

Plaza, Port Talbot

HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING

(385)1902-GWP-A-2A-HBR-P00

Date: 06.01.20

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CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction and Objectives of Report

- 1.1 Introduction and Objectives
- 1.2 Authorship
- 1.3 Legislative Guidance on Historic Building Recording
- 1.4 Historic England’s Level 4 Standard Recording
- 1.5 Structure of the Report

Section One: Report

2.0 History, Heritage & Context of the Site

- 2.1 Location
- 2.2 Use
- 2.3 Age
- 2.4 Statutory Designations
- 2.5 Outline History of Port Talbot
- 2.6 Appraisal of Historic Maps
- 2.7 Setting and Context of The Plaza
- 2.8 Historical Background of The Plaza and its context
- 2.9 Architectural Design & Materials of The Plaza
- 2.10 General Condition of The Plaza

3.0 Statement of Significance of the Site

- 3.1 An Assessment of Significance
- 3.2 Historical Value
- 3.3 Evidential Value
- 3.4 Aesthetic Value
- 3.5 Communal Value
- 3.6 Overall Heritage Value

Section Two: Drawings & Investigations

4.0 Existing Drawings of Porter’s Lodge & Weighbridge Office

- 4.1 Site Location Plan and Aerial Photograph
- 4.2 Existing Ground Floor Plan
- 4.3 Existing First Floor Plan
- 4.4 Existing Second Floor Plan
- 4.5 Existing Roof Plan
- 4.6 Existing Site External Hardstand
- 4.7 Existing South and West Elevations
- 4.8 Existing North and East Elevations
- 4.9 Existing Longitudinal Section
- 4.10 Existing Front Portion - Existing Wall Finishes
- 4.11 Existing Front Portion - Existing Floor Finishes
- 4.12 Existing Front Portion - Existing Ceiling Finishes
- 4.13 Existing Front Portion - Existing Elevations

5.0 Paint Analysis

Section Three: Photographs

6.0 Detailed Photographic Record of the Site

- 6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza
- 6.2 The Interior of the Plaza - Ground Floor
- 6.3 The Interior of the Plaza - First Floor
- 6.4 The Interior of the Plaza - Second Floor

7.0 Bibliography



I.0 INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES OF REPORT

I.1 Introduction and Objectives

This ‘Historic Building Recording’ document has been produced in order to meet the requirements of Condition no. 7 of Planning Consent ref: P2019/5237 from Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council and Condition no. 3 of Listed Building Consent ref: 2019/5238 from the Welsh Government Planning Directorate, for proposed works to the grade II listed Plaza in Port Talbot.

The two Conditions state that:

“No works to which this consent relates shall commence until an appropriate programme of historic building recording and analysis has been secured and implemented in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which shall be submitted to and approved in writing by Welsh Ministers”.

As recommended by the Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust, in their letter to Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council, dated 29th August 2019, that the recording **“will take the form of a Level 4 survey”**.

The purpose of the work is to record and advance understanding of the significance of the affected heritage assets – the Plaza, Port Talbot.

The objectives of the Historic Building Recording programme are:

- To provide a comprehensive visual record of the building prior to any works being undertaken, as it represents upstanding archaeological/ historical remains of local and regional importance.
- To provide a review of the local and regional historical context of the building, adequately detailed to place the findings of the recording in their context.
- To produce a high quality, fully integrated archive suitable for long-term deposition in order to ‘preserve by record’ the building in its current form prior to the works.

A Historic Building Recording document should contain:

- A written analysis, charting the historical development of the site, explaining and illustrating what is significant and providing dates for significant parts or phases of development, wherever possible;
- A drawn survey, with plans, elevations and, if available, other information;
- A photographic survey, of the exterior and, if relevant to the nature of the record, the interior.

I.2 Authorship

This document has been produced for GWP Architecture in December 2019 by Ashley Davies, an RIBA-accredited Specialist Conservation Architect, an Affiliate Member of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation, a member of the RIBA Conservation Register Steering Group and a part-time lecturer in ‘Conservation Principles’, following visits to, and appraisal of, the site on various occasions between January and November 2019.

Ashley is also a Chartered Architect and has undertaken Building Conservation courses at SPAB, the RIBA, the RSAW and the CEW as well as a hand-on practical course at Ty Mawr. Lime He has delivered many heritage-led projects over his career involving the repair, restoration and adaptation of many grade I, II* and II listed buildings.

In the last few years, Ashley has written dozens of Heritage Assessments, Heritage Impact Statements, Conservation Plans, Management & Maintenance Plans and Historic Building Recordings.

I.3 Legislative Guidance on Historic Building Recording

This Historic Building Recording document is produced in accordance with the Welsh Government’s ‘Planning Policy Wales’ Edition 10, dated December 2018, paragraph 6.1.27, which states:

“If the planning authority is minded to approve an application and where archaeological remains are affected by proposals that alter or destroy them, the planning authority must be satisfied that the developer has secured appropriate and satisfactory provision for their recording and investigation, followed by the analysis and publication of the results and the deposition of the resulting archive in an approved repository”.

The Welsh Government Historic Environment Service (Cadw)’s May 2017 document ‘Managing Change to Listed Buildings in Wales’ states:

“4.11 Documenting and Recording:

It is important to document and learn from the decisions that are taken when changes are made to a listed building. When part or even all of a historic building is to be lost or altered, it is good practice to take the opportunity to record, investigate and analyse the features of the building that are to be removed or altered. It is also good practice to record features revealed during the course of any work. Advice on the appropriate level and standard of recording may be obtained from your local planning authority, the Welsh archaeological trusts, or the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (RCAHMW).”

In 1996, the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments identified a four-levelled approach to recording historic buildings, entitled ‘Recording Historic Buildings’. It set out four levels of detail and analysis which is usually dependent upon both the nature of the building and the purpose for which the record is intended. They are:

- Level 1 is termed ‘Visual Record’;
- Level 2 is termed ‘Descriptive Record’;
- Level 3 is termed ‘Analytical Record’;
- Level 4 is termed ‘Comprehensive Analytical Record’.

Amongst the most helpful guides to what is required for Historic Building Recordings is Historic England’s guidelines ‘Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice (2016)’, which has been used, in this document, as the basis for defining levels of recording and what is expected. As stated, the Historic Building Record for this project will be undertaken to Level 4.

I.4 Historic England’s Level 4 Standard Recording

Historic England’s ‘Understanding Historic Buildings - A Guide to Good Recording Practice’ document, published by Historic England in May 2016, sets out four levels of recording which, at a glance, require the following levels of detail:

Level	Record	Written	Drawings	Photographs
1	Visual	Simple record	Sketch (usually exterior only)	General
2	Descriptive	Basic record	Measured drawings	General (external & internal)
3	Analytical	Full record	Measured plans; sections & elevations	Comprehensive
4	Comprehensive	Full record	Measured plans; sections; elevations; details; reconstructions	Comprehensive

Historic England’s ‘Understanding Historic Buildings - A Guide to Good Recording Practice’ document states (p27) that:

“Level 4 provides a **comprehensive analytical record** and is appropriate for buildings of special importance. Whereas the analysis and interpretation employed at Level 3 will clarify the building’s history so far as it may be deduced from the structure itself, the record at Level 4 will draw on the full range of other sources of information about the building and discuss its significance in terms of architectural, social, regional and economic history. The range of drawings may also be greater than at other levels.”

Historic England’s ‘Understanding Historic Buildings - A Guide to Good Recording Practice’ document goes onto state that:

- “A Level 4 record will typically consist of:
- **drawings** – item 2; sometimes one or more of items 3-12 (see numbered list in 4.3.3);
 - **photography** – items 1-9 (see numbered list in 4.4.8);
 - **written account** – items 1-3, 5-8, 10-23; sometimes item 24 (see numbered list in 4.5.1)”.

Page 14 of the document covers the ‘**Types of drawing**’ and states (4.3.3):

“A building record may contain one or more of the following drawing types. This list should be referred to when deciding on a record level as outlined in section 5:

Either

1. Sketched plan, section, elevation or detail drawings (when no more thorough drawn record is made). Sketches may be roughly dimensioned.

Or

2. Measured plans (to scale or fully dimensioned) as existing. These may extend to all floors, or they may be restricted to one or a selection. The latter option may be appropriate, for example, in a town-centre building where an upper floor has been little altered. Buildings with a repetitive structure may also be planned on one floor, but a note or a sketch plan should be made to indicate the arrangement of other floors. Plans should show the form and location of any structural features of historic significance, such as blocked doorways, windows and fireplaces, masonry joints, ceiling beams and other changes in floor and ceiling levels, and any evidence for fixtures of significance.

Further drawing types as required, from:

3. Measured drawings recording the form or location of other significant structural detail (for example timber or metal framing).
4. Measured cross-sections or long-sections to illustrate the vertical relationships within a building (for example floor and ceiling heights, the form of roof trusses).
5. Measured drawings to show the form of any architectural decoration (for example the moulding profiles of door surrounds, beams, mullions and cornices) or small-scale functional detail not easily captured by photography. A measured detail drawing is particularly valuable when the feature in question is an aid to dating.
6. Measured elevations, where these are necessary to an understanding of the building’s design, development or function.
7. A site plan relating the building to other structures and to any related topographical and landscape features.
8. A plan or plans identifying the location and direction of accompanying photographs.
9. Copies of earlier drawings throwing light on the building’s history.

10. Three-dimensional projections when these are of value in understanding the building. If these are to be considered components of the record they must always be accompanied by measured plans, sections and elevational details.

11. Reconstruction drawings and phased drawings, when these are of value. In phased drawings successive phases of a building’s development may be shown by graded tone (dark to light, with the darker being the earlier) or by colour, by sequential diagrams or by annotation. Whenever phased drawings are included in a record, they must be accompanied by the unmarked drawings on which they are based.

12. Diagrams interpreting the movement of materials (process flow) or people (circulation), or the segregation of people or activities (for example permeability diagrams), where these are warranted by the complexity of the subject. As with 10 and 11, the evidence supporting the interpretations must be provided.”

Historic England expects:
‘item 2; sometimes one or more of items 3-12’.

In this document, we have included:
Items 2, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8.

Pages 19-20 of the document covers the ‘**Types of photograph**’ and states (4.4.8):

“Site photography may include one or more of the following. This list should be referred to when deciding on a record level as outlined in Section 5:

1. A general view or views of the building (in its wider setting or landscape if 2 (below) is also to be adopted).
2. The building’s external appearance. Typically a series of oblique views will show all external elevations of the building, and give an overall impression of its size and shape. Where individual elevations include complex historical information it may also be appropriate to take views at right-angles to the plane of the elevation.
3. Further views may be desirable to reflect the original design intentions of the builder or architect, where these are known from documentary sources or can be inferred from the building or its setting.
4. The overall appearance of the principal rooms and circulation areas. The approach will be similar to that outlined in 2.
5. Any external or internal detail, structural or decorative, which is relevant to the building’s design, development and use, with scale where appropriate.
6. Any machinery or other plant, or evidence for its former existence.
7. Any dates or other inscriptions; any signage, makers’ plates or graffiti which contribute to an understanding of the building. A transcription should be made wherever characters are difficult to interpret.
8. Any building contents which have a significant bearing on the building’s history (for example, a cheese press, a malt shovel).
9. Copies of maps, drawings, views and photographs, present in the building and illustrating its development or that of its site. The owner’s written consent may be required where copies are to be deposited in an archive.”

Historic England expects:
‘items 1-9’.

In this document, we have included:
Items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. and 9

Pages 22-23 of the document covers the **'Report sections'** and states (4.5.1):

"The main components of the account will generally be selected, according to the level of record adopted, from the following list. This list should be referred to when deciding on a record level as outlined in Section 5.

Introductory material

1. The precise location of the building as an address and in the form of a National Grid reference.
2. A note of any statutory designation (that is, listing, scheduling, Register of Historic Parks and Gardens, conservation area). Information on statutory designations can be found on the Historic England website. Non-statutory designations (local lists) may be added.
3. The date when the record was made, the name(s) of the recorder(s) and the location of any archive material.
4. A summary statement (when no more detailed account is intended) describing the building's type or purpose, historically and at present, its materials and possible date(s) so far as these are apparent from a superficial inspection.
5. A contents list; a list of illustrations or figures.
6. A longer summary statement. An alternative to 4. This account should summarise the building's form, function, date and sequence of development. The names of architects, builders, patrons and owners should be given if known. Its purpose is to describe the building when no fuller record is necessary. Alternatively it may serve as an introduction to the more detailed body of a record that may follow, for users who may need a summary of the report's findings.
7. An introduction briefly setting out the circumstances in which the record was made, its objectives, methods, scope and limitations, and any constraints. Where appropriate the brief for the work or the project design should be stated or appended.
8. Acknowledgements to all those who have made a significant contribution to the making of the record, or who have given permission for copyright items to be reproduced.

Main report

9. A discussion of the published sources relating to the building and its setting, an account of its history as given in published sources, an analysis of historic map evidence (map regression) and a critical evaluation of previous records of the building, where they exist.
10. An expansion of 9, drawing additionally on a range of primary documentary sources.

11. An account of the building's overall form (structure, materials, layout) and of its successive phases of development, together with the evidence supporting this analysis.
12. An account of the building's past and present use, and of the uses of its parts, with the evidence for these interpretations. An analysis of a circulation pattern or of a decorative or liturgical scheme. An account of any fixtures, fittings, plant or machinery associated with the building, and their purpose. In an industrial building, a sequential account of the way in which materials or processes were handled.
13. Any evidence for the former existence of demolished structures or removed plant associated with the building.
14. A summary of the findings of any specialist reports (for example dendrochronology or paint analysis).
15. A discussion of the building's past and present relationship to its setting; its relationship to local settlement patterns or other man-made features in the landscape; its part in a larger architectural or functional group of buildings; its visual importance as a landmark, etc. For more guidance on investigating and recording landscapes see Understanding the Archaeology of Landscapes (English Heritage 2007; revised edition forthcoming).
16. An assessment of the potential for further investigative or documentary work, and of the potential survival of below-ground evidence for the history of the building and its site.
17. A discussion of the architectural or historical context or significance of the building locally, regionally or nationally, in terms of its origin, purpose, form, construction, design, materials, status or historical associations.
18. Copies of historic maps, drawings, views or photographs illustrating the development of the building or its site (the permission of owners or copyright holders may be required).
19. Copies of other records of the building, including specialist reports (again with any necessary permissions), or a note of their existence and location.
20. Any further information from documentary sources, published or unpublished, bearing on any of these matters, or bearing on the circumstances of its building, designer, craftsmen, ownership, use and occupancy, with a note on the sources of the information.
21. Relevant information from owners, builders, architects or others who may be acquainted with the building, including oral history. The sources of the information must be given and it is important that the particular strengths and weaknesses of different types of information are weighed.

22. An outline of the significance of the building. This can seek to identify both the significance of different features or phases of development in the building relative to each other, and also set important aspects of the building in a regional or national context.

End material

23. Full bibliographic and other references, or a list of the sources consulted (in long reports it is preferable to include both). Websites which may prove to be ephemeral should be avoided as references wherever possible; where their use is unavoidable the full web address and the date on which the site was consulted should be noted.
24. A glossary of architectural or other terms likely to be unfamiliar to readers. If few in number, terms may be explained more economically within the text or in footnotes.

Historic England expects:

'items 1-3, 5-8, 10-23; sometimes item 24'.

In this document, we have included:

Items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22 & 23.

1.5 Structure of the Report

The document has been set out in three main sections:

The 'Report', which presents the architecture, history and significance of the building and addresses the 'Reports section' referred to by Historic England.

'Drawings' which show all aspects of the building in detail and address the 'Types of drawing' referred to by Historic England.

A series of general photographs of the building and general and detailed photographs of the areas planned for loss and/or adaptation and address the 'Types of photograph' referred to by Historic England.

2.0 SECTION TWO – UNDERSTANDING THE HERITAGE

2.1 Location & Setting

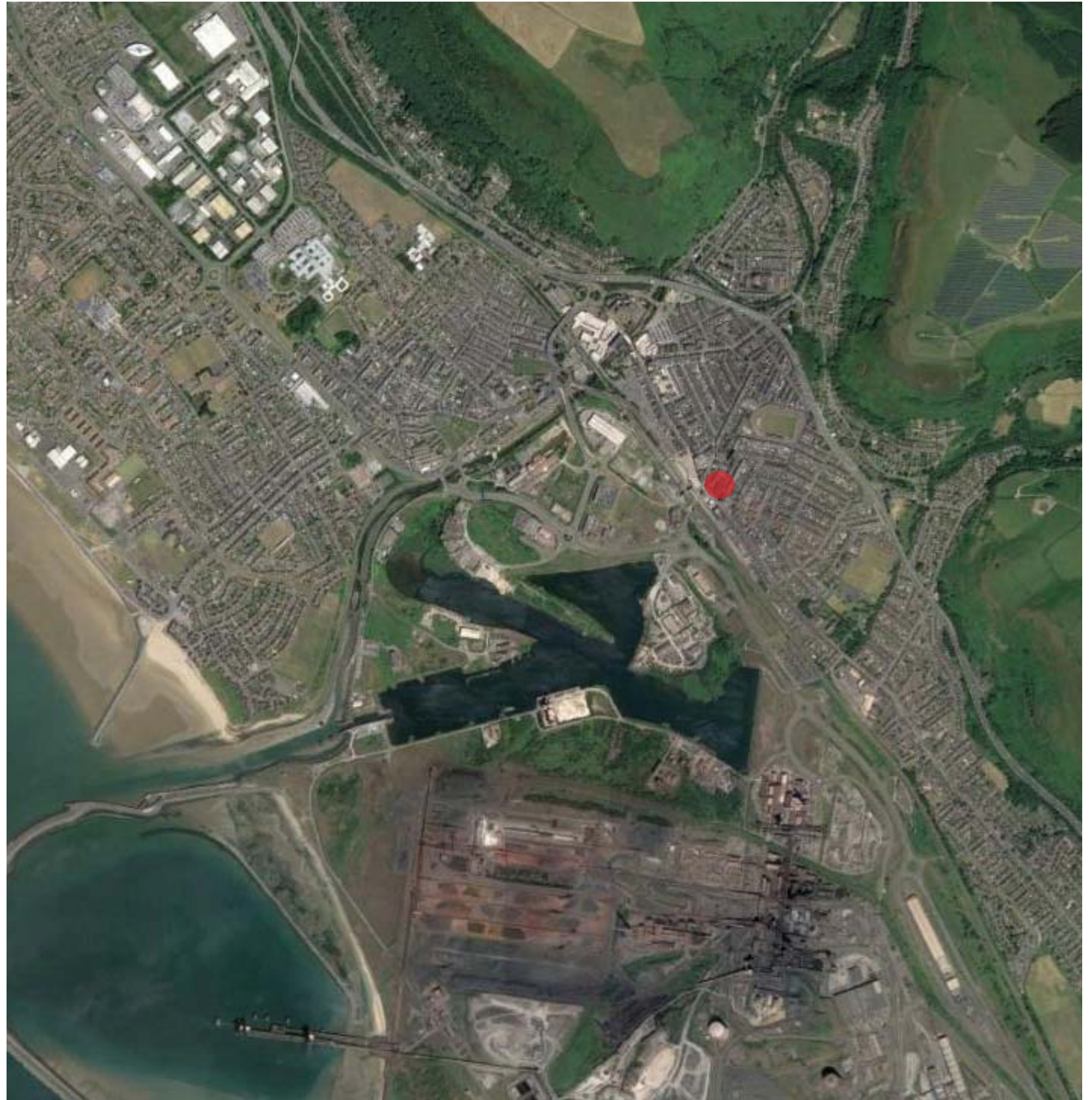
The development site's address is:

Plaza Cinema
14 Talbot Road
Port Talbot
SA13 1DT

The development site is within the centre of Port Talbot, on the corner between Talbot Road (the A48) and Eagle Street.

Its 'front' entrance elevation onto Talbot Road faces south south west and its longer elevation onto Eagle Street faces south east east.

Its OS Eastings is 276856; its OS Northings is 189606 and its OS Grid reference is SS768896.



GoogleEarth aerial photograph of Port Talbot with the Plaza highlighted in red

2.2 Use

The Plaza was built in 1939 as a single-screen cinema, opening on 25th March 1940.

The early 1980s saw the building being run as a combined cinema and bingo club.

It closed as a cinema in June 1983, with its use changing exclusively to that of a bingo club.

The bingo club closed after 2 years in July 1985.

Its use then changed back to that of a single-screen cinema, re-opening on 18th October 1985.

In 1989 the interior of the cinema was converted into a multi-screen operation.

It closed as a cinema on 4th January 1999.

The building has been empty and unused ever since.

In 2009 Neath Port Talbot Council acquired the cinema with the aim of safeguarding the building and developing a future use.

2.3 Age

The Plaza Cinema was built in 1939, although building works were not fully completed at that time due to materials restrictions as a result of the outbreak of the Second World War. The almost finished cinema finally opened in 1940.

Building works were completed in 1950 when the building received its Plaza sign, faience tiles and Crittall-style metal framed windows 10 years after opening.

Its use changed to that of a combined cinema and bingo club in the early 1980s, and became just a bingo club in 1983, however, this change of use did not result in any major alterations to the interior of the building.

After re-opening as a cinema in 1985, the single-screen cinema was converted into a multi-screen operation in 1989, the year of its 50th anniversary. The stalls were converted into three separate screens with a fourth screen in the circle. It had reduced to three screens prior to closing. The cinema finally stopped operating and closed in 1999, having limped along to its 60th anniversary.



Plaza exterior approx 1950 - building receiving sign, tiles and windows 10 years after opening (source: Port Talbot Historical Society)

2.4 Statutory Designations

2.4.1 Listing

The Plaza Cinema is protected by a grade II listing, which was designated on 4 August 1999 and last amended on 7 September 2000.

The listing (with a Cadw ID No. of 22136) states:

History

Built in 1939. Opened Easter 1940, but due to war completion delayed.

Exterior

Modernist style with Art Deco influences. Front elevation in cream faience tiling with band in eau-de-nil; leadwork scallops below capping of parapet; tiles painted black beneath canopy. Projecting central block with partially obscured tripartite window (metal glazing bars), projecting turrets to ends; side elevation to R has 2 broad windows on 2 levels (metal glazing bars where visible); side elevation to L has 3 windows at upper level, and broad window below. Walls to sides, screening body of cinema, also faced in faience. Original full-width canopy, entrance doors boarded over; to each side, doors and semi-circular convex shopfronts. Plain roughcast side elevations with tall ribs and small windows infilled with concrete. Large lean-to to rear.

Interior

Outer doors lead to lobby, terrazzo steps (inscription "Plaza"), lead to central group of 3 sets of doors with horizontal glazed panels, long brass handles, glazing above; similar single set of doors to each side of central group. Foyer has cornices with art-deco decoration, cream and eau-de-nil floor tiles; stair to each side, ticket booth at entrance to auditorium. Auditorium has ceiling with square panels, some with ventilator grilles, some (original?) lamps; moulded cornice. Moulded proscenium surround to stage and screen area. Balcony area retains its seating; seating removed from stalls.

Reasons for Listing

Listed as a very rare example in Wales of a building type which expresses the distinctive architectural vocabulary of 1930s cinema architecture, and whose interior has escaped subdivision or major changes.

2.4.2 Other Statutory Protection

The site is not situated within a Conservation Area, nor is it designated with any other specific protection.



2.5 Outline History of Port Talbot

Much of the information within this section has been established thanks to various sources, particularly:

- The Port Talbot Historical Society's website 'historicalporttalbot.com';
- John Newman's 'The Buildings of Glamorgan';
- The 'wikipedia.org' website.

Whilst the area around Port Talbot has presented evidence of human occupation as far back as the Bronze Age, with farming ditches discovered on the side of Mynydd Margam from 4,000 BC, and suggestions of Roman presence, the present town grew out of the medieval borough of Aberafan and the surrounding communities of Baglan, Bry, Cwmafan and Margam, which was noted for its fine Cistercian abbey, founded in 1147. Margam Abbey was dissolved in 1535-7 and, in 1750, it passed to the Talbot family of Lacock Abbey.

The English antiquarian John Leland made an extensive journey through Wales c.1536-39 of which he recorded an itinerary. He passed through Aberafan, which he describes as a 'poor village' surrounded by barren ground, though he also describes the area as heavily wooded, not much of which remains today. He mentions the use of the river mouth as a port. His portrayal of Aberafan as a small, struggling village suggests that the port was not in great use, especially as traffic to and from Margam Abbey would have ceased following its dissolution in 1536.

The Talbot family, who were related to the pioneer photographer, William Henry Fox Talbot, became major local landowners. As well as a patrons of Margam Abbey, in 1834-6, Christopher Rice Mansel Talbot (1803-1890), a Liberal Member of Parliament for Glamorgan from 1830 until his death, had Margam Castle built, using Thomas Hopper as his architect. In 1941, the Castle became uninhabited, however, in the early 1970s, Margam was bought by the Local Authority and became a country park.

Although the monks of Margam mined coal, and Lord Mansel's Forge was in existence by 1717, the major industrial development of the area began when the English Copper Company set up a works at Taibach in 1770. In 1820, the Margam Tinplate Works opened near Aberafan, whilst, at the same time, iron production was beginning in the lower Afan Valley. In 1835, the English Copper Company moved to Cwmafan, and their works at Taibach were taken over by the Vivian Family of the Hafod and Morfa Copperworks in Swansea. This rapid growth of industry meant that the old medieval harbour, the Bar of Afan, was no longer adequate and, in around 1836, Christopher Rice Mansel Talbot saw the potential of his property as a site for an extensive ironworks, which opened in early 1831, joined with others to create a new dock complex. The main line of the South Wales Railway reached what was being called Port Talbot in 1850, with Talbot as the Chairman and major shareholder.

The first reference to the name 'Port Talbot' dates to 1837, as the name of the new docks built on the south-east side of the river Afan by the Christopher Rice Mansel Talbot.

Modern Port Talbot is a town formed from the merging of multiple villages, including Baglan, Margam, and Aberafan, which was the historic centre, where the Afan River exits from the mountains. Over time, the name came to be applied to the whole of the emerging conurbation.

By the end of the 19th century, iron and steel production had overtaken copper as the main local product, with coal also a major export. By 1898, the docks once more required upgrading; Miss Emily Talbot led these upgrades. In 1906, the Port Talbot Steelwork opened, and, in 1916, the Margam Works began production. By 1947, the site had been developed into an integrated steelwork of international importance. At the same time, the BP chemical plant was opened up at Baglan Bay. Since the Second World War, Port Talbot has been, with Llanwern, one of the two major sites for the rationalised steel industry in Wales.

The building of the M4, in 1966, and of the Aberafan Centre, in the early 1970s, meant that most of the old town of Aberafan was lost.

As a result, the town's population had soared and, in the early 1950s, the vast Sandfields estate was created to house the influx of workers and their families.

Whilst Port Talbot is synonymous with industry, it has a long and distinguished history of culture and invention, with the 20th and 21st centuries seeing major figures in the acting world coming out of Port Talbot, including Richard Burton, Anthony Hopkins and Michael Sheen.



2.6 Appraisal of Historic Maps

The earliest historical map found dates to 1877. Here, the Mansel Tinplate Works, the Afan-vale Tinplate Works and the Port Talbot Chemical Works are all evident, along with the Port Talbot Docks and the South Wales Railway. All of this is a little to the north west of a small sets of structures clustered around the junction of the main South Wales Railway line, running south east to north west, and a secondary line running from the north to the docks in the south. At this crossing were the remains of a Chapel, the Port Talbot Train Station, a series of signal posts, the Eagle Inn, a Smithy and two clusters of buildings called 'Upper Court' and 'Lower Court'. This is the area which was to become the centre of Port Talbot town and the location of the Plaza Cinema. Running parallel with the main railway line was a road which would become know at Talbot Road and/or the A48.

By 1897, much of the space in between the Works and the Railway Crossing of 1877, had been eaten up by residential development, however, there remained only a small cluster of structures around the railway crossing. Adding to those structures identified on the 1877 plan, by 1897, are a Hotel, a Post Office, a building on the corner of the new Eagle Street which we assume to be the Custom House, a Saw Mill and one or two unidentified buildings. Further to the south, on the other side of the main railway line, the Taibach Tin Plate Works had been developed. Whilst in 1877, there appeared to be only one railway line to the north-south run, by 1897, there appears to be three new line terminating just short of the crossing, which bend to the east and form the new Port Talbot Railway. These three line terminated right by the Central Station and the Hotel, just to the north of what would become Talbot Road, but was now Court-Ucha Terrace. It is the termination point of these three railway line which was to become the site of the Plaza Cinema 42 years later.

By 1914, the area around the future site of the Plaza Cinema was considerably more developed again. To the east and north east of the site, a vast new residential development had been built, in the form of terrace housed streets, with a series of more considerable detached houses north of the Port Talbot Railway line. The site still included the Central Station and the adjacent hotel, by now known as 'Temperance Hotel', and the building on the corner of Eagle Street now identified as Custom House, and, to the east was now a long terrace of houses facing onto Eagle Street and the Central Station and railway line terminations of the Port Talbot Railway. Adding to this, were the Grand Hotel and Police Station to the west of the site, the New Theatre and a number of Schools to the east, and a large new Athletic Ground to the north. The site of the future Plaza Cinema remained railway land and the termination point of what appears now to be four lines.

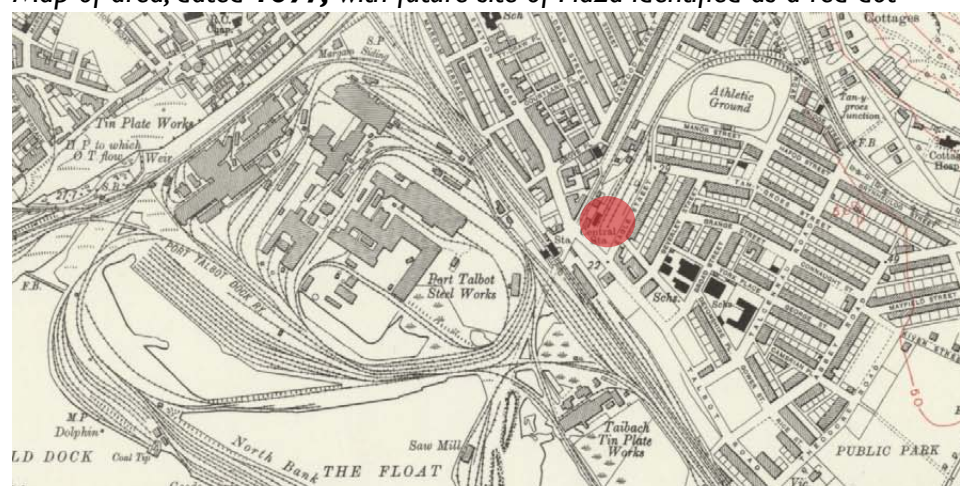
In the year that the Plaza Cinema was built, 1939, a further map was produced, however, the Plaza had clearly yet to be constructed as it does not appear. There had not been considerable change between 1914 and 1939 (unlike the periods between 1877 and 1897 and 1897 and 1914), however, a series of new buildings had appeared along Talbot Road and just behind, and to the west of, the Central Station.



Map of area, dated **1877**, with future site of Plaza identified as a red dot



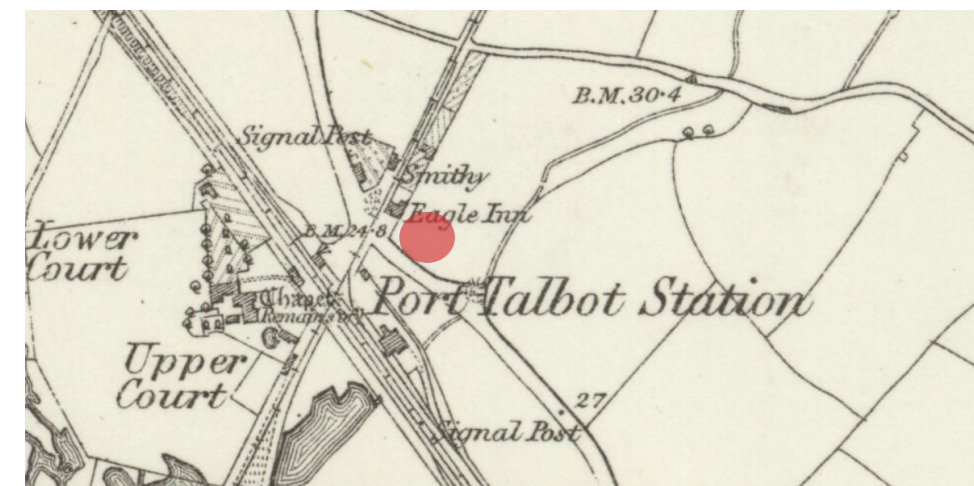
Map of area, dated **1897**, with future site of Plaza identified as a red dot



Map of area, dated **1914**, with future site of Plaza identified as a red dot



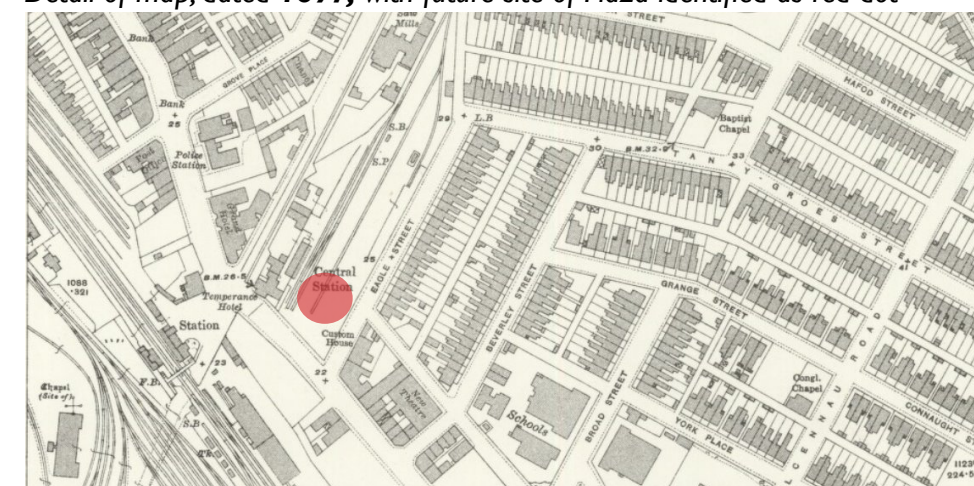
Map of area, dated **1939**, with future site of Plaza identified as a red dot



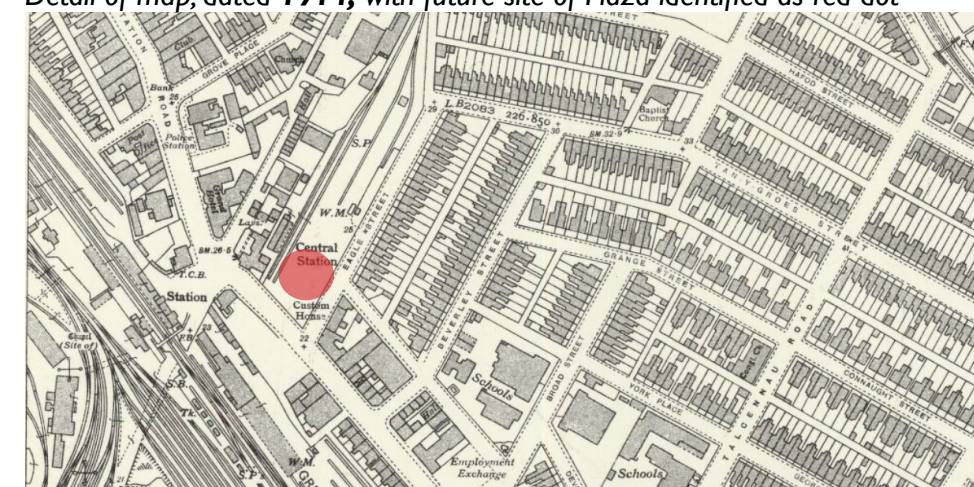
Detail of map, dated **1877**, with future site of Plaza identified as red dot



Detail of map, dated **1897**, with future site of Plaza identified as red dot



Detail of map, dated **1914**, with future site of Plaza identified as red dot



Detail of map, dated **1939**, with future site of Plaza identified as red dot

The 1947 map is the first to show the Plaza Cinema on the junction of Talbot Road and Eagle Street. It is known that the frontage of the Plaza followed the line of Talbot Road when it was built, and the building was never truly rectangular, so this map is a little inaccurate. However, the plan does show a section of the building at the rear with what appears to be a different roof form. Assuming that this is suggestive of the lean-to section of the roof to the north end, this would confirm that this rather strange anomaly in the roof form is likely to have been original and not an alteration.

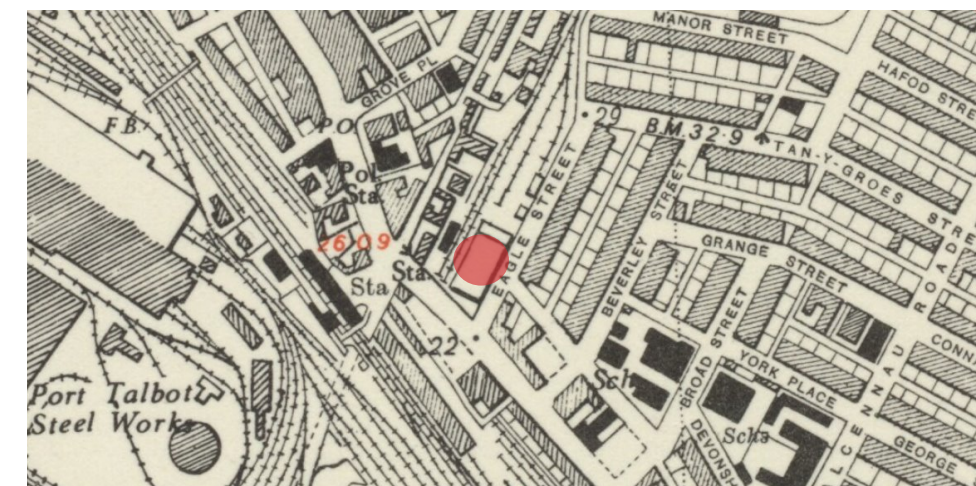
What is particularly interesting about the 1947 map is the fact that the Plaza Cinema was, in 1947, surrounded by railway line termination points. The site, which was, from as far back as 1877 a railway siding and, by 1897, a railway termination point for three or four lines from the new Port Talbot Railway, was still serving the same purpose, however, a large isolated cinema building had been built on top of part of that land. The two railway lines which, in 1939, had terminated short of the end were still thus, and the two railway lines which had run up to the road were still thus, and ran all the way passed the north west elevation of the new Plaza Cinema, sandwiched between it and the Railway Station. Two small railway structures appear just to the north of the Plaza.

By 2006, as seen in the GoogleEarth map, Eagle Mews had been formed and residential buildings had appeared where the two longer railway lines were to the west of the Plaza and light industrial buildings to the north, where the two terminated lines were.

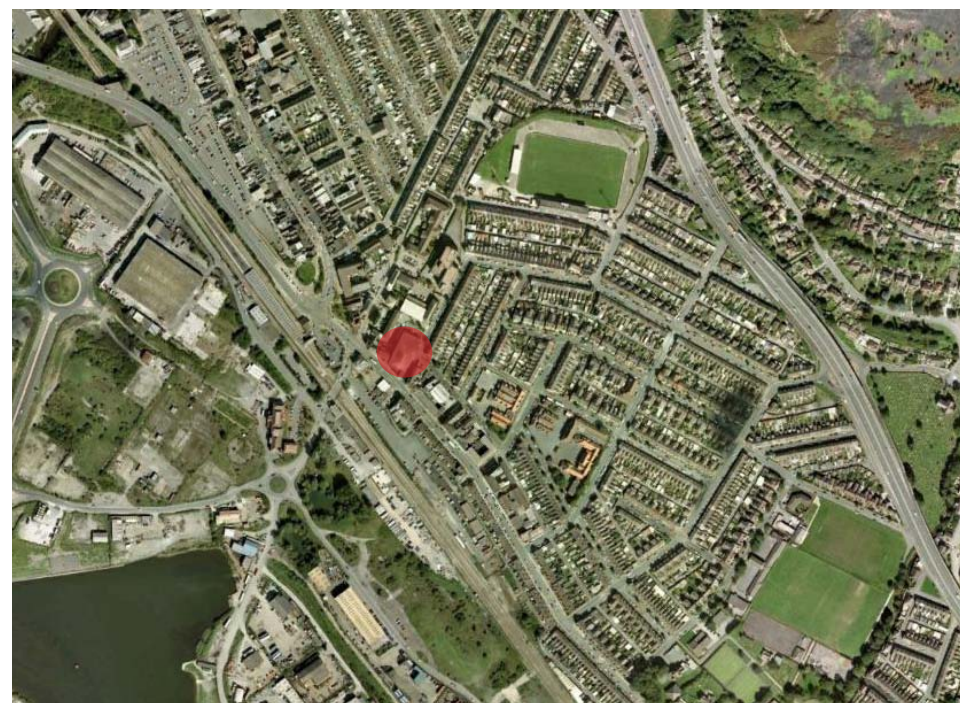
Between 2006 and 2018, a new railway station had been built west of the Plaza and the road structure around this area had altered somewhat. It may also be the case that the Custom House on the corner of Talbot Road and Eagle Street was, between 2006 and 2018, demolished and replaced with a new, also called Customs House.



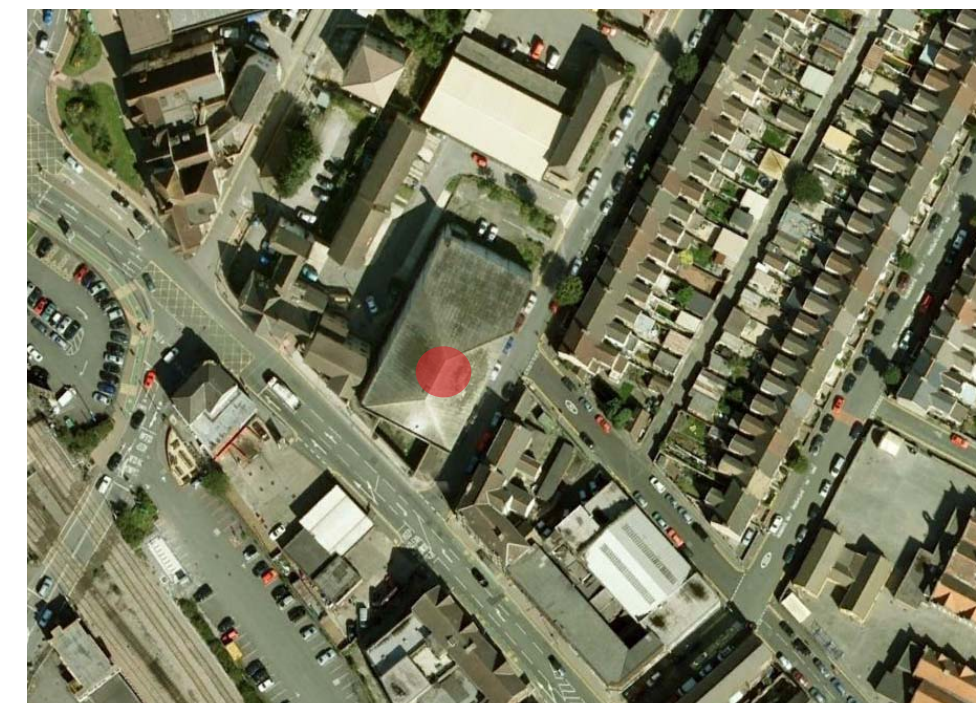
Map of area, dated **1947**, with the site of the Plaza identified as a red dot



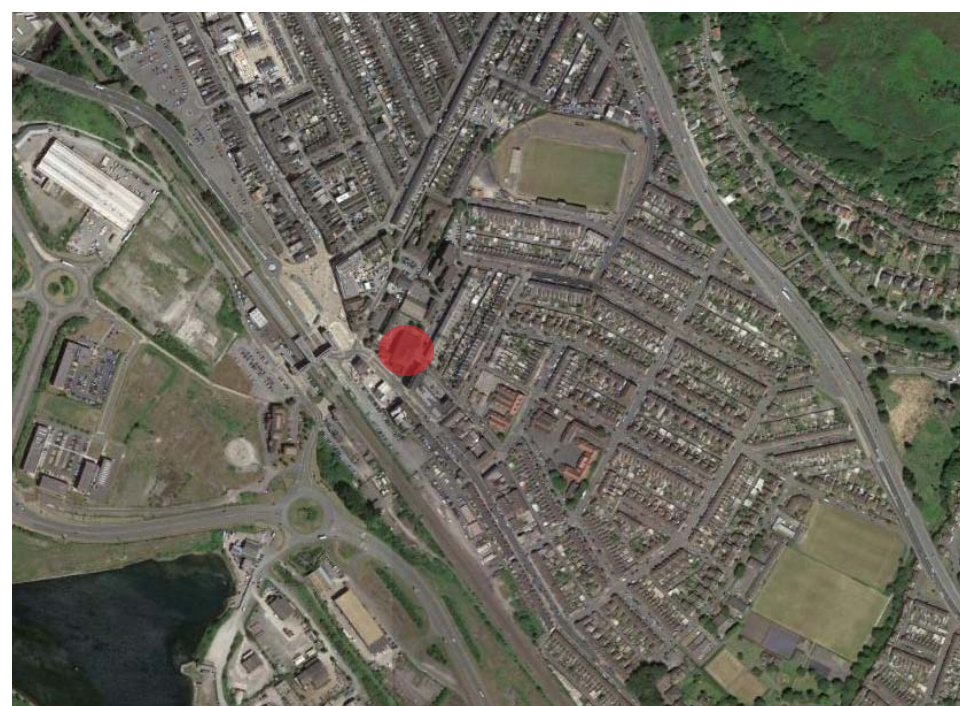
Detail of map, dated **1947**, with the site of the Plaza identified as red dot



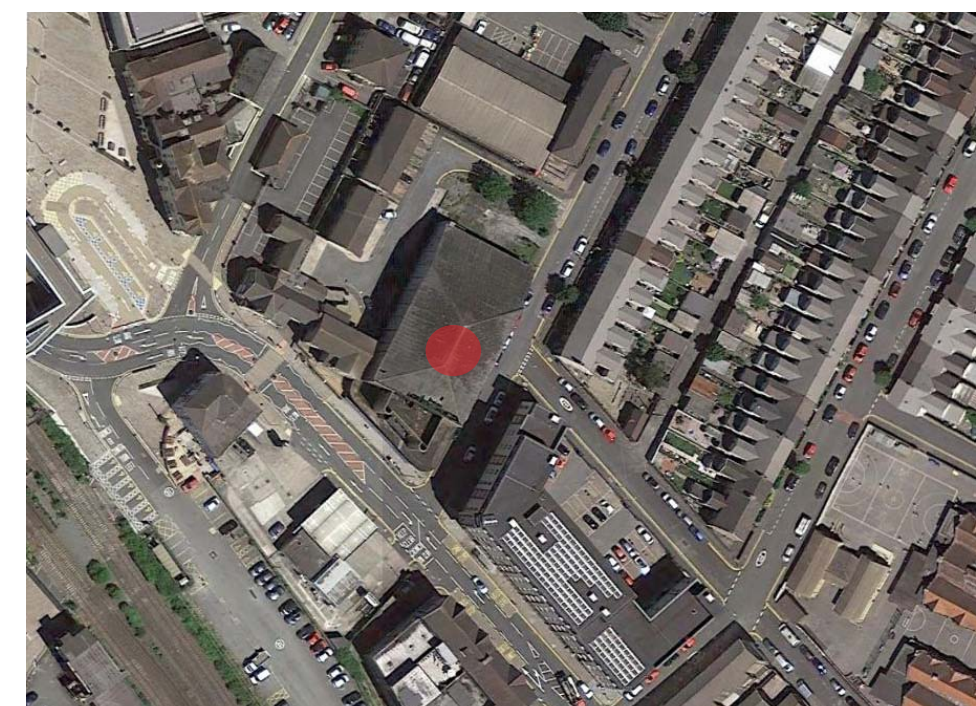
GoogleEarth aerial view, dated **2006**, with site of Plaza identified as a red dot



GoogleEarth detailed view, dated **2006**, with site of Plaza identified as red dot



GoogleEarth aerial view, dated **2018**, with site of Plaza identified as a red dot



GoogleEarth detailed view, dated **2018**, with site of Plaza identified as red dot

2.7 Setting and Context of the Plaza

The Plaza is in the centre of the town of Port Talbot, on the corner of Talbot Road (the A48) and Eagle Street.

Its 'front' entrance elevation onto Talbot Road faces south south west and its longer elevation onto Eagle Street faces south east east. Its 'rear' and other side elevation face onto Eagle Mews.

To the west of the site is the main railway station, which was redeveloped in 2016, and a bus station, along with an area of recently improved hard landscaping, forming a pedestrian friendly area. The Grand Hotel still overlooks this area.

To the east of the site is still a large residential area, with schools, which leads from the terrace on Eagle Street eastwards.

The north end of the site is laid out as a car park, rectangular in plan, with the light industrial buildings of the Royal Mail Group beyond.

To the south of the site, overlooked by the Plaza's front, and by far most prominent, elevation is a fairly wide pavement to Talbot Road (the A48) and a petrol station with forecourt and eatery. Further to the south is a narrow car park and then the main railway line.

The area is built up in all directions, however, not heavily built up in either density or height. There are a number of areas unbuilt upon land, be that road, car park, railway, bus station, pedestrian area, football ground or, a little further away to the south open land around the once-busy docks.

Most of the buildings around the Plaza are of a similar height. The result of this is that the Plaza's frontage is visible from a number of positions in the town, and is clearly apparent when driving through the main road of the town.

Whilst there remains the core of Victorian and Edwardian hotels and residential terraces and the one other listed building in the area (the grade II listed Grove Place Chapel, built in 1904, albeit listed principally for its interior), the architecture of the area is a rather varied, with many more recent inclusions to the streetscene, and with the Plaza as the one Art Deco style building in the area.



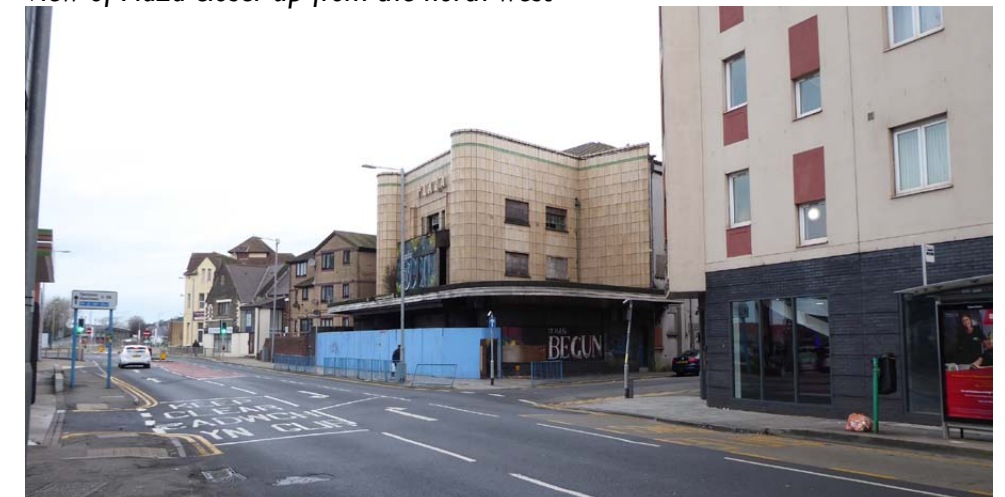
View of Plaza from the Railway Station to the north west



View of Plaza closer up from the north west



View of Plaza from down Talbot Road to the south east



View of Plaza closer up from the south east



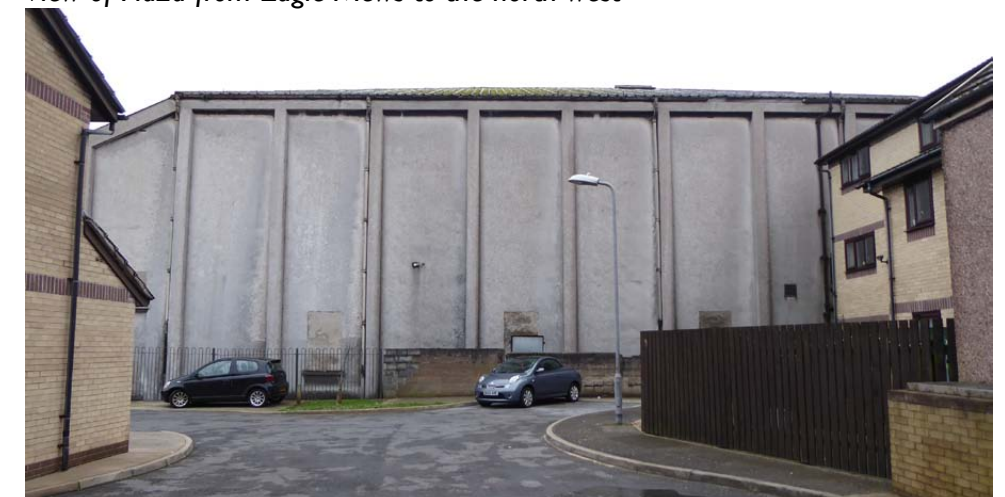
View of Plaza from down Eagle Street to the north east



View of Plaza from Eagle Mews to the north west



View of Plaza from down side street off Eagle Street to the east



View of Plaza from hammerhead off Eagle Mews to the west

2.8 Historical Background of The Plaza and its context

Much of the information within this section has been established thanks to various sources, particularly:

- BBC Radio 4 documentary by Michael Sheen entitled 'Port Talbot Paradiso';
- The pamphlet 'Ninety Years of Cinema in Newtown, Welshpool and Port Talbot' by Brian Hornsey;
- The book 'Real Port Talbot' by Lynne Rees;
- The book 'The Actors' Crucible' by Angela V. John;
- The 'theguardian.com' website, article entitled 'Port Talbot's once grand Plaza cinema due for major revamp';
- The 'theguardian.com' website, article entitled 'Five of the best Art deco cinemas';
- The 'theguardian.com' website, article entitled 'The mogul's monuments – How Oscar Deutsch's Odeon cinemas taught Britain to love modern architecture' by Jonathan Glancey;
- The 'walesonline.co.uk' website, article entitled 'Port Talbot's derelict Plaza cinema to get a new lease of life';
- The 'walesonline.co.uk' website, article entitled 'The now derelict cinema where Richard Burton watched early movies is considered for £5m revamp';
- The 'bbc.co.uk' website, article entitled 'Port Talbot's Plaza cinema set for community hub revamp';
- The 'bbc.co.uk' website, article entitled 'Michael Sheen's Port Talbot Passion play 'crucifixion'';
- The 'bbc.co.uk' website, article entitled 'Banksy confirms Port Talbot 'Season's greetings' piece is his';
- The 'bbc.co.uk' website, article entitled 'Graffiti artist Ame72 in surprise Port Talbot street art';
- The 'spectator.co.uk' website, article entitled 'Welsh noir: How Port Talbot became the drama capital of Wales';
- The 'cinematreasures.org' website;
- The 'retrowow.co.uk' website;
- The 'parliament.uk' website;
- The 'historyandpolicy.org' website;
- The 'whateversleft.co.uk' website;
- The '28dayslater.co.uk' website;
- The 'derelictplaces.co.uk' website;
- The 'jannaludlow.co.uk' website, article entitled '1930s Cinemas – The age of the 'Odeon!'';
- The 'architecture.com' website, article entitled 'Art Deco' by Suzanne Waters;
- The 'screenonline.org.uk' website;
- The 'wikipedia.org' website;
- The 'imdb.com' website;
- The 'bing.com' website for images.

Many of the photographs within this section are also included courtesy of these websites.

Building work began on the Plaza in 1939, just before the outbreak of the second World War. The 1930s had been a boom time for cinemas and many large 'super-cinemas' were being built. The Plaza was the second super-cinema to be built in Port Talbot within 18 months, with 'The Majestic' on Forge Road being first.



Plaza exterior 27th July 1948 - not complete 8 years after opening due to material restrictions during WW II (source: cinematreasures.org)



Photograph taken of three unknown gentlemen on the top of the canopy roof, probably also dating to 1948

Original plans were for the Plaza to open in 1939, however, its opening was delayed until Easter 1940 due to materials restrictions as a result of the war. However, even by East 1940, works were still far from complete. However, despite this, the Plaza opened on the 25th March 1940 as a single-screen cinema originally seating around 1,467 people.

It was not until 10 years later, in 1950, that the building work was finished with the Plaza sign being erected, faience tiling added and Crittall-style windows installed.

The Plaza complex also had two shop units, one either side of the main entrance; a Ladies fashion boutique and an Italian café. The café was extremely popular with courting couples!



Plaza exterior approx 1950 - building receiving sign, tiles and windows 10 years after opening (source: Port Talbot Historical Society)



The Plaza in the early 1980s in its bingo days (source: Port Talbot Historical Society)

Despite extensive archival research, we are unable to confirm the name of the Plaza's architect, however, one suggestion has been Howard Williams.

However, the external architecture of the Plaza is very similar to that of many Odeon cinemas in the 1930s, with its curves, faience cladding and Crittall-style windows so we can at least tell where the architect might have taken inspiration from. Six such examples are pictured on this page.

The Odeon cinema chain was founded by Oscar Deutsch (1893-1941) in Birmingham in 1930 and the increasing popularity of cinema-going amongst the British public allowed the Odeon chain to grow to 258 cinemas throughout Britain by his death in 1941, more than half of them in new buildings. The company almost exclusively built its cinemas in an Art Deco style, and although no two cinemas were identical, the company's house style was bold and innovative incorporating soaring towers and fins; dynamic, curved canopies; facades clad in black and buff-coloured faience pierced with horizontal bands of coloured faience; curved and semi-circular wings; and extensive use of neon lighting.

The original 'odeons' were the popular amphitheatres of ancient Greece. The name 'Odeon' had been appropriated by cinemas in France and Italy in the 1920s, but Oscar Deutsch was to make it his own. Odeon, said his publicity team, stood for 'Oscar Deutsch Entertains Our Nation'.

Odeon Cinema, Sutton Coldfield built 1935-6 designed by Harry Weedon & Cecil Clavering soon after opening Grade II listed (source: bing.com images)



Odeon Cinema, Harrogate built 1936 designed by Harry Weedon now Grade II listed (source: bing.com images)



Odeon Cinema, Muswell Hill, London built 1935-6 designed by George Coles now Grade II listed (source: bing.com images)



Odeon Cinema, Kingstanding, Birmingham built 1935-6 designed by Harry Weedon & Cecil Clavering now Grade II listed (source: bing.com images)



Odeon Cinema, York built 1937 designed by Harry Weedon & Robert Bullivant shortly after opening now Grade II listed (source: jannaludlow.co.uk)

Odeon Cinema, Scarborough built 1936 designed by Cecil Clavering & Robert Bullivant now Grade II listed (source: bing.com images)

By the middle of the 1930s, some 18 million people a week in Britain went to the cinema and it was undoubtedly the most popular commercial leisure time activity of the decade. By the end of the 1930s, three national cinema chains had emerged to dominate British film exhibition:

- Associated British Cinemas opened 93 new cinemas in the decade, reconstructed several others, took over existing circuits (including a major competitor, Union Cinemas in 1937), and at maximum operated around 460 cinemas, the largest total of any company in this country. Its cinemas used a variety of names, with Regal, Rex and Savoy being the favourites.
- Gaumont entered the decade with a larger number of properties than ABC (including the Provincial Cinematic Theatres (PCT) circuit) and had less need to expand. Nevertheless, it constructed 51 new cinemas, including many opulent Gaumont Palaces. It had 303 cinemas by the end of the decade.
- The Odeon circuit opened its first sites in 1930, but rapidly expanded, adding 136 new cinemas and taking over nearly as many existing properties, reaching a total of 255 properties by 1940. The brainchild of entrepreneur Oscar Deutsch, it particularly epitomised the modern, streamlined look in architecture and fittings.

However, rather than being built for a large chain, the Plaza was built for the independent Cardiff syndicate of Woodavon Cinema Company (according to 'Ninety Years of Cinemas in Newtown, Welshpool and Port Talbot' by Brian Hornsey).

The Plaza opened on Monday, 25th March 1940 with the film 'Babes In Arms' starring Mickey Rooney and Judy Garland (poster to the right) with 'Girl from Rio' as the supporting feature. There was a full-page article in the Port Talbot Guardian on Friday, 22nd March 1940 announcing the opening of 'Port Talbot's New Luxury Super-Cinema'. The article (pictured to the right) went on to say:

“The new Port Talbot Cinema, the Plaza, which is one of the most imposing buildings in the town and commands a foremost position on Station Road, will be opened next week. This event, which has been eagerly awaited by the residents, will take place on Easter Monday with a brilliant opening show.

It is one of the most luxurious cinemas in the district and will bear comparison with the best in Wales. Its position near the Port Talbot General Railway Station could not be more admirably situated for the convenience of passengers on all omnibuses. The reinforced concrete canopy which surrounds the front of the building will be a welcome feature, as a protection for patrons in inclement weather.

The building, which is modern in design, has the main façade carried out in reconstructed stone. The main entrance is approached by a loggia flanked by two lock-up shops. After passing through the main entrance doors there is a spacious foyer complete with kiosk.

The foyer, tastefully decorated in various shades, with fibrous plaster enrichments in gold and green, has two staircases leading to the balcony, and three double entrance doors to auditorium. Cloak rooms and lavatories are arranged under the balcony staircases and entered from the foyer.

The floors of auditorium and balcony are finished in oregon pine flooring laid in mastic, and with boards secret nailed, and five frame Wilton carpet is laid to all gangways. The proscenium and window curtains are in velour of a petunia shade with satin screen curtain in old gold, and the seats are covered in moquette of a green shade. The interior decorations are treated to harmonise with the furnishings. A car park has been provided for the convenience of patrons.

The seat capacity is about 1,500, including 376 in the balcony.

THE GUARDIAN, FRIDAY, MARCH 22, 1930

PORT TALBOT'S NEW LUXURY SUPER-CINEMA

A. G. THOMPSON
and
D. MANOLOPOULOS
LIMITED

REINFORCED CONCRETE SPECIALISTS

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MODERN BUILDING ON MAIN ROAD

BRILLIANT OPENING ON EASTER MONDAY

THE new Port Talbot Cinema, the Plaza, which is one of the most
imposing buildings in the town and commands a foremost
position on Station Road, will be opened next week. This event,
which has been eagerly awaited by the public, will take place on
Easter Monday with a brilliant opening show.

The cinema, which will be built on the site of the old cinema, is a fine example of modern architecture. It is a two-story building with a large hall and a balcony. The building is a masterpiece of modern design and is a credit to the town.

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Babes In Arms 1940 advert (source: Port Talbot Historical Society)

The frame work, staircases, floors, balcony and flat roofs are constructed in reinforced concrete, with wall panels in 11 in. cavity brickwork between piers and beams; while the roof is carried by steel trusses and covered with asbestos sheets, with concrete flat roof to main entrance and shops.

The operator's box and staff rooms are over the foyer and under the balcony: the placing of the box in this position gives a horizontal throw of the picture on to the screen and obviates distortion."

The newspaper article continues with further details of the ceiling, heating and ventilation, sound system (R.C.A.), opening attractions, the main contractors (Messrs. Griffith Davies and Co. Ltd., Paxton Yard, Swansea), reinforced concrete specialists (Messrs. A.G. Thompson and D. Manolopoulos Ltd., Gower Chambers, Swansea), brick suppliers (New Eagle and Bryn Brickworks Company Ltd., Lloyd's Bank Chambers, Port Talbot), heating system installers (Messrs. J.G. Proger and Sons Ltd., 17 St. Andrews Crescent, Cardiff) and suppliers of sand (Messrs. H. Gwynne Jones and Co., sand and gravel merchants, Port Talbot). With large adverts for all these companies.



12 - Babes in Arms poster 1939 (source: imdb.com)

The opening of the Plaza is documented in the actor Richard Burton's diary for Monday, 25th March 1940 as follows "Went down to Uncle Ben's this morning to fetch stones for the cement bed. Dilwyn came with me. Went to Majestic to see 'King of the River'. Plaza opened today and it was all crowded out". Although the Plaza was so busy on opening night that Richard Burton went elsewhere, his diary shows he made it to the Plaza later that year to see George Formby in 'Come on George'.

The Plaza opened as a single-screen cinema originally seating around 1,467 people with a proscenium opening of 38 feet in width. From the foyer there were two staircases leading up to the balcony, known as the circle. The seats in the main theatre were known as the stalls with different prices depending on where you sat – the front stalls were the cheapest because necks cricked looking up at the screen and the back stalls were the most expensive, a price courting couples were happy to pay!

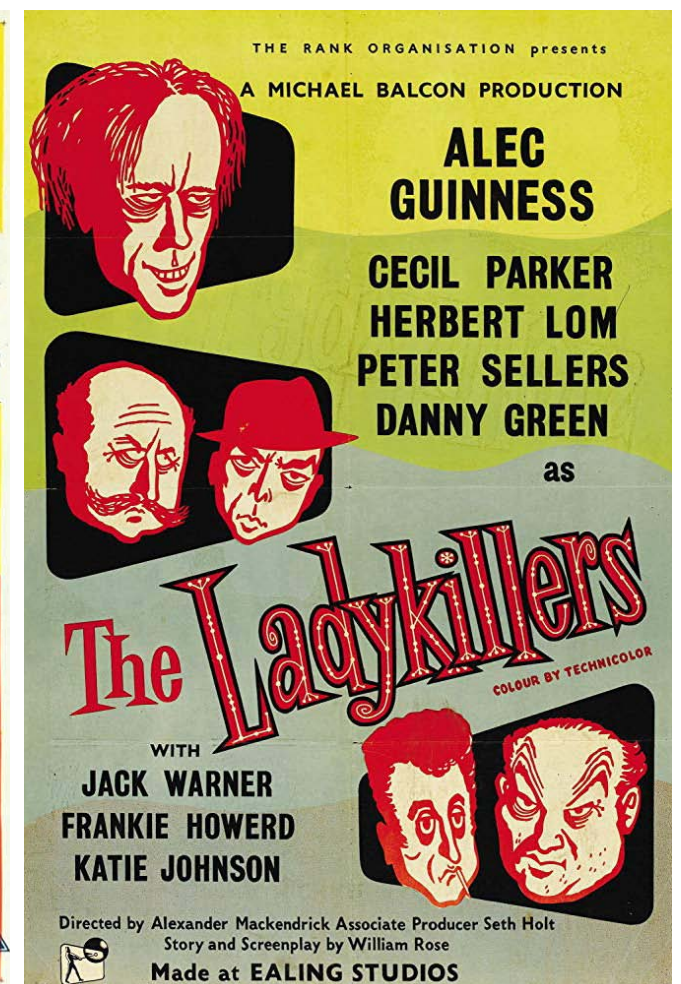
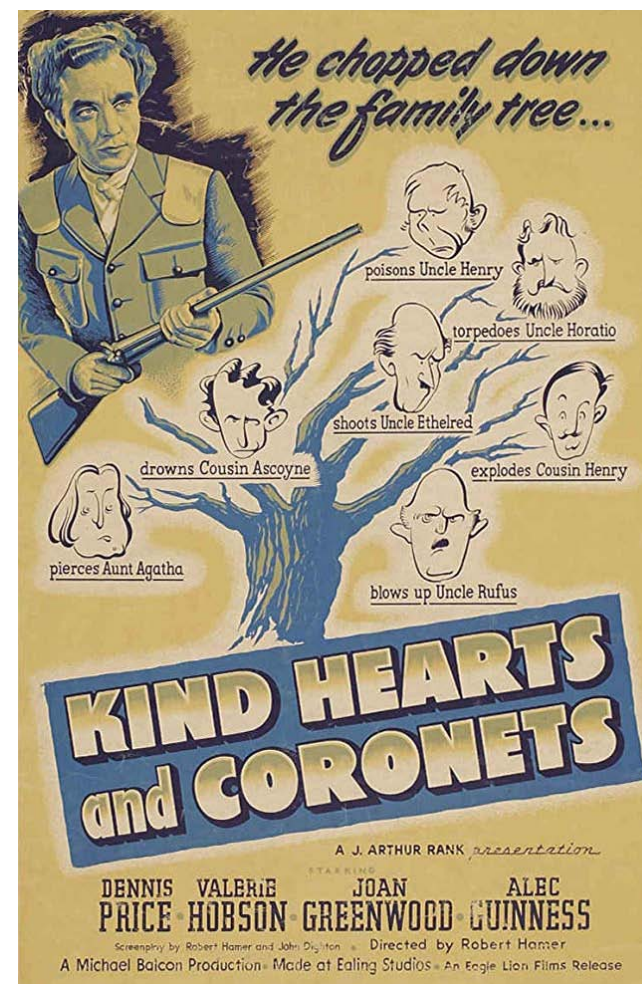
With the introduction of Cinemascope in the 1950s, a process that produces an image two-and-a-half times as wide as it is high, seating capacity was reduced to around 1,440 in order to provide good sightlines of the new large screen with some seats at the front sides being taken out.

During the 1940s, British cinema enjoyed a golden age as wartime film-makers found a new freedom to reflect the national mood. Audiences turned to Ealing comedy films, escapist melodrama often from Gainsborough Pictures and World War II propaganda.

To the right are six examples of films probably shown at the Plaza, with images sourced from 'imdb.com' and 'bing.com' websites.

That said, the age was less golden in other respects. When it began, Britain had been formally at war with Nazi Germany for nearly four months, but the conflict began in earnest in 1940. One of the immediate upshots of war being declared was that Britain's cinemas were closed due to concerns that they might be attractive air raid targets. However, they quickly reopened, not least because the government realised that the cinema was an ideal vehicle for propaganda via its newly-created Ministry of Information (MOI). Cinema-going became a national obsession during the Second World War, with attendances rising by 50% between 1939 and 1942. Two reasons are given for this increase: people flocked to see the latest news from the War and, paradoxically, to seek escapism from it. High levels of employment and rising incomes also played a role.

Although the war ended in 1945, the rest of the decade was a time of extreme national hardship, as a shattered Britain began the lengthy and expensive process of rebuilding itself. Cinema was extremely popular as the only other form of cheap entertainment with the same potency was radio. Audiences peaked in 1946, with total cinema admissions reaching 1.6 billion, equivalent to every man, woman and child in the UK going to the pictures 33 times that year.



The town of Port Talbot has been synonymous with steel since the early 1900s when the first steelworks were founded there in 1902. In 1923 a second Margam works was opened and, in 1947, construction of the Abbey Steelworks commenced with its official unveiling in 1951. The effect of the new steelworks was to transform Port Talbot into a largely mono-industrial economy. In its heyday in the 1960s the steel industry employed around 18,000 people in Port Talbot and the town grew up around it. Work could also be found at the docks which received the iron ore for the steelworks and in the British Oxygen Company built in 1951 to supply oxygen and nitrogen, chiefly to the steelworks.

Port Talbot was dubbed a 'boom town' as workers from throughout South Wales and beyond moved to the area in search of the plentiful and well-paid jobs available at the plant. Between 1939 and 1961, the town's population increased by 10,000. To accommodate this large influx of workers to man the new plant, the local council embarked upon an ambitious program of house building. Between 1945 and 1951 over 1,000 homes had been built and over 3,500 homes by 1957. Most of these new houses were built on the Sandfields Estate, a housing development that grew to be the second largest estate in Wales. By 1960, almost 4,000 steelworks employees called this new estate home.

Port Talbot's steelworkers became amongst the best paid manual workers in Britain and had access to employee leisure and welfare facilities that ranked amongst the finest in Wales, with the steelworks becoming known as 'Treasure Island'. Facilitated by the Betting and Gaming Act 1960, gambling mogul George Alfred James opened the Casino Club in Port Talbot in 1961 which is believed to be Britain's first legal casino. Also, the Afan Lido on Aberavon Seafront was opened in 1965 by the Queen and boasted a 50m Olympic standard pool. Graham Jenkins, the brother of Hollywood actor Richard Burton was the Lido's first manager. The glamour of the Plaza was a complement to these other facilities.



Port Talbot Dock (source: bing.com images)



Workers leaving the shift at the newly-formed Steel Company of Wales in Port Talbot 1949 (source: bbc.co.uk)



Steelworks (source: bbc.co.uk)



Sandfields Estate, Port Talbot (source: bing.com images)



George Alfred James, Casino Club founder (source: bing.com images)



Port Talbot in its heyday in the mid 60s (source: bbc.co.uk)



Worker measures a roll of steel 1961 (source: bbc.co.uk)



Afan Lido, Aberavon Seafront, Port Talbot mid 1960s (source: bing.com images)

Cinema attendances began to fall in the late 1940s and early 1950s. This decline was accelerated as television ownership became widespread. One of the most watched events on television in the early 50s was the Queen's Coronation in 1953 with many people coming together to watch the event on a friend's set. The Coronation seemed to ignite people's interest in television and was a catalyst for its growth in popularity. In 1955, a third of households had a television and, by 1970, over nine in ten owned one. Cinema couldn't compete, and admissions fell by 85% over the same period.

During the late 1950s the Plaza would have live entertainment during the film intervals. Opera singer Rebecca Evans says in 'Port Talbot Paradiso' that her aunt had spoken of a formidable lady called Madame Miriam Joseph James who would put on evenings of song and dance during the film intervals and that she had a brother, Jacky Jones, with a band that would play there too. Also, during the 1960s, the Plaza would host live shows such as Mike and Bernie Winters and an unexpected use was for Saturday night wrestling which was apparently well attended. They would build a platform and ring at the front of the stalls where it was flat. So, the Plaza was an adaptable space and a community hub even back then.



TV 1950's Family watching television at home
(source: theguardian.com)



TV 1970s in colour (source: theguardian.com)



Queen's Coronation 1953 (source: bing.com images)



TV 1963 A little boy watches Andy Pandy (source: theguardian.com)



Mike and Bernie Winters (source: bing.com images)

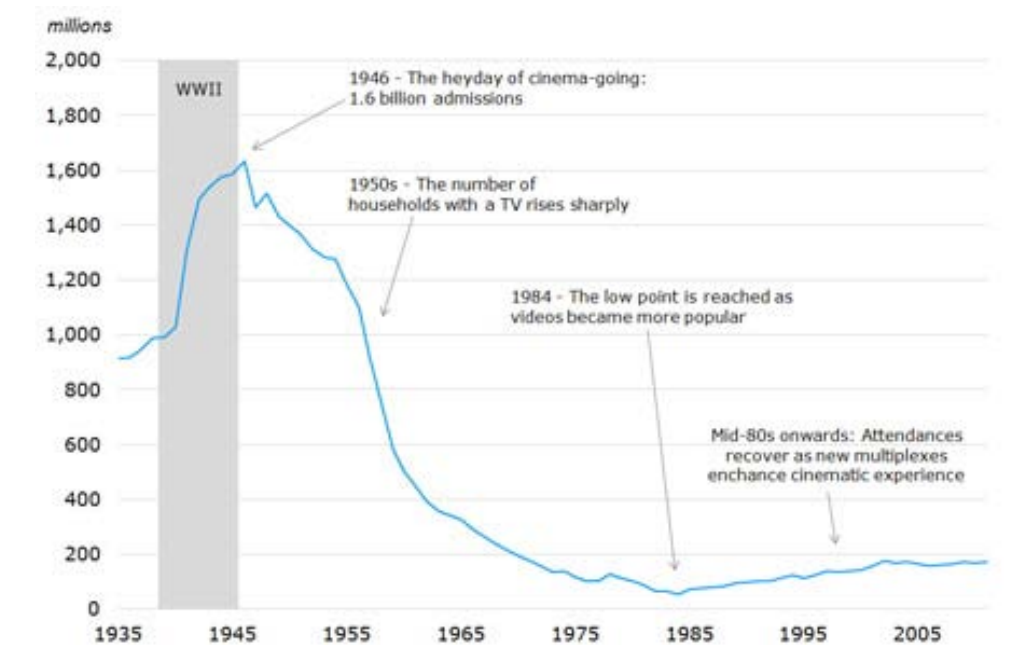


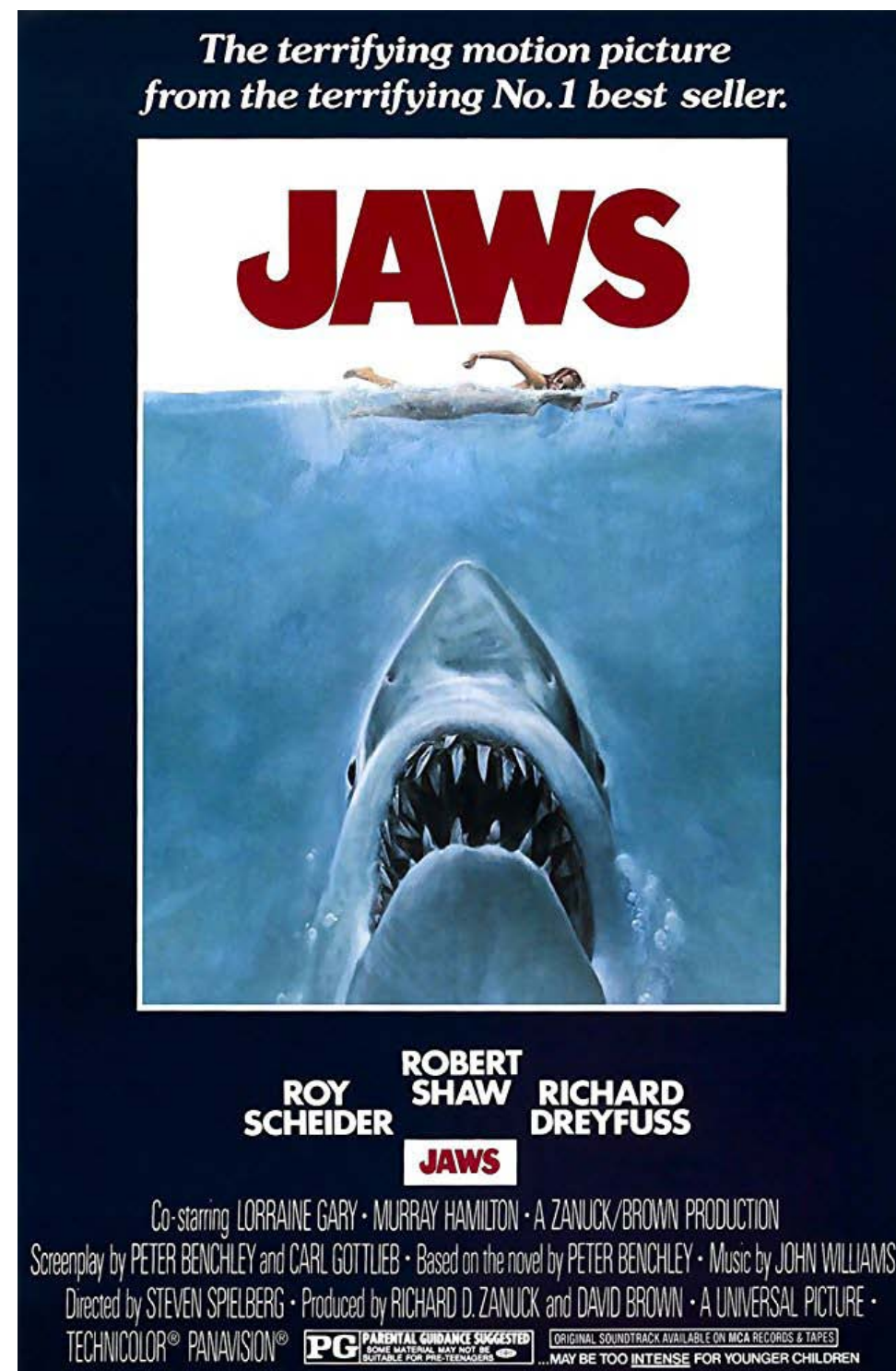
Chart of cinema attendance 1935 onwards (source: parliament.uk)

The Betting and Gaming Act 1960, also allowed commercial bingo halls to be set up, provided they were established as members-only clubs.

In response to the declining cinema audiences of the 1960s, as a result of the increased popularity of television, many cinemas changed their premises into Bingo Clubs and this was the case in Port Talbot also. The Grand, Majestic (renamed Odeon in 1947) and Taibach Picture Palace (renamed Picturedome in 1918) all converted to Bingo Clubs. Ironically, every time another cinema closed it boosted the fortunes of the Plaza as people had fewer options. This trend continued and, by 1972, the Plaza was the only cinema in town. Even so, the Plaza eventually went to evening only performances in response to declining audiences.

There were some big blockbuster films during the 1970s such as 'Jaws' in 1975, 'Star Wars' in 1977 and 'Grease' in 1978.

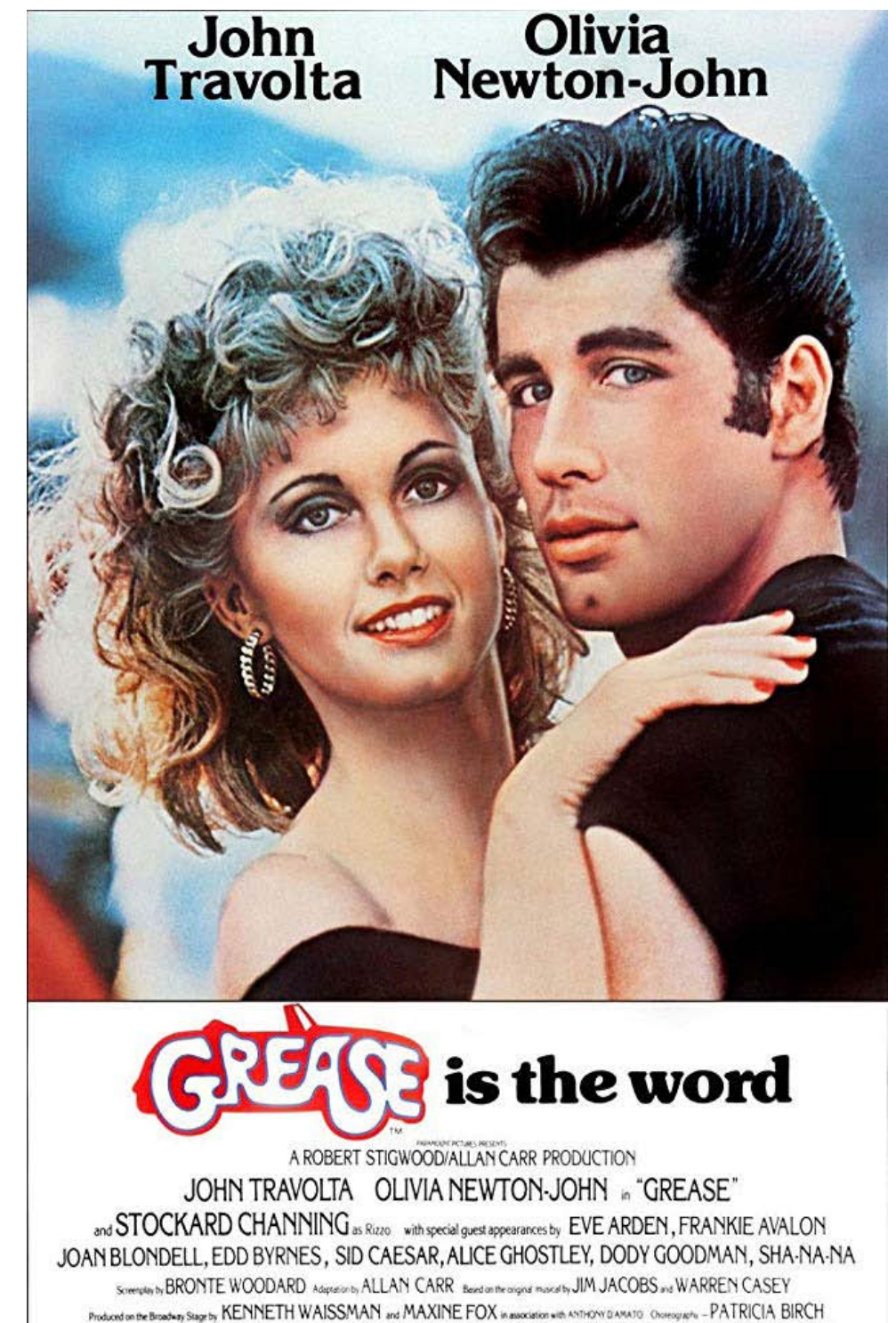
In the Radio 4 production 'Port Talbot Paradiso' a documentary headed by Michael Sheen telling the story of the Port Talbot Plaza cinema, internationally successful soprano Rebecca Evans (originally from Pontrhydyfen) remembers seeing 'Jaws' and 'Grease' at the Plaza. In fact she admitted to knowing all the words to Grease and dancing and singing along to the film in the Plaza. Michael Sheen recalls people queuing round the block and all the way down Station Road to see 'Star Wars' there.



1975 Poster for 'Jaws' (source: imdb.com)



1977 Poster for 'Star Wars' (source: imdb.com)



1978 Poster for 'Grease' (source: imdb.com)

In the early 1980s another source of competition was introduced in the form of the Videocassette Recorder (VCR) and the ability to watch blockbuster films at home. Cinema attendances in the UK reached their lowest point in 1984, when only 54 million tickets were bought: less than one trip per person over the whole year. The Plaza started to operate as a combined cinema and bingo club in the early 1980s with films being shown less and less until there was just one film night per week and then they ceased altogether. The Plaza closed as a cinema in 1983 and became a full-time bingo club. It showed its last film, 'Tootsie' in June 1983. The Plaza only operated as a bingo club for 2 years before closing completely in July 1985.

In 1985 cinema was in the doldrums, so film distributors and exhibitors in the UK organised British Film Year, designed to reverse the dramatic decline in cinema audiences. A number of events took place in the period from April 1985 to March 1986 including a touring exhibition of the 'Stars of the British Screen', the release of commemorative film star stamps and the inauguration of a Hollywood-style 'Walk of Fame' in London's West End. British Film Year was a hugely successful marketing campaign and by the end of 1985 cinema audiences in the UK had increased by 35%.

Following its closure, the Plaza was in the process of being boarded up when a young Alex Jones was visiting Port Talbot to look at the Majestic (renamed Odeon) with the aim of re-opening it as a cinema. The Majestic needed too much work and money spent on it to make it an appealing venture. So Alex Jones took a walk up to the Plaza, saw it being boarded up and phoned the owners the next day. Whilst looking around the inside the Plaza, he found that the projection equipment was relatively new and in good working order, the curtains still opened and revealed that the 38 foot screen was still in place. Alex Jones decided to take on the task of re-opening the Plaza and running it as a cinema again.

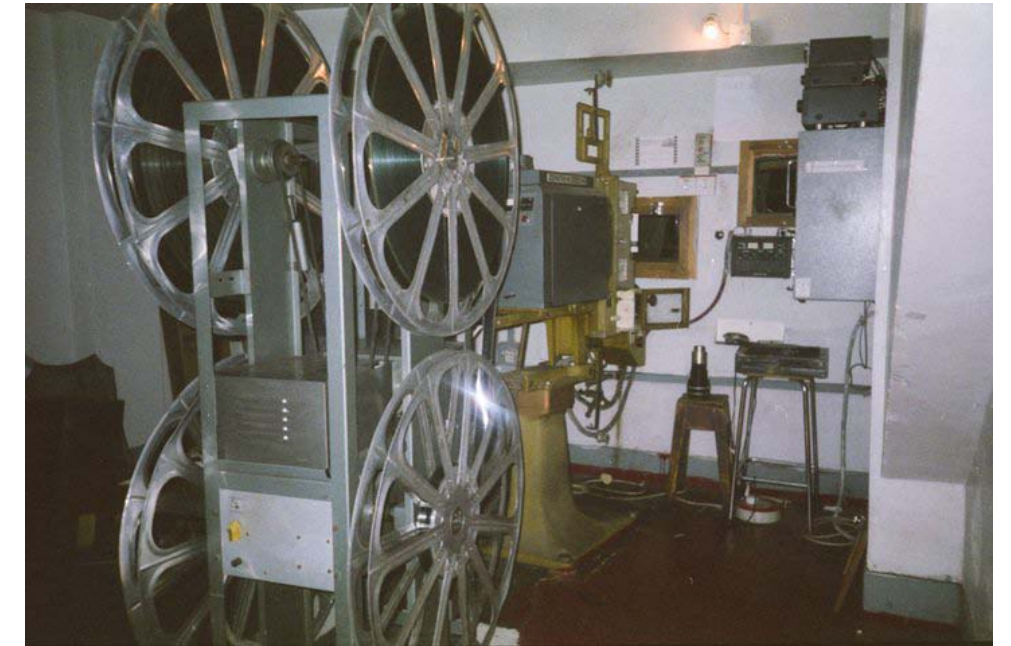
The Plaza re-opened on 18th October 1985, after a refurbishment, as a single-screen cinema with Walt Disney's 'Peter Pan'. Alex had hoped for audiences of a few hundred each day, however, his expectations were exceeded when around 10,000 people had visited in the first 7 days. There was a new appetite for the big screen and in Port Talbot the word Plaza was synonymous with Cinema. Most people said "We're going to the cinema" but in Port Talbot they said "We're going to the Plaza".



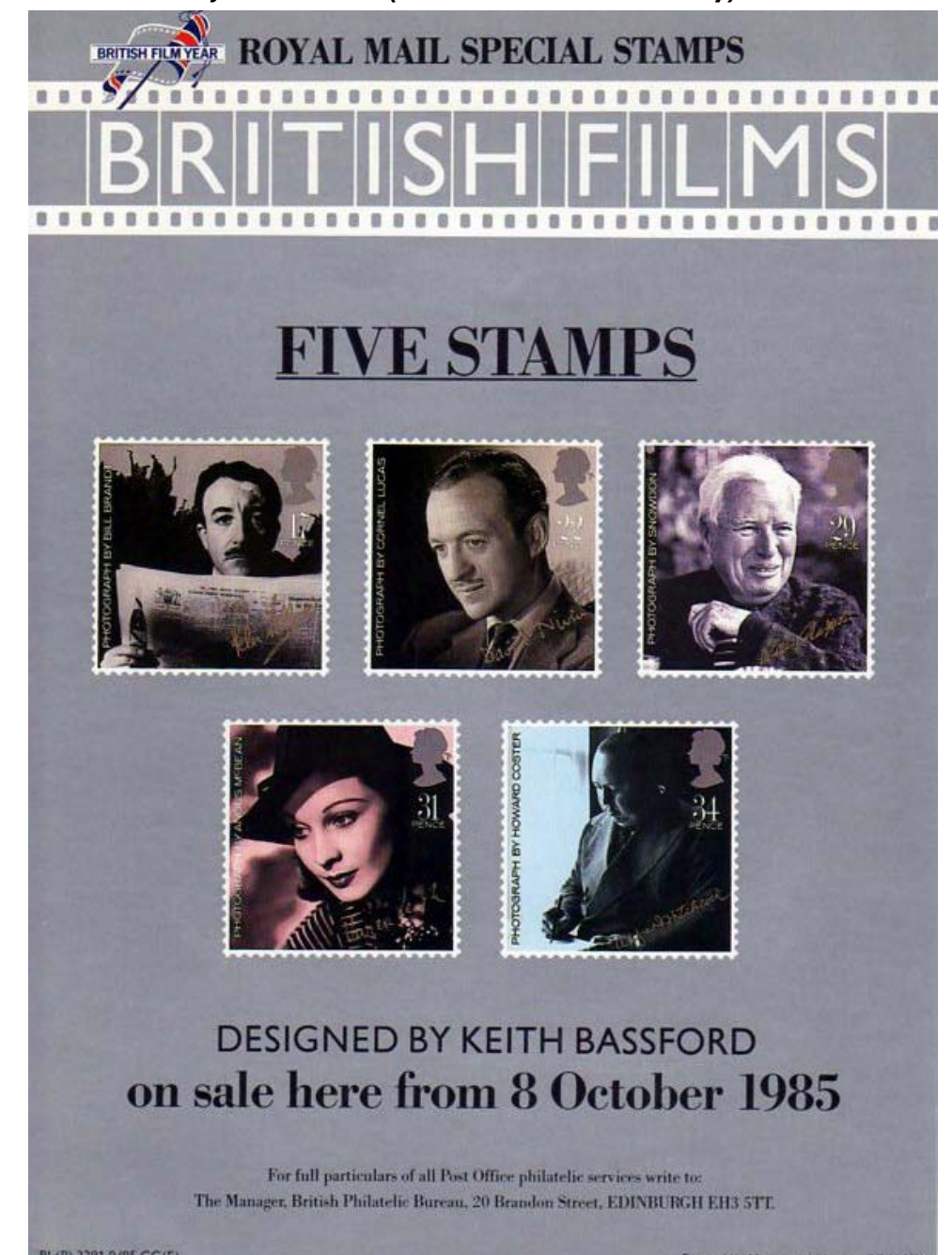
'Tootsie' poster 1982 Plaza closing July 1983
(source: bing.com images)



Walt Disney's 'Peter Pan' Plaza re-opening October 1985
(source: imdb.com)



The Plaza Projection room (source: Historical Society)



1985 British Film Year commemorative stamps
(source: bing.com images)



The Plaza in 1980 (source: Port Talbot Historical Society)



The Plaza in 1981 (source: walesonline)



The Plaza in the early 1980s in its bingo days



The Plaza in 1985



The Plaza in 1985 (source: Port Talbot Historical Society)



The Plaza in 1987 (source: Port Talbot Historical Society)



The Plaza in 1988

The Plaza converted to a multi-screen operation around 1988 with the last film to be shown in the single-screen cinema being 'Fatal Attraction'. In 'Port Talbot Paradiso' Alex Jones talks about there being a packed house that night and how he was at the front of the cinema for the final scene when Michael Douglas has drowned Glenn Close and she re-emerges from the bath unexpectedly and how 1,700 people jumped and screamed in unison.

Initially the cinema was converted into 4 screens, one screen in the circle, another in the front stalls with the rear stalls being split in half to create two further screens. The two small screens in the rear stalls had an ingenious periscope arrangement for projectors in the main projector booth to project the film on to an angled mirror which was then deflected by a second mirror onto the screen on the floor below. Soon after, the front stall floor was found to be rotten and the cinema was converted into a three-screen affair with the original upper stalls acting as main screen with the two smaller screens below.



1987 - Fatal Attraction last film as a single-screen cinema (source: imdb.com)



Plaza interior Circle when single-cinema (source: Historical Society)



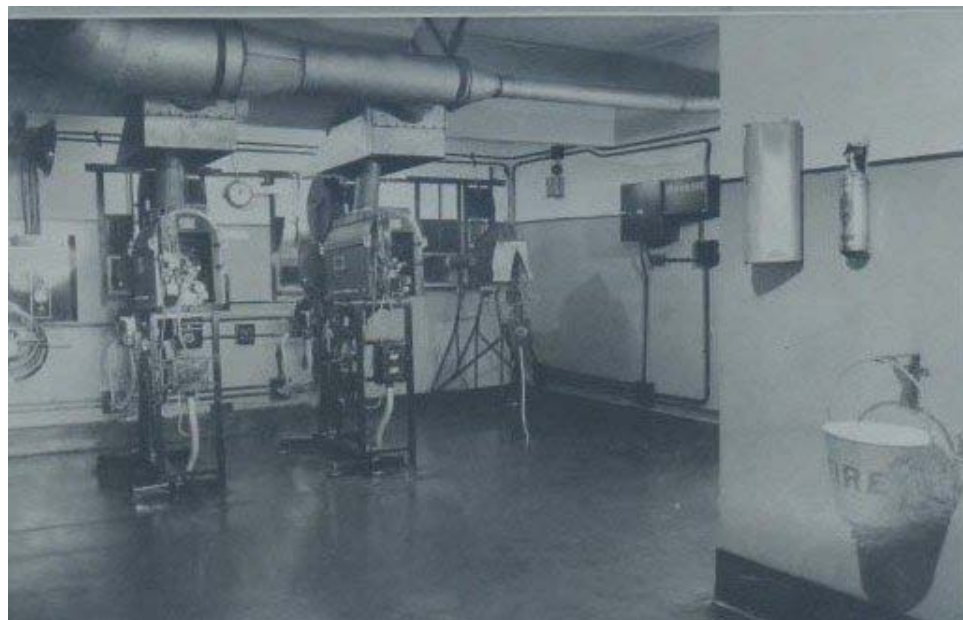
Plaza interior rear stalls screen (source: Port Talbot Historical Society)



Plaza interior front stalls (source: Port Talbot Historical Society)



Plaza interior rear stalls screen (source: Port Talbot Historical Society)



Plaza interior of projection room (source: walesonline.co.uk)



Plaza interior rear stalls screen with mirror forming part of periscope system (source: Port Talbot Historical Society)



Plaza interior rear stalls screen with mirror forming part of periscope system (source: Port Talbot Historical Society)

A lot of time and effort was put into promoting the Plaza and enticing audiences in. Press nights were held, a Saturday morning film club for youngsters was introduced, with a darkly clad phantom who threw custard pies, and theme nights for the adults. Alex Jones turned the Plaza back into a thriving business during the late 1980s.



Plaza foyer 23rd June 1988 Crocodile Dundee press night (source: cinematreasures.com)



1993 Abba night encouraging fancy dress (source: Historical Society)

Ironically, home videos and British Film Year had sparked a renewed interest in cinema-going along with the introduction of the Multiplex Cinema from America. The first multiplex opened in the UK in 1985 called the Point in Milton Keynes and around 500 new multiplex cinemas sprung up nationwide between 1987 and 1991, by which point British cinema admissions had risen from 55m in 1984 to 100m in 1991 and 172m by 2011. The increased choice of films, state-of-the-art technology, copious free parking spaces and vast array of snacks on offer in the multiplexes tempted audiences away from the smaller town-based independent cinemas. Plus, film distributors only wanted to give new films to the new multiplexes.

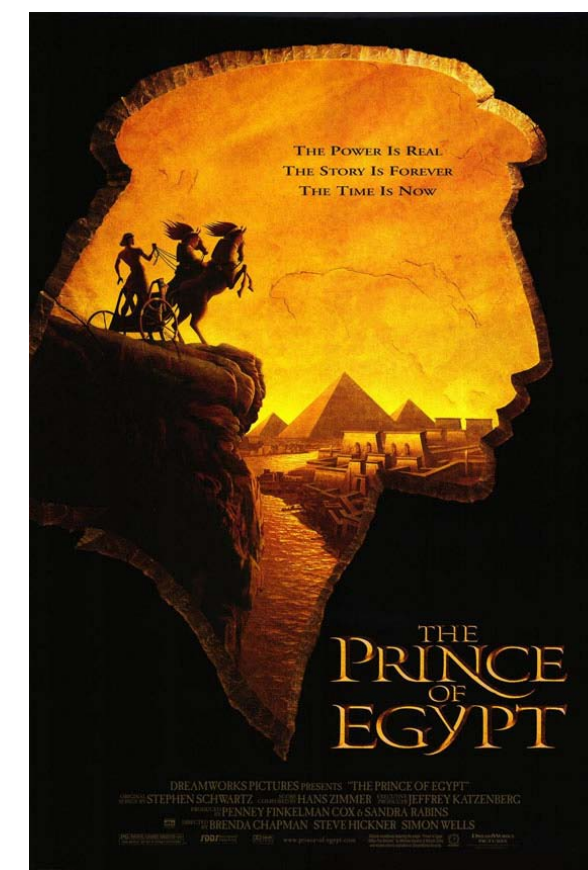


Saturday morning club at the Plaza (source: Historical Society)



The Point, Milton Keynes first multiplex cinema in the UK opened in 1985 (source: bing.com images)

Multiplex cinemas started opening up near to Port Talbot and eventually in Port Talbot itself, with the Apollo cinema opening down on Aberavon Sea Front. Audiences at the Plaza were reducing significantly, and the cinema started to lose money. It limped along until January 1999, its 60th anniversary year but finally closed on 4th January 1999. Its final show being Disney's 'Prince of Egypt'. In 'Port Talbot Paradiso' Alex Jones talks about that emotional last night "Closed the curtains at the end and as the curtains were closing there were snapshots of people taking pictures of the curtains closing and you could actually hear people sobbing in the auditorium". The building has been empty and unused ever since with Neath Port Talbot Council acquiring the building in 2009 with the aim of safeguarding it and developing a future use.



**Disney's 'Prince of Egypt'
last film to be shown at
the Plaza 4th January
1999 (source: imdb.com)**



Plaza exterior 4th Jan 1999 final night - Alex Jones removing film titles (source: Port Talbot Historical Society)



The Plaza in 1989 (source: britishlistedbuildings)



The Plaza in 1991 (source: cinematreasures)



The Plaza in 1995 (source: cinematreasures)



The Plaza at night in 1989 (source: britishlistedbuildings)



The Plaza Shop in 1993 (source: Port Talbot Historical Society)



The Plaza in 1998



The Plaza at night in 1989 (source: cinematreasures)



The Plaza in 1993 (source: britishlistedbuildings)



The Plaza boarded up after closing in January 1999 (source: Port Talbot Historical Society)

The Plaza has stood empty and unused for the last 20 years, whereas it used to be the epitome of glamour with its imposing front clad in cream tiles with a band of green, terrazzo steps up to the box office and plush carpets inside. Its Art Deco frontage is now discoloured, the entrance and shops are boarded up and there are holes in the roof letting in water.

Yet despite all this, in 'Port Talbot Paradiso' Michael Sheen said there was only one place to announce the start of The Passion in 2011 and that was on the side of the Plaza. Forty days before the performance, the words "It has begun" were painted onto the wooden boarding in big white and red letters on a black background. Its central location on Port Talbot's main street meant the public saw it and started talking about it.



The Plaza boarded up after closing in January 1999
(source: Port Talbot Historical Society)



'It has begun' 40 days before The Passion started in Easter 2011
(source: bing.com images)

Passion Plays are plays telling the Easter Story and the suffering and death of Jesus Christ. Michael Sheen's 2011 production 'The Passion' had a core cast of 15 professional actors from Port Talbot, including Sheen as 'the Teacher', a Jesus Christ-like character, and more than 1,000 locals taking part.



The play started on Good Friday and ran in 'real time' for 72 hours with the cast staying in character throughout. Different scenes took place in different locations around Port Talbot, culminating in the Crucifixion on Aberavon seafront in front of an estimated crowd of 6,000. One thing that emerged from 'The Passion' was a sense of community, and a coming together of people, something that many people thought had been lost in the town.

Scenes from 'The Passion' showing the Teacher (Michael Sheen) carrying the Cross and large crowds of onlookers
(sources: dailymail.co.uk and bing.com images)



The town of Port Talbot has long been seen as synonymous with the steel industry. Yet it also has another claim to fame - as the actors' capital of Wales. It has produced a remarkable number of actors since the inter-war years with Richard Burton, Anthony Hopkins and Michael Sheen heading the glittering cast, but there are many others too. The book 'The Actors Crucible' by Angela V. John concentrates on these three acting legends, their early life and those unsung heroes who helped to nurture their talent in schools, youth centres and youth theatre. The significance of these three actors to Port Talbot's identity can be demonstrated by the artwork (or graffiti) painted onto the wooden boards surrounding the derelict Plaza with images of Richard Burton, Anthony Hopkins and Michael Sheen painted there together with daffodils, the national symbol of Wales.



Actors & daffodils painted on Plaza exterior (source: theguardian.com)



Richard Burton 1953 in 'The Robe' (source: bing.com images)

Another star from the area is Rob Brydon, and in his BBC television series 'The Trip' 2010 he jokingly says to Steve Coogan "You've got Hopkins, me, Richard Burton and Sheen. The Port Talbot four. That's what we're known as." Before launching into his impersonations of the Port Talbot stars (especially Anthony Hopkins) that punctuate the episodes. Rob Brydon also features heavily in the Radio 4 documentary 'Port Talbot Paradiso', talking to Michael Sheen about his memories of the Plaza and how his parents supposedly met at the Italian café on the corner of the Plaza which Sheen described as "a veritable hotbed for the courting couples of Port Talbot in the post war era".



Anthony Hopkins visits the Plaza around 1991 (source: Port Talbot Historical Society)



Anthony Hopkins 1991 in 'Silence of the Lambs' (source: bing.com)

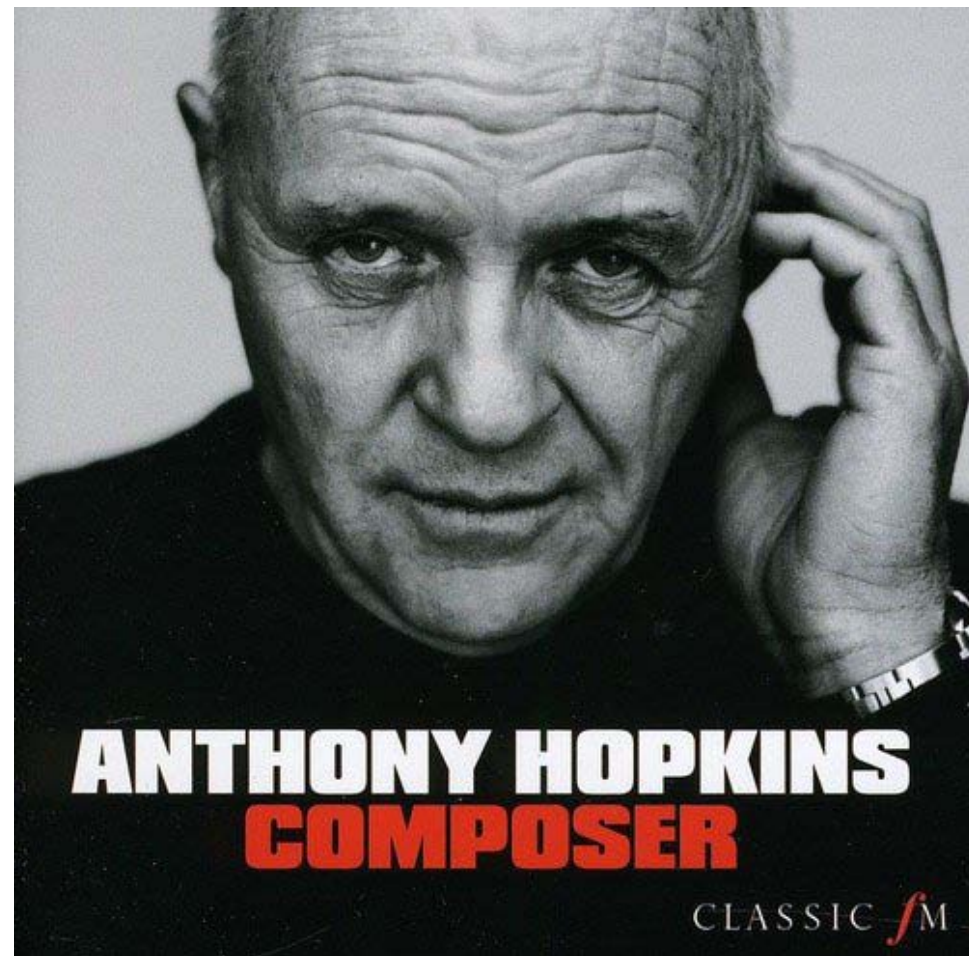


Michael Sheen (source: bing.com Images)



Rob Brydon 'The Trip' (source: bing.com images)

The Plaza cinema has inspired music too, with Anthony Hopkins (an accomplished pianist as well as actor) having composed classical music inspired by his childhood. In July 2011, the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra recorded a live album of his orchestrated piano compositions and film scores. The album entitled 'Composer' includes a track called '1947 – The Plaza' in homage to the Port Talbot cinema that used to transport him to another world. On the sleeve notes he wrote "On Friday nights we'd go to the pictures. I loved the pictures. Sometimes the Majestic in Bethany Square or the Regent in Taibach but the Plaza was the place to go." He had originally composed the piece for a sci-fi fantasy called 'Slipstream' that he had scripted and taken to the 2007 Sundance Film Festival.



Anthony Hopkins 2011 'Composer' CD (source: amazon.co.uk)



'Slipstream' 2007 featuring Anthony Hopkins musical composition '1947 - The Plaza' (source: imdb.com)

Port Talbot continues to hit the headlines and national news for artistic reasons with the recent graffiti artwork by Banksy and Ame72. A Banksy mural appeared on the side of a domestic garage in Richmond Terrace, in the Taibach area of town in December 2018. It covered two walls, from one angle the piece shows a child in a bobble hat with a sled enjoying a snow shower and trying to catch the flakes on his tongue. But from another, it becomes clear that what is actually falling on the child is ash billowing from a bin. Thousands of people came to view this latest piece.

A second international street artist, Ame72, also left his mark on Port Talbot at the start of February 2019 with his signature Lego minifigures at Taibach rugby club and around the corner at ABC Tyres.



Graffiti - Banksy (source: bing.com images)



Graffiti - Ame72 Lego Man (source: bing.com images)

The listing for the Plaza states the reasons as “Listed as a very rare example in Wales of a building type which expresses the distinctive architectural vocabulary of 1930s cinema architecture, and whose interior has escaped subdivision or major changes.”

The Plaza managed to escape demolition or significant alteration which was the fate of other cinemas in Port Talbot as shown below.

The Grand Cinema, High Street, Port Talbot - Demolished

Located on the corner of High Street and Forge Road. The Grand Cinema was built in 1908 and was constructed at the rear of an existing building, with the entrance through a former shop front. It was enlarged in the 1920's and was able to seat 1,100 and by 1930. It was closed in the mid to late 1950's due to the downturn in cinema going. The Grand was converted into a bingo club in 1963. This closed in 1972, and the building was demolished in a redevelopment of the area.



**The Grand Cinema, corner of High Street & Forge Road, Port Talbot
(source: cinematreasures.org)**

New Theatre / Empire, Talbot Road, Port Talbot - Demolished

The New Theatre was built at the rear of Royal Buildings on Talbot Road and opened in 1912. The building had an entrance through the arcade of Royal Buildings on Talbot Road and a frontage on Beverley Street. It originally operated as a Leon Vint Theatre and had a 32 feet deep stage and six dressing rooms. Gracie Field appeared here before her fame grew.

By 1926, it had begun showing films and became known as the Empire Cinema. The Empire suffered a disastrous fire in 1938 which completely destroyed the building after a showing of the film 'The Firefly'. The fire was contained to just the cinema and did not spread to Royal Buildings which adjoined it. A new building was erected on the site which functioned as many things thereafter, including a garage, printers and shops. Royal Buildings, the printers and the adjoining Railway and Docks Company offices building were demolished in 2012 to make way for a new development of flats and retail units which was completed in 2013.

Vint's Palace/Palace Cinema, Water Street, Aberavon, Port Talbot - Demolished

This was the local cinema in Aberavon, a seaside suburb of Port Talbot. Opened as a live theatre by Leon Vint around 1910/1911, it was also equipped to screen films. By 1922, it was operated by Max Corne and known as The Palace Cinema. It was still open in 1937 but closed soon after although the building remained. It became a David Evans store which operated for many years. The former Palace Cinema was finally demolished in 1972.



**Vint's Palace, Aberavon (after conversion to a David Evans store)
(source: cinematreasures.org)**

The Picturedrome / Capitol Cinema, High Street, Port Talbot - Demolished

The Picturedrome was built and opened in 1912. By 1937, it had been re-named Capitol Cinema and was operated by Woodward's Cinemas. The Capitol Cinema closed sometime during the second world war and lay empty and unused for some years. The building was later purchased by David Evans Ltd. of Swansea and converted into a furnishing store. It was demolished due to redevelopment of the area.



**The Picturedrome then Capitol, High Street, Port Talbot (after
conversion to a David Evans store) (source: cinematreasures.org)**

**Ebley's Kinema / Olympic, Depot Road, Cwmavon
- now Other Uses**

The Ebley family were show people who travelled a fit-up bioscope around South Wales between 1895 and 1915. In 1915, after the outbreak of the 1st World War touring became impossible. Two members of the family, Edward and his son Lord Robert settled in the Cwmavon district of Port Talbot, and built a small 200-seat, bricks and mortar cinema with their own hands. The cinema building looks more like a double fronted terraced house with a slightly wider than usual entrance. Above the door was a stone slab bearing the legend "Cinema". In the 1920's, it was re-built as the Olympic Cinema, with 600 seats. The proscenium was 27 feet wide. The Olympic Cinema was still open in 1966, but had gone from listings by 1980, and was in other uses.



Ebley's Kinema then Olympic, Cwmavon
(source: cinematreasures.org)

Workmens Hall / Taibach Picture Palace / Picturedrome, Alma Terrace, Taibach, Port Talbot - now a Nursing Home

The Workmen's Hall was opened in October 1872. It was converted into a cinema in 1911, and gained a stage show licence in 1913 when it was re-named Taibach Picture Palace. After the end of World War I in 1918, it was re-named Picturedrome, and had a 30 feet wide proscenium. It was still open in 1966, but soon went over to bingo use, which closed in 1984. After standing derelict for a while, it re-opened as a cinema on 12th December 1986 and closed in June 1988 with Peter Ustinov in "Appointment With Death". The building is now a nursing home.



Taibach Picture Palace then Picturedrome, Taibach 1985
(source: cinema.treasures.org)

**The Majestic / Odeon, Forge Road / Bethany Square, Port Talbot
- Demolished**

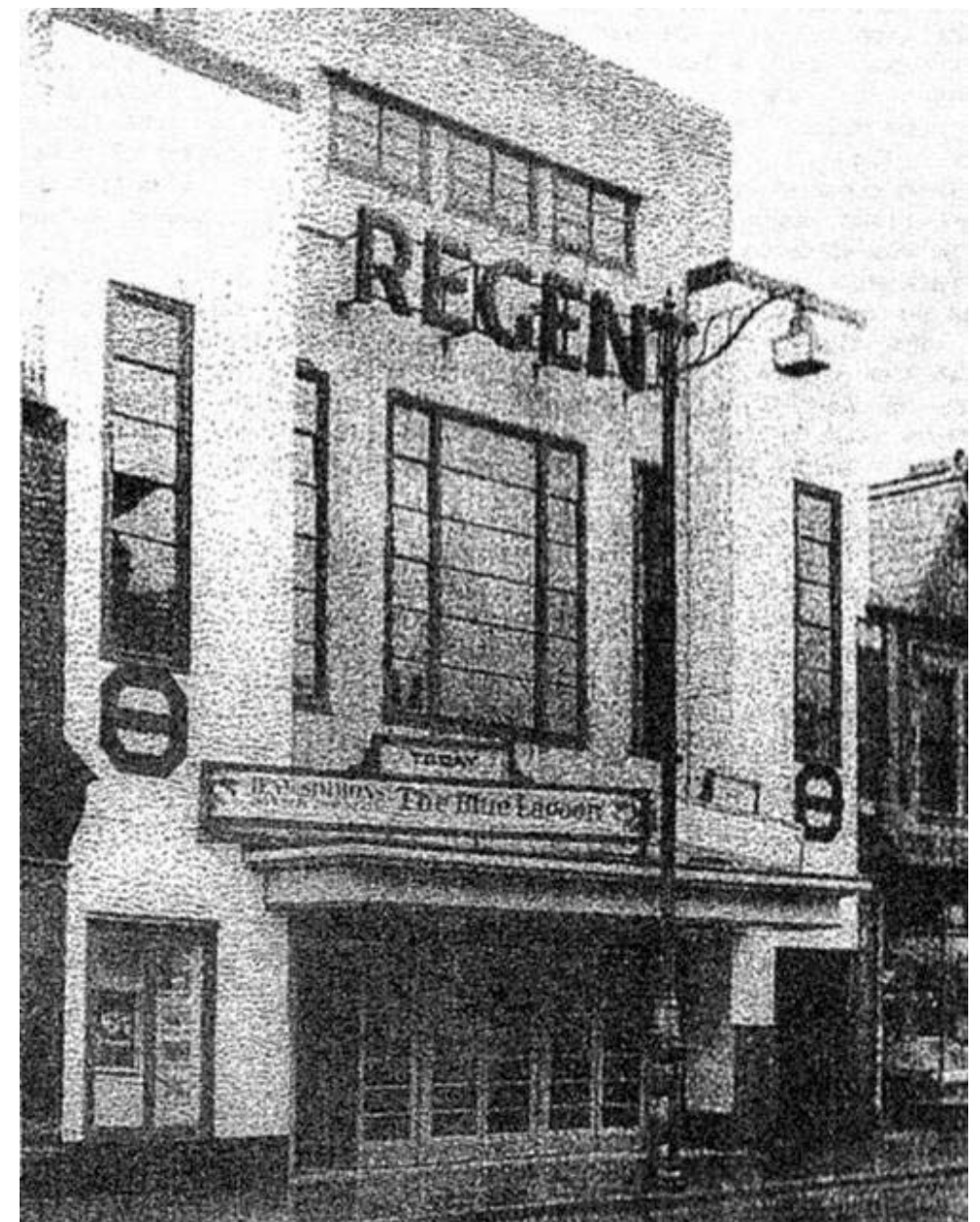
Originally opened as the Majestic Cinema on 11th January 1938 with Anna Neagle in "The Show Goes On" & Gene Raymond in "There Goes My Girl". It was planned by the Oscar Deutsch chain of Odeon Theatres Ltd. but initially operated by Max Corne of Cardiff. It was taken over by the Oscar Deutsch chain of Odeon Theatres Ltd. in 1940. The Majestic Cinema was re-named Odeon in April 1947. The building remained in cinema use until it closed on 27th March 1971, when the Rank Organisation suddenly pulled out and sold the building. It was converted into an independent bingo club, which closed on 6th September 1980. The building lay unused until its demolition in July 1995 for a new Tesco store, by which time it was in a terrible state of repair.



The Majestic then Odeon, Port Talbot (El Paso 1949)
(source: cinematreasures.org)

**The Regent Cinema, Commercial Road, Taibach
- now a Health Studio & Gym**

A small second run cinema located in the Port Talbot suburb of Taibach. It was a conversion of a building owned by the Co-Operative Society which housed a dancing academy on the ground floor and a billiards saloon upstairs on the first floor. The Regent Cinema opened on 26th October 1936 by an independent operator. It was taken over by the Oscar Deutsch chain of Odeon Theatres Ltd. on 13th December 1943 and retained its 'Regent' name. The Regent Cinema closed on 27th October 1956. The building became a Co-Op grocery store. By 1994, it had been converted into a Body Shape health studio & gymnasium, renamed Warehouse by 2014.



The Regent Cinema, Taibach
(source: cinematreasures.org)

2.9 Character, Architectural Design & Materials of The Plaza

The Plaza Cinema has remained relatively unchanged in its 80 years of existence.

- Built in 1939, as the single-screen Plaza Cinema, Port Talbot.
- In June 1983 it was turned into a bingo club but required no alterations.
- In July 1985, the bingo club closed, and the building was boarded up.
- In October 1985 it re-opened as a single-screen cinema with some minor internal refurbishment to spruce it up.
- Around 1988/89 the interior of the cinema was converted into a multi-screen operation, this meant the rear stalls were partitioned off from the front stalls and converted into two separate screens, with the balcony forming a third screen. The front stalls operated as a fourth screen for a short period of time, before being cleared due to the floor being rotten.
- In January 1999, the building was closed and boarded up and began to fall into disrepair.

The listing for the Plaza states the reasons as “Listed as a very rare example in Wales of a building type which expresses the distinctive architectural vocabulary of 1930s cinema architecture, and whose interior has escaped subdivision or major changes”. With the exterior described as “Modernist style with Art Deco influences”.

The term Art Deco was coined after the Exposition Internationale des Arts Decoratifs et Industriels Modernes (International Exhibition of Modern and Industrial Decorative Arts) held in Paris in 1925. It is a style characterised by clean lines, bold shapes, colour, geometric designs and decoration. It encompassed furniture, textiles, ceramics, sculpture and architecture. The style spread across Europe to the United States and Britain, where it became a favourite for building types associated with the modern age such as garages, airports, office buildings, department stores, power stations, factories, swimming pools and cinemas. There were overlaps with Modernism, with the use of clean lines and minimal decoration, but the style also lent itself well to buildings associated with entertainment, providing glamorous interiors for theatres, cinemas, hotels, restaurants and luxury apartments. Lighting was also a key feature with much made of neon strip lighting to emphasise the streamlined nature of the designs.

To illustrate the best of 1930's cinema architecture, an article from the Guardian online in September 2011, listed what they believed to be five of the best Art Deco cinemas.

These five Art Deco cinemas are presented on the next two pages.

Odeon Kingstanding (now Mecca), Birmingham (Grade II Listed building)

Opened 22nd July 1935. The exterior of the building is considered to be in the quintessential Art Deco ‘Odeon’ style. It has rounded corners, a central bay covered in cream faience tiles and a slender vertical fin-tower, which originally had letters on top, horizontally spelling out ‘CINEMA’. As large and glorious Art Deco cinema as you will ever see – though it’s now a bingo hall, its magnificent three fins and sweeping lines retain their allure.



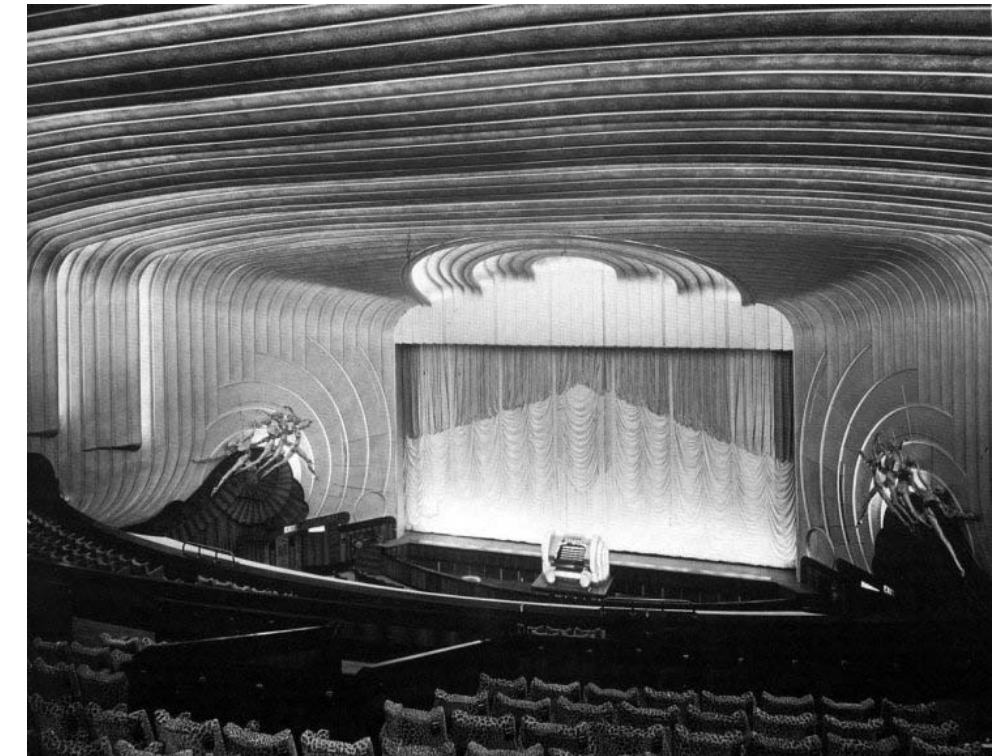
The Abbey, Wavertree, Liverpool (unlisted)

Opened 4th March 1939. A truly awe-inspiring local cinema, with strip-lit frontage and curved brick battlements. Today it has kept its glorious shape, but little of its dignity, by being repurposed as a supermarket.



Odeon Leicester Square, London (unlisted)

Opened 2nd November 1937. The jewel of cinema magnate Oscar Deutsch's Odeon empire, and still the largest single-screen cinema in Britain, its original seating capacity was for 2,116. It dominates Leicester Square with its 120 feet tall tower, and the entire façade and tower covered in black granite slabs which is the exact opposite of the traditional Odeon look.



Odeon Bury, Greater Manchester (unlisted)

Opened 16th November 1936. This was a white-tiled vision from an Odeon chain at the very peak of glamour, with the square tower feature clad in faience tiles. By 1988 the building had been converted into a nightclub and has sadly been demolished since the Guardian article was written.

**Ascot Cinema, Glasgow (Scottish Listing B – façade only)**

Opened 6th December 1939. This is a magnificent example of both a large art deco cinema, and how to convert one into something useful: in this case a block of flats. The Art Deco façade has been retained so the curved towers and vertical stripes always remind its residents where they are.

**The Plaza is very much a building of two parts:**

The front part of the building is about one third of the overall footprint of the building. Facing onto Talbot Road, the Plaza's frontage is impressive. Clad in cream faience tiling, of a 2x1 ratio orientated vertically, the central block projects forward with half-round fronted turrets on either side, projecting further forward. To the sides, screening the two staircases, the frontage steps back, still clad in cream faience tiling. This sculpted façade is capped with a row of projected tiles sitting on a lead sheet which is scalloped as it dresses down the wall. A further course of tiling below is a band of tiles a quarter the depth of the other tiles, this time of eau-de-nil (green) in colour.

To the sides and the front of the central projected section are a series of Crittall-style steel-framed windows – four on the south side, two per floor, and two on the north side, one per floor, and a tripartite window on the upper floor of the frontage, below which is a recessed balcony area. Either side of the central windows are tall, small in plan, are projected columns which originally supported two deep relief sculptures, then supported lights, now support nothing. Above and in between these columns, onto which the lights would have been directed, is a simple sign spelling out 'PLAZA'.



Wrapping around the full frontage, sailing over the ground floor is a curved canopy, completely in keeping with so many Art Deco cinemas. Whereas the central section continues down below the canopy, with the entrance screen flanked by the curved turrets, to the sides the ground floor does not set back as the upper floor do, but following the curve of the canopy, albeit set back, are curved glazed shopfront with a masonry stall riser. Most of the masonry below the canopy, apart from the top 800mm or so, is painted black.

This front section of the building is not symmetrical. It is trapezoidal in plan, with the front face parallel to the road and the rear line parallel with the rectilinear form of the rest of the building. This makes the south side wall of the projected central section much longer than the north wall. Its roof is flat, with a very tall parapet.



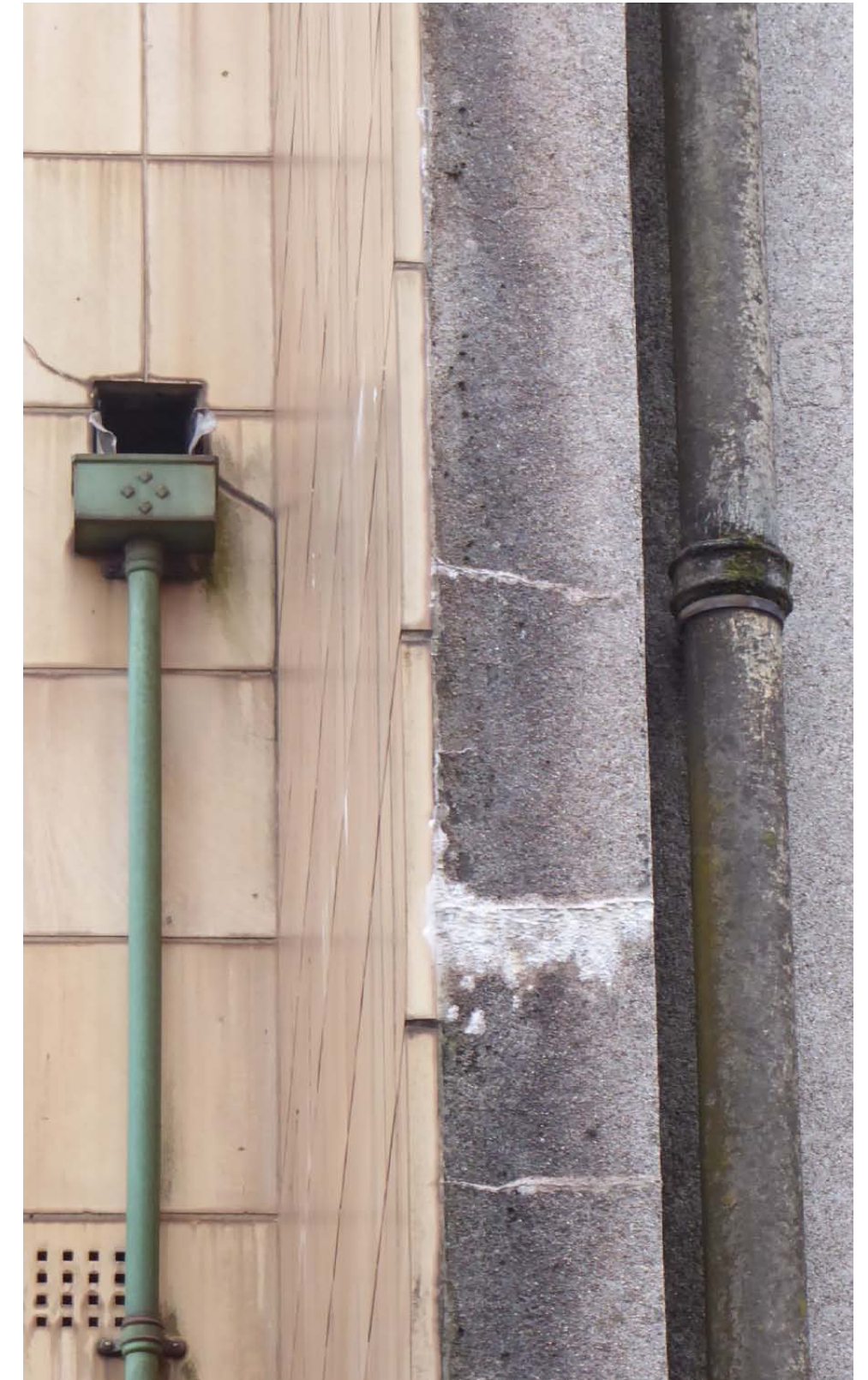
The rear part of the building is about two thirds of the overall footprint of the building. In stark contrast to the frontage, this rear section is unimpressive. Its three exposed elevations, onto Eagle Street and Eagle Mews, take the form of what is assumed to be reinforced concrete columns at regular centres (supporting beam which span the full width of the cinema) with roughcast rendered masonry panels in between, set back from the face of the columns. The render is of a grey/cream colour and there are a number of openings at various levels within the bottom half of the elevations, almost all blocked up.

The roof to the main body of the building is hipped, with the easternmost hip continuing down to beyond the line of the general eaves level, making the rear elevation lower than the two sides. The two side elevations have a level eaves for three quarters of its length and then the eaves drop down to the rear elevation.

The roof to the front section is flat and covered with asphalt.

The rainwater goods are of cast iron with the downpipes round. To the rear section, the gutters are moulded half-round and both gutters and downpipes are painted black. To the front section, the flat roof drains out through holes in the faience tiling to rectangular hoppers leading to circular downpipes. Against the cream faience tiling, the rainwater goods are of eau-de-nil green.

See photograph below taken looking at the junction between the faience tiled frontage and the rendered rear, with the two different types of downpipe.



As one enters through the wide entrance, made up of three sets of timber double doors with five horizontal glazed panes above each other, the outer lobby comprises a full width set of six grey terrazzo steps, each with a run of black and white checkerboard squares a little back from the nosing. At the top step, within the terrazzo, the floor spells out 'PLAZA' in typically art deco style text. One then passes through a set of five double timber doors, the set at each end separated from the central three by a sizeable plastered concrete column, with five glazed panes each, as per the front screen doors, with long brass handles and a run of glazed overpanes.

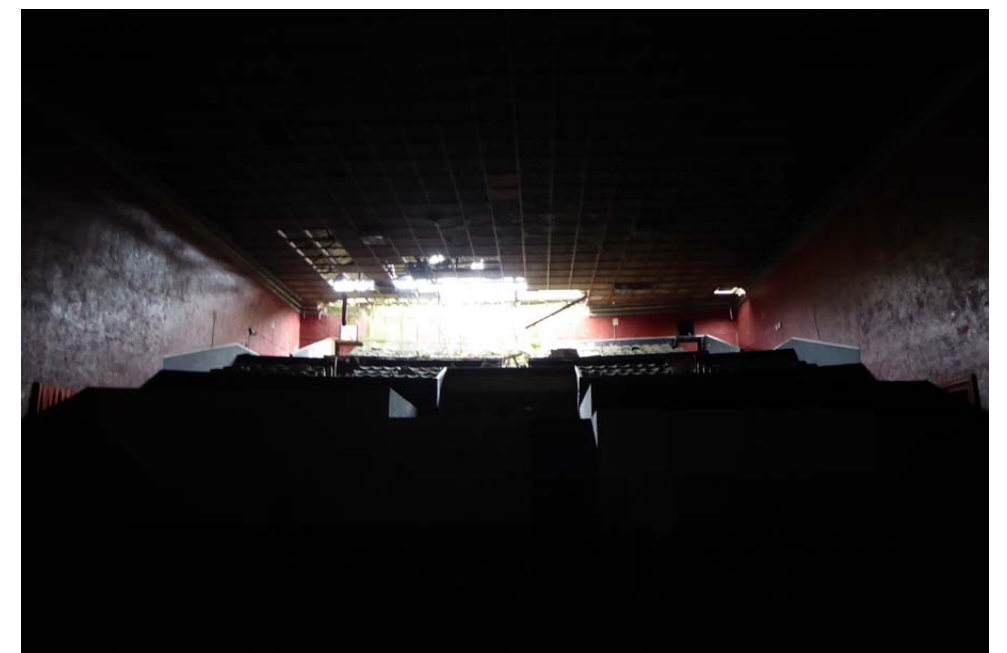
Into the inner lobby, the flooring is again terrazzo, however, here it is made up of individual tiles, once again in a checkerboard pattern, however this time the consistent combination of cream and eau-de-nil colours. The ceiling is plastered with downstand beams with a cornice to the perimeter and beams of the space, with an art deco style chevron pattern in golden yellow. Whilst paint samples have yet to be taken, there are at a few levels of paint underneath the golden yellow, with the earliest visible colour a burgundy red.

At both ends of the inner lobby are a terrazzo staircase with the same black and white checkerboard nosing, which passes over a set of toilets, accessed from the inner lobby via a small lobby. Opposite the screen of five double doors are three sets of double doors leading into the main cinema spaces.



Originally, these doors will have led into one large space which was the cinema stalls, with a very deep balcony oversailing the first (rear) section of stalls with a sloping floor, then a large full height (front) section, with a part sloping part flat floor, and then the stage and screen. In 1989, this rear section of the stalls, overhung by the balcony, was sub-divided, as it still remains, with the central doors accessing the large full height space and the stage via a corridor, whilst each of the side doors leads to a single screen cinema space with seating fixed to the sloped floor. All the seating to the front stalls area has been removed. Throughout the auditorium, the ceiling comprises an exposed grid with square ceiling panels of what appears to be wood fire, with intermittent decorative ventilator grilles and light fittings dropped from the ceiling, however set within the grid, made up of a 3 x 3 x 1 series of cubes. A moulded plaster cornice runs around the auditorium, coloured now in red, white and blue. Surrounding the curve fronted stage area is a moulded proscenium arch.

On this page are photographs of the main cinema space.



On this page are photographs of some of the details within the main cinema space.



On this page are photographs of the two single screen cinema space which were formed in 1989 within the rear stall area of the original single cinema space - the north screen in the first column and the south screen in the second and third columns.



The north screen



The south screen



The south screen



The north screen



The south screen



The south screen



The north screen



The north screen



The south screen

The two staircases lead to a first floor made up of a central projector room, a switch room and stores over the inner foyer, all which were linoleum floored; a flat roof with balcony (which used to comprise a wrought iron railing, however no longer does) over the outer foyer; and a series of office spaces within the two curve fronted turrets over the retail units below, which appear to have been wood block floored.

From the first floor, the staircases rise again, this time to the back of the upper tier balcony to the large cinema space. Here the seating remains, in its curved form, with a curved back wall of brick. It is of interest that these stairs are not of terrazzo, but finished in carpet, and the staircases both sides appear to pass through the middle of what appears to have once been a window opening, but is now blocked up. This leads on to assume that the first to second floor staircases are not original and were added in at a later time. How the balcony would have been accessed prior to this is not yet known.

From the first floor south turret section, a tight staircase leads up to second floor space behind the rear of the cinema balcony. This is one large space with the inside of the curved turrets expressed and Crittall-style windows on all three external walls.



As stated earlier, the Art Deco style is characterised by clean and sweeping lines; streamlined and bold shapes; colour; geometric designs and decoration.

The Plaza displays all of these Art Deco features:

- The clean lines of the frontage, which are set off by the familiar art deco characteristic clean edged faience tiling and Crittall-style flat steel-section slender framed windows. See Photo A.
- The sweeping lines and streamlined and bold shapes of the curved-fronted turrets, the curved-fronted retail units and the curved canopy which draws it all together; in addition to the curved bold 'exit' signage. See Photos A, C & D.
- The art deco characteristic colour scheme of cream and eau de nil green, which one sees on the main elevation, in the faience tiling, and in the lobby, with the terrazzo floor tiles. See Photos B & C.
- The black and white checkerplate tiles set into the terrazzo steps in the lobbies and up the two staircases. See Photo E.
- The chevron / zigzag geometric decoration to the foyer cornice. See Photo F.
- The linoleum flooring in other areas, such as the first floor rooms.
- The Britannic Bold font lettering, synonymous with the art deco period, on the foyer floor spelling out 'PLAZA'. See Photo G.



2.10 General Condition of The Plaza

In July 2017, Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council undertook a Condition Survey / Review of the Plaza, producing a report, written by Terry Preece, Principal Structural Engineer at the Council.

This report is reproduced on the next six pages, under section 4.10.1.

Prior to that, in May 2012, Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council commissioned an 'Appraisal of the Existing Structure' from James & Nicholas Structural Engineers, under section 4.10.2.

This was a longer report and so only prevalent sections of the main body of the text are reproduced over the following number of pages.

On the final three pages of this section, under section 4.10.3, are a series of plans identifying the floor, ceiling and walls materials for the Art Deco front portion of the Plaza, produced by GWP Architecture, with a summary statement as to the general condition of these materials.

2.10.1 Condition Survey / Review of the Plaza, produced by Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council, July 2017

1.0 Synopsis/Executive Summary

Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council Structures section were asked to review the condition of the former Plaza Cinema (now derelict) in relation to a condition survey carried out by external consultants in 2012. This report is to be read in conjunction with James & Nicholas report "Appraisal of Existing Structure".

This report concentrates on the facade and front portion of the building in order to evaluate any ongoing deterioration in condition. The remaining rear part of the building (main auditorium) has already been deemed as little merit for re-development and demolition recommended in the 2012 consultant's report. We have gained access to the rear portion of the building in order to re-assess its condition as a duty of care to the public to assess whether it poses a danger to the public.

An interim inspection of the external envelope only was carried out by NPTCBC Structural Engineer, Terry Preece, on the 14th June 2017 following reports of further dilapidation to the building envelope that posed a risk to the public. Emergency remedial safety works have already been carried out including removal of an external chimney, cleaning out of high level ACM gutters and hoarding off a section of the pavement to the public, all of which is covered in section 3.0 of this report. A short interim report was produced to cover these works "Plaza Cinema Port Talbot, Safety Inspection Report, Structural Survey/Risk Assessment, June 2017"

Copies of both these previous reports can be found in the appendices for reference.

The rear portion of the building (Area 2) including the main auditorium and foyer area has a substantial hole in the asbestos cement roof sheeting over the seated balcony area. Water has continued to enter the building and there are trees growing from the seats extending out of the roof. There is substantial water damage internally with the concrete slabs cracked and water permeating through down to ground floor level onto the foyer slab. The whole area is in a very poor state of repair and looks to have deteriorated further since the 2012 inspection. It is recommended this portion of the building is deemed potentially dangerous and only accessed by qualified personnel to carry out bi-annual inspections to review if there has been any further damage to key structural elements. Both a desk top and an on-site risk assessment should be carried out prior to entering this area in future. Full PPE including masks, disposable overalls and gloves need to be worn when entering the building due to potential asbestos debris, extensive dry powdery pigeon droppings and potential vermin.

The front portion (Area 1) of the building inclusive of the feature tiled facade, curved retail units and canopy are also starting to deteriorate further, however, not to the same level of extent as the rear portion of the building. The concrete roof slabs to both retail units show evidence of water ingress locally but not extensive, this must be due to the deterioration of the felt roof covering. The same can be said for the concrete canopy with the steel soffit panels badly corroded and at risk of falling. These areas will continue to deteriorate further unless the roof felt is inspected and repaired.

The steel soffit panels would need to be fully removed to properly inspect the slab soffit, however given the condition of the exposed areas the hairline cracks do not appear to have significantly worsened.

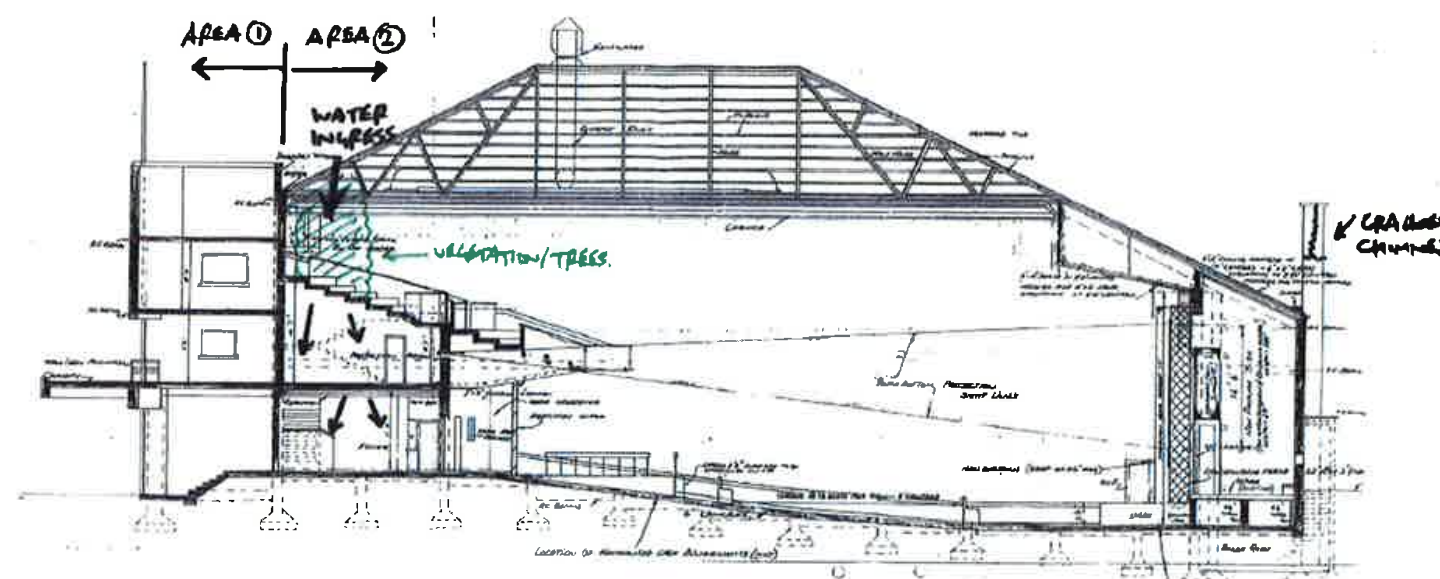
The feature tiles and lower curved concrete cladding panels appear to have deteriorated slightly but whilst they protect the structure against the elements there is no cause for concern to the structure at this moment in time.

It is recommended the front area is reviewed bi-annually until such time as it is re-developed. The building should also be inspected ad hoc externally following particularly bad weather such as gale force winds.

2.0 Review of 2012 Condition Survey Report

The 2012 J&N report was commissioned in order to provide a structural inspection and appraisal of a substantial re-modelling scheme proposed at the time.

The building is a Grade II listed structure built in 1939. It has been unoccupied since 1999 and has remained derelict since. The report splits the building into two areas. Area 1 is the front section of the building and Area 2 the remaining rear portion of the building (main auditorium). It was proposed Area 1 could be re-developed and area 2 be demolished as there was no practical merit in keeping/remodelling this due to its condition. Refer to section through building below indicating Areas 1 and 2:



Area 1 comprises of the feature tiled facade, canopy, foyer steps and curved retail units. The report identified the following key defects:

- Water/damp ingress into both retail unit concrete slab flat roofs with corroded reinforcement evident
- Concrete canopy, spalling soffit with exposed corroded reinforcement
- Metal soffit panels to canopy were badly corroded
- Ceramic feature tiles on facade, hairline cracks and concerns highlighted regarding adequate bonding of tiles and the presence of wall ties.
- Cracking of concrete cladding panels below retail unit windows

Area 2 comprises the main auditorium, balcony, projection room and boiler house to the rear. The report highlighted the following key defects:

- Broken asbestos cement roof sheeting to the front of area 2 where it meets the flat roof to Area 1. Balcony area left open to elements with substantial damage internally due to water ingress also affecting the projection room and entrance foyer below.
- Rear external brickwork chimney stack, top portion cracked and in danger of collapse.
- Render to side and rear elevations cracked and falling in patches.

3.0 Safety Inspection/Works Carried out in June 2017

(Note: Following the initial 2012 survey report urgent remedial work was carried out. The chimney stack to the rear of the property was Heras fenced off to provide an exclusion zone to protect the public should there be a collapse. Additional work was also carried out in 2016 when loose render and spalled concrete was removed on the Eagle Street elevation to remove the risk of falling onto the pavement below.)

Concerns of further deterioration to the building envelope were reported in June 2017 that instigated a site inspection to assess the extent of deterioration and potential risk to the public given the building is bounded on two sides by pavements used by the public.

During the inspection there were three main areas of concern:

Concrete Canopy (front elevation): There were badly corroded steel soffit panels, support trims and metal work hanging loose which posed a risk to the public walking below. The area has now been fenced off with 8ft solid timber hoarding to prevent access under the canopy. See photographs below:



Loose/corroded metal soffit panels (June 2017) Pavement hoarded off below (July 2017)

High level asbestos cement guttering: The guttering along Eagle Street was clearly overgrown with moss and vegetation. In one area it looked as though the guttering was sagging under the weight and if this were to fall onto a member of the public below it could cause serious injury. As a result the gutter has now been cleaned out and checked for damage including its support brackets via MEWP. The contractor has given assurances the gutter is secure. The rear and opposite side gutters were also cleaned and checked for damage. Whilst not immediately adjacent to a public highway they still pose a risk and a small length of guttering to the rear and side elevation had to be removed. See photographs below:



Overgrowth in high level gutters (June 2017) Overgrowth removed via MEWP (July 2017)



Close up of overgrowth (June 2017)



After clearing out (July 2017)

Rear Chimney: The chimney was clearly in a state of disrepair in 2012 and it was recommended to be reduced in height to a safe level in the J&N report. The chimney had deteriorated and looked extremely unstable and could potentially fall into the parking area outside the side boundary. There was a clear danger so the decision was made to remove the chimney down to a safe level. This work has been carried out and approximately 1.5m of the top section of chimney has been taken down. Refer to photographs below:



Rear Chimney cracked and leaning (June 2017) Top portion of chimney removed (July 2017)

Whilst cleaning the gutters the contractor took photographs of the roof at close range to give an indication of the condition of the roof sheeting, see photograph below:



Broken section of asbestos cement roof sheeting, exposed steel trusses (rusted) to the elements (Photograph taken from MEWP July 2017)

4.0 Site inspection

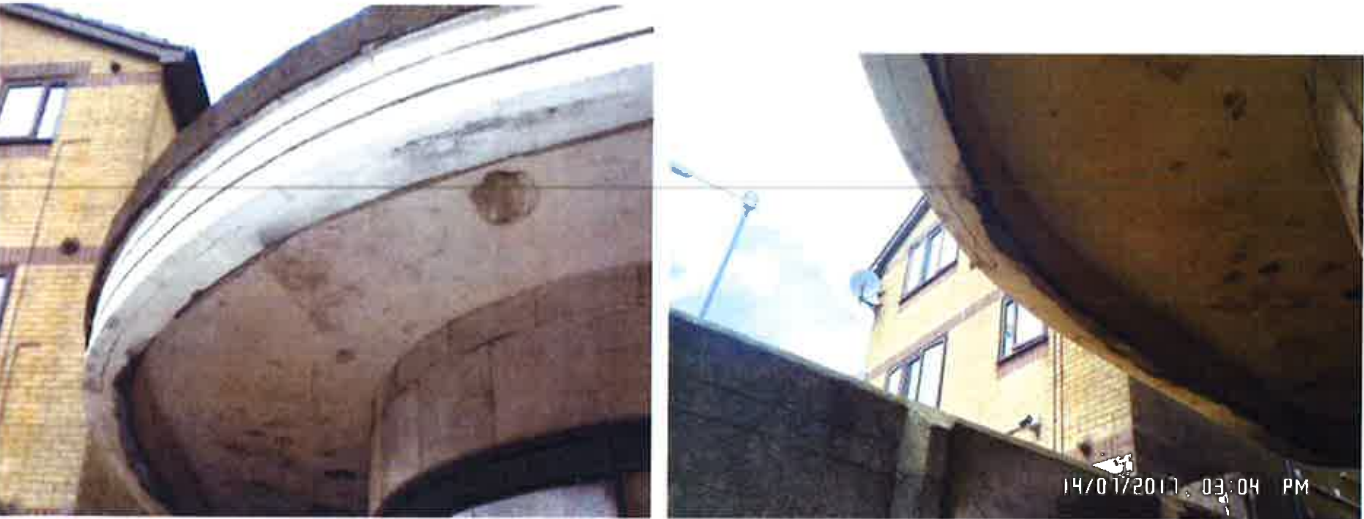
An inspection was carried out on the 14th July 2017 and the following observations were made with regard to key defects identified in J&N's report in order to draw a comparison and assess the extent and scale of deterioration since 2012.

The survey consisted of a visual inspection only from the ground. Internally the inspection was initially limited to the front portion of the building (ie; the foyer and retail units). This was due to health and safety reasons given the derelict condition of the building, presence of asbestos, pigeon droppings and potential vermin. A brief inspection of the auditorium area was carried out following and on site visual risk assessment.

Full PPE including masks and disposable overalls were worn, a full risk assessment carried out prior to entering the building from the front elevation. (A copy of the risk assessment can be found in Appendix C)

Front canopy

The exposed concrete soffit does not appear to have any additional areas of localised spalling compared to the 2012 report. There was approximately 1m of spalling along the curved down stand edge (town end) identified in 2012. Having looked at this area it appears that the edge fillet of concrete has been pushed out further by the corroded reinforcing bars within. Refer to photographs below:



Front Canopy, town end (2012)

July 2017

There is significant deterioration of the metal panels hung from the soffit which are badly corroded and delaminated around the edges including their support members. There is a corroded steel fascia section approximately 0.2 x 0.4m hanging dangerously loose that is not present on the 2012 report photograph for this area. Refer to photographs below:



Corroded metal soffit panels (2012)

July 2017

There does appear to be a few additional hairline cracks radiating around the soffit on Eagle Street and what appears to be additional calcium carbonate stalactites hanging from the cracks in comparison with 2012 photographs for this area. Refer to photographs below:



2012

July 2017

There are metal brackets and signs under the canopy that are also very badly corroded. It is difficult to assess whether they have deteriorated since 2012 (without testing by hand), however, 5 years of exposure to the elements would most probably lead to further deterioration.

The majority of the concrete soffit hidden by the metal panels is not visible for inspection. Given the deterioration of the metal soffit panels it cannot be ruled out that the concrete canopy itself has also deteriorated underneath.

There is clear evidence that the roof felt covering to the canopy has deteriorated along the edge compared with 5 years ago, it would follow that the felt in general will be in poor condition which would account for the additional hairline cracks and stalactites.

Front Elevation ceramic feature tiles:

The 2012 report made no mention of any defects to the tiles, however, it did suggest a detailed inspection would be required to assess if they still had adequate bond to the wall. During our inspection it was noted that a section of tile has fallen from the RHS curved portion of the elevation. This has shown that the bond has failed locally and water ingress behind could affect the tiles immediately local to this in future. Refer to photographs below:



2012

July 2017

Entrance area/steps

The paint is peeling off the reinforced concrete columns and beams. There are metal soffit panels to the front down stand beam that are badly corroded and on one side dangerously hanging loose. The Concrete frame and roof slab, however, do not show any evidence of rust staining or spalling. There is visual evidence of further deterioration in comparison to the 2012 report photographs, see below:



Photograph of entrance steps 2012



July 2017



July 2017



July 2017

Foyer area

The foyer area is directly below the projection room, upper balcony/seating and forms part of the main auditorium structure that has been deemed to have little merit in keeping. Directly above this is a large void caused as a result of broken roof sheeting with clear evidence of water penetration working its way through the building down to ground level with pools of standing water.

The paintwork to the soffit of the concrete slab, down stand beams and columns are peeling away badly in all locations. There is clearly standing water on the slab above as there are hairline cracks in the soffit with rust staining and damp areas. This area is clearly in a poor state of repair and has deteriorated further since 2012 with the majority of the feature cornicing breaking away from the ceiling. Refer to photographs below:



Foyer area (2012)



Downstand RC beam (2012)



Foyer area doors, July 2017



Foyer area ceiling, July 2017



Foyer area ticket booth, July 2017



Cracked ceiling slab/damp, July 2017

The projection room and balcony were not inspected as it was deemed to be dangerous to enter these areas due to the extent of dilapidation and excessive build-up of pigeon droppings over the years. We managed to gain access through to the main auditorium at ground level and the vegetation that was noted as growing from the balcony seats in 2012 are now fully grown trees that extend up towards the broken roof sheeting and beyond. The trees also appear to be directly adjacent to the front wall to the auditorium structure. Whilst this wall has not been inspected the tree/vegetation roots may have caused damage to the wall. See photographs below:



2012 vegetation over seating



July 2017, trees growing up to roof level

Curved retail unit No.1 (RHS larger unit)

The 2012 report identified water ingress through the concrete roof slab revealing some corroded reinforcing bars. During the inspection it was clear that the paintwork to the concrete in general had deteriorated with almost all concrete surfaces peeling. Refer to photographs below:



2012



2012



Cladding panels below window 2012



Additional cracking July 2017

Curved retail unit No.2 (LHS smaller unit unit)

Likewise with unit 1 there are hairline cracks with water penetration to the soffit of the slab in two areas with algae staining and exposed corroded reinforcement. The paintwork is also looking in a much poorer state than the photographs on the 2012 report. Refer to photographs below:



July 2017 indicates clear evidence of water penetration through hairline cracks



2012



July 2017

The slab and down stand beams appear to be in a fair condition however the slab soffit displayed areas of additional hairline cracks and water staining with exposed/corroded reinforcement. There is clear evidence that the felt roof is letting in water and it is increasingly starting to affect the integrity of the slab. If this continues the slab will deteriorate to a point where spalling of concrete will occur and significant concrete repairs will be required.

There are concrete cladding plinth units under the front window. The 2012 report only identified one as being badly spalled with reinforcement showing. The current inspection showed cracking to a few additional cladding panels which indicates ongoing dilapidation. Refer to photographs below:

5.0 Recommendations

This main purpose of this inspection was to assess any further deterioration to the front portion of the building (area 1; as referred to in J&N report) as it is likely this will be retained and form part of a future redevelopment. It is, however, difficult to ignore the continual deterioration of the main auditorium (area 2) with specific attention to the broken/missing roof sheeting over the balcony area.

Area 1, foyer and main auditorium

Safe yet brief access was gained to the main auditorium ground floor via the foyer area where the extent of the damage could be assessed. Given the height of trees/vegetation growing from the upper level seats through the roof gives real cause for concern. Access was not afforded to the upper levels due to the inherent risks. It must be assumed that structural damage has been caused to the upper floors in this area especially given the extent of water ingress to the floors below and the crazed hairline cracks in the soffit of the slab over the foyer. There could also be damage to the steel roof trusses which were already showing signs of corrosion in the 2012 survey.

This area of the building should be classified as potentially dangerous as the slabs above the foyer area are showing early signs of damage which must have reduced their structural capacity. The structure will continue to deteriorate further as long as the broken roof sheeting allows water to enter the building.

Whilst it is unlikely that there will be a complete collapse of the structure in the near future the severity would be high. It is recommended this area is inspected annually by qualified personnel to assess whether there is clear evidence of structural failure to any key elements in this part of the building. The risk assessment carried out for this inspection should be reviewed and used for future inspections on an ad hoc basis (refer to appendix C). If it is deemed too dangerous, access should be prohibited to this part of the building.

Area 2, front façade, retail units, canopy and foyer steps

The front part of the building (Area 1) is in a generally better condition than Area 2 with no evidence of standing water on the ground floor slab, however in both retail units the concrete slab flat roof covering is not watertight due to small areas of cracking on the soffit and damp.. These areas will continue to deteriorate further as long as the felt roofing allows water penetration through to the concrete slab below. In order to stop this it is recommended the felt covering is inspected and repaired as necessary.

The lower external concrete cladding panels along the curved elevations are continuing to crack and spall away, however are of no real structural concern

The steel soffit panel on the underside of the concrete down-stand beam over the main front doors is starting to corrode. The steel panels on the soffit of the concrete canopy slab are also badly corroded and in danger of falling. These items are not primary structural elements and their condition does not necessarily mean the underlying structure has been compromised. It can't be ruled out the concrete canopy slab is in poor structural condition unless the soffit panels are removed and the slab inspected.

The hairline cracking that is visible on the canopy soffit does appear to have slightly increased from the 2012 report photographs. Given the condition of the soffit panels and hairline cracks it is recommended the felt roof protection is inspected and repaired to prevent water penetrating the slab.

The façade feature tiles have a small area where a tile has fallen off and a clearly visible hairline crack in the same location which indicated the tiles are susceptible to de-bonding with water getting behind which could exasperate the situation. The tiles however are superficial and the structure behind should not be affected to any large extent.

It is recommended that if the front portion of the building is to be retained and re-developed the defects identified will only deteriorate unless the roof covering is repaired. It is also recommended that prior to any re-development the contractor would need to strip the canopy soffit to inspect any concrete damage and tap test sample areas of the feature tiles

**4.10.2 Appraisal of the Existing Structure produced by
James & Nicholas Structural Engineers, May 2012**

SYNOPSIS / EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

James & Nicholas LLP were instructed by NPTCBC to carry out a structural inspection of the former Plaza Cinema in Port Talbot, and then to carry out a structural appraisal of the existing structure with particular reference to remodelling proposals illustrated on drawings prepared by Holder Mathias Architects.

The building is a Grade II listed structure built in 1939/40 which has been empty since 1999 and is currently-derelect.

It is known that asbestos is present at a number of locations in the building and, as a result, our survey work was limited – we were not able to carry out any intrusive works nor to inspect any areas that were inaccessible or covered up.

When carrying out our structural appraisal, we separated the building into two defined areas based on the proposed remodelling, as follows: -

Area 1 – those areas of the existing building where there appeared to be potential practical merit in re-using the existing structure if the building is remodelled as proposed (i.e. the front section of the building, including the main entrance, entrance canopy, retail units and the feature facade).

Area 2 - the remaining areas of the building, where the proposed remodelling is so significant that there appeared likely to be little or no practical merit in retaining the existing structure, subject to this being permissible under the terms of the Grade II listing.

We noted a number of defects and/or issues requiring further investigation in relation to Area 1 and, assuming that it is agreed that Area 1 will be re-used if possible, we recommend that further investigations are undertaken in relation to the concrete frame, façade and foundations, and also that compliance of the structure with current Building regulations and British Standards should be confirmed.

We concluded that there would be no practical merit in retaining the existing structure in Area 2 and recommend that the extent of the proposed demolition should be confirmed as acceptable in terms of the buildings CADW Grade II listing. A 'Refurbishment & Demolition' Asbestos Survey will be required prior to the carrying out of any construction works.

We noted that the chimney to the rear boiler house is in poor condition and recommend that it should be demolished to a safe height and sealed as necessary, as a matter of some urgency. A 'Refurbishment & Demolition' Asbestos Survey will be required prior to the carrying out of any construction works.

We noted that water is entering the building in significant quantities and recommend that a scheme for sealing the building envelope should be agreed upon, the nature and required extent of which will depend on the proposed timescale for commencement of the proposed remodelling works.

6.1.3 Site Inspection

Our site inspection took place on various days during March and early April 2012.

Record Photographs taken during our visits are enclosed (see Appendix E).

i) General Structural Form

(See Photographs 1 to 5, Appendix E)

The structural form of the building was confirmed generally to be as indicated on the record drawings.

Area 1 (Front Façade) is concrete-framed and made up of slabs, beams and columns clad with masonry walls. The masonry walls are generally of cavity construction and clad with ceramic tiles on the front elevation. Internal walls are generally of masonry construction and appear to be non load-bearing. Ground floor slabs appear to be ground-bearing.

Area 2 (Main Auditorium) is generally single-storey (but with two- and three-storey areas to the front and rear) comprising a steel-framed roof structure supported on a reinforced concrete frame. The infill perimeter walls to the sides and rear of this area comprise rendered brickwork of cavity wall construction. Internal walls are generally of masonry construction and appear to be non load-bearing. Ground floor slabs appear to be ground-bearing.

ii) Area 1 (Front Façade)

Flat Roof

(See Photographs 6 to 11, Appendix E)

The flat roof at second floor level is concealed by parapet walls which form part of the main façade. It is accessed from the store room below via a cat ladder.

The front and side walls comprise concrete-framed masonry panels of cavity construction clad with ceramic tiles to their external elevations.

The rear wall abuts the main auditorium and is of similar construction to the front and side walls with a precast concrete coping and valley gutters abutting the main auditorium roof.

The walls are lined / tanked internally with a bitumen-type finish. The roof slab is surfaced using an asphalt-type product and is largely covered in moss.

No structural defects were noted but the membranes to the walls and roof slab were noted to be aged and in need of repair or replacement.

Second Floor Storage Area

(See Photographs 12 to 18, Appendix E)

The storage area is located at the front of the building, its perimeter walls on three sides comprising part of the main ceramic-clad façade. It includes 'feature' metal windows to its front and side elevations.

It is accessed via concrete stairs from the staff areas at first floor.

Its external walls comprise brickwork of cavity wall construction clad with ceramic tiles. The masonry is framed with reinforced concrete beams and columns.

The soffit of the concrete roof slab above and the supporting downstand beams and columns can be seen clearly.

The structure is generally in fair condition. No significant defects were noted other than spalling to the soffit of a concrete beam on the front elevation and a crack in the soffit of the roof slab. The crack is approximately 1mm wide and runs from the front to back of the room, approximately at its mid-point.

A limited amount of water is entering via the roof hatch and also via broken glass in the front window, albeit not in significant amounts. This water is working its way down through the building affecting the structure below.

This area is also inhabited by pigeons and the floor slab and access stairs are covered with a significant amount of bird excrement.

Staff & Administration Areas - First Floor (Mezzanine)

(See Photographs 19 to 23, Appendix E)

These comprise office and staff areas, stores and circulation areas. Access to the void between the balcony slab and suspended ceiling (both of which are within Area 2) can be achieved via either of two small store rooms at this level.

The concrete floor slab at this level extends out to provide a felt-covered flat roof over the two retail units situated at ground level and a front entrance canopy.

The front elevation of the building at this level is part of the decorative façade above the main entrance and construction generally is similar to that at the upper levels, comprising a reinforced concrete frame with ceramic-tile-clad cavity walls on the perimeter.

This level includes a recessed area just above the main entrance which was originally an external balcony. This has been boarded up and is now enclosed. The walls are clad with ceramic tiles and / or stone. Some spalling of concrete and corroded reinforcement was noted in the soffit of the slab over the balcony area, and also hairline cracking (which was in isolated areas and not widespread).

There are numerous partition walls which made it impossible to inspect the structure adequately.

The external roof slabs could not be inspected due to the presence of the felt roof covering. The covering is generally in fairly poor condition and in need of repair or replacement.

Main Entrance

(See Photographs 24 to 33, Appendix E)

The main entrance is located on the south side of the building and provides access from Talbot Road.

A series of terrazzo-surfaced steps within the cinema entrance area lead to the foyer which is located approximately 850mm above pavement level.

An entrance canopy wraps around the front of the building cantilevering off the main structure by up to three metres.

The canopy comprises a reinforced concrete slab and downstand beams. The front face of the canopy is clad with a decorative precast concrete panel and the soffit is rendered and painted. An underslung metal structure was also noted above the main entrance doors - this conceals a number of downstand concrete beams cantilevering from the main building. The underlying metal structure is not thought to be part of the building structure. It is very corroded and in poor condition.

The top of the canopy slab could not be inspected due to the presence of a felt roof covering.

Corroded bars were noted at various locations in the soffit of the slab and the perimeter downstand beams. The bars were noted as 10-12mm in diameter with very little concrete cover, sometimes only the render.

Water ingress through the roof covering was also noted, evidenced by the presence of calcium carbonate stalactites in the slab soffit.

The main entrance to the cinema comprises glazed timber doors between 'feature' columns, which appear to be either brick- or precast-concrete-clad reinforced concrete columns.

A series of concrete downstand beams and columns was noted internally. These were generally in good condition.

Self-Contained Retail Units 1 and 2

(See Photographs 34 to 43, Appendix E)

The two retail units are located either side of the main entrance to the cinema, off Talbot Road. They are each provided with dedicated level access from the pavement.

The external elevations are almost fully glazed sitting above a 750mm high plinth.

Unit 1 is significantly larger than Unit 2 but they are of similar construction with a concrete frame comprising roof slab on downstand beams and columns. Metal columns are provided in the south-east and south-west corners in lieu of concrete.

The plinth beneath the glazing appears to have been constructed using pre-cast concrete units.

There is evidence of water ingress through the roof slab in both units.

Slab soffits have been rendered but this has come away in various locations revealing corroded bars. The bars are small in diameter (approximately 12mm) and have little, if any, concrete cover to them.

Externally, one of the precast concrete plinth units on Unit 1 has spalled quite badly revealing a corroded reinforcing bar.

(iii) Area 2 – Main AuditoriumPitched Roof

(See Photographs 44 to 61, Appendix E)

Access to inspect the roof was limited due to the poor condition of the access stairs and platforms and also the presence of a suspended ceiling.

The roof over the main auditorium comprises asbestos sheeting supported on timber purlins which in turn span onto a grid of steel trusses and / or beams.

Ventilation plant (ductwork, fans, etc) was noted within the depth of the trusses in some areas.

A suspended ceiling comprising a grid of timber with inlaid tiles hangs beneath the steel trusses over the entire plan area of the auditorium (excluding the stage and backstage areas – see below) albeit this has collapsed in some areas.

The asbestos roof cladding has collapsed or been blown off along part of the southern edge of the roof so that part of the balcony underneath is now exposed to the elements.

The main section of roof comprises steel trusses spanning the full width of the building (approximately 23 metres) onto the concrete perimeter frame or onto a steel lattice girder located just in front of the stage.

The trusses generally comprise rolled-steel angle sections with gusset plates and riveted connections.

Where it could be inspected, the steelwork was found to be in fair condition. It was difficult to ascertain if it had ever been painted, but corrosion was limited to light surface rusting.

No other significant defects were noted.

The back (northern) section of the roof (i.e. above the stage and backstage areas) comprises a series of steel beams, purlins and joists spanning between the steel lattice girder mentioned above, a concrete 'goal-post'-type reinforced concrete frame forming the proscenium arch over the stage and the concrete frame of the perimeter wall.

Above the stage and backstage areas the ceiling construction changes and in these areas it is of similar construction to the roof. It is supported by the bottom boom of the lattice girder, the roof-level steelwork and the proscenium arch.

The roof structure and above-stage ceiling structure were inspected from the store rooms situated at high level adjacent to the stage and were noted to be in good condition, with no obvious structural defects noted.

Balcony

(See Photographs 62 to 65, Appendix E)

The balcony, which is located at second floor level, is accessed from the main foyer at ground floor level via stairs on each side of the building.

It sits beneath the main auditorium roof and over the first floor mezzanine and ground floor auditorium areas below.

The balcony structure comprises a stepped concrete slab spanning approximately 4.5 metres onto raking reinforced concrete beams.

The central beams cantilever approximately six to seven metres over part of the ground floor auditorium below.

Beneath the balcony there is a suspended ceiling comprising a grid of timber joists spanning between steel beams which are in turn supported by the main concrete frame.

The entire structure is supported on a grid of reinforced concrete columns.

A significant portion of the roof cladding above the central portion of the southern edge of the balcony has failed and much of the debris, along with bird excrement and plant life, is currently sitting on the balcony slab, along with the original seating. The adjoining valley gutter was noted to be full of vegetation and in poor condition.

Water is entering the building in significant quantities through the open roof and this is evidenced at all levels vertically beneath, particularly in the projection room at first floor level and the foyer at ground floor level.

The balcony structure could not be inspected from above due to the presence of existing floor finishes and the reported potential presence of asbestos.

When viewed from below, the concrete slab and supporting beams appeared to be in fair condition except in those areas affected by water ingress. In these areas the slab was noted to be in poor condition. When it was raining outside, water was noted to be constantly dripping through the slab through rust-stained areas (probably in the location of steel reinforcing bars).

Projection Room & Switch Room - First Floor (Mezzanine)

(See Photographs 66 and 67, Appendix E)

The area immediately beneath the damaged roof section of the Main Auditorium (i.e. primarily the projection room) is badly affected by water ingress.

Ponding of water is present on the floor slab and the concrete balcony slab and supporting beams are deteriorating as a consequence.

Staining to the soffits of the concrete slabs and beams indicated that corrosion of the reinforcement is taking place and areas of spalling and corroded bars were noted in the soffit of the balcony slab and some beams. Concrete cover to the bars in these areas was as little as 10mm in places.

Ground Floor – Entrance Foyer

(See Photographs 73 to 78, Appendix E)

The entrance foyer is located above the main entrance and it is accessed by a series of terrazzo-surfaced steps. Male and female toilet areas are located to either together with access stairs to the upper floors.

Downstand beams and columns were noted throughout the area, all of which are rendered.

The stairs to the upper floors are constructed using concrete. The floor slab and stairs are surfaced in terrazzo throughout.

Ponding of water on the slab in the central section of the foyer was noted, as well as widespread damage to finishes as a result of water ingress. This area is located directly underneath the projection room (at first floor (mezzanine) level), balcony (at second floor level) and the damaged area of the main auditorium roof.

The condition of the slab and beams in this area could not be inspected further as the finishes could not be removed due to the reported potential presence of asbestos.

Except as reported above, the structure was considered to be in fair condition.

Main Auditorium

(See Photographs 79 to 81, Appendix E)

The main auditorium area at ground floor level is approximately 23 metres by 31 metres on plan (excluding the stage) but has been subdivided to include two small-screen cinemas at the rear.

The main perimeter walls comprise reinforced concrete columns and intermediate beams with infill masonry cavity wall panels. The concrete frames could not be viewed internally other than in the backstage areas due to the presence of decorative finishes.

The columns are spaced at approximately 3.9 metre centres horizontally and the beams at 2.8 metre centres vertically.

The concrete frame and walls appear to be in good condition generally. Some spalling of concrete due to corroded bars was noted externally but this was in very limited areas.

The external render was noted to be hollow in various locations but appeared to be generally in fair condition. However it should be noted that access was limited to inspect this due to the limited reach of the access platform.

The concrete frame comprising the proscenium arch was also noted to be in fair condition.

The walls forming the two small-screen cinemas are constructed in studwork to the underside of the concrete second floor balcony and are non-load-bearing.

The ground floor slab appears to be solid and ground-bearing. It is covered with carpet and/or timber flooring and therefore its condition could not be determined.

The auditorium floor slopes gradually downwards so that it is approximately 900mm below pavement level just in front of the stage. The car park to the rear was noted to be 750mm higher than pavement level.

The perimeter walls in the areas to the rear of the building therefore act as retaining walls.

Stage and Backstage

The stage and backstage areas are approximately 900mm above auditorium level and suspended of timber construction. Access was not available to inspect the sub-structure.

The fire escapes situated on each side of the building adjacent to the stage are served by flights of concrete stairs to pavement level externally.

There are a number of small rooms flanking the stage at first- and second-floor level. Two of these accommodate ventilation equipment. The rooms are concrete-framed, as elsewhere, and the structure is in fair condition.

Boiler Room and Chimney Stack

(See Photographs 82 to 84, Appendix E)

The boiler room is situated in the north-east corner of the building and accessed via a single-storey annexe from the car park at the rear. The record drawings show a flight of steps leading to a basement beneath part of the backstage area.

Access to the boiler room was prohibited due to the presence of asbestos.

The boiler room is provided with a chimney stack projecting approximately four metres above eaves level at the rear.

The chimney, which appears to be constructed in masonry, is significantly out of plumb and contains some large cracks up to approximately 20mm in width.

Ground Floor – Entrance Foyer

(See Photographs 73 to 78, Appendix E)

The entrance foyer is located above the main entrance and it is accessed by a series of terrazzo-surfaced steps. Male and female toilet areas are located to either together with access stairs to the upper floors.

Downstand beams and columns were noted throughout the area, all of which are rendered.

The stairs to the upper floors are constructed using concrete. The floor slab and stairs are surfaced in terrazzo throughout.

Ponding of water on the slab in the central section of the foyer was noted, as well as widespread damage to finishes as a result of water ingress. This area is located directly underneath the projection room (at first floor (mezzanine) level), balcony (at second floor level) and the damaged area of the main auditorium roof.

The condition of the slab and beams in this area could not be inspected further as the finishes could not be removed due to the reported potential presence of asbestos.

Except as reported above, the structure was considered to be in fair condition.

Main Auditorium

(See Photographs 79 to 81, Appendix E)

The main auditorium area at ground floor level is approximately 23 metres by 31 metres on plan (excluding the stage) but has been subdivided to include two small-screen cinemas at the rear.

The main perimeter walls comprise reinforced concrete columns and intermediate beams with infill masonry cavity wall panels. The concrete frames could not be viewed internally other than in the backstage areas due to the presence of decorative finishes.

The columns are spaced at approximately 3.9 metre centres horizontally and the beams at 2.8 metre centres vertically.

The concrete frame and walls appear to be in good condition generally. Some spalling of concrete due to corroded bars was noted externally but this was in very limited areas.

The external render was noted to be hollow in various locations but appeared to be generally in fair condition. However it should be noted that access was limited to inspect this due to the limited reach of the access platform.

The concrete frame comprising the proscenium arch was also noted to be in fair condition.

The walls forming the two small-screen cinemas are constructed in studwork to the underside of the concrete second floor balcony and are non-load-bearing.

The ground floor slab appears to be solid and ground-bearing. It is covered with carpet and/or timber flooring and therefore its condition could not be determined.

CONCLUSIONS

8.1 Preliminary Structural Survey

8.1.1 Historic Data

The cinema was purpose-built in 1939 and opened for business in 1940. It was not fully completed until 1950 (mainly in relation to the works to the façade) due to restrictions on materials imposed as a result of the Second World War. No significant structural alterations appear to have been made since construction was completed.

The cinema closed in January 1999 and has remained empty ever since.

It was Grade II listed by CADW in August 1999.

It is known that asbestos is present at a number of locations within the building.

8.1.2 Structural Form

The structural form of the building was confirmed generally as being in accordance with the available record drawings insofar as they gave details of the construction.

The three-storey accommodation at the front of the building is reinforced-concrete-framed, made up of slabs, beams and columns clad with masonry walls. The masonry walls are generally of a cavity construction.

The main auditorium is generally single-storey (but includes two-storey and three-storey areas to the front and rear) and comprises a steel-framed roof structure supported on a reinforced concrete frame. The infill perimeter walls to the sides and rear comprise rendered brickwork of cavity wall construction. Internal walls are generally of masonry construction and non load-bearing.

Ground floor slabs in all areas appear to be ground-bearing and foundations to be spread or pad type.

8.1.3 Structural Condition

Taking into account the age of the building (and subject to the noted access limitations to those parts of the structure which were either inaccessible or covered, due to the reported presence of asbestos,) the structure of the building appears to be in fair or good condition except as follows: -

a) General

The ingress of water both via the damaged main auditorium roof (significant) and via broken glass in the window to the front façade (less significant) has caused damage to finishes and is gradually causing problems with the reinforced concrete elements, particularly floor slabs and beams in the following parts of the front three-storey section of the building: -

- the balcony
- the projection room
- the entrance foyer.

Staining / rusting of reinforcing bars and spalled concrete was noted in these areas as a consequence of the water ingress.

b) Entrance Canopy

The reinforced concrete canopy over the main entrance appears generally to be in fair to good condition when viewed from below. Although water staining was noted and some spalling of concrete and corrosion of reinforcing bars, this was not extensive.

However access to inspect the top of the canopy was not possible due to the presence of the roofing membrane.

c) Boiler House

The chimney to the boiler house is in poor condition and remedial works or demolition should be carried out as a matter of some urgency.

d) External Walls

The external rendered cavity brickwork walls are generally in good condition and no significant defects were noted.

However if the external walls are to be re-used, further investigations should be carried out to confirm the presence and condition of wall ties.

e) Façade

The ceramic-tiled façade was noted to be in reasonable condition where it could be inspected. No major defects were noted other than some hairline cracking in limited areas.

However, if the façade is to be re-used, further investigations should be carried out to ensure that the ceramic tiles are adequately bonded to the walls behind and to establish the presence and condition of wall ties

Preliminary Structural Assessment Prior to Proposed Remodelling

The proposed remodelling scheme (i.e. to convert the former Plaza Cinema into a multi-purpose arts centre) illustrated on the drawings prepared by Holder Mathias Architects requires such significant alteration to the structure to the rear of the main façade (i.e. Area 2) that there appears to be little, if any, practical merit in re-using the existing structure.

Area 1 (i.e. the three-storey structure at the front of the existing building which includes the main entrance, retail units and feature façade) may be suitable for re-use and, if this is to be considered, further investigation (as detailed below) should be carried out in relation to the concrete frame, entrance canopy, external walls and façade: -

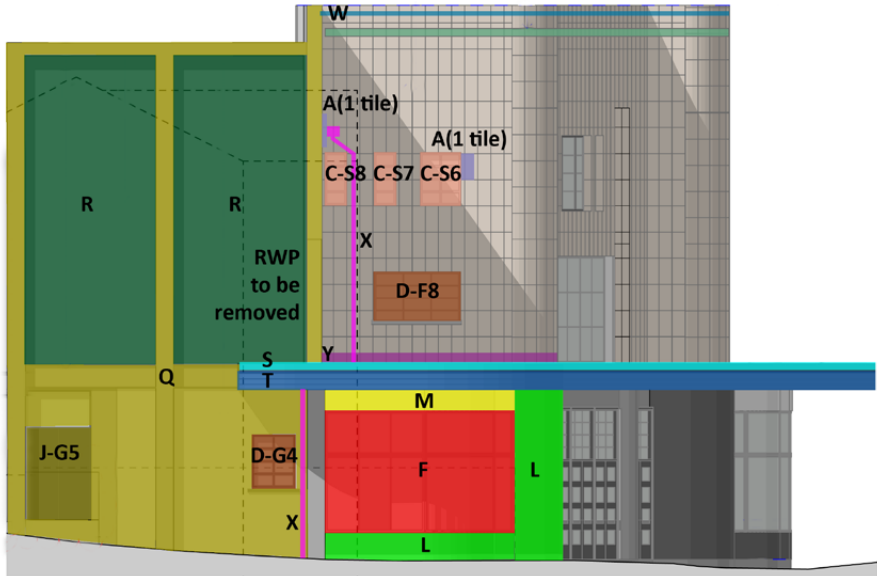
Concrete Frame

Carry out intrusive investigation to confirm its condition and to confirm member sizes and reinforcement details of any members that are to be retained.

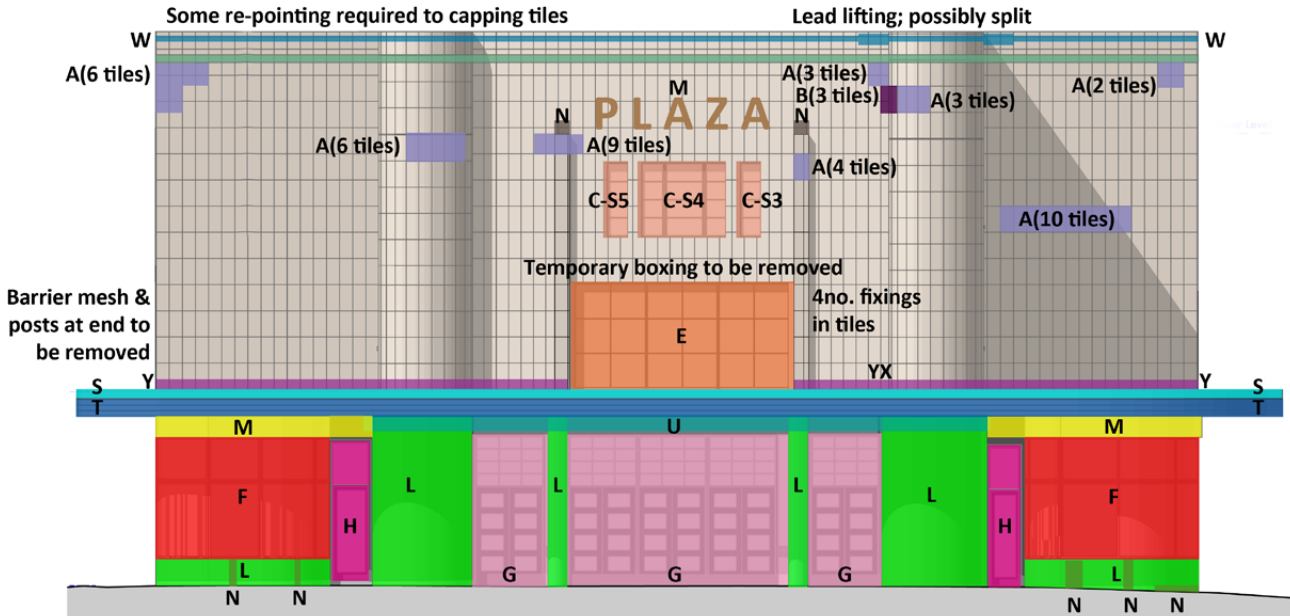
2.10.3 Existing Front Portion - Existing Elevations - General Condition & Repair Proposals

Key:

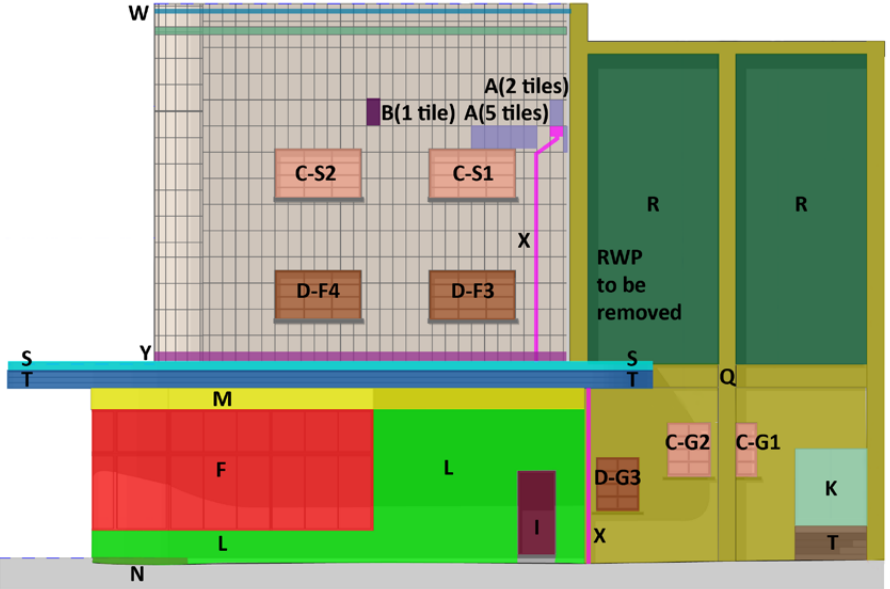
- A Cracks in Faience Tiling to be Repaired using grout injection (lime-based or epoxy or polyester resin) using a syringe & then glaze repair. Also some metal fixings to be removed & holes infilled. All faience tiling to be lightly clean using water & suitable detergent. Refer to Repair & Cleaning Specification.
- B Faience Tiles beyond repair to be Removed & Replaced, like-for-like. Minor spalling / delaminations may be gently & sensitively re-worked (by hand) using a non-hydraulic 'fat' lime putty: terracotta dust 1:3 mix & then glazed in situ. Refer to Repair & Cleaning Specification.
- C Crittall-style Windows in good condition. To be taken out, Repaired & Restored (rust abraded, filed or ground off down to bright metal), & Re-inserted, after removal of boarding. New single glazing. Colour of frame to be advised, possibly based on paint samples taken. Timber sub-cills to S3,4 & 5 to be replaced.
- D Crittall-style Windows in very poor condition. New Replica like-for-like Crittall-style Windows proposed. To match those retained in all respects. If possible, use god sections from window frames otherwise too corroded to retain & G5, F1, F5 & F10.
- E New double-glazed Window in opening. To be variant to existing Crittall-style windows, with larger pane sizes.
- F New thick single-glazed Shopfront Glazing (thickness of original), along with curved ends, within Repaired & Restored Timber frame & with Repaired & Restored rounded Bronze Cill.
- G Existing Timber-framed Glazed Entrance Doors & Overlights to be Rubbed down, Repaired & Restored. Plastic louvres & metal plates currently cover outside face of the overpanels. These are to be removed. Some glass panes are broken & require replacement. New brass art deco handles to match those lost.
- H Existing Timber Glazed Doors to Retail units, with timber-frame glazed overpanel. To be repaired & restored, like-for-like. Some new glass panes required.
- I New Steel Flood Protection Doorset within existing opening, replacing existing paneled timber door & frame. 3no. glazed over-panels within timber frame to be retained.
- J New Steel Door within existing window opening, with cill of window dropped to floor to enlargen opening. Colour to be advised.
- K New Steel Door behind steps. Colour to be advised.
- L Masonry Stall riser & Curved bays, rendered & painted black. Attempt to rub down all paintwork; repair damaged plaster, like-for-like, & re-paint, only if necessary; colour to be decided. If paintwork does not come off without damaging surface, undertake repairs & then re-paint black.
- M Reconstituted stone cladding panels to zone above openings, not painted, to be retained & repaired, as necessary. Some re-pointing (like-for-like) may be required.
- N Areas of damage to masonry requiring localised render & masonry repairs; i.e. re-bar exposed - like-for-like repairs.
- O New PLAZA sign to match original (which is damaged), using existing fixings & framework. Framework may require some local repairs.
- P New Lights on top of pilasters, uplighting sign. Existing light fittings to be removed.
- Q Existing Masonry Columns, Beams and Infill Panels to be Repaired. Existing Render to be Removed and New Render applied.
- R New Masonry Infill Panels to retained column & beam frame, Rendered to match render to existing panels.
- S Canopy Bitumen Felt Roof - in very poor condition - to be taken up & Re-applied. Dress new felt covering down front of fascia, as existing. At top / edge, form 50mm timber chamfer to drain water away from edge & back to roof.
- T Reconstitued Stone Profiled Fascia to Canopy Roof to be lightly cleaned & repaired in any areas necessary. Lead flashing below to be fully reviewed & patch repaired, if required. Joint between stone & lead to be sealed (black).
- U Metal Downstand to Canopy to be Removed & Replicated. Existing metal frame & panels severely corroded, so cannot be retained, even in part; & many panels have been replaced with board. Replication to match existing as closely as possible, in metal, painted a colour to be agreed.
- V Existing Steps to be Repaired & Restored, like-for-like.
- W Scalloped Lead Flashing. Lifting in areas. Possible splitting to be investigated. Dress back down & repair lead where damaged. To avoid damage to faience, bricks above lead course not proposed for removal, so lead cannot be checked or replaced. Capping of brickwork possible, if not exposed over faience.
- X Existing Rainwater Pipes & Hoppers to be rubbed down, any corrosion abraded off, primed & re-painted. Any damaged areas to be repaired or replaced. Lead dressing into hopper to be re-formed once roof behind is laid.
- Y Lead flashing at base of faience tiling, dressed over flat bitumen roof, damaged in areas. Removal of lead could damage faience tiling, so proposal is to dress new roof finish under lead, chased into bottom joint, & patch repair all damaged areas to lead flashing in situ. [YX = damaged to lead flsahing]



Part West Elevation



South Elevation



Part East Elevation

2.10.3.1 Examples of aspects of the Envelope requiring attention



A Cracks in Faience Tiling



A Cracks in Faience Tiling



B Faience Tiling probably needing replacement



C Crittall Window to be Retained & Restored - Window S2



D Crittall Window to be Replaced like-for-like - Window F8



E Opening to receive New Glazed Screen



F Thick Shopfront Glazing to be Replicated



G Timber-framed Entrance Doors to be Retained & Restored



H Timber-framed Shop Doors to be Retained & Restored

2.10.3.2 Examples of aspects of the Envelope requiring attention



I Existing Door to be Replaced with Steel Flood Protection Door



L Black painted Masonry Stall riser & Curved bay



N Example of Damage to Masonry



J Existing Window to be Replaced with Steel Escape Door



O PLAZA Sign



K Location of New Steel Door (highlighted in red)



M Stone Cladding above openings



P Existing Lights to be Replaced with New Lights

2.10.3.3 Examples of aspects of the Envelope requiring attention



Q Existing Masonry Columns, Beams & Infills to be Repaired



T Reconstituted Stone Profiled Fascia to Canopy with felt dressed



W Scalloped Lead Flashing at head of faience tiling



R Existing Masonry Infills to be Replaced



U Metal Downstand to Canopy to be Replicated



X Existing Rainwater Goods to be Retained & Restored



S Canopy Bitumen Roof to be Replaced



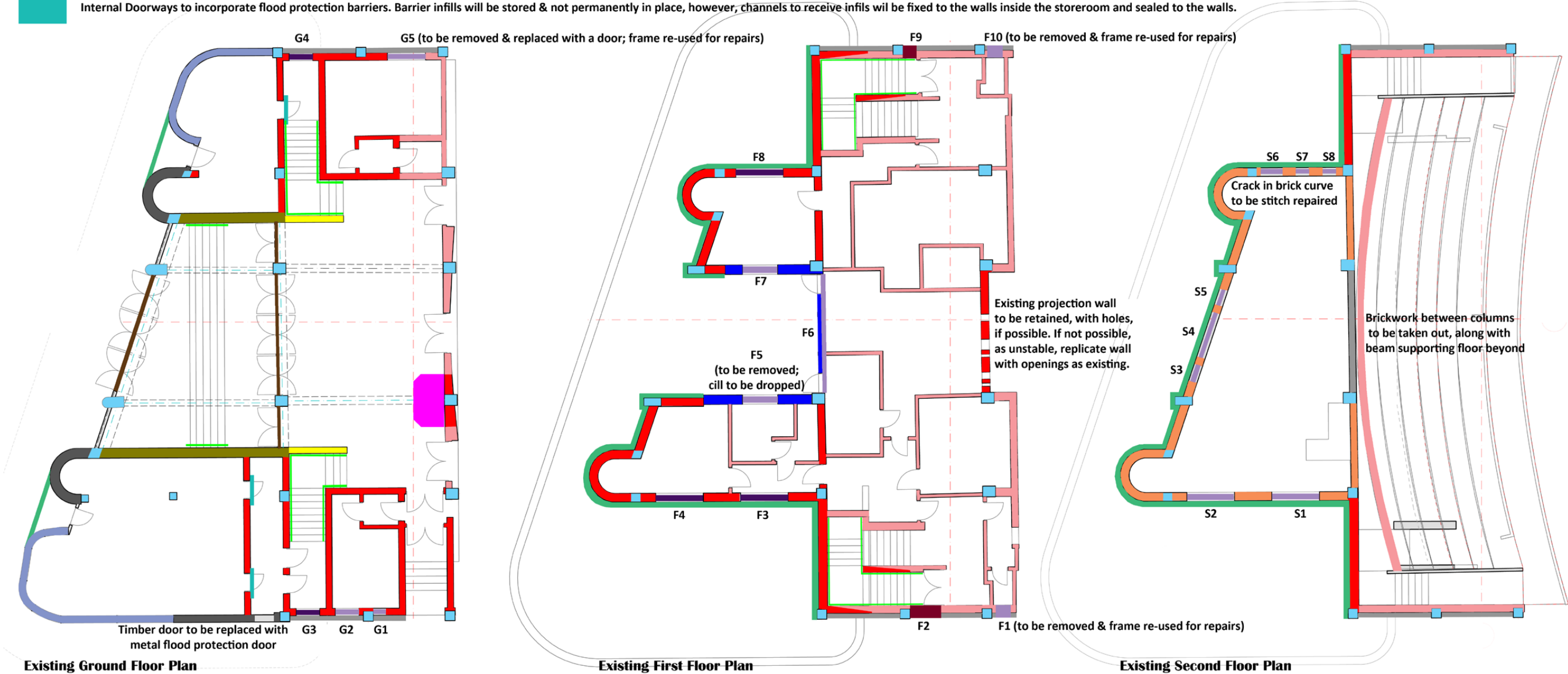
V Existing Steps to be Repaired



Y Lead Flashing at base of faience tiling

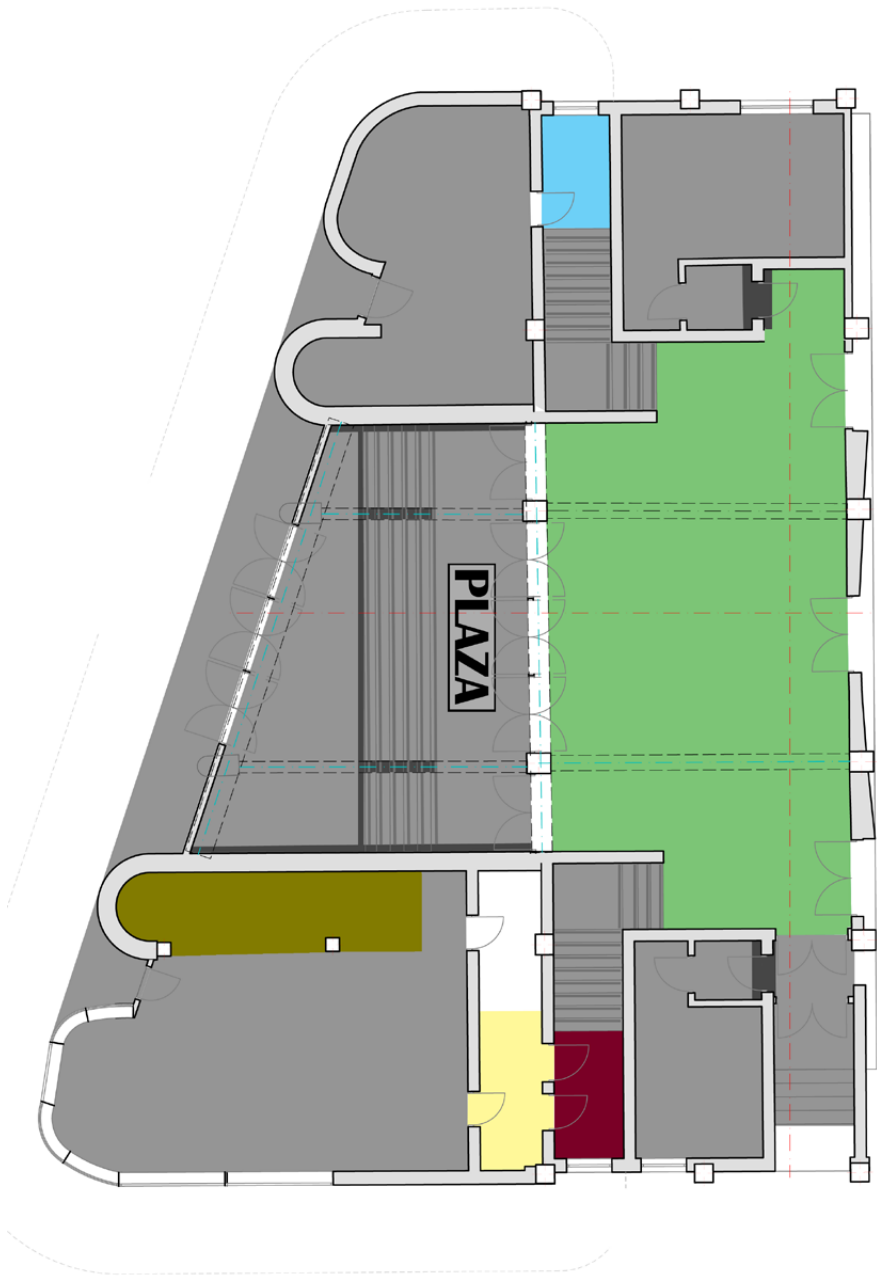
2.10.4 Existing Front Portion - Existing Wall Finishes & General Condition

- Key:
- Cream Faience Tile Cladding with eau-de-nil course near top. A number of damaged tiles (see Elevations mark-up), however all tiles remain & most are not damaged. Proposal: Localised repairs to damaged tiles, along with light clean. See Specification & Elevation mark-up.
 - Grey-painted External Render. In poor condition. Proposal: To ground floor: Removal & then re-rendering. To upper floors: Removal, along with masonry, and new render on new masonry.
 - Painted Plastered Red-orange Brickwork infill. Paint peeling in most areas. Some damage to plaster, however, generally in reasonable condition. Proposal: Retain. Rub down all paintwork; repair damaged plaster, like-for-like, & re-paint.
 - Painted Plastered Red-orange Brickwork infill. Paint peeling in most areas. Some damage to plaster, however, generally in reasonable condition. Proposal: Remove & make good at junctions with retaining fabric.
 - Painted Red-orange Brickwork infill (not plastered). Generally in reasonable condition. Proposal: Rub down all paintwork; repair any damaged brickwork & re-point, where necessary, & re-paint. Colour to be advised, but probably off-white, as existing.
 - Reinforced Concrete Frame. Proposal: Refer to Structural Engineers' specification.
 - Black-painted Render, with cut-in ashlar joints, on Brickwork forming curved walls and/or Black-painted large curved blocks. Proposal: Rub down all paintwork; repair damaged plaster, like-for-like, & re-paint, only if necessary; colour to be decided.
 - Off-white painted Render, with cut-in ashlar joints, on Brickwork and/or painted large Blocks. Render to bottom section. No skirting. Proposal: Rub down all paintwork; repair damaged plaster, like-for-like, and re-paint; colour off-white.
 - Large Reconstituted Stone Facing Blockwork with plastered brickwork backing. Stone facing to be repaired locally & lightly cleaned. Plaster to stripped, to be repaired, as required, & re-painted.
 - Curved & straight thick single-layer Glazing with horizontal joint at 3/4 height. Black-painted curved masonry stall riser at base. Slim metal grille at top; Bronze cil at bottom.. All frame black. Proposal: Rub down all paintwork; repair any damage & re-glaze.
 - Low plastered masonry walls with sloping timber capping. Timber capping continues up stair wall as profiled timber dado rail just above steel circular handrail. Proposal: Rub down paintwork; repair damaged plaster, like-for-like, & re-paint. New fire-rated glazing to be built over.
 - Hardwood-framed sets of double Doors with 5no. horizontal glass panes per door, & glazed overpanels to inner line of doors, louvre to outer line of doors. In good condition. Proposal: Local repairs; re-finishing with new/repared glass. New brass art deco handles to match those lost.
 - Existing Box Office construction to be retained & repaired.
 - Crittall Windows in good condition. To be taken out, Repaired & Restored, & Re-inserted (apart from G5, F1, F5 & F10), after removal of boarding. New single glazing. Colour of frame to be advised, possibly based on paint samples taken. Timber sub-cills to S3,4 & 5 to be replaced.
 - Crittall Windows in very poor condition. New Replica like-for-like Crittall-style Windows proposed. To match those retained in all respects. Single glazing. If possible, use good sections from window frames otherwise too corroded to retain & G5, F1, F5 & F10.
 - Glass block windows to be removed, along with wall.
 - Round Metal Stair Handrails - partly corroded - to be retained, rubbed down / abraded, made good as required & re-painted.
 - Internal Doorways to incorporate flood protection barriers. Barrier infills will be stored & not permanently in place, however, channels to receive infills will be fixed to the walls inside the storeroom and sealed to the walls.

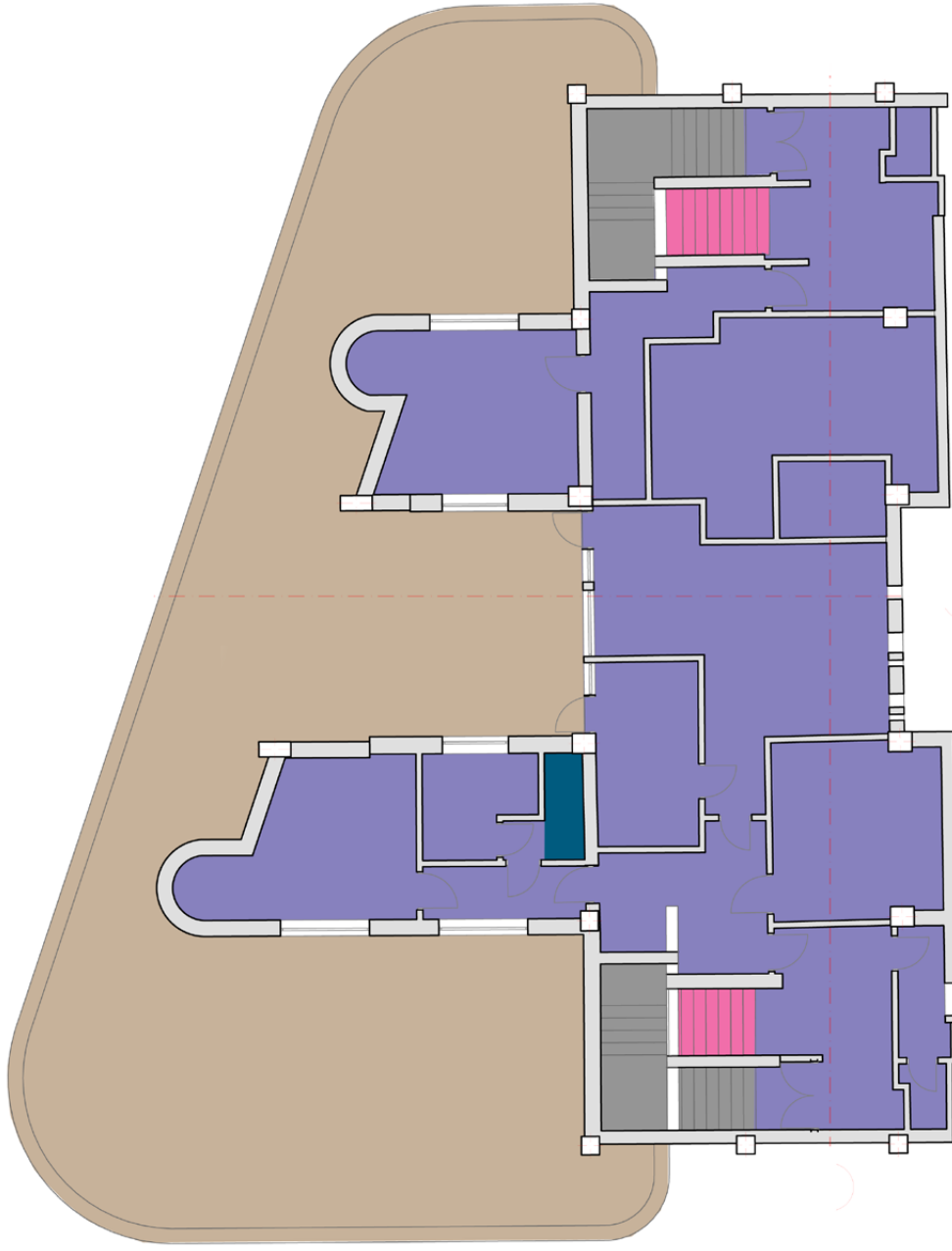


2.10.5 Existing Front Portion - Existing Floor Finishes & General Condition

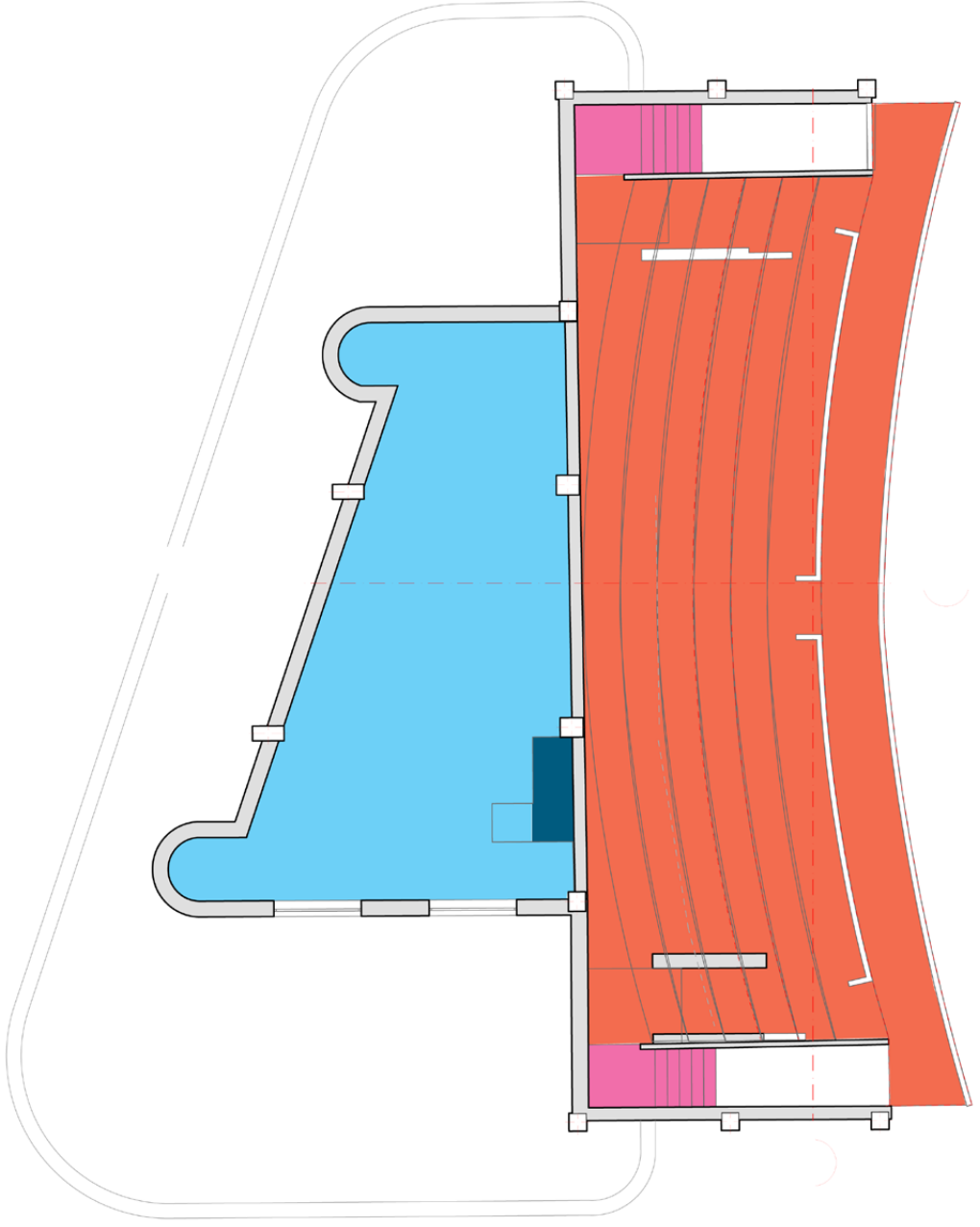
- Key:**
- Green & Yellow Terrazzo Tiles. Generally in good condition, however requires cleaning before full assessment can be made. Proposal: Joints to be re-grouted and small number of local in-situ repairs may be required, then cleaning.
 - Mid-Grey Terrazzo in large bays with dark grey band on perimeter. Generally in good condition, however requires cleaning to establish detail. Also terrazzo steps with black & white checkerplate nosings. Proposal: Local repairs & cleaning. Use off-cuts from auditorium steps for repairs.
 - 'PLAZA' lettering painted onto terrazzo, within thin black edged box with lighter grey terrazzo insert. Generally in good condition. Proposal: Requires touching up, mainly to the final 'A'.
 - Cream & Burgundy small Terracotta Tiles in checkerboard pattern. Condition appears to be reasonable. Proposal: Joints to be re-grouted and small number of local in-situ repairs may be required, then cleaning.
 - Burgundy small Terracotta Tiles. Condition appears to be reasonable. Proposal: Joints to be re-grouted and small number of local in-situ repairs may be required, then cleaning.
 - Linoleum on Raised Concrete Floor. Condition poor. Proposal: Slab to be levelled (for full accessibility). Levelling compound to be applied. New linoleum finish to be applied.
 - Timber staircases with carpetted treads & risers & pvc nosings. Generally in very poor condition. Proposal: Staircase from first to second floor to be removed & replaced with new timber staircase.
 - Carpet on Concrete Steps to auditorium. In Poor Condition. Proposal: To be fully removed.
 - Painted Concrete Floor. Small areas of spalled concrete & corroded reinforcement. Proposal: Concrete & reinforcement repairs as Structural Engineers' specification. New carpet tile flooring.
 - Uncovered Concrete Floor. Reasonable Condition. Proposal: Carpet tiles to be laid over floor, following any localised repairs.
 - Uncovered Concrete Steps. Reasonable Condition, however too steep for use. Proposal: Concrete Steps to be removed. Hole to be infilled, but railings to be retained, rubbed down & re-painted.
 - Canopy Bitumen Felt Roof. In very poor condition. Proposal: to be taken up & Re-applied. Dress new felt covering down front of fascia, as existing. At top / edge, form 50mm timber chamfer to drain water away from edge & back to roof. Area in centre to be made internal & carpetted.



Existing Ground Floor Plan



Existing First Floor Plan

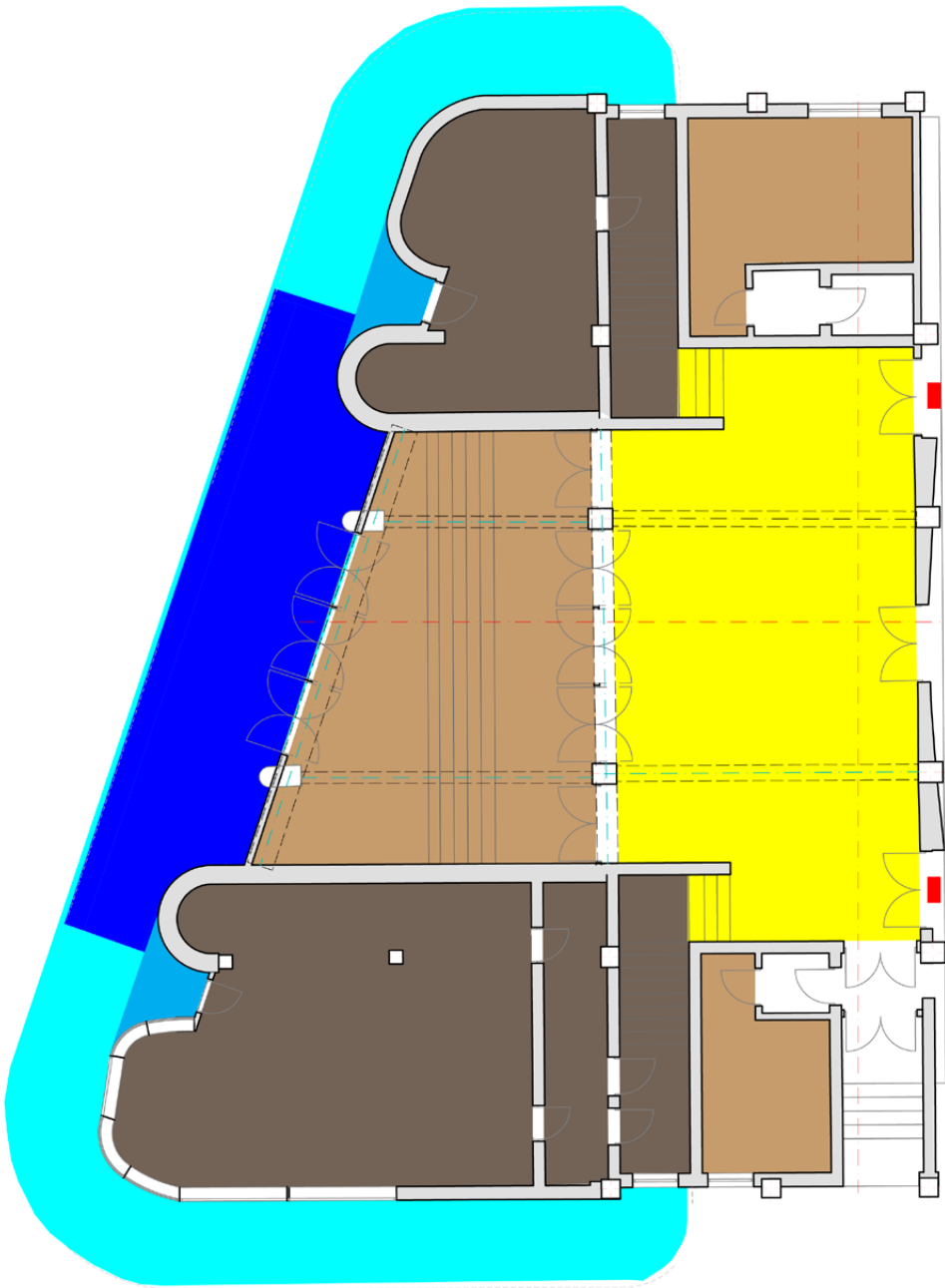


Existing Second Floor Plan

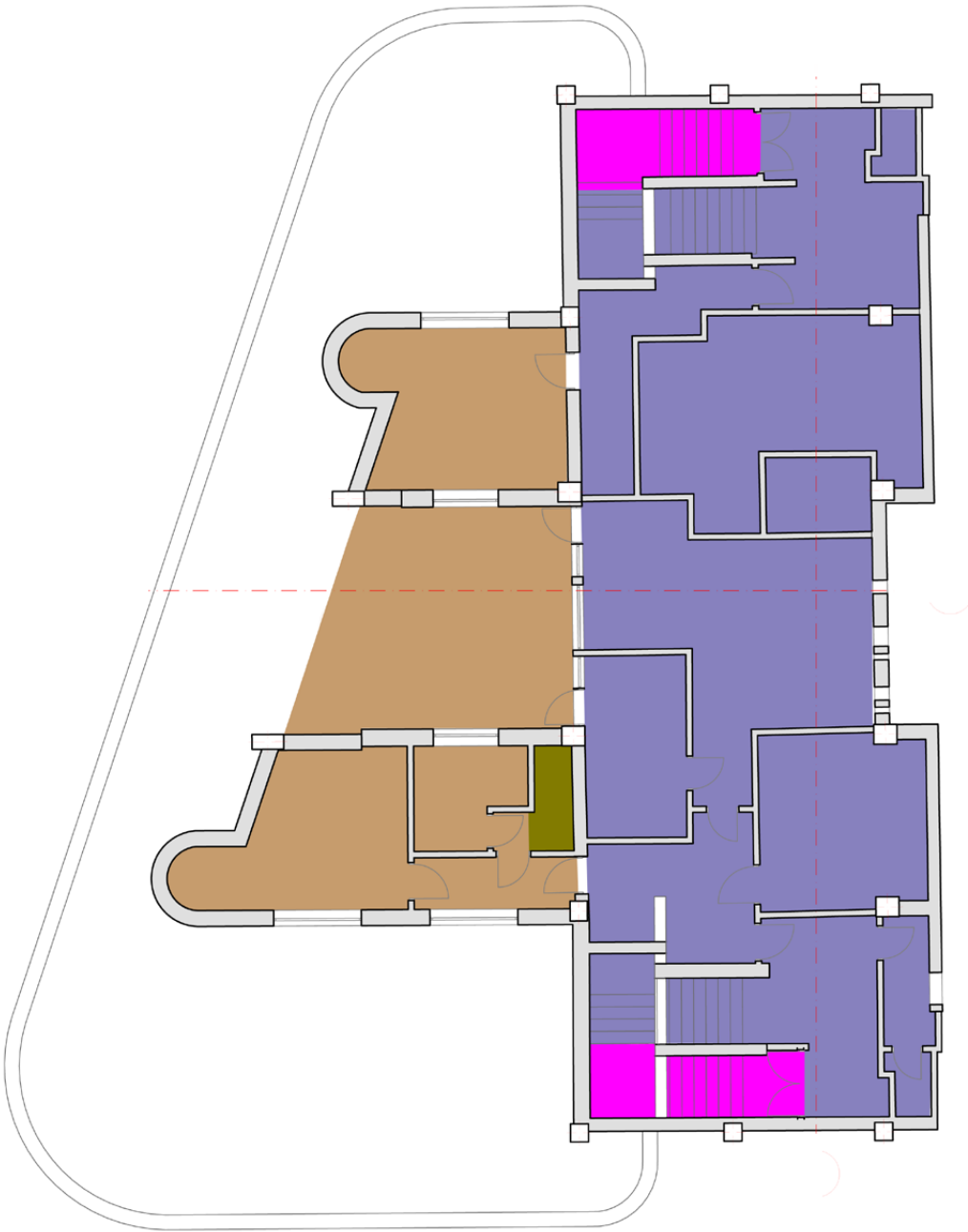
2.10.6 Existing Front Portion - Existing Ceiling Finishes & General Condition

Key:

- Painted Plastered Concrete Soffit with Decorative Yellow Chevron Cornice. In Very Poor Condition. Much plaster damage. Cornice damaged in most areas. Proposal: Rub down paintwork; Repair all plaster, like-for-like; Re-paint. Remove cornice & replicate like-for-like. Colour tba, possibly golden yellow
- Painted Plastered Concrete Soffit with no cornice. Paintwork in Very Poor Condition, and, due to water damage, Plaster & underside of Concrete now in Poor Condition. Proposal: Rub down paintwork; Repair all plaster, like-for-like; Re-paint.
- Painted Plastered Concrete Soffit with no cornice. In Extremely Poor Condition; most areas lost Plaster; many areas spalled Concrete and exposed reinforcement. Proposal: Concrete & reinforcement repairs as Structural Engineers' specification. Re-plaster throughout & paint.
- Exposed Shuttered Concrete Soffit & Beams. Generally in reasonable condition, however, one large crack & a number of areas of spalling, exposing re-bar. Proposal: Undertaken minor repairs to surface, as Structural Engineer's specification. Paint white.
- Exposed Grid Suspended Ceiling. In Poor Condition. Proposal: Remove completely.
- Metal Downstand to Canopy - in Very Poor Condition. Existing metal frame & panels severely corroded, so cannot be retained; & many panels have been replaced with board. Proposal: To be Removed & Replicated, using like-for-like detailing.
- Concrete Canopy. In Reasonable Condition, however, with areas of cracking apparent & spalling concrete, exposing re-bar.. Proposal: Undertaken necessary concrete repairs as Structural Engineers' specification..
- Underside of Concrete Pitched Seating. In Very Poor Condition, with water ingress, spalling concrete & corroded reinforcement. Proposal: To be removed. New 'ceiling' to be underside of soffit of new composite deck floor above - painted.
- Original Art Deco style 'Emergency Exit' signs to be retained, repaired & re-used, possibly in different locations. May require modern, compliant signs to be used alongside these.
- Opening in floor to be infilled with new concrete slab, once stairs have been removed.



Existing Ground Floor Plan



Existing First Floor Plan



Existing Second Floor Plan

3.0 SECTION THREE - UNDERSTANDING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE HISTORIC ASSET – ‘STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE’

3.1 An Assessment of Significance

One of the real strengths of any historic building assessment is that it focuses attentions on what is of high importance about a cultural or national asset, whilst similarly defining aspects which are of little or no importance. Thus, in planning what or how to conserve, or develop, areas around it, it is possible to make decisions based on the best possible analytical process rather than on individual preference, or some other arbitrary method.

This section of the report seeks to set out, albeit briefly, what makes the heritage asset, the Plaza, of value and should therefore be protected.

The assessment of significance has been provided to give an initial guidance on the proposals for the development.

Significance can be defined as the sum of the cultural, social and/or natural heritage values that make a building or place important to this and future generations. The aim of conservation is to sensitively manage change to a place to ensure that its significance is not only protected, but also revealed, reinforced and enhanced at every possible opportunity. It should also ensure that decisions regarding both day-to-day and long term use and management of the site take into account all of the values that contribute to a place's significance.

The purpose of a Statement of Significance is to identify the areas and aspects of the Plaza which have cultural significance. Cultural significance is a concept which helps us in estimating the value of a place and which:

- Helps us understand the past;
- Enrich our present lives;
- Will be of value to future generations.

Most historic sites or buildings are significant for a range of reasons, and it is important to understand all of its values in order that informed, balanced decisions can be made.

Many heritage values are recognised by the statutory designation and regulation of significant places. In statutory terms, the significance of the Plaza is formally recognised by its Listing. As a Grade II Listed Building, it is a building 'of special interest, warranting every effort to preserve' it, as appraised by Cadw.

However, while these designations provide baseline guidance to the significance of the Plaza, it is useful to go beyond this view to arrive at a deeper understanding of its values and significance.

Cadw's '*Conservation Principles for the sustainable management of the historic environment in Wales*' (March 2011), expands on how one can analyse the public's interest in heritage assets by sub-dividing it into evidential, historic, aesthetic and communal values. These values can be used to inform the structured and consistent assessment of buildings.

Evidential Value is deemed to derive from those elements of a historic asset that can provide evidence about past human activity, and especially its historic fabric, supported in some cases by documentation. These may be visible and relatively easy to assess, or they may be buried below ground, under water or be hidden by later fabric. These remains provide the primary evidence for when and how an historic asset was made or built, what it was used for and how it has changed over time. The unrecorded loss of historic fabric represents the destruction of the primary evidence. Additional evidential values can be gained from documentary sources, pictorial records and archaeological archives or museum collections.

All buildings — domestic, commercial, religious, industrial etc — have the capacity to provide evidence of specific past human activity from one or perhaps several periods. The extent to which they do so depends on coherence and integrity, or an intelligible development sequence. The extent of survival of original or clearly phased fabric and layout, or of detail relating to use (including internal detail) are particularly important.

Context may also be relevant: the evidential value of a single industrial or agricultural building for example will be diminished if other associated buildings have already been lost or damaged.

Historical Value is deemed to be the associative or illustrative ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present.

An historic asset might illustrate a particular aspect of past life or it might be associated with a notable family, person, event or movement. These illustrative or associative values of an historic asset may be less tangible than its evidential value but will often connect past people, events and aspects of life with the present. Of course the functions of an historic asset are likely to change over time and so the full range of changing historical values might not become clear until all the evidential values have been gathered together. Historical values are not so easily diminished by change as evidential values and are harmed only to the extent that adaptation has obliterated them or concealed them.

In practice, much of the historical value of an asset is inseparable from its evidential value — a well-preserved building can illustrate an aspect of past life much better than can a damaged or heavily altered building. But historical value may also reside in the less tangible — in associations with notable people events or movements of proven regional or national significance. As in the criteria for listing, however, these associations will be more powerful if the building as it survives directly confirms the association (i.e. is recognisably the building with which connection is claimed).

The difference between evidential value and illustrative historical value may seem difficult to define, but in general, evidential value relates to the material evidence about how a particular building or site functioned, and historical value to the capacity of that site to illustrate broader historical themes — its contribution to our understanding of aspects of past life, be they for example the organisation of society, developments in agriculture or industry, or in religious observance.

Understanding historical value therefore requires a broader understanding of the asset in context, whereas a good understanding of evidential value can be reached by close physical analysis on site.

Aesthetic Value relates to the external appearance and form of an asset and its relationship to its context and setting, be it a designed landscape, a working agricultural or industrial landscape, or a townscape. Aesthetic Value derives from the way in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from an historic asset. It may relate to conscious design or style or it may be a seemingly fortuitous outcome of the way in which an historic asset has evolved and been used over time, or a combination of both. It may relate to adherence to tradition, to quality of craftsmanship or technology of construction, or it may reflect the results of development over time.

High-quality conscious design — so-called ‘polite architecture’ often associated with named architects — and vernacular building according to clear regional traditions (and perhaps unconscious design), have their own aesthetic codes. But for both, composition, plan, method of construction, materials, finish and detail — including interior detail — are the essential elements of design.

The form of an asset normally changes over time. Sometimes earlier pictorial records and written descriptions will be more powerful in many people’s minds than what survives today. Some important viewpoints may be lost or screened, or access to them may be temporarily denied. To assess this aspect of an asset, again the evidence of the present and past form must be gathered systematically. This needs to be complemented by a thorough appreciation on site of the external appearance of an asset in its setting. Inevitably understanding the aesthetic value of an historic asset will be more subjective than the study of its evidential and historical values. Much of it will involve trying to express the aesthetic qualities or the relative value of different parts of its form or design.

Communal Value derives from the meanings that an asset has for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory. It includes social and economic value, as well as commemorative, spiritual or symbolic value.

It is closely linked to historical and aesthetic values but tends to have additional or specific aspects. Communal value might be commemorative or symbolic. For example, people might draw part of their identity or collective memory from an historic asset, or have emotional links to it. Such values often change over time and they may be important for remembering both positive and uncomfortable events, attitudes or periods in Wales’ history. Historic assets can also have social value, acting as a source of social interaction, distinctiveness or coherence; economic value, providing a valuable source of income or employment; or they may have spiritual value, emanating from religious beliefs or modern perceptions of the spirit of a place.

Each of these elements will be dealt with below.

The significance of a place is the sum of these values, brought together and expressed in a statement of significance. This statement forms the foundation upon which any proposals for change and enhancement of a place can be considered and carried forward.

In order to identify the relative contributions that these values make to the significance of a place and therefore the capacity for these values to be revealed and/or enhanced, a range of classifications are used.

For the purpose of this study we have adopted a fairly standard classification using five levels of significance, which are sufficient to measure each aspect of significance and to compare it to others consistently.

High: An aspect of value that strongly contributes to the significance of a place, forming a key piece of its history and cultural value which may be of national or international importance. In material terms, these aspects will best contribute towards the heritage values. Conservation will be a priority, and alteration is likely to be resisted unless it is demonstrated that significance will be greatly enhanced, reinforced or revealed as a result.

Medium: An aspect of value that will have some cultural importance (perhaps on a regional scale) and will make a moderate contribution to the significance of a place. In material terms they will play an important role in conveying the heritage values. Efforts should be made to protect and enhance these aspects, though a greater degree of flexibility is possible than with aspects of high value.

Low: An aspect of value that will make a slight (yet still noteworthy) contribution to the significance of a place, but perhaps only on a local scale. In material terms it will still add something to the heritage values (such as helping to maintain plan form and historic character), although this contribution may have been compromised by loss or uninformed intervention. A greater capacity for enhancement exists than for items of medium or high value, although a low designation does not necessarily mean that the feature is expendable.

Neutral: An aspect that has no discernible value that neither adds to nor detracts from the significance of the place. Informed change will be acceptable.

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 strongly encouraged.

3.2 Historical Value

Historical Value is deemed to be the associative or illustrative ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present. It relates to the capacity of the site to illustrate broad historical themes — i.e. its contribution to our understanding of aspects of past life. The Plaza is an excellent example of both illustrative and associative historical value.

Port Talbot is a town best known for industry – primarily for its Steelworks and its Docks. Despite the demise of this once life-blood of the town, it will, for a very long time, be associated thus. This is an essential part of the historical significance of the town.

The Plaza Cinema sits within a part of the town which was the railway crossroads at a time when coal, copper, tin, iron, steel and people will have been transported backwards and forwards in huge volumes. Coal, and other materials, from further inland, will have been off-loaded by the tonne on the site of the Plaza and taken to the steelworks and the docks.

However, Port Talbot also has a long and distinguished history of culture and invention. As local comedian, Rob Brydon, jokingly said in 2010 in his BBC television series ‘The Trip’ “You’ve got Hopkins, me, Richard Burton and Sheen. The Port Talbot four. That’s what we’re known as.” He may have been joking, but Port Talbot is not only synonymous with the steel industry, but as the ‘actors’ capital of Wales’. Richard Burton, Anthony Hopkins and Michael Sheen, along with Rob Brydon, and the operatic soprano Rebecca Evans, head a list of world-renowned performers who came from the area, and who have retained a personal connection with the town.

And, whilst such associations for a town might not always be direct associations to a building, for the Plaza, these associations do extend to the building. Each of these performers has actively reminisced about how the Plaza was a pertinent part of their respective upbringings.

The opening of the Plaza is documented in Richard Burton’s diary for Monday, 25th March 1940 as follows “Went down to Uncle Ben’s this morning to fetch stones for the cement bed. Dilwyn came with me. Went to Majestic to see ‘King of the River’. Plaza opened today and it was all crowded out”. Although the Plaza was so busy on opening night that Richard Burton went elsewhere, his diary shows he made it to the Plaza later that year to see George Formby in ‘Come on George’.

Anthony Hopkins’ childhood memories of the Plaza inspired his classical musical composition ‘1947 – The Plaza’ which was his homage to the Port Talbot cinema that used to transport him to another world, stating that “On Friday nights we’d go to the pictures. I loved the pictures. Sometimes the Majestic in Bethany Square or the Regent in Taibach but the Plaza was the place to go.”

Martin Sheen made a BBC Radio 4 documentary entitled ‘Port Talbot Paradiso’, in which Rob Brydon also featured heavily, talking about his memories of the Plaza and how his parents supposedly met at the Italian café on the corner of the Plaza which he described as “a veritable hotbed for the courting couples of Port Talbot in the post war era”.

Martin Sheen’s production of ‘The Passion’ in 2011 through Port Talbot, in which he also starred, was ‘announced’ on the front of the derelict Plaza. In ‘Port Talbot Paradiso’, Sheen said there was only one place to announce the start of The Passion in 2011 and that was on the side of the Plaza. Forty days before the performance, the words “It has begun” were painted onto the wooden boarding in big white and red letters on a black background. At the same time, artwork was painted onto the wooden boards surrounding the derelict Plaza with images of Richard Burton, Anthony Hopkins and Michael Sheen painted there together with daffodils, the national symbol of Wales.

Operatic soprano Rebecca Evans says in ‘Port Talbot Paradiso’ that her aunt had spoken of a formidable lady called Madame Miriam Joseph James who would put on evenings of song and dance during the film intervals and that she had a brother, Jacky Jones, with a band that would play there too. She also recalls seeing ‘Jaws’ and ‘Grease’ at the Plaza, admitting to knowing all the words to Grease and dancing and singing along to the film in the Plaza, whilst Michael Sheen recalls people queuing round the block and all the way down Station Road to see ‘Star Wars’ there.

Cinema-going, and the gleaning of news, was an enormous part of the lives of people of all ages through the 1930s, 40s and 50s. With the growing popularity of television, cinema still had its part to play in the 1950s and 60s showing live entertainment as well as cinema, with the opportunity to see the best known names of the age; and, whilst less frequented in the 1970s and 1980s, blockbuster movies continued to draw people to the cinema, as it would be some time before these films would appear on the television, or even video. Everyone has their memories of visits to the cinema and only a few are referred to above.

The Art Deco architectural style - characterised by clean lines, bold shapes, colour, geometric designs and decoration - became a favourite for building types associated with the modern age of the 1930s, particularly with cinemas, a new building type celebrating a new phenomenon. There were overlaps with the Modernist style, with the use of clean lines and minimal decoration; a style which also leant itself well to buildings associated with entertainment, providing glamorous interiors for theatres, cinemas, hotels, restaurants and luxury apartments. Described in the listing as “Modernist style with Art Deco influences”, the Plaza Cinema in Port Talbot is a very clear illustration of the Art Deco and Modernist architectural styles which were used across the UK and the world, with its clean and sweeping lines and streamlined and bold, curving shapes; its curved canopy; its faience tiling and Crittall-style windows; its colour scheme of cream and eau de nil green; its terrazzo flooring, black and white checkerplate tiles and linoleum flooring; its chevron / zigzag geometric decoration to the foyer cornice; its bold signage; and its Britannic Bold font lettering.

Indeed, whilst the Plaza was built for the independent Cardiff syndicate, its design is synonymous with that of the ‘house style’ of the vast network of Odeon cinemas in the 1930s, a chain founded by Oscar Deutsch (1893-1941) in Birmingham in 1930, which usually included soaring towers and fins; dynamic, curved canopies; facades clad in black and buff-coloured faience pierced with horizontal bands of coloured faience; curved and semi-circular wings; Crittall steel windows; and extensive use of neon lighting.

Of note is the fact that the Plaza is one of only six remaining cinemas for the Art Deco period on the 1920s and 1930s which have survived throughout Wales; the other surviving cinemas are the former Odeons at Llanelli, Newport and Rhyl, the Plaza in Flint and the Palace in Conwy.

A well-preserved building can illustrate an aspect of past life much better than can a damaged or heavily altered building. The Plaza’s relatively unaltered form, layout and decoration, aside from the insertion of two cinemas in the rear stalls area, is largely unaltered.

The part that the Plaza played in the lives the people of Port Talbot between 1939 and 1999 is considerable. It is both illustrative of, and associative with, the way people spent their leisure time for 60 years. It illustrates a pastime which is still very relevant to today, and is indeed the precursor to so much of our modern leisure activity – watching television and online entertainment, keeping up with the news, and meeting up with friends - however, it illustrates a very different way of doing so to now.

The fact that the Plaza retains so much of the provision and character which it had 80 years ago, and through its 60 year working life, simple adds to its historical value.

It is this level of preservation, when so many of these early cinemas no longer exist; its illustration of, and contribution to our understanding of, such a prominent part of past life; its prominence within the town; and its association with such prominent names as Burton, Hopkins, Sheen, Brydon and Evans; which affords the Plaza Medium Historical Value. This is because it forms a key piece of the history and cultural value of the area, however, one which is more of local and regional importance than of national importance.

This means that, whilst efforts should be made to protect and enhance those aspects which afford this level of historical value - and any project should encourage the interpretation of its history and heritage – a greater degree of flexibility is possible with changes to the fabric than with aspects of high value. In materials terms, this might suggest that the building’s art deco frontage and its foyer would be the more resistant to loss or change, whilst the rear auditorium could possibly accommodate change or loss.

3.3 Evidential Value

Insofar as Evidential Value is deemed to derive from those elements of an historic asset that can provide evidence about past human activity, and especially its historic fabric, the Plaza provides considerable evidence from 60 years of human activity.

As stated under ‘historical value’, the Plaza retains much of the provision and character which it had 80 years ago, when it was built, and through its 60 year working life. It is extremely well-preserved, with few major alterations evident from its inception. The next series of paragraphs backs up this claim.

Photographs of the frontage of the Plaza onto Talbot Road from 1948 and 1950, suggest that the form of the building from its construction date of 1939, and the treatment of the frontage, from its completion date of 1950, are very much as we see today. Whilst it is of for this main body is much as it is today, suggesting that the slightly strange lean-to section of the roof to the north end is likely to have been original and not an alteration.

The article in the Port Talbot Guardian on Friday, 22nd March 1940, after its opening night, stated that “the building . . . has the main façade carried out in reconstructed stone”, albeit a finish which was covered up on the upper two floors in 1950. It went on to state that “the main entrance is approached by a loggia flanked by two lock-up shops. After passing through the main entrance doors there is a spacious foyer complete with kiosk”. This is still very much as it is now.

The article then stated that “the foyer, tastefully decorated in various shades, with fibrous plaster enrichments in gold and green”. This reference to the “with fibrous plaster enrichments in gold and green” is interesting, as these enrichments are currently golden yellow, however, were, at some point burgundy red. The terrazzo tiles to the foyer, and of course the faience tiling, were both cream and green, so this ‘gold and green’ will be continued the general colour theme.

The article then stated that “the foyer . . . has two staircases leading to the balcony, and three double entrance doors to auditorium. Cloak rooms and lavatories are arranged under the balcony staircases and entered from the foyer”. Again this layout is as it is today, with the two staircases, three double doors and lavatories under the stairs. However, one point of interest relates to my comment under ‘Character, Architectural Design and Materials of the Albert Hall and Changes it underwent’ where I stated that “from the first floor, the staircases rise again, this time to the back of the upper tier balcony to the large cinema space. Here the seating remains, in its curved form, with a curved back wall of brick. It is of interest that these stairs are not of terrazzo, but finished in carpet, and the staircases both sides appear to pass through the middle of what appears to have once been a window opening, but is now blocked up. This leads on to assume that the first to second floor staircases are not original and were added in at a later time. How the balcony would have been accessed prior to this is not yet known”.

During the soft strip of the staircase, this will require a further review – are the stairs original? If so, was there actually a window at the location of the physical staircase? Or, were there different stairs which have been replaced and re-aligned?

The article went on to state that “The floors of auditorium and balcony are finished in oregon pine flooring laid in mastic, and with boards secret nailed, and five frame Wilton carpet is laid to all gangways. The proscenium and window curtains are in velour of a petunia shade with satin screen curtain in old gold, and the seats are covered in moquette of a green shade. The interior decorations are treated to harmonise with the furnishings. A car park has been provided for the convenience of patrons. The frame work, staircases, floors, balcony and flat roofs are constructed in reinforced concrete, with wall panels in 1 in. cavity brickwork between piers and beams; while the roof is carried by steel trusses and covered with asbestos sheets, with concrete flat roof to main entrance and shops. The operator’s box and staff rooms are over the foyer and under the balcony: the placing of the box in this position gives a horizontal throw of the picture on to the screen and obviates distortion.” Again, much of this is as we still have it.

Even the lettering on the foyer floor spelling out ‘PLAZA’ in Britannic Bold font lettering, synonymous with the art deco period, appears to be original; and, whilst slightly damaged, it remains almost intact.

The Plaza has, as one would expect, undergone some change. In 1988, the single-screen cinema was converted into a multi-screen operation, with the stalls converted into three separate screens with a fourth screen in the circle. This meant the insertion of acoustic partitioning to form the individual cinemas. Since its closure in 1999, and possible before 1999, many window and door openings have been blocked up. However, this is both relatively minor and reversible change.

Where additional evidential values can be gained from documentary sources and pictorial records, there have been a few documentaries produced, not least a long two-parter entitled ‘Road to Plaza Cinema Port Talbot’, produced for the BBC, which charted the period between 1985 and 1999, when Alex Jones (in 1985 a 20-year-old ex-projectionist) bought the Plaza and regenerated it. Along with the video footage, there are also a number of photographs of the exterior and interior from this period. However, very few photographs, and no drawings, have been discovered from prior to the mid-1980s.

Also, in 2011 Michael Sheen made ‘Port Talbot Paradiso’, a nostalgic documentary for Radio 4, which, whilst radio, draws upon a number of people’s memories of the cinema in its hey-day, rather more than its fabric.

Insofar as evidential value and/or archaeology may be buried below ground, it is possible that there are remnants of the railway structures which used to occupy the site, not least as much of the ground floor is raised above the ground outside. This is unlikely to be of considerable value, as there has never been any sign of a building on the site, but simply the end of railway lines.

Insofar as evidential value may be hidden by later fabric, this is unlikely as almost all of the fabric appears to be original and, therefore, not hidden by newer fabric, apart from the partitions to the cinema screen within the rear section of the stalls.

Context may also be relevant - the evidential value of a single industrial or agricultural building for example will be diminished if other associated buildings have already been lost or damaged. The streetscape / urban context is fairly consistent with the 1939 streetscape, which means that the way the focal frontage and the less architecturally interesting side and rear elevations relate to their surroundings now is similar to how they did in 1939, however, the nature of the buildings has changed considerably. However, whilst there remains the core of Victorian and Edwardian hotels and residential terraces and the one other listed building in the area (the grade II listed Grove Place Chapel, built in 1904, albeit listed principally for its interior), the architecture of the area is a rather varied, with many more recent inclusions to the streetscene, and with the Plaza as the one Art Deco style building in the area. This and the fact that the Plaza appears to have always been the only building of its style in the area, means that context will not have a huge bearing on the evidential value of the Plaza.

Given the intactness of the original building, the Plaza’s evidential value might be deemed to be high, however, as evidential value is deemed to derive from those elements of an historic asset that can provide evidence about past human activity, it is arguable that the 1940s-1990s is recent enough for a considerable amount of other evidence – be it photography, film or memories – to still be available. As a result, the Plaza is deemed to have Medium Evidential Value.

As with its historical value, this means that, whilst efforts should be made to protect and enhance those aspects which afford this level of evidential value, a greater degree of flexibility is possible with changes to the fabric than with aspects of high value.

3.3.1 Photographs of the Interior from the 1980s and 1990s

On this page are a series of photographs from the mid to late 1980s and the 1990s of the interior of the Plaza in use, when it had been re-opened and run as a family business, led by Alex Jones. The photographs are reproduced courtesy of the Port Talbot Historical Society.



3.4 Aesthetic Value

Aesthetic Value relates to the external appearance and form of a heritage asset. In this respect, the Plaza has considerable aesthetic value.

It epitomises the Modernist Art Deco design aesthetic which was so celebrated in the emerging Cinema tradition; an aesthetic which was hugely popular in the 1930s and appears to have retained that level of popularity in the 90 years since.

Indeed, whilst the Plaza was built for the independent Cardiff syndicate, its design is synonymous with that of the 'house style' of the vast network of Odeon cinemas in the 1930s, a chain founded by Oscar Deutsch (1893-1941) in Birmingham in 1930, which usually included soaring towers and fins; dynamic, curved canopies; facades clad in black and buff-coloured faience pierced with horizontal bands of coloured faience; curved and semi-circular wings; Crittall steel windows; and extensive use of neon lighting.

As the listing states, the Plaza is listed "as a very rare example in Wales of a building type which expresses the distinctive architectural vocabulary of 1930s cinema architecture".

The Plaza displays all of the Art Deco characteristics of clean and sweeping lines; streamlined and bold shapes; colour; geometric designs and decoration.

It incorporates so many of the well-known Art Deco features and materiality, such as faience tiling; Crittall-style steel windows; curved-fronted turrets and retail units and curved canopy; a cream and eau de nil green colour scheme; black and white checkerplate floor tiles; chevron / zigzag geometric decoration to the foyer cornice; linoleum flooring; and the Britannic Bold font lettering, synonymous with the art deco period, on the foyer floor spelling out 'PLAZA'.

Aesthetic Value derives from either conscious design or style or the seemingly fortuitous outcome of the way in which an historic asset has evolved and been used over time, or a combination of both. The Plaza is a very interesting representation of conscious design.

Aesthetic Value also relates to the building's relationship to its context and setting. The value of the Plaza's setting is also considerable, as it can be seen down the streets from all directions and, to an extent, further afield. It can be seen from the train, as it passes between east and west Wales. This setting has not changed much, in terms of urban grain and streetscape, although its neighbours have changed over the years. However, its lack of use and activity and its derelict and deteriorating condition are beginning to make it look more of a 'blot' on the streetscape than the lively presence it once had.

However, Aesthetic Value also derives from the way in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from it, and the response by the local community to its deterioration over the last 20 years suggests that there it still stirs some considerable emotion. In the form of sensory stimulation, the Plaza was clearly once a celebrated and very popular icon of the town and many people have many experiences of visiting it and passing it. In the form of intellectual stimulation, its Art Deco style and motifs are of considerable interest and the knowledge of those famous sons and daughters of the area who once held it, and still do, to their hearts, it rather warming.

Of course, a well-preserved building, still intact, in its original form, and largely unaltered will hold more aesthetic value than one which is not. The Plaza is principally intact, in its original form, and largely unaltered, which does add to its aesthetic value. However, it is in a very poor state of repair, particularly in the main body of the auditorium where a large hole in the roof has resulted in major deterioration beneath it, which has an extremely negative impact on its aesthetic value.

The Plaza's iconic frontage affords it considerable aesthetic value; its conscious Art Deco style and its use of such well-known Art Deco characteristics and features; its prominence within its setting; the love and sensory stimulation it draws from the people of the area; and the fact that it remains almost as it was when it was originally built all imbue considerable aesthetic value.



The Plaza frontage in 1981 in its colourful glory - green window frames and red sign and canopy underside (source: walesonline)

However, its 20 years' dereliction and the resultant condition it finds itself in reduces that value somewhat. Also, whilst the front third is so iconic and of high design quality, the rear two thirds, with its roughcast rendered monolithic elevations with blocked up openings and deteriorating roof, is much less appealing, even unattractive.

As a result, the Plaza is considered to have Medium Aesthetic Value, principally because of its frontage. This means that, whilst efforts should be made to protect and enhance it, some degree of flexibility is possible with changes to the fabric, not least in order to ensure that the building is brought back into viable and sustainable re-use, even if this necessitated adaptation. The assessment might suggest that the building's art deco frontage and its foyer - which are in a reasonable condition - would be the more resistant to loss or change, whilst the rear auditorium - which is in a poor condition - could possibly accommodate change or loss.

Indeed, reference is made to the 2012 Condition Assessment of the Plaza from James & Nicholas Structural Engineers (particularly the summary on page 50 of this Heritage Impact Statement (HIS)) and the 2017 Condition Assessment from Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council (particularly the summary on page 44 of the HIS), which states, of the rear section, that "the whole area is in a very poor state of repair and looks to have deteriorated further since the 2012 inspection. It is recommended this portion of the building is deemed potentially dangerous...". This being said, the rear portion of the building - which houses the auditorium - contains some surviving features from the period of its construction, such as the art deco emergency exit signs, which should be found a home in the adapted building, whilst other aspects, such as sections of the terrazzo steps either side of the stage, could be re-used to undertake like-for-like repairs to the front portion of the building.



A recent photo of the Plaza frontage shows that, despite its dereliction, it retains the iconic Art Deco forms, lines & features

3.5 Communal Value

Communal Value derives from the meanings that an asset has for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory. It includes social and economic value, as well as commemorative, spiritual or symbolic value.

The Plaza figures in the memories of almost everyone who lived in and around Port Talbot between 1939 and 1999. Cinema-going, and the gleaning of news, was an enormous part of the lives of people of all ages through the 1930s, 40s and 50s. With the growing popularity of television, cinema still had its part to play in the 1950s and 60s showing live entertainment as well as cinema, with the opportunity to see the best known names of the age; and, whilst less frequented in the 1970s and 1980s, blockbuster movies continued to draw people to the cinema, as it would be some time before these films would appear on the television, or even video. Everyone has their memories of visits to the cinema, particularly insofar as they were the primary means of entertainment for many, and were frequently in large numbers with great regularity. The Plaza was one such cinema, with the 1,500 seat capacity met regularly.

Some considerable press attention and community website activity has focussed on the Plaza, all seeking to encourage its restoration and/or re-use, including the Port Talbot Historical Society and the 'Cinema Treasures' website.

It has also been the subject of written, recorded and filmed reminiscences for many years from many people, some of which are particularly well-known and influential.

The opening of the Plaza is documented in Richard Burton's diary for Monday, 25th March 1940 as follows "Went down to Uncle Ben's this morning to fetch stones for the cement bed. Dilwyn came with me. Went to Majestic to see 'King of the River'. Plaza opened today and it was all crowded out". Although the Plaza was so busy on opening night that Richard Burton went elsewhere, his diary shows he made it to the Plaza later that year to see George Formby in 'Come on George'.

Anthony Hopkins' childhood memories of the Plaza inspired his classical musical composition '1947 – The Plaza' which was his homage to the Port Talbot cinema that used to transport him to another world, stating that "On Friday nights we'd go to the pictures. I loved the pictures. Sometimes the Majestic in Bethany Square or the Regent in Taibach but the Plaza was the place to go."

Martin Sheen made a BBC Radio 4 documentary entitled 'Port Talbot Paradiso', in which Rob Brydon also featured heavily, talking about his memories of the Plaza and how his parents supposedly met at the Italian café on the corner of the Plaza which he described as "a veritable hotbed for the courting couples of Port Talbot in the post war era".

Martin Sheen's production of 'The Passion' in 2011 through Port Talbot, in which he also starred, was 'announced' on the front of the derelict Plaza. In 'Port Talbot Paradiso', Sheen said there was only one place to announce the start of The Passion in 2011 and that was on the side of the Plaza. Forty days before the performance, the words "It has begun" were painted onto the wooden boarding in big white and red letters on a black background. At the same time, artwork was painted onto the wooden boards surrounding the derelict Plaza with images of Richard Burton, Anthony Hopkins and Michael Sheen painted there together with daffodils, the national symbol of Wales.

Operatic soprano Rebecca Evans says in 'Port Talbot Paradiso' that her aunt had spoken of a formidable lady called Madame Miriam Joseph James who would put on evenings of song and dance during the film intervals and that she had a brother, Jacky Jones, with a band that would play there too. She also recalls seeing 'Jaws' and 'Grease' at the Plaza, admitting to knowing all the words to Grease and dancing and singing along to the film in the Plaza, whilst Michael Sheen recalls people queuing round the block and all the way down Station Road to see 'Star Wars' there.

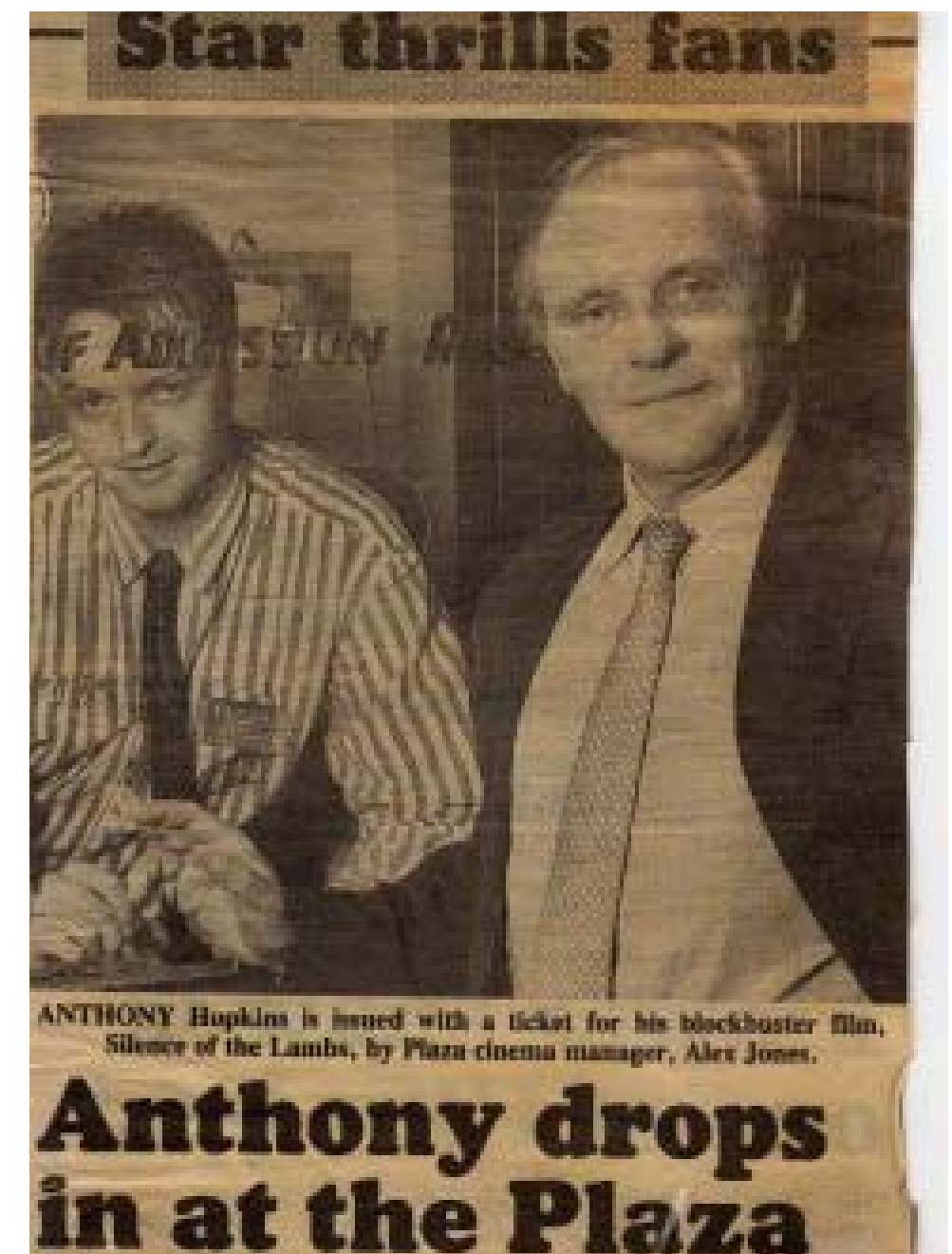
A long two-part documentary was produced for the BBC, entitled 'Road to Plaza Cinema Port Talbot', charting the period between 1985 and 1999, when Alex Jones (in 1985 a 20-year-old ex-projectionist) bought the Plaza and regenerated it. Along with the video footage, there are also a number of photographs of the exterior and interior from this period.

Insofar as communal value includes social and economic value, as well as commemorative, spiritual or symbolic value, the Plaza held enormous social value, as the social hub of the area for a number of decades; considerable economic value, as an employer and place of economic activity; and was a source of commemorative, spiritual and symbolic value during the second world war, when the Plaza was where people would go to glean news about the progress of the war.

Communal value is closely linked to historical value, in the way that it acts as a source of social interaction. In the section on historical value, it was stated that the Plaza's level of preservation, when so many of these early cinemas no longer exist; its illustration of, and contribution to our understanding of, such a prominent part of past life; its prominence within the town; and its association with such prominent names as Burton, Hopkins, Sheen, Brydon and Evans; affords it medium historical value.

Communal value is also closely linked to aesthetic value and the way in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from it. In the section on aesthetic value, it was stated that the Plaza's iconic frontage affords it considerable aesthetic value; its conscious Art Deco style and its use of such well-known Art Deco characteristics and features; its prominence within its setting; the love and sensory stimulation it draws from the people of the area; and the fact that it remains almost as it was when it was originally built all imbue considerable aesthetic value. However, its 20 years' dereliction and the resultant condition it finds itself in reduces that value somewhat.

It is the host of memories which it holds, some of which are recorded, some from extremely well-known figures from the area; the communal love for the building; and its source of social interaction which afford the Plaza Medium Communal Value, however, this value is slowly ebbing away as the building further deteriorates.



*Anthony Hopkins visits the Plaza around 1991
(source: Port Talbot Historical Society)*

3.6 Overall Heritage Value

In summary, the Plaza is considered to be of regional importance, however not of national importance. It is, therefore, deemed to have Medium Heritage Value, representing an aspect of value that will have some cultural importance which makes a moderate contribution to the significance of its place.

Its values are equally shared between historical, evidential, aesthetic and communal derivations.

In material terms it plays an important role in conveying the heritage values of the area (such as helping to maintain historical representation and historical character), however this contribution has been compromised by its 20-year dereliction.

This means that, whilst efforts should be made to protect and enhance the asset, some degree of flexibility is possible with changes to the fabric, not least in order to ensure that the building is brought back into viable and sustainable re-use, even if this necessitated adaptation. The assessment might suggest that the building's art deco frontage and its foyer would be the more resistant to loss or change, whilst the rear auditorium could possibly accommodate change or loss.

The part that the Plaza played in the lives the people of Port Talbot between 1939 and 1999 is considerable. It is both illustrative of, and associative with, the way people spent their leisure time for 60 years. It illustrates a pastime which is still very relevant to today, and is indeed the precursor to so much of our modern leisure activity – watching television and online entertainment, keeping up with the news, and meeting up with friends - however, it illustrates a very different way of doing so to now.

The fact that the Plaza retains so much of the provision and character which it had 80 years ago, and through its 60 year working life, simple adds to its heritage value.

Of course, a well-preserved building, still intact, in its original form, and largely unaltered will hold more heritage value than one which is not. The Plaza is principally intact, in its original form, and largely unaltered, which does add to its heritage value. However, it is in a very poor state of repair, particularly in the main body of the auditorium where a large hole in the roof has resulted in major deterioration beneath it, which has an extremely negative impact on its heritage value.

It is this level of preservation, when so many of these early cinemas no longer exist; its illustration of, and contribution to our understanding of, such a prominent part of past life; its prominence within the town; and its association with such prominent names as Richard Burton, Anthony Hopkins, Michael Sheen, Rob Brydon and Rebecca Evans; which affords the Plaza medium historical value.

Given the intactness of the original building, the Plaza's evidential value might be deemed to be high, however, as evidential value is deemed to derive from those elements of an historic asset that can provide evidence about past human activity, it is arguable that the 1940s-1990s is recent enough for a considerable amount of other evidence – be it photography, film or memories – to still be available. As a result, the Plaza is deemed to have medium evidential value.

The Plaza's listing states that it is listed “as a very rare example in Wales of a building type which expresses the distinctive architectural vocabulary of 1930s cinema architecture”. Its iconic frontage affords it considerable aesthetic value; its conscious Art Deco style and its use of such well-known Art Deco characteristics and features; its prominence within its setting; the love and sensory stimulation it draws from the people of the area; and the fact that it remains almost as it was when it was originally built all imbue considerable aesthetic value. However, its 20 years' dereliction and the resultant condition it finds itself in reduces that value somewhat. Also, whilst the front third is so iconic and of high design quality, the rear two thirds, with its roughcast rendered monolithic elevations with blocked up openings and deteriorating roof, is much less appealing, even unattractive. As a result, the Plaza is considered to have medium aesthetic value, principally because of its frontage.

The Plaza figures in the memories of almost everyone who lived in and around Port Talbot between 1939 and 1999. Cinema-going, and the gleaning of news, was an enormous part of the lives of people of all ages through the 1930s, 40s and 50s. With the growing popularity of television, cinema still had its part to play in the 1950s and 60s showing live entertainment as well as cinema, with the opportunity to see the best known names of the age; and, whilst less frequented in the 1970s and 1980s, blockbuster movies continued to draw people to the cinema, as it would be some time before these films would appear on the television, or even video. Everyone has their memories of visits to the cinema, particularly insofar as they were the primary means of entertainment for many, and were frequently in large numbers with great regularity. The Plaza was one such cinema, with the 1,500 seat capacity met regularly.

It is the host of memories which it holds, some of which are recorded, some from extremely well-known figures from the area; the communal love for the building; and its source of social interaction which afford the Plaza medium communal value, however, this value is slowly ebbing away as the building further deteriorates.



Plaza exterior approx 1950 - building receiving sign, tiles and windows 10 years after opening (source: Port Talbot Historical Society)

4.0 Existing Drawings of the Existing Building

On the next pages are scaled existing drawings of the Plaza building and Site, including Plans at each level, Sections and Elevations, along with a series of drawings identifying the materials of the fabric to the front portion to be retained and the condition of those aspects of fabric.

Included are:

- 4.1 Site Location Plan and Aerial Photograph
- 4.2 Existing Ground Floor Plan Scale: 1:200 @ A3
- 4.3 Existing First Floor Plan Scale: 1:100 @ A3
- 4.4 Existing Second Floor Plan Scale: 1:100 @ A3
- 4.5 Existing Roof Plan Scale: 1:200 @ A3
- 4.6 Existing Site External Hardstand Scale: 1:300 @ A3
- 4.7 Existing South and West Elevations Scale: 1:200 @ A3
- 4.8 Existing North and East Elevations Scale: 1:200 @ A3
- 4.9 Existing Longitudinal Section Scale: 1:200 @ A3
- 4.10 Existing Front Portion - Existing Wall Finishes, General Condition & Repair Proposals
- 4.11 Existing Front Portion - Existing Floor Finishes, General Condition & Repair Proposals
- 4.12 Existing Front Portion - Existing Ceiling Finishes, General Condition & Repair Proposals
- 4.13 Existing Front Portion - Existing Elevations - General Condition & Repair Proposals

4.1 Site Location Plan and Aerial Photograph

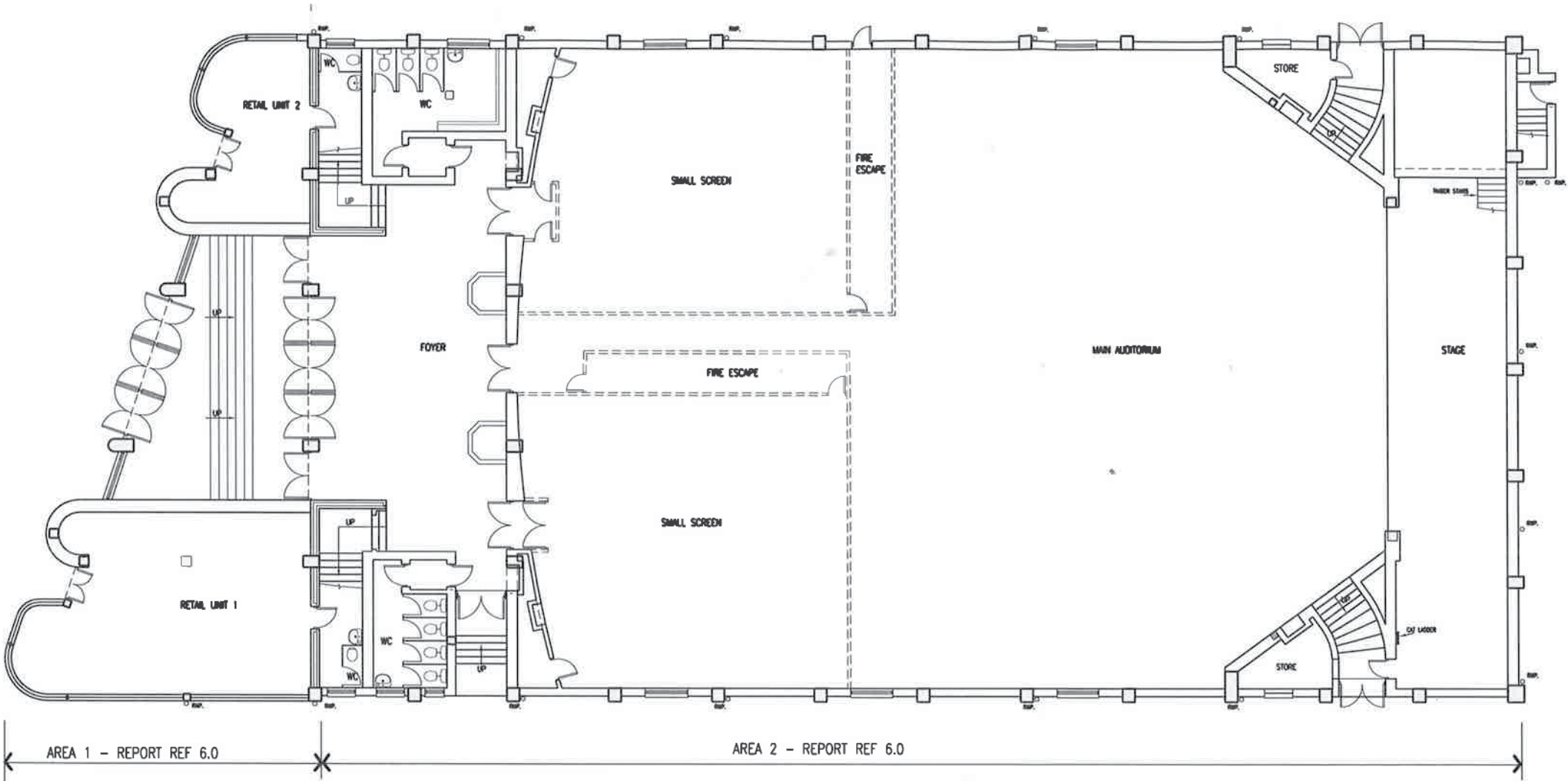


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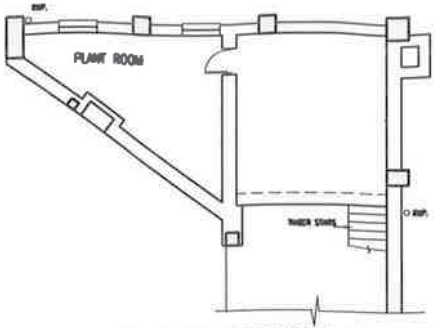
Site Boundary



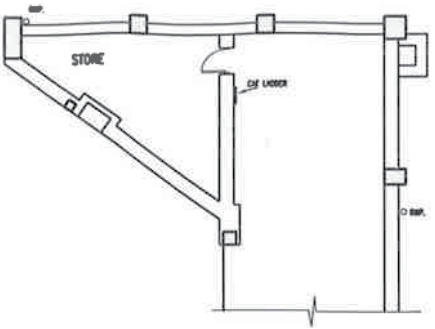
4.2 Existing Ground Floor Plan



EXISTING GROUND FLOOR PLAN
Scale 1:200



PLANT ROOM (EXISTING FIRST FLOOR)
Scale 1:200



STORE (EXISTING SECOND FLOOR)
Scale 1:200

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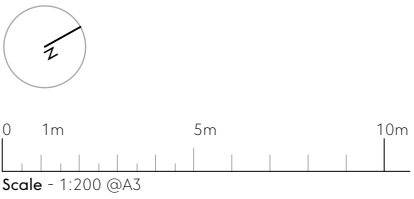
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Note
Floor plan taken from James & Nicholas (drawing reference):
Job No 12:15 - Drawing No A01
Plaza Cinema, Port Talbot -
Existing Ground Floor Plan.
1st & 2nd Stage Area.

Rev	Date	Comment	Dr	Ch
P03	28.05.19	update as per planning consultant's comments	CT	RT
P02	24.05.19	existing	CT	RT
P01	17.05.19	First Issue	CT	RT



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GWP Job Reference (385)1902

Job Title Plaza Port Talbot

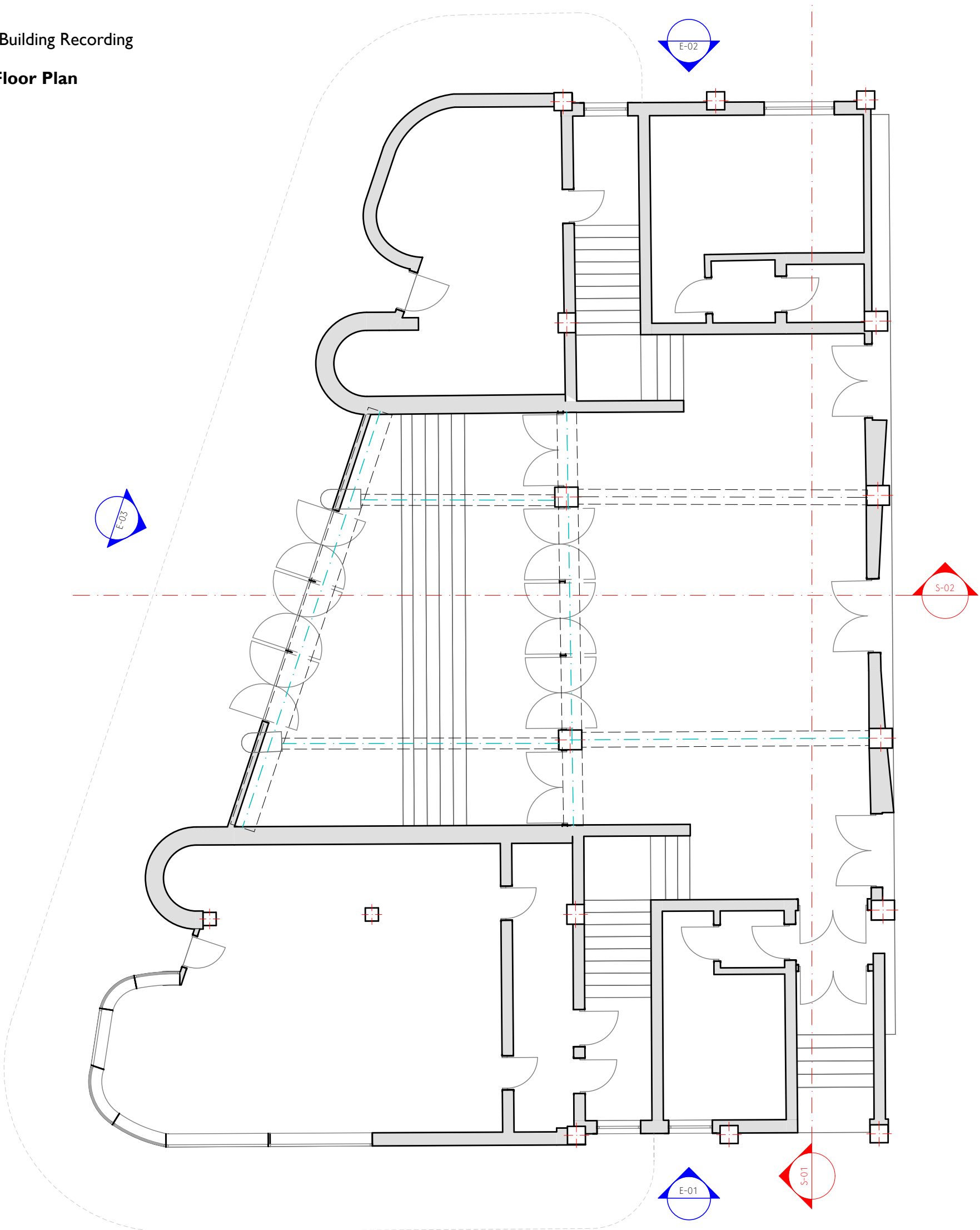
Client
Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council

Existing Ground Floor Plan

Name	(385)1902-GWP-01-01-DR-A-(PA)-0010		
Scale	1:200@A3	Revision	03
Drawn/Checked	CT/RT	First Issue	17.05.2019
Drawing Status	S - Work In Progress		

BIMcloud: BIMServer-HP - BIMcloud Basic for ARCHICAD 22(385)1902 GWP-01-XX-A3-A-18-PortTalbot-P01

4.2 Existing Ground Floor Plan



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Job Title Plaza Port Talbot

Client

BAM Construction

Existing Ground Floor Plan

Name (385)1902-GWP-01-01-DR-A-(PA)-0010

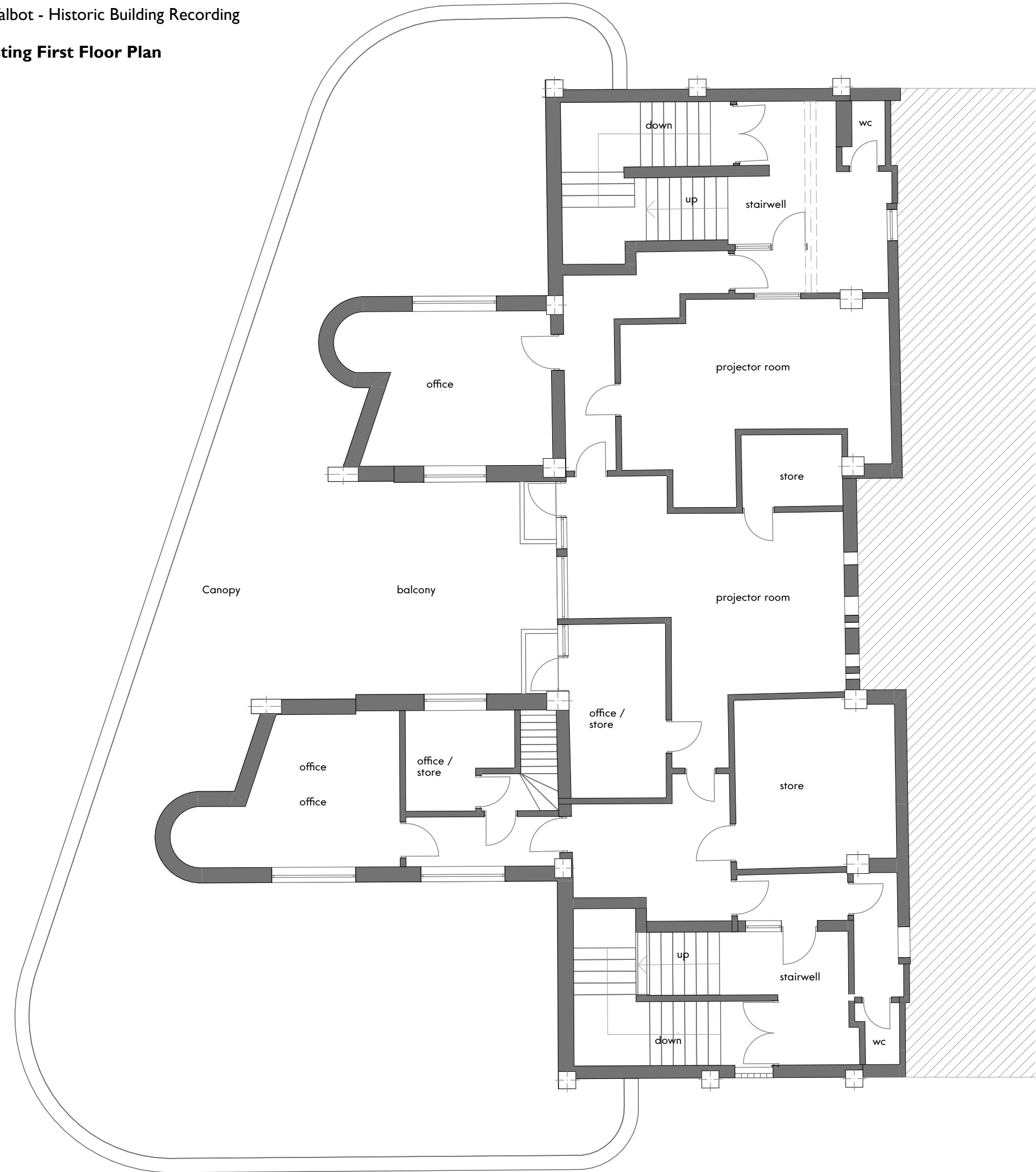
Scale 1:200@A3 Revision 01

Drawn/Checked DT/RT First Issue XX.04.2019

Drawing Status S - Work In Progress

BIMcloud: BIMServer-HP - BIMcloud Basic for ARCHICAD 22/(385)1902-GWP-01-XX-W3-A-1B-PortTalbot-P01

4.3 Existing First Floor Plan



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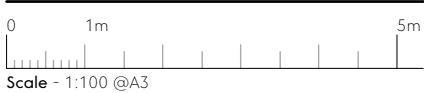
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Note:
See Demolition Drawing (PA)0021

P02	28.05.19	update as per planning consultant's comments	CT	RT
P01	17.05.19	First Issue	CT	RT
Rev	Date	Comment	Dr	Ch



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Job Title Plaza Port Talbot

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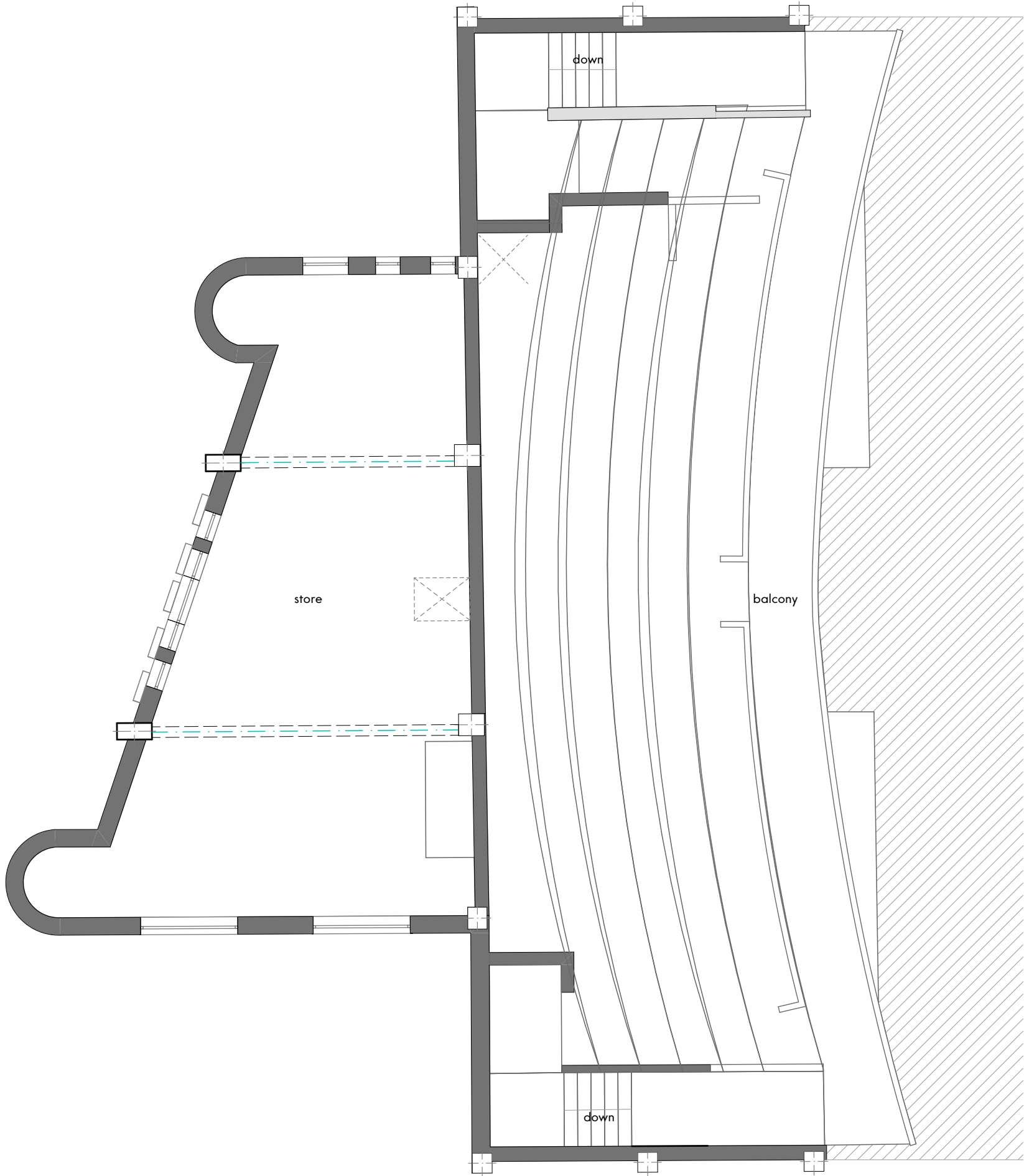
Existing First Floor Plan

Name (385)1902-GWP-01-01-DR-A-(PA)-0011

Scale	1:200@A3	Revision	02
Drawn/Checked	CT/RT	First Issue	17.05.2019
Drawing Status	S - Work In Progress		

BIMcloud: BIMServer-HP - BIMcloud Basic for ARCHICAD 22/(385)1902-GWP-01-XX-A3-A-18-PortTalbot-P01

4.4 Existing Second Floor Plan



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Note:
See Demolition Drawing (PA)0021

P02	28.05.19	update as per planning consultant's comments	CT	RT
P01	17.05.19	First Issue	CT	RT
Rev	Date	Comment	Dr	Ch



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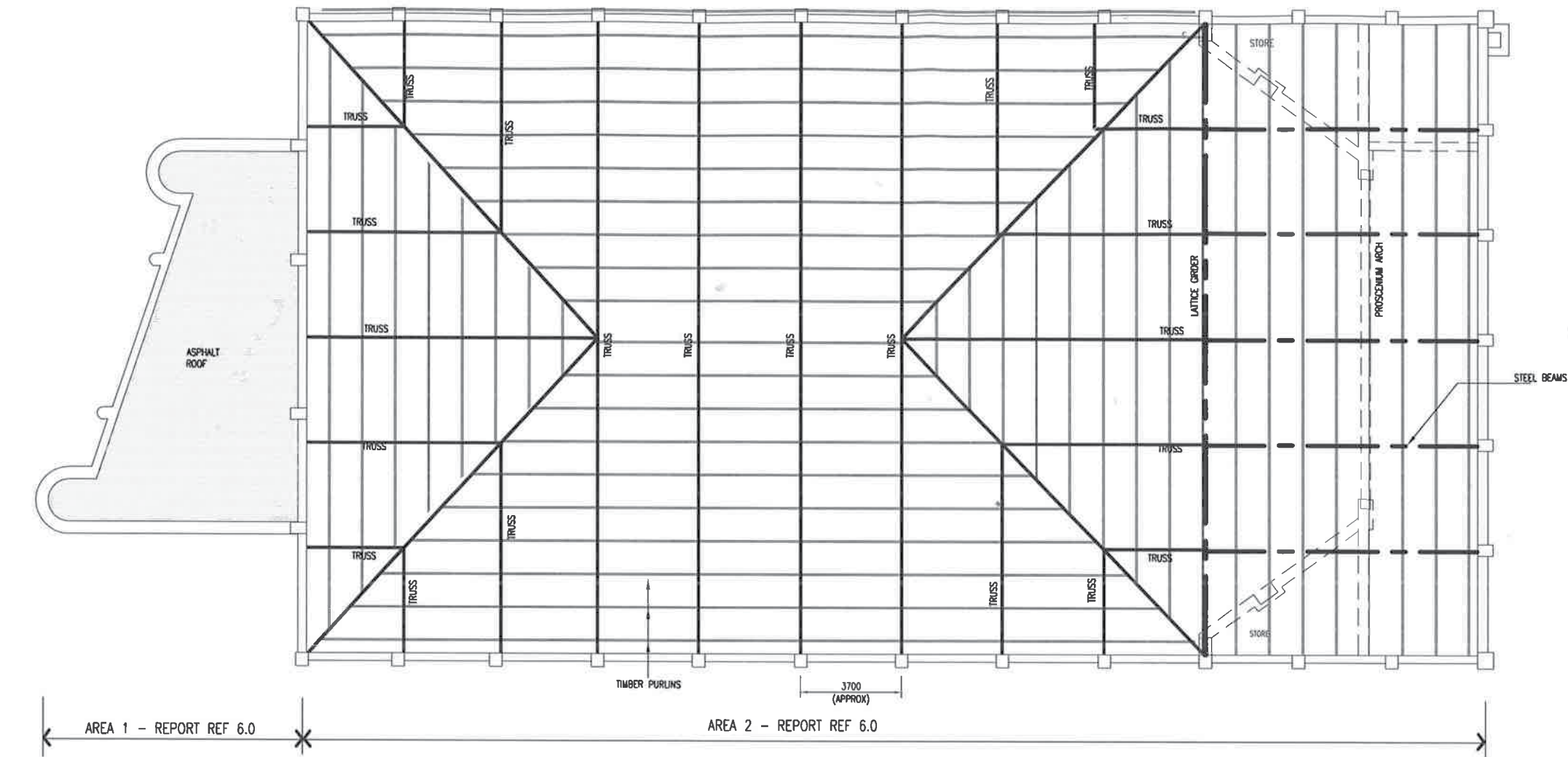
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Name (385)1902-GWP-01-01-DR-A-(PA)-0012

Scale	1:200@A3	Revision	02
Drawn/Checked	CT/RT	First Issue	17.05.2019
Drawing Status	S - Work In Progress		

BIMcloud: BIMServer-HP - BIMcloud Basic for ARCHICAD 22/(385)1902-GWP-01-XX-M3-A-18-PortTalbot-P01

4.5 Existing Roof Plan



EXISTING ROOF PLAN
Scale 1:200

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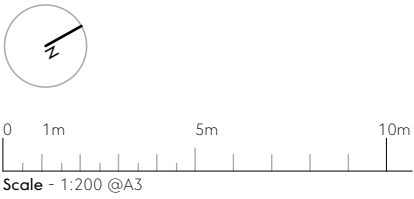
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Note
Floor plan taken from James & Nicholas (drawing reference):
Job No 12:15 - Drawing No A03
Plaza Cinema, Port Talbot - Existing Roof Structure Plan.

P01	XX.04.19	First Issue	DT	RT
Rev	Date	Comment	Dr	Ch



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Job Title Plaza Port Talbot

Client

BAM Construction

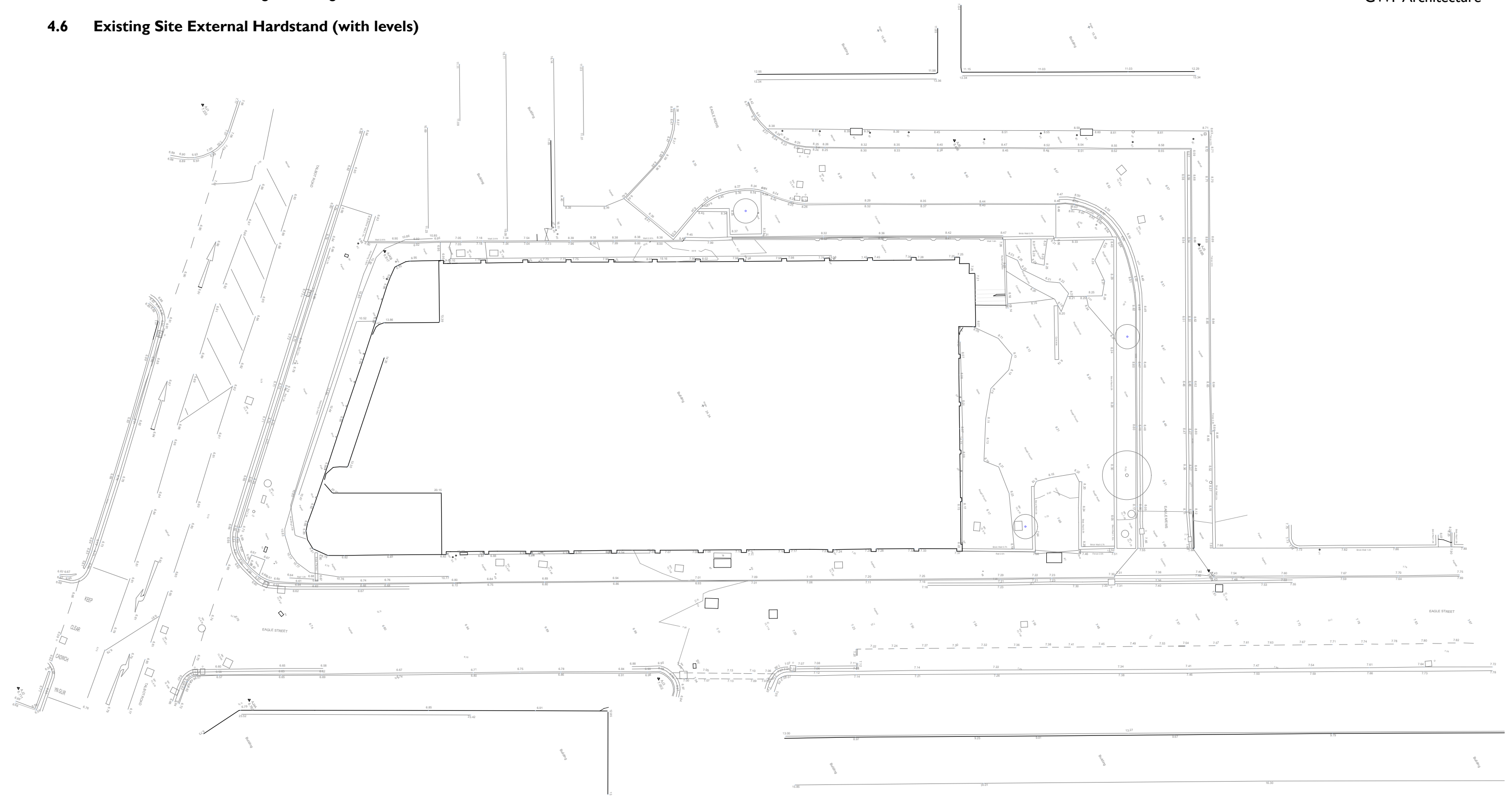
Existing Roof Plan

Name (385)1902-GWP-01-01-DR-A-(PA)-0012

Scale 1:200@A3	Revision 01
Drawn/Checked DT/RT	First Issue XX.04.2019
Drawing Status S - Work In Progress	

BIMcloud: BIMServer-HP - BIMcloud Basic for ARCHICAD 22/(385)1902-01-XX-W3-A-1B-PortTalbot-P0174

4.6 Existing Site External Hardstand (with levels)



Station	Easting	Northing	Level
AJ1	276814.404	189582.023	7.233
AJ2	276848.575	189545.438	6.711
AJ3	276873.636	189591.463	7.002
AJ4	276888.040	189635.025	7.484
AJ5	276864.423	189647.441	8.688
AJ6	276847.161	189634.185	8.456
AJ4A	276858.696	189561.420	6.780
AJ4B	276832.162	189589.116	6.917

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0 1m 5m 10m



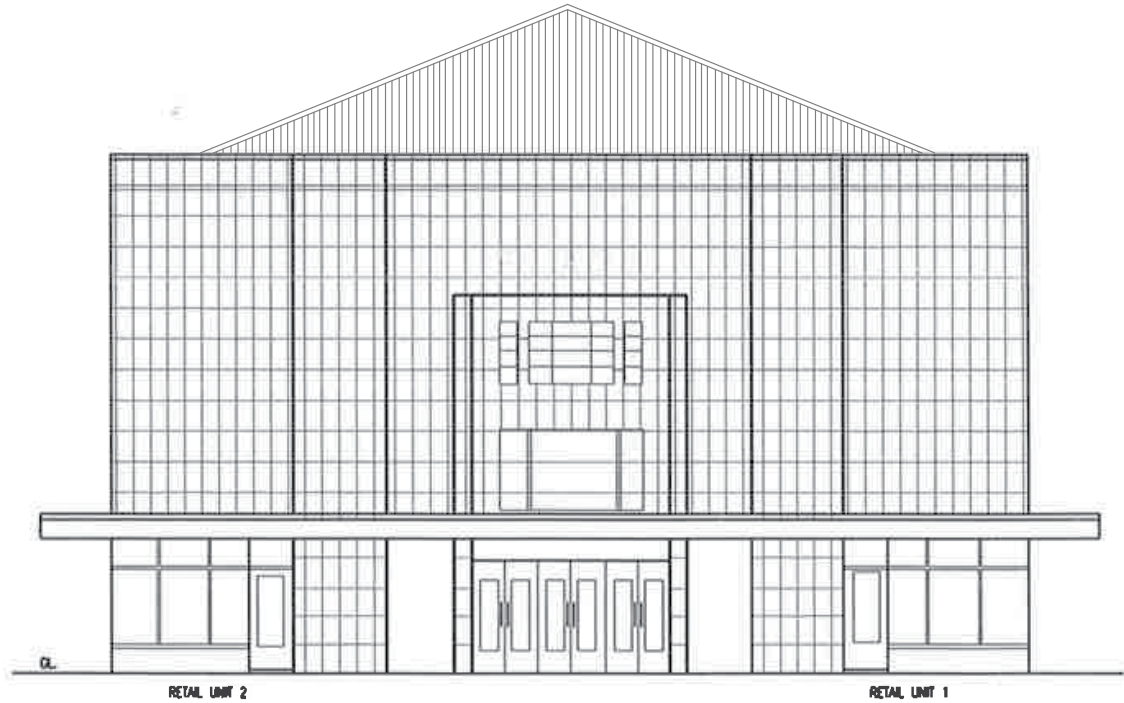
GWP Ref (385)1902		Topographical Survey	
Job Title Plaza Port Talbot			
Client BAM Construction			
Rev	Date	Comment	Dr Ch
P01	XX.04.19	First Issue	DT RT
Scale 1:150@A1		Revision 01	
Drawn/Checked DT / RT		First Issue 00.04.2019	
Drawing Status S - Work In Progress			



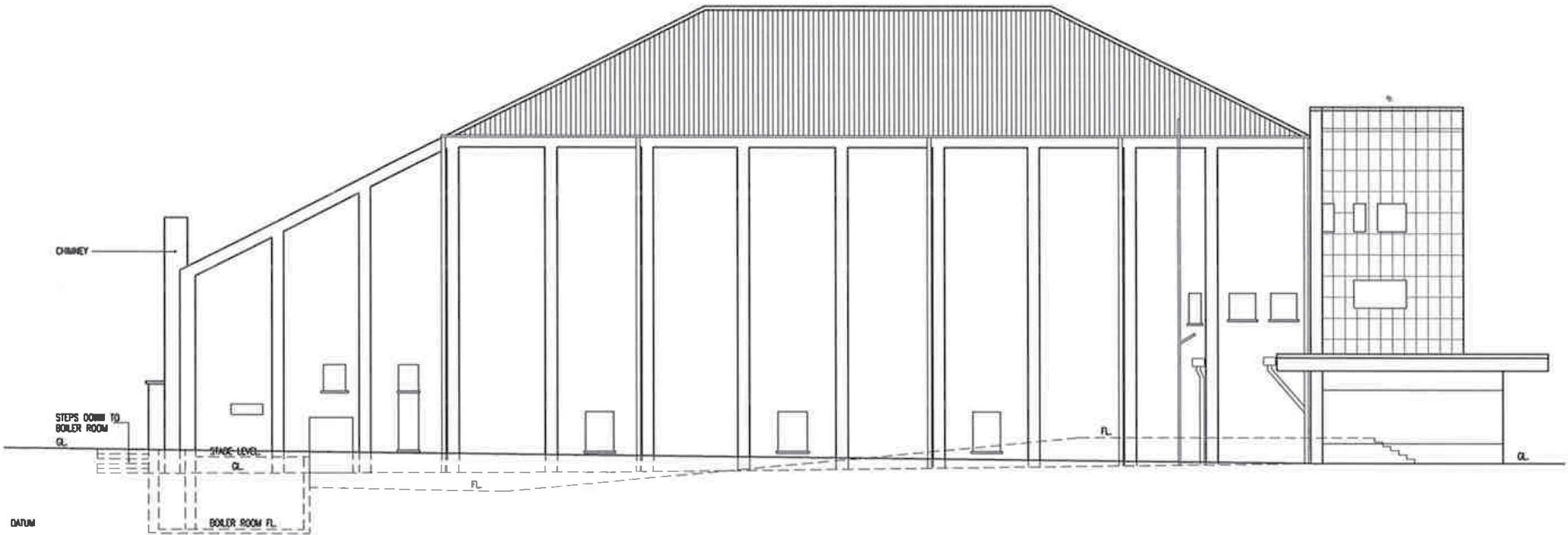
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4.7 Existing South and West Elevations



EXISTING SOUTH ELEVATION
Scale 1:200



EXISTING WEST ELEVATION
Scale 1:200

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0 1m 5m 10m

Scale - 1:200 @A3

Note
Section taken from James & Nicholas
(drawing reference):
Job No 12:15 - Drawing No A05
Plaza Cinema, Port Talbot - Existing Building Elevations.

P02	28.05.19	update as per planning consultant's comments -south elevation roof	CT	RT
P01	17.05.19	First Issue	CT	RT
Rev	Date	Comment	Dr	Ch

GWP

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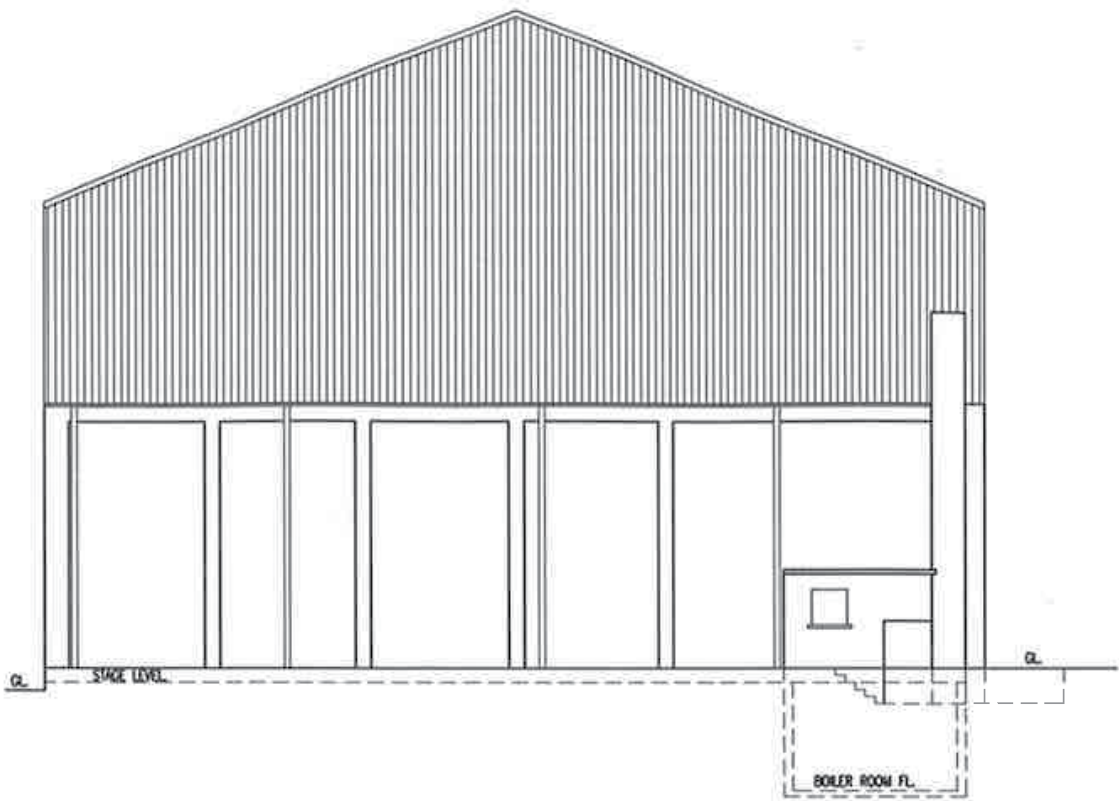
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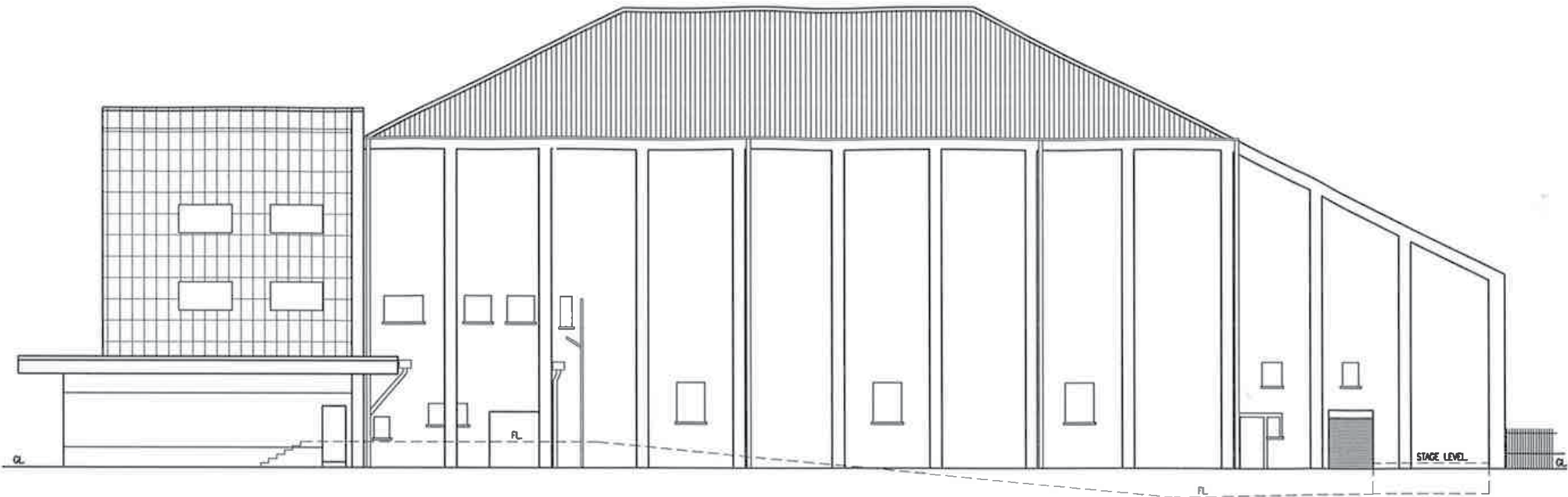
Job Title Plaza Port Talbot

Client
Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council

4.8 Existing North and East Elevations



EXISTING NORTH ELEVATION
Scale 1:200



EXISTING EAST ELEVATION
Scale 1:200



Note
Section taken from James & Nicholas
(drawing reference):
Job No 12:15 - Drawing No A05
Plaza Cinema, Port Talbot - Existing Building
Elevations.

P02	28.05.19	update as per planning consultant's comments	CT	RT
P01	17.05.19	First Issue	CT	RT
Rev	Date	Comment	Dr	Ch



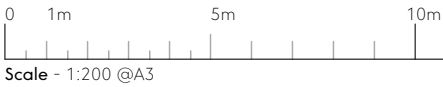
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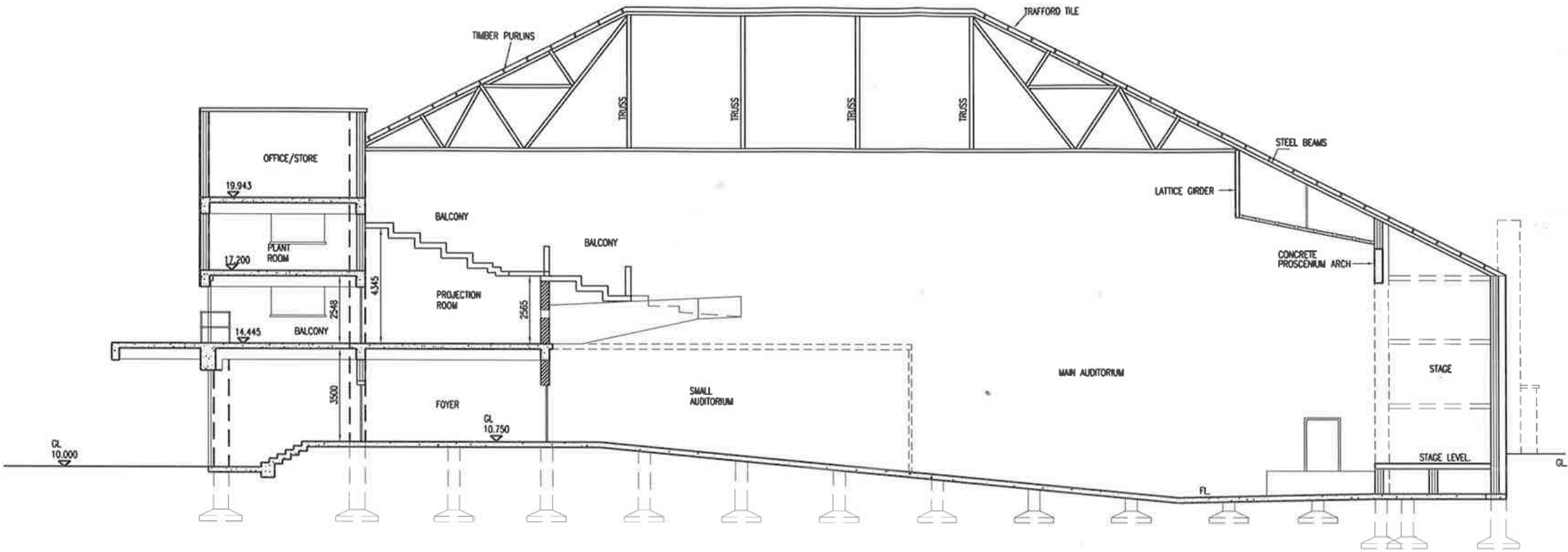
Job Title Plaza Port Talbot

Client
Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council

4.9 Existing Longitudinal Section down centre of building



Note
Section taken from James & Nicholas
(drawing reference):
Job No 12:15 - Drawing No A04
Plaza Cinema, Port Talbot - Existing Building
Section.



P01	XX.04.19	First Issue	DT	RT
Rev	Date	Comment	Dr	Ch

EXISTING LONGITUDINAL SECTION
Scale 1:200



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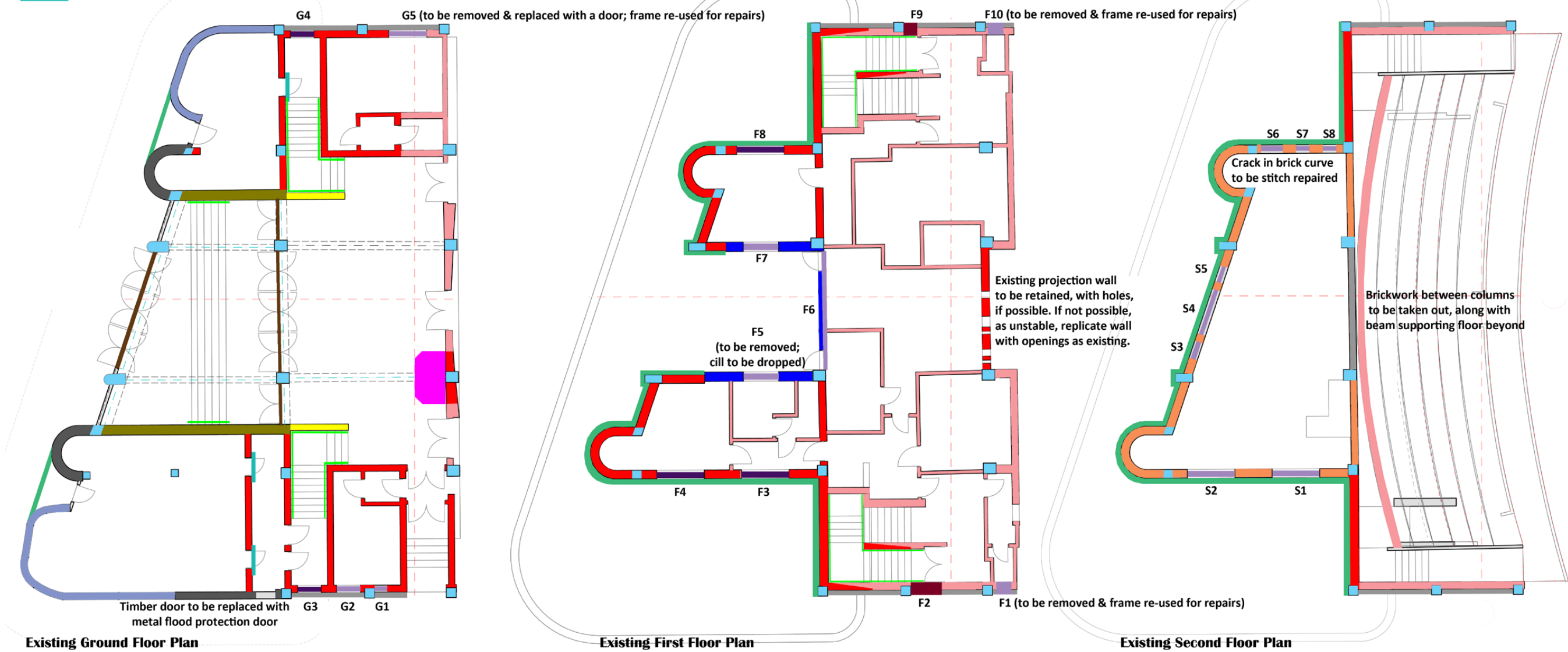
Job Title Plaza Port Talbot

Client

BAM Construction

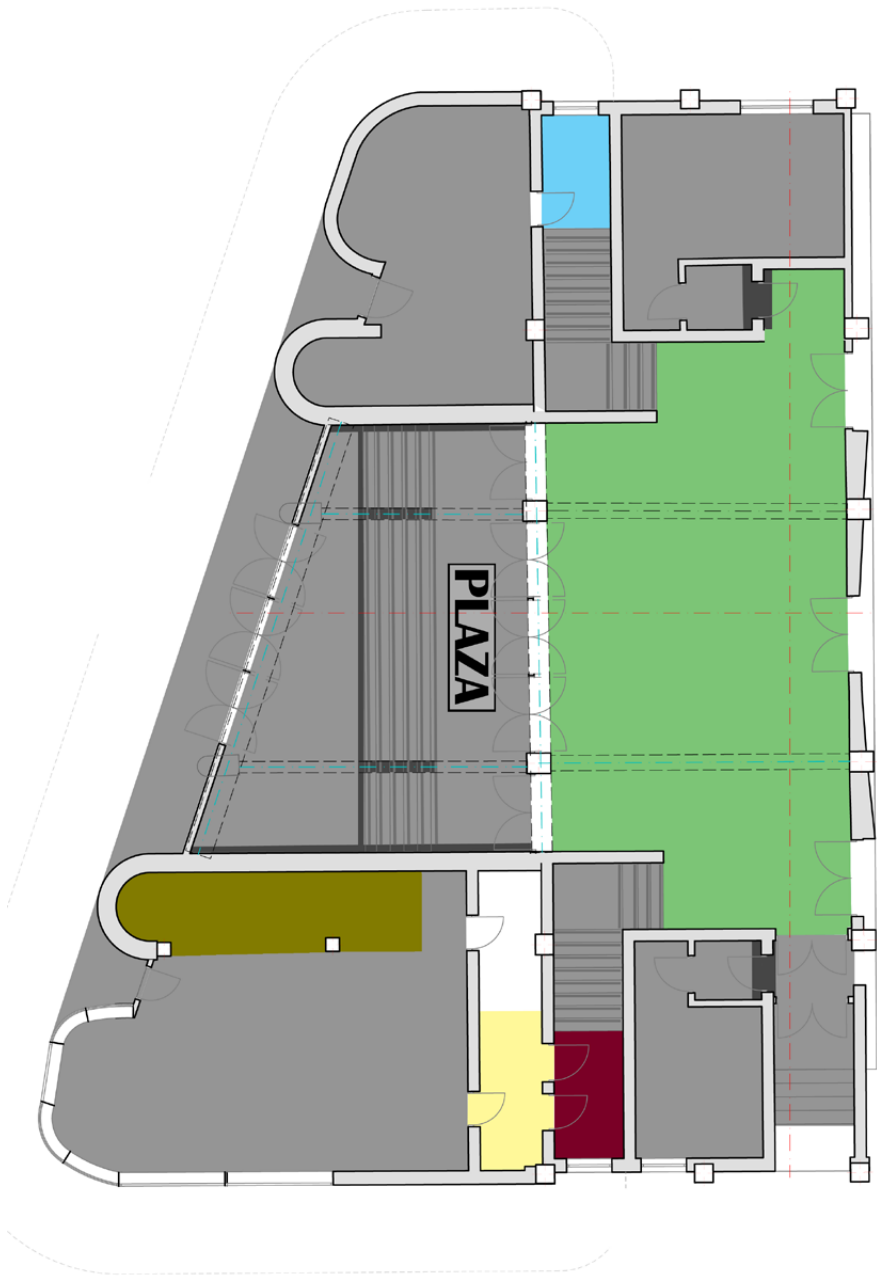
4.10 Existing Front Portion - Existing Wall Finishes, General Condition & Repair Proposals

- Key:
- Cream Faience Tile Cladding with eau-de-nil course near top. A number of damaged tiles (see Elevations mark-up), however all tiles remain & most are not damaged. Proposal: Localised repairs to damaged tiles, along with light clean. See Specification & Elevation mark-up.
 - Grey-painted External Render. In poor condition. Proposal: To ground floor: Removal & then re-rendering. To upper floors: Removal, along with masonry, and new render on new masonry.
 - Painted Plastered Red-orange Brickwork infill. Paint peeling in most areas. Some damage to plaster, however, generally in reasonable condition. Proposal: Retain. Rub down all paintwork; repair damaged plaster, like-for-like, & re-paint.
 - Painted Plastered Red-orange Brickwork infill. Paint peeling in most areas. Some damage to plaster, however, generally in reasonable condition. Proposal: Remove & make good at junctions with retaining fabric.
 - Painted Red-orange Brickwork infill (not plastered). Generally in reasonable condition. Proposal: Rub down all paintwork; repair any damaged brickwork & re-point, where necessary, & re-paint. Colour to be advised, but probably off-white, as existing.
 - Reinforced Concrete Frame. Proposal: Refer to Structural Engineers' specification.
 - Black-painted Render, with cut-in ashlar joints, on Brickwork forming curved walls and/or Black-painted large curved blocks. Proposal: Rub down all paintwork; repair damaged plaster, like-for-like, & re-paint, only if necessary; colour to be decided.
 - Off-white painted Render, with cut-in ashlar joints, on Brickwork and/or painted large Blocks. Render to bottom section. No skirting. Proposal: Rub down all paintwork; repair damaged plaster, like-for-like, and re-paint; colour off-white.
 - Large Reconstituted Stone Facing Blockwork with plastered brickwork backing. Stone facing to be repaired locally & lightly cleaned. Plaster to stripped, to be repaired, as required, & re-painted.
 - Curved & straight thick single-layer Glazing with horizontal joint at 3/4 height. Black-painted curved masonry stall riser at base. Slim metal grille at top; Bronze cil at bottom.. All frame black. Proposal: Rub down all paintwork; repair any damage & re-glaze.
 - Low plastered masonry walls with sloping timber capping. Timber capping continues up stair wall as profiled timber dado rail just above steel circular handrail. Proposal: Rub down paintwork; repair damaged plaster, like-for-like, & re-paint. New fire-rated glazing to be built over.
 - Hardwood-framed sets of double Doors with 5no. horizontal glass panes per door, & glazed overpanels to inner line of doors, louvre to outer line of doors. In good condition. Proposal: Local repairs; re-finishing with new/repared glass. New brass art deco handles to match those lost.
 - Existing Box Office construction to be retained & repaired.
 - Crittall Windows in good condition. To be taken out, Repaired & Restored, & Re-inserted (apart from G5, F1, F5 & F10), after removal of boarding. New single glazing. Colour of frame to be advised, possibly based on paint samples taken. Timber sub-cills to S3,4 & 5 to be replaced.
 - Crittall Windows in very poor condition. New Replica like-for-like Crittall-style Windows proposed. To match those retained in all respects. Single glazing. If possible, use good sections from window frames otherwise too corroded to retain & G5, F1, F5 & F10.
 - Glass block windows to be removed, along with wall.
 - Round Metal Stair Handrails - partly corroded - to be retained, rubbed down / abraded, made good as required & re-painted.
 - Internal Doorways to incorporate flood protection barriers. Barrier infills will be stored & not permanently in place, however, channels to receive infills will be fixed to the walls inside the storeroom and sealed to the walls.

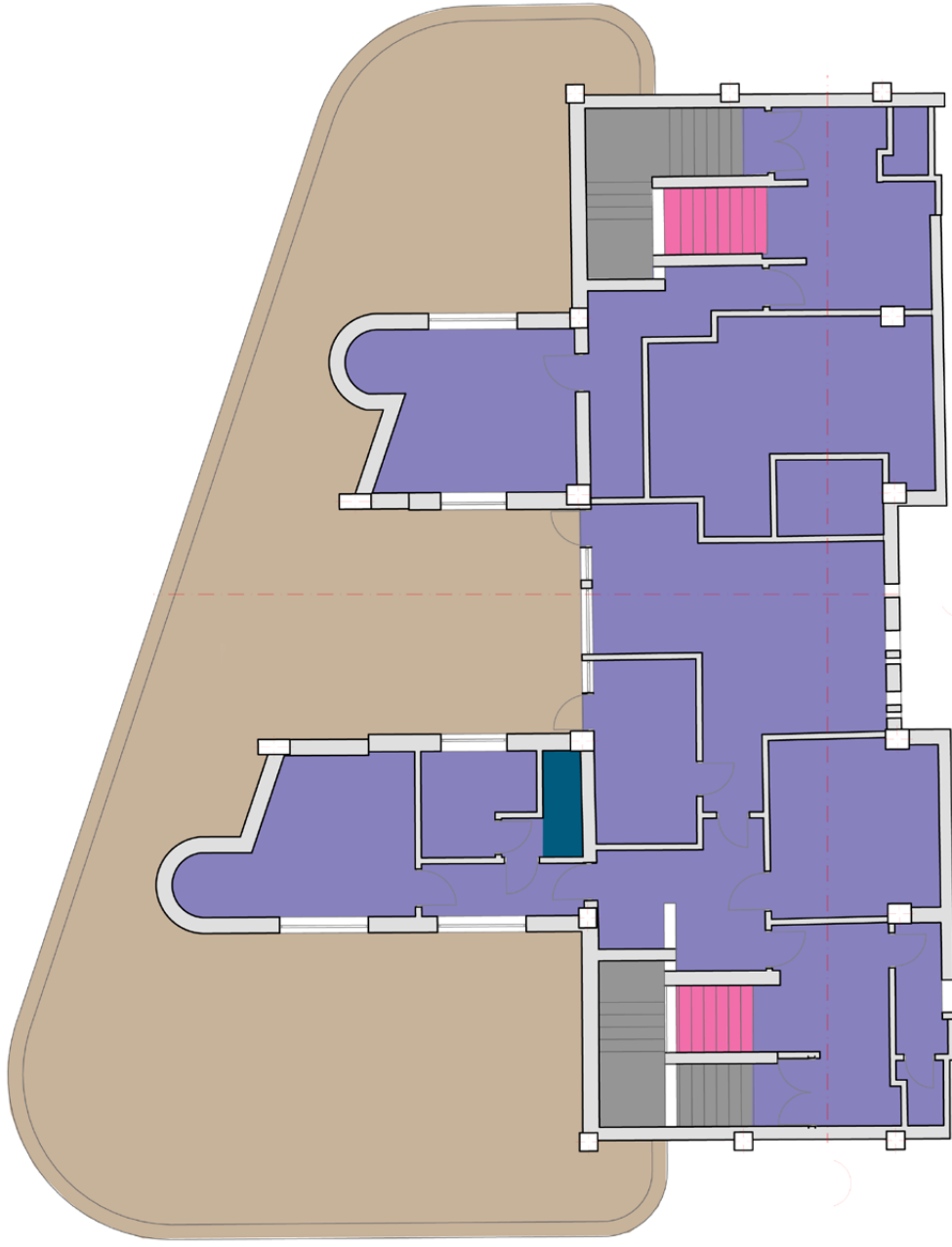


4.11 Existing Front Portion - Existing Floor Finishes, General Condition & Repair Proposals

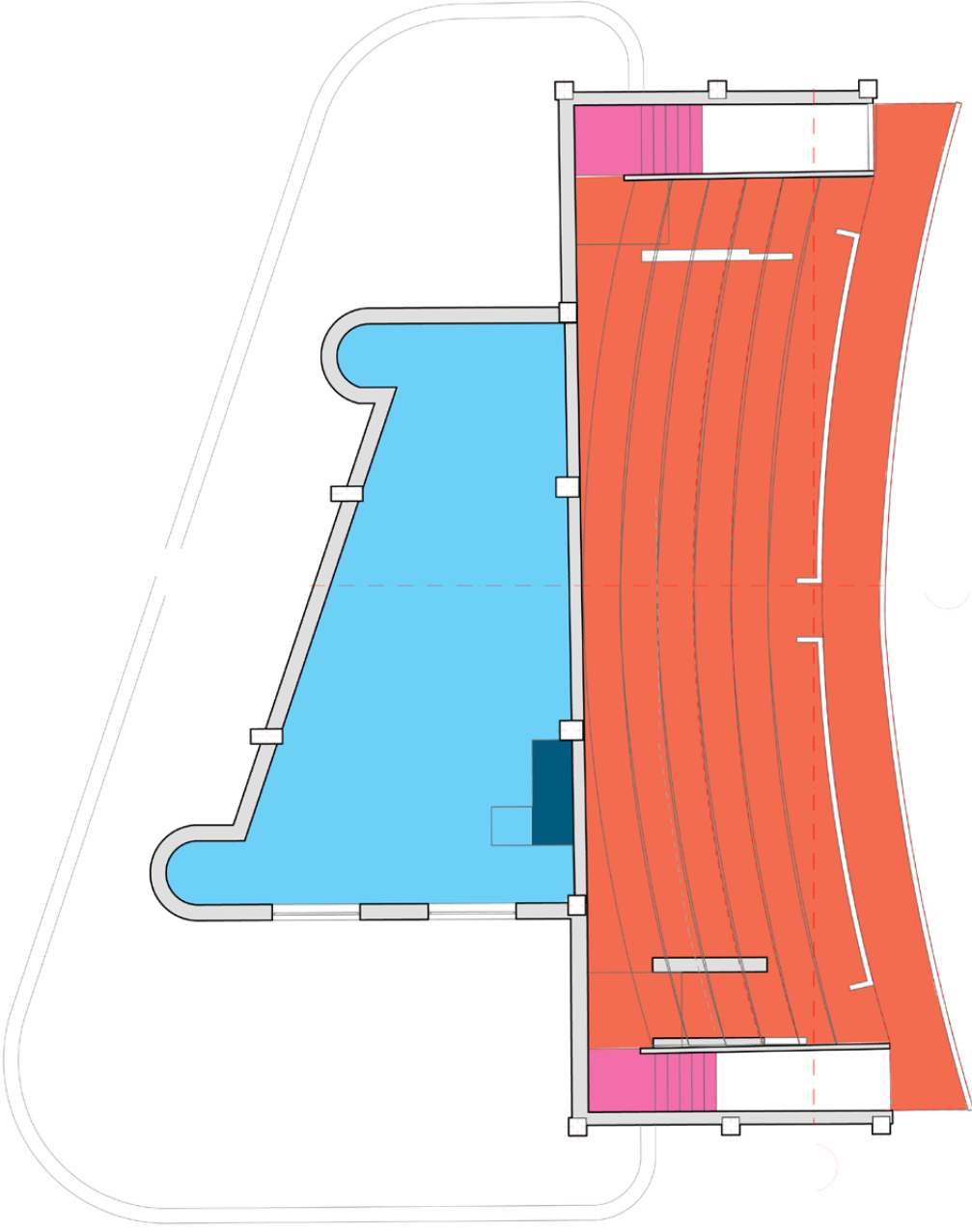
- Key:**
- Green & Yellow Terrazzo Tiles. Generally in good condition, however requires cleaning before full assessment can be made. Proposal: Joints to be re-grouted and small number of local in-situ repairs may be required, then cleaning.
 - Mid-Grey Terrazzo in large bays with dark grey band on perimeter. Generally in good condition, however requires cleaning to establish detail. Also terrazzo steps with black & white checkerplate nosings. Proposal: Local repairs & cleaning. Use off-cuts from auditorium steps for repairs.
 - 'PLAZA' lettering painted onto terrazzo, within thin black edged box with lighter grey terrazzo insert. Generally in good condition. Proposal: Requires touching up, mainly to the final 'A'.
 - Cream & Burgundy small Terracotta Tiles in checkerboard pattern. Condition appears to be reasonable. Proposal: Joints to be re-grouted and small number of local in-situ repairs may be required, then cleaning.
 - Burgundy small Terracotta Tiles. Condition appears to be reasonable. Proposal: Joints to be re-grouted and small number of local in-situ repairs may be required, then cleaning.
 - Linoleum on Raised Concrete Floor. Condition poor. Proposal: Slab to be levelled (for full accessibility). Levelling compound to be applied. New linoleum finish to be applied.
 - Timber staircases with carpeted treads & risers & pvc nosings. Generally in very poor condition. Proposal: Staircase from first to second floor to be removed & replaced with new timber staircase.
 - Carpet on Concrete Steps to auditorium. In Poor Condition. Proposal: To be fully removed.
 - Painted Concrete Floor. Small areas of spalled concrete & corroded reinforcement. Proposal: Concrete & reinforcement repairs as Structural Engineers' specification. New carpet tile flooring.
 - Uncovered Concrete Floor. Reasonable Condition. Proposal: Carpet tiles to be laid over floor, following any localised repairs.
 - Uncovered Concrete Steps. Reasonable Condition, however too steep for use. Proposal: Concrete Steps to be removed. Hole to be infilled, but railings to be retained, rubbed down & re-painted.
 - Canopy Bitumen Felt Roof. In very poor condition. Proposal: to be taken up & Re-applied. Dress new felt covering down front of fascia, as existing. At top / edge, form 50mm timber chamfer to drain water away from edge & back to roof. Area in centre to be made internal & carpetted.



Existing Ground Floor Plan



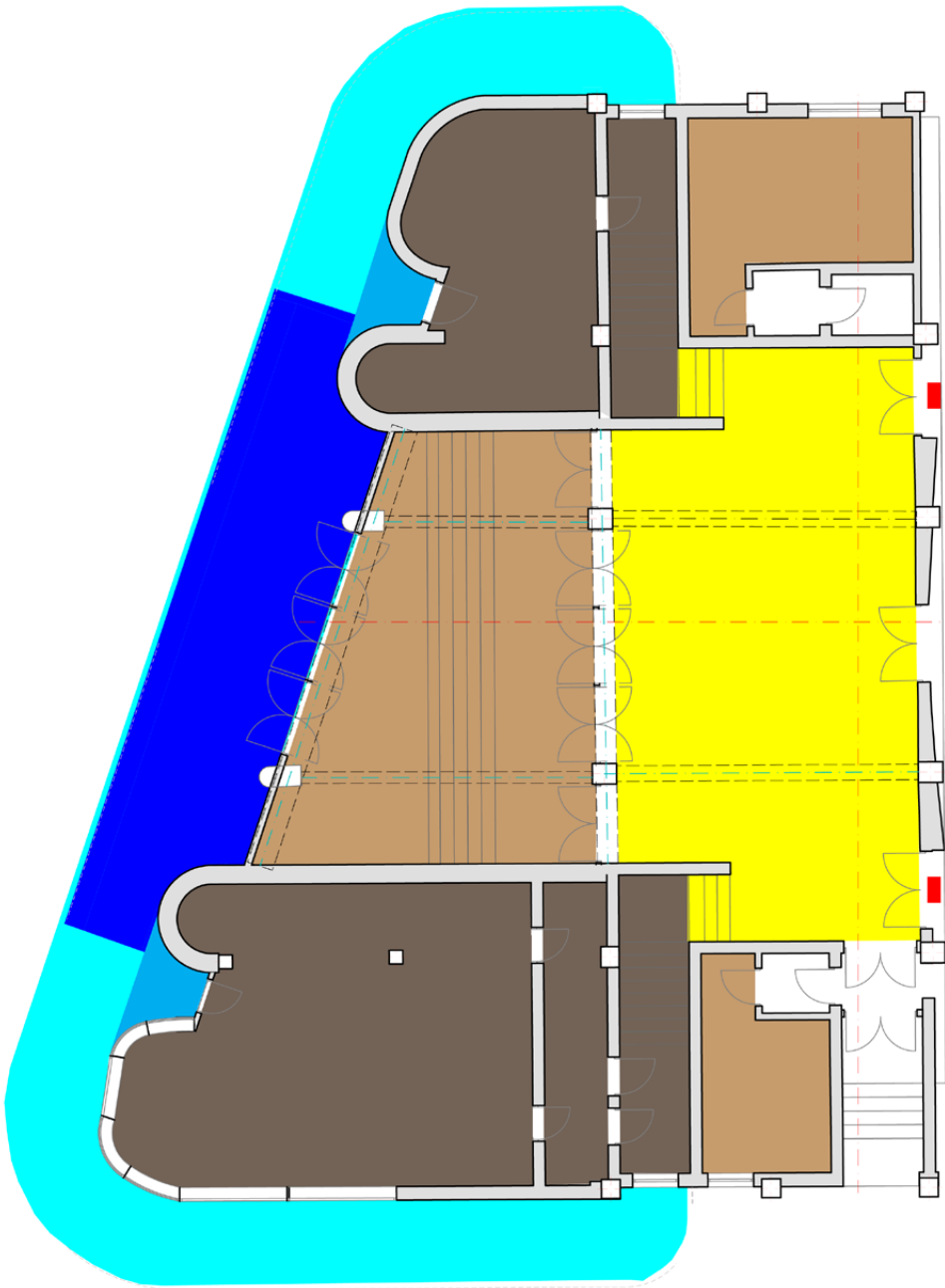
Existing First Floor Plan



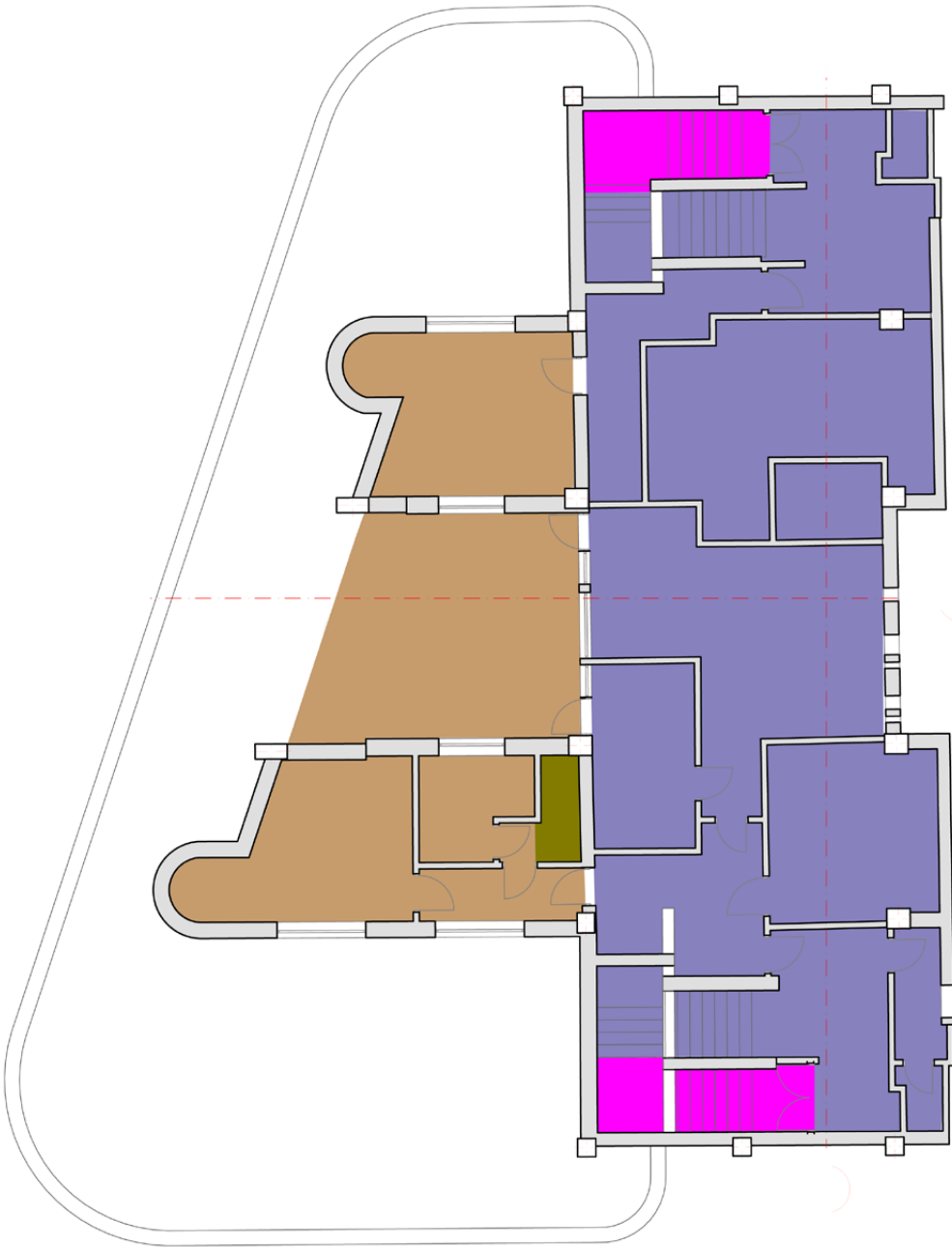
Existing Second Floor Plan

4.12 Existing Front Portion - Existing Ceiling Finishes, General Condition & Repair Proposals

- Key:
- Painted Plastered Concrete Soffit with Decorative Yellow Chevron Cornice. In Very Poor Condition. Much plaster damage. Cornice damaged in most areas. Proposal: Rub down paintwork; Repair all plaster, like-for-like; Re-paint. Remove cornice & replicate like-for-like. Colour tba, possibly golden yellow
 - Painted Plastered Concrete Soffit with no cornice. Paintwork in Very Poor Condition, and, due to water damage, Plaster & underside of Concrete now in Poor Condition. Proposal: Rub down paintwork; Repair all plaster, like-for-like; Re-paint.
 - Painted Plastered Concrete Soffit with no cornice. In Extremely Poor Condition; most areas lost Plaster; many areas spalled Concrete and exposed reinforcement. Proposal: Concrete & reinforcement repairs as Structural Engineers' specification. Re-plaster throughout & paint.
 - Exposed Shuttered Concrete Soffit & Beams. Generally in reasonable condition, however, one large crack & a number of areas of spalling, exposing re-bar. Proposal: Undertaken minor repairs to surface, as Structural Engineer's specification. Paint white.
 - Exposed Grid Suspended Ceiling. In Poor Condition. Proposal: Remove completely.
 - Metal Downstand to Canopy - in Very Poor Condition. Existing metal frame & panels severely corroded, so cannot be retained; & many panels have been replaced with board. Proposal: To be Removed & Replicated, using like-for-like detailing.
 - Concrete Canopy. In Reasonable Condition, however, with areas of cracking apparent & spalling concrete, exposing re-bar.. Proposal: Undertaken necessary concrete repairs as Structural Engineers' specification..
 - Underside of Concrete Pitched Seating. In Very Poor Condition, with water ingress, spalling concrete & corroded reinforcement. Proposal: To be removed. New 'ceiling' to be underside of soffit of new composite deck floor above - painted.
 - Original Art Deco style 'Emergency Exit' signs to be retained, repaired & re-used, possibly in different locations. May require modern, compliant signs to be used alongside these.
 - Opening in floor to be infilled with new concrete slab, once stairs have been removed.



Existing Ground Floor Plan



Existing First Floor Plan

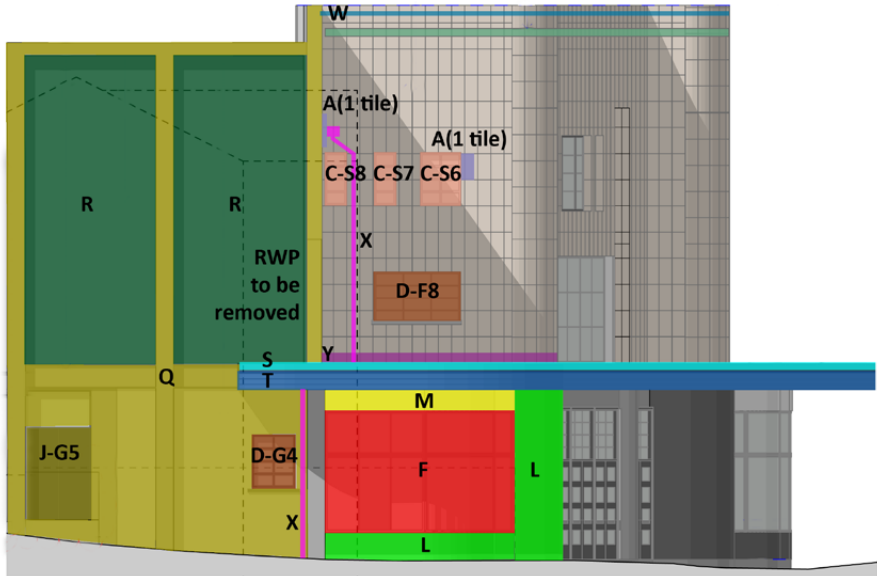


Existing Second Floor Plan

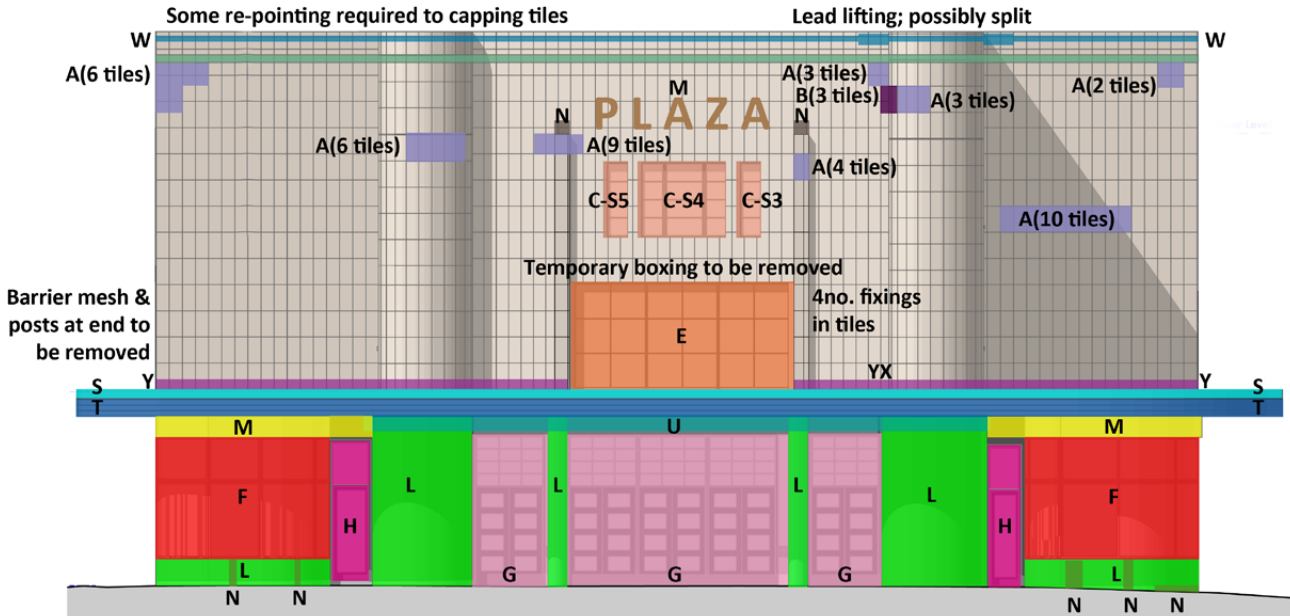
4.13 Existing Front Portion - Existing Elevations - General Condition & Repair Proposals

Key:

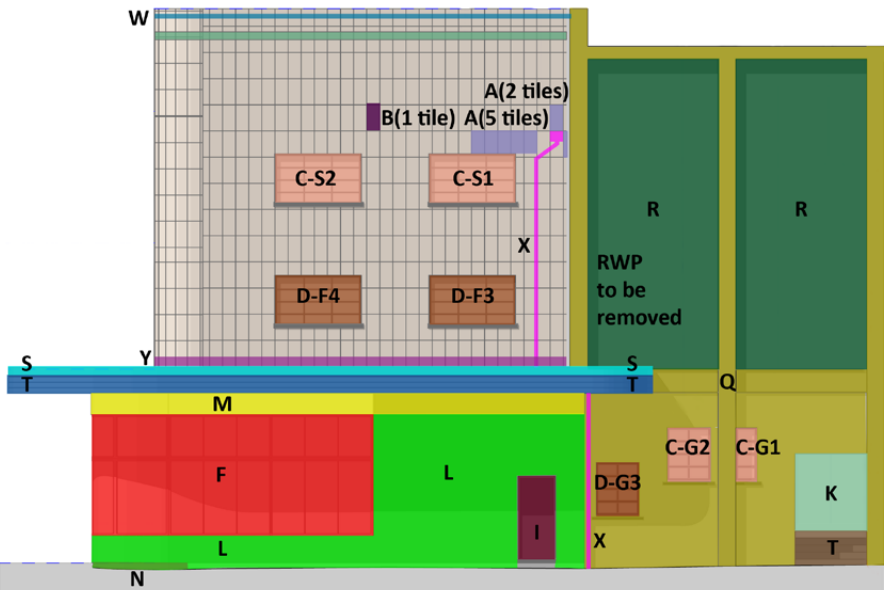
- A Cracks in Faience Tiling to be Repaired using grout injection (lime-based or epoxy or polyester resin) using a syringe & then glaze repair. Also some metal fixings to be removed & holes infilled. All faience tiling to be lightly clean using water & suitable detergent. Refer to Repair & Cleaning Specification.
- B Faience Tiles beyond repair to be Removed & Replaced, like-for-like. Minor spalling / delaminations may be gently & sensitively re-worked (by hand) using a non-hydraulic 'fat' lime putty: terracotta dust 1:3 mix & then glazed in situ. Refer to Repair & Cleaning Specification.
- C Crittall-style Windows in good condition. To be taken out, Repaired & Restored (rust abraded, filed or ground off down to bright metal), & Re-inserted, after removal of boarding. New single glazing. Colour of frame to be advised, possibly based on paint samples taken. Timber sub-cills to S3,4 & 5 to be replaced.
- D Crittall-style Windows in very poor condition. New Replica like-for-like Crittall-style Windows proposed. To match those retained in all respects. If possible, use god sections from window frames otherwise too corroded to retain & G5, F1, F5 & F10.
- E New double-glazed Window in opening. To be variant to existing Crittall-style windows, with larger pane sizes.
- F New thick single-glazed Shopfront Glazing (thickness of original), along with curved ends, within Repaired & Restored Timber frame & with Repaired & Restored rounded Bronze Cill.
- G Existing Timber-framed Glazed Entrance Doors & Overlights to be Rubbed down, Repaired & Restored. Plastic louvres & metal plates currently cover outside face of the overpanels. These are to be removed. Some glass panes are broken & require replacement. New brass art deco handles to match those lost.
- H Existing Timber Glazed Doors to Retail units, with timber-frame glazed overpanel. To be repaired & restored, like-for-like. Some new glass panes required.
- I New Steel Flood Protection Doorset within existing opening, replacing existing paneled timber door & frame. 3no. glazed over-panels within timber frame to be retained.
- J New Steel Door within existing window opening, with cill of window dropped to floor to enlargen opening. Colour to be advised.
- K New Steel Door behind steps. Colour to be advised.
- L Masonry Stall riser & Curved bays, rendered & painted black. Attempt to rub down all paintwork; repair damaged plaster, like-for-like, & re-paint, only if necessary; colour to be decided. If paintwork does not come off without damaging surface, undertake repairs & then re-paint black.
- M Reconstituted stone cladding panels to zone above openings, not painted, to be retained & repaired, as necessary. Some re-pointing (like-for-like) may be required.
- N Areas of damage to masonry requiring localised render & masonry repairs; i.e. re-bar exposed - like-for-like repairs.
- O New PLAZA sign to match original (which is damaged), using existing fixings & framework. Framework may require some local repairs.
- P New Lights on top of pilasters, uplighting sign. Existing light fittings to be removed.
- Q Existing Masonry Columns, Beams and Infill Panels to be Repaired. Existing Render to be Removed and New Render applied.
- R New Masonry Infill Panels to retained column & beam frame, Rendered to match render to existing panels.
- S Canopy Bitumen Felt Roof - in very poor condition - to be taken up & Re-applied. Dress new felt covering down front of fascia, as existing. At top / edge, form 50mm timber chamfer to drain water away from edge & back to roof.
- T Reconstitued Stone Profiled Fascia to Canopy Roof to be lightly cleaned & repaired in any areas necessary. Lead flashing below to be fully reviewed & patch repaired, if required. Joint between stone & lead to be sealed (black).
- U Metal Downstand to Canopy to be Removed & Replicated. Existing metal frame & panels severely corroded, so cannot be retained, even in part; & many panels have been replaced with board. Replication to match existing as closely as possible, in metal, painted a colour to be agreed.
- V Existing Steps to be Repaired & Restored, like-for-like.
- W Scalloped Lead Flashing. Lifting in areas. Possible splitting to be investigated. Dress back down & repair lead where damaged. To avoid damage to faience, bricks above lead course not proposed for removal, so lead cannot be checked or replaced. Capping of brickwork possible, if not exposed over faience.
- X Existing Rainwater Pipes & Hoppers to be rubbed down, any corrosion abraded off, primed & re-painted. Any damaged areas to be repaired or replaced. Lead dressing into hopper to be re-formed once roof behind is laid.
- Y Lead flashing at base of faience tiling, dressed over flat bitumen roof, damaged in areas. Removal of lead could damage faience tiling, so proposal is to dress new roof finish under lead, chased into bottom joint, & patch repair all damaged areas to lead flashing in situ. [YX = damaged to lead flsahing]



Part West Elevation



South Elevation



Part East Elevation

5.0 Paint Analysis

In order to assist in determining the nature, contents and historic colours of paintwork insitu to the Plaza, a number of scrapings were taken and sampled by Lisa Oestreicher Architectural Paint Research.

The next few pages present those findings.

PLAZA CINEMA PORT TALBOT, WALES

Architectural Paint Research Report



July 2019

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5.0 Paint Analysis

Executive summary

As many as twelve separate phases of decoration were recorded on the architectural features examined at the Plaza cinema. This is considered a sufficient number to date back to the initial construction of the building in 1940 and establishes that the property was redecorated at intervals of approximately every five years. However, the first two schemes were notably absent on the metal Crittall-style windows and Foyer entablature, indicating that Scheme 3 was applied ten years later upon the completion of the cinema. Whilst it is known that the metal windows were installed in 1950, analysis also indicates that the Foyer entablature may have also been inserted as part of this second fitting.

Unfortunately, none of the pigmentation identified was helpful in pinpointing the introduction of individual schemes as it was all in common use prior to the construction of the cinema. However, the transition between the initial use of lithopone and lead based paints to titanium coatings was informative as it helped pinpoint those schemes that were applied around c. 1960 or later.

The *Port Talbot Guardian*’s description of the Foyer at the opening of the cinema in 1940 as “tastefully decorated in various shades, with fibrous plaster enrichments in gold and green” was supported by analysis. The lack of strata recorded on the Foyer walls above dado level during Schemes 1-4 raises the possibility that the upper surfaces were wallpapered or decorated with a water-based distemper during its early history. Similarly, evidence indicates that the ceiling bed may have been distempered prior to 1950.

Upon installation in 1950, both the interior and exterior faces of the metal windows were painted an orange shade of red. The fenestration was painted red once more before shades of green became the dominant colour choice. Although there is a lack of consistent paint survival on the windows, the investigations indicate that during the 1970s they were decorated in an ad hoc manner with little attention given to a uniform presentation. Curiously, the metal windows employed hardwood timber frames. It is feasible that these formed part of the first generation of 1940 windows and were retained when the metal windows were installed ten years later.

The ground floor front elevation columns and copper-clad shopfront doors and window cills retained insufficient paint strata to date back to either the initial opening of the cinema in 1940 or its completion ten years later; suggesting that they were originally left undecorated. It is considered unlikely that the architect would have been intended the copper cladding and to a lesser extent the composite stone columns to be painted initially due to the expensive nature of these materials. Analysis suggests that the columns were first painted around 1960, with the shop door and cills not being overpainted until at least five years later. When eventually decorated, the columns appear to have been textured to give the impression of a stone.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive summary

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and brief

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Removal of paint samples
2.2 Examination of paint samples

3. ARCHITECTURAL PAINT RESEARCH

4. CONCLUSIONS

5. APPENDICES

5.1 Sample list
5.2 Sample location photographs

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and brief

The Plaza Cinema is a Grade II listed building located in Port Talbot, South Wales. Construction started on the cinema in 1939, but the advent of World War II meant that it opened in an uncompleted state in March 1940. Work progressed in the post-war period with the Plaza sign, faience tiles and metal windows not being installed for another ten years.

The cinema was constructed in a Modernist style with strong Art Deco influences. Its front elevation boasts cream coloured faience tiling contrasted with a single band of tiles in an eau-de-nil shade of green. Two retail units sited on the corners of the main façade were designed with semi-circular convex shopfronts and enhanced with copper-cladded doors and window cills. The main entrance into the cinema is flanked by columns and projecting blocks of masonry which rise up the face of the building. The façade is punctuated with Crittall-style metal windows and at first floor level doors lead on to a balcony which served as canopy over the front entrance. The Foyer boasts Art Deco cornice mouldings, cream and eau-de-nil floor tiles and an original ticket booth. Built for the independent Woodavon Cinema Company based in Cardiff, the name of the architect for the Plaza Cinema is not known.

The *Port Talbot Guardian* reported on the opening of the cinema in 1940 describing the Foyer as “tastefully decorated in various shades, with fibrous plaster enrichments in gold and green.”

The fortunes of this 1500-seat cinema have waxed and waned over the years. A decrease in audience numbers resulted in the building being converted first to a combined cinema and bingo club in the early 1980s and then solely a bingo club in 1983. It is not considered that these changes of use led to any significant alterations to the building. In 1985 it reopened as a single screen cinema. However, a shift in public viewing habits resulted in its conversion to a multi-screen cineplex four year later. As a consequence, the auditorium was subdivided into four separate screens; with three located in the stalls and a fourth in the circle. The mini-auditorium in the circle eventually ceased operation prior to the closure of the entire building in January 1999. It has stood vacant since that date, gradually falling into very poor state of repair.

The Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council (NPTCBC) purchased the property in 2009 and is currently in the process of developing plans to bring it back into active use and has enlisted the YMCA to help restore, re-adapt and manage the building as a community arts centre. As part of this programme of reuse the Art Deco front section of the building is to be conserved with the rear portion replaced with a multi-purpose structure sited within the original footprint of the building.

NPTCBC has commissioned architectural paint research to gain a better understanding of the decorative appearance of the windows, Foyer and front elevation of the Plaza Cinema in advance of its conservation and re-adaptation. It is anticipated that the findings of this report will inform this process.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Removal of paint samples

Twenty-one samples were removed from the metal windows, architectural features in the Foyer and the front elevation. The samples were taken with a scalpel blade whilst a ladder provided access to high levels. Sample locations can be found on the sample list in Appendix 5.1 and sample location photographs in Appendix 5.2.

2.2 Examination of paint samples

Samples were mounted in polyester resin and cross-sections prepared. The samples were examined microscopically at high magnification under dark field incident and ultra-violet light. Once the sequence of paint layers was established, micro-chemical tests were undertaken to identify pigments on several of key strata. The findings are noted in the Architectural Paint Research and Conclusions sections of this report.

5.0 Paint Analysis

3. ARCHITECTURAL PAINT RESEARCH

3.1 Foyer

Wall surfaces

Sample 7 was taken from the skirting, sample 8 from the dado, samples 9-10 from the dado rail and sample 11 from the upper wall surface.

The dado retained the most complete history composed of 12 phases of decoration over a pink gypsum plaster substrate. This is considered a sufficient number to date back to the construction of the cinema in 1940.

In the initial three schemes the dado was painted in an eau-de-nil shade of green in lithopone based paints pigmented with small flecks of green, Prussian blue, yellow ochre and carbon black. The first of these decorations rested over a lithopone white undercoat blued with a few particles of Prussian blue. All the colourants identified were in common use prior to 1940 and therefore, are not useful for dating the introduction of these decorations. Lithopone based paints were first manufactured in 1876 but early products suffered from discolouration. Improvements led to greater popularity in the first half of the 20th century.

Next, the dado was painted red over a light eau-de-nil undercoat. A light warm mint and two darker mint green decorations were then visible before the dado was painted brown over warm brown and brown preparation layers. The red coating was executed in lithopone based paints with titanium based paints employed from Scheme 5 onwards. Titanium based paints were first introduced commercially in 1920 but did not gain universal acceptance until the end of the 1950s. A range of green, Prussian blue, French ultramarine, iron oxide earth and carbon black pigmentation was noted in these paint mixtures; all once again in common employment prior to the erection of the Plaza cinema.

The dado was subsequently repainted plain titanium white. This was followed by a pinkish red and two mustard yellow decorations, also titanium based.

In contrast, the dado rail ovolo moulding was initially decorated with an imitation gold paint composed of copper flecks in a varnish medium. This coating rested over bluish lithopone white and light grey undercoats and a pink gypsum plaster substrate. Whilst the ovolo moulding does

not appear to have been redecorated in the second phase, in Scheme 3 a deep of eau-de-nil hue was applied over a lighter shade of the same colour.

In the following two phases the ovolo moulding was painted red and in Scheme 6 it was emphasised in black. No further decoration was identified until Scheme 9 when a blue colour was applied. This in turn was followed by a pinkish shade of cream, a warm brown and the existing brown paint mixture.

All the pigmentation identified in the paint strata described above was in common usage prior to the construction of the cinema and therefore are not useful date markers. A similar early use of lithopone based paints superseded by titanium based coatings noted on the dado was also present on the rail.

The adjacent dado rail fillet moulding, sandwiched between two ovolo mouldings, was originally painted gold before two eau-de-nil and one red painted lithopone based decorations were applied over a pink gypsum plaster substrate. No further strata were noted until the penultimate scheme when the fillet was painted warm brown and then brown, in tandem with the ovolo profile.

The skirting retained only its two final black painted decorations over a cement render substrate. The lack of paint history and the identification of a cement rather than plaster surface, suggests that the skirting was re-rendered as part of Scheme 11.

The upper wall surface did not display decoration until Scheme 5 when it was painted a light shade of pink over a titanium white undercoat. These strata rested over a pink gypsum plaster substrate. The lack of early painted decoration indicates that this section of the wall was either paint stripped in its fifth phase of decoration or an easily removable decoration such as wallpaper or water-based distemper was employed during its early decorative history. Water-based distemper is a traditional material which has a long history of use dating back beyond the Middle Ages.

In Scheme 6 the upper walls were painted a deep shade of warm yellow. This was followed by a mauve coloured decoration, a light mustard yellow and the existing cream colour. Once again, none of the pigmentation recorded in the various paint mixtures were introduced commercially after 1940 and therefore were not helpful in dating individual schemes. All the paint strata were titanium based and therefore, most likely applied in the second half of the 20th century.

Foyer Wall Surfaces
Photographic Illustration of Sample

Sample 8 taken from the dado region of the wall, showing its decorative history. Photographed in cross-section under reflected light using a 20X magnification lens. Printed magnification not calculated.

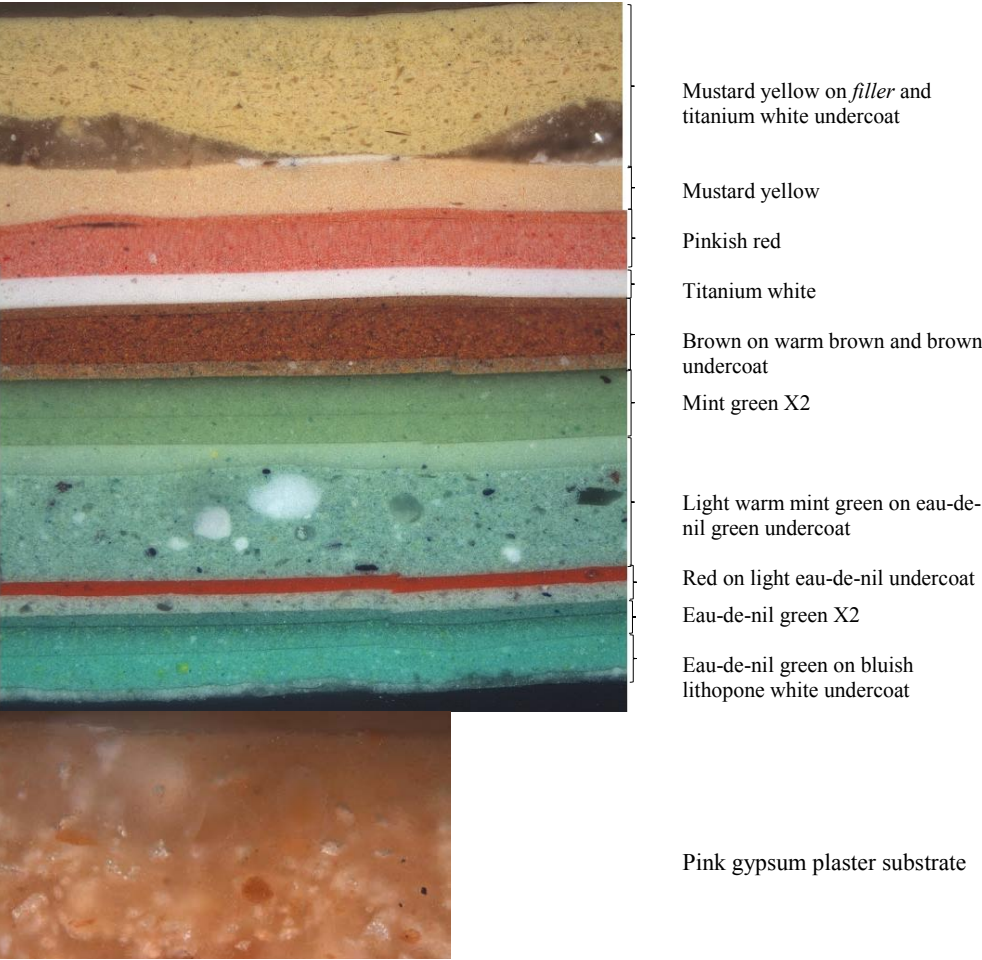


Table 1: Foyer Wall Surfaces

	Sample 7 Skirting	Sample 8 Dado	Sample 9 Dado rail Ovolo moulding	Sample 10 Dado rail Fillet moulding	Sample 11 Upper wall
12 Pre-1999	Black	Mustard yellow on coarse mustard yellow undercoat <i>Filler</i> Titanium white (thin)	Brown on brownish grey and titanium white undercoat (u/c)	Brown on brownish grey undercoat (u/c)	Cream
11 c. 1989	Black <i>Cement render</i>	Mustard yellow	Warm brown on dark brownish grey u/c	Warm brown on dark brownish grey undercoat	Light mustard yellow
10 c. 1985		Pinkish red	Pinkish cream on coarse warm cream undercoat		Mauve
9 c. 1983		Titanium white	Blue on titanium white undercoat		
8		Brown on warm brown and brown u/c			
7		Mint green			
6		Mint green	Black on dark warm cream undercoat		Deep warm yellow on deep warm yellow u/c
5 c. 1960		Light warm mint green on eau-de-nil undercoat	Red		Light pink on titanium white undercoat
4		Red on light eau-de-nil green undercoat	Red on light eau-de-nil green undercoat	Red on light eau-de-nil green undercoat	
3 c. 1950		Eau-de-nil green	Deep eau-de-nil green on eau-de-nil green u/c	Eau-de-nil green	
2		Eau-de-nil green		Eau-de-nil green	
1 c. 1940		Eau-de-nil green on bluish lithopone white undercoat	<i>Imitation gold paint</i> Bluish lithopone white on light grey undercoat	<i>Imitation gold paint</i> Eau-de-nil green on light grey and lithopone white	
Substrate		Pink gypsum plaster	Pink gypsum plaster	Pink gypsum plaster	Pink gypsum plaster

5.0 Paint Analysis

10

Foyer entablature

From the cornice, sample 13 was removed from the bottom banding, sample 14 from the bed, sample 15 from the oval chevron bed and sample 16 from the chevron motif. Sample 17 was taken from the coving.

The entablature elements retained decoration from as early as Scheme 3, believed to have been executed in 1950 upon the completion of the cinema. Except for the bottom banding, the cornice and the coving were formed using a finely ground white gypsum plaster substrate. It is considered likely that these features were manufactured off-site, although the bottom banding was probably formed when the walls were originally plastered in 1940 or reskimmed ten years later upon completion of the cinema. None of the entablature features recorded decoration in Schemes 8-9, indicating a period of limited decorative attention in the Foyer.

Initially, the bottom cornice banding was painted soft black over a light cream coloured translucent coating. Micro-chemical tests and visual observation suggest that the cream layer was an oil-bound distemper; a popular decoration material from the 1870s until the mid-20th century. It was more durable than traditional water-bound distemper, which has been a feature of interior decoration in Britain since before the Middle Ages.

Two light mint green paint mixtures were then applied, the second warmer than the first. A deep warm yellow paint coating can subsequently be seen before the banding was painted a light shade of mint once more.

Next, a light pink paint was recorded prior to the banding being painted titanium white two times. Following the initial oil-bound distemper coating lithopone based paints were employed up to Scheme 5 when they were superseded by titanium based mixtures.

The cornice bed displayed the light cream coloured oil-bound distemper originally. No decoration was recorded in the following phase. However, in Scheme 5 the bed was painted red. The deep warm yellow paint mixture noted on the banding was then applied followed by a blued titanium white paint mixture resting over a dark grey undercoat.

11

In Scheme 10 the bed was painted with imitation gold paint formulated with copper shards in a varnish medium. It rested over a pinkish cream preparation layer. A mustard yellow paint was identified in the penultimate scheme followed by the existing white coating. Except for the initial light cream oil-bound distemper titanium based paint were used throughout.

The oval chevron bed was similarly decorated with the light cream oil-bound distemper originally. A salmon pink coloured lithopone based paint was then visible before the red coating associated with Scheme 5 was applied. The bed does not appear to have been decorated in the following phase. However, the light mint green paint mixture associated with Scheme 7 was subsequently visible.

In Scheme 10 the oval chevron bed was decorated with imitation gold paint followed by two titanium based mustard yellow paint mixtures.

The chevron motif did not retain decoration until Scheme 5 when it was painted a light shade of warm mint green over a dark warm grey undercoat. The deep warm yellow coating noted on the other cornice elements was also applied to the chevron. No further strata were recorded until the imitation gold paint and two mustard yellow mixtures associated with Schemes 10-12 were visible. Titanium based paints were used throughout.

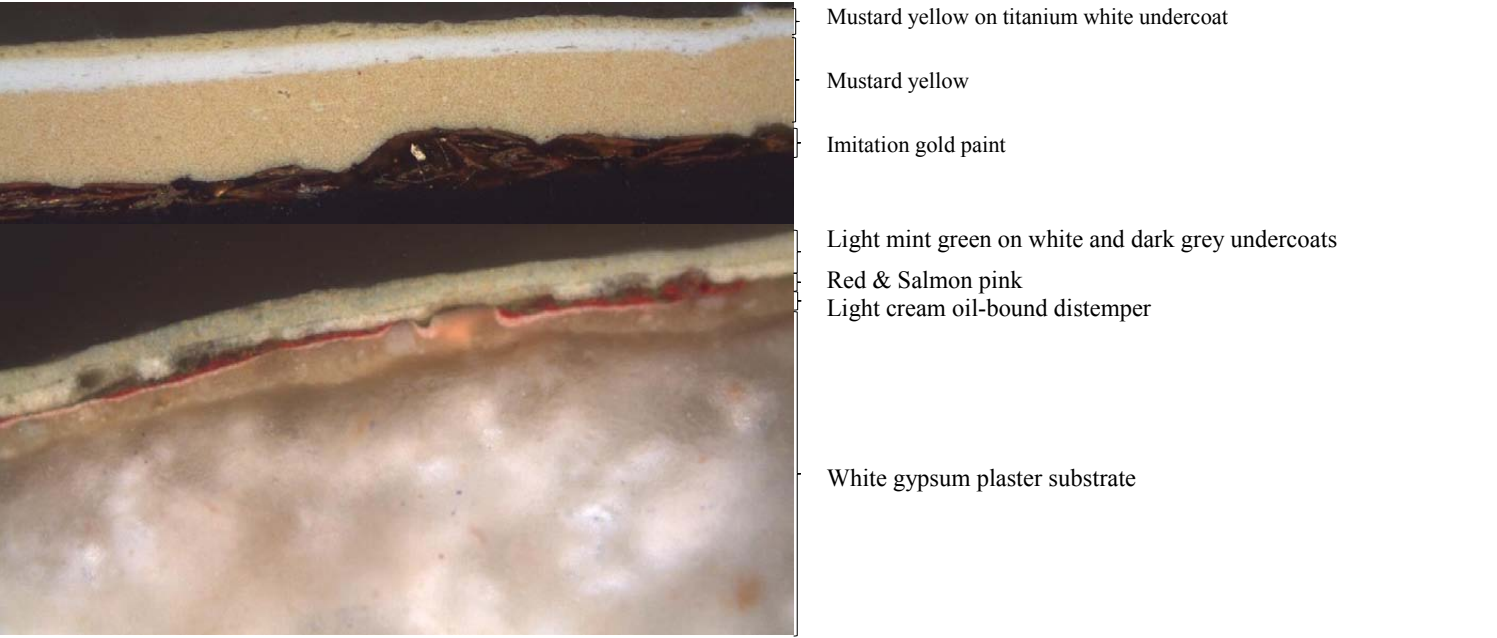
All decoration prior to Scheme 5 was also absent on the coving, possibly the result of isolated paint loss. It was painted a warm cream colour at this time followed by the deep warm yellow paint mixture seen on the other entablature features as part of Scheme 6. In the final three phases the coving was plainly painted titanium white.

All of the pigmentation identified in the various strata were in common use prior to the construction of the Plaza Cinema and therefore, were not useful for dating the application of individual schemes. The introduction of titanium based paints in Scheme 5 is interesting as it suggests a late 1950s or early 1960s application date.

12

Foyer Entablature
Photographic Illustration of Sample

Sample 15 taken from the oval shaped chevron bed, showing its surviving decorative history. Photographed in cross-section under reflected light using a 20X magnification lens. Printed magnification not calculated.



13

Table 2: Foyer Entablature

	Sample 13 Cornice Bottom banding	Sample 14 Cornice Bed	Sample 15 Cornice Oval chevron bed	Sample 16 Cornice Chevron motif
12 Pre-1999	Titanium white	Titanium white	Mustard yellow on titanium white undercoat (u/c)	Mustard yellow on titanium white undercoat (u/c)
11 c. 1989	Titanium white	Mustard yellow on titanium white undercoat	Mustard yellow	Mustard yellow
10 c. 1985	Light pink	<i>Imitation gold paint</i> Pinkish cream	<i>Imitation gold paint</i>	<i>Imitation gold paint</i>
8-9				
7	Light mint green	Blued titanium white on dark grey u/c	Light mint green on titanium white and dark grey u/c	
6	Deep warm yellow on coarse warm yellow undercoat	Deep warm yellow on light warm yellow undercoat		Deep warm yellow
5 c. 1960	Light warm mint green on light pink and dark warm grey u/c	Red	Red	Light warm mint green on dark warm grey u/c
4	Light mint green		Salmon pink	
3 c. 1950	Black paint on light cream oil-bound distemper	Light cream oil-bound distemper	Light cream oil-bound distemper	
1-2				
Substrate	Pink gypsum plaster	White gypsum plaster	White gypsum plaster	White gypsum plaster

5.0 Paint Analysis

Ceiling

Sample 18 was removed from the ceiling bed and sample 12 from the underside of a ceiling beam.

The ceiling bed was first decorated in Scheme 3 with the light cream coloured oil-bound distemper noted on the entablature over a pink gypsum plaster substrate. No further decoration was recorded until Scheme 6 when it was painted a light shade of warm yellow-cream over a titanium white undercoat. A French ultramarine blue coating can then be seen before the existing titanium white decoration was applied.

The underside of the ceiling beam was initially decorated a light shade of warm mint green before the distinctive deep warm yellow paint mixture recorded on the entablature was visible. In Scheme 10 the mauve coloured coating encountered earlier on the upper walls was recorded here also. It was followed by a light shade of mustard yellow and the existing white coating. Modern titanium based paints were used throughout.

The pigmentation identified in the various strata outlined above were in regular employment prior to the construction of the Plaza Cinema and therefore, are not useful for dating the introduction of individual schemes.

3.2 Windows

In the 2nd Floor Office sample 1 was taken from the frame and sample 2 from the bottom rail of Window S1 internally and sample 3 from the exterior elevation bottom rail of Window S4. Sample 4 was removed from the frame and sample 5 from the mullion on the interior face of Window F3 in the 1st Floor Corridor. Sample 6 was taken from the exterior mullion of Window F6 on the 1st Floor Balcony.

The exterior elevation 1st Floor Balcony mullion displayed the most complete paint history consisting of nine phases of decoration. This is considered a sufficient number to date back to Scheme 3, believed to have been executed in 1950 when the Crittall-style windows were installed. Initially, the fragmentary remains of an orange-red paint mixture were visible. A small area of deep red paint was then recorded.

Next, the mullion was painted a dark shade of grey followed by four decorations executed in various shades of green. In Scheme 10 a royal blue paint mixture was noted before the existing warm yellow-green coating was applied. The dark nature of the initial two red coloured decorations made the results of micro-chemical testing difficult to assess. It is considered that these initial phases most likely employed traditional lead based paints with all strata applied from Scheme 5 onwards being titanium based. Lead white was the most commonly used body colour for decorative oil paints from the Classical period up to the end of the 1950s at which time it was superseded by titanium based coatings.

The exterior bottom rail on Window S4 in the 2nd Floor Office displayed an initial bright blue-green decoration over a red ochre primer not seen on the Balcony window. Next, both the Balcony and S4 windows were painted royal blue and then warm yellow-green in unison with one another. It is considered likely that titanium based paints were used throughout.

Internally, the bottom rail of Window S1 and the F3 mullion both retained the initial orange-red decoration over a carbon black primer. A chalk based filler can be seen sandwiched between these coatings on Window S1. Only the fragmentary remains of a titanium white paint layer were then visible on Window S1 with no further decoration recorded. In contrast Window F3 retained the deep red paint mixture noted externally, a dark chocolate brown, a lime green, a light blue and the existing blue-green decorations. It is considered that titanium based paints were most likely used from the dark chocolate brown coating onwards.

Table 3: Foyer Coving and Ceiling

	Sample 17 Coving	Sample 12 Ceiling beam Underside	Sample 18 Ceiling Bed
12 Pre 1999	Titanium white	Titanium white	Titanium white
11 c. 1989	Titanium white	Light mustard yellow on coarse light mustard yellow undercoat	
10 c. 1985	Titanium white	Mauve	Blue
8-9			
7			
6	Deep warm yellow on coarse deep warm yellow undercoat	Deep warm yellow on coarse deep warm yellow undercoat	Light warm yellow cream on titanium white undercoat
5 c. 1960	Warm cream	Light warm mint green	
4			
3 c. 1950			Light cream oil-bound distemper
2			
1 c. 1940			
Substrate	White gypsum plaster	Pink gypsum plaster	Pink gypsum plaster

The timber frames of Window S1 and F3 in the 2nd Floor Office and 1st Floor Corridor were both constructed of hardwood. They displayed an initial light pink titanium based decoration thought to relate to Scheme 10. Whilst no further strata were evident on the Window S1 frame, the F3 frame was subsequently painted with the light blue and blue-green mixtures noted on its adjacent mullion.

The pigmentation identified in the various strata were in common employment prior to the completion of the Plaza Cinema and therefore, were not helpful in dating individual schemes.

In summary, analysis indicates that no decoration survived on the fenestration prior to Scheme 3, believed to have been executed in 1950 when the Crittall-style windows were installed. At that time both the interior and exterior faces of the windows were painted an orange shade of red, being superseded by a deep shade of red in the following phase. Internally, very little post-war decoration survived until the final three decorative cycles. Whilst externally the 2nd Floor Office window did not retain decoration until Scheme 8, a more complete paint history was recorded on the Balcony window. Although it is presumed that since both windows were positioned on the front elevation they would have been uniformly decorated, the lack of early strata at higher level makes this assumption impossible to confirm. Interestingly, by Scheme 8 two different shades of green were employed, once again suggesting a less than comprehensive approach to the decoration by the 1970s. However, from Scheme 10 this oversight was corrected, and they were treated in a uniform manner.

The timber frames were constructed of hardwood. It is feasible that these formed part of the first generation 1940 windows and were retained when the metal windows were installed ten years later.

In terms of colour palette, the metal windows were initially painted in shades of red with green being the most prominent hue thereafter.

5.0 Paint Analysis

18

Foyer Entablature
Photographic Illustration of Sample

Sample 5 taken from the interior elevation of Window F3 mullion located in the 1st Floor Corridor, showing its surviving decorative history. Photographed in cross-section under reflected light using a 20X magnification lens. Printed magnification not calculated.



19

Table 4: Windows

	Sample 1 Window S1 Timber frame Interior elevation 2 nd Floor Office	Sample 2 Window S1 Bottom rail Interior elevation 2 nd Floor Office	Sample 4 Window F3 Timber frame Interior elevation 1 st Floor Corridor	Sample 5 Window F3 Mullion Interior elevation 1 st Floor Corridor	Sample 6 Window F6 Mullion Exterior elevation 1 st Floor Balcony	Sample 3 Window S4 Bottom rail Exterior elevation 2 nd Floor Office
12 Pre 1999			Blue-green	Blue-green	Warm yellow-green	Warm yellow-green
11 c. 1989			Light blue	Light blue		
10 c. 1985	Light pink		Light pink		Royal blue	Royal blue
9					Light green	
8					Olive green	Bright blue-green <i>Red ochre primer</i>
7				Lime green	Deep lime green	
6				Dark chocolate brown	Yellow-green	
5 c. 1960		Titanium white <i>(fragment)</i>			Dark grey on grey u/c	
4				Deep red	Deep red <i>(fragment)</i>	
3 c. 1950		Orange-red <i>Filler</i> <i>Carbon black & red lead primer</i>		Orange-red <i>Carbon black primer</i>	Orange-red <i>(fragment)</i>	
2						
1 c. 1940						
Substrate	Hardwood		Hardwood			

3.3 Front Elevation

Sample 19 was taken from a column at ground floor level. Sample 20 was removed from the entrance door and sample 21 from the window cill of Retail Unit 1, both of which were painted over copper cladding.

The column retained two light stone and six black painted decorations. The initial scheme was formulated using two light stone coloured paint layers. Large chunks of silica were visible in the topcoat, possibly included to give the decoration an uneven surface in imitation of natural stone.

The shop door displayed five phases of decoration. In the first scheme a warm brown paint mixture was identified followed by a black coating. In Scheme 10 the door was painted royal blue in unison with the exterior front elevation windows. Two more black painted decorations were then applied.

The sample removed from the shop window cill was badly disturbed making it difficult to discern its full stratigraphy pattern. However, an initial green coloured paint mixture can be seen followed by a yellow coating. The black and royal blue coatings visible on the door were then identified. The cill was subsequently painted light blue before the existing black decoration was applied.

All the decorations recorded on the column, shop door and window cill employed modern titanium based paints with no pigmentation pre-dating the construction of the property. None of these features retained sufficient paint strata to date back to either the initial opening of the cinema in 1940 or its completion ten years later, suggesting that they were left undecorated initially. This assumption is supported by photographs taken in 1950 which show these elements unpainted. Whilst no similar visual evidence relating to the 1960s-70s was available, they do appear to have been decorated by c. 1980.

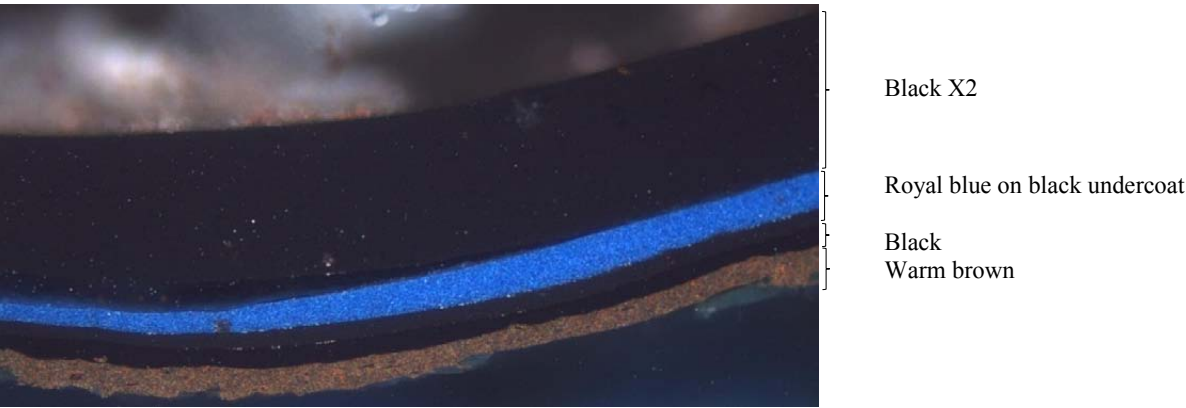
It is considered unlikely that the architect would have been intended the copper cladding and to a lesser extent the composite stone columns to be painted initially due to the expensive nature of these materials. Analysis suggests that the columns were first decorated around 1960, with the shop

21

door and cills not being overpainted until at least five years later. When eventually decorated, the columns appear to have been textured to give the impression of a stone finish.

Front Elevation
Photographic Illustration of Sample

Sample 20 taken from the Retail Unit 1 door, showing its surviving decorative history. Photographed in cross-section under reflected light using a 20X magnification lens. Printed magnification not calculated.



5.0 Paint Analysis

Front Elevation
Photographic Illustration of Sample

Sample 19 taken from the ground floor front elevation column, showing its initial decoration executed in imitation of stone. Photographed in cross-section under reflected light using a 20X magnification lens. Printed magnification not calculated.



Textured paint layer containing large chunks of silica resting over a light stone coloured base coat

Table 5: Front Elevation

	Sample 19 Column	Sample 20 Door Retail Unit 1	Sample 21 Window cill Retail Unit 1
12 Pre-1999	Black	Black	Black
11 c. 1989	Black	Black	Light blue
10 c. 1985	Black	Royal blue on black undercoat	Royal blue on black undercoat
9	Black	Black	Black
8	Black	Warm brown	Sample disturbed
7	Black on grey undercoat		Yellow
6	Light stone		Green
5 c. 1960	Light stone (large chunks of silica) Light stone base coat <i>Imitation stone finish</i>		
1 - 4			
Substrate			

4. CONCLUSIONS

As many as twelve separate phases of decoration were recorded on the architectural features examined at the Plaza cinema. This is considered a sufficient number to date back to the initial construction of the building in 1940 and establishes that the property was redecorated at intervals of approximately every five years. However, the first two schemes were notably absent on the metal Crittall-style windows and Foyer entablature, indicating that Scheme 3 was applied ten years later upon the completion of the cinema. Whilst it is known that the metal windows were installed in 1950, analysis also indicates that the Foyer entablature may have also been inserted as part of this second fitting.

Unfortunately, none of the pigmentation identified was helpful in pinpointing the introduction of individual schemes as it was all in common use prior to the construction of the cinema. However, the transition between the initial use of lithopone and lead based paints to titanium coatings was informative as it helped pinpoint those schemes that were applied around c. 1960 or later.

The *Port Talbot Guardian*’s description of the Foyer at the opening of the cinema in 1940 as “tastefully decorated in various shades, with fibrous plaster enrichments in gold and green” was supported by analysis. The lack of strata recorded on the Foyer walls above dado level during Schemes 1-4 raises the possibility that the upper surfaces were wallpapered or decorated with a water-based distemper during its early history. Similarly, evidence indicates that the ceiling bed may have been distempered prior to 1950.

Upon installation in 1950, both the interior and exterior faces of the metal windows were painted an orange shade of red. The fenestration was painted red once more before shades of green became the dominant colour choice. Although there is a lack of consistent paint survival on the windows, the investigations indicate that during the 1970s they were decorated in an ad hoc manner with little attention given to a uniform presentation. Curiously, the metal windows employed hardwood timber frames. It is feasible that these formed part of the first generation of 1940 windows and were retained when the metal windows were installed ten years later.

The ground floor front elevation columns and copper-clad shopfront doors and window cills retained insufficient paint strata to date back to either the initial opening of the cinema in 1940 or its completion ten years later; suggesting that they were originally left undecorated. It is considered unlikely that the architect would have been intended the copper cladding and to a lesser extent the composite stone columns to be painted initially due to the expensive nature of these materials. Analysis suggests that the columns were first painted around 1960, with the shop door and cills not

being overpainted until at least five years later. When eventually decorated, the columns appear to have been textured to give the impression of a stone.

Table 6: Summary of Surviving Decoration

Scheme	Date	Description
1	<i>c. 1940</i> Plaza Cinema opens. Metal Crittall-style windows not yet inserted. Lithopone based paints identified. The local newspaper describes the Foyer has being “tastefully decorated in various shades, with fibrous plaster enrichments in gold and green.”	The Foyer was decorated with an eau-de-nil green dado and gold painted dado rail. The lack of evidence on the upper walls and ceiling raises the possibility that these areas were decorated with an easily removable coating such as water-based distemper or wallpaper originally. Analysis indicates that the entablature may not yet have been erected. The front elevation column and copper-cladded shop door and window cill were not painted during this period.
2	Lithopone based paints identified.	The Foyer dado was touched up in eau-de-nil green paint. Whilst the dado rail ovolo mouldings retained their Scheme 1 gold painted finish, the central fillet moulding was accented with the same eau-de-nil paint mixture as the dado. No other architectural features examined in the cinema were redecorated at this time.
3	<i>c. 1950</i> Plaza Cinema completed. Metal windows installed. Lithopone based paints identified internally with traditional lead based paints most likely employed on the windows.	The Foyer dado and the central fillet moulding on the dado rail were painted eau-de-nil green with a deeper shade of the same colour used to accent the rail’s ovolo mouldings. Once again, the upper wall area did not retain decoration indicating that it may have been either wallpapered or distempered for the re-opening of the Cinema. The entablature and ceiling in the Foyer employed a light cream coloured oil-bound distemper with soft black painted accents on the cornice. It is feasible that the entablature was inserted during this period. The metal windows were installed and painted an orange shade of red both inside and out. The front elevation column was left unpainted as was the copper cladding on the shopfront door and window cill.
4	Lithopone based paints identified internally with traditional lead based paints most likely employed on the windows.	The Foyer dado and dado rail were painted red with a light mint green and salmon pink coloured cornice. No other architectural features in the Foyer retained their Scheme 4 decoration. The internal and external faces of the metal windows were painted a deep shade of red. The front elevation columns and shopfront copper cladding were left unpainted.

Table 6: Summary of Surviving Decoration (continued)

Appendix 5.1
Sample list

Scheme	Date	Description
5	<i>c. 1960</i> Titanium based paints introduced	In the Foyer, the dado was painted a warm shade of light mint green with a red dado rail and light pink upper walls. The entablature employed a palette of light warm mint green and red. The coving was painted warm cream with the ceiling beams echoing the light mint seen on other architectural features in the room. The ceiling bed treatment has not survived. One interior metal window was found to have been painted white with dark grey used externally at balcony height. The front elevation columns displayed decoration for the first time when they were painted a light stone colour. The inclusion of large chunks of silica in the topcoats may have been used to give texture and the impression of a stone finish. The copper cladding on the shopfront door and cills were left exposed.
6		The Foyer dado was painted mint green with a black dado rail. A deep shade of warm yellow was applied to the upper walls, entablature and ceiling beam. A lighter shade of the same colour was employed on the ceiling. A dark chocolate brown colour was identified on one of the metal windows internally with a yellow-green paint mixture recorded externally at balcony level. The front elevation column was painted a light shade of stone with no textured inclusions. The copper shopfront window cill was overpainted a green colour but the door may have been left undecorated.
7		The Foyer dado was touched up with mint green paint and the cornice was repainted in light mint and white. One interior window was decorated lime green with a deeper shade of lime green used externally at balcony height. The front elevation column was painted black with a yellow colour recorded on the shopfront window cill. It is feasible that the copper cladding was left exposed on the door.
8		The dado in the Foyer was retouched with brown paint. Olive green and bright blue-green paint mixtures were identified on the front elevation metal windows at balcony and 2 nd floor level, indicating a lack of coherency in the external treatment of the building during this period. The front elevation columns were repainted black with a warm brown colour noted on the shopfront door examined.

Sample number	Feature	Room	Number of fragments	Block number
1	Window S1, frame, interior elevation	2 nd Floor Office		PC.1
2	Window S1, bottom rail, interior elevation	2 nd Floor Office		
3	Window S4, bottom rail, exterior elevation	2 nd Floor Office		
4	Window F3, frame, interior elevation	1 st Floor Corridor		
5	Window F3, mullion, interior elevation	1 st Floor Corridor		
6	Window F6, mullion, exterior elevation	1 st Floor Balcony		
7	Skirting	Foyer		PC.2
8	Dado	Foyer	(2)	
9	Dado rail, ovolo moulding	Foyer		
10	Dado rail, fillet moulding	Foyer	(2)	PC.3
11	Upper wall	Foyer		
12	Ceiling beam, underside	Foyer	(2)	
13	Cornice, bottom banding	Foyer	(2)	PC.4
14	Cornice, bed	Foyer	(2)	
15	Cornice, oval chevron bed	Foyer	(2)	

Table 6: Summary of Surviving Decoration (continued)

Scheme	Date	Description
9	<i>c. 1983</i> Plaza Cinema converted to a bingo hall	In the Foyer, the dado was plainly repainted white with a blue dado rail. The balcony window was decorated a light green colour externally. At ground floor level the columns and shopfront door and window cill were uniformly painted black.
10	<i>c. 1985</i> Plaza Cinema re-opened as single-screen picture house	The Foyer was redecorated with a pinkish red dado, a pinkish cream dado rail and mauve coloured upper walls and ceiling beams. The entablature was painted gold with a light pink bottom banding and white coving. The ceiling above was decorated blue. A light pink paint mixture was recorded on the windows internally at 1 st and 2 nd floor level whilst a royal blue colour was noted on the external face of the front elevation windows. At ground floor level the columns were painted black with the royal blue paint mixture employed on the shopfront door and window cill.
11	<i>c. 1989</i> Interior converted to a multi-screen complex	In the Foyer, the skirting retained decoration for the first time when it was painted black over a cement render substrate. These findings suggest that the skirting was re-rendered or inserted as part of Scheme 11. The dado was painted mustard yellow with a warm brown dado rail and lighter mustard yellow coloured upper walls. The entablature employed a mustard yellow and white palette whilst the lighter mustard yellow was applied to the ceiling beams. No strata survived on the ceiling bed relating to this period. The timber frame and metal window in the 1 st floor corridor were painted light blue internally. The front elevation columns and shopfront door were decorated black whilst a light blue paint mixture was identified on the shopfront window cill.
12	<i>Pre 1999</i> Plaza Cinema closes	The Foyer was decorated with a black skirting, mustard yellow dado, brown dado rail and cream coloured walls. The entablature was painted mustard yellow and white. The ceiling bed and beams were also decorated white. Internally, the 1 st floor corridor window was painted a blue-green colour whilst a warm yellow-green hue was recorded on the front elevation windows. The ground floor external columns and shopfront door and window cill were uniformly painted black.

Sample number	Feature	Room	Number of fragments	Block number
16	Cornice, chevron motif	Foyer	(3)	PC.5
17	Cornice, coving	Foyer	(2)	
19	Column	Front Elevation		
18	Ceiling bed	Foyer	(2)	PC.6
20	Door	Front Elevation, Retail Unit 1	(2)	
21	Window cill	Front Elevation, Retail Unit 1		

5.0 Paint Analysis

Appendix 5.2
Sample location photographs



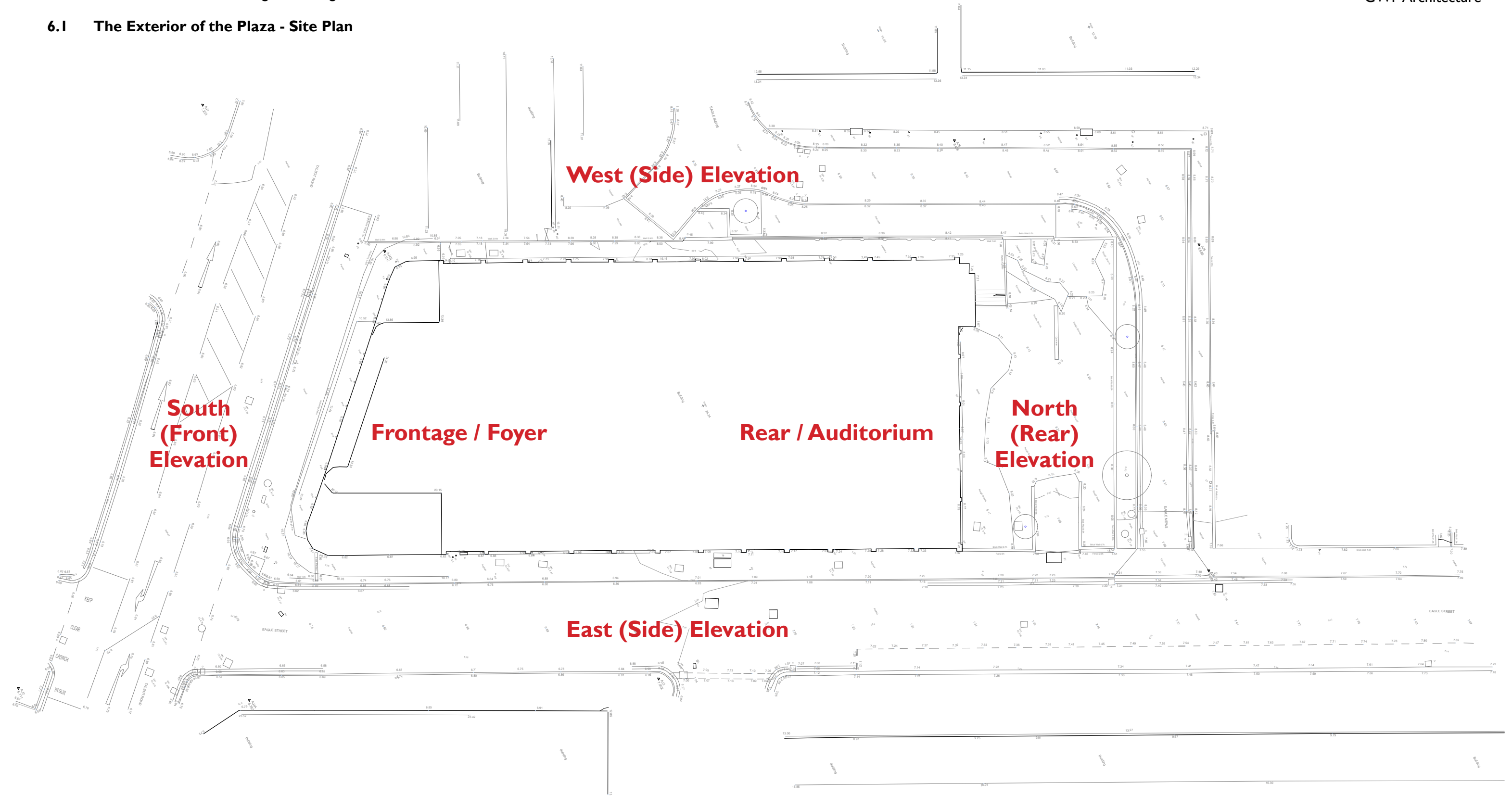
6.0 Detailed Photographic Record

On the next pages are a series of photographs of the Plaza, externally and internally.

The photographs are displayed following the list below.

- 6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza
- 6.2 The Interior of the Plaza - Ground Floor
- 6.3 The Interior of the Plaza - First Floor
- 6.4 The Interior of the Plaza - Second Floor

6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - Site Plan



Station	Easting	Northing	Level
AJ1	276814.404	189582.023	7.233
AJ2	276848.575	189545.438	6.711
AJ3	276873.636	189591.463	7.002
AJ4	276888.040	189635.025	7.484
AJ5	276864.423	189647.441	8.688
AJ6	276847.161	189634.185	8.456
AJ4A	276858.696	189561.420	6.780
AJ4B	276832.162	189589.116	6.917

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All work to be carried out in accordance with current Building Regulations.

Contractors must verify all dimensions at the job before commencing any work or making shop drawings.

Written dimensions should be taken. Do not scale off drawing. Do not take digital dimensions from this drawing.

Any discrepancies to be reported to the Architect.

Scale: 1:150 @A1



GWP Ref: (385)1902		Job Title: Plaza Port Talbot		Topographical Survey	
Client: BAM Construction		Name: (385)1902-GWP-01-01-DR-A-(PA)-0003		Scale: 1:150@A1	
Rev: R01		Date: XX.04.19		Revision: 01	
Comment: First Issue		Dr: DT		First Issue: 00.04.2019	
Drawing Status: S - Work In Progress		Ch: CH		Drawing Status: S - Work In Progress	



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6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the Frontage

The front part of the building is about one third of the overall footprint of the building. Facing onto Talbot Road, the Plaza's frontage is impressive. Clad in cream faience tiling, of a 2x1 ratio orientated vertically, the central block projects forward with half-round fronted turrets on either side, projecting further forward. To the sides, screening the two staircases, the frontage steps back, still clad in cream faience tiling. This sculpted façade is capped with a row of projected tiles sitting on a lead sheet which is scalloped as it dresses down the wall. A further course of tiling below is a band of tiles a quarter the depth of the other tiles, this time of eau-de-nil (green) in colour.

To the sides and the front of the central projected section are a series of Crittall-style steel-framed windows – four on the south side, two per floor, and two on the north side, one per floor, and a tripartite window on the upper floor of the frontage, below which is a recessed balcony area. Either side of the central windows are tall, small in plan, are projected columns which originally supported two deep relief sculptures, then supported lights, now support nothing. Above and in between these columns, onto which the lights would have been directed, is a simple sign spelling out 'PLAZA'.

Wrapping around the full frontage, sailing over the ground floor is a curved canopy, completely in keeping with so many Art Deco cinemas. Whereas the central section continues down below the canopy, with the entrance screen flanked by the curved turrets, to the sides the ground floor does not set back as the upper floor do, but following the curve of the canopy, albeit set back, are curved glazed shopfront with a masonry stall riser. Most of the masonry below the canopy, apart from the top 800mm or so, is painted black.

This front section of the building is not symmetrical. It is trapezoidal in plan, with the front face parallel to the road and the rear line parallel with the rectilinear form of the rest of the building. This makes the south side wall of the projected central section much longer than the north wall. Its roof is flat, with a very tall parapet.

The roof to the front section is flat and covered with asphalt.



View of the Plaza from the south



View of the Plaza from the west



View of the Front Elevation from the south west

6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the Frontage



View of the top (faience) section of the front elevation



View of the left hand side (faience) section of the front elevation



View of the right hand side (faience) section of the front elevation

6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the Frontage



View of the 'PLAZA' sign



View of the left hand side of the front elevation

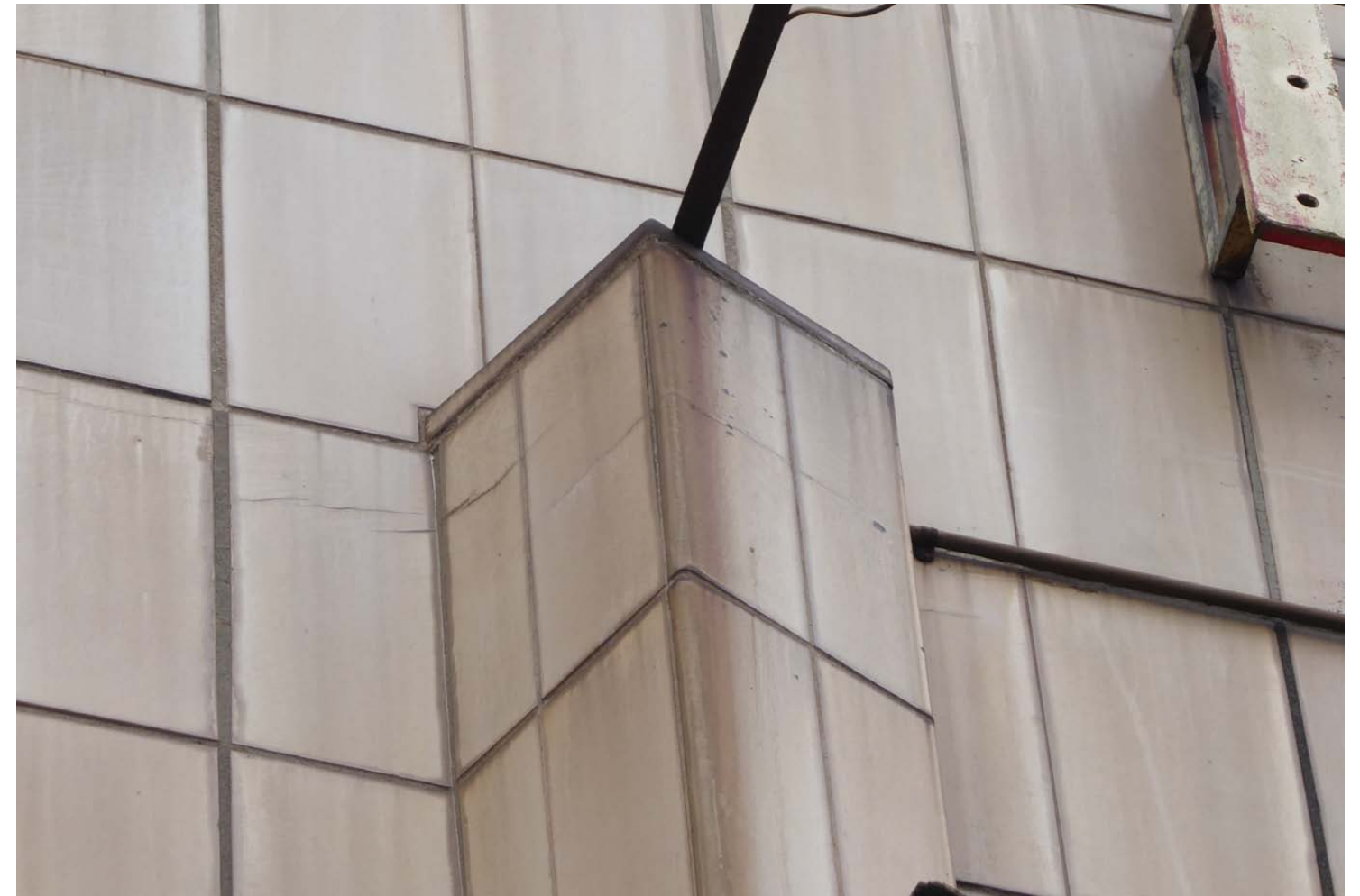


View of the three windows to the left hand side, facing west

6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the Frontage



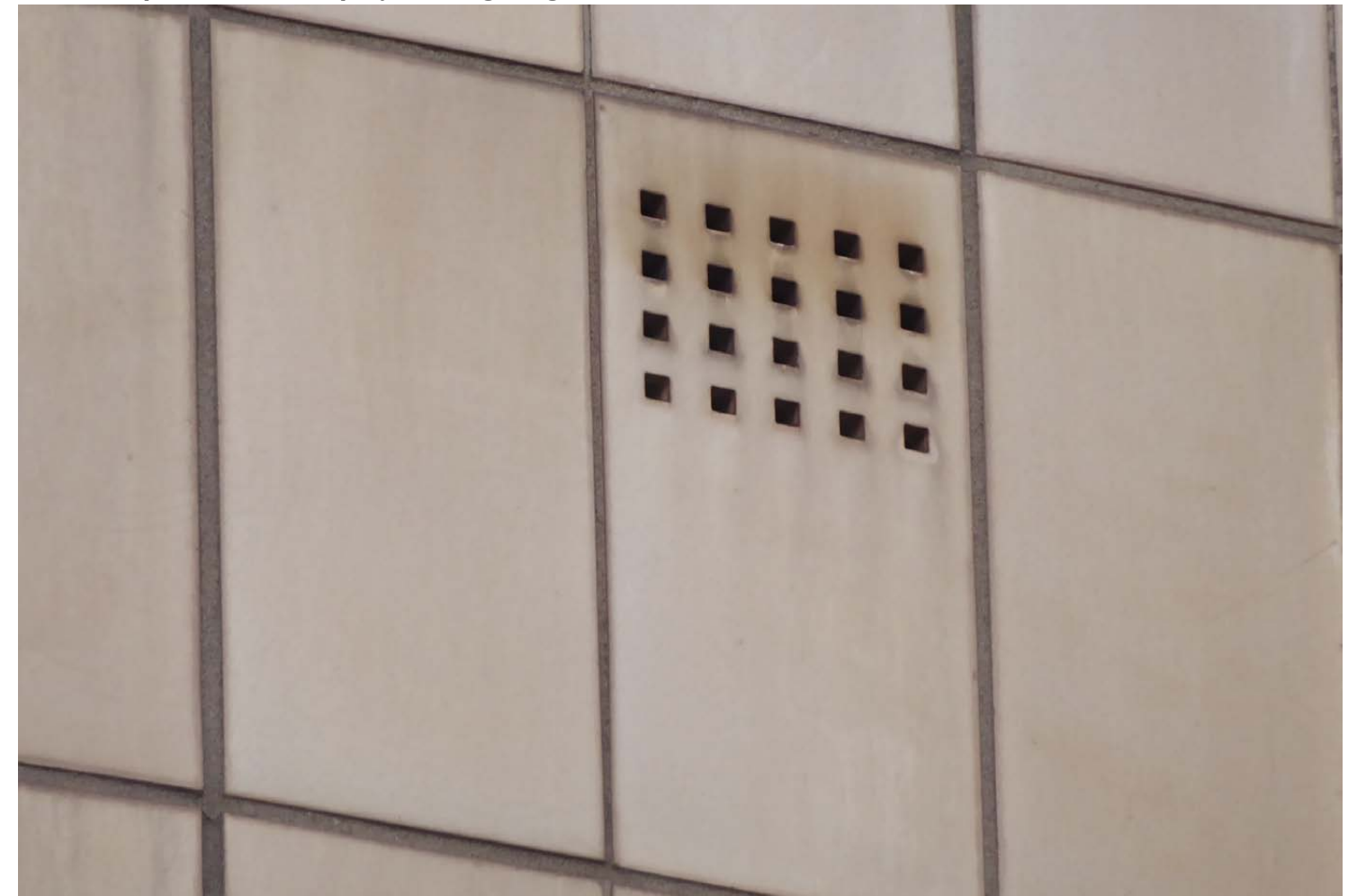
View of top of curved end with ornate lead dressing and faience brick capping



View of top of one of the projected lighting columns



View of the base of the faience tiling to the asphalt roof to the canopy with a lead dressing



View of one of the louvred faience panels

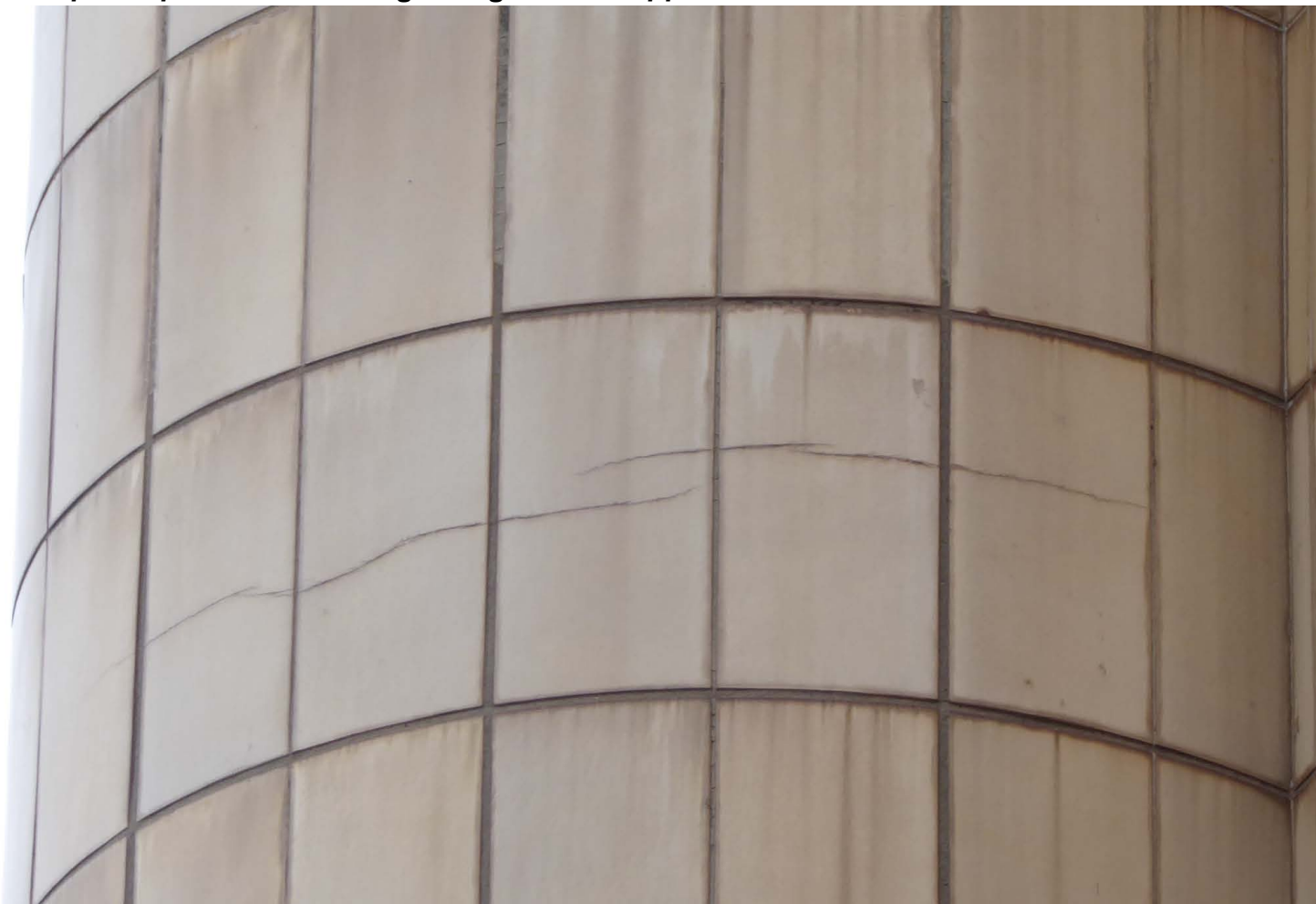
6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the Frontage



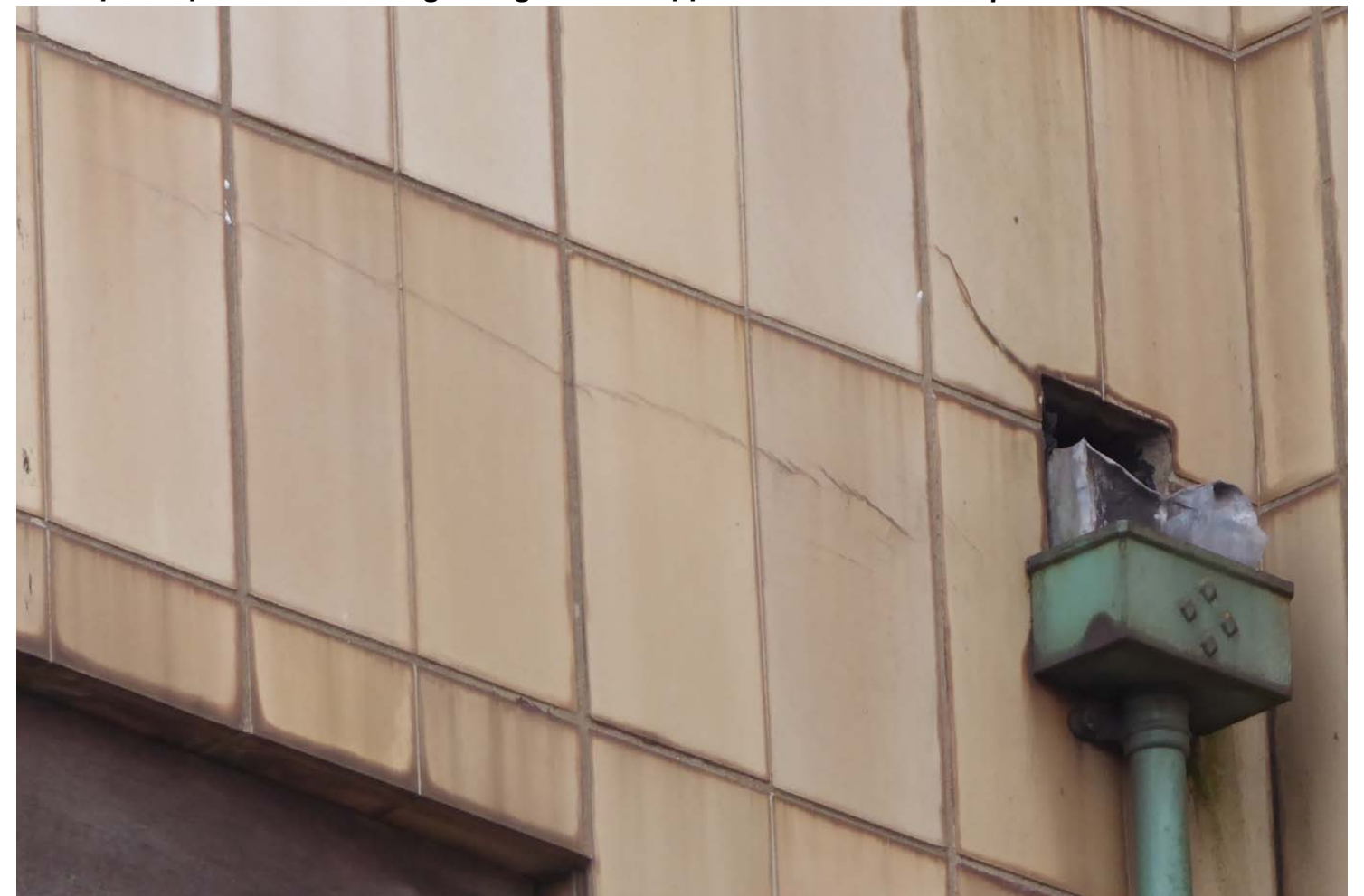
View of one of the cracks running through a series of faience tiles



View of one of the cracks running through a series of faience tiles near the top



View of one of the cracks running through a series of faience tiles on one of the curved ends



View of one of the cracks running through a series of faience tiles by the rainwater hopper

6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the Frontage



View of a crack running through a series of faience tiles on the top of one of the lighting columns



View of a badly defaced series of faience tiles



View of a metal fixing in a faience tiling discolouring the tiles



View of a badly defaced faience tile

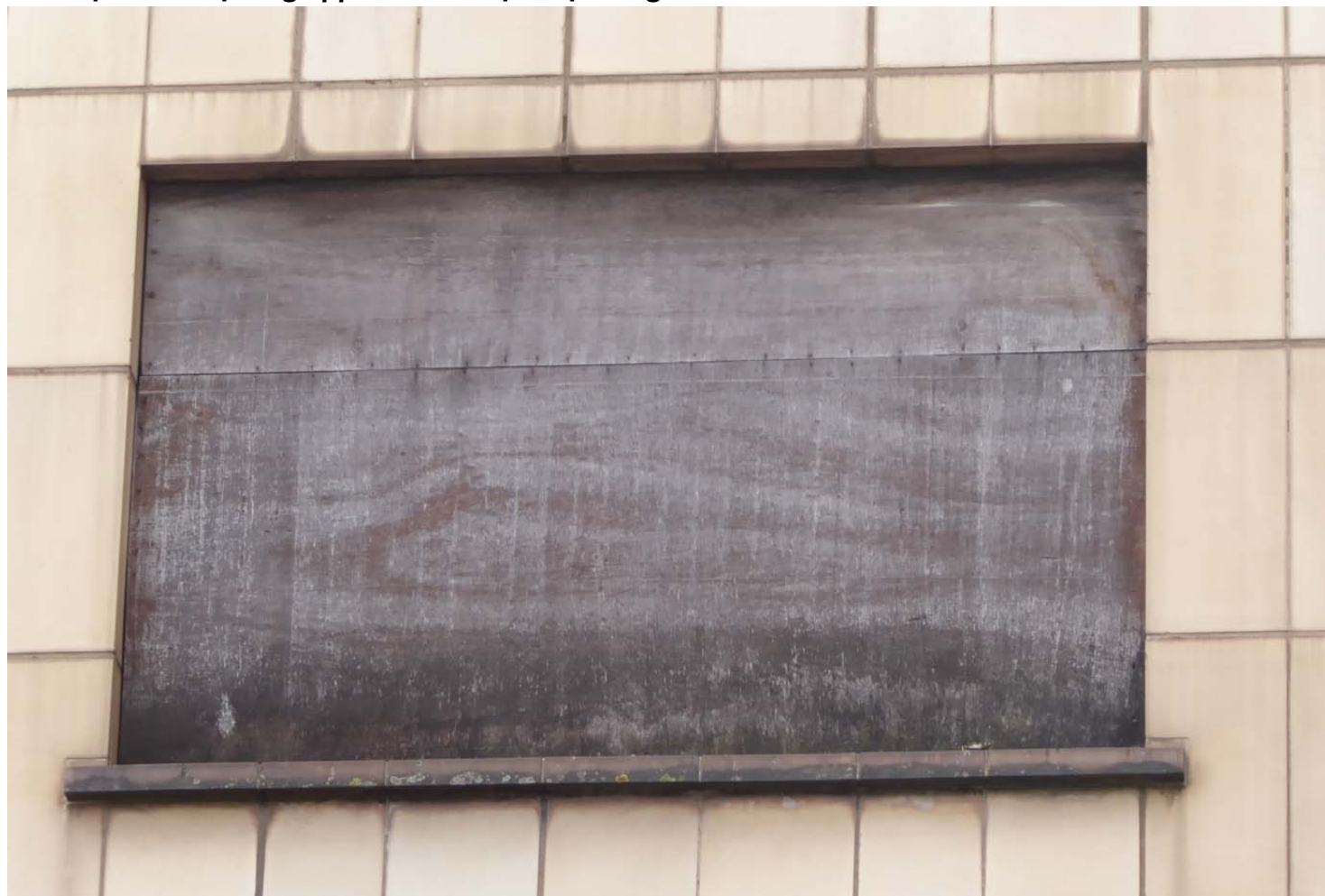
6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the Frontage



View of the east-facing upper section of the frontage



View of the two higher windows on the east facing section of the frontage



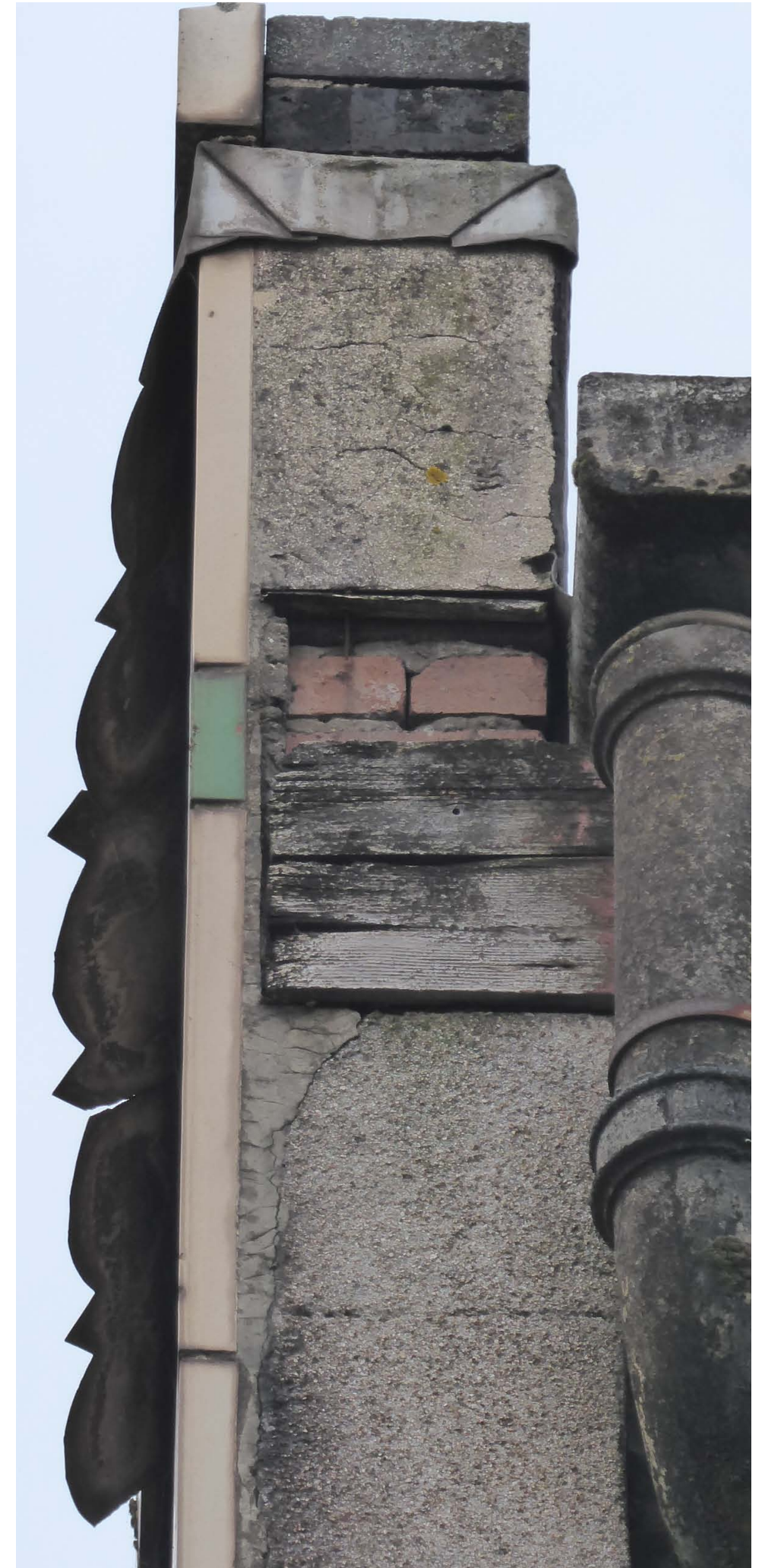
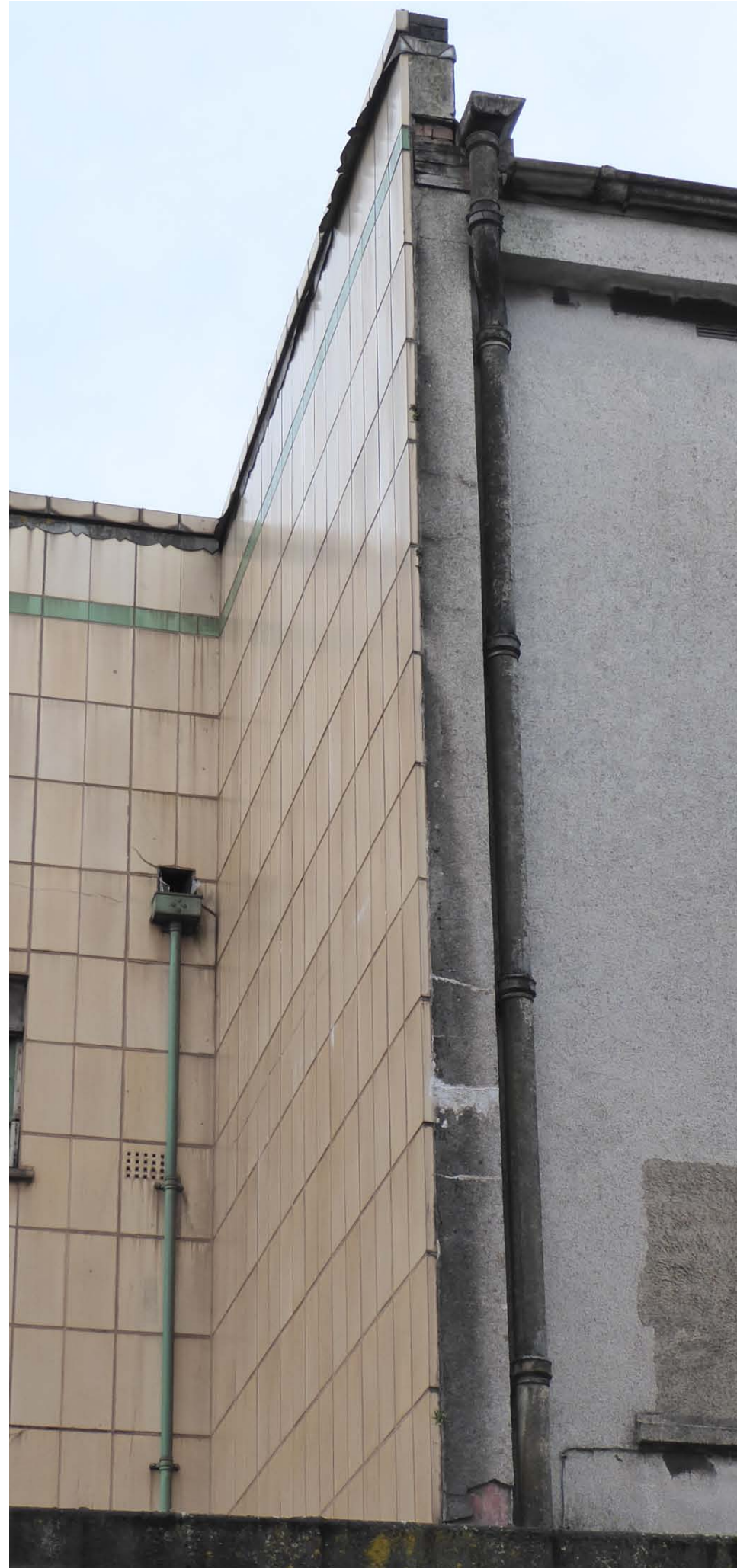
Detailed view of the top left window on the east facing section of the frontage



Detailed view of the top right window on the east facing section of the frontage

6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the Frontage

On this page is three photographs showing the edge of the front-facing faience-tiled wall with the tiles adhered to the concrete wall behind.



View of top showing two courses of bricks over lead capping

6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the Frontage

The rainwater goods are of cast iron with the downpipes round. To the front section, the flat roof drains out through holes in the faience tiling to rectangular hoppers leading to circular downpipes. Against the cream faience tiling, the rainwater goods are of eau-de-nil green.



6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the East Side



View from Talbot Road / Eagle Street junction looking at south east corner



View of Eagle Street (east-facing) Elevation



View of left-hand side of Eagle Street (east-facing) Elevation



View of right-hand side of Eagle Street (east-facing) Elevation

6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the East Side

The rear part of the building is about two thirds of the overall footprint of the building.

In stark contrast to the frontage, this rear section is unimpressive. Its three exposed elevations, onto Eagle Street and Eagle Mews, take the form of what is assumed to be reinforced concrete columns at regular centres (supporting beam which span the full width of the cinema) with roughcast rendered masonry panels in between, set back from the face of the columns.

The render is of a grey/cream colour and there are a number of openings at various levels within the bottom half of the elevations, almost all blocked up.

The roof to the main body of the building is hipped, with the easternmost hip continuing down to beyond the line of the general eaves level, making the rear elevation lower than the two sides. The two side elevations have a level eaves for three quarters of its length and then the eaves drop down to the rear elevation.



View of windows (and blocked up windows) at high level



View of rear (rendered) section of Eagle Street (east-facing) Elevation

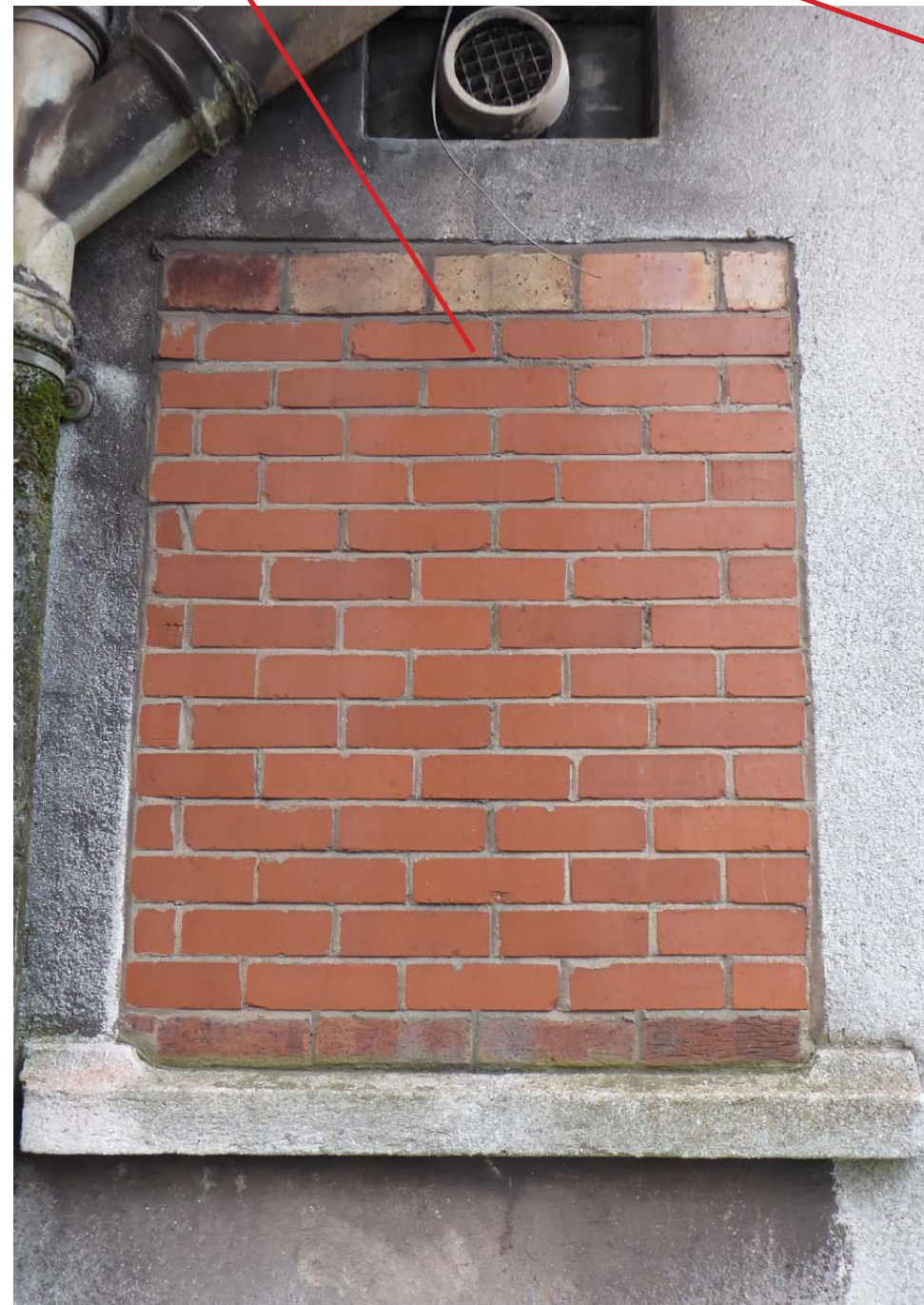


Detailed view of glass block window and one blocked up windows at high level

6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the East Side



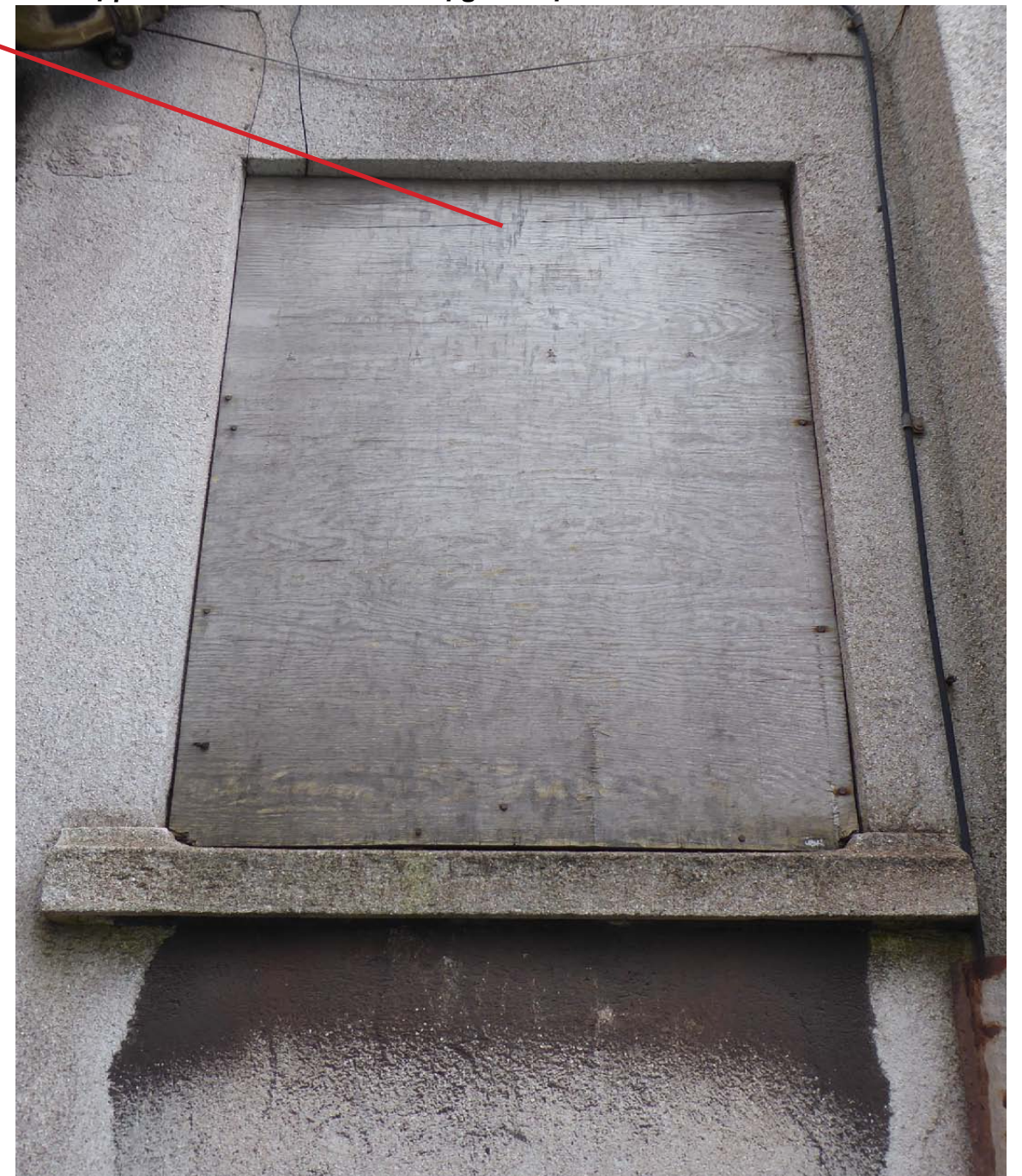
View of external door to rear of Retail unit



View of bricked up window to ground floor to Retail unit Toilet



View of part-boarded vent to rear of ground floor to Retail unit



View of boarded up window to ground floor to Male Toilets

6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the East Side



View of boarded up windows to ground floor to Male Toilets



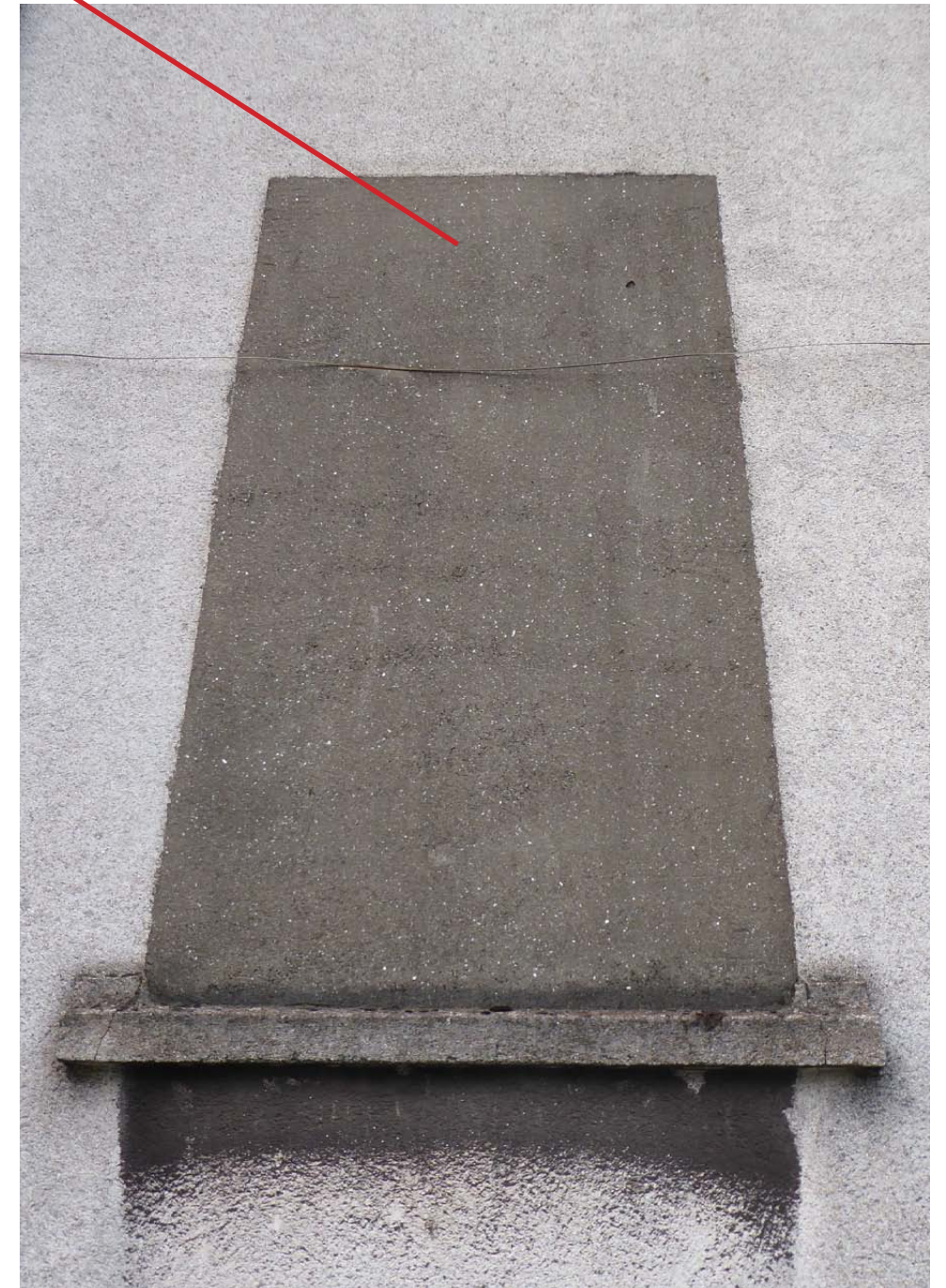
View of boarded up door to ground floor emergency exit from foyer



View to damaged window to first floor toilet

6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the East Side

On this page are photographs of the 3no. bricked up and rendered windows openings to the auditorium, with the left hand one to the east cinema.



6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the East Side



View of blocked / boarded up windows and door to auditorium



View of boarded up emergency exit door from auditorium



View of top of exit door

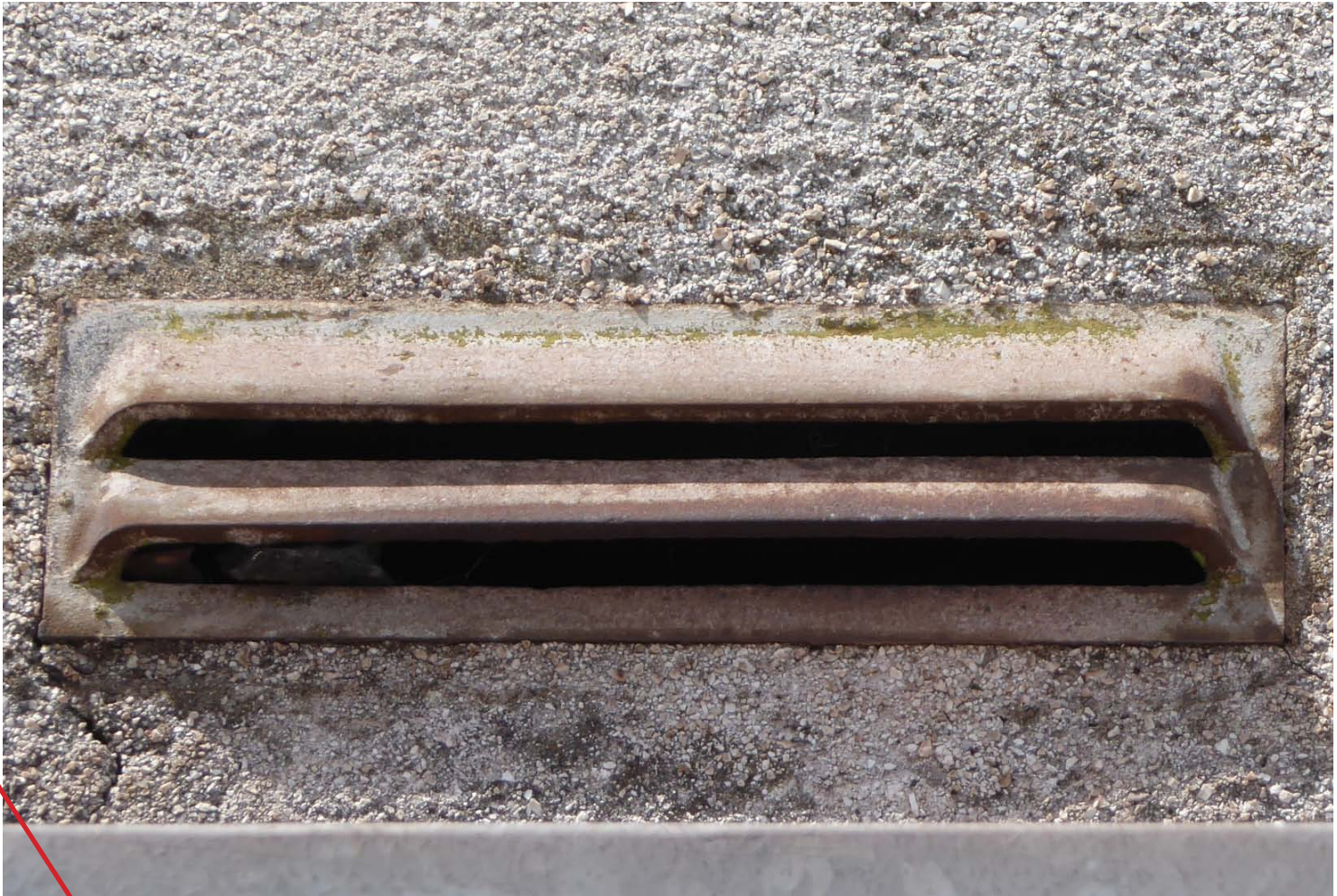


View of threshold of exit door (note terrazzo & chequerboard nosing)

6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the East Side



View of two of the broken low vents to the auditorium and cinema



View of one of the few intact low vents to the auditorium and cinema



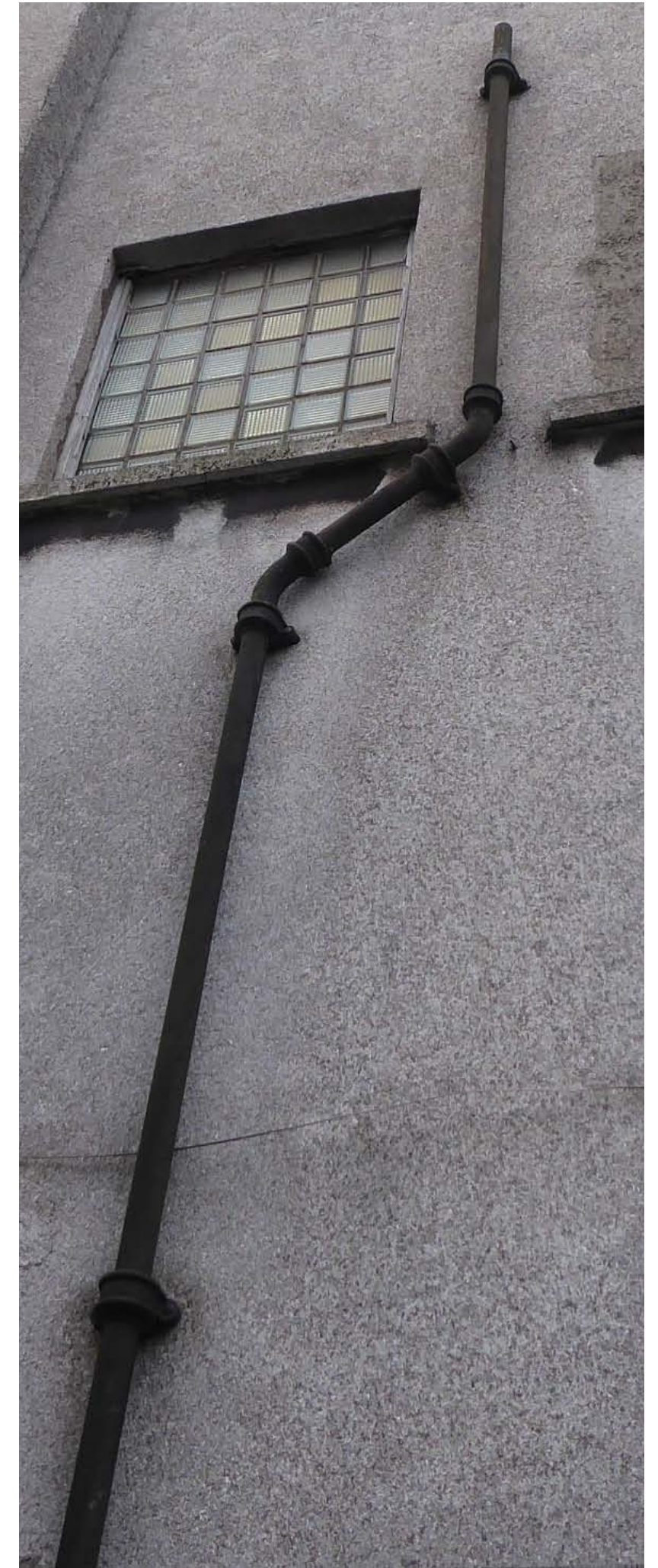
View of one of the broken low vents to the auditorium and cinema



View of one of the broken low vents to the auditorium and cinema

6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the East Side

The rainwater goods are of cast iron with the downpipes round. To the rear section, the gutters are moulded half-round and both gutters and downpipes are painted black. The hoppers are white plastic.



6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the Rear



View from the north east corner



View from the north west corner



View of the rear (south) elevation



View from the north west corner looking at more of the side elevation

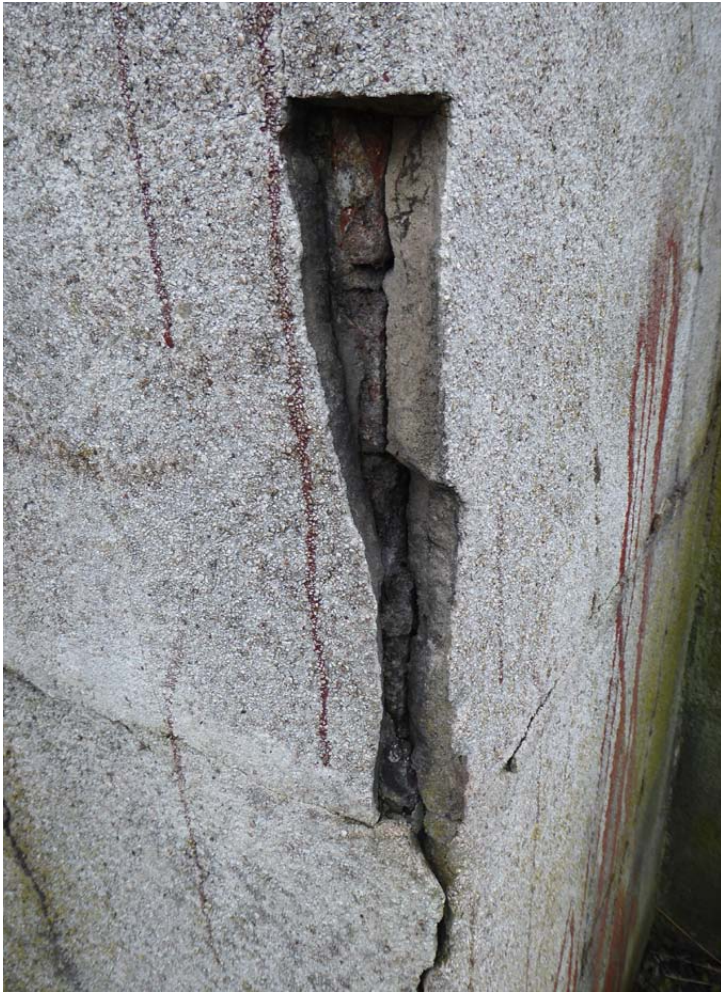
6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the Rear



View of damaged render to the rear elevation showing the concrete frame and brick infill



View of vent tower to the north west corner



View of damaged render to vent tower



View of projected exit lobby to rear of stage with external steps



View of projected exit lobby to rear of stage with external steps

6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the West Side



View of west elevation

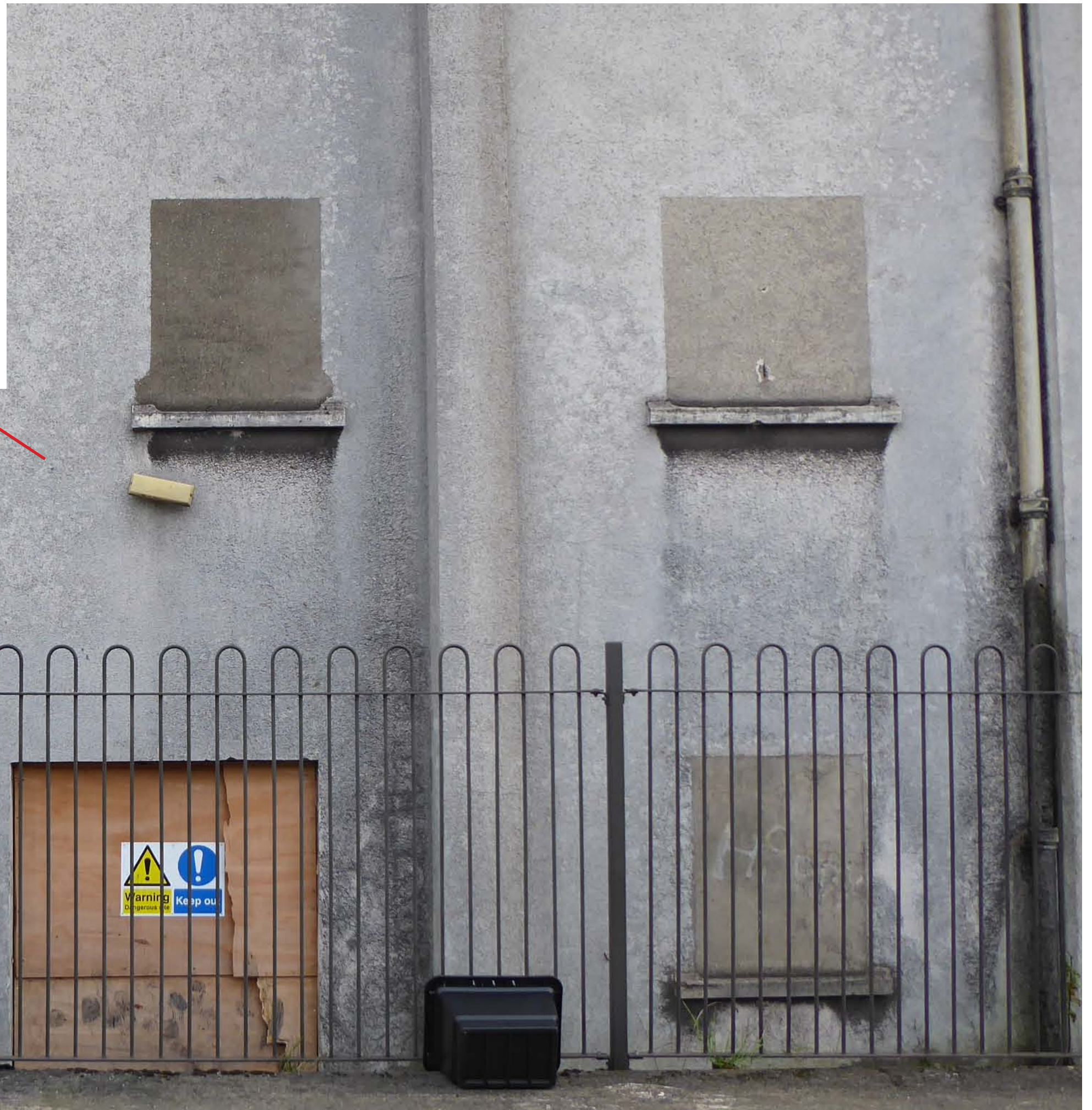


View of central section of west elevation looking from Eagle Mews



View of Right of Way with Plaza to the left and Eagle Mews housing to the right

6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the West Side



View of the blocked and boarded up windows and exit door to the left hand side of the west side elevation

6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the West Side



View of the blocked & boarded up windows and exit door to the central section of the west side elevation



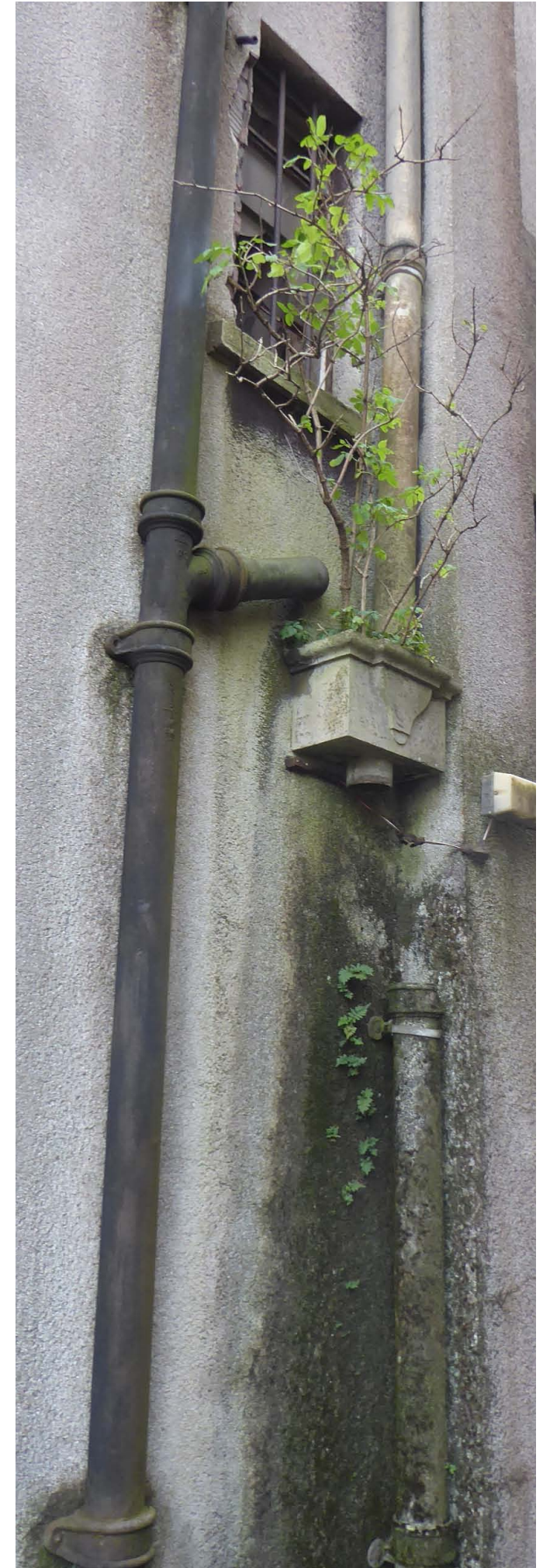
View of the windows and blocked up windows to the upper right hand side of the west side elevation



View of the windows and blocked up windows to the lower right hand side of the west side elevation

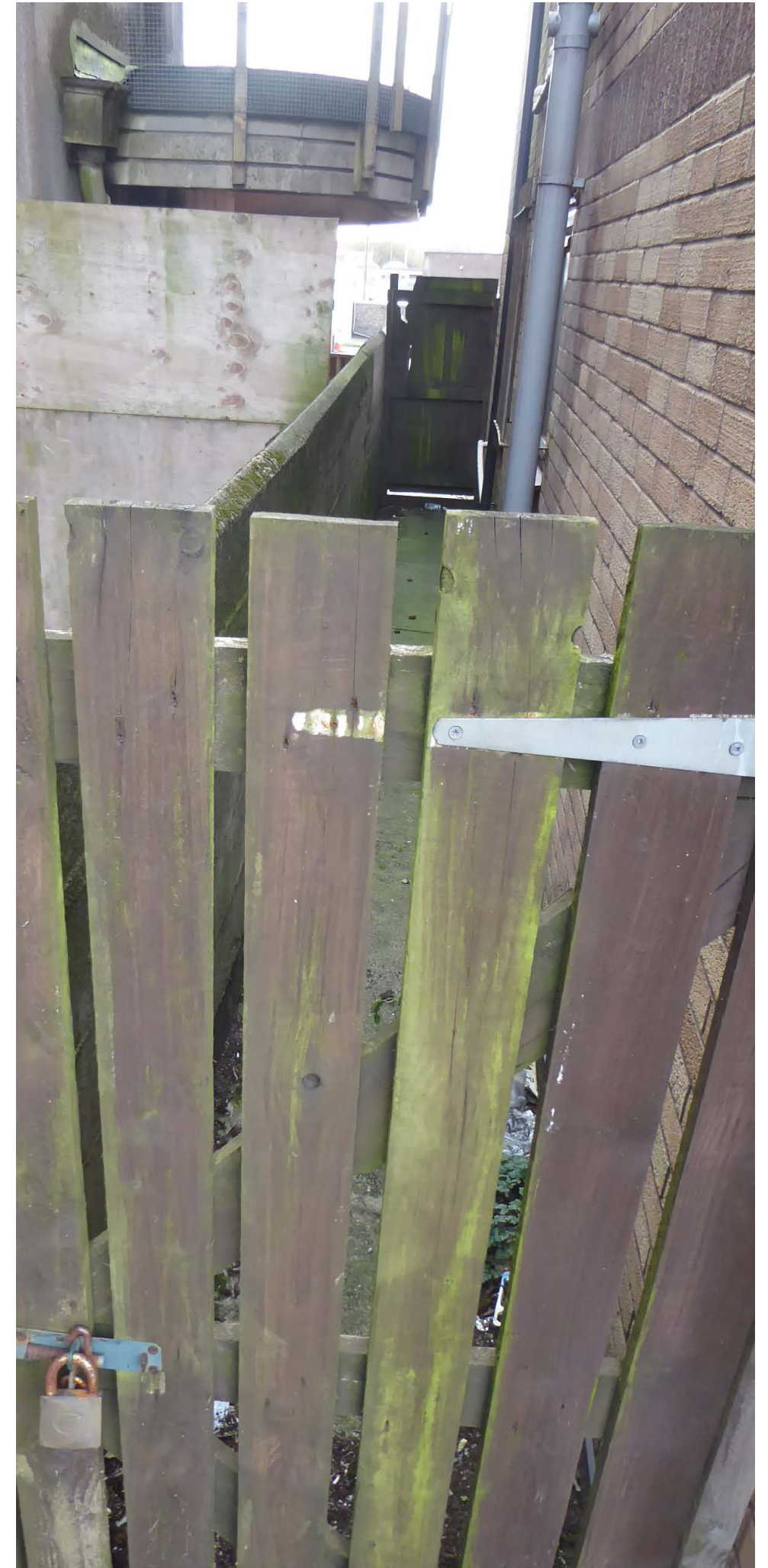
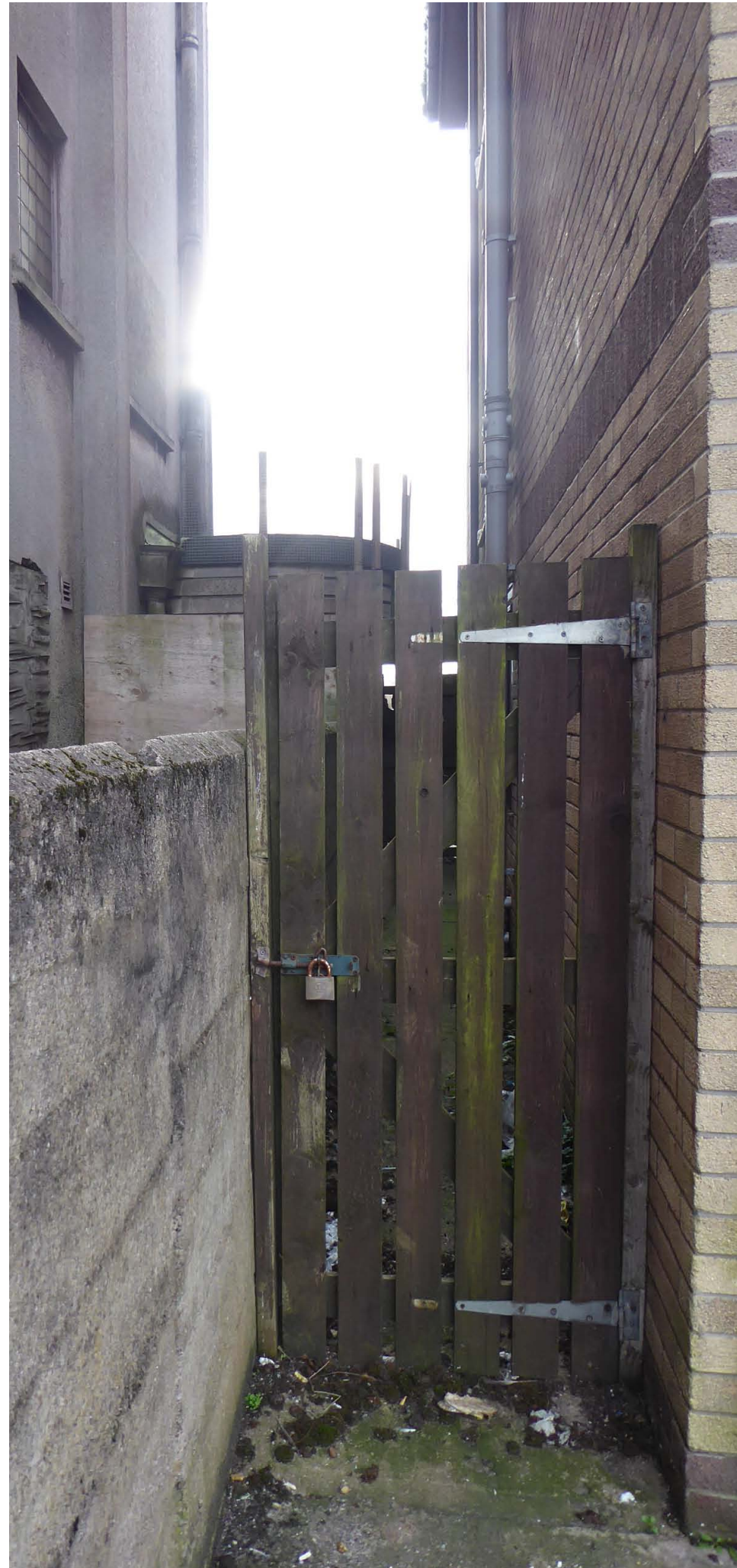
6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the Rainwater Goods

The rainwater goods are of cast iron with the downpipes round. To the rear section, the gutters are moulded half-round and both gutters and downpipes are painted black. The hoppers are white plastic.



6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the Right of Way

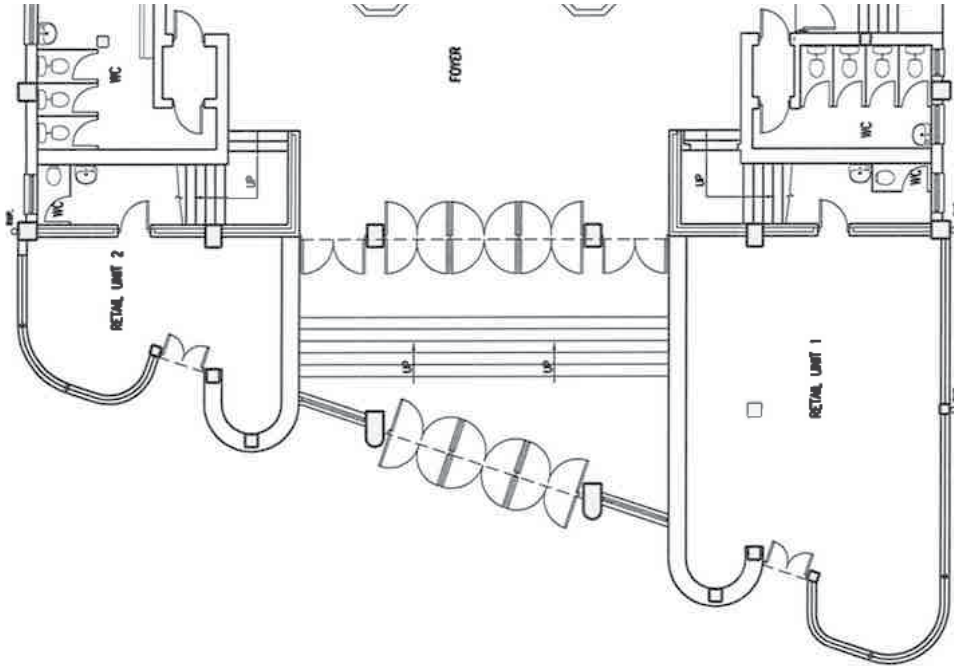
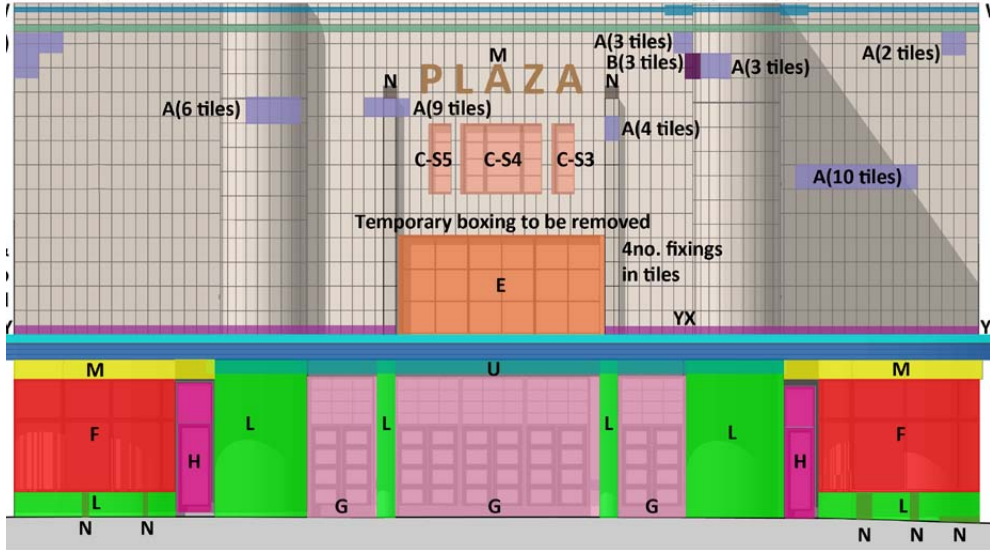
In between the west side of the Plaza's frontage and the adjacent Eagle Mews houses is a narrow Right of Way with gate access.



6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the Frontage

The mark up to the right and the list below describes the materials to the lower section of the front elevation, as photographed below:

- F Thick single-glazed shopfront glazing with curved ends, within timber frame and rounded bronze cill over timber cill plate. Much of glazing broken or missing.
- G Timber-framed glazed entrance doors & overlights. Plastic louvres & metal plates currently covering outside face of the overpanels. Some glass panes are broken. Brass art deco handles lost.
- H Timber glazed doors to retail units, with timber-framed glazed overpanels. Some glass panes are broken.
- L Masonry stall riser with curved bays, rendered & painted black.
- M Reconstituted stone cladding panels to zone above openings, not painted. Some areas of lost pointing.
- N Areas of damage to masonry stall risers.
- U Metal downstand to canopy.
Metal frame & panels severely corroded.



6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the Frontage



View of the left hand side of the bank of main entrance boarded up



View of the right hand side of the bank of main entrance boarded up



View of the bank of main entrance boarded up with the metal canopy overhead

6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the Frontage



View of the main entrance from the left hand (south west) corner



View of the right hand side of the Plaza lower frontage with the metal canopy overhead

6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the Frontage



View of the west side of the frontage with the Retail unit to the right



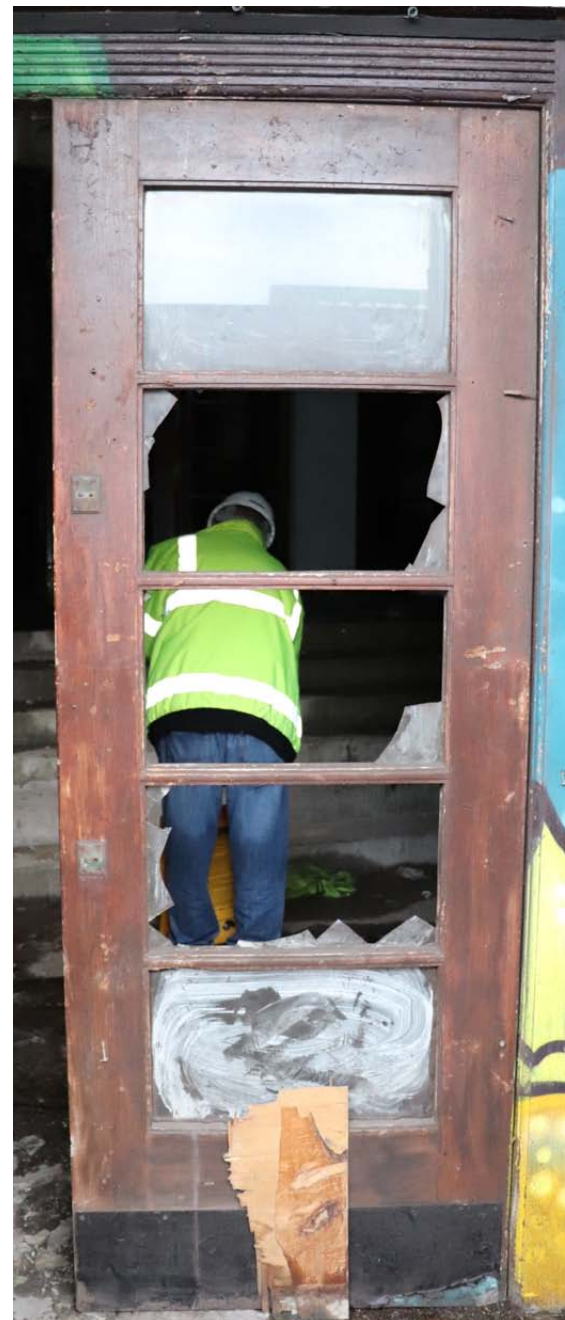
Views of the blocked up window to west side of the frontage to the Toilet behind the small Retail unit



6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the Frontage

On this page are photographs of the details of the front main entrance timber-framed glazed doors with the 5no. horizontal panes.

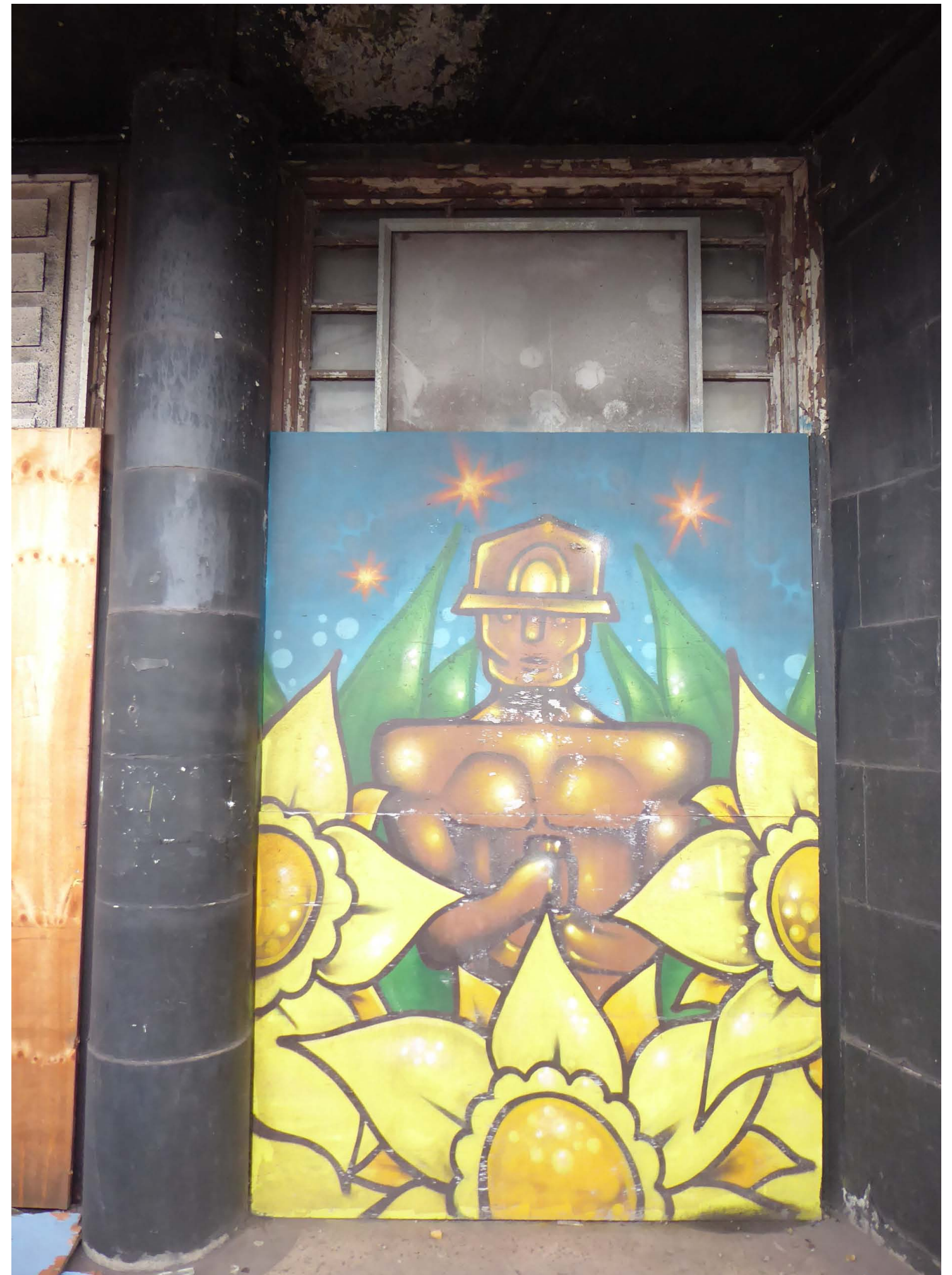
Note that the brass push plates remains, however the pull handles have been lost.



6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the Frontage



View of boarded up left hand large timber-frame glazed screen to side of bank of entrance doors



View of boarded up right hand large timber-frame glazed screen to side of bank of entrance doors

6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the Frontage



View of glazed overhead panel above side glazed panel, with metal plate affixed



View of louvres over the top of the bank of main entrance timber doors



View of left hand side of louvres & overhead panel over the top of the bank of main entrance doors & screen



View of right hand side of louvres & overhead panel over the top of the bank of main entrance doors & screen

6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the Frontage



View of left hand black-painted curve-ended projection to left of main entrance doors



View of right hand black-painted curve-ended projection to right of main entrance doors

6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the Frontage

On this page is a photograph of the front of the curved timber-framed glazing to the smaller (left-hand) Retail unit.



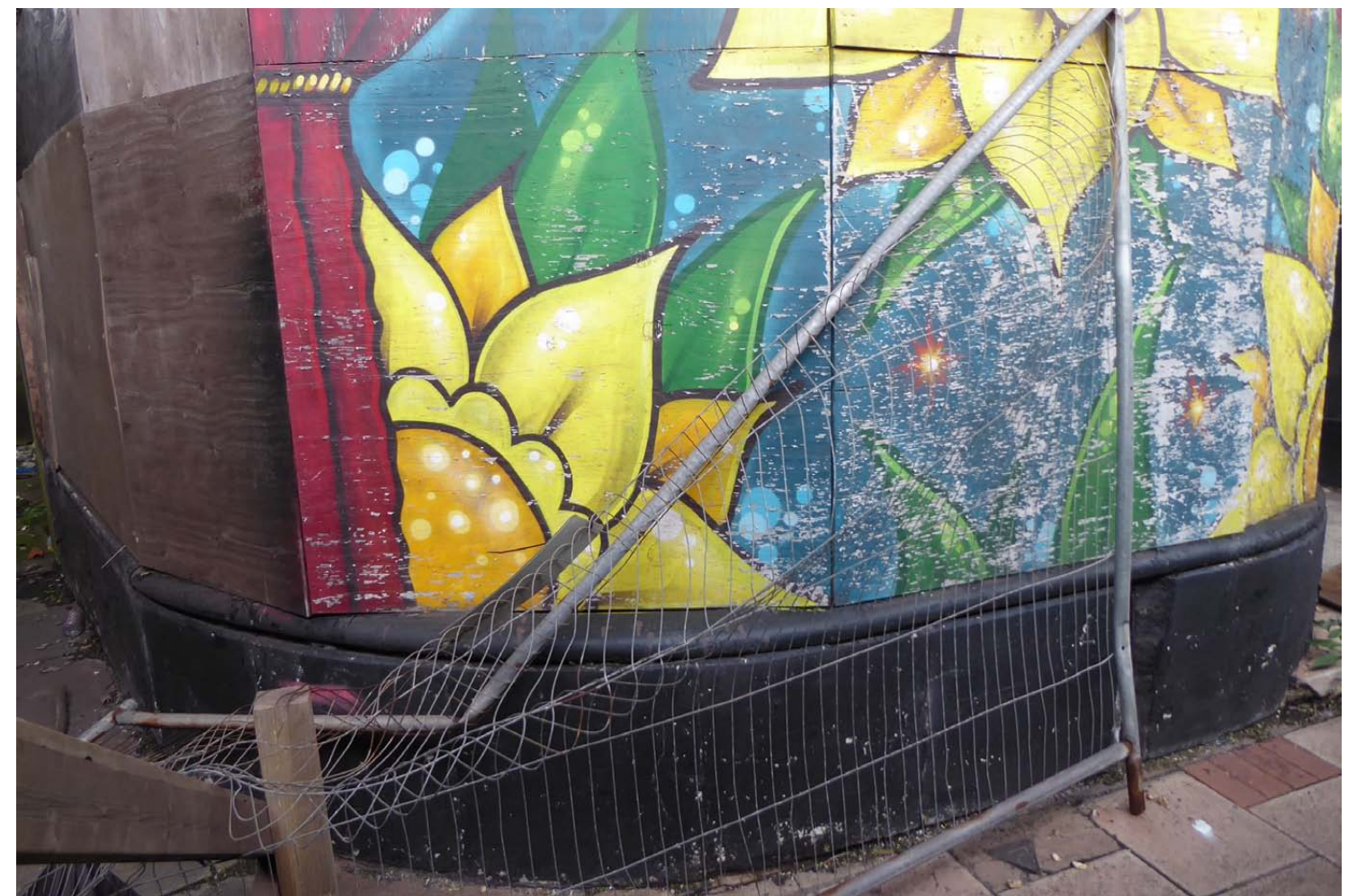
6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the Frontage - On this page are photographs of the curved and straight timber-framed glazing to the larger (right-hand) Retail unit.



6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the Frontage - On this page are photographs of the curved frontage to the timber-framed glazing to the larger (right-hand) Retail unit.



6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the Frontage - On this page are photographs of the curved frontage to the timber-framed glazing to the smaller (left-hand) Retail unit.



6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the Frontage



View of glazed door and overpanel to single door to left hand (smaller) retail unit



View of glazed door and overpanel to single door to right hand (larger) retail unit

6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the Frontage



View of head of glazed overpanel to door to right hand (larger) retail unit with faience facing



View of head of glazed overpanel to door to left hand (larger) retail unit with faience facing



View of side of steel-framed glazed door to right hand retail unit with pull handle & perimeter glazing

6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the Frontage



Views of top of curved frontage to timber-framed glazing to the smaller (left-hand) Retail unit, showing curved glass to corners & straight glass to ends and sides, with middle sections boarded up due to loss of glass



Views of top of curved frontage to timber-framed glazing to the smaller (left-hand) Retail unit, showing profile to timber head section and lower transom section and vertical glazing bar with aerofoil profile

6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the Frontage



Views of top of curved frontage to timber-framed glazing to the larger (right-hand) Retail unit, showing profile to timber head section and lower transom section and vertical glazing bar with aerofoil profile



Detailed views of profile to lower timber transom section with metal clip supporting transom

6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the Frontage - These photographs show the curved & rounded black painted metal cill to the retail units' glazing with the black painted reconstituted stone / concrete plinth, damaged in areas



6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the Frontage - These photographs show the curved & rounded black painted metal cill to the retail units' glazing with the curved timber support behind / underneath it with holes for fixings



6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the Frontage - These photographs show the black painted reconstituted stone / concrete curved plinth underneath the metal cill which is cracked & damaged in a number of areas



6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the Frontage - These photographs show the black painted reconstituted stone / concrete curved plinth underneath the metal cill which is cracked & damaged in a number of areas



View of spalled surface to plinth showing corroded steel behind which presumably caused the spalling



View of spalled surface to plinth



View of spalled surface to plinth showing corroded steel behind which presumably caused the spalling

6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the Frontage



View of terrazzo threshold to main entrance



View of terrazzo threshold to right hand (larger) retail unit



View of terrazzo threshold to left hand (smaller) retail unit

6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the Frontage - The photographs below show the concrete / reconstituted stone faced canopy edge with the asphalt of the flat roof dressed over the edge



6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the Frontage - The photographs below show, in more detail, the concrete / reconstituted stone faced canopy edge with the asphalt of the flat roof dressed over the edge



View of the 2no.rebates in the canopy edging providing an articulated profile

6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the Frontage - The photographs below show the underside of the reinforced concrete canopy over the frontage (in poor condition) with its rebated canopy edge and asphalt dressed over



6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the Frontage - The photographs below show the underside of the reinforced concrete canopy over the frontage with examples of the lost plaster, spalled concrete & exposed re-bar



6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the Frontage - The photographs below show the underside of the reinforced concrete canopy over the frontage with examples of the lost plaster, spalled / cracked concrete & exposed re-bar



6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the Frontage - The photographs below show the underside of the black-painted steel dropped section below the canopy across the central section of the entrance frontage, which is original



6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the Frontage - The photographs below show details of the black-painted steel dropped section below the canopy with the metal (and board) panels within a metal hung frame



6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the Frontage



View of edging to metal dropped section to canopy with edging set back from canopy edge



View of two panels abutting each other where 'T' section support appears to have been lost



View of edging to metal dropped section to canopy with edging set back from canopy edge



View of edging to metal dropped section to canopy with edging set back from canopy edge

6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the Frontage - The photographs below show details of the black-painted steel dropped section below the canopy with the metal (and board) panels within a metal hung frame



This photograph show how badly the panels and frame have been corroded



This photograph show how badly the panels and frame have been corroded

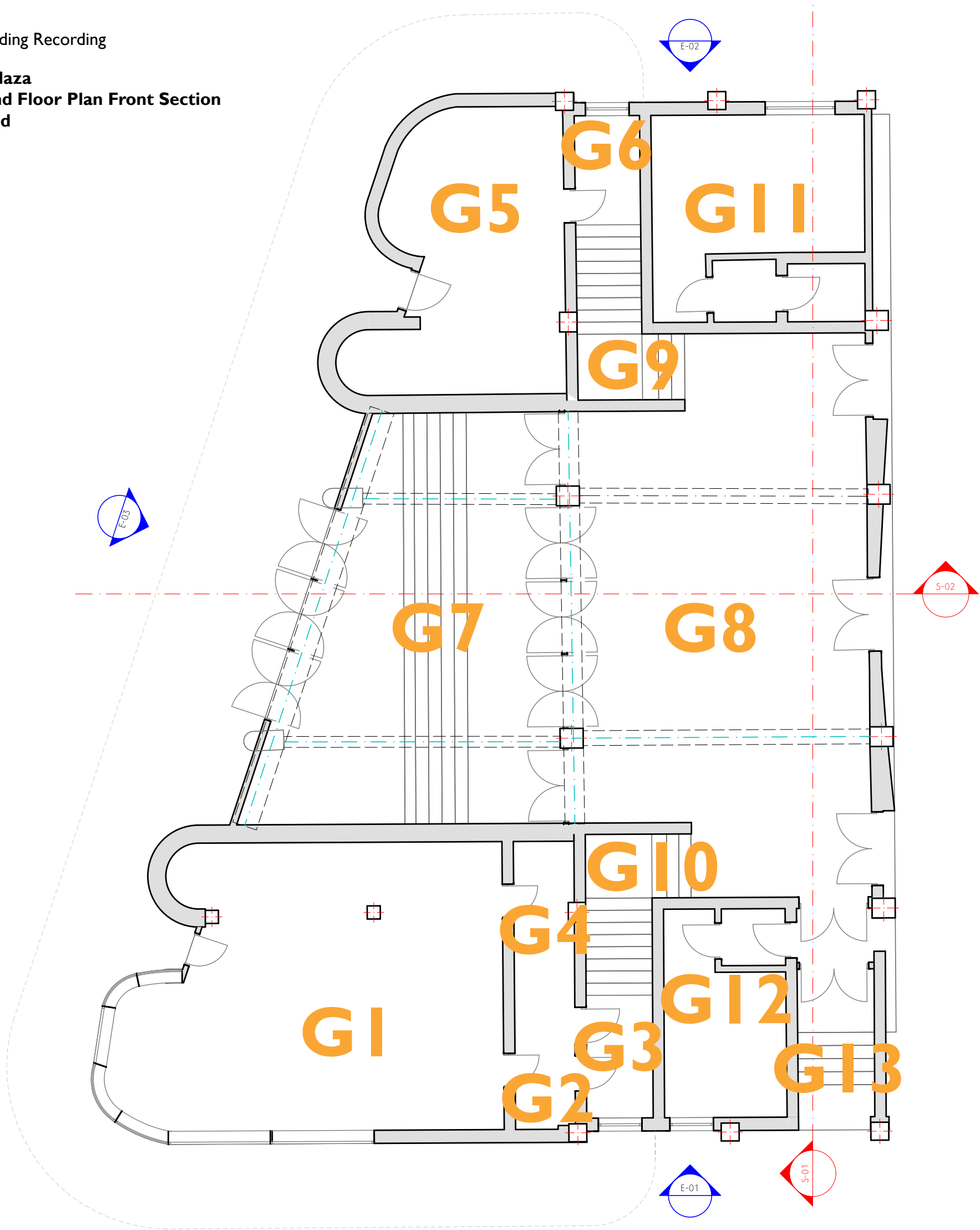


Detailed view of panels and frame

6.1 The Exterior of the Plaza - the Frontage - To the south east corner of the canopy, in front of the large retail unit, is a part-damaged plastic internally illuminated 'Pepsi' sign identifying a 'Cafe'



6.2 The Interior of the Plaza
- the Frontage Ground Floor Plan Front Section
with spaces annotated



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Written dimensions should be taken.

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GWP Job Reference (385)1902

Job Title Plaza Port Talbot

Client

BAM Construction

Existing Ground Floor Plan

Name (385)1902-GWP-01-01-DR-A-(PA)-0010

Scale 1:200@A3 Revision 01

Drawn/Checked DT/RT First Issue XX.04.2019

Drawing Status S - Work In Progress

BlMcloud: BlMServer-HP - BlMcloud Basic for ARCHICAD 22/(385)1902-GWP-01-XX-W3-A-1B-PortTalbot-P01

G1 - South Retail Unit

To the south west corner of the plan is the long retail space with a curved glazed end facing the street, with the curved lintol supported on two slender steel columns. It has plastered walls and a plastered reinforced concrete ceiling, both painted pink.

The curved glazed end can be seen with most of its glazed panels infilled with plywood. The internal cill is timber and the external cill is a curved painted brass section.

The ceiling paintwork and plaster is in a very poor condition with the concrete soffit also in a poor condition, with reinforcement bar exposed.

The flooring is grey insitu terrazzo with separating strips between bays.

Much of the glazing has been lost or damaged, with some plywood boarding infills and some glass over-painted, however, much, albeit not all, of the slender timber framing remains.

To the left hand side of the space is a long counter unit, the floor to which is slightly raised, with vinyl flooring. There is a run of shelving behind.

There is one square column in the centre of the counter unit.

The external door is timber-framed with timber surrounds to a large central glazed pane and long perimeter panes with square corner panes. There is a large glazed over-panel.



View looking from the External Door towards the back of the space

GI - South Retail Unit



View of Rear of the unit with the Toilet & Kitchenette accessed to the right and the Store to the left



View of Shop Counter to left hand side of space



View of Main Entrance from rear of space, with Glazing to left and Counter to right

G1 - South Retail Unit



View of Glazing with Curved End and two Steel Columns



View of Main Entrance from rear of space, with Glazing to left and Counter to right



A Timber Glazing Mullion



Panoramic View of Glazing with Curved End and two Steel Columns and full extent of boarded up glazing panes

G1 - South Retail Unit



View peeling Paint, damaged Plaster and damaged Concrete Soffit to Ceiling



View peeling Paint, damaged Plaster & damaged Concrete Soffit to Ceiling with exposed Reinforcement



View the grey insitu terrazzo with separating strips between bays



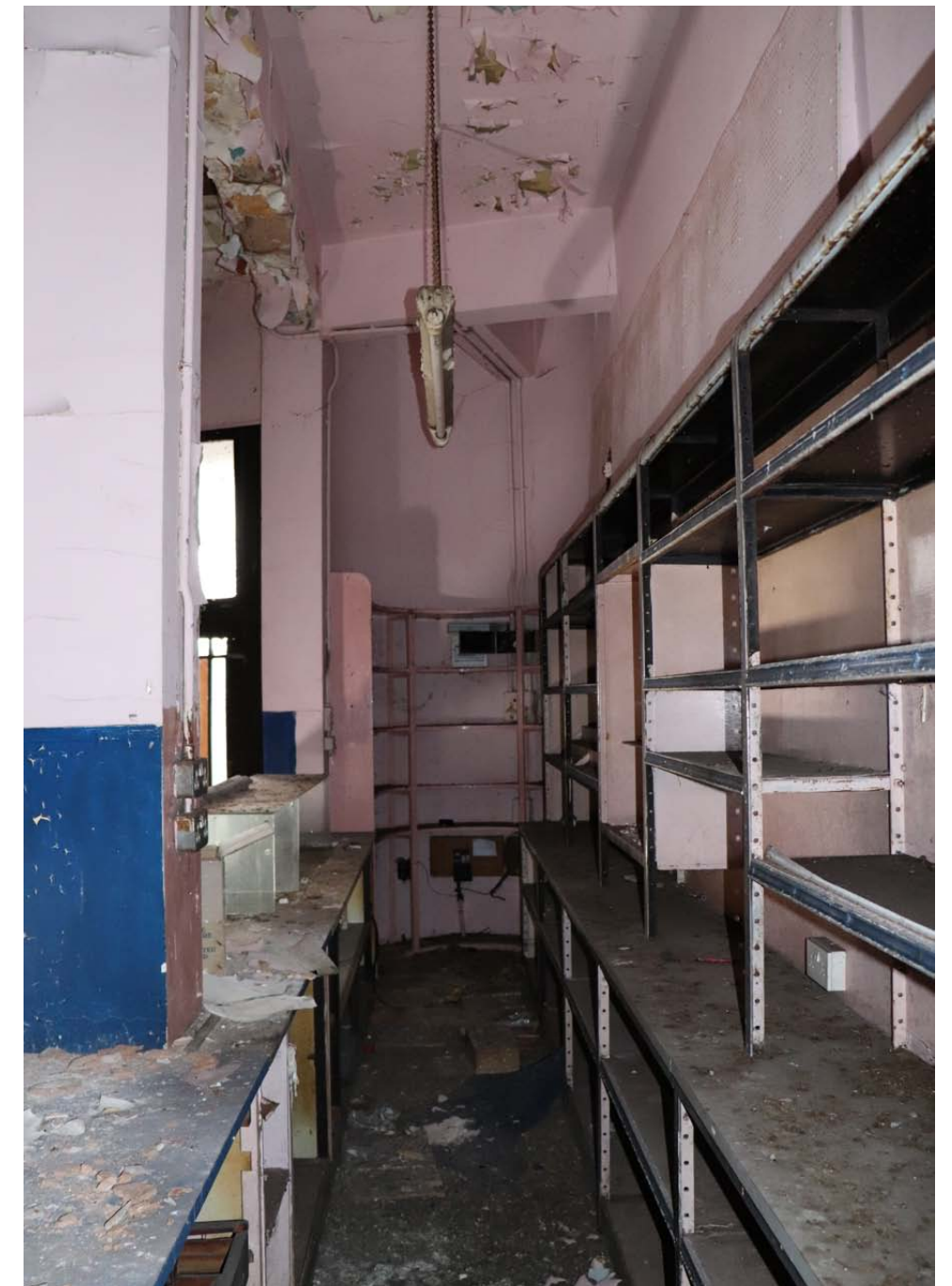
View the grey insitu terrazzo with separating strips between bays

G1 - South Retail Unit

The curved glazed end can be seen with most of its glazed panels infilled with plywood. The photograph to the top right shows the timber cill. The external cill is a curved painted brass section.

The external door is timber-framed with timber surrounds to a large central glazed pane and long perimeter panes with square corner panes, formed by slender glazing bars. There is a large glazed over-panel.

The door handle is a brass round pull handle with capped ends welded to plates fixed back to the timber door surround.

*Curved Glazed End**Timber Cill to Glazing**Timber-framed Glazed External Door with perimeter glazed panes**Brass Door Handle to External Door**North side of space with Servery Counter to left & Shelves to right*

G2 - Toilet & Lobby behind South Retail Unit

Behind the Retail space (on its east side) is a Lobby leading to a framed and panelled External Exit Door (see bottom right photograph) and a Toilet with WC and Basin. Access is via a blue-painted sliding timber door.

The floor in this area is of small unit Quarry Tiles in a chequer-board pattern, of terracotta and cream.



Quarry Tile Flooring in chequer-board pattern, of terracotta & cream



Quarry Tile Flooring in chequer-board pattern, of terracotta & cream



View of Sliding Door from Retail space to rear spaces



Framed and Panelled Blue-painted External Existing Door



View of Toilet

G3 - Kitchenette behind South Retail Unit

Further behind the Toilet an Exit Lobby is a long Kitchenette with a counter unit, with sink and drainer, and shelving.

There is a Window to the east end, however, this is currently boarded up (see centre photograph below).

The Ceiling is painted plaster, peeling away in areas.

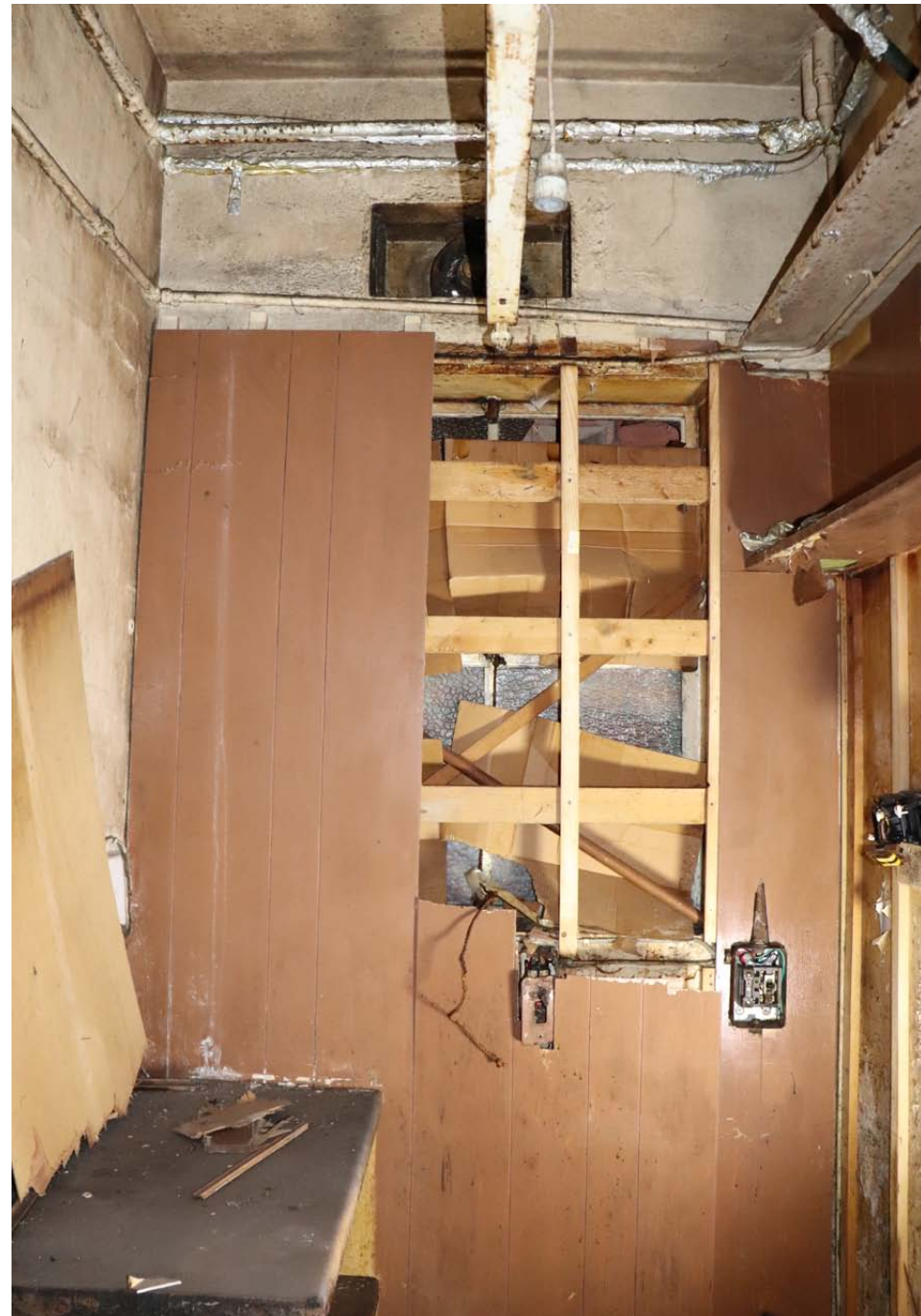
The Flooring is of small unit Quarry Tiles, however, in this case, all of one colour - terracotta.



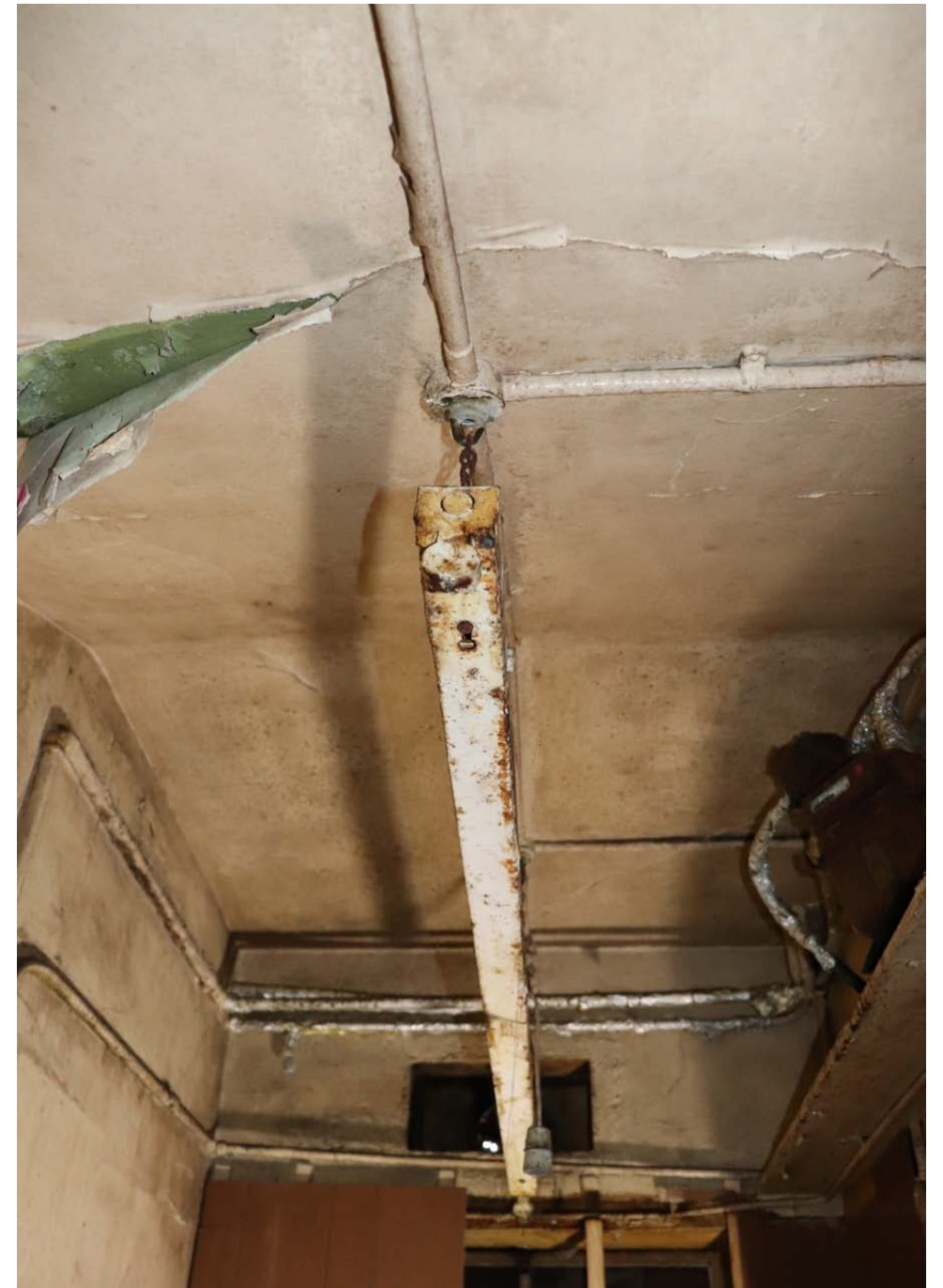
View of Terracotta-coloured small unit Quarry Floor Tiles



View of west end of Kitchenette with shelving & worktop to right



East end of Kitchenette with worktop to left & boarded up Window



View of painted plaster Ceiling to Kitchenette

G4 - Store behind South Retail Unit

Behind the Retail space (on its east side) is a tall Store room with many levels of timber shelving on three sides. Part of the store room is over the top of the adjacent Toilet and so a timber ladder is provided for access.

The Walls and Ceiling are of painted plaster. The paint and plaster to the ceiling is badly damaged, with some damage also to the concrete soffit.

The Flooring is of vinyl squares over the slab. It is not known what, if anything, is beneath the vinyl covering.



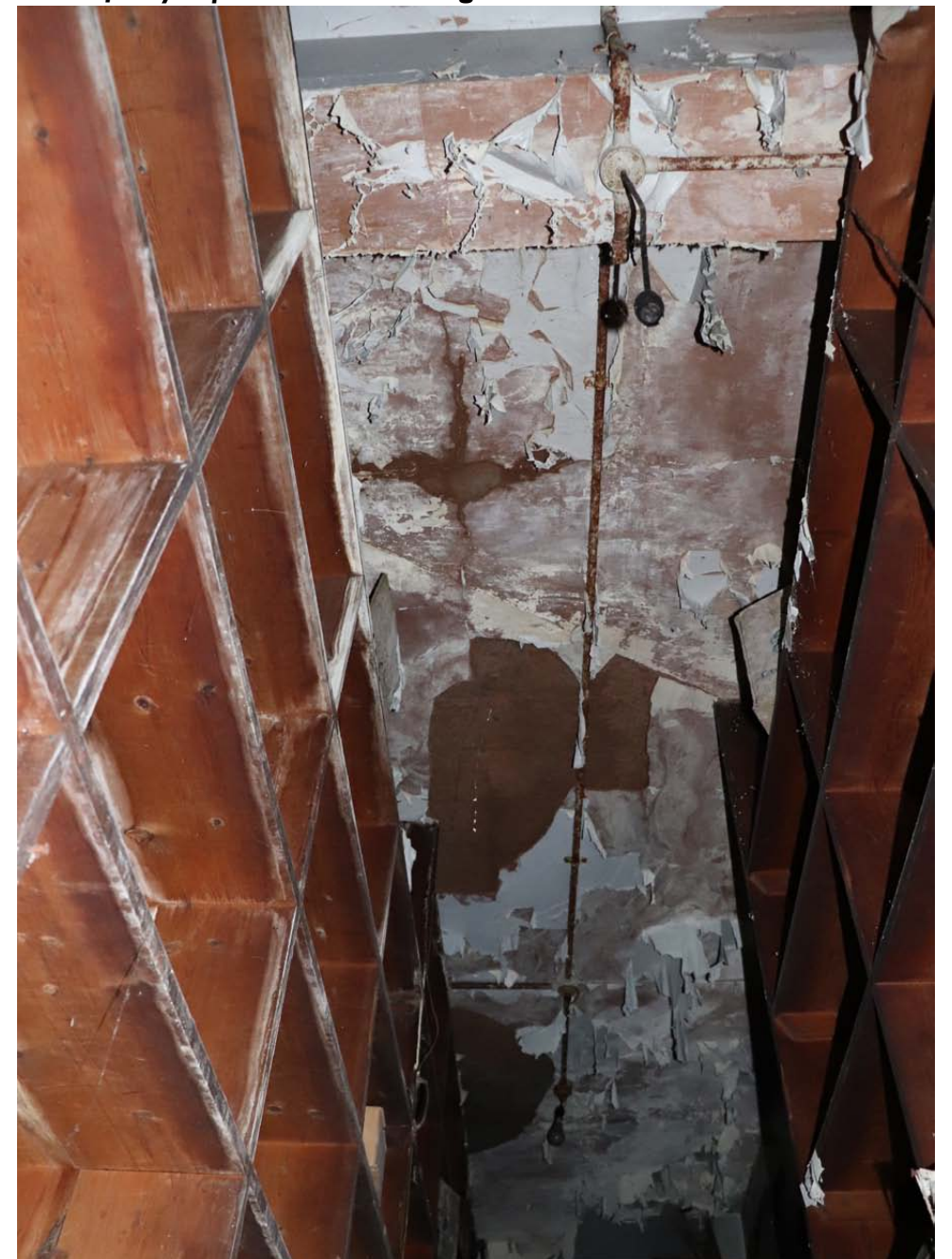
View of Vinyl square Floor covering



View to east end of Store, over Toilet, with Shelving to both sides



View of west end of Store, with Shelving wrapping around from sides



View of peeling paint, damaged plaster & damaged soffit to Ceiling

G5 - North Retail Unit

To the north west corner of the plan is the much-smaller retail space, also with a curved glazed end facing the street, with the curved lintol supported on two slender steel columns. It has plastered walls and a plastered reinforced concrete ceiling, both painted. The curved glazed end can be seen with most of its glazed panels infilled with plywood. The internal cill is timber and the external cill is a curved painted brass section.

The ceiling paintwork and plaster is in a very poor condition with the concrete soffit also in a poor condition, with reinforcement bar exposed.

The flooring is carpet tiling. It is possible that this covers an insitu terrazzo floor; however, this is not known.

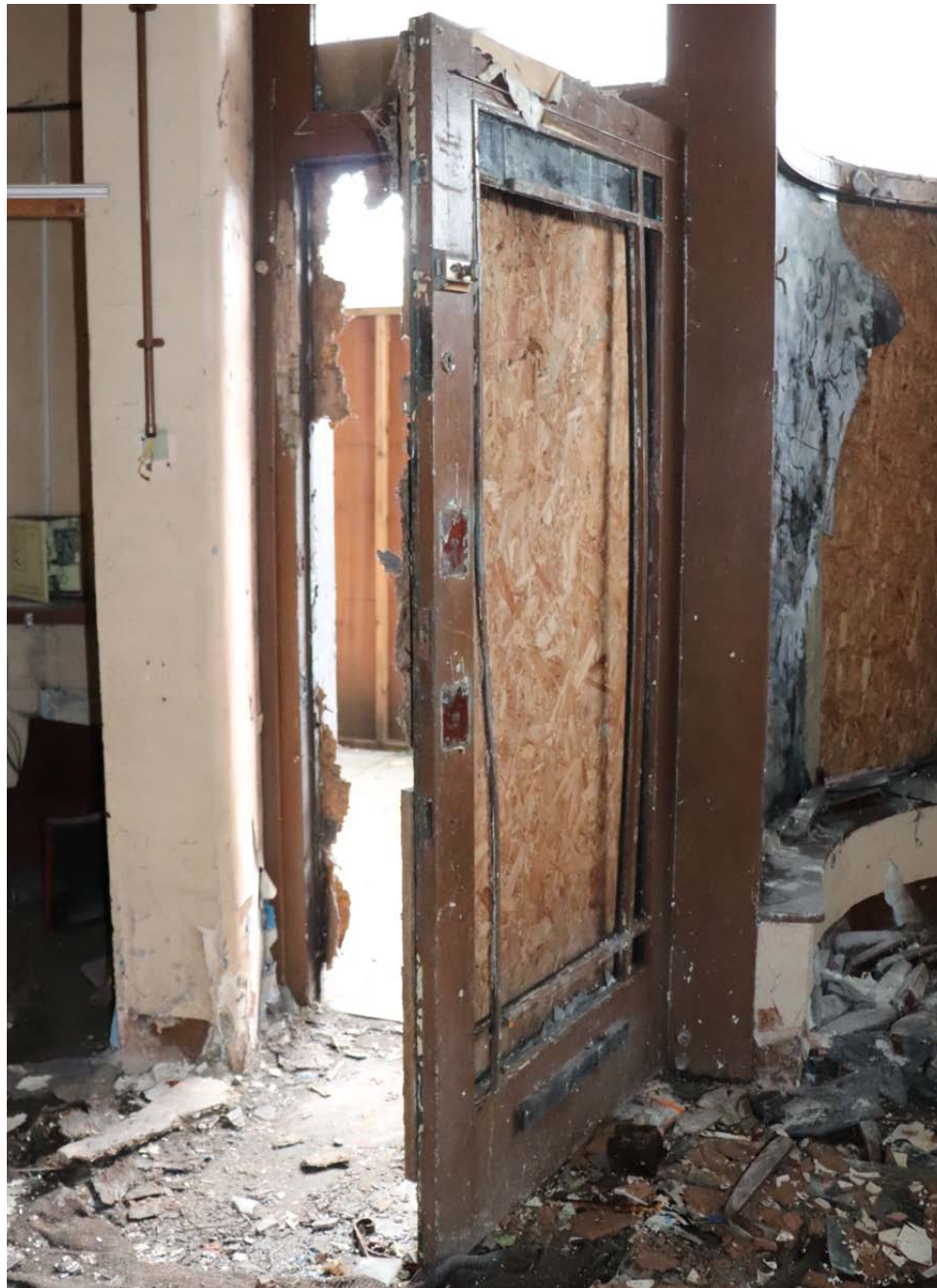
The external door is timber-framed with timber surrounds to a large central glazed pane and long perimeter panes with square corner panes, formed by slender glazing bars. There is a large glazed over-panel. The pull handle no longer exists.



View of Vented Strip to top of Glazing - in this area, the vent is open



View of Vented Strip to top of Glazing - in this area, the vent is closed



Timber-framed Glazed External Door with perimeter glazed panes



View of Glazing with Curved End and two Steel Columns and full extent of boarded up glazing panes, timber cill & vented strip to top

G5 - North Retail Unit



View of Timber Cill to Glazing



Extremely damp concrete soffit with paint & plaster all lost



Carpet tiling to floor



Timber-framed Glazed External Door with perimeter glazed panes



View east end of Retail space, with external door to right, showing painted plastered walls in poor condition

G6 - Toilet & Store behind North Retail Unit

To the rear of the Retail space is a Storage area within which (on the west end) is a Toilet, with a WC and basin, separated off with a timber cubicle panel and door.

To the east end, the Ceiling is the sloping soffit of the staircase above.

The Walls and Ceiling are painted plaster, which is very badly peeling in most areas.

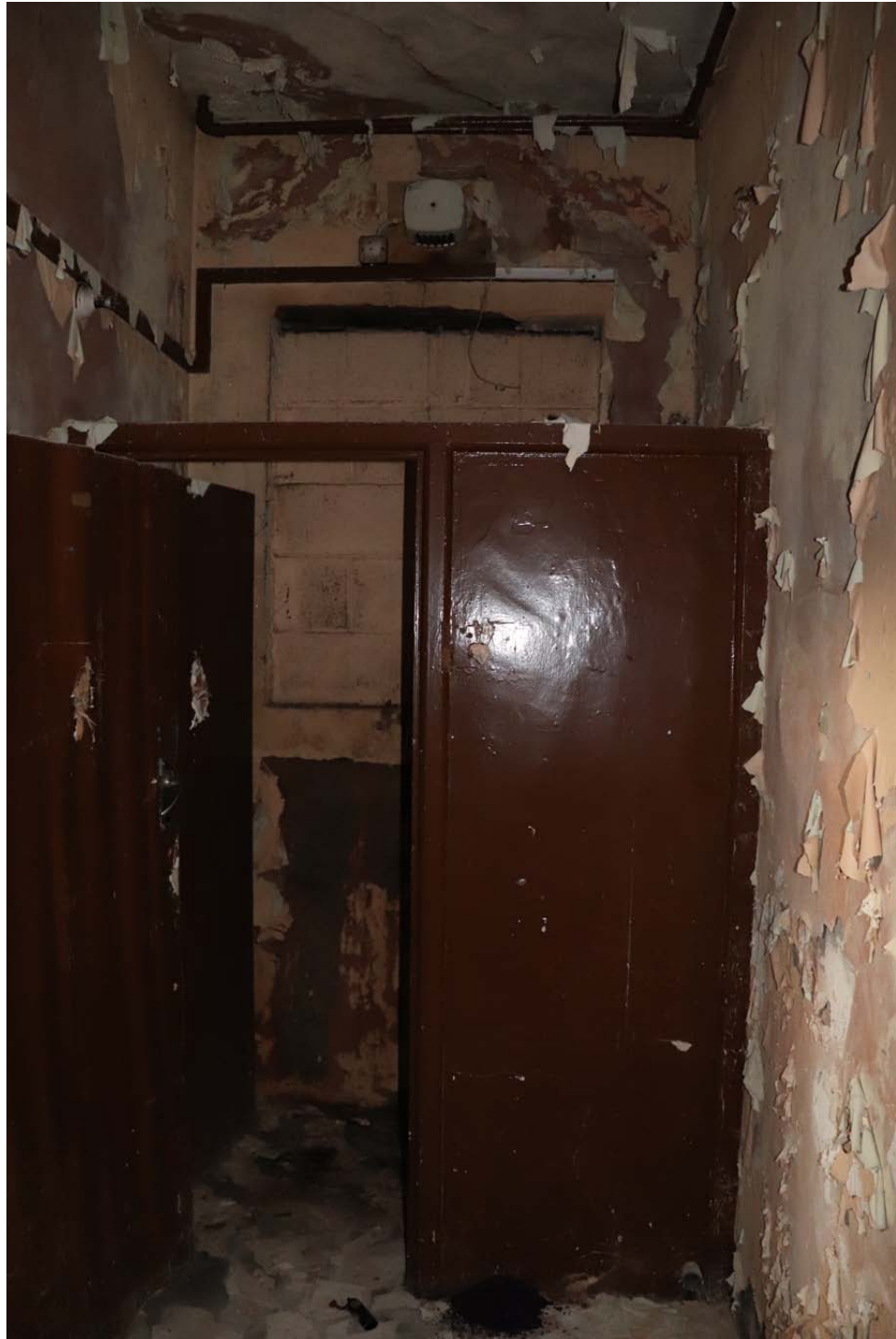
The Flooring appears to be painted concrete, with the paint flaking.



Flaking Paintwork to Concrete Floor



Further view of Timber Cubicle Partition



View of Toilet Cubicle to west end of space with blocked up window



Peeling Paint & Plaster to Walls & Ceiling, which is sloping soffit

G7 - Main Entrance Lobby

The Main Entrance to the Plaza is via a bank of Timber-Framed Glazed Doors.

There are 3no. sets of double doors in the centre, set between 2no. square plastered concrete columns. Each door is made up of 5no. horizontal glazed panels, separated by slender timber glazing beads.

On the other side of each of the 2no. columns is a wide timber-framed glazed screen.

The Floor to the lobby is Terrazzo, as are the Steps, each of which are in a relatively good condition.

The Ceiling is Painted Plaster, in a better condition than other ceilings, however, still showing signs of damage and damp.



View of Central Bank of 3no. Double Doors



View of Painted Plastered Ceiling



View, from top of steps, of bank of Timber-Framed Glazed Entrance Doors with 3no. sets of double doors in centre, between the 2no. columns, and a wide timber-framed glazed screen to each side of the columns

G7 - Main Entrance Lobby

Below are more detail photographs of the central bank of 3no. sets of double doors and the 2no. wide timber-framed glazed screen either side of the columns.

The glass to the doors and side screens is either broken and boarded up or painted out.

The over-panels are also covered up.



View of east wide timber-frame glazed screen



View of bank of 3no. sets of double doors in centre



View of west wide timber-frame glazed screen

G7 - Main Entrance Lobby

Between the lower entrance lobby and the upper entrance foyer is another bank of Timber-Frame Glazed Double Doors. As with the lower set, there is a bank of 3no. sets in between two square columns; however, to each side of the columns, there is not a wide glazed screen, but a further set of double doors matching the others.

A flight of 6no. Terrazzo Steps runs the full width of the lobby, with steel round handrails at each end, fixed to the walls.

The lower part of the two sides walls is blue painted plaster, whilst the upper part is painted masonry blocks and not plastered.



View of central bank of double doors



View of east side wall



View of bank of timber-framed double doors between lower entrance lobby and upper entrance foyer, with terrazzo steps in foreground

G7 - Main Entrance Lobby - Details of Doors & Ironmongery



View of one leaf of doors with 5no. glazed panes & brass kickplate



View of timber-framed glazed overpanels



View leading stile of door with holes where handle once was



View of 'Brinton' door closers



View of 'Brinton' door closers

G7 - Main Entrance Lobby

A flight of 6no. Terrazzo Steps runs the full width of the lobby, with steel round handrails at each end, fixed to the walls.

The terrazzon steps include a black and white chequerboard pattern just in from the nosing.

At the top of the steps, just before the bank of doors, painted onto the terrazzo flooring is the word 'PLAZA' in what appears to be 'Broadway' font. It is set within terrazzo of a smaller aggregate and a rectangular box. The final 'A' of the word is in a poor condition, but the other 4no. letters are in a good condition, suggesting that the paint used was extremely robust and long-lasting.



View of the run of 6no. terrazzo steps



View the word 'PLAZA' in 'Broadway' font at the top of the steps



View the black & white chequerboard pattern just in from the nosing



View of the 'PL' of the 'PLAZA' floor lettering



View of the painted steel round handrail on the east side wall



View of the 'AZ' of the 'PLAZA' floor lettering



View of the final 'A' of the 'PLAZA' floor lettering which is damaged

G8 - Foyer

The inner lobby - the Foyer - is accessed from the top of the 6no. steps and through the bank of 5no. sets of double doors. The Foyer space is, essentially, symmetrical in layout.

At the back end of the Foyer are 3no. further sets of double doors which lead into the main auditorium and the 2no. cinemas.

To each side of the Foyer is a Staircase open to the space and a set of Toilets.

The Walls and Ceilings are painted plaster in a poor condition, especially the ceiling, where water ingress has damaged some of the concrete soffit, much of the plaster and most of the paint. To the ceiling is a set of downstand concrete beams which are decorated with a chevron profiled frieze (gold / yellow in colour) below a curved coving (white in colour). The base of the walls are gold / yellow in colour, with the upper section cream in colour, with a dark profiled dado band.

The Flooring is of terrazzo tiling, of a green (eau de nil) and yellow alternate (chequerboard) pattern. Whilst covered in debris from above, the terrazzo appears to be in a reasonable condition.



View of the Foyer looking towards the east



View of the Foyer looking towards the east



View of the Foyer looking towards the bank of doors to the south with the inner lobby beyond

G8 - Foyer

On this page are more detail photographs of the central bank of 3no. sets of double timber-frame glazed doors and the 2no. further double timber-frame glazed doors either side of the columns.

The glazing pattern is of 5no. horizontal panes separated by rebated timber glazing beads. The push plates and kickplates are simple rectangular plates of brass. Much of the glass to the doors is broken.

Above each set of double doors is a set of 9no. glazed panes as an overpanel. The central row of panes is deeper than the top and bottom rows and the central column is wider than the outer columns.



View of central bank of 3no. sets of doors



View of base of one door with glazing beads and kickplate



View of right hand set of doors



View of full extent of 5no. sets of doors

G8 - Foyer

This page includes photographs of the back end of the Foyer with 3no. further sets of double doors leading into the main auditorium and the 2no. cinemas. To each side of the Foyer is a Staircase open to the space and a set of Toilets.

In between the central and right hand doors is a small box office enclosure, which is likely to be original to the building. It is in a poor condition.

In between the central and left hand doors is a larger ice cream stall, which is not likely to be original to the building. It is in a poor condition.



View of the Foyer looking towards the west staircase and toilets



View of the Foyer looking towards the east staircase and toilets



View of the Foyer looking northwards towards the doors to the main auditorium and the 2no. cinemas, with the box office enclosure to the right and the ice cream stall to the left

G8 - Foyer

On this page is a series of photographs of the ceiling to the Foyer, showing the extent of peeling paint, damaged plaster and cracked and spalling concrete soffit and downstand beams caused, in the main, by water ingress from above.



G8 - Foyer

On this page is a series of photographs of the chevron profiled frieze (gold / yellow in colour) below the curved coving (white in colour).

Whilst the top two rows of photographs show the frieze principally intact, much of it has been lost throughout the rest of the foyer.

The lower row of photographs shows the profile of the chevron as well as the fact that the gold / yellow paint on the plaster (which appears to comprise two separate coats) appears to have been preceded by a red colour.



Section of chevron plaster with gold / yellow paint preceded by red

G8 - Foyer

As seen in the top two rows of photographs on this page, the Flooring is of terrazzo tiling, of a green (eau de nil) and yellow alternate (chequerboard) pattern. Whilst covered in debris from above, the terrazzo appears to be in a reasonable condition.

The bottom left photograph shows the green and yellow terrazzo tiling leading into an grey insitu terrazzo to the Toilet lobby.

The bottom right photograph shows the grey insitu terrazzo to the Toilets.



Views of green and yellow terrazzo tiling leading into an grey insitu terrazzo to the toilet lobby



View of grey insitu terrazzo to the toilets

G8 - Foyer

The 3no. sets of double doors leading from the Foyer to the Auditorium and the 2no. Cinemas are dark timber veneered solid core doors with a single small circular vision panel in each door. All of the vision panels have been damaged, however, it is apparent that they used to be of semi-translucence, green in colour - see photograph to right.

These doors are very different to the doors to the Lobby and the Foyer - arguably of lesser quality.

Within the Foyer is a series of deep cast iron radiators with a timber shelf over the top.



View green glazed circular vision panel to one door



View of cast iron radiator with timber shelf



View of one set of doors - to the west cinema - which is in a reasonable condition



View of one set of doors - to the central corridor to the auditorium - which is in a very poor condition

G8 - Foyer

In between the central and right hand doors is a small box office enclosure, which is likely to be original to the building. On this page are photographs of this structure from all sides.

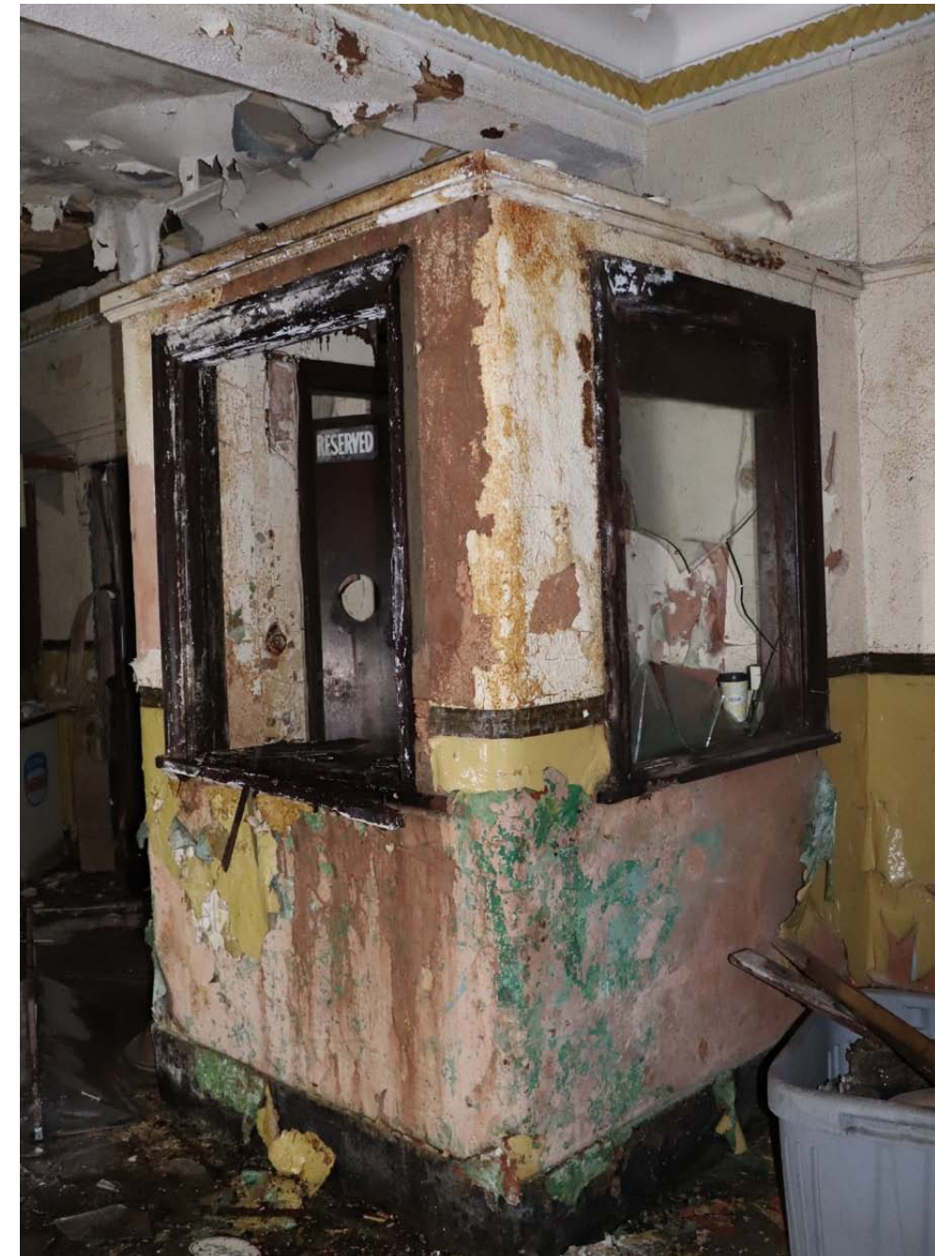
Formed of plastered masonry (treated as the other walls, with a profiled dado) with timber-framed openings to each of three open sides (a door to the west and large window openings to the south and east), it is in a poor condition.



View of the box office enclosure from the west



View of the box office enclosure from the south



View of the box office enclosure from the east

G9 - North Staircase

Open to the Foyer, the Staircase to the north of the foyer is made up of grey coloured terrazzo treads with a black and white chequerboard pattern just in from the nosing. They are exactly as the long steps between the outer lobby and the foyer. The staircase forms a dogleg leading up to the first floor, with 2no. quarter landings.

The first short flight, of 3no. risers to the first quarter landing, is separated from the foyer by a low masonry painted plaster wall, which is capped with a dark timber flat capping which projects over the edges.

On the full height walls, this timber capping leads into a dark brown dado profile in the plasterwork, below which the plaster is painted yellow and smooth, above which the plaster is painted white and rough.

Below the dado, and the timber capping, is a simple round steel handrail, fixed back to the walls, which curves inside the square corners.



Simple round steel handrail curving inside the square corner



View of low wall with timber oversailing capping.



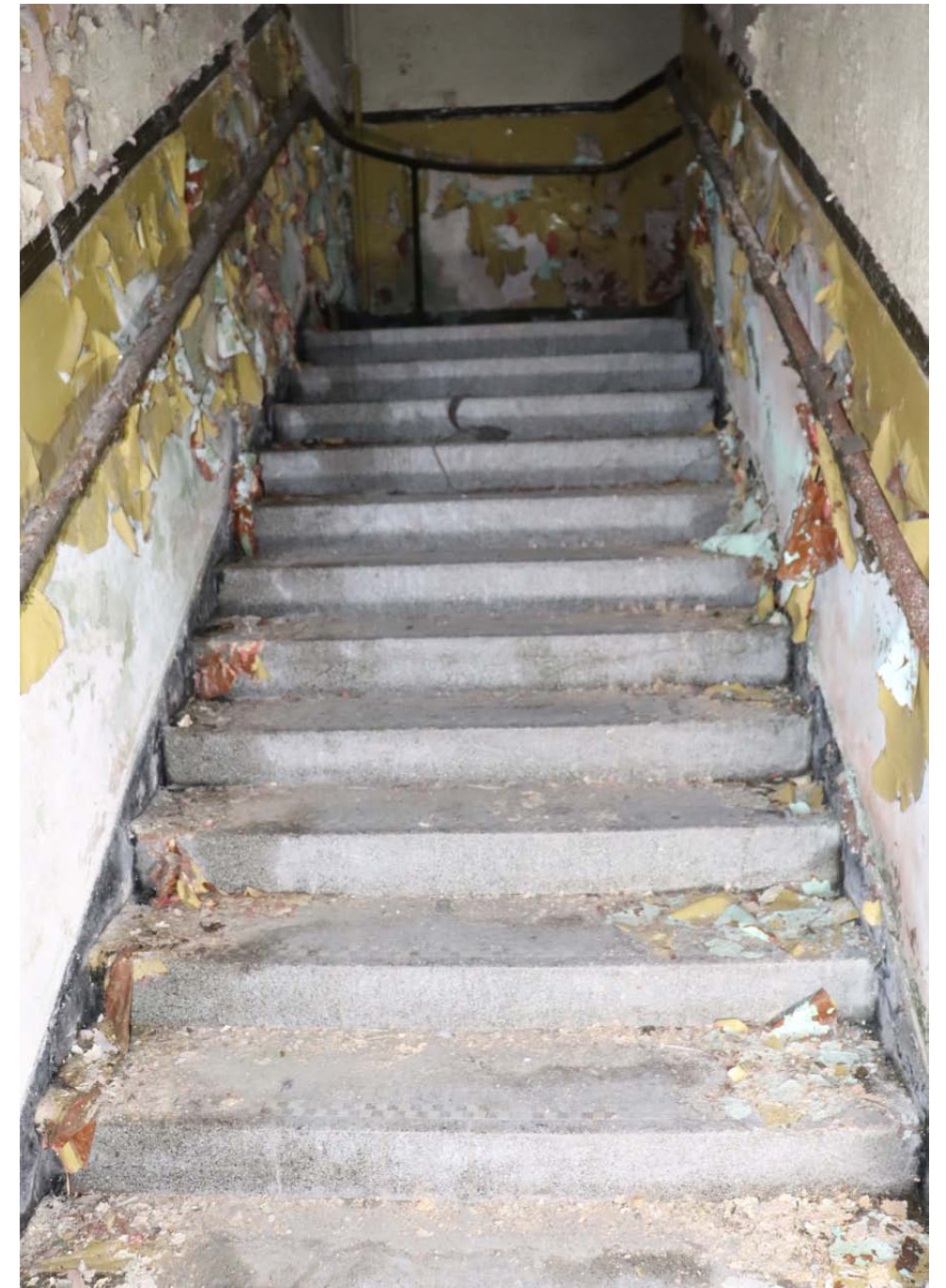
View of bottom flight of staircase with low wall to left



View of dado profile in plaster with handrail below



View of detail of treads with black and white chequerboard nosing



View of second, longer flight to staircase

G10 - South Staircase

Open to the Foyer, the Staircase to the south of the foyer is made up of grey coloured terrazzo treads with a black and white chequerboard pattern just in from the nosing. They are exactly as the long steps between the outer lobby and the foyer. The staircase forms a dogleg leading up to the first floor, with 2no. quarter landings.

The first short flight, of 3no. risers to the first quarter landing, is separated from the foyer by a low masonry painted plaster wall, which is capped with a dark timber flat capping which projects over the edges.

On the full height walls, this timber capping leads into a dark brown dado profile in the plasterwork, below which the plaster is painted yellow an smooth, above which the plaster is painted white and rough.

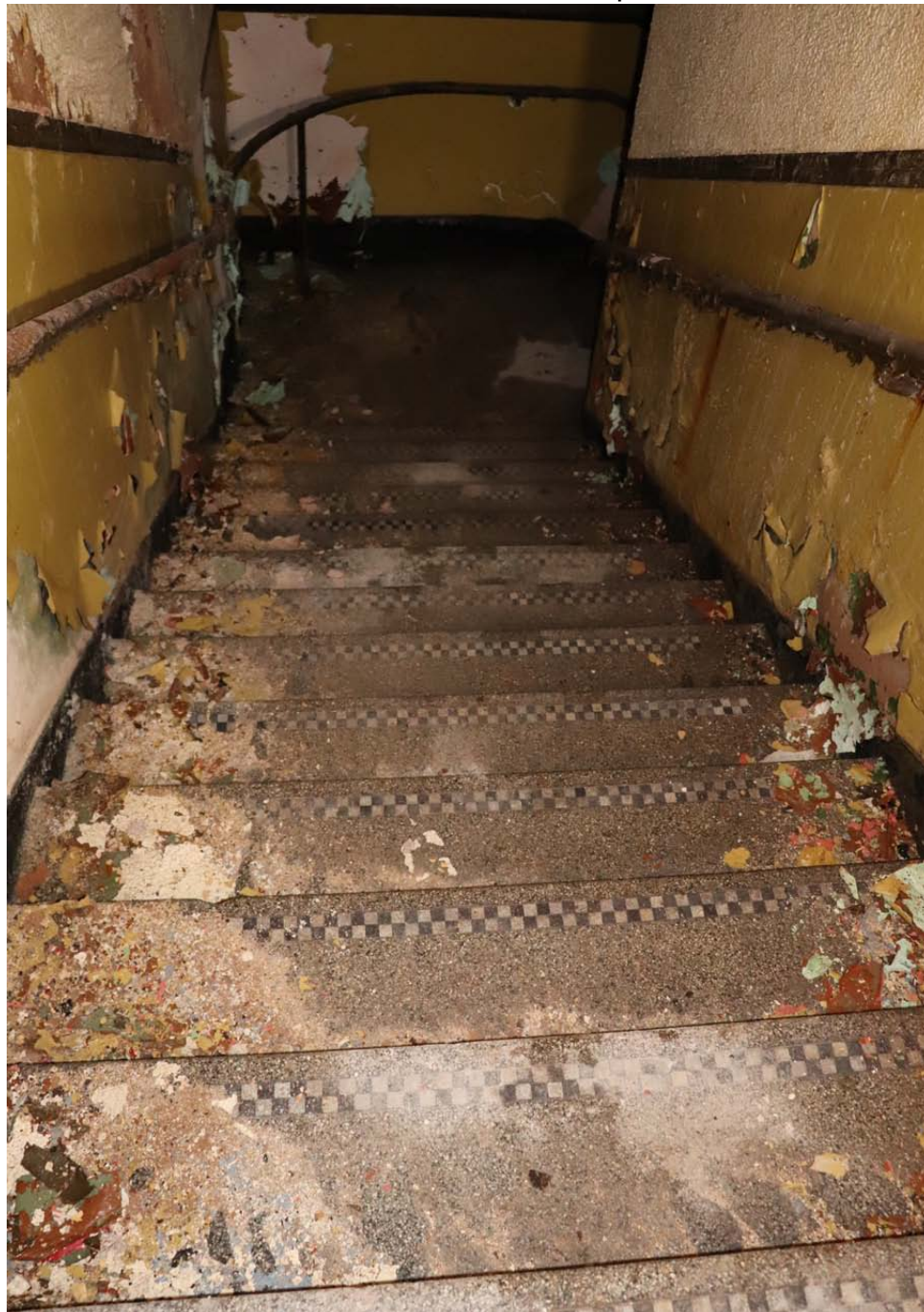
Below the dado, and the timber capping, is a simple round steel handrail, fixed back to the walls, which curves inside the square corners.



Simple round steel handrail curving inside the square corner



View of peeling paint to soffit over staircase



View of second, longer flight to staircase



Simple round steel handrail curving inside the square corner



Set of double doors to top of staircase, matching those to foyer

G11 - North (Female) Toilets

Enwrapped by the staircase, at the far west end of the foyer is a space fitted out as the Female Toilets. It is approached by a small lobby with a single door to the outer and inner walls of the lobby. The form of the staircase is apparent as the sloping soffit over the toilet cubicles. The ceiling comprises downstand beams supported off a column.

The Wall and Ceiling are painted plaster. The paintwork to all surfaces is badly peeling and there is some damage to the plaster. The lower part of the wall, up to dado, in areas, is papered.

The Flooring is insitu grey terrazzo.

There is a window to the west elevation, with a bottom-hung opener in the top half, with opaque glazing, much of which is broken and boarded up.

The fit out comprises 3no.WC cubicles and a vanity unit with basins.



View of the Window to the west elevation



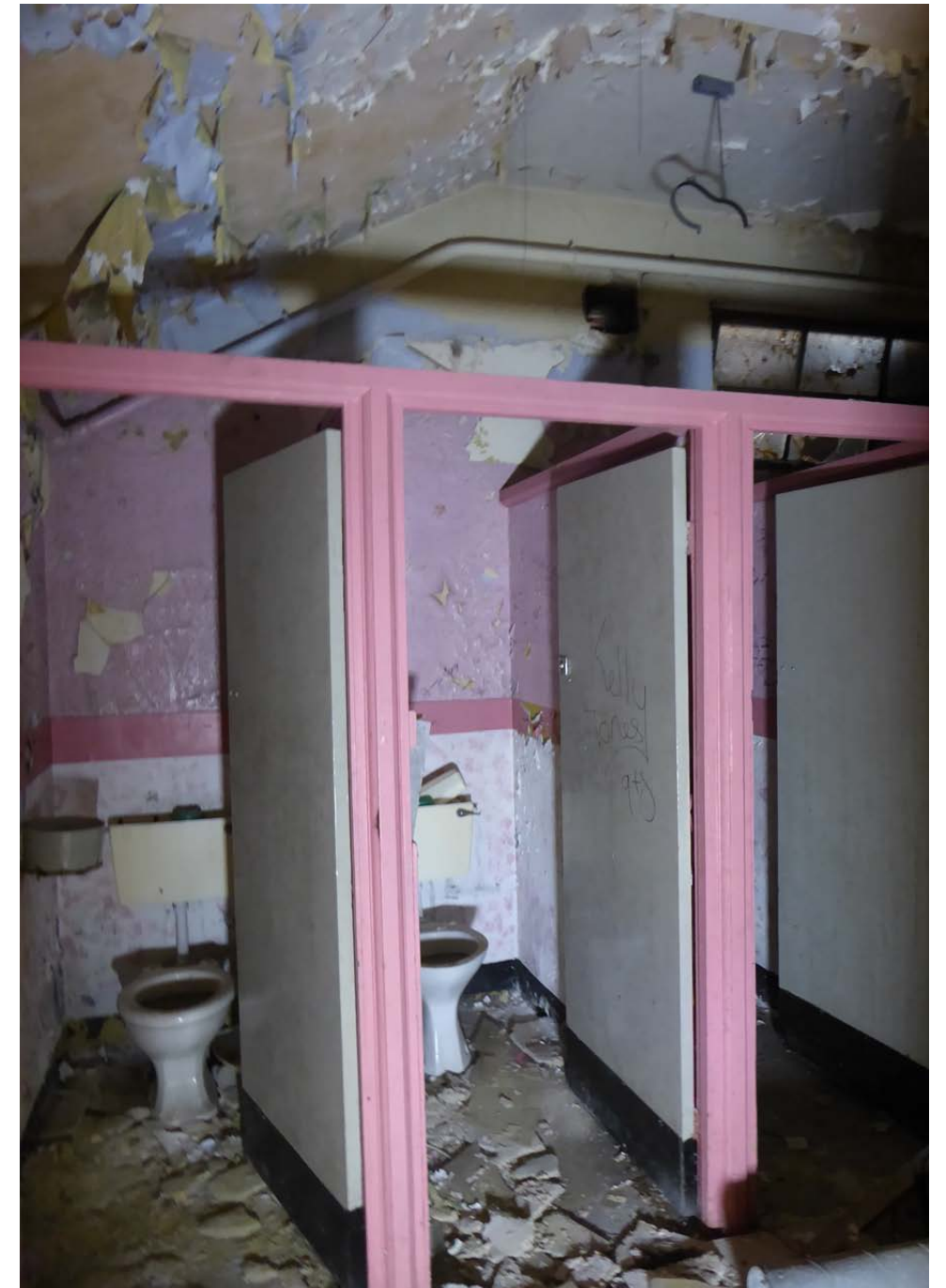
View of the Ceiling, downstand beam and column



View from the Lobby looking out towards the foyer



View from the Lobby looking in towards the toilets



View of the 3no.WC cubicles

G12 - South (Male) Toilets

Enwrapped by the staircase, at the far east end of the foyer is a space fitted out as the Male Toilets. It is approached by a small lobby with a single door to the outer and inner walls of the lobby. The form of the staircase is apparent as the sloping soffit over the toilet cubicles. The ceiling comprises downstand beams supported off a column.

The Wall and Ceiling are painted plaster. The paintwork to all surfaces is badly peeling and there is some damage to the plaster. The lower part of the wall, up to dado, in areas, is papered. The Flooring is insitu grey terrazzo.

There are 2no. windows to the east elevation (one two panes wide and one one pane wide), with a bottom-hung opener in the top half, of each with opaque glazing, much of which is broken and boarded up.

The fit out comprises 2no.WC cubicles, 2no. urinals and one basin.



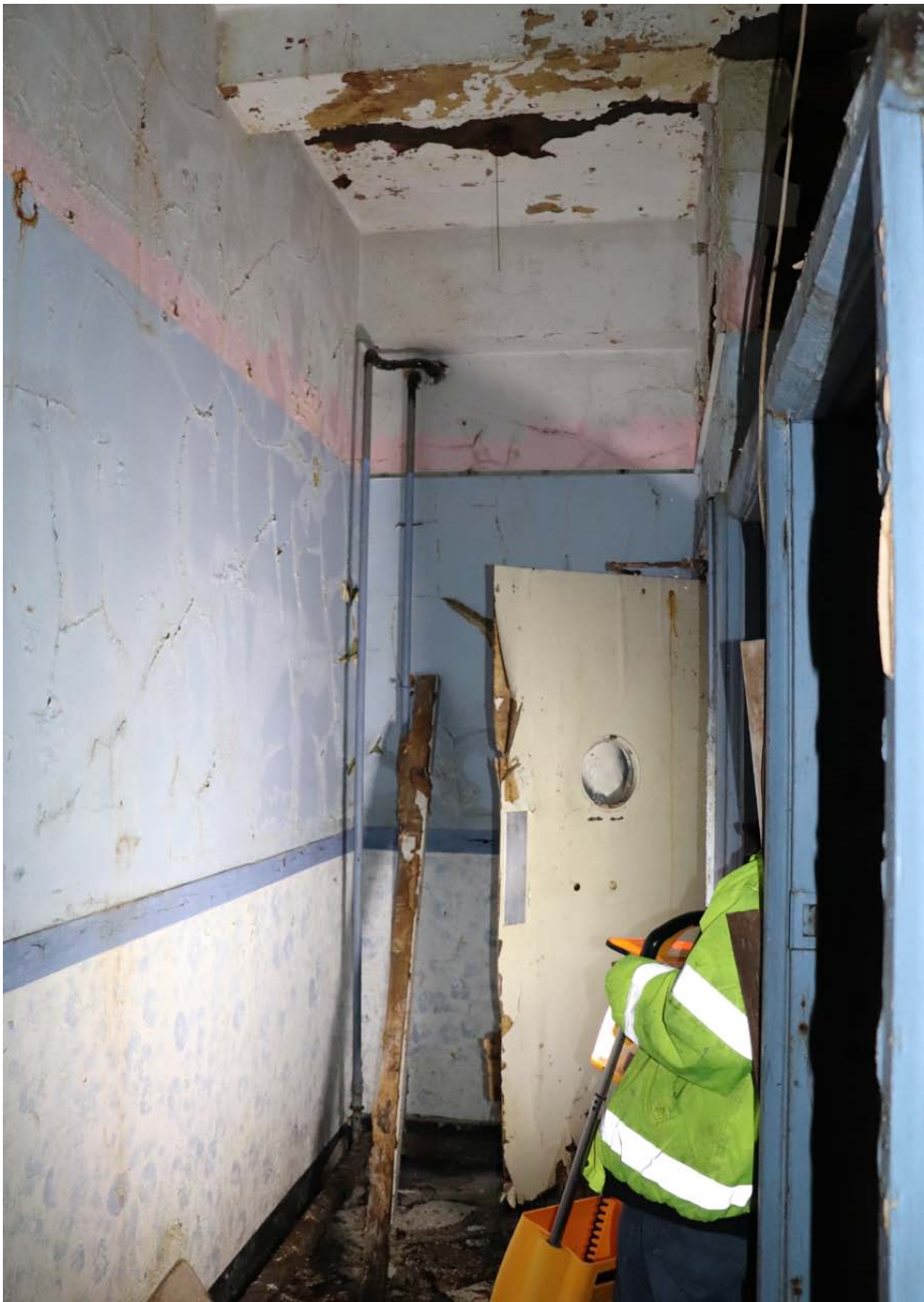
View of the sloping soffit of the staircase within the toilets



View of the Windows to the east elevation



View of the door to the toilets from within the lobby



View looking towards the entrance to the toilets



View of the larger window to the east elevation

G13 - South Escape Stairs

To the east end of the Foyer, alongside the Male Toilets is an emergency exit with a short flight of steps.

The steps are of grey terrazzo with a black and white chequerboard pattern just in from the nosing, as are the landings. They are exactly as the steps to the lobby and the main staircase to the first floor.

There is a set of double doors at both the top and bottom of the steps. To the top, they are timber and solid, whilst the opening to the bottom is boarded up.

The Walls and Ceiling are painted plaster in a poor condition.

There is a simple round steel handrail to the left hand side, fixed back to the wall, however it appears as though the rail to the right hand side has been lost, whilst the fixing points remain.



View of terrazzo steps with black and white chequerboard nosings



View of landing at bottom of steps



View of external door at base of steps

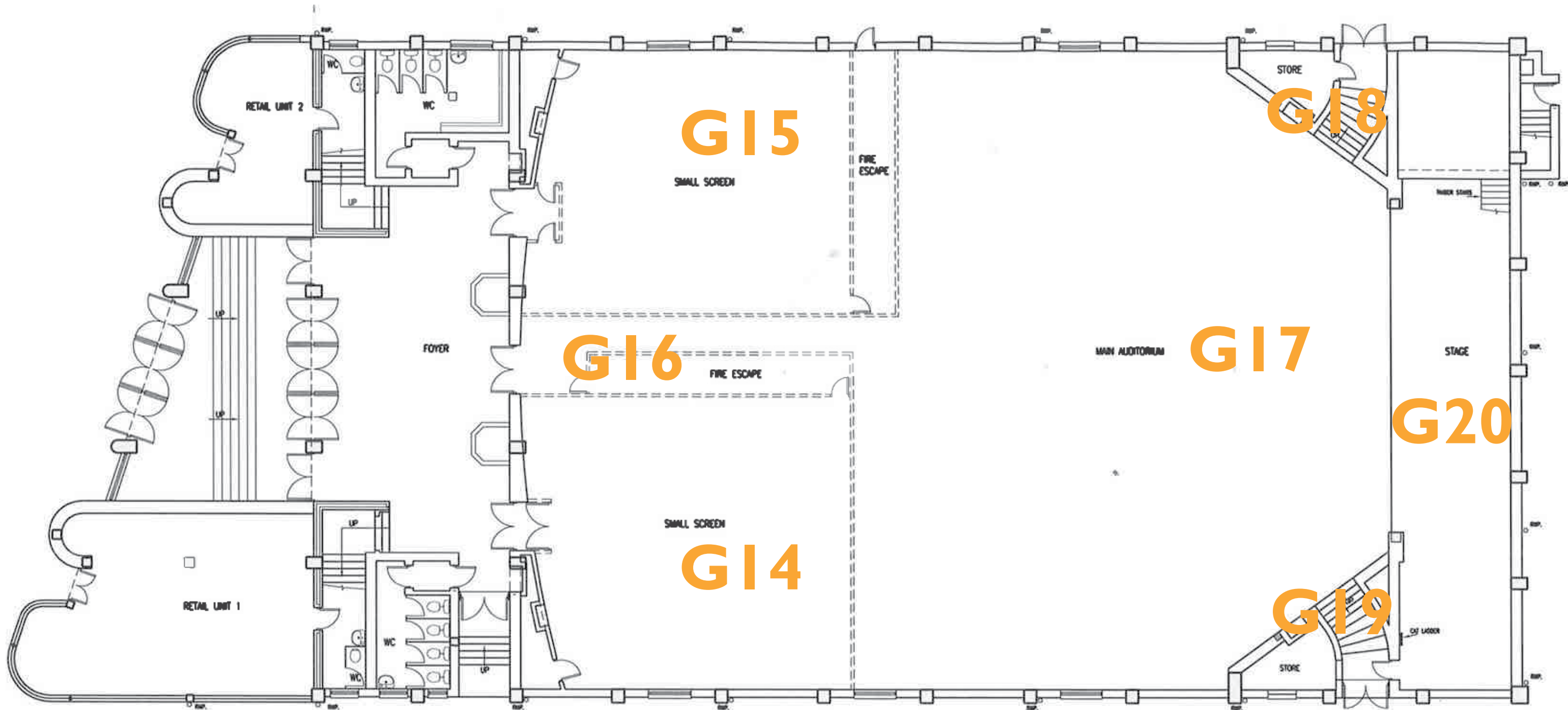


View of internal door at top of steps



View of ceiling in poor condition

6.2 The Interior of the Plaza
- Ground Floor Plan Rear Section with spaces annotated



G14 - South Cinema - Installed in 1989, two cinemas were built into the original larger auditorium, with seating on a pitched timber floor, a plasterboard soffit and a screen at the north end, the east window was blocked up.



View of Cinema looking south



View of Cinema looking north



View of Cinema looking east



View of Cinema looking west

G14 - South Cinema



View of ceiling to soffit underneath main auditorium balcony with dropped section for service zone



View of Art Deco style 'emergency escape' internally lit sign



View of timber flooring with linoleum floor covering and then carpeting on top



View of vinyl tile floor covering on timber boarded sloping floor

G14 - South Cinema



View of the rear of the seats with their timber curved backs and the metal support in between each seat. The metal stand lying on the floor is a broken version of the stand visible between the seats

G15 - North Cinema - Installed in 1989, two cinemas were built into the original larger auditorium, with seating on a pitched timber floor; a plasterboard soffit and a screen at the north end, the west window was blocked up.



View of Cinema looking north



View of Cinema looking south



View of Cinema looking east



View of Cinema looking west

G15 - North Cinema

Installed in 1989, two cinemas were built into the original larger auditorium, with seating on a pitched timber floor, a plasterboard soffit and a screen at the north end, the west window was blocked up.



View of ceiling to soffit underneath main auditorium balcony



View of Art Deco style 'emergency escape' internally lit sign



View of blocked up window on west elevation



View of plaster profile to front face of window cill



View to front of seating with fabric seats and back



View of plaster profile to front face of window cill



View of cast iron radiator at rear of space

G16 - Central Corridor

Installed in 1989, two cinemas were built into the original larger auditorium. In so doing, a corridor was formed in plasterboard and timber studwork down the central of the space, in between the two cinemas.



View of Art Deco style 'emergency escape' internally lit sign



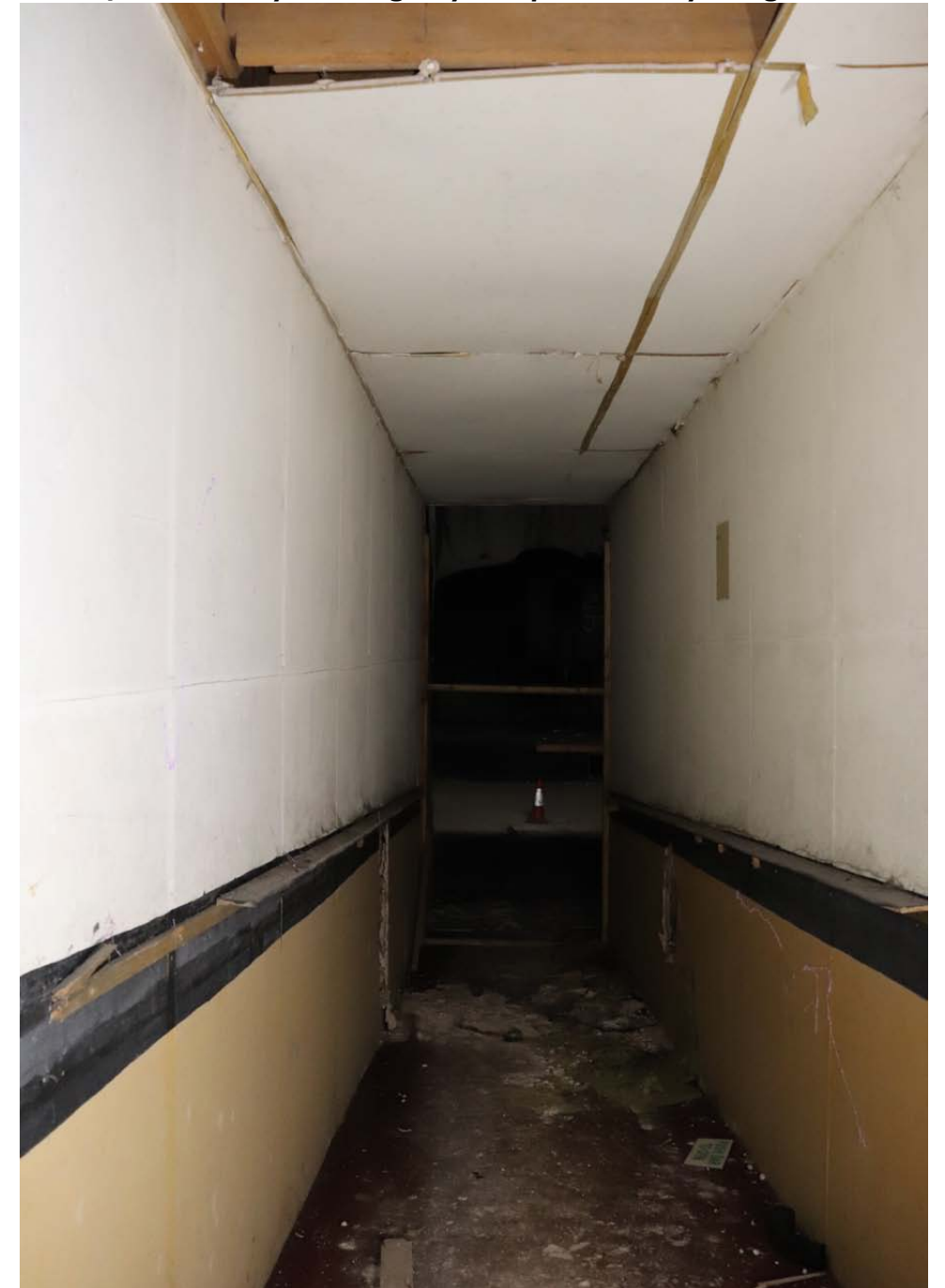
View of Art Deco style 'emergency escape' internally lit sign



View of central Corridor as seen from main Auditorium space



View of double doors leading from Foyer into central Corridor



View looking down Corridor towards Auditorium lined in plasterboard

G17 - Auditorium - View looking from auditorium space towards Stage with curve fronted timber raised stage and series of drapes in front of proscenium arch



G17 - Auditorium - View looking from stage back to Auditorium, with upper balcony seating and large hole in roof at rear, and plasterboard on timber studwork enclosure to both cinemas with central corridor in between both



G17 - Auditorium

The largest space within the Plaza is the treble height auditorium, with a narrow stage at the rear.

Originally, this was one large space which was the cinema stalls, with a very deep balcony oversailing the first (front) section of stalls with a sloping floor, then a large full height (rear) section, with a part sloping part flat floor, and then the stage and screen.

In 1989, this front section of the stalls, overhung by the balcony, was sub-divided, as it still remains, with the central doors accessing the large full height space and the stage via a corridor, whilst each of the side doors leads to a single screen cinema space with seating fixed to the sloped floor.

All the seating to the front stalls area has been removed.

Throughout the auditorium, the ceiling comprises an exposed grid with square ceiling panels of what appears to be wood fire, with intermittent decorative ventilator grilles and light fittings dropped from the ceiling, however set within the grid, made up of a 3 x 3 x 1 series of cubes.

A moulded plaster cornice runs around the auditorium, coloured now in red, white and blue. Surrounding the curve fronted stage area is a moulded proscenium arch.



View of Stage and proscenium arch as seen from upper balcony of auditorium



View of the timber framed construction of the curve fronted stage



View of Stage and proscenium arch as seen auditorium, looking obliquely from the south east

G17 - Auditorium - Stage surround and Proscenium arch



View on gold coloured drapes inside proscenium arch



View of underside of acoustic reflector panels to either side of stage



View looking across length of stage to stage right (west) end



View of stage right side of proscenium arch



View of profiled acoustic reflector side panelling to stage left



View of stage / auditorium connection on stage left

G17 - Auditorium & Forstage



View of recess in stage with cat iron radiator dripped below stage



View of dip troughs within stage showing timber raised construction



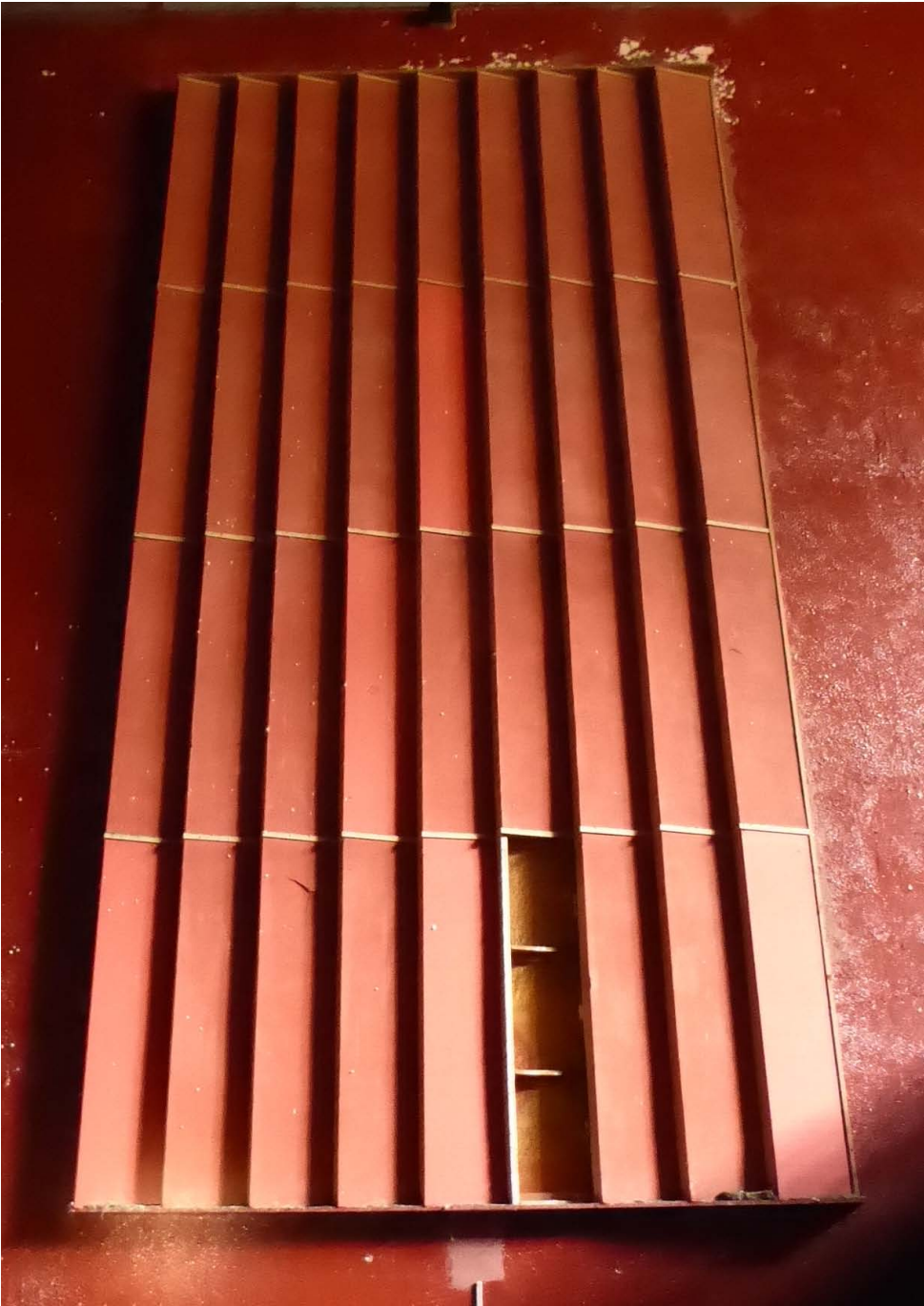
View of underside construction of timber stage



View of timber boarded flooring to auditorium in poor condition



View of green and gold profile timber surround to proscenium arch



View of acoustic reflector panels to either side of stage

G17 - Auditorium & Forestage



View of ceiling over Forestage



View of ceiling to Auditorium as seen from forestage with hole of roof at far end



View of ceiling over Forestage running into ceiling over Auditorium with drapes in between



View of ceiling to Auditorium as seen from forestage with hole of roof at far end

G18 - North Emergency Escape

To the north west corner of the Auditorium is a flight of 6no. radial steps leading to an emergency exit.

The steps are of grey terrazzo with a black and white chequerboard pattern just in from the nosing, as are the landings. They are exactly as all the ground to first floor steps in the frontage of the building.

There is a set of double doors at the top of the steps. These are timber and solid.

The Walls and Ceiling are painted plaster in a reasonable condition.

There is a simple curved round steel handrail to both sides of the steps.



View of terrazzo steps with black & white chequerboard nosings



View of round metal handrail & profiled dado above



View of the Emergency Exit from the auditorium



View of the Steps leading up to the final exit doors



View of the final timber six-panelled exit doors

G19 - South Emergency Escape

To the north east corner of the Auditorium is a flight of 6no. radial steps leading to an emergency exit.

The steps are of grey terrazzo with a black and white chequerboard pattern just in from the nosing, as are the landings. They are exactly as all the ground to first floor steps in the frontage of the building.

There is a set of double doors at the top of the steps. These are timber and solid.

The Walls and Ceiling are painted plaster in a reasonable condition.

There is a simple curved round steel handrail to both sides of the steps.

From the top landing, there is access to the Stage.



View of the Steps leading up to the final exit doors



View of terrazzo steps with black & white checkerboard nosings



View of the Emergency Exit from the auditorium



View of the Emergency Exit from the auditorium



View of the final timber six-panelled exit doors

G20 - Stage

The Stage is the full width of the auditorium, however, it is quite narrow.

The rear wall of the stage is formed of brick infill to a concrete frame.

The ceiling of the stage is the underside boarding of the sloped roof, painted black.

There are gold drapes at the head of the proscenium arch.



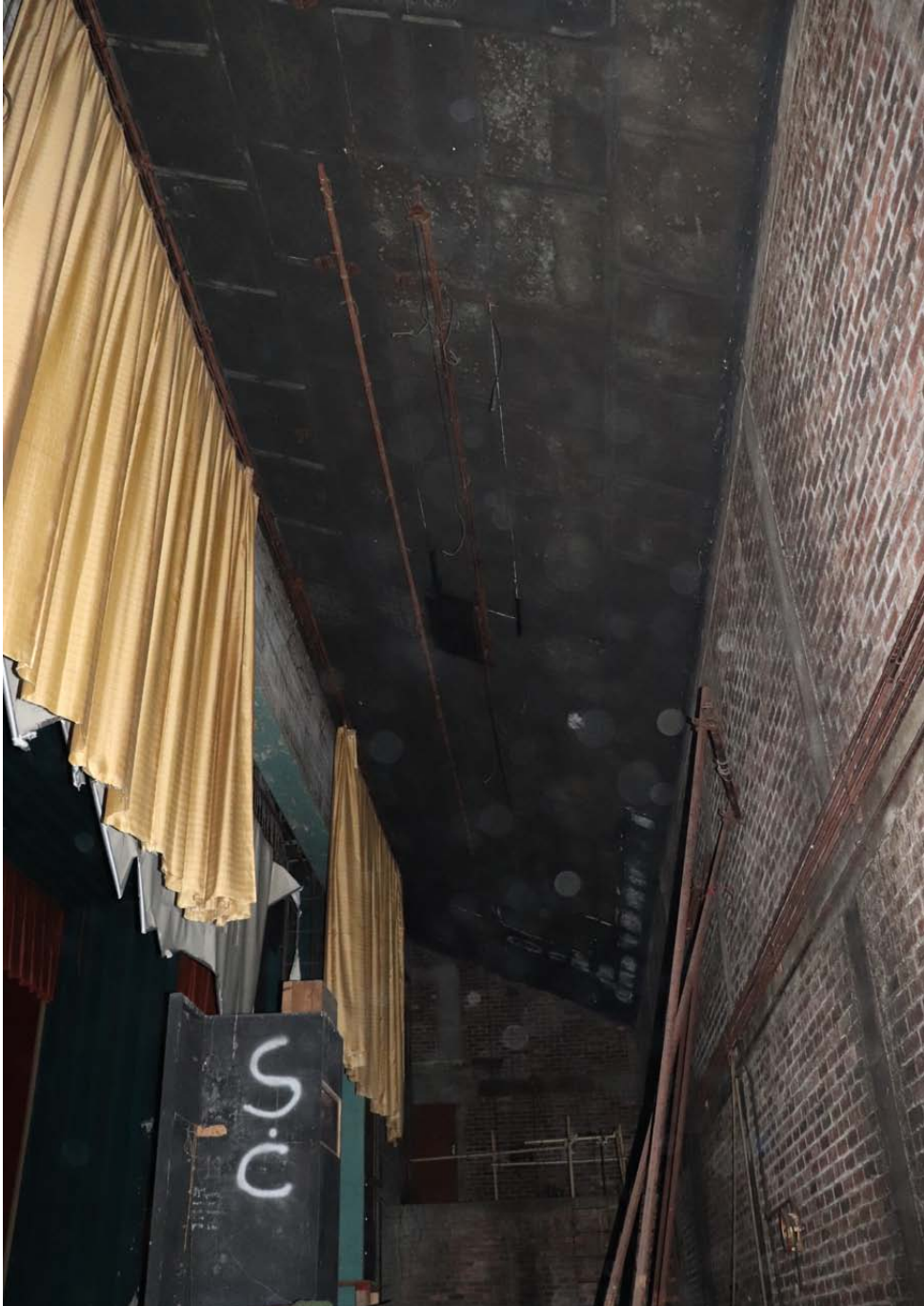
View of black painted soffit boarding



View of brick rear wall to stage within a concrete frame



View looking across stage towards west end



View looking up to ceiling with rear wall to right and drapes to left



View looking across stage towards east end

G20 - Stage

The Flooring to the stage is made up of timber boarding over a timber construction.

Within the flooring is an access hatch and a series of dip troughs and recessed radiators.



View of cast iron radiator sitting at rear of stage



View of access hatch within stage at rear



View of brick rear wall to stage within a concrete frame



View across stage towards east end with steps to lighting position



View of timber boarded Flooring to stage

G20 - Stage

To the west end (stage right), there is a raised section which acts as a lighting position. It is made up concrete frame and flooring with brick infilling.



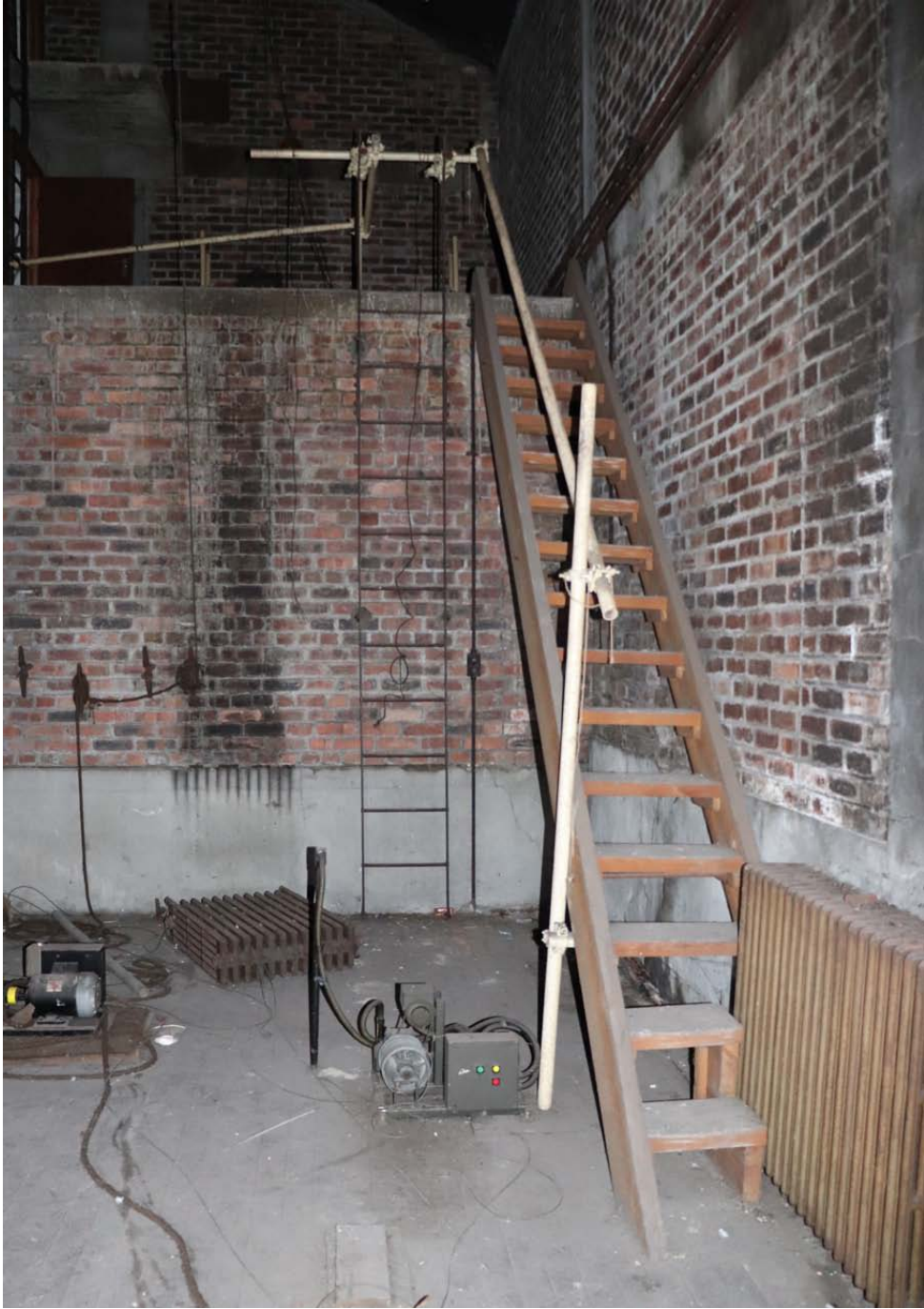
View of concrete floor to raised section



View of brickwork within concrete frame to raised section



View across stage towards west end with steps to lighting position

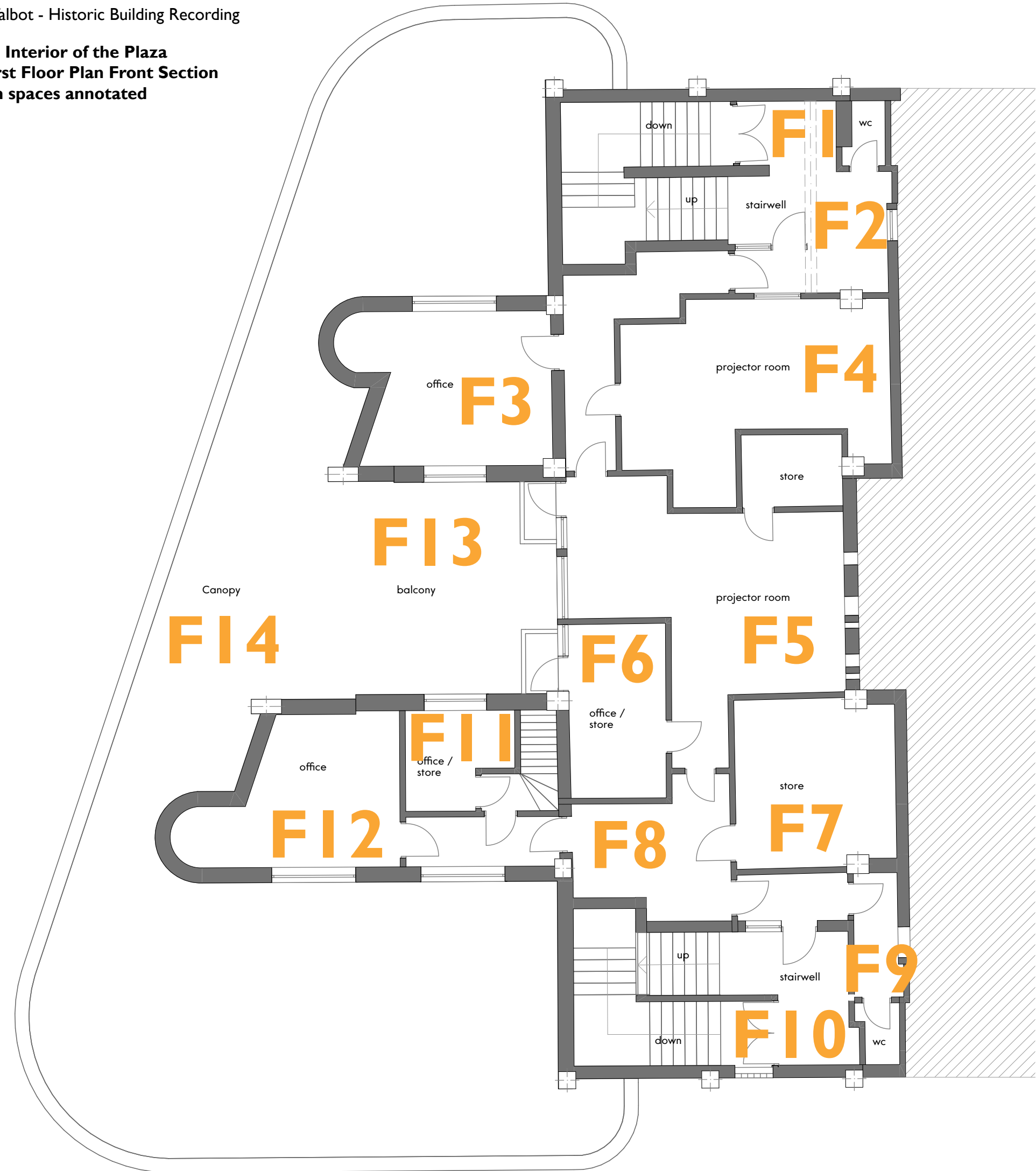


View of steps to lighting position



View of brickwork within concrete frame to raised section

6.3 The Interior of the Plaza
- First Floor Plan Front Section
with spaces annotated



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All work to be carried out in accordance with current Building Regulations.

Contractors must verify all dimensions at the job before commencing any work or making shop drawings.

Written dimensions should be taken.

Do not scale off drawing.

Do not take digital dimensions from this drawing.

Any discrepancies to be reported to the Architect.



Note:
See Demolition Drawing (PA)0021

P02	28.05.19	update as per planning consultant's comments	CT	RT	
P01	17.05.19	First Issue	CT	RT	
Rev	Date	Comment	Dr	Ch	



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GWP Job Reference (385)1902

Job Title Plaza Port Talbot

Client
Neath Port Talbot County
Borough Council

Existing First Floor Plan

Name (385)1902-GWP-01-01-DR-A-(PA)-0011			
Scale	1:200@A3	Revision	02
Drawn/Checked	CT/RT	First Issue	17.05.2019
Drawing Status	S - Work In Progress		

BIMcloud: BIMServer-PP - BIMcloud Basic for ARCHICAD 22/(385)1902-GWP-01-XX-A3-A-18-PortTalbot-P01

FI - North Staircase

The north staircase leads to a first floor, which is made up of a central projector room, a switch room, stores and a series of office spaces within the two curve fronted turrets over the retail units below.

The Staircase is a continuation of the grey coloured terrazzo treads with a black and white chequerboard pattern just in from the nosing.

On the walls is a dark brown dado profile in the plasterwork, below which the plaster is painted yellow and smooth, above which the plaster is painted white and rough.

Below the dado is a simple round steel handrail, fixed back to the walls, which curves inside the square corners.

At the top of the stairs, on the first floor, is a set of double doors matching those to foyer



View of terrazzo flooring at top of staircase



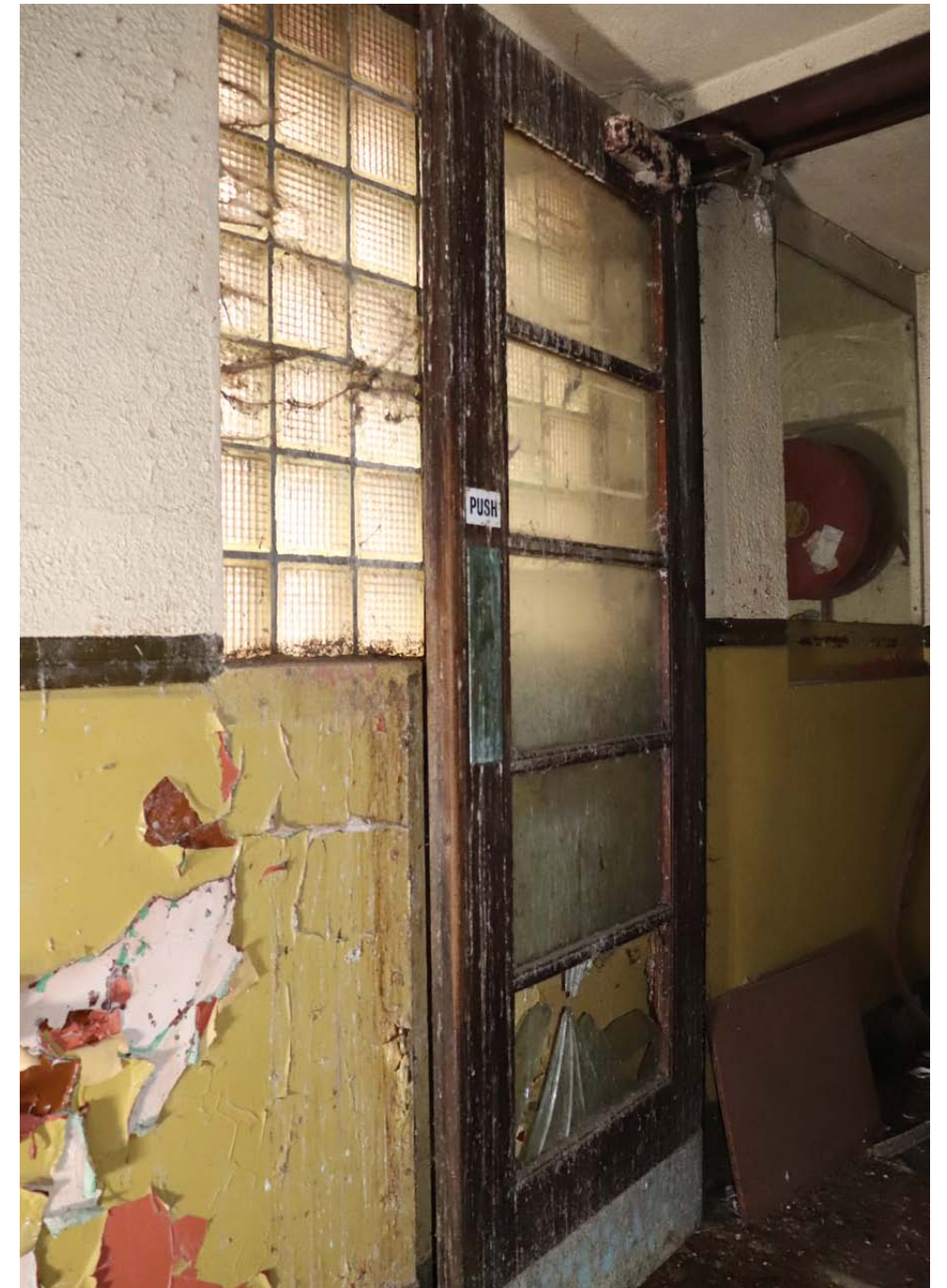
View of end wall at top of staircase with recess for hose reel



Quarter landing to staircase with curved simple round steel handrail



View at top of staircase towards timber-framed door



View of timber-frame glazed doors matching those in the foyer

F2 - North Toilet Area

In the area at the top of the staircase is a Toilet with a window.

To the side of the area in front of the toilet is a timber-framed and architraved opening to the void underneath the concrete auditorium balcony seating.

Further around the corridor is a boxed out masonry construction which provides headroom to the staircase below.

The Walls and Ceilings are of painted plaster, with paintwork in a very poor condition and areas of plaster damage.



View to void underneath the concrete auditorium balcony seating



View of masonry construction providing headroom to the staircase



View of Toilet at top of staircase



View of opening to underside of auditorium balcony seating



View up corridor towards masonry construction over staircase

F3 - North Office - The Flooring is carpet, however it appears as though this room had a wood block floor originally.



View of east wall with window looking out to recessed roof area



View of south wall with rounded apse-like space to right, also showing carpet floor covering



View of west wall with window to the exterior



View of north wall with entrance door to room

F3 - North Office



View of cast iron radiator in space



View of peeling paintwork to plastered concrete soffit



View of window stay



View rounded apse-like recess in south wall



View of window in east wall



View of window in west wall



View of two-point cockscur fastener

F4 - North Switch Room

To the first floor, there are 2no. projector rooms and a switch room. This is the switch room.

In these rooms it is clear to see the raking concrete ‘beams’ through the rooms supporting the concrete pitched flooring to the auditorium balcony.

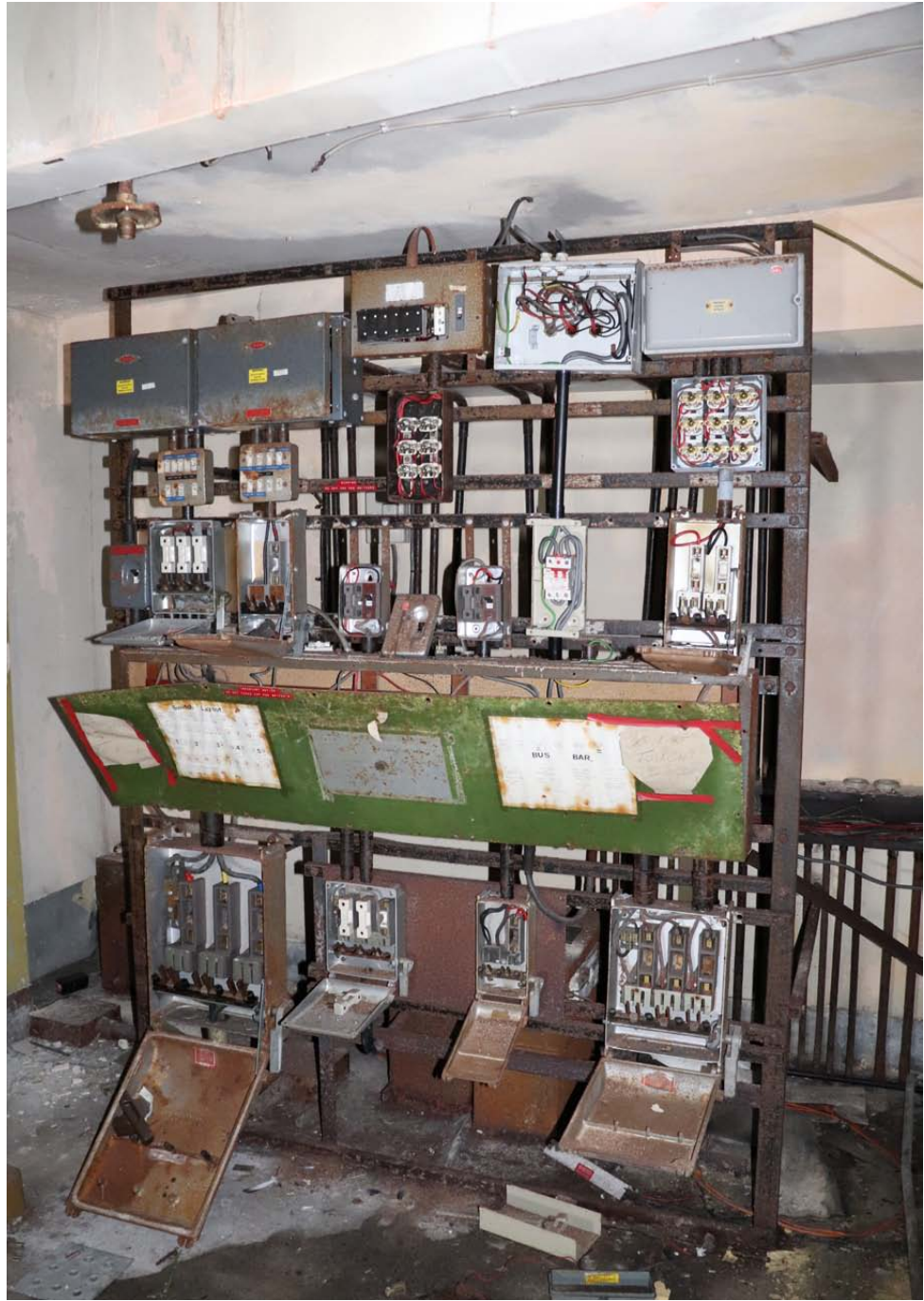
The Walls and Ceilings are of painted plaster, with paintwork in a very poor condition and areas of plaster damage.



West wall to space showing raking concrete ‘beam’ to seating above



View of painted concrete floor



View of switch gear



View of room from entrance door with switch gear at end

F4 - North Switch Room

In this rooms it is clear to see the raking concrete 'beams' through the rooms supporting the concrete pitched flooring to the auditorium balcony.

The Walls and Ceilings are of painted plaster, with paintwork in a very poor condition and areas of plaster damage.



View of soffit showing raking concrete 'beam' and flat seating above



Further view of soffit showing flat concrete seating above



View of part of kit in room



View of south wall with entrance to room

F5 - Central Projection Room - the most important of the first floor spaces with a pattern on projection openings to the auditorium



View of north Projection Wall with series of projection openings



View of east wall



View of south wall

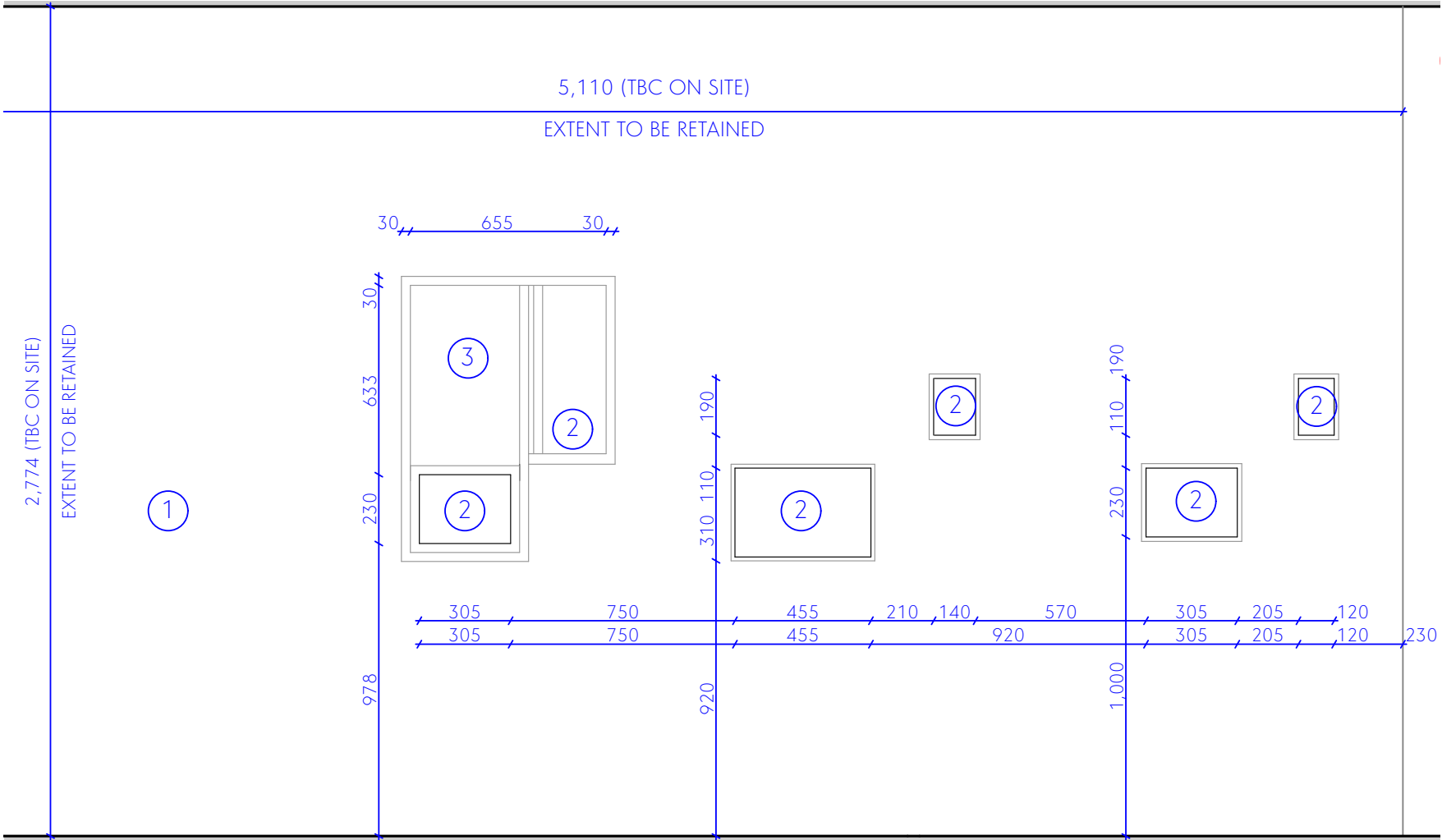


View of west wall with small store room beyond

F5 - Central Projection Room



View of left hand openings with sliding covers



Drawing of projection glazed openings within north wall



View of glazed projection openings as seen from the left



View of glazed projection openings as seen straight on

F5 - Central Projection Room

To the first floor, there are 2no. projector rooms and a switch room. This is the main Projection Room.

The the left hand side of the room is a small store room access via a steel door.

The Walls and Ceilings are of painted plaster, with paintwork in a very poor condition and areas of plaster damage.



View of part of kit in room



View of one of the projection window with the broken glass



View of the small Store room to the side of the projection room



View of Store room showing raking concrete 'beam' to seating above

F6 - Central Office

This room is behind the front projection rooms, and the tops of the raking concrete 'beams' with the flat concrete seating are visible.

To the rear of the room is one door and one window of the glazing looking out onto the recess roof area.

The Walls and Ceilings are of painted plaster, with paintwork in a very poor condition and areas of plaster damage.



View of top of the raking concrete 'beam' with the flat concrete seating



View of room looking towards one door and one window of the glazing looking out onto the recess roof area



View of room looking towards one door and one window of the glazing looking out onto the

F7 - South Projection Room



View of north Projection Wall with 2no. projection openings



View of east wall to space showing raking concrete 'beam' to seating above



View of north wall with entrance to space



View of west wall to space showing raking concrete 'beam' to seating above

F7 - South Projection Room

To the first floor, there are 2no. projector rooms and a switch room. This is the main Projection Room.

The the left hand side of the room is a small store room access via a steel door.

The Walls and Ceilings are of painted plaster, with paintwork in a very poor condition and areas of plaster damage.



View of the concrete soffit with spalling concrete & damaged re-bar



View of painted concrete floor



View of part of kit in room



View of the 2no. projection windows in the north wall

F8 - South Lobby

In between the rooms is a lobby. This include the boxed out masonry construction which provides headroom to the staircase below.

The Walls and Ceilings are of painted plaster, with paintwork in a very poor condition and areas of plaster damage.



Boxed out masonry construction providing headroom to staircase



View of profile of architrave to doors in the space



View of soffit showing raking concrete 'beam' and flat seating above



View of north wall



View of south wall with doors into projection room & stair area

F9 - South Toilet Area

In the area at the top of the staircase is a Toilet with a window.

To the side of the area in front of the toilet is a timber-framed and architraved opening to the void underneath the concrete auditorium balcony seating.



View of Toilet at top of staircase



View to void underneath the concrete auditorium balcony seating



View to void underneath the concrete auditorium balcony seating showing the timber-framed ceiling over the cinema below

F10 - South Staircase



View of blocked up opening to stair landing



View of glass block window to stair landing



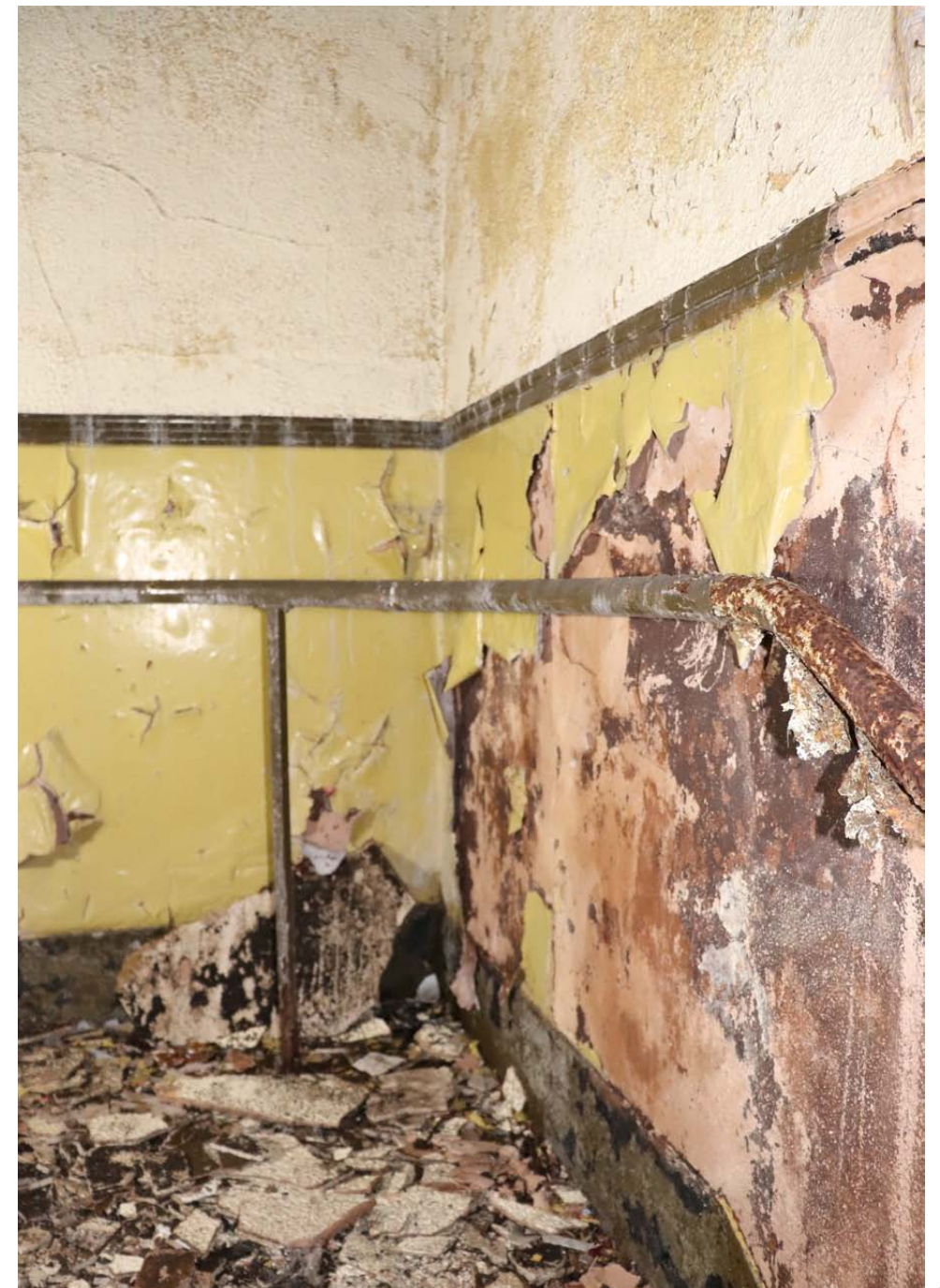
View of carpeted timber stairs with pvc nosings & debris from above



Looking down stairs to blocked up window where timber stairs pass



View from stair landing looking towards projection room



Quarter landing to staircase with curved simple round steel handrail

F11 - West Office



View of west wall with window looking out to recessed roof area



View of profiles of skirting and door architrave in the space



View of spiral concrete staircase leading from first floor to second floor

F12 - South Office

This room is over the larger retail unit to the south east corner of the building with 2no. windows on the east elevation.

These window are flat steel-section slender frames, manufactured by Crittall or similar, synonymous with the Art Deco architectural movement.

Both are in a very poor condition with considerable corrosion to the steel sections.

The Walls and Ceilings to the room are of painted plaster, with paintwork in a very poor condition and areas of plaster damage. To the left hand side of the south wall is a rounded apse-like space with a door forming a store room.

The Flooring is carpet, however it appears as though this room had a wood block floor originally.



View of west wall



View of north wall with entrance door



View of room from entrance door with apse-like space at end



View of south wall with rounded apse-like space.



View of steel safe in the room

F12 - South Office

Below are photographs of the 2no. windows to this space, along with their ironmongery.



View of top bottom-hung opening light



View of finger-pull latch to top bottom-hung opening light



View of window within office



View of the severe corrosion to the steel section at the mullion



View of two-point cockspur fastener to casements



View of window to lobby to office



View of window stay to casement

F13 - Central Roofed Recess

These photographs are of the flat roof area in between the two round-ended forms, which would have been an accessible, covered balcony area, leading to the more open roof area, which used to comprise a wrought iron railing, however no longer does.

There is a run of flat steel-section slender framed windows with doors at either end, manufactured by Crittall or similar, synonymous with the Art Deco architectural movement to the north elevation and windows to both the east and west elevations. The space was completely open on its south end, however, it is now mainly boarded up.

To the east and west elevation are masonry blocks leading to faience tiling. The floor / roof covering is asphalt.



View of the bottom left corner of the window



View the metal-framed window with steel bars behind



The faience-clad beam to the opening & the faience to the side



View of east elevation to open space with the masonry block facade, with its metal-framed window, leading to faience cladding

F13 - Central Roofed Recess

These photographs are of the flat roof area in between the two round-ended forms, which would have been an accessible, covered balcony area, leading to the more open roof area, which used to comprise a wrought iron railing, however no longer does.

There is a run of flat steel-section slender framed windows with doors at either end, manufactured by Crittall or similar, synonymous with the Art Deco architectural movement to the north elevation and windows to both the east and west elevations. The space was completely open on its south end, however, it is now mainly boarded up.

To the east and west elevation are masonry blocks leading to faience tiling.

The floor / roof covering is asphalt.



View of plastered ceiling / soffit



View the metal-framed window with steel bars in front in this case



View of the lead flashing at junction between faience & asphalt roof



View of the asphalt roof



View of east elevation to open space with the masonry block facade, with its metal-framed window, leading to faience cladding

F13 - Central Roofed Recess - View looking out to large opening, now boarded up



F13 - Central Roofed Recess - View of north elevation to space with run of flat steel-section slender framed windows with doors at either end, manufactured by Crittall or similar, synonymous with the Art Deco style



F13 - Central Roofed Recess

View of corrosion to steel frame sections at mullion



View of corrosion to steel frame sections at mullion



View of Art Deco style handle to the doors



View of run of flat steel-section slender framed windows with doors at either end, manufactured by Crittall or similar, synonymous with the Art Deco architectural movement. Almost all of the glass panes are broken and much of the frame is corroded, as seen from the photographs on the top row. Note the Art Deco style handle to the doors to the top right.

F14 - Roof to Ground Floor Canopy

These photographs are of the flat roof area in between and in front of the two round-ended faience-clad forms, which is the canopy over the entrance area. It used to form a balcony, which used to comprise a wrought iron railing, however no longer does.

The finish is asphalt, however, it has developed considerable vegetation over the years and the asphalt is in a poor condition.



View looking eastwards



View looking westwards



View looking eastwards

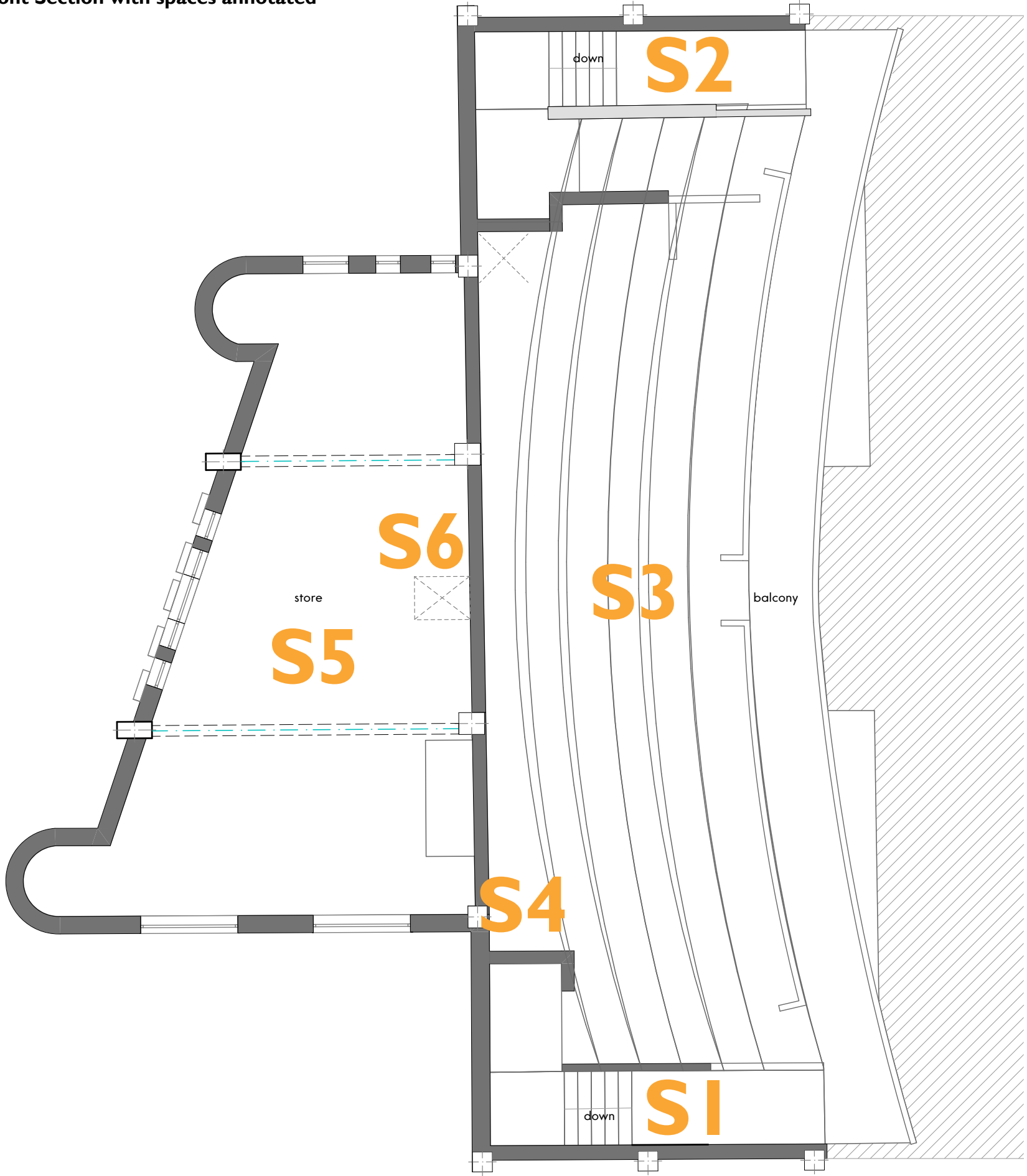


View looking westwards



View of the lead flashing at junction between faience & asphalt roof

6.4 The Interior of the Plaza
- Second Floor Plan Front Section with spaces annotated



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All work to be carried out in accordance with current Building Regulations.

Contractors must verify all dimensions at the job before commencing any work or making shop drawings.

Written dimensions should be taken.

Do not scale off drawing.

Do not take digital dimensions from this drawing.

Any discrepancies to be reported to the Architect.



Note:
See Demolition Drawing (PA)0021

P02	28.05.19	update as per planning consultant's comments	CT	RT
P01	17.05.19	First Issue	CT	RT
Rev	Date	Comment	Dr	Ch



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GWP Job Reference (385)1902

Job Title Plaza Port Talbot

Client Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council

Existing Second Floor Plan

Name (385)1902-GWP-01-01-DR-A-(PA)-0012				
Scale	1:200@A3	Revision	02	
Drawn/Checked	CT/RT	First Issue	17.05.2019	
Drawing Status	S - Work In Progress			

BIMcloud: BIMServer-HP - BIMcloud Basic for ARCHICAD 22/(385)1902-GWP-01-XX-M3-A-18-PortTalbot-P01

SI - South Staircase

Whilst all of the other stairs and steps in the Plaza are concrete in substrate with a terrazzo finish and black and white chequerboard nosings, the stairs leading from the first floor up to the second floor auditorium balcony are timber and are carpeted with pvc nosings.

The flight of the staircase on the external wall passes directly over a blocked up window.

The varied construction and the blocking up of the window so that the flight could be locate in this position lead to the assumption that this first to second floor staircase is not original and that the auditorium balcony was accessed in a different way.

The excessive water ingressing this staircase has resulted in the timber becoming badly rotten with the surface caked in rot spores. The masonry walls have also become saturated, with the plaster falling off.



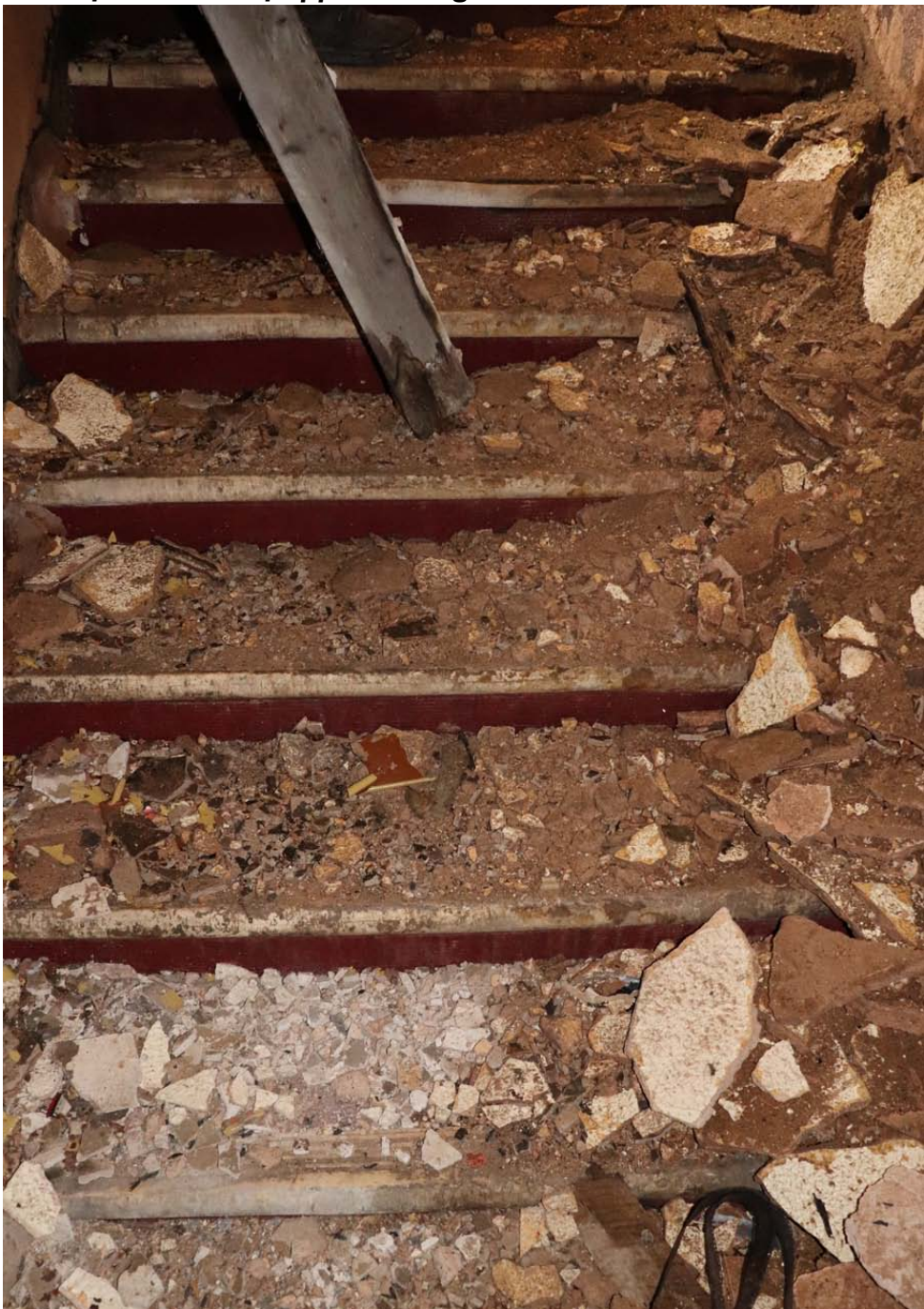
View of underside of upper landing



View of rot spores caking timber to underside of stairs



View of saturated brickwork & lost plaster to inner wall



View of carpeted timber stairs with pvc nosings & debris from above



View of underside of internal flight

SI - South Staircase

From the first floor, the staircase rises to the back of the upper tier balcony to the large cinema space, with a vomitory leading out to the seating



View of last flight of stairs leading into auditorium balcony



View at top of stairs leading to vomitory to auditorium balcony



View of timber board flooring at top of stairs underneath carpet

S2 - North Staircase

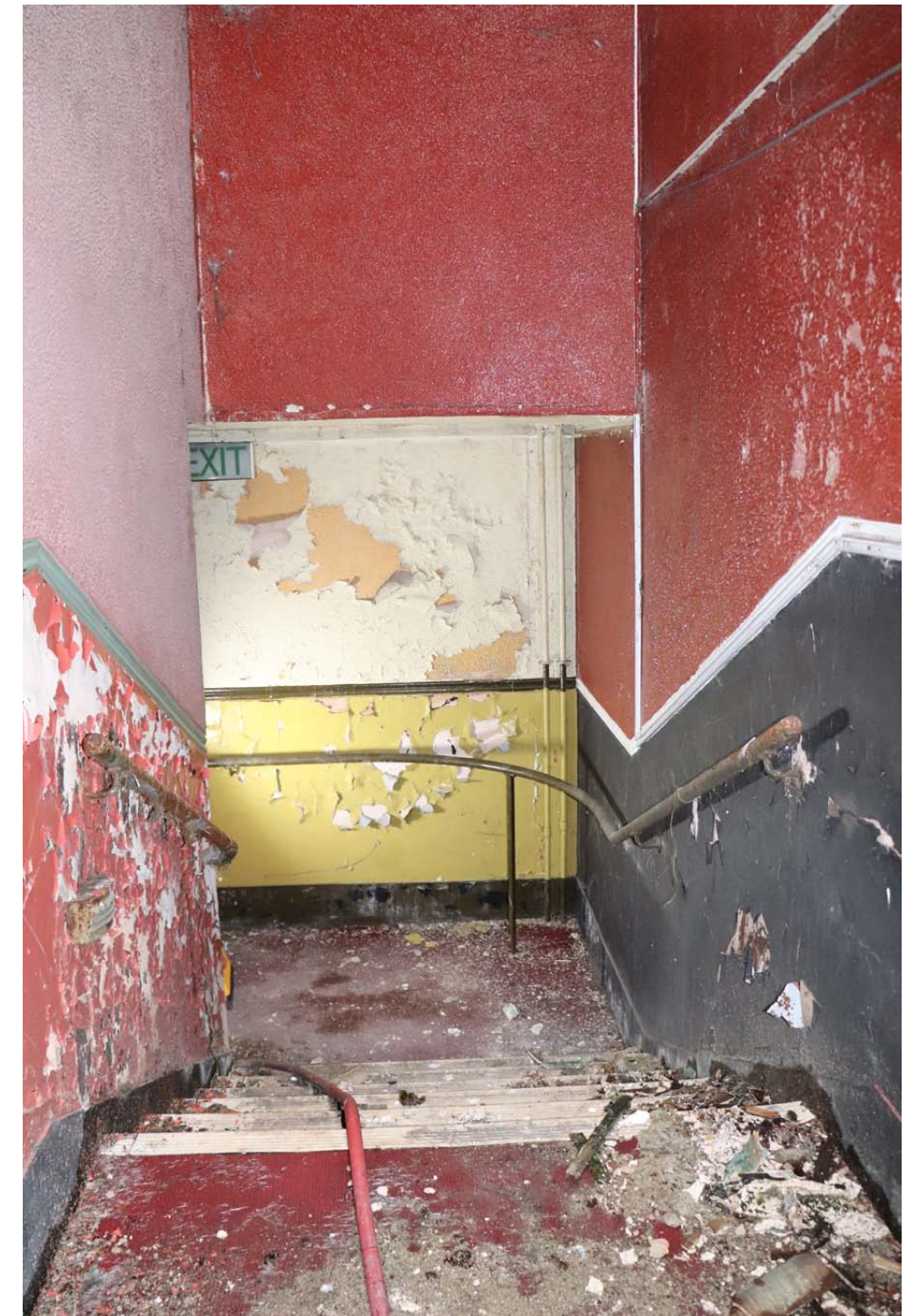
Whilst all of the other stairs and steps in the Plaza are concrete in substrate with a terrazzo finish and black and white chequerboard nosings, the stairs leading from the first floor up to the second floor auditorium balcony are timber and are carpeted with pvc nosings.

The flight of the staircase on the external wall passes directly over a blocked up window.

The varied construction and the blocking up of the window so that the flight could be located in this position lead to the assumption that this first to second floor staircase is not original and that the auditorium balcony was accessed in a different way.



View of lower flight of stair looking up



View of upper flight of stair looking down

S3 - Auditorium Balcony

Originally, the auditorium was one large space with a very deep stalls, with a deep balcony oversailing the first (rear) section of stalls with a sloping floor, then a large full height (front) section, with a part sloping part flat floor, and then the stage and screen. In 1989, the rear section of the stalls, overhung by the balcony, was sub-divided, as it still remains. All the seating to the front stalls area has been removed, however, the seating to the upper balcony has remained.

On this page, and the next few pages, is a series of photographs of the seating. On this page, the rear section is covered.

Note on this page the photographs of the large hole in the roof at the rear of the space which has spawned the growth of considerable vegetation amongst the seating.



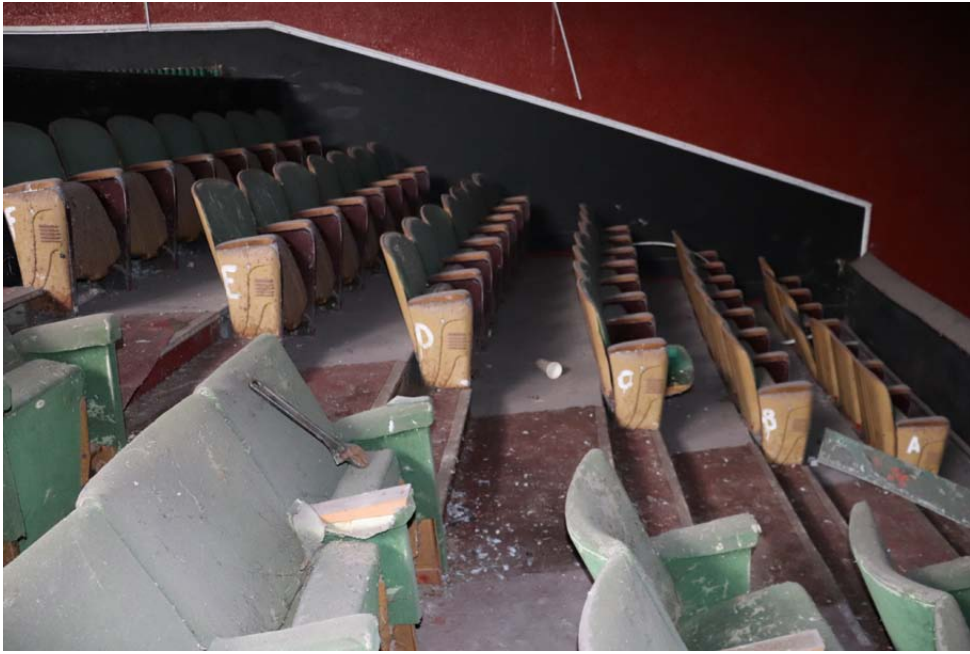
S3 - Auditorium Balcony

This page shows the central section of the balcony seating.



S3 - Auditorium Balcony

This page shows the lower section of the balcony seating, with the middle row showing the timber construction over the top of the 2no cinemas below and the central corridor.



View of timber construction over the top of the west cinema below



View of timber construction over the top of the central corridor below



View of timber construction over the top of the east cinema below



View of railing at bottom of aisle with radiator below it



View of radiator at the rear of the space



View of illuminated exit sign at the rear of the space

S3 - Auditorium Balcony

Throughout the auditorium, the ceiling comprises an exposed grid with square ceiling panels of what appears to be wood fire, with intermittent decorative ventilator grilles and light fittings dropped from the ceiling, however set within the grid, made up of a 3 x 3 x 1 series of cubes.

A moulded plaster cornice runs around the auditorium, coloured now in red, white and blue.



View of the ceiling looking northwards



View of the ceiling looking eastwards with the large hole to the right



View of the ceiling looking northwards



View of light within ceiling



View of detail of the grid at a cross junction



View of ventilation grille within ceiling



View of ventilation grille and light within ceiling

S3 - Auditorium Balcony

On this page is a series of photographs of the moulded plaster cornice which runs around the auditorium, coloured now in red, white and blue.

It is clear that the moulding is a thin reinforced form.



S4 - Void at back of Auditorium Balcony

Between the rear wall of the auditorium - which is curved - and the wall to the back of the second floor office roof - which is straight - there is a void, which is naturally narrow in the centre and wider at the ends.

Below are photographs of this void, showing both walls to be single skin brickwork in a stretcher bond.



S5 - Store / Office

From the first floor south turret section, a tight staircase leads up to second floor space behind the rear of the cinema balcony. This is one large space with the inside of the curved turrets expressed and windows on all three external walls.

The windows are flat steel-section slender framed windows, manufactured by Crittall or similar, synonymous with the Art Deco architectural movement. Each has opening lights.

The walls are of single skin brickwork (of stretcher bond) within a reinforced concrete frame, clad on the outside with faience tiling. Walls and ceiling and all painted white, and not plastered. The floor is exposed concrete.

The photographs on this page are on the east end.



View of left hand window to east elevation



View of right hand window to east elevation



View of the brick formed curved turret end to the south east corner



View of the east elevation of the room

S5 - Store / Office



Detail of the south window, showing the mullion and transom bar



View of the large tripartite windows to the centre of the south elevation



View of the room taken from the north east corner facing the main south elevation

S5 - Store / Office

From the first floor south turret section, a tight staircase leads up to second floor space behind the rear of the cinema balcony. This is one large space with the inside of the curved turrets expressed and windows on all three external walls.

The windows are flat steel-section slender framed windows, manufactured by Crittall or similar, synonymous with the Art Deco architectural movement. Each has opening lights.

The walls are of single skin brickwork (of stretcher bond) within a reinforced concrete frame, clad on the outside with faience tiling. Walls and ceiling and all painted white, and not plastered. The floor is exposed concrete.

The photographs on this page are on the west end.



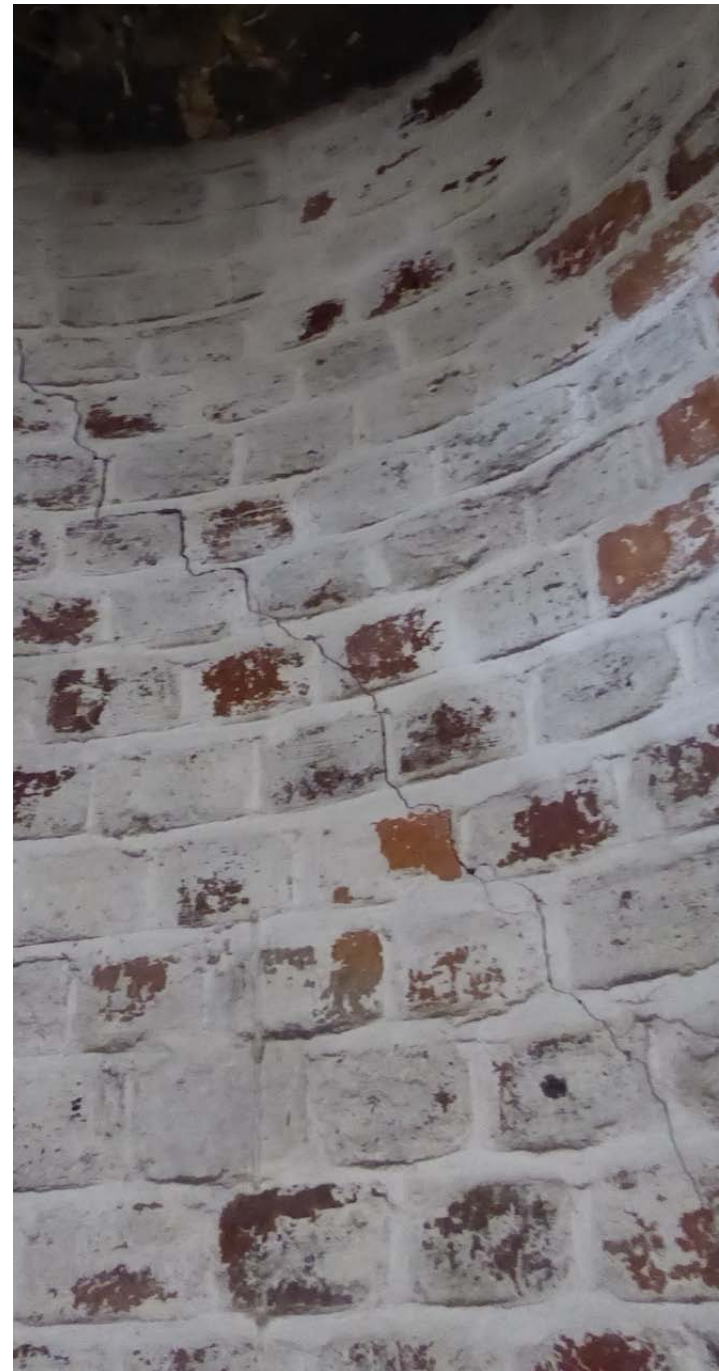
View of concrete 'lid' to turret, showing small crack



View of the trio of windows to the west elevation



View of the brick curved end to south west corner



View of crack in brickwork to turret



View of the west elevation of the room

S5 - Store / Office



View of example of stay to windows



View of example of stay to windows



View of example of top-hinged toplight to windows



View of example of cockspur fastener to windows



View of example of timber sub-frame to windows



View of example of timber sub-frame to windows



View of example of mullion to transom joint to windows

S5 - Store / Office



View of vent within brickwork of wall



View of concrete floor



View of slim precast concrete units to soffit, painted white



View of north wall showing concrete framed wall with brick infill and slim precast concrete units to soffit, all painted white

S5 - Store / Office

From the first floor south turret section, a tight staircase leads up to second floor space behind the rear of the cinema balcony.

There is a steel guardrail around the stair void, which is Art Deco in style, however, badly corroded.

There is a hole in the soffit, leading to an external access construction to the flat roof above. There is a steel ladder to access this opening, fixed back to the wall.

Alongside the ladder is a galvanised steel duct, which also penetrates the concrete soffit.

There is a noticeable crack down the concrete soffit



View of opening in soffit with start of long crack



View of steel ladder to access roof & galvanised steel duct



Spiral concrete staircase leading from first floor to second floor



View of steel guardrail around stair void, which is Art Deco in style



View of steel guardrail around stair void, which is Art Deco in style



View of steel ladder to access roof & galvanised steel duct

S6 - Roof over Store / Office

Over the second floor room is an asphalt flat roof which has developed considerable vegetation.

Around the roof are 2.5m high walls of brick inner skin with faience outer cladding with a lead capping and two further brick capping courses.

The walls are coated in thick bitumen.

To both the laddered access and the duct which penetrate the roof, there is a box construction designed to keep the space below weather proof. Both are capped with an asphalt flat roof (albeit slightly falling) and encased in bitumen coating.

The access used to have a timber door on it, but that has broken away and is lying on the roof.



View of south east turret and some of south wall



View of south west turret and west end wall



View of south east turret



View looking eastwards

S6 - Roof over Store / Office



View of top of walls with two brick courses over a lead flashing



View of top of walls with two brick courses over a lead flashing



View of ne of the two drainage outlets from the roof



View of south east turret



View of south west turret



View of the bitumen coating to the wall

S6 - Roof over Store / Office



View of timber door which used to enclose box construction to ladder



View of box construction to duct vent



View of box construction to ladder access - from below



View of box construction to ladder access & duct vent - from side



View of box construction to ladder access - straight on



View of box construction to ladder access - from side

S6 - Roof over Store / Office

To both the laddered access and the duct which penetrate the roof, there is a box construction designed to keep the space below weather proof. Both are capped with an asphalt flat roof (albeit slightly falling) and encased in bitumen coating.

The access used to have a timber door on it, but that has broken away and is lying on the roof.



View of asphalt capping to box construction to ladder access



View of asphalt capping to box construction to ladder access



View of interior of box construction to ladder access



View of interior of box construction to ladder access



View of interior of box construction to ladder access, looking down

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