



# CFA ARCHAEOLOGY

Professional cultural heritage consultants - branches nationwide  
enquiries@cfa-archaeology.co.uk



CAPABILITY  
FLEXIBILITY  
ASSURANCE

50 Nicolson Street, Edinburgh

Report type: Historic Building Survey  
Report No. 3851

Author(s):

Stuart Mitchell MA ACIfA, Graeme Carruthers MA  
MCIfA, Mike Cressey BA MSc PhD FSA Scot  
MCIfA



Constructionline  
Gold Member

## **CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD**

The Old Engine House  
Eskmills Business Park  
Musselburgh  
East Lothian  
EH21 7PQ

Tel: 0131 273 4380  
Fax: 0131 273 4381  
email: [info@cfa-archaeology.co.uk](mailto:info@cfa-archaeology.co.uk)  
web: [www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk](http://www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk)

Authors	Stuart Mitchell MA ACIfA, Graeme Carruthers MA MCIfA, Mike Cressey BA MSc PhD FSA Scot MCIFA
Illustrator	Shelly Werner BA MPhil PhD MCIfA
Approver	Melanie Johnson MA PhD FSA Scot MCIfA
Commissioned by	Darling Associates Architects Ltd
Date issued	October 2019
Version	1
OASIS Reference	cfaarcha1-371430
Planning Application No	18/04172/FUL
Grid Ref	NT 26130 73179

This document has been prepared in accordance with CFA Archaeology Ltd standard operating procedures.

**50 Nicolson Street, Edinburgh**

**Historic Building Survey**

**Report No. 3851**

## CONTENTS

1.	Introduction	3
2.	Methodology	4
3.	Desk-based Assessment Results	5
4.	Building Survey Results	6
5.	Discussion	7
6.	Conclusion	8
7.	References	8

## Appendices

1.	Unit Descriptions	10
2.	Photographic Register	13
3.	Discovery & Excavation in Scotland Entry	16

## List of Figures (Bound at Rear)

Fig 1	General Location Plan
Fig 2a-d	Historic Map Regression
3a-d	Floor plans with photographic viewpoints
Figs 4	50 Nicolson Street frontage showing the main entrance to the former Empire Bingo Hall
Fig 5	Unit 2.2, passage and main fire exit to Nicolson Street
Fig 6	Unit 2.1, historic fabric exposed where the cladding had been removed in incorporating a relieving arch blocked with brick and two sections of railway line
Fig 7	Unit 1, general view of the interior of the ground floor Auditorium
Fig 8	Unit 1, general view of the stage and wing walls
Fig 9	Looking up at the first floor balcony
Fig 10	Looking down on the auditorium from the balcony
Fig 11	Stairs to the rear of the circle floor
Fig 12	Embellished balcony front with heraldic detailing
Fig 13	Detail of a boss incorporating the initials RP (Royal Princess) and leaf and scroll plasterwork
Fig 14	Highly ornate gilded ceiling light and semi-circular air vents (061)
Fig 15	Underside of the first floor balcony with cladding removed exposing a Pratt truss spanning the width of the auditorium with bolted raker girders and original 19 <sup>th</sup> century wooden form work
Fig 16	Cast iron columns supporting the auditorium floor
Fig 17	Boiler room with services
Fig 18	Vaulted coal store for a coke fired boiler

## Thumbnail images (Bound at rear).

# **1. INTRODUCTION**

## **1.1 General**

This report presents the results of a Level 1 historic building survey carried out by CFA Archaeology Ltd during March and September 2019 at 50 Nicolson Street, Edinburgh (NT 26130 73179, Fig.1) on behalf of Darling Associates Architects Ltd.

The purpose of the report is to provide a baseline understanding of the archaeological and architectural significance of the building. The survey included a rapid desk-based assessment and a photographic survey in line with historic building survey parameters. The survey was designed to record the current layout of the building prior to its alteration and to propose mitigation if the results merited it.

A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI), dated 22 March 2019, was produced by CFA and approved by John Lawson of the City of Edinburgh Council Archaeology Service (CECAS).

## **1.2 Background**

50 Nicolson Street started life as The Royal Princess Theatre built in 1875. It went out of business in 1886 and was then used by The Salvation Army. It is described on the 1893 Ordnance Survey map as a “barracks” seating 1300 people. In 1912 it was converted to the La Scala silent-picture house and remained so into the late 1940s. In 1984 it was renamed The Classic and was last known as the Empire bingo hall. The building is to be converted into a restaurant and wine bar.

## **1.3 Objectives**

The objectives of this programme of work were to:

- Carry out a Level 1 building survey of the building as it stands prior to its alteration.
- Produce an illustrated historic building report integrating the architectural plans and elevations and photographs as appropriate.
- Identify any areas for further recording prior to or during the alteration of the building.



## **2. METHODOLOGY**

### **2.1 General**

CFA follows the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Code of Conduct and Standards and Guidelines for Historic Building Survey as appropriate. Architectural detail recording followed the recommendations for building appraisals outlined in ALGAO (2013).

### **2.2 Desk-based Assessment**

Prior to the commencement of the building survey the following resources were examined:

- The National Record of the Historic Environment (NHRE)
- The National Map Library of Scotland (NMLS)
- Other readily available bibliographic sources

### **2.3 Building Recording**

The survey was completed during two separate visits. The balcony and auditorium was accessed first followed by the basement once areas of asbestos had been removed.

The client's existing architectural elevations were checked in the field and have been annotated to bring them up to the required survey standard. Individual areas within the building are described as Units (Figs 3a-d) in order to differentiate between specific rooms including the auditorium, kitchens, hallways and stairwells etc.

A photographic survey was carried out using a Nikon SLR under flash and artificial lighting conditions. A digital photographic record is included as Appendix 1. Balcony, auditorium and basement plans (Figs 3a-d) have been annotated to show the relative viewpoints of each photograph taken.

On health and safety grounds no attempt was made to remove clutter within cupboards and other storage areas.

### **3. DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT RESULTS**

#### **3.1 General**

The desk-based results provide a summary of the readily available historical and bibliographic sources that have been examined to provide a succinct account of the historic development of 50 Nicolson Street.

#### **3.2 National Record of the Historic Environment (NRHE)**

The NRHE record (NT 27SE 5203) mentions that 50 Nicolson Street opened as the Royal Princess Theatre in the 1890s. It was re-named the New Royal Alhambra and the La Scala Electric theatre in 1912. La Scala survived until it was changed to The Classic in 1974. Sometime in the 1980s the building became the Empire and it was last used as a bingo hall under the same name.

#### **3.3 Historic Environment Scotland (HES) Statutory List**

The HES Statutory List does not include 50 Nicolson Street.

#### **3.4 The National Library & Archive of Scotland**

The on-line catalogue of the National Library and Archive of Scotland provided no pertinent information on 50 Nicolson Street.

#### **3.5 On-line information**

The *Cinema Treasures* website includes a comment on the building and holds historical photographs of the cinema entrance. It mentions that The La Scala Electric Theatre was opened on 31st December 1912 on the site of an earlier New Royal Alhambra Theatre (1862). Ralph Pringle, the proprietor, put on occasional variety acts. The projection box was located at the rear of the stalls seating area, under the balcony. In the 1930s the cinema passed to the Peter Crerer circuit. The Classic Cinema was opened in April 1974 and screened adult films. It closed its balcony, thus reducing its capacity to 294. It then became a bingo hall in the mid-1980s, operated by Premier Empire Bingo (Fig. 4).

#### **3.6 Historical Map Regression (Figs 2a-d)**

The Ordnance Survey 1852 First Edition map does not show the position of a theatre within the proposed development area. It is named as *Theatre* on the Post Office Directory map of 1867 (Fig. 2a).

The 1896 Ordnance Survey map shows the juxtaposition of the individual properties making up the site but the theatre is not named although it existed. It was either closed or it simply may have been omitted by the map surveyors.

The 1914 Ordnance Survey map (Revised 1912-1913) depicts the position of *Electric Theatre* set back from the street frontage that now also contains a public house (Fig. 2b).

The 1933 Ordnance Survey map now shows *Picture Theatre* which confirms the building's use as a cinema (Fig. 2c).

The 1948 Ordnance Survey map now shows the *La Scala Cinema* at No. 44 Nicolson Street (Fig. 2d). Presumably the property was later assigned No. 50 Nicolson Street by the Post Office when the properties in the block underwent commercial re-development.

## **4. BUILDING SURVEY RESULTS**

### **4.1 General**

This section describes the interior of the building. Each individual interior space within the building was afforded a unique identifying Unit number and these are shown on the respective floor plans (Figs 3a-d). The Units are individually described in the gazetteer (Appendix 1) and each is cross-referenced to the appropriate photographs listed in the photographic record (Appendix 2).

### **4.2 Ground Level, Auditorium (Fig. 3a)**

The auditorium (Fig. 7-8, 10) was flanked by two first floor wings which essentially linked the rear staircases and comfort rooms to the first floor circle or balcony (Fig. 9). At the back of the auditorium were a bar and kitchen as well as toilets and a door leading off to the main foyer and entrance to Nicolson Street. On the S side of the main entrance was a long narrow corridor used as the main fire exit (Fig. 5). This narrow passage was lit by a pair of roof lights. Its low flat roof shows it was originally a narrow passage between Nos. 48 and 52 Nicolson Street. Two commercial properties in between were in private ownership.

Removal of the cladding on the underside of the timber-framed balcony exposed the single supporting Pratt beam. Fixed to this beam was a jack-truss that supported the wooden frame of the sloping balcony floor. The composite nature of the steel-work is typical of 1930s buildings, where these types of trusses were used to cover wide spans; a technique commonly used in other structures such as bridges, hangars and factory sheds. The use of hexi-headed bolts suggests a post-war date for the installation of the steelwork.

### **4.3 First Floor Balcony (Fig. 3b)**

The first floor circle or balcony (Fig. 9) occupied roughly half the area of the auditorium and was split into three seating tiers (Fig. 11). The walls were lined with moulded panels and boxed in stanchions forming palisters that were embellished with fluted capitals that were surmounted by moulded architraves. Original 19<sup>th</sup> century features included intertwined gold letters R & P representing the initials Royal Princess in the middle of heraldic plaques equally spaced around the balcony front and flanking first floor passages (Fig. 12-13). These were surmounted by long strings of piping that terminated in swags or scrollwork. Following the partial removal of the underside of the balcony, its main superstructure was exposed and seen to comprise a

composite steel Pratt truss with more recent raking joists inserted in the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Fig. 15).

#### **4.4 Basement Floor Level (Fig. 3c)**

The basement was accessed via a very steep staircase located at the N end of the auditorium. The ceiling was a plethora of floor joists supporting the auditorium floor. The main transom beams were supported on cast-iron columns of 19<sup>th</sup> century date (Fig. 16). Various rooms occupied the W side of the basement and these were mainly service rooms including a beer and juice store, a pump room, boiler room and storerooms (Fig. 17-18).

#### **4.5 Half Landing Level (Fig. 3d)**

The half landing level was situated between the main auditorium and balcony staircase. It incorporated the former manager's office and storeroom. The room contained a single blind window on its SW side. The window would have previously looked out over a courtyard situated behind the Nicolson Street frontage.

### **5. DISCUSSION**

The most notable period feature that has survived from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century theatre is the ornate balcony frontage that is embellished with heraldic bosses that had the intertwined gold letters R & P representing the initials Royal Princess. Each emblem is connected by upper and lower piping that terminated in a series of leaves and swags. The auditorium walls also retained the moulded panel work typical of cinema and theatre interiors where the large walls would otherwise have been plain and imposing. Highly decorated ceilings such as that seen at 50 Nicolson Street (Fig. 14) were normally suspended on a timber frame. The void above often provided only rudimentary ventilation.

Hidden behind the wall linings was the 19<sup>th</sup> century composite riveted and bolted steel framework that formed the spine of the building. Late 19<sup>th</sup> century theatre construction preceded the boom in cinematograph theatres in the 1920s. All were reliant on wide steel girders and supporting stanchions (Buxton 1930, Jackson 1998). Indirectly both the theatre and cinema had common requirements, namely the need to accommodate as many people as possible, either in stalls or on balconies, and every one of them must have uninterrupted views of the stage/screen.

In this building the balcony floor was supported by a composite Pratt truss that spanned the full width of the auditorium. The use of Pratt beams is very typical of steel-framed cinema and theatre buildings. A similar Pratt truss was recorded under the balcony at the Assembly Rooms, George Street, Edinburgh (Cressey 2012) and below the mansard roof at the former Odeon Cinema on Clerk Street, Edinburgh (Cressey 2013)

## 6. CONCLUSION

The building survey recorded the exterior and interior of the former cinema and bingo hall as it survived at the time of the survey. The survey confirmed some late 19<sup>th</sup> century decorative period features still survived from the Royal Princess Theatre era. The results also confirm that the building has been modified to suit the transition from a small vaudeville theatre to an Edwardian and mid-20<sup>th</sup> century cinema. At some point, probably in the 1950s alterations to the balcony seating may have required additional support resulting in the introduction of load-bearing raker beams. More modern conversions (fire exits and kitchen appliances) relate to its use as a bingo hall in the late 1990s.

The photographic survey carried out at the site provides a permanent record of the interior of the theatre/bingo hall and represents an adequate pre-alteration record. The plan form of the theatre and its surviving period features have also been sufficiently documented prior to its change of use and no further recording work is required.

CFA consider that an entry in *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland* (Appendix 3) and the completion of the online OASIS form will be sufficient to disseminate the results of this work.

In line with normal CECAS requirements a copy of the final report will be lodged with them and the NRHE.

## 7. REFERENCES

### *Bibliographic*

ALGAO Scotland 2013 *Historic Buildings Guidance*. Association of Local Government Archaeologists and East Lothian Council Archaeology Service.

Buxton M B 1930 'The Modern Super-Cinema' in Gilbert, W.R. (eds) *Modern Steelwork: A review of current practice in the employment of structural steelwork in Buildings & Bridges*. 56-67.

Cressey, M 2012 *Assembly Rooms, 54 George Street, Edinburgh. Historical Building Recording & Archaeological Watching Brief*. CFA Report No 2054.

Cressey, M and Mitchell, S 2013 *66 Buccleuch Street, Odeon Cinema, Edinburgh, Historic Building Survey Report*. CFA Report No 3140.

Jackson, A 1998 The Development of Steel Framed Buildings in Britain 1880-1905. *Construction History* Vol 14 21-27

### *On-line*

<http://cinematreasures.org/theaters/45848>

*Cartographic*

Plan of Edinburgh & Leith with Suburbs, from Ordnance and Actual Surveys.  
Constructed for the Post Office Directory. By John Bartholomew, F.R.G.S. 1867

Ordnance Survey 1896 Edinburghshire Sheet III.8

Ordnance Survey 1914 Edinburghshire Sheet III.8

Ordnance Survey 1933 Edinburghshire Sheet III.8

Ordnance Survey 1948 NT2673SW 1:25000



## APPENDIX 1: Unit Descriptions

Unit numbers can be found on Figs. 3a-d

Unit	Function	Architectural form and layout	Photos
1	Main theatre	The main theatre converted to bingo hall. The floor sloped down to the stage and was carpeted and fitted with bingo tables. The side and back walls were plastered with decorative timber framing and had a dado rail with timber panelling below. The back wall featured entrance and exit doors and a central open bar (5). The stage was small and adapted for bingo. Timber panelled wings framed the stage and some of the curtains, notably the fabric soffit, remained in place.	29-50, 86, 106-110
2.1	Exit corridor, front.	A corridor running along the south side of the building formed by roofing over a close. It was continuous with the back exit corridor (2.2) and linked the theatre to Nicolson Street via a vestibule formed by fire doors topped with a decorative fanlight. The floor was covered with red linoleum. The walls were plasterboard and painted white. The south side featured a dado and frame panelling. The north side had a large section of plasterboard missing revealing part of the original stone wall. This featured a bricked-up window, a large blocked archway and the edge of a large quoin-framed opening. The ceiling had angled soffits and featured two glass roof lights. The roof was flat above the vestibule. A bay at the east end connected to the main theatre auditorium and also contained two doors; one to a disabled toilet, the other to the main water riser.	1-12, 16-23
2.2	Exit corridor, back	A corridor running along south side of building formed by roofing over a close. It connected the escape stairs (6) at the back of the building to the front exit corridor. It also had a double door connecting to the front of the main theatre auditorium. It had a red linoleum floor which dropped c.0.9m to the east. The walls were plain plasterboard and the ceiling was flat and plastered.	13-15
3.1	Outer foyer, vestibule	The reception vestibule was separated from the outer foyer (3.2) by a steel framed glass door. Access from Nicolson Street was via a steel-framed double glass door. The walls were painted plaster with a dado rail with vertical corrugated moulding below. The floor was carpeted. The ceiling was a modern suspension. A reception desk was situated within the vestibule.	94-98
3.2	Main outer foyer	A narrow corridor running down the north side of the building and was connected to the vestibule (3.1) at the west end and to the inner foyer (4) at the east end by a modern fire door. The walls are coated with artex and had a dado rail with corrugated moulding below. The floor was carpeted and it had a modern suspended ceiling. It had a return wall at its west end to access the foyer. The interior south wall featured a row of electrical sockets to power a series of gaming machines.	87-93, 99
4	Inner foyer	The inner foyer was linked the entrance hall (3.2) and the main theatre auditorium (1). The foot of the main circle stair (10) and steps to the north fire exit and basement stair (13) were on the north side. The Ladies' cloakroom and WC (6) was accessed via a door on the south side of the foyer. The walls were plastered and papered and featured a dado rail. The floor was carpeted and it had a modern	75-77

		suspended ceiling.	
5	Bar and kitchen	The bar and kitchen open out into the main theatre auditorium (1). It was fitted with modern kitchen fittings and appliances and it included a small annex on the north side containing a deep fat fryer. It had a red linoleum floor and modern suspended ceiling.	24-28
6	Ladies cloakroom and WC	The ladies cloakroom and WC is situated up a short stair accessed from the foyer (6). It comprised a narrow cloakroom cupboard, a small cleaner's cupboard and the WCs. The walls of the cloakroom and cleaner's cupboard were painted brick. The floors were bare timber and the ceilings were sloping and appeared to be lined with hardboard. The WCs were modern booths with fitted sinks and formica/chipboard cabinets.	78-85
7.1	Back escape stairs, south	The stairs were situated in the back south-east corner of the building and provide access and escape from the circle, main auditorium and basement to the south exit corridor (2.2).	111-114
7.2	Back escape stairs, north	The stairs are situated in the back north-east corner of the building and provide access and escape from the circle, main auditorium and basement to Richmond Place.	115-119
8	Circle	The circle was suspended above back and sides of the main auditorium. It comprised a curved balcony with galleries running down each side. The front edge of both the balcony and galleries had a decorative cornice with mouldings. The balcony was terraced and carpeted, and was fitted out with bingo tables and modern blue metal guardrails. The galleries formed passageways to the fire exits at the rear of the building. The back and side walls were plastered and featured dado rails with timber panelling below. Imitation columns were moulded into the wall fabric.	051-058, 101-103, 106-108
9	Ceiling	The theatre ceiling was flat with a concave soffit around the sides and front. It featured a large central decorative roof light.	60, 61, 100
10	Circle stair	The main stair linking the foyer (4) to the circle (8) comprised a straight run in two flights with a small central landing. The stair had a decorative curved starting step with a bullnose. The balustrade featured a 360° left hand volute on the banister and stringer with ornate iron balusters. The steps were carpeted with protective aluminium noses on the treads. The walls and ceiling of the stairwell were plastered and papered. The walls featured decorative timber panelling and a dado rail. A small cupboard door was situated on the front face of the soffit.	62-67, 73-74
11	Office	The office was accessed from the half-way landing on the stair (11) and comprised a single room with a large walk-in cupboard. The office had plastered and painted walls and had a carpeted floor below a modern suspended ceiling. It had a window looking out to the west with the walk-in cupboard on the south wall. The cupboard was fitted with timber shelving and had a large 'H' beam girder passing horizontally through it.	68-71
12	Basement staircase	A steep staircase led down to the basement floor. It was accessed from the rear of the bar. Wooden treads with modern handrail on one side. Rubble built walls on flanking walls with whitewashed brickwork in places.	120-121
13	Corridor	Corridor with four rooms leading off it under the auditorium floor. The walls were rubble-built and	122

		whitewashed. The floor was flagstone. Numerous service pipes were present at head height and the walls	
14	Restricted access	Access was not safe to this area due to the presence of holes and piles of loose rubble. Three rows of cylindrical columns and three main supporting beams. Brick-built piers were also visible at the rear of this area.	123-129
15	Sub-square alcove	A near square room with a concrete floor and brick-blocked walls with ventilation bricks built into it. This was an alcove (1.95m x 0.75m) built into the W wall. The floor is raised above the basement floor by three courses of stonework. Its E and W walls are whitewashed brickwork.	130-132
16	Room	A small room with two whitewashed brick and a stone walls with a raised concrete floor.	133
17	Corridor	A corridor with stone-lined walls except at the N end where a brick wall divides off to Room 9. It had a rough uneven flagstone floor. The S wall has a dressed-stone entrance to Room 7 and the wall has some random lintels and square blocks built into it.	135-138
18	Room	A sub-rectangular room with a blocked stone staircase in the SE corner that once may have been an original staircase to the ground floor. Now blocked with bricks. The floor comprised rough sandstone flagstones. A small cupboard was present on the S wall with a brick wall behind it.	135, 142 & 144
19	Room	A rhomboid shaped room with brick lined and stone walls half filled with rubble	143
20	Storeroom	A storeroom with walls that contained a mixture of whitewashed brick and wire mesh on a wooden frame. It had a rough flagstone floor.	137-138
21	Boiler Room	A boiler room with a rough flagstone floor. Stone and brick-built walls. The north wall has had a number of brick and stone repairs and blocking work probably as a result of numerous types of boiler and ventilation fitted within its interior over the years.	
22	Floor	Rough stone flagstone floor flanked by stone-built walls.	141
23	Room/coal store	A square-shaped room with a stone-built barrel-vaulted ceiling. The SW end has a blocked opening that was probably a coal chute from the street immediately above. The presence of the nearby boiler room suggests that this room was a coal store.	160

## APPENDIX 2: Photographic Register

Shot No.	Unit No	Description	Facing
1	N/a	Exterior W-facing elevation	E
2	N/a	Exterior W-facing elevation, main entrance door detail	E
3	N/a	Exterior W-facing elevation, exit door and pend detail	E
4	2.2	Wend	E
5	2.2	W end	E
6	2.2	W end	E
7	2.1	W end	W
8	2.1	W end	W
9	2.1	W end	W
10	2.1	Detail of a stone wall with relieving arch and blocking work	W
11	2.1	Detail of the relieving arch	NE
12	2.1	W end	W
13	2.1	E end	E
14	2.1	E end	E
15	2.1	E end	W
16	2.1	Bay to theatre, riser and WC door	N
17	2.1	Sprinkler riser	NE
18	2.1	Disabled toilet	N
19	3.2	Vestibule and exit doors to Nicolson Street	W
20	3.1	Vestibule	N
21	2.1	Detail of a bricked up opening	
22	2.1	Detail of quoins	N
23	2.1	Detail of iron beam	N
24	5	Bar frontage	W
25	5	Bar frontage	W
26	5	Kitchen interior	SW
27	5	Kitchen interior	E
28	5	Kitchen deep fat fryer	N
29	1	Ground floor auditorium	NE
30	1	Ground floor auditorium	SE
31	1	Ground floor auditorium	E
32	1	Stage detail	E
33	1	Stage detail	SE
34	1	Stage detail	E
35	1	Ground floor auditorium	SE
36	1	Ground floor auditorium	NE
37	1	Ground floor auditorium	W
38	1	Ground floor auditorium	SW
39	1	Stage detail	SE
40	1	Stage detail	E
41	1	Stage detail	NE
42	1	Entrance door	W
43	1	Stage from balcony	E
44	1	Stage from balcony	E
45	1	Auditorium from balcony	E
46	1	Auditorium from balcony and roof light	E
47	1	Auditorium from balcony	NE
48	1	Auditorium from balcony	N
49	1	Detail of ornate wall paneling	S
50	1	Detail of ornate wall paneling	SE
51	8	Fake columns	N
52	8	Balcony seating	S
53	8	Balcony seating	NW
54	8	South Gallery to escape stairs (Unit 7)	E

<b>Shot No.</b>	<b>Unit No</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Facing</b>
55	8	Balcony seating and steps	W
56	8	Balcony general view	NW
57	8	Balcony general view	NW
58	8	Balcony general view	NW
59	8	Balcony detail	NW
60	9	Roof light detail	Oblique
61	9	Roof light detail	Oblique
62	10	Staircase to balcony	W
63	10	Staircase to balcony	W
64	10	Staircase to balcony	NW
65	10	Water tank cupboard on stairs	W
66	10	Balcony staircase	W
67	10	Staircase	NE
68	11	Entrance to managers office	SE
69	11	Office interior	E
70	11	Office interior	S
71	11	Office cupboard	S
72	4	Foyer and stairs (Unit 10)	N
73	4	Foyer and stairs (Unit 10)	E
74	10	Staircase	E
75	4	Foyer general view	W
76	4	Foyer general view	E
77	4	Foyer and stairs to basement and fire escape	N
78	6	Stairs to ladies cloakroom	S
79	6	Stairs to ladies cloakroom	S
80	6	Interior of ladies cloakroom	N
81	6	Press	E
82	6	Ladies WC	E
83	6	Ladies cloakroom	E
84	6	Ladies WC	E
85	6	Ladies WC	N
86	1	Auditorium with exit and bar (Unit 5)	W
87	3.1	Main entry hall	W
88	3.1	Main entry hall	W
89	3.1	Main entry hall	W
90	3.1	Main entry hall	SW
91	3.1	Main entry hall	E
92	3.1	Main entry hall	E
93	3.1	Main entry hall	S
94	3.2	Reception	NE
95	3.1	Reception	NE
96	3.1	Reception	NE
97	3.1	Reception	W
98	3.1	Reception	W
99	3.1	Entry hall, detail on the wall	S
100	9	Roof light detail	Oblique
101	8	Ornate moulding on the balcony	Oblique
102	8	Ornate moulding on the balcony	Oblique
103	8	Ornate moulding on the balcony	Oblique
104	7	Fire escape staircase	E
105	7	Fire escape staircase and store cupboard	W
106	1	Auditorium and balcony from the stage	W
107	1	Auditorium and balcony from the stage	W
108	1	Auditorium and balcony from the stage	SW
109	1	Stage detail and podium	SW
110	1	Detail of stone wall exposed behind the stage wing	E
111	7	Fire escape staircase south	W

Shot No.	Unit No	Description	Facing
112	7	Fire escape staircase south	
113	7	Fire escape staircase south, ladies WC	E
114	7	Fire escape staircase south	W
115	7	Fire escape north and Staff WC	W
116	7	Fire escape staircase north	W
117	7	Fire escape staircase north, wall press (fuse board)	N
118	7	Fire escape staircase north, gents WC	E
119	7	Fire escape staircase north	E
120	12	Staircase leading down to the basement	N
121	12	Staircase leading down to the basement	N
122	13	General shot of the passage	E
123		Pump and keg store, general view	NE
124	13	Flagstone floor general view	NE
125	14	General view of the iron columns and joist fittings	E
126	14	General view of supporting brick columns	E
127	14	General view of the different iron columns and joist fittings	SE
128	14	Detailed shot of joists and floorboards above	Oblique
129	14	General shot showing columns and debris	E
130	15	General shot of the interior	N
131	15	General shot of the interior	N
132	15	General shot of the alcove feature	S
133	15	General shot of the interior	W
134	16	General shot of the interior	SE
135	17	General shot of the dressed quoins	SE
136	17	Re-used stone used in the wall near the entrance to Unit 18	SE
137	17 & 20	General shots of the interiors	W
138	17 & 20	General shots of the interiors	W
139	21	General shot of the boiler room with flagstone floor	W
140	21	Blocking work and repairs to its outer wall	NW
141	22	Rough flagstone floor flanked by rubble walls	W
142	18	Blocked up staircase	E
143	19	General view of the flagstone floor and debris	S
144	18	Cupboard and the base of the blocked staircase	N
145	18	Cupboard and the base of the blocked staircase	N
146		Main auditorium – removed false ceiling showing sarking on the main roof	Oblique
147	Auditorium	Main auditorium suspended ornate roof light	Oblique
148	Auditorium	Main auditorium showing ceiling supports and sarking	Oblique
149	Auditorium	Main support stanchion behind cladding	N
150	Auditorium	Numbered supporting steel transom girder for the balcony	Oblique
151	Auditorium	Main balcony beam, wide span with fish plate jointing	N
152	Auditorium	Main balcony beam, wide span with fish plate jointing	N
153-158	Auditorium	Cantilever beam arrangement to support the balcony	N
159	Auditorium	Cantilever beam arrangement to support the balcony with curved wooden stud work	NE
160	23	Ground floor showing vaulted roof, coal chute on the rear wall with coke and clinker covered floor	SW

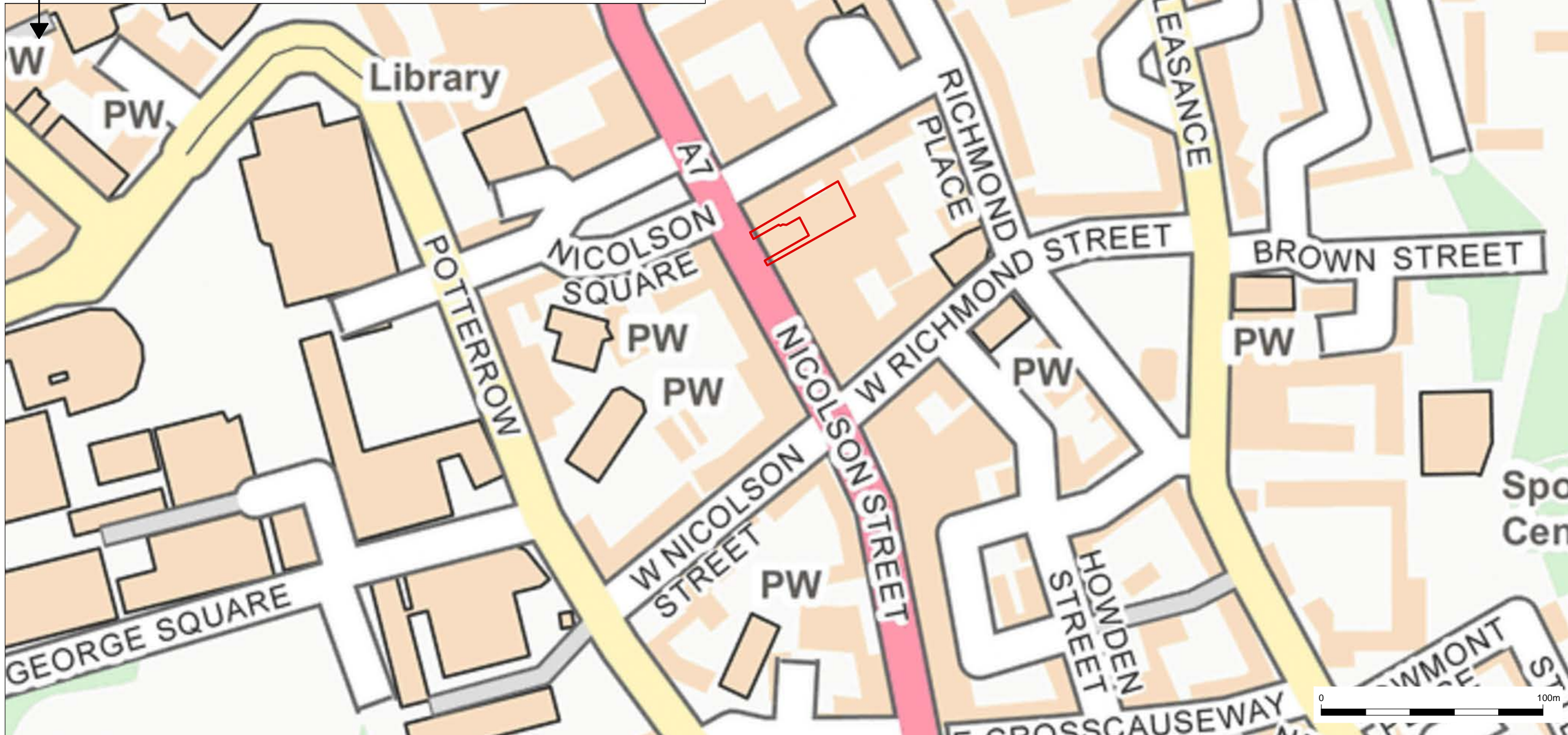
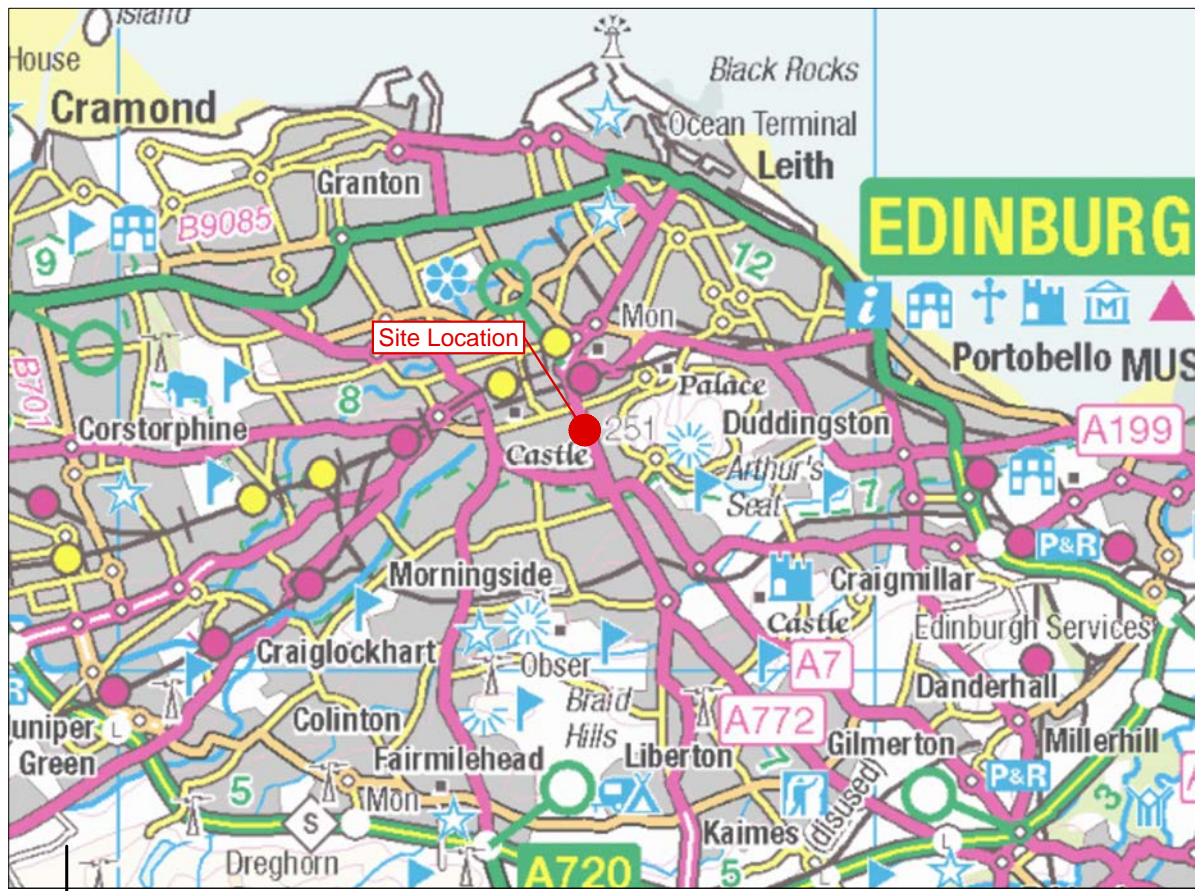


### APPENDIX 3: Discovery and Excavation in Scotland Entry

<b>LOCAL AUTHORITY:</b>	City of Edinburgh
<b>PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:</b>	50 Nicolson Street, Edinburgh
<b>PROJECT CODE:</b>	ARCT
<b>PARISH:</b>	Edinburgh
<b>NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:</b>	Mike Cressey
<b>NAME OF ORGANISATION:</b>	CFA Archaeology Ltd
<b>TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:</b>	Historic Building Recording
<b>NMRS NO(S):</b>	NT 27SE 5203
<b>SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):</b>	Theatre, cinema
<b>SIGNIFICANT FINDS:</b>	-
<b>NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)</b>	NT 26130 73179
<b>START DATE (this season)</b>	March 2019
<b>END DATE (this season)</b>	September 2019
<b>PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)</b>	None
<b>MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION:</b> (May include information from other fields)	<p>A Level 1 historic building survey was carried out by CFA Archaeology Ltd at 50 Nicolson Street, Edinburgh. The survey was designed to record the current layout of the building prior to its alteration.</p> <p>50 Nicolson Street started life as The Royal Princess Theatre built in 1875. It went out of business in 1886 and was then used by The Salvation Army. In 1912 it was converted to the La Scala silent-picture house and remained so into the late 1940s. In 1984 it was renamed The Classic and was last known as the Empire bingo hall.</p> <p>The building survey recorded the exterior and interior of the former cinema and bingo hall as it survived at the time of the survey. The survey confirmed some late 19<sup>th</sup> century decorative period features still survived from the Royal Princess Theatre era. The results also confirm that the building has been modified to suit the transition from a small vaudeville theatre to an Edwardian and mid-20<sup>th</sup> century cinema. At some point, probably in the 1950s alterations to the balcony seating may have required additional support resulting in the introduction of load-bearing raker beams. More modern conversions (fire exits and kitchen appliances) relate to its use as a bingo hall in the in the late 1990s.</p>
<b>PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:</b>	None
<b>CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:</b>	None
<b>SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:</b>	Darling Associated Architects
<b>ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:</b>	CFA Archaeology Ltd, Old Engine House, Eskmills Park, Musselburgh, EH21 7PQ.
<b>EMAIL ADDRESS:</b>	<a href="mailto:cfa@cfa-archaeology.co.uk">cfa@cfa-archaeology.co.uk</a>
<b>ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)</b>	Archive to be deposited with NRHE, reports lodged with SMR.







Key:

Site boundary



Reproduced with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown copyright. CFA Archaeology Ltd, Old Engine House, Eskmills Park, Musselburgh EH21 7PQ AL100034785

**CFA** ARCHAEOLOGY LTD  
 The Old Engine House  
 Eskmills Park  
 Musselburgh  
 East Lothian, EH21 7PQ  
 T: 0131 273 4380  
 F: 0131 273 4381  
 info@cfa-archaeology.co.uk  
 www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk

Title:  
 General Location Plan

Project:  
 50 Nicolson Street, Edinburgh  
 Historic Building Survey

Client:  
 Darling Associates Architects Ltd

Scale at A3:  
 1:2000

Drawn by: CA	Checked by: SW	Date: 22/10/2019
-----------------	-------------------	---------------------

Report No: 3851	Fig. No: 1
--------------------	---------------







Fig. 2a - 1867 Post Office Directory map extract

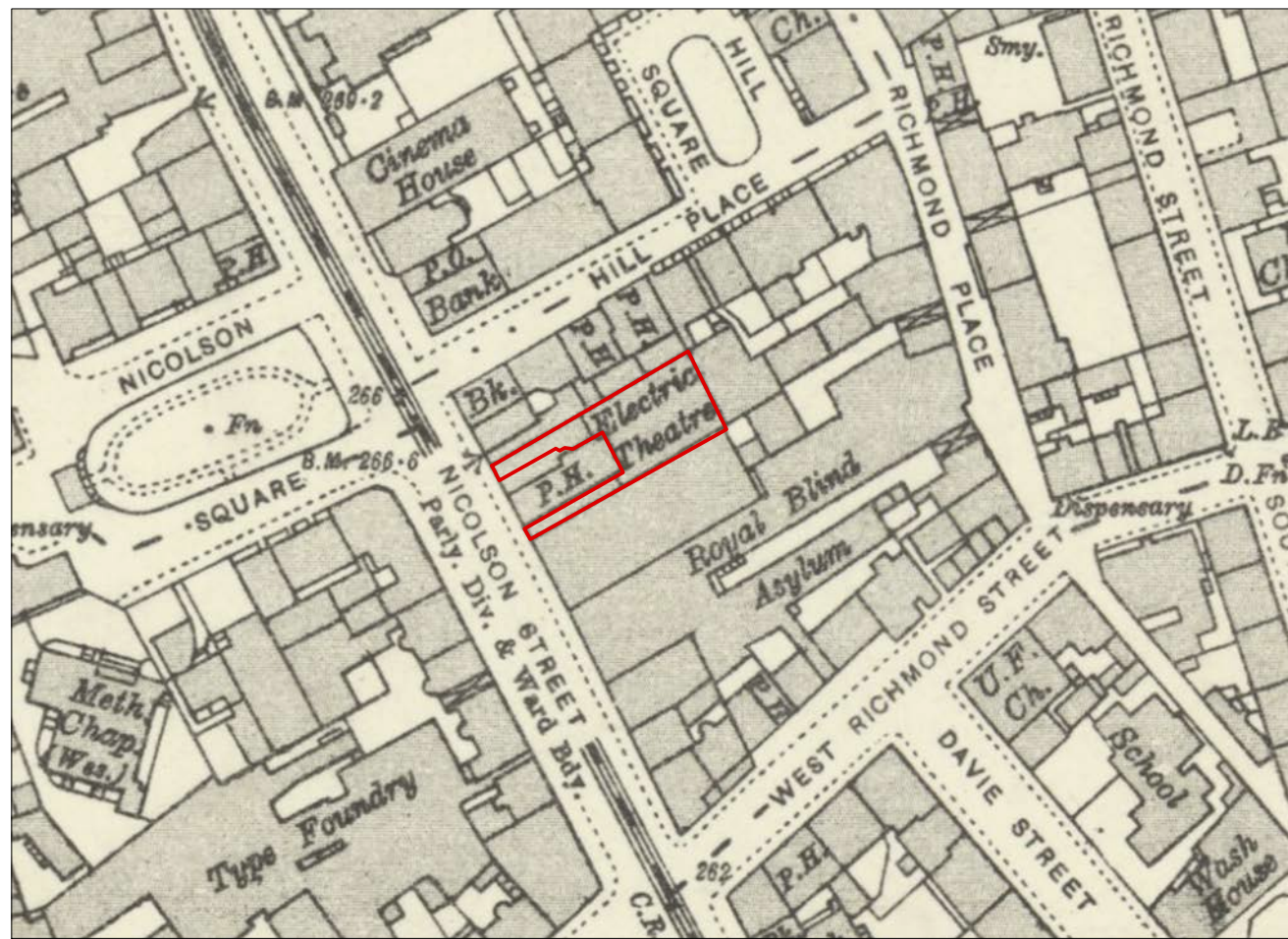


Fig. 2b - 1914 Ordnance Survey map extract

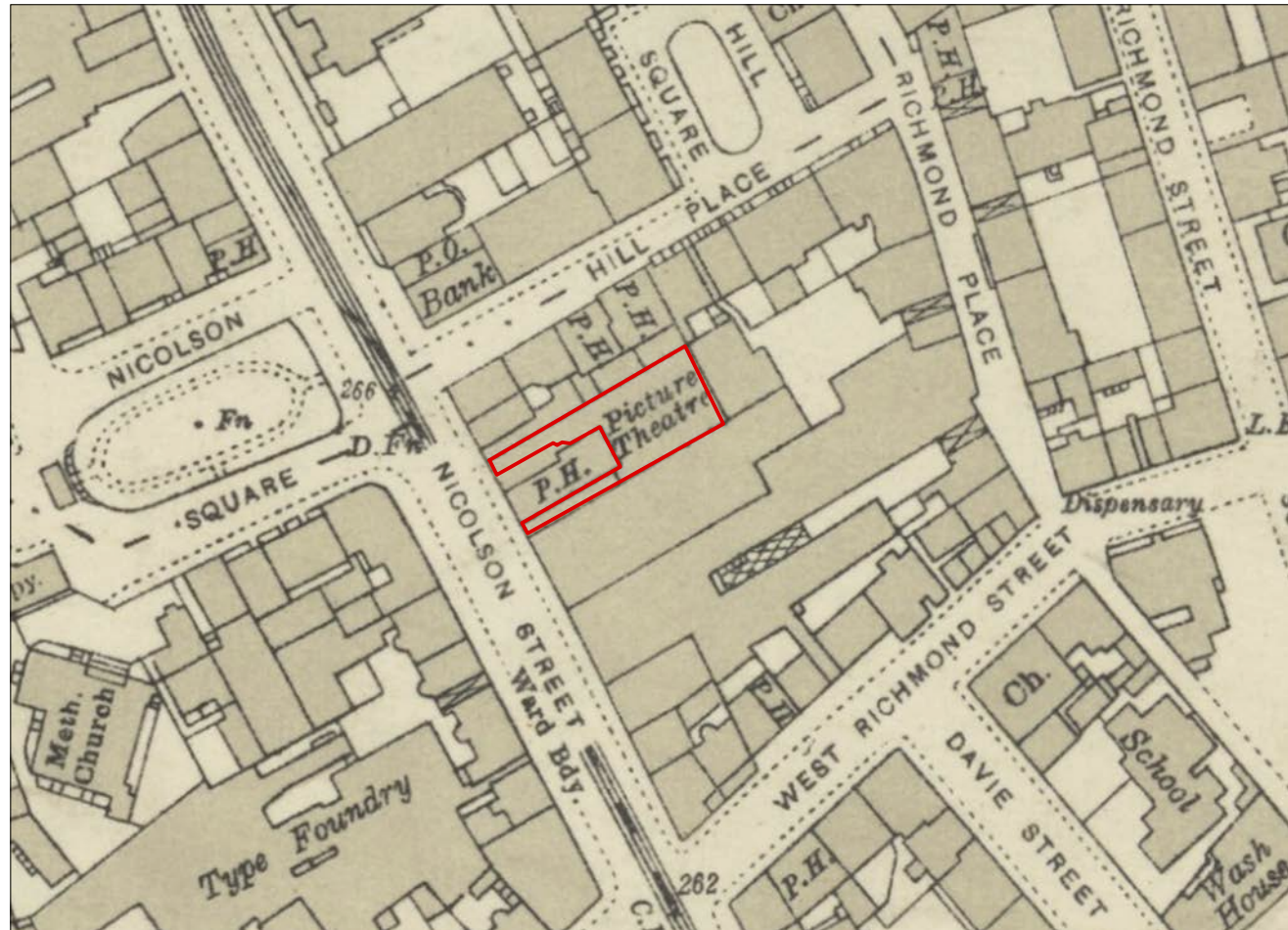


Fig. 2c - 1933 Ordnance Survey map extract

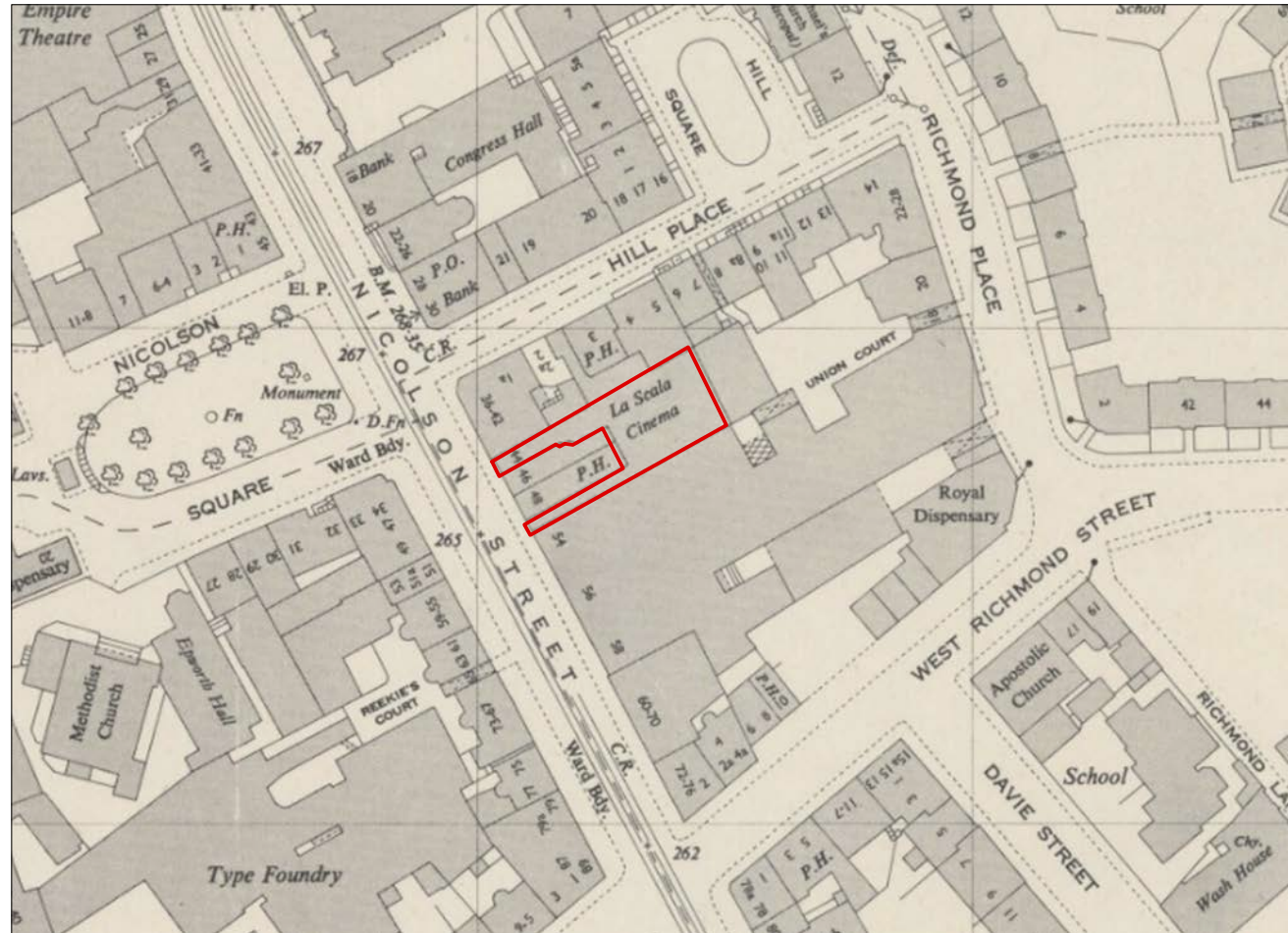


Fig. 2d - 1948 Ordnance Survey map extract

Key:

Site boundary



Reproduced with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown copyright. CFA Archaeology Ltd, Old Engine House, Eskmills Park, Musselburgh EH21 7PQ AL100034785



Title:  
Historic Map Regression

Project:  
50 Nicolson Street, Edinburgh  
Historic Building Survey

Client:  
Darling Associates Architects Ltd

Scale at A3:  
1:1500

Drawn by: CA	Checked by: SW	Date: 22/10/2019
-----------------	-------------------	---------------------

Report No: 3851	Fig. No: 2
--------------------	---------------





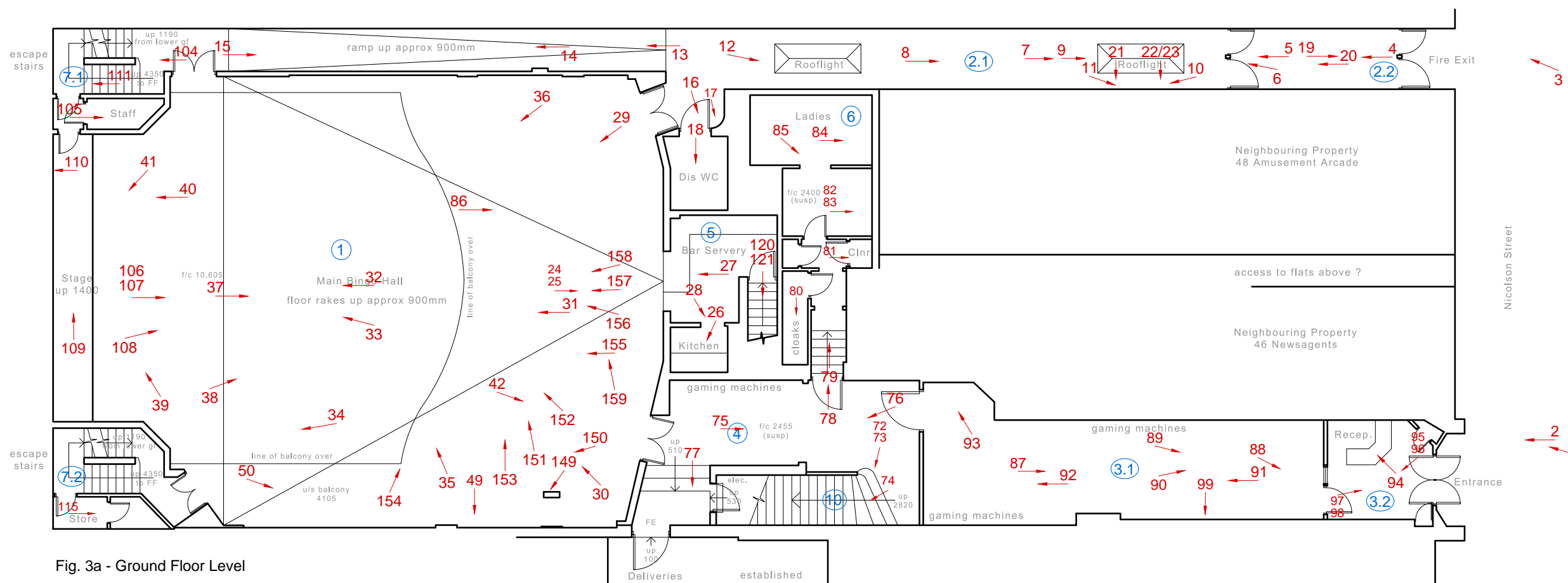


Fig. 3a - Ground Floor Level

Key:

- ④ Room number
- ➔ Photo location/direction

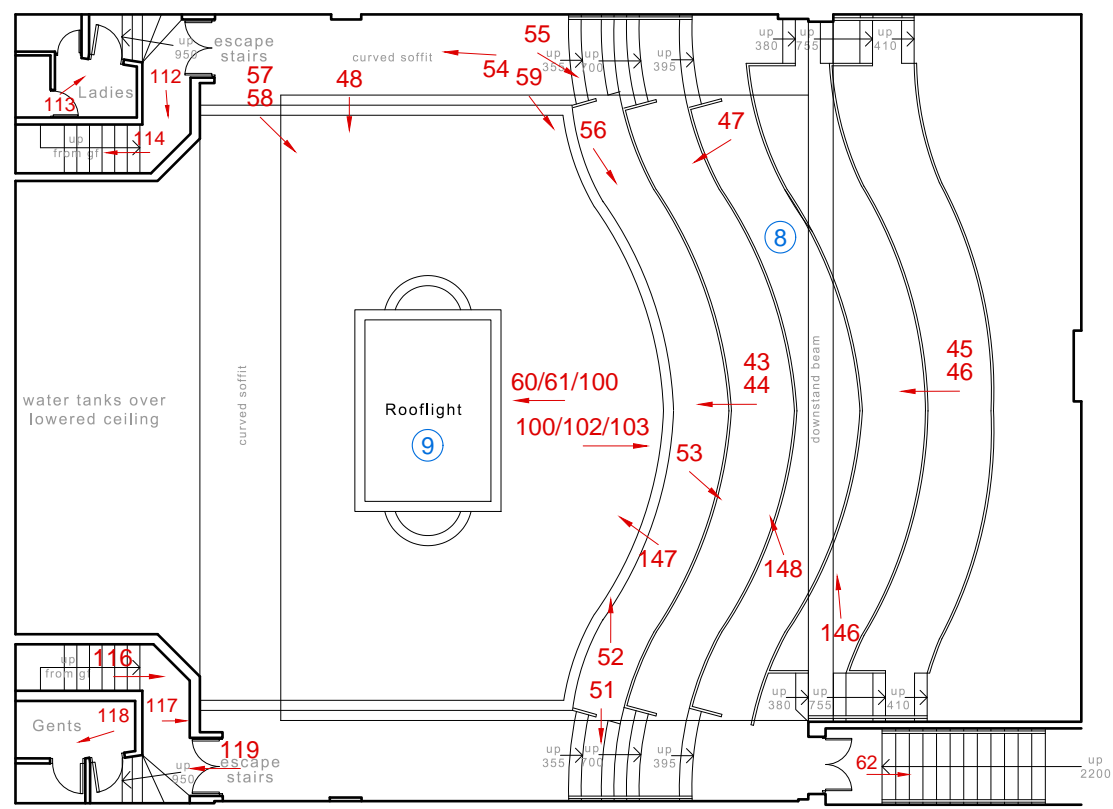


Fig. 3b - First Floor Balcony



Reproduced with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown copyright. CFA Archaeology Ltd, Old Engine House, Eskmills Park, Musselburgh EH21 7PQ AL100034785

**CFA**  
ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD  
The Old Engine House  
Eskmills Park  
Musselburgh  
East Lothian, EH21 7PQ  
T: 0131 273 4380  
F: 0131 273 4381  
info@cfa-archaeology.co.uk  
www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk

Title:  
Floor plans with unit number and photographic viewpoints

Project:  
50 Nicolson Street, Edinburgh  
Historic Building Survey

Client:  
Darling Associates Architects Ltd

Scale at A3:  
1:150

Drawn by: CA	Checked: SW	Date: 22/10/2019
-----------------	----------------	---------------------

Report No: 3851	Fig. No: 3a-3b
--------------------	-------------------

Key:

- ④ Room number
- 8 Photo location/direction

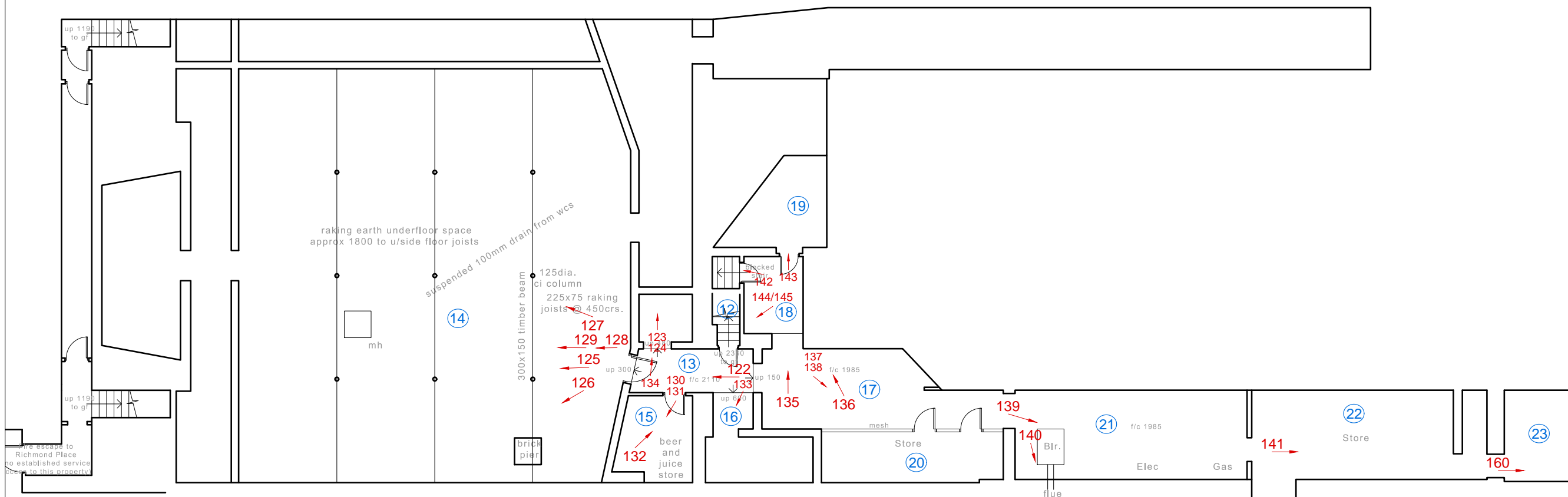


Fig. 3c - Basement Floor Level

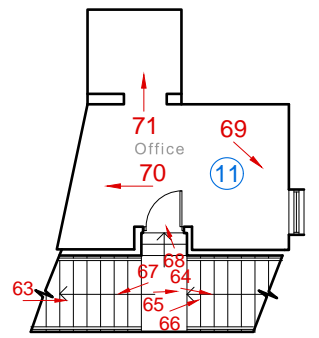


Fig. 3d - Half Landing Level

Reproduced with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown copyright. CFA Archaeology Ltd, Old Engine House, Eskmills Park, Musselburgh EH21 7PQ AL100034785

**CFA** ARCHAEOLOGY LTD  
 The Old Engine House  
 Eskmills Park  
 Musselburgh  
 East Lothian, EH21 7PQ  
 T: 0131 273 4380  
 F: 0131 273 4381  
 info@cfa-archaeology.co.uk  
 www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk

Title:  
**Floor plans with unit number and photographic viewpoints**

Project:  
**50 Nicolson Street, Edinburgh  
 Historic Building Survey**

Client:  
**Darling Associates Architects Ltd**

Scale at A3:  
**1:150**

Drawn by: CA	Checked by: SW	Date: 22/10/2019
-----------------	-------------------	---------------------

Report No: 3851	Fig. No: 3c-3d
--------------------	-------------------







Fig. 4 - 50 Nicolson Street frontage showing the main entrance to the former Empire Bingo Hall



Fig. 5 - Unit 2.2, passage and main fire exit to Nicolson Street

Project:  
50 Nicolson Street, Edinburgh  
Historic Building Survey



CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD  
The Old Engine House  
Eskmills Park  
Musselburgh  
East Lothian, EH21 7PQ  
T: 0131 273 4380  
F: 0131 273 4381  
info@cfa-archaeology.co.uk  
www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk

Client:  
Darling Associates Architects Ltd

Drawn by: CA	Checked: SW	Date: 22/10/19
Report No: 3851		Fig. No: 4-5





Fig. 6 - Unit 2.1, historic fabric exposed where the cladding had been removed in incorporating a relieving arch blocked with brick and two sections of railway line



Fig. 7 - Unit 1, general view of the interior of the ground floor Auditorium

Project:  
50 Nicolson Street, Edinburgh  
Historic Building Survey



CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD  
The Old Engine House  
Eskmills Park  
Musselburgh  
East Lothian, EH21 7PQ  
T: 0131 273 4380  
F: 0131 273 4381  
info@cfa-archaeology.co.uk  
www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk

Client:  
Darling Associates Architects Ltd

Drawn by: CA	Checked: SW	Date: 22/10/19
Report No: 3851		Fig. No: 6-7





Fig. 8 - Unit 1, general view of the stage and wing walls



Fig. 9 - Looking up at the first floor balcony

Project:  
50 Nicolson Street, Edinburgh  
Historic Building Survey



CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD  
The Old Engine House  
Eskmills Park  
Musselburgh  
East Lothian, EH21 7PQ  
T: 0131 273 4380  
F: 0131 273 4381  
info@cfa-archaeology.co.uk  
www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk

Client:  
Darling Associates Architects Ltd

Drawn by: CA	Checked: SW	Date: 22/10/19
Report No: 3851		Fig. No: 8-9





Fig. 10 - Looking down on the auditorium from the balcony



Fig. 11 - Stairs to the rear of the circle floor

Project:  
50 Nicolson Street, Edinburgh  
Historic Building Survey



**CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD**  
The Old Engine House  
Eskmills Park  
Musselburgh  
East Lothian, EH21 7PQ  
T: 0131 273 4380  
F: 0131 273 4381  
info@cfa-archaeology.co.uk  
www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk

Client:  
Darling Associates Architects Ltd

Drawn by: CA	Checked: SW	Date: 22/10/19
Report No: 3851		Fig. No: 10-11





Fig. 12 - Embellished balcony front with heraldic detailing



Fig. 13 - Detail of a boss incorporating the initials RP (Royal Princess) and leaf and scroll plasterwork

Project:  
50 Nicolson Street, Edinburgh  
Historic Building Survey



**CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD**  
The Old Engine House  
Eskmills Park  
Musselburgh  
East Lothian, EH21 7PQ  
T: 0131 273 4380  
F: 0131 273 4381  
info@cfa-archaeology.co.uk  
www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk

Client:  
Darling Associates Architects Ltd

Drawn by: CA	Checked: SW	Date: 22/10/19
Report No: 3851		Fig. No: 12-13





Fig. 14 - Highly ornate gilded ceiling light and semi-circular air vents



Fig. 15 - Underside of the first floor balcony with cladding removed exposing a Pratt truss spanning the width of the auditorium with bolted raker girders and original 19th century wooden form work

Project:  
50 Nicolson Street, Edinburgh  
Historic Building Survey



Client:  
Darling Associates Architects Ltd

Drawn by: CA	Checked: SW	Date: 22/10/19
Report No: 3851		Fig. No: 14-15





Fig. 16 - Cast iron columns supporting the auditorium floor



Fig. 17 - Boiler room with services

Project:  
50 Nicolson Street, Edinburgh  
Historic Building Survey



CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD  
The Old Engine House  
Eskmills Park  
Musselburgh  
East Lothian, EH21 7PQ  
T: 0131 273 4380  
F: 0131 273 4381  
info@cfa-archaeology.co.uk  
www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk

Client:  
Darling Associates Architects Ltd

Drawn by: CA	Checked: SW	Date: 22/10/19
Report No: 3851		Fig. No: 16-17





Fig. 18 - Vaulted coal store for a coke fired boiler

Project:  
50 Nicolson Street, Edinburgh  
Historic Building Survey



**CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD**  
The Old Engine House  
Eskmills Park  
Musselburgh  
East Lothian, EH21 7PQ  
T: 0131 273 4380  
F: 0131 273 4381  
info@cfa-archaeology.co.uk  
www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk

Client:  
Darling Associates Architects Ltd

Drawn by: CA	Checked: SW	Date: 22/10/19
Report No: 3851		Fig. No: 18



ARCT\_001.jpg



ARCT\_002.jpg



ARCT\_003.jpg



ARCT\_004.jpg



ARCT\_005.jpg



ARCT\_006.jpg



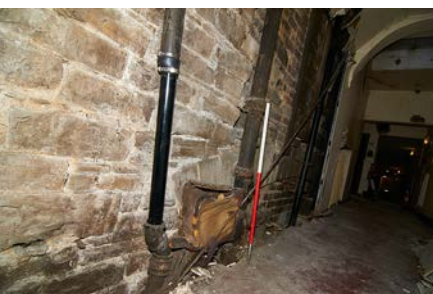
ARCT\_007.jpg



ARCT\_008.jpg



ARCT\_009.jpg



ARCT\_010.jpg



ARCT\_011.jpg



ARCT\_012.jpg





ARCT\_013.jpg



ARCT\_014.jpg



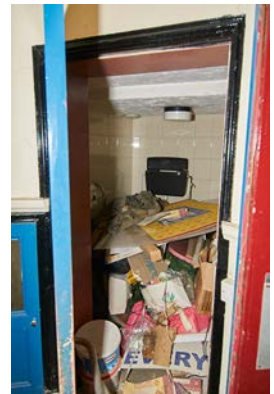
ARCT\_015.jpg



ARCT\_016.jpg



ARCT\_017.jpg



ARCT\_018.jpg



ARCT\_019.jpg



ARCT\_020.jpg



ARCT\_021.jpg



ARCT\_022.jpg



ARCT\_023.jpg



ARCT\_024.jpg



ARCT\_025.jpg



ARCT\_026.jpg



ARCT\_027.jpg



ARCT\_028.jpg



ARCT\_029.jpg



ARCT\_030.jpg



ARCT\_031.jpg



ARCT\_032.jpg



ARCT\_033.jpg



ARCT\_034.jpg



ARCT\_035.jpg



ARCT\_036.jpg





ARCT\_037.jpg



ARCT\_038.jpg



ARCT\_039.jpg



ARCT\_040.jpg



ARCT\_041.jpg



ARCT\_042.jpg



ARCT\_043.jpg



ARCT\_044.jpg



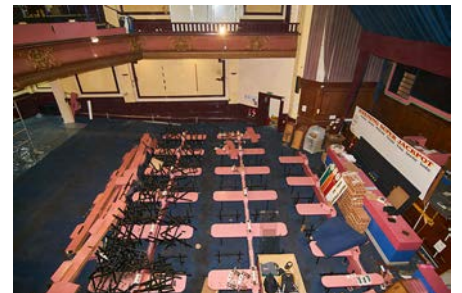
ARCT\_045.jpg



ARCT\_046.jpg



ARCT\_047.jpg



ARCT\_048.jpg





ARCT\_049.jpg



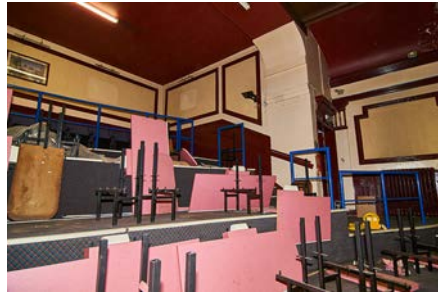
ARCT\_050.jpg



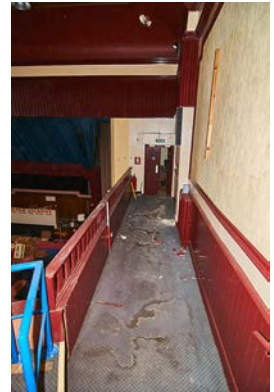
ARCT\_051.jpg



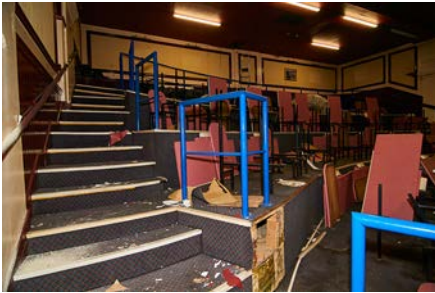
ARCT\_052.jpg



ARCT\_053.jpg



ARCT\_054.jpg



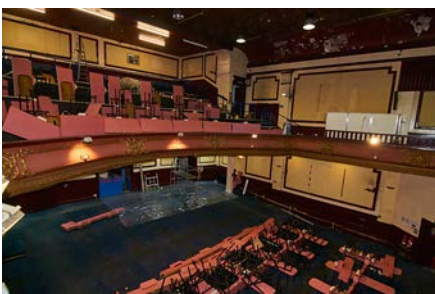
ARCT\_055.jpg



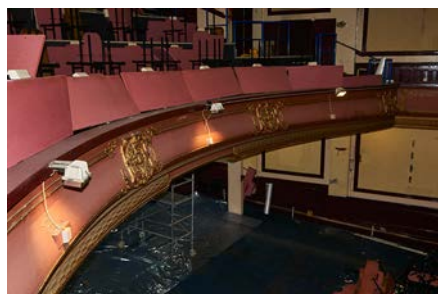
ARCT\_056.jpg



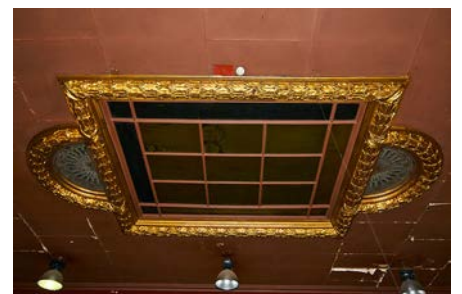
ARCT\_057.jpg



ARCT\_058.jpg



ARCT\_059.jpg



ARCT\_060.jpg



ARCT\_061.jpg



ARCT\_062.jpg



ARCT\_063.jpg



ARCT\_064.jpg



ARCT\_065.jpg



ARCT\_066.jpg



ARCT\_067.jpg



ARCT\_068.jpg



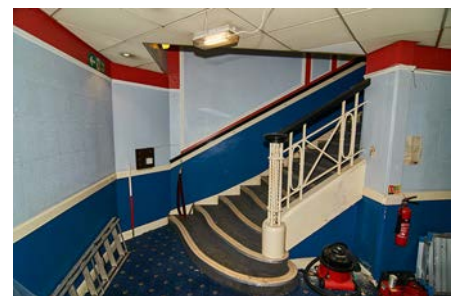
ARCT\_069.jpg



ARCT\_070.jpg



ARCT\_071.jpg

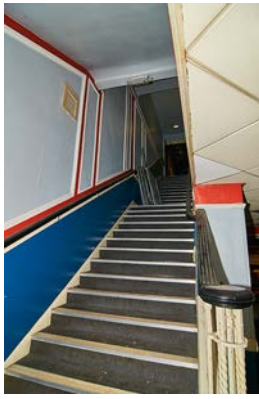


ARCT\_072.jpg





ARCT\_073.jpg



ARCT\_074.jpg



ARCT\_075.jpg



ARCT\_076.jpg



ARCT\_077.jpg



ARCT\_078.jpg



ARCT\_079.jpg



ARCT\_080.jpg



ARCT\_081.jpg



ARCT\_082.jpg



ARCT\_083.jpg



ARCT\_084.jpg



ARCT\_085.jpg



ARCT\_086.jpg



ARCT\_087.jpg



ARCT\_088.jpg



ARCT\_089.jpg



ARCT\_090.jpg



ARCT\_091.jpg



ARCT\_092.jpg



ARCT\_093.jpg



ARCT\_094.jpg



ARCT\_095.jpg



ARCT\_096.jpg





ARCT\_097.jpg



ARCT\_098.jpg



ARCT\_099.jpg



ARCT\_100.jpg



ARCT\_101.jpg



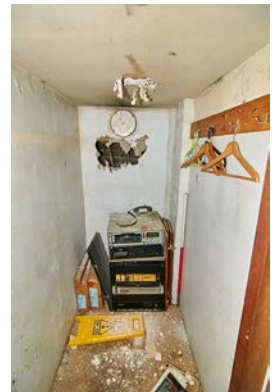
ARCT\_102.jpg



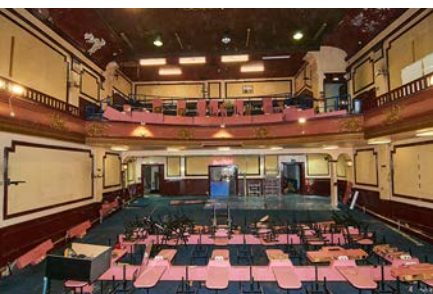
ARCT\_103.jpg



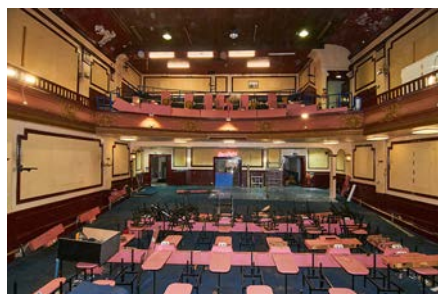
ARCT\_104.jpg



ARCT\_105.jpg



ARCT\_106.jpg



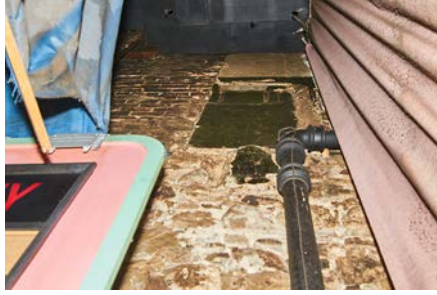
ARCT\_107.jpg



ARCT\_108.jpg



ARCT\_109.jpg



ARCT\_110.jpg



ARCT\_111.jpg



ARCT\_112.jpg



ARCT\_113.jpg



ARCT\_114.jpg



ARCT\_115.jpg



ARCT\_116.jpg



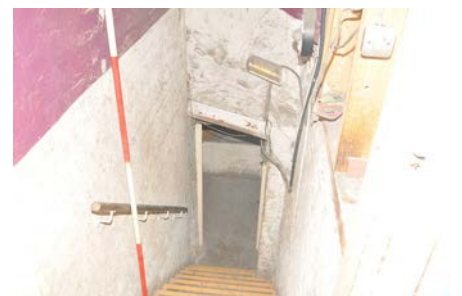
ARCT\_117.jpg



ARCT\_118.jpg

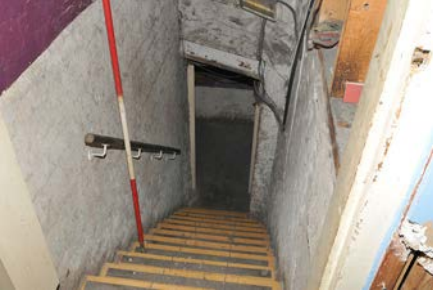


ARCT\_119.jpg



ARCT\_120.JPG





ARCT\_121.JPG



ARCT\_122.JPG



ARCT\_123.JPG



ARCT\_124.JPG



ARCT\_125.JPG



ARCT\_126.JPG



ARCT\_127.JPG



ARCT\_128.JPG



ARCT\_129.JPG



ARCT\_130.JPG



ARCT\_131.JPG



ARCT\_132.JPG



ARCT\_133.JPG



ARCT\_134.JPG



ARCT\_135.JPG



ARCT\_136.JPG



ARCT\_137.JPG



ARCT\_138.JPG



ARCT\_139.JPG



ARCT\_140.JPG



ARCT\_141.JPG



ARCT\_142.JPG



ARCT\_143.JPG



ARCT\_144.JPG

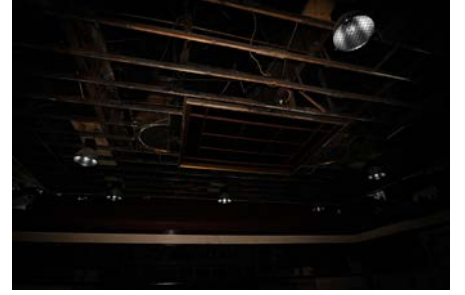




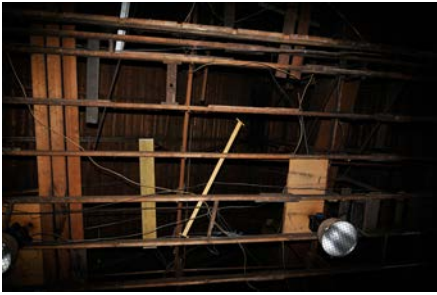
ARCT\_145.JPG



ARCT\_146.JPG



ARCT\_147.JPG



ARCT\_148.JPG



ARCT\_149.JPG



ARCT\_150.JPG



ARCT\_151.JPG



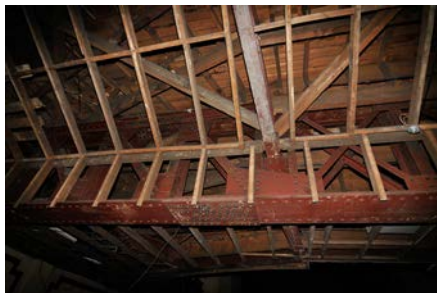
ARCT\_152.JPG



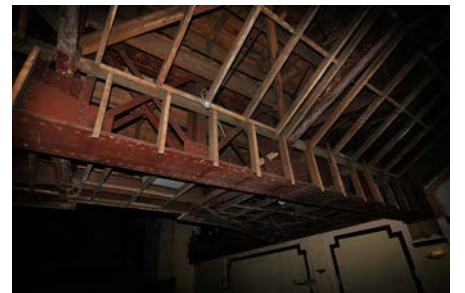
ARCT\_153.JPG



ARCT\_154.JPG



ARCT\_155.JPG



ARCT\_156.JPG



ARCT\_157.JPG



ARCT\_158.JPG



ARCT\_159.JPG



ARCT\_160.jpg





**CFA** ARCHAEOLOGY  
www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk

**HEAD OFFICE - Musselburgh**

Old Engine House  
Eskmills Park, Musselburgh  
East Lothian, EH21 7PQ

t: +44 (0) 131 273 4380  
e: enquiries@cfa-archaeology.co.uk

**Leeds**

Clayton Works Business Centre  
Midland Road  
Leeds, LS10 2RJ

t: +44 (0) 113 271 6060  
e: yorkshire@cfa-archaeology.co.uk

**Milton Keynes**

Suite 11, Letchworth House  
Chesney Wold, Bleak Hall  
Milton Keynes, MK6 1NE

t: +44 (0) 1908 226 124  
e: miltonkeynes@cfa-archaeology.co.uk

**Carlisle**

Warwick Mill Business Village  
Warwick Bridge, Carlisle  
Cumbria, CA4 8RR

t: +44 (0) 1228 564 531  
e: cumbria@cfa-archaeology.co.uk

**Sheffield**

Office 5, Ecclesfield Business Centre  
46 Stocks Hill, Ecclesfield  
Sheffield, S35 9YT

t: +44 (0) 114 327 1108  
e: sheffield@cfa-archaeology.co.uk

**Leicester**

Business Box  
3 Oswin Road, Brailsford Industrial Estate  
Leicester, LE3 1HR

t: +44 (0) 116 279 5156  
e: leicestershire@cfa-archaeology.co.uk

**Hertfordshire**

Amwell House  
9 Amwell Street, Hoddesdon  
Hertfordshire, EN11 8TS

t: +44 (0) 845 017 9847  
e: herts@cfa-archaeology.co.uk