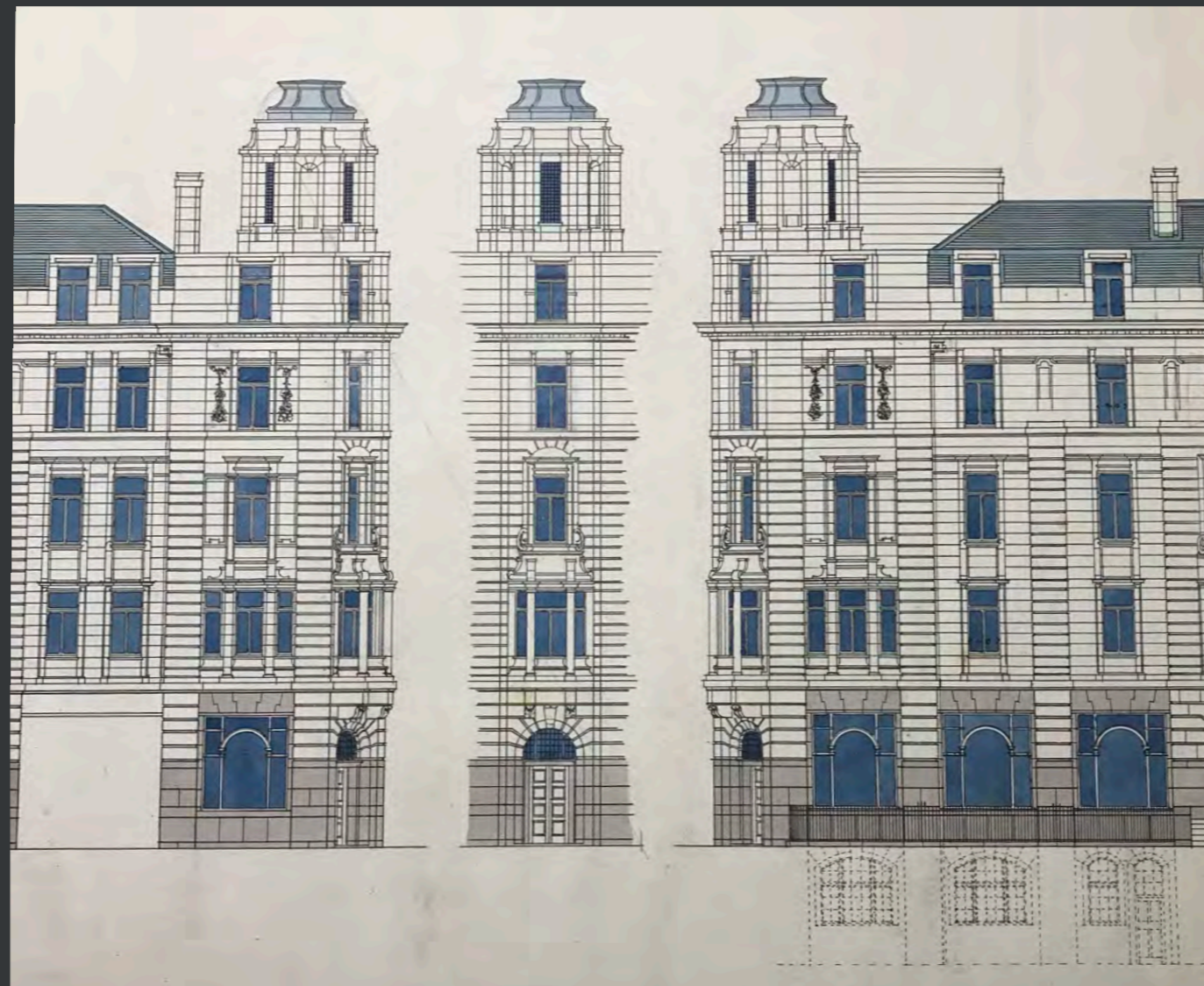


Giles Quarme Architects
Historic Building Architects & Consultants

Heritage Statement

9802 - Holborn Link
Project 3: Norfolk House



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ABOUT GILES QUARME & ASSOCIATES

Giles Quarme & Associates is an architectural practice specialising in the conservation of historic buildings. We are a small team of staff with specialist training and knowledge of historic buildings and their conservation.

Our work includes traditional architecture projects from concept designs to completion and consultancy services such as advice, report writing and acting as expert witnesses.

Since 1987 we have worked on a wide range of historic buildings and new buildings within historic contexts, and therefore have expertise in all aspects of dealing with listed buildings and scheduled ancient monuments in terms of planning, conserving fabric, new interventions, and public use of such buildings.

Our work includes such high-profile buildings as The British Museum, the Old Royal Naval College at Greenwich, a World Heritage Site and group of Grade I Listed buildings, and the Victoria & Albert Museum. We have worked on a considerable number of Grade I, II* and II Listed country houses, churches, public buildings and townhouses, both in the UK and internationally.

Giles Quarme is Chairman of the Ancient Monuments Society, a former Trustee of the Georgian Group for 16 years, a member of the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea's Design Panel, and sat on Historic England's London Advisory Committee for over 15 years.

Natasha Brown is a Chartered Architect with over 20 years experience of working on historic buildings throughout her career at GQA. She has undertaken the specialist diploma in Building Conservation at the Architectural Association and is a Part III examiner at The Architectural Association and is currently accredited with RIBA SCA and CAABC in conservation.

Our approach to historic buildings is to ensure their significance is preserved and enhanced, whilst providing them with a viable use that protects them for future generations. We do not believe in a dogmatic approach to conservation, but one which responds to the needs of individual buildings.

PLANNING AND LISTED BUILDING APPLICATION PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

This Heritage Statement to accompany the Planning & Listed Building Consent Application has been prepared by Giles Quarme Architects to provide information to Camden Borough Council in support of the following development:

- The overhaul and refurbishment of all M&E and interiors to provide an improved entrance, and upgrade of the existing systems within the building.
- proposals have kept any impact on the remaining historic fabric to a minimum.

GQA has based the proposals on historic research, previous planning and due considerations for the significance of the historic building and its setting.

THE CLIENT & THE TEAM

The client wishes to restore and enhance the Holborn Link to a reimagined and vibrant location that respects the heritage and enhances the ability of the heritage assets to provide a 21st century offering to the new tenants:

Tristan Capital Partners and Edward de Rothschild: Client
WSP - Planning Consultants
Giles Quarme & Architects - Heritage Consultant
MICA Architects - Lead Consultant Architect

1.3 To comply with the council's requirements, this report contains the following sections:

Section 2 describes the building and outlines its history.

Section 3 provides an insight into the previous planning history

Section 4 assesses the significance of the building.

Section 5 assesses the proposals in response to the impact it may have on the significance of the heritage asset.

Section 6 is a brief conclusion.

THE BUILDING & GROUNDS

The property has Listed Building Status of Grade II and was given this status on 8th May 1950.



Figure 1 Entrance to the Offices of Southhampton Place

RESEARCH & SURVEYS UNDERTAKEN

The investigations into the heritage assessment that forms this application have been based on three different methods:

METHOD 1: Physical Onsite Examination:

It can be seen when assessing the materials that survive onsite that the building has elements that survive from the original Edwardian period, but these are now few and far between internally.

METHOD 2: Written documentation:

Archive Research:

- Listed Building Description
- Archives: RIBA, London Metropolitan and RIBA at the V&A.
- National Library of Scotland historic maps
- British History online:
- Previous Planning and Listed Building Consent information.

Planning Policy Documents:

- NPPF updated Feb 2019
- Historic England's Conservation Principles
- Historic England's Good Practice Advice notes (GPAs) and Historic England Advice Notes (HEANs)
- Camden Planning Policy documents: as reviewed by WSP

METHOD 3: Drawings:

Review of the proposals against the research, the significance, the planning policies and any pre-application advice.



Figure 2 N Percy Adams FRIBA Elevation Southampton Street

Norfolk House is located at the south west corner of the junction of Southampton Place and High Holborn. It is a substantial corner building. The ground floor and basement is in retail use, currently occupied by the Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS) and is accessed off the corner of the Southampton Place and High Holborn. The first, second, third and fourth (attic) floors are accessed from a separate entrance at ground floor level from Southampton Place. Those floors above first floor have been combined to create one single open plan office unit.

The ground floor office entrance off Southampton Place with its surviving Edwardian decorations and fittings was inspected on Tuesday 6th February by Giles Quarme and Matthew Woollven of Giles Quarme Architects, who were accompanied by Nick Belsten of WSP and Joe the caretaker.

Only the interior of the building was inspected as there are, as we understand it, no current proposals for external alterations to the listed façade and therefore no review of that was carried out.

The rest of the building, the ground and basement floors, that are currently occupied by RBS, were locked and inaccessible.

The second, third and fourth floors were all inspected and unfortunately no evidence of any original Edwardian features or fittings were found to have survived the recent refurbishment, which we believe took place approximately 10 years ago. Whilst the First floor has no Edwardian features and fittings remaining the original floor plan layout still exists.



Figure 3 - Location of Norfolk House, with outline dashed in Red (Google Earth Image, 2021).

2. The Heritage Assets

Norfolk House, 127 and 129 High Holborn, is a Grade II listed building. It was listed on the 14th May 1974, listing no. NGR:TQ3042481526.

The building is located on the south east corner of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, which was first designated in 1968 and has been subsequently extended on a number of occasions.

The Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy was adopted on the 18th April 2011.

The Bloomsbury Conservation Area is very extensive and has been subdivided into 14 different sub-areas. Norfolk House is located within sub area no. 8, New Oxford St/High Holborn/Southampton Place. However, its northern party wall in Southampton Place is located within the boundary of the adjoining sub area no. 6, namely Bloomsbury Square, Russell Square and Tavistock Square.



1894-96



1908



1931



Figure 4 - Historic Development of the Holborn Area shown using the Historic Ordnance Survey Maps from NLS

03. HISTORY

Norfolk House is an extremely fine Edwardian building, which was designed by H Percy Adams and Charles Holden in circa 1904.

Charles Holden joined the Percy Adams practice in 1900 and was the Principal Designer for the practice for the rest of his career within that practice.

The building bears similarity to three contemporary buildings that he designed, namely the Law Society Library (1903-1904) in Chancery Lane, the former British Medical Association building, now called Rhodesia House, located in the Strand (1907-1908) and Evelyn House, 62 Oxford Street, which was constructed in 1908 to 1910.

All four buildings were designed according to Alistair Service in his book on 'Edwardian architecture' as in the "Free Style Tradition" that was developed out of the Arts & Crafts Movement. The style involved adopting "classical or Baroque idioms of their time... and transforming them into an architecture of powerful masses and original detailing".

Holden subsequently evolved away from this historicist style to a more 'scraped' modernist aesthetic that he applied to his design for London University Senate House and for the individual underground stations of the late 1920s and 1930s that Frank Pick commissioned him to do.

The chimneys and attic floor appear to have been altered by 1962, as evidenced by the historic photographs.



Figure 5 - Historic Photograph of Norfolk House (nee Norwich House) 1962, London Picture Archives

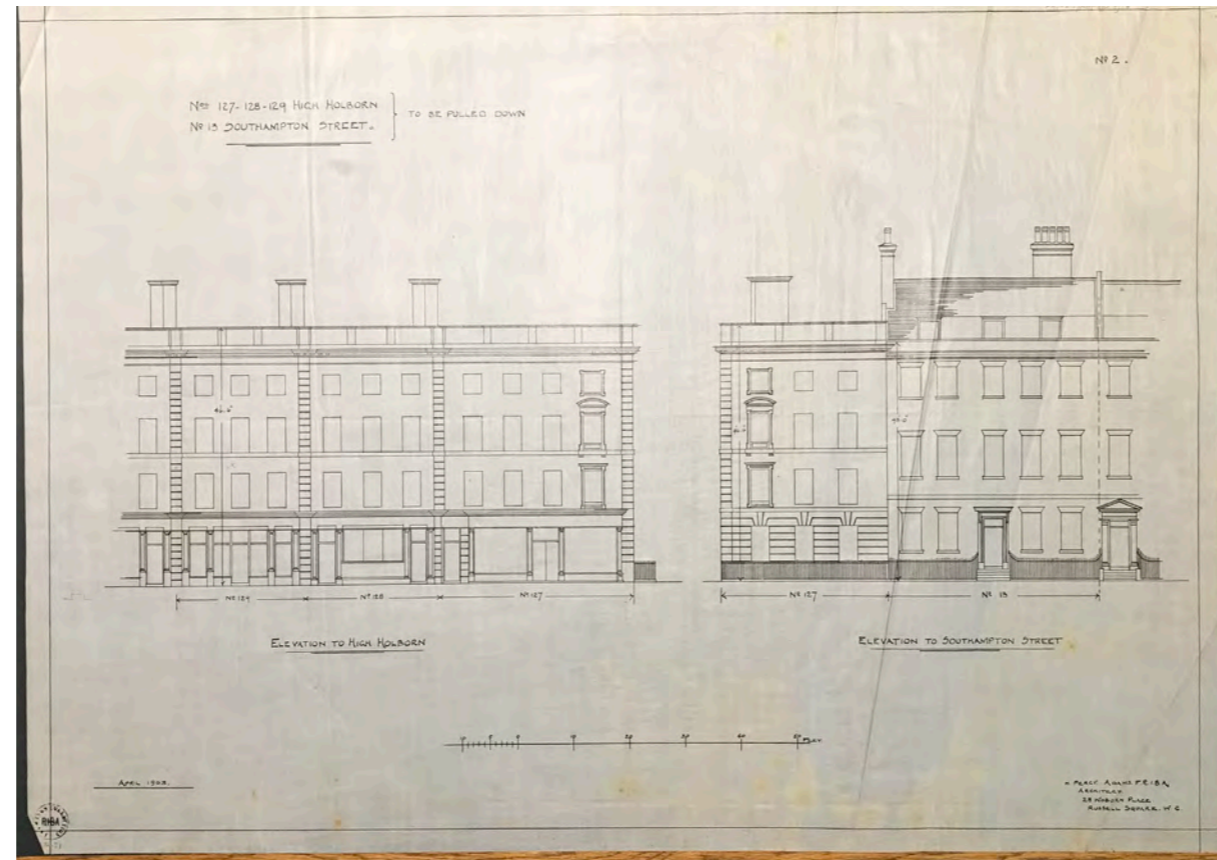
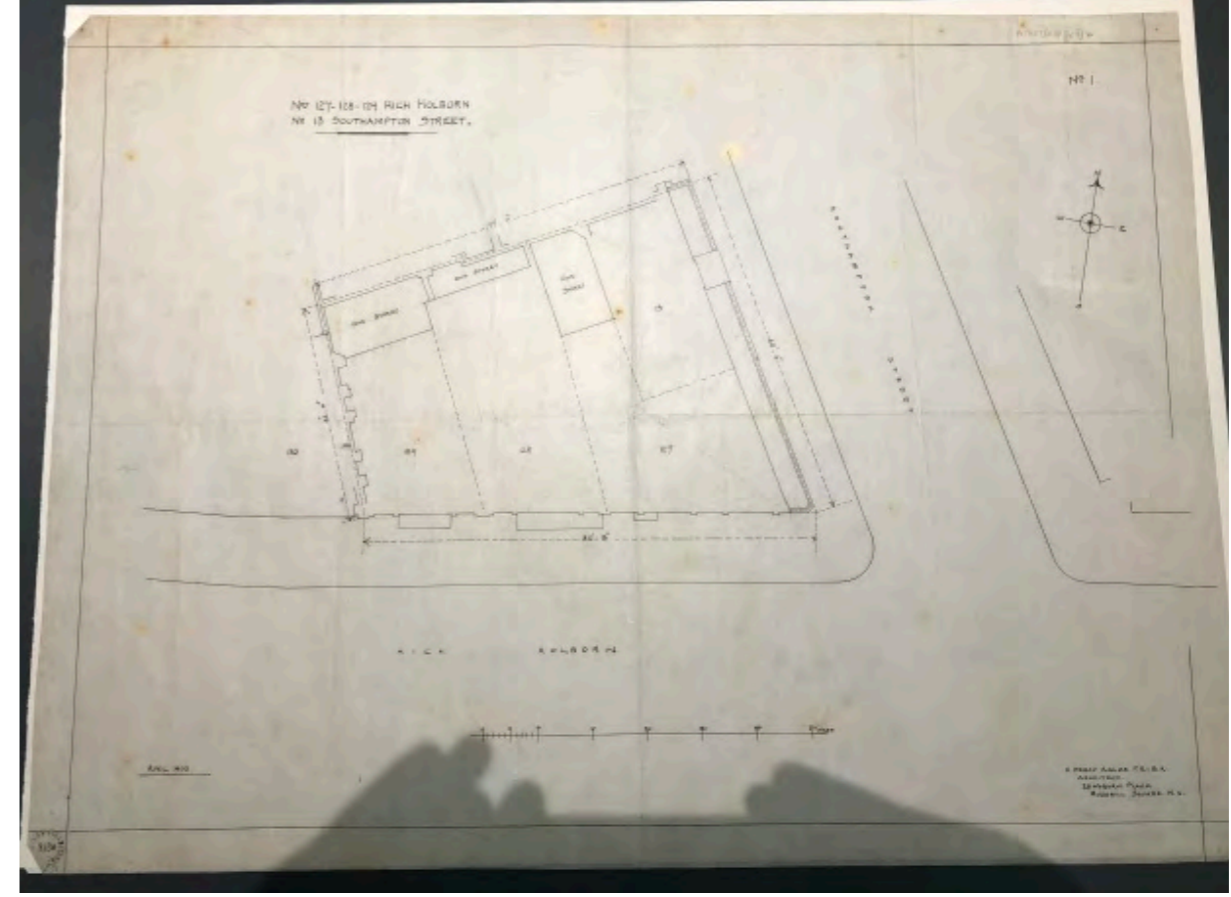
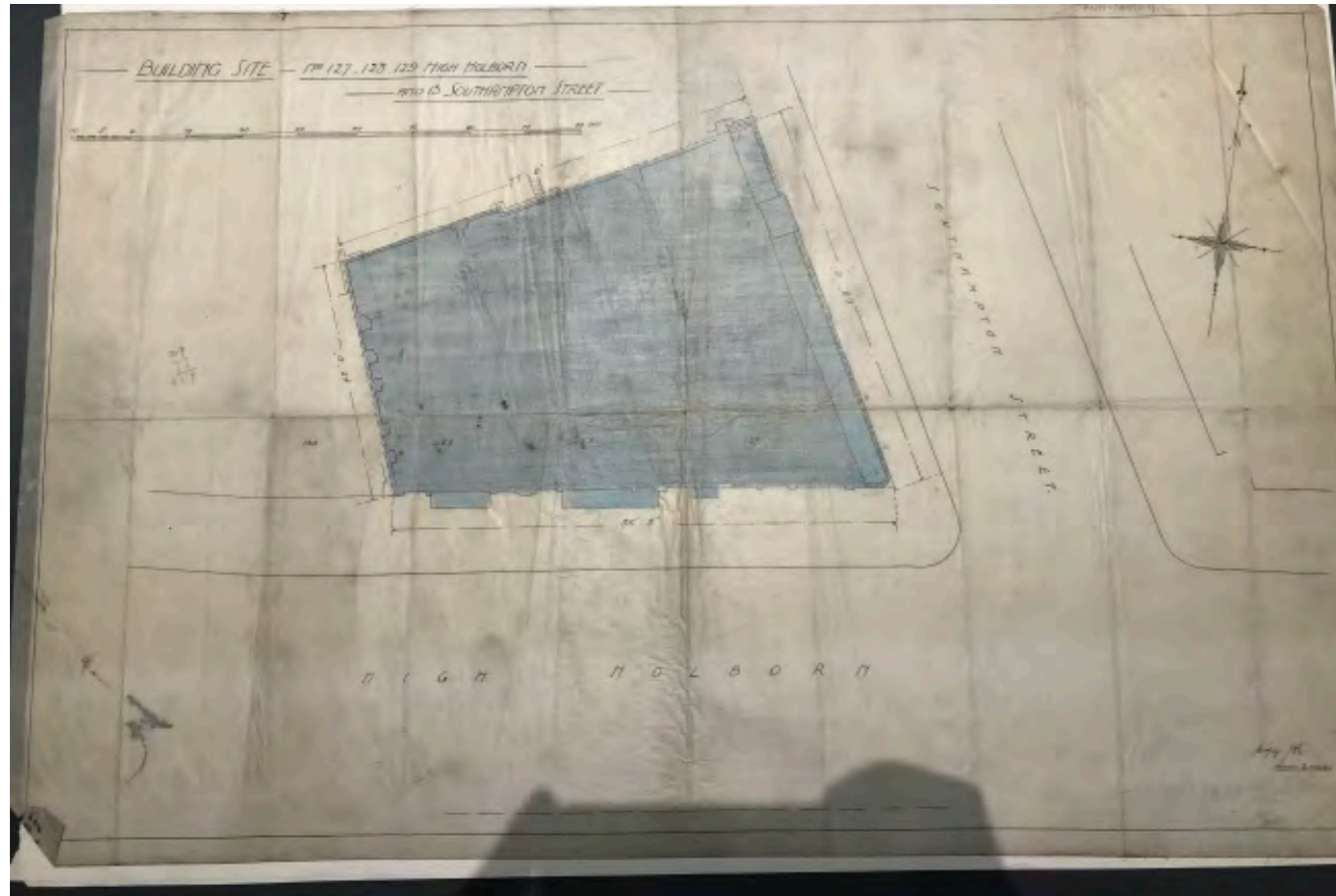


Figure 6 - Block Plan of Proposed Building Site 127-129 High Holborn and 13 Southampton Street. 1903 and showing division and indicates where the single storey buildings are located and the elevations to High Holborn and Southampton Row prior to Norwich/Norfolk House



Figure 7 - Proposal Plans 1903/4 Charles Holden, Percy Adams - Basement, Ground, First and Second Floors

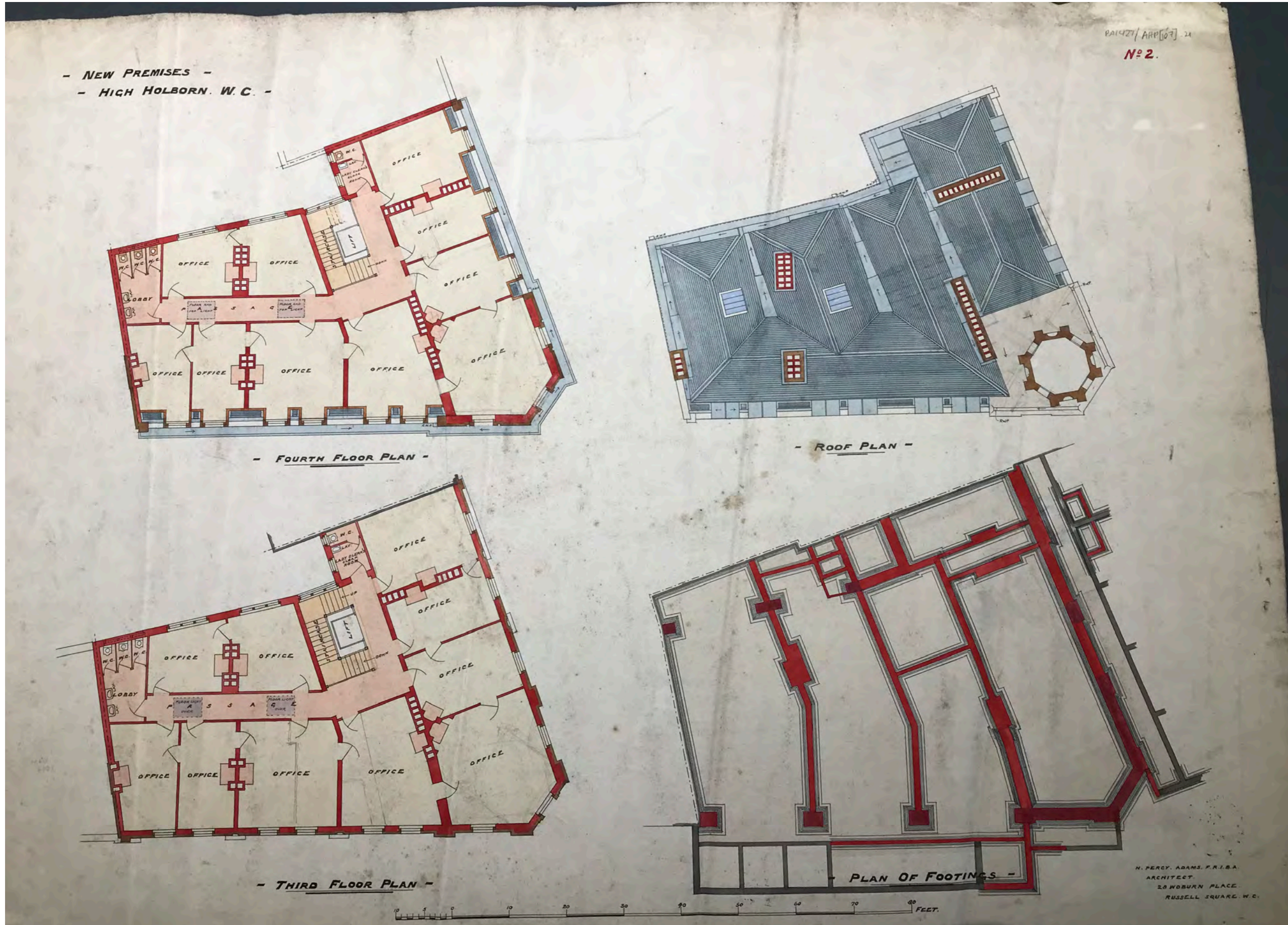


Figure 8 - Proposal Plans 1903/4 Charles Holden, Percy Adams - Third, Fourth, Roof and Footings

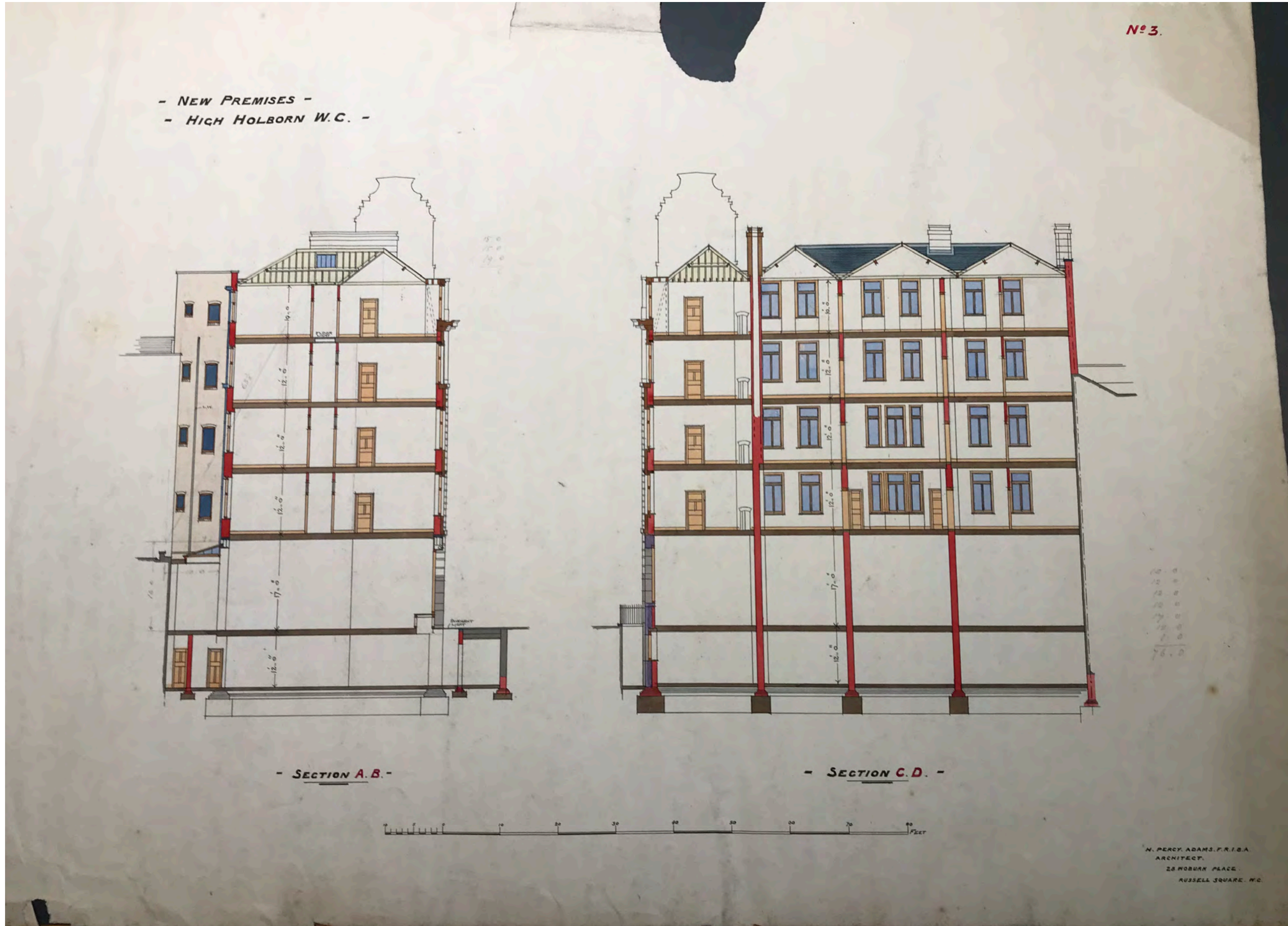


Figure 9 - Proposal Plans 1903/4 Charles Holden, Percy Adams - Section and Rear Elevation

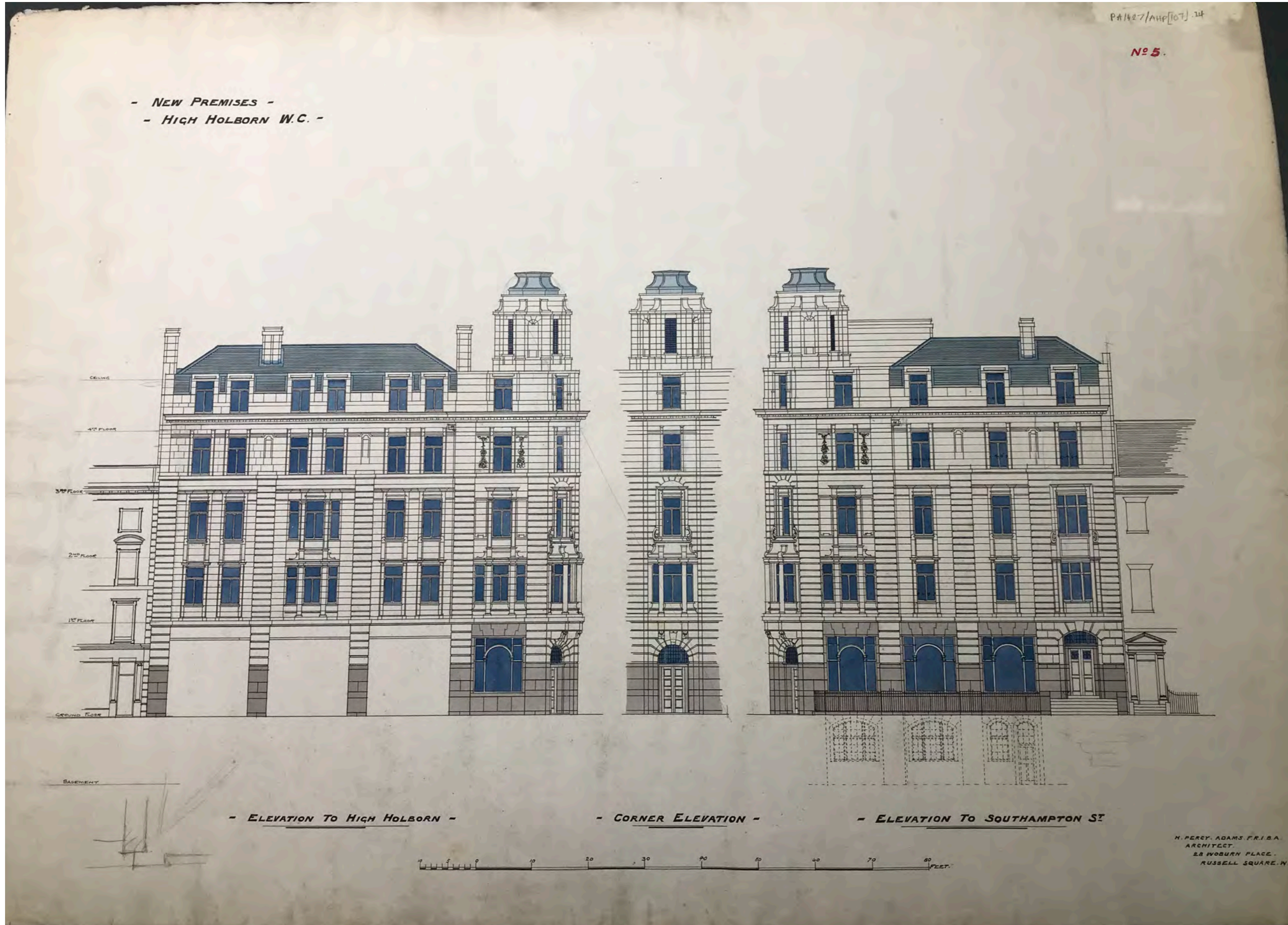
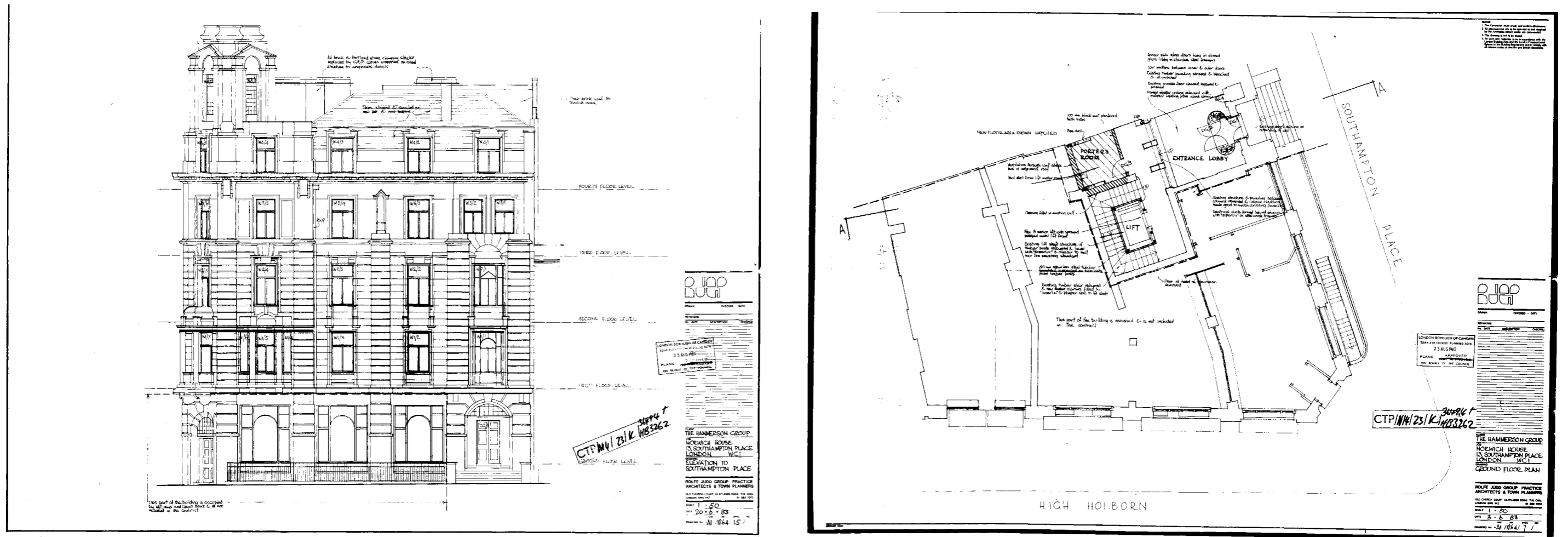


Figure 10 - Proposal Plans 1903/4 Charles Holden, Percy Adams - Front facade Elevations

03. HISTORY: consented application 1983



Figure 11 - The 1983 consented scheme



One of the most significant Planning and Listed building applications for the heritage asset was granted permission in 1983. At this time the following was granted consent:

The refurbishment of the existing office at Norwich House (127-129 High Holborn and 13 Southampton Place) together with the infilling of the rear lightwell and external alterations roof level and the construction lift housing, tank room and boiler room and the replacement and/or alteration of windows.

What is interesting to note is the retention of the entrance lobby to the offices with the columns retained. It would appear that this application formed the premise for the opening up of the upper floors as the following comments exist on the consented plans: *All non-structural partitions demolished. Structural walls taken out and replaced with steel frames. Windows replaced with aluminium framed windows with black synthetic-pulvin finish glazed with clear double glazed units.*

The extent of the first floor retained fabric/footprint and the following notes: *All non-structural partitions demolished and fireplace surrounds removed. Fireplaces filled in with blockwork and plastered.*

The existing timber structure to the staircase was removed and replaced by 100mm blockwall plastered.

The roof was fully altered at this time: *“ roof re-boarded to form continuous slope between existing hips. Existing slates and valley gutters stripped and new flat roof formed at ridge level built off existing roof timbers. Flat areas finished with asphalt. All existing brick and Portland stone chimney stacks replaced by GRP copies supported on steel structure to engineer’s details. Slates stripped from all outer roof slopes and re-nailed on new felt and battens.*

All floors were granted permission for the inclusion of suspended ceiling with recessed light fittings that were suspended directly in front of the windows.

The notes regarding the historic panelling in the ground floor states that it was *stripped, bleached and repaired before being re-fitted, the existing structure and panelling between the columns was removed and the column cladding made good to match the existing panelling. Electrical ducts were formed behind the columns with “Superlux” on steel angle frames.*

There have been other minor alterations to the property, but none as important as those for the 1983 consented works.

Figure 12 - The Southampton Place elevation and ground floor showing the infill of the lightwell and the alterations at ground floor of the 1983 consented scheme.

General - The gazeteer was undertaken with no prior knowledge of the previously approved schemes and is therefore an accurate review of the existing condition, which is now supported by the heritage research and review of the previous planning applications. The review was only undertaken to those parts of the building that form part of this application.

Externals

The external granite and stone façade appear to have survived relatively unaltered. It would appear that all the original steel glazing has been replaced with very modern powder coated aluminium windows. These appear to follow what appears to be the ‘idiosyncrasy’ of the original design, but no attempt has been made to replicate the detailing of the original glazing bars.

Internally

The floors at ground floor and first floor appear to retain most of their historic footprints, albeit without historic details at first floor. Those of the upper floors and roof appear to have been altered considerably and no longer contain any historic value in terms of footprint, aesthetic or historic detailing.

Floor Finish

The marble steps to the Southampton Place entrance are original.

Ceilings / Walls

The vaulted ceiling to the Southampton Place entrance is original, and of significance as one of the principal and only surviving Edwardian features of the interior design of the building.

Cornice / Ceiling Roses

There are no original cornices or ceiling roses that survive.

Windows

None of the original Edwardian windows survive to the upper floors.

Internal Doors

None of the original internal doors survive.

Skirtings

No original skirtings within the building survive.

Dados

There are no historic dados or picture rails.

Joinery

The panelled lobby at ground floor level, when entering from the Southampton Place entrance is original, and of significance, but appears to be a modern match having been altered to the rear (west wall)

Fireplaces

There are no fireplaces that survive.

Conclusions

The significance of the historic interior has been eliminated by the recent refurbishment that removed all historic architectural features.

Definitions of Significance and Special Interest:

The NPPF defines the significance of a heritage asset as:

“The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting.”

Listed Buildings:

Listed buildings are defined as designated heritage assets that hold special architectural or historic interest. The principles of selection for listed buildings are published by the Department of Culture Media and Sport and supported by Historic England’s Listing Selection Guides for each building type.

All Heritage Assets:

Historic England has published guidance on the identification of four types of heritage value that an asset may hold: Aesthetic; Communal; Historic; and Evidential value. Together, this guidance provides a framework for assessing the significance of designated or non-designated heritage assets.

Historic England’s Conservation Principles

Based on Historic England’s Conservation Principles: Policies and Guidance for the sustainable management of the historic environment we have assessed 31 Southampton Row on the following 4 values:

Evidential value: the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity.

Historical value: the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present - it tends to be illustrative or associative.

Aesthetic value: the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place.

Communal value: the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory.

Evaluating the significance of the building and its significant elements is based on a relative scale:

Most Significant: an area or fabric which is considered to be the most significant in the complex and which should not be jeopardised by alteration, but enhanced where/if necessary.

Highly Significant: an area or fabric which, while not most significant, would be expected to be treated in a similar manner.

Significant: an area or fabric which is of interest and should be preserved.

Good: an area or fabric which, while of interest, might be considered for replacement if it resulted in an improvement to the complex as a whole, or enhanced elements of higher significance.

Neutral: an area or fabric which may be considered expendable.

Negative: an area or fabric which should be removed and/or improved.

Norfolk House - Overview

Norfolk House is a very handsome building at the southern end of Southampton Place, with its south facade facing High Holborn. It is a steel framed building faced in Portland Stone with a ground floor plinth of granite. It was designed by Charles Holden and built in the early 20th century in a Free Style classical manner.

The building has previously been used as offices on the upper floors. They are accessed through a large round-arched entrance with lions-head mouldings along Southampton Place. The area currently occupied by RBS is not being altered and does not form part of this application.

The exterior of this building is highly significant, and an extremely fine example of this type of Edwardian commercial building. The original drawings were located at the RIBA V&A drawings archive and these have helped form our review, together with a site walk round by Giles Quarme and Matt Woollven.

Internally, and very regrettably, the interior of this building has been severely altered from its original state. Other than the panelled lobby, when accessing the building via its Southampton Place entrance, and the corresponding vaulted ceiling and marble steps to that entrance, nothing of original architectural significance remains. The original floor plan of the ground floor of this entrance has also been altered and the end wall (west) has been infilled during the works carried out 10 years ago. The original footprint of the first floor with wall divisions and location of chimneys still remains, albeit without any historic details. The upper floors have been completely gutted and turned into open plan spaces.

It is important to note that whilst the internal significance of this building has been audited, this level of detail has not been applied to the external facades as the main elevations are not being altered.

The facades of the building are the most significant element of this building in terms of Evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal value, adding to the streetscape and conservation area.

Internally the Ground Floor entrance is Highly Significant although the west wall infill has detracted from the original intent and construction. It holds elements of all HE’s Conservation Principles in terms of Value. The West Wall has a negative impact on the original understanding of this entrance space.

The First floor is deemed to be of Good significance as the original layout is still in existence, although no historic detailing survives. It holds only minor historical value

The upper floors all have neutral impacts on the heritage asset and hold no value other than externally as they have been so thoroughly altered during past works, especially those of 1983



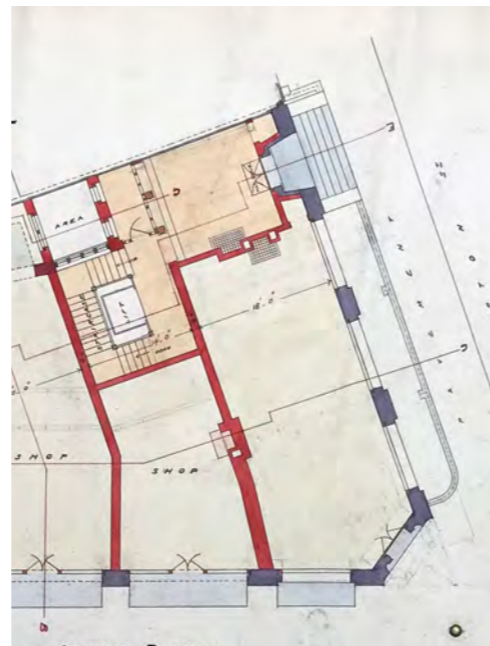
05. ASSESSMENT and IMPACT OF THE PROPOSALS

The current proposals seek to retain the historic plan at Ground Floor and re-open the original West Wall, which we believe is to be welcomed. This re-establishes the original intent of access and views upon entering the property.

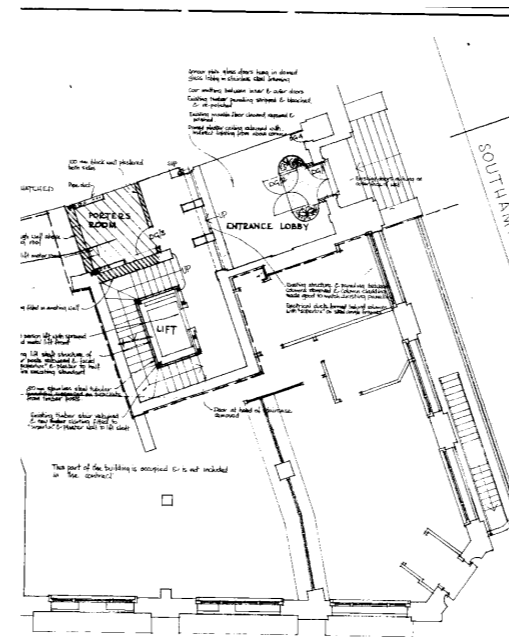
The first floor does look to remove some of the historic plan form, however we would note that this was thoroughly altered during the 1983 works and all non-loading partitions and fire-places were removed including all historic mouldings and the windows altered at this time.

The only other elements that we would note as having an impact on the historic fabric is deemed to be minimal and to the rear elevation where the vent sizes are being increased slightly to accommodate modern requirements. The rear elevation is the least significant and the vents are replacing previously installed and approved ventilation grilles.

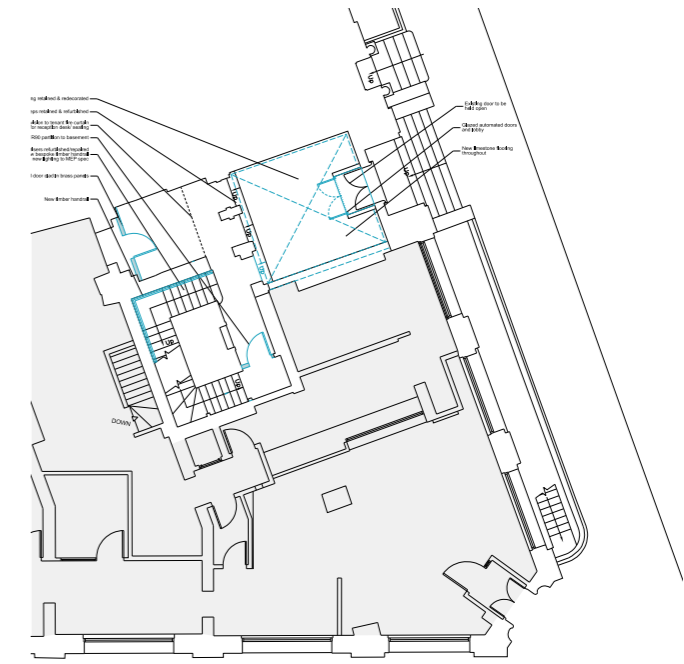
Works to the roof and upper floors have minimal impact on the historic fabric as it can be seen from the 1983 granted and executed proposals very little historic fabric or design remains. The proposals for the plant at roof level replaces existing plant and those that are additional are deemed to be unobtrusive to the views of the previously altered roof line and are not visible from the street around the most significant element on the roof of the corner turret detail.



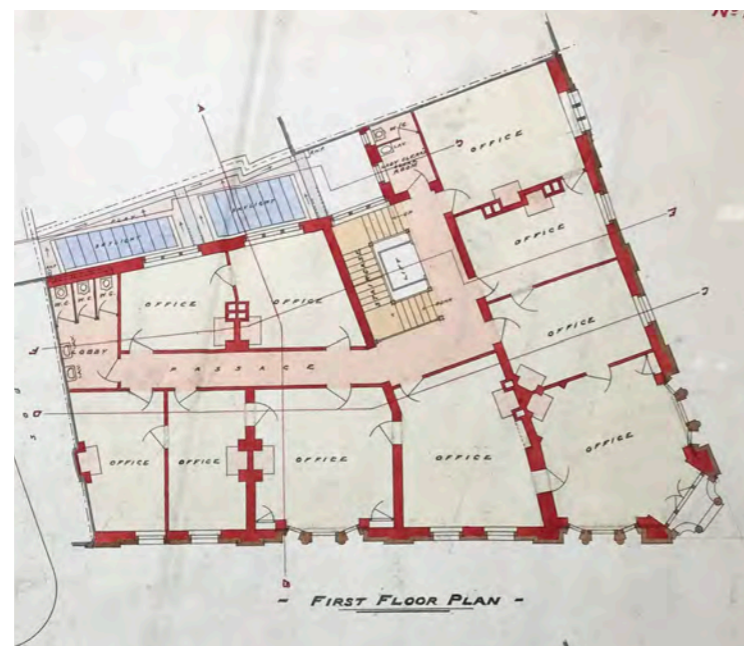
Original 1903



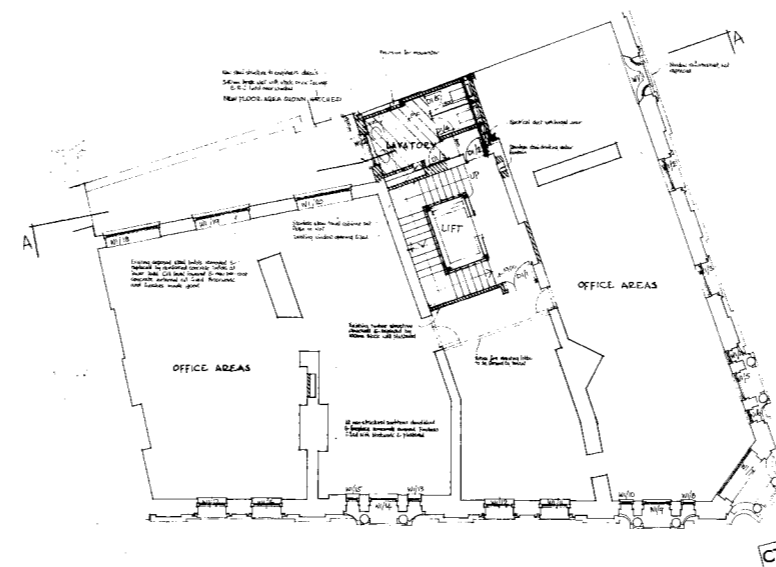
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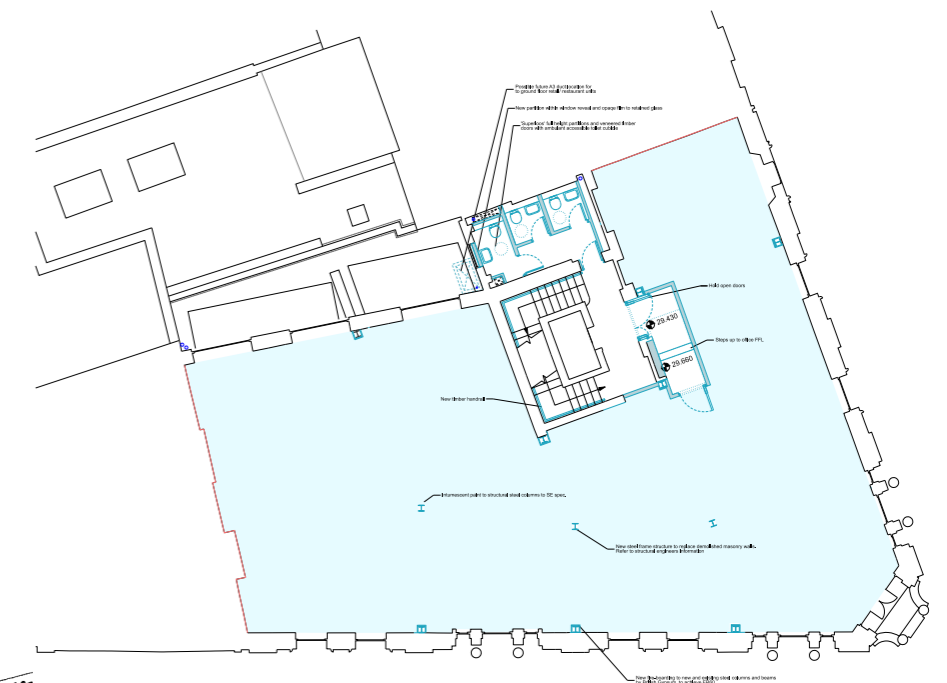
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Original 1903

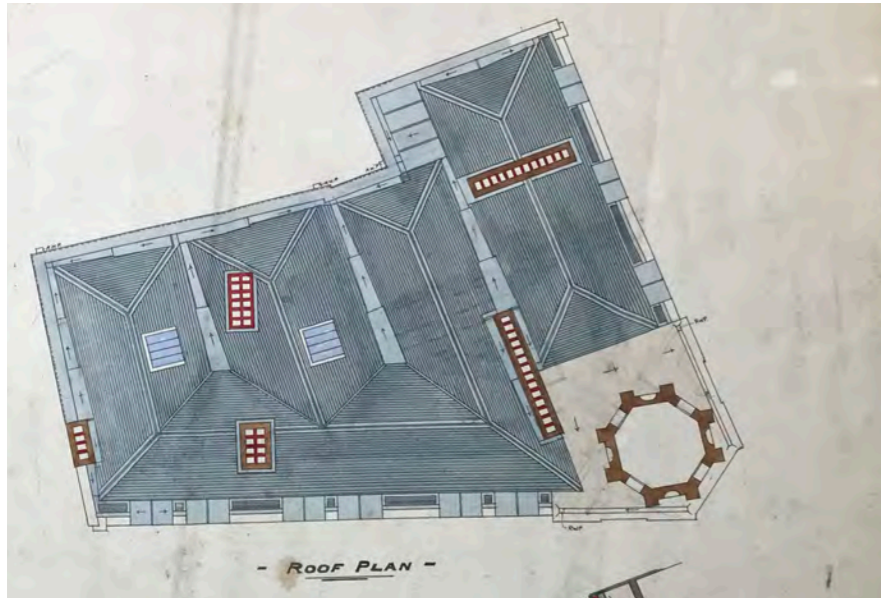


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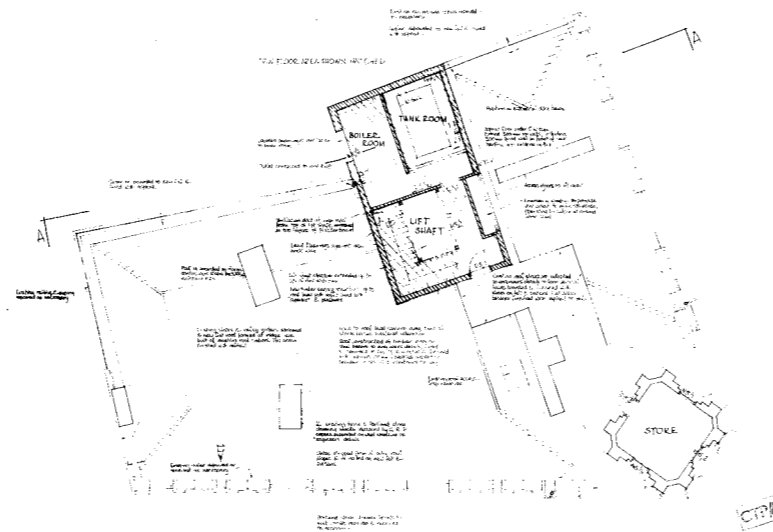


2021

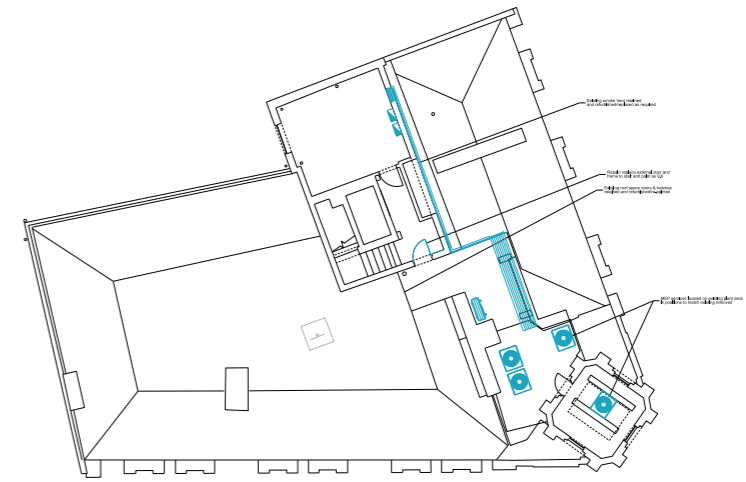
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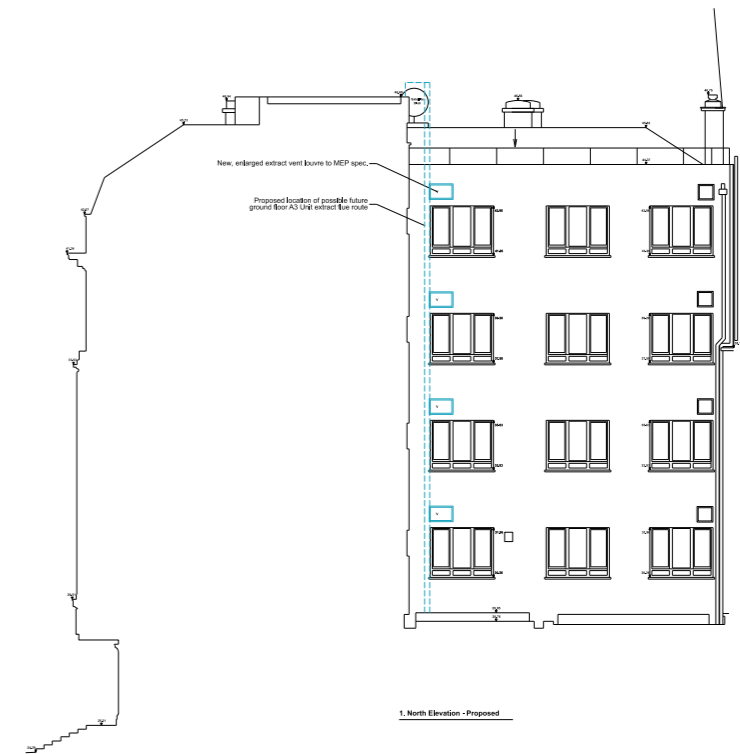
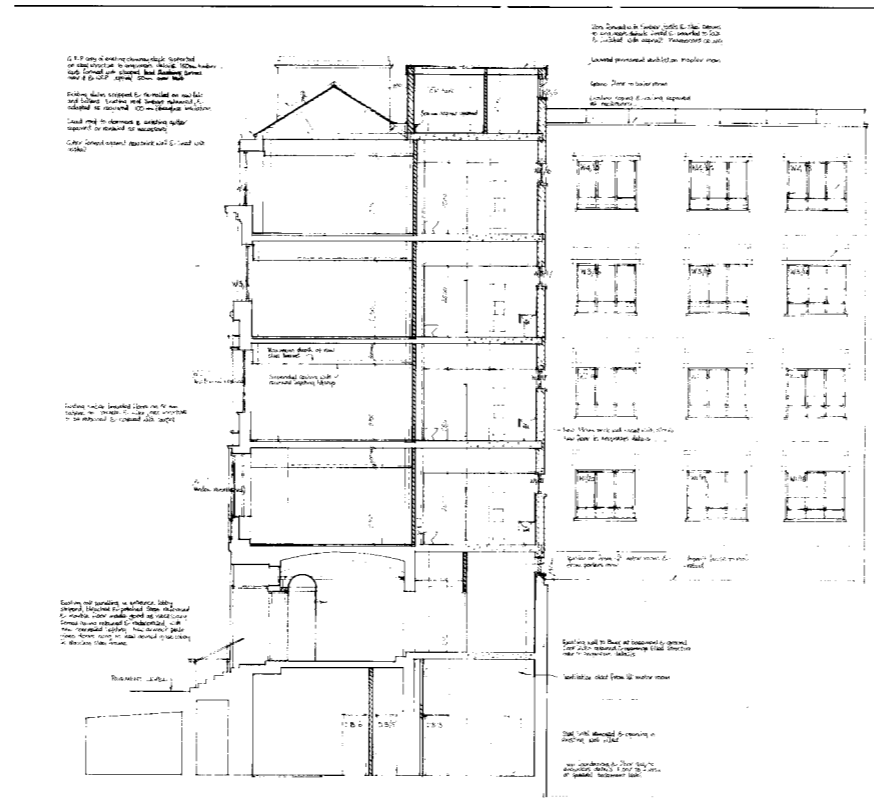
Original 1903



1983



2021



06. CONCLUSION

In conclusion Giles Quarme Architects feel that the current proposals are to be welcomed at Ground floor, the intent of the client and architects sees to be sympathetic to the external facades of the Charles Holden/Percy Adam original scheme and are to be welcomed at Ground floor by reintroducing the original intent of views when you walk through the doors to the offices at upper floor level.

The works to the upper floors is deemed to be of little interest in terms of impact on the heritage asset as the 1983 consented and actioned scheme removed almost all of the historic fabric to the upper floors, infilled the lightwells and introduced downstand suspended ceilings throughout.

The current proposals do remove the remaining fabric that provides an understanding of the original layout of the first floor, but again these have also been removed of all of their historic mouldings, and the floors and chimneys above have been thoroughly altered and replaced.

The works to include suspended ceilings can be seen on the sections of the proposals and these are an improvement on the previously approved and actioned 1983 scheme. The suspended ceilings are now located away from the windows, which is to be welcomed.

GQA Nov 2021



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