



6

repositories were placed at the back of the site and a *porte cochère* at the entrance – with a linear wing of accommodation joining them and overlooking a space on the south side. This array of the distinctive elements in the brief was derived entirely from the security and control requirements, whose hierarchy was summarized in the zoning diagram [Fig. 3b]. Using this early conceptual framework, numerous layouts were planned and costed. Models 1, 2, and 3 [Figs. 4a–c] illustrate the major moves – 1 shows the competition submission with four repositories, 2 shows the T-shaped version, and 3 the simplified single wing of the built scheme. By that stage in the design, rockface investigations, and prudence, had pulled the repositories away from the quarry wall and created the secure delivery area.

During the feasibility study, the team visited other archives – notably Dorchester, Winchester, Nottingham and Swindon. Their plan forms were overlaid on the Jersey site [Fig. 5] and floor areas of each were tabulated to enable a better understanding of their similarities and differences to the Jersey brief. This ‘bench marking’ was particularly useful as a check on the Jersey brief for areas, relationships, budgets, and management regimes. Archives are a very bespoke building type and are bound to differ from each other so this comparative study brought confidence to the project. The other archives did not have museum/exhibition space or records management provision (the latter was dropped after this feasibility stage) and, with the exception of the Hampshire Records Office (a ‘statement building’), they were utilitarian and without a public presence.

The origin of the environmental control strategy lay in an informed proposition (based on MacCormac Jamieson Prichard’s work at the Ruskin Archive) and was mentioned at the first interview with the client body. Many historic libraries had successfully preserved books for several centuries before air conditioning was invented: it was our intuitive belief that the flywheel effect of heavy mass materials could be refined to give both thermal and moisture stability. It was to take a great deal of original research by Chris Twinn of Ove Arup to prove how this could work and be modelled and then be monitored and controlled by the building management system (BMS) (see the account on pp.222–228). However, a diagram of this approach was presented [Fig. 6] to the interview panel.

The Ruskin Archive (Davey, 2000) achieves environmental stability by the ‘Russian doll idea’ of a building within a building [Figs. 7a–d]. On that project, the funders had been nervous of achieving stability without air-conditioning and had insisted on spare space for any necessary retrofitting of plant: following the building’s completion, monitoring demonstrated that this was unnecessary.

Scheme design

To announce its public role, the entrance to the Archive is from a new alcove, a pedestrian sanctuary [Figs. 1 and 8], off a narrow one-way residential street. The small neighbouring private cottages reconcile the large-scale intervention of the Archive, and the townscape device of the forecourt recesses the *porte cochère* into the terrace. This modernist *porte cochère* literally spans the gap, embracing vehicular and