

Rochdale Town Hall, The Esplanade, Rochdale

Written Scheme of Investigation for an Historic Building Investigation and Watching Brief

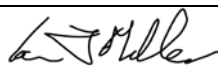
Planning and Listed Building Application Refs:

20/00576/FUL and 20/00577/LBC (Phase 1)

20/00615/FUL and 20/00616/LBC (Phase 2)



Project Name:	Rochdale Town Hall, The Esplanade, Rochdale
Project Code:	TBC
Site Location:	Rochdale Town Hall lies on The Esplanade in Rochdale Town Centre Postcode OL16 1AB
National Grid Reference:	NGR 389574 413255
Planning Refs:	20/00576/FUL and 20/00577/LBC (Phase 1 Enabling Works) 20/00615/FUL and 20/00616/LBC (Phase 2 Restoration)
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1. Introduction

1.1 Background to the Project

- 1.1.1 Rochdale Development Agency has submitted planning and listed building applications for the proposed restoration and refurbishment of Rochdale Town Hall, a Grade I listed building of exceptional interest (List Entry No 1084275). The proposed scheme of works ultimately seeks to incorporate civic spaces together with ancillary functions, including events, exhibition and interpretation spaces, upgraded bar and cafe. This will be achieved in two phases. In the first instance, a programme of enabling works will be carried out (Phase 1), which will include an internal strip out, asbestos removal, structural works, installation of dry risers and a trial replacement window (Planning Refs: 20/00576/FUL and 20/00577/LBC).
- 1.1.2 It is anticipated that the scope of the Phase 1 enabling works will be focused largely on internal areas, predominantly in the centre and east of the building, and it is anticipated that the delivery of these works will expose some historic fabric of the Town Hall that is currently obscured from view behind modern materials, particularly in the basement. This has some potential to enhance the understanding of the building and thereby inform the Phase 2 technical design work, and would also maximise the opportunity to integrate and conceal services without impact on the significance of the building.
- 1.1.3 The Phase 2 works allow for the restoration and refurbishments works to facilitate the building's continued use, and will involve the glazing of the Porte Cochere and tower link, new terraced access to building perimeter, external repair works, specialist repair of decorative interiors, restoration of key internal spaces and selective window replacement, the installation of new services including lifts, plant and equipment, new facilities including exhibition, toilets and storage, and associated works (Planning Refs: 20/00615/FUL and 20/00616/LBC).
- 1.1.4 Heritage considerations have been of paramount consideration throughout the design process, with a focus on ensuring minimal alteration to the historic fabric of the listed building, although some minor intrusive ground and structural works will inevitably be required, and historic fabric that is currently concealed from view will almost certainly come to light. However, as part of the extensive range of specialist studies implemented to inform the design proposals in 2019-20, Salford Archaeology carried out a comprehensive measured survey (internal and external) of the Town Hall, which included the creation of a detailed point cloud from laser scanning. In addition, a comprehensive Conservation Management Plan of the Town Hall was prepared by Architectural History Practice in 2015, and updated by Donald Insall Associates in support of the current planning applications. These documents include room-by-room and elevational descriptions that provide a comprehensive record of the listed building, and a detailed understanding of its significance.



Plate 1: Measured survey drawing of the north elevation of Rochdale Town Hall

1.1.5 In the light of the immense historical and archaeological significance of Rochdale Town Hall, but taking into consideration the extent of recent studies and surveys of the building, the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS), in their capacity as Historic Environment Advisors to Rochdale Council, has recommended that a condition is attached to planning and listed building consent. The recommended wording of the condition attached to both phases of development works is:

‘No works shall take place until the applicant or their agents or successors in title has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological works. The works are to be undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) submitted to and approved in writing by Rochdale Planning Authority. The WSI shall cover the following:

- i. A phased programme and methodology of investigation and recording to include:
 - an archaeological watching brief to record historic fabric exposed or impacted on during ground and structural works.
- ii. A programme of post-investigation assessment to include:
 - analysis of the site investigation records and finds;
 - production of a final report on the significance of the archaeological and historical interest represented.
- iii. Dissemination of the results commensurate with their significance.
- iv. Provision for archive deposition of the report and records of the site investigation.
- v. Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the approved WSI.

Reason:

In accordance with NPPF Section 16, Paragraph 199 - To record and advance understanding of the heritage asset impacted on by the works and to make information about the archaeological heritage interest publicly accessible.'

1.2 Purpose of the Document

1.2.1 An Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) is a comprehensive document detailing the requirements and methodological approaches of a programme of archaeological works. It is defined by Historic England as:

'Where development will lead to the loss of a material part of the significance of a heritage asset, policy HE12.3 requires local planning authorities to ensure that developers take advantage of the opportunity to advance our understanding of the past before the asset or the relevant part is irretrievably lost. As this is the only opportunity to do this it is important that:

- 1: Any investigation is carried out to professional standards and to an appropriate level of detail proportionate to the assets likely significance, by an organisation or individual with appropriate expertise;
2. The resultant records, artefacts and samples are analysed and, where necessary, conserved;
- 3: The understanding gained is made publically available;
- 4: An archive is created, and deposited for future research.'

1.3 National and Local Planning Policies

1.3.1 The revised *National Planning Policy Framework* sets out the Government's planning policies and outlines the presumption in favour of sustainable development, which is defined by three principles: economic, social and environmental (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, February 2019). Of the core planning principles underpinning decision making, conserving heritage assets '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' is one. Section 16 specifically deals with this historic environment (paragraphs 184-202), and local planning authorities should consider:

- the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
- the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
- opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

- 1.3.2 Paragraph 189 states that local planning authorities, when determining applications, should require the applicant to describe the significance of any affected heritage assets, 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. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary'.
- 1.3.3 Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation'.
- 1.3.4 Paragraph 197 states that the effect of a proposal on non-designated heritage assets (designated assets are covered in paragraphs 193-96) should be taken into account in determining a planning application. Paragraph 199 states that local planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of any heritage assets to be lost, in a manner appropriate to their importance and impact, and to make this evidence publicly accessible.
- 1.3.5 The NPPF outlines the need for local planning authorities to create local plans and frameworks to implement the NPPF at a local level. The future use and development of land and buildings in the borough is currently guided by the Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Unitary Development Plan (UDP). This document sets out a framework of policies to: control the location and quality of new development; encourage and stimulate development, where appropriate; protect and improve the environment; and safeguard the borough's most important natural and built assets. Adopted in 2006, the Secretary of State issued a saving direction on policies in 2009 including policies G/BE/9 and BE/10-19 relevant to the built and historic environment.
- 1.3.6 In determining applications, local planning authorities must be able to understand the significance of any heritage assets affected by the proposed development in order to assess its impact. This would enable the conservation of 'heritage assets in a manner suitable to their significance so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations' (*op cit*, para 17), or else they can be recorded 'and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible (*op cit*, Section 12.141).

1.4 Overview of Rochdale Town Hall

- 1.4.1 Rochdale Town Hall was designed by William Henry Crossland in 1864, and is of the highest significance in terms of its historical and aesthetic values as one of the finest examples in Britain of a Victorian town hall, as reflected in its Grade 1 listed building status. Its original form as designed is recognised as an important early departure from High Victorian heaviness, and has survived into the 21st century with little alteration, with the exception of the later tower, itself a fine example of design by the noted architect, Alfred Waterhouse.
- 1.4.2 The north front and tower are of the highest architectural significance. Crossland utilised the form of 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 each trade.
- 1.4.3 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.
- 1.4.4 The Town Hall is the most significant building in the Rochdale Town Centre 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 (Grade II*), the Post Office (Grade II) and Cenotaph (Grade I) 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 (a Grade II-Registered Park and Garden) and from the Memorial Gardens are of particular significance. Conversely, adaptations undertaken in the 1970s and 1990s are of low value and detract from the significance of the building.

2. Aims and Objectives

2.1 Academic Aims

2.1.1 The main aims of the archaeological investigation will be to record any historic fabric of the Town Hall that is exposed during the soft-strip activity, record any below-ground remains that are exposed during earth-moving works required to construct the proposed new services, and complete the detailed archaeological record of the historic building prior to any alterations. This will be achieved via targeted archaeological monitoring during the Phase 1 and Phase 2 works to the Town Hall. This approach to offsetting the impact of development on the archaeological resource of the development area is in accordance with national guidelines set out in the National Planning Policy Framework: Section 16 – *Conserving and enhancing the historic environment*.

2.2 Objectives

2.2.1 The principal objectives of the archaeological investigation are:

- to maintain a targeted archaeological watching brief during the Phase 1 stripping-out works, and enhance the existing archaeological record of the Town Hall by recording any historic fabric that is exposed;
- to maintain a targeted archaeological watching brief Phase 2 restoration works, and monitor any ground-breaking works required for the installation of new services, etc;
- to undertake any post-excavation works required and create an appropriate site archive;
- to present the results of the watching brief in a fully illustrated report;
- to produce an archive for the project;
- to make available the results of the work in an appropriate format.

3. Method Statement

3.1 Phase 1 'Soft Strip' Methodology

- 3.1.1 Whilst the items to be removed are modern additions, the fabric to which they are fixed is primarily historic fabric. The soft strip works will be carried out carefully by a competent contractor according to the specifications outlined in the planning application.
- 3.1.2 Due to the potential for damage to be caused to the historic fabric during the works, careful consideration has been given to the removal process with the following guidelines developed to minimise harm:
- Initial assessment undertaken by operatives to assess current fixing methodologies in order to determine the appropriate removal strategy. This strategy should then employ the following principles:
 - all items identified for removal should be dismantled carefully to avoid damage to the historic fabric to the rear;
 - if it is not possible to dismantle the item for removal, priority must be given to protecting the building fabric rather than the item to be removed;
 - if an item is screw fixed, the screws are to be unscrewed and the item removed; and,
 - dismantling of partitions / dry-lining / panelling should be undertaken with care in order to protect any historic fabric obscured to the rear.
 - Clear guidance given to operatives on the extent of removal and what to do in the case of uncovering anything that is not as expected for that element of the works.
 - All operatives to have a site induction on the heritage elements of the building to ensure a good understanding of how to work with a listed structure.
 - When the item has been removed there will be a variety of making good to be undertaken.
- 3.1.3 All removals of modern fabric or low-quality alterations will be carried out in a way that minimises damage to the surrounding historic fabric.
- 3.1.4 The work will be monitored by an appropriately qualified archaeologist.

3.2 Watching Brief Methodology

- 3.2.1 Following consultation with the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS) it has been recommended that the implementation of an archaeological watching brief would be an appropriate strategy to offset any harm from the soft-strip activity (Phase 1) and any subsequent ground-breaking works (Phase 2).
- 3.2.2 The archaeological watching brief will be conducted following the relevant ClfA *Standards and Guidance* for an archaeological watching brief (2014).
- 3.2.3 Results of the watching brief will be recorded on *pro-forma* record sheets and will be accompanied with sufficient pictorial record (plans, sections and high-resolution digital photographs) to identify and illustrate individual features. In the event of extensive historic fabric being exposed being encountered during the watching brief, works will be halted temporarily to enable an appropriate level of archaeological recording to be carried out.
- 3.2.4 *Photographic Archive:* a comprehensive photographic archive will be produced utilising a high-resolution digital camera. All frames, excluding general contextual views, will incorporate a graduated metric scale. A plan showing the view point directions will be produced, together with a full photographic index. Photography will be undertaken using high-resolution digital cameras, and in accordance with current Historic England guidance embodied in *Digital Image capture and File Storage Guideline for Best Practice* (Historic England 2015).
- 3.2.5 *Site Drawings:* a set of measured survey floor plans and elevations of the building has been prepared by Salford Archaeology at the design stage of the project. Any requirement for additional survey will be carried out utilising a combination of rectified photography, a reflectorless electronic distance meter (REDM), and manual survey techniques. The resultant data will then be used as the basis of CAD drawings, which will be included within the final report as figures.
- 3.2.6 *Written Description:* a description of any historic fabric revealed during the soft strip will be maintained Historic England Level 4 standard, as appropriate. The records will be essentially descriptive and provide a systematic account of the origin, development and use of the building, which will include a description of the plan, form, fabric, function, age and development sequence. The written description will comprise:
- an account of the building's past and present use;
 - an account of the key architectural features, fixtures and fittings;
 - a discussion of the relative significance of each individual element;
 - a discussion of the relative significance of each individual component structure within the Town Hall complex.

3.3 Health and Safety

3.2.1 Full regard will be given to all constraints during the course of the project, and all relevant Health and Safety legislation, CDM, COSHH regulations and codes of practice will be respected. The University of Salford provides a Health and Safety Statement for all projects and maintains a Safety Policy. Salford Archaeology is advised on its Health and Safety matters by the University of Salford, who provide ongoing advice on health and safety matters to all departments in the organisation. All site procedures are in accordance with the guidance set out in the Health and Safety Manual compiled by the Federation of Archaeological Employers and Managers (FAME), and in accordance with current legislation, including:

- The Health and Safety at Work Act (1974);
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999);
- The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations (2015);
- The Control of Asbestos Regulations (2006);
- Construction (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations (1996);
- The Health and Safety (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations (2002);
- The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (2002);
- The Health and Safety (First-Aid) Regulations (1981);
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order (2005);
- The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (1998);
- Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (1998).

3.2.2 A risk assessment and will be produced by the archaeological contractor and submitted to the Client prior to the commencement of any on-site works. Once approved this WSI will be used for the purposes of a method statement. All Salford Archaeology staff associated with the project will be given a copy of the method statement and the risk assessment prior to the beginning of the works and will be required to read both documents.

3.2.3 **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** all staff will wear PPE at appropriate times dictated as by the groundworks contractor e. All Salford Archaeology staff are supplied with the following PPE:

- Safety Helmets (EN397);
- Ear Defenders (EN 352-3);
- Safety spectacles (EN166);
- Goggles (Chemical BSEN 166 Type 3);
- Dust masks plain and valved (EN149 2001);
- Disposable overalls (Type 5/6 disposable EN340);
- Hi-visibility vests (EN471);
- Gloves Nitrile and latex disposable, PVC, EN374;
- Safety footwear - steel toecap and mid-sole boots and Wellingtons EN345-47.

4. Other Matters

- 4.1 **Project Monitoring:** the aims of monitoring are to ensure that the archaeological works are undertaken within the limits set by the Written Scheme of Investigation, and to the satisfaction of the local planning authority. Monitoring will be carried out by the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS) on behalf of Rochdale Council.
- 4.2 As a minimum requirement, the local planning authority and GMAAS will be given a minimum of one week's notice of work commencing on site.
- 4.3 Salford Archaeology will notify GMAAS of any discoveries of archaeological significance so that site visits can be made, as necessary. Any changes to this agreed WSI will only be made in consultation with the Client and the local planning authority.
- 4.4 **Working Hours:** normal working hours are variable between 7.30 am and 6.00 pm, Monday to Friday. It is not normal practice for the University of Salford staff to be asked to work weekends or bank holidays, and should the Client require such time to be worked during the course of a project a contract variation to cover additional costs will be necessary.
- 4.5 **Insurance:** the University of Salford has professional indemnity to a value of £50,000,000, employer's liability cover to a value of £50,000,000 and public liability to a value of £50,000,000. Written details of insurance cover can be provided if required.

5. Report and Archive

5.1 **Report:** a draft copy of a final report will be submitted for comment to the client and GMAAS within eight working weeks of the completion of the fieldwork. This will present the results obtained from the watching brief, and will include:

- a title page detailing site address, NGR, author/originating body, client's name and address;
- full content's listing;
- a non-technical summary of the findings of the watching brief;
- an account of the historical development of the Town Hall complex;
- a description of the methodologies used during the fieldwork;
- a description of the findings of the fieldwork;
- detailed plans and elevation drawings of the building;
- appropriate photographs of specific archaeological features;
- interpretation of the features, fixtures and fittings identified;
- a consideration of the importance of the Town Hall in local, regional and national terms;
- a catalogue of archive items, including a list of photographs, and details of the final deposition of the project archive.

5.2 **Archive:** the results of the archaeological investigation will form the basis of a full archive to professional standards, in accordance with current ClfA guidelines (updated 2014). The project archive represents the collation and indexing of all the data and material gathered during the course of the project. The deposition of a properly ordered and indexed project archive in an appropriate repository is considered an essential and integral element of all archaeological projects by the ClfA in that organisation's code of conduct.

5.3 The initial results of the survey will be the site archive, which will be organised so as to be compatible with the other archaeological archives produced in the Greater Manchester area. All drawn records to be transferred to and stored in digital format, in systems which are easily accessible. The integrity of the site archive will be maintained upon completion of the archaeological works with the archive ultimately being deposited with Touchstones Rochdale (subject to their approval).

5.4 The archaeological archive will consist of the following:

- Digital material created from written, drawn or photographed original records;
- Indexes to the drawings;
- Indexes to the photographic archive;
- All born digital material;
- The final project report;
- A list of contents of the archive.



- 5.5 It is likely that a large element of the project archive will be in digital format. It would thus be appropriate to deposit a copy of the archive generated from the archaeological investigation with the Archaeological Data Service (ADS), through ADS-Easy. Any records that are created in hard copy during the course of the project will be scanned and added to this digital archive.
- 5.6 **Dissemination:** as a minimum, the information will be finally disseminated through the deposition of the final report with the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record; an Adobe Acrobat pdf copy of the report will also be supplied. A hard copy of the report will also be forwarded to the Touchstones Rochdale.

6. Timetable

- 6.1 The duration of the watching brief will be dependent on the contractor's timetable for the stripping out and any subsequent ground works.
- 6.2 A draft report will be submitted to the Client for comment within eight weeks of completion of the fieldwork.
- 6.3 The project archive will be deposited with the receiving museum (where applicable) within six months of completion of the final report.

7. Staffing Proposals

- 7.1 The project will be under the overall charge of **Ian Miller BA FSA** (Assistant Director, Salford Archaeology) to whom all correspondence should be addressed. Ian has over 30 years' experience of commercial archaeology, and has a particular interest in the archaeology of the Industrial Period. Ian is a member of the CBA North West Industrial Archaeology Panel, the Cumberland and Westmorland Archaeological Society Industrial Archaeology Panel, and a Co-opted Member of Council for the Association of Industrial Archaeology. He is also Co-Editor of *Industrial Archaeology Review*, the peer-reviewed journal of the Association of Industrial Archaeology.
- 7.2 The watching brief will be undertaken under the auspices of **Chris Wild BSc** (Historic Buildings Project Manager, Salford Archaeology), who specialises in historic building recording. Chris has more than 28 years' continuous experience as a professional archaeologist working across Great Britain, and with projects undertaken in Turkey, France, and Ireland. His major role has been specialised in the recording and analysis of historic buildings of a wide range of types and periods, including medieval castles, manor houses, and farm complexes, early-post medieval housing, and vernacular, industrial, domestic and military structures from the 18th century to the present date.

Bibliography

Secondary Sources

ClfA Regulations, Standards and Guidelines, updated 2014 *Standards and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives*

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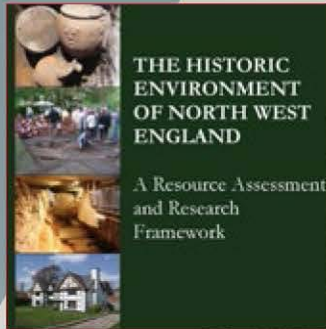
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CONSULTANCY



DESK-BASED ASSESSMENTS



WATCHING BRIEF & EVALUATION



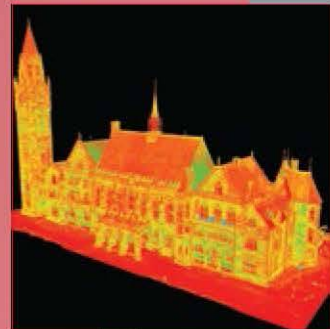
EXCAVATION



BUILDING SURVEY



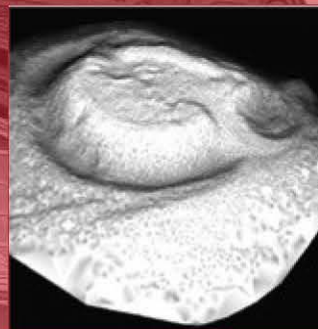
3D LASER SCANNING



COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT



LANDSCAPE SURVEYS



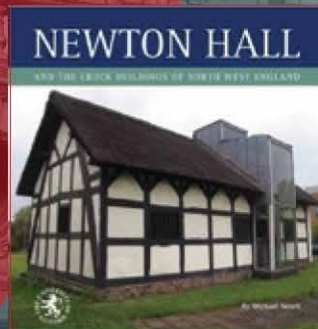
DRONE SURVEYS



WORKSHOPS & VOCATIONAL TRAINING



RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS



SEMINARS, DAYSCHOOLS CPD EVENTS

