



Historic England

Former Central Stores of Bishop Auckland Co-operative Society,
80 Newgate Street, Bishop Auckland, County Durham
Historic Building Report

Alastair Coey Architects

Discovery, Innovation and Science in the Historic Environment



**FORMER CENTRAL STORES OF
BISHOP AUCKLAND CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY
80 NEWGATE STREET, BISHOP AUCKLAND
COUNTY DURHAM**

HISTORIC BUILDING REPORT

Alastair Coey Architects

NGR: NZ 21021 29775

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ISSN 2059-4453 (Online)

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SUMMARY

The subject of this report is the former Bishop Auckland Co-operative Society Stores located on Newgate Street, Bishop Auckland, Co. Durham. It sits within the Bishop Auckland Conservation Area, south of the historic core, and is listed Grade II (NHLE 1292114). The three-storey frontage on Newgate Street as it exists today was built in four main phases: the first section of the building was built in 1873; in 1882-83 this was extended to the north into a tripartite arrangement with a central gabled block; this extension was replicated to the south side of the original building in 1892-94 to form a complete elevation of five blocks; the final phase of expansion resulted from the purchase in 1902 of the adjoining pre-existing building, dated 1894. Behind the street frontage the building comprises warehousing and offices ranging in date from circa 1883-1961. The building is known locally either as 'the Co-op' or 'Beales', the latter being the final company to operate in the premises. Throughout this report the terms 'central stores' and 'co-operative stores' are used to refer to the building as these terms were used interchangeably by the Bishop Auckland Co-operative Society.

The Society ceased independent operation in 1968, but the building remained in Co-operative ownership, following a series of mergers and take-overs, until 2011 when it was sold to Beales Department Stores. Beales closed its Bishop Auckland branch in 2017 and, despite discussions regarding the potential reopening in 2018, the buildings remain vacant. This report was commissioned in late 2018 as part of a programme of work relating to the Bishop Auckland Heritage Action Zone, and is intended to provide a more detailed understanding of the building fabric and historical context, through a combined programme of physical inspection and historical research.

The significance of the building is in large part connected to its role at the centre of an organisation which served the people of Bishop Auckland for over 100 years. The central stores represent the position of the Co-operative Society in the town, its development and expansion to offer new goods and services, and a rich history of local enterprise and social memory. The phasing of the building physically reflects this and it exists in a national context of the Co-operative Movement's architecture.

CONTRIBUTORS

The report was prepared by Alastair Coey Architects. Historical and documentary research was carried out by Rory Lamb, whilst the site investigation and measured survey were conducted by Alastair Coey with assistance from Ashley Turner. The plans were prepared by Ashley Turner, and the report was prepared for publication by Rory Lamb, Delia Graham and Samantha Pace. Advice, support and oversight of this project was provided by Clare Howard and David Went of Historic England, who read various drafts of the report. Quality assurance on the report was also provided by Kathryn Morrison and Emily Cole of Historic England.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The team would like to thank the Bishop Auckland Heritage Action Zone officer, Annalisa Ward, for facilitating access. Particular thanks are owed to Liz Bregazzi, the County

Archivist, and the staff of Durham County Record Office for their thorough assistance with archival material. We would also like to thank local historian, Tom Hutchinson, who was generous with his own research material, and Robert McManners, chair of the Civic Society, both of whom provided useful local information in conversation.

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ARCHIVE LOCATION

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DATE OF SURVEY

14/02/2019

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Figure 141: Interior of the east compartment of R132 looking north (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

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Figure 147: The restaurant kitchen counter in R221 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

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Figure 149: View from the doorway of R324 (marked 'Staff Room' on the 1961 plans) looking north (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

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Figure 154: Rear elevation of the co-operative complex showing the square-headed gateway entrances now with steel doors (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

Figure 155: The interior of the covered yard at R119 looking south-west (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

Figure 156: A timber chute in the ceiling of R119 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

Figure 157: The interior of R139 looking south in R128 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

Figure 158: Interior of the covered yard (R120) looking east in R121 with the internal window to R214 above (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

Figure 159: Interior of storage space R110 looking east (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

Figure 160: Timber ceiling joists and boards in R141-142 looking east (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

Figure 161: Interior of R142 showing tarmacadamed floor and the entrance to basement R001 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

Figure 162: View from R142 of the blocked windows in the north wall of R137 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

1. INTRODUCTION



Figure 1: Location Map of 80 Newgate Street. Modern Ordnance Survey mapping: (© Crown Copyright and database rights 2019. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence Number 100019088)

The former Bishop Auckland Co-operative Society central stores are located on the west side of Newgate Street within Bishop Auckland town centre, approximately 320 metres south of the town hall in Market Place (Figure 1). They stand near the north end of Newgate Street, the main commercial artery of the town, within the Bishop Auckland Conservation Area. To the north and south of the site on Newgate Street are more modest, lower-lying terraced commercial premises, and the complex of warehouses to the rear is bounded by Westgate Road (formerly Back Way). The building is the result of several phased expansions of the Co-operative premises and its entirety is listed Grade II (NHLE 1292114).

The Bishop Auckland Co-operative Society opened its first shop on South Church Lane before moving to a shop on Newgate Street in 1862.¹ This first premises on Newgate Street was demolished in 1873 and was replaced by the earliest section of the replacement building, which is represented by a four-bay section in the midst of the existing street frontage, illustrated by Figure 2. During the following decades these premises were expanded through purchases of neighbouring shops and their replacement, first to the north (1882-83) and then to the south (1892-94). The final addition to the Newgate Street elevation was a further premises to the south, dated 1894, purchased by the Society in 1902. The street frontage provided a remarkable variety of retail showrooms and served as the ‘public face’ of the Bishop Auckland Co-operative Society.

However the larger proportion of the site is taken up by rear offices and warehouse buildings, which provided operational and ancillary functions including administration, storage, processing, packing and transportation. The rear complex also developed in incremental stages, generally closely aligned to the development of retail frontages on Newgate Street, the most substantial being built in 1883, shortly after the first phase of extension in 1882-83, and again in 1893 to the rear of the southern extension underway at the same time. Other warehouses of unknown dates arose in the early 20th century as are shown on survey and proposal plans in 1961 for a substantial phase of alterations and modernisation, which resulted in the expansion of retail space to the rear. The Society also owned numerous industrial buildings across Bishop Auckland, most of which have since been demolished, as well as branch stores in surrounding villages.²

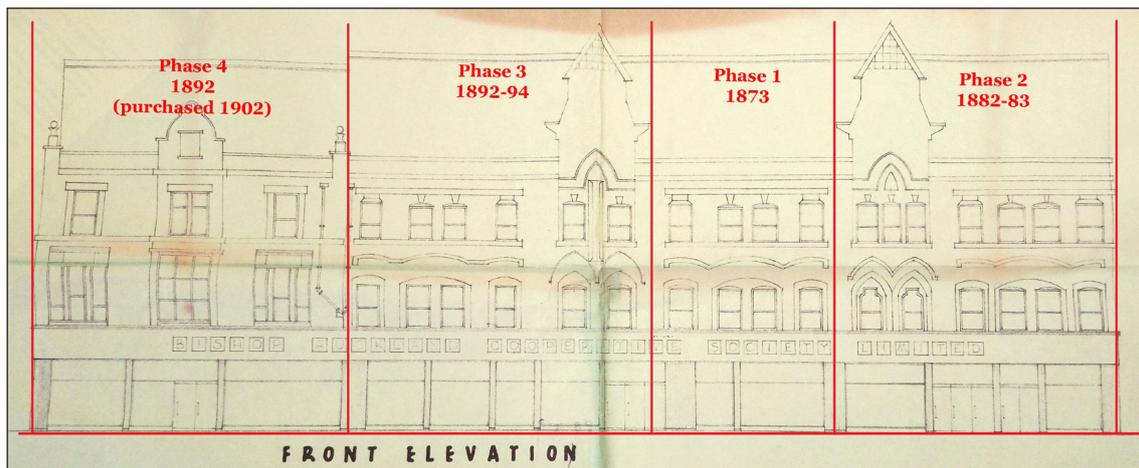


Figure 2: Front elevation of the Bishop Auckland Co-operative Society central stores, Newgate Street 1961, annotated to show the phased development of the street front.

The former co-operative stores have lain vacant since the departure of their last occupants, the private department store chain Beales, in January 2017. This report was commissioned by Historic England as part of a programme of works relating to the Bishop Auckland Heritage Action Zone. It is intended to provide a more detailed understanding of the building fabric, fixtures and historical context, through a combined programme of physical inspection and historical research. The report comments on the significance of the building, in order that decisions about its future can be appropriately guided and framed by the opportunity to safeguard and enhance heritage values. This will contribute to the heritage-led regeneration of Bishop Auckland through the joint efforts of the Heritage Action Zone, which constitutes a partnership between Historic England, Durham County Council and the Brighter Bishop Auckland Regeneration Partnership.

The historical research conducted during preparation of this report was much assisted by the availability of Thomas Readshaw's *History of the Bishop Auckland Co-operative Society Limited*, published in the Society's jubilee year of 1910. Readshaw was the Secretary of the Society in the early years of the 20th century and provides a full and enthusiastic celebration of its foundation, development and success.³ The book is especially helpful in providing a chapter dedicated to the development of the central stores, detailing the construction costs and people involved in the complicated progression of changes and extensions to the building. This report is based on an assumption that his coverage of original archival material relating to the Society, which was beyond the scope of this report to assess in depth, is correct.

The Durham County Record Office retains a number of important sets of information relating to the Bishop Auckland Co-operative Society, which have been partially assessed, within the terms of reference of the brief. It holds the archive of the organisation itself, comprising the committee minutes, reports and agendas dating from the foundation of the Society until the 1960s (excluding 1866-67 which

were lost in a fire at the central stores). Readshaw quotes the material predating 1910 thoroughly and further examination of the Society archive has not been undertaken in the preparation of this report, with the exception of the minutes relating to the final transfer of the Society's assets in 1967-68. The record office also holds several drawing sets in its building control archive pertaining to the central stores, which have been fully assessed. Selections from these drawings are used to illustrate the text of the report where necessary, and photographs of each of the drawing sets are included in full in Appendix 1. These have been valuable for helping to understand the building. During the site survey, a set of proposal drawings of 1961, which comprises survey plans, proposed plans, sections and elevations, was discovered in the building. Although comparison with the existing layout of the buildings suggests that the proposals were not fully executed as intended, the preliminary survey drawings provide useful information about the activities of the Society at the time and the extent of the central stores.

The British Newspaper Archive has also been searched, but, surprisingly, contains relatively little information on the various phases of alteration, with the exception of an article on the third (1892-94) extension. Any relevant information is included in the narrative section of the report.

A Level-3 survey of the co-operative stores was undertaken as part of this assessment to enhance understanding of the structure, its use and development. This involved a detailed internal and external on-site analysis carried out by a conservation architect and an architectural assistant. Annotated plans and a photographic record were prepared, which have been deposited with the Historic England Archive in Swindon and are included as Appendix 3 of this report. The rooms on the plans have been given unique identification numbers which are referenced in the text of the report and its image captions. Rooms numbered 'R0—' refer to the basement, 'R1—' to the ground floor, 'R2—' to the first floor and 'R3—' to the second floor.

There is some discrepancy between the date stones visible on the building, the construction or purchase dates of the various premises and the dates visible on surviving drawings. The building dated 1882, for example, was only completed in 1883, and the building dated 1894 was only purchased by the Co-operative in 1902. In the text each phase is referred to by its construction dates as given by Thomas Readshaw's historical narrative, for example the 1882 building as the '1882-83 extension'. Similarly the street numbers of the building have changed. The co-operative stores in their entirety are today listed as 80 Newgate Street, but historically were built up through the purchase of several individual shop premises. Where provided by Readshaw the original plot numbers are given to indicate where they correspond with the existing building.

2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Co-operative Movement

Co-operation arose in the context of the rising labour movement of the 19th century, in reaction to changes in the industrial workforce and the factory system. It was inspired by the ideas of Robert Owen (1771-1858), a Welsh textile manufacturer who campaigned to improve working conditions.⁴ The increasing support for workers' rights led to the repeal of the Combination Laws in 1824 and 1825, which had restricted the rights of labourers to gather to discuss their interests, or to agitate for the betterment of working conditions, and influenced the movement for Parliamentary reform and the repeal of the Corn Laws.⁵ This opened the way for development of trade unions and other movements that represented the interests of workers and generally ushered in an era of progressive social reform, which reached a peak in the 1860s. Acts were passed to govern working and living conditions of working classes, to legalise industrial and provident societies, and to provide access to improved education and sanitation.⁶ Thomas Readshaw, the Secretary and historian of the Bishop Auckland Co-operative Society, summarises as follows:

A new type of working man was being evolved, who was no longer content to be a puppet in the hands of others, but who was feeling his own strength, realising his own possibilities, and demonstrating that by organisation and combination he could hold his own against the powerful forces of the aristocrat and the capitalist.⁷

The co-operative movement was an important representation of this new aspirational spirit, founded by 28 weavers of Rochdale who became known as the Rochdale Pioneers. Their objectives were as follows:

To form arrangements for the pecuniary benefit, and the improvement of the social and domestic conditions of its members, by raising a sufficient amount of capital by shares of £1 each, to bring into operation the following plans and arrangements:

- The establishment of a Store for the sale of provisions, clothing &c.;
- The building, purchasing, or erecting of a number of houses in which those members desiring to help each other in improving their domestic conditions may reside;
- To commence the manufacture of such articles as the Society may determine upon, for the employment of such members as may be without employment, or who may be suffering in consequence of repeated reductions in their wages;
- As a further benefit and security to the members of the Society, the Society shall purchase or rent an estate, or estates, of land, which shall be cultivated by the members who may be out of employment, or whose labours may be badly remunerated;

- That as soon as practicable this Society shall proceed to arrange the powers of production, distribution, education, and government, or, in other words, to establish a self-supporting home colony of united interests, or assist other societies in establishing such colonies.⁸

The movement was founded on the principle of combining shared capital to purchase goods, distribute them, and share any profits. This allowed goods to be sold at prices affordable to the working classes and help avoid the expensive 'tommy shops' run by factory owners.⁹ By 1860, the year of the foundation of the Bishop Auckland Co-operative Society, 179 co-operative societies were in existence.¹⁰ Quoting the 1885 Co-operative Annual, Readshaw celebrated that:

In no part of the United Kingdom has more progress been made in Co-operative work than in the counties of Durham and Northumberland, where at least one-third of the population purchase their requirements from the Co-operative Stores.¹¹

In 1864 the North of England Co-operative Wholesale Society, a union of co-operatives, was founded, to buy and manufacture goods. Its members were independent consumer co-operatives (such as the Bishop Auckland Co-operative Society) who could use these goods for sale in their stores. In 1872 the 'North of England' was dropped from the title, and the society became known as the Co-operative Wholesale Society (CWS), based in Manchester.¹² By 1900 there were 1,439 co-operatives across the UK and they were a staple part of many towns and villages until the 1960s, with a national membership of three million.¹³ It remains the world's largest consumer-owned business.¹⁴

Co-operative buildings varied from modest local stores, through large industrial warehouses and manufactories, eventually to include impressive urban stores, following the model of proto-department stores, in a variety of architectural styles. The ambitious designs tended to be reserved for the cities and larger towns, with more rural examples being of a much more modest character.¹⁵ The Bishop Auckland stores are characteristic of the wider context of the movement in the 19th century in so far as they expanded in phases, rather than being built as a single large structure, reflecting the ongoing growth of the Society.¹⁶ However, most co-operative societies did not attempt for their extensions to match their existing buildings stylistically, usually comprising multiple architecturally distinct units. This makes Bishop Auckland unusual in that the first two extensions to the street frontage consciously follow the design of the original block dating from 1873.¹⁷

Grand co-operative buildings were seen as testament to the enterprise of the co-operative spirit which had aided the 'self-help' of the working-classes.¹⁸ In 1933 an article in the *Co-operative News* described the movement's buildings as 'our silent salesmen':

Every shop, like every picture, tells a story; and what is the story so far as the Co-operative movement is concerned? Is it not that

business can be combined with idealism, and that idealism in relation to business can be presented to the public in a bright and up-to-date fashion ... many different styles of architecture have been adopted, even by individual societies. There is no distinctive style which immediately brings a Co-operative shop to one's notice.¹⁹

In 1897, just a few years after the completion of the final major extension the co-operative stores street frontage at Bishop Auckland, the CWS opened an architects' department headed by architect F E L Harris to develop the infrastructure needed by individual societies. This represented the consolidation of the co-operative



Figure 3: F E L Harris, The Hanover Building of the Co-operative Wholesale Society, Corporation Street, Manchester, 1905-1908 (© Copyright Stephen Richards and licenced for reuse under Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic licence)

movement's architectural output, which from then on was largely conducted by CWS architects. The wide design scope which co-operative buildings offered attracted numerous young architects.²⁰ The CWS headquarters in Manchester was an impressive complex of muscular Baroque Revival buildings designed 1905-08 by Harris (Figure 3), while its bank, opened in 1930, adopted a more sober Renaissance style.²¹ Elsewhere co-operative buildings employed Gothic Revival, Art Nouveau, Inter-War Classicism, and eventually Modernist styles for their buildings. The large stores in towns, such as Bishop Auckland, might be rudimentary in their architectural detailing, but nevertheless made clear the aspirational spirit of the wider movement. Their lavish and varied buildings in the industrial

North tended to dominate the urban grain of modestly scaled townscapes such as Bishop Auckland, and although falling well short of the grandeur of expensive proto-department stores in London, perhaps borrowed something of the aspiration represented by the latter.

Pre-dating the founding of the CWS architects' department, the Bishop Auckland stores lack the common signifiers that unite many of the later stores, despite their variety. This might include, for example, the use of common symbols such as the wheatsheaf (signifying strength in unity), which became the company logo, or clasped hands, which were also later used.²² It is possible that these symbols, which fit within a recognised lexicon, were employed around the architecture of the shopfronts in Bishop Auckland, of which no evidence remains. The Society clearly did make some use of the CWS architectural department in the 20th century,

however, as CWS insignia is found on the 1923 branch building in Spennymoor, and a departmental architect provided plans for the central stores reorganisation in the 1960s (both discussed below).



Figure 4: F E L Harris, Former Co-operative Wholesale Society Warehouse, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1899-1900 (Licenced for reuse under Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic licence)

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, co-operative stores grappled with the difficulty of accommodating their expanding provision of goods and services within the available amount of retail space.²³ Commonly, extensions to stores comprised distinct spaces for each department such that shoppers might have to exit to the street before moving into the next department. From the 1910s some existing stores began to be remodelled to provide a more flexible form of open plan layout and this was also reflected in new-builds of the time, reflecting the design of contemporary proto-department stores.²⁴ Co-operative architects were quick to adopt advances in building techniques and materials in the early decades of the 20th century, exemplified by the co-operative warehouse at Newcastle Quayside (NHLE 1107186), also designed by Harris and representing one of the earliest reinforced concrete structures in the UK (Figure 4).²⁵ Structural steel and concrete, as well as new heating, ventilation and lighting facilities, allowed their buildings to be flexible to the expanding departments of individual societies and the changing retail trends towards open-planned shop floors.²⁶

Architecturally, the heyday of the movement was in the 1930s, championed by the CWS architects Leonard G Elkins and William A Johnson, who were instrumental in introducing continental modernism to co-operative buildings but were also keen to maintain their variety and diversity (Figure 5).²⁷ In the inter-war period co-operatives proved successful due to their focus on affordable goods in a period of economic difficulty.²⁸ The 1940s saw the movement at the forefront of the change to self-service rather than counter service shopping.²⁹ Encouraging customers to browse products themselves benefitted from the extra floor space and ease of circulation offered by open-plan interiors.³⁰ This was supported by improvements in lighting and ventilation systems. In the following decade, this change was reflected in the widespread alteration to the interiors of co-operative stores, usually under the direction of the CWS Architects' Department, characterized by the removal of traditional timber counters, shelving and panelling with 'hygienic' internal finishes.³¹



Figure 5: W A Johnston, The Redfern Building of the Co-operative Wholesale Society, Dantzic Street, Manchester, 1936 (© Copyright Stephen Richards and licenced for reuse under Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic licence)

The Bishop Auckland Industrial Co-operative Flour and Provision Society

The 19th century

Founded in 1860, the Bishop Auckland Industrial Co-operative Flour and Provision Society Ltd was the first co-operative in County Durham and the fourth to be founded in the North East of England, following the Teesdale Workmen's Industrial and Provident Society (1842), the Bladon District Industrial and Provident Society (1858) and the Sunderland Economical and Provident Society (1859).³² Bishop Auckland in the 19th century was a thriving industrial town, having a hinterland characterised by a concentration of industrial output in the form of collieries, supported by important railway links. The spirit of co-operation was fuelled by the contemporary challenges of low wages, high prices for provisions and the recent memory of the 1844 mining strikes in County Durham.³³

On 25 February 1860, a meeting was held at the National Schoolroom in Shildon at which it was agreed that a Co-operative Provision Society should be established, with an entrance fee of a single £1 share.³⁴ This was also the maximum number of shares allowed to any member to ensure equality among members. The goal of the new Bishop Auckland Co-operative was 'to supply all articles for domestic purposes, as funds will permit', and it was agreed that 'Bishop Auckland be the place for the Central Store, and that four miles will be the limit for delivering goods from the Store.'³⁵ A total of 63 members was enrolled at the meeting and a Provisional Committee appointed to include a secretary, treasurer, five directors and seven district agents. As the Society was initially focused on serving the rural mining villages, the town's inhabitants formed a minority of the original members.³⁶ The importance of this initial meeting was later recognised during the zenith of the Society:

In looking back over the work done at this meeting, we cannot but be struck at the sane and sober, yet determined and purposeful, spirit that prevailed. These few working men without social standing, experience, or any exceptional educational advantages, embark upon an enterprise involving serious work and great self-sacrifice that would require brains, courage and skill...³⁷

Having written to and consulted with existing co-operative societies, including the Pioneers in Rochdale, rules were drawn up and accepted for the Bishop Auckland Co-operative on 31 March 1860. Within these rules they defined their objects as 'to raise by voluntary subscriptions a fund for the better enabling them to purchase food, firing, clothes, and other necessaries by carrying on in common the trade or business or general dealers'.³⁸ If the Society proved successful, each member was to receive an annual dividend of up to five per cent upon his share.

The first regular meetings of the Society were held in the house of the first Chairman, Robert Morley, until the opening of their first shop at a rented premises, *Belvedere*, in South Church Lane, Bishop Auckland, in May 1860.³⁹ Readshaw provides a photograph of this building from 1910 and it may survive today in the row of much remodelled houses known as 'Belvedere' standing alongside Kingsway



Figure 6: Photograph (probably circa 1910) of Belvedere, South Church Lane, the Society's first premises, rented in 1860. (From Readshaw 1910, 55: Publication out of copyright)

(Figure 6). The shop was initially stocked with coffee, pepper mills, six tea caddies and one treacle tank, soon supplemented by bacon, lard, cheese, cheap coffee and sugar, and a pony and cart were purchased to begin making deliveries.⁴⁰ Despite the Society's name, it was not until 1861 that the Co-operative Corn Mill Society, in which the Co-operative Society was a large stakeholder, was founded to produce flour in a local mill at Town Head, later moving to Blue Row.⁴¹ Although the mill itself failed as a venture in 1868, the sale of flour remained a part of the Society's provisions, as flour warehouses and chutes are labelled on architectural plans for the extension of the central stores in 1882-83.⁴² Public demand inspired the first expansion of the core provisions with the opening of a drapery department in 1863 and a weaving mill to support it in 1864.⁴³ By 1865, having purchased its own premises on Newgate Street in 1862, the co-operative stores' opening hours were fixed at 7.30am-7pm except on Thursdays and Saturday, when they opened later for the town market days.⁴⁴

In 1864 the Co-operative Wholesale Society was founded and Readshaw suggests that the Bishop

Auckland Co-operative was ‘in at the commencement of this gigantic co-operative federation’.⁴⁵ He records that in response to a circular sent from the Manchester District Conference Committee, requesting funds to help establish a co-operative federation, the Bishop Auckland Co-operative committee resolved on 21 February 1863:

...that the Bishop Auckland Co-operative Flour and Provision Society Limited contribute their farthing per member for the purpose to meet the expenses of the Committee in carrying out the resolution of the Conference, viz. to remedy a few defects in the Act of 1862, in the present session of Parliament, to prepare plans for a central agency, or wholesale depot, and consider plans for insurance, assurance and guarantee in connection with Co-operative Societies.⁴⁶

Readshaw also tells us that the Bishop Auckland Co-operative sent delegates to Newcastle for a conference of co-operative societies in May 1863.⁴⁷ After their first decade of operation, in 1870, the Bishop Auckland Co-operative Society had 514 members, capital of £2,620, and sales of the half year to March at £7,337.⁴⁸



Figure 7: Bishop Auckland Co-operative Society branch stores (clockwise from top left): Butterknowle (founded 1885/ building date 1890), Coundon (1901/ 1908), Ferryhill Station (founded and built 1904), Spennymoor (1872/ 1882). (From Readshaw 1910, 123, 127, 131, 105: Publication out of copyright)

As the 19th century progressed, the Society substantially expanded its services and the variety of goods on offer, as reflected in its successive building extensions, leaving a sizeable footprint on the Ordnance Survey map published in 1897 (Figure 7). Having quickly engaged a horse and cart for delivery service, improvements were made for stables in the rear yard of the Newgate Street store, and a complex of stables was later erected on King Street (now Durham Street) in May 1875.⁴⁹ The Society began tailoring in 1876 and by March employed a cutter, fifteen tailors and one machinist. This was expanded the following year to provide a ready-made clothing department and a boot and shoe cutting service was also opened.⁵⁰ Readshaw lists the trades provided at the central stores following its expansion in 1894: grocery, flour and provisions, drapery, millinery, boots, tailoring and ready-made clothing, ironmongery, furnishing, jewellery, dressmaking, kersey-making and stocking-knitting.⁵¹ The following year, a butchery department and tobacco production were proposed as new ventures. The former was begun swiftly but the latter only began in 1898, when the stables in King Street were demolished and a tobacco factory erected in their place (now also demolished).⁵²

By the early 20th century, branch stores had opened in various nearby towns, including Shildon, Butterknowle, Coundon, Ferryhill Station, Evenwood and Dean Bank (Figure 8). These towns were much more modest in size than Bishop Auckland, and the architecture of the local stores reflected that. For example, the

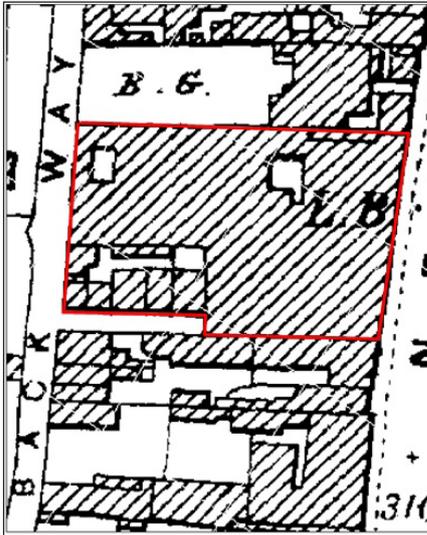


Figure 8: The co-operative stores in 1897, following the expansion in 1892-94. Reproduced from the 1897 Ordnance Survey map, 1:2500

Coundon store of 1902 (now the Wear Valley Decorating Centre) is modestly proportioned, although elevated by symmetrical composition with gables to centre and at either end, in a restrained Perpendicular Gothic style.⁵³ The most accomplished was the Spennymoor store, the first branch to be established (1872), which was managed by Henry Kellet and became large enough to be expanded in new premises which were later extended as well. Kellet later went on to become the most celebrated General Manager of the Society, in 1876, and spearheaded much of its development in the late 19th century.⁵⁴

A purpose-built store and warehouses with a manager's house was designed for Spennymoor Co-operative by William Vickers Thompson (1836-1888), architect of the first stage of the central stores (see below), and opened in 1876, before being extended in 1881 by his brother, Robert Wilkinson Thompson (1850-1896).⁵⁵ The premises were rebuilt following a fire in 1882, presumably by the same architect, and in Readshaw's time it was a six-bay structure in a loose Renaissance style with a large off-centre gable. This was replaced in 1923 by the existing

building on Clyde Terrace of free-stone construction with perpendicular windows and a gable bearing the CWS wheatsheaf and motto 'Unity is Strength'.⁵⁶ However, neither building seems to deliberately imitate the architectural treatment of the central stores in Bishop Auckland.

Other branch stores, such as Evenwood, also made use of gables with some embellishment but otherwise they reflect a simpler, vernacular style than the central stores. On the whole, embellishments were concentrated on their shopfronts and photographs from the turn of the 20th century show these were typical of their time, with bracketed consoles and pilasters flanking fascia signage, and windows of large plate glass with narrow mullions. Some of the Co-operative Society's branch store buildings survive, including Evenwood and Spennymoor.

The 20th century

Details of the running of the Bishop Auckland Co-operative Society are found in a book of Rules published in 1903.⁵⁷ The third rule specified that the full name of the Society was to be kept well maintained on the outside of every premises, 'conspicuously and with legible lettering'.⁵⁸ Historic photographs show that the name was maintained primarily on the fascia signage at the central stores and that by *circa* 1970 a prominent projecting sign reading 'B.A.C.S. CO-OP' had also been added to the frontage of the building (see Figure 42). Admittance to membership entailed a commitment to buy five shares of one pound each, with a one shilling deposit and a one shilling entrance fee.⁵⁹ Members were issued with share books which recorded their company shares and needed to be produced each time money was added or withdrawn to their account.⁶⁰ Goods ordered were left at the purchaser's home and either paid for in cash or deducted from their share capital within a fortnight of delivery.⁶¹ The committee at this time comprised a president, secretary, treasurer, and twelve committee men elected equally from six electoral districts around Bishop Auckland and its hinterland.⁶² Ordinary meetings were held every third month, with those in May and November including the presentation of committee reports.⁶³ Thomas Readshaw is recorded as the Secretary in this Rules book.⁶⁴

Growth continued well into the 20th century, with the opening of branch stores and the building of their new premises. In Bishop Auckland itself, a joinery and cabinet department was opened and this provided timber fittings to the Society's new bakery in 1909, located alongside the Society's buildings on King Street.⁶⁵ Readshaw outlines the staffing arrangements in some of the departments in 1910: ready-made clothing was run by J P Aydon, with 20 men on the cutting boards and one assistant cutter; boot and shoe cutting by Mr S Forrest, longstanding foreman of the department, with 48 hands employed and 27 brand new machines; tobacco, with 22 hands, was the most profitable department and was bought into by other local co-operative societies.⁶⁶ Further expansions were intended in the following decades with proposals surviving for a motor repair shop in 1919 and a milk dairy in 1924 (replacing one founded in 1905), presumably in or near Bishop Auckland, although it is not known whether these went ahead.⁶⁷ Additionally, from *circa* 1890, the Society began developing affordable housing which was let or sold to members and offering mortgages, operations which became common for co-operative societies at this time.⁶⁸ By 1909, it owned 150 houses across its catchment area, including 95 within Bishop Auckland.⁶⁹

As with many co-operative societies, the Bishop Auckland Co-operative was sufficiently diverse in its departments to remain financially stable into the middle of the 20th century and continued to maintain its central Newgate Street premises. The Ordnance Survey map published in 1939 shows the footprint of the central stores at its height, with additional area purchased since the publication of the 1897 map (Figure 9). Surviving proposals for a general reorganisation of the stores on

Newgate Street indicates its solvency as late as 1961.⁷⁰ However, the 1950s and 1960s saw the decline of many co-operative societies in the face of competition from high street supermarkets, and by the end of the 1960s the Bishop Auckland Society was struggling to survive as an independent organisation. On 11 November 1967 the motion was first brought before the committee to transfer its assets to the Darlington Co-operative Society Ltd in a merger, with 148 votes for and four against. The proposal read:

That this meeting of members of the Bishop Auckland Co-operative Society Ltd Hereby resolves to transfer the whole of the stock, property and other assets and all engagements of the society to the Darlington Co-operative Society Ltd In consideration of the Darlington Co-operative Society Ltd Issuing to each member of the Bishop Auckland Co-operative Society Ltd paid up shares equal to the amount standing to the credit of each member in the share of the Bishop Auckland Co-operative Society Ltd on the date when the transfer of engagements becomes effective.⁷¹

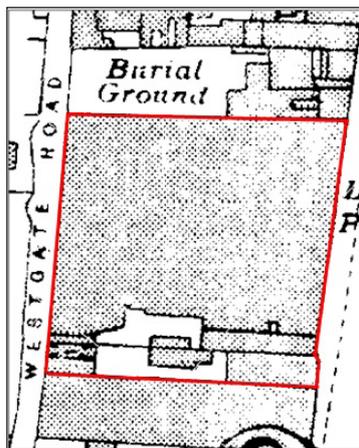


Figure 9: The co-operative stores in 1939. 1:2500. (© Crown Copyright and database rights 2019. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence Number 100019088)

A second vote passed without opposition on 2 December and on 28 January 1968 the committee agreed to offer their services to the Darlington Board of Management to assist on local matters relating to the work in Bishop Auckland. This course of action was felt to be regrettable but essential to ensuring the protection of their members' interest and shares.

The Darlington Co-operative Society stores themselves closed in 1986 and were demolished in the early 1990s.⁷² Subsequently, the late 20th- and early 21st-century Goad insurance maps include the Bishop Auckland central stores from 1984 to 2003 under the name 'North Eastern Co-operative Society Department Store', indicating a further series of co-operative mergers in the North East.⁷³ By the time the Goad insurance map was produced in 2007 it was the 'Westgate Department Store', one of a series of department stores run by the Anglia Regional Co-operative, based in Peterborough, which was by then one of the largest co-operatives in Britain. Four years later, 19 Westgate Department Stores were

sold to the independent chain Beales Department Stores, including the former Bishop Auckland co-operative stores, which remained in operation by Beales until its closure of the Bishop Auckland branch in January 2017.⁷⁴ Beales entered discussions with Durham County Council in 2018 with the aim of returning to Bishop Auckland but in November that year confirmed that the store would remain closed.⁷⁵

Social benefits of Co-operation

In addition to its rapid growth in importance as a local provider of affordable goods and services in Bishop Auckland, it is clear that the Co-operative Society and its buildings made an important contribution to civic identity. This was rooted in the Society's ideals of mutuality and reflected in the status of local members as beneficiaries of the success of the enterprise, as well as being loyal customers. Something of the value placed on the Society by the community was reflected in the celebration around the opening of each new extension, which would generally be accompanied by a grand public ceremony, with ever-larger tea parties, parades through the town, speeches and lectures.⁷⁶ In his study of the visual presence of the movement, John Walton (2008) notes the communal importance of a town's co-operative: 'Societies embodied an alternative form of civic pride, and [their] central premises almost amounted to alternative town halls, as the Co-op offered a complete social life'.⁷⁷ Likewise, at the celebrations that accompanied the opening of the 1863 store in Bishop Auckland, the *Durham Chronicle* reports that Mr T C Farn, editor of the *Eccles Advertiser*, addressed the assembled crowd, stating that 'Monopoly had been taken from the hands of the wholesale dealers, and a fairer method of trade introduced'; his speech is further paraphrased, noting that:

...it was not to be understood, however, that co-operation was intended as a measure of hostility against any class of tradesmen, for in true co-operation there could be no hostile feeling, its sole object being to improve the condition of working men by adding the profits of trade to the wages of labour...⁷⁸

The celebratory speeches are noted to have contained several tributes to co-operation, including that the building is a 'monument of the thrift of the working classes', and 'an honour to the town and to working men'.⁷⁹

Co-operative societies, as significant employers in their areas, also sought to reflect the principles of workers' rights and moral improvement which underpinned other aspects of the labour movement. In Bishop Auckland, the Society employed people for the manufacturing and selling of their goods and services throughout its existence and Readshaw was keen to portray it as a paternalistic employer:

It is not in material things only that its [the Society's] value and greatness consists. It is a great social factor in the district, and has a moral influence in the community. ... it has become a large employer of labour, with 519 hands employed, and its wage bill amounts to £36,396 per annum. It may be safely argued that it is doing something towards the solution of the industrial problem, for the leaven of its human [*sic*] and considerate treatment of employees must permeate, to some extent, other industrial communities.⁸⁰

Beyond its benefit to the community he was convinced that involvement in co-operation helped improve individual morals and character in the same way that contemporary organisations like Mechanics' Institutes sought to help the working classes educate themselves:

...it is likewise a centre of moral good, and is yielding some of the fruits of righteousness. The habits of thrift which it inculcates and fosters are moral in their tendency ... The principles of mutual help, of confidence and trust, which it inspires are also moral principles. No man can be a true Co-operator without being a better man for it – less selfish and more sympathetic and trustful.

The Society offers many opportunities for the exhibition of the finest traits of manliness, and holds out inducements for the exercise of the best powers of human nature.⁸¹

He goes on to outline that all co-operative employees learned to be 'industrious, courteous, painstaking and honest' and that the roles of committee members encouraged further character benefits. Even taking part in the democratic process of elections at members meetings was to build 'a fuller confidence in his fellow-men, and an increased faith in humanity'.⁸²

In Bishop Auckland, the former co-operative stores retain this communal importance as a reminder of the enterprise and civic spirit of its members and committees and the mutual effort and support which governed the success of this important local institution. Today the only activity carried out by Co-op (the nation-wide successor of most local consumer co-operatives) in Bishop Auckland is funeral-care, at Fylands House, Tindale Crescent, although Co-op Food supermarkets are located in nearby villages.

The development of the Bishop Auckland Co-Operative Society central stores, 80 Newgate Street

The Co-operative arrives on Newgate Street

The site occupied by the former Co-operative Society central stores, latterly known as Beales Department Store, is bounded to the east by Newgate Street, Bishop Auckland's main retail street, and to the west by a service cul-de-sac formerly known as Back Way (now Westgate Road), on land sloping upwards to the west and level from north to south. The building dwarfs most other buildings in the commercial centre of the town.



Figure 10: Colour coded block plan of the co-operative stores site showing the principal phases (Drawn by Alastair Coey Architects © Historic England)



Figure 11: An illustration of the first Co-operative Society shop in Newgate Street, 1862. (From Readshaw 1910, 73: Publication out of copyright)

The Co-operative building as it stands today is a phased three-storey building with a long street frontage, which is the result of at least four phases of expansion – the first involving the demolition and replacement of the original premises in 1873, extended to the north in 1882-83, to the south in 1892-94, and finally expanding in 1902 to occupy an adjoining building of 1894, which forms the southern extremity of the current street-fronted premises (see Figure 2). This was augmented by various phases of development to the rear, formerly a mixture of yards and cottages, involving the development of stores, packing areas and offices that supported the retail units along the street frontage, divided by ‘gateways’ which allowed cart movement between the spaces (Figure 10). The main phasing of this development is outlined in detail below; it was a warehouse in 1863, a large range of warehouses and offices in 1883, further offices in 1893, and another new three-storey warehouse, possibly in 1901, replaced by a water tower later in the 20th century.

The published history of the Society states that from its foundation in 1860 the Society operated for about two years from rented premises on South Church Lane, but was soon in a position to purchase its own property. After lengthy negotiations, on 3 September 1862, 84 Newgate Street was purchased for £720. The property comprised a two-storey terraced building with a street-fronted shop with first-floor accommodation and a rear kitchen.⁸³ Figure 11 shows an illustration of the first premises in Newgate Street, taken from Readshaw’s history. It is not certain how historically accurate this illustration might be, and it is likely that it is an artist’s impression prepared *circa* 1910, but it gives a sense of the modest scale of the first store and its surrounding buildings.

The first edition Ordnance Survey map, published in 1857, confirms that Newgate Street was already substantially laid out by the mid-19th century, having a continuous street line and generous rear plots to most buildings (Figure 12). At the time of the establishment of the co-operative premises in 1862, the area immediately to its north was occupied by a Friends’ Meeting House and burial ground and, further north, by various small-scale buildings, including ‘cottages’ and an independent chapel which faced onto a narrow lane, Great Gates, which links Newgate Street and Back Way. To the south, a mixture of modestly-scaled commercial and domestic premises faced onto Newgate Street, with yards, workshops and low-rise warehousing behind. Generally, the surrounding buildings shown on the 1857 map have now been replaced with various, mainly two-storey

modern buildings, although some earlier buildings remain along the street which may give an indication of the scale of the first co-operative store.⁸⁴

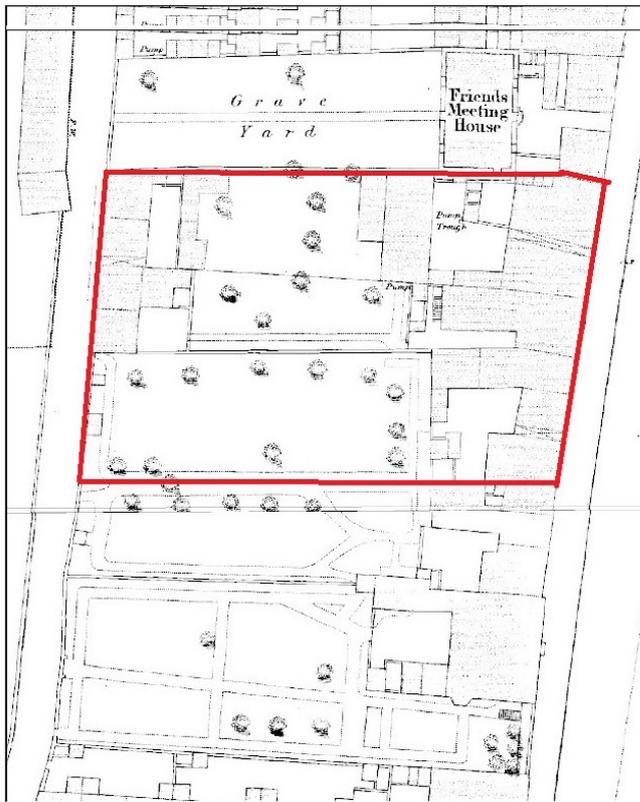


Figure 12: The site of the central stores in 1857, prior to its development. It shows a range of small premises with rear plots. Reproduced from the 1857 Ordnance Survey map, 1:500

Readshaw's history confirms that the original building at 84 Newgate Street quickly became insufficient for the Society's purposes and a committee was formed to consider 'upon plans and specifications for a new warehouse' to be constructed in the plot stretching towards Back Way at the back of the shop.⁸⁵ A local engineer named John Walton was appointed to prepare plans, and tenders were returned on 16 February 1863, with a final building cost of £150 borne by the members of the Society.⁸⁶ Walton was one of the original trustees of the Society and the first 'District Agent' for the area around Woodhouse wClose Colliery (operational 1835-1934), where he was employed.⁸⁷ Readshaw, however, gives no details of the character or layout of the new warehouse, other than that it was constructed in masonry and accommodated 800 for tea at its opening.⁸⁸

The structure was probably lost in 1876 when 'a fire broke out in the warehouses, completely destroying them' and no other sizeable warehousing is known to have been built by that time.⁸⁹

Developments by the Thompson family

The next alterations to the site on Newgate Street came when plans were submitted in June 1869 for a modest warehouse and stables 'intended to be erected for the Co-operative Store Ltd' by James D Thompson, architect (Figure 13).⁹⁰ An outline of the several Thompson architects involved at the co-operative stores is given in the following section. The stable complex had a two-storey frontage onto Back Way with a cart-entrance, having stabling and harness room for three horses in the east return with haylofts and corn store above. However, although the plans are marked 'approved' it is not clear if this structure was actually constructed: no known

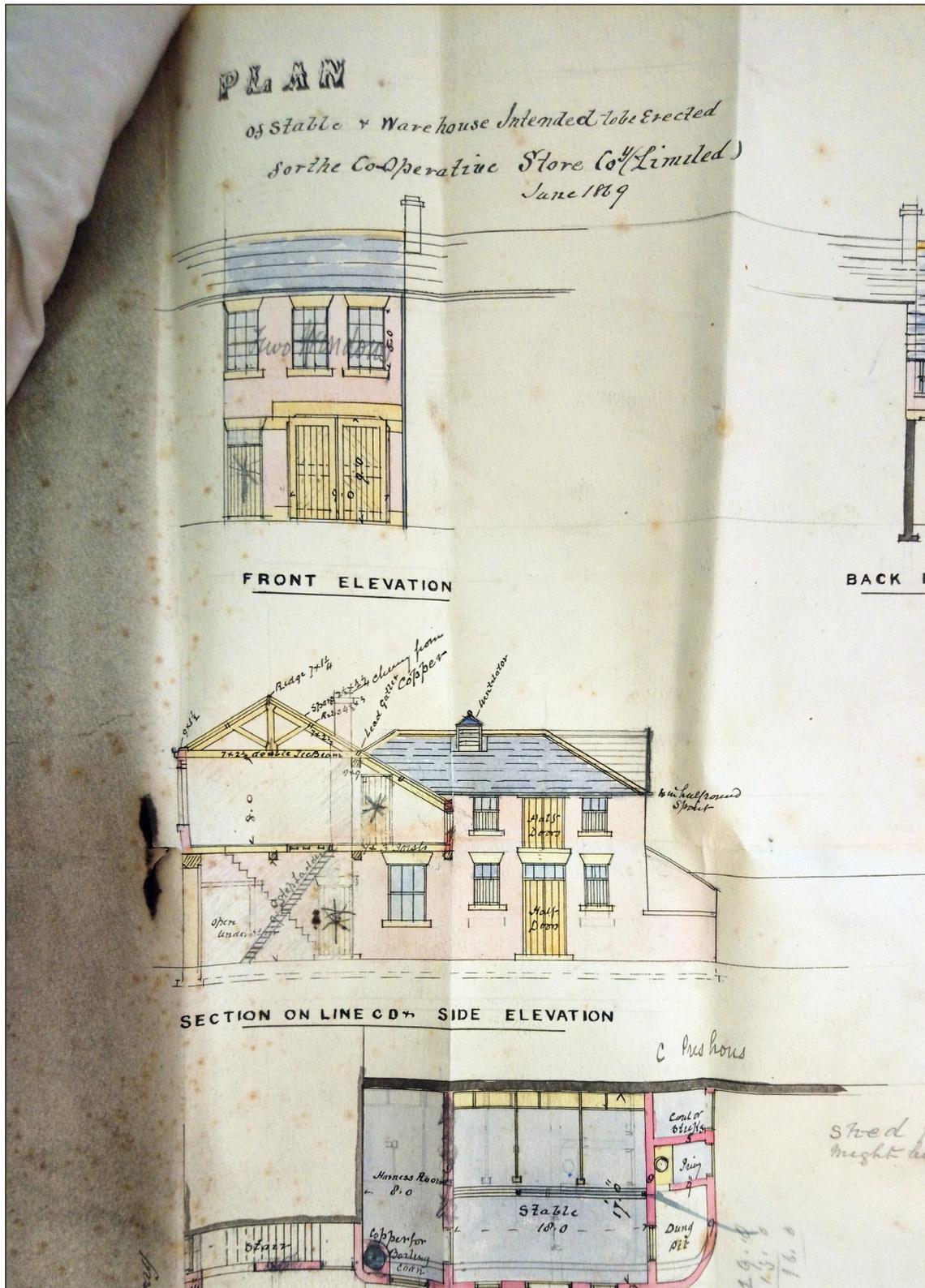


Figure 13: New stables and warehouse on Back Way, drawn by J D Thompson, 1869 (UD/BA 432/73 Bishop Auckland Urban District Council. Reproduced by permission of Durham County Record Office (DRO))

physical evidence identifies it and the first reference to stabling in Readshaw's narrative is in 1875, when the Society constructed stables on Durham Street (then King Street; interestingly on land purchased from a Mr James Thompson).⁹¹ If the stables at the central stores were built, they appear to have been substantially demolished by 1883, the date of the first available plans of the rear warehouses, and were perhaps damaged by the fire noted above. The proposals were intended to be built where the Co-operative's original plot behind Newgate Street met Back Way: Thompson's plan has 'C Preshous' written on the plot across the boundary wall to the north and Readshaw notes that Nos 85 & 86 (immediately north of the original plot) were occupied by Mrs Preshous when they were purchased by the Society in 1880.⁹²

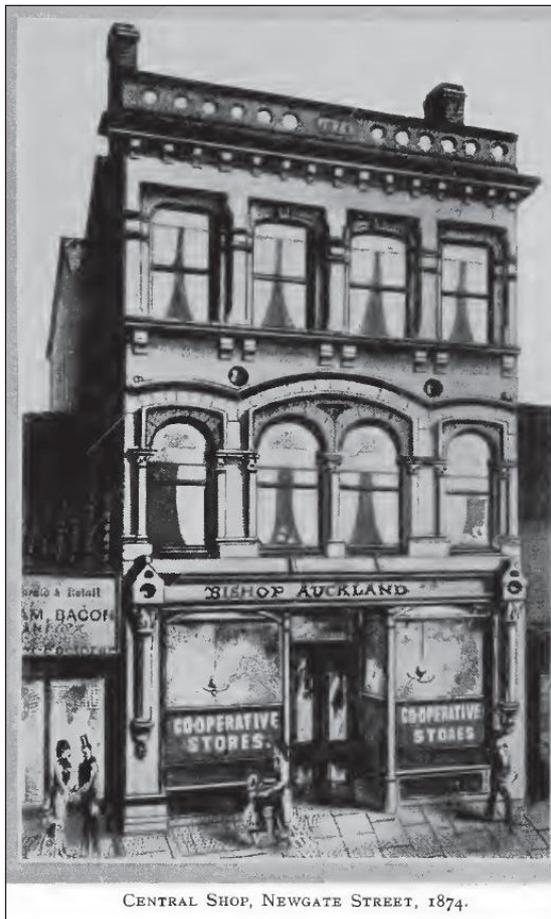


Figure 14: (a) Photograph of W V Thompson's 1873 building for the Bishop Auckland Co-operative Society Stores, Newgate Street, photograph dated 1874. (From Readshaw 1910, 147: Publication out of copyright) (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 14: (b) The 1873 building in the context of the other extensions (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

Substantial enlargement was undertaken in 1873, when the Society yet again outgrew the accommodation at the Newgate Street shop premises. A Society report of 17 March 1873 notes the plans for expansion:

Owing to the large increase in business, and in accordance with a resolution passed at the last Half-yearly Meeting, we have decided to pull down and enlarge the shop premises. The plans have been passed by the Board of Health, tenders have been received and accepted, and we shall commence operations at once. During alterations the business will be carried on in the large warehouse behind the present shop, the entrance to which will be from the back street. The road to the street is up the street called Great Gates...⁹³

The large warehouse behind the shop was presumably the structure designed by John Walton in 1863. The new shop building was designed by William Vickers Thompson, architect, of Bishop Auckland (1836-88; discussed below), and is denoted (as are all four phases of the building) by a distinct embossed date stone centrally located on the parapet. No plans have been located for this building, but an illustration created the following year (1874) survives (Figures 14a and b). The image emphasises the relatively modest scale of the original building, which was four bays wide and three storeys high raised over a basement, in ashlar sandstone. This building laid the tone for the extensions that were to follow to the north (1882-82) and south (1892-94) in both style and palette; the style is classically influenced, although liberally ornamented, with closely-spaced round- and segmental-headed window openings over a generously-glazed shopfront. By the 1870s fascia signage, flanked by console brackets resting on colonettes, was a common arrangement, having ousted the more exact classical use of full pilasters and entablature from around the 1830s.⁹⁴ The frame of the shop front is also typical of the late 19th century, larger sheet glass having become available from the 1850s and '60s, and framed by slender iron or hardwood colonettes with segmental arched heads.⁹⁵ The double-pitched roof which is clearly shown in the image remains intact, with late 19th-century roof timbers although these have not been photographed. Evidence of the late 19th-century ground-floor shop frontage has, as with the other buildings, been largely if not entirely subsumed by 20th-century modernisation. However, the original exterior fabric generally survives above ground-floor level, including the single-pane timber sash windows.

Likewise, no plans survive to illuminate the original uses of the 1873 building, but Readshaw states that this part of the building was used as the grocery and provision shop, boot and shoe shop, and boot stockroom when he was writing his history in 1910.⁹⁶ Grocery and provisions were perhaps its original use as well, given that it was the only store when first built, and these would have been the sort of general goods that the Co-operative began its operations with; boot and shoes were sold by the Society from an early stage but not manufactured by them until 1877.⁹⁷ In July 1876, *The Northern Echo* reported that the 'new Co-operative Stores' were severely damaged by fire and a subsequent explosion of blasting powder, which was apparently being stored in the rear warehouse.⁹⁸ Communication with the National

Co-operation Archive has not shed any light on why a co-operative society would have been storing explosive powder.⁹⁹ Coverage of the blaze gives an indication of the varied range of productivity that was already by that date being undertaken at the Co-operative complex. It is reported:

The fire was raging in the grocery warehouse, and had reached two waggons which were standing in the yard laden with flour and groceries. Great caution had to be exercised, as it was known that a quantity of blasting powder was stored in the warehouse where the fire was raging...(following the subsequent explosion)...the whole of the back premises, including the fruit dressing-room, bacon warehouse, tailors' workroom, sewing machine-room, committee-room, paper store, shoe room and tea-store were instantly wrecked.¹⁰⁰

The explosion, it appears, actually extinguished the fire, and saved the retail frontage from severe damage. The same article reports:

The debris caused by the explosion in a great measure subdued the flames, and prevented the fire reaching the extensive and handsome front building (which was only erected, at great cost, about two years ago and was attached to the large and extensive warehouses).¹⁰¹

Readshaw also makes reference to the 1876 fire, noting that the building was insured, and that a sum of £1,044-14s-9d was received from the insurers to make good the damage.¹⁰² Given the extent of this sum, and Readshaw's description that the warehouses were 'completely destroyed', it is likely that this represented a significant phase of rebuilding, although he provides no details besides that the Society 'speedily recovered its position'.¹⁰³ It is worth noting that the fire presumably destroyed the Society's original 1863 warehouse designed by Walton. The pre-existing volume marked 'general warehouse' on James Linday's plans from 1883 (*see below*) may well represent some of the rebuilding undertaken after the 1876 fire.

Within a decade, in 1882-83, a new block was constructed to the north of the 1873 store, comprising the plots of 85-86 Newgate Street.¹⁰⁴ Following the death of John Adamson, proprietor of No. 85, the Society took the opportunity to purchase that shop at auction (which included the backlands of both plots 85 & 86). It is notable that they did so through a third party, which Readshaw attributes to the potential opposition of independent local tradesfolk who may have objected to the further expansion of the Society's operations.¹⁰⁵ The premises were secured for £1,130 and the Society also purchased the adjoining street-fronting shop to the north, 86 Newgate Street, for £615, representing a significant expansion to the existing site. No work proceeded until 1882 when, according to Readshaw, the decision was taken to demolish the existing buildings and build additions comprising of shops, warehouses and cellars to supplement the existing premises.¹⁰⁶

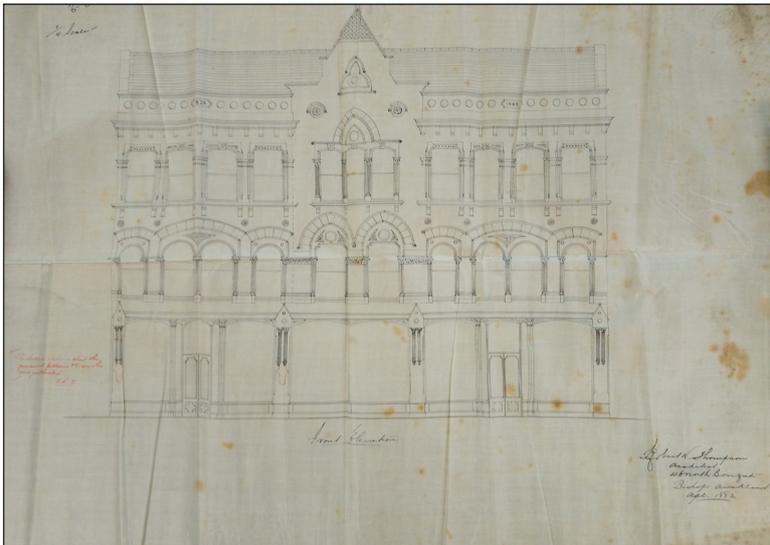


Figure 15: R W Thompson, (a) Front elevation to Newgate Street. Note that the four bays to the left belong to the earlier building. (UD/BA 432/538 Bishop Auckland Urban District Council. All reproduced by permission of Durham County Record Office (DRO))



Figure 15: R W Thompson, (b) First- and second-floor plans. (UD/BA 432/538 Bishop Auckland Urban District Council. All reproduced by permission of Durham County Record Office (DRO))

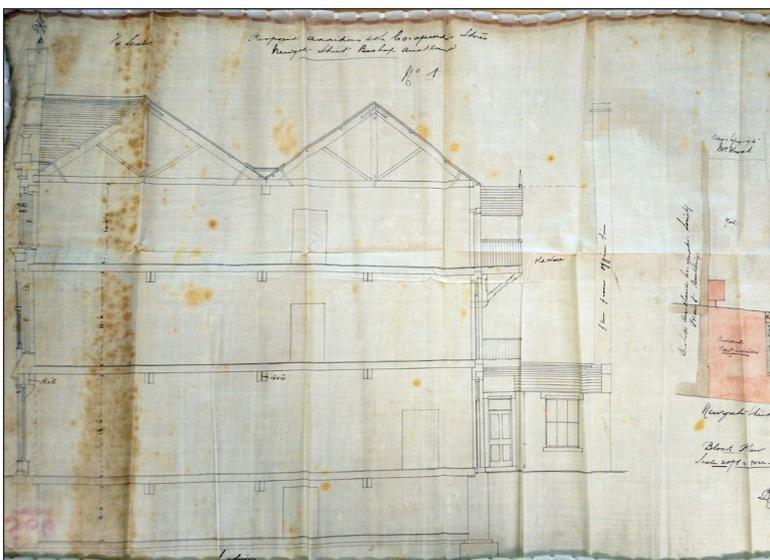


Figure 15: R W Thompson (c) Sectional view of the proposed extension to the Bishop Auckland co-operative stores in 1882. (UD/BA 432/538 Bishop Auckland Urban District Council. All reproduced by permission of Durham County Record Office (DRO))

The architect's drawings for the 1882-83 street frontage extension are held in Durham County Record Office, and signed by Robert W Thompson (*circa* 1850-1896) (Figures 15a, b and c). The tenders were appointed to G H Bell for masonry; Thomas Manners for joinery; S Kirby for plasterwork; W Pulford for slating; Messrs Cooke and Bell for plumbing; and Mr Pallister for painting, all local tradesmen of Bishop Auckland. The new stores were completed in April 1883 at a cost of £1,877-4s.¹⁰⁷



Figure 16: View of the extended Bishop Auckland co-operative stores, Newgate Street, 1883. (From Readshaw 1910, 151: Publication out of copyright)

Thompson deliberately designed the new building to create a symmetrical composition incorporating the earlier building, the four-bay section to the north side of the centrepiece being almost identical to the 1873 structure (*see* Figure 15a). This design choice was somewhat unusual for a co-operative stores building, which tended to expand in stylistically distinct phases.¹⁰⁸ The centrepiece is characterised by a pointed gable, which succeeds in giving the whole a rather more Gothic appearance than the original block, which has a more classical composition. Its execution as planned is confirmed by the photograph of 1883 included as Figure 16. The ground-floor retail frontage was composed of three bays separated by pedimented consoles and with central recessed entrance doorways in the end bays, each containing double doors flanked by fluted columns. As above, this shopfront was completely remodelled in the latter half of the 20th century and no physical evidence appears to survive of the fabric that pre-dated it.

The slate roof is concealed behind the street-fronting parapet, identical to the 1873 building with a central embossed date stone flanked by six chamfered circular perforations (Figure 17). Curiously, the date stone reads '1882' although as noted above, the building was not completed until the following year. This may have been because the date stone was completed at an early stage, or perhaps because the final completion may have been behind schedule. Like the adjoining original building, the roof has a double pitch and is carried on two rows of king post trusses. A comparison of Thompson's drawings with the building today indicates that the plan of the 1882-83 building is largely unchanged. It seems that the small rectangular projection to the north-east was included simply to enable the fourth bay to be built to ensure symmetry with the 1873 wing. This projection is shown abutting a 'cottage', and the new building clearly towered above its neighbours as

it still does today (see Figure 16). Thompson's plans show that on the ground floor the party wall to the 1873 premises was removed, replaced with columns (now encased in modern finishes) and the existing shop space extended into part of the new building (in the two bays topped by the gable), while the shop to the north was physically separate, although accessible from inside (Figure 18). At first-floor level the spaces were subdivided into smaller showrooms.



Figure 17: Detail of the datestone from the 1882-83 extension (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 18: Columns with later facings at the division between the 1873 and 1882-83 blocks (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

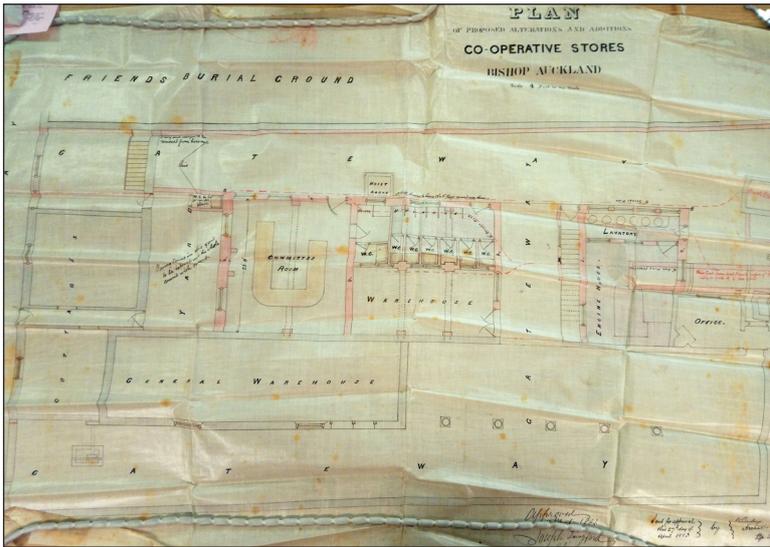


Figure 19: (a) James Linday's ground-floor plan of warehouse and office extensions, Newgate Street, 1883 (UD/BA 432/547 Bishop Auckland Urban District Council. Reproduced by permission of DRO)

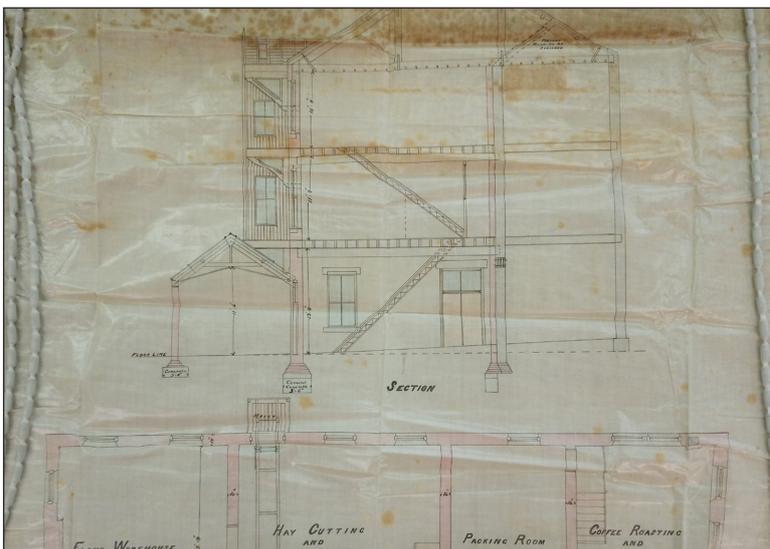


Figure 19: (b) James Linday's second floor plan and section, Newgate Street, 1883 (UD/BA 432/547 Bishop Auckland Urban District Council. Reproduced by permission of DRO)

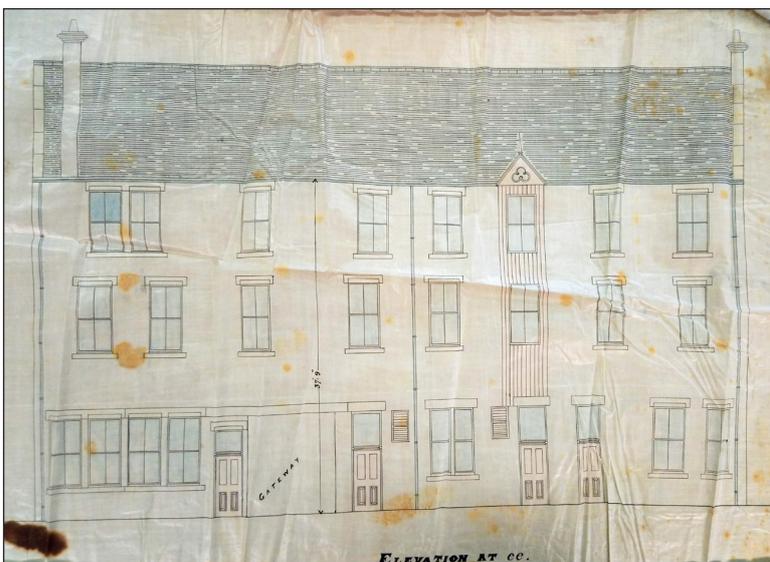


Figure 19: (c) To the rear of the extended co-operative stores, Newgate Street, 1883 (UD/BA 432/547 Bishop Auckland Urban District Council. Reproduced by permission of DRO)

Extensions by James Linday

In the same month as the completion of the 1882-83 extension, on 27 April 1883, further contracts totalling £2,613-11s-9d were let for the construction of new warehouses behind the premises on Newgate Street.¹⁰⁹ That this sum is considerably more than that expended on the retail frontage, which was undoubtedly the more architecturally sophisticated, yields some insight as to the scale of the warehouse and packing complex to rear. The approved drawings were prepared by James Linday, who resigned from his position as Secretary of the Society to undertake their architectural work (Figures 19a, b and c).¹¹⁰ It is unclear what Linday's background in architecture was and although he signs himself 'Architect' on his drawings, his training may have been rudimentary and his title self-styled. However, a letter attached to one of his later designs for the Co-operative Society (1893 office extensions discussed below) bears his stamp reading 'Telegraphic Address – James Linday – Bishop Auckland – Architect, Surveyor and Licenced Valuer' (Figure 20). He was listed in Kelly's Directory as a mineral surveyor in 1890 and nominated as a member of the North of England Institute of Mining and Mechanical Engineers in 1892.¹¹¹ Readshaw records that James' brother, Robert, prepared plans for the new Co-operative branch premises at Butterknowle in 1890, indicating that he too was involved in architecture in Bishop Auckland.¹¹²

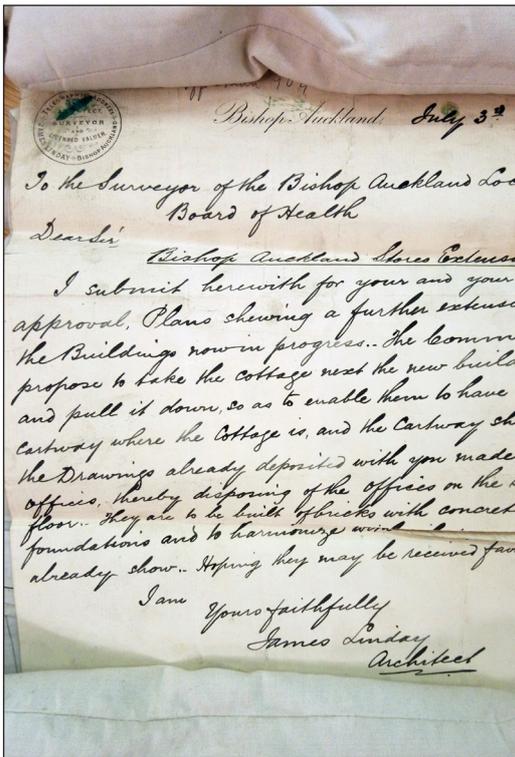


Figure 20: Detail of James Linday's professional stamp from a letter of 1893 (UD/BA 432/690 Bishop Auckland Urban District Council. Reproduced by permission of DRO)

Linday's warehouse and associated offices comprised a linear three-storey building of functional appearance, beneath a slated roof with stone verges having chimneystacks at either end. Windows were unevenly spaced, and a hoist was located to the west of centre on the north elevation, housed within a timber sheeted gabled outshot which rose from the first floor, and served the range of processing, packing and storage rooms on the first and second floors. This building is shown on the plan to be detached from the main front block, and surrounded on three sides by 'gateways' or passageways, for ease of circulation. Although there has been remodelling, these are still evident in the extant arrangement of the building; the north gateway is shown to have been designed to have a glazed roof, although there is no evidence to show whether this was built as constructed; the area remains covered, but by a late 20th-century timber structure (Figure 21). The plans also usefully illustrate the diversity of produce

and processing provided by the Society at the time, with dedicated spaces for flour and hay storage, corn and grain crushing, coffee roasting and grinding, engine rooms and packing rooms. The ground-floor plan shows two cottages lining Back Way (now Westgate Street) and bounding the warehouse yard to the west; at this time the cottages were not in the ownership of the Society, but were purchased in 1887 to facilitate additional extensions, and presumably demolished some time later.¹¹³



Figure 21: The timber structure covering the north gateway (R140-142) (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 22: Photograph of the Bishop Auckland co-operative stores, Newgate Street, following the 1892-94 extensions (From Readshaw 1910, 157: Publication out of copyright)



Figure 23: Detail of truncated central gable to 1892-94 section (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

The next major development began early in 1892 when the Society purchased, at a cost of £3,900, a range of three shops to the south of their existing premises, in addition to seven cottages to the rear, from the representatives of the late owner, John Donaldson.¹¹⁴ Linday was again appointed to design the extension, which is almost a complete copy and mirror image of the 1882-83 building abutting the north side of the original 1873 building, but his drawings for this extension have not been located (Figure 22). The gable detailing was originally designed to align with the earlier gable of 1882-83, but has been truncated, with the result that the existing central gable has a rather clumsy appearance (Figure 23; for appearance in 1914 see Figure 35). This alteration took place at an unknown date, but is shown to have been intact in 1961 (see Figure 2). The new buildings covered an area of 3,449 yards and cost £7,891-3s-4d, the contracts being let to Mr Marshall for masonry; William Hudson for joinery; Mr Marshall for slating; S Kirby for plastering (the only contractor from the previous phase of extensions); Mr Thompson for painting; and Mr Kilburn for plumbing.¹¹⁵

Alterations to this scheme were made during the erection of the new building, comprising changes at the rear to the existing arrangement of cottages and an existing 'cartway'. These plans are somewhat ambiguous and may reveal Linday's lack of formal training as an architect (Figures 24a, b and c). His accompanying letter to the Local Board of Health, dated 3 July 1893, confirms that the extensions on Newgate Street designed in 1892 were 'now in progress', and expresses the desire of the Committee to have the existing cottage to the rear pulled down, 'so as to enable them to have their cartway where the cottage is, and the cartway shown in the drawings already submitted to you made into offices, thereby disposing of the offices on the second floor' (see Figure 20).¹¹⁶ This cartway was presumably intended to provide a link to the warehouses of 1883, and the proposed first-floor offices are marked on the drawings as 'waiting room', 'safe room', 'manager's office' and 'Mr Walker's Office'; all are shown to have a fireplace with the exception of the safe room, which was accessed from Mr Walker's office only.¹¹⁷ Henry Kellett was the general manager at the time and Mr John Walker had been the head clerk since 1883.¹¹⁸ This extension can be identified today on plans of the stores and the bifurcated staircase lines up with the one surviving in the shops housed in the 1892-94 building, the structural fabric of which seems to be original. The various offices located here were in use for retail space when the building closed (R111 & R112). The first-floor offices and strong room, shown in roughly their original (1893) configuration in the 1961 survey plan, have since been knocked through into a single space (R208) connecting through to the front shops.

According to Readshaw, the Society encountered 'many unforeseen difficulties' during the construction process, but he does not give further details except that the son of one of the Society's employees was killed on site.¹¹⁹ The celebratory opening took place on 14 July 1894 in the park of the Bishop's Palace conducted by the Society's treasurer, Johnathan Parkin, and the manager, Henry Kellet.¹²⁰ The opening was followed by a procession led by the town brass band to a tea party for 5,000 held in three tents and a large marquee. A report to the committee on 11 September 1894 relates that the committee were pleased with the enlargements,

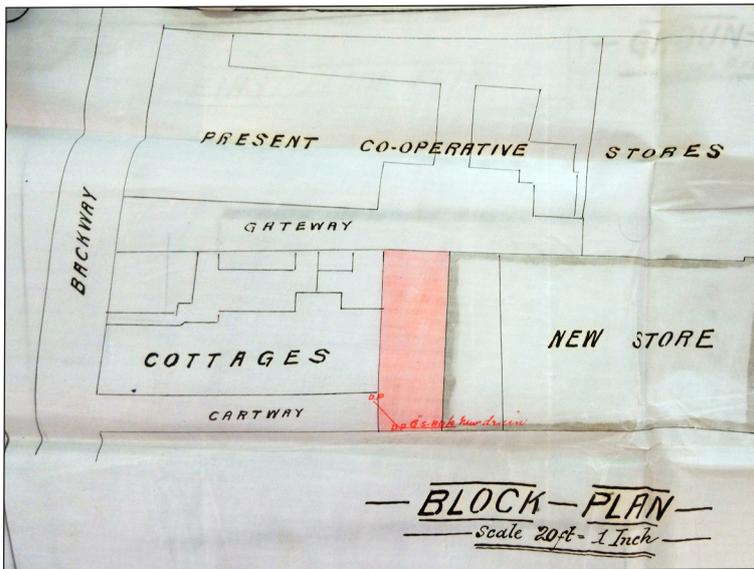


Figure 24: (a) Block plan of Lindsay's proposed plans of 1893 for the existing site to rear of the 1892-4 block. (UD/BA/432 690 Bishop Auckland Urban District Council. Reproduced by permission of DRO)

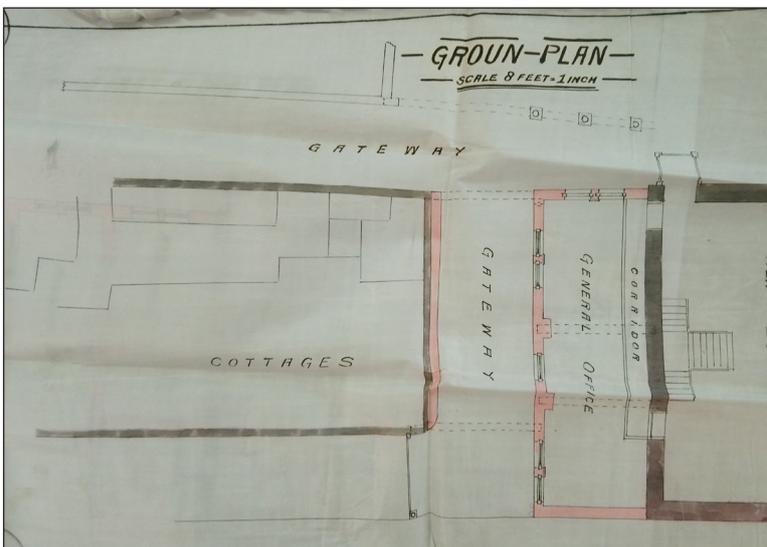


Figure 24: (b) Ground-floor plan of Lindsay's proposed plans of 1893 for the existing site to rear of the 1892-4 block. (UD/BA/432 690 Bishop Auckland Urban District Council. Reproduced by permission of DRO)

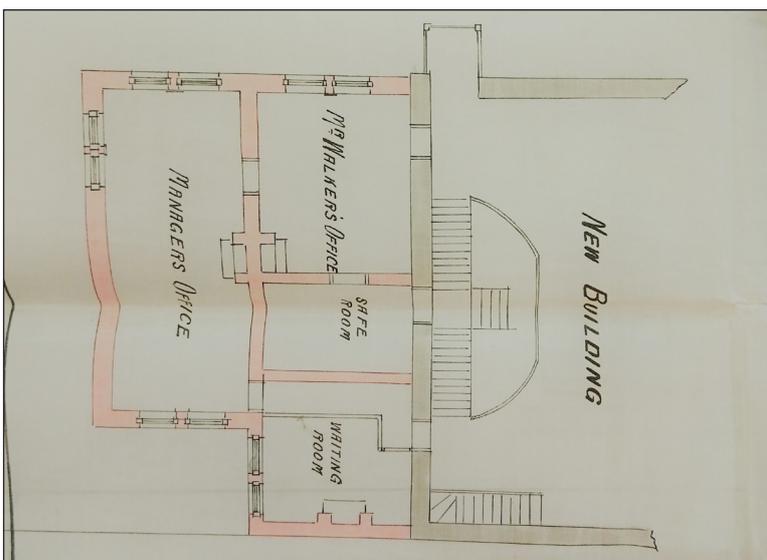


Figure 24: (c) First-floor plan of Lindsay's proposed plans of 1893 for the existing site to rear of the 1892-4 block. (UD/BA/432 690 Bishop Auckland Urban District Council. Reproduced by permission of DRO)

noting that since the opening the buildings 'have been visited by scores of hundreds of members and others, who have invariably expressed their appreciation of the splendid accommodation we now possess in the Drapery, Millinery, and Furnishing Departments, for transacting an extensive trade.'¹²¹ In 1910 this new building held the drapery and earthenware departments on the ground floor, the carpet and mantle departments on the first floor and furnishing departments on the second floor.¹²²



Figure 25: Interior view of R104 in the 1892-94 block looking west from the north-east corner (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

What is visible of this extension on the 1893 office alteration plans and what can be seen on the survey plan of the 1960s suggests that this extension was consciously intended to have a more open-plan layout than previous phases, each floor comprising a single open shop floor divided by a row of columns. This is reflective of a context of reorganisation and adaptation in co-operative stores in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, endeavouring to accommodate their many departments, and the following decades saw a strong movement towards open floor plans and display units rather

than counters.¹²³ Plans of the 1882-83 stores (see Figure 15b), supported by the physical evidence of partition walls, down-stands and inserted structural columns, indicate that the growing range of departments originally operated as largely self-contained units, usually stretching the depth of the main range as a single space (Figure 25). Again, this was fairly typical for the gradual evolution of a late 19th- / early 20th-century retail premises, in contrast to the large open department store arrangement which emerged in the first few decades of the 20th century, and which influenced the rearrangements to the Bishop Auckland stores in the 1960s. Each of the Newgate Street phases functioned fully for retail purposes at ground-floor level, whilst the upper floors were a mixture of additional show room and retail departments, as well as operational spaces including offices, stock rooms and staff rooms.

Additional warehouse alterations

There is some difficulty in unravelling the next stage of the building development. The Durham Record Office holds a set of drawings entitled 'Proposed Additions and Alterations' to the co-operative stores, which, unusually in their collection, bear



Figure 26: (a) Elevation and section of undated Co-operative warehouses on Back Way to the rear of the central stores. (UD/BA 432/671 Bishop Auckland Urban District Council. Reproduced by permission of DRO)

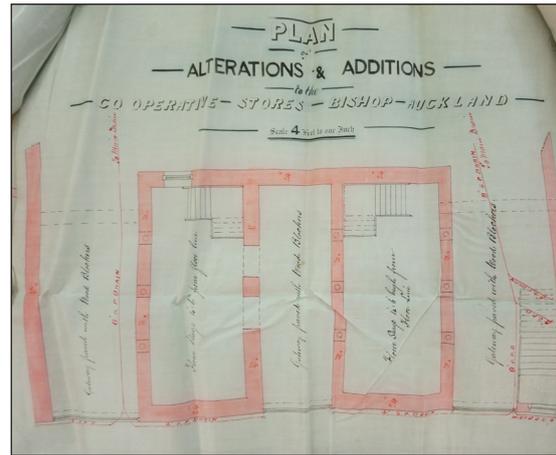


Figure 26: (b) Ground-floor plan of undated Co-operative warehouses on Back Way to the rear of the central stores. (UD/BA 432/671 Bishop Auckland Urban District Council. Reproduced by permission of DRO)

no dates of submission or approval and no architect's signature (Figures 26a and b).¹²⁴ The elevation drawing depicts a three-storey gabled warehouse situated on Back Way adjacent to the Friends' Burial Ground. The ground floor incorporates three covered gateways, each of which was paved with 'wooden blockers'. Only the 'wooden blocker'-paved northern gateway survives today, leading to the rear of the 1882-83 shop building with the site's brick boundary wall to the north. The central gateway appears to have been a cul-de-sac accessing the 'flour stages' and cellars to either side, while the southern gateway appears to have replaced the stables described above and provided access to the yard behind Block A. With the exception of one east/west cross wall, to the north side of the central gateway, most of the ground and first floors were open, having iron columns which carried the upper floors. A staircase, located at the south end, rose through the full height of the building. Part of the function of the new building must have been to provide more storage space for flour, as the plans and sections show 'flour stages' elevated 1.2m above the wooden blocker floors which form mezzanine levels, presumably elevated to facilitate loading and unloading of vehicles and to keep the flour free from pests. Overlaying the plans for the warehouse onto James Linday's warehouse drawings from 1883 indicates that the proposal was probably intended to be built at the end of that warehouse, incorporating the two existing gateways and replacing the pair of cottages shown there (Figure 27). These may be the pair that Readshaw notes were tenanted by the Society, then purchased for £350 in 1887 and 'kept in reserve for the next extension'.¹²⁵ Chronologically, the next extensions were Linday's 1892-94 expansions on Newgate Street. The Record Office drawings register shows that the proposals fall amongst other submissions from 1892 and there are some similarities in the presentational style of the drawings to those signed by Linday, who was the Society architect at that time. It is possible that this warehouse formed part of the extensions that took place in 1892-94: the cost of these works, £7,891-31s, by

comparison exceeds the combined cost of the 1882-82 building and the subsequent 1883 warehouse, suggesting the work may have included more than just the frontage on Newgate Street.¹²⁶

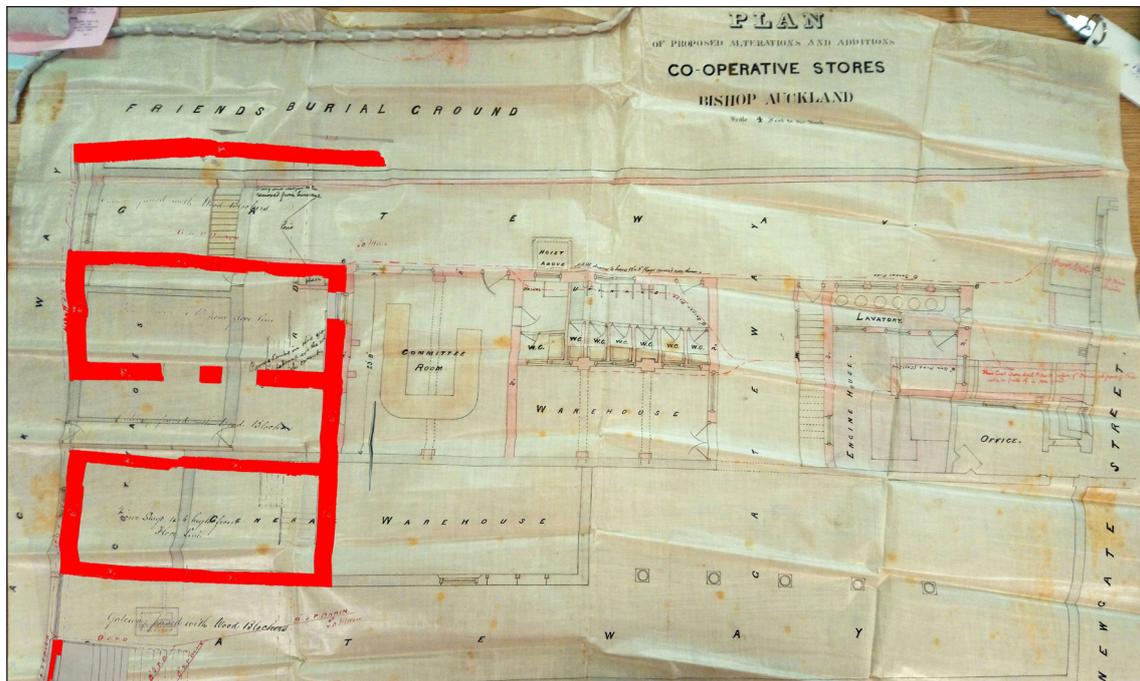


Figure 27: Overlay of the undated warehouse plans onto Linday's plans for the 1883 warehouse and gateways (UD/BA 432/547 Bishop Auckland Urban District Council. Reproduced by permission of DRO)

However, Readshaw's narrative, which otherwise matches the available plans fairly accurately, makes no mention of a large new warehouse being constructed in the 1890s. What he does describe is the building of a new warehouse in 1901-03, following complaints about the congestion of wagons and carts at the stores, which fits the appearance of the undated proposals. Plans were prepared in 1901 by an architect called Frederick Howard Livesay (1869-1924) and the contract was let for £2,832-2s-3d on 16 June, the new building being completed in early 1903.¹²⁷ Livesay is listed in Kelly's Directory of 1914 as 'architect and surveyor' working from 107 Newgate Street.¹²⁸ He was articled to William Livesay of Darlington, presumably a relation, from 1885-90 and was later his assistant (1893-96), after which he commenced independent practice, being nominated to the Royal Institute for British Architects (RIBA) in 1911.¹²⁹ In April 1908, he was confirmed as a Lieutenant in the 2nd Volunteer Battalion, The Durham Light Infantry.¹³⁰

Readshaw relates that in 1901, after inspection of the 'flour yard and other two sites outside ... they [the committee] decided to make extensive alterations at the back of the premises by pulling down the cottages standing there'.¹³¹ This also seems to fit the location proposed for the undated drawings of the northwest corner of the co-operative stores site, as the flour yard was presumably that shown at the west end of the 1883 warehouse plan below the first-floor flour warehouse. The



Figure 28: Floor covering of wooden blockers in R141 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 29: View of the co-operative buildings from Back Way showing the late 20th-century water tower (L) and the undated warehouse behind the 1892-94 block (R) (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

committee's requirements from Livesay's alterations and extensions were 'separate roads of ingress and egress, cellars, warehouse, stockrooms, packing-room, and manufacturing rooms' and these needs, especially for cellars and improved access, are fulfilled in the undated proposal drawings.¹³² The 1961 survey plans show that at that date flour was still stored in a three-storey building at this location although it appears to have been much altered from the proposal drawings. Some of the most useful physical evidence is the survival of the 'wooden blockers' shown on warehouse plans to pave the gateways which gives an indication of where these gateways were (Figure 28). Readshaw states that the alterations at this time 'provided a most useful area of yard space, and splendid warehousing, stocking and manufacturing rooms, which have proved of great value'.¹³³ This, the wooden blockers located elsewhere in the gateways and his earlier statement that 'other two sites outside' were inspected prior to construction suggest that the warehouse discussed above was not the only change made at this time.¹³⁴ It is worth noting here that the three-storey warehouse to the rear of the 1892-94 extensions (comprising R115-118, R210-211, and R327) is also otherwise unaccounted for in Readshaw's history and would have been constructed following the demolition of cottages shown by Lindsay in his plans for the office extension of 1893 (Figure 29).¹³⁵ It is possible that this was built as part of the same extensions and alterations.

Changes for the 20th century

In May 1902, concurrently with the construction work, a neighbouring building to the south of the, by now substantially enlarged façade was acquired from Mr Manners.¹³⁶ This building had been constructed in 1894, notably around the same time as Lindsay's façade extension; although similar to the latter in terms of



Figure 30: The 1894 building purchased from C Manners in 1902 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

proportion and palette, being of three storeys (although without basement) and three bays wide, it is quite distinct in style (Figure 30). Although now unified with the phased façade by the continuous replacement shop frontage, the upper storeys are of squared and snecked sandstone rubble, distinguished by a central breakfront crowned by a handsome curvilinear pediment with cartouche breaking a balustraded parapet, and finished with polished ashlar quoins. All windows are rectangular, with single-pane sashes, those to the second floor having moulded sandstone architraves with entablature. The central windows are further embellished with Gibbsian-style blocked jambs. Like the 1892-94 block, the gable here has been truncated, having originally had an upper curvilinear section topped by the surviving urn (see Figure 35).

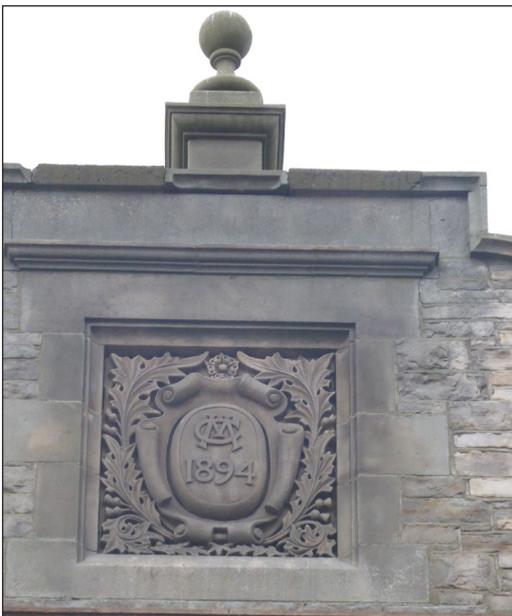


Figure 31: Detail of the gable cartouche with the initials 'CM' for Christopher Manners (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

At the time of its purchase by the Society, the building was only eight years old and was in commercial use as a butcher's shop and dwelling with three cottages to the rear.¹³⁷ Its former owner, Christopher Manners, is listed as a butcher at 83 Newgate Street in 1890, and the family company had moved to 99 Newgate Street in 1914 and continued in operation into the late 20th century.¹³⁸ His initials are shown on the cartouche of the 1894 premises (Figure 31). His brother, Thomas Manners, was the founder of a building company which still operates in Bishop Auckland and is now one of the oldest family-run builders in North East England.¹³⁹ Thomas may have built the new dwelling and shop premises for Christopher in 1894: he is thought to have built various commercial premises on Newgate Street during the late 19th century and his firm executed joinery and plasterwork for the Co-operative Society, notably the 1882-83 extensions.¹⁴⁰

According to Readshaw (who was now writing of events well within his own recall), it was deemed that 'the front premises were well built and in good condition, and of a design and style similar to the other front buildings of the society, and so required not outward alterations to fit them for their purpose.'¹⁴¹ Whilst the date stone should be treated with appropriate caution, it suggests that the building had originally been built in 1894. Upon acquisition by the Co-operative Society in



Figure 32: Plasterwork and chimneypiece in the first-floor manager's office (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

1902, the building was refitted to provide two butcher's shops and a tailoring department on the ground floor (shown by later plans of 1913 to be side-by-side, see Figure 33) whilst upper floors were refitted for staff purposes including Committee and Manager's rooms on the first floor, and meeting and staff-rooms on the second floor.¹⁴² Various elements of original fittings and finishes in these managerial rooms survive today, including geometric linoleum flooring, a neoclassical-style plasterwork ceiling, a chimneypiece to the Manager's office, and wood grained joinery and textured glass in both rooms (Figure 32). Notably, the

rear windows of the committee room have been retained, despite the openings being blocked to install a rear fire stair, probably towards the end of the 20th century (see Figure 40).

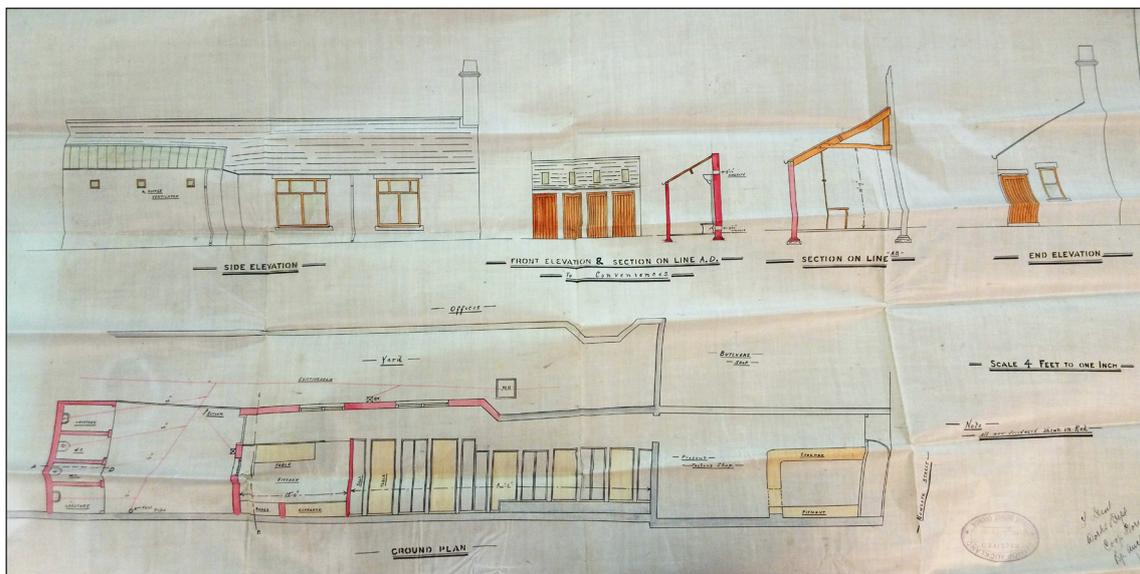


Figure 33: Thomas Dent's 1903 approved drawings for the cafeteria extension to the rear of the existing tailor's department (UD/BA 432/1336 Bishop Auckland Urban District Council. Reproduced by permission of DRO)

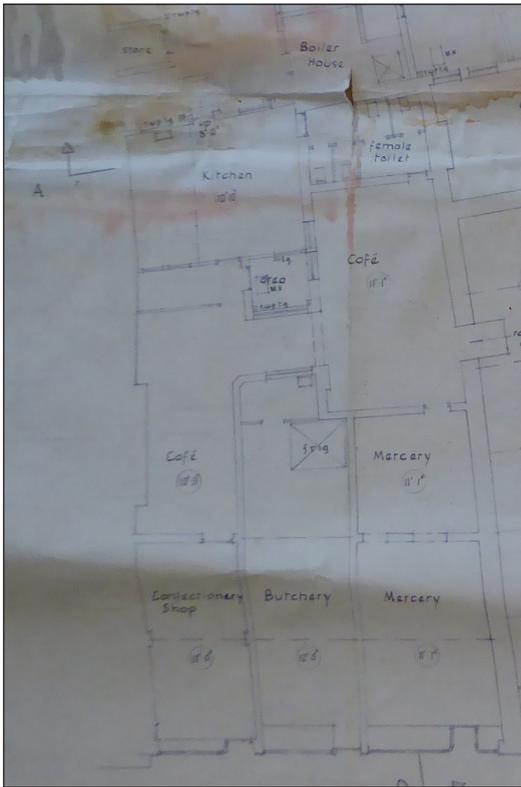


Figure 34: Detail of R A Thomas's 1961 survey drawings showing the cafeteria to the rear of the 1894 block.

About a decade after this refitting, approved plans of 1913 by Thomas Dent show that a single-storey public cafeteria was built to partially abut the rear of the newly remodelled premises, extending into the yard from the rear of the tailoring department, and accommodating five tables, kitchen and toilets (Figure 33).¹⁴³ Thomas Dent had been an employee in the joinery department and was by 1913 the manager of the Society's building department.¹⁴⁴ A narrow access yard remained between the cafeteria and the adjoining gateway and offices to the north side. On the survey drawings from 1961 the cafeteria is still visible and by then had been expanded into the yard to provide extra kitchen facilities with the dining space stretching into the adjoining plot to the north (Figure 34). Although it is unclear whether the accompanying proposal plans in October 1961 were executed, they indicate the intention to combine the existing confectionary shops, butchery, mercery and cafeteria (all in the 1894 building) into a single menswear department (see Appendix 2). Certainly,

at the time of survey (February 2019), the entirety of this space was occupied by late 20th century retail floor extensions, covered with a flat roof, with no trace of the early 20th-century cafeteria.

Readshaw describes the central stores in 1910 as having a street frontage of 155.5 ft with the site extending back 183 ft and that the facilities secured a weekly trade for the Society of £4,450 (Figure 35).¹⁴⁵ At his time of writing, various modern facilities had also recently been installed.¹⁴⁶ Pneumatic cash carriers which allowed cash to be transferred from the tills to a central reserve through a tube system were celebrated as an important feature of the new building at the opening of Linday's 1892-94 building.¹⁴⁷ A low-pressure steam heating system had been fitted, and compressed gas lighting using the system patented by James Keith and Blackman Co. of Farringdon Avenue, London, installed by the north-east firm Messrs J J Spoor and Son; some evidence of this survives in the former Manager's Office in the 1894 section of the building, at first-floor level.

In June 1907, plans were submitted showing the arrangements of water supplies from the town mains for the installation of a Grinnell sprinkler system by Messrs Mather and Platt of Park Works, Manchester; the plans were approved in April 1908 (Figure 36).¹⁴⁸ The Grinnell system was patented in 1890 by Frederick

Grinnell, who developed a glass disc sprinkler system that has formed the basis of all subsequent sprinkler systems, including those in use today.¹⁴⁹ The firm of Mather and Platt, the installers of the system in Bishop Auckland, was established in 1845, and in 1883 had acquired the manufacturing rights to the Grinnell system outside of the United States of America.¹⁵⁰ It is worth noting here that the water tower at the rear of the Co-operative complex was not built to pressurise this sprinkler system, which was originally connected to mains water supply. In 1911, the Co-operative premises, comprising the plots of 89-92 Newgate Street, were valued with a total site value of £22,500, including buildings and machinery of £11,340.¹⁵¹



Figure 35: Newgate Street, showing the Co-operative Society central stores (left), 1914 (D/CL 5/236/A Durham County Library Collections. Reproduced by permission of DRO)

There is relatively limited information on the fortunes of the Bishop Auckland Co-operative central stores during much of the 20th century. A thorough search of original archives may be fruitful in this regard, although it is beyond the scope of this research. In 1921 the sales figures recorded for the Society were recorded to be ‘still record-breaking’, in the *Daily Herald*.¹⁵² However, in 1937, the *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer* reported a notable drop in profits for the Bishop Auckland Co-operative Society central premises, including a fall of £800 in the grocery department alone, and an overall annual fall of £2,000.¹⁵³ The news appeared to cause much consternation amongst the members – they attended in such numbers

that the annual meeting had to be adjourned in order that larger premises could be secured. This represented the first notable change in the trajectory of growth that had hitherto defined the Bishop Auckland co-operative stores and came surprisingly at a time when the co-operative movement nationally was enjoying growth and architectural expansion.¹⁵⁴ In 1947, the fortunes of the Bishop Auckland Co-operative appear to have revived somewhat; it was noted in an article in the *Newcastle Evening Chronicle* to be paying the second highest dividends in the country, running a 'close second' to the Wallsend store in North Tyneside.¹⁵⁵



Figure 36: Pipework and dials associated with the Mather and Platt sprinkler systems (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 37: The water tower at the north-west of the co-operative complex (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

It may have been around this time that the brick water tower on the west gable of Lindsay's 1883 warehouse extension was added (Figure 37). It seems to have been omitted from the 1961 plans, as the external brickwork shows no obvious break between the lower courses and the water tower itself to suggest that it was a later 20th-century addition. The plans do, however, indicate a three-storey warehouse in this location with an internal staircase which may have been the result of early 20th-century alterations to Livesay's warehouse built *circa* 1903, and these could have included the addition of the new water tower. It is possible to offer a rough date for the tower itself thanks to the water tank it contains, which is shown in an advertisement of 1949 in *Grace's Guide to British Industrial History*. The



Figure 38: Mather and Platt, advertisement for cast-iron storage tanks in The Architect and Building News, June 1949

The plans surviving from a survey of July 1961 yield important information with regard to the arrangement of the stores and the range of uses that still characterised the extensive premises as late as the 1960s (Appendix 2). The front shops on the ground floor comprised a ready-mades department, self-service grocery, drapery, tailoring, butchering and confectionary departments with the boot and shoe department, mantles and gowns, and administrative offices on the first floor and carpets and bedding and flooring and furniture on the second floor. The warehousing behind provided individual storage rooms for different products and the manufacturing rooms for clothing and boot and shoe repairs.

poster reveals that the tank was manufactured by Mather and Platt, the same company that installed the Grinnell sprinklers in 1908, and shows a sectional, internally-flanged, cast-iron tank with quadrant corners similar to the one on top of the tower. This suggests that the Bishop Auckland tower was erected in the 1940s when these tanks were being manufactured (Figure 38). *Grace's Guide* also gives an example of another Mather and Platt water storage tank on a building in Central Manchester. Although the precise location is unknown, it displays an even more exaggerated corbelled course to carry the tank than the one on the Bishop Auckland tower and the online caption suggests this was utilised to reduce the overall footprint of the tower (Figure 39).



Figure 39: Mather and Platt water storage tank on a wide corbelled base, Central Manchester (see bibliography entry Tweedie, A I (ed) and 'Mather and Platt'. Reproduced by permission of 'Grace's Guide to British Industrial History')

The survey in July was followed in October 1961 by extensive proposals for alterations and reorganisation, but these do not all seem to have been executed as intended, for the building today more closely reflects the arrangement as it was on the ‘as existing’ drawings dated July 1961. Both the survey drawings and scheme designs were executed by R A Thomas, architect for the branch office of the Co-operative Wholesale Society’s Architects Department which had opened in Newcastle in 1903.¹⁵⁶ Comparison of the survey and the proposals suggests that they intended to streamline the shop floors on a more contemporary open-plan layout, removing some sections of the party walls between the different building phases and involving various other internal alterations and reorganisation. The strongest indication that the scheme was not fully executed is that Thomas’ proposals included extending the top two storeys of the 1894 building at the rear to provide further retail space on the first and second floors. This was clearly not undertaken and the upper floors of the 1894 building today closely match the July 1961 survey plans (Figure 40). Similarly, on the ground floor, he proposed the alteration of the grocery store in the rear warehouses so that it abutted the back of the 1893 office extension and did not project into the covered yard to the north. This also did not happen, as the latter projection is still defined with a prominent curved brick corner (R121) (Figure 41).



Figure 40: View of the rear of the 1894 building bought in 1902 no change according to the 1961 plans (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

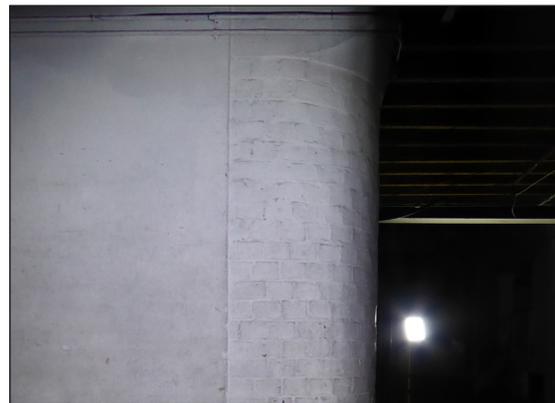


Figure 41: The prominent rounded corner in the covered yard behind Linday’s 1892-94 store extension (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

However, one of the most notable changes which does appear to have been carried out is the replacement of the existing (possibly original) shopfront windows and entrances. The July 1961 survey plans make clear the distinct shopfront units comprising individual departments, reflecting the stores’ gradual expansion, while the October plans propose a streamlined replacement with a reduced number of entrances. A photograph from *circa* 1970 shows that recent street-front alterations had had a major impact on the appearance of the building (Figure 42). Fascia signage was used to unite the different premises and new 20th-century shopfronts installed which still form the basis of what can be seen today. Thomas’

proposed elevation also shows the substantial projecting 'Co-op' sign visible in the photograph, blocking up a central second-floor window of the 1892-94 building.



Figure 42: Newgate Street, showing the Bishop Auckland Co-operative central stores following alterations in 1961-62, circa 1970 (Picture courtesy of The Northern Echo)

At some point between 1961 and the OS map revision published in 1980, two further noticeable changes were made (Figure 43). One is the extension of the ground-floor retail space in the 1894 building, comprising a single-storey flat-roofed structure replacing the earlier cafeteria, kitchen and yards (Figure 44). This is still visible on 21st-century plans and in the surviving fabric. It is possible that this alteration was executed as an alternative to Thomas' abortive proposal to increase retail space on the upper floors in this area. The 1980 OS revision also shows that a small portion of the complex in the south-west corner had been demolished. The 1961 plans show that this was a two-storey structure containing

bacon houses and cheese room to the ground floor, with sewing and alteration rooms above. It is now in use as a small car park, and this was presumably the space's intended original function.

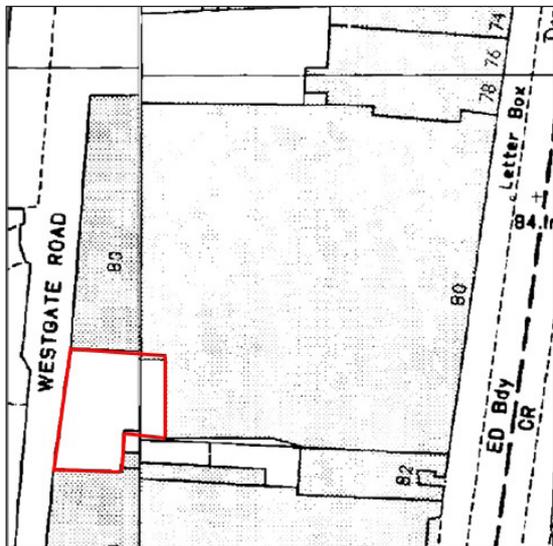


Figure 43: Extract from the 1:1250 Ordnance Survey map published in 1980 showing the area demolished to the south-west of the site (© Crown Copyright and database rights 2019. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence Number 100019088)



Figure 44: The expanded ground-floor retail space in the 1894 building bought in 1902, which replaced the former cafeteria and kitchen (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

Timeline of building developments

- 1860 The Bishop Auckland Co-operative and Flour Society Ltd. founded
- 1860 A shop is rented in South Church Lane, Bishop Auckland
- 1862 A shop is purchased on Newgate Street (No. 84) and the Society relocates to the new premises
- 1863 Warehouse constructed behind the Newgate Street shop
- 1869 Stables and extra storage built on Back Way, exact location unclear
- 1873 Original shop demolished and rebuilt on Newgate Street
- 1876 New premises on Newgate Street damaged by fire
- 1880 Purchase of additional shops to north (Nos 85-86)
- 1882-83 Demolition of shops (Nos 85-86) and extension of central stores onto these plots
- 1883 New warehouses, offices and covered yards constructed behind the new extensions (Nos 84-86)
- 1887 Purchase of cottages on Back Way behind Nos 84-86
- 1892 Purchase of three further shops to south and seven cottages behind
Shops demolished to provide a further extension to the central stores main frontage to Newgate Street
- 1893 Additional proposals to build managerial offices adjoining the rear of the new extension
- 1894 Opening of the new extensions
- 1901-03 Demolition of cottages purchased and construction of new warehouse and cellars, and other alterations
- 1902 Purchase of shops to south of the premises (dated 1894)
- 1908 Installation of Grinnell sprinkler system
- 1913 Extension behind tailoring shop in the 1894 building to provide public cafeteria space
- circa* 1949 Water tower built and warehouse altered in north-east section of site, possibly alongside updating of sprinkler system

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| 1961 | Survey and proposal for reorganisation of central stores including new shopfronts and external signage |
| 1968 | Transfer of all assets to Darlington Co-operative Society |
| <i>circa</i> 1980 | In use as a department store run by the North Eastern Co-operative Society |
| 2006 | Sold to Anglia Regional Co-operative Society and the store relaunched as Westgate Department Store |
| 2011 | Westgate Department Store bought by Beales Department Stores |
| 2017 | Beales Department Stores close their branch in Bishop Auckland |

The Thompson architects of Bishop Auckland

William Thompson (*circa* 1810-1858) was an architect, surveyor and accountant who lived on Newgate Street from at least 1841.¹⁵⁷ He is thought to have been architect to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners and the designer of the Church of St Anne, Market Place, in the 1840s.¹⁵⁸ Hagar's directory of 1851 lists William as the only architect in the town.¹⁵⁹ He had six sons, William (b 1836; architect), Thomas (b c 1838; stonemason), John (b c 1840; draper), James (b c 1845), Edward (b c 1848) and Robert (b 1850.)¹⁶⁰

William Vickers Thompson (1836-1888) was the eldest son of William Thompson.¹⁶¹ He was listed in 1858 as an agent to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, in the 1861 census as a surveyor and in 1871 as an architect.¹⁶² He was responsible for the first block of the extant Bishop Auckland Co-operative Society central stores in 1873. In the remainder of that decade he designed a church at Stanley, alterations at the Bishop Auckland Union Workhouse, and a new Congregational Church on Victoria Street.¹⁶³ He had bought a house for his family at 2 Etherley Road by 1881, but was examined for bankruptcy in 1884-85 and died in 1888 at Gateshead.¹⁶⁴

The co-operative stores were extended in 1882-83 and again in 1883 by William Vickers' brother, Robert Wilkinson Thompson (1850-1896).¹⁶⁵ In 1871 he was listed as a clerk in the census, but by 1881 was described as an architect and surveyor, living and working from 46 Market Place.¹⁶⁶ Most of his known designs are roughly contemporary with his extensions to the co-operative stores. In 1880 he designed the local Mechanics' Institute on Victoria Street, in *circa* 1882 designed the Lightfoot Institute (Kingsway), in *circa* 1883 designed the Edgar Memorial Hall, off Tenters Street (demolished), and in 1889 designed the rebuilding of the Steam Packet Inn at Middlesborough on Tees.¹⁶⁷ Robert's son, Robert Brown Thompson (*circa* 1879-1929), was also an architect, who undertook alterations to McIntyre's shoe shop (25 Newgate Street; Listed Grade II, NHLE 1196577) in 1909. In 1911 he was listed as the next door neighbour of the shop's proprietor

William John McIntyre at 5 Clarence Street.¹⁶⁸

William Vickers and Robert Wilkinson are known to have worked on the same buildings, primarily the co-operative stores, but it is unknown whether they were in practice together. Readshaw credits William Vickers with the design of the co-operative branch store in Spennymoor in 1876 and goes on to say that this was extended in 1882 by 'Mr Thompson'.¹⁶⁹ However *The Northern Echo* reported that the latter architect was Robert Wilkinson Thompson showing that both brothers were involved, as at the central stores.¹⁷⁰ That they were in partnership is perhaps supported by the fact that we know of no commissions from Robert between 1883 and 1889, which correlates with the bankruptcy and death of William.

Another unknown is the connection of James D Thompson to the family. He is clearly signed as 'Architect' of the stables and warehouse on Back Way in 1869. Although the *Directory of British Architects 1834-1914* lists a J D Thompson of Bishop Auckland active in 1868 there is no evidence for him in censuses for the Thompson family or in local trade directories.¹⁷¹ There is a James Thompson listed as a timber merchant and another as a stone mason, so it is possible that one of these men styled himself an architect.

3. HISTORIC FABRIC ANALYSIS

Introduction

The site now occupied by the former co-operative stores is bounded to the east by Newgate Street, Bishop Auckland's main retail street, and to the west by Westgate Road, a service cul-de-sac (previously known as Back Way). The land slopes gently upwards to the west and is almost level from north to south. The site has a rhombus-shaped boundary with a small rectangular projection to the north-east. For the following discussion the buildings have been divided into blocks listed A-G which correspond with the block plan in Figure 45, and the rooms provided with a unique identification number as shown on the plans in Appendix 3. This section also makes frequent reference to the 1961 survey and proposal plans by R A Thomas found in Appendix 2.

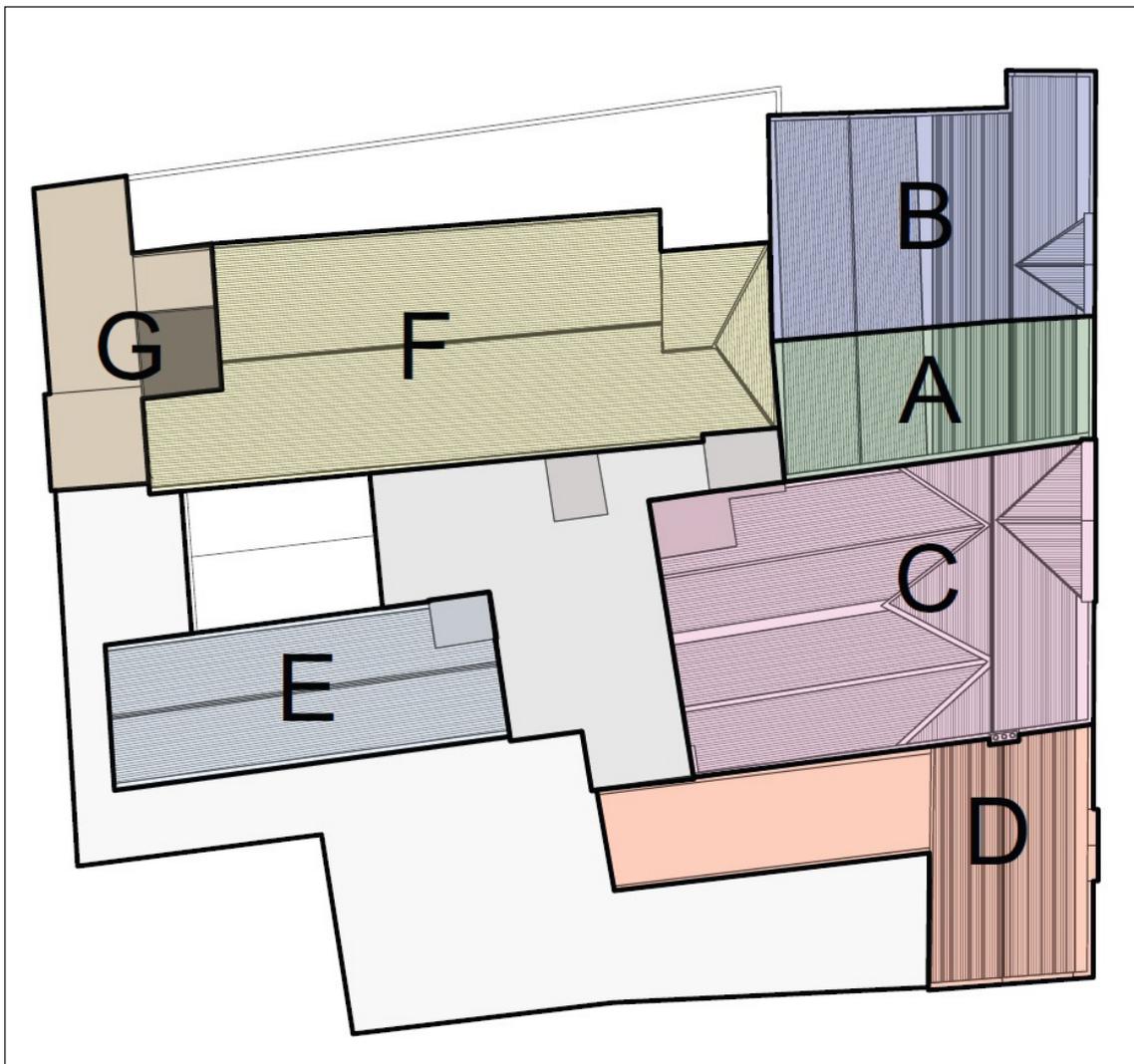


Figure 45: Labelled block plan of the Bishop Auckland Co-operative central stores (Drawn by Alastair Coey Architects © Historic England)

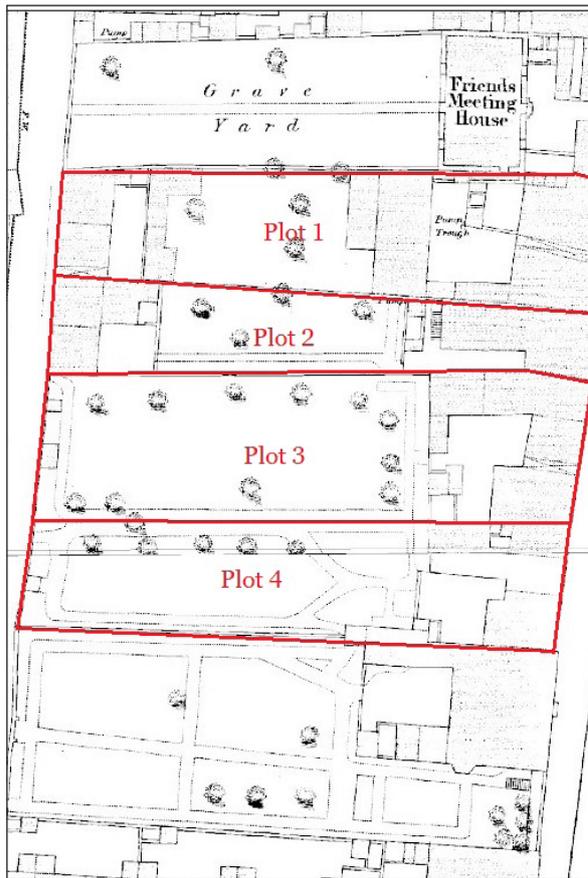


Figure 46: The site of the central stores in 1857, marked with plot divisions discussed in the Historic Fabric Analysis. Reproduced from the 1857 Ordnance Survey map, 1:500

Before development of the co-operative stores complex began in the late 1860s, the site comprised four plots, of varying width, each extending from Newgate Street to Back Way. The 1857 Ordnance Survey map clearly defines the four plots, which hereafter will be referred as Plots 1 to 4, with the northernmost being Plot 1 and the southernmost being Plot 4 (Figure 46). The 1857 map shows buildings fronting onto Newgate Street, each with outbuildings and yards behind and extensive gardens extending further to the west. A row of four cottages faced directly onto Back Way at the west end of Plots 1 and 2. The northernmost three of these survived beyond the 1883 warehouse development but were demolished before 1900 and their sites absorbed into the complex. More cottages were built perpendicular to Back Way on Plot 3 between 1857 and 1893 and these had a 'Cartway' to the south which led to the rear of Block C, returning northwards to the yard behind Block A.¹⁷²

The complex as it exists today is a palimpsest consisting of layer upon layer of incremental alterations, demolitions and replacement, usually executed expediently in response to expansion of the Society's provisioning. The layout of the front-of-house aspects of the store responded to changing retail environments and evolved from individual compartmentalised departments, shops within shops, to the open-plan layouts which survive today. These alterations inevitably involved major structural interventions which required the introduction of new columns and beams to replace formerly solid brick transverse walls. Despite much change, a great deal of evidence of previous iterations does survive.

The three sales area floors in Blocks A-D were subjected to periodic refurbishment with the final iteration probably being carried out in the late 20th or early 21st centuries. A relatively consistent range of floor, wall and ceiling finishes was adopted throughout ground- (R101-R106 and R111), first- (R202-R205) and second-floor (R301-R303) levels (Figure 47). The exposed grid-pattern mineral tile suspended ceiling incorporates integrated modular fluorescent light fittings, downlighters, spot lights and fire suppressant sprinkler heads. During the course

of the site inspection, some ceiling tiles were removed from ground-floor ceilings to permit viewing of the void above. In these locations it was noted that late 19th-century lath and plaster ceilings, downstand beams, associated moulded cornices and decorative finishes appear to survive in a reasonably intact condition.



Figure 47: Interior of R104 looking east showing modernised shop finishes (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

While extant physical fabric is the primary source of information for this study, R A Thomas' 1961 survey drawings and complementary set of plans, sections and elevations showing a scheme for a major remodelling and renovation of the entire premises (much of which seem to have been executed) post-1961, have proved to be an invaluable benchmark in establishing a better understanding of how the complex developed.

Block A - 1873 Building

Evidence of the late 19th-century ground-floor shop frontage has, as with the other buildings, been largely subsumed by 20th-century modernisation. However, the late 19th-century ashlar sandstone treatment survives above ground floor. At first-floor level are four recessed round-headed one over one sash windows; the two central windows are coupled and set below a shallow segmental arch with narrower flanking windows also set under segmental arches (Figure 48). An impost moulding is carried on colonnettes with carved capitals. A continuous hood moulding over the segmental arches terminates in carved label stops at either end and roundels are set in the spandrels of the flanking windows and a carved triangular panel in the spandrel between the two central windows. At second floor, one over one sash windows are recessed within square-headed openings set on a continuous projecting moulded sill course carried on paired moulded consoles aligning with the piers between the windows (Figure 49). The outer windows have quadrant cornered lintels each with a central carved panel; the two central windows have segmental heads with central projecting keystones.

The 'M' profile slate roof is concealed behind a parapet containing a central embossed '1873' date stone flanked by six chamfered circular perforations. The parapet is set on a moulded cornice returning at both ends and carried on evenly

spaced, plain moulded consoles. The roof structure, which appears to align with the roof of Block B to the north, seems to closely resemble that shown on an early photograph (see Figure 14a) and is probably original to the 1873 building. At the front, east side, a parapet gutter drains to externally routed downpipes; the central valley appears to drain to internal downpipes and, to the rear, west side, the back slope drains to eaves gutters.



Figure 48: First-floor windows on the 1892-94 building (exterior of R204) (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 49: Second-floor windows on the 1892-94 building (exterior of R303) (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

Basement (R003, 005 and 006)

The main basement space, R003, occupies the full footprint of the three-storey building above. The concrete floor appears to be of late 20th- or early 21st-century origin. A raised concrete plinth in the north-west corner contains pipes and valves, probably related to a redundant heating system (Figure 50). The north wall is penetrated by an opening, containing ledged and sheeted double doors, connecting the basement of Block A to the basement of Block B, presumably formed at the time of construction of the newer block. To the east of this opening the wall is of limewashed rubble stone which steps slightly northwards towards its east end (Figure 51). To the west, the wall is constructed mainly in limewashed brick returning at the west end to the west wall and an opening into R005. The brick walling to the south of this opening is of much more recent origin and forms the north wall of the base of the lift shaft introduced as part of the post-1961 renovations; the lift shaft is not accessible from the basement. The south wall is built

entirely of limewashed rubble stone and contains a later opening leading to R004 in the basement of Block C. The east wall is of brick construction, carrying the front elevation of the building. A centrally located, brick fin wall projects perpendicular from the east wall, presumably introduced to provide additional support to the floor joists at the ground-floor shop entrance above. Late 19th-century north/south spanning joists survive albeit with their bearings on the south side strengthened through the introduction of a timber beam, set against the south wall and supported by a row of rough square-section timber posts and, on the north side, by a steel beam set in the east alcove (Figure 52). A single centrally located circular iron column with two quatrefoil brackets is the only survival of a set of columns which rose through the entire height of the building to provide support for the central valley beam of the roof (the columns at ground-, first- and second-floor levels were all removed during the post-1961 restructuring) (Figure 53). The underside of the ground-floor floorboards can be seen and there is no indication that the joists ever carried a plaster ceiling.



Figure 50: R003 looking west and showing raised platform with heating system (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 51: Limeswashed rubble construction in the north wall of R003 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 52: The inserted timber beam and posts on the south wall of R003 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 53: The centrally located iron column in R003 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 54: View of R005 looking west from the doorway to R003 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

R005 is accessed from the west end of R003 (Figure 54). The floor is paved with stone slabs and the north, east and west walls are brick, while the south wall is of rubble stone. What appears to be a redundant flue is located in the north-west corner suggesting that this space once housed a boiler plant. The ceiling, constructed from cast concrete, is lower to the south side of a pair of east-west spanning steel beams. A timber trimmer, spanning diagonally from south-west to north-east, carries timber joists on its south side. A large redundant riveted iron water storage tank is set on the floor on the north side of the space, but its original purpose has not been traced.

R006 is an ante chamber to the west of R005. The floor has stone slabs, the walls are brick and the ceiling appears to be concrete. A substantial iron pipe crosses the space at mid height diagonally from south-west to north-east.

No physical evidence was found of the location of an original staircase in the 1873 building which presumably must have existed to connect the basement with the ground floor. Staircase access was later provided to the basement of the 1892-94 extension to the south (R004) which connects to R003.



Figure 55: The remains of the paneled soffit in the reduced opening between R103 and R123 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

Ground floor (R103 and 123)

The 1961 survey shows the ground floor in use as 'Self-service Grocery', redefined as 'Food Hall' with 'check outs' in the post-1961 restructuring. The north wall on the ground floor of Block A was largely removed when Block B was constructed in 1882-83, such that the wall on the floor above is now supported by beams bearing on piers to the west and east, a single intermediate column to the west and a pair of columns to the east, the latter supporting the offset in the north wall which carries through the entire height of the building.

A large opening in the west wall of R103, which leads to R123, has been reduced in size by the insertion of the lift shaft to the south and now contains a pair of modern flush doors. Above the opening, the north portion of a two-panel decorative plaster soffit survives, the remainder of the panel being absorbed into the structure of

the brick lift shaft to the south (Figure 55). What remains visible is carried on a wide fluted plaster console with egg and dart enrichment. This feature may be of a late 19th-century date or could be related to the alteration work associated with construction of Block B, which was added in 1882-83. It certainly suggests that R123, which now is bounded by plain painted brick walls, was originally of enough significance to merit decorative panelling (Figure 56). Part of the bottom flange of a substantial riveted iron beam, which carries the south wall of the original long narrow general warehouse to the west on Plot 2 (now absorbed into Block F), protrudes at ceiling level on the south wall and continues westwards through R121, 122 and 124. The 1961 survey shows the space, now occupied by the lift shaft and R123, in use as an office with a covered yard to the west.



Figure 56: View of R123 looking south from the opening to R138 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 57: Interior of R102 and 103 looking south-west from R101 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

The main ground-floor space, R103, has been substantially modernised in the late 20th or early 21st centuries (Figure 57). The floor is finished with wood-effect vinyl sheet walkways bounding two carpeted display areas, all laid on the late 19th-century timber floorboards which survive beneath. The columns on the line of the former north wall, inserted in 1882-83, are now encased by horizontally grooved display panelling and the wider encasement to the east conceals the pair of columns referred to above. The west end of the north wall, west wall and south wall are all lined with modern shelving display panelling. A suspended ceiling conceals the late 19th-century ceiling bays which are finished with a later painted anaglypta paper.

First floor (R203)

The 1961 survey shows this area in use as ‘Boot and Shoe Department’, a function which continued as ‘Footwear Department’ in the post-1961 restructuring. Today this space has also been refitted. The floor is finished with wood-effect vinyl sheet concealing the late 19th-century flooring which probably survives below (see above). The north and south walls are lined with modern shelving display panelling

set out from the structural walls (Figure 58). The opening in the north wall, leading to R202, was formed with the construction of Block B while the opening in the west end of the south wall, containing a pair of glazed aluminium sliding doors leading to R204, and the wide opening to the north side of the west wall, with steps leading up to R216, were both formed as part of the post-1961 restructuring (Figure 59). The east wall retains late 19th-century plasterwork including pole mouldings on the splayed reveals of the four sash windows. The central pair of windows is set below a segmental arch. Again, the late 19th-century ceiling is concealed above a late 20th- or early 21st-century suspended ceiling.



Figure 58: Interior of R203 looking east showing modern shelving to north and south (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 59: Interior of R203 looking west in R216 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

Second floor (R302)

The 1961 survey shows this floor in use as ‘Furnishing, Polishing and Lino Department’. At this time a narrow opening in the north wall led to a ‘Corridor’ in Block B while another narrow opening in the south wall contained a ramp leading up to a ‘Furniture Showroom’ in Block C. The west wall contained, at its south end, a window overlooking the yard to the south of Block F and, at its north end, an opening which led to two steps up into Block F. The king-post roof structure, carried by a centrally located column, was probably exposed, as two ‘rooflights’ are shown close to either side of the central valley.

The post-1961 restructuring drawings show the second floor of Blocks A and B re-designated as ‘Restaurant’. Two new openings were shown to be formed in the north wall. Today, the opening to the west side of the north wall is considerably wider than that shown on the re-structuring drawings, which suggests, as does the changed location of the new staircase in Block B, that this area was not in fact ever used as a restaurant. The drawings also show the narrow opening in the south wall widened with three steps leading up to a ‘Dry Goods Showroom’ in Block C. The window in the south end of the west wall was built-up to facilitate construction of



Figure 60: Interior of R302 and R303 with stepped opening between (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

the brick lift shaft for a new passenger lift which was accessed from Block C but the opening into Block F at the north end of the wall was retained. The column carrying the centre of the roof valley beam was also removed and replaced by a steel beam which spans between the north and south walls.

Today the floor is carpeted, concealing the original flooring which probably survives below (*see above*) (Figure 60). All walls are plastered and painted. The internal faces of the late 19th-century sash windows on the east wall are visible although the window linings have been removed and replaced with modern plasterwork. A suspended ceiling conceals the roof structure.

Block B – 1882-83 Building

The ground-floor shopfront was completely remodelled in the latter half of the 20th century and no evidence appears to survive of what pre-dated it. The historic illustrations from Readshaw's book indicate that the handsome glazed shopfront proposed by R W Thompson was executed, again following the earlier section designed by his brother in 1873. The shopfront arrangement created by this extension was a symmetrical composition of three bays separated by pedimented consoles with central recessed entrance doorways in the end bays, each containing double doors flanked by fluted columns. At first floor the centrepiece has two shouldered window openings with one over one recessed sash windows set below

pointed-arch hood mouldings terminating in carved label stops and containing carved enrichments in the tympana (Figure 61). At second floor, three recessed segmental-headed one over one sash windows are grouped on a continuous projecting moulded sill course carried on four, equally-spaced, plain moulded corbels separated by colonnettes and set in a rectangular opening broken by a central upward-projecting pointed arch containing carved enrichment (Figure 62). Above, an unusual stepped pediment contains square diamond relief panels and other carved embellishments.



Figure 61: First-floor window on the 1882-82 building (exterior of R202) (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 62: Second-floor windows (exterior of R301) and gable on 1882-83 building (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

Behind the main building, the 1882 plans show a long yard extending westwards to the rear of one of the row of cottages facing onto Back Way. The plans also show a 'Lift' projecting from the west elevation rising from basement to second floor, but this does not seem to correlate with what is shown on the sectional drawing, which only depicts a gabled loading bay carried on gallows brackets projecting from the second floor. The plans also show a small single-storey office building projecting from the south-west corner with a tall slender chimneystack rising from its south-west corner to the ridge height of the main building. No evidence survives of the office building.

The west (rear) elevation, and presumably the north gable (now rendered), were constructed in red clay brick laid in stretcher bond with intermittent header courses

(Figure 63). A late 19th-century rear second-floor window opening and staircase half-landing window survive along with the second-floor opening into the lift shaft (Figure 64). Each has a sandstone sill and stop-chamfered lintel. All three openings are now sheeted over. The line of the former lift shaft/hoist is further defined at second-floor level by square recessed fixing holes and lighter coloured brickwork. Further evidence of original openings in the west elevation, infilled with brick probably in the late 20th century, can be seen at ground level from R142 (Figure 65).



Figure 63: The rendered north end elevation of the 1882-83 building and part of the warehouse of Block F (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 64: Blocked up second-floor window (left), opening onto former lift shaft (centre) and half-landing window (right) on the rear of the 1882-83 building (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

The slate roof over the main building is concealed behind a street-fronting parapet identical to that on the 1873 building. It contains a central embossed '1882' date stone flanked by six chamfered circular perforations (see Figure 17). The roof has an 'M' profile which the 1882 drawings show was carried on king-post trusses bearing on a central north-south spanning beam. At the front, east side, a parapet gutter drains to externally routed downpipes while the central valley appears to drain to internal downpipes. To the rear, west side, the back slope drains to eaves gutters.

The internal layout of Block B, shown on the 1882 plans, was subdivided by an east-west spanning brick wall, 350mm thick, rising from a rubble stone basement wall through the ground, first and second floors. The location of this wall appears to have been dictated by the window arrangement on the street elevation which resulted in the compartment to the north being somewhat wider than that to the south. The wall was penetrated at each level by one double-door-width opening

which connected the two compartments. It seems that the small rectangular projection to the north-east of the northern compartment was included simply to enable the fourth bay of the front elevation to be built to achieve symmetry with the 1873 wing. An 'L' shaped staircase, located in the south-west corner of the northern compartment, rose from ground to first floor where it changed to a dog-leg staircase rising to the second floor. This staircase had already been replaced by the time of the 1961 survey, and the post-1961 restructuring drawings proposed a new fire escape staircase located in the north-east corner of the northern compartment (extending into the north-east projection). This, however, was not built and instead, the current concrete staircase and stairwell was formed in the north-west corner of the northern compartment.



Figure 65: Blocked up openings at ground-floor level on the west elevation of the 1882 building (now within R142) (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

The floor structure at ground-, first- and second-floor level in the northern compartment consists of timber boards laid on 355x100mm deep east-west spanning timber joists carried on three 355x355mm north-south spanning timber flitch beams while, in the southern compartment, similarly sized joists span north-south bearing on the transverse masonry walls.



Figure 66: The staircase entrance in R142 descending to R001 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 67: Interior of R001 looking east (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)Architects, 2019)



Figure 68: The north side of the blocked up opening between R001 and 002 with steel I-beam inserted above original wall (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 69: Timber post carrying the north end of the central beam in the ceiling of R001 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

Basement (R001 and 002)

The 1882 plans show R001 (northern compartment) and R002 (southern compartment) as 'Cellars' accessed from the ground floor by a dog-leg staircase located beneath the main staircase in the south-west corner of R001. A rectangular space in the north-west corner of R001 is designated 'Heating Apparatus' although today little evidence of the mechanical plant survives beyond a section of raised plinth and a cast-iron smoke door located in the north wall. A rectangular projection from the centre of the west wall, between the heating apparatus and staircase, marked the base of the lift shaft. This survives today in a modified form in R142 and provides the only access to R001 via a steep timber staircase (Figure 66). The concrete floor in both basement spaces appears to be of 20th-century origin and is almost certainly contemporaneous with the post-1961 major alterations to the wall separating the two spaces.

The walls of R001 are of limewashed rubble stone. The north wall, including the north-east projection, west and east walls survive substantially unaltered (Figure 67). An opening in the west wall, presumably the opening to the 1882 staircase, has been infilled with stretcher course brickwork during the 20th century. On the east wall an opening, which on the 1882 plans seems to extend to a chamber under the pavement on Newgate Street, has also been bricked up. Unlike the opening to the west, the brickwork here is laid in English bond, showing remains of limewash, and may have been closed up in the early 20th century. The south wall has been substantially altered. The original opening connecting R001 and R002 has been bricked up and two substantial 'I' section steel beams, extending almost the full length of the wall, have been placed side-by-side on a concrete base formed on top of the original stone wall which has been reduced in height (Figure 68). These beams were introduced as part of the post-1961 restructuring to carry the three steel columns at ground and first floor, which allowed the north and south compartments to be interlinked, and a single column at second floor to carry the central roof valley beam.

The central of the three north-south-spanning fitch beams carrying the ground-floor joists is supported at its north end by a square-section limewashed timber column which tapers inwards from its base with chamfered corners, set on a raised masonry plinth, introduced around the end of the 19th century, presumably to address concerns over timber decay in the end bearing of the beam (Figure 69). The third, easternmost, beam is also supported at its north end but by a steel 'I' section stanchion, clearly a later intervention likely dating to the early 20th century (Figure 70). A lath and plaster ceiling, applied to the underside of the floor joists, has been removed, exposing the underside of the ground floor boards.

The west and east walls of R002 are also of limewashed rubble stone. The west wall contains a window recess with splayed sill and sides which, on the 1882 plans, is shown with a horizontal grille above at ground level. A brick pier projects from the east wall, presumably introduced to provide intermediate support for the floor joists above. The north wall, separating the north and south compartments, is described

above. The south wall is faced with a one-brick-thick leaf built in English garden wall bond against, and following the profile of, the north rubble stone basement wall of Block A and containing the double doors opening from Block A.

Ground-floor joists in R002 span north/south bearing on timber wall plates set on the north and south walls. A lath and plaster ceiling, applied to the underside of the floor joists, has been removed, exposing the underside of the ground floor boards.



Figure 70: Steel stanchion carrying the north end of the east beam in the ceiling of R001 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

Ground floor (R101 and 102)

The 1882 drawings show a self-contained 'Shop' with a symmetrical shopfront in the northern compartment (R101). In the south-west corner a staircase descended to the basement beneath the main staircase. The 1961 survey designates the space, which at this stage was still self-contained, as 'Readymades' with a small 'Office' in the north-west corner and a reconfigured staircase in the south-west corner rising to first floor. The shopfront by this time had a deeply recessed asymmetrical layout with generous window display space.

The southern compartment (R102), which opened up into the ground floor of Block A, was also designated as 'Shop' on the 1882 drawings. A door on the south side of the west wall led to the single-storey office annex, described above. An opening in the west side of the north wall led under the staircase into R001.

The post-1961 re-structuring saw both compartments inter-connected through removal of the separating wall and insertion of three columns, as part of the open plan 'Food Hall' (see above) which extended further south into Block A. The new stairwell occupied the north-west corner.

As existing, the floor is finished with wood-effect vinyl sheet (Figure 71). Changing cubicles are located against the west wall south of the staircase. The three columns on the line of separation between the north and south compartments are encased by mirrored glass and walls are dry-lined and finished with paint or wallpaper. A suspended ceiling conceals the steel beams inserted in the northern compartment as part of the post-1961 re-structuring (Figure 72).



Figure 71: Interior of R101, 102 and 103 looking south-east (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 72: Interior of the shopfront entrance to the 1882-83 building (R101) (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

First floor (R201 and 202)

The 1882 drawings show four 'Show Rooms', two in the northern compartment and two in the southern compartment – separated from each other, and the stairwell, by slender partitions (Figure 73).

By the 1961 survey a large section of the dividing wall between the two compartments had already been removed and two steel columns had been inserted to carry new and existing beams above. The two compartments formed part of the 'Boot and Shoe Department' which extended into Block A through two openings in the south wall. An 'Office' was located in the north-east projection and an open-well enclosed staircase in the south-west corner of the northern compartment. A 'Tea Room' was shown at the west side of the southern compartment and an opening in the south side of the west wall of the Tea Room led to a new block which appears to have been supported on beams over an area at ground floor designated 'Bacon Cutting' and containing a lobby and 'Female Toilets' with four cubicles.



Figure 73: Interior of R202 looking west (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

The post-1961 re-structuring saw removal of the Tea Room, the staircase and the stairwell wall between the two compartments. The opening into the female toilets was built up. Existing columns and beams on the line separating the two compartments were retained and a third column was introduced to support the widened opening. The opening where the stairwell had been removed was infilled with new flooring. The new open-plan floor layout was designated 'Footwear Department' and a new stairwell occupied the north-west corner (Figure 74).



Figure 74: Interior of the staircase (R201) ascending to the second floor (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 75: View north behind the stud wall at the east side of R202, showing the timber windows (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 76: Detail of the original cornicing above the suspended ceiling in R202 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

In the existing layout, a staff room is located in the north-east projection. The floor is finished with carpet. The three columns on the line of separation between the north and south compartments have plastered rectangular encasements and walls are dry-lined and painted. A suspended ceiling conceals the original ceiling layout

and steel beams inserted in the northern compartment as part of the post-1961 re-structuring. A false wall, constructed from timber studwork, closes off the east side of the space from the east window wall (Figure 75). From within the void between the false wall and east wall it can be seen that original plasterwork between and around the sash windows has been removed, exposing the brick wall structure. It is also possible to see here the east side of the original lath and plaster ceiling, down-stand beam and moulded cornice above (Figure 76).

Second floor (R301)

The 1882 drawings show large, undivided ‘Stock Rooms’ in each compartment with a single opening in the dividing wall between the compartments and a single opening in the south wall into Block A. The dog-leg staircase is located in the south-west corner of the northern compartment.



Figure 77: Interior of R301 looking south-west to R302 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 78: Timber sash windows in R301 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

By the 1961 survey the northern compartment had been sub-divided to create a ‘Paper Store’ on the west side and ‘Furniture Stock’ on the east side. The southern compartment had a central corridor between the original openings in the central dividing wall and south wall, with ‘Mutability Club Office’ to the east side and two small interconnected ‘Optical’ rooms on the west side and a corridor leading to the toilet block referred to above.

The post-1961 re-structuring proposed removal of the central dividing wall, and insertion of a steel column to carry the central valley of the roof. A ‘Restaurant’ is shown in the east side and ‘Kitchen’ in the west side of the space. As stated above, it seems unlikely that this use was adopted.

The floor space here is now finished with carpet (Figure 77). The central column is encased and mirrored, walls are plastered and painted and a suspended ceiling conceals the roof structure. Timber sash windows, with plain plastered square reveals and substantial window boards, are exposed on the east wall (Figure 78).

Block C – 1892-94 Building

Construction of the 1892-94 building on Plot 3, to designs by James Linday, bore witness to the continuing rapid expansion of the store. Its trapezoidal footprint, perpendicular to Newgate Street, was considerably deeper than the previous two phases. The façade, which abuts the south side of Block A, is almost an exact mirror image of the 1882 building to the north (Figure 79), the only significant difference being in the slightly wider pedimented three-bay section, where the latticework decoration of the tympanum has been removed leaving the pediment truncated (see Figure 62). No original drawings for the 1892-94 building were discovered in the course of research. However, a small section of the west end of the block is visible on Linday's amendment drawings for additional extensions in 1893, including the location of the bifurcated staircase.



Figure 79: The exterior of the 1892-94 building (Block C) on Newgate Street (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

The main volume of Block C has a double-pitch slate roof concealed behind the street-fronting parapet. The 'M'-profile gabled roofs, with a central valley and perimeter gutters, are set behind tall brick parapets to the north and south, and there is a return structure to the west, perpendicular to the front roof. A flat-roofed lift motor room, now redundant, projects above the north-west corner marking the location of a lift shaft, shown on the 1961 survey drawings but subsequently removed from all floor levels of the interior as part of the post-1961 re-structuring. At the front, east side, a parapet gutter drains to externally routed downpipes. The return roof parapet and central valley gutters drain through outlets in the west gable onto the flat-roof of the three-storey extension to the west.



Figure 80: The modernised bifurcated staircase on the ground floor of R104 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 81: The former covered 'gateway' (R113, looking south) to the west of the 1882-83 building and below R208 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

The main building was constructed with timber floors resting on riveted iron beams carried on iron columns. A bifurcated public staircase, which rises through all floors, is centrally located against the west wall, splitting from a single central flight after the first half landing (Figure 80). Modernisation of the late 19th-century staircase has included removal of the balustrading, replaced in glass and stainless steel, and re-covering of the treads with carpet and stair nosings.



Figure 82: View of the west elevation of the 1892-94 building showing the windows of the 'Waiting Room' (centre) and blocked south windows of the 'Manager's Office' (to their left). Both rooms now form part of R208 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

While construction of the block was underway, Lindsay submitted revised plans showing a two-storey brick extension, 'L'-shaped on plan, with a double-pitch slate roof, to be added to the west (rear) of the new building. This apparently required demolition of the easternmost cottage of the row perpendicular to Back Way, to allow a new north-south 'Gateway' (R113) to pass below the west part of the first floor of the new extension and connect with an existing east-west 'Gateway' to the south of Block F and west of Block A (Figure 81). Original first-floor window openings belonging to this extension can still be seen in the south-west corner of the surviving fabric consisting of a pair of two over two sash windows with stop-chamfered sandstone lintels

and sandstone sills facing west ('Waiting Room') and two windows facing south ('Manager's Office'), also with sandstone lintels but subsequently blocked with brick in the mid- to late 20th century (Figure 82).



Figure 83: Blocked windows and parapet to the rear of R306 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 84: The staircase from R111 down to R004. The treads to the right form part of the earlier route of the staircase descending from under the main staircase in R104 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 85: R004 looking north-west showing the two columns offset from the centreline (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 86: Detail of a column in R004 with timber staging behind (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 87: Opening leading into R003 showing glazed brick walling and sections of timber staging (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 88: Glazed brick walling with the names of branch stores written on the walls for organising storage (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 89: Electrical switchgears to the west wall of R004 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

Post-1961 re-structuring work included infilling the eastern half of the east-west 'Gateway' with a three-storey extension which accommodated a 'Public Lift' at its east end and a 'Goods Hoist' at its west end, the flat-roofed motor rooms of which project above the main roof level (Figure 83).

In the late 20th century, a flat-roofed second floor was added over Lindsay's two-storey extension (see Figure 82). This new extension also extended over the north-east projection from Block E and the formerly open east-west 'Gateway' further north (R121). The work involved removal of the pitched roofs over Lindsay's extension and removal of the lean-to roof over the Block E extension. Part of the west wall of the three-storey building can be seen from the upper windows in Block F. The newest portion is built in red brick in English garden wall bond rising to a

parapet capped with a header course coping (Figure 83). The line of the former lean-to roof over the north-east abutment of Block E can also be seen incorporated into and below the new work as can two former second-floor window openings, each with exposed pre-stressed concrete lintels, now built up with red brick.

Basement (R004)

The basement was originally accessed by an 'L'-shaped staircase from R104 directly below the south return leg of the main staircase. It had sandstone treads and a simple tubular steel balustrade with widely-spaced balusters which are lead-caulked into the treads (Figure 84). At some point after 1961 it was reconfigured as a straight flight accessed from R111 with the new top treads formed in concrete. Some original stained and varnished vertical tongue and groove and 'V'-jointed sheeting lining the side walls survives but has been removed from the soffit of the main staircase above.

The concrete floor in R004 appears to be of 20th-century origin and is almost certainly contemporaneous with the post-1961 re-structuring. An east-west, centrally located row of five wide squat circular cast-iron columns, each with an eight-finned capital, carry a grid of substantial riveted iron beams which support the ground floor slab (Figures 85 and 86). At the west end two columns are offset from the centre line to facilitate the central location of the public staircase above.¹⁷³ North, east, south and west walls are faced in white glazed stretcher-bond brickwork. The glazed brick walling returns, with quadrant corners, into the reveals of the opening in the north wall, which contains sheeted timber double doors leading to R003 in Block A (Figure 87). The east wall contains a number of openings which have been blocked with red brick and are matched with recesses formed in the floor slab above. The purpose of these openings is not known but may indicate the location of pavement loading trap doors. The cast concrete ground-floor slab has a thin plaster finish.

Timber staging, to isolate stored goods from a potentially damp floor, is arranged around the perimeter walls and the central row of columns (*see* Figures 85 and 86). Various arrangements of timber shelving encapsulate the columns. Hand-written lettering on the glazed brickwork including 'High Street Spennymoor', 'Shildon' and 'Ferryhill' indicates the branch stores of the Co-operative Society to which goods were to be delivered (Figure 88). A small office, located to the north of the staircase with thin timber walls, is entered from the east and has a splayed, north-east facing wall containing eight glazed panes. The base of the redundant brick lift shaft shown on the 1961 survey survives in the north-west corner. The west wall to the south of the staircase contains electrical distribution switchgear with labels such as 'Drapery, windows & hardware department' and 'Mercery, Committee Rooms & Butchery' (Figure 89).

Ground floor (R104, 111, 112, 113, 114, 121 and 122)

Lindsay's revised plans for Block C show what appears to be a lift or hoist projecting from the west end of the north wall of R104, although all evidence of this has long since disappeared. The bifurcated public staircase, which survives today in altered form, is shown set against the west wall. To the rear (west) of R104 the spaces now occupied by R111 and R112 are shown as 'General Office' with a long 'Corridor' on the east side extending between two door openings set in the west wall of R104 – one, just south of the main staircase, and the other, at the north end of the wall adjacent to the opening to the lift/hoist. Windows set in the west wall of the 'General Office' overlooked the covered 'Gateway', now R113, connecting the lane to the south of the cottages with the 'Gateway' to the north.

The 1961 survey drawing shows R104 designated as 'Drapery Department'. The public staircase rises against the west wall and the arrangement of columns echoes the basement layout. A ramped opening towards the west end of the south wall led to Block D. A lift is shown in the north-west corner, apparently a replacement for the external lift/hoist shown on Lindsay's drawing. A narrow doorway towards the west end of the north wall leads to a corridor in the location now occupied by the public lift. Another opening at the east end of the north wall led to 'Self-service Grocery etc.' in Block A. The 1961 drawing also indicates a complex symmetrical shopfront arrangement comprising a pair of entrances, with quadrant corners, separated by a central display window.

By the 1961 survey the 'General Office' and 'Corridor' had been re-configured as one space designated 'Grocery Packing'. Steps led up to raised staging at the north end and what appears to be a chimney breast is shown projecting from the south wall. The windows in the west wall, which had looked into the covered 'Gateway', had been blocked although projecting stone sills of the former windows can still be seen from R113 (see Figure 81).

The post-1961 restructuring saw R104 re-designated as 'Dry Goods Showroom' and the shopfront replaced with the current asymmetrical arrangement. Two openings into R103 in Block A were to be formed in the north wall; only that to the east side, 3.6m wide, can be seen today while that to the west, 2.7m wide, may be concealed behind modern wall linings. Two openings into Block D, both 3.6m wide, were to be formed in the south wall; that to the east (into R105) can be seen while that to the west (into R106) may be concealed behind the wall lining (Figure 90). The lift in the north-west corner was removed and the lift shaft for the new public lift, which projects from the north wall, was constructed further to the east. A new door opening was to be formed in the north wall, in the location where the earlier lift had been removed, leading to a 'Grocery Warehouse' in the area now occupied by R122, 123 and 124. The 'Grocery Packing' area was re-designated 'Advanced Stocks' but the layout, including raised staging at the north end, was largely unchanged although new openings were formed into R106, designated 'Men's Wear Department', R110 designated 'Covered Yard' and R122 designated 'Grocery Warehouse'. Finally, R113 'Gateway' was isolated from the 'Covered Yard' (R109

and 110) by a masonry wall constructed at its south end and an opening into Block E was formed in the west wall.



Figure 90: The modernised interior of R104 showing the opening into R105 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

Today, the sales area, R104, has been altered. The floor is finished with vinyl tile and sheet covered walkways passing through three carpeted display areas all laid on the original timber floorboards which survive beneath (see Figure 90). Columns are encased by horizontally-grooved display panelling and the north, south and west walls are lined with modern shelf display panelling. A suspended ceiling conceals the original lath-and-plaster ceiling bays which are decorated with painted anaglypta paper. The column capitals can also be seen within the void.



Figure 91: The entrance in R111 to the staircase descending to R004 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

In R111, it is presumed that the wide openings in the east wall into R104 and south wall into R106 were introduced in the late 20th century. A doorway at the north end of the east wall leads to the re-configured staircase which descends to the basement and a doorway in the north wall leads to R112 (Figure 91). The southern half of the floor is finished with thermoplastic tiles and the northern half with carpet. The north, south and west walls are lined with modern shelving display panelling although two late 19th-century piers, which carry east-west spanning beams, can be seen projecting from the west wall. A suspended ceiling conceals the original lath-and-plaster ceiling bays and beams.

R112 is separated from R111 by a lightweight partition. The floor is surfaced with linoleum and a ramp in an opening in the north wall rises approximately 400mm to R122, walls are plastered and painted and the suspended ceiling, formed from pine

sheeting, probably dating from the 1970s, conceals the late 19th-century lath and plaster ceiling and moulded cornicing relating to the 1892-94 layout (Figure 92).



Figure 92: Moulded cornicing above the suspended ceiling in R112 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 93: The original lath and plaster ceiling in the 'gateway' (R113) (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

The former 'Gateway', R113, has a macadamed surface (see Figure 81). The east wall is of limewashed brickwork with alternating header and stretcher courses. It contains evidence of the former window openings to R111 and 112 referred to above and which are presumed to have been blocked in the early 20th century. A former vehicular entrance in the south wall to R110 has been blocked with concrete blocks. Late 19th-century brickwork, identical to the east wall, can be seen on the lower part of the west wall while the upper section has been rendered. At its north end the west wall terminates in a quadrant corner formed in brick rising to a sandstone corbel which converts the quadrant to a right angle to provide a bearing for the beam over the opening from R121. An opening in the centre of the west wall has bullnose corners to the reveals and sandstone steps which rose to R116 in Block E before the back of the recess was blocked with brick. The original lath and plaster 'Gateway' ceiling survives (Figure 93).

R114 forms the ground floor of the north-east abutment to Block E. It is shown on the 1961 survey drawing as part of 'Grocery Warehouse', a long narrow space extending south into Block E. Demolition, proposed in the post-1961 re-structuring, was not carried out and today the space remains much as is shown on the 1961 drawing but with the insertion of a north-south partition wall which separates a corridor to the west from a small room to the east. The ceiling is finished with a modern sheet material and a steel 'I' beam over the opening to the south carries the upper storeys of the north wall of Block E.

R121 occupies the eastern half of the former east-west 'Gateway' (Figure 94). Macadamed paving slopes down from west to east towards the goods hoist with its iron concertina gate, walls are of limewashed brickwork and exposed north-south spanning timber joists, dating from the post-1961 re-structuring, carry



Figure 94: Interior of R121 looking east (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

timber floorboards the underside of which are visible (Figure 95). The external face of the brick north wall of the goods hoist structural shaft incorporates a cast-iron column (facing into R124), which carries a substantial riveted iron beam, supporting the south wall of the original long narrow warehouse on Plot 2 (now absorbed into Block F). Interestingly, the capital of this column is almost identical, though of a smaller profile, to the columns in the basement of the 1892-94 building, suggesting they came from the same manufacturer (Figure 96 and see Figure 86). It is the only remaining one of five shown as pre-existing on Linday's 1883 plan in the location of the south side of R124.



Figure 95: The goods hoist with iron concertina gate at the east end of R121 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 96: A capital of one of the cast-iron columns in R121 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

First floor (R204, 208, 212, 213, 214 and 215)

Linday's revised plans for Block C show the main staircase in R204 terminating at first-floor level and a straight flight staircase, located in the south-west corner, rising to the second floor. Access to the lift/hoist is shown on the north wall. The extension, now occupied by R208, is shown as an administration suite. In the south-west, a corridor, entered from the top of the public staircase, passes a 'Waiting Room' on its south side and leads to a large 'Manager's Office' located

over and extending the full length of the 'Gateway' below. A doorway, north of the staircase, opened directly into 'Mr Walker's Office' which had access to a 'Safe Room' to the south and, through an interconnecting door, to the 'Manager's Office' to the west. All three rooms had fireplaces.

The 1961 survey drawing shows R204 with a wide landing at the main staircase separated by a north/south partition extending the full width of the building from an area to the east, designated as 'Mantles and Gowns'. The straight flight staircase in the south-west corner had been removed and an opening formed in the south wall of the landing leading to offices in Block D. The external lift/hoist had also been removed and replaced by the internal lift located in the north-west corner. Further east an opening in the north wall led to the 'Boot and Shoe Department' in Block A and 'Hardware Sales' in Block G. The bifurcated staircase, which appears originally to have only risen to the first floor, had by this time been extended to the second floor. The area now occupied by R208 was reconfigured with a 'Bank Office' and 'Public Space' to the south-west leading to an office for an 'Assistant Manager' over R113. The original 'Strong Room' had been reduced in size and was now accessed from the Assistant Manager's office. The entire width of the north end was designated 'General Office' and this now extended further west into the upper floor of the two-storey extension to the north-east of Block E. The 'General Office' had in its west wall a door leading to a long narrow 'Strong Room', located in Block E. All of the original window openings seem to have been retained with the exception of one to the north end of the west wall of the former 'Manager's Office', which seems to have been removed to facilitate construction of the extension to Block E.

The post-1961 re-structuring saw removal of the lift in the north-west corner of R204 and construction of the new public lift. To the west of the lift a new opening is shown leading to a lobby (now included in R215) serving a hoist to the west and linking to Block G to the north. Two wide openings were to be formed in each of the north and south walls, leading to Blocks A and D respectively. The long partition wall was removed and the new open plan sales floor was designated 'Dry Goods Showroom'. In R208, all internal subdividing walls and the centrally-located 'Strong Room' were removed to create an open space designated 'Advanced Stocks'. However, proposals to remove R213 (the north-east annex to Block E) were not carried out. The new goods hoist was shown projecting from the north wall of R208 with, on its east side, an 'Unpacking Area' in R212. An opening in the south wall of R212 led to 'Advanced Stocks'. R215, between R212 and the new 'Public Lift', was a lobby leading to Block G to the north.

Today, the floor of the sales area, R204, is finished with carpet and, around the stairwell, wood-effect vinyl sheet, both laid on the original timber floorboards which survive beneath (Figure 97). The columns have square plain plaster encasements. The north wall has aluminium sliding doors to the east of the public lift entrance, leading to R203 in Block A. To the west of the lift a wide flat-headed opening contains stepped and ramped access leading through R215 to the restaurant area (Figure 98). The windows within the front elevation are concealed behind a full-height partition which excludes all natural light from the sales area and prevents

any survey of the windows themselves. The western half of the south wall has three wide, flat-headed, full-height openings leading to R205 in Block D. Two wide, flat-headed openings, to either side of the public staircase, lead to R208. These openings do not match the plans proposed in 1961 and must have been created at another point in the second half of the 20th century. The late 20th century ceiling probably conceals the original lath-and-plaster ceiling bays.



Figure 97: Interior of R204 looking north-west with the staircase at the west end (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 98: The opening and ramp into R215 and looking into R208 from R208 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 99: Interior of R208 looking south-west (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 100: The replacement steel concertina door to the goods hoist in R212 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

R208 has also been fitted with carpeted floors, plastered walls and suspended ceiling concealing all earlier finishes (Figure 99). The west wall contains two door openings. That to the south gives on to a timber staircase rising to R210 in Block E and that to the north, which opens into R213, is set in a partition wall which infills the former wide opening shown on the 1961 survey.

R212 is a lobby serving the east side of the goods hoist constructed as part of the post-1961 re-structuring. The flooring is unfinished pine floorboards and walls and ceilings are finished with gypsum plaster. The hoist concertina door is a modern sheet steel version rather than the older iron gate version which exists at ground floor (Figure 100).



Figure 101: The east wall of R213 showing the shouldered-arch opening into R208 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

R213 is the first floor of the north-east abutment to Block E. It has a plain sheeted floor, plastered walls and lath and plaster ceiling. The south and west walls are lined with fixed shelving. The east wall contains the wide shouldered-arch opening to R208 and has original moulded reveals with paired consoles carrying inward facing quadrants supporting a flat soffit (Figure 101). This arch is not visible from within the modernised shop interior of R208. It was presumably formed in the early 20th century with the construction of the north-east abutment on Block E (replacing two west-facing windows in the Manager's Office shown in Figure 24c) and this space is shown as a north-west extension of a 'General Office' on the 1961 survey. A one over one sash window, visible at the south side of the west wall of R213, has been blocked with brick in the late 20th century on the outside although the original sandstone sill and lintel survive. A square-headed opening, formed in the north wall, leads to R214.

R214 is a long, narrow, nondescript room, built *circa* 1990 as part of the work involved in adding a second floor above R208. The new room enabled new lift doors to be installed on the west side of the hoist shaft in addition to the existing opening on the east side. R214 also connects with R213 to the south and Block F to the north. The flooring is unfinished pine floorboards laid on north-south spanning joists which are visible from R121 below. The north, south and west walls and ceiling are finished with gypsum plaster but the east wall retains the exposed, previously external, brickwork of the hoist shaft in which the new lift door opening has been inserted. Two steps up to a lobby projecting from the west end of the north wall leads to R220 in Block F. The west wall contains a late 20th-century casement window which can also be seen on the north wall of the interior of R120 (Figure 102 and *see* Figure 158).



Figure 102: The casement window in the west wall of R214 overlooking R120 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

Second floor (R303, 306, 307 and 308)

The 1961 survey drawing shows R303, designated as 'Furniture Showroom', with a centrally-located 'Cash Office' at the top of the public staircase, a lift in the north-west corner and a small office in the south-west corner. Only the three westernmost of the central line of columns present on the lower floors remain to carry the central valley beam of the 'M' profile return roofs. A number of roof lights are shown, suggesting the underside of the roof was exposed to view. In the north wall an opening is shown with a ramp down to Block A and, in the south wall, another opening is shown with a ramp down to Block D.

The post-1961 restructuring saw R303 re-designated as part of the 'Dry Goods Showrooms'. The cash office, lift and small office were all removed. A wide, centrally-located, square-headed opening was formed in the north wall which also included access to the new public lift to the west and, further west, another new opening led to a lobby (R308) serving the goods hoist to the west and linking to Block G to the north.

R303 has been refitted and was most recently in use as an open-plan sales area (Figure 103). The floor is finished with carpet and, around the stairwell and opening to R302, wood-effect vinyl sheet, all laid on the original timber floorboards

which survive beneath. The three columns have square plain plaster encasements with mirror panels fixed to the upper portions. The north, east and south walls are wallpapered and have dado rails. Two non-structural piers project perpendicular from the east wall and two from the south wall and are presumed to have been installed in the late 20th century to subdivide the display space. Original late 19th-century sash windows, with plain plastered reveals and thick sill boards, are exposed on the east wall. The two wide openings, to either end of the west wall, each have two full-width steps up into R306 and must have been formed when the new second floor was added *circa* 1990. The suspended ceiling probably conceals the original roof structure above.



Figure 103: Interior of R303 looking east and showing the non-structural piers between windows (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 104: Interior view of the north-west portion of R306 looking west and showing the column and steel beam (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

The sales area comprising R306 appears to have been constructed *circa* 1990 as it is not shown on either the 1961 survey or the post-1961 restructuring drawings. The floor is carpeted, walls are papered and an open grid suspended ceiling conceals the flat roof above (Figure 104). A single central column carries a steel 'I' beam which spans from the south-west corner of the goods-hoist structural shaft to the middle of the west wall, through which it protrudes to be visible on the outside. A protrusion from the west wall of the goods hoist shaft may mark the location of a set of lift doors, now removed. Although from the interior no evidence can be seen of two windows in the west wall, they are visible from the outside and are now blocked with late 20th-century red brick but, unusually, with timber lintels (*see* Figure 84). Two wide openings at either end of the east wall lead down two steps to R303 and double flush doors in the north wall, adjacent to the west wall, lead to R307.

R307 is a lobby serving the east side of the goods hoist, constructed as part of the post-1961 re-structuring. Floor and roof joists span north-south. The floor finish is thermoplastic tiles laid on pine floorboards, the walls and ceiling are finished with gypsum plaster. Double flush doors in the east partition wall open from R308 and a

ramp in an alcove in the south wall rises to double doors opening from R306. As in R212, the hoist concertina door in the west wall is a modern sheet steel version.

Block D - 1894 Building (including flat-roof extensions to rear)

Built at almost the same time as Block C, its neighbour to the north, the 1894 building was originally in separate ownership and was acquired in 1902 to meet the ever increasing accommodation needs of the Co-operative Society. As with Block C, no drawings were discovered in the research on this building, making it difficult to determine the development of its layout. Block D has a more refined composition than the other buildings, comprising a three-bay façade with a projecting central bay, having squared-and-snecked rubble stone walling finished with polished ashlar quoins. At first floor the central bay contains a tripartite window with square-headed one over one sash windows separated by moulded stone mullions, on a continuous moulded sill course (Figure 105). The moulded architrave is Gibbsian in style and is surmounted by a narrow pulvinated frieze carrying a cornice the full width of the bay. The paired flanking windows have been remodelled with the probable replacement of architraves and lintels in plain square stone. At second floor the central bay contains a coupled window with square-headed one over one sash windows separated by a moulded stone mullion, on a moulded sill course which extends across the entire width of the building. The side bays each have square-headed one over one sash windows with moulded architraves. All three second-floor windows have entablatures comprising an enriched frieze with alternating fluting and elliptical rosettes, moulded cornice and blocking course (Figure 106). A moulded cornice extends across the full width of the building carrying the central pediment with simple convex quadrant sides rising to a level coping on which a central knop sits on a corniced pedestal. It appears that similar features may have been removed from the lower copings and balustrade pedestals leaving only the bases. A square plaque, set in a moulded ashlar surround, contains the ovoid date stone 'CM 1894', the initials being those of the butcher Christopher Manners, surrounded by scrolled and foliate carving. A balustrade with ashlar balusters and moulded cornice extends to either side of the central feature terminating in pedestals at the north and south sides. The rear wall is constructed in stretcher bond brickwork (suggesting this might be an early cavity wall) with sandstone sills and lintels to openings.

The double-pitch slate roof is concealed behind the street-fronting parapet. An ashlar sandstone chimneystack, serving the former Managing Secretary's office, is located on the ridge at the north end. At the front, east side, a parapet gutter drains to externally routed downpipes. To the rear, west side, the back slope drains to eaves gutters.

A two-storey return, with mono-pitch slate roof and brick walling in an irregular English garden wall bond, projects from the rear north-west corner of the three-storey front building and abuts the south side of Block C (Figure 107). The west wall of this return must have been re-built and the roof replaced after 1990 as it is

constructed against the second floor structure of Block C which was not built until the late 20th century.



Figure 105: The central tripartite first-floor window on the 1894 building (Block D) (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 106: The central second-floor windows on the 1894 building (Block D) (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 107: The west elevation of Block D showing the inserted fire staircase and blocked windows (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

The post-1961 re-structuring drawings show an unexecuted proposal which would have involved retention of the front elevation of the front building and removal of virtually all of the original three-storey building, the two-storey return and the single-storey café and kitchen to be replaced by a new three-storey structure, the rear of which would have aligned with the rear external wall of the 'General Office' in Linday's 1893 extension to Block C.

Today, the interior of the three-storey front building, with the exception of the ground floor, survives reasonably intact while the remainder of Block D, with the exception of the two-storey return, is single-storey and flat-roofed, presumably constructed after 1990 and replacing single-storey outbuildings and yards shown on the 1961 survey drawing.

Ground floor (R105, 106 and 107)

The 1961 survey drawings show the ground floor at the front of the building contained a 'Confectionery Shop' to the south, 'Butchery' in the middle and 'Mercery' (fabric shop) to the north, each with its own shopfront and recessed doorway offset to the north. A door in the west (rear) wall of the 'Confectionery Shop' led to a single-storey 'Café', 'L'-shaped on plan, from which a door opened into a small yard in the north-west corner. Further west, the café 'Kitchen' occupied the space between the south boundary and south wall of the two-storey return building. A door in the north end of the north wall opened into a two-cubicle toilet. West of the café kitchen, a long narrow yard with various stores to its north and south extended to two 'Bacon Houses' and a 'Cheese Room', which may have been converted cottages facing onto Back Way (suggested by the indication of a party wall with chimney breasts to either side) with, to their south, a narrow passageway leading from the 'Yard' to Back Way. The 'Butchery' extended into the single-storey building with a 'Frig' (or fridge) in the north-west corner and small room at the west end. The 'Mercery' extended into the ground floor of the two-storey return. A door in the west wall opened into the remainder of the café area, which extended into the ground floor of the two-storey return. A door in the west wall of this part of the café opened into a 'Female Toilet'. Today, all the single-storey accommodation has been demolished to be replaced by the present flat-roofed building at the east end in the late 20th century, and a car park at the west end on the site formerly occupied by the bacon houses and cheese room.



Figure 108: Interior of Block D looking east through R107, 106 and 105 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

Room R105 occupies the ground floor of the three-storey front building. A centrally-located east-west spanning steel beam bears at its east end on the front wall and, at its west end, on a north-south-spanning steel beam which carries the rear wall of the three-storey building and is centrally supported by a steel column. The east-west beam carries late 19th-century north-south spanning first-floor timber floor joists concealed by a 21st-century suspended ceiling. The floor is finished with a wood-effect vinyl sheet walkway bounded by two carpeted display areas. The 20th-century aluminium shopfront is sub-divided into three sections separated by piers which reflect the spacing of the original shop frontages.

The north and south walls are lined with display panelling and the full width of the west side is open into R106. A square-headed opening in the north wall leads to R104 in Block A. The column and beams are encased with plain plaster.

Three columns in R106 carry steel beams which support the south wall of the two-storey return building (Figure 108). The east side of R106 is open to R105 and the west side to R107. Columns and down stand beams are encased in plasterwork, and the floor is finished with a wood-effect vinyl sheet walkway bounded by two carpeted display areas. The north and south walls are lined with display panelling. A square-headed opening at the west end of the north wall leads to R111. A suspended ceiling conceals the underside of a composite timber flat-roofed structure above.

The floor of R107 is finished with wood-effect vinyl sheet. The north, south and west walls are lined with display panelling. Double flush service doors at the west end of the north wall open from R110. A suspended ceiling conceals the underside of a composite timber flat roof structure above.

First floor (R205, 206, 207 and 209)

The 1961 survey drawings show the first floor of the main building and return building in use as administration offices. R205 was sub-divided with 'Secretary's Office' to the east, 'Accounts Office' to the west and a narrow 'Female Toilet' between. A corridor passed these rooms on the north side with an opening in the west end of its north wall to Block C. R207, at the west end of the return, had a 'Male Toilet' on the south side, accessed from a lobby containing a 'Safe' on the north side. The main building had a corridor which led to the 'Managing Secretary's Office' to the north-east and a full-width 'Board Room' to the south.



Figure 109: Interior of R205 looking north-east into R204 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

Today, R205 is a single space designated 'Sales Area' (Figure 109). The floor is carpeted, the north wall has been substantially removed to create three wide square-headed openings into the sales area of R204 and the south, east and west walls are lined with display shelving. A flush fire escape door at the west end of the south wall opens onto the ground-floor flat roof. A suspended ceiling conceals the mono-pitch roof structure above. The lobby and male toilet which comprise R207 have been converted to use as a store. The west wall has exposed brickwork which appears to confirm that this wall was rebuilt at the same time as the second floor was added to the adjoining room (R208) in the late 20th century.



Figure 110: View looking south behind the partition at the east end of R205 with the doors to R209 and 206 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 111: The door in R206 looking north (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

In the main building the layout shown in 1961 survives essentially intact. The corridor has an open-topped toilet cubicle in its north-east corner. The floor is finished with thermoplastic floor tiles, walls are plastered above a vertically-sheeted timber dado and the ceiling is lath and plaster with a moulded cornice (Figure 110). A four-panel door in the east wall leads to R209, the former Managing Secretary's Office, and a panelled door in the west wall formerly opened into R205 but is no longer visible within that room (the surround of the latter door is on the right of Figure 110). In the south wall the late 19th-century half-glazed double-doors, on double-action floor springs with side lights and fanlights, are set in a glazed screen and open into the former Board Room, R206 (Figure 111). In R206, late 19th-century softwood floorboards on east-west spanning joists are exposed. Walls have moulded skirtings, scumbling below a moulded dado and plain plaster above. A lath and plaster ceiling, down stand beams and moulded cornicing can be seen above an open-grid suspended ceiling and are probably original to the 1890s. A fire escape door onto the flat roof is located in a crudely formed opening at the north end of the west wall. Further south a late 19th-century coupled two over two sash window with moulded architrave has been blocked with brick on the outside in the late 20th century (Figure 112). Further

south again, evidence of an earlier decorative scheme (possibly from the early 20th century) can be seen on the wall where a piece of furniture, such as a press, has been removed. At the north end of the east wall is a tripartite window with two over two sash windows set in a recess with square reveals. At the south end of the wall is a replacement coupled window with one over one sashes and splayed plaster reveals.

R209, the former 'Managing Secretary's Office', has geometrical-patterned linoleum flooring. The walls have built-up skirtings, plain panelled and scumbled dado and moulded dado rails with wallpaper above. The lath and plaster ceiling is finished

with anaglypta wallpaper and sub-divided into panels (the four corner panels containing gas light bosses) separated by mouldings, and the ceiling is bounded by a moulded and dentilled cornice with a shallow frieze containing swags and urns (Figure 113). The four-panel door has bolection mouldings (Figure 114). Joinery work has woodgrained finish and the dado is scumbled. The north wall contains a projecting chimney breast containing an early 20th-century Art Deco-style fireplace with hardwood surround and tiled inset and hearth (Figure 115).



Figure 112: Shelving obscuring blocked windows on the west wall of R206 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 113: The north wall and chimneybreast of R209 showing the frieze, cornice and ceiling (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 114: The door of R209 with bolection mouldings (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

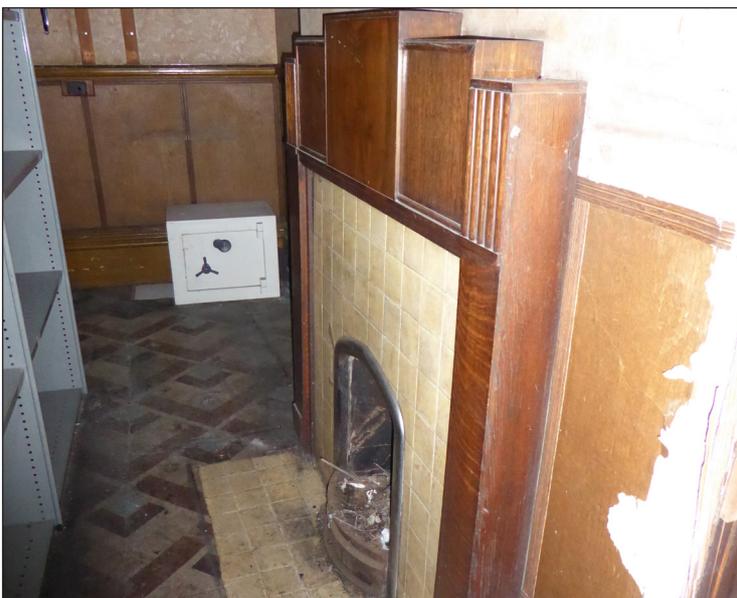


Figure 115: The timber Art Deco-inspired surround to the fireplace in R209 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

Second floor (R304 and 305)

The 1961 survey drawings designated R304 'Carpets and Bedding' and R305, the north-east corner of the space, as 'Telephone Room' (Figure 116). Both rooms appear to have been refurbished *circa* 1970 and were last used for storage. R304 has plywood flooring, plain plastered walls and a fibre-based ceiling tile system fixed directly to the 19th-century lath and plaster ceiling. The north wall contains double flush doors opening from Sales Area R303. The two northernmost window openings on the west wall have been sheeted over and a third window opening at the south end of the wall has been lowered and a flush fire escape door installed, which opens onto a steel staircase descending to the flat roof below. Two window openings on the east wall have been partially blocked in the early 21st century. Partial collapse of the ceiling allows the late 19th-century timber roof structure and underside of the slating to be glimpsed.



Figure 116: Interior view of R304 looking north-east to R305 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

R305 has a carpeted floor, plain plastered walls and the same suspended ceiling tile system as R304. The north (party) wall contains a cupboard recess with what appears to be a late 19th-century four-panel door. The east wall retains a one over one sash window with panelled linings, moulded architraves and plain sill board. The west wall has a doorway containing a 1930s-style door with three narrow bottom panels and glazed top panel. North of the door, the wall surface retains evidence of the telephone switchboard now removed.

Block E – Grocery Store 1

The date of Block E is unclear but it seems to have replaced the cottages in the row perpendicular to Back Way on Plot 3, shown on the plans for Linday's 1893 extension to Block C. This may have taken place in the opening years of the 20th century. Historical plans prior to 1961 have not been discovered to illustrate the original function and layout of these spaces. As it stands today, Block E is a three-storey, three-bay brick warehouse with a gabled double-pitch slate roof (see Figure 29). The 1961 survey plans (and the length and bounding walls of the semi-basement, R117) show that the full three storeys of the warehouse originally extended to Back Way. Much of the warehousing and storage along Back Way seems to have been demolished in the late 20th century including the west end of Block E. The new west gable is built in rendered brick and only a pier, projecting from the north-west corner, gives any indication that the building originally extended further west (Figure 117). The brick walls are largely built in stretcher bond which might suggest early cavity construction. Early 20th-century window openings, at first and second floor on both north and south elevations, have segmental brick arches and sandstone sills but have all now been blocked with brick in the late 20th century (Figure 118). The interior has three floors over a semi-basement. Each floor has north-south spanning joists. The motor room which served an internal hoist located on the north side of the building, and which was installed at some point after the original construction, projects from the north roof slope.



Figure 117: View of the warehouse comprising Block E from the south-west on Westgate Road (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 118: The south wall elevation of Block E showing blocked windows (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

Semi- basement (R117)

The semi-basement, R117, is not shown on the 1961 survey drawings. The space is sub-divided into two compartments approximately similar in area by a north-south-spanning lightweight timber partition wall. Both compartments have exposed concrete floors.

The eastern compartment has plastered walls (Figure 119). The ceiling is formed by a sheet material fixed to timber joists. The compartment is accessed at the west end of the north wall from R120 by a flight of five steps, each with sandstone treads on brick risers. The steps have on their west side a concrete ramp, presumably introduced to facilitate handling of goods into and out of the semi-basement. The vertical timber-sheeted enclosure of the hoist shaft, which was located in the north-east corner, has been removed and the ceiling aperture crudely infilled. An opening in the north wall indicates the hoist was accessed from R120, which would have been an open yard or 'Gateway' before the space was roofed over in the mid-20th century before 1961. The south wall contains an opening leading to R110 up a short ramp.



Figure 119: The east compartment of the semi-basement (R117) showing the steps to R120 and the site of the hoist in the north-east corner (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 120: The west compartment of the semi-basement (R117) looking west showing the blocked up steps to R108 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

The western compartment has limewashed rubble stone walls (Figure 120). A blocked opening in the south wall contains six steps up to R108 with on its west side a concrete ramp, similar to that in the eastern compartment. An opening on the north wall has been blocked with brick in the late 20th century; the ceiling joists are trimmed at this location suggesting this was an access point from R119. At the west end of the compartment a relatively new 'I' section steel stanchion penetrates to the floor above (R118), where it is encased and provides mid-span support for a north-south spanning beam, the purpose of which is not clear. North-south spanning timber joists are exposed revealing the underside of timber floorboards of the floor above (R118).

Ground floor (R115, 116 and 118)

The ground floor of Block E sits approximately 1200mm above the upper level of the paved 'Gateway' to the north, possibly to aid the provision of access to a semi-basement rather than a full basement in R117. The 1961 survey drawings show a 'Confectionery Store' at the west end with a staircase rising to the first floor against the west wall. The central space is occupied by a 'Biscuit Store' on the south side and 'Tobacco Store', 'Cloaks' and 'Tea Room' arranged along the north wall with a 'Hoist' in the north-east corner. The south wall is shown with three openings separated by two cast-iron columns from a 'Covered Yard', now R108 and R109. On the east side of the north-south dividing wall are located a 'Mess Room' and 'Grocery Warehouse' in the space now occupied by R114, R115 and R116 (R114 is located in the north-east abutment to Block E and is described under Block C). These three interconnected spaces are sub-divided by a north-south-spanning partition wall, which does not rise full height, and has a wide corridor on its west side opening to R120 at the north end and R110 at the south end (Figure 121). To the east side of the partition are two rooms, R114 to the north and R116 to the south. The floor is concrete throughout and the east and west walls are finished in plaster. The ceiling of the west section, R115, is a segmental masonry arch carried on two east-west spanning beams, considerably lower than R114 to the north and R116 to the south. This formed the floor of the former 'Strong Room' shown above it on the 1961 survey. The ceiling of R116 has a central sheeted section subdivided into rectangular panels while the perimeter margins are open, exposing the ends of the north-south spanning joists and the underside of the first-floor floorboards. On the east side can be seen the plastered soffit of a short staircase which rises from R208 in Block C to R210 in Block E (Figure 122).



Figure 121: The corridor (R115) looking north to the door into R120 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 122: The ceiling of R116 showing the underside of the staircase between R208 and 210 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

R118 extends eastwards from the north-

south dividing wall from R115 to the boundary wall with Westgate Road. The space is sub-divided along a north-south line with a large undivided space at the east end and office accommodation at the west end.

The eastern part of this space has the early 20th-century pine boarded floor laid on north-south spanning joists and bearing some evidence of the previous subdivisions. Evidence of the hoist enclosure remains in the north-east corner. The north wall has two casement windows and a third opening to the west of these, shown on the 1961 survey, has been blocked and plastered over (Figure 123). The east wall contains a blocked door opening, adjacent to the hoist, which appears to have opened into R116 but is not shown on the 1961 survey drawings. The south wall has the two circular cast-iron columns which carry steel beams that bear on a brick end pier to the east and support the south external wall of the floors above (Figure 124). The central bay contains at its west side a low door which opens to timber steps down to Room R109. The openings between the columns have been infilled with concrete blockwork. The ceiling is sheeted with a panel material with strapped joints.



Figure 123: R118 looking north-east showing the casement windows in the north wall (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 124: One of the cast-iron columns in the south wall of R118 carrying a steel beam (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

The offices to the west of R118 have lightweight stud partition walls, flush doors and two casement windows overlooking Gateway R119, all appearing to date from *circa* 1970. The offices are accessed by a timber staircase which originates in R119 and enters a corridor located in the north-west corner. In the south wall of the corridor can be seen the column referenced in R117 and the down-stand beam which it carries can be seen above. The reason for the positioning of this column and beam arrangement, only about one metre from the west boundary wall, has not been ascertained although it may be related to the staircase arrangement, shown on

the 1961 survey drawings. A door opens from the south side of the hallway into a space which extends from a doorway in the east wall to a full-width opening at the east end.

First floor (R210 and 211)

The 1961 survey designates R210 as 'Grocery Store' with the upper portion of the concrete 'Strong Room' projecting in the room at the north side. Today, the room is accessed by a timber staircase rising from the sales area R208 to the east in Block C. The floor has early 20th-century pine floorboards laid on north-south spanning timber joists. The north wall has a small timber access door above the strong room roof, the purpose of which is not known. The east wall has early 21st-century electrical distribution boards mounted south of the staircase. The window opening in the south wall has been blocked with concrete blockwork in the late 20th century and a vertical steel ladder is fixed to the wall and rises to a trap door in the ceiling, giving access to the second floor (Figure 125) (The 1961 plans show that prior to the demolition of the west end of the building in the late 20th century, the staircase to the upper floors of Block E rose through the storage rooms at the westernmost end of the room of each floor). The west wall is an ad hoc vertically sheeted arrangement rising to within approximately 500mm of the ceiling with two strands of barbed wire across the gap. A crudely modified early 20th-century four-panel door opens to R211. At the base of the wall can be seen a footprint of the position of the wall previously in this location. The ceiling is sheeted with lath cover strips at joints. Exposed margins show the end of the north-south spanning joists and the underside of the flooring to Room R328.



Figure 125: The south wall of R210 showing the blocked window, steel ladder and electrical distribution boards to left (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

The 1961 survey designates R211 as 'Tea Store'. The floor has early 20th-century pine floorboards laid on north-south spanning timber joists. Window openings in the lime plastered north and south walls have been blocked with concrete blockwork but remnants of the early 20th-century 12-pane sash windows can be seen by looking into the hoist shaft (Figures 126 and 127). The west wall has an applied sheeted finish presumably added when the new gable was constructed in the late 20th century. The vertically-sheeted hoist shaft is located in the north-east corner and retains its original iron concertina gate. The ceiling is sheeted with lath cover strips at the joints. Exposed margins show the end of the north-south spanning joists and the underside of the

flooring to Room R328. Marks on the underside of the joists show that the ceiling was originally lath and plaster.



Figure 126: The north wall of R211 showing the blocked windows and hoist shaft (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 127: Internal view of the hoist shaft showing remains of a sash window on the floor below (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

Second floor (R328)

The 1961 survey designates R328 as 'Grocery Warehouse' accessed from the storage rooms to the west, demolished in the late 20th century. The floor has early 20th-century original pine floorboards laid on north-south spanning timber joists (Figure 128). Window openings in the lime-plastered north and south walls have been blocked with late 20th-century concrete blockwork. The west wall has an applied sheeted finish similar to that in R211. The hoist shaft retains its original iron concertina gate. The ceiling is lath and plaster.

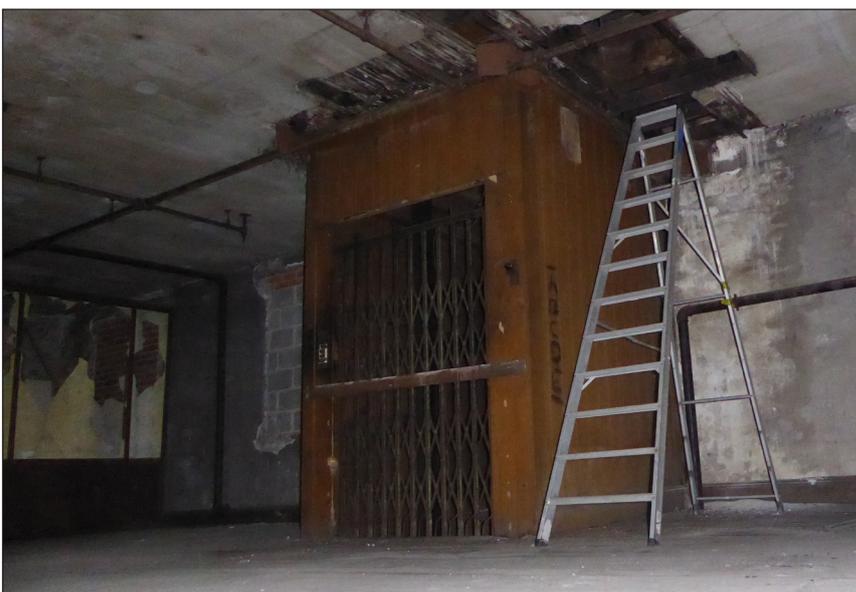


Figure 128: The hoist shaft in R328 and blocked windows in the north wall (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

Block F - Grocery Store 2 and Water Tower

The main building of Block F was built in 1883 to plans prepared by James Linday (see Figures 19a, b and c). It is a three-storey brick warehouse with slate double-pitch roof, sandstone kneelers and coping stones and English garden wall bond brick walls, straddling Plots 1 and 2. It possibly incorporates parts of the pre-existing 'General Warehouse' which is shown on Linday's plan, abutting the north boundary of Plot 2 at the rear of Block A (the 1873 premises) and extending beyond the gable of the new building. This earlier building may date to a programme of rebuilding following a fire in 1876 as noted in the historical discussion above. It appears that two of the Back Way cottages were demolished in 1883 to create two new entrances, both of which survive today, opening from Back Way to west-east 'Gateways', one to the north of Block F and the other to the south. A north-south passageway, passing through the east end of the new building on the ground floor, linked the new gateways. Linday's drawings show the north gateway, with a double-pitch glazed roof, extending from Back Way, to the west to the rear of Block B in the east. A small 'Yard', with a privy in its north-east corner, separated the west gable of the new building from the back of the remaining cottage. The yard was overlooked by windows in the 'Committee Room' (R132), evidence of which can still be seen in R129 and 130.

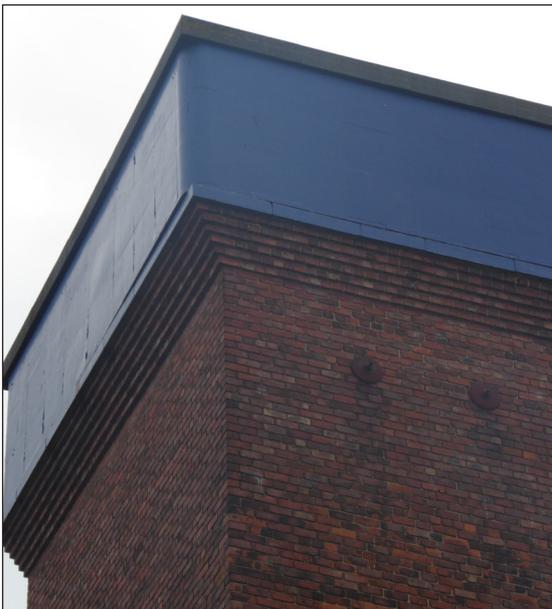


Figure 129: View of the water tower storage tank from the north-west showing the tank panels and corbel-course (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

At some later point, possibly in the 1940s, the water tower, which remains a prominent feature of the complex, was added on the south side of the yard above the west gable of Linday's building and the north side of the west end of the 'General Warehouse' building.¹⁷⁴ The tower rises about four metres above the ridge of the main building before six corbel courses step out to carry a masonry base for the round-cornered cast-iron tank (Figure 129). The purpose of a corbelled projection, two and a half bricks wide, above the ridge is not known (see right hand side of Figure 130). The north, east and south walls have exposed English garden wall bond brickwork. A steel, hooped access ladder with an intermediate platform to accommodate the corbelled projection is mounted on the smooth-rendered west elevation.

It is not known why the west wall was rendered but the work seems to have been carried out after the upper floors of Block G were demolished in the late 20th century (see below). A pair of restraining tie rods, terminating in circular cast-iron pattress plates, span east-west seven courses

above the ridge, and a second pair, spanning north-south, are located ten courses below the corbelling.

A second-floor room (R327) seems to have been added to the north side of the water tower in the early or mid-20th century and is shown on the 1961 survey with nothing corresponding on the floors below it. It must have spanned the north side of the tower between Block F and the three-storey warehouse to the west which was demolished in the late 20th century. The external brickwork is laid in stretcher courses with a single course of headers and appears of greater age than the brickwork of the two floors below it, which were infilled below R327 in the late 20th century to create R130 and R225.

Linday's drawings show the north elevation of the new three-storey main building was eight bays wide and had two over two sash windows with sandstone sills and lintels. A bracketed hoist projected on the first and second floors of the third bay from the west gable. Both gables had two windows at each floor level. The post-1961 restructuring work radically altered the window openings on the first and second floors of the north and south elevations of Block F. Late 19th-century sash windows were removed and new, wider openings with brick soldier course lintels and header course sills containing casement windows were introduced (Figure 130). The blocked openings of the former windows, infilled with late 20th-century brick, can still be seen.



Figure 130: North elevation of the 1883 warehouse (Block F) with replacement casement windows (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

The east end of the new building adjoined the small single-storey office building which protruded from the south-west corner of Block B in Thompson's 1882 plans. By the 1961 survey this had been replaced by a three-storey toilet block.

Ground floor, General Warehouse (R123, 124, 125 and 126)

Lindsay's drawings show the south side of the spaces occupied by R123 and 124 open to the 'Gateway' to the south and the external wall above supported by five columns. The 1961 survey drawings show the five columns had been removed and replaced by one new cast-iron, centrally located column carrying a substantial riveted iron beam which must have been inserted at the same time. The column can be seen today embedded in the north wall of the goods hoist. R123 was partially separated from R124 by a brickwork pier projecting perpendicular to the north wall. An opening in the north wall led to a space designated 'Bacon Cutting' and a ramp to the east led down to R103 ('Self-service Grocery etc') in Block A. A room designated 'Detergent Store', located at the west end of R124, was entered through a doorway in the south wall. A small 'Office' was located in the north-west corner of the main space and steps, projecting from the north wall, rose to a 'Storage Platform' in R136.



Figure 131: The office in R124 looking south out of the windows into R121 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 132: The narrow space to the west of the office showing the W&T Avery scales and wooden blockers behind (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

Today, R123 has a painted concrete floor, painted brick walls and plaster ceiling. R124, to the west, is a warehouse space having, to its west, an office with a corridor connecting into a small compartment adjacent to R125, which is shown on the

1961 plan as 'Detergent Store'. The office, probably a dispatch office, was expanded from a smaller office shown in 1961 and constructed in single skin brickwork. The office is entered from the east side and has full-width windows to the east, south and west walls (Figure 131). A door in the north wall of the office leads to a narrow corridor with shelving against the north wall. A step up at an opening at the west end of the corridor leads into the former detergent store. Floors are formed in concrete, late 19th-century lime plaster survives on the north wall of the corridor and the east and west walls of the detergent store and portions of the late 19th-century lath and plaster ceiling also survive. The original door opening to the former detergent store in the south wall has been blocked in brick in the late 20th century. To the west of the office, a narrow space opening off R121 is paved with the original wooden 'blockers' and houses a set of antique W&T Avery floor weigh scales (Figure 132). The west wall is finished with lime plaster and the ceiling is lath and plaster.



Figure 133: The east wall of R124 with the bricked up entrance to R123 to the right (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

To the east of the office the remainder of R124 has a macadamed floor with, in the north-east corner, a raised rectangular area bounded by a raised bullnose kerb laid to fall to a manhole and grating in the corner. It is not known what purpose this served (Figure 133). The north wall has a square-headed opening into R136 with a substantial timber beam as its lintel. It is also not known what purpose was served by five, equally-spaced, floor to ceiling vertical timber lathes fixed to the lime-plastered north wall, east of the opening to R136. To the east, the opening to the south of the brickwork pier between R123 and R124 has been infilled with a full-

height, single-leaf, brick wall which now separates the two spaces (see Figure 133). The brick south wall to R123 and R124, which infills the voids below the riveted beam, is contemporaneous with the construction of the hoist and lift shafts in Block C as part of the post-1961 re-structuring work. The wide, square-headed opening from R124 to R122 has a substantial timber beam as its lintel. All brickwork in this area is painted white. The ceiling is lath and lime plaster on north-south spanning joists. Two short planks spanning east-west and parallel to each other are fixed to the ceiling soffit in the north-east corner directly above the rectangular drain area described above. A 'U'-shaped steel strap, which is fixed to the planks, may have been used to suspend something over the drain (see top of Figure 133).

The space now occupied by R125 and R126 is shown as an undivided area designated 'General Warehouse' on Linday's plans. The north, east and west walls were imperforate and the south wall contained two windows. No door into the

warehouse is shown. The 1961 survey drawings show the space sub-divided by a north-south spanning wall with R125, to the east, designated 'Sugar Store' with two openings in the south wall onto the 'Covered Yard' and R126, to the west, designated 'Male Toilets' with four toilet cubicles perpendicular to the north wall, a door and window in the south wall and another window in the west wall.



Figure 134: Interior of R125 looking south-west into R120 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 135: The site of the former hoist in the north wall of R125 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

Today, R125 has what appears to be late 19th-century timber floorboards on north-south spanning joists over a semi-basement (Figure 134). The floor is approximately one metre above the sloping macadamed surface of R120. The brick north wall, which is the north wall of the 'General Warehouse' (circa 1876), is plastered and limewashed. A door opening has been formed at the west side and leads to R132. Further east, a darker rectangular plaster panel coincides with a trimmed opening in the floor above and patched floorboards in the floor showing the location of a hoist now removed (Figure 135). The east wall is plastered and limewashed. The south wall has three square-headed openings. At the east end the lintel soffit is approximately 500mm above floor level and, inexplicably, the opening continues down allowing the semi-basement to be entered through a pair of small timber framed meshed gates (not accessed). The upper part of the opening is blocked with late 20th-century brick. The narrow central opening is directly above another opening to the semi-basement and the wider opening to the west is accessed by a flight of timber steps from R120. The brick west wall, which is constructed in English garden wall bond, stops short of the floor joists above. North-south spanning timber joists with mid-span herringbone struts appear to be late 19th-century and did not have a plastered ceiling. The new appearance of the underside of the floorboards above suggest these were replaced towards the end of the 20th century.

R126 has a concrete floor. All four walls have a hard cement-based plastered dado, moulded dado rail and painted lime plaster above. The north wall has a projecting base and carries evidence of the four toilet pans and cubicle partitions which have now been removed. The east wall has two bracketed ceramic sinks at its south end. The south wall has a narrow entrance opening to the east of the office in R119 and a narrow window opening which has been sheeted over on the outside. The west wall contains early 20th-century porcelain urinals with a glazed white brick gable to the north end and overhead cistern (Figure 136). To the north end of the wall is a two over two sash window with artic textured glass, moulded horns, moulded architraves and plain sill. The ceiling has painted tongue-and-groove 'V'-jointed sheeting on north-south spanning joists.



Figure 136: Porcelain urinals and cistern in R126 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

Ground floor, Water Tower (R129)

The 1961 survey drawings show two toilets to the north end of R129 accessed from the north 'Gateway'. A door on the east side of the north wall led to a 'Store' on the south side of the space, separated from the toilets by an east-west internal wall. Today, the east-west wall has been removed and a new north-south brick wall constructed. The floor is concrete. The painted brickwork of the east wall, which is the west gable of Lindsay's main building, contains a blocked late 19th-century window opening which originally served the Committee Room, R132. It is blocked with brick and was probably closed in the early 20th century when the stores in this part of the site were being developed. The original sandstone sill and chamfered lintel survives (Figure 137). The limewashed south wall is the north wall of the General Warehouse, the bottom portion of which is rubble sandstone. The



Figure 137: The east wall of R129 showing the blocked window to R132 and pipework relating to the 1908 Grinnell sprinkler system (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

west wall may be part of the rear wall of one of the Back Way cottages. The original toilet door openings in the north wall have been blocked with late 20th century brick. The ceiling of both compartments appears to be chipboard sheeting. The eastern compartment has, mounted on the east wall, control valves and pipework related to the Grinnell sprinkler installation which served the entire complex. A printed instruction sheet, prepared by the manufacturer Mather and Platt Ltd and entitled 'Automatic Sprinkler and Fire Alarm Installation', is pasted to the wall. This appears to be dated 20 February 1943, which may be the date the system was installed or updated from the 1908 installation. As noted in Section 2 it may also have been Mather and Platt that was responsible for manufacture of the water tank and is possible that the two features were installed at the same time. The western compartment contains back-up battery packs and electrical switchgear set against the south and west walls.

Ground floor, Annex (R130)

R130 does not appear on the 1961 survey or re-structuring drawings and seems, along with R225, to have been infilled beneath R327 in the late 20th century. It seems to have served as a lobby to R129. It is entered through a doorway at the east side of the north wall. The floor is unfinished concrete. The north and west walls are constructed in relatively new brickwork, although towards the south end of the west wall is a vertical line indicating the north-east corner of R128, which is part of Block G. The painted brickwork of the east wall, which is part of the west gable of Lindsay's 1883 building, contains the other late 19th-century window serving the Committee Room, R132, and again, the original sandstone sill and chamfered lintel survives while the opening is blocked with early 20th-century brick. The south wall has, at its east side, the early 20th-century shallow camber-headed door opening to R129. The door openings to the two toilets have been built up in red brick and cast-iron soil pipes serving the first floor toilets in R227 are mounted on the wall. A redundant cast-iron downpipe and hopper head in the south-west corner may have served the east roof of Block G. The ceiling is sheeted with flimsy hardboard.

Ground floor, 1883 Main Building (R131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136 and 137)

Linday's plans show the north-south gateway, now R136, with a staircase, entered from the north, set against the east wall and rising to the first floor. The space now occupied by R137 was designated on its north side as a 'Lavatory' with a row of circular drop toilets on the north wall and, on the south side, an 'Engine House'. It is not known what the function of the engine was nor the purpose of two parallel walls shown extending from the rear of Block B and projecting into the Engine House. The 1961 survey drawings show the Gateway modified with a raised storage platform approached by steps on the south side and R136 designated 'Readymades', with a 'Compressor Room' to the north. Today, the floor in R136 has a macadamed surface, the north end has been infilled, and the east and west walls are limewashed brickwork. The location of the staircase shown on Linday's drawings is clearly visible on the east wall and former window openings in each wall have been blocked with early 20th-century brick but retain their original chamfered lintels. The ceiling is plastered. R137 has a tiled floor and tiled walls. Openings in the east and west walls lead to R138 and R136. The north wall contains three two over two sash windows, shown on the 1883 plan, with artc textured glass, moulded horns, moulded architraves and plain sills. The windows, which are visible from R142, are separated by single-brick-wide mullions and have chamfered sandstone lintels and sandstone sills. The ceiling is lath and plaster.



Figure 138: The polychromatic tiled flooring in R131 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

To the west of the former gateway, R136, Linday's plans show the space now occupied by R131, R133, R134 and R135 with a three bay 'Warehouse' to the south of a central east-west spanning wall and a toilet block to the north. The central wall incorporated two equally-spaced masonry piers which supported two north-south spanning timber fitch beams carrying the floor above. The warehouse was accessed from the gateway by double doors in the south side of the east wall, which also contained a window overlooking the gateway. To the north-east of the central wall was a toilet block with six toilet cubicles against the south wall and six urinals against the north wall. The toilet block was entered from the north gateway through a doorway in the east end of the north wall, which also contained a window. To the north-west a room, accessed from the 'Committee Room', contained on its

south side a toilet cubicle and, on its north side, a urinal. The north and south walls both contained windows.

The 1961 survey shows the space previously occupied by the warehouse and toilet block and Committee Room toilet completely reconfigured. The central dividing wall had been removed and the area was now designated 'Jam Store' with a 'Tobacco Room' in the north-east corner. The Committee Room toilet was re-designated 'Switch Room' and was now accessed from the Jam Store.

Today, R131 has been reconfigured as a lobby serving the former Committee Room (R132). The original polychromatic floor tiling survives bearing evidence of a toilet and urinal, shown on Linday's drawing, which have long since been removed (Figure 138). All walls have been re-plastered with gypsum plaster and door openings post-dating the 1961 plans have been formed in the north wall, from R141, and the west wall, from R132, while the opening to R133, shown in 1961, has been closed and plastered over. The ceiling has a gypsum plaster finish.



Figure 139: The ceiling plasterwork in the east compartment of R132 showing the cast-iron column on the west wall (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

The 'Committee Room', R132, shown on Linday's drawing must have been one of the finest spaces in the entire complex. The drawing shows a square room containing a 'U'-shaped conference table (see Figure 19a). The north and south walls had central projecting piers which carried a wide, north-south spanning beam. The north wall had two windows to the west of the central pier which overlooked the north gateway and an entrance doorway to the east of the pier which opened directly into the gateway. The east wall had, at its north end, a door which opened

into the toilet, R131, described above. The west wall had a central fireplace flanked by windows which overlooked the yard to the west. A centrally located cast-iron column with decorative moulded base and Corinthian capital supported the flat soffit of the beam above (Figure 139). The 1961 survey drawings show the west side of room had been converted to a 'Soap Store' which had a timber boarded platform 1.4m above the floor level of the eastern compartment. An opening which had been formed in the south wall had a ramp down to the sugar store. The eastern compartment which is designated 'Empties' was entered from the north gateway through the original doorway. A flight of steps rose to the north end of the platform



Figure 140: Interior of the west compartment of R132 looking north (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 141: Interior of the east compartment of R132 looking north (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

.Today, the room is fully sub-divided by a north-south spanning single-leaf red brick wall constructed in the late 20th century which is plastered with gypsum plaster on its east side and rests on a north-south spanning 'I'-section beam (Figures 140 and 141). The soap store platform remains as the floor of the western compartment, presumably at the level of the 'I'-section beam (visible in the western compartment), and the floor of the eastern compartment is unfinished concrete. Window openings in the western compartment have been infilled but much of the late 19th-century wall plaster, lath and plaster ceiling, moulded and enriched cornicing and highly decorative ceiling roses survive (Figure 142).

R133 has a concrete floor. All walls have been re-plastered with gypsum plaster. A new structural system was introduced to carry a first-floor 'Strong Room' as part of the post-1961 re-structuring. This consists of three free-standing steel 'I'-section stanchions located in the north-west and south-west corners of the west projection and centre of the south wall which carry two north-south spanning and two east-west spanning beams. The beams, which delineate a rectangle in the south-west corner, are encased in concrete and the soffit of cast concrete is exposed within the rectangle. It is not known why exactly the Strong Room required such a major structural intervention, but presumably it related to the additional security wall thickness shown on the 1961 proposal plans. The southern portion of the late 19th-

century west, north-south spanning, fitch beam has been removed but otherwise the beams survive. A circular cast-iron column, manufactured by the Bishop Auckland engineering company Lingford Gardiner and Co., is located at the south-east corner of the walls to R131 and supports the south end of the truncated fitch beam above (Figure 143). The ceiling has a gypsum plaster finish.



Figure 142: Detail of the ceiling rose in the west compartment of R132 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 143: Interior of R133 looking south showing the column supporting the fitch beam and R131 partitioned off to the right (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 144: The window between R135 and R136 visible in the west wall of R136 and probably blocked in the early 20th century (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

The former tobacco store, R134, is entered through a central doorway in the south wall. The floor is concrete and the walls and ceiling have been re-plastered with gypsum plaster. R135 also has a concrete floor and gypsum plastered walls and ceiling. Evidence of the window which overlooked the former gateway now comprising R136 can be seen from R136 (Figure 144). It was blocked with brick probably in the early 20th century and does not appear on the 1961 survey drawings.

Ground floor, Toilet Block (R138)

Linday's 1882 drawings show a small single-storey office building projecting from the south-west corner of Block B. The 1961 survey drawings show that, with the exception of the south wall (the north wall of the 'General Warehouse'), this had been removed and replaced by a space designated 'Bacon Cutting'. An arrangement of beams carried toilet accommodation above at first and second floors. Today, the space appears to have been refurbished *circa* 1990 and contains two toilet cubicles against the north wall. The floor has timber floorboards and walls and ceiling are gypsum plastered.

First floor, General Warehouse and Main Building (R216 and 220 – 224, 226 and 228)

The first-floor layout of the General Warehouse is not shown on Linday's 1883 drawings. The Main Building is shown, however, with four spaces, each the full depth of the building and separated from each other by 355mm thick brick cross walls. From west to east these are labelled 'Flour Warehouse' (part-R228), 'Corn and Bean Crusher' (part-R221, 222 and 223), 'Packing Room' (part-R221) and 'Dining Room' (part-R221).

The Flour Warehouse had two windows in the north wall and two windows in the west gable flanked by a chimney breast which would have accommodated the flue from the Committee Room below. A centrally-located north-south beam carried the second-floor joists. A central opening in the west wall led to the Corn and Bean Crusher. The Corn and Bean Crusher room had two windows on the east side of the north wall and, on the west side, an opening into an external hoist which projected from the wall. Two beams sub-divided the ceiling into three bays. To the south of the Corn and Bean Crusher room, a corridor extended along the south wall to an opening on the south side of the east wall and continued eastwards to the head of the staircase which rose from the east side of the north-south Gateway below (R136). North of the corridor was a 'Packing Room'. The packing room had one window in the north wall; on its east wall a staircase rose to the second floor. A north-south spanning beam, set approximately 1m from the west wall, carried the second-floor joists. An opening on the south side of the east wall led to a 'Dining Room' which had, on its north wall, windows flanking a centrally-located fireplace and, on the east gable, two more windows. A staircase rose from the south-west



Figure 145: The late 20th-century restaurant looking east from R220 into R221 and R216 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 146: Windows in the north wall of R221 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 147: The restaurant kitchen counter in R221 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

corner of the dining room to the second floor.

The 1961 survey drawings show that, by this time, the first floor had been re-defined as retail space rather than warehouse space but did not appear to have been altered structurally to any great extent. All of the floor space in the Main Building had been designated as 'Hardware Stock'. The hoist which had projected from the north elevation had been removed and some other minor alterations had been carried out including removal of the staircase which ascended from R136, removal of the south corridor and removal of the staircase which ascended from the Corn and Bean Crusher room. The General Warehouse, mainly dedicated to 'Hardware Sales', was accessed from Block A to the east. Towards its west end an internal hoist had been introduced, set against the north wall. An 'Office' was located against the south wall and, further west, more space was designated for 'Hardware Stock'. Finally, at the west gable, a staircase ascended to the second floor and an opening, at the west end of the north wall, led to a 'Male Toilet' located in the water tower.

The post-1961 re-structuring works brought about radical alterations to the first-floor layout with the entire floor being given over to banking use. The former General Warehouse now contained a long narrow 'Public Space' (R216 and R220) accessed from Block A which had a long customer counter on the north side terminating at its west end in two 'Interview' rooms. Further west, a corridor along the south wall (R229) led to 'Staff Toilets' (R227) in the water tower and a new concrete staircase in Block G. To the north of this corridor, the entire wall between the Main Building and General

Warehouse was removed to create a large 'Accounts Office' (R228). North-south dividing walls between the former Corn and Bean Crusher room, Packing Room and Dining Room in the Main Building were taken down to create one open space (R221), re-designated as 'Bank Office', 'General Office' and 'Assistant Manager'. To the west of this space a reinforced concrete 'Strong Room' was constructed in the south-west corner.

Today, the layout of the first floor remains much as shown on the 1961 re-structuring drawings but the use has once again changed with the east side having been re-modelled as a customer restaurant with associated kitchen and self-service area (Figures 145-147). The west side continued in use as offices. All evidence of the historic fabric is concealed. The floors in R216 and R220 have cork tiles and all other floors have thermoplastic tiles. Walls have been re-plastered and painted and those in R216, R220 and R221 have a moulded dado rail. Suspended ceilings in R216, R220 and R221 have exposed grid tiles identical to those in the main sales areas; all other ceilings have perforated concealed grid tiles.

First floor, Water Tower (R227)

The 1961 survey drawings show this room designated as 'Male Toilet'. It was entered from the west end of the south wall. The north wall contained three windows. Two toilet cubicles are shown on the east side of the north wall. The post-1961 re-structuring introduced a lobby and re-designated the toilet as 'Female'. Today, the room has been sub-divided to create a disabled toilet in the north-west corner and a long narrow space on the east side with a wash hand basin at its north end. The windows in the north wall have been blocked and plastered over in the late 20th century. The floor is sheet vinyl and the walls and ceiling are plastered and painted.

First floor, Annex (R225)

This room does not appear on the 1961 survey or re-structuring drawings, and was inserted, along with R130, to infill the space below R327 in the late 20th century. The room is entered through a doorway in the east wall from R228. The floor is finished with linoleum sheeting, and walls and ceiling are gypsum plastered. The south and west walls are lined with timber shelving and the north wall has three safes set against it.

First floor, Toilet Block (R217 and 218)

The 1961 survey drawings show the space designated 'Female Toilets' adopting the same plan form as the ground-floor office beneath, shown on Lindsay's 1883 plans. It was entered from the east through a small lobby from the Tea Room in Block B and had two windows in the north wall and one in the east wall. Four toilet cubicles were arranged along the west wall.

The post-1961 re-structuring saw the block being reconfigured to provide male and female toilets, both accessed from the public space at the east end of the former General Warehouse. The void between the east wall and the west wall of Block B was infilled and the opening into Block B was built up. The male toilets to the east (R217) had two toilet cubicles and a slab urinal. The female toilets to the west (R218) had two toilet cubicles. A note on the drawing indicates that the partition walls were to be constructed in '3" foam slag'. Today the layout remains unchanged although the sanitary ware has been renewed and the floor is finished with linoleum sheeting, and walls and ceiling are gypsum plastered.

Second floor, General Warehouse and 1883 Main Building (R309 – 322 and 324 - 326)

The second-floor layout of the General Warehouse is not shown on Linday's 1883 drawings. The Main Building is shown with four spaces, each the full depth of the building and separated from each other by 355mm thick brick cross walls. From west to east these are designated 'Flour Warehouse' (R324 and 325), 'Hay Cutting and Storage Room' (R315), 'Packing Room' (R314 and 316) and 'Coffee Roasting and Grinding Room' (part-R309, 312 and 313). The Flour Warehouse was identical to the room below. The Hay Cutting and Storage Room had the staircase from the room below terminating in its south-east corner, where an opening in the cross wall led to the Packing Room. A ladder-like symbol on the floor extending from the south side of the Hay Cutting and Storage Room to the hoist on the north wall is presumed to represent a trolley track for moving hay to and from the hoist. The Packing Room, like the room below, had one window in the north wall. An opening at the north end of the cross wall in this room led to the head of the staircase in the Coffee Roasting and Grinding Room, which had a pair of coupled sash windows in the north wall in addition to one window in the east gable wall directly above that in the room below.

The 1961 survey drawings showed that, by this time, the second floor had also found new uses but, again, had not been altered physically to a great extent. The Main Building on this floor was given over to shoe repairs. The two eastern compartments were designated for repairs, the former Packing Room was now 'Shoe Reception' with a small office in the north-west corner, and the Coffee Roasting and Grinding Room had become a 'Leather Store'. The east side of the General Warehouse was now a 'Tailoring Department' accessed in the north-east corner from Block A. A 'Mess Room' was located at the east end of this space. The roof structure appears to have been exposed in the main tailoring room and two pairs of roof lights, positioned between trusses, provided additional natural light. The west side of the General Warehouse was designated 'Furniture Stockroom' with the hoist centrally-located on the north wall. A dog-leg staircase in the north-west corner led from 'Hardware Stock' on the floor below to another 'Male Toilet' located in the water tower.

The 1961 proposals for restructuring included opening up the entire west side of the General Warehouse floor for use as storage space. An opening in the north



Figure 148: The second-floor corridor (R317) looking west (into R319) (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 149: View from the doorway of R324 (marked 'Staff Room' on the 1961 plans) looking north (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

re-plastered and painted (Figure 149). Suspended ceilings in R314-R317, R319, R320, R321, R324 and R325 have exposed grid tiles identical to those in the main sales areas; all other ceilings have perforated Asbestolux concealed grid tiles.

wall, in the former location of the hoist, led to R324 'Office Stores'. Another opening further west led to R325 'Office Records'. The masonry wall between the former Leather Store and the east end of the General Warehouse was removed to create a new 'L'-shaped reception area accessed from Block A. The staircase from the former Hardware Store was removed and a 'Secretary's Office' was added to the north side of this space. In the former Shoe Reception area, the small office was removed and the area re-designated as 'Secretary Manager's Office'. The former Shoe Repair Room, R315, became a 'Board Room' which was accessed through a door located in the south end of the east wall.

Today, the layout of the Main Building is similar to what is shown in the 1961 proposals. However, the General Warehouse now has a long corridor, R317, 319, 326, against the north wall, with double flush doors at either end, extending from the 'L'-shaped R309 to the east to the concrete staircase in Block G to the west (Figure 148). Doors open on the north side to 'Staff Room' R324 and the water tower and on the south side to four narrow rooms R318, R320, R321 and R322. It seems that this work was carried out as a modification to the post-1961 restructuring scheme as joinery details are identical on both sides of the east-west dividing wall. All evidence of the historic fabric is concealed. The floors in R318 and R320 have cork tiles, R314, R315 and R316 have carpet tiles and all other floors have thermoplastic tiles. Walls have been



Figure 150: View of the north wall of R323 with a remaining window and the three toilet cubicles (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 151: The exposed timber structure of the ceiling of R323 forming a floor in the next stage of the water tower above (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

Second floor, Water Tower (R323)

The 1961 survey drawings show this room designated as ‘Male Toilet’. It was accessed from three directions. An opening in the east wall led to the corridor to the south of Shoe Repairs in the Main Building. An opening in the south wall gave onto a staircase which descended to the first floor of the General Warehouse, and steps up to an opening in the south end of the west wall led to a ‘Flour Store’ in Block G. The north wall contained three windows and three toilet cubicles are shown against the wall (Figure 150). The post-1961 re-structuring saw the introduction of a lobby to the opening from the south and the east and west openings both being blocked. Today, the floor is finished with thermoplastic tiles, walls are painted plaster and the ceiling has exposed east-west spanning timber joists with the underside of the boards above exposed (Figure 151).

Second floor, Annex (R327)

R327 is shown on the 1961 survey drawings as an annex to a shoe repair room (R324). The plans show no rooms in this position on the lower floors, suggesting that R327 bridged the space between Linday’s warehouse and the (now demolished) west warehouse at second-floor level. The room is entered through a doorway in the east wall from R324. The floor is finished with linoleum sheeting, and walls and sloping ceiling are gypsum plastered (Figure 152). Electrical distribution boards are mounted on the south wall. The north wall is tiled and contains a glass-block window.



Figure 152: Interior of R327 looking west with electrical distribution boards on the south (left) wall (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

Second floor, Toilet Block (R310 and 311)

The 1961 survey drawings show the space sub-divided to create a 'Male Toilet' and 'Female Toilet'. The male toilet was accessed via a corridor on the east side from Block B and had a single toilet cubicle and wash basin. The north wall contained two windows. The female toilet was accessed from the tailoring department in the General Warehouse and had three toilet cubicles and a wash hand basin.

The post-1961 re-structuring saw the block being reconfigured to provide male and female toilets, both accessed from the public space at the east end of the former General Warehouse. The void between the east wall and west wall of Block B was infilled and the opening into Block B was blocked. The male toilets to the east (R310) had two toilet cubicles and a slab urinal. The female toilets to the west

(R311) had two toilet cubicles. A note on the drawing indicates that the partition walls were to be constructed in '3" foam slag'. Today the layout remains unchanged although the sanitary ware has been renewed. The floor is finished with linoleum sheeting, and walls and ceiling are gypsum plastered.

Block G - Westgate Warehouse

Block G faces west onto Westgate Road (Back Way). It is 36m long and extends from the north boundary of Plot 1 to the south boundary of Plot 3. This is thought to have been the location of the three-storey eight-bay brick warehouse with a double-pitch slate roof designed by F H Livesay, *circa* 1903. To the south, on Plot 4, was a lower two-storey, three-bay building, possibly reconfigured from the former cottages which occupied this site. The building was removed in the late 20th century and replaced by a car park. The warehouse designed by Livesay replaced the remaining cottages and other buildings which faced onto Back Way but, while the date of construction is not known, it can be assumed that, as the building is not shown on Linday's 1893 drawings, a date in the early years of the 20th century is probable, as noted above.

The 1961 re-structuring proposals show a number of proposed alterations and it is known that some of these – for example, the new concrete staircase in R127 – were executed (Figure 153). It is not known when a decision was taken to remove

most of the first floor and the entire second floor and install a new flat roof over the remaining ground-floor and stairwell spaces, but it is likely to have occurred after the 1961 re-structuring programme. The surviving front elevation drawing attributed to Livesay shows eight over eight sash windows to all three floors (see Figure 26a). Each window opening had a segmental brick arch and three-course sandstone sill. The square-headed archway entrances to the north and south yards each remain as shown on the elevation drawing (Figure 154).



Figure 153: The concrete stairwell R127 at first-floor level (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 154: Rear elevation of the co-operative complex showing the square-headed gateway entrances now with steel doors (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

The 1961 survey ground-floor plan shows a covered carriageway, R108, between a 'Cheese Room' to the south and 'Confectionery Store' to the north, which was at a higher level and open to the carriageway which continued east into a covered yard. Today, the carriage arch has been built up in red brick, the paved surface is concrete and the north, south and west walls are of painted brickwork. The south wall contains a square-headed opening which has also been built up in red brick. 600mm x 600mm fibre tiles line the carriageway soffit. The 'Confectionery Store' which is now the area occupied by the west end of R118 is described under Block E.

R119 is a wide arrival area (Figure 155). A small dispatch office is located against the north wall in the north-east corner. A chute device is connected from an opening in the floor above which could be winched up or down (Figure 156). The apparatus, capable of being raised and lowered and presumably used for handling bags of flour from the 'Flour Room' above, is housed in the centre of the north side of the former floor. A macadamed surface slopes down from west to east. A rectangular raised concrete plinth abuts the south wall and a timber staircase in the south-east corner rises approximately 1260mm to the lobby of R118. North, south and west walls have paint on English garden wall bond brickwork. The carriage arch has a modern roller shutter door. Two casement windows have been installed in the south wall. Blackened east-west spanning timber joists are supported at mid-

span by a north-south spanning beam. The underside of timber boards, once first-floor floorboards, are exposed and probably now form a base for the waterproof membrane of the flat roof above. Two parallel 'I'-section steel beams carry the joists' ends and would originally have also carried the east wall of the upper floors.



Figure 155: The interior of the covered yard at R119 looking south-west (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 156: A timber chute in the ceiling of R119 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

The 1961 survey shows a 'Potato Store' in the location of R127 and R128 which now are separated by a one-brick-thick wall. R127 contains the base of a cast concrete staircase with a steel balustrade and plastic hand rails, which rises through three floors. The staircase and the dividing wall to R128 were introduced as part of the re-structuring proposed in the October 1961 plans. In R127, the staircase is now roofed-over a short distance above the top landing; this change presumably took place at the same time as the demolition of the surrounding three-storey warehouse in the late 20th century. The stairwell is accessed from Westgate Road through a set of double doors in the west wall. Double doors on the east side of the south and north walls open into R119 and R128 respectively. The floor is concrete and walls are plastered and painted. Evidence of window openings might be found behind the plasterwork of the west wall. R128 also has a concrete floor. The north, east and west walls retain some original brickwork, lime plaster and evidence of previous openings which are now blocked with late 20th-century brick. At ceiling level timber joists with mid-span herringbone strutting span east-west. The underside of timber boards, once first-floor floorboards, is exposed and probably now forms a base for the waterproof membrane of the flat roof above. The underside of the joists show that a lath and plaster ceiling has been removed. A centrally-positioned trimmed opening on the north side of the ceiling appears to have been a hatch between ground and first floors.

R139 has a ribbed concrete ramp down to a macadamed surface (Figure 157). The north gable wall, east wall, south wall and west wall all have limewashed brickwork. The carriage arch has a modern roller shutter door. The east wall contains evidence



Figure 157: The interior of R139 looking south in R128 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

of a former window opening to the lobby R130. At ceiling level, timber joists with mid-span herringbone strutting span east-west. The underside of timber boards, once first-floor floorboards, is exposed and probably now forms a base for the waterproof membrane of the flat roof above. The underside of the joists show that a lath and plaster ceiling has been removed. A centrally-positioned trimmed opening in the floor above the carriageway appears to have been a hatch between ground and first floors.

The 1961 survey drawings show the first floor and part of the second floor was used for flour storage and the remainder of the second floor as a 'Hardware Store' and 'Rice and Tea Store'.

Area Between Blocks

Covered yard between Blocks C, E, F and G (R120)

The 1961 survey drawings designate this space as 'Covered Yard' but the date of construction is not known (Figure 158). The macadamed surface which slopes downwards from west to east may originally have been paved with 'wooden blockers'. The painted brickwork walls to the four sides have been described under their respective Blocks. The east end of the double-pitch roof abuts the west wall of Block C (where the casement window into R214 can be seen in the upper wall) and the west end abuts the south wall of Block G. The painted timber roof structure comprises four 'A' trusses, with iron strap reinforced joints, which carry four in-line purlins to each side of the central ridge. The roof covering to the top four bays has been replaced with modern profiled metal sheeting; however, the



Figure 158: Interior of the covered yard (R120) looking east in R121 with the internal window to R214 above (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

eaves bay retains the original rafters and timber sarking. From above the roof new structural steelwork can be seen comprising an 'I'-section beam spanning east-west, almost directly above the ridge bearing on the west wall of the north-east annex to Block E and the rear wall of Block G (which survives as a parapet). Another beam, spanning north-south, passes under the east-west beam at mid-span, apparently to provide additional support. This arrangement seems to suggest that there was an intention to create additional accommodation above the yard which, presumably, would have involved removal of the existing roof.

Covered yard to north of Block D, south of Block E and east of Block G (R109 and 110)

The long narrow space occupied by R109 and R110 is also shown as a 'Covered Yard' on the 1961 drawings. It was a single space with an entrance onto Westgate Road and R110 and R113 formerly connected with each other around the east end of Block E. R109 and R110 were subdivided from R113 by a masonry wall in the late 20th century and latterly served as a store (Figure 159). The paved surface of R109 is concrete and, at the west east end, a metal balustrade guards the drop to R110. The floor of R110 is finished with thermoplastic tiles. The north and south walls of both spaces are of painted brickwork and the ceiling has 600mm x 600mm fibre tiles fixed to the underside of the flat roof structure. In R110 a flight of ten concrete steps rise in the south-west corner to R109. Another set of (timber) steps on the north wall rise to R116 in Block E. To the east end of R110 is a small temporary store and office approached by a flight of four steps. A set of double flush doors in the south wall lead to R109 in Block D.

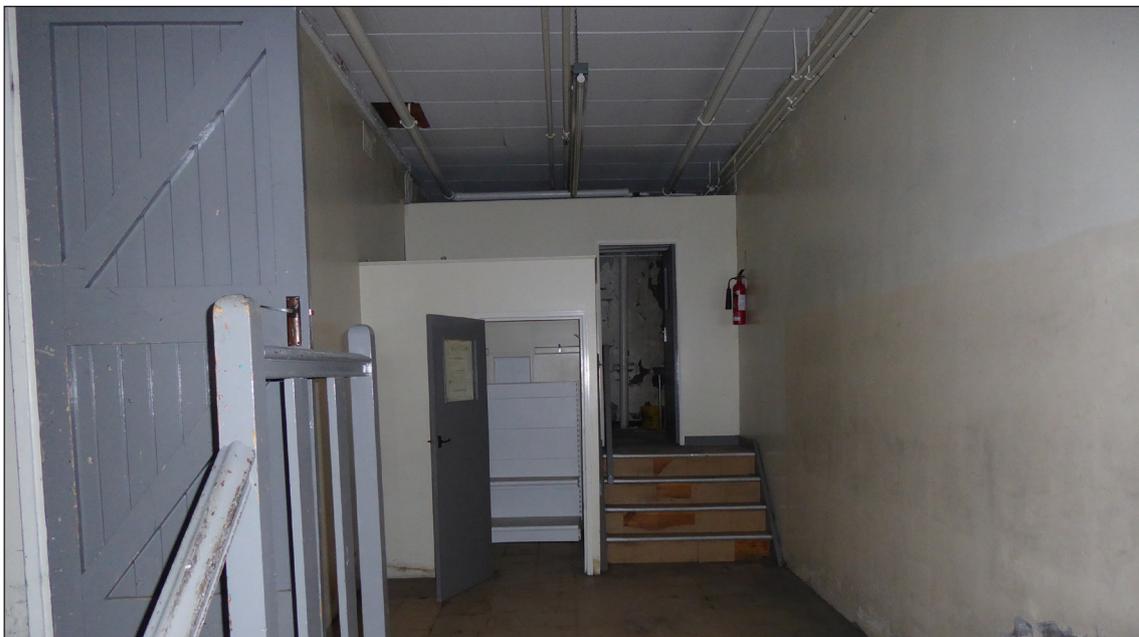


Figure 159: Interior of storage space R110 looking east (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

Covered yard to west of Block B, east of Block G and north of Block F, (R140, 141 and 142)

Linday's 1883 drawings for Block F show R140-R142 with a double-pitch glazed roof carried on an 'A' truss roof structure bearing on the north wall of Block F and the north boundary wall. This has been removed and replaced with a flat roof consisting of plywood decking on timber joists, a change which seems to have occurred prior to the 1961 survey (Figure 160). The paved surface, which slopes down from west to east, is macadamed but retains evidence of the late 19th-century 'wooden blocker' paving (Figure 161 and *see* Figure 28). The north and south walls are painted red brick. A north-south spanning brick wall with a set of double doors at its south side, separates R141 and 142. The south-east corner of R142 contains two redundant toilet cubicles and, in the wall to the west, three painted-over windows which looked into R137 with sandstone sills and splayed lintels (Figure 162). A 21st-century (apparently functional) floor-mounted boiler and calorifier is located in the north-east corner. A steep flight of timber steps on the east side of R142 lead down to the basement (R001) of Block B. The opening in the floor is protected by a brick parapet wall.

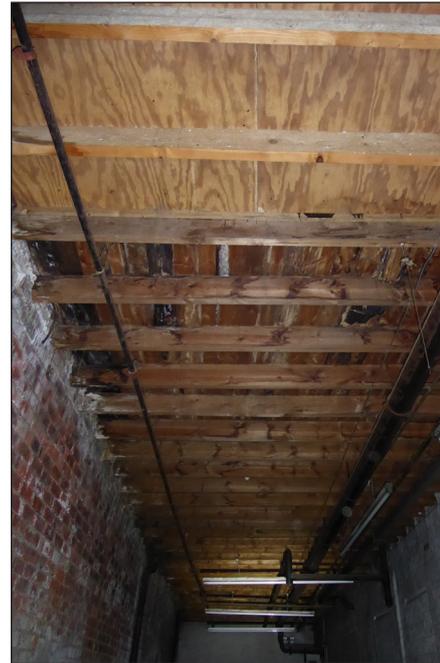


Figure 160: Timber ceiling joists and boards in R141-142 looking east (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 161: Interior of R142 showing tarmacadamed floor and the entrance to basement R001 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)



Figure 162: View from R142 of the blocked windows in the north wall of R137 (© Historic England, photograph: Alastair Coey Architects, 2019)

4. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Evidential

The Bishop Auckland Co-operative Stores remains a substantially intact example of a late Victorian commercial store, although with later alterations, particularly to the ground-floor shopfronts, which slightly compromise the level of significance. Although there have been internal alterations, these have generally been 'loose-fit', and applied without significant damage to existing fabric, which tends to survive beneath later stud work. The progression of construction phases is complex, and presents an interesting study in the means employed by a series of Victorian architects to achieve stylistic and material unity across phased expansions. Further, evidence of the redevelopment of spaces, and conversion of uses within the internal layout, represents a considerable body of information relating to the change and growth of the Society and the co-operative movement as a whole. Spaces extending under the street from the basements on Newgate Street are unexplored and may merit further investigation.

The building is representative of the exponential growth of the economic model of co-operation in the late 19th century, nationally and within Bishop Auckland, and internally the complex floor plan is reflective of the stores' developing position as a primary provider of a remarkably diverse range of goods and services in the town. This is represented most clearly in the distinct phasing of the façade, which reflects the successive purchasing and expansion of new premises over a period of 30 years and is clearly legible in the historic fabric. Although distinct, the phasing achieves a sense of architectural uniformity which is unusual in the expansion of a co-operative store. The whole complex represents over 150 years of changes during the life and decline of the Society, and yields a rich picture of its commercial, economic, manufacturing and social activity.

The rear warehouses retain evidence of the functioning of a large co-operative store, in the form of sections of hoists, grilles, lifts, and evidence of transportation linked to cart entrances and surviving 'Gateways' paved with timber cobbles. There is also evidence of a clear hierarchy of internal spaces, with rather incongruous decorative plasterwork within the rear section of the building indicating committee meeting rooms, and a well-preserved board room and manager's office on the first floor, all retaining high quality late 19th-century original fabric. The internal spaces also contain structural evidence which informs our understanding of late Victorian construction and engineering, including steel columns and beams, and original timber roof construction. Although the change of materials through the different phases is limited, there is some evidence of increased concern with fireproofing, for example in the move from timber boards to concrete flooring between Blocks B and C. It is anticipated that the building is likely to contain further evidence of internal ornament and fittings which are currently obscured by 20th-century stud walling and suspended ceilings.

Understanding of the building and its functioning is enhanced by a series of surviving services, which includes limited evidence of the original gas lighting, an early electricity installation, and finally the sprinkler system. The latter represented a significant investment in the 20th century, likely reflecting more stringent requirements for insurance, and its updating may have been connected to the introduction of the water tower to rear, which represented one of the most striking later alterations to the structure, probably *circa* 1949.

Evidential value is significantly enhanced by a detailed surviving historic record of the buildings' development, notably including a series of surviving plans and elevations, and a detailed published history of the Society, including its building projects. This combined information contributes to an integrated and detailed understanding of the building and its uses. Comparison of the surviving layout and features of Block B with R W Thompson's 1882-83 designs and the 1961 surveys gives a particularly valuable indication of the good preservation of the building.

Significance is furthered by the fact that the former central stores is the only remaining structure, in Bishop Auckland, of a rich built environment of Co-operative Society infrastructure, detailed extensively in Readshaw's history, including stables, mills, warehouses, and production sites across Bishop Auckland, now generally demolished.

Historical

The complex of buildings retains a strong association with the wider co-operative movement, which is an important feature of the labour movement in Industrial Britain, representative of the late 19th-century development of increased rights and organisations to improve the rights of the working classes. It represents the local manifestation of a nationwide movement, with contact and inspiration coming from the founding Rochdale Pioneers, and the administrative centre of the Co-operative Wholesale Society in Manchester. Bishop Auckland is significant as one of the earliest co-operative societies in the North East, placing it at the forefront of the movement's activities within the industrial heartland of Northumberland and County Durham and connecting more broadly to the local mining communities, in whose interests co-operation was established. The central stores were the hub of a wide network of manufacturing and retail branch activity within the wider hinterland of Bishop Auckland, illustrative of the link between small-scale local manufacturing and retail on a sustainable, profit-sharing model. The Society also owned numerous industrial buildings across Bishop Auckland, most of which have since been demolished, as well as branch stores in surrounding villages some of which survive such as the Coundon store (1902-3) and the Evenwood store (1904).

The building is a good example of an evolved Victorian retail store and combined warehouse. The primary spaces, layout and structural fabric of the building remain largely intact, although numerous internal rearrangements and refitting have erased many of the fittings and features including the removal of the historic shopfronts.

The scale and complexity of the layout reflects the extent to which the Society developed their retail offering to provide for a comprehensive range of basic food and clothing needs amongst local people, and a historical overview of associated manufactories that was associated with the stores suggests a localised model of production and supply which is aligned with the principles of co-operation, and is of considerable historic, social and economic interest. The changes to the original subdivided plan reflect a move towards retail trends for open planning in the 20th century, while still retaining traces of the earlier layout and division.

The prominent frontage of the building reflects changing trends on the late Victorian high street, illustrating the move away from relatively low-rise individual shops towards vast consolidated street frontages more typical of the department store, which was also a relatively new late 19th-century development, representing changing building practices and the economic prosperity of large retail organisations from this period. The building is typical of the grand aspirational quality of the central stores of many co-operative societies in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and their ability to erect substantial premises in both urban and rural centres.

Designed over various stages from the 1860s-1890s, the complex is a substantial product of various local architects. Although not unusual, it should be noted that its major phases of expansion did not involve work by the CWS architects' department, which was only founded a few years after the last major expansion on Newgate Street (1892-94). In demonstrating the work of William Vickers Thompson and Robert Wilkinson Thompson, the building seems to testify to the presence of a longstanding family of local architects in Bishop Auckland. Robert Wilkinson Thompson is known to have designed the nearby Mechanics' Institute, which strongly recalls the character of parts of the co-operative stores, while his son Robert Brown Thompson made alterations to McIntyre's Shoe Shop (Listed Grade II, NHLE 1196577), also on Newgate Street. William Vickers and Robert Wilkinson were sons of William Vickers Thompson Snr who was the designer of St Anne's Church beside the Town Hall in Bishop Auckland (Listed Grade II; NHLE 1292201). Other local architects who contributed to the building were Frederick Livesay, James Linday and Thomas Dent, the latter two of whom had longstanding commitments to the Society, the former as committee Secretary and the latter as an employee in the joinery department. The building also retains evidence, in the form of a cast-iron column, of the involvement of the long-standing Bishop Auckland engineering firm of Lingford and Co.

The central stores complements other neighbouring buildings which are representative of shifting Victorian ideals in terms of improved conditions and aspirations for the working classes, including the Mechanics' Institute, Victoria Avenue, and the Lightfoot Institute, Kingsway, each representative of working-class education movements.

Aesthetic

The co-operative store is prominently located on Newgate Street, the commercial heart of Bishop Auckland, and is notable for its grand scale and architectural confidence, representing the aspirational ideals of the Society, as well as its pre-eminence amongst competitors at the time of its construction. The building is composed in a loose Gothic Revival style with classical influences, representative of Victorian eclecticism. Its execution is also indicative of the varied stylistic approaches to the design of co-operative buildings, which included the more modest provincial designs of small-town architects. The frontage makes a strong contribution to the quality of the urban environment and to the diversity of its architectural character, an aesthetic contrast with the more informal and modestly scaled premises of Bondgate.

Generally, despite being built in phases, the building presents a harmonious architectural character with the exception of the southernmost section, of 1894. This was an unusual aesthetic choice in a co-operative store as premises elsewhere tended to expand in architecturally distinct phases. The 1894 block was built independently for another retailer, Christopher Manners, purchased by the Society in 1902, and displays a similar level of architectural confidence. Despite efforts by the architects to maintain an appearance of unity during the phasing, closer inspection reveals signs of historical development of the buildings over time: the original three-storey store building designed by W V Thompson in 1873, with extensions by R W Thompson in 1882-83 and James Linday in 1892-94. Each phase incorporates the respective earlier buildings as components of the new design, whilst subtly shifting emphasis and massing, and introducing a new axis of symmetry. Judicious use of gabled bays avoids the impression of a development of terraced shops, elevating a sense of grandeur, which approximates the architectural confidence of the fashionable department store.

Aesthetic significance has been slightly eroded by the loss of the original shop-fronts in the 1960s, and the late 20th-century retail units are rather incongruous. Historical photographs, however, give an impression of their earlier appearance, with awning covering the pavement on Newgate Street, and might be used to inform a restoration. Little of aesthetic significance has survived from the 1960s remodelling.

Aesthetically, there is a strong contrast between the formality of the public facade and the sprawling warehouse buildings behind, indicative of the function of the Co-operative Society as a producer as well as a retailer. The significance of the interiors is at present greatly obscured by the insertion of stud walls and suspended ceilings introduced by later shop renovations. Site-work has confirmed the survival of original details behind some of these insertions and their removal would offer great potential to reveal the extent of surviving historic decoration. In the warehouses and administrative rooms, original aspects of the industrial building – such as steel columns and beams, open timber roofs, and whitewashed brick – reinforce their industrial aesthetic, offering a contrast with the panelling and plaster ceilings of the

committee rooms.

Communal

The Co-operative Society was by definition an organisation of great communal significance, with links to an era of considerable civic and communal pride, as well as improvement and self-determination for the working classes. The co-operative movement embodied social and equitable principles which highlight the Victorian ethos of improvement and enterprise combined with social conscience, represented by the survival of the former central stores. Prominently located in the commercial core of Bishop Auckland, the building served as a place of employment, membership and social gathering, which is firmly embedded into local memory.

The diversity of services and goods offered at the central stores is representative of the dominance of the co-operative movement within working-class retailing, and indeed, for a time, the production that supported it. Although there is no evidence that the central stores hosted social activities (as some premises did), the social importance of the place is represented by the increasingly flamboyant celebration with which each expansion was greeted locally. The introduction of a cafeteria in 1913 increased the significance of the central stores as a gathering place, reflective of changing social trends in the high street. Its longevity as the principal retail premises within Bishop Auckland, from the various prototypes and developments of the co-operative stores to its last incarnation as Beale's Department Store, means that the shop has traced 150 years of retail development through the late 1800s and the entire 20th century. The stores' eventual closure in 2007 is also representative of the decline and challenge faced by high streets in the 21st century.

The building is clearly of exceptional local significance, with associations and memories for Bishop Auckland residents over many generations. There is a strong likelihood that members of the community today have particular memories of the co-operative stores and may even own artefacts relating to it such as account books or membership cards. A conversation with two local men during the preparation of this report confirmed that the 'Co-Op' was a central part of life growing up in Bishop Auckland in the mid-20th century and that memories of it were widespread.

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- 538: Proposed additions to the Co-operative stores, Newgate Street, Bishop Auckland, R W Thompson, 1882
- 547: Plans of proposed alterations and additions to the Co-operative Stores, Bishop Auckland, James Linday, 1883
- 671: Additions and alterations to the Bishop Auckland Co-operative stores, unsigned, undated
- 690: Further additions to the Bishop Auckland Stores Extensions, James Linday, 1893
- 1147: Plan of arrangements for water supplies from towns main and tank to installation of Grinnell sprinklers for the co-op, Messrs Mather and Platt, 1908
- 1336: Proposed café at central stores for the Bishop Auckland Co-op society ltd, Thomas Dent, 1913

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ENDNOTES

- 1 The location of this original shop is not precisely known, and South Church Lane no longer exists, having been subsumed into what is now South Church Road.
- 2 See Chapters 7 and 9 in Readshaw 1910.
- 3 We do not have precise dates for Readshaw's tenure as Secretary, but we do know that he joined the Co-op in 1892 after losing his mining job at Adelaide Colliery during the Strike of that year, He was Secretary in 1903, and in 1910, and presumably in the intervening years (Lloyd 16 July 2016, online)
- 4 Mansfield 2013, 41
- 5 Readshaw 1910, 20
- 6 Ibid
- 7 Readshaw 1910, 16
- 8 Readshaw 1910, 21-22
- 9 The term 'tommy shop' refers to a monopolistic company-owned shop where wages paid are expected to be returned to the employer for goods purchased, often at unrealistically high prices. 'Tommy' refers to bread or a penny roll, or goods in lieu of money.
- 10 Readshaw 1910, 22
- 11 Readshaw 1910, 25
- 12 Tweedie nd, CWS online
- 13 Mansfield 2013, 46
- 14 Tweedie nd, CWS online
- 15 Historic England 2017, 5
- 16 Morrison 2003, 147
- 17 Ibid
- 18 Mansfield 2013, 47
- 19 Mansfield 2013, 49
- 20 Ibid
- 21 Mansfield 2013, 46-47
- 22 Mansfield 2013, 49
- 23 Morrison 2003, 153
- 24 Ibid
- 25 Mansfield 2013, 50
- 26 Mansfield 2013, 45
- 27 Morrison 2003, 153, 155
- 28 Morrison 2003, 172
- 29 Morrison 2003, 173
- 30 Morrison 2003, 173
- 31 Morrison 2003, 156
- 32 Readshaw 1910, 25
- 33 Readshaw 1910, 34
- 34 Readshaw 1910, 36
- 35 Readshaw 1910, 43
- 36 Readshaw 1910, 34
- 37 Readshaw 1910, 43
- 38 Readshaw 1910, 47
- 39 Readshaw 1910, 53, 58
- 40 Readshaw 1910, 58-62
- 41 Readshaw 1910, 83
- 42 DRO, Bishop Auckland Urban District Authority, UD/BA, 432 (Building Plans)/547: Plans of proposed alterations and additions to the Co-operative Stores

- Bishop Auckland, James Linday, 1883
- 43 Readshaw 1910, 84-85
- 44 Readshaw 1910, 91
- 45 Readshaw 1910, 78
- 46 Readshaw 1910, 78
- 47 Readshaw 1910, 77
- 48 Readshaw 1910, 93
- 49 DRO, UD/BA 432/73: Plan of stable and warehouse intended to be erected for the Co-operative Store co^y (limited), James D Thompson, 1869; Readshaw 1910, 146. Durham Street is now completely developed with early 20th-century housing, so the stables are presumed to have been demolished at this time.
- 50 Readshaw 1910, 164
- 51 Readshaw 1910, 156; kersey is a type of coarse, light-weight woollen cloth like tweed, originally produced in the South East of England in the late medieval period, but by the 19th century its largest production centres were in the North.
- 52 Readshaw 1910, 178-181
- 53 It is not known whether any of the original co-op buildings in these towns remain; although several retain a Co-op, many are now accommodated in late 20th-century buildings.
- 54 Lloyd 16 July 2016, online
- 55 Readshaw 1910, 101-102
- 56 Lloyd 14 April 2014, online
- 57 DRO, Bishop Auckland Co-operative Society, D/Co/BA 66: Rules of the Bishop Auckland Industrial Co-operative Flour and Provision Society Ltd. 1903.
- 58 DRO, D/Co/BA 66, 4
- 59 DRO, D/Co/BA 66, 5
- 60 DRO, D/Co/BA 66, 8
- 61 DRO, D/Co/BA 66, 19
- 62 DRO, D/Co/BA 66, 14-5
- 63 DRO, D/Co/BA 66, 12
- 64 DRO, D/Co/BA 66, 34
- 65 Readshaw 1910, 186
- 66 Readshaw 1910, 164-5/182
- 67 DRO, UD/BA 432: Plans 1527 & 1700 (as listed in Drawings Register 1905); Darvill 1954, Table 11
- 68 Mansfield 2013, 56
- 69 Readshaw 1910, 208
- 70 Mansfield 2013, 57
- 71 DRO, D/Co/BA 40/232-233: Committee and Quarterly Members' Meetings Minute Book 1949-1968
- 72 Lloyd 19 October 2016, online
- 73 Charles Goad's Insurance Plans, Bishop Auckland sheets (1984; 1989; 1995; 2003; 2007), held at the Clayport Library, Durham.
- 74 Bowman 6 April 2011, online; Teasdale 9 January 2017, online
- 75 MacFarlane 27 November 2018, online
- 76 Readshaw 1910, 77, 102, 129, 155
- 77 Walton 2008, 161
- 78 *Durham Chronicle* 15 May 1863, online
- 79 *The Northern Echo* 16 July 1894, online
- 80 Readshaw 1910, 363
- 81 Readshaw 1910, 364
- 82 Readshaw 1910, 364

- 83 Readshaw 1910, 72
- 84 See for example, Research Report 29-2019 on 25 Newgate Street, which lies a short distance to north-east, and is representative of the earlier commercial structures along the street.
- 85 Readshaw 1910, 76
- 86 Readshaw 1910, 77
- 87 Readshaw 1910, 43, 368
- 88 Readshaw 1910, 77
- 89 Readshaw 1910, 225
- 90 DRO, UD/BA 432/73; it is unclear whether James D Thompson was related to the other architects of the same name who later worked for the Society, as discussed later herein
- 91 Readshaw 1910, 146
- 92 Readshaw 1910, 146
- 93 Readshaw 1910, 142
- 94 Morrison 2003, 50
- 95 Morrison 2003, 50
- 96 Readshaw 1910, 145
- 97 Readshaw 1910, 56, 165
- 98 *The Northern Echo* 31 July 1876, online
- 99 Personal communication with an archivist at the National Co-operative Archives
- 100 *The Northern Echo* 31 July 1876, online
- 101 Ibid
- 102 Readshaw 1910, 225-226
- 103 Readshaw 1910, 225-226
- 104 Readshaw 1910, 146
- 105 Readshaw 1910, 149
- 106 Readshaw 1910, 150
- 107 Readshaw 1910, 150
- 108 Morrison 2003, 147
- 109 Readshaw 1910, 150
- 110 Readshaw 1910, 154; DRO, UD/BA 432/547
- 111 Walton Brown 1893, 168; Kelly and Co 1890, 28
- 112 Readshaw 1910, 122
- 113 Readshaw 1910, 153
- 114 Readshaw 1910, 154
- 115 Readshaw 1910, 154
- 116 Letter by James Linday to accompany planning approval drawings, dated 3 July 1893 (DRO, UD/BA 432/690: Further additions to the Bishop Auckland Stores Extensions, James Linday, 1893)
- 117 DRO, UD/BA 432/690
- 118 Readshaw 1910, 110
- 119 Readshaw 1910, 155
- 120 Readshaw 1910, 155
- 121 Readshaw 1910, 156
- 122 Ibid
- 123 Morrison 2003, 153-156
- 124 DRO, UD/BA 432/671: Additions and alterations to the Bishop Auckland Co-operative stores, unsigned, undated
- 125 Readshaw 1910, 153
- 126 Readshaw 1910, 154

- 127 Readshaw 1910, 159
- 128 Kelly and Co 1914, 29
- 129 Brodie 2001, 58
- 130 *The London Gazette* 10 November 1908, online
- 131 Readshaw 1910, 159
- 132 Readshaw 1910, 159
- 133 Readshaw 1910, 159
- 134 Readshaw 1910, 159
- 135 DRO, UD/BA 432/690
- 136 Readshaw 1910, 160
- 137 Readshaw 1910, 160
- 138 Kelly and Co 1890, 23
- 139 'T. Manners & Sons Ltd', online
- 140 Manners 1981, 6-7; Readshaw 1910, 150, 201
- 141 Readshaw 1910, 160
- 142 Readshaw 1910, 161
- 143 DRO, UD/BA 432/1336
- 144 Readshaw 1910, 185
- 145 Readshaw 1910, 161
- 146 Readshaw 1910, 161
- 147 *The Northern Echo* 16 July 1894, online
- 148 DRO, UD/BA 432/1147
- 149 WPDev WPDev 2017, online
- 150 'Our History' *Mather and Platt*, online
- 151 DRO, Inland Revenue, IR 1 (Finance Act 1909/10 Valuation Books)/6: Duties on Land Values: Bishop Auckland (No. 1)
- 152 *Daily Herald* 20 April 1921, online
- 153 *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer* 8 November 1937, online
- 154 Morrison 2003, 153
- 155 *Newcastle Evening Chronicle* Wednesday 5 April, online
- 156 Mansfield 2013, 47
- 157 Profession and birth date listed in 1851 Census, Folio 179, Page 30; Year of death taken from grave in St Andrew's Churchyard, Bishop Auckland; 1841 Census, Book 9, Civil Parish Auckland St Andrew, Folio 18, Page 30
- 158 Notice of death of Robert Wilkinson Thompson *Newcastle Evening Chronicle* 15 June 1896, 4
- 159 Hagar and Co 1851, 61
- 160 1851 Census Folio 179, Page 30
- 161 1851 Census Folio 179, Page 30; Elkin, online
- 162 Post Office 1858, 376; 1861 Census Folio 13, Page 20; 1871 Census, Piece 4924, Folio 44, Page 22, GSU roll 848017
- 163 *The Durham County Advertiser* 20 August 1875, 3; *The Durham County Advertiser* 10 March 1876, 4; *South Durham and Cleveland Mercury* 31 March 1877, 6
- 164 1881 Census, Folio 98, Page 44; *Western Daily Press* 8 October 1884, 8 and *Durham County Advertiser* 14 November 1884, 8; *Daily Gazette for Middlesborough* 28 January 1885, 3; *York Herald* 7 April 1888, 4
- 165 1851 Census, Folio 179, Page 30; 1861 Census, Folio 13, Page 20. NB the 1891 census incorrectly states his year of birth as 1845 but this is a mis-transcription from the original document
- 166 1871 Census, Piece 4923, Folio 7, Page 8, GSU roll 848016; 1881 Census, Folio

- 106, Page 9
- 167 See RRS report 30-2019 by Alastair Coey Architects; *The Northern Echo* 21 February 1882, 3 and *Newcastle Evening Chronicle* 15 June 1896, 4; Notice of death of R W Thompson *Newcastle Evening Chronicle* 15 June 1896. An account of the opening of the hall is given in *The North Eastern Daily Gazette* 17 February 1883; *The Northern Echo* 30 January 1889, 1
- 168 England Select Birth and Christenings 1538-1975; See RRS report 29-2019 by Alastair Coey Architects; 1911 Census, Piece 29710
- 169 Readshaw 1910, 101-102
- 170 *The Northern Echo* 30 January 1882, 3
- 171 Brodie 2001, 794
- 172 These cottages must have been erected prior to 1893 when they are depicted on Linday's plans for extending the managerial offices at the back of Plot 3 (dated 3 July 1893 (DRO, UD/BA 432/690))
- 173 This structural arrangement presumably dates from the original design of this block in 1892 as the staircase can be seen in the present location on Linday's amendment drawings from 1893 (DRO, UD/BA 432/690)
- 174 As noted in the historical background section there is no change of brickwork to suggest that the tower was constructed after the 1961 plans and therefore the additional levels of the tower seem to have been excluded from the drawings. The 1940s date is given based on the advertisement in Figure 38, which shows that these tanks were under manufacture at that time.

APPENDIX 1

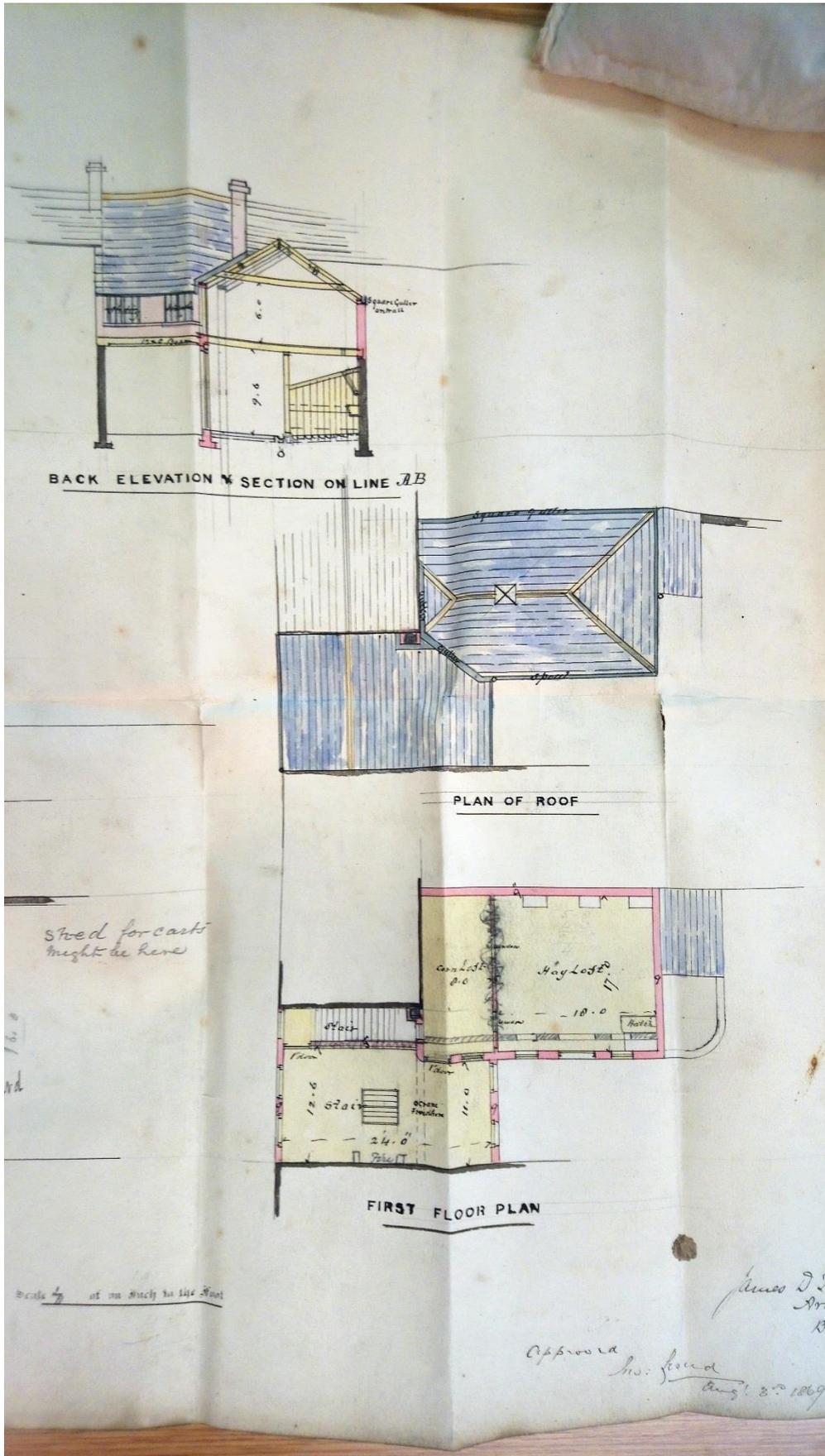
DURHAM COUNTY RECORD OFFICE BUILDING PLANS

UDBA 43273

Drawings of Co-operative Warehouse and Stables in Backway

James D. Thompson

Approved 8 August 1869



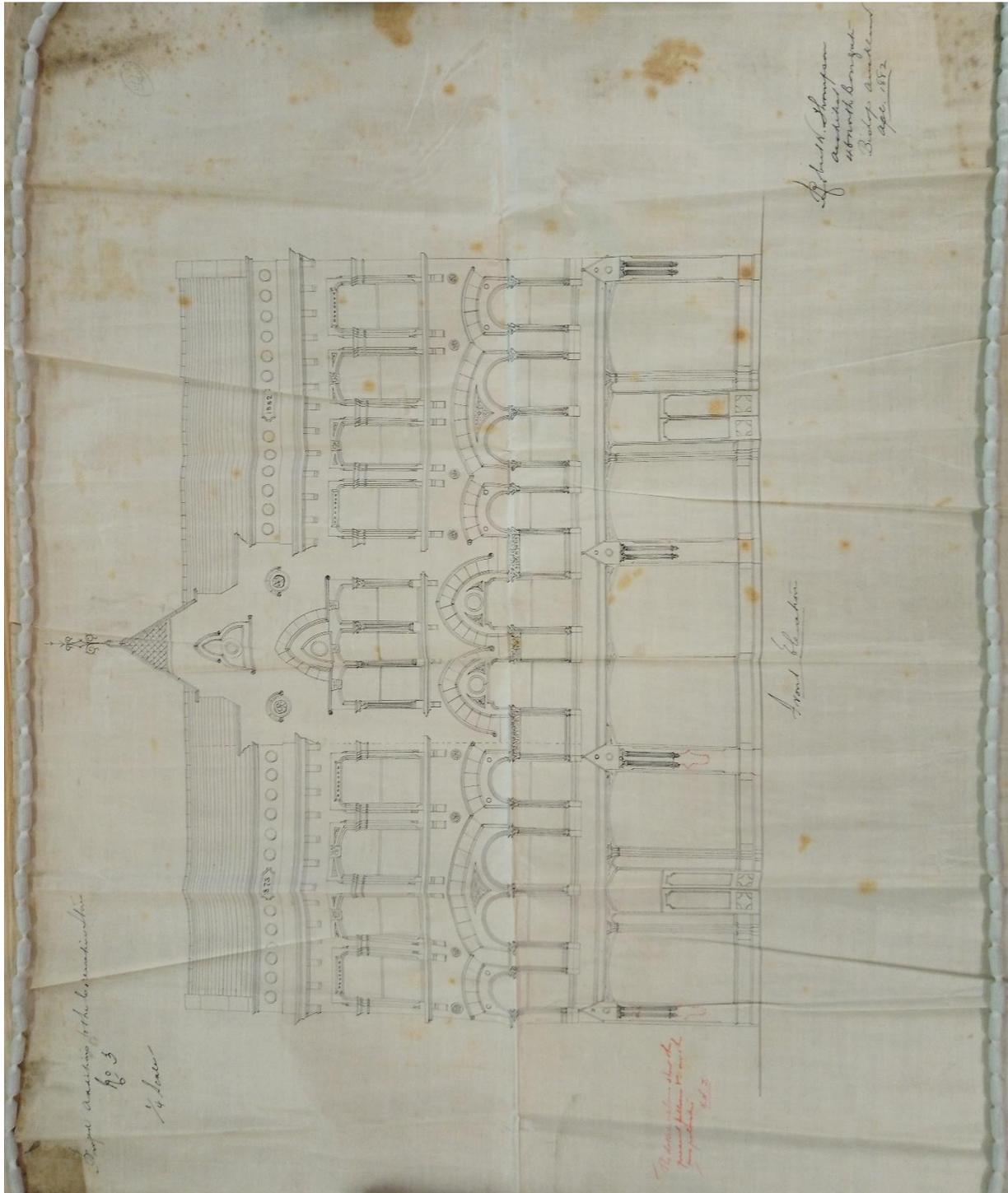
B: Back Elevation Section on line AB; Plan of Roof; First Floor Plan

UDBA 432538

Proposed Additions to the Co-operative Stores, Newgate Street

Robert W. Thompson

April 1882



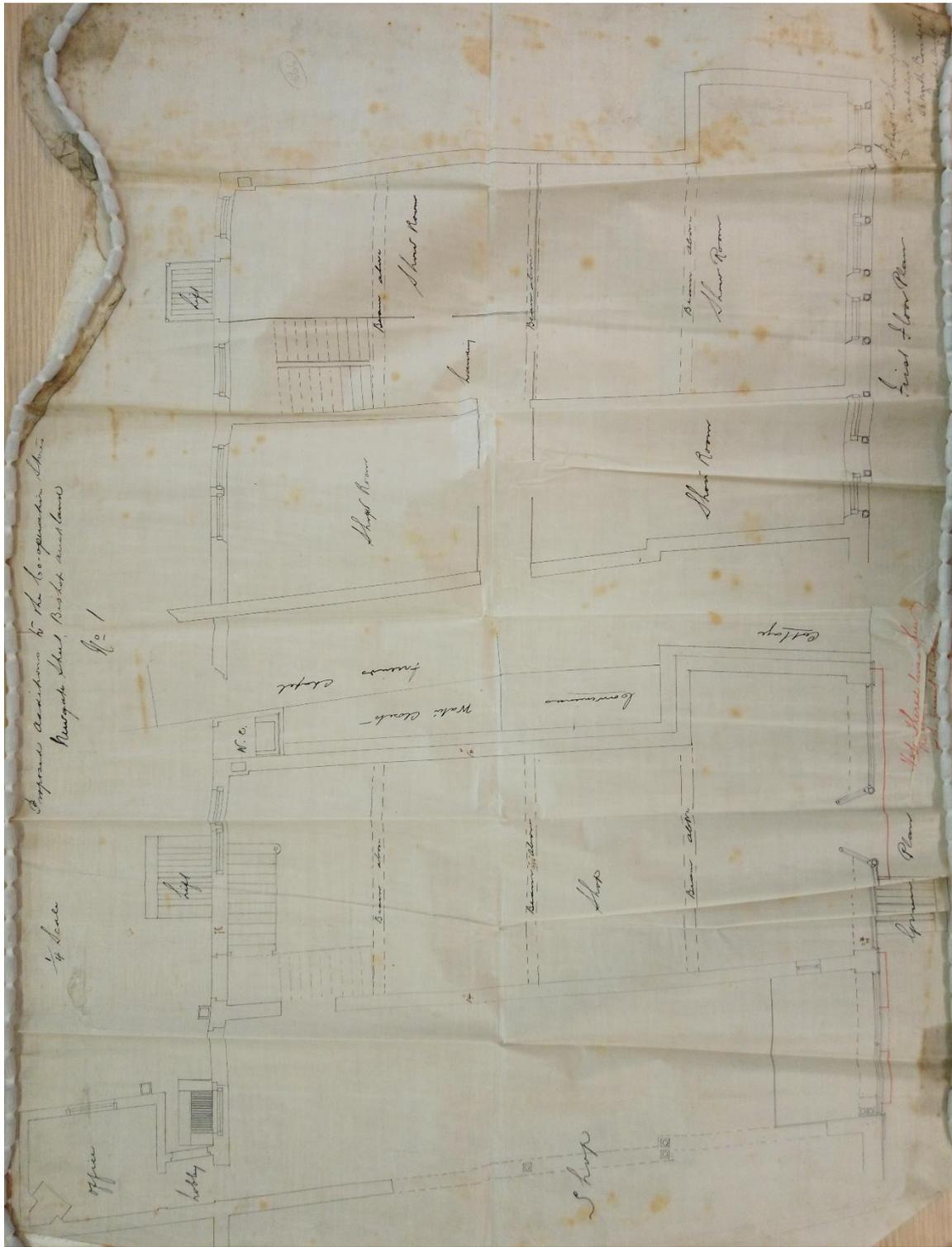
John H. Thompson
Architect
North Street
Boston, Mass.
Apr. 1852

Front Elevation

The drawing shows the
front elevation of the
building.
1852

Copy made to the
No. 3
to show

A: Front Elevation



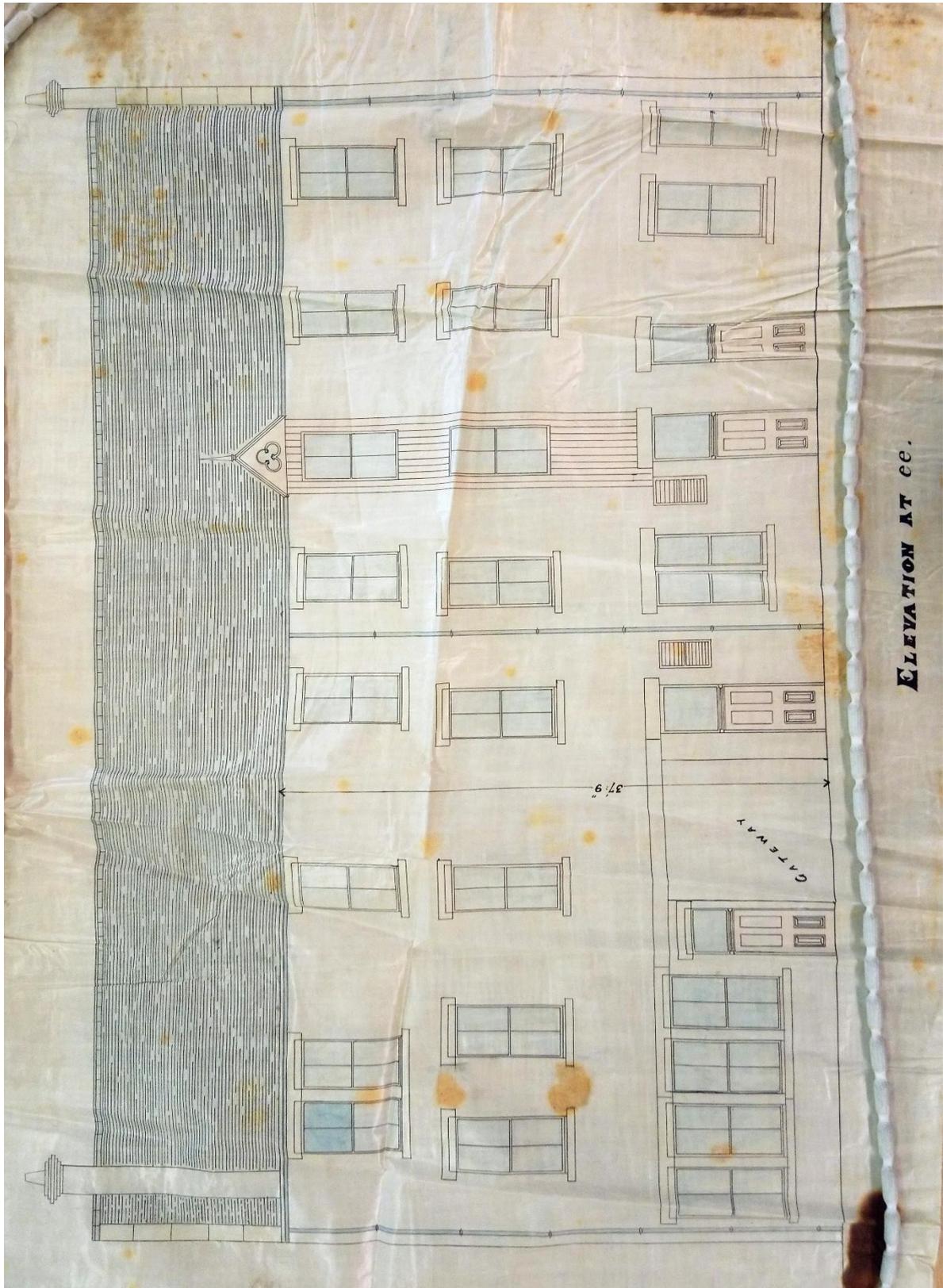
C: Ground-flan; First Floor Plan

UDBA 432547

Proposed Alterations and Additions to the Co-operative Stores, Bishop
Auckland

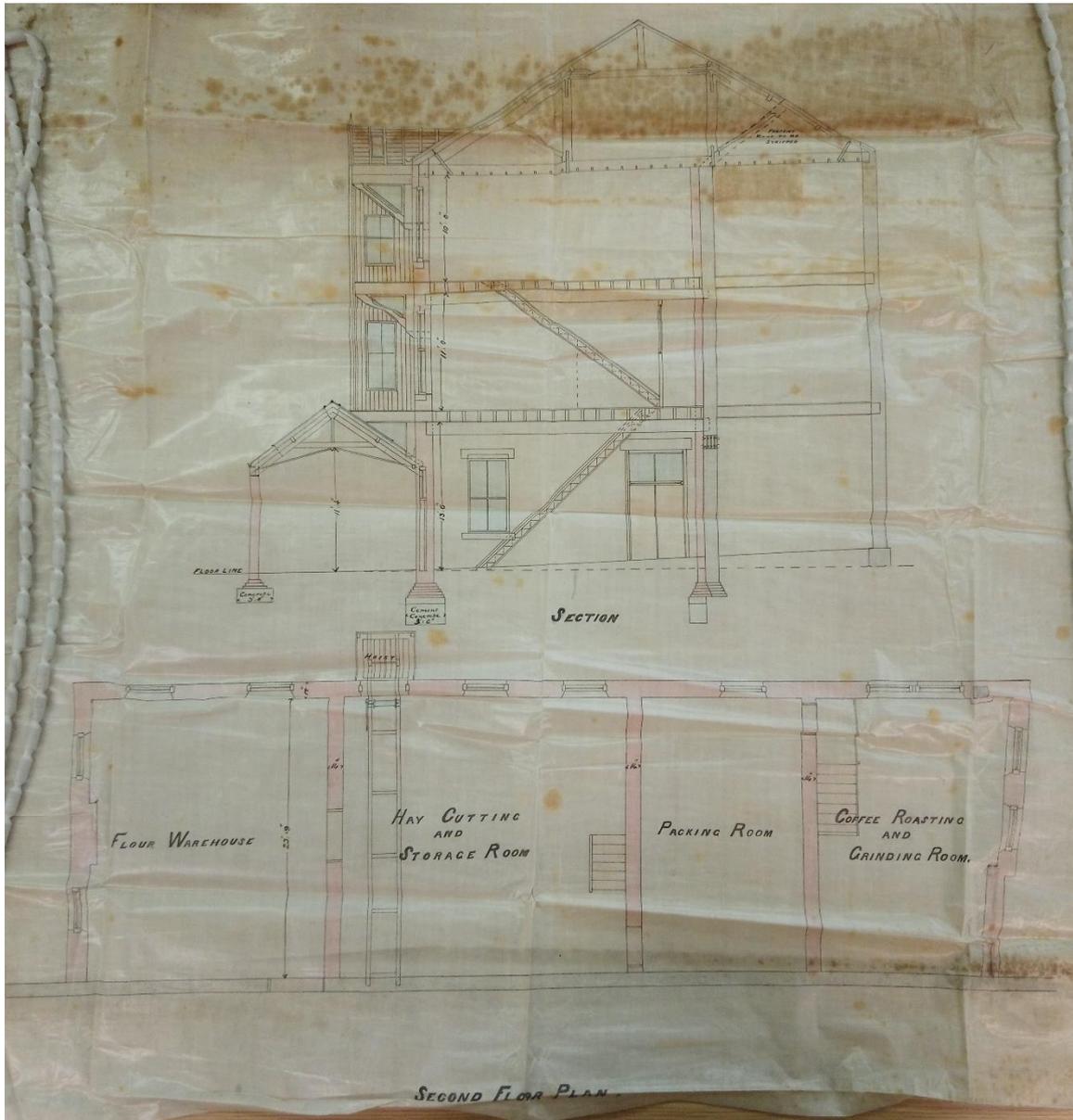
James Linday

Submitted 27 April 1883

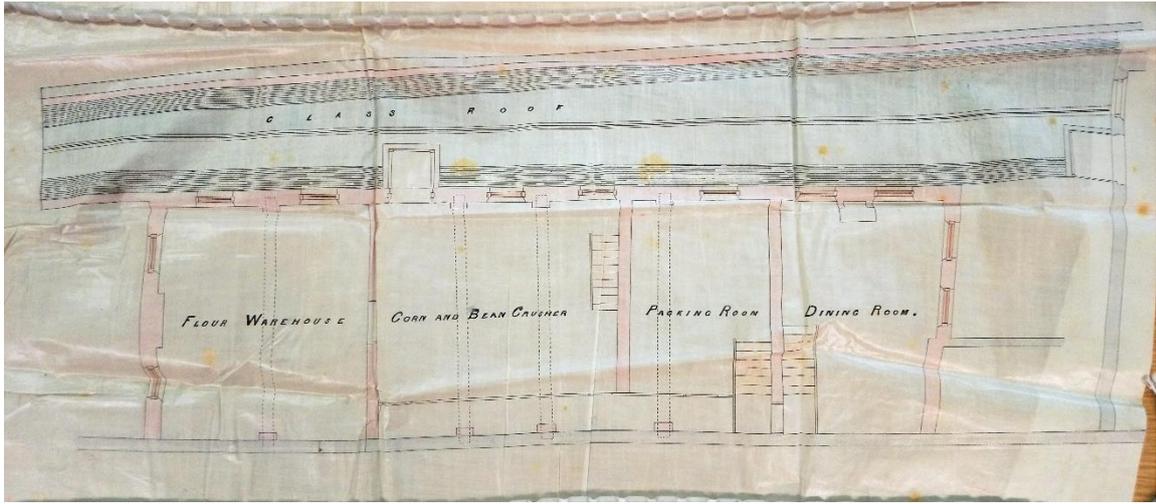


ELEVATION AT CE.

B: Elevation at EE



C: Section; Second-floor Plan



D: First-floor Plan

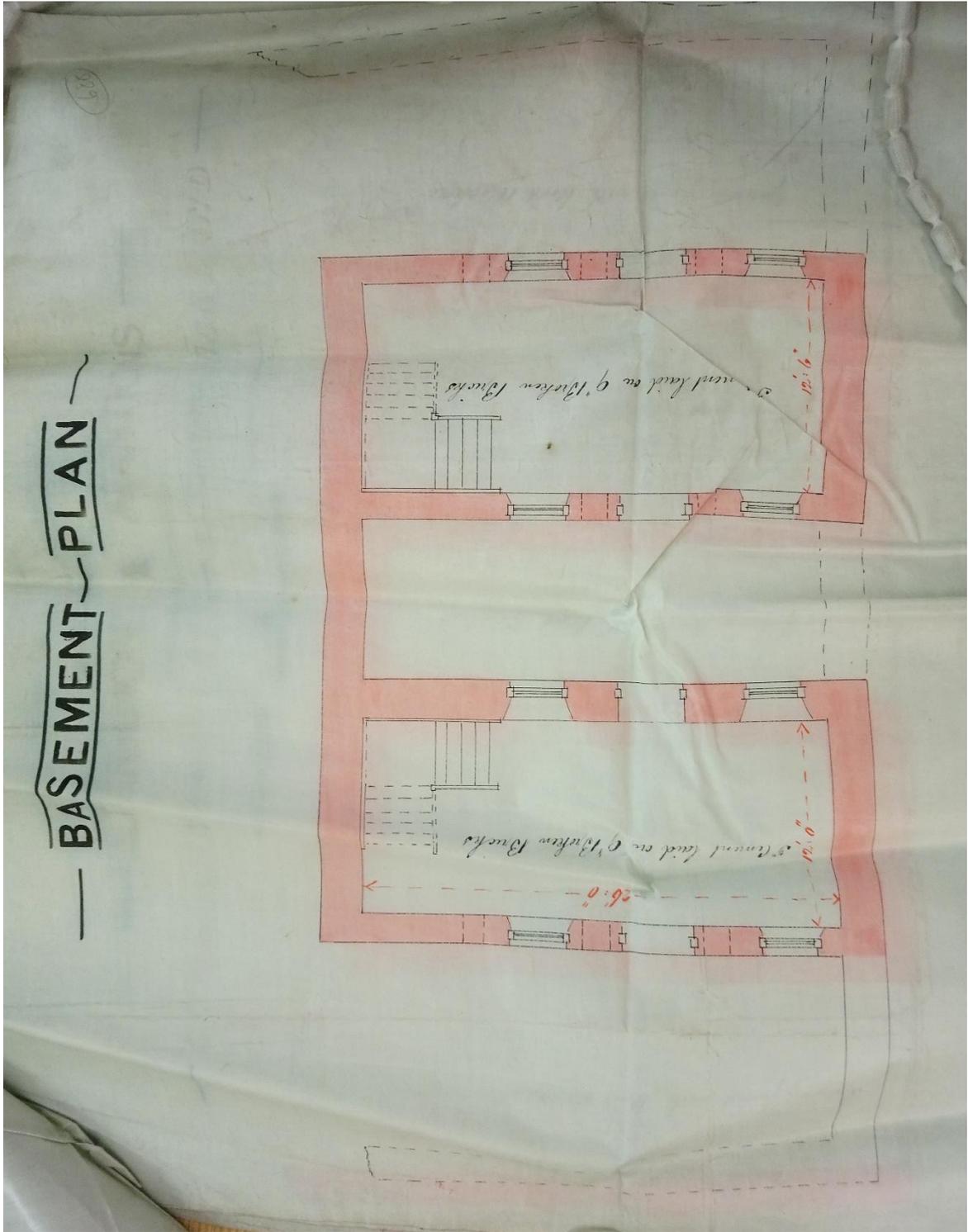
UDBA 432671

Proposed Additions and Alterations to the Bishop Auckland Co-operative Stores

Unsigned (possibly Frederick Howard Livesay)

Undated (possibly *circa* 1901-1903)

BASEMENT PLAN



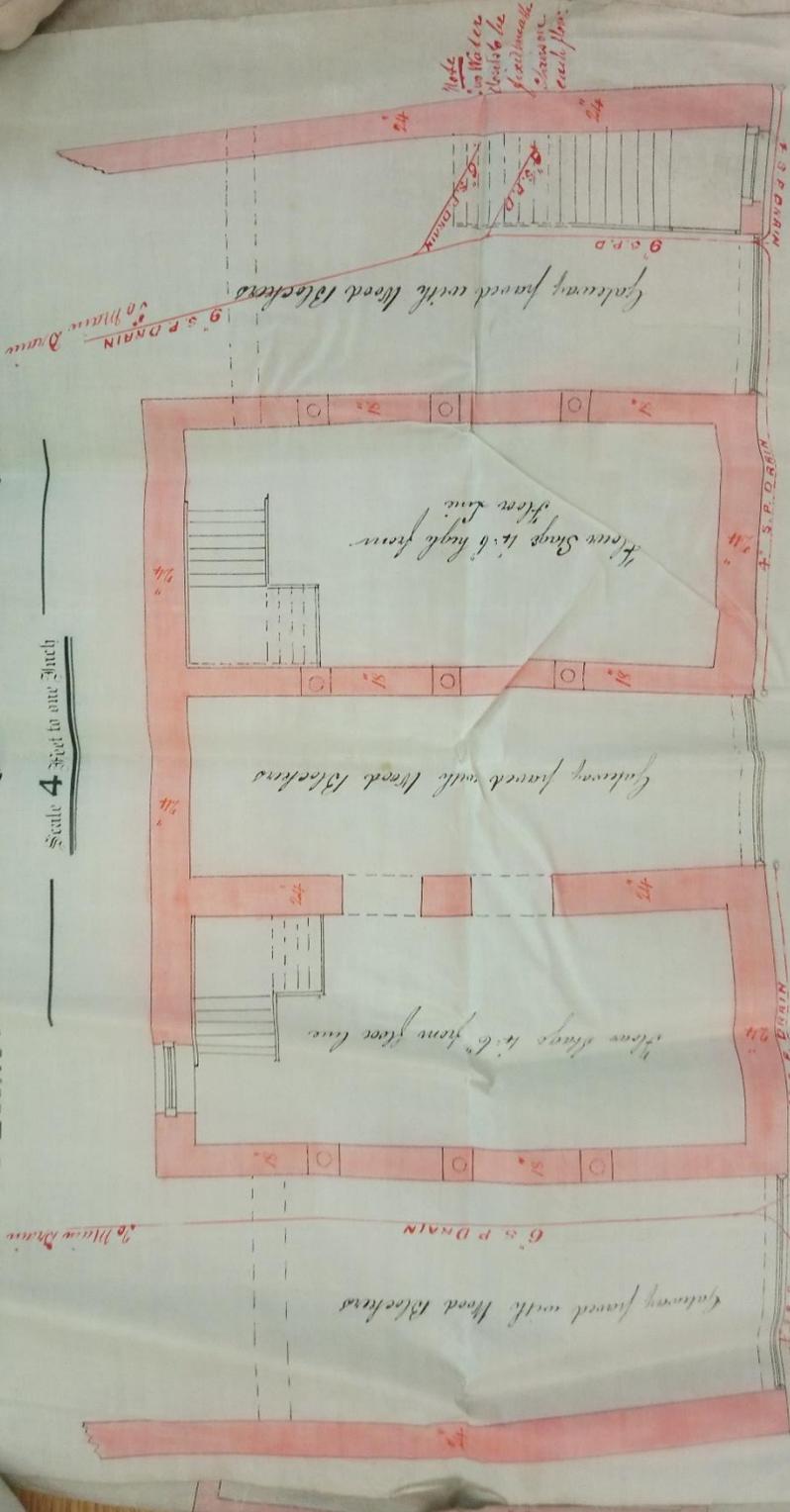
A: Basement Plan

— PLAN —

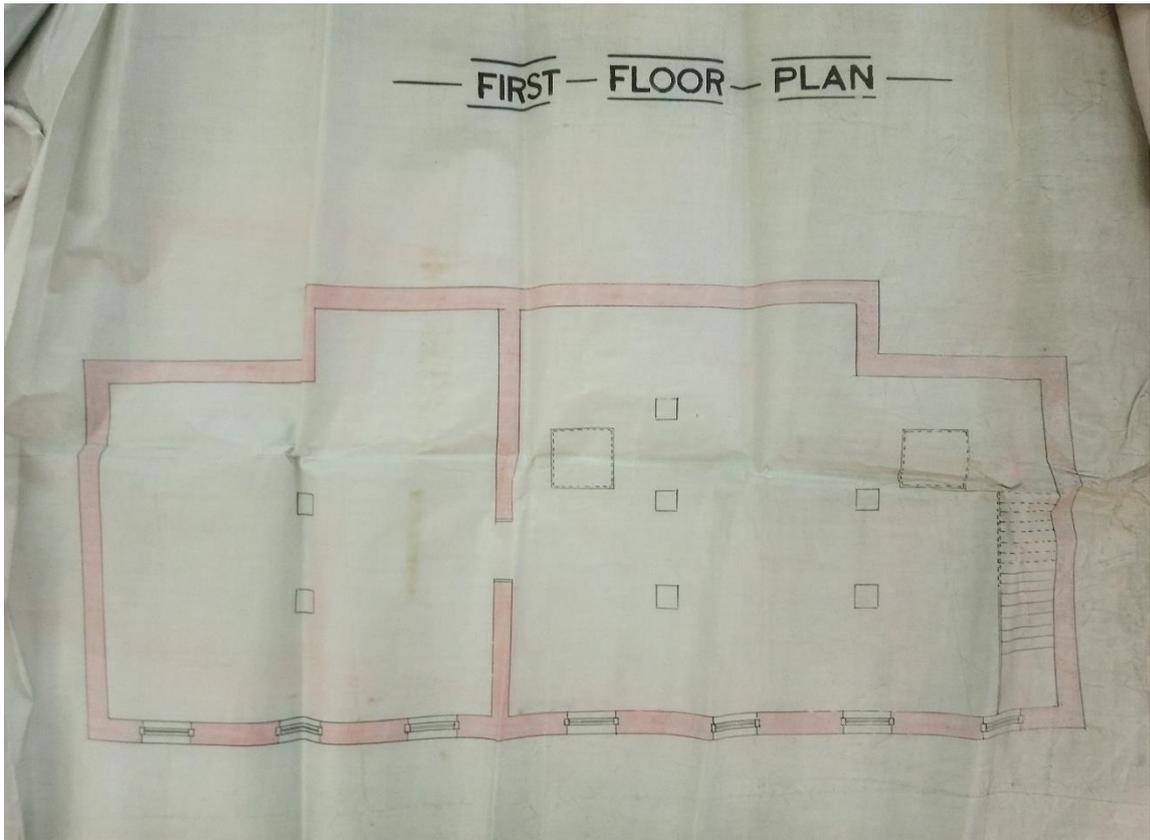
— ALTERATIONS & ADDITIONS —

— CO-OPERATIVE STORES — BISHOP-AUCKLAND —

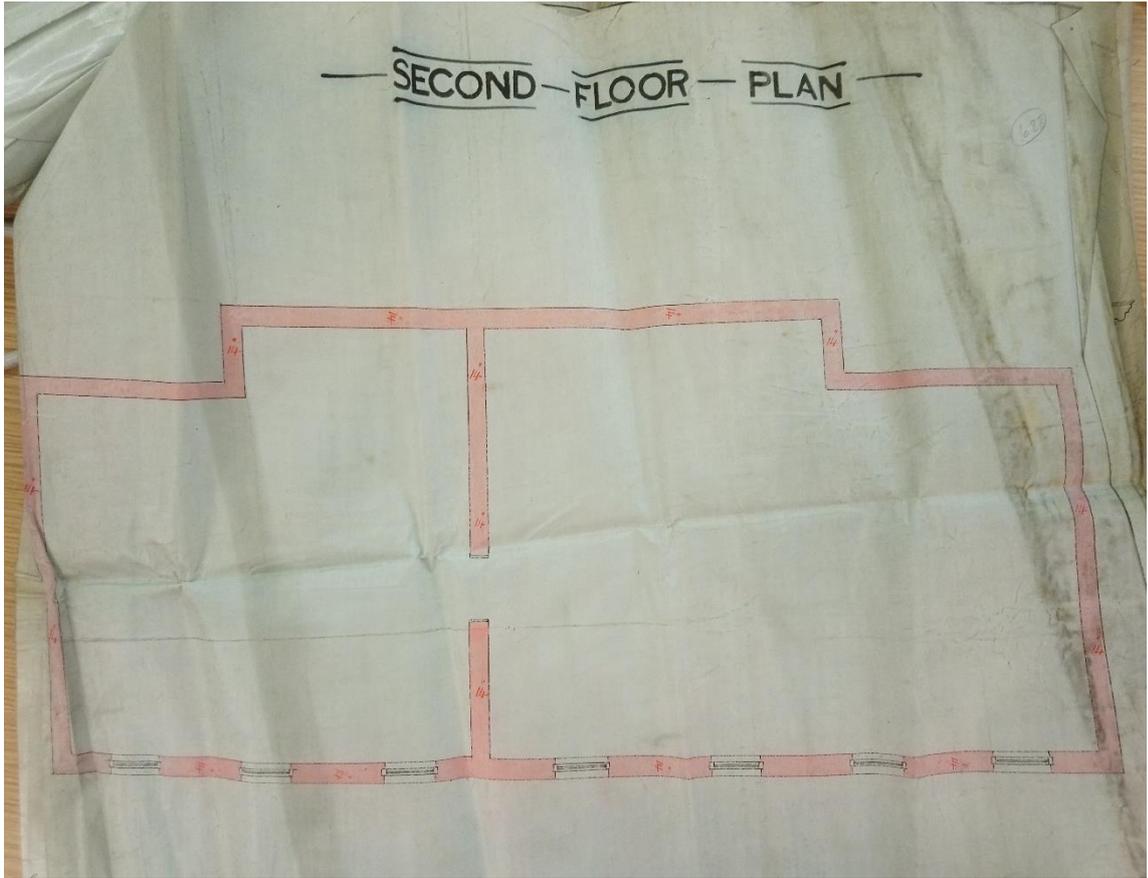
Scale 4 Feet to one Inch



B: Ground Floor Plan



C: First Floor Plan



D: Second Floor Plan



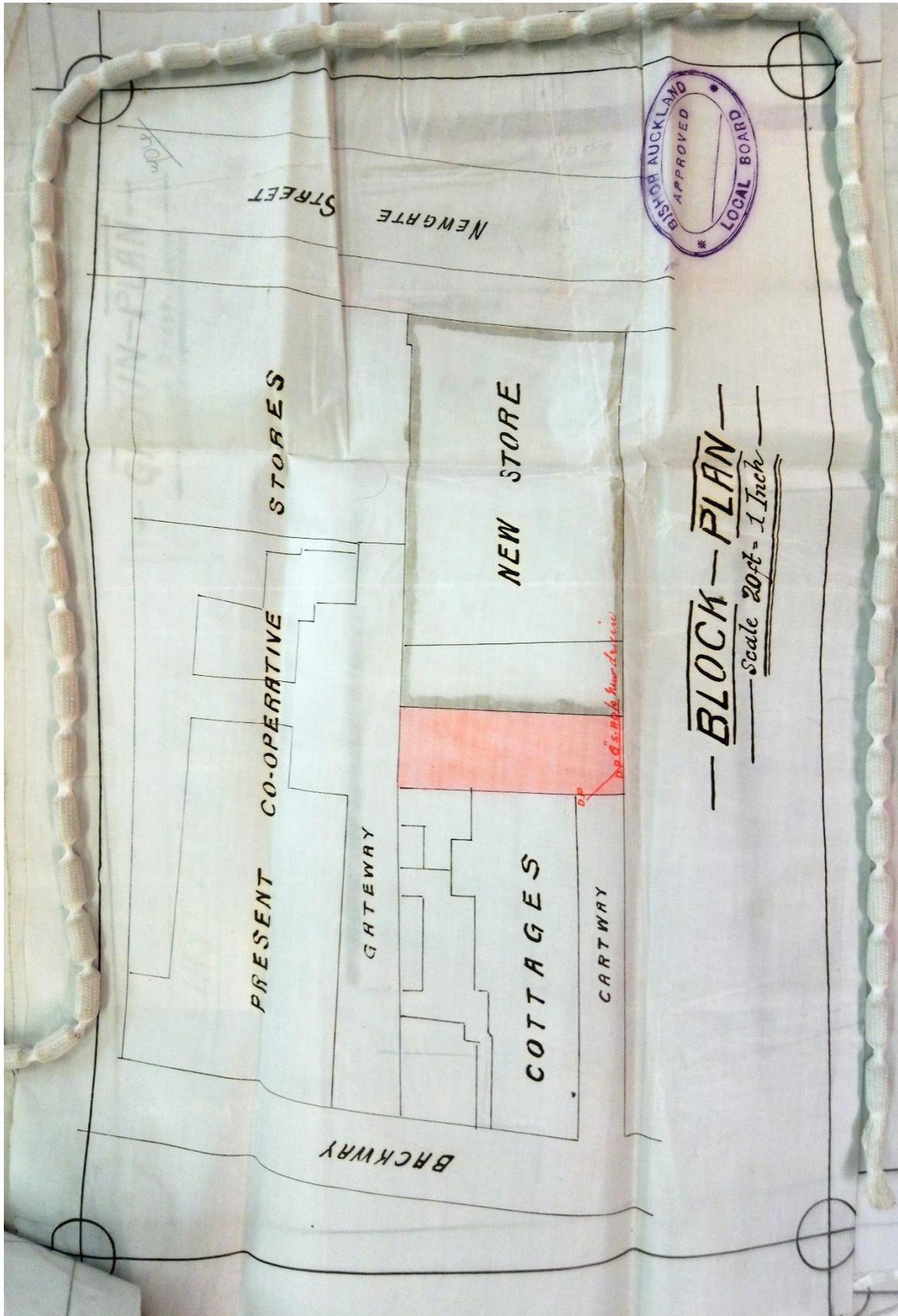
E: Elevation and Section

UDBA 432690

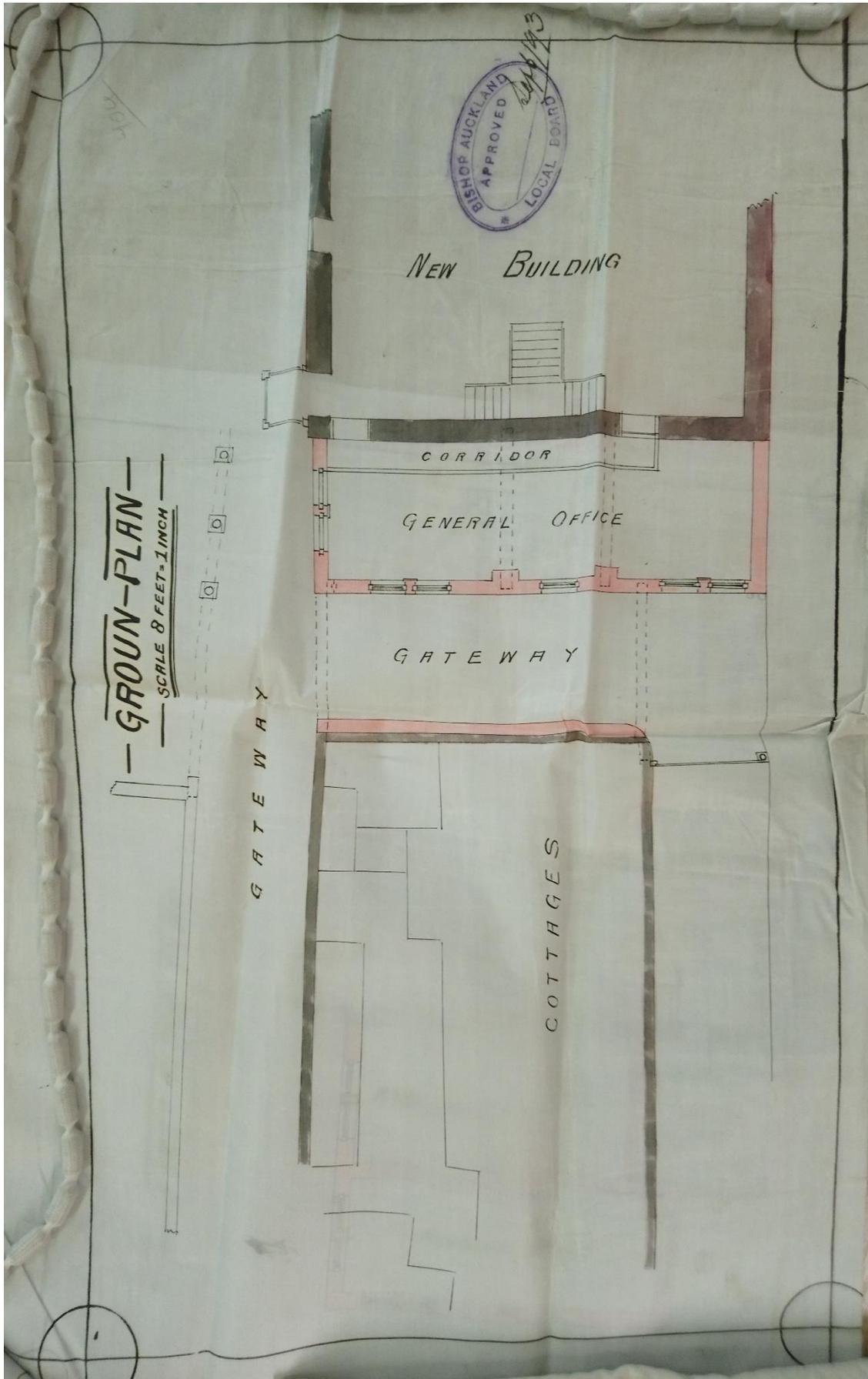
Offices to rear of new Co-operative building

James Linday

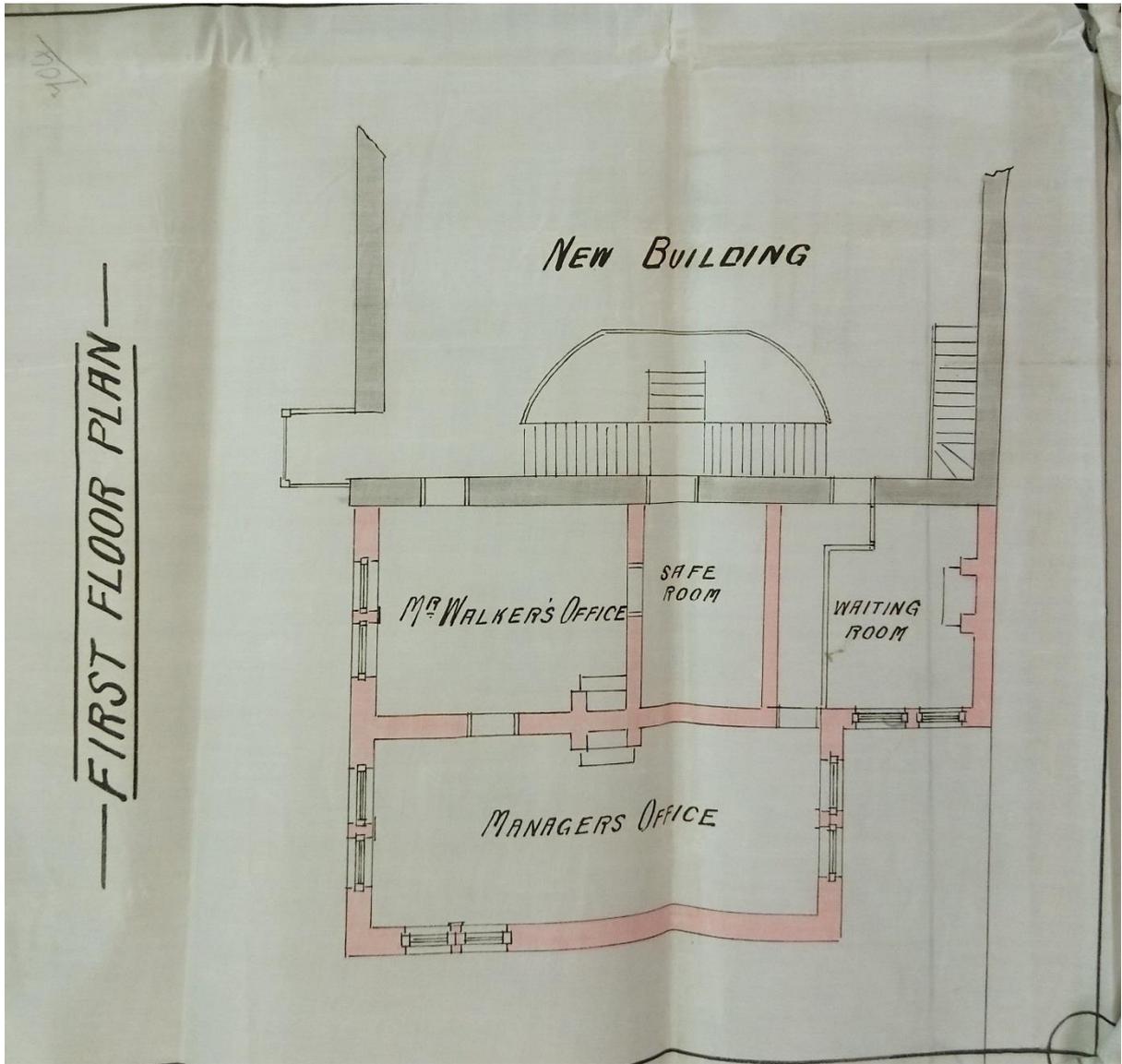
Submitted 3 July 1893



A: Block Plan



B: Ground Plan



C: First Floor Plan

UDBA 4321336

Proposed Café at the Central Stores

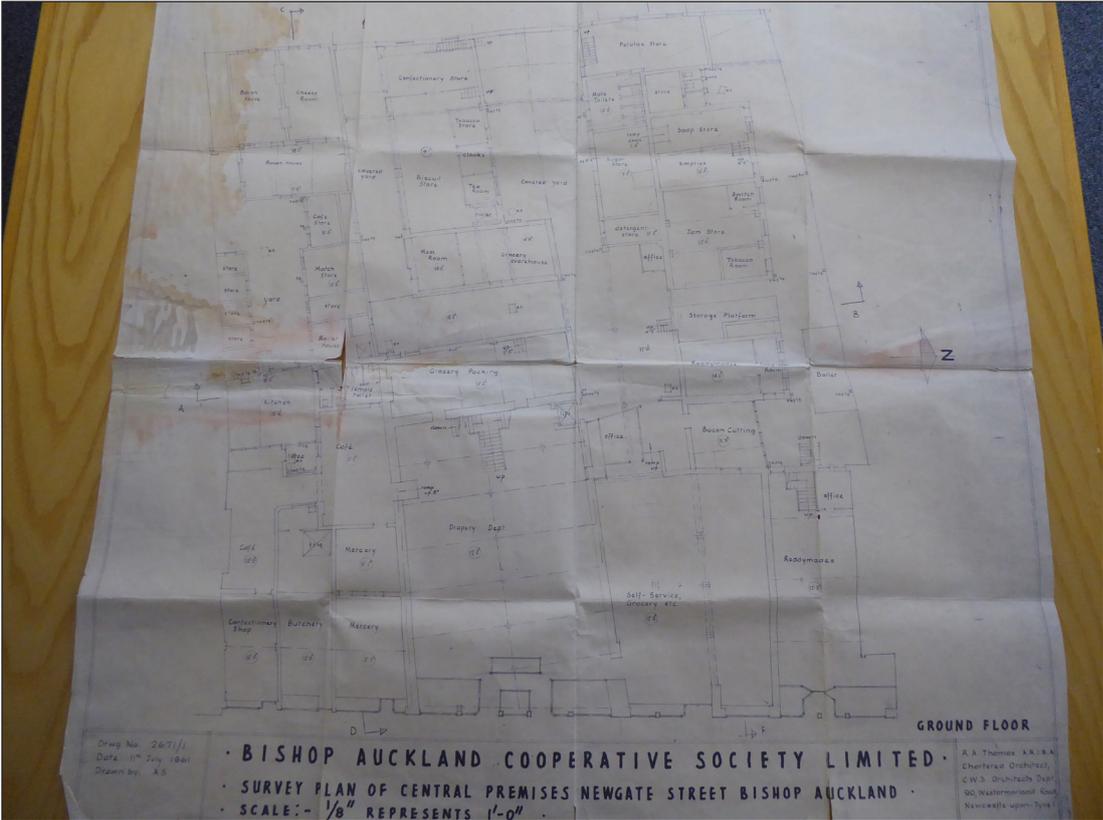
Thomas Dent

12 August 1913

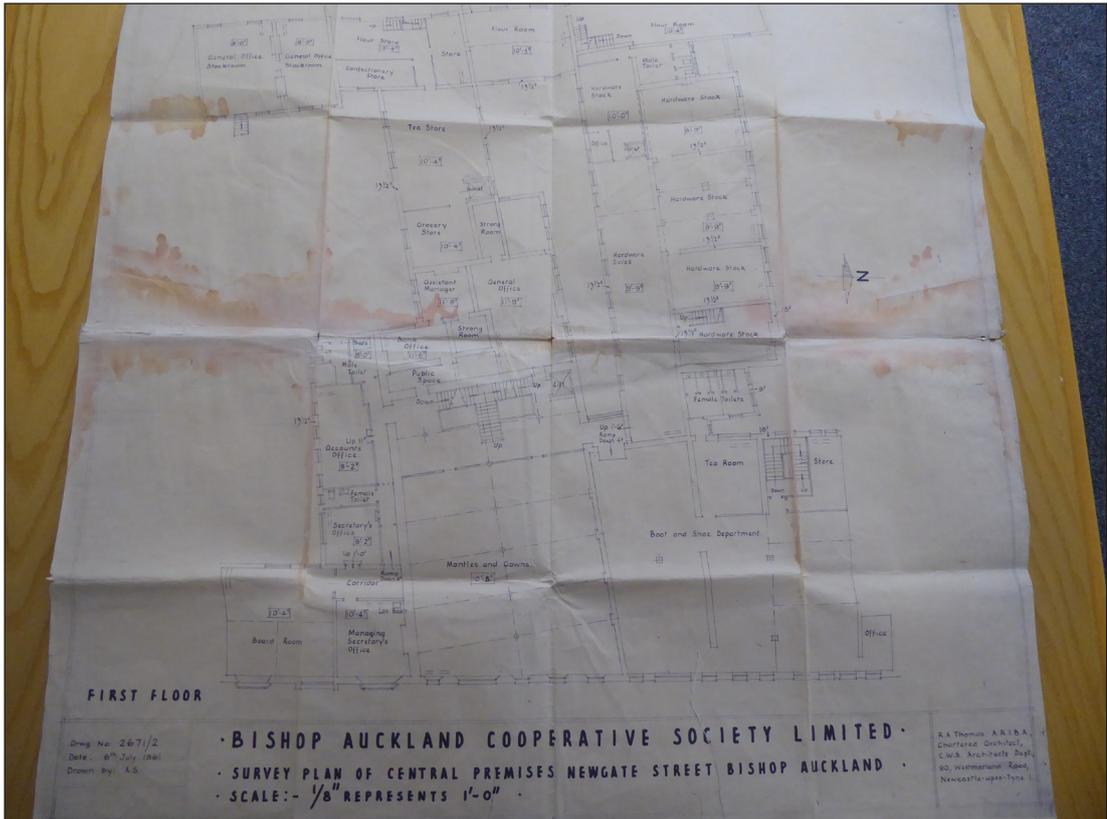
APPENDIX 2

1961 SURVEY PLANS BY R A THOMAS

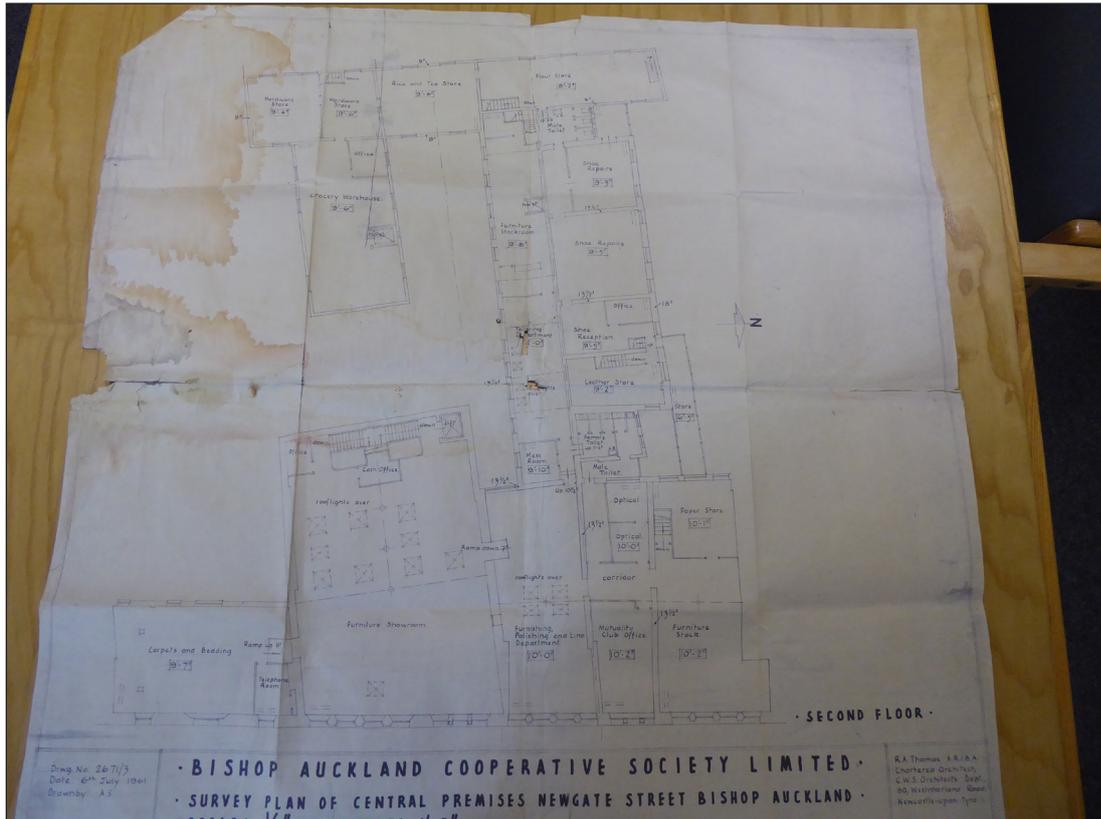
Plans as existing drawn in 1961



A: Ground Floor



B: First Floor



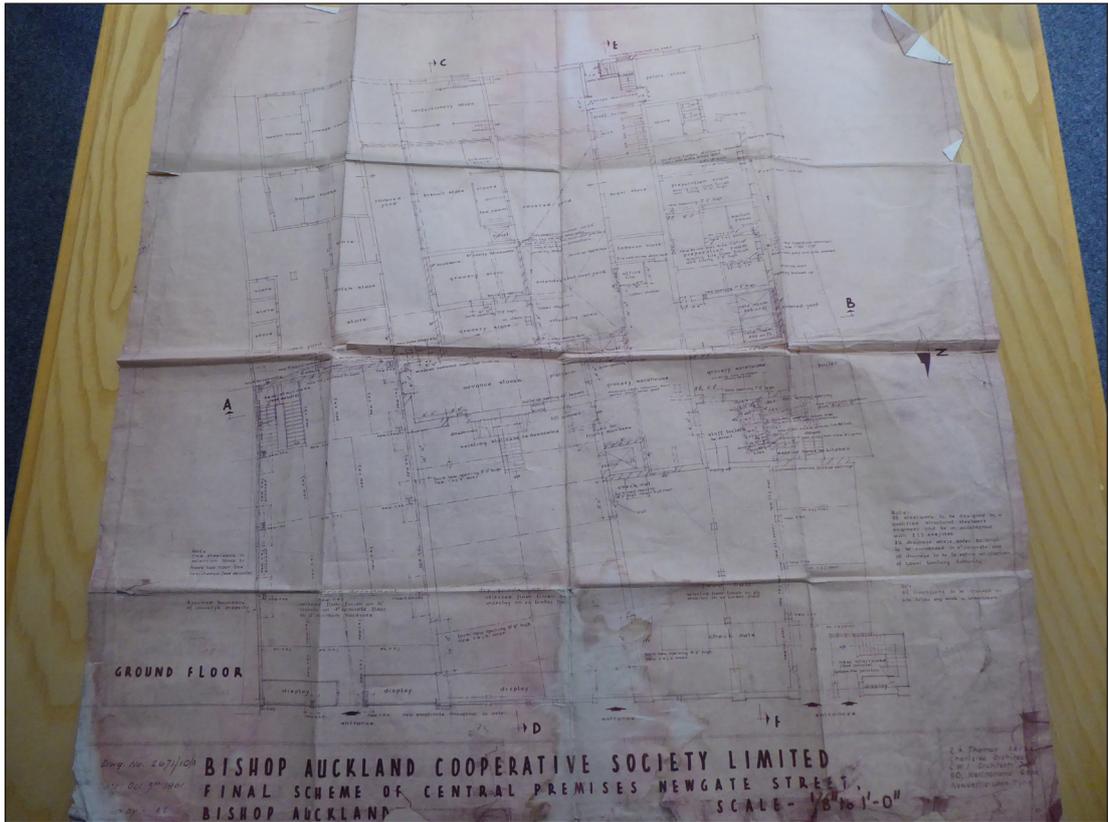
C: Second Floor

Drawg. No. 26/7/5
 Date 6th July 1961
 Drawn by: A.S.

• BISHOP AUCKLAND COOPERATIVE SOCIETY LIMITED •
 • SURVEY PLAN OF CENTRAL PREMISES NEWGATE STREET BISHOP AUCKLAND •

R.A. Thomas, R.R.R.A.
 Chartered Architect,
 C.W.S. Greenfield, Dept.
 80, Waterhouse Lane,
 Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

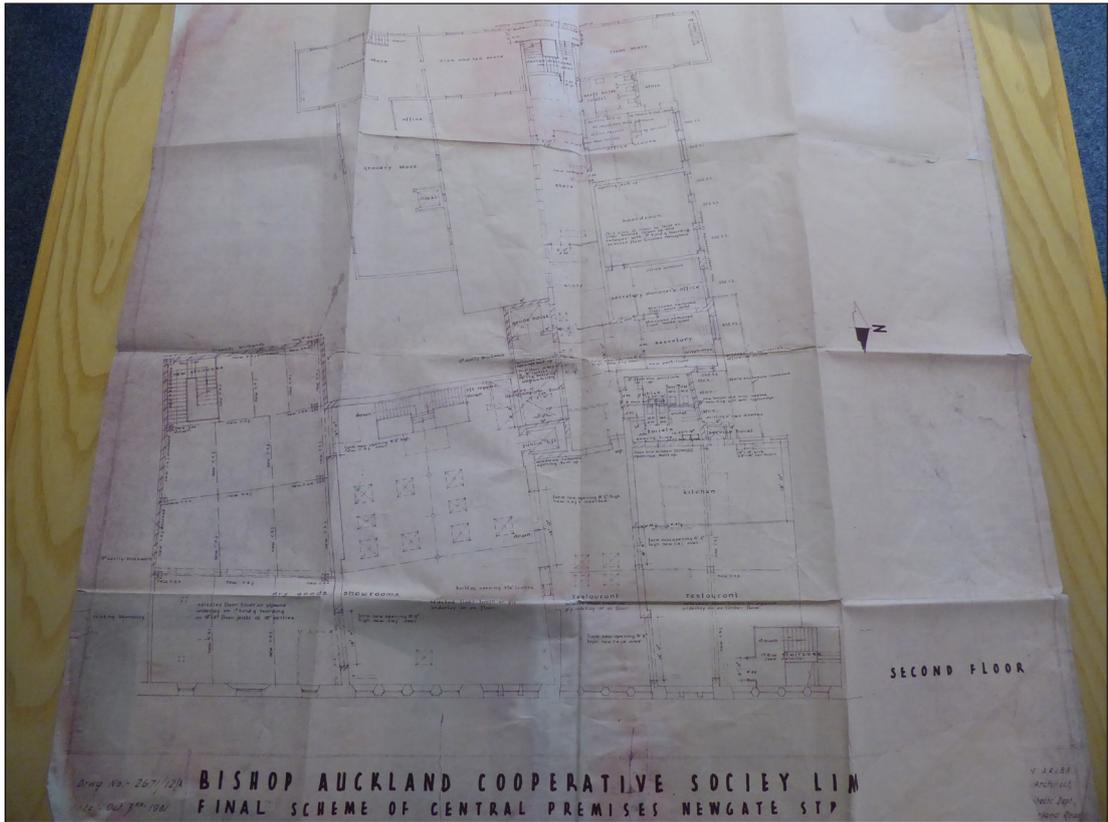
Proposed plans as proposed in 1961



A: Ground Floor



B: First Floor



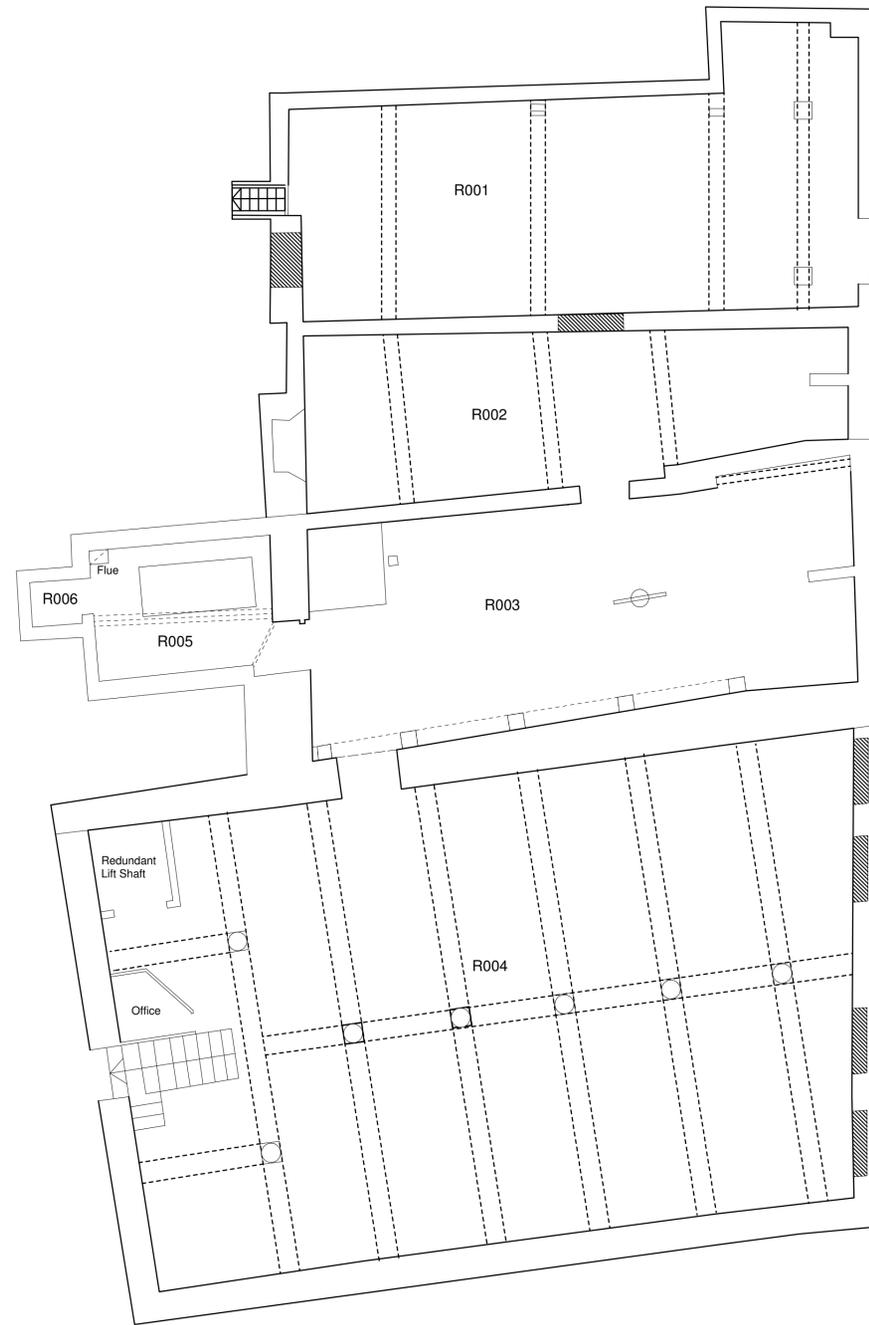
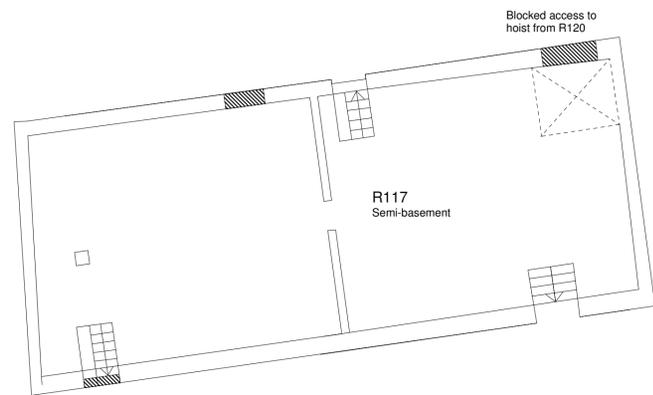
C: Second Floor



D: Sections on lines AB, CD, EF



E: Rear and Front Elevations



-  Blocked up opening
-  Plaster encased column
-  Display panelling encased column
-  Mirror encased column

Basement Plan SCALE 1:100



N



1m 5m 10m



Historic England

Co-operative Building
Newgate Street
Bishop Auckland
Durham

NGR: NZ 21035 29765
Surveyed By: ADC, AJT Feb 2019
Drawn: AJT, March 2019
Sheet: 1 of 5



Ground Floor Plan SCALE 1:100

-  Blocked up opening
-  Plaster encased column
-  Display panelling encased column
-  Mirror encased column

 N

 Co-operative Building
 Newgate Street
 Bishop Auckland
 Durham
 NGR: NZ 21035 23765
 Surveyed By: ADC, AJT Feb 2019
 Drawn: AJT, March 2019
 Sheet: 2 of 5
 Historic England



- Blocked up opening
- Plaster encased column
- Display panelling encased column
- Mirror encased column

First Floor Plan SCALE 1:100




Co-operative Building
 Newgate Street
 Bishop Auckland
 Durham

NGR: NZ 21035 29765
 Surveyed By: ADC, AJT Feb 2019
 Drawn: AJT, March 2019
 Sheet: 3 of 5



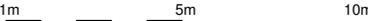


Second Floor Plan SCALE 1:100

-  Blocked up opening
-  Plaster encased column
-  Display panelling encased column
-  Mirror encased column



N



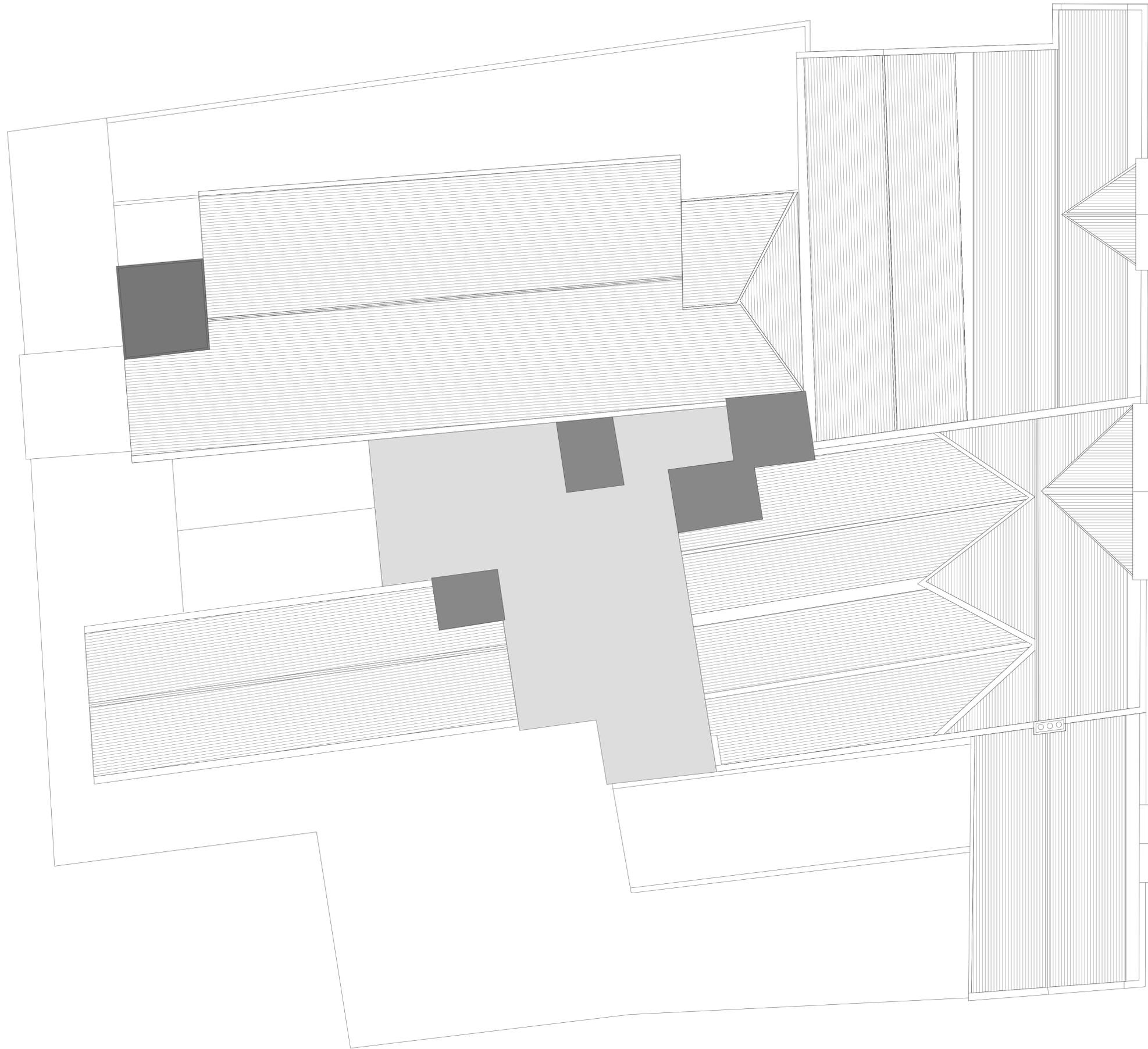
1m 5m 10m

Co-operative Building
Newgate Street
Bishop Auckland
Durham

NGR: NZ 21035 29765
Surveyed By: ADC, AJT Feb 2019
Drawn: AJT, March 2019
Sheet: 4 of 5



Historic England



Roof Plan SCALE 1:100



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