



## Thomas's Richmond Hill

Pre-Application Planning advice  
Supplementary Report

1714-IID-RP-A-006-P03

18<sup>th</sup> December 2023



## Introduction

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At the meeting on 1st November 2023, LBRuT Planning and Conservation Officers questioned the need to alter the existing 2nd floor layout from existing cellular bedrooms (typically 11m<sup>2</sup> each) either side of a central corridor to new classroom spaces (of 40-50m<sup>2</sup> each to accommodate up to 22 pupils) accessed from a new corridor to the west of the Main Building.

IID explained that the number of proposed classroom spaces had been assessed by reference to the Department for Education Building Bulletin (BB103) prescribing minimum areas of accommodation required for a Senior School + Sixth Form with a total number of 630 students and a maximum class size of 22 pupils. The brief for a total of 28 general teaching classrooms (5 of which can be located in the Sir Cyril Taylor Library building) has been reinforced by the ongoing discussions with each of the teaching departments at Thomas's during design development. An area diagram is provided on page 10 of this report.

The provision of 6 no. classrooms at the 2nd floor level is key to the organisation of the proposed school and the existing 2nd floor (former bedroom) layout is not suited to meet this required provision.

IID have subsequently prepared drawings to demonstrate the following:

1. The restrictions that the existing 2nd floor layout would impose if the central corridor arrangement was retained and classrooms were created either side by removing partitions between the existing rooms.
2. Possible alternative locations for new classrooms in the event that the existing 2nd floor layout was retained.

The drawings illustrating Point 1 demonstrate that it would only be possible to create poorly proportioned classrooms (too long and thin) from the existing layout. These rooms cannot satisfactorily accommodate class sizes of 22 pupils.

The drawings illustrating Point 2 reveal a number of significant compromises, namely:

- a. The Lower Ground Floor level offers little potential to accommodate general teaching classrooms. The Lower Ground Floor level suffers from relatively low levels of daylight and the accommodation which can be provided will require mechanical ventilation. This level is best suited for specialist music teaching, gym and changing facilities.
- b. Creation of 2 no. new classrooms within the Edward Maufe extension at Ground Floor level – an area of heritage significance which is untouched and used for the Headteacher and associated office if the second floor can be altered. The relocation of the Headteacher's team to 2nd floor level would leave them remote from visitors and the day to day operation of the school.
- c. Creation of a classroom where the Medical/Treatment Room facilities are currently proposed at Ground Floor level of the Main Building. The Medical/Treatment Rooms are ideally located in their proposed location adjacent to the principal Admin Office and their relocation will compromise accessibility and supervision.
- d. Provision of a classroom within the Lycett Room to the western side of the Ground Floor level corridor – the Pre-App proposals allow for the Lycett Room to be a hybrid/overspill Dining Area, the provision of which, if aligned with the addition of dining in the adjoining class space, could enable the removal the existing 1st floor Dining Mezzanine. An opportunity exists here to return the Ground Floor Dining Area to its original double height grandeur following removal of the more unfortunate late 20th Century mezzanine and connecting stair interventions.
- e. It is only possible to provide four of the six classrooms required from the alternative proposals and so a fundamental shortfall remains.

## HERITAGE BENEFITS

The following heritage benefits can be delivered to help outweigh the harm created by the proposed alterations to layout at 2nd floor level.

- Removal of the mezzanine floor to the south of the main entrance (i.e. existing dining areas), thereby reinstating the full heights of the ceilings of these rooms and facilitating a better appreciation of their original architectural features;
- Removal of the modern boxing-in around the chimney breasts in the existing dining room and café at ground floor level – either revealing the original fire surrounds, or providing new historically correct fire surrounds;
- Removal of the glazed partitioning between the rooms at ground floor level to the north of the main entrance, thereby reinstating the historic form and appearance of that room;
- Removal of the modern walling which forms the security office within the entrance hall, thereby reinstating the former 1930s appearance of the stairs;
- Removal of glazed partitions around the front entrance, reinstating the original form and appearance of the entrance hall;
- Better revealing the windows at the ends of the wings at second floor level, so that they are located within new classrooms instead of forming end-stops to the corridors.
- Removal of the spiral staircase which serves the mezzanine floor to the north of the ground floor to reveal the fire place.

## Proposed Scheme

# Thomas's College

## Proposed Lower Ground Floor Main Building

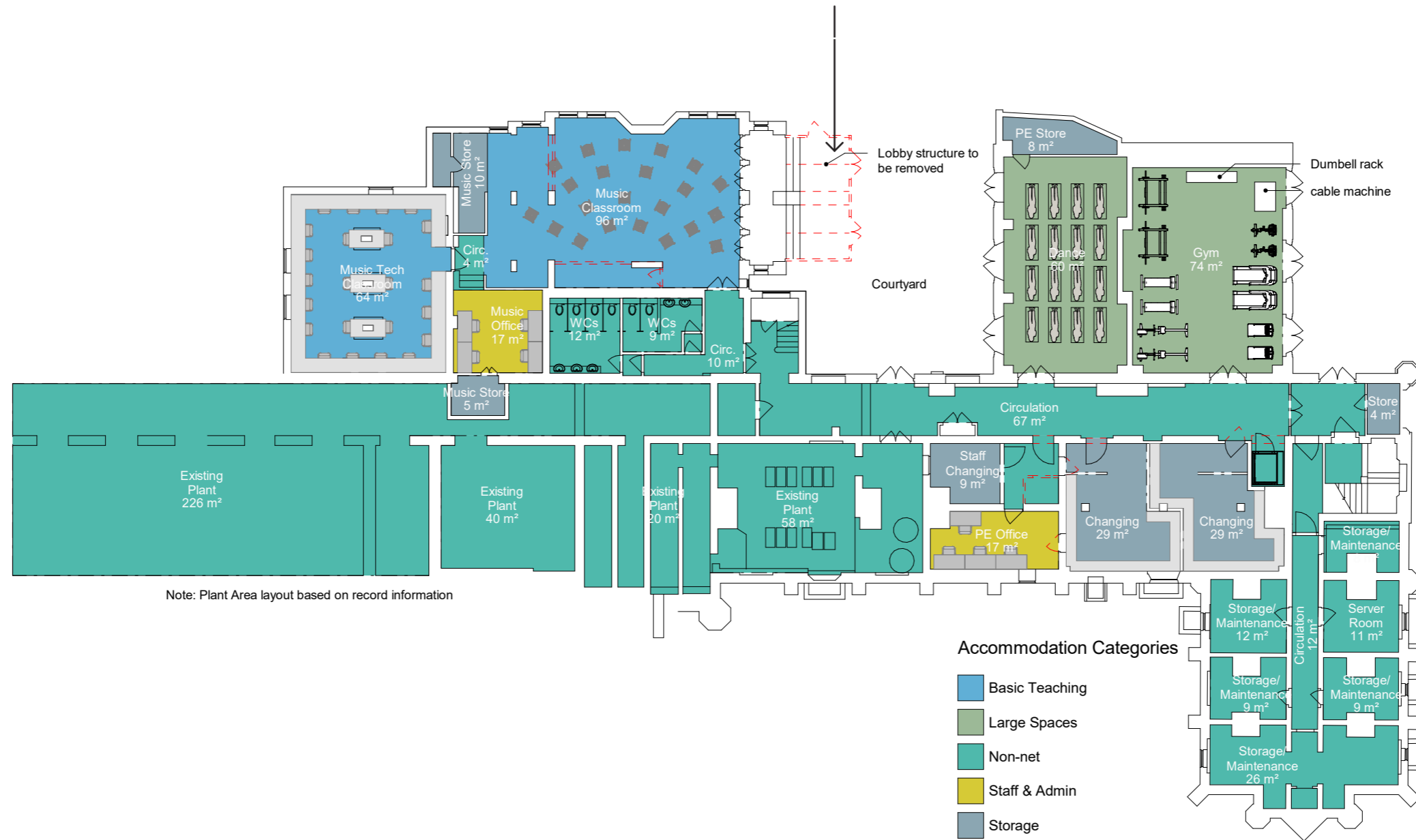
1714 IID XX XX DR A-0107 P10

Scale: 1 : 250 at A3

27.11.23

### LOBBY REMOVED

Removal of the low grade, polycarbonate roofed lobby area which was added to the 1980s extension at the rear to open up the courtyard



Key:

**RED TEXT** - Heritage Benefit

**GREEN TEXT** - Design Benefit



# Thomas's College

## Proposed Ground Floor Main Building

1714 IID XX XX DR A-0108 P10

Scale: 1 : 250 at A3

27.11.23

**2** Proposed Ground Floor Plan - LHS  
1 : 250

### SECURITY OFFICE REMOVED

Removal of the modern walling which forms the security office within the entrance hall, thereby reinstating the former 1930s appearance of the stairs.

### OPENING UP THE ROOM

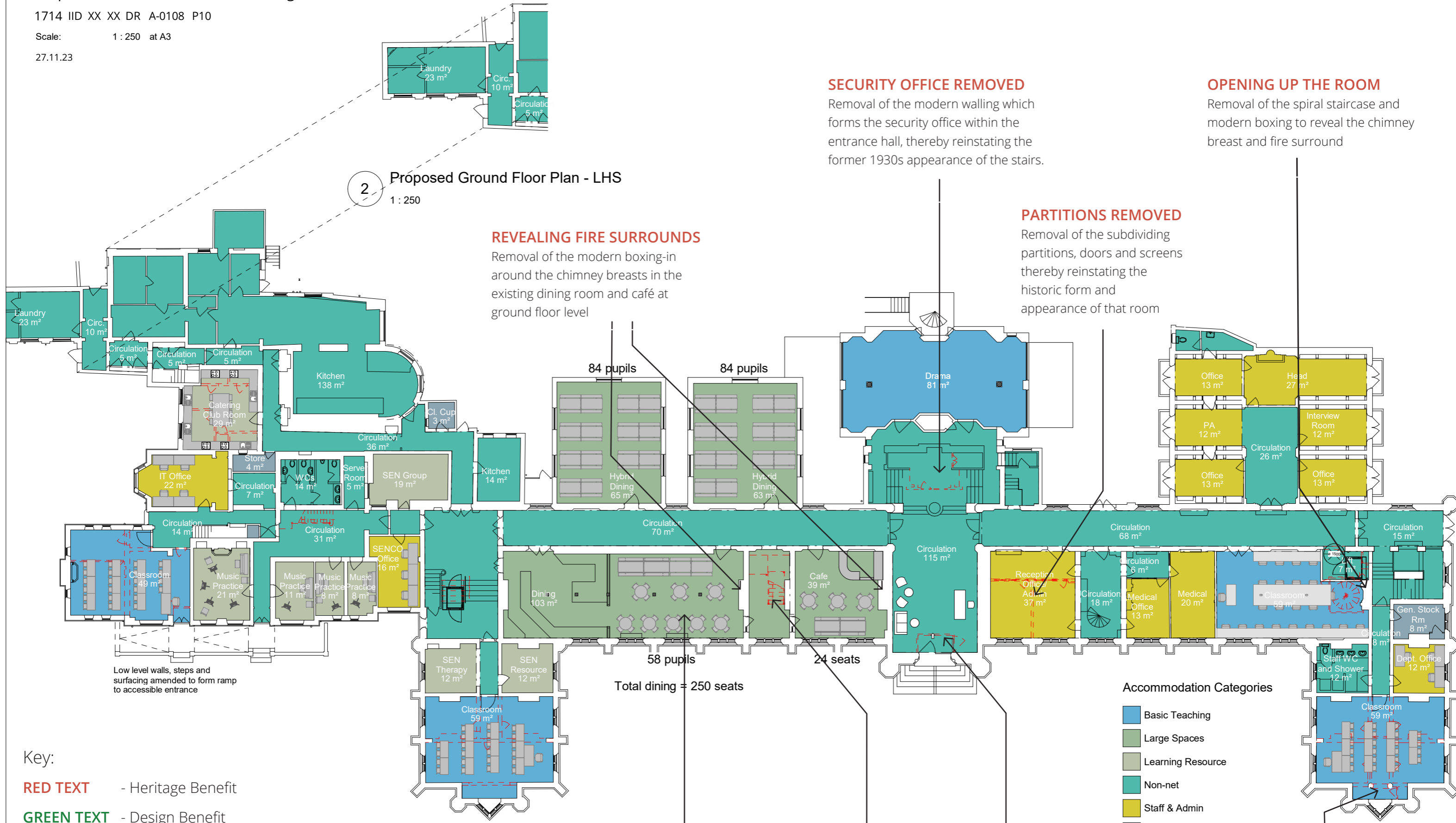
Removal of the spiral staircase and modern boxing to reveal the chimney breast and fire surround

### REVEALING FIRE SURROUNDS

Removal of the modern boxing-in around the chimney breasts in the existing dining room and café at ground floor level

### PARTITIONS REMOVED

Removal of the subdividing partitions, doors and screens thereby reinstating the historic form and appearance of that room



Low level walls, steps and surfacing amended to form ramp to accessible entrance

Key:  
**RED TEXT** - Heritage Benefit  
**GREEN TEXT** - Design Benefit

- Accommodation Categories**
- Basic Teaching
  - Large Spaces
  - Learning Resource
  - Non-net
  - Staff & Admin
  - Storage

### MEZZANINE REMOVED

With the addition of a Hybrid Dining room opposite, the existing 1st floor Dining Mezzanine and staircase can be removed.

### STAIR REMOVED

To reinstate the room to its original configuration

### DRAUGHT LOBBY REMOVED

Reinstating the original form and appearance of the entrance hall

### OPENING UP THE WINGS

revealing the windows at the ends of the wings, so that they are located within new classrooms instead of forming end-stops to the corridors

# Thomas's College

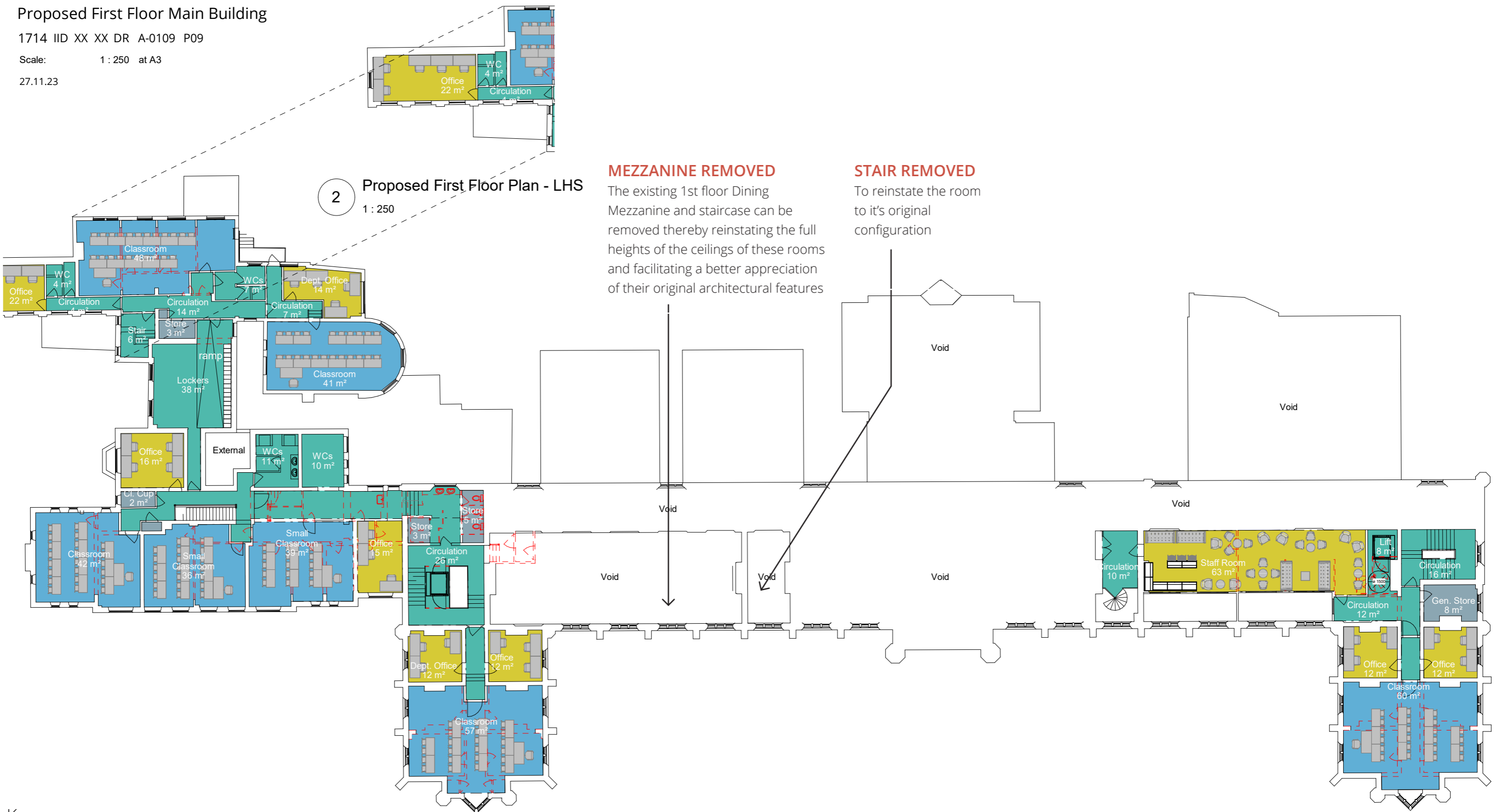
## Proposed First Floor Main Building

1714 IID XX XX DR A-0109 P09

Scale: 1 : 250 at A3

27.11.23

**2 Proposed First Floor Plan - LHS**  
1 : 250



**MEZZANINE REMOVED**  
The existing 1st floor Dining Mezzanine and staircase can be removed thereby reinstating the full heights of the ceilings of these rooms and facilitating a better appreciation of their original architectural features

**STAIR REMOVED**  
To reinstate the room to it's original configuration

Key:  
**RED TEXT** - Heritage Benefit  
**GREEN TEXT** - Design Benefit

**Accommodation Categories**

- Basic Teaching
- Non-net
- Staff & Admin
- Storage



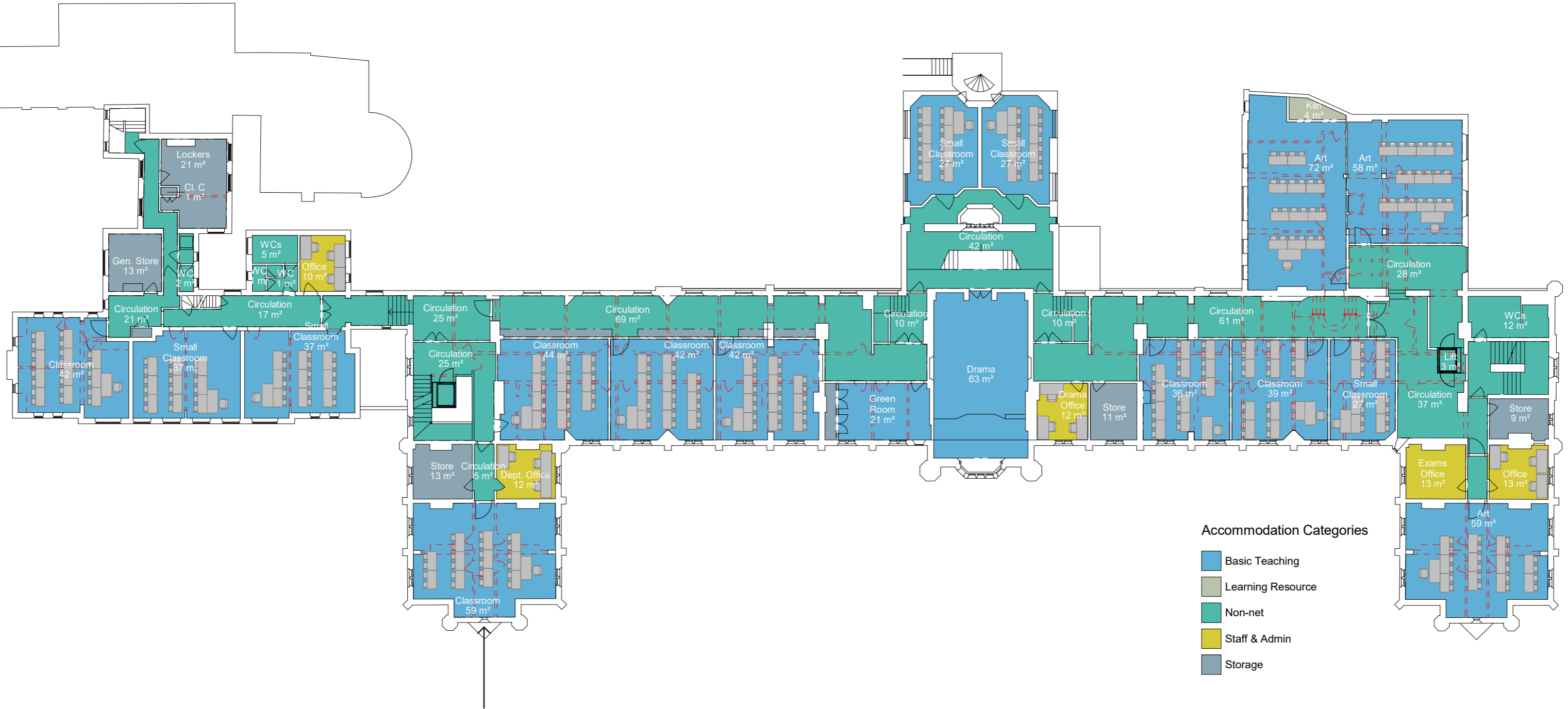
# Thomas's College

## Proposed Second Floor Main Building

1714 IID XX XX DR A-0110 P09

Scale: 1 : 250 at A3

27.11.23



**Accommodation Categories**

- Basic Teaching
- Learning Resource
- Non-net
- Staff & Admin
- Storage

Key:

**RED TEXT** - Heritage Benefit

**GREEN TEXT** - Design Benefit

**OPENING UP THE WINGS**  
 revealing the windows at the ends of the wings at second floor level, so that they are located within new classrooms instead of forming end-stops to the corridors

# Thomas's College

## Proposed Third and Fourth Floor Main Building

1714 IID XX XX DR A-0111 P09

Scale: 1 : 250 at A3

27.11.23

### COMMON ROOM

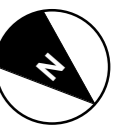
Sited in the 1980s extension to reduce negative impact on the original building



Key:

**RED TEXT** - Heritage Benefit

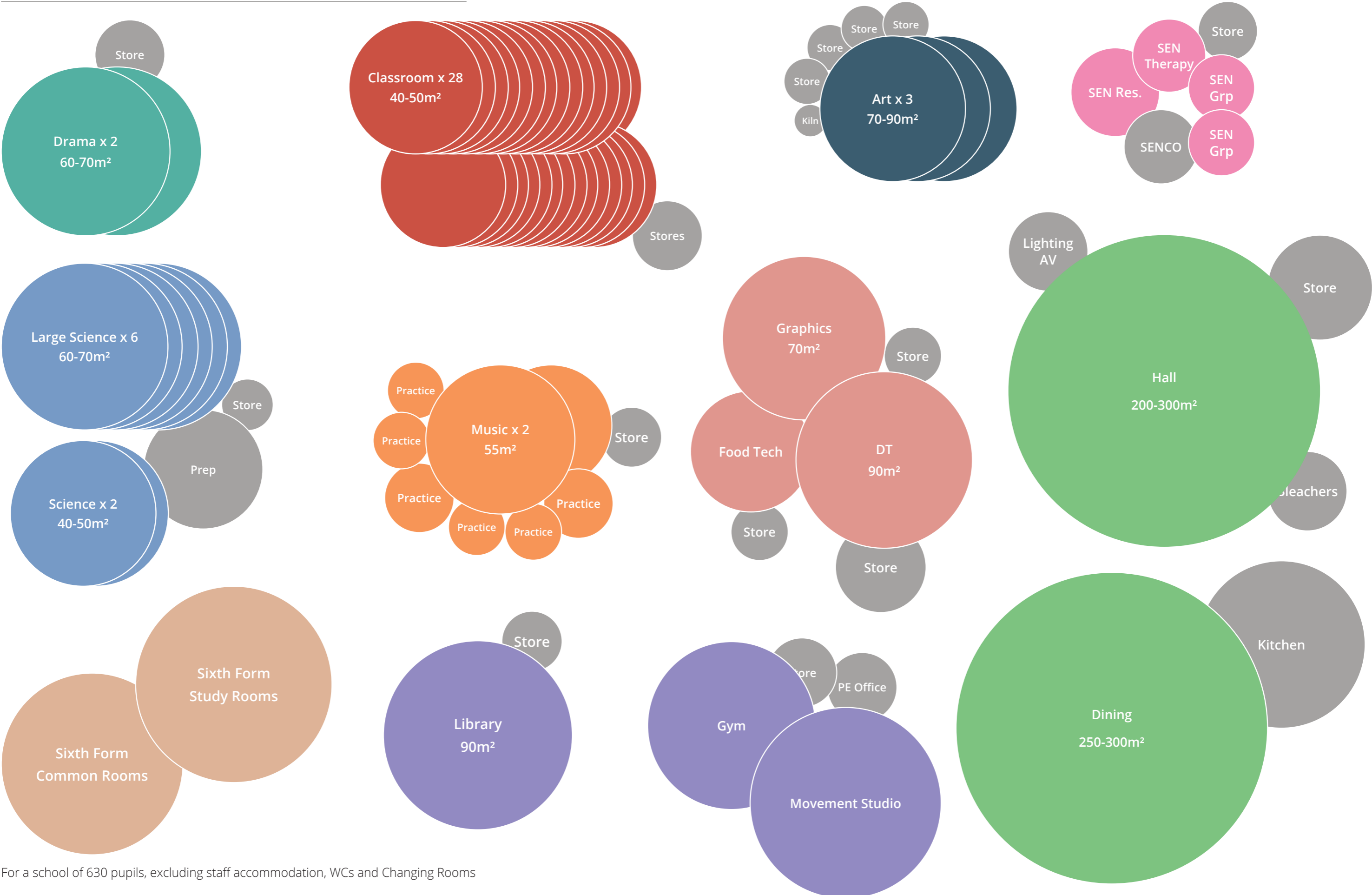
**GREEN TEXT** - Design Benefit





## Justification for Second Floor Alterations

Accommodation Required



For a school of 630 pupils, excluding staff accommodation, WCs and Changing Rooms

## Alternative Classroom Locations

To make best use of the space available and to avoid undue change to the Listed Building, the largest teaching spaces have been located in the Cyril Taylor library building and Longley House. These buildings provides all of the DT and Science classrooms and five general teaching classrooms, leaving 23 general teaching classrooms, Music, Drama, PE and Art to be located in the Listed Building.

The Red House becomes a Sixth Form Centre with common rooms and study space. Orchard House has to remain as staff housing to comply with a historic planning condition, Upper and Lower Cottage and Oak Tree House are security and estates team accommodation.

### The Edward Maufe Library

If classrooms are not provided at second floor, 2 no. new classrooms would need to be created within the Edward Maufe Library extension. The features, vaulted ceilings and layout of this area have heritage significance which would be lost in this arrangement.



Proposed Layout - Ground floor plan extract 1:250 at A3



Alternative Ground floor plan extract 1:250 at A3



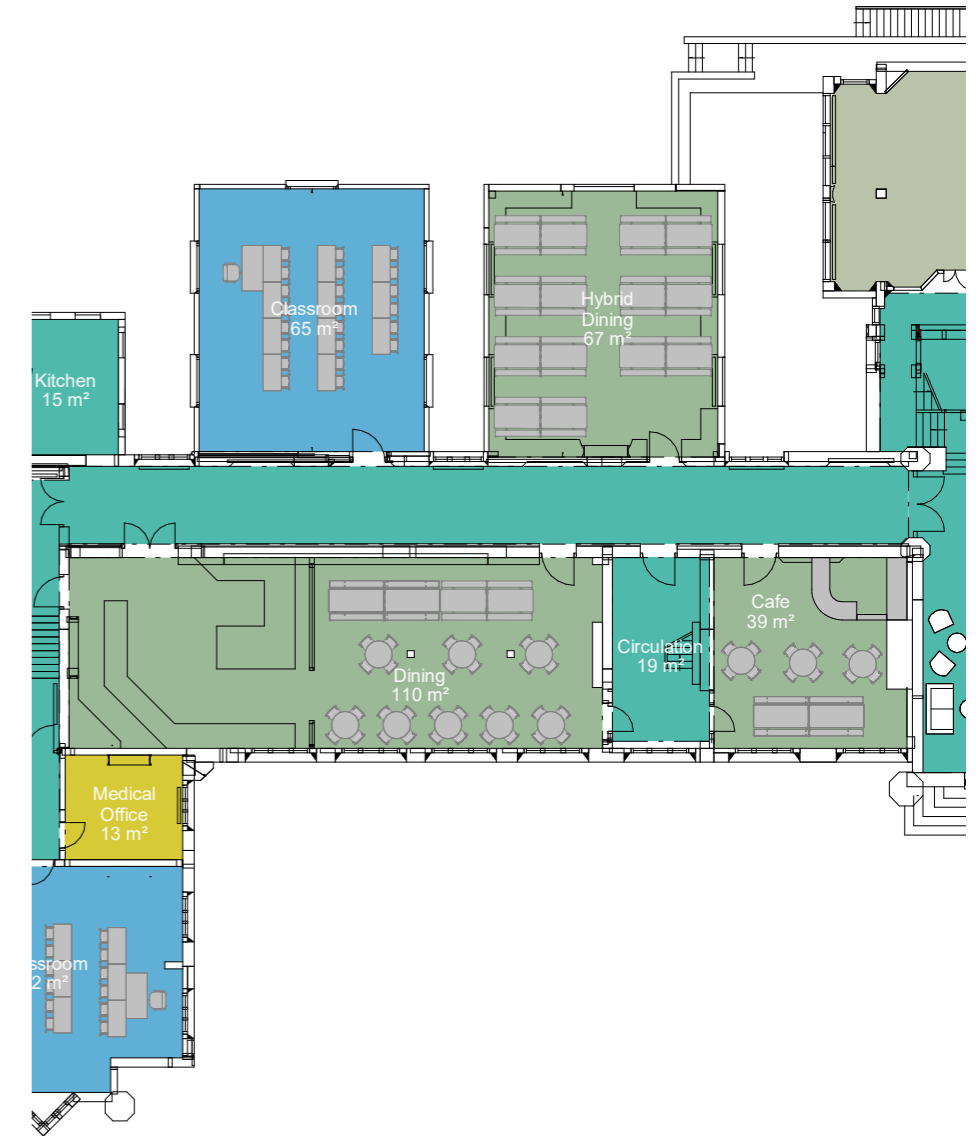
# Alternative Classroom Locations

## Dining

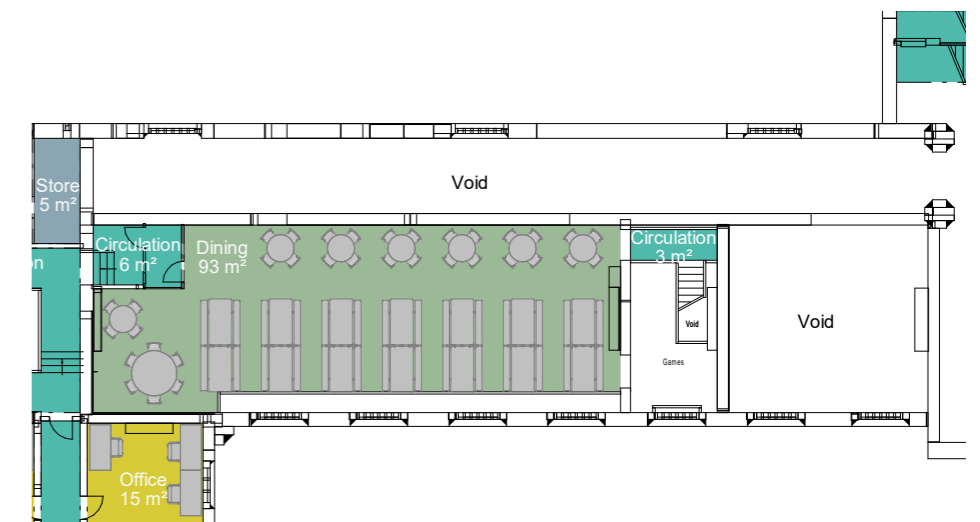
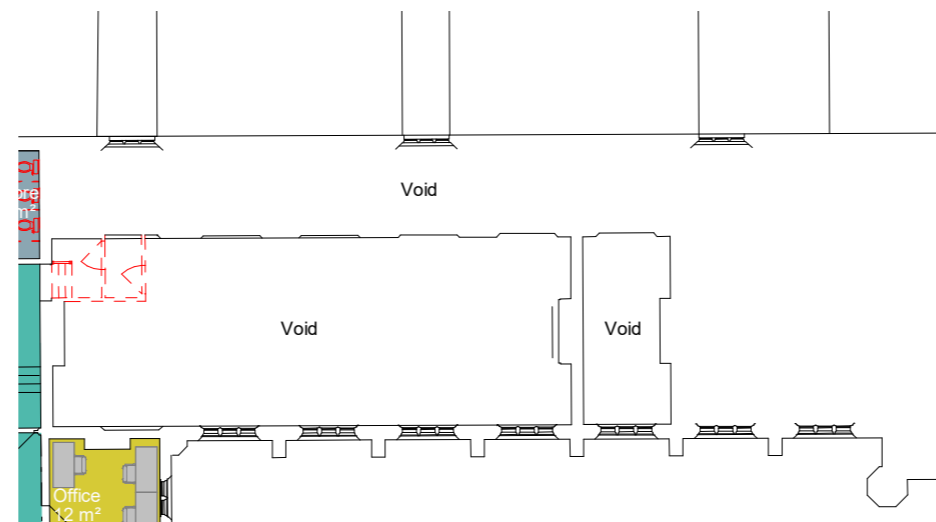
If classrooms are not provided at second floor one of the Hybrid Dining Rooms at ground floor would need to become a Classroom. As a result, the existing mezzanine dining room would need to remain.



Proposed Layout - Ground floor plan extract 1:250 at A3



Alternative Ground floor plan extract 1:250 at A3



# Alternative Classroom Locations

## Basement

Teaching classrooms cannot be accommodated at this level due to low levels of natural daylight.

The changing rooms are needed in this location, adjacent to the PE Office for supervision, the Gym, Dance Studio and external door for access to the games court. The rooms do not need daylight as they are used for short periods.



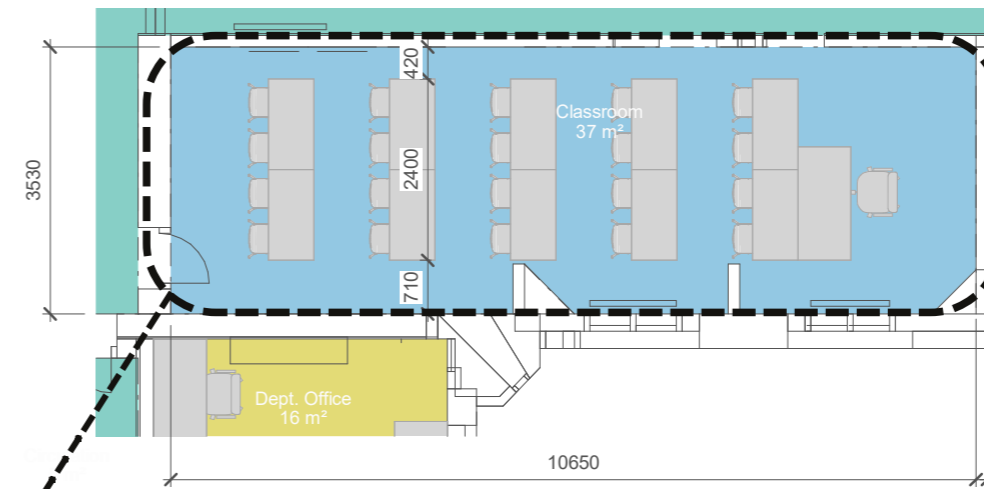
The existing fully functioning plant areas are required to be retained to serve the building and cannot be consolidated into a smaller area. These areas also suffer from very limited headroom no natural lighting and ventilation.

The existing rooms at the end of the wing at this level are in a state of disrepair and suffer from damp issues and low levels of natural daylight and ventilation. Accessibility is also limited due to existing service runs preventing use to provide teaching accommodation.

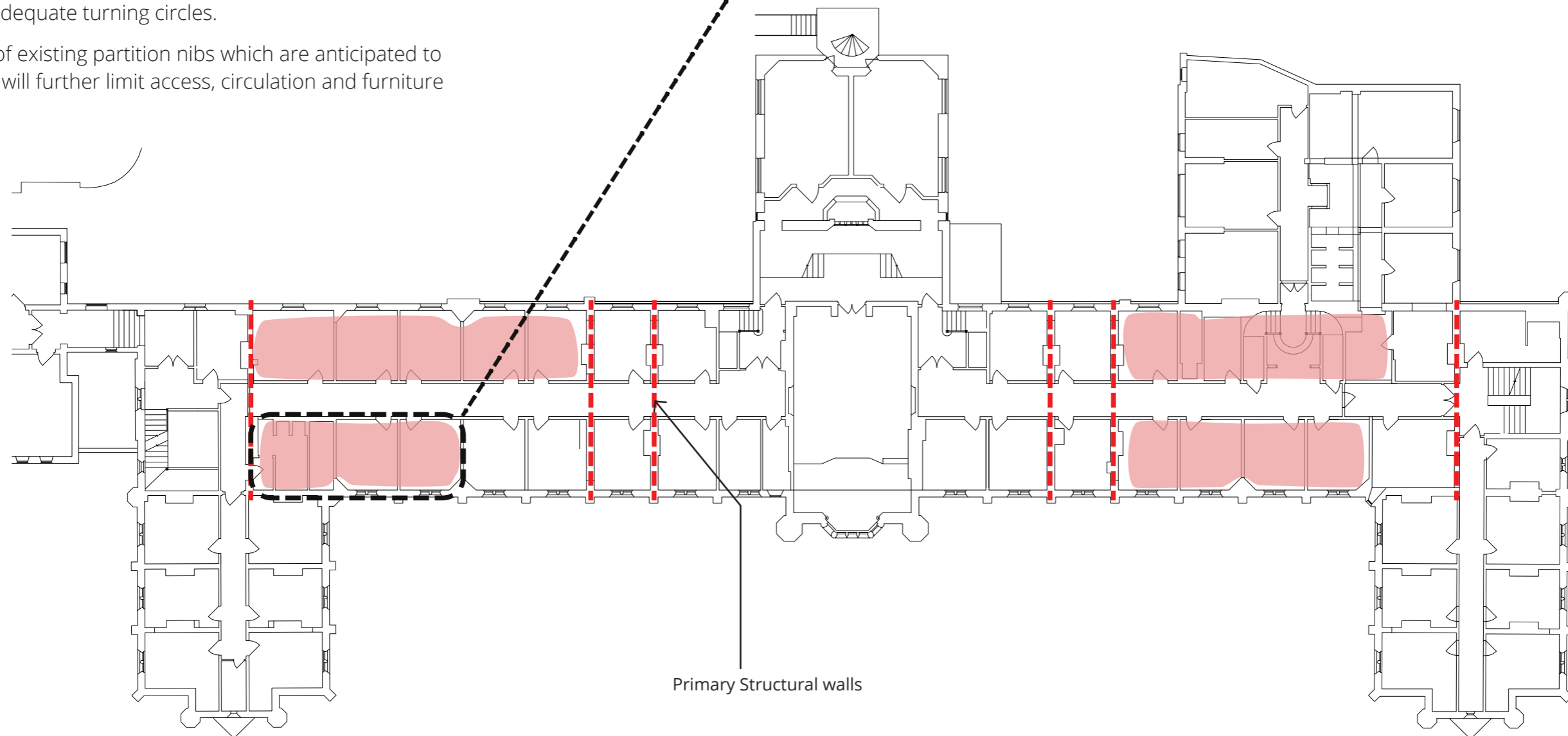
## Second Floor Layout with Central Corridor

Both the size and proportions of the classrooms are important. Whilst it is possible to knock two, three or even four bedrooms together on the second floor, the resulting room is too long and thin to be practical for use as a classroom.

- Rooms cannot accommodate the required class sizes shown in the preferred scheme.
- Pupils sat towards the rear space of the rooms are too remote and distant from the teaching screens and staff at 9.4 metres.
- Furniture layouts are prohibited by the narrow room proportions resulting in very little circulation space.
- Teaching classrooms will not be accessible due to the inability to provide adequate turning circles.
- The extent of existing partition nibs which are anticipated to be retained will further limit access, circulation and furniture layouts.



Second floor plan extract 1:100 at A3



Primary Structural walls



Second floor plan extract 1:250 at A3

## Comparative Scheme Classroom Schedules

## Conclusion

It is not possible to find sufficient classrooms of the required size and proportions without altering the second floor layout.

Alternative classroom locations in the Edward Maufe Library cause significant heritage harm and conversion of one of the proposed Hybrid Dining Rooms into a classroom prevents the removal of a harmful mezzanine at ground floor which would have significant heritage benefit.

Whilst the changes to the second floor deviate from the original layout, the existing accommodation is low grade and lacks character or features which would give it greater significance.

On balance we believe that altering the second floor layout to create five classrooms is the least harmful way of providing the accommodation required for a school of this size.

<b>Preferred Proposed Scheme</b>		
Level	Room Area	Pupil Occupancy
00 Ground Floor	56 m <sup>2</sup>	22
00 Ground Floor	62 m <sup>2</sup>	22
00 Ground Floor	52 m <sup>2</sup>	22
00 Ground Floor	49 m <sup>2</sup>	22
01 First Floor	62 m <sup>2</sup>	22
01 First Floor	63 m <sup>2</sup>	22
01 First Floor	39 m <sup>2</sup>	15
01 First Floor	42 m <sup>2</sup>	22
01 First Floor	41 m <sup>2</sup>	20
01 First Floor	51 m <sup>2</sup>	22
01 First Floor	49 m <sup>2</sup>	22
02 Second Floor	46 m <sup>2</sup>	22
02 Second Floor	38 m <sup>2</sup>	18
02 Second Floor	38 m <sup>2</sup>	18
02 Second Floor	46 m <sup>2</sup>	22
02 Second Floor	62 m <sup>2</sup>	22
02 Second Floor	40 m <sup>2</sup>	22
02 Second Floor	39 m <sup>2</sup>	22
02 Second Floor	41 m <sup>2</sup>	22
02 Second Floor	27 m <sup>2</sup>	16
02 Second Floor	27 m <sup>2</sup>	16
02 Second Floor	35 m <sup>2</sup>	22
02 Second Floor	32 m <sup>2</sup>	16

Total: 23

Total 23 Classrooms

<b>Alternative Option A</b>		
Level	Room Area	Pupil Occupancy
00 Ground Floor	57 m <sup>2</sup>	22
00 Ground Floor	62 m <sup>2</sup>	22
00 Ground Floor	48 m <sup>2</sup>	22
00 Ground Floor	65 m <sup>2</sup>	22
00 Ground Floor	49 m <sup>2</sup>	22
00 Ground Floor	41 m <sup>2</sup>	22
00 Ground Floor	39 m <sup>2</sup>	22
00 Ground Floor	38 m <sup>2</sup>	22
01 First Floor	62 m <sup>2</sup>	22
01 First Floor	63 m <sup>2</sup>	22
01 First Floor	42 m <sup>2</sup>	22
01 First Floor	41 m <sup>2</sup>	20
01 First Floor	39 m <sup>2</sup>	15
01 First Floor	50 m <sup>2</sup>	22
01 First Floor	49 m <sup>2</sup>	22
02 Second Floor	46 m <sup>2</sup>	22
02 Second Floor	38 m <sup>2</sup>	18
02 Second Floor	39 m <sup>2</sup>	18
02 Second Floor	62 m <sup>2</sup>	22
02 Second Floor	27 m <sup>2</sup>	16
02 Second Floor	28 m <sup>2</sup>	16

Total: 21

Total 21 Classrooms



