



## REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES - ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION

### 11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The criteria adopted by the Heritage Council in November 1996 have been used to determine the cultural heritage significance of the place.

#### PRINCIPAL AUSTRALIAN HISTORIC THEME(S)

- 6.2 Establishing schools
- 6.4 Building a system of higher education
- 6.3 Training people for the workplace

#### HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 402 Education & science

#### 11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE\*

As competently designed and built examples of the Victorian Rustic Style and the Federation Free Style, both the former Infants and Girls School (1877/1878) and Fremantle Technical School (1913) have significant aesthetic value. (Criterion 1.1)

*Fremantle Technical College Annexe* makes a significant contribution to the South Terrace streetscape. The two storey Fremantle Technical School (1913) terminates the north end of the site and has a conspicuous presence which gives it strong landmark qualities, particularly in the way it terminates the vista looking west along Henderson Street and its prominence when looking south along South Terrace. (Criterion 1.3)

The recessed central bay of the single storey former Infants and Girls School (1877/1878) forms a small forecourt enhancing the streetscape qualities of the footpath in that area. (Criterion 1.3)

*Fremantle Technical College Annexe* contributes to the significant precinctual qualities of this part of Fremantle which contains Scots Presbyterian Church, the Norfolk Hotel, the Market Buildings and the Sail and Anchor Hotel. (Criterion 1.4)

#### 11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

*Fremantle Technical College Annexe* represents the development of educational facilities in the Fremantle in response to the needs of an increasing population, and an education facility has continued to operate from the site from 1877 up until 2001. (Criterion 2.1)

\* For consistency, all references to architectural style are taken from Apperly, Richard; Irving, Robert and Reynolds, Peter A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture: Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present, Angus & Robertson, North Ryde, 1989.

The former Infants and Girls School (1877/1878) is representative of the establishment of colonial schools in Western Australia in the 1850s. Governor Weld's Education Act of 1871, which introduced compulsory elementary education, resulted in the construction of more of these colonial schools including the former Infants and Girls School in South Terrace. (Criterion 2.2)

Fremantle Technical School (1913) is representative of the development a technical education system for post primary aged children in Western Australia. This first saw the conversion of the former Infants and Girls School (1877/1878) as a technical school circa 1902 and the construction of a purpose built technical school building in 1913.. (Criterion 2.2)

Fremantle Technical School (1913) has associations with Hillson Beasley, Chief Architect of the Public Works Department from 1905 to 1917. (Criterion 2.3)

### 11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

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### 11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

Since the construction of the former Infants and Girls School in 1877/1878 and the later construction of the Fremantle Technical School in 1913, *Fremantle Technical College Annexe* has been in continuous operation as an educational facility and, as a result, has value to the local and wider community. (Criterion 4.1)

*Fremantle Technical College Annexe* is of social significance to the Fremantle and wider community. Its value to the community is evidenced by its classification by the National Trust of Australia (WA Branch), its inclusion in the City of Fremantle Municipal Inventory, and its listing in the Register of the National Estate. (Criteria 4.1 & 4.2)

## 12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

### 12. 1. RARITY

The former Infants and Girls School (1877/1878) is a rare intact example of a small school based on the 'hall and gallery' design constructed during the Victorian period(c. 1840 – c. 1890). With similar schools such as Fremantle Boys School (1854) the original design intention was lost or impeded by the construction of additional classrooms around the central core. (Criterion 5.1)

### 12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

The former Infants and Girls School (1877/1878) is characteristic of a small school based on the 'hall and gallery' design, which had large single classroom spaces with half hall and half gallery seating. The hall and gallery designed schools were constructed during the Victorian period(c. 1840 – c. 1890). (Criterion 6.1)

Fremantle Technical School (1913) is characteristic of a number of large institutional buildings built in the early twentieth century by the Public Works Department. The building as it stands is only part of a much larger proposed building. It is primarily a classroom building, whereas the proposed building would have housed a greater range of room types and as a result it is likely that it would have demonstrated a greater degree of representativeness. (Criterion 6.1)

### 12.3 CONDITION

*Fremantle Technical College Annexe* generally appears to be in good condition. There are some signs of degradation of the stone work to the external walls of the former Infants and Girls School building.

### 12.4 INTEGRITY

*Fremantle Technical College Annexe* continues to be used as educational buildings as was the original intention, and is of moderate/high integrity.

### 12.5 AUTHENTICITY

*Fremantle Technical College Annexe* is of moderate authenticity with much of the original fabric of both the former Infants and Girls School and Fremantle Technical School remaining in its original state. It appears that the substantial additions, including the mezzanine, that have been made to the interior of the former Infants and Girls School could be removed without greatly affecting the original fabric of the building.

Please note that the works that are to be carried out in the near future (2001) may alter this appraisal.

## 13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary evidence has been compiled by Kristy Bizzaca, Historian. The physical evidence has been compiled by Alan Kelsall, Kelsall Binet Architects.

### 13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

*Fremantle Technical College Annexe* is located at 41 South Terrace, Fremantle, and is situated on land bounded by South Terrace and Norfolk Lane, and Norfolk and Essex Streets. *Fremantle Technical College Annexe* comprises the former Infants and Girls School (1877/1878), a single storey building of limestone construction, and Fremantle Technical School (1913), a two storey building of brick construction.

Education in Western Australia from 1829 up until the gold rushes of the 1880s and 1890s was rudimentary, with children educated in either the government or religious school systems.<sup>1</sup> By 1855, thirteen colonial schools had been established by the Committee of Education, which had been established in 1847. Among these included Perth Boys School (erected 1854), Perth Girls School (erected 1877), Fremantle Boys (erected 1854), and Fremantle Girls (1854).<sup>2</sup>

Governor Weld's Education Act of 1871 implemented compulsory elementary education for all children aged between six and fourteen.<sup>3</sup> This resulted in the increased numbers of students and the subsequent establishment of more colonial schools, including more permanent school buildings. By 1876/77, it

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<sup>1</sup> Centre for WA History (Gregory, J. & Smith, L.), 'A Thematic History of Public Education in Western Australia', prepared for the Building Management Authority, 1995, p. 5. The arrival of members of the Roman Catholic Church in the early 1840s, and with them teaching orders such as the Sisters of Mercy, stymied the development of a colonial education system for children of all denominations and, in 1847, the General Committee of Education was established. (Ibid, pp. 2 – 3.)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, p. x.

was determined that a new building was required for the education of Infants and Girls in Fremantle.<sup>4</sup>

The land on which the school was located was part of government reserves set aside as early as 1869 and stretching all the way from Market Street and South Terrace to Norfolk Street.<sup>5</sup> The foundation stone for the former Infants and Girls School was laid by Lady Ord, wife of Governor General H. St George Ord, on 5 December 1877.<sup>6</sup> The school was opened to students in 1878 and reported to be a 'boon' to the district.<sup>7</sup>

Although the 1870s drawings for the former Infants and Girls School have not as yet been located, the building is based on a 'hall and gallery' plan.<sup>8</sup> In this period, small schools were generally designed on a hall and gallery plan, best typified by that constructed at Fremantle Boys' in 1854. Plans for this school show a single schoolroom with half hall and half gallery seating.<sup>9</sup> Although the infants and girls schools were located under the same roof, it is likely that the two groups had totally separate facilities, entrances and playgrounds; one located in the northern classroom and the other in the southern.<sup>10</sup>

The period of 'National Efficiency' from 1903 to 1945 resulted in the establishment and provision of a progressive education system from infants schools through to university.<sup>11</sup> One of the Inspector General of Education Cyril Jackson's first duties when he began at the Education Department in 1896 was to develop a technical education system for post primary aged children.<sup>12</sup> The popularity of the evening classes on technical subjects at James Street Central School resulted in the opening of Perth Technical School in 1900 and Fremantle Technical School circa 1901.<sup>13</sup>

The Infants and Girls School in South Terrace was converted for use as the technical school for the port of Fremantle circa 1901.<sup>14</sup> The school for Infants and Girls was relocated at this time to larger and improved buildings at the newly constructed Princess May Girls School in Adelaide Terrace.<sup>15</sup>

Plans in the early 1900s show that subjects such as carpentry, metallurgy, chemistry, cooking and laundry were taught at the technical school.<sup>16</sup> A new

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4 Report of the Central Board of Education, 1877, p. 4, in *Votes & Proceedings*, 1878.

5 *Fremantle Times*, 30/5/1919.

6 Information from Foundation Stone.

7 Report of the Central Board of Education, 1878, pp. 3 & 4, in *Votes & Proceedings*, 1879.

8 Kelsall Binet Architects in association with Kris Bizzaca, *Draft Education Department of Western Australia Heritage Inventory Pictorial Guide*, prepared for EDWA & CAMS, September 2000, Victorian Period (c. 1840 – c. 1890) section. **Note:** The architect thought to have been responsible for the design of the former Infants and Girls School was James Manning, who was Clerk of Works of the Public Works Department at the time of the building's construction in 1877/1878.

9 New School Building Fremantle, March 1853, PWDWA 701, reproduced in Considine & Griffiths Architects, 'Conservation Plan for Princess May Reserve', prepared for the BMA, October 1995.

10 Kelsall Binet Architects in association with Kris Bizzaca, op. cit., Victorian Period (c. 1840 – c. 1890) section. This was the case at the 1867 infants, girls and boys school at Guildford. (Drawings of Proposed Schools Guildford, 1867, reproduced in Allom Lovell Hocking, 'Conservation Plan for Guildford Primary School', prepared for CAMS on behalf of EDWA, March 1997, p. 11.)

11 Centre for WA History (Gregory, J. & Smith, L.), 'A Thematic History of Public Education in Western Australia', prepared for the Building Management Authority, 1995, pp. xi, 19 – 23.

12 'A Thematic History of Public Education in Western Australia', op. cit., pp. 19 – 20; Palassis Architects, 'Conservation Plan for Perth Modern School', prepared for CAMS, March 1998, Vol. 1, p. 95.

13 'A Thematic History of Public Education in Western Australia', op. cit., p. 26; 'Conservation Plan for Perth Modern School', op. cit., p. 95.

14 Report of the Public Works Department, 1901, p. 53, in *Votes & Proceedings*, 1902, Vol. 2.

15 Information from City of Fremantle, Blue File, 41 South Terrace.

16 Fremantle Technical School, 14/8/1901, PWD 8484, PWD Plan Set 16612; Fremantle Technical School, 28/5/1902, PWD9139, PWD Plan Set 16612.

plumbing classroom was constructed at the site in 1903.<sup>17</sup> A 1907 sewerage plan shows a number of galvanized iron structures on the site including a workshop and a drill hall both located to the south of the main school building.<sup>18</sup>

Enrolments in the technical schools and the popularity of technical education resulted in the establishment of a number of schools and centers around the metropolitan area and throughout the State. In 1910, the first purpose built technical school was constructed at St George's Terrace, Perth. This was followed by the construction of a second technical school at South Terrace Fremantle, adjacent to the former Infants and Girls School, in 1912/1913.<sup>19</sup>

Chief Architect of the Public Works Department Hillson Beasley signed off on the plans for the Fremantle Technical School on 20 July 1912.<sup>20</sup> A two-storey building of red brick construction, the new building's primary function was that of classroom block with five classrooms and an office located at each level. Each classroom had a teacher's lecture platform and the art classroom was provided with a skylight to allow for better lighting.<sup>21</sup>

The Minister for Education Hon. Thomas Walker MLA laid the foundation stone for Fremantle Technical School on 31 October 1912.<sup>22</sup> The school building was first used as classrooms in 1913.<sup>23</sup>

The extant Fremantle Technical School was the only portion built of a large technical school at South Terrace. The proposed scheme was for a two storey building constructed with the same materials and in the same style as the Fremantle Technical School, and which ran the entire length of the block between Essex and Norfolk Streets.<sup>24</sup> Although it is not known why the building was not constructed in its entirety, it is clear that the larger school was still planned:

The first portion of a New Technical School was completed and opened during the year. This gives additional accommodation that was greatly needed. When completed, the building will be a very handsome and commodious one.<sup>25</sup>

A site plan drawn of the school in 1912 shows a number of buildings located to the south of the former Infants and Girls School. These include the attached plumbing, blacksmith and motor room classrooms, and a building for woodwork classes.<sup>26</sup>

In the 1920s, some works were carried out at *Fremantle Technical College Annexe*. Circa 1919, new forges were installed in the blacksmith's shop classroom.<sup>27</sup> Alterations were made to the fitting and turning workshop,

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17 Fremantle Technical School Additions - New Plumbing Shop, 17/3/1903, PWD 11335, PWD Plan Set 16612.

18 Fremantle District Metropolitan Sewerage Plan, September 1907, MWSSD 14250, Sheet No. 55.

19 'Conservation Plan for Perth Modern School', op. cit., pp. 93 & 95.

20 Fremantle Technical School, Block Plan, 20/7/1912, PWD 16612.

21 Fremantle Technical School, Floor Plans, 20/7/1912 (plans located at *Fremantle Technical College Annexe*). The Block Plan shows that a caretaker's quarters located at the north western corner of the property was removed to make way for the new school building. (Fremantle Technical School, Block Plan, 20/7/1912, PWD 16612.)

22 Information from Foundation Stone.

23 Report of the Education Department, 1913, p. 7, in *Votes & Proceedings*, 1914.

24 Fremantle Technical School, 16/10/1912 (plan located at *Fremantle Technical College Annexe*).

25 Report of the Education Department, 1913, p. 7, in *Votes & Proceedings*, 1914. Why the scheme for the larger technical school was abandoned is an area of further research.

26 Fremantle Technical School, Block Plan, 20/7/1912, PWD 16612.

27 Fremantle Technical School, Blacksmith's Shop - New Forges, date unclear [c. 1919], PWD 20096 (plan located at *Fremantle Technical College Annexe*).

located in the southern classroom of the former Infants and Girls School, in 1922.<sup>28</sup> At the same time, a new basement was built at the Fremantle Technical School building. The basement consisted of two rooms and a stairwell, with ramp access to Norfolk Lane. Plans show that the basement was to be used as a wool classing room.<sup>29</sup>

Additions to the Fremantle Technical School building were completed in 1939 at a cost of approximately £2000<sup>30</sup>. This work comprised the construction of an additional two storey classroom block at the south western corner of the building, and the erection of an outside staircase and landing.<sup>31</sup>

In 1982, the timber buildings at *Fremantle Technical College Annexe* were demolished as part of the upgrading of facilities at the site for the proposed TAFE Maritime Studies School. Those structures demolished included two buildings located to the south of the former Infants and Girls School and the woodwork classroom, and offices and stores attached to the 1877/1878 school.<sup>32</sup>

The Minister for Education Hon. R. J. Pearce officially opened the TAFE Maritime Studies School on 10 August 1983.<sup>33</sup> The renovation of Fremantle Technical College Annexe was completed at a total cost of \$500,000, funded by grants from the State and Commonwealth Governments.<sup>34</sup> Some of the works included the erection of a classroom of limestone construction to the rear of the former Infants and Girls School, a new administration area, and the upgrading of student and staff facilities.<sup>35</sup>

In 1987, the Building Management Authority received an Architecture Award for its work at *Fremantle Technical College Annexe*.<sup>36</sup>

In March 1997, it was announced that the business college was to be relocated from *Fremantle Technical College Annexe*. This followed the removal of the Maritime School the previous year from *Fremantle Technical College Annexe* to facilities at South Mole. Since this time, the buildings have been used for classrooms for overseas students and as the Fremantle TAFE's information centre.<sup>37</sup>

In February/March 2001, works were being carried out as part of the upgrading of facilities at *Fremantle Technical College Annexe*. These works were occurring primarily to the former Infants and Girls School and while much of the internal spaces and fabric will remain intact, some alterations such as the installation of new and wider doorways will be carried out.<sup>38</sup> In November 2001 these works had been completed. *Fremantle Technical College Annexe* has been internally remodeled as an e-tech centre, with a small café. Two temporary blue awning structures have been established on the South

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28 Fremantle Technical School, Alterations and re-arrangement for Fitting and Turning Shop, 8/10/1922, PWD 22063 (plan located at *Fremantle Technical College Annexe*).

29 Ibid.

30 *Building and Construction*, 3/2/1939, p. 7

31 Site Inspection, 22 January 2001.

32 Information from City of Fremantle, Blue File, 41 South Terrace; Information from Fremantle Technical School, Pamphlet File: 727.4, City of Fremantle Library, Local History Collection.

33 Information from plaque; *West Australian*, 11/8/1983.

34 *Daily News*, 4/8/1983.

35 *West Australian*, 11/8/1983.

36 *The Architect*, Vol. 27, No. 3, Spring 1987.

37 *Fremantle Herald*, 29/3/1997.

38 Site Inspection, 22 January 2001.

Terrace street frontage, which were received with dissatisfaction by some members of the local community.

In November 2001, *Fremantle Technical College Annexe* continues to operate as an educational facility.

### 13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

*Fremantle Technical College Annexe*, comprising the single storey former Infants and Girls School (1877/1878) and the two storey Fremantle Technical School (1913), is located within the site bounded by South Terrace, Norfolk Street, Norfolk Lane and Essex Street. The former Infants and Girls School faces onto South Terrace and is located almost centrally between Essex and Norfolk Streets. Fremantle Technical School occupies the north end of the site with its two main facades facing onto South Terrace and Essex Street. *Fremantle Technical College Annexe* is opposite the Fremantle Markets and the Sail and Anchor Hotel is diagonally opposite the north-eastern corner of the site.

#### ***Relationship of buildings on site***

The former Infants and Girls School (1877/1878) is situated centrally within the east side of the site. Fremantle Technical School (1913) occupies the northern quarter of the site with its east, north and west sides sitting on the site boundary lines in these locations. A single storey classroom building of recent construction is attached to the west façade of the former Infants and Girls School occupying the semi-enclosed area formed by the north and south wings. This classroom block is attached by a covered walkway to a lavatory block, the rear wall of which forms the west boundary of the site. The classroom and lavatory blocks appear to be of the same age. A car park enclosed by limestone wall approximately 2 metres high, which is entered off Norfolk Street, occupies the southern end of the site.

#### ***External form and style, and details of each of the building(s)***

##### **The former Infants and Girls School (1877/1878)**

With a steep pitched roof, prominent gables, square headed openings and mullioned windows the former Infants and Girls School is built in a restrained version of the Victorian Rustic Style c.1840-c.1890<sup>39</sup> that does not possess some of the more picturesque qualities that are characteristic of the style.

The former Infants and Girls School is a linear building. The main body of the building runs in a north/south direction and is terminated at each end by gabled wings. On the east facade, these wings project 1.5 metres beyond the face of the main building line while on the west façade the projection, at around 12 metres, is substantially greater. The main entry to the building is located centrally in the east façade within a flat parapetted rectangular bay that projects approximately 2.5 metres. The main entry door is set within a segmental arched opening above which is a recessed panel containing a bas-relief sculpture of an open book.

The walls are constructed of uncoursed limestone rubble set between piers, a plinth and cornice of ashlar limestone. The cornice is stepped in the form of a simple corbel table. Panels of smooth render are set below the windows on the east façade. The steeply pitched gabled roof is covered in Marseilles pattern terra cotta tiles.

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Apperly, et. al., op. cit.

Window openings are square headed with timber framed windows with substantial mullions and transomes containing horizontally pivoting sashes.

Chimneys are of face brickwork with a corbelled course near the top.

### **Fremantle Technical School (1913)**

Fremantle Technical School is built in the Federation Free Style c.1890 – 1915 style<sup>40</sup> and displays an eclectic mix of elements and details adapted from a number of architectural sources.

Fremantle Technical School appears to have an almost square plan. The two main facades of the building (North and East) match each other in appearance both being composed around a dominant centrally located pedimented bay. Within these two bays there is a concentration of detail. Each has an arch of brick and stone voussoirs containing a recessed panel of brick and stone banding which sits above the two levels of windows. The windows are separated by a rendered spandrel.

The walls are constructed predominantly of English bond brickwork above a rusticated limestone plinth. A composite parapet of brick and limestone partly conceals the roof. Brick chimneys with battlemented tops are positioned prominently in the corners of the building. The walls are enriched by string coursing in stone (or render) of contrasting colour to the brickwork. The string courses coincide with the heads, transomes and sill levels of the windows of each of the two stories.

The flat headed window openings are coupled around a 900 mm wide pier, with rendered masonry mullions and transomes containing a combination of double hung sash windows and fixed or hopper sashes.

The hipped roof is covered by Marseilles profile terracotta tiles. The roof appears to be ventilated by louvred vents housed within gablets. A small vented cupola sits on the ridge of the roof above north side of the building.

### ***Internal layout and details***

#### **The former Infants and Girls School (1877/1878)**

The internal layout of the former Infants and Girls School is divided into three parts with the configuration of the rooms reflecting the external form of the building. The main body of the building is entered through a lobby formed by a timber framed glazed screen and doors which are of recent construction. This part of the building is divided into two unequal parts by a lateral masonry wall that runs across the room on the line of the south side of the entrance porch. There is no corridor. The larger room has been compartmentalised by studwork partitioning and a timber mezzanine into a reception area, offices and a library. The dividing wall contains two openings that lead to a room housing a face red brick forge and chimney in the southwest corner. These two rooms have suspended acoustic ceilings and jarrah floors.

The two end wings of the building originally housed single rooms. At present the room in the north wing is divided by a timber studwork wall with high level glazing. Both the north and south rooms have raking ceilings lining the soffit of the roof and the roof is supported by timber trusses. The rooms of the building have plastered walls enriched with ashlar lining. The floors are carpeted.

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Apperly, et. al., op. cit..

### **Fremantle Technical School (1913)**

The entrance to Fremantle Technical School is located centrally in the south façade of the building. It terminates the covered link, which connects the building to the former Infants and Girls School. The rooms are arranged around a central lobby that contains the staircase leading to the upper floor. On both levels, all the rooms except one is a classroom type and they are located at the perimeter of the building on the north, east and west faces. The dogleg staircase is of jarrah with carved jarrah newel posts and square section balustrading.

The doors are six panelled timber with fanlights over. The classrooms and lobbies have plastered walls with a rendered dado topped by a reeded moulding. The ceilings are plastered. At ground floor level the ceilings line the soffit of the floor above and encase the supporting beams, whereas on the upper floor level the ceilings are flat and include ceiling vents. The classrooms have fireplaces with timber surrounds positioned diagonally in one corner of the room. Most of the platforms in front of the blackboards have been retained. The blackboards are replacements.

The former Art room, on the east side of the upper level, has a timber board lined skylight.

Classroom floors are carpeted and the rooms have fluorescent tube light fittings mounted on a suspended grid.

The basement is reached by a flight of stairs situated below the main staircase and comprises two rooms with perimeter windows. The ceiling is the soffit of the floor above and floor is a concrete slab.

#### ***Subsequent alterations***

An addition, similar in appearance to the original part of Fremantle Technical School has been added to the south side of the building.

#### ***Appearance and condition of the building to date***

The former Infants and Girls School appears to be in a fair condition. There is some minor evidence of stone degradation.

Fremantle Technical School appears to be in a fair condition.

### **13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION**

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### **13.4 KEY REFERENCES**

Centre for WA History (Gregory, J. & Smith, L.), 'A Thematic History of Public Education in Western Australia', prepared for the Building Management Authority, 1995.

### **13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH**

The history of the former Infants and Girls School (1877/1878) from circa 1878 to circa 1902 is an area of further research. In particular, finding and discussing the original 1870s plans for the school building.