



Chambers Institute: Burgh Hall Feasibility study

Client: Chambers Institution Trust
Stage: Feasibility Study

Issue 01: Draft 17.02.2023

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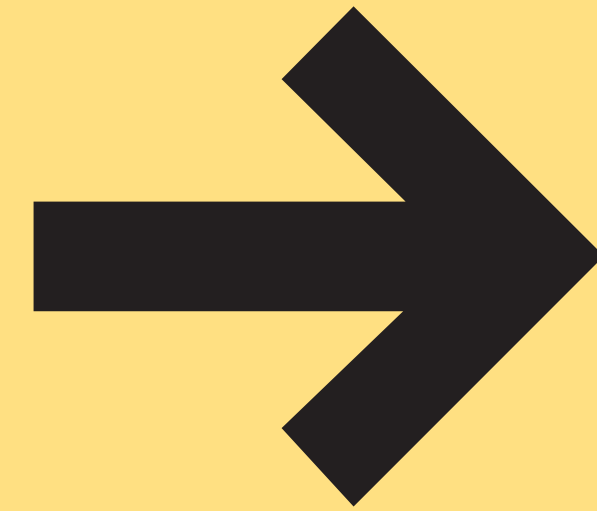


Photo of Burgh Hall taken 10th Feb 2023 with suspended ceiling removed and full height of hall revealed



Page\Park have been commissioned to consider options for inserting a new floor level within the Burgh Hall to increase the usable floor area within the Chambers Institute building. This study will then be combined with the earlier feasibility study on the Chambers Institute to reach an agreed vision for the whole building.

Preliminary survey of the space has been carried out to sketch the volume of space available but this will need to be accurately surveyed to fully test the proposals.

No specific brief has yet been agreed for the use of the space beyond retaining a large multi-purpose community hall and activities that would support the museum and library use of the rest of the building. To begin testing possibilities we have explored the idea of creating space for archive storage or handling of the museum collections.

Option 01 - Full floor

Option 01 involves the insertion of a full floor into the Burgh Hall to create a large archive store and kitchen at ground level. The existing kitchen lean-to would be demolished and a new stair and lift core constructed to provide access to the new first floor hall. A partition would be constructed around the existing balcony to protect it.

A notional arrangement of an archive has been indicated opposite, but this could be configured in lots of different ways, depending on the collection and service requirements. Facilities could include rolling racking (subject to structurally reinforcing the floor), fixed shelving, wall mounted racking, layout space for handling / packing / preparing objects, storage for packing materials, etc.

The Registrar would be relocated to the existing office beside the main pend, freeing up space to create a second fire escape stairs from the new first floor Burgh Hall with an escape door directly to outside.

The existing WCs would be renovated. The new WCs could be configured in various ways, including a bank of unisex toilets, but there is adequate space for this within the existing WC area.

A new wide corridor would connect the existing covered veranda to the new stair and lift core and form the main route into the new Burgh Hall at first floor. A display wall of museum objects could be integrated into this corridor to add interest, with the potential to create a window into the Archive.

PROS

- New archive
- View to hills opened up at first floor
- Improved WC provision

CONS

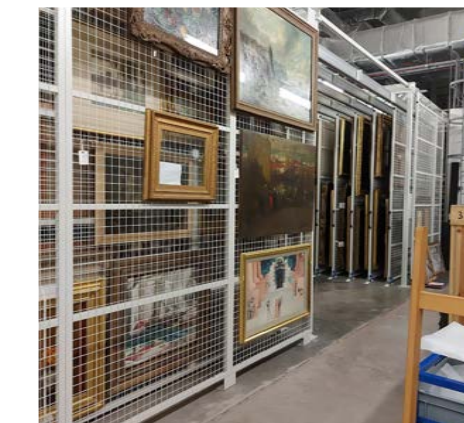
- Two new fire escape stairs need to be formed - capital cost
- A lift is required - capital cost + yearly maintenance
- Entrance to first floor Burgh Hall is complicated making it hard for people to locate
- Registrar needs to be relocated
- Original entrance sequence to Burgh Hall is lost
- Connection between Burgh Hall and courtyard is lost
- Junction between heritage balcony and new floor is uncomfortable - heritage features generally impacted by new insertion
- Listed Building Consent will be hard to obtain



Museum display wall at Kelvinhall, Glasgow



Example of layout space / packing area at The Hunterian Archive



Example of fine art racking at The Hunterian Archive, Glasgow



Example of plan chest integrated into rolling racking



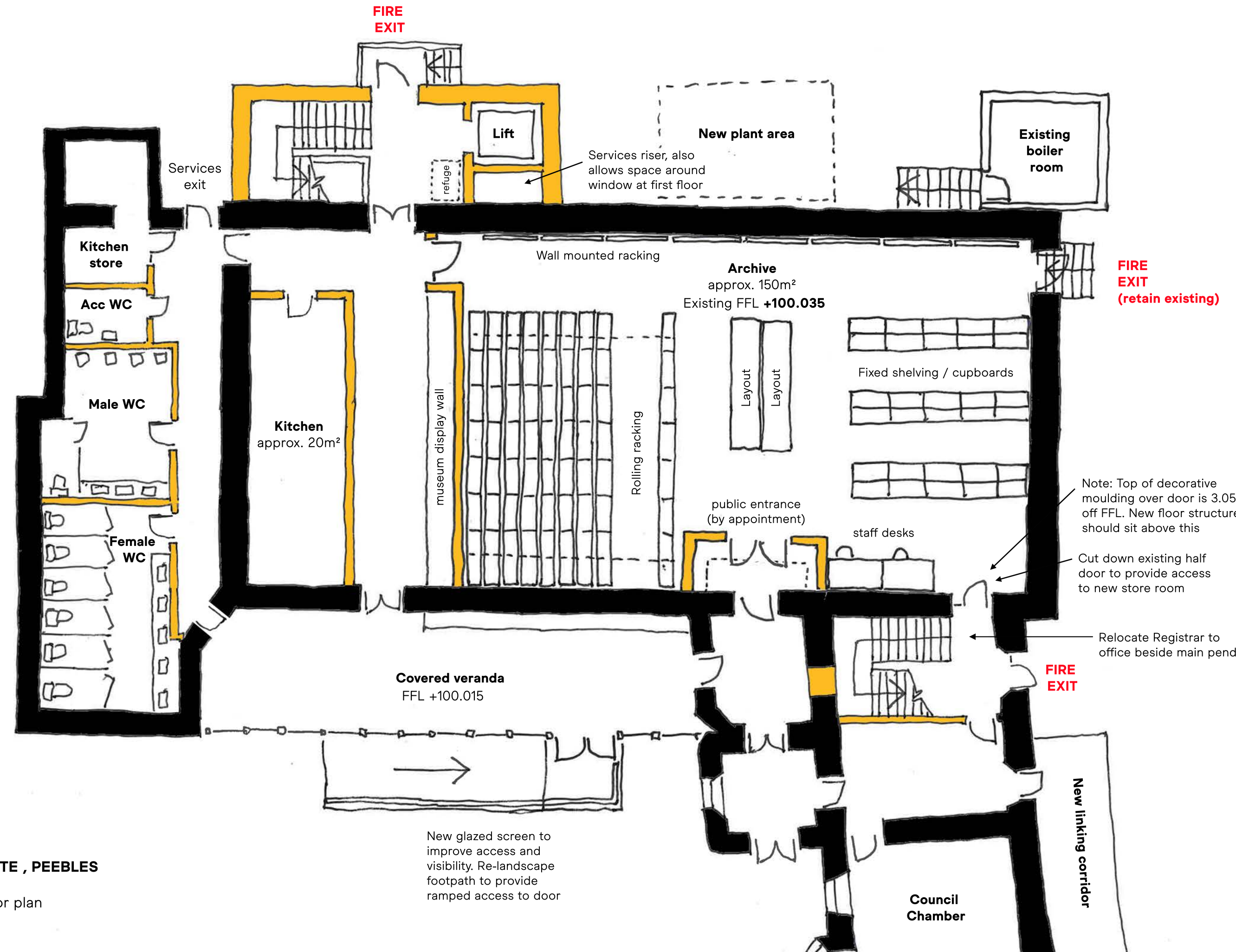
Example of fixed shelving at The Secret Collection, Paisley



Example of rolling racking system (manually operated) at The Secret Collection, Paisley



Example of wall mounted racking at The Hunterian Archive, Glasgow



Images this page:
Example of archive storage and museum display walls

Drawing opp page:
Proposed Option 1 ground floor plan

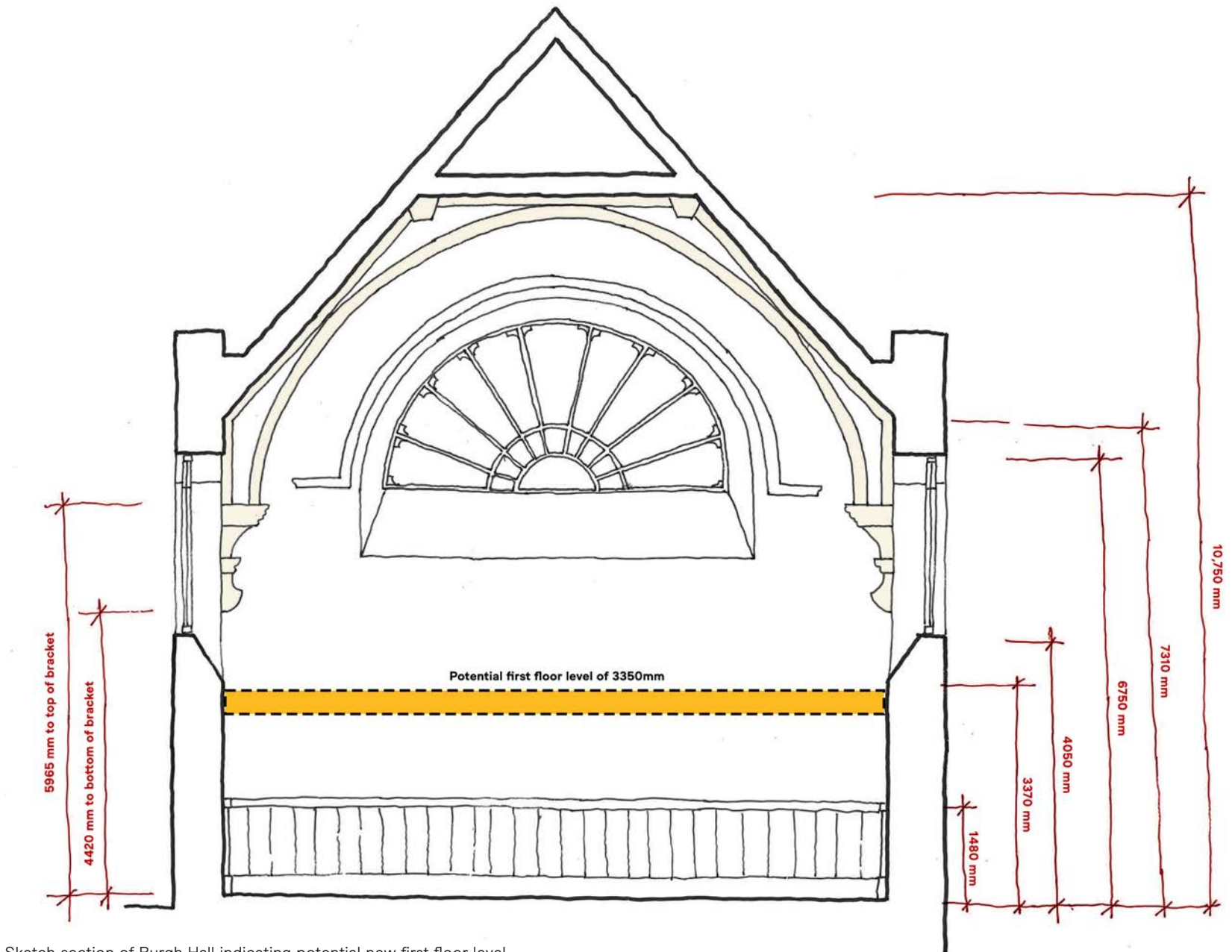
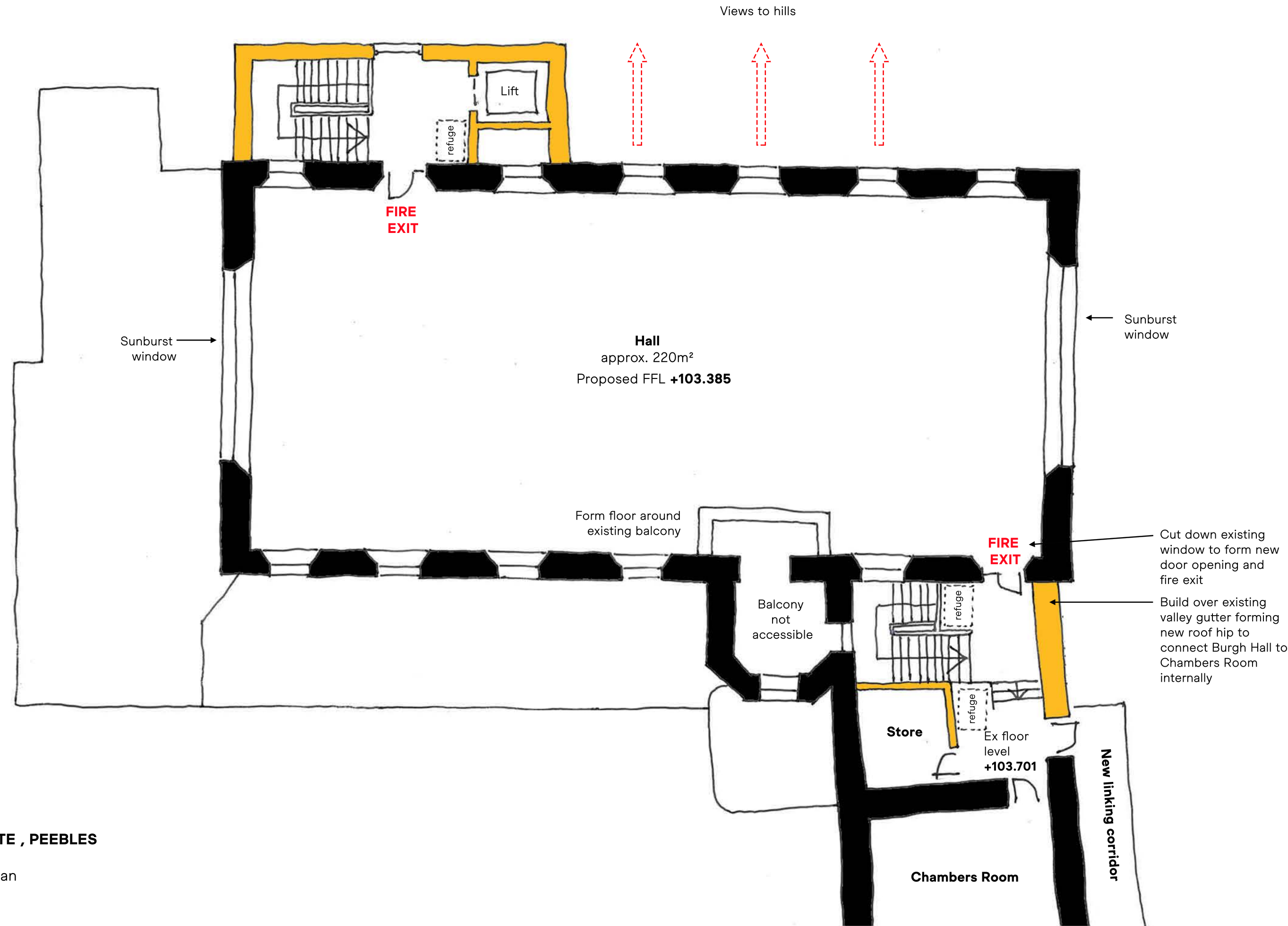
Option 01 - Full floor

By inserting a new first floor into the Burgh Hall, this space can take advantage of the lovely views to the Tweedsmuir Hills to the south.

The relationship to the existing windows will be altered, so that the window cill will be approx. 700mm above the new floor level. This is too low to be considered safe, so balustrades or secondary glazing with toughened glass to any area less than 800mm off FFL will need to be installed.

While the hall will still be a tall space, the proportion of the hall will be substantially altered, which might make it difficult to obtain listed building consent.

The relationship to the decorative plaster brackets supporting the trusses will be altered. This will expose them to be potential for damage.



Sketch section of Burgh Hall indicating potential new first floor level



View of hills from rear of Burgh Hall

SKETCH VIEW OF HALL

Note on archive storage

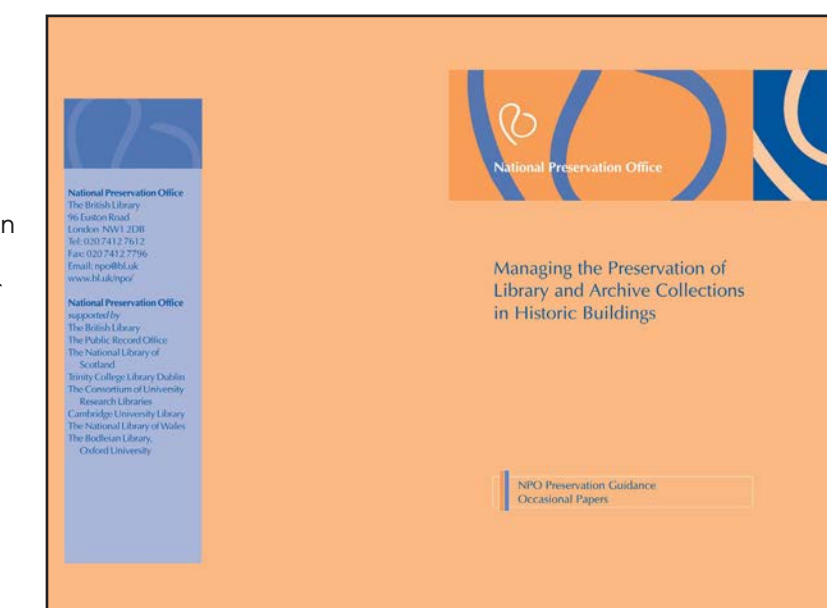
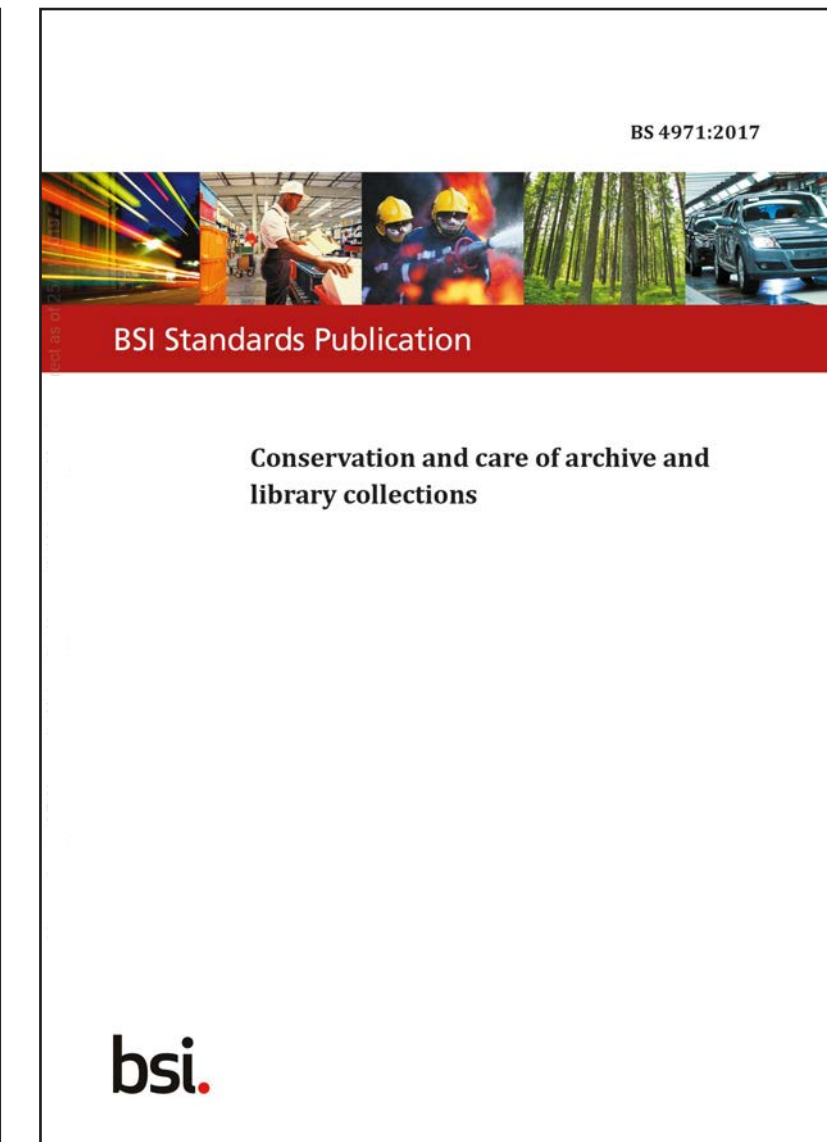
BS EN 16893 "Conservation of Cultural Heritage. Specifications for location, construction and modification of buildings or rooms intended for the storage or use of heritage collections" contains guidance on the constructional aspects of creating a storage facility for museum collections.

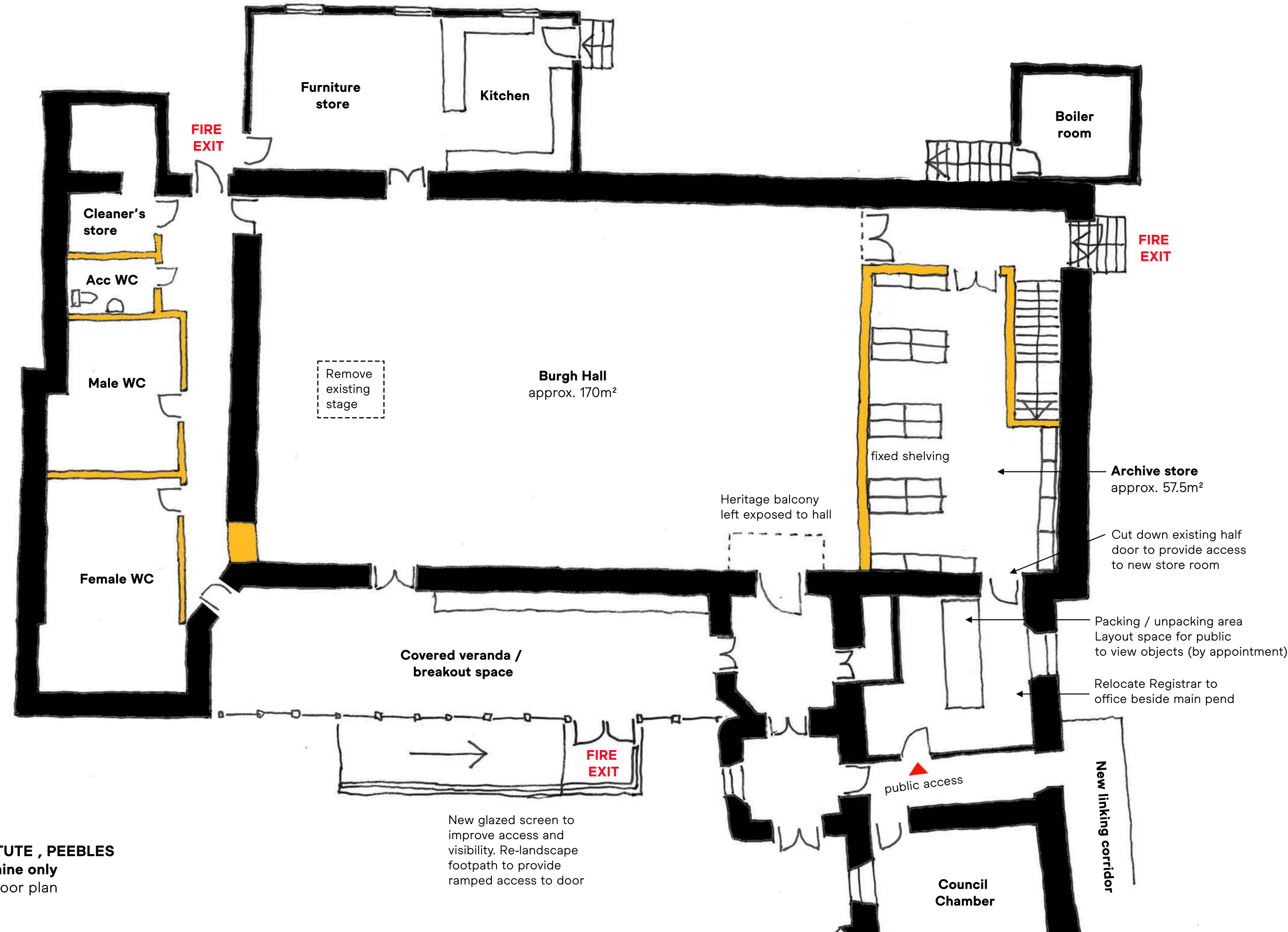
BS 4971:2017 covers the exhibition and storage aspects of the conservation and care of archive and library collections.

These are the relevant British and European standards for this project. BS 4971:2017 contains archive and library specifications which are considered out of scope of BS EN 16893, being archive-specific. The Collections Trust also provide useful guidance on housing collections in historic buildings, which would be considered if the proposal was taken forward.

An archive should protect the collections against internal and external hazards including fire, water, pests, criminal activity and the environment (temperature and humidity). Environmental conditions should be tailored to the collection and be influenced by the nature of their materials, their condition, the intended longevity of the collection and the nature and cost of the energy required to achieve these objectives. The BS recommends carrying out a risk assessment against each of these hazards to identify issues and management / elimination strategies. This will be particularly important in relation to creating an archive within a Category A listed building. It is likely the "ideal" conditions for an archive will not always align with the needs of the listed building, and so some compromise will be required.

The first step should be to assess whether this building is the right space to store a museum collection. It might be more appropriate to store the collection in a purpose built facility, with items brought to the Chambers Institute for handling / viewing by researcher and the public, and exhibition only. As such, there is potential to create a smaller unpacking / viewing room within the Burgh Hall for this purpose, see following pages.





CHAMBERS INSTITUTE , PEEBLES
OPTION 2 - Mezzanine only
 Proposed ground floor plan
 1:100 @ A3

Images this page:
 Examples of structures, floors
 and mezzanines inserted into
 historic spaces in Scotland

Drawing opp page:
 Proposed Option 2 ground
 floor plan

Option 02 - Mezzanine

Option 2 involves the insertion of a single storey mezzanine into Burgh Hall. This would create an enclosed archive store at ground level and an open mezzanine meeting space at first floor. The mezzanine would be accessed via a stairs within the hall, and occupancy would be limited to 60 on the mezzanine for fire escape.

At ground level, the Registrar could be relocated to the office adjacent to the main pend, which would allow use of this room as a packing / unpacking area and public viewing space for archive material.

This proposal would be less intrusive into the historic hall, and potentially more palatable to Historic Environment Scotland. The new structure could take many forms, see example opposite. It could, be a strikingly contemporary insertion such as our St. Teresa's project or Perth City Hall, or it could be something more integrated such as the Glasgow University Post Grad centre.

The mezzanine meeting space would take advantage of the views to the hills through the existing windows. It should be noted that this space is not accessible as it is accessed by stairs only.

The existing kitchen, replaced last year, and the current re-decoration works would be integrated into this option, so there would be no waste.

PROS

- New archive store with layout space for public access (by appointment).
- Improved WC provision.
- Good connection between hall and courtyard, with covered veranda acting as breakout space. These three spaces together will create a lovely setting for events such as weddings, awards ceremonies, dinner events, etc. and open up that market.
- Kitchen, furniture store and WCs on one level providing necessary support spaces for a variety of activities.
- Burgh Hall easy to locate, fully accessible.
- Full height of existing hall including heritage features remain intact.
- Current decoration, repair and services work not abortive.
- Existing kitchen, one year old, does not need to be removed.
- Modest budget as no requirement for new lift, stairs or modification to existing roof structure.

CONS

- Is the Archive store big enough?



Mezzanine at Glasgow's Women's Library by Collective



New floor inserted at York Art Gallery by Simpson + Brown



Perth City Hall by Mechanoo, new insertion into historic space



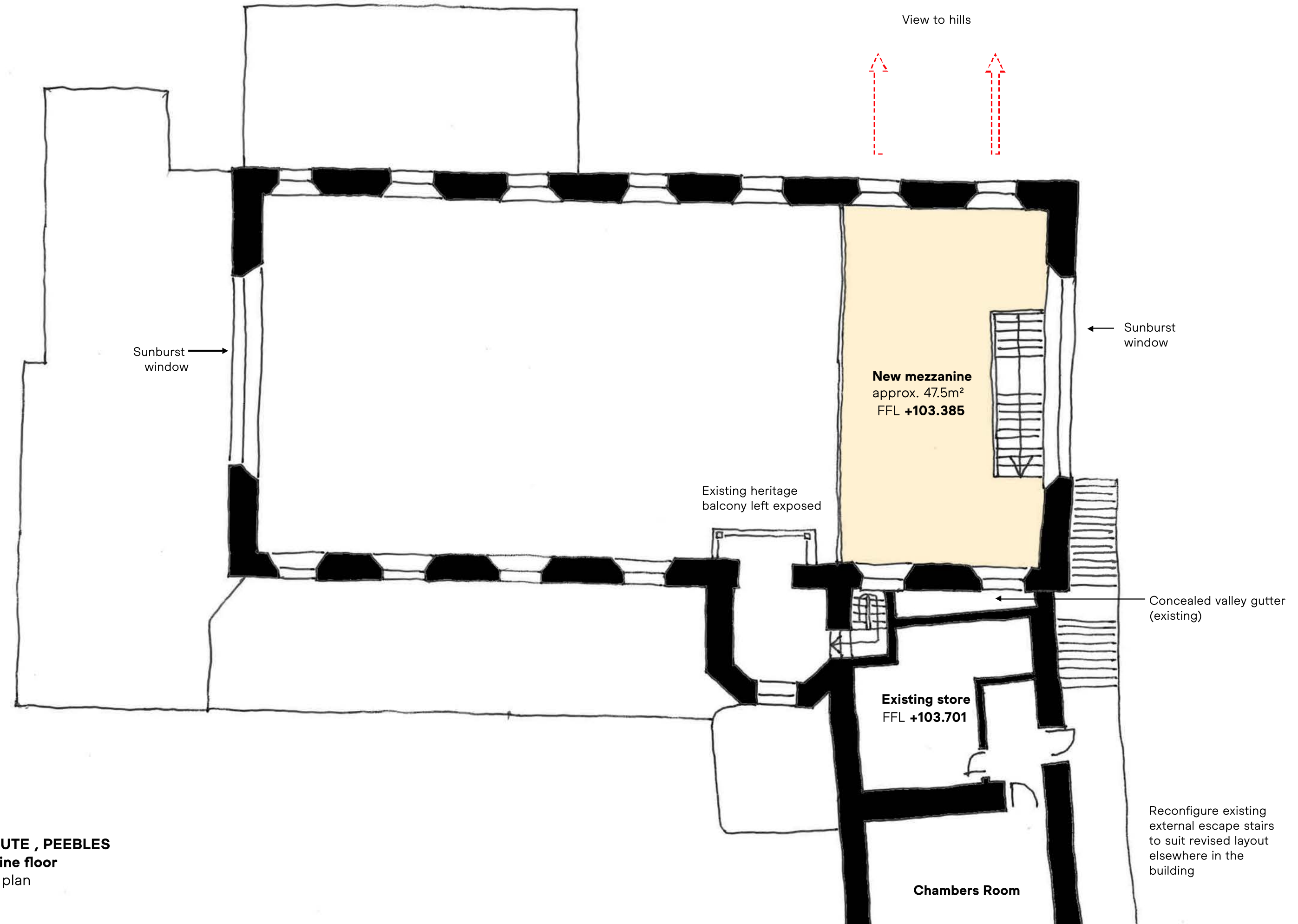
St. Teresa's Church, Glasgow. New meeting rooms inserted into Church sanctuary



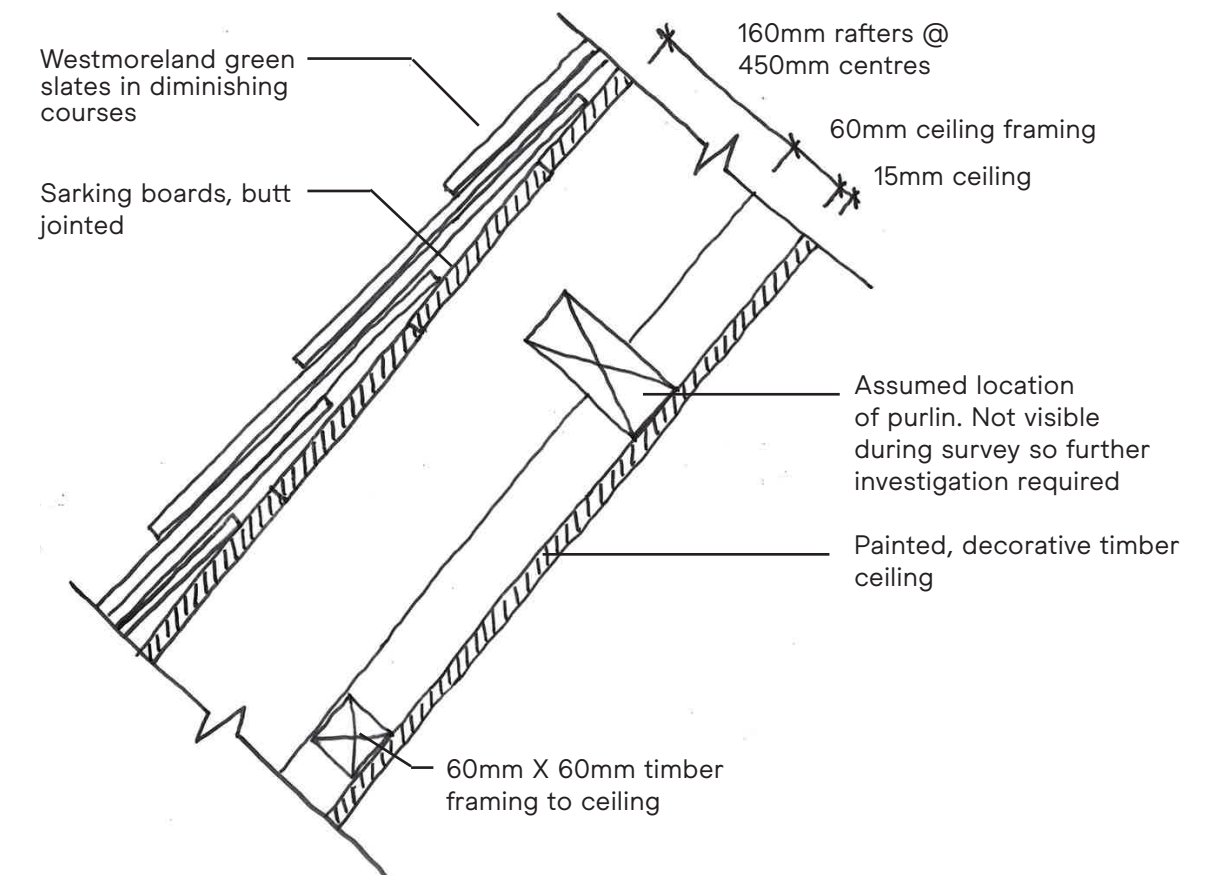
First floor of post grad centre in Glasgow University



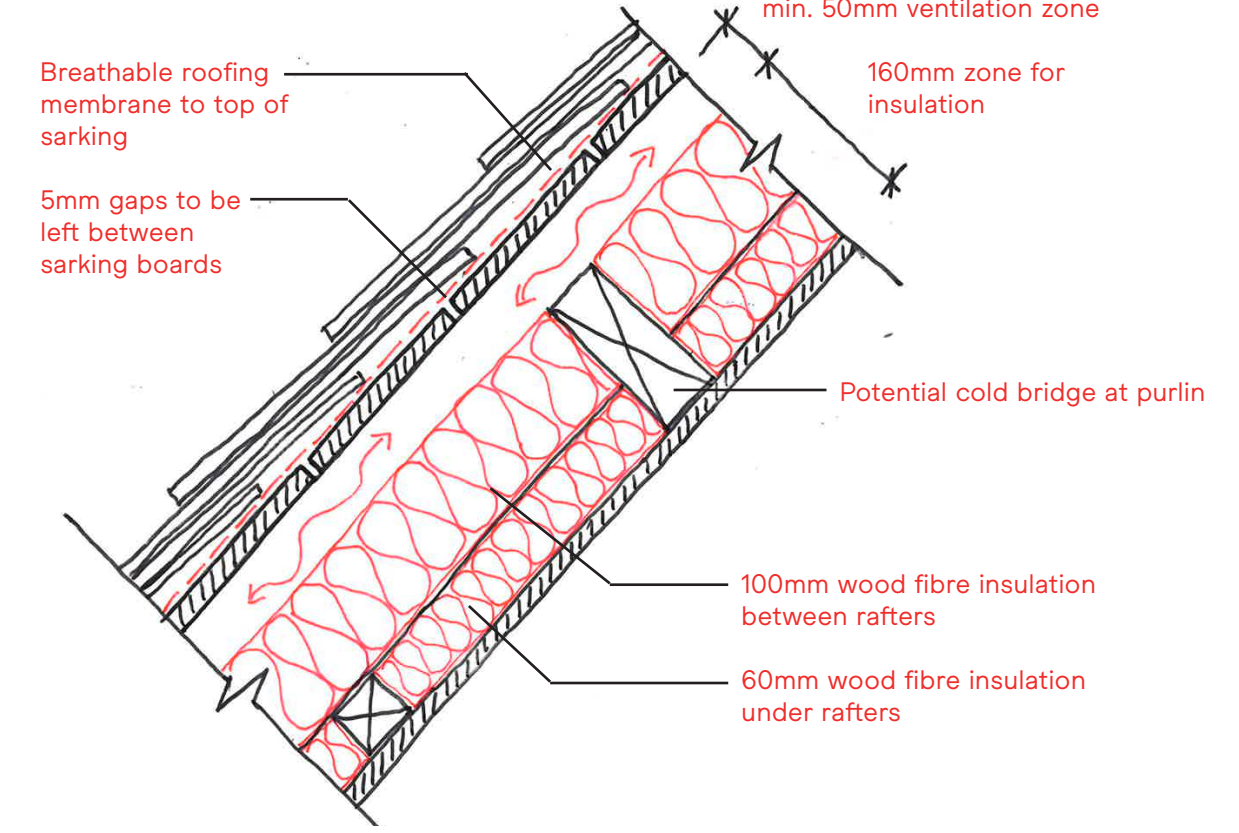
Ground floor of post grad centre in Glasgow University



Insulating the roof



EXISTING ROOF DETAIL



PROPOSED ROOF DETAIL



Decorative timber ceiling should not be removed, insulation to be installed from above



Plaster cornice detail



Photo of rafters and sarking at wall head where wall linings are missing

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