UCL Bicentenary Heritage Statement

Prepared for University College London

July 2024

Alan Baxter
50 YEARS IN PRACTICE

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Contents

Executive Summary

University College London's iconic Wilkins Building lies at the heart of their historic campus. It's distinctive portico and dome form the emblem of the UCL, identifying the university's buildings across Bloomsbury and beyond. This monumental building is as historically significant as it is architecturally striking as the earliest building of the wider university, one of the country's first institutions to admit men regardless of their religious affiliation and later, the first in the world to admit women.

As with higher education more generally, the building has undergone significant change since it first opened its doors in 1826, with the interiors evolving to meet the changing needs and expectations of a functioning modern university. Most significantly, following extensive and irreparable damage in the Second World War, the interiors of the building were substantively remodelled and the exteriors, including the dome, partially rebuilt.

Originally built in isolation, the Wilkins Building now stands as the eastern range of five separate buildings that enclose a quadrangle. Although only the eastern building that bears his name was initially completed, Wilkins always planned it to be the centrepiece of a set of encircling buildings around a central quadrangle although it would be a century before this vision was completed. The resulting central quadrangle is simply furnished with limited seating and a landscape of little aesthetic merit or historic interest. It is, in a sense, the last unfinished element in the set piece of the university buildings. This is a busy space however, not only functioning as part of the entrance sequence to the university's main buildings but also playing host to many of the university's outdoor gatherings from Welcome Week Fairs to vociferous student protests, acting as something of a 'town rectangular' for the university. It also forms the setting by which the encircling Grade I listed buildings are seen and appreciated.

Despite this important function, the quadrangle manages to feel both sparsely furnished and yet cluttered with later structures – a somewhat underwhelming space, ill-suited to forming the primary arrival sequence of the University's most historic buildings.

With the bicentenary of the university fast approaching, UCL would like to take the opportunity to improve this last part of the historic development of the university core, to better reflect and support the demands on the space that a twenty-first century institution imposes and give it some much needed attention. With a designed capacity to accommodate the different types of events that occur there, the quadrangle will be more resilient and robust to wear and tear as well as more welcoming. These proposals seek to improve the quality and intangible 'feel' of the quadrangle thus enhancing the setting of the listed buildings that surround it.

Within the Wilkins Building itself, the proposals also seek to improve the permeability of rooms along the western side of the North and South Cloisters and to update the quality of those spaces and supporting services. Whilst this would involve some change to historic fabric, the overall improvement and increased use of the original suite of rooms would be improved and the needs of the university better supported.

Most importantly, the university seeks to make the entire building accessible to all users regardless of mobility and to ensure that movement around the Wilkins Building is dignified for all users via high-quality, designed spaces rather than via the agglomeration of evolved routes that currently exist. UCL's aspiration is to maintain this iconic building in full use for the next two centuries of its continuing evolution as a world-leading higher education institution.

Working with ecologists, the landscape has been designed to provide planting and new habitats in accordance with the principles set out by the Wild Bloomsbury campaign. To achieve this vision, the University have appointed the experienced Burwell Architects , who are already familiar with the Wilkins Building, having designed the striking library stair and refectory within the Wilkins Building's iconic octagon and sensitively updated the previously mundane basement refectory to an attractive and resilient space.

The proposed quadrangle redesign will be the first holistic design for the space since Wilkins' original sketch in 1826. Like Wilkins, the new proposal seeks to subtly guide visitors to the main entrances of the buildings (including the Grade I listed Slade School of Art). The new scheme would reinstate the routes of Wilkins' original curving paths from Gower Street to the North and South Wings but complement this with a beautiful and well-considered landscape design, purposely designed to accommodate the many diverse uses that are a long part of the quadrangle's intangible history, from relaxed celebrations to passionate protest. The scheme would be a contemporary take on a neo-classical amphitheatre, providing the best of twenty-first century accessible design in strongly neo-classical context, all finished in English stone with cast stone benches and fittings. To achieve this holistic reimagining of the space, the scheme proposes gradual level changes including the replacement of existing access ramps with smaller, more visually discreet bridges to the North and South Wings and the Slade School of Art, executed in Portland stone. This would return all users, regardless of mobility, to the designed accesses of these historic buildings, outweighing any harm from the fully reversible stone structures covering the existing steps.

Within the Wilkins Building, an existing staircase is to be converted to a fully accessible lift and staircase, providing step-free access to the mezzanine level for the first time and improving legible access for all users to all levels. To achieve this substantial benefit, some historic fabric must be removed to accommodate the new vertical access. Any harm from this is substantially outweighed however, by the enhancement of the octagon as the principle vertical circulation space as historically intended and the improvements to the overall legibility Similarly, Burwell's considered and contextual connections between the underused original rooms on the western side of the Wilkins Building and the Cloisters will result in some loss of fabric. As a result of the proposed careful and exemplar detailing however, the substantial heritage and functional benefits of better revealing and using these western rooms would outweigh any harm arising as a result of the loss of fabric.

Despite significant and notable changes, the proposals are nonetheless offered to decision makers and heritage stakeholders as enhancing the setting significance and setting of the Wilkins Building and the setting of all of the enclosing Grade I buildings around the quadrangle as well as the Grade II observatories within it. The works would additionally improve the quality of the appearance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area and as a result, be fully complaint with the NPPF and Policies D2 of the LB Camden Local Plan.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This report has been commissioned from Alan Baxter Ltd by University College London (hereafter, 'UCL' or 'the University') to support listed building consent and planning applications for works to the Grade I listed Wilkins Building; the quadrangle of UCL's main campus on Gower Street and light refurbishment to the Grade II listed observatories.

The works are intended to improve accessibility; functionality and flexibility within the university's core buildings and to improve the quality of experience and wayfinding within the quadrangle. This report sets out the history of development within the core university buildings; the significance of the Wilkins Building and quadrangle and the impact of the proposed works on that significance.

1.2 Site and scope

University College London was founded in 1826 in its current location in the then open fields to the north of London. Originally known as University of London, the institution was originally composed of the single, if monumental, twenty-two bay range topped with a copper dome that now forms the Wilkins Building. The building was the first phase of a planned expansion around a central quadrangle that would take a full century to be completed. It is the Wilkins Building, and the quadrangle itself that form the application site (hereafter, the Site).

The Wilkins Building is today flanked by two linked, projecting wings which project forward (westward) towards Gower Street. These are now known as the North Wing, housing the Slade School of Art to the north (hereafter 'the North wing' or simply 'the Slade'), and the South Wing to the south. Together with two ranges fronting Gower Street (the North-West Wing and the Chadwick Wing to the south-east), these enclose the rectangular courtyard of the quadrangle, which is reached via two entrance lodges directly on Gower Street.

The lodges are 1980s replicas of the original Georgian lodges which were relocated closer together to accommodate extensions to the neighbouring buildings. The quadrangle also accommodates two, early twentieth-century observatories and a recent, two-storey, semi-permanent structure taking up much of the southern half of the space called the Main Quad Pop-Up.

1.3 Designations

With the exception of the unlisted entrance lodges, all of the structures that surround the quadrangle are Grade I listed with many of the buildings in the near vicinity also listed or identified as positive contributors to the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. The two observatories in the centre of the quadrangle are Grade II listed, as is the Cruciform Building on the western side of Gower Street.

1. Wilkins Building
2. Student Hub
3. South Wing
4. Chadwick Building
5. Lodges
6. North-West Wing
7. North Wing/Slade School of Art
8. Cruciform Building (former University College Hospital)
9. Physics Building

Fig. 1: Site plan

The Physics Building to the rear of the Wilkins Building is also Grade I listed, by virtue of its physical attachment to the Wilkins Building but is not of particular architectural or historic merit.

The two 1980s replica lodges to the entrance to the courtyard are not formally identified as buildings of merit within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area but we have afforded them status as undesignated heritage assets worthy of consideration.

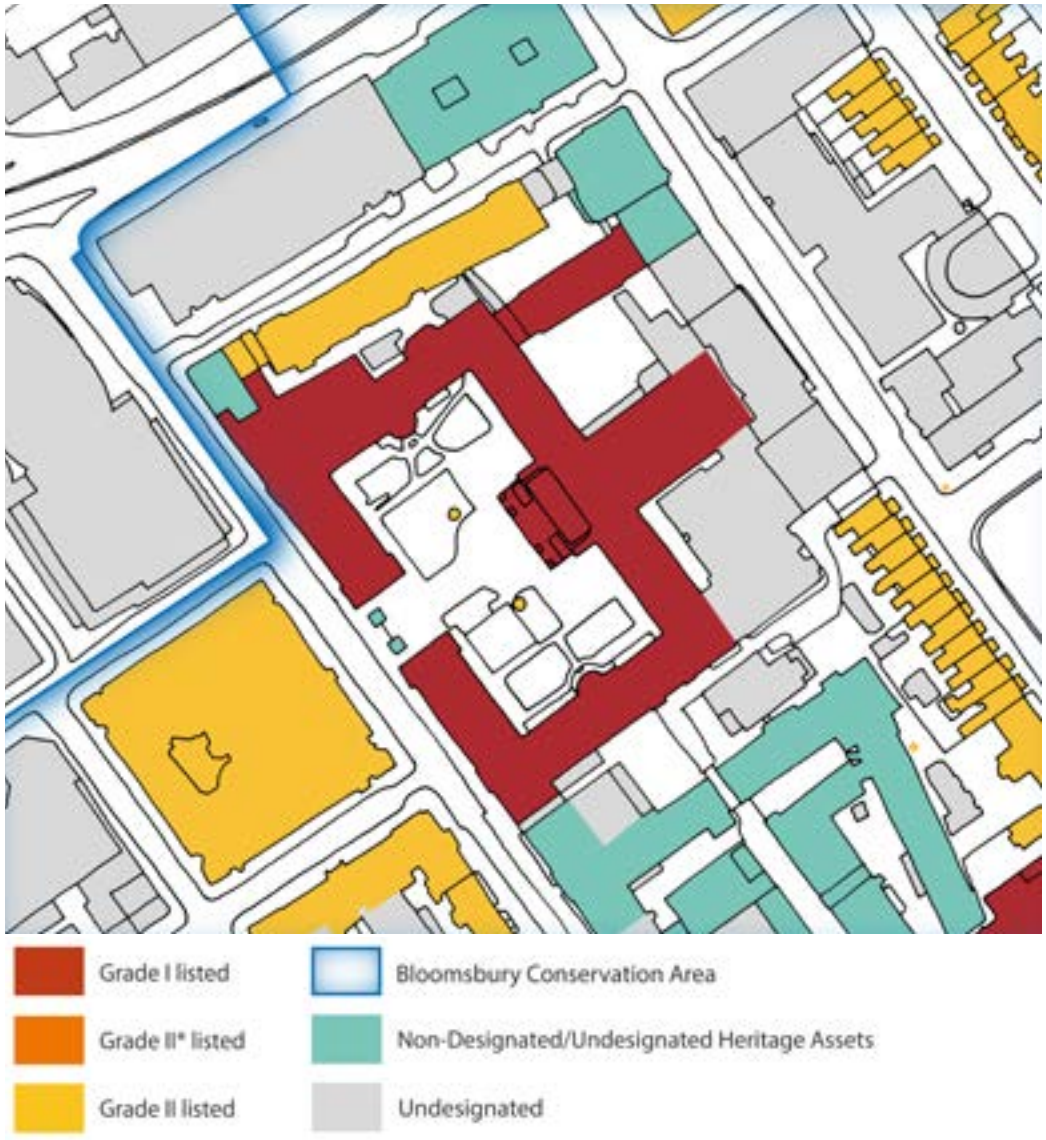


Fig. 2: Heritage designations around the core UCL buildings

1.4 Planning context

UCL has been subject to near constant change since its foundation in 1826 with the original buildings around the quadrangle substantially extended throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. As the university grew in size and popularity, UCL's functions and teaching expanded into pre-existing houses and then purpose-built buildings across Bloomsbury, an area which has become intimately associated with the university.

The planning system was introduced in 1948 when a substantial amount of the wider campus was being rebuilt following extensive post-war damage. Within the Wilkins Building, there was extensive rebuilding to repair damage sustained in wartime bombing with much of the north and south ranges of the Wilkins Building rebuilt internally. These north and south ranges of the Wilkins Building (now generally known as the North and South Cloisters) are distinguished from the connected, but later, North and South Wings that run perpendicular to them and enclose the quadrangle. All of the buildings around the quad were listed in 1954 and internal works should therefore be recorded within the planning record but information is relatively scant.

1.5 Methodology, sources and limitations

1.5.1 Methodology

This report broadly follows the suggested structure for impact statements set out in Historic England's *Advice Note 12: Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in the Historic Environment* (2019). Any variations from this structure reflect the specific circumstances and characteristics of the scheme and have been adopted to bring clarity to the reader.

Where relevant, the advice given in Historic England *Advice Note 12* and *Advice Note 16: Listed Building Consent* (2021) and *Good Practice Advice in Planning: The Setting of Heritage Assets* (GPA3, 2017) has also been followed.

Site visits were made to the university building throughout 2024.

1.5.2 Sources

A list of sources is provided at Section 5.1, including records kept by Alan Baxter by Alan Baxter over its twenty year history of involvement with the historic buildings of UCL.

During digitisation of the original records supporting the 2003 study, some original archival numbers and locations have regrettably been lost. Where this occurs, the Alan Baxter Management Guidelines document is identified as the source.

1.5.3 Limitations

It is the nature of existing buildings that details of their construction and development may be hidden or may not be apparent from a visual inspection. The conclusions and any advice contained in our reports — particularly relating to the dating and nature of the fabric — are based on our research, and on observations and interpretations of what was visible at the time of our site visits. Further research, investigations or opening up works may reveal new information which may require such conclusions and advice to be revised.

As noted above, the list of original sources in the 2003 UCL Management Guidance has been lost. Images from that report, which are likely to have been sourced from a combination of UCL's archives; the RIBA and the National Archives, have been credited as Alan Baxter 2003 Report, until such time as images are fully accredited.

1.6 Building Naming

The various buildings of the university have undergone name changes over their existence, including the use of 'The North and South Cloisters' for the former North and South Wings of the Wilkins Building, which more accurately included open-air Cloisters at ground-floor level only when originally built. For ease of communication, the buildings are generally referred to by their current names unless relevant to a specific historical point.

2.0
Understanding the Site

2.1 Development of the campus

UCL was founded as the University of London in 1826, as a radical social experiment to provide higher education to men regardless of their religious affiliation, specifically, regardless of whether they were practicing Anglicans. Whilst modern eyes may view this as a rather narrow interpretation of equality and diversity, this was a radical and provocative idea at the time with the institution facing significant objection from the Establishment for its progressive ideology.

Undeterred, the original founders of the university's beliefs of egalitarian access to higher education were realised and the architect William Wilkins was commissioned to design a monumental neo-classical edifice: a temple to education for the (select) masses and a bold statement of intent of the seriousness of the institute's mission.

The neo-classical building, with its colossal ten-columned (or 'decastyle') portico was built on open land to the north of London's encroaching suburbs, controversially built without a chapel that then formed part of normal and expected university life at Oxford and Cambridge. Due to financial constraints, the interior and rear of the building were not complete at the time of opening with the planned wings enclosing a courtyard also delayed until the university had established itself financially.

In 1836, the success of the university and the growing public interest in social improvement saw the foundation of the University of London, of which the institution became a founding and integral 'college', taking the name 'University College London' and offering training for students to sit University of London degrees. Continuing its history of radical social change, the same year, it became the first university in modern times to admit women. In 1907, the University of London became a federal college and UCL was absorbed into it, although maintained its own identity throughout until finally being granted its own charter in 1977 as an independent university (if still wholly owned by the University of London). For clarity, references to 'the University' in this document refer to University College London, regardless of its formal status and relationship to University of London at the time.

Despite the University's early financial struggles in establishing itself, the institution increased in popularity as did the expanding curriculum, reflecting increasing specialisation in higher education. With the construction of wings to the north and south of the quadrangle in the late nineteenth century, and the completion of the Gower Street (west) side in the early twentieth century, the university began to spread beyond its original site into the burgeoning suburb of Bloomsbury, first by occupying existing buildings and later by building purpose-built accommodation. Several masterplans were started and halted in the twentieth century as the Second World War intervened and later, the nascent conservation movement hampered the University's Brutalist expansion.

The quadrangle within the original university core was finally enclosed in 1914 with the construction of the North-West Wing although this included a single-storey engineering building (the Chadwick Building), along south-eastern part of the Gower Street which was later extended upwards in 1922. The quadrangle was finally complete in its current form in 1986 when architects Casson and Condor demolished the original lodges to make way for extensions to the buildings on either side of them (the North-West Wing to their north and the Chadwick Building to the south), rebuilding the lodges in the process.

Today, UCL prides itself as one of the world's foremost educational institutions, famed for academic excellence and research brilliance. As it approaches its bicentennial year, it seeks to gently update its earliest buildings and spaces to reflect the quality and equality it stands for and is famous for across the world.

2.2 History

2.2.1 Early history

Prior to the nineteenth century, the area that would become UCL's historic core was open pasture associated with the nearby Saxon manor of Totten Hall which had existed in records since at least AD 1000. In the Tudor period, the manor passed into the hands of Elizabeth I and became a royal manor, known as Tottenham Court, eventually being bequeathed to Charles II's illegitimate son Henry Fitzroy, Duke of Grafton and Earl of Euston.

The manor remained in the ownership of the Fitzroys with the hall and its farm surviving until the construction of the New Road (now Euston Road) in 1756, across their land and through the presumably dated and no longer valued Tottenham Court, which was completely destroyed.

The road was intended to function as a drover's road, linking the ancient livestock routes west of London directly with Smithfield Market in the east without passing through the increasingly populous city. This aim soon altered however when the increasing fashion for townhouses amongst the wealthier classes spurred speculative growth between the city limits and the New Road, which was swiftly rebranded Euston Road after the Fitzroy's seat and itself developed with housing. Wishing to take advantage of the fortune to be made, Fitzroy's estate was laid out and gradually developed in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century with that part to the west of the original lane of Tottenham Court Road, now known as Fitzrovia in their honour.

In 1809, an engineer named Richard Trevithick built and operated a circular steam locomotive named 'Catch me if you can' for paying passengers on the undeveloped land south of the New Road. By chance, this, the world's first ever public railway would be built on the site of the future University's Engineering Department within the Chadwick Building, Gower Street. The attraction was an industrial success but not a commercial one however and Trevithick's Circus would eventually be dispersed and the land cleared (but perhaps as a consequence, was not developed as quickly as land further south).

By 1819, the southern part of Gower Street supported smart terraces of houses whilst Euston Road was developed along its length. Between the two, to the east of Gower Street, the route of roads had been mapped out (see Fig. 3 and Fig. 4) but the land remained undeveloped.

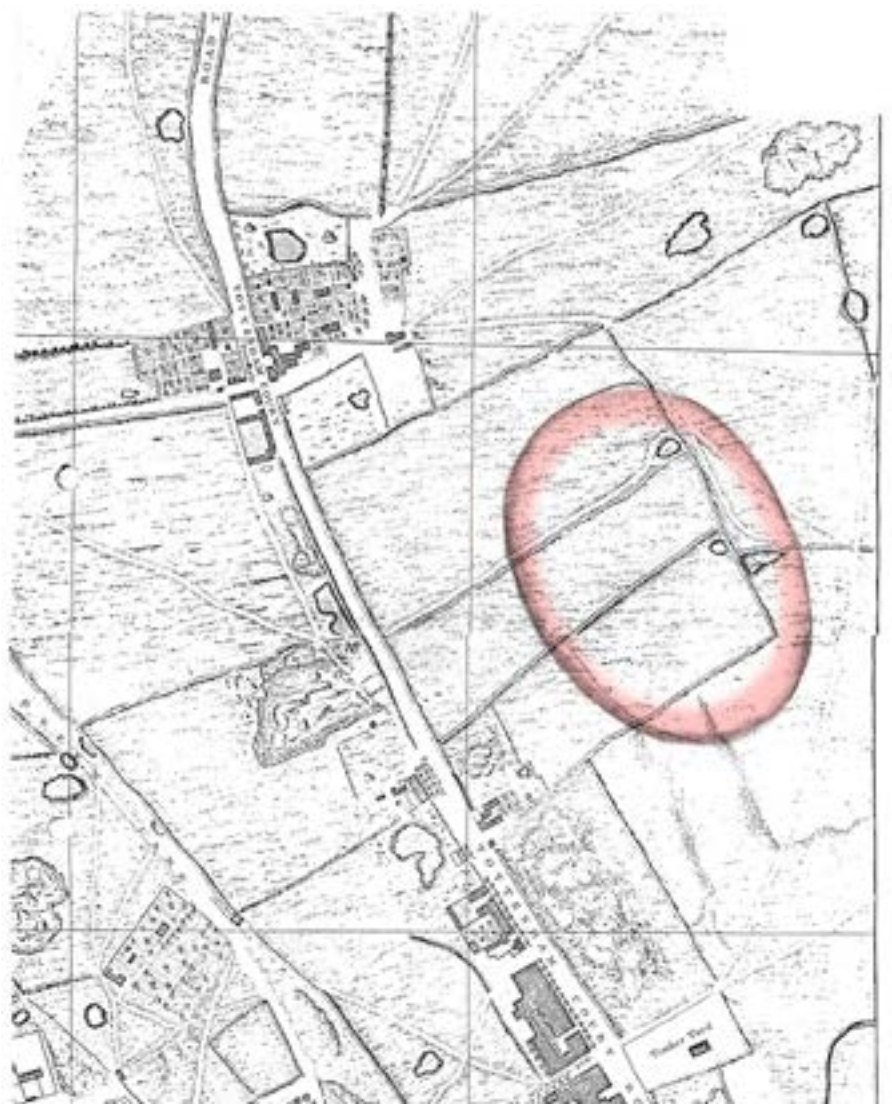


Fig. 3: Roque's Map of 1746, showing the Site to the east of Tottenham Court Lane. Tottenham Court can be seen to the North-West (around the present day junction of Tottenham Court and Euston Roads.

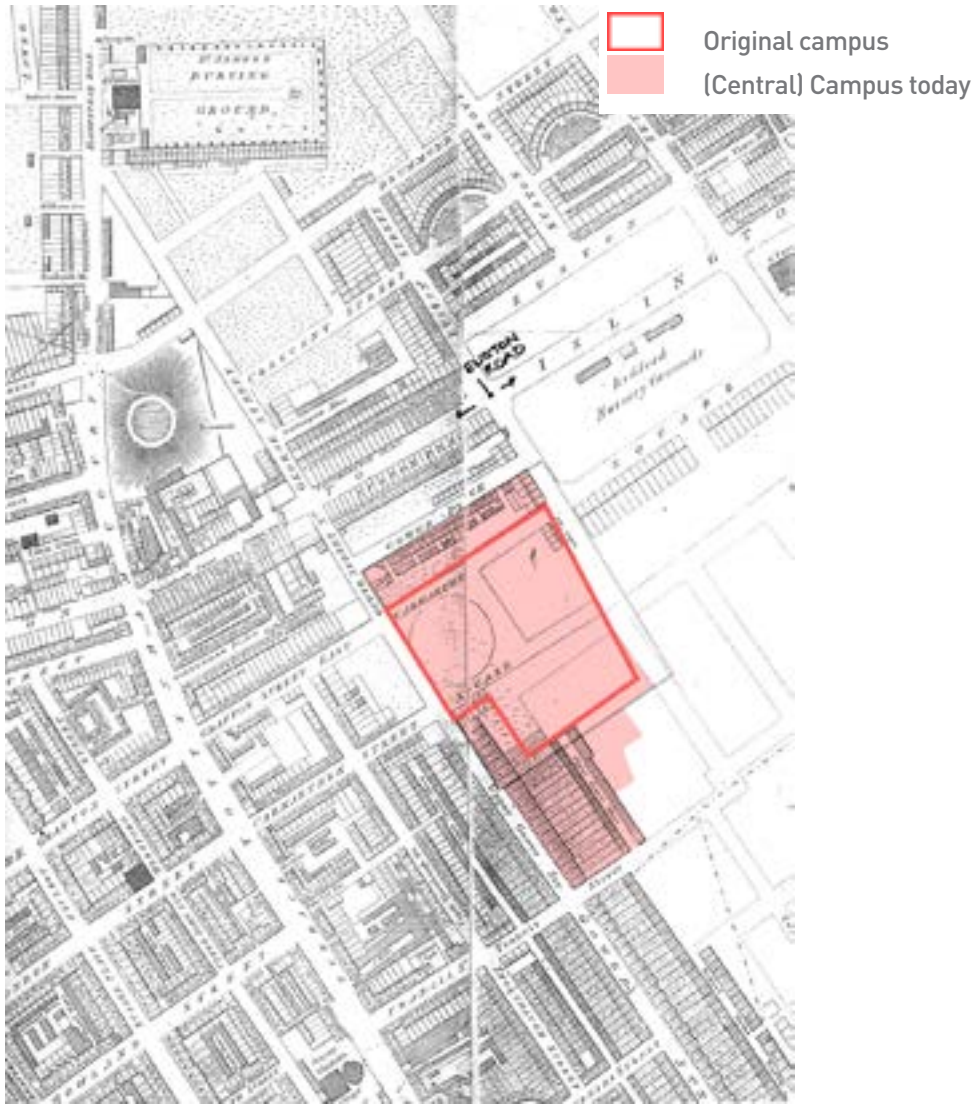


Fig. 4: The Site in 1819 – Bloomsbury remains undeveloped.

2.2.2 A new model university

At the turn of the nineteenth century, against a backdrop of increasing pressure for Catholic emancipation, and influenced by the Utilitarian philosophy of social reformers such as Jeremy Bentham, there had been a popular movement to open up education to a wider sector of society. At this time, university education in England was restricted to the colleges of Oxford and Cambridge and Roman Catholicism precluded anyone from an active role in university or civic life (with other denominations and faiths facing similar, if informal barriers to civic involvement). With the foundation of a successful university in Manchester in 1824 and the debates running up to the Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829, there were increasing calls amongst some of the Capital's intellectuals for a university in London, to be open to all (male) students regardless of religion. The radical nature of this egalitarian approach cannot be understated in Regency London, with the Establishment generally unsupportive of the enterprise. Undeterred, early promoters sought funding for the new university, selling £100 shares with a view to raising £ 300 000, with shareholders able to elect a Council to run the institution. The university's backers, including Jeremy Bentham himself, bought eight acres of land in the still undeveloped area east of Gower Street and published adverts seeking designs for the new buildings.

In 1826 architect William Wilkins submitted a neo-classical design for the site, radically omitting a chapel, which was accepted as the masterplan for the university. The plans were described by Neo-Gothic architect Augustus Pugin as *pagan…in character with the intentions and principles of the institution*, and by famously referred to by influential headmaster of Rugby School and Anglican commentator Thomas Arnold, as *that Godless institution of Gower Street*.

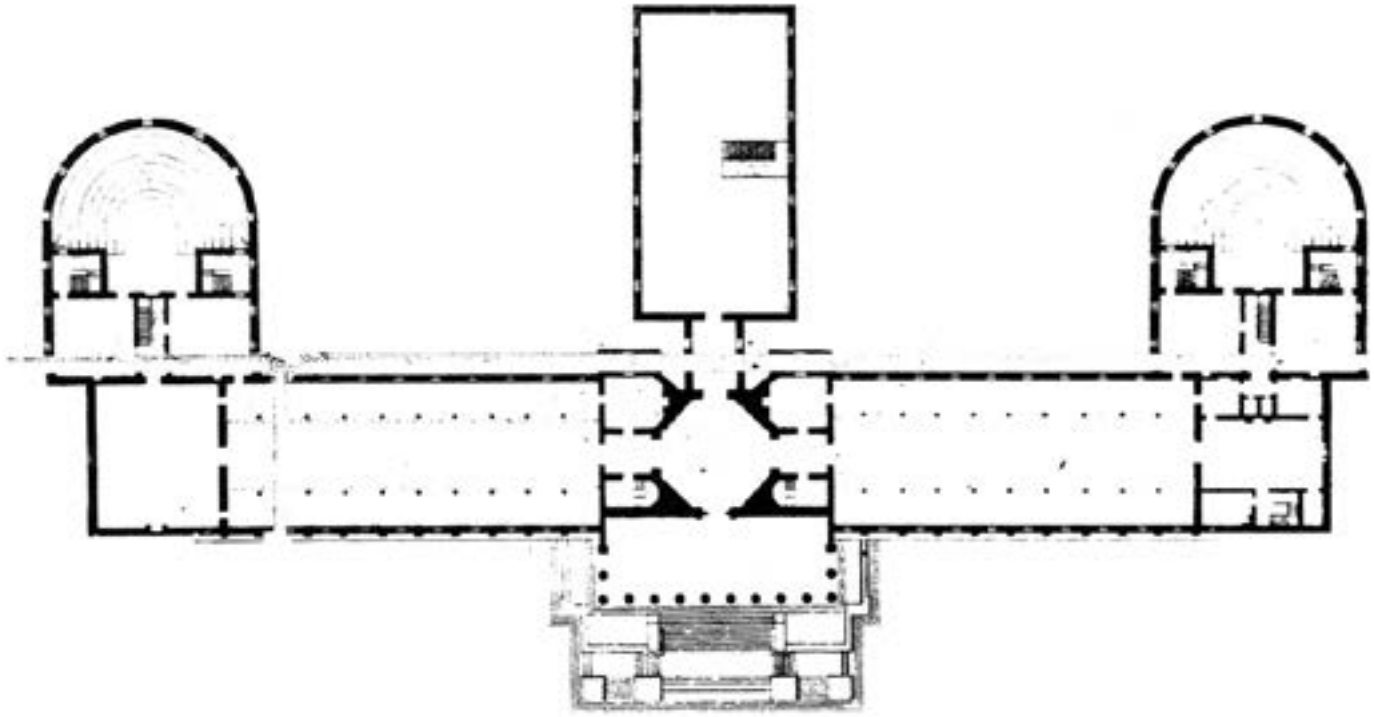


Fig. 5: Plan of the Wilkins building, as built, with the Great Hall moved behind the dome

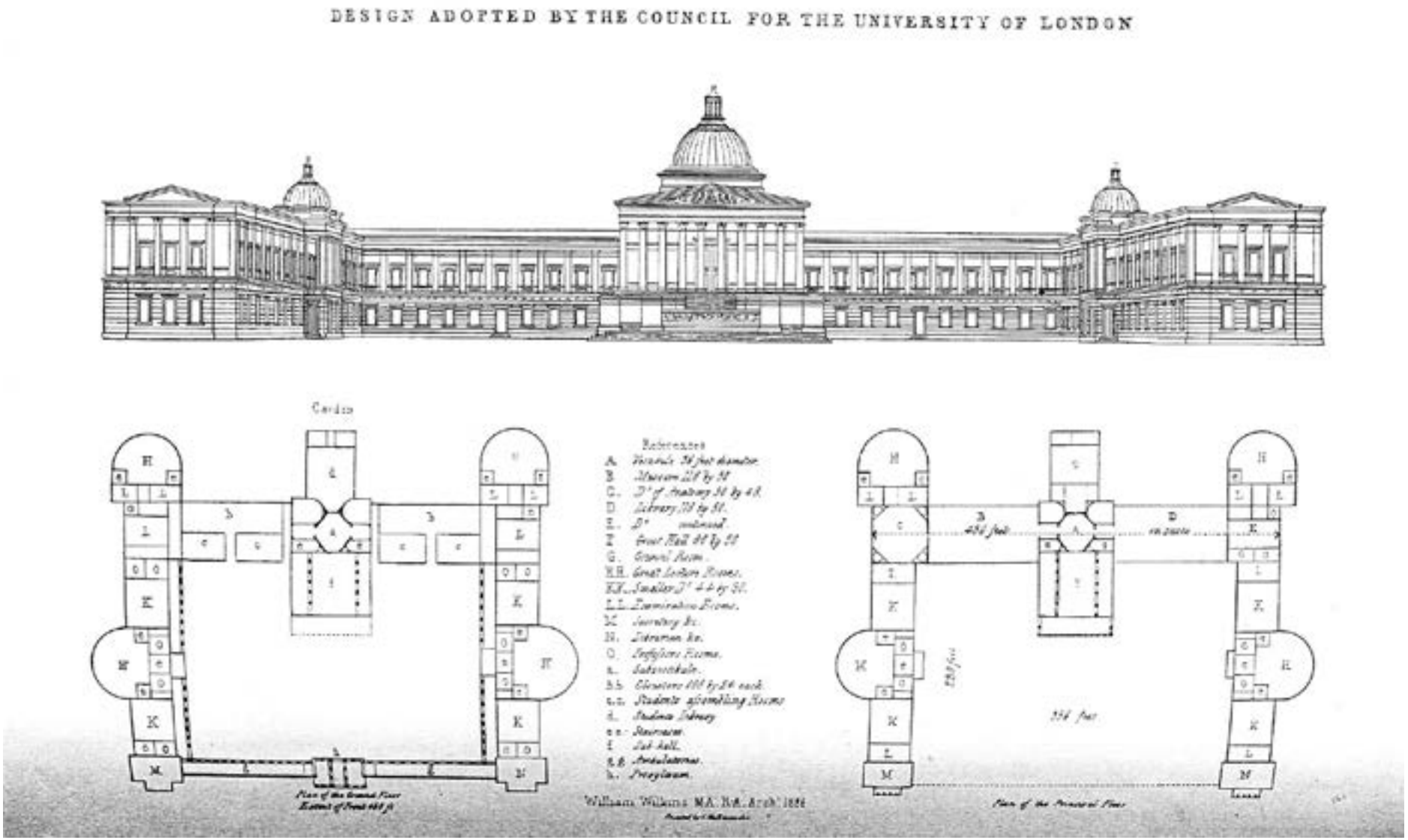


Fig. 6: William Wilkins' original scheme, with the Great Hall projecting into the Quadrangle

Wilkins's building was grandiose, designed to convey the seriousness of purpose that the university's founders believed in. Whilst its founding ethos was equality, that equality was understood through the prism of 1820s anti-establishmentarianism, i.e.: men whose Christian worship differed from the established state-approved Anglican practice. Whilst this may not seem radical or inclusive by twenty-first century standards, this was at the time, a near revolutionary statement of social and political change that was seen as subversively egalitarian by many contemporary commentators.

In 1868, UCL continued this radical history by being the world's first university to admit women (and the first one to award them degrees, if ten years later).

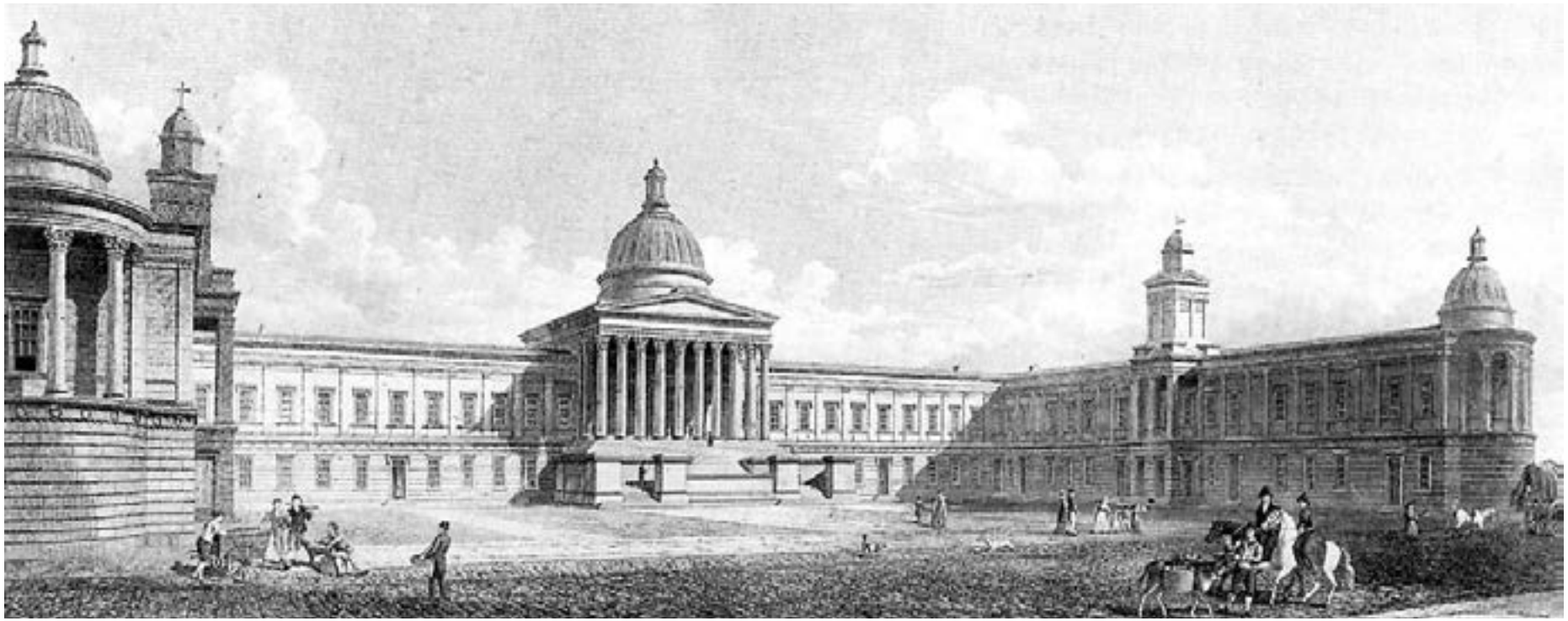


Fig. 7: Wilkins' original engraving of the propsoed scheme, c.1826

William Wilkins (1778-1839)
Wilkins was one of the leading figures in the English Greek Revival of the early 1800s, first as a classicist, then an archaeologist, then an architect. He was best known for his designs for the National Gallery in Trafalgar Rectangular (18?) and the main buildings of University College in 1826.

He toured Greece, Asia Minor and Italy between 1801 and 1804, before returning to England and winning the competition for Downing College, Cambridge. Thomas Hope had assisted this success by writing a supporting pamphlet and the college was built between 1807 and 1820. Also from 1804, work began at Grange Park, where Wilkins adapted the monumental Greek temple language to a private house set in a landscape.

In 1826 his neo-Grecian design won the competition for the new University College in Gower Street in London, although the built scheme was reduced for reasons of cost. A few years after UCL, his scheme for the National Gallery in Trafalgar Square was built between 1832 and 1838.

He was also known as a scholar, publishing *Antiquities of Magna Graecia* in 1807, *Atheniensia* in 1816, *Civil Architecture of Vitruvius* in 1812 and 1817 and finally *Prolusiones Architectonicae* in 1837.

Fig. 8: Wilkins' original statue, c.1826

2.2.3 The nineteenth-century university

Wilkins' original vision

Wilkins' plans were ambitious with a vision to enclose a quadrangle around a projecting central assembly hall. The main feature was a ten-columned portico raised on a rusticated plinth and approached by the central flight of stairs, anecdotally modelled on the Temple of Jupiter Olympus at Athens. This neo-classical frontage led to a Renaissance interior, topped by a now iconic dome. This was a symbol of the Enlightenment, a fact that would not have been lost on 1820s commentators. The dome sat above a central, octagonal vestibule from which the grander spaces in the adjacent wings could be accessed. At either end of the central block, two semi-circular lecture theatres protruded rearward to the east.

Beneath these larger spaces, at ground-floor level, were more domestically scaled rooms relating to the administration of the institution: offices; student assembly rooms and offices with arcaded 'Cloisters' along the eastern elevations, open to the air to allow students and lecturers to take exercise in inclement weather. Wilkins envisaged that the eventual North and South wings flanking the courtyard would also include such semi-circular lecture theatres, protruding to the rear of each wing, topped by smaller domes.

The Gower Street elevation was to be enclosed by an ambulatory (covered walkway) with a central propylon: a monumental, roofed gateway in Doric style although this was never built.

The new college

Subscriptions fell short of the originally hoped for £300 000 so that Wilkins' design had to be modified and delivered in phases. The Institution opened as the University of London in 1826 with the building only partially complete and no further funding to build the north and south wings.

What was built was the east range only with Wilkins' original hall design sacrificed to become a foreshortened columned portico above the grand stairs. The hall was instead placed to the rear of the octagon in place of the planned Council Chamber and was not finished at the time of opening together with the incomplete dome. Instead of a grand entrance, two small temporary brick lodges were built on Gower Street. Minutes from the Council's meetings show that there was however a clear intention to build out the remainder of Wilkins' vision in phases, as funds became available.

As the government refused to grant the institution a university charter, University College London opened as a college in October 1828 with the portico and dome incomplete until the following year and far fewer students than originally hoped.

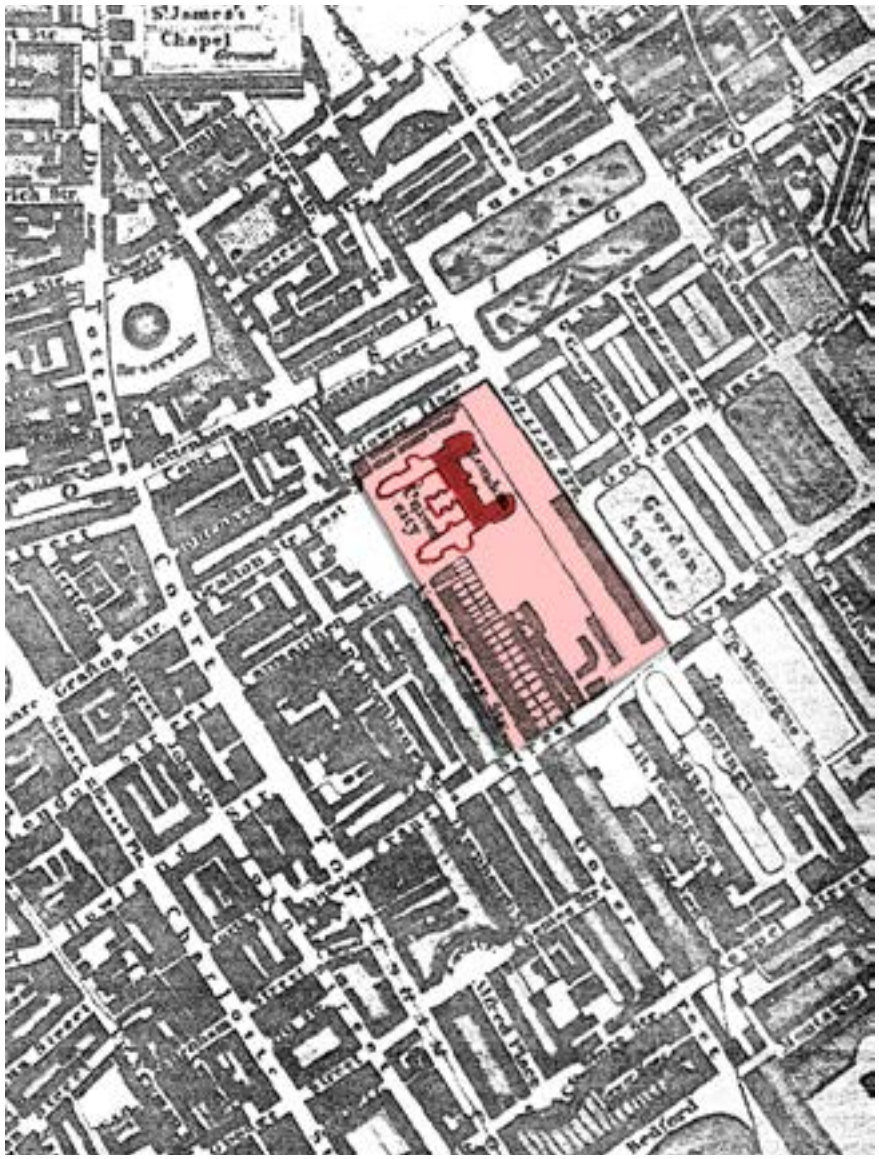


Fig. 9: OS Map 1827 showing university under construction (and remainder to be built)

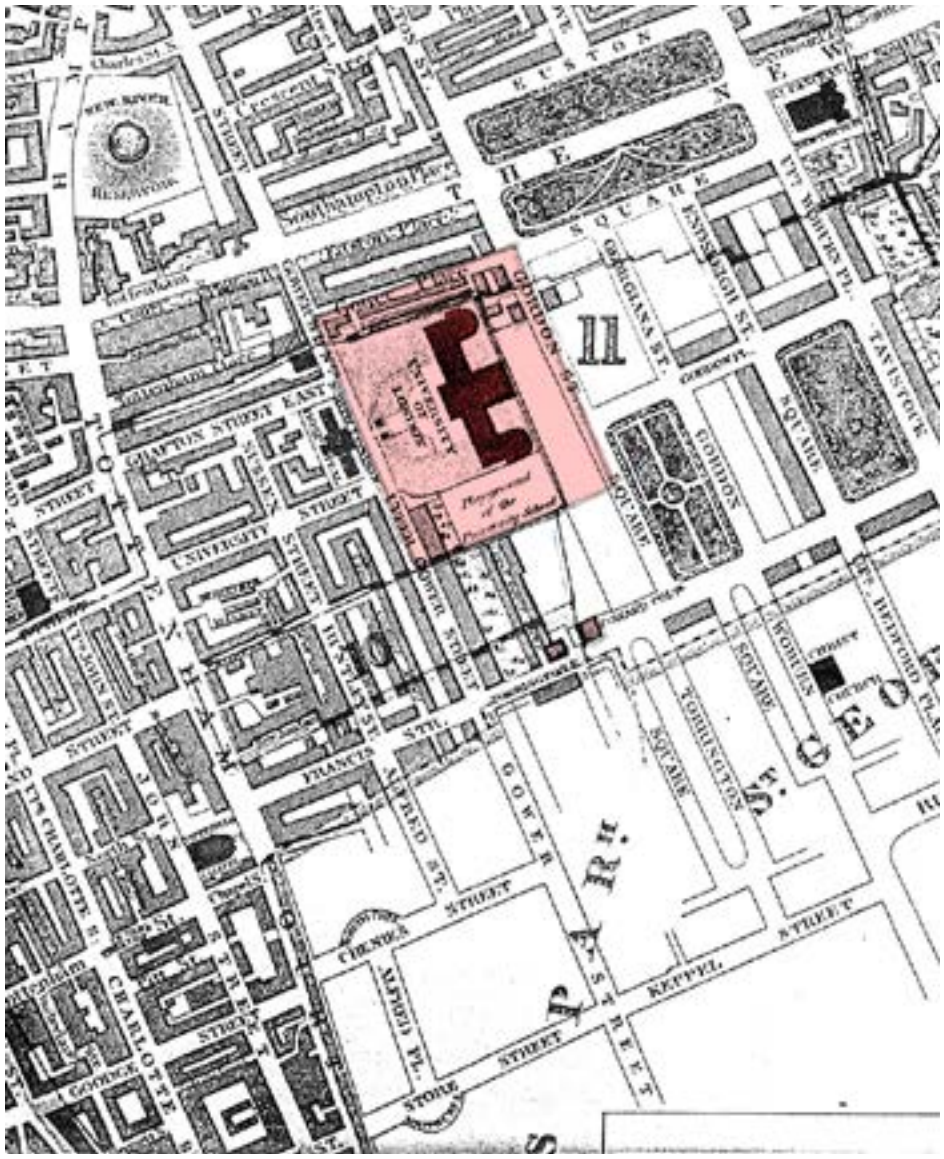


Fig. 10: OS Map 1836 University operational, note curving oval sweep to lawns and North London Hospital on west side of Gower Street.

The initial running of the college was not smooth: funds were problematic and, to compensate, a school was opened occupying the space that was intended to be the Great Library in the southern range. The library was squeezed into the southernmost room before being dispensed with a year later following growth of the school and it may have been around this time that the double-height space of Wilkins' intended library had a floor inserted.

Having been refused access to the nearby St Mary's Hospital for teaching purposes, the University decided to open its own dispensary and in 1836, its own hospital: the North London Hospital, on the undeveloped land that they owned opposite the university on the western side of Gower Street.

In 1836, the still unfinished hall to the rear of the dome burned down but the institution was finally granted its Royal Charter, becoming London's first university. The University's Hospital on Gower Street was renamed the 'University College Hospital' at the same time.

Fig. 11: As built, showing scholars in the University grounds (left) and the school playground (right), 1833

Development of the university buildings

By the 1840s, Bloomsbury was beginning to emerge as a smart residential area and UCL had managed to form a more established and stable footing. The university was able to complete some development works, helped by the first appointment of a Chair of Architecture: practicing architect, Professor TL Donaldson. His additions included the country's first purpose-built chemistry teaching laboratory in 1847 (the Birkbeck Laboratory, named for philanthropist and funder George Birkbeck, who went on to found his own college, named for him); a hall of residence on Gordon Rectangular in 1848 and, within the university's main building, a library in 1849. This was built on the site of Wilkins' ill-fated Great Hall to the east of the octagon. The footprint of the new library was broadly the same as Wilkins' hall but was raised at a ground level eleven steps higher, to accommodate usable spaces beneath including teaching space. In addition to the staircase running east from the central octagon to the new library , a more visible, grander stairs to the ground floor was added, curving around the north-east of the octagon (since replaced by Burwell Architects in the early years of the millennium). This provided additional vertical circulation to Wilkins' two discreet, enclosed stairs. A further, enclosed stairs for students was added in the south-east corner - part of a history of change that would eventually result in a confusion of vertical circualtion routes within and adjacent to the octagon.

In 1847, UCL was given a collection of casts and pictures by sculptor John Flaxman which, a few years later, were displayed within the octagon. A large cast, *St Michael conquering Satan,* was positioned on the library stairs landing with modifications to windows within the dome to increase natural light. Wilkins north stair was blocked off to provide a niche for statuary. In 1862, the ground-floor Cloisters were glazed to provide additional usable space. Although the term Cloisters was originally applied to just the open air walkways along the east elevation of the north and south ranges of Wilkins' building, the terms 'North and South Cloisters' came to apply to the entire north and south ranges of the Wilkins Building, possibly to distinguish them from the North and South Wings that were soon to enclose the quadrangle.

Fig. 12: The Donaldson Library, built 1849 by T. L. Donaldson (on site of the Great Hall)

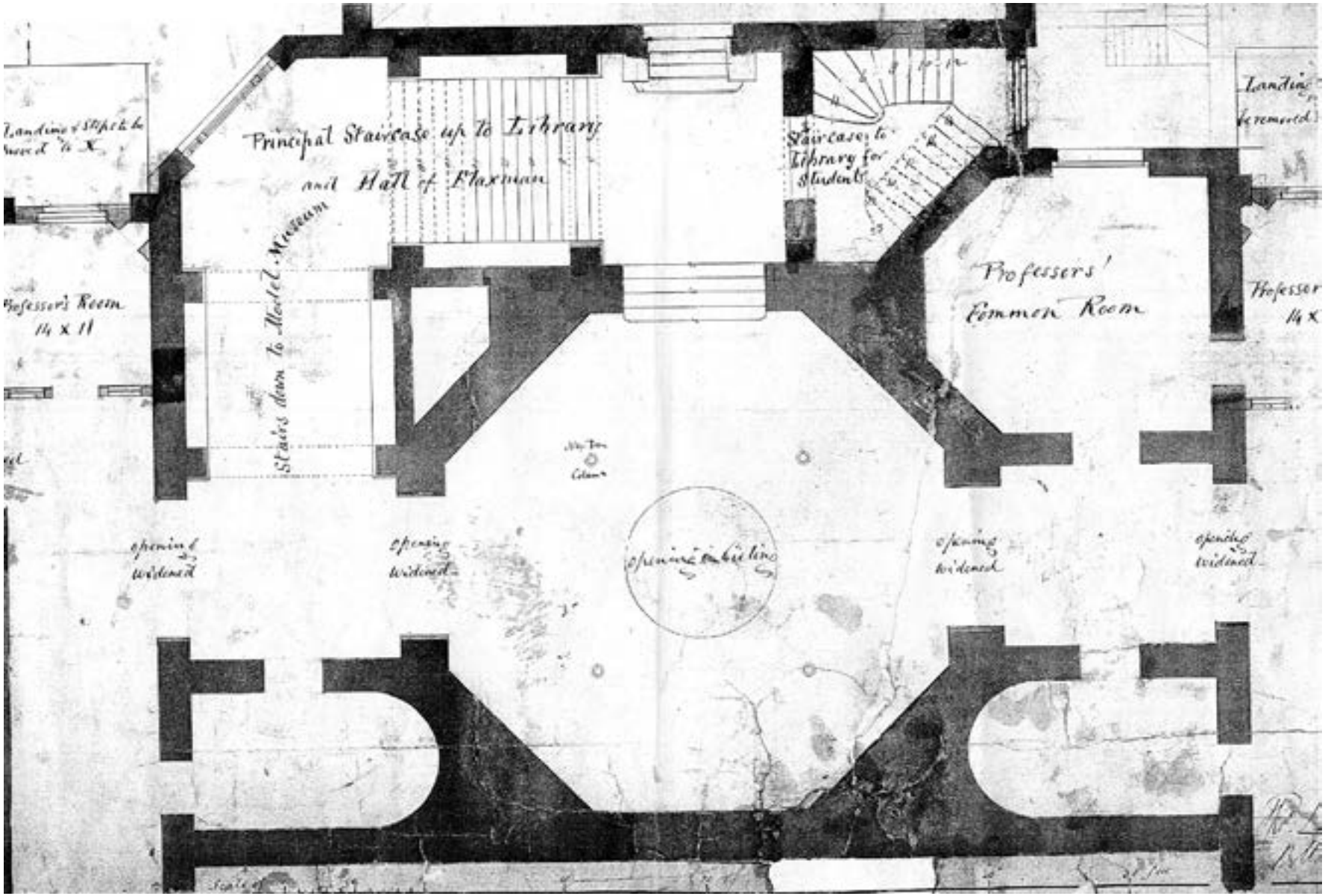


Fig. 13: The dome area showing the alterations made in 1849 by T. L. Donaldson, for the Flaxman Gallery and to link to his new library

In 1874, the South Wing of the quadrangle was completed followed by the North Wing, four years later. These were completed to designs by the second Chair of Architecture, T. Hayter Lewis. Whilst grandly neo-classical on the exterior, they were plainer inside, reflecting university cost-saving and the fact that the South Wing was purpose built to accommodate the University School, which remained successful. Its layout was cellular with teaching rooms and offices accessed off a central corridor across all three floors. The North Wing however, was purpose built to train artists with larger, north-facing studios accessed from a corridor along the south façade. The University's recently founded Slade School of Art (1871) moved into the buildings once finished in 1878 and remain there today. The upper floors and a rear laboratory were given over to sciences, especially chemistry (with the original Birkbeck Laboratory claimed by other branches of science).

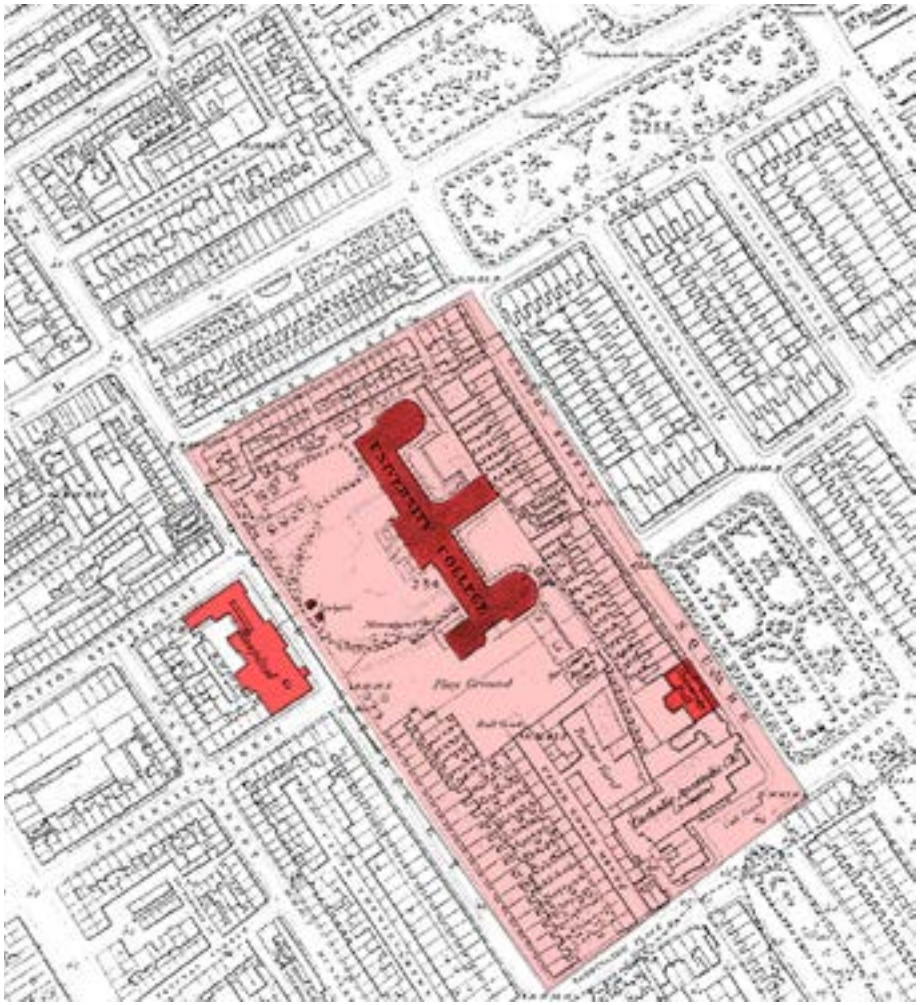


Fig. 14: 1870 OS Map. Construction of the South Wing has begun. The North London Hospital has been extended to meet huge demand.

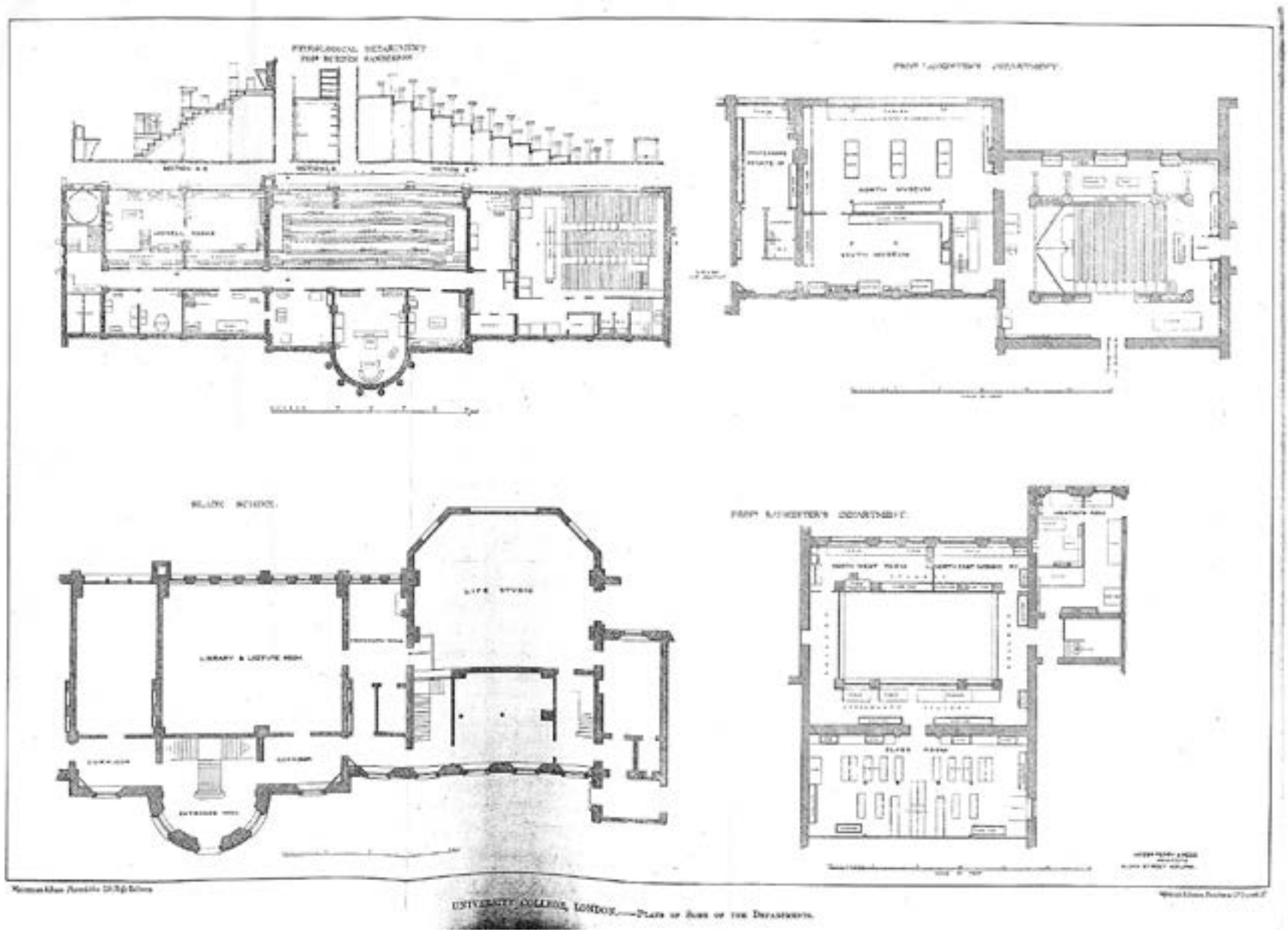


Fig. 15: Plan of the North Wing for the Slade School of Art, designed by T. Hayter Lewis

The relocation of the school allowed for the library to finally occupy the space originally intended for it in the south range of the original building, if across two floors and with cellular division instead of the grand double-storey space that Wilkins had originally envisaged.

By the end of the nineteenth century, increasing numbers of students and changing teaching needs also overruled Wilkins' original vision of a single-storey ambulatory on Gower Street. Instead, a new engineering laboratory was built in 1894 along the southern half of the Gower Street side of the quadrangle. This matched the height of the South Wing where it abutted it but was otherwise single-storey, forming the south-west wing of the quadrangle (today's Chadwick Building).

Throughout the early part of the twentieth century, the original university buildings on Gower Street were being continuously adapted to meet the evolving needs of higher education and the increasing numbers of students but this was not enough space to accommodate the University's needs. Architect Alfred Waterhouse's 1906 University College Hospital building, replacing the earlier building directly opposite the main campus on Gower Street, marked the first move away from Wilkins' Portland Stone neo-classicism (although the two small observatories built in the quadrangle the following year were classically inspired to reflect their surroundings).

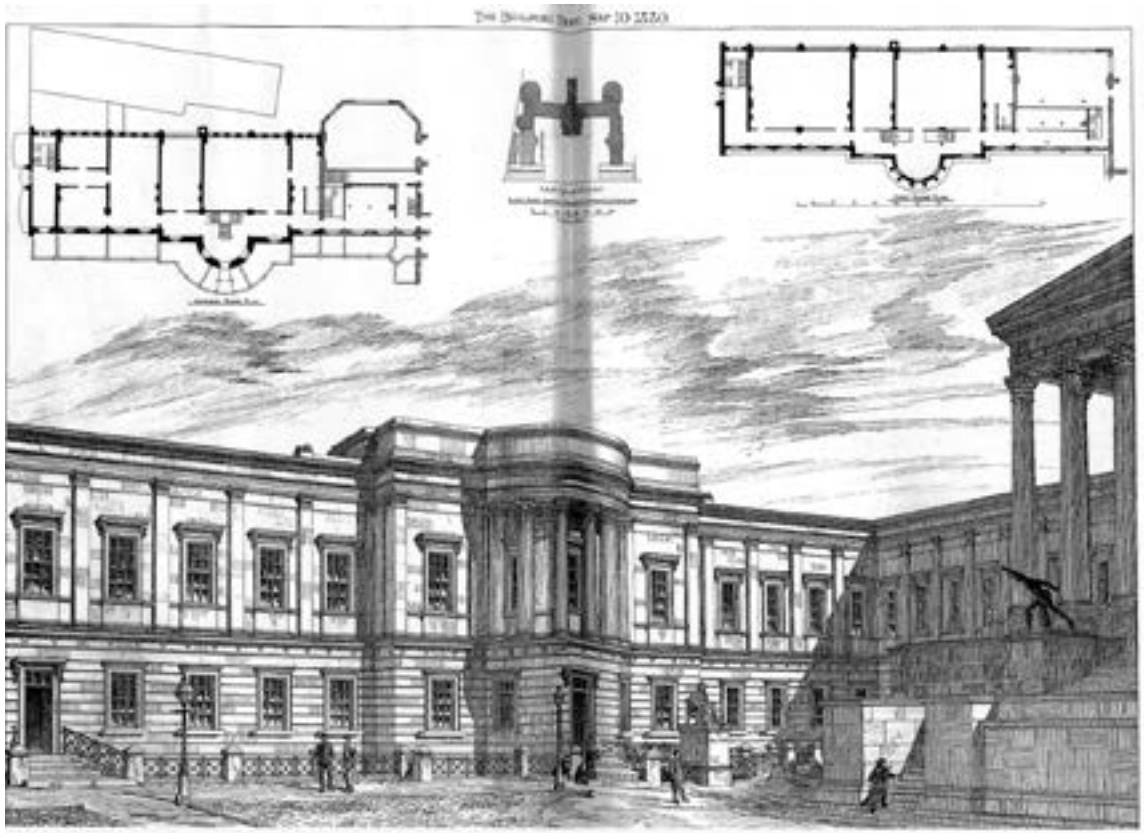


Fig. 16: Building News engraving of the North Wing, by T. Hayter Lewis

In 1907, UCL merged with other colleges across London to form the federal University of London. The same year, the school moved out of the South Wing, allowing the expanding administrative functions to move into that space. The departure of the school also allowed the school playing field to its south to be gradually developed over the following decade with increasingly specialist teaching buildings. In 1914, the final enclosing element of the quadrangle was completed with the three-storey North-West Wing filling the north-western half part of the quadrangle along Gower Street to designs by architect FM Simpson.

This was almost immediately converted to a First World War Hospital but was handed back to the University in 1919 to house the Bartlett School of Architecture within its lower floors as well as the world's first statistics department on the upper floor, which remained there until 2000.

In 1922, two further storeys were added to the single-storey engineering building (Chadwick Building) quadrangle to match the Bartlett School of Architecture.

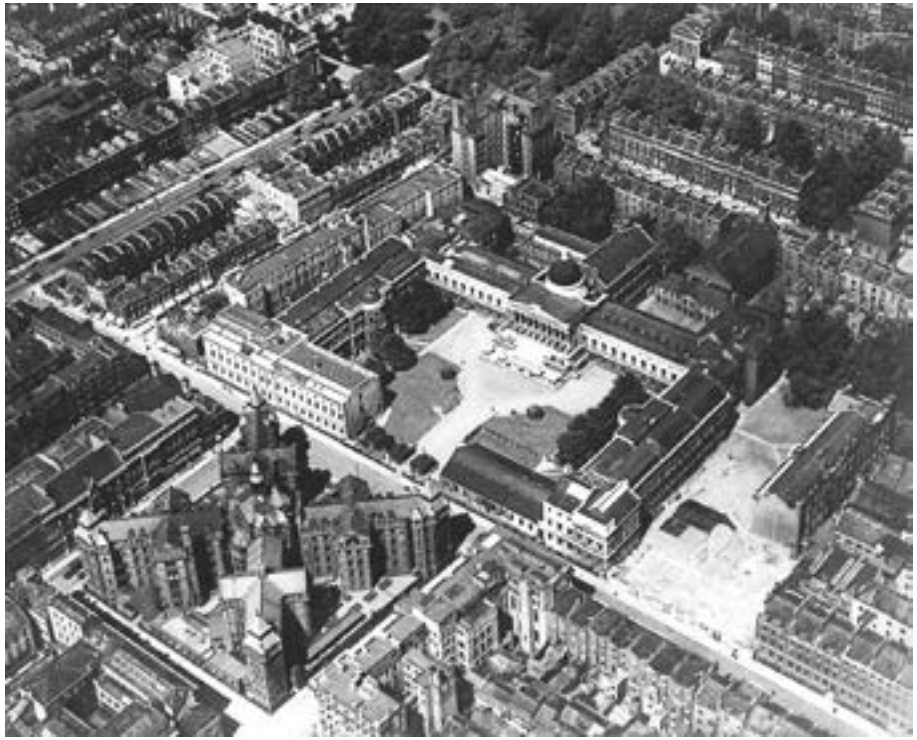


Fig. 17: The campus, c.1922, The quadrangle is enclosed. Note the single-storey Chadwick Building.

Fig. 18: The South Cloister in the inter-war period. Wilkins original columns would not survive the Second World War and the consequent rebuilding.

Development of the wider campus in the twentieth century

By the 1920s, Bloomsbury had been fully developed and the emphasis for the university changed from new built development to the conversion of existing buildings around the core of the campus. A decade later the university was firmly established across most of Bloomsbury and was in a position to not only spill into existing buildings but to also seek to complete sweeping masterplans. Over the next few decades, two separate masterplans for the redevelopment of Bloomsbury were started and abandoned, one disrupted by the Second World War and the subsequent funding and materials shortages and the second by the increasing interest in conservation of the built environment. A third masterplan for the post-war reconstruction of the original Gower Street campus was also started and unfinished.

The first masterplan centred on the relocation of the administrative services of the University of London to architect Charles Holden's striking Senate House in the 1937: the focal point of a wider complex of buildings that was interrupted by the Second World War and never completed due to the need to repair and rebuild the existing campus. By the 1970s, the university was able to think about its masterplanning ideals again starting with the demolition of terraces on Bedford Way to make way for architect Denys Lasdun's Brutalist Institute of Education. Such was the level of public objection to the demolition of Bloomsbury's by then characteristic historic terraces that the campaign birthed the modern conservation movement. The entirety of Bloomsbury was duly designated a conservation area in 1968 resulting that the university's second masterplan was never completed leaving the campus around Woburn Rectangular a curious mix of Georgian terraces and twentieth-century set pieces.

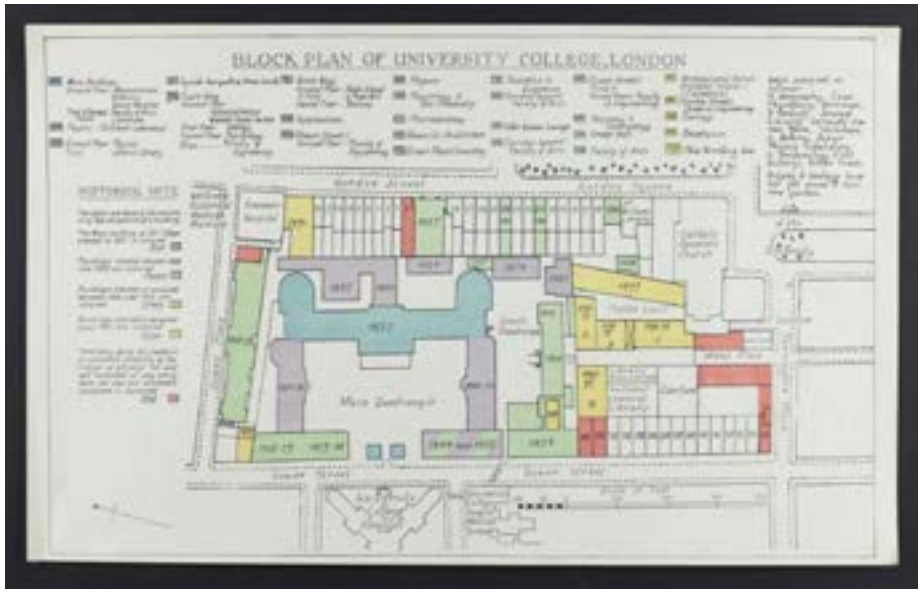


Fig. 19: 1937 Plan of the University Credit: UCL Archive

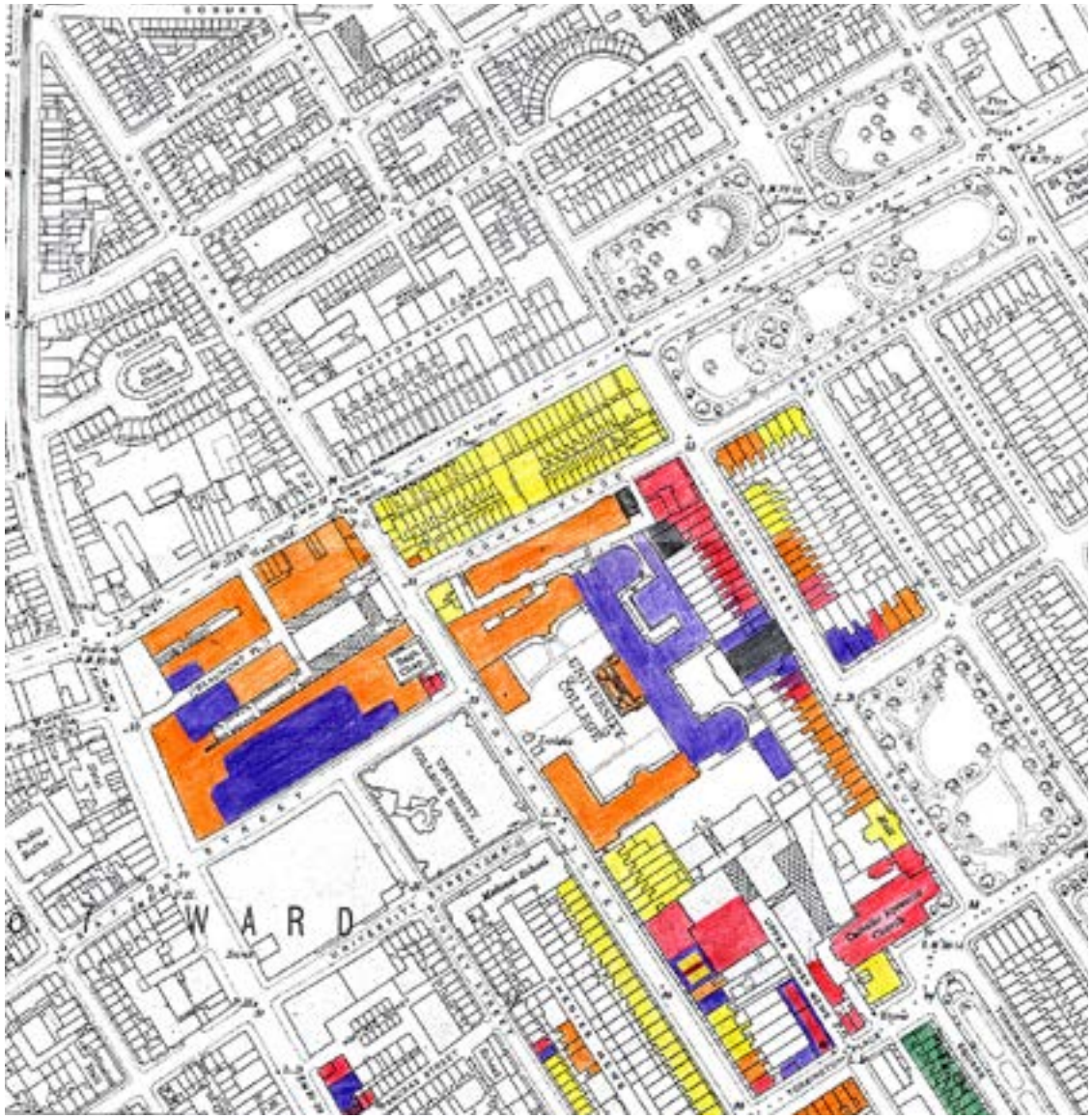
The Gower Street buildings after the Second World War

One of the reasons that the University's first masterplan faltered in the post-war period was that focus was necessarily diverted elsewhere. The Wilkins Building took direct hits in the bombing raids of 1940 and 1941 with the 1849 Great Hall to the east of the rotunda irreparably burned due to incendiary bombing and most of the terraced housing to its east completely destroyed. The university's iconic rotunda was partially destroyed; the octagonal lobby burned out and the interiors of the Cloisters wings irrecoverably damaged. The 1945 bomb damage maps, which are habitually restrained in their assessments, categorise the Wilkins Building as 'damaged beyond repair'.

Despite this, the buildings *were* painstakingly repaired. The bombed houses were cleared and a series of huts erected in the bomb sites to accommodate post-war students whilst repair and reconstruction took place. The incumbent Professor of Architecture, AE Richardson, designed a series of replacement buildings, which were to extend the Wilkins Building eastward and be arranged around quadrangle to the east of the Wilkins Building, reminiscent of Oxbridge style colleges. In practice, only two of these buildings (the Darwin and Physics Buildings) were completed, possibly as the university's focus and budget was poured into the rebuilding of the Wilkins' Building's interiors. The Physics Building replaced the earlier and historically important Birkbeck science laboratory, which had been destroyed in the war.

Fig. 20: The burnt out remains of the South Cloisters and southern lecture hall. Beyond it, the shattered dome

Fig. 21: C1950. Huts for teaching in the cleared bombsites on Gordon Street



KEY

LCC WAR DAMAGE MAPS (1:2500)

Black	Total destruction
Purple	Damage beyond repair
Dark Red	Seriously damaged; doubtful if repairable
Light Red	Seriously damaged, but repairable at cost
Orange	General blast damage; not structural
Yellow	Blast damage, minor in nature
Light Green	Clearance areas
Small circle	V2 bomb
Large circle	V1 bomb

Fig. 22: War Office Bomb Damage Maps from 1945 showing the Wilkins Building as 'damaged beyond repair'. Much of Gordon Street has suffered 'total destruction'

Within the Wilkins' Building, the floors were completely rebuilt in concrete complete with over-ceiling heating, As a result, the columns in the south cloister became structurally redundant and were removed. Those higher up in the building were also removed but replaced with new columns which define the first and second floor corridors as well as taking the weight of the entirely new roof level and providing vertical risers for an air cooling system. A void above each corridor was created for services. The roof was completely rebuilt and slightly raised to accommodate services so that it is now visible from the quadrangle, unlike pre-war views. The library was rebuilt with a compartmentalisation that suited the separate departments of the post-war university all reached from a central corridor. Richardson completely redesigned the ends of the building formerly occupied by the destroyed original lecture theatres to create double height spaces topped by domes and lanterns in the style of Sir John Soane and it is the roofs of these spaces that now connect the Wilkins Building with the North and South Wings, with the externally fine, if internally modest, Provost's offices occupying the ground-floor level of the South Cloister.

Fig. 23: Richardson's new library space at the north end

Richardson's rebuilding and refitting of the burned octagon included the insertion of a central oculus to improve a sense of connection between ground and first floor levels and the insertion of a more grandly scaled staircase between the two. This last insertion connected with his rebuilt library to the east which was completed in the style of Donaldson's destroyed library with some extensions to the flanks. The first floor of the building was connected as a single entity for the first time, becoming the Flaxman Gallery.

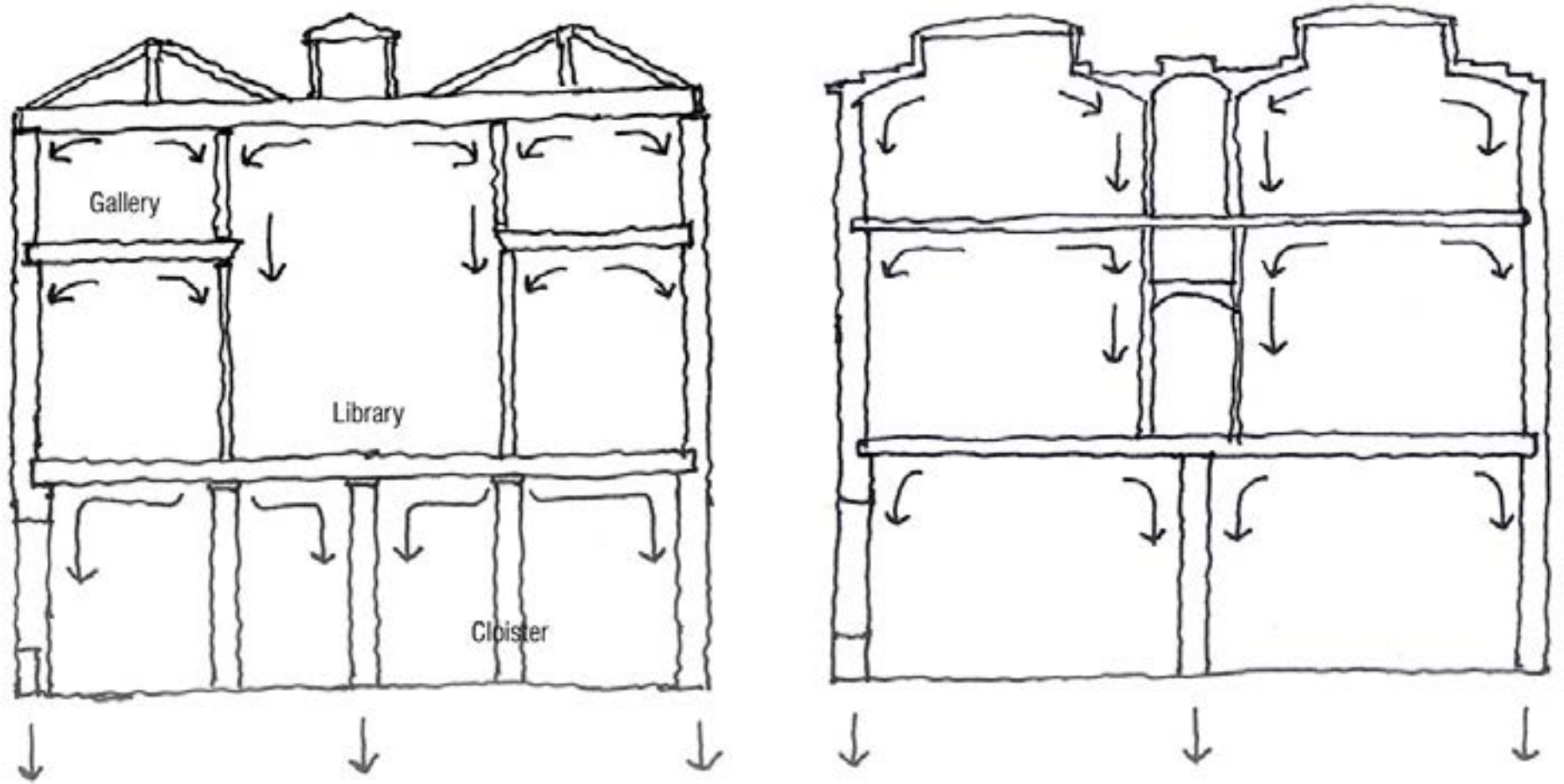


Fig. 24: Cross sections of Wilkins' original and Richardson's reconstructed library

Beneath the Donaldson Library, Richardson fitted in a suite of rooms at a mezzanine level including the Jeremy Bentham rooms and other spaces with a refectory at basement level beneath that. Richardson also included a circular room at this mezzanine level to take wall frescos by the acclaimed Slade School of Art educated artist Rex Whistler, who had been killed in action during the war. These were taken from their original location in the house of Lady Diana Cooper on Gower Street which had been damaged beyond repair in the bombing. The external yard was reconfigured as a vehicular space to service the building and the Richardson's new Physics Building fronting Gower Street.

In the following decade, the remainder of Richardson's masterplan was abandoned such that the Physics Building; the 1961 Engineering Building by his successor HO Corfiato and the latter's Bloomsbury Theatre of 1968 on Gower Street remain starkly dominant, adding little to a sense of cohesion to the wider campus (although they do respond to the 1958 Archaeology Building on Gordon Rectangular by architects Booth, Ledeboer and Pinckheard, which remained a separate entity of the University of London before merging with UCL in 1986).

At some point in the early twentieth century, according to the University's 2003 Outline Management Guidelines, Flaxman's large *St Michael defeating Satan* was relocated from the octagon to the portico and later in 1976, entirely relocated to the V&A Museum with the rest of the casts. These would eventually be returned in 1994, once more blocking the oculus. In the meantime, in 1986 the octagon was redecorated in a rich mid-nineteenth century decorative scheme that is seen today.

The final change to the quadrangle also came in 1986 when architects Casson & Condor extended the two ends of the buildings on either side of the entrance gate (the North-West Wing to the north and the Chadwick Building to the south)creating more accommodation. Wilkins original lodges were necessarily demolished but rebuilt closer together in a 1980s replica of Georgian lodges.

After the turn of the millennium, the entrance to the library was remodelled with a new staircase by Burwell Architects completely replacing Richardson's post-war stair. *St Michael defeating Satan* was raised up onto a circular glass plinth allowing the space to accommodate the statue and allow the oculus beneath to function whilst Flaxman's other casts were mounted onto the wall of the upper oculus as is seen today.

After this, little changed within the Wilkins Building, with development focused on rebuilding and refurbishing the buildings on Gower Street and the conversion of the space between them into usable courtyard space, including the Japanese Peace Garden.

In recent years, a utilitarian semi-permanent structure was erected within the quadrangle, occupying the entirety of the southern half of the space whilst semi-permanent marquees have occupied some of the northern part of the quadrangle. The most significant change to the context of the site was the completion of the Student Hub on Gower Street in 2022, a 'bookless library', able to accommodate up to 1400 student terminals, reflecting the ever evolving nature of university education.

Fig. 25: The earliest image of the university as built, 1828 (UCL Archive)

2.3 The Quadrangle

2.3.1 Landscape and design

Wilkins original competition drawing of 1825 showed the area to the front of his building with very limited landscape design. There was a straight access from the lodges to the portico, surrounded by a rectangular area of hard surfacing. Two sweeping curved paths, trimmed by an iron palisade fence were to lead from the lodges to the central entrances on today's North and South Cloisters. In practice, the building that was constructed was a scaled down version of this original vision whilst the landscape design appears to be a more a more pragmatic and simple arrangement. UCL's archive contains an ink drawing of the completed building on opening in 1828 which shows a more practical semicircular carriage driveway at the foot of the portico steps which also allowed access to the central doors on today's Cloisters Wings. The landscape appears to have been laid as lawn with some shrubs and trees with Wilkins' curving path, presumably to the Cloisters entrances, appearing in the foreground. A fence is not present in this drawing although it is unknown if this is because it was not originally installed or the perspective of the artist. Interestingly, as compared to what would follow later, two women sit on a bench located on this curving path.

An 1833 engraving (See Fig. 11) also shows the edge of the semi-circular carriage driveway at the base of the portico surrounded by flat grass. This image also includes Wilkins'semi-circular path leading from the entrance on Gower Street to the doorway of what is today the South Cloister. Wilkins' originally-intended iron railings have been added (or they were simply omitted from the earlier ink drawing) which seem to separate the boys of the school from older students of the college inside the quadrangle. Men and boys are shown on the lawn with equipment of some sort, possibly students from the college under instruction by lecturers showing that this was a learning space.

The 1836 OS Map (see Fig. 10) shows the carriage driveway from the lodges to the portico with the faint line of the railings visible around this area. The curving pathway of the earlier engraving is not shown. The 1836 OS map shows no trees or planting but likely shows grass, as differentiated from the hard surfacing of the adjacent school yard.

By the publication of 1870 OS Map (Fig. 14) the semi-circular sweep of the railings shows that more mature planting has grown up along the line of the railings. The still undeveloped plot along the northern edge that would eventually support the North Wing/Slade School of Art has planting around it - where mature trees survive today - including what may be a small orchard and a garden at the Gower Street end. A small group of trees is also shown at the Gower Street end of what would soon be the South Wing with the Gower Street frontage apparently verdant and planted, as corroborated by an 1876 drawing in UCL's archives (Fig. 25.).

By the 1922 photograph (Fig. 17), most of any frontage planting and trees have been replaced with the Chadwick Wing and North-West Wing with the trees along the frontages of the Slade and South Wing now mature.

In the 1922 image, as well as the observatories and two lampposts on the curve of the hard-standing, one can also make out a pathway to a small structure which may be a statue; a fountain or a sundial or similar. In the south-east corner, a fenced enclosure can also be seen showing that some form of activity was happening with the quadrangle at that time. What are notably absent are any seats or anything encouraging people to use the quadrangle for quiet leisure, unlike the ink drawing a century earlier. The dropped curb between the lodges onto Gower Street reinforces the idea that this is a space for carriages, or by this point, cars, although none can be seen in this image. This may reflect their general scarcity during the period rather than their purposeful absence from the space as there are no vehicles to be seen on the entirety of Gower Street and relatively few vehicles (some horse-drawn) on Euston Road, a major traffic route.

Fig. 26: An 1876 drawing of the College showing South Wing and planted frontage

Images from 1956 and 1975 from UCL's archive (see Nicholas Burwell's Design and Access Statement) show that the trafficked nature of this former carriage driveway has been retained even as the automotive revolution is beginning to change the urban environment. The earlier driveway has been laid with tarmac and cars are now parked along the entire perimeter of that tarmac. By 1975, the remaining trees along Gower Street have been removed and replaced with parking spaces. Mature trees remain but the balance of uses in the quadrangle has changed to a car-focused environment.

In 1985, as part of the University's 'Greening of UCL' project, the quadrangle was predominantly pedestrianised and re-surfaced and cars removed from the space except for servicing access and disabled parking. This coincided with the narrowing the of the entrance and replacement of the lodges by Sir Hugh Casson, and more significantly, the final enclosure of the quadrangle.

2.3.2 Quadrangle Uses

From nineteenth-century lawn and outdoor learning space to the many formal and informal events that take place there today, the quadrangle has been a mixed use space throughout its existence . It is simultaneously the entrance to the historic university; a gathering and event space and a welcome if somewhat hard outdoor space within urban Bloomsbury. These many different uses do not diminish each other by being very different in tone and sharing the space.

- The quadrangle is ***a place of gathering and remembrance***, with the Great War memorial prominently displayed on the plinth of the portico (poignantly in the same location that the young men of the engineering department that it remembers gathered for a photo before going off to that very war). It is the location that the staff and students of the university gathered on 8th July 2005, a day after terrorist attacks killed 52 people, and injured 700 more, many of them students, on public transport in and around Bloomsbury.
- It is also ***a place of joy and celebration*** from pitched mock battles against students of King's College in the 1920s to raucous welcome weeks and events that mark many young students first engagement with the university. It has housed fetes; markets and musical events since the University's opening.
- It is ***a focus of protest and politics***, with student political protest marches often originating or ending in the quadrangle as well as informal encampments such as 2024's student protest against the Israeli-Gaza crisis: a reminder of UCL's historical and ongoing radical stance on societal issues.
- It is and always has been ***a place of outdoor learning*** from its role as nineteenth-century outdoor teaching space to its brief time as the location of the University's astronomical observatories as well as periodically displaying works from the adjacent Slade art school. More recently, it has housed semi-permanent teaching spaces as pressure on space remains high.
- It is also ***a quite place of rest and relaxation*** with the benches around its pathways providing quiet respite to staff, students and visitors, with one of the redundant observatories now occupied by a well-used coffee shop. Whilst there is limited quality to the green space within it, the quadrangle is nonetheless a valued urban green space.
- It is ***a thoroughfare and provides east-west movement across the campus*** as well as the primary entrance to the many of the buildings around it, not least the Wilkins Building and Slade. This role is amplified by the opening of the Student Hub on Gordon Street, with many students moving through the Wilkins Building and quadrangle to reach Gower Street and vice versa.

All of these uses are appropriate and co-exist alongside each other to varying degrees of success, within the single space of the quadrangle.

2.4 The buildings today

2.4.1 The Site today - the Wilkins Building

The Building

Architecturally and in terms of use and function, the Wilkins Building divides into six distinct areas:

- **The principal (west) elevation of Portland Stone and the rear (east) elevation in stock brick.**
  Although restored by Richardson following war damage, these are essentially as Wilkins intended, even where the rear elevations now form parts of separate quadrangles, as Richardson had hoped.

  Today, access to the building is achieved via the quadrangle through the original entrances in the North and South Cloisters, with the 'primary', central entrance to the upper octagon sealed off as it would bring someone directly into the upper library, where access is otherwise controlled by barriers. Direct access to the octagon is now achieved via a ramped side door in the north flank of the portico. The Portland stone frontage set the tone for the remainder of the appearance quadrangle and much of nearby development resulting in a somewhat imposing space within the adjacent quadrangle.

  To the east, cost-savings and normal building practice meant that the rear elevation was completed in London stock brick, bringing a more domestic feel to the spaces now created at the rear, a sense emphasised by the large sash windows covering the rear elevation (which all appear to contain twentieth-century glass). The stark level changes between the back courtyards and the sunken areas of the basement give the area a somewhat back-of-house feel with movement routes not clearly legible. Today, the southernmost courtyard supports a Japanese Garden which acts as an east-west through-route from the Wilkins Building to the popular Student Centre on Gordon Street.

- **The dome and octagon.**
  The dome was largely rebuilt in the post-war period but is again, a clear expression of Wilkins' vision. The octagon is the central and orientating core of the building, and historically of the university as a whole before its expansion beyond the original bounds. As the central circulation core around which the other ranges pivot, it has been subject to significant alteration. Whilst remaining at the centre of the building, the Wilkins Building's role as the centre of the campus has reduced somewhat and by extension, the role of the octagon at the centre of building's flow and function, similarly changed. In addition to the changing functions of the Wilkins Building itself, the movement of people from Gower Street to the buildings on Gordon Street through the Cloisters has altered the sense of the octagon as central to all movement within the building.

  The octagon retains several historic flights of stairs and a lift which allow vertical circulation - although these are difficult to differentiate and discern with poor legibility. The route to the basement for mobility-impaired users is particularly difficult to identify as it is accessed via a serious of small back room spaces including an external lift access. Access to the mezzanine floor level (the Jeremy Bentham Whistler Rooms) is accessed directly from the octagon via a series of stone flights.

- **The Cloisters**
  The north and south ranges of the building, now known as the North and South Cloisters, retain Wilkins' original concept with a central spine wall separating the circulation flow of the eastern Cloisters from rooms to the west. The enclosure of the Cloisters reduced the sense of the western rooms as primary spaces with poor legibility between today's Cloisters and these rooms. Beyond the concept, the fabric is entirely post-war in date and appearance. Today the Cloisters facilitate east-west movement through the campus as well as providing large spaces for different university functions.

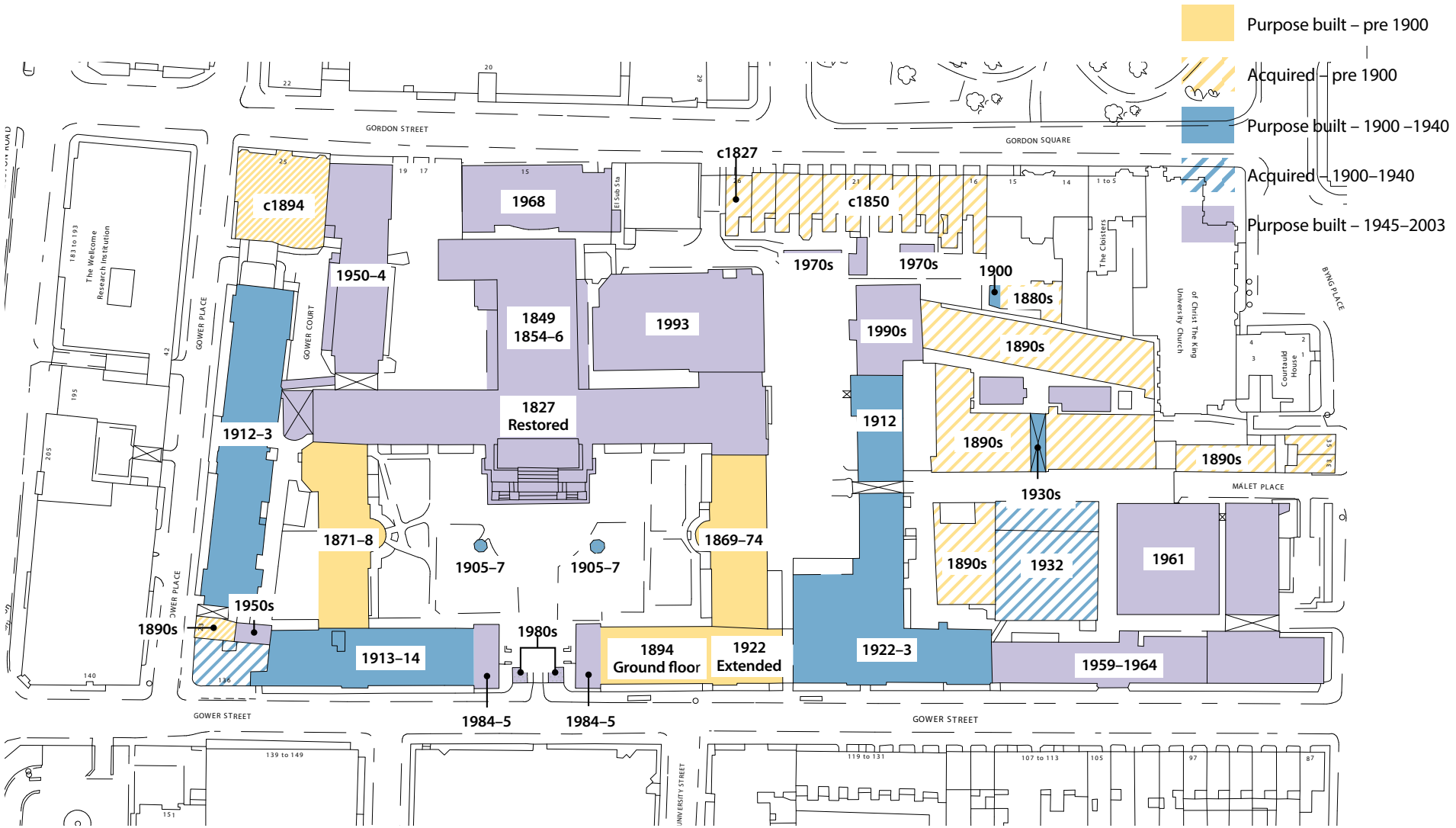


Fig. 27: Summary of construction and acquisition dates

The stone floor of the Cloisters is simple rather than fine. The south Cloisters contains the 1865 marble intarsia mural *Marmor Homericum* by Henri-Joseph-François Triqueti on its northernmost wall but is otherwise similar to the north Cloisters in that it is devoid of any historic features. Whilst well maintained, the marks of previous fittings are visible within the ceiling and walls. The rooms are entirely hard-surfaced and suffer from poor acoustic performance.

The western rooms along the quadrangle elevation are little appreciated from the larger Cloisters spaces, with many visitors arriving into the Cloisters without appreciating the rooms on the western side of the building exist at all. This is largely because their solid timber doors face into the entrance vestibules.

- **The upper floors – Flaxman Gallery and Donaldson Library**
  The upper floors of the north and south ranges were completely remodelled in the post-war period centred around a central corridor. The Donaldson Library is a good, post-war recreation of the 1849 library.

- **The north and south ends**
  These attractive post-war spaces replaced the bombed-out ruins of Wilkins' lecture halls with the double-height space of the north end particularly attractive. Historic fittings and furniture appear to survive intact with the overall sense of an historic space. Richardson placed the Provost's Offices at ground-floor level at the southernmost point of the South Cloister: these spaces have good post-war detailing externally but are plain internally with no historic detailing.

- **The Basement**
  The basement supports service spaces and the refectory. Subsequent remodelling has removed any historical interest.

2.4.2 The Setting of the listed buildings

Whilst developed over a century, the buildings that enclose the quadrangle form a recognisable and cohesive group, designed to be understood as single composition of buildings and a very particular building type: the university quadrangle. The quadrangle differs from the archetypal Oxbridge college in that it has never been a space reserved as a tranquil landscape piece but rather a busy place for access; arrival and activity.

Externally, the various wings follow Wilkins' neo-classical idiom even where their interiors are wholly plain or designed for various separate functions. The lack of grand entrances on the wings emphasises the Wilkins Building as the 'entrance' and key building of the group. Whilst not fully enclosed for nearly sixty years, the quadrangle has had a consistently appreciable semi-circular form set within a rectangle, whether defined by buildings or not.

The whole space is dominated by the monumental Portland stone facades, centred on the Wilkins Building's portico as the primary feature (even if it is now redundant as an entrance although, in practice, there have always been entrances into it, and other wings, at ground floor level). A Great War memorial carved into the plinth of the portico is the dominating feature seen from the quadrangle, beneath the columns at least a storey above ground level. Whilst all of the historic buildings are Grade I listed, it is unlikely that the other individual elements of the courtyard would themselves attract a Grade I listing if not part of the set piece of the Wilkins Building and the quadrangle.

The open space is therefore at the centre of how the group of historic buildings is experienced. Activity within the quadrangle can be seen from, and regularly spills out onto, Gower Street and is a recognisable part of the activity of the university. The view through from Gower Street to the massive, raised portico is one of London's iconic designed views, if not formally identified.

Nonetheless, the quality of experience within the quadrangle is poor, with flat and uninspiring lawns; no real emphasis to the main trafficked routes and the two-storey bulk of the semi-permanent 'Main Quad Pop-up' obscuring a sense of the volume and proportions of the space. The quadrangle does support mature trees, with Limes along the northern and southern edge and younger Gingkoes planted by the entrance but little other planting or biodiversity. The historic development of the quadrangle's surfaces results in something of a patchwork of surviving materials, visually dominated by the central tarmac spine and semi-circular area at the foot of the portico. An encircling pavement, mostly finished York stone paviours, encircles the space with similar materials on the surviving curved path across the lawn to the south (although this is mostly obscured by the semi-permanent structure). Cobbles unevenly define the edge of the tarmac in many locations. The resurfacing of the spaces means that the where 'level' surfaces abut the entrances and steps into the Wilkins Building and Slade School of Art, the bottom steps are partially engulfed by later surface treatments (or disable access ramps). The variety of materials results in uneven surfaces in many locations.

The space is enlivened during events and is the location for many mobile food-sellers as well as a café based in the north observatory. At the time of writing in July 2024, it is occupied by a live-in protest relating to the Israel-Palestine crisis. In normal circumstances, it acts as a relatively unsuccessful space and through-route which does not generally encourage lingering and is a poor experience as the main public entrance to the university.

2.4.3 Beyond the site

This report concerns itself solely with the Wilkins Building and the quadrangle (and the entrance to the Slade School of Art within the quadrangle) however, it is recognised that the quadrangle is enclosed by several other listed buildings; supports listed structures within it and near it and forms part of the wider Bloomsbury Conservation Area. As such, these buildings and the degree to which the quadrangle contributes to their setting or character, as appropriate, is considered here.

The Slade School of Art aka The North Wing (Grade I listed)
Whilst this report is not concerned with the interiors of the Slade School of Art, the 2003 UCL Management Guidelines conclude that the front (south) elevation of the building holds the highest significance and this must be understood as a contributing element of the quadrangle and the setting of the Wilkins building.

The building also holds considerable historic interest: the Slade School of Art was founded at UCL seven years before moving into purpose-built accommodation in the North Wing in 1878. Despite considerable advances in technology; teaching and expectations for accommodation, it remains there still, a testament to the quality of the spaces within it.

The institution has produced some of the best British artists of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries including Rex Whistler, painter of the murals that are maintained in the Wilkins Building.

The original upper floor (and Birkbeck Laboratory behind) was the University's chemistry department where, in 1904, chemist and Head of Department William Ramsey would discover the Noble gases and helium, winning a Nobel Prize for his work. It has been anecdotally suggested that the building has seen the discovery of more chemical elements than anywhere else in the world.

Externally, the North Wing faithfully copies the neo-classical detailing of the Wilkins Building, acting as a seamless extension of that range. At the centre, is a projecting, bowed bay, or 'semi-rotunda', with Corinthian columns at first floor carrying the entablature above. This symmetrical arrangement complements but does not dominate or detract from the Wilkins Building.

The South Wing (Grade I listed)
As the first addition to Wilkins' range, architect T Hayter Lewis' neo-classical South Wing set the tone of all later additions around the quadrangle. It is a fine neo-classical addition, lacking the entrance in the semi-rotunda that was inserted into the later North Wing. As such is a wholly subservient addition to the primary range of the Wilkins Building. Other than its contribution to the quadrangle's form and appearance, this range has lesser interest than it's more illustrious partner to the north, fitted out more humbly as a school with no notable interiors or associated historic activities. Like the North Wing, its primary façade to the quadrangle carries the highest significance.

The South-West Wing -The Chadwick Building (Grade I listed)
Despite being built in three phases (in 1894, 1924 and 1985) the main quadrangle and Gower Street elevations display complete uniformity and harmony with the rest of the quadrangle. They are highly significant.

The interior of the building, built to house the engineering laboratories has always been functional and is of historic significance. The building was named after the philosopher Jeremy Bentham's assistant, Edwin Chadwick, who was a committed social and welfare reformer responsible for a Royal Commission into the terrible impacts of the antiquated Poor Laws in Victorian Britain.

Chadwick influenced the government and public opinion to understand that poverty was a public health issue as much as an economic one and that the prevention of disease was an obligation of civilised society. He left a charitable trust to continue societal reform through sanitary science setting up a Chadwick Professorship of Municipal Engineering, which is today the University's Chadwick Professorship of Civil Engineering, with the original engineering building named after him.

The appearance of the upper floors, which were a 1924 addition, closely mimics the appearance of the earlier North-West Wing.

The North-West Wing (Grade I listed)
In 2019, UCL set up a Commission of Enquiry into its history promoting the discredited field of eugenics which made recommendations to 'de-name' those parts of the university that were named after prominent eugenicists. This included, most notably, the Pearson Building which reverted to being known as the North West Wing since that date.

Like the other, earlier, buildings of the quadrangle, this building extended Wilkins idiom with the original 1919 building by FM Simpson (and its 1980s southern extension by Casson & Condor) a late Edwardian take on the Wilkins Building with a rusticated ground floor but two storeys above with a purpose-built third storey. Instead of the rotunda, the building had a more restrained central projection with engaged, rectangular columns reflecting the prevailing style of the late Edwardian period. First floor windows expressed a more traditional *piano nobile* with smaller rectangular windows above at second-floor level in the twentieth-century element of the building but the Portland stone; similar massing and neo-classical detailing make it a harmonious addition to the quadrangle and to Gower Street.

The Lodges (Undesignated heritage assets)
The lodges were rebuilt in 1985, when the adjacent ends of the Chadwick Building and North-West Wing (then the Pearson Building) were extended to meet each other and provide more usable space.

They are reasonable replicas of Regency lodges and, with 1980s detailing. Although they form part of the historic character of the quadrangle and a re a key element of the entrance experience to the quadrangle from Gower Street, they are not designated.

The Observatories (Grade II listed)
The 1907 observatories are late examples of urban observatories, with the advent of electricity in the twentieth-century rendering them almost immediately obsolete. With the relocation of astronomical studies to Mill Hill Park in 1925, to a site that could accommodate a large reflecting telescope given to the university, the observatories were abandoned. Possibly as a result, their mechanisms and copper roofs remain intact internally. As of 2024, the northernmost is successfully used as a coffee shop whilst the southernmost is disused.

The Cruciform Building (Grade II listed)
Designed by architect Alfred Waterhouse in his trademark terracotta finish and completed in 1906 a year after his death, the Cruciform Building was the University's teaching hospital, replacing the university's earlier building on the same site. The hospital was run directly by UCL with its main entrance consequently sited immediately opposite the entrance to the quadrangle on Gower Street. Today it provides teaching and meeting rooms for the university, intensifying the east-west route to the Wilkins Building across the quadrangle.

The Bloomsbury Conservation Area

The Bloomsbury Conservation Area is a large and early conservation area which was designated partly in response to the University's masterplans of the mid-twentieth century. Today, this part of the conservation area (Sub-area 3 [University of London/British Museum], in the Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy, 2011) is dominated by the monumental scale of buildings at UCL and other institutions (notably, the British Museum). Paragraphs 5.28 and 5.29 of the Conservation Area Appraisal say the following:

> *The area to the north of Torrington Place contains a concentration of university buildings that generally have long, imposing street frontages. Although there is a variety in the age and style of buildings, many have classically-influenced detailing, are characterised by vertical proportions and a rhythm derived from repetitive elements such as window openings. Buildings are constructed in a variety of materials: stone is predominant in Gower Street and Gower Place, whereas brick with decorative terracotta together with some stone detailing can be found in the courtyard areas to the east of Gower Street. Heights vary from site to site, but each block exhibits its own uniformity.*
>
> *The most notable building in the northern section of the sub area is the grade I listed University College (UCL), known as the Wilkins Building, a range of buildings grouped around a central element topped by a dome and a pedimented west portico, built in 1827-29 to a design by William Wilkins. Other buildings include the 1849 library rear extension and the ranges forming the sides of the central quadrangle. The north and south ranges of the quadrangle were added in the 1870s and 1980s. They are articulated by central, two-storey curved bays. The returns fronting Gower Street enclose the western edge of the space, and rise to three storeys (built 1891-1913, extended 1984). These ranges and the entrance lodges frame views of the dome from Gower Street. The central space has some grassed areas with a couple of mature trees that soften the formality of the surrounding architecture. The grade II listed observatories to the north and south were added in 1905-7.*

Typified by large expanses of often monumental buildings interspersed with Georgian terraces, the area's use and character is intimately intertwined with the functions of the university and the activities of students and university staff in and around the buildings. As a diffuse campus, the movement of students between and around buildings, interspersed with the ordinary daily lives of Londoners is one of the defining characteristics of the area. So too are the businesses and institutions that are associated with the university (eg: Waterstones Book Shop on Gower Street) and the series of fine public rectangular and regular grid of streets that provide a framework for the many institutions and university buildings in the area.

In a university with no clearly defined campus, the Gower Street buildings form the most concentrated part of the University's public presence, most closely and clearly associated with university students, including the colourful, loud and chaotic aspects of student life (flyers, protests, gatherings etc.) contrasting almost jarringly with the genteel architecture of the spaces, if with a long pedigree of co-existence.

3.0
Assessment of Heritage significance

3.1 Methodology for assessing significance

3.1.1 Purpose

Assessing significance is the means by which the cultural importance of a place and its component parts are identified and compared, both absolutely and relatively. The purpose of this is not merely academic, it is essential to effective conservation and management because the identification of elements of higher and lower significance, based on a thorough understanding of a site, enables owners and designers to develop proposals that safeguard, respect and where possible enhance the character and cultural values of the site. The assessment identifies areas where no change, or only minimal changes should be considered, as well as those where more intrusive changes might be acceptable and could enrich understanding and appreciation of significance.

3.1.2 Definitions

Statutory designation is the legal mechanism by which significant historic places are identified in order to protect them. The designations applying to the site are listed in Section 1.3. The *National Planning Policy Framework* (*NPPF*, 2023) places the concept of significance at the heart of the planning process. Annex 2 of the *NPPF* defines significance as:

> *The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.*

Historic England's *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance* (2008) includes a methodology for assessing significance by considering 'heritage values'. Ultimately the difference between this and the NPPF amounts to one of terminology - the intellectual approach used to analyse and understand significance is the same. The NPPF terms are used here because this document has been specifically prepared to support the planning process but the equivalent heritage values are given in brackets for reference.

The types of heritage interest that make up significance are as follows:

Archaeological interest (evidential value): As defined in the Glossary to the *NPPF*, *there will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.*

Architectural and Artistic Interest (aesthetic value): As defined in the Planning Practice Guide, *these are interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place. They can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures of all types. Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skill, like sculpture.*

Historic Interest (historical value): As defined in the Planning Practice Guide, *this is an interest in past lives and events (including pre-historic). Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with them. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of our nation's history, but can also provide meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity [sometimes called 'communal value'].*

Historic England has helpfully sought to clarify the distinction between archaeological interest and historic interest that the NPPF intends. Para 13 of the organisation's *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-taking in the Historic Environment* (July 2015) begins

> *Archaeological interest, as defined in the NPPF, differs from historic interest, because it is the prospects for a future expert archaeological investigation to reveal more about our past that need protecting.*

Any assessment of significance is usually an amalgam of these different interests, and the balance between them will vary from one case to the next. What is important is to demonstrate that all these interests have been considered. This is achieved by assessing the significance of the whole site relative to comparable places, and the relative significance of its component parts.

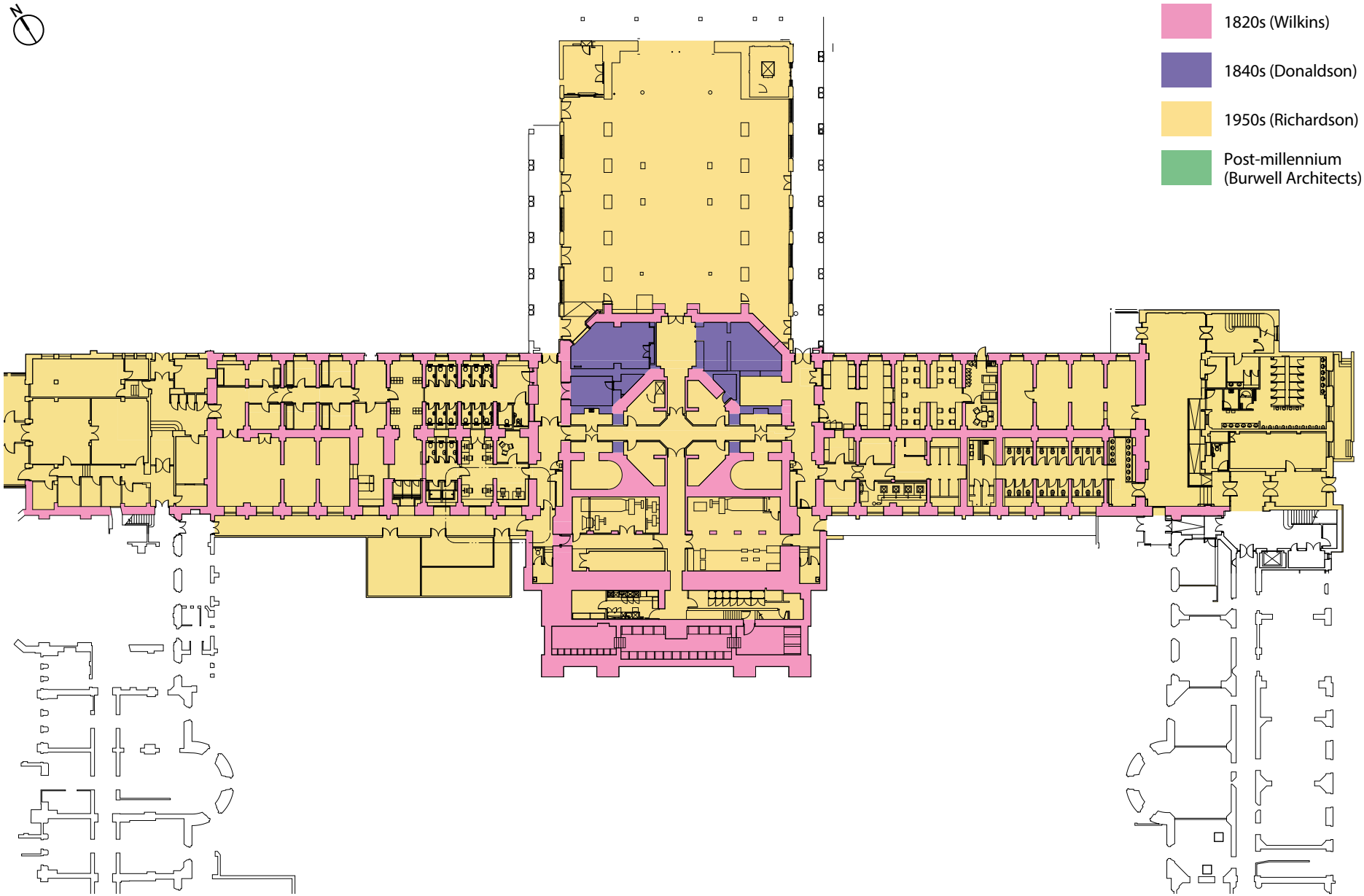


Fig. 28: Basement age of fabric

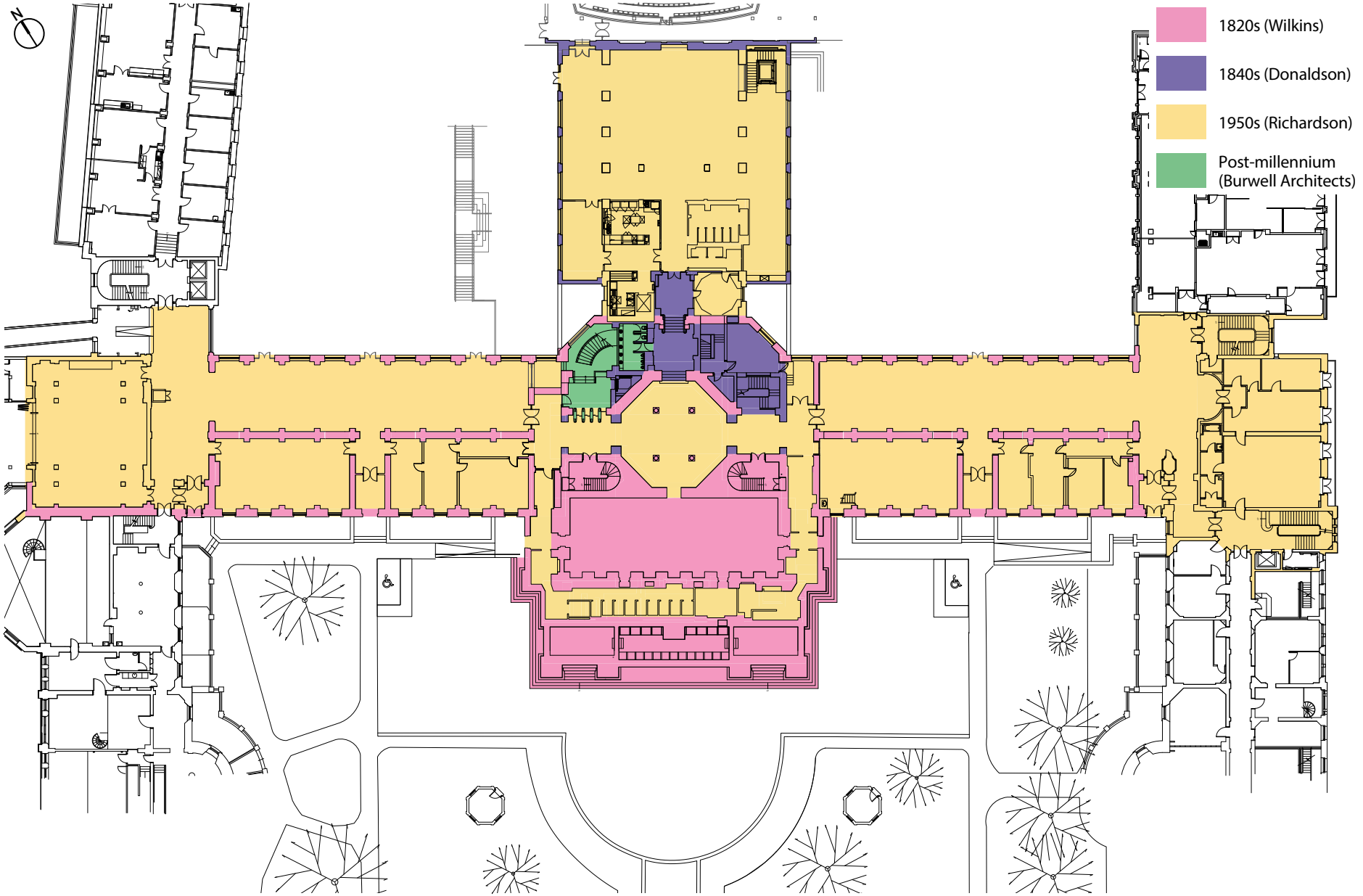


Fig. 29: Ground floor and mezzanine age of fabric

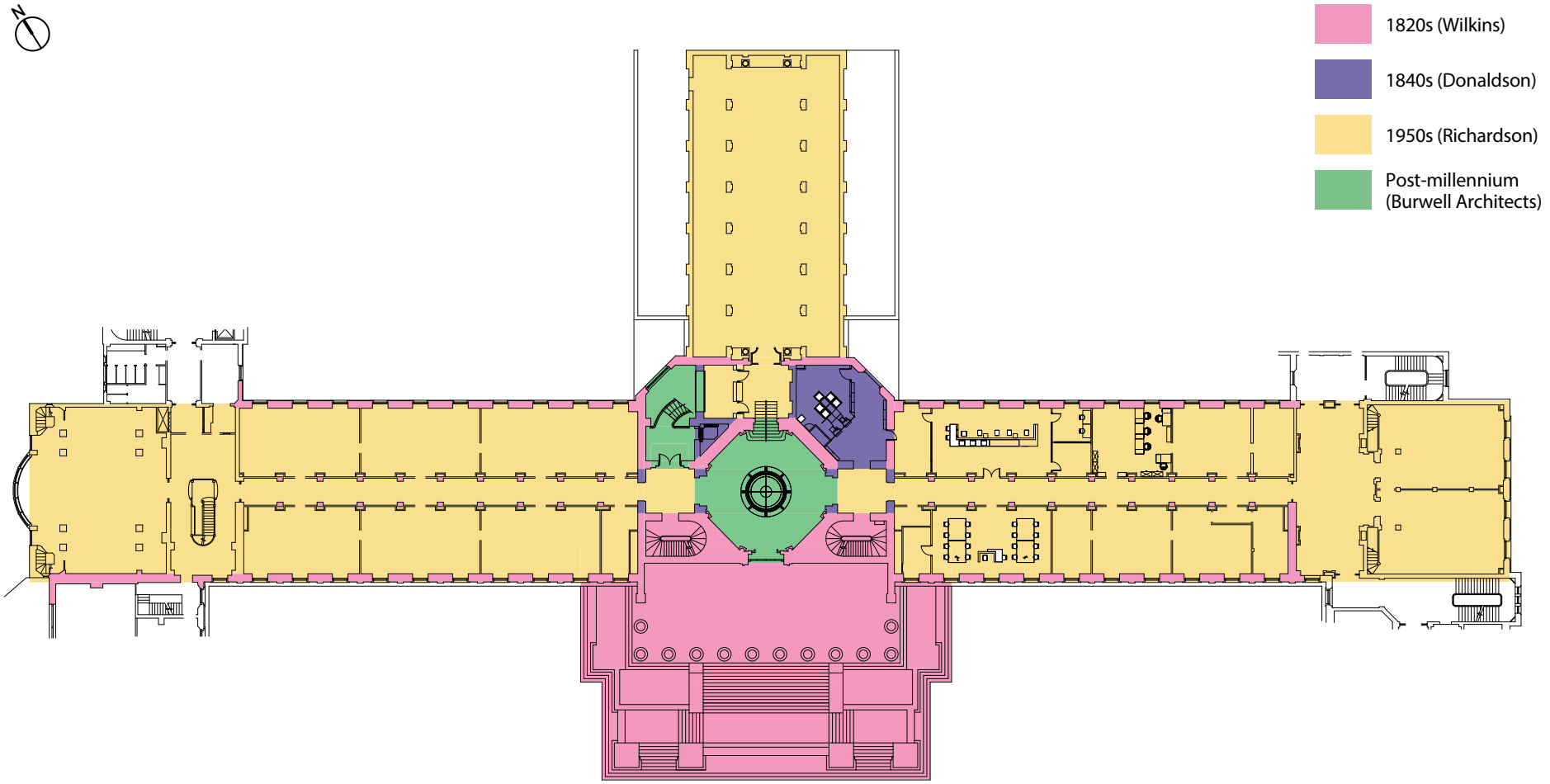


Fig. 30: First floor and Donaldson Library age of fabric

3.1.3 Methodology for assessing setting

Setting is defined in the *NPPF* (2023, Annex 2: Glossary) as:

> *The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.*

This means that all heritage assets have a setting, separate from the concept of curtilage, character and context. However, the contribution made by the setting to the significance of heritage assets varies considerably and is subject to change over time. Defining the extent, nature and contribution of a heritage asset's setting can be challenging. Historic England offers guidance on this in its *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition): The Setting of Heritage Assets* (December 2017). This advises that one common way of understanding setting's contribution to the significance of a heritage asset is through views. However, the setting of a heritage asset encompasses more than just this purely visual impression. It is also influenced by other environmental factors and the historic relationships between places.

3.1.4 Methodology for assessing the character and appearance of the conservation area

Unlike other forms of designated heritage asset, the special architectural and historic interest of conservation areas is commonly expressed in terms of character and appearance. This is based on Section 72[1] of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, which states that when local authorities exercise their planning functions in the context of conservation areas, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area. Much like setting, defining the extent and nature of a conservation area's character and appearance can be challenging, and is often based on a combination of tangible and intangible factors.

Historic England's *Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management: Historic England Advice Note 1* (Second Edition, February 2019) offers guidance on how character and appearance can be defined, suggesting the types of special architectural and historic interest which are reasons for designation of conservation areas:

- Areas with a high number of nationally or locally designated heritage assets and a variety of architectural styles and historic associations.
- Those linked to a particular individual, industry, custom or pastime with a particular local interest.
- Where an earlier, historically significant, layout is visible in the modern street pattern.
- Where a particular style of architecture or traditional building materials predominate
- Areas designated because of the quality of the public realm or a spatial element, such as a design form or settlement pattern, green spaces which are an essential component of the wider historic area, and historic parks and gardens and other designed landscapes.

3.2 Significance

3.2.1 Wilkins Building

The exteriors

The Wilkins Building is the University's historical and spiritual epicentre, providing the focal point, literally and metaphorically, of university and student life. UCL's ten-columned or 'decastyle' portico with the iconic dome above it as seen across the quadrangle from Gower Street is easily recognisable as the organisation's emblem, replicated on buildings across Bloomsbury.

In the years since it was built, monumental classicism has become regarded as somewhat old-fashioned and associated with the Establishment so that the radical nature of the building and the institution it serves is perhaps not understood by the casual observer. With a contemporary understanding of what it means to be welcoming and accessible, the building appears imposing and dominating, with a daunting staircase that might be perceived prolong rather than promote equality. It is a triumphant piece of architecture, with all the positive and negative associations of that triumphalism.

It is, despite the compromises forced on him, Wilkins' best work, described by the architectural historian Pevsner as *an impressively monumental composition, more concentrated and intense than [his] later National Gallery and more ornate than his earlier Downing College, Cambridge.*

The front elevation seen from Gower Street, with the dome above it, is therefore a highly significant piece of social history as well as an architectural statement of the **highest significance** for its architectural interest and its historical interest as the focal point of the historic foundation of UCL and its place in the development of higher education in England.

The copper roof and Portland stone materials of the exterior are **highly significant** elements of the front elevation The façade is also of **high significance** for its contribution to the group of buildings enclosing the quadrangle.

The plain brick rear (east) elevation, intended to face the backs of houses on Gordon Street, lacks any architectural adornment and has been significantly restored after bomb damage. The destruction of the former great hall (rebuilt on plan but different in scale and appearance) and the two semi-circular lecture theatres means that the original architectural composition of the building is no longer legible. With the addition of the twentieth and twenty-first century buildings to the east of the Wilkins Building, the rear is read less as a single dominant elevation and more as individual components to the spaces to the rear. Overall, the fabric and appearance of **moderate significance**.

The Great War memorial carved centrally into the plinth of the portico is prominent and stark, befitting its role, if one that often supports student banners and activity**.** It is of **high significance**.

First and Second Floors

The first floor octagon and surrounding space, together called the Flaxman Gallery, are **highly significant** as the only surviving suite of rooms from Wilkins' scheme, even if remodelled and redecorated twice in the twentieth century. The Flaxman collection displayed within it also has considerable artistic and historical interest both in itself and for the history of its display within the university building.

The overall architectural effect has been compromised by the closure of the portico entrance, now fitted with glazing. Whilst this is an understandable security and accessibility measure, this **detracts** from the portico as the primary entrance route into the building with the octagon no longer experienced as the arrival space or central hub of the Wilkins Building as a result. Similarly, the impact of this space is lessened by the loss of the flanking double-height spaces in the adjacent ranges (although the sub-division of this space is in itself part of the historical evolution of the building).

Similarly detracting are the insertion of floors in the nineteenth century (formalised in the post-war rebuilding), and the compartmentalisation of the formerly open double-height spaces.

Donaldson's staircase between the octagon and his library, and the library itself, to the east represent the set pieces of his interventions. The staircase is not in itself spectacular with its impact diluted by the myriad other staircases in the same vertical circulation core of the octagon such that it is of **moderate significance.** Burwell's staircase is of lesser historical value but is a high-quality insertion representing the University's major intervention in the early twenty-first century and is of **moderate significance**. Donaldson's library however, if rebuilt in the postwar period, is a finely detailed space and is **highly significant.**

Ground Floor and Double Height Spaces
At ground floor level, Wilkins' plan form and adjacent spaces remain legible but are experienced very differently from the open Cloisters he intended, with most of the nineteenth-century fabric removed and rebuilt in the post-war period. What is seen internally today expresses the mid-twentieth century rebuilding if with earlier proportions and window finishes. The North and South Cloisters are generally of **moderate significance** with the original walls partitioning them also of **moderate significance**. Richardson's post-war, double-height additions in place of the lost lecture theatres are of high quality and are of **moderate significance** within the building.

The Cloisters also support many artworks associated with eminent people associated with the university, not least of all Jeremy Bentham's infamously preserved body, which has recently been moved to the Student Centre, a move which might be said to detract from its overall significance of the building, as an intimately-related object/human remains, . The other works are also of artistic and historic within or closely associated with the building although their exact location is usually not of particular significance.

The Whistler Room, has poignancy as a designed, post-war space for the salvaged work of then recently killed Rex Whistler, former student at the Slade despite being an otherwise fairly unsuccessful space. It has low significance as a place purposely designed for the display of the artist's works although its current inaccessibility (reachable only by stairs and usually locked) detracts from that interest.

Basement
The basement contains the refectory and other lesser rooms. These spaces do not contain any historic detailing and are complete with contemporary, utilitarian finishes that are of **neutral significance.** Recent upgrading of the refectory has improved the visual quality of this space.

Physics Building
Richardson's Physics Building is listed only as a result of its attachment to the listed whole rather than any individual architectural or historical merit.

The Quadrangle and the setting of the listed buildings
The Quadrangle has the unusual status of being referred to and treated like a quadrangle years before it was actually enclosed on all four sides. The space defined where the permitter buildings would be built just as much as the buildings themselves define the open space. Whilst not registered as an open space, it is a critically important part of the setting of the Wilkins Building and the other listed buildings that enclose it. More than this, it is the historic and current focal point for student activity. It is hugely important and **highly significant** in its own right as well as a critical part of the setting of the surrounding buildings (and observatories).

Despite being the arrival point for the main campus of the university, the space remains somewhat underwhelming with no cohesive design befitting the quality of the buildings around it or its own important role as UCL's 'town rectangular' – as meeting point, entrance and focal point. The university developed in phases with often critical funding challenges or the need to focus develop elsewhere. As a result, the quadrangle has never been subject to an holistic landscape design and whilst the space itself is of the highest significance, the components of that space are of little or no importance (with the exception of the listed observatories).

The flat lawns and paths are consequences of the piecemeal development of buildings: they are **neutral** in terms of significance, which neither detract not contribute positively to the space with few materials of any quality. The semi-circular shape of the former carriage driveway at the plinth of the portico is of significance as is the direct route to it from the lodges but the materials that surface these areas of not of interest. Where York paviours exist these are of **low significance** although have little historical interest. What limited planting exists is of mixed quality in historic terms although may have separate arboricultural value as mature trees with the exception of mature limes along the North and South Wings do contribute to the sense of the quadrangle as a green space and are of some low historic significance. The recently inserted Main Quad Pop-Up building **detracts** from the quality of the space and the legibility of the building and thus from the setting of seven listed structures. It also very significantly **detracts** from the quality of the quadrangle in its own right, although it is not listed as a separate space.

Whilst not defined in any document relating to views, the quadrangle strongly contributes to the character and appearance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, as a key space within the area; a critical element in a designed historic view of importance, and one that is replicated on many buildings in Bloomsbury as the University's logo, and a focal point for activity within the conservation area. The quality of the quadrangle's appearance is separate to the fact and view of the space however, neither adding nor detracting from the character and appearance of the conservation area.

3.3 Significance drawings

We have not included significance plans of the quadrangle. It is a highly significant space although the individual elements and materials that constitute the quadrangle are not themselves of particular architectural merit.

The following table may be helpful to refer to:

Highest significance	Strongly contributes to the national importance of the building or group of buildings.
Moderate significance	Secondary space of lesser historical and architectural interest that contributes to the national importance of the building or group of buildings.
Low significance	Some architectural or historical interest that collectively contributes to the overall national importance of the building or group of buildings.
Neutral significance	Little or no contribution to architectural or historical significance.
Detracts from significance	Detracts from the significance of designated heritage assets, for example partition of a significant space or non-appropriate repair materials

4.0
Heritage impact assessment

4.1 Summary of the proposals

UCL's 200 year bicentenary year is approaching in 2026, and the University is taking the opportunity to review its campus to make it both fit for purpose and better able to support its students, staff and visitors. It is understood that a long-term solution needs to be implemented that is intended to support and complement the University for a further two centuries of education and evolution. This project is to be exemplar, and is hoped to be read as part of the final completion of the quadrangle and as an important intervention to the Wilkins Building.

Whilst a single project, with each part enabling the other, it is helpful to divide the scheme into two parts to describe and assess each element fully. the following description therefore considers:

- Works within the Wilkins Building.
- Works within the Quadrangle.

4.1.1 The Wilkins Building

Within the Wilkins Building, Burwell Architects seek to improve access and equality of access for all users of the building and to improve the quality of the internal spaces, with a full refurbishment of the interiors and servicing. The proposals seek to make better use of the rooms along the western side of the Cloisters and improve interconnectivity between them and the Cloisters themselves. This will allow a variety of events to take place within the building – mitigating the need for the semi-permanent structures that are habitually placed within the quadrangle.

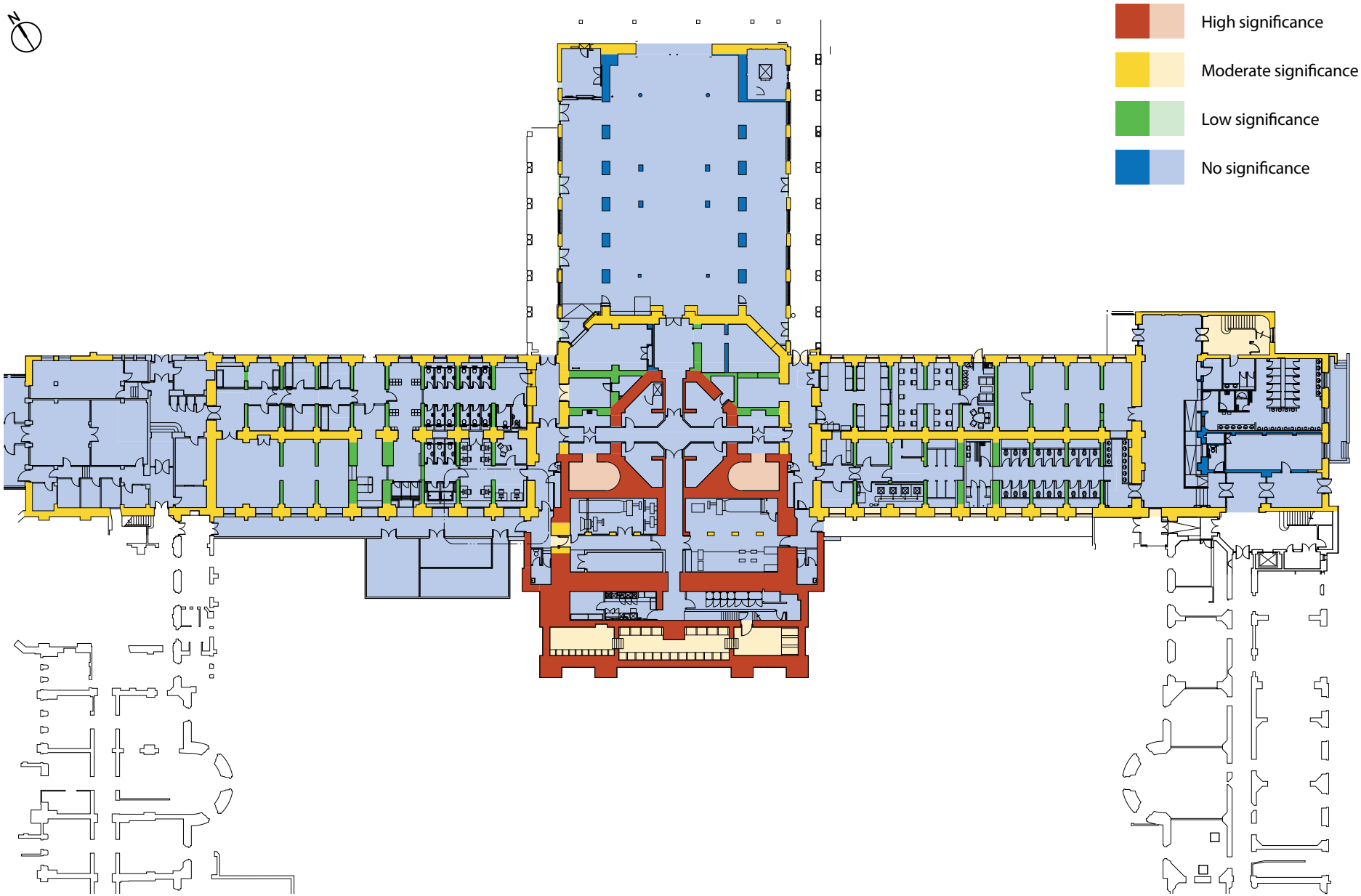


Fig. 31: Basement significance

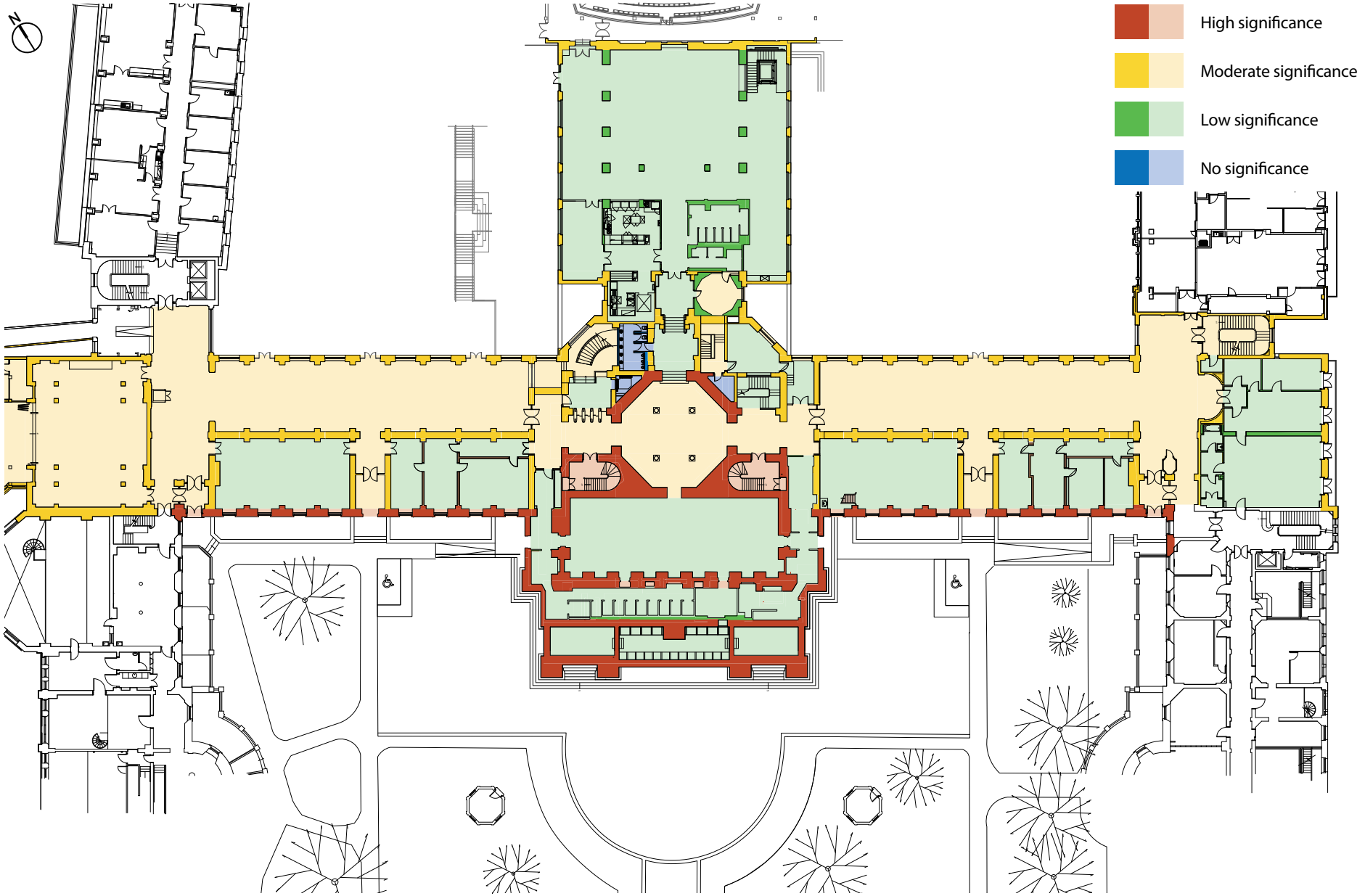


Fig. 32: Ground floor and mezzanine significance (mezzanine within southern room detracts)

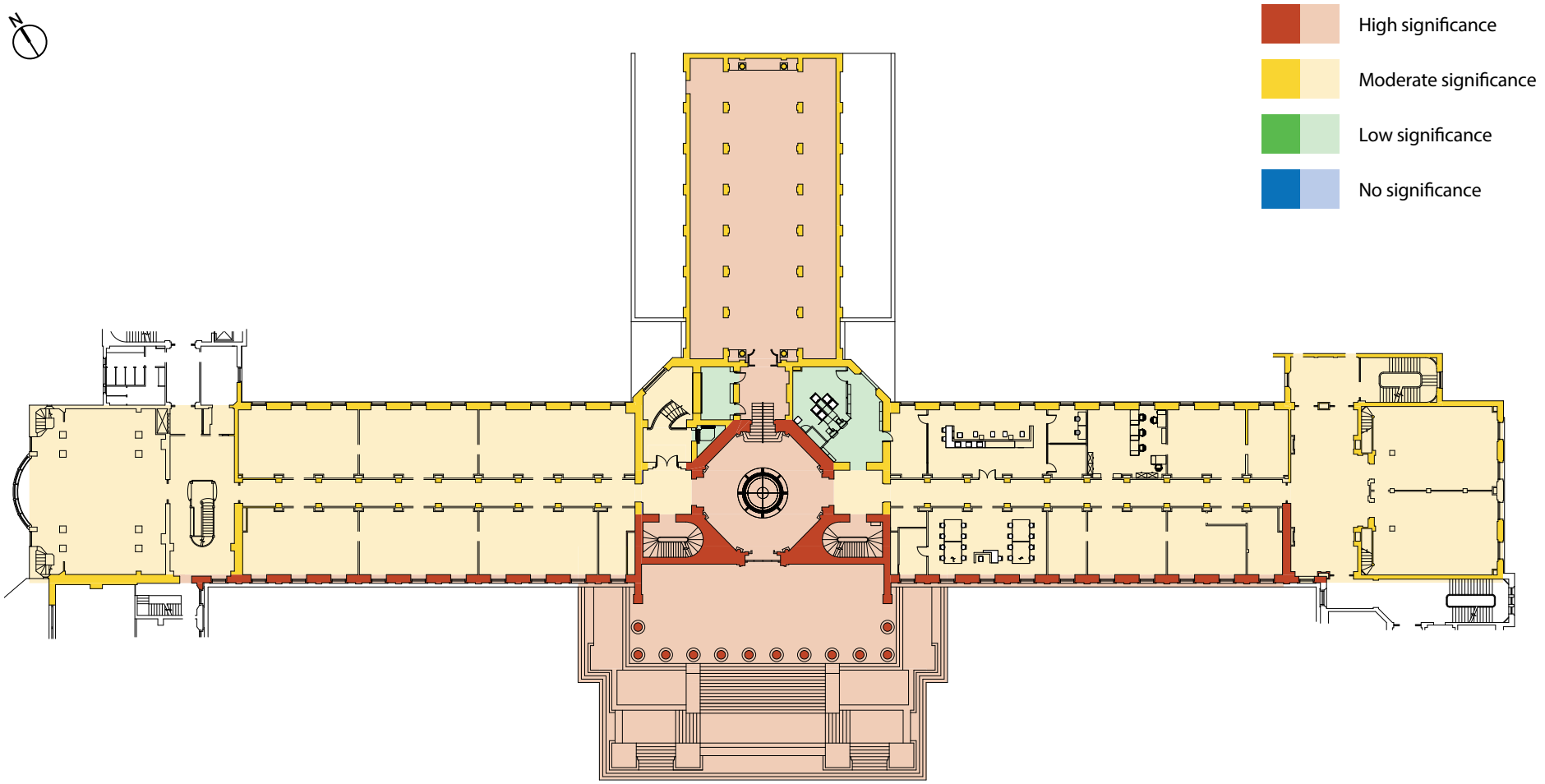


Fig. 33: First floor significance

The proposals include

- The better integration of the western rooms with the Cloisters on the east though the introduction of semi-circular-headed openings between them.
- The introduction of a step-free access from ground-floor level to the half-level/mezzanine of the Donaldson Library above it and the refectory below it.
- As part of the above, introducing clear vertical circulation between all floors of the building, including the basement and refectory.
- Improvement in the display of the Whistler murals.
- The replacement of all post-war glazing with 4mm thick glazing within the Cloisters to improve thermal efficiency.
- The introduction of ceiling hung baffles to improve acoustic performance, heating and lighting and to future-proof any alterations to these systems without more significant intervention.
- Introduction of wall-mounted fan coil units within bespoke housing.
- The introduction of inset floor mats to manage water ingress in inclement weather.
- The introduction of air source heat pumps to the roof and suitable enclosure.

Openings
The openings between the western rooms and the eastern Cloisters are to be in pairs of segmental-arched openings, reflecting the shape and proportions of Wilkins' windows and doorways within the existing Cloisters. The paired openings would be evenly spaced, allowing entry and exit into each of the four rooms on the western side in symmetrical pairs across all four rooms and scaled to appear subordinate to the original north-south openings.

The openings are proposed to original fabric of moderate significance, and as such, there would be some detrimental impact to historic fabric. This is weighed against the fact that the western rooms are under-used and under appreciated within the current arrangement of the ground floor spaces and potentially have been so since the Cloisters were sealed off in the late nineteenth century. This relegated the once principle rooms of the ground floor to ancillary spaces off of the enclosed Cloisters. The proposed works will return these spaces to prominence and use.

In a neo-classical building designed with symmetry as a guiding principle, the choice to include four sets of paired entrances is positive, reflecting the need for a consistent and holistic treatment of the building rather than some of the more ad hoc interventions that have evolved as the building has evolved. Single entrances could be similarly symmetrical, although would not achieve the sense of fluid porosity that the university is seeking for the relationship of these rooms with the Cloisters. The paired openings also relate to the intended functions of the spaces such as providing separate entrance and exist flows during busy freshers' fairs.

The specific detailing of the openings is to include metal finishes that purposely edge and protrude from the openings. These are included for aesthetic affect but also allow the necessarily cut mouldings and skirting to be replicated and returned within the opening to appear, a detail which would better integrate them with the existing fabric of the Cloisters and western rooms themselves.

Thus, whilst original fabric would be lost to create the openings will cause some harm to the original historic fabric of the building, the revitalisation of these somewhat forgotten western rooms and the care taken with their detailing and attention to the architectural hierarchy of the Cloisters spaces would mitigate this harm. On balance, this intervention would better reveal the original rooms of Wilkins design whilst introducing features with highly considered detailing and would have **no impact** to the overall significance of the Wilkins Building.

Beyond purely physical considerations, the alterations would support the better function of the university buildings in their original designed use and support the better use of the nearby quadrangle by minimising the need for seasonal marquees.

Notwithstanding the openings, the interventions are also relatively simple to reverse within the context of the post-war finishes should that ever be required. Overall, the interventions are therefore part of a holistic scheme to improve the quality, function and appearance of the western rooms, the Cloisters and the quadrangle and part of the overall package of heritage benefits.

Staircase, Lift and Remodelling of the Whistler Room

The staircase and lift are proposed to bring step-free access into the Jeremy Bentham Room (beneath the Donaldson Library) and the spaces off of that half-level for the first time. It is also proposed to install step-free access to the basement and its refectory via the proposed lift and direct access from a high-quality staircase, reinstating the octagon as the primary vertical circulation for the whole building. Due to the layout of these spaces and a desire to maintain the octagon as the focal point of vertical circulation, the aspiration is to add a stair and lift within, or as close to, the original core of the building as possible. To achieve this, it is necessary to remove and adapt existing historic fabric on the south-eastern side of the octagon.

With a view to retaining all fabric identified of highest significance, the two enclosed staircases to the south-west of the octagon (as seen at ground-floor level) have been identified as both of lesser significance to the building; non-original fabric and contributing to the current confusion of legibility in and around the octagon as a result of the various phases of remodelling.

Burwell Architects seek to remove these staircases and add a high-quality staircase and circulation space with a closely associated lift. Having these two elements in the same location is good design practice that achieves an equality of experience for all users, irrespective of mobility as well as equality of access.

The use of high-quality materials and subtle design features such as a curving balustrade and open void will result in an attractive and well-considered space suitable to a Grade I listed building rather than simply functional space. The stairs, like the adjacent lift, will travel from ground-floor to basement level, providing direct access to this space for the first time since it was built in the post-war period and the only accessible access to this important amenity space.

The lift is also proposed to travel upward, to the half-level of the Jeremy Bentham Room, providing step-free access to this space and the rooms at this level for the first time. To achieve this, the small rooms that currently straddle the split-level spaces must be levelled out and remodelled. Among them, by necessity, is the post-war octagonal space dedicated to the display of the recovered Whistler mural fragments.

Inevitably, this results in a degree of harm to the post-war space that was specifically designed to accommodate the mural fragments displayed within it, notwithstanding that the space is small, dark and simply decorated. To counterbalance this, the proposals seek to reinstate the murals in what will be a more highly trafficked space rather than what has become something of a little-used ancillary room, commonly locked. In weighing the impact of this design, it is taken into consideration that the room was not the original or intended location for the mural fragments, whose historic importance predominantly relates to their relocation within the Wilkins Building - rather than to this specific room within it – both near to their original location in the now destroyed house on Gordon Street and their association with Second World War casualty and Slade Alumnus, Rex Whistler. The impact to fabric is therefore offset by the revitalisation of the murals's display and their promotion to a wider and more diverse audience than those few people who have occasion to use the existing small side room. The improvement to the display of the Whistler murals mitigates the loss of the post-war octagonal room.

Overall, the co-location of the stair and lift and their easy legibility from the core of the Wilkins Building is a key and **substantial heritage benefit** of the scheme,

not only improving accessibility within this Grade I listed building but also improving legibility and flow through the building after two hundred years of increasingly confusing interventions to Wilkins' original clarity. By providing an equal point of access to all users to a high standard of design quality, returned as close to the octagon as can be accommodated without harm to highly significant fabric, UCL: seeks to provide an improved dignity of experience for all users within the Grade I listed building. Despite some necessary interventions to historic fabric, enhances users' experience and appreciation of the building.

Glazing Improvements

The distinctive, semi-circular-headed windows that serve the east wall of the Cloisters have the proportions of Wilkins' windows but were refitted with glass in the post-war era. Having carefully reviewed the windows, all of the glass appears to be post-war in age although some few individual panes have an element of mild distortion in the glass. Whilst this can indicate the use of pre-war cylinder glass, distortion is not unknown in post-war glass production from the 1950s and it is not so noticeable as to suggest that these are earlier surviving panes. Given the traumatic history of the building with both bombing and severe fires and the minimal degree of distortion, it is much more likely that the wholesale replacement of glass included some few panes of poorer quality, rather than it surviving from 1860s when the Cloisters were enclosed. This is corroborated by identical mild distortions in the flanks of the rebuilt Donaldson Library, the window openings of which are post-war in origin. The glass is of no particular significance, whereas the appearance and shape of the windows do contribute to the architectural quality of the Cloisters and the adjacent courtyards.

The replacement of this glass with 4mm thick insulating glass will have a **neutral** heritage impact but will make an appreciable difference to the thermal efficiency of the spaces, and thus towards the university's commitments to carbon neutrality. The replacement of glass will also allow the casement sections of the windows to remain functional and avoid the use of secondary glazing which can be unsightly – as can be seen in the second-floor windows above the courtyard, where it detracts from the overall appearance of the rear elevation.

Replacement fittings and services

Since the enclosure of the Cloisters in the 1860s, this hard-surfaced space has functioned differently to the architect's original intention. With many competing uses and groups using the space, acoustic performance is notably poor. To overcome this longstanding problem, and to avoid the habitual replacement of fittings as technology gradually changes, the architects propose the insertion of ceiling-mounted baffles. These will have an acoustically absorbent layer fixed to the post-war soffits above them. Some minor making good to the post-war plasterwork is anticipated to allow new regulation-compliant electrical services to remain unseen in the final arrangement. These circular features include acoustic materials and will allow lighting to be installed that can be changed and controlled as differing events and environments demand without fixing to or chasing into the post-war concrete ceilings of the Cloisters. The existing globular light fittings post-date the 1950s replacement of the ceilings and are not architecturally or historically significant. Replacing these with the acoustic panelled ceiling fittings will be an aesthetic benefit although will have no real impact to the significance of the building and are deemed to be **neutral**.

Fan coil units

The scheme includes wall-mounted fain coil units which will have the appearance of radiators. These will enhance the climate of the space with minimal visual impact and are **neutral** with regard to heritage impact.

Mats

The stone floor of the Cloisters suffers from water ingress from the feet of the many people entering or crossing through the building, such that water build up can be dangerous and damaging on wetter days. The proposal to cut in recessed matting would affect a very small area of stone floor at the eastern and western entrances of both Cloisters. Whilst this has an impact on fabric, this is a relatively small area within the expanse of the Cloisters and would not have a

significant impact on the overall significance of the Cloisters or of the entrance vestibules. Whilst the existing matting would have less impact to fabric, the appearance of loose matting is unsightly and has a more negative impact to the appearance and quality of the relevant spaces than the proposed recessed matting. Overall, if carefully detailed, the protective impact of the matting and the designed appearance of the recessed matting would outweigh any harm as a result of a small loss of fabric. The works are therefore **neutral** with regard to the significance of the building.

Air source heat pumps to the roof

UCL has made a commitment to achieve carbon neutrality across its campus– predominantly comprised of heritage assets - by 2030 and to reduce energy consumption by 40% by that date. Listed status should not necessarily be a barrier to climate adaptation and the architects have determined that existing redundant tanks on the roof can be replaced with a rooftop enclosure for air source heat pumps (ASHPs). Given the available space, it is proposed to construct an enclosure that would be oversized to accommodate future needs in a well-designed and single solution, avoiding further change and disruption. ASHPs require specific conditions and acoustic screening but the aspiration is to create a copper roofed enclosure that, from the few locations that it would be visible (primarily in the Japanese Garden and from the upper storeys of neighbouring buildings), would appear as a pitched roof – an expected rooftop feature. As copper oxides to its characteristic Verdigris green at a much slower pace than in the previous century due to air quality improvements, this could be pre-treated to blend in with the octagon's characteristic dome and other existing roof structures.

This addition would not affect the key view of the Wilkins Building from the quadrangle and surrounding key spaces but would be visible from the Japanese Garden and taller buildings to the east. The proposed arrangement will allow for the removal of the existing, unsightly galvanised steel handrails and provide a cohesive arrangement at roof level. As a fairly minor addition however, a rooftop pitched roof slope would neither be obtrusive nor inappropriate and this small feature is not considered to be **neutral** with regard to the significance of the Wilkins Building, whilst enabling climate resilience for the building and its users.

To maintain the symmetry of this neo-classical building and to future-proof its appearance, it is proposed to locate a similar structure on the north-eastern side of the drum, to allow further carbon reductions in the future within an identical enclosure.

Fig. 34: Sketch by Burwell Architects showing the proposed plant enclosure. (Burwell Architects)

4.1.2 The Quadrangle

UCL's commitment to enhance the quality of the space of the quadrangle is its flagship project to celebrate the university's bicentenary and will be a fitting way to finally complete the quadrangle as a significant historic space in its own right, improving accessibility to, and enhancing the setting of, the surrounding Grade I listed buildings and the primary entrance experience to the university.

The fundamental purpose of the project is to embody UCL's historic ethos of equality and accessibility in its twenty-first century campus. This is not to be in conflict with its historic buildings but to adapt them to the working needs and expectations of a world-leading university. Without these adaptations, the historic buildings are less fit for purpose and their continued occupation by their designed functions is at risk, jeopardising their significance.

The proposals are to include:

- Removal of the semi-permanent 'Main Quad Pop-Up Building'
- Removal of the existing hard and soft landscaping in its entirety including bollards and lamp posts.
- Removal of ad hoc signage from the exterior of Grade I listed buildings.
- Removal of existing accessibility ramps and associated barriers.
- Relandscaping the courtyard to include a gently graded 'amphitheatre' of banked earth and English stone seating allowing flexible uses of the space.
- Relaying of the hard surfacing with a mixture of English sandstones and Welsh Pennant stone including resurfacing the central spine path and semi-circular area at the foot of the portico (currently tarmac) in stone and adding a crossing path to the Slade with a gentle curved parabolic pathway. Introduction of bonded gravel in south-west corner over existing basement structure to Chadwick Building and other locations around the exterior as necessary.
- Introduction of landscaped ramps to the top step level of the Cloisters' and portico entrances, retaining the original steps beneath to bring people of all mobilities through the primary entrances.
- Introduction of a part graded, part bridged entrance to the Slade with attendant tapping rail to bring people of all mobilities though the originally intended entrance.
- Introduction of a metal tapping rail around the graded landscape forms to assist non and partially-sighted people.
- Introduction of a dedicated dog area to accommodate assistance dogs.
- Introduction of a verdant, biodiverse and climate resilient landscape scheme including specific study specimens for UCL research students (including loss of four existing trees by the Gower Street entrance).
- Introduction of service points in retractable bollards.
- Introduction of lighting poles to achieve adequate and adjustable lighting with minimal fixings to historic fabric.
- Introduction of four service points (two to the Slade and two to the South Wing) to allow for fire-safe risers to these otherwise vulnerable buildings.
- Introduction of wayfinding totems to allow for reduced signage and fixings to the listed buildings.

The removal of the existing landscape scheme and Main Quad Pop-up Building

The improvement of the quality of the quadrangle and its adaptation to help it support the many types of events that occur here with twenty-first century amenities is, in our view, a welcome intervention in heritage terms, which would improve the quality of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area and the setting of

the various listed buildings around the space. The space is tired and does not enhance the setting of the Grade I listed buildings that enclose it, retaining interventions from two centuries of ad hoc amendments. Amongst these, the most detracting of these additions amongst these has been the hard surfacing of the quadrangle to meet the needs of cars and later adaptations and the crowding of the space with temporary accommodation (the pop-up building), the removal of both **would enhance the setting of the adjacent listed buildings and the character and appearance of the conservation area.**

The space includes some furniture –six metal lamp posts, some concrete bollards and chains and some metal (probably steel) bollards at different locations within the space. It is not certain when these were installed but appear to be early twentieth-century in origin. Lamp posts of some sort appear in the 1922 photo of the quadrangle (Fig. 17) but on inspection today, these appear to be specifically designed for electricity which may or may not mean they are the same lamp posts as 1922 commonly saw the use of both. The concrete bollards and intervening chains to the rear of the Chadwick Building may date from its construction or its later extension upward whilst the steel bollards elsewhere may date from the 1980s improvements to the quadrangle but none of these estimates can be said with certainty. Taking a precautionary approach, we would accept that these individual elements are appropriate objects within the quadrangle if simultaneously contributing to a sense of an ad hoc, evolved space that somewhat detracts from its cohesiveness. In the case of the Chadwick's bollards their removal, in isolation, results in some **less than substantial harm to the setting of the Chadwick Building.** Similarly, the loss of the lamp posts would be a loss of historic features within this important space and thus have some **less than substantial harm to the character of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area** although not to such a degree as to limit or negatively impact the setting of the surrounding listed buildings The removal of the steel bollards would have no impact to the setting of the surrounding buildings or the wider conservation area.

Removal of ad hoc signage and introduction of wayfinding
The removal of contemporary signage from the Portland Stone elevations of the listed buildings is intended to prevent continuous change and fixings to the elevations of the Grade I listed buildings and gradual deterioration of the stonework as a result. This is a **heritage benefit** allowing future changes to signage to avoid further degradation of the stonework.

Signage is, by its nature, visually prominent and the wayfinding totems will be noticeable, if proportionate and relatively discreet. This is not considered detrimental to the quality of the courtyard or to the setting of adjacent listed buildings however as signage is an expected element of any university environment and would not appear overly prominent nor visually dominating.

In addition to the above, a schedule of repairs for the stone bollards adjacent to the Slade entrance will be prepared and will include the removal of older, cement-based repairs that are causing damage to the surrounding softer stonework. These will retain the patina of age. In principle, this will be a **heritage benefit.**

Landscape scheme
The proposed fan-shaped, semi-circular seating recalls the form of classical theatres, referencing the neo-classical form of the buildings that surround the quadrangle without competing with the strong rectilinear forms of the buildings. The scheme is to be laid in an alternating pattern of cream-coloured English Sandstone with details picked out in blue-grey Welsh Pennant. Around the perimeter, existing York Stone is to be reused or crushed and reused with some elements of bonded gravel. In the south-west corner, over the existing basement of the Chadwick Building, it is not yet known if the available depth will accommodate the necessary build-up for the stone and bonded gravel is proposed as an alternative instead (although stone will be used if this later proves possible). Seating is to be built up in cast stone with timber and natural stone finishes.

For the north-south crossing path that leads to the entrance to the Slade, the architects have chosen a parabolic curve that subtly reflects the orbit of a comet – a playful reference to the adjacent Grade II listed observatories.

Even without understanding that detail, the curving forms picked out in grey and pale sandstone would create a delightful, beautiful and flexible space able to support all of the historic functions of the courtyard with Wilkins' original curved pathways reinstated as part of the wider landscape design. The landscape scheme would not only encourage people to use the space, it would aid in clearly signposting the primary routes and entrances to all of the buildings. Whilst the South Wing does not have a central entrance like the Slade, the north-south crossing is included to link the overall composition together with a symmetry suitable to the neo-classical character of the buildings around the space, if executed in a contemporary way. The works would not only support continued use of the quadrangle as a place for gatherings; outdoor recreation and learning and performance they would enable this in a more supported and serviced way, with a more legible arrangement of access routes and entrances.

The conversion of flat grass to the raised seating would represent a change to the historic condition of the quadrangle. The gently banked space has been carefully considered so that at its highest point along the western edge, it would still only be 0.6m higher than the existing ground condition and would allow uninterrupted views of the portico from Gower Street as well as a clear and legible appreciation of the other buildings around the quadrangle. The gradient of the slope forming the seating area and access to the surrounding buildings will be shallow with a maximum 1 in 40 rise that will be perceptible to some but not all users.

The loss of the twentieth-century trees will be mitigated in terms of historic character by the replanting of the quadrangle as a seasonally beautiful, biodiverse planting scheme including replacement native trees. The inclusion of spaces and specimens specifically to enhance learning and research will recall the early use of the space as an outdoor learning space and is an enhancement to the intangible historic qualities of the space.

The location of elegantly shaped alternatives to Sheffield bicycle stands in dedicated locations in the north-west corner and along the frontage of the South Wing is commensurate with the architectural quality of the context and expected use of the space and would have no impact to the setting of the buildings. Similarly, the inclusion of a discretely-hedged area for accessibility dogs all contribute to a sense of a fully inclusive and accessible environment which would not detract from the setting of the surrounding listed buildings.

Overall the works thus **significantly enhance the setting** of all five Grade I listed buildings, the immediate settings of the listed observatories as well as improving the quality of this key space within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

Alterations to the entrance to the Slade and entrances to the North and South Cloisters

The Slade

The principles of equality of access and quality of access are the driving forces to improve the access to these Grade I listed buildings. Burwell Architects have come up with a design solution that not only achieves an equal access experience, returning all users to the originally designed entrances of these buildings, but also one that is of a fitting architectural quality to complement the buildings rather than simply technically competent. The proposed structural bridges, paired to maintain the symmetry of the existing stepped entrance, will rest on a waterproof membrane to prevent decay of the stone steps beneath and be finished with a metal tapping rail along the edge. When viewing the bridges, the form of the steps will still be discernible from side views (or views from below).

Whilst the bridges reduce the visibility of the retained steps from the primary view of the Slade within the quadrangle, they will enhance the entrance experience and inclusivity of the Slade, widening participation in the designed entrance experience. Additionally, the associated removal of the bulky wheelchair ramp in the north-west corner of the courtyard and the removal of the convoluted accessible route through the building to bring less mobile users back to the front entrance is a significant benefit in experiencing the building as it was originally intended, which in our view outweighs the harm of the covered steps.

The new finishes allow a subtle but clear delineation of old and new and allow for removal/reversal in the future should this be desired. Considered together, the changes to the Slade entrance experience would therefore be **neutral** with regard to heritage whilst achieving attendant planning benefits of equality of access to a Grade I listed Building.

Cloisters

Similarly, the carefully graded and integrated landscape will allow shallow, Portland stone ramps to be built across the steps to the North and South Cloisters. As with the Slade, the stone is to be carefully preserved and protected from water build-up. In addition, parallel to the North Cloisters, the sloping landscape scheme will allow similar accessible access to the existing door to the Portico, allowing the existing somewhat visually cumbersome ramp to be removed. The fully reversible ramps will obscure the original Portland stone steps but will appear as a high-quality part of the entrance structure, allowing equal and direct access to the Cloisters for all users. This equality of access experience finished to a high degree of architectural quality is a substantive and substantial heritage benefit to the buildings. Overall, the accessibility benefits to the Grade I listed building and the high-quality of execution of the works that reflect the original materials of the Wilkins Building would outweigh any harm arising from the reversible alterations obscuring the steps. The works would be **neutral** with regard to significance, overall.

Servicing

The listed North and South Wings have limited fire protection at present. It is proposed to take the opportunity of the significant quadrangle works to introduce Dry Riser pipework laid beneath the proposed landscape scheme leading to two separate locations within the North and South Wings. Further pipework within those buildings will be the subject of later applications and details. The future-proofing of the quadrangle pipework would have no effect on the setting of any of the listed structures. .

The proposed lighting poles would introduce a new element into the quadrangle but one that will improve the exceptionally poor lighting levels that are currently experienced within the quadrangle after dark (see BDP lighting report attached to the Design and Access Statement). The proposed lighting poles also seek to future proof against the impact to historic fabric from the inevitable obsolescence of any current technology by reducing fixings to the listed buildings themselves. The lighting scheme will include some elements of lighting strips within landscape features such as removable lighting within the cast stone benches and fixed to trees to illuminate the quadrangle under different conditions.

The new poles will also carry the required wifi and CCTV technology for the quadrangle.

Retractable service points have been designed into the landscape scheme to avoid the impact of technological redundancy being designed into the benches or other elements of the landscape scheme. These easily updatable features retract into the stone-laid landscape scheme to reduce visual impact when not in use.

All of the above features are considered neutral with regard to impact to the setting of listed buildings and to the character and appearance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

4.2 Conclusion

The proposals reflect the University's aspirations for a high-quality environment, able to support the multiple functions that happen within its historic spaces and most importantly, that is equally accessible to all. As a result, the works fundamentally embody the first two principles of Historic England's Conservation Principles in that the historic environment is a shared resource and that everyone should be able to participate in experiencing that historic environment. The aims of the project are therefore wholly positive in heritage terms with the acceptability of the proposals relying on careful detailing.

Notwithstanding this, the works are significant interventions and will make significant, striking and lasting changes to the setting of seven, Grade I and Grade II listed buildings. The impact of change from these works is not underestimated even if considered an enhancement to the setting and function of the Wilkins Building, similarly to the quadrangle as an historic space in its own right within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area and the setting of the other listed structures surrounding it.

The works to the Wilkins Building and the quadrangle are a single related project, one set of works enabling the other, although for ease they are considered separately.

4.2.1 Wilkins Building,

The Wilkins Building works will result in a building with historic spaces that are better used, better appreciated and function more efficiently to support the various events and uses within the building addressing long-overdue inequality of access to some significant areas of the Wilkins Building including the designed entrances and vertical circulation within the octagon.

Introducing step-free access to the mezzanine level is a significant heritage benefit in its own right. Coupled with an improvement to the quality of the step-free journey through, and into, the building and consolidation of this journey into a single location for all users is also a heritage benefit. Aside from this, addressing the centuries of aggregate interventions within the octagon to

provide a clearly legible route from within it to the basement level for the first time is also a heritage benefit.

There is precedent for beneficial radical changes to the octagon from the late nineteenth century onwards. Burwell Architects' bold interventions to the octagon include the now iconic oculus which visually connects the ground and first floor levels as well as the northern staircase which more literally connects the two. Striking change is not something to be shied away from where it better reveals an aspect of significance of the building or improves its functionality and supports its purpose. Such changes can become part of the architectural and eventual historic interest of the building itself if completed to an excellent standard.

The proposed southern staircase, lift and landing are such an intervention, bringing people back to the core of Wilkins' design, the octagon, and using this as a point of legible, vertical circulation as he originally intended, if adapted for the needs and spaces of the modern university building. To achieve this, there will be some removal of historic and original fabric although this has been carefully concentrated in areas of lesser significance to mitigate any harm and preserve what is most significant of Wilkins's (and later architects') designs. The overall aim and the intangible benefit of enhancing the sense of the octagon as the core of the building would significantly outweigh the harm as a resulting from necessary loss or change of fabric, in our view.

Similarly, the creation of openings in Wilkins' spine wall demands the removal of original fabric. Removal of moderately significant fabric is not to be carried out lightly and must be carefully weighed against the heritage and other benefits of any such intervention. At present, Wilkins' ground-floor rooms along the western side of the building are overlooked and underused, a consequence of the enclosure of the original Cloisters and subsequent changes in the expansion of the university and changing movement routes around the campus. Whilst some of these changes are themselves historic that is not to say that they enhance how these western rooms are appreciated and there is significant scope to better reveal that significance.

By directly connecting these rooms to the Cloisters, the university can better support the gatherings that occur in the building and better manage different uses. More staff, students and visitors will use these rooms and the quality of the spaces and flow between them will be vastly improved to such a degree that the impact to moderately significant fabric is outweighed. Burwell's responsive and contextual use of semicircular arches will match those frequently used by Wilkins within the building with the subtle contemporary flourish of the projecting metal fillets enabling the existing wainscotting and mouldings to be seamlessly matched to a high quality along the returns to the openings. The openings will be read as a complementary enhancement to the spaces they serve and facilitate the improved and enhanced flow of the university. Only the balance with loss of original fabric results in a conclusion that these works will be neutral with regard to significance rather than an enhancement and it is envisaged that these features will form part of the architectural interest of the building in the future. Added to this, the scheme would improve and increase access to the Whistler murals which are currently accessed only via staircase in a poorly visited (and frequently locked) space.

The remaining changes in the Wilkins Building collectively seek to raise the quality and environment of the spaces within the building: improved lighting; improved acoustics; improved thermal management and improved appearance relative to somewhat tired and ad hoc detailing at present. These aesthetically beneficial changes, from windows to acoustic baffles and lighting will collectively improve the quality of the space although all are individually neutral with regard to architectural and historical significance.

Overall, the changes to the Wilkins Building seek to work with the original flow and function of the building to support its continuing use as a higher education provider and perhaps to undo some of the unseen and negative consequences of earlier intervention. They will result in a fully accessible, efficiently-functioning and high-quality space that the UCL can be proud to still be using as its main building in its bicentennial year.

4.2.2 Quadrangle

The appearance and quality of the quadrangle does not match its importance as the key element in the setting of the Grade I (and Grade II) listed buildings which surround it. Whilst inoffensive in its current layout (barring the semi-permanent pop-up structure to the south), it is not of high-quality and has little to recommend it other than as an empty space with a tarmac-dominated historic core surrounded by underwhelming lawns. In terms of equality of access, the space performs poorly with multiple level changes and uneven surfaces which are poorly lit, ad hoc survivors from previous hard-standing upgrades. The bicentennial project hopes to change this, resulting in a space that properly announces the entrance to a modern & historic university and is fit to serve the many uses, and many users, that university life demands of it.

The hemispherical, classically-inspired shape of the seating/landscaping would maintain the direction of focus towards the neo-classical portico of Wilkins' original building as seen from Gower Street, an important view from the Bloomsbury Conservation Area and a key view in the setting of Wilkins' portico. The bunded, recessed seating would from a subtle, amphitheatre, usable in various layouts and for various events and informal uses. The scheme would additionally promote the use of the space for leisure and lingering, an historic intent which is not well-served by the existing hardstanding and featureless lawns.

Overall, the works would not impact fabric of significance; will promote the quality of the space and complement the existing monolithic, rectilinear blocks of the quadrangle buildings without visually competing with them. We note some less than substantial harm, at the cusp of the threshold of harm, to the significance of the Chadwick Building as a consequence of the removal of the bollards. This low level harm would be wholly outweighed by the enhancements to the building's setting as a result of the removal of the pop up building and the provision of an integrated and high quality landscape scheme abutting this building, and others enclosing the quadrangle. Similarly, the loss of the lampposts within the quadrangle would be mitigated and substantially outweighed by the improvements to the appearance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

Areas requiring particularly careful detailing are focused the bridged steps of the Slade and the Cloisters Wings and how the landscape build-up meets the surrounding railings and the steps of the buildings. With regard to the latter, the landscape has been carefully graded and the meeting points designed to be roughly level with the existing finishes. The covering of the steps (which is in isolation harmful to the significance of the buildings) cannot be considered in isolation from the enhancement of the original entrances, returning these as the sole points of entry for all users and widening participation in the designed entrance experience for these buildings. Additionally, the removal of unsightly ramps and inappropriate back-of-house arrival routes within the building are substantial benefits sufficient to outweigh the harm arising from the reversible covering of the steps. As with the Wilkins works, the acceptability of these proposals relies on the detailing and Burwell Architect have included detailed drawings of relevant design elements and the abutment of the scheme works with the existing structures.

Together, the works will be notable and striking, befitting the quality of the historic and architecturally significant UCL campus and a significant enhancement to the university's historic core.

With each element of the scheme considered in the round, as the NPPF and relevant case law accepts is appropriate, the works do not result in harm to the significance or setting of any listed building or other heritage asset: a remarkable achievement for the redevelopment of a space that directly serves seven separate listed buildings and is a prominent space within an historic conservation area. The works are offered for consideration as fully compliant with Policy D2 of the Camden Local Plan (2017).

5.0
Supporting Information

5.1 Sources

Aldrich R., *The Institute of Education, 1902-2002: A Centenary History* (2002) UCL Press: London

Harte N., North J., and Brewis G. *The World of UCL* 4th ed. (2018) UCL Press: London

Alan Baxter (2003) *University College London Outline Management Plan*

Survey of London: Volume 21, the Parish of St Pancras Part 3: Tottenham Court Road and Neighbourhood. Originally published by London County Council, London, 1949.

Images from UCL Archive – Accessed online.

5.2 Entry on the National Heritage List

Add listing (in images folder) Please shorten (take out gaps etc).

5.3 Planning policy

National legislation and policy

Planning (Listed Building & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Planning Act 1990 (As Amended)

The overarching legislation governing the consideration of applications for planning consent that affect heritage assets is contained in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation) Areas Act 1990.

Sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Act require local planning authorities, in considering whether to grant listed building consent, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Section 72 of the Act requires local planning authorities, in considering whether to grant planning permission with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, to pay 'special attention […] to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.'

National policy

National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

The NPPF sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. Its core principle is to help achieve sustainable development through the planning system. Sustainable development is commonly summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Having been first published in 2012, the Framework was most recently updated in 2023.

Section 16, entitled Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment, contains guidance on heritage assets, which include listed buildings and conservation areas. Paragraphs 194-207 are relevant to the present application:

Paragraph 200 requires an applicant to give a summary of the significance of the building or area affected, proportionate to its importance. This Heritage Statement provides that information at an appropriate level.

Paragraph 201 advises local authorities to take account of that significance in assessing proposals to avoid or minimise conflict between the proposals and conservation of the asset.

Paragraph 203 emphasises the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of individual assets and wider, local distinctiveness, and the desirability of viable and fitting uses for a building being found or continued.

Paragraph 205advises that when considering the impact of proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the conservation of the asset, and that the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. It also establishes a scale of harm, from total loss, to substantial harm, to less than substantial harm.

Paragraph 206 establishes the principle that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification.

Paragraph 208 states: Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.

Paragraph 212 advises that local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Area and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance.

Paragraph 213 addresses harm to the significance of conservation areas. It states: Not all elements of a Conservation Area […] will necessarily contribute to its significance.

The NPPF also requires good design, as set out in chapter 12 and emphasised in relation to the historic environment in paragraph 130.

Regional policy

London Plan (2021)

The London Plan (March 2021) is underpinned by the principle of 'Good Growth', that is, growth that is socially and economically inclusive and environmentally sustainable (Paragraph 1.0.1). Paragraph 1.1.4 highlights the positive impact that good quality, affordable homes, better public transport connectivity, accessible and welcoming public space, and built forms that work with local heritage and identity will have on London.

Policy HC1: Heritage conservation and growth states:

A) Boroughs should, in consultation with Historic England, local communities and other statutory and relevant organisations, develop evidence that demonstrates a clear understanding of London's historic environment. This evidence should be used for identifying, understanding, conserving, and enhancing the historic environment and heritage assets, and improving access to, and interpretation of, the heritage assets, landscapes and archaeology within their area

For planning decisions, it states:

C) Development proposals affecting heritage assets, and their settings, should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to the assets' significance and appreciation within their surroundings. The cumulative impacts of incremental change from development on heritage assets and their settings should also be actively managed. Development proposals should avoid harm and identify enhancement opportunities by integrating heritage considerations early on in the design process.

Local policy

Camden Local Plan (2017)

In July 2017 Camden Council adopted the Local Plan, which has reRectangulard the Core Strategy and Camden Development Policies documents as the basis for planning decisions and future development in the borough.

Paragraph 7.41 states:

The Council Rectangular great importance on preserving the historic environment. Under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act the Council has a responsibility to have special regard to preserving listed buildings and must pay special attention to preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas.

Paragraph 7.44 states:

Any harm to or loss of a designated heritage asset will require clear and convincing justification which must be provided by the applicant to the Council. In decision making the Council will take into consideration the scale of the harm and the significance of the asset.

Policy D2 Heritage states that the Council will:

preserve and, where appropriate, enhance Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas, listed buildings, archaeological remains, scheduled ancient monuments and historic parks and gardens and locally listed heritage assets.

Designated heritage assets

not permit development that results in harm that is less than substantial to the significance of a designated heritage asset unless the public benefits of the proposal convincingly outweigh that harm.

Conservation areas

e. require that development within conservation areas preserves or, where possible, enhances the character or appearance of the area.

Listed Buildings

j. resist proposals for a change of use or alterations and extensions to a listed building where this would cause harm to the special architectural and historic interest of the building

5.3.1 National guidance

Planning Practice Guidance (Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities) (2014)

The aim of the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) is to support implementation of the policies set out in the NPPF. The section 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' was last updated in April 2014.

Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 – The Setting of Heritage Assets (Historic England, 2015)

This advice note supports the implementation of policy in the NPPF. This document sets out guidance on managing change within the settings of heritage assets including archaeological remains and historic buildings, sites, areas and landscapes. It contains advice on the extent of setting, its relationship to views and how it contributes to significance. It also sets out a staged approach to decision-taking.

5.3.2 Local guidance

Camden Planning Guidance: Design (Camden Council, July 2015, updated March 2018)

Camden Council is reviewing and updating its Planning Guidance documents to support the Camden Local Plan following its adoption in summer 2017. The update is in two phases, the first of which was completed in March 2018. CPG1 Design will come under review in the second phase, but continues to apply until it is fully updated. Section 3 of this CPG sets out further guidance on how Policy D2 Heritage from the Local Plan (2017) should be applied

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