

PURCELL

BLACKBURN COTTON EXCHANGE HERITAGE STATEMENT

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KATE BURDEN / REBECCA BURROWS

On behalf of Purcell ®
29 Marygate, York, YO30 7WH
rebecca.burrows@purcelluk.com
www.purcelluk.com

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DOCUMENT ISSUE

Issue 1	(June 2016)	-	Re:Source Blackburn
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I INTRODUCTION



I INTRODUCTION

I.1 AUTHORSHIP

This report has been prepared by Rebecca Burrows (BA(Hons), MSc, IHBC) Senior Heritage Consultant and Kate Burden BA(Hons) of Durham University on behalf of Re:Source Blackburn. Copyright will be vested with Purcell, with Re:Source Blackburn given rights to distribute this report to relevant stakeholders. Unless otherwise stated, all photographs within this document are copyright Purcell, 2016.

This report has been prepared in compliance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and accordance with the guidance published by Historic England (Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Historic Environment, 2008). It has been written following primary and desk-based research, and site investigation in early 2016.

I.2 HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

This Heritage Statement brings together the current extent of our understanding of the historic development, setting, context and significance of the Blackburn Cotton Exchange in order to inform constructive proposals for its future conservation and reuse. It also provides a comprehensive descriptive and photographic records of the building prior to redevelopment. It aims to provide a single comprehensive resource for those involved in decision making. The sections included within this report are:

Understanding – historic development and understanding of the site in order to inform its future management, including descriptions of how the site exists today, setting, views, context and phases of development

Significance – assessment of the importance of the site as a whole, and as individual elements, based on Historic England's Heritage Values contained within Conservation Principles (2008)

Managing change – identification of relevant planning policy, capacity for change and recommended conservation principles for the site

The aim of this report is to help to shed new light on the historic development of the Cotton Exchange in order to support a viable future use for the building. The report will also establish base parameters for the options review for the Cotton Exchange. This report should be read in conjunction with the Purcell Condition Survey (2016).

I.3 VISION OF RE:SOURCE BLACKBURN

The vision of Re:Source is to raise aspirations and restore hope to Blackburn with Darwen, with the aim of contributing to a recovery of the town's prosperity and addressing poverty. It desires to create an environment that cares for the physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual needs of the town.

Re:Source is a Christian charity, that is passionate about people and communities. Re:Source are developing the Blackburn Cotton Exchange site as a strategic project, that will help support and develop community transformation across our town.

Re:Source Blackburn vision is to save this magnificent Grade II listed building from continued dereliction, and see it flourish once again as a strategic venue. Even in its current state it is beautiful and awe-inspiring, but The Exchange when finished will inspire hope and raise aspirations in the town.

Re:Source Blackburn are committed to working with local partners in re-imagining what this venue could look like, and how it can best serve the town.

2 UNDERSTANDING



2.1 IDENTIFYING THE SITE

Blackburn Cotton Exchange or Exchange Hall (hereafter known as 'the site') is a grade II listed building situated on King William Street in Blackburn, Lancashire (BB1 7DT). The site is situated to the north-west of the town centre, inside the inner ring road. The building is situated to the north-west of the Town Square. A group of significant civic buildings are clustered around this area including the council offices, the central library, concert hall and magistrates court.

Blackburn is a large town in Lancashire, 20 miles from Manchester to the north of the West Pennine Moors on the southern edge of the Ribble Valley. Blackburn is a former mill town and in 2011 the town had a population of 106,000. Blackburn is the largest town within the borough of Blackburn and Derwen, which has a population of 147,400 in total, including the smaller town of Derwen and the surrounding countryside. Textiles were produced in Blackburn since the 13th century, when wool was woven here. A rapid period of development in Blackburn related to the industrialisation and expansion of the textile industry in Britain. As with other mill towns in Lancashire and other industrial towns across the country, Blackburn suffered a terminal decline from the mid-20th century onwards. It is now characterised as a post-industrial town with challenges such as economic deprivation and housing issues.⁰¹ Significant investment and redevelopment from the 1980s onwards has helped revive the town and the proposed future for Blackburn Cotton Exchange is part of this.

⁰¹ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blackburn> accessed 19/04/2016

2.2 EXISTING INFORMATION

It is vitally important to understand the historic function of Blackburn Cotton Exchange and its interrelationship with other similar sites to be able to consider its significance and the importance of its inherent features and details.

Our understanding of the development and history of Blackburn Cotton Exchange has drawn on a variety of sources in order to better inform the decisions for its future. Previous studies, websites and literature relating to the site include:

- The Old Cotton Exchange, Blackburn, Feasibility Study Report, Prepared for Picturehouse, Burrell Foley Fischer LLP, 2013
- Blackburn Past, The Cinema and Theatres of Blackburn, 2010
- Blackburn Times 'Opening of the New Exchange at Blackburn', 6th May, 1865
- English Heritage, Picture Palaces: New Life for Old Cinemas, 1999
- Lewis, B., Life in a Cotton Town: Blackburn, 1818 – 1848, 1985
- Newman, R. ed., The Archaeology of Lancashire: Present State and Future Priorities, 1996
- <http://www.cottontown.org/The%20Cotton%20Industry/Pages/default.aspx>
- <http://www.rovingmick.com/2015/01/06/dickens-blackburns-old-cotton-exchange/>
- <http://www.blackburnpast.com/2010/01/cotton-exchange-exchange-hall-in-king.html>
- <http://www.blackburnpast.com/2010/08/cinemas-theatres-of-blackburn.html>

To inform the historic research, the following Archives were consulted:

- Blackburn Museum and Art Gallery, Blackburn
- Blackburn Central Library, Blackburn
- Lancashire Archives, Preston
- Blackburn with Darwen County Council, Blackburn

Searches of local and national archival catalogues have revealed that very few primary sources on the Cotton Exchange exists. No architectural drawings or building plans have been identified. Some ephemera survives relating to the use of the Exchange Hall as a cinema, including tickets and performance posters, but even contemporary newspaper articles are limited. This has reduced the understanding that can be gained from primary sources.

A full bibliography of our sources used are fully referenced and located at the end of this report.

2.3 GAPS IN KNOWLEDGE

Although there is high level of interest in the cotton industry within Britain and Lancashire, little has been written with direct reference to Blackburn Cotton Exchange. Therefore, information regarding the site's use as a centre for trade is largely based upon publications on other Exchange buildings, which is indirectly relevant to the site. A similar process has been adopted when researching the use of the Exchange Hall as a cinema.

Due to limited primary sources, and complex physical survivals of historic fabric on site there are several gaps in knowledge that could warrant further investigation in the future as more information comes to light. Areas of possible interest include:

- Primary evidence of the original design of the Exchange Hall - original building plans may exist but none have been identified to date. The configuration of the west end of the

hall is tantalising as the physical fabric offers clues for the existence of balconies and various offices, but these cannot be corroborated without primary sources.

- Further investigations into the physical fabric - in order to fully understand the age of each element and the phases of development. To date only a rapid visual assessment has been made of the fabric, which may benefit in the future from a Level 3 building recording exercise (see Historic England, Understanding Historic Buildings, 2006)
- Investigations into the construction of the original Exchange Hall roof - this would reveal more information. The roof and ceiling is currently obscured by the 1920s cinema ceiling.
- Original use as an Exchange Hall - it is believed that the Exchange Hall was only in use as such until the end of the 19th century with entertainment being its primary use due to the cotton industry crash in the 1860s. However, this is not certain and more information on its use would increase our understanding.
- Internal photographs - no photographs of the interior of the building, either in use as an Exchange Hall or as a cinema have been identified. These would be useful when considering development proposals for the interior.
- Staircases and floor levels - The altered floor levels of the entrance hall are of interest and have the potential to tell us more about its various uses. In particular, the small side rooms of the original design are intriguing. Original staircases have been blocked in some locations and investigations into these would provide information on circulation routes.
- Design of the original window tracery - window tracery (in the entrance lobby and to the rear of the hall) has been lost in many locations and more research is required in order to understand these better. This might require a survey of the existing fabric in order to reinstate complete windows.
- Cinema evolution - the development of the various phases of the cinema can be seen within the physical fabric i.e. from one screen to three or five, but this has not been confirmed through primary sources.

2 UNDERSTANDING

2.4 SETTING AND VIEWS

Understanding setting

The setting of a heritage asset is the surroundings in which that heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surrounding evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.⁰²

Setting does not have a fixed boundary and may change over time as the surroundings evolve. The setting of the site in this instance can include the overlapping and related experiences of the historic civic buildings that make up the town centre of Blackburn, wider Lancashire cotton industry sites and national exchange buildings.

Setting of the Exchange Hall

The Blackburn Cotton Exchange is situated in the heart of Blackburn on King William Street. Although the site is in the centre of a urban environment, it does not witness a large amount of road traffic. The building is located is on a key pedestrian route next to one of the largest shopping districts in the town and is opposite the Town Hall.

The surrounding townscape is varied in materials, design and age; from the 1856 town hall, to 1980s and 2000s shops, resulting in the Cotton Exchange having a very diverse environment, making this building unique and locally incomparable.

Designated heritage assets

Despite the strong urban grain and substantial modern development, this Grade II listed building is surrounded by many other designated heritage assets which emphasise this area's prosperity, significance, and high-quality architecture.

The following plan sets out those listed buildings within the close proximity of the site. Although none of the surrounding buildings are directly linked with the cotton industry, the important public buildings create a powerful group of prominent buildings, of which the Cotton Exchange is an integral part. Buildings with civic

functions include the Central Police Station and Courthouse, and the Town Hall. The area around the market square in Blackburn grew to become the centre of wealth and justice, with high-quality architecture being used to represent this power.

Further north there are a series of houses which have been listed as Grade II buildings; this demonstrates the wealth that the cotton industry brought to the area, as not only are they centrally located, they are long red bricked terrace houses all with iconic doorways making them architecturally uniformed.



Aerial view of Blackburn Town Centre, including a key listing all of the listed buildings in the area.

A	The Blackburn Cotton Exchange	Grade II
B	College of Technology and Design	Grade II
C	Central Police Station and Court House	Grade II
D	King Georges Hall	Grade II
E	K6 Telephone Kiosk	Grade II
F	1-21 Richmond Terrace	Grade II
G	National Westminster Bank	Grade II
H	Blackburn Museum	Grade II
I	Textiles Museum	Grade II
J	Town Hall	Grade II
K	22-27 Richmond Terrace	Grade II
L	Nos.25-31a on Victoria Street, Including No. 10 James Street	Grade II
M	Church of St John Evangelist	Grade II

⁰² Historic England, The Setting of Heritage Assets, Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: Guidance Note Three, 2015

Conservation Area

Within the town centre of Blackburn, there are five Conservation Areas: Cathedral, Darwen Street, King Street, Northgate, and Richmond Terrace. The Blackburn Cotton Exchange is positioned within the Northgate Conservation Area. This area is comprised predominantly from 19th and 20th century buildings which are largely retail and commercial buildings. Many of the municipal buildings that lay within this boundary are Grade II and made from locally quarried Carboniferous Gritstone. Although this area is designed around the notable buildings in the area, such as the Blackburn Cotton Exchange and the town hall, unsympathetic developments have impeded upon historical views into and through the area.



- 1 Blakey Moor street, west, view of Blackburn College
- 2 Blakey Moor street, north, view of King George's Hall front entrance
- 3 Town Hall Street view, north, the town hall on the right, Cotton Exchange to the rear on the left
- 4 Town Hall Street view, north, Cotton Exchange main entrance
- 5 Town Hall Street view, west, Exchange Hotel and buildings to the rear of the site
- 6 Kings William Street view, west, Cotton Exchange on the left

2 UNDERSTANDING

Key views

The key views on the adjacent plan have been chosen as they contribute to our understanding of the significance of the Cotton Exchange through their visual and historical relationship or associations between the site and other heritage assets in the area.⁰³

In spite of Blackburn Cotton Exchange being in the centre of the town, the locations where you can see this site have been reduced dramatically by a large amount of 19th and 20th century development that has occurred to the south of the site. However, the key features of the building and the principal elevations can be viewed along King William Street, but also Exchange Street and Museum Street. Furthermore, although it is not an obvious view, the view from the alleyway at the west end of the site proves for an interesting perspective of the building.



Significant views from the Blackburn Cotton Exchange

⁰³ Historic England, The Setting of Heritage Assets, Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: Guidance Note Three, 2015



2 UNDERSTANDING

2.5 ARCHAEOLOGY

There are no scheduled ancient monuments within the setting of the site although it does contain areas of archaeological interest. The National Record of the Historic Environment (NRHE) has been searched for records of architectural and archaeological interest within 250m of the Cotton Exchange using Historic England's online tool Pastscape.⁰⁴ The records identified have been listed below. The exclusion of any features from this list does not imply an absence of historic significance. Pastscape only offers information on records that have been created through previous research into a place:

- 01 Cotton Exchange - Exchange and cinema of 1865 by Brakespear of Manchester; high Victorian Gothic in an incomplete design
- 02 Monument no.43499 - the site of Fish Stones on the site of the rebuilt Market House
- 03 Blackburn College of Technology and Design - Technical College of 1888 by Smith, Woodhouse and Willoughby
- 04 Randall Street Works - 1870s works of James Haydock, a heald and reed manufacturer
- 05 Limbrick Mill - house then mill of c.1836, weaving sheds survive

Several records within 500m of the Exchange Hall are also of interest in relation to the historic development of the site:

- 06 Monument no. 43500 - site of market cross, erected 1101, rebuilt 1533, demolished post-1802. Adjacent to well and stocks
- 07 Monument no. 43501 - Old Bull Hotel, pre-17th century, demolished in the 1950s
- 08 Monument no. 1356761 - Blackburn Market Hall complex 1960s
- 09 Oxford Mill - weaving and dying mill c.1875

⁰⁴ <http://www.pastscape.org.uk/background.aspx>

2.6 CONDITION AND USE

Blackburn Cotton Exchange has been largely empty for over 10 years and consequently is in a poor state of repair. Following closure as a cinema, much of the internal fit-out and subdivisions to the ground floor rooms have been removed leaving a heavily scarred shell which appears severely dilapidated. This is a slightly misleading appearance, as much of the building was found to be stable and in need of aesthetic or fit-out works only. Below is a summary of more urgent works as described in more detail within the body of the report.

2.6.1 EXTERIOR

The roofs to the original building appear to be in reasonable condition, however, these were inspected from ground level only. There may be blocked parapet gutters, particularly to the tower where staining was noted. There is evidence of ongoing water ingress to the rear spaces within the 1920s extension, where there are a mix of pitched slate roofs with valley gutters and flat roofs. High level access is planned to provide further information on these spaces.

There were no areas of the elevations found to be at risk of collapse or accelerated decay. There are multiple instances of soft faces to masonry, missing or damaged ornamentation, staining and algal growth, damaged glazing and unsympathetic alterations but these can be seen as longer term repairs. Reinstatement of items such as tracery and stained glass will be expensive and are not technically required to provide a water tight shell.

2.6.2 TOWER INTERIOR

There have clearly been three additional floors inserted within the tower in the past, as well as the ground floor having been lowered. Consequently, the internal walls are heavily disfigured with multiple pockets and embedded steel ends relating to former structure, infilled windows and missing sections of tracery. There are some alterations which have left potentially unstable masonry, however, the repairs required are again largely cosmetic such as cleaning, providing stone indents, unblocking windows, reinstating tracery and re-glazing windows.

2.6.3 BASEMENT

Reported dry rot to the space has recently been treated and the risk is now presumed to be removed. The remaining space is again structurally sound and largely in reasonable condition. Extensive general strip out of redundant finishes is required and provision of general decoration/fit-out, however, no major concerns were raised. Some of the rooms to the rear were not inspected due to safety concerns and may have further issues.

2.6.4 GROUND FLOOR

The main space bears the scars of the former multiple screen cinema and consequently appears in poor condition. Multiple embedded steels and potentially unstable openings or pockets noted within the structural report which require attention. There are also a number of loose and damaged steel ceiling tiles to the main room which are a safety hazard and require either removing or re-fixing as a matter of urgency. The rear wall to this space has multiple lancet windows which have been infilled and partially removed, repair and reinstatement of these is again a largely cosmetic requirement. The floor is a temporary structure and may not be suitable for permanent use.

The spaces within the 1920s extension are in poor condition, with water ingress from above causing damage to steel tile ceilings, lay lights and wall finishes. There appears to be a room beyond this area which has been divided off and is in use by an adjoining property, the ownership of this requires clarification. There is also evidence of water ingress above the rooms to the north-east of the stage, though an additional roof has been added which is likely to have stopped this.

2.7 HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

This section provides an overview of the various heritage assets within the site.

SUMMARY TIMELINE

- 1729** - The first Cotton Exchange is built in Manchester
- 1865** - The Blackburn Cotton Exchange opened
- 1869** - Charles Dickens gave a reading at the Blackburn Exchange of 'A Christmas Carol'.
- 1919** - The Blackburn Cotton Exchange was sold, and began its transformation into a cinema.
- 1924** - Cinema underwent a major development, adding an extension and a lowered ceiling
- 1955** - Site changed ownership and became known as Essoldo, five screens were installed.
- 1985** - The cinema became a Grade II listed building.
- 2005** - The building closed.
- 2006** - The site was stripped internally of its cinema features

19th century development of Blackburn Cotton Exchange

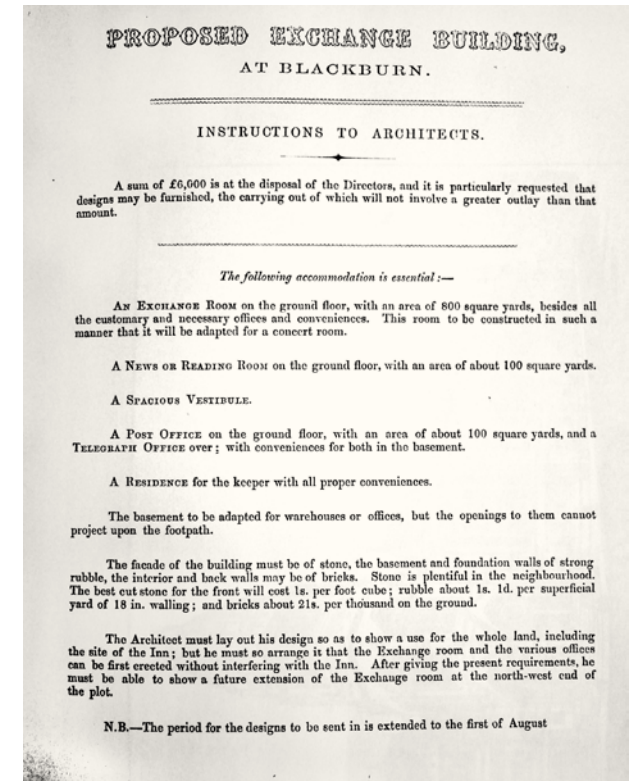
1860 - A design competition was held to find new designs for a proposed Exchange Building in Blackburn. Architects were invited to submit their designs for a total sum of £6,000. Within that figure the design was required to include all furnishings and the following essential features:

- An exchange room on the ground floor along with all offices and conveniences
- A news or reading room on the ground floor
- A spacious vestibule
- A post office, telegraph office and conveniences
- A residence for the keeper
- A basement with warehousing and offices

The design was explicitly required to also be useable as a concert room and was required to be constructed from stone on the principal facades, the basement of rubble and the back walls of brick.

The instruction to the architects stated that a further extension to the north-west of the site would be possible in the future.

The requirements of the Exchange Hall mirrors those found in other similar buildings, such as the Manchester Royal Exchange, which had a post office, tenanted shops, offices, a bar, newsroom, kitchens in the basement and a large trading floor.



*Proposed Exchange Building, Instruction to Architects, 1860
(Blackburn Central Library)*

2 UNDERSTANDING

1860 - On the 8th August, the winners of a design competition for the new Exchange building in Blackburn were announced:

- 1st, £50 Mr. W. H. Brakespear, Manchester
- 2nd, £30 Mesars, Taylor and Foggett, Blackburn
- 3rd, £20 Mr. J. Bentley, Kendal⁰⁵

The winning design by Brakespear of Manchester was commissioned and the northern range and octagonal tower was built between 1863 and 1865. The southern range was not completed.

W. H. Brakespear was primarily an ecclesiastical architect but was known for branching out from churches to design industrial and commercial structures in a Gothic style. See page 52 for more information on the architect.



The winning design for the Blackburn Exchange Hall

1863 - March 10th, the Foundation stone for the Exchange Hall was laid by the Mayor, J.B.S Sturdy, Esq. In 1885, Vladimir Sherwood published a painting depicting the laying of the founding stone, this painting includes many famous faces of the time, such as, councillors, mayors (past, present, and future), members of parliament, and leading manufacturers. However, the brewer, former mayor, chairman of the Exchange Company, and the architect, William Brakespear, are missing.⁰⁶



Painting by Vladimir Sherwood depicting the laying of the foundation stone to the Blackburn Cotton Exchange⁰⁷

OPENING OF THE BLACKBURN NEW EXCHANGE.
List of Patrons in future Advertisements.
THE OPENING OF THE BLACKBURN EXCHANGE
 and will be celebrated by a **GRAND CONCERT** of Vocal and Instrumental Music on **WEDNESDAY** the 26th April, 1865.
 The orchestra will be complete, and will comprise about forty performers, selected from the London Philharmonic, the Manchester Concert Hall, and the Liverpool Philharmonic Bands.
 The proceeds to be given to the Infirmary.

ARTISTES:
VOCALIST (Soprano): MADAME PAREPA.
VOCALIST (Contralto): MISS PALMER.
VOCALIST (Bass): MR. J. G. PATEY.
PIANOFORTE (Solo): Madame ARABELLA GODDARD.
VIOLIN (Solo): HERR JOACHIM.
FLUTE (Solo): M. DE JONG.

ORCHESTRA.

FIRST VIOLINS. Mr. C. A. Seymour. Mr. W. F. Buck. Mr. J. Ellis. Herr S. Jacoby. Mr. Hies. Mons. C. Rogner. Mr. W. Walker.	DOUBLE BASSES. Mr. Waud. Mr. H. Thorley. Mr. E. Janson.
SECOND VIOLINS. Mr. G. Bentley. Mr. George Ellis. Mr. J. Harrison. Mr. S. Pycroft. Mr. Owen Edwards. Mr. J. H. Openshaw. Mr. J. Stewart. Mr. F. Vetter.	FLUTES. Mr. E. De Jong. Mr. R. Charlton. OBONES. Mr. Jennings. Mr. Drake.
TENORS. Mr. T. H. Jackson. Mr. Howarth. Mr. Millar. Mr. H. Jopson. Mr. J. Wilde.	CLARIONETS. Herr Grosse. Mr. J. Gladney. BASSOONS. Mr. Walters. Mr. Shepherd.
VIOLONCELLOS. Mr. R. Thorley. Mr. Arison. Mons. Colton. Mr. J. G. Turner. Mr. J. Pinder.	HORNS. Mr. L. Edwards. Mr. G. Batley. TRUMPETS. Mr. J. Ellwood. Mr. F. Banks.
	TROMBONES. Mr. Wielopolsky Phillips. Mr. J. Green. Mr. H. Roberts. KETTLE DRUMS. Mr. Batley.
	LIBRARIAN. Mr. W. L. Constantine.

CONDUCTOR - Mr. DAVID JOHNSON.
 To commence at half-past Seven o'clock.
RESERVED NUMBERED SEATS, 7s. 6d. EACH,
 May be secured at Mr. DAVID JOHNSON'S,
 Corporation-street, Blackburn.
 Parties from the country may have Tickets secured by enclosing the amount and postage. The best seats unsecured will in all cases be sent, and where several Tickets are required, they will be placed as near together as possible.
 Doors open to reserved seats at a quarter to seven o'clock.
 Second seats, 4s.; third seats, 2s.
 Second and third seat tickets may be had up the 25th April (the day before the concert) at the following places - Mr. James Walkden, King William-street; Mr. J. N. Haworth, Town-hall Buildings; Mr. C. Tiplady, Church-street; Mr. Wharton, Church-street; Mr. J. H. Robinson, King William-street; Mr. J. Meller, New Market-street; Mr. Denis Baron, Church-street; Mr. David Johnson, Corporation-street. Note:—On the day of the concert every class of ticket will be sold ONLY at Mr. David Johnson's, Corporation-street.
 An early application for tickets is requested.
REGULATIONS.—Holders of second and third seat tickets will be admitted at six o'clock. NO MONEY WILL BE TAKEN AT THE DOOR TILL SEVEN O'CLOCK, thus securing to purchasers of tickets an opportunity of taking their seats before money be taken at the door.
 Special Trains will run to Accrington, Burnley, Clitheroe, and Over Darwen, at ordinary 1st and 2nd class fares, calling at all the intermediate stations as required.
T. H. BAYNES,
WM. GODDINGTON, } Hon.
W. H. HORNBY, jun., } Secs.
A. I. ROBINSON,

Newspaper article from the opening of Blackburn's new exchange

⁰⁶ Cotton Town, Available From: www.cottontown.org

⁰⁷ Blackburn Museum and Art Gallery (1885) Laying the Foundation Stone to the Cotton Exchange, Blackburn [Online] Available From: <http://artuk.org/discover/artworks/laying-the-foundation-stone-to-the-cotton-exchange-blackburn-153964>

⁰⁵ Chronological Notes on the Blackburn Cotton Exchange, Blackburn Central Library, (Unknown Date) Date Accessed: 8th March 2016)

1865 - The Exchange Hall was opened in April 1865 at half the size of the originally envisaged design. Due to the Lancashire Cotton Famine the second hall was omitted and the central tower was not constructed to its full height. On 26th April the opening concert of the Exchange was noted in the Blackburn Times:

*"About eight o'clock the interior of the building presented a very animated appearance, while outside the crowd was great, waiting to hear the opening strains of the concert... every seat in the building was occupied, and many had to stand, looking down at the vast room, one could not help feeling thankful that a place has at last been built in which meetings and concerts may be held without damage to the constitutions of those who speak and sing"*⁰⁸

A description of the Manchester Royal Exchange gives an indication of what the Blackburn Cotton Exchange may have been like on a typical trading day:

*"Well over a thousand men in tall silk hats and beautifully dressed. It was difficult to see exactly what was going on. There was little noise and certainly no idle chatter. Just men standing thoughtfully or moving noiselessly from one person to another. They were, of course, in search of a deal. And you deal in whispers, nods, gestures, when you are after business and conclude your transaction with a final shake of the hand or head, to indicate acceptance or refusal. Thousands of pounds would exchange hands in a few, short, exchanged half-sentences. On a really good day nobody would stand still for more than a minute, but dash madly from point to point in search of the best deal."*⁰⁹



The original Exchange Hall soon after completion

⁰⁸ Blackburn Times, 1865 'Opening of the New Exchange at Blackburn'. 6th May

⁰⁹ RDH Scott, The Biggest Room in the World: A Short History of the Manchester Royal Exchange, 1976

2 UNDERSTANDING

1866 - November 26th and 27th, performance by Christy's Minstrels at the Exchange Hall¹⁰

1869 - April 29th, Mr Charles Dickens gave a reading in the Blackburn Exchange of 'A Christmas Carol'. This was the last public appearance that the great man gave in Lancashire.¹¹

1870 - On July 2nd and 4th, Queen's minstrels, the Royal Original Christy's, performed at the 'Exchange Assembly Rooms'¹²

1878 - November 9th, a lecture was given by the explorer H. M. Stanley¹³

1879 - October 21st, a Liberal meeting was held in the Exchange¹⁴

1879 - November 6th, Lecture was given by the war correspondent Mr. Archibald Forbes¹⁵

1880 - March 17th, a Conservative meeting was held¹⁶

1880 - October 16th, a Conservative meeting was held and addressed by the Hon. E. Stanhope, MP, and Sir H. D. Wolff, MP¹⁷

1883 - December 1st, Mr. W. E. Briggs, M. P. addressed his constituents in the Exchange Hall¹⁸

¹⁰ Chronological Notes on the Blackburn Cotton Exchange, Blackburn Central Library, (Unknown Date) Date Accessed: 8th March 2016)

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

EXCHANGE ROOM, BLACKBURN.
FOR TWO NIGHTS ONLY.
MONDAY AND TUESDAY, OCTOBER 7th & 8th.
MIRTHFUL!
MORSELS!!
MUSICALLY!!!
MINGLED!!!!

MR. JAS. TAYLOR

CHAMPION COMIQUE OF GREAT BRITAIN,
Winner of the Hundred Guinea Prize at the late Comic Contest
in London, will give his Entertainment, entitled

SKETCHES FROM LIFE!
ASSISTED BY
MRS R. A. BRENNAN
Serio-Comic and Soubrette Actress.
MR. R. A. BRENNAN
Baritone and Buffo Vocalist.
Pianist - - - Herr SCHMIDT.

Prices of Admission—
First Class Seats 2s. Second ditto 1s. Third ditto 6d.
Doors Open at Half-past 7, commence at 8 o'clock.
Carriages to be ordered at 10 o'clock.
AGENT IN ADVANCE - - Mr. H. MONTAGUE.
Tickets may be obtained at Mr. HAWORTH'S, Printer, Mr. MELLOR'S,
and all the principal Music Sellers.

Poster advertising a musical performance in 1867

ASSEMBLY ROOM,
EXCHANGE, BLACKBURN.
On Saturday Afternoon, Oct. 23rd.
Doors open at 2-0, to commence at 2-30

THE GREAT TREAT of the SEASON.
ARABIAN, INDIAN, AND CHINESE MAGICAL
ILLUSIONS, BY THE
GREAT WONDER WORKER!
New and Extraordinary Entertainment in the World!
ENCHANTED PALACE of MAGICAL WONDERS
Introducing Surprising and Delightful Experiments, Illusions with
Members of the Feathered Tribe; The Love Bird and Mysterious Canary.
EXTRAORDINARY PRODUCTION OF FLAGS OF MANY NATIONS.
THE PLUME OF MERCURY, OR A REMARKABLE FLIGHT.
FUNNY VENTRILOQUIAL MARVELS!
An Old Man on the Housetop. A Boy up the chimney. A little girl in a
Hat, or Here, There, and Everywhere.
Transmission of Thoughts; a Mystery. Feast of the Wizard.
Magic Cookery—a Plum Pudding made in a Hat.
This Ticket will admit 1, 2, 3, or any number of Children on paying
ONE PENNY EACH.
ADULTS 3d. EACH. DON'T FORGET. COME EARLY.

500 PRIZES GIVEN AWAY!!
To the Children entering the Hall.
Consisting of Ships, Boats, Trains, Members on ships,
Whistles, Toys, Picture Books, Fairy Tales, Maps, &c.
Books, Stationery, Pens in boxes, Little Chairs and Tables, &c.
Wagon, &c.

T. ASHWORTH, PRINTER, LONDON ROAD, MANCHESTER.

Newspaper article to an event at the Exchange Hall

1896 - December 11th, John Dillon, M. P. leader of the Irish Party made a public appearance at the Exchange Hall¹⁹

1897 - The Exchange Hall was enlarged.²⁰ This is the possible date for the addition of the pitched roof to the octagonal tower, which was not part of the original design. A date range of between 1865 and 1905 has been suggested for the addition of the roof; further research is required to clarify this.

1898 - July 2nd, a fire broke out at the Exchange Hall²¹

1900 - December 12th, Mr. Alfred Nuttall, brewer, purchased the Exchange Hall, Exchange Hotel and adjoining property for £20,000²²



A Grand Bazaar held at the Exchange Hall in 1895

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ British History Online states that the site was "enlarged in 1897" [online]

²¹ Chronological Notes on the Blackburn Cotton Exchange, Blackburn Central Library, (Unknown Date) Date Accessed: 8th March 2016)

²² Ibid.

2 UNDERSTANDING

1901 - June 24th, a mass meeting of weavers in the Exchange Hall took place to protest against “driving” (a new manufacturing process)²³

1903 - March 10th, Sousa’s band performed at the Exchange²⁴

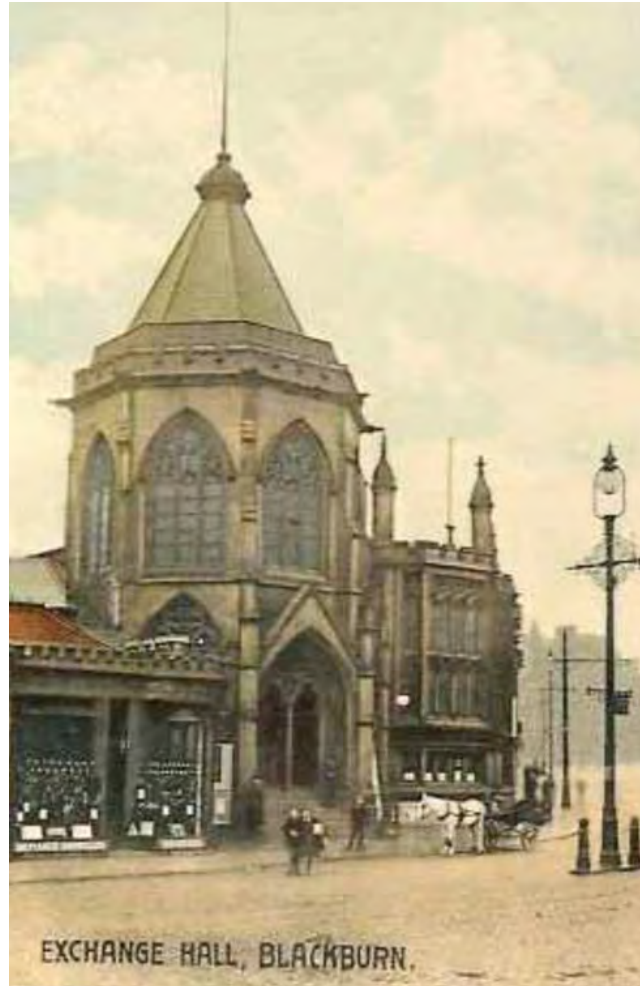
1904 - April 13th, Wesleyan Methodist Circuit four-day bazaar opened in Exchange Hall, total receipts accounted to £2,190²⁵

1904 - November 15th, The Kilties Band gave two performances in the Exchange Hall²⁶

1904 - November 21st, Madame Albani sang at the Exchange Hall²⁷

1905 - November 25th, Unitarians first service at the Exchange Hall²⁸

1910 - December 2nd, Lord Morley addressed Liberal meeting²⁹



The octagonal tower of the Exchange Hall c.1890s

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

20th century reuse of the Cotton Exchange

Exchange Halls were often originally built as a multi-purpose space as an exchange but also a public assembly room and possibly a fixed stage for concerts. With the closure of mills and the decline of the cotton industry occurring all over the country, it became common for Exchange buildings in the North West to focus on the secondary use as a public entertainment venue, as suggested by the various uses and performances listed in the previous section. The advent of cinema – silent movies and then talkies – led to the evolution of these assembly halls into specialist cinema buildings.

We know that the hall was used as an ad hoc cinema space from the early 1910s, and more specifically from 1919 onwards when the building was sold to the Blackburn Syndicate. The building was converted to full cinema use in 1924; at the peak of cinema construction nationally.

The Blackburn Cotton Exchange changed hands many times throughout the 20th century but continued in its use as a cinema. With its large open space (which at peak sat 1,500 people) and high ceilings (resulting in excellent acoustics) the building was an ideal entertainment venue.

1908 – The site showed its first travelling film and became known as The Exchange Picture Hall



Advertisement for some of the first films shown at the Exchange Hall, from the Lancaster Evening Telegraph, 1908



The Exchange Hall at the start of the 20th century

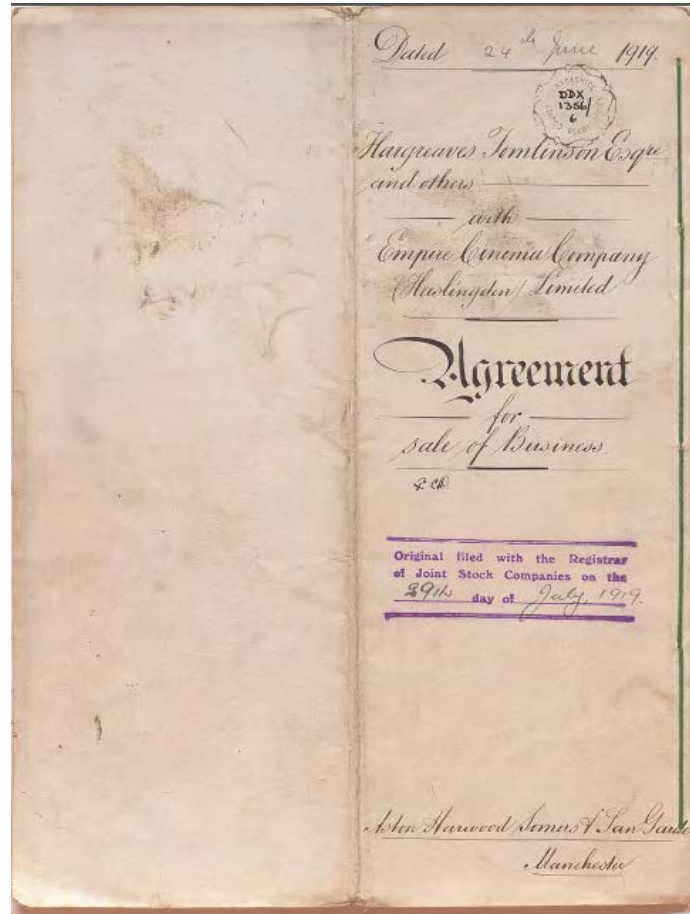
2 UNDERSTANDING

1910s - Male WCs at the west end of the Exchange Hall were installed or refurbished

1919 - November, the Exchange Hall block of property was purchased by the trustees of the Nuttall Estate for £35,000.³⁰ Later on in the same year, the Exchange Hall block was sold again for £70,000 by Blackburn Syndicate. At this date the building was evolving to be used exclusively as a cinema venue and was branded as The Picturehouse.

1924 - March 31st, the former Exchange Hall was re-named the Majestic Cinema and had a grand re-opening. The Exchange Hall itself was retained as a single space but a new circulation extension was added on the southern side of the building at ground floor and basement level. The basement was converted to a cinema bar and café, with staircases, WCs, a mezzanine, barrel-vaulted ceiling and full-height screen/partition added.

1932 - The site modernised its interiors and reopened in October as the New Majestic, however, the seating capacity was reduced to 1,400 people.³¹



'Lease Agreement 24th June 1919' - Lease agreement front page, 1919



Newspaper listing for the Majestic cinema

³⁰ 'Agreement for Sale of Business'. Lancashire Archives (24th June 1919) Date Accessed: 11th April 2016

³¹ Chronological Notes on the Blackburn Cotton Exchange, Blackburn Central Library, (Unknown Date) Date Accessed: 8th March 2016)

1953 - The architectural firm Drury & Gomersall, renovated the cinema, which was taken over by an independent operator.

1954 - June 7th, Blackburn's New Majestic Cinema was the first in East Lancashire to turn over exclusively to the showing of cinemascope. The cost of the installation of the special equipment was roughly £5,000.³²

1955 - December 21st, The New Majestic was acquired by Mr. Sol Sheckman's Essoldo Cinema group of Newcastle, and re-branded as such.³³



Newspaper listing for the new Majestic cinema c.1950s



View along King William Street in the 1950s



Cinema posters advertising the new Essoldo, with the pitched roof of the Exchange Hall in the background in William Street in the 1950s

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

2 UNDERSTANDING

1967 - Further renovations were carried out in March of this year, when the cinema was bought by Classic Cinemas, the site was once again re-named, and became known as Classic Cinema.

1976 - The number of screens within the cinema was increased to three, with the screens now being able to seat: 316, 186, and 256 people.³⁴

1981 - The company, Unit 4 Cinemas, took control of the site and added two more screens to a total of five. The total cinemas capacity was now 799.³⁵

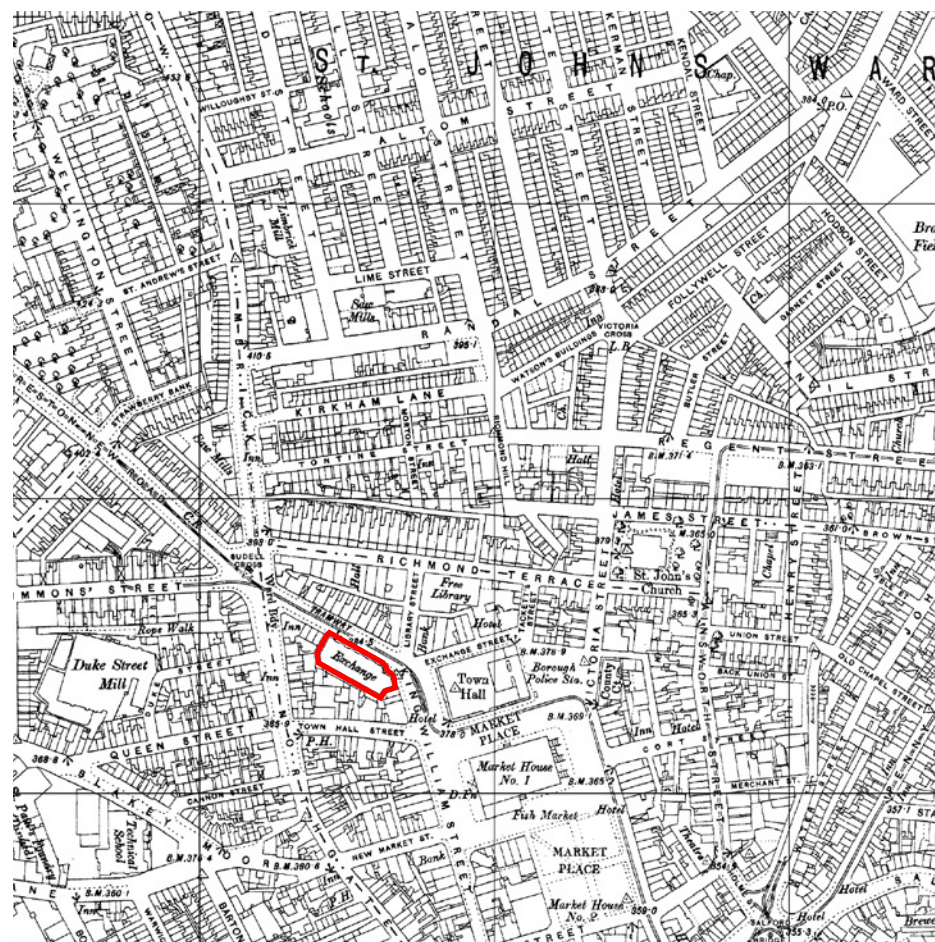
1985 - The former Exchange Hall became a Grade II listed building³⁶

1992 - The cinema was re-named The Apollo. This was the last phase of development c.1994 and the current entrance arrangement within the octagonal tower relates to this. The floor plans on page 25 show the layout of the cinema prior to its removal. The plans show block and stud partition walls of 1994, a suspended ceiling over screens 3 and 4 to the west, a projector room and kiosk at the east end, a suspended timber floor and WC fittings.

2005 - The building was closed on the 22nd December as it was unable to compete with the new Vue complex which had opened in the town.³⁷

2006 - The interior of the Exchange Hall was completely stripped out, including all modern fabric relating to the most recent cinema use and almost all historic fabric relating to the earlier cinema phases. Scars from the previous building phases can now be seen including the original west-end apse and rose window, the 1924 barrel-vaulted ceiling and the early first floor office.³⁸

MAP PROGRESSION



1894 OS Map

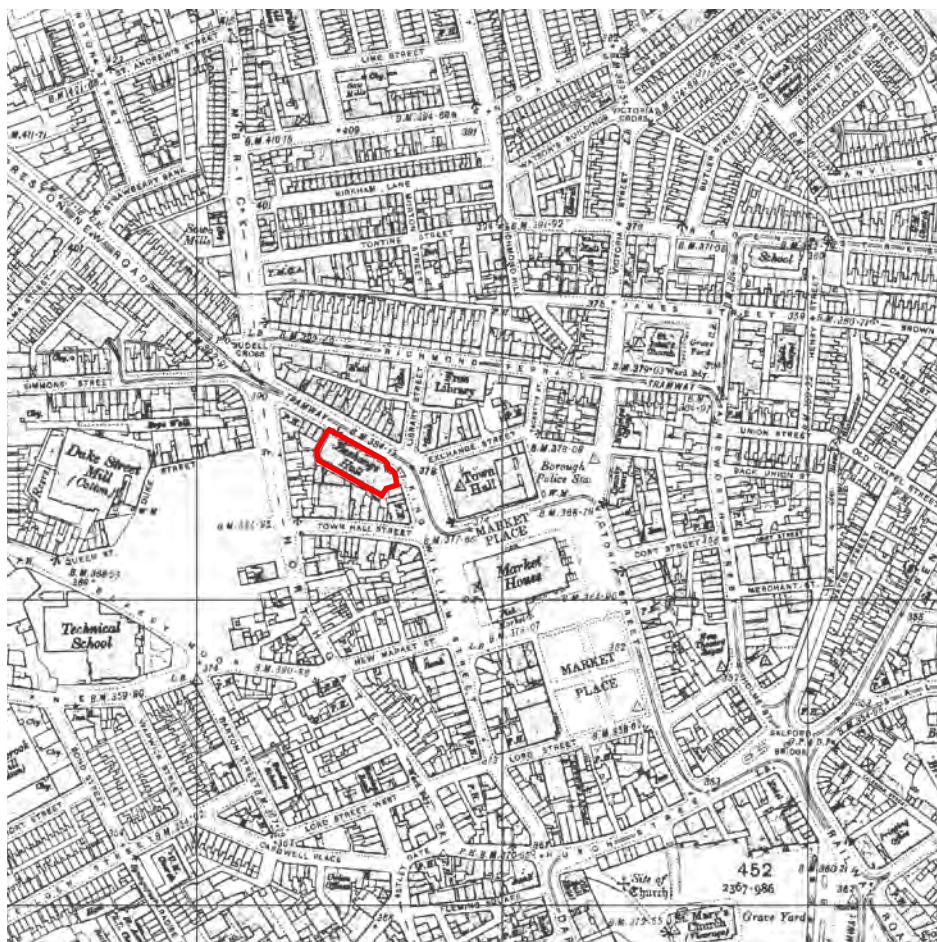
³⁴ Cinema Treasures: Apollo 5 Cinemas in Blackburn, Available From: <http://cinematreasures.org/theaters/24035>

³⁵ Ibid.

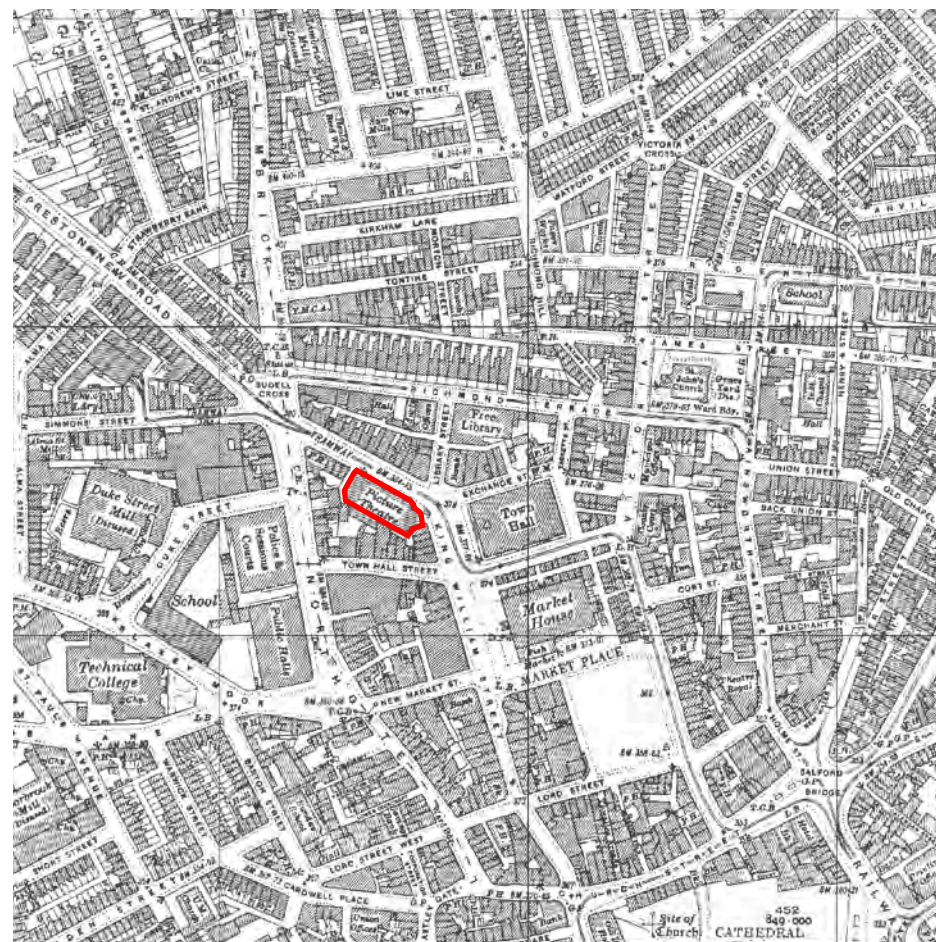
³⁶ English Heritage (1999) Picture Palaces: New Life for Old Cinemas.

³⁷ Cinema Treasures: Apollo 5 Cinemas in Blackburn, Available From: <http://cinematreasures.org/theaters/24035>

³⁸ Ibid.

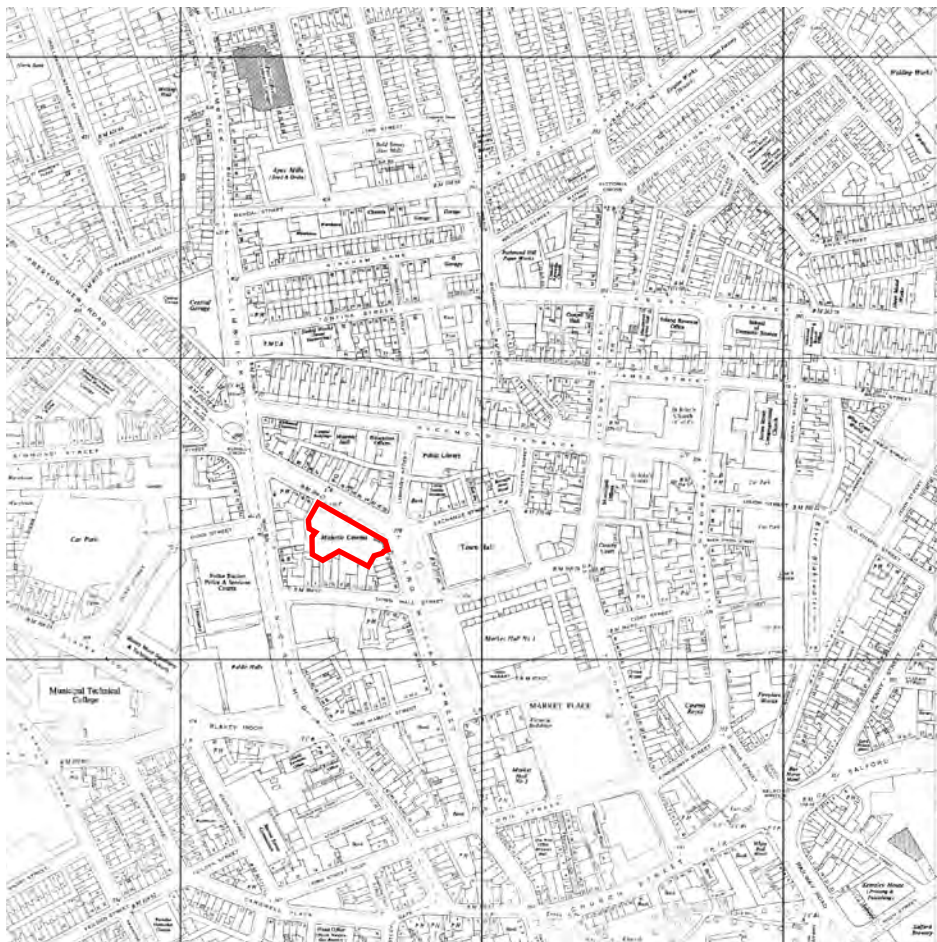


1911 OS Map



1931 OS Map

2 UNDERSTANDING



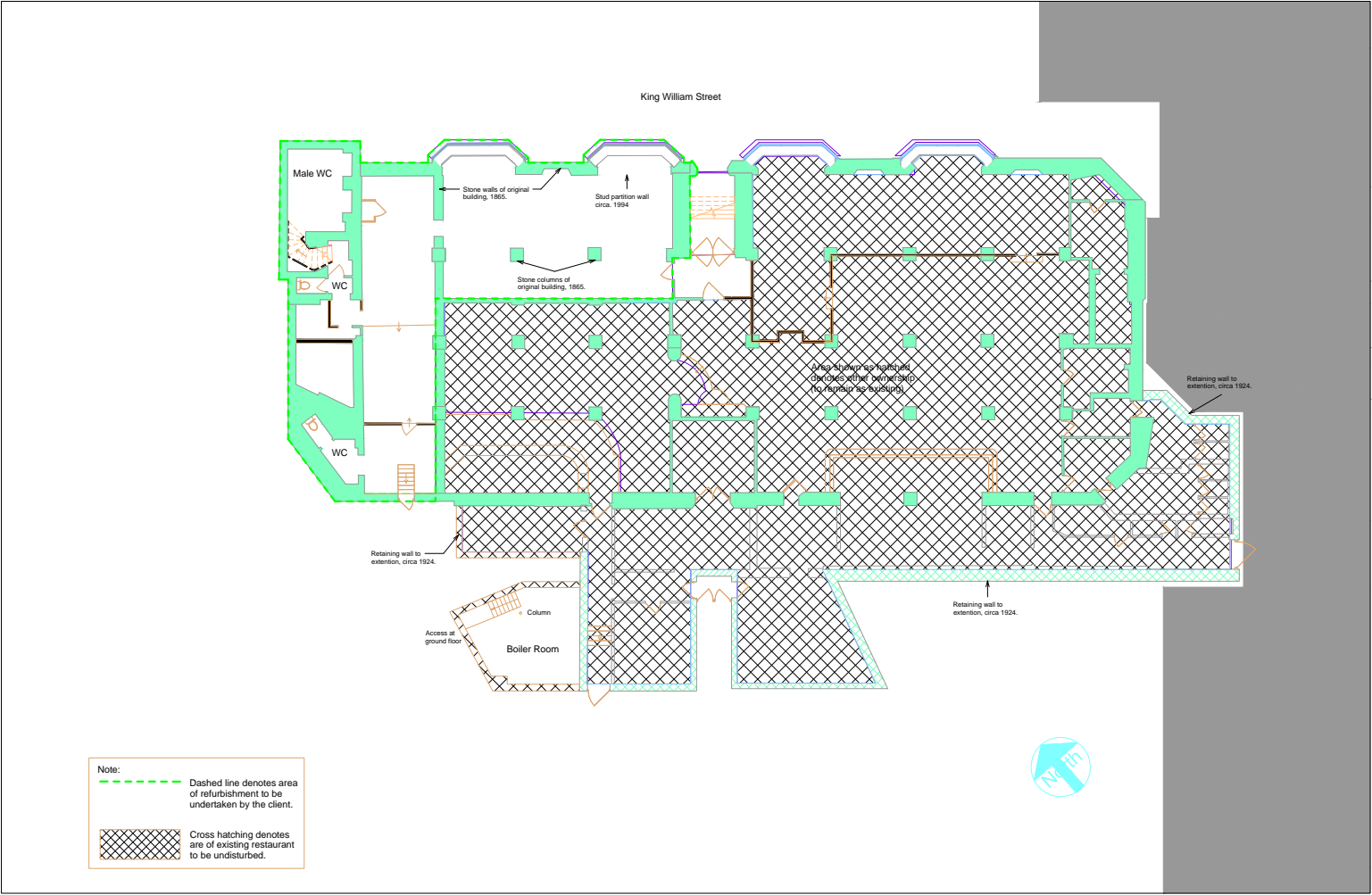
1956 OS Map



1968-1986 OS Map

FLOOR PLANS

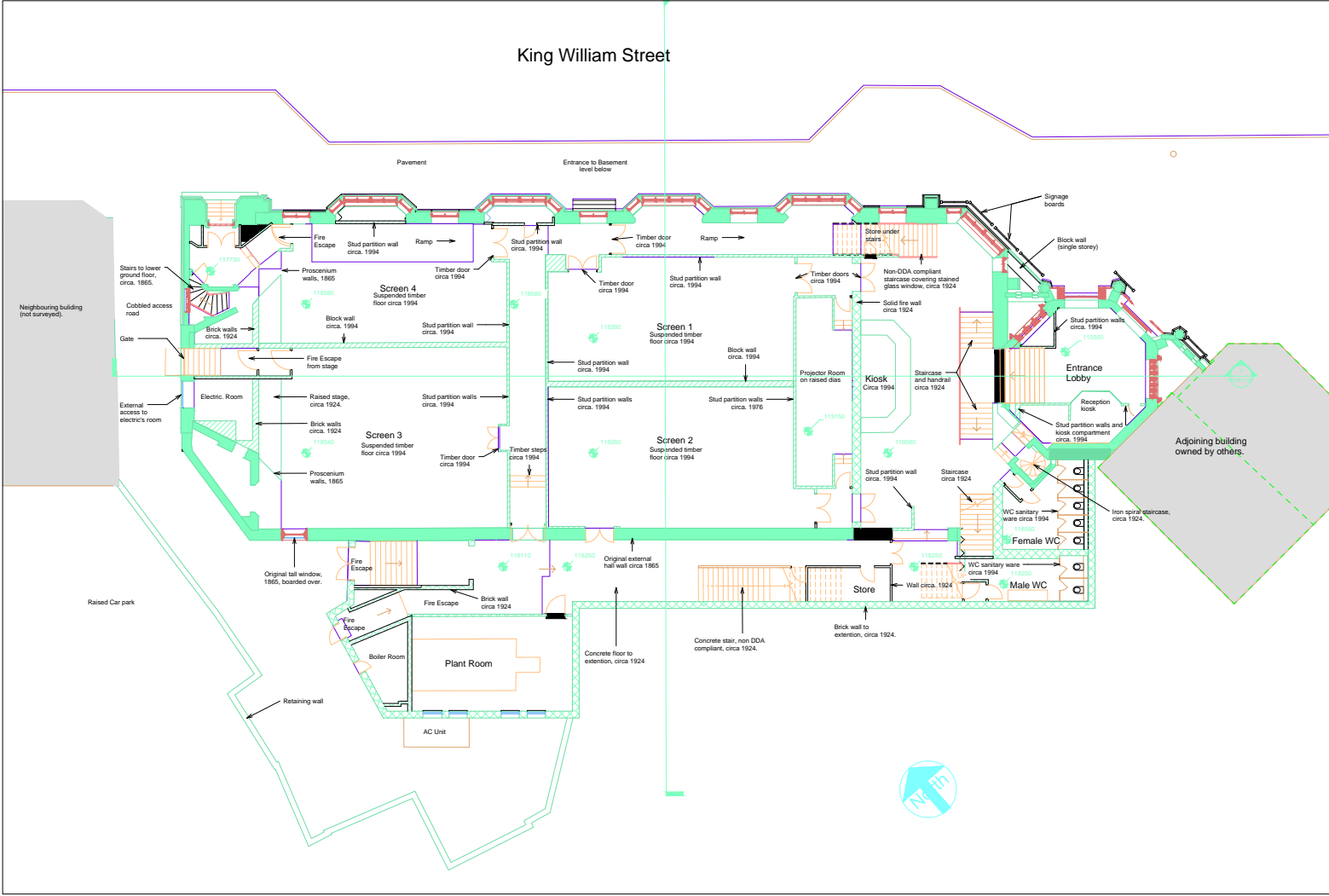
The following floor plans show the Blackburn Cotton Exchange as it was in the early 21st century prior to closure of the cinema.



Basement

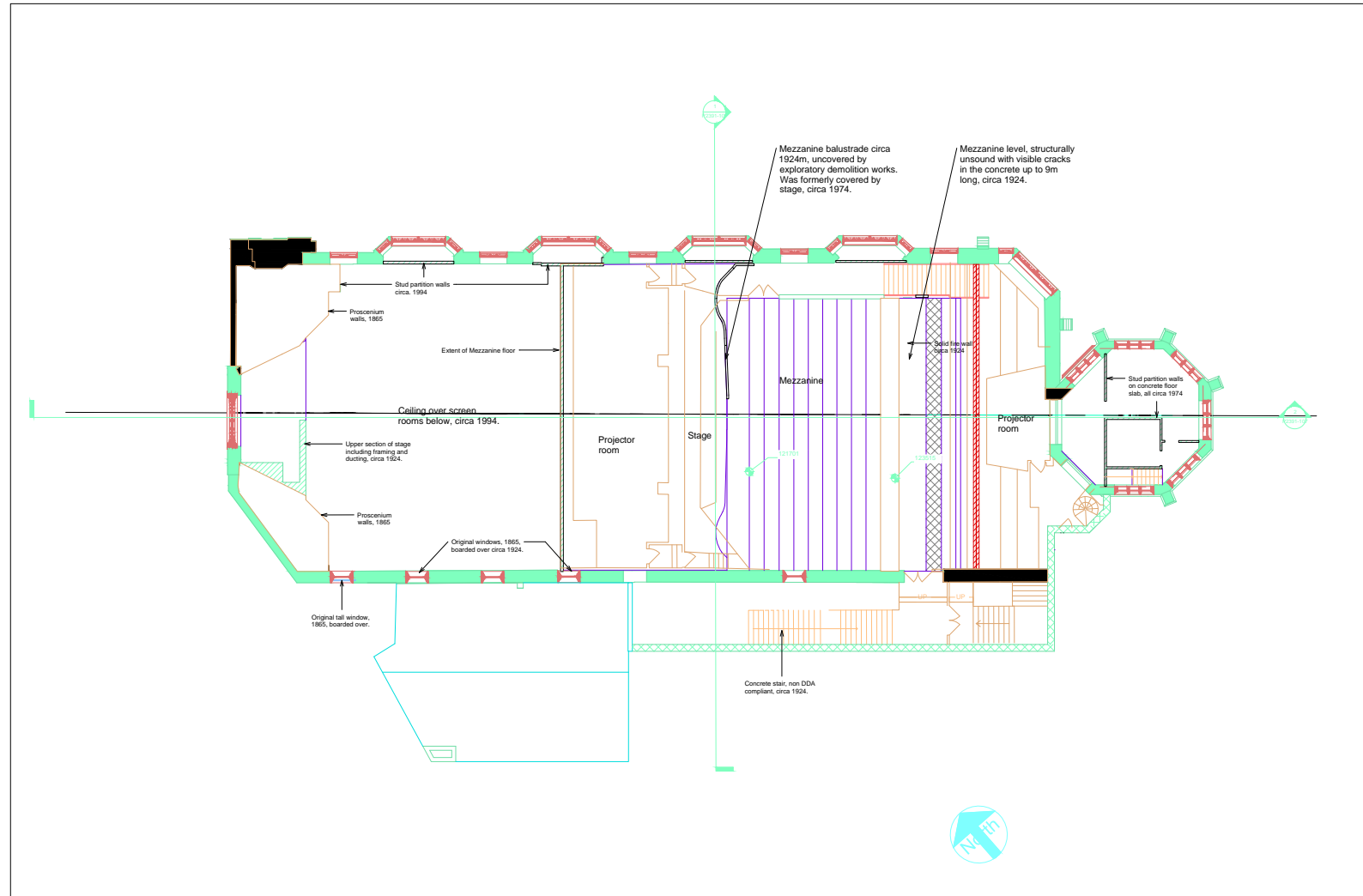
Existing Basement Floor Plan - Cinema
1:100 @ A1

2 UNDERSTANDING



Ground floor

Existing Ground Floor Plan - Cinema
1:100 @ A1



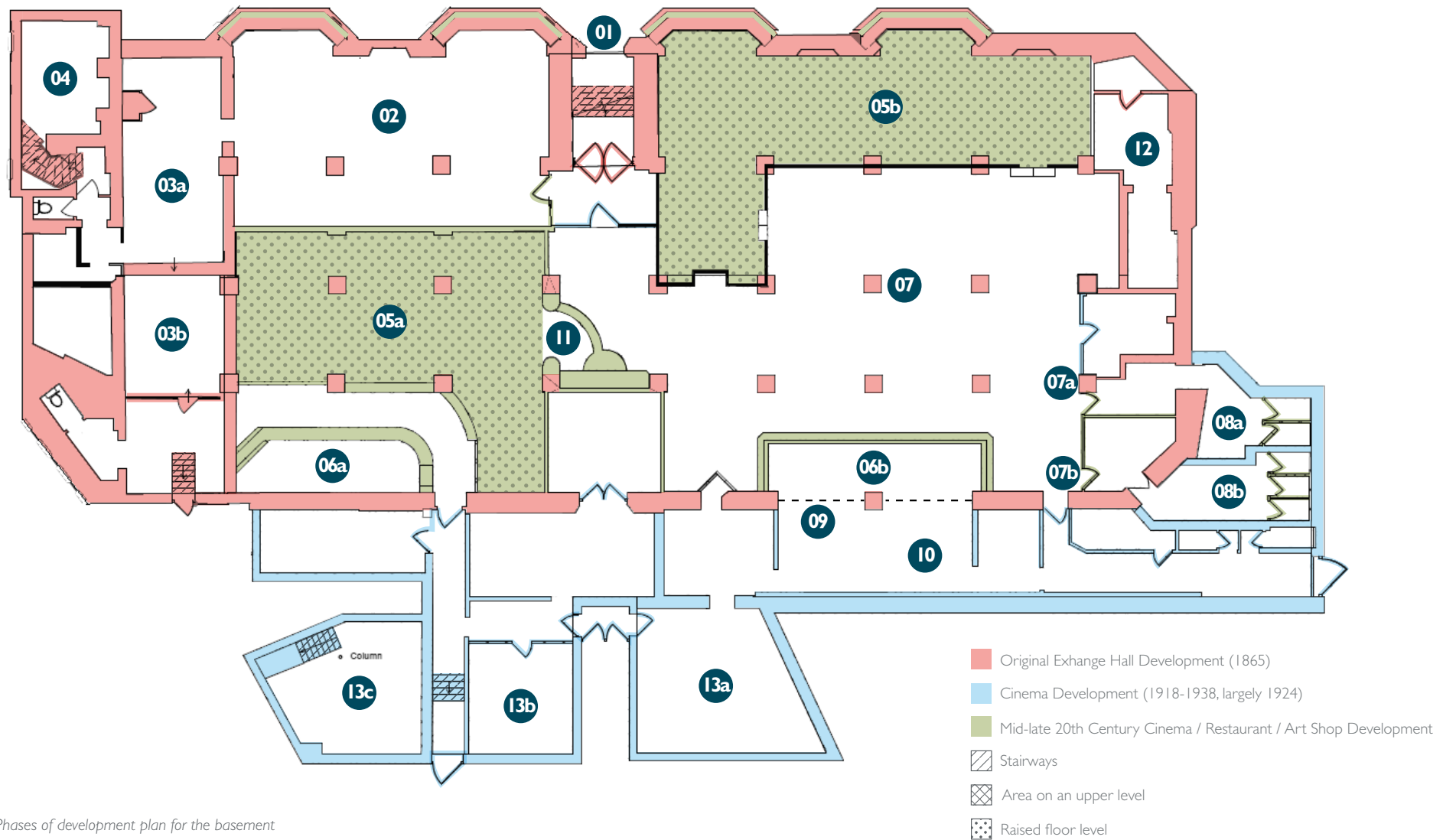
Mezzanine

Existing Mezzanine Plan - Cinema
1:100 @ A1

2 UNDERSTANDING

2.8 PHASES OF DEVELOPMENT PLAN

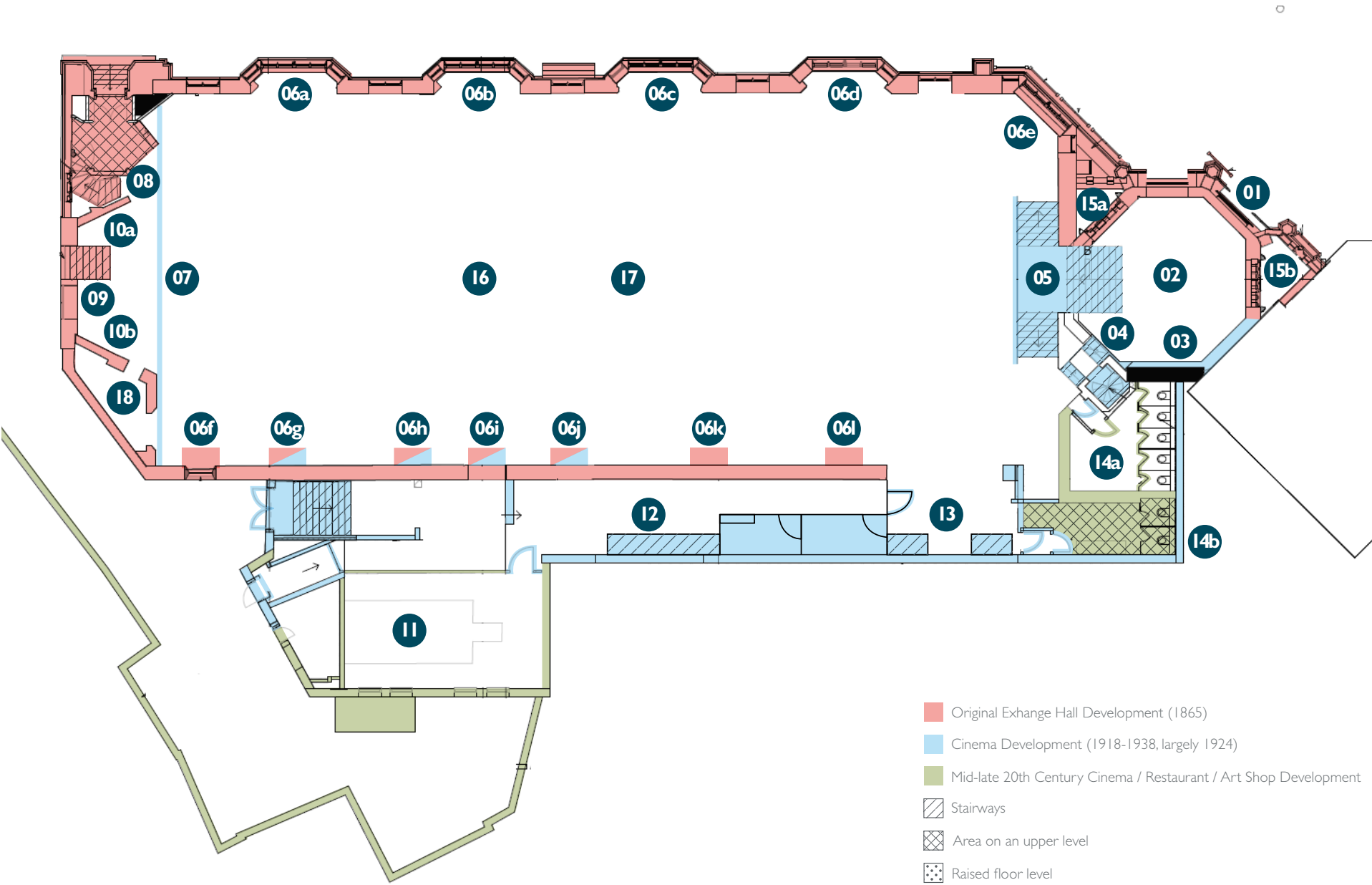
These plans show the phases of development for the site over both floors. No drawings of the first floor offices (and former mezzanine level) exist so these have been noted on the ground floor plan.



Phases of development plan for the basement

- 01 Street Level Entrance: Although the use of the basement floor has change over the years, this entrance has always been the public entrance to the basement level. Steps lead down to replacement iron gates and original polished granite flooring. The black-panted timber doors are possibly original or an early feature. Beyond this door the fixtures and fittings are generally modern.
- 02 Modern Shop unit: This space was last used as a barber shop and although the fixtures and fittings have been stripped out, it still has signs that suggest its last use, such as the window advertisements and modern wallpaper. The arched ceilings have been plastered over so that the brickwork of the arches is not visible, however, the pillars all remain in situ. The wall which divides this space from the restaurant is a lightweight partition of plasterboard. This can also be seen at number 11., however, unlike 11, this partition goes all the way up to the ceiling. The partition hides an older partition and possible access doors.
- 03 West End: A single bay of the basement running the full length north to south has been partitioned off from the main space. The date of this wall is unknown but the partition is possibly original or an early alteration. Small rooms to the west mirror those above on the ground floor and are used as storage and lavatories. To the south is a more recent fire exit with a modern staircase.
- 04 Early lavatories: This area is inaccessible from the basement level and can only be accessed from the ground floor (see number 08 of the ground floor historic development)
- 05 Original storage space, later restaurant: The main space of the Cotton Exchange would originally have been used for warehousing and storage from the 1860s onwards. More recently it has been used as a restaurant and bar. The fixtures, fittings, floors, decorative scheme and partitions all recently to a recent Italian restaurant that occupied the space. At least two modern tiled floors cover any original fabric in this area. Two areas (marked on the maps with dots) have modern raised floors (5a and 5b). The raised floor of 5b has a modern Tuscan-style balustrade surrounding it.
- 06 Bar and servery: The basement contains two bar areas – one a public bar (6a) and the other a servery for the kitchens (6b). Both are modern additions. It is thought that during use as a cinema, the basement would have been used as a café and bar for patrons. There is no physical evidence left of these phases of development.
- 07 Basement: The main basement space retains the original 1865 build supportive pillars are shown. The pillars have been extensively decorated in a Tuscan-style with paintwork, wallpaper and plasterwork. The majority of the pillars are in a good condition, although two have been partially removed to make way for additional walls and developments (7a. and 7b).
- 08 These lavatories mirror those on the ground floor and their layout is thought to date to the 1924 cinema additions. 8a were the male lavatories, and 8b were female; the fixtures and fittings are modern.
- 09 Circulation extension: As part of the 1924 cinema extension a narrow corridor was added at basement level to mirror the circulation space above. The space was for back of house uses and has most recently been used as a restaurant kitchen. At number 9, sections of the original 1865 outer wall have been broken through to create large openings. The wall above is supported by a large steel beam, depicted on the floor plan by a dashed line.
- 10 Circulation extension: The 1924 extension has been heavily altered since its construction and as such possesses very few features of interest. The area is divided into various smaller rooms, such as a staff bathroom, kitchen, storage rooms etc. The kitchen has remnants of leftover equipment and a service hatch, which has been bricked off partway. Between the kitchen and the 'Pot Wash' area, there are signs of asbestos in the suspended ceiling (an asbestos survey will be required).
- 11 Partition: A wall divides the bar space from the restaurant is a lightweight partition of plasterboard.
- 12 This area of small partitioned rooms was possibly added after the 1924 extension to act as an additional managerial office, further investigation into the fabric is required to confirm this. No features of historic interest have been identified.

2 UNDERSTANDING



Phases of development plan for the ground floor

- 01 West End Entrance Lobby: The current main entrance into the building has been in this location since construction in 1865, however, the door was originally above ground floor level; accessed by a set of stone steps from the outside. The entrance lobby led directly into the main hall space. Later, during the cinema development in 1924, the door and lobby space was lowered to street level, the outside steps removed and the entrance tracery altered to accommodate the lower doors. Internally a split stairway was added which led up to the main hall from the lobby. This arrangement meant that the original two small side rooms within the lobby (15a-b) were made redundant. Evidence of the original floor height within the lobby is visible through surviving skirting boards at high level. The double arched tracery within the lobby has also been cut off at springer-level to create new lower openings. The ceiling of the entranceway is vaulted with a central boss and retains some elements of a painted design.
- 02 West End Entrance Lobby: The original design for the tower featured an additional stage above the octagonal lobby of 1865, but this was not constructed. The current pitched roof with decorative fish scale slates was added at a later date, we would suggest it was in 1894 but more research is required.
- 03 West End Entrance Lobby: As a result of a series of developments taking place in this area and a lack of archived evidence, it is difficult to understand the evolution of the lobby space. A reception kiosk was installed here c.1994 with stud partition walls. There is evidence to say that there was access to the mezzanine level part way up the tower. Although this is no longer in place, the staircase that would have led to this is still intact (no. 4).
- 04 West End Entrance Lobby: Below the stairs leading to the mezzanine level, there is an iron spiral staircase that descends into the basement. These are currently covered and inaccessible.
- 05 These stairs leading up to the main hall are thought to relate to the 1924 cinema conversion and would have led to the main screen.
- 06a-e Central Hall Stained Glass Windows: The five sets of stained glass windows that look out onto King William Street are all original, but have been variously blocked and uncovered over time due to the cinema use. They are currently unprotected and have minor damage as a result of vandalism during the time of its abandonment. External netting has been installed to prevent vandalism. Along this wall, the stained glass window bays alternate in design between larger six light projections and smaller two light windows flush with the wall. The windows take the form of perpendicular tracery with a simple stained glass pattern and clear leaded lights
- 06f-l Central Hall Stained Glass Windows: The windows on the south wall have all be greatly damaged over the course of time, to the extent that none of them retain any stained glass, and only 6g-j. retain any of the original gothic tracery. The remaining windows have been completely removed and bricked over on an ad hoc basis, with poor quality brickwork and various phases of development. It is clear that these windows would have been blocked from view internally.
- 07 Proscenium Arch Cinema Screen Division: At the west end of the hall, remains of the upper section of a full-length dividing screen, partitioning off the apsidal west end, which is possibly part of the original (or early) proscenium arch. Later alterations including the 1924 cinema screen and stage would have blocked any public view of the feature rose window and the exchange meeting room. Nothing else survives from the early single screen and later five screen cinema spaces. To the north and south of the central partition are two walls, which are thought to relate to the 19th century proscenium arch construction. Below the stage is an original fireplace, matching that in the first floor meeting room.
- 08 Office, Stairway, Male Lavatories: On an upper level there is a small meeting room or office which may have been used for the exchange of money during the Cotton Exchange era from 1865 onwards. However, it may also have been the telegraph room, with the Post Office below. This room possesses a stained glass window (all features relatively intact), fireplace, wooden ceiling and a viewing window in order for merchants to be able to look over the hall. This area also contains a concrete spiral staircase which leads both up to the meeting room, and down to the bathrooms. The balustrade is decorated, and retains some original paintwork. At basement level (but only accessible from this staircase on the ground floor) are the male lavatories. It is believed that this space would have been always used for this purpose. The room contains early tiles and urinals that date from c.1914.

2 UNDERSTANDING

- 09 Rose Window: The Rose Window at the west end of the hall has remained untouched throughout the different stages of development. It still retains its geometrical tracery and some damaged stained glass. The window was hidden being the partition around 1924 to make way for the cinema, and has only recently been uncovered.
- 10 10a-b. West End Entrance: On the two side walls of the Rose Windows, there are wall scars which suggest numerous alterations. To the north and south of the central apse are two doors, each at different levels, which suggest that there were once galleries in place that would have overlooked the Exchange Hall. Other features in this area include the cinema stage, and beneath this, a fireplace that matches the feature within the first floor office (08)
- 11 Plant and Boiler Room: This section of the Exchange Hall is thought to have been built as part of the 1924 extension as some early 20th century bricks survive in the lower element of the external fabric. The structure was rebuilt and extended in the mid-20th century prior to 1954 and again in the late-20th century to create a plant room and a boiler room. The area is utilitarian in appearance and contains little of historic interest.
- 12 Cinema corridor extension: These areas make up the extension that was added in 1924 to create the purpose-built cinema within the Exchange Hall. The area was built to create a circulation space, allowing the main hall to be used for screenings. This section is clearly divided by the remains of the original 1865 wall, which has survived largely intact. This area has been built with concrete flooring and a with pressed metal panel ceiling with large skylights.
- 13 Staircase: This area clearly shows the markings of where a staircase inserted in 1924 would have led to the mezzanine level. The staircase had two flights from opposite directions that met at mezzanine level and allows access into an upper screen.
- 14a-b Lavatories: At the east end of the Hall there are remains of the female lavatories. It is likely that the original lavatories for the 1924 cinema conversion were placed here in this layout, however the current fixtures and fittings could be as late as 1994. On an upper mezzanine level, there are also remains of the male lavatories (14b). The doorway which leads to this is still in place, however, inaccessible due to the removal of the stairway.
- 15a-b Lobby side rooms: Original 1865 features of unknown use. The floors were removed following removal of the upper floor from the lobby to allow ground floor entrance into the building.
- 16 Central Hall Ceiling: The original ceiling of the Exchange Hall has been hidden by later additions and is not visible. However, it is believed that an access gantry exists above the current ceiling, which would allow assessment of whether any of the original (presumably timber) ceiling or roof structure survives. The current ceiling within the main hall is a barrel vaulted ceiling of pressed metal panelling (likely to be aluminium), which date to the 1924 cinema alterations and were originally painted cream. The original colour can be still partially viewed at the East End of the Hall. The lower barrel vaulted ceiling was commonly used in 1920s cinema design and improved the acoustics. A ladder survives at the west end of the hall would have provided access at the time (currently unsafe for use).
- 17 Central Hall Floor: The original floor of the central hall may survive, hidden beneath the current temporary timber boarded floor, raised up on softwood beams. This is thought to have been put in following the removal of the most recent cinema fixtures and fittings.
- 18 South-west spaces: This was possibly an office, meeting room or newsroom that corresponds to the private uses of the other offices to the north (08). A door giving access to a viewing gallery on this side (now lost) is larger than the one opposite.

2.9 DESCRIPTION

EXTERIOR

Blackburn Cotton Exchange was built between 1863 and 1865 in a 14th century Gothic revival style. Decorative Gothic features include the flowing and geometrical tracery to the entrance tower, including some blind tracery, with cusped, pointed arches and quatrefoils. Much of the decorative work, including the column capitals, makes use of Early English stylised floral designs, reminiscent of the Leaves of Southwell.

The entrance tower is octagonal and has crenellations and grotesques at high level below a more recent octagonal pitched roof, which has been covered in a blue slate in fishscale design. The original external steps have been removed to create step-free access into the lobby and the window and door tracery has been altered to create high-level windows, with modern door openings below.

The large bay windows fronting onto King William Street are in a later perpendicular style with vertical emphasis and dividing transoms. The largest windows on this elevation project outwards and are crenellated. The window openings have square heads, mullions and transoms, pointed cusped arches and geometrical top lights. The glazing in these windows is plain leaded lights.

The building is constructed in ashlar stonework and below the main windows are lower openings to the basement floor. Some original windows have been blocked with brickwork and others have been boarded up. Several secondary door openings give access to the basement and the ground floor on the King William Street elevation. These have Tudor arched openings. The entrance to the basement has a ribbed vaulted ceiling, original polished

terrazzo and simple skirting. The side entrance to the main hall has a pointed arch with drip mould and decorative head stops. The reveal has blind tracery and Early English floral decoration. Modern signage on this elevation somewhat mars the facade.

The west elevation of the hall is largely a rear elevation, visible from an access alley but has some visibility from King William Street. The stonework on this elevation is of coursed rubble with carved string courses and moulded elements. Windows here are smaller and randomly placed, relating to the requirements of the rooms inside rather than external appearance. The windows have small square-headed openings but there are two large arched openings at ground floor level. The main feature is the large geometrical rose window, which was intended to be viewed from the inside. The other decorative features are the dragon grotesques. Two door openings on this elevation give access into the building. A chimney on this elevation serves the first floor office. The remainder of the building appears to have been unheated, unless chimneys on the rear elevation were lost with the 1924 extension.

The roof of the main hall is a pitched slate roof and has recently been repaired. Large copper ventilation openings project upwards; beneath which decorative circular openings can be seen internally within the 1924 extension. Adjacent to the octagonal tower is an area of built-up masonry projecting above the main pitched roof. This was possibly introduced in 1924 to incorporate raked seating or the mezzanine level. The roof is raised here to allow the stepped ceiling.

To the rear of the building (south) elements of the large Early English single lancet windows of the original hall can still be seen, although the 1924 and later additions have blocked these off in

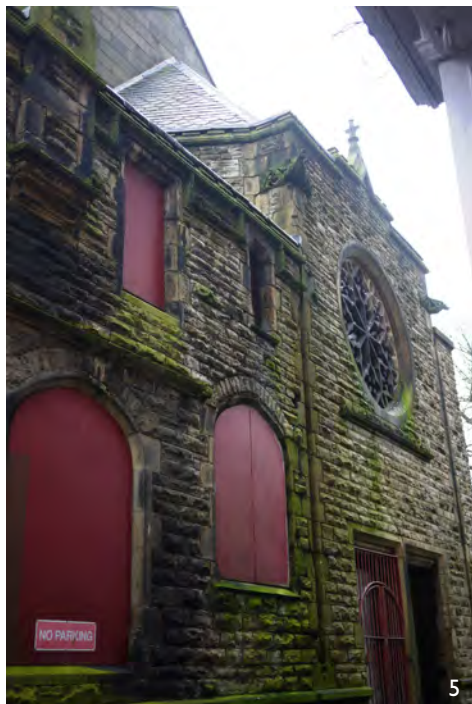
most places. Some of the windows are boarded up and some are bricked up. A large, late 20th century brick extension has been added in a hard engineering brick with concrete lintels and large openings for loading including a large metal-grilled ventilation opening. This seems to have replaced an extension of the early 20th century as a softer red brick can be seen at low level. The softer brick may even be contemporary with the Exchange Hall (brick was used to build the rear elevation) and some detailing may date to the 1920s. To the south-east the building abuts other structures, which are all generally in a poor condition. Metal security shutters, barred windows, AC units and overflowing water outlets detract from, and cause physical harm to, the Exchange Hall. Beyond this is an external courtyard, to the south of the entrance tower.

The rear access alley of the Exchange Hall is an original feature and is surrounded by a low retaining wall beyond which is modern car parking. This rubble stone wall is in a poor condition.

2 UNDERSTANDING



- 1 Cotton Exchange front entrance, east
- 2 Cotton Exchange front entrance, north-east
- 3 Cotton Exchange, Bella Roma restaurant windows, south
- 4 Side entrance along north elevation



- 5 West elevation, accessed via sideroad off King William Street
- 6 South elevation and adjoining 1924 extension with modern brickwork, accessed via sideroad off King William Street
- 7 Modern additions to the rear, loading bay entrance, all of which is in bad condition
- 8 Exterior of modern plant room, with early 20th century at the base of the wall
- 9 Original rear access lane, with cobbled surface

2 UNDERSTANDING

INTERIOR

Ground floor

Entrance lobby

Internally, the entrance lobby has been heavily altered from its original appearance. Intrusive changes and damaging removals have made it difficult to understand the successive phases of development in this area. The original external entrance steps that led up to the raised floor level internally have been removed, with internal steps being added within the main hall to give access.

Damage to the lobby space includes steel and timber beam insertions, brick blocked openings, loss of original tracery openings and damaged stonework. A reception kiosk was installed in the Entrance Lobby as part of the 1994 cinema conversion. The original arched openings in the form of pointed Gothic windows were used as doorways or windows but many have been cut off at head height and a steel beam inserted to widen openings. Stained glass survives in some of the window tracery.

The ceiling of the entrance lobby has a ribbed lierne-vault, with central boss and multiple smaller floral bosses. Some stonework has been painted and there is some evidence of historic plasterwork but condition is poor. The black paint on the ceiling is thought to show the extend of a rear projection room at this location. Originally steps to the basement would have been accessible from the lobby but these have been blocked off. The steps can be seen from inside the basement.

Within the lobby were originally two small corner rooms, which are evidenced by the original skirting that can be seen above the current floor level. It is not clear what these small rooms were used for. The doors and floors have been removed, and these spaces would have been hidden from sight since at least the 1920s.



1 Remaining stained glass windows in main entrance octagonal lobby



2 Doorway which once would have led to mezzanine level in main entrance octagonal lobby



3 Main entrance lobby ceiling



4 Main entrance lobby, pipework on display



5 Main entrance lobby window remains



6 Remains of east end toilet

MAIN HALL

The main hall is a large open space that has successively been used as an exchange hall, entertainment venue and cinema. The space is lit by large bay windows facing King William Street but lancet windows along the south wall have been blocked up. New openings on this elevation give access to the 1920s circulation corridor. The windows facing King William Street appear to have original glazing in the top lights and possibly 1920s glazing below. Windows that have been blocked behind modern fabric retain higher survival rates of historic glass, such as stained and painted lights

The current floor of the hall is a temporary modern timber floor, although historic fabric may survive below this. There is some evidence of decorative floor tiles within the window bays that require further investigation. The original ceiling may also survive above the 1920s metal-pressed panels, which have been used to create an ornate barrel-vaulted ceiling. One surviving corbel (matching those at the west end) can be seen within the main hall, indicating there was originally a matching hammerbeam roof supporting the Exchange Hall roof. This was originally painted a cream colour but has since been painted blue, red and black. Some of the panels have corroded and have been damaged by later light fittings. The panels are also thought to have lined the walls as some evidence can be seen of surviving examples beneath a later plaster covering.

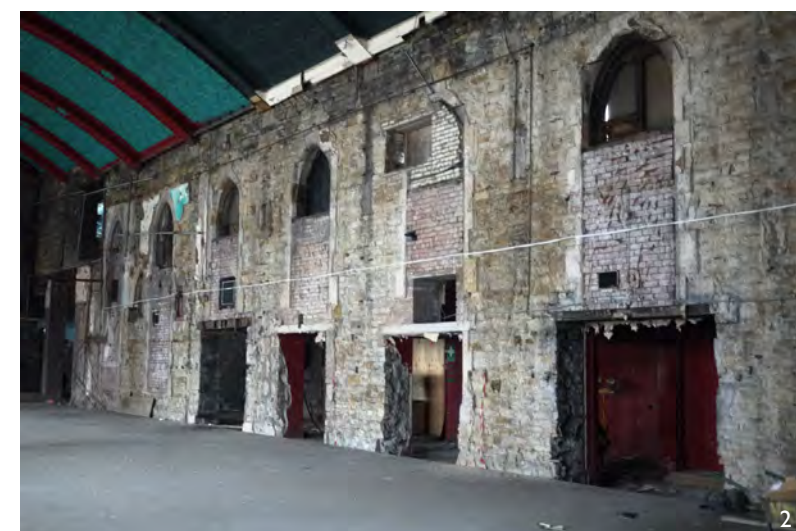
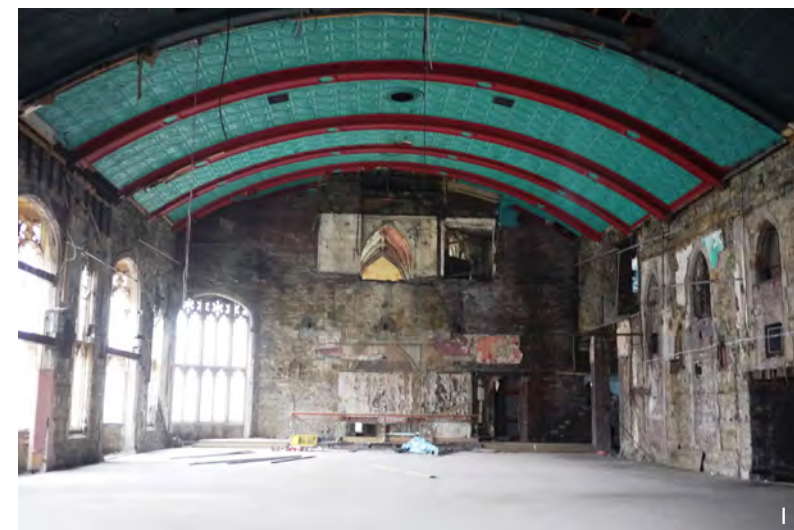
Pressed-metal ceilings, made from a thin, rolled-tin plate, were popular in the 1920s for use in cinemas due to their lightweight and fireproof properties.³⁹ The use of pressed-metal was not common in the UK but was very commonly used in Australia for all ceiling types, even in domestic properties, as an affordable alternative to ornate plasterwork. Its use declined from the 1930s. The pressed-metal ceiling at the Exchange Hall indicates that

the new cinema was at the height of fashion at the time and that decorative elements that survive from this period are of interest and should be retained where possible. A small area of wall tiles were also noticed in the main space indicated that the whole room was lined out, presumably in the 1920s.

Although much of the cinema features have been stripped out of the main hall, there are clues to its previous use. The 1920s cinema had a mezzanine level at the rear (east) of the hall as an upper auditorium, which has been removed. This contained a projector room and solid fire wall. The change in ceiling colour indicates where the different screens were divided. A full-height timber partition at the west end is also part of the cinema conversion, but has been cut off at high-level. This is thought to be part of a proscenium arch, along with the brick side walls, but the date is unclear. This could potentially be original (1865) but could also date to the 1900s or 1920s. These survivals are fragmentary and more investigations are necessary.

Within the hall, all original decorative finishes have been stripped back, but keyed stonework indicates that the north wall would have been plastered at some point, possibly the early 20th century. The window surrounds are set 1" forward of the masonry indicating that the walls would originally have been plastered but the stonework left exposed. Some elements of a possibly mid-20th century decorative scheme survives, including a light-grained wood finish. Elements of the original decorative scheme possibly survive in places, for example the window surrounds and skirtings. Intrusive cable and service runs on this elevation also mar the historic fabric as they run through original fabric and are detrimental to aesthetic value. Large holes have also been punched through this rear wall; the largest being an opening at mezzanine level for access from the circulation corridor and staircase. Another large opening on the ground floor allowed access from the corridor at this level. Steel beams have been used to support the original wall.

The most recent cinema scheme from 1994 following conversion to the Apollo had 4-5 screens on the ground floor, which were accessed from the lobby. A kiosk at the back of the hall led into stud partition corridors to each screen. The west end screens had a suspended ceiling, blocking views of the barrel vault.



1 View from the west end of the main hall

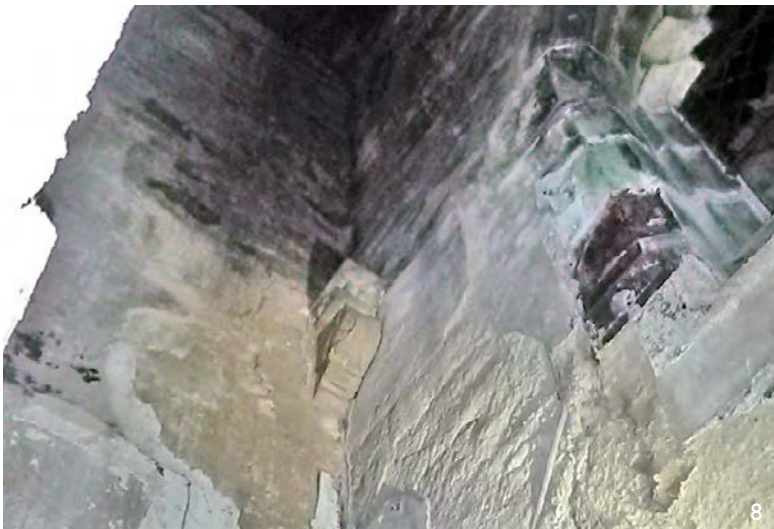
2 View from the west end of the south side remains of the windows

³⁹ An example of a similar ceiling can be seen on the purpose-built cinema in Clevedon <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1267925>

2 UNDERSTANDING



- 1 View from the west end of the north side windows
- 2 Section of the east end ceiling in the main hall
- 3 Remains of what are possibly early proscenium arch walls
- 4 Remains of the proscenium arch and cinema projection screen
- 5 View from the east end of the main hall

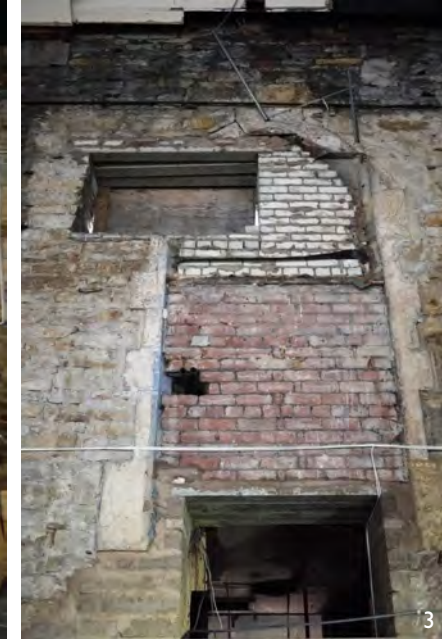


- 6 Victorian tiles within the window bays of the main hall
- 7 Example of the pressed-metal panels surviving on the main hall walls
- 8 Stone corbel within the main hall indicating the form of the original roof

2 UNDERSTANDING

REAR WINDOWS

The rear windows are single lancet Gothic openings in an Early English style. Each window has suffered a different degree of loss. The photographs here record each window and its level of alteration or survival.



- 1 South elevation, western window original remains
- 2 South elevation, partial modern brick infill in window remains
- 3 South elevation, window with modern brick infill, sections removed
- 4 South elevation, partial modern brick infill with original window remains
- 5 South elevation, original window remains, with modern brick infill, plumbing, and wiring

WEST END (FIRST, GROUND AND BASEMENT FLOORS)

The west end of the Exchange Hall was hidden behind a full-height partition wall as part of the cinema conversion in the 1920s and has therefore retained many more original features compared to the other areas of the building. Some of the original grandeur of the original Exchange Hall has survived intact, providing a glimpse into its original use.

The ground floor space of the west end is apsidal, a feature taken from Gothic religious buildings. The original roof and ceiling structure can be seen in this location and takes the form of a highly ornate timber hammer-beam roof; another feature more commonly seen in medieval or ecclesiastical buildings. The structure has projecting hammer beams, upright braces and hammer-braces. The hammer-braces are supported on decorative stone corbels, which have survived on the back wall but have been lost on the walls closest to the main hall. The hammer-beam roof has been damaged in some areas, with timber arches being removed due to later alterations. The scars of its previous location are still visible.

This central space is full-height and the visual focus is the rose window in the centre of the space. Scars indicate that there may have been two galleries or balcony structures that projected into the space from the side wings, creating a viewing platform for the trading floor below. One of the galleries was accessed from the south-west corner, from a staircase on the ground floor. The arched opening is a large single lancet. To the north-west the lancet opening is smaller and gave access from the first floor office. This opening retains its original timber door.

The west end of the Exchange Hall contains the stage, which may be an original feature of the space. Beneath this is a space with Victorian quarry tiled floor and a fireplace matching that in the first floor office.

The original decorative scheme can be seen on the walls of the west end, which was painted in reds and greens. Areas of the plasterwork has come away, revealing that stone was not used for the internal walls but brick, with the plaster lined-out to imitate stonework. Only the door surrounds were constructed in stone.

The room to the south of the apsidal west end is accessed via a large Tudor arched opening, which would have originally contained a staircase to the viewing area above; this has been removed. This was clearly an important space, judging by the hierarchy of decorative orders. This may have been an office, or the News Room mentioned in the original instruction to architects.⁴⁰

To the north of the west-end is another small ground floor room with stone arches, carved elements and a timber panelled ceiling with carved bosses with acorn leaves. This was possibly the Post Office.⁴¹ A historic staircase, possibly constructed in an early concrete, retains its original timber and iron handrail and leads up to the first floor office. The stone and timber work has been painted in modern colours and in the corner a modern internal porch has been added, which leads from the side entrance to the main hall.

The only first floor room within the Exchange Hall is a small office space, which contains a substantial Gothic revival/Tudor style fireplace with unusual crenellations, green tiles and iron grate. The windows on the north elevation has leaded quarry-paned glazing with some coloured glass surviving. The original timber roof structure survives, which has been decorated with ball flower carvings. Above this externally is a modern insert roof with lead flashings added over the parapet. This may have been the telegraph office as the suit of telegraph office, Post Office and WCs below matches the description in the original instruction to architects.⁴²

The final room that can be accessed from the west end is the basement space below the north-west corner. This is not accessible from the basement level. A staircase leads to the original (or early) WCs that served the Offices of the Exchange Hall. As part of the building that was blocked off and disused from the 1920s, this area retains many original features including moulded plaster skirting, arches and tiles. Features that rarely survive include early examples of urinals. The urinals are branded as 'The Beryl' and are thought to have been manufactured around 1914 or earlier. They are thought to predate the use of the building as a cinema.⁴³

⁴⁰ Proposed Exchange Building, Instruction to Architects, 1860 (Blackburn Central Library)

⁴¹ Ibid

⁴² Ibid

⁴³ The first urinals were patented in 1866 however these ones were manufactured by W. R. Pickup & Co., possibly around 1914. http://www.gracesguide.co.uk/W_R_Pickup_and_Co

2 UNDERSTANDING



1 West end, basement level, bathroom

2 West end, north, stairway ceiling

3 West end, north, stairway ceiling, modern paintwork

4 West end, north, mezzanine level, first floor office fireplace

5 West end, north, mezzanine level, first floor office ceiling



- 6 West end, north, mezzanine level, original paint scheme and door
- 7 West end, north, stairway leading to mezzanine level
- 8 West end, rose window, and remains of proscenium arch
- 9 West end, unsure on what the doorway was leading to, potentially a balcony, evidence is missing
- 10 Fireplace beneath the stage that matches that in the first floor

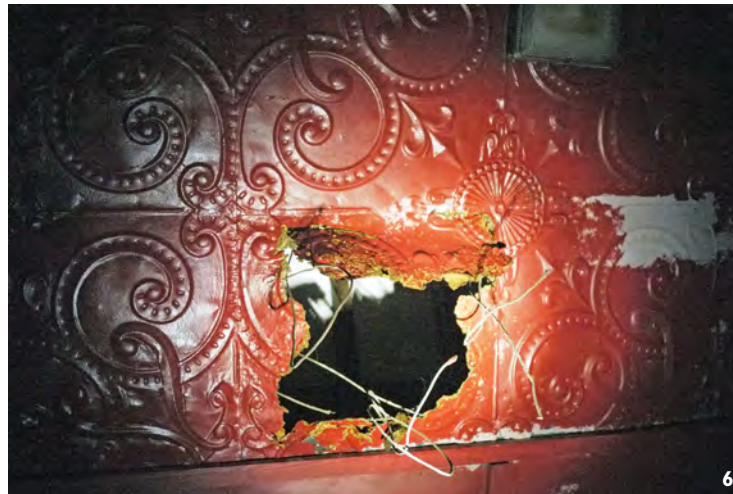
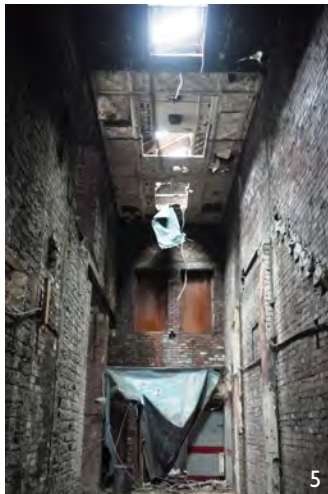
2 UNDERSTANDING

REAR CIRCULATION SPACES

The rear circulation space of the Exchange Hall is a long corridor that runs the length of the south elevation. It was added at ground and first floor level in the 1920s as part of the cinema conversion to create space for WCs, staircases, circulation and back of house services. The extension is built in brick and covered up the original lancet windows on this elevation. A large stone-stepped staircase

had two flights that joined at the top to give access to the upper floor WCs and the upper auditorium. The stone steps have been hacked off, leaving scars flush with the wall. This area also has pressed-metal ceiling panels, in a different design. Many of the tin panels have corroded and are in a poor condition. A large flat skylight let light into the space but the glazing has been removed.

The WCs on the ground floor are of little interest as they have more recently been refurbished with new fixtures and fittings. Other rooms within this circulation space are more modern and were built to serve the recent cinema use. These include heating, plant and services areas, which were partly rebuilt in the mid-20th century. One section of the 1924 extension to the south is not accessible on the ground floor and is thought to have been sold to an adjoining building.



- 1 Supporting steel frame to support the original wall where they removed sections to make way for doorway to the southern extension
- 2 Section removed from the original southern wall
- 3 Room in section of southern extension
- 4 South elevation, extension, remains of a stairway which would have lead to a mezzanine level
- 5 South elevation, extension, doors of bathrooms on the once existing mezzanine level
- 6 Red pressed metal panels

BASEMENT FLOOR

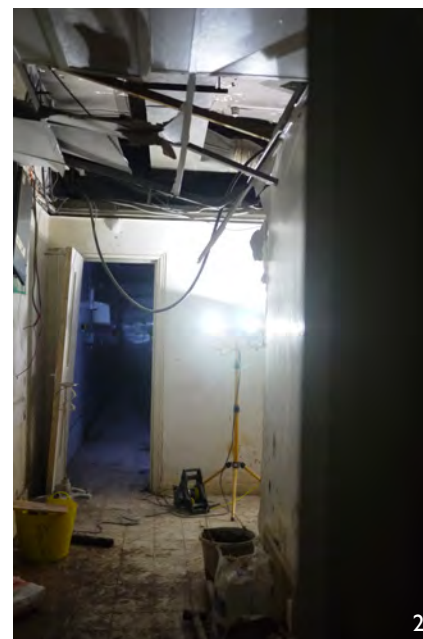
RESTAURANT UNIT

The basement is likely to originally have been used as warehousing and offices for the Exchange Hall above⁴⁴ and is characterised by its repetitive brick-vaulted ceiling and piers with a simple cushion capital. The spaces may also have provided facilities for traders such as WCs and refreshments.

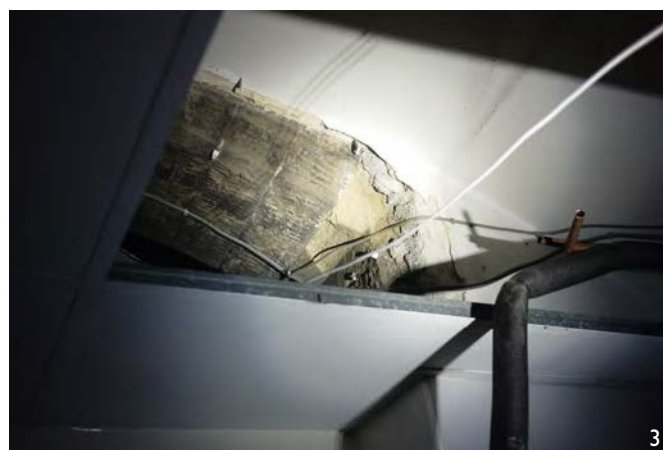
The main space of the basement has most recently been used as a restaurant and retains many of the fixtures and fittings associated with this. The space is split into two rooms; the main restaurant space and the bar. The main space is accessed from King William Street and contains several partitioned spaces, utilising lightweight stud partitions. An area to the north-east is raised on a platform above floor level with faux-Italian balustrading.

At the east end of the main space are rooms that were previously WCs, and the original entrance from the hall above into the basement (blocked off). Other small rooms have been partitioned off to create ancillary spaces.

To the rear of this space (south) is a servery counter that opens through into the kitchens beyond. The circulation space to the south was added c.1924 to mirror the new space above and was constructed to provide back of house circulation. Today, modern kitchens have been inserted into the long, narrow space. To the south-west a series of smaller rooms have been used for plant and services. These rooms are in a fairly poor condition and have no features of historic interest. Modern interventions in the latter half of the 20th century include new doors inserted with brickwork, steel beams and concrete lintels, suspended ceilings, modern flooring and modern decorative schemes, often in a poor condition. These features are detrimental to significance and our understanding of the Exchange Hall.



- 1 Rear circulation space kitchen fit-out
- 2 Circulation and services spaces within the rear of the basement
- 3 Evidence of the stone roof structure above modern ceiling tiles
- 4 Basement level, southern extension, original and early 20th century brickwork with modern electrics



⁴⁴ Proposed Exchange Building, Instruction to Architects, 1860 (Blackburn Central Library)

2 UNDERSTANDING

The other element of the restaurant is the bar, which is also raised up, on a parquet floor. This room contains modern bar counters. Removal of modern plaster in this area has revealed a blocked stone mullion window.

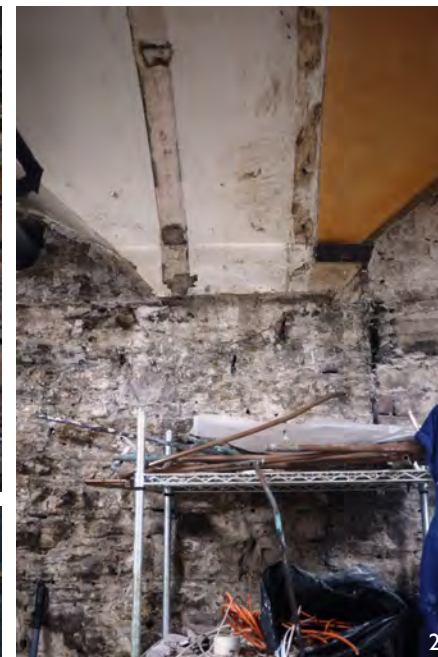
Both areas of the restaurant have been heavily altered from their original appearance, which may originally have been lime-washed brickwork as warehouse facilities for the Exchange Hall above. The basements also possibly held office spaces. Any decorative schemes or features from cinema use in the 20th century have been removed or covered over. It is likely that the basement would have been used for bar and café facilities to serve the cinema above although there is no evidence for this.

The extensive 21st century decorative scheme includes painted decoration, modern floor coverings and timber cladding to the piers. Since the businesses left the building, enabling works have been carried out to adequately light the spaces. This has necessitated a service run and lighting throughout.

It is possible that the modern decorative schemes within the basement mask original features, for example beneath two layers of floor coverings and the raised platforms. More investigative works are required in these areas.

In the areas that modern fabric has been stripped off (partly to deal with an outbreak of dry rot) the original stone and brickwork can be seen, revealing many alterations and a succession of interventions over the years. Some areas of stone masonry can be seen at the east end, but other areas are of rubble blockwork and many areas of infill brick can be seen. It has not been possible to date each intervention into the fabric; however, many of the changes to the south relate to the 1920s additions. These include large openings in the original rear wall of the Exchange Hall basements and blocked windows. Concrete lintels, steel beams, cinder blocks, ventilation, pipework and modern brickwork all illustrate later 20th century alterations.

In some areas a treatment for dry rot has been inserted into the historic fabric by injecting resin into the bricks and stones themselves. This is potentially harmful to the historic fabric but may be considered necessary to halt the advance of decay elsewhere. Work has also been carried out to limit water ingress in places, which is beneficial to the condition of the building.



- 1 Modern brick wall, drilled hole markings created during the treating of dry rot
- 2 The remains of where a pillar has been removed during the extension
- 3 Modern restaurant front, north elevation, taken from King William Street



- 4 Basement restaurant, 21st century paint work, original pillars, however, they have been plastered over
- 5 Boarded over window, with modern shop additions
- 6 Basement supportive pillar with modern restaurant wallpaper.
- 7 Entrance way into restaurant bathrooms
- 8 Modern restaurant raised floor elevation

2 UNDERSTANDING

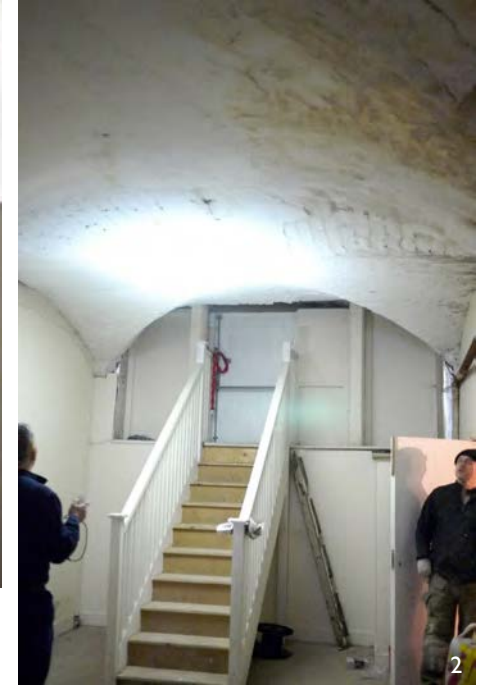


- 9 Main restaurant bar
- 10 Blocked stone window on the rear elevation
- 11 Modern tiled flooring
- 12 Additional bar, west end
- 13 Underside of stairs leading from ground floor lobby to main hall rotate anti-clockwise 90°



To the north-west of the basement is a separate shop unit that has been divided from the main space with modern plasterboard partitions. Several of the original piers have been removed from this unit to create the new walls. This space was most recently used as a hairdressers and retains a modern decorative scheme including wall colours and coverings.

To the rear of this shop unit the westernmost bay has been divided off from the main basement, but this appears to be an original or late 19th century division. Small store room, WCs and the early 20th century urinals (Urinals are not accessible from this level) are extant here. The construction of the brick vaulting within this area is visible beneath the paintwork, indicating that the other areas have been plastered. There is some evidence of historic finishes and timber behind the modern plasterboard on the western wall. In the south-west corner is a modern fire escape. The majority of the external walls to the Exchange Hall have had a modern dry lining system applied, which is visible in some areas where the plasterboard is damaged.

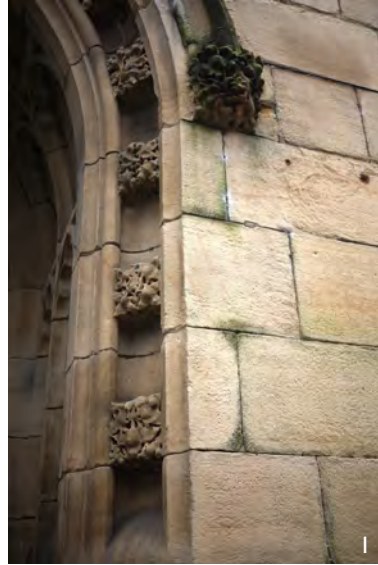


- 1 Modern shop unit, north-west
- 2 Modern fire exit, with original brick vaulting

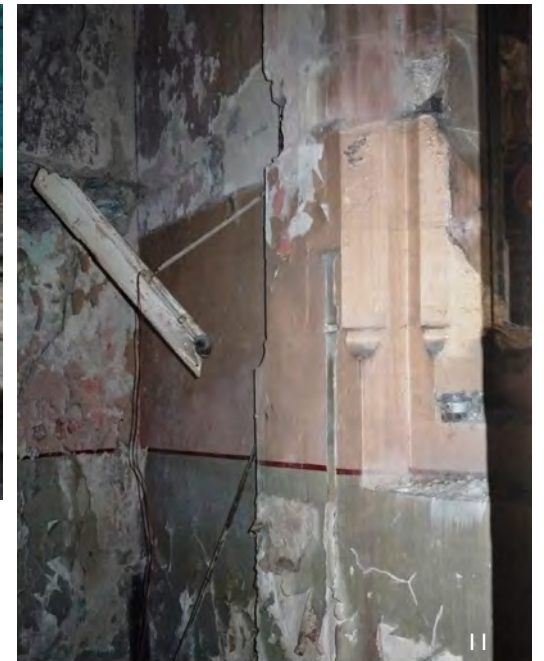
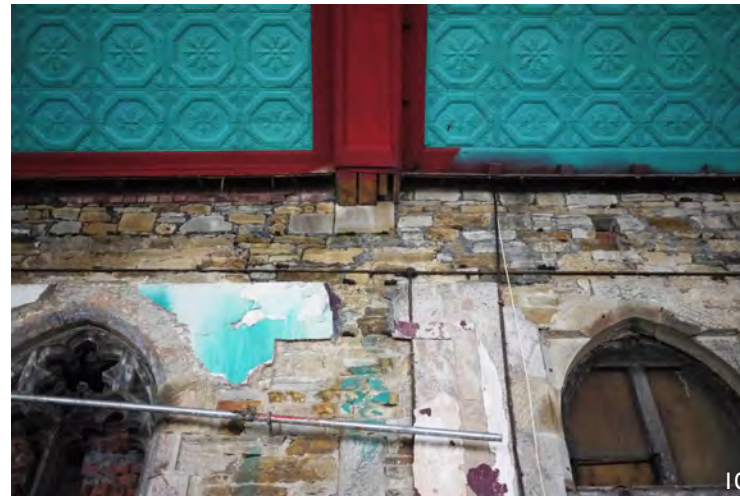
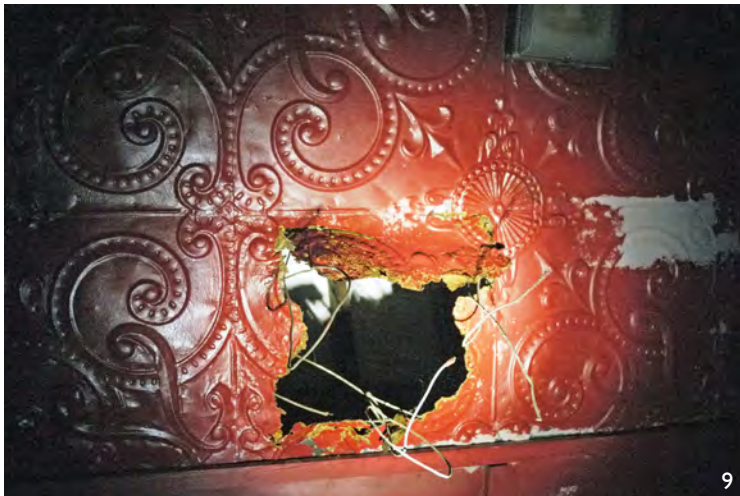
2 UNDERSTANDING

2.10 CHARACTER DEFINING FEATURES

The Blackburn Cotton Exchange has a distinctive character as a large open space used as a business and entertainment venue. It can be seen as a semi-public space, which had controlled access for specific events. The large open space of the main hall has recently been stripped of its more recent cinema structures, opening the space up for the first time since the 1920s. The comprehensive removal of all modern fabric - stripping the building back to its structural envelope - has created a space that was never intended to be seen in this way. The character is one of decay and alteration; each successive change can be traced through the scars, holes and blocked openings. In the basement, the character is one of recent desertion, viewed through the abandoned modern restaurant and shop. However, traces of the former grandeur can still be identified, in the glimpses of stained glass, the rose window, hints of the original paint scheme, the high-quality hammer-beam roof and the sumptuous pressed-metal ceiling.



- 1 Detail of the decorative carvings on the north side entrance
- 2 West elevation, brick indent of where a drain pipe would have originally been
- 3 West elevation, rose window
- 4 Street level entrance to basement floor, north, modern skirting board and flooring
- 5 Basement vaulted ceiling, south west corner.



- 6 Early 20th century urinals
- 7 Original build banister, with original paintwork, north west stairway
- 8 West elevation, rose window
- 9 Pressed-metal ceiling in 1924 southern extension
- 10 1924's ceiling adjoining to the original southern wall, remains of plastering is still visible
- 11 Southern extensions poor conditions

2 UNDERSTANDING

Features of importance

Defining features of interest

- West end of the main hall – this is the most complete element and retains many features from the 1860s original scheme including paintwork, door leaves, roof structure, fireplaces and staircases Pressed-metal ceiling panels from the 1924 cinema decorative scheme
- Scars from the 1924 main cinema staircase (stone) in the circulation space
- Cushion capital brick piers within the basement. Other features on this level include stone window mullions (rear elevation)
- Minor survivals in the main hall including ceiling corbel, floor and wall tiles
- Entrance lobby vaulted ceiling and stonework tracery
- Gothic windows within the main hall on the King William Street elevation, lancets to the rear (now internal) and rose window at the west end.
- Historic urinals and other fittings i.e. tiles
- External elevations to King William Street and the west end, particularly views along the street of the octagonal tower.

Detrimental features

- Temporary timber floor within the main hall
- Extensive and intrusive restaurant and shop decorative scheme in the basement
- Modern building materials including asbestos, breeze blocks and concrete or steel beams - often crudely inserted
- Damage to window tracery within the main hall and entrance lobby
- Intrusive alterations to staircases throughout
- Overall condition and water ingress

2.11 CONTEXT

The context of a heritage asset is a non-statutory term used by Historic England to describe any relationship between it and other heritage assets, which are relevant to its significance. They apply irrespective of distance, sometimes extending well beyond what might be considered an asset's setting, and can include the relationship of one heritage asset to another of the same period or function, or with the same designer or architect.⁴⁵

Understanding the context of a heritage asset is important as it provides a wider narrative for assessment of significance by understanding the level of survival, rarity, integrity, vulnerability, documentation, group value and potential.

The Cotton Industry in Britain

During the Industrial Revolution, from the late 18th century onwards, Britain's cotton industry expanded hugely, resulting in it being known as the 'Workshop of the World'. This expansion largely took place in the North of England, due to circumstances which resulted in the region being perfect for the development of cotton. One key factor in this was the topography of the Pennines, which meant that the cotton factories could initially be powered by water.

In later years, the factories developed to being powered by coal, which the north had copious amounts of. Due to low employment rates in the major cities, these cotton factories were easily filled with workers. These combined features resulted in the North of England being the centre of the cotton industry's development.

Liverpool became one of the leading cities in this development due to its vast transport connections. Liverpool was able to use its port as a resource for importing raw cotton from the southern American states, and to export their finished cotton abroad, largely to India. Additionally, their railway connections meant that they could export their goods nationally.

⁴⁵ Historic England, The Setting of Heritage Assets, Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: Guidance Note Three, 2015

Manchester was also a prominent city in this industry, as it possessed the largest trading room in the world of the time, and was able to frequently attract over 3,000 merchants to one of their business days.

1729 - The first Cotton Exchange was developed in Manchester, and became known as the Royal Exchange. Over the years this site has been modified and rebuilt multiple times to the extent that the building no longer resembles anything like its original appearance. Key dates of development are 1806, 1874, and 1921.⁴⁶

1760 - Prior to 1760, cotton was spun by hand, commonly at home, however, this decade marked the rise in the cotton factory industry

1770 - The Cotton Industry in Britain was worth £600,000⁴⁷

1774 - The heavy tax on cotton thread and cloth made in Britain was retracted, leading to greater expansion in the industry

1803 - Cotton overtakes wool as Britain's biggest export. Flax also begins to decline from the 1830s in the face of the expanding cotton industry.

1808 - Liverpool Cotton Exchange opened; however, it was initially only used as offices for the cotton brokers, whilst business was conducted in the square just outside. It was the development of the telephone and the telegraph in the 1880s which meant that the men were forced to move trade indoors. By 1906, a 'purpose-built' Cotton Exchange was built, that was considered state of the art, with telephones and direct cables to the New York, Bremen, and Bombay cotton exchanges.⁴⁸

1809 - The second Manchester Royal Exchange was opened. Subscribers were required to raise £20,000 (far higher than the £6,000 for the Blackburn Exchange)

⁴⁶ Royal Exchange Building, Available From: <http://manchesterhistory.net/manchester/tours/tour5/area5page8.html>

⁴⁷ History Learning Site: The Cotton Industry and the Industrial Revolution, Available From: <http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/britain-1700-to-1900/industrial-revolution/the-cotton-industry-and-the-industrial-revolution/>

⁴⁸ Merseyside Maritime Museum: A City Built on Cotton, Available From: <http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/maritime/exhibitions/cotton/traders/liverpool.aspx>

1870 - The Cotton Industry in Britain was worth £38,800,000⁴⁹

1874 - The third and final Manchester Royal Exchange was opened

1912 - Britain was at its peak in the cotton industry, however, the industry rapidly declined from here. The outbreak of the First World War meant that they could not easily export to their international markets. Furthermore, other countries were developing the technology to produce their own cheaper cotton. By 1933, Japan had created a 24-hour cotton production and became the world's largest cotton manufacturer⁵⁰

1918 - 1939 - During the interwar period, 345,000 workers left the cotton industry and 800 mills were closed⁵¹

1926 - Cotton exports halved and fell into irreversible decline.

1941 - At the end of March 1941, the Liverpool Cotton Exchange closed for the duration of the war, and then closed permanently in 1946 as they decided that raw cotton should be controlled by the central government. However, was re-opened in May 1954. Nevertheless, trade remained slow and unsuccessful, so was finally sold in February 1963.

1968 - The Manchester Royal Exchange was closed.

The Cotton Industry in Blackburn

Alongside Manchester and Liverpool, Blackburn became one of the leading towns in the Cotton Industry which was made possible as a result of its optimum conditions for processing cotton. Blackburn was known for its manufacturing of cotton (along with Burnley, while Oldham and Bolton were spinning towns. , the town was able to process its own raw cotton to a high standard. Consequently, the town thrived and saw a huge influx in its population (See Table 1.), which resulted in the town not only growing its industrial and residential sectors.

TABLE 1.⁵² POPULATION IN BLACKBURN BETWEEN 1801 TO 1891

Year	Population
1801	11,980
1811	15,082
1821	21,940
1831	17,091
1841	36,629
1851	46,536
1861	63,126
1871	76,339
1881	104,012
1891	120,064

1840s - During the 1840s, Blackburn had over 35 cotton factories, which contained 150,000 spindles and 12,000 looms⁵³

1860 - By 1860 the number of factories had increased to 78, containing 1 million spindles and 29,000 looms, and employing 440,000 people

1861 - 1865 - The Lancashire Cotton Famine, or the 'Cotton Panic', occurred from 1861-65 and was a result of two key incidents. Firstly, during 1859 – 1860, the cotton industry experienced a boom which resulted in more cotton being woven than could be sold, therefore resulting in the price collapsing and factory owners no longer being able to buy large quantities of raw cotton to process. Secondly, the American Civil War resulted in the southern states placing a blockade on the export of raw cotton to the British Empire, this was done in hope that the British would support their cause. Consequently, Britain no longer had access to cheap resources. However, by 1864, cotton imports had been restored, and cotton production had returned to normal, however, in many Lancashire towns thousands of workers had moved elsewhere looking for stable work.

1878 - Cotton Riots took place in Blackburn, not for political reasons, as was common elsewhere, but due to industrial difficulties and the breakdown of the processes of negotiation between the cotton masters and their workforce.

1900s - The Cotton Industry in Lancashire was at its peak, producing 8 billion yards of cloth a year, which were being exported all over the world.⁵⁴

1918 - 1945 - 55 out of 110 of Lancashire's mills closed as a result of under production, as a result the county witnessed a steep decline in their employment figures⁵⁵

1960s and 1970s - Mills and factories all across Lancashire were closing, at a rate of almost one a week

⁴⁹ History Learning Site: <http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/britain-1700-to-1900/industrial-revolution>

⁵⁰ BBC: Boom to Bust, The Decline of the Cotton Industry, Available From: http://www.bbc.co.uk/nationonfilm/topics/textiles/background_decline.shtml

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Cotton Town, Available From: www.cottontown.org

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Make it British: The Decline of the Lancashire Cotton Mills, Available From: <http://makeitbritish.co.uk/uk-manufacturing-2/lancashire-cotton-mills/>

⁵⁵ Making the Modern World: The Cotton Industry, Available From: http://www.makingthemodernworld.org.uk/learning_modules/history/04.TU.04/?section=9

2 UNDERSTANDING

The British Cinema Industry

The 'Blackburn Exchange Building' was recorded and subsequently listed in 1985 along with 123 other cinemas in England as part of a strategic study into the previously underappreciated building type by Historic England (then English Heritage). This survey formally recognised the special architectural, historical and communal qualities of these significant spaces.

The timeline below offers a brief overview of the development of the cinema industry in England, putting the later history of the Blackburn Cotton Exchange in its national and local context.

1914 - Following a boom in popularity at the beginning of the 20th century, 3,500 cinemas had been erected in Britain by 1914. Typical cinema design included a fashionable and elaborate frontage, barrel-vaulted ceilings, plasterwork decoration and panelled side walls. Examples of this style that have survived well include the Gate (formerly the Electric Palace), Notting Hill, 1910-11, and Electric Cinema, Portobello Road, 1911.⁵⁶



The barrel vaulted, pressed-metal ceiling at the Curzon Cinema in Clevedon, built 1920-22

⁵⁶ English Heritage (1999) *Picture Palaces: New Life for Old Cinemas*.

1914 - 1918 - During the First World War, the cinema industry saw a period of decline, with many shutting. However, following the end of the war, and throughout the interwar period, the cinema as a form of entertainment was rejuvenated.

1920s - The desire for new and exciting entertainment venues in the inter-war period resulted in cinemas becoming more than just a screening room, and it became common for cinemas to be combined with a dance hall or restaurant.

Fewer cinemas were built in the 1920s than in the previous decade and their relatively large size together with their lack of technical sophistication means few buildings survive unaltered or containing their original fixtures and fittings. Cinema's constructed in this period were built with the intention of providing low-cost entertainment in a luxurious environment which frequently possessed crystal chandeliers, decorative plasterwork and murals. One particularly prolific architect, Thomas Lamb, built over 300 cinemas by 1921 in a French Classical style with detailed columns and arcading.⁵⁷

1927 - The first 'Talkie', *The Singing Fool*, was released in Britain.⁵⁸

1927 - The Cinematograph Act was released, setting a quota for the number of British releases that had to be shown, as opposed to Hollywood blockbusters. This was done in order to encourage the growth of the British film industry, and proved to be very successful.⁵⁹

1930s - Most sizeable towns now possessed at least three large cinemas, each playing a different circuit release, with older halls concentrating on 'second run' programmes or revivals. Old cinemas were commonly redecorated in this period to become more modern, and to keep up with the major international influences, such as America and Germany.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

1937 - By this stage, elaborate cinemas were no longer being designed, smaller cinemas that provided greater comfort at a lower cost were preferred. Single spaces were often subdivided into multiple screens from this date onwards. This modern style evolved so that the cinemas matched the sophisticated style of films that were starting to emerge from Hollywood.

1936 - 1939 - The company Odeon opened 96 new cinemas.⁶¹

1939 - The Second World War immediately stopped the building of cinemas, leaving many proposals unrealised.

1954 - Cinema constructions recommenced after the war but started to lose their popularity due to the development of the television and other social activities becoming more acceptable for both men and women, such as going to the pub. Nevertheless, a vast number of new cinemas were still being built, or redeveloped. A good example of a post-war cinema that survives in its original condition is the Grade II listed Curzon, Mayfair (1964-6).

1950s - Blackburn had 14 cinemas in the 1950s, some originally built for other purposes such as variety and music halls. The Rialto was purpose-built and considered to be very luxurious at the time.⁶²

Late 20th century - Small independent cinemas closed due to being unable to compete with the monopoly of large cinema companies in out of town retail parks. The Cotton Exchange closed due to competition from the Vue cinema company.

21st century - In spite of the cinemas growing competition, the British film industry has grown rapidly, with Britain now possessing over 742 cinemas,⁶³ and more films being released every year, for example in 2012, 647 British films were released, making an average of 12 a week.⁶⁴

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Blackburn Past: The Cinema and Theatres of Blackburn, Available From: <http://www.blackburnpast.com/2010/08/cinemas-theatres-of-blackburn.html>

⁶³ UK Cinema Association (2014)

⁶⁴ British Film Industry (2012)

The Architect

W.H. Brakespear was responsible for the design and construction of Blackburn Cotton Exchange in the 1860s. Brakespear was an ecclesiastical architect and was responsible for the Church of St Mary the Virgin in Bowdon (Trafford, 1858), parts of the Church of St Paul, Stalybridge (1872) and the Church of St Martin in Ashton-on-Mersey. He is also known to have designed a chapel for Wembdon Road Cemetery in Bridgwater.

Having established himself as an authority of Gothic architect, Brakespear often turned his skills to industrial and commercial structures. He designed several pumping stations for the Croydon atmospheric railway in 1845, including a tall chimney in the style of a Gothic church spire. The idea of applying ancient Gothic or Classical architecture to modern structures was a new one, which was used to ensure 'uncouth' industrial structures became ornaments in the landscape.

New uses for Britain's Exchange Halls

As with the Blackburn Cotton Exchange, the other exchange halls around Britain had a vibrant life after decline in the cotton industry. This achievement acts as a strong testament to how these buildings were often valued by their local communities and have become a strong part of their heritage and townscape, to the extent that many schemes to revive these architectural gems are now being developed for them to be appreciated by future generations.

1963 - Liverpool Cotton Exchange closed as a cotton exchange

1964 - Liverpool Cotton Exchange was sold

1967 - Liverpool Cotton Exchange began its conversion into an office block, the Liverpool Cotton Association Ltd., have occupied these offices ever since⁶⁵

1968 - Manchester Royal Exchange closed as a trading hall

1976 - Manchester Royal Exchange opened as the Royal Exchange Theatre Company⁶⁶

1996 - Manchester Royal Exchange was bombed by the IRA, causing £38 million worth of damage. Its restoration was supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund⁶⁷

1998 - Repairs on the Manchester Royal Exchange were completed on the site, and is now in use as a centre for culture. Within the theatre the original trading boards are still visible, and are presented as they would have been on the Exchange Hall's final day of trading⁶⁸



The Rialto in Blackburn

⁶⁵ The National Archives: Liverpool Cotton Association Ltd., Available From: <http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/rd/dl4ab124-8e9c-4998-8843-b17fedc28e6e>

⁶⁶ Royal Exchange Theatre: Our History, Available From: www.royalexchange.co.uk/our-history

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

2 UNDERSTANDING

2.12 COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS: EXCHANGE BUILDINGS

Within England, exchange buildings proliferated in the 19th century as international and national trade grew rapidly. The buildings that acted as trade exchanges are common and are found in the thriving industrial cities of the Victorian period. These buildings frequently serve alternative purposes today.

Exchange buildings that were specific to the cotton industry are a fairly rare building type, and seemed to be restricted to the North-West of England; Manchester, Lancashire and Liverpool. The Liverpool Cotton Exchange is the only other identified site which specialised in this sector. Manchester Royal Exchange did open specifically to trade in this textile, but quickly expanded their market to include other goods. The Blackburn and Liverpool exchange buildings are rare for their original purpose. Other towns such as Leeds had 'cloth halls' but this was for the sale of the finished product.

The Manchester exchange, followed a similar pattern of development to the Blackburn Cotton Exchange in its early years, and mirrored its existence as an entertainment venue when it closed as a trading centre in 1968. The first Manchester exchange hall was built in 1729 and from its conception was also used as a place of entertainment. The second exchange was built in its place in 1809 and the third (which exists today) was built in 1874 following a design competition. The building was described as the biggest commercial room in the world and was extended to 1.7 acres in the early 20th century. It had ten floors, 250 offices, 38 shops and 6 restaurants. Features common to Exchange Halls such as a newsroom and post office were also accommodated. Although, it is not a cinema, this site was transformed into the Royal Exchange Theatre Company, which still remains as a thriving centre for culture within the city.

The direction that the Liverpool Cotton Exchange took after its closure makes for interesting comparison. Unlike Blackburn and Manchester, the site continued its influence as a centre for business, and was converted into the Liverpool Cotton Association Ltd. which has been centred there ever since.

Architecturally, the Blackburn Cotton Exchange possesses unique qualities such as its 14th century Gothic architecture and the interesting barrel vaulted, pressed-metal ceiling of the 1920s cinema. Both the Manchester and Liverpool Cotton Exchange's made use of Classical architectural styles while Blackburn made use of a high Victorian Gothic that gained popularity from the 1840s onwards. This was much more commonly used on Town Halls. It is difficult to compare Blackburn to Manchester and Liverpool due to the variations in scale and purpose. Manchester had a dining room for 300 and kitchens to match. While Blackburn originally planned to include such features, the Cotton Famine put an end to their ambitions. While Blackburn appears to have traded exclusively in raw cotton, the Manchester Exchange was more diverse, with transactions being made with agents, finishers, manufacturers and cotton waste dealers.

Comparisons can be made in terms of the design competitions used for construction, the subscribers used to finance the venture, the importance of the post and telegraph offices for overseas trade and their close link to the booming Lancashire cotton industry.



Liverpool Cotton Exchange, replaced in the mid-20th century



The Royal Exchange, Manchester, now a theatre © Flickr, Oneterry, 2008

2.13 COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS: CINEMAS

The Exchange Hall was converted into a cinema at the same time that many other cinemas were being purpose-built. Although over a thousand of these buildings were constructed in the 1920s, many of them have not survived in anything like their original form. The conversion of existing buildings into a cinema space was not uncommon and Blackburn Cotton Exchange follows this pattern. Judging by the surviving ceiling it appears that the typical fashionable cinema fixtures were installed here. Two cinemas that are comparable with the Exchange Hall are discussed below:

1. In 1915 the Kingsland Empire was constructed using features originally found in theatres, with high ceilings and moulded decorations. However, in 1937, the site was entirely remodelled by F E Bromige, who inserted a streamlined modern-style auditorium within the old shell. Alterations were partly to do with architectural taste but also due to new technology and sound improvements within the industry. Ceilings were often lowered, giving audiences a higher quality experience.⁶⁹

2. The Phoenix Cinema, London, built in 1910, is Grade II listed building. It also possesses a striking vaulted ceiling, within the auditorium, and Art Deco wall panels which reflect the trends during the time of its build.⁷⁰



The Kingsland Empire, now known as the Rio Dalston



The Phoenix Cinema, London, current interior.

⁶⁹ English Heritage (1999) Picture Palaces: New Life for Old Cinemas.

⁷⁰ The Telegraph (2016) The Rio in Dalston, London [Online] Available From: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/business/2016/04/02/>

3 SIGNIFICANCE

3.1 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Primary Significance

The Blackburn Cotton Exchange is a significant Grade II listed building, which holds importance as the tangible remains of an important local industry, and for the way it illustrates this industry at its zenith and as it evolved following decline. The structure acts as a symbol of Blackburn's prime as a centre for trade and cotton. It also provides a public space for entertainment and civic functions that has had a positive effect on the local community and their lives. The building is a rare example of a surviving cotton exchange; a building type specific to the cotton industry but which holds similarities with exchange buildings for other trades. Survivals of historic fabric of the original trading space and offices arrangement is of high significance.

Summary of Significance

- The Cotton Exchange is of national value due to its status as a Grade II listed building.
- The site acts as a tangible link to the cotton industry which brought trade and prosperity to the area. Many original features from its use as an Exchange Hall survive within the site, for instance the stained glass windows, first-floor office, and vaulted lobby ceiling.
- The building possesses much physical evidence which tell us about its use as a cinema, such as the projection windows, partial cinema screen, and outline of staircases.
- The basement is a simple space that has retained much of its plan form and simple character
- Communal value is high due to the many significant events over the decades, such as political speeches, concerts, and public readings.
- Evidential value is high due to the further investigations into the physical fabric and primary sources that could be carried out to increase our understanding

Detrimental Elements

- As a result of development, many original features have been lost, for example, lancet windows, entrance hall floor levels, cinema features, and original design in the basement.
- The building was stripped-out upon its closure, therefore leaving us uncertain how the cinema would have been presented to the public in the late 20th century.
- Due to vacancy, the building is in disrepair and subject to vandalism. Ongoing water ingress is a concern.

3.2 ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Significance can be defined as the sum of the cultural heritage values that make a building or place important to this and future generations. The range of values that may contribute to the significance of a place can be categorised as evidential, aesthetic, historic and communal. These values are taken from Historic England's Conservation Principles (2008).

Levels of Significance

The significance of Blackburn Cotton Exchange and its immediate setting is assessed using a scale of significance ratings ranging from High to Detrimental:

High: an aspect of the value that strongly contributes to the significance of the site. These aspects will usually be of national importance and will be priorities for conservation and safeguarding for the long term. In material terms they will greatly contribute towards the heritage values.

Medium: an aspect of heritage value that will have some cultural importance and will make a moderate contribution to the significance of the site. In material terms they will play an important role in conveying heritage values, although the scope for enhancement will be greater than for aspects of higher value.

Low: aspects of the site that will make a lesser (though still noteworthy) contribution to the significance of the place. In material terms they will still add something to the heritage values, although this contribution may have been compromised by loss of informed intervention.

Neutral: themes, spaces, buildings or features have little or no cultural value but do not detract from the character or appearance of the site its setting.

Detrimental: An aspect of the place that detracts from its values and therefore its significance. In material terms, removal or reversal of these aspects should be encouraged.

3.3 HERITAGE VALUES

The sections below set out the relative significance of the site and the elements that contribute or detract from its heritage value.

Evidential Value

This derives from those elements of an historic asset that can provide evidence about past human activity, including its physical remains or historic fabric. These remains provide the primary evidence for how the asset has changed over time. It is the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity.

Evidential Value: High

Blackburn Cotton Exchange has high evidential value as a building that has been altered and reused many times since its original construction as an exchange hall. Subsequent alterations have left many layers of history that add to our understanding. Following recent closure of the cinema in the 2000s, the modern fabric was stripped out, leaving a building envelope that has the potential to tell us much about the historic use and construction of the building. Scars from lost staircases, various phases of window alteration and different floor levels all have the potential to contribute to our understanding; however, further investigation is required to fully explain all the changes that have occurred over the decades.

In spite of many transformative alterations to the Cotton Exchange since its construction in 1865, the building still possesses many of its original features. Many features within the building survive intact, for example, the stained glass windows, the first and ground floor offices, early 20th century WCs and the original paint scheme. These allow us to understand the different phases of development.

Our understanding of the uses of the original spaces within the Cotton Exchange is low. The original instruction to architects of 1860 lists the facilities that were essential for the building but it is unclear whether these were all accommodated. It is tempting to

assume the first floor and ground floor offices in the north-west corner are the suite of Post Office, telegraph office and WCs, but there is little evidence for this. Possible small spaces in the south-west corner may also have accommodated a News Room, meeting rooms or offices. The News Room was required to be 100 square yards in size so it is unclear whether this was ever constructed. Equally there does not appear to have been a residence for the keeper. It is likely that these spaces were designed to be accommodated within the incomplete south-east range of the structure and that the west-end spaces were just small meeting rooms or offices.

Although the 1865 components of the building are certainly of evidential value, the site's long use as a cinema must not be undervalued, as the building still retains visible signs of this part of its life. For instance partitions used to create projection rooms and the metal-pressed panel ceiling are still in place. The remnants of a full-height partition or cinema screen also survives at high-level. The strip-out of the cinema interiors prior to recording or assessment of significance is detrimental to our understanding of the site.

Our potential to understand more about the changes made during the 1924 cinema conversion is of interest, for example many windows were removed, bricked over, or destroyed altogether. Stripping back the fabric has uncovered many historic features that were previously hidden, such as the feature rose window and historic paint scheme.

On the ground floor of the building, there are a lot of unknown areas, consequently, the site has high potential to increase our understanding. This is the case when it comes to the main hall's ceiling, as the original ceiling and roof structure is hidden by the 1924 remodelled ceiling, leaving us with unanswered questions. Although the current barrel-vaulted ceiling tells us about the fashion of the cinemas during this era, further investigations will potentially reveal more of the original ceiling of the Exchange Hall above.

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Similarly, the basement floor has been significantly altered with the addition of a comprehensive modern decorative scheme, fixtures and fittings. However, unlike the main hall, the basement level has not been stripped back to reveal any of the rooms original features, and there is an unknown level of historic fabric surviving beneath. Many features are yet to be investigated, such as the modern raised floor which may hide original features.

With the absence of any substantial archival sources, the physical building is the best primary source that we have access to. Although the building was stripped back to its bare essentials in 2006, the building still retains the scars from its many phases of developments. As a result, there is a lot that can still be learnt about the Exchange building.

Historical Value

This can be present in two main forms; associative historical value i.e. the ways in which a place can be connected to important past people or events and/or illustrative historical value i.e. the ways in which a place visually conveys its history, development and importance through time.

Illustrative Value: Medium

The Blackburn Cotton Exchange is a site of high historical value locally and of medium historical value nationally. The tangible remains of the site adds greatly to both the history of Blackburn, the former cotton industry in Lancashire and the wider narrative of cinema's and exchange buildings nationally.

The site illustrates the peak of the cotton industry in the mid-19th century and the decline that followed. The diversification at the turn of the 20th century into entertainment and cinema use is of interest, and follows a similar pattern seen across the country as variety halls were converted to the more popular medium of film. This was followed by slow decline as larger out of town facilities became more popular.

The 14th century Gothic architecture adds to the site's significance, as the use of this architectural style on a public exchange building was uncommon; Classical architectural styles were more commonly used, in Manchester and Liverpool for example. The building possesses many features that illustrate its historical significance. For instance, its vaulted ceilings, large communal space, and smaller offices, are of high value as they allow us to understand much more about the buildings activities and importance during its time as an exchange.

Spaces that were specific to its use as an Exchange Hall have high illustrative value, although these have yet to be fully understood. For example the Post Office, telegraph office and possible News Rooms are thought to have been accommodated at the west end.

In spite of the site being stripped of most of its cinema fittings, there are still some remaining features which allow us to understand the site as an entertainment venue. This is shown through the remains of projection windows, located in the original office space, the ceiling, outline of where staircases and a mezzanine level would have once been, and the framework of a cinema screen.

It is these tangible remains, particularly as an early cinema, that have lead to this site becoming a Grade II listed building in the 1980s. The building was listed as part of a strategic cinema survey by Historic England; however, the building in fact holds more rarity as one of very few cotton exchange buildings. In addition, since the cinema fittings were largely stripped out in the 2000s, it begs the question as to how much of that value has been retained.

When considering the value of the basement level, it would be fair to suggest that this floor is of lower historical value than its upper level. This is due to limited physical survivals (that are visible at any rate) that could give us an insight into its original use. There is little evidence supporting the theory that it was originally a warehouse/offices or used as a cafe or foyer in the early cinema.

Associative Value: Low

The site has some associative value as the Exchange Hall was a witness to many events of a political, cultural and civic nature. The venue a great attraction for the local population and was treasured as a public entertainment space in the 19th century and early 20th century.

When it opened, the Cotton Exchange was described as the only place in Blackburn where speakers could safely perform without fear for their health (i.e. a warm, dry space). The Exchange Hall attracted a lot of important political, social, civic and educational speakers. This included events such as political rallies, concerts, and public readings, such as Charles Dicken's reading of 'A Christmas Carol' in 1869. However, the building's era of being a cotton exchange did not match those such as Liverpool or Manchester and there are no significant associations with the building following its conversion to a cinema.

From the beginning of the building's use as a cinema, the site was constantly changing ownership and reinventing itself, which often led to refurbishment. Associations with leading cinema companies from the 20th century hold some interest. The cinema was the first in Lancashire to show only cinemascope films in 1954.

Aesthetic value

The ways in which people draw sensory or intellectual stimulation from a place. This can, for example, be as a result of good design, the use of suitable materials in buildings or the character of the setting or landscape.

External Aesthetic Value: Medium

Internal Aesthetic Value: Low-Detrimental

Blackburn Cotton Exchange has high landscape value and is an iconic feature of the town, but not on the same scale as other civic buildings in Blackburn. When approaching the building from the east along King William Street the Gothic architectural treatment is striking and is compounded by its scale, height and dramatic entranceway. However, upon closer inspection, the building has deteriorated greatly over the years since its closure in 2005. Therefore, the building appears very neglected, less aesthetically pleasing, and not as prominent as it would have once been in its prime. Advertisements on the principal facade also mar the building.

As a result of its abandonment for almost a decade, the building has been subject to decay and vandalism resulting in a substantial amount of damage being caused and reducing aesthetic significance. They currently result in the building being of lower aesthetic value than it has potential to be.

In spite of its deterioration the building still holds aesthetic value that should not be under appreciated. The alternating large and smaller bay windows bring a repetition to the streetscape and provides a contrasting architectural style to the other styles used in the area. The octagonal tower entrance is imposing but also fanciful and welcoming, made more so by the loss of the external entrance steps. The rose window at the far end of the Exchange Hall is a prominent feature and characteristic of the style of the Exchange Hall.

Internally, alterations to the building have had a negative impact on aesthetic value as several phases of modification that lead to the loss of historic features. The strip-out of modern fabric has not

been carried out sympathetically and much damage has been caused. In the basement where the vaulted ceilings have been plastered over and modern materials inserted. Some of the pillars have also been lost during or after the 1924 extension work.

On the ground floor, additional intrusive and unsympathetic alterations are visible, which has furthered its loss in aesthetic value. The once impressive stained glass windows have been lost on the south wall which would have originally mirrored the north wall stain glass windows that remain. The original roof structure has been covered and lowered, leading to some of the building's dramatic height being lost. However, the ceiling modifications are not necessarily detrimental due to the insertion of the high-quality 1920s cinema ceiling.

Communal Value

The associated meanings of the place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory.

Communal Value: Medium

The Blackburn Cotton Exchange is a locally significant site due to its role in the Lancashire cotton trade, which reached its peak in the mid-19th century. Although the cotton industry has long since ended, the site is still valued as a tangible link to this important industry, which brought employment and prosperity to the area. The town was built on the prosperity of the cotton industry, resulting in generations of families being based in Blackburn as a result of this trade. Therefore, many families within the town would have had ancestors who made a living linked to this building.

The site's late 19th century use as an entertainment venue also holds communal value as the Exchange Hall put on many concerts, variety performances and public appearances of politicians; even Charles Dickens spoke here.

The site continues today to be remembered by those who visited the site as a cinema venue for many years, continuing well into the 21st century. The local population has first-hand memories of the

site, as a modern attraction that was regularly updated and reinvented to keep up with public demand. During the development of the film industry it became one of the main public places to go as a fashionable activity.

Ancillary uses to the cinema such as the cafes, restaurants, bars and shops in the basement of the building also hold communal value as local facilities that have only recently closed. This continued renewal and reuse demonstrates a desire to keep the site in use as a successful part of their community.

In addition, over the years people have kept souvenirs of the site to act as a reminder of their experience there. Whether this be of cinema stubs, advertising flyers, or of more substantial things such as the foundation stone trowel. This highlights the public's desire to retain things from this period, demonstrating a connection between the site and the people.

Currently, the Cotton Exchange is considered to be of low value to the public, as the site is inaccessible and in poor condition. There is also no interpretive information available to the public regarding the site. However, the building is in a prime location which ensures the site has great potential for a sustainable new use in the future when it is re-opened to the public. Consequently, the site will then become of greater communal value.

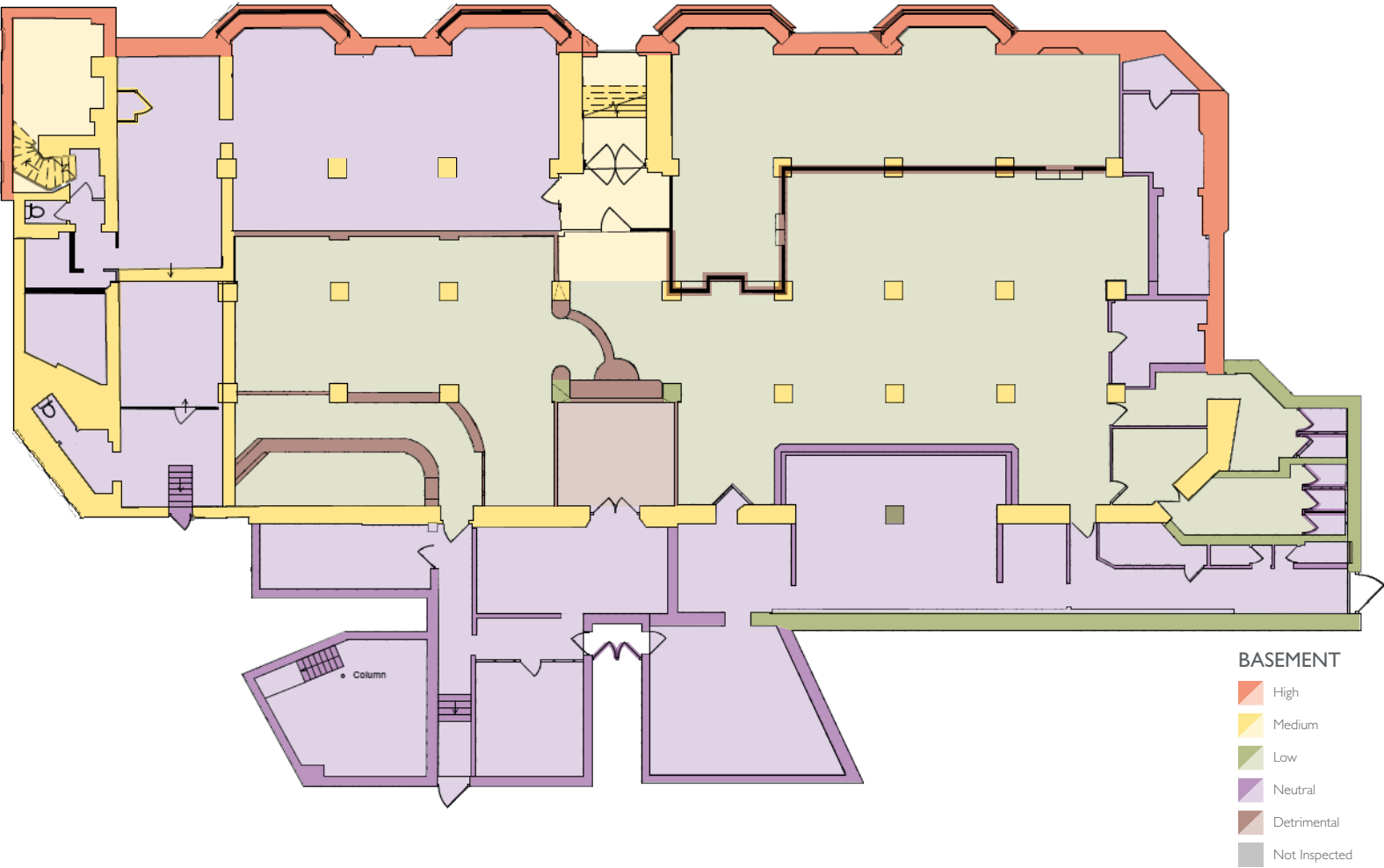
3.4 SETTING

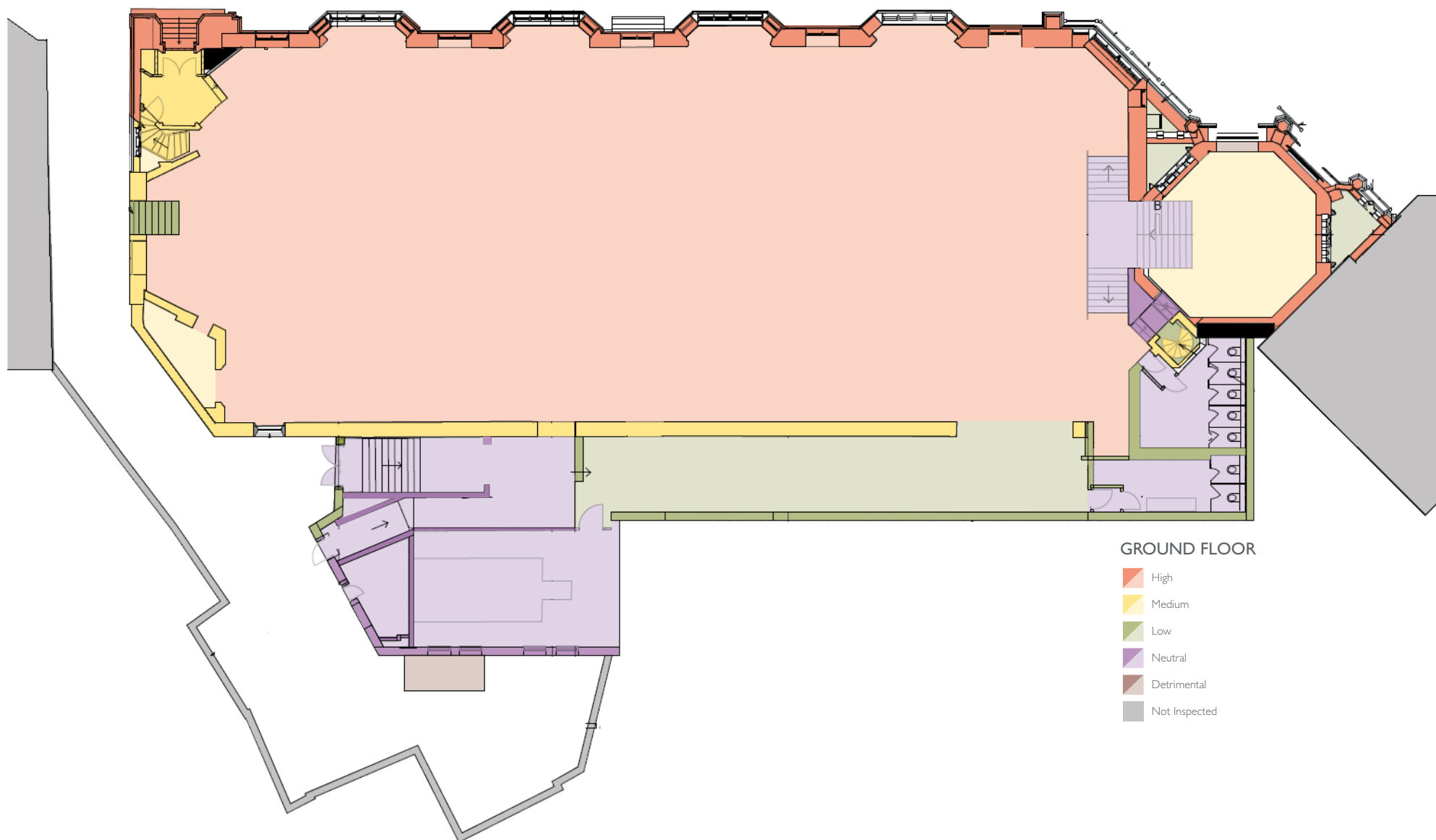
Setting: Low

The setting of the Cotton Exchange contributes somewhat to the significance of the building as there are some good quality Victorian and early 20th century buildings. The Cotton Exchange is particularly important for its grouping with other high-quality public and civic buildings within the town centre. However, the late 20th century residential and commercial development of the town centre is of lower-quality and takes few design cues from the surrounding historic environment. This has a negative impact on the Exchange Hall.

6 UNDERSTANDING

3.5 SIGNIFICANCE PLANS





4 MANAGING CHANGE

This section identifies the policy and guidance relevant to the site, the constraints and opportunities associated with it and the conservation principles that should be considered and pursued as part of any development proposals. At this early stage it is inevitable that our understanding of the issues and opportunities on the site will evolve and this section should be updated regularly as discussions progress.

The following sections should not to be viewed as rigid and impractical rules, but as informed guidance on the ways in which issues can be actively addressed and opportunities unlocked to ensure a sustainable future for the site while protecting its special qualities and significance.

4.1 PLANNING POLICY AND LEGISLATION

The management of the Blackburn Cotton Exchange is subject to a number of statutory and non-statutory measures and planning policy frameworks that seek to ensure that any change on the site takes place in an informed and appropriate manner. The following summary sets out the key legislation and planning guidance relevant to the heritage assets of the site connected with the regeneration of the site.

4.1.1 PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) ACT (1990)

Listed Buildings are designated under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 for their special architectural or historic interest. Listing gives them protection as alterations, additions or demolitions are controlled by Listed Building Consent, which is required by local planning authorities when change is proposed. Conservation Areas are also protected under Section 69 of the same act.

4.1.2 THE NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (NPPF)

The NPPF sets out the government's economic, social and environmental planning policies for England. At the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a 'golden thread' running through both plan making and decision taking. This requires economic, social and environmental gains to be pursued jointly through the planning system.

Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

The objectives of the policies protecting the historic environment are to maintain and manage change to heritage assets in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance. In order to make a sound decision, a planning authority needs to understand the significance of any heritage asset affected.

When determining applications the authority should take into account the Government objectives as expressed in the overarching definition of sustainable development and particularly (paragraph 131):

- the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of all heritage assets (whether designated or not) and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities, including their economic vitality; and
- the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Historic England, Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning, Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets, 2015

Originally produced in 2011 by Historic England, this document has been revised to reflect changes resulting from the NPPF and now takes the form of a Good Practice Advice note (GPA 3).

The document sets out how the significance of a heritage asset derives not only from its physical presence and historic fabric but also from its setting – the surroundings in which it is experienced. The careful management of change within the surroundings of heritage assets therefore makes an important contribution to the quality of the places in which we live.

Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council, Local Development Plan⁰¹

Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council has 14 designated conservation areas. Although most contain listed buildings, the majority of buildings in conservation areas are not listed. It is the quality and interest of areas, including the associated open spaces, trees and historic street patterns, rather than of individual buildings that is the prime consideration in identifying conservation areas.

The Blackburn with Darwen Local Plan was adopted in 2002 and was expected to run until 2006. Part one of the updated Local Development Framework (Core Strategy) was adopted in 2011 and followed by Part 2 of the plan in 2015, which replaces the saved policies of the 2002 Local Plan.

Section 11 of the Core Strategy focuses on the quality of place of Blackburn, including the built and cultural heritage and design development.

Policy CS17: Built and Cultural Heritage

The Core Strategy states that new development should identify and take advantage of opportunities to integrate with and promote the Borough's cultural assets. These include features signifying the history of the area, landscapes, views and cultural facilities. New development is required to be designed with heritage buildings or features as a focus. Ways in which this might be achieved include but are not limited to:

- Retaining, reusing or converting key buildings
- Enhancing the setting and views of buildings through appropriate layout of new development and design of public realm
- Designing new development to fit and strengthen the urban "grain" created by historic buildings

The area's built and natural heritage is a major asset in its attractiveness and local distinctiveness. Importantly, this does not relate solely to designated buildings or specified areas. The less distinctive buildings and spaces in between form the "glue" that joins key features together, and are crucially important in maintaining the overall character of our place. This focus on our area's overall heritage asset, and an informed approach to knitting together new development and existing features, is crucial to creating high quality places and ensuring that new development strengthens local character.

4.2 CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

There are several building constraints within Blackburn Cotton Exchange that present a challenge when considering a viable future use for the building and surrounding site:

- Vacancy - Blackburn Cotton Exchange is currently vacant, following the loss of the cinema, restaurant and shop. This is a constraint in some respects as vandalism is a concern and the lack of an agreed new use puts the future of the building at risk.
- Condition - Vacancy has also had an impact on condition due to a lack of maintenance, which has now led to water ingress and damage in several areas. The structural condition of the building is sound; however, dry rot has been found at basement level. Only limited investigative surveys have been carried out and the suspected presence of asbestos is a concern.
- Loss of historic features - The Exchange Hall has been stripped back to its original building envelope, causing damage and possible loss of historic features, resulted in the loss of later phases of change, which may also have held significance.
- Physical and intellectual access - Access to the Exchange Hall is currently not possible for most people. Physical access is constrained by the poor condition of the site and there is no step-free access to any spaces other than the entrance lobby. Intellectual access to the heritage asset is also limited due to a lack of interpretation. Re:Source Blackburn has a new website that gives some information on the site but in general there is very little information available to people interested in the history of the site. There is no interpretive material on site.

⁰¹ https://www.blackburn.gov.uk/Lists/DownloadableDocuments/Adopted_Core_Strategy_final_A4.pdf

4 MANAGING CHANGE

However, there are many opportunities that present themselves within the site that could be harnessed to preserve and enhance the significance and create a viable new use:

- Strip out of modern material - Although some historic fabric is likely to have been lost, this has also created an opportunity to fully understand the historic phases of development within the built fabric; features that have been covered for the best part of a century have now been revealed. This has also created a 'clean slate' that would be suitable for sensitive redevelopment
- Survival of historic features - Many of the original and early Exchange Hall features have survived well, or in part, which would allow repair, restoration or reinstatement of these features, where evidence allows.
- Survival of historic plan form - The layout of the original Exchange Hall can be seen within the existing building, which has the potential to be preserved or enhanced through future redevelopment
- Future use - There is capacity for the Exchange Hall to accommodate future new uses that are compatible with its original uses such as a mixed-use entertainment venue.

Engaging stakeholders

Blackburn Cotton Exchange holds communal value and as such any development on the site will elicit a response from the local community. Its national significance will also require consultation with heritage professionals and organisations with an interest in the site. This might not be limited to statutory amenity societies.

A list of key local and national stakeholders should be drawn up at an early stage to allow for consultation on any proposals for change

Statutory consents

The Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council requires any new development to be sensitive to its location and of high architectural quality. Any development within the setting of listed buildings will be required to preserve and/or enhance the significance of the listed buildings (NPPF paragraph 137). Listed Building Consent will be required for any material changes to the Exchange Hall.

4.3 CAPACITY FOR CHANGE

An assessment of the capacity for change for the site as a whole has been included here to help inform future decisions and the careful management of change. Areas of high significance should be carefully assessed and change carried out sensitively to avoid harm to significant features. Areas of low or detrimental significance have more potential for change and these areas should be actively reused in new and creative ways. There is some scope for development proposals to incorporate selective demolition. The points below offer a rough guide to areas where alterations would be more acceptable than others, based on the assessment of significance:

- There is little scope for alteration to the main external elevations including those along King William Street, the west end, and octagonal tower. Improvements should be made to condition. There is more scope for alterations to be made to the rear of the site, which is in a poor condition and has fewer features of interest.
- Improvements would be particularly welcomed to the rear (south) of the Exchange Hall both internally and externally where modern brick elements (plant and service rooms) have been added to the 1924 circulation extension.
- The apsidal west end of the main hall is sensitive to redevelopment due to the fragmentary survivals of the original paint scheme, timber roof structure, stone window and door tracery, fireplace, staircases and stained glass. These should be restored and incorporated into the new design.
- The historic WC basement space is a complete interior with early 20th century fixtures and has little potential for alteration without harming significance.
- The original lancet windows on the south elevation should be restored, with low-quality modern fabric removed from openings.
- The pressed-metal ceiling panels are of interest and their retention would be welcomed. Loss of original fabric would be acceptable if the condition is deemed to be poor and

replacement with replica tiles would be required. The two different panel designs should be retained. Following investigation into the original roof structure, consideration should be given to whether any survivals should be revealed.

- Subdivision of the main Exchange Hall would be detrimental to our understanding of the space. Although this has been partitioned throughout the 20th century there is now an opportunity to retain this space as it was intended. The introduction of a mezzanine floor is not incompatible with heritage value as both the Cotton Exchange and early cinema made use of gallery or mezzanine levels.
- The plan form of the 1924 circulation space should be retained, although the internal and external appearance of these spaces on the ground and basement floors is detrimental to significance and has much capacity to be enhanced.
- There is an opportunity to restore the entrance lobby by restoring the original window tracery and vaulted ceiling. Reinstatement of the original entrance steps would be positive but will depend on the proposed use as this could restrict equal access.
- The basement spaces have high capacity for development. Development proposals should be sensitive to the simple character of the spaces and retain the original brick piers.
- The WC facilities on the ground and first floor at the east end are of limited historic interest and have potential for development.
- The provision of circulation and stairs should be informed by research into the original and 1920s layout of the Exchange Hall rather than new additions. Blocked staircases should be reused where possible.

4.4 CONSERVATION PRINCIPLES

Constructive conservation – Constructive Conservation is a term used by Historic England to refer to a positive, well-informed and collaborative approach to conservation. At the heart of it is the use of our understanding of a site in order to manage change. It states that innovative schemes can be achieved through collaborative working in order to preserve and enhance significance and to promote sustainable growth.

Minimum intervention - Best practice guidance sets out that the extent of repair and development should be limited to what is reasonably necessary in order to allow the building to fulfil a function and should cause the minimum harm or change to heritage values.⁰² Repairs should respect existing historic fabric and should be replaced like-for-like where possible. Traditional methods and techniques should be used and any reinstatement or restoration should be informed by primary evidence.

Restoration – restoration to a specific period in the history of the Exchange Hall would not be suitable in this case as it ignores the importance of other layers of change and history. Both the cinema and Cotton Exchange have historic value. A solution should be sought that enhances surviving features from all periods within the building. Features of interest have been listed within this report but other features may be uncovered during investigations or development works. All features should be assessed for significance prior to any alteration.

Reversibility - change should seek to add new layers of development rather than remove a previous layer. High-quality installations of significance should be retained but areas of fabric that are detrimental to significance (such as low-quality blockwork) should be removed. Any new partitions, wall coverings or floor structures should be reversible and be inserted over historic fabric rather than replacing it, where possible.

Authenticity - authenticity lies in whatever most truthfully reflects and embodies the values attached to the place. It can therefore relate to design and function as well as fabric.⁰³ Any interventions into the site should be honest and in keeping with the character of the building i.e. a public entertainment and trading venue. It is accepted that a degree of visual and physical alteration will be inevitable in order to accommodate a new use.⁰⁴

Extensions – this principle is accepted to the rear of the site and could allow for some demolition of the rear circulation space. Particularly the modern additions such as the boiler/heating room. The 1920s corridor is of some significance but it is accepted that this could be replaced with a modern addition on a similar footprint to make the scheme viable as a whole.

Mitigation - It is accepted that there will be a degree of harm to heritage values of the Cotton Exchange through redevelopment; be that loss of historic fabric or changes to its character. It will be important to attempt to mitigate this harm. Investigations to improve our understanding and building recording exercises are both acceptable methods of mitigation to minimise harm.⁰⁵

⁰² Policy 119, Historic England, Conservation Principles, 2008

⁰³ Policy 91, Historic England, Conservation Principles, 2008

⁰⁴ Section 4.1, Historic England, Conservation Principles, 2008

⁰⁵ Policy 104, Historic England, Conservation Principles, 2008

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APPENDIX A: LISTING DESCRIPTION

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

Name: THE COTTON EXCHANGE

List entry Number: 1222896

Location

THE COTTON EXCHANGE, KING WILLIAM STREET

The building may lie within the boundary of more than one authority. County:

District: Blackburn with Darwen

District Type: Unitary Authority

Parish:

National Park: Not applicable to this List entry.

Grade: II

Date first listed: 02-Sep-1985

Date of most recent amendment: Not applicable to this List entry.

Legacy System Information

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system. Legacy System: LBS

UID: 418383

Asset Groupings

This list entry does not comprise part of an Asset Grouping. Asset Groupings are not part of the official record but are added later for information.

List entry Description

Summary of Building

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

Reasons for Designation

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

History

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

Details

This list entry was subject to a Minor Amendment on 07/01/2015

SD 62 NE 4/18

KING WILLIAM STREET The Cotton Exchange

(Formerly listed as Unit 4 Cinema (formerly the Cotton Exchange)) II Former Cotton Exchange, later a cinema. 1862-5 by Brakespear of Manchester. Coursed ashlar with slate roofs. High Victorian Gothic, the design is incomplete as one wing and the central tower were never built so the plan is asymmetrical; an octagonal entrance, which was to form the base of the tower and the northern wing only were constructed. The twin pointed entrances, in the frontal angle of the 2-storey octagon, have elaborately carved foliated cusping to the 2-light trefoliated heads and quatrefoil tracery, set in splayed, perpendicular, traceried, panelled reveals to the moulded pointed porch, each bay distinguished by an octagonal plinthed buttress with crenellated apex ogee finial. A continuous moulded string course divides the 1st from the 2nd storey, each face of which contains a 3-light perpendicular traceried

pointed opening with hood mould and off-set buttress between each face. The crenellated parapet is canted on a bossed, coved moulded cornice with gargoyles to the angles and the octagonal roof has bands of fish-scale shaped tiles with a flag pole at the apex. The north elevation is of 2 storeys and 9 bays. Bays 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 have deeply-set square headed moulded reveals to what were originally shop doors, now glazed in the 1st storey beneath. 2-light, square-headed cusped and traceried cross windows alternating with canted bay windows in bays 2, 4, 6, 8, plain below and 6-light square-headed traceried and cusped transomed and mullioned above. There is a bossed, coved and moulded continuous hoodmould with gargoyles at the cant points of the bay windows to a plain, 5-course upper wall crenellated parapet. The north wing is linked to the octagon entrance by an angled 2-storey bay, the upper storey fenestrated with a 6-light square-headed, traceried, transomed, mullioned and cusped window. The interior has been extensively altered to accommodate 3 cinemas and has not been inspected. Charles Dickens gave his last public reading here.

Listing NGR: SD6811028290

Selected Sources

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details

National Grid Reference: SD 68110 28290

