

The Society's Casework in 2004: Review of Selected Cases

by

MATTHEW SAUNDERS *and* FRANK KELSALL

Local planning authorities in England and Wales have been obliged to consult the Ancient Monuments Society (and the other National Amenity Societies) on all applications for listed building consent involving demolition, either total or partial, since 1972. In recent years the number of part demolition cases has settled to about 5,000 a year and those for complete demolition to around 200. The exact number of listed buildings threatened by application for total demolition in 2003 (the last full year at the time of writing) was 128 (fourteen of them in Wales). This compared with 146 in 2002. A full list of these cases can be obtained from the Society's office and website. The cases discussed here include some of the most interesting, although in choosing them we are limited by the availability of illustrations. The drawings have been kindly supplied by the architects of the various schemes and the names of the practices concerned are given in the text.

The AMS is concerned with buildings of all ages and all types but as our sister organisation, The Friends, owns thirty-four Grade II* and Grade I listed churches that have fallen out of pastoral use, the care of historic place of worship is something to which we can bring to bear the perspective of client and owner as well as that of a conservation body. Ecclesiastical consultations come to us through two routes. Planning authorities still need to give planning permission for extensions beyond the existing envelope for any external 'material change' as well as under internal decision making processes, and from Registrars and Chancellors in the case of the Established Church. Through these routes we have been presented with:

ALL SAINTS CHURCH, MALDON, ESSEX

All Saints is already well known to the AMS. Volume 38 of the *Transactions* in 1994 includes a lengthy illustrated article on it by Cecil Hewett and T. Elphin Watkin. What sets it apart is the triangular plan of the tower walls supporting an hexagonal shingled spire above with three spirelets. Something of the purity of the geometry is shown on Figure 1, a drawing by Hewett taken from the article. Although there

is twelfth-century stonework, the tower and the spire were both pinned down to the first decades of the thirteenth century.

Following the sale of an existing church hall in 2003, located some 500 metres from All Saints, the parish embarked on an extensive round of consultations to reach a consensus on providing substitute accommodation as near as possible to the historic church. Certain parameters were agreed. First, that any new building 'should not disturb the traditional layout and relationship of church and churchyard' and, secondly, 'that any new building should have architectural merit but not such as to compete with the church'.

After much discussion, the area of least sensitivity in this respect was felt to be at the south-east corner immediately beyond the pre-existing War Memorial. The site had been developed in the Middle Ages and the current open view was only progressively achieved from the time of the first demolitions in the mid-nineteenth century. The bulk of the buildings were swept away in the 1920s. Figure 2 shows the historic overlays to the survey of 2000, in particular the ribbon development which used to hug the frontage.

The architect chosen by the parish to tackle this most sensitive of commissions was Geoffrey Vale based in Maldon itself. He brought experience of earlier church extension schemes, particularly that to St Bartholomew's in Wickham Bishops, which supplanted the ancient church of St Peter's, now vested with the Friends of Friendless Churches. He used to work with the practice of Plater Claiborne of Tollesbury, also in Essex, whose work we have illustrated in previous volumes. From March 2000 to May 2004 he drew up twelve different approaches, half of which are shown on Figure 3. As you can see, these vary from the single storey to the three storey and from the polygonal to the square. All of them share historicist references, some more obvious than others. The one that became the most favoured and the subject of the application that was referred to us is given at Figure 4. This took its geometric cue from the triangular form of the tower. The indebtedness seems so obvious that it is rather curious to see from the supporting statement that Mr Vale adopted the form in part for social and functional reasons: 'The pavement in this area, containing the bus stop, is one of the most vibrant parts of the High Street and the shape of the building was governed by a desire to increase the focus and usefulness of this space. The triangular form

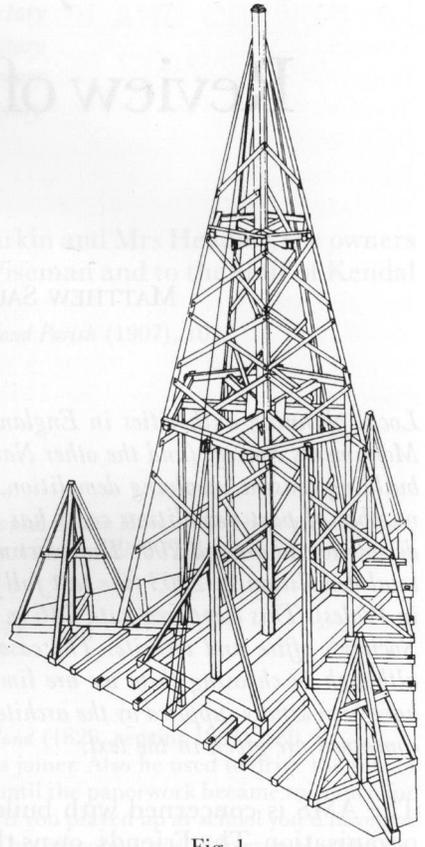


Fig. 1

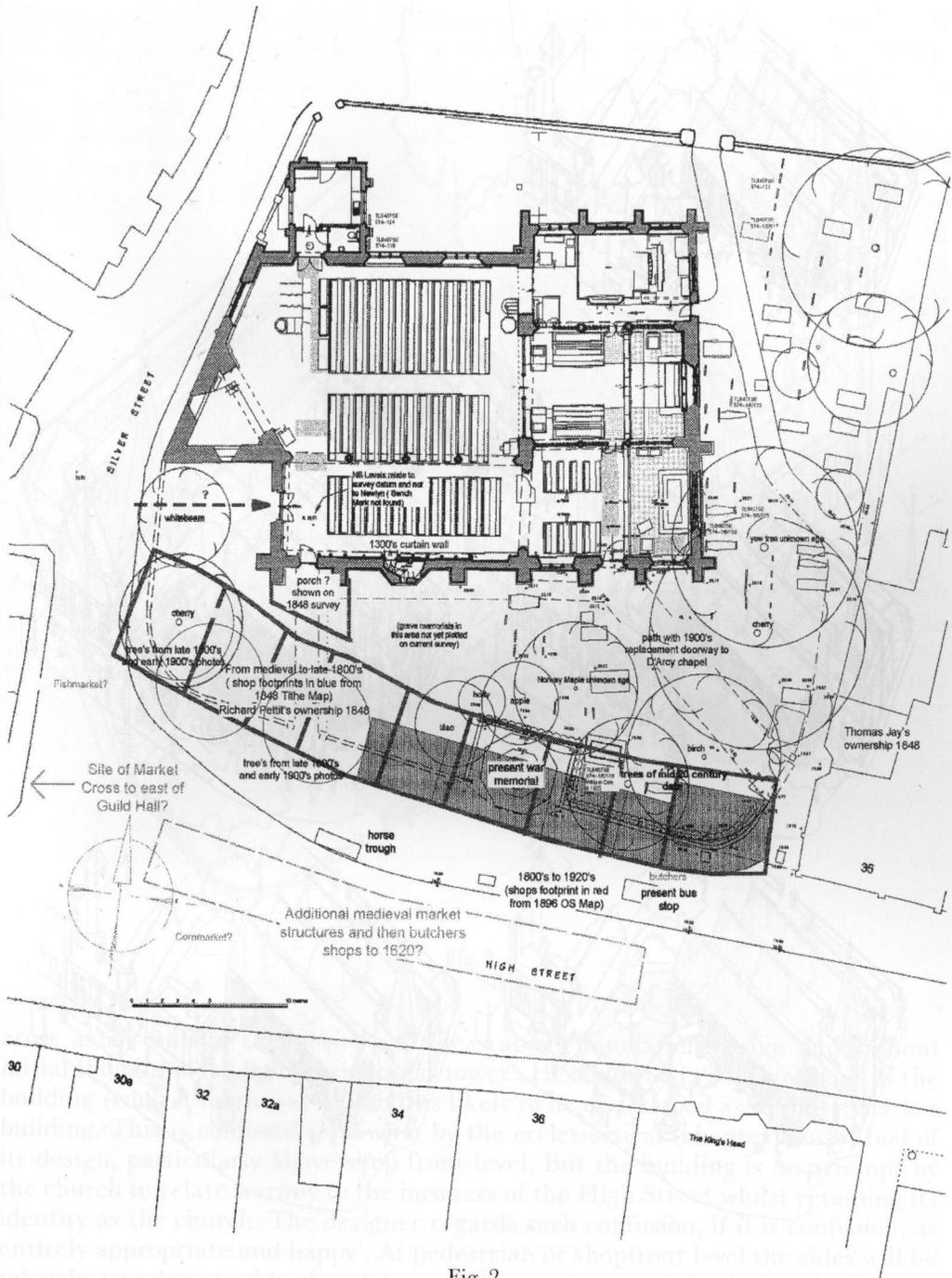


Fig. 2

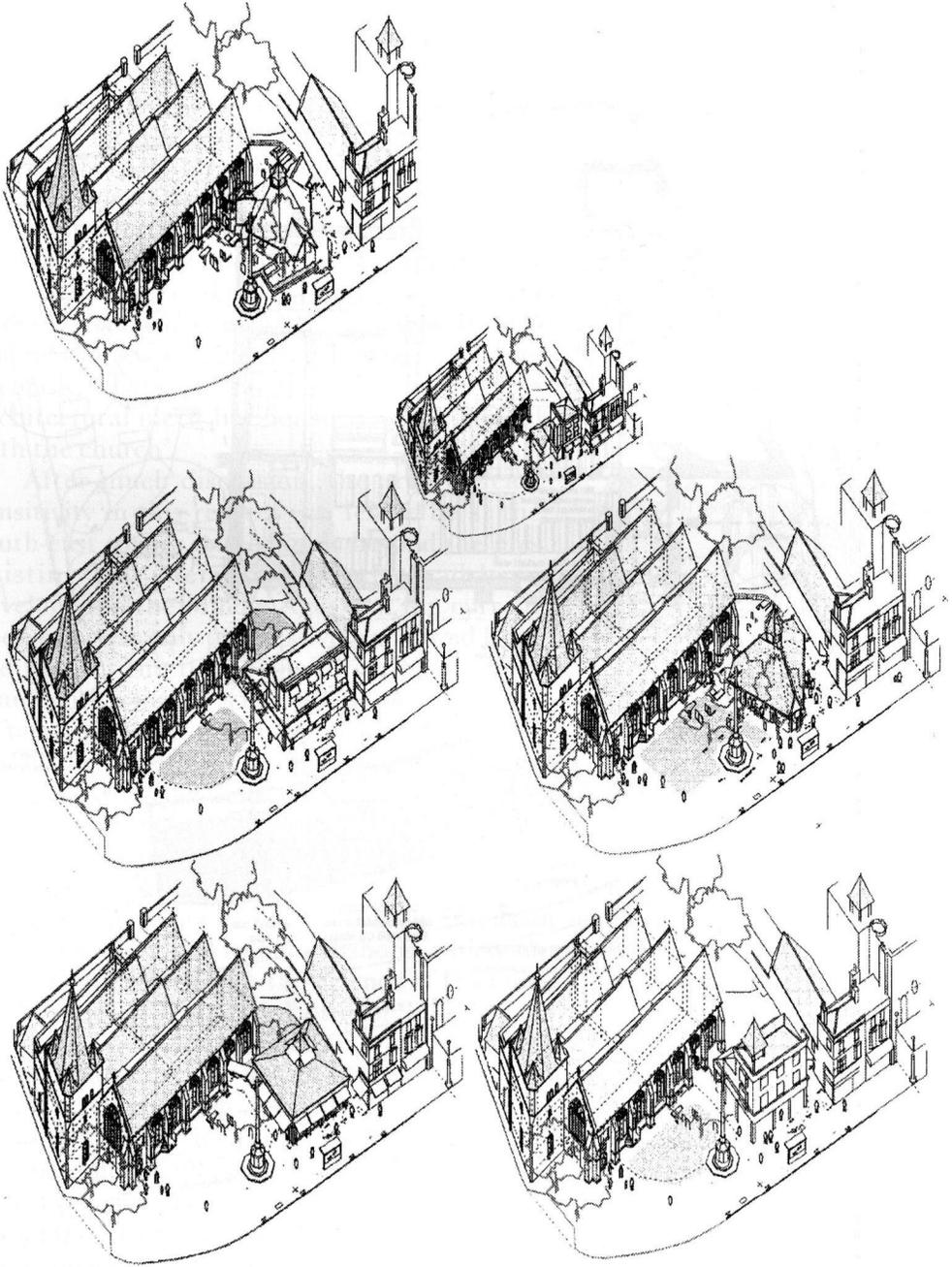


Fig. 3

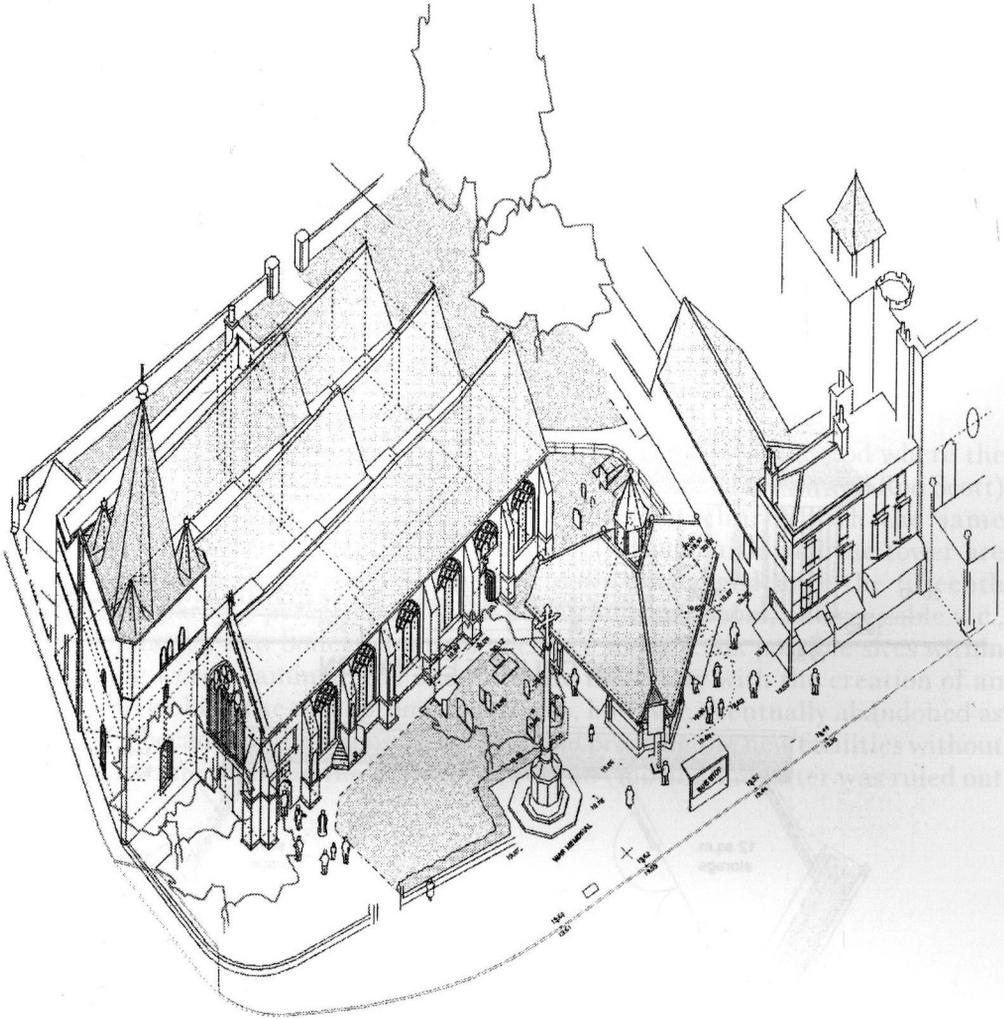


Fig. 4

arose as a result of this desire and ideas about foundation design and without initial thought of All Saints triangular tower'. He continued: 'The language of the building (what it might say of itself) is likely to be understood as that of a market building. This is confused somewhat by the ecclesiastical (chapter house) feel of its design, particularly above shop front level. But the building is an attempt by the church to relate warmly to the business of the High Street whilst retaining its identity as the church. The designer regards such confusion, if it is confusion, as entirely appropriate and happy'. At pedestrian or shopfront level the sides will be taken by largely openable glazed doors. The corner areas and a clerestory are to be in bleached oak, the former constructed in thick sawn stays modelled rather on the

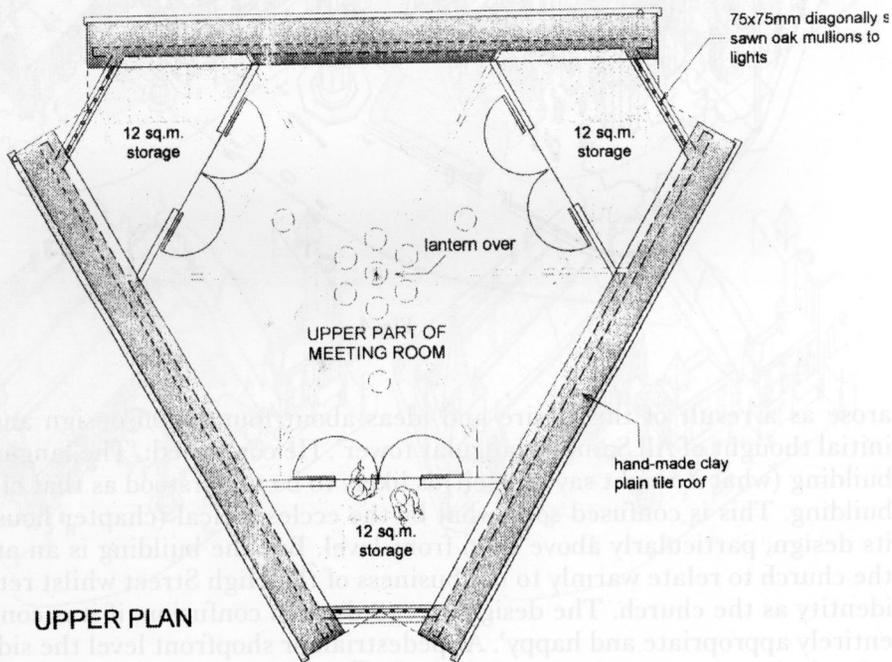
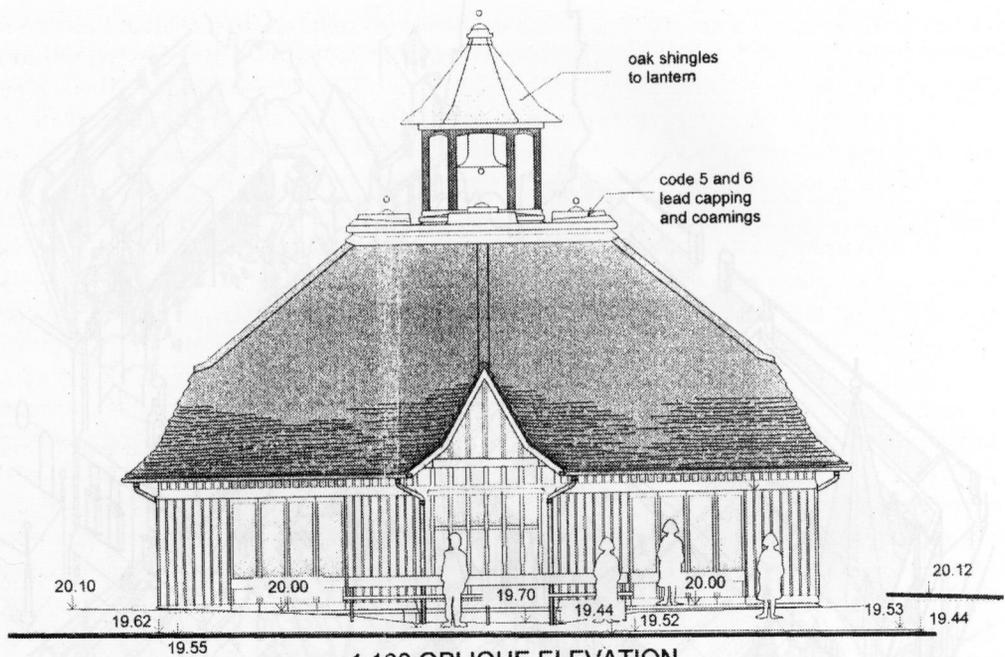


Fig. 5

Saxon example at Greensted near Ongar. He hopes to cover the central lantern in oak shingles, the echo there being taken from the bellcote of the Moot Hall and the spirelets on the church. Figure 5 shows the oblique elevation and the sixty square metres of meeting room provided in a shape that speaks so powerfully of the form captured in Hewett's drawing. The w.c., the galley and the office, all on the ground floor, are tucked neatly into the areas occupied on the spire by the spirelets.

The Society's Casework Committee discussed the case at its meeting in the High Summer and felt able to applaud it, albeit with some misgivings, as on the lantern. The planning authority disagreed and refused planning permission. An appeal has been lodged.

ST NICHOLAS CHURCH, CHARLWOOD, SURREY

Much the same slow-burn decision making was adopted at Charlwood where the architects, Thomas Ford and Partners (job architects: Paul Sharrock and Rod Scott) approached the commission to extend an historic church with the same circumspection. St Nicholas is listed Grade I. The north aisle and the tower are Norman and the exterior has remained virtually unchanged since the fifteenth century. The parish's perceived need was for a children's room, an accessible w.c., a small kitchen, a new boiler room and ancillary storage. Six possible sites within the building were examined, the one to re-use the vestry with the creation of an upper room looking the most promising. It was, however, eventually abandoned as impractical because of the impossibility of sound proofing the new facilities without at the same time muffling the sound of the organ (moving the latter was ruled out



Fig. 6

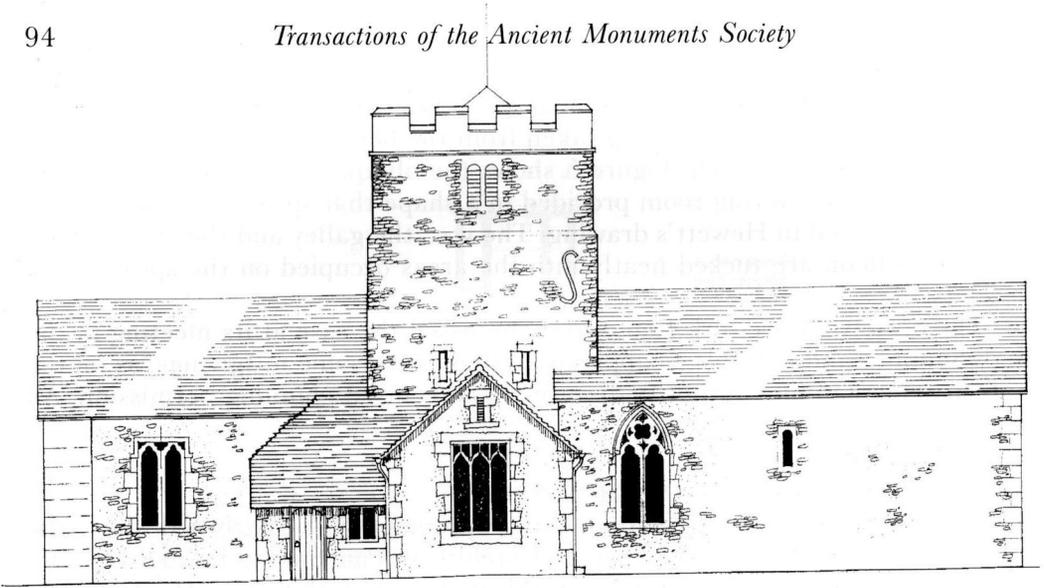


Fig. 7



Fig. 8

on the advice of the Diocesan Organ Adviser). The eye then turned to three external sites: the Rectory stables; part of the Rectory itself; or a ruined laundry used for a time as a cottage. They were ruled out as being separated from the church. 'Building a new free standing hall has also been considered but would not be justified by the comparatively small size of the new facilities required and because it would detract from the visual setting of the church'. The net result of all this was to plump for a small single-storey extension onto the north wall of the church linked to the tower and the vestry. Figure 6 shows that elevation as existing, Figure 7 the projected new build and Figure 8, the perspective from the north-east angle. The splendid Cuddington chest tomb of 1829 in the immediate foreground would have to be moved.

The architects are confident of the appropriateness and reticence of what they propose: 'The extension will be constructed to have minimal effect on the existing fabric. By using an existing doorway not a single stone of the building need be moved (although the later boiler room would be demolished). Where new walls abut existing ones, soft joints would be provided, and the external treatment will be derived from existing elements of the church with pitched roof of handmade clay tiles It is intended that the walls of the new extension will be rendered (as much of the church was originally treated) in traditional self coloured lime render with stone quoins and stone dressings round the windows. The existing north walls and windows will be kept visible within the new extension'.

We always approach consultations such as these with a sceptical eye. Ancillary contiguous accommodation is a modern fad, but the arguments here seem strong and they were achieved in a manner which seemed appropriately subordinate. We did not therefore object.

ST LAURENCE AND ALL SAINTS CHURCH, EASTWOOD, ESSEX

It seems hard to believe from the photographs of this Grade I church (photos by Judy Cligman) that there was a serious proposal to dismantle and move it as part of a scheme to extend Southend Airport. But there was and it was contested by us and with particular vigour by the SPAB. In the end the suggestion was rejected with unanimous clarity by the Planning Committee and the proposal now seems dead in the water.

Like so many English churches, the archaeology of St Laurence is extraordinarily complicated with overlay of fabric on fabric. The bulk of the work is twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth century, but one of the most charming long distance views (Fig. 9 shows a nineteenth-century

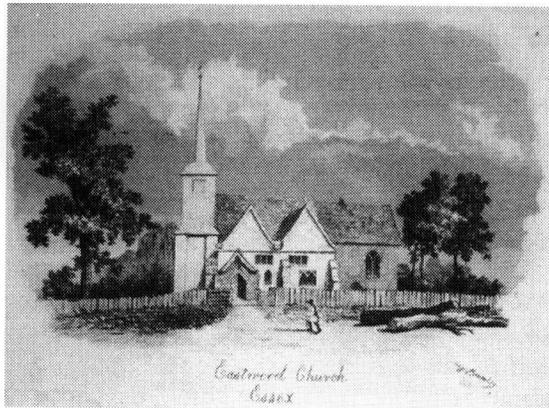


Fig. 9

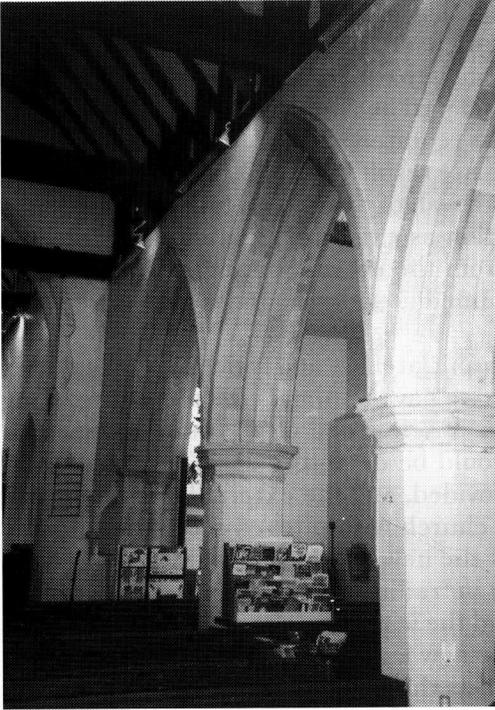


Fig. 10

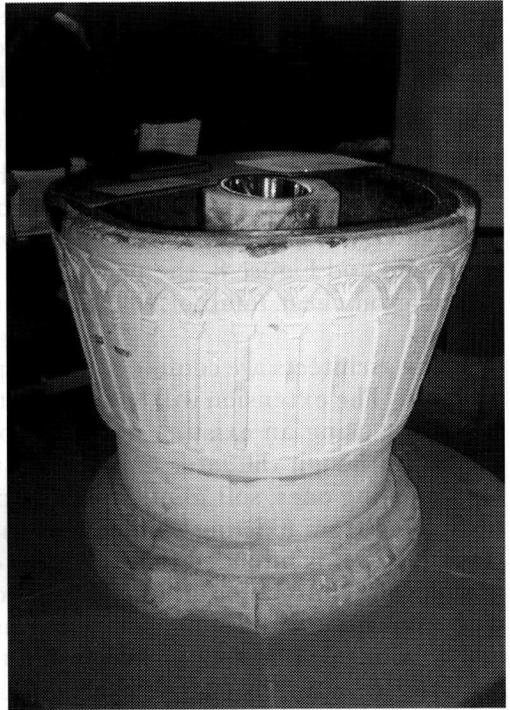


Fig. 11



Fig. 12



Fig. 13

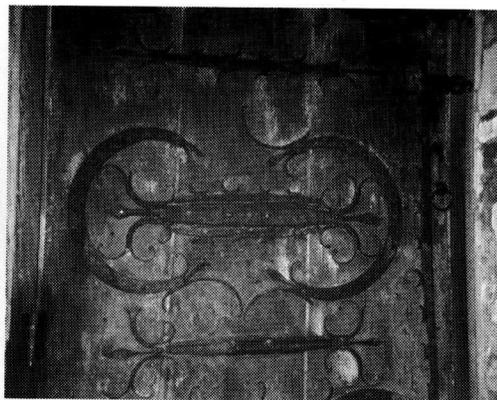


Fig. 14

print) is from the south where the two plastered and gabled extensions are immediately post medieval. Figure 10 shows two of the three bays of the south arcade of *c.* 1300, but the emphatically Norman origins are shown in the animated tub font (Fig. 11) with blind intersected arches. What makes the church particularly celebrated is a priest's chamber at the west end of the north aisle (external view, Fig. 12) and the wonderfully overscaled early thirteenth century doors, one of them shown on Figures 13 and 14. Here there are two and a half tiers of large curves and small tendrils between, unhinged at the time of Pevsner's visit in 1954 but now back in use, giving access to a modern extension. This palimpsest of a building can now continue in the slow process of accretion and maturity and not be torn from its historic site.

SS PETER AND PAUL CHURCH, LAVENHAM, SUFFOLK

Lavenham is one of the glories of Suffolk and any changes, however minimal, are bound to be controversial. It was a new heating system which led the PCC to propose a pair of boiler vents protruding through the north wall of the vestry at the point shown on Figure 15. The solution proposed by the architect, Nicholas Jacob of Ipswich, was to make a virtue of function and disguise the newcomers as the

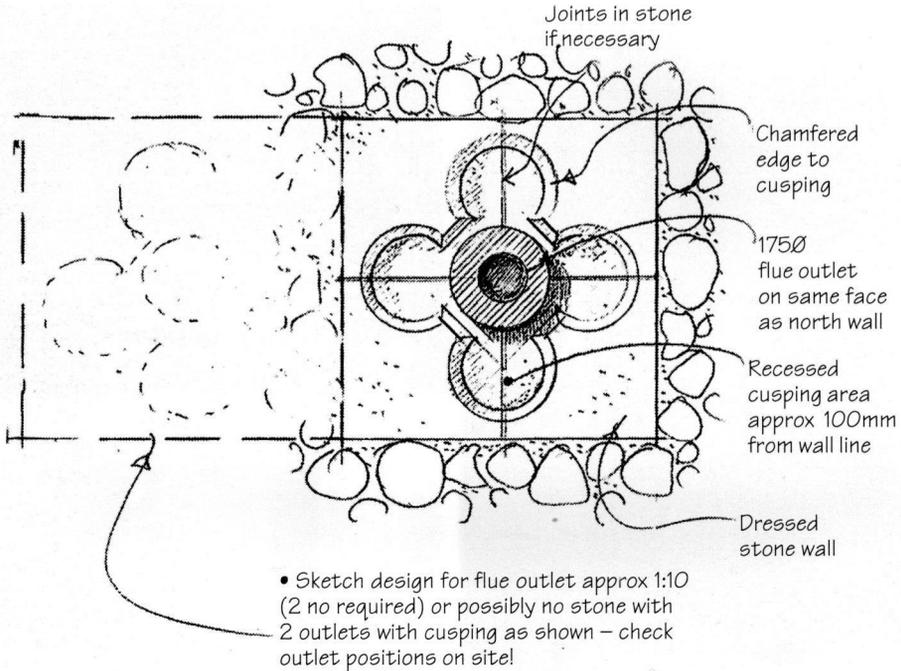


Fig. 15

central 'rose' within a blind and recessed quatrefoil, the lobes of which corresponded to the diameter of the flue outlets. The solution manifested some wit but in initial discussions English Heritage suggested instead that the flues were extracted through the roof. At the time of writing discussions are still ongoing.

CHRIST CHURCH, DISHFORTH, NORTH YORKSHIRE

This is the only case of redundancy. Christ Church was first constructed in 1791, but as Figure 16 shows was the subject of a drastic reformation *c.* 1880 by the architect George Mallinson based in Ripon. This triptych of a drawing shows the galleried simplicity of 1791 on the left and the gothicization in the middle and on the right. Following closure as a church, local people have come forward with a scheme to adapt it as the village hall. The plans, drawn up by J. M. Witherick,

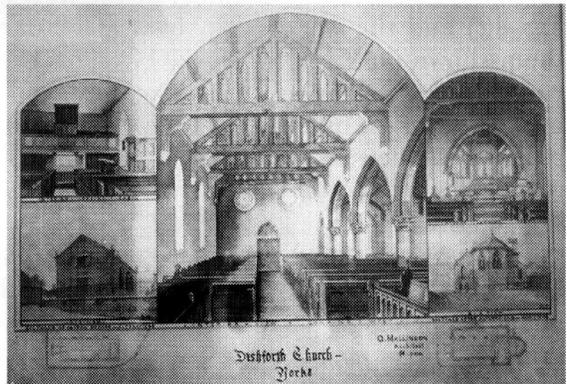


Fig. 16



Fig. 17

architect of Laverton near Ripon, worked with the grain of the building in such a way that we were able to accept the principle. However it did seem needlessly cavalier with fittings, proposing the expulsion of the pulpit and the font (Fig. 17). Ejecting the former in particular with its elaborate carving, angle columns and miniature tracery is tantamount to a sentence of destruction as moving an item of that size would almost certainly have to be preceded by breaking it up. Hardly any usable space would be foregone by retention and we have advised strongly against loss.

ST ANNE'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CATHEDRAL, LEEDS, WEST YORKSHIRE

A great deal of money has been invested in recent years in conserving and beautifying J. H. Eastwood's design in Cookridge Street of 1902-4, built in that Arts and Crafts Gothic style associated with the turn of the century. However, the distinguished conservation practice of Buttress Fuller Alsop Williams is still of the view that 'the overwhelming impression on entering the cathedral is of a dirty and dingy interior. Close examination of the stonework reveals that it is coated in a layer of black sooty dust that has settled onto and is ingrained into the lightly textured surface of the Ketton limestone masonry of the cathedral interior. This has changed the natural warm buff colour of the underline masonry to a dull, lifeless grey. ... The effect is the creation of a cold austere interior.' Part of the



Fig. 18

resultant scheme of cleaning and improved lighting is the serious consideration that has gone to recreating a lost scheme of decoration. In December 1910 the Italian decorative artist and architect, Cesare Formilli, was commissioned to carry out Eastwood's plan of 1907 for decorating the sanctuary shown here in a photograph of 1931 (Fig. 18). Eastwood proposed covering the walls of the sanctuary with mosaic and marble panels of saints and angels and symbols of the Passion and Eucharist. To either side of the great reredos there were to be mosaics depicting the Ascension and Assumption. He completed the forty-eight mural panels for the sanctuary and Lady Chapel by 1915, but as early as 1927, the cathedral authorities decided to replace the murals to either side of the reredos with mosaic panels. These were also undertaken by Formilli and unveiled in 1928. It was hoped that the other murals in the sanctuary would ultimately be replaced by mosaic panels of the same quality but this never happened. However, in 1937, Canon Bentley undertook the redecoration of the Lady Chapel and arranged for an 'ecclesiastical artist' to replace the Formilli murals. His intention was to continue the process of replacement in the sanctuary but he backed down under criticism. In 1954 Father Bradley undertook a further 'beautification' process and removed

all the Formilli murals in the sanctuary and Lady Chapel. This was followed by a redecoration in 1963 when the plaster panels that once contained the murals were over painted again. It is unclear whether the murals and backing plaster were completely removed or whether they have merely been covered. A specialist cleaning contractor is to be asked to carry out some trials to remove the layers of modern paint to see if the murals that had the spandrels still exist. The architects are confident that with modern techniques that allow ink to be removed from paper without affecting the latter's surface, they can expose the murals with minimal damage. They conclude that 'if they exist, a scheme for their repair and reinstatement could be considered'.

ST RAPHAEL'S CHURCH, SURBITON, SURREY

The same sort of promise of reinstatement permitting a church to resume its original decorative balance is being proposed in respect of St Raphael's. The history of this remarkable church has just been compiled by Anthony Symondson who has himself drawn on the researches of Sandra Coombs.

St Raphael's was designed by Charles Parker in a neo-Lombardic style in 1846 and built in Bath stone by John Dickson. It was erected in the grounds of Surbiton Hall beside the Thames and completed at a cost of £7,000 in 1847. It remained a private chapel belonging to the Raphael and Savile families until it was sold to the Archdiocese of Suffolk in 1945.

The founder, Alexander Raphael, was an Armenian Catholic born in Madras. *The Gentleman's Magazine* described him as a man of great wealth who had 'presented to the Ministers of the Church of Rome within the last few years sums amounting to £100,000 chiefly for building purposes'. He seems to have come to England in the first years of the nineteenth century and by 1830 had entered politics. He was Member of Parliament for St Albans from 1847 until his death in 1850, precisely the time when the Surbiton church was begun (by which time Raphael was already seventy-one).

The architect, Charles Parker (1799-1881), was a pupil of Sir Jeffry Wyatville. He was especially keen on the Italianate style and published between 1832 and 1841 a series of plates entitled *Villa Rustica* showing how 'Italian domestic architecture could be adapted to English needs'. He was a key figure in the development of Kingston New Town in the 1830s, which later grew into present-day Surbiton. His best known building is Hoare's Bank in Fleet Street of 1829-32, designed before his Italian journeys. In 1840 he was used by Sir Hugh Hoare to add the portico to his country seat at Stourhead in Wiltshire. How Alexander Raphael came to know of Parker's work is not yet known. Clearly it was a partnership that worked, for no sooner was Surbiton finished, than he commissioned the same architect to design a further Lombardic church, Christ Church in his St Albans constituency in 1845, left unfinished at his death (this was completed by Sir George Gilbert Scott in 1859, but it is now adapted as offices).

The splendid perspective by Howell and Bellion (Fig. 19) shows how some of the original vigour of the composition is to be reinstated under plans announced in



Fig. 19

2004. *Building News* in 1874 recorded that St Raphael's was 'thoroughly restored' by Christopher George Wray, a Catholic convert whose commissions included convents and churches in Hampstead, Market Harborough and Maidstone. As a result, the comparative austerity of Parker was overlaid by a richer schema. Although the perspective shows preliminary thoughts and further research is being undertaken, the hope is to recapture some of the original effect of this remarkable and original interior. The authorship of the east window remains unknown but the side windows are now known to be by Powells of Whitefriars, possibly to Parker's design.

WALLFIELD, 55 WEST STREET, REIGATE, SURREY



Fig. 20

Although not stated as such in the listing schedule, this substantial 'mid-nineteenth century Italianate design' is actually the design of James Knowles Senior, whose most prominent work is the Grosvenor Hotel of 1863 beside Victoria Station. What he provided at Reigate on a site just outside the town centre was a gentleman's villa set in a sylvan setting that has still largely survived (Fig. 20). By 1923 it had been rendered asymmetrical by a new servants' block, and the nibbling away of its character continued when it entered what proved the twilight years for so many similar structures – public use – this time as an annexe to an art college. The chimneys were truncated and a noticeably unsympathetic new window carved into the garden or west elevation. The much more tightly composed façade onto West Street glimpsed through sturdy specimen trees (Fig. 21) survives much more satisfactorily. After the art college left it entered a disgraceful period of vacancy and boarding

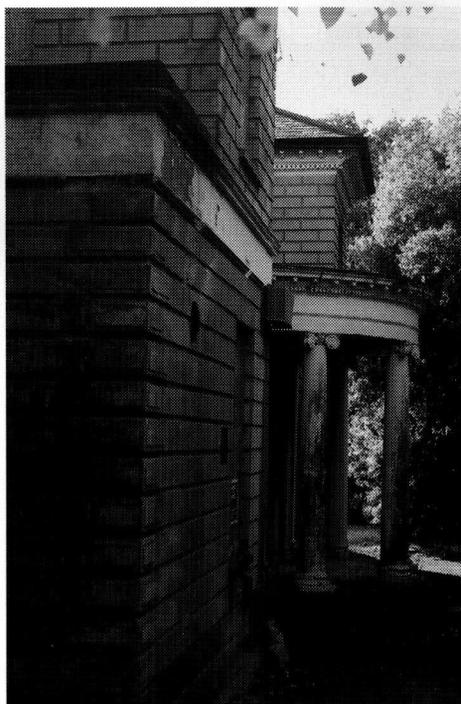


Fig. 21



Fig. 22



up, such that it was formally designated a Building at Risk. Weather and vandals began to wreak their worst on a building where simplicity of form was combined with great subtlety of detailing. Figure 22 shows the care with which the semi-circular floor of the entrance porch was laid. The external render, which gave unusual emphasis to the quoins (Fig. 23), looked like something from the early twentieth century by Plecjnik. The effect of differential weathering and lichens over the years had given a soft variegated honey texture which added to the building's pleasure. Even in workaday detailing like the steps to the garden doors (Fig. 24) there was room for architectural display. (Is the cement infilling original?)

Left: Fig. 23

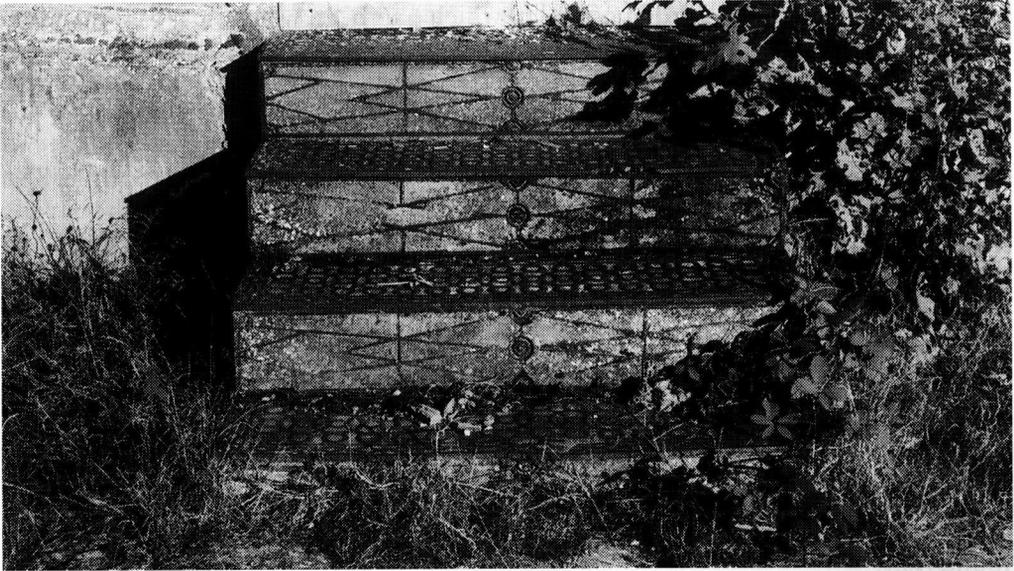


Fig. 24

In 2003 we were consulted on an application to repair the building, convert it into five dwellings on the first and second floors and two flats in the basements, and provide substantially more within developments in the grounds. The architects were Fourém (John Hegarty, architect, and Paul Hegarty, structural engineer) based in Cork. Figure 25 shows their distinctive Block Plan. The long view south across what is now recreation grounds was kept open. Four smaller villas were tucked into each of the four corners and, in the most controversial intervention of the lot, a terrace of seven houses with spartan Neo-Classical, almost Post-Modern, echoes was proposed defining the area to the west. To the south they reinstated

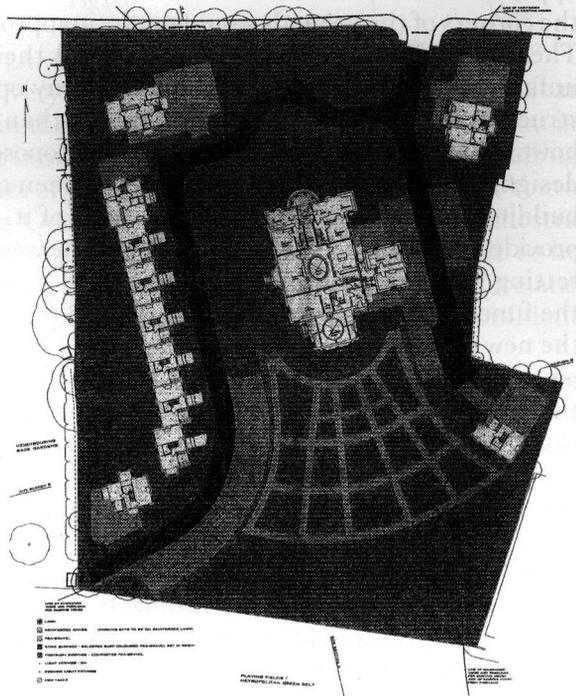


Fig. 25

the radiating vegetable garden of *c.* 1870 which had been wholly lost and inspired, it seems, by the formality of the trellis work, further framed the house by a road system with a curve to the north echoing the apsidal form of the entrance porch. The later work, particularly that to the east, was kept. Some trees had to go but the majority remained. We wrote twice, recognising virtues in the scheme but expressing particular concern that the terrace might be too hard in its outline. The architects tried hard to persuade the decision makers otherwise: 'The strong Victorian detailing of the house may breathe within the context of strong plain and quiet buildings. Materials proposed are of high quality. Local handmade brick in lime mortar is proposed as the external expression of the new buildings influenced by the local setting. The natural brick blends with the earth and sits quietly against the stucco finish of the original house... The architecture is neither overly grand nor reduced to overt modesty'. Reigate and Banstead, the local authority concerned, were singularly unimpressed and planning permission was refused in emphatic terms.

The case then went to appeal and the decision of 24 June 2004 (to refuse consent) is worth quoting in extenso. The Inspector, Katie Peerless, Dip, RIBA, found that:

'It seems to me that the three detached houses (those that survived the applicants' cull were in the north-east, north-west and south-west apexes) sited in the corners of the grounds would not be inappropriate to the setting of the building. Their style is restrained and simple and their proportions would not compete unfavourably with those of Wallfield. In my opinion they would read as ancillary structures that would compliment rather than detract from the main house. I do, however, have serious concerns about the proposed terrace. I accept that the detailed design, whilst different to Wallfield, has been chosen to provide a foil to the listed building rather than to attempt pastiche of it. I note that its purpose would be to provide a defined boundary to the site on the western side and create a new improved setting for the building. I also understand that the terrace is intended to perform the function of a garden wall which would separate the environs of the house from the new developments that are proposed on the property to the west. These design objectives are, I consider, valid aspirations for the site. However I do not believe that the proposed terrace would be successful in these objectives... The new houses would enclose the western part of the site to an extent that I consider would be excessive, particularly as they would cut off most view of the trees behind them from the space between Wallfield and the terrace. This space would also be given an estate like character by the introduction of the service driveway, the adjacent footpath, street lighting and the individual paths to the entrances to the houses... The elevation that would be intended to perform the function of a garden wall would be punctuated by regular doors and windows, six openings on each property, and would, I consider, resemble a street rather than a garden enclosure... The proposed garden layout and the sweep of the western drive would reflect the curving form of the portico at the entrance to the main house, the bay on the west front and the informal nature of the mature planting on the site. In comparison with these

features, the straight lines and uncompromisingly linear form of the terrace would, I consider, be in stark and unsympathetic contrast...’.

So the problems of Wallfield, empty since 1998 when the East Surrey College moved out, remain as pressing as they have ever been. A revised plan was referred to us in October (Fig. 26). The terrace had been dropped in favour of two more detached houses.

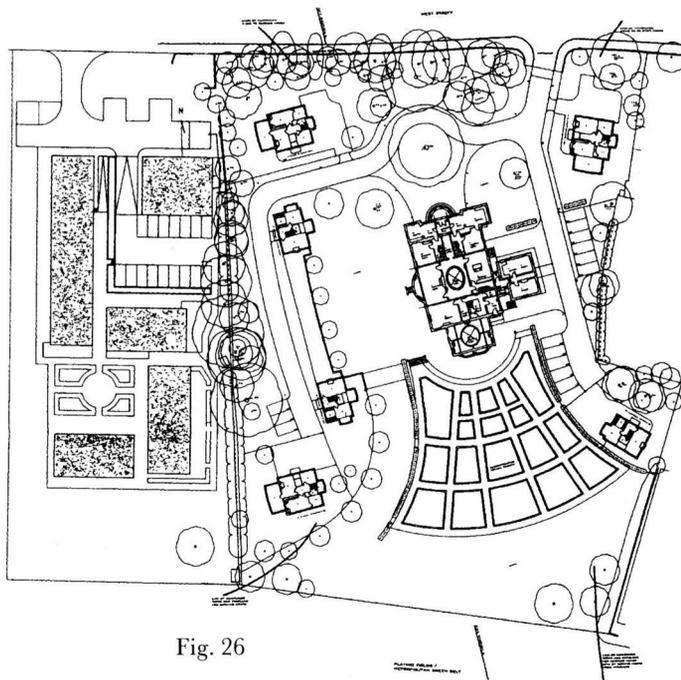


Fig. 26

1-7 SCHOOL LANE, UPPINGHAM, RUTLAND

Town and Gown appear to get on very well at Uppingham and there is a clear communality of interest, not least in the renowned Uppingham concerts begun in the 1950s which have brought what is otherwise a Rutland settlement of middling size national and international names of the calibre of John Lill, the National Youth Jazz Orchestra, the Lindsay String Quartet, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and the King's Singers. The school's present Music Centre of 1981 is felt to be inadequate and plans have now been advanced for a substantial new structure and it has raised again the age old problem of how to slot contextual but self confident new build into historic townscapes.

The very particular site is School Lane, one side of which is taken by Ernest Newton's justifiably praised Memorial Hall. The other has four modest but very appealing properties, three of them listed. Figure 27 shows all four. No. 1 is three-storey and has a very precise date: '1697'. The Welsh slate roof is later, as is the charming eighteenth-century shopfront. No. 3 is of the eighteenth century but with a nineteenth-century dormer, and No. 5 of the late seventeenth century in coursed stone rubble with Collyweston slate for the roof. Both are listed for 'group value'. No. 7, on the other hand, is unlisted. It is described by the applicants as late nineteenth century but such a description modernises it by a good fifty years as it is very much in the unpretentious late Georgian tradition. Vitrified or flared headers add animation to the brickwork, whilst the survival of considerable stretches of natural masonry on the return elevation suggest that it has incorporated an earlier structure.

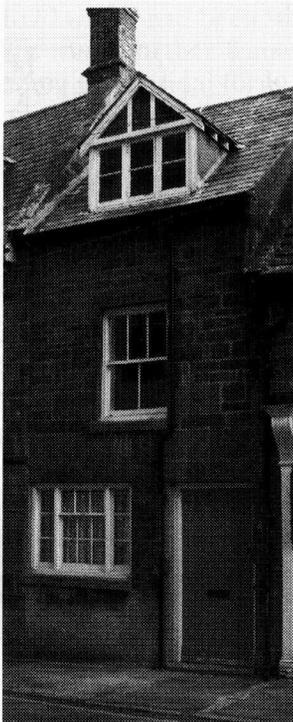
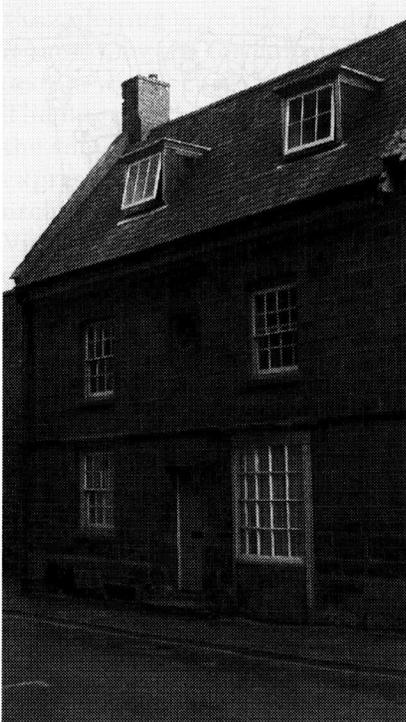
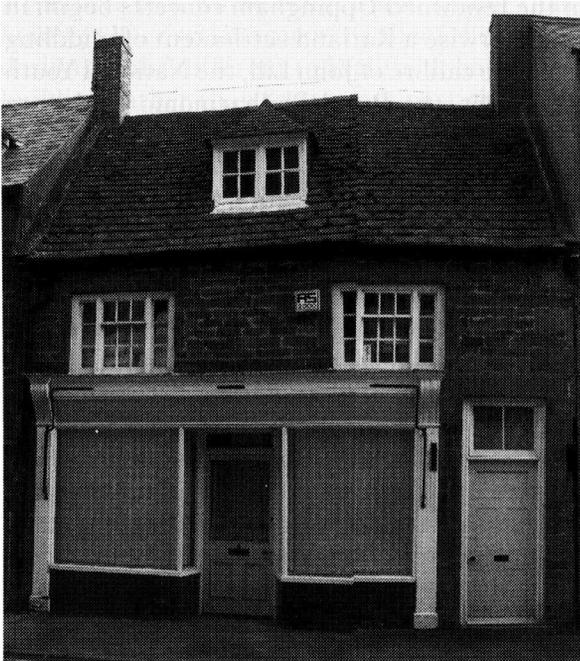


Fig. 27



The proposal by the architects, ORMS of London EC1, is to provide the bulk of the new Music Centre on the 'backland' location tucked behind School Lane, even if clearly visible from the school precincts, particularly Masons Lawn. However, that did not provide enough space and a short arm was proposed on the site of No. 7. Figures 28 and 29 show the resultant elevation. The Society's Casework Committee was rather taken aback at the dominance and size of the roof and the lack of 'softness' to the shell. This would be in 'selected local natural stone with fine ashlar finish and flush joints' but this very regularity seemed to put it at odds with the gentler, less formal character of the neighbours.

We flagged up concerns and a revised scheme proposing a less demonstrative new build was prepared.

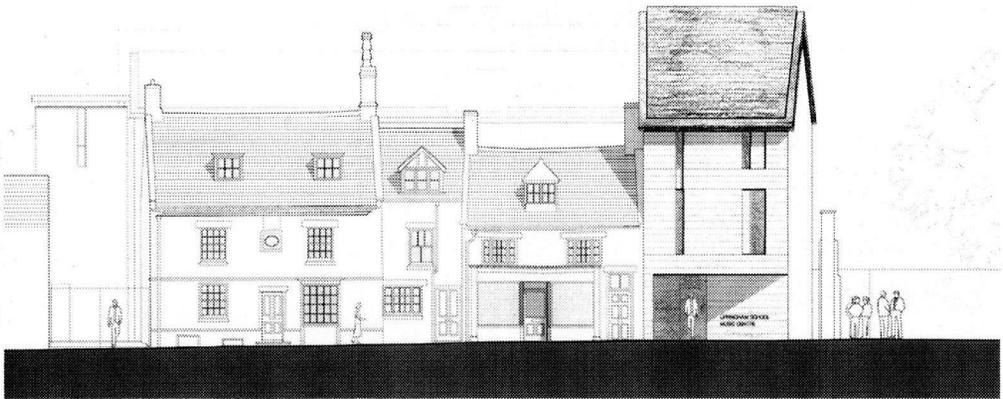


Fig. 28

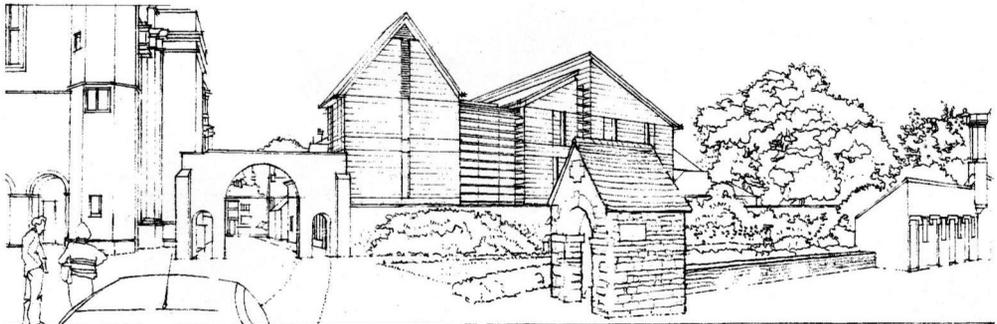


Fig. 29

FORMER ST JOSEPH'S SCHOOL, 96 HOWARD ROAD, SHEFFIELD, SOUTH YORKSHIRE
Sheffield's nineteenth-century schools were in many ways pioneering and the importance of the building type has been recognised in the new 'Blue Back' of listed buildings in the city. One of the examples now given statutory protection is the former St Joseph's in Howard Road built in 1889. It had been hoped that adaptation as an architect's office would have guaranteed its long term future. However, the practice moved out in 1999 and the building has been vacant, and vandalised, since then. The owners, Peak Solutions (1962) Ltd, have now come in with a scheme for residential conversion (Fig. 30). Five units would be located within the listed building, four more in a rather daring new build that swoops down and away from the school (replacing unattractive flat roofed post war extensions). The roof is to be covered with sedum to add 'camouflage'. The large expanse of glazing is to be silk screen printed with a dot matrix pattern creating an opaque effect which should limit the loss of privacy to neighbours. The architects are Coda Studios of Barnsley (David Cross).

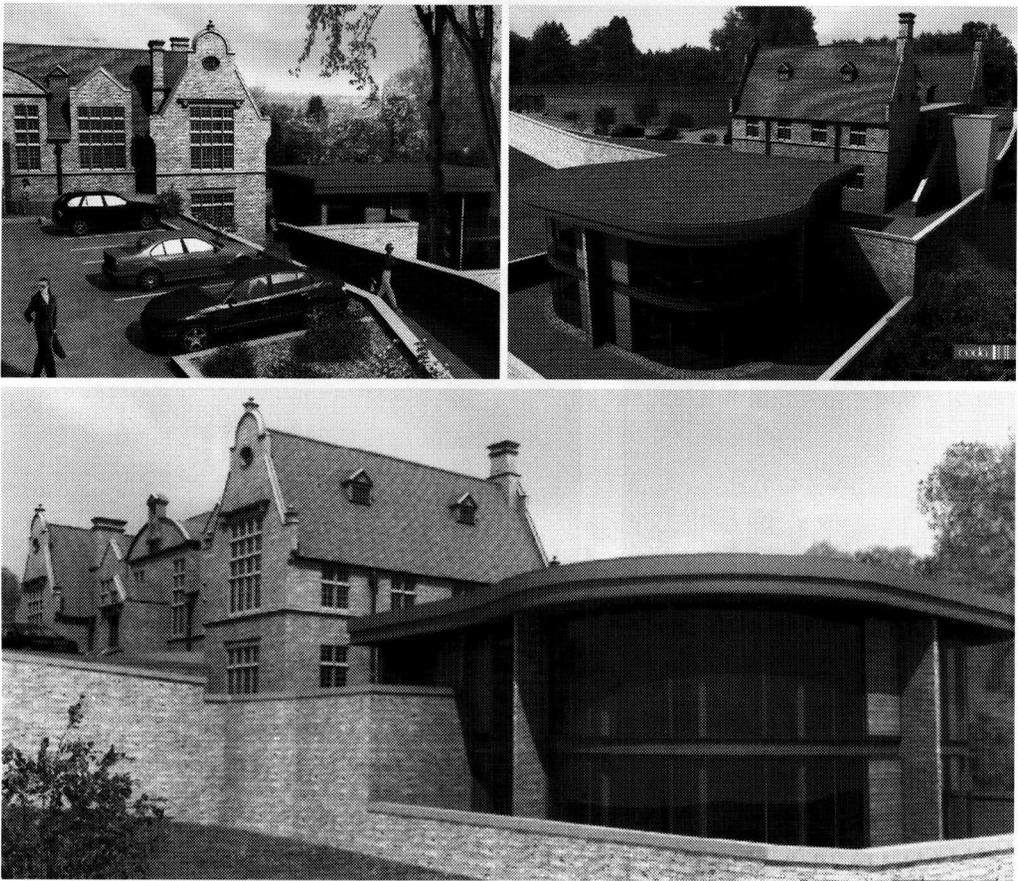


Fig. 30

SULLY HOSPITAL, VALE OF GLAMORGAN

This illustration (Fig. 31) from *The Builder* (showing the design exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1932) is one of the best ways to sum up the architectural power of a building that it is so difficult to gauge at one glance. It is, as John Newman says in the Pevsner volume 'an outstanding example of Inter War Functional architecture which has survived almost

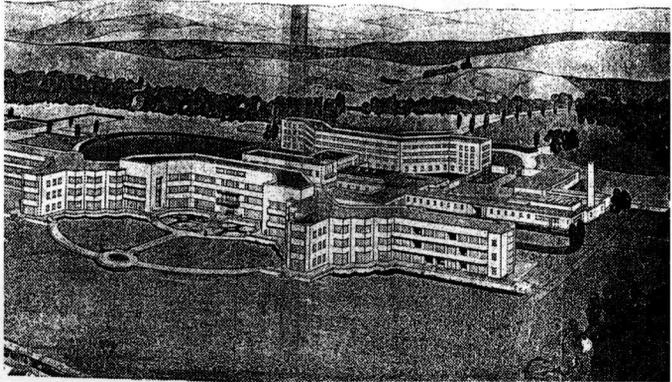


Fig. 31

unaltered'. Now listed Grade II*, it lies south-west of the B4267 near the western outskirts of Sully with a generous view across the Bristol Channel. Constructed between 1931 and 1938, it was intended to house up to 300 victims of tuberculosis. Indeed, it was the last institute established for that purpose by the (King Edward VII) Welsh National Memorial Association. This was a precursor of the NHS, whose President was Lord Davies of Llandinam (whose biography was written by the former Chairman of the AMS, Ivor Bulmer-Thomas). The designers were W. A. Pite, Son and Fairweather, an architectural practice based in London who won the competition with an unashamedly Modernist design. Everywhere the desire is to maximise shelter and ventilation, the ward blocks stretching east and west on three floors so that every ward faced out to sea. The interiors were consciously designed to be easily cleaned with coved skirtings and flush surfaces. Nearly all of the furniture was designed by the architect, some being made by the Brynmawr Furniture Factory that was set up by the university settlement in the town.

Once faced with the prospect of closure, the Vale of Glamorgan Council acted responsibly and drew up a Development Brief. This now forms the basis of an

application for residential conversion designed by N. S. Woods, RIBA, which we were happy to applaud. The originality and purity of the building were well understood both in form and in detail. And not everything was driven by function. Figure 32 shows the stained glass window with swirling clouds and swirling sea slotted into the jazzy outlines of one of the staircase windows.



Fig. 32

BARN, GUNTHWAITE HALL, PENISTONE, SOUTH YORKSHIRE

The photos give some impression of this spectacular complex, particularly the main aisled barn of the mid-sixteenth century (Fig. 33). Most unusually for the building type, it is listed Grade I. What animates it in particular is the run of black and white timber framing on the upper level in herringbone format. The composition is made grander by the two fine stone blocks at either end of 1699 and 1701 respectively, one with purpose-built cart sheds, the other constructed as the stable (Fig. 34). Although the barn was re-roofed in 1978, it is now argued that the site is redundant for agricultural purposes and in the early summer of 2004 we received notice of an application to convert it to housing. English Heritage, SPAB and ourselves reacted sceptically. What to do with the buildings will no doubt be a matter for long debate.



Fig. 33

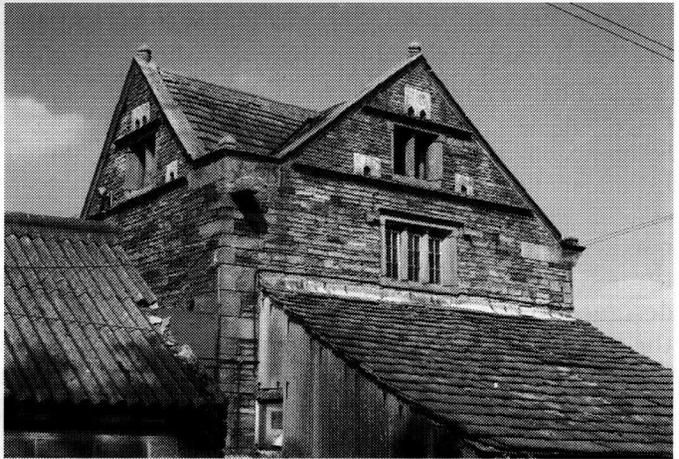


Fig. 34

THE MARKET HALL, BOLTON, GREATER MANCHESTER

If there is a shrine to shopping in central Bolton, it has to be the soaringly ambitious market hall opened in December 1856 to the designs of the architect, G. T. Robinson. The cost was £72,414 and the opening was such an occasion that 20,000 people attended, including 3,000 women seated in the galleries. There have been alterations since in 1865 (the fish market) 1871, 1894, 1935 and most recently 1989 when it was incorporated into the post modern shopping centre next door by Chapman



Above: Fig. 35

Taylor. The new build shown on the right of Figure 35 followed Robinson in the use of bright red brick for the shell and ashlar for the stone dressings. The interior (Fig. 36) shows the delicate filigree of the central octagon rising at its highest point to 112 feet. We were told in 2004 of a further plan for changes but this one was rooted in appreciation of the building's individual grandeur and informed by a study of the building compiled by the Architectural History Practice. The scheme proposed the substitution of a mezzanine gallery of more delicate form for the work of the 1980s. More controversially there was to be a new build at one side but being largely glazed this still allowed appreciation of the listed building.



Right: Fig. 36

MIDLAND HOTEL, MORECAMBE, LANCASHIRE

Pevsner writing in 1969 said that this memorable exercise in confident Art Deco had 'aged well'. He would have been disappointed by a visit today, but perhaps not for much longer. The Grade II* design of 1932 by Oliver Hill, long a problem, has now been bought by the developers Urban Splash (Tom Bloxham MBE). They intend to repair it to its original state, keeping and enhancing detailing like the seahorses perched over the central bay (Fig. 37), and the swirly gate piers offering a long spiral trudge for the ants (Fig. 38). Some of the internal decoration has been lost or over painted but there are delightful survivals like this animated map of local attractions (Fig. 39). Some of the Eric Gill sculpture was removed to the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1980.



Fig. 37



Fig. 38

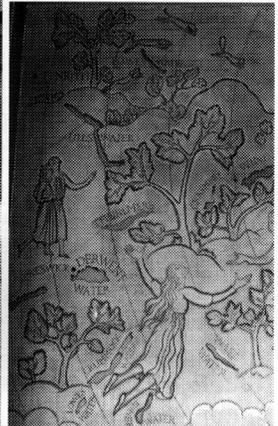


Fig. 39

PLANTATION HOUSE, FENCHURCH STREET, MINCING LANE, CITY OF LONDON

One 1930s contemporary has fared disastrously. Plantation House was begun in 1935 shortly after the Midland Hotel to the designs of A. W. Moore. In the words of Simon Bradley in the new Pevsner for the City of London – 'it served the commodities markets (rubber and tea especially) housed in numerous offices and sale rooms around lightwells with broad hotel-like semi-public passages between'. By 1939 it covered most of the block bounded by Mincing Lane and Eastcheap



Fig. 40



Fig. 41

with distinctly different characters united only by the classical language on the two main frontages, both of them shown here (Figs 40 and 41). The gold painted relief surrounds to the door (Fig. 42), the canopy and thickened window mullions in bronze point up the pursuit of quality. None of this saved the building, which was unlisted, and despite a multi million refurbishment fifteen years ago, it was demolished in 2003 to be replaced by a new design by Ove Arup.

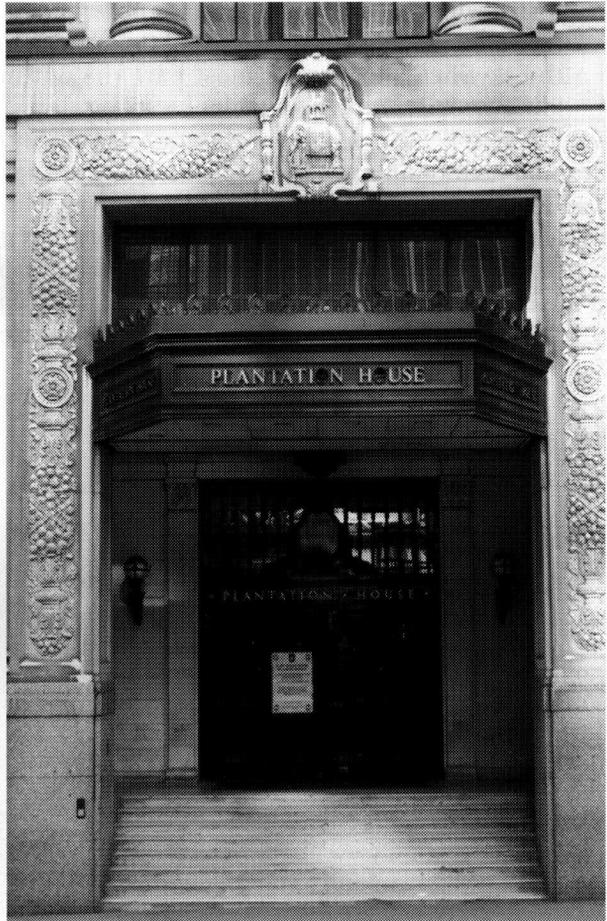


Fig. 42

THE TRICORN CENTRE, PORTSMOUTH, HAMPSHIRE

Writing in the Hampshire volume of the 'Buildings of England', Pevsner thought that he had finally spotted a swallow pointing to the Summer of Modernism – 'in Charlotte Street (Portsmouth) leading left, something really exciting is going on (at the time of writing), a sign that Portsmouth is at last catching up with the mid-twentieth century. Here a complex of shops, offices and great deal else, by Owen Luder, in association with Clayton Black and Petch, is being developed; in 1965 it was not far enough for anything like a final judgement, but it already makes a splendid composition. Everything is in concrete. The form of the whole is highly romantic, with many planes and varied heights and (at least in its incomplete state) a fascinating skyline. The ground storey has massive square piers, boldly corbelled at the top, the second has balconies at different heights, shutter-finished, their undersides with the grid pattern in relief. Other surfaces are finished in smooth concrete, others again with rough panels, so that as much textural variety as possible in the concrete idiom is obtained. Cantilevered spiral car ramps at either end are boldly emphasised features, and there are curious little hemispheres on the skyline. But for the most part the outline is chunky and angular. As the building nears completion, it looks, if anything, more exciting than it did in the earlier years'. The decline of the complex since then to its present pigeon-infested stained abandonment says everything about the dramatic potential of Modernism but also either its spectacular failure or to win hearts and minds or to perform basic functional demands. In fact the Tricorn was never totally finished and remained largely unlet. Against the azure blue of the summer sky something of the bravura and sense of display intended by Owen Luder (and job architects Rodney Gordon and Peter Abbot) comes out (Fig. 43). The gentle corkscrew of the spiral up to the

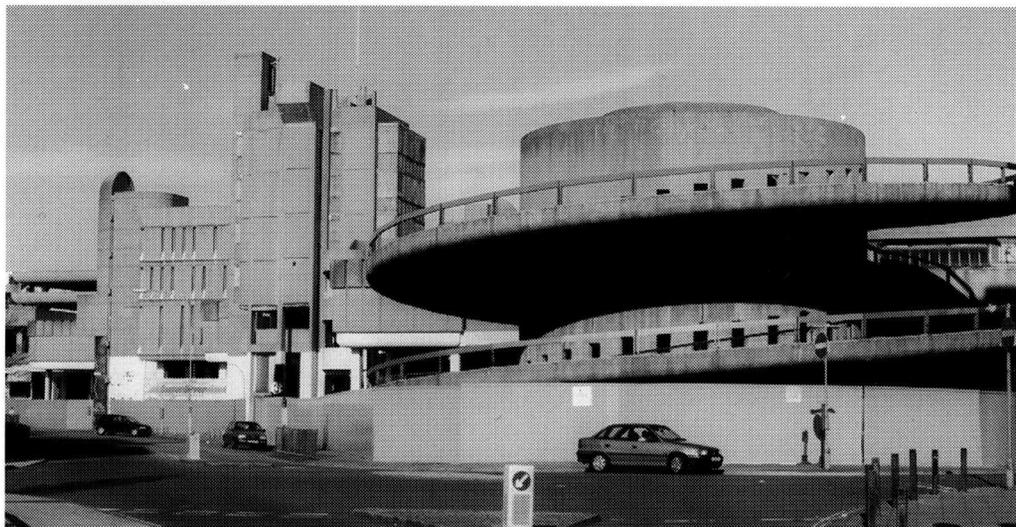


Fig. 43



Fig. 44

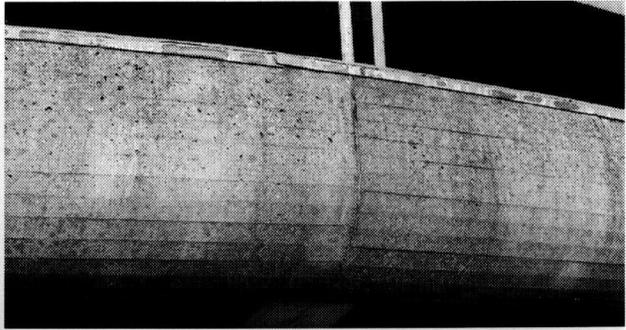


Fig. 45

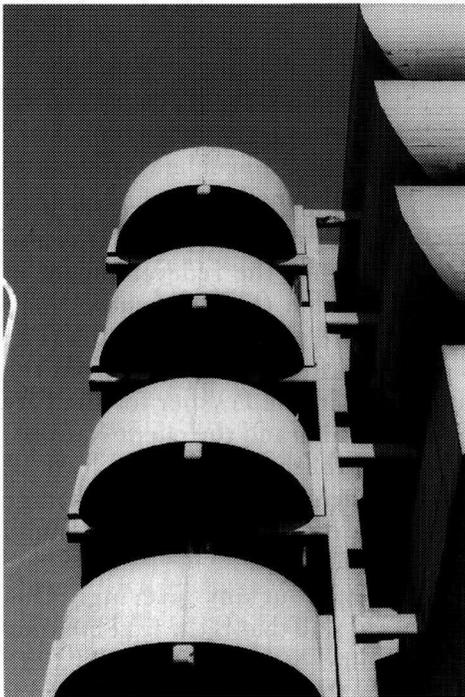


Fig. 46

car park is satisfying, whilst the underside (Fig. 44) shows the great precision with which the concrete panels and shuttering were laid. The curve to the road edge (Fig. 45) shows clear evidence of the tiers of wooden shuttering. The great spiral stair for pedestrians leading to each floor looks as much a work of sculpture as architecture. It has architectural clout but there is an alienating quality to the Brave New World evoked by it and for the heavily laden shoppers trudging their way up to the top floor in driving rain, this cannot have been a happy experience. Despite being championed by the Portsmouth Society and the Twentieth Century Society, I suspect many members of the AMS would not have disputed the poll conducted two years ago on Radio Four's Today programme which voted it the most disliked building in Britain. The thumbs down has fed through to a direct decision to demolish after Lord Macintosh the Minister for Heritage decided not to add the buildings to the statutory lists. Owen Luder's even more dramatic car park at Gateshead, almost medieval in its height and defensiveness is more loved and, despite structural problems, seems better placed to survive.

OTHER POST-WAR CASUALTIES



Fig. 47

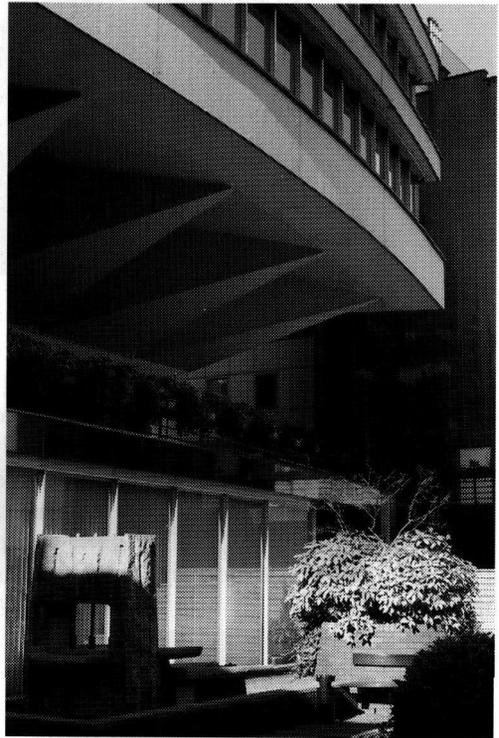


Fig. 48

Given that the average large-scale redevelopment in Britain's town and city centres demolishes buildings of the 1960s and even 1970s, other post-war landmarks also face demolition. Planning permission has been given for the redevelopment of Richard Seifert's Drapers Gardens in the City of London (Fig. 47), shown here enhanced by the bright light of good weather. The more gloomy photograph (Fig. 48) captures the 'massive tapering supports cantilevering dramatically from the reinforced concrete core' picked up by Simon Bradley in the Pevsner for the City of London. Built in 1962-7 for the developer Harry Hyams and the client National Westminster Bank, the tower is regarded as one of the best of Seifert's works. However, because of the damaging effect it has on the skyline, English Heritage did not recommend listing and planning permission for demolition and rebuild has now been given.

However, most 1960s tower blocks disappear without any grieving. One forthcoming casualty is likely to be the straightforward slab that is the first building most visitors to Liverpool see on emerging from Lime Street Station (Fig. 49). Despite being barely into its fifth decade, English Partnerships have purchased it with an apparent view to total demolition. Once its arrogant domination has been



Fig. 49



Fig. 50

removed, the great hotel by Waterhouse (Fig. 50) and the subtlety of the late nineteenth century pub immediately adjacent (Fig. 51) will be less challenged.

No-one mourned the loss of the really terrible Bowring Centre and shopping complex (Fig. 52) near the Tower of London. A much more contextual, lower and spreading complex by Lord Foster has replaced it forming a flattering curve behind All Hallows by the Tower which as the photograph shows was otherwise dominated by the casual indifference of its neighbour (Fig. 53).



Fig. 51



Fig. 52



Fig. 53

The great 1960s blocks that dominate the centre of Bradford immediately below the cathedral also have their days numbered (Fig. 54). Apart from architectural banality, perhaps their biggest crime is that they could be absolutely anywhere, owing nothing to the *genius loci*. Even the stone is Portland from Dorset rather than millstone grit from Yorkshire. Will Alsop plans to sweep them away in the broader redevelopment of the centre.

Outside the city centres even more of the more brutal manifestations of 1960s wealth and indifference to context are about to succumb to demolition. Figure 55 shows the existing student housing in the grounds of the rather fine Georgian villa known as Elmhurst in South Woodford (Fig. 56), dangerously close to the concrete revetments of the North Circular.



Fig. 54



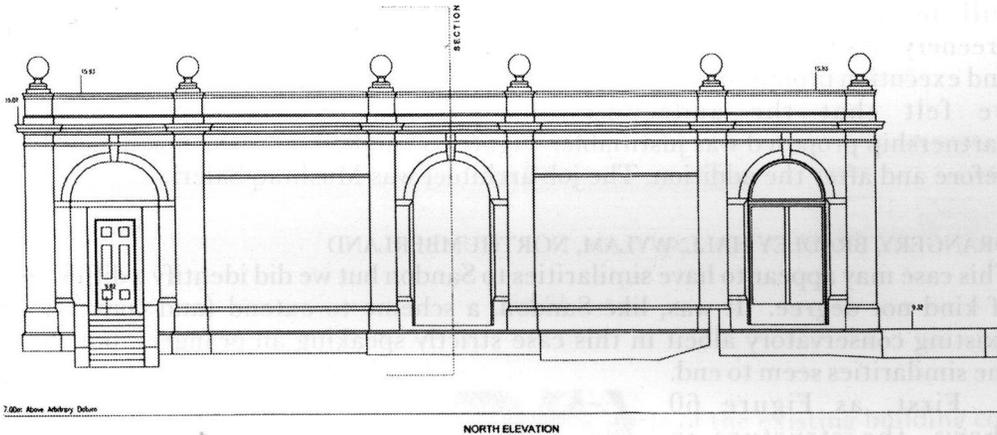
Fig. 55



Fig. 56

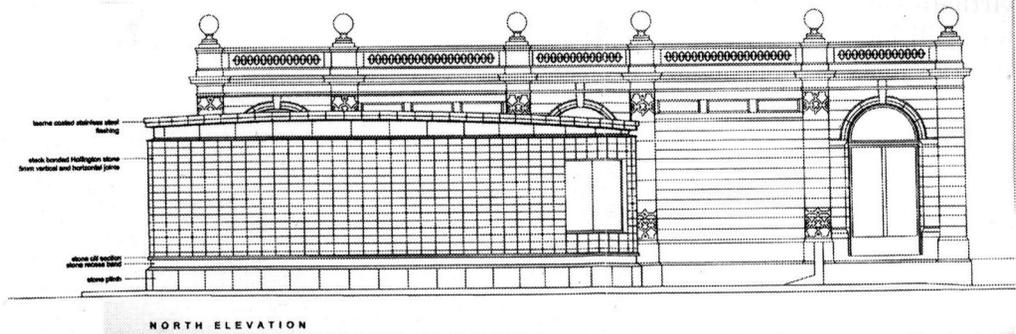
SANDON PARK, SANDON, STAFFORDSHIRE

Sandon dates for the most part from 1852 and is the work of William Burn. It remains the family home of the Earl of Harrowby (and Lord Sandon) but it is more than a home. In 1993, the family set up SHAPE (Sandon Hall and Park Enterprises) to make the building work for its living, providing venues for wedding receptions and small conferences. One of the principal spaces used is 'The Great Conservatory' added 1866 at a total cost of £7,396. The architect was Henry Isaac Stevens then in partnership with one of his pupils as Stevens and Robinson (based in Derby). The trouble is that the conservatory is too small for the sort of functions now being attracted to the very particular atmosphere, which as Pevsner said is 'splendidly evocative Victorian'. The perceived need is for a small scale extension principally to provide toilets and a bar. But how can this be achieved on a structure, which is symmetrical on all its elevations? The solution produced by the architects Studio Three is certainly bold. Figure 59 shows the view from the side marked by



NORTH ELEVATION

Fig. 57



NORTH ELEVATION

Fig. 58

a stone plinth, a rain screen of panels in Hollington stone to match the house and the distinctive coat of arms. Further round the new build breaks into a self-confident curve borrowed, the architect's say, from the quarter link or quadrant, which joins the conservatory to the Hall. No part of the 1866 fabric would be removed and any concealment would only be partial as much of the connecting link is glazed. Moreover, the site is not visible in any of the principal views from the house and even close to it will be veiled by trees and greenery. As the quality of finish and execution promised to be high, we felt that the audacious partnership proposed was justifiable. Figures 57 and 58 show the north elevation before and after the addition. The job architect was Mushtaq Saleri.

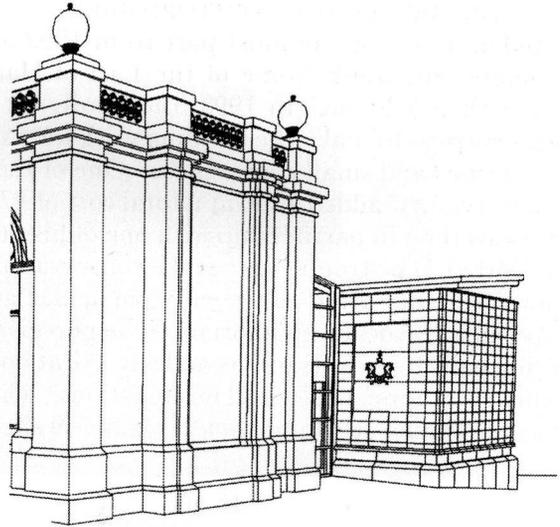


Fig. 59

Figures 57 and 58 show the north elevation before and after the addition. The job architect was Mushtaq Saleri.

ORANGERY, BRADLEY HALL, WYLAM, NORTHUMBERLAND

This case may appear to have similarities to Sandon but we did identify a difference of kind not degree. It was, like Sandon, a scheme to extend (and convert) an existing conservatory albeit in this case strictly speaking an orangery, but there the similarities seem to end.

First, as Figure 60 shows, the structure in question was entirely freestanding and had virtually collapsed. When it was still identifiable it had been given its own individual Grade II listing. Like most in the building type, three of the four walls were very plain but it had a glazed front framed by Tuscan pilasters. Sadly it was that that had caved in following virtual abandonment.

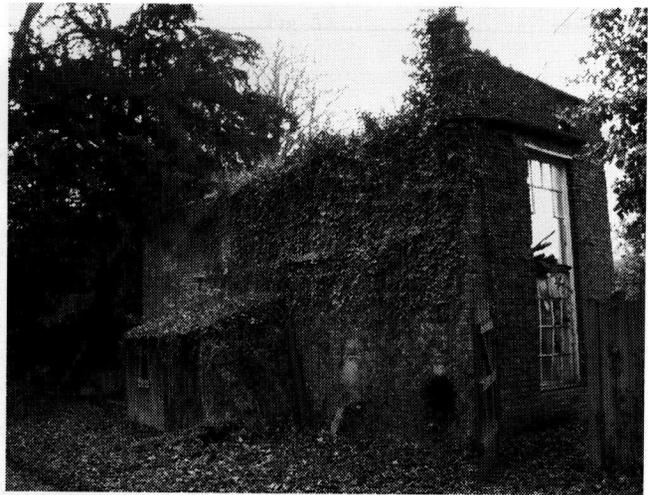


Fig. 60

Secondly, what we were faced with was less a scheme



Fig. 62

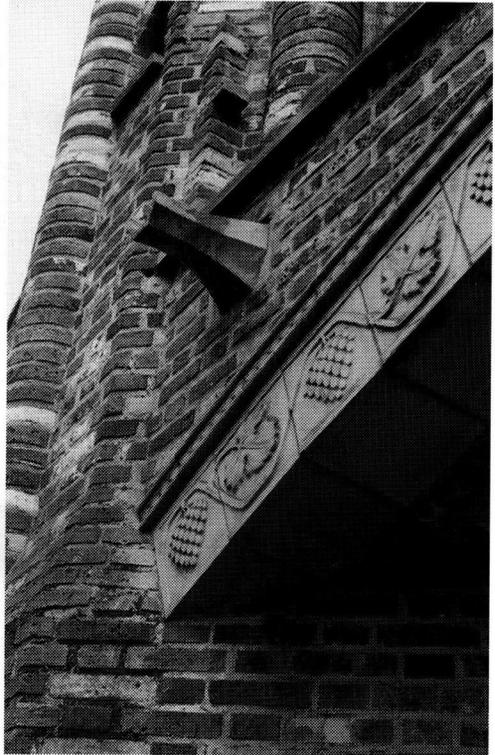


Fig. 63

problems. Eastern minded Orthodox worship seems wholly appropriate amid the Byzantine splendour of this last work by the great architect and theorist, Professor E. S. Prior. It was built between 1913 and 1916 in partnership with Arthur Grove. As Pevsner says 'it is as rich and strange as anything by Prior'. He kept the chancel of 1904 by G. A. B. Livesay of Bournemouth, but his west front, shown here (Fig. 62), is a riot of colour and texture prophetic of the Expressionism of the 1920s. The brick, mottled from red to brown to yellow, was specially hand made near Wareham. Its flickering texture is picked up by the bustling arcades of two galleries and by the elaborate geometry of the great rose window with its spider's web of leading. The portal below is a superbly decisive segmental arch of terracotta, broad and low, spanning from turret to turret and moulded with a trailing vine (Fig. 63). The building was adventurous in the choice of materials with reinforced concrete used for the vaulting, as here (Fig. 64) over the passage aisles. However, the concrete almost proved its nemesis as it soon began to fail. The dome had to be rebuilt in 1922 and the whole of the south aisle was reconstructed in 1950 by L. Magnus Austin. The interior was, until some fittings were removed for safekeeping, a treasure house of Arts and Crafts design including a lectern by Bainbridge



Fig. 64

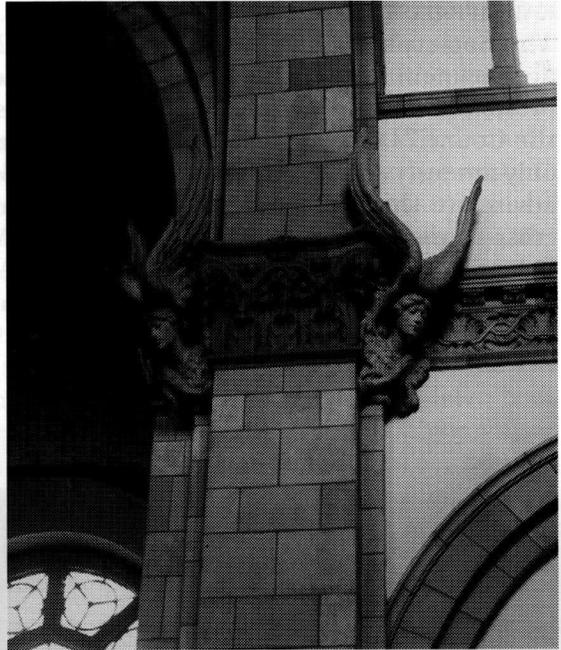


Fig. 65



Reynolds of 1926 and inscriptions by Eric Gill. In an extraordinary original display, winged angels appear to fly from behind the terracotta capitals (Fig. 65). The glass (Fig. 66) is in the thick hand made 'Priors Glass' that the architect himself patented.

Left: Fig. 66

CARDIFF CASTLE, GLAMORGAN [Report by Frank Kelsall]

The Society's major casework activity in 2003 had been to oppose damaging development proposed by Cardiff City Council for Cardiff Castle. The Chairman presented our evidence and the casework adviser spent seven days at inquiry putting the Council's case to the test. CADW also gave evidence, but our Society was the only amenity society to attend the inquiry. Because CADW had a difficult role as adviser to the decision taker as well as consultee on the proposals most of the cross-examination was left to the Society. We were delighted that the Planning Decision Committee of the National Assembly for Wales followed the recommendation of the inquiry inspector and rejected the proposals.

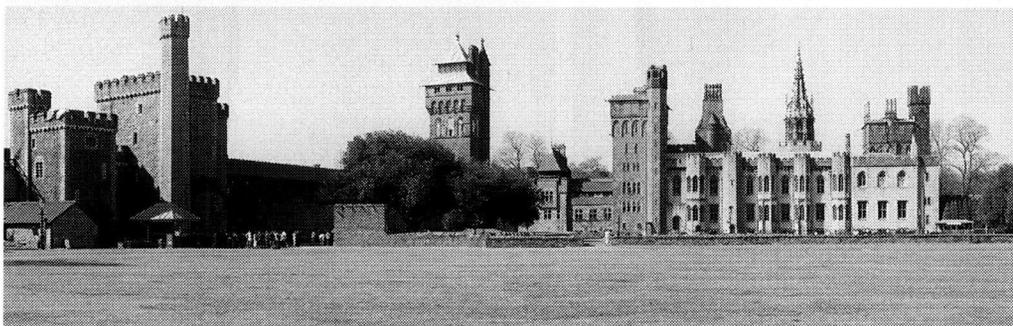


Fig. 67

View of the south west corner of Cardiff Castle Green affected by the proposals for a new visitor centre and restaurant

By kind permission of Cardiff City Council and Nicholas Pearson Associates



Fig. 68

View of the west range of the south wall of Cardiff Castle, with the Burges Walkway, against which it was proposed to build a new restaurant

By kind permission of Cardiff City Council and Nicholas Pearson Associates

Cardiff Castle is a monument of international importance. Its rectangular form is based on that of a Roman fort in the north-west corner of which in the twelfth century a motte and shell keep was built. Domestic apartments were built

against the western wall in the later Middle Ages and these became the basis of apartments remodelled by Henry Holland for the Bute family. At the same time Capability Brown landscaped the Castle Green, the grounds within the walls. In the 1870s and 1880s the third Marquis of Bute, with William Burges as architect, remodelled and extended the domestic apartments giving the castle a dramatic skyline and a series of interiors of outstanding virtuosity. In the early twentieth century the exterior of the castle was substantially rebuilt as a reconstruction of the Roman defences, parts of which had been excavated. The Bute family gave the castle to the City of Cardiff in 1947, along with Bute Park, an extensive tract of parkland to the north and west of the castle.

Although the Society objected to the Council's development proposals, the City Council should not be regarded as villains in their approach to the castle. The City is proud of this unique monument. In recent years great steps have been made in conserving the Burges interiors. The council needs to meet a recognised need for better facilities for visitors. A conservation and management plan was commissioned and presented in 2000.

However, the development proposals put forward in 2002 were rather more ambitious than those envisaged two years before. Some parts of the scheme were very welcome, especially the removal of admission charges to the Castle Green and opening the north gate into Bute Park. But the proposals were based on estimates of much larger visitor numbers than the Conservation and Management Plans had considered. In this respect we found unacceptable the proposals to build a substantial visitor centre to the east of the castle entrance and a restaurant against the south wall west of the entrance. Although there were arguments relating to the archaeology of the site and the effect on the historic landscape our objections were principally founded on what we believed would be the very damaging effect of these proposals on the setting of the existing castle buildings when seen from many viewpoints on the Castle Green. The inquiry inspector and the Welsh Assembly agreed with us.

The inquiry was an opportunity for the examination of some issues which have a wider relevance.

The Society expressed concern about visitor numbers. About two thirds of those who visit the castle go to the Burges rooms. These are already frequently overcrowded and some have to be 'rested' in the interests of conservation. While Cardiff Castle has other attractions which could be better exploited – the circuit of passages within the walls is a notable example – it seems unrealistic to expect that there could be a significant increase in the total number of visitors without also increasing the pressure on those spaces which make Cardiff a monument of international importance and which usually appear in the promotional literature. To what extent should the tourist potential of important buildings be exploited? Where conflicting pressures arise it must surely be the capacity of the building to absorb visitors rather than its capacity to attract them which must determine the outcome of development proposals. The City Council proposed that there must be income from a significant visitor increase to 'sustain' the castle, but, 'sustainability'

also means handing our assets on to future generations with as little damage as possible.

Historic buildings which are visitor attractions often house collections which are not directly relevant to the building in question – the outpost of the National Portrait Gallery collection at Beningborough is a prime example. The association can often be mutually beneficial. Cardiff Castle houses two military museums – that of the Royal Regiment of Wales and that of the First Queen's Dragoon Guards. While the former has close connections with the castle the latter does not and has been accommodated at the castle only from 1987.

To what extent should space be allocated to these uses?

How much space do you need to 'interpret' a building? The Cardiff visitor centre proposals included a theatre for audio-visual presentations. How much space do you need to provide for catering when a building sits close to the middle of a busy city and next to a park which it is intended should be linked into the development?

Since the inquiry decision in 2004 we have had some discussion with Cardiff City Council. The Council is reconsidering both the brief and the design. Some of the issues outlined above are being confronted. We also have to consider more technical issues which may lead to finely balanced decisions: how far is it acceptable to damage more of the archaeology of a site (by digging deeper into it) in order to lessen the impact of new building on the setting of the buildings? We are hopeful that a better solution will emerge from this reconsideration.

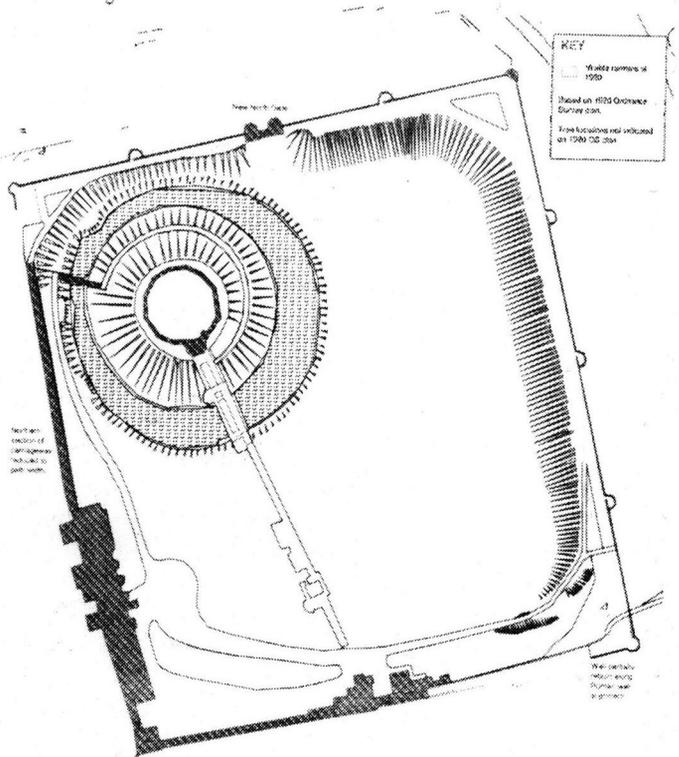


Fig. 69

Plan of Cardiff Castle in the early twentieth century

*By kind permission of Cardiff City Council
and Nicholas Pearson Associates*