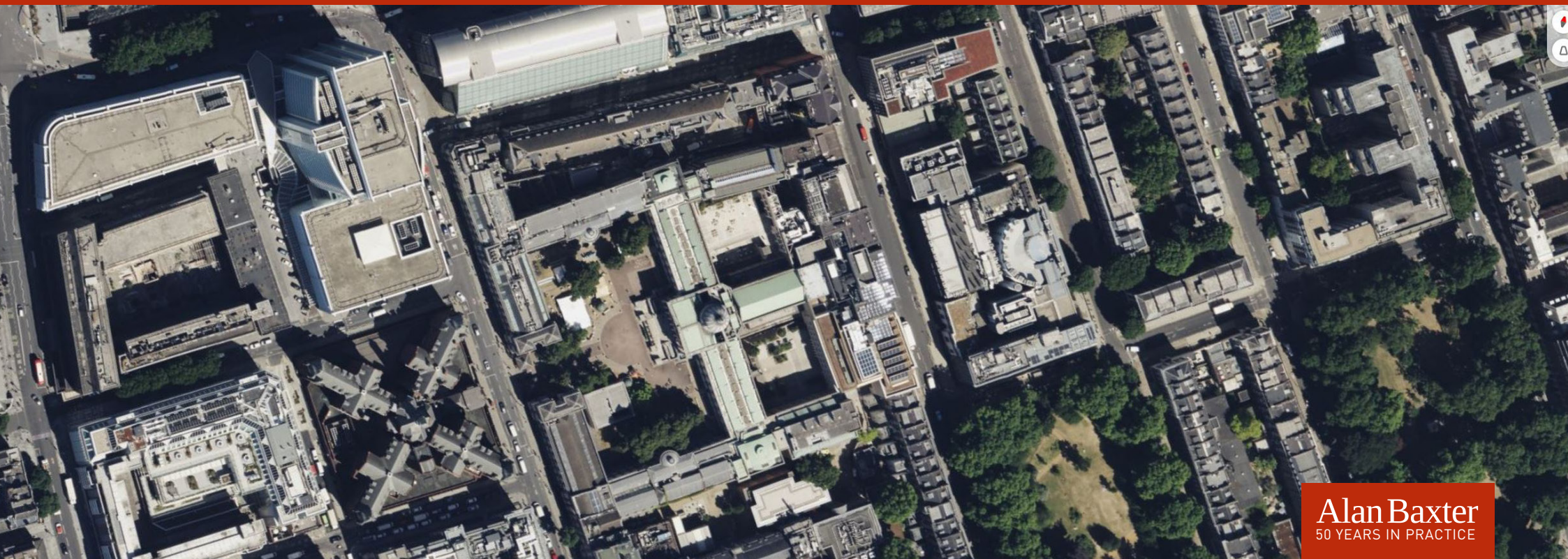
The Garwood Lecture Theatre, South Wing, UCL Heritage Statement

Prepared for University College London

April 2025



Alan Baxter
50 YEARS IN PRACTICE

The Garwood Lecture Theatre, South Wing, UCL Heritage Statement

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Executive Summary

This report has been provided for University College London in support of a listed building consent application for refurbishment of, and access improvements to, the Garwood Lecture Theatre. This small lecture theatre is located on the first floor of in the Grade I listed South Wing of University College London, abutting the Grade I listed Wilkins Building. It's bowed window, usually hidden behind thick curtains, fronts onto the quad itself. Originally completed in 1874 to the designs of UCL's then Chair of Architecture T Hayter Lewis, the South Wing was fully subservient to the Wilkins Building, with access from the primary building rather than independent of it. Expense was lavished on the Portland stone, neo-classical exterior to form a suitably fitting wing to the adjacent main university building which had been completed in 1828. The South Wing was designed as a pair with the North Wing, more commonly called the Slade School of Art, which faces it across the quadrangle and was completed four years after but with the addition of its own central entrance.

The application relates to a single room within the building: the first-floor level, Garwood Lecture Theatre which generally serves the Geology Department but, as a small lecture theatre, is also available to other departments and courses within the university. The seats of the lecture theatre appear to have been recently replaced but the remainder of the space is somewhat dated if of a solid and functional character, reflecting post-war refurbishment. The primary need to refurbish the theatre stems from both accessibility issues and the desire to generally improve the quality of the environment. In terms of accessibility, there are two narrow entrances to the lecture theatre from the corridor, a stepped dias and no specifically wheelchair accessible seating amongst other accessibility issues. In terms of functionality, the screen and audio-visual technology need to be improved to respond to twenty-first century teaching needs. From the perspective of a higher quality environment, the attractive bowed window is almost permanently covered by bulky, heavy curtains which allows no appreciation of the quad beyond and , conversely, does little to animate the building frontage as seen from the quad. The Garwood Lecture Theatre occupies the primary bowed window at first floor level and is therefore highly noticeable from the quad. At present it compares unfavourably with the refurbished rooms beneath it at ground-floor level which were recently refitted with sympathetic lighting and window blinds, allowing the ground-floor of the building a more dynamic frontage and interaction with the exterior.

The works involve some impact to fabric, specifically, the widening of the two doorframes to better accommodate wheelchair users; the uncovering of the original ceiling height which has been clogged with various acoustic materials and services and the reordering of the dias, it's bulwark and back wall behind it. Having carefully considered these changes, these would have no impact to the overall significance of the South Wing. Moreover, the improvements to the legibility of the room and the improved relationship with the external quad, from both perspectives, would enhance the significance of the Grade I listed building. The application is therefore offered to LB Camden as a heritage benefit, with no heritage balance needing to be struck. The application is therefore wholly compliant with the NPPF and Policies D2 of the LB Camden Local Plan. By lesser degree, the improved appearance of the building and relationship of the quad will improve the quality of this important space and building frontage within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

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 for works to upgrade access, services and finishes within the Garwood Lecture Theatre within the Grade I listed South Wing, itself an extension to the Grade I listed Wilkins Building. There is also a retrospective component for the regularisation of replacement seating within the lecture theatre which was replaced within the last few years.

1.2 Site and scope

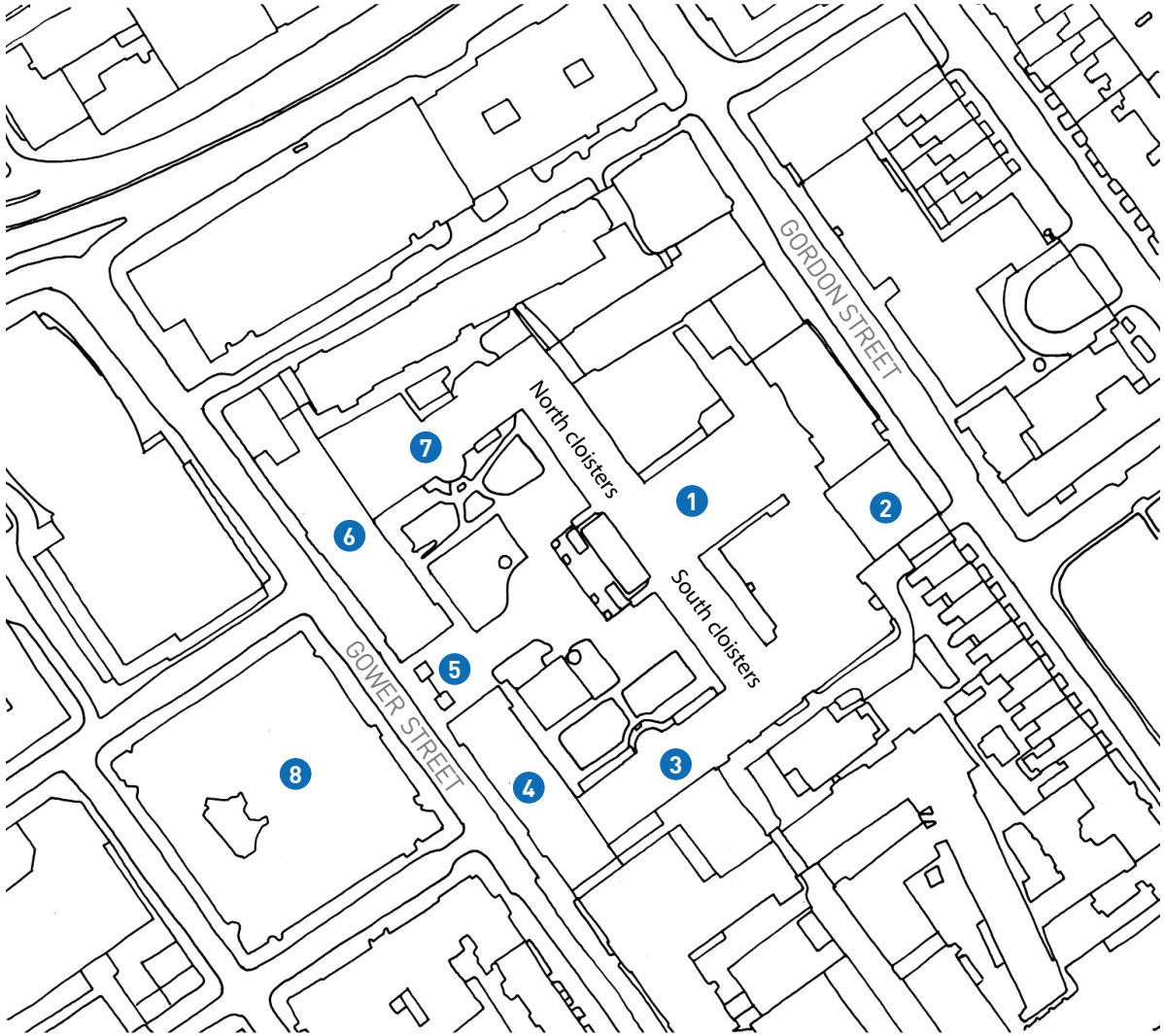
University College London was founded in 1826 in its current location in the then open fields to the north of London. Originally known as University of London, the institution was originally composed of the single, if monumental, twenty-two bay range topped with a copper dome that now forms the Wilkins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

Today, 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, and the South Wing to the south, subject of this application Together with two ranges fronting Gower Street (the North- West Wing and the Chadwick Wing to the south-east, these enclose an inner quadrangle which is currently subject to ongoing remodelling works approved in advance of the University's; upcoming Bicentennial celebrations.

1.3 Planning context

UCL has been subject to near constant change since its foundation in 1826 with the original buildings set 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 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 were rebuilt internally. These north and south ranges of the Wilkins Building (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 nonetheless, information is relatively scant. This is particularly true of the South Wing, which was always built as a plainer, subsidiary wing to the Wilkins Building, originally housing the University's income-generating school and offices. With the closure of the school in XXXX and expansion of the University itself into the buildings, first the Geology department, then Psychology, the buildings were gradually altered in a piecemeal fashion to accommodate the needs of its various occupiers, although the basic cellular plan and it's restrained classical detailing remains visible in stairwells and corridors. There appears to have been extensive refurbishment in the immediate post-war period as the wider complex of buildings were rebuilt and/or refurbished following extensive bomb and fire damage, although this is not captured wholly in the planning record. The building was listed in 1954.



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

Fig. 1: Site plan

Planning records show some small incremental changes to the building since that date specifically the addition of an induction loop to the Garwood Lecture Theatre and a power-assisted door to the easternmost door in 2003 (LB Camden ref: 2003/2464/L). On inspection, the seating appears to be relatively new and it has been confirmed that the damaged and inadequate seating was recently replaced. As such, this application retrospectively includes replacement seating within the lecture theatre.

1.4 Methodology, sources and limitations

1.4.1 Methodology

This report broadly follows the suggested structure for heritage statements / 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 Garwood Lecture Theatre in March 2025.

1.4.2 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 been lost .Where this occurs, the Alan Baxter Management Guidelines document is identified as the source.

1.4.3 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.

Regrettably, very little documentary information survives from the internal changes to the South Wing in the twentieth-century and many of the inferences within this report are based on close inspection of the building itself. As such, we have not included age of fabric plans or detailed significance plans as there would be too high a degree of conjecture for the age or significance of individual walls or

This application has been written at a time when the UCL is preparing major development works for the Quadrangle and the Wilkins Building. As such, the history and significance sections of this report is closely modelled on the history and significance sections of reports that support these works and have already been shared with LB Camden.

1.5 Designations

With the exception of the 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 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.

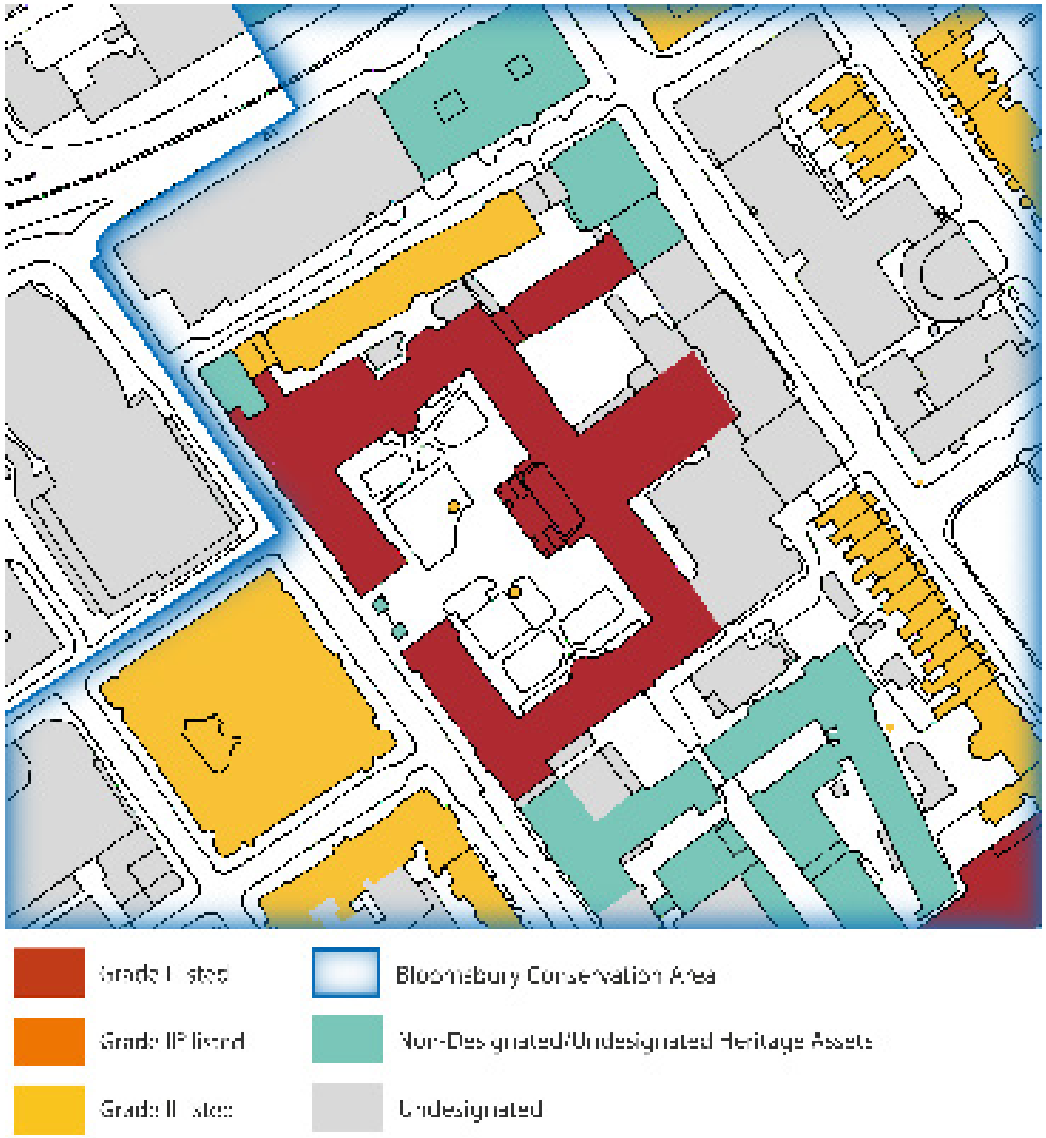


Fig. 2: Heritage designations around the core UCL buildings

2.0
Understanding UCL and the South Wing

2.1 The development of UCL

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.

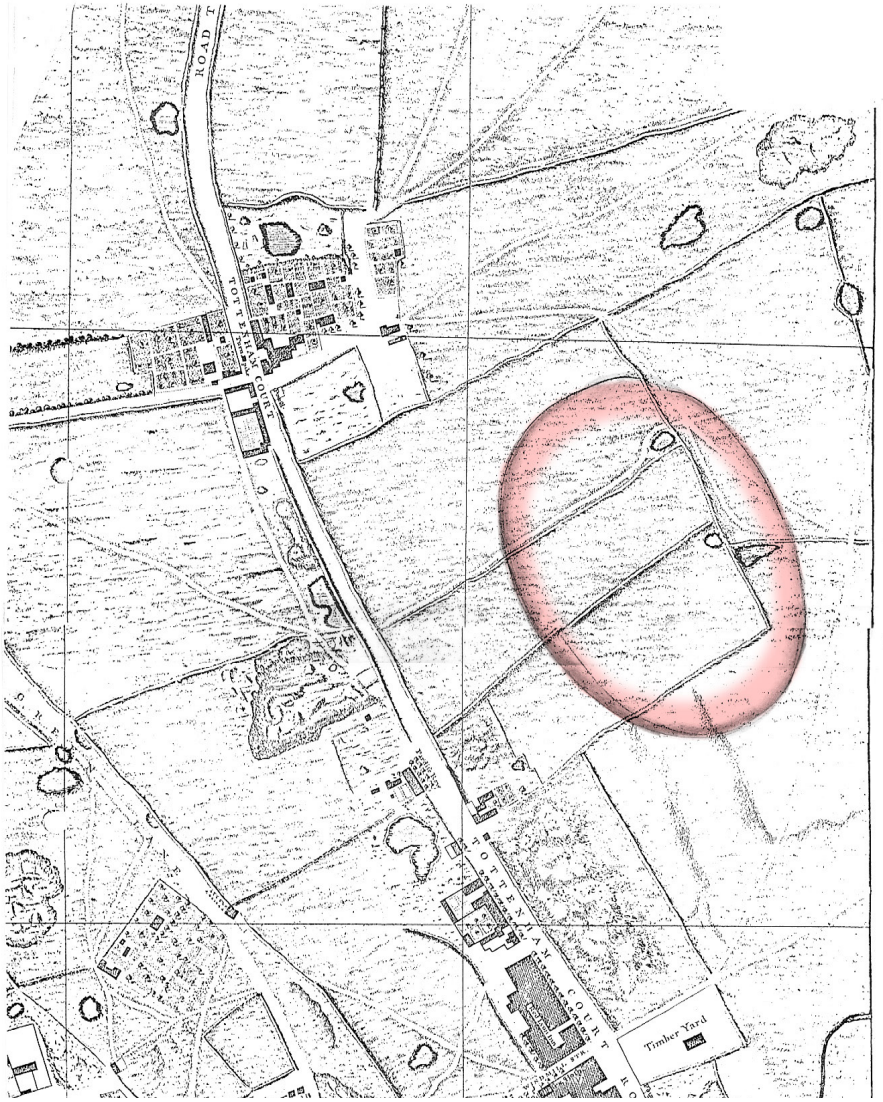


Fig. 3: Roque's Map of 1746, showing the Site to the east of Tottenham Court Lane. Tottenham Court can be seen to the North-West (around the present day junction of Tottenham Court and Euston Roads.

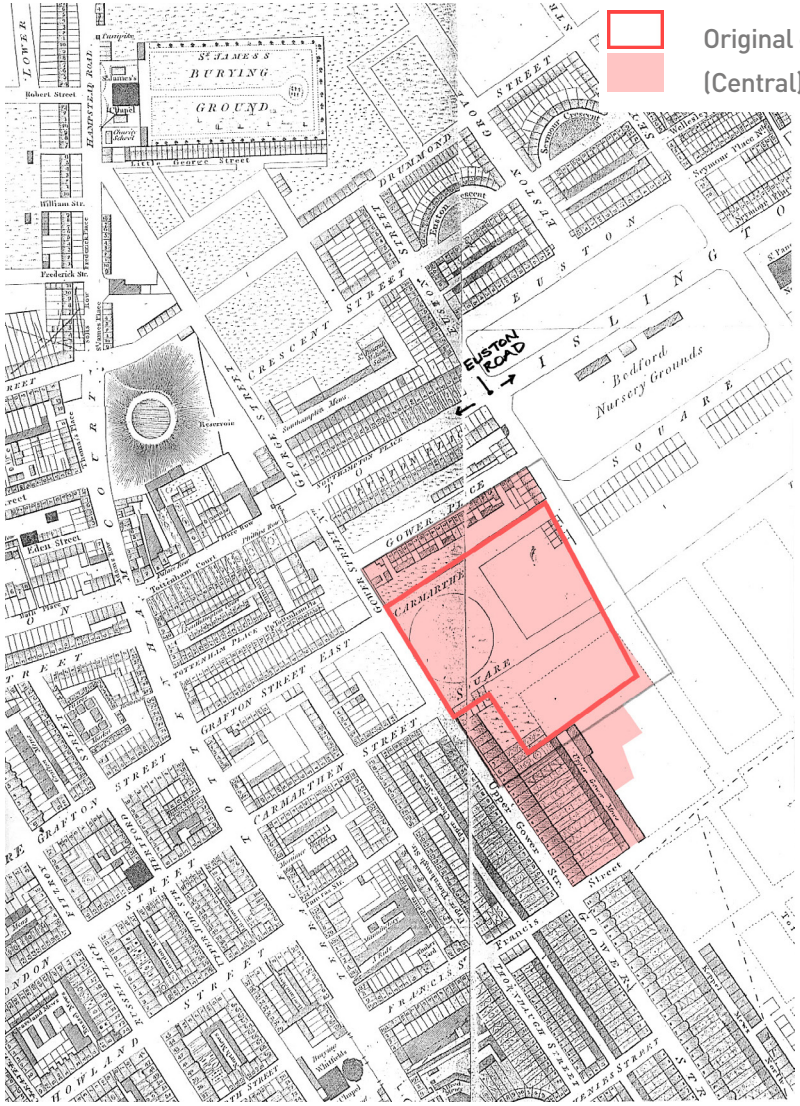


Fig. 4: The Site in 1819 – Bloomsbury remains undeveloped.

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.*

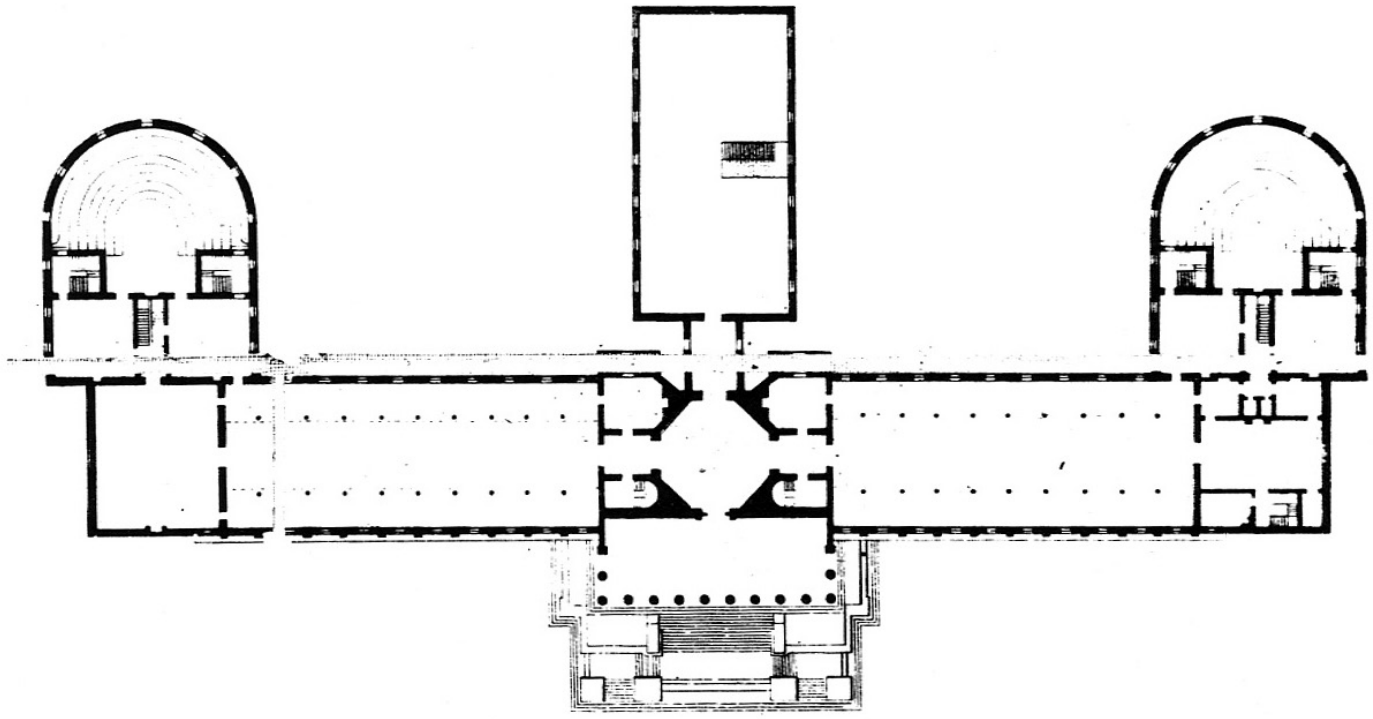


Fig. 5: Plan of the Wilkins building, as built, with the Great Hall moved behind the dome

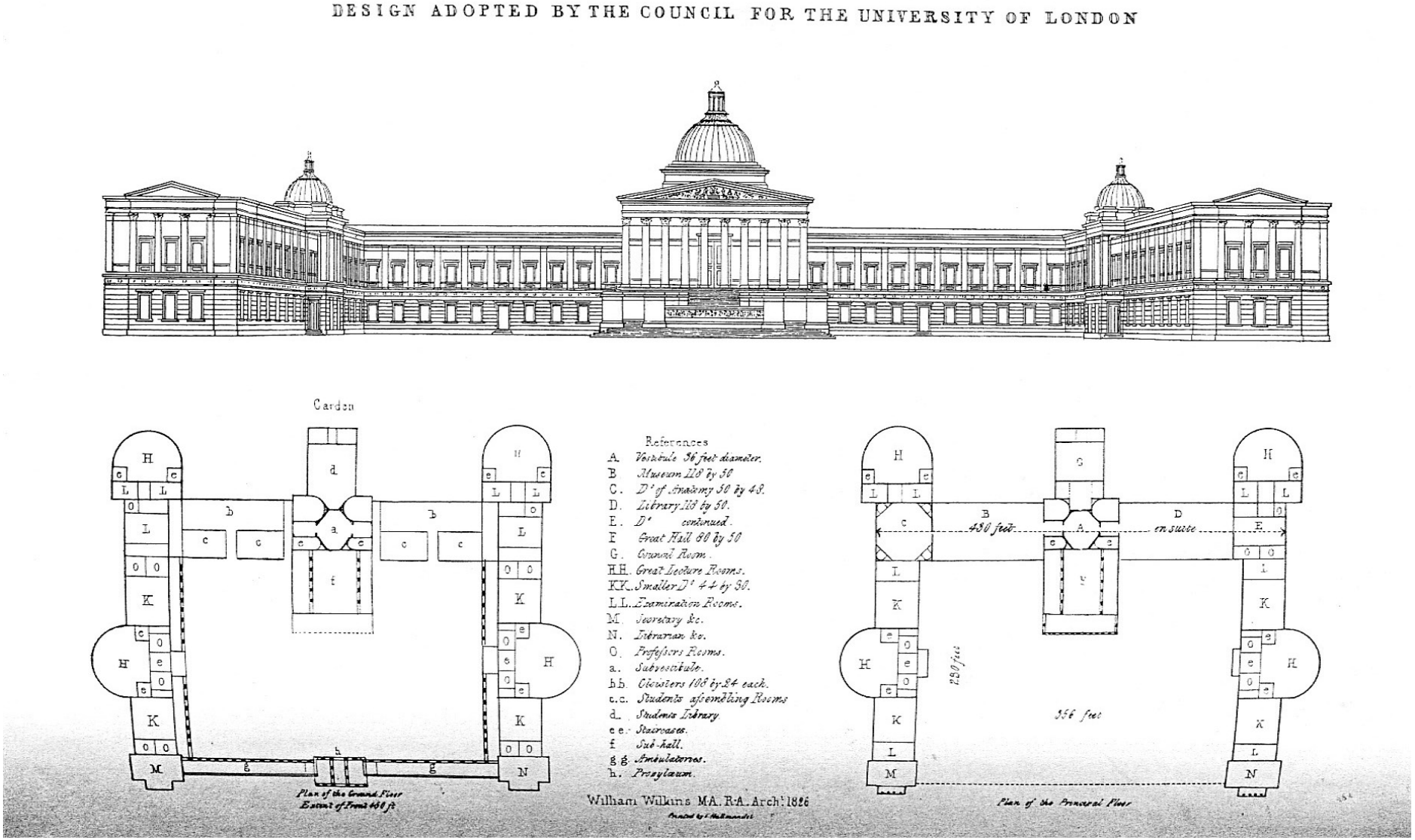


Fig. 6: William Wilkins' original scheme, with the Great Hall projecting into the Quadrangle

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).

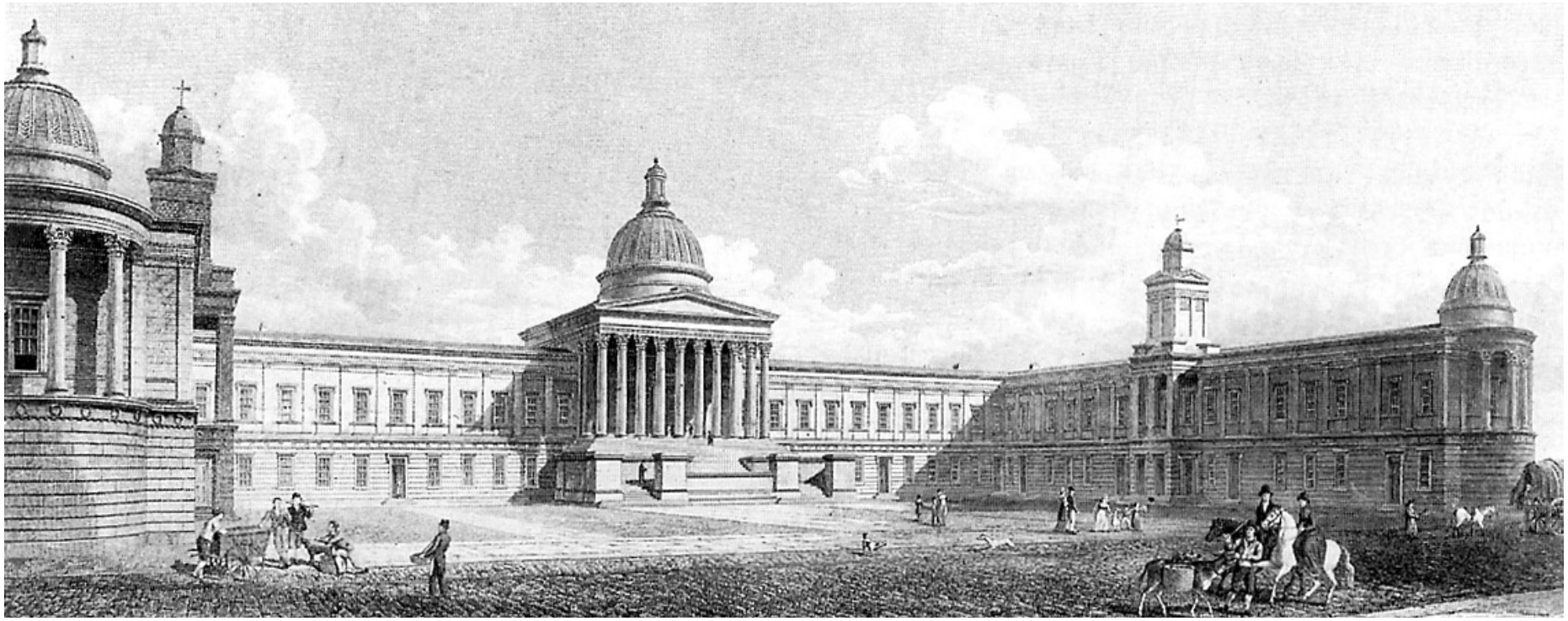


Fig. 7: Wilkins' original engraving, c.1826

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.

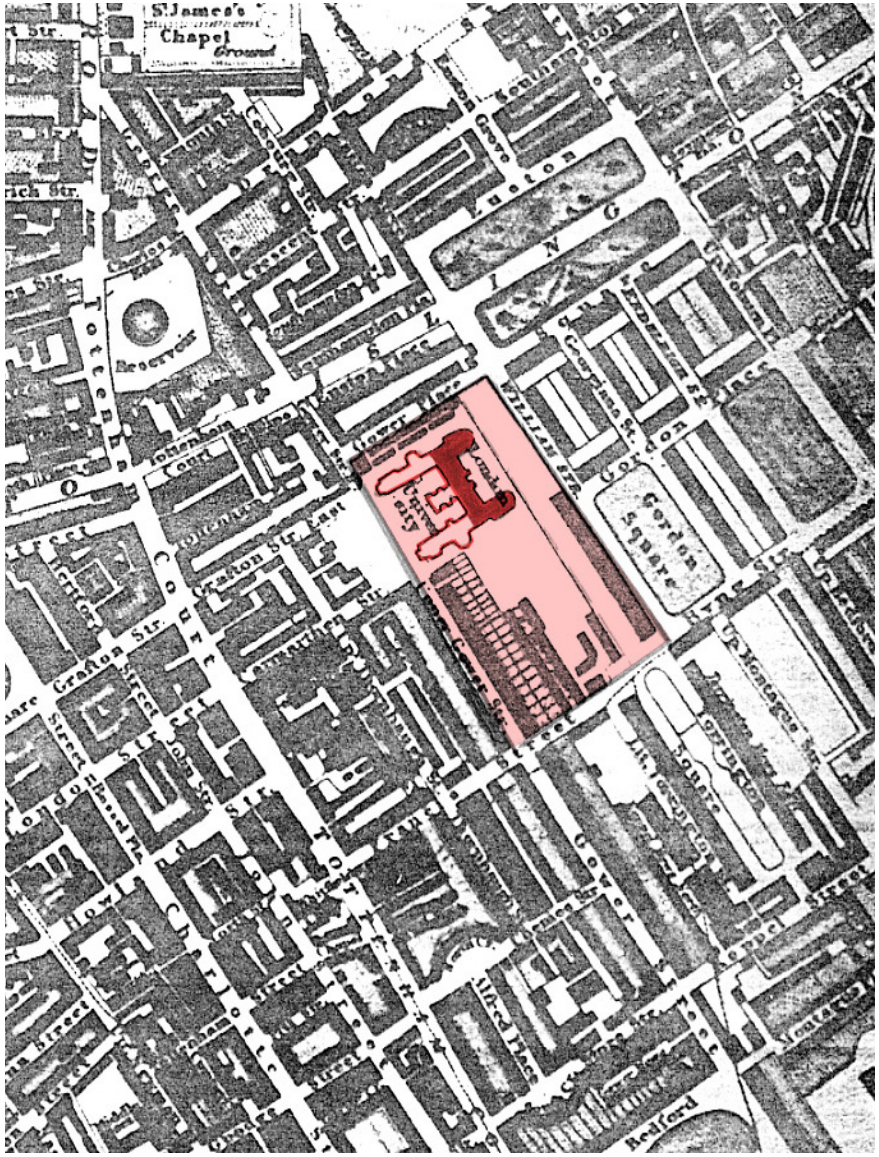


Fig. 8: OS Map 1827 showing university under construction (and remainder to be built)

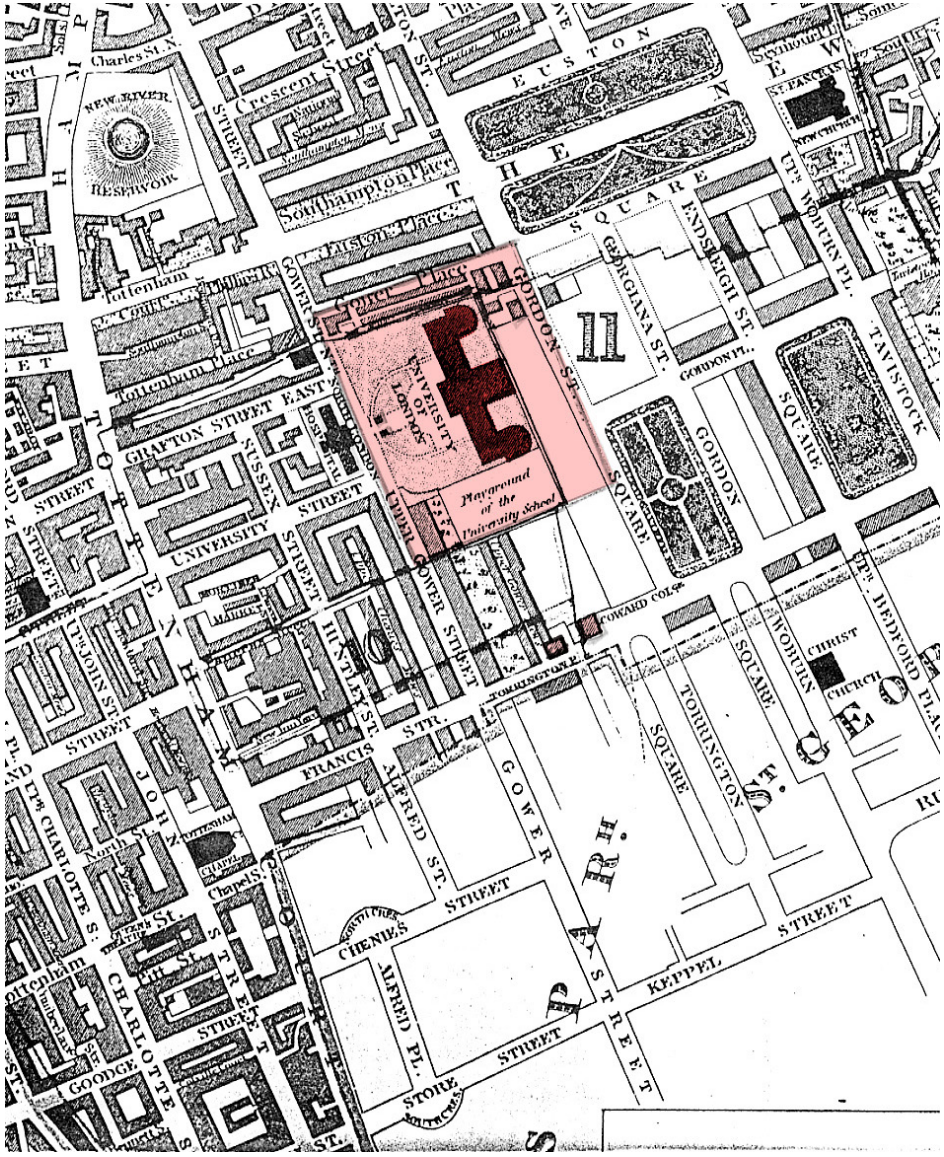


Fig. 9: OS Map 1836 University operational, note curving oval sweep to lawns and North London Hospital on west side of Gower Street.

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. 10: As built, showing school playground, 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..

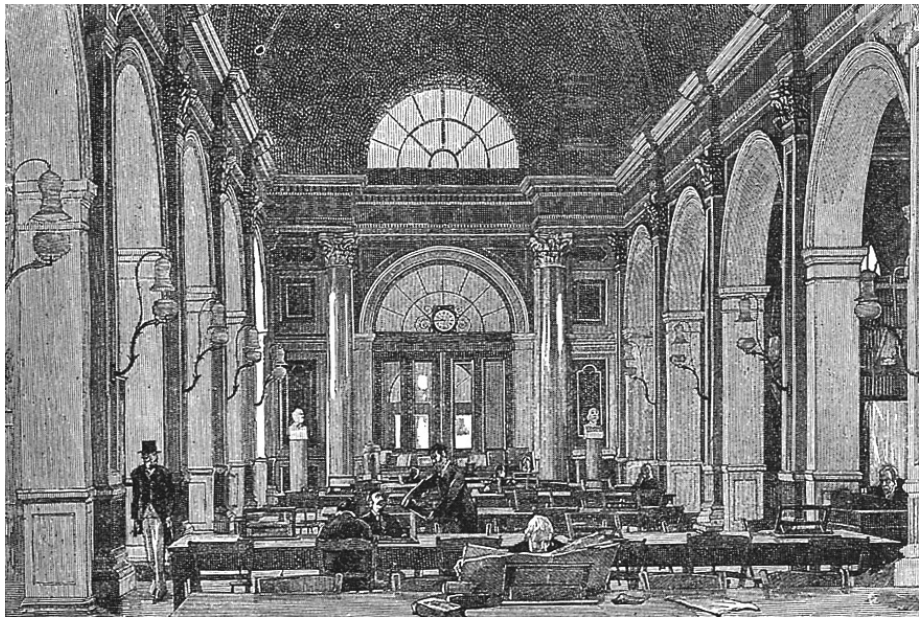


Fig. 11: The Donaldson Library, built 1849 by T. L. Donaldson (on site of the Great Hall)

2.3 The South Wing

The South Wing was originally designed to house the University School, which in the first years of economic struggle, financially bolstered the University. The school originally occupied the southern range of the Wilkins Building (referred to as the South Cloisters) but, as the finances of the university improved, was relocated to the new South Wing to free up space for the expanding University. In a move that would be repeated with the remainder of the campus over the next century, the new extension to the Wilkins Building was designed by the University's own Professor of Architecture, T Hayer Lewis. He became Professor of Architecture at UCL in 1865 and almost immediately began to draw up the buildings for the long-planned expansion of the university. This was to be completed to the general vision of William Wilkins, who had designed the monumental decastyle portico of the original university building with enclosing wings. As envisaged by Wilkins, Hayter Lewis' complementary wings were to jut out to the west of the main building, enclosing the forecourt, or quad, on three sides in a more restrained neo-classical style. Due to budget constraint however, these were built in phases with the palatial frontages of a considerably higher order than the interiors. Hayter Lewis also did away with the subsidiary domes envisaged by Wilkins to present the polite frontage seen today. With modest finances available, the fitting out of the interior of the school was of a far plainer order than the public-facing exterior, with simple detailing and a cellular plan for class rooms accessed off a central corridor.

Hayter Lewis designed the South Wing as part of a pair with the North Wing, which would be completed four years later. Although similar externally, the North Wing was purpose-built to house the Slade School of Art, Chemistry and Physics departments and was designed to have large, top lit artist's studios for the art students and dedicated laboratories for the science departments, with the result that the two buildings were unalike internally. Hayter also reconfigured the frontage of the later North Wing to have its own central entrance and to be separately functional, unlike its southern counterpart which operated as a wholly subservient wing to the Wilkins Building and was

Fig. 12: Exterior of the South Wing from the quadrangle

only accessible from within it. Although some contemporary engravings show the South Wing as having a central entrance, as might be expected from its appearance and apparently central arrangement, these may introduce a degree of artistic licence with only the North Wing having a door at the centre of the building.

Over the following years, the increasing success and prestige of the University and the increasing specialism of different subjects meant that more space was needed to expand. The school moved out of the South Wing in 1907, when the department of Geology, one of the University's original departments, moved in to the South Wing with the University's administrative functions taking the more cellular rooms on the ground-level. The then Professor of Geology was Edmund J. Garwood for whom the new lecture theatre was named. We have no definitive proof that the lecture theatre was introduced at this stage, rather than existing within the earlier school, although this does seem likely. The relative narrowness of entrance doors in comparison to other doors within the South Wing suggest that they have been retrofitted and the relatively simple detailing of the room is appropriate to 1907, together with the name in honour of the Professor of the Geology School at that time. Frustratingly, there is no clear indication what this large room might have been during the life of the school although a large school room is entirely possible, as is free-standing raked seating, which reflects educational practice of the day. The combination of the incoming university department and the room's dedication to Garwood likely suggests that the current arrangement dates from 1907 however and there is no visible fabric in the room which suggests otherwise.

The South Wing was generally refitted as needed throughout its life including extensive refurbishment in the post-war period, as the university was rebuilt and refurbished following comprehensive damage to the adjacent Wilkins Building and lesser, if substantial damage to the South Wing itself.

2.4 The Garwood Lecture Theatre

The small lecture theatre is accessed from two doors from the corridor, either side of a central dias. Both of these doors are narrower than others within the South Wing and are suggestive of changes to the access arrangements to this room at some point in its history. Internally, the doors flank a dias which recesses back to the corridor wall by virtue of two installed walls or bulwarks. They either contain services or were installed to separate the entrances from the dias, all suggestive of retrofitting rather than the original use of the room when it operated as a school. A stepped, carpeted rake supports recently installed seats (with imagery from UCL's website suggesting what was replaced was later twentieth-century in origin and of no historic significance.

At present, a heavy curtain sits at the back of the room which is used to block out light from the windows (within the bay of the semi-rotunda). This curtain is of no significance. Timber hand-rails have been fixed to the wall and timber panelling exists around the screen/board of the lecture theatre. These are fairly utilitarian and may date from the post-war period and of no significance although the hand-rails are solid and have a robust charm.

The ceiling is obscured by modern baffles and servicing, a fact which obscures the original volume of the room and so **detract** from an understanding of its proportions. It is not clear whether any moulding exists above this although the generally plain finishes of the building suggests this is unlikely or at best modest.

Fig. 13: The curtains covering the windows – difficult to move and usually kept closed. Poor ceiling condition above

Fig. 14: Hand rail and carpet

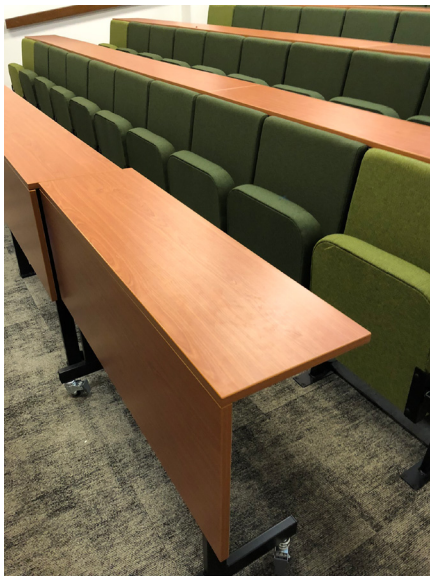


Fig. 15: Installed lecture chairs (including removable wheelchair accessible desk)

Fig. 17: Dias step

Fig. 16: Narrow entrance door (eastern)

Fig. 18: Narrow entrance door (western)

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.*

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

Archaeological interest: 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: 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: 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.

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 of the Garwood Lecture Theatre

The primary element of significance of the South Wing is its palace façade of thirteen bays and central semi-rotunda extending from basement to second floor and the and the contribution that that makes to the group of buildings surrounding the quadrangle. The façade detail increases in hierarchy with a rusticated ground floor with simply architraved windows. At first floor level, enrichment around windows increases with bracketed consoles either side of each window and moulded strings along each sill. Most striking are the engaged Corinthian columns around the first-floor level of the semi-rotunda. This Portland Stone elevation is of **high significance**. This is appreciated as a whole and is so noted as all of high significance. There are elements within this composition however, notably the enriched semi-rotunda which are particular sensitivity relative to that whole. Similarly, the building footprint that reflects the semi-rotunda to the north front is also of **high significance**.

Internally, the plan form of a central spine corridor with rooms off is on **moderate significance** as are surviving oversized doors and simple neo-classical features where they survive. Typically, most interior finishes are twentieth-century provenance and of **low** or **neutral significance**.

Within the lecture theatre, the plan form follows the semi-rotunda and so is of high significance. All other elements of the room are of no significance even if some post-war timber hand-rails have some solid charm. The architraves of the doors reflects the style and appearance of other doors within the corridor but their lesser width and resulting change in proportions is notably different to others. Whilst a unity of appearance within the corridor space is of some low significance, reflecting the layout of the building since it's construction, the narrow doorframes are of neutral significance in themselves. Around the simple dias, bulwarks have been built out, possibly to encloses services or to enclose the dias area. These are of **neutral significance**. The acoustic ceiling with its poor lighting obstructs an appreciation of the volume of the room and **detracts** from its overall significance.

The modern lecture seating is of **no significance**.

3.3 Significance

The following table relates to an identification of significance.

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	Little or no contribution to architectural or historical significance.

4.0
Heritage impact assessment

4.1 The proposals

As a world-leading university, it is critical that UCL's estate reflects the highest quality of educational provision and experience for staff, students and visitors. Wider works across the campus are being undertaken in this spirit to improve the quality of spaces that have undergone some piecemeal development over the two centuries of the university's existence. As the university's second oldest building, and therefore one of Bloomsbury's oldest buildings, the South Wing is an important element of UCL's historic core. Even where there is a gradient of relative significance across the building and relative to the striking Wilkins Building, the building in its entirety is an historic Grade I listed building.

The majority of the proposed refurbishment, including repainting and the replacement of carpets would not affect the special interest of the building and does not require listed building consent however this is all included here for completeness.

- Removal of the infill bulwark next to the screen area, to facilitate a wider door and wheelchair accessible entrances.
- Widening of the two doorways to comfortably accommodate wheelchair users with replacement architraves to match the existing.
- Replacement carpets throughout the room.
- Removal of the twentieth-century curtain and pelmet and the installation of inline blinds (as already approved and installed in the ground-floor room beneath).
- Removal of the ceiling accretions and installation of high-quality, circular lighting fixtures (as already approved and installed in the ground-floor room beneath).
- Retrospective installation of lecture hall seating including wheelchair accessible seating at lowest level.
- Reordering of the screen area, including removal of the timber surrounds, to facilitate the installation of necessary audio-visual equipment.
- Removal of the stepped dias to provide inclusive access to staff.
- General refurbishment (repainting)

4.2 Impact Assessment

The majority of proposed changes are modest and affect fabric of neutral significance - including the replacement of late twentieth-century curtains and fitting and the timber surround of the existing backdrop/screen area. The alterations to the doors to make these not just fully accessible to all users but easily and appropriately accessible would also requires the removal of the infill bulwark that separates the entrance vestibule from the lecture theatre. As later and somewhat awkward additions, this is welcome in heritage as well as accessibility terms, better revealing the full volume of the original room. As seen from the plain but historic corridor, the widening of these notably narrow doors would have no visual impact as they would better relate to the historic openings already existing off of the corridor. These works affect fabric but would be negligible in terms of impact to significance, provided that an appropriately solid door is to take their place. The detail of the door does not

form part of this application but LB Camden may wish to add an appropriate condition to any approval.

As seen from the adjacent quad, the greater visibility of students and activity within the Garwood Lecture Theatre would be beneficial, enhancing and reinforcing that the somewhat moniolithic neo-classical facades that surround the space are active university locations – the business of education is being carried out within them. At present, the almost permanent blocking of this view by curtains interrupts this relationship. There would be some modest benefit to the group value of the surrounding Grade I listed buildings as a result and, by extension, the very particular educational character of this part of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

In terms of quality of space and experience, investing in the Garwood Lecture Theatre in this way supports its continued use as a university lecture theatre, which has been its consistent role throughout the entirety of the twentieth century and throughout the twenty-first so far. Works that support this use, support the use of the South Wing in its optimum viable use as a teaching and learning space of the university.

4.3 Conclusion: the planning balance

The South Wing is part of UCL's ground-breaking and innovative approach to education. As a modern university, its interiors undergo periodic change to enable it to be fit for purpose and of a quality that would be expected with a world-leading institution whilst maintaining the historic character and detailing of those architects who have worked on the building previously. The simple finishes of the South Wing are able to tolerate minimal intervention or change without affecting the significance of the spaces and therefore of the complex of Grade I listed buildings overall. The works will enhance the South Wing's simple, functional character without any harm to that visual character and status.

The removal of a small degree of fabric to facilitate widening of the doorways would remove a small degree of nineteenth-century fabric although the overall appearance of the likely later, inserted doors would move closer to the expected width of doors from the central corridor. Overall, the widened doorways results in loss of fabric but supports the heritage benefit of a the best fit for this historic lecture thearte and we can therefore take an overview that this specific intervention is neutral in heritage terms.

Removing the heavy twentieth-century acoustic ceiling and its poor lighting would be a significant benefit to the quality of the space and an appreciation of its original volume.

In conclusion, the works support an appropriate and historic use of the Garwood Lecture Theatre, which itself represents an evolution of teaching from its original use as a school room, updated to be fit for purpose within a twenty-first century education. They will be completed with no detrimental impact to significance and will improve the quality of the space and it's interaction with the exterior quadrangle.

The retrospective seating anecdotally replaces late twentieth-century seating of similar form but without the movable wheelchair accessible space and in poor condition and it therefore considered to be a neutral change affecting no fabric of significance.

The works are therefore consistent with Policy D2 of the LB Camden Local Plan (2017) and the requirements of the NPPF (2023) and we therefore request that the application be approved, accepting an appropriate condition for the appearance of the external doors.

Fig. 19: Improved lighting and blinds already installed at ground-floor level beneath the Garwood Lecture Theatre

5.0
Supporting Information

5.1 Sources

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 194 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 195 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 197 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 199 advises 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 200 establishes the principle that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification.

Paragraph 202 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 206 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 207 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 reSquared 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 Squares 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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