceived harm would be limited to the loss of a very modest amount of wall fabric. Served by a new lift within the clock tower and secondary escape route, this alteration would not only enable access to the restored and refurbished Mayor's suite and Bright Hall and provide a safe means of escape but it would provide public access into Waterhouse's clock tower for the first time – better revealing the building's significance. As with the proposals for the main porte cochère, other benefits would include effective counter terrorism solutions and the prevention of the space being utilised by vagrants and vandals.

MAYORS
ENTRANCE
GLAZING
GA



GLASS SPEC FOR SCREENS AND DOORS

- 2 x 10 mm low-iron annealed glass laminate with safety glass interlayer and low reflective coating

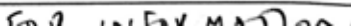
GLAZED ENTRANCE DOORS + SCREENS

- 2N° E03 E04
- Refer to skof for typical details skob
- The two doors and three individual screens are restrained by a fabricated stainless steel portal frame and bracket fixed to existing stonework
- The glazed doors and screens are planar the portal protrudes internally

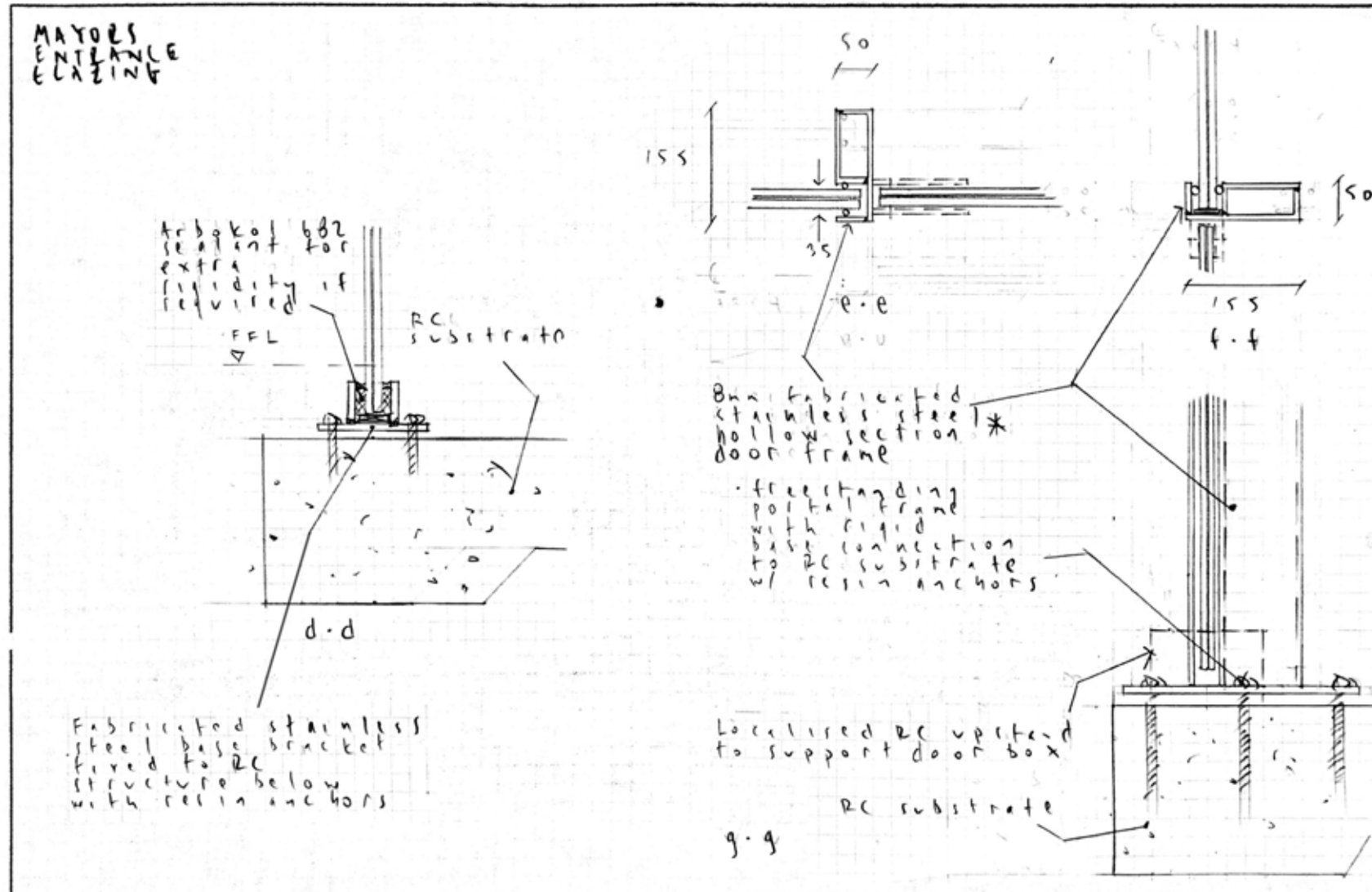
NOTES

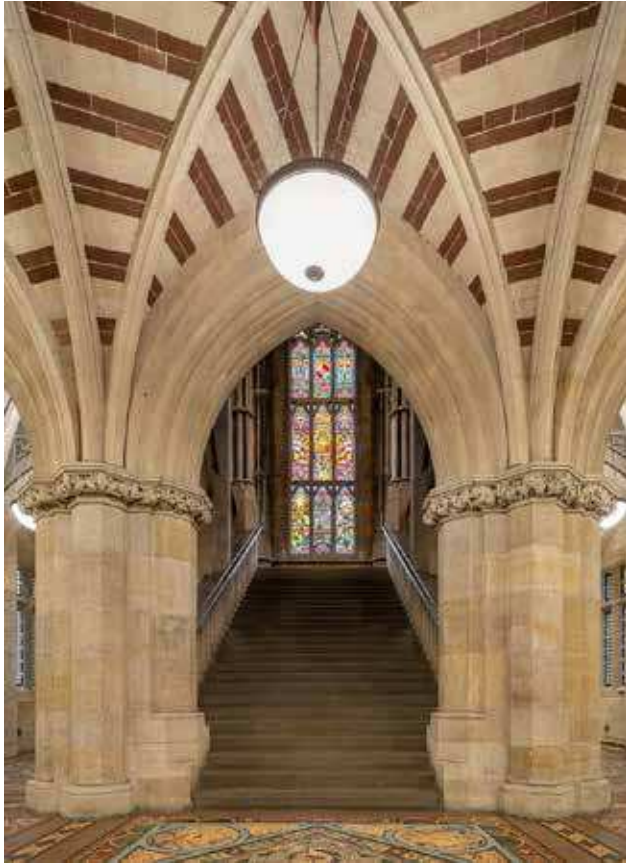
- Refer to Architect drawings for setting out and opening dimensions
- Further info on existing stone profile required from point cloud survey
- Load criteria:
 - Barrier = 15 kN/m
 - 15 kN
 - Wind = 10 kN/m²
- All structural steel to be grade S16

* with flame-sprayed bronze finish



27076 - 5x 6/8
27076 - 2x 20
27076 - 2x 20
27076 - 2x 20

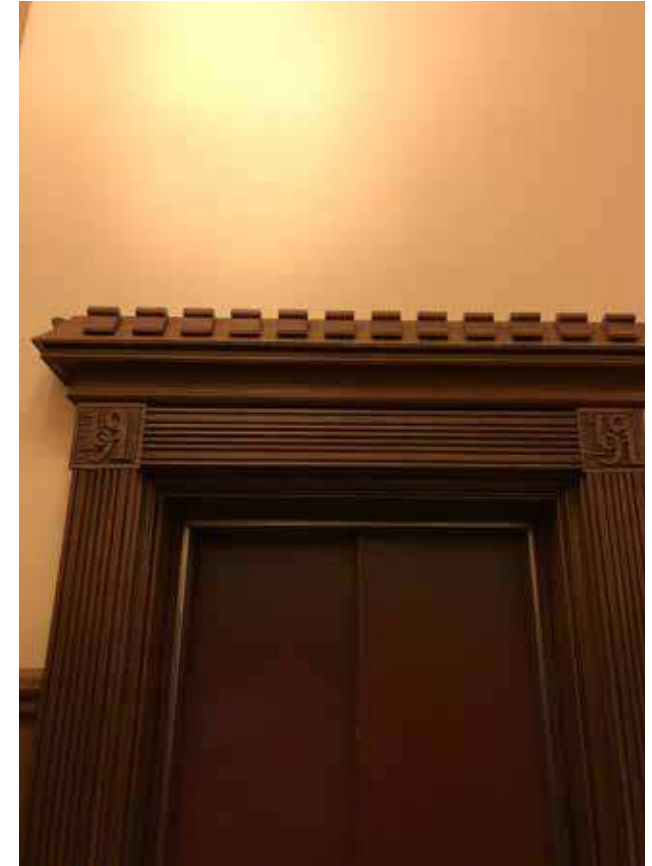




Existing vertical circulation highly significant but non-compliant



Existing lift has detrimental impact on Bright Hall features and spatial qualities



Existing lift installed 1990s

5.8 Vertical Circulation

The Need

In order to allow the Town Hall to truly stand as an “accessible” community asset, improvement to access into and within the building are required, which both address issues inherent with a building designed long before the advent of modern standards, whilst being sensitive to its original design.

Currently the Town Hall has stepped access to external entrances and the majority of vertical circulation around the building is via historic steps, which are non-compliant, with only one lift serving the entirety of the upper floors. This existing lift is slow and does not function well; meaning travel times are unnecessarily long. The lift is also utilised by staff for back of house functions, such as moving of bins or catering equipment, which often prevents the public being able

to use the lift. There is also no lift access to the west wing of the building above first floor level, meaning these areas can only be reached by stairs.

The proposals to improve physical access throughout the building are centred around a new vertical circulation strategy that seeks to maximise use of the building at all times, whilst minimising impact on the historic fabric of the building. Proposals have



Opening up works reveal later plasterboard ceilings



New lift overrun will protrude through lead roof (see detailed drawings)



Later 20th century modifications to internal areas of clock tower



Existing spiral staircase and entrance of high significance

been developed on a thorough understanding of the significance of the building, locating vertical circulation cores in areas that will have least impact on significance, whilst creating maximum benefit for the future use and functionality of the historic building. Modifications to the function of the building, such as reinstatement of the Bright Hall at second floor level, further dictate the need to improve vertical circulation in order to increase visitor capacity, ensure access for all to the reinstated areas of high significance and ensure safe emergency egress from the building.

The team are aware that improvement to the vertical circulation needs to be carefully considered and detailed to avoid causing harm to the building's significance. A number of alternatives were assessed, which are discussed below.

Options Appraisal

Retain existing vertical circulation

The current lift, installed 1991, is situated part way along the ground floor corridor and runs up to second

floor. As stated above, this existing lift is slow and does not function well; meaning travel times for the public are unnecessarily long. The lift is also utilised by staff to facilitate back of house functions, such as moving of bins or catering equipment, which often prevents the public being able to enter the lift when needed.

Consideration was given to retaining and improving the functionality of this lift. However, the lift currently runs into the middle of the Bright Hall at first floor level which would inhibit the restoration of this highly significant space back to its original proportions. The current location of the lift would also not improve the current lack of division between 'front of house' and 'back of house'.

It was therefore concluded that this was not an appropriate solution.

Re-locate existing vertical circulation

Removal of the present lift, which extends into the Bright Hall, would enable the restoration of this highly significant space back to its original proportions. In

addition, removal of the current lift would mean that one of the Bright Hall trusses and its angel corbel could be reinstated.

Detailed consideration was given to the location of a new lift. The front of the south east wing was deemed the most appropriate location to provide access to all areas being publically opened as part of the Phase 2 works, whilst also sitting on the dividing line between 'front of house' and 'back of house' areas. This would enable separate rear lift access for catering, deliveries etc. which would improve the current conflict between 'back of house' service and 'front of house' visitor areas. This location would also facilitate public access to the newly restored Bright Hall with the least impact on the significance of the building. The new lift will be an evacuation lift to aid safe egress of less able bodied people from the building.

Opening up works have revealed that the floor and ceiling fabric within the proposed lift location has previously been heavily modified to facilitate installation of the café and service kitchen above,

which would ensure that this proposal causes minimal harm to the significance of the building. The lift over run would need to protrude slightly above the line of the existing lead roof. The lead to this roof is modern (renewed early 2000's) and increasing the height of a section of this roof slightly would have minimal impact on the significance of the building.

The former lift would be removed, reinstating the proportions and features of the Bright Hall as well as the proportions and features of the ground and first floor corridors. Part of the shaft would be utilised as a new service riser to make use of the existing void running through the building. This would run behind the original wall linings of the ground and first floor corridors and terminate at second floor level so as not to impact the reinstated the Bright Hall.

Studies in relation to access for all and fire evacuation provided evidence that a secondary circulation core (both lift and staircase) would be required to ensure that increased visitor numbers would have a safe form of egress from the newly reinstated Bright Hall.

It was therefore concluded that this solution should be developed to Stage 3, however additional vertical circulation would be required to supplement this

Relocate existing vertical circulation and provide supplementary new vertical circulation

Our fire consultant deemed it necessary for two evacuation lifts to be installed in order to service the increased visitor numbers expected within the reinstated Bright Hall and both fire and access consultants have advised that the current stepped access to this area of the building requires improvement.

The only staircase at this side of the building is the spiral staircase rising up through G5, F5 and S5. This staircase and entrance are of high significance as part of the original plan form and design of the Town Hall, however the stairs are not user friendly, with undulating stone steps, lack of nosings and non-compliant handrails. A review of the steps concluded that modification to increase compliance would result in significant harm, therefore alternative options were reviewed.

As part of further feasibility studies, the clock tower rooms were reviewed and found to have been heavily modified internally in the late 20th century, meaning that very little of the original internal fabric remains. As a result, the spaces within the clock tower were deemed to be the most suitable space for a new vertical circulation core and a way of sensitively connecting the Bright Hall with the ground floor. By stripping out the late 20th century alterations and making the tower part of the key visitor route, this area of the building can be enjoyed by all and become a focal point of the Town Hall visitor experience.

It was therefore concluded that this solution should be developed to Stage 3.

Developed Design for new Vertical Circulation

New lift to main building

The lift to the main building will be unobtrusive in design, remaining in keeping with the historic nature and fabric of the building so as not to have a detrimental impact on the surrounding spaces that it serves. Where details such as cornices and skirting boards are present in this location, these will continue around the walls of the new lift shaft in order to create cohesive spaces. Any existing features, such as cornices, will remain in-tact and new stud blanking walls will be scribed around existing details to ensure that the intervention is as reversible as possible. The heightening of the lead roof to accommodate the lift overrun above second floor level has been developed to cat slide off the slope of the existing lead roof, therefore blending in with the existing roof and having very minimal impact on the roofscape.

New lift to clock tower

The design intent for the clock tower is to make the newly inserted circulation core an obvious modern intervention that is as transparent and 'light touch' as possible and to enable the historic fabric of the clock tower to be appreciated and enjoyed by all. The new lift will be glazed, with any necessary manifestation and signage tying in to the exhibition and interpretation proposals, so that the history of the clock tower is revealed as one ascends the space. The lift shaft will have steel columns, supported back to the clock tower fabric with minimum number of junctions as possible. Glazing to the lift shaft will be supported on the lift shaft structure (as indicated on drawings - beams buried into walls occurring at each quarter landing)

New staircase to clock tower

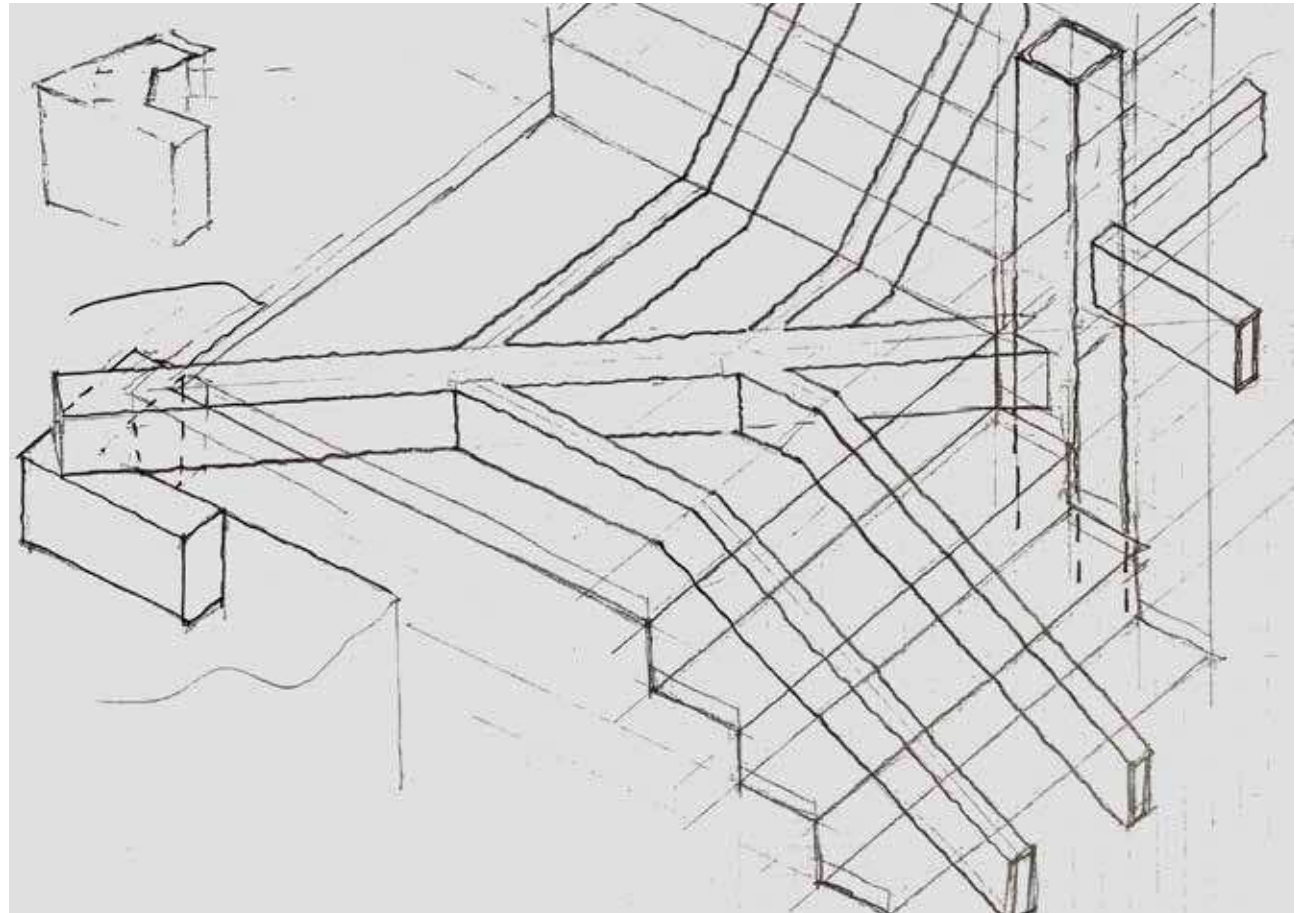
The new staircase will again be designed as an obviously modern intervention, with timber and metal to contrast with the robust masonry of the tower itself. The main support for the staircase will come from the steel columns of the lift shaft, with struts running at each quarter landing, which will be supported from the corner of the tower. This will minimise fixings – avoiding both physical and visual disruption. It is intended that an approx. 80mm gap will be present between the staircase and the tower walls, and similarly between the staircase and the lift shaft walls, to give the effect that the staircase is a freestanding element within the tower. The staircase will be designed as a fully compliant accessible emergency stair to allow access for all through the building and allow for ease of egress in the event of a fire.

The new lift and staircase to the clock tower are accessed at each level through to the main building, at ground level this is via a new opening into the porte cochere / Mayor's entrance. Refer Section 10 for further information.

Phasing

The existing lift will be removed during Phase 1 to allow for a greater understanding of the spatial qualities of the Bright Hall and to understand exactly how much damage to the historic fabric was caused when this lift was inserted in 1991. The lift pits for each of the new lifts will also be installed in Phase 1, when all of the other below ground excavations and new floor structure will be formed. This will act to minimise risk to the Phase 2 programme and works.

The new lifts and staircase will be installed in Phase 2 of the project. Repairs to the existing building fabric where the former lift was removed will also happen during Phase 2 of the works.



Development of staircase proposals

Summary Impact Assessment

The proposals have been developed on a thorough understanding of the significance of the building, and would substantially improve physical access throughout the building by introducing a new vertical circulation strategy which optimises the building's viability, whilst having a minimal impact on the building's historic fabric and its spatial qualities. Great care has been taken to ensure that the new interventions are well designed and read as modern insertions – whilst providing public access into Waterhouse's clock tower for the first time – better revealing the building's significance. Furthermore, these proposals would enable the removal of the detracting lift and restoration of the highly significant Bright Hall to its original proportions and the restoration of its highly significant original features.

5.9 Town Hall Access Terraces

The Need

One of the principal aims of this project is to enable the Town Hall to be a truly 'accessible' community asset and to ensure this, sensitive improvements to the building's access arrangements are required. Issues relating to entrance access and arrival were identified during the early stages of the project; the internal floor level is circa 600mm higher than the surrounding pavement level. It was also noted that more recent DDA 'improvements' to the Registry Office entrance have blocked some sight lines and are visually intrusive.



As part of the transformation of the Town Hall, new entrance points into the building will be created, requiring flush threshold access. A new public entrance is proposed - to be accessed from the base of the clock tower and approached from two directions, with two doorways. There will also be a new external entrance leading directly into the café, to

improve accessibility. Equality Act compliant access will also be required to be retained to the current Registry Office entrance and extended to encompass future public access points into the old fire station.

In order to provide accessible routes into the building, adjustments are required to external areas to raise levels sufficiently to provide flush access at doorways.

As part of the original external composition – and of the highest significance - the team are aware that alterations to the external elevations need to be carefully considered and detailed to avoid causing harm to the building's significance. A number of alternative solutions were assessed, in order to evaluate the alternatives, these are discussed below.

Options Appraisal

Retain existing access provision

The existing provision at building entrances comprises original stone steps which do not meet current accessibility standards and a more recent ramped access to the Registry Office. Additional entrances will be created that are not accessed from the existing ramp and will require new access provision.

It was therefore concluded that this was not an appropriate solution.

Provide separate access provision for each separate building entrance

Initial concept design work focussed on providing each entrance with a separate access provision - steps and ramps. Due to the number of, and clustered layout of, the entrances into the Town Hall this resulted in a complex and cluttered arrangement of multiple ramps and steps.

It was therefore concluded that this was not an appropriate solution.

Raise levels of surrounding public realm to doorway threshold height.

Levels of the surrounding public realm were investigated to see if they could be raised to avoid the need for ramps and steps at building access points. The existing levels fall away from the building towards the culverted River Roch. Due to the raised internal floor level (circa 600mm above surrounding public realm) and the existing arrangement of drainage falls, this would result in highly visible slopes across the whole Town Hall Square and also cover a significant amount of the building plinth detail.

It was therefore concluded that this was not an appropriate solution.

Provide combined access points surrounding base of the clock tower.

In order to simplify the arrangement of multiple ramps and steps a concept was developed that created two shared raised terraces serving multiple entrance points. The raised western terrace can accommodate café seating from the Clock Tower Café. The southern terrace adjacent to the old fire station can accommodate spill-out space from future business use along this sunny elevation. The steps were extended to create raised seating features and viewing areas by wrapping the terrace around the base of the clock tower on the western terrace. Although this option provided more scope for public use, it significantly impacted on the view of the clock tower elevations; truncating the original elevation and preventing the view of the tower rising directly from the ground from being appreciated.

It was therefore concluded that this was not an appropriate solution.

Provide combined access points serving multiple entrances

In order to simplify the arrangement of multiple ramps and steps, a concept was developed which created two shared raised terraces serving multiple entrance points. The raised western terrace can accommodate café seating from the Clock Tower Café. The southern terrace adjacent to the old fire station can accommodate 'spill-out' space – to take advantage of this sunny elevation. The western terrace was designed to avoid the clock tower and both terraces would have a simple plinth treatment to echo the detail to the Town Hall, which would serve to 'ground' the building. In addition, in-built seating was removed from the proposal, to simplify the layout as much as possible. A separate flight of steps was designed to provide access from the new front entrance adjacent to the clock tower. The design of these is simple and read as secondary. The main point of access would be from the western elevation via steps and sloping footpaths.

It was therefore concluded that this solution should be developed to Stage 3.

Developed Design for Town Hall access terraces

Raised Terrace RIBA Stage 3 detail

The Town Hall building has a commanding presence within its setting. The detailing of the building where it meets the ground is simple and robust with a consistent York stone "plinth" feature around almost the entire perimeter. This feature of the building will be partly obscured by the new raised terraces which



Artists impression of proposed external terracing

could lessen the dramatic impact of the building rising out of the surrounding ground plane - which could be seen as harmful to the building's significance.

The design concept is based upon replicating the plinth detail on all outward facing elevations and lessening the visual impact of all other elements e.g. hand-rails, guard rails. This will allow the new raised terraces to read as an extension of the existing plinth.

To achieve this design concept the new walls will be constructed in natural York Stone, selected to closely match the building. Coursing and block sizes will be generous to replicate that seen on the Town Hall.

Paving will be in large slabs of natural York Stone with a non-slip 'weathered' finish to echo retained and re-laid original York stone paving.

Steps will be constructed in natural York stone and have integrated contrast nosings in charcoal grey. They will be monolithic in appearance to echo existing steps seen around the building.

The balustrade will be constructed from tempered glass panels with bronze finish edge rail. The glass panels will be fixed directly into the stone plinth detail to minimize visual impact.

The handrails will contain integrated LED lighting for simplicity and safety. Their design will be simple and contemporary in style, with minimal detail.

Phasing

The works to the Town Hall access terraces are included within Phase 2 works as crucial element to the commercial viability of the project.

Summary Impact Assessment

The proposed terracing would wrap around the base of the building on three sides, and whilst it is an alteration to the exterior – acknowledged as an element of the highest significance – the design has been sensitively developed to ensure that what is significant about the exterior would not be harmed. The careful replication of the plinth - to 'ground' the building, careful detailing of junctions and the overall 'quiet' design ensure that the terracing would read as a new intervention whilst being of the same architectural language and materials. Furthermore, this proposal would provide the requisite egalitarian access without the need for ramped access to all entrances and importantly, it is entirely reversible. This sensitively designed alteration is pivotal to enabling improved access for all into the building and will be key to this next phase of the building's history.

6.0 Access Statement

The vision for Rochdale Town Hall will include improved access for all visitors, particularly those with disabilities, as part of an inter-connected series of improvements that will be delivered by the interpretation, activity plan and building design. Working in partnership together we have identified opportunities to deliver a number of access improvements. This delivery has included significant collaboration with an accessibility consultant throughout RIBA 2 and RIBA 3, who the design team have worked with to ensure Rochdale Town Hall becomes truly accessible and an exemplar in the region.

Whilst improving access for all visitors is a key objective, we recognise that some visitors to the Town Hall will have specific needs to be considered and catered for. These will include those with physical and cognitive disabilities, hearing and visual impairments. Some visitors may not have English as a first language others may have differing sensory requirements. In order to allow the Town Hall to truly stand as an “accessible” community asset, improvements to access into and within the building are required which both address issues inherent with a building designed long before the advent of modern standards whilst being sensitive to its original design. However “accessibility” goes far beyond physical barriers and the proposed scheme will also bring forward improvements to the legibility and interpretation of the building’s significance, features and historic context to improve people’s knowledge, and relationship with, this iconic building. Currently only the front entrance can be accessed by less able bodied people, which in itself is difficult to navigate due to the 1930’s timber lobby. New terracing to the external areas will create

level access to all main entrances, ensuring that every entrance can be accessed by all. Removal of the 1930’s lobby and glazing of the porte cochere will also improve accessibility, both visually and physically, to the front entrance by opening up views of the interior to the world outside, inviting the public to come in and enjoy what the Town Hall has to offer. Issues of draught-proofing, counter-terrorism and current misuse of the porte cochere covered space will also be resolved as part of these works.

A new stair and lift core will facilitate public access of the clock tower and use of the newly revealed Bright Hall, one of the most significant spaces within the building, for the very first time. Glazing in of the tower link and a new opening at ground floor level will subtly make the clock tower functionally a more integral part of the main building. Relocation of the existing lift inside the building will also assist to restore the Bright Hall back to its former glory. New facilities will ensure that the Town Hall has the capability to be enjoyed by many new people and visitors of all abilities and ages. These include provision of ambulant and disabled toilets on every floor with a new Changing Places toilet located at second floor level, evacuation lifts to assist egress of disabled visitors in the event of a fire and facilities such as induction loops to provide additional aid as required.

New exhibition spaces will provide a key new feature to enhance both the visitor experience and local citizens’ appreciation of their heritage. Also, by providing interpretation of the Town Hall using a range of methods that include guided tours as well as interpretive exhibits; we have the flexibility to meet the needs of a wide audience.

Guided tours of the building will present an opportunity for bespoke experiences tailored to the specific needs of visitors, these could include tours with a BSL signer, ‘audio described’ and tactile tours for those with visual impairments and tours in languages other than English. In addition to the improved visitor offer, these tours also present training and up-skilling opportunities for volunteers and staff. The interpretive media has been designed to deliver an accessible experience. Video with spoken word will include subtitles, audio handsets will incorporate induction loops, there will be tactile exhibits and digital alternatives to the interpretation of the Grand Staircase.

6.1 Highways & Parking

The proposed scheme will have no impact on the current highway. Following the completion of Phase 1 works the parking area to the north of the building will remain cordoned off to protect the site and this will remain until and during Phase 2 works. This will allow both extensive scaffold and site works to take place and a community archaeology project linked in with the project activity plan. A new landscaping scheme is to be implemented alongside the Phase 2 works (not part of Phase 2 application) which will reorder the existing parking provision to tie in with the new terracing proposed as part of this application. Details of the new public realm and general car park configuration are subject to further consultation prior to undergoing a separate consents process. In the event that the public realm scheme does not go ahead, the existing car parking will be modified to ensure the same numbers of disabled spaces as existing are retained.

6.2 Refuse, Recycling and Emergency Access

The existing refuse and recycling method will remain largely as existing, with improvements made to improve the current storage and transportation of waste. Bins are currently stored in the basement and carried up to the ground floor level via as the internal public lift as individual bins / bags. The proposals improve the bin store area by providing a fire protected room within the basement, and improved management of waste by providing an external platform lift within the basement courtyard to separate back of house and front of house operations. Bins are put out in parking area for collection only.

Access for emergency vehicles will remain and be unchanged by the new proposals, with permanent dry riser outlets being installed within the terrace walls adjacent to the east and west staircases for the fire brigade to connect into (dry risers installed during Phase 1 works). The new landscaping works to be implemented alongside the Phase 2 proposals ensure adequate provision for emergency access and all proposals have been discussed and refined in conjunction with Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service.

Opening Hours

Rochdale Town Hall is a commercial building in the heart of the town centre and there are currently no operational restrictions on existing opening hours. The Town Hall will be closed from the start of Phase 1 until the end Phase 2. The proposed opening hours

following Phase 2 are being worked up by business planners as part of the project and can be discussed as part of the application process if required.

6.3 Flood Risk

The EA's indicative floodplain map shows that the site is located in Flood Zone 2 and is at "Medium" risk of flooding from the River Roch. Land in this flood zone is assessed as having an annual probability of river flooding between 0.1% and 1%. The use of the building is unchanged and only internal alterations/ improvements are proposed therefore the works will not impact on the current level of flood risk. Existing flood mitigation measures and evacuation plans will need to be maintained on site. In accordance with National and Council policies, a Flood Risk Assessment has been carried out and accompanies this application.



7.0 Planning Statement

7.1 Project Objectives

As summarised at the overall introduction to this statement, the principal aims of the Town Hall project are as follows:

Continued use of the building in a manner sympathetic to its original use and function whilst allowing sensitive adaption to accommodate modern requirements

Retention of the building as a key cultural facility for the local community

Repair and restoration of the building fabric and interiors

Sustainable use and improved access

7.2 Summary of Relevant Planning Policy Context

This section provides a summary of the relevant adopted planning policy that has been considered as part of the preparation of these applications. The review covers national, regional and local planning policies as well as other relevant guidance, where appropriate and how the scheme complies.

7.2.1 The Site and its Legal Status

Rochdale Town Hall is a Grade I listed building located in the Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area (designated in 1980 and extended in 2011) in the Metropolitan Borough of Rochdale. It is in the setting of a number of nationally significant designated heritage assets. Directly opposite the Town Hall lies the Cenotaph (Grade I) and the old Post Office (Grade II); to the rear, St Chads Church (Grade II*) sits at the top of the hill with Broadfield Park and Slopes (Grade II Registered Park and Garden) extending between. The recently listed Rochdale Bridge (Grade II) forms part of the NLHF funded 'Revealing the Roch' scheme. The site also lies within the Historic England designated 'Heritage Action Zone' – a 5 year programme of heritage-led regeneration. Alterations to a listed building generally require listed building consent; development in conservation areas or within the setting of a listed building or conservation area requires local authorities to assess the implications of proposals on built heritage. The present planning use class is D1, with ancillary uses and these proposals do not require a change of use.

7.2.2 National Planning Policy and Guidance Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is the legislative basis for decision-making on applications that relate to the historic environment. Sections 66 and 72 of the Act impose statutory duties upon local planning authorities which, with regard to listed buildings, require the planning authority to have:

special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

and, in respect of conservation areas, that:

special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

As set out in the Heritage Impact Assessment, which accompanies this application, the proposals would ensure that the presumption against the grant of planning permission within the Act is not engaged and there are clear benefits to the scheme, which support the granting of consent.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), February 2019

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (revised February 2019), articulates the priorities of the *Plan for Growth* within planning policy.

At the heart of the NPPF lies the 'presumption' in favour of sustainable development, which supports proposals that are in accordance with policies in an up to date Development Plan. Sustainable development is about positive growth – making economic, environmental and social progress for this and future generations. The NPPF states that:

the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. (Paragraph 7)

It summarises the objective of sustainable development as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Paragraph 8 of the NPPF states that to achieve sustainable development, there are three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued mutually.

a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;

b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services

and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and

c) an environmental objective – *to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.*

The proposed scheme very much accords with the policy ambitions for sustainable development; redefining the Town Hall as a central cultural and community focal point, freely accessible to visitors and providing a 'safe' space where cross-cultural activities are supported and encouraged. The interpretation proposed would better reveal the building's significance to the public it serves, would reinforce links to local history, character and identity and enhance the vitality and vibrancy of Rochdale town centre. A more detailed assessment can be found in the accompanying Heritage Impact Assessment.

Section 8 focusses on the promotion of healthy and safe communities, through planning policies and decisions, which promote social interaction, are safe and accessible and which enable and support healthy lifestyles. Furthermore, in order to provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities including cultural buildings and other local services, to enhance the sustainability of communities. They

should also take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community and guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services.

As outlined in full in the Heritage Impact Assessment and in the Statement of Public Benefit, the scheme presents a once in generation opportunity to create a truly accessible building which is able to serve the whole community for the first time, breaking down previous barriers and bringing forward major social benefits; whilst the proposed community uses and Heritage Conservation Skills and Training Studio would engage the local community with the key heritage asset of exceptional interest in a constructive way.

Section 14 of the NPPF sets out the need to meet the challenges of climate change, flooding and coastal change. Sites should be assessed appropriately for the risk of flooding and take advice from the Environment Agency and other risk management authorities. When determining any planning applications, local planning authorities should ensure that flood risk is not increased elsewhere.

The application site is in Flood Zone 2; in accordance with National and Council policies, a Flood Risk Assessment has been carried out and accompanies this application.

Paragraph 124 notes that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and should contribute positively to creating better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

Paragraph 127 outlines that decisions should ensure good design by ensuring developments:

a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;

b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;

c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);

d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;

e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and

f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users⁴⁶; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

The proposals accord with all of these requirements, in particular items a), b), c), d) and f).

Section 16 of the NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies on the conservation of the historic environment, particularly in the context of sustainable development.

The NPPF states that heritage assets are 'an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations'. The Glossary to the NPPF defines a heritage asset as:

A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

The Framework, in Paragraph 189, states that:

In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

Section 2 of the accompanying Heritage Impact Assessment contains the assessment of significance; which meets this requirement and is based on the research and site surveys undertaken as part of the Conservation Management Plan (2019), which are of a sufficient level of detail to understand the potential impact of the proposals.

The Framework also, in Paragraph 193, requires that:

When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

The Framework goes on to state at Paragraph 194 that:

Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting) should require clear and convincing justification.

Section 4 of the accompanying Heritage Impact Assessment contains provides this clear and convincing justification.

The Framework requires that local planning authorities categorise harm as either 'substantial' or 'less than substantial'. Where a proposed development will lead to 'substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset', the Framework states, in Paragraph 195, that:

... local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and

b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and

c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and

d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

For harm to be considered substantial the proposal would have to have such a serious impact that the significance of the listed building would be either vitiated altogether or very much reduced; this is clearly not the case in this instance as demonstrated in this detailed analysis within the Heritage Impact Assessment. As such it can only be concluded that the proposals would cause 'less than substantial' harm.

Where a development proposal will lead to 'less than substantial harm' to the significance of a designated heritage asset, the Framework states, in Paragraph 196, that:

...this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

The repair and restoration of Rochdale Town Hall alongside works proposed to open-up the building with enhanced public access and interpretation, would better reveal its significance (and that of the wider conservation area) and reinforce its relevance to the local community it was designed to serve for this and future generations. This is the foremost and critical benefit offered by the scheme; however the associated additional public benefits it brings are numerous and are set out in full in the Statement of Public Benefit and Heritage Impact Assessment.

The Framework requires local planning authorities to look for opportunities for new development within conservation areas and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Paragraph 200 states that:

Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.

Perhaps most significant in terms of what the project would achieve more widely is the reengagement of the building with its external environment and the community it serves in an unprecedented manner both through the physical interventions proposed as well as the interpretation, activity planning and training proposed - better revealing the significance of the building itself as well as its contribution to the character and distinctiveness of Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area.

Concerning conservation areas it states, in Paragraph 201, that:

Not all elements of a Conservation Area...will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or...should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 195 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 196, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area...as a whole.

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), updated October 2019

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) was introduced in March 2014 as a live web-based resource to support the NPPF. It brings together planning practice guidance for England in an accessible and usable way and is a material consideration in assessing this application. This resource was updated in October 2019. This guidance has been taken into account in the development of these proposals.

Paragraph 001 sets out how well-designed places can be achieved through the planning system; by taking a proactive and collaborative approach at all stages of the planning process, from policy and plan formulation through to the determination of planning applications and the post approval stage. Guidance should follow both the NPPG and the National Design Guide – which sets out the characteristics of well-designed places and demonstrates what ‘good design’ means in practice, using the following 10 characteristics:

- *context*
- *identity*
- *built form*
- *movement*
- *nature*
- *public spaces*
- *uses*
- *homes and buildings*
- *resources*
- *lifespan*

Paragraph 130 of the NPPF advises that permission should be refused for development of poor design, that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality and conversely, where the design of a development accords with clear expectations in plan policies, design should not be used by the decision-maker as a valid reason to object to development.

The NPPG advises how local planning authorities can support energy efficiency improvements to existing buildings through ensuring any advice to developers is co-ordinated to guarantee consistency between energy, design and heritage matters (Paragraph 008).

It also includes particular guidance on matters relating to protecting the historic environment in the section: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment.

The NPPG recognises that the conservation of heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance is a core planning principle, requiring a flexible and thoughtful approach to get the best out of assets. It states that:

- *Heritage assets may be affected by direct physical change or by change in their setting. Being*
- *able to properly assess the nature, extent and importance of the significance of a heritage asset,*
- *and the contribution of its setting, is very important to understanding the potential impact and*
- *acceptability of development proposals.*

In the case of buildings, generally the risks of neglect and decay of heritage assets are best addressed through ensuring that they remain in active use that is consistent with their conservation. Ensuring such

heritage assets remain used and valued is likely to require sympathetic changes to be made from time to time. In the case of archaeological sites, many have no active use, and so for those kinds of sites, periodic changes may not be necessary, though on-going management remains important.

Where changes are proposed, the National Planning Policy Framework sets out a clear framework for both plan-making and decision-making in respect of applications for planning permission and listed building consent to ensure that heritage assets are conserved, and where appropriate enhanced, in a manner that is consistent with their significance and thereby achieving sustainable development. Heritage assets are either designated heritage assets or non-designated heritage assets.

In Paragraph 006, the NPPG refers to the Glossary of the NPPF to describe 'significance' as follows: in terms of heritage-related planning policy, significance is defined as the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

Heritage assets may be affected by direct physical change or by change in their setting. Being able to properly assess the nature, extent and importance of the significance of a heritage asset, and the contribution of its setting, is very important to understanding the potential impact and acceptability of development proposals (Paragraph 007).

The National Planning Policy Framework requires any harm to designated heritage assets to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. The

NPPG sets out that developments which impact upon heritage assets should deliver public benefits (Paragraph 020). These benefits should be of a nature or scale to be of benefit to the public at large and should not just be a private benefit. However, NPPG notes that benefits do not always have to be visible or accessible to the public in order to be genuine public benefits. Public benefits may include heritage benefits, such as:

- *sustaining or enhancing the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting;*
- *reducing or removing risks to a heritage asset; and*
- *securing the optimum viable use of a heritage asset in support of its long term conservation.*

7.2.3 Regional Policy

Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (Draft, January 2019)

The Revised Draft of the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF), 'Greater Manchester's Plan for Homes, Jobs and the Environment, was published for formal consultation in January 2019, under Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, which closed on 18th March 2019.

Paragraph 48 of the NPPF states that local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to: the stages of preparation; the extent of unresolved objections; and the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to this Framework. Whilst

the GMSF is still in draft and at the early stages of consultation, it is considered to carry some weight in the determination of planning applications.

Policy GM-S 1 (Sustainable Development) seeks to encourage developments to maximise economic, social and environmental benefits and highlights that previously-developed (brownfield) land will be prioritised to meet development needs.

Policy GM-P 1 (Supporting Long-Term Economic Growth) recognises the importance of supporting a thriving economy in Greater Manchester, placing an emphasis on the following: maintaining economic diversity; facilitating high value clusters in prime sectors (Advanced manufacturing; Business, financial and professional services; Digital; Health innovation; and Logistics); making the most of major assets including existing and proposed transport infrastructure; and providing the high-quality, sustainable living environments.

7.2.4 Local Policy

Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council Policies

Rochdale Core Strategy

The Core Strategy for the Rochdale Borough Local Plan was adopted on 19th October 2016 and sets out the strategies for the Borough through to 2028.

Policy SP2 sets out the Spatial Strategy for the borough, which aims to meet the development needs of the borough.

Rochdale will have a transformed and attractive town centre which is highly accessible to its residents and visitors due to Metrolink, and a

new transport interchange. The development of Kingsway will be a huge success providing quality new jobs and new employment opportunities in the Town Centre, Castleton, Stakehill Business Park and South Rochdale will be available. The most deprived areas of the town will be regenerated with better housing, jobs, facilities and environment. New homes will be attracting new residents to the borough as well as matching the needs and aspirations of existing residents. Rochdale station and the adjoining area will be regenerated as a new transport / mixed use hub providing an exciting gateway into the borough.

Policy SP3/R is the Strategy for Rochdale, the priorities for Rochdale are to transform Rochdale town centre (Policies SO1,SO2,SO3,SO4,SO5) by:

- *Focusing growth and major retail, leisure and office developments which will maintain and reinforce the centre as the main town centre (Policies E1,P1);*
- *Delivering major new retail led development in the Rochdale town centre east area that is well integrated with the existing centre and surrounding area (Policy E1);*
- *Supporting major transport works and improvements to deliver a high quality public transport interchange (Policy T1);*
- *Promoting opportunities to improve and create distinctive local places through in the town centre through excellent design of buildings and the public realm, valuing heritage, identity, cultural assets, the River Roch and the natural environment (Policies E1,P1,P3,T1); and*
- *Delivering the regeneration of the town centre*

and surrounding areas in line with the adopted Rochdale Town Centre Masterplan or Rochdale Town Centre SPD (Policies E1 & P1).

Policy E1 Establishing thriving town centres, with a good range and choice of shops, activities and facilities, will help make the borough an attractive place to live, work and do business. Policy E1/R specifically seeks to establish Rochdale as a thriving town centre – as the main location for major developments attracting a large number of people. In particular, planning permission will be granted for development that supports the vitality and viability, such as major retail, leisure, cultural and office development. Below is a selection Council objectives:

- *Open up part of the river Roch through the town centre along with associated public realm improvements;*
- *Promote and support the heritage of the town centre, particularly the Town Hall given its importance as a Grade I listed building, by maximising opportunities for tourism and culture and related economic benefits;*
- *Support and develop the proposals set out in the adopted Rochdale Town Centre Masterplan or Rochdale Town Centre SPD for the redevelopment, refurbishment and improvement of the centre and its public realm;*
- *Support a greater mix of uses and improve the public realm around the Butts and Smith Street to help create a focal point for activities, events and visitor attractions;*
- *Improve links to, and the use of, Memorial Gardens, the Town Hall, Touchstones, The Butts and promote*

its potential as a visitor attraction.

This scheme is the focus of one of the key elements within this policy and it is considered that it would accord with this policy.

Policy E5 relates to encouraging the visitor economy through enhanced visitor attractions, which will benefit the local economy by broadening its economic base, providing additional employment and improving the image of the borough. To do this, the Council will focus on promoting the following tourism opportunities:

1. *Rochdale town centre, where we will:*

- a. Promote the heritage attractions of the Town Hall, Broadfield Park and the Municipal Gardens, and the Toad Lane Pioneers Trail linked through to the river and the retail centre (Policy E1/R); and up to the Parish Church; and*
- b. Ensure that new development complements and relates well to, and enhances, the above assets.*

3. *River Roch Valley corridor, where we will:*

- a. Promote and enhance a Roch Valley recreational trail and linkages to key visitor destinations; and*
- b. Improve and enhance perception and image of, and access to, the river with a focus on delivering this in Rochdale town centre.*

As set out in the Statement of Public Benefit and supporting documentation, this project will significantly improve the Town Hall as a commercial venue for hire but also through the new visitor and community offer, increased accessibility and new spaces will enable complementary uses to take place simultaneously. This will significantly enhance

sustainability of the Town Hall and enable continued investment in the offer thus ensuring the Town Hall continues to be an asset to the Borough and beyond.

Policy P2 relates to the protection and enhancement of character, landscape and heritage.

1. We will protect and enhance the borough's character, the distinctiveness of its town centres, housing areas and countryside, and the qualities of its landscapes, utilising the considerable potential of these assets in development and regeneration schemes. We will do this by:

a. Requiring new development to integrate successfully with the key natural features of the borough, e.g. river valleys and the Pennine landscape;

b. Requiring new development to take opportunities to protect and open up important views of hills and valleys which are part of the borough's unique character;

c. Restoring the River Roch and other water bodies to their place as key and attractive features of the borough, including opening up waterways where they have been covered, and enhancing their setting, heritage assets and biodiversity potential;

d. Protecting, enhancing and utilising outstanding cultural landscapes, such as the Cheesden Valley area and around Littleborough and Hollingworth Lake; and

Conserving and enhancing townscape character.

2. We will protect the borough's heritage by:

a. Conserving, enhancing and promoting key heritage assets, both statutory and non-statutory, including consideration of their wider settings. Key heritage assets of the borough include:

i. Four outstanding conservation areas: Central Rochdale, Middleton and Littleborough town centres and Rock Nook / Summit;

ii. Other designated assets such as listed buildings, conservation areas, registered parks and scheduled ancient monuments;

iii. The heritage of the Co-operative movement, the Rochdale Pioneers and the Labour movement;

iv. The Edgar Wood and J. H. Sellers cultural heritage;

v. The heritage of the seventeenth and eighteenth century vernacular tradition; and

vi. The engineering heritage, including mills, canals and railways.

b. Conserving, enhancing and utilising other non-statutory heritage assets of local interest, be they buildings, parks, gardens or archaeological sites, including promoting their sensitive restoration;

c. Using heritage assets positively and intelligently to strengthen identity and image and support the visitor economy, particularly in development and regeneration schemes; and

d. Prioritising the conservation of heritage assets at risk from decay, giving special attention to designated heritage assets in this regard.

The Heritage Impact Assessment outlines the impact of the proposals on the heritage assets in detail, and concludes that the proposals would meet the requirement set out within this policy, particularly according with 1c) and e) and 2a), c) and d).

Core Strategy Policy C8 sets out how improving community, sport, leisure and cultural facilities will help improve resident's health and quality of life and make the borough a more desirable place to live, work and visit. The policy states the vital role of arts, cultural facilities and entertainment facilities, in attracting residents and visitors and in supporting local culture and improving the borough's image. Section 8 also highlights accessibility as a critical issue for community facilities - to ensure they are usable by all groups, including those without access to a car and with restricted mobility.

Section 9 (SO3) Improving design, image and quality of place Improving the 'quality of place' of the borough is a priority if it is to be a place where people choose to live. It will help to:

- *Create livelier, more interesting and distinctive town centres, housing areas and public spaces;*
- *Attract investment and improve prosperity;*
- *Make people feel good about the place and improve their health and well being; and*
- *Make it a destination of choice.*

To improve design, image and quality of place, Rochdale's policies seek to:

- *Protect and enhance the best aspects of the borough's character and heritage;*
- *Make development more attractive and*

sustainable, with a cleaner, greener and safer environment;

- *Improve the image of the borough including the most visible, highest profile places such as town centres and gateways; and*
- *Take a positive role in the promotion of better design.*

Policy P1 seeks to improve the image of Rochdale, through requiring high quality design and by promoting the development and re-use of under-used land and buildings, maximising the potential for heritage assets to provide a sense of place and image. Rochdale Town Hall, is identified as one of the borough's major assets and this section goes on to set out how public art and heritage assets can play a major part in re-enforcing the borough's character and distinctiveness and can be incorporated in many ways in developments and regeneration schemes.

The scheme, which places Rochdale's unique heritage at its heart, would see the enhancement of the Town Hall and in turn a reinforcement of the town's image and character.

Policy G1 - tackling and adapting to climate change – new development within the borough should minimise its contribution to climate change, and adapts to its impacts. The Council will ensure the borough plays its part in delivering national targets in respect of climate change by the following measures:

- *Expecting all development and regeneration schemes to be well connected to surrounding areas and facilities by sustainable means of transport (Policy T2);*
- *Promoting the efficient re-use of buildings,*

especially those of heritage value, and the recycling of construction waste;

- *Making the best use of open space to contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation.*

The scheme is fundamentally one of conserving embodied energy and sensitively adapting, within the constraints of the building's significance, by implementing sustainable and long-lasting repairs and adaptation for reduced energy consumption.

Policy DM1 sets out the general development requirements, which all development proposals, including changes of use of land and buildings, extensions and alterations; they will be expected to demonstrate that they are:

- a. Are of high quality design and take the opportunity to enhance the quality of the area;*
- b. Are compatible with surrounding land uses;*
- c. Do not adversely affect the amenity of residents or users;*
- d. Mitigate (as necessary) against any impacts due to noise, air, dust, light and odour pollution, traffic generation or inadequate access;*
- e. Provide satisfactory vehicular access;*
- f. Do not have an adverse impact on health;*
- g. Provide, or demonstrate the availability of, the service and community infrastructure necessary to meet local needs;*
- h. Minimise opportunities for crime against people or property;*
- i. Take account of ground conditions;*

j. Incorporate, where appropriate, high quality landscape schemes;

k. Have assessed whether the development may be affected by ground instability;

l. Have considered the availability of water and wastewater infrastructure; and

m. Do not lead to impacts detrimental to the conservation interests of European Protected Sites.

The proposals have been developed to accord with all of the elements within this policy, specifically a), b), c), d), f), g), h), k) and m).

Rochdale Renaissance Masterplan (2010)

This was developed as a vision document, as part of the Council's LDF, to guide the implementation of development. The Masterplan focussed on delivering 7 key themes:

1. Creating sustainable neighbourhoods
2. Developing 21st century employment sites
3. Establishing thriving town centres
4. Capitalising on our environmental assets
5. Focusing on strategic gateways and corridors
6. Accessible and integrated transport
7. Design and image

As part of **Section 3**, the Masterplan identified the Esplanade and the area around the Town Hall as having the 'potential to become a first class public space and a quality Cultural Quarter'. In Section 7, the Masterplan discusses conservation and heritage, recognising

that: 'there is a growing recognition that conserving and enhancing the Borough's built and natural heritage brings economic and environmental benefits'. The Masterplan also states that the Borough has one of the best architectural and historic heritage bases of any authority in the North West, which helps to define a sense of place and character. Rochdale town centre – particularly the Town Hall – was identified as one of the four key assets in the Masterplan.

7.3 Rochdale Town Hall Planning History

Installation Of Air Conditioning Unit

Rochdale Town Hall, The Esplanade, Rochdale

Ref. No: 08/D50353 | Received: Fri 18 Jan 2008 | Validated: Fri 18 Jan 2008 | Status: Unknown

Installation Of Air Conditioning Unit To Grade 1 Listed Building

Rochdale Town Hall, The Esplanade, Rochdale

Ref. No: 08/D50354 | Received: Fri 18 Jan 2008 | Validated: Fri 18 Jan 2008 | Status: Unknown

Construction Of Bin Storage Area And Formation Of 7 Additional Car Parking Spaces Within Town Hall Car Park

Site Of Former Mortuary Building, Rear Of Rochdale Town Hall, Rochdale, Lancashire

Ref. No: 05/D45046 | Received: Tue 08 Mar 2005 | Validated: Tue 08 Mar 2005 | Status: Decided

Refurbishment Of Committee Rooms 1 And 2 Of Listed Building

Rochdale Town Hall, The Esplanade, Rochdale

Ref. No: 00/D37681 | Received: Wed 24 May 2000 | Validated: Tue 23 May 2000 | Status: Decided

Refurbishment Of East End Toilets (First Floor)

Rochdale Town Hall The Esplanade Rochdale

Ref. No: 94/D31296 | Received: Mon 03 Oct 1994 | Validated: Thu 13 Oct 1994 | Status: Decided

Two Non-Illuminated Panel Signs

Rochdale Town Hall The Esplanade Rochdale

Ref. No: 90/D25492 | Received: Thu 21 Jun 1990 | Validated: Fri 06 Jul 1990 | Status: Unknown

7.4 Statement of Community Involvement and Summary of Consultation

7.4.1 Pre-application Consultation with Statutory Consultees

Rochdale Borough Council

During the course of the development of Stage 2 and 3 proposals, there have been a series of informal pre-application meetings and a continuing constructive ongoing dialogue with Rochdale Borough Council. Key individuals include Jessica Scott (Conservation Officer) and Samia Syeda (Planning Officer). A Stage 3 pre-application meeting was held on 30th April, along with Historic England (HE). The following document

was presented: Stage 3 Statutory Consultation Document, DIA. A further pre-application meeting was held with RBC on 14th May 2020.

Historic England

Historic England (HE) were consulted in November 2019, at which point the case officer was Ross Brazier. This consultation included a presentation and walking tour, led by Architect Becky Mills. The following material was presented and shared: Stage 2 Mid-Point Review Report, DIA and the Updated Conservation Management Plan, DIA. Feedback was received by letter on 15th February 2020.

A *Stage 3 Statutory Consultation Document*, DIA was prepared and presented to Richard Broadhead (HE) and Jessica Scott (RBC) on 30th April 2020. Feedback was received by letter on 21st May 2020. This letter concluded that Historic England are supportive of the principles of the scheme. The full letter can be found in the Appendix to this statement.

7.4.2 Non-statutory Stakeholder Consultees

The Victorian Society

The Victorian Society were consulted in November 2019. This included a brief presentation and a walking tour, led by Architect Becky Mills. The following material was shared: Stage 2 Mid-Point Review Reports, DIA. A formal response via letter was received on 20th December 2020.

A follow up meeting to discuss the scheme in more detail has been delayed due to COVID-19 and instead a presentation document has been prepared and sent

for the Society's review. It is anticipated that following this review, the team will carry out further consultation with the Society, following the submission of the listed building consent and planning applications.

7.4.3 Stakeholder Consultation

The development of the proposals have been submitted regularly during RIBA Stage 2 and 3 to the client project team and as necessary, Board. The proposals were signed-off by Board at the completion of RIBA Stage 2 and 3. Between February 2019 and May 2020, throughout RIBA 2 and 3 design stages, the Town Hall Project Team have consulted on the development of options, with feedback incorporated where appropriate. In addition to the client team and statutory consultees outlined above, the following stakeholders have been engaged as part of the pre-application consultation process:

Rochdale Borough Council

- Executive Members and Councillors
- Building Control
- Highways
- Facilities Management
- Events Management
- Estates Management

Heritage

- FORTH
- Touchstones
- Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS)

Access

- Building Control

Fire

- Rochdale and Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue services

Security

- Counter Terrorism Policing North West

Utilities

- Please refer to Max Fordham's Report.

7.4.4 Further Consultation and Events

The project aims to restore people's pride in their town as a place of trade and industry, community support and tolerance. In the birthplace of co-operation, we will encourage people to learn about and value their civic heritage, ensuring that its continuity is cherished and relevant for future generations. The little known social heritage of our culturally rich Borough will be captured, shared and celebrated.

The **activity programme** has been created following extensive consultation with our communities, key audience groups, and stakeholders, and developed with the support of our project partners and stakeholders. The programme contains a total of 19 projects, which are split into the following themes: Arts and Crafts Heritage, Placemaking; Storytelling; Conservation in Action and Civic Voices. More information on the activity programme and a full

record on consultation events carried out over the period of April – August 2019 can be found in the accompanying Appendix.

7.5 Statement of Public Benefit

The development of Rochdale Town Hall, the people responsible for its creation and its social, architectural and artistic context was fully researched at the beginning of the project - providing an assessment of significance and analysis of the building and its contents, which formed the basis of the updated CMP and underpinned the development of the scheme. Central to this was the development of a **conservation philosophy** for the proposed scheme, focused on four key themes:

- **Continued use of the building in a manner sympathetic to its original use and function whilst allowing sensitive adaption to accommodate modern requirements**
- **Retention of the building as a key cultural facility for the local community**
- **Repair and restoration of the building fabric and interiors**
- **Sustainable use and improved access**

This resultant scheme offers a once in generation opportunity to create a truly accessible building which is able to serve the whole community for the first time, breaking down previous barriers and bringing forward a series of major public benefits. Furthermore, not only would the works secure the conservation of the building for future generations, they would enable greater social inclusion, regeneration and

interpretation, allowing the wider community to access and understand its outstanding historic interest, manifest in its fabric and features, in a manner unknown before.

Public benefits may follow from many developments and could be anything that delivers economic, social or environmental objectives as described in the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 8) and clarified under paragraph 20 of the National Planning Policy Guidance. The guidance states that they should be of a nature or scale to be of benefit to the public at large and not just be a private benefit. However, benefits do not always have to be visible or accessible to the public in order to be genuine public benefits, for example, works to a listed private dwelling which secure its future as a designated heritage asset could be a public benefit.

Public benefits can be categorised under the following three main headings:

a) an economic objective – *to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;*

b) a social objective – *to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services*

and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and

c) an environmental objective – *to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.*

The repair and restoration of Rochdale Town Hall alongside works proposed to open-up the building with enhanced public access and interpretation, would better reveal the Grade I listed building's significance (and that of the wider conservation area) and reinforce its relevance to the local community it was designed to serve for this and future generations. This is the foremost and critical benefit offered by the scheme; however the associated additional public benefits it brings are numerous and are summarised below under the three principal categories:

a) an economic objective

Since the hugely successful river Roch re-opening scheme, the value of using heritage as a driver for the economic and social wellbeing of the town has been seen by all. The Town Hall restoration and forthcoming Town Hall Square public realm projects are key elements of an ambitious overarching heritage-led town centre regeneration strategy led by Rochdale Borough Council and Rochdale Development Agency. Over the next five years, the Council intend to bring forward 2,000 high quality new homes in and around

Rochdale town centre, redevelop its unique heritage assets to create a stunning public realm, and further improve the day and evening visitor offer and its transport infrastructure. More information on how the Town Hall project sits within the wider context of Rochdale's regeneration can be found on RDA's website here: www.investinrochdale.co.uk; with summaries on investment opportunities as part of the £400m regeneration of Rochdale town centre here: [Rochdale Town Centre delivery plan](#) and a document setting out the regeneration of key sites around the Borough's stations, including Rochdale Station and the Heritage Action Zone here: [Rochdale rail corridor strategy](#)

The restoration of Rochdale Town Hall will include conservation and interpretation works throughout the building and will significantly increase and improve public access. The highly significant spaces within the Grade I listed Town Hall will be freely accessible to visitors and will be a 'safe' space where cross-cultural activities are supported and encouraged.

The Town Hall will be open for commercial and community bookings seven days a week, with the café accessible internally and from its own dedicated external entrance, drawing visitors to the building to the benefit of the town centre economy more widely. The increased commercial operations of the Town Hall would generate new employment opportunities whilst a commitment has been made to utilise local suppliers and maintenance and security companies. The proposed improvements to the Town Hall as a commercial venue would significantly enhance the

sustainability of the Town Hall and enable continued investment and therefore the conservation of the building in the long-term.

Overall, the project will significantly improve the Town Hall as a commercial venue for hire but also through the new visitor and community offer, increased accessibility and new spaces will enable complementary uses to take place simultaneously. This will significantly enhance sustainability of the Town Hall and enable continued investment in the offer thus ensuring the Town Hall continues to be an asset to the Borough and beyond.

In summary, this project would bring about the following economic benefits:

- Investment in the fabric of the building to prolong its life and give it a revitalised new purpose;
- Sensitive and high quality repair and enhancement of areas of high historic significance;
- Restoration and repurposing of key commercial areas;
- Contribution of increased visitor footfall and in turn the vitality and vibrancy of Rochdale town centre;
- Increase visitor spend and dwell time in Rochdale Town Centre;
- Central role within an ambitious heritage-led town centre regeneration strategy to uplift economic wellbeing of the town;
- Generation of employment during the construction project;
- Creation of 9.5 FTE permanent jobs and up to 50 positions including casual events staff and Town

Hall ambassador volunteers;

- Giving the Town Hall a sustainable future.

b) a social objective

Perhaps most significant in terms of what the project would achieve more widely is the reengagement of the building with its external environment and the community it serves in an unprecedented manner both through the physical interventions proposed as well as the interpretation, activity planning and training proposed – better revealing the significance of the building itself as well as its contribution to the character and distinctiveness of Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area.

Interpretation proposals and activity planning have been developed in tandem with the proposed physical interventions to greatly increase public access to and understanding of the Town Hall to restore people's pride in their town as a place of trade and industry, community support and tolerance. The ambition and vision seeks to 'gift Rochdale Town Hall back to the people of the Borough, actively involving people in telling their stories as testimony to Rochdale's manufacturing, entrepreneurial and trading past and present, the continuity of its civic purpose and philanthropy, and its celebratory communal heritage, creating a shared sense of Rochdalian identity, pride and ownership'.

The principal ceremonial rooms of the Town Hall will be made accessible and freely available for the first time in its 150-year history. Visitor facilities will be upgraded and a new family friendly programme will improve the financial and environmental sustainability of the building, doubling visitor numbers.

The project aims to restore people's pride in their town as a place of trade and industry, community support and tolerance. In the birthplace of co-operation, the project will encourage people to learn about and value their civic heritage, ensuring that its continuity is cherished and relevant for future generations. The little known social heritage of this culturally rich Borough will be captured, shared and celebrated. Full details of how this will be realised can be found in the Appendix.

Social Value was embedded in the project from its inception and forms part of the framework for its delivery, and beyond. To date, RDA and the consultancy team have worked with local schools to deliver the Design Engineer Construct!® (DEC!) learning programme; through providing short online tutorials and feedback on final projects. In addition, Insalls and Price & Myers have both appointed apprentices who are solely working on the Town Hall project.

Social Value will be continued throughout the delivery of the project, and will include a series of projects and workshops with Falinge Park High School – whereby each of the consultants and main contractor will input with tutorials, presentations and feedback sessions to help guide the students through the process supported by a series of site visits, workshops and school visits. The Contractor will deliver Construction Apprenticeships, providing the traditional apprenticeship skills in areas including scaffolding, roofing, joinery and stone masonry; seeking to recruit from the local Hopwood Hall College. In addition, during the course of construction, the contractor will facilitate monthly Construction Tours.

The Heritage Conservation Skills and Training Studio proposals offer opportunities for specialist training in a unique heritage setting whilst also addressing the need to conserve such an important Grade I-listed building. The training on offer will help to raise aspirations of the community and young people by introducing them to career opportunities they may not have considered or are not available elsewhere in the borough. The work placements directly respond to the requirement of the new T Levels being offered at the local college from September 2020 meaning our proposals offer a broad range of opportunities aimed at upskilling the local community and improving their life chances. The Appendix contains more detailed information on the aims and implementation of the Heritage Conservation Skills and Training Studio.

In conclusion, this project would bring about the following substantial social benefits:

- Facilitating public access to a building of exceptional significance – to spaces never before accessed by the public;
- Egalitarian access and interpretation of historic and architectural importance of the building, reinforcing local identity;
- Provision of free access, seven days a week with volunteer Town Hall Ambassadors welcoming the public to the building;
- Creation of central community resource with cross-cultural activities encouraged;
- Central role within ambitious heritage-led town centre regeneration strategy, contributing to sense of place and uplifting social wellbeing;
- Creation of Heritage Conservation Skills and

Training Studio – as an investment in the wider community;

- Appointment of three apprentices to the project and commitment to appointment of four construction apprentices;
- Provision of monthly construction tours;
- Assistance in the delivery of DEC course at local high school.

c)an environmental objective

Underpinning the ambition to reinforce the building as a cultural landmark for the local community is an extensive scheme of repair and restoration of the original fabric, to halt further decay and prevent the need for more extensive repair and replacement. These are outlined in detail in the accompanying Planning, Design and Access Statement, proposed drawings and input from specialist consultants.

While Rochdale Town Hall has remained in constant use, the nature of breathing new life into existing buildings is rarely limited to sensitive repair alone. As outlined in detail in the accompanying Planning, Design and Access Statement, drawings and supporting consultant reports, a 'passive-first' approach has been taken alongside solutions designed in response to the significance of the building. The upgrading of the Town Hall to be inherently more 'green' will see the repair works and upgrades to thermal and energy efficiencies which would conserve the fabric of the building in the long term, alongside the specification of appropriately long-lasting materials from sustainable sources, and avoiding high carbon footprints where possible.

In summary, the project would bring about the following considerable environmental benefits:

- Repair and restoration of the building both externally and internally;
- The sensitive reordering of uses and circulation, to secure the long-term use and conservation of the building;
- Facilitating public access to the building to enable the appreciation of the areas of high significance;
- The delivery of exemplary levels of sustainable design in respect of the new build elements of the scheme;
- Facilitating improvements to the sustainability performance of the building (including target 40% gas and 60% electricity reduction);
- Improvements to the internal environment control to better conserve the important wall paintings and stained glass;
- Creation of Heritage Conservation Skills and Training Studio – ensuring the ongoing skilled maintenance and management of the building;
- Contribution of the restored building to the heritage-led vibrancy of Rochdale town centre;
- Central role within an ambitious heritage-led town centre regeneration strategy to uplift the historic environment and cultural offer of the town;
- Reduction of negative environmental impacts.

