

Old Town Hall.



Malton Town Hall, 1728

Malton Town Hall is said to date from the 16thC in its core. A vaulted and arcaded butter market was added to the core building seen on Settrington's 1728 painting of the town during the 18thC (and after 1728), with Council Chamber above.



Terrier 1730

Plans uncovered in NYCCRO show the Town Hall in Malton and seem to be of alternative proposals for its repair and refurbishment of differing levels of ambition. The architect was John Gibson, who would seem to have been much involved in works across the town during the second half of the 19thC. The same cache of drawings includes designs by Gibson for new houses upon The Mount. Along with George Chandler, with whom he would seem to have been in partnership in later years, Gibson raised designs for alterations and additions to the Talbot Hotel, as well as for more minor works to York House.

The more careful and tidy drawings show an ambitious Gothic Revival scheme with leaded light windows of plain quarries with presumably stained glass heraldic devices in their centre. These are held within chamfered stone surrounds with 4-centred arches over. These elevation and detail drawings are dated May, 1854. Drawings of the same elevations, but with sash windows (with slender glazing bars) are less polished and have instructions regarding materials and finishes, as well as repair approach, written across them in long-hand. This may be the hand of the architect – it may be that of the Fitzwilliam Agent. These drawings, also by Gibson, are dated August 1854.

It would seem, therefore, that the architect, charged with designing the refurbishment of the Town Hall fabric by the Fitzwilliam Estate, initially produced a grander Gothick scheme, intending to give a

suitably bourgeois aura to the already much evolved 16thC Town Hall building, but that this was rejected by the owner in favour of a more conservative, as necessary repair of the existing fabric.

This entailed some wholesale refacing of some walls (particularly the E elevation and part of the N)) with new 'hammered' calcareous sandstone from Brows Quarry, laid 'to fair courses' but most of the S and W elevations were scheduled for in situ dressing back of existing calcareous sandstone masonry. Raking back and repointing 'with good mortar' was carried out across existing and dressed back elevations. The string course was to be 'chiselled' – dressed back. Later again, some of the string course, at least was replaced in brick and rendered with cementitious mortar.

Notably, those parts of the building upon which the stone was dressed back in situ are those which today are of an unsympathetic pitch-faced millstone grit ashlar, indicating later wholesale replacement under the direction of architects much less informed or considerate of either aesthetics or local materials than Gibson.

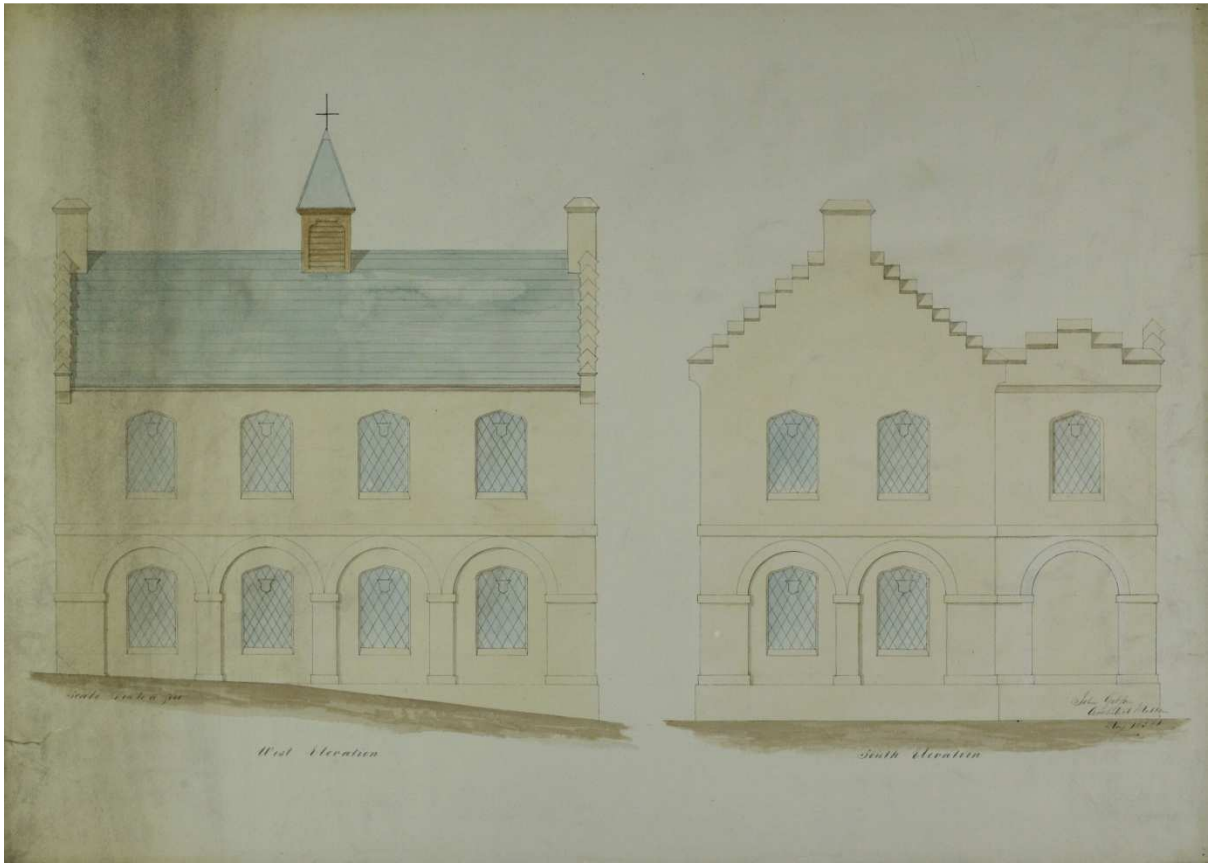
Main elevations were to be refaced with calcareous sandstone from Brow's Quarry; weathering elements were to be of 'Moor Stone', denoting the use of Jurassic sandstone from the Whitby area. More serious structural elements, such as the platform of the balcony, were to be of West Yorkshire Sandstone. Some of the already blocked arches of the originally open arcade of the Butter Market were to have their existing blocking taken out, to be reblocked with brick. This – and perhaps already existing - brickwork was to remain uncovered and visible until the second half of the 20thC when it was rendered with a cementitious mortar, at the same time, perhaps, as the gables and some of the upper walls Gibson had refaced with calcareous sandstone ashlar were unsympathetically refaced with pitch-faced millstone grit ashlar and even with reconstituted stone of similar finish, creating the visual hotch-potch that is known today.

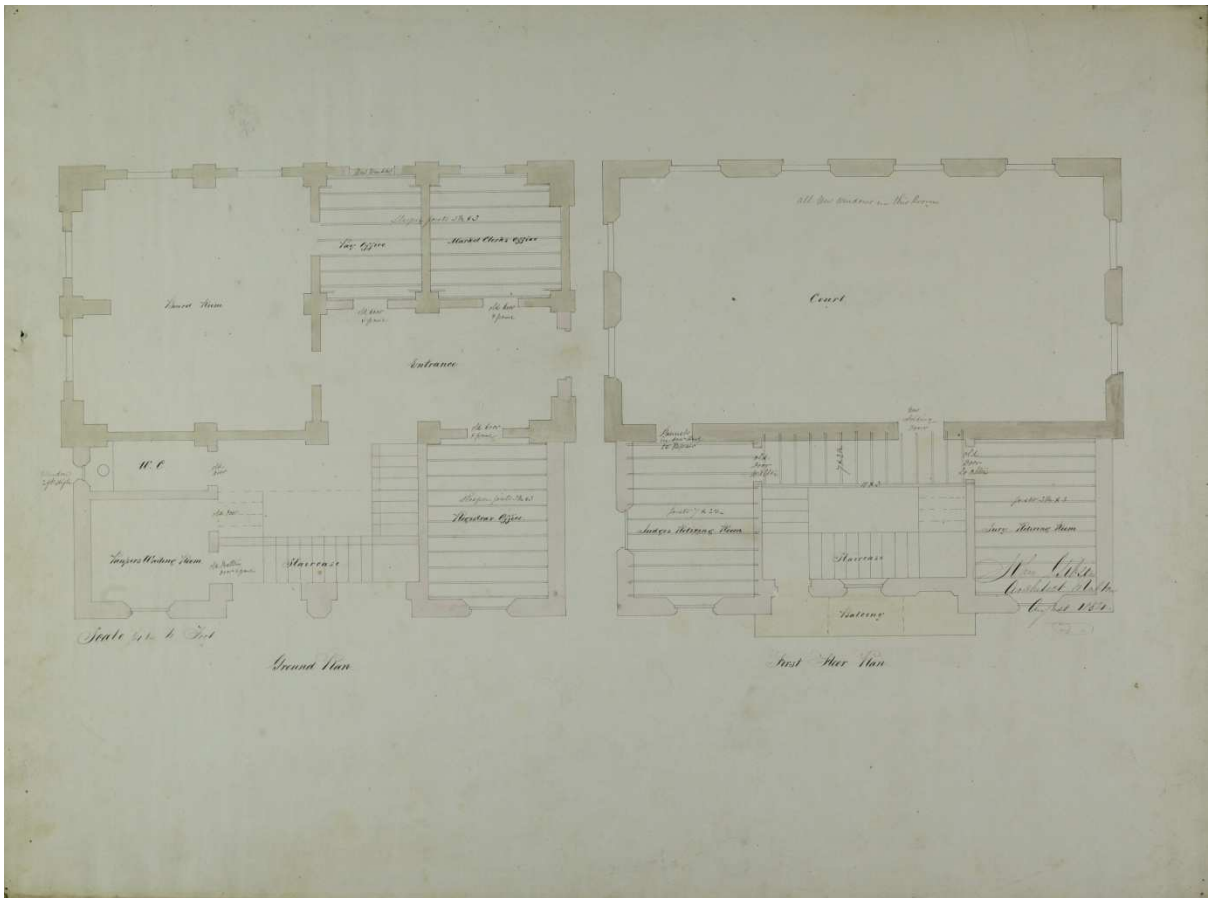
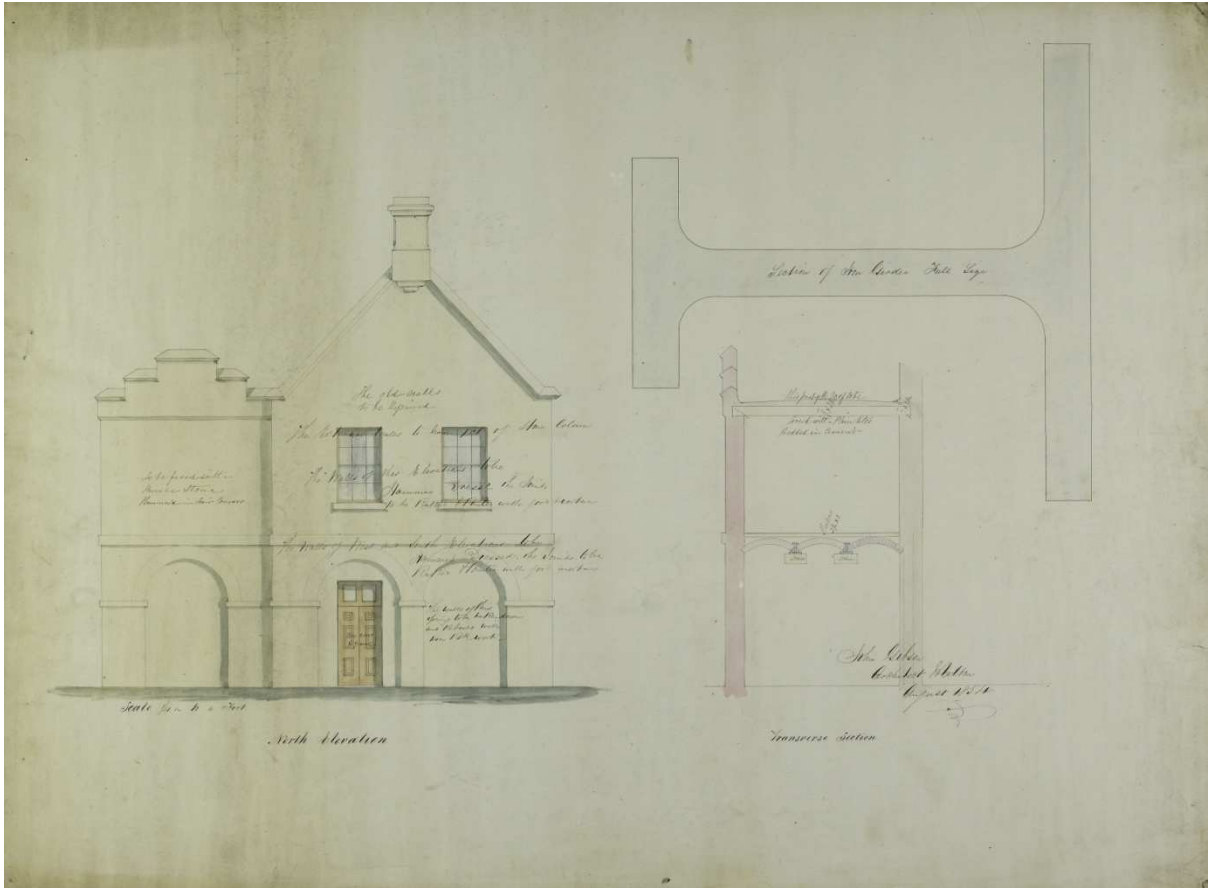
The current entrance extension – to the east elevation – forms no part of the 1854 scheme: the balcony was recessed between two stepped gables and was accessed from the staircase. The current balcony and entrance are part of a relatively shallow eastward extension of the building. This is shown on photographs in John Stones's *Around Malton*, from the late 19th and earlier 20th Centuries (p15), both of which pre-date the extensive introduction of west Yorkshire grit-stone to the south elevation, although by the time of the later image, some repair to the upper SE corner (also in west Yorkshire sandstone) has been carried out and remains today, the earlier calcareous sandstone ashlar having subsequently been rendered with a cementitious mortar, which is failing under the force of the decay it has promoted to the substrate.

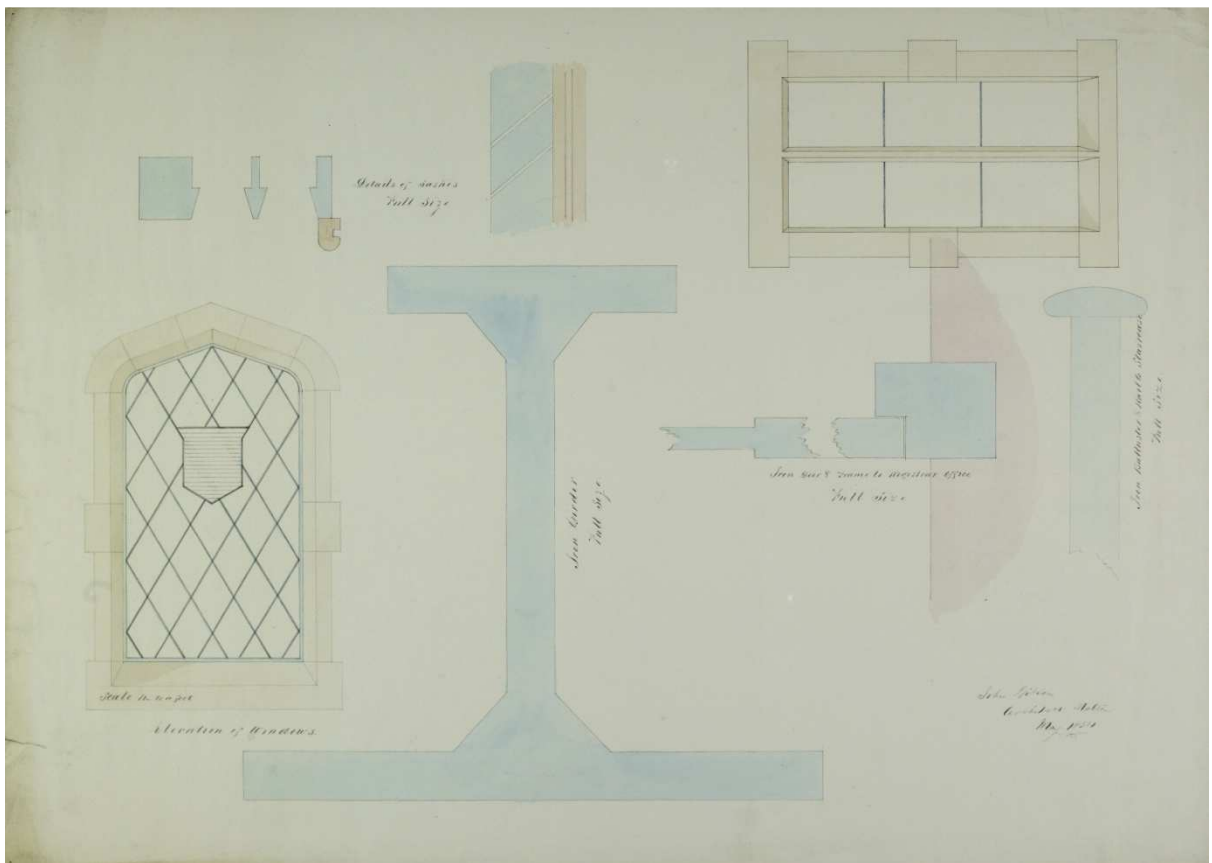
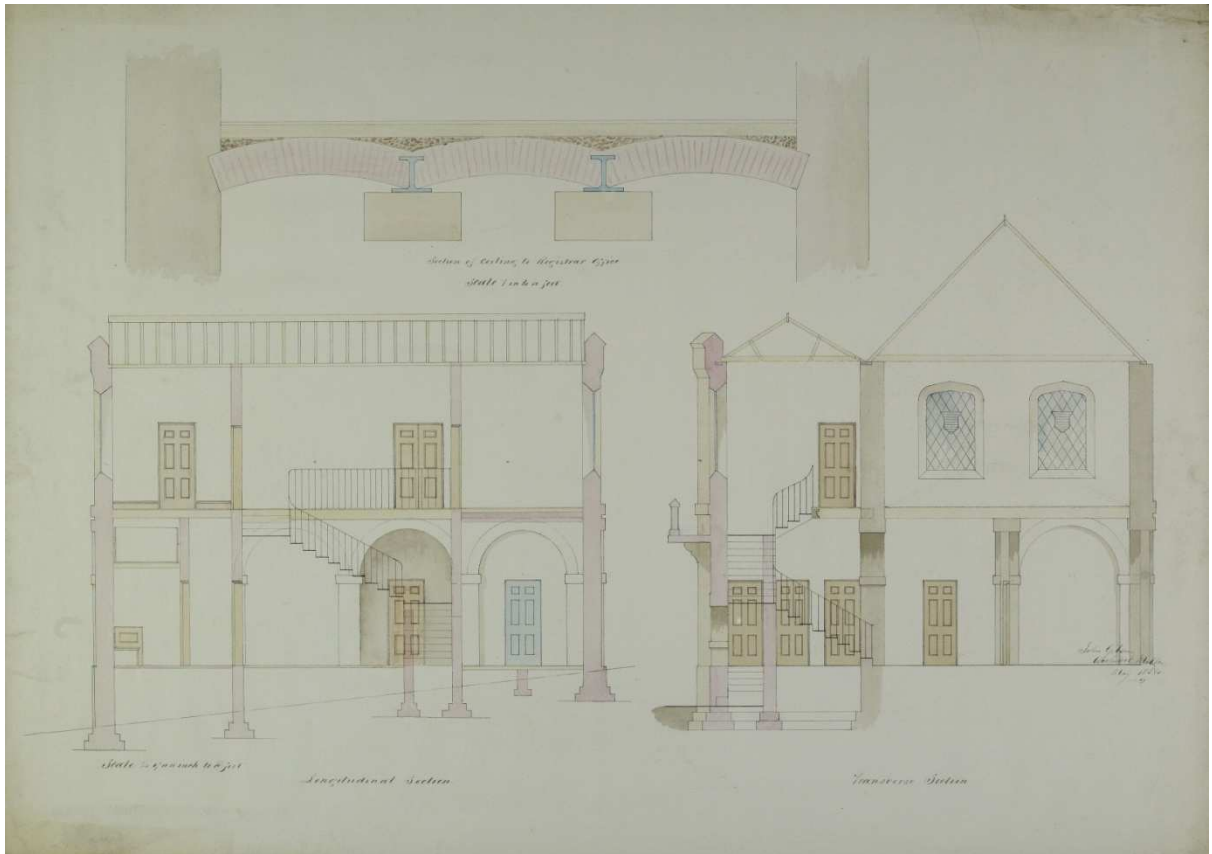


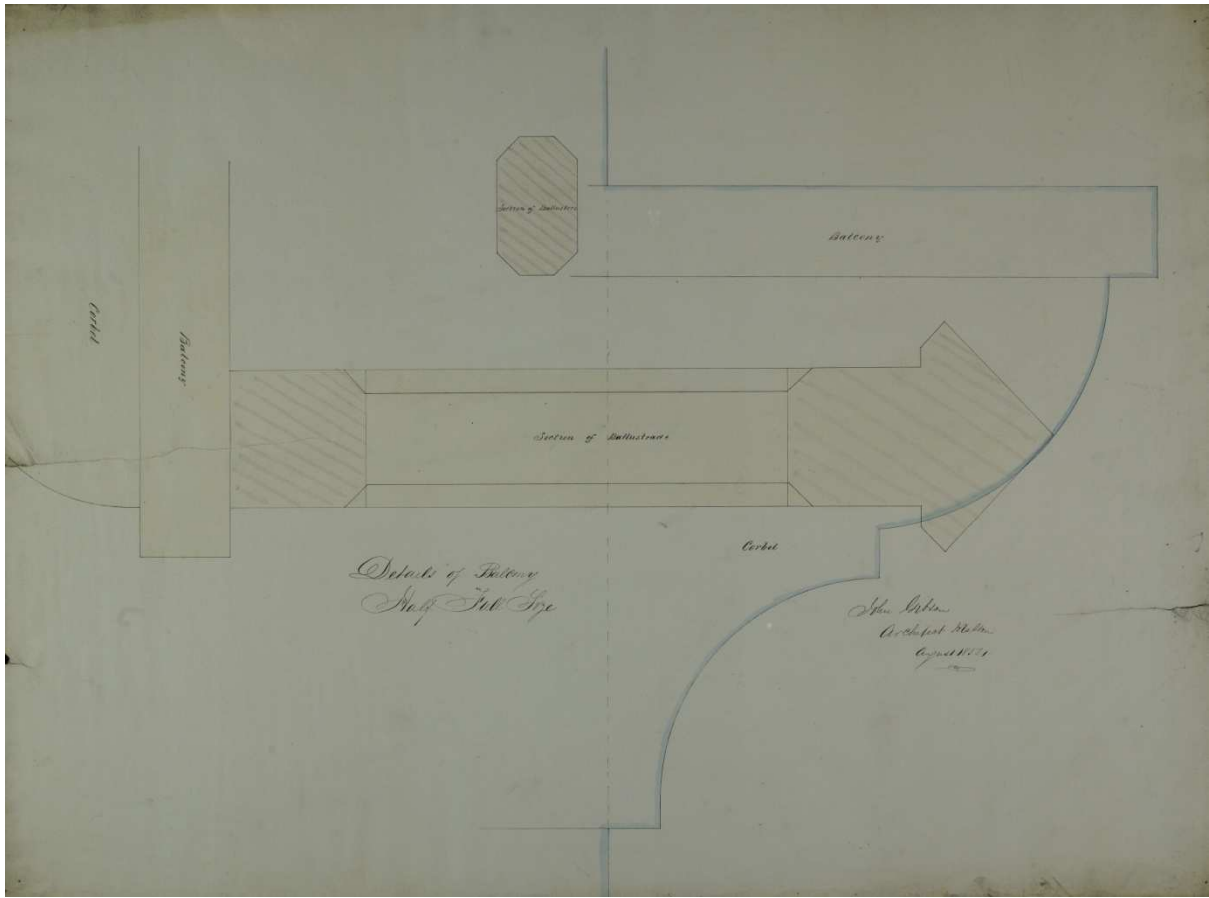
In 2011, plans are well-advanced for another programme of refurbishment, alteration and repair of the now former town hall, to plans by architect Jan Maciag.











One of John Gibson's drawings for *The Mount*. This was built and remains today.

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