January 2023

Whitworth Art Gallery Fabric Repairs

Heritage Impact Assessment

Certified B Corporation



Version history

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1 Introduction



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1.0 Introduction

This Assessment has been prepared to support an application for Listed Building Consent for works to the Whitworth Art Gallery, in acknowledgement of its Grade II designation.

The following report provides an understanding of the site's heritage context, provides a breakdown of heritage significance, and assesses the potential impacts of the proposed scheme on this significance.

1.1 Methodology

As required by paragraph 207, the following report describes the significance of the heritage assets. The detail of which is required to be 'proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.' This information can be found in 3.0 Assessment of Significance. This will underpin an appropriate assessment of the potential impacts of the proposal on that significance, which is found in 4.0 Summary of Proposed Works + Heritage Impact Assessment, in accordance with paragraphs 212-221 of the NPPF.

The document follows best practice guidance, such as Historic England's Statements of Heritage Significance (2019), Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 - The Setting of Heritage Assets (2017) and Conservation Principles, Policies & Management for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment (2008), and BS7913 - British Standards Guide to the Conservation of Historic Buildings.

1.2 Scope

The physical boundary of the project is outlined in **1.4 Location**.

The assessment will consider the potential impacts of the proposed works on the special interest of the Whitworth Art Gallery, as this is a designated asset.

Any potential archaeological impacts are beyond the remit of this report.

1.3 Authorship & Acknowledgements

This document has been prepared by Jenna Johnston MA (Hons) MSc IHBC, Associate Heritage Consultant at Buttress.

This document has been informed by the extant Conservation Management Plan, prepared by the Art Gallery in 2010, but updated where necessary to reflect 2025 guidance and best practice.

With thanks to the SDA Consulting and the University of Manchester.

1.4 Location

The Whitworth Art Gallery is situated on Oxford Road, bounded to the north by Denmark Road, and the south by Whitworth Park. The gallery forms part of the University of Manchester campus.

1.4.1 Key details:

Address: The Whitworth, Oxford Road, Manchester M15 6ER, United Kingdom.

Proximity: 1.5 miles south of Manchester city centre.

Landmarks: The gallery is adjacent to Whitworth Park, and major university buildings and student accommodations.

The gallery is well-connected by public transport, including buses that travel along Oxford Road, one of Manchester's major thoroughfares. Additionally, it is within walking or cycling distance from many parts of the city.

2 Understanding the Heritage

2.0 Undertanding the Heritage



Figure 1 Cockerham, F M(1950) © Manchester City Council

2.1 Listed Buildings and Structures

The Whitworth Art Gallery is a **Grade II listed building.**

2.1.1 Litsting Description

Details

MANCHESTER

SJ89NW OXFORD ROAD, Chorlton-On-Medlock 698-1/4/615 (West side) 03/10/74 Whitworth Gallery

GV II

Art gallery. c.1895-1900, by J.W.Beaumont; altered. Red brick with bands and dressings of matching terracotta, green slate roofs. Roughly rectangular plan with 2 towers and a large porch projecting to the front plus short wings to left and rear. Free Jacobean style. Two storeys over basements, 1:1:9:1:2 windows; with semi-octagonal pilasters to the corners finished as short Baroque turrets with colonnades, plinth, 1st-floor sill-band, stylised corbel tables, moulded cornice, and parapet. The 9-bay main range has a projected ground floor with cornice and balustraded parapet which sweep out over a large semi-circular porch with a screen of paired stone Ionic columns and stone frieze, mounted on 4 semicircular steps; round-headed windows to the curved wall in this porch, small 3-light windows to the straight sides of the projection; cross-windows at 1st floor except the centre which has a slightly bowed 6-light transomed window with a balustrade in the parapet (flanked by raised gold lettering "WHITWORTH" "GALLERIES"). The towers flanking the main range have tiered canted oriel windows and low top stages with corner pinnacles and pyramidal roofs. The end bay to the left and the 2 bays to the right have cross-windows to both floors, the lower larger and set in segmental-headed recesses. All windows have small-paned glazing. Small white lantern on roof ridge, with pedimented faces.

Listing NGR: SJ8486895969

2.2 Conservation Area

The site is not within a Conservation Area.

2.3 Description of the Heritage

The following information is extracted from the Conservation Management Plan (2010)

2.3.1 WHITWORTH ART GALLERY 1887-1908:

The Whitworth bequest and formation of the Whitworth Institute.

Sir Joseph Whitworth (1803-1887) was a mechanical engineer and entrepreneur who rose from relatively humble beginnings to become one of the country's leading industrialists. He specialised in machine tool manufacture and armaments and by the end of his life he had amassed a fortune, much of which was left for charitable and educational purposes after his death (for a recent biography, see Norman Atkinson, Sir Joseph Whitworth: the World's Best Mechanician, 1996). His bequest was administered by legatees: Richard Copley Christie, Whitworth's widow Mary Louisa Whitworth and Robert Darbishire, a close friend and Whitworth's legal adviser. They enjoyed a high degree of freedom in the administration of the bequest and amongst other projects, many connected with the promotion of technical education and with the development of Owens College, they bought Grove House, its grounds and the land now occupied by Whitworth Park and the Art Gallery. The intention was to establish an institute to promote 'Commercial and Technical Instruction, and the cultivation of taste and knowledge of the Fine Arts of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture.' A committee, later the board of Governors, was formed to carry forward the plans. It included leading local figures, including prominent industrialists, William Agnew, a prominent art dealer and C.P. Scott, editor of the Manchester Guardian.

A detailed account of the formation of the committee and the subsequent history of the gallery is given by Francis W. Hawcroft, 'The Whitworth Art Gallery' in Art and Architecture in Victorian Manchester. The plan went forward with the aid of additional endowments, but the initial aim of securing the backing of Manchester Corporation failed and in 1889 a charter of incorporation was obtained. Plans for laying out the park were published in the same year, and it opened in 1890, while Grove House was being converted to an art gallery. The plans for incorporating a technical museum seem to have been dropped by this time. The collections continued to grow over the next few years and according to the 1894 catalogue it was decided to erect:

> **suitable galleries … intended in the first instance to be such as are immediately required, Grove House being retained for the offices of the Institute until required to give place at some future time to a characteristic and more completely architectural main building and façade.**

An architectural competition was held in 1891, with Alfred Waterhouse as assessor. The competition was the subject of comment in the architectural and Manchester press, which criticised the way it had been conducted, in particular for the failure to publicly exhibit the entries. It was suggested that the Whitworth Committee was 'apparently committed to some change of policy in the matter and do not wish any public clue to be given as to what they have intended



Figure 2 E. Salomons, William Agnew in his gallery, circa 1880, detail

or now intend.' (Builder, 30.1.1892 p.75) It was further suggested that plans for the new building 'should have been one of the great competitions of the day' but that the conditions were such that architects were reluctant to enter, and in any event the committee had changed its mind about what they required (Builder 6.2.1892). Correspondence in the Manchester Guardian went further by claiming that the competition was not genuine, and the architect had in effect already been chosen (17.2.1892). Controversy about architectural competitions was common at the time, and the exact circumstances are not entirely clear, but the winner was J.W. Beaumont, a Manchester architect who had previous contact with the Whitworth legatees and had already designed philanthropic buildings for them in Derbyshire.

The architect J. W. Beaumont

James William Beaumont (1848-1931) was articled to Sir James Picton of Liverpool and set up his own architectural practice in Manchester in 1872. He took his son William into partnership in 1900, and another son, John, joined the practice in 1919. He was president of the Manchester Society of Architects in 1903-4 (RIBA Journal 19.9.1931 p. 739). Beaumont designed a number of commercial buildings, warehouses, schools and libraries mainly in the Manchester area. He was also responsible for various laboratories at Manchester University, including the former Whitworth Laboratory (1909). Larger commissions included Pendlebury Hall, an orphanage near Stockport (1880-2), Hyde Town Hall (1883-5) and Colne Town Hall (1894).

The circumstances of Beaumont's involvement with the Whitworth legatees is unclear, but a connection had been established before 1890 and he designed buildings, said to have been commissioned directly by Whitworth's widow, in Darley Dale, Derbyshire where Whitworth lived at the time of his death. The Whitworth Institute there is associated with a public park, Whitworth Park, both opened in 1890. They provide an interesting, albeit relatively small-scale, parallel with the Manchester project. The Whitworth Park and Institute in Derbyshire opened just as Whitworth Park in Manchester was opening, at a time when ideas for the art gallery there were crystallising. Beaumont's Whitworth Hospital at Matlock seems to have been built at around the same time, also through the Whitworth bequest. The Christie cancer hospital was another beneficiary of the bequest where building work was undertaken by the firm. Beaumont undertook another commission for the legatees in 1908, the Whitworth Institute, with library, reading rooms etc., and baths in Openshaw, Manchester (now derelict). This sequence of commissions shows that the legatees had formed a relationship with the architect before the Art Gallery was commissioned in 1892 and chose to retain him for future projects. It is also clear that the idea of combining cultural and educational resources with public open space for recreational use was established at an early stage, with the Derbyshire project running in tandem with the development of proposals for Manchester.

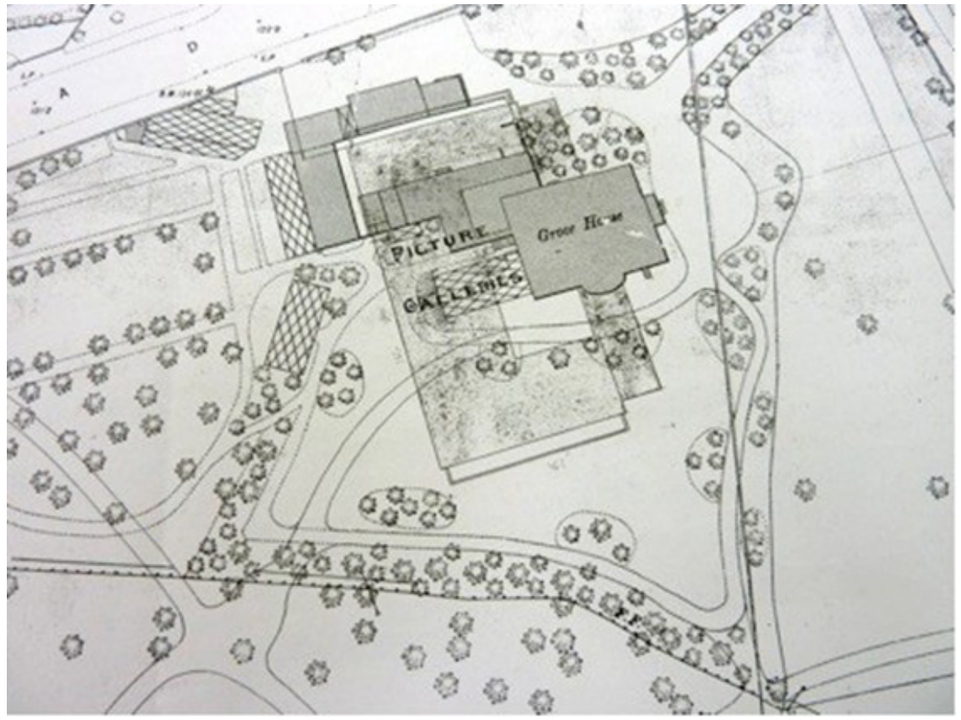


Figure 3 Hyde Town Hall, 1883-5. Images of England

Figure 4 Whitworth Institute, Darley Dale, opened 1890. Images of England



Figure 5 Undated map showing Grove House and intended extensions, circa 1892-3, Whitworth Art Gallery collections



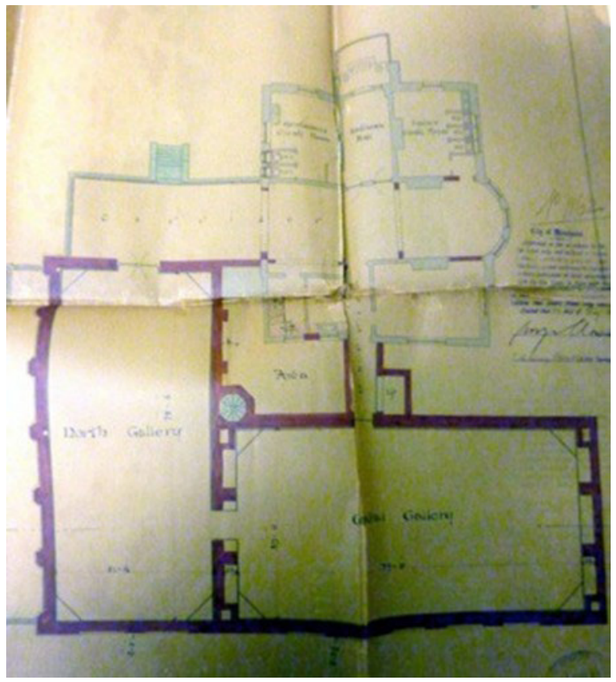


Figure 6 Plan showing Grove House and the new galleries, 1894. Manchester City Council

Development of the building

Contemporary accounts show that the way in which the gallery building evolved was intended to be incremental, presumably as the collections were augmented and perhaps as additional funds became available. It is not entirely clear if the design which won the competition was implemented, since the original competition drawings have not been identified, though it seems likely that the general appearance, building materials (Beaumont entered his proposals under the name 'Terracotta') and main elements were established at that time. The sequence of building can be summarised as follows:

- Conversion of Grove House, 1890
- Erection of North and Central Galleries, 1894-6
- Erection of the South Gallery 1897-8
- Erection of the West Galleries 1905
- Demolition of Grove House and erection of the main frontage building, 1906-8

An undated map held at the Whitworth Art Gallery is based on an OS original of 1889 and shows outline proposals for galleries and extensions to Grove House.

The details shown on the map appear to represent the proposed construction of the North, South and Central galleries with retention and extension of Grove House.

The first set of proposals to be submitted to the Corporation are dated 1894 (Reference No. 1602). These show Grove House and details of a gallery to be erected on the north side of the house (the North Gallery) and the Central Gallery, behind the house. Both galleries had basements and a spiral stair at the angle of the L-shape formed by the buildings connected the floors. They were connected to Grove House by means of a temporary corridor. This was provided with a basement and a hydraulic lift.

The galleries opened in 1896, when they were described in the architectural press. An account in the British Architect (23.10.1896) gives details including descriptions of the heating and ventilation (by E. Hatton of Manchester) of the new spaces. The roofs were of steel and wrought-iron with patent glazing and ceiling lights supplied by Heywood & Co. of Huddersfield. The floors were of fireproof construction in concrete with a steel frame, finished in oak blocks. An illustration by Thomas Raffles Davison is the earliest identified view of the Gallery interior. It shows that the galleries were lit by electricity, as well as by natural light and provided with back-to-back seating.

The scheme was described as 'one of the most pleasing and acceptable instances of the late Sir Joseph Whitworth's generous gifts for the public use'.

The next submission, for building the South Gallery, followed in 1897 (Reference No. 2516). Work started in that year and was completed in the following autumn. The gallery matched the design of the existing north gallery.

University of Manchester



Figure 7 The Gallery in an illustration by Thomas Raffles Davison, British Architect 23.10.1896, detail

A period of several years passed before more extensions were made. In 1905 a further submission to the Corporation (Reference No. 6902) provided for the erection of the West Galleries. The block plan shows how Grove House had been extended to the north and south, with open areas between it and the galleries. The West Galleries are lower than the others, and treated in a much simpler manner. Constructed on a different principle, with an arched undercroft, they do not relate well to the existing decorative scheme. They have the appearance of being a fairly functional 'add-on', and appear to have been built directly over an existing setted thoroughfare or yard thar served as a goods entrance. Windows at basement level in the west wall of the existing building were blocked. The initial function was to take the collections held in Grove House, so that the building could be demolished and replaced by a new entrance front, for which an application was made to the Corporation in the following year.

The final application (Reference No. 7527) is dated 1906 and represents the completion of the scheme with demolition of Grove House and unification of the galleries behind a new frontage building. The area in front of the gallery was laid out as a terrace with walls with terracotta copings. A short notice describing the proposals appeared in the Builder (10.11.1906) but the completion did not receive a great deal of attention in the architectural press, probably because of the incremental manner in which it had been built. By this time the architectural practice had become J.W. Beaumont & Son. William Somerville Beaumont was articled to his father in 1892. His RIBA nomination papers of 1921 (held in the RIBA library) give additional insight into work of the practice and mentions various buildings at Manchester University, extensions to the Christie Hospital in Manchester as well as 'Whitworth Galleries Manchester (front portion)'.

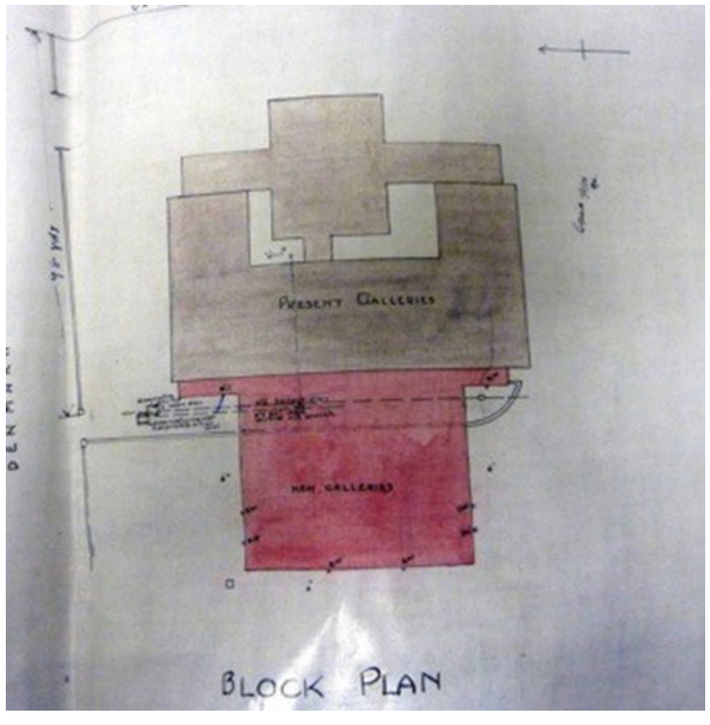


Figure 8 The 1905 block plan showing the position of the West Galleries. Manchester City Council

2.4 WHITWORTH ART GALLERY 1908-1968:

Transfer to Manchester University and modernisation

The building was subject to few alterations from the time of its completion until the mid 20th century. Severe funding problems reached crisis point in the interwar years, when some of the collection was sacrificed to maintain the building. The future of the Whitworth was only secured by the energy and commitment of Margaret Pilkington, who became Honorary Director in 1936 and remained in post for 22 years. Financial matters worsened as sources for funding failed to appear after the war. The Gallery was handed to the University of Manchester in 1958, joining the Manchester Museum as a major public resource run by the University, and assuring the future of the building and its collections. John White, Professor of the History of Art was appointed Director, and a scheme for modernisation of the interior soon followed, prompted by the University Vice-Chancellor, Sir William Mansfield Cooper. Papers held at the Whitworth Art Gallery (architectural correspondence files) include a memorandum, dated 7.9.1959 on the development of the Whitworth Art Gallery prepared by John White for the Architectural Subcommittee of the House Committee of the University. This was intended as a basis for discussion with the aim of establishing a brief 'for an architect eventually to be appointed'.

The paper is divided into sections covering essential requirements, suggested eventual requirements, planning principles and allowance for expansion. The document shows that clear ideas on requirements had been formulated with regard to the need for adequate storage and study space, flexible exhibition space, a modern lecture theatre and improved staff facilities. The section on planning principles is of particular interest as it shows that many of the features of the finished scheme had been formulated before architects were appointed. It was established at this stage that the maximum architectural volume could be aimed for, if necessary by breaking through the internal and external structure, though the façade and flanking towers should remain intact. Great care was taken in the framing of requirements for lighting, both from the point of view of the visitor and with regard to preservation of the exhibits. Principles for the architectural treatment included:

> **Minimum of busyness in detail. Concentration on clarity and proportion. Effects to be gained by fundamentally architectural means. Variety without disunity as the overall aim.**

In addition to this, attention was paid to possible changes in floor levels and circulation generally and the inclusion of space suitable for displaying sculpture

'bearing in mind that initially such spaces would almost certainly have to be used for exhibitions, since the gallery possesses little sculpture'.

The Bickerdike Scheme

The 1960s conversion was contained within the envelope of the existing building and took place in two phases.

The first phase, of 1962-4 included:

- Conversion of the Central Gallery, creating the Margaret Pilkington Room with a mezzanine above
- Creation of the Calouste Gulbenkian Room in the area immediately to the east, previously a corridor flanked by small galleries
- Heating and ventilation systems replaced

The final phase of 1966-8 included:

- Conversion of the North Gallery and insertion of stairs and mezzanine
- Refitting of the South Gallery at full height and creation of a balcony from the central mezzanine. Inserting windows in the south wall
- Introduction of a lecture room in the northern third of the West Galleries
- Refitting of the remaining West Galleries
- Conversion of the Darbishire Hall, the textile gallery

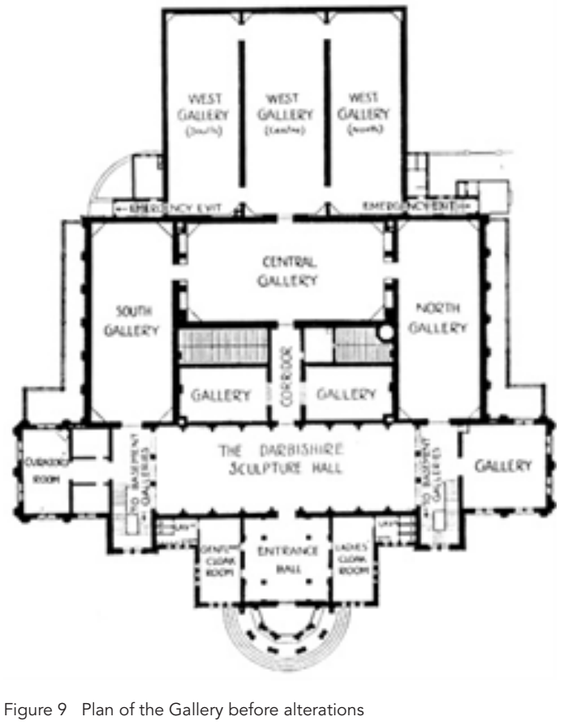


Figure 9 Plan of the Gallery before alterations



Figure 10 The conversion plan 1962-8

The architect, the background to the commission and Phase I

John Bickerdike of the John Bickerdike Partnership (later Bickerdike, Allen, Rich and Partners) was appointed as architect of the conversion. It is plain from the correspondence that he was closely personally involved in the project. Bickerdike (1924-81) was educated in Manchester, at the Manchester Grammar School, the School of Architecture at the School of Art, at Manchester University and finally at the College of Technology, where he undertook a structural

engineering course. He had undertaken reconstruction work at the National Gallery in 1948 and at Birmingham Art Gallery in 1958. He was also an expert on lighting and acoustic control, and had published several papers on the subject as well as designing lighting schemes for a variety of buildings. It may have been this experience that particularly commended him to the client.

In September 1960 he produced his report on the proposed modernisation scheme (architectural correspondence files, Whitworth Art Gallery), which corresponds in many ways to the requirements of the brief, and shows that the general outline of the conversion, including the insertion of a mezzanine had been conceived. It seems from the correspondence that a set of plans had been put into circulation, and detailed comments were received from Margaret Pilkington. Others consulted included Professors Cordingley, and Kantorowich as well as the architect Harry Fairhurst, who was designing new buildings for the University at the time. By 1962 the first phase of the scheme, dealing with alterations to the central area, was ready for submission to the local authority. Bickerdike had evidently found the process a slightly challenging experience. In a letter written to John White early in 1962 he said: 'it makes life awfully difficult in an architect's office to keep stopping and starting, changing and reassessing' (architectural correspondence file, Whitworth Art Gallery).

The first phase of the scheme went forward, but costs rose to around £60,000. Completion was only possible with help of a special grant of £25,000 from the University Grants Committee and a donation of £10,000 from the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation.

The work was executed within the envelope of the existing building, creating a new interior of streamlined modernity but rich in contrasting texture and materials. Historic doors and partitions were removed, the top-lit gallery roofs concealed above inserted ceilings carrying new services. Connections between spaces were improved by the insertion of new openings in existing walls. Up to date heating, lighting and ventilation systems were installed. A mezzanine was inserted within the central gallery and a new area, the Calouste Gulbenkian room, was created from a circulation and corridor area. This room incorporated a podium for sculpture and raised carpeted platform designed as a sitting area.

The first phase of design work established the character, materials, ceiling and wall treatments, which were continued with some modification in phase 2. These included a system of moveable display screens designed by the architect which could be slotted into channels in the ceilings and a system for hanging pictures either by suspending them from aluminium cornice rails or by fixing them to mountings set into tracks in the plaster walls and between plywood panels.

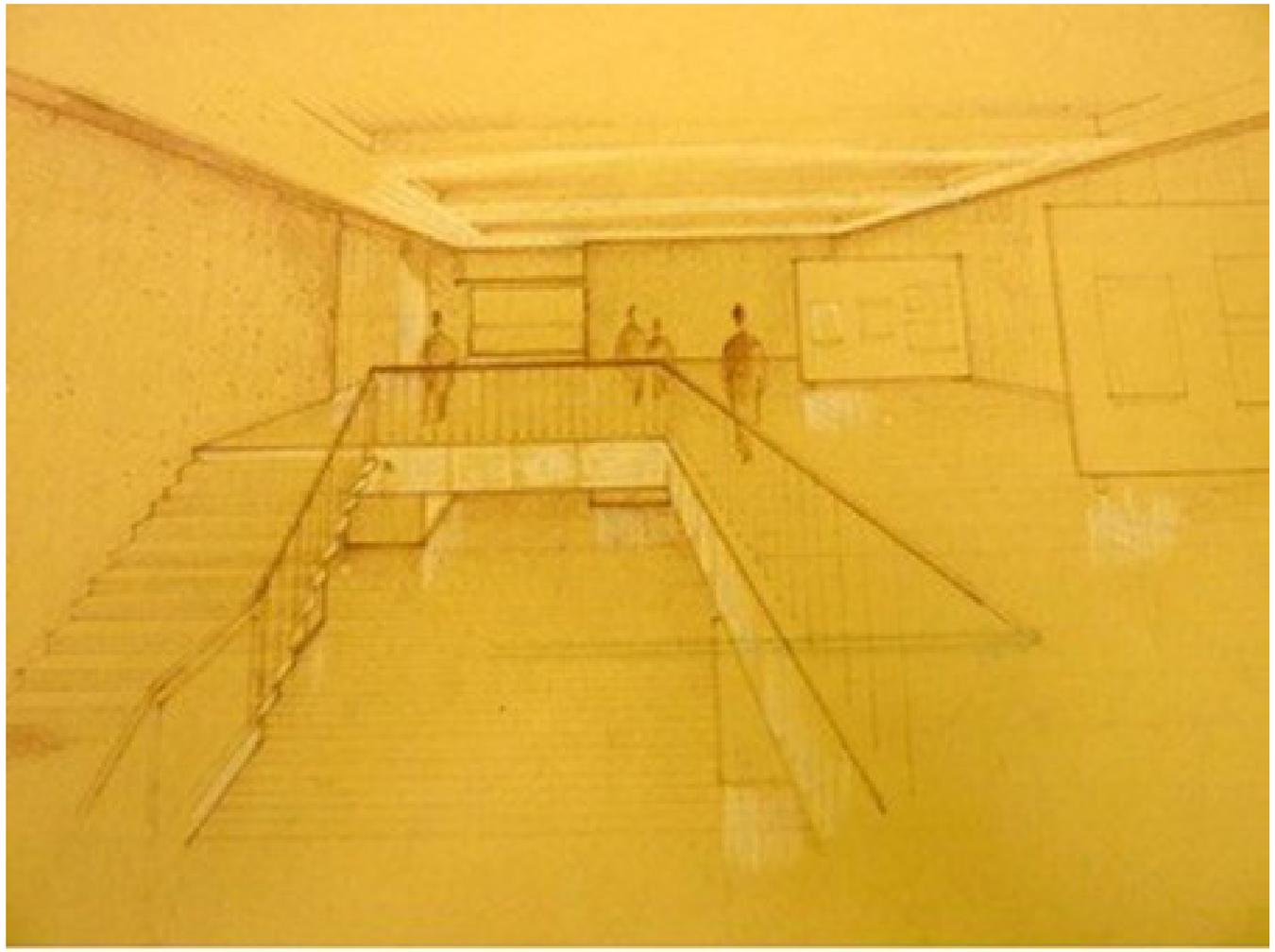


Figure 11 Perspective by John Bickerdike circa 1964, Whitworth Art Gallery collections

The choice of materials reflected Scandinavian influence. Ceilings were formed from Sitka spruce slats or louvres to allow natural light to be filtered in from the original roof lights, retained above. The space above the inserted ceilings was used to introduce artificial lighting and to carry services. Walls were finished in a palette of contrasting materials, ranging from smooth plaster or rough plaster finished with light grey flat paint, with some walls clad in carefully detailed plywood panels of straight-grained elm.

Floors were finished in Loliondo hardwood blocks and natural-riven quartzite stone. A raised area in the Calouste Gulbenkian room was designed to be carpeted and is finished in simpler hardwood strips. The mezzanine floors were covered with foamed latex-backed rubber in a neutral colour.

The new galleries were opened by Lord Cottesloe, chairman of the Arts Council, on the 4th of May 1964 with an exhibition entitled 'Age of Shakespeare' to mark the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's birth. The Burlington Magazine editorial column (Vol. CVI No. 6, July 1964) declared the conversion to be a 'triumphant success' and reserved special praise for the new lighting scheme. It went on to declare:

> **The Council of the University cannot fail to be impressed by the results so far. It must realize that a radical modification of the plan at this stage would be an admission of defeat when victory was in sight. What is more, it must realise that with the growth of the History of Art Department in the University, the Whitworth now has a vitally important function to perform, and can only perform it if its house is completely in order.**

John Bickerdike published an illustrated article in the Museums Journal (Vol. 64 No. 2 September 1964) describing the scheme and the creation of exhibition space suitable for light-sensitive watercolours and textiles, with references to

contemporary studies on illumination and protection from ultraviolet radiation in museum lighting (published in Studies in Conservation Vol. VI, 1961). The improvements to circulation were designed not only to integrate the spaces and give flexibility, but also produced economy in the number of attendants required. Bickerdike concluded that the cost of renovation in this case was substantially less than a complete rebuilding would have been.

The Bickerdike scheme: phase 2 1966-8

Alteration of the outer galleries continued in a phase which was completed in 1968 following submission of plans to the City Council in 1966. The work included reconstruction of five major rooms with introduction of a further mezzanine area in part of the North Gallery, creation of a lecture room in the northern portion of the West Galleries and extension of storage facilities. The guiding principles on circulation were continued, and the surface treatments followed those established. Ceiling heights were lowered except in the South Gallery which was retained at near full height for the display of larger pictures and sculpture as well as providing a space for receptions. Large new windows were introduced into the south side to give high levels of natural light and views of Whitworth Park. In addition to this, vertical tracks were inserted along the south wall so that they could be used for display, and as a frame to curtains, and an opening was created to give views to and from the central mezzanine.

The new windows in the South Gallery set up an engagement with Whitworth Park in a very direct manner, popular at the time, which was adopted, for example, at the Burrell Collection (1983) in Glasgow where glazed walls give direct views into surrounding woodland.

The opportunity was taken to adjust the lighting scheme and hanging system, as well as solving other minor problems which had emerged. It seems that not all of the original proposals were carried forward, in particular a basement café and 'Sculpture Terrace' leading from the South Gallery into the park were intended but remained unexecuted. An opening in the north wall of the West Galleries relates to a lecture theatre and its origin and function have yet to be identified.

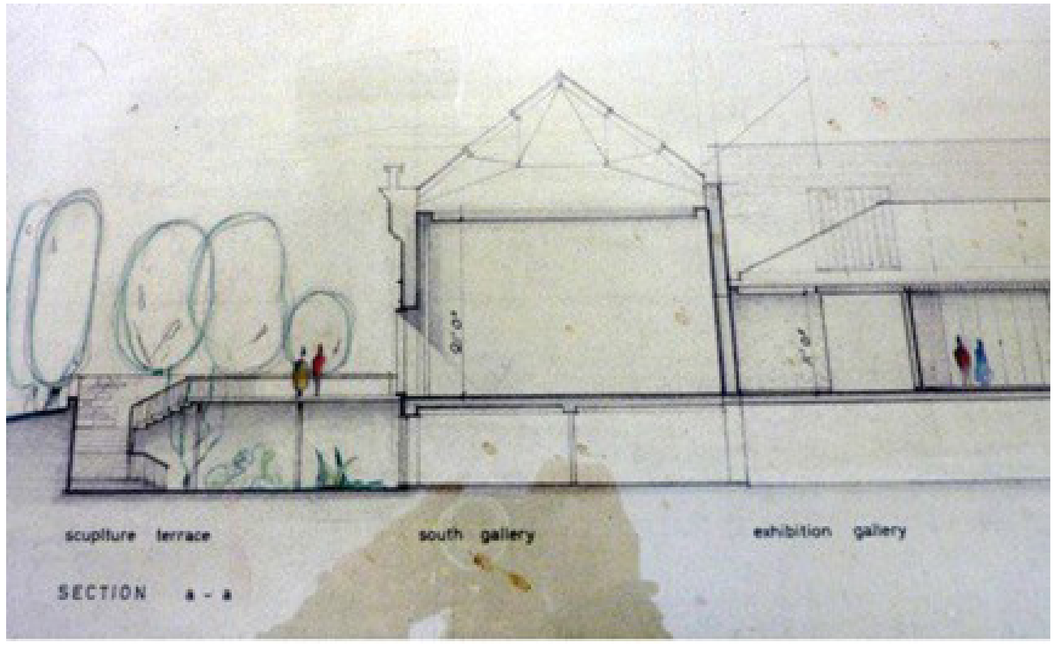


Figure 12 Detail of a sectional view showing a proposed sculpture terrace, Whitworth Art Gallery collections

Bickerdike published another illustrated article in the Museums Journal (Vol. 68 No. 2 September 1968) describing the new work. He concluded:

> **A major reconstruction of this kind is only possible with affinity in attitudes between the architect and the client. First discussions were held in 1959; thus a period of nine years has elapsed, in which time ideas and concepts tend to change or develop and mature. Most of the designing work was complete some eight years ago and the initial concept has been carried through with little deviation.**

The Bickerdike scheme has many of the hallmarks of early 1960s design, for example in the use of African hardwoods with strong visual character, exposed timber in the ceilings to give warmth and texture, and the use of sheets of glazing to allow interiors to interact with exteriors. Although the budget was very tight, the work was executed to generally high standards and the quality of the finishes and clever disposition of space has stood the test of time.

A broadly comparable local scheme is the Royal Northern College of Music, Oxford Road, Manchester, which was designed by Bickerdike's practice (then Bickerdike, Allen Rich and Partners) in 1968-73. The generosity of space, good circulation and flexibility are attributes shared by both buildings.

Details of further alterations are available in the Conservation Plan.

2015 Extension

The latest development by MUMA in 2015 includes two new wings extending into the park, creating a garden court and new entrance. The south wing houses a café with a terrace, while the north wing includes a Landscape Gallery and Study Centre.

The redevelopment focuses on integrating the gallery with the park, creating visual and physical connections. New openings and a promenade gallery enhance views and light, while the Art Garden and lower promenade provide informal, welcoming spaces.

The north wing includes essential back-of-house facilities like a new loading bay and goods lift. The redevelopment also improves environmental control and display space, making the gallery more versatile and visitor-friendly.



Figure 13 Whitworth by MUMA

3 Assessment of Significance

3.0 Assessment of Significance

This section is extracted from/informed by the Conservation Management Plan (2010). The level of significance will be assessed based on the scale provided within that document.

The 2010 assessment of significance was carried out in accordance with contemporary guidance - though using terminology that is now out od fate. We have reattributed the prior work to the corresponding categories based on Historic England's Statements of Heritage Significance 2017. These are:

Archaeological Interest

There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.

Architectural & Artistic Interest

These are interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place. They can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures of all types. Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skills, like sculpture.

Historic Interest

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

Levels of significance

Exceptional	important at national to international levels, including the most important scheduled ancient monuments, Grade I listed buildings and World Heritage Sites. Buildings and places of exceptional significance demand the highest level of care and protection. Any proposals for change will require the highest level of scrutiny and justification. In mitigation for change, an appropriate level of recording will be required.
High	important at a regional level or sometimes at a national level, including Grade II listed buildings. The retention of these buildings or elements is a priority and considerable care is needed in their adaptation. In mitigation for change, an appropriate level of recording will be required.
Medium	important at local to regional level, including local (non- statutory) listed buildings or those that make a positive contribution to the setting of a listed building or to a conservation area. May include less significant parts of Grade II listed buildings. Buildings and parts of structures in this category should be retained where possible, although there is usually scope for adaptation that takes account of adjoining heritage structures and setting.
Low	of limited heritage or other cultural value. May include altered parts of listed buildings or modern additions. The removal or adaptation of buildings or features in this category is usually acceptable, provided that care is taken to protect adjoining historic features, setting and buried archaeology.
Negative or intrusive	those that harm the value of the site as a whole or individual elements. Wherever practicable, removal of negative features should be considered, taking account of adjoining historic features or archaeology and the benefits of the change to the entity as a whole.

3.1 Archaeological Interest

The physical fabric and arrangement of the Whitworth Art Gallery expresses two principal phases of construction and development, from 1890-1908, the dominant external phase, also reflected in its parkland setting, and the mid to late 1960s, expressed mainly internally. These enable the building to be interpreted and 'read' by the visitor in the context of the historic evolution of the place, and the interaction of the collections with the spaces and with the parkland setting. The juxtaposition of the two main phases expresses continuity and change in the context of fine art collections and the buildings which house them, and acts as a validation of the historic origins of the place and its continuing worth.

3.2 Historic Interest

The gallery is associated with some notable local historic figures, including the engineer Sir Joseph Whitworth and prominent Manchester figures associated with the arts, culture and philanthropy. These include C.P. Scott, editor of the Manchester Guardian, William Agnew of the famous art dealing firm and John Copley Christie, a major influence in the development of Manchester University. In more general terms, historic value is expressed through the building as a type, an expression of Victorian ideals and inclusive cultural aspirations. As a gallery set up through the bequest of an engineer there is a particularly North- Western resonance, echoed in comparable bequests by industrialists, such as that of John Rylands. At the time that the Whitworth was conceived many Manchester business and industrialist figures were only a generation away from humble, often Nonconformist origins, denied a university education and compelled to make their way without family wealth as a backing. In some cases it seems that the desire to make a claim on high culture and education was translated into active promotion of education and the arts for the benefit of a wider public.

3.3 Architectural and Artistic Interest

The building is an example of public architecture of late 19th to early 20th century date of high value that expresses its function and associations through the design and setting. Internally the character and quality of the surviving early 20th century work is of high aesthetic value. The work is generally robust but well-finished. The value of the mid 20th century conversion is also high, with a distinctive palette, manipulation of light, and flow of space. In townscape terms, the Gallery is of high significance as part of a group of educational and hospital buildings of broadly similar date, which have connections with one another, in a recognisable educational and cultural quarter. Whitworth Park is an important open green space.

Communal value:

he Activity Plan describes in detail how local communities value the Whitworth. Between 2005/6 and 2009/10 visitor numbers to the Gallery increased by 94% from around 80,000 to 170,000, and 40% of these visitors were from local communities. The ethnic backgrounds of the local communities are very diverse and historically transient. These communities have reported that they find the Whitworth Art Gallery relaxed and family friendly and evaluation shows that many local families visit the Gallery as independent visitors, having first attended artist-led family learning sessions. Families now make up more than 20% of the Gallery's visitors. Attracted by a busy and varied programme of cultural activities for specific targeted groups of families, these groups now view the Gallery as a lively and welcoming social hub.

The Friends of the Whitworth, a voluntary organisation founded in 1933, is another powerful expression of the communal value of the Gallery and its collections. The group organises events and supports the Gallery financially through contributions to the costs of acquisitions and support of activities at the Gallery such as a Sunday concerts programme. Members help at the Whitworth as volunteers and guides, particularly for weekly introductory tours. We would expect members of the Friends of the Whitworth to be prominent in the teams of trained volunteers who will deliver the support for interacting with adult discoverers and amateur experts, as outlined in the Activity Action Plan.

Architectural significance

The Building is of high significance architecturally. It is a grade II listed building, which was added to the list in 1974 (for the listed building description see appendix 2). The gallery was constructed and designed according to contemporary principles of gallery design using methods which were by then standard. The free Jacobean design of the building places it in the context of architectural design of the day and links broadly with neighbouring educational, cultural and philanthropic institutions. The evolution and appearance of the building suggests that the design of the North, South and Central Galleries and frontage buildings were conceived as a unified design.

The West Galleries, effectively at the back of the building, do not display the same level of integration or decorative treatment. For this reason this part of the building is considered to be of medium significance.

The West Gallery showing the gable cutting crudely across the South gallery cornice

Apart from this, the building envelope exhibits a very high degree of architectural unity with the external appearance and character much as it was on completion in 1908. The exceptions are minor alterations connected with security, disabled access and fire safety, and window openings in the South Gallery.

The interior of the building reflects two principal phases in its history, the 1906-8 phase, reflected in the entrance vestibule and entrance hall. 1906-8 stairs and stairwells (not usually accessible to the public) exhibit a high degree of architectural unity and preservation of original features, including the stairs with decorative cast-iron balustrades, the probably original principal light fittings, mosaic window sills, windows and doors and their furniture.

The other principal phase is associated with the internal rebuilding of the galleries that took place in two phases between 1962 and 1968. This work is considered to be of high significance in terms of mid 20th century post-war design. It is one of relatively few such conversions of high calibre to survive from a time when few art galleries were built or extended. The quality of the materials and design set it apart from standard work of this period, and the lighting and display systems were purpose-designed for the project. A high degree of flexibility was built in. Although the original lighting systems and display screens have largely been superseded, the layout and many of the finishes have stood the test of time and continue to create a flexible and attractive environment with good circulation and flow of spaces.

The Mezzanine Court was created in the mid 1990s by the architects Ahrends Burton & Koralek. It is well integrated into the 1960s mezzanine areas, with engagement with the South Gallery. A dramatic space was created with relatively little intervention into the existing fabric, and the previously outer wall of the 1906-8 building is exposed, creating connection and interaction with this phase of the building's history. The addition is considered to be significant as recent work of note.

Social history significance

The Building is of medium significance in terms of social history in a national context, but of great importance in relation to the history of Manchester. Sir Joseph Whitworth was a figure of national importance and renown, though his name is not widely known outside engineering history circles today. The association with him contributes to social history significance and links the building with others and other projects that bear (or bore) his name, such as the Whitworth Hall at Manchester University and the Whitworth laboratories there.

The Whitworth Art Gallery became part of Manchester University in 1958 but there was a connection from the gallery's inception, since both institutions benefited from Whitworth's legacy and some of the same personnel, in particular Richard Copley Christie (1830-1901), were involved with both institutions. Christie was one of the first members of academic staff at Owens College, the precursor to Manchester University and went on to become a Governor. As one of the Whitworth legatees Christie was instrumental in making substantial grants to Owens College including provision of land to be held by the college for hospital purposes, and the erection of Whitworth Hall. He was president of the Whitworth Institute from 1890-5, overseeing the commissioning and first stages of the creation of the art gallery. These connections place the Whitworth Art Gallery at the heart of late Victorian social provision in Manchester as part of a range of facilities which reflect the non-sectarian educational and cultural aims of some of its leading citizens.

4 Proposed Works + Heritage Impact Assessment

4.0 Proposed Works + Heritage Impact Assessment

The following section will present a summary of the proposed works on the Whitworth Art Gallery site, followed by an assessment of the potential impacts on the heritage.

Impacts will be assessed and scaled per British Standards BS7913 guidance for the scale of impacts, which correlates with the ICOMOS Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments.

VALUE OF HERITAGE ASSET	SCALE & SEVERITY OF CHANGE/IMPACT (EITHER ADVERSE OR BENEFICIAL)				
	No Change	**Negligible Change**	**Minor Change**	**Moderate Change**	**Major Change**
Exceptional	Neutral	Slight	Moderate/ Large	Large/Very Large	Very Large
High	Neutral	Slight	Moderate/ Slight	Moderate/ Large	Large/Very Large
Medium	Neutral	Neutral/Slight	Slight	Moderate	Moderate/ Large
Low	Neutral	Neutral/Slight	Neutral/Slight	Slight	Slight/ Moderate
Negligible	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral/Slight	Neutral/Slight	Slight

Figure 14 Significance/Scale of Impacts Table

Scale of Change

No Change	No material change to the heritage asset or its setting.
Negligible Change	A small change or alteration, but unimportant. Having no visual or indirect impacts on the asset or its setting. Slight changes to use or access.
Minor Change	A small change to an element of fabric or setting that results in a noticeable difference. Limited indirect impacts or changes to character.
Moderate Change	Changes to an element, including replacement, or insertion of a new element, where the asset or its setting has clearly been modified. Noticeable indirect impacts.
Major Change	A change of great extent, including the complete removal of an element. Changes to most or all of the asset or its setting. Total alteration of the asset. Extreme indirect impacts.

Scale of Impact

Major beneficial	The proposal will have an exceptionally positive impact on the significance of the heritage.
Moderate beneficial	The proposal will have a substantial positive impact on the significance of the heritage.
Minor beneficial	The proposal will have some limited positive impact on the significance of heritage.
Neutral	The proposal does not affect the significance of the significance of heritage.
Minor adverse	The proposal will have some limited negative impact on the significance of the heritage.
Moderate adverse	The proposal will have a substantial negative impact on the significance of the heritage.
Major adverse	The proposal will have a serious and irreversible impact on the significance of the heritage.

4.1 Summary of Proposed Gutter + Rainwater Remedial Works

There is water ingress to the north and south galleries from the box gutters above, caused by excess water collection. The north and south roofs do not have their own gutters and therefore directly discharge into the box gutters. The proposed solution is to install new gutters, (Alutec 200 x 150mm Aligator Giant gutter system incorporating leaf guards), to the eaves of the polycarbonate roof slopes to reduce the rainfall load on the gutter boxes below. The discharge of these gutters will require the creation of a roof penetration with a rainwater pipe fixed within the roof void to the west gable wall, and a new lead spitter formed including cast iron hopper and downpipe. On the south roof, the lead sump will be increased in length to accommodate rainwater discharge. An overflow outlet will be added to north east corner of the south roof to manage potential excessive rainfall discharge into the box gutter, Overflow pipe added to outlet at south east corner of north roof to manage potential excessive rainfall discharge into the box gutter.

All pipework within the ceiling void will be insulated to prevent condensation and a leak detection system such as Envirotech Alarms Ltd or Waterguard System are recommended subject to approval by the University.

4.2 Assessment of Heritage Impacts

4.2.1 Step 1: Determine the Asset's Significance

The Whitworth Art Gallery is a Grade II listed buildings, and is considered of moderate significance.

The roof and guttering are core to preserving the structural and visual integrity of the galleries but are not themselves of exceptional heritage interest.

4.2.2 Step 2: Assess the Scale of Change

The proposed works involve moderate change, as the installation of new gutters and associated rainwater management features will alter the existing roof and drainage system. However, the works are necessary to address functional deficiencies and ensure the long-term preservation of the asset.

4.2.3 Step 3: Evaluate the Impact Using the Matrix

Moderate significance + Moderate change = Moderate impact.

4.2.4 Step 4: Interpretation

Impact

The impact of the proposed works is assessed as moderate. The proposed alterations do not enhance the architectural or historic significance of the asset directly but do improve the functionality and longevity of the building.

Benefits

Improved rainwater management will prevent water ingress, safeguarding the galleries and their contents.

Reduced risk of long-term damage to the structural and decorative elements of the building

Mitigation

Ensure the design and materials are in keeping with the building's character, using appropriate detailing.

Conduct regular maintenance checks post-installation to ensure the effectiveness of the system and avoid unanticipated issues.

4.2.5 Conclusion

The proposed works result in a minor beneficial impact on the heritage asset. They enhance the building's resilience, aligning with best practices for functional conservation.

4.3 Summary of Proposed Terracotta Finial Replacement Works

An initial assessment by Novus on January 14th, 2022, revealed that the finials were in poor condition. Finial 1 was at risk of collapse, prompting its careful removal along with associated ornate coping stones. Novus reported the following:

Finial 1: The ball section and some lower coping stones were removed. Although the pillar remains stable, it has cracks around its structure. Novus recommends removing and re-bedding three coping stones and two main top coping stones, with bespoke new finials and coping stones cast for replacement.

Finial 2: Several cracks were identified in the ball and base, but the structure is currently stable. Moss was removed from the cracks, and Novus recommends monitoring the condition with planned future replacement.

4.4 Assessment of Heritage Impacts

4.4.1 Step 1: Determine the Asset's Significance

The Whitworth Art Gallery is a Grade II listed buildings, and is considered of moderate significance.

The finials and coping stones contribute to the aesthetic and structural integrity of the building, reflecting its historical character and craftsmanship.

The damaged finials and coping stones are integral components of the structure's decorative and functional design.

4.4.2 Step 2: Assess the Scale of Change

This constitutes a minor to moderate change, as the replacement and repair aim to restore the elements to its original aesthetic appearance.

4.4.3 Step 3: Evaluate the Impact Using the Matrix

Moderate significance + Minor/Moderate change = Minor beneficial impact.

4.4.4 Step 4: Interpretation

Impact

The works will have a minor beneficial impact on the heritage asset. The replacement and re-bedding are designed to prevent further deterioration and maintain historic character.

Benefits

The reinstatement of the finial contributes to the overall aesthetic quality of the building's decorative elements.

Stabilisation of coping stones reduces risks to the structure and enhances longevity.

Matching materials and profiles on a like-for-like basis, in accordance with best conservation practice.

Mitigation

Close collaboration to ensure the replacements are of appropriate quality and match the originals.

Regular monitoring and maintenance post-restoration to prevent similar damage in the future.

4.4.5 Conclusion

The replacement of the ball finials and re-bedding of coping stones will result in a minor beneficial impact. These works are essential for preserving the building's structural and visual integrity, ensuring its continued contribution to the heritage value of the area.

4.5 Summary of Proposed Dry Rot Eradication Works

The proposed works aim to address water ingress and dry rot by repointing mortar joints with a mix approved by the local authority, repairing damaged plaster and timber in the stairwell, and using biocides to treat masonry rot. Decayed joinery will be replaced to match the existing features, and lime plaster will be applied where required. In the storeroom, the window casement will be repaired using pretreated timber, with the window removed and reinstated. Conservation measures include isolating the picture rails and window frames in the north staircase from dry rot-infested masonry using a damp-proof membrane to prevent further deterioration.

4.6 Assessment of Heritage Impacts

4.6.1 Step 1: Determine the Asset's Significance

The Whitworth Art Gallery is a Grade II listed buildings, and is considered of moderate significance.

The affected features, such as picture rails and window frames, are minor contributors to the architectural and historical integrity of the asset.

4.6.2 Step 2: Assess the Scale of Change

This constitutes a minor to moderate change, as the like-for-like replacement of the finishes and details does not result in the irreversible loss of its historic appearance or character.

The area of plaster for removal os relatively substantial, forming the full stair wall, with some additional removal on the other side of th walls and around the window. This will be monitored on site to ensure that the plaster removal is sufficient to access and treat areas affected by dry rot.

4.6.3 Step 3: Evaluate the Impact Using the Matrix

Moderate significance + Minor/Moderate change = Minor beneficial impact.

4.7 Step 4: Interpretation

Impact

The impact of the works is minor beneficial, as they address the ongoing degradation of the fabric and seek to halt active rot, in a manner appropriate to the significance of the building.

Benefits

Prevention of further deterioration caused by dry rot and water ingress.

Conservation of features, such as picture rails and window frames, ensuring continuity of the building's architectural language.

Enhanced longevity and resilience of the asset.

Mitigation

All materials and methods will be agreed upon with the local authority to ensure compatibility with the building's historic fabric.

The replacement of timber and plaster will use pre-treated and traditional materials, such as lime plaster, to match the original.

Regular monitoring of the treated areas will ensure the long-term success of the interventions and prevent future issues.

4.8 Conclusion

The proposed dry rot eradication works will have a minor beneficial impact on the heritage asset. By addressing water ingress, treating affected masonry, and replacing decayed materials with like-for-like, these interventions are essential to maintaining the asset's integrity and historic character, ensuring its continued contribution to the heritage significance of the site.

4.9 Justification Statement

The proposed works are necessary to address ongoing issues threatening the long-term conservation of the heritage asset. In accordance with Paragraphs 207-208 of the NPPF (December 2024), the works are proportionate to the significance of the asset and are informed by an understanding of its heritage significance.

The works are designed to minimize harm and are sensitive to the asset's significance, in line with Paragraph 212, which seeks to prioritise conservation. Key features, such as the ball finials, will be replaced with new to match the original materials and profiles, while rainwater systems will be enhanced to mitigate overflow. These measures ensure that the asset remains viable for its intended use and resilient against environmental risks, with minimal alteration to its historic fabric.

In accordance with Paragraph 214, any less-than-substantial harm resulting from the interventions is justified by the significant public benefits, including preventing further deterioration and ensuring the building's continued use. These works align with best conservation practices and the overarching aim of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets.

Thank you

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