UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

St. Cross Building Conservation Plan

May 2012

Building No. 228

Oxford University

Estates Services

First draft March 2011

This draft May 2012

CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION

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1 INTRODUCTION

The St. Cross Building was designed by Sir Leslie Martin with Sir Colin St. John Wilson between 1958-62 and was constructed from 1961-65. It is a Grade II* listed building with significance attributed to its adherence to modernist design principles and its inherent functionality. The building is in fact a grouping of three distinct yet structurally-connected buildings. These have largely been used in their original function, as the libraries and departmental lecture theatres and offices for the Law and English departments, since they were constructed, and previously housed the Statistics department. Oxford University's Law department is one of the world's foremost centres for the study of law. In the long term it is envisaged that the English department will relocate to the new humanities complex at the Radcliffe Infirmary site, and the Law department will take over its previous accommodation, with the building as a whole forming the new Law Complex. Currently ongoing alterations will further integrate the spaces by incorporating a new direct entrance to the vacated Statistics department from the main monumental staircase.

1.1 Purpose of the Conservation Plan

The University has an unrivalled portfolio of historic buildings, of which it is rightly proud. It has traditionally taken a thorough, holistic approach to building conservation, seeking to understand all the varied factors that make historic buildings significant to their diverse stakeholders, and using this to inform necessary change. It has become clear that this approach is vital to the conservation culture of an institution where so many of its historic buildings that are valued for their function also have extensive historical or architectural significance. This Conservation Plan represents the continuation of this tradition of seeking to understand what makes the University's buildings cherished assets, and of seeking ways to conserve these most important features for the enjoyment of future generations.

The success of this approach is such that it has now become codified in government policy: First in March 2010's *Planning Policy Statement* 5: *Planning for the Historical Environment* then in its replacement, March 2012's *National Planning Policy Framework* (hereafter: NPPF). NPPF provides useful guidance on approaching the conservation of heritage assets, and postdates the University's existing literature. NPPF defines a heritage asset as:

'*A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).*'

This designation clearly applies to the St. Cross Building.

The purpose of this Conservation Plan is to update the St. Cross Building's conservation policy to take into account the new guidance provided by NPPF. It will be of use both for informing responsible regular maintenance and in the preparation of future planning applications, as specified in NPPF paragraph 128.

The Conservation Plan should form the basis for the St. Cross Building's Conservation Policy and exists as part of an ongoing process. It will be renewed and updated at least every five years or following any major alterations or legislative changes.

1.2 Scope of the Conservation Plan

This Conservation Plan will cover the interior and the exterior of the St. Cross Building, a single building originally encapsulating three university departments, and consisting of a sculptural geometric form, represented by three cubes with three towers, intersected by a monumental external stair. It is located on the corner of Manor Road and St. Cross Road in Oxford (see **Figure 1** below). The area includes two car parks to the south and to the west/north of the building, the latter of which detracts from the setting of the building, and the building's wider setting as detailed in *The Setting of Heritage Assets: English Heritage Guidance: Consultation Draft* (August, 2010).

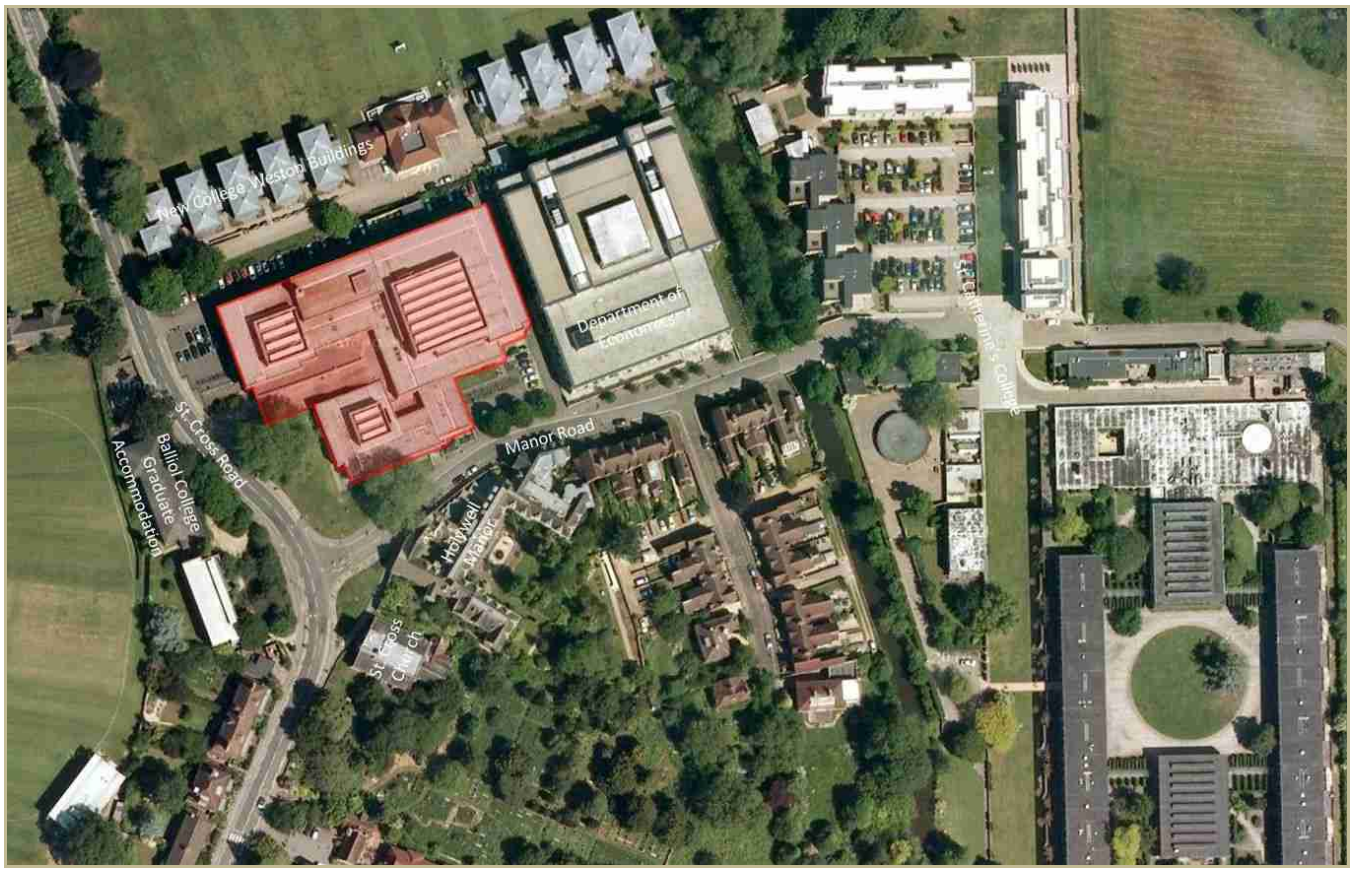

Figure 1. Satellite image of the St. Cross Building (marked in red) and surrounding area, orientated with north at the top of the image

The plan is not a catalogue and to facilitate its practical use will concentrate only on the most vulnerable aspects of significance, dictating how they will be approached and conserved in the future. A brief list of the most significant architectural features can be found in **Appendix 4** and this will be referred to when planning any repair or alteration work.

1.3 Existing Information

A Conservation Plan has not previously been produced for the St. Cross Building but it is a heavily-used building and has undergone various periods of work in the last 20 years. A Conservation Statement was produced for the building in July 2010. Also, recent planning applications have included Heritage Impact Statements, which provide a good introduction to the history and significance of the building. Other plans and reports are also available, for instance, Sir Leslie Martin's original scheme design report is unpublished but is available from the Oxford University Archives.

A description of the St. Cross Building and its contents can be found in its listed building description, available from Oxford City Council (see **Appendix 1**). This explains the original basis for its grant of listed status.

The plan draws on statutory guidance from NPPF prepared by HM's Department for Communities and Local Government in March 2012.

1.4 Methodology

The Conservation Plan is a document that assesses the current and predicted conservation needs of the St. Cross Building and attempts to address them with a view towards maintaining or increasing the significance of the heritage asset. Its formulation to supersede any existing literature is a response to the requirements of NPPF, and it is prepared in accordance with the policies contained therein.

1.5 Constraints

The St. Cross Building and its environs are subject to various constraints imposed by Oxford City Council:

- HE.2 – Archaeology Area: Any planning applications must incorporate sufficient information to define the character and extent of potential archaeological deposits, including the results of fieldwork evaluations.

- CP.3 – Limiting the Need to Travel. New development will be limited to accessible locations on previously developed sites.

- HE.9 – High Building Areas: Planning permission will not be granted for any development within a 1,200 metre radius of Carfax which exceeds 18.2m in height except for minor elements of no bulk.

- TR.3, TR.11, TR.12 – Car Parking Standards. The City Council will not allow any significant increase in the overall number of car-parking spaces in the Transport Central Area or development that provides an inappropriate level of car-parking spaces. It will attempt to reduce the level of non-residential car parking.

- The City of Oxford Smoke Control Order No. 2. It is an offence to emit smoke from a chimney of a building, from a furnace, or from any fixed boiler if located in a designated smoke control area.

- HE.7 – Conservation Areas: The Central (City and University) Conservation Area. Planning permission will only be granted for development that preserves or enhances the special character and appearance of the conservation areas or their setting. All trees in Conservation Areas with stem diameters greater than 75mm at 1.5m off the ground are protected; this applies to all trees within the confines of the St. Cross Building.

2 UNDERSTANDING THE SITE

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2 UNDERSTANDING THE SITE

2.1 History of the Site and University

The city of Oxford has had sporadic settlement since the Neolithic period, and this has been continuous since at least the 8th Century. The University of Oxford has a long-standing tradition of exceptional education. Able to trace its roots to the 11th Century, it is known to be the oldest university in the English-speaking world. The St. Cross Building is located on the site of the mediaeval suburb of Holywell, near the 11th-century Holywell church. This settlement grew up in a piecemeal fashion around the location of the holy well from which it takes its name. Holywell was nominally a suburb of Oxford, but resembled a country village with its church, townhouse (of 1516), farm buildings, a few cottages, and Holywell green or Common. A cock-pit and two bowling greens provided entertainment for Town and Gown by the 18th Century, but the pastoral scene remained largely undisturbed. Holywell village was accessed via Holywell Lane with an offshoot to Holywell Mill and a foot path link to the University Parks.

The growth of the city made an initial impact in 1848, when part of the Holywell Green was enclosed to form Holywell cemetery.

A key factor in the development of the area was the construction of St. Cross Road and Manor Road sometime between 1831 and 1876. From this point on the influence of the University and Oxford Colleges have been significant factors in shaping the economic development and activities around the St. Cross Building site. Evidence of this is seen in the construction of various facilities in the 19th/early 20th Centuries which have now been added to or replaced by the expansion of educational and leisure facilities.

The Grade I listed St. Catherine's College was constructed to the south-east of the site of the St. Cross Building in 1960-62 to a design by Arne Jacobsen. This was the first modernist structure in the area and its success certainly facilitated the adoption of such a design for St. Cross. Further later 20th-century expansion in the area includes: the construction of the St. Cross Building itself (1961-65), New College's Weston Buildings (1995-99), Manor Road Building (1999), the Balliol College Graduate Accommodation (1966 and 1986, the first phase of which was also designed by Sir Leslie Martin), St. Cross College Annex (1996), alteration and extension of Holywell Manor (1966), and the replacement of various meadows and open fields with playing fields.

The advent of the motor car in the 20th Century has had a considerable impact on the road system around St. Cross Building, with heavy congestion at peak times as motorists use Longwall Street and St. Cross Road to bypass the city centre. There is steady vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle traffic at most times. The tranquillity of St. Cross churchyard and cemetery and the relative peace of the adjacent playing fields contrast with the busy, often noisy nature of the road network.

The precise site of the St. Cross Building previously housed some rubble stone and pantiled cottages and a vast brick building, which originally held raquet courts, fives

courts, billiard rooms, and changing facilities. Until 1877 these cottages stood near a 13th-century cruck barn.

In April 1971 Oxford City Council designated the majority of the city centre as part of the Central (City and University) Conservation area, this includes the Holywell site and the St. Cross Building (see **Appendix 2**).

2.2 Design, Construction, and Subsequent History of the St. Cross Building

The St. Cross Building was designed between 1958-1962 by Sir Leslie Martin in association with Colin St. John Wilson, and assisted in the early stages by Patrick Hodgkinson. Leslie Martin often chose to work in association with another architect, and had already worked with St. John Wilson on projects at Cambridge, before they worked together on the St. Cross Building. Leslie Martin was Chair of the Architecture School at Cambridge, and had brought Colin St. John Wilson to the School as a lecturer, having known him from when they worked together at the LCC Architects Office. Funding came from the Gulbenkian Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation.

The brief was developed through consultation with representatives of the affected departments and called for the three faculties to be accommodated on the site at the corner of Manor Road and St. Cross Road. The faculties ideally wanted separate buildings but the site was too small and so the faculties became amalgamated into one building, a sculptural geometric form, represented by three cubes with three towers, intersected by a monumental external stair. The external stair acted as a spine from which entrance was gained to each faculty. Some accommodation, such as the lecture theatre, entrance, cloakroom, and other public facilities, was designed to be shared between the faculties, but each required its own library and reading room.

The overall concept and design for the St. Cross Building was in development from late 1958, following a previous scheme designed by Peter Shepheard of Shepheard Epstein Hunter. By December 1958 Leslie Martin had developed the concept of a group of buildings clustered around a raised courtyard, the courtyard forming the social hub of the building. 'The built form…embodies a pattern of use. The individual is identified by the room…and the community by the enclosed form of the court itself' (Leslie Martin, *Buildings and Ideas*).

The disposition of the buildings around the court was developed, keeping a strong central courtyard theme, and the resulting layout can be seen in the June 1959 scheme, which had yet to develop the concept of the three square libraries, and still explored the relationship of the buildings grouped around the court. At the centre of the proposal lay the Law Library, always the keystone of the group.

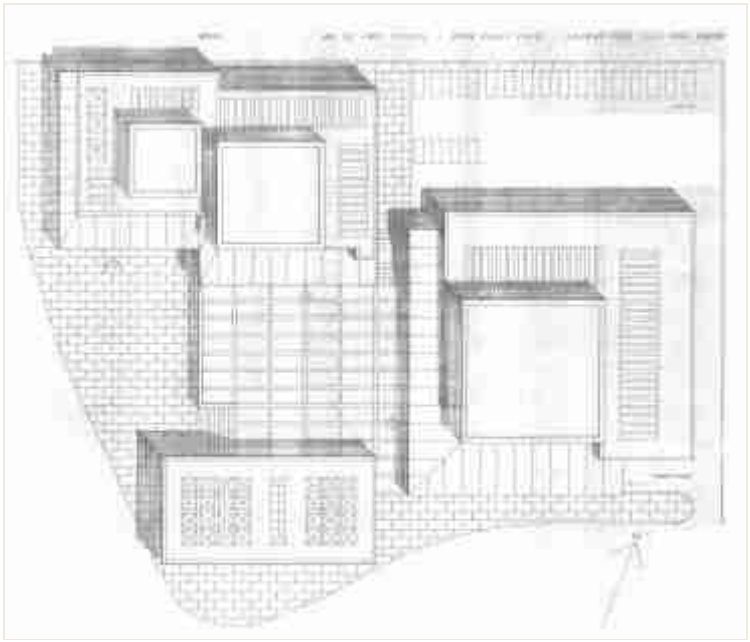

Figure 2. St. Cross Plan, August 1959

The plan had developed by August 1959 (**Figure 2**) and the large square form of the Law Library was now in place, located at the front of a raised courtyard, flanked on either side by two buildings, the English Faculty and Statistics buildings being to the north side and the shared accommodation to the south side. The raised courtyard was approached via two stairs, one carving a route between the Law Library and the English Library, very much in the style of Aalto at Saynatsälto, and the other, offset from the raised court, flanked the shared accommodation. In this scheme the Law Library very obviously addressed St. Cross Road and was visibly the most important element.

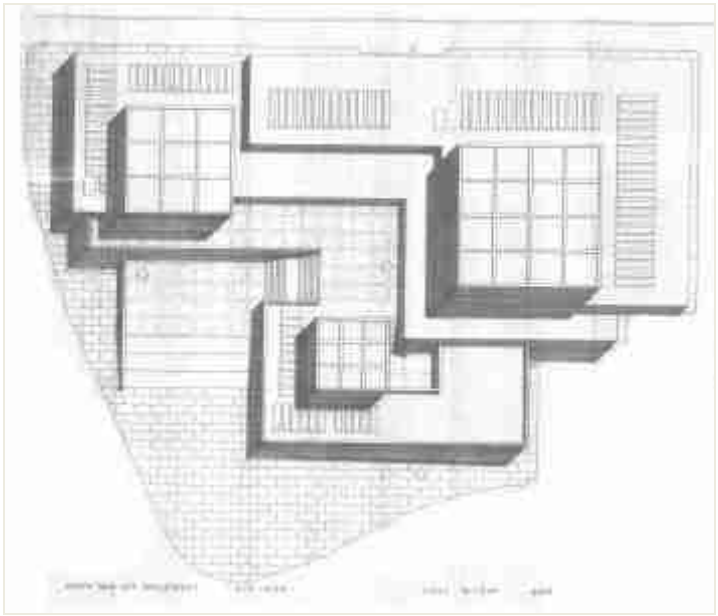

Figure 3. St. Cross Plan, October 1959

By October 1959 the scheme had developed further (**Figure 3**). The configuration of the three faculties had become three distinct buildings, no longer around such a clear courtyard, but accessible off a grand terrace. An important but much less monumental staircase, with long shallow steps at the base, brought the users to an upper terrace, by way of a large terraced landing. The terraced landing offered clear entrances into the English Library and the main entrance hall. The English Library has a more spacious entrance lobby than the final building and a more gracious entrance and book check sequence. In fact the entrance to the English Faculty is clearer, more legible, and more important than the entrance as built. The form of the main entrance hall is now very similar to the final proposal, although the toilets are located on the opposite side, adjacent to the Statistics building, but the levels are more subtle and can be approached via a series of long ramps. The lecture theatre had reached its final position, and the Institute of Economics and Statistics (IES) Library had its main entrance off Manor Road, but with a clearer internal route to the lecture theatres at the Lower Ground floor level. The entrance to the Law Library was again more spacious, with a clear diagram of entrance and control, following the development of the generic library pattern.

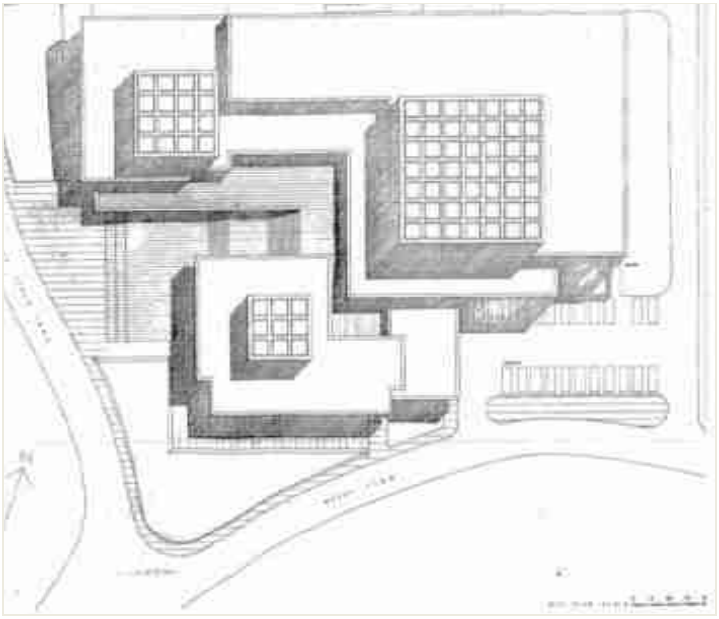

Figure 4. St. Cross Plan, March 1960

By March 1960 the form of the three buildings was very close to the as-built design (**Figure 4**), although the access stair, terraces, and court had evolved further to be a hybrid: more of a staircase with the terraced landing curving around and engaging the front façade of the Institute of Statistics. The entrance to the English Faculty Library was still clearly located off the generous landing although the interior configuration had regressed, was less spacious, and already had the beginnings of the rather contorted current staircase adjoining the upper and lower floors. The main entrance to the shared accommodation remained as before but the lecture rooms had been reconfigured, as had the toilets. The levels had been readjusted and the gentle sloping ramps had disappeared and had been replaced by two flights of stairs. The Law Library remained as before; this should be regarded as the most consistent element throughout the development of the design, changing relatively little from the earliest concept, whilst the architects endlessly reconsidered the external access route, each

time reducing the size of the court and the terraces, until in the as-built design the external circulation is dominated by the formal flight of steps. The arrangement of the entrance hall and the two smaller lecture rooms was another element constantly on the move. There seem to have been problems from the start in the location of the two small lecture rooms, which were tried in several different dispositions. The lecture rooms came to rest on the south side of the entrance sequence, at the half level, but perhaps had been more clearly located in the March 1960 proposals, immediately to the north of the main entrance hall, when the toilets were relegated to the Lower Ground.

Figure 5. St. Cross Building shortly after completion in 1965

The final execution (**Figure 5**) of the ceremonial approach had lost a number of its important conceptual elements by the time the design was finalised. The English Faculty Library was entered from a half landing on the stairs, very much played down in scale from earlier schemes, and as such lost a considerable amount of clarity. The entrance to the shared facilities remained in the same position but no longer had the spacious piazza outside, in which students could gather. The Law Library remained at the top of the steps and addressed St. Cross Road, but the upper terrace had become more constricted as the last flight of steps had been edged up into the terrace, and what was in the 1959 designs a rather relaxed and glorious sequence, very much in the Aalto mode, had become more formal and more imposing, dominated by the central axis leading to the Law Library.

A number of alterations were made to the St. Cross building in 2000. These alterations include the following:

- New partitions installed to form the locker and common rooms to the east of the Law students study space on the ground floor.

- The formation of new door ground-floor opening between the main building stair and the new corridor.

- Formation of admin store and switch gear room to the north west of the ground floor.

- Removal of various internal fittings including library desk and screen and shelving on the ground floor.

- Installation of new partitions to the west of the first floor to form new English Faculty offices.

- Installation of disabled toilet to the east of the first floor.

- Installation of new desks around the central first floor atrium.

- Installation of a new door to the south of the first floor.

- Installation of new cooling units to the first floor courtyard space.

The 2010 Approved alterations which are being carried out in 2011 are all to the former Statistics building. A new entrance is being introduced into the first floor, or upper gallery, of the building from the monumental staircase, opposite the existing main reception to the whole St. Cross building. This upper gallery is glazed internally allowing it to operate as a circulation area for adjacent new Law Faculty office spaces, whilst the atrium's ground floor (previously the main component of the IES Library) will be used as a large, sky-lit seminar room. A new opening in the exterior wall at first-floor level creates access to a sunken inner courtyard previously only accessible from the existing Law Faculty offices. Several new seminar rooms and improved, accessible toilet accommodation are being introduced and the plant room below the monumental staircase is being updated and rationalised to meet 21st-century requirements. The roof lights in the reading room are being replaced and reconfigured closer to the original design. The flooring and internal decorations and fittings are being refurbished throughout as required. These alterations will increase the interconnectivity of existing spaces in this part of the building with the whole and make it more accessible and user friendly.

Figure 6. The St. Cross Building in 2010

3 SIGNIFICANCE

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3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ST. CROSS BUILDING

NPPF paragraph 128 specifies that in assessing planning applications:

'*Local planning authorities should require an applicant to provide a description of the significance of any heritage assets affected including any contribution made by their setting*.'

The significance of the St. Cross Building has been publically recognised by two statutory designations: It was designated a Grade II* Listed building in 1993 (see **Appendix 1**); and it was included in Oxford City Council's designation of the Central (City and University) Conservation Area in 1971, and in its subsequent revisions in 1974, 1981, 1985, and 1998 (see **Appendix 2**).

3.1 Significance as part of the Holywell suburb, and the Central (City and University) Conservation Area

The St. Cross Building lacks the tourist appeal of the University's centrally-located listed buildings, notably on Broad Street, yet contributes significantly to the character of the north of Holywell Ward. The character created is that of a leafy, academic suburb (through conscious design, as the north of Holywell Ward is located less than half of a mile outside the city centre and would have been subsumed into the CBD of most cities), an area for serious research and study unimpeded by pomp and ceremony. This is a less striking feature than the grand stone edifices of Broad Street, but one as central to the image of academic Oxford. The character created within the area provides an agreeable setting for the students and readers who live and work here, and a pleasant surprise for the tourist who wanders upon it by accident.

Whilst the St. Cross Building is a starkly modernist structure it was designed to harmonise with its more-venerable surroundings. The mild, slightly-yellowed tone of the brickwork purposefully complements the stonework of the juxtaposing structures, most notably St. Cross Church. This approach gives it the character of a legitimate occupier of the space, rather than a later compromise imposed upon the area; an ever-present danger when modernist structures are allowed to interact with older buildings.

As mentioned above (**Section 2.1**), the area now houses a number of other modern buildings. The Balliol College Graduate Accommodation was designed by Sir Leslie Martin in 1966 to complement the St. Cross Building. He employed the same modernist cuboid design, its hard angles matching those of the St. Cross Building. Martin even went to the extent of leaving a deliberate gap in the design so as not to obscure the views from the English and Law libraries of the fields to the west. This gap was filled in 1986 when the accommodation was extended to a less sympathetic design. This structure, along with New College's Weston Buildings (1995-99), the St. Cross College Annex (1996), and the Manor Road Building (1999), has contributed to the character of the area as an academic cluster where classical buildings, modern buildings, and extensive tree cover pleasantly coexist.

The St. Cross Building and the spaces around it are highly visible from public viewpoints due to the flat nature of the land, the location of the building at the

intersection of St. Cross Road and Manor Road, and the lack of physical boundaries such as stone walls or hedge boundaries.

The main entrance to the St. Cross Building has an open area of hard surfacing with bicycle racks on the south and beyond this on the south west corner a further L-shaped area, which is grass covered with a number of fine trees, which frame the impressive flight of steps to the building.[1] On the south east corner, there is a small inset sunken area of space, with a grassed area and trees bordering Manor Road.

Although relatively small spaces, the open quality of the paved entrance approach, the grassed area with 3 fine specimen trees and the wider, monumental entrance steps contribute highly to the significance of the St. Cross Building within the streetscape and wider setting.

Figure 7. SW elevation of the St. Cross Building

The tree cover in the area is greater than that envisaged in the original design. As **Figure 5** shows, it was originally rather limited and all three sections of the building could be seen from most angles. This is still the case in the winter months as the trees are bare; however in the spring and summer months the now-extensive tree cover has acted to give the building a more subtle, yet equally impressive character whereby its extent is slowly revealed to the viewer as one approaches. If one approaches from St. Cross Road to the south, the initial view is of the Statistics cube alone (**Figure 7**), with only the outline of the other sections appearing in the background. Here the

[1] As all the trees in the area have a circumference greater than 75mm at 1.5m off the ground they are protected by the tree preservation order that covers the conservation area.

cuboid forms of the former Statistics Library make reference to the tower of St. Cross Church.

Equally, if one approaches along St. Cross Road from the north, the initial view is only of the outer elevation of the English cube, with both the angle of the building and the tree cover blocking views of the monumental stairway (**Figure 8**). As with the view from the south, the illusion created is that of an independent structure.

Figure 8. NW elevation of the St. Cross Building

The car parking in front of the NW elevation does detract from the character and significance of the building (see **Figure 5**, where the elevation of the English Faculty Library originally provided a striking monumental approach). This was not a feature of Sir Leslie Martin's original design, which only made provision for the parking of 25 cars, which were concealed to the east behind the angle of the Statistics cube along Manor Road (this can be seen in **Figure 4**)

It is only when one continues on to stand directly before the monumental staircase that the full extent of the structure is revealed (**Figure 9**). This slow revelation of the extent of the structure allows passers-by and library users to interact with the space. It contributes positively to the special character of the area in a different manner depending on where it is viewed from.

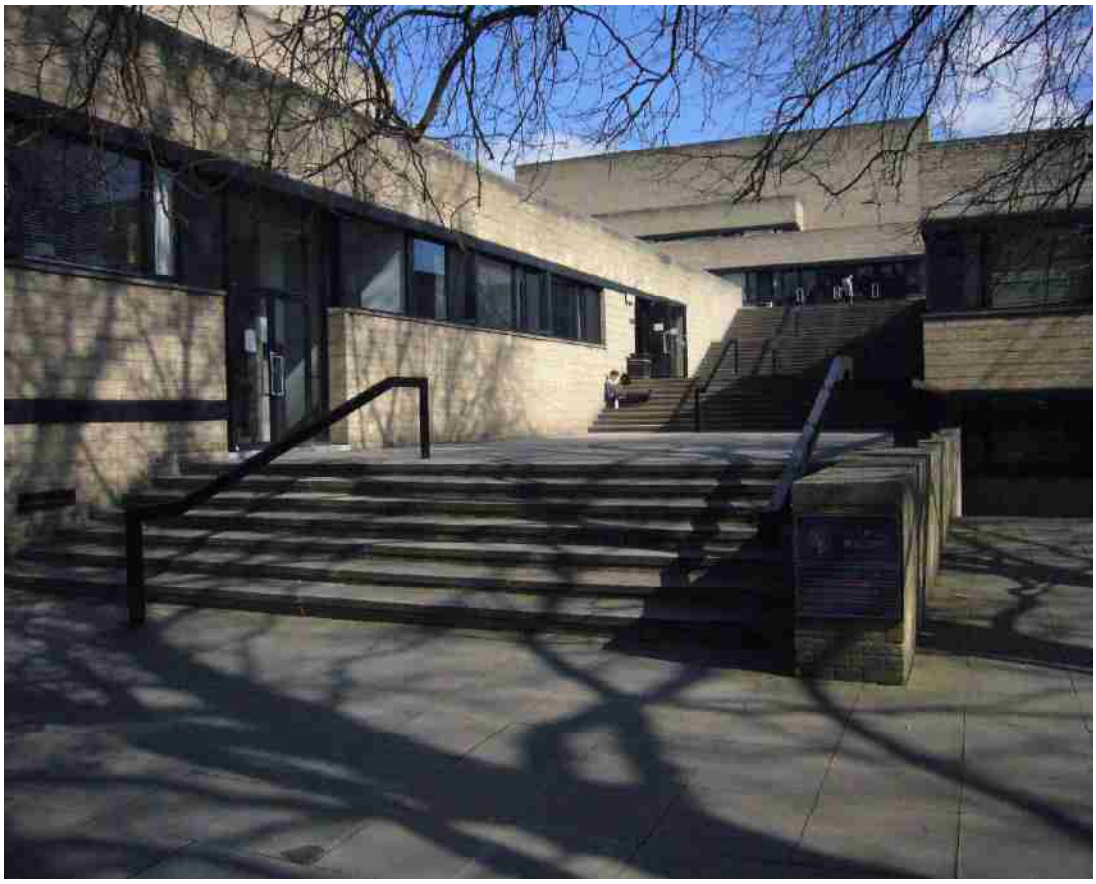

Figure 9. View of St. Cross Building directly from W and up monumental staircase

The St. Cross Building is the one of the largest structures in the vicinity and, of the modern structures, is certainly the most architecturally significant. It is a major contributing factor to the area's atmosphere of understated academic tranquillity, something broken only by the extensive motor traffic.

3.2 Architectural Significance

The building has a significant place in the history of twentieth-century architecture. Some of the more important figures active in the architecture of the later Twentieth Century were involved with the building, including Leslie Martin, Colin St. John Wilson, Patrick Hodgkinson, and John Miller. The building itself is an embodiment of the dominant concerns of the period: The use of techniques of scientific analysis to determine building form; the influence of a northern European architectural design tradition stemming from English Free Style architecture and including Alvar Aalto and other Scandinavian architects; and the importance of the selection of materials, and their use in a constructionally honest manner. As the two principle architects

taught at the Cambridge School of Architecture the building also had a rôle in the ongoing development of architectural ideas and their transmission to subsequent generations. As well as its position as an exemplar of a particular architectural philosophy and style, the building is also significant in the development of the library as a building type, a line of development going back to Aalto's Vipuri Library and Asplund's Stockholm City Library, and forward to Colin St. John Wilson's work on the British Library.

3.2.1 Sir Leslie Martin

The principal architect on the St. Cross Building was Sir Leslie Martin. Martin became the first principal of the School of Architecture in the Hull College of Art when aged only 26 (1934-39). He went on to become the first Chair of the Department of Architecture at Cambridge (1956-1972), and won the RIBA gold medal in 1973. The St. Cross Building was completed during his prolific post-war period, as he was in great demand following the success of his most lauded design, the Royal Festival Hall on London's South Bank (1948-51; **Figure 10**).

Figure 10. Martin's Royal Festival Hall in 2010 following extensive alterations in 2006-7

It is now accepted that Sir Leslie Martin is one of the most important architects of the post-war period, with his work at Cambridge inspiring a generation of prominent architects. He acted as a vocal advocate of Modernism in the vein of Le Corbusier, and produced some of the finest examples of this approach extant in Britain. Modernist structures tend to illicit polarised opinions from their viewers; however, there is no doubt that Martin's work is outstanding within the style and in terms of absolute aesthetic principles is certainly appealing, generating substantial aesthetic value.

The St. Cross Building is a fine and particularly-complete example of Martin's style, with all of its alterations clearly documented (see **Section 3.5**) and most of the interior remaining as originally built (including the extensive timber panelling in the lecture areas). Whilst some attempts have been made to link the circulation spaces of the three departmental buildings within the structure, and the ongoing alterations will affect the interaction of the Statistics cube with the rest of the complex, for the most part the layout remains identical to Martin's original construction.

3.2.2 Design from Function

Operating within the modernist tradition, Sir Leslie Martin saw design as a reaction to need and function. Design is not subservient to function but rather a natural response to it. Most importantly, function should not be dictated or compromised by the needs of aesthetics. With this in mind, the St. Cross Building does not represent a manhandling of its brief into the confines of a pre-existing design or concept, but rather a unique design arising from the precise requirements of the users.

According to architectural historian Geoffrey Tyack:

'*Martin subscribed to Le Corbusier's belief that "the plan is the generator [of form]", and the form of the building is determined by the internal arrangement of differently sized boxes – placed at different levels and ingeniously interlocking with one another. The resulting agglomeration of massive cubic blocks is clad in buff brick – chosen, though this is not very apparent to the observer, to harmonize with the stone of the adjacent Holywell Manor and St Cross Church – and broken up by long strips of plate glass windows in metal frames: a favourite Corbusian mannerism…The effect is impressive but lacks humanity: a criticism which can be applied to much of Martin's work.*' [2]

One might argue that Martin's design has an inherent humanity because it arises directly from human need and utility; however, the real significance of the building is based on its importance as a fine and near-complete example of post-war modernist functionality.

3.3 Archaeological Significance

As noted above (**Section 2.1**), the St. Cross Building is constructed on the site of some rubble stone and pantiled cottages and a vast brick building, which originally held raquet courts, fives courts, billiard rooms, and changing facilities. These were in use at least from the 19th Century, but settlement in the immediate area can certainly be traced back as far as the 11th Century when the St. Cross Church was first constructed. There has been sporadic permanent occupation in Oxford from the Neolithic Period and continuous occupation since the Middle Saxon Period, so it would be unsurprising if permanent occupation at Holywell predates the church by at the very least several centuries.

Considering what is known of the occupation of the site in the 18th and 19th Centuries it is likely that that the most significant archaeological material on the site would have been post mediaeval. With this being located at the highest stratigraphic layers it is

[2] Tyack, G., *Oxford: An Architectural Guide* (Oxford, 1998) 311

the material most likely to have been destroyed during the construction of the St. Cross Building; however considering that the site has at least 1000 years of continuous occupation, and almost certainly longer, there is likely to be significant extant archaeological material at lower levels. The site has evidential value from its potential to yield evidence about past human activity.

3.4 Significance as a major library and work space

The building is not widely known or significantly valued by the wider Oxford community but it has a significant link with the development of the occupying departments over the last 50 years. The Faculties of Law and English and the associated libraries were deeply involved in the initial shaping of the building. The subsequent related evolution of the building and the occupying departments, their continued presence in the building, and the importance of the building to generations of students, indicates a significant academic and communal value. The St. Cross Building is not a building that exists in isolation as a historical and aesthetic artefact, divorced from its original purpose: It is still in use, generally in the way envisaged by the original designers 50 years ago. The maintenance of this continuity of occupation is important not just for the users but for all with an interest in the building; it is an accepted conservation principle that the best use for a building is generally that for which it was designed. An idea central to the work of Colin St John Wilson was the defining importance of use, 'don't ask for the meaning, ask for the use'; the St. Cross Building was designed as a working academic building and its continued use for this purpose is a significant element in maintaining its heritage value. Continuity of use is also important for the longer term preservation of the building. The future potential of the building to be used and enjoyed is an important generator of value and provides a continuing strong incentive to maintain the building in a conscientious and informed manner.

The building is not preserved as a historical artefact, neither is it a building to which people resort occasionally for concerts, exhibitions or social gatherings. It is a place of work, used on a daily basis by a large number of people with no special interest in its historic provenance, and as such should generally be perceived to provide a high quality working environment, capable of comparison with the best of more recent academic facilities.

The St. Cross Building houses the Bodleian Law Library which is of global significance for the study of law as an academic discipline. The University's long-term plan is that the building will house all 5 of Oxford centres for law, making it the world's foremost centre for the study of law. The building's greatest significance must lay in its continued success in providing a suitable location for the study of law at Oxford.

3.5 Historical Significance

The main historical area in which the St. Cross Building is significant is in its contribution to the history of architecture for which it generates historical value as a wonderful illustration of Martin's work and the Cambridge School, as detailed above (**Section 3.2**); however there is some wider historical value in the thorough manner in which the building is recorded: There is a significant body of writing by both the

original design team and by architectural historians, and much of the documentation relating to the original design and construction is extant. There are also physical aspects of the building, such as the detailed design of important building elements and the methodology of the construction, which have significant potential evidential values in themselves.

Figure 11. The English Faculty Library

4

VULNERABILITIES

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4 VULNERABILITIES

The Ability of the St. Cross Building to Fulfil its Current Function

The St. Cross Building's current function as a library and teaching space is its optimum viable use.

The St. Cross Building was a bespoke design planned around this function and, other than the introduction of modern communications infrastructure and AV technology, the requirements of library and teaching spaces have not changed greatly since 1965. The alterations that have been required of this building in order for it to retain its current function are no greater than those that would be required for it to fulfil any form of modern utility, i.e. those related to communications technology (notably high-speed internet access), adequate plumbing and lavatory accommodation, disabled access, and some minor rearrangement of interior space to delineate new areas. The current use funds the upkeep and conservation of the heritage asset and ensures its continued existence and significance.

The retention of this broad function is vital to the continued significance of the St. Cross Building. Whilst the basic requirements remain the same, the function has differed subtly in recent years: The building was originally designed as three separate departments, in three distinct buildings with some limited connection. As it is to become a single integrated Law complex, connectivity between the distinct regions will have to improve. The ongoing alterations will ensure that this interconnectivity is developed, thus facilitating the continued significance of the St. Cross Building

4.1 Access

Despite significant improvements, disabled access remains below the standard that should be expected of the building and that will ensure its continued use, relevance, and significance into the future. Notably there is still no capacity for disabled users to access the building through the same entrances as other users, and disabled toilet provision has improved but remains limited. Currently wheelchair users must enter the building through the delivery bay, and use what is primarily the book lift to reach the Law Library and other areas of the building. To meet current acceptable standards of accessibility all building users should be able to use the same approaches to the building, should be able to enter the building at the same points, and should be able to proceed through the building without disadvantage.

4.2 Legibility

4.2.1 Circulation

The building was originally designed as 3 individual buildings ingenuously squeezed onto one site. Due to this fact there are few legible circulation routes between the 3 buildings. The building has been designed around linear parallel internal and external routes, with none of the familiar characteristics of a more homogenised building – main entrance, foyer, and lift lobby. From **Figure 12** it is clear that lifts were only provided in the original design to transport books around the building and it was not considered necessary for students to use a lift, as the building was only on four levels which could be accessed by foot.

Throughout the life of the building, attempts have been made to address the issues of interconnectivity. These have largely been unsuccessful and have been carried out locally and in an ad hoc manner without consideration to the bigger picture. Further door openings have been made in an attempt to make linkages across the building but these have introduced more extended and complex routes rather than helping legibility. The situation will improve following the ongoing alterations, but this will remain a limitation imposed by the need-specific nature of the original design.

Figure 12. Circulation routes between libraries and public spaces

4.2.2 Departmental Entrances

When the St. Cross Building was built, the layout of the entrance to a department was not a particularly critical design factor. The entrance to the English Faculty and Faculty Library is marred by a very mean entrance lobby, and a steep flight of stairs up to the main reading room and down to the Faculty accommodation. The entrance itself, situated as it is at the bottom of the flight of steps, is relatively small and insignificant. The original entrance to the Department of Statistics is similarly insignificant, and poorly connected to the departmental accommodation. In order to function effectively in a modern context, the building should enable departmental entrances to be accessed via a main building entrance providing basic security and visitor assistance. The departmental entrance itself should be effective in communicating the importance and status of the department, and should provide a functional sequence of spaces linking the entrance door with a reception point, adjacent waiting/display area, and an easy progress to meeting rooms or departmental offices.

4.2.3 Lack of Understanding of the Building

There is a distinct lack of understanding amongst the building's occupants and users of the importance of the St. Cross Building to the development of twentieth-century architecture. There is no attempt in terms of displays or commemoration to highlight the importance of the heritage asset or its architects. This is especially important for a modernist structure where, beyond its absolute aesthetic value, much of its significance arises from the ideas and thought processes that motivated the design. This has resulted in the building being under-appreciated by its inhabitants.

4.2.4 Lack of Informal Catering/Social Spaces

The only spaces in the original building providing for relaxation and food consumption are the Junior and Senior Common Rooms opening onto the first-floor terrace. They are relatively small spaces, with rather formal, uninviting furnishings, accessed via a narrow staircase from the upper-ground-floor entrance hall. Without a cafeteria, students and staff do not stay in the building; the building is perceived as being dead and lacking in atmosphere and is therefore unpopular with the users feeling no sense of ownership. More particularly, it is increasingly important for the success of academic buildings that they provide spaces to encourage productive interaction between students and staff.

4.2.5 Lack of Adequate Sanitary Provision

The existing provision of sanitary facilities throughout the building is poor: there is an underprovision of facilities; the distribution throughout the building is uneven; and the facilities themselves are outdated. Abundant toilet accommodation is provided adjacent to the main staircase on the ground and first floors; there is no provision to the upper floors. Disabled toilets have been inserted within the Law Library and within the former Statistics Library area. It is essential that the sanitary facilities are modernised, with augmented provision to the upper floors. Unisex disabled toilets should be provided to all floors.

4.3 Maintenance

4.3.1 Exterior Elevations and Setting

The impressive massing and scale, as well as the colouring and detailing, of the exterior elevations of the St. Cross Building are essential to its significance as an object of architectural interest. The buff brickwork is carefully detailed, and raked out at every third course, paying homage to the traditional use of stone in Oxford buildings. Generally, the careful selection of materials (**Figure 13**), and their use in a way that respects their essential character, again reflects the influence of Leslie Martin's early roots in the Arts and Crafts movement, and the Scandinavian modernist tradition. They are essential to Martin's design and define the relationship of the building with the surrounding area (see **Section 3.1**).

Elements of the external detail are susceptible to environmental damage, for instance the original black anodised aluminium setting around the main entrance have had to be replaced with a sympathetic modern alternative. Equally, the hard angles that define the exterior of the building, and are so central to its exterior impact and character, will be susceptible to weathering over long periods of time. Especially the coping details which have suffered from a lack of run-off allowing them to become stained and unattractive.

Unusually, all of the rainwater goods are internal, and there is no exposed cabling, trunking, or pipe work, allowing the clean faces and hard angles of the exterior to be maintained. Internal rainwater goods are difficult to access for maintenance and pose a problem in any building; however, they are important to the external aspect of the building and should be retained as long as they continue to function well.

The colouring of the external brick was purposefully chosen to harmonise with the stone of the neighbouring St. Cross Church. Whilst they matched at that point in time, it cannot be predicted how the colours of the differing materials will develop over longer periods of time.

Martin's original design anticipated that the surrounding area would remain relatively clear, with the wide windows of the reading room originally opening onto long vistas. These have since been lost due to surrounding development, and it seems unlikely that there will be significant further development in the area that might alter the St. Cross Building's relationship with its setting; however, this should be monitored.

The exterior setting of the building has been diminished by the encroachment of car parking to the west and the north of the building (the original design only allowed for parking for 25 cars in an inconspicuous position to the south of the Statistics cube). This diminishes the clean, monumental approach to the English cube. The presence of litter bins without dedicated stores in the exterior spaces also detracts from the appreciation of the outside of the building.

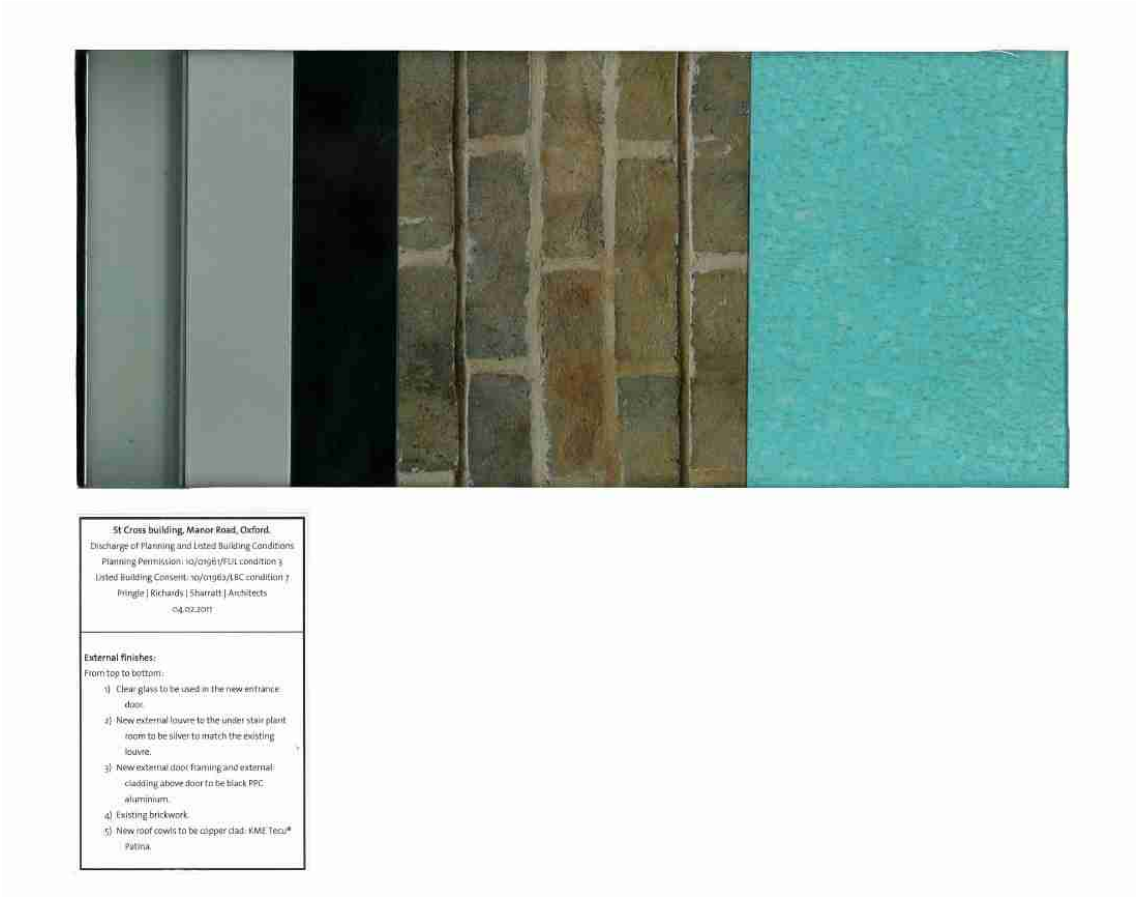


Figure 13. Materials board showing external palette for St. Cross Building

4.3.2 Roofs

The building's copper roofs are only visible to the user on the Statistics Cube, where they provide a key component of the entrance experience along the monumental staircase; the green expanse of ridged copper contrasting starkly with the yellowed brick of the building-proper. By modern standards the roofs are inefficient and limit the sustainability of the building. They require periodic repair, and in some cases replacement. The visible roof on the Statistics Cube is important to the character of the building and as such its visual continuity should be ensured whilst discreet improvements are made to its energy efficiency; however, the roofs of the other areas do not form a significant part of the users' experience, being only partially visible from the windows of the respective areas, and entirely obscured from the main staircase and concourse. In these areas the impact of the roofing on the overall sustainability of the building may outweigh its visual impact on the structure's character.

4.3.3 Principal Spaces

There are number of spaces, particularly interior spaces, of specific significance, either because of the quality of their design or their state of preservation. These spaces are integral to the St. Cross Building's significance as a heritage asset. Each has particular elements (either relating to their architecture, fittings, or furnishings) that contribute substantially to the significance of the site as a whole. They are vulnerable

to the same issues as the other interior spaces, but their damage or loss pose greater potential consequences for the heritage asset as a whole.

Brief descriptions of these areas are given below:

4.3.3.1 Monumental External Steps

This powerful approach is the very essence of the building, and is unique among contemporary buildings as a means of articulating external circulation. Although not an original feature of the design, the steps assumed increasing importance during design development, and feature prominently in most published images of the building. Influenced by the (shorter) flight of steps to the internal courtyard in Aalto's Säynätsalo Town Hall (**Figure 14**), they also possibly refer to some of Asplund's work in Sweden. Although generally effective as a design element, they have the tendency to emphasise the importance of the Law Library entrance, prominent at the top of the steps, at the expense of the entrances of to the lecture theatres and the English Library, which become subsidiary side doors on the main route of ascent.

Figure 14. Säynätsalo Town Hall.

4.3.3.1 Reading Rooms

The most atmospheric and important space in the St. Cross Building is the Bodleian Law Library reading room. It is the heart of the building both in terms of primary building function, and architectural significance. This fine space is one of the best reading rooms in modern British architecture. The simple use of materials, the overhead natural light (from original rooflights) and the simple structural grid, with the upper gallery highly integrated into the library volume, is immediately powerful yet not overwhelming: It appears effortless, with only the cantilevered balcony appearing as an almost unnecessary architectural statement. The clean white walls and concrete panels are timeless and immaculate. The reading room of the English Faculty Library is also a fine space, being a scaled down version of the Bodleian Law Library (**Figure 15**). The generic design of the reading room works best at the larger scale; the same design when carried out in the Statistics Library, the smallest of the libraries, is the least successful, without quite enough daylight, and with the concrete panels rather overwhelming the relatively small void over the reading room. The ongoing repurposing of this area will overcome these issues by removing the concrete panels on the first floor and introducing recessed lighting.

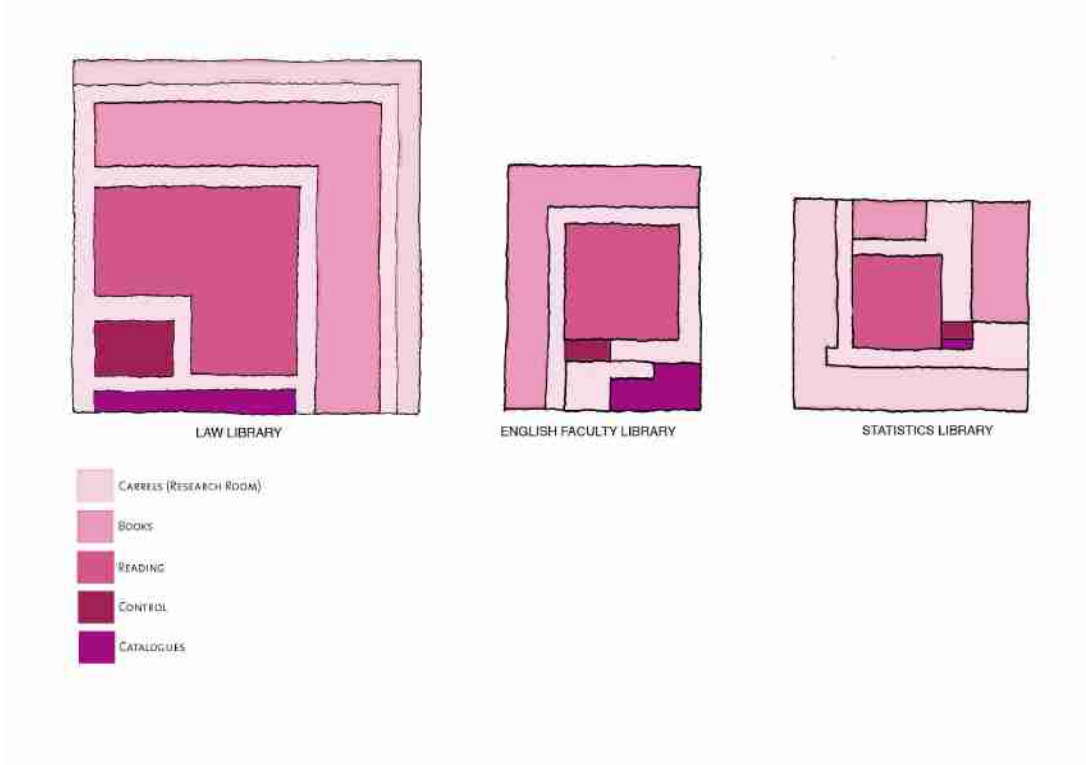


Figure 15. The generic reading room design employed by Martin across the building. The generic plan developed by the architects for the reading rooms consisted of entry in one corner, catalogues and control points slightly further in, reading tables under the control of the main desk, with book stacks surrounding the reading area, and carrels around the perimeter. Each library had natural light over the central reading room area, as requested by the clients, and in the Law Library different categories of reader were catered for, from supervised central study to faculty members using private carrels

4.3.3.2 The Entrance Hall

The view across the entrance hall towards the internal circulation route is very well considered, despite the lack of daylight, and the rather low ceiling. The brick screen concealing the cloakroom areas behind, and the wide, fair-faced brickwork stair-well form a memorable entrance sequence, leading to a series of levels relating to the ascending and descending staircase. The mezzanine level houses an informal meeting space on its wide landing.

Figure 16. The Entrance Hall

4.3.3.3The Lecture Theatres

The Gulbenkian Lecture Theatre is a fine-sized space, set at an interesting intersecting level between the upper and lower ground floors; this half level poses one of many difficult challenges to make the building accessible. The large wooden doors of the lecture theatres are expertly balanced to require a low opening force of only 25-35 newtons. They lend a monumental feel to the lecture theatres and are central to their character. The interior fit-out of the Gulbenkian is typical of its period, a well-crafted brick box relieved by iroko wall panelling and beech strip ceilings. Some of the detailing to the timber ceiling panels and associated timber-cased luminaries is, however, rather crude, and the fluorescent lights are rather harsh. The English Lecture Theatre is similar to the Gulbenkian Theatre but smaller. These two principal lecture rooms were again developed as a generic form; the raked seating (original and extant), allowing direct sound path from speaker to listener, the use of timber panels to provide acoustic relief on the walls, and the linear ceiling lights housed in timber boxes, set against a timber panelled ceiling. The two smaller lecture rooms use the same materials but without the raked seating. The flooring is cork as elsewhere in the building, providing acoustic dampening in line with the needs of the lecture space and interacting well with iroko panelling. The wood and cork have darkened over time, and the lighting will need to be improved to accommodate for this. The materials are central to the character of the space, and should be conserved with consideration given to their cleaning and conservation. All the spaces are enclosed, without daylight, without external distraction, a shared facility but linked closely in plan with each of the faculties, and providing an architectural contrast to the calm roof-lit spaces of the libraries. The lecture theatres were designed in the age of the blackboard, and contain fine examples concealed behind timber-panelled doors. A development of this form of lecture space can be seen again in Martin's Middleton Hall building for the University of Hull, used here with further refinement of the detailing which leads, perhaps, to a more effective interior.

Figure 17. The Gulbenkian Lecture Theatre

4.3.4 Interior Fixtures, Fittings, and Furnishings

Much of the original interior, designed by Martin and St. John Wilson, is extant. The original wood panelling throughout the grander areas of the building, notably within the Gulbenkian Lecture Theatre, is testament to the North European roots of the design and is significant to the character of the heritage asset (see **Section 3.5**).

Figure 18. Materials board showing internal palette for St. Cross Building

Internally the building is remarkable for its strong palette of a small number of materials (**Figure 18**). The buff brickwork is carried inside with good-quality fair-faced walls, this time without the raked-out joints, and is used with particular effect in the entrance hall. The floors are cork in all areas except for the toilets. Cork as a flooring material dates back to the turn of the 20th Century where it was first produced by Armstrong Flooring in Pennsylvania. It was a material much favoured by Frank Lloyd Wright in his public buildings, being tough, low cost, easy to install and the first of the new type of resilient flooring. It was a more acoustically friendly material for public buildings than timber or stone. Hardwood panelling is used extensively as a wall and ceiling finish to the lecture theatres and seminar rooms, and also as a finish to the ceiling of the adjacent entrance hall, forming a unifying element to this area of the building. In the lecture theatres and seminar rooms it is used in conjunction with absorbent linings to modify the room acoustics. Whilst generally effective as a finish, contrasting with the predominant brickwork and plaster, the impact of the timber panelling is diminished by the quality of some of the details, and by the surface finishings, the latter possibly not original. The timber panelling fits the public spaces very well and signifies the design lineage of the building; it interacts perfectly with

the cork flooring as part of a mild palette in a calm learning environment. These features are central to the character of the interior and should be retained in the public spaces of the building, with consideration given to their cleaning and conservation.

As the interior features are in regular use and of less permanent construction than the external structure of the building they are more vulnerable to vandalism, accidents, and general wear and tear. Some of these issues should be mitigated assuming adequate security is in place, but ultimately these significant elements will have limited lifespans. These lives can be lengthened as much as possible through regular, adequate monitoring and maintenance.

As a Grade II* listed building any alterations, or repairs made with non-original materials.

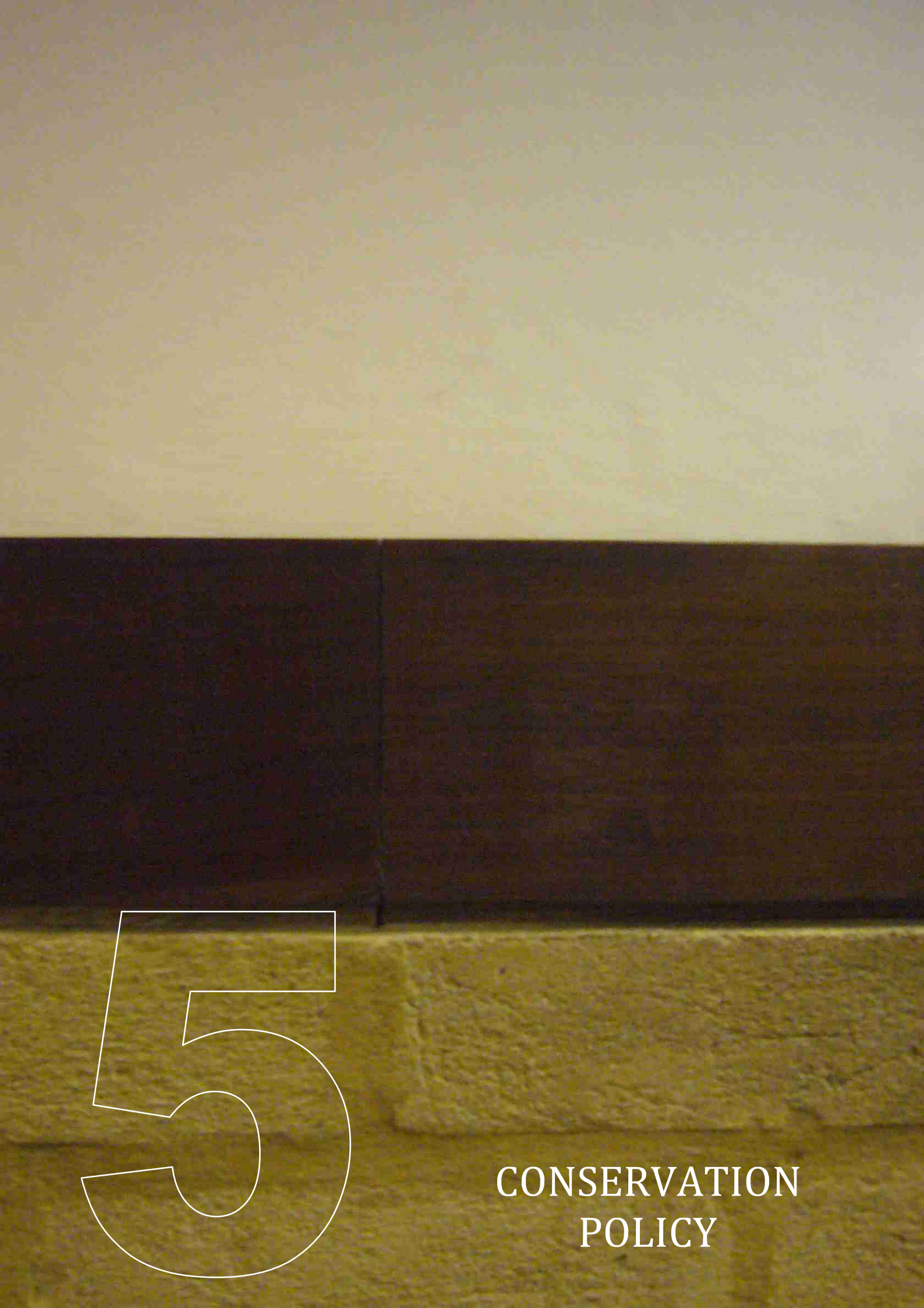
4.4 Health and Safety

4.4.1 Fire Safety

With a building of such complexity, containing such a valuable collection, and used by such a large number of people, fire safety will always remain an important priority. The new main entrance to the former Statistics Library will improve the escape routes here but improvements will still be required in the book stack areas of the Law Library, where the enclosure to the flanking stairs is incomplete. There is also a possible issue relating to dead-end conditions in the north wing stacks to the Law Library which should be addressed. The existing fire detection installation is a radio system. It is nearing the end of its life and will require replacement in the near future. Due to the limited accessible circulation routes, emergency escape provision for disabled users is particularly poor.

4.4.2 Security

The safety of the contents and users of the building is central to its ability to fulfil its function as a working library and teaching space. The building has a reasonably comprehensive CCTV system covering the exterior of the building, including the main access steps, and some of the interior. The CCTV is monitored on a 24-hour basis. There is no security alarm system to the building, a deficiency that should be addressed in order to bring the level of security up to current standards.



5

CONSERVATION POLICY

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5 CONSERVATION POLICY

Having established the significance of the St. Cross Building as a heritage asset, and having identified ways in which the significance of the St. Cross Building is vulnerable to harm, it is necessary to recommend policies to reduce the probability of such harm occurring and thereby conserve the significance of the site. In essence, these policies set parameters for managing the fabric of the site.

The Conservation Plan is intended as an active tool for the regular maintenance and long-term management of the St. Cross Building. It needs to be reviewed regularly, and revised as appropriate to take account of additional knowledge and changing priorities. Through a process of regular review it should continue to act as a useful resource.

5.1 The St. Cross Building's current use, as a library and teaching space, is its optimum viable use. Permit, in line with NPPF paragraphs 131, 132, 133, and 134, alterations intended to facilitate its continued use in this way

The significance of the St. Cross Building as a library and teaching space, and as the future integrated Law complex, means that its current rôle represents its optimum viable use. Limited alterations will inevitably be required to allow it to retain this significance in line with modern standards and requirements. If alteration is required in the future it should be permitted with the following provisos:

- Any alterations must be sympathetic to the St. Cross Building's significance as a heritage asset and, in line with NPPF paragraph 134, any proposals that involve 'less than substantial harm to the significance' should deliver 'substantial public benefits.' In line with NPPF paragraph 132, any proposals that involve 'substantial harm or loss' should be 'exceptional.'

- Any changes should: '…preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset' (NPPF paragraph 137).

5.1.1 Note that the St. Cross Building is a Grade II* listed building and ensure that appropriate consents are obtained for any alteration works to the interior or exterior of the building

The ongoing alterations will be followed by further changes in the near future, and due to the listed status of the building even minor routine repairs may need consent. Caution should be applied in order to ensure that any statutory duties are fulfilled. In cases of doubt **Estates Services should be contacted in the first instance**, and if necessary they will refer queries on to Oxford City Council.

5.1.2 Ensure proper consultation in advance of any work to the building with the Local Authority Conservation Officer (through Estates Services) and any other interested parties

It is important to guarantee that the best advice is obtained at an early stage of any proposal to alter any part of the building in order to ensure that the significance of the building is respected.

5.1.3 Refer to this Conservation Guide when considering repairs or alterations in any space

The Conservation Plan gives an overview of which aspects of the building are significant or vulnerable. Where original or significant material is extant, repairs should be carried out using the same materials and techniques and should not affect the significance of the asset without providing substantial public benefits in line with NPPF paragraph 134.

5.2 In order to ensure that the St. Cross Building can operate to modern standards, and that its significance can be maintained by making access as wide as possible, special concern should be applied to ensuring that disabled access is adequate

Ensuring that the heritage asset can be enjoyed as widely as possible will have a major positive impact on its significance. As noted in **Section 4.1**, disabled access is not currently up to acceptable standards. The ongoing alterations will redress this point to a limited extent. Due to the main entrance being via the monumental staircase and the lack of connectivity between the disparate spaces in the building's initial design, the provision of adequate access will always be an issue on this site. With this in mind, access will remain a major concern in any plans developed for the site, and will always be viewed as part of an ongoing process.

In June 2008 All Clear Designs composed *St Cross: Appendix G – Access Audit*, which accompanies Application 10/01962/LBC. This provides a number of specific and useful suggestions that would help bring the building in line with modern access requirements. Some of these recommendations have been integrated into the ongoing alterations, but they should also inform any future plans. In particular, there should be shared entrances for all users and unisex disabled toilets on all floors.

5.3 Any redevelopment needs to respect the Conservation Area and the St. Cross Building's setting adjacent to listed buildings

It has been established that the St. Cross Building is significant to the character of Holywell Ward, interacting well with both the older and newer buildings around it. Any future alteration should be sympathetic to this fact, and should not diminish its rôle there. It should be noted that the adjacent trees are protected by the Tree Control Order as part of the Conservation Area.

5.4 Conservation of specific features contributing to overall significance

A great deal of the interior fixtures and fittings have some significance (see **Section 4.3.4**). These finishes should be identified and conserved and kept in use where

possible in line with **Section 5.1**. It is accepted, however, that all these materials have a natural life span and some degree of change must be permitted to keep the building safe, useable, and generally fit for its primary purpose as a working library and teaching space. Some materials such as the wooden panelling will have a very long life expectancy if given minor maintenance; others such as the cork flooring are impermanent and will need careful conservation or where necessary like-for-like replacement. Within the framework of understanding and valuing what is present in the building a degree of ongoing change is inevitable.

5.4.1 Significant Materials

5.4.1.1 Brickwork

The fair-faced brickwork is an integral aspect of the external character of the St. Cross Building. Its light colouring and third-course raking references the stone of the adjacent St. Cross Church and of Oxford stonework in general. The brickwork will be maintained and all repairs or alterations will retain the raking at every third course and the mortar will be brought up to the surface when repointing elsewhere. Where necessary bricks will be replaced on a like-for-like basis only, and the quality of workmanship will be maintained at all points. The sharp edges of the brick parapets have darkened due to rain-deposited sediment, softening the appearance of the hard lines of the elevations. Consideration will be given to the resolution of this defective coping detail for an appropriate long-term solution which can be carried out, after which the brickwork may be cleaned to remove the dark staining at the head of all the external walls.

5.4.1.2 Cork Flooring

The cork floor tiles are an original design feature of some significance, contributing to the special character of the principal spaces of the interior. Their significance is such that it should be first considered to retain them in all the principal public spaces (**Section 5.4.2**) and the principal circulation spaces of the building. Cork flooring specialists will be consulted regarding their conservation. Due to heavy use, the cork has darkened considerably in many areas. It will be cleaned and maintained using a wax finish and a dry or damp mop. Where substantial cleaning is necessary electric buffing may be applied. Where replacement is unavoidable it will be conducted on a strictly like-for-like basis with matching natural cork tiles using water-based adhesives and a natural wax finish with a beeswax base.

5.4.1.3 Copper Roofing

The weathered green copper of the ridged roof of the Statistics Cube is significant to the entrance experience of the Law Library, and influences the external character of the building as a whole. The appearance of the roofing in this area will be maintained, with any necessary alterations being made in pre-weathered copper to match as closely as possible the appearance of the original fabric. In line with **Section 5.5** inconspicuous alterations designed to increase the energy performance of this now-inefficient roofing will be undertaken where possible.

5.4.1.4 Aluminium Banding and Window Surrounds

The black banding around the windows and external elevations in general adds substantially to the exterior character of the St. Cross Building. Due to the difficulties of sourcing anodised aluminium (as used in the original design), these significant elements will be maintained through periodic painting in black, rendering them visually identical to the architect's original intention.

5.4.2 Principal Spaces

5.4.2.1 The exterior elevations

As established above (**Section 3.1** and **Section 4.3.1**), the exterior elevations are integral to the significance of the St. Cross Building. The absence of any external pipes, cables, or trunking, is particularly important to the clean surfaces and hard angles that define the building. Any changes to the external elevations will significantly affect the character of the building.

5.4.2.2 The Law Reading Room and the English Reading Room

The Statistics Reading Room is the least effective of the reading room spaces and is currently undergoing physical alteration and repurposing (**Section 2.2**). The Law reading room is a significant space and is instrumental to the success of the building as a whole. It continues to function in line with its original design and will require only minor alterations, for instance upgraded lighting, in order to continue in this function into the foreseeable future. With this in mind, and taking into account the allowances made in **Section 5.1**, **Section 5.2**, the Law reading room will remain largely unchanged from its current state, allowing for conservation and repair work as required. The cork flooring provides excellent sound dampening whilst matching the clean, airy feel of the area, and is integral to the original design; it should be retained and conserved where possible, and be replaced on a like-for-like basis where not.

The English Library clearly also holds a significant role in the building but is seen as subservient to the Law Library. Its current entrance arrangement is unsatisfactory and its linkages to the main entrance contorted and not obvious; however, any changes that should be suggested to this space will need to be considered with a regard to its position within the St. Cross building as a whole.

5.4.2.3 The Entrance Hall

The Entrance Hall is arguably the most impressive area of the St. Cross Building. It effectively dictates the tone for the character of the rest of the building. As its character is so central to the significance of the heritage asset it will remain largely unchanged, taking into account the allowances made in **Section 5.1**, **Section 5.2**, and allowing for necessary conservation and repair work. The cork flooring provides excellent sound dampening (necessary for a space that opens onto teaching areas) whilst interacting with the timber panelling to create a space secure in its North European lineage. It is integral to the original design and it should be retained and conserved where possible, and be replaced on a like-for-like basis where not.

5.4.2.4 The Lecture Theatres

As with the reading rooms, the lecture theatres are central to the utility of the building. They will increase in significance in the coming years as the St. Cross Building becomes increasingly open to public lectures and meetings. Minor changes, notably in the form of lighting, tiered seating, desking, and audio-visual equipment, will be necessary to ensure the continued use of these areas into the long term, but beyond this they should continue to function in an unaltered state. Notably the iroko wood panelling and the cork flooring are significant to the character of the spaces and should be left substantially unaltered, taking into account the allowances made in **Section 5.1**, **Section 5.2**, and allowing for necessary conservation, maintenance, and repair work.

5.5 In the vein of NPPF paragraph 110, efforts should be made to ensure that the St. Cross Building's contribution to climate change is as minimal as is feasible for a building of its age, size, materials, and use. Any proposals for alterations should assess the feasibility of incorporating low and zero carbon technologies

Ensuring that the building is sustainable will be crucial to its long-term survival and significance. As stated in NPPF paragraph 110, development should seek to 'minimise pollution and other adverse effects on the local and natural environment.'

5.6 A disaster recovery plan will be prepared for the building and will be regularly reviewed to keep it up to date

This is a significant building with internal contents of particular value and significance. It is imperative for the safety of the building that a clear disaster recovery plan exists.

5.7 If during subsequent renovations or alterations any excavation work is carried out beneath the St. Cross Building or surrounding area an archaeological assessment will be made of the potential for significant finds, and if appropriate an archaeologist will be given a watching brief as the excavation takes place

There is the potential for significant archaeological material across the site and should any excavation work be carried out an assessment of the archaeological potential should be made. This should include at least a desk assessment, but possibly geophysics and trial trenching. A watching brief will almost certainly be required for any such work.

5.8 A good practice of routine recording, investigation, and maintenance will be enacted and sustained. Such an approach will minimise the need for larger repairs or other interventions and will usually represent the most economical way of retaining an asset

5.8.1 Estates Services (or its agents) will ensure that a senior member of staff has responsibility for the administration and recording of a routine maintenance programme for the building

All buildings need to be routinely maintained if they are to stay in good condition. This requires a detailed maintenance programme and, critically, someone who is responsible for ensuring that the routine operations are carried out. A proper record of the repair and maintenance work in a maintenance log is a useful management tool. Such information will be recorded in the Estates Management software package *Planon*.

5.8.2 A detailed routine maintenance programme will be prepared for the building

Maintenance is best carried out as a series of planned operations. A well thought-out and properly-administered maintenance programme may appear to be time consuming but will result in a better-functioning building with less need for emergency repairs.

5.8.3 The Conservation Plan will be circulated to all senior staff who work in the St. Cross Building and to all other members of the University who have responsibility for the building or the collection

The value of the building needs to be appreciated by all the senior staff managing or working in the building. Only in this way will the heritage asset be properly treated, repaired, and maintained.

5.8.4 The Conservation Plan will be made available to Oxford City Council, English Heritage, and any other party with a legitimate interest in the building

The Conservation Plan is intended to be a useful document to inform all parties with a legitimate interest in the building.

5.9 The Conservation Plan will be reviewed and updated from time to time as work is carried out on the building or as circumstances change. The recommendations should be reviewed at least at five-yearly intervals

Policy changes, building alterations, or other changes of circumstance, will affect the conservation duties and requirements of the building. The policy recommendations in the Conservation Plan will inform the future of the building and should be a useful tool for people carrying out maintenance work or where more significant alterations are being considered. The recommendations need to be kept up to date if they are to remain relevant.

6

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- *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservations Areas) Act* 1990.

6.2 Planning Applications and Supporting Documents

- *Application* 10/01962/LBC *(Form new external entrance to Law Faculty, new louvre under main stairs and new opening into courtyard. Various internal works of alterations, new configurations and refurbishment including new seminar rooms, reorganisation of circulation space and reconfigure rooflights)* Estates Services (July 2010):

  - *St. Cross - Planning Application: Design and Access Statement Incorporating a Heritage Statement*, Pringle Richards Sharratt Architects (July 2010).

  - *St. Cross - Appendix A: Architectural Drawings*, Pringle Richards Sharratt Architects (July 2010).

  - *St. Cross - Appendix B: Phased Masterplan*, Pringle Richards Sharratt Architects (July 2010).

  - *St. Cross - Appendix C: Conservation Statement*, Pringle Richards Sharratt Architects (July 2010).

  - *St. Cross - Appendix D: Heritage Impact Assessment*, Pringle Richards Sharratt Architects (July 2010).

  - *St. Cross - Appendix E: Consultation Information*, Oxford University Law Department, Estates Services, Pringle Richards Sharratt Architects (July 2010).

  - *St. Cross - Appendix F: Design Options Considered*, Pringle Richards Sharratt Architects (July 2010).

  - *St. Cross - Appendix G: Access Audit*, All Clear Designs (June 2008).

  - *St. Cross - Appendix H: Bibliography*, Pringle Richards Sharratt Architects (July, 2010).

- *Application 10/01452/LBC (Alterations in former IES library area to form seminar room)*, Estates Services (June 2010):

  - *Design and Access Statement: St. Cross Building, Proposed New Seminar Room: Former IES Library Area*, DPDS Consulting (June 2010).

6.3 Other Documents

- Martin, L., *Scheme Design Report for the St. Cross Building, Oxford* (unpublished, available from Oxford University archives).

- Stradling, S., *St. Cross Building: Feasibility Study: Context Analysis* (July 2008).

- Tyack, G., *Oxford: An Architectural Guide* (Oxford, 1998).

6.4 Websites

- English Heritage, Heritage Gateway: http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=246015&resourceID=5, accessed on 14.09.2010 (Resource includes public access to Listed Building descriptions).

- Oxford University Chemistry Department: http://www.chem.ox.ac.uk/oxfordtour/stcrossbuilding/# , accessed 07.09.2010 (This useful tool allows 3D views of various parts of the exterior of the building).

- Telegraph Obituary for Sir Leslie Martin: http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/obituaries/1366823/Sir-Leslie-Martin.html, accessed 14.09.2010.

- Wikipedia Commons: http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/56/St_Cross_Building.jpg , accessed 08.09.2010.

6.5 Image Credits

- Cover: Estates Services photograph.

- Chapter Covers: Estates Services photographs.

- Figure 1: Adapted from Application 10/01962/LBC, supplementary material: *St. Cross - Appendix E: Consultation Information*, Oxford University Law Department, Estates Services, Pringle Richards Sharratt Architects (July 2010).

- Figure 2, 3, 4, and 5: From Application 10/01962/LBC, supplementary material: *St. Cross - Planning Application: Design and Access Statement Incorporating a Heritage Statement*, Pringle Richards Sharratt Architects (July 2010).

- Figure 6: from Bing Maps: http://www.bing.com/maps/#JnE9Lm94MSszdWwlN2Vzc3QuMCU3ZXBnLjEmYmI9NTEuNzUyODY4NzgzMzAzMyU3ZS0xLjI0OTAyODQwMzEwNTk4JTdlNTEuNzUxMzkzNTAxNTEyOSU3ZS0xLjI1MTI0MjI0MTIyMzQ2, accessed 29.03.2011.

- Figures 7, 8 and 9, 11, 16, 17: Estates Services photographs.

- Figure 10: Wikipedia Commons: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Royal_Festival_Hall_%281%29.jpg, accessed 22.03.2011.

- Figures 12, 13, 14, 15, 18: Courtesy of Pringle Richards Sharratt Architects.

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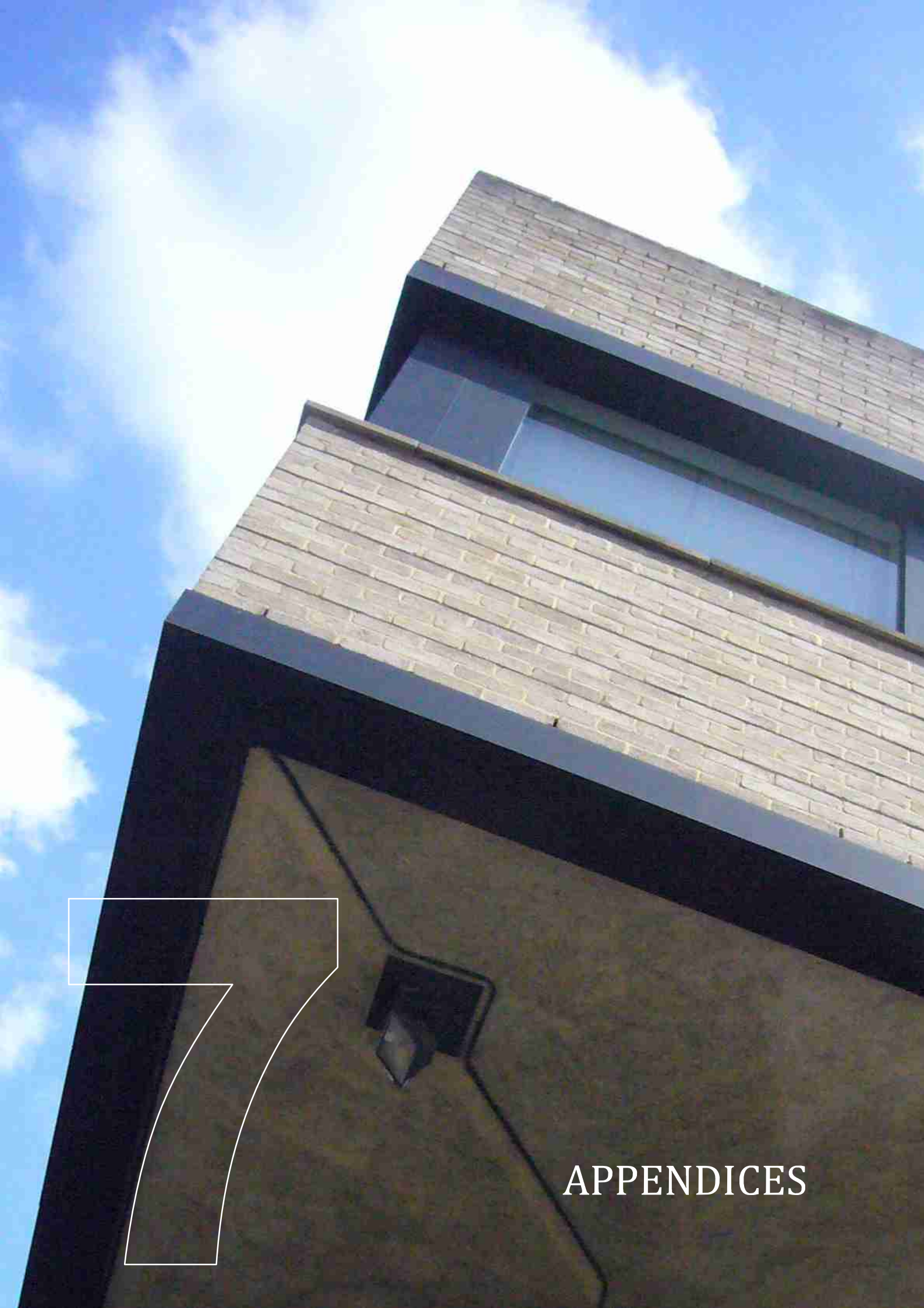

7 APPENDICES

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7 APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Listed Building Description

Building Name:	University Of Oxford, St Cross Building	**LBS Number:**	246015
Parish:	Oxford	**Grade:**	II*
District:	Oxford	**Date Listed:**	30 March 1993
County:	Oxfordshire	**Date Delisted:**	
Postcode:	OX1 3UJ[3]	**National Grid Reference:**	SP5200906758

Listing Text:

OXFORD MANOR ROAD
OXFORDSHIRE
SP 5106 NE
SP 50 NW
612/6/10029 St Cross Building,
612/24/10029 University of Oxford

II*

Library and teaching space for Law, English and Statistics. 1961-65. Sir Leslie Martin and Colin St John Wilson. Buff brick with a raked joint to every third course, black anodised aluminium; flat roof. Compact, interlocking plan of one to three storeys comprising three libraries, each of different sizes and at different levels, each with a double-height top- lit reading room with ancillary stack space; also lecture theatre and other teaching space. Central external staircase rises three storeys with entrances at each level.

L. Martin, Buildings and Ideas 1933-83.

Listing NGR: SP5197206757

[3] The postcode is actually OX1 3UL, the Manor Road entrance rather than the St. Cross Road entrance as indicated in the listing description.

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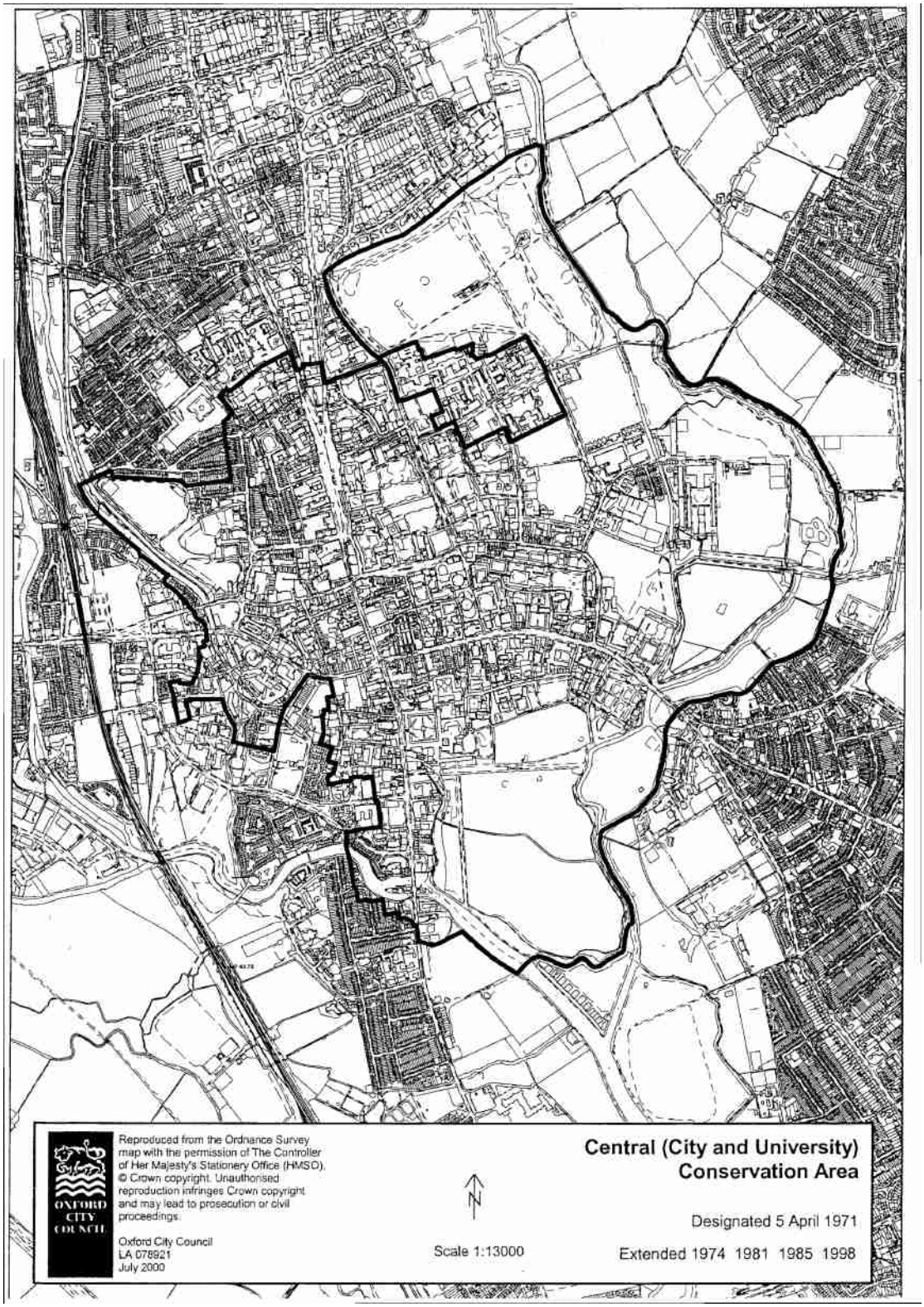
Appendix 2 Conservation Area Description



Central Conservation Area, No. 5

The historic centre of Oxford forms one of the masterpieces of European architectural heritage. It is also a major regional commercial centre. Many of its historic buildings still function for the purpose for which they were built, and provide accommodation for the University of Oxford and its colleges.

From small beginnings as a settlement in the Saxon period, Oxford grew by the 11th century into one of the largest towns in England and a major trade centre. The Norman conquest brought the construction of the Castle and the establishment of major religious houses. The infant University arose in the 12th century and gradually grew into a major force in the city's life. The Saxons' rigid street layout and the fixed line of the 13th century defensive walls, together with the floodable river valleys, largely determined the plan of the historic centre as it is today. The gentle curve of the High Street, the great market place of St Giles and the older churches, together with the post-medieval timber-framed houses, belong to the town rather than the gown.

The University as it expanded, colonised the eastern half of the town with colleges and halls, building quadrangles of medieval and post-medieval gothic buildings, both within and without the walled town. The growth of the University's central institutions is well shown by the magnificent group of buildings situated between Broad Street and St Mary's Church. This group began in the 15th century with the building of the Divinity School and the Duke Humphrey's Library, a nucleus which expanded in the 17th century with the addition of the Schools' Quadrangle, Convocation House and Sheldonian Theatre. The group was further extended in the 18th century by the addition of the Old Clarendon Building and Radcliffe Camera to form a sequence of buildings and spaces of the highest architectural and historic interest, that today form the visual heart of the conservation area. Aspects of Oxford's 19th and 20th century change and growth may be illustrated by the considerable additions made to University and College buildings in Victorian and recent times, by the vigorous commercial and shopping centre, and by the welcome fact that the presence of the University ensures that many upper floors of buildings in the conservation area are in use for residential purposes, rather than unoccupied as in some historic towns.

Thomas Sharp, in his report to the City Council, published in 1948 as *Oxford Replanned,* set out and defined Oxford's special physical and architectural character and stressed its virtues and problems in a 20fh century context. The Council, in its Review of the Development Plan, approved in 1967, approved much of the central area as an area of great historic value, and since 1962 the Council has protected the prospect of the city's unique skyline with its high buildings policy. The complementary views out of the city to its open country background have been similarly protected by the Green Belt and other policies.

The Council designated a large part of the central area as a conservation area in 1971. An extension taking in the Folly Bridge riverside was designated on 28th May 1974, a second extension covering part of Walton Street, Fisher Row and lower St Aldate's was designated on 23rd February 1981, while a third covering Cornmarket and Queen Street was designated on 29th April

1985. On 9th December 1998, a fourth extension was made to the conservation area taking in part of the St Thomas' area, the University Observatory adjacent to University Parks and Magdalen College School playing field.

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Appendix 3 Chronology of the St. Cross Building

December 1958	Sir Leslie Martin develops his first plan for the St. Cross Building
June 1959	Sir Leslie Martin develops his second design
August 1959	Sir Leslie Martin develops his third design
October 1959	Sir Leslie Martin develops his fourth design
March 1960	Sir Leslie Martin develops his final design
1961	Construction work begins on the St. Cross Building
17th October 1964	Bodleian Law Library opened by Erwin Nathaniel Griswold, the Dean of the Harvard Law School
1965	Construction work completed
1965	The English Faculty Library moves into the St. Cross Building from its former location in the attic space of the Examination Schools
1992	Installation of raised arm vehicle barriers and metal railings
1993	St. Cross Building designated a Grade II* listed building
1994	New electrical services containment system, including intrusive overhead metal cable trays in reading rooms.
1995	Internal separating wall to delineate new Centre for European Law. Reduction of 2 metre-high screen wall in courtyard
1995	Installation of five external and three internal security cameras
1996	Installation of an internal wheelchair stair-lift in main entrance hall
1999	Department of Statistics vacates the Institute of Economics and Statistics (IES) Library
2000	Various internal alterations completed, including alterations to Law Library to create new IT teaching laboratory and refurbishment of former Economics and Statistics space
2004	Replacement of Issue Desk in English Faculty Library
2006	Alteration of previous book storage area to form Graduate Reading Room
2007	Pringle Richards Sharratt complete feasibility study of the possibility of creating an integrated centre for Law at the St. Cross Building
2009	Public consultations undertaken regarding upcoming alterations
2010	New plans developed for alterations including the reorganisation of the Statistics Cube (including a new entrance opposite the main building entrance). Intrusive electrical services containment to be replaced by concealed trunking
In the future	The English Faculty will vacate their space, facilitating the formation of an integrated centre for Law at the St. Cross Building

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Appendix 4

CHECKLIST OF SIGNIFICANT FEATURES

This checklist is intended for the use of those working or planning work on the building. It highlights features of architectural significance within the **St. Cross Building**; these may be original features or new additions that nevertheless contribute positively to the character of the building. As this is a **Grade II* listed building** any repair or alteration work to factors that contribute to the significance of the building will require listed building consent in order to avoid prosecution under the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990. **If planned work will likely affect any of the aspects featured in the list below advice should immediately be sought from the Building Conservation Team at Estates Services.**

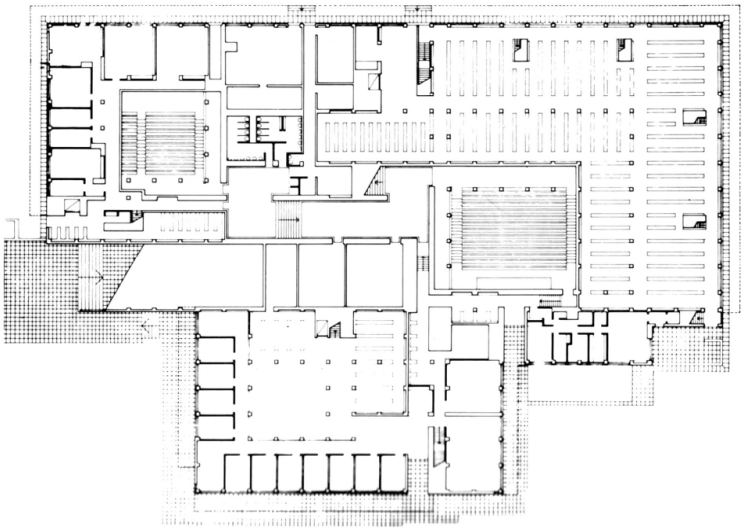
The checklist lists both general significant features that affect the building as a whole and which should be held in mind if working in any space, and specific features of particular significance that should receive special regard if working in these particular spaces. The Further Information column refers to the relevant page reference in the Conservation Plan proper.

The St. Cross Building, Building No. 228		
SIGNIFICANT FEATURE	✓	Further Information
General:		
External Elevations		p. 21-24, 33-35, 44-46
Monumental External staircase		p. 21-24, 35, 44-46
Rooflights throughout		p. 18, 36
Copper roofing throughout		p. 35, 45
Windows throughout		p. 26, 34, 45
Internal timber panelling throughout		p. 26, 37, 38, 46
Cork flooring throughout		p. 37, 38, 45-47
Internal fitted furniture		p. 26, 37-38
Internal brickwork		p. 37-38
Layout of Law and English reading rooms		p. 32, 36, 46
Trees within the curtilage		p. 9, 22-23, 44
Specific Features:		
External Elevations:		
-Raked brickwork		p. 21-24, 33-35, 44-46
-Anodised aluminium fittings		p. 21-24, 33-35, 44-46
-Windows and rooflights		p. 18, 26, 34, 36, 45
-External staircase		p. 21-24, 33-35, 44-46
Entrance Hall:		
-Timber panelling (walls and ceiling)		p. 37-38, 46
-Timber light fittings		p. 37-38, 46
-Timber handrails		p. 37, 38, 46

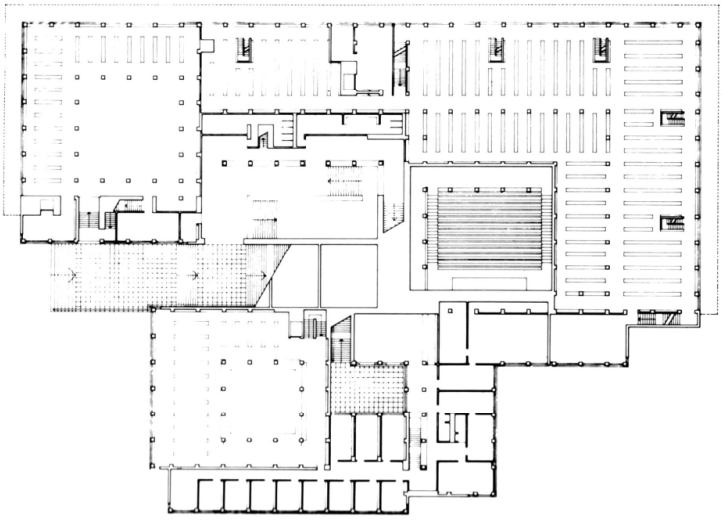
-Cork flooring		p. 37-38, 45-47
-Exposed brickwork		p. 37-38, 46
Lecture Theatres:		
-Timber panelling (walls and ceiling)		p. 37-38, 46
-Timber light fittings		p. 37-38, 46
-Timber doors		p. 37-38, 46
-Timber blackboard settings		p. 37-38, 46
-Fitted seating and desktops		p. 37-38, 46
-Cork flooring		p. 37-38, 45-47
-Exposed brickwork		p. 37-38, 46
Lecture Rooms		
-Timber panelling (walls and ceiling)		p. 37-38, 46
-Timber light fittings		p. 37-38, 46
-Timber doors		p. 37-38, 46
-Timber blackboard settings		p. 37-38, 46
-Fitted seating and desktops		p. 37-38, 46
-Cork Flooring		p. 37-38, 46
-Exposed brickwork		p. 37-38, 46
Law and English Reading Rooms:		
-Rooflights		p. 18, 36
-Windows		p. 26, 34, 45
-Concrete panels		p. 32, 36, 46
-Interior columns		p. 32, 36, 46
-Desks and table lamps		
-Shelving		
-Cork flooring		p.26, 37-38
-White walls		
Statistics Reading Rooms:		
-Rooflights		p. 18, 36
-Windows		p. 26, 34, 45
-Interior columns		
-Shelving		

PRIOR TO UNDERTAKING <u>ANY</u> REPAIRS OR ALTERATIONS ON THE ABOVE-LISTED ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES, CONTACT THE CONSERVATION TEAM AT ESTATES SERVICES ON (01865) (2)78750

Appendix 5 Floor Plans



Lower Ground Floor



Upper Ground Floor

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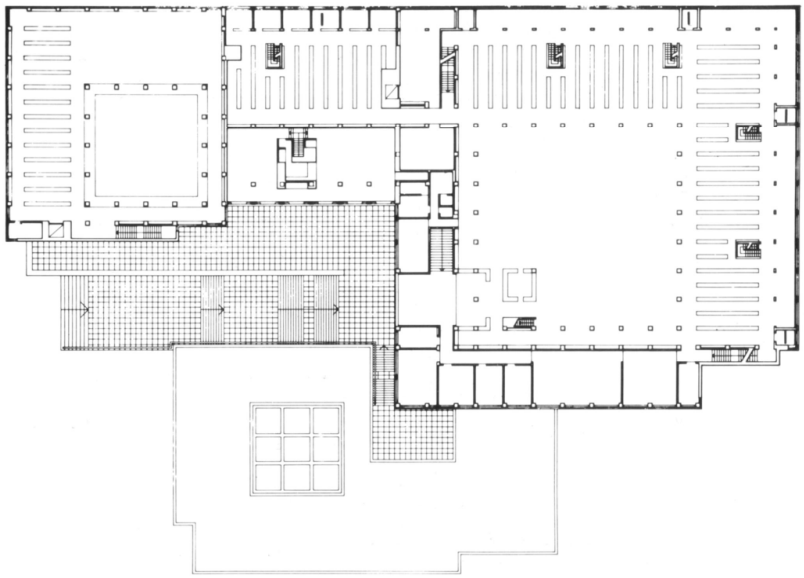
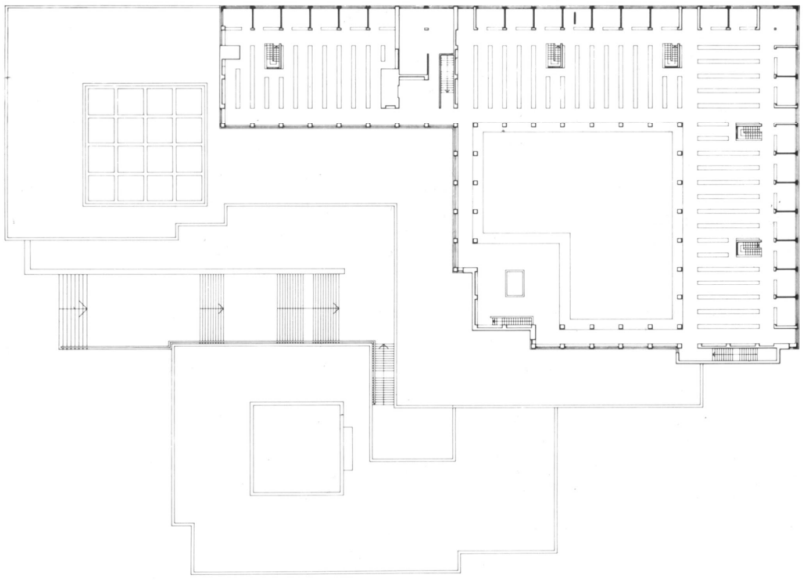


1st Floor



2nd Floor