

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

3.3.2.2 Construction

The following photographs show Town Hall during construction, showing the steel-framed, fireproof structure, Portland stone facings on each elevation backed by brickwork; and the roof was encased in thick green Westmorland slates. The contractors were Messrs. Dove Brothers Limited, based in Islington, and the sculpture-work was carried out by Mr. W C. H. King and the plaster work by Mr. E. Broadbent.



View of the construction site from the north-east of the Euston Road with Queen Alexandra Mansions in the background, July 8, 1935 (© Camden Local Studies: LCP 725.13, D.M. Wolfe, NEG 103)



View of the construction site from the north-east of the Euston Road, October 14, 1935 (© Camden Local Studies: LCP.13, D.M. Wolfe, NEG 109)



View of the progress made on the Euston Road and Judd Street elevations, November 18, 1935 (© Camden Local Studies: LCP 725.13, DIG 0115, D.M Wolfe)



Staircase in the Entrance Hall under construction, November 27, 1935 (© Tim Drewitt)

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View of the progress on the Judd Street elevation, January 2, 1936 (© Camden Local Studies: 725.13, D. M. Wolfe, NEG 129)



View of the roof construction, January 10, 1936 (© Camden Local Studies, 725.13, D. M. Wolfe, NEG 134)



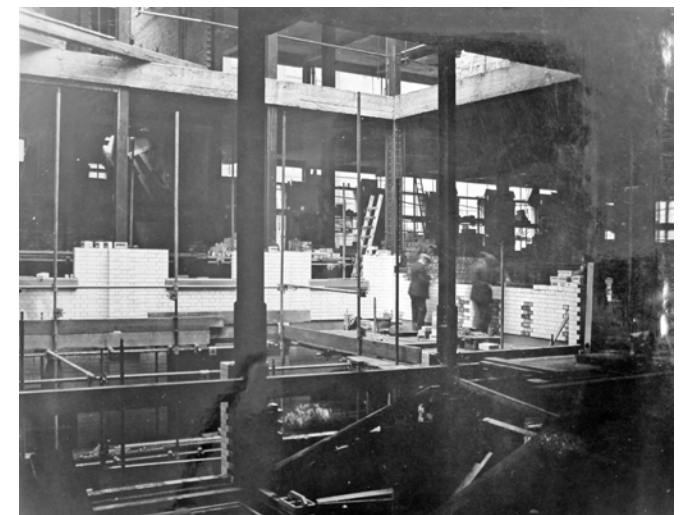
View of the roof construction of the Council Chamber, March 5, 1936 (© Camden Local Studies: LCP 725.13, D. M. Wolfe, NEG 145)



View of the roof construction of the Council Chamber and tiled wall (Bidborough Street elevation), March 1936 (© Camden Local Studies: LCP 725.13, D. M. Wolfe, NEG 147)



Air ducts fitted into the roof of the Council Chamber, March 1936 (© Camden Local Studies: LCP 725.13, D. M. Wolfe, NEG 148)



View of the progress made with the left-hand ventilation shaft by the site of the main staircase (Judd St), November 18, 1935 (© Camden Local Studies: LCP 725.13, D. M. Wolfe, NEG 118)

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View from the north-east of the Euston Road with Queen Alexandra Mansions in the background showing the construction of the roof, January 10, 1936 (© Camden Local Studies: 31.801, DIG 06055)

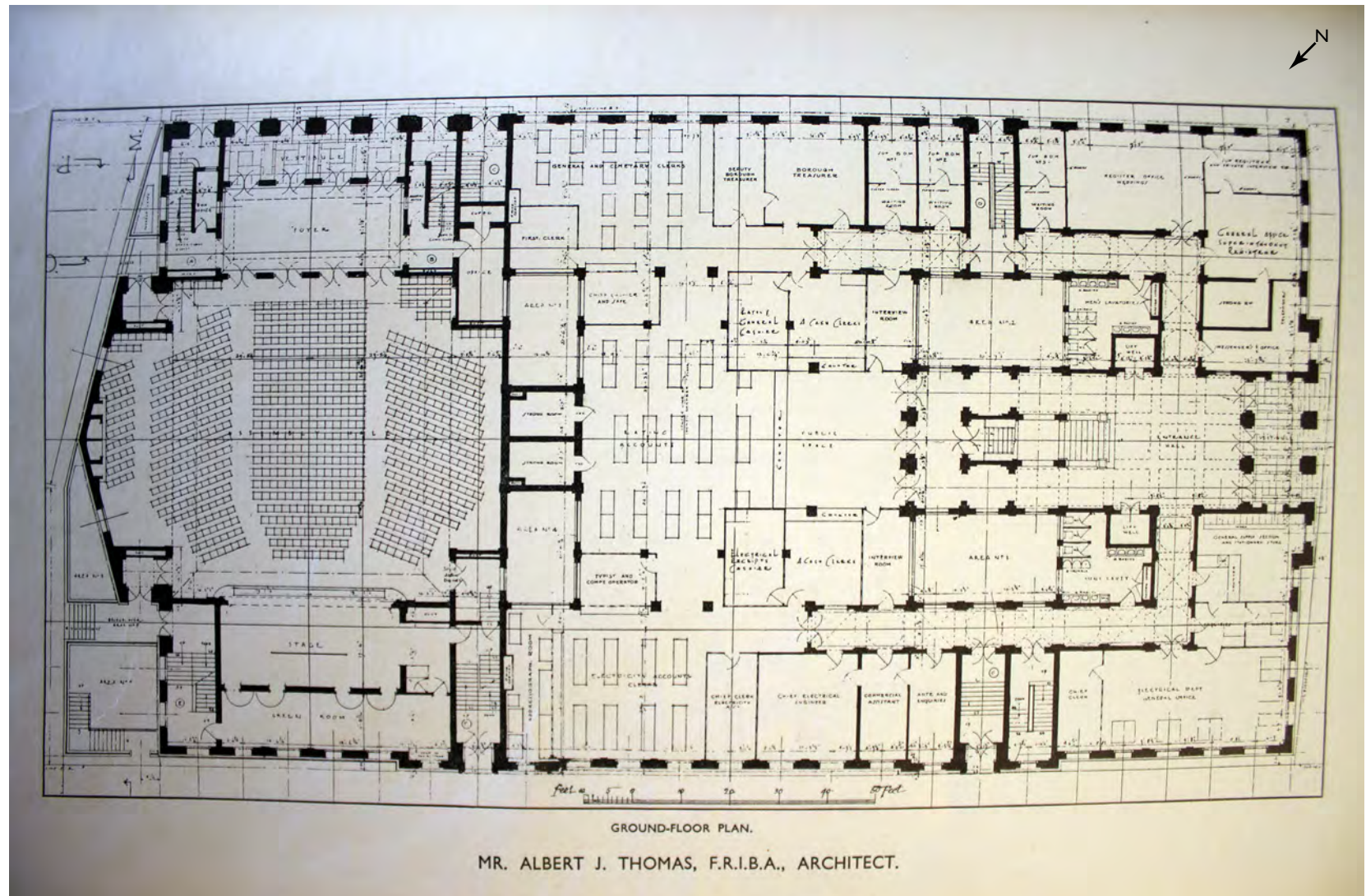


View from the north-east of the Euston Road with Queen Alexandra Mansions in the background showing the near completion of the building (the roof pavilions had been completed since the last image and most of the scaffolding removed from the eastern elevation), March 14, 1936 (© Camden Local Studies: 31.801, DIG 06057)

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3.3.2.3 Completion

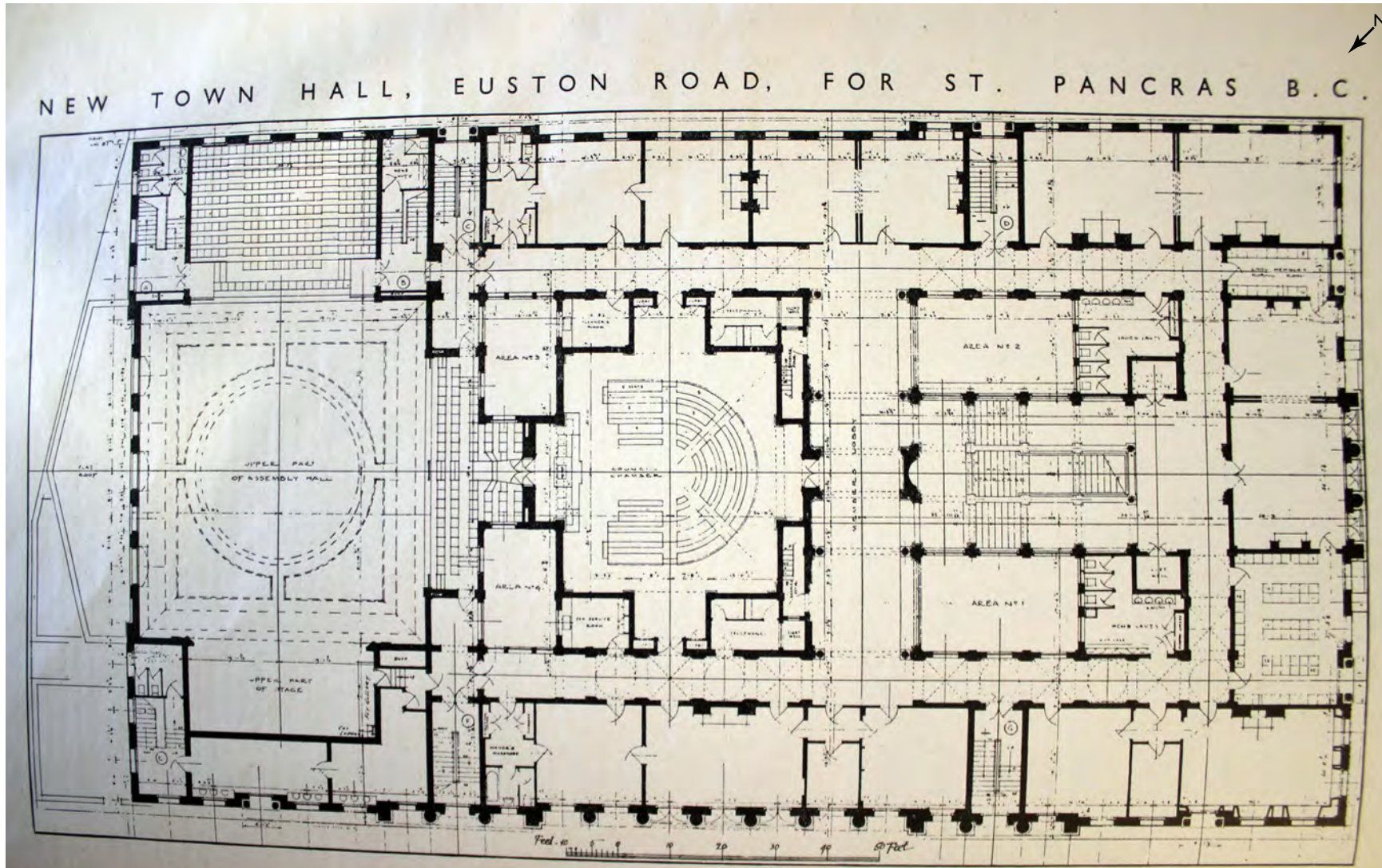
The building construction was complete in 1937 at a cost of £250,000.⁰⁴ The Town Hall was opened on July 1 by his Worship the Mayor of St Pancras, Alderman R. F. Fincham. The main entrance to the Town Hall occupied a central position on the Judd Street entrance. The main elevations employed the Corinthian order with attached columns carried on a podium with rusticated courses. The windows were steel-framed casements. Internally, the general finish was painted plaster, polished hardwood and block flooring. The key spaces the finished in marble or oak panelling. A state of the art heating and cooling system was installed, concealed behind the panelling in the committee and members rooms; however radiators have since been installed in these spaces.



⁰⁴ St. Pancras Borough Council, *The End of One Story: A souvenir of the Borough of St Pancras*, 1965

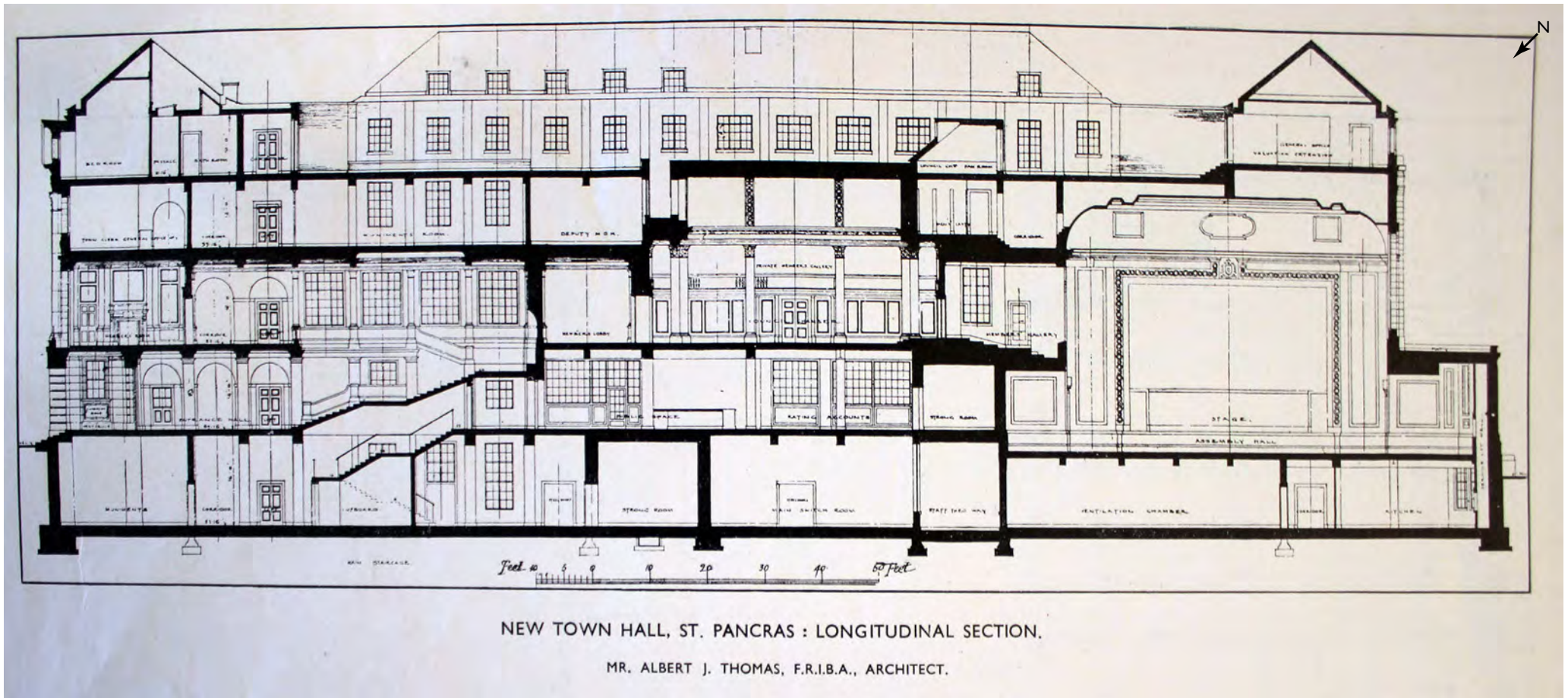
Ground-floor plan, Saint Pancras Town Hall (*The Builder*, July 9, 1937). As Built.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT



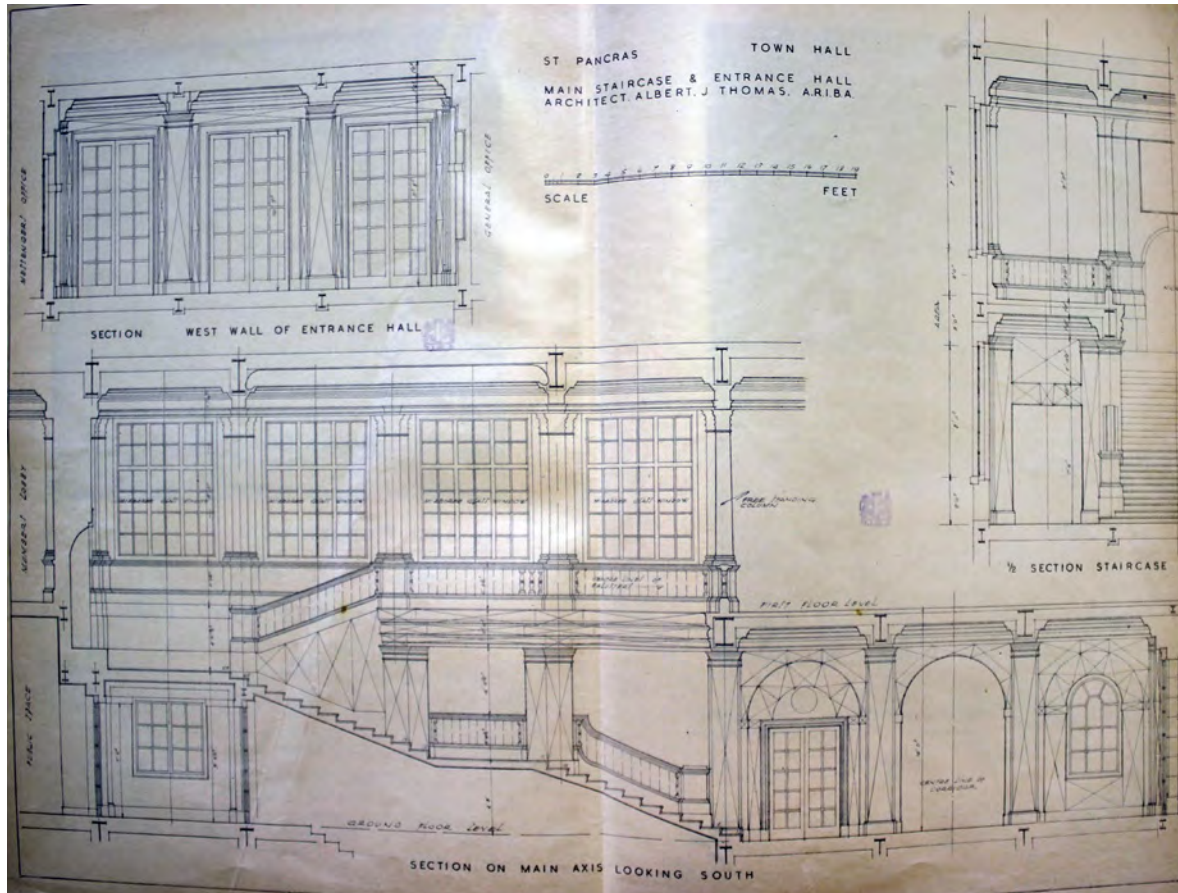
First-floor plan (*The Builder*, July 9, 1937). As Built.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT



Longitudinal section (*The Builder*, July 9, 1937). As Built.

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Sections of the main staircase and entrance hall, 1937 (*The Architect and Building News*)



View from the north-west of the completed Town Hall, 1937 (© Camden Local Studies: LCP 125.13, DIG 01528)

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View of the north-west corner of the Town Hall, undated [probably c.1937 following competition]



The Mayor's Parlour panelled in oak (The Builder, July 9, 1937)



The Main Staircase showing statuary marble finishes (The Builder, July 9, 1937)

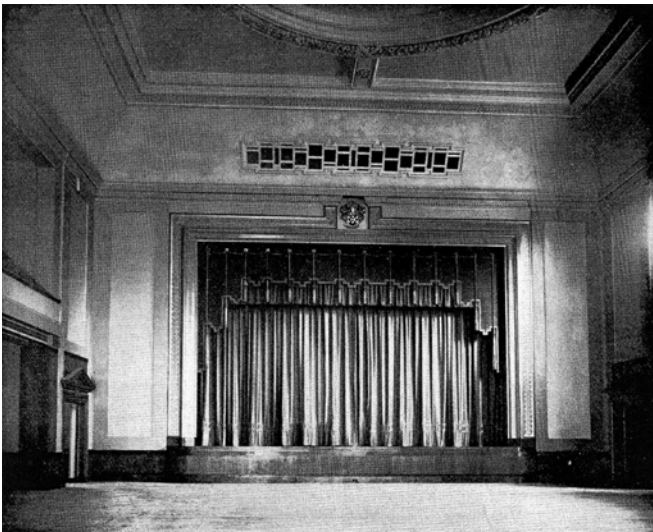


The Council Chamber showing the top-lit ceiling and horseshoe-shape seating (The Builder, July 9, 1937)

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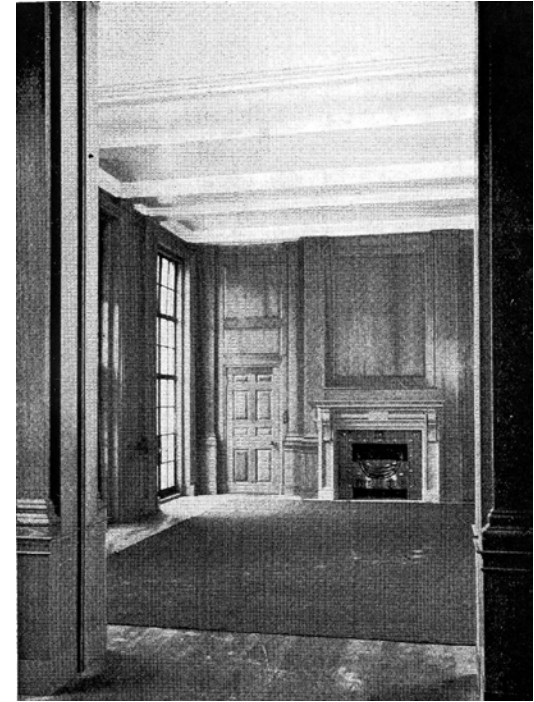
Opening Ceremony, 1 July 1937 (© Tim Drewitt)



Assembly Hall, c.1937 (© Camden Local Studies)

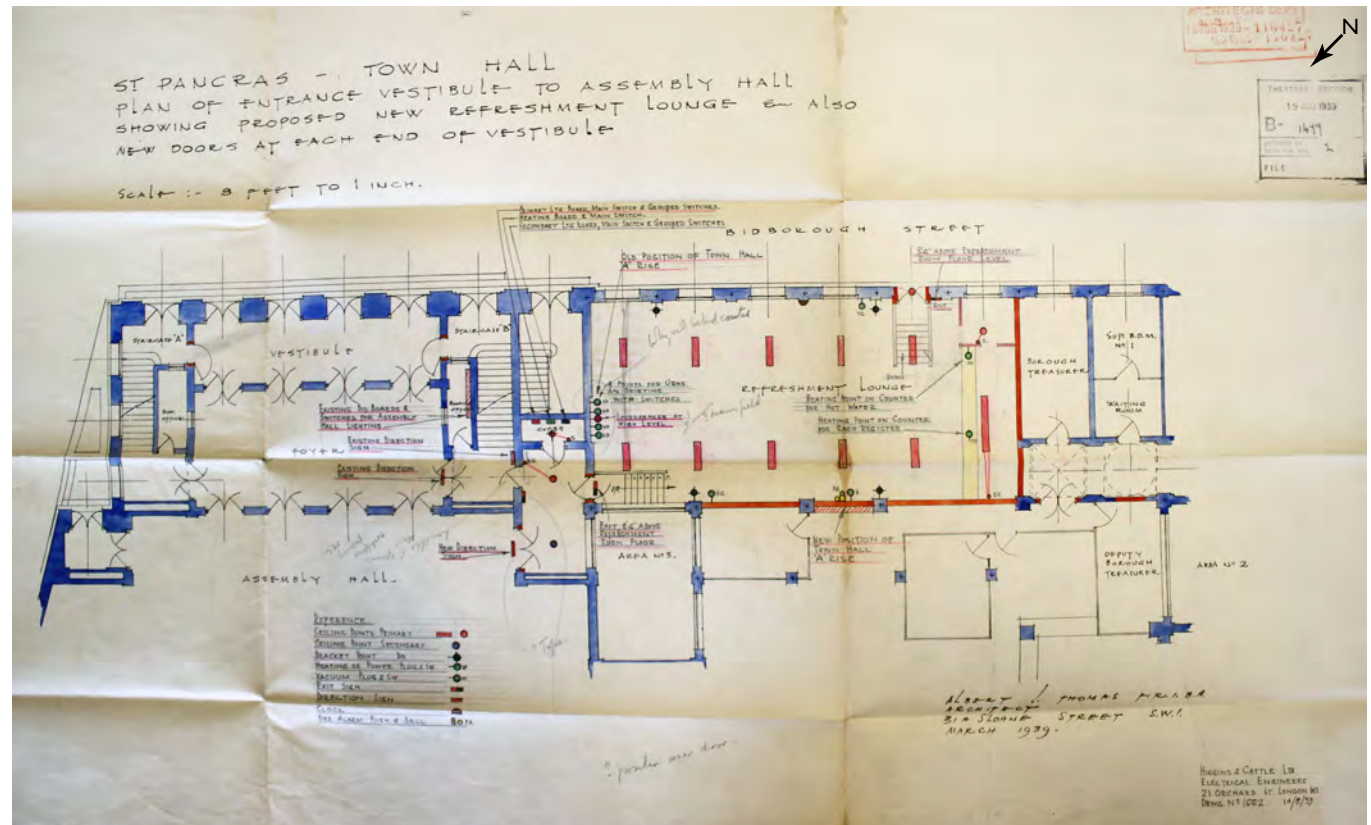


The Members' Lobby on the First-floor outside the Council Chamber (Building, July, 1937)



Members' Room, c.1937 (© Camden Local Studies)

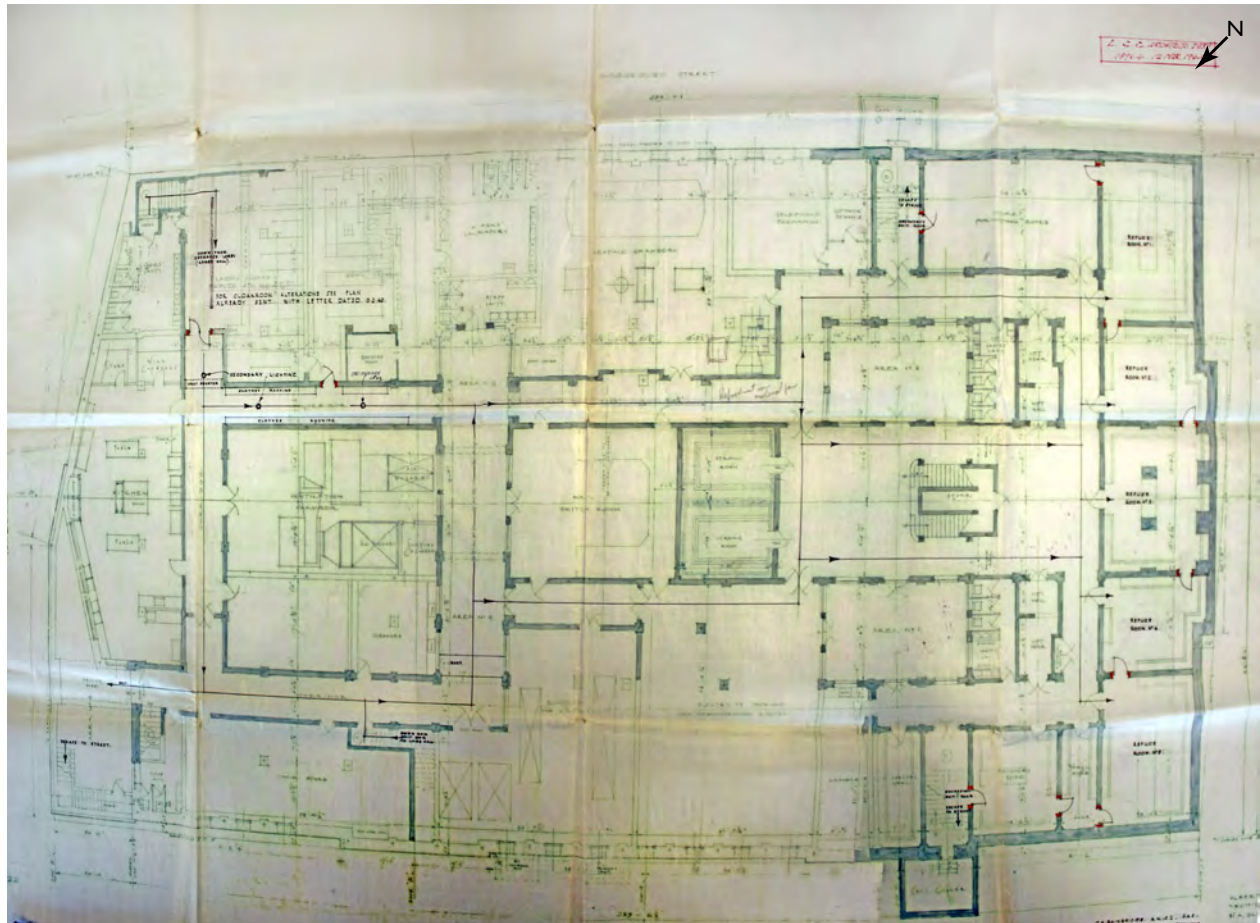
Soon after the building was completed, a new refreshment lounge for the assembly hall was proposed adjacent the west of the entrance vestibule to the hall. The new lounge is shown on a plan dating to 1939, reproduced below. On the original plans, this area was part of the Council functions rather than the public assembly hall use.



Plan of Entrance Vestibule to Assembly Hall showing proposed new Refreshment Lounge and also new doors at each end of the vestibule, Albert J. Thomas, March, 1939 (London Metropolitan Archives), GLC/AR/BR/07/1707, II)

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

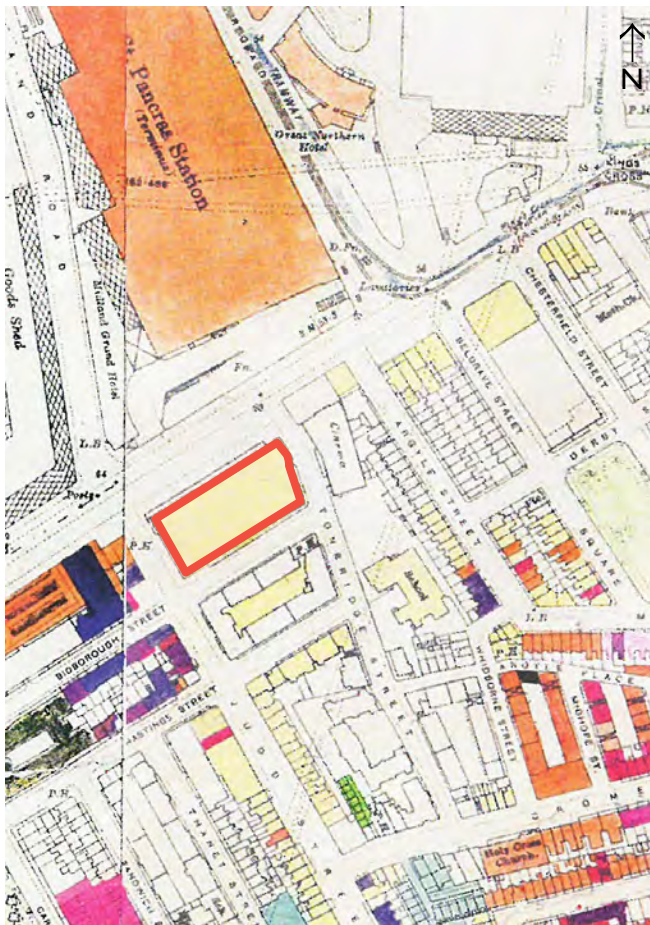
A Basement floor plan from 1940 shows few changes since the 1930s, except a few room use changes and new doorways. The main changes affected the muniments room, lining the west end of the building, which were converted into air raid shelters during the WWII, the refuges were linked by interconnecting doors. The spaces were returned to storage vault use following the end of the war.



Basement floor, C. S. Bainbridge, February 1940 (London Metropolitan Archives), GLC/AR/BR/07/1707, 11)

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The bomb damage map of 1945, reproduced overleaf, shows that the Town Hall suffered minor blast damage during the Blitz. St Pancras Station also suffered bomb damage but to a greater degree while the buildings adjacent to the west of the site were damaged beyond repair.



BOMB DAMAGE

- Site Boundary
- Total Destruction
- Damaged Beyond Repair
- Seriously Damaged – Doubtful if Repairable
- Seriously Damaged – Repairable at Cost
- General Blast Damage – Not Structural
- Blast Damage – Minor in Nature
- Clearance Areas

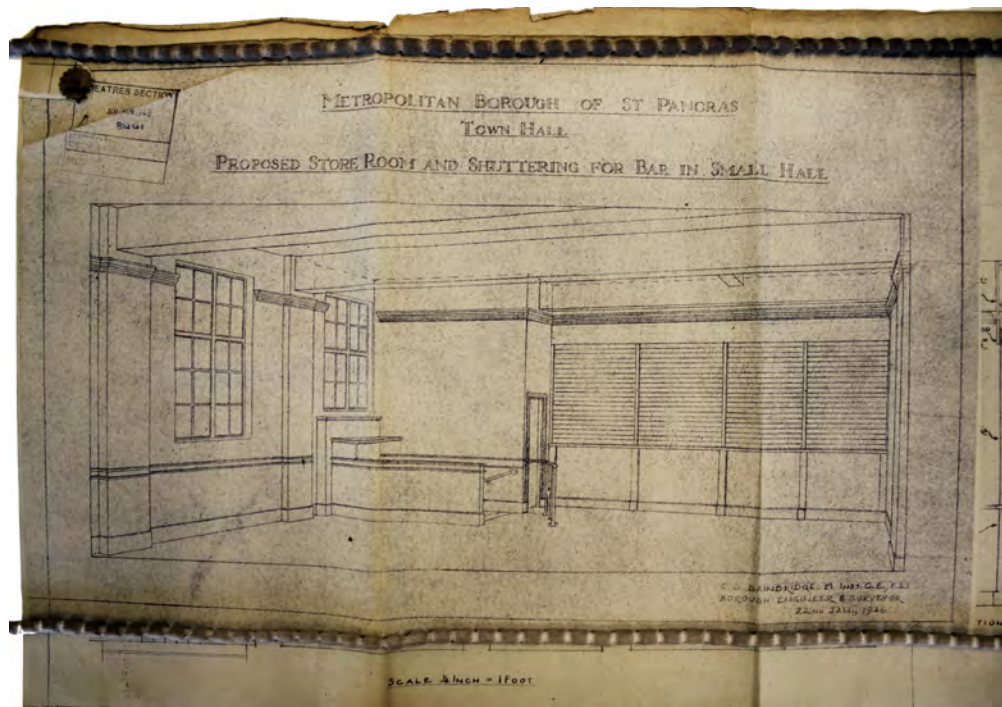
This plan is not to scale

Bomb Damage map of 1945, the site boundary is outlined in red

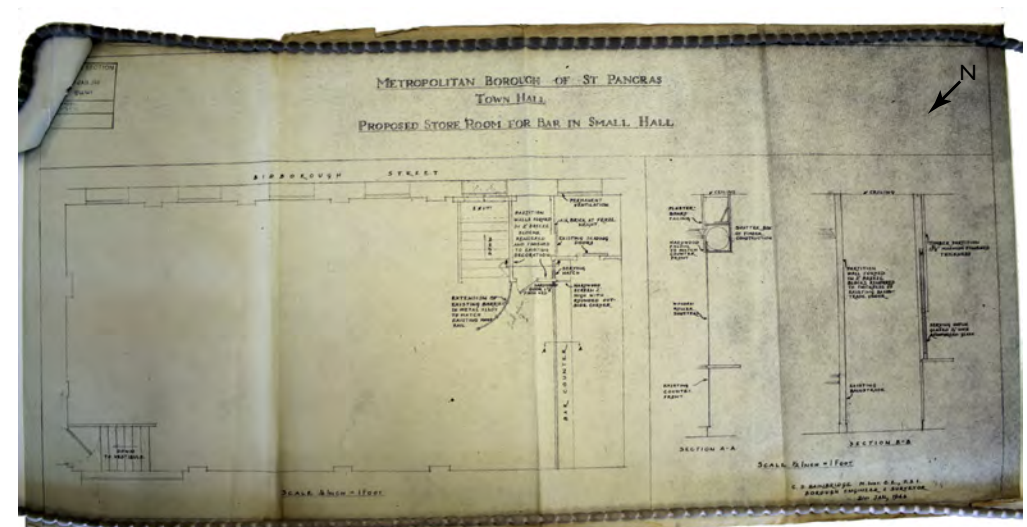
HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

3.3.2.4 Mid-Twentieth Century

In the mid-twentieth century, a new bar and redecoration of the refreshments lounge to the south-west of the Camden Centre at ground floor level was proposed, the space was also identified as the small hall or small assembly hall on some drawings.

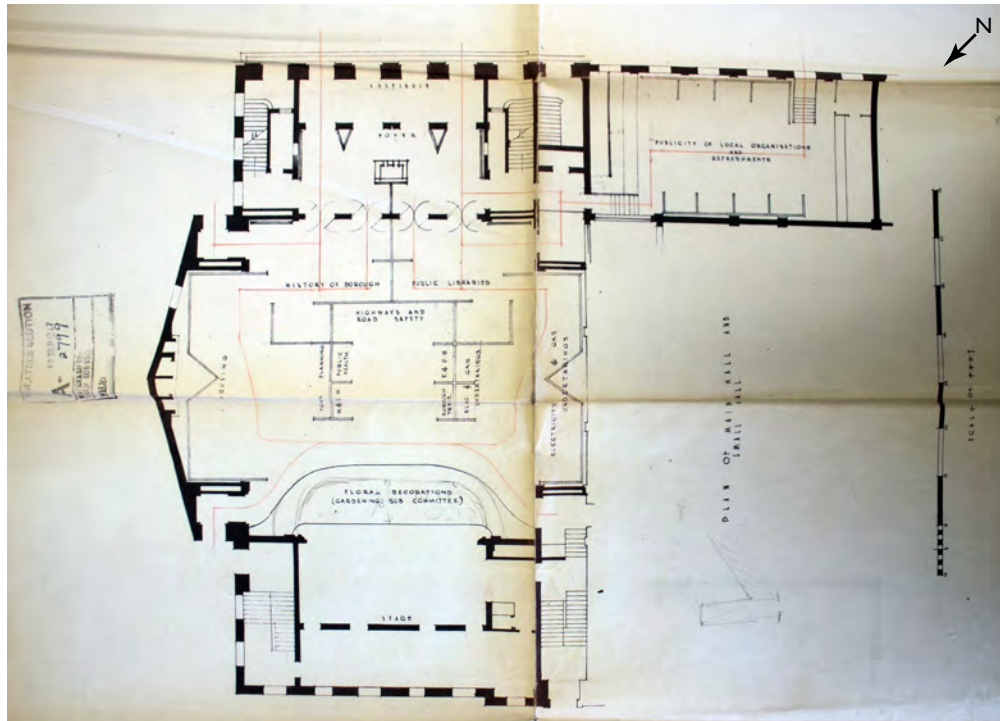


Proposed store room and shuttering for bar in small hall, C.S. Bainbridge (Engineer and Surveyor), January 22, 1946 (© London Metropolitan Archives: GLC/AR/BR/07/1707, II)

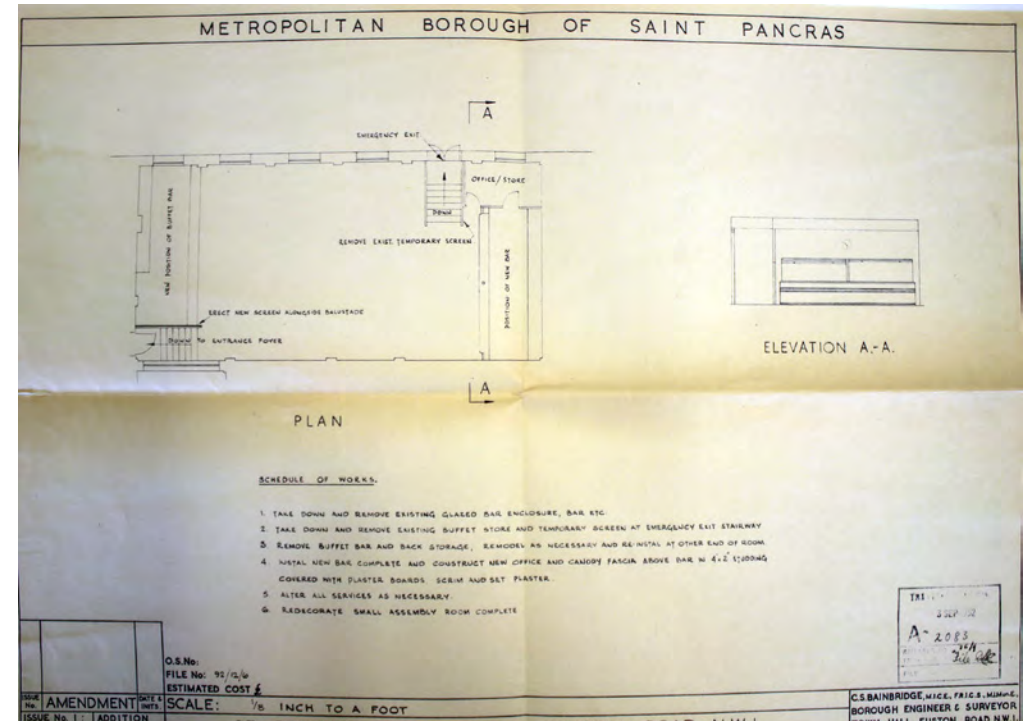


Proposed store room for bar in small hall, C.S. Bainbridge (Engineer and Surveyor), January 21, 1946 (© London Metropolitan Archives: GLC/AR/BR/07/1707, II)

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT



Plan of assembly hall and small hall, Thomas Sibthorp (Chief Architect) September 12, 1947 (© London Metropolitan Archives, GLC/AR/BR/07/11707, II)



Plan and schedule of works concerning new bar alterations and redecoration of small assembly room, C.S. Bainbridge, August 25, 1952 (© London Metropolitan Archives: GLC/AR/BR/07/11707, II)

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

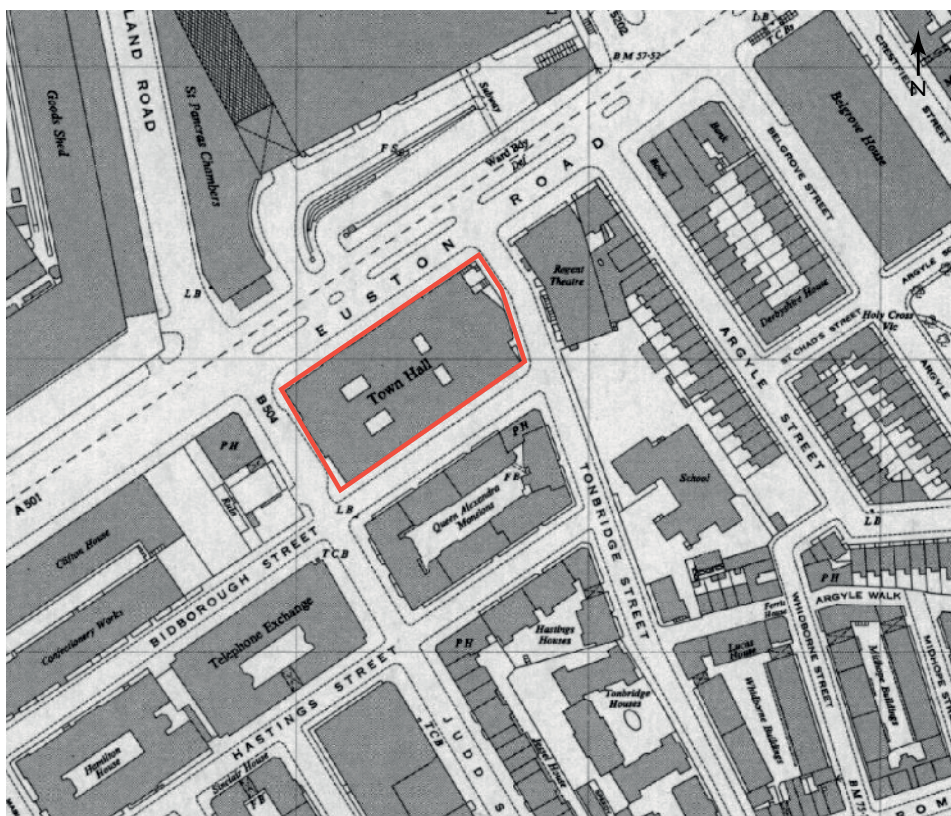
The following aerial photograph was taken in 1947 and shows the roofscape of the Town Hall as originally conceived. The two flat roofed areas are clearly visible, later being built over with an extension on the T-shaped area shortly after this photograph was taken and the conservatory-like structure in the later 20th century. This image also shows the original arrangement of the lanterns over the Council Chamber; on either side of the barrel-vaulted roof; these appear to have been heavily altered or replaced since the 1940s.



Aerial photograph of the Town Hall taken in 1947 and showing the roofscape as originally conceived (Britain from Above ref no. EAW006467)

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In 1947 permission was granted for an extension at Third floor to be used as further office accommodation.⁰⁵ This is assumed to be the T-shaped area of office at Third floor, between the roof of the Council Chamber and the two western lightwells. The extension can be clearly seen within the physical fabric of the building as it was constructed in brick and part rendered contrasting with the white glazed brick of the original lightwell walls.



1951 OS map showing the Town Hall

The OS map dating from 1951 shows the Town Hall within its surrounding context, which has changed little since the 1930s. The four lightwells and eastern prow are delineated on the map, demonstrating their importance to the plan form of the building. The Town Hall was hung with Coronation decorations for Elizabeth II's Coronation in June 1953. The photograph below demonstrates both the lack of change to the Euston Road and Judd Street elevations since the building's completion in 1937 and the building's central role in community celebrations of this national event.

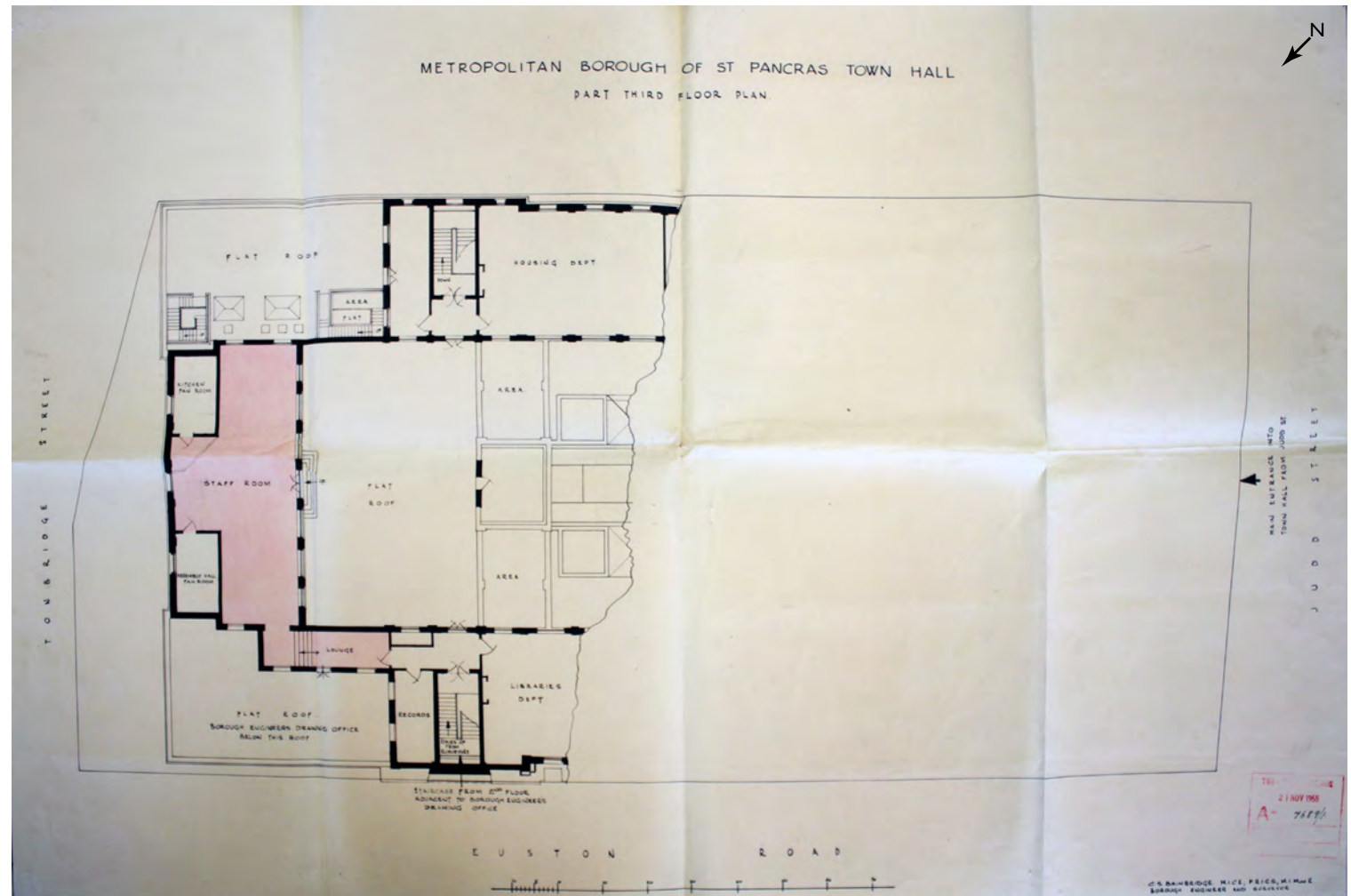


St Pancras Town Hall with Coronation decorations, 1953 (© Camden Local Studies: Fox photos, NP 68914)

⁰⁵ Application No. TP2033/2523

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Minor alterations were made to the eastern end of the Third floor in 1955, the drawing shows that the offices adjacent to the stairwells have not yet been sub-divided. There were very limited internal alterations to the key spaces of the building, the photograph below of the Council Chamber shows the interior fixtures and fitting are unchanged since originally completed.

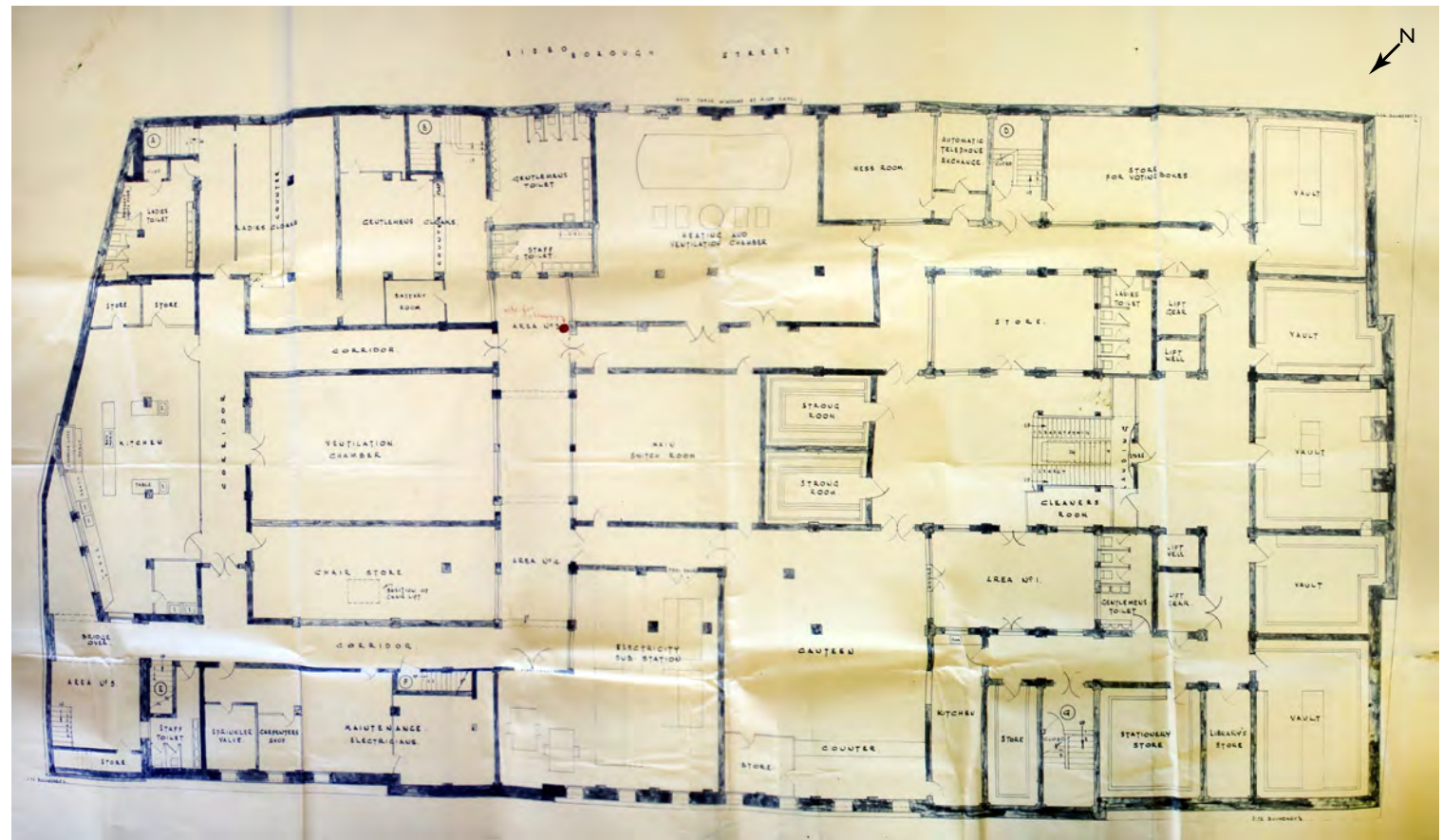


Part Third-floor plan, C.S. Bainbridge, November, 1955 (© London Metropolitan Archives: GLC/AR/BR/07/1707, II)

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

The Town Hall was always a rallying point for protests and demonstrations. On May Day 1958, the Red Flag was flown over the Town Hall sparked demonstrations included by Communists, the League of Empire Loyalists and Fascists.

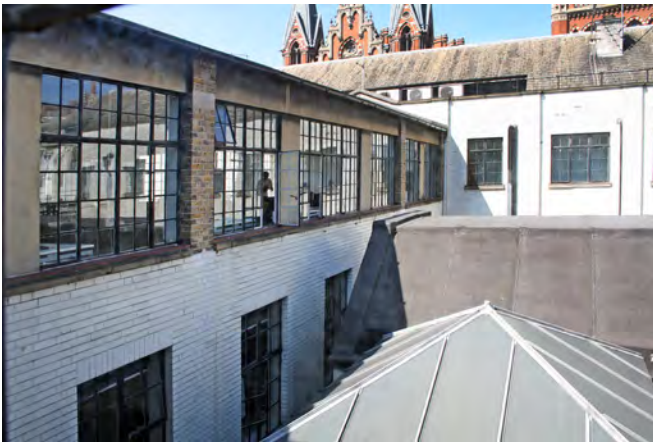
Between the 1940s and 1960s, the Basement floor underwent some alterations. A canteen replaced an electricity showroom on the Euston Road side. On the east side, part of the Ventilation Chamber was converted to a chair store (c.1949), and the previous chair store became occupied by a maintenance room, a carpenter's shop and a sprinkler valve. The kitchen also saw minor partition alterations.



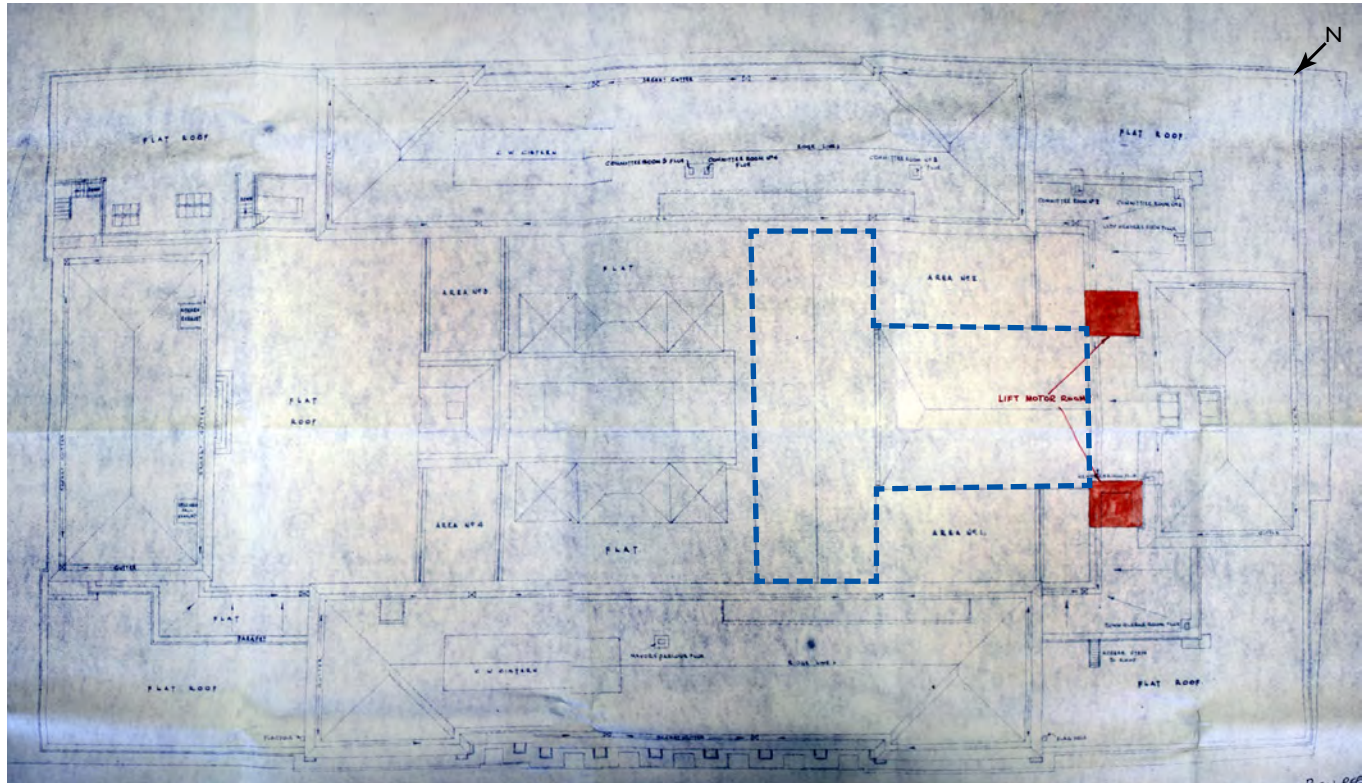
Basement plan, C. S. Bainbridge, October 1961 (© London Metropolitan Archives: GLC/AR/BR/07/1707, 1)

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

A roof plan dating to 1961 shows the 1940s Third floor extension, which is pitch roofed, the plan also shows that two new lift motor rooms were installed at this time.



Evidence of the Third floor extension through the change in materiality from white glazed brick to brown brick



Roof plan, K. P. Harman (Borough Engineer and Surveyor), October 1961 (© London Metropolitan Archives: GLC/AR/BR/07/11707, 1). Dashed area indicates the extent of the 1940s extension.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Establishment of the London Borough of Camden

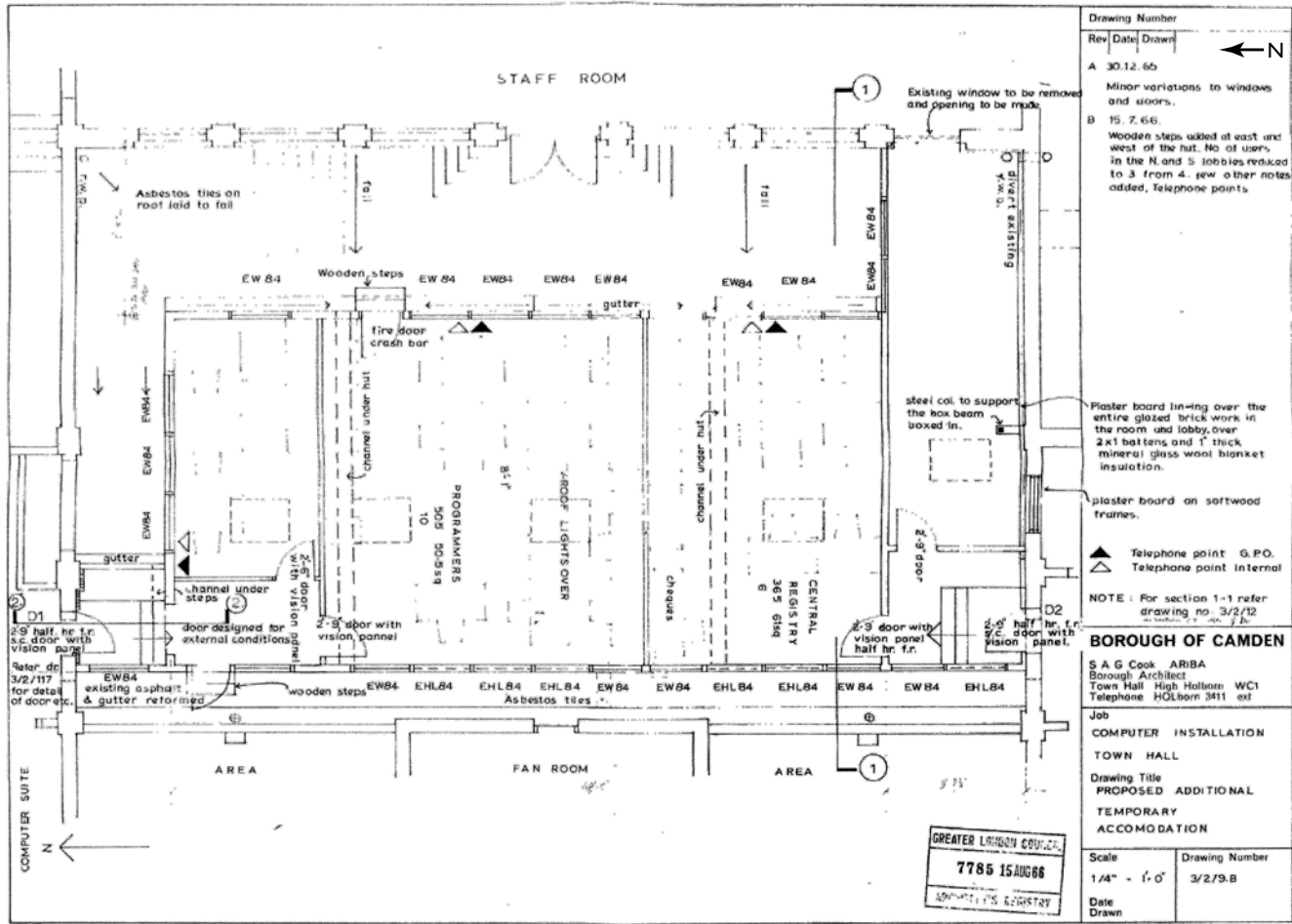
On March 31, 1965 St Pancras ceased to be a borough in the metropolis of London.⁰⁶ The London Borough of Camden replaced the former metropolitan boroughs of Hampstead, Holborn and St Pancras. The name derived from the first Earl Camden, Charles Pratt, who had begun the development of Camden Town in 1791. St Pancras Town Hall was chosen as the administrative centre fore the newly formed borough and was therefore renamed Camden Town Hall.



The Council Chamber, April 1965 (© Camden Local Studies: 31:51, DIG 06051)

06 St. Pancras Borough Council, *The End of One Story: A souvenir of the Borough of St Pancras*, 1965

In 1966, temporary accommodation was proposed on the site of the current modern conservatory at the eastern end, which on the original plans was marked as a flat roof.



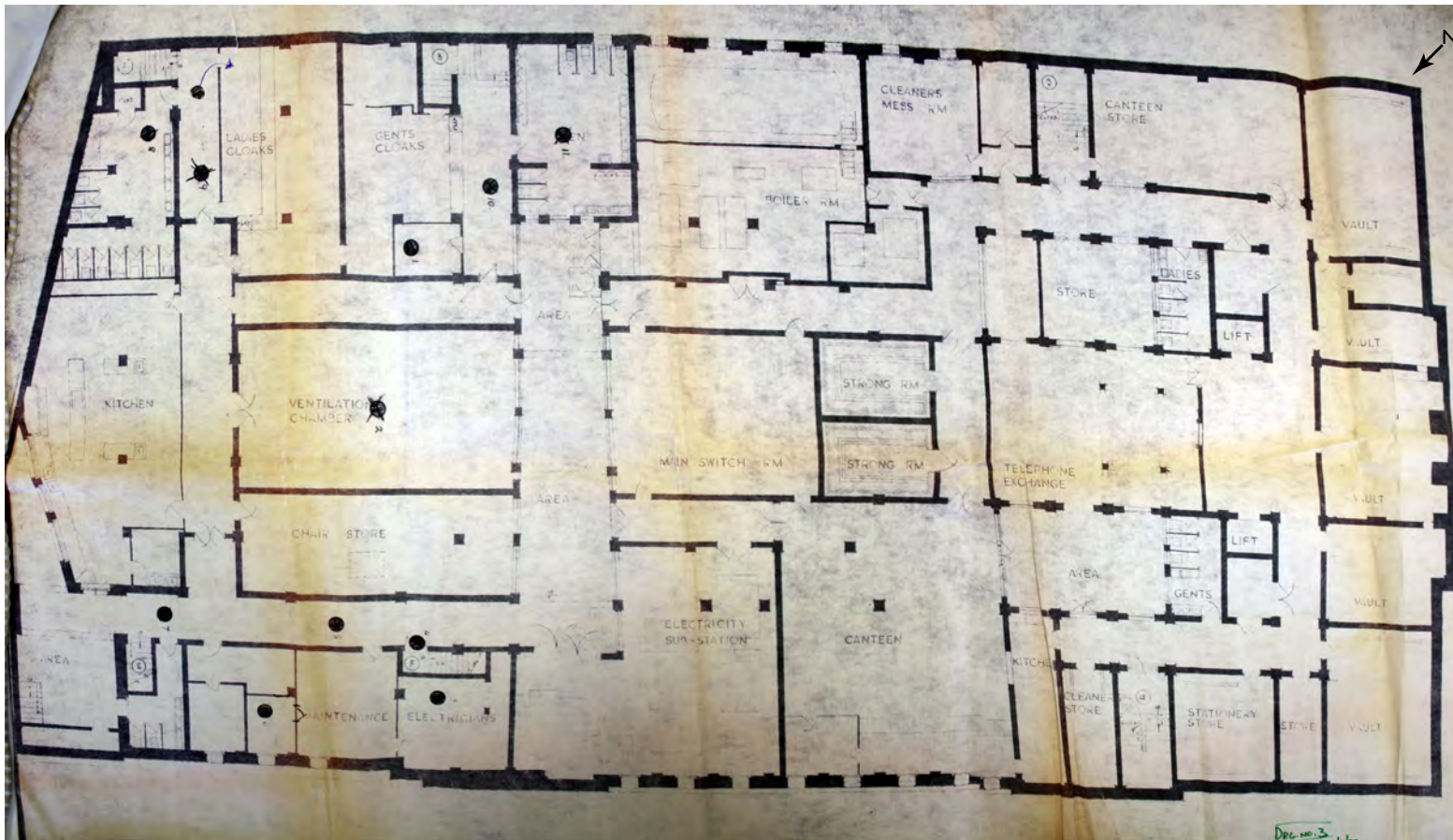
Third floor plan, 1966 (© London Metropolitan Archives)

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

3.3.2.5 Later Twentieth Century

A set of plans for Basement, part of the Ground floor and First floor dating to 1977 show the changes these areas between 1961 and 1977. The Basement floor underwent a few minor changes: the heating and ventilation chamber and one of the vault spaces

were subdivided, and a row of toilet cubicles was replaced by store rooms on the east side of the plan. There was very little change to the area of the Ground floor shown and at First floor.



Basement floor plan, July 27, 1977 (© London Metropolitan Archives: GLC/AR/BR/07/1707, 1)

London Borough of Camden
St Pancras Assembly Rooms
Town Hall
Euston Road NW1

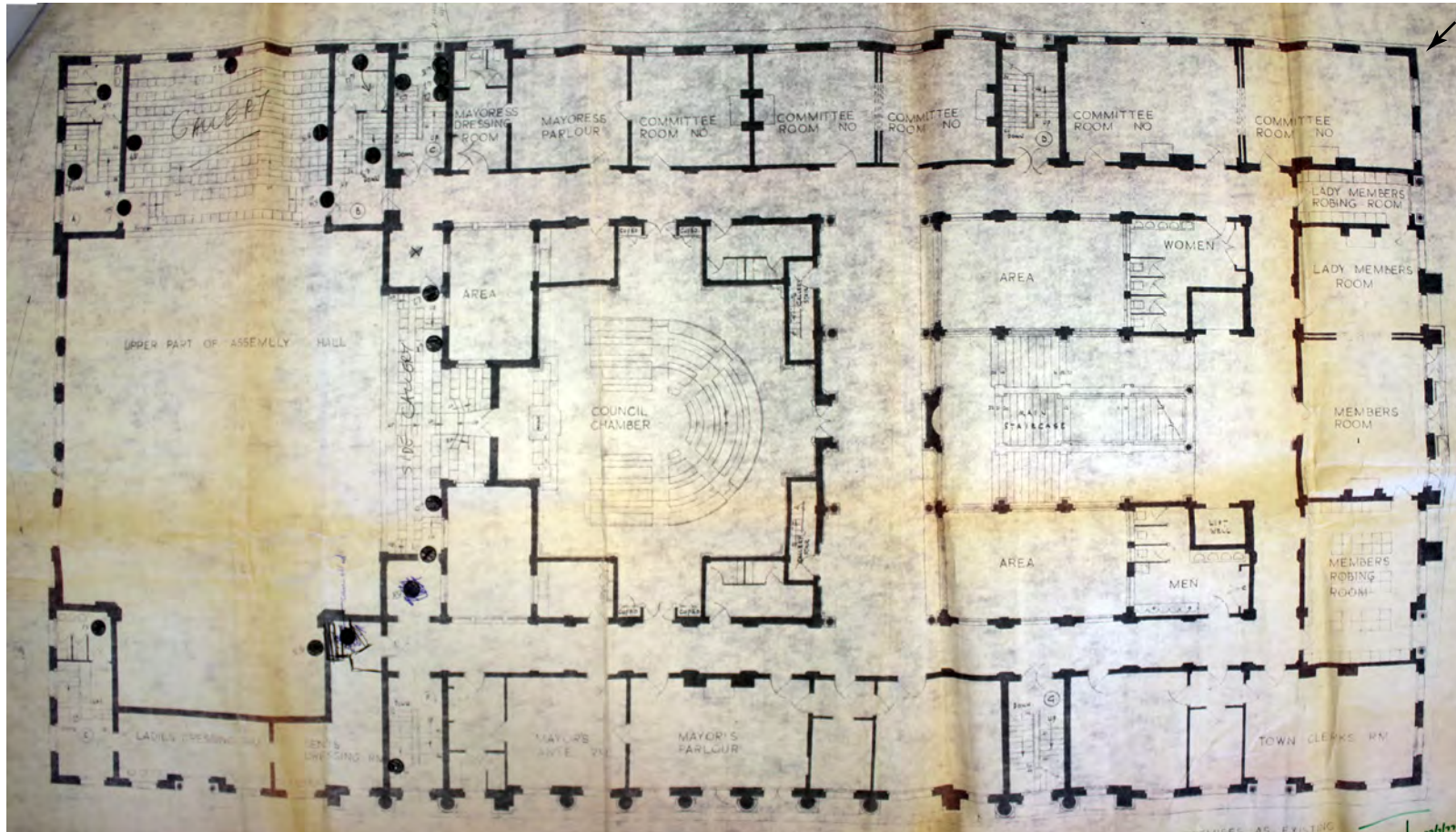
GROUND FLOOR PLAN

TOWN BRIDGE ST

Dec 2002

73

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT



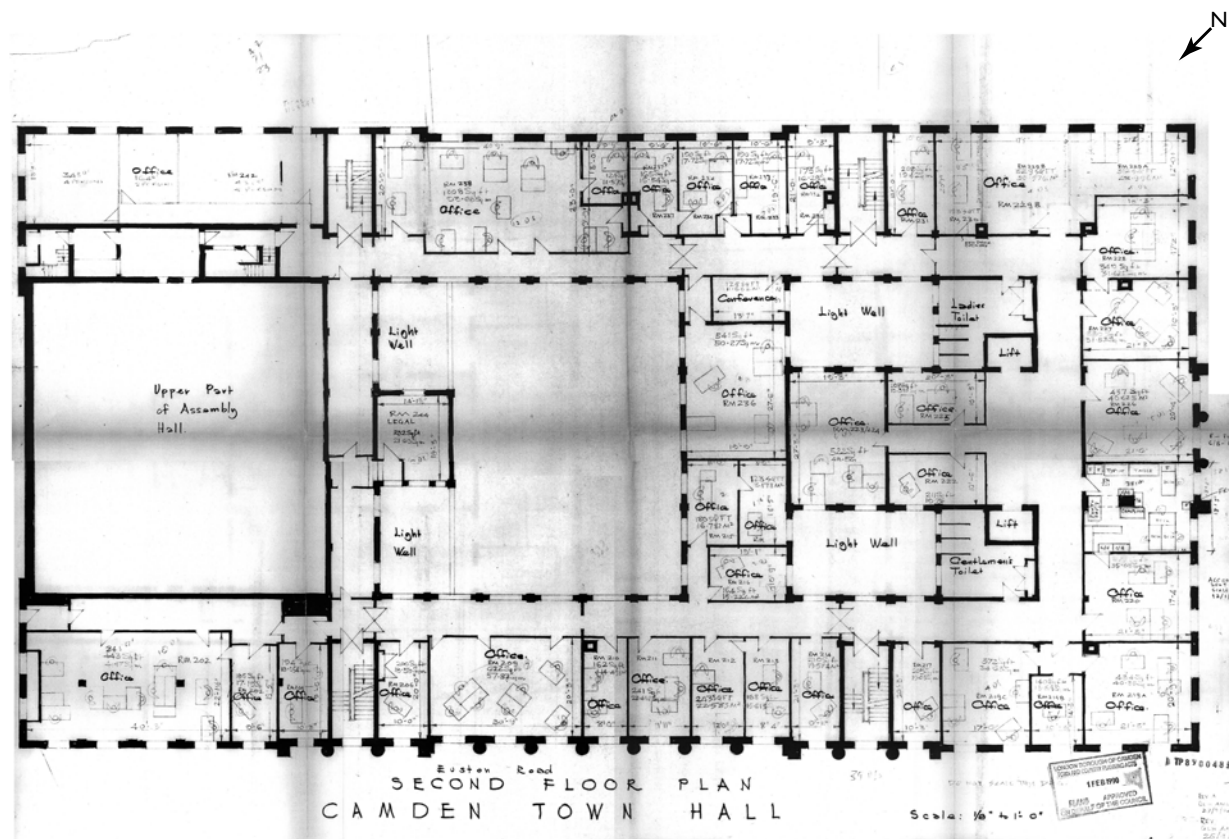
First-floor plan, July 27, 1977 (© London Metropolitan Archives: GLC/AR/BR/07/1707, I)

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

By the 1970s the Council was outgrowing the Town Hall once again and the Town Hall Annex was completed in 1977. It appears on the OS map of the same year (not reproduced due to copyright restrictions). Part of the block (houses and cinema) between Tonbridge Street and Argyle Street, was demolished for the construction of the Annex. The Annex required the reconfiguration of Tonbridge Street which was terminated just to the south of the Town Hall and a pedestrian walkway continued through to Euston Road, named Tonbridge Walk. The two buildings were connected by a bridge link at Second floor, which altered the eastern end of the rooms and corridor of the Town Hall.

Plans of the Second and Third floors dating from 1985 show alterations to these two floors. There has been a greater amount of change at these levels than at the Ground and First floors, with many partition changes as well as changes to the use of the spaces. Substantial subdivision is shown at Second floor breaking up the large office spaces either side of the assembly hall and many of the other office spaces around the perimeter of the building. The Third floor had also been further subdivided to create further offices. A planning application of the same year permitted the alteration of the Judd Street entrance this included *"a solid wheelchair access ramp and the creation of a new entrance together with reinstatement of entrance steps"*.⁰⁷ It is assumed that the alterations to the partitioning of the security office were part of this phase of works, a further application in 1992 suggests the entrance doors may have been replaced slightly later.⁰⁸

It is not clear from historic material when the ground floor alterations to the cashiers area took place however from visual inspection the alterations appear to date to the later 20th century.

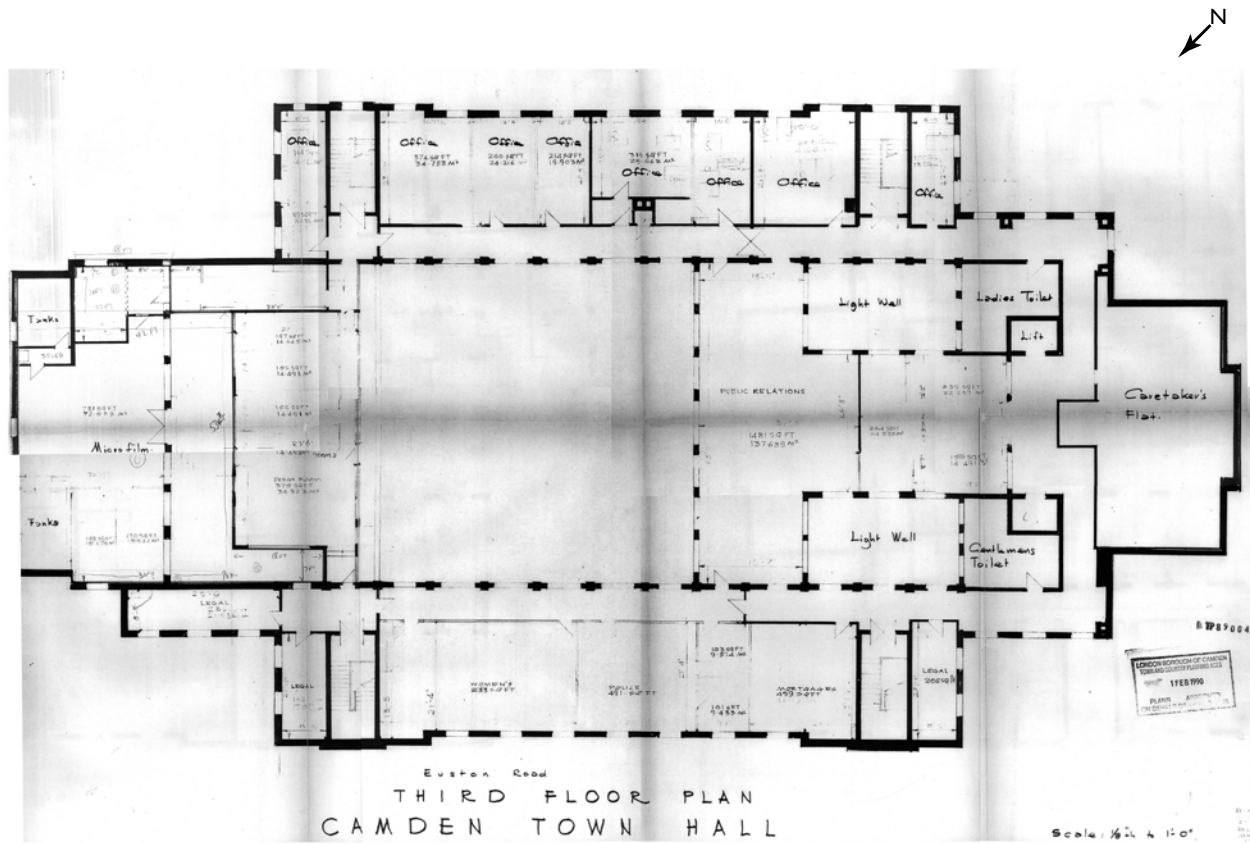


Second floor plan, September 1985 (© London Borough of Camden)

⁰⁷ Application No. 8401859

⁰⁸ Application No. 9240006

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT



Third floor plan, September, 1985 (© London Borough of Camden)

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

In 1989–1990, the existing conservatory-like structure was constructed at Third floor level to provide a new staff canteen.⁰⁹ In 1996 the Town Hall is Grade II listed.

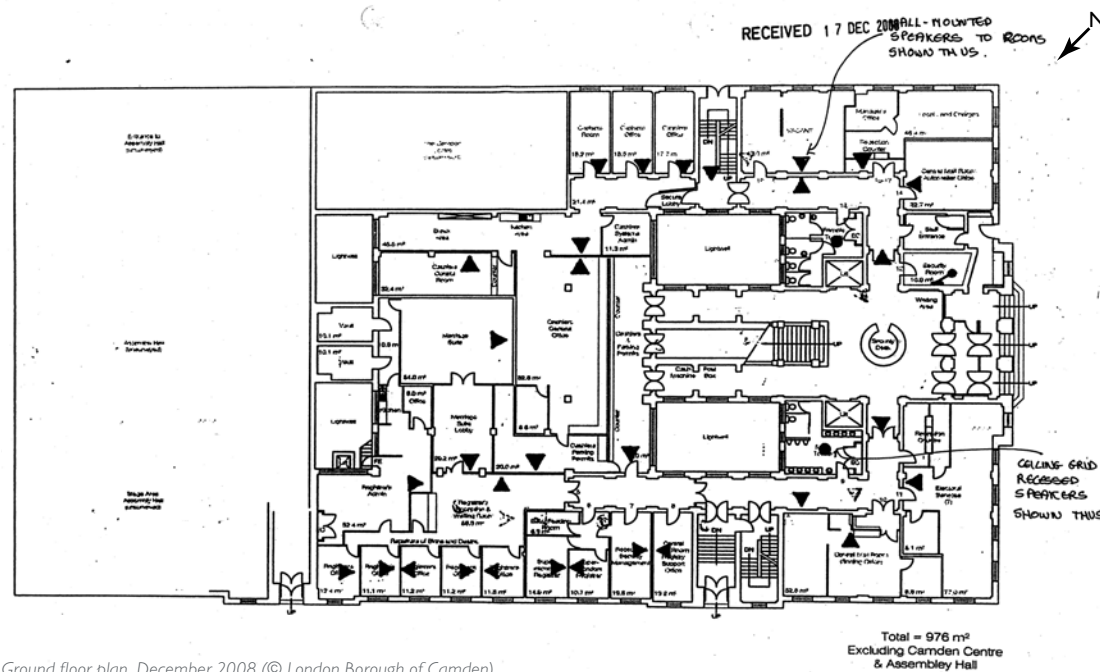
The platform lift within the north-east lightwell was installed in 2000 along with a ramp and alterations to the Mezzanine seating within the Council Chamber to provide wheelchair access.¹⁰ Various other minor upgrades and works took place in the early 21st century including alterations to the railings on Tonbridge Walk, refurbishment of light fittings at Ground and First floors, installation of a cooling system into some rooms at First floor, the addition of non-slip finishes to marble staircase and a new plant enclosure at roof level.¹¹

In 2006, Watts and Partners made alterations to the toilets at the Ground to Third floors.¹² These alterations comprised the provision of new wheelchair disabled toilets and accompanying partition changes. In 2007 alterations were made at the north-east corner of the Basement to provide staff toilet and changing areas including three new openings in the corridor partition.¹³ A new PA system was installed in 2008, the application was accompanied by a ground floor plan of the building, the first full plan which has been identified since original construction.

In 2012, partition alterations were made to the registrar's department on the Ground floor.¹⁴

In 2015 and 2016 the link bridge and existing staircase between the Town Hall and the extension was demolished and a temporary façade installed on the Town Hall; a permanent façade is to be reinstated as part of the construction works currently being undertaken to the Annex.¹⁵

A full list of planning and listed building consent applications relating to the Town Hall is reproduced at Appendix B.



Ground floor plan, December 2008 (© London Borough of Camden)

⁰⁹ Application Nos. 8900485, 8900223 and 9000096

¹⁰ Application No. LS9904830

¹¹ Application Nos. LSX0004060, LSX0204243, LSX0304222, 2004/3948/L, 2005/1762/L, 2005/1759/P

¹² Application Nos. 2006/0613/L, 2006/2188/L, 2006/4463/L

¹³ Application No. 2007/0154/L

¹⁴ Application No. 2012/6045/L