

Archaeological Building Recording  
at  
**CLIFTON LIBRARY,**  
**PRINCESS VICTORIA STREET, BRISTOL.**  
for  
Bristol City Council



Report No. 2382/2010  
BHER No. 24948



Bristol and Region Archaeological Services



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Archaeological Building Recording  
at  
**CLIFTON LIBRARY,**  
**PRINCESS VICTORIA STREET, BRISTOL.**

Centred on  
N.G.R. ST 57045 73025

Client: Bristol City Council  
Agent: Colliers CRE

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<i>Approved by:</i>	John Bryant
<i>Signature:</i>	
<i>Date Issued:</i>	13 October 2010 

## CONTENTS

Summary

List of Illustrations

1.	Introduction.....	1
2.	Methodology.....	2
3.	Historical Context.....	3
4.	Building Recording .....	5
5.	Conclusion.....	6
6.	References.....	7
7.	Acknowledgements.....	7

Appendix 1: Policy Statement

Illustrations and Plates

### Abbreviations

AD	Anno Domini	Km	Kilometre
aOD	Above Ordnance Datum	m	Metre
BaRAS	Bristol & Region Archaeological Services	NGR	National Grid Reference
BC	Before Christ	NMR	National Monuments Record
c.	Circa	OASIS	Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations
HER	Historic Environment Record	OS	Ordnance Survey

### NOTE

Notwithstanding that Bristol and Region Archaeological Services have taken reasonable care to produce a comprehensive summary of the known and recorded archaeological evidence, no responsibility can be accepted for any omissions of fact or opinion, however caused.

October, 2010.

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## **SUMMARY**

This archaeological building recording project at Clifton Library, Princess Victoria Street, Clifton, Bristol, was commissioned from Bristol and Region Archaeological Services by Colliers CRE, acting on behalf of Bristol City Council.

Recording was undertaken in advance of alteration works and comprised two parts. Firstly, photography of a partition between two classrooms on the first floor that was scheduled to be repositioned. Secondly, photography of the threshold of an existing fire exit to a ground floor courtyard prior to its modification to a wheel chair ramp.

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

### Figures

- Figure 1 Site location plan (not to scale)
- Figure 2 General plan of the library indicating the location of the proposed alterations and plate directions
- Figure 3 Amended elevation drawing of the removed partition wall

### Plates

- Cover View of the library frontage, from the north
- Plate 1 Oblique view of the partition (Classroom 1) looking east, 2 x 0.5m scales
- Plate 2 Oblique view of the partition (Classroom 1) looking north-east, 2 x 0.5m scales
- Plate 3 Detail of the north-west end of the partition built into a window bay (Classroom 1) looking east, 2 x 0.5m scales
- Plate 4 Detail of the doorway and adjacent panels with door (Classroom 1) looking east-north-east, 2 x 0.5m scales
- Plate 5 Overall view of partition in Classroom 2, looking south-south-west, 0.5m scale
- Plate 6 Detail of device for opening upper window panes (Classroom 1) looking east-north-east, 0.5m scale
- Plate 7 Door to courtyard from outside showing steps to be altered to form ramp, looking west-south-west, 0.5m scale

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### Site Location

- 1.1 Archaeological building recording at Clifton Library Building, Princess Victoria Street, Clifton, Bristol (NGR ST 57045 73025), was commissioned from Bristol and Region Archaeological Services by Colliers CRE, acting on behalf of Bristol City Council.
- 1.2 The site is situated at the west end of Princess Victoria Street, on the south side of the road, approximately 1.5 miles west of Bristol City Centre (**Fig. 1**). The site is situated at approximately 73m aOD and comprises an area of 314 square metres.
- 1.3 Recording was undertaken in two former classrooms on the first floor of the library building and around the ground floor fire exit, which opened onto a small forecourt at the front of the building (**Fig. 2**).
- 1.4 The study area is situated in the Clifton Conservation Area (designated 1972; currently under appraisal). The *Bristol Local Plan* (1997/2003) defines the study area as 'Predominately residential areas (Policy H1), where the existing uses are, for the most part, likely to remain undisturbed'.
- 1.5 The Library Building itself along with attached railings and gate is Grade II listed.

### Existing Use and Layout

- 1.6 The premises presently comprises the Clifton Library building (**Cover Plate**). The library is fronted by Princess Victoria Street and has properties fronting Princess Victoria Street to both east and west of it whilst properties fronting Royal York Crescent lay to the south of the study area (**Fig. 1**).

### Planning History

- 1.7 A planning application (10/01619/LA) for alterations including the formation of an accessible wc to the ground floor, formation of an opening for a new disabled access platform lift through the first floor, construction of new partitions, the cleaning of the stone facade to the front of the building, provision of new level access to the front courtyard from the front right hand gate, and decorations was submitted to Bristol City Council in April 2010.
- 1.8 Consent for the proposed works was granted, with conditions, on 22nd June 2010.
- 1.9 The present programme of building recording relates to Listed Building Consent (Ref: GOWM/PLN/Z0116/92559, paragraph 8) and Condition 8 (SC83) of the consent which states:

The developer shall ensure the recording of those parts of an historic building which are likely to be disturbed or concealed in the course of redevelopment or refurbishment. Such recording shall be carried out by an archaeologist or archaeological organisation approved by the Local Planning Authority. No redevelopment or refurbishment of an historic building shall take place until at least two weeks notice has been given in writing to the Local Planning Authority unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
- 1.10 In response to the above Condition of the Listed Building consent and the planning application (see above), a Written Scheme of Investigation (BaRAS 2010) for the programme of building recording has been prepared.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

### **Recording**

- 2.1 A photographic record was made of the internal partition between the two classrooms on the first floor and the fire exit doorway to be converted.

### **Access & Limitations**

- 2.2 At the time the building recording was undertaken, the majority of the face of the internal partition in Classroom 2 was obscured by fixed shelves, thus preventing full observations from being made.

### **OASIS & Historic Environment Registration**

- 2.3 The project has been included in the Bristol Historic Environment Record as: BHER 24948.
- 2.4 The project has been registered with the English Heritage OASIS project as: bristola1-83611.
- 2.5 The project has been assigned an accession number by the Bristol City Museum & Art Gallery: BRSMG 2010/65.

### **Programme**

- 2.6 The building recording was undertaken on 10th September 2010 by Raymond K Ducker of Bristol & Region Archaeological Services.

### 3. HISTORICAL CONTEXT

#### Clifton & Lower Clifton

- 3.1 Historically, the study area lies within the Manor of Clifton. A recent account Clifton is given by Donald Jones in his *History of Clifton* (1992), with a more specific account by James Russell (1999).
- 3.2 The history of the Clifton area can be traced back to prehistoric times and for which visible evidence remains in the present landscape, including Clifton Down Camp. Along with Stokeleigh Camp and Burwalls (situated on the western side of the Avon Gorge), Clifton Down Camp appears to have served as the focus of human activity since the Iron Age.
- 3.3 Some 3 km to the north-east of Clifton Camp (see § 3.1.2) lies the Roman town of Sea Mills (*Portus Abonae*) (Bennett 1985). During Roman times, a major road connected that latter town with Bath (*Aquae Sulis*) (see Russell and Williams 1984).
- 3.4 The name 'Clifton' first appears in Domesday (1086):

Roger son of Ralph holds a manor named Clifton which Saewin, the reeve of Bristol, held from King Edward; he could go with this land where he would, and gave no revenue whatever for it. 3 hides. In lordship 3 ploughs; 6 villagers and 6 smallholders with 2 ploughs. 3 slaves; meadow, 8 acres. The value was 100s; now 60s (Moore 1982).
- 3.5 The Manor appears to have followed the boundaries set out in land grants of the Saxon period. A Charter of 883 describes the boundaries with Clifton defined to the north and east by the tithing of Stoke Bishop. During the reign of Edward the Confessor (reigned 1042-1066) the Manor was held from the King by Saewin who, after the Conquest (1066), was replaced by a Norman, Roger Fitz Ralph. Fitz Ralph was then succeeded by Roger de Clifton as holder of the Manor.
- 3.6 By the 15th century, Clifton had been divided into a 'greater manor' and smaller 'ecclesiastical manor'. The latter was created from the main estate in 1463 by Bishop Carpenter of Worcester, who gave it to the then re-founded College at Westbury-on-Trym. The manorial situation was further complicated by the fact that that Manor had been split in three during the 14th century.
- 3.7 In 1676, the Society of Merchant Venturers purchased three-quarters of the Manor, which saw its various elements reunited. Clifton was annexed to the City of Bristol in 1836.
- 3.8 Clifton Down and Durdham Down escaped the enclosure measures of the 18th and 19th centuries and, since 1861 (*The Downs Bill* of 1861), have enjoyed protection as public open spaces. Note that the area of the Downs has also been the site of much industrial activity over the past centuries, including mining (lead and other non-ferrous metals) and quarrying (for sandstone and limestone), both of which have left their mark on the landscape. Clifton developed as a fashionable suburb of Bristol mainly in the 18th and 19th centuries, not least in view of the salubrious environment offered.
- 3.9 According to Mills (1991), the name 'Clifton' refers to a 'farmstead on or near a cliff or bank' (see also Ekwall 1960; Watts 2004).



- 3.10 Clifton Library itself is a Grade II Listed Building (LBS No: 380217). The building was founded in 1852 and was designed by Charles Underwood, it was rebuilt in 1877 by Charles Hansom with additions during 1891 by WT Bernard. The Italianate building is described as of “U-shaped, double depth plan” and was originally designed as a school building before becoming a Library in the 1960s. The building is 2 storeys high (plus basement) and was provided with decorative facades. The interior of the building has been described as “largely rebuilt” but retains stone dogleg stairs with wrought iron railings in the right-hand wing and roof trusses with “chamfered queen posts”.
- 3.11 Subsidiary features include the cast iron gates and railings with “Fleur-de-lys Heads” closing the small forecourt of the building. Of historic interest is the fact that the building is one of only a few pre-Board schools in Bristol.

### **Known Archaeology**

- 3.12 No HER entries fall within the study area itself, and no entries deemed to be of major archaeological significance fall in the immediate vicinity of the study area.
- 3.13 The plan devised by James Russell (Russell 1999) depicts the general layout of the parish of Clifton, including the location of major prehistoric, Roman and medieval features. Prehistoric and Roman activity is in evidence at Clifton Camp approximately 1 km to the west. The study area lies within the core area of medieval Clifton, which includes the church. No features are, however, depicted in close proximity of the study area.
- 3.14 Two English Civil War (AD 1642-1653) fortifications are known in the area, that at Brandon Hill to the east, the other at St Michael's Hill (The Royal Fort) to the north-east of the study area.
- 3.15 No evidence has been found on the study area for any of the following:
- a. Scheduled monuments;
  - b. Important hedgerows;
  - c. Historic battlefields;
  - d. Registered parks or gardens;
  - e. Burial grounds (in use or disused).
- 3.16 The extant built environment of the study area essentially comprises the following:
- a. Post medieval buildings (some listed) and associated features (e.g. boundary walls and railings) including the Library building railings and gates.

## 4. BUILDING RECORDING

### General

4.1 The building as a whole was not recorded therefore, only those elements outlined for alteration in the Listed Building Consent were recorded during this project. (**Figs 1 - 3 & Cover Plate**).

4.2 The recording was undertaken in relation to the two areas of alteration to be undertaken:

(i) Internal Partition (**Fig. 2, Plates 1- 6**);

(ii) Fire Exit (**Fig. 2, Plate 7**)

4.3 At the time the recording was undertaken, it was proposed to reposition an existing partition between two classrooms on the first floor of the library and alter the existing fire exit step to form a shallow ramp for the access/egress of wheelchairs.

### The Internal Partition (**Figs. 2 & 3, Plates 1 – 6**)

4.4 The internal partition between classrooms 1 & 2 (**Figs 2 & 3**) comprised 3 sections. The lowest section comprised 7 timber panels in a space equating to 8 panel lengths. The panels were connected by a framework of shared wooden spars. In place of the second panel was the lower portion of a wooden door, which utilised the adjacent panel framework to mount hinges on the north side of the doorway.

4.5 The middle section of the structure comprised 2 rows of 8 no., 6-panelled, single glazed windows with wooden frames. The second window of the lower row was left out for the positioning of the door as above.

4.6 At each end of the partition was a window opening in the walls of the building and the partition had been extended into both by the addition of two unevenly sized, wooden framed windows. The upper part of the windows conformed to the height of the upper of the two rows of glazing in the main body of the partition but the lower pane was shorter to correspond with the different size of the window opening compared to the partition panels. Both of these panels will be wholly removed when the partition is repositioned, away from the window openings, during this work.

4.7 Finally the upper part of the partition comprised simple wooden panelling with a trapezoidal shape to the upper edge to conform to the ceiling. Both sides of the partition were identical in form as far as could be seen except for the addition in room 1, of 2 ferrous metal apparatus (**Plate 5**) for opening some of the upper row of windows. Only the 2nd & 3rd and 6th & 7th of the 8 panels could be opened in this way.

4.8 The device comprised a screw threaded iron bar fitted into a socketed base. The turning of a handle in the base raised or lowered the rod, which passed through a simple ring support to a wall mounted pivot that swung the window open or closed.

### Fire Exit (**Fig. 2, Plate 7**)

4.9 The opening itself was a standard rectangular wooden framed door opening from a stairwell into the small forecourt at the front of the Clifton Library.

4.10 The affected elements of the fire exit comprised two modern concrete steps, which the author photographed internally and externally. The steps themselves are of no archaeological or historic interest.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 The partition was recorded by digital photograph and additional side panels within window openings on either side were added to the record. These additional side panels are not due to be retained as the new positioning of the partition – away from the window bay negates the need for them. Details of ferrous metal fittings for opening selected glass panels in the partition were also added to the record. No further drawings of the partition were considered necessary though the existing drawings were annotated to show the newly recorded elements.
- 5.2 The fire exit doorway and threshold were photographed but no further recording was deemed necessary, the steps to be altered being of solely modern concrete.

## 6. REFERENCES & WORKS CONSULTED

### Texts

BaRAS, 2010. *Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for a Recording Programme at Clifton Library, Princess Victoria Street, Clifton, Bristol (NGR ST 57045 73025) as Archaeological Mitigation for Repairs and Alterations to the Premises*. WSI prepared by Bristol & Region Archaeological Services, October 2010.

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### Architectural/Engineering Drawings

2008 Plans and sections of First floor Glazed Timber Partition, Ground Floor Plan & First Floor Plan. Vista Architecture Drawing No. 04, Job No. B15179.

## 7. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The above report was compiled by Raymond K Ducker and produced by Ann Linge of Bristol and Region Archaeological Services.

The project was managed by John Bryant, MfA of BaRAS.

## **APPENDIX 1: Policy Statement**

This report is the result of work carried out in the light of national and local authority policies.

### **NATIONAL POLICIES**

Statutory protection for archaeology is enshrined in the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979), amended by the National Heritage Act, 1983. Nationally important sites are listed in the Schedule of Ancient Monuments (SAM). Scheduled Monument consent is required for any work that would affect a SAM.

### **GOVERNMENT POLICY GUIDANCE**

Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment (1994) and Planning Policy Guidance Note 16: Archaeology and Planning (1990) have been replaced (23 March 2010) by Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (2010) which sets out the Government's national policies on conservation of the historic environment. Those parts of the historic environment that have significance because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest are called heritage assets.

Of particular relevance within the Planning Policy Statement are:

#### **Policy HE6: Information Requirements for Applications for Consent Affecting Heritage Assets**

HE6.1 Local planning authorities should require an applicant to provide a description of the significance of the heritage assets affected and the contribution of their setting to that significance. The level of detail should be proportionate to the importance of the heritage asset and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on the significance of the heritage asset. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets themselves should have been assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary given the application's impact. Where an application site includes, or is considered to have the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where desk-based research is insufficient to properly assess the interest, a field evaluation.

#### **Policy HE9: Additional Policy Principles Guiding the Consideration of Applications for Consent Relating to Designated Heritage Assets**

HE9.1 There should be a presumption in favour of the conservation of designated heritage assets and the more significant the designated heritage asset, the greater the presumption in favour of its conservation should be. Once lost, heritage assets cannot be replaced and their loss has a cultural, environmental, economic and social impact. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. Loss affecting any designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of a grade II listed building, park or garden should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, including scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, battlefields, grade I or II\* listed buildings and grade I and II\* registered parks and gardens, World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.

#### **Policy HE12: Policy Principles Guiding the Recording of Information Related to Heritage Assets**

HE12.3 Where the loss of the whole or a material part of a heritage asset's significance is justified, local planning authorities should require the developer to record and advance understanding of the significance of the heritage asset before it is lost, using planning conditions or obligations as appropriate. The extent of the requirement should be proportionate to the nature and level of the asset's significance. Developers should publish this evidence and deposit copies of the reports with the relevant historic environment record. Local planning authorities should require any archive generated to be deposited with a local museum or other public depository willing to receive it. Local planning authorities should impose planning conditions or obligations to ensure such work is carried out in a timely manner and that the completion of the exercise is properly secured.

### **DISTRICT POLICY**

Bristol City Council Supplementary Planning Document (2006) states (policy SPD No.7, p4):

- (i) There will be a presumption in favour of preserving any archaeological features or sites of national importance, whether scheduled or not.
- (ii) Development which could adversely affect sites, structures, landscapes or buildings of archaeological interest and their settings will require an assessment of the archaeological resource through a desktop study, and where appropriate a field evaluation. Where there is evidence of archaeological remains, development will not be permitted except where it can be demonstrated that the archaeological features of the site will be satisfactorily preserved in situ, or a suitable strategy has been put forward to mitigate the impact of development proposals upon important archaeological remains and their settings; or, if this is not possible and the sites are not scheduled or of national importance, provision for adequately recording the site prior to destruction is made, preferably by negotiating a planning agreement to ensure that access, time and financial resources are available to allow essential recording and publication to take place.

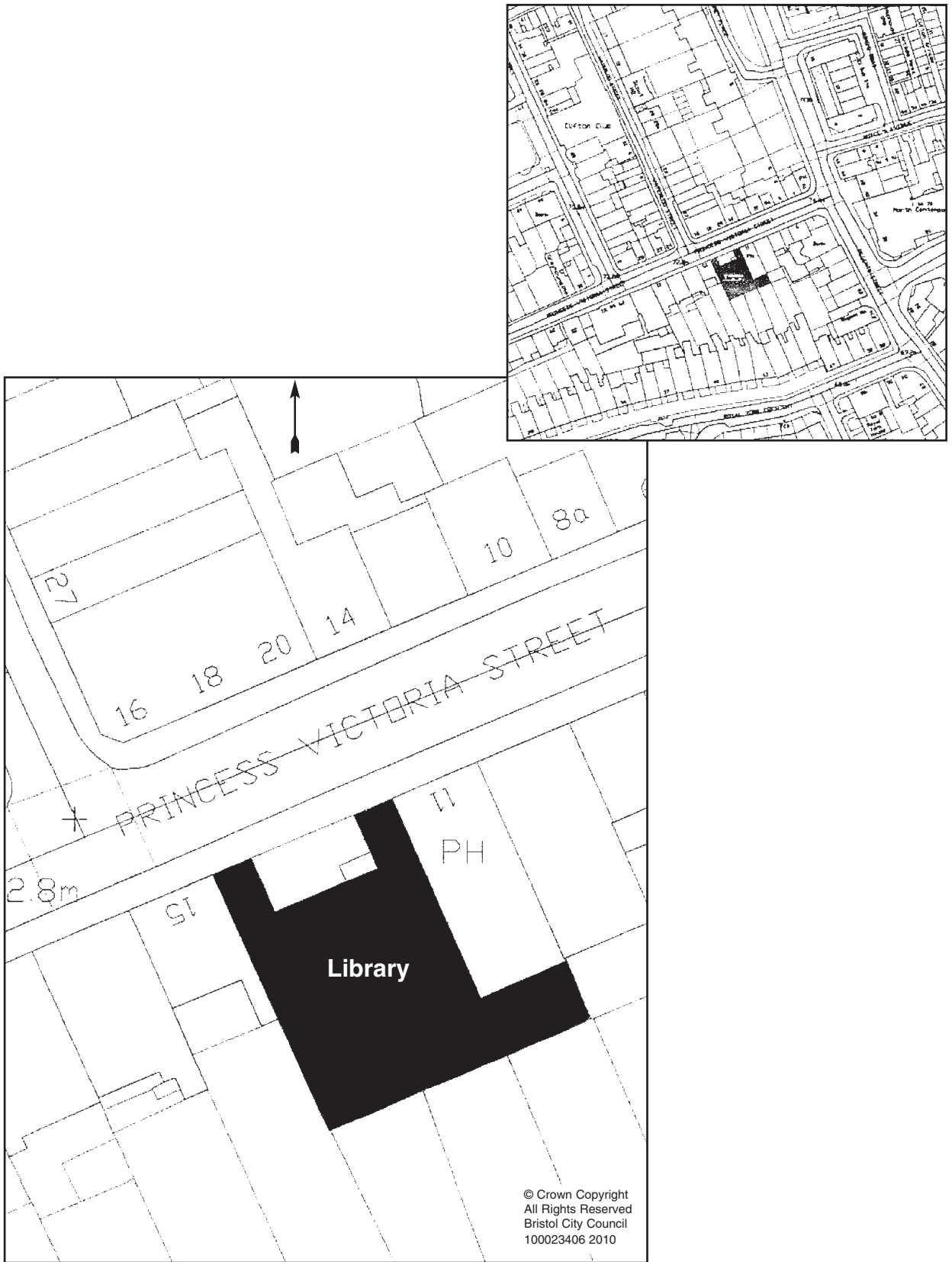


Fig.1 Site location plan (not to scale)



Fig.2 General plan of the library indicating the location of the proposed alterations and plate directions in red



Fig.3 Amended south-west facing elevation drawing of the removed partition wall



Plate 1  
Oblique view of the partition  
(Classroom 1) looking east,  
scale 2 x 0.5m



Plate 2  
Oblique view of the par-  
tition (Classroom 1)  
looking north-east, 2 x  
0.5m scales



Plate 3 Detail of the north-west end of the partition built into a window bay (Classroom 1) looking east, 2 x 0.5m scales



Plate 4 Detail of the doorway and adjacent panels with door (Classroom 1) looking east-north-east, 2 x 0.5m scales





Plate 5  
Overall view of partition in  
Classroom 2, looking  
south-south-west, 0.5m  
scale



Plate 6  
Detail of device for  
opening upper window  
panes (Classroom 1)  
looking east-north-east,  
0.5m scale



Plate 7  
Door to courtyard  
viewed from outside,  
showing steps to be  
altered to form a ramp,  
looking west-south-  
west, 0.5m scale