

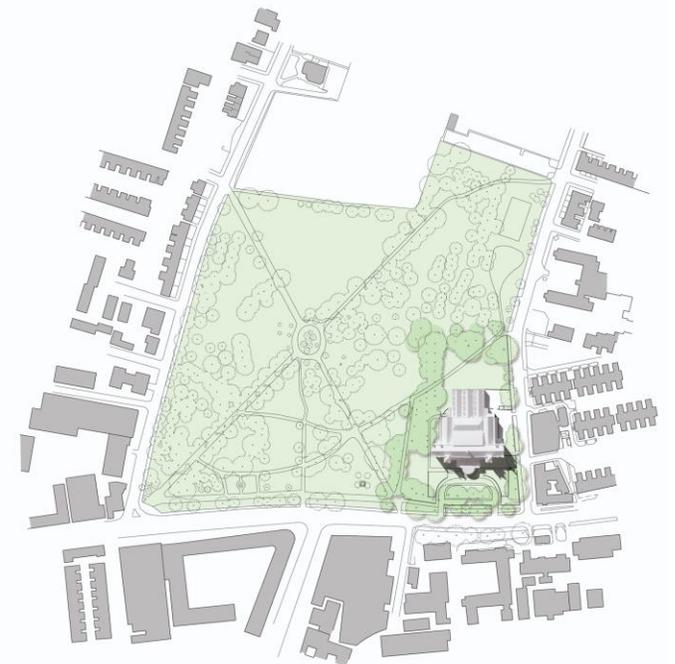
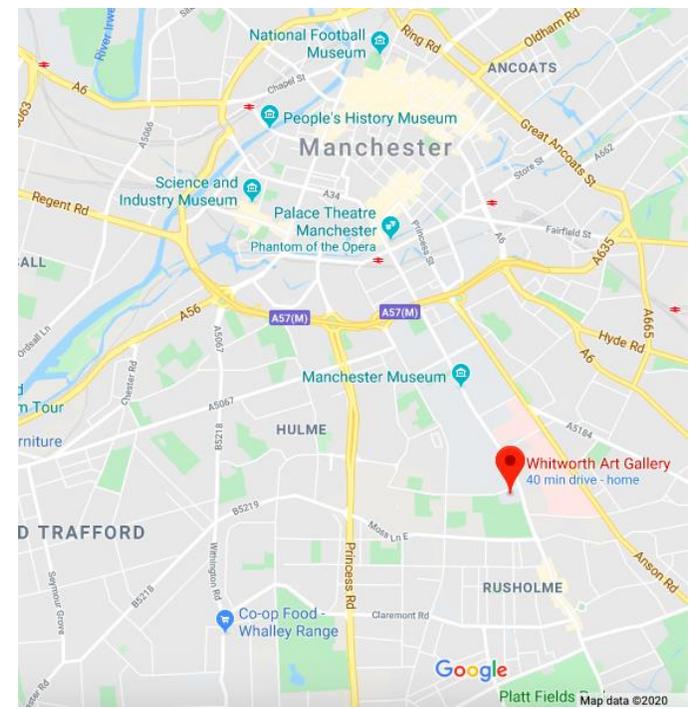
Coping with the “unknown unknowns”

Reflections on the planning, implementation and consequences of new storage within a capital project at the Whitworth, The University of Manchester

Mike Bowes and Sarah Potter



Before the development



Strong symmetrical, imposing facade addresses Oxford Road.



THE LAKE, WHITWORTH PARK, MANCHESTER.









Watercolours

Bringing the Whitworth into the 21st century

Connection with park
New exhibition galleries
Access to collections
Developing new audiences
Sustainability

Funding bids to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), Arts Council England (ACE) and other donors

...with an uninviting side facing our park and neighbouring communities



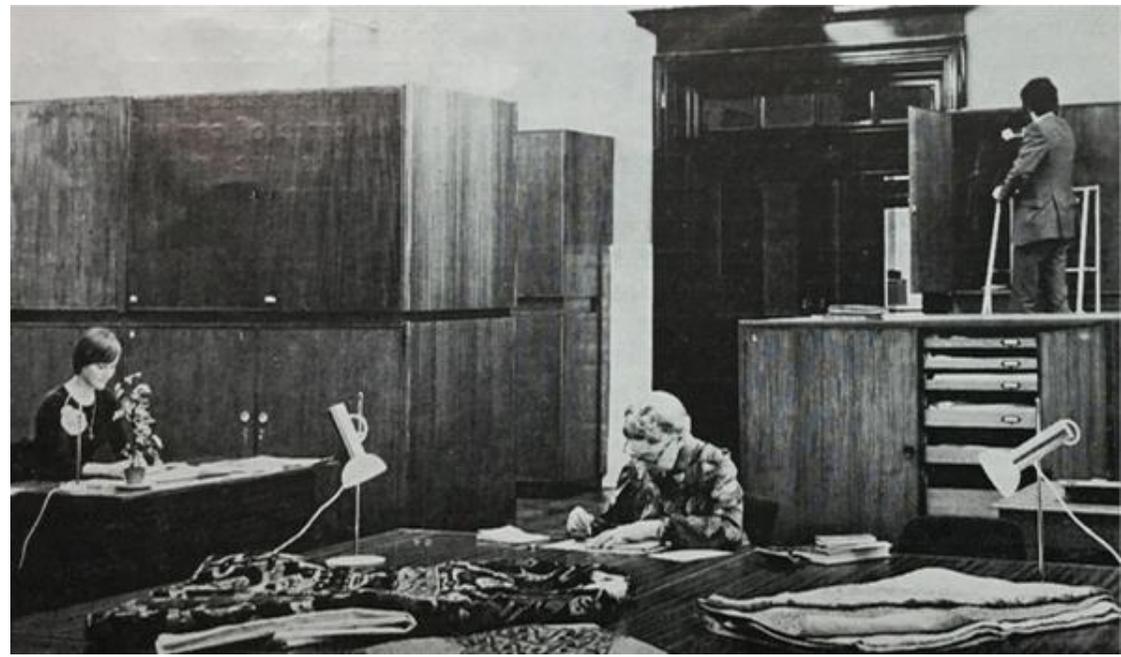
2008

A desire to reconnect with our park and local communities



2019

Old Study Rooms



Making do



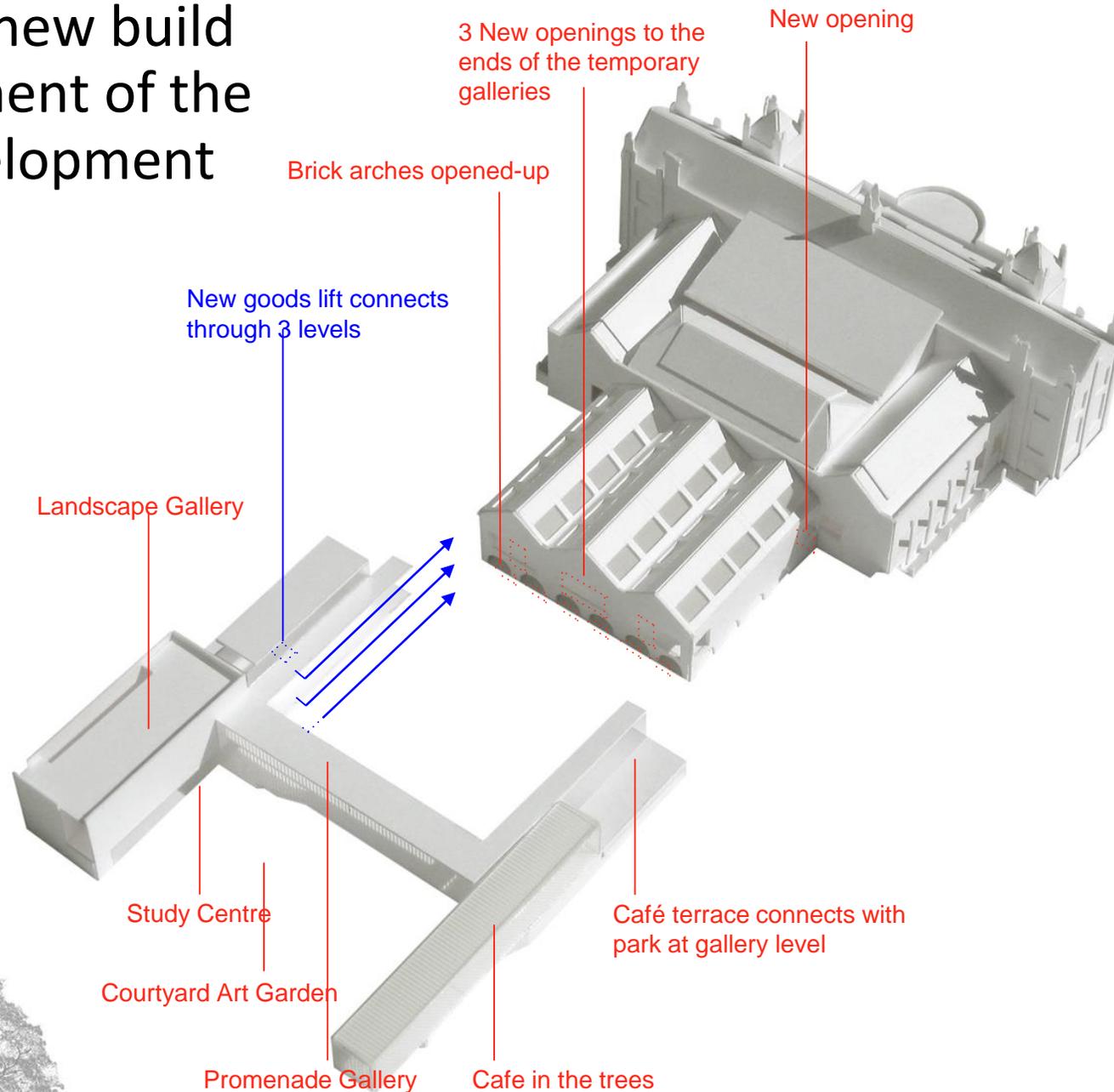
Food storage behind the old stores

Café food store



Art store

The new build element of the development



Time Line

- 2008 Planning starts
- 2009 MUMA Architects Selected
- 2010 Storage Analysis
- 2010 HLF Bid
- 2012 Break ground
- 2014 (September) Gallery closes to public
- 2015 Open to the public

Storage Analysis of All Spaces



Old Wallpaper Store



Old - Picture Store



Old Textile Storage - trays

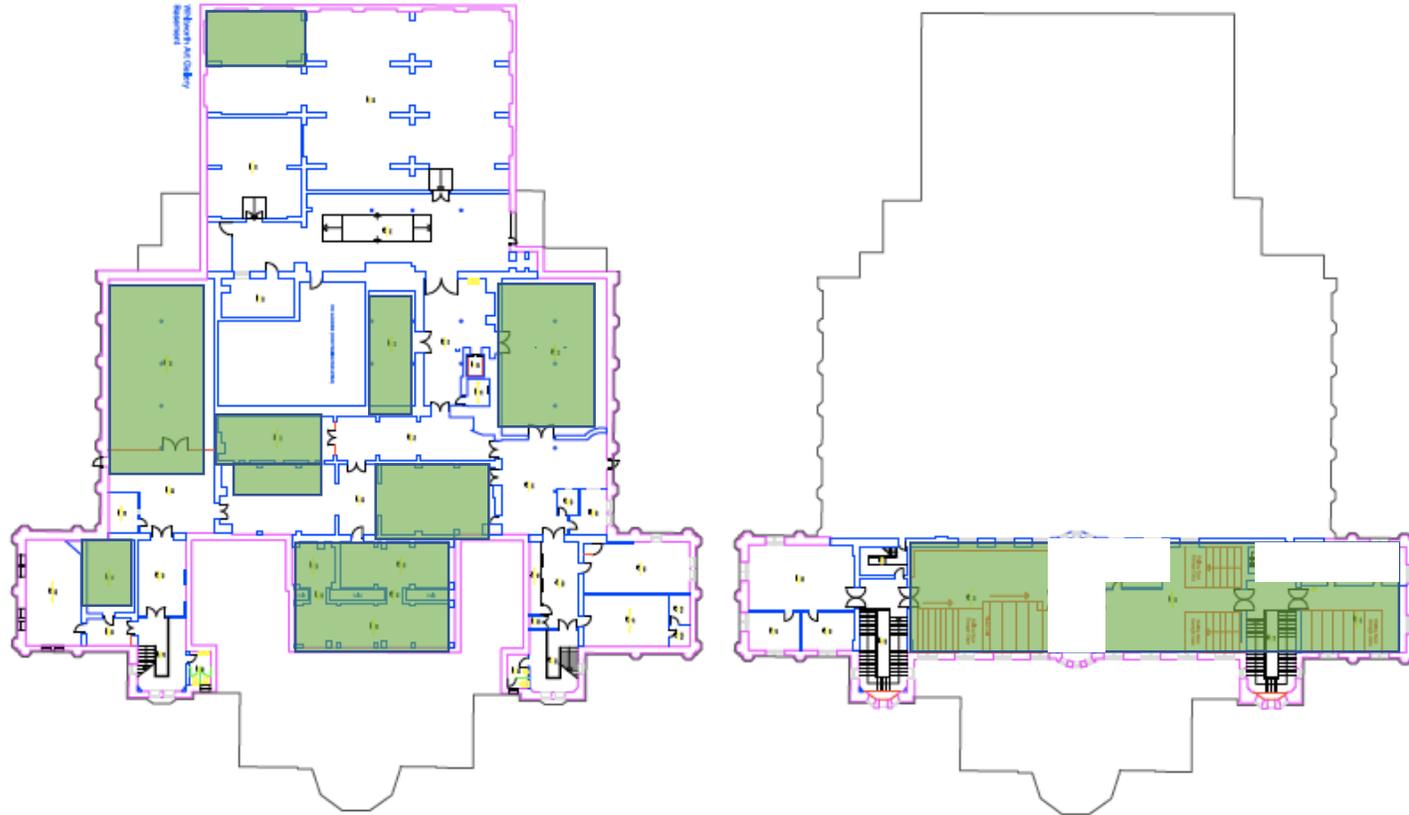


Old Textile Store - rolled



Storage locations

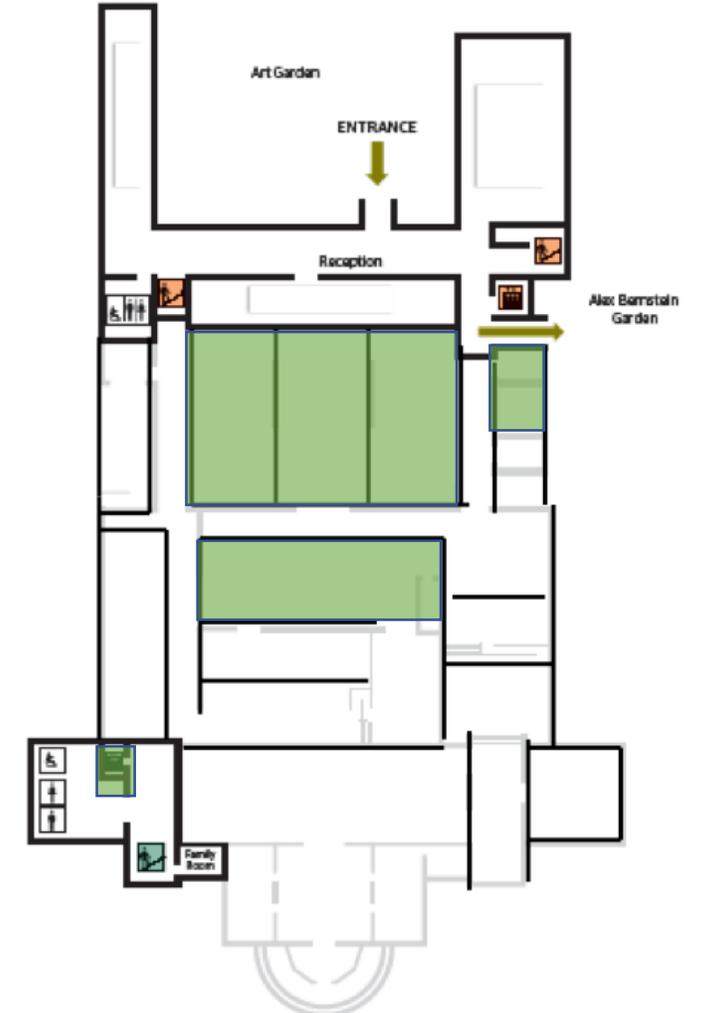
Old Store Locations



Basement

1st Floor

New Store Locations



Basement

Tender Process & brief for storage

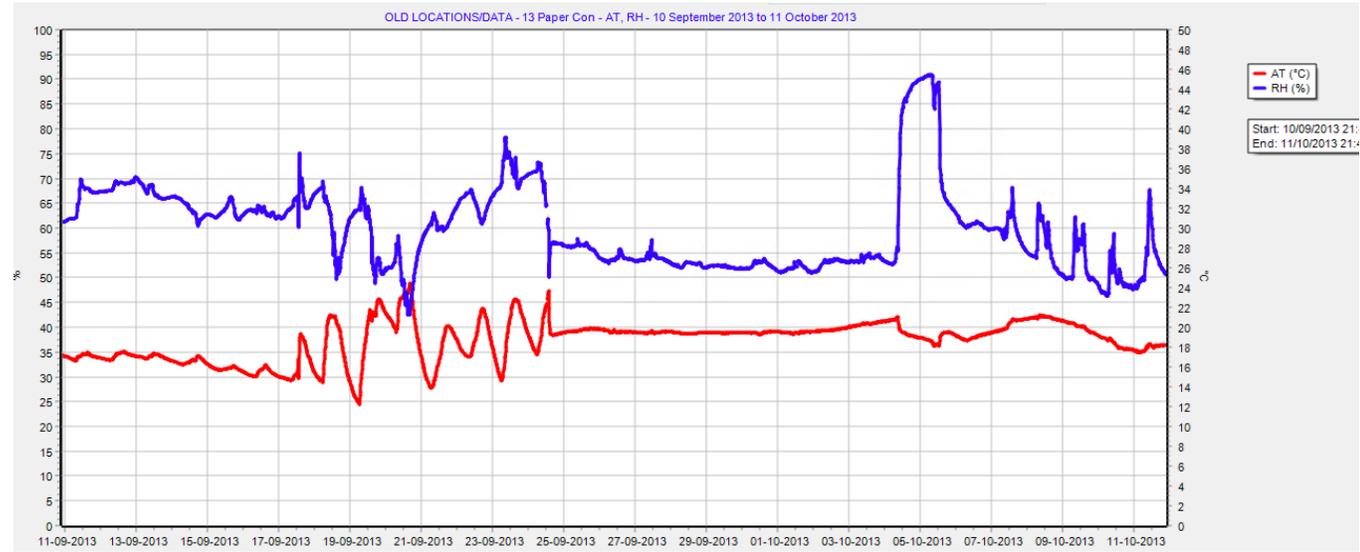


Standardisation

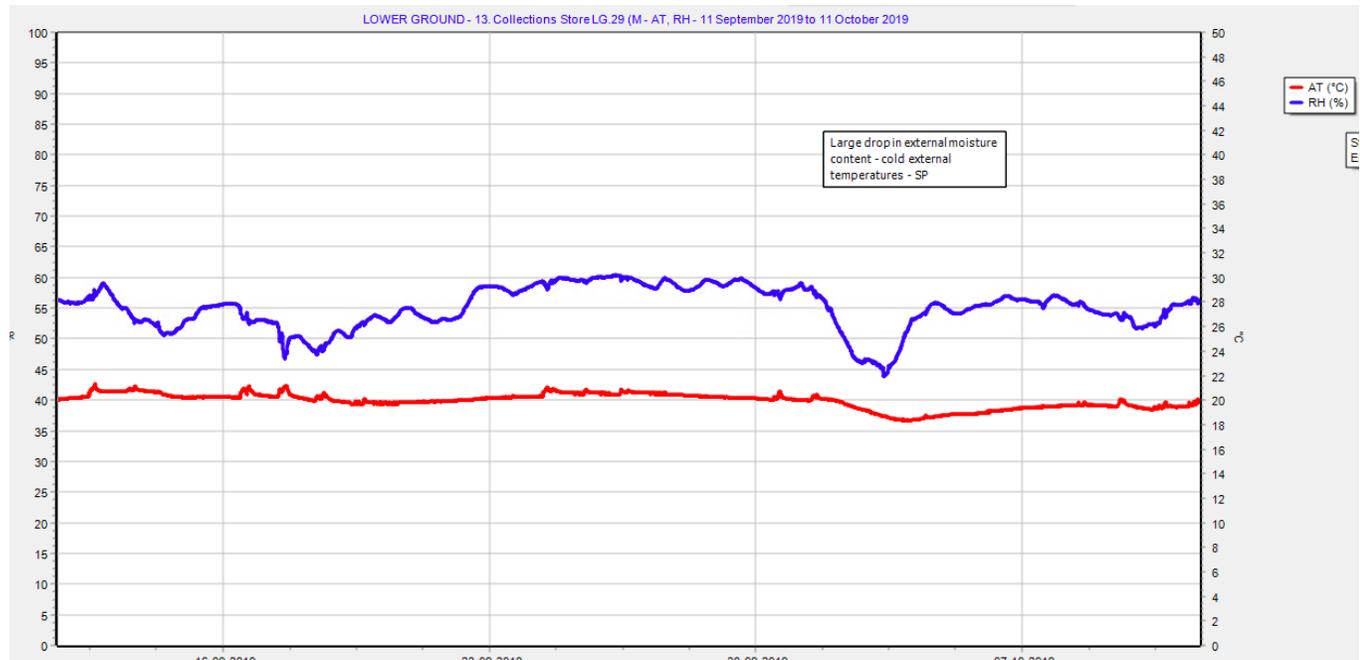


New Store Environmental Specification

- Environment 40-60% - BIZOT
- Passive environment with conservation heating
- Uses buffering of building



11 September – 11 October 2013 – old environment



11 September – 11 October 2019 – new environment

Moving the Collections – take one



Exhibition gallery turned into a store



Office turned into a collection store



52,000 objects relocated in 8 weeks

Decant Packing



Moving the Collections – take two



Moving the Collection – take three



Reuse of Materials



The Gallery Reopened – 14/02/2015



Cai Guo-Qiang
Unmanned Nature



Cornelia Parker
Cold Dark Matter



Cornelia Parker
War Room

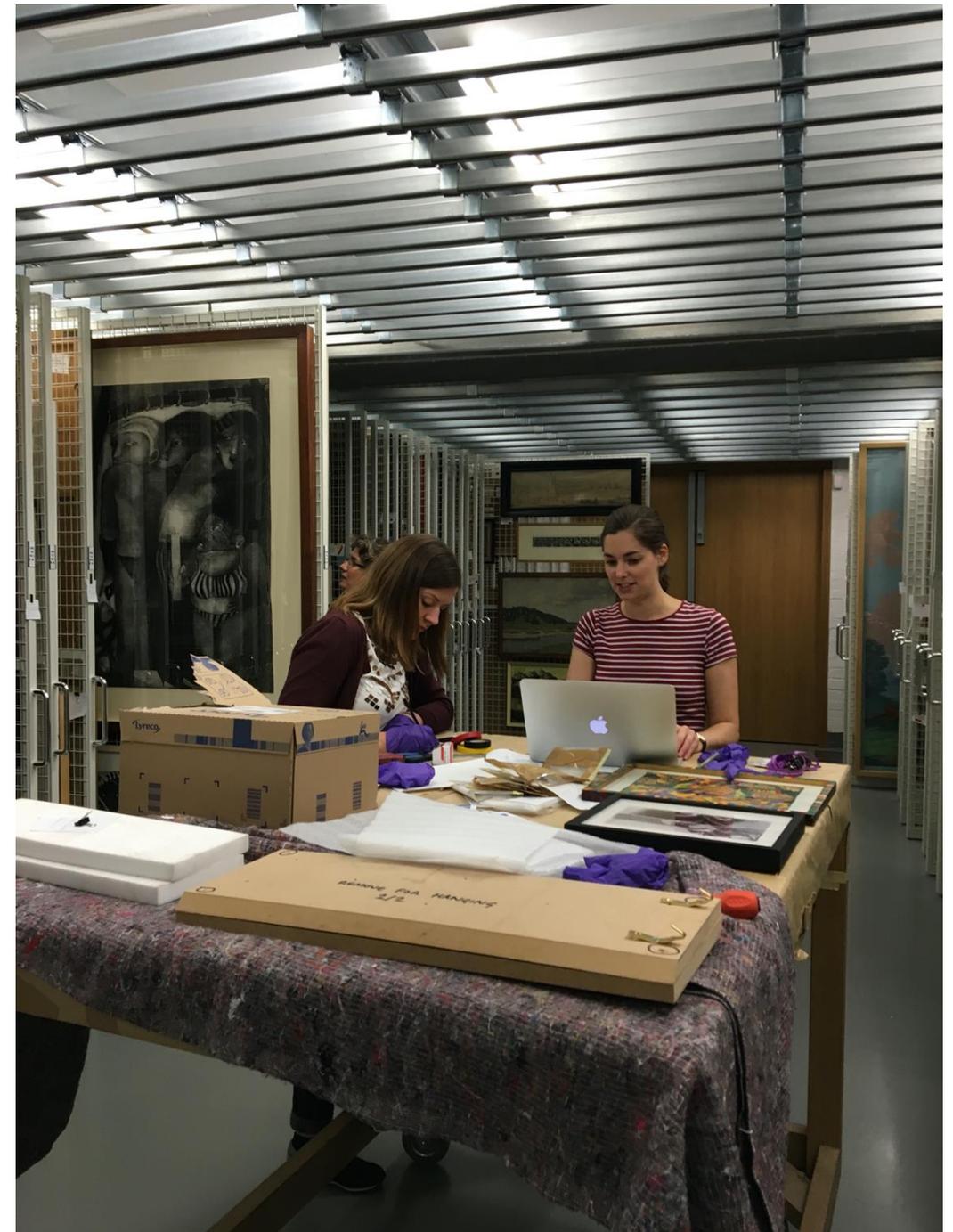
The Gallery Reopened – 14/02/2015



187 loans, 419 collection works and 3 installations across 13 gallery spaces in 5 weeks

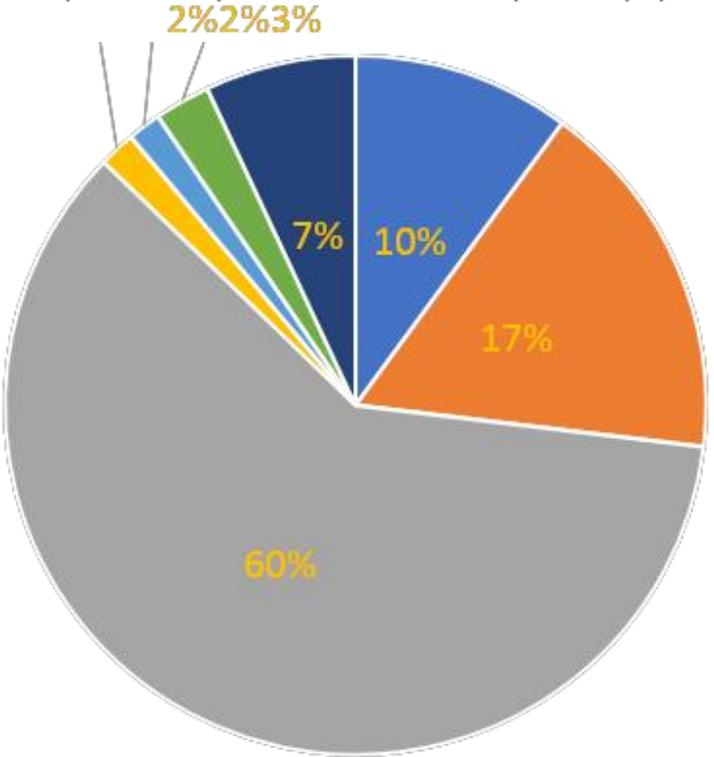
Visitor figures: 180,000 (2013) – to 440,000 (2016)

Moving the Collection – the finale?

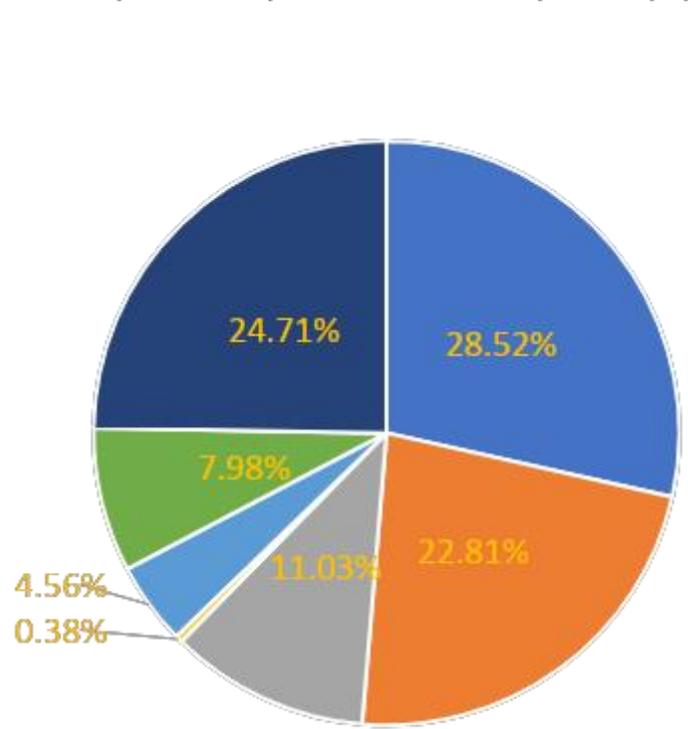


New Stores

Acquisitions 5 years before development (%)



Acquisitions 5 years after development (%)



■ Drawings

Increase of 21% for all items needed to storage on mesh racking



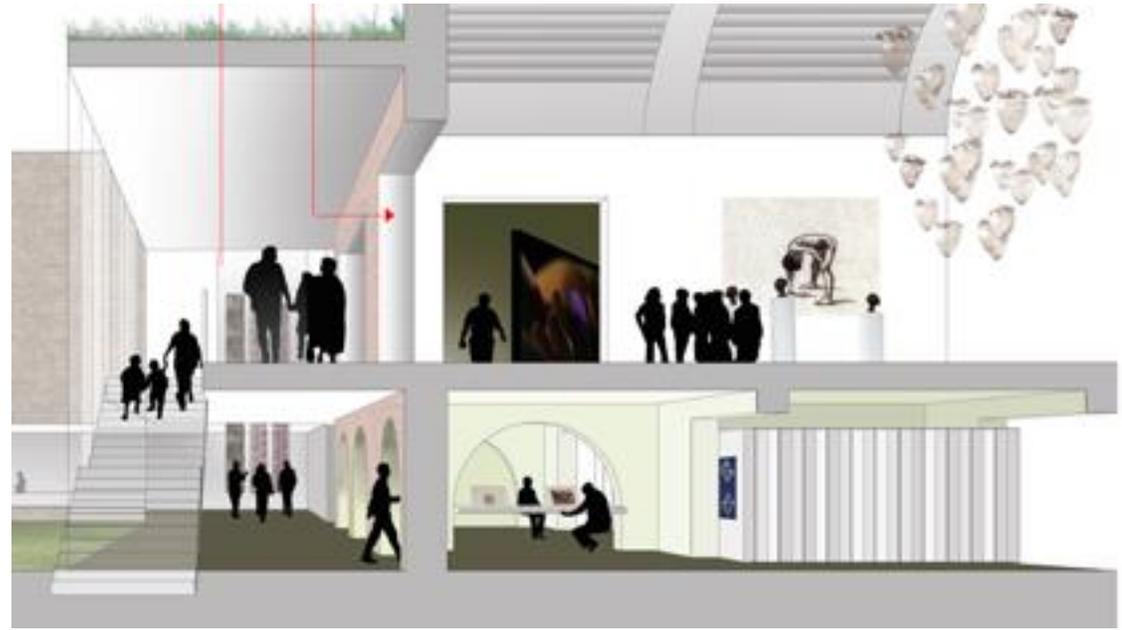
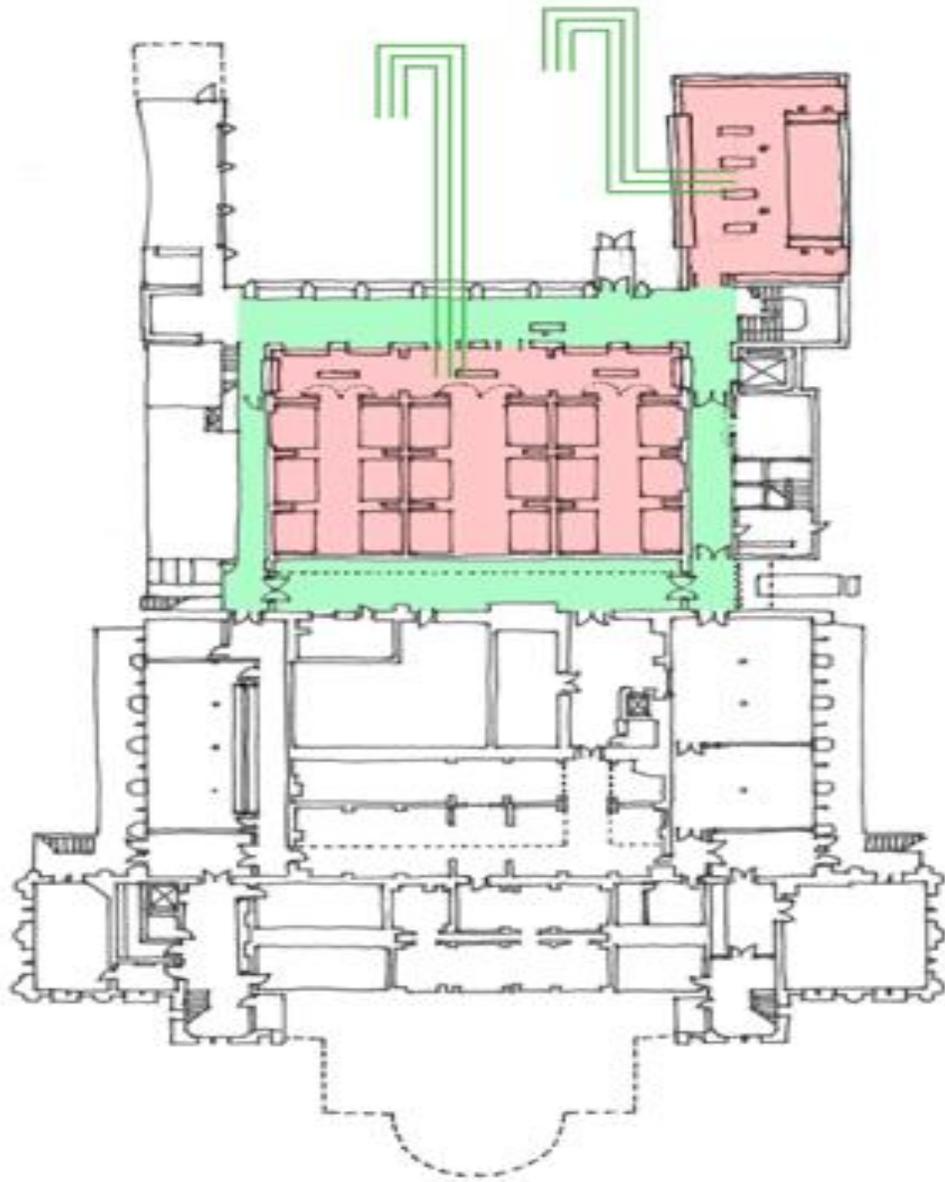
Framed storage

Rolled textiles



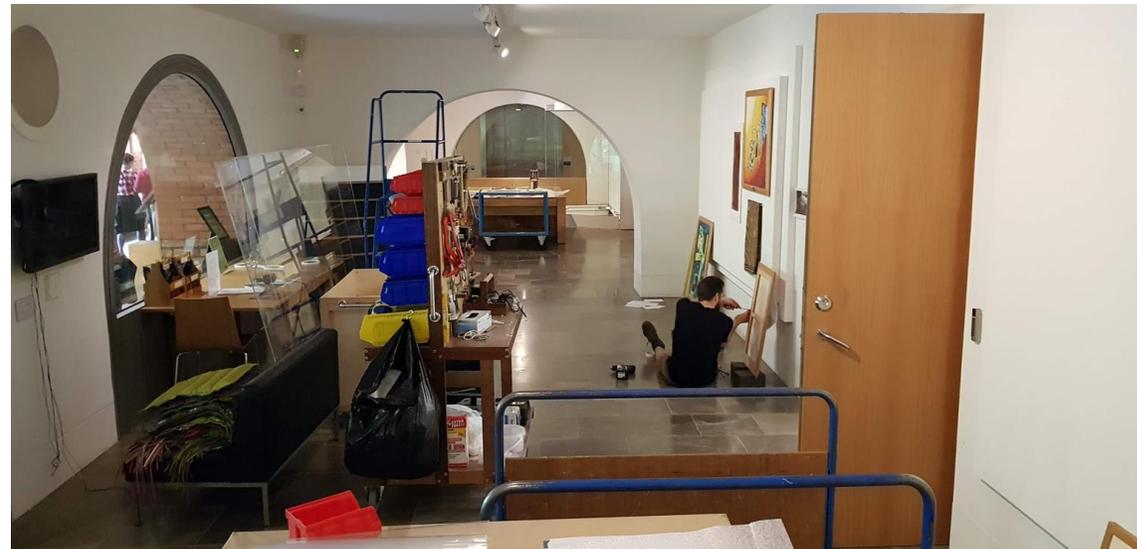
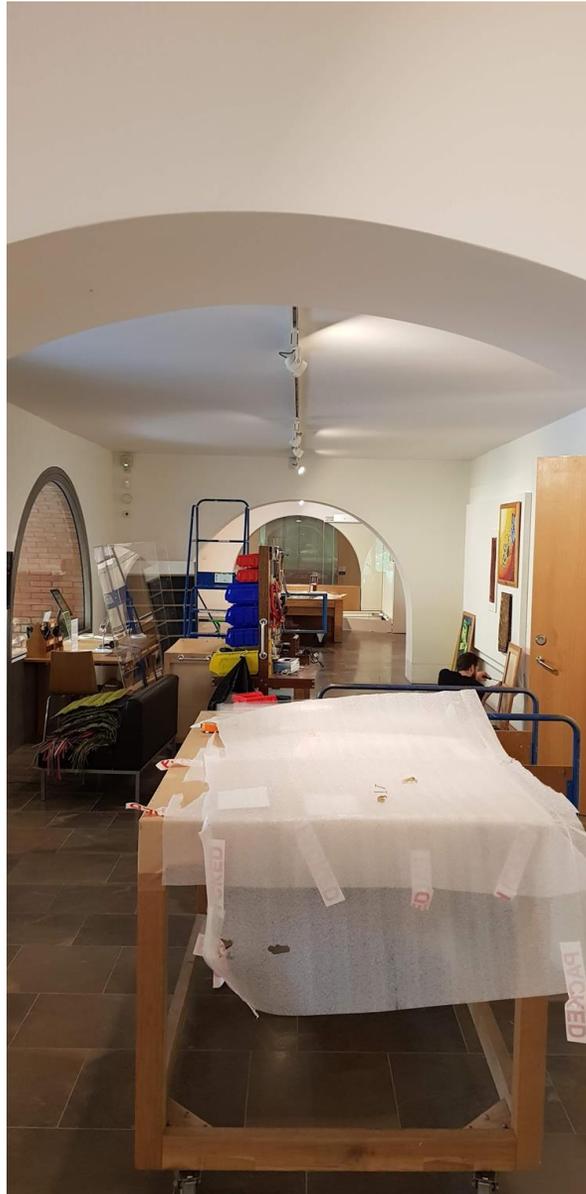
Consequences and Alterations

Situation of the Stores





Change in Philosophy for the Galleries



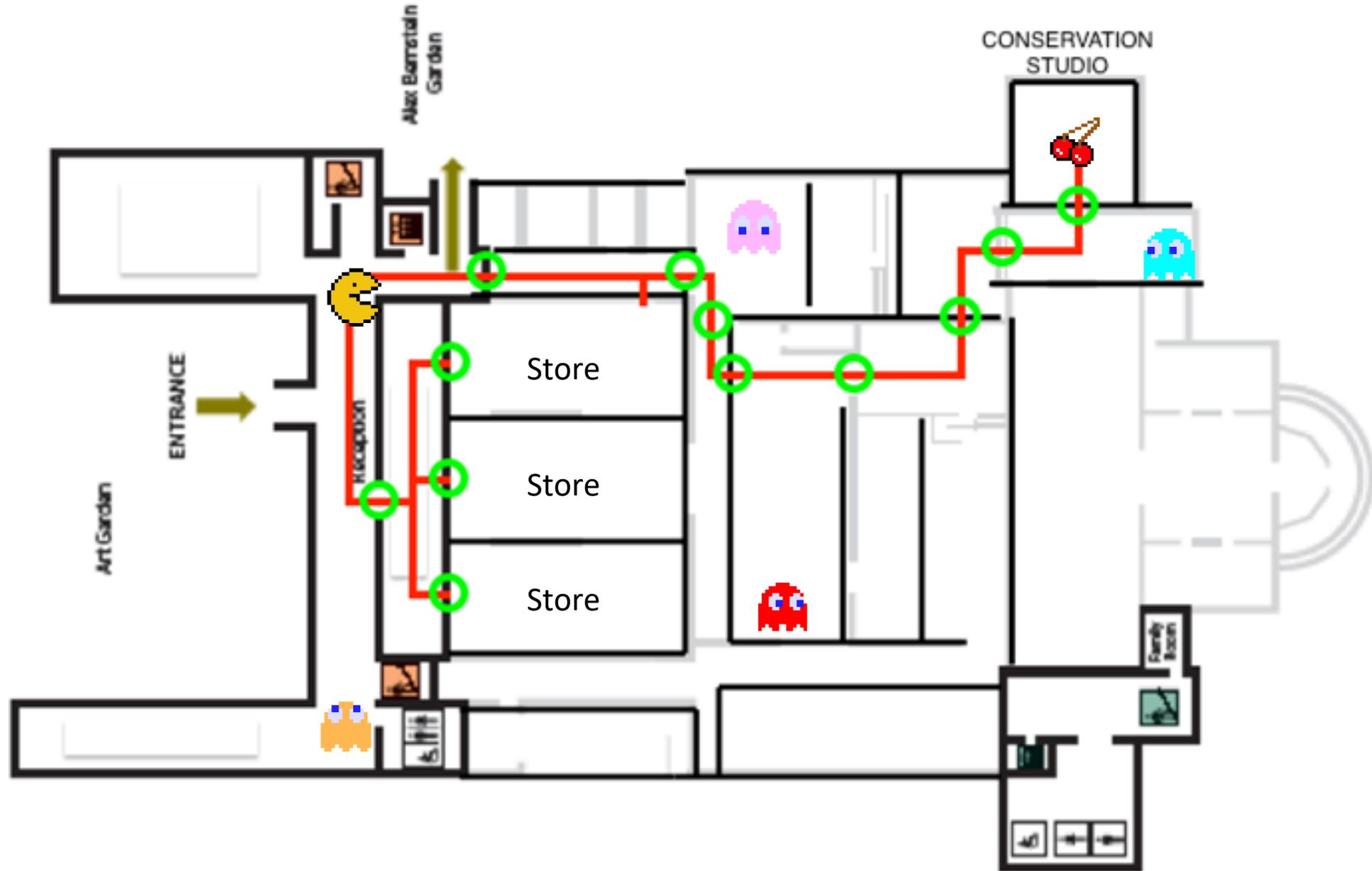
Gallery 9 - Landscape Gallery



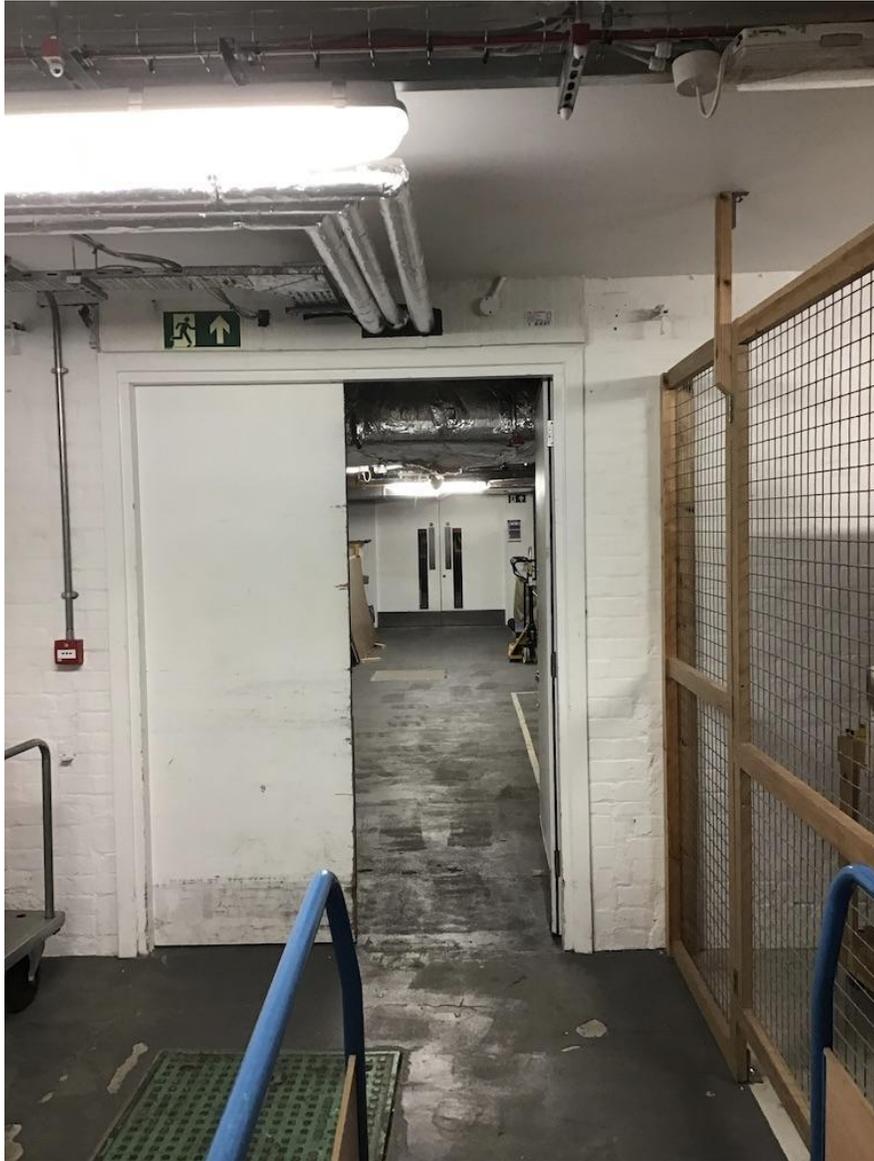
Main Galleries 6, 7 and 8



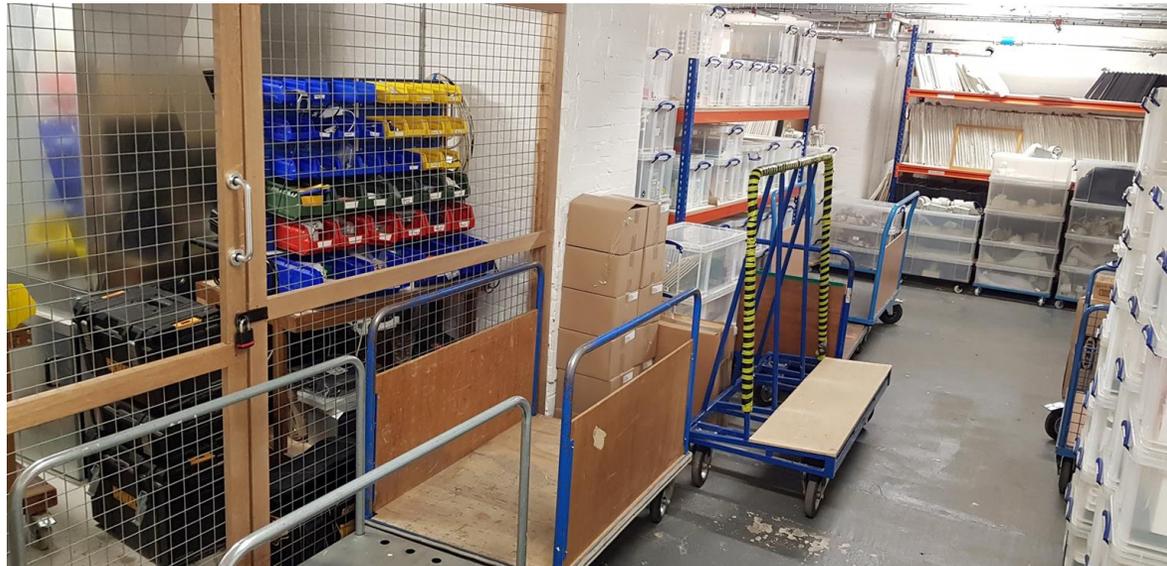
Access to Conservation Studio and Framing Area



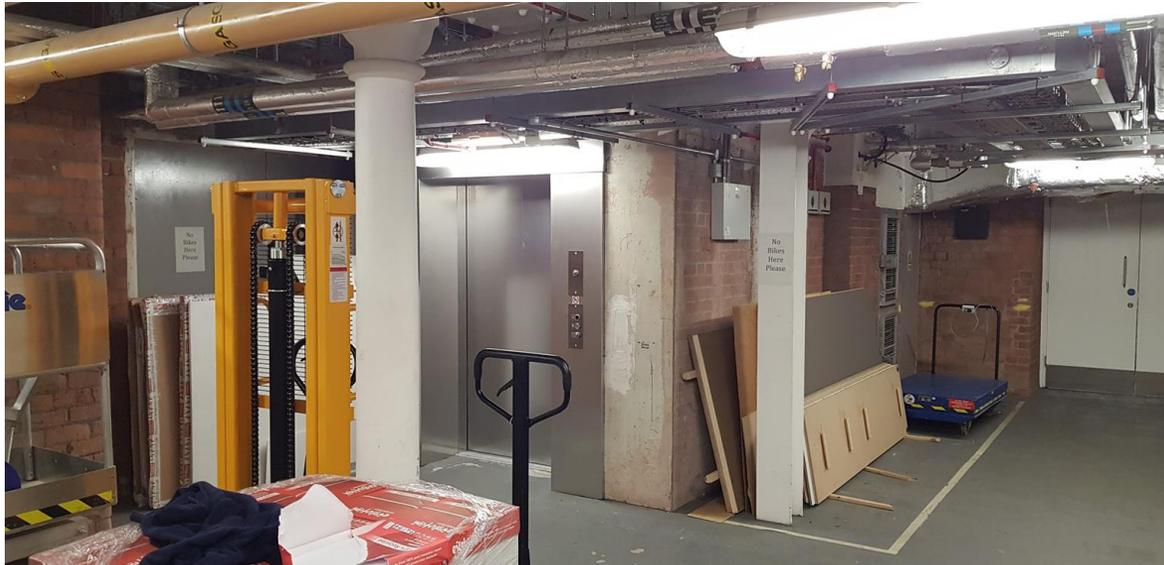
Access from storage



Using the original building



Access Routes - Storage and Equipment

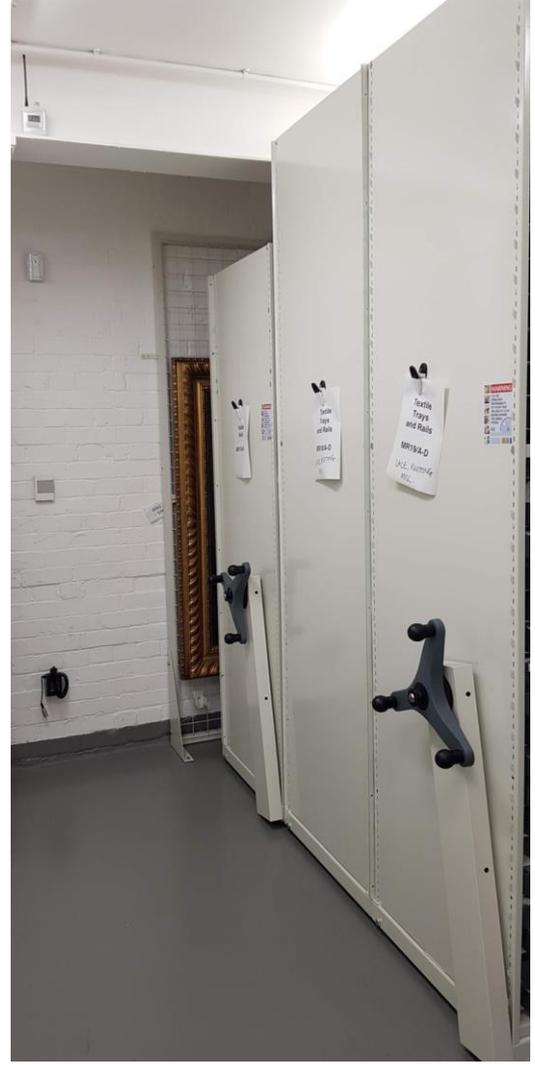
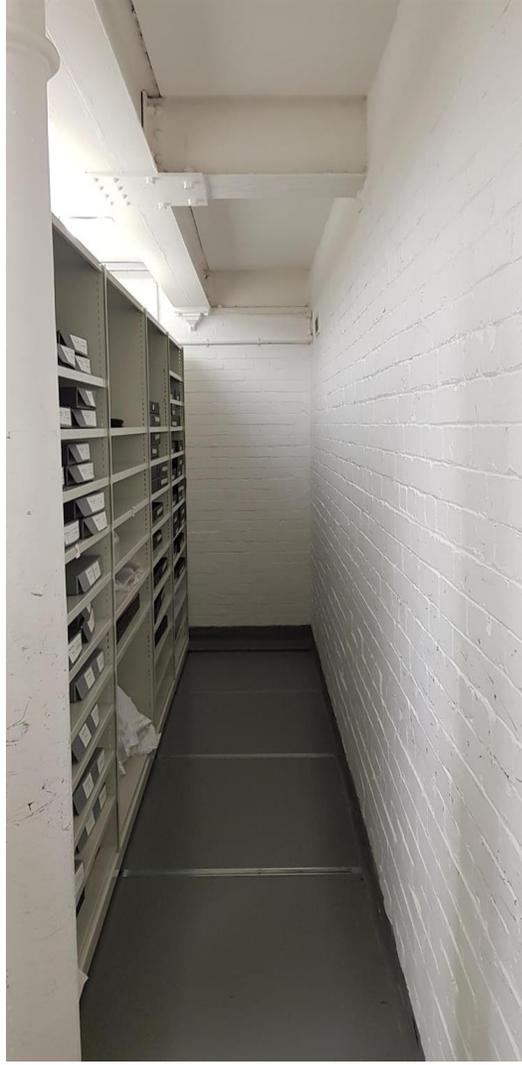


Alterations for the large rolled textiles



Consequences for the Collection.





Future Expansion



Width of Aisles

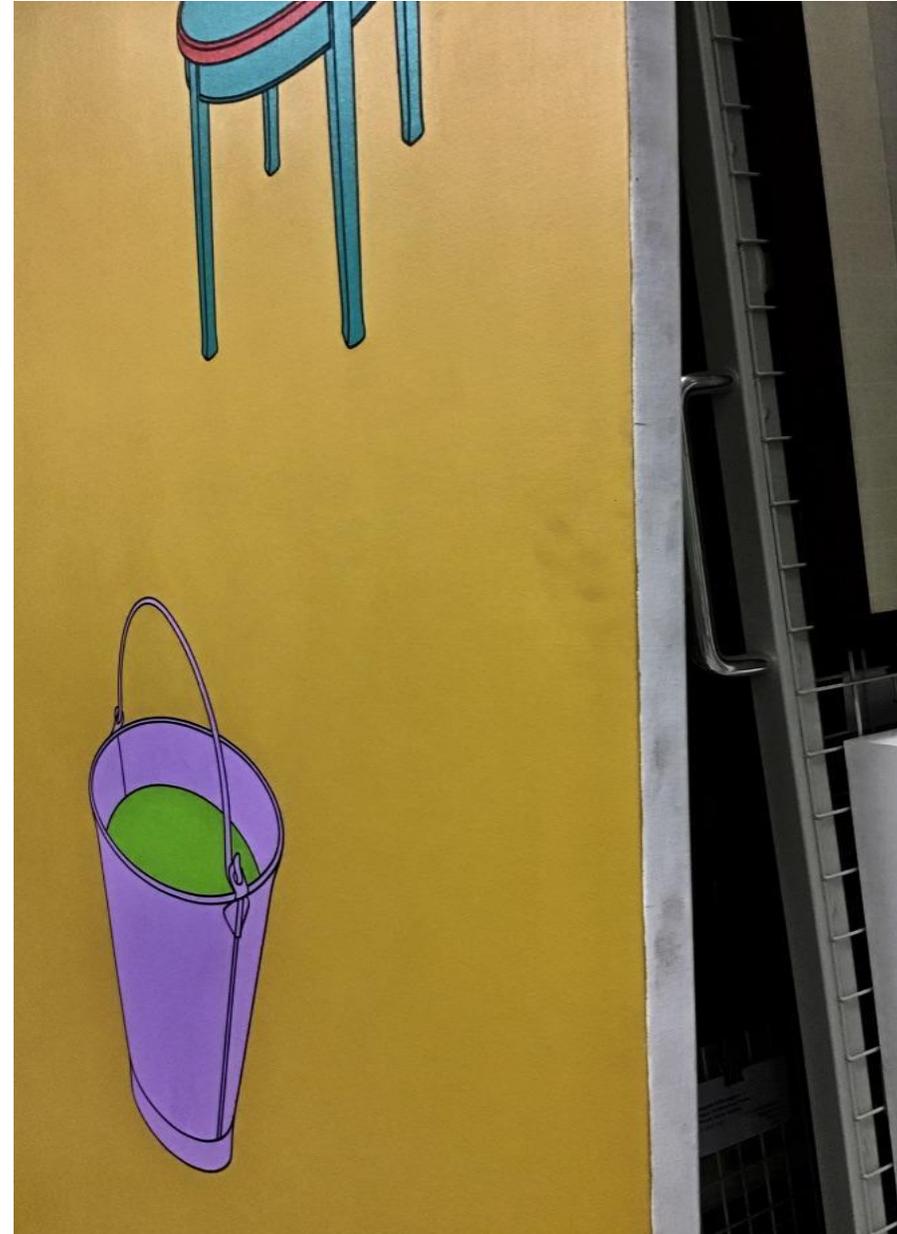
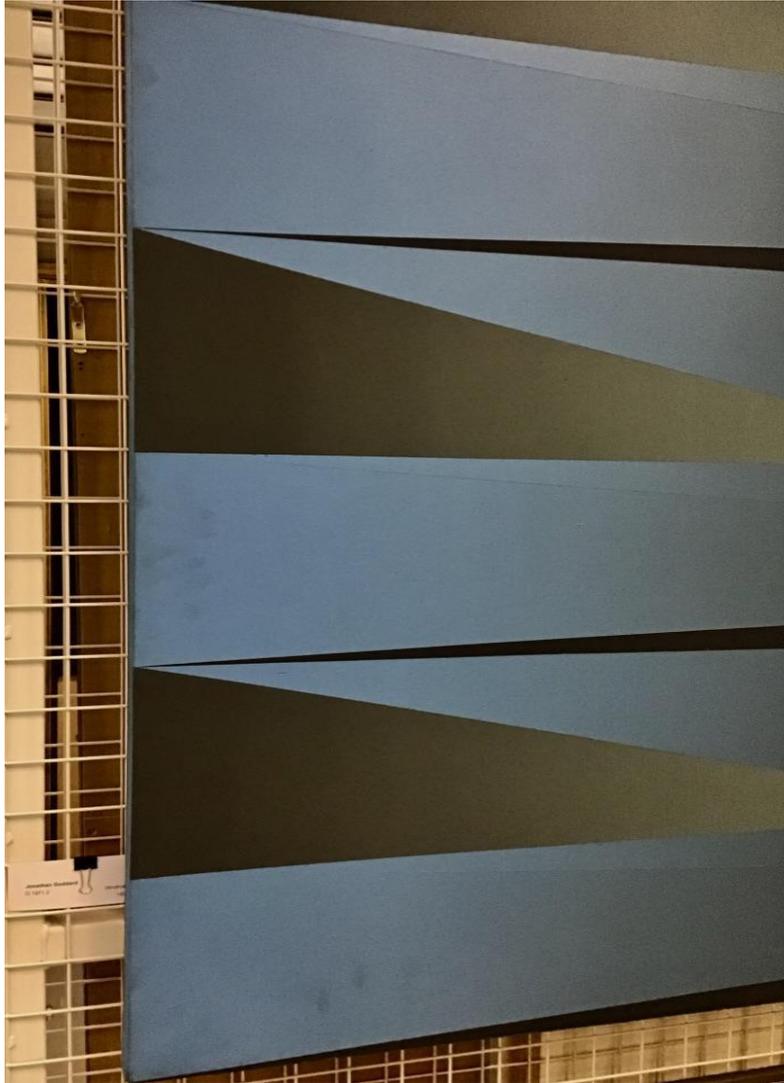




Collections Move



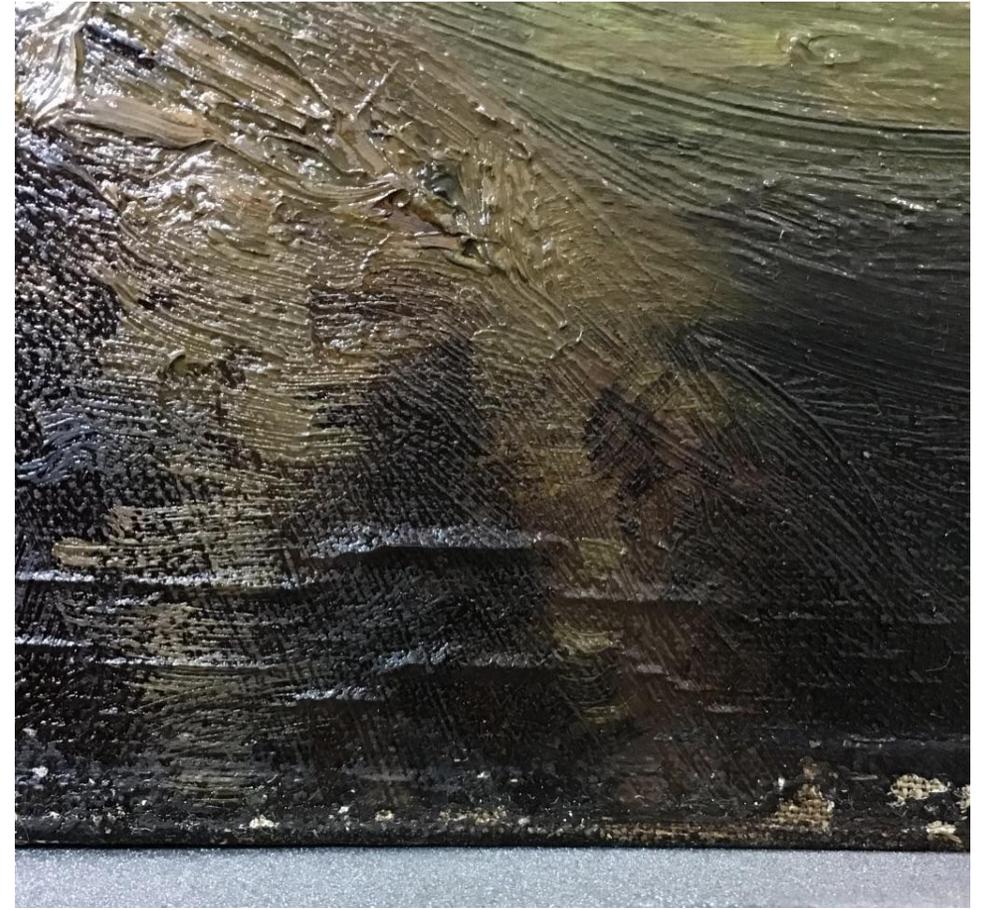
Consequences of speed



Fragility of decorative frames and un-framed un-glazed works



Soft wrapped fragile frames



Canvas reactions to high humidity



Consequences



Continuing work



Summary

- Long term effect on collections and staff
- No build goes to plan, lots of change and impact
- Budget for the decant and recant even when just moving the collection
- Declutter and deaccession before the development – create a post to do this
- Try to get someone from Collection Care to be on the development planning
- Reflect on how far you have come
- Be resilient, take lots of breaks and provide snacks/tea and coffee!
- Keep a staff room

