

## Conservation Statement

# TUNBRIDGE WELLS CIVIC COMPLEX



## CONTENTS

### List of Figures

<b>1.0</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2.0</b>	<b>BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2.1</b>	<b>The Mount Pleasant Site</b>	
<b>2.2</b>	<b>Technical Schools in England &amp; the work of H T Hare</b>	
<b>2.3</b>	<b>Inter-war Civic Buildings in England and the work of Percy Thomas</b>	
<b>3.0</b>	<b>DESCRIPTIONS OF INDIVIDUAL LISTED BUILDINGS WITH AN ASSESSMENT OF THEIR SIGNIFICANCE.....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>3.1</b>	<b>9 &amp; 10 Crescent Road</b>	
<b>3.2</b>	<b>The Adult Education Centre</b>	
<b>3.3</b>	<b>The War Memorial</b>	
<b>3.4</b>	<b>Assembly Hall</b>	
<b>3.5</b>	<b>Police Station</b>	
<b>3.6</b>	<b>Town Hall</b>	
<b>3.7</b>	<b>Library and Museum</b>	
<b>3.8</b>	<b>Exteriors</b>	
<b>4.0</b>	<b>OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE.....</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>5.0</b>	<b>POTENTIAL FOR CHANGE.....</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>5.1</b>	<b>Existing Open Spaces</b>	
<b>5.2</b>	<b>Buildings of Little Heritage Interest</b>	
<b>5.3</b>	<b>Additions to Existing Buildings</b>	
<b>5.4</b>	<b>Internal Alterations</b>	
<b>6.0</b>	<b>LIKELY EFFECTS OF NEW USES &amp; PLANNING OPPORTUNITIES.....</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>6.1</b>	<b>New Uses</b>	
<b>6.2</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>	
<b>7.0</b>	<b>GENERAL CONCLUSIONS.....</b>	<b>71</b>
	<b>Appendix I Project Brief</b>	

## List of Figures

- Fig. 1 A map of the proposed Area of Change showing listed buildings shaded in blue.
- Fig.2 A map of the Mount Pleasant area in 1832
- Fig.3 A map of the same area in 1849 showing the development of Hervey Town
- Fig. 4 Vincent Harris's 1930 design for a new Town Hall (from *The Builder* 9 Jan 1931)
- Fig.5 Percy Thomas and Ernest Prestwich's selected 1934 design for a Civic Centre
- Fig.6 A detail from the Ordnance map of 1897
- Fig.7 The Ordnance map of 1945 (surveyed in 1938) with the public baths, the sheds behind the Technical Institute and the piecemeal demolition of the houses and the mews behind
- Fig.8 Perspective drawing of the Technical Institute, Tunbridge Wells  
(*Academy Architecture and Architectural Review*, v.20, 1901, p. 112)
- Fig. 9 Original plans of the Technical Institute, Tunbridge Wells  
(*Academy Architecture and Architectural Review*, v.20, 1901, p. 119)
- Fig.10 Braintree Town Hall (1926–8), by E. Vincent Harris  
(*The Builder*, 15 May 1928, facing page p. 898)
- Fig.11 Perspective drawing of the Civic Centre, Southampton (1928–1939), by E. Berry Webber  
(*The Builder*, 11 January 1929, p. 91)
- Fig.12 Swansea Guildhall (1930–34), by Percy Thomas  
(*The Architect and Building News*, 19 October 1934, p. 69)
- Fig. 13 Norwich City Hall (1937–8), C.H. James and S.R. Pierce  
(*The Architect and Building News*, 11 November 1938, p. 153)
- Fig. 14 Perspective drawing of winning design for Hornsey Town Hall (1933–35), Reginald Uren  
(*The Builder*, 20 October 1933, p. 604)
- Fig. 15 The former Poplar Town Hall (now Bow House) (1937–9) by Culpin & Son  
(*The Architect and Building News*, 18 November 1938, p. 185)
- Fig. 16 Upper ground floor of the Swansea Guildhall  
(*The Architect and Building News*, 19 October 1934, p. 68)
- Fig. 17 Ground and first floor plans of Dagenham Civic Centre (1936) by E. Berry Webber  
(*The Architect and Building News*, 5 November 1937, p. 160)
- Fig. 18 The competition-winning plan for Southampton's Civic Centre by E. Berry Webber  
(*The Builder*, 21 September 1928, p. 461)
- Fig. 19 First floor plan of the former Greenwich Town Hall (now Meridian House), by Clifford Culpin  
(*The Architect and Building News*, 3 November 1939, p. 111)
- Fig. 20 Swinton & Pendlebury Town Hall (now Salford Civic Centre; 1936–8), by Percy Thomas and Ernest Prestwich  
(*The Architect and Building News*, 30 December 1938, p. 356)
- Fig.21 Carmarthen County Hall (1935–55), (*The Builder*, 10 January 1936, illustration)

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Conservation Statement was prepared in response to a brief from Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and English Heritage, dated 11 January 2013, for the preparation of a Conservation Statement for the group of listed buildings which make up the present Civic Complex (see appendix I). This group includes the complex of Town Hall and other civic buildings begun in 1939, the War memorial erected in 1923, the former Technical School (now the Adult Education Centre) built in 1902 and a pair of early nineteenth century villas designed by the architect Decimus Burton and built in the 1820s. These buildings are all grouped together at the western edge of a large island site bounded by Mount Pleasant Road, Monson Road, Calverley Road and Crescent Road which is intended to be designated as an Area of Change. (see fig.1) The whole of the site lies within the Town Centre character area of the Royal Tunbridge Wells Conservation Area.

The brief required a significance assessment of the complex using the range of heritage values identified in the English Heritage publication *Conservation Principles* (2008). The complex to be assessed both as a whole and broken down into its constituent heritage assets, considering its contribution to the history of the town and setting it in the national context of inter-war civic architecture. Although this is not a feasibility study, the brief also requested an evaluation of the potential scope for change to the complex to accommodate new uses and of the likely effects of change on established heritage values. In addition, the brief asked for a consideration in broad terms of the likely effects on these heritage values of a range of credible new uses, especially including cultural, retail and commercial uses.

The Conservation Statement was prepared by Neil Burton and Johanna Roethe of The Architectural History Practice Ltd. The authors would like to acknowledge the assistance of Alan Legg the Urban Design Team Leader, Ian Beavis in the Tunbridge Wells Museum and also the Tunbridge Wells Project which provided many of the images.



**Fig. 1** A map of the proposed Area of Change showing listed buildings shaded in blue.

## **2.0 BACKGROUND HISTORY**

### **2.1 The Mount Pleasant Site**

At the beginning of the nineteenth century Tunbridge Wells had grown little since its hey-day as a late seventeenth century Spa and was a small settlement grouped round the church of St Charles the Martyr, with a population of about 1,200. During the following half-century the population rose to nearly 10,000 as several estates to the north of the old centre were laid out with new houses for the middle classes<sup>1</sup>. On the Calverley Park Estate the owner John Ward commissioned the architect Decimus Burton to lay out the eastern section with ‘a number of edifices suitable for the reception of genteel families’. Burton made his layout in 1828 and most of the building work was completed by 1836. Maps of 1832 and 1849 (figs.2&3) show the part of the layout now occupied by the civic complex, in particular the semi-detached houses in Calverley Terrace and the terrace of houses known as Calverley Parade. To the east was an area of smaller houses known as Hervey Town and just to the north was Calverley Place which was intended as the commercial centre of the new town and included a handsome market hall.

The expanding population made it very desirable to have an organised local government and in 1835 an Act of Parliament was obtained which established a Board of Commissioners to oversee such things as policing and cleansing. The Market Hall in Calverley Place, which had proved a commercial failure, was adapted for use as the Town Hall.

During the second half of the nineteenth century the population of Tunbridge Wells grew steadily, stimulated partly by the arrival in 1846 of the railway connection to London. The town was considered an agreeable place to live and boasted an unusually large number of leisured residents as well as many hotels. Most of the expansion was to the north of the old centre along what is now Mount Pleasant Road and on either side. Some of the larger earlier villas were demolished to make way for more intensive development. Thus the large private residences of Monson House and Monson Place were both demolished in the 1870s for the laying out of Monson Road.

In 1889 the Town Commissioners applied under the 1888 Local Government Act for Tunbridge Wells to become incorporated as a Municipal Borough, which gave them wider powers, and the two decades after 1890 saw several significant improvements in the amenities of the town. In March 1895 the corporation minutes record that the members of various committees considered, ‘that it is very desirable that the Corporation should acquire land in the centre of town upon which it might erect any public buildings which might be required from time to time’. Almost immediately the Corporation purchased from the Ward Estate a substantial piece of land on the east side of Mount Pleasant, on which then stood numbers 1-10 Calverley Parade, 1 & 2 Calverley Mount and 39-53 (odd) Monson Road.

As soon as the purchase was completed the Corporation used some of their land to widen Mount Pleasant Road. Presumably the stone boundary wall on the east side of the road dates from this time. The first public buildings to be erected on the site were the Public Baths, opened in 1898 on a site off Monson Road, and the Technical School, opened in 1902. A projected free library and museum was not proceeded with. Some of the houses fronting

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<sup>1</sup> This brief account is based on the account in C.W.Chalklin’s *Royal Tunbridge Wells, A History* (2008)



Mount Pleasant became corporation offices as their leases fell in and some remained in private occupation. In addition to these public buildings, a new General Post Office was opened in Grosvenor Road in 1896 and the Opera House was built just to the north of Monson Road in 1902. Of the two Corporation buildings, only the former Technical School now survives. The swimming bath was demolished in 1974 to make way for a new office building. For a discussion of the Technical School building and its national context and for information about its architect see section 2.2 below.

After the First World War, population grew slowly in the 1920s and 1930s, but in the latter decade two major public buildings were erected in Tunbridge Wells: the Kent and Sussex Hospital in Mt Ephraim (now closed) and the Civic Centre fronting Mount Pleasant and Crescent Roads. Anticipating the need for additional land for municipal buildings, the Borough Council in 1928 initiated the purchase of the row of four semi-detached houses in Calverley Terrace. In 1930 the national government approached local authorities to put in hand building projects which would provide employment and offered grants to support the work. Proposals for a new Tunbridge Wells Civic Centre were submitted by the Corporation for approval by the Ministry of Health in 1931, and a handsome design by the well-known architect Vincent Harris was prepared and published in the building journals as 'about to be erected'.<sup>2</sup>

The Harris scheme (fig.4) provided for a neo-Georgian town hall, similar in appearance to Harris's later Council House at Bristol, fronting the angle of Mount Pleasant and Crescent Road with the 1923 War Memorial statue as a focus. The Town Hall was to be flanked on one side by a new museum and library fronting Mount Pleasant Road and on the other by a building fronting Crescent Road containing a clinic and police station. Beyond the police station was a fire station and in the large space between the town hall and the swimming baths was a large assembly hall. It was a spacious layout making full use of the whole site for civic purposes. Sadly, nothing came of the Harris scheme, because the Ministry of Health refused to approve the Council's application for borrowing powers.

After prolonged discussion an open competition was held in 1934 inviting fresh designs for the Civic Centre, with the stipulation that the building had to be capable of being completed in sections to allow a smooth transfer from the existing accommodation. The competition was judged by E.Berry Webber, the architect of Southampton Civic Centre, begun in 1929. Webber was told by the Civic Centre Special Committee that 'the design of the buildings [should] be that of a typical English building suitable to the neighbourhood and character of Tunbridge Wells and that the buildings [should] be constructed of brick and stone'.<sup>3</sup> The instructions to the competing architects emphasised economy. The total cost was not to exceed £120,000 and the buildings were to be 'dignified...without elaborate or unnecessary features'. An all-stone frontage was not required

The competition was judged in November 1934 and the winning scheme was that submitted by Percy Thomas and Ernest Prestwich (fig.5). In second place was the scheme by Carr & Howard and in third place the scheme by Nauheim and Adams. All three schemes were in modern versions of the neo-Georgian style with flat roofs. For a discussion of the executed

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<sup>2</sup> *The Builder* 9 January 1931

<sup>3</sup> Civic Centre Committee minutes 24 April 1934

design and its national context and for information about the architects see section 2.3 below.

After the competition there was a delay of several years while the approval and financial support of the Ministry of Health was obtained. During this period various modifications were made, mostly for reasons of economy, and the internal layout of the various buildings was adapted. One major change to the elevations of all the buildings was the omission of the red brick quoins and window surrounds originally proposed. The main modification to the Town Hall building was the omission of the accommodation for the maternity and child welfare departments, which led the Ministry of Health to suggest that perhaps the entire north wing of the town hall could be omitted from the scheme. This idea was rejected and part of the space formerly allocated to the Health Department at the north west corner of the building became an electrical showroom.

Demolition of the houses in Calverley Place and the mews behind began in 1938 (fig.7)but the service road in front of the houses was retained and became the access road along the front of the Civic Complex, now called Civic Way. The first of the new buildings to be constructed were the police station and assembly hall which were both opened in 1939, followed by the town hall in 1941. The Second World War forced building to stop with the library and museum building part-constructed. It was not finally completed and opened until 1952. The proposed fire station at the extreme eastern extremity of the site was never begun.

Since the final completion of the Civic Complex in the early 1950s the buildings themselves appear to have suffered little significant alteration, either externally or internally. The setting of the main frontage has also remained recognisably the same but the setting of the rear (eastern) side of the complex has changed very substantially. The most significant change has been the construction of a large multi-storey car park which terminates all the views between the Civic Complex buildings and presses tight against the rear of 9 & 10 Calverley Terrace. The demolition of the Monson Road Baths and their replacement by the brick office block called Monson House has changed the immediate setting of the former Technical School building.

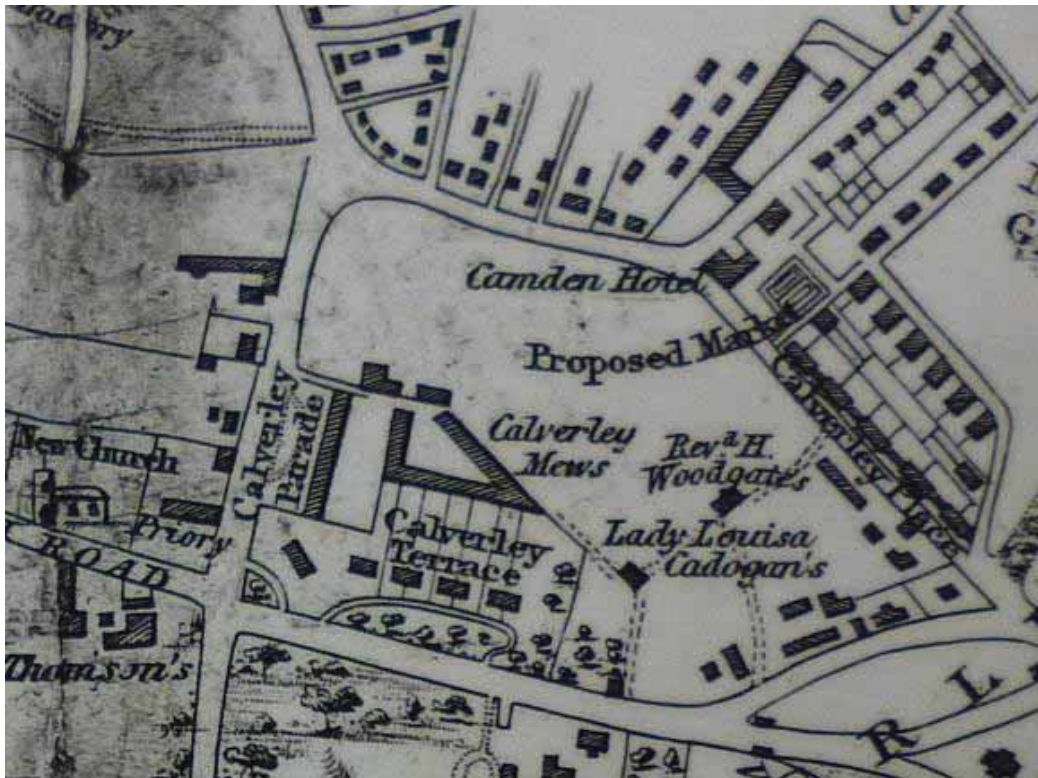


Fig.2 A map of the Mount Pleasant area in 1832

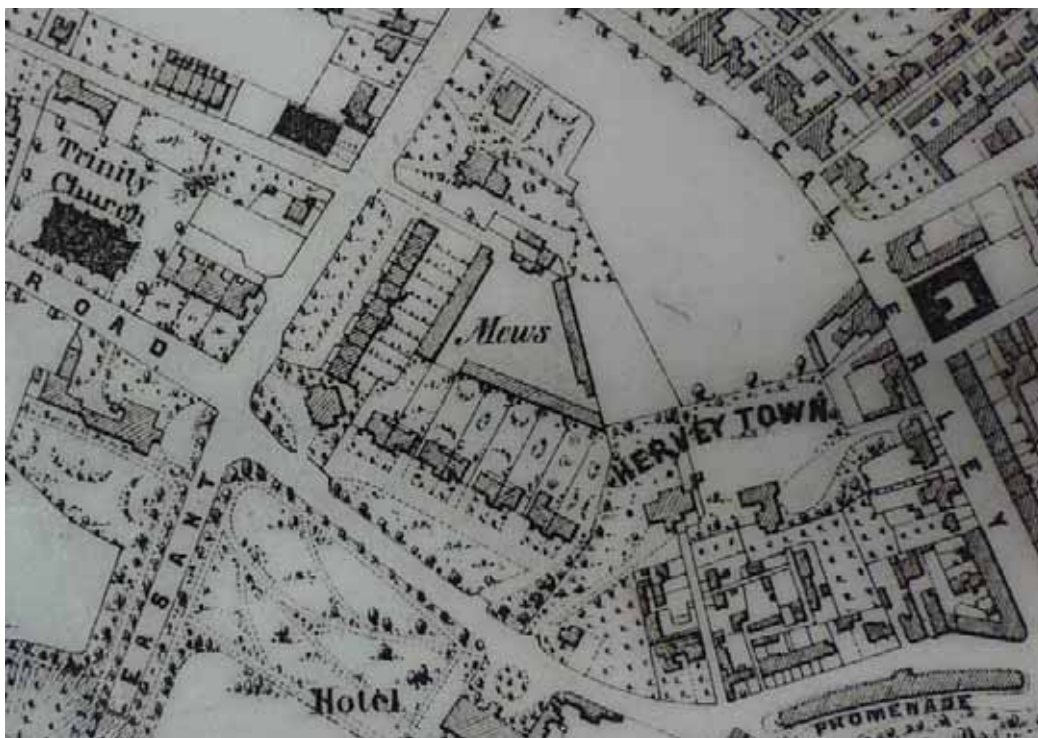


Fig.3 A map of the same area in 1849 showing the development of Hervey Town.

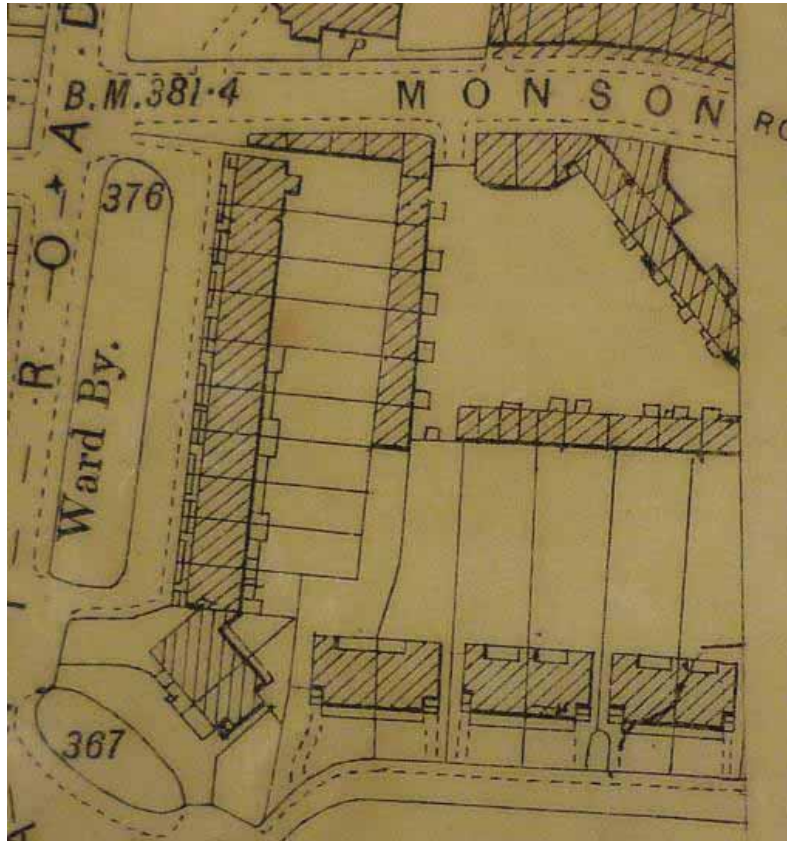




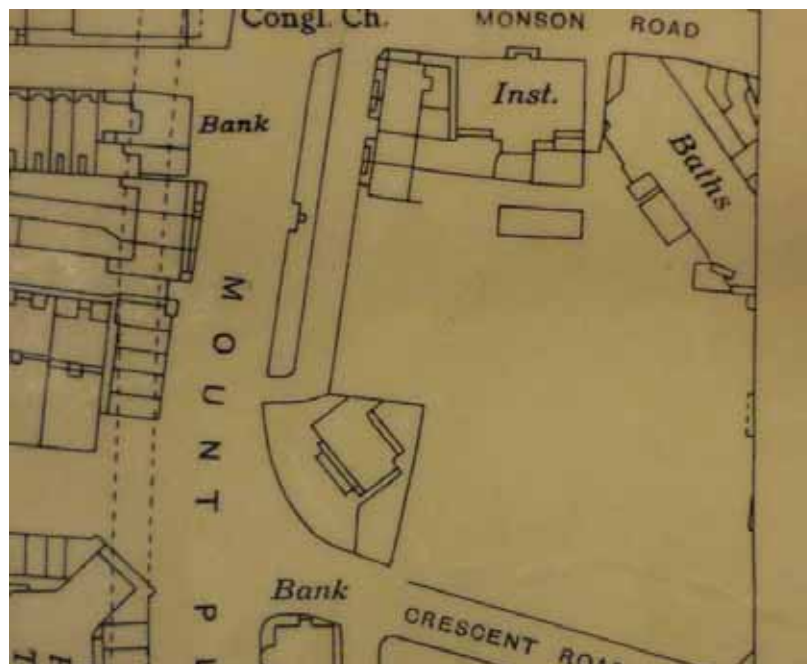
**Fig. 4 Vincent Harris's 1930 design for a new Town Hall (from *The Builder* 9 Jan 1931)**



**Fig.5 Percy Thomas and Ernest Prestwich's selected 1934 design for a Civic Centre**



**Fig.6 A detail from the Ordnance map of 1897**



**Fig.7 The Ordnance map of 1945 (surveyed in 1938) showing the Monson Road public baths, the two sheds behind the Technical Institute and the piecemeal demolition of the houses and the mews behind**

## 2.2 Art Schools and Technical Colleges in England

Several European countries like France, Spain, Italy and Germany established a system of provincial and municipal drawing schools in the eighteenth century. However, apart from a few exceptions, there was nothing comparable in Britain. (Among the exceptions was the Trustees' Academy in Edinburgh founded in 1760 by the Board of Manufactures with the aim of promoting 'the art of drawing for the use of manufactures'.<sup>4</sup> By 1835, there were schools of different types in Nottingham, Stoke, Liverpool and Glasgow, and the workers of Coventry had applied for a school of design.<sup>5</sup>) Some of the mechanics' institutes which had been founded since the 1820s also set up evening classes for teaching drawing and modelling but they suffered from a lack of adequate teachers.<sup>6</sup>

The subsequent development of a nationwide system of design education was at least partly prompted by economic pressures. In the recession following the Napoleonic wars, British manufacturing suffered from strong competition from France.<sup>7</sup> In 1835, a parliamentary commission was appointed 'to inquire into the best means of extending a knowledge of the arts and of the principles of design among the people (especially the manufacturing population) of the country'. The commission reported on the drawing schools in other countries (including 80 in France, 33 in Bavaria) and recommended a similar system in Britain. The Government (also known as Normal or Central) School of Design was set up by the Board of Trade in 1837, as the national school of design, based at Somerset House. It offered drawing classes but initially no practical classes.<sup>8</sup>

From 1841, the Council of the Government School offered financial help in establishing provincial or branch schools of design, initially in the principal manufacturing towns. The main aims of the system of the schools of design were: to educate the workforce in order to improve the standards of British goods; to educate the British customers in order to create a home market for high-quality goods; and to educate children.<sup>9</sup> (The latter was undertaken by the masters of the provincial art schools who taught drawing in elementary schools.) Existing and new schools could get a grant of £150 per annum to pay a master, while another £150pa was to be provided by local manufacturers, magnates, subscribers, and MPs. The governing structure of the branch schools was similar to that of the Government School and both were supposed to follow the same curriculum. However, there was a marked difference in teachers

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<sup>4</sup> Nikolaus Pevsner, *Academies of Art Past and Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1940), p. 247; Stuart Macdonald, *The History and Philosophy of Art Education* (Cambridge: Lutterworth Press, 2004), p. 76.

<sup>5</sup> Quentin Bell, *The Schools of Design* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963), p. 100.

<sup>6</sup> John Charles Lewis Sparkes, *Schools of Art: their origin, history, work and influence* (London: William Cowles & Son, 1884), p. 33.

<sup>7</sup> Dorothy Bosomworth, 'Design Education in the Provinces: Converting principles into practice' in Franz Bosbach *et al* (eds), *Prinz Albert und die Entwicklung der Bildung in England und Deutschland im 19. Jahrhundert* (München: Saur, 2000), p. 111.

<sup>8</sup> Pevsner, pp. 247–8.

<sup>9</sup> Bosomworth, p. 112.

and pupils in the local schools: teachers were rarely renowned artists and the pupils were generally younger, and mostly workers or children of workers.<sup>10</sup>

The first provincial schools of design were established in 1842. In the first ten years (1842–52) 18 schools of design (not counting their branches) were founded or subsidised: Birmingham (1842), Manchester (a pre-existing school, supported from 1842), Spitalfields (1842), the Female School, London (1842), York (founded in 1842), Nottingham (1843), Sheffield (1843), Coventry (1844), Glasgow (1844), Newcastle upon Tyne (1844), Norwich (1846), Hanley (1847), Leeds (1847), Stoke-on-Trent (1847), Dublin (1849), Macclesfield (1851), Worcester (1851), Limerick (1852), Stourbridge (1852).<sup>11</sup>

In 1849, another parliamentary committee investigated the results of the Government School and the provincial schools. It deemed the Government School a ‘failure’, as its teaching focused on the copying of drawings.<sup>12</sup> Likewise, the school at Manchester was condemned as failing since the departure of the previous master. On the other hand, the Nottingham school was considered a success as its pupils ‘had the command of the market for lace designs’. Overall, the committee found that the school taught more of the fine arts than applied arts or design.<sup>13</sup> Overall, the evidence was divided as to whether the schools had had any effect on the manufactures. The committee’s report concluded that they had some effect but not the degree they could achieve.<sup>14</sup>

The progress of the provincial schools was measured by regular inspections and the requirement to send student work to the Government School for assessment. There were also several exhibitions of student works in London: for example in spring 1851, works from 17 schools, the Government School and the school at Spitalfields were exhibited at Marlborough House, the home of the Government School; with a further public exhibition in the summer of 1858 and a display as part of the International Health Exhibition of 1884, where about 1,500 works by students and manufacturers were exhibited.<sup>15</sup>

The Great Exhibition of 1851 provided further impetus for improving the system: numerous commentators were appalled at the low standards of design in France, Germany and Great Britain evident in the exhibits. Gottfried Semper, who may have been invited by Prince Albert to suggest remedies, recommended a thorough reform of art education which made no distinction between fine and decorative arts. (This was published in 1852 in German under the title ‘Wissenschaft, Industrie und Kunst: Vorschläge zur Anregung nationalen Kunstgefühles bei dem Schlusse der Londoner Industrie-Ausstellung’ (‘Science, industry and art: Suggestions for the stimulation of national art feeling at the closure of the London industry exhibition’). Teaching should combine lectures, training in workshops and studying exemplary specimens in newly-founded museums of decorative art. In his 1863 publication ‘The True and False in the Decorative Arts’, Owen Jones took these recommendations a step

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<sup>10</sup> Bell, pp. 100–3.

<sup>11</sup> The order in which the schools were established and the dates vary considerably in secondary literature. This list is based on Appendix C in Sparkes (see Appendix 1).

<sup>12</sup> Pevsner, p. 248.

<sup>13</sup> Sparkes, pp. 47–9.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 53.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 58; Bosomworth, p. 115; see George Wallis, *A Catalogue of Manufactures, Decorations and Designs [...]* (London: William Cowles & Son, 1884).

further, calling for the provision of an art museum in every town and a drawing school in every village.<sup>16</sup>

In 1852, the Department of Practical Art was founded (from 1853 the Department of Science and Art), with Henry Cole as general superintendent. The Department includes the Museum of Manufactures (later the Victoria & Albert Museum) and the Government School of Design, all of which moved into Marlborough House. (In 1856, the School and the Museum moved to South Kensington.) The School of Design (from 1853 Central Training School for Art) offered new classes on metalwork, jewellery, enamels, fabrics, embroidery, lace and paper-staining; however, these were all stopped in 1856. By the late 1850s, the School was essentially a training school for art teachers, again utilising only drawing as teaching tool – albeit from decorative art objects.<sup>17</sup>

Under Cole's reforms the provincial schools of design (renamed schools of art) were to be self-supporting. (The Department of Science and Art offered some grant aid for the promotion of instruction: from 1856 for art schools, from 1868 for schools of design and technical schools.) Previously, the Council would decide where new schools would be opened; now schools could be opened anywhere, if they satisfied the Department's criteria.<sup>18</sup> Their number increased steadily: by 1861 there were 69 (excluding branch schools), by 1864 75 training about 16,000 students, and by 1884 177 existed, training nearly 34,000 students.<sup>19</sup>

In the 1850s, more manufacturers realised the need for better designs and the schools' ability to produce designers, whereas previously they had tended to resist the new developments. At the International Exhibition of 1862, there was further evidence of the improvement of design and the role played by the schools: a survey of all exhibitors showed that 344 former students of schools of art had been involved in the manufacture of exhibits of 104 manufactures.<sup>20</sup>

A third parliamentary select committee concluded in 1864 that the improvement of manufactures and of the public taste, and the extensive substitution of foreign designers with British designers working for manufacturers was 'conclusively established'.<sup>21</sup>

In 1899, the Department of Science and Art was subsumed into the newly-created Board of Education. The local art schools were released from control by the Department of Science and Art. Most became municipal institutions, assuming the dual character of art school and trade school, and possibly specialising in a local trade.<sup>22</sup> (In 1863, the Central School of Design was renamed the National Art Training School and in 1896 the Royal College of Art.)

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<sup>16</sup> Pevsner, pp. 249–253.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 255–6.

<sup>18</sup> Sparkes, pp. 70, 126

<sup>19</sup> Bell, pp. 253–6; Pevsner, pp. 256; Sparkes, Appendix C.

<sup>20</sup> Sparkes, p. 74.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 82.

<sup>22</sup> Macdonald, p. 299.



### Technical colleges and schools

By 1884, there was criticism that the schools of art were not sufficiently technical in their teaching. On the one hand, government did not want to subsidise trade with public money, on the other, the manufacturers themselves were opposing technical training.<sup>23</sup>

In 1870, the Royal Commission on Scientific Instruction and the Advancement of Science (Devonshire Commission) had examined the work of existing institutions which provided scientific instruction. A further Royal Commission on Technical Instruction (Samuelson Commission) reported in 1884. This led to the Technical Instruction Act of 1889, which gave local authorities the power to levy rates to aid technical or manual instruction. The distribution of those grants was overseen by technical instruction committees of the county or county borough councils, who began to provide technical instruction. The Local Taxation (Customs and Excise) Act 1890 provided a further source of income, using 'whisky money' from surrendered licences.<sup>24</sup>

### The Technical Institute at Tunbridge Wells

From as early as 1859 part-time classes in carpentry, wood carving, metalwork and dress-making were held in Tunbridge Wells. Initially, these took place in the basement of the Eye Hospital in the Pantiles, in the Corn Exchange, and later in Walmer House, Mount Sion. In 1894, the curriculum was broadened to include trade classes. In 1902, it was renamed the Technical Institute and moved to purpose-built premises in Monson Road designed by H T Hare.<sup>25</sup>

After the First World War, full-time courses in commerce, engineering and building were established. Renamed the Junior Technical School, it became part of the Technical College. In 1956, the Tunbridge Wells Technical School was established which incorporated the Junior Technical School. On completion of the new Technical School's premises in 1962, the building in Monson Road was vacated and it later became an Adult Education Centre.<sup>26</sup>

### The Architect of the Technical School, Henry T. Hare

Henry Thomas Hare (1860–1921) has been described as 'one of the outstanding and (so far) underrated designers of large buildings of the [Edwardian] period in all the styles of the time'.<sup>27</sup> He was articled to C.A. Bury of Scarborough and studied at the École des Beaux-Arts, Paris. In 1891, he started in private practice. He was elected a Fellow of the RIBA in 1898, served as Vice-President in 1904–6, as Honorary Secretary in 1909–13, and as President of the RIBA in 1917–19.<sup>28</sup> He specialised in public buildings, including numerous libraries,

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<sup>23</sup> Sparkes, p. 104.

<sup>24</sup> The National Archives, 'Technical colleges and further education', *The National Archives* website, <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/records/research-guides/technical-further-education.htm>

[accessed 5 February 2013].

<sup>25</sup> Mervyn Davies, 'The Origins of Royal Tunbridge Wells Technical High School', *TWGSB*

*News Online*, newsletter no. 3, February 2000,

<http://fsoba-twgsb.uku.co.uk/newsletters/newsletter3/origins.htm> [accessed 5 February 2013].

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Alastair Service, *Edwardian Architecture* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1977), p. 202.

<sup>28</sup> Obituary, *Journal of the American Institute of Architects*, v.9, 1921, p. 100.

town halls, and hospitals. His town halls include the Stafford County Hall (1892–95); the town hall in Oxford (1892–97); Henley Town Hall (1900–04).

As well as a number of public libraries (some of which were built with money from Andrew Carnegie), he also built at least three technical schools: at Southend-on-Sea (1899; demolished); at Tunbridge Wells (1900–2); and the County Technical Schools at Stafford (1900).<sup>29</sup> The former Technical Institute at Tunbridge Wells appears to be the best surviving of these three known technical school buildings. (Two blocks of the former Stafford County Technical School are listed (1896 (by Bailey and McConnal) and c.1937), however the building by Hare does not seem to have survived.)<sup>30</sup> Hare's designs for the Tunbridge Wells building were exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1901 and, together with the other architectural designs exhibited, reproduced in *Academy Architecture and Architectural Review* (figs. 8 and 9).<sup>31</sup>

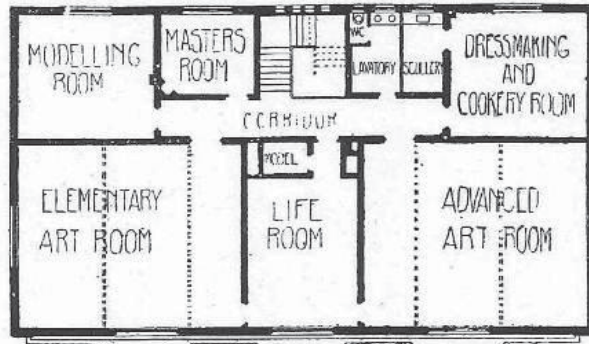


**Fig.8 Perspective drawing of the Technical Institute, Tunbridge Wells  
(*Academy Architecture and Architectural Review*, v.20, 1901, p. 112)**

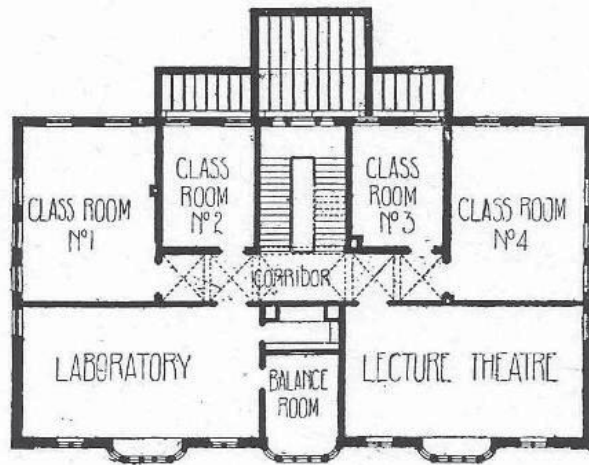
<sup>29</sup> RIBA biographical file; obituary, *The Builder*, 14 January 1921, p. 67.

<sup>30</sup> Statutory list description.

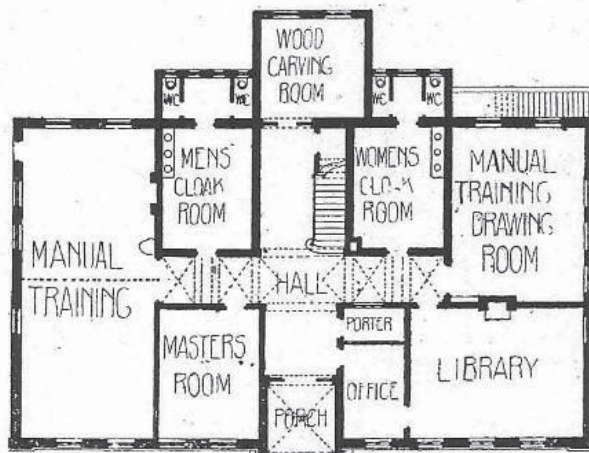
<sup>31</sup> *Academy Architecture and Architectural Review*, v.20, 1901, pp. 112, 119.



SECOND FLOOR PLAN



FIRST FLOOR PLAN



GROUND PLAN

**Fig. 9 Original plans of the Technical Institute, Tunbridge Wells  
(Academy Architecture and Architectural Review, v.20, 1901, p. 119)**



## 2.3 Inter-war Civic Buildings in England and Wales and the work of Percy Thomas

### Definition

For the purposes of this account and in order to provide a suitable comparison with the buildings at Tunbridge Wells, civic buildings are defined as purpose-built complexes comprising a civic suite and municipal offices. Frequently, these were augmented by public halls, and other functions such as law courts, depending on local circumstances. Civic buildings were generally called ‘town hall’, ‘city hall’ or ‘municipal offices’, or even ‘guildhall’ depending on local custom, but during the inter-war period the term ‘civic centre’ was increasingly used. Extensions to existing civic buildings are not included in this account. County halls, while operating at a different level of local government, essentially fulfil similar functions as town halls and are included in this study.

### External factors: economic crises and depression

The inter-war period was one of the major periods of civic architecture in Britain. Many new town halls and civic centres were being constructed, mainly to consolidate different functions on a single site. While recurring episodes of economic crisis slowed down and postponed several building projects, the 1930s saw both economic recovery and a rapid increase in the number of town halls under construction. The easing of government spending restrictions in 1935 in particular caused a building boom in the late 1930s. The outbreak of war brought this boom to an abrupt halt: the winning designs of some competitions of the late 1930s were put on hold until after the war, and constructions projects already underway were frequently delayed by war and post-war austerity. For example, the completion of E. Vincent Harris’s Council House at Bristol – whose construction had begun in 1938 – was delayed until 1952.

Several town hall projects were deliberately executed in stages, generally for financial reasons. For example, Islington Town Hall by E.C.P. Monson was built in three stages between 1922 and 1929. Offices and the civic suite (containing the key spaces of the mayor’s parlour and the council chamber) formed part of the first two phases, while the public hall was built last.<sup>32</sup> Similarly, the construction of the individual elements of the Civic Centre at Southampton were staggered (1928–39): first the municipal offices (including the council chamber, the mayor’s parlour, as well as reception and committee rooms, members’ rooms and offices); then the courts and police offices; thirdly, the guildhall (which is here used as the name of the assembly hall); and lastly the art block (housing the central library, art gallery and art school).<sup>33</sup>

### Architectural competitions

From the mid-nineteenth century, architectural competitions were the favoured method of procurement for public buildings, not least because of the choice of designs they offered and the fact that the cost of designing was borne by the competitors.<sup>34</sup> By the inter-war period these followed the guidelines of the Royal Institute of British Architects and involved a professional assessor, generally an eminent architect with experience in civic buildings. For example, Henry Austen Hall, one of the architects responsible for Lambeth Town Hall (1906–08), was the assessor for the 1928 competition for the Civic Centre at Southampton,

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<sup>32</sup> Joanna Smith, *London’s Town Halls. The architecture of local government from 1840 to the present* (Swindon: English Heritage, 1999), p. 55.

<sup>33</sup> *The Builder*, 21 September 1928, p. 457.

<sup>34</sup> Smith, p. 18.

while Ernest Berry Webber, the winner of that competition, was the assessor for the 1934 competition to build the Civic Centre at Tunbridge Wells.<sup>35</sup>

### Architectural styles

In 1935, Charles Herbert Reilly, the recently retired professor of architecture at Liverpool University, lamented the fact that recent civic buildings, and town halls in particular, were generally historicist in style: 'it is difficult to understand why no one has yet produced a town hall to correspond, say, to a Cachemaille-Day or to a Velarde church', referring to two particularly innovative church architects. He suggested that this was a 'result of the competition system which, on the whole, seems to produce clever men rather than first-rate buildings', as the assessors generally perpetuated their own revival architecture by choosing similar designs.<sup>36</sup>

These historicist styles included a mostly classical spectrum ranging from neo-Baroque and Wrenaissance, to various forms of eighteenth-century architecture generally called 'neo-Georgian'. The latter in particular became almost the default style for inter-war public buildings, housing, schools and new towns such as Welwyn Garden City (begun 1924). Increasingly, the style was stripped of all detailing, while retaining its proportions and use of brick with stone dressings and pitched roofs. While its dominance began to be challenged during the 1930s, the use of the neo-Georgian style for civic buildings continued throughout the period, for example in E. Vincent Harris's Bristol Council House (1938–52). Yet, even buildings in a revival style could not escape the modernist influence from Europe: numerous neo-Georgian and neo-classical town halls have interiors with Art Deco detailing, such as Padiham Town Hall in Burnley (1938, Bradshaw Gass & Hope).

Some of the revivalist town halls of the inter-war period included very direct quotes, such as Harris's Leeds Civic Hall (competition 1926, built 1931–3) which included references to Gibbs and Wren, not least in the twin spires based on St Vedast's church, Cheapside.<sup>37</sup> Other quotes are less obvious but no less important in underscoring the buildings' civic importance and dignity. For example, several of the smaller town halls have small cupolas inspired by that of Wren's Chelsea Hospital, for example Bridlington Town Hall (1931, by the borough surveyor F. Y. Newton) and Braintree Town Hall (1926–8, E. Vincent Harris) (fig. 10).<sup>38</sup>

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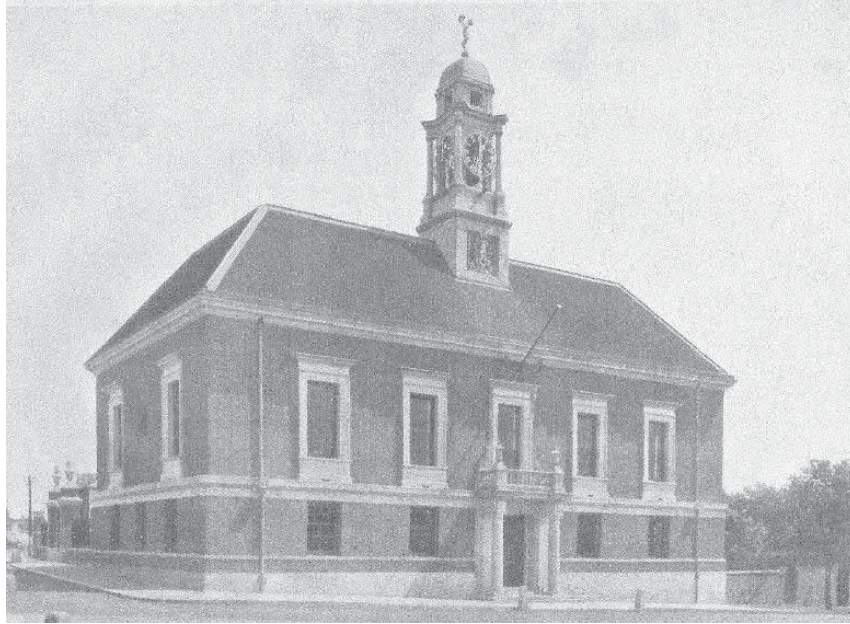
<sup>35</sup> *The Builder*, 21 September 1928, p. 457; *The Architects' Journal*, 15 November 1934, p. 731.

<sup>36</sup> C.H. Reilly, 'Criticism: 1. The Town Hall Problem', *The Architectural Review*, March 1935, pp. 113–5.

<sup>37</sup> Holder, Julian, 'Emmanuel Vincent Harris and the survival of classicism in inter-war Manchester', in Clare Hartwell and Terry Wyke (eds.), *Making Manchester aspects of the History of Architecture in the city and region since 1800* (Manchester: Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society, 2007).

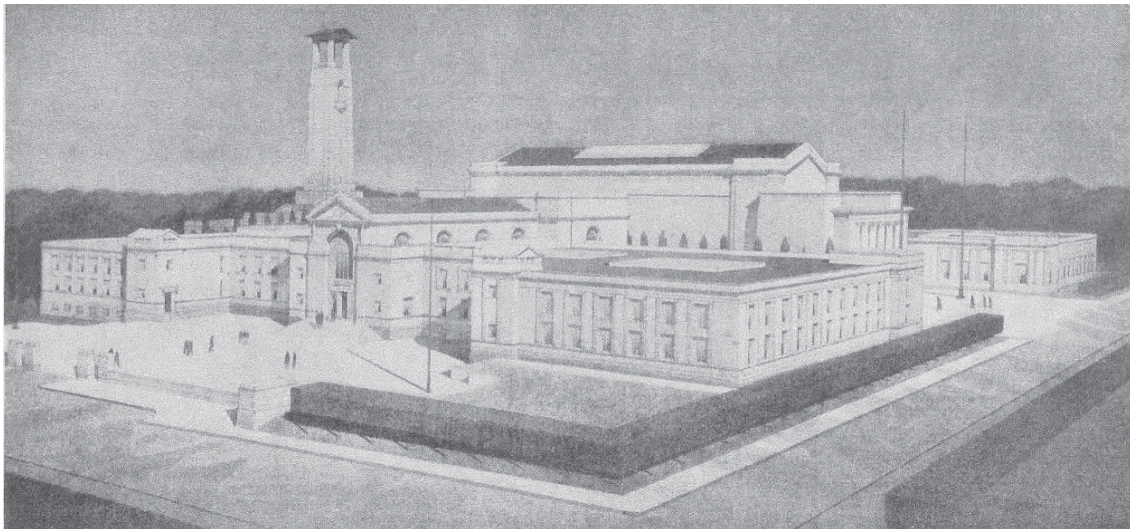
<sup>38</sup> List description.





**Fig.10 Braintree Town Hall (1926–8), by E. Vincent Harris**  
**(*The Builder*, 15 May 1928, facing page p. 898)**

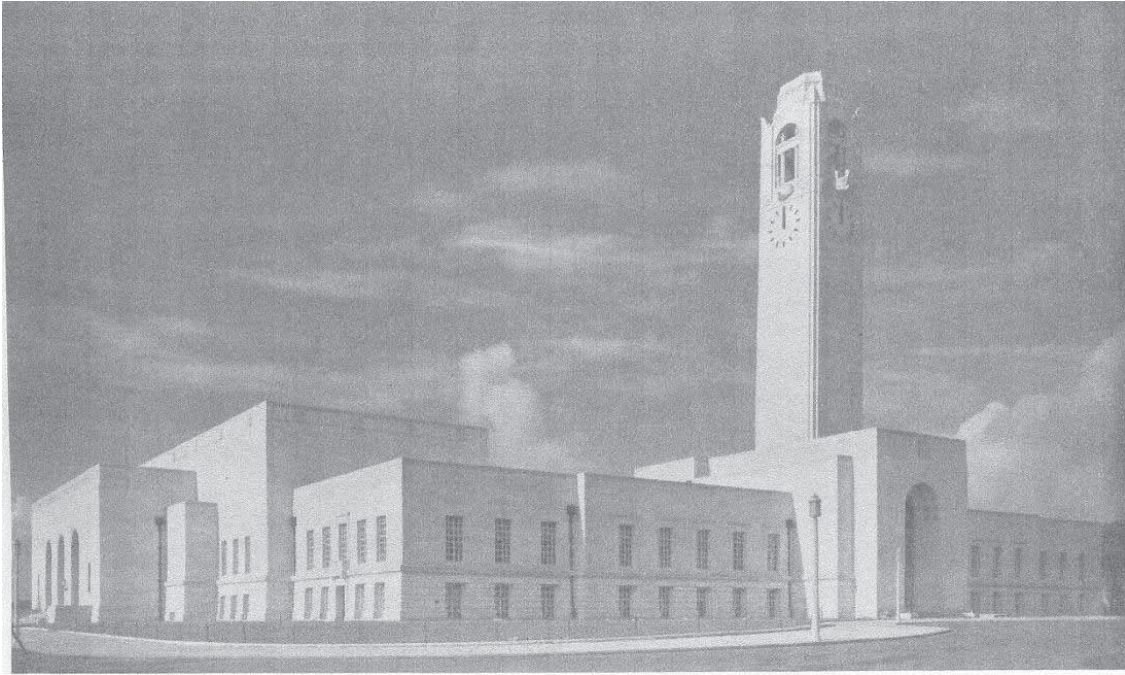
Of a more modern appearance were buildings in the style called ‘stripped classicism’, where the vocabulary of classicism was pared back. Prominent examples in civic architecture include Southampton Civic Centre (fig. 11) and Swansea Guildhall (Percy Thomas, 1930–34) (fig. 12). The latter earned Reilly’s approval as ‘the nearest we have got to a modern town hall in this country’.<sup>39</sup>



**Fig.11 Perspective drawing of the Civic Centre, Southampton (1928–1939), by E. Berry Webber**  
**(*The Builder*, 11 January 1929, p. 91)**

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<sup>39</sup> C.H. Reilly, ‘Criticism: 1. The Town Hall Problem’, *The Architectural Review*, March 1935, p. 115.



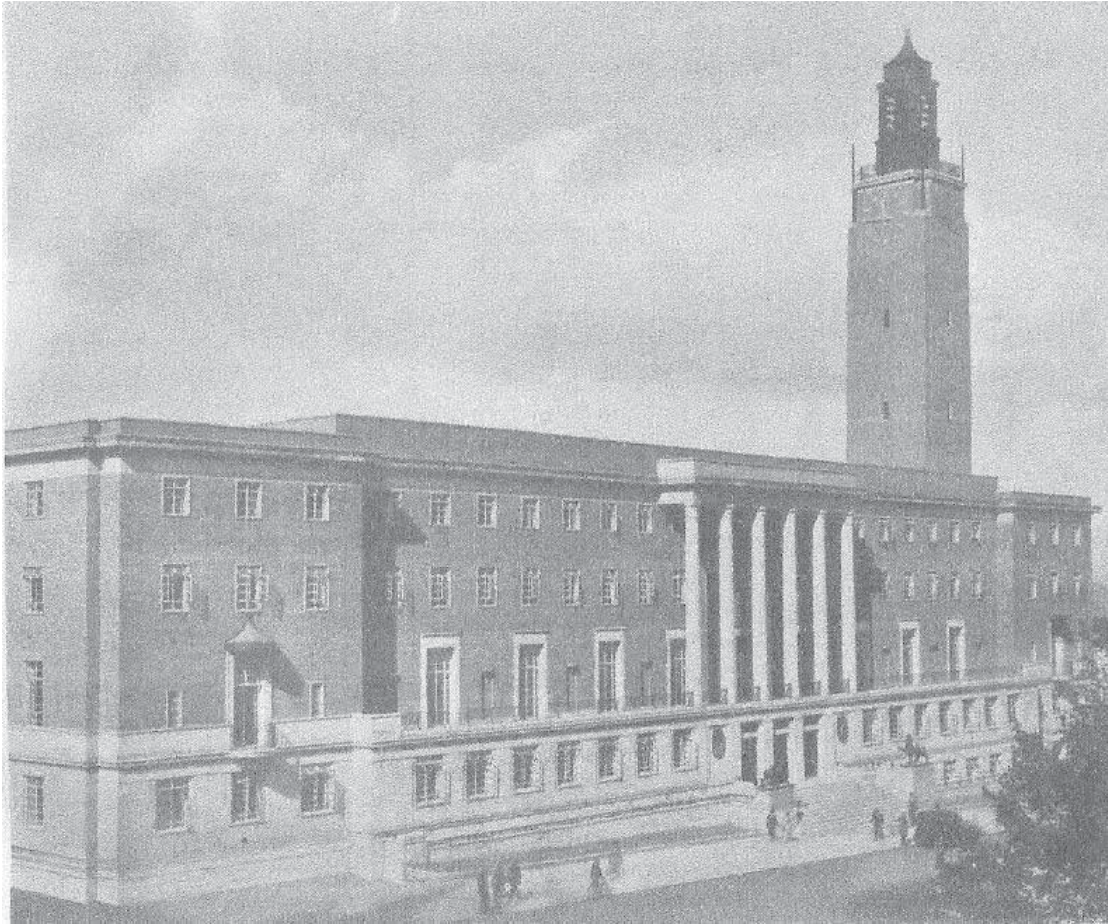
**Fig.12 Swansea Guildhall (1930–34), by Percy Thomas  
(*The Architect and Building News*, 19 October 1934, p. 69)**

Two European examples in particular had a large influence on inter-war civic buildings in Britain: Ragnar Östberg's Stadshus at Stockholm (1911–23), a product of Swedish national romanticism and the modernist Town Hall (1928–30) at Hilversum in the Netherlands, probably the most famous building by Willem Dudok. Stockholm's City Hall successfully combined elegant brick elevations, a highly-visible tower and historicist quotations. In British civic buildings, its influence frequently resulted in what Reilly called the 'Swedish-Georgian compromise'.<sup>40</sup> The inspiration of the Stockholm City Hall is visible for example in Norwich City Hall (C.H. James and S.R. Pierce, competition 1931, built 1937–8) (fig.13) and Hertford County Hall (James & Bywater and Rowland Pierce, competition 1935, built 1937–9).

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<sup>40</sup> C.H. Reilly, 'Criticism: 1. The Town Hall Problem', *The Architectural Review*, v. 728, 1935, p. 113.





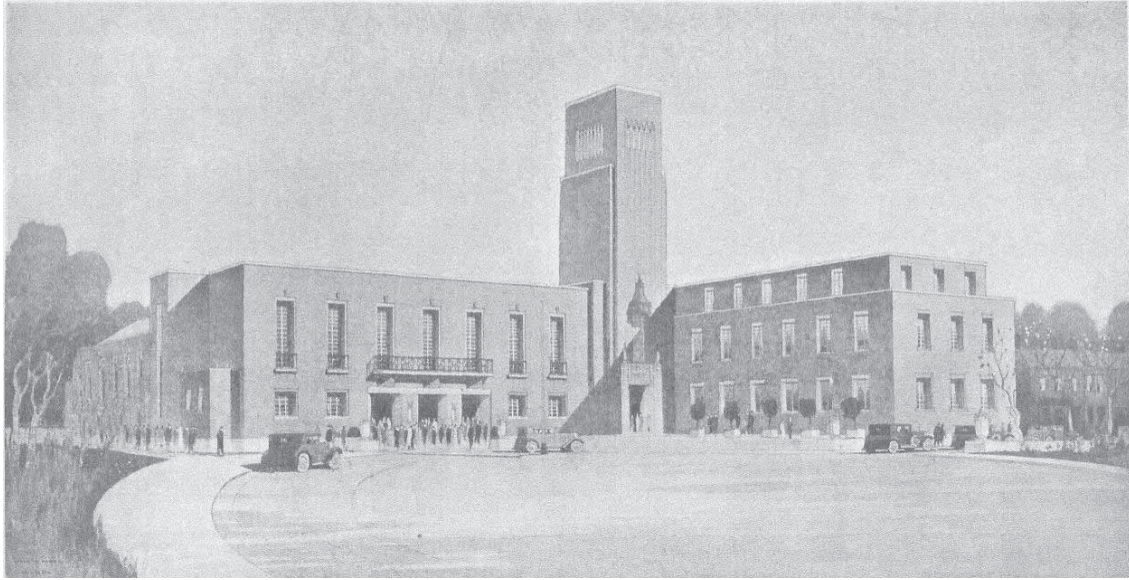
**Fig. 13 Norwich City Hall (1937–8), C.H. James and S.R. Pierce  
(*The Architect and Building News*, 11 November 1938, p. 153)**

In contrast, the influence of Hilversum Town Hall led British civic buildings much closer to radical modernism. The first British town hall to be modelled on the Hilversum building was Hornsey Town Hall (1933–35, Reginald Uren) (fig. 14). An asymmetrical L-shaped brick building with a tower in the angle, it became highly influential in itself. The architectural press described it as ‘a logical and practical solution, with a touch of genius – the treatment of the main façade’.<sup>41</sup> Another outstanding Dudokian town hall was that at Greenwich (1938–39, Clifford Culpin), also with a tower, sheer facades of hand-made, thin bricks, and horizontal window bands.

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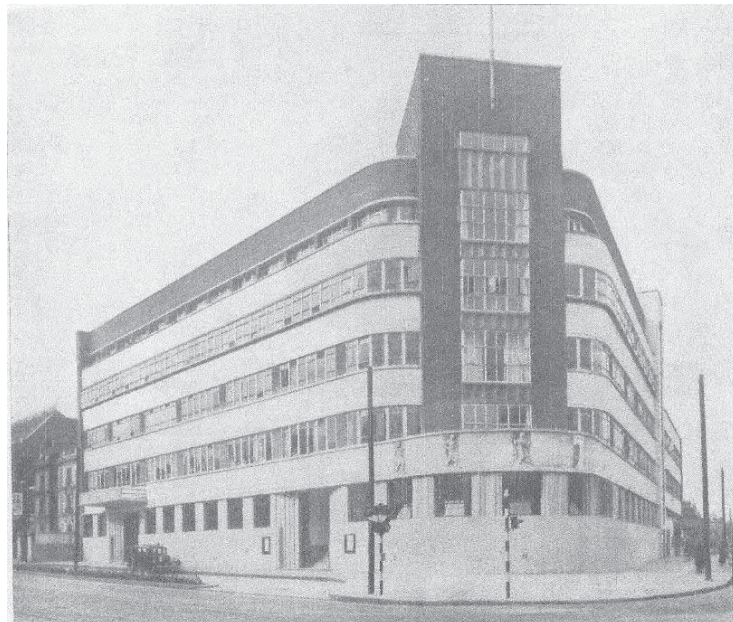
<sup>41</sup> *The Builder*, 20 October 1933, p. 610.





**Fig. 14** Perspective drawing of winning design for Hornsey Town Hall (1933–35),  
Reginald Uren (*The Builder*, 20 October 1933, p. 604)

Poplar Town Hall (1937–9, Culpin & Son) was described at its opening ceremony as the first town hall in the country to be built on ‘truly modernist lines’ (fig. 15).<sup>42</sup> A corner building, it makes excellent use of its site achieving a streamlined appearance by means of continuous window bands and a convex corner.

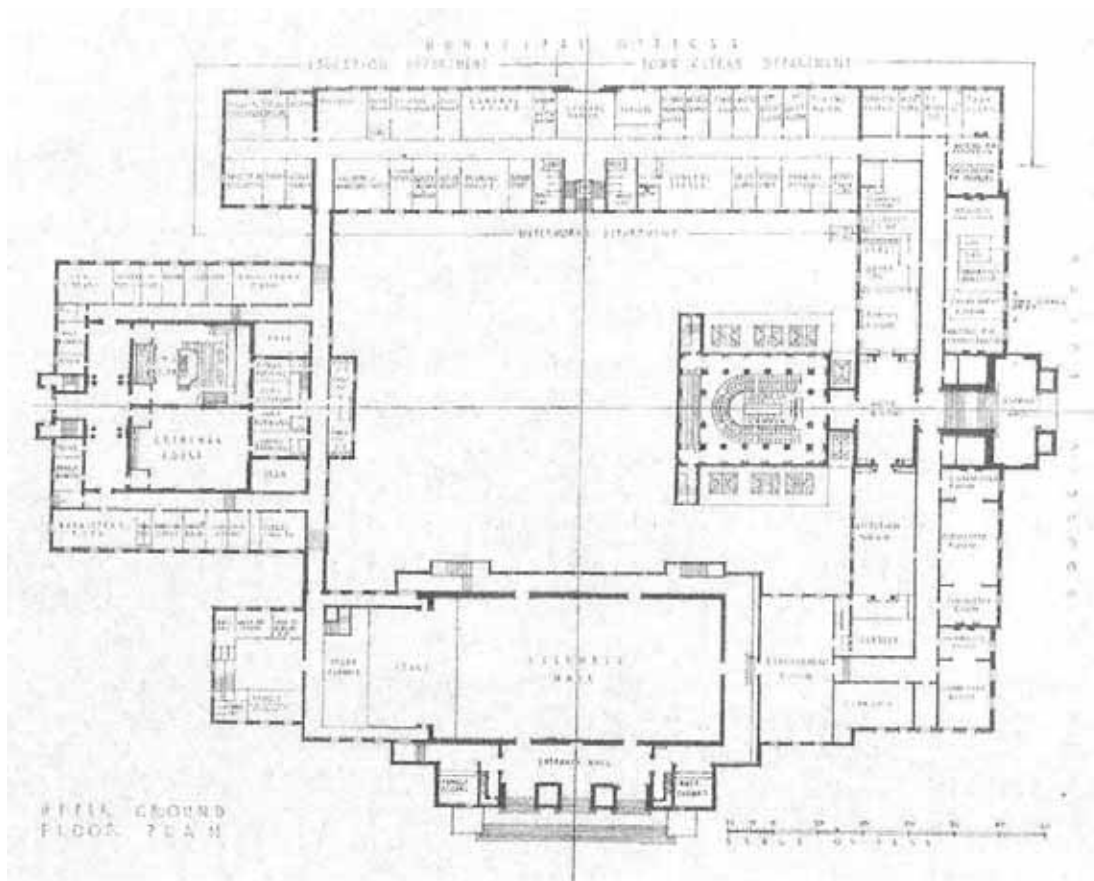


**Fig. 15** The former Poplar Town Hall (now Bow House) (1937–9) by Culpin & Son  
(*The Architect and Building News*, 18 November 1938, p. 185)

<sup>42</sup> Joanna Smith, *London's Town Halls. The architecture of local government from 1840 to the present* (Swindon: English Heritage, 1999), pp. 67–9.

Plan types and additional functions

Most civic buildings followed one of three established plan forms: the courtyard plan, a single-range plan or a plan where different elements were separate but linked together ('the group plan').<sup>43</sup> Swansea Guildhall is a typical example of a courtyard plan, with the assembly hall, the municipal offices, the police station and law courts, and the civic suite with the council chamber projecting into the central courtyard (fig. 16). Another example is Hertford County Hall, where the semi-circular council chamber projects outwards.

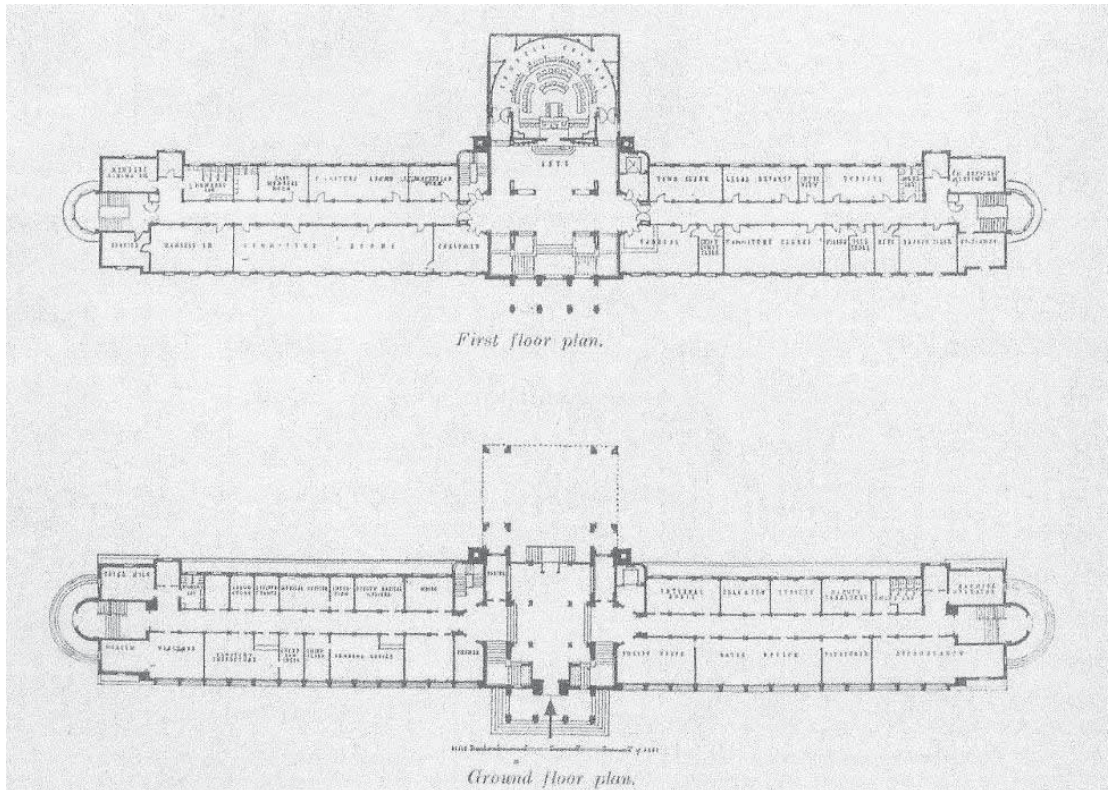


**Fig. 16 Upper ground floor of the Swansea Guildhall  
(*The Architect and Building News*, 19 October 1934, p. 68)**

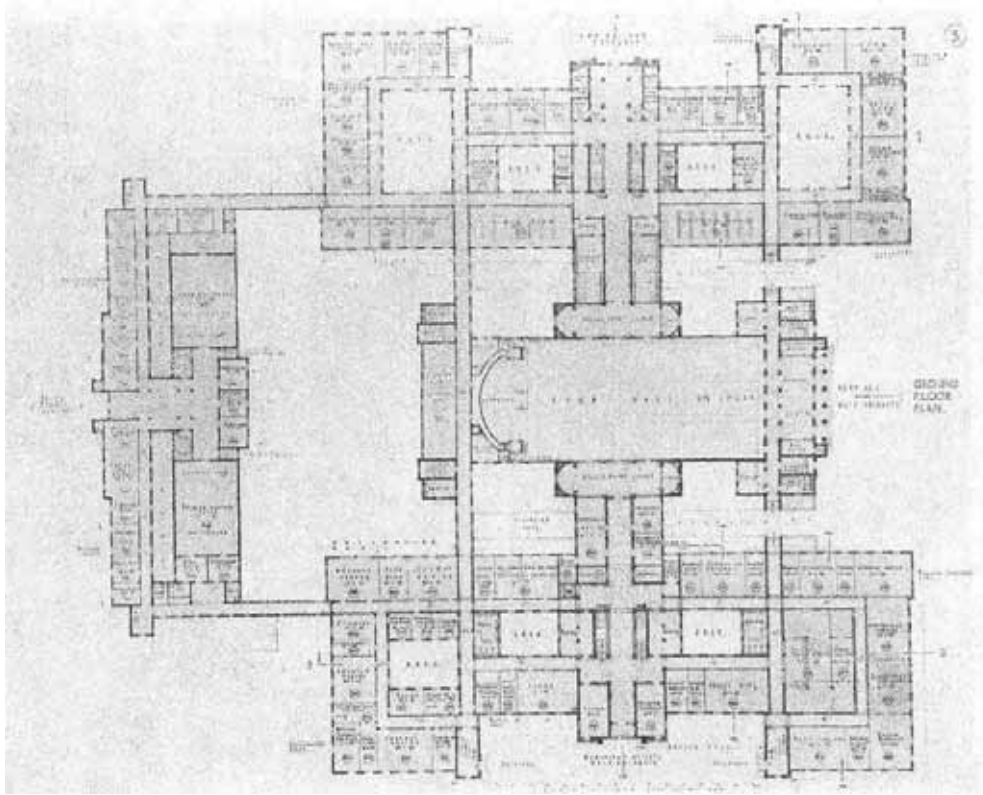
<sup>43</sup> Smith, pp. 26–7.



Dagenham Civic Centre (1936, E. Berry Webber) is typical of the single-range plan, with a central corridor, staircases at both ends, and the projecting council chamber opposite the entrance (fig. 17). The disparate elements of Southampton's Civic Centre were grouped together in a kind of H-plan with an additional range, with all elements linked by corridors – typical for the group plan (fig. 18).



**Fig. 17** Ground and first floor plans of Dagenham Civic Centre (1936) by E. Berry Webber (*The Architect and Building News*, 5 November 1937, p. 160)

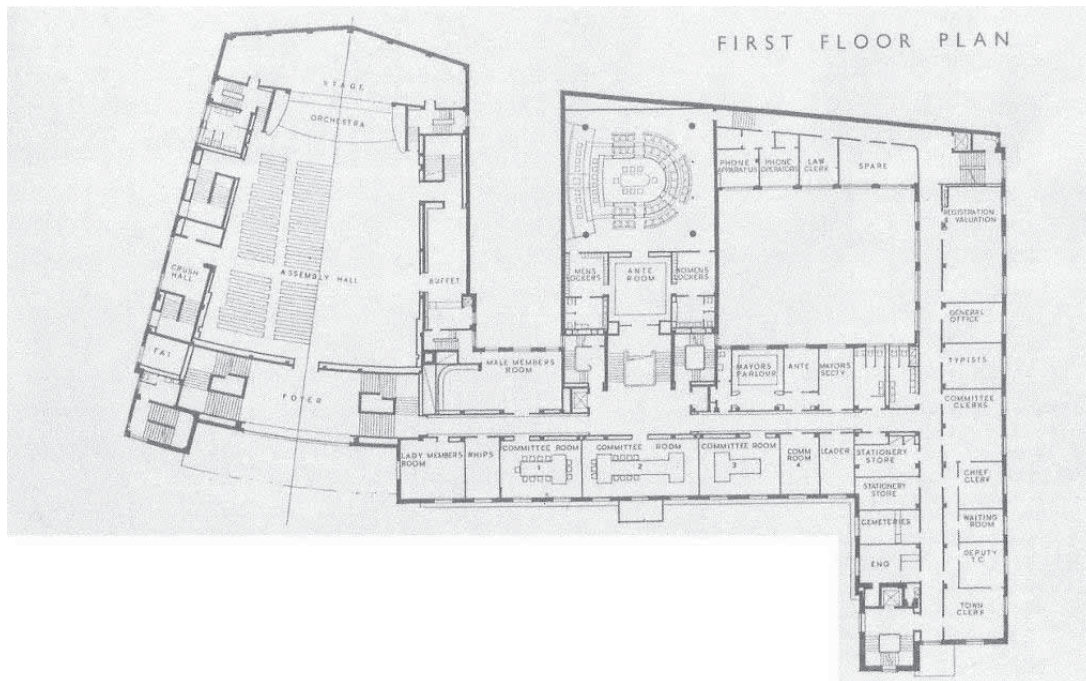


**Fig. 18** The competition-winning plan for Southampton's Civic Centre by E. Berry Webber, with the arts block at the top, the guildhall (assembly hall) in the centre, the civic suite and municipal offices at the bottom, and the police station and law courts at the left (*The Builder*, 21 September 1928, p. 461)

But the move towards modernism in the late 1930s also meant a greater degree of asymmetry and less formality in the planning of civic buildings. The plans of the Dudok-influenced town halls at Greenwich (fig. 19) and Hornsey are both examples of such informal planning, loosely grouping together separately-articulated functional areas. At Greenwich, the municipal offices were grouped along the street fronts, with the mayor's parlour and council chamber to the rear overlooking a lightwell above a carpark. The assembly hall is attached at the far end of the block, clearly indicating its distinct function. Site constraints at Hornsey meant that a symmetrical plan had little practical value, and the winning, asymmetrical plan was instead arranged to guarantee sufficient natural light for the main spaces.<sup>44</sup>

The resulting plans were also more flexible in regard to the future expansion of office accommodation. In fact, the future demand for more office space was increasingly planned for: at Greenwich, an attic storey was added in 1972–74 which had been allowed for by Culpin.

<sup>44</sup> *The Builder*, 13 October 1933, p. 572; 20 October 1933, pp. 610–1.



**Fig. 19 First floor plan of the former Greenwich Town Hall (now Meridian House), by Clifford Culpin (*The Architect and Building News*, 3 November 1939, p. 111)**

### Elevational details

Several elevational details recur in numerous civic buildings of the inter-war period. Convex corners were a natural solution to site restraints, but also showed the influence of streamline moderne, a variation of Art Deco (e.g. Stoke Newington Town Hall (1935–37, J. Reginald Truelove)). Concave corners also occur frequently and were possibly inspired by the façade of Ralph Knott’s London County Hall (1911–22); for example, at Watford Town Hall (1937–39, C. Cowles-Voysey) and Luton Town Hall (1935–36, Bradshaw Gass & Hope).

Towers were a popular feature of civic buildings, especially if these were located away from the historic city centre. They marked the location of the new building within an existing street- and roovescape, and were an outward sign of civic pride. Many of the full-height towers were influenced by the tower of the Stockholm City Hall. Indeed, the vogue for towers was such that a clock tower had to be added later to the winning design for the Southampton Civic Centre which originally was planned without one. Smaller town halls in a revival style generally had at least a flèche or a small cupola.

### Construction methods

Although most inter-war civic buildings were probably erected in a style of the past, this did not mean architects scorned the new construction methods available. By the 1920 steel frames were used, followed by reinforced concrete framing. From a modernist perspective, the modern structure and the historicist dressing were, of course, not compatible. In regard to stone-clad towers in particular, the pretence of solid stone was simply a deception.

### Additional functions

Several inter-war town halls and civic centres incorporated not just the civic suite and municipal offices, but also additional civic functions which were either provided for the first



time or consolidated on one site. A common additional function was a public hall (to be used as theatre, concert hall, assembly hall, ballroom etc). Depending on the local requirements and funding available, the new complex might also include law courts and a police station, a fire station, a library, an art gallery or a museum. This was not a wholly new development (for example, Middlesbrough Town Hall built in the 1880s contained a grand public hall, magistrates courts and a police station as well as the council chamber and offices) but it became more common.

At Southampton the Civic Centre included an assembly hall, law courts and a police station, and an arts block housing a new art gallery, central library and the municipal art school. Norwich City Hall included a police station, as well as a small 'museum of civic regalia'.<sup>45</sup> Clacton Town Hall (1931, Sir Alfred Brumwell Thomas) included a theatre (now the Princes Theatre) and, originally, a library.<sup>46</sup> Hertfordshire County Hall had a separate building for the County Library.<sup>47</sup> Swansea Guildhall included a concert hall (Brangwyn Hall) and law courts.<sup>48</sup>

However, the majority of inter-war town halls and civic buildings focused on the civic spaces and municipal buildings. Of course, new buildings for the various municipal functions, such as police stations and fire stations, were also built independently of town halls. Occasionally, several were grouped together without the town/county hall element. In Accrington in Lancashire, Percy Thomas built a complex of new police station, law courts and a fire station, together with 12 houses for firemen (competition 1930, built 1933).<sup>49</sup>

#### Civic buildings by Percy Thomas

Percy Thomas (1883–1969) set up in private architectural practice together with Ivor Jones in 1912, after they won the competition for Cardiff Technical College. This was the beginning of the Percy Thomas Partnership which later became one of the most commercially successful British architectural practices of the twentieth century. Thomas went on to win the RIBA gold medal in 1939, was knighted in 1946, and was twice president of the RIBA (1935–7, 1943–6).<sup>50</sup> At the beginning, however, it was Thomas's ability to win competitions which ensured the continued success of the practice, particularly for civic buildings and municipal buildings such as fire and police stations.

The inter-war period and particularly the 1930s have been described as the most significant decade in Thomas's career as designer.<sup>51</sup> He won a number of prestigious competitions, including that of his most accomplished and most celebrated work, the Swansea Guildhall, his own favourite building (figs.12,16).<sup>52</sup> Other buildings of his were in a similar monumental, simplified classical style: the police and fire station at Bristol (competition 1924, built 1928, with Ivor Jones); an unexecuted competition-winning design for a police and fire station in Newcastle (competition 1925); the police station, law courts and fire

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<sup>45</sup> *The Architect and Building News*, 11 November 1938, pp. 151–7.

<sup>46</sup> List description.

<sup>47</sup> List description.

<sup>48</sup> *The Architect and Building News*, 19 October 1934, p. 68.

<sup>49</sup> *The Architect and Building News*, 28 June 1935, pp. 367–73.

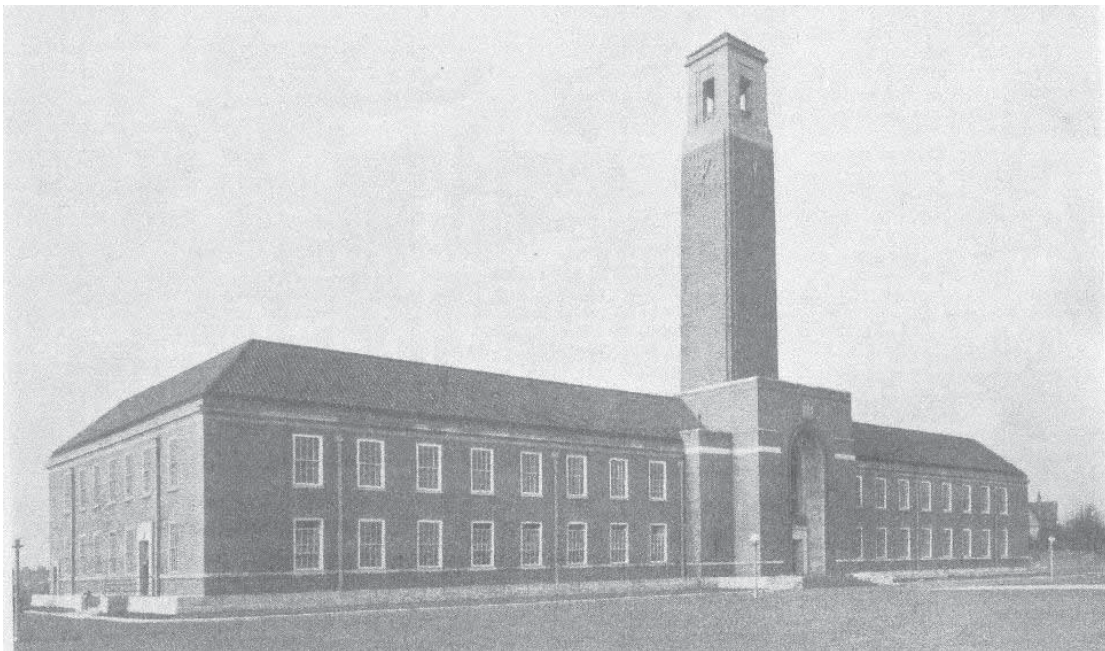
<sup>50</sup> Simon Unwin, 'Thomas, Sir Percy Edward (1883–1969)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/63146, accessed 14 Feb 2013].

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>52</sup> 'Makers of Industrial Wales: Sir Percy Thomas', newspaper cutting in the RIBA biographical file; Unwin, 'Thomas, Sir Percy Edward', *ODNB*.

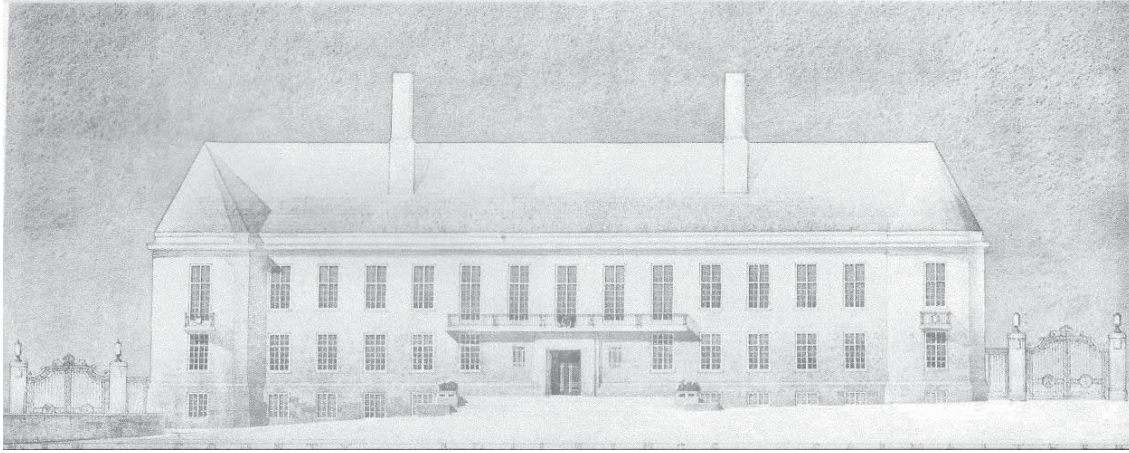
station in Accrington (competition 1930, built 1933); and the Temple of Peace in Cathays Park, Cardiff (completed 1938). Another civic project was the extension (completed in 1932) of the Glamorgan County Hall (by E. Vincent Harris and Thomas Anderson Moodie (1909–11)), also in Cathays Park Cardiff.

He also occasionally used the neo-Georgian style, as at the police and fire station at Worcester (completed c.1940); the Swinton and Pendlebury Town Hall (now Salford Civic Centre; competition 1934, built 1936–8; fig. 20); and the Tunbridge Wells Civic Centre (competition 1934, built 1939). Like the earlier Swansea Guildhall, the Swinton and Pendlebury Town Hall had a flat-roofed entrance block with a giant arch, topped by a tall, prominent clock tower, but the neo-Georgian character of the building was heightened by the prominent pitched roofs of the main ranges. The E-plan building was intended to be later extended so as to form a courtyard; however, the post-war extension took the form of a single, freestanding range office building, linked by a corridor to the older building.



**Fig. 20 Swinton & Pendlebury Town Hall (now Salford Civic Centre; 1936–8), by Thomas and Prestwich (*The Architect and Building News*, 30 December 1938, p. 356)**

Percy Thomas's County Hall at Camarthen was designed in 1935 but was completed only after the war, in 1956 (fig. 21). Unlike his other civic buildings its choice of architectural style was probably more inspired by its location on the site of the medieval castle than by the established styles for civic buildings. The rock-faced grey stone facades with corner towers are unusual for civic buildings which tend to aim for a more 'polite' expression. The steep, tall slate roof with towering chimney stacks are reminiscent of a French chateau – and exploit the building's situation on Castle Hill above the town and the river Towy to good effect.



**Fig.21 Carmarthen County Hall (1935–55), by Percy Thomas  
(*The Builder*, 10 January 1936, illustration)**

Thomas's partnership with Ivor Jones was dissolved by mutual consent in 1937<sup>53</sup> but he also collaborated with Ernest Prestwich on a few projects, including the Civic Centre at Tunbridge Wells, and the Town Hall for Swinton and Pendlebury.<sup>54</sup> Ernest was the younger son of James Caldwell Prestwich (1851–1940) who had a flourishing local practice based in Leigh, Lancashire, which was responsible for several public buildings including the Leigh Town Hall. Percy Thomas had worked for J.C. Prestwich in 1904, and again from 1907 as chief assistant before leaving to set up his partnership with Jones. Both of J.C. Prestwich's sons became partners in his practice (operating as 'J.C. Prestwich & Sons'): Harold Oswald Prestwich (born 1881) and Ernest (1889–1977). Ernest is chiefly remembered for winning a 1910 competition to redesign Port Sunlight village while still a student at the Liverpool School of Architecture. His plan was influenced by Beaux-Arts principles and introduced a new formality into the village's plan. For a time, he acted as assistant to James Lomax-Simpson, the architect to Lever Brothers. Working for his father's practice, he designed several war memorials, public baths at Leeds and Northampton, and also the police station, fire station and law courts at Northampton.<sup>55</sup>

During the Second World War, Thomas undertook largely government work, as area officer for the Ministry of Supply in Wales, and as chairman of the Wales regional board of the new Ministry of Production. After the War, he increasingly acted as consultant architect, for example to the Steel Company of Wales, to the Ministry of Transport, the Cardiff hospitals, the universities of Bristol, Nottingham and Wales, and for the British Electricity Authority's projects in Wales. He also acted as assessor to several major architectural competitions of the post-war years, including that for Coventry Cathedral.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>53</sup> Unwin, 'Sir Percy Thomas', *ODNB*.

<sup>54</sup> Norman Percy Thomas, 'Thomas, Sir Percy Edward', *Welsh Biography Online*, <http://wbo.llgc.org.uk/en/s2-THOM-EDW-1883.html> [accessed 24 January 2013].

<sup>55</sup> *Dictionary of Scottish Architects*, <http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk> [accessed 20 February 2012]; Antonia Brodie *et al* (eds.), *Directory of British Architects, 1834-1914: Vol. 2 (L-Z)* (Continuum, 2001), p. 408; E. Hubbard and M. Shippobottom, *A Guide to Port Sunlight Village* (Liverpool University Press, 2005), pp. 17, 19–20.

<sup>56</sup> Unwin, 'Sir Percy Thomas', *ODNB*; Thomas, 'Thomas, Sir Percy Edward', *WBO*.



Within Percy Thomas's oeuvre of civic and municipal buildings, the Civic Centre at Tunbridge Wells occupies a less prominent position than some of his larger and better-known buildings. His most acclaimed civic building is the Swansea Guildhall, which was appreciated not only by Thomas himself but also by contemporary critics such as C.H. Reilly. The town halls at Swansea and Swinton & Pendlebury both won RIBA bronze medals (as did the Temple of Peace). Both have large prominent towers which proclaim the presence of the buildings in the townscape. The Guildhall at Swansea is in the stripped classical style, like the majority of Thomas's civic and municipal buildings. The Swinton & Pendlebury Town Hall (of a nearly contemporary date with Tunbridge Wells) is in the neo-Georgian revival style with tall roofs, like the police and fire station at Worcester. On the other hand, the Tunbridge Wells Civic Complex is in a late variety of neo-Georgian, inflected with modernist details. It no longer has a pitched roof which was part of the earlier, confident neo-Georgian buildings, but features flat roofs. One distinguishing feature which also occurs in Thomas's other two town halls is the giant entrance arch which is placed on the canted corner of the town hall at Tunbridge Wells (figs. 12 and 20).

#### The Civic Centre at Tunbridge Wells in context

Like the vast majority of civic buildings of the inter-war period, the style of the Tunbridge Wells Civic Centre is neo-Georgian. However, it was built in 1934–39, a time when the neo-Georgian revival style was becoming less popular. The absence of any historicist detailing (apart from the sash windows), the flat roofs, and the presence of details such as the brick fluting over the entrance arch, the decorative window grilles, and the relief sculpture are an indication that this building is part of a transition away from full-blooded historicist style and towards modernism. Compared to innovative town halls, such as those at Hornsey, Greenwich and Poplar, the Civic Centre at Tunbridge Wells is a weaker design in an outdated style.

The plan of the complex as a whole does not follow any of the plan types common in the inter-war period. This was partly because of site constraints and partly because of the Council's specific requirement that 'the buildings, while following a general grouping, should be separate and distinct units'.<sup>57</sup> Consequently, Thomas and Prestwich planned four buildings for the various functions, (with the assembly hall as part of the town hall). This is in contrast to other multi-function civic centres, such as Swansea and Southampton, where the different buildings were linked. The plan of the town hall building itself is of the courtyard type, with the assembly hall forming one side and the council chamber projecting into the courtyard. (For reasons of noise reduction, the council chamber is located in most town halls away from the street.)

Unlike most inter-war civic buildings, the Tunbridge Wells complex does not have a tower or even a small domed cupola as an expression of civic pride and to locate the buildings in the urban streetscape. The unexecuted tower for the storage of fire hoses and drill practice sited behind the proposed fire station would have provided a vertical accent, although its proposed location at the eastern edge of the site and set back considerably from the street frontage was not at all prominent.

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<sup>57</sup> *The Architects' Journal*, 15 November 1934, p. 731.

### **3.0 DESCRIPTIONS OF INDIVIDUAL LISTED BUILDINGS WITH AN ASSESSMENT OF THEIR SIGNIFICANCE**

In the following section the listed buildings and structures which make up the Civic Centre Complex are considered in chronological order of building (see below) with a short history and description and an assessment of significance. The assessment of individual buildings is followed by an assessment of the importance of their frontages.

The assessments of significance use the range of values identified in the English Heritage publication *Conservation Principles* (2008), that is to say, Evidential value, deriving from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity; Historical value, deriving from the ways in which past people events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present; Aesthetic value, deriving from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place; Communal value, deriving from the meaning of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience and memory.

9 & 10 Calverley Terrace - 1820s

The Adult Education Centre (former Technical and Art School) - 1902

The War Memorial - 1923

The Police Station - 1939

The Assembly Hall - 1939

The Town Hall - 1941

The Library and Museum - 1952

### **3.1 Numbers 9&10 Crescent Road (also known as 9&10 Calverley Terrace)**

#### History

Nos. 9–10 Crescent Road is the only surviving remnant of ‘Calverley Terrace’ by Decimus Burton. The building was originally the easternmost of four similar semi-detached houses built in the late 1820s and early 1830s on part of the Calverley Estate.

Calverley Parade and some of the land behind it was acquired by the Corporation in 1895 with a view to building a town hall and other municipal buildings. In the years around 1900, most of the mews were built over with public baths (foundation stone laid in 1897) and then the Technical Institute (1900–02). The Calverley Terrace property was acquired by the council between 1928 and 1931. As early as 1930, the site of Calverley Terrace and Parade had been earmarked for the new civic centre. Most of the houses were gradually demolished in 1937/8 as redevelopment progressed. The proposed fire station on the site of Nos. 9–10 was the last phase of the civic centre and ultimately remained unexecuted, ensuring the survival of the last two houses.

Both houses were used as a health clinic for several years. In 1978, listed building consent was granted for the conversion of most of the building to offices. The basement was used as a dental laboratory until c.1992. The building is now used as offices by various Council departments and the ambulance service. It was listed in 1974.

#### Description

Nos. 9–10 Crescent Road is a pair of houses, each of two storeys, with a raised basement and an attic. The materials are local sandstone with a slate roof. The roof is hipped but has at the centre a narrow valley. There are two dormers to the front (south), four to the north and one to the west. Originally, there would have been three chimney stacks, one at the centre and one at both sides. Both houses have recessed stone porches. The main frontage is six windows wide, with the centre of the façade projecting slightly. The ground-floor windows have cast-iron balconies on fine scrolled brackets. The rear elevation has two central bays of wider, nearly square windows, with narrower windows to the outer bays. There is a single-storey canted bay window to the rear of no. 10, supported on columns standing in the rear basement area.

Originally, the plans of each half of the building would have been probably identical, but this is now occasionally obscured by later partitions. The entrance door leads into a lobby around the corner from the stairwell, which is placed beside the back rooms. On ground and first floor at least, the original plan would have had one large room to the front and back for each house.

Both houses have the original staircases, which have plain stick balusters and terminate in a scroll at ground-floor level. The stair between the basement and the ground floor at no. 10 has been replaced. The basement rooms are relatively plain and without any distinguishing features. There are doors leading to the basement from the front area. Several rooms are subdivided and toilets have been built into part of the back area. The ground-floor back rooms in nos. 9 and 10 have curved corner doors, matched by curved outer walls with niches or cupboards beside the windows. Both of the original front rooms have ceiling roses and decorative cornices. The narrower part of the front room of no. 9 (where the front wall steps



back) has a depressed arch on volute brackets which separates the narrower part as an alcove.

The first floor of no. 10 has a modern kitchen and toilet above the entrance porch, with a small arched window with a sash with margin lights and etched coloured glass rosettes, as well as modern coloured glass. The back rooms have canted corner doors and cupboards in the outer corners. The flues from the outer ground-floor front room fireplaces curve up on the first floor walls, disguised as arched niches (that at no. 10 being only half an arch).

The second floor is lit by dormers both on the main roof and the central M-section roof. There are cupboards on both of the landings, and there is another cupboard with drawers in the front kitchen of no. 9. Several rooms have modern timber-panelling to the walls. The rooms are small and plain.

Most fireplaces are blocked up, but some retain their surrounds: for example in the ground-floor rooms of no. 9; the first-floor front room of no. 9 (with a cast-iron grate); and the second-floor back room of no. 10 (with a cast-iron grate). Some of the windows have working internal shutters.

#### Alterations

The bay window to the ground floor of no. 10 is a Victorian addition (according to map evidence), as were the tented verandas on the front elevation (since removed). The party wall stack may have been taken down or shortened as part of roof alterations as it is not visible from the street.

There have been a range of internal alterations associated with office use. Connections were made through the former party wall on all levels. On the first floor of no. 10, part of the spine wall has also been removed. Several rooms were subdivided and partitions inserted so as to create a corridor between front and back rooms; although some partitions have recently been removed on the ground floor. A number of fireplaces have been blocked up and some of the fire surrounds removed. Toilets and kitchens have been inserted. The stair at no. 10 between ground and basement level appears to have been removed at some point and later reinstated (listed building consent 1992).

#### Principal spaces

The principal spaces include the staircases, the main ground-floor rooms, and the main first-floor rooms, all of which are of considerable significance. These are the spaces which preserve most of the original features, including plasterwork, fireplaces, and staircases. The ground-floor back rooms are particularly attractive spaces, due to the unusual curved corner rooms, which are matched by curved cupboards on the same wall. All of these rooms are of considerable significance.

#### Significance assessment

Nos. 9–10 Crescent Road have considerable evidential value. As residential houses of the 1830s, both the site and the building are likely to have some potential to yield evidence about past human activity, including archaeological evidence.

As 1830s houses whose original plan form is still largely discernible, nos. 9–10 have a considerable historical value. The building is of high associative and illustrative significance

as it is the only one remaining of Decimus Burton's Calverley Terrace, Calverley Mount and Calverley Parade. (There are of course other surviving Burton buildings in Tunbridge Wells.)

Nos. 9–10 Crescent Road are a finely detailed Regency pair of houses, with several original features. Designed by an important architect of the period who worked extensively in Tunbridge Wells, it is of considerable aesthetic value.

While not in communal use, the building dates from a key period in the history of Tunbridge Wells when the town expanded and Burton developed the Calverley Estate. This period and the buildings it produced form part of the identity of Tunbridge Wells and lend this building communal significance in the form of commemorative and symbolic value.



Exterior, from the southwest



View along the rear elevation of no. 10 showing the bay window and the proximity of the multi-storey car park.

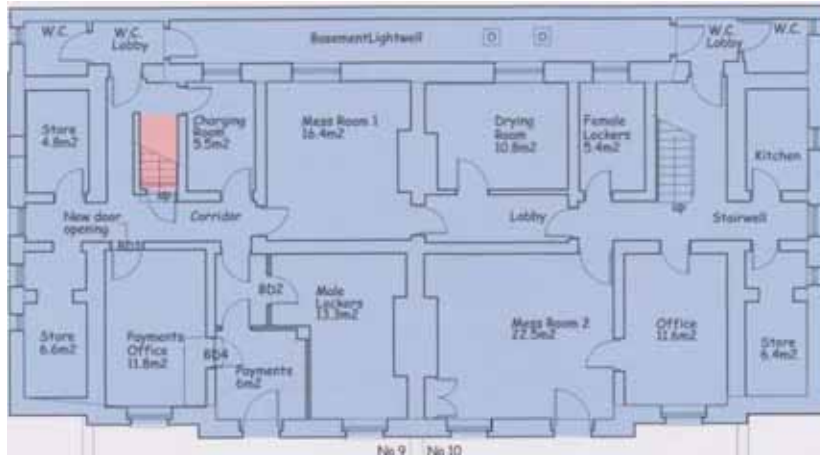




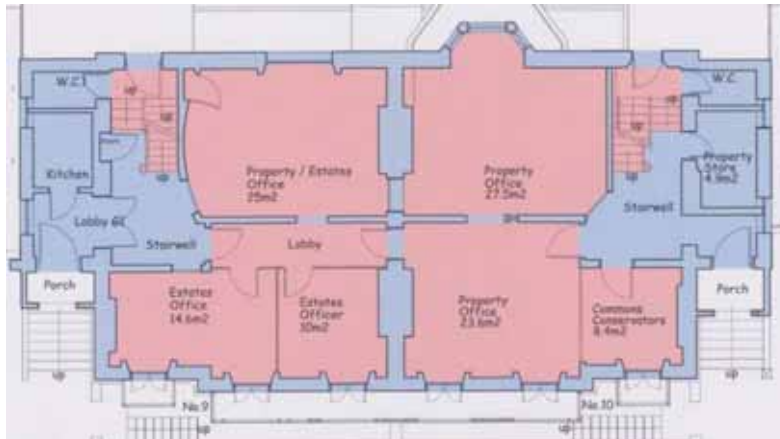
Ground-floor front room of no. 9



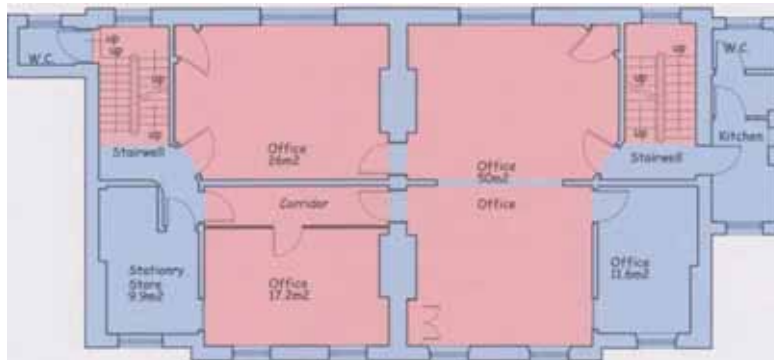
Staircase in no. 9; cupboard in curved northeast corner of ground-floor back room of no. 10



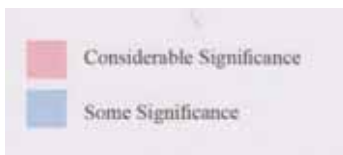
**Basement**



**Ground Floor**



**First Floor**



### 3.2 The Adult Education Centre

#### History

The building was erected as the first purpose-built premises of the Technical Institute. It was built between November 1900 and November 1902 to designs by the architect Henry T. Hare and was formally opened by Sir John Lubbock, Lord Avebury. The institution and the construction of the building owed much to the campaigning of the Mayor, C.R. Fletcher Lutwidge, who was a painter himself and who also donated a stained glass window for the new building (two of his paintings hang in the stairwell of the Town Hall). An account of 1912 states that the building was 'erected by the Corporation' but that the teaching was by then 'under the control of the Kent County Council Higher Education Committee'.<sup>58</sup> Hare exhibited a perspective drawing (original now in the Adult Education Centre) and the plans at the Royal Academy in 1901 and they were subsequently published. The plans vary in some small details such as the fenestration from the actual building. The building was lit by electricity from the start.

By the time of the First World War, the Technical Institute became the 'Junior Technical School' and part of the Technical College. In 1956, a new Technical School was set up, which incorporated the Junior Technical School, and new buildings erected in Broadwater Down. When these were completed at Easter 1962, the Monson Road building was vacated. (The Technical School was later renamed Technical High School and is now the Tunbridge Wells Grammar School for Boys.) The Monson Road building is now used as Adult Education Centre, which offers a range of courses, which include classes in arts and crafts. The installation of a lift inside the building is currently under way. The building was listed in 1966.

According to map evidence, the two workshop sheds to the south of the former Technical Institute were *in situ* by c.1936.

#### Description

The plan of the former Technical Institute is oblong, with single-storey projections to the rear. The building has three storeys and a basement. The materials are red brick in English bond with stone dressings and tiled roofs. The building has a C-plan pitched roof with gables to the east and west, and to the south. Between the two lateral pitched roofs is a lead-covered flat roof, as well as several chimneys and a square, louvred ventilator with pyramidal roof.

The elevation to Monson Road has eight ground-floor windows with segmental hoods on either side of the entrance door; seven mullion and transom windows to the first floor, of which three are oriels, and the other four are pedimented; and three tall dormer windows to the top floor with open segmental pediments. The corners have quoin-like stone bands, and above the first-floor windows is a broad frieze with scrolls and cartouches.

The other elevations are not as symmetrical. The east elevation has seven ground-floor windows, four first-floor windows, and one second-floor window with a stone surround with keystone. The rear elevation has four windows on either side of the projecting single-storey block; six first-floor windows, as well as a Venetian window to the half-landing; and seven

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<sup>58</sup> Pelton's *Illustrated Guide to Royal Tunbridge Wells* (Tunbridge Wells: Aubrey J. Pelton, 1912), <http://www.tunbridgewellscitizens.org.uk/twvorkroad/peltontunbridgewells1912.html> [accessed 20 February 2012].



windows to the top floor. The west elevation is only partly visible and has three first-floor windows, and one top-floor window. Both east and west gables have a segmental hood over a carving of swags. There is a metal fire escape stair fixed to the east bay of the rear elevation.

The entrance porch is framed by an arch with a swan-neck pediment, above which sits the central oriel window of the first floor. Inside the groin-vaulted porch are two beaten bronze panels by the local artist Charles Tattershall Dodd junior (1861–1951), recording the start of the building works in November 1900 and the opening in November 1902. The timber entrance door has leaded glazing on either side, as well as a large leaded fanlight above a broken timber pediment with a lantern.

The basement is under the western half of the building. It contains three rooms and one small store room. It is accessed by a stair under the main staircase as well as by an external stair.

The ground floor has a groin-vaulted corridor with mosaic floors with a Greek key border and (painted) tiled dados. Left of the entrance is the former Masters' Room (now the reception and office), the former male cloakroom (now subdivided into lavatories), and the former manual training room (with added mezzanine storage at the south, and access to another storage space above the lavatories). The former wood carving room which projects behind the stairwell has been subdivided and is used as offices. The former women's cloak room and single-storey toilets have been combined into one room. To the west of the entrance is the former librarian's office (now a kitchen) and the former porter's lodge, with a large leaded Venetian window between them to give light into the porter's lodge. The former library (now cafeteria) has the original timber panelling, bookcases and fireplace along the south wall. The former manual training drawing room has shelving in its original location, beside the chimneystack. The original enquiries window from the corridor to the porter's lodge has been blocked although the frame survives in the corridor.

The open-well staircase has a fine wrought-iron balustrade with a timber handrail. The landing between the ground and the first floors has a Venetian window with Doric marble pilasters and columns. The stained glass depicts Athena with personifications of science, art, industry, and commerce. It was designed and made by J. Dudley Forsyth (1874–1926), a painter, sculptor and stained glass artist, who had worked as painter for the glassmakers James Powell & Sons, and then for Henry Holiday before establishing his own practice in about 1900. The window was donated by the Mayor, C.R. Fletcher Lutwidge.

The first floor has a similar corridor to the ground floor. It has four classrooms to the south which largely survive unaltered. The former laboratory at the northeast has been subdivided to create a small office. The balance room behind the central oriel window and the adjoining space to the north (originally used in conjunction with the laboratory) have been combined into one room (with a break in the cornice indicating the original division). A small space has been divided off from the former lecture theatre at the northwest to create a darkroom.

The rooms on the second floor are largely unaltered. The central room to Monson Road is the former life room which originally had a small cubicle for the model (since removed). This space is flanked by the former elementary art room and the advanced art room, both tall, well-lit rooms with north light and exposed metal roof-trusses. On the south side are the former modelling room, another masters' rooms, and the former dressmaking and cookery

room (originally with gas stoves) beside a former scullery (now toilets) and a former lavatory.

Most of the ground and first floor rooms have the original two-leaf doors with glazed upper halves and a large semi-circular leaded fanlight above.

There are two sheds built behind the Adult Education Centre and parallel with it. The shed closest to the Centre was built in brick and corrugated iron. It is divided into two rooms, one of which is now used for metalwork. The building has sash windows to the short sides and skylights. The other shed is built of timber with large timber windows to the north and south. It is divided into two large workshops/classrooms (now used for pottery) with a smaller room with kilns between them.

### Alterations

The addition of the fire escape stair necessitated the insertion of doors in some of the windows at the rear. The formerly symmetrical rear projection (the wood carving room and two toilet blocks on either side) was extended by one bay to the east (in a sympathetic style). The opening from the former librarian's office to the former library has been altered (now blocked). The steps of the main stair have been covered in linoleum and chairlifts have been installed in the stairwell. An opening has been made between the reception and the entrance hall, and a door leads from the former wood carving room to the narrow courtyard between the building and the nearest workshop shed.

Several rooms have been subdivided including the former wood carving room, the former men's cloakroom, the former laboratory, and the former lecture room. Some original room divisions have also been removed, included that between the balance room and the adjoining room on the first floor, and in the former life room above.

Several rooms on the first and second floors have suspended ceilings. Modern glass-and-timber partitions have been inserted on each side of the first-floor landing. Many of the leaded fanlights above internal doors have been painted white. Modern strip lighting has been suspended in the two large rooms on the second floor. The few fireplaces in the building have been blocked.

### Principal spaces

The principal rooms in the Adult Education Centre are: the porch, the former library on the ground floor, the stairwell, the ground and first floor corridors, and the two art rooms on the second floor (the former elementary art room and the former advanced art room). All of them are of considerable significance. However, it has to be stressed that most of the other rooms are little altered and have group value.

The porch has the fine entrance door, as well as two Art Nouveau plaques by a local artist. The former library retains its original bookcases, panelling and fireplace. The stairwell is a grand space, with a decorative wrought-iron balustrade, and an ornate Venetian window with a marble surround and a fine stained glass window. The corridors have finely-detailed groin vaults on corbels and an attractive mosaic floor. The two top-floor art rooms most clearly express the purpose of the building, with the tall dormers providing north light. They are also the most impressive spaces in the building as they extend into the roof space, with the roof slopes and the metal trusses clearly visible.

### Significance assessment

The Adult Education Centre has considerable evidential value as a little altered and purpose-built technical school which is still in educational use. The two workshop sheds have some evidential value as they demonstrate the need for expansion due to the success of the Technical Institute.

The building has considerable historical value as the oldest surviving part of the civic centre. As its interior is little altered, it has strong illustrative value as an Edwardian technical school. It also has some associative value due to the involvement of the Mayor Charles Robert Fletcher Lutwidge (1835–1907), a colourful local figure (and cousin of Lewis Carroll). He was mayor of Tunbridge Wells twice: 1895–8 and 1901–2. The two sheds have some historical value, although little is known about the date of their construction and the circumstances.

The former Technical Institute has exceptional aesthetic significance. It is an accomplished design by an architect of national reputation. The Monson Road elevation, the former library, the stairwell and the stained glass window in particular have strong design values. The two workshop sheds to the rear have little aesthetic value.

The Edwardian building and the two inter-war sheds have considerable communal value. All three are still in educational use which comprises (albeit not exclusively) the art and crafts classes they were built for (although they do not necessarily take place in the spaces designed for them). The buildings and the institutions it housed performed a kind of social function: Countless students received some form of education and training here and it seems likely that many people have emotional links to it.





The main Monson Road front and the east and south elevations with one of the two sheds



The Entrance porch and the ground floor corridor



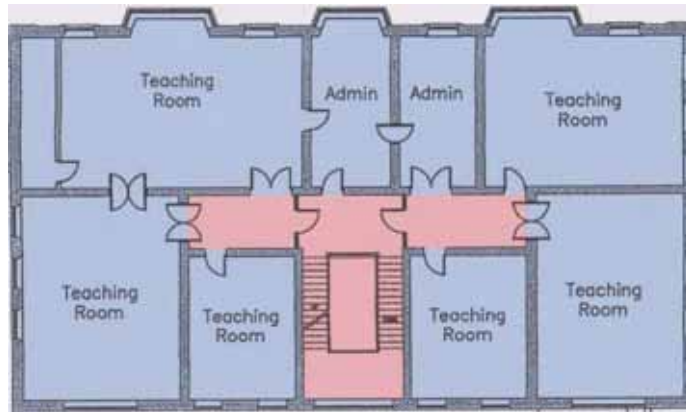
The former library and the stained glass window on the main stair



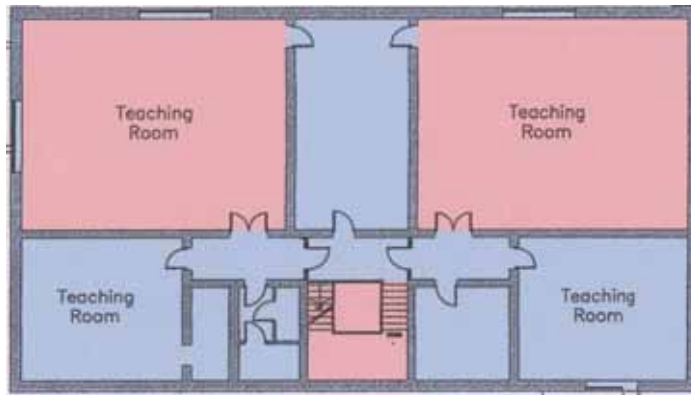
The former 'elementary art room'



Ground Floor



First Floor



Second Floor





### **3.3 The War Memorial**

#### History

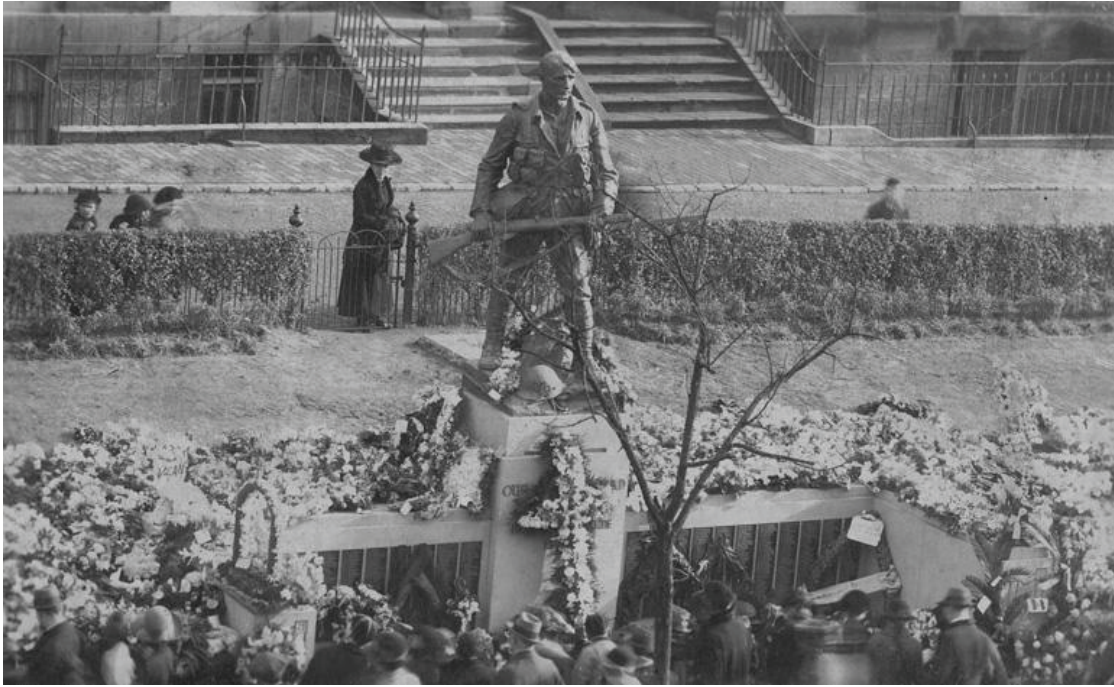
The war memorial was commissioned in 1921 by the Borough Council from the sculptor Stanley Nicholson Babb (1874-1957). The memorial was set into the stone wall enclosing the grass embankment on the west side of Mount Pleasant Road in front of a terrace of 1820s houses named Calverley Parade. The houses had been purchased by the Borough Council in 1895 as a location for future public buildings and were demolished in the late 1930s to make way for the present Civic Centre buildings. The low stone wall into which the memorial was set probably dates from c1895 when Mount Pleasant Road was widened and the original wall here removed. The memorial was unveiled on 11 February 1923 by Col. Viscount Hardinge. Additional names were added to the memorial after the Second World War. The memorial was listed in 2011.

#### Description

The memorial consists of a life-size bronze statue of a young bareheaded rifleman in full battle dress, with his rifle held across his body and his helmet tumbled at his feet. The statue faces towards Mount Pleasant Road and stands on a rectangular plinth of Portland stone with the words OUR GLORIOUS DEAD/1914-1918/HONOUR AND GRATITUDE/ PRAISE/ 1939-1945 in bronze lettering on the face with a stone carved wreath below. The flank walls on either side of the plinth have bronze plaques with the names of the First World War dead. The names of the Second World War dead are on similar plaques on the return walls. On each of these return walls is a bronze lamp with a laurel garland carved beneath.

#### Significance Assessment

The memorial has some Evidential value as the product of the national enthusiasm for public memorials especially after the First World War. It has considerable Historical value as a direct connection with the two major conflicts of the twentieth century. It also has considerable Aesthetic value as the work of S.N.Babb, an established sculptor who was also responsible for the Captain Scott memorial in St Paul's Cathedral a Boer War memorial at Grahamstown in South Africa and another first World War memorial at Bridlington in Yorkshire unveiled in 1921 (listed grade II in 2012). Perhaps most importantly, the memorial has very considerable Communal value as a permanent testament to the sacrifice made by members of the community in the First and Second World Wars



**The memorial shortly after its erection in 1923  
in front of the houses of Calverley Parade**



**The memorial today**

### **3.4 The Assembly Hall**

#### History

The Assembly Hall forms the eastern section of the central block of the Thomas and Prestwich 1934 design. Together with the Police Station it was the first part of the Civic Complex to be completed. The Assembly Hall was opened in 1939 (The Town Hall was not opened until 1941). The building was apparently intended to serve both as a theatre and as a dance hall, but it is used solely as a theatre. The Assembly Hall was listed in 1995.

#### Description

The Assembly Hall is in the same brown brick modern neo-Georgian style as its neighbours with Portland stone detailing and ornament. The main front facing Crescent Road is five bays wide with the three central bays slightly projecting. There are five entrance doors with a modernistic glass canopy over the three central openings. The side doors lead to the escape stairs and have long stair windows above them. The doors under the canopy lead to the main foyer. Above the canopy are three tall rectangular windows with carved stone reliefs in their heads. These are probably by John Hector Seale of G. Seale & Co. The reliefs show female figures in classical dress representing Dancing, Drama and Music. The windows themselves have Deco glazing patterns. Above the windows is a broad stone frieze across the whole front with the words ASSEMBLY HALL blocked out in low relief.

The exposed eastern side wall is of sheer brickwork with a single large brick-mullioned rectangular window of seven lights to the auditorium and the side of the fly tower prominent towards the rear. The western side of the building abuts the town hall. The rear elevation of the building to Monson Way is three storeys high and six windows wide. All the windows of this elevation are rectangular small-paned sashes, those on the top floor smaller than those below.

The entrance foyer is a handsome modernistic space with walls of polished stone, stylised Greek fret ornament on the ceiling and a main stair rising between two black banded pylons with curved ends containing the original ticket booths (now disused). The stair leads to an upper foyer with doors to the auditorium and to a long bar space (originally a tea lounge) on the west side of the building. The main auditorium space has a dado of Australian walnut wood inset with ebonized mahogany bands; the walls above are faced with acoustic plaster. Unusually, the side walls of the auditorium have large rectangular mullioned windows. That on the west side overlooks the central courtyard of the town hall building. The original proscenium arch and gallery remain. The seating is not original and now includes a raked section. Both in the Auditorium and other public spaces the Assembly Hall retains many of its original fittings, though the jazz-moderne fittings of the basement bar are modern reproductions.

#### Alterations

The exterior remains essentially as built but there have been various internal alterations over the years. Most of these alterations are of little consequence. They include the insertion of a section of moveable seating in the auditorium, the formation of a suite of small offices around the original projection box and the formation of a new basement bar in what was originally the cloakroom.

### Principal Spaces

The main foyer and main stair, the two escape stairs and the auditorium are spaces of considerable significance. The main foyer has hardly been altered, though it is now cluttered with a modern welcome desk and various banner advertisements. It is a grand space in the modernistic style, wholly characteristic of the period in which it was built with flamboyant touches like the black pylons containing the original ticket booths. The auditorium is quite simply decorated. The admission of daylight through the side windows emphasises that this was intended to be a multi-purpose space, and was not just for theatrical performances.

### Significance Assessment

The Assembly Hall has some Evidential value because the original internal arrangements are still in place and, for the most part, still fulfilling their original functions.

The Assembly Hall has some Historical value as a purpose built public space for theatrical performances and other activities like ballroom dancing which were popular in the years between the wars.

The Assembly Hall is not a flamboyant building, though the exterior with its carved stone decoration is not without interest, but its considerable Aesthetic value lies principally in the interior where the main foyer and to a lesser extent the auditorium are handsome typical examples of inter-war modernistic decoration.

The Communal value of the building is very considerable. Since it opened in 1939 it has been continuously in use as a place of public live entertainment for the benefit of the residents of Tunbridge Wells, and that function is still continuing. The closure of other places of entertainment like the Opera House has increased the communal value of the Assembly Hall.





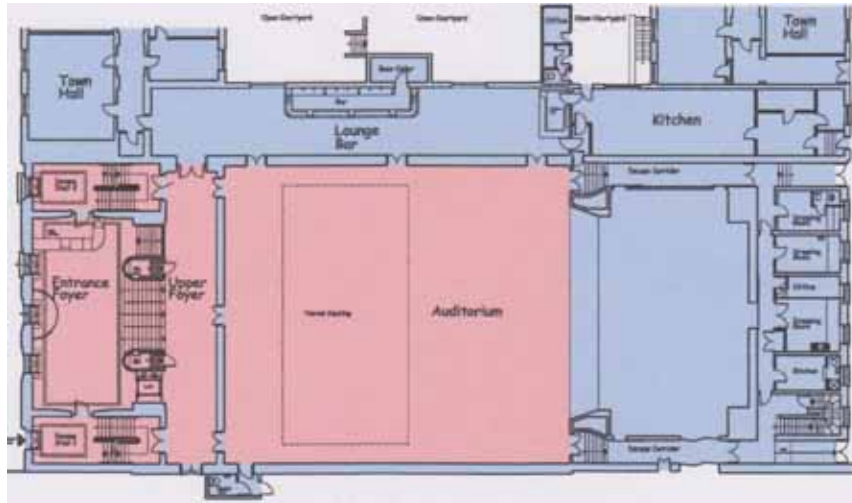
**The main east front and the rear elevation with the prominent fly tower**



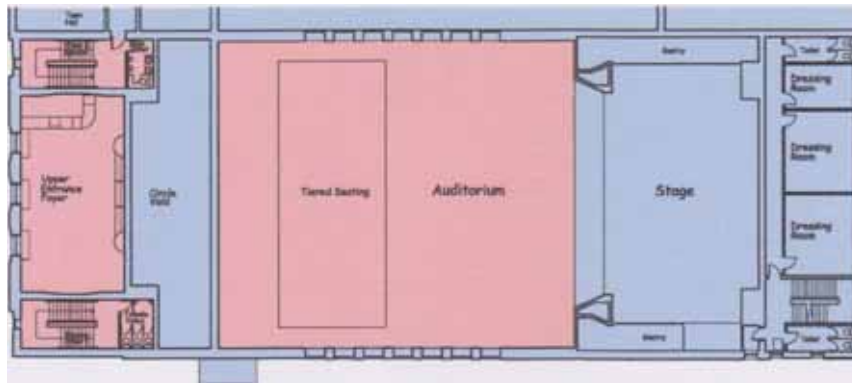
**The main foyer and one of the secondary stairs**



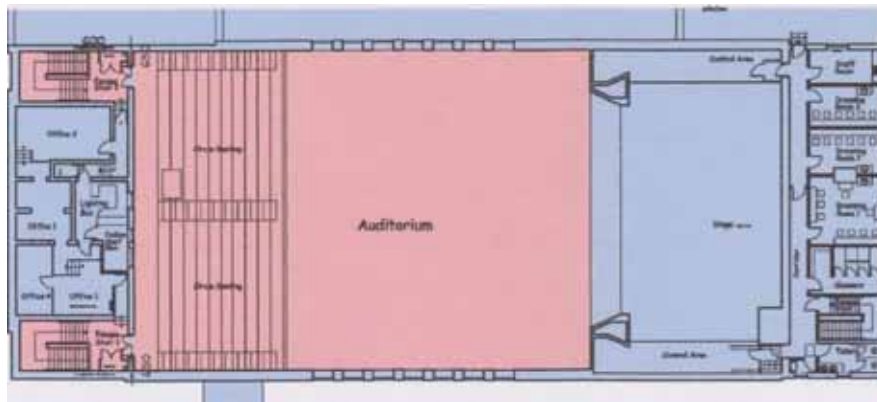
**The auditorium**



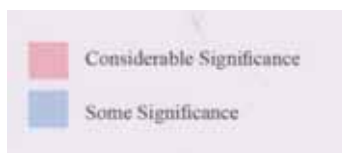
**Ground Floor**



**First Floor**



**Second Floor**



### **3.5 The Police Station**

#### History

The police station was built following a competition for the whole civic centre in 1934. The architects were Percy Thomas and Ernest Prestwich. The building opened in 1939. Originally, it comprised a police station with one court room. The latter is now disused. Like the other buildings of the Civic Centre, the Police Station was added to the statutory list in 1995.

#### Description

The plan of the building is oblong, with the short side facing Crescent Road. An access road along the west side of the building leads to the yard at the rear with parking spaces and four garages. The building is two-storeys tall; but short sections to the east and west are of a single storey only, to allow for lateral windows to the court room and high-level windows to the cells. All the roofs are flat.

The building is faced in brown brick laid in Flemish bond with a stone plinth and a broad stone band below the parapet. On the front elevation, the latter is carved in sans serif lettering with 'COURT AND POLICE STATION'. The front façade is four windows wide, which are ranged on either side of the main entrance under a tall arch. Most of the windows are sash windows; only the lateral windows to the court are metal windows. The entrance is framed by a stone architrave, above which is a carved stone tympanum, carved (by Gilbert Seale & Sons) with the Borough motto ('Do well, doubt not') and five figures including Justice. Above the original bronze entrance doors is an oblong fanlight with a decorative metal grille, similar to the grilles on the town hall and the library.

The rear and side elevation are plain, without the stone plinth. Each elevation has several white down pipes with hoppers placed below small arches, either below or above the parapet stone band. There are two side entrances on each of the west and east sides, and two at the rear of the building.

The ground floor originally comprised the working spaces of the police stations, including the charge room, the enquiry room, a telephone room, six cells, an exercise yard (which also acts as a lightwell), and a parade and instruction room. The upper floor had the courtroom, with associated spaces for the judge and a robing room, as well as clerks' offices and the office of the chief constable.

The interiors are generally very plain and functional, apart from the court room, the grand staircase, and two staircases with Art Deco-style metal rails. The former exercise yard has pale bricks in Flemish bond and has the remains of what may have been external shutters to the ground floor windows. The former cell rooms are narrow and tall, lit by multi-paned windows set high into the wall.

The main staircase leads up to ground floor level, then divides into two flights leading to a landing from where a single flight leads up to the first floor. The stairwell is lit by a skylight set into a ceiling with plain banding around the edge. Originally, there would have only been the handrail mounted on the solid masonry balustrade, which has curved scrolls at the ground floor level and angular scrolls on the mezzanine.

The court room has timber desks and divisions which separate the seats for the different groups of attendees, as well as the central dock. At the back of the room are three tiers of seating on either side of a central door (with circular windows) leading to the main staircase. There are further rows of seating to the sides and between the central dock (with brass railings) and the judges' chairs. The room has three high-level metal windows on the long sides. There are several timber doors at the sides, all with circular windows. A narrow flight of steps leads from the cell area directly into the dock. Behind the judges is a tall oblong niche with a fluted frame, now filled with a curtain. The walls are panelled with acoustic tiles, as is the ceiling, around the central skylight. Around the edge of the ceiling is a coffered band with ventilation holes in some of its panels and rosettes in the corners. The top of the judges' desk has a raised motif of fluting and angular scrolls.

The two subsidiary staircases have fine balustrades of circular balusters and five horizontal metal bands with a brass handrail on top. Particularly fine are the scrolls terminations on the ground floor.

#### Alterations

Several rooms have changed their use over time, with the attendant loss of fixtures: The cells are now mainly used as locker rooms (losing their heavy doors, benches and lavatories); the exercise yard is no longer used as such but has dog kennels; and the rooms associated with the former court room are now largely offices. Most spaces have suspended ceilings.

An additional door has been created in the rear elevation. The original gate to the garages at the back were replaced in c.1996 (listed building consent) by a modern gate closer to the street, leaving only the brick gate piers as indication of the gate's original position. Within the current gate is a small disabled toilet block.

Originally, the entrance stair led to a hall and to the enquiries desk, flanked by the charge room and the telephone room. These three rooms have been altered, with the original walls being part demolished and the space extended (into the hall) and subdivided by modern partitions to create the current reception, interview room, control room and store. Consequently, the hall is now narrower than it was originally.

In the grand staircase, additional, plastic-covered handrails have been added. On the first-floor landing modern glazed partitions have been added, presumably for safety reasons. An inner aluminium entrance door has been installed.

The original leather-covered benches and chairs in the court room have been replaced with modern metal chairs. A royal coat of arms seems to have been removed from the frame of the oblong niche behind the judges. The original light fixtures ('Saturn-shaped' pendants, i.e. globes with two discs) have been replaced with strip lighting and an electric ventilator. The originally wall-mounted clock on the rear wall has been removed (presumably when the acoustic tiles were installed).

#### Principal spaces

The court room, the main entrance stairwell, and the two subsidiary staircases are of considerable significance.

The court room was the main representative space, which had to reflect the dignity and importance of the judiciary. Hence, more care and expense was expended in designing and



furnishing this room. It retains most of its furnishings (albeit without the original seating or the royal arms) and decorative features.

The main staircase was the ceremonial route through the building up to the court room. While not lavishly decorated, is a large and grand space with clear lines whose main decoration consists of the finely moulded handrails which reflects the alternating shapes of the termination of the solid balustrade (circular and square).

The two subsidiary staircases have balustrades which are typical for the 1930s and reflect the streamlined Art Deco aesthetic.

#### Significance assessment

The Police Station has some evidential value as the original working arrangement of the station and the court are still discernible on the interior, while the actual use of some spaces has changed.

As a purpose-built police station of the 1930s the building has some illustrative historical value. However, as other police stations from the inter-war period survive, the building provides little unique historical evidence.

The Police Station has considerable aesthetic value, both in itself and as part of the Civic Centre complex. It is a compact building in a simplified neo-Georgian style with well-designed details such as the tympanum relief, the lettering and the metalwork in the fanlight. It was designed to form part of the group of municipal buildings comprising the adjacent assembly hall, the town hall and offices, and the museum and library building. All these are in a very similar style of brick neo-Georgian, with subtle variations in the details.

The Police Station has never been open to the public (apart from the public gallery of the court room). However, as part of the civic heart of Tunbridge Wells it has considerable communal value, in particular due to its symbolic value as representing law and order.



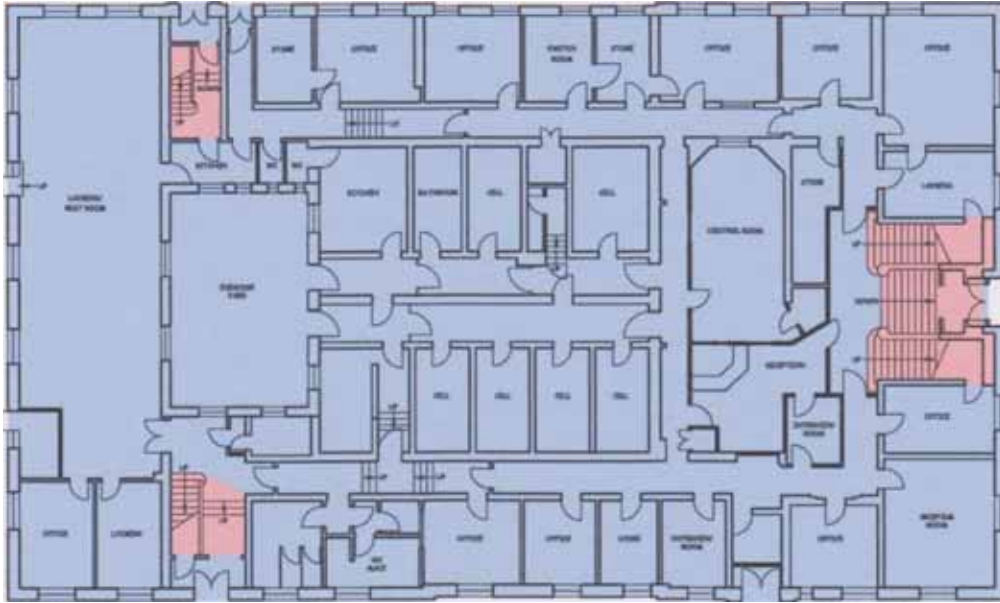
**The front and west side elevations**



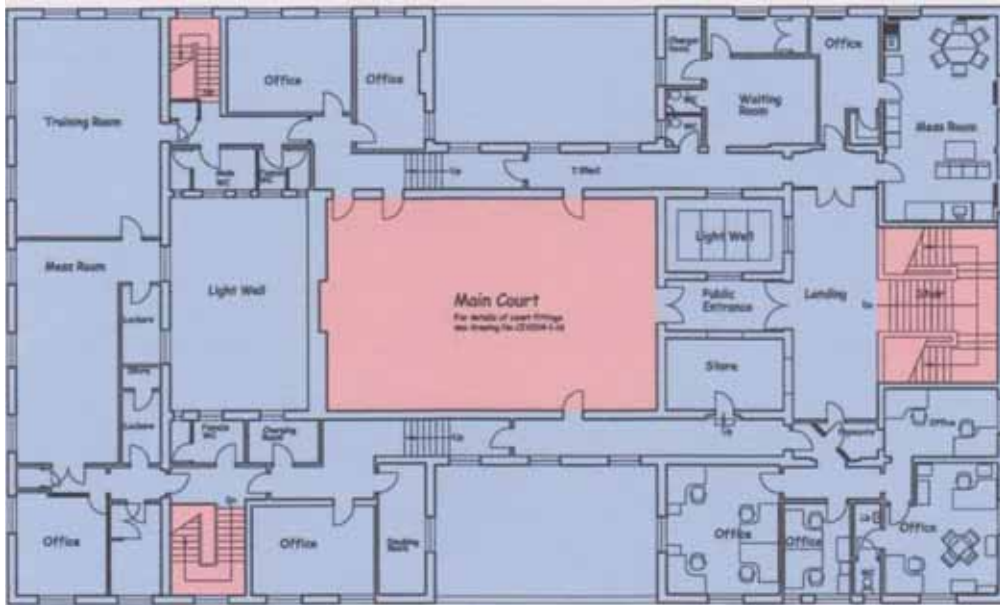
**Relief carving in the tympanum of the main door and the Court Room interior**



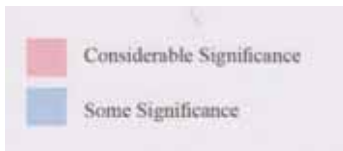
**The main stair and a typical former cell**



**Ground Floor**



**First Floor**



### **3.6 The Town Hall**

#### History

The town hall is the centrepiece of the Thomas and Prestwich 1934 design. It was begun in 1939 and opened in 1941. The building occupies an elevated site at the junction of Mount Pleasant Road and Crescent Road. The site was previously occupied by the houses in Calverley Parade, Calverley Terrace and Calverley Mount, all built to the designs of Decimus Burton in the 1820s and demolished in 1937. The Town Hall was listed in 1995.

#### Description

The exterior of the Town Hall is in a simple version of the neo-Georgian style. The external walls are faced with brown brick laid in Flemish bond with dressings, strings and ornaments of Portland Stone. The building is arranged with the principal entrance facing the corner, flanked on either side by ranges of offices. The range facing Crescent Road abuts the main front of the Assembly Hall to form a continuous elevation. The range facing Mount Pleasant Road returns along Monson Way to link with the rear elevation of the Assembly Hall. These ranges enclose a central courtyard surrounding the council chamber, which is thus insulated from street noise.

The centre of the building containing the principal entrance and main stair is treated as a short tower with the stone surround of the main entrance door set in a giant glazed arch – a feature found in several of Thomas's other town hall designs. The top stage of the tower is of fluted brickwork with the carved stone arms of the town in the centre (in the original design the top stage was to be faced entirely in Portland Stone, which would have made it more prominent). On either side of the tower is a single two-storey bay whose window arrangement is continued along the fronts of the office ranges which are canted back to follow the street lines. Both ranges are two full storeys high over a semi-basement, with tall plain parapets concealing flat roofs. The right hand range which abuts the Assembly Hall is seven windows long, the left hand range is twelve bays long with a doorway with a moulded stone surround in the eleventh bay. All the windows are rectangular small-paned timber sashes, those on the lower floor with 8/12 panes, those on the upper floor slightly longer with 12/12 panes.

The north return elevation to Monson Way is fifteen bays long, with fenestration similar to the other ranges. It abuts the three-storey north elevation of the Assembly Hall. At the west end of the Town Hall elevation is a canopied entrance flanked by plate glass windows in bronzed surrounds. This was originally the entrance to the Council's electricity showroom and is now the public entrance.

Internally, the main entrance door leads to a small entrance hall with wall linings of polished stone. From the hall a wide main stair rises to the first floor; the stair has figured marble capping to the side walls and neo-Grec ceiling. The marble cappings have rows of small wooden blocks, presumably covering the sinkings for a metal handrail which has either been removed or was never installed. At first floor level the stair is flanked by the Mayor's parlour and former Treasurer's rooms, both with stylised Greek ceiling decoration. A long vaulted top-lit lobby with robing rooms at either end has twin entrances to the main council chamber. This is a large rectangular space with large four-light windows on each side, stylised neo-Grec plasterwork and the original pendant light fittings. Much of the moveable seat furniture is dated 1889, the year the Borough Council was created. The long wings on



either side of the core have central corridors with offices of varying size on both sides. The original doors in their original timber and glass surrounds survive but otherwise there are no decorative features.

### Alterations

The exterior remains essentially as first built. The principal public entrance is now in Monson Way, between the large glazed windows of what was originally the electricity showroom. A comparison with Thomas's original contract drawings suggests that there have been no significant alterations since the Town Hall was opened in 1941. Inevitably the functions of some of the office rooms have changed and some of the original partitions have been removed to create larger offices, but the principal spaces remain much as finished

### Principal Spaces

Most of the most significant spaces are those concerned with the conduct of public business, together with the mayor's parlour, the main entrance hall and staircase and what is now the public entrance in the former electricity showroom with the secondary stair behind.

The main stair is the ceremonial route leading directly to a handsome vaulted first floor lobby off which open the council chamber, robing rooms, mayor's parlour and chief executive's office. There are also two main committee rooms in the south range with decorative plaster cornices and some of the original furniture (made by Higgins & Co. of Bury)

The former Electricity Showroom is now subdivided to serve as a post room and public entrance lobby but it has retained its timber-lined walls, decorative plasterwork and the large plate glass windows in bronzed surrounds. The secondary stair serving all the offices has simplified classical ceiling decoration.

### Significance Assessment

The Town Hall has some Evidential value because much of the original internal layout has survived with little alteration, although the actual use of many of the smaller spaces has changed.

As the centrepiece of the purpose-built Civic Centre the Town Hall has considerable Historic Value. In national terms it shows the increasing significance of local government. In local terms it can be seen as the fulfilment of the civic ambition to have all the public buildings in the town concentrated in a single central location, which inspired the purchase of the site in 1895, and exemplifies the civic ambitions of Tunbridge Wells in the period between the wars.

The Town Hall has considerable Aesthetic value, both in itself and as part of the Civic Centre complex. The exterior is a good and well-detailed example of the simplified neo-Georgian style popular in the 1930s. Inside the building the important public spaces are handsomely fitted-up with high quality materials

As the centre of democratic local government, and also as the repository of the archives of Tunbridge Wells local government since the 1830s, the Town Hall building is clearly of exceptional Community Value.



**The main entrance and the north elevation facing the library and museum**



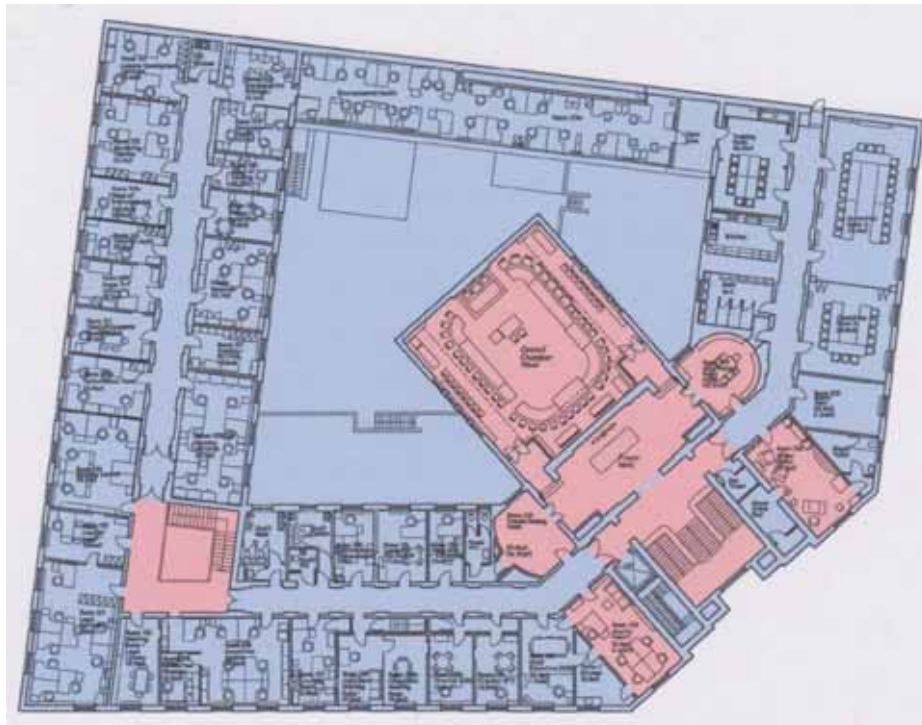
**The main stair and first floor lobby**



**The Council Chamber and a ground floor corridor in one of the office wings**



**Ground Floor**



**First Floor**



### **3.7 The Library and Museum**

#### History

The Library and Museum building replaced the previous free library in Dudley Road which was established in 1922 in the former Mechanics Institute and the previous museum which was housed in a former private residence in Mount Ephraim. The present library and museum is the northernmost part of the Thomas and Prestwich 1934 design and it was the last of the component buildings to be finished. Work started in 1939 but was suspended in 1940 when the building was still in carcass and not resumed until the early 1950s. The building was finally opened in 1952. As completed, the building differed slightly from the competition design, with a larger south wing which was two storeyed throughout, and not partly single-storeyed as originally proposed.

#### Description

As with the rest of the Civic Centre buildings, the style is a modern version of neo-Georgian and the facing material is brown brick laid in Flemish bond with dressings and ornaments of Portland Stone. The main front to Mount Pleasant Road is nine bays wide with a tall central opening containing the main entrance and a window over with lotus decoration in the side panes and a carved stone relief of classical deities at the head. The relief is presumably by John Hector Seale of G.Seale & Co who provided the relief carvings for the other buildings in the Complex. On each side of the entrance at ground floor level are four timber small-paned sash windows. The upper floor is blind with a stone band carved with the words LIBRARY AND MUSEUM in low relief. Above the band is a plain parapet with a simple coping. Behind the parapet is a shallow-pitched hipped roof covered in Westmorland slate.

The north return elevation has three sash windows on the lower floor and one sash on the left side of the upper floor and has a single-storey brick link to the Adult Education centre. The south return elevation to Monson Way is eight bays wide with, on the ground floor, seven sash windows and a doorway with a stone surround in the fifth bay from the left. The rear (east) elevation is bowed with continuous metal glazing to the ground and first floors. The rear elevation of the east wing is blind.

#### Alterations

The exterior remains essentially as built and the main internal spaces also remain but the internal arrangements of the lesser spaces differs considerably from the original proposals and there have probably been various minor internal alterations over the years. Most of these alterations are of little consequence. A new lift is shortly to be installed at the rear of the building. The Library and Museum was listed in 1995.

#### Principal Spaces

The principal spaces are the public reading rooms on the ground floor, the main staircase and the reference library, museum and art gallery display rooms on the first floor.

#### Significance Assessment

The present Library and Museum building has some Evidential value as a purpose-built mid-twentieth century library and museum. The principal reading room spaces of the library and



the principal exhibition spaces of the museum are still in use for their intended purposes, though few of the original fittings survive.

The building also has some Historical value as the successor to the previous library and museum. The museum collection is itself of very considerable Historical value.

The Library and Museum building exterior is plainly detailed but certainly has some Aesthetic value for its proportions and for the carved decoration over the main entrance door. The interior is plainer than the other buildings in the group, which is probably a reflection of the austerity of the post-war period in which it was completed.

Clearly the library and museum have very considerable Communal value. The library is the principal library in the town and the only reference library. The museum has an extensive collection of material of local relevance and also a considerable archive collection.



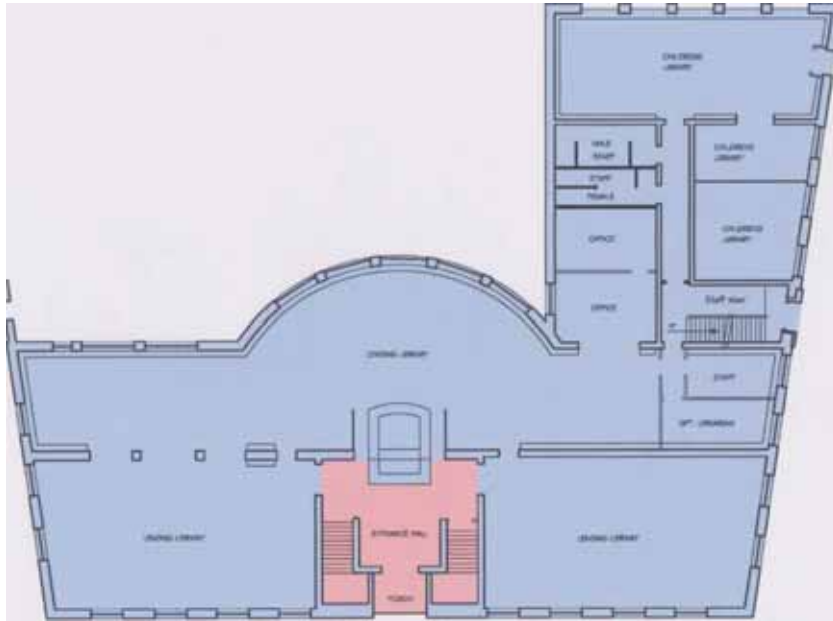
**The main elevation and the bowed east elevation of the main library rooms**



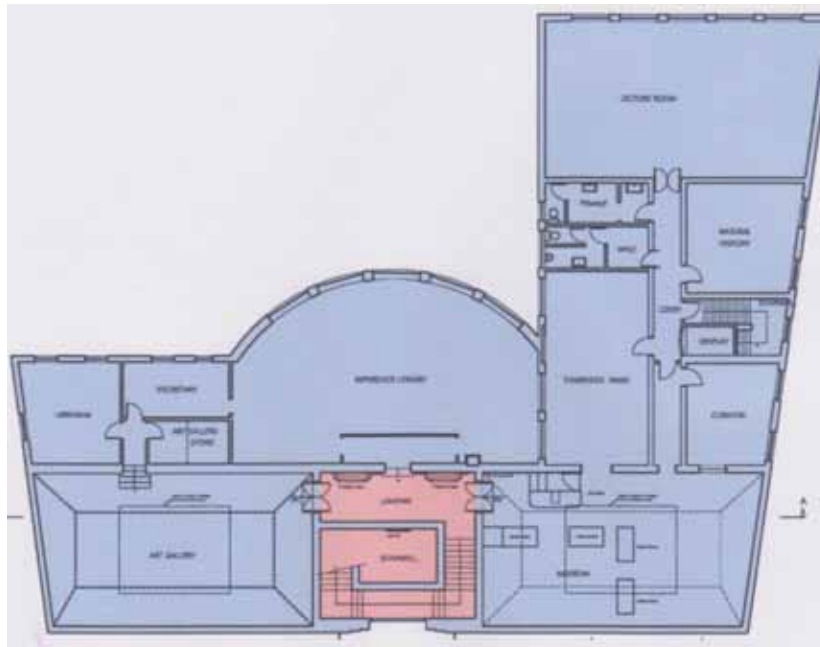
**The main stair and the main museum space**



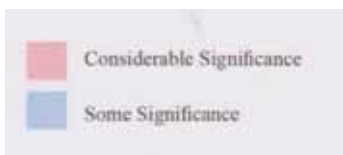
**The main lending library and the first floor reference library**



**Ground Floor**

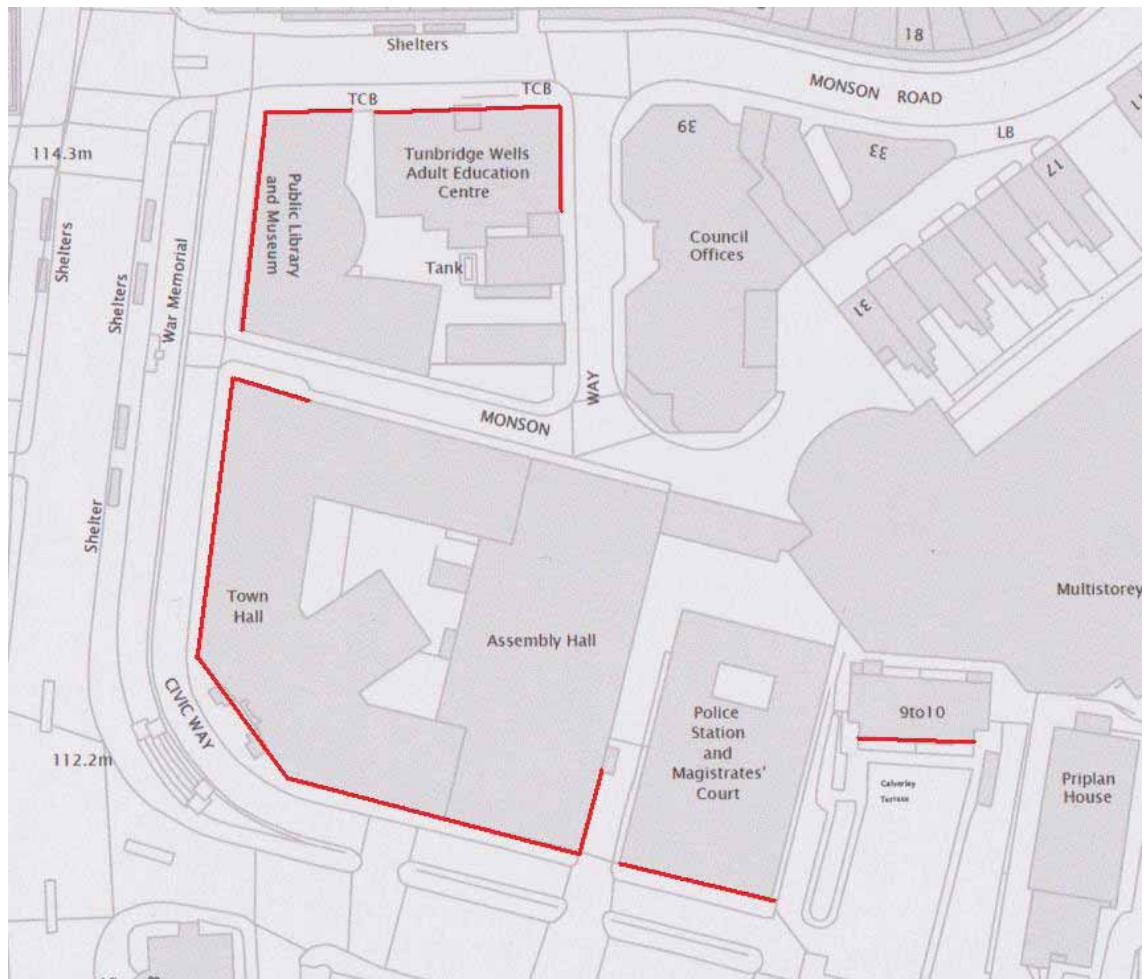


**First floor**



### 3.8 Exteriors

One distinctive feature of the Civic Complex is the way in which all the principal fronts face the outwards to the street. When first built, the Adult Education Centre was flanked by building on either side and all the architectural emphasis was on main north elevation to Monson Road. Percy Thomas designed all his buildings with their main facades and main entrances onto Mount Pleasant Road and Crescent Road. All the ornament is concentrated on these fronts which are of considerable significance, while the side and rear elevations are plainer and of less, though still of some significance. It is difficult to see how any additions could be made to the main frontages without compromising the character of the original designs and having an adverse effect on the architectural significance of the listed buildings. Additions could be made to the side and rear elevations, though as always with listed buildings proper attention should be given to scale, materials and detailing. The plan below indicates which frontages are considered to be of greatest significance.



Principal frontages lined in red



#### **4.0 OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

This section contains an assessment of the significance of the civic complex as a whole, including all the buildings described in the preceding section and taking into account the individual significance assessments.

The assessment of the significance of historic buildings and their settings is not an exact science. It is based partly on specialist knowledge and comparison with what exists elsewhere, and partly on the extent to which it may be distinctive or have special meaning for different groups of people.

In 2008 English Heritage published *Conservation Principles*, which identified four principal heritage values which should be taken into account when assessing significance and which can be used to amplify the assessments in the statutory lists. These values are *Evidential*, deriving from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity; *Historical*, deriving from the ways in which past people events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present; *Aesthetic*, deriving from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place; *Communal*, deriving from the meaning of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience and memory.

In 2012 the Department of Communities and Local Government issued the National Policy Planning Framework which suggests that significance should be assessed under the headings of *archaeological*, *architectural*, *artistic or historic* and points out that significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence but also from its setting.

##### **Evidential Value**

The Civic Complex at Tunbridge Wells is certainly of some evidential value. The archaeological component is small; it is unlikely that there is much below-ground evidence of earlier structures. On the other hand, most of the buildings on the site have preserved their original internal arrangements with little alteration and the material evidence of past activity can be illuminated in most cases by original plans which show the original intended uses of the various spaces.

##### **Historical Value**

The Civic Complex is of exceptional historical value in Tunbridge Wells. Almost by accident its buildings represent three of the four main phases of the development of the town. The pair of houses in Crescent Road, built in the 1820s to the designs of Decimus Burton, is a reminder of the early nineteenth century period of expansion when the Calverley and other private estates were built-up with residences for genteel inhabitants. The former Technical School in Monson Road was built in 1902 shortly after Tunbridge Wells became a municipal borough and was a concrete expression of a spirit of civic improvement. The group of 1930s civic buildings was the culmination of these improvements. The only phase of development not represented is the development of the Tunbridge Wells spa in the late seventeenth century.

##### **Aesthetic Value**

It is more difficult to make an overall assessment of aesthetic value because the three phases of development produced buildings of very different character. Burton's villas are typically

elegant, Hare's Technical School building has the exuberance of the Edwardian period, while the 1930s buildings by Thomas and Prestwich are much more reticent. In the end it is the Thomas and Prestwich buildings which form the dominant element in the complex. They are well-mannered buildings of considerable aesthetic value but, as the comparative study has demonstrated, they are weaker designs than other civic buildings by the same architects and in a style which was outdated.

### **Communal Value**

Almost by definition, the Civic Complex is of exceptional communal value. It forms the centre of the town. It is the centre of local government. It houses several vital community services including the public library, the police station, the local history museum, the Assembly Hall and the adult education centre.

### **Setting**

In this case the headings proposed in the National Planning Policy Framework overlap closely with those of *Conservation Principles*, but the NPPF also emphasises the importance of the considering the setting of heritage assets as part of any significance assessment.

The setting of the Civic Complex consists principally of Crescent Road, Mount Pleasant Road and Monson Road, which enclose the main frontages. Monson Road is a relatively narrow shopping street whose northern side is lined with later nineteenth century buildings, most of which are listed. Crescent Road is much wider and with most of the buildings on the southern frontage set back considerably from the street. Of these buildings both the Gothic Lloyds Bank at the corner with Mount Pleasant Road immediately south of the main Town Hall entrance and the early nineteenth century Hotel du Vin are listed buildings.

The stretch of Mount Pleasant Road along the western frontage of the complex is effectively the principal frontage with the listed steps up to the Town Hall main entrance at the southern end and the war memorial towards the northern end. The west side of the road facing the complex is lined with a variety of mostly three storey mostly nineteenth century buildings which are unlisted, with the exception of the former congregational chapel with its handsome Tuscan portico facing down Monson Road. The civic complex is at a higher level than the buildings opposite and separated from the street by a service road (Civic Way) and a grassed embankment which are both survivors from the earlier arrangement when the embankment separated the private houses of Calverley Parade from the public thoroughfare. The stone wall at the bottom of the embankment probably dates from the mid 1890s when Mount Pleasant Road was widened.

The eastern side of the civic complex fronts onto a modern office block on Monson Way and the large multi-storey car park with its concrete-faced tiers. Neither of these buildings provide a positive setting and the car park is positively harmful in the way it overshadows the rear elevation of the Calverley Crescent houses and closes the views through the site.

## **5.0 POTENTIAL FOR CHANGE**

This section considers where there is most and least potential for change to accommodate new uses. As all the buildings in the complex are listed individually and lie within a conservation area the constraints of listed building and conservation area control will be considerations in any proposal for change.

As an important preliminary, the ownership of the different buildings and the spaces between them should be clarified. There have been several changes of ownership of individual buildings as a consequence of local government reorganisations and there appears to be some uncertainty about the present boundaries.

### **5.1 Existing Open Spaces**

There are few existing open spaces within the civic complex. They comprise the rectangular plot in front of 9 & 10 Crescent Road now used for car parking, the car park behind the police station with its approach road and the stretch of Monson Way between the town hall and the library

The plot immediately in front of 9 & 10 was originally the front gardens of this pair of houses and is an integral part of their setting. The significance of the listed buildings would certainly be damaged by any building here and it would be preferable to enhance the significance of the space by more sympathetic treatment. Ideally this would mean the removal of cars and the restoration of a suitably landscaped space.

The space at the rear of the police station is currently enclosed on all sides and could provide space for some new building.

There might be scope for covering in the approach road to the police car park and also that part of Monson Way between the town hall and library. In any such proposal it would be important to maintain the original visual separation of the individual buildings, probably by setting any new covering back from the main frontage.

### **5.2 Buildings of little heritage interest which could be considered for demolition**

There are some structures of low heritage significance which could be considered for demolition. These are the two sheds behind the Adult Education Centre and the garage block behind the Police Station.

Both the sheds date from before 1938 and should be treated as curtilage structures to the listed Adult Education Centre, but neither are of particular significance. Their demolition would provide a site which could be used for a new building.

The single storey garage block behind the police station is part of the original 1930s accommodation, but is otherwise of no particular significance. Its demolition would increase the amount of open space here for new building.

### **5.3 Additions to existing buildings**

Both the town hall and the police station have flat roofs enclosed by tall parapets. A modern rectangular single storey addition has already been placed on the Mount Pleasant Road

frontage of the town hall and there may be scope for adding a new top storey to all the buildings.

The Assembly Hall and the Library building have slightly complicated roof arrangements. In the case of the library this means a pitched roof along the length of the main front covered in Westmoreland slate with some large roof-lights. In the case of the Assembly Hall, only the roof over the entrance foyer is flat, while the main auditorium space has a shallow pitched roof.

Any proposal for roof additions would need to be carefully considered because at present all the buildings of Percy Thomas's Civic Complex are of uniform height with a uniform parapet line. Adding an upper storey to the town hall and police station alone could detract from that uniformity and affect the original character of the group.

The town hall has a large internal courtyard into which the council chamber projects. The court provides natural light to all those offices and public spaces facing onto it. There are many examples of public buildings where such internal courtyards have been roofed-in and that may be a possibility in this case.

#### **5.4 Internal Alterations**

All the buildings of the civic complex have some scope for internal alterations, within the usual constraints of listed building control.

Spaces of particular importance or interest or with fittings of special interest are indicated on the plans with the assessments of individual buildings. These include the main entrance and auditorium spaces of the Assembly Hall, the main entrance, stair and first floor Council suite of the town hall and the former courtroom in the police station. These spaces should ideally be preserved without significant alteration.

Both the town hall and the police station have a large number of small office spaces with little or no decoration and there is certainly scope for removing some of the internal partitions to create larger spaces, without undue harm to the character of the listed building.

In the library and museum the larger public rooms remain as originally planned, but the rooms are quite plain, few original fittings survive and there is probably scope for alteration.

In the adult education centre the chief interest lies in the central circulation spaces on each floor including the staircase, the former library (now the canteen) with its panelling and the large north-lit studio spaces on the top floor. The other spaces are largely as planned in 1902 but not of such particular character that no alterations could be contemplated.



## **6.0 LIKELY EFFECTS OF CREDIBLE NEW USES & PLANNING OPPORTUNITIES**

No specific proposals for new uses have been put forward for any of the listed buildings in the civic complex. Indeed, the majority of the buildings are currently in full use, and for their original purpose. While the original use is often the best use for historic buildings there is a possibility that at some time in the future new and beneficial uses will need to be sought. Either independently or combined with the introduction of new uses, there may be opportunities for improvements to amenities or to the quality of the public realm. In the following section the effects of potential new uses and the opportunities for improvement are considered in broad terms.

### **6.1 New Uses**

#### Cultural Use

Both the library and museum building and the Adult Education Centre are already in cultural use. Behind the Centre are two sheds which, although they date from before the Second World War, are of little heritage value. It is possible to imagine the redevelopment of the site of the sheds in such a way that the two main buildings could be combined with a new building which would provide additional space for circulation, exhibitions, archive storage. Such redevelopment would have little impact on the main frontage of the complex but could considerably enhance the Monson Road area.

The Assembly Hall is fully used for its original intended purpose as a space for public entertainment. The Hall is directly linked to the Town Hall building and it is possible to imagine that it could be used in conjunction with spaces currently in the Town Hall

#### Commercial Use

Much of the space inside the Town Hall building and the Police Station building was designed to be used as offices and remains in office use, albeit many of the spaces are small and not necessarily suited to modern office requirements. Internal re-arrangement could probably be accomplished to provide commercial offices of a modern standard, which could be occupied by several tenants.

The Town Hall contains the large Council Chamber and several committee rooms and the Council suite could be used for commercial conferences. Such a use would not necessarily require major alterations to the interior spaces.

Numbers 9&10 Crescent Road are also currently used as offices and have suffered considerably as a result, with many inappropriate internal alterations. It is unlikely that the buildings will ever return to their original residential use, but refurbishment as high-grade office space would allow the opportunity for the interiors to be properly treated.

#### Retail Use

There is at present very limited scope for retail use in any of the buildings. There are no shop fronts (apart from the former gas showroom on the Monson Way frontage of the Town Hall), and the existing small interior spaces of most of the buildings do not lend themselves to large-scale retail use. It might be possible to adapt the interior of the Town Hall wings, for example, as boutique shopping arcades with a series of small retail units off the spine corridors, or linked to the central area. The creation of any large retail space would require

the removal of a large number of original partitions; such an alteration is not unthinkable but would need to be carefully considered.

### Residential Use

Many former industrial, commercial and institutional historic buildings have been converted to residential use. Of the buildings in the civic complex, the Town Hall is the one which would lend itself most readily to such a conversion, with apartments either side of the spine passages in the wings.

## **6.2 Opportunities**

### Repair and Maintenance

At the present time, several of the listed buildings in the Civic Complex are clearly in need of repair and maintenance. For example, the stonework on the main front of the Adult Education Centre is badly decayed and the Borough Council has acknowledged publicly that the Town Hall has a backlog of major maintenance.<sup>59</sup> Other buildings may be in a similar condition. In any refurbishment of the buildings, whether for existing or new uses, the opportunity should be taken to carry out any necessary repairs to a good conservation standard and to set up a regular maintenance programme.

### Public Realm

There are various potential improvements to the public realm which could enhance the amenity of the Civic Complex. They might include some or all of the following:

Pedestrianization of the service road in front of the buildings (Civic Way) and at least the western section of Monson Way

Pedestrianization or semi-pedestrianization of that section of Mount Pleasant Road in front of the Civic Complex to form a public space.

Improvement of the immediate setting of the War Memorial, which is currently just an adjunct to the bus stops.

Removal of the car park in front of 9&10 Crescent Road and its conversion to a public square.

### Removal of Multi-Storey Car Park

The Civic Complex site is severely blighted by the multi-storey car park, which closes all views from the west, looms uncomfortably close to the Crescent Road houses and restricts pedestrian circulation across the site.

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<sup>59</sup> TWBC website, *FAQs on the Civic Complex*

## **7.0 GENERAL CONCLUSIONS**

The group of listed buildings and structures which make up the Civic Complex is probably the most important element in the townscape of central Tunbridge Wells and certainly the most important element in the proposed Area of Change. Changing demands and expectations for public services and changing building standards will be key considerations affecting the future of the site and these need to be taken into account in planning for the future of the Civic Complex. There is certainly scope for improvement and adaptation. All the existing individual buildings would be capable of some internal alteration and there is also a limited amount of opportunity for new building, some of which could entail the demolition of existing structures of little heritage significance.

Although the best use for historic buildings is often their original use, all the individual listed buildings, with the possible exception of the Assembly Hall, would be capable of being adapted to serve a new use or uses. Of possible new uses, cultural, commercial (office) and residential would be possible. There is probably also some scope for introducing retail use, although the creation of large retail spaces would require a considerable amount of internal change.

Besides physical changes to buildings and the spaces between them there is also an opportunity for several improvements to the Public Realm.

The key to the positive improvement of the whole of the proposed Area of Change lies in the future of the multi-storey car park. This conspicuous and ugly structure occupies a large amount of space at the centre of the area and blights the setting of all the buildings around it and particularly the setting of the Civic Complex, whose eastern boundary it forms. Demolition of the car park and replacement with a different building or buildings would not only provide the space for new retail users – if this is thought desirable – but would also give the opportunity to improve the amenity and appearance of the whole site, develop new routes across the site and enhance the setting of all the listed buildings.

## Appendix I: Project Brief



ENGLISH HERITAGE

### Brief for Conservation Statement

#### Tunbridge Wells Civic Complex

A conservation statement is sought for the civic complex at Tunbridge Wells to assess and advance understanding of its heritage significance and to set out its ability to accept change and accommodate new uses intended to enhance its contribution to the vibrancy of the town centre. More specifically this statement is required to:

- Research and summarise the heritage significance of the civic complex (as defined on the site plan), both as a whole and broken down into its constituent heritage assets and their key components, using the range of heritage values identified in the English Heritage publication, *Conservation Principles* (2008). It should consider the contribution of the complex to the history of the town and in relation to its immediate surroundings, whilst also setting it in the national context of interwar civic architecture and particularly in terms of its relative importance, completeness and intactness.
- Based on the above assessment, evaluate at a strategic level where there is most and least potential for change to the complex to accommodate new uses. This evaluation should take into account the likely effects of change on the above-mentioned heritage values, particularly where they relate to significance derived from: setting; the physical interrelation of the constituent buildings; the external appearance of individual buildings and of the complex as a whole; internal plan forms; and key internal features (e.g. staircases, fixed furniture, decorative schemes etc).
- Consider in broad strategic terms the likely effects (both positive and negative) on the above heritage values of a range of credible new uses for the buildings, especially including cultural, retail and commercial uses. Possibilities for creative planning opportunities should also be considered, particularly taking into account the development potential of neighbouring sites (car parks, service spaces etc).

#### Useful references:

- *NPPF* (2012)
- *Conservation Principles* (EH, 2008)
- Listing Selection Guides (especially *Culture and Entertainment and Law and Government Buildings* (EH, 2011)).
- *Local Authority Heritage Assets: Current Issues and Opportunities* (EH, 2012)
- *Constructive Conservation in Practice* (EH, 2008)
- *Valuing Places: Good Practice in Conservation Areas* (EH, 2012)



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