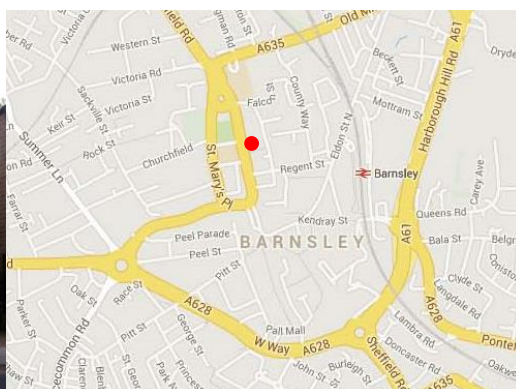


Design and Access Statement

Project: Cooper Gallery, Church Street, Barnsley S70 2AH
Proposed Extension and Alterations
Ref: RL3111
Date: March 2014
Applicant: Ms Lynn Dunning,
 Arts Museums and Archives Manager, Barnsley MBC



Main frontage onto Church Street



Town Centre location

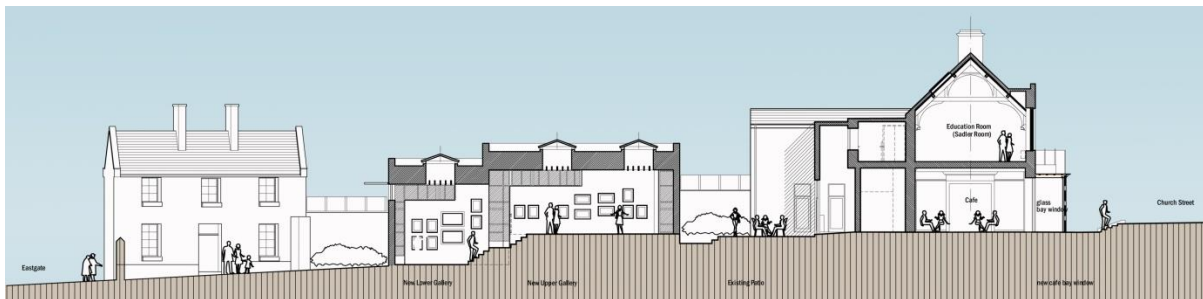
Introduction

The following statement has been prepared to support the planning application for the extension to the Cooper Gallery, Church Street, Barnsley, and to explain how the proposals fit within the Trustees' ambitions for improvements, and their future development plans for the wider enhancement of the Gallery's function as a significant community, education and heritage asset for the town.

Only part of the Cooper's unique collection of paintings can be put on display at any given time due to lack of space, and the existing spaces can be inflexible when it comes to mounting temporary exhibitions. The Gallery recognises also that alterations to the existing layout to improve circulation throughout the building would bring benefits to gallery users, and taking a wider view, the improvement of the toilets and café would further enhance the overall experience.

The Trustees nonetheless recognise, whilst at the same time as not losing sight of the above issues, that their main priorities must be, with this project, to increase the amount of space available for exhibiting art works, which is after all the Gallery's primary function. The current project therefore focusses on the achieving the following:

- The creation of two new gallery spaces: a large one, and a smaller one, linked together and to the adjacent existing rooms on different levels, providing a natural flow for visitors across the site from Church Street through to the lower level on Eastgate;
- Improvement towards achieving a natural circular route through the gallery with the open linkage of galleries;
- Restoring the Church Street entrance to its original central position at the stone portico;
- Presenting a new and attractive entrance toward the Eastgate side of the site with level access which will have equal importance to the Church Street frontage. This new face towards Eastgate will hopefully increase visitor numbers, and be attractive to a new audience amongst students and others who perhaps don't visit the gallery at present.



Section showing level transition through the new galleries between Eastgate and Church Street



Section looking north through the new galleries

Constraints

There are characteristics inherent in the shape, slope and layout of the site at the rear of the Gallery which dictate the form that the new extension will take:

- The slope across the site from west to east, whilst a constraint, can offer an opportunity for dramatic split floor levels between galleries linking Church Street through to Eastgate;
- The layout of previous extensions over the last century dictates the form in which the new galleries must relate to the existing. Additions have been made at different times

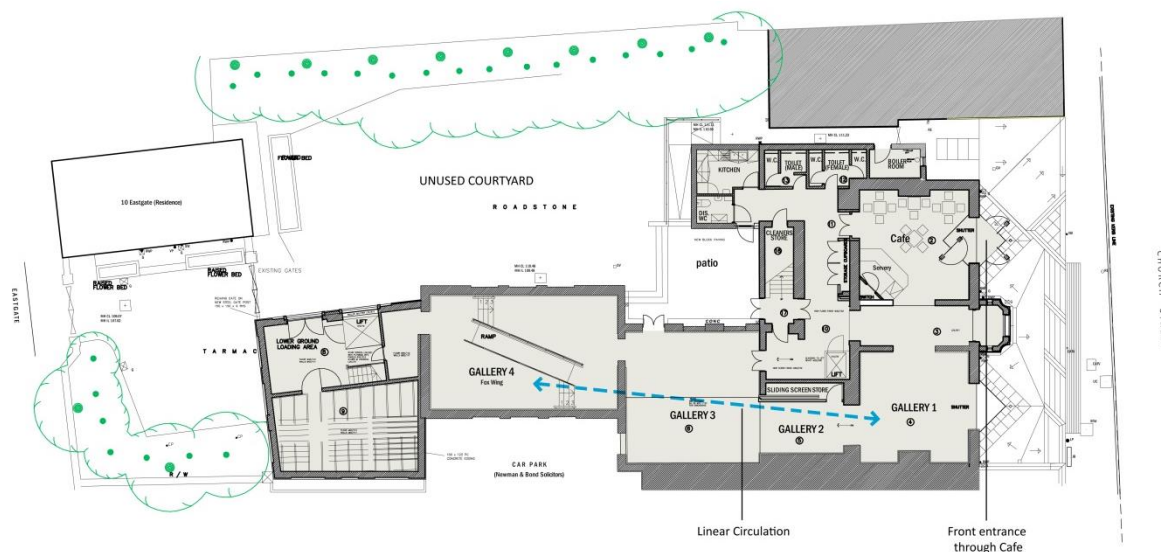
responding to the requirements of the time, and there has been little opportunity to consider an overall development plan.

- The Trees along the southern boundary, it is agreed, have considerable amenity value for the site. We sought to maintain them, and to design the proposals to take best advantage of their value. Our early design development focussed on having views out to the trees from the inside, and on avoiding unnecessary construction over their root systems.

This however proved to impose too much of a constraint on the shape of the new gallery spaces which were forced to be too narrow and elongated. Also while trying to maximise wall display area within the exhibition spaces this left little scope for windows to afford view to the outside. It became obvious that retaining the trees would mean that the Gallery would be unable to provide the new spaces it requires, and was also not really able to take full advantage to their amenity value.

Considering the impact of this conclusion on the wider conservation area, and examining the contribution of the trees make to it, we also concluded that their removal would have minimal detrimental effect.

The trees to the east of the gallery Workshop and Store will be unaffected by these proposals.



Existing Ground Floor Plan

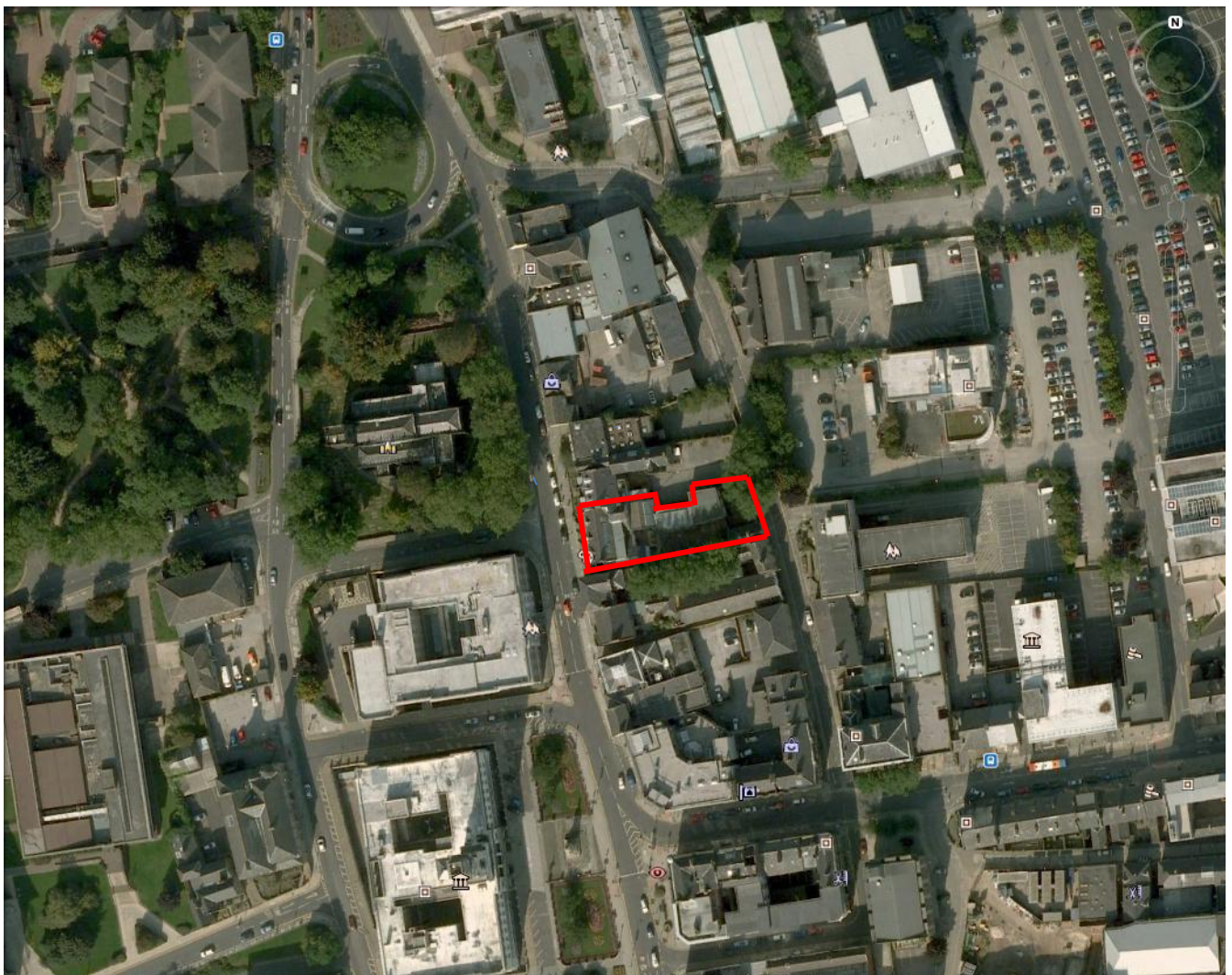
History

The Cooper Gallery occupies the site of the Barnsley Grammar School which was founded by Thomas Keresforth in 1660 when he bequeathed a schoolhouse and various other buildings.

Following rebuilding in the eighteenth century the schoolhouse consisted of two storeys, one room to each floor. An existing date stone of 1769 relates to this construction. An extension was added in

1784 which was used as a Sunday school, and again in 1847 an extension was added to the rear of the school.

The school was used as a church Institute in late Victorian times. It eventually amalgamated with Archbishop Holgate's Grammar School and the premises were greatly expanded on the same site to accommodate the increase in pupil numbers, with a rectangular extension added at the rear. Lack of space after 1906 restricted development, and by 1912 the school had outgrown its premises and moved to Shaw Lands. The old school was then sold to S. J. Cooper, and officially opened its doors as a gallery in 1914. The Ordnance Survey of 1932 shows that the schoolyard had been extended along its southern boundary.



Cooper Gallery – located at the heart of Barnsley Town Centre



Mid 20th Century Gallery extensions



Rear extensions around the Patio

Later additions took place between 1932 and 1962. These included a small wing at the southern end of the main building, and a further extension alongside the 1887 extension. The Fox Wing was added in 1934. Since that time the main Church Street frontage, which had been relatively plain, has had modern projecting glass bays added, and a new workshop and store was completed in the 1990s to provide storage for the extensive collection in suitable conditions on site. Also at this time the white-rendered block was extended eastward to provide kitchen and disabled toilet provision at ground floor, and office accommodation above.



Modern glazed bays



Existing Feature Sculpture

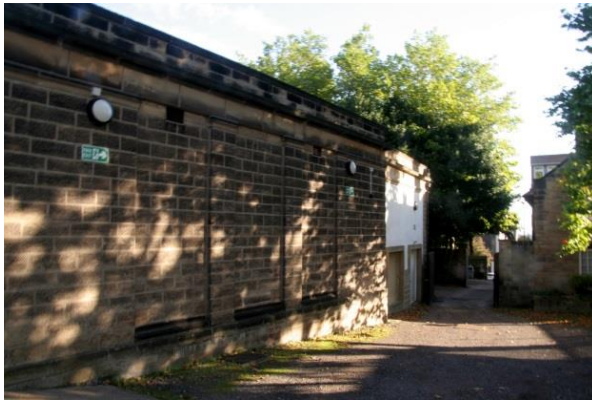


Portico – new Entrance

The Gallery layout, as it now is, is therefore largely constrained by the shape and form of the buildings it has inherited from the old school and since 1914 has been restricted in its ability to expand and re-shape the spaces to meet the changing needs of a modern and developing gallery.

Heritage Statement

In addition to the above a Heritage Statement has been provided to support this application.



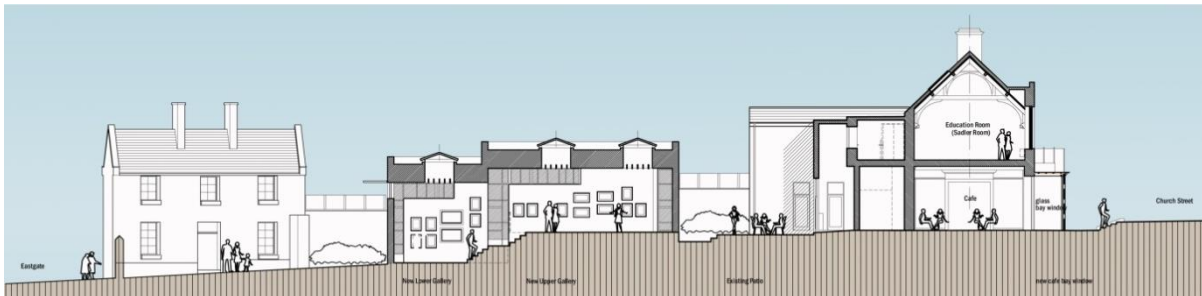
Fox Wing and Workshop beyond



Existing Workshop/Store looking from Eastgate

Opportunity

The opportunity now presents itself to extend the gallery spaces, display more of the Collection and in so doing improve circulation and movement around the building, bringing flexibility, and the opportunity to present a new and inviting face towards Eastgate, offering glimpses of the outside, which will change the whole dynamic of the gallery experience within. With more open gallery space this will provide the Cooper with the opportunity for more flexibility in displaying art works, and for wider community and educational use.

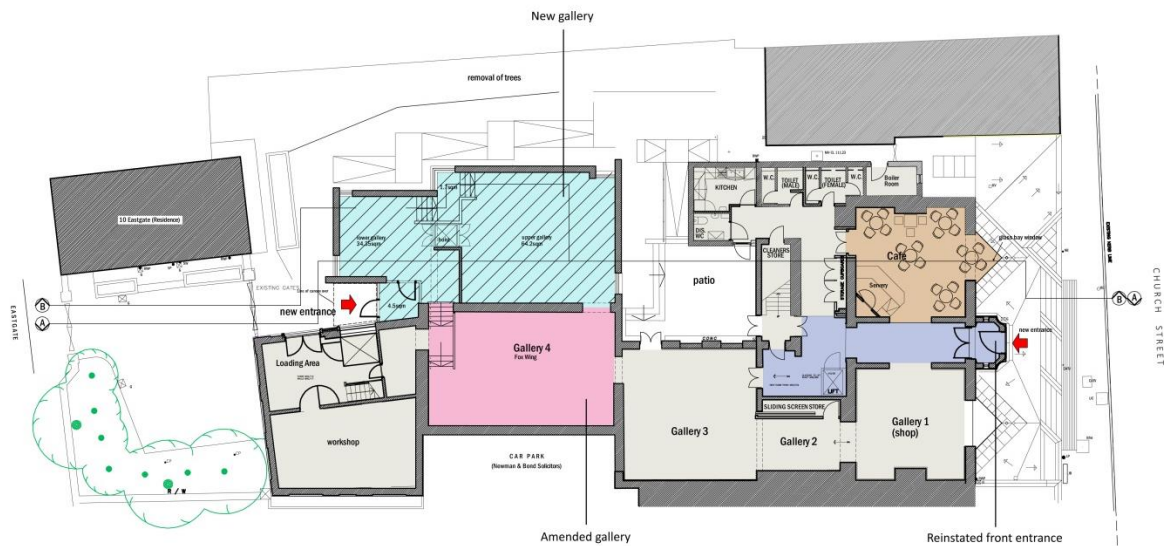


Site Section – looking south

The Proposal

The layout of the extension seeks to provide two new galleries, of different sizes which link through new openings to integrate with the existing exhibition spaces within the Gallery. They are to be as square in plan as possible to combine maximising wall display space with floor area for display cases and to exhibit free-standing objects or sculpture. The scale and height of these new spaces will match the existing galleries with similar floor areas of e.g. Galleries 3 and 4 and will have similar ceiling heights.

The architecture of the new extension therefore employs a very simple form, to help consolidate what is at the moment a somewhat diverse collection of unrelated extensions from different stages of the Gallery's history. Two new separate but related spaces are proposed with good proportions for flexibility, each having new links through to the existing Fox Wing (Gallery 4) which will have its over-dominant ramp removed. The plan is on two levels and this is accommodated between the new and existing gallery spaces.

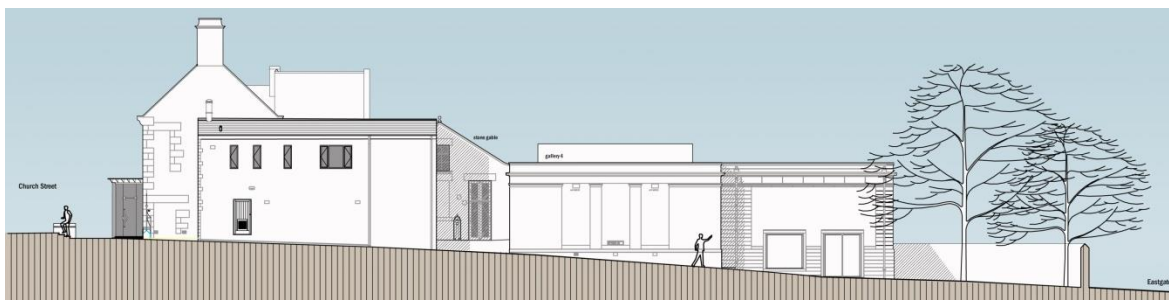


Proposed Ground Floor Plan

Appearance

SOUTH ELEVATION

The south elevation faces internally into the existing courtyard and is opposite the blank wall of the high southern boundary wall. The proposal here is for a plain white render finish, picking up on the existing two-storey service and office wing immediately to the west. Within the pattern of aluminium polyester-powder coated window frames in dark grey, there will be highlight rendered panels in orange (suggested from the Gallery's logo). Brise Soleil shading will assist in the control of lighting levels within. The parapet up-stand will conceal the rooflights set in the shallow-pitched flat roofs. The proposed parapet height of the lower gallery will match the parapet level of the existing Fox Wing and the Workshop/Store. That of the upper gallery will be slightly higher.



Existing South Elevation



Proposed South Elevation

With the setback between the new upper and lower galleries the opportunity has been taken to introduce a full-height glazed corner feature marking the transmission between the different floor levels. The new extension will bring unity to the different elements that make up the eastern expansion of the building over the last hundred years.



South Elevation: New Galleries



Section through new galleries looking north

EAST ELEVATION

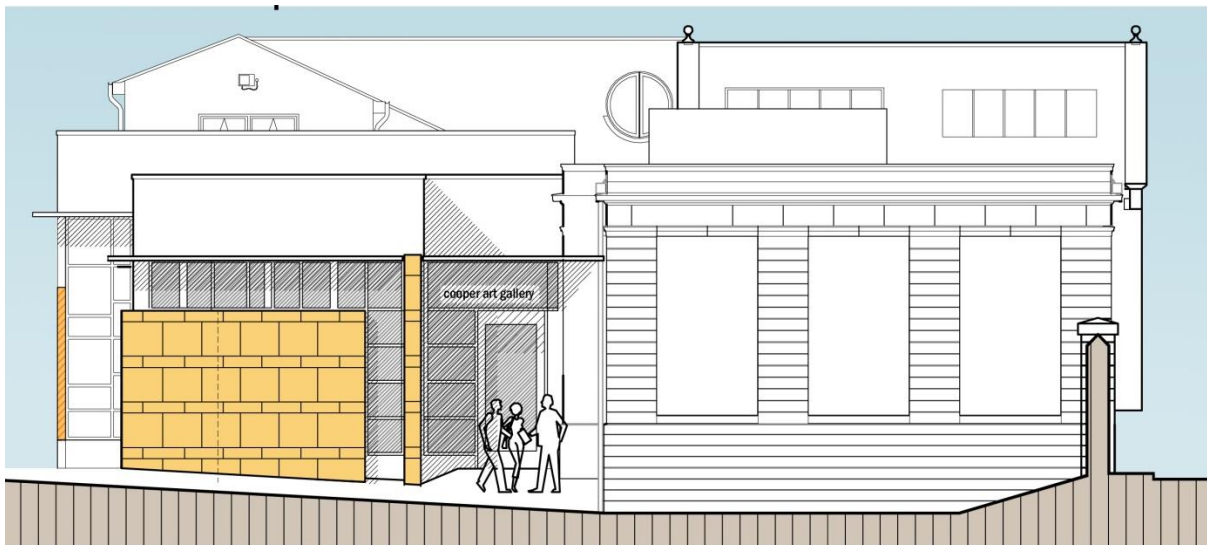


Entrance gateway from Eastgate



View into car park/yard

The treatment on the south side of the extension is carried through onto the east elevation return with the white render providing the unifying material. The east side presents the new frontage towards Eastgate. As this needs more presence, and is a focal point within the public realm, the opportunity to heighten the architectural effect is taken with natural ashlar stonework replacing the coloured render, and the use of a simple high canopy to mark the new entrance. This simple modern treatment, with open views into the gallery, provides a suitable foil to the existing stone-built workshop/store with its neat but plain classical detail.



Proposed East Elevation – New Entrance towards Eastgate

Existing Workshop/Store Elevation

WEST ELEVATION

The west elevation is the main frontage to the Gallery announcing its presence on Church Street. Here the proposed changes will be minimal and are largely driven by the need to improve the layout of the internal spaces around the entrance, the café and the shop.

The main public entrance to the building is to be reinstated through the central Edwardian porch, returning it to its original use, and focussing the entrance in the middle of the façade.

The entrance door to the café will be removed and replaced with a fixed glass pane to match the second bay window.

With the entrance now in the centre there will be minor alteration to the steps with the removal of a small wall and the provision of new handrails.



Edwardian Portico

Church Street steps

Glass bay window



Proposed West Elevation – Church Street



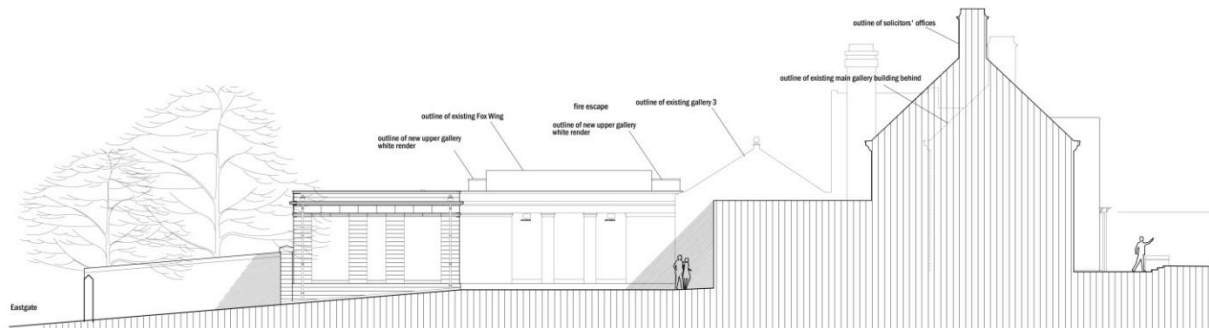
COOPER
GALLERY



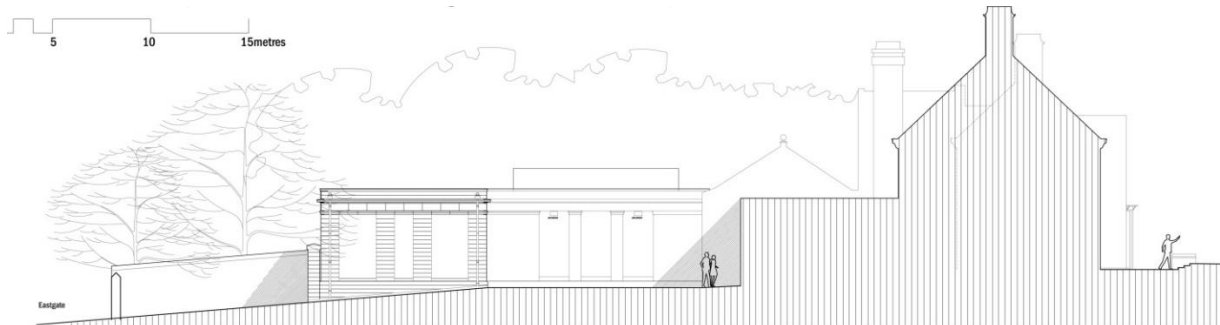
BARNSELY
Metropolitan Borough Council

NORTH ELEVATION

The proposals have virtually no impact on the north elevation. The whole of the lower gallery is below the parapet of the existing workshop/store, with the upper gallery only evident as slight projections at either end of the roof plant housing on the Fox Wing (Gallery 4).



Proposed North Sectional Elevation



Existing North Sectional Elevation



Section looking south

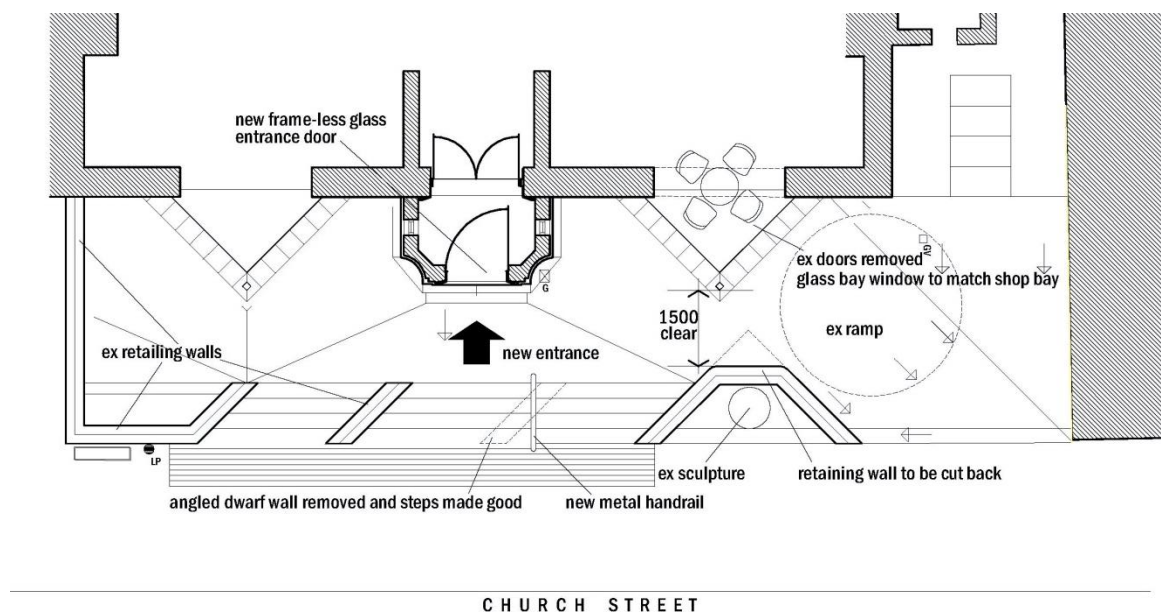
Access

At the very heart of this project is the ambition to improve accessibility to the Gallery for everyone, to appeal to a wider audience, by providing a better and more welcoming environment throughout. As noted the provision of a main frontage and access from Eastgate may help to attract a different and more diverse audience. To enhance this link the level difference between Church Street and Eastgate can be negotiated between the new upper and lower galleries with steps and a lift hoist providing a route through the Gallery as well as dramatic spaces within.

Access to the building from the reinstated entrance from Church Street, and the new one from Eastgate will allow level access via power-assisted doors. Visitors can then progress easily to all areas. Access via the existing lift to the first floor will be unaffected by the proposals.

In addition externally on the southern edge of the new galleries there will be ramps to provide access to the landscaped area, and to afford safe fire escape towards the eastern end of the site.

New power assisted doors



Proposed Alterations to Church Street Forecourt

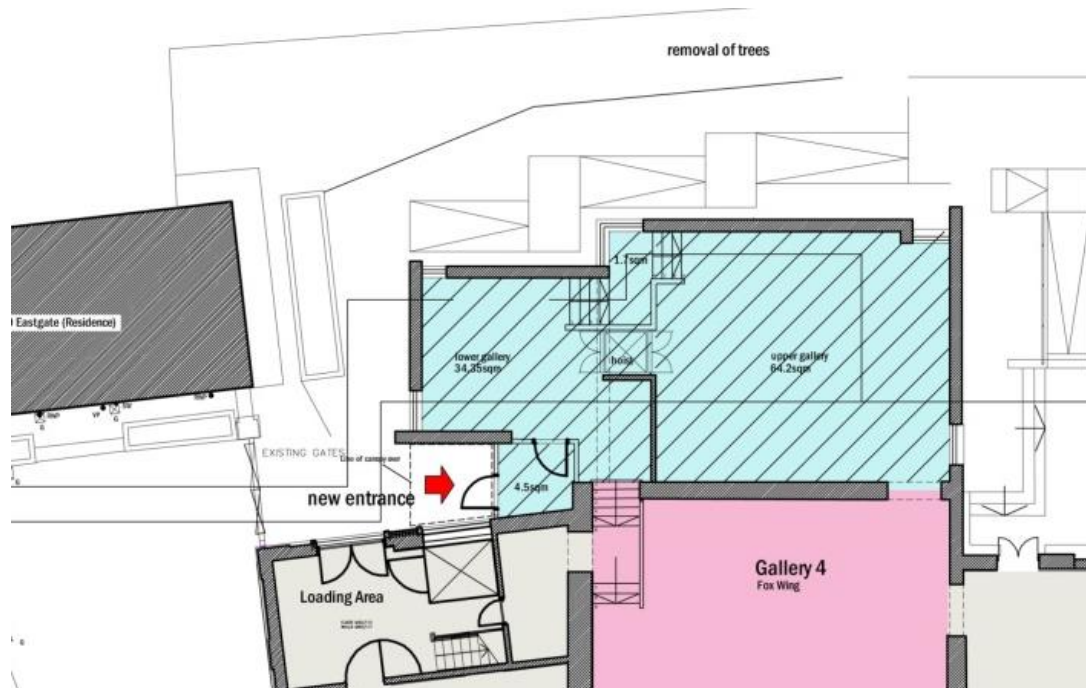
Car Parking/Servicing

The site at the rear of the building is presently used as a service courtyard off Eastgate with the café patio which overlooks it. It is informally used by some staff members for parking. This is generally an unattractive area for Gallery visitors using the café patio. As part of the proposals the informal staff parking will be omitted. With the new extension the patio will be much enhanced with more enclosure becoming an external courtyard at the heart of the gallery.

The space will be planted with new shrubs to replace the trees which need to be removed, enhancing the glimpses of the external landscape provided via the narrow windows.

Given the central urban location of the Gallery, and proximity to public transport and car parks the loss of the internal parking is not considered to be of significance.

Service vehicles serving the café and the gallery workshop will continue to have access to the site from Eastgate. There will be provision for cycle parking close to the new entrance.



Proposed Plan showing links between new upper and lower galleries through to the existing Fox Wing.

Conclusion

This project will provide the additional spaces and improved layout that the Gallery so urgently needs to allow it to display more and varied art works and to move forward, in this its Centenary Year, to secure its sustainability for the future.

The Gallery already sits prominently within Church Street and its presence there will be enhanced by the improvements to the frontage.

The proposals will also create a significant and vibrant new presence onto Eastgate, breathing new life into the street and making an important contribution towards transforming it into a much more appealing public route and in a wider sense work to enhancing the quality of the conservation area.

The work will clearly compliment the public realm works proposed for both streets, and contribute to the Urban Infrastructure Programme.