

Heritage Impact Statement

Victoria Hall, Glossop

External Works 1b

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Preliminary Information

This Heritage Impact Assessment has been instructed by High Peak Borough Council and produced by AHR Building Consultancy Ltd to consider the heritage values and significance of Victoria Hall in Glossop.

1.2 Designation

Victoria Hall and Public Library – Listed Building – Grade 2 – 1384300 – First Listed: 22 May 2000.

Historic Asset Description:

Concert hall and public library. 1887. Coursed rock-faced millstone grit with ashlar dressings and Welsh slate roofs with coped gables and kneelers. STYLE: Gothic Revival. PLAN: cruciform plan, the main range containing library to ground and hall to first floor, with entrances in east and west wings that to east with bell tower. EXTERIOR: 2 Storeys. Chamfered plinth and chamfered sill bands. Square east bell tower has steps and ramp to 4-centred arch doorway in moulded ashlar surround with double panel doors and overlight, flanked by single dated foundation stones, above 2 single light windows and rectangular plaque with coat-of-arms inscribed: - 'Aldermen and Burgesses of the Borough/ Virtus, Veritas et Libertas.' Above again single pointed arch bell opening to each face with tracery and louvres. Topped quatrefoil parapet, projecting corner pinnacles with ball finials and square spire with finial and lucarnes. Main north front has 5 window canted apsidal end with 4 window sides, divided by single storey pilasters topped with ball finials. Blind quatrefoil panels between floors, topped with blind arcaded and coped parapet. Side windows single light, apsidal windows paired in chamfered surrounds with dividing mullion. Central bay topped by pedimented gable with ball finial and escutcheon inscribed: - 'Public Library Glossop' To west entrance to Victoria Hall similar to east entrance with 2 similar windows above topped with gable. Remaining elevations with similar detailing, basement level apparent to rear south facade. INTERIOR: has main entrance hall with glazed tiles bearing heraldic motif and inscription. Tower contains staircase to first floor hall. Opposing entrance from west with wooden staircase. Ground floor library retains moulded architraves to panelled doors and engaged pilasters support encased wide beams. Plastered and painted. Built to commemorate Queen Victoria's Jubilee, donated by H Rhodes and Capt Partington, foundation stones laid 30 July 1887.

1.3 Setting

Victoria Hall
Talbot Street
Glossop
High Peak
Derbyshire
SK13 7DQ

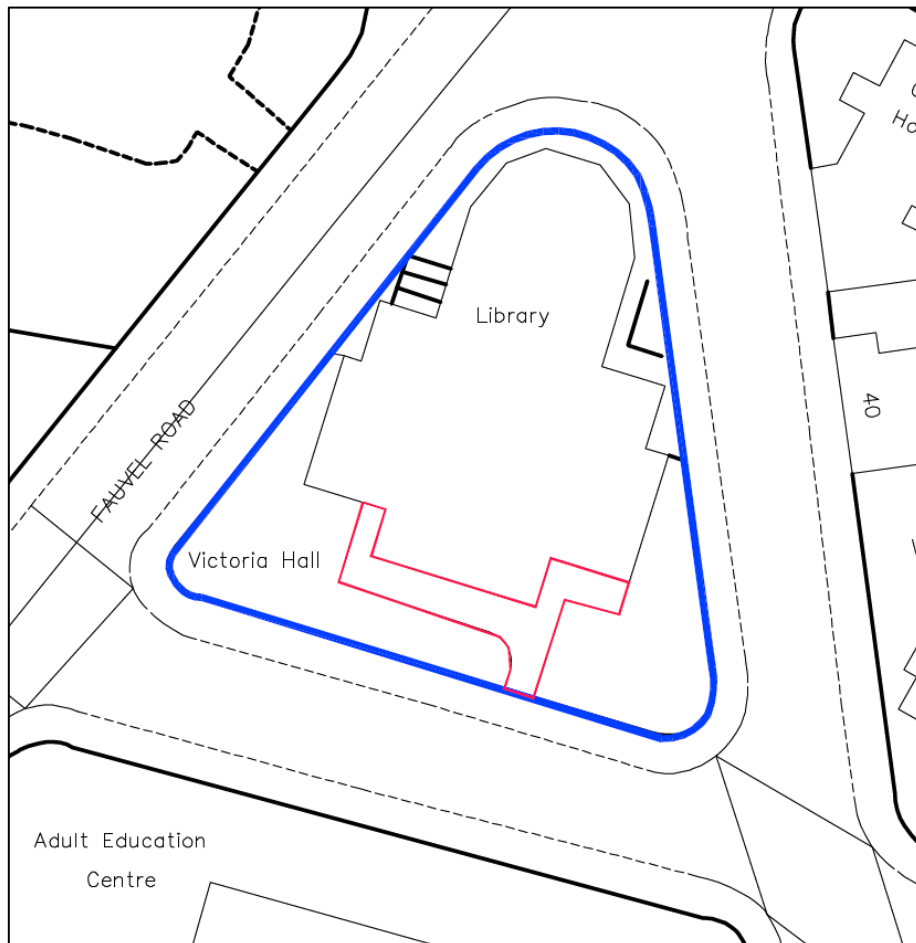


Figure 1 - Location Plan

Blue line denotes the site boundary

Red line denotes the works area

1.3 Methodology

A site visit and brief local heritage search were carried out to determine the building's significance and its association with other buildings in the Glossop area. The inspection involved a limited initial appraisal of the building and its fabric for historical evidence of the building's date and development. The material collected form the basis of this report.

2.0 Historic Background

2.1 History of Glossop

Glossop is a market town in the Borough of High Peak, Derbyshire, England, 15 miles (24 km) east of Manchester, 24 miles (39 km) north-west of Sheffield and 32 miles (51 km) north of the county town, Matlock. Derbyshire borders with Cheshire, Greater Manchester, South Yorkshire and West Yorkshire. It is between 150 and 300 metres (492 and 984 ft) above mean sea level and is bounded by the Peak District National Park to the south, east and north.

Historically, the name Glossop refers to the small hamlet that gave its name to an ancient parish recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086, and then the manor given by William I of England to William Peverel. A municipal borough was created in 1866, and the unparished urban area within two local government wards. The area now known as Glossop approximates to the villages that used to be called Glossopdale, on the lands of the Duke of Norfolk. Originally a centre of wool processing, Glossop rapidly expanded in the late 18th century when it specialised in the production and printing of calico, a coarse cotton, and became a mill town with many chapels and churches, its fortunes tied to the cotton industry.

Architecturally, the area is dominated by buildings constructed of the local sandstone, a number of which, including Glossop Gasworks, are Grade II listed. There remain two significant former cotton mills and the Dinting railway viaduct. Glossop has transport links to Manchester, making the area popular for commuters.

Glossop has been included as pilot in the Liveability scheme and has drawn up the Glossop Vision masterplan for the improvement and gentrification of the town. This is being partially funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. It aims to open up access to the Glossop Brook, to coordinate developments in Glossop town centre, to enhance the built environment and to link the town to its wider setting. As such, the mills have become a retail development with housing, trees are to be planted along the A57 and the market square has been pedestrianised.

The historical town of Glossop features seven conservation areas which cover a large majority of the town. Victoria Hall is located within the Norfolk Square Conservation area. Surrounding and boarding conservation areas include Wren Nest, St James and Howard Town. Norfolk Square Conservation area was originally designated in 1970, however was then later expanded in 1994. The main architectural features of this Conservation Area include stone walls, Welsh slate roofs, and simple stone detailing. Throughout the area there is a clear unity, however the building designs are varied.

2.2 History of Victoria Hall, Glossop

Victoria Hall was donated to Glossop by Herbert Rhodes and Edward Partington and was intended to provide a free library, museum, art school, concert space and venue for educational public lectures. The building construction was completed by the end of December 1888. The free library and public hall were formally opened on Saturday, December 20th 1888. The final measurements were "The public hall is 98 ft. long and 36 ft. wide and will accommodate 1,000 persons. The Reading Room and Library is 72 ft. long and 36 ft. wide. The Lecture Hall and Museum is 36 ft. long and 23 ft. 6 in. wide." There was also a well-attended garden with shrubs, and a gravel walk.

The Hall is held in trust for charitable purposes by the Council. This means that although the Council owns the land, it must act in the best interests of the charity and use the Hall in accordance with the principal intentions of the trust, these being to use the building as a library and public hall for the benefit of the community. Over the years, Victoria Hall has been a hub of the local community being

the setting for concerts, bazaars, dramatic performances, hosting dances for the local factories as well as housing the public library.

For many years the ground floor has been used by Derbyshire County Council as a public library with the basement being used by a youth group and the upper floor as a public hall used by several community groups. The upper floor closed in recent years due to accessibility issues. Derbyshire County Council has decided to relocate the library leaving the building virtually empty and the Borough Council looking for new uses.

2.3 Historic Map



Figure 1 - 1888-1913 Ordnance Survey Map (red triangle denotes the indicative location of Victoria Hall)

3.0 Description

3.1 Description of the Site

The site boundary is highlighted in blue (Figure 1). Within the site boundary is the Hall and external surrounding green space. The site is in Glossop, part of the High Peak Borough Council. The Hall is located in a predominantly residential area within close proximity of open green spaces, such as Glossop Cricket & Bowling Club.

Vehicular and pedestrian access to the site is available off Talbot Road/ Fitzalan Street/ Fauvel Road. The Hall is within a triangular plot, with on road parking on the surrounding roads and no designated parking spaces for the Hall.

The Hall is surrounded with a low-level stone retaining wall denoting the boundary of the community hall, with a public footpath around the full perimeter of the site. The green space surrounding the site has existing footpaths, however they are in poor condition and do not allow safe access into the basement of the Hall.



Image 01 External boundary



Image 02 Degraded footpath and trip hazards to access

3.2 Description of Victoria Hall, Glossop

Victoria Hall is a Grade II listed building within the Norfolk Square Conservation area. Originally built in 1887 as a concert hall and library, the community now utilises the space to run various community lead events throughout the year as well as retaining the library.

The Hall is Gothic Revival Architectural Style which features coursed rock-faced millstone grit with ashlar dressings, and Welsh slate roofs with coped gables and kneelers. The main entrance to the Hall is through an arched ashlar doorway, highlighting the panelled double doors and above fan light.

Additional features which gain architectural and historical significance include chamfered sill bands and plinths, quatrefoil parapets, square spire finished with ball finials and apsidal windows. The basement level is visible and accessible from the rear south façade, as photographed above.

Internally, there is a main entrance hall with detailed finishes and stairs to the unused upper floor. There is currently no public access due to poor, unsafe conditions. The historic features internally are retained, included moulded architraves and ceiling style cornice, as well as panelled doors and engaged pilasters support encased wide beams.

Although there have been internal alterations, the extent of these alterations over the last 150 years is unknown. However, existing features which have previously been covered are within the scope of works to reinstate to retain the historical features.

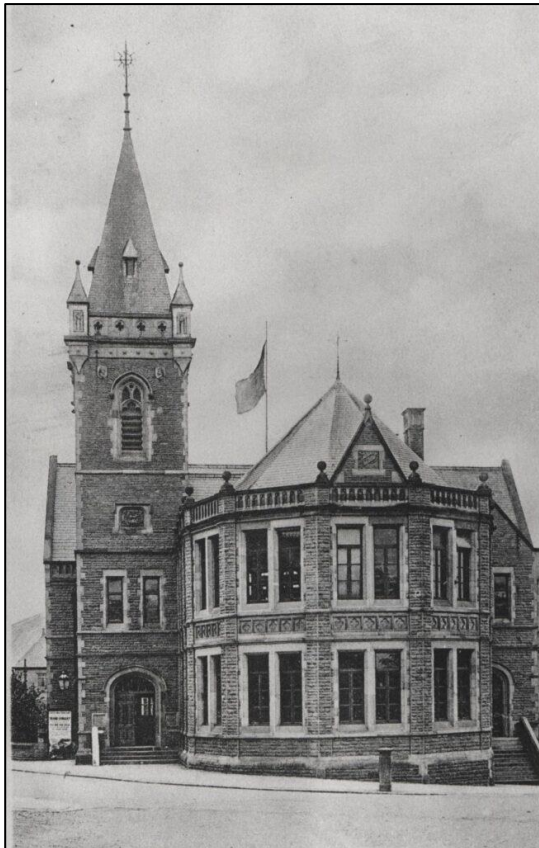


Image 03 Historic view



Image 04 Historic view

3.3 Description of Proposals

External Basement Level Proposed Works

Two new external doors are proposed to be installed, replacing the existing timber doors. The new doors will have 2no. large glazing panels which will allow for visibility and thus, safe access for all users to enter and exit the Hall safely throughout the day and evening. The current doors do not provide any visibility as to who is entering the Hall, which is a safety risk for the community. The proposed doors are aluminium, double glazed single doors, these will provide improved thermal insulation, reducing heating costs for the Hall. To one of the existing entrances, a new handrail to the existing steps is proposed to be installed to ensure this area is also as accessible as possible without removing or damaging the listed building or grounds. The other external door provides full level access to the basement of the hall.

The existing footpath to these entrances is degraded and has multiple trip hazards, preventing wheelchair users and community members with mobility issues to safely enter the basement. Given the main entrance has stairs to access, it is imperative the basement entrance and exit is accessible to everyone. We are proposing both new macadam surfacing and expanding the area of the existing path. This will minimally reduce the green space on the site, however, will provide a much improved entrance to the building which will be invaluable for complete accessibility.

3.4 Design Development and Justification

The heritage interest of Victoria Hall has been considered when investigating the available design options in order that a balance is struck between conservation of the listed building and safe use for the community. The main components of the proposal which require further exploration and justification are the proposed external aluminium and glazed doors.

The advantages and disadvantages of the proposal are discussed below, along with consideration of the following criteria: preservation of heritage, visual impact and maintenance and longevity.

Preservation of Heritage – The existing external doors to the basement do not match the front entrance door with the heritage panelling and fan light design. Internally, the doors are painted purple and are a distraction from the historical features within the basement which will be maintained, such as the sash windows. It is suspected the doors to the basement are not original and therefore removing them would be preserving the heritage of the building, ensuring a clear divide between heritage features and newly installed.

Visual Impact – The juxtaposition of the new external doors and the heritage construction will be clear, however, as mentioned above, the basement entrances are not on the main façade and have limited visibility from the road due to the levels and trees within this area.

Maintenance and Longevity – The existing doors are painted timber, which has a significantly shorter life span when not treated correctly, compared to the proposed aluminium frames. Installation of aluminium doors will have the benefit of less ongoing investment and maintenance and increased protection from water ingress, thus damage to the internal heritage of the building.

4.0 Discussion

Victoria Hall is a Gothic Revival building constructed in the late 1880's for use as a Library (Ground Floor) and Public Hall (First floor). The hall promotes a community led space for residents in Glossop and the surrounding areas. The library is now in use as a Workshop Space for community groups and the first floor is no longer in use due to its dangerous deterioration and inaccessibility. Part of the basement has been used as a Youth Club in recent years, however, is now deemed unusable due to damp and the consequences thereof.

We have been appointed as building consultants by our Client, Victoria Hall (part of the High Peak Borough Council), to apply for and obtain Listed Building Consent for the proposed internal alterations to the basement, which will provide office space for the Glossop Heritage Trust, as well as improving the circulation on the ground floor.

The hall is set within a diverse area in Glossop. There are good transport links via train, bus and car to Manchester city centre and the surrounds. The local context includes the following:

- Housing
- Small independent shops / businesses
- Library
- Golf Course
- Supermarket
- Offices
- Sports Club
- General agricultural land

Within the site boundary is the Hall and surrounding green space. The majority of the surrounding property is residential. The total site area is approximately 1,000.00m² and the current total built area is approximately 100.00m².

Following several meetings with the client and stakeholders of Victoria Hall, a brief has been developed, and this comprises of refurbishment of the external fire exists and external path. This will allow for level access to the basement of the hall and will increase its use capabilities within the community.

Development of the site has been under consideration for some time, and the Council is coming under increased pressure to utilise the building. It is understood that the purpose of the works is to increase capacity for the hall and to promote inclusivity and allow visitors with accessibility issues to enter the basement of the hall unaided.

5.0 Conclusion

The building is of historic significance for the area due to being a Grade II listed property and within a conservation area, however the current standard of the internal make-up of the building means that large areas of the building are not being utilised and not serving the community as originally intended.

The external works discussed will have a minor impact to the external features, however, will greatly aid in the use and accessibility of the space. Without these works taking place, the space cannot be utilised to full capacity and the condition of the building fabric will continue to deteriorate.