



Former School of Art Building Vision West College, Chesterfield Rd, Mansfield, Notts.

Historic Building Survey

Client: Clegg Construction Ltd

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Executive Summary

Prospect Archaeology Ltd was commissioned by Network Archaeology Ltd, on behalf of Nottinghamshire County Council to undertake an historic building survey at the former School of Art, Vision West College Mansfield. This was a requirement of planning permission that was granted in August 2023 by Mansfield District Council for the erection of an education building and the demolition of the existing school of Arts building and ancillary outbuildings. The aim of the survey was to record the existing fabric of the prior to its demolition in order to provide a permanent written and illustrated record of the building.

The School of Art Building comprises a single storey brick building that overlooks Paulson's Drive to the north and Clifton Place to the south, north of the town centre. It is the easternmost part of the college complex that sits in the former gardens of Ashfield House a stone building of c.1805 that was set in spacious grounds. The former technical college occupies a dominant position at the front of the site overlooking Chesterfield Road South.

The site lies at the eastern limit of the West Gate Conservation Area which was first designated in 1990 and extended in 2017 to include to include the grounds of Ashfield House and the College of Art building to its rear.

Ashfield House and its grounds were purchased by Nottinghamshire County council in 1924 in order to build a technical college for the town, This imposing neo-classical style built was opened in 1928 and followed soon after by the more modest School of Art building in 1930 also in a neoclassical style with a stone portico on its front elevation. This replaced the facilities at Carr Bank House provided by Mansfield Town Council and control of the new college was transferred to Nottinghamshire County Council.

Although the frontage is in different brick to the rest of the building it was conceived as one phase comprising side and rear corridor wings around a central area that contained large studios with steep asymmetrical roofs, with north-facing glass panes. Whilst it is not uncommon to find facades built in expensive brick with poorer quality, cheaper, bricks used for less visible elevations of a building in this case the bricks on the side and rear elevations were of high quality.

Little by way of original fixtures and fittings have survived apart from a few original four-panelled doors and some door and window furniture. Evidence of alterations to the original layout in the area examined was limited. There was once a larger entrance hall, that was the full width of the portico and the eastern entrance was removed to convert the former side lobby into an office.

Newspaper archives and other documentary sources have revealed how Mansfield has valued the importance of a liberal arts education since at least the 1870s that the College of Art has played a central role in its provision. It is to be welcomed that the distinctive stone portico will be incorporated into the new building as a reminder of a hard-won and important stage in the provision of further education in the town and the county beyond.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Prospect Archaeology Ltd was commissioned by Network Archaeology on behalf of Clegg Construction Ltd to undertake an historic building survey of The old College of Art Building at West Nottinghamshire College Chesterfield Road campus Vision West College Mansfield, in order to fulfil a condition of the planning permission that was granted for demolition and redevelopment of the property.

2.0 Site Location and Description

2.1 The market town of Mansfield is situated in the Maun Valley approximately 15 miles north of Nottingham and 20 miles west of Newark-on-Trent. Mansfield is the principal town of north Nottinghamshire, being second in size to Nottingham.

2.2 The site comprises a rectangular parcel of land to the east of Chesterfield Road South with Paulson's Drive to the north and Clifton Place to the south (Fig. 1). The former technical college built in 1928 occupies a dominant position at the front of the site overlooking the main road with access to the parking area to the north of this building. Set back from the road and not connected to the main complex, is Ashfield House a Georgian stone building of c1805. Ashfield House once stood in spacious grounds with a large front turning circle, landscaped grounds and walled garden, with a courtyard, kitchen garden and outbuildings to its rear. Towards the rear of the site there is a later, more functional brick building attaching Ashfield House to the School of Art Building which comprises a single storey brick building with parapet and stone portico.

2.3 The site lies at the eastern limit of the West Gate Conservation Area which was first designated in 1990 to safeguard the industrial history of this part of the town where malting and framework knitting were prevalent in the area in the 18th and 19th centuries. The Conservation Area boundary included the original Ashfield House but did not extend eastwards to include the buildings currently proposed for demolition. In 2017 the boundary was revised to include the grounds of Ashfield House and the College of Art building to its rear. Ashfield House is not listed but is considered to be of special interest to the community and is recorded as a local heritage asset on the Council's register. It is considered to be an important structure in the Conservation Area.

3.0 Planning Background

3.1 Some of the existing buildings on the Vision West College site were assessed as being inadequate to meet the increased demand for courses in technology, construction for 16-18 year olds. This resulted in a proposal to demolish buildings occupying the eastern portion of the campus, including the School of Art building, and the erection of a replacement building. The entrance of the College of Art building constructed in 1930 would be reused on the northern elevation of the new building.

3.2 Full planning permission was granted in August 2023 by Mansfield District Council for the “erection of an education building and the demolition of the existing school of Arts building and ancillary outbuildings, relocation of the School of Art portico entrance, remedial works /alterations to Ashfield House , resurfacing to existing car parking and the provision of additional car parking cycle storage and landscaping” .

3.3 Condition 25 states

The School of Art building should be subject to a historic building recording [Level 3] prior to any work being undertaken on the site. The details of the historic building recording shall thereafter be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority prior to demolition works taking place.

Reason: to ensure the building details are properly recorded for historic records prior to its demolition in accordance with the national planning policy framework and policy HE1 of the Mansfield district adopted local plan 2013-2033.

4.0 Aims and Objectives

4.1 The aim of the survey was to record the existing fabric of the prior to its demolition in order to provide a permanent written and illustrated record of the building.

5.0 Scope of Work

5.1 The building survey was undertaken in line with the guidelines set out in the Historic England guidance note *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Reporting Practice* second edition (2016), the best practice set out in the *Standard and Guidance for the Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures* (ClfA 2014b, updated 2020, 2020) and the *Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook* (revised 2019).

5.2 Historic England identifies four levels of building recording in its guidance, Level 1 being the most basic and Level 4 being the most detailed. It is noted that a Level 3 survey may be appropriate when the fabric of a building is under threat (e.g., demolition). The planning condition in the case of the College of Art building specified a Level 3 survey .

6.0 Method

6.1 A laser survey was undertaken by TJC Heritage Ltd (The JESSOP Consultancy) to create a floor plan and elevations. This was followed by a site visit by the author of this report in order to make a full room by room written account of the buildings with appropriate annotations of the survey drawings and a full photographic record.

6.2 The photographic record was made using a Lumix digital camera which take simultaneous RAW and JPG images. RAW format data will be archived in accordance with the Historic England (2015) advice in their guidance *Digital Image Capture and File Storage*. JPG format images

have been used to illustrate this report. Each external elevation of the building, where accessible, was recorded with additional general oblique views of the building in its setting. An internal record comprised each elevation of the internal space from a sufficient number of vantage points to adequately record the form, general appearance and manner of construction. In addition, detail photographs of any architectural features fixtures and fittings were made.

- 6.3 A visit to the local studies library and Nottingham Archives was made following the site visit to obtain further background information on the site and the college of art.

7.0 Historical Background

- 7.1 A background desk-based assessment of the site and its archaeological potential was undertaken by Network Archaeology in January (NA 2023). This was followed by a Heritage Impact Assessment by GHM Planning in March 2023 and an architectural assessment was undertaken by the History Studio in July 2023 to accompany the planning application. The following section includes information used in these reports as well as reference to documents held at Nottinghamshire Archives and newspapers in the online British Newspaper Archive (BNA).

Ashfield House Site

- 7.2 *The Nottingham Evening Post* of June 18th 1921 reported that at a meeting of Mansfield Town Council a Mr Hardy complained that “we have been trying to stir up the county authority with regard to the School of Art premises which are a disgrace to the town”. He hoped that something would result from a deputation to the county education committee to resolve this problem (BNA). Negotiations for the purchase of a site for a Technical College had, in fact, been in hand for some years prior to the First World War when things came to a halt. Negotiations were resumed after the war and in 1920 the County Council decided to purchase Ashfield House and the grounds for this purpose. The purchase was finally concluded in 1922 but there followed difficulties in agreeing rights of access to the Chesterfield Road for property owners in Ashfield Ave on the south side of Ashfield House. These were only resolved in 1926.
- 7.3 The site of the original Technical College and Art College occupied the grounds belonging to Ashfield House, built for a local solicitor, Richard Parsons in around 1805. Ashfield House is reputed to be the work of William Wilkinson, an architect from nearby Mansfield Woodhouse. The Parsons family occupied the house until 1910.
- 7.4 When built, it stood in spacious grounds in an exclusive area on the northern edge of Mansfield, along with a number of similar buildings such as Westfield House, Crowhill House and Dale Close. Early cartographic sources show how this area of Mansfield was on the northern margins of the town centre. Ashfield House and its grounds are shown on the tithe map dated 1844 as plots 4870 and 4870a (Fig. 2). The plot of land to the east of Ashfield House would eventually

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- become the site of the College of Art. Land to the north (4876) is shown as a clear strip of ground.
- 7.5 The layout of Ashfield House and its grounds is shown in greater detail on the Ordnance Survey 1:500 scale map surveyed in 1876 and published in 1879 (Fig.3). This shows landscaped grounds to the west of Ashfield house with shrubs surrounding an open area (possibly lawn). To the north is an access road leading to a series of allotments. This track was to be called Occupation Road and eventually Paulson's Drive (after the owner of the land to the north). Within the grounds of Ashfield house is shown a private driveway parallel to Occupation Road leading to a circular drive in front of Ashfield House and access to the rear yard surrounded by the outbuildings. East of the house are two tree-lined rectangular plots, possibly kitchen gardens, the future site of the College of Art.
- 7.6 Later Ordnance Survey maps are not so helpful in showing the development of the college complex as there are none available for the period between 1917 and 1958, by which time layout of the College of Art is shown as existing now (Fig. 4).
- 7.7 As well as the problems relating to rights of way there were also difficulties in raising funds for a new building because site economic conditions in the country and at the council deteriorated soon after the purchase of the site. However, increasing demand for courses led to the Education Committee providing temporary accommodation by converting Ashfield House itself into laboratories and lecture rooms. Although the Board of Education approve the plans they were not allowed any expenditure on the conversion of the building and the whole project was funded by the County Council themselves.
- 7.8 In May 1924 the Miners Welfare Fund promised a contribution of £9700 out of the central allocation for higher education purposes to cover the cost of the erection and equipping a mining centre in Mansfield but in 1925 it became clear that such a centre would not meet the needs of the district so general plans for a technical college were resurrected and were finally approved by the board in 1926. The school was designed by the county architect Mr Leonard Maggs FRIBA FSI. Once approved the project began immediately and minutes of the Nottinghamshire County Council Education Committee (CC3/12/2/17 and 18) record the progress of the construction work on the technical college which began in early 1927. The technical college opened on September the 24th 1928 with a ceremonial opening a month later by the Viscount Chelmsford, Chairman of the Miners' Welfare Central Committee. The event was reported in the Sheffield Daily Independent (BNA). A fancy brochure was produced for the ceremony which contains a short history of funding for the college as well as describing the new facilities (CC/ED/5/17/1).
- 7.9 The council also wished to make proper provision for an art college. Temporary facilities had been provided at Carr Bank House (whose grounds are now a public park) and plans were soon afoot to design a building in the grounds of the Technical College. Only a year after the opening
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- of the Technical College work began on the College of Art behind Ashfield House. In the meantime a resolution, prepared in August 1927, was approved by the Education Committee for the transfer of control of the Mansfield School of Art from Mansfield Town Council to Nottinghamshire County Council.
- 7.10 *The [Mansfield] Journal* of January 30th 1929 reported that at a meeting of the Higher Education sub-committee of the county council Education Committee tenders had been received “for the erection of a School of Art on a portion of the Technical College site kept for the purpose, it being estimated that a satisfactory building could be built for about £6000”. It was recommended that the County Council and Board of Education be asked to approve the building works. The building was once again designed by the County Architect Leonard Maggs and its neoclassical design echoed that of the technical college albeit in a more modest style. No detailed plans were found at the archives, only block plans (Fig. 5). The layout of the building is discussed in more detail below.
- 7.11 On February 28th 1929 it was noted in the minutes that a draft lease for the premises at Carr Bank House had been received and rent was to be paid up to March 31st 1929 (CC3/12/2/18). Revised plans incorporating the Board’s suggestions were tabled for approval at the meeting of July 27th 1929. By May 1930 it was reported that “the brickwork to the school is carried up to plate level. The steel roof truss is all fixed and a start made framing roof and corridor flats are boarded ready to receive covering”.
- 7.12 Only 10 months after approval had been given for the construction to proceed *The Nottingham Journal* reported that the new County School of Art had been opened officially by Alderman W. H. Mason, Chairman of the County Council Higher Education sub-committee. The school had a roll of 221 students and the new building, “which meets all modern requirements, has cost approximately £9000. Alderman T.L.K. Edge Chairman of the County Education Committee presided and handed over the management of the school to the governing body of the Technical College which adjoined the College of Art.”
- 7.13 Mr B.W.L. Bulkeley the County Director of Education spoke of the desire of the County Council “to look after cultural subjects as well as the strictly technical subjects.” He recalled that the first classes in art were held in rooms at St. John's schools where Mansfield unofficially took part in the movement of the [18]70s. Then a local committee was formed and a room was found at the Mechanics [Institute] and then another room was built at the rear of the building when the first was too small. New premises were found in Commercial Street then in Leeming Street but in each case when the lease expired well in the latter quarters the classes were taken over by the town council and were given a part of the reference library the last move was to Carr Bank where they passed under the control of the Nottinghamshire County Council. He went on to say “we now have a school which will hold its own with any school in a town of the same size as Mansfield”. (BNA)
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- 7.14 “Alderman Mason eulogised the work of art schools and said that the value of drawing was that it taught children to observe, a faculty which was lacking among many people. Mr Frank Hardy recalled there was a time when Mansfield thought , and said openly, that the County Council was a slow-moving cumbersome body whom they could not persuade to do anything for Mansfield they had reminded the County Council of the considerable amount of rates which were paid by Mansfield and the little they get in return for many years they had agitated for the Technical College in the School of Art and now they had buildings which were a credit both to the town and the County Council. The company then moved to the door of the art school which Alderman Mason unlocked, formally declaring the school open. The building and the work of the students were inspected and tea concluded the proceedings.” (ibid.) The article was accompanied by advertisements from several of the contractors who had supplied materials for the college building.
- 7.15 In the 1950’s, a two-storey, flat roofed brick block was added to the rear of Ashfield House to link it to the Art School buildings. requiring the demolition of the former coach house, stable block and kitchen garden. More recently, an access ramp was added to the front of Ashfield House and the area to the west of the building tarmacked and used for car parking.
- 7.16 A new Technical College was built at Derby Road, Mansfield in 1960 and the site at Chesterfield Road South was retained for art and design. The school of art later became Mansfield College of Art and remained an autonomous institution until it became part of West Nottinghamshire College of Further Education in 1976.
- 7.17 In September 2014 the college’s visual arts and design department re-located from its Chesterfield Road site to its main Derby Road campus to provide students with improved, modern facilities comprising studios for visual arts, design, screen-print, fashion and textiles, graphic design and photography, along with a wood, metal and ceramics workshop. Its entrance foyer will serve as an exhibition space for students to display their work. The centre forms part of the college’s ongoing £40 million investment in its buildings and facilities across Mansfield and Ashfield.
- 7.18 The present building programme will enable the College of Art and Design to return to the Chesterfield Road campus.

8.0 Results

- 8.1 Unfortunately, no detailed plans for the building could be found at the Nottinghamshire archives, only sketch plans to accompany various minor proposals for other works. Fig. 5 is one example of these drawings which shows the School of Art as a single block. Although the frontage is in different brick the building was conceived as one phase together with the rear corridor wings around a central area that contained two large studios with steep asymmetrical roofs, with north-facing glass panes.

8.2 The following description is based on the site visit made in November 2023, after a laser survey of the front range was undertaken by TJC Heritage Ltd (Fig. 6). This survey was amended and annotated after the site visit. Spaces on the plan are numbered for ease of reference in the text below and do not imply any phasing of construction.

Exterior

8.3 The Mansfield School of Art building is located to the rear and east of Ashfield House with a later brick extension built before 1958 linking the two buildings. The ground drops in height from east to west, all the way down to Chesterfield Road South at the western site boundary of the college. To accommodate the slope the building itself is level and raised above the private road in front that gives both pedestrian and vehicular access to the east side of the site. A coursed stone retaining wall sits in front of flower beds that increases in height down the slope. At the east end it sits just above the surrounding ground level and is barely two courses high, while at the west end of the building it is four courses high with an even taller section that incorporates steps up to the west side entrance (Pls 2-4).

8.4 The School of Art was built in a neo-classical style to complement the design of the technical college that had been built only two years earlier (Pl. 1). Its principal façade faces north and is defined by a central pillared portico in stone projecting from a single-storey brick façade, originally with a pair of recessed side entrances (Pls 2-4).

8.5 The front range is constructed in a narrow pinkish brick measuring 230 x 110 x 50mm (9" x 4 1/4" x 2" thick) in English Bond with a double chamfered plinth (0.17m total height) near the base of the wall (Pl.7). A single course stone band sits immediately above the window lintels. There is a hipped slate roof to either side of a flat roof behind the main entrance. The recessed flanking wings also have flat roofs. All these roof elements are partly concealed by a brick parapet, 14 courses high, also built in English Bond and topped with a stone coping. Centrally positioned on the elevation to either side of the entrance are two arched brick openings in the parapet, provide rainwater drainage off the roof. The rainwater goods appear to be plastic replacements. The ridge is capped with semi-circular stone ridge tiles. Two stone chimneys are symmetrically positioned to either side of the entrance.

8.6 The projecting portico is at the top of a flight of eight steps that cross the strip of flower bed in front of the building. It is built in stone and forms a covering for the central entrance (Pl. 4). It is supported by two Doric columns. There are square-sectioned fluted Doric responds on the sides of the porch, in line with the columns. The solid side walls are of stone with blank rectangular panels on the front, the only decoration being carved six-petalled roses in each corner (Pl.8) These are not Tudor roses and their symbolism is not known. The external side wall faces are plain. Above the columns is a pediment containing the inscription 'School of Art.'. The main double-leafed timber doors have three recessed panels, each with surrounding bolection moulding. The middle panel is circular with central brass/copper alloy door knob. Above and

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- below there are part-rectangular panels whose inner edge follows the curve of the circular panel (Pl.9). A letter box is present in one of the doors. A rectangular fanlight above the solid doors gives light to the lobby inside. There are 15 oblong panes five across and three deep, in a flat sectioned frame (Pl. 10).
- 8.7 To either side of the central entrance are five wood-framed vertical sash windows, all of the same height the central window being narrower than the other four (Pls 3 and 5). All the windows are 1.87m tall and have vertical (soldier) brick lintels and protruding, lipped stone sills. The eight larger windows are 0.99m wide have a 12 over 12 configuration with twelve panes of glass (four rows by three columns) in both the upper and lower halves of the windows creating a symmetrical grid pattern. Each pane measures 248 x 190mm (9¾" x 7 ½"). The two narrow windows, just 0.65m wide, are 9 over 9 with three rows by three columns whose panes are 248 x 159mm (9¾" x 6 ¼"). Two washrooms (one male, one female) occupy most of this north range, spanning two large and one narrow window to either side of the entrance, all have plain glass panes in the top sash while the bottom section is obscured, providing privacy without compromising illumination. They occupy each end of the projecting frontage and there are two small side windows just below the parapet on each side (Pls 11 and 19). These are not visible internally as they have been covered over.
- 8.8 A second double leafed door of the same design as the centre door is located in the recessed portion of the front elevation, at the west end of the building (Pl. 12). There had originally been a third entrance at the east end of the building but this was replaced by a window with top opening quarter lights, possibly in the 1960s judging by its style (Pl. 6 and 19).
- 8.9 The front range wraps around the west elevation which is built in a different brick. The junction with the front range is clear with a vertical joint and the brickwork behind the front range, while also in English bond, uses much larger red bricks with a surface sheen measuring 230 x 115 x 70mm (9" x 4 ½" x 3"). Instead of a stone plinth at the base of the wall there are five courses of engineering brick (Pl. 14). The west elevation is partially obscured by a later brick extension constructed to the rear of Ashfield House by 1958 that replaced the stable block and other outbuildings, leaving only a narrow gap between the buildings (Pl. 13). A cross passage connected the College of Art to this building. Two sash windows give light to a corridor along the west side of the Art College building. They have plain projecting stone sills without any moulding and no lintels, the top of the window being flush with the eaves and hidden behind the gutter. They are wood framed but casement rather than sash windows with 8 panes in each half of the window- two across and four down. There is a letter box beneath on of the windows ,identical to the on the central front door. The window in the cross passage of the later building is metal framed.
- 8.10 The steps at the east end of the building lead to a flat asphalt surface in front of the side entrance. The stairs and terrace are surrounded by decorative iron railings, set into a stone
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- ashlar capping, measuring 0.38m wide across the top and 0.15m deep, on top of the stonework of the retaining wall (Pls 15 and 16). The 'newel' at the foot of the stairs is especially ornate with oval openwork panels with radiating spokes on all four faces (Pl. 17). There are also several more oval panels infilling the railings (Pl. 18).
- 8.11 On the east elevation the recessed wing is in two sections, the rear section projecting out by about 0.30m (Pls 19 and 20). The front part was originally the foyer for the eastern entrance but has been converted into an office with the removal of the door and insertion of a top opening window (see 1 below). The parapet continues around the side of the building as does the stone plinth. Two rainwater pipes are present on this side of the front range, identical to those on the front (Pl. 20).
- 8.12 Larger bricks as used on the west side of the building are used here too. Windows on this elevation casement, not sash, windows with one half opening. They give light to the corridor along this side of the building. As on the west wall they have stone sills and no lintels, the tops of the windows being hidden behind the plastic guttering (Pls 21-22). The junction of the east wall with the front range is not so clear on this side of the building because the walls have been painted in red but the vertical joint is still evident (Pl. 23).
- 8.13 There are steps, parallel to the west wall leading to the basement/boiler room, with iron railings of the same design as the railings bordering the steps at the front (Pls. 24 and 25). A lock on the gate that encloses the steps is stamped with the name GOODACRE, GLOVER & BUTLER NOTTS. (Pl. 26)
- 8.14 The south wing has the same construction details as found on the east elevation except that window have lintels of tapered bricks, the same as used on the side doors in the front elevation. (Pl. 27). This side of the building had a central studio area with high steep pitched roof and the north facing side of the roof is of glass. To either side are flat-roofed rooms with a brick chimney to west and east. An internal corridor runs around all four sides of the building with access to an inner area which was split into two large studios, each with steep pitched slate roofs facing south, and the north-facing side of the roofs being glass panels.

Interior

1. Corridor

- 8.15 A corridor runs around all four sides of the building giving access to rooms mainly on the north and south sides of the building. The corridor at the north end gives access to rooms on the front of the building and also to the studios in the centre of the building (Pl. 28 and 29). At the base of the wall is simple quarter round beading. Carpet tiles cover small pink composite tiles measuring 159 x 83 and 51mm thick (6 ¼" x 3 ¼" x 2"). These were used throughout the building.

8.16 Three barrel-vaulted roof lights provide natural lighting along the length of the corridor. These windows are replacements but over the original openings as the edgings have moulded plaster decoration (Pls 30 and 31). Additional lighting is provided at the west end of the corridor with a casement window in the west wall (Pl. 32). It retains its original fittings.

8.17 A brick-lined conduit, capped with concrete slabs 5cm thick, which used to contain water pipes for the central heating system, and other services, runs along the north side of the corridor measuring 0.45m wide and 0.45m deep including the present floor (Pls 29 and 33), and turns south at the end of the corridor by Room 10 and runs south along the east side of the corridor (Pl. 70). A short pipe length also crosses the corridor (Pls 33 and 34).

2. Office

8.18 This room was originally the foyer for the eastern side entrance but was converted into an office (Pl. 35). The door into this room is a modern fire door with a reinforced glass panels, probably never was one until the space was converted (Pl. 36). The window in the north wall is modern with a wooden frame with two opening top lights. The lower part of the window is fixed (Pl. 37). This window replaces a door that used to be in this position. The window in the east wall is a casement window with one side opening and a top opening on the left hand side (Pl. 38). It has retained its original fixings (Pls 39 and 40) including a stay on the window to limit the range of opening. This is the same as two found on the window at the end of the corridor (Pl. 32). Carpet tiles on the floor lie over a concrete floor which was previously tiled. Only a small part was exposed, the carpet tiles being mostly glued down.

3. Gents' Toilets

8.19 A four-panelled door with original fittings gives access from the corridor into the Gents' toilets (Pls 41 and 42). An early radiator sits adjacent to the east side of the door (Pl. 43). Two small side windows in the east wall above the toilet cubicles have been blocked. These small windows indicate this room was originally designed as a washroom (Pl. 44). There are three toilets and two urinals. Three sash windows on the north wall provide light into the room, the eastern one being narrower than the other two (see above). The two larger windows overlook three modern washbasins, which may have replaced earlier units (Pl. 45). A shower room on the opposite side of the room and is a later installation (Pl. 46).

4. Learning Support Room 123

8.20 A modern fire door gives access from the corridor into the learning support room (Pl. 47). It is the smartest room in this part of the building and clearly designed to be an office, for one of the senior staff. There is a built-in cupboard on one side of the chimney breast (Pl. 48). It is not clear if there ever was an open fire here or if the chimney breast was for mounting an electric fire, as found in Room 8 (see below). The room is lit by two sash windows with original sills intact (pl. 49). A dentil plaster coving c.0.20m deep runs around all sides of the room including

the chimney breast (pl. 50). Carpet tiles cover small floor tiles as found in other parts of the building.

5. Store?

- 8.21 This room is situated on the east side of the central entrance to the building with access at the southwest corner of the room from the passage rather than the main corridor (Pl.51). The door itself is a modern fire door. There is no window and there is no skirting board this room (Pl. 52). There is a false ceiling with asbestos type tiles. It is possible that the ceiling tiles conceal decorative dentil coving above as this was present in the equivalent room on the other side of the foyer 7 (see below). It was probably a storeroom.

6. Foyer

- 8.22 The central foyer is a short passage leading to the main entrance (Pl. 53). The three panels observed on the external are present on the internal face of each door but without the bolection moulding The brass door knob is original as are the top bolts (Pl. 54). The bottom bolt may also be original. The dentil coving is present above the north and south walls only (Pls 53 and 55). The side wall of the passage are plain.

7 and 8. Room 121

- 8.23 These two rooms have been knocked together into a single room. An original four-panelled door with a coat peg on the internal face provides access to Room 8 (Pl. 56). There is no second door for Room 7. Room 8 would be the mirror image of Room 4 if the east wall had not been knocked through. There is a chimney breast on the west wall with a mounted REVO electric fire, possibly 1940s in date and perhaps a replacement for an open fireplace Pls 57 and 58). Later white tiles surround the electric fire.
- 8.24 Revo was founded in 1907 by Frederick Harold Reeves, off Stourbridge Road, Wolverhampton. The business began as The Cable Accessories Company Limited in Dudley Port. Frederick Reeves went into partnership with Septimus Vaughan, whose father, Ernest Vaughan, founded VONO, the local manufacturer of mattresses and bedstead fittings. Revo soon became very successful and produced a vast range of products, most of which were designed in-house. Early products included household appliances, lighting, radios, loudspeakers, cookers, switchgear, and fans. By the 1930s the firm became a household name and the firm's electric street lighting was widely introduced throughout the country. Revo was taken over by Duport in 1956 and then sold on to English Electric in 1967 (<http://www.historywebsite.co.uk/articles/Tipton/Revo.htm>).
- 8.25 Two sash windows overlook the front of the building (Pl. 59). One has an original sill while the other has been partially cut away for electric cable trunking there is the same coving detail as in room 3.

8.26 Room 7 is the same size as Room 5 on the opposite side of the passageway to the front door but without any door, unless there was once a connecting door between Rooms 7 and 8 now removed along with the cross wall. It has no window either. Decorative coving is present along the top of three walls but not the party wall shared with the entrance 7 (Pls 60 and 61) (see Fig. 7 and Discussion below).

9. Ladies toilets

8.27 The door into the toilet is another original four-panelled door (Pl. 62). There are five cubicles along the west wall (Pl. 63) with four wash basins below three windows on the north wall (pl. 64), the westernmost window being narrower as seen in the Gents toilets on the other side of the building.

8.28 The disabled toilet takes up the eastern part of the room (Pl. 65). The inserted partition partially masks the end window and wraps around the end of the wash basins (Pl. 64). There is a concrete floor with a rubberized surface and a tiled skirting to allow for ease of cleaning.

10. Side entrance

8.29 The western side entrance was lately only used as a fire escape. It has swing doors facing on to the corridor (Pl. 66) The inner doors are panelled with a scuff plate below the lower panels on both faces of the doors. The upper panels have been replaced with reinforced single glass panes (Pl. 67). There is a finger plate on the west door (Pl. 67) but is missing on the east door. There is also an original handle on the west door which is missing on the east door (Pl. 66). The outer doors are identical in design to the central doors with a single oval brass handle on the west door. A mat well inside the lobby has been filled with concrete (Pl. 69). It is surrounded by square tiles of the same style as the main entrance. There is a wooden skirting board and moulded door frame.

There are views along the western corridor from this side entrance (Pl. 70). This gives access to the studios at the back of the building and also to the connecting corridor into the back of Ashfield House.

11 . Slop room and Store

8.30 The slop room and adjacent store are accessed from a four panelled door at the junction of the north and east corridors, just south of Room 2 (Pls 71 and 72). There is a window on the east external wall in each half with top opening catchments (Pl. 73). The cross wall between the two parts of the room is half a brick thick with a connecting door, close to the door from the corridor. The door itself is 1960s but the door surround looks original. The north half is the slop room with a sink for buckets (Pl. 74) The inner room has shelving along one side and was used for storing cleaning materials (Pl. 75).

12. Store room

- 8.31 Access is off the eastern corridor, the two-panelled door is a replacement (Pls 72 and 76). This store is split like Room 11 with windows in each half (Pls 77 and 78). A door connecting the two halves has been removed. These spaces were used for storing chemicals, artists materials for printing or photography. Each half of the room was filled with shelving units leaving little room for access

9.0 Discussion

- 9.1 Previous reports have focused only on the front range and the elevation built in the smaller bricks (GHM Planning 2023, History Studio 2023). This resulted in the present survey being similarly focused only on the front range of the building, without any guidance to the contrary. There are clear junctions between the walls of the different materials, on both the west and east sides of the building suggesting that the front elevation had been wrapped around a slightly earlier building.
- 9.2 Whilst it is not uncommon to find facades built in expensive brick with poorer quality, cheaper, bricks used for less visible elevations of a building in this case the bricks on the side and rear elevations were of high quality. The larger red bricks used in the rest of the building would not be inconsistent with a date of 1930 but could equally have been as early as c.1900. It can only be concluded that previous researchers either thought that the use of two different brick materials meant that the neo-Classical front range was added to an existing building, or that the remainder of the building was of no architectural or historical merit.
- 9.3 It is unfortunate that it was only possible to undertake the archive work after the site visit was completed as it became clear that the documentary evidence, such as it was, did not support the physical evidence for two phases of construction. The few drawings associated with various legal dealings connected with the purchase of the Ashfield house property by Nottinghamshire County Council and several 19th and 20th century maps show no evidence for the existence of any building on the site at the back of Ashfield House before the college of art was built in 1930 (see Figs 2-5). Outbuildings attached to Ashfield House including a stable block were cleared, after 1930 when the connecting building that was constructed some time before 1958.
- 9.4 Little by way of original fixtures and fittings have survived apart from a few original four-panelled doors and some door and window furniture. Evidence of alterations to the original layout in the area examined was limited to the replacement of the eastern side door with a window to convert the former lobby into an office being the most obvious. In addition, the absence of decorative coving in the central part of the building strongly indicates that there was once a larger entrance hall, that was the full width of the portico comprising the passageway 6 and the flanking 'rooms' 5 and 7. The full complement of rooms in this front range would then have consisted of a central hallway, two side entrances and foyers, with Ladies and Gents' toilets and a single office to either side of the entrance hall in rooms 4 and 8, where there were fireplaces.

Classrooms/studios were in the centre of the building in large rooms with glass roofs with more offices on the south side of the building.

- 9.5 Examination of the newspaper archives and other documentary sources has revealed how much Mansfield has valued the importance of a liberal arts education, since at least the 1870s and the College of Art in all its iterations has played a central part in its provision. It is to be welcomed that the distinctive portico will be incorporated into the new building as a reminder of a hard-won and important stage in the provision of further education in the town and the county beyond.

10.0 References

CIfA 2014a (revised 2022) *Code of Conduct: professional ethics in archaeology*, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

CIfA 2014b (revised 2020) *Standard and guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures* Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

GHM Planning 2023 *Heritage Impact Assessment West Nottinghamshire College of Further Education, Chesterfield Road South, Mansfield. Application for the demolition of the School of Art Building, the erection of a replacement building and associated works.*

History Studio 2023. *Architectural Assessment: School of Art Building West Nottinghamshire College Complex, Mansfield.*

LCC 2019, *Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook: a manual of archaeological practice*. Lincoln, Lincolnshire County Council, Built Environment Department

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government 2023 *Revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)*

NA 2023 *Vision West Nottinghamshire College: Adult Learning Centre at Ashfield House, Mansfield Desk Based Assessment* Network Archaeology report REP23006

Archive resources At Nottinghamshire Archives Nottingham

CC/6/3/4/30 grubbing out of trees 1926

CC/6/3/4/81 WC and garage 1933

CC/6/3/4/151 central heating contract 1945

CC/6/3/4/154 drawing office construction 1946

CC/6/3/20/18 Phase 4 of college 1963

CC/5/E74/3 Ashfield House series

DC/M/1/40 Index to council minutes

DC/M/3/5 Building plan registers 1-5

11.0 The Figures

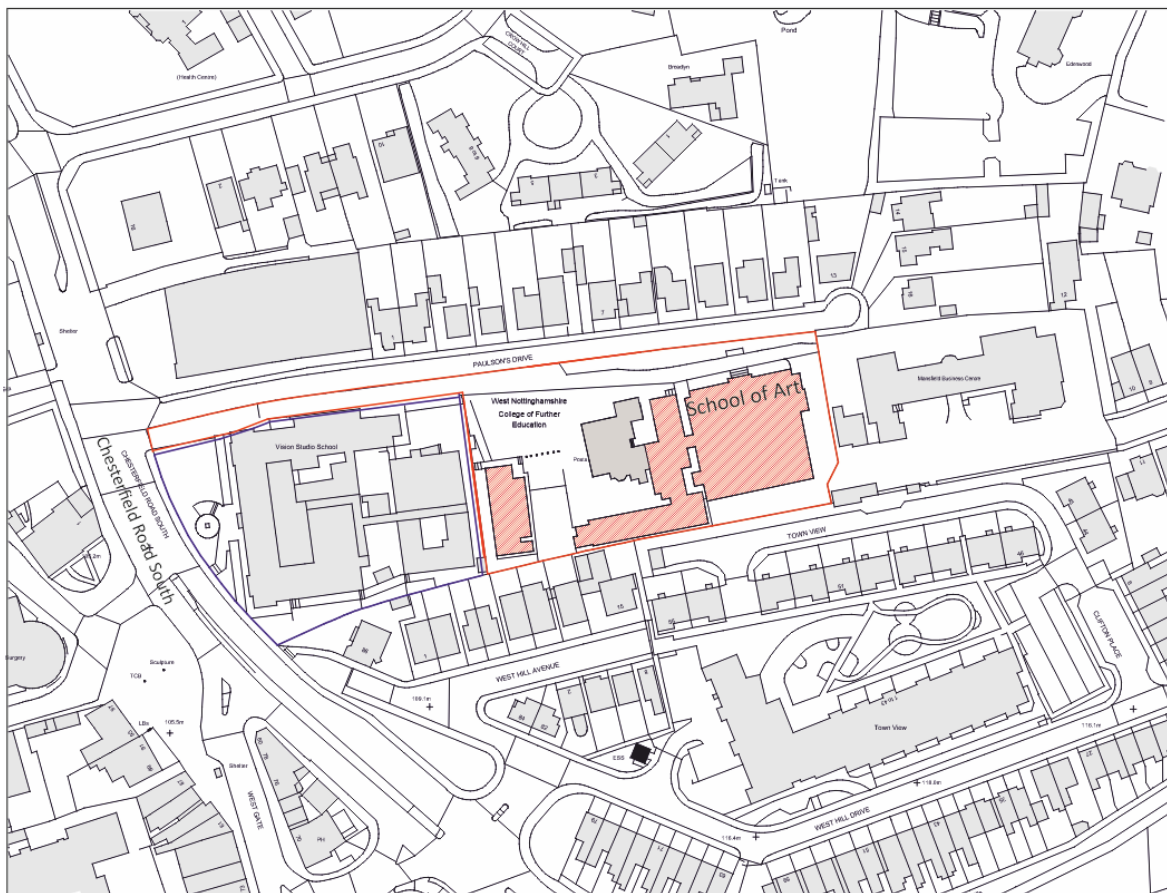
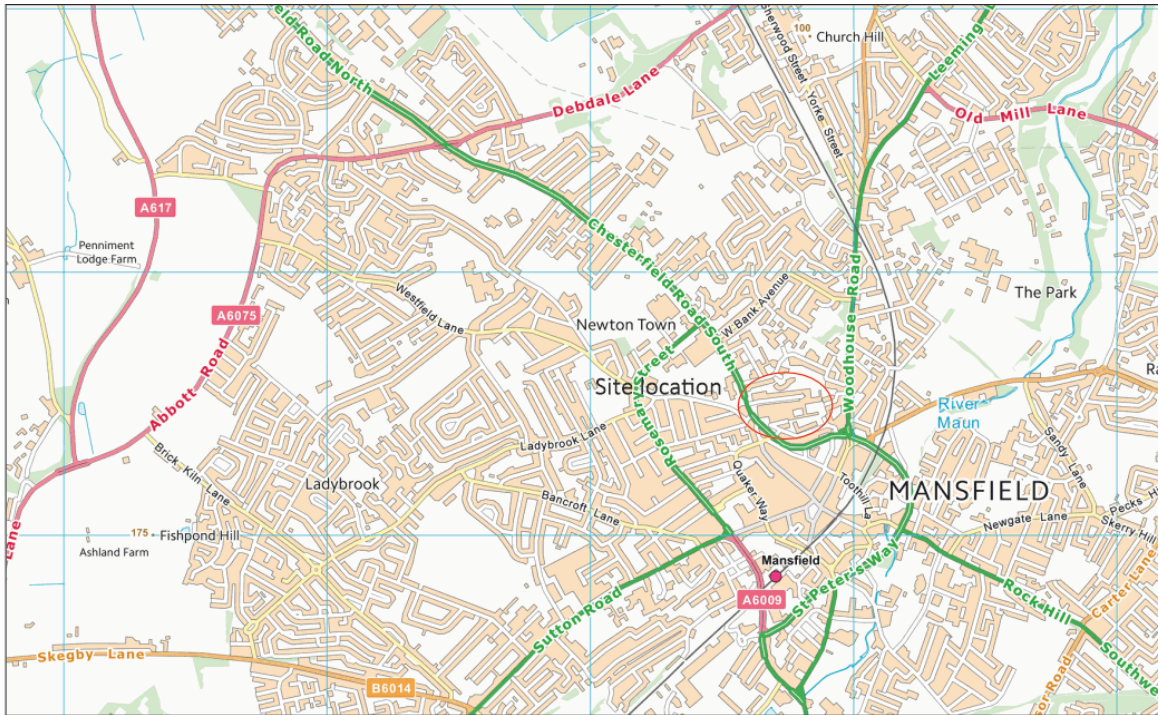


Fig. 1 Vision West College, Chesterfield Road South, Mansfield. Site location showing buildings to be demolished in red

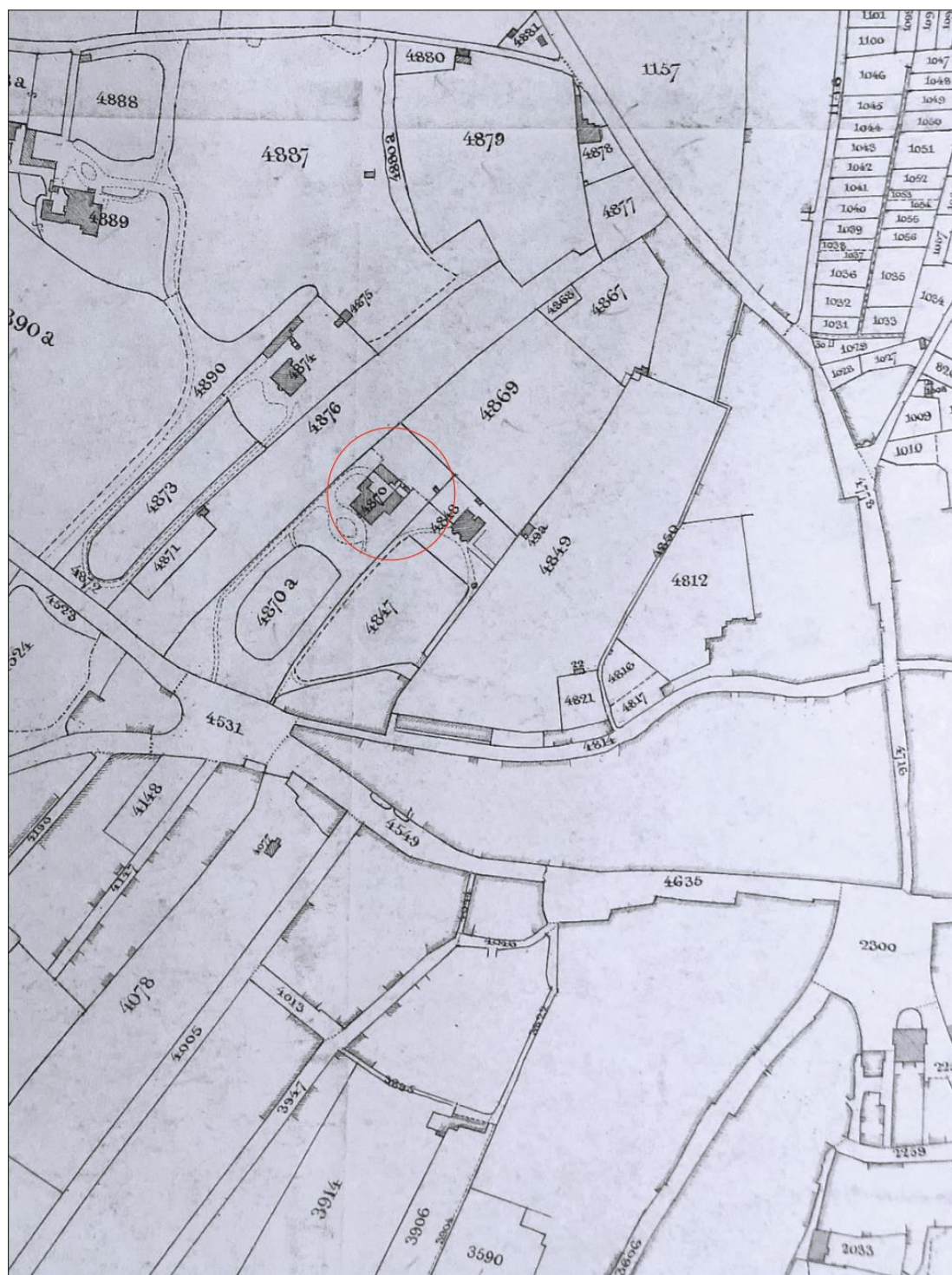


Fig. 2 1844 Tithe map showing Ashfield House and grounds (plots 4870 and 4870a)
Nottinghamshire Archives ref AT/83.



Fig. 3 OS 1:500 map of Mansfield 1879 (surveyed 1876) sheets XXIII.13.6 and 10



Fig.4 OS 1:2500 scale map of Mansfield 1958 (enlarged)

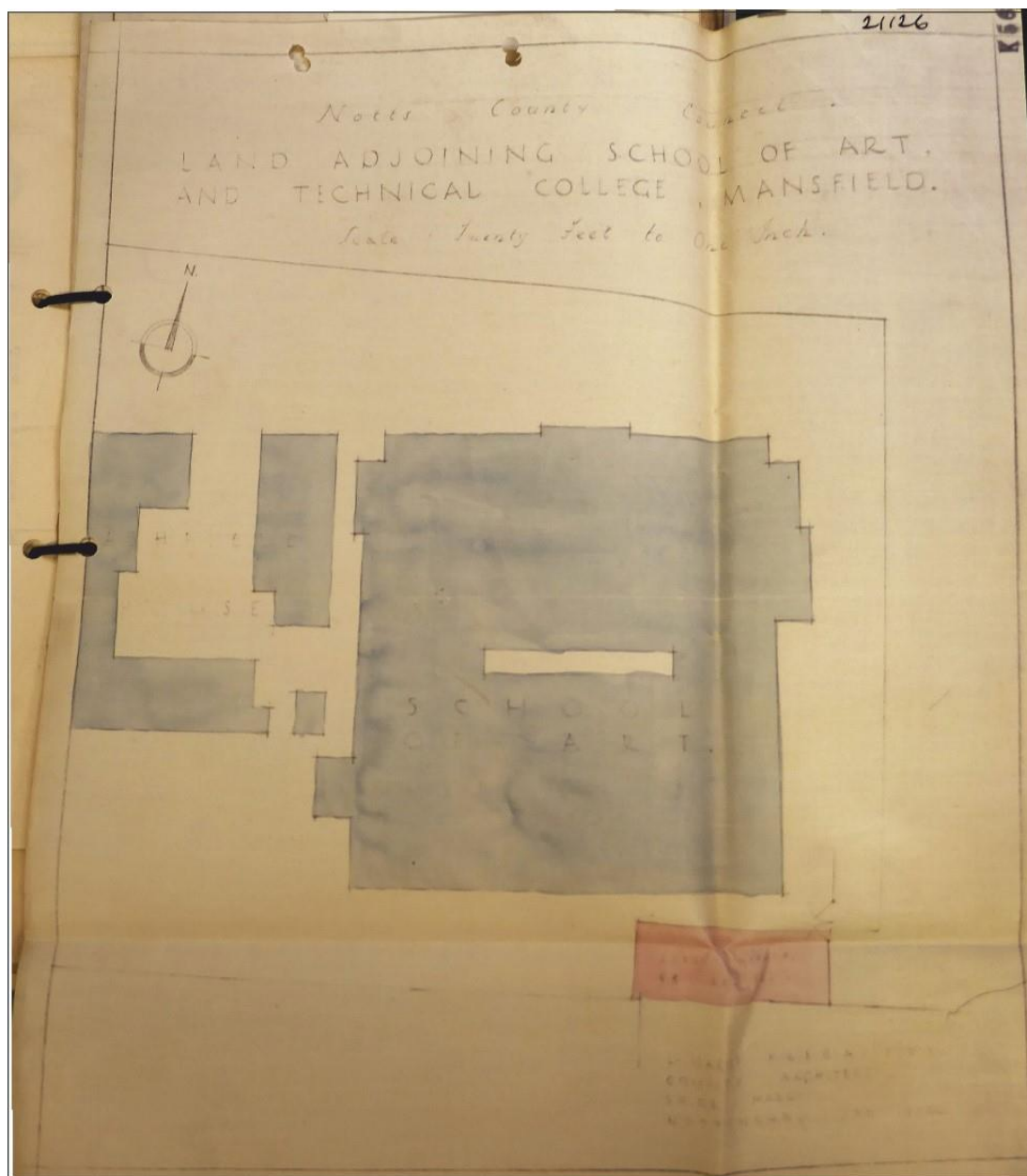


Fig. 5 Plan of School of Art showing proposed purchase of land to the south With stable block and part of Ashfield House to the west (L. Maggs)

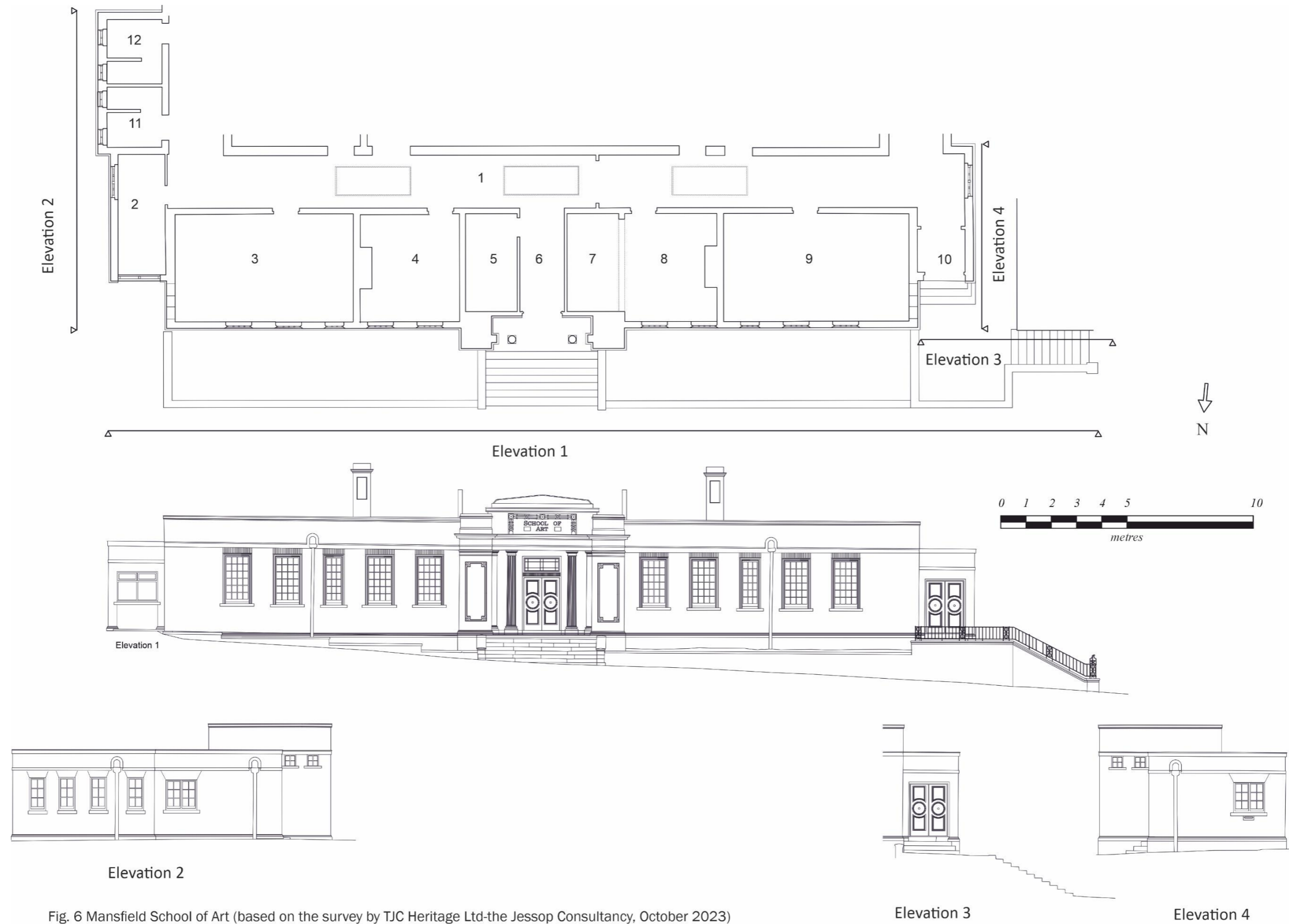


Fig. 6 Mansfield School of Art (based on the survey by TJC Heritage Ltd-the Jessop Consultancy, October 2023)

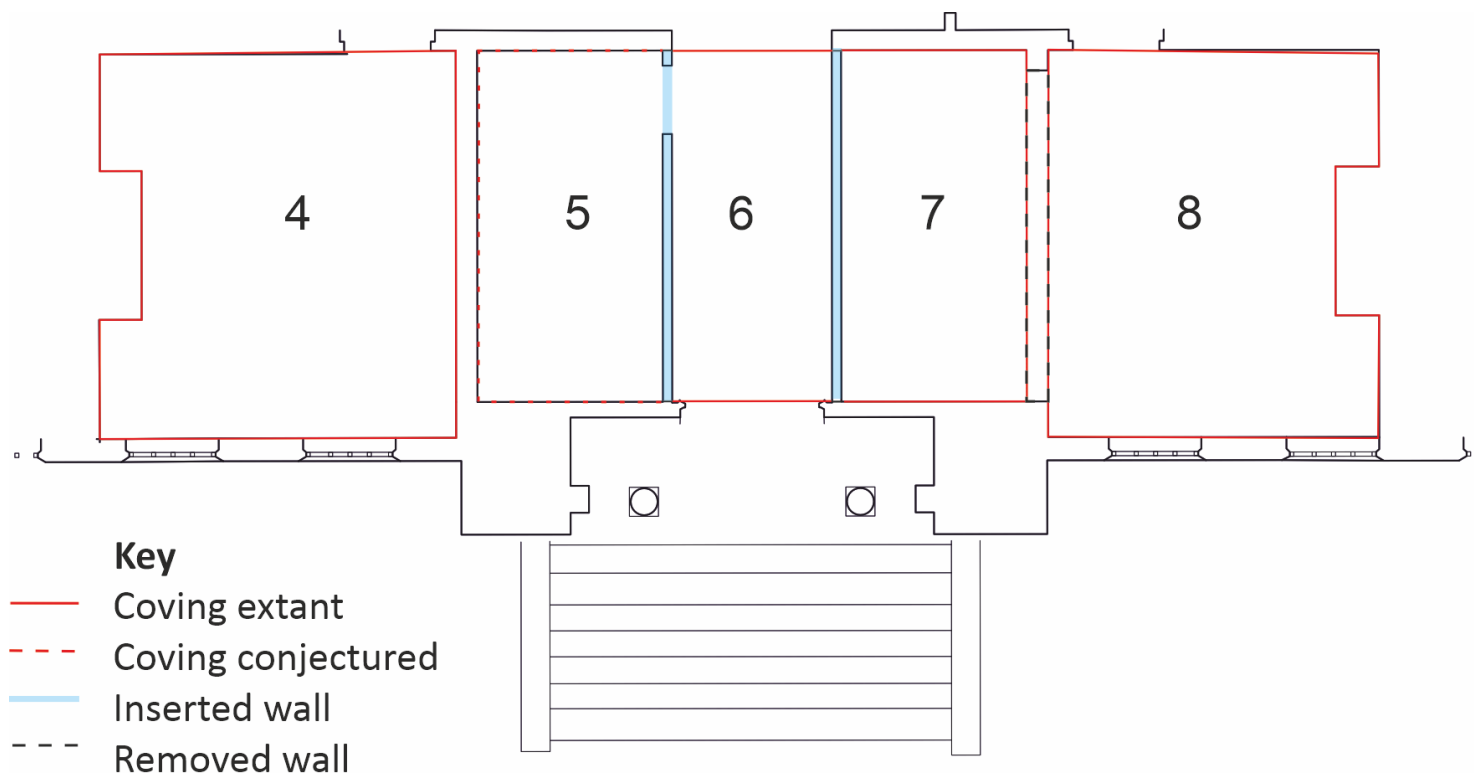


Fig. 7 Central part of the front range showing the presence of coving

12.0 The Plates



Pl. 1 Former Mansfield Technical College, built 1928, looking east.



Pl. 2 College of Art building built 1930 showing the front range, looking south-east.



Pl.3 West part of the front range looking south



Pl.4 Central part of the front range, looking south



Pl. 5 East part of the front range, looking south



Pl. 6 East end of front range showing recessed wing, with replacement window, looking south



Pl. 7 Plinth at base of wall



Pl. 8 Six-petalled rose in corner of the porch side panel



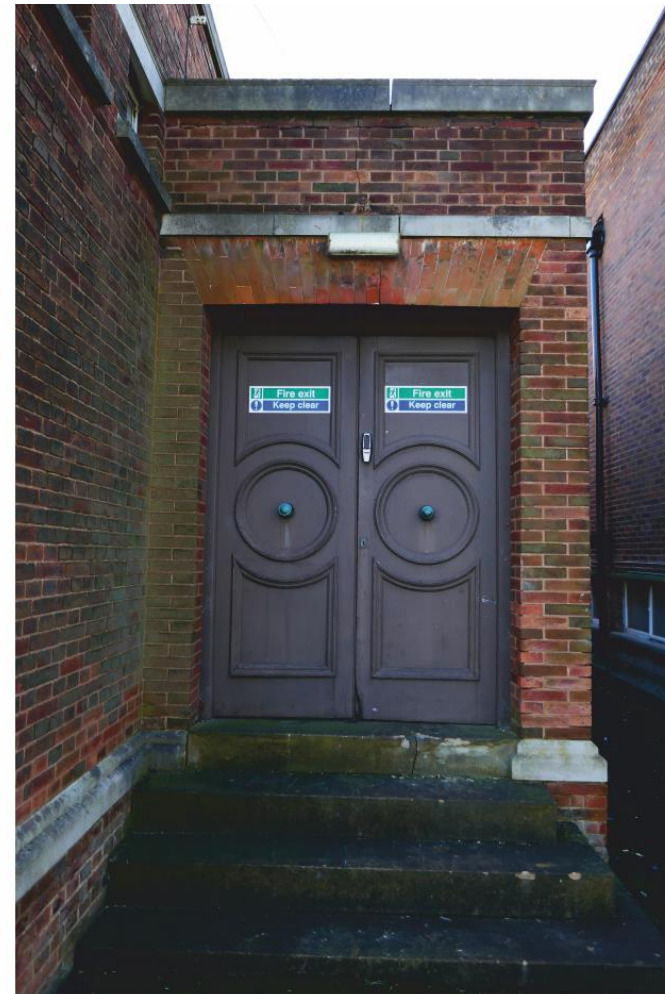
Pl. 9 Central door



Pl. 10 Fanlight above the central door



Pl. 11 West side of front range showing two small windows in the ladies' toilets



Pl. 12 West entrance showing stone steps and tapered brick lintel



Pl. 13 West Entrance showing later link building to rear, looking south



Pl. 14 Junction of front and side wings showing use of different brickwork



Pl.15 Terrace at top of steps in front of west side entrance looking north



Pl.16 Detail of stone wall capping



Pl. 17 Decorative 'newel' on stair at west end of the building



Pl. 18 Decorative oval panel with radiating spokes in metal railings at front of building



Pl.19 East elevation showing recessed wing with blocked door, looking south-west



Pl.20 East elevation showing red tapered lintel bricks above the windows



Pl. 21 East range looking north-west



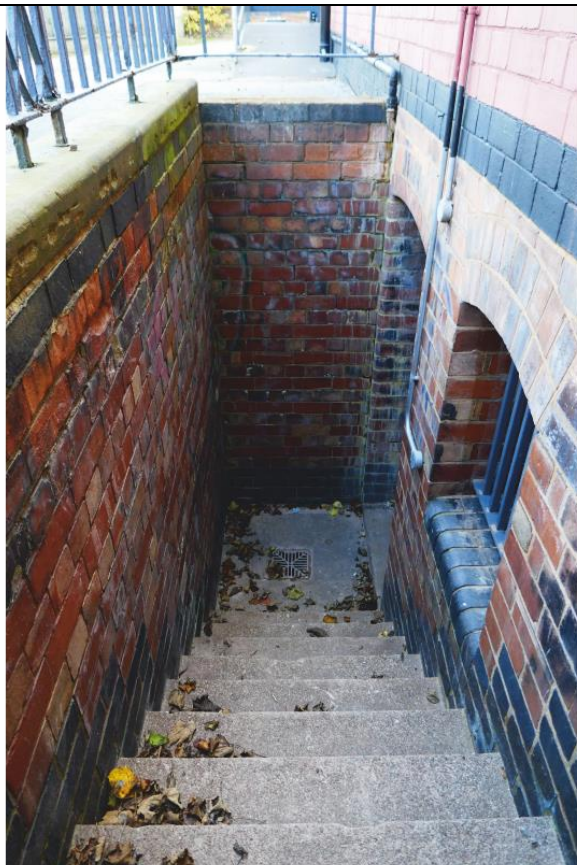
Pl. 22 Junction of front range with east range looking west



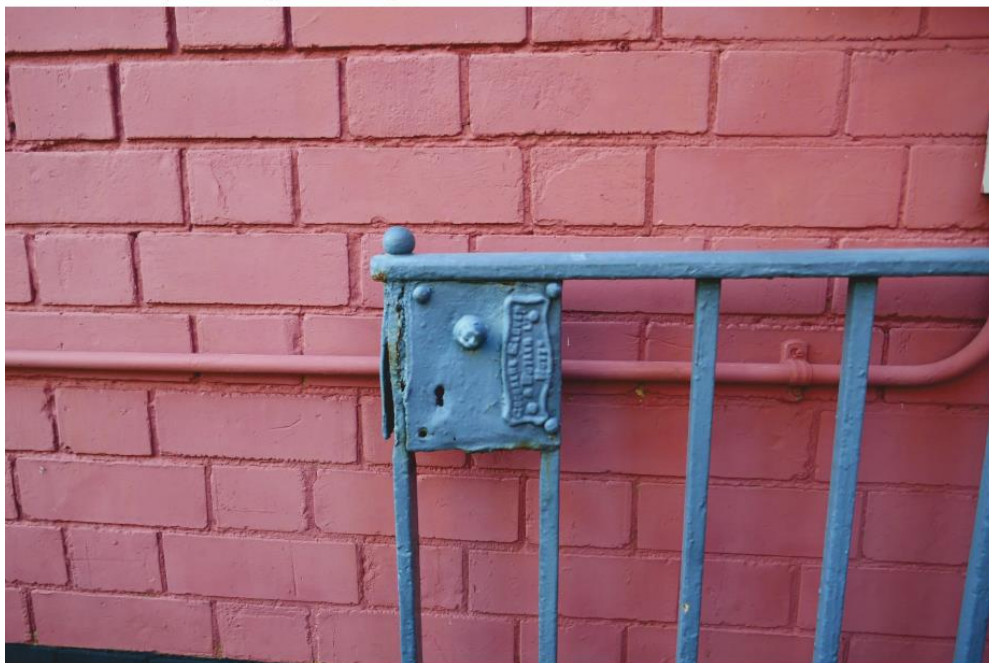
Pl. 23 Detail of the junction between the north and east wing showing the different brick sizes



Pl. 24 Metal railings around steps to basement with same decorative motifs as found on the front steps



Pl. 25 Steps to basement, note use of burnished red bricks and engineering bricks to protect against damp



Pl. 26 Detail of lock on gate to basement, Goodacre, Glover & Butler, Notts



Pl. 27 South range, looking north-west



Pl. 28 North corridor, looking east



Pl. 29 North corridor looking west



Pl. 30 Corridor ceiling light



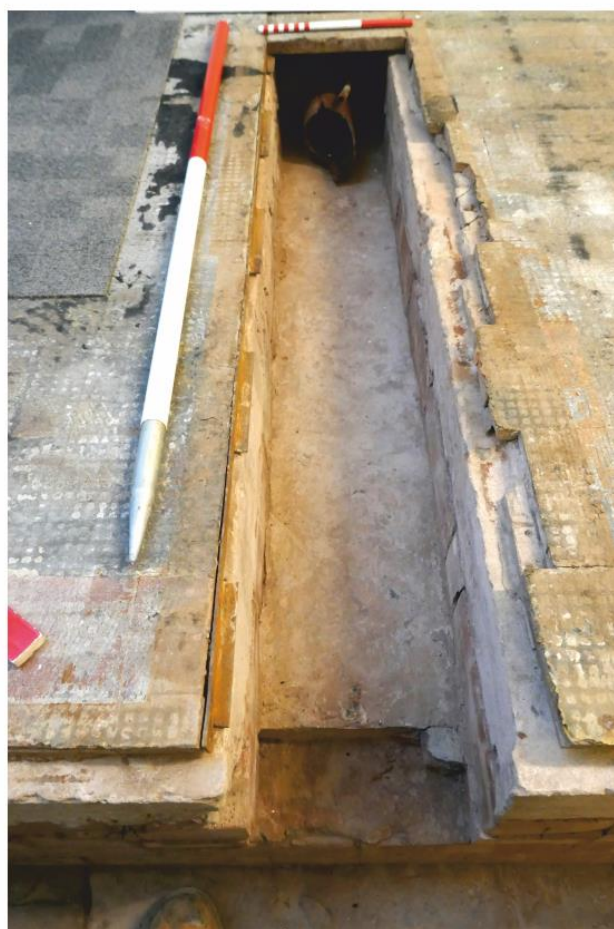
Pl. 31 Detail of moulded plasterwork around the corridor ceiling lights



Pl. 32 Casement window at west end of corridor



Pl. 33 Conduit running along the north side of the corridor



Pl. 34 Conduit crossing the corridor, looking south



Pl. 35 Office 2 looking north showing inserted window



Pl. 36 Office 2 looking south, showing modern fire door.



Pl. 37 Office 2 inserted window with top opening lights, looking north



Pl. 38 Office 2 window in east wall with original fittings



Pl. 39 Office 2, original handle on east window



Pl. 40 Office 2, original fitting on east window



Pl. 41 Original four-panelled door into Gents' toilets



Pl. 42 Inner face of door



Pl. 43 Early radiator next to the door



Pl. 44 Modern cubicles and sanitary ware, looking east. A hardboard panel above the cubicles conceals the two small windows visible on the external wall.



Pl. 45 View looking north-east showing washbasins and frosted glass in the lower half of the windows



Pl. 46 Inserted shower and cubicle, looking west.



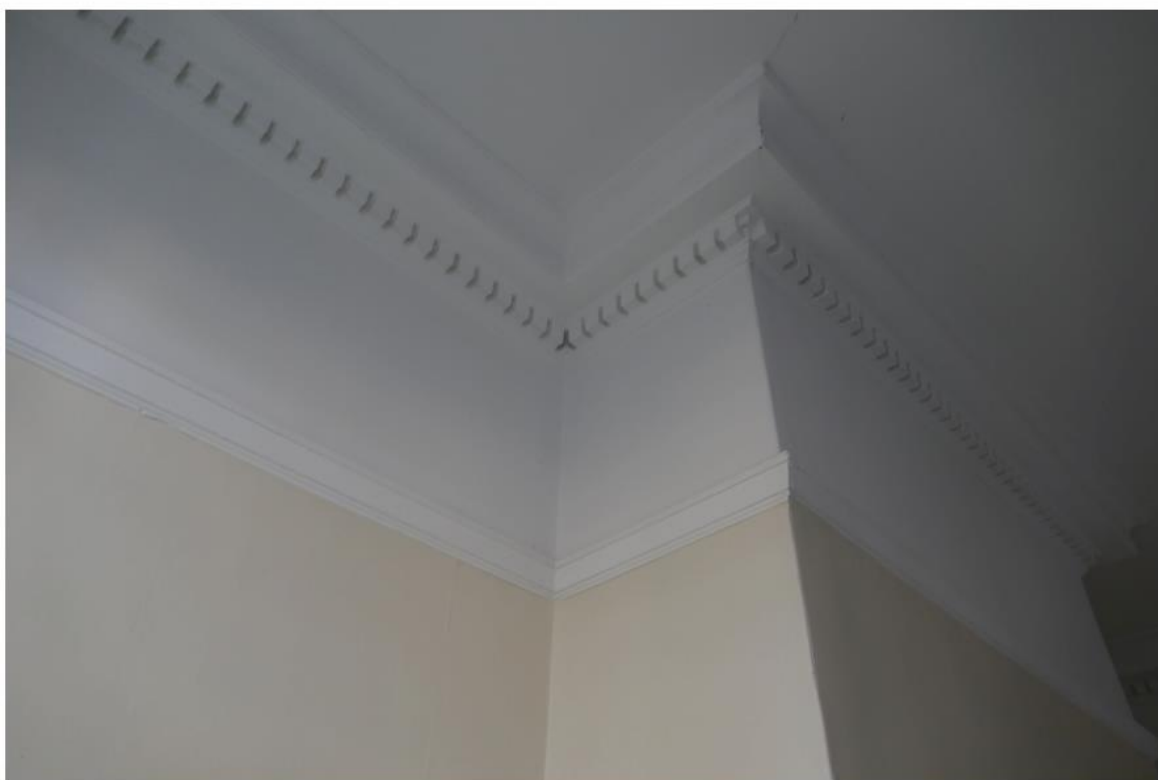
Pl. 47 Learning support room 4, looking south-west



Pl. 48 Built-in cupboard



Pl. 49 Windows overlooking the front , with early radiator between.



Pl. 50 Detail of the ornate dentil coving



Pl. 51 Store room 5 looking north



Pl. 52 Store room 5 looking south



Pl. 53 Central door looking north, showing dentil coving above the fanlight.



Pl. 54 Detail of panels and door knob



Pl. 55 South end of foyer 6, showing coving on south wall only



Pl. 56 Original door for Room 8, with coat peg.



Pl. 57 Room 8 electric fire in chimney breast, hidden behind a plywood panel. ,looking west.



Pl. 58 Revo electric fire



Pl. 59 Room 8 looking north



Pl. 60 Room 7 looking east showing removed all between 7 and 8



Pl. 61 Room 7, looking north, showing coving no north and east walls



Pl. 62, Door into Ladies' toilets 9, looking south Shower and disabled toilet cubicle to left. .



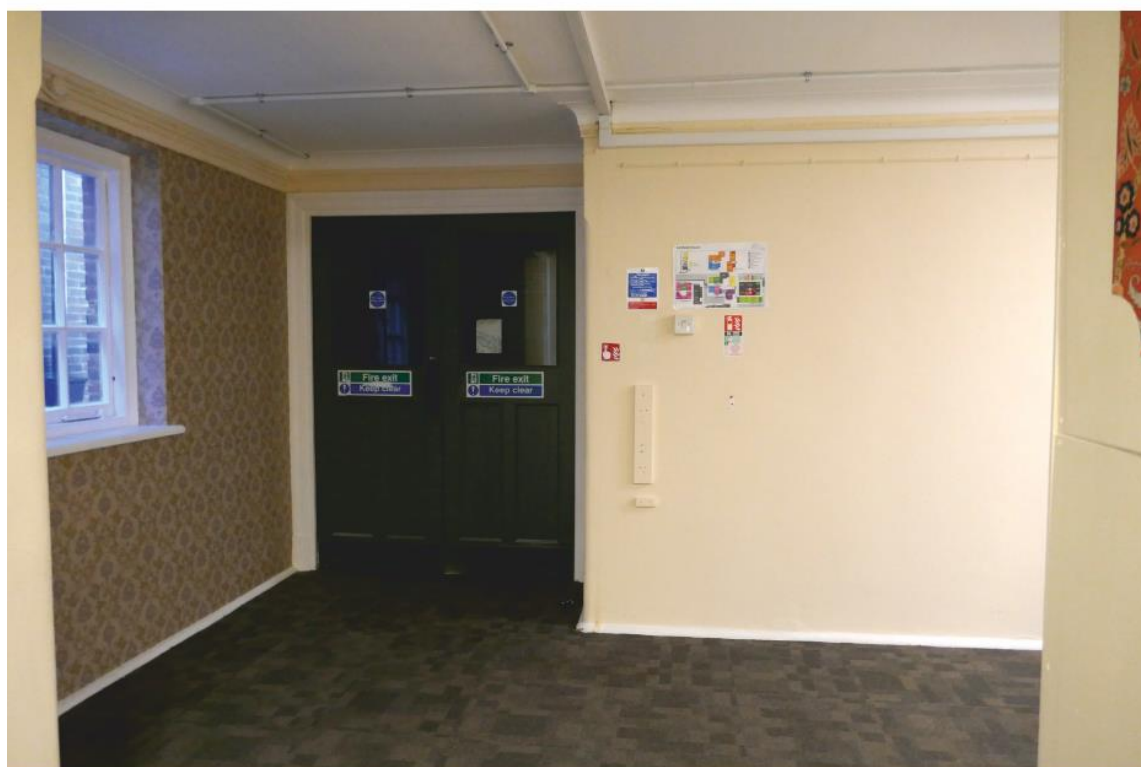
Pl. 63. Ladies' toilet cubicles 9. Blocked side windows just below ceiling



Pl. 64, Ladies' toilets 9 looking north-east.



Pl. 65 Disabled toilet and shower room 9



Pl. 66 Inner swing doors leading to west side entrance, looking north



Pl. 67 Swing door showing scuff plate and finger plate



Pl. 68 Foyer 10 looking north towards outer door



Pl. 69 Filled in mat well surrounded by square floor tiles



Pl. 70 View south along western corridor from the west side entrance