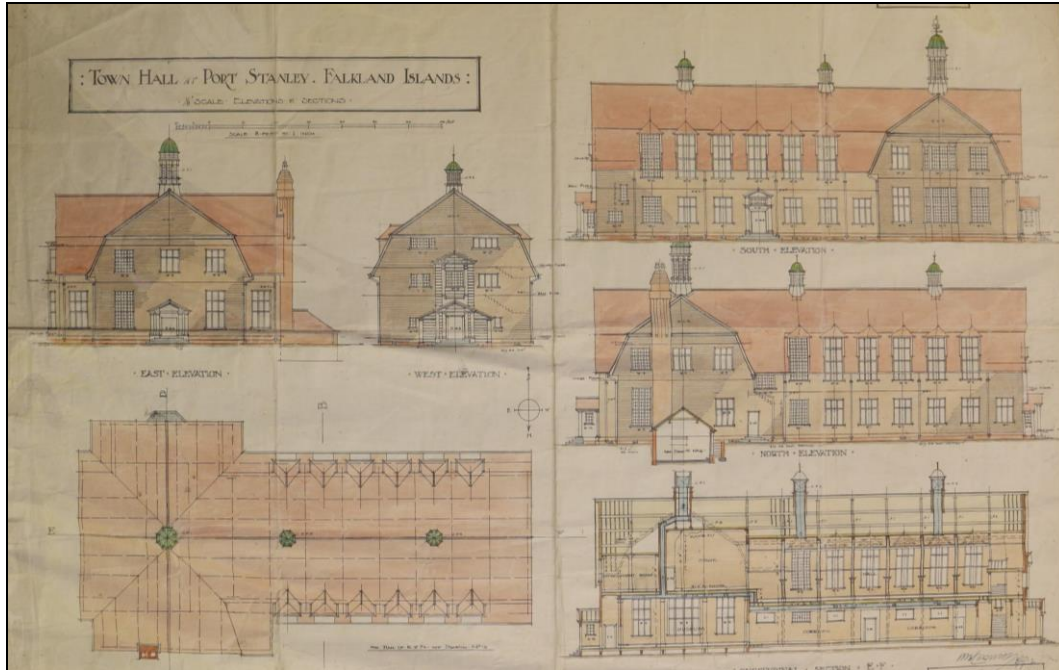# THE TOWN HALL
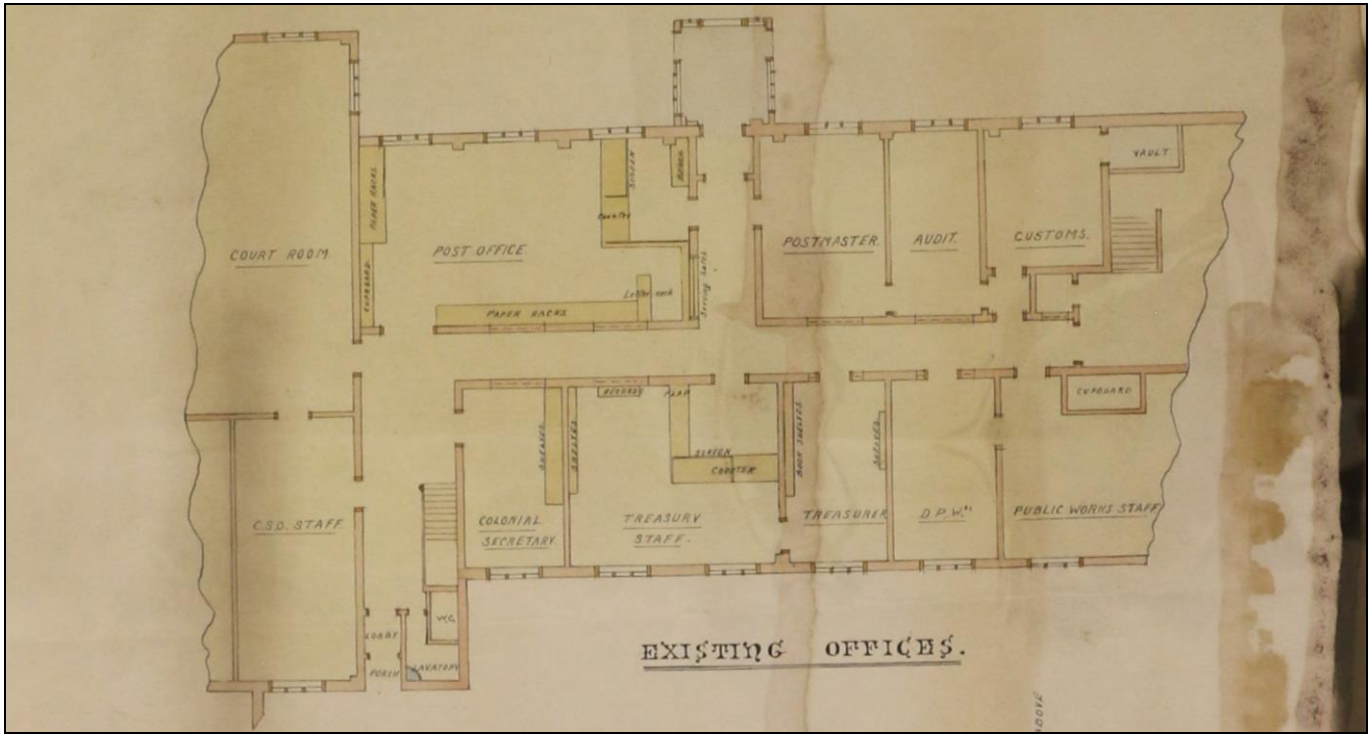## *(all photographs FIC Collection unless stated otherwise)*

After the Assembly Rooms were destroyed by fire in 1911 it was decided that a larger social and business centre was needed. The foundation stone for the Town Hall was laid 25 January 1913 and although it was open to the public from 1915 building work was not finally completed until 1917 at a cost of over £11,000.

The Town Hall was built to plans by Mr R Bruce Baseley, the Colonial Engineer, and was 144 feet long by 65 feet wide and it stood 47 feet high to the main ridge. The floor area was 884 square feet and the main hall was capable of seating 1,000 people. The building was roofed with red Somerset tiles and the cladding was pale yellow sheets of pressed tin designed to look like wooden clapboarding.
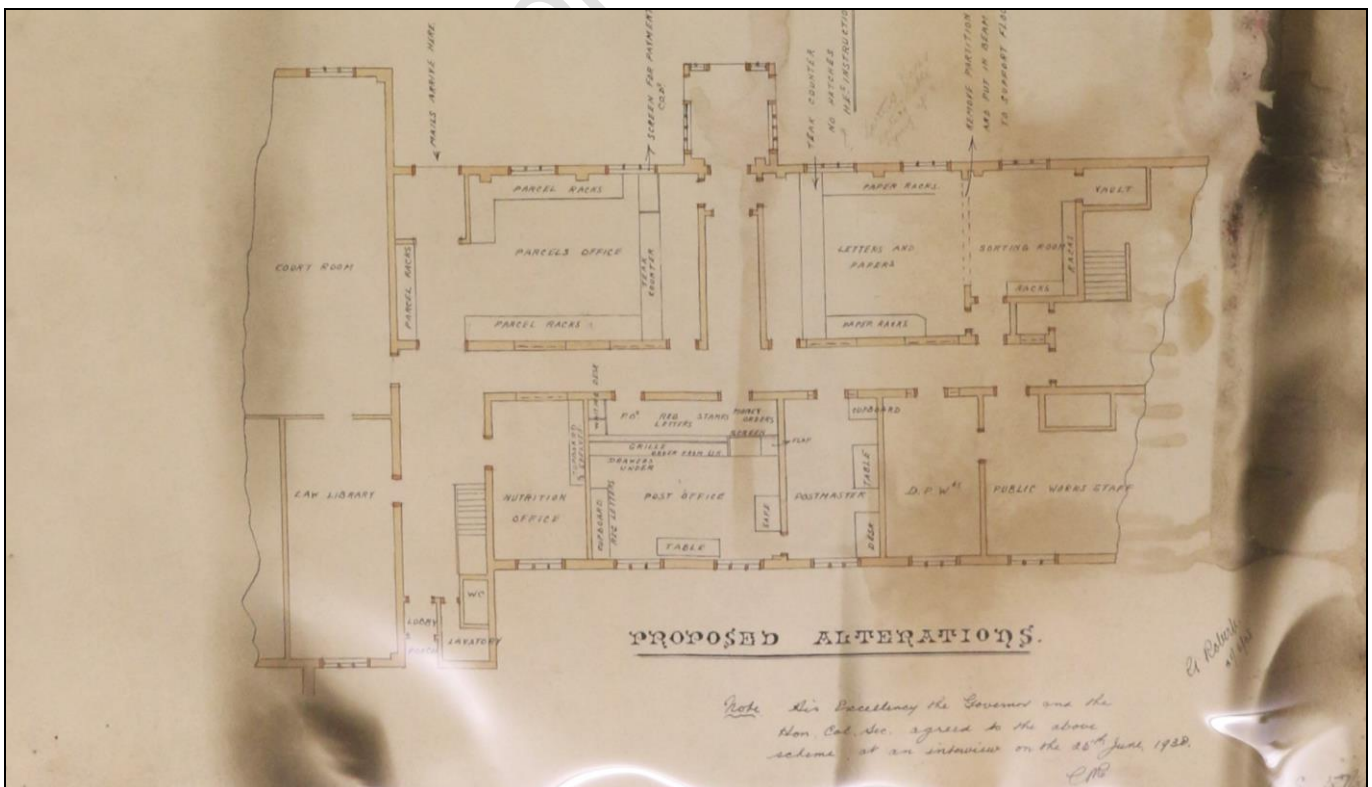

Town Hall from the south west, 1930s – Hamilton Collection

As well as the main hall the Town Hall housed the Treasury, Court House, Legal Office, Auditor/Headmaster's Office, Munitions Office, Post Office, Public Works Department, Public Library and Museum.

The Town Hall was the hub of the social life of Stanley with numerous dances, concerts and dramatic productions held there as well as fund raising activities by local organisations.

In 1928 an oil engine was purchased to provide electric lighting; in 1929 the windows were changed to casement style and in 1937 the clock was added.

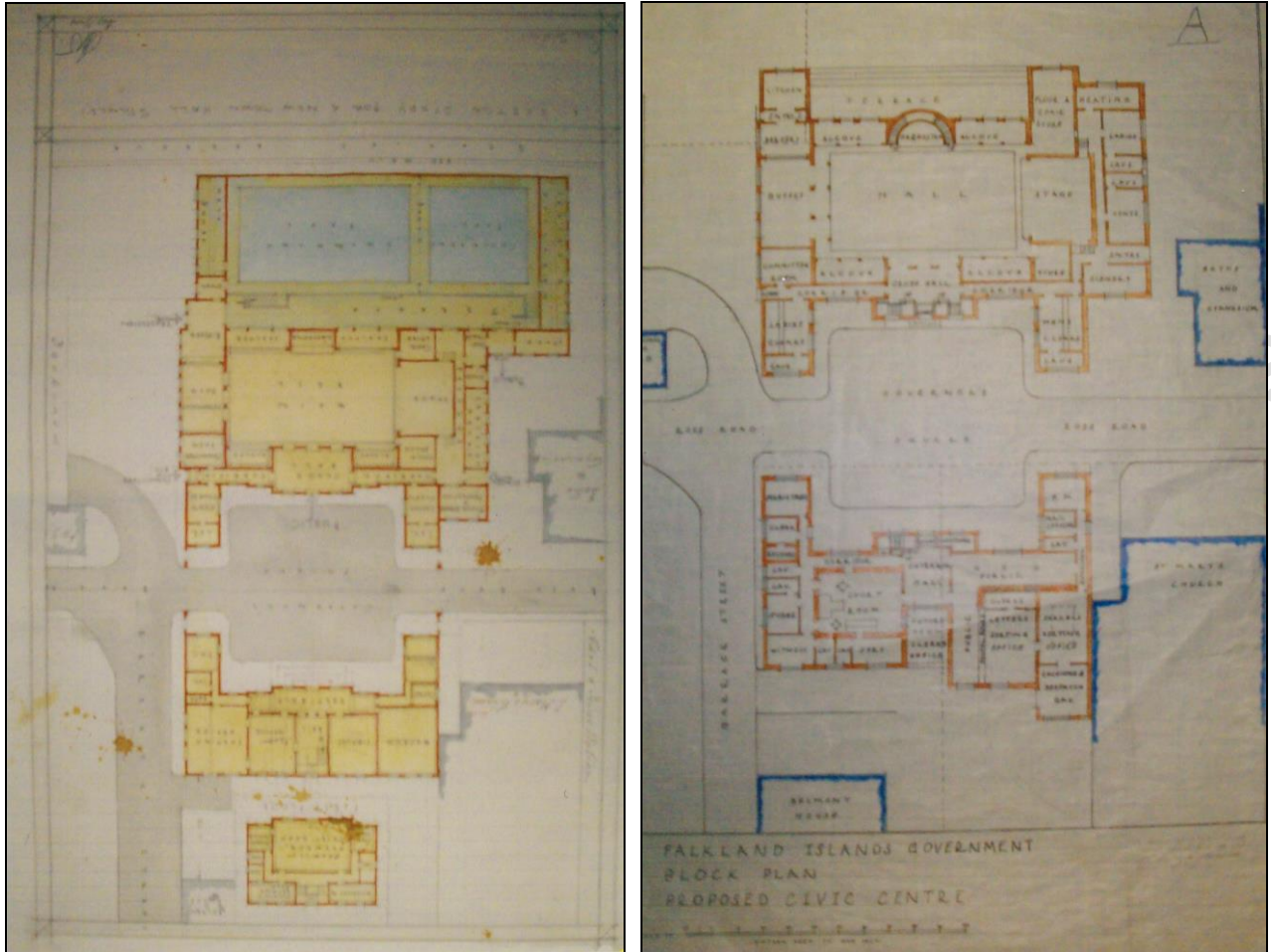

1938

Town Hall from the east

Town Hall from the north

Interior early 1940s

The Town Hall was accidentally destroyed by fire 16 April 1944 with the loss and damage of numerous government records.

Although many plans for a new Town Hall were put forward most had to be discarded as being too expensive to build. Above are two of the more ambitious plans put forward for the new Town Hall with the proposed new buildings arranged around an open area called Governor's Square and including what is now Mineral Resources on the south side of Ross Road. The first dated August 1944 shows children's and adults' outdoor swimming pools in the current Town Hall car park above the harbour and the second dated December 1944 a slightly less elaborate design.

Foundation building, new Town Hall looking south east – Tony Carey Collection, JCNA

Foundation building, new Town Hall looking south west – Tony Carey Collection, JCNA

Starting building the new Town Hall looking south west – Tony Carey Collection, JCNA

Building the new Town Hall, the inside – Tony Carey Collection, JCNA

The present Town Hall was officially opened on Empire Day 20 May 1950.