



Design and Access Statement

Kathleen Lonsdale Building

UCL: Planning and Listed
Building Consent Application

April 2016

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Section 01

01

Introduction

Introduction



This revised Design and Access report has been prepared by Levitt Bernstein on behalf of UCL to outline proposals for the Listed Building Consent application and Planning application for the refurbishment of the Kathleen Lonsdale Building (KLB). This grade II listed building is located at the northern edge of UCL’s Bloomsbury Campus on Gower Place.

This report outlines the condition of the existing building, UCL’s project brief and requirements, and the proposed works. There are further supporting documents prepared by Deloitte’s Real Estate, Alan Baxter Associates (Heritage Assessment) and Buro Happold (Sustainability report).

The proposals within this report represent a scheme that has evolved during a positive pre-application process with the London Borough of Camden (meetings in April 2013, January 2014, and September 2014).

Reference is made to the adjacent Health Centre at 3 Gower Place in this report. Any permissions relating to this building will be secured by a separate application.

The design team for the project is:

Architects	Levitt Bernstein
Lab Architects	DesM
Services Engineer	Parsons Brinkerhoff
Structural Engineer	Carter Clack
Sustainability Consultant	Buro Happold
CDMC	Turner Townsend
Planning Consultant	Deloitte Real Estate
Heritage Consultant	Alan Baxter Associate

Planning/Listed Building History

Planning and Listed Building Consent (2014/7223/P & 2014/7310/L) was granted in January 2015 for a number of works to the KLB including general internal and external refurbishment.

In October 2015, permission was granted for two planning and listed building consents associated with minor revisions to the scheme. The two key revisions included the reconfiguration of flues on the rear façade of the building (2015/4931/L & 2015/4349/P) and a minor extension to accommodate the GMP lab (2015/4924/L & 2015/4348/P), also to the rear of the building.

This Design and Access Statement accompanies a new planning application, which is seeking full planning and listed building consent for:

“Changes to the internal layout and amendments to the external façade”

The new application encompasses a number of minor design changes which have arisen following the detailed design stages of the refurbishment scheme, including:

Relocation and consolidation of flues, along with revisions to plant and louvres locations externally.

The omission of new internal “pod” offices at Ground Floor Level - West end, the space is to be a shared workroom.

Alternative layouts for new offices at first floor level (east and west wings).

Relocation of the proposed lecture/ teaching rooms - from ground to first floor level.

New office/ work room accommodation in the ground floor east end (former rake).

Alternative layouts to the second floor mezzanine.

Elsewhere, the scope of works has reduced with areas being retained in the existing layouts.



Section 01

Project Brief



Extract of UCL Bloomsbury Masterplan

Project Brief & Objectives

The refurbishment of the KLB is a crucial part of implementing the Masterplan for UCL's Bloomsbury Campus (extract left). The project will enable the co-location of some of the departments that form part of the Faculty of Maths and Physical Sciences (MAPS), with all of the Earth Science department housed in the KLB. To achieve this, there are a number of key objectives:

Project specific objectives

- To increase the building's utilisation
- To improve the building's accessibility
- To consolidate the Department of Earth Sciences within KLB
- To provide accommodation for the Departments of Physics and Astronomy and Chemistry

In addition to these specific requirements, there are a number of strategic objectives that are in line with the principles set within the UCL Bloomsbury Masterplan.

Strategic objectives

- To improve the student and staff experience through refurbishment and provision of teaching and studying spaces.
- To create modern, flexible laboratory accommodation.
- To develop the kit of parts approach
- To improve the sustainability of the building through refurbishment of the building fabric and the upgrade of the mechanical and electrical services.

The proposed refurbishment does not cover the whole of the KLB, there being distinct areas that will remain out of scope of the works due to their need of continued operation, including:

- The eastern end of the basement housing existing Earth Sciences Laboratories.
- Accommodation in the west wing of the basement used by Information Services (ISD).

- Chemistry labs located in the eastern wing of the second floor, and an area of existing laboratory space at the west end of the same floor.
- Research accommodation within the west wing of the third floor.
- There are limited works proposed within the fourth floor/ attic plant space.

The scope of works is illustrated in more detail in section 3 of this report.

As outlined in the following section "The Existing Building", the KLB has been subjected to ad hoc, and isolated areas of modifications. This has included structural works, installation of newer services, changes to the original layout with newer partitions and suspended ceiling installed in numerous locations.

This application is for the comprehensive refurbishment of the building to create high quality, flexible learning spaces. The proposals also include the removal, repositioning and consolidation of services to the rear of the building.





Gower Place (looking west)



Gower Place (looking east) Wellcome trust buildings on LHS

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Gower Court (looking east) with the white rendered Slade extension on near RHS, copper clad Housmann Room beyond



New Gower Court entrance for UCLU Lewis's Building

Section 02

The Existing Building

Context

The Kathleen Lonsdale building is Grade II listed LB Camden's Ref: 798-1-60291) and located on Gower Place within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area (sub area 3).

It is sited near to a number of other Listed Buildings, notably those that are all Grade I listed around the main Quadrangle - there is also a direct access from the Wilkins Building and the North Wing (The Slade) to the Kathleen Lonsdale Building from the rear.

Gower Place

Gower Place is a one-way vehicular road linking Gordon Street (from the east) to Gower Street (to the west), providing a local route that avoids Euston Road. It is used as an access route for the Wellcome Trust building to the north (there are several loading bays off this road which UCL also use).

The UCL buildings along the south side of Gower Place front onto this road – indeed the KLB provides the most imposing façade. In contrast the two Wellcome Trust buildings to the north face onto Euston Road. The older building “backs” onto Gower Place, having only service entrances at street level, and the newer Hopkins-designed building provides a

more active façade to Gower Place, albeit with a secondary entrance.

Gower Place has good facilities for pedestrian and cyclists; wider pavements with new planting, cycle racks and a Barclay's Cycle Hire docking station. Furthermore, Euston Square Underground Station is located at the western end of Gower Place and Euston main line Station is nearby to the eastern end of the road. Gower Place is therefore a regularly used route for pedestrians by- passing the north of the main campus.

Gower Court

Gower Court is a more private service road/ yard behind the Kathleen Lonsdale building, providing access (deliveries etc) to a number of UCL buildings. Access to Gower Court is via a gated entrance below the Health Centre adjacent to the Kathleen Lonsdale Building. Gower Court also leads to the Physics Yard, which is to the south, and the location of much of UCL's operational and serviceable infrastructure.

Historically all the buildings “back” onto Gower Court; however, the recent extensions to The Slade and the Union Building provide more active facades and defined entrances for users.

Section 02

Gower Place Elevation

The KLB was designed by FM Simpson, and was a purpose-built academic building (when first constructed in 1915) and is the site of historically significant research. One of the most appealing aspects of the building is its Gower Place elevation, a grand Neo-Classical Portland stone façade facing on Gower Place. Indeed it is described in some detail in the listing:

“Stone facade with later slate mansard roof and dormers. 2 main storeys, attic and basement. Symmetrical facade in modified Neo-Greek style with projecting end and central bays; fenestration 2:8:3:8:3. Main pedimented entrance distyle-in-antis with columns (Tower of Winds capitals) rising through ground to 1st floor and supporting an entablature inscribed “ANNO DOMI MCMXIII UNIVERSITY OF LONDON UNIV COLL”, beneath which paterae. Double flight of steps to architraved doorway with console brackets carrying pediment. Flanking bays with shallow pilasters, rising from rusticated basement podium, between window bays and carrying a simplified entablature. Recessed metal transom and mullion windows, the 1st floor with lugged aprons enriched with paterae. Parapet.”

Behind this elevation, the different types of accommodation within the building are subtly identified - the western end having two large storeys below the cornice level, with three at the eastern end. The second floor windows sit above the cornice line, with a further floor (third floor) of accommodation within the mansard.



Gower Place Elevation



Detail of western end of Gower Place Elevation



Kathleen Lonsdale Building, Gower Place from west



Gower Court Elevation

Gower Court Elevation

In contrast to the Gower Place elevation, the rear of the Kathleen Lonsdale Building, facing the service road Gower Court, is more utilitarian in character and suffers from a seemingly haphazard collection of ducts and pipes across its brick façade.

The features of the rear elevation are not explicitly identified in the listing, but there are a few areas of particular architectural interest, such as the copper-clad link bridge to the Wilkins Building behind the Housman Room, and the feature window that aligns with the main staircase internally.

The rear facade which was not meant to be seen by the public is of plain brick and has been much altered.



Photos of the rear of the Kathleen Lonsdale Building

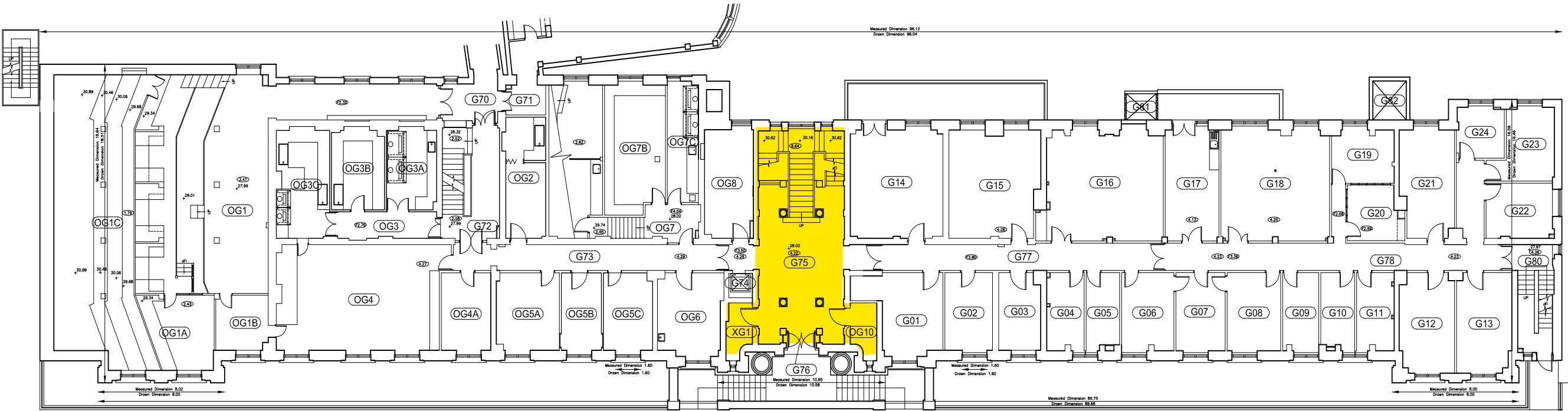
Section 02

Interiors: Entrance Hall and Main Stair

Internally, the building is arranged as two wings off a central entrance and a grand staircase. This staircase has many retained original features and the proposals have adopted an approach where the stair and its landings remain uncluttered of existing and new services in order to become a focal point for the building on all storeys. Indeed, some of the proposed student spaces will be close to this space.



Photos of the central staircase and feature window



Ground Floor (Central staircase in yellow)



Section (Central staircase in yellow; existing upper staircase between second, second mezzanine and third floors in orange))

Section 02

Interiors

The interiors of the Building vary in age and architectural heritage; some areas have retained details, such as the staircase, through to areas updated as recently as the 1990s. As a result. The historical significance and architectural quality of the spaces varies significantly.

The following pages outline the existing condition of the building and we include diagrams from Alan Baxter's Supporting Heritage Statement which indicate the significance of various parts of the building.

Ground Floor

Aside from the new partitioning in the formerly open-plan laboratories, much of the partitioning dates back to the original

construction. An area of particular significance is the Professor's office, used by Kathleen Lonsdale herself. The office and original features will be retained.

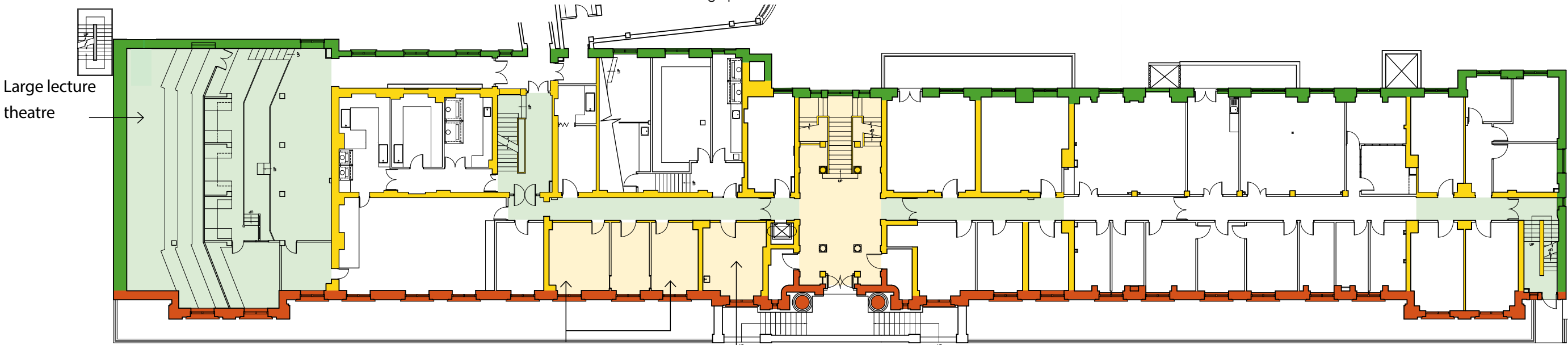
Identified as an area of low significance is the large lecture theatre at the eastern end. This space has been subjected to a number of works over the years, with the seating lost, new accommodation built around the rake, and a new concrete floor inserted at first floor level, effectively splitting the void in two.

Similar interventions have occurred in the smaller lecture rooms located between the main staircase and the secondary east wing stair. At ground floor levels the rake has been retained and built around, and on upper floors the rake has been removed.



Existing space created in the former lecture hall at Ground Floor

- High significance
- Moderate significance
- Low significance
- Neutral



Ground floor

Professor's LAB used by Kathleen Lonsdale

Professor's Office used by Kathleen Lonsdale

Ground Floor Plan (From Alan Baxter Initial Heritage Statement)

First Floor

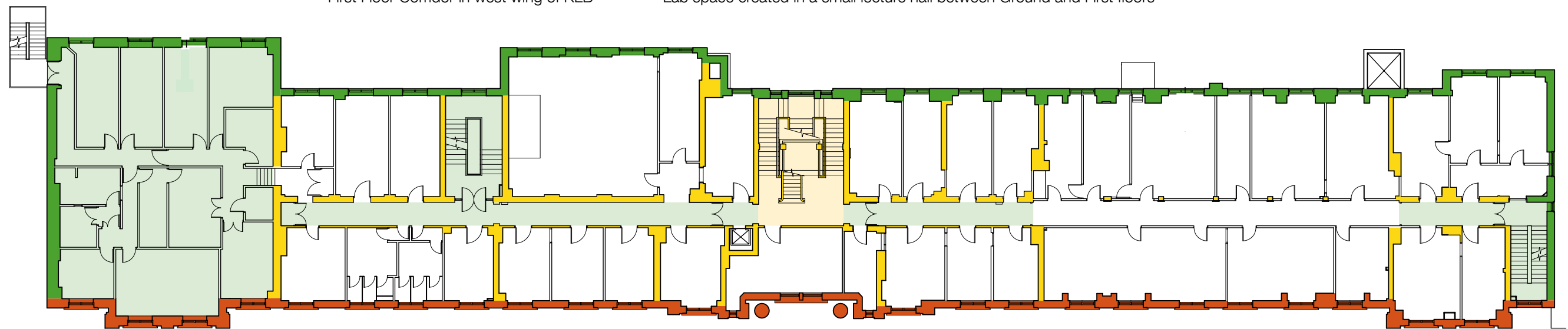
Like the ground floor, the original partitions have been retained in many areas, and newer partitions added to formerly open-plan spaces. As noted earlier, a new concrete floor has been added in the space of the lecture theatre. Due to height restrictions, this newer floor is at a different level to the rest for the first floor.



First Floor Corridor in west wing of KLB



Lab space created in a small lecture hall between Ground and First floors



First floor

First Floor Plan
(From Alan Baxter Initial Heritage Statement)

Section 02

Upper Floors (Second to Third)

The second floor is the highest storey of the original building (the third floor and the roof space were built in the 1970s). This level has been subjected to substantial refurbishment so that few of the original features are evident.

The layout is also compromised by significant changes in level as well as access to a second floor mezzanine.

The third floor has no change in levels, with the LF90 department in the west end, and cellular offices (of varying sizes) in the east end.

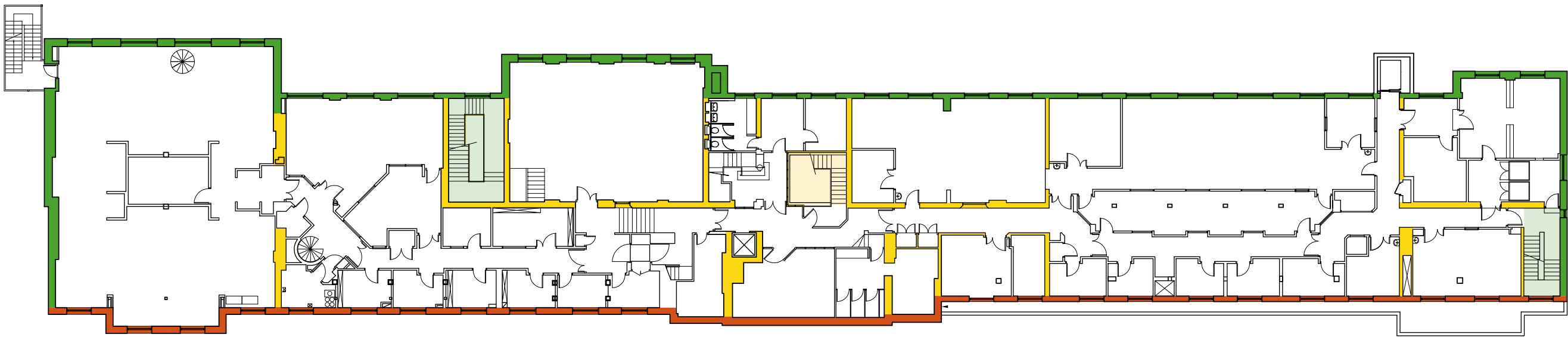


Stairs at second floor



Existing laboratories on second floor

- High significance
- Moderate significance
- Low significance
- Neutral



Second floor



Stepped entrance from Gower Place



Bridge link from Wilkins Building (interior)



Bridge link from Wilkins Building (exterior)

Existing Entrances

There are a number of entrances into KLB, at ground floor level; off Gower Place or from the Wilkins Building, and at basement level from Gower Court.

Gower Place Entrance

This is the building's very definite front door, set within a prominent central pedimented bay/ portico. Due to the flights of steps from street level, the entrance is difficult for visitors with disabilities, and impossible for those in wheelchairs. While there are alternative accessible entrances to the building, these require the building to be approached from the main campus, either from Gower Court or from the Wilkins Building.

However, making this entrance fully accessible (through platforms and the like) would require significant interventions that would not be appropriate, given the significance of the Gower Place facade.

Wilkin Building Entrance

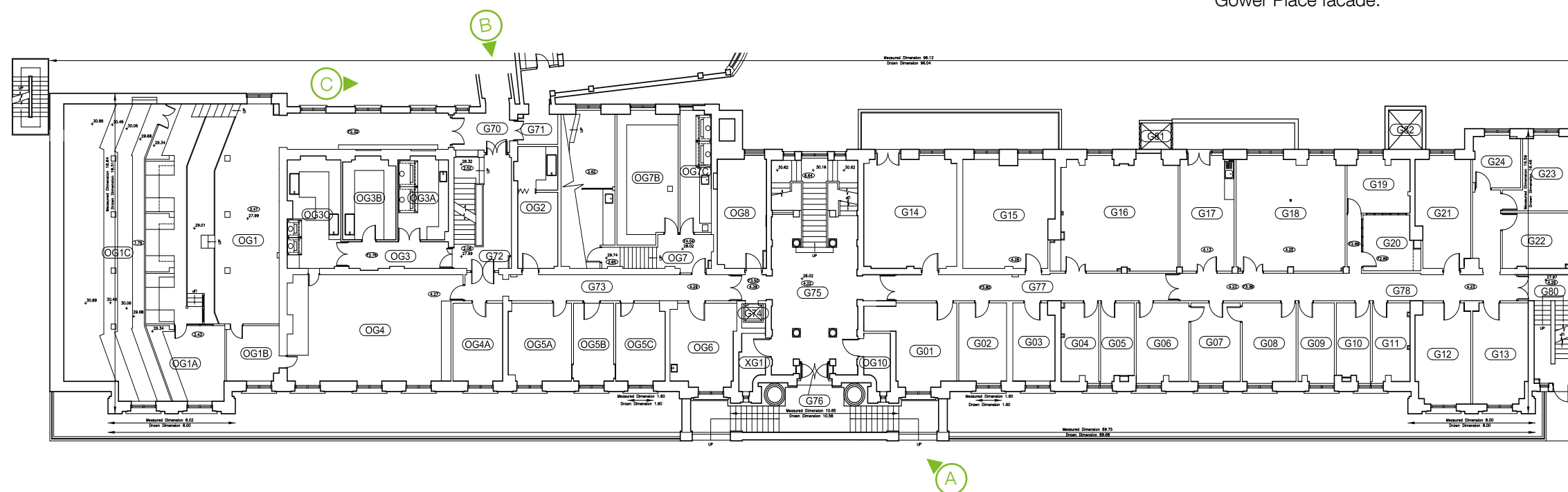
This entrance is formed by a bridge link from the Wilkins Building in the Main Quadrangle, providing access to the back of the building at ground floor level, next to the existing secondary staircase and corridor leading to the former lecture theatre.

This accessible entrance is important within the context of the wider university, as it enables the building to be accessed from the main Wilkins Buildings cloisters, providing excellent internal access to the main library and other facilities.

This entrance bridge is expressed externally with copper cladding, and porthole windows bridging Gower Court between the two buildings.

Gower Court Entrance

This basement level entrance is located just beyond the bridge link at ground floor level, and as such is less prominent. It operates as a service entrance and as a secondary entrance by those who know of its existence and use it as a short cut.



Section 03

03

Proposals



Cut-away perspective of KLB

Section 03

Proposals

The proposals for the refurbishment of the KLB have been developed by the design team to create new modern teaching, research and study facilities that align with the conservation of this notable UCL building.

The design approach for the KLB refurbishment is cognicent of the need to preserve, retain and rediscover much of the building's original character, clarity and feature.

Alan Baxter Associates prepared a heritage assessment at an early design stage to help inform the design of the proposals.

While some areas of the building have been largely unaffected by the years of use, namely; Gower Place facade, central and secondary staircases (basement to second floor). Other areas have been affected by periodic refurbishments and modernisations that have contributed to a lack of clarity in the building's organisation and in covering up historic features.

The current proposals include a comprehensive refurbishment of the building to rationalise the spaces and enhance the original features where possible.

The design approach includes the following principles:

- Reorganising the central staircase, with a character that is sympathetic to the retained original features.
- Removing non-original partitions, ceilings, floor finishes to reveal historic features.
- Retaining and overhauling doors and joinery in distinct grouped areas where there is predominately original features in place.
- Replacing doors etc where the finishes are predominantly non-original. New doors to offices etc will be glazed.
- Retention of all fabric on the Gower Place facade.
- Modification and reordering works to the rear (Gower Court) facade.

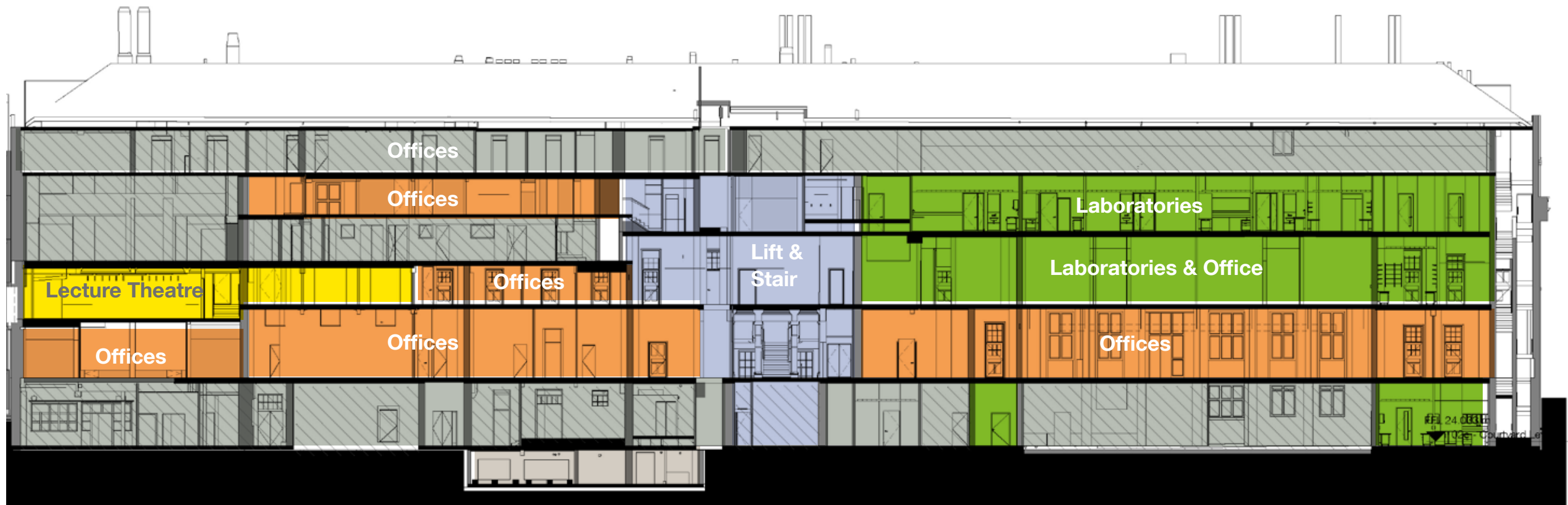
Section 03

The refurbishment of the KLB will create a number of different uses within the building, such as new laboratories for research (green on section below), refurbished office spaces for academics and other faculty staff (orange), new teaching space (yellow) as well as new communal “hub” spaces for staff and students to provide areas conducive for collaborative study, informal tutoring and group working.

The section also illustrates how the existing central staircase serving from sub-basement to second floor will extend to serve third floor.

Areas that are out of scope (as mentioned earlier) are indicated in grey.

The following pages outline particular aspects of the proposals in further detail.



Long section through KLB facing south