

# Case Study: Ashmolean Museum, Oxford

## Museum

Reputedly the oldest public museum in Britain, the Ashmolean improvements involved a new extension incorporating galleries, a conservation department and refreshment facilities as well as education and office provision. This extension provides access to the existing listed buildings by linking itself to the Cockerell Building and to the Cast Gallery. A key aim of the project was to make the museum as accessible as possible within the constraints of the existing buildings.

The museum had changed little in the last century and needed additional exhibition space, commercial provision (a roof-top restaurant) and staff offices. The scope of change provided major opportunities for improved internal access, including two new lifts, and much improved internal circulation.

David Bonnett Associates' (DBA) appointment commenced with an Access Audit that identified access limitations that might be addressed by the emerging design. Proposals included the installation of two lifts, to serve both the existing and new levels, new educational facilities and access to the roof-top restaurant.

A major challenge for the project was to develop the case for the removal of some 19th century internal steps that were a major obstacle to step-free internal circulation. As with similar projects elsewhere, DBA contributed a practical analysis of access and heritage issues resulting in a balanced conclusion and successful interventions. The Ashmolean Museum now meets the access standards expected of such an internationally renowned institution.



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### Project Details:

Location	London
Completion	2012
Architects	Rick Mather Architects
Clients	University Estates Directorate, Oxford University
Awards	Shortlisted for RIBA Stirling Prize 2010