KIRKLEES CULTURAL HEART
HERITAGE STATEMENT: VOLUME 4
LIBRARY AND ART GALLERY: ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

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4.0 - LIBRARY AND ART GALLERY ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

4.0.1 - INTRODUCTION

This Assessment of Significance comprises Volume 4 of the Kirklees Cultural Heart Heritage Statement, commissioned by Kirklees Council, and produced by Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios. It seeks to provide a detailed appraisal of the Grade II listed Huddersfield Library and Art Gallery building as found in December 2021, as well as making specific consideration to its immediate setting.

This Assessment should be viewed as substantially complete. However, if in the course of the project leading up to planning, further information is discovered that further informs significance or potential impact, the Assessment will be updated. It should be read in conjunction with the separate Assessments of Significance produced for the setting of the development site (Volume 33) and Queensgate Market (Volume 4), alongside the other accompanying volumes of the Heritage Statement as listed in Volume 1.

A Heritage Impact Assessment upon the Library and Art Gallery building will be undertaken in the course of the scheme's design development. The proposals will be guided by the understanding of significance recorded here. The scheme will be appraised in terms of its impact and the heritage benefit or harm caused to it, with justification describing the mitigation of harm where appropriate.

4.0.2 - METHODOLOGY

With reference to archive material, such as the original Architect's drawings, publications by the Architect and references to past secondary research, the assessment seeks to understand the heritage significance of the building's various aspects based on an evaluation of its associated values and interests.

The process of assessment and its findings draw from relevant legislative, planning and heritage frameworks designed to inform appropriate development and understanding of designated heritage assets. These frameworks are discussed further in Volume 1. The report also draws from the professional expertise of its authors to inform its findings.

A hierarchy of designations for significance have been used to describe and categorise aspects of the building and its importance from a heritage perspective. The designations of significance used for this assessment are based on the frameworks described above and are described as follows:

High Significance

Exceptional aspects of the building that describe its intended purpose and are strong reflections of its associated values as a heritage asset, such as aesthetic or historic aspects. While condition is no measure of significance it is evident that where elements of aesthetic importance are intact, they have greater propensity to retain significance. Elements with high significance best communicate the embodied heritage values of the asset. Change to elements of high significance will require care and clear justification with consideration for the long-term sustainable use of the building.

Medium Significance

Aspects of the building that support its special character. These may be seen as part of the greater whole which in their own right are of interest but not exceptional. Elements of medium significance are able to tolerate change.

Low Significance

General elements of the building that are often original but offer little contribution to the building's value as a heritage asset. These could be aspects of the base construction or finishes. These elements make up the majority of the fabric and should be able to accept extensive change while leaving the overarching significance of the building intact.

Negative Significance

Negative significance is attributed where overarching values associated with the asset are affected or even eroded. This may derive from more recent elements of fabric or even the absence of original elements. Aspects of negative significance are most often the result of later change that has not been sympathetic to the building's special character or is derived from the loss of elements of medium or high significance where no clear benefit has been achieved.

The purpose of this assessment is to offer a summary description on a room-by-room basis to establish a specific account of significance.

This assessment should be considered a working document capable of evolving as new evidence emerges. Such updates to the assessment may be required to capture resolved understanding which often develops in the course of a project where a heritage asset is the subject of change. These may arise due to the discovery of new information that has potential to improve understanding of the asset.

4.1 - BRIEF HISTORY

4.1.1 - OVERVIEW

As a piece of civic architecture, the Huddersfield Library and Art Gallery building represented a small picture of a much grander vision for the town that emerged during the early 1930s. Construction on the building began in 1937, and it was completed by the start of WWII.

The new building was intended as a replacement to the town existing library and gallery provision that had outgrown their space on the upper floors of Somerset Buildings. As described in documents at the time:

> *"The new Library is to serve to replace the existing obsolete premises in Church Street, provide for present and future reader's needs, act as a distribution centre for the local Branch Libraries, and also contain an Art Gallery of sufficient accommodation to house the existing permanent collection of pictures and such temporary collections as are arranged from time to time."*
>
> (*A Plan for Huddersfield,* P.E. Hirst, 1945)

The Library was opened by Mayor Alderman Norman Crossley on 15th April 1940, however wartime planning meant the Art Gallery remained closed until 1943 so that it may be used as a temporary hospital if needed. In addition, the lower ground floor of the building was temporarily repurposed as a decontamination post and first aid centre prior to its formal opening as a Children's Library on 19th May 1945 (Ref – WYAS). Since this time, the building has continued to operate under its original civic purpose as a Library and Art Gallery for the local people of Huddersfield.

4.1.1.1 - Huddersfield Library and Art Gallery building

4.1 - BRIEF HISTORY

4.1.2 - COUNCIL RECORD OF WORKS

The Council's committee minutes in which plans for the Public Library and Art Gallery were discussed record the following key milestones as the project developed (Ref – CL/5, WYAS):

2nd March 1934: Council carries a recommendation to set aside the site of the Ramsden Street Chapel for use as a Public Library.

23rd March 1934: Designs and plans for a new library to be obtained by competition with other Architects, and that Librarians should correspond with other towns where Library schemes are in progress.

1st June 1934: Corporation now obtained possession of the Ramsden Street chapel premises.

28th September 1934: Borough Engineers be instructed to submit sketch plans for a new building.

1st February 1935: Borough Engineers submit four alternative designs. Committee prefer design Option 'D' be used and tenders should be requested.

12th July 1935: West Yorkshire Society of Architects suggest six Architects willing to carry out the work at the new building.

30th September 1935: Committee appoint E.H. Ashburner as Architect.

27th December 1935: Estimate from the Architect to be approved and the Finance Committee accept to proceed based on the projected cost

27th March 1936: Ashburner submits amended plans

15th April 1936: Ashburner requested to redesign elevations (the record doesn't clarify if this is a request to or from the Architect).

27th May 1936: Committee inspects Leeds University Library for ideas and opinions before embarking on the Huddersfield Library project.

18th September 1936: Tenders invited for steelwork, heating and plant.

16th October 1936: Demolition of Ramsden Street chapel is complete.

13th November 1936: Tenders for steelwork accepted and tenders for building work invited.

4th January 1937: Tender from J. Wimpenny & Co. Builders accepted.

Construction starts in 1937, with Councillor Thomas Smailes setting the foundation stone on 29th October 1937.

17th December 1937: Architect receives revised tender from James Woodford RA, Sculptor, for stone sculptural work.

14th January 1938: Tender from J. Wimpenny & Co. for carved shield over main entrance door be accepted.

18th March 1938: Architect submitted photos of the models of the sculpture figures for the new building, and for the mural panels in Children's Library by Art School of Technical College, both approved.

Construction of envelope completes around mid-1939.

24th June 1938: Tenders submitted and accepted for the teak woodblock flooring, cork carpet and tile flooring, Terrazzo work, marble work and asphalt roofing.

14th October 1938: Tenders submitted and accepted for wood fittings, wrought iron railings, bronze grilles, wall tiling and blinds in Art Gallery.

17th March 1939: Confirmed that the room in the basement of the new building e is selected by the Air Raid Precautions Department for use as a first aid post.

16th June 1939: Architect submits an amended scheme of three rooms as a first aid post, and plan accepted.

17th November 1939: Final cost of the Library realised on statement submitted to Borough Treasurer, shown as £103,071. Committee place on record their thanks to E.H. Ashburner, Architect, for the efficient manner the work was carried out.

15th April 1940: Opening of the Lending Library performed by the Mayor, Alderman Norman Crossley.

1943: Art Gallery Opened after being reserved as possible Emergency Hospital during the war.

19th May 1945: Opening of the Children's Library following its release by the Air Raid Precaution Department as a first aid post.

4.2 - DESIGN PHILOSOPHY

4.2.1 - ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN APPROACH

The Huddersfield Corporation had sought to redefine its civic centre with the 1933 Jagger Report in which the Borough Engineer, W. Jagger, offered proposals for the new Municipal Offices on Ramsden Street and a new Fire Station on Princess Street, the site opposite that of the future Library. Both proposed buildings were presented in two architectural styles; Design A (Art Deco) and Design B (a reductive neoclassical style), both of which were created to reflect the aspirational visions of the Corporation. This desire to explore different architectural styles was an approach repeated with the new Library and Art Gallery building. The realised building comprises a steel frame with Crosland Hill ashlar stonework and Art Deco detailing.

E. H. Ashburner was commissioned as Architect once the site for the new Library and Art Gallery had been selected, and only after the Borough Engineer had offered his initial concept for the scale and aesthetic of the building. It is thought that early conceptual drawings conveying a neoclassical vision for the building were developed by the Corporation prior to Ashburner's appointment. Committee meeting minutes of 15th April 1936 suggest a subsequent shift in the previous architectural approach toward the Art Deco-inspired decorative treatments that are evident today.

Ashburner was recognised in his time as an Architect specialising in the design of public libraries. He authored the book *Modern Public Libraries* in 1946, which continued to inform thinking of public library design until the 1970s. The publication forms a key source for this assessment of significance due to Ashburner's references to the Huddersfield Library and Gallery building. As such, its information provides insight into the building's original design and has subsequently informed an appreciation of the progressive modifications that have taken place since its opening.

In *Modern Public Libraries*, Ashburner describes the design approach for the building as follows:

> *"At Huddersfield the planning problem was comparatively simple in spite of the fact that the upper floors contained very important departments which it was felt called for a generous planning of their approach stairs. A central service counter was asked for with "in" and " out "openings on either side as at Birkenhead. This condition permitted of a monumental stair with a straight flight "up" directly opposite to the main entrance and with return flights back on either side. Approach to the upper departments and galleries is thus sufficiently obvious and inviting -at the expense, to some extent, of the lending library, of which the entrance is not so prominently positioned as is the case at either Birkenhead or Sheffield. The short approach passages to the lending library, however, do have their uses. In one, queues may form for the lending library " in" counter, and in the other there is a convenient recess where readers may turn aside to parcel up their books before passing out into the street. The floors of all reading-rooms are covered with ¼-inch thick cork carpet, whilst those of the art galleries and the central area of the lending library are laid with ½ -inch cork tiles set in mastic.*
>
> *The children's library and reading-room (both of which are on the solid) are laid with 1-inch hardwood blocks, the stack rooms and staff corridors being finished in grano treated with silicate of soda. To facilitate the cleaning of the white glazed brick walls of the central area, a light traveller and hoist is provided, spanning the area and working along tracks set in the tops of the side coping walls.*
>
> *The general equipment of the building includes vacuum-cleaning plant, internal telephones, electric clocks, and lifts for the accommodation of passengers, goods, books, and pictures. Internally, a simple, easily cleaned treatment of plaster decoration and wood fittings has been adopted throughout. The entrance hall is lined with San Steffano marble, with Swedish Green skirtings and a chequered paving of Bianco del Mare. The central area of the lending library is emphasized by a treatment of clear-cut fluted columns of Swedish Green marble. In the children's library the inner wall is brightened by a series of mural frescoes illustrative of local legends. For the design of these frescoes a competition was organized through the auspices of the Principal of the Huddersfield School of Art, and the work was carried out by the successful contestant, Mr. C. R. Napier."*
>
> (*Modern Public Libraries*, E.H. Ashburner, 1946)

A selection of other points from the same publication are highlighted below:

- Building the library cost £20/m2 in 1939 - £87,000 for about 4,300m2
- 10% of the capital cost went on the bespoke timber joinery (bookshelves, desks etc.)
- 2% of the capital cost was spent on commissioning the entrance statues and sculptural frieze by James Woodford RA
- Ventilation for the building runs in the depth of the external walls
- The gallery walls were originally lined with tongue and groove boards covered with selected fabric. with horizontal metal slots for easy picture hanging
- A central vacuum cleaner originally served the building.

4.2 - DESIGN PHILOSOPHY

- The building was built with heated ceilings throughout comprising piped hot water in welded wrought iron pipes
- Ashburner had a low opinion of newspapers (except the Times and Manchester Guardian), stating that: “the general standard of the daily paper is scarcely of sufficient merit as to warrant its inclusion in a building devoted to works of literature”. He consequently located the Newspaper Room away from the main building approach on the lower ground floor and via its own external entrance. This entrance directly off Bull and Mouth Lane at the Junction with Ramsden Street allowed the working man more immediate access to the room without the need of entering the main library located above.

4.2.2 - ENGINEERING DESIGN AND BUILDING SERVICES

Ashburner held clear views on the improvements that contemporary building engineering strategies of the period could deliver for the operation of the library and art gallery space. Through this philosophy, Ashburner also sought to conceal the building’s services from public view. This was in order to maximise the wall space available for the building’s civic purpose and to maintain the clarity of its architectural volume and detailing.

Ventilation System

The building was designed with a whole-building centralised mechanical ventilation system, with services discreetly hidden within the building fabric (namely the external walls) and selected fixtures. Inlet and extract ducts serving each main room of the library and art gallery spaces were designed to terminate at fitted furniture in the form of bookshelves, archive shelving or dado panelling. These vents are typically described by flat bronze grilles set into and over the joinery. Larger extract vents are found in the walls at higher level and are typically of timber that has been painted to match the wall. The lower ground plant spaces included the main fan room, which is still present and appears to still contain the original or early equipment. This connects to the main shaft that rises and connects to the ventilation distribution that runs through the building. The original plans including a central vacuum cleaning system. This was similarly concealed within the building fabric and is typically located in the corner of the library rooms.

Next to this room is a fuel store which would have been in service of the boilers.

Heating System

Ashburner did not want to obscure the building’s usable floor area with radiators or pipework, and therefore sought to locate heating equipment within the ceiling or other elements of the building fabric. Where possible all pipes are hidden or buried within purpose-formed chases. His working details for the gallery roof describe “roof slopes of concrete and ‘viking’ hollow tile construction’. Set below these are networks of piped hot water systems in welded wrought iron pipework. On inspection of the building, these pipes appear to have been either chased into the roof once formed or laid out on formwork against which the roof was then assembled, with a topping of concrete poured. The basement plant space housed four boilers alongside other plant which discharged to a flue in the northeast corner.

Electric Lighting

Ashburner’s drawings illustrate that the joinery and ceilings were designed to accommodate modern electric lighting. This continued his approach to integrate services within the fabric of the building, thereby ensuring minimum disruption to its aesthetics. Almost all of the original light fittings have been removed over time with those located in the main Entrance Lobby the only ones noted in the course of the recent building inspections.

A picture lift was also provided to serve the gallery spaces, which incorporated its own heating and ventilation system

4.2 - DESIGN PHILOSOPHY

4.2.3 - INTEGRATION OF PUBLIC ART

In *Modern Public Libraries,* Ashburner wrote:

> *"I always feel strongly that in a library, perhaps more than in most buildings, it is incumbent of the architect to do his utmost to beautify his building by making it a permanent record of the best of contemporary art, sculpture, and other arts or crafts which are available. If artists of sufficient note are available locally, then so much the better".*
>
> (*Modern Public Libraries*, E.H. Ashburner, 1946)

The integration of specifically commissioned artworks arose from Ashburner's desire to bring contemporary ideas of artistic vision and quality into publicly assessable spaces. The sculptures of the Spirit of Art and the Spirit of Literature flanking the entrance of the Library are by James Woodford RA (1839-1976, elected RA 1945). He was a sculptor working in the architectural and heraldic tradition and often employing an Art Deco style who also undertook

inster Abbey for the Queen's coronation in 1953, the sculptural doors to the RIBA at 66 Portland Place (1934) and the statue of Robin Hood (1954) for his home town of Nottingham.

Within the building there was also the recognition of the importance of art. The Corporation commissioned Charles Reginald Napier (1910-89) to design a set of murals executed in oil on canvas depicting traditional folk tales set in the Huddersfield area. Each was 135cm x 41cm and hung on the walls of the Children's Library. At some point in the building's history, the Napier murals were removed from the Children's Library and placed in the main Kirklees collection. It is thought that their removal coincided with a more extensive series of internal alterations that took place during or after the 1970s.

Robert Hall, former Principal Visual Arts Officer, described Napier's involvement in the project:

> *"Napier worked with six of his students on the commission which were completed between 1938 and 1940. The Marsden Cuckoo revolves around the desire of the villagers to capture the bird to prevent it migrating and thus preserve the summer. The Slaithwaite Moon-rakers depicts liquor smuggling and The Scapegoat Hill Band depicts the celebrations after the brass band won a competition. Scapegoat Hill, Linthwaite, Slaithwaite and Marsden are all situated close to or in the Colne Valley which lies to the west of Huddersfield. The valley was once dominated by the textile industry, the narrow valley floor crammed with huge stone mill buildings and extensive weaving sheds together with river, road, canal and railway. The steep valley sides lead up to farmland and moorland high above the mill chimney tops"*
>
> (Robert Hall, 2004, extract from *Occupational Medicine*, Volume 69, Issue 1, January 2019)

The inclusion of art as cultural expression within the built environment, and civic spaces specifically, is a theme found elsewhere within Huddersfield. The accompanying description on setting which is to be read in conjunction with this document, describes the commissioning of public art within the wider locality.

4.2.3.1 - 'Spirit of Literature', James Woodford, 1939

4.2.3.2 - James Woodford (right) at work sculpting 'Spirit of Literature'

4.2 - DESIGN PHILOSOPHY

4.2.3.3 - 'The Walling Up of the Marsden Cuckoo', C.R. Napier, designed for the Children's Library (now in Kirklees collection)

4.2.3.4 - 'Scapegoat Hill Band', C.R. Napier, designed for the Children's Library (now in Kirklees collection)

4.2.3.5 - 'Slaithwaite Moonrakers', C.R. Napier, designed for the Children's Library (now in Kirklees collection)

4.2.3.6 - 'The Telling of the Stories', C.R. Napier, designed for the Children's Library (now in Kirklees collection)

4.2 - DESIGN PHILOSOPHY

4.2.4 - BUILDING PHASES

The building has remained in the same use since it first opened, with a subtle series of modifications made to the building's internal layout and finishes in response to evolving operational practices for library and gallery facilities, as well as in response to changing user demand. In addition, the significant redevelopment of the building's setting between 1969-1974 under the Murrayfield development has resulted in a largely new context. The wider context is described under the section on setting.

To help understand this sequence of progressive development and thereby inform the assessment of significance, the spatial arrangement and fabric of the building can be broadly categorised into three phases:

Phase 1 (1937 / 1945): Original Construction

The library in its initial period of operation, and subject to some early changes arising during and shortly after the war.

Phase 2 (1946-1970): Early Adaption

Changes to the layout of some spaces to suit shifts in use and/or cultural changes in which the following modifications took place:

- Lower ground floor Children's Library north bay partitioned
- Lower ground floor Newspaper Room reappropriated as a Store (Rm.31)
- Ground floor Chief Librarian's Office (now Office and Transcription Service) layout changed and two rooms formed (Rm.48 & 49)
- Ground floor Staff Office (now Administration Offices) partitioned (Rm.39 & 39a)
- First floor Ladies Room and Reference Library combined / partition removed (Rm.76)
- First floor entrance to Reference Library converted into small office (Rm.75)

Phase 3 (1971-Present): Post 1970s Alterations

This most recent phase encompasses further internal alterations, as well as the removal of the Bull and Mouth public house at the north-west corner of the site and changes to the external building landscape and setting to the north, east and south initiated by the Murrayfield development.

General modifications:

- All WCs refitted
- Passenger lift renewed
- Shelving within the open floors of library spaces replaced with modern alternatives
- Original purpose-made loose furniture largely removed
- Original service counters removed
- Entrance turnstiles removed
- Roof coverings patched and some lantern rooflights covered or replaced
- Original floor finishes to rooms covered or possibly renewed

Modifications at lower ground floor:

- Landscape around the north, east and west altered as part of the Queensgate redevelopment
- Exhibition Hall (now the Lower Ground Stair Lobby): Lobbies and storeroom added
- Space below entrance steps enclosed
- Children's Library finishes changed, and Napier paintings removed
- Main Store at centre of plan partitioned (Rm.17 & Rm.32)
- Service access adapted and lobby (Rm.35) added
- Boiler plant renewed (at least twice)

Modifications at ground floor:

- Reading Room stripped out and converted to Computer Room (Rm.58)
- Committee Room furniture removed (Rm.57)

Modifications at first floor:

- Partitions between Study Room removed (Rm.77, 72a & 72b)
- Reference Archive shelving replaced with rolling archive shelving (Rm.66)

Modifications at second floor:

- Mechanical plant added in space below the lanterns
- Suspended ceilings added
- Original wall linings above dado removed
- Picture lift adjacent to former Picture Store decommissioned
- Entrance to Gallery 1 adapted to form a storeroom in place of cloak space (Rm.88)

The assessment of significance refers to these three phases where sufficient information is available with which to date original features or later modifications. The forthcoming scheme that is to be designed with close reference to this assessment will become 'Phase 4' in the building's historical development.

4.2 - DESIGN PHILOSOPHY

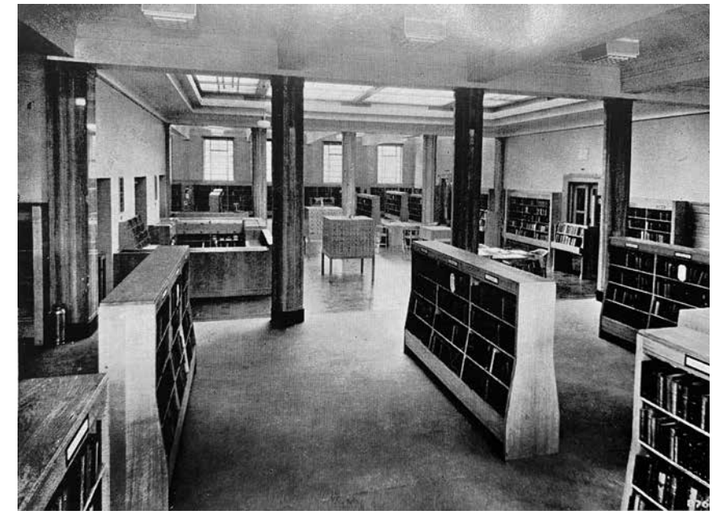
4.2.3.7 - Postcard of Library and Art Gallery on Ramsden Street with the Theatre Royal behind (now demolished), c1950s

4.2.3.8 - Library and Art Gallery, 1940

4.2.3.9 - East elevation looking onto Bull & Mouth Lane (now lost)

4.2.3.10 - North elevation looking onto Bull and Mouth public house (now demolished), c. early 1960s

4.2.3.11 - Entrance Hall, 1940



4.2.3.12 - Lending Library, 1940

4.3 - SETTING

In his book *Modern Public Libraries*, E.H.Ashburner describes the building in its setting at the time of construction:

> *"THE HUDDERSFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY…was opened in October 1939. It faces on to Ramsden Street, with its frontage set back 25 ft. from the general building line; a set-back which has permitted of a spacious treatment of the main entrance steps being adopted. A fall in the level of Ramsden Street has allowed of access being gained from the side street to a paved courtyard extending under the main entrance steps and across the front and west side of the building. Access may thus be had from the paved court to the lower ground floor and to the children's library and newspaper room - departments which it was deemed desirable to isolate from the other reading-rooms of the library. Separate staff and goods entrances are provided at the rear of the building, where also are placed the fan, fuel, and switch rooms, and, in a sub-basement chamber, the heating and vacuum cleaning plant."*

4.3.1 - Library and Art Gallery viewed from south-west

4.3.2 - Library and Art Gallery viewed from south-east

4.3.3 - Steps from Victoria Lane down to Piazza

4.3.4 - East elevation onto Piazza Shopping Centre

SETTING GENERALLY

Low / Negative Significance

The Library is set within an area of the town which has been intentionally excluded from the Huddersfield Town Conservation Area (CA). The curtilage of the CA runs along Victoria Lane to the west of the Library.

The assessment the Library setting is concerned with the area outside the curtilage of listing. In summary in the north, east and south aspects have all been redeveloped since the Library opened. The west aspect retains the street line of 1945 with various aspects of the street re-developed since.

4.3 - SETTING

The south and west retain some of the form and topography known to the building when it was designed, although the surrounding townscape has changed dramatically since the building was constructed following the more recent Murrayfield development. The removal of the Victorian market building and Bull and Mouth Pub to the north and the total loss of the pre 1969 townscape from Bull and Mouth Street down to Queen Street mean that the areas to the north and east is completely changed. The aspirational public realm of the 1969-74 Piazza is oddly disconnected from the library building. The setting has no historic value and limited aesthetic value for the soft landscaping of the adjacent Piazza which was intended to form a garden space within the town. In truth, the designs were not fully integrated into the setting of the library and as such, offer the promise of a valuable public amenity that was never realised in use.

Further to the south is the Grade II listed Queensgate Market, which was constructed as part of phase 2 of the Murrayfield development. Two arcades allow access to the shared public realm between the Library and Market Hall. The western most arcade provides a line of sight onto the 'Spirit of Art' which is suggestive of an opportunity to have improved the relationship between the Market Hall and Library which seems to have been missed.

To the north, the Piazza retail complex and open space between offers no comment on the Library. The hard landscaping is devoid of features or intent and provides little opportunity for engagement with between the two buildings.

4.3.5 - Piazza Shopping Centre facing building's north aspect

4.3.6 - Victoria Lane looking south from King Street

4.3.7 - View of building from Peel Street

4.3.8 -View of west elevation from Albert Yard

4.4 - BUILDING EXTERIOR AND ITS RELATION TO SETTING

SOUTH (PRIMARY ELEVATION)

High Significance

The front of the building was designed to address the main visitor approach from Ramsden Street, a steeply sloping road and pavement that afforded stepped access to the Children's Library, as well as to the grand entrance hall to the main Lending Library and the Newspaper Reading Room.

This south-facing elevation is in a reductive Art Deco style with clear Egyptian and Greek stylistic influences. The entrance is somewhat pinched, set at the centre of the elevation below a series of five tall windows that describe the first-floor landing above the entrance hall. The public entrance seems too understated a gesture for the boldness of the elevation but is likely the consequence of achieving a practical threshold between inside and out. The two enthroned sculptures of 'Spirit of Literature' and 'Spirit of Art', by James Woodford RA and situated to the west and east of the entrance respectively, are of very high aesthetic and artistic value. These are carved from local stone and are highly significant assets in their own right, but also as components in the composition and stylistic execution of the primary elevation. Their inclusion emphasies the main entrance approach. Woodford also created the decoratively carved relief panels set in the spandrel between the ground and first floor windows, which comprise grouped figures symbolising arts and cultural activities. Bronze grilles that originally marked the entrance door head and windows flanking the entrance have since been lost. The central handrails on the approach stair are later 1980s additions.

As an aesthetic and architectural composition, the south elevation is carefully controlled and has an austere elegance. The detailing shows a strong transition between the Art Deco influences of the 1930s and the Modern Movement that was set to dominate.

4.4.1 - South elevation onto Princess Alexandra Walk

4.4.2 - Entrance from Princess Alexandra Walk

4.4.3 - Decorative panel on south elevation, James Woodford, 1939

4.4.4 - 'Spirit of Literature', James Woodford, 1939

4.4 - BUILDING EXTERIOR AND ITS RELATION TO SETTING

EAST (SECONDARY ELEVATION)

Medium Significance

This elevation once addressed Bull and Mouth Street, a tapering street that linked to the now lost Victoria Street that ran from Victoria Lane to Queen Street and was the south aspect of the Victorian Market Hall.

The façade of the Library was to be seen in the context of the primary elevation and as a continuation is of the same architectural aesthetic, but on a simplified canvas with reduced artistic adornment. The changes made to the surrounding townscape as a result of the 1969-1974 Murrayfield development left this elevation far more visible than Ashburner would have envisaged. Furthermore, the removal of Bull and Mouth Street and the subsequent formation of a steeply sloping route into subterranean tunnels has served to isolate this elevation from the public realm. This space was initially excavated to form a car park and adjacent delivery zone. The continuation of this as an access route from the tunnels to the upper street level was made some time after 1990.

The east elevation holds value for is architectural detailing, however the erosion of it imposes a negative impact on this aspect of the building.

4.4.5 - East elevation facing the Piazza Shopping Centre

4.4.6 - East elevation facing the Piazza Shopping Centre

4.4.7 - Tunnel access below east elevation

4.4 - BUILDING EXTERIOR AND ITS RELATION TO SETTING

WEST (SECONDARY ELEVATION)

High and Medium Significance

This elevation addresses Victoria Lane, which remains largely as it was in 1940 save for the more recent Poundland development at the junction of Albert Yard, which has resulted in a sever and very bland elevation of stone. The street setting has some communal and historic value.

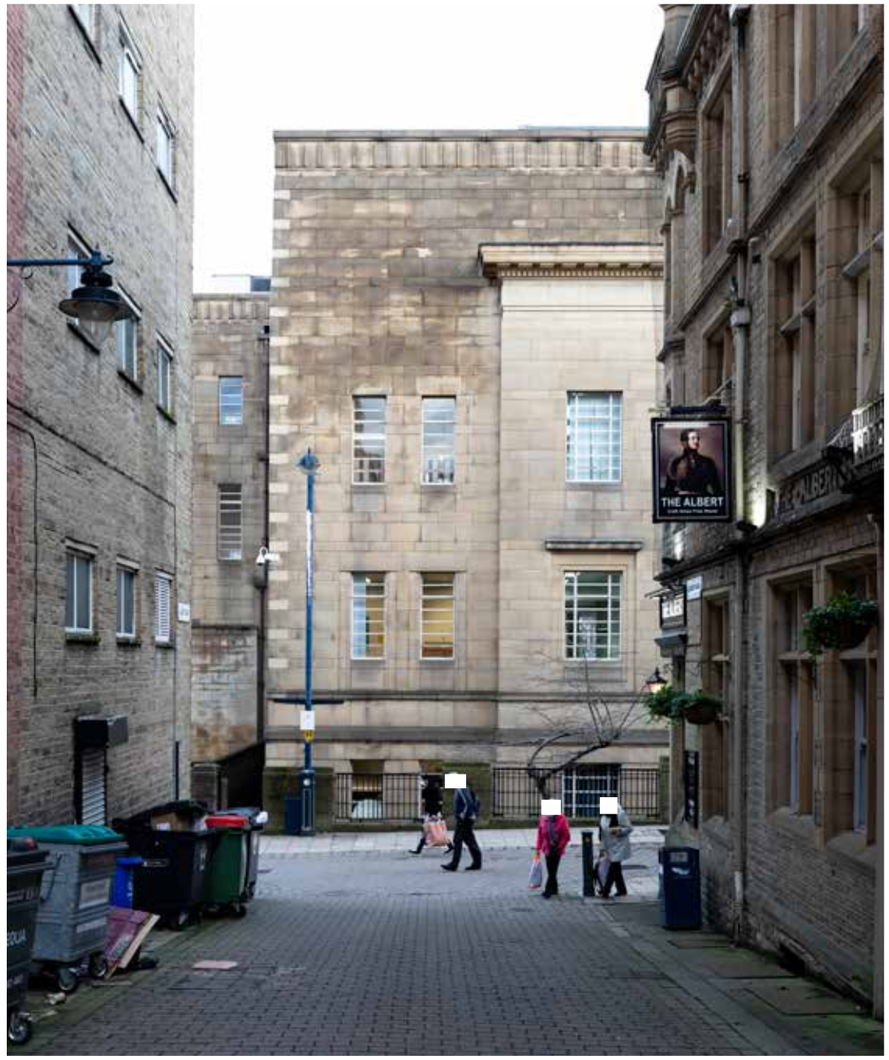
Between the street and the building is a sunken garden area lined with cherry trees and a stone wall with iron railings provides a perforate aspect of the garden from the street. This arrangement of spaces exists as intended in the original design and provides a soft and welcoming space between the street and Children's Library. Ashburner viewed this space as key to the philosophical aspect of the Library's role in aiding contemplation and thought. This sunken garden holds some communal and aesthetic value and as a part of the original landscape has high significance.

The composition of this elevation is broadly identical to that of the east, with some minor adjustments to suit the shorter plan on this side of the building. This elevation has medium significance.

The northern projection of the elevation beyond the formal piece serves as the façade of the service block. At the time of the building's completion in 1940, the floor at this location would have been disguised by surrounding existing buildings, however later clearance works have left this area empty (see description of the north / tertiary elevation). The west-facing elevation of the service block has low significance.

4.4.8 - West elevation and sunken garden

4.4.9 - West elevation and sunken garden



4.4.10 - East elevation from Albert Yard

4.4 - BUILDING EXTERIOR AND ITS RELATION TO SETTING

NORTH (TERTIARY ELEVATION)

Low Significance

This elevation was originally set behind a series of two and three storey buildings, including the former Bull and Mouth public house.

The north elevation was not designed to be of aesthetic significance, with architectural detailing only retained at the wall head which, from a distance, would have been visible above the roofs of the adjoining properties. The current setting is the result of the Murrayfield redevelopment, which resulted in the extensive excavation of this area to a substantial depth so that access tunnels could be formed. This has effectively removed much of the archaeological potential. To maintain the service route to the rear of the service block, a small retaining wall was formed in the same brickwork as found in the wider Murrayfield development and in the Market Hall. Although the ground level was reinstated, the land which was subsequently given over to a combination of soft and hard landscaping offers almost no positive relationship to the adjoining spaces or buildings. The open aspect of this area was left in this manner to enable future development at the northern end of the building. Furthermore, it is noted that a strategy for northward expansion formed part of Ashburner's original design intent, which may explain the blank nature of this elevation.

In summary, the north elevation in isolation comprises little in the way of aesthetic value and is of low significance when compared to the building's other elevations. Furthermore, it could be argued to embody negative significance when weighed in the round with its immediate setting, which is considered to impart a negative impact on the building as a whole and its wider context.

4.4.11 - North elevation

4.4.12 - North elevation from Victoria Lane

4.4 - BUILDING EXTERIOR AND ITS RELATION TO SETTING

ROOF

Low Significance

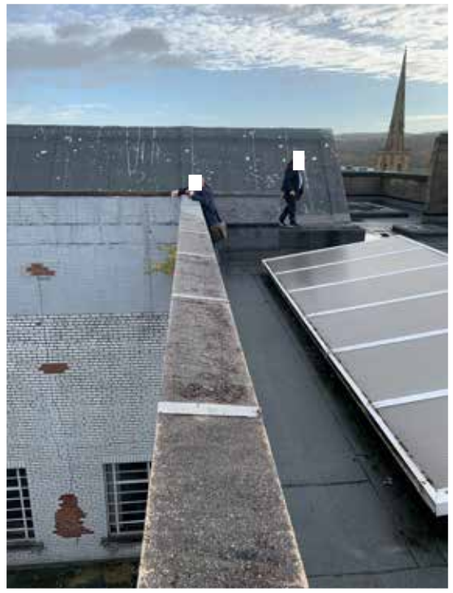
The roof is formed of a series of glazed lanterns set behind a parapet. These allowed daylight into the windowless galleries and other rooms below.

The lanterns are a combination of triangular pitched profiles orientated to match the rooms below with more simplistic upstands. The pitched elements are typically glazed along one face and in-situ concrete to the other. The roof was originally covered in asphalt. All roof forms still exist but in varying degrees of completeness, with some capped and felted over. Where lanterns remain functional, the glazing is of a modern replacement. The arrangement of pitched roofs, gutters and flat roofs across the roofscape have all been relined in mineral felt or other flat roofing material. The original roofing coverings have been either removed or covered over.

The presence of roof lanterns illuminating the gallery holds some significance tied to the functional operation of these spaces, however the absence of original material and the architectural form of the lanterns themselves offer little historic value.

4.4.13 - Modern lanterns to roof

4.4.14 - Modern lanterns to roof



4.4.15 - Modern lanterns to roof

4.4.16 - Original lanterns to roof

4.4.17 - Deteriorating roof parapet

4.4.18 - Service access at roof

4.4 - BUILDING EXTERIOR AND ITS RELATION TO SETTING

LIGHTWELL ABOVE ATRIUM / LENDING LIBRARY

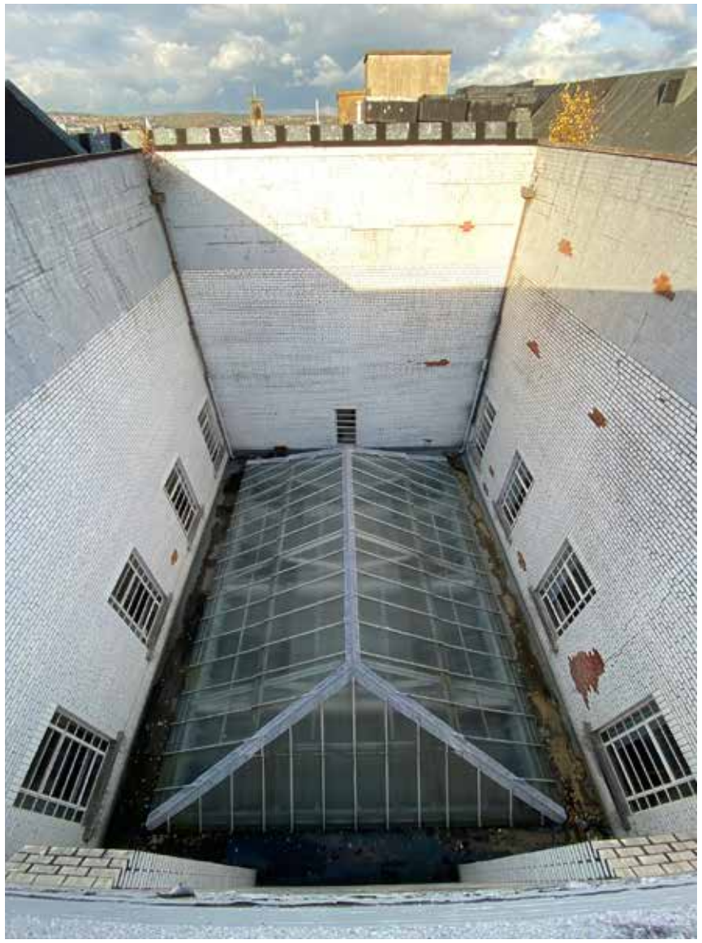
Medium Significance

The lightwell is of glazed bricks laid in English garden wall bond. At the base, a modern glazed lantern sits over the original steel and glass laylight, which forms a major feature in the centre of the Lending Library ceiling.

The first-floor library spaces have large windows which open onto the atrium, thereby offering a balance level of natural light into these rooms from both the east and west aspects.

The upper roof discharges rainwater into the lightwell, which is reported to regularly flood and requires weekly maintenance to avoid excessive damage.

The lightwell's form and application of materials are not unique or remarkable features, however its inclusion is a key articulating device that drives the building's typology and floor plan arrangement. The importance of natural light penetrating deep into the building characterises these spaces afforded by the lightwell serves to heighten the building's role as a hub for civic and cultural life. As such, the lightwell has historic value for its form and purpose within the wider arrangement of spaces but is low in aesthetic value in relation to its design and use of materials.



4.4.19 - Lightwell above atrium

4.4.20 - Lightwell above atrium

4.5 - GROUND FLOOR ROOMS

ENTRANCE LOBBY / RECEPTION (Rm.52)

High Significance

This space was designed to be impressive and imposing, however the description of the setting and south elevation has already commented on the lost opportunity for greater articulation of this entrance in architectural terms. As a consequence, the Entrance Lobby lacks street presence.

Within the Entrance Lobby, the grand stair rises centrally at ground floor before splitting into two separate flights to the east and west that return to provide two points of landing at the first floor. Below the return flights at ground floor are the routes into and out of the Lending Library. To the east is the door to the Committee Room and to the west, the door to the Chief Librarian's Office (now hosting the Transcription Services).

The fabric of the Entrance Lobby is opulent, with walls lined with large slabs of polished light San Steffano marble set over Swedish Green marble skirting. The ceiling above the Entrance Lobby is formed of coffered plaster recessed with a large ogee cornice detail to the perimeter. The large, stepped coffers create an impressive sense of scale and are a deliberate reference to the Greek tradition also inferred in the front façade. The floor is covered in modern green carpet tiles but is thought to have the original Bianco del Mare and Swedish Green Marble tiling below.

Doors - The doors from the street are modern replacements, although there are likely to be original external secure doors that open into the reveal of the masonry porch. Internal doors to the Porter's Room, Committee Room, Librarian's Office and Lending Library beyond are largely original, and serve to create a monolithic feel which matches the overarching architectural style of the building. Most still retain their copper light glazing although this is not present in the Porter's Room door.

The stairs are finished in white terrazzo with a tall nosing creating a monolithic aesthetic. Each tread has a dark nosing strip set in. The string is in Swedish Green marble matching the skirting detail of the Entrance Lobby. The wall enclosure to the stair is in light buff marble, thereby complementing the finish on the floors above and that on the wall of the stair enclosure leading to the lower ground. The handrails are of polished brass which wrap down the face of the buff marble, reminiscent of a simple Art Deco motif. On the face of each panel to the east and west side of the stair are framed murals that form a pair. The origin and narrative of this artwork is unknown, however their style suggests they date from the 1960s or 1970s.

Windows – The windows maintain their original Crittall profiles.

Lights – The ceiling-mounted light pendants are the only surviving original light fittings in the building that have been identified and comprise round brass and glass cylinders suspended on four rods.

Services – There are a number of modern surface-mounted cables and fittings including security cameras, a computer monitor screen, a modern retro-style wall clock and surface-mounted lift level indicators. All have been installed within the past forty years and thus hold no aesthetic or historic significance for the building.

Value – Whilst changes have been made to some fittings, the aesthetic quality and volume of the Entrance Lobby remains largely unaltered from its original design. The space itself, as well as all original finishes and fittings, hold aesthetic and historic value.

Significance of features:

High Significance - Stairs, light fittings, marble wall cladding, ceiling, windows, terrazzo floor

High and Medium Significance - Doors

Low Significance - Brass plague to former Independent Chapel / pair of murals

Negative Significance – Modern carpet tiles, modern services, lift doors and indicator, blind and blind box, modern shelving

MAIN LENDING LIBRARY (Rm.47)

High Significance

Ashburner's describes the Main Lending Library as follows:

> *"The lending library…with accommodation for 20,250 volumes, forms the main feature of the upper ground-floor plan. Opening off the lending library are an extensive music library and a special library, where are housed the collections of several local professional societies."*

The main room within the Library spans the full width of the building with five tall windows set above the top of the shelves along each façade. In the centre, a large steel and cast glass laylight is set below a lantern, allowing natural light to penetrate deep into the plan.

The ceiling is set out in a series of coffers that correspond with the structural grid. Each houses the heating system as described in Ashburner's drawings and writings. The ceiling coffers are decorated with a plaster cornice which has a simple stepped profile that is most in keeping with the architectural detail of the front façade and Entrance Lobby.

The edge of the atrium opening above is described by a series of three faceted columns within the body of the floor plan that

4.5 - GROUND FLOOR ROOMS

are bookended either side by pilasters. Each column is clad in Swedish Green marble comprising clear banding from light to dark pale green. The column capitals step out at the head with a simple inset band detail below. The column bases are in darker green marble which complement the marble finishes used in the Entrance Lobby and for the main stair.

Doors into adjoining rooms are of oak with three vision panels, some of which still contain the original copper lights. The architraves are also in oak and have a dramatic Art Deco step detail to the corners and head. The floor is covered in modern carpet tiles which likely disguise the original cork flooring below.

The fittings are a combination of original shelving to the perimeter with modern movable shelving within the floor plate and a modern serving counter. A number of original fittings and fixtures have been lost, including the original serving counter, turnstiles, shelving from the body of the floor area and electric lighting. It is also noted that the current room layout has been flipped from that of the original design, with the modern serving counter currently located at the north end of the plan.

Value - The room remains substantially intact with key finishes still present. The room holds aesthetic value for its design but also historic and communal value for its purpose as a civic amenity and as an enduring place that remains in use by the people of Huddersfield.

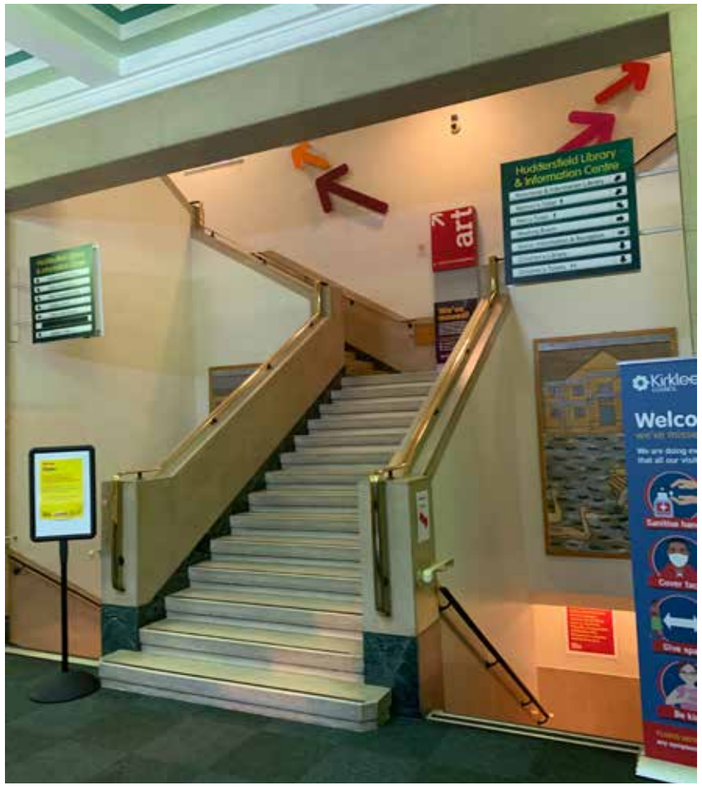
Significance of features:

High Significance: Ceiling plasterwork, laylight, marble clad columns, oak doors, original shelving

Medium Significance: In-wall ventilation grilles, book lifts, clock

Low Significance: Early escape signage

Negative Significance: Modern lighting, modern carpet tiles, modern painted wallpaper, modern surface mounted services



4.5.1 - Entrance Lobby / Reception (Rm.52)

4.5.2 - Entrance Lobby / Reception (Rm.52)

4.5.3 - Ceiling to Entrance Lobby / Reception (Rm.52)

4.5.4 - Entrance Lobby / Reception (Rm.52)

4.5.5 - Entrance Lobby / Reception (Rm.52)

4.5 - GROUND FLOOR ROOMS

4.5.6 - Main Lending Library (Rm.47)

4.5.7 - Shelving in Main Lending Library (Rm.47)

4.5.8 - Main Lending Library (Rm.47)

4.5.9 - Historic photograph of Main Lending Library (Rm.47)

4.5.10 / 4.5.11 / 4.5.12 - Services to Main Lending Library (Rm.47)

4.5.13 - Main Lending Library (Rm.47)

4.5 - GROUND FLOOR ROOMS

SPECIAL LIBRARY / GRAPHIC NOVELS (Rm.98)
Medium Significance
This room was designed as the 'Special Library' which would have been reserved for specific collection or rare books.

The room finishes are similar to those found in the main Lending Library. Original shelving is evident along the room perimeter only. Other joinery elements including the shelving, doors, architraves, wall panelling, and book lift have been stripped and treated to give the appearance of a limed oak finish. This is at odds with the aesthetic of the wider building and an inappropriate treatment for high quality joinery in this context.

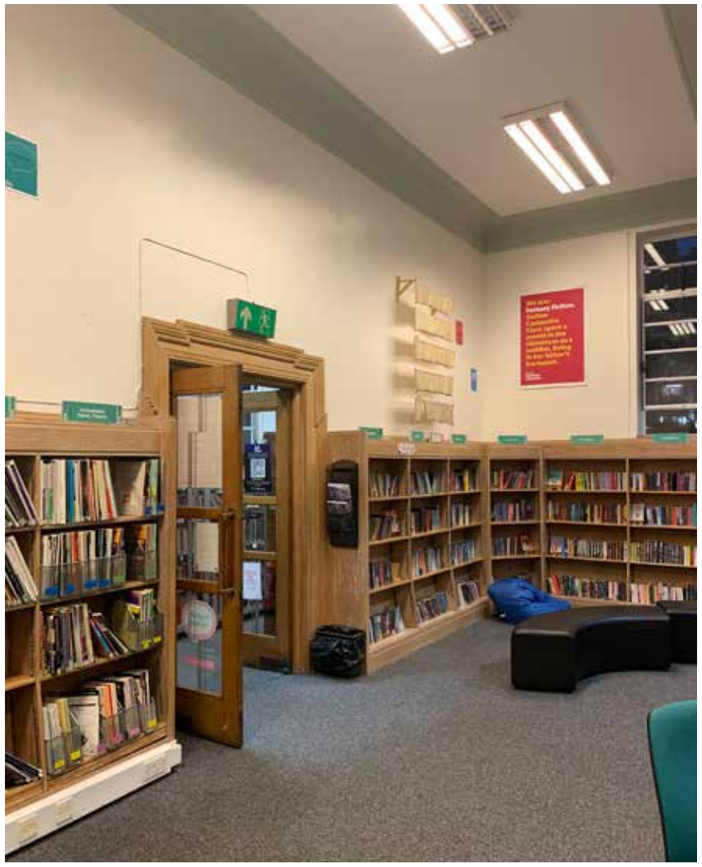
This room retains aesthetic value for its joinery and the ceiling form.

Significance of features:
High Significance: Ceiling plasterwork, oak doors, original shelving, architraves and panelling
Medium Significance: Book lift
Low Significance: Early escape signage
Negative Significance: Modern lighting, carpet tiles, modern painted wallpaper, modern surface mounted services, decoration of joinery items

COMPUTER ROOM (formerly the Reading Room - Rm.58)
Low Significance
This room is similar to Rm.98 (Special Library / Graphic Novels) on the west of the plan and formerly served as a Music Room. It retains the coffered ceiling, tall windows and oak architraves to the two doors that serve it. It has been cleared of all original furniture and fittings.

Significance of features:
High Significance: Ceiling plasterwork
Medium Significance: none
Low Significance: Early escape signage
Negative Significance: Modern lighting, carpet tiles, modern painted wallpaper, modern surface mounted services

4.5.14 / 4.5.15 - Timber detailing to Special Library / Graphic Novels (Rm.98)



4.5.16 - Special Library / Graphic Novels (Rm.98)

4.5.17 - Special Library / Graphic Novels (Rm.98)

4.5 - GROUND FLOOR ROOMS

OFFICE (Rm.48) and **TRANSCRIPTION SERVICE** (Rm.49)

High Significance

This was formerly the Chief Librarian's Office with both rooms forming a single office. The partition between the rooms is scribed to the cornice but there is evidence that this addition may have been an early change to the room layout. The door between the rooms appears original or early and is likely to be the re-purposed storeroom door of the office. The presence of a doorknob on one site and level handle on the other supports this theory. The doors and linings generally are in oak with a stepped profile as found in other rooms. Entry into Rm.49 (Transcription Service Room) is provided by a set of double doors which are also original or very early.

The ceiling of the room generally is coffered as with the main Lending Library, although a lower ceiling and bulkhead occurs in Rm.49, which aligns with the location of the storeroom on the original plan. The bulkhead has a large painted timber vent mounted within it.

The walls are lined with oak veneered panelling, the head of which aligns with the top of the fitted glass door-fronted bookcases. Above this, the walls are lined with modern paper and painted. The windows have been fitted with timber-built secondary glazing that has been stained to match the oak panelling. The floor is lined with modern carpet tiles which likely hide the original cork floor finish.

Within the office there is a Swedish Green marble-lined fireplace that was designed for use with an electric heater. The fireplace is set within the timber panelling with a typical 1930s aesthetic. A small oak box with a button and illuminated 'engaged / enter' sign is mounted on the inserted partition, and it is thought that this fixture was added early in the building's use. The room has lost some if its original shelving.

Off Rm.49 is a small WC (Rm.50) which remains in use for the Transcription Team. In this room the sanitaryware and finishes date to the 1980s. The adjacent Rm.51 comprises a small sink and tea point with modern fittings.

Value – The Office has high historic value for its designed purpose and medium aesthetic value for the quality of its finishes. The early changes to this room are of interest and have some historic value as an expression of evolving library practice.

Significance of features:

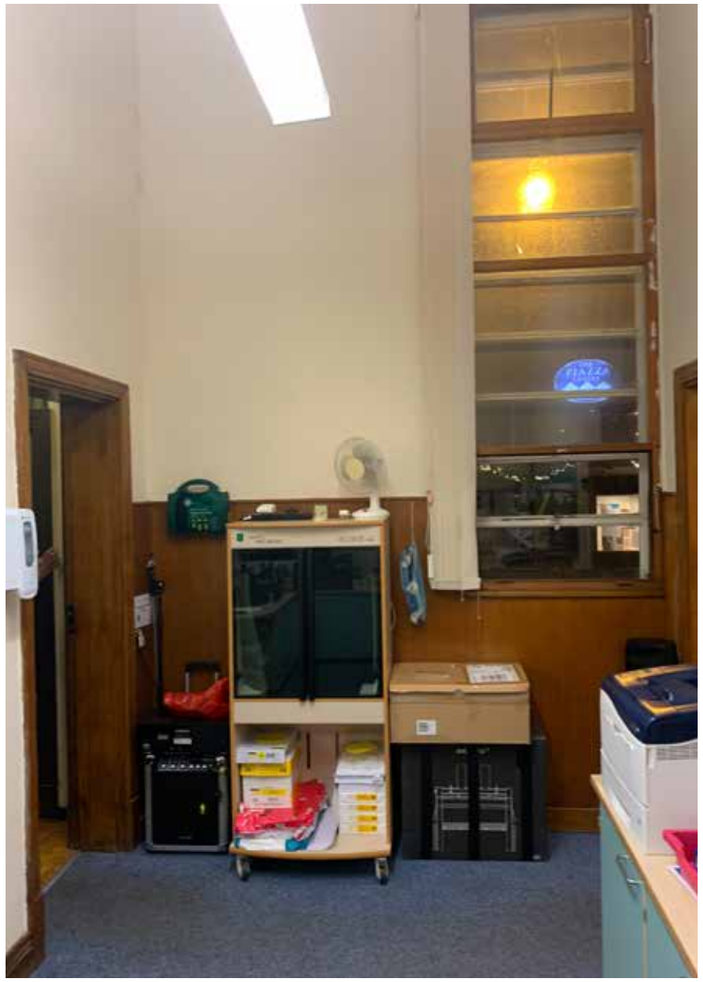
High Significance: Oak veneered panelling, bookcases and fireplace, doors

Medium Significance: Ceiling plasterwork

Low Significance: Early stud partition, secondary glazing, call button

Negative Significance: Modern lighting, modern carpet tiles, modern painted wallpaper, modern surface mounted services, modern sanitary fittings

4.5.18 - Marble-lined fireplace in the Office (Rm.48)



4.5.19 - Transcription Service (Rm.49)

4.5.20 - New partition in Transcription Service (Rm.49)

4.5.21 - 'Engaged / enter' sign in the Transcription Service (Rm.49)

4.5 - GROUND FLOOR ROOMS

COMMITTEE ROOM (Rm.57) and **ACCESS LOBBY** (Rm.54)

High Significance

This room is finished to a high standard and shares the detailing of the front of house spaces. The room is accessed via a single flush door which appears plain but is likely solid in order to offer better separation from the adjacent space. The door is veneered in teak, laid in a butterfly pattern to match the wall panelling. The walls are lined with the same teak and walnut veneered panelling as the second floor Stair Lobby and rises to picture rail level. Above the panelling, the wall is painted plaster. There are two large white painted timber ventilation louvres as found in other rooms.

The windows have been fitted with modern aluminium secondary glazing. Since installation, these have lost their glazed panels, although the fixed frame remains in place. Above the door is an original rectangular clock with the numbers fitted directly over the panelling offering a clean and elegant Art Deco aesthetic. The original furniture is missing save for the coat and hat stand. This is of oak, well made and detailed to match the wider Library furniture. The original Committee Room table and chairs are understood to have been removed from the building with the table dismantled.

Value - The room has high aesthetic value for its design and quality of finishes. It also has historic and communal value for the purpose of the room as a civic space that has played host to local governance.

Significance of features:

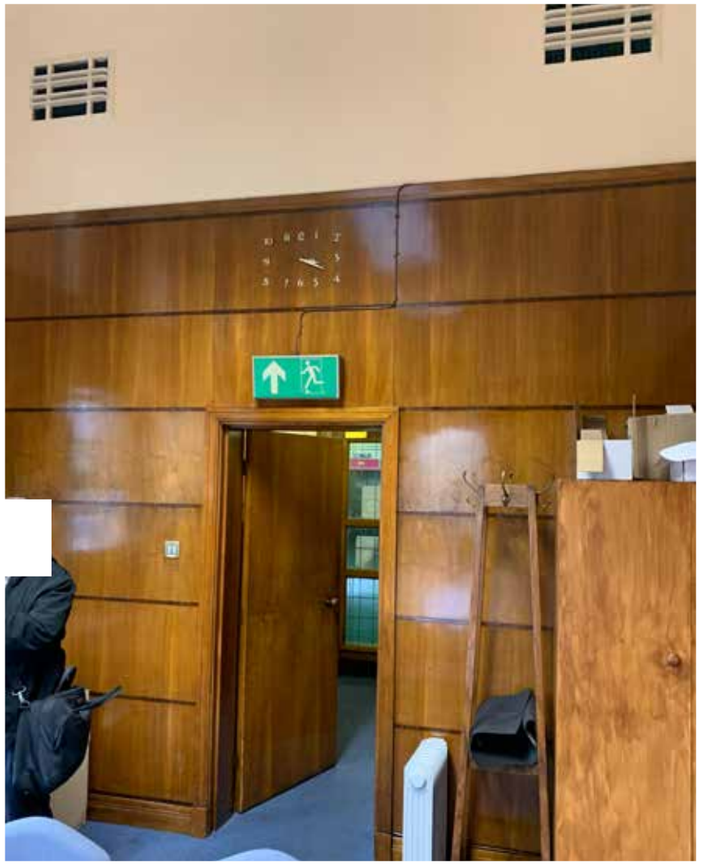
High Significance: Oak veneered panelling, door, hat and coat stand, wall-mounted clock

Medium Significance: Decorative ceiling plasterwork

Low Significance: Early fire escape sign, ventilation grilles

Negative Significance: Modern lighting, carpet tiles, modern surface mounted services, secondary glazing

4.5.22 - Committee Room (Rm.57)



4.5.23 - Committee Room (Rm.57)

4.5.24 - Committee Room (Rm.57)

4.5.25 - Committee Room (Rm.57)

4.5.26 - Committee Room (Rm.57)

4.5 - GROUND FLOOR ROOMS

STOREROOM (Rm.56) and **WC** (Rm.55)

Low Significance

Both of these rooms are back-of-house spaces. The WC has been refitted with modern sanitaryware and has a utilitarian finish.

PORTERS OFFICE (Rm.53)

Low Significance

The exterior of this room suggests the office will be fitted out to a high quality, however the room is in fact a plain space without notable value, and is currently used for storage and electrical services.

ADMINISTRATION OFFICES (Rm.39 & 39a)

Low Significance

These spaces remain in use as the staff workspaces. Since the building's opening, the room has been divided into two with a manager's office set within a glazed area partitioned from the wider space. The partition rises to the full height of the room. The finishes are plain and without detail.

Significance of features:

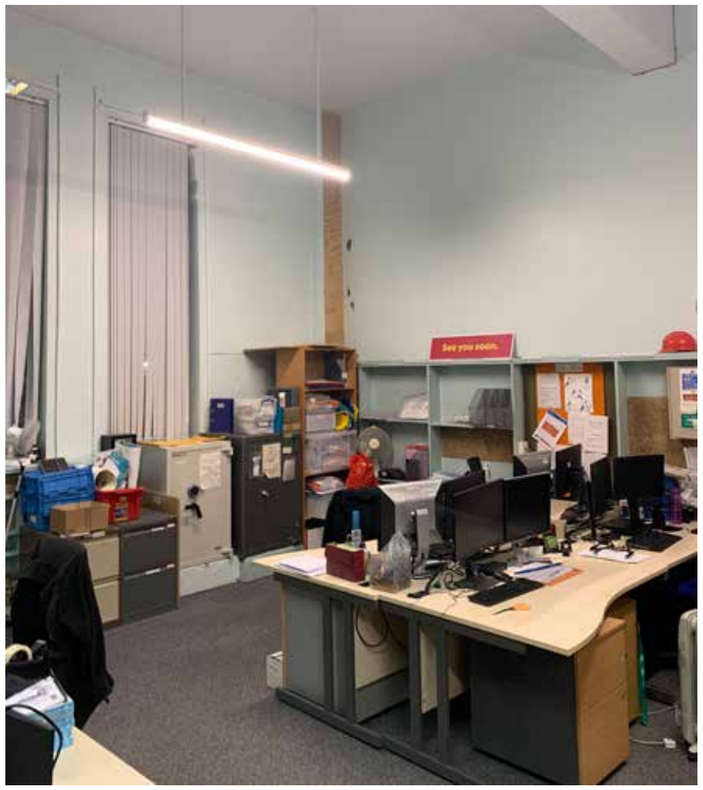
Low Significance: Painted doors / architraves, glazed partition

Negative Significance: Modern lighting, carpet tiles, modern surface mounted services

OFFICE MEETING ROOM (Rm.42)

Low Significance

This room is largely introspective and appears to be windowless. The walls have been overlined with a thin boarding material that has been papered. The main ceiling is concealed above a suspended grid and the floor is lined with carpet tiles. There are no notable features of heritage value within this space.



4.5.27 - Administration Office (Rm.39)

4.5.28 - Administration Office (Rm.39)

4.5.29 - Administration Office (Rm.39a)

4.5 - GROUND FLOOR ROOMS

STAFF CLOAKROOM (Rm.44) and **WC** (Rm.45)

Low Significance

These rooms remain as staff areas. They are plainly decorated with little detailing save for the window, which has a stepped under cill that emulates the profile of the architrave and offers continuity to the detailing. The door is a solid flush door which has been adapted with modern intumescent seals, like most of the doors in the building. It has been painted but retains the original doorknobs.

The WC is of painted brickwork, with sanitaryware dating from the 1980s.

Significance of features:

Low Significance: Painted door and architrave

Negative Significance: Carpet tiles, modern surface mounted services.

CIRCULATION SPACE (Rm.43)

Low Significance (note this assessment is also used to describe other circulation spaces distributed across the building – Rm. 07, 09, 36, 63, 79 & 80)

The service corridor is plain, with the walls and ceiling plastered but without decorative features. The floor appears to be painted concrete. Doors opening into the corridor are typically flush, with those opening into formal library spaces constructed in oak and usually glazed. Skirtings and door architraves are in a stepped profile and painted. Generally, the building's circulation spaces hold no aesthetic value, and only very limited historic value for their part in the overall layout of the library floor plan where their original form remains unchanged.

SERVICE STAIR and **LIFT** (Rm.40 & 41)

Low Significance (note this assessment is also used to describe other service stair and lift spaces distributed across the building – Rm. 05, 59, 60 & 81)

The service stair, landing and lift core are common between the floors. The walls of the stair are painted common brickwork in Flemish bond and the stair and floor are painted concrete. Tall Crittall windows occur at each level, with the lower panes in obscure cast glass. The service lift is original, comprising a caged car set within a steel mesh shaft with manual-folding guarding at each entry point. The space is appropriately utilitarian in nature. The lift has historic value as a component of the original design but has no broader significance.

4.5.30 - Staff Cloakroom (Rm.44)

4.5.31 - Corridor (Rm.43)

4.5.32 - Stair and Lift (Rm.40 & 41)

4.6 - FIRST FLOOR ROOMS

FIRST FLOOR STAIR LOBBY (Rm.71) and **STUDY ROOMS** (Rm.72, 72a, 72b & 72.c)

High Significance

The high status of the grand stair is reflected at each of the floor levels. The stair arrives at each side of the Lobby with a central flight continuing to the second floor. To the east, a door leads to the Reference Library, however the 1936 plans show this as the 'Ladies Room' which is separate to that of the larger room to the north titled 'General Reading Room', which was accessed via a short corridor and now serves as an office. To the west, two sets of doors lead into the West Yorkshire Archive Service Office (depicted on original plans as a 'Student's Room') and Local History Library. On the south aspect of the Lobby are four doors which lead into a series of four study rooms, Rm.72, 72a, 72b & 72c. The western most three are now a single room. It is apparent from the ceiling detailing that the division of these spaces would have been via partitions likely constructed from timber that stopped short of the ceiling. Study room Rm.72c is a self-contained space which is now used for map storage. Each study room is set behind its own window with original Crittall profiles, although the window to Rm.72c (currently operating as a self-contained space for map storage) is boarded up. Further to these spaces there are two WCs, one at each side of the Lobby, and the lift.

Similar to the ground floor, the walls of the first floor Lobby are lined with large slabs of polished light marble set over Swedish Green marble skirting. The study rooms have a green glazed skirting tile like that found at lower ground. The Lobby ceiling is largely flush with a cornice to the perimeter. A beam downstand occurs on the line of the study rooms and continues to the west wall. This describes the position of the lift shaft. Here the ceiling matches the adjacent ceiling with a decorative cornice. The floor of the Lobby is covered in green carpet tiles but is likely to have the original terrazzo finish below.

Stairs - The stairs are of white terrazzo with dark grey nosings and match those of the flights rising from ground to first. The outside face of the stair flight is painted plaster. Where the stair rises to the second floor, the wall coverings change from plaster above the stone cladding to timber panelling above.

Doors - The doors to the library spaces are original, although all now contain Georgian wired glass vision panels. The doors to the WC are flush and painted, although these may conceal original material beneath the paint. The former entrance to the Reference Library has been rebuilt as a single door to the later office. This door is not usable and has been trapped behind shelving on the room side.

Windows – The window are the original Crittall profiles.

Lights – The original light fittings have been replaced by modern florescent tubes and reflectors. Some early or aesthetically sympathetic lights are present at the corners of the main stair set over the timber panelling.

Services – There are a number of modern surface-mounted cables fitted at high level. These are neatly fitted but detract from the intended clear aesthetic.

Value – As evidenced by the Entrance Lobby at ground floor, the first floor Stair Lobby holds aesthetic and historic value due to the aesthetic quality and volume of the space.

Significance of features:

High Significance: Stairs, marble wall cladding, ceiling, Crittall windows, terrazzo floor

Medium Significance: Original doors and linings

Low significance: Painted doors and architraves, early fire escape signs

Negative Significance: Carpet tiles, modern services, light fittings, lift doors and indicator

WEST YORKSHIRE LOCAL HISTORY OFFICE (Rm.69)

High Significance

This room is noted as a 'Student Room' on Ashburner's plans. It has a high ceiling with decorative cornice set in each bay described by the steel structure. This room is at the south-west corner of the floor plan and benefits from a dual aspect. To the south, through the tall Crittall windows the Victorian Town Hall is clearly visible, as is the low-rise retail block of the later Queensgate Market, complete with extensive fall protection railings.

The walls are plastered and painted. The bottom 2.2m are lined with oak shelving with simple detailing that emulates that seen in the main Lending Library shelving. Glazed doors are present to several of the shelving units, while others appear to have had the doors removed. Bronze tonk strips are recessed within the units to allow for shelf positions to be adjusted. Small bronze vent grilles recessed into the banding element at the mid and top levels form part of the ventilation strategy, which entails pumping air up behind the shelves to mitigate the risk of damp or stale air affecting the books. Beneath the west window, the shelf back is missing to reveal an unfinished brick wall and a void behind the shelving.

Value - The room is of historic and aesthetic value for its intended purpose and the extent of the original fittings that remain.

Significance of features:

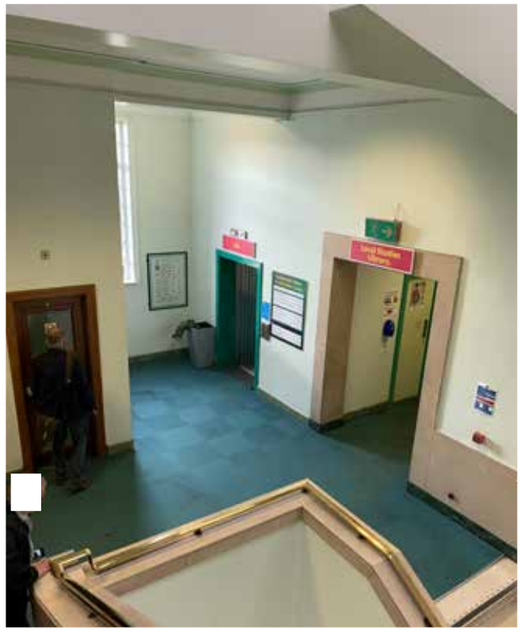
Medium Significance: In-wall ventilation system, bookshelves, door

Low Significance: Wall plaster, ceiling plaster

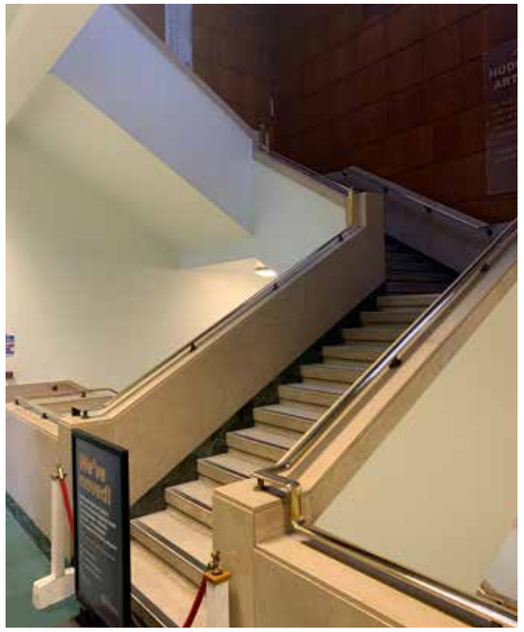
Negative Significance: Modern lighting, carpet tiles

4.6 - FIRST FLOOR ROOMS

4.6.1 - First Floor Stair Lobby (Rm.71)



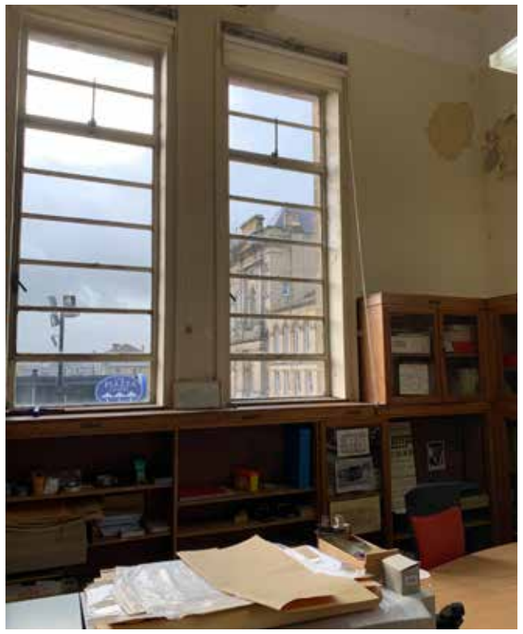
4.6.2 - First Floor Stair Lobby (Rm.71)



4.6.3 - First Floor Stair Lobby (Rm.71)

4.6.4 - Ceiling to First Floor Stair Lobby (Rm.71)

4.6.5 - Skirting to First Floor Stair Lobby (Rm.71)



4.6.6 - West Yorkshire Local History Office (Rm.69)

4.6.7 - West Yorkshire Local History Office (Rm.69)

4.6.8 - Shelving to Local History Office (Rm.69)

4.6 - FIRST FLOOR ROOMS

WEST YORKSHIRE LOCAL HISTORY LIBRARY (Rm.68)
Medium Significance

This room is located on the west side of the plan and was formerly the Reference Library. It has five tall windows along each side which address Victoria Lane to the west and the light well to the east. The ceiling incorporates five distinct bays defined by bulkheads at the line of each beam. Each bay comprises a flush ceiling with modern surface-mounted florescent tube lights and a decorative cornice around its perimeter.

The walls are plastered and painted, and the floor is lined with a modern patterned carpet. The window openings have a timber batten surround painted to match the wall. These may have been part of the original blinds although none are in evidence here or in any room. Some windows have modern blinds.

Original open-fronted oak shelving around the room perimeter with metal vents to the head and base rise to window cill height. The remaining furniture is modern and the original counter and reading tables are not present. To the south, double doors open out into the stair well whilst a single door gives access into the Local History Office, Rm.68. To the north, a single door leads into the Reference Archive, Rm.66. All doors are original oak with oak architraves set over skirting blocks, although all have later replacement glazed vision panels inserted.

At the north end of the room, an original rectangular clock formally mains-wired with green painted numbers on an off-white face is set over a painted timber base and is similar in appearance to those found in other rooms. Original and modern picture hooks fixed to the walls, and modern plastic conduits are present in a number of areas on the walls and the ceiling.

Value - The room retains the original fitted shelving and other original linings. The space holds some aesthetic value, although the absence of the original furniture means the spatial quality of the room is unlike that of the original design.

Significance of features:

Medium Significance: Wall clock, in-wall ventilation system, bookshelves, doors

Low Significance: Wall plaster, ceiling plaster, original picture hooks in the wall

Negative Significance: Modern lighting, security camera, modern services, carpet

4.6.9 - Local History Library (Rm.68)

4.6.10 - Wall clock in Local History Library (Rm.68)

4.6.11 - Ventilation in Local History Library (Rm.68)

4.6.12 - Original Reference Library in 1940 (now Local History Library)

4.6 - FIRST FLOOR ROOMS

REFERENCE ARCHIVE (Rm.66)

Low Significance

This room is at the north-west corner of the building, located next to the Local History Library Rm.68. This room is used for archive storage however the original shelving for the space has been replaced with modern track-mounted archive shelves.

The ceiling is divided into three bays that are defined by the downstand of the steel structure. Each bay has cornicing to its perimeter with florescent tubes suspended on chains from ceiling-mounted conduits which could be original or early.

The room benefits from a dual aspect, with two windows to the west and three to the north. The walls are of painted plaster generally and lined at lower level with plain timber panelling which appears to be of ply and is probably original. Most of the wall is hidden by the modern shelving. The floor is largely hidden beneath the plinth formed to carry the rolling archive shelves. Where visible, it appears to be the original lino with the indentation of the original shelves still clearly visible.

In the south-east corner, the book lift is still present, although the lift and timber enclosure are all modern. Painted double doors leading to the service corridor are original with modern Georgian wired glass vision panel insertions.

Value – The room has some historic value for its purpose as part of the Library and the presence of some original finishes.

Significance of features:

Low Significance: Wall plaster, ceiling plaster, original floor coverings

Negative Significance: Modern lighting, modern services

REFERENCE LIBRARY (Rm.76)

Medium Significance

This room is described on the original plans as the 'General Reading Room'. To the south it was connected to the main stair by a short corridor, which permitted the southern end of the room to be partitioned to serve as the 'Ladies Room'. The corridor is now a windowless office (Rm.75) and the two larger spaces that formed the original 'General Reading Room' now operate as a single space.

This room would have been a publicly accessible area of high importance. The walls are of painted plaster with oak veneered ply panelling set below. Although it no longer retains the original division, the change from two distinct rooms appears to have occurred not long after the building opened, as the linings where the wall would have divided the room appear to be of a similar age to those around the perimeter. On the west wall next to the entrance, a recessed painted timber vent is present.

In its current form as a single space, the room has windows on three aspects, to the east, south and west. Vent grilles are evident at the window cills, indicating the presence of the ventilation system ducts behind the panelling. As with other rooms on this floor, the ceiling is divided into structural bays, each with decorative perimeter cornicing. The original lights have been replaced with modern florescent tubes set into surface-mounted reflectors.

Above the entrance doors from the Stair Lobby are the workings of an original clock, the majority of its movements of which have been removed. At the north end of the room, an original clock similar to that seen in the Local History Library survives, comprising light blue numbers at the quarter hours and strikes between on what appears to be a white acrylic or plexiglass face set over a painted timber base. A modern conduit rises to this, which may have been installed to replace the original power supply chased into the wall.

4.6.13 - Reference Archive (Rm.66)

4.6.14 - Book lift in Reference Archive (Rm.66)

4.6.15 - Doors in Reference Archive (Rm.66)

4.6 - FIRST FLOOR ROOMS

To the southern end, the original double doors that once provided access from the short corridor into the former General Reading Room are still present. They have since been shut with shelving fitted across them on the far side of the door leaves as part of the Office fit out. To the left is a recess in the wall panelling which once contained original light switches that have since been replaced with modern brass-fronted controls.

The floor is lined with the same modern patterned carpet found in the West Yorkshire Archive, Rm.68. At the north end, the former book lift opening has been boarded up.

Within the room there are two original oak tables. Alongside the hat and coat stand in the Committee Room, Rm.57, these are possibly the only surviving items of original loose furniture from the entire Library. The loose fitted perimeter bookshelves are not original and do not fit into the space well.

An office (Rm. 75) has been formed from the short corridor that was once the access route into the former General Reading Room. Its entrance door from the Stair Lobby appears to be late 50s or early 60s in form, and therefore likely added along with the new partition that converted this space into a standalone room. The access into the office is though the west wall from behind the location of the modern reception counter. This door is a modern flush face oak-veneered fire door. The opening has required the alteration of the original wall panelling. Within this office space, the original ceiling, cornice and wall plaster survive. There are several free-standing shelves that date to the 2000s.

Value – The Reference Library has historic value for its purpose as part of the library in its former incarnation as the General Reading Room, alongside the presence of some original finishes.

Significance of features:

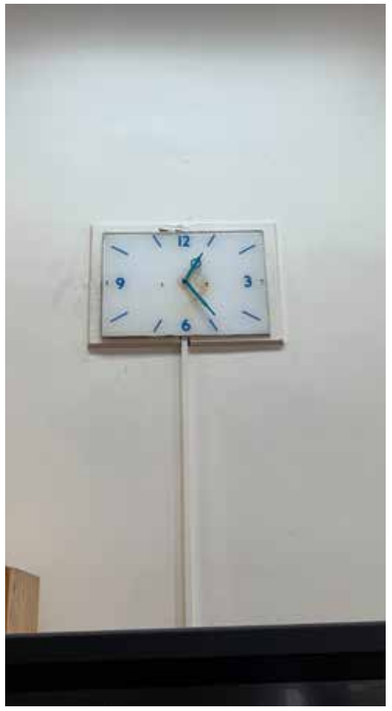
Medium Significance: Wall panelling, original doors and linings, surviving clock movements, original oak tables

Low Significance: Wall plaster, ceiling plaster

Negative Significance: Modern lighting, modern services, modern bookshelves, changes to the access corridor to form an office, modern carpet

4.6.16 - Reference Library (Rm.76)

4.6.17 - Original oak tables in in Reference Library (Rm.76)



4.6.18 - Clock in Reference Library (Rm.76)

4.6.19 - Office (Rm.78)

4.6 - FIRST FLOOR ROOMS

OFFICES (Rm.77 & 78)

Low Significance

These rooms with external windows to the north and east are utilitarian in function and free of decorative finishes or detail. Within Rm.78, a suspended ceiling has been fitted, concealing the original ceiling above. The walls are plastered to the floor with a simple painted timber skirting, although Rm.78 incorporates wallpaper that has been applied and painted. Modern plastic dado trunking wraps the perimeter of Rm.77. The floor in both spaces is lined with carpet tiles.

The door to Rm.77 comprises a modern fire-rated doorset with vision panels and modern ironmongery. The door to Rm.78 is original with an insert panel, which may be an original detail to achieve fire performance. It is noted that such panels may contain asbestos.

The lights to Rm.77 are modern florescent tubes suspended from ceiling-mounted conduits.

Value – Both rooms are considered to hold no aesthetic value, and only very limited historic value for their part in the overall layout of the library floor plan.

Significance of features:

Low Significance: Wall plaster, ceiling plaster, original electrical services, original door to Rm. 77

Negative Significance: Modern lighting, modern services, modern carpet, suspended ceiling to Rm. 78, modern door to Rm. 77, modern painted wallpaper to Rm. 78

KITCHEN (Rm.61)

Low Significance

This space is located on the west side of the rear part of the building and is situated in the same location as described on the original plan. As with other staff spaces, it has a utilitarian aesthetic. The kitchen fittings are modern. The entrance door is original, although the large vision panel within it may be more recent. The original floor tiles have been replaced by vinyl with a coved skirting. The original window to the left of the external wall is missing a transom. Modern florescent lighting tubes are suspended from the ceiling.

Value – The kitchen holds no aesthetic value, and only very limited historic value for its part in the overall layout of the library floor plan.

Significance of features:

Low Significance: Wall plaster, ceiling plaster, original electrical services, original door

Negative Significance: Modern kitchen fittings, modern services, vinyl flooring

WCS and **STOREROOMS** (Rm.63, 64 & 65)

Low Significance

The primary fabric of these rooms is largely unaltered, generally comprising painted concrete soffit, painted brickwork partitions, and painted joinery. Rm.65 has painted plaster to the walls. The original Cleaners Store (Rm.63) now operates as a small office. The WCs remain in their original intended use but with modern fittings dating to the 1980s. Rm.65 is now a storeroom. The doors to all rooms are original, flush faced and painted, with bronze doorknobs. The floors are lined with modern carpet or vinyl.

Value – These rooms hold no aesthetic value, and only very limited historic value for their part in the overall layout of the library floor plan.

Significance of features

Low Significance: Wall plaster, ceiling plaster, original electrical services, original doors

Negative Significance: Modern WCs, modern services, vinyl flooring, carpet

CIRCULATION SPACES (Rm.63 & 79)

Low Significance

Refer to assessment description for ground floor Circulation Space (Rm. 43).

SERVICE STAIR and **LIFT** (Rm.59 & 60)

Low Significance

Refer to assessment description for ground floor Service Stair and Lift (Rm. 40 & 41).

4.6.20 - Kitchen (Rm.61)

4.7 - SECOND FLOOR ROOMS

Ashburner describes the design approach for the second floor as follows:

> *"The second floor is devoted entirely to the functions of an art gallery, and receives natural light from above by the top-side-lighted method. Continuous trough reflectors with electric bulbs space at 12-inch centres are installed for the purpose of night- time illumination. The central panel of the gallery ceiling has been kept at the level of the underside of the main cross girders, thus giving an unbroken level throughout the length of the gallery. In wide galleries where the cross beams are of a deep section a very discordant note is struck if the heavy cross beams are allowed to protrude downwards and thus cut the gallery into definite bays.*
>
> *Space is allowed for the handling and storage of pictures and statuary, and a large-size sink is provided for the washing of marble busts, etc. General heating is provided by four coke-fired sectional boilers fitted with overhead gravity feed hoppers. Rooms are heated by means of the low pressure and temperature accelerated hot-water panel system, the pipes being embedded in the ceilings of all rooms…In the art gallery section the picture-hanging space is lined with tongued and grooved boarding fixed to battens and covered with selected fabrics, horizontal metal slots being provided for the easy alignment and hanging of the pictures.*
>
> *The double turnstiles at each side of the gallery landing are of a type which comprises a three-arm barrier rotating on an inclined axis so that the arms move downwards as they rotate and thus make it possible to reduce considerably the working width as compared with that required for the old circular rotating type turnstile. By a slight adjustment the turnstile may be made recording or non-recording and may be fixed so as to work in either direction. No binding or repairing rooms are provided in this library, these works being carried out locally by contract"*

(*Modern Public Libraries*, E.H. Ashburner, 1946)

4.7 - SECOND FLOOR ROOMS

GALLERY RECEPTION / STAIR LOBBY (Rm.91)
High Significance

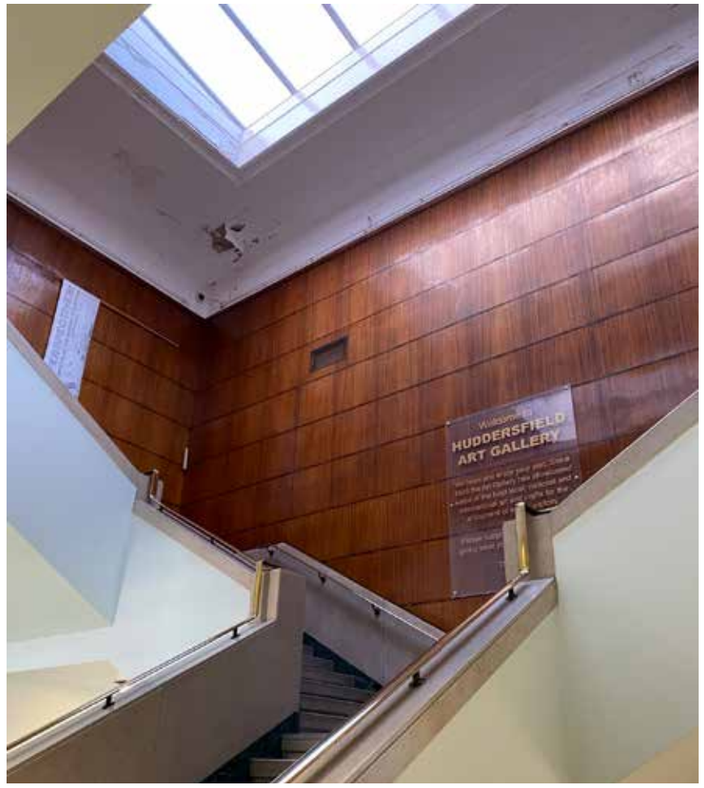
The second-floor Stair Lobby / Gallery Reception is substantially intact. The floors are lined with light and dark cork tiles in a basket weave pattern. Skirting to the Lobby corresponds with the finish of the wall generally. The walls of the Lobby comprise a combination of stained teak and walnut veneered panelling in a stepped profile and Swedish Green marble over buff light marble to dado level. Horizontal strips of walnut within the wall panelling disguises the presence of small vent openings. The wall panelling rises to picture rail level, above which there is a plain plaster frieze and a decorative plaster cornice. The ceiling has two large mono-pitched, north-facing roof lanterns, both of which comprise modern polycarbonate replacements of the original elements. The passenger lift in the south-west corner is also a relatively modern replacement.

The stair arrangement and materials at second floor are similar to that seen at ground and first floor, comprising a wide flight of light terrazzo and grey nosings with flat, polished brass handrails set on modern PPC balusters to the outer string and metal balusters to the inner string. The remounting of the outer handrail is likely the result of insufficient strength in the fixing of the original handrail brackets.

The aesthetic design and material finish of this space is a controlled repetition that echoes the discipline of the external facades. Despite the absence of artwork as seen on the lower floors, the space holds a high degree of aesthetic value. Some later additions, such as the modern lift, replacement handrail balusters, modern surface-mounted services and polycarbonate lanterns, impose a negative impact, although in general the space remains substantially intact and there is scope for sympathetic restoration.

Significance of features:
High Significance: Terrazzo stair, brass balustrade, timber wall panelling, plaster coving, lantern roof opening
Medium Significance: Cork floor tiles, lantern roof opening
Negative significance: Polycarbonate lanterns, surface-mounted services

4.7.1 - Gallery Reception / Stair Lobby (Rm.91)



4.7.2 - Gallery Reception / Stair Lobby (Rm.91)

4.7.3 - Gallery Reception / Stair Lobby (Rm.91)

4.7 - SECOND FLOOR ROOMS

GALLERY ENTRANCE LOBBY (Extension of Rm.91)

High Significance

This was formerly the exit from the Gallery. The walls are lined with teak-veneered timber panelling that terminates below the ceiling, above which the walls are plastered with a decorative coving. Set in the middle of the ceiling is a steel and glass laylight over which a roof lantern would have provided day light.

The floor retains the original cork floor tiles laid in a basket weave pattern, with a margin of light and dark cork tiles laid in a band of three parallel to the skirting. The teak wall skirting matches the wall panelling above and its stepped profile echoes that seen in other skirting details throughout the building.

The entrance off the stair landing has been fitted with a modern steel roller shutter. A set of timber double doors with Georgian glass glazing and brass pull handles open into Gallery 6.

Significance of features

High Significance: Timber wall panelling, plaster coving

Medium Significance: Cork floor tiles, roof laylight

Negative significance: Surface-mounted services, steel roller shutter

OFFICE (Rm.92)

Low Significance

The Office is illustrated on Ashburner's plan as 'Ladies Lav'. This space is a white painted box with a cork tile suspended ceiling. Original finishes and fittings have been removed.

Lift and roller shutter to Gallery Entrance Lobby (Extension of Rm.91)

4.7.4 - Roofllight to Gallery Exit Lobby (Extension of Rm.91)

4.7 - SECOND FLOOR ROOMS

STORE ROOM / OFFICE (Rm.88) and **GALLERY EXIT LOBBY** (Extension of Rm.91)

Medium Significance

The space that now operates as the Gallery exit was formerly the entrance route. It has timber panelled walls to each side with a set of timber double doors with Georgian glass glazing and brass pull handles that lead into Gallery 1. The space is largely intact, although the installation of a modern steel roller shutter has resulted in the loss of some of the fabric. There is a laylight in the ceiling similar to that over the Gallery Entrance Lobby described above. The door between the Exit Lobby and the Office has been replaced or adapted to provide a folding door leaf in order to manage space constraints.

The Store Room / Office is not in its original form but has instead been fully partitioned from the Lobby. The west part of the partition to the Lobby was once a wall nib, finished to match the high-quality finish of the wider space. The area is identified on Ashburner's plans as for 'umbrellas'. Within the space the stained timber cladding rises toward the ceiling but stops short leaving the decorative plaster coving to describe the wider room of the entrance and umbrella store. Within the middle of the ceiling is a simple roof lantern, and heating valves can be seen emerging from the side of the upstand. These serve the heating pipes embedded in the roof construction.

The floor retains the original cork tiles which are in a large basket weave pattern however they are heavily worn and discoloured.

Significance of features:

High Significance: Timber wall panelling, plaster coving

Medium Significance: Cork floor tiles, roof laylight

Negative significance: Modern partition and door, steel roller shutter

PLANT SPACE (Rm.89)

Low Significance

Situated to the south of the Gallery Exit Lobby, this room is shown on Ashburner's plan as the 'Gents WC'. The room is plain in decoration and is used as plant space for the lift. No original fittings remain.

STOREROOM (Rm.94)

Low Significance

This is a simple white painted and plastered room used as a store cupboard. The door is painted on the room side with a stained and polished mahogany veneer on the outer that blends in with the cladding to the wall. Within the room, the simple stepped architrave is set over skirting blocks. The skirtings are also stepped to match the architrave profile. The floor is lined with vinyl.

4.7.5 - Roller shutter to Gallery Exit Lobby (Extension of Rm.91)

4.7.6 - Timber panelling to Gallery Exit Lobby (Extension of Rm.91)

4.7.7 - Plant Space (Rm.89)

4.7 - SECOND FLOOR ROOMS

GALLERY 1 (Rm. 87) and **GALLERY 6** (Rm. 93)

High Significance

These rooms are described together due to their similarity in arrangement, use and materials. Both operate as small galleries accessed directly from the Stair Lobby. Their form is highly significant as they remain largely unchanged from the building's original layout. Much of the detailing and use of materials in these rooms echo that used in the wider gallery spaces.

Doors into the adjacent galleries appear original, comprising pocket sliding doorsets with two leaves suspended on a top running gear and formed of seven horizontal panels set between rails, likely of oak or other hardwood. These are painted matt white with ironmongery including a small, recessed brass finger pull. The decorative architraves used throughout reflect the hierarchy of the gallery spaces over the floor plan. Architraves to the sliding doors between the galleries are in two parts, with a simple stepped profile matching the common detail throughout the building, whilst the outer detail comprises a shallow ogee profile. Skirtings are used throughout and comprise a simple profile with a long chamfered upper edge.

Timber dado wall panelling designed to conceal services and ventilation ducts runs the perimeter of both rooms. It projects 150mm off the wall face and is decorated to match the white painted walls above. Both galleries exhibit coved architraves to the ceiling, running to lantern rooflight openings described by a simple architrave set flush into the ceiling. The ceiling and wall above the picture rail in Gallery 6 are painted black. Gallery 6 retains its original steel and glass laylight, however the rooflight opening to Gallery 1 has been infilled with a modern suspended ceiling tile grid. Externally, the original roof lanterns have been replaced or overclad by modern polycarbonate elements. It is likely that these have been installed in order to prevent rainwater ingress caused by failures in the original fabric. Lighting comprises track-mounted spotlights throughout.

The flooring comprises a modern, oak effect laminate with an edge bead used to manage the junction between the flooring and dado panelling. Research suggests that an original cork floor may be concealed below.

There are a number of modern fittings installed within both spaces. In Gallery 1, a modern (C21) steel containment art picture rail is evident, which traverses the space and carries a lighting track. Switch plates and sockets all date from the 1990s, with fire signage dating from the 1980s.

Both rooms hold historic value given their continued use as gallery spaces in their original layouts. They also hold aesthetic value due to the partial retention of original materials and quality of detailing.

Significance of features:

High Significance: Room forms, steel and glass laylight (Gallery 6)

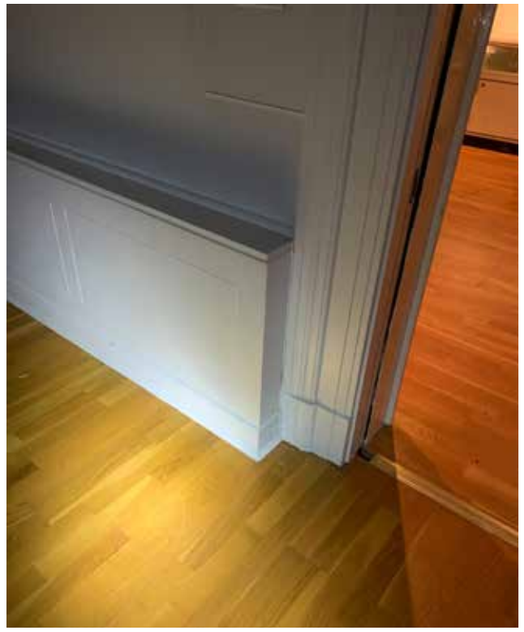
Medium Significance: Ceiling plasterwork, architrave profiles, lantern roof openings, doors between galleries, dado panelling

Low Significance: Original cork floor below modern laminate, wall plaster

Negative Significance: Suspended ceiling (Gallery 1), polycarbonate lanterns, laminate floor, modern surface-mounted services, steel containment picture rail / lighting track (Gallery 1)

4.7 - SECOND FLOOR ROOMS

4.7.8 - Door to Gallery 1 (Rm. 87)



4.7.9 - Dado panelling to Gallery 1 (Rm. 87)

4.7.10 - Gallery 1 (Rm. 87)

4.7.11 - Infilled rooflight opening to Gallery 1 (Rm. 87)

4.7.12 - Door to Gallery 6 (Rm. 93)

4.7.13 - Door to Gallery 6 (Rm. 93)

4.7.14 - Gallery 6 (Rm. 93)

4.7.15 - Gallery 6 (Rm. 93)

4.7 - SECOND FLOOR ROOMS

GALLEY 2 (Rm. 86), **GALLERIES 3 AND 4** (Rm. 85) and **GALLERY 5** (Rm. 95)

High Significance

These rooms are described together due to their similarity in arrangement, use and materials. Their form as a series of display spaces is highly significant, and they remain largely unchanged from the building's original layout. Ashburner's original plans of 1936 suggest that the north end of Gallery 5 was to be partitioned off to from an additional gallery. His later plan contained in his 1946 book on Libraries shows Gallery 5 as a single large space. At some point in the building's history it has been partitioned to create a narrow operational space at the north end of the gallery. Much of the detailing and use of materials in these rooms echo that used in Gallery 1 and 6.

The walls are likely to be lime ash plaster or possibly gypsum, and are painted with matt-white emulsion. The original boarded wall cladding with integrated picture hanging tracks have been lost. Timber dado wall panelling designed to conceal services and ventilation ducts runs the perimeter of both rooms. It projects 150mm off the wall face and is decorated to match the walls above.

Flooring comprises a modern, oak effect laminate with an edge bead used to manage the junction between the flooring and dado panelling. Research suggests that an original cork floor may be concealed below.

These galleries utilise the same pocket sliding doorsets and ironmongery as those used in Gallery 1 and 6. The double doors to leading to the rear stair from Gallery 4 comprise modern solid flush-faced fire leaves and closers. The painted white architraves comprising a stepped detail with shallow ogee profile also matches that used in Gallery 1 and 6, and the same skirting profile is also evident throughout.

Across the rooms, there are in a variety of rooflight openings with lanterns of different forms, although some have been replaced by new elements or obscured by other fittings. These include a longitudinal dual-pitch lantern with glazing to the east pitch in Gallery 2, two rows of longitudinal lanterns with east-west orientation and glazed the inner-facing north-south pitches in Gallery 3 and 4, and a longitudinal dual pitch lantern with glazing to the west pitch in Gallery 5. The larger lanterns are formed from masonry pitched upstands, the openings for which hold embedded heating pipes that appear to have been designed as a solution for avoiding heating at gallery floor level. Elsewhere, smaller rooflights on upstands are present. The lantern to Gallery 2 appears to have been covered with felt, likely after the modern suspended ceiling was installed, whilst the lantern to Gallery 5 appears to be concealed by internal blinds or other modern covering. Glazing to the lanterns in Gallery 3 and 4 appears to have been coated as a means of reducing light transmission into the space.

Much of the ceiling zone generally is occupied by modern mechanical plant. In many cases, this equipment is set below the lanterns and concealed behind modern suspended grid ceilings, often of textured white cork / hardboard tile infill with open-mesh tiles to the room perimeter. This arrangement obscures both the plant and the lanterns themselves and prevents or significantly obscures natural light from penetrating into the gallery via the lanterns as originally intended. Any ceiling plasterwork that may exist in these rooms are also subsequently obscured. Areas of the soffit that are visible in Gallery 2 and 4 indicate a simple plaster finish with no decoration. Lighting comprises modern florescent tubes and track-mounted spotlights throughout.

A steel containment similar to that in Gallery 1 is also found in Gallery 2 and Gallery 5, located at picture rail level below the suspended ceiling. Switch plates and sockets all date from the 1990s, with fire signage dating from the 1980s.

Both rooms hold historic value given their continued use as gallery spaces in their original layouts. They also hold aesthetic value due to the partial retention of original materials and quality of detailing.

The arrangement and use of roof lanterns have historical value, given they originally served as a key feature providing aesthetic as well as practical benefits to the galleries when the building opened. They also hold some technical value drawn from their unusual form. However, the application of modern elements, including glass coatings and suspended ceilings, means they are now largely obscured from view internally. It is also noted that the lanterns in their current form are now considered unsuitable by modern conservation standards for display of collections.

Significance of features:

High Significance: Room forms

Medium Significance: Lantern roof openings, doors between galleries, dado panelling

Low Significance: Ceiling plasterwork, wall plaster, modern roof lanterns, original cork floor below modern laminate

Negative Significance: Suspended ceilings, laminate floor, modern surface-mounted services, blinds / covering to Gallery 5 roof lanterns, steel containment picture rail / lighting track (Gallery 2 and 5)

4.7 - SECOND FLOOR ROOMS

4.7.16 - Gallery 2 (Rm. 86)

4.7.17 - Ceiling to Gallery 2 (Rm. 86)

4.7.18 - Panelling to Gallery 4 (Rm. 85)

4.7.19 - Gallery 4 (Rm. 85)

4.7.20 - Gallery 4 (Rm. 85)

4.7.21 - Ceiling to Gallery 3 (Rm. 85)

4.7.22 - Gallery 5 (Rm. 95)

4.7 - SECOND FLOOR ROOMS

SERVICE SPACES (Rm. 82 & 83) and **WC** (Rm. 84)

Low Significance

All of these spaces are utilitarian in aesthetic by design and finish, comprising painted concrete floors, painted common brick walls and solid panel doors. The WCs were refitted in the 1980s and no original fittings remain. None of the spaces hold aesthetic value.

PICTURE STORE (Rm.96)

Low Significance

This room is retained for use by the Gallery services Department. The room is largely painted brickwork with fairly modern picture racks. As with the rest of this level is has no windows but is served by a roof light. There is a plastic canopy formed above to protect the contents of the room from leaks through the roof lantern.

The room retains some significance as a space specifically designed for use in service of the Galleries operation.

CIRCULATION SPACE (Rm.80)

Low Significance

Refer to assessment description for ground floor Circulation Space (Rm. 43).

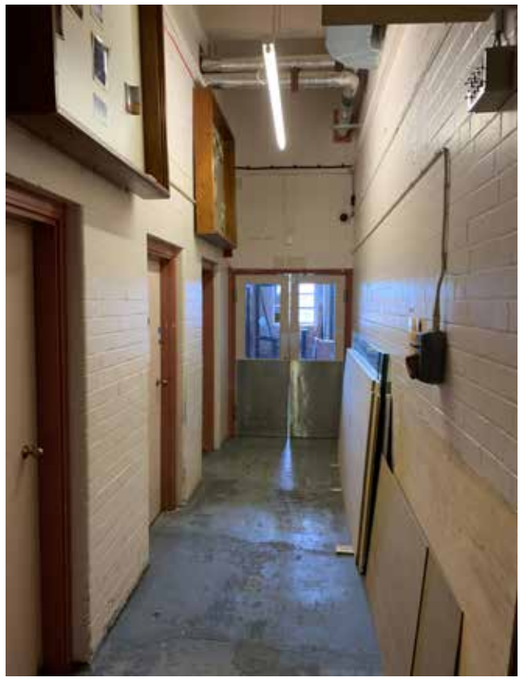
SERVICE STAIR and **LIFT** (Rm.81)

Low Significance

Refer to assessment description for ground floor Service Stair and Lift (Rm. 40 & 41).

4.7.23 - Store / Service Room (Rm. 83)

4.7.24 - Store / Service Room (Rm. 83)



4.7.25 - Corridor (Rm. 80)

4.7.26 - Service Stair and Lift (Rm. 81)

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4.8 - LOWER GROUND FLOOR ROOMS

The lower ground floor entrances and public spaces were an important part of the function and use of the Library. These front-of-house spaces had less status than the ground floor level but were still respected as publicly facing areas. The lower ceiling heights suited the overall composition of the building's architecture, which prioritises the raised position of the ground floor level yet provides a series of important spaces at the lower ground floor.

LOWER GROUND STAIR LOBBY (Rm.24)

Medium Significance

The Lower Ground Stair Lobby retains the high-quality finishes of the Ground Floor Stair Lobby above with some marginal efficiencies. The stair is of the same white terrazzo used on the upper floors, the walls are lined with the same light buff marble and the polished brass handrail carries down to this level. The Lobby is identified on the original plans as an 'Exhibition Hall', and therefore recognised for its importance as a public-facing space and not simply for circulation. The ceiling is flush, with the same decorative cornice evident in public spaces on the floors above. The walls are painted plaster and terminate at the floor with painted skirtings. The floor is lined with dark stained teak woodblocks laid in a herringbone pattern with a two-block margin.

There have been a number of changes since the building was constructed, all of which appear to date from the 1960s or 70s. Double doors have been added across the top of the lower flight of stairs that separate the Lower Ground Stair Lobby from the main Entrance Lobby above. In addition, doors have been inserted through the return walls on each side of the stair to create small storage cupboards using space appropriated from the Store behind (Rm.19). Within the Lobby, a modern partition has been inserted to form an additional new Store (Rm.26). This adaption has disrupted the character of the Lobby, changing it from an open and symmetrical area designed with the potential for collections display into a more serviceable circulation space. This has had a large impact on the potential quality of the room.

4.8.1 - Lower Ground Stair Lobby (Rm.24) with new room on right (Rm.26)

4.8.2 - Lower Ground Stair Lobby (Rm.24) with new room on left (Rm.26) and new enclosure

4.8 - LOWER GROUND FLOOR ROOMS

WEST ENTRANCE / CHILDREN'S LIBRARY LOBBY (Rm.22)
Medium Significance

As with the main Entrance Lobby, the entrance vestibule steps into the building envelope, thereby allowing the main external doors to be held open during hours of operation. The external door appears to be original, whilst the inner doors are modern aluminium, as those found at the main Entrance Lobby. The internal door from the Lobby into the Children's Library appears to be a replacement, as it is close in form to other original doors but lacking the stepped profile found in other examples. The doors to the adjacent WC are flush and painted, although these may have original material beneath.

The floor is lined with original off-white terrazzo with a green band to the outer room perimeter followed by a further margin of off-white terrazzo. The skirtings are of light-green glazed tiles. The windows maintain their original Crittall profiles.

Modern services are present throughout in the form of new fire, security and access systems. Above the external doors, a fire sign appears to be early with the signage insert possibly over-painted and disguising an original graphic beneath. Within the same vestibule is an original recessed light, however internal light fittings are generally modern replacements.

The room holds some aesthetic value for its finishes as well as historic value for its role in the overall design.

Significance of features:

High Significance: Terrazzo floor, marble wall cladding, windows
Medium Significance: Doors and linings
Low Significance: Painted doors and architrave, early fire escape signs
Negative Significance: Modern services

EAST ENTRANCE / INTERLIBRARY LOANS AND NEWSPAPER ROOM LOBBY (Rm.28)
Medium Significance

The flooring materials and detailing here generally matches that of the West Entrance Lobby, although there is evidence that a number of terrazzo tiles have been renewed. The windows maintain their original Crittall profiles.

The internal door from the Lobby into the Interlibrary Loans Room is original, although it has been adapted with Georgian wired glass panels. The doors to the adjacent WC are flush and painted, although these may have original material beneath. Modern services are present throughout in the form of new fire, security and access systems. Light fittings are all modern replacements.

The room holds some aesthetic value for its finishes as well as historic value for its role in the overall design.

Significance of features:

High Significance: Terrazzo floor, marble wall cladding, windows, original internal door
Medium Significance: Doors and linings
Low Significance: Painted doors and architrave
Negative Significance: Modern services

4.8.3 - East Entrance Lobby (Rm.28)

4.8 - LOWER GROUND FLOOR ROOMS

CHILDREN'S LIBRARY (Rm.16)

Medium / Low Significance

This room remains in the same use as originally intended, however adjustments to its decoration and layout have led to it now functioning as a utilitarian 'white box'. The ceiling is formed into bays dictated by structural downstand beams, with decorative cornicing to the perimeter of each. Modern suspended lighting features in each bay, which are supplied by a surface-mounted conduit skirting the east wall at high level. The west wall has high-level windows that look onto the external sunken garden of cherry trees with Victoria Lane beyond. The walls are painted plaster with original bookshelves to the east and west up to window cill height. At the northern end, modern partitions have truncated the room, with the northern-most bay now used as staff space (refer to Rm.13, 14 and 15 description). Modern carpet tiles conceal original teak woodblock flooring in a herringbone pattern below and the original bookcases have been overpainted, as have the door architraves.

Artwork by C.R Napier conveying local tales of Huddersfield provided a visual focus for this space. These were produced with the help of students from the Huddersfield School of Art, where Napier was First Assistant (Anne E Brooke, Douglas K Dyson, A Sylvia Varley, Sax R Shaw, Stanley Broadbent and Jack Kenworthy - Broadbent and Kenworthy were both killed in action and did not live to see the artworks installed). The artworks were moved to the central Kirklees Museum and Art Galleries collection around the mid-1980s.

The Children's Library has lost much of its potential significance, although it still holds some aesthetic value based on the partial retention of original finishes, as well as historic value for their role in the overall design. The room holds communal value as a civic space designed for the residents of Huddersfield. However, the removal of artworks by C.R. Napier, which were originally commissioned for the space, has diminished the potential for the communal and artistic value of this space.

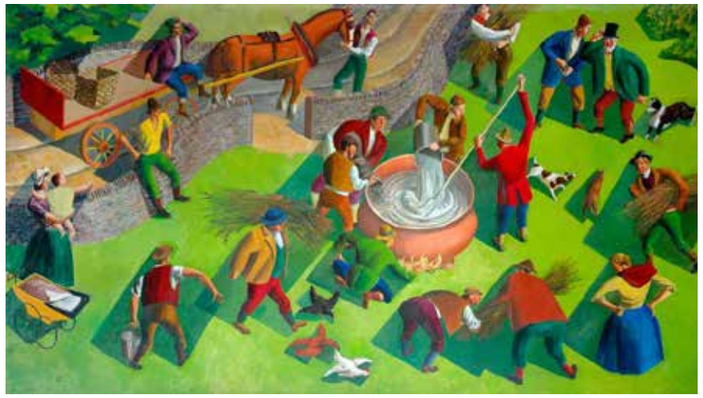
Significance of features:

Medium Significance: Shelving, plaster cornicing

Low significance: Painted doors and architrave

Negative Significance: Modern services, partitions and doors

4.8.4 - Children's Library (Rm.16)



4.8.5 - 'Linthwaite Leadboilers', C.R. Napier, designed for the Children's Library (now in Kirklees collection)

4.8 - LOWER GROUND FLOOR ROOMS

OFFICE (Rm. 13), **LOBBY** (Rm. 14) and **STORE** (Rm.15)

Low Significance

These rooms feature at the north end of the Children's Library and were formed when new partitions were installed within the Library footprint to provide additional operational space. As a result, their ceilings are similar to that in the adjacent Library space, and their floors comprise the original oak woodblock laid in a herringbone pattern. In addition, the Office and Store both retain the original Library shelving in place, with the modern painted plaster partitions setting around them and running to a height of around 2.3m.

The double doors of the Lobby adjoining the adjacent Library Archive are the original doorset. These are of solid construction with seven decorative panels, thereby matching the design of the other public external doors and the solid sliding doors of the Gallery. The double doors set within the new partition to the Children's Library are modern fire doors with wall-mounted access controls.

These spaces belong to the original volume of the Children's Library, however their adaption into additional operational space is of limited interest. As a result, these spaces hold little value in their own right although there is some aesthetic value found in the remaining original finishes.

Significance of features:

Medium Significance: Original door, original shelving, woodblock flooring

Low significance: Plaster cornicing

Negative Significance: Modern partitions, modern services

LIBRARY ARCHIVE (Rm.12)

Low Significance

Located at the north-west corner of the plan, this room is used for general archiving. The ceiling is plain and the walls are painted brick. Ventilation grilles set within the walls are visible at high level. The floor is lined with an old vinyl. There is a bank of 1970s rolling archive shelving. A modern book lift provides a working link to the Reference Archive on the first floor.

The space holds minimal historic value as part of the building's overall original layout.

Significance of features:

Low Significance: Original vinyl, doors to the service corridor, modern book lift

Negative Significance: Modern services

4.8.6 - Office (Rm.13)

4.8.7 - Office (Rm.13)

4.8.8 - Store (Rm.15)

4.8.9 - Library Archive (Rm.12)

4.8 - LOWER GROUND FLOOR ROOMS

MAIN OFFICE / INTERLIBRARY LOANS (Rm.31)

Low Significance

Originally serving as a Newspaper Room, it is likely that this space changed use early in the building's life as access to newspapers became more widespread. It now serves as the main operational base for the administration of Kirklees Libraries and for interlibrary loans. The ceiling is formed in bays with decorative cornicing to each and modern surface-mounted lighting. The east wall has high-level windows that would have originally provided views to Bull and Mouth Street (now a tunnel service ramp). The walls are painted plaster with original dado railing with a stepped profile at the head and base. It is likely that this feature was designed to protect the walls from the newspaper tables. A modern doorway has been inserted into the west wall to provide access into the adjacent Store (Rm. 32). The floor is lined with modern carpet tiles below which is believed to be an original woodblock floor.

The space holds minimal historic value as part of the overall original layout and some minor aesthetic value for the original linings.

Significance of features

Low Significance: Doors from the Lobby, ceiling plasterwork, dado railing, original clock over the rear doors, early fire escape signage

Negative Significance: Modern services, modern carpet tiles, door opening in west wall

STORE (Rm.34) and **ACCESS LOBBY** (Rm.35)

Low Significance

Located at the east side of the plan, the Store is used for processing interlibrary book loans. It was originally intended for use as a stack room, therefore it remains as a space for operational purposes. The ceiling is plain with modern florescent suspended lights, and the walls are of painted brick. The floor is painted concrete. Fittings comprise modern timber and metal shelving.

The Access Lobby to the corner is a later addition which encloses a ramped section of floor. This appears to have been added to address a disparity in floor levels between the Store and an adjacent corridor (Rm. 36).

The space holds minimal historic value as part of the overall original layout.

Significance of features:

Low Significance: Doors to the service corridor, modern book lift

Negative Significance: Modern services, light fittings

LARGE STOREROOMS (Rm.17 & 32), and **SMALL STOREROOMS** (Rm.18, 19 & 20)

Low Significance

These spaces are located beneath the middle of the building and are therefore windowless. They were originally operated as a stack room meaning it remains a space for operational purposes, however what previously comprised a single space has since been partitioned into smaller rooms. The ceilings are plain, the walls are painted brick and the floor is painted concrete. All shelving is modern.

The space holds minimal historic value as part of the overall original layout.

4.8.10 - Interlibrary Loans (Rm.31)

4.8.11 - Original clock and early fire signage in Interlibrary Loans (Rm.31)

4.8 - LOWER GROUND FLOOR ROOMS

PLANT ROOM (Rm.38) and **AIR FILTER CHAMBER** (Rm.37)
Low Significance
These are located at the north end of the building, and as with many service spaces in historic buildings, have seen less redecoration than other front-of-house spaces. The walls of the Plant Room are painted brick with their heads abutting the web of the exposed riveted iron / steel beams. A small light-green painted door leads from the Plant Room into the adjacent Air Filter Chamber, which is also accessible from the adjacent corridor. The Plant Room is predominately occupied by a large modern fan unit. Within the Air Filter Chamber there is a large steel-built grill partition, likely constructed for protection from the plant equipment. The room is undecorated and is likely to have been subject to limited changes to its fabric. Above head height, the vent shaft has a recently installed access deck with an earlier steel ladder access still in place.

The space holds historic value as part of the overall original layout and for its technical value through its role in providing servicing to the Library's vital ventilation system.

ELECTRIC SWITCH ROOM (Rm.06)
Low Significance
This room remains in use as the electrical switch room.

PLANT SPACE (Rm.08), **WCs** (Rm.10) and **STAFF TEA POINT** (Rm.11)
Low Significance
The primary fabric of these rooms is largely unaltered, comprising painted concrete soffit, painted brickwork walls (Rm.08 & 10) or painted plaster (Rm.11) and painted joinery. The WC fittings date from the 1980s. The doors are original, flush faced and painted, with bronze doorknobs. The floors are lined with modern carpet or vinyl.

These rooms hold no aesthetic value and very limited historic value for their part in the overall layout of the building.

Significance of features:
Low Significance: Wall plaster, ceiling plaster, original electrical services, original doors
Negative Significance: Modern WCs, modern services, modern carpet, vinyl flooring

4.8.12 - Air Filter Chamber (Rm.37)

4.8.13 - Plant Room (Rm.38)

4.8.14 - Staff Tea Point (Rm.11)

4.8.15 - WCs (Rm.10)

4.8 - LOWER GROUND FLOOR ROOMS

GIRLS WC (Rm.21) and **BOYS WC** (Rm.23)

Low Significance

These rooms are located next to the West Entrance Lobby and remain in use as children's toilets. The spaces are sparsely decorated with plain painted soffits and plastered walls. Original wall tiling is present up to a height of around 1.4m, however these have since been painted. The WC cubicle doors are original and have original architraves with a stepped profile. The floors are covered in vinyl and are likely to have the original floor finish beneath.

These rooms hold minimal aesthetic value and some historic value for their part in the overall layout of the building and their continued use as WCs.

Significance of features:

Low Significance: Wall plaster, wall tiles, ceiling plaster, original doors

Negative Significance: Modern WCs, modern services, vinyl flooring, paint to tiles

ACCESSIBLE WC (Rm.27) and **SERVER ROOM** (Rm.29)

Low Significance

The Accessible WC is noted as a 'Men's Public Lav' on Ashburner's original plans, whilst the adjacent room is noted as an 'Attendants Room'. Both of these functions illustrate the use of and oversight for the adjacent Newspaper Room, which was intended as an area designed for regular access by men. This 'Men's Lav' is now the Accessible WC, although nothing remains of its original finishes. The 'Attendant's Room' has become the Server Room, and has evidently functioned as a storage area for many years. It has therefore retained its earlier decorative scheme with original joinery skirtings and architraves. The floor is the original oak woodblock laid in a herringbone pattern.

The Accessible WC has no aesthetic and limited historic value. The Server Room holds some aesthetic value for its original finishes.

Significance of features:

Low Significance: Wall plaster, original doors, woodblock floor

Negative Significance: Modern WCs, modern services, vinyl flooring

CIRCULATION SPACES (Rm.07, 09 & 36)

Low Significance

Refer to assessment description for ground floor Circulation Space (Rm. 43).

SERVICE STAIR AND LIFT (Rm.05)

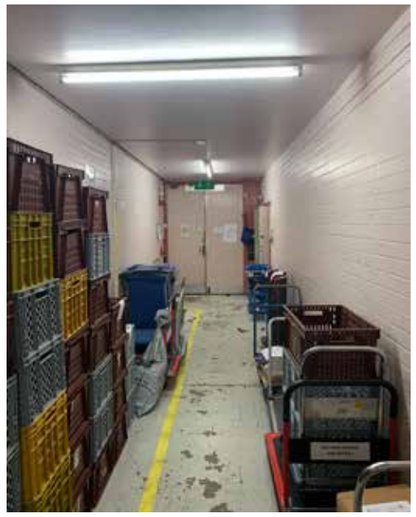
Low Significance

Refer to assessment description for ground floor Service Stair and Lift (Rm. 40 & 41).

4.8.16 - Architrave to Boys WC (Rm.23)

4.8.17 - Accessible WC (Rm.27)

4.8.18 - Rear Corridor (Rm.07)



4.8.19 - Corridor (Rm.36)

4.8.20 - Service Stair and Lift (Rm.05)

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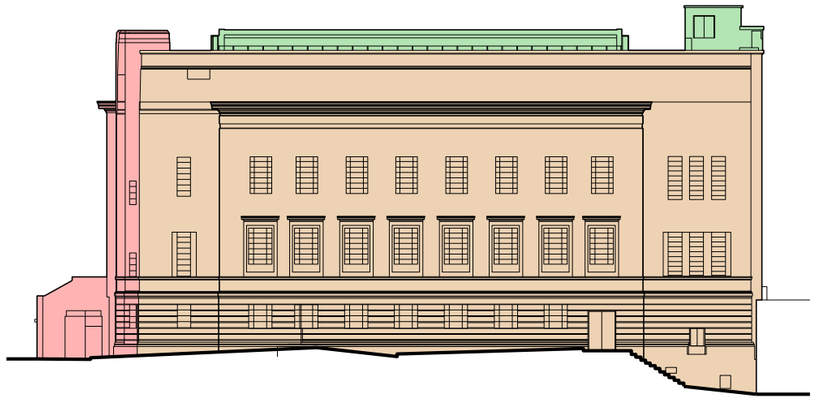
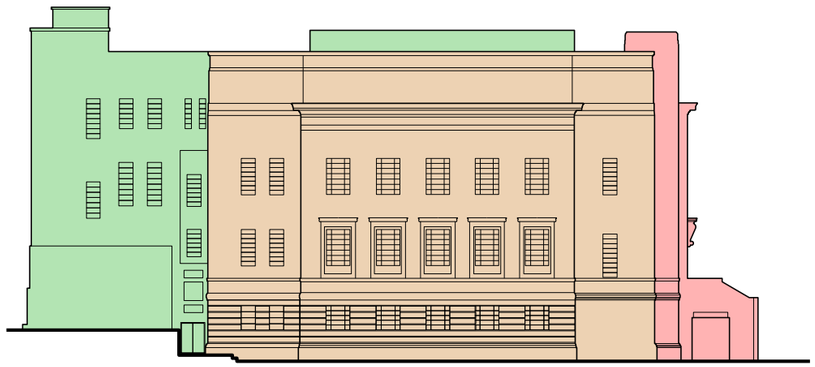
4.9 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE - Elevations

SOUTH - PRIMARY ELEVATION



EAST - SECONDARY ELEVATION

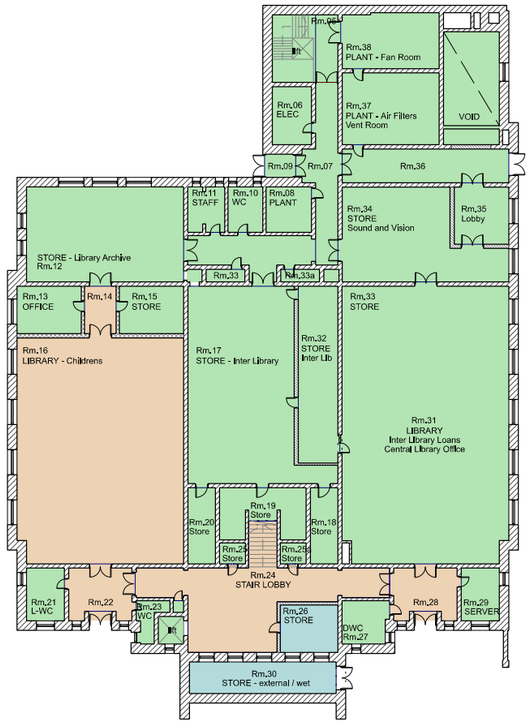


SIGNIFICANCE KEY

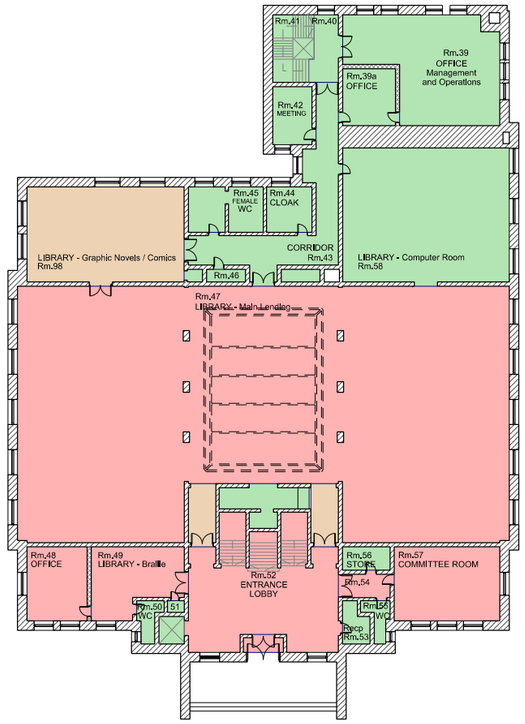
1	HIGH
2	MEDIUM
3	LOW
4	NEGATIVE

4.9.1 - Heritage significance: Elevations

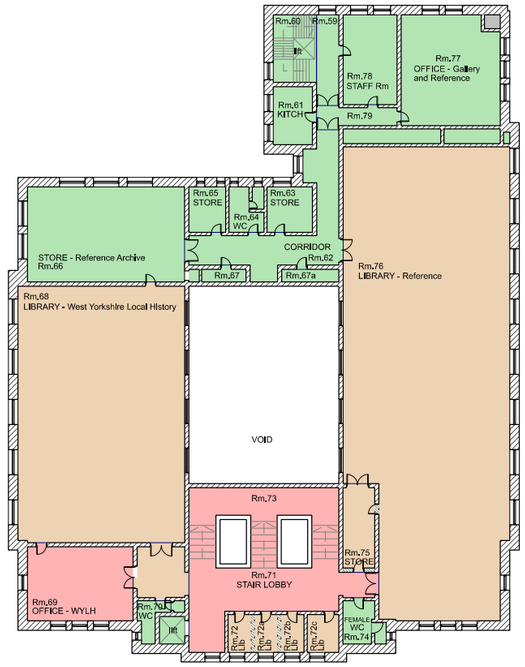
4.10 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE - Floor Plans



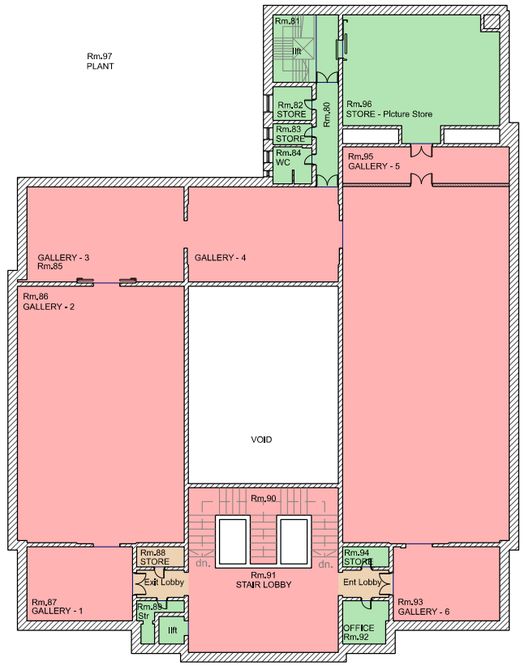
LOWER GROUND FLOOR



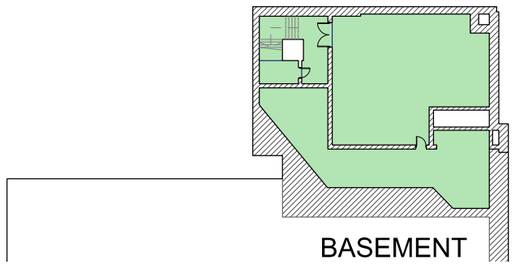
GROUND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR



BASEMENT

SIGNIFICANCE KEY

1	HIGH
2	MEDIUM
3	LOW
4	NEGATIVE

4.9.2 - Heritage significance: Plans

4.11 - KEY OPPORTUNITIES

There is a clear hierarchy of spaces within the building, in which its civic importance as a Library alongside the aesthetics and arrangement of the Entrance Lobby, Committee Room are balanced with the less significant rooms. The controlled articulation of the external decoration continues into the interior spaces, with strong and restrained details that are firmly anchored in the period. The material palette is controlled, with high quality finishes used sparingly in the most populated areas. Beyond these spaces, there is greater economy of materials with much simpler and less costly finishes, such as exposed in the stores and service spaces.

Huddersfield Library and Art Gallery has seen a number of changes internally and externally since its completion in 1940 which have resulted in variations to its original design and to setting. A number of these changes have resulted in the loss of some significance due to the erosion of legibility and loss of authenticity. While the changes are clearly the result of shifts in operational demand, they have at times impacted the aesthetic and historic values of the original building.

Changing societal practices mean that a public library of 1940 does not reflect the requirements, needs nor aesthetic expectations of the people for which it was built. It has been noted that the library is inward-looking with restricted access; both are aspects of the buildings architectural form which do not align with modern requirements of a library facility and would need to be addressed for use in any building intended for civic and / or public use.

In respect of the extent of potential for future change, the appraisal has identified that the building has been consistently adapted across its lifetime as it has adjusted to meet the needs of its operators and users. The building's heritage values and significance are predominantly derived from its key public-facing spaces such as the main Lending Library, Entrance Lobby and main stair. These spaces therefore require the need for a more thoughtful conservation approach as a result. Other rooms such as the galleries hold high significance but have historically been subject to more invasive forms of alteration, such as the introduction of modern plant equipment, suspended ceilings and the loss of original wall linings for hanging art. Despite this, these spaces retain their primary qualities of form, proportion, and in most instances, top light. Servicing and operational spaces hold the greatest potential for change as these spaces can be altered without the special character of the building being eroded.

It is also noted that there are defects present contributing to significant impact to the efficient operation of the building. The Gallery space is current closed, in part due to extensive leaking from the roof, and the existing rainwater drainage strategy which relies on internal drainage has resulted in a number of localised flooding events. Furthermore, movement in the steel frame has caused localised failures to the atrium structure. These and other long-term maintenance and repair issues require effective resolution.

4.11 - KEY OPPORTUNITIES

In pursuit of a positive reuse strategy that will safeguard the building's long-term use as a public asset, it is clear that change has the potential to benefit both the building and setting. As a result, it is considered that Huddersfield Library and Art Gallery could accommodate a high degree of change that would ensure it better meets the needs of its users. Indeed, there is potential to achieve clear heritage gain and public benefit though enhanced access and greater use by a wider and more diverse audience, as well as provide a resolution for much needed repairs and instigate strategies that mitigate against rising operational costs.

Such a strategy could be framed around the following interventions:

IMPROVEMENTS TO THE SETTING

- South - Improve engagement at the south entrance and ensure any changes to the landscape match the architectural intent of the building's original design
- East - Resolve the lost relationship of the east elevation to the public realm.
- North - Seek to create an active frontage that contributes to the surrounding public realm
- West – Explore improvements for the sunken courtyard to the south and the walkway along the west elevation as a means of offering greater activation to the street (in Ashburner's own words "The view, from the street, of an attractive interior would amply compensate, from the point of view of advertisement value, for the small amount of shelving thus sacrificed.")

IMPROVEMENTS TO THE BUILDING INTERIOR

- Improved access and circulation
- Greater visual activation between space (arguably as intended due to the large stair landings where social exchange was expected)
- Removal of later, insensitive additions such as modern partitions and linings (of which there are very few)
- Implementation of focused reinstatement of lost furniture/ fabric/artwork in key public areas

4.12 - IMAGES AND FIGURES

IMAGES and FIGURES

All images and figures by Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios unless noted below:

4.2 - Design Philosophy

4.2.3.2 - James Woodford (right) at work sculpting 'Spirit of Literature', c.1940 - photographer unknown - RIBA British Architectural Library (ref: RIBA17126)
4.2.3.3 - 'The Walling Up of the Marsden Cuckoo', c.1940 - C.R. Napier - Kirklees Museum and Galleries collection
4.2.3.4 - 'Scapegoat Hill Band', c.1940 - C.R. Napier - Kirklees Museum and Galleries collection
4.2.3.5 - 'Slaithwaite Moonrakers', c.1940 - C.R. Napier - Kirklees Museum and Galleries collection
4.2.3.6 - 'The Telling of the Stories', c.1940 - C.R. Napier - Kirklees Museum and Galleries collection
4.2.3.7 - Postcard of Library and Art Gallery on Ramsden Street with the Theatre Royal behind (now demolished), c1950s - Lilywhite Ltd. of Brighouse - Huddersfield Exposed archive
4.2.3.8 - Library and Art Gallery, 1940 - Charles R. H. Pickard - RIBA British Architectural Library (ref: RIBA73910)
4.2.3.9 - East elevation looking onto Bull & Mouth Lane (now lost) - photographer unknown - Corporation Negatives Collection, Kirklees Image Archive (ref: k020508)
4.2.3.10 - North elevation looking onto Bull and Mouth public house (now demolished), c. early 1960s - Graham Slater - HLSLC, Kirklees Image Archive (ref: k024139)
4.2.3.11 - Entrance Hall, 1940 - Charles R. H. Pickard - RIBA British Architectural Library (ref: RIBA73908)
4.2.3.12 - Lending Library, 1940 - Charles R. H. Pickard - RIBA British Architectural Library (ref: RIBA73909)

4.5 - Ground Floor Rooms

4.5.9 - Lending Library, 1940 - Charles R. H. Pickard - RIBA British Architectural Library (ref: RIBA73909)

4.6 - First Floor Rooms

4.6.12 - Public Library, 1940 - Charles R. H. Pickard - RIBA British Architectural Library (ref: RIBA73910)

4.8 - Lower Ground Floor Rooms

4.8.6 - 'Linthwaite Leadboilers', c.1940 - C.R. Napier - Kirklees Museum and Galleries collection

image - title, year - artist - accessed via
*HLSLC = Huddersfield Local Studies Library Collection

4.13 - REFERENCE LIST

REFERENCE LIST

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