

FINAL DRAFT

# IPSWICH MUSEUM

HIGH STREET,  
IPSWICH

## A CONSERVATION STATEMENT



for Colchester and Ipswich Museums

By James Edgar

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. THE PURPOSE OF THE CONSERVATION STATEMENT

1.1.1. Ipswich Museum and the former Art Gallery are late 19<sup>th</sup> century, red brick and terracotta public buildings, statutorily listed at grade II\*. On St George's Street (no. 32), to the west, is the New Wolsey Studio, housed in the former Salem Chapel, a Baptist chapel erected in 1812. The Studio building, which is grade II listed, is used as a performing arts venue and offshoot of the town's New Wolsey Theatre. There are also a number of stores buildings, of no architectural interest, located on the north side of Charles Street. The whole complex is an important part of the Ipswich Central Conservation Area.



Figure 1. Location plan.

1.1.2. In June 2013, James Edgar, as part of a team assembled by Stephen Taylor, Architects, was commissioned by the Colchester and Ipswich Museums to produce a conservation statement for the Ipswich Museum which occupies a site on the west side of the High Street, Ipswich (National Grid Reference TM 16078 44941).

1.1.3. The Art Gallery was opened in 1880 and the Museum in 1881; both buildings have been altered and extended over the years, most extensively to the rear with large new galleries built facing onto St George's Street. The last significant phase was the erection of a new home for the Ipswich School of Art in 1934 on a site immediately adjoining to the north.

1.1.4. The statement is intended to assist in the formation of the strategic conservation framework for the whole site, including the stores buildings, by:

- Understanding the development of the buildings and site;
  - Assessing their cultural significance;
  - Identifying issues potentially affecting the cultural significance of the place;
- and
- Recommending conservation policies to guide the future management (repair and potential development) of the place.

1.1.5. It is being prepared in the context of the Museum's need to identify sustainable future use(s) for the building consistent with its conservation requirements and taking cognisance of the current role as a public building in multiple use. The statement therefore responds to a specific need for works to the building, both of adaptation and repair, in order to facilitate a financially sustainable long-term use.

1.1.6. The statement is intended to be a working document that takes account of changing circumstances. It is hoped that new information about the place will be added as it comes to light, and policies periodically updated in response to new or changing issues affecting the building. The statement should be thoroughly reviewed on a regular basis and it is important that a full conservation management plan be produced as a vital part of the next steps towards securing the future of the site.

## 1.2. THE STRUCTURE OF THE CONSERVATION STATEMENT

1.2.1. The Ipswich Museum Conservation Statement comprises the following sections:

- *Understanding*: The *Understanding* section consists of an account of the development of the buildings and site, followed by a discussion of the historical and architectural contexts.
- *Significance*: This section is an assessment of the cultural heritage values attached to the whole place, culminating in a statement of overall significance.
- *Issues and Policies*: The issues affecting the building are presented in outline form, with little discussion, as the brief calls for an outline conservation statement not a full Conservation Management Plan. Draft recommendations, or policies, are offered to address the issues.

## 1.3. PREPARATION

1.3.1. The conservation statement has been prepared by James Edgar, a specialist historic buildings consultant, working with Stephen Taylor Architects Ltd.

1.3.2. The understanding section of the statement is intended to be a concise account of the evolution of the buildings and site. Given the research undertaken for this statement, building on the excellent work of Bob Markham [author of the invaluable, and wonderfully-titled, publication *The Rhino in the High Street* (1990)] and the unpublished work<sup>1</sup> by the same author and by David Jones (*A Community Museum from Museum Street to High Street 1790-1920*), further documentary research might be undertaken but it is unlikely to produce much additional material of great significance. One important omission, however, is the collection of local histories and memories – oral histories and personal photographs. Such work might form part of a full Conservation Management Plan and part of the museum's long-term outreach programme.

1.3.3. When the opportunity arises, paint analysis and some limited investigation work, such as removing modern floor surfaces and lifting carpets, should be undertaken to establish the original decorative scheme and the nature of the floor

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<sup>1</sup> Manuscript copies of these papers are held in the Museum's archives.

and other finishes. An illustrated gazetteer of all structure and spaces (internal and external) and of all fixtures and fittings, would greatly assist understanding and management and should be considered as an important 'next step'.

1.3.4. Consultation with the client group has taken place throughout the preparation of the statement but there has been no public consultation. This could take place at a later date and certainly should form an important part of the preparation of a full Conservation Management Plan.

1.3.5. The statement excludes other interests and subjects such as the collections, archaeology and biodiversity. It is possible that the last two are important in the context of Ipswich Museum, but the preparation of a conservation plan for the collections is highly desirable.

#### 1.4. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

1.4.1. I would like to thank the following for their assistance in preparing the statement:

Bob Markham

Jayne Austin, Ipswich Development Manager, Colchester and Ipswich Museums

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Philip Wise, Collections and Curatorial Manager, Colchester and Ipswich Museums

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Stephen Taylor and Sam Holden, Stephen Taylor Architects Ltd

The staff of the Ipswich branch of the Suffolk Record Office.

1.4.2. Suffolk Record Office have kindly given permission for the reproduction of figures 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 15, 18, 20, 23, 24, 29, 31, 36, 40, 42, 43, 46, 53, 71, 72, 73, 77 and 80.

1.4.3. Fiona Spence-Arnold for proof-reading, editing and comments.

## **2. UNDERSTANDING: HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE OF IPSWICH MUSEUM.**

### 2.1. DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE

2.1.1. For the purposes of this statement, the evolution of the site can be considered according to the historical uses of the site, each with phases of activity and development related to changes in 'ownership' and use of the individual parts of the site. They can be summarised as follows:

### 2.2. THE DEVELOPMENT OF ST. GEORGE STREET, HIGH STREET AND THE SALEM CHAPEL, 1800 – 1879.

2.2.1. High Street (so named because of its topography rather than being the main town thoroughfare) and St. George Street (named after the former mediaeval chapel of St George that stood on the site of St George's Terrace, opposite the 1900 extension to the museum) developed in the early-mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. Early maps provide a contrasting picture. The 1849 Tithe map for the parish of St Margaret, Ipswich shows the chapel and a terrace of houses to the south on St. George's Street (the west side is not shown as it lay in the parish of St. Matthew) but that High Street and Charles Street had not been laid out. White's map, published in 1849, however, shows development along the whole of (St.) George Street and terraces of houses lining the southern half of the High Street, with larger houses to the south of the Brethren Chapel (c. 1845) at the top end of the road. The terrace houses on both streets, built of Suffolk white brick or stucco-covered, are those shown on these maps. It is possible that the tithe map was prepared at a slightly earlier date and records the pre-development field system.



2.2.2. The Salem Chapel was opened on 11 June 1812. According to Clarke<sup>2</sup> it

was built at the sole expense of Mr Joseph Chamberlain; who after having expended £1,200 in its erection, generously conveyed to trustees, for use of the Particular Baptists. It is a brick building, measuring forty-five feet by thirty-five, and capable of accommodation nearly four hundred persons.

2.2.3. The minister in the early 1820s was the Rev John Hartnall (d. 11<sup>th</sup> May 1825, aged 40); a subscription for his four children raised £500, an indication of the high esteem in which he was held. Hartnall had two sermons published on the deaths of George III and Queen Caroline (*A Eulogy on the Grave*; apparently printed in the chapel) in 1820 and 1821, respectively.<sup>3</sup> From around 1829 the chapel was shut until the Rev Thomas Middleditch took up the ministry. He formed a church 'on the true union principle, the members being Baptists and Independents indiscriminately'.<sup>4</sup> Middleditch resigned to take up a position in Calne, in 1845/6, and was succeeded by the Rev John Gay, but the Baptists withdrew and the church became 'practically Pædobaptist' (infant, as opposed to adult, baptism) and formally Congregationalist. The chapel was enlarged during the pastorates of both men. The chapel was still in use in 1876 when Mr J Manning was the pastor.

2.2.4. The upper part of the west side of High Street, and the plot immediately to the west of the site on St. George's Street remained undeveloped – the reason is not known but given that the area all around was developed it seems unlikely that the reason related solely to economic viability. The High Street land, with a 225 feet long frontage, was owned by the Rev Edmund Hollond. A clerk in Holy orders without the care of souls, who lived in Paddington, London. He offered it to the Corporation for £875, the price he paid for it 'many years ago' and at 'about half the present marketable value of the land'.<sup>5</sup> The condition was that the land be used for the 'purpose of a Museum, Free Library, and Schools of Science and Art, or purposes of a kindred character.' Hollond gave the Council six months to consider the offer.

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<sup>2</sup> G R Clarke, *The History and Description of the Town and Borough of Ipswich*, 1830, pp 195 & 469-70.

<sup>3</sup> Anna Clark, *Scandal: The Sexual Politics of the British Constitution*, 2004, footnote 179.

<sup>4</sup> John Browne, *History of Congregationalism and Memorials of the Churches in Norfolk and Suffolk*, 1877, pp 388-9 &

<sup>5</sup> *Ipswich Journal*, 1878, Sept 28, pp 10-11.

Key

- Exceptional
- Considerable
- Some
- Little/ Neutral
- Intrusive/ Missing
- N/A





2.2.5. The Museum Committee of the Corporation first discussed the matter on 14<sup>th</sup> August 1878 and they asked the Ipswich architects, Mr Frederick Barnes and Mr E F Bisshopp, to draw up plans for consideration. The Town Council considered the committee's report at a special meeting held on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> September 1878; the principal question before the meeting was whether the Public Hall in Westgate Street should be converted to a museum or whether to build on the High Street. The background to the matter was growth in public demand for museum and educational 'facilities' and increases in rent meant that the premises in Museum Street were seen as inadequate and costly by the mid-1870s. A particularly pressing point was that the lease would expire on 11 October 1879 and that the rent would increase to £200 per annum (an increase of £50) for the next lease period of eight years. The Mayor, C H Cowell Esq., summarised the architects' sketch proposals, estimated that the total cost would be £8,100 and stated that he believed that it would be possible for the subscriptions, amounting to £1,450, raised for the purchase of property on Northgate Street for a new public library to be diverted to the new proposal. The resolution to proceed with the High Street option was put to the vote and carried unanimously.

### 2.3. THE FINE ART GALLERY: 1879 – 1939.

2.3.1. The Ipswich Fine Art Club was formed in 1873 by Alderman Edward Packard and the Rev Crusoe, of Bramford; it was based in the old Museum. In 1875 it began to hold an annual exhibition, including pictures loaned from South Kensington and other museums. Initially the profits were given to charities but from 1878 the money was devoted to building their own permanent gallery. A Building Committee was appointed.

2.3.2. At a special meeting of the Corporation held on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> August 1879 the Museum Committee it was reported that the Club had approached the Corporation with a request to lease the southern part of the land sold by Hollond. The Committee had determined that all of the site was not required for Museum purposes and a lease, dated 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1879, was agreed; the terms were for a period of 75 years at £11 *per annum*). The Club raised funds and had the High Street Gallery built at their own cost (£1,200). The Gallery, with a committee room, was the first structure to be opened on the site, on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> March 1880.

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2.3.3. The building was designed by Horace Cheston, architect, of 1 Great Winchester Street Buildings, London; he was also the designer of the new Museum. The plans submitted to the Ipswich Urban Sanitary Authority on 13<sup>th</sup> August 1897 by the builder, F Bennett (no. 1323) survive but are damaged and in extremely poor condition. Cheston's name is not on the surviving sections of the drawings or on the application form but it is recorded in a manuscript catalogue in the Suffolk Record Office. The plans and elevations were not executed as shown, the principal difference being that a two-storey entrance block was erected rather than the single storey shown on the drawings.

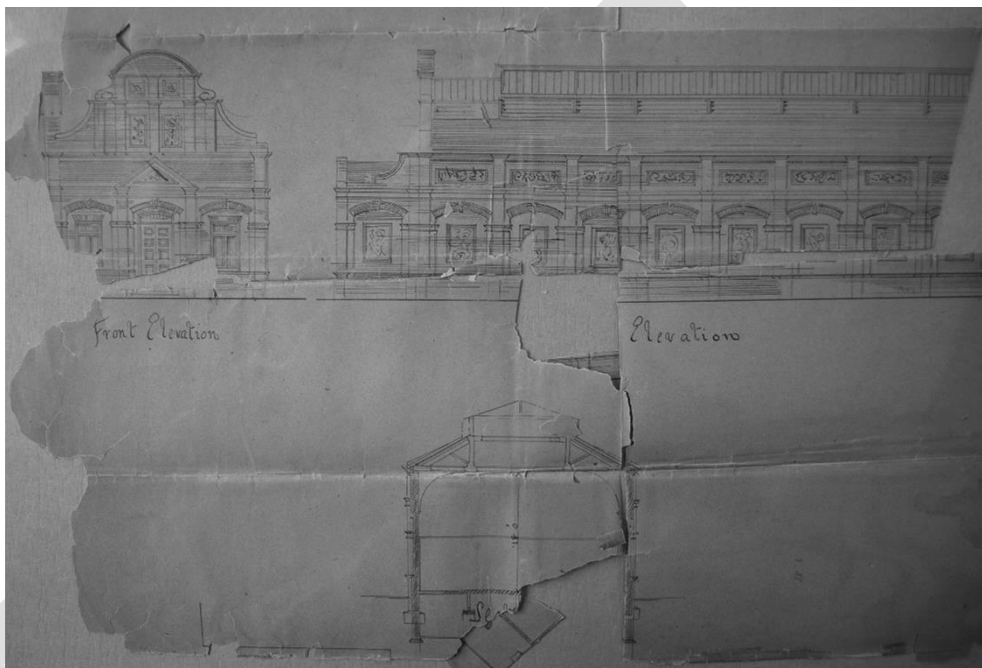


Figure 4. 1879. Plans for the new Art Gallery (Suffolk Record Office, drainage plan no. 1323).

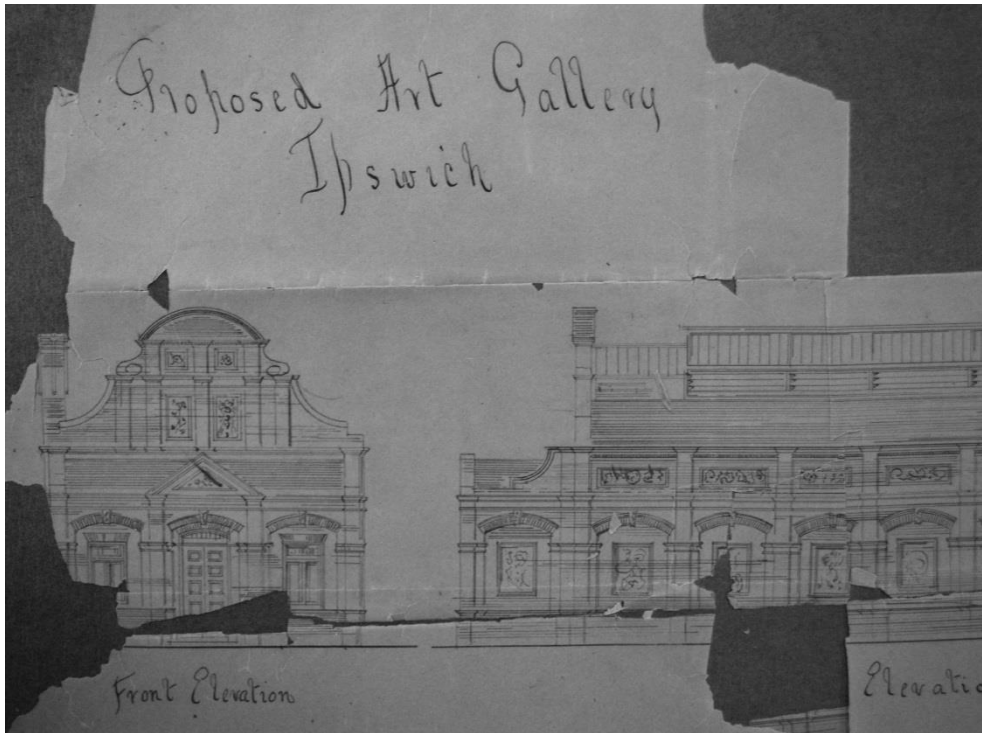


Figure 5. 1879. Detail from plans for the new Art Gallery (Suffolk Record Office, drainage plan no. 1323). Front and part of side elevations.

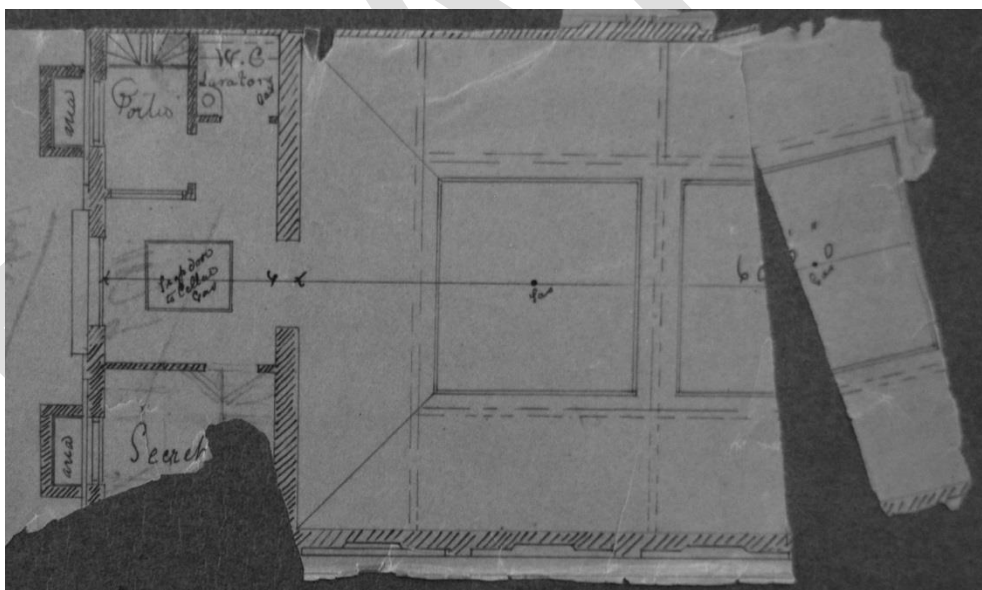


Figure 6. 1879. Detail from plans for the new Art Gallery (Suffolk Record Office, drainage plan no. 1323).

Part of plan with entrance to left.

2.3.4. The Art Gallery was extended to the rear in 1893, with a new store and retiring and exhibition rooms. The architect was Frank Brown of Tower Street, Ipswich.

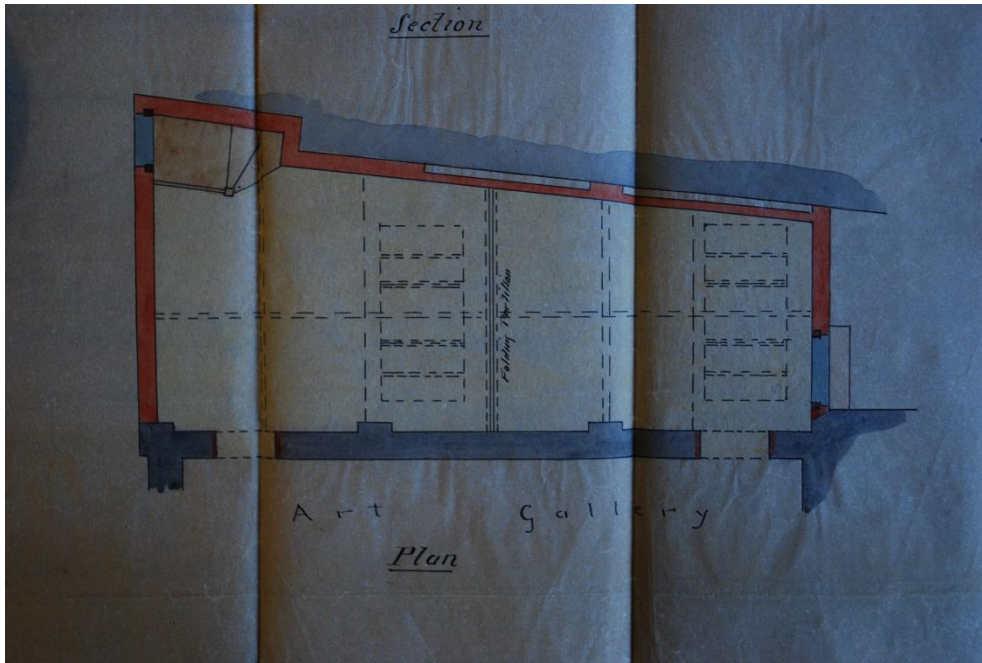


Figure 7. 1893. Detail from plans to extend the Art Gallery (Suffolk Record Office, drainage plan no. 3037).

2.3.5. In 1934 the Museum Committee took over the Art Gallery and converted the building for use as an educational film theatre and amateur dramatic theatre, with exhibitions in the summer. This was brought about by the realisation by the Fine Art Club that it could no longer afford to maintain the Art Gallery; the remaining years of the lease were surrendered. The stage and associated alterations were constructed in 1938 when the Rushmere Players approached the Curator with the idea of renting the space.

#### 2.4. THE MUSEUM, LIBRARY AND SCHOOLS: 1879 – 1900.

2.4.1. Ipswich has had a private literary institute with a small collection since the early 1790s, and there was also a small collection in the Mechanics' Institute founded in 1824. The first museum was founded in 1846, making it 'the earliest publicly funded museum in East Anglia but quite possibly one of the first provincial museums in the United Kingdom' (Jones, 2008). It was a mix between a learned society and an educational organisation aimed at the general public. The property, in Museum Street (opened 1848), was rented and the building was opened two days and two evenings a week. The focus of the collection was the natural history of the world, from basic elements and minerals through shells, butterflies, reptiles, birds and mammals, moving from simple to complex life forms. The Corporation took over the funding of the institution in 1853.

2.4.2. The background to the construction of the new museum is set out above at 2.2.4 and 2.2.5. To pick up the story, the Honorary Secretary to the Museum, issued a report on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1879, listing the subscribers to that date.<sup>6</sup> £2,825 had been raised. Heading the list of donors was Sir Richard Wallace<sup>7</sup>, Bart., M.P., President, who had given £500, and there were 17 other subscribers who had given £100, including three members of the Cobbold (J C, T C and the late J P) family, the Lords Rendlesham, Henniker, Waveney and John Hervey, Sir Edward Kerrison, J Berners, the Hon. and Rev de Grey, J R Bulwer, M.P., ten other gentlemen and three companies. The list provides an excellent example of the Victorian attitude to civic duty and pride.

2.4.3. It was decided to hold a design competition.<sup>8</sup> The brief called for the following:

- A Museum of 4,400 sq ft;
- A facility for future extension;
- A Free Library of 1,000 sq ft, a reading room of equal size and a committee room of 450 sq ft;
- The School of Science to have a laboratory of 550 sq ft, store of 125 ft, a class room of 800 ft and a master's preparation room adjoining of 225 ft;
- The School of Art to have an elementary classroom of 600 ft, an advance classroom of 750 ft, and a painting room of 500 ft, communicating and divided by curtains, ladies and gentlemen's cloakrooms of 100 ft, rooms for models, casts etc of 300 ft and a master's room of 180 ft.
- Cost not to exceed £7,000.

2.4.4. There were eleven entries, submitted anonymously, nine under the following intriguing titles: 'Pinpatch' (a whelk), alternatively named 'Dispatch', 'Economy', Bona Fides', 'Work and Win', 'Simplicity', 'Pro Bono Publico', 'Architect', 'Sivez-moi' and 'Shield and Supporter'.<sup>9</sup> The styles chosen included Tudor/Elizabethan, Jacobean,

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<sup>6</sup> *Ipswich Journal*, 1879, April 5, p 5.

<sup>7</sup> Sir Richard Wallace (formerly Jackson), baronet (1818–1890), was the philanthropist and art collector, part of whose possessions were to form the Wallace Collection in his home at Hertford House, Manchester Square, London. He also had a country seat at Sudbourne Hall, Sudbourne, Suffolk. He bought the estate in 1871 and sold it in 1884 – fortunate timing for Ipswich. He became President of the Museum in 1875 and presented a large number of exhibits.

<sup>8</sup> *The Builder*, 1879, April 12.

<sup>9</sup> *The Building News*, 1879, June 13, *The Builder*, 1879, June 14 & *Ipswich Journal*, 1879, June 17, p 1.

Queen Anne, Domestic Gothic, Classical, Italian and Mediaeval – the full range of Victorian architectural styles. There was some controversy because the selection committee chose three designs - 'Pinpatch', 'Economy', Bona Fides – but their decision 'aroused in the town much discussion and dissatisfaction' and the headmaster of the grammar school declared their decision to have been a mistake.<sup>10</sup> A new, more complex system of voting in three rounds, produced an entirely different winner.<sup>11</sup> A competing architect commented that 'the proceedings of the committee appear absurd.'<sup>12</sup> Four of the losing entries have been traced.

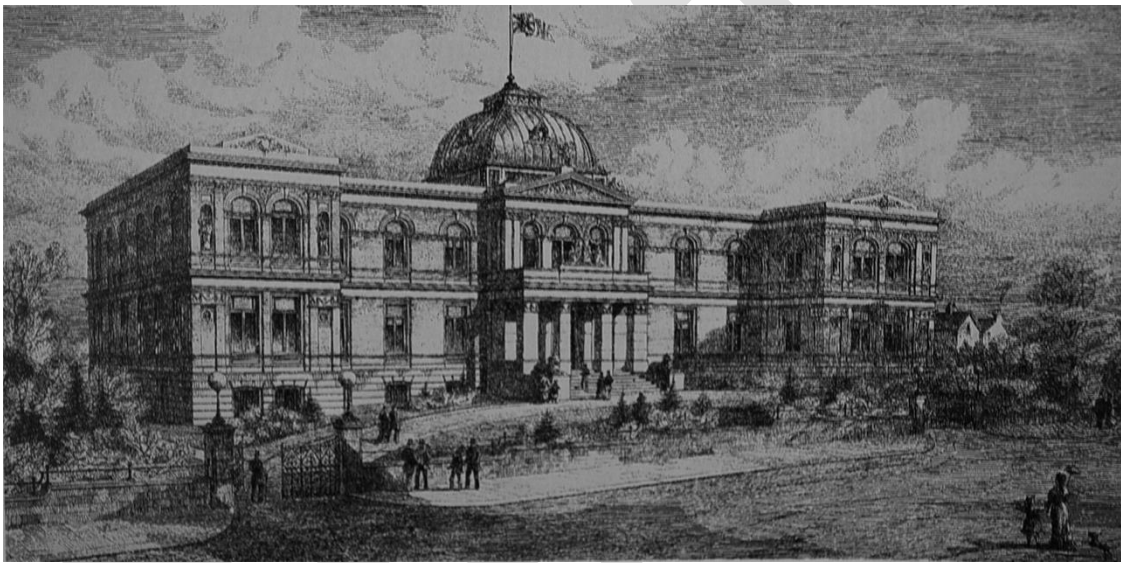


Figure 8. Probably 'Suivez-moi', J S Moye, architect<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> *The Building News*, 1879, June 27.

<sup>11</sup> *The Builder*, 1879, July 5 & *The Building News*, 1879, July 25.

<sup>12</sup> *The Building News*, 1879, July 4.

<sup>13</sup> R A B Markham, *The Rhino in the High Street*, 1990, p 36.



Figure 9. Unknown but possibly 'Shield and Supporter'.

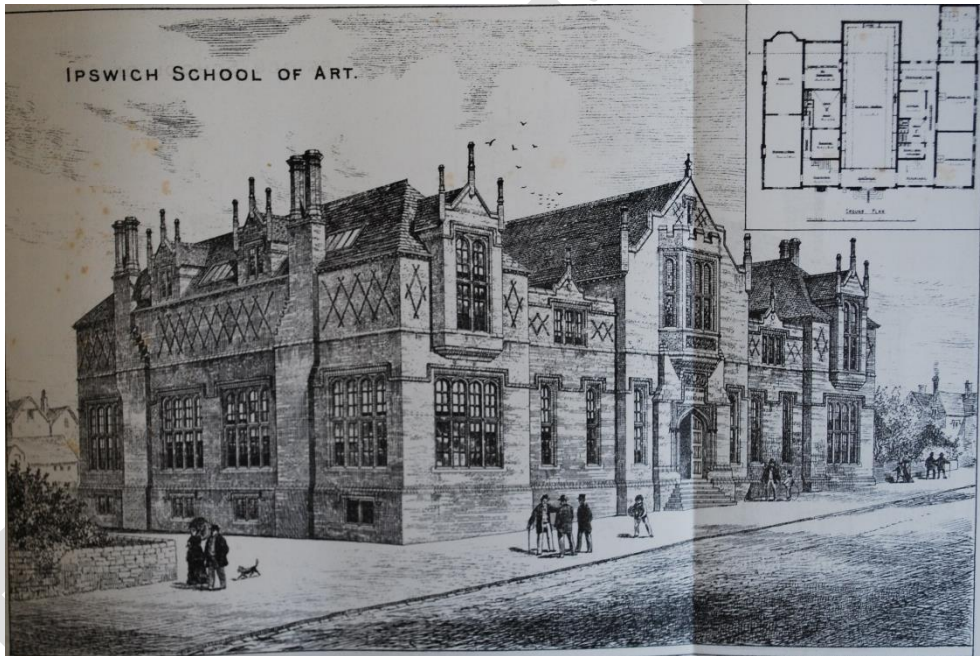


Figure 10. 'Pinpatch', E F Bisshopp, architect.





Figure 11. Probably 'Bona Fides', Brightwen Binyon, architect<sup>14</sup>

2.4.5. The design chosen was prepared by Horace Cheston; it was 'Architect' which *The Builder* had described as

"Architect", a Queen Anne design, with some very ugly detail, and also some character in the side elevations: drawings very good, plan fair; the reading-room is a passage to the library, but the author has recognised the fact that the library for patent publications should be easily accessible. He places the curator's room as if that gentleman were to act as the hall-porter. An alternative plan, in which the plan is compressed more towards the front, and extended from front to back, seems the best of the two.

*The Building News* thought the design to be of considerable merit in the planning in which the museum is placed behind in a central position, the library and reading-room being on the south side. On the first floor the museum extends over the south wing of the library and the reading-room. We do not like the areas cut out of the museum by the lavatories; there are, nevertheless, a few good points in the plan, and little waste room, albeit the entrances are a little crowded. We cannot speak with commendation of the elevations. One in a Queen Anne style is spoilt by the projecting wings, with chimneys in the gable of unmitigated plainness. The back and sides are

<sup>14</sup> *The Building News*, 1879, Sept 19.

meanly plain. Another design is in a more finished species of the style, and the detail is better, the entrance forming an arcade terrace between the wings, but the west elevation is bare to ugliness. Its plan shows an arrangement in three parallelograms, the centre being the museum opposite entrance 55ft. x 33ft., a reading-room and library on the south side, and the school department on the north. The entrances and hall conveniences are not satisfactory.

2.4.6. The design was published in *The Building News* on 29<sup>th</sup> August 1879. The journal reported that the committee decided to have the front elevation altered by having the chimney shafts over the side gable replaced by shafts up the flanks. The building was to be

faced with red stocks. The dressings to be of a darker red brick, with moulded and cut and rubbed strings, architraves to windows, panels, &c., and cornices; Bath stone mullions and transoms being used in all the windows. The roofs to be covered with tiles. The rooms in all cases, except in the curator's and committee rooms, which will have the ordinary open grates, are to be heated by close stoves; fresh air being provided to all rooms by Tobin's ventilators next the outside walls, and by shafts in the internal walls, communicating with air-passages under the building. The foul air will be carried off by tubes over the gas sunlights in ceilings.



Figure 12. 1879 August 29, *Building News*. Perspective.

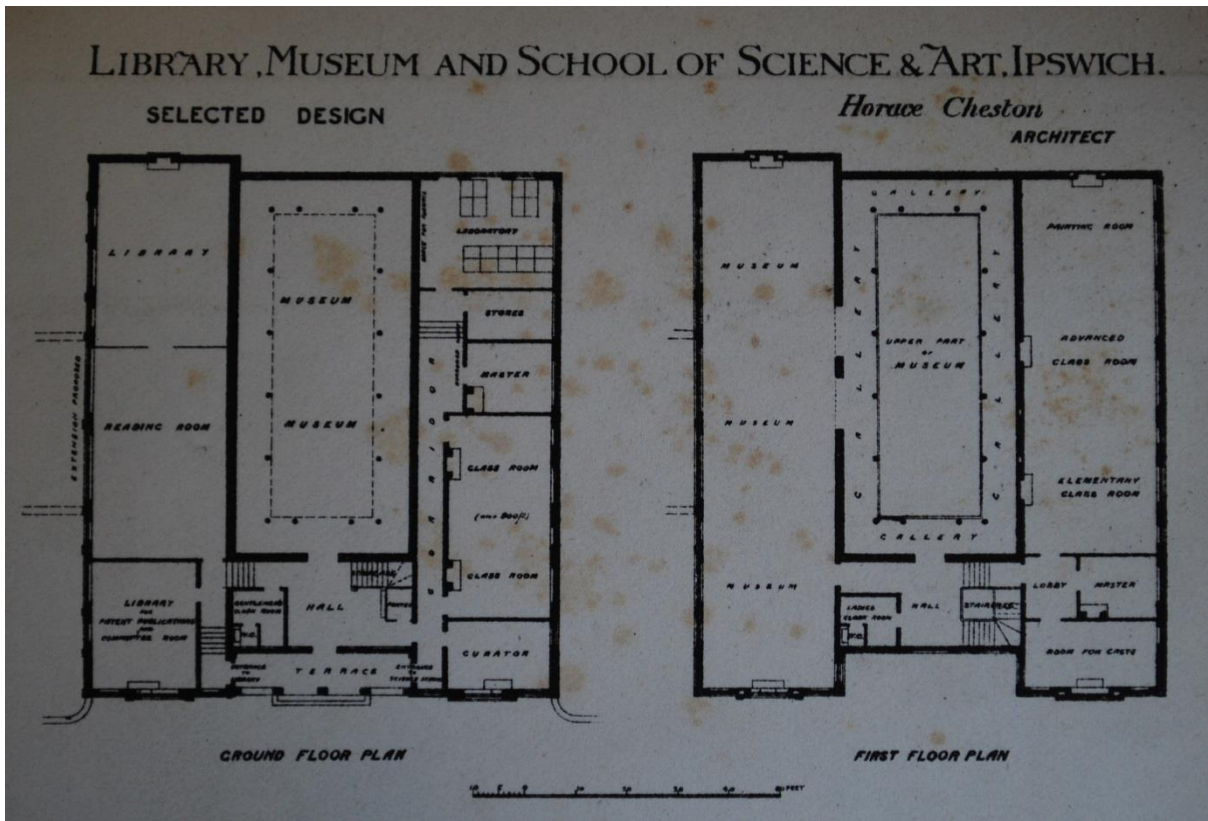


Figure 13. 1879 August 29, *Building News*. Plans.

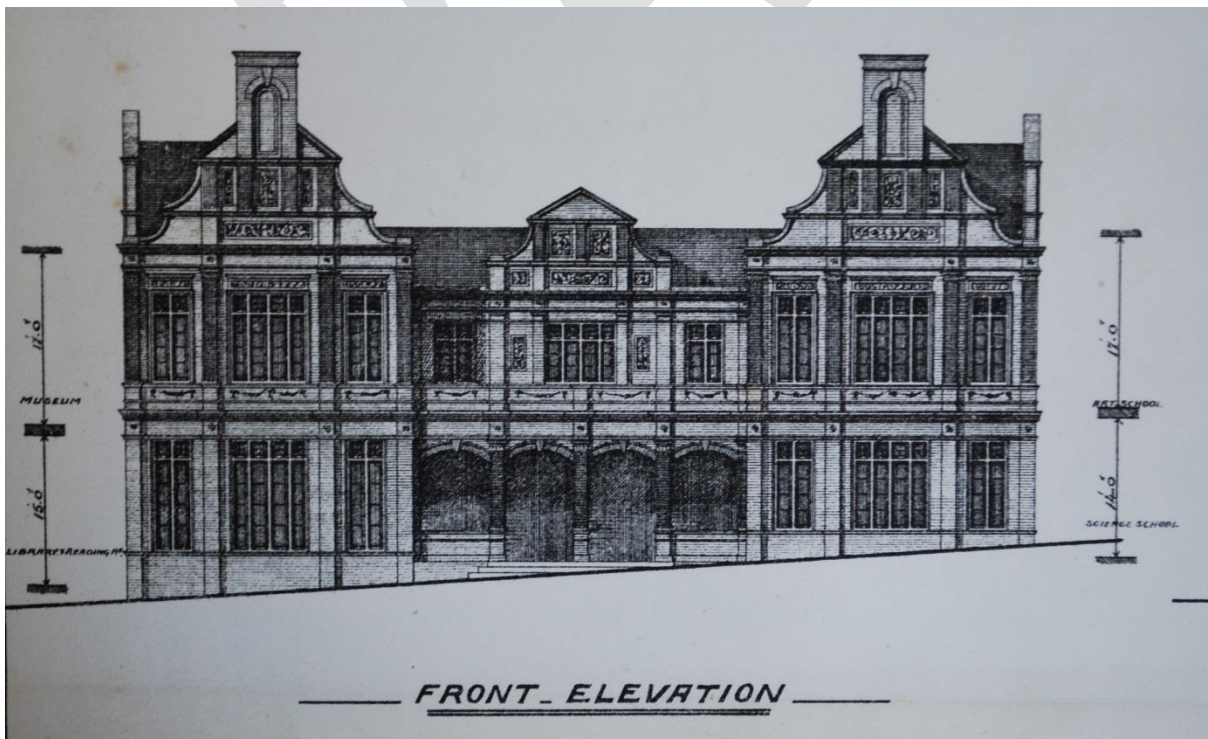


Figure 14. 1879 August 29, *Building News*. Front elevation.

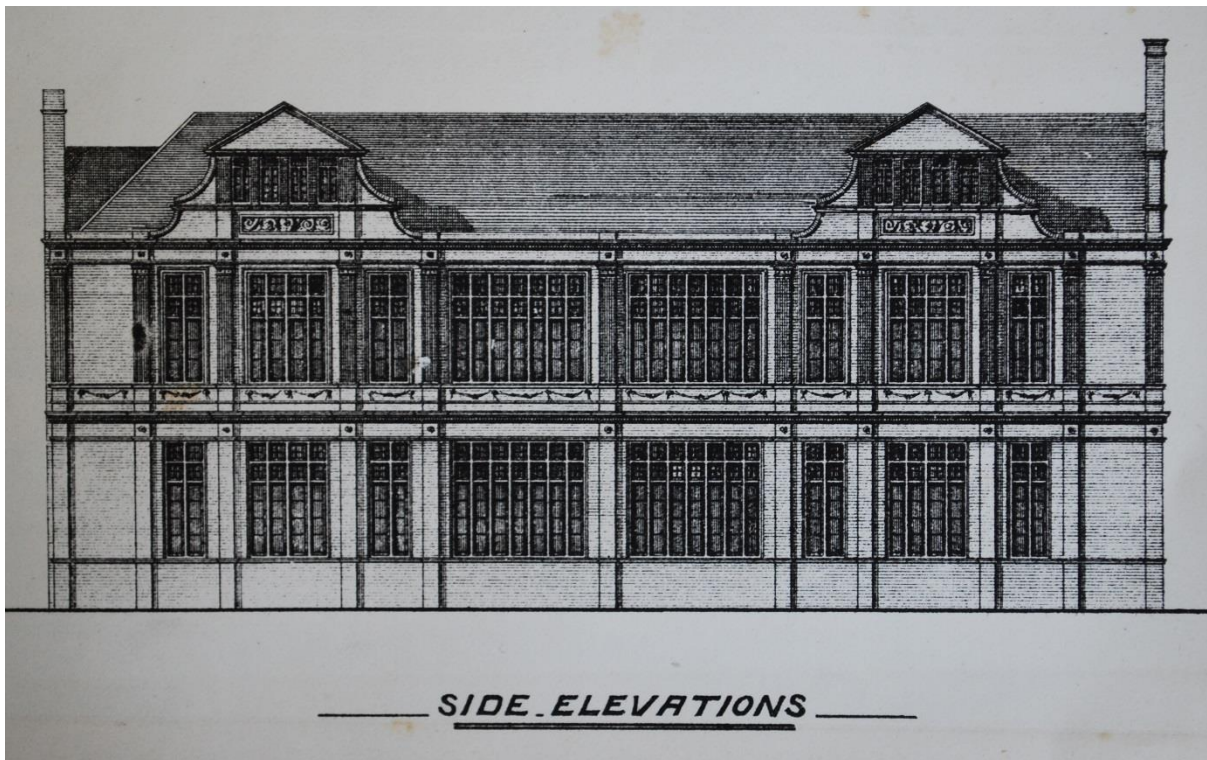


Figure 15. 1879 August 29, *Building News*. Side elevation.

2.4.7. Internally, other design alterations were made, principally that the staircase in the entrance hall was to be to the south (left) necessitating the relocation of the steps down to the Library and Reading Room and the W.Cs. The curator's office was relocated to the east end of the south range, with doors to the library to the west and one to the north to the connecting passage to the Museum entrance; an office for the Assistant Curator was provided to the north of the entrance hall. The relocation of the external stacks brought about the need to carry the flue from office over the passage down to the library; an arch in the passage is likely to have been built to disguise the flue as it bends through the building. The entrance hall also had an arcaded front at the north end next to the corridor to the Science Schools. These amendments do not appear to have affected the principle that there should be separate entrances for each of the three functions – Museum, library and schools. The doors to the north and south end of the open arcade, or 'Terrace', at the entrance from the street, were blocked at a later date, possibly in the mid-1930s. Each function even had a distinct gateway in the boundary wall and railings with the street. An amended drawing showing the upper floor, probably as executed, survives in the collection of Frank Woolnough, curator from 1893 to 1924, in the Suffolk Record Office.

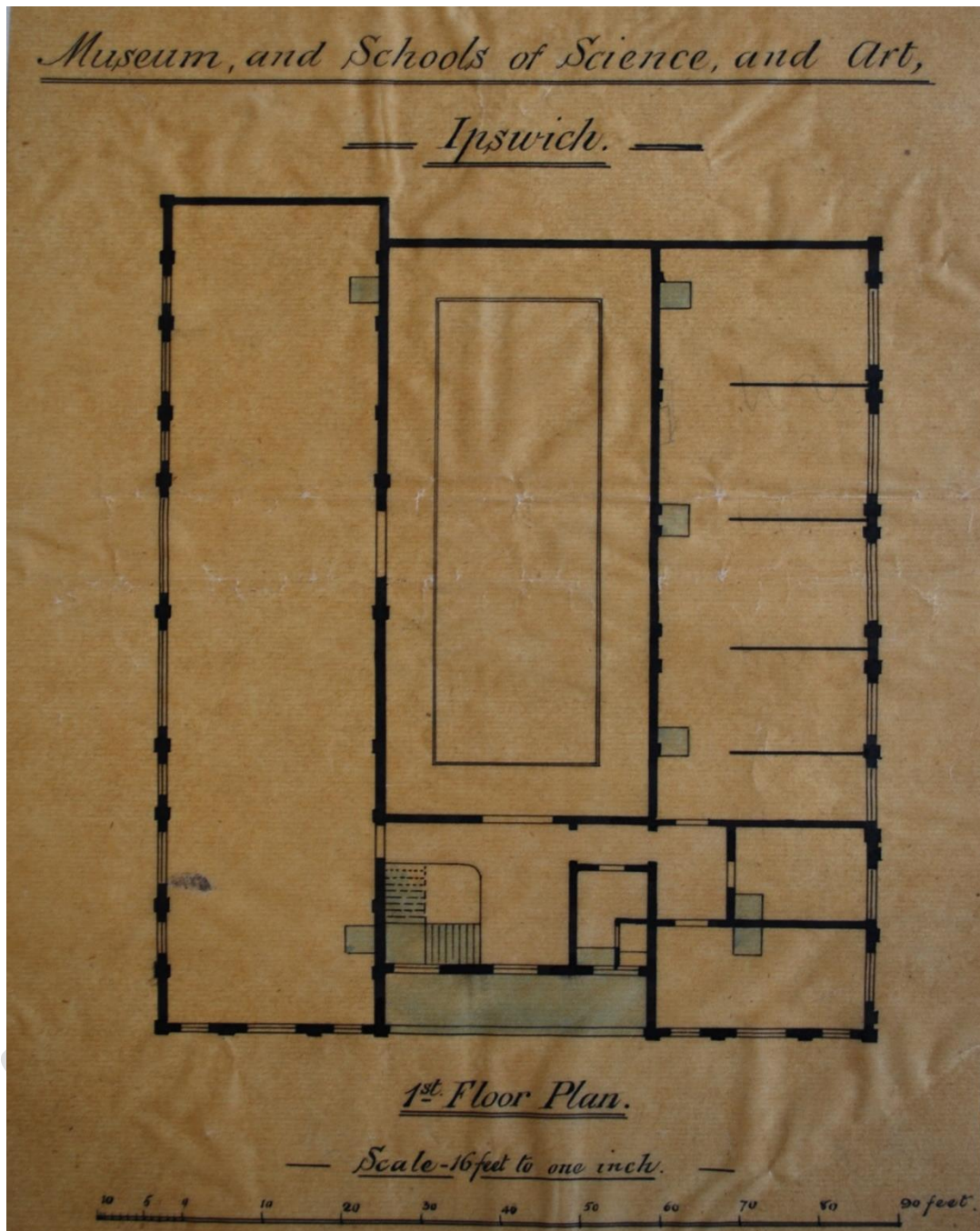


Figure 16. Plan of first floor (Suffolk Record Office).

#### 2.4.8. Horace Cheston, Architect

Horace Cheston (1850 – 1919), of 1 Great Winchester Street Buildings, London, EC, was educated at Haileybury College and then worked in the Hackney Estate Office, London for his brother Chester Cheston. He then worked in the office of John Whichord, architect, as an 'improver' and clerk of works. He became an Associate of the Royal Institute of British architects in 1873; and a Fellow in 1885. After visiting France and Italy in 1874-5 he established his own practice. He was the

District Surveyor and Surveyor for a number of London authorities and hospitals.<sup>15</sup> In 1892 Joseph Craddock Perkin became a partner in the new practice of Cheston & Perkin. Some of Cheston's other works were the following

- 1879 - the prize for the scheme for the conversion of the Public Hall to a Corn Exchange, Ipswich (not built);
- 1886 – Public Library & Museum, Folkestone, Kent;
- 1887 – New Offices & Printing Works, Ipswich, Suffolk;
- 1903-4 - 195–201, Earl's Court Road, Kensington, for the London and County (now National Westminster Bank);
- 1895 - (Cheston & Perkin) National Westminster Bank, High Street, Wimbledon;
- 1903 – (Cheston & Perkin) Westminster Bank, Market Hill, Sudbury, Babergh, Suffolk;
- 1909 – (Cheston & Perkin) Hatchard's, 187, Piccadilly, London, W1.

2.4.9. An advertisement inviting builders to tender was placed in *The Ipswich Journal* on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> October 1879. Tenders had to be returned by 5<sup>th</sup> November; ten were received. The successful, lowest bid - £6,990 – was prepared by the Ipswich firm of J, B and F Bennett who had built the Art Gallery.<sup>16</sup> *The Journal* for Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> June 1881 reported that 'The new Museum, in the High Street, is rapidly approaching completion.' The paper commented that it was 'one of the finest, we believe, devoted to similar purposes in the Kingdom.'

2.4.10. The opening event took place on 27<sup>th</sup> July 1881 and was combined with the opening of the new lock entrance and post office – a red letter day for the town. It was widely reported in the local and national press.<sup>17</sup> The full description in *The Ipswich Journal* allows a more detailed understanding of the original layout and fittings. The style was described as 'English Renaissance of the Stuart period or "Free Classic"'. The ornamental terracotta panels were supplied by Doulton's of

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<sup>15</sup> Antonia Brodie, Alison Felstead, Jonathan Franklin, Leslie Pinfield and Jane Oldfield, *Directory of British Architects 1834-1914*, 2001, volume 1, A-K, pp 366-7.

<sup>16</sup> *Ipswich Journal*, 1879, November 11. Fred Bennett had 'a good name in the county, and even far beyond its border, for the excellence of his work.' A major client was the Corporation; another was the Duke of Hamilton at Euston Park. He employed about 300 men in all the building trades at his New Street Works which covered about one acre. *Ipswich Journal*, 1891, Aug 22.

<sup>17</sup> *Ipswich Journal*, 1881, July 30; *East Anglian Daily Times*, 1881, July 27 & 28; *The Graphic*, 1881, August 6; *The Illustrated London News*, 1881, July 30.

Lambeth, London – Newton, Hogarth, the symbols of Science and Art, copies of fossils provided by the curator, Dr Taylor. Doulton's also supplied tile stoves for the classrooms. The museums were heated by 'Musgrave's slow combustion stoves'.<sup>18</sup> The principal rooms (see illustrations in section 3) were lighted by sunburners, the shafts from which ensure the extraction of foul air, fresh air being supplied to every room by Tobin's ventilating shafts connected directly to the outside or with a large shaft under the building. The skylights over the roof were 'glazed by Messrs Rendle in their patent system'. The roof was covered in Broseley tiles and access ladders were installed. The stone staircase, with an English oak handrail and ornamental iron balustrade, had steps covered in lead for the 'double purpose of deadening the sound and diminishing the aptitude for dust.' The gallery in the main hall was painted in green and blue and the first floor of the south range is described as having a richly moulded cornice with a light neck moulding 15 inches below it and as being well lit by windows on the south and east fronts. The Art School was reached after passing the Ladies' cloakroom. The room, lit by the sunlights at night, was divided by moveable partitions, rooms; the master's room and model room were to the east end. *The Journal* also provides a full description of the original of the collections. The Chemical Laboratory was fitted out in 1882 at the expense of Alderman Packard.

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<sup>18</sup> See [www.hevac-heritage.org/victorian\\_engineers/musgrave's/musgrave's.htm](http://www.hevac-heritage.org/victorian_engineers/musgrave's/musgrave's.htm).



Figure 17. 1881, August 6, *Graphic*.

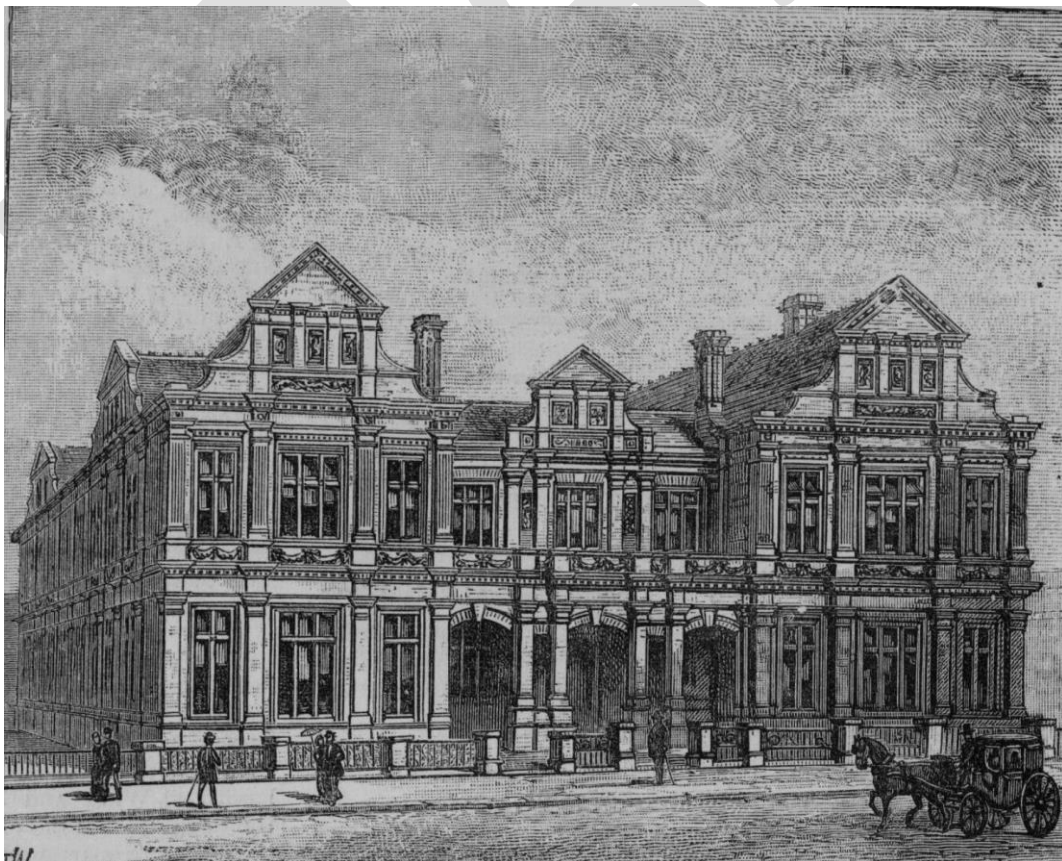


Figure 18. 1881, July 30, *Illustrated London News*.



2.4.11. The developed site was captured on the large scale Ordnance Survey plan of the town, made in 1881. It is not surprising that with so many functions on one site, and growing demand, extensions would soon be required. It would appear that the remainder of the site was held in reserve for expansion. The words 'EXTENSION PROPOSED' and dotted lines for possible walls appear to the left of Cheston's published plans at ground and first floor levels in the centre of the south elevation.



Figure 19. Surveyed 1881, Ordnance Survey town Plan, 1:500 (Suffolk Record Office). (Note the Salem Chapel is not named suggesting that it had been closed by the date of the survey.)

## 2.5. THE VICTORIA FREE LIBRARY.

2.5.1. The first development came in Queen Victoria's Jubilee year, 1887. It was decided to build a new library, at an estimated cost of £1,100, on the south side of the Museum.<sup>19</sup> The advantages of extra space and facilities for all uses were thought to be obvious. The new building was opened during the celebrations on 24<sup>th</sup> June 1887.<sup>20</sup> Fred Bennett was the builder but the identity of the architect is not given in the newspaper. It is possible that Cheston was involved but Bennett was quite capable of doing the design work in house. The building had a brick

<sup>19</sup> *Ipswich Journal*, 1887, Feb 19.

<sup>20</sup> *Ipswich Journal*, 1887, June 24.

pediment in 'the German Renaissance style'; it was decorated with an entablature supported by a boy on each side and bearing the inscription 'Victoria Free Library'. (This important feature was removed in 1956 when the new gallery was built, partly because the roof lantern had 'failed'.) The frieze below consisted of swags of fruit and masks. The roof had iron girders and was lead covered. The principal external feature is the medallion of the queen.

2.5.2. Internally, the walls and ceiling were boarded in red deal. The lantern light lit the space which was divided by five low level partitions, each with six tiers of shelves. Another Musgrave stove was installed in a chimneypiece of English walnut with marble slips and fender. The plumbing and gas-fitting was by Messrs Stearn and Son and the glazing was by Mr Elwes of Kings' Road, Chelsea.

2.5.3. In 1890 the south courtyard was graced with the gift of the fine bronze of a stag and hounds; it was a memorial to Sir Richard Wallace, presented by his widow. (This was removed and sold in 1961.)

## 2.6. ADDITIONS TO THE SCHOOLS

2.6.1. By 1892 the success of the Schools meant that new accommodation was required. The north wing was built and opened in 1893. They contained a modelling room, an art classroom, a chemical lecture room and a new laboratory; the old laboratory at the west end of the north range was converted to a mechanical lecture room. The layout is shown on a block plan made after 1893 and before 1900 for an event, possibly one of Ipswich's *conversazione*s. (The plan shows temporary accommodation in the courtyards for cloakroom and a saloon. On the verso is stated that the Ladies' Pompadour Band will play in the New Hall; the band was in Ipswich in 1896 and 1898.)

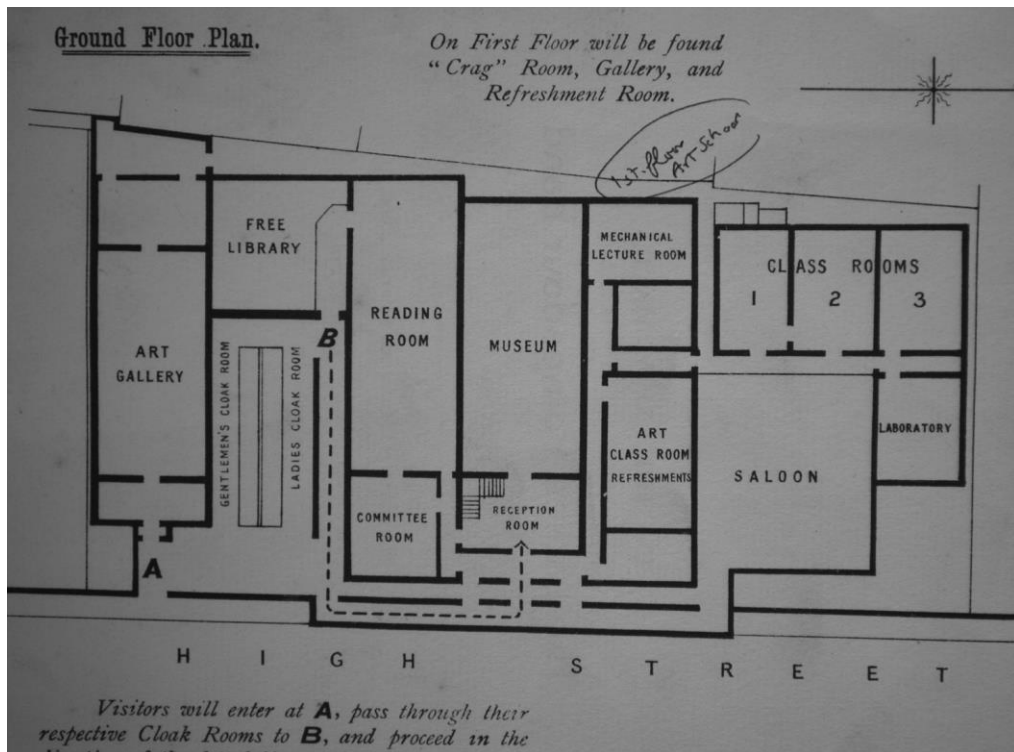


Figure 20. 1896 or 1898. Block plan produced for guests (Museum archives). (Note the separate entrances for the museum, library and schools.)

2.6.2. The laboratory was removed when the new Art School was built in the 1930s; it is also likely that the covered, open passage at ground floor level on the elevation, was removed at the same time. The open passage was connected to a newly-formed doorway and internal passage in the north range of the main building. It is not known when the central, raised pediment was removed.

2.6.3. The identities of the designer and builder have not been established but it is most probable that Fred Bennett was involved. The cost was £1,660. A photograph by Woolnough shows the completed composition as seen from the High Street.



Figure 21. Undated (after 1893) photograph by Frank Woolnough (Suffolk Record Office).

## 2.7. THE MUSEUM, LIBRARY AND SCHOOLS: 1900 – 1930.

2.7.1. In 1895 Christchurch Mansion and the parts of the Park that had not been developed were given to the town by Felix Thornley Cobbold. Once the house had been converted for museum use, with functions and exhibits relocated from the High Street, an 'ambitious new building project was set in motion, enabled largely by private donations' (Jones, 2008). In total it increased the floor space used by the High Street museum by about a third.

2.7.2. Land to the rear of the Museum, on St. George Street was given by Alfred Townsend Cobbold and Francis Charles Ward. Funds were raised and the new St George Street building, bearing the date 1900, was erected at a cost of about £3000, including fitting out. A drawing is held in the museum archives but the identities of the designer and builder have not yet been established, although research in the contemporary, local newspapers is likely to provide more information. It shows a proposal that was not built as the plan is orthogonal with the Cheston's building whereas the structure as erected is set on the pavement line of the street at an angle to the original building. One interesting observation is that there was to be shared use and no connection to the floors: on the ground floor the extension was for library use and on the first floor it was for the museum. Contemporary photographs (see section 3) indicate that this design principle was carried through to execution.

Proposed Additions to the  
Ipswich Museum and Free Library.



Elevation to St. George's Street.

Figure 22. 1900 extension (not executed as shown). Elevation to St. George Street (Museum archives).

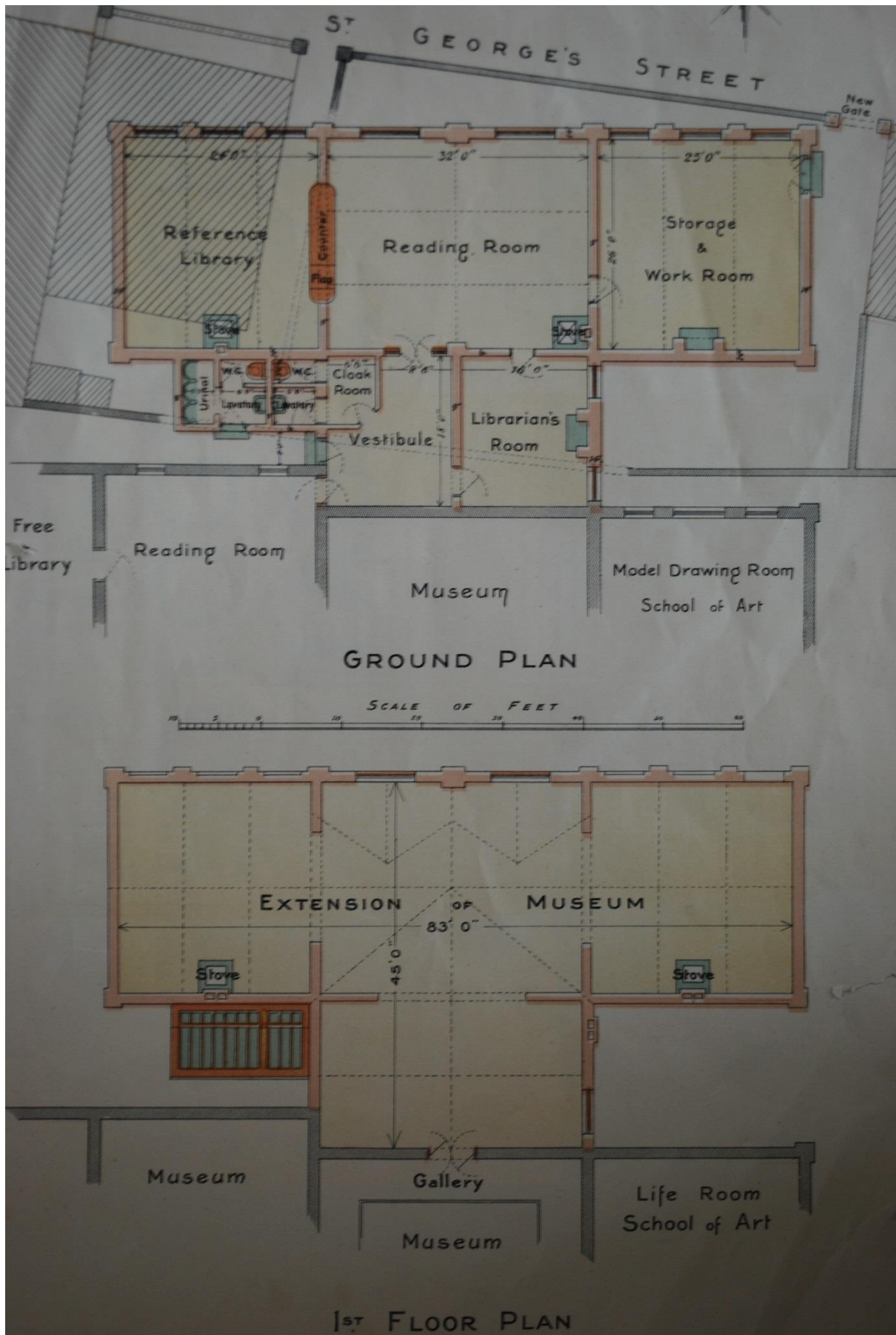


Figure 23. 1900 extension (not executed as shown). Ground and first floor plans.

2.7.3. In the first three decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century there were a number of changes that had quite a dramatic impact on the internal arrangements of the museum and library. (Documentation for the Schools is less rich, meaning that precise dates for alterations have not yet been established.)

2.7.4. In 1914 electric lighting replaced the original gas but a more important alteration was the removal of the stoves to be replaced by central heating in 1926-7. A 'heating chamber' or boiler room was built at the rear. The application was submitted to the Urban Sanitary Authority on 16<sup>th</sup> September 1926; the builder was J Jepson of Cliff Road, Ipswich. The works necessitated the shortening of two windows in the repair room at the west end of the north range of the main block.

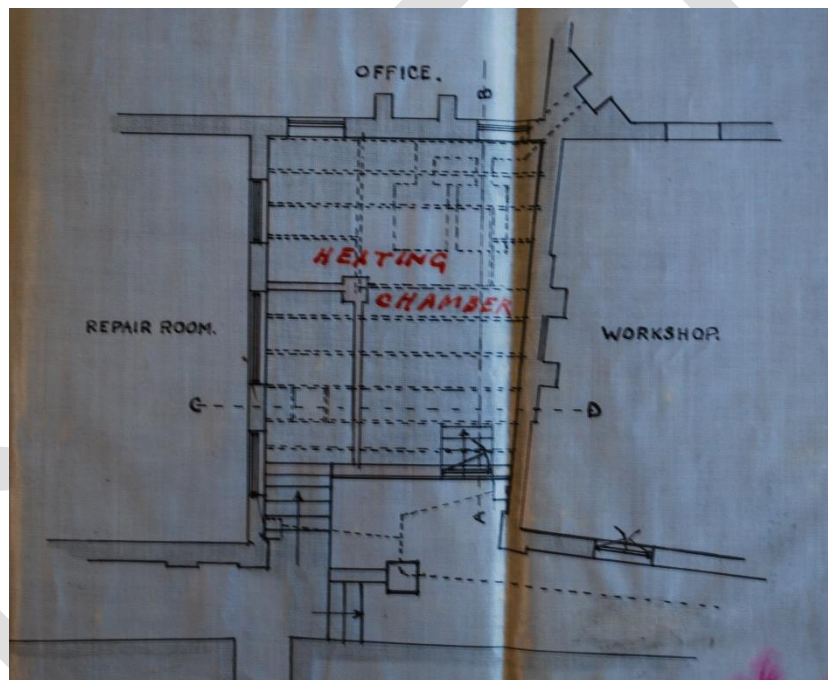


Figure 24. 1926. The Heating Chamber: Plan (Suffolk Record Office).

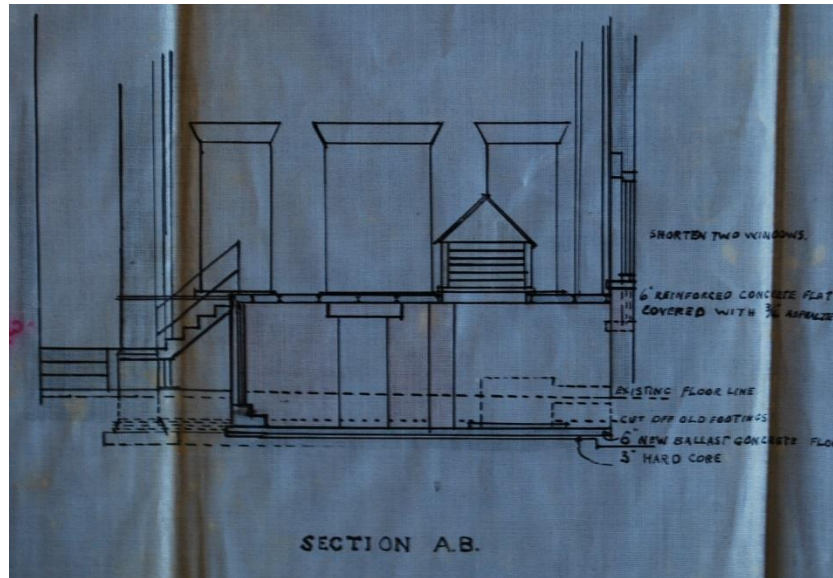


Figure 25. 1926. The Heating Chamber: Section (Suffolk Record Office).

2.7.5. The installation of central heating appears to have been part of major alterations to the interior and minor, but significant alterations to the exterior. In 1924 the library was transferred to new premises in Northgate Street. The new curator, Guy Maynard (he had succeeded Frank Woolnough in 1920) was presented with an increase in potential gallery space of about a third of the total museum. In 1926 a new gallery of prehistory was formed on the first floor of the south range of the museum and the geology display was moved to the ground floor. An opening was formed in the centre of the south wall of the main hall and a staircase constructed to lead down to the south range. The two downstairs galleries became the geology gallery and a store. The office part of the former library became the new office for the curator. An office and store was created for geology off the connecting passage between the main building and the St George's Street extension front (now the Museum library) and an aquarium was placed in the corridor, necessitating narrowing it to take an air compressor unit (now the lift shaft).

2.7.6. The former Victoria Free Library was re-used as the model room in which Art School students copied the plaster statues from the antique. This use ceased in 1934 and the space was thereafter used as a biology room. In 1927 there was a major exhibition of Gainsborough's works in the Art Gallery and Museum; a connecting doorway was formed between the former Free Library and the Art Gallery.



2.7.7. On cessation of its use as a place of worship the building was used as a furniture warehouse until it was given to the town in 1928 by Alderman William Francis Paul. It was then used as a store and carpenters' workshop. Further significant changes took place in 1934. Use of the former chapel allowed the former St George's Street reference library to be cleared and turned into the local geology gallery. A new staircase was constructed in the north-west corner of the St George's Street extension allowing a circulation of visitors between the floors at the rear of the museum.

2.7.8. The most significant alteration in this period, however, was the blocking of the separate front entrances to the former library and schools. It is not clear whether this took place in the mid-1920s or ten years later, although the former date would seem likely. It is probable that the Art School was 'compensated' by the creation of the present access from the north court.

## 2.8. THE SCHOOL OF ART, 1933-4.

2.8.1. By the early 1930s the Art School had outgrown its original accommodation and plans for alterations and additions to the Art School were submitted to the Corporation in 1933 (Suffolk Record Office: DC/14/372/12944. The plans could not be produced in July 2013). They were approved on 31<sup>st</sup> August that year and the new building was opened in 1934.

2.8.2. In the Appraisal and Management Plan for the Central Conservation Area prepared by Ipswich Borough Council (p. 39) it is stated that the former Art School was designed by the Ipswich firm of Cautley & Barefoot in 1933. As the Cautley & Barefoot archive has not yet been catalogued (the work is in progress at the Suffolk Record Office) it has not been possible to check this information. In a recent history of the School, however, Bruce and Scott state that 'Initial drawings ... were produced in 1930 by the Borough's architects [Edwin] Johns and [Martin] Slater, who had designed the school buildings in the 1920s.'<sup>21</sup> They continue: 'Plans were

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<sup>21</sup> Paul Bruce and Richard Scott, *High Street Heyday: memories of the Ipswich school of art*, 2011, pp. 25-7.

completed in 1933, and construction started the following year ... the new building ... is thought to have come into service during 1935.'

2.9. The School was to have had a suite of studios and teaching areas to the west of the central octagon and a free-standing workshop block to the west, flanking St George's Street. This would explain why the terrace of houses on the east side of St George's Street (now the car parking area) and the buildings on Upper High Street (now the new flats) were demolished. Jones (2008) comments that in 1938 the Art School was still occupying rooms in the main building 'because the rebuilding of the Art School had been deferred because of the war and the Museum Committee had decided not to give them notice.'

## 2.10. ALTERATIONS IN THE LATER 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY.

2.10.1. A search in the catalogues of the Suffolk Record Office provides the following list of 'recent' alterations:

- (?) 1975 - Workshop and store (ref: 43069);
- 1976 (10 Sept) – staff WCs (ref: 44690);
- 1980 (1 July) – ramp (ref: 51217);
- 1982 (November 5 & 12) – alterations to offices (ref: FP/54831);
- 1986 (May 13) – alterations to Roman Gallery room (ref: FP/60716);
- 1995 (August 22) – alterations to entrance hall (ref: FP/95/0631);
- 1998 (August 6) – roof over bird gallery (ref: FP/98/0266);
- 1998 (August 6) – fire precautions and improvements (ref: FP/98/0279);
- 1998 (October 9) – wheelchair access (ref: FP/98/0393);
- (?) 2001 – lift (ref: 01/000545).

Some of these works, albeit necessary, have had an adverse impact on the architectural and aesthetic significance of the building.

## 2.11. THE CHARLES STREET STORES

2.11.1. The Charles Street stores were formerly the premise of coach builders: the lettering 'Coach · H H Nears Ltd · Builders' can just be seen in the white painted panels of the right hand block. The coach entry has been blocked by the blue and red bricks under the central band of lettering.

2.11.2. The site had previously been the gardens of Fonnerau House and the adjoining property; a kitchen garden with ranges of glasshouses lay to the east (right) – see first edition Ordnance Survey plan (1881). The 1904 edition of the OS shows that a structure had been erected (subsequently rebuilt) in the Fonnerau House garden by this date. The kitchen garden is still shown on the 1927 edition of the OS although the present, taller structure to the east had been developed by 1952. It became the museum store around 1974.

### **3. DESCRIPTION: NOW AND THEN**

#### **3.1. 'QUEEN ANNE'**

3.1.1. Little is known about Horace Cheston, the designer of the Art Gallery and Museum buildings. He was articled to John Whichcord (1823-85) who, although he was the president of the Royal Institute of British Architects (1879 to 1881), is little known. Whichcord's buildings, including the Grand Hotel St Stephen's Club, Westminster (demolished), were in Classical styles - Italianate and French. Cheston was the 'improver' (architectural assistant) and assistant clerk of work at St Stephen's Club which was erected in 1874-5 as a meeting place for Conservative Members of Parliament.<sup>22</sup> The building is in the French Renaissance style. Cheston travelled in France and Italy and established his own practice in 1875. Some details - the mullion and transom or 'cross' windows - of the London building can be seen at Ipswich.

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<sup>22</sup> *Building News*, 1875 September 17.



Figure 26. St Stephen's Club, Westminster (demolished).

3.1.2. The style chosen for the High Street buildings – it has not yet been demonstrated beyond doubt that he had any role in the Free Library and the Schools extensions – was described at the time as 'English Renaissance of the Stuart period or Free Classic'. It is also known as 'Queen Anne'.<sup>23</sup> The 'style' was introduced in the late 1860s by architects such as Philip Webb, William Eden Nesfield, Basil Champneys, J J Stevenson and, most importantly, Richard Norman Shaw; it was one of the dominant themes of English architecture, for all types of secular buildings, of the 1870s. Cheston will have seen the new architecture in London, Westminster and Kensington & Chelsea, and designs were often published in influential journals such as *The Builder* and *The Building News*. Fine red, brickwork, often with the use of rubbers and specials, was the dominant building material with clay tiles for the roofs and terracotta decorative panels – swags, flowers etc. The buildings could exhibit features of the late 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> century, not only from English precedents but also from European ones, particularly those in the Low Countries. The 'style' was also promoted in artistic and literary works such as those by Walter Crane and Kate Greenaway.

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<sup>23</sup> Andrew Saint, *Richard Norman Shaw*, 1976, revised 2010.  
Mark Girouard, *Sweetness and Light: the 'Queen Anne' Movement 1860-90*, 1977.

3.1.3. Important London examples include New Zealand Chambers (1871-3, demolished), the Offices (Thames Embankment) and schools of the London School Board and houses in Palace Gate and Kensington Gore, Kensington and on the Cadogan estate and the Embankment, Chelsea. The design for New Zealand Chambers, by Richard Norman Shaw, was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1873; it drew on Sparrowe's House, Ipswich for much of its design. Cheston was to use the Sparrowe's House window, in a simplified and modified form for the central window at first floor level at the Art Gallery.

## 3.2. ART GALLERY

3.2.1. The Art Gallery is two storeys high and three bays wide. The whole composition is framed by giant, end pilasters and a moulded cornice under a blocking course that supports ball finials above the pilasters. The centre projects with pediment and elliptical headed doorway with the large bow window above, with the centre and sides divided by stone pilasters. The ground floor, cross windows are set in segmental headed recesses with 'keystones'; above are two, two-light windows. The north elevation is of five bays divided by pilasters framing segmental headed recesses with central panels that were designed to have ornament. (The fourth bay has been converted to a door and the fifth [and sixth] bay is partly obscured by the Victoria Free Library.) The roof lantern runs along the full length of the hall to the rear and is terminated by a raised, segmental pediment. Unfortunately much of the front wall and railings have been removed, the front area has been re-surfaced with concrete paving and there are some maintenance problems (water staining, faulty rainwater goods, cracking mortar) and inappropriate repairs (cement pointing and mortar).



Figure 27. The Art Gallery, 1880, Horace Cheston.

3.2.2. Internally the building retains a large section of the exhibition hall, lit by the tripartite lantern, but the 1938 stage has altered the west end; a cornice (replaced in the 1930s; the historic cornice can be seen behind the stage) a deep skirting and cast iron heating grilles have been retained. The panelled and glazed front entrance doors, the balustraded staircase and panelled doors to the upper floor are all part of the 1880 building. The upper room is a well-lit and pleasant space but is full with storage cases. A store under the stairs at the east end is in poor condition. The rear extension has internal boarding but the whole are is utilitarian and altered.



Figure 28. The Art Gallery, exhibition hall.

### 3.3 THE MUSEUM (AND FORMER LIBRARY AND SCHOOLS)

3.3.1 The building bears the date 1880. Gabled wings project at the north and south ends with Dutch gables and are connected at the front by a single storey open screen – the ‘Terrace’ - of paired fluted pillars and segmental arches. The building is two storeys high over a partial basement. The elevation of nine, mullioned and transomed (formed of Bath stone) casement windows is arranged in a rhythm of 3:3:3, with the central window of the wings and all those in the recessed central section being three lights. The windows are framed by fluted brick pilasters and modillion cornices which run above each storey. The Dutch gables to the wings and centre part have terracotta ornamental panels made by Doulton’s of Lambeth, with plants, garlands, flowers, fruit, dragons, shells cast from real examples, and the portraits of Isaac Newton (for science) and William Hogarth (for art). A double order of pilasters – fluted to the first floor – and the moulded, dentil cornice are seen on all three elevations. The south elevation has five windows and two Dutch gables, each with four windows framed by fluted pilasters. The north elevation has four windows, with three tall studio windows at the west end at first floor level, with gables above. The roofs are covered in tiles.



Figure 29. Front elevation.



Figure 29. Undated but before 1892, (Suffolk Record Office).





Figure 30. Detail of above, showing three historic entrances with gates and central lamp with overthrow.



Figure 31. July 1881; opening day (Suffolk Record Office).



Figure 32. Terracotta detailing.



Figure 33. Science.

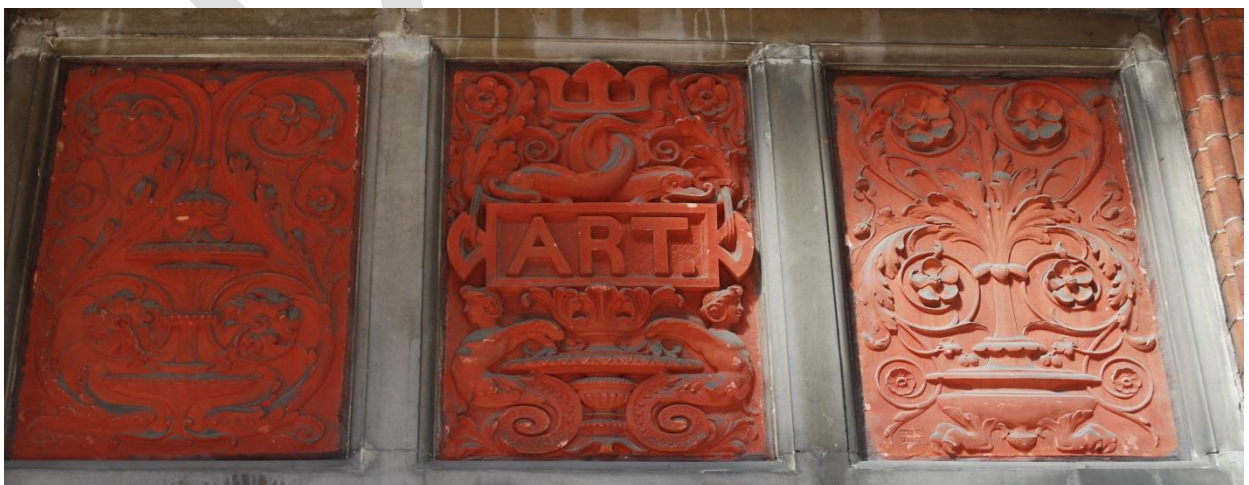


Figure 34. Art.

3.3.2 The entrance and staircase hall has coffered ceilings to both floors and an open well stone staircase with an iron balustrade which is elaborated with square panels and circular infill sections, in a simplified 'chinoiserie' style; the same design is used in the Gallery for the balustrade and the spandrels at the head of the cast iron, fluted columns (made by Turners of St Peter's Ironworks, Ipswich) that support the gallery. The doors to the gallery from the hall have been renewed, the floors are covered with carpet and a draft lobby has been constructed inside the entrance doors. These alterations, and the modern decorative scheme and fittings, detract from the significance of the interior.



Figure 35. Staircase hall.





Figure 36. c 1907. Entrance Hall (Suffolk Record Office).

3.3.3 The central hall has an open timber roof and retains many, mahogany display cases that are fixed into the structure; some were brought from the first museum building in Museum Street. Jones (2008) states that 'The main hall had been carefully designed to the same dimensions as that of the previous museum so that the old cases could be removed and re-installed in the new building ...' Other cases have been purpose-built for the museum over the years. Throughout the building are panelled and glazed doors, some with elaborate door furniture, which date from 1880-1 and 1900-1.



Figure 37. Main hall.



Figure 38. Opening to south range, formed 1924-6.



Figure 39. Columns and cases.





Figure 40. c 1907. Main Hall (Suffolk Record Office).



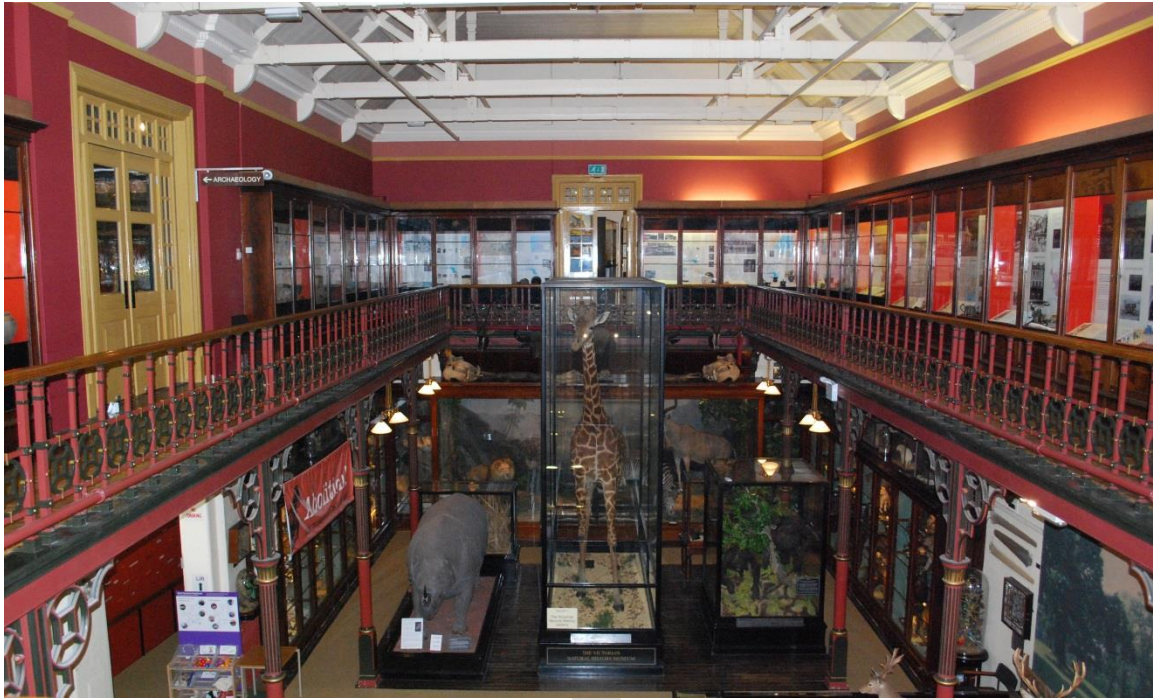


Figure 41. Gallery.





Figure 42. c 1907. Gallery (Suffolk Record Office).



Figure 43. c 1907. Gallery: Ethnological Collection (Suffolk Record Office).



Figure 44. Roof.

3.3.4 In the south range at ground floor level was the curator's office. The plan form, with doorways to the corridor and to the library, the dentil cornice and chimney breast, all survive; a housing that curves up and over the corridor. The large gallery to the west retains its cornice and downstand beams, door and window architraves and, running the full height of the walls, redundant flue ducts from the early heating and ventilation systems. (Originally there would have been a dividing wall between the reading room and the library.) Two mahogany cases from the museum are set on the east wall of the room.



Figure 45. Former office for curator, showing blocked door and chimney breast.



Figure 46. c 1907. Frank Woolnough, the curator, in his office (Suffolk Record Office).



Figure 47. Flue housing over library corridor      Figure 48. Library doors and mahogany case.



Figure 49. Former library and reading room.



Figure 50. Redundant heating/ventilation flue Figure 51. Door to St George's Street wing, 1900.

3.3.5 At first floor level in the south range is the former Crag Room, now an ethnography gallery. The open roof, cornice, architraves and doors are all extant.

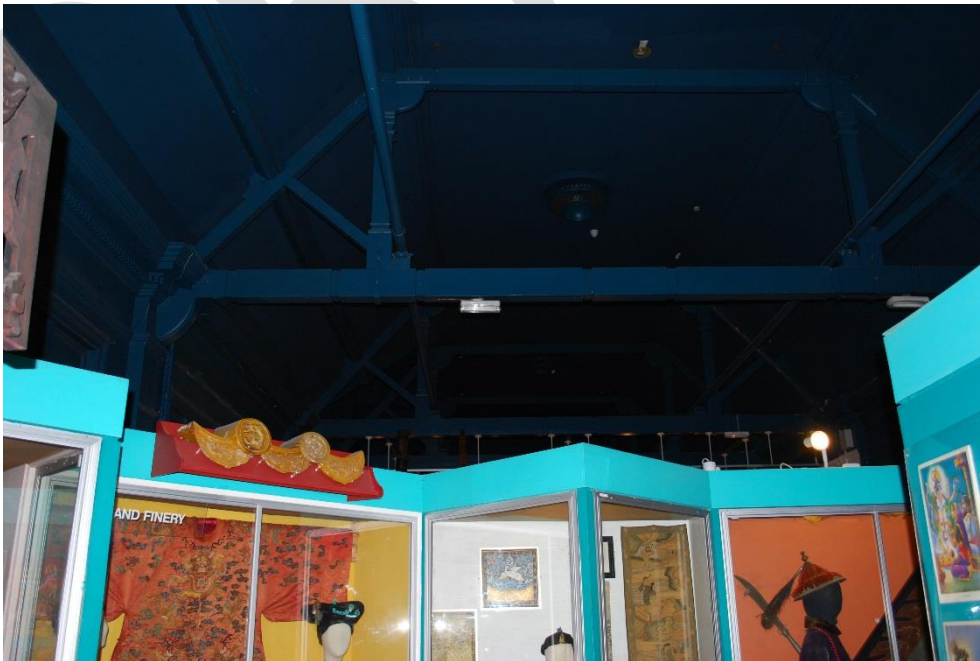


Figure 52. Ethnography gallery.



Figure 53. c 1907. Crag Room (Suffolk Record Office).



Figure 54. Ethnography doors.

3.3.6 To the north range an important element of Cheston's planning was the arcade to the north of the entrance hall. This gave access to an office for the Assistant Curator in the north east corner of the building and to a corridor that led off it westwards into the Art School. The planning of the area was altered when the new connection was formed to the extension to the Schools in 1892-3 and in the mid-1930s when the new Art School was erected. In the 1890s' phase the Art Master's office was divided to form the N – S corridor; in the 1930s the lavatories, doorway and corridor from the north court were formed and the classroom truncated. Beyond the Art Master's room a staircase led down to the laboratory and stores but the upward flights were inserted later, possibly in the 1890s.



Figure 55. Arcade to north of entrance hall; former office of Assistant Curator to right.





Figure 56. Blocked 'spinal' corridor, running E-W. Figure 57. N-S corridor to Schools extension, 1892-3.



Figure 58. Art classroom, looking W.



Figure 59. Art classroom, looking E with inserted wall and stage, 1930s.



Figure 60. Fireplace in former Art Master's room.



Figure 61. Art School corridor from court, 1930s. Figure 62. Stairs to laboratory (down), and later upper flight.



Figure 63. Former laboratory.



Figure 64. Former stores

3.3.7 At first floor level the Master's room and the room for casts are at the east end of the range with access off a tiled corridor and lobby which passes the ladies' cloakroom. The moveable partitions that allowed for four classrooms have been replaced by a fixed central partition.



Figure 65. Lobby and passage.



Figure 66. Former casts room.



Figure 67. West classroom.



Figure 68. East classroom.

### 3.4 THE FORMER VICTORIA FREE LIBRARY

3.4.1 The former Victoria Free Library is three bays wide with each bay set below a segmental arch with a keystone and each divided by pilasters. The left bays hold tripartite windows with the centre under a pediment with a swag friezes; the right bay has a stone doorcase with fluted pilasters and a pediment over a wreathed, medallion portrait of Queen Victoria. The upper storey was added in 1956; it has tripartite windows under soldier courses. The interiors are plain; all historic detailing and finishes have been removed or hidden.



Figure 69. The former Victoria Free Library.



Figure 70. Victoria Free Library, details of elevation.



Figure 71. 1890s, Museum & Victoria Free Library (Suffolk Record Office).



Figure 72. Art Gallery & Victoria Free Library (Suffolk Record Office).



Figure 73. 1900-01, showing the statue of the Stag & Hounds in the south court (Suffolk Record Office).

### 3.5 THE SCHOOLS EXTENSION

3.5.1 The former Schools extension on the north side of the main building is of five bays with two-light cross windows alternating with panelled doors. Above a dentil cornice a tall parapet is divided into three sections by fluted pilaster; the central panel has a terracotta plaque embellished with a cartouche and letter 'SCIENCE & ART SCHOOLS'. The surmounting pediment and the canopy have been removed, leaving the building appearing somewhat unfinished. Internally there are two

studios with north-lights, open roof with king-post trusses and chamfered beams, panelled fire surrounds, matchboard panelling, panelled doors and a screen.



Figure 74. Science & Art Schools, 1892-3 extension.



Figure 75. Science & Art Schools, terracotta detail.



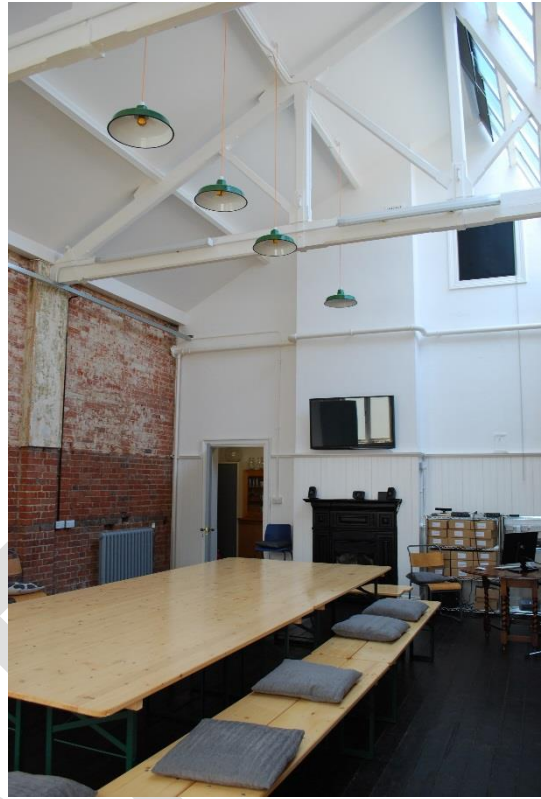


Figure 76. Science & Art Schools, 1892-3 extension interiors.





Figure 77. Undated but after 1892-3, showing the Schools extension with the laboratory at the far right (Suffolk Record Office). (Note: No door to north of main building.)

### 3.6 THE ST GEORGE'S STREET EXTENSION

3.6.1 On St George's Street is the museum extension dated 1900. It is of red brick and eight bays wide divided by a double order of pilasters; dentil cornices run across at both levels. The two central bays are wider and terminate in Dutch gables; the lower sections are ornamented with pediments and the lettering 'AD' and '1900'. The windows are two- and four-light cross windows; the outer bays to the upper storey are blocked.

3.6.2 The bookcase to the former Reading Room fittings and the wall with the elliptical opening for the desk have been removed and the whole space is now the Geology Gallery but doors, beams, cornices, dado panelling and a fireplace are extant. At the first floor level entrance from the Gallery is a large, fitted case containing the Bass Rock exhibit. Beyond are the Bird Rooms with open, queen-post roof trusses and elliptical arched openings: the real drama at this level, however, is the magnificent collection of glass cases filled with British birds, presented by Mrs Ogilvie in 1918.



Figure 78. Elevation to St George's Street.



Figure 79. The former Reading Room.



Figure 80. 1907. Reading Room (Suffolk Record Office).



Figure 81. The Bass Rock case.



Figure 82. The Bird Room.

### 3.7 THE FORMER ART SCHOOL

3.7.1 The former Art School lies immediately to the north of the north court of the Museum with its entrance on upper High Street. It is formed of red brick with irregularly set burnt headers. The entrance range is lower than the High Street block but both elevations have square frames with inset implied pilasters to the front and piers set on the angle to the side. The rhythm of the fenestration is 1:4:1 to the front and 1:3:1 to the side. A two-panelled door is set within a stone architrave with an upper projecting panel bearing the town's armorial bearings.

3.7.2 Internally, the rooms are plain but the octagonal hall is an impressive and well-lit space. To the rear lies the site of a former terrace of houses that was demolished for a proposed extension; this is now used for parking.



Figure 83. The former Art School.

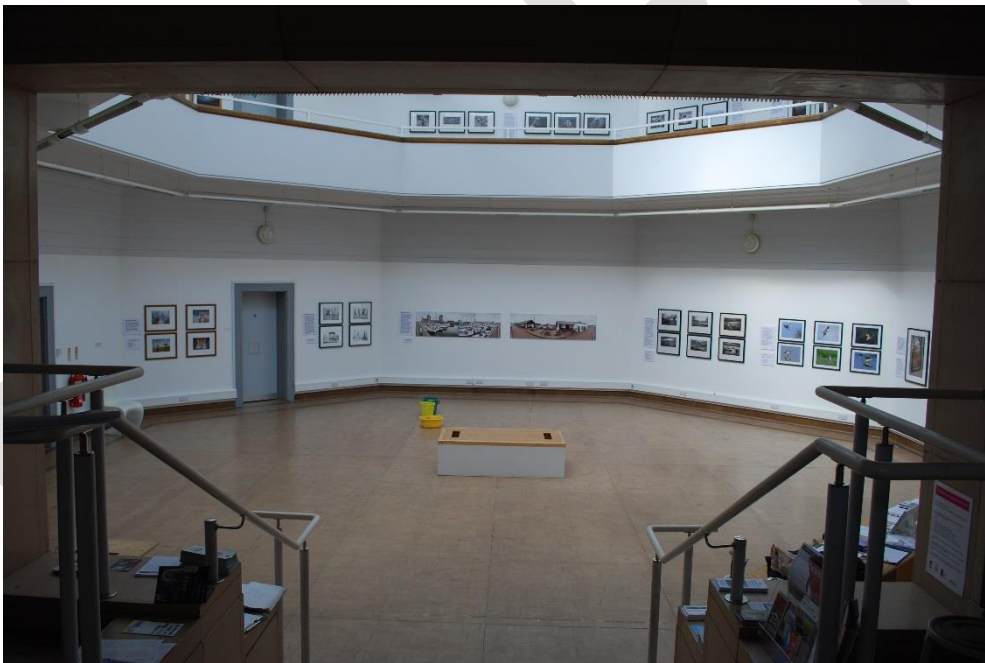


Figure 84. The hall of the former Art School.



Figure 85. Undeveloped site at the rear of the former Art School.

### 3.8 THE FORMER SALEM CHAPEL

3.8.1 The former Salem chapel on St George's Street is a red brick building, two storeys high under a hipped, pantiled roof. It has five bays with segmental headed windows to the ground floor and semi-circular headed windows above, all with multi-pane glazing. There are areas of brick replacement and the central doorway has been renewed. Incised stone plaques flank the first floor, central window; they read 'SALEM CHAPEL' and 'ERECTED 1812'. The aerial view indicates that the building has been extended to the rear.



Figure 86. The former Salem Chapel.

3.8.2 Internally the building has been converted and extensively altered but the roof structure survives albeit supported on modern steelwork. It consists of long beams and queen post trusses. The south balcony and raking floor, with iron post at ground floor level, is also intact.

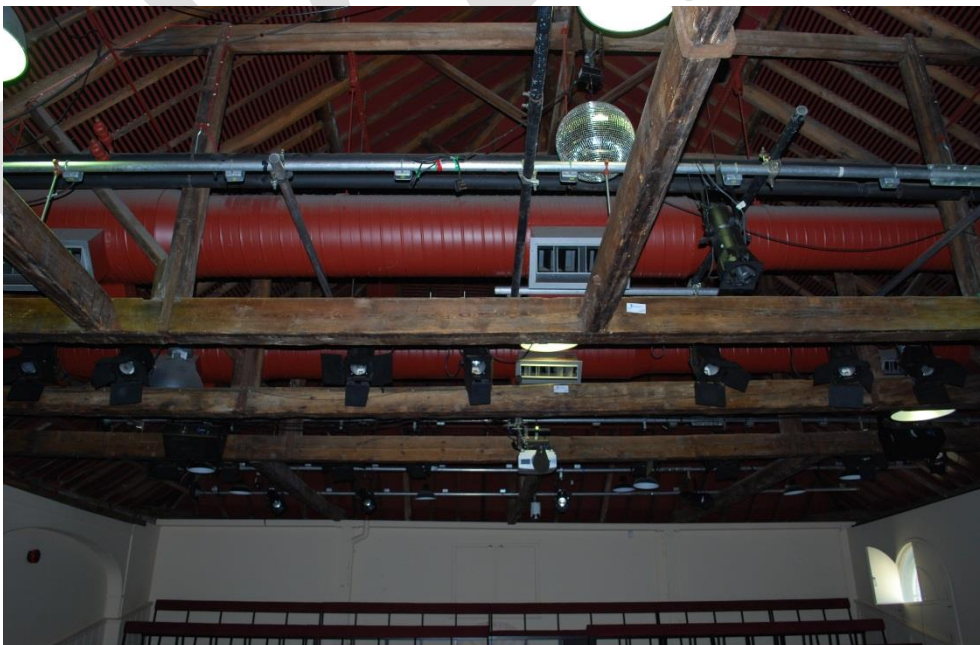


Figure 87. The former Salem Chapel, roof.





Figure 88. The former Salem Chapel, balcony.

### 3.9 CHARLES STREET STORES

3.9.1 The Charles Street buildings consist of the former Nears coach building works to the west and part of a hospital accommodation building to the east. While the Nears building has some presence – the central entrance was framed by pilasters in a tall gabled structure – the side elevation is plain and the hospital building is ugly.



Figure 89. The former Nears coach works.



Figure 90. The stores.

## 4. SIGNIFICANCE

### 4.1 INTRODUCTION: SIGNIFICANCE AND VALUES

4.1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) defines significance as ‘the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic.’<sup>24</sup> Understanding the values that contribute to that significance, and how they relate to the fabric of the place, is vital to understanding the best means of conservation of the heritage asset.

#### *Archaeological interest*

4.1.2 There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially may hold, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point. Heritage assets with archaeological interest are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of the people and cultures that made them.

#### *Architectural and artistic interest*

4.1.3 These are interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place. They can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures

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<sup>24</sup>National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012), Annex 2: Glossary.

of all types. Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skills, like sculpture.

#### *Historic interest*

4.1.4 An interest in past lives and events (including pre-historic). Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with them. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of our nation's history, but can also provide an emotional meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity.

## 4.2 GRADING SIGNIFICANCE

4.2.1 The following grading system (used by English Heritage in the preparation of its own conservation plans and statements) has been adopted to enable the relative weight of the values contributing to the significance of the place and its setting to be compared:

### A: *Exceptional significance*

Elements whose values are both unique to the place and relevant to our perception and understanding of architectural and social history in a national and international context. These are the qualities that, for buildings, warrant listing in grade I and II\*.

### B: *Considerable significance*

Elements whose values contribute to the place's status as a nationally important place. These are the qualities that justify statutory protection at national level.

### C: *Some significance*

Elements whose values make a positive contribution to the way the place is understood and perceived, primarily in a local context.

### D: *Little significance*

Elements whose values contribute to the way the place is perceived in a very limited but positive way.

### N: *Neutral significance*

Elements which neither add to nor detract from the significance of the place.

### INT: *Intrusive*

Elements of no historic interest or aesthetic or architectural merit that detract from the appearance of the place, or mask the understanding of significant elements.

## 4.3 STATUTORY DESIGNATIONS

4.3.1 The Museum, High Street, Ipswich was added to the Secretary of State's list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest on 4<sup>th</sup> August 1972. The Art Gallery, St George's Street was added on 15<sup>th</sup> December 1977. Both buildings were listed as grade II entries but the entries were amended to form a single list entry and upgraded to II\* on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2006. The list description is at Appendix 1.

4.3.2 It should be noted, however, that it is questionable whether the Art Gallery should be included as the same item and it is also questionable whether it is of II\* quality; the building is actually rather pedestrian in design and execution. The listing assessment is based on the misunderstanding that the Art Gallery was erected as part of a complete complex by the Corporation and that as such a combined use was an 'unusual' aspect of the development. It is thus claimed that the 'complete combination appears to be very unusual and of particular interest.' As we have seen, however, the Art Gallery was a separate, private venture and the building, although on land owned by the Corporation, has never been part of the Museum, Library and Schools complex.

4.3.3 Grade II\* list structures fall within the top 8% of the nation's stock of historic buildings and can be defined as being particularly important and of more than special interest. Listed buildings account for about 2% of English building stock. In March 2010, there were approximately 374,000 list entries (many including multiple buildings) of which 92% were Grade II, 5.5% were Grade II\*, and 2.5% were Grade I. According to the *National Heritage List for England* there are 458 listed buildings in Ipswich. The local authority's website, however, states that there are over 600 listed buildings. (The discrepancy might be explained if the local authority is counting the individual units of multiple entries, such as the individual houses in a terrace.) Of the entries in the *National Heritage List for England* 39 of the Ipswich structures are grade I and II\*, but the list does not yet include the Museum.

4.3.4 The former Salem Chapel, St. George's Street was added to the Secretary of State's list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest on 15<sup>th</sup> December 1977. The list description reads as follows:

Formerly a Chapel, now part of the Ipswich Art Gallery, An early C19 red brick building. 2 storeys. 5 window range, casements with glazing bars. The 1st storey windows have semi-circular heads and the ground storey windows have segmental. Modern central doorway. Roof pantiled, hipped.

4.3.5 The Secretary of State's list entries are usually descriptive and until recently have made no mention of the specific reasons for designation. Given the 2006 amendment there is a helpful, if somewhat questionable in parts, explanation of the reason for listing and grading. The Secretary of State uses the following criteria when assessing whether a building is of special interest and therefore should be included in the statutory list:

- Architectural interest. To be of special architectural interest a building must be of importance in its architectural design, decoration or craftsmanship; special interest may also apply to nationally important examples of particular building types and techniques (e.g. buildings displaying technological innovation or virtuosity) and significant plan forms.
- Historic interest. To be of special historic interest a building must illustrate important aspects of the nation's social, economic, cultural, or military history and/or have close historical associations with nationally important people. There should normally be some quality of interest in the physical fabric of the building itself to justify the statutory protection afforded by listing.

4.3.6 The general principles with regard to selection state that if built after 1840, progressively greater selection is necessary but 'the fewer the surviving examples of its kind, the more likely it is to have special interest.'<sup>25</sup> 'The appearance of a building – both its intrinsic architectural merit and any group value [with other listed buildings] is a key consideration ...'. When considering listing the contribution of fixtures and features, internal and external, and the desirability of their preservation, is a consideration.

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<sup>25</sup> Department for Culture, Media and Sport, *Principles of selection for Listing Buildings*, March 2010.

4.3.7 English Heritage has published a *Designation Listing Selection Guide: Culture and Entertainment* (April 2011) that adds a little more on the approach to selection. It states that

Buildings in this category are extremely diverse. Some make a strong impression in the street, as a statement of their cultural and often civic aspirations, or to attract patrons inside. Yet it is often their interiors that are the determining factors when considering them for designation, and any listing, especially at the high grades, will normally be based on the quality, rarity and/or good survival of the interior.

With regard to historical association 'some buildings embody particular social phenomena. In such cases as these the buildings should survive in a form that directly illustrates and confirms the historical claim, and be very good examples of their genre.'

4.3.8 For museums, galleries and libraries English Heritage advise that 'The selection criteria for museums and art galleries centre around architectural quality; decorative enrichment; degree of alteration; artistic interest and group value. Like libraries, they often form part of a civic group ... Grandeur and patronage (whether civic or privately endowed) are key elements.'

4.3.9 The whole of the Museum site, including the Charles Street stores, is included in the Central Conservation Area as designated by Ipswich Borough Council in 1974.

#### 4.4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE

4.4.1 The site of the Museum and associated buildings lies outside the mediaeval area of the town and its immediately post-mediaeval suburbs. Prior to the 1880s' buildings the site had remained undeveloped and was used as gardens. The buildings themselves can be understood in the context of the documents, history and visual inspection, and therefore are unlikely to yield much information on investigation by opening-up.

4.4.2 The sites of the Museum, Free Library, Art Gallery, Art School, Salem Chapel and former terrace on St. George's Street and of the store on Charles Street are therefore of *little archaeological significance* (D).

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## 4.5 ARCHITECTURAL AND ARTISTIC SIGNIFICANCE

4.5.1 The particular architectural interest of the main part of the Museum (Library and Schools, including the extensions of 1887 and 1892-3) is that it is, in terms of its overall appearance and plan form, a substantially intact example of civic, multi-purpose structure designed in 1879 adopting the 17<sup>th</sup> century Renaissance style. It is a well-balanced composition in terms of the variation in height and the forward and backward movement of the individual blocks is important to the architecture and to the streetscape. The open courts are important to the architectural composition, allowing 'internal' elevations to be appreciated and providing foils to, and 'breathing space' for, the structures; the removal of the pediments that surmounted the extensions, the construction of the upper storey of the former Victoria Free Library and the removal of the railings, gates and doorways to the street have diminished the significance of the composition.

4.5.2 The buildings are competent, but not exceptional designs. Cheston was not a major or significant architect and may not even be classified as of the 'second rank' of Victorian architects – his name does not appear in any of the architectural histories of the period or of the 'Queen Anne' movement. Contrary to the assertion in the list description it is not evident that the whole complex was designed by Cheston; it is possible that Fred Bennett undertook the Library and Schools extensions without the input of an architect, and it seems unlikely that the 1900 wing is by Cheston. It is also claimed that the 17<sup>th</sup> century Renaissance style used was then 'very-up-to-date' but in fact it had been in use for more than a decade and was by 1879-80. On the basis of the exterior architecture the buildings are important in terms of their architectural design, decoration and craftsmanship; the terracotta supplied by Doulton's is exquisite and the brickwork and general contracting undertaken by Fred Bennett and his team is of high quality. For these reasons the buildings are properly included on the list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest.

4.5.3 Internally the plan form is well-thought out and rational, although much altered beyond the main hall and gallery. The interesting historical plan arrangement dividing the three separate functions has been eroded and confused by later extensions and alterations. The interior features and details are mostly straightforward and not of the highest design quality. One aspect, however, is truly



exceptional: the degree of survival of 19<sup>th</sup> century, and later fitted display cases, often made of mahogany, many in their historic locations. It is these, in the context of the main hall and gallery that give the interior 'the highly evocative character and ambience of a bygone era and presents an excellent example of an almost unaltered late Victorian museum – now extremely rare.'<sup>26</sup>

4.5.4 For this last reason Ipswich Museum can be considered to be of *exceptional architectural and artistic significance (A)*. The buildings and site have elements whose values are both unique to the place and relevant to our perception and understanding of architectural and social history in a national and international context.

4.5.5 The former Salem Chapel is of *considerable architectural significance (B)* as an example of a late Georgian, Nonconformist chapel. The Charles Street stores are *intrusive* in terms of their impact on the setting of nearby listed buildings and on the character and appearance of the conservation area.

#### 4.6 HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

4.6.1 The key historic interest of the museum site is that it illustrates an important aspect of the nation's social and cultural history – the provision of cultural, educational and library facilities for the townspeople and working classes of Ipswich; it embodies those particular late 19<sup>th</sup> century social phenomena of civic pride and patronage and concern for education. The list description states that the 'combination of the three central elements of the Victorian scientific education system – the library, the artefacts and the schools – in a single building is rare'. It cites an earlier example, the Arkwright Building in Nottingham but points out that this was a university building – the original building of Nottingham University. The combination of two functions - museum and library – is more common.

4.6.2 It also has some historical associations with important people such as Sir Richard Wallace, Revd Prof. John Stevens Henslow (Darwin's tutor at Cambridge), Dr

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<sup>26</sup> Specific advice should be sought with regard to the extent of 'fittings' in the listed buildings. Questions might include: Are the cases in the Bird Room fittings? Are the animals and their scenes part of the fittings?

J E Taylor (curator and lecturer) and Edward Packard (an important industrialist and, effectively, one of the founders of the British fertilizer industry).

4.6.3 Jones (2008) believes that 'Ipswich museum is undoubtedly therefore not only the earliest publicly funded museum in East Anglia but quite possibly one of the first provincial museums in the United Kingdom.' He lists the following other institutions:

- The Ashmolean 1683;
- The British Museum 1759 (but requiring a long application process to gain admission);
- The Ipswich Literary Institute 1790-1;
- The Fitzwilliam 1816;
- The Ipswich mechanics institute 1824;
- Alexander's collection, Ipswich, 1830;
- Saffron Walden 1835;
- Ipswich Museum 1846;
- Colchester Keep 1860;
- Norwich 1887;
- Bury 1899.

Lewis (1984) shows that six towns (Sunderland, Canterbury, Warrington, Dover, Leicester and Salford) adopted the Museums Act (1845) and took over local collections before 1850.<sup>27</sup> Winchester opened its library and museum in 1851 and Ipswich followed in 1853. The institution therefore is one of the oldest in the country, albeit the buildings were erected at a later date.<sup>28</sup>

4.6.4 As set out in 1.5.3 the display of the collections at Ipswich is of exceptional architectural significance but it is not known whether the collections themselves deserve such a high ranking. There can be no doubt Ipswich Museum is thus of

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<sup>27</sup> Geoffrey D Lewis, 'Collections, collectors and museums in Britain to 1920' in John M A Thompson (*et al*), *Manual of Curatorship*, 1984, pp 23-37.

<sup>28</sup> The history of Art Schools and their relationship with the National (South Kensington) School is less well understood but there were many art schools in English towns before 1880. (The first municipal School of Art in the country, not dependent on central government support, was erected in Margaret Street, Birmingham in 1885.)

*some considerable historical significance* (**B**) as it has elements whose values make a positive contribution to the way the place is understood and perceived, primarily in a local context.

#### 4.7 COMMUNITY INTEREST

4.7.1 The museum is also likely to have at least *some* value (**C**) to the local community because it has been the training ground for artists and it is likely that most Ipswich children will have been inspired by its contents. It has been in community use and an asset to the town for 133 years and it is therefore a meaningful place for all those individuals and groups who have used, and continue to use, the building for learning, leisure and entertainment.

4.7.2 Full consultation and a programme of oral history should demonstrate the importance of the site to the community.

#### 4.8 LOCATION AND SETTING: A LANDMARK

4.8.1 Setting is defined as 'the surroundings in which a place is experienced'. The Museum is primarily perceived in the local context but it can also be seen from the town 'centre' to the south of Crown Street. It is therefore a local landmark and it greatly enlivens the local streetscape defining the upper part of High Street.

#### 4.9 SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE

4.9.1 For the reasons set out above, there can be no doubt that Ipswich Museum as a whole and its setting is of *exceptional significance* as it possesses values that are both unique to the place and relevant to our perception and understanding of architectural and social history in a national context. But not all parts are of exceptional significance and some parts are intrusive. There follows a summary of the hierarchy of significant according to the architectural elements of the buildings.

4.9.2 *Exceptional significance* (**A**). The external elevations and the courts to the High Street (excluding the 1930s' Art School) the entrance hall, the Main Hall and the Gallery above with all the fitted cases and the roof.

4.9.3 *Considerable significance (B)*. The whole of the south and north ranges in terms of surviving 1880s' plan, features and fittings. The interior of the 1892-3 Schools extension. The exteriors of the Salem Chapel and its roof structure and remaining parts of the south gallery.

4.9.4 *Some significance (C)*. The elevation and interiors of the St George's Street extension and of the interior of the former Victoria Free Library. The elevation, entrance, hall and staircase of the 1930s' Art School.

4.9.5 *Neutral significance (D)*. The 1890s' extension to the Art Gallery and the 'heating chamber' of the museum. These are elements which neither add to nor detract from the significance of the place. The rooms in the Art School.

4.9.6 *Intrusive*. The upper storey of the former Victoria Free Library, the side entrance/passage with the toilets that runs from the north court to the shop, the blocking of the east-west corridor in the north range, the site of the former terrace of houses (now the car park) on St. George's Street and the Charles Street stores. In the museum modern floor finishes – carpets etc – service runs (wiring, pipes etc), general signage, modern decorative schemes and spaces where fitted case have been removed. The rear sections of the Art School that adjoin the car park. The interiors to the former Salem Chapel except for the south gallery.

#### 4.10 OVERALL STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

4.10.1 Ipswich Museum as first built in 1880-81, with fitted display cases installed in the next 20-30 years, is of exceptional significance as a substantially preserved example of a late Victorian/Edwardian museum. It illustrates a building type and social phenomena that are not well preserved in the United Kingdom. The elevations to High Street and the central block of the main building are of the highest significance.

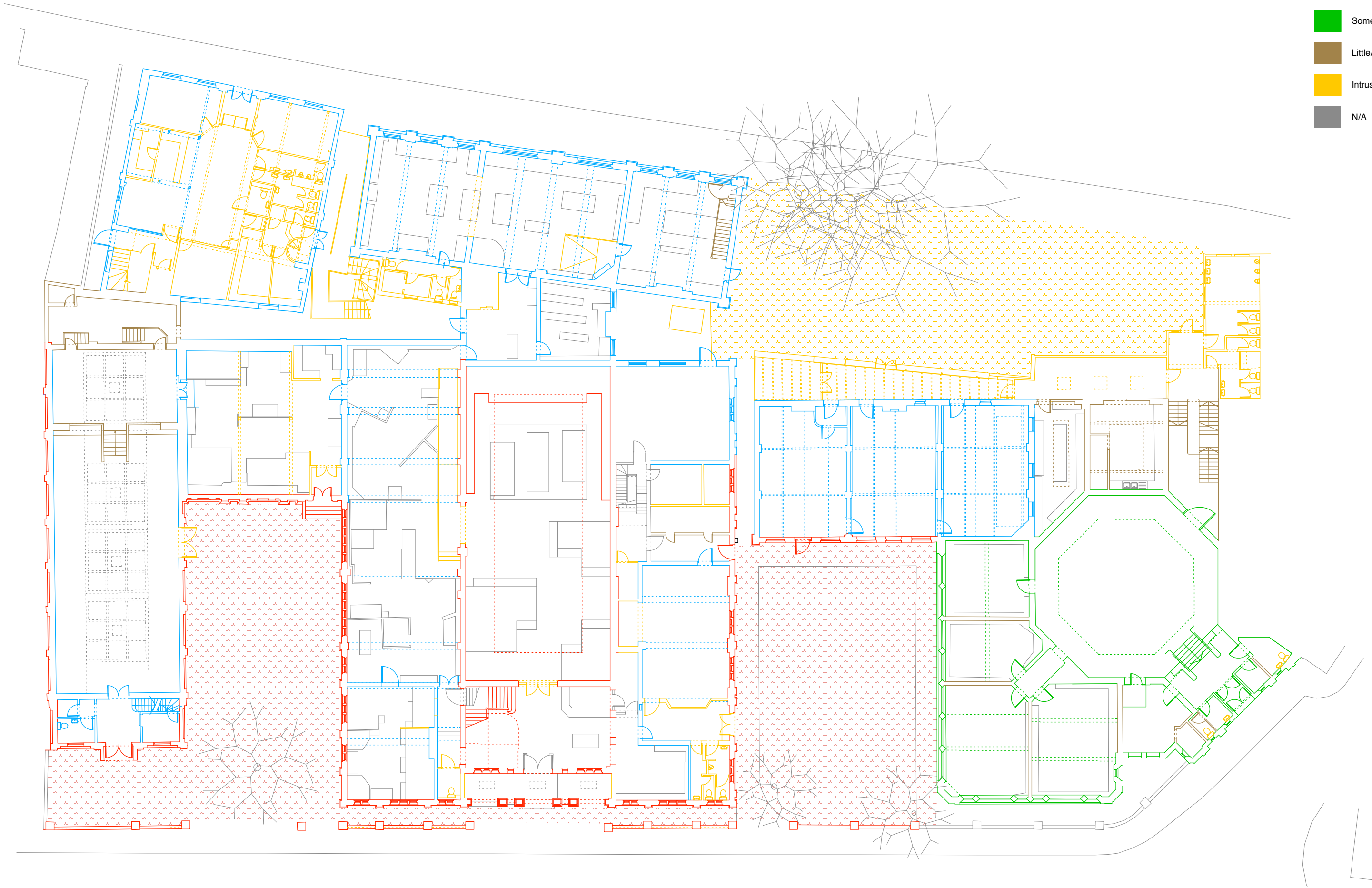
4.10.2 The remaining parts of the works of the 1880s- 1890s are of considerable significance and illustrate the expansion and development of the three functions that occupied the buildings.

Key

- Exceptional
- Considerable
- Some
- Little/ Neutral
- Intrusive/ Missing
- N/A

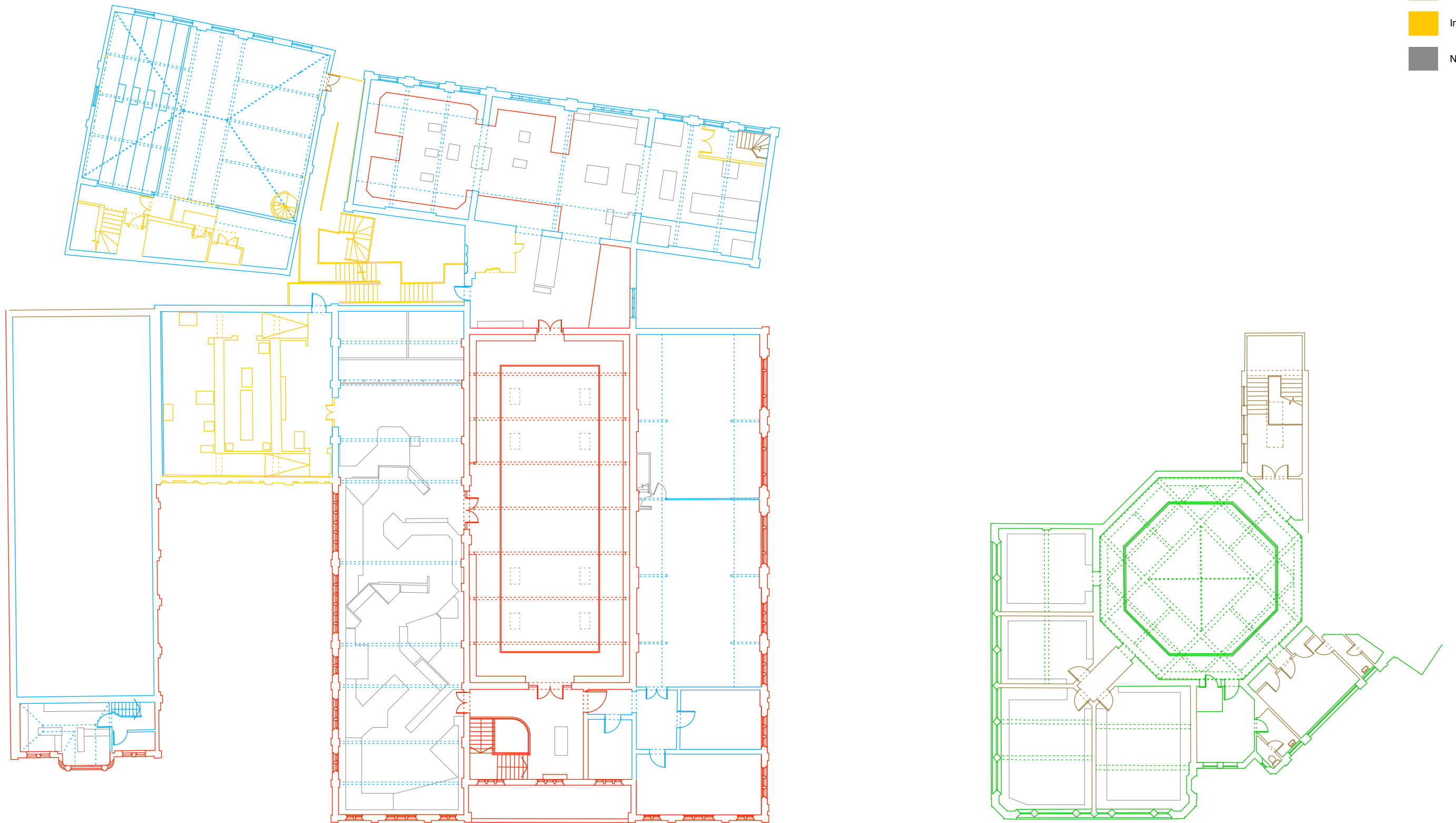


- Exceptional
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Key

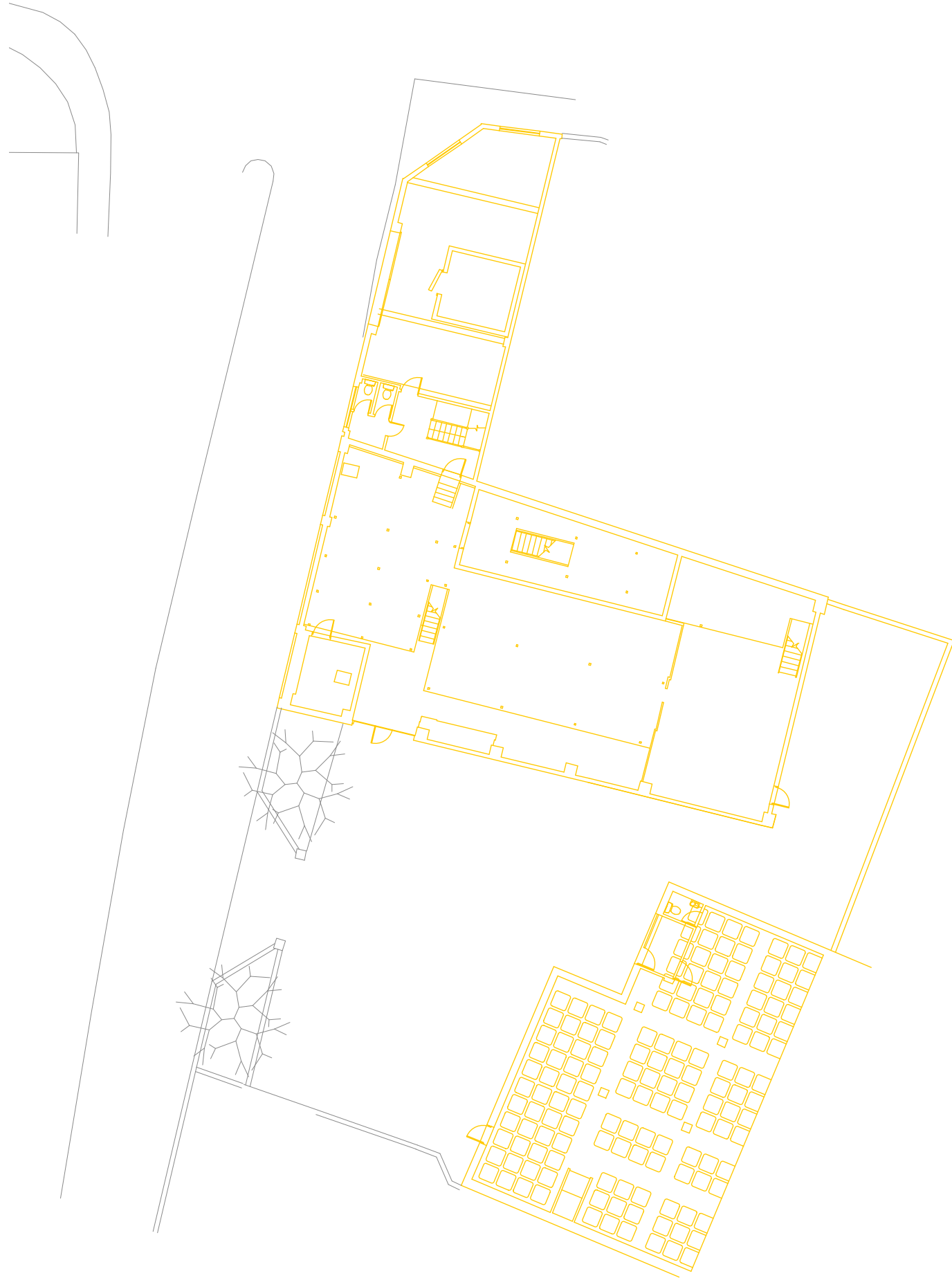
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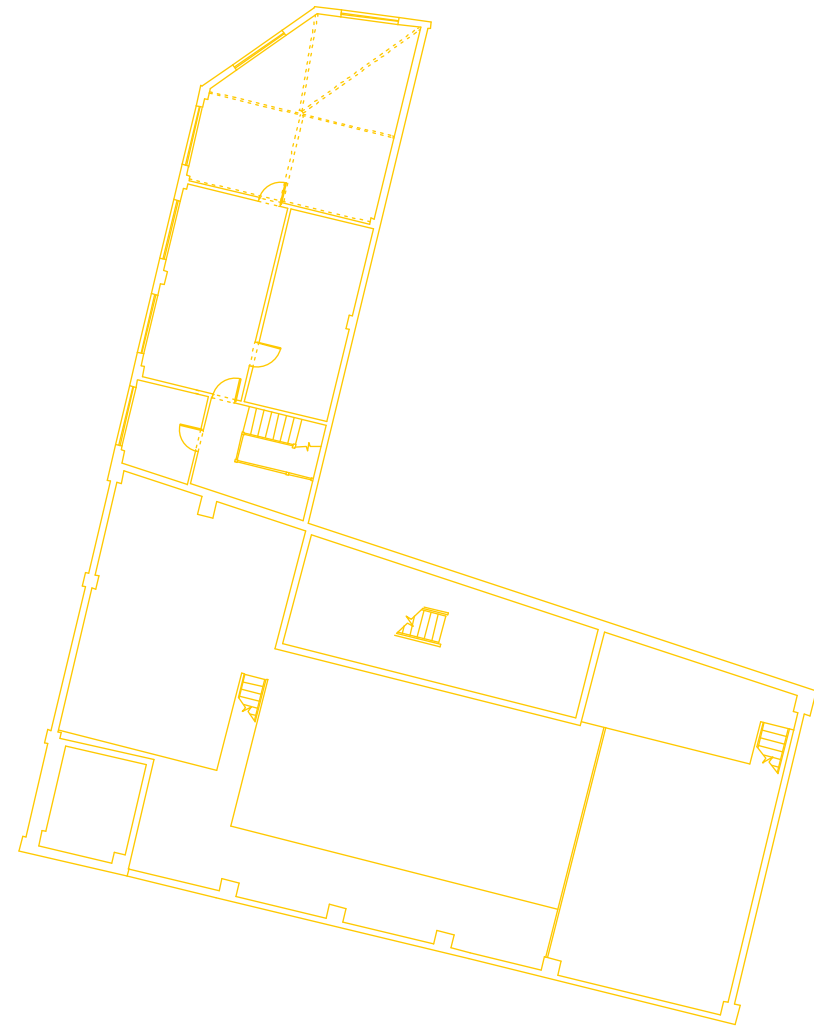
Significance Plans - Charles Street Annex

Key

- Exceptional
- Considerable
- Some
- Little/ Neutral
- Intrusive/ Missing
- N/A



Existing Ground Floor Plan (1:250 @A3)



Existing First Floor Plan (1:250 @A3)



4.10.3 Virtually all later work is of local significance, neutral or intrusive as much is utilitarian in character and has confused the understanding of the historic interiors.

## **5. ISSUES, VULNERABILITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES: POLICIES**

### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

5.1.1 This section of the conservation statement examines, in outline, how the significance of the Museum site is vulnerable. It identifies opportunities whereby this significance could be revealed and reinforced, and sets out policies to address the issues affecting the future of the house. These preliminary conclusions have been reached by observation; there has been no consultation. A programme of public consultation could help to refine the findings.

*Draft policy 1: The Colchester and Ipswich Museums will undertake adequate consultation with all interested parties before the conservation statement is adopted.*

### **5.2 THE USE AND UPDATING OF THE STATEMENT**

5.2.1 The purpose of this conservation statement is to inform and guide the long-term future management of the building. In long-term public ownership, future management decisions should be informed by the assessment of significance and the policies set out in it. In order to achieve this, it is important that the statement should be adopted by Colchester and Ipswich Museums and by Ipswich Borough Council. It is also important that the statement should be distributed to, and used by, all those involved in managing the site.

5.2.2 The conservation statement should be a living document, which will be updated and amended as new information comes to light. In order to do this an electronic master copy should be held by an appointed senior member of staff in Colchester and Ipswich Museums. The staff member should be designated as having ultimate responsibility for co-ordinating management of the buildings, and should also be responsible for holding and updating the plan. However, a distinction should be made between having responsibility for updating the document and the process, which is likely to be best carried out by a member of staff, or consultant with relevant building interpretation and conservation skills.

*Draft policy 2: The policies set out in this conservation statement will be endorsed by Colchester and Ipswich Museums and by Ipswich Borough Council as a guide to the future management of the Museum site and buildings.*

*Draft policy 3: The assessments of significance set out in this conservation statement will be used to inform decisions about the future management of the building.*

*Draft policy 4: Responsibility for updating the statement will ultimately rest with Colchester and Ipswich Museums.*

DRAFT

## 5.3 STATUTORY AND OTHER CONSENTS

5.3.1 The Museum has been statutorily protected by listing at grade II\*, placing it among the most important 8% of English listed buildings in terms of architectural and historic interest. The former Salem Chapel is a grade II listed building. This protection extends to all buildings and structures, including walls, within its curtilage which existed before 1<sup>st</sup> July 1948 and to all interior features and fixtures.

5.3.2 Listed building consent is necessary for all works, both internal and external, that affect a building's special interest, whether or not the particular feature is specifically mentioned in the list description. Consent is not normally required for repairs, but, where repairs involve alteration which would affect the character of the listed building, consent is required.

5.3.3 The listed building consent process is handled by the development control section of the Council, advised by the Conservation Officer. Because the building is Council-owned, applications must be made to the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), who are advised by English Heritage. As a grade II\* listed building, English Heritage must also be formally notified of any application.

5.3.4 Early consultation with both the Borough Council's Conservation Officer and the relevant English Heritage Historic Buildings and Areas Advisor within the East of England area is strongly recommended when any alterations to the listed building are being considered. It is also essential that advice is sought before embarking on significant repairs, including re-pointing, or replacing services and joinery.

5.3.5 Listed building consent is a different regime from planning control and does not supersede the need to apply for planning permission. Where works constituting development are proposed, planning permission must therefore be sought in parallel with listed building consent.

5.3.6 Special regard must be had by the decision-maker to the assessment of the impact of any development on the desirability of preserving the setting of any listed building (section 66 of the Planning [Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas] Act 1990). This statutory requirement means that the impact of proposed development within the setting of Ipswich Museum must be assessed.

*Draft policy 5: When formulating proposals for development or alterations at the Museum, advice will be sought at an early stage from the Council's Conservation Officer and English Heritage.*

*Draft policy 6: Listed building consent will be sought for all alterations that would affect the character of any listed building or curtilage structure on the site.*

#### 5.4 PLANNING POLICY AND THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

##### *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*

5.4.1 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (hereafter the 1990 Act) is the primary legislation providing for the protection of historic buildings. Section 16(2) of the 1990 Act places a duty on local planning authorities and the Secretary of State "to have special regard to the desirability of preserving [a listed building] or its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest it possesses".

5.4.2 In addition to establishing control over works to listed buildings themselves, Section 66 (l) states that "In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State, shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses."

5.4.3 Local planning authorities are required to notify English Heritage of all applications for planning permission and/or listed building consent affecting grade I and grade II\* listed buildings and their settings<sup>29</sup>, which applies to the Museum and former School of Art.

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<sup>29</sup> ODPM/DCMS Circular 01/01, paragraph 15

### *National planning policy*

5.4.4 National planning policy for planning and decision-making affecting designated heritage assets and their settings is set out in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF), published in March 2012. The Government's over-arching aim is that there should be "a presumption in favour of sustainable development". One of the three dimensions of sustainable development is environmental and this includes "protecting and enhancing ... the built and historic environment".

5.4.5 Included in the NPPF's core planning principles is the statement that planning should "conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations". In order to achieve this, their 'significance', or heritage interest, must be understood at the outset. This clearly requires expert assessment of significance, proportionate to the interest of the asset and the extent of the intervention proposed, which this heritage impact assessment seeks to provide.

5.4.6 The importance of the contribution made to their significance by the settings of designated heritage assets and the impact of development on the setting of all heritage assets is recognised in the NPPF which defines setting as "The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance, or may be neutral."

5.4.7 The NPPF advises local planning authorities that they should require applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by development and that "The level of detail [required in describing the significance of the heritage assets] should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance". Authorities are advised to identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal, taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise and to seek to avoid or minimise conflict between a heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

5.4.8 The NPPF also states 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. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting.”

5.4.9 As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification. Paragraph 132 of the NPPF states that any substantial harm to or loss of a grade II listed building, park or garden should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, including grade I and II\* listed buildings, and grade I and II\* registered parks and gardens, should be wholly exceptional.

5.4.10 Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, authorities are advised to weigh this harm against the public benefit of the proposal, including securing the heritage asset’s optimum viable use.

#### *Local planning policy*

5.4.11 General policy and advice is set out in the *Ipswich Borough Council Core Strategy and Policies Development Plan Document*. The document and the Proposals Map were formally adopted by the Council on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2011. Specific conservation advice for the site is contained within *The Central Conservation Area Appraisal and Management* prepared by the Borough Council. This highlights particular issues for attention; these are set out on pages 39-40 of the document.

5.4.12 On St George’s Street “the east side has unsightly open sites used for car parking, relieved only by the group of self-sown sycamore trees in the Suffolk Institute of Technology car park.”

5.4.13 “The frontage to the Museum and Art Gallery originally had ornamental railings set on a red brick wall and stone plinth. The brick piers survive and the setting of the Listed buildings would be considerably enhanced if the railings were reinstated to their late 19<sup>th</sup> century detailing.”

5.4.14 "To the immediate north of the Museum the townscape quality of the street is reduced by the presence of a former light industrial unit and car park exit on the corner with Charles Street ..."

## 5.5 CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES

5.5.1 Above all the best use for an historic building is almost always the original use as in this the historic purpose of the architecture and the community's interest in, and memory of, the building are maintained.

*Draft policy 7: The buildings of the Ipswich Museum should be retained in use for museum, exhibition and educational purposes.*

5.5.2 There should be a presumption in favour of the conservation of all elements of the building that are identified in this plan as being of significance, but the design, plan form, fabric and fittings and fixtures of the early periods – 1880-1920 - make the most important contribution to its significance as a building of *exceptional* or *outstanding* architectural or historic interest.

*Draft policy 8: When formulating proposals for development or alterations at the Museum, priority will be given to the principle of retention and enhancement of the character and fabric of the buildings as they appeared before 1920 (with the exception of the former Art School at the north end of the site).*

*Draft policy 9: Management of the Museum buildings and site will seek to retain all elements of significance. However, the loss of elements of relatively low significance will be acceptable in order to preserve, reveal or reinforce elements of higher significance, or the wider significance of the place, or where justified to achieve other public benefits.*

5.5.3 Externally, the building has retained much of its early form but the following items have been altered or removed to the detriment of the significance of the structure:

- Sections of the boundary wall, railings and gates;
- The north and south doorways to the Schools and Library, respectively;

- The historic surface treatment on the south court, the forecourt to the Art Gallery and the 'Terrace' behind the entrance arcade;
- The raised pediments to the former Victoria Free Library and to the 1892-3 Schools extension.

*Draft policy 10: Important missing features of the elevation will be re-instated to their original appearance and design. These include the boundary wall, railings and gates; the north and south doorways to the Schools and Library; the historic surface treatment on the south court, the forecourt to the Art Gallery and the 'Terrace' behind the entrance arcade; and the raised pediments to the former Victoria Free Library and to the 1892-3 Schools extension. A programme of re-instatement should be published.*

5.5.4 Some later alterations, materials and details have removed features or fabric of significance, and/or they are utilitarian. The most obvious are the addition of the upper storey to the former Free Library, the installation of a draft lobby, a reception desk and new doors in the entrance hall, the formation of the opening from the main hall to the south range, the blocking of the corridor in the north range and the insertion of the new corridor and toilets in the north west. These changes have had a neutral or negative effect on the building. Opportunities should be taken when they arise to remove these where not essential for functional purposes, or to replace them with more sympathetic designs using materials in keeping with the exceptional significance of the building. Every opportunity should be taken to reinstate the original entrance arrangements and the interior of the hall.

5.5.5 Externally and internally the building has been marred by the *ad-hoc* installation of services, signage, lighting etc.

*Draft policy 11: An audit of inappropriate alterations, fittings, services, signage, lighting etc. should be undertaken and a programme of removal undertaken within five years. Priority should be given to the removal of fittings in, and alterations to, the entrance hall.*

5.5.6 The planning and decoration of the principal spaces, rooms and circulation areas can be appreciated, despite alterations. The central range (the entrance and staircase hall, the main hall, the gallery and the open roof) is of exceptional



significance and there is great potential to reveal and reinforce the very special character of these parts of the interior. This could be achieved by the re-instatement of original, or historic as appropriate, doors and joinery, decorative schemes, light fittings, floor finishes, fixture and fittings and historic displays. Some fixture and fittings can be found elsewhere in the Borough's/museum's ownership; these should be brought back. Other items might have to be re-made, if there is evidence of their form and nature.

*Draft policy 12: Highest priority should be given to protecting, revealing and reinforcing those aspects of highest significance in the interior, largely the pre-1920 plan form, fixtures and fittings and decoration. This should be achieved by the preparation and execution of a programme of restoration of original or historic elements to the entrance hall, main hall and gallery.*

5.5.7 The setting of the Museum, and the character and appearance of the conservation area, suffers in two particular respects. First the site of the former terrace on St George's Street (the car park) is harmful and redevelopment of the site, with an appropriately scaled and detailed building, should be encouraged. Second the Charles Street stores are unsightly. Redevelopment of these, and the adjoining former hospital accommodation building, would be highly desirable and engender pride in the local environment and place.

*Draft policy 13: Design briefs should be prepared for the redevelopment of the car parking area on St George's Street and the site of the Charles Street stores and former hospital accommodation.*

## 5.6 CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

5.6.1 The statutory listing of the Museum at grade II\* and the significance of its plan form and internal fixtures and fittings impose constraints on the potential for alteration. The most important constraint is that sub-division of the principal spaces would be unacceptably damaging to the comprehension of the historic form of the buildings and to the fabric. Having said this there may be scope for subdivision in the altered areas such as the rear service areas (boiler house, rear of Art Gallery, etc). There is also scope for new development in the rear yards and passages as well as on the car park site.

5.6.2 Some areas of the site and features of the buildings are seen as opportunities or constraints; two were discussed during the preparation of the conservation statement. First, the remaining parts of the gallery in the former Salem Chapel, including cast iron colonnettes on the ground floor, the raked floor of the gallery and the panelled gallery front are seen as a constraint for the present users. These features, however, are the only visible remaining elements of the interior of the listed building and the only evidence of its historic design and use. The local planning authority has previously advised that these features should be retained; their removal would harm the significance of the listed building.

5.6.3 Second the possibility of roofing over of the south court, with a lightweight, glazed canopy, has been proposed. It is the case that the south elevation of the main museum building has been altered; the original brief called for the identification of areas for possible extensions. But the complex of buildings as completed by 1893 is carefully composed and well-balanced. The advanced central, north and south blocks are relieved by the recessed flanks and the open space of the courts. There would be practical issues including the loss of potentially useable outdoor gathering and relaxation space, and the aesthetic and design difficulties associated with making one fit three different elevations with three different window and cornice lines. Finally, a new structure in this location is likely to prohibit the re-instatement of the original upper storey of the former Victoria Free Library – a highly important conservation goal.

5.6.4 On the other hand if the south elevation of the main block were to be used as a new entrance to the Museum it should be possible to erect a well-detailed canopy over the new entrance and to consider temporary 'installations' – artistic and functional - in the open court.

*Draft policy 14: The Colchester and Ipswich Museums City Council should undertake a detailed appraisal of viable and sustainable, conservation-led options for the re-development of the Museum buildings and site. Any proposed new development should seek to take into account the highly significant external elevations and spaces and the very special character of the central range of the interior.*

*Draft policy 15: The Colchester and Ipswich Museums City Council will prepare a business plan for the preferred option(s).*

*Draft policy 16: The Colchester and Ipswich Museums City Council will prepare a Heritage Impact Assessment for the preferred option(s).*

*Draft policy 17: The removal of significant fixture and fittings and the subdivision of the significant internal spaces will generally not be acceptable.*

*Draft policy 18: Development in significant spaces, that adversely affects the setting of elements of architectural significance and that jeopardise the re-instatement of missing parts of the architectural composition, (see 5.5.3 and draft policy 10) will generally not be acceptable.*

## 5.7 BUILDING CONDITION AND NEED FOR REPAIR

5.7.1 The Museum buildings are mostly in fair to good condition but there appear to be many signs of 'deferred maintenance' including faulty rainwater goods, poor pointing, use of inappropriate materials and ingress of water. One important priority therefore is to repair the buildings and ensure full and appropriate uses.

5.7.2 There is no survey of the condition of the built fabric. Best practice would be to prepare a fabric condition survey on a frequent, often quinquennial basis. This should be undertaken by an accredited conservation architect or building surveyor with input from other specialists if required. The report should provide estimates of cost prepared by an experienced (conservation) quantity surveyor. Generally, the report should identify the following priorities:

- 1 Areas requiring further investigation.
- 2 Urgent repairs to be carried out within 6 months.
- 3 Repairs to be undertaken within 2 years.
- 4 Repairs to be undertaken within 5 years.
- 5 Future and further desirable repairs and improvements.

*Draft policy 19: Colchester and Ipswich Museums will commission a fabric condition survey for the Museum buildings and update the document on a regular basis.*

*Draft policy 20: Colchester and Ipswich Museums will undertake all the necessary repairs as identified in the fabric condition report.*

5.7.3 There is no maintenance plan for the Museum buildings either in their present state or for the post-repair period.

*Draft policy 21: The Colchester and Ipswich Museums will prepare a maintenance plan to allow for the cost of cyclical maintenance in its annual budget and carry out the recommended works in accordance with the maintenance plan. Records should be kept of what is done and when to ensure compliance.*

*Draft policy 22: The Colchester and Ipswich Museums will allocate a realistic budget for the works of repair and maintenance, in accordance with the priorities set out in the fabric condition report and maintenance plan.*

## 5.8 ACCESS AND ACCESSIBILITY

5.8.1 An access audit should be prepared to address the following matters:

- Surroundings and parking;
- External access;
- Reception areas and entrance lobbies;
- Internal circulation;
- W.C. provision;
- Accommodation generally

5.8.2 Given the exceptional architectural and historical interest of the Museum and its use as a public building the matters set out can be addressed as follows:

- ?????
- ?????
- ?????
- Visibility and access from Ipswich town centre, and the possibilities for improving connections.

*Draft policy 23: The Colchester and Ipswich Museums will undertake an access audit for the Museum buildings and site.*

*Draft policy 24: The Colchester and Ipswich Museums will ensure that works to improve access and accessibility do not harm, and preferably will enhance, the significance of the Museum buildings and site.*

## 5.9 FURTHER RESEARCH AND THE NEED FOR A CUMULATIVE BUILDING ARCHIVE

5.9.1 A thorough understanding of the history and significance of heritage assets, and their component parts, is essential for their proper management. Loss or damage can be prevented and change managed to preserve and enhance significance if a detailed understanding and assessment of significance is established and kept up to date. Research can also enhance understanding and appreciation.

5.9.2 Gaps in the understanding of the Museum buildings relate mainly to the display of the collections in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Oral history programmes, the examination of local newspapers and the collection of photographs and ephemera should provide additional information.

*Draft policy 25: Further studies of documentary sources will be undertaken to document the displays and collection in the first forty years*

5.9.3 At present there is no archive on the building. Copies of all significant documents need to be gathered together and held at a single location with a copy of all material at the Museum. High resolution copies of all archive material should be obtained and made available to those with an interest in the property.

*Draft policy 26: A cumulative building and site archive, with high resolution digital copies of all material, will be established and maintained by the Colchester and Ipswich Museums.*

## 5.10 A CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN AND GAZETTEER.

5.10.1 This document is a conservation statement, including a full statement of significance, not a full conservation management plan. Some of the gaps are set out in paragraphs 1.3.3 – 1.3.5 and in section 5 above. All of these matters should be addressed – full consultation and the collection of personal histories, fabric and paint investigation, a plan for the collections, a fabric condition survey, an access and accessibility audit and a business (and ‘audience’) plan – in order that a full conservation management plan could be produced as soon as possible. An illustrated gazetteer of all structure and spaces (internal and external) and of all fixtures and fittings should be produced in order to inform detailed decision-making and management.

*Draft policy 27: The Colchester and Ipswich Museums should commission the preparation of a full conservation management plan and an illustrated gazetteer for the whole of the museum site.*

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August 2013