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DESIGN, ACCESS AND HERITAGE STATEMENT

Internal Alterations to the Vaughan Building Form
Additional Teaching Space

at

St Bede College
Alexandra Road South
Manchester
M16 8HX

prepared by

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Introduction

This design, access and heritage statement has been prepared by LMM on behalf of St Bede College and forms part of the listed building consent for the proposed internal alterations of the Grade II listed Vaughan Building.

The internal proposals are located on the second and fourth floors of the Vaughan Building highlighted in blue on the site plan facing Alexandra Road South.

This statement sets out the historic context, design principles and justification for the proposed work and its impact on the listed building. It is to be read in conjunction with the drawings and information submitted as part of the listed building consent.

St Bede's College have been exploring options to create additional teaching space at the school to maintain its promise to students and carers on class sizes and curriculum. Previous alterations have been undertaken to the Henshaw Building to create a space more conducive to modern day learning and as sections of the Vaughan Building are currently unoccupied due to safeguarding concerns, alterations to the areas identified will bring the building back to full occupancy whilst providing learning spaces.

If approved, the College are aiming to commence works in Summer 2024.



Site Analysis – Description of Building

St. Bede's College is located within the Whalley Range Conservation Area in Manchester and is a grade II (1994) listed building. The main Vaughan Building which was originally built as the Manchester Aquarium in 1874, is in the Italian Renaissance style, 4 storey high in red brick and terracotta detailing with decorative frieze and cornice and part attic and concealed roof. The single storey porch with decorative panels leads to the main ground floor corridor and the Academic Hall, which are decorated with mosaics and marble.

The College was opened on 10 September 1877 and the College Chapel added in 1898. The Henshaw Building (1932) and the Beck Building (1958) complete the main group of school buildings which bound the playgrounds to the rear between Mayfield and Wellington Roads. The main buildings were all named after respective Bishops of Salford.

The Vaughan Building was originally intended to have two wings, only one of which was built, thereby giving the building an asymmetrical look from Alexandra Park opposite. The four storey gable has brickwork toothed and high level inset fireplaces to take this future addition.

The College Chapel with its design matching the Academic Hall, is a rectangular brick built, single storey building with pairs of round arched windows and rounded niches inset into brickwork which originally contained statuary.

The science department is contained within the 1932 Henshaw Building which is a 3 storey building fronting Mayfield Road, 'H' shaped in plan with 2 end wings and linking stairwells to the main central block.

The 1958 Beck Building is a 3 storey brick building which contains the Refectory, Dining Hall and classrooms on upper levels and was designed by Reynolds and Scott of Manchester. The irregular shaped layout forms the southern wing of the College and is accessed from the main Vaughan Building by a series of contrasting brick arched openings forming a cloistered approach to the Refectory and Dining Hall. There are 7 large panelled windows with round arch heads and inset basketwork panels to these areas, whilst the classroom windows are gauged flat arch.

Recent additions have included The Maher Library (1993) and extension to the Prep School (1995) which were sited either side of the Chapel facing Mayfield Road.





Historic Context

Below is a brief outline of the history of the College and surrounding area, its importance, how it has evolved.

Whalley Range was one of the first suburbs created in Manchester providing a *“desirable estate for gentlemen and their families”* by Samuel Brooks (1792-1864), who was a local businessman and banker turned developer. Roads were laid out and building plots sold with conditions to ensure that development met Samuel Brooks’ vision.

Alongside this new residential area, parks and open spaces were created to provide leisure and recreation for the people. Alexandra Park was designed by Alexander Hensell and was opened to the public in 1870. Its main purpose was to “deter the working men of Manchester from the alehouses during their day off and to encourage spending time off with their families on moral and physically healthier activities”. The park’s informal pathways linked with the Serpentine Lake and a Lyme Walk and bandstand were designed for promenading. Shortly afterwards the Manchester Aquarium was built in 1874 and sited opposite Alexandra Park. It was the largest inland aquarium of its kind and although it expanded, it proved to be commercially unsuccessful and in 1877 was purchased by the then Bishop Vaughan and converted and extended by Dunn and Hansom, two prominent architects in the North of England into a catholic school. There are aquatic motifs and detailing of fish and other marine animals to the stonework, terracotta and mosaics of the original Aquarium building (now the College’s Academic Hall) which reflect the building’s original use.

The main ground floor corridor is an impressive centrepiece for the school and leads to the Academic Hall and via two linking corridors to the Chapel and Preparatory School.

The building is dominant and contributes positively to the main streetscape, particularly its relationship to the main formal entrance gates to Alexandra Park opposite. The building forms the east boundary to the Whalley Range Conservation Area.



Alexandra Park, Whalley Range - 1925



Statement of Significance

The main buildings and their setting are a designated heritage asset in accordance with PPS5 – Grade 2 Listed and Conservation Area.

Evidential

Long standing College with a history of expansion and improvement which can be traced through its varied architecture style and buildings.

Many original rooms, circulation areas and spaces are still being used as teaching spaces as originally intended when the College was created.

Historic

Important example of an early public leisure building, the Manchester Aquarium, which at the time was one of the largest inland institutions of its kind, set in one of Manchester's first residential suburbs with evidence of marine life in detailing and mosaics still evident.

St Bede's College and its Chapel has a wealth of historic reference and connection over a 136 year period from its initial boarding college, through major conflicts and events in the 20th Century and provides a place belonging to nurtured through its alumni and Old Bedians Association which celebrated its centenary in 1992.

Architectural Aesthetic

Impressive four storey frontage to Alexandra Road in the Italian Renaissance style with red brick and marching terracotta detailing and decorative single porch entrance with a twisted blue columns and four decorative artistic panels by George Tinworth (1843-1903), all giving an imposing presence at Alexandra Road.

Communal Value

Longstanding social and inspirational relevance to Whalley Range and Manchester City communities.

Sources

We have considered the following sources in assessment of these proposals:

- List Entry Description List Entry No. 1207517
- National Planning Policy Framework PPS5: 'Planning for the Historic Environment' Practice Guide English Heritage.
- Listed Building Applications – 'Is your application valid' by MCC.
- 'Making better applications for Listed Building Consent' Publication 57.
- Whalley Range Conservation Area – History by MCC.
- Aquariums and Public Aquariums in mid Victorian times by Howard Norfolk.
- College of the Vaughan Building.
- Planning history of recent developments at St. Bede's College including Extension and Alterations to Preparatory School and various projects between 1990 and present day.
- Existing historic photographs.
- In line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), we confirm that the following have been considered in compliance with the above Framework.
- High quality inclusive design for individual buildings, and interpretation into the natural built and historic environment.
- The NPPF supersedes Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (PPS5) but the latter remains a rated and relevant Practice guide in the application of the NPPF

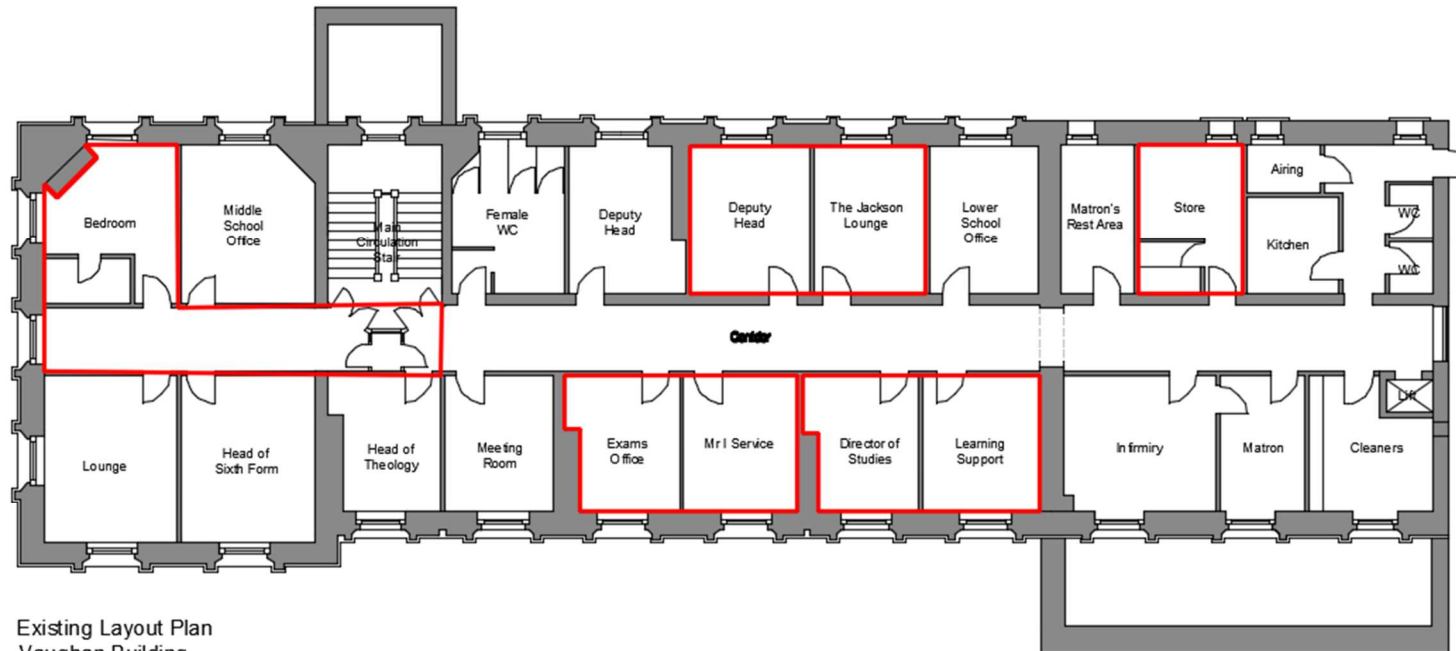


Design Proposals

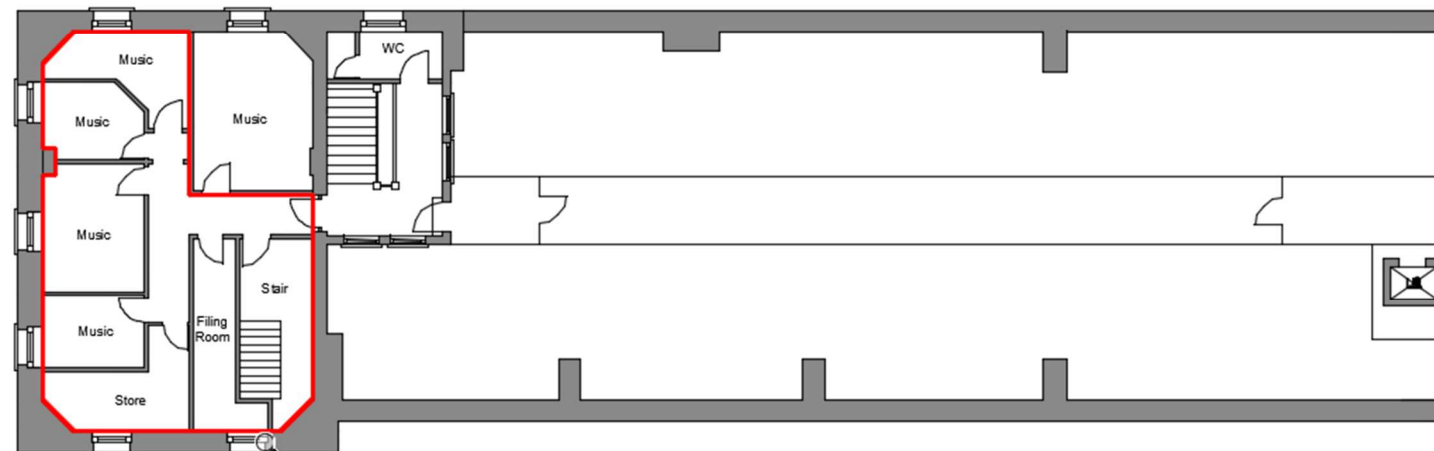
The proposals are to reconfigure the existing rooms within the Vaughan Building to create spaces which can accommodate up to twenty children to be used as general teaching classrooms. The fourth floor is currently not used by the school for teaching as the secondary staircase gives opportunities for pupils to leave class without use of the main staircase which is monitored by staff. This is a safeguarding concern as pupils cannot be accounted for at all times. The rooms on the second floor are used as offices and meeting rooms as they are not large enough to be used as teaching classrooms.

The proposals request for four walls to be removed to the second floor, a shower enclosure and a stairway vestibule which restricts the flow of students for a more modern configuration which is conducive to flow. On the fourth floor there are archive rooms and music practice rooms (currently not used due to safeguarding concerns) of which the College would like to create two teaching spaces by removing walls. One of the walls is constructed using asbestos containing materials (AIB) which have been recently identified as poor condition requiring immediate removal. The College are currently obtaining quotations from licenced contractors to undertake this work.

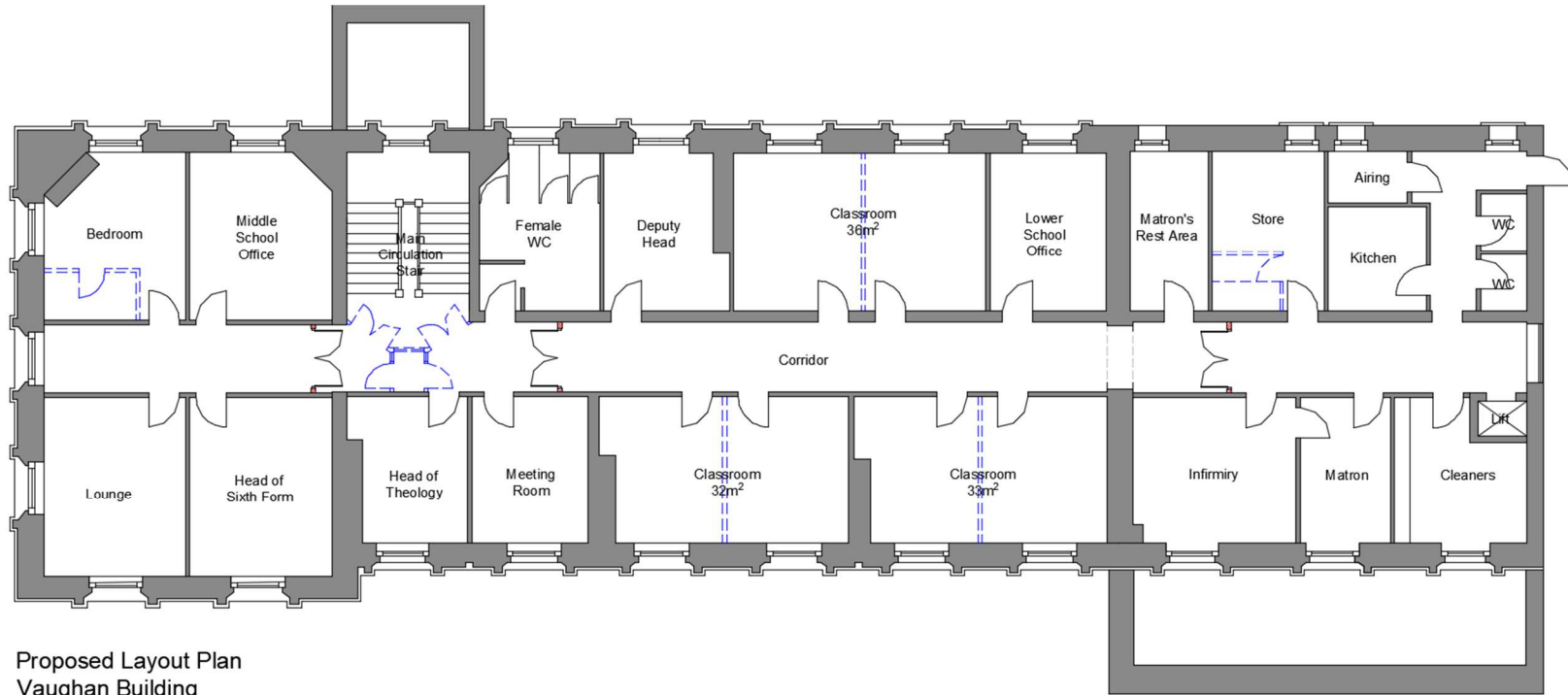
The existing plans are included on the next page with the proposed work area highlighted in red.



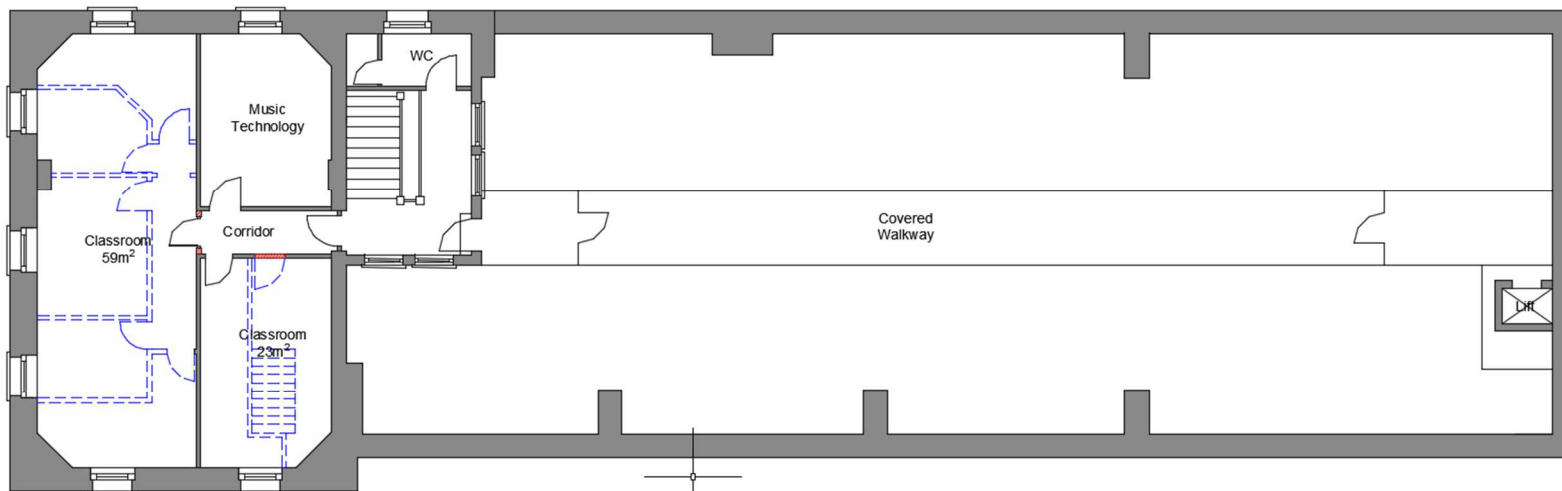
Existing Layout Plan
Vaughan Building
Second Floor



Existing Layout Plan
Vaughan Building
Forth Floor



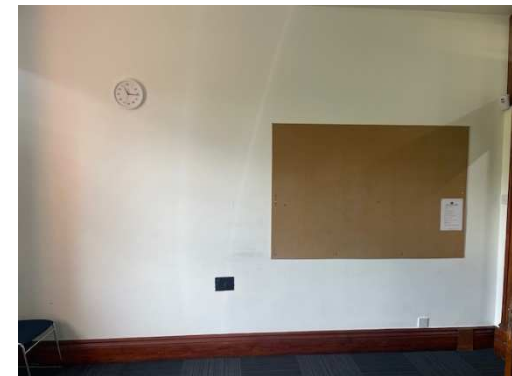
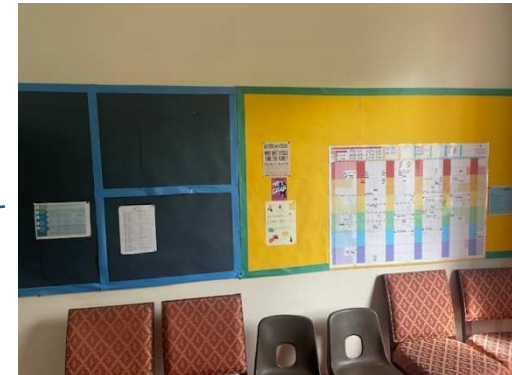
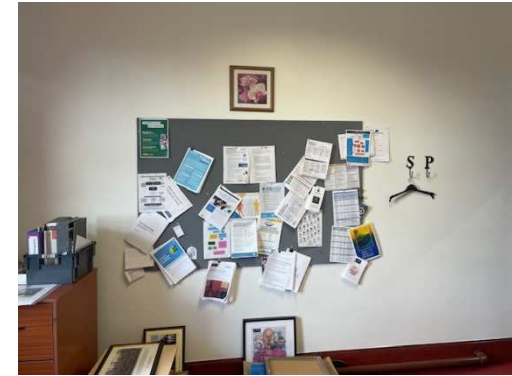
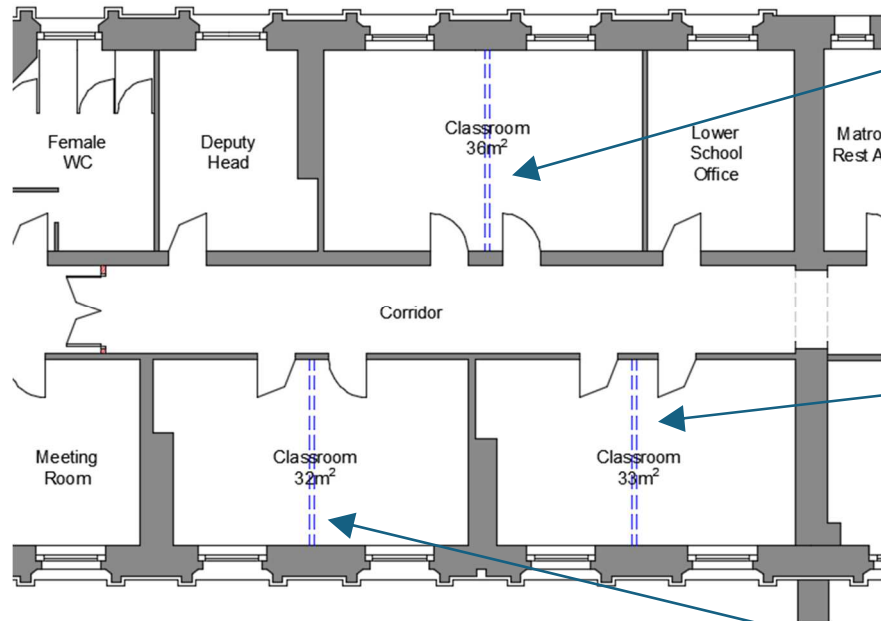
Proposed Layout Plan
Vaughan Building
Second Floor



Proposed Layout Plan
Vaughan Building
Forth Floor

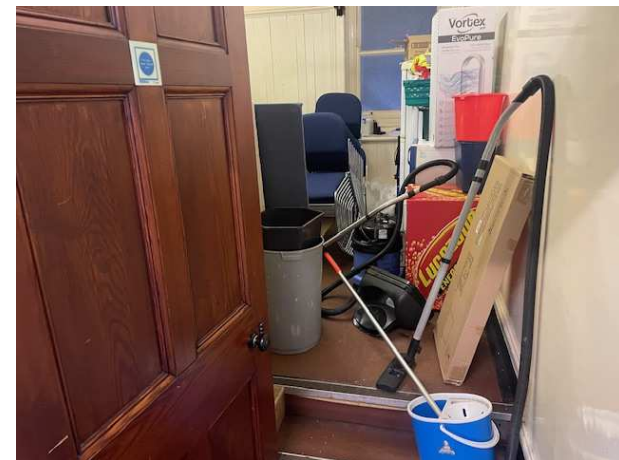
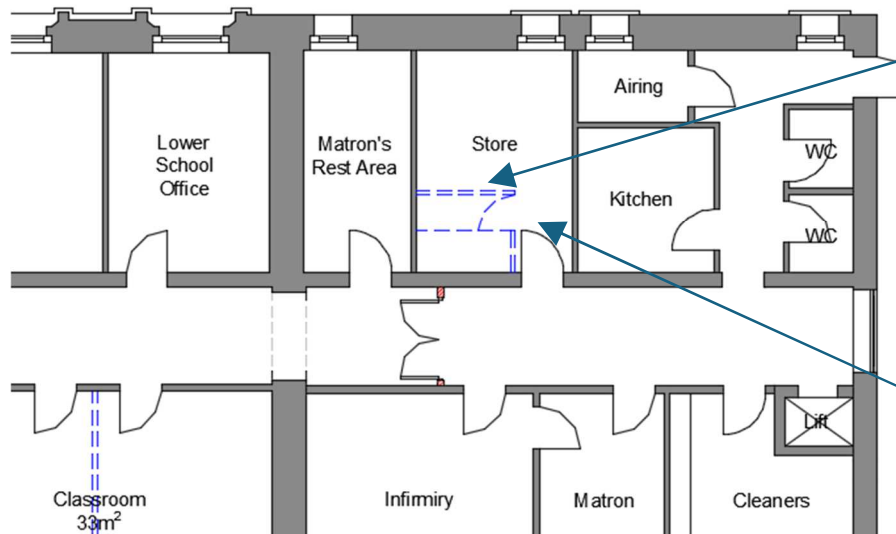
Item 1 – Remove Walls & Make Good

The College is proposing to remove three existing walls forming general teaching classrooms. The walls are lathe and plaster in construction, the plans provided from 1924 indicate that these walls are not original. This alteration will create improved teaching facilities for pupils and staff.



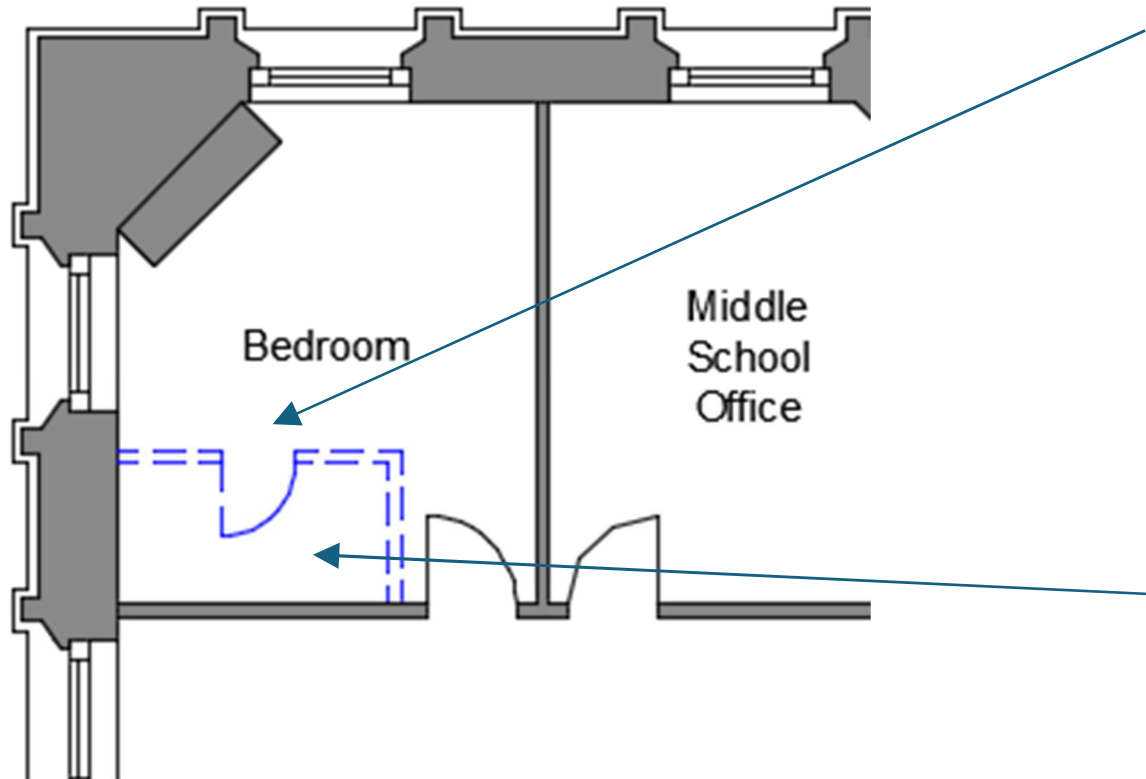
Item 2 – Remove Shower Enclosure

What used to be an infirmary store is now used by housekeeping as a cleaner's store however, a shower in incontinently located within this area. The walls are constructed of timber studwork and are not original to the building.



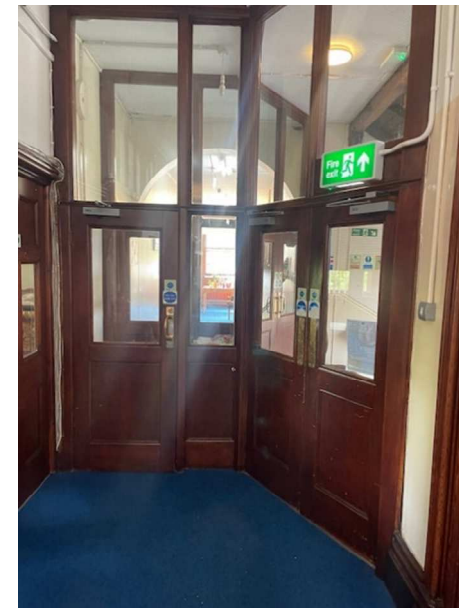
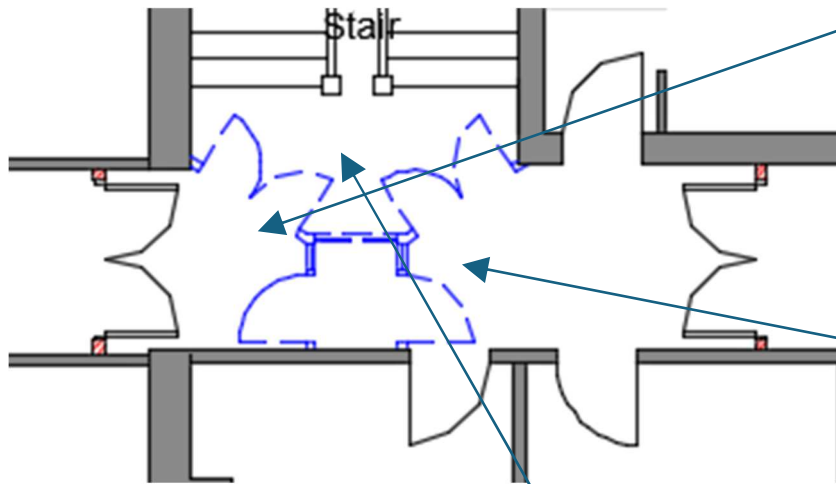
Item 3 – Removal of Wall

Within what used to be the pastoral bedroom there is a later ensuite constructed of modern studwork to one corner of the room. The college are proposing to remove this and use the area as an office.



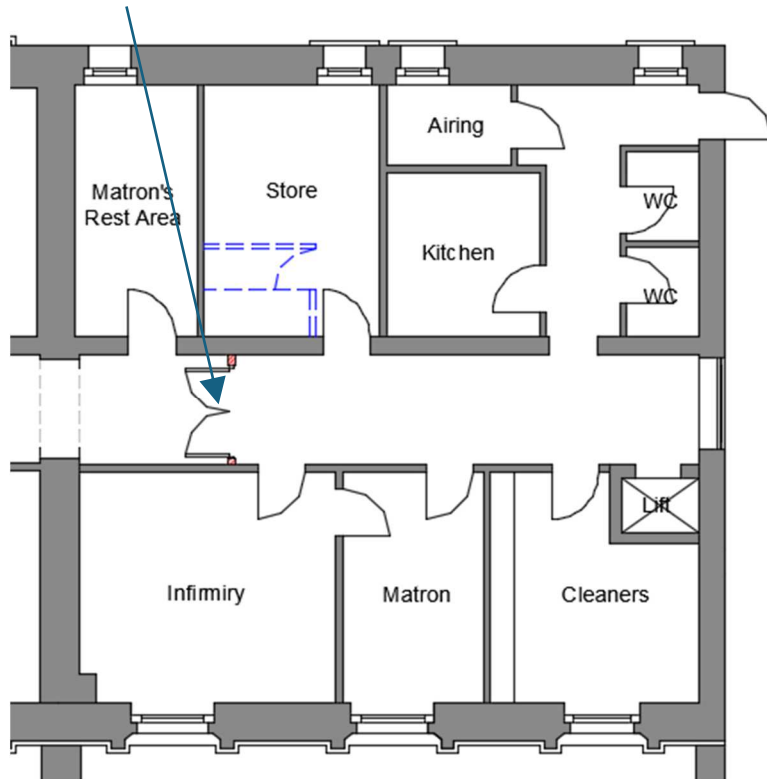
Item 4 – Removal of Vestibule

There is a glazed timber vestibule to the top of the main circulation stair which restricts flow and has been highlighted as a risk in the event of an evacuation on the school's fire risk assessment. The College propose to remove the vestibule is not original as shown on the 1925 drawings. In addition two new doorsets are proposed to protect the staircase from fire (Building Regulations requirement).



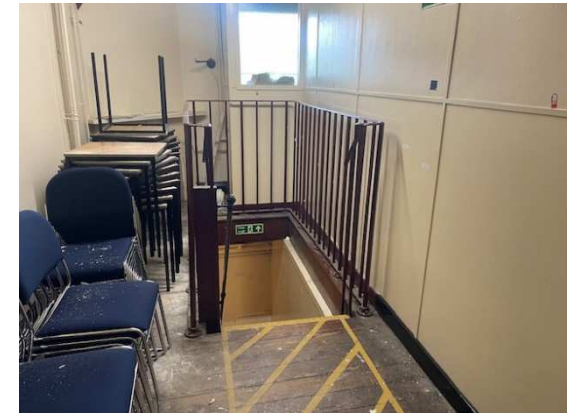
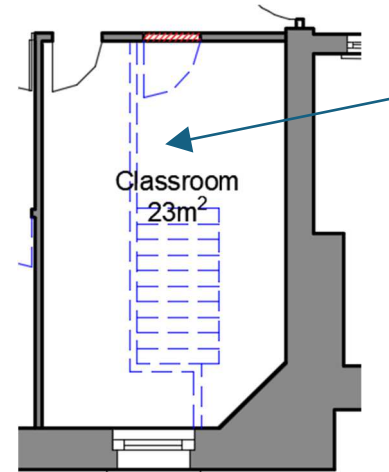
Item 5 – Additional Doorset

To secure housekeeping and ensure pupils to not gain unauthorised access the college would like to install a doorset to the circulation corridor creating a clear barrier between staff and pupils.



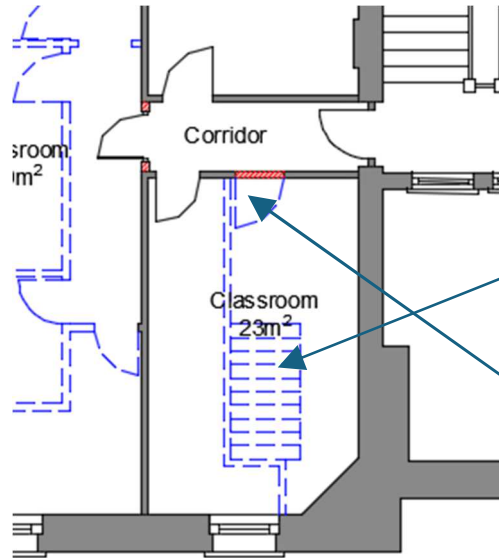
Item 6 – Removal of Wall Constructed of Asbestos Materials

The school recently had an asbestos management survey completed which identified that the wall dividing the archive and utility staircase had become friable with the asbestos surveyor recommending removal of the wall due to a risk of airborne asbestos. The wall is beyond repair or encapsulation and the school are currently obtaining quotations for this work to be completed.



Item 7 – Infill Door Opening

Once the aforementioned wall has been demolished the school would like to change the use of the archive into a general teaching classroom and as such only one door opening would be required.



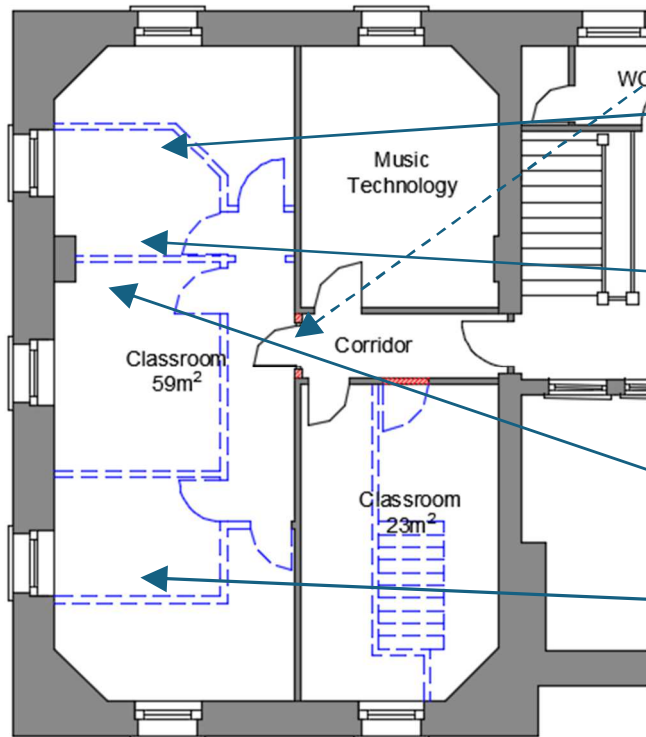
Item 8 – Infill Staircase

For the archive to become a usage general teaching space, it is proposed that the utility staircase be boarded over to create a level floorspace.



Item 9 – Demolition of Internal Walls

The music practice rooms are currently not used due to safeguarding concerns mentioned above. The College are proposing to open this area up to create two general teaching classrooms which would bring the area back into use. The existing walls are constructed of modern studwork and are not original.



Item 10 – Construction of Studwork Walls

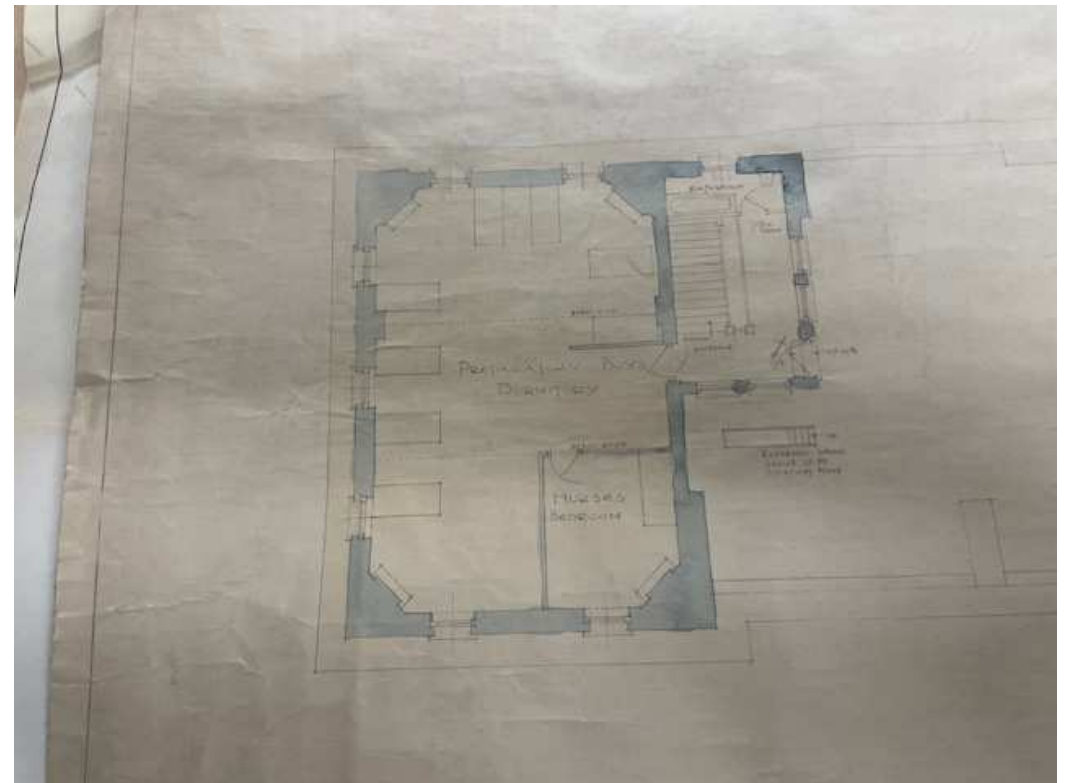
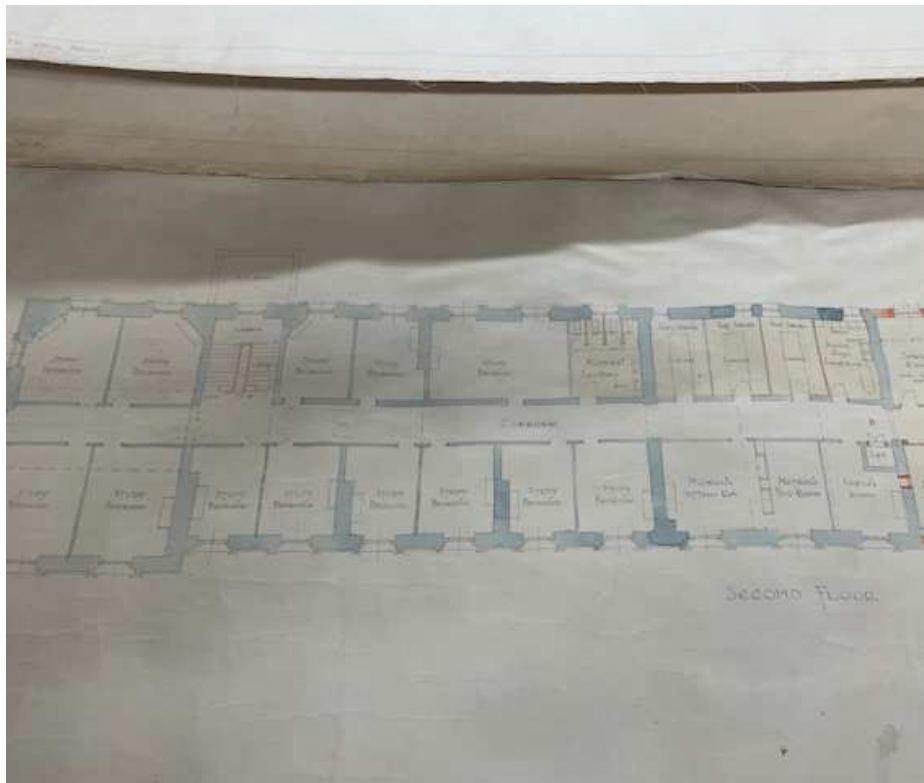
Create new doorway to open plan classroom including studwork wall to circulation area.





Historic Information

Within the school's internal records copies of the 1924 drawings for when the school was converted to a boarding school which indicate that many of the walls chosen for demolition are not original to the school's construction and are later additions.





Additional Design Comments

Existing ceilings will be made good upon removal of walls using materials sympathetic to the original construction of the building.

Existing doorsets will be reused to maintain the character of the building, should any new be required, the style will match that of the existing to ensure the original character is maintained.

Redundant services will be removed and made good locally where required.

All walls, floors and fixed items will be made good and redecorated upon completion of the works. Where applicable, contrasting colours and finishes are to be introduced in accordance with The Equality Act.

Listed Building Entry

Heritage Category: Listed Building

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1207517

Date first listed: 03-Oct-1974

Statutory Address: St Bedes College, Alexander Road South Manchester

SJ89NW ALEXANDRA ROAD SOUTH, Whalley Range 698-1/4/826 (West side) 03/10/74 St Bede's College (Formerly Listed as: ALEXANDRA PARK St Bede's College)

Roman Catholic college, now school. 1877, by Dunn and Hansom (unfinished). Red brick with matching terracotta dressings (roof concealed). L-shaped plan (incomplete T-plan) formed by main range parallel to road, with rear wing. Italian Renaissance style. Four storeys and attic, 11 bays (2:6:3, probably intended to be 2:6:3:6:2), the 2-bay south end breaking forwards and a single-storey 3-bay porch projecting at the north end; with moulded terracotta bands to all floors, frieze enriched with scrolls, prominent modillioned cornice, and pierced parapet punctuated by short piers with segmental pediments. The windows have enriched terracotta architraves, those at ground floor with pediments containing busts (all different), and those at 1st and 2nd floors vertically linked, with decorated panels between the floors and pediments at 2nd floor; the 3rd floor has small square windows and the 2-bay south end has an attic. The single-storey porch has a 3-bay arcade of round-headed arches, the outer containing segmental-pedimented windows flanked by piers with coloured relief majolica panels, and that in the centre a doorway with elaborate enrichment including twisted columns of deep blue glazed tiling, segmental pediment, and frieze lettered "VENITE FILII AUDITE ME Ps.33"; frieze over outer arches lettered "BONITATEM ET DISCIPLINAM" "ET SCIENTIAM DOCE ME Ps.118"; balustraded parapet; shield with bees, and various free-range terracotta bees on other parts of wall. Interior: entrance hall with 3-bay arcades of Corinthian columns (front) and pilasters (rear), the latter glazed and opening onto a hall or former chapel which has 12-bay aisle arcades of very narrow round-headed arches; wide axial corridor.

Listing NGR: SJ832829502

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System number: 387877

Legacy System: LB

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.