

6 SIGNIFICANT FABRIC, SPACES AND ELEMENTS

6.1 Schedule of Significant Fabric

A detailed schedule of significant fabric, spaces and elements is contained in Appendix 1: External Inventory and Appendix 2: Internal Inventory, where an overall significance rating is ascribed to each space. In addition, the Rating (R) column of each record assigns a significance rating to individual fabric and elements within that space. **It is important that this schedule is consulted and used as a reference guide in making decisions or outlining strategies relating to any area or element of the building.**

The key used is the following:

Items to be protected, repaired and retained.....Aa

Items to be retained and repaired but may be modified with conditions.....Bb

Items which may be removed, little or no heritage value.....Cc

Items which are intrusive and should be removed where possible.....Intrusive (Int.)

Note: upper case letters (ABC) refer to spaces and major elements, whereas lower case letters (abc) refer to individual components.

In addition, a set of Significant Spaces drawings have been included in Volume 2 of this report. These give an indicative graphic representation of the layout and disposition of significant spaces within the building and may help to clarify the written text.

6.2 General Summary

6.2.1 Exterior

The architectural form and bulk appearance of the building are both significant, in particular the retention of the loosely 'basilical' form, with its full-height central Hall flanked by lower flat-roofed side wings, and four corner 'towers' of varying designs.

All three major elevations are considered of high significance. Although the Municipal Lane elevation (east) has been somewhat compromised by the construction of the adjacent Library building it appears to have undergone very little modification to openings or detailing.

All original exterior fabric should be considered worthy of protection, repair and retention and any modifications should start from this premise, being made only where agreed to be absolutely necessary and in the minimal possible manner. Particular attention should be paid to door and window openings as it is from the arrangement of these openings that the elevations – particularly the side elevations – derive much of their rhythm and interest. This is typical of the early twentieth century style of relatively austere, and largely astylar, classicism and as such is an important part of the building's design.

Lettering to all elevations is of particular note. Differentiating the various openings and underlining the careful planning and thought that went into managing movement of people throughout the building. The lintel inscriptions reading 'Upper Gallery', 'Lower Gallery' etc act as an external reference to the building's internal layout and as such are of particular significance.

Later modifications to the exterior of the building have been relatively minor and while these are clearly a departure from the original design, they form part of the building's history and, although changes can certainly be considered, removal would not be recommended. The one exception to this rule may be the entrance porch on the north

elevation as this is particularly insensitive in obscuring the original openings. Removal is not an imperative, however if the opportunity exists to replace this porch with one of a more sensitive and suitable design it should certainly be considered.

6.2.2 Interior: Town Hall

This is largely unmodified in terms of layout, and original fabric to the most significant spaces remains largely unaltered. The internal layout can be categorised into primary, and secondary spaces, extending outwards from the main Auditorium. The main auditorium, entrance lobbies and foyers, stairwells and flanking corridors are considered of primary importance. The corridors and stairwells form an integral part of the original design and illustrate the careful planning that went into crowd control and population flow throughout the building. Secondary spaces are service spaces located directly off the flanking corridors (toilets, cloakrooms etc) as well as backstage areas and dressing rooms.

The primary spaces of the Town Hall, to include Auditorium, Entrance Lobbies, Stairwells and Corridors, should be retained and protected. Any alteration to secondary spaces should respect the overall layout, with lateral corridors giving access to smaller rooms in either side wing. Where it is deemed necessary to make changes to the layout or fabric of secondary spaces this should be carried out in consultation with an approved heritage professional. Every effort should be made to preserve original room layouts, particularly as the original layouts and functions provide a fascinating insight into the backstage life of a large entertainment venue such as the Town Hall, with male and female soloists' rooms, organists' quarters, green rooms for the upper and lower choruses etc. Consultation of the original architect's drawings will quickly illustrate how much of that insight was lost when the backstage rooms on the western side of the stage were demolished in creating the link with the Dunedin Centre.

In the basement, modifications made in 1942 for the insertion of air raid shelters should be considered significant and accorded similar treatment to secondary spaces on the upper floors of the building.

Where spaces have been refitted – for example with the addition of suspended ceilings, acoustic wall coverings, or Seratone panelling – it is possible that original fabric survives beneath and care should be taken in removing any later interior treatments to avoid the possibility of damaging such fabric in the process.

'Norma', the Town Hall Organ, merits a particular mention and should certainly be considered of fundamental significance. It should be protected and retained in any upgrading or refurbishment.

6.2.3 Interior: Dunedin Centre

As noted in Chapters 3 and 4, this has been extensively modified and very little of the original/early interior survives, with the exception of some of the features noted below.

Original windows should be protected, repaired and retained throughout.

The Glenroy auditorium preserves the original Concert Chamber space and as such every effort should be made to retain it, as the whole design of this section of the building revolves around this area. It should be noted also that it is quite possible that original fabric survives beneath the later furnishings in this space and care should be taken that these are not inadvertently lost.

It should be further noted that the Glenroy Auditorium is a representative example of 1980s design and, while the style may not be to our current taste, may be of interest and significance to later generations. The rehabilitation of 1950s and 1960s design in recent years sets an interesting precedent in terms of changing interpretations of what

constitutes heritage and we should take great care not to remove all traces of modern styles which may not conform to our current tastes.

Other significant features that should be taken into consideration are:

- The general division of space in this section of the building, with smaller 'foyers' or 'congregating areas' to the west of where the central stairwell now stands, and larger auditorium spaces to the east of this division, is of some interest.
- The corridor at S09, formerly an open lightwell, is of significance in retaining its original layout. Walls and window openings to this corridor, whether currently exposed or covered, and their windows should be retained.
- The 'Engineers Office' in the second floor roof space is also of some significance, and the roof structure and reinforced door should be retained.

For more detailed indications see the schedule of significant fabric in Appendices 1 & 2.