

University of Edinburgh
The Royal (Dick) Veterinary College, Summerhall

Heritage Report

May 2011

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1 Introduction

Fag-end Wrenaissance by *David McArthy*, 1909-16, the front a dreary frame of columns and pediments. Inside, the pompous stair-hall is an epitome of bourgeois smugness.....



Above: stained glass panel commemorating the founder of the college, William Dick (1793-1866), now removed to Easter Bush
Right: perspective drawing by JT Murray of the scheme by David McArthy for the Royal (Dick) Veterinary College c1910



While the heritage report cannot provide the answers to all of these questions, it can introduce a level of understanding of the historical development of the site within the wider city context, and promote a preliminary basis for evaluating relative significance of the relative parts that make up the present campus at Summerhall upon which decisions about the future of the site may be founded.

The heritage report is not a conservation plan, and neither is it a conservation statement within the terms of what these documents generally mean. It is expressly stated that neither should it be regarded by a developer, or a developer's agents, as being a substitute for focused research which will require to be carried out at a later date in order to

justify the actions for interventions across the site as part of the statutory planning process.

The paper has been commissioned by the University of Edinburgh, and should be read in conjunction with development brief for the site prepared by GVA Grimley on its behalf.

2 Historical research and methodology

2.1 Archival research

Original archival research undertaken for the preparation of this document has been confined mainly to photographic records deposited by the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies at the University of Edinburgh Library, and the collections of the National Monuments Record for Scotland (NMRS) held at the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS), Bernard Terrace. Historic Ordnance Survey maps have been consulted at the Map Library of the National Library of Scotland, Causewayside, some of which are reproduced in this document.

A literary review has included publications and articles held on the libraries of the above institutions, and also at the Edinburgh Room of the Central Library, George IV Bridge. Literary sources have been supplemented by the author's own library.

Online sources include primarily historic maps of the area held at the National Library of Scotland and, where appropriate, the biographical notes of architects involved in designing or altering the buildings on the site in the online Dictionary of Scottish Architects, and as recorded elsewhere.

All source references consulted for the preparation of this document are listed in Section 5.

2.2 Site evidence

In order to establish aspects of significance historical research has been supplemented by an evaluation on site of the buildings of varying ages – for instance, where original fabric has survived and is substantially in an authentic state; where alterations may have occurred; and to establish aesthetic values in townscape and architectural terms, including the building interiors. This evaluation has not been exhaustive and has been sufficient to establish significance in outline terms. Fieldwork was undertaken in April 2009, and a review of the hierarchical significance of the structures on the site was carried out during March and April 2011, after which the findings from this exercise were shared with representatives of the City of Edinburgh Council and with Historic Scotland.

2.3 Identification of individual blocks within the campus

Throughout this document identification of the individual buildings, and ranges of buildings, of the Summerhall campus reflect the system adopted by the University of giving individual letters to each of the blocks. The same recognition appears in the statutory list entry for the site. In summary, they comprise the following:

Table 1: nomenclature of blocks

Block A	The original main block and wings to the rear courtyard (1913-25)
Block B	Small animals clinical unit and research laboratories on Summerhall Square (1966-73)
Block C	Teaching block on Hope Park Terrace (1937-40)
Block D	Tower block of teaching laboratories and offices at junction of Summerhall and Hope Park Terrace (1966-1973)
Block E	Former Hope Park and Buccleuch Congregational Church (1876)
Block F	Island range comprising the former small animals clinic; rear range along east boundary of former stables and ancillary rooms (1913-25) with alterations of 1937-40, and later

2.4 Statutory designations

The Summerhall campus falls within the South Side Conservation Area, which was first designated in 1976. It was extended in 1986.

With the sole exception of the former Hope Park and Buccleuch Congregational Church, the buildings of the campus are covered by a blanket statutory listing designation at Category B. The listing has been updated fairly recently, in March 2002. The former church is listed separately, and is also Category B, with the date of the listing given as April 1977. The list entry for this building has not been updated to reflect the transfer of ownership of the building to the University, and the description includes a reference to a 'plain galleried interior' which has since been removed.

It is evident from the list description for the main listing, and from the supplementary notes, that a thematic listing programme to register modern buildings which had not been included in the lists previously had been embarked upon. The description focuses on the principal block of the early twentieth century scheme for the redevelopment of the site by David McArthy, and the blocks added in the late twentieth century by Alan Reiach, Eric Hall and Partners (Blocks B and D respectively). As a consequence the description, and the supplementary notes, might be considered to be skewed in focusing on these structures alone – for instance, there is no mention of the prominent wing on Hope Park

Terrace designed in the late 1930s by the well known Edinburgh practice of Lorimer & Matthew.

The emphasis on the modern additions to the campus is significant when interpreting the reasoning behind listing both of the buildings (Blocks B and D). The supplementary notes are reproduced here:

Block D is a significant work of late Scottish Modernism, acting as a landmark, rising up at the east end of the Meadows and marks the edge of the University area. It appears to be engaged in a skyline dialogue with the twin towers of George Square. Of these, the Appleton Tower was also by Reiach's practice. Although the red sandstone of the 1916 building may have determined the colour of the cladding slabs, there is no other precedent informing its striking appearance. The main influence on the building form is the Economist building, in London, by Alison and Peter Smithson (1964). Block B, which is more overtly functional, may also be influenced by the Smithson's sense of rectilinear formality. Its fittings are typical of Scottish institutional buildings of the period.

In the introductory paragraph of the description the design is reported as being in the New Brutalist style. These attributions are examined in more detail in Appendix 6.1 to this document.

2.5 Copyright and photographic credits

Photographs appearing in the heritage report, unless identified otherwise, were taken by the author and date, in the main, from April 2009. Other images are reproduced courtesy of the trustees of the respective organisations shown and are subject to strict copyright and reproduction rights restricted to this document. They should not be reproduced without seeking permission from the original copyright holder. Copyright in this document otherwise is vested jointly in the names of the author and the University of Edinburgh.

Photographic credits for historic images are as follows:

EUL	Images deposited by the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies with the University of Edinburgh Special Collections
RCAHMS	Images held in the NMRS, with the name of the collection noted

2.6 Acknowledgements

In preparing the heritage report the author is indebted especially to Colin M Warwick MBE and Dr Alistair A Macdonald for their considerable assistance in the preparation of this document, and for sharing their extensive knowledge of the history and growth of the Royal (Dick) Veterinary College, and how it came to be established at the site at Summerhall. References to articles they have prepared are to be found throughout the text of the heritage report and are listed individually in Section 5.

Grateful thanks are due also to Tom Bostock of Reiach & Hall for supplying the author with a copy of the practice's office brochure in which the proposed work at Summerhall is illustrated and described.

2.7 Author of the heritage report

Andrew Wright is an architect accredited in building conservation at the highest level, and an architectural historian. He has undertaken numerous heritage reports, conservation plans, management plans and conservation area character appraisals for which his skills have been widely recognised. Clients have included Scotland's leading institutions, local authorities, the National Trust for Scotland, other private charitable trusts, and private developers. Notes on the author are set out in Appendix 6.4.

3 Understanding the site: historical background



The Borough Loch (later the South Loch) as it might have appeared before draining (from Grant's *Old and New Edinburgh*)

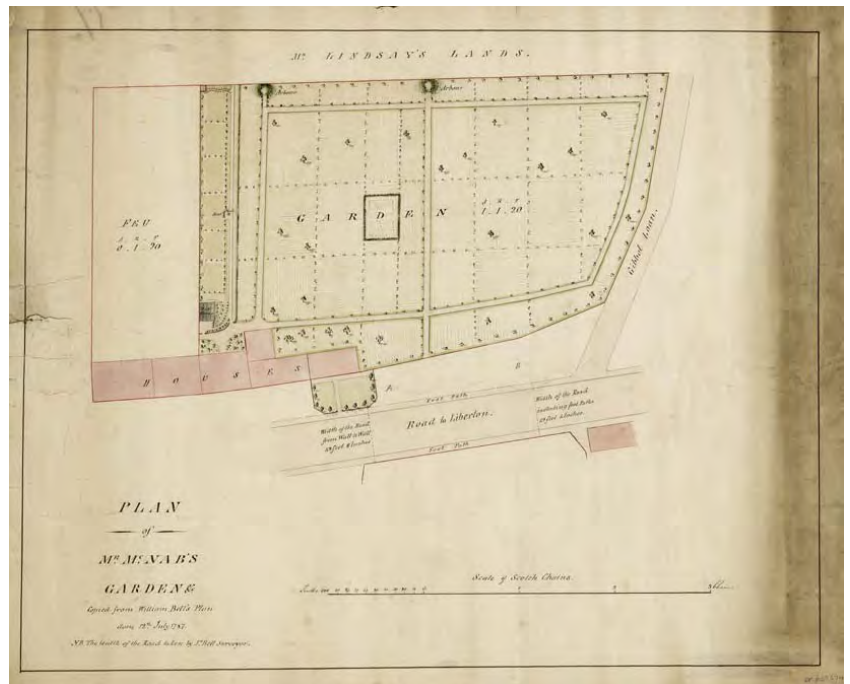
3.1 Summerhall in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries

On one of the principal roads leading out of the city, noted on historic maps as 'leading to London by Carlisle', Summerhall is within an area at the eastern extremity of the Meadows having a long association with the brewing industry. The reason for this lay in the high dependency on the water of the Borough Loch to which the Fellowship and Society of Brewers were given historic rights of access. The area surrounding the loch - which came to be known later as the South Loch to distinguish it from the Nor' Loch - extended to around 63 acres. Before water was piped in from Comiston in 1621 the loch had been the city's principal source of drinking water. However, by the early seventeenth century the loch had shrunk in size considerably and in 1657 the Town Council determined that it should be drained, a task which was discharged to John Straiton. His efforts proved unsuccessful. Thomas Hope of Rankeillour acquired the lease of the loch in 1722, setting about draining it with real determination and, although his efforts proved unsuccessful, he is credited with taking the first steps of introducing pleasure walks to the drained areas of the loch bed. By the late eighteenth century the popularity of the site was such that Lord Cockburn observed that the Meadows had become an 'academic grove'. He added: 'Under these trees walked, and talked and meditated, all our literary and scientific, and many of our legal worthies'.

Hope died in 1777, but his efforts had been widely praised. In 1804 the Town Council assumed responsibility for completing the civil engineering works required to complete the drainage of the loch bed and,



Extract from Alexander Kincaid's map (1784) showing the east end of the Meadows © NLS gradually, the Meadows was laid out to its present form. Melville Drive was laid down in 1858-9, the eastern end of which was later realigned with Hope Park Terrace to create a cross-route linking the principal road arteries leading out of the city.



William Bell's plan of McNab's gardens at Summerhall (1787) © RCAHMS (George Heriot's Trust Collection)

One of the most prominent establishments to appear on historic maps at Hope Park End, at the eastern extremity of the Meadows, was the brewery at Summerhall. It was established in the first decade of the eighteenth century and its first brewer was Robert McClellan. James Grant in his notes for *Cassell's Old and New Edinburgh* records that in 1739 the brewery, which was run by Thomas Bryson at that time, had been destroyed by fire. Cinders from the chimneys of adjoining properties had landed on the brewery during a severe gale, which then caught fire. The Bryson family continued as brewers until the end of the eighteenth century by which time the property was owned by Francis McNab, a



Extract from John Ainslie's map (1804) © NLS

gardener. In 1787 McNab engaged a surveyor, William Bell, to draw up the layout of the plot to the immediate south of the brewery. Set behind enclosing walls his attractive garden was laid out with formal walks, hothouses and arbours. The angle of the wall adjoining Gibbet Loan on the south side of the garden came to be reflected in the line of West Preston Street (as the road was renamed when the area was developed in the nineteenth century), noticeably off the dominant grid pattern of the street blocks. The eighteenth century houses within the terrace on Summerhall were tied to the brewery, or leased out by its owner, during its final years.

The extent of McNab's garden is shown on John Ainslie's map of 1804. Appearing on the same map, set back from the street and to the immediate north of the brewery, is Summerhall House, with its formal garden to the rear. The property had been erected since Kincaid's earlier map was drawn up in 1784. The angled north boundary of the mansion house site creates a distinctive wedge shape, tapering to the rear of the site. The frontage of the villa appears roughly perpendicular to the south boundary wall shared with the brewery. It appears to be aligned on the same axis as the drainage ditch within the Meadows which, by this time, appears to have been planted up as a pleasure walk fringed by trees. Ainslie's map shows where it had been intended to drive South Clerk Street through to the rear of Summerhall House, with the actual line of the street shown on Robert Kirkwood's map of the city of 1817, which also records the villa, together with extensive land to the rear, being owned by the heirs of a Mr Hislop.

It is not immediately apparent why the setting of Summerhall House should have been so heavily compromised from the middle of the nineteenth century onwards, and the answer may lie simply in spiralling values of real estate as the city expanded southwards. A plan of c1860 by

Right: extract from Robert Kirkwood's map (1817) © NLS

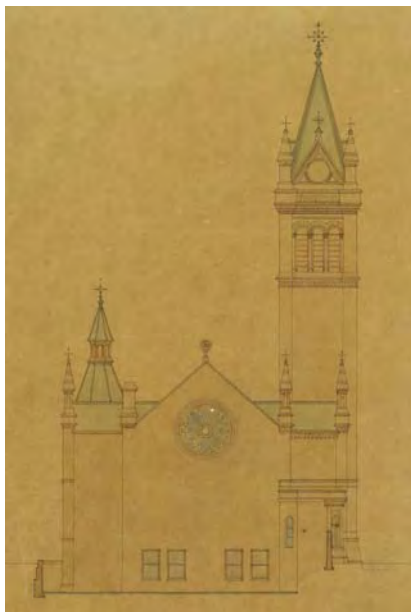
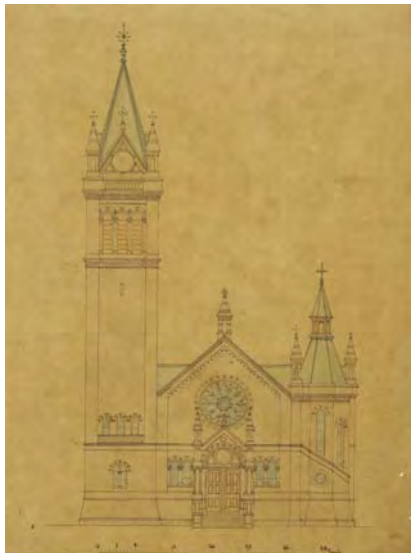
Below: front and rear elevations of the Hope Park United Presbyterian Church (1866) by Peddie & Kinnear



John Gellatly in the National Library of Scotland shows the proposal for driving through Hope Park Terrace, and for creating the new terrace at Hope Park End at the termination of the street. Curiously on this map, Summerhall House is shown as being located on the street line at Hope Park End, while the villa appearing on maps hitherto as Summerhall House had been renamed Hopeparkend House. The insertion of this street, which ran from west to east, had the effect of slicing off the north corner of the villa.

Its setting was further compromised when the corner plot was acquired for the Hope Park United Presbyterian church, for which designs were prepared by Peddie & Mackay in 1866. The church opened for worship in September 1867. The Ordnance Survey map shows the degree to which the villa had been affected by the subdivision of the policies, with the only the nucleus of the former villa peeping out from behind the massive walls of the church. The architects responded to the civic design potential of the site in creating a landmark tower and spire to be admired from a distance across the open expanse of the Meadows. The landmark qualities of the site were reinforced by the manner in which the church tower enhanced the vistas from South Clerk Street when looking westwards towards the Meadows, and southwards from along the terrace from Hope Park End. Although when it was built the church was slightly less elaborate than the architects' drawings had promised, the building still derived considerable presence from such a constrained site.

In the spate of church building that accompanied the expansion of the city southwards into the suburbs, within a few years the Hope Park





Above right: extract from the Ordnance Survey map 1876-7 series © NLS

Below: former Hope Park and Buccleuch Congregational Church and details of the façade on Hope Park Terrace (1876)



and Buccleuch Congregational Church sprang up on Hope Park Terrace to the immediate east of what remained of Summerhall House. Again the site was heavily constrained. The architect, John Russell Walker (1847-91) of Sutherland & Walker, created an inspired response with a carefully modelled and richly decorated street elevation in what has been described as a North Italian, or Lombardy, Romanesque style. The tower accentuates the entrance into the church and compensates for the fact that it would have been inappropriate to have added a tall feature in this location. The design of the tower suggests contemporary French Second Empire stylistic overtones. The church opened in 1876 and was designed to seat 730 worshippers within a plain horseshoe galleried interior.

The Summerhall brewery was placed in the care of William Robertson, who was the brewer from 1826 until 1861. During this period the operations remained fairly small in scale compared with the largest of the Edinburgh brewers. From 1862 until 1889 the site was in the ownership of Robin, McMillan Ltd when the company was acquired by Edinburgh United Breweries. The company was amalgamated from four of the smaller breweries, of which one was the brewery at Summerhall. Suffering from over-capitalisation, the EUB was badly managed from the outset and, perhaps more damagingly, from the poor quality of its beers. The site at Summerhall closed in 1908, whereupon it was offered for sale. Two of the other breweries were sold in 1916, leaving the company's operations focused on Bell's Brewery alone. Trading ceased altogether in the mid-1930s when Customs and Excise pursued the company for accounting irregularities, effectively putting it out of business.



Above: terraced properties on Summerhall, with the brewery chimney to the rear (AH Baird, 1911) © RCAHMS (Edinburgh Photographic Society)

Below: the entry into Summerhall Square, with the tower to the UP Church and the brewery chimney in the background (c1910, FM Chrystal) © RCAHMS (Chrystal Collection)



Above: Hope Park UP Church with the stables to the Summerhall Brewery to the right (JR Hamilton, 1912) © RCAHMS (Edinburgh Photographic Society)

Below: fragment of the original rubble stone boundary wall to the brewery at the north end of the old clinical block



At the turn of the twentieth century the brewery site could be identified by its slender square brick chimney and by the two entrances into the complex from Summerhall. One of these entrances led to an open yard, with the gable of the stables building for the horses pulling the beer drays visible from the street pavement. The other entry was relatively inconspicuous and appears to have led into the heart of the complex through a covered pend with a straight lintol within the terrace of houses. From contemporary photographs it can be seen that the houses were in multiple occupation. They looked shabby, with evidence of chimneyheads having been rebuilt cheaply in brick - a repair solution commonly found in old tenement buildings and often implemented by the city authorities to overcome the dangers posed by masonry at imminent risk of collapse. At the south end of the row single storey shop frontages had been built out to the pavement line from the front of the dwelling next to Summerhall Square, with a furniture store on the street corner. The only fragments of the old brewery to have survived to this day are the well and the tall stone rubble sandstone boundary wall at the northern end of the clinical block

(Block F), with the evidence of a corbel built in which, at one stage, would have supported the end of a timber beam.

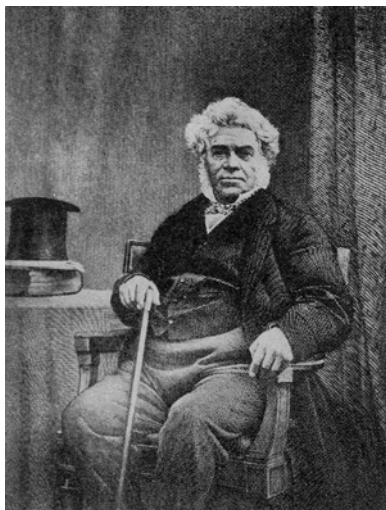
The continuing plight of the old Summerhall House can be seen from contemporary photographs of Hope Park Terrace. Single storey shops had also been erected here on the street frontage to the rear of the house, whereas the light coloured appearance of the walls of the former villa suggest that it had probably been given an ashlar render.



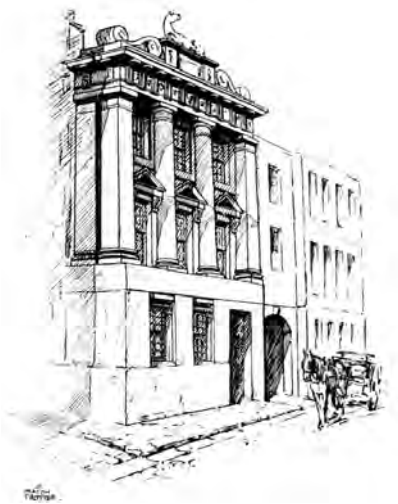
Above: Hope Park Terrace viewed from the junction with South Clerk Street (1914, JR Hamilton) © RCAHMS (Edinburgh Photographic Society)

3.2 Origins of the Royal (Dick) Veterinary College

The history of veterinary education in Edinburgh is recounted at some length in the paper appearing in the New Series Volume 6 of the *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club* (2005). William Dick (1793-1866) was the son of an Aberdeenshire farrier who had moved to Edinburgh in the later 1780s. In around 1815 he took up premises at 8 Clyde Street within the eastern block of James Craig's New Town plan where he set up his forge. William, having had lessons in anatomy, travelled to London and enrolled at the Veterinary College at Camden, where he completed his course in 1818. Upon his return to Edinburgh he gave lessons in the subject, and with his sessions proving so popular he began lecturing at Clyde Street in the early 1830s. By 1833 he had commissioned a new building of which the street frontage was crowned by the sculpture of a recumbent horse, understood to have been carved by A Wallace (possibly of the sculptors Wallace & Whyte), although it has been credited to John Rhind in some accounts and given a later date (1883). The sculpture became an icon of Dick's veterinary school: it was transferred to the new



Above: William Dick (1793-1866)



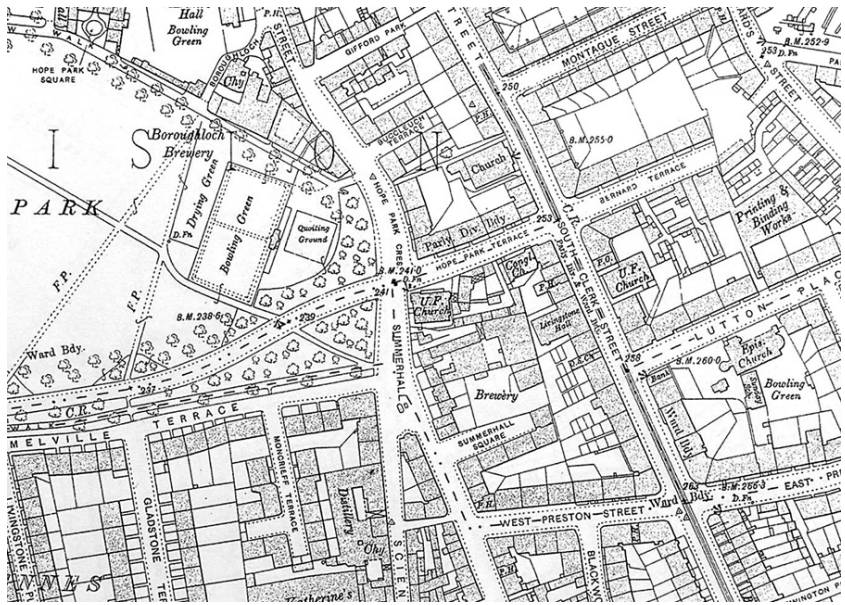
Above: the frontage of the Dick Veterinary College, as extended, on Clyde Street

site at Summerhall when the institution moved there, and in recent years it has been moved yet again to the campus at Easter Bush.

When in 1844 the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons was established, Dick's pioneering contribution in the field was recognised when he became a member of the body's Council. In the 1850s around 60-100 students were enrolled at his institution with certificates of graduation issued then by the Highland Society. A fire in 1864 destroyed part of the college buildings, providing the incentive to rebuild and expand the site for which the adjoining premises at 10 Clyde Street were acquired. Dick died shortly afterwards, but within twenty years or so the need to expand the premises had become urgent once more, and further premises on Clyde Street were acquired. At this time also the college was reorganised, with the alterations completed by 1887.

By the turn of the twentieth century discussions commenced on the possible amalgamation of the two established Edinburgh veterinary colleges, which would see the Dick Veterinary College merging with the second of the New Veterinary Colleges which opened at Elm Row on Leith Walk in 1886. However a shortage in the number of students enrolling, and a general lack of benefaction, saw the New Veterinary College transferred to the University of Liverpool in 1904 and so the planned merger never transpired. Instead, the managing body of the Dick Veterinary College was strengthened with the trusteeship of the Town Council assumed by a new Board of Management, leading to closer links with the University. However, the college retained its independence, and it was not until 1951 that the college was absorbed into the University.

The new board was ratified by Act of Parliament in 1906, and it set about the immediate task of improving the facilities of the college. Having enquired as to the suitability of the premises, the Board found that the responses received revealed that they were considered to be unsuitable in a number of respects, among them being the fact that the natural lighting was poor as a consequence of the buildings having small windows, and because of the narrowness of the surrounding streets. In 1907 the first steps were taken to examine the availability of sites, both within the city and on the perimeter, where the college might flourish. The architect appointed by the college, David McArthur (1854-1926), was invited to advise the board on the options under consideration, which included extending and altering the existing premises at Clyde Street, upon which he was to report unfavourably. In 1908 it was determined by the Board that the college should remain within the city, and that the brewery site at Summerhall be acquired. It took two years of negotiations before the sale was confirmed, for which the sum paid was £8,767.



Right: extract from the Ordnance Survey map 1914 Edition showing the site before the demolitions of the buildings on the site at Summerhall from the end of the previous year © NLS



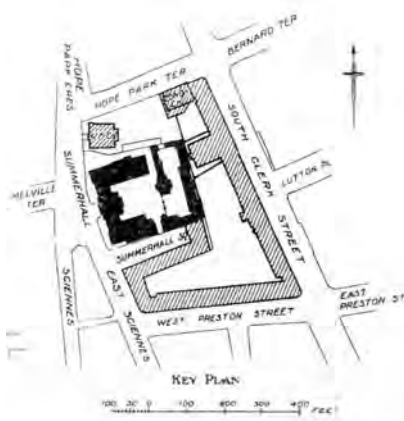
Above: Orlando Charnock Bradley, Principal of the Dick Veterinary College from 1911
Below: Charnock Bradley's tenure at Summerhall commemorated in the panelling of the entrance lobby



Determining the final brief for the new buildings at Summerhall seems to have been a long drawn out affair and it took the appointment in 1911 of a keen young principal, Orlando Charnock Bradley, for the process to be given a sense of real urgency. Charnock Bradley was aware of the need to learn from latest developments and so he and McArthy were despatched by the Board to Hanover and Brussels to inspect new veterinary institutions in those cities. On their return a visit was fitted in to the Army facilities at Aldershot. Although there are references to plans having been drawn up in 1909, McArthy's plans for the buildings were passed by the Board in April 1912. The estimated cost was £65,000, of which one half of the sum was to be contributed by the Board of Agriculture for Scotland, with the remainder coming from public subscription. Work in demolishing the artisans' houses on Summerhall began in earnest in the early autumn of 1913. It is no accident of fate that McArthy incorporated echoes of the features of the old Clyde Street buildings in the new design, finding expression in the gallery and spiral stair to the double-height dissecting room and in the replication of the northlights.

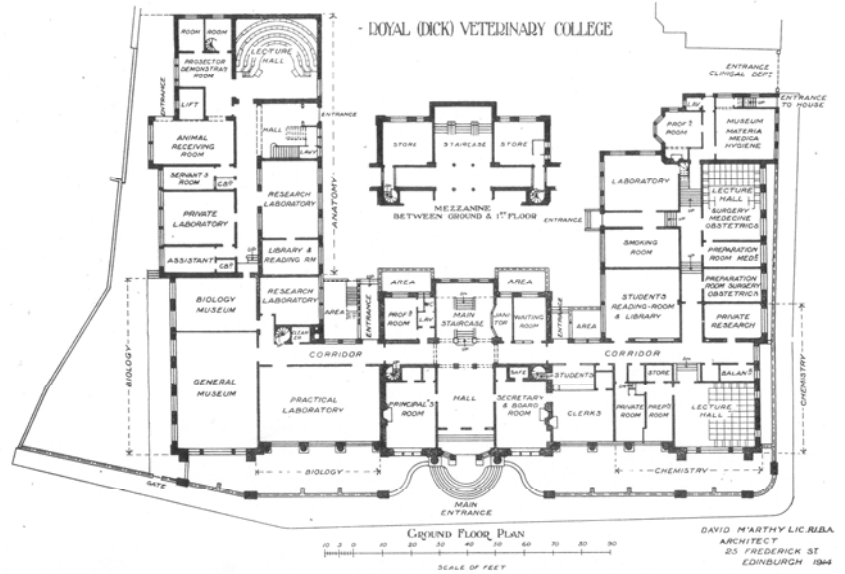
3.3 Establishing the campus at Summerhall in the early twentieth century

The existence of a set of David McArthy's original plans had not been registered until very recently, and only after it was established that they had been reproduced in a college publication. Dated 1914, they appear to have been prepared for presentation purposes, or possibly for the purpose of raising funds for the project. They have been reproduced in this document in Appendix 6.3. Further drawings may exist at the Dean of Guild records held by the City of Edinburgh Council.



Above: David McCarthy's site plan for the redevelopment of Summerhall

Right: plan of the principal floor at Summerhall (1914), both courtesy of the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies

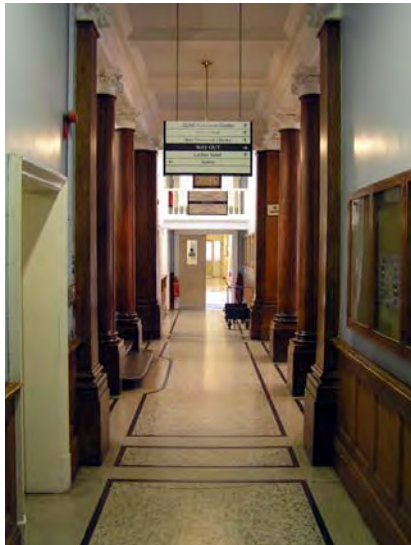


Above: the college buildings under construction during 1914 and 1915 © EUL

Not a great deal is known about McCarthy's early years, other than he had travelled extensively in Northern Europe and had been articulated to Robert Rowand Anderson. He was evidently not without talent, and the list of projects credited to his name indicates that he had won a number of architectural competitions in conjunction with John Watson, his partner in the early years of his practice, or otherwise their entries had been highly placed. His commission for the building of the new Royal (Dick) Veterinary College seems to have occurred in the twilight of his career, but what seems to come across is that the new principal must have fostered a close working relationship with the architect of the college, and that he appears to have done likewise with the artist James T Murray (d1931). Both may have acted as close confidants to Charnock Bradley. Better known for painting coastal scenes of the east coast in oil and watercolour, Murray drew the perspective of the new college which appeared in Charnock Bradley's book *History of the Edinburgh Veterinary College*, first published in 1923 (page 1), and he also painted the anatomical image of the horse and rider which dominated the brightly lit dissecting room for almost a century until taken down in the move to Easter Bush.

McCarthy was faced with a complex brief for spaces with highly dissimilar functions. They varied in spatial needs - from places for formal assembly and lecture theatres, to highly serviced individual rooms such as dissecting rooms, post-mortem areas and research laboratories. There was also a requirement to house animals awaiting treatment in stabling and kennelling, and even a flat-roofed area to the rear of the small animals clinic was provided, shown on the drawings as a dog run. For the main teaching and administrative block McCarthy resorted to Beaux-Arts planning, in which the main elements of the brief were strung out along corridors on an E plan. The lower level blocks to the rear of the site

Right: the principal Summerhall elevation shortly after completion © EUL



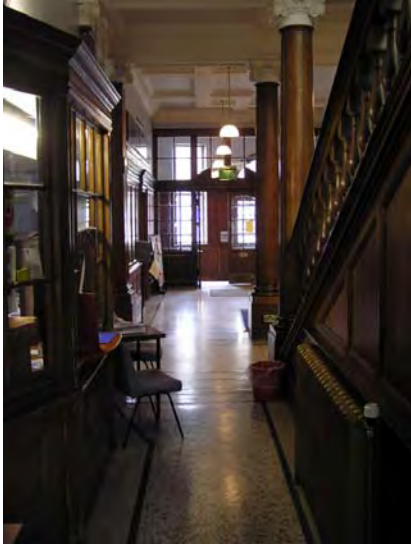
Upper: the old clinical block
Lower: one of the principal corridors at ground floor

consisted of two parallel ranges enclosing a ‘trotting track’, or courtyard, for exercising animals for which the plinths of the buildings were protected by brown ceramic bricks or tiles. Leading into the rear courtyard an archway was formed, above which the reclining horse was re-positioned following the closure of the Clyde Street College in 1916. The fundamental principles underlying Beaux-Arts planning may have eluded the architect: the gift of the opportunity to align the finely detailed frontage with the bow windows he created for the small animals clinic, so that it would be precisely on axis with the view from the main staircase to the rear of the main teaching block, seems to have been missed. Instead, it is only slightly, but disturbingly, off axis.



Above: civic values expressed in the Summerhall façade, from the north

Set between Peddie & Kinnear’s UP church on the corner and Summerhall Square, the street frontage at Summerhall was given a strong civic presence. The north wing was set back sufficiently from the church to be registered from the crossroads at the end of Melville Drive and, although the side elevations are relatively plain in the original design,



Above, and right: the entrance hall

Below: sandstone blocks around openings starved of carved detail



Above: rear elevations of the main teaching block



the Summerhall Square elevation was greatly improved by the pavilions with pediments, devised as set-pieces to enliven the streetscape and frame the entrance to the rear of the building, features which were destroyed to accommodate the changes made in the late twentieth century when Block B was introduced. One of the dwellings housed a museum at street level.

A pragmatic approach was adopted for the individual buildings according to their prominence and function, no doubt driven by the need to control costs on a tight budget. The problem was exacerbated by a shortage of building labour as young men volunteered to join the armed services at the outbreak of the First World War. Evidence of this can be seen in the unfinished hewn blocks of sandstone, intended for decorative carving, on the aedicules of the principal street façade. The sandstone ashlar finish of the principal façade gives way to cheaper coursed rubble on the side elevations, and where the elevations became less prominent still the finish was altered to a monotone grey render with a nominal pebbledash finish.

The criticism of the dark rooms of the old college premises seems to have been taken to heart as a consistent feature of all of the elevations is a high window to wall ratio, even where laboratories were to be located. Wherever it was possible to include them, the daylighting of rooms was supplemented by rooflights, or by glazed lanterns which were positioned above the upper corridors, or to provide light to lecture theatres. Within the principal façade the high window-to-wall ratio is accommodated by a frame of giant engaged columns with spandrel panels at the intermediate floor. The projecting end bays, each having triangular broken pediments, and the central bay with the semicircular pediment, are typical of



Above: the centrepiece of the façade to Summerhall

Right: the assembly/examination hall at first floor



Edwardian civic architecture of the first decades of the twentieth century. It is unquestionably the case that the elevations appeared far preferable with the window frames painted out in a dark colour, as can be seen in historic photographs, when compared with the over-dominant white fenestration patterns seen today.



Above; the Principal's Room, adjacent to the entrance hall

While McArthy may not have deserved the vitriol poured on his efforts in the *Buildings of Scotland* volume (see page 1), he was certainly challenged to get all of the elements of the design working coherently, and nowhere better is this illustrated than in the Summerhall elevation where the requirement to incorporate the penthouse of laboratories has resulted in far too heavy an appearance in the attic storey. The reason for this lies in the positioning of the assembly hall at the front of the building at first floor. It is a superbly proportioned and detailed room, but the additional height required for the coved ceiling pushed the laboratory block up to an uncomfortable height and a more skilled architect would have adjusted the proportions of the windows to the penthouse to compensate. The rear of the main building is, in contrast, much less disciplined and, apart from the large Venetian window at the main staircase, windows appear to have been slotted in randomly to secure the maximum amount of light to the rooms and circulation spaces.

In addition to the assembly hall, some highly satisfying spaces have resulted from McArthy's concept. The glazed entrance screen, hall and staircase, together with the corridors linking with the extremities of the plan are memorable, while the Principal's Room, of quite a different scale, is finely proportioned and beautifully detailed. Upon entering the double-height dissecting room it is difficult not to imagine that McArthy had knowledge of the work of contemporary Futurists such as Sant' Elia, unlikely as that may seem, while the anatomy lecture theatre remains a



Memorable spaces: Above, the anatomy lecture theatre; Right, the double-height dissecting room



tour de force with a high level of authenticity and completeness, despite not having been in use for many years. Its significance is all the greater because it is the oldest surviving veterinary college lecture theatre of its type in the United Kingdom.

Neither are the ranges of buildings to the rear of the site without interest. While most of the original fittings have been stripped out, the rooms of the old Clinical Department, sometimes confused with having been the principal's house, have high levels of authentic detail surviving in windows, doors, ironmongery, plaster cornices and fireplaces, although many of these features are now in a badly deteriorating condition. Another space demanding a closer look is the old post mortem room at the end of the original courtyard, with its angled Dutch gabled wall defining the entrance from the courtyard. It has an interesting patent glazed roof, surmounted by a lantern ventilator.

Principal Charnock Bradley lived locally. He visited the site regularly as the new buildings came out of the ground, taking record photographs, and even dating them. He was present when the brewery chimney was toppled over, noting the date as 23 October 1913. Despite his melancholic protestations that it had taken so long to get the work started on site, the building operations seemed to progress steadily, if not spectacularly. A memorial stone and time capsule were laid on 21 July 1914 when the stonework of the principal façade seemed well advanced. The ranges to the rear appear to have been commenced towards the end of 1914 and contemporary photographs show the brick walls under construction. Charnock Bradley recorded the date when the clinical department moved from Clyde Street to Summerhall – 15 April 1916 – but it would be many years yet before the campus could be declared complete in 1925. The total cost of the project was estimated at the time



Upper: fireplace within the old clinical department

Lower: rear range looking towards the post-mortem room



Above: the new buildings commemorated in stained glass to the main stair

Right: the War Memorial Library sketched by JT Murray

to be around £75,000. Paid for by the alumni, the first of the stained glass panels to the stair were added in the early 1920s, with the final set of windows installed by June 1928. A poignant addition was made in 1922 to commemorate those who fell in the Great War when the Memorial Library was fitted out.

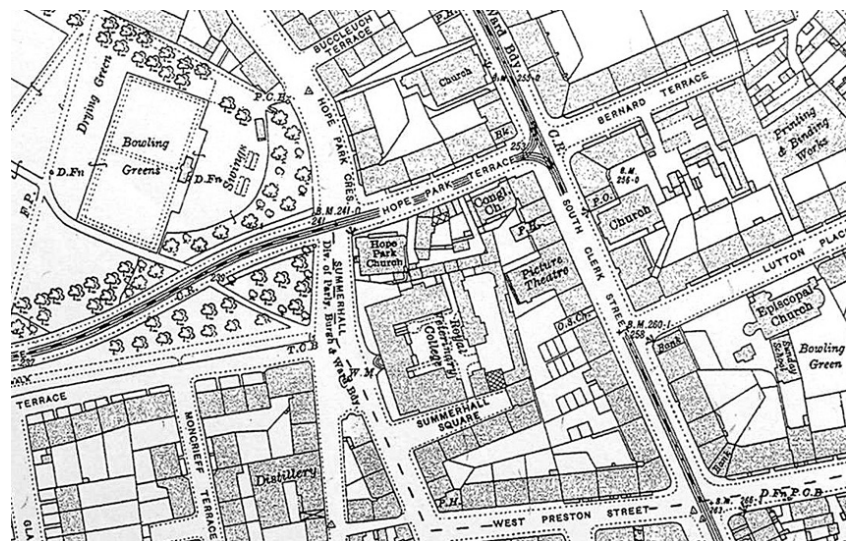


War Memorial Library - Royal (Dick) Veterinary College - Edinburgh

No sooner had the campus been declared complete than the need to expand the college facilities was raised as an issue. It was considered by the Board in December 1926.

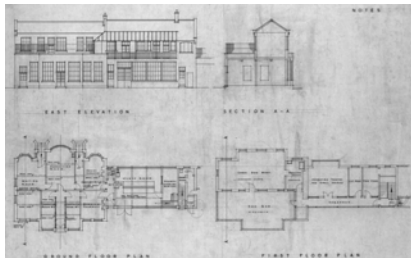
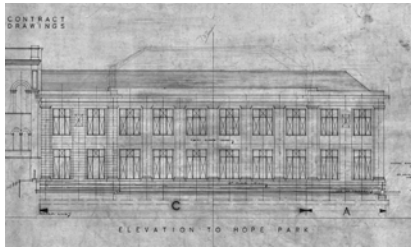
3.4 Years of expansion 1: the work of Lorimer & Matthew

As early as 1913 it had been noted that land and buildings on Hope Park Terrace, on the site of Summerhall House, were offered for sale by a Mr Alston. While the College Board chose to take no action at the time, the matter was resurrected in 1926 when need for the site to expand was recorded. In 1929 the Board agreed to procedures being set in motion for the site to be acquired for the purpose of extending the college.



Above; extract of the Ordnance Survey map dated 1932 – the building noted as the 'Livingstone Hall on South Clerk Street on earlier maps is now shown as a picture theatre

© NLS



Drawings by Lorimer & Matthew (1937)

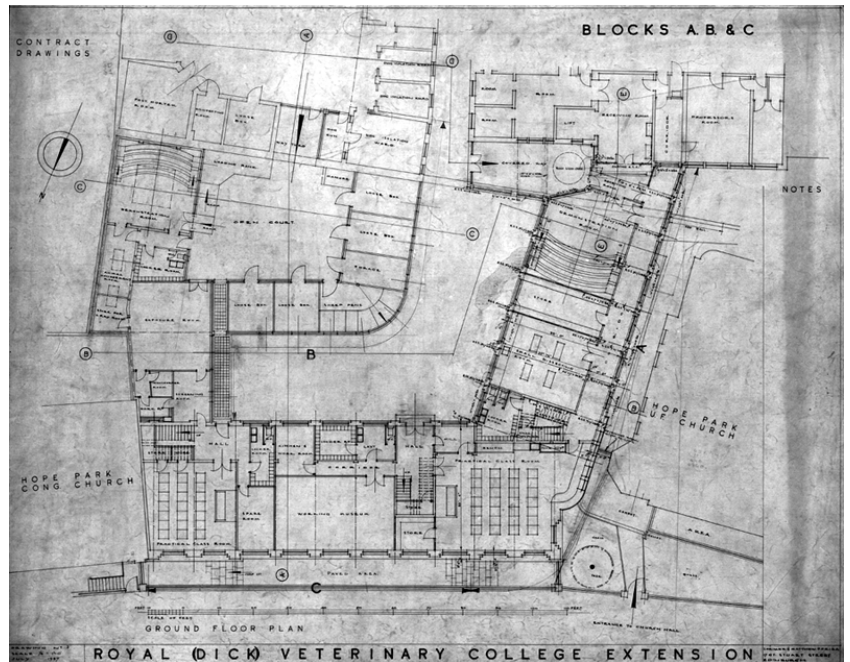
Top: elevation to Hope Park Terrace

Lower: Alterations to the clinical block

Right: Ground Floor Plan of the extension showing more extensive additions to the courtyard than was carried out

All © RCAHMS (Lorimer & Matthew Collection)

Below: details of the front and rear elevations of the Lorimer & Matthew extension

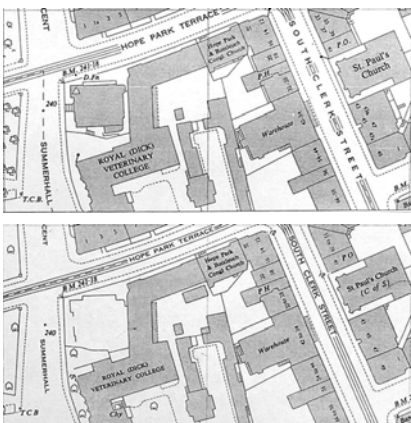


David McCarthy suffered ill health towards the end of his career, and died in 1926. Charnock Bradley turned to a newly appointed architect in 1930 over drawing up plans for the extension, and all that is known is that his name had been Constable. Almost certainly this is a reference to William Constable of Lyle & Constable who would have been approaching his middle sixties when first approached. His son, Graham, joined the practice in the 1930s. In the online *Dictionary of Scottish Architects* it is confirmed that in 1931 William Constable had indeed prepared plans for the extension of the college. When William Constable died is not known, but before the end of the decade the college had approached the well known practice of Lorimer & Matthew which had, of course, been involved with the University of Edinburgh's campus at King's Buildings just before Sir Robert Lorimer's death in 1929, with the projects having been led by his partner, John F Matthew. Tellingly, perhaps, Matthew's university buildings experience was gained in the later 1920s delivering the Department of Zoology and the Animal Breeding Research Department, which would have made his practice well suited to the proposed work at Summerhall. Further work for the University followed in 1933 with the Department of Anatomy. Although designs for the new extension on the grounds of Summerhall House were well advanced by 1937, Charnock Bradley did not live to see them come to fruition, dying in May of that year.

It seems that Lorimer & Matthew prepared a number of alternative plans for the extension of the college, all of which involved breaking through the old brewery wall, and tacking a block onto the north wing of the main building to run at the same angle as the rear wall of the UP church which, of course, had been governed largely by the frontage of Summerhall House. The practice had already adopted a cranked plan for



Above: circulation spaces within the 1940 extension



Above: extracts from Ordnance Survey maps dated 1947 and 1953, showing the demolition of the former UP church on the corner of Summerhall; the picture house on South Clerk Street has become C&J Brown's warehouse © NLS

the design of the Department of Zoology, but here the corridor wall on the Meadows side of the wing appeared uncomfortably close to the bulk of the church, justifying the change from sandstone ashlar finish on the Hope Park Terrace elevation to the rather dull coloured cement harled finish to the walls that were to be largely hidden. The same finish was applied to the courtyard to the rear, echoing the pragmatic solution adopted previously by McArthy. The Hope Park Terrace elevation was carried through to meet the gable of the congregational church, set back from the street behind railings so as to recover the street line which had been broken when the shops were extended forwards to the back of the pavement line. The design of the principal street elevation evolved from something fairly plain to a more sophisticated solution, having advanced bays at either end, to which the rhythm of the plain pilasters contributed. At the rear of the site Matthew added a further lecture theatre, adjacent to the post-mortem room. Although it was also top-lit it had none of the character of the original lecture theatre in the main teaching block upon which the layout was based. Not unlike McArthy's work, the window-to-wall ratio is high in each of the elevations, maximising on the amount of light entering the rooms.

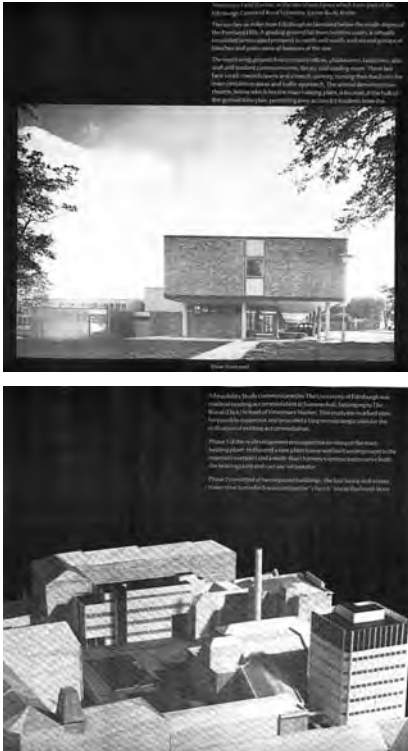
The Government's contribution to the cost of the project had been promised to be one half of the total cost. Estimated originally to be around £40,000, the costs rose to around £67,000 by the time that the work was finished. Once more, the college had seen the misfortune of advancing a capital project at the time of the onset of global warfare; although the plans were dated 1937 with the work having commenced in that year, the extension does not appear to have been completed until 1940 when it was formally opened.

The interior is distinguished mainly for the simplicity of the detailing. Some of the larger rooms have tall dado panelling with matching four-panelled doors which appear to have been varnished originally. Corridors and staircase enclosures are distinguished by the terrazzo flooring and dados, and by the quality of the metalwork to the stair railings and handrails. The dissecting room at first floor was extended into the new wing, but has little of the drama of the original space. Alterations and improvements were also carried out to the clinical block around this time which was to suffer from some poor quality flat-roofed additions in the third quarter of the twentieth century.

Successive Ordnance Survey maps, published in 1947 and 1953, confirm that the landmark former United Presbyterian church on the corner site had been demolished in 1948, thereby opening up opportunities for the further planned expansion of the campus in the late 1960s. An unprepossessing flat-roofed two storeyed building, stylistically

belonging to the 1950s, was added to the north wall of the 1940 lecture theatre, closing off the court on the east side.

3.5 Years of expansion 2: the work of Reiach & Hall



Above: extracts from a 1970s practice brochure for Alan Reiach, Eric Hall & Partners, showing work undertaken on the field station at Roslin and the masterplanning for the Summerhall site © reproduced with the kind permission of Reiach & Hall



Perspective sketch by Alan Reiach, Eric Hall & Partners (1968) showing the proposed tower as viewed from the Meadows © RCAHMS (Alan Reiach Collection)

In 1964 the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies was granted Faculty status. Yet more improvements were planned for the campus at Summerhall for which the redundant church site on the corner of Hope Park Terrace had been acquired. Among the needs for the site in the late 1960s were improved research and laboratory facilities, despite a substantial investment having been made at the end of the previous decade in establishing a field centre as part of the Centre of Rural Economy at Easter Bush, Roslin, on the outskirts of Edinburgh (completed 1962). For this project the University turned to the leading Scottish architectural practice of Alan Reiach & Partners. After Reiach merged with Eric Hall in 1965 the practice name changed to Alan Reiach, Eric Hall & Partners. In 1963 the practice had been appointed to design the Appleton Tower (completed 1966), one of two iconoclastic towers built at the University's George Square, with the other, the David Hume Tower, having been designed by Robert Matthew, Johnson-Marshall & Partners (completed 1962).

Reiach and Hall were commissioned to undertake an options appraisal on the Summerhall site to gauge the potential for the further expansion of the campus and its redevelopment, and to set a long term strategy for the site. Phase 1 of the masterplan addressed the problems of infrastructure. An underground boilerhouse was installed, served by a tall flue stack of precast concrete rings erected within the courtyard for the joint disposal of flue gases from the boiler and from an animal incinerator, although it never seems to have served the last mentioned



Right: photographs taken c1970 before the demolition of the pavilions at the rear of Summerhall Square, and the archway leading to the rear courtyard to accommodate Block B © EUL

use. The stack dominates the courtyard. Although it was positioned so as not to interfere with the axis of the main staircase and windows to the rear of the building, the effect is disturbing when the symmetry of the whole elevation is viewed from the street. Phase 2 envisaged the erection of two separate buildings, a tower block on the site of the former church (Block D), and a new block housing a small animals clinic and research laboratories to the rear of Summerhall Square (Block B). The tower block was freestanding on the corner site, connected to the main block by an elevated glazed walkway with a subterranean lecture theatre at the lower level. Block B required the pavilions to either side of the entrance into the site on Summerhall Square to be demolished. A covered way led from the rear of this building at the upper level to the south end of the old clinical block. Other changes to internal rooms may have been tackled as part of the same masterplan, and so it seems likely that the insertion of the mezzanine level and spiral stair in the faculty library – above the entrance



Upper: the tower during construction © EUL
 Above right: the corner tower (Block D) seen from the Meadows to the west
 Above: detail of the tower
 Below: base of the tower on Summerhall



to the glazed link to the tower - could have been installed around the same time. Commentary is offered on the respective architectural merits of these new buildings and the impact they had on the campus at Summerhall, and on the wider townscape, in Appendix 6.1.

Perspective sketches of the development of the corner tower are held among the collections at RCAHMS. The image selected for this document is dated March 1968, and was prepared some time after the first of the sketches for the corner tower had been rendered in April 1967. It shows the view from the Meadows towards the site. While in some respects it represents the scheme that went ahead, the design had still to go through some stages of development, resulting in a marginal increase in its overall height (no doubt to recognise the full extent of plant to be housed at the top of this heavily serviced building). The appearance of the tower also changed, which at this stage appeared still finely balanced between a horizontal and vertical emphasis. The vertical ribs of the tower, emphasised by their bright tone, were to become the dominant element in the design when it was built, and this is borne out in the photographs taken during construction. The precast cladding panels have flourishes at the edges where they curve upwards to meet the cills of the windows, and are coloured in a pinkish brown aggregate selected to be a close tonal match to the sandstone of the main teaching block on Summerhall. While the angle at which the tower is set is finely judged, it had to be a compromise. Aligned with the principal frontage on Summerhall, it appears more or less satisfactory when viewed along Hope Park Terrace from the junction with South Clerk Street, but is least satisfactory when viewed from the north. The approach differed to that adopted by Peddie & Kinnear, in which the frontage of the church completed the curved sweep of Hope Park Crescent, most probably because this had been the original urban design proposal shown on Gellatly's nineteenth century street plan.



Above: view from the Meadows, from the northwest – the spire behind the tower is that of St Peter's, Lutton Place



With relatively low grade precast cladding panels, and the upper storeys clad in grey Galbestos metal cladding, the exterior of the tower was finished inexpensively given the prominence of its location at an important road junction, and the potential to be a landmark building when viewed from the Meadows. The means of escape added at the foot of the building appears almost as an afterthought, and interferes with the lines of the tower at the corner where it meets the ground.



The loss of the pavilions flanking the entrance off Summerhall Square has been unfortunate. In order to fulfil the requirements of the brief for the additional accommodation, this could only be achieved by fitting in a four storey building in this location with the generous floor-to-floor heights needed to accommodate high levels of servicing within the ceiling voids. With strips of ribbon glazing this building has been given a more pronounced horizontal emphasis, and the significance of the public access to the clinic is stressed by the external staircase set within the plinth of the building. Once more a similar textured finish and colour has been applied to concrete panels which, in this instance, are of a very large size. The building was opened formally on 7 February 1973 to coincide with the 150th anniversary of the foundation of William Dick's veterinary school. The provision of the research laboratories was made possible through funding from the Wellcome Foundation.

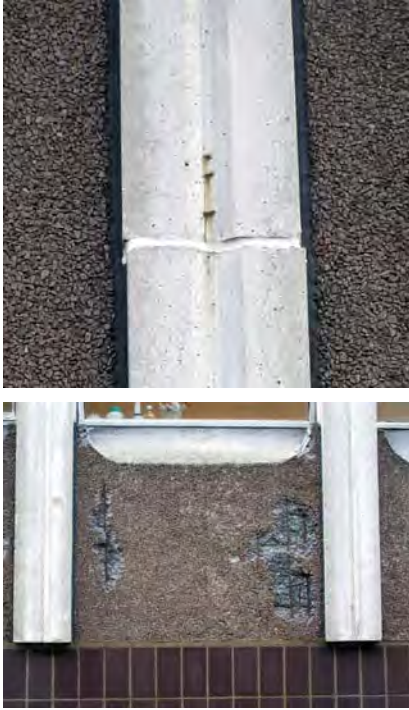
Above: the small animals clinic (1973)

Below: the public reception area



The interiors of neither of these buildings can be considered inviting, and the main circulation areas are disappointing. The functional nature of the brief has been taken literally, with painted concrete block partition walls lining corridors, while the most heavily trafficked areas have been given a coating of unattractive 'Portaflek' paint. Spaces are finished with gridded suspended ceilings and many of the rooms have higher cill levels than would be normal to suit servicing arrangements for laboratory benches. However, the outlook from the top of the tower can be spectacular, with sweeping views to be had across the cityscape.

Externally the blocks have not weathered well, and the cladding in particular has been prone to problems. On the tower block problems seem to relate to poor positioning of the reinforcement within the precast concrete moulds, which does not appear to have the required depth of



Above: problems of rusting reinforcement in the tower fins and cladding panels

cover. As a consequence the raised fins to the window spandrels are prone to cracking and breaking off at the edges of the window cills; in some cases the entire face of the panel has spalled off, leaving large areas of reinforcing mesh exposed. Even the precast vertical fins are not immune from problems with concrete reinforcement – in places this has been exposed at the shallow V-trough in the profile. The cladding panels to Block B on Summerhall Square have suffered similar problems, and where repairs have been carried out it has proved to be very difficult to match the original finish. If these listed structures are to be retained, it seems inevitable that some loss of authenticity will result as a consequence of having to replace the cladding. Opportunities may be presented for remedying some of the deficiencies of the original design, particularly in respect of the tower where the vertical proportions of the fins, revealed when the block was under construction, were inherently more satisfying aesthetically and promised rather more than was delivered by the design in its final form.

3.6 The Summerhall campus: the final years

On a site which has been subjected to intensive use, and to constant change, it is gratifying to see the extent to which authentic fabric has survived in so many spaces of the buildings. In some cases high levels of preservation of original fabric have resulted where spaces have remained disused for a number of years. The rounds of changes have seen spaces subdivided; lecture rooms converted to other teaching or research facilities; and false ceilings inserted in order to accommodate services distribution to highly serviced laboratory and private research spaces. At the north courtyard, large windows that had once provided daylight to teaching spaces within the 1940 wing are now blind from wall linings having been inserted across them where there is no longer any need for daylighting. Within the same suite of rooms suspended ceilings have been installed where none had existed previously.

The changes from the planned programme for expansion of the campus did not cease following Reiach & Hall's interventions. The Hope Park and Buccleuch Congregational Church faced redundancy, whereupon it was acquired by the University and converted into a refectory, student common room and tutorial rooms on the lowest levels, with research offices inserted at the top floor. The church interiors were stripped out, and only the entrance lobby and stairs leading to the basement and to first floor have been retained. Undistinguished as the work of conversion has been, and destructive in terms of losing the internal galleries, at least the finishes to the external walls and original windows (and window glass) appear to have survived close to their



Top: students' cafeteria converted from the interior of the former Congregational Church
Above: plaster frieze surviving at the top storey

Right: view into the courtyard through the original window frames and historic glass, exposed when the stained glass screens were removed from the main staircase

original state, and with them the deep decorative plaster frieze at the top storey.

A major change to the appearance of the external fabric occurred in 2001, which saw the original metal window frames being removed from almost the entire building. Exceptions were the former church, as noted above, and the windows of the old disused clinical block which has retained the original ironmongery and window fittings. The original iron window frames and supporting lintols of the main teaching blocks were suffering from advanced decay and were becoming dangerous, while a number of windows were no longer capable of being opened. On the main block, with the removal of the stained glass windows for Easter Bush the original iron frames to the large Venetian windows have been revealed, together with the original window glass. At one time the view from the stair through these windows would have been onto areas of lawn, but the landscaping has been encroached upon increasingly to satisfy the need for on-site parking.

Gradually the relics that have contributed to an understanding of the richness of the history of the site at Summerhall are being removed to their new home at Easter Bush, but the buildings still have considerable potential to recover what has been lost over the years, or has been damaged by inappropriate change.



Right: the anatomy lecture theatre is the last surviving example of its type among veterinary colleges in the United Kingdom, and is of considerable historical as well as architectural significance

4 Notes on the significance of the site



Above: well detailed staircase surviving within Block E

Below: glazed roof and lantern above the former post mortem room



4.1 Preamble

The notes in this section should be read in conjunction with the coloured diagrams prepared by GVA showing the hierarchical significance of the exteriors of the buildings of the complex at Summerhall, and of the principal internal spaces. These diagrams are reproduced in Appendix 6.2. Their purpose is to give general guidance, and to identify spaces where redevelopment may be possible within an overall framework for the site. It should be noted that the archival research and evaluation of the individual buildings on the site has been limited for the purposes of the present exercise, sufficient only to give an overview. It is anticipated that development proposals for the site, in accordance with any proposed functional uses that have been determined, will require to be informed by the preparation of a conservation statement, or a full conservation plan. This refined level of understanding would be deemed appropriate before discussions are advanced with the City of Edinburgh Council and with Historic Scotland prior to submitting proposals for planning permission and conservation area consent, particularly if, as might be anticipated, these proposals will involve adaptation of the principal spaces and the demolition of any of the structures on the site.

Categories are intended to convey levels of relative significance, and at this stage they should not be equated directly to categories of special interest which exist already for historic buildings (SHEP July 2009, Note 2.19, p58). While information presented in this visual format provides an aid to understanding, it should be borne in mind that the categories, without the supporting Statements of Significance and



Upper: first floor corridor within the main teaching block

Lower: spiral stair leading to the gallery within the dissecting room

Below: relic of the past within the former Board Room



Conservation Policies set out in a conservation statement, or full conservation plan, can be something of a blunt tool.

4.2 External elevations

Categories of significance take into account factors such as townscape value; authenticity of fabric; age and rarity; group value; spatial values; architectural value and recognition of the wider output of known designers or artists; and historical associations.

4.3 Internal spaces

Categories of significance take into account factors such as the quality of the internal spaces, finishes and fitments; their authenticity; age and rarity; historical associations; recognition of their place within the wider output of known designers or artists; their completeness; and their relationship to other internal spaces.

It is expressly noted that, even though a space may be identified as having little, or no, significance, it may well be the case that important architectural features survive at the external walls providing an indication of past uses of the space and its former quality. For instance, such is the case in the upper rooms of the interior of the former Hope Park and Buccleuch Congregational Church – although the interiors have been converted with the insertion of modern partitions, suspended ceilings and modern finishes, the decorative plaster frieze at the external walls has been retained together with the original wall finishes.

It should also be borne in mind that many of the rooms throughout the complex have been converted through subdivision and the insertion of modern finishes and services for intensive laboratory use, or for other teaching purposes. There is the strong possibility that original features, such as decorative plasterwork or wall panelling, survive hidden within the fabric and may be uncovered only during the duntakings phase of preparatory work. Some level of intrusive investigation to establish the existence of any features which might be retained in a final scheme would be advised before work commences on site.

4.4 Detrimental to significance

A further category (not shown on the diagrams) is that of matters considered to be detrimental to an appreciation of the significance of the site. The list making up this category might be expanded at the time of preparing a conservation statement, or full conservation plan. Items listed in this category present opportunities perhaps just as much as they identify problems to be overcome.



Above: decaying finishes within the former clinical department



Above: stone decay (Block E)



Above: concrete repairs, Block B

A provisional list is of those matters considered to impair an appreciation of the values of the site is set out in Table 2.

Table 2: matters considered detrimental to significance

General	<p>The loss of the original functional uses across the whole of the site, and of certain distinctive spaces, such as lecture theatres being inflexible for other uses</p> <p>Low grade appearance of the main courtyard and loss of soft landscaping</p> <p>Internal subdivision of spaces to accommodate change and new technological features within the teaching laboratories</p> <p>External elevations and fenestration marred by ventilators, extractors, external flues mounted on walls and pipework from laboratory sinks, surface cabling etc</p>
Block A	<p>Loss of the original windows and, in some cases, fenestration patterns, and substitution of modern windows</p> <p>Modern boiler flue dominating the courtyard, and appearing off-axis in relation to the symmetry of the principal façade</p> <p>Permanent loss of distinguishing features relating to past historical uses, such as stained glass, busts of figures, murals and carved features within panelling</p>
Block B	<p>Lack of connection with the courtyard</p> <p>Substandard finishes to external walls and cladding; decay from 'concrete cancer'</p> <p>Undistinguished interior</p>
Block C	<p>Dullness of external render to 'working areas' of the building</p>
Block D	<p>Relationship unresolved in townscape terms – at street level, to the Meadows, and in long distance views of the cityscape</p> <p>Unsatisfactory relationship with Block C and poor ground plane in this area</p> <p>The tower sits unhappily on the ground plane – no interaction with the external ground level or with the street corner and the space is confined behind railings</p> <p>Additional means of escape further mars the appearance of the tower at ground level</p> <p>Cladding panels and vertical fins affected by 'concrete cancer' – surface finish deteriorating</p> <p>Space planning constraints within the vertical circulation areas and poor standard of finish</p> <p>High cill levels may limit functional uses</p>
Block F	<p>Advanced decay of the internal room finishes at the former clinical block</p> <p>Poor quality of the flat roofed finished extensions to the former clinical block</p>

5 Selected bibliography and source references

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- Alan Reiach, Eric Hall & Partners
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- Graham Constable
- William Constable
- Lorimer & Matthew
- Sutherland & Walker
- John Russell Walker

Friends of the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links: History and Archaeology

www.fombl.org.uk/hist.html

Map Library, National Library of Scotland www.nls.uk/maps

6 Appendices

6.1 Commentary on the work of Reich & Hall at Summerhall

6.2 Layouts: hierarchy of significance

6.3 Plans of Summerhall by David McCarthy (1914)

6.4 Author's notes

6.1 Commentary on the work of Reiach & Hall at Summerhall

Opinions have been sharply divided on the merits of the work at Summerhall carried out towards the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s by Reiach & Hall or, more properly, Alan Reiach, Eric Hall & Partners, which had been the practice name at that time.

Having delivered their verdict on McCarthy's buildings in searing tones (page 1 of the heritage report), the authors of the *Buildings of Scotland* volume were no less kind about the new work, especially as it had been completed only a decade or so previously from when the volume was first published (1984). The new building on Summerhall Square failed to get a mention in the narrative, and all they could find to say about the corner tower was: 'On the N an awkward ribbed tower'. It was as though it could not be ignored.

These sentiments were shared when the South Side Conservation Area Character Appraisal was adopted in August 2002, but it is hard to know whether the author, or authors, of the document had taken into account the listing entry for the property which had been updated in March of the same year. Concern about the impact of the tower is highlighted in the bullet point on page 41 of the document, which states that 'The multi storey block of the Royal Dick Vet College is a disrupting element to the skyline'. The specific paragraph highlighting the impact of the building on the surrounding townscape is worded as follows:

One building that detracts from the area is the 1960s, eight storey ribbed tower belonging to the Royal (Dick) Vet College on the corner of Hope Park Terrace and Summerhall. This building breaks through the general height of the South Side and forms an inappropriate punctuation at the east end of the meadows.

There is a particularly unflattering photograph included of the tower seen from the top of Hope Park Terrace to reinforce the point. The focus of the appraisal where the criticism of the tower is made is associated mainly with townscape values and the impact of recent developments on the skyline. The appraisal document is equally critical of the damaging effect of the towers at George Square on the skyline of the conservation area (page 29).

Set against such strongly held negative views are the findings of the thematic survey of modern structures by Historic Scotland, which resulted in the redrafting of the list descriptions for the buildings on the site and the addition of the supplementary notes (of which an extract is reproduced on page 5 of the heritage report). Accepting that views of what may be considered important may change over the span of a

single generation, it is still hard not to draw the conclusion that the perceived merits of Reiach & Hall's work from this period, on this particular site, had been overstated.

Right, upper: Edinburgh's South Side viewed from the summit of Blackford Hill, showing the relationship between the tower block at Summerhall (to right of centre), and the University's towers at George Square
 Right, lower: the tower at Summerhall obscures Thomas Brown's spire (1823) on the Queen's Hall, South Clerk Street, from this direction and to the right of the image is the tall spire of St Peter's, Lutton Place



Views from the top of the refurbished University Library in George Square confirm the uncertain appearance of the tower when seen on the skyline looking southwards. Compared with the spires of the numerous churches of the South Side punctuating the skyline, it appears cumbersome and intrusive. It is neither tall enough to have landmark quality (as has been claimed for it), nor low enough so as not to disturb the predominant urban grain of the conservation area. These negative considerations are reinforced when the cityscape is viewed from popular vantage points on the rolling hills to the south of the city - for instance, from the site of the Royal Observatory on Blackford Hill. The tower has the unfortunate effect of overshadowing and even obliterating views towards Thomas Brown's slender spire of the Queen's Hall on South Clerk Street (1823). The most striking element within the vista of the South Side properties with which the tower competes is the elegant tower of St Peter's, Lutton Place, by Slater & Carpenter (1857-65). From here, the



Upper: the tower of the UP Church at Summerhall seen above the canopy of trees when viewed from the Meadows c1900
© Friends of the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links

Lower: the modern tower seen today from the Meadows from the northwest

notion expressed in the supplementary listing notes that the tower ‘appears to be engaged in a dialogue with the twin towers of George Square’ has to be questioned. Clearly, when viewed from a distance, it does not come close to fulfilling this claim.

Equally questionable has to be the contention that the tower has landmark qualities when seen from the popular open recreational space of the Meadows. It is visible only from within a narrow arc of vision from the northwest, less so when the trees are in leaf, and from here it makes no positive contribution to the wider townscape setting, nor to the South Side Conservation Area. Comparisons between the modern tower and the steeple of Peddie & Kinnear’s UP church on the same site are instructive – while it could never be claimed that the Victorian architects’ design had been among the most elegant of Edinburgh’s remarkable collection of church towers or spires, it nonetheless punctuated the skyline effectively, marking the corner of the road junction at the east end of the Meadows in a way in which the present tower does not from appearing too solid and out of scale with its surroundings. Two historic images support this view – the first is taken from across the Meadows around the turn of the twentieth century, and the other image shows the church tower seen in the context of the streetscape of Hope Park Terrace (JR Hamilton, 1914, page 13 of the heritage report).

Right: the tower viewed from the end of Bernard Terrace at the junction with South Clerk Street



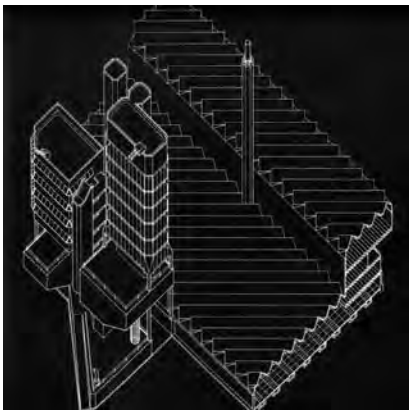
What is not held in dispute is that the inspiration for the design of the tower is likely to have been found in the Economist Building in London by the *avant garde* architects Alison and Peter Smithson (1964), with the most obvious similarity occurring in the splayed edges to the tower to reduce its apparent bulk. Beyond that, comparisons do not seem to stack up. The Economist Development, in the heart of London, consisted of three separate towers of differing heights and the splayed edges within the plan create a dynamism, both within the internal spaces of the



Above: the Economist Building, London, by Alison & Peter Smithson (1964)



Below: Leicester Engineering Building by Stirling & Gowan (1963)



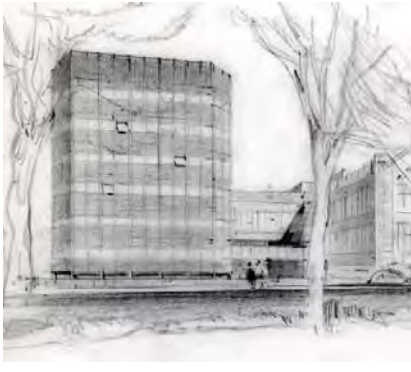
buildings where entrances on the diagonal are formed, and within the urban realm which was unprecedented for the time. The massing of the individual towers was extremely subtle, with the lower floors conceived as double height spaces. The apparent bulk of each of the towers is mitigated where the top storeys, containing lift motor rooms and plant, are set well back from the parapet.

Another highly influential building of the 1960s having a tall tower with splayed sides was Stirling & Gowan's Leicester Engineering Building (1963). Here the splayed sides to the tower were an integral part of a highly sophisticated geometric exercise in three-dimensional spatial planning in which the diagonals were expressed.

None of the qualities that made these structures icons of this era are to be found in the freestanding tower at Summerhall. The early sketches from Reich's office suggest that the balance of horizontal and vertical elements in the design was still being explored and, at that stage, there is seems to be a familiarity with the contemporary work of mainstream practices in the UK – for instance, Gollins, Melvin, Ward & Partners. The sketch reveals that the base of the tower was to have been modelled, an intention absent in the final work where the vertical fins collide unhappily with the brown brick plinth. Unlike the Economist Building, the tower is confined behind perimeter railings. It fails to relate to the ground planes on this important corner which marks the edge of the street block at the transition from the open space of the Meadows.

In the Historic Scotland listing notes rather less is said of Block B on Summerhall Square, which is noted as being 'overtly functional', although the possibility of the influence of the Smithsons' interest in 'rectilinear formality' is mentioned. The influence is possibly more from buildings of the International Style of the 1920s and 1930s, or from contemporary buildings of the Cambridge School under Leslie Martin and Colin St John Wilson. The building sits less than happily on the site. Seen from the courtyard the rear elevation is unresolved, especially where the horizontal panels are interrupted by the inelegant gaping hole at the end of the elevation to accommodate tall delivery vehicles.

As noted in Section 3.6 of the heritage report the current condition of these structures, and the constraints imposed by the functional uses for which they had been designed, will be considerations to be taken into account as to whether they will be capable of being retained and adapted in any scheme for the redevelopment of the site. Issues associated with sustainability and embodied energy will obviously require to be addressed, but the authenticity of the original designs may have to be sacrificed, especially as the cladding panels will prove impossible to repair satisfactorily without destroying the unified appearance of the structures,



Upper: detail from the perspective sketch by Alan Reiach, Eric Hall & Partners (1968)
© RCAHMS (Alan Reiach Collection)
Lower: the tower from the Meadows, as built

or from changing the appearance altogether. In the case of Block B this has effectively been damaged already by the patched repairs that have been undertaken as a matter of necessity.

Taking into account all of the foregoing matters, the special interest of these structures may be held in question. In the case of the tower, positive change by way of enhancement might be encouraged if it were to be retained. The structure could be made to appear more elegant, and its impact on the surrounding townscape less damaging, if the inherently good proportions of the vertical fins (seen during construction, page 26 of the heritage report) could be developed through exploring alternative forms of cladding. It would have to be accepted that, while the negative impact of the tower on the conservation area can be mitigated, the more fundamental issues of its ambivalence in terms of its height and apparent bulk will prove a greater challenge to overcome.

It is unquestionably the case that Alan Reiach, Eric Hall & Partners were among the three, or four, elite large architectural practices with a good track record in architecture and design at work in Edinburgh in the 1960s and 1970s. The practice would compete against Robert Matthew, Johnson-Marshall & Partners and Sir Basil Spence, Glover & Ferguson for similar work for the financial institutions, educational establishments, and for the occasional ecclesiastical building. Another Edinburgh practice, although slightly smaller in the scale of its operations, but engaged in similar high quality work, was Rowand Anderson, Kininmonth & Paul. At the time when the reconstruction of Scotland was well underway the larger firms tended to employ large numbers of staff working in teams, and they were characterised by a high turnover of staff, even at partner level. The Oil Crisis dented the prospects for a short time in the early 1970s.



Above: rear of Block B viewed from the courtyard

Alan Reiach (1910-92) had been an outstanding architecture student, and when established in practice he had no difficulty in attracting staff of a high calibre. Talented individuals joining the practice in the mid-1950s, having a key role in its future growth were George McNab and Stuart Renton. McNab was involved in the design of the new Field Station for the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies at Roslin in the late 1950s, a distinguished design of deceptive Scandinavian simplicity which was featured later, in June 1964, in the *Architects' Journal*. Renton worked closely with Reiach in creating some of the finest new church buildings of the era, arguably only matched by the output of Gillespie, Kidd & Coia in the West of Scotland. The new parish church at Kildrum, Cumbernauld (1962) demonstrates his mastery in the production of clear, rational plans which led to the creation of buildings of considerable sophistication.



Above: contemporary photograph of the New Club, Princes Street, Edinburgh by Alan Reiach, Eric Hall & Partners when complete (1969)



Above: Reiach & Hall's Pier Arts Centre, Stromness, winner of numerous architectural awards

Right: Westport Evolution House, Edinburgh (Reiach & Hall)

Among the best work of the practice of the 1960s demonstrating these traits was the New Club on Princes Street (completed 1969) in which Renton again played a leading role. The replacement building had been tainted by the outcome of a protracted conservation battle which saw the loss of William Burn's fine facade of 1834. The club had been extended by David Bryce, with the interior refurbished by Sir Robert Lorimer. Some of the most distinguished historic interiors were recreated convincingly in the new building. Despite having to comply with the design straitjacket imposed by the Princes Street Panel the building was widely praised at the time. It has a timeless quality which none of the other interventions of the period possess along the entire length of Princes Street, and these enduring qualities have been described as a 'slow burn' in Historic Scotland's recent book on post-war architecture *Scotland: Building for the Future* (2009).

As the size of the firm expanded, and the number of partners increased, not all of the work of the practice was of the same calibre. The eleven-storey Appleton Tower at George Square (completed 1966), despite some fine illustrations having been produced by Alan Reiach during its inception, has never earned the same levels of admiration as the New Club. Again, it was the focus of a bitter and celebrated conservation battle and this, together with its prominence on Edinburgh's historic skyline, may provide a clue as to why it has been less admired.



The impetus for the practice's direction throughout the 1980s and into the 1990s was provided by John Spencely and during that time, and since, it has been consolidated by Tom Bostock and Neil Gillespie, the practice's Design Director. A string of highly worthy award winning buildings has been produced in recent years, and in a rapidly changing climate of procurement the reputation of this long established practice has proved to be as enduring as many of its buildings.

Reiach & Hall's buildings at Summerhall, produced between 1967 and 1973, cannot be considered among the best work of this well known architectural practice. The enthusiastic reception given to their qualities

by Historic Scotland may not stand up to scrutiny and throws what is considered to be their 'special interest' into sharp focus. With hindsight, were the authors who were so disenchanted about the architectural qualities of the buildings of the Summerhall campus in the *Buildings of Scotland* volume, so wildly off the mark when passing their dismissive verdict on the late twentieth century structures on the site?

Andrew PK Wright OBE BArch RIBA PPRIAS FRSA FSA Scot

Forres April 2011

Appendix 6.2

Layouts: hierarchy of significance



University of Edinburgh • Summerhall Place

Heritage Analysis • Categories of Significance (Draft)

All Blocks • External Elevations



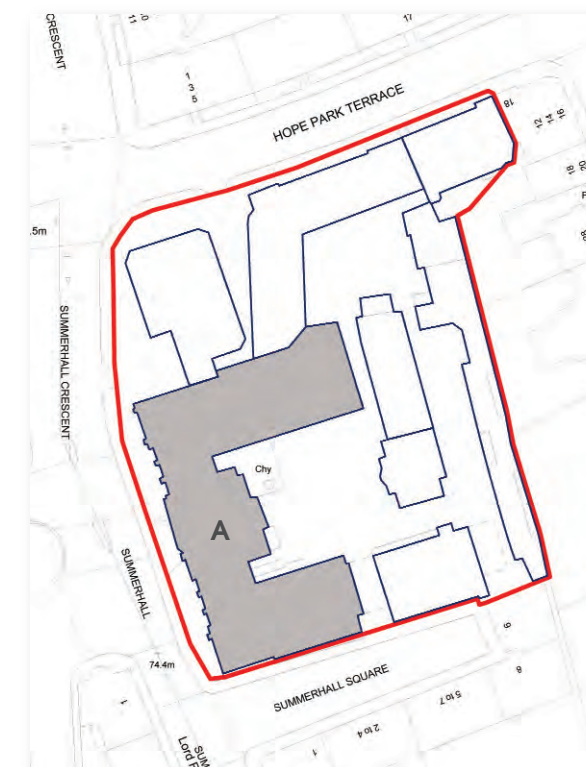
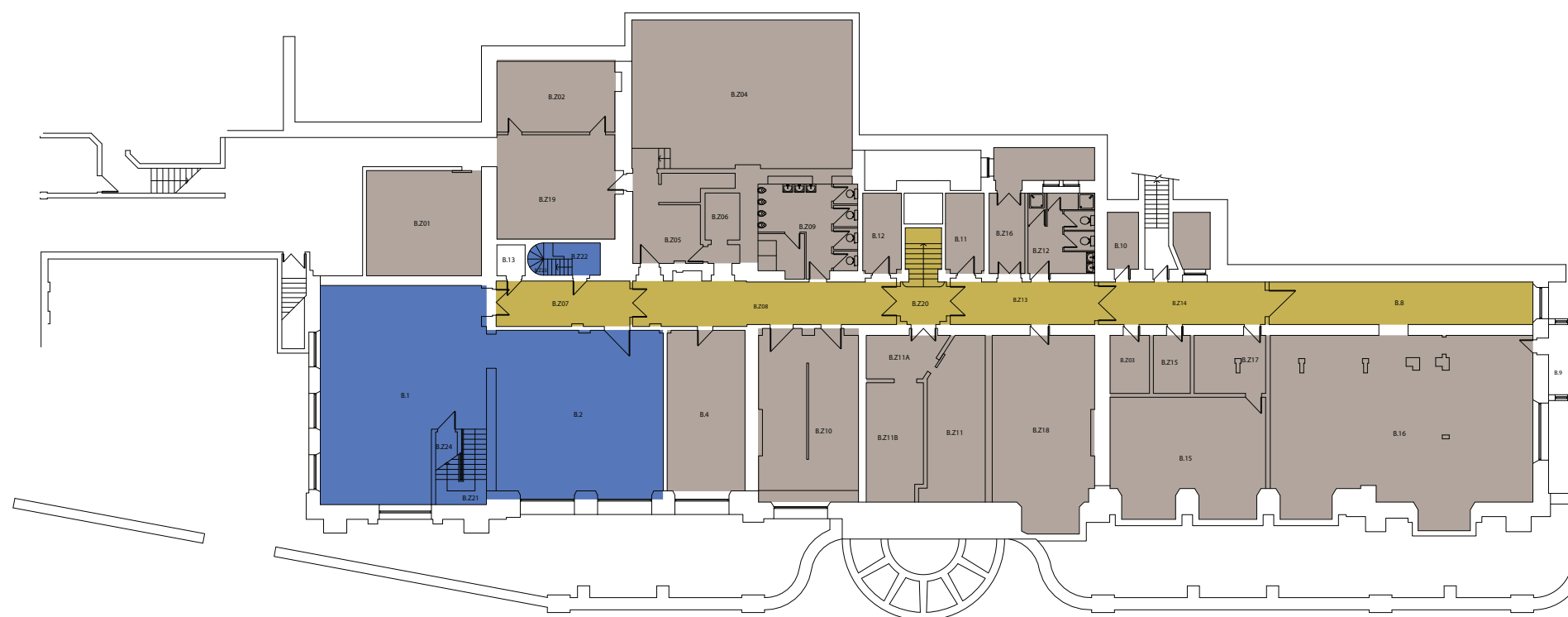
- High
- Significant
- Moderate
- Some significance
- Little, or no significance



University of Edinburgh • Summerhall Place

Heritage Analysis • Categories of Significance (Draft)

Block A • Internal • Basement





University of Edinburgh • Summerhall Place

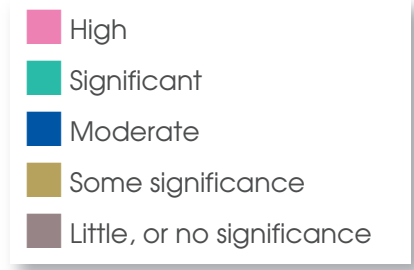
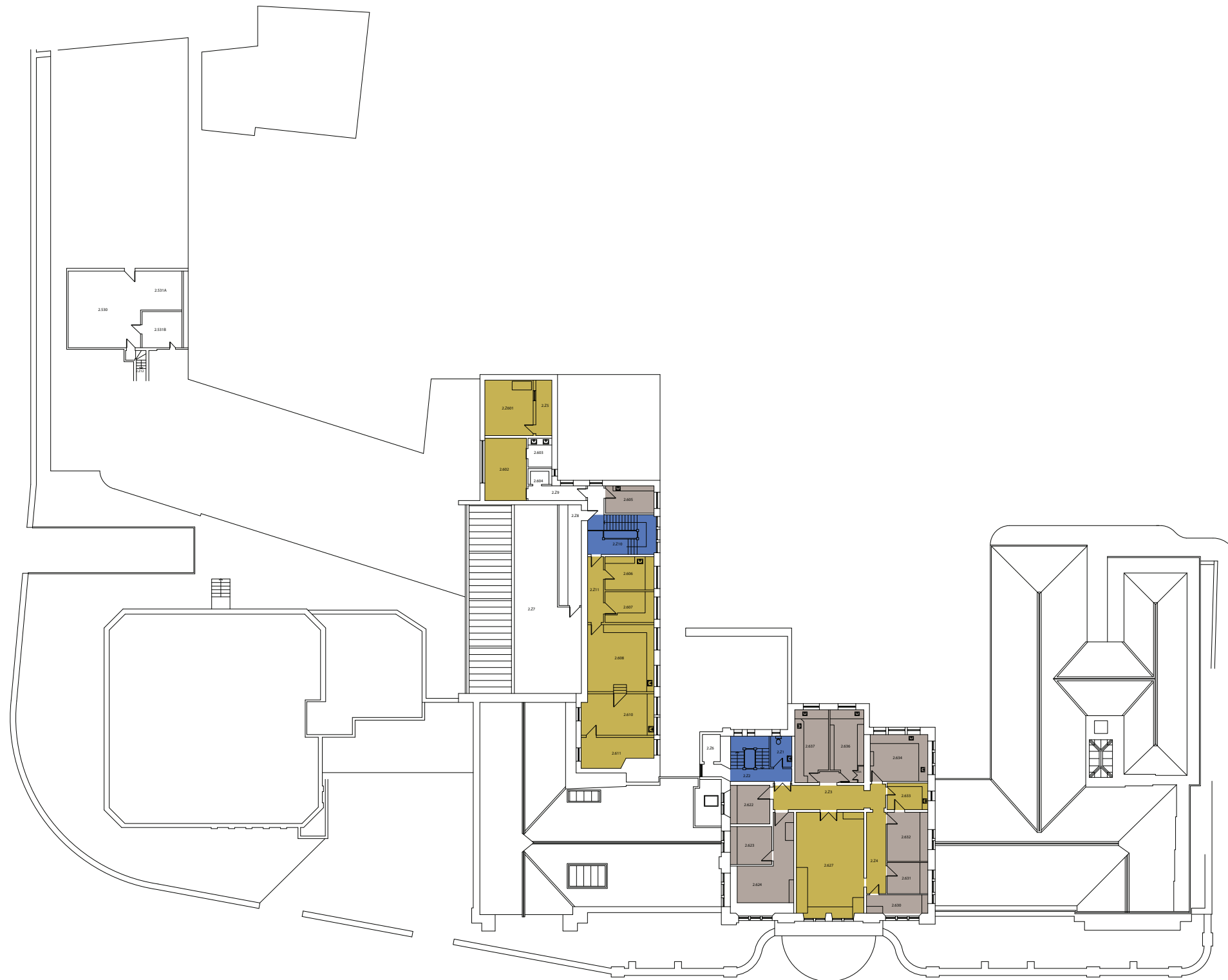
Heritage Analysis • Categories of Significance (Draft)

Block A • Internal • Mezzanine





University of Edinburgh • Summerhall Place
Heritage Analysis • Categories of Significance (Draft)
Block A • Internal • Second floor

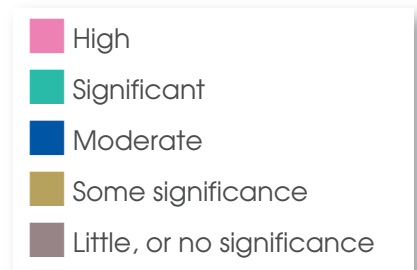
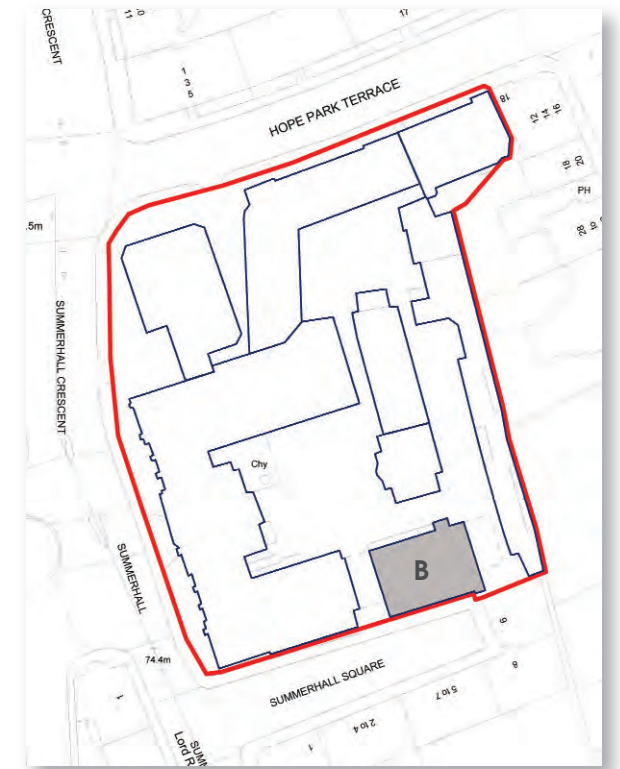
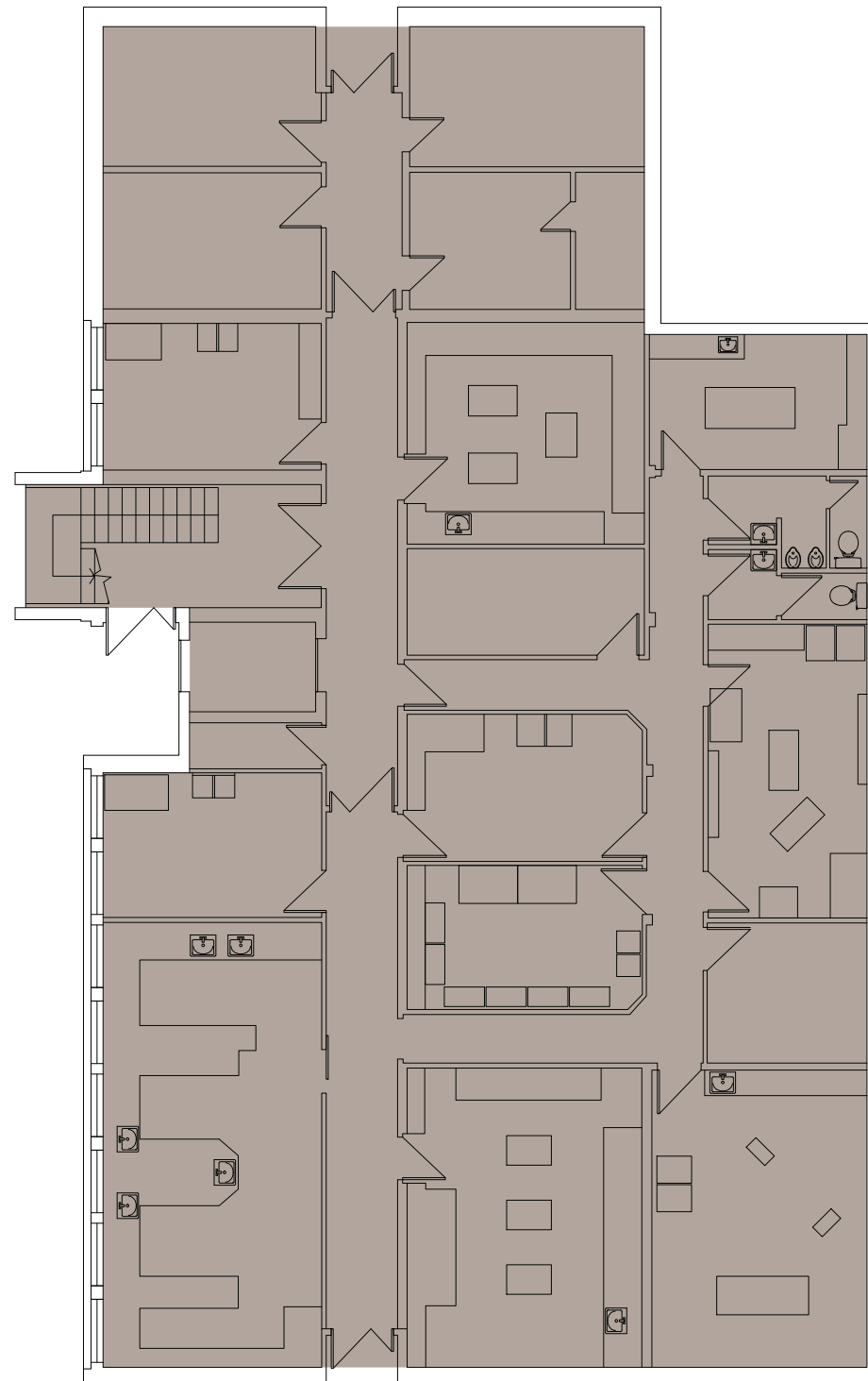




University of Edinburgh • Summerhall Place

Heritage Analysis • Categories of Significance (Draft)

Block B • Internal • All floors

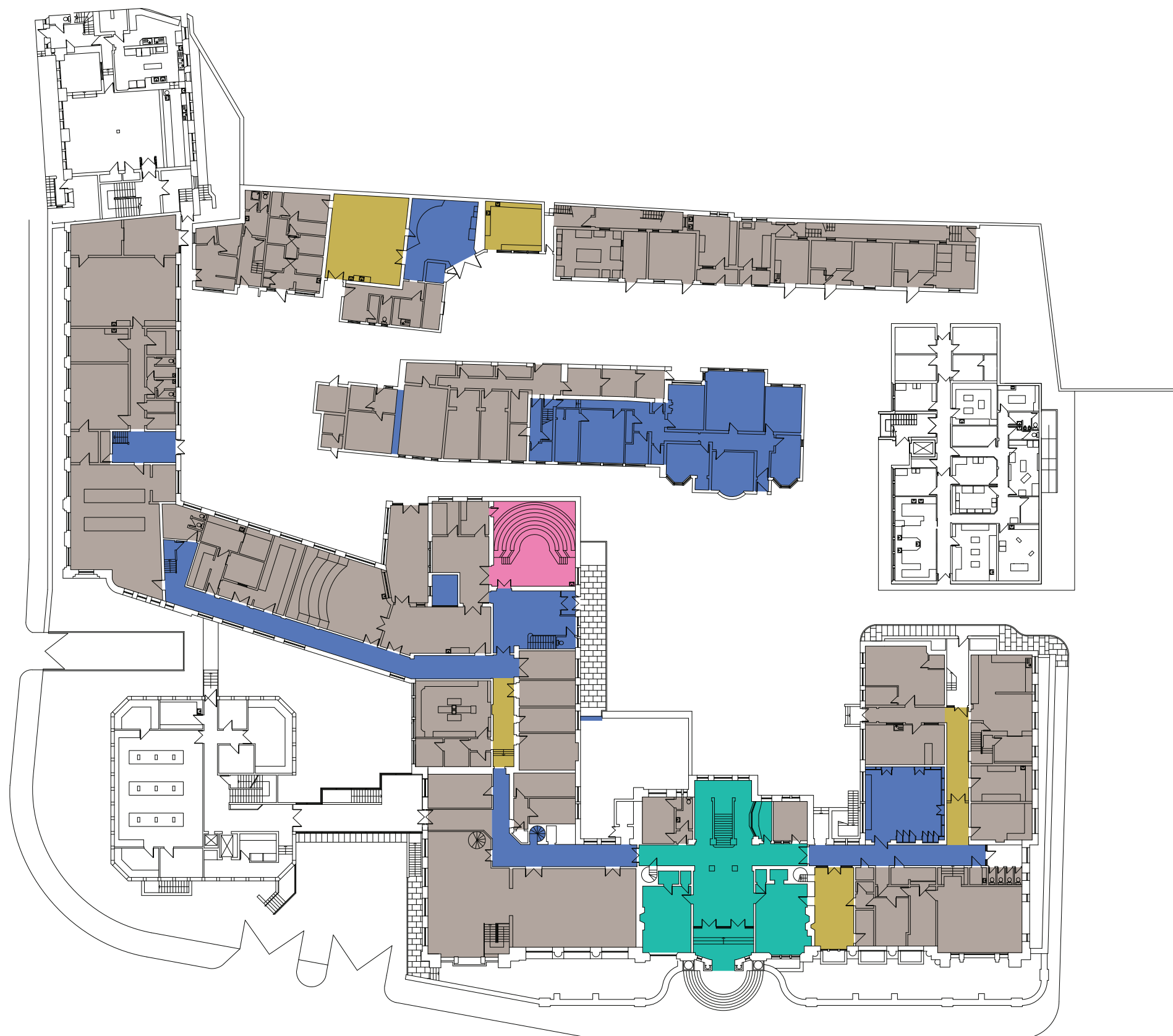


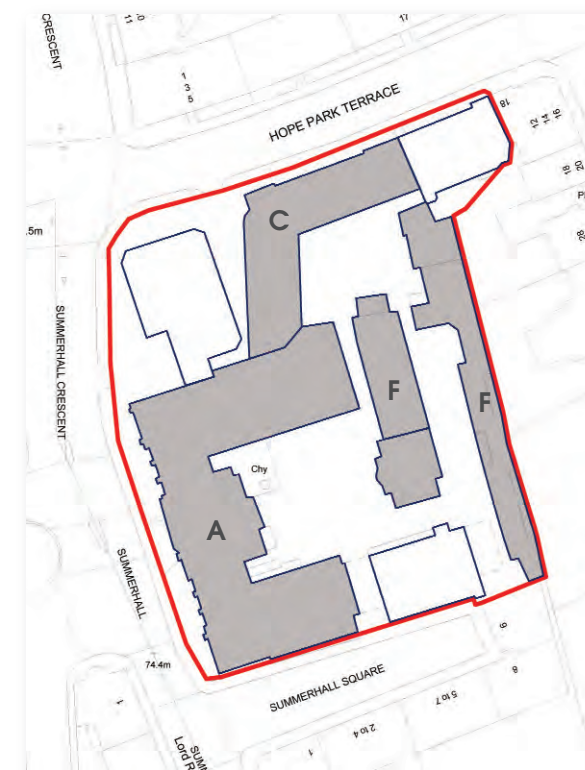


University of Edinburgh • Summerhall Place

Heritage Analysis • Categories of Significance (Draft)

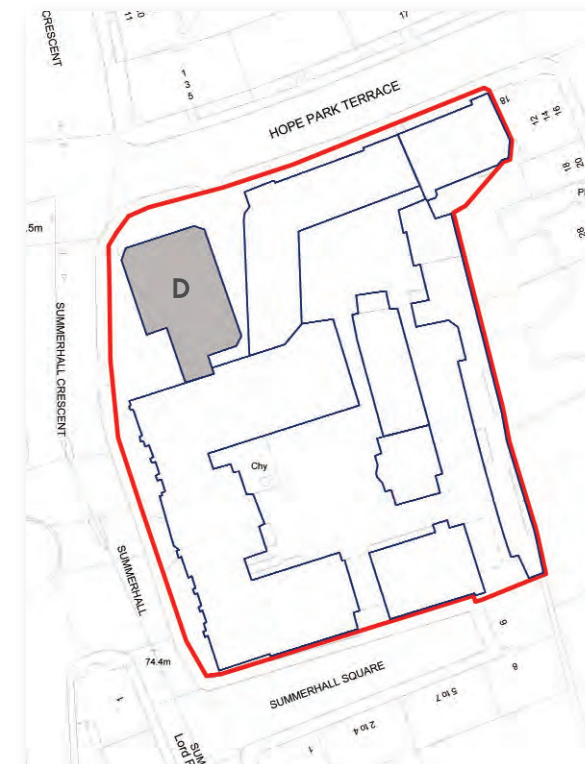
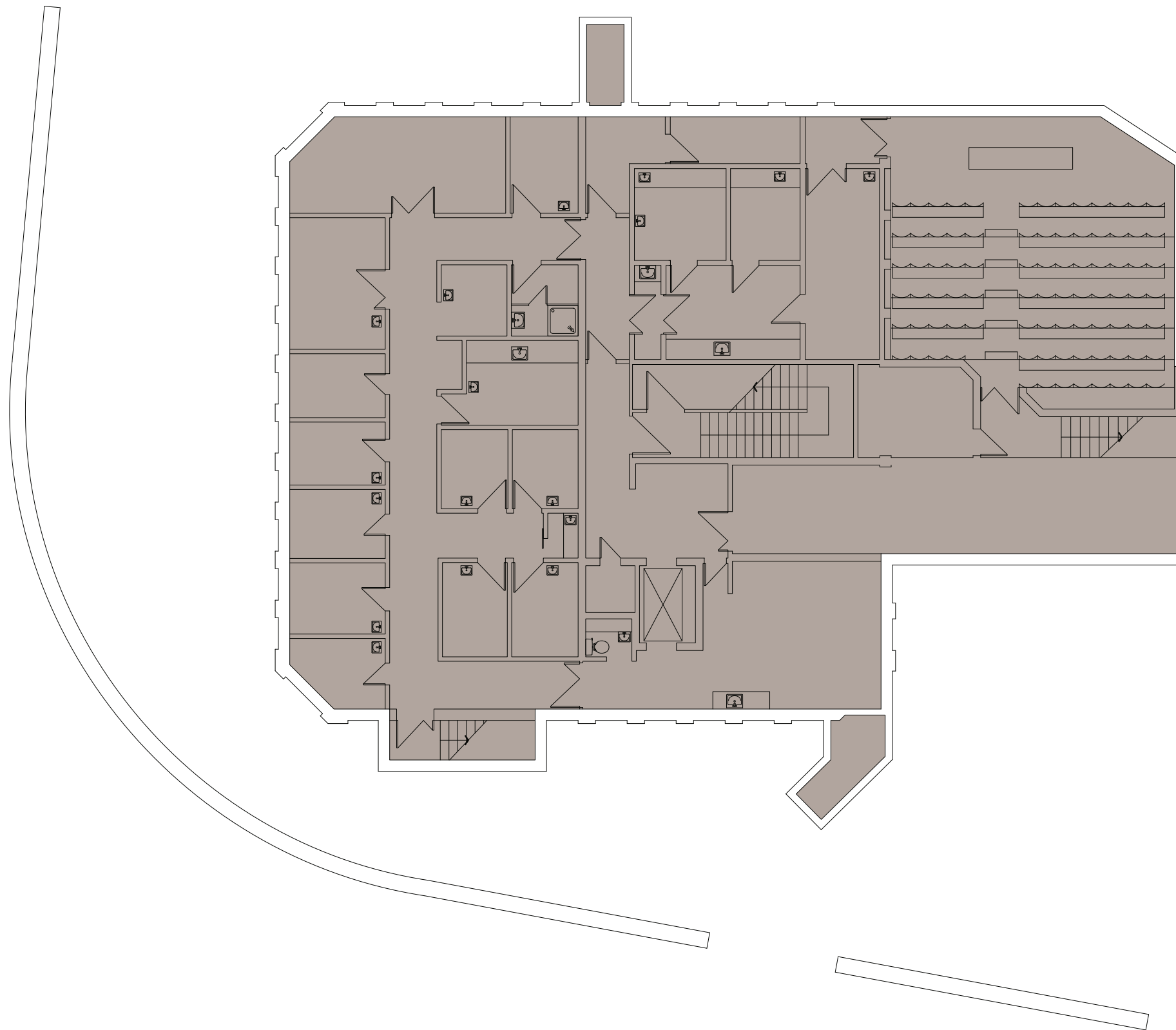
Blocks A, C & F • Internal • Ground floor



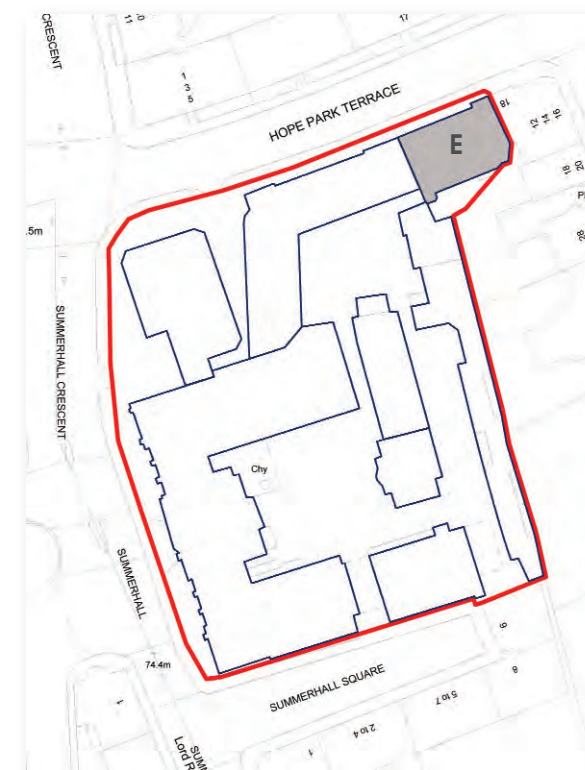
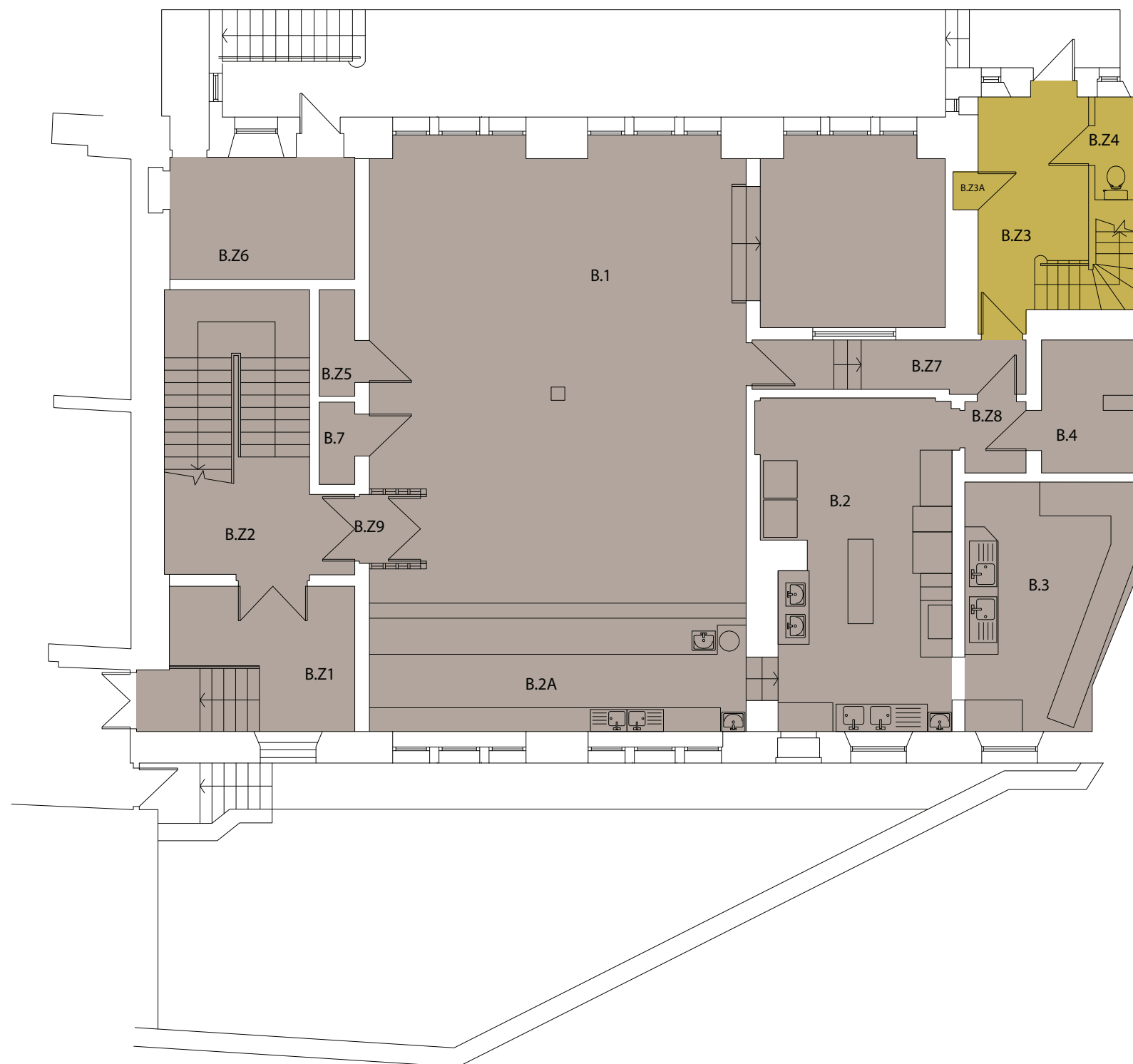




University of Edinburgh • Summerhall Place
Heritage Analysis • Categories of Significance (Draft)
Block D • Internal • All floors



- High
- Significant
- Moderate
- Some significance
- Little, or no significance



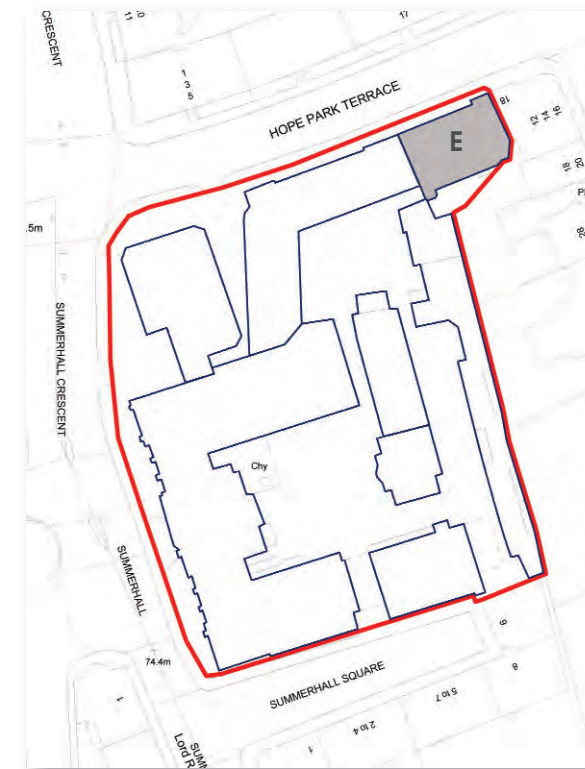
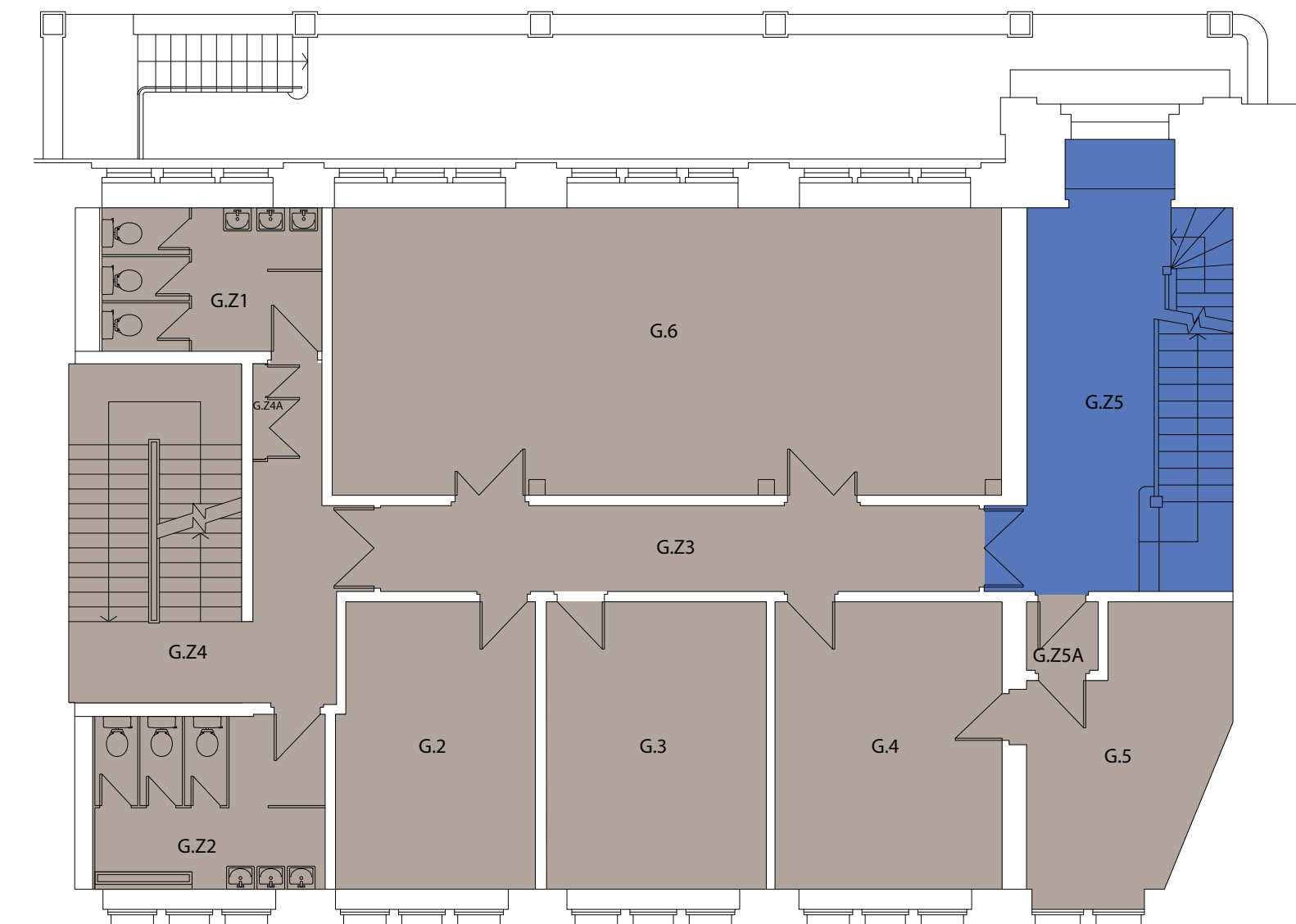
- High
- Significant
- Moderate
- Some significance
- Little, or no significance



University of Edinburgh • Summerhall Place

Heritage Analysis • Categories of Significance (Draft)

Block E • Internal • Ground floor



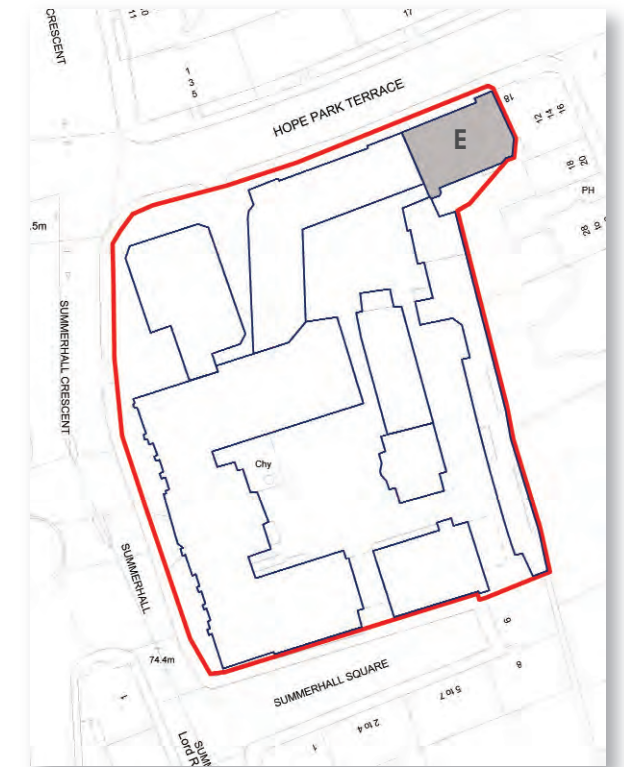
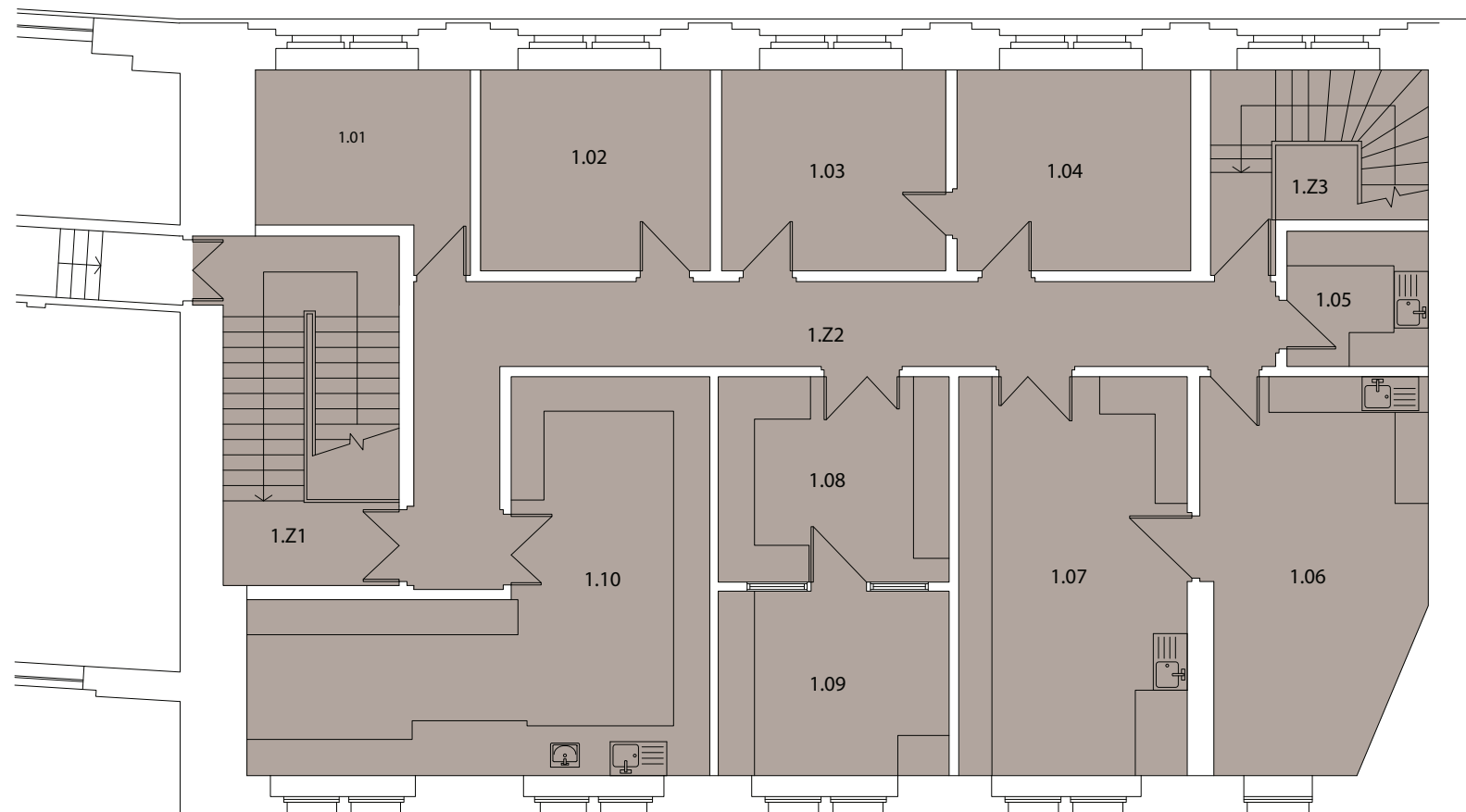
- High
- Significant
- Moderate
- Some significance
- Little, or no significance



University of Edinburgh • Summerhall Place

Heritage Analysis • Categories of Significance (Draft)

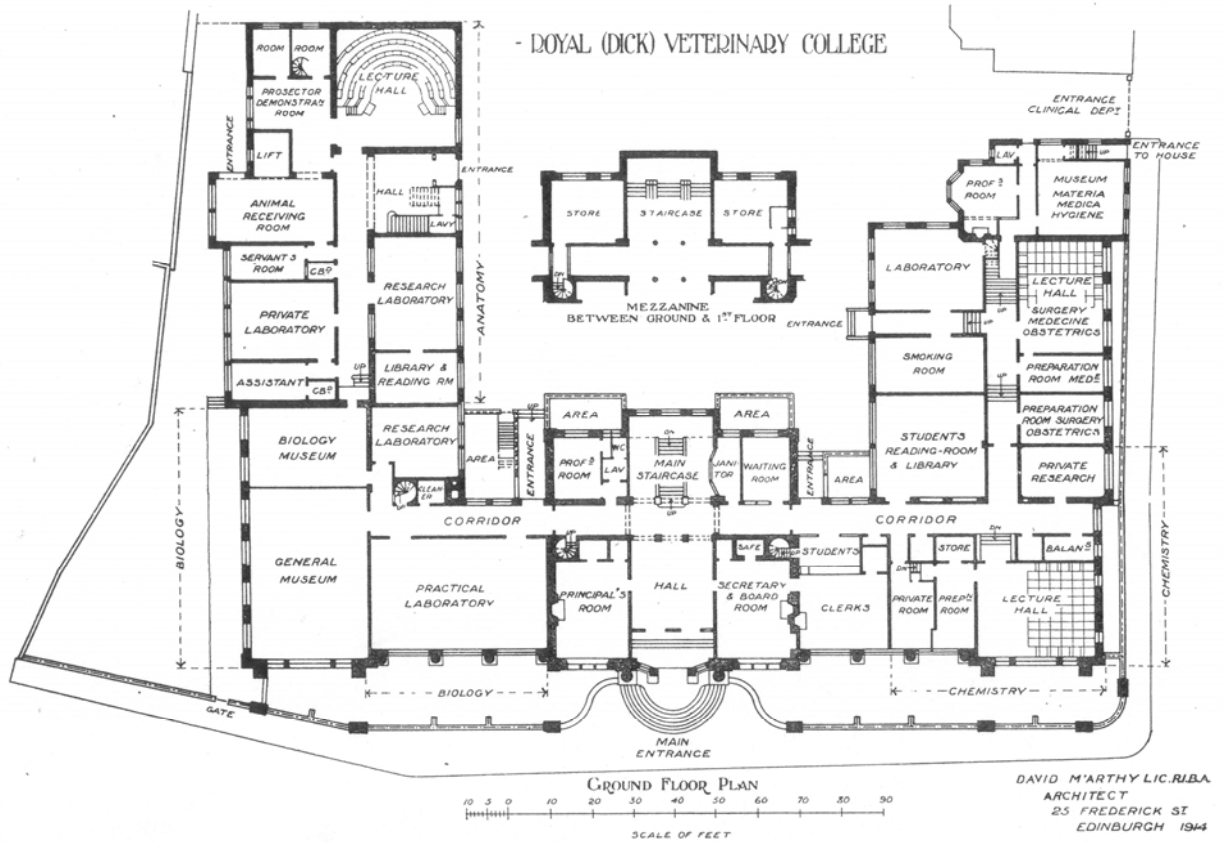
Block E • Internal • First floor



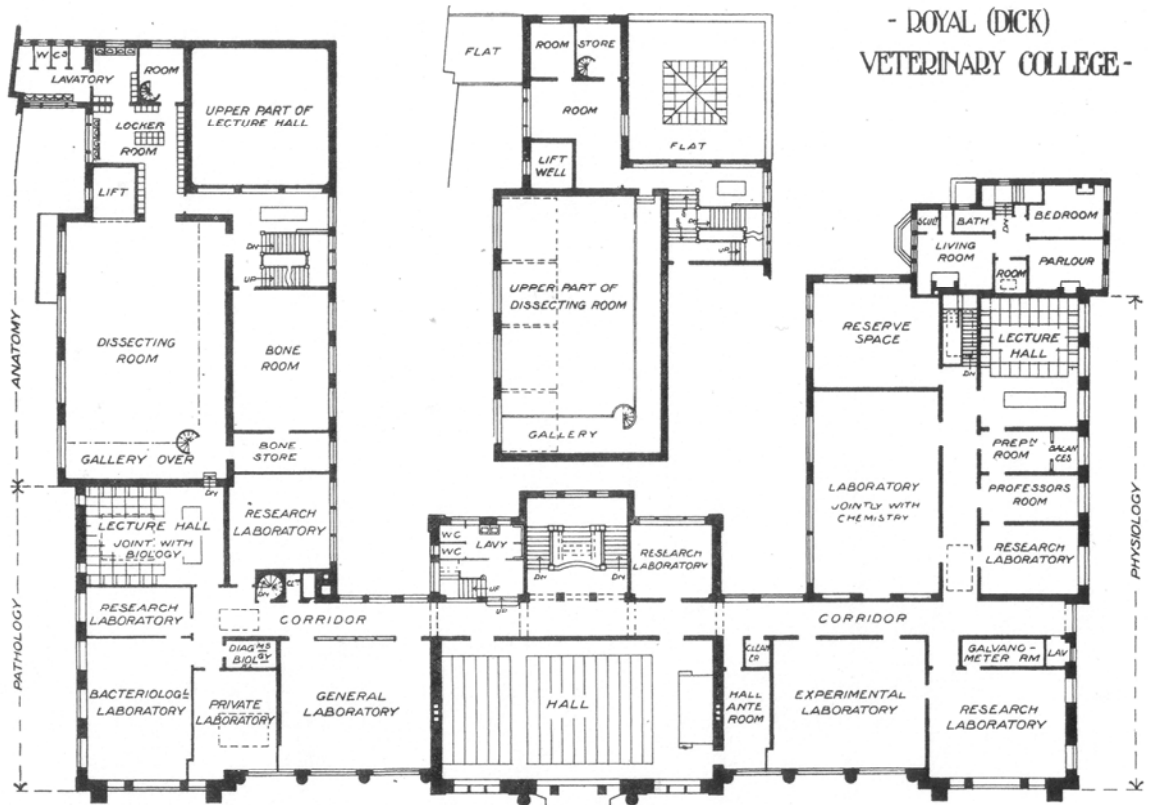
- High
- Significant
- Moderate
- Some significance
- Little, or no significance

Appendix 6.3

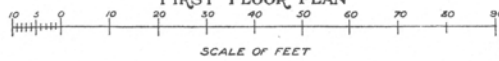
Plans of Summerhall by David McCarthy (1914)



- ROYAL (DICK)
VETERINARY COLLEGE -

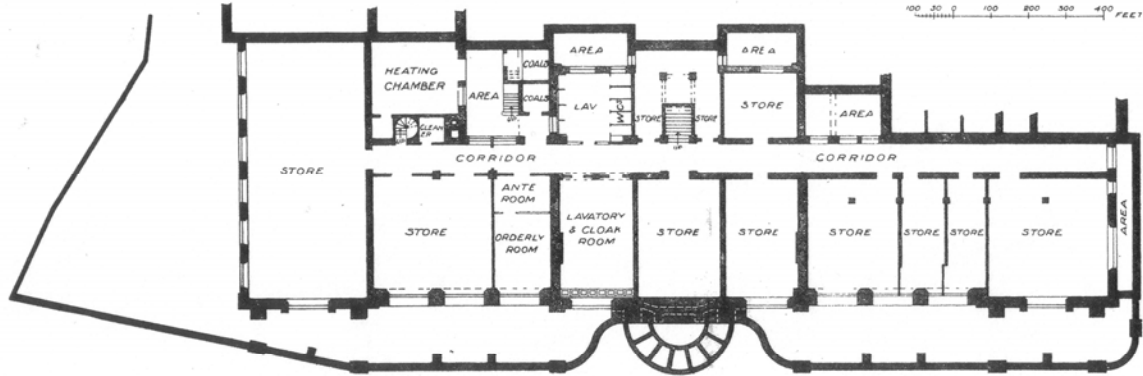
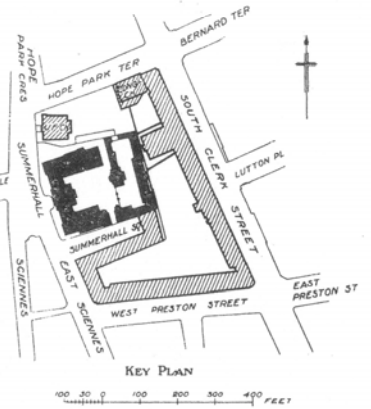
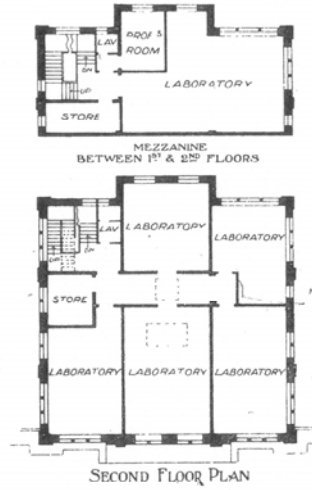
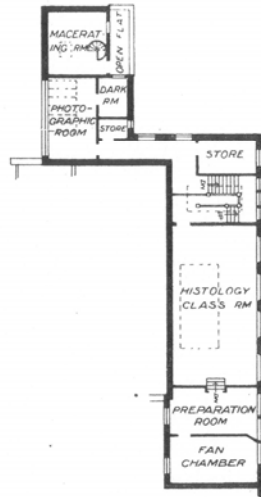


FIRST FLOOR PLAN

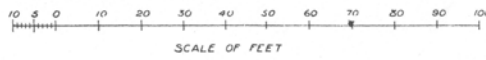


DAVID M'ARTHY L.I.C.R.I.B.A.
ARCHITECT
25 FREDERICK ST
EDINBURGH 1914

- ROYAL (DICK) VETERINARY COLLEGE -

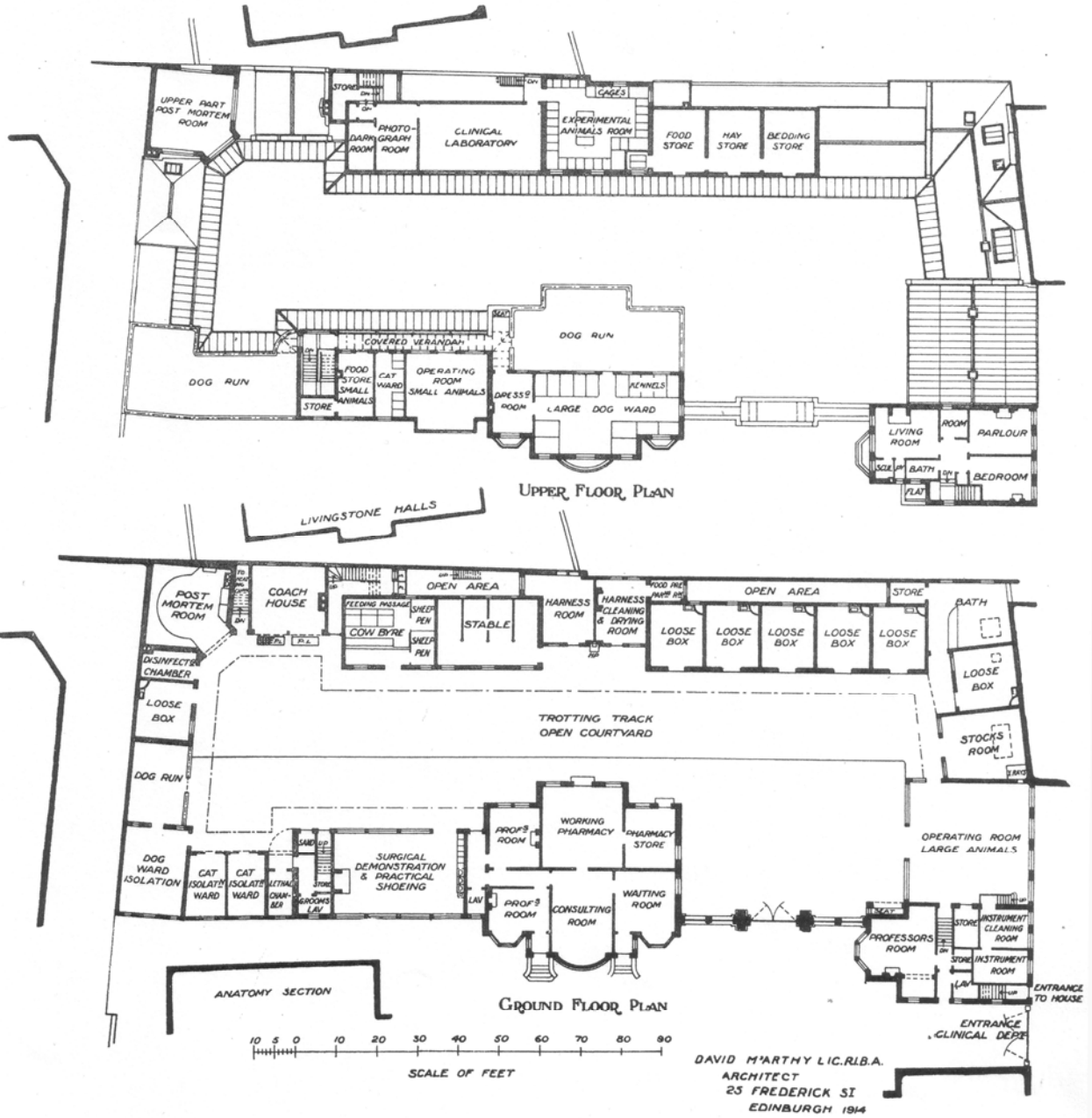


BASEMENT PLAN



DAVID M'ARTHY LIC.R.I.B.A.
ARCHITECT
25 FREDERICK ST
EDINBURGH 1944

ROYAL (DICK) VETERINARY COLLEGE
CLINICAL DEPARTMENT BACK BUILDINGS



Appendix 6.4

Author's notes

ANDREW PK WRIGHT

Chartered Architect and Heritage Consultant



Formerly a partner and chairman of a leading Scottish architectural practice, Andrew Wright stepped down in 2001 to pursue his interests in consultancy work; in doing so he works leading architectural practices and in collaboration with other specialist disciplines. As an architect accredited at the highest level in building conservation he is focusing primarily on projects in the heritage sector, working closely with clients during the early stages helping to define the scope of the project, the conservation issues to be addressed and advising on the availability of funding. Advice can be given on the need to undertake options appraisals through feasibility studies, on the appointment of specialist consultants and the requirements for competitive tendering. He is on the register of mentors, associate monitors and expert advisers for the Heritage Lottery Fund and has extensive experience of projects funded by the HLF and by Historic Scotland.

Conservation Planning

Drawing upon a lifetime's knowledge of architectural history, he has prepared numerous conservation plans and management plans for complex heritage sites and buildings, for which his skills have been widely recognised. His approach has been always to embrace the historic environment in its broadest sense, taking in an understanding of the significance of collections, archives, furnishings, designed gardens and landscapes, and of the archaeology of the site. He has prepared several conservation plans for the National Trust for Scotland, including a heritage impact assessment for the Culloden Memorial Battlefield Project. He has acknowledged expertise in interpreting historic environment legislation, and in particular of the requirements to be met for the alteration and demolition of listed buildings in the Scottish Historic Environment Policy document (July 2009). In recent years he has undertaken conservation area character appraisals for Stornoway and the rural conservation areas of the Western Isles, Pulteneytown (Wick), and Dingwall.

Charitable Trusts

Andrew Wright acts as an honorary architectural adviser or as the conservation adviser to building preservation trusts, including the Scottish Redundant Churches Trust, the Scottish Churches Architectural Heritage Trust, the Highland Buildings Preservation Trust and several single project trusts, including the Knockando Woolmill Trust. He is a trustee of the Clan Mackenzie Charitable Trust, Cawdor Maintenance Trust, Cawdor Heritage Charity and the Scottish Lime Centre Trust.

Appointments

In 2000 he was appointed to serve as an independent architectural adviser to the Scottish Parliament Corporate Body over the construction of the new Parliament building, a role he continued until after the completion of the project. He served as a Commissioner of the Royal Fine Art Commission for Scotland between 1997 and 2005 and, after two terms on the Ancient Monuments Board for Scotland, was appointed to its replacement body, the Historic Environment Advisory Council for Scotland for which he has acted as a Vice-Chair, serving two terms between 2003 and 2009. He sits currently on the over-arching Conservation Committee of The National Trust for Scotland and on the RIAS Conservation Committee. A Past President of the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland and of the Inverness Architectural Association, he was awarded the OBE in the 2001 New Year Honours List for services to architecture and the built heritage in Scotland.

Memberships

In addition to lecturing and writing regularly on conservation issues, Andrew Wright has membership of numerous conservation and amenity bodies including the Garden History Society, SPAB, ICOMOS, Scottish Vernacular Buildings Working Group, Scottish Industrial Heritage Society and the Historic Houses Association. He is member of the Society of Architectural Historians of Great Britain, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland. He is also a Founding Fellow of the Institute of Contemporary Scotland.

Education

Born in 1947 in Walsall, and educated at Queen Mary's Grammar School, Andrew Wright graduated from the Liverpool University School of Architecture in 1970 with First Class Honours. He worked for two years in Liverpool before moving to Edinburgh where he worked for Rowand Anderson Kininmonth and Paul, and then Sir Basil Spence, Glover and Ferguson before taking up a position with Law & Dunbar-Nasmith to manage their newly-opened office in Forres, where he relocated with his family in 1978. His wife, Jean, is a partner in the practice, and they have three children and two grandchildren.

Andrew PK Wright OBE BArch RIBA PPRIAS FRSA FSA Scot

