

Victoria and Albert Museum / Public Record Office

project	Victoria and Albert/ Public record Office. Rehousing the National Art Library, feasibility study
location	Chancery Lane, London WC2
client	National Art Library/ Victoria and Albert Museum
dates	1996-1997
cost	£5.5-£10 million
area	10,000m ²

The study was carried out in two phases with reports submitted to the V&A in September and November 1996.

The Public Record Office Building in Chancery Lane is a fine listed 19th century gothic building. The earlier part, designed in the 1850's by Sir James Pennethorne is a fascinating example of the nineteenth century ability to invent building types appropriate to their use; in this case an archive.

With the PRO moving to their new building at Kew, the V&A asked Long & Kentish to look at the feasibility of taking over the building in Chancery Lane for the National Art Library (now housed in cramped conditions in the V&A itself). The move would have two main benefits: giving the NAL 30-50 years capacity for growth and freeing space in the V&A museum for display.

