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**The University Museum
Conservation Plan**

Oxford University

Estates Services

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THE UNIVERSITY MUSEUM, OXFORD
CONSERVATION PLAN



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INTRODUCTION

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1 INTRODUCTION

The Oxford University Museum of Natural History (the University Museum) was constructed in 1855-60 to a design by Deane and Woodward of Dublin. It was funded from an initial budget of £30,000 gathered from the profits of the University Press. It was constructed by Lucas Brothers of London. It was the first major test of Ruskinian Gothic architecture in Oxford; a style which would go on to dominate the city for the next 20 years. It was founded as a bastion of scientific learning, designed to hold the University's natural history collections, and it continues to fulfil this function. It was designated a Grade I listed building in 1954.

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 University Museum.

The purpose of this Conservation Plan is to update the University Museum'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 University Museum'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.

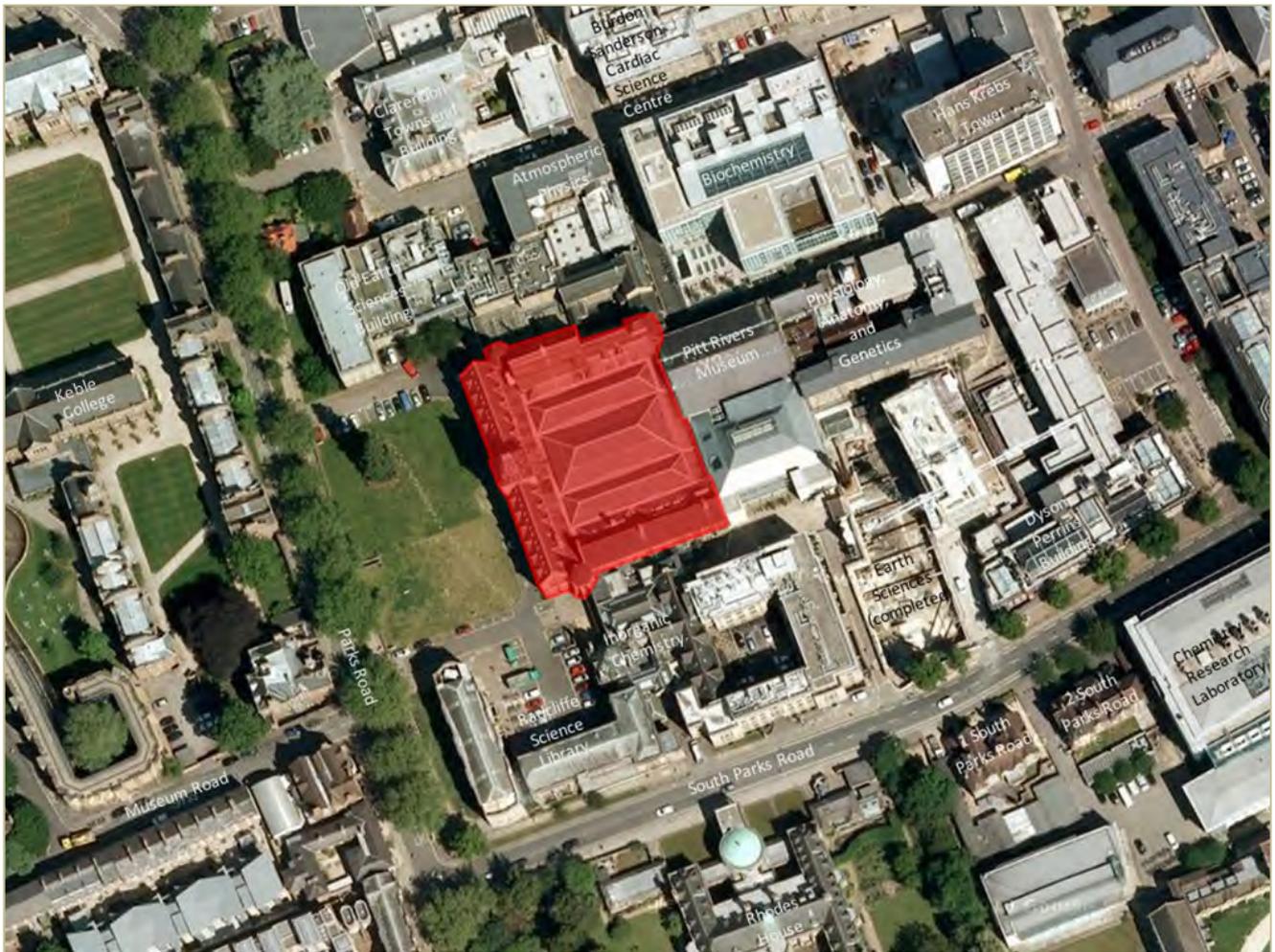


Figure 1. Map showing the University Museum (highlighted in red) and the surrounding area, orientated with North at the top of the image

1.2 Scope of the Conservation Plan

This Conservation Plan will cover the exterior and interior of the University Museum, a grade-I-listed building in the University Science Area on the north-eastern edge of central Oxford.

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

1.3 Existing Information

A Conservation Plan has not previously been produced for the University Museum; however, there are various forms of existing information available:

There is a relatively-detailed listed building description for the heritage asset (**Appendix 1**). This is the logical starting point for this plan, as it lists the heritage asset's main features and briefly assesses their architectural significance.

Various planning applications have been made throughout the building's history, providing a fragmentary indication of the changes that have occurred over time.

There are several published books and articles that examine the development of Gothic architecture in Oxford and the history of the city and University, as well as the work of Deane and Woodward. These publications provide an important resource for studying this building and works of this period in Oxford.

The Oxford University Archives and the University Museum's own archives contain a great deal of useful plans and documents and these have kindly been made available for the composition of this document.

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 University Museum 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 University Museum and its environs are subject to various constraints imposed by Oxford City Council:

- 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 the 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.



UNDERSTANDING THE SITE

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2 UNDERSTANDING THE SITE

2.1 History of the Site and University¹

The site of Oxford has had sporadic settlement since the Neolithic period. Bronze Age barrows have been found in the University Parks (linear barrow cemetery) and in the Science Area (double-ditched barrow). Oxford has had a continuous history of occupation since at least the 8th Century AD. The University of Oxford itself 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 site upon which the University Museum now stands is situated in the northeast of the city of Oxford. This area was developed in the 19th Century, notably with the construction of Keble College on the western side of Parks Road in 1868-70.

The 91-acre site now occupied by the University Museum, the Science Area, and the University Parks was purchased by the University from Merton College in stages between 1853 and 1864. The first plans for the University Parks were presented to the University in June 1863, but these were rejected, and it was not until 1865 that £500 was allocated for the purchase of trees and shrubberies. Even before this point the space allocated to the Parks was diminished by the allocation in 1853 of 4 acres in its southern portion (followed by another 4 acres in 1854) for the University Museum (1855-60), and this southern expanse underwent near-continuous development throughout the second half of the 19th Century.

Soon after its construction the University Museum was extended with: the construction of the original Clarendon Physics Laboratory (now embedded within the Robert Hooke (Old Earth Sciences) Building) on its northwest side in 1867-69 (extended in 1946-58); the construction of the Pitt Rivers Museum on the east in 1885-86; the addition of Jackson's Radcliffe Science Library to the south in 1898-1900 (extended in 1933-34); and the extension of the Department of Zoology (now housing Atmospheric Physics) and Stevenson and Redfern's Morphology Laboratory to the north in 1898-1901.²

Further science buildings were constructed in this precinct from the last quarter of the 19th Century. Many of these were originally free-standing, but continued development has created an increasingly interconnected science precinct in the area. The near-continuous history of development in the area has created a crowded space at the south of the Park precinct. It is the main centre for the study of sciences within the University, and is now known as the University Science Area.

2.2 History of the University Museum

The mid-19th Century was a period of flux and expansion for the city and University, as highlighted by the 1852 Royal Commission on the State, Discipline, Study, and Revenues of the University and Colleges of Oxford. A manifestation of this *zeitgeist* was the hosting of the

¹ A short chronology of the University Museum can be found in **Appendix 3**.

² A brief overview of the development of the Science Area can be found in **Annexe 1**.

1847 Conference of the British Association for the Advancement of Science in Oxford and the subsequent 1849 decision of Convocation to establish a School of Natural Sciences and the related formation of the Museum Committee. Henry Acland, Reader in Anatomy (later Regius Professor of Medicine), was the main proponent of a natural history museum for the exhibition of ‘all the materials explanatory of the structure of the earth, and of the organic beings placed upon it.’³

In 1850 it was conservatively estimated that £50,000 would be required in order to complete the building, before taking into account maintenance and endowments. In 1853 a Delegacy was appointed to oversee the construction of the Museum. It promptly purchased 4 acres of land in the University Parks from Merton College for £4,000. A further four acres were purchased in the following May for £3,600 by a new Delegacy appointed in February 1854.⁴ The Delegacy had coveted a £60,000 fund (profits, mainly from the sale of Bibles) held by the University Press, but by 1854 half of this had been spent on professorships, leaving an ultimately insufficient £30,000 for the construction of the Museum. The competition for the design of the Museum was held in 1854 and the competitors were tasked to submit a design that could be completed for less than the £30,000 available.

Deane and Woodward won the competition with a design (primarily of Benjamin Woodward’s devising) influenced by the contemporary renewed interest in the Gothic (most recently highlighted in Ruskin’s *Stone of Venice*) and helped through the process by Acland’s constant support.⁵

‘Thirty-two designs by anonymous contributors were sent in; the majority of the judges, after a thoroughly English battle, in which some professed advocates of Gothic architecture on this occasion deprecated the application of Gothic Art to secular purposes, - thereby denying their own style that malleability which is, perhaps, its highest prerogative, - the design, “Nisi Dominus ædificaverit domum” [Deane and Woodward’s design] was accepted. Having been openly one of its warmest advocates, I have seen no reason to regret the decision of the University.’⁶

Deane and Woodward’s closest competitor was E.M. Barry, the son of Sir Charles Barry (a member of the judging body), who submitted an accomplished design in an Italian style. Acland felt the need to defend the choice of Deane and Woodward’s design and even Ruskin was not initially entirely happy with it, though he grudgingly admitted that it was the best of the submitted designs; however, Ruskin soon warmed to the scheme, even the structural and

³ Tyack, G., *Oxford: An Architectural Guide* (Oxford, 1998) 217.

⁴ O’Dwyer, F., *The Architecture of Deane and Woodward* (Cork, 1997) 157.

⁵ Ruskin, J., *The Stones of Venice* (3 Vols.; 1851-3); A.W.N. Pugin’s work in the 1830’s argued for the importance of Gothic as the true Christian style of architecture. This prompted a Gothic revival that was well underway by the time John Ruskin codified the movement’s tenets in *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (1849). Gothic architecture, championed by Ruskin, became tied to conservative movements within the University’s internal political machine following the completion of the University Museum, and was subsequently the predominant style of architecture in Oxford until T.G. Jackson, whose patronage lay within the University’s liberal movement, succeeded in winning the competition to design the Examination Schools in 1876.

⁶ Acland, H.W., *Lecture before a meeting of the Architectural Societies of Oxford*, 1858.

decorative use of iron, probably through personal experience of the enthusiasm of Woodward, who became his confidant whilst in Oxford.

Once Deane and Woodward were selected, the process continued apace. By February 1855 they had submitted a revised scheme which included a chemistry laboratory to the south inspired by the 14th-century Abbot's Kitchen at Glastonbury. On 21st April the Lucas Brothers of London submitted a tender of £29,041, which was accepted by the University. This was only just within budget and did not include '...ventilation, lighting, warming, drainage, water supply, the enclosing and laying out of the grounds, not even the paving of the central court, nor oak doors and floors for the principal rooms, nor painting, varnishing and glazing.'⁷ Various appeals were made to Convocation over the following years in order to pay for essential items not covered by the initial tender, including a list of additional items submitted to Convocation in 1856.

The foundation stone was laid on the 20th June 1855 by the 14th Earl of Derby (1799-1869), Chancellor of the University. By 1857 Woodward had submitted a scheme for the heating and ventilation systems, though the engineer's heating plans were not submitted until New Year's Eve 1858.

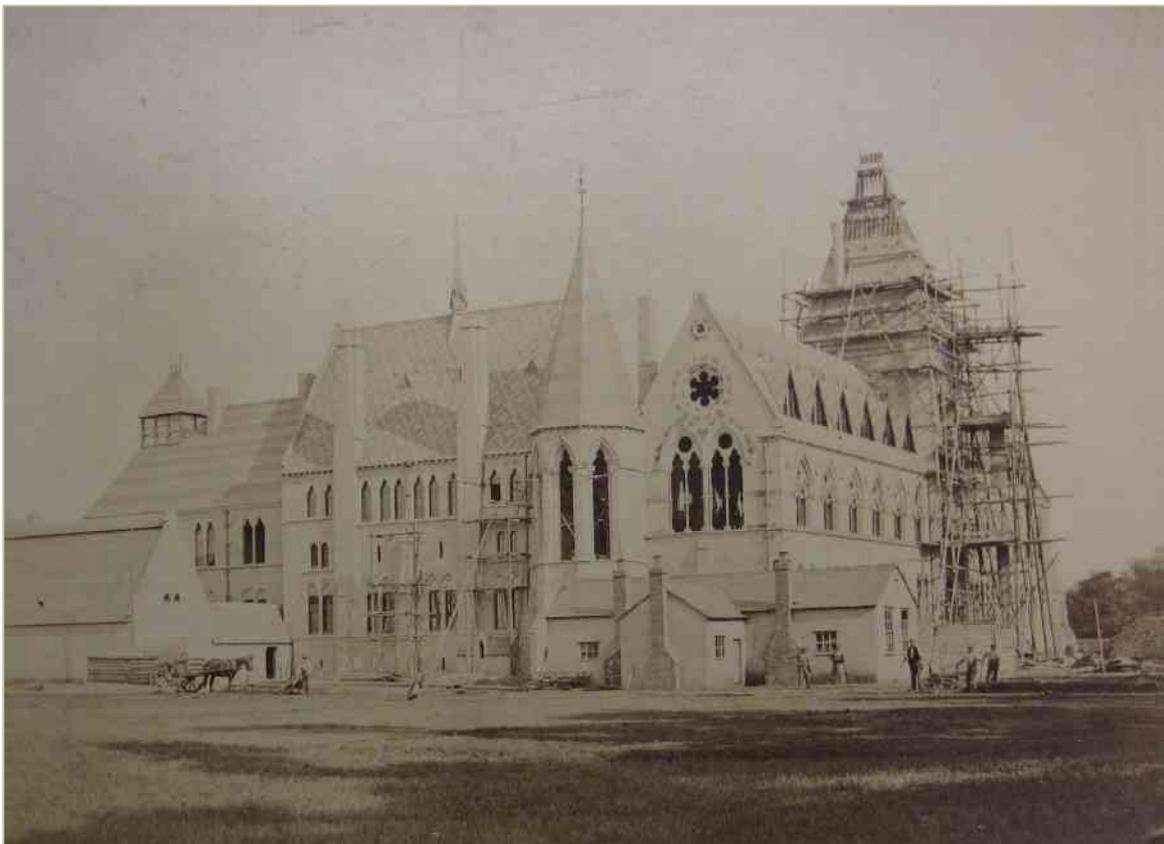


Figure 2. The Museum under construction, from the north. Note the temporary workers' reading room at the centre front of the image. From University Museum Archives

⁷ Garnham, T., *Oxford Museum: Deane and Woodward* (London, 1992); Vernon, H.M., and Vernon, K.D., *A History of Oxford Museum* (Oxford, 1909) 68.

The iron roof was in place by the time testing was begun in November 1857. The structure consisted of tubular iron columns with wrought-iron foliage on the capitals, unique on each example. The work was conducted by Francis Skidmore of Coventry at the cost of £5,000.⁸ It is an oft-recounted tale how, in February 1858, the newly-completed roof threatened to collapse when the iron columns gave way in several places. The original wrought and cast iron design had been substituted for one of purely wrought iron on Skidmore's advice on the grounds of reduced cost. Skidmore was an experienced iron worker of exceptional ability (as the extant structure attests) and this scheme should have been fine; however, the weight of the roof proved to be greater than originally envisaged and the wrought iron columns were not up to the task. They were eventually replaced with cast iron columns which proved capable of holding the heavy glass roof, which was completed in 1859.⁹

The majority of the structural work was completed by late 1858 and the Chemistry Laboratory was occupied in October. The brothers James and John O'Shea of Dublin and their nephew, Edward Whellan, were employed in August to carve the Museum's ornaments. The O'Shea brothers were exceptional artisans, perfectly suited to the Ruskinian ideal of the archetypal mediaeval master mason; part builder, part artist, able to draw inspiration from the beauty of nature, with its vitality and lack of repetition. Needless to say, Ruskin's ideas involved a paternalistic interpretation of the 'noble savage' (a view so prevalent under the Empire), in touch with nature to an extent unknown in 'civilised countries.'¹⁰ The skill of the O'Sheas was such that they were able to create lifelike and energetic sculptures of flora and fauna in a scheme that retains cohesion despite no two items being the same. In spite of the undoubted quality of their work, the O'Sheas completed only 46 capitals and some other



Figure 3. James O'Shea working on 'cat wall'. A posed shot taken in 1860.

pieces before they were let go. Funds had run out and, whilst they offered to work for free, it was thought that they were caricaturing some members of Convocation in their carvings in the forms of parrots and owls and it was decided that their services were no longer required.¹¹ Some of their carvings remain incomplete to this day.

Throughout 1859-60 Rev. Richard St. John Tyrwhitt worked on some geologically-themed wall murals in the Geological Lecture Room (now the Director's Office). The building's decoration remains incomplete to this day, but in 1860 it was deemed fit for occupation and was made available to Members of the University in October. It was prior to this formal occupation, on the 30th June, that the famous Wilberforce-Huxley debate on Darwin's theories (*On the Origin of Species* had been published in the following November) was held in the Hope Library.

⁸ Pevsner, N., and Sherwood, J., *The Buildings of England: Oxfordshire* (Harmondsworth, 1974) 280-2.

⁹ Garnham, T., *op. cit.*

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ Acland, H.W., and Ruskin, J., *The Oxford Museum* (London, 1893) 107-9.

In 1861 Woodward died from the consumption that had plagued him for several years. He was the creative force behind the design and, whilst Deane and Woodward's relationship with the University continued (they designed the Pitt Rivers Museum in 1885-6), Thomas Newenham Deane's work lacked Woodward's creative inspiration.

In the period following the occupation of the Museum the first indications of the development of the science area became apparent. The original Clarendon Laboratory was built as an additional wing to the north of the Museum in 1867-72. A new chemistry laboratory was provided on the south side of the Museum in 1878 and the Pitt Rivers Museum was constructed to the east of the Museum in 1885-6. Human Anatomy was built to the east of the Pitt Rivers Museum in 1898. The Museum continued to be the setting for landmark scientific moments and in 1894 the first demonstration of wireless telegraphy was made from the lecture theatre to the adjacent Clarendon Laboratory.



Figure 4. The southern boundary of the University after the construction of the Inorganic Chemistry extension in 1876 and prior to the construction of the Radcliffe Science Library in 1901. Note the iron railings in the foreground. From Oxfordshire County Archives

Work on the interior decoration of the Museum continued on and off throughout the second half of the 19th Century. By 1905 Mr Mills and Louis Holt of Messrs. Farmer and Brindley of

Westminster Bridge Road, London, had completed the carving in the lower corridors.¹² They were accomplished craftsmen but lacked the vaunted artistry of the O'Shea Brothers. By 1910 Mills and Holt had completed the carving in the upper corridors.

For the most part, the history of the first half of the 20th Century was one of continuity and maintenance within the Museum, though the Science Area around it continued to develop apace (see **Annexe 1**), including the enlargement of the Pitt Rivers Museum in 1907. Electricity was installed in the Museum Court in 1926. The glass roof over the court proved to be a major issue throughout this period, with the southern span being refitted (and lined with asbestos cord) due to leaking in 1903 and the entire roof being reconditioned and repainted in 1929. Gales forced roof repairs in 1907, 1943, and 1947. All this culminated in the complete overhauling of the glass roof in 1956-7. Regular glass repairs continued to be a feature of the court, perhaps an inevitability of the nature of the roof, with minor repairs being required in 1970, 1977, 1989, 1990, and 1993.

The second half of the 20th Century saw continued maintenance issues, but also some developments in the use of space within the Museum. In 1949 the link to the Abbot's Kitchen was replaced with the two-storey arcade present today. In 1953 the ironwork in the court was inspected and found to be in dire need of cleaning and redecoration, but the works were rejected on the basis of their cost. In the same year, planning permission was granted to convert part of the roof space into a laboratory and workroom for the use of the Hope Department of Entomology. Pressures on space continued, with planning permission being granted in 1959 for the construction of a projecting gallery (with asbestos lined projection booth and supports) to provide additional seating to the large lecture theatre. This was followed in 1960 by an application to insert an additional floor to convert a double-height space into two storeys; something that became a common feature in the rooms projecting from the central court.

In 1970 a new entrance door and canopy was constructed on the façade of the Worthington Wing to the south of the main façade and an underground extension was built beneath the southern half of the museum forecourt. In 1978 planning consent was granted for the provision of a mezzanine floor in the old Geology lecture theatre to form a rock store and work room. In the same year the Entomology Department vacated the Museum, the last department to do so.

In 1987 listed building consent was granted for the insertion of a mezzanine in the Hope Library of Entomology in order to form a bookstack. In 1988 listed building consent was granted for the insertion of a steel spiral staircase between the tower room and the roof space. In 1991 listed building consent was granted for the construction of a mezzanine floor in the Historic and New British (Poulton) Room to form storage space and a work room.

Major alterations in the use and organisation of space slowed into the 1990s, with minor alterations and refurbishment being characteristic activities. In 1994 listed building consent was granted for the refurbishment of the Huxley Room, which included the removal of an

¹² Haward, B., *Oxford University Museum: Its Architecture and Art* (Oxford, 1991) 18.

added ceiling within the roof space of the front range. In the same year, listed building consent was granted for a wheelchair stair lift in the northwest stair basement up to the ground-floor level. In 1996, listed building consent was granted for the provision of an additional doorway, an additional door (for an existing opening), and associated work to the Wilberforce Room on the West Gallery.

In 2003, a disabled access ramp was constructed adjacent to the southwest stair tower with an associated internal lift. In 2004 alterations were conducted to the eastern elevation including the removal of the 1892 Gable Building, along with further works to form a junction with the 3-storey extension to the Pitt Rivers Museum. In 2009 the display cases on the first floor were replaced to match them to those on the ground floor.

In 2011, consent was granted to alter the hard landscaping immediately to the west of the primary façade. From September 2011, work has begun on a complete clean and overhaul of the glass roof over the court. This will be conducted in phases over a three-year period and the associated scaffolding will facilitate cleaning and conservation work on the internal stone and ironwork.

The University Museum continues to fulfil its original rôle as a museum and educational centre, serving research staff, graduates and undergraduates, school children, and members of the public.



Figure 5. The University Museum and Science Area in 2010, orientated with East at the top of the image

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SIGNIFICANCE

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3 SIGNIFICANCE

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 University Museum has been publically recognised by its designation as a Grade I listed building in 1954 (see **Appendix 1**); and it was included in Oxford City Council’s designation of its Central (City and University) Conservation Area in 1971, and in its subsequent revisions in 1974, 1981, 1985, and 1998 (see **Appendix 2**). The boundary of the Central (City and University) Conservation Area at this point is defined by the perimeter of the University Museum (to the extent that it cuts through its extensions), highlighting its perceived importance to the historical character of the city centre.

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

The University Museum contributes significantly to the character of Holywell Ward, Parks Road, and the University Science Area. Barely away from the splendour of Broad Street, Parks Road forms a pleasant, tree-shadowed precinct, marred only by its often-busy motor traffic. The austere majesty of its grand 19th and early 20th-century buildings creates a character of serious academic rigour, venerable rather than pompous.

The University Museum is, along with the eastern façade of Keble College, one of two defining factors in the character of this area: It is the combination of these two buildings which sets the tone for the entire area. The neo-gothic splendour of Keble College juxtaposed with the Ruskinian gothic of the University Museum, linked by a busy, tree-lined road and an open, green approach, creating a unique character of substantial aesthetic value.



Figure 6. The 1949 link between the University Museum and the Abbot’s Kitchen

The set-back façade of the University Museum when approached from directly opposite is striking, rising high, with the eye’s focus being drawn to the central arrangement and its projecting tower. The massing of the building is significant as it achieves at different points a sense of both verticality (due to the tower) and horizontal emphasis, due to the width of the building which dominates almost the entirety of the open space in front. The deep approach across the forecourt provides an appropriately monumental setting for the building, though the spaces to either side have been diminished as a consequence of later construction. The verticality of the building is dominant from a

distance, but this is diminished as one moves closer and the width of the building becomes emphasised and begins to dictate the experience.

The primary elevation of the building faces onto a plain, red-brick boundary wall belonging to Keble College, the impact of which on the area is not substantial; however, at its northern extent, the Museum faces onto the grade-I-listed South Quadrangle of Keble College. The University Museum presents a pleasant and highly-attractive face onto Parks Road which acts to mask the somewhat ugly sprawl of the Science Area behind. The Radcliffe Science Library and Inorganic Chemistry to the south feel part of a cohesive whole with the Museum, though they (especially the original section of the Radcliffe Science Library) are in need of cleaning. The 1949 arcaded link between the Museum and the Abbot's Kitchen feels a little incongruous where it connects and contrasts with the older construction (**Figure 6**), though ultimately it is not intrusive. The Robert Hooke Building (formerly Earth Sciences) to the north, however, feels like a very separate wing; something of an interloper connected to the Museum by intrusive infilling.

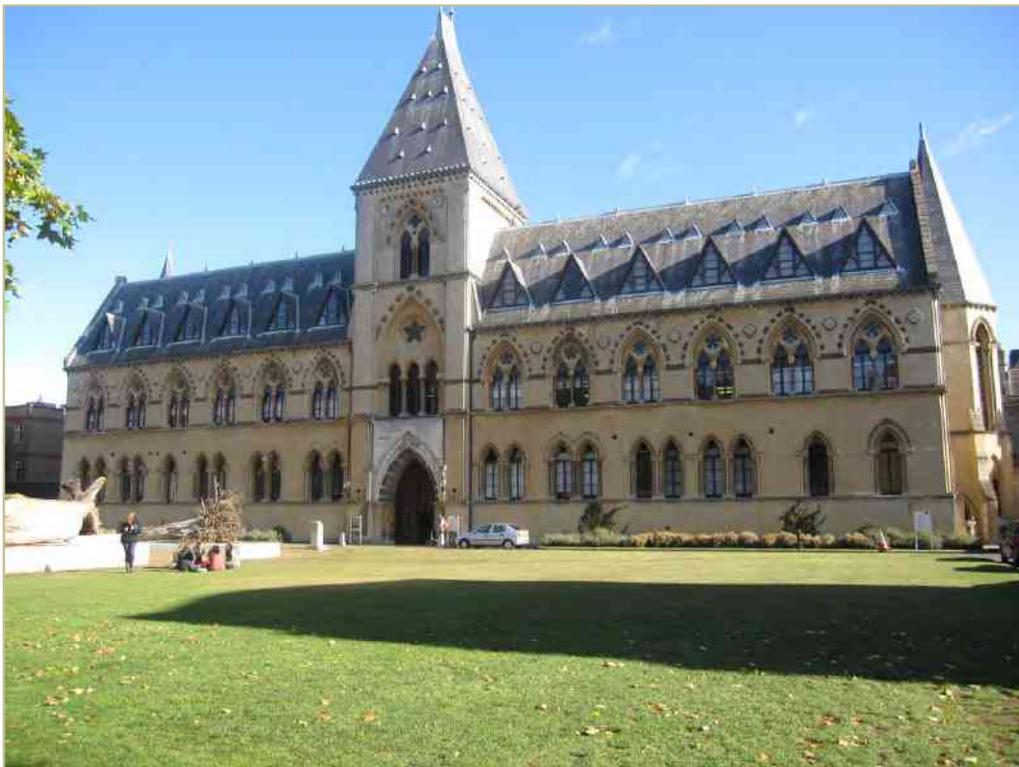


Figure 7. The University Museum in its immediate setting

From an oblique angle the tower gains added prominence and becomes the defining feature of the building. When viewed from the north on the eastern side of the road, even from just outside the north corner of the Robert Hooke Building, it is almost completely obscured. It is more visible from the western side of the road, where the projection of the other buildings is less able to obscure it, and the tower retains some impact from outside Keble College Lodge.

Keble College is a defining factor in this area and it retains the entirety of its historical character from the street. Though whilst the main body of the University retains its historical character, it is unfortunate that later additions and unsympathetic infilling has diminished its setting. The Museum was originally located in open parkland and this setting has certainly been lost.

The Museum cannot really be enjoyed from the rear, where it has been subsumed into the inelegant mass of the Science Area. The Pitt Rivers Museum does retain some position here, but the University Museum can only really be distinguished by its towers, and these only from specific points.

3.2 Architectural Significance

The heritage asset possesses substantial illustrative value. The University Museum marks Oxford's first major 19th-century building in the Gothic style: the style which would come to dominate construction within the city for the following 20 years; initially a manifestation of radicalism, it would soon become tied to conservatism within the University's political structure. In 1974 Pevsner described the Museum as the first '...High Victorian attack on large-scale building...' The work of Pugin and Ruskin had put forth Gothic as the most natural manifestation of architecture, perfect for a building designed to display the marvels of nature:

*'The second great principle of the Gothic Revivalists is that all art employed in decoration should be informative, conveying truthful statements about natural facts, if it conveys any statement. It may sometimes merely compose its decorations of mosaics, chequers, bosses, or other meaningless ornaments; but if it represents organic form (and in all important places it will represent it), it will give that form truthfully, with as much resemblance to nature as the necessary treatment of the piece of ornament in question will admit of [e.g. Figure 8].'*¹³

The Museum was built in isolation within the expanse of the University Parks, with Keble College and the buildings of the Science Area all being erected later. The walls are built in Bath stone with Red Bristol sandstone and Hornton ironstone dressings (**Figure 7**).

*'The Museum's bold, almost symmetrical façade, with its pointed central tower, has no ecclesiastical or monastic overtones, and is completely free of any aura of 'collegiate Gothic'. The main inspiration comes from the medieval secular architecture of northern Europe, especially the Low Countries, though the almost free-standing chemistry laboratory to the south was based on the 14th-century kitchen at Glastonbury Abbey.'*¹⁴



Figure 8. Detail of carving on a pillar base in main court

¹³ Acland, H.W., and Ruskin, J., *op.cit.*, 50-53.

¹⁴ Tyack, G., *op.cit.*, 219.

The façade borrows from Brussels Town Hall, the Cloth Hall at Ypres, and the Cloth Hall at Bruges, though with less emphasis being placed on the tower than in those examples. Garnham has remarked that the tower borrows more from Amiens Cathedral, though with echoes of the work of the contemporary Gothic proponent G.E. Street.¹⁵

‘The main UNIVERSITY MUSEUM comprises a façade reminiscent of a Flemish cloth hall, with side wings which together form three sides of the spectacular glazed hall which houses most of the main exhibits. The façade, in smooth buff ashlar with some banded detailing in reddish-brown ashlar, runs north-south and facing west. It is of two storeys, with triangular dormers and ventilators piercing the grey-green slate roof. At the centre is a tall, three-storey, tower with a steeply-pitched hipped roof; at the base of the tower is the main door. This, and the six bays of windows along the façade to either side (the first-floor windows more complex and regularly spaced than those below), is in an interpretation of the Early English style. About a third of the windows, and the door surround, are richly carved with naturalistic detail executed by the Irish O’Shea brothers and their nephew Edward Whellan...Set back behind both rear corners of the façade are angular stair turrets with tall, conical, roofs.’¹⁶

The elaborately sculpted entrance portal (**Section 4 Chapter Cover**) is by John Hungerford Pollen (1820-1902), a Catholic convert and colleague of Cardinal Newman. Pollen was a friend of William Morris, John Ruskin, and Richard Tyrwhitt (who painted the murals in the Director’s Office) and an active figure in Victorian Oxford’s artistic community. He also designed the sculpted entrance to Tyrwhitt’s house at 62 Banbury Road, now part of Kellogg College, as well as working on the ceiling of Merton College Chapel and the Pre-Raphaelites’ paintings in the Oxford Union. The carving was executed by the famed pre-Raphaelite sculptor Thomas Woolner (1825-92).

Beyond its illustrative value, as a development of Gothic architecture in Oxford, the aesthetic value of the exterior of the heritage asset is substantial despite its unfinished ornamentation. It is, however, the interior court (**Figure 10**) which is of the greatest architectural significance, illustrative and aesthetic:

‘The double-volume glazed court, 110 by 110 feet, is divided into five bays by iron columns and the arched roof they support on a A:B:A:B:A rhythm, with the wide central bay being taller than those on either side. The court is surrounded by a two-storey brick-and-stone arcade which provides circulation. Throughout the University Museum, and especially its public spaces, the carved decoration (some again by the O’Sheas, the remainder completed by 1910), the incorporation of geological specimens, and most of all the innovative and



Figure 9. Detail of wrought-iron pillar capital

¹⁵ Garnham, T., *op.cit.*

¹⁶ Listed Building description (**Appendix 1**).

*highly ornamental cast iron work of the glazed hall...form exhibits in their own right. For instance, the stone columns of the arcades, most with the type of stone and its source inscribed on its base, incorporate exhibit and structural component while their capitals, carved with thistles, daisies, ivy, and honeysuckle, serve as an encyclopaedia of nature. So too the slender cast-iron shafts whose wrought iron capitals are formed into leaves of palm, oak, chestnut, and sycamore. Set against the columns supporting the ground-floor arcade are life-size statues of eminent scientists.*¹⁷



Figure 10. The central court looking East

The structural use of wrought iron in this way was a relatively new, if not cutting edge technology at the time: W. Fairbairn and R. Stephenson had used tubular wrought iron to support great masonry piers on the Britannia Bridge over the Menai Straits in 1850 and Isambard Kingdom Brunel created a glazed roof supported by wrought iron over Paddington Station in 1854. No previous use had the aesthetic impact of Deane and Woodward's glazed roof, which remains striking to this day. The experience of entering the building involves

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

moving from a solid façade into a darkened antechamber (which feels, more than anything else, like entering a narthex) surrounded on all sides by solid stone and then through a closed portal into the light and splendour of the court; an experience that the solidity of the exterior façade cannot prepare the visitor for.

The cast- and wrought-iron roof arrangement is of substantial aesthetic value, an immediately-striking edifice of singular quality: ‘A rare feeling of fantasy is engendered by the interior of this museum, especially when the iron decorations of the glass roof are glimpsed through the bones of a skeleton, while one’s body rests against a Gothic column.’¹⁸ The construction as a whole is of international significance, but the incredible value of its individual components should not be ignored. Each capital, each decorative element, stone or metal, is unique and drawn from nature, harkening to Ruskinian ideals.¹⁹ Whilst they are significant as a group, the aesthetic value of each individual piece is also significant (**Figure 9**).

The rooms around the court were in many cases ‘originally double height and open to the roof...although incrementally since the later 19th Century these have generally been subdivided horizontally...Throughout these rooms there is much rich decorative work: carved and painted woodwork, painted walls and ceilings, door furniture, carved stone fireplaces, and cast iron grates.’²⁰

The 28 statues and busts within the court are of substantial aesthetic value. They were carved in Caen Stone and represent various famous scientists ranging two-and-a-half millennia, from the 5th-century Aegean to 19th-century England, as well as the Prince Consort (1819-1861) and Benjamin Woodward himself. The statues were paid for by subscription and only 19 were actually completed.

The University Museum remains a building of international significance with substantial internal and external aesthetic value. It has illustrative value as an example of the application of Ruskinian principles and of the impact of the Gothic Revival on Oxford. Its influence dominated Oxford for the following 20 years and was felt more widely:

*‘In common with other innovative buildings, the influence of the Oxford University Museum was exerted even before its completion. It influenced G.G. Scott’s Hamburg Rathaus project of 1855-56, to be followed by further Scott designs and the town halls of E.W. Godwin at Northampton in 1861 and Congleton in 1864, and other buildings right up to the end of the century. As a building type, the influence of the enclosed court plan of the museum continues to be felt strongly today.’*²¹

¹⁸ Betjeman, J., *An Oxford University Chest* (London, 1938) 175.

¹⁹ Acland, H.W., and Ruskin, J., *op.cit.*, 52; ‘The third great principle of the Gothic revival is that all architectural ornamentation should be executed by the men who design it, and should be of various degrees of excellence...’

²⁰ Listed Building description (**Appendix 1**).

²¹ Haward, B., *op.cit.*, 27.

3.3 Archaeological Significance

The University Parks and the Science Area have a rich and relatively-continuous history of occupation as indicated by: Bronze Age barrows (late third millennium BC), with evidence for Iron Age infilling of the double-ditched barrow in the Science Area; ring ditches suggesting Iron Age settlement; Roman earthworks; a Roman burial and several ditches near the Lindemann Building; mediaeval (post-1066) ridge and furrow, suggesting an intensive agricultural use in this period; Civil War earthworks; and post-mediaeval field boundaries. The Clarendon Laboratory's foundation trenches occupy some 4 m-deep trenches which formed part of Oxford's Civil War defences.

Considering the wealth of nearby archaeological material, it is likely that there is some significant material, with potential evidential value, preserved on the site.

3.4 Historical Significance

The building holds substantial illustrative value as an example of 19th-century attitudes towards science and nature. It is an example of a particularly-early attempt to place the Sciences in a prominent position within a university, institutions that had traditionally been dominated by the Arts. The Museum marks a new-found appreciation of the position of the ascendant Sciences. It also encapsulates an epoch where the science of nature was studied but also treated with a religious reverence, as exhibited by the building's elaborate decorative scheme.

Both the decorative scheme and the building itself are indicative of contemporary Ruskinian principles.²² The decorative scheme represents the individual talents of the artisans, with every piece being unique. Equally, the construction itself lacks any sterile uniformity; in the roof space (**Figure 11**), for instance, each rafter beam is distinctive, with the rafter brackets meeting them to varying degrees at different points, and the trusses possessing individual characters, yet the entire affair works as a whole on both structural and aesthetic grounds.

The statuary within the main court has association value with the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, for instance Thomas Woolner carved the statues of Francis Bacon and the Prince Consort and Alexander Munro carved

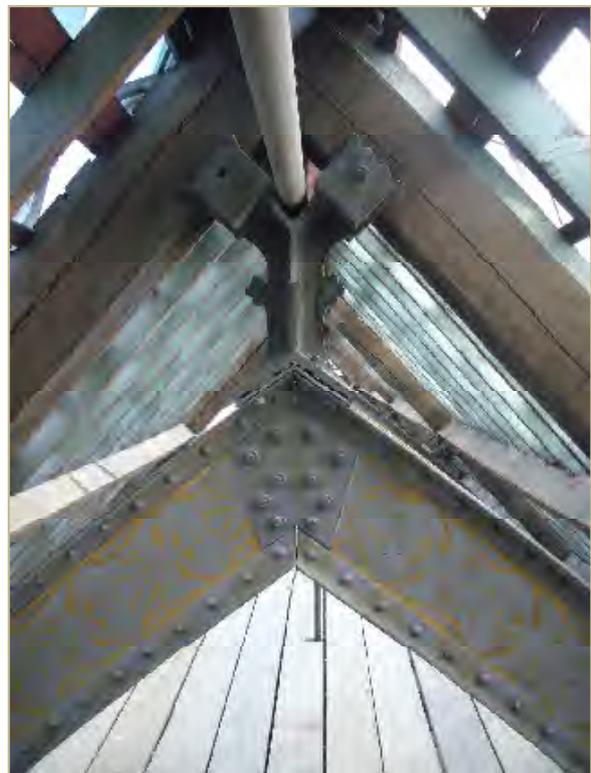


Figure 11. Rafters, trusses, and brackets within the roof space

²² *Supra.* 19.

Hippocrates, Galileo, Isaac Newton, Humphrey Davy, Gottfried Leibnitz, and James Watt, as well as the evocative medallion of Woodward. Equally, the Museum's personal association with Ruskin (beyond the application of Ruskinian principals) is of some note: 'Ruskin himself gave advice and encouragement, and erected one of the columns with his own hand; it is said that the workmen took it down and re-erected it.'²³ Ruskin is also reported to have designed one of the windows.²⁴ The direct interaction and association of some of the most important figures in 19th-century Art with the heritage asset is of some significance.

The Museum also has association value as the setting for various events of scientific importance. The Wilberforce-Huxley debate on Darwin's theory of evolution, held in the Hope Library on 30th June 1860, is considered one of the most important developments in the acceptance of Darwin's theories by the scientific community and the public at large. Equally, the world's first demonstration of wireless telegraphy was made in the University Museum in 1894. The building retains social and historical value as the setting for events of unique significance in human history.

3.5 Significance as a museum, research, and teaching space

The University Museum continues to be an important teaching and research space for the science community within the University. It contains a 300-seat lecture theatre, one of the largest within the University, which is utilised for undergraduate teaching as well as seminars and public lectures.²⁵ The peripheral spaces of the building are utilised as laboratories and teaching and research spaces. It also holds substantial and internationally-significant collections of entomology (over 5 million specimens), geology (375,000 specimens), mineralogy (30,000 specimens), petrology (50,000 specimens), and zoology (250,000 specimens).

The Museum's tower is the nesting ground for a significant colony of European swifts, which has been the subject of a research study since May 1948, one of the longest continuous studies of a single bird species in the world.²⁶

As well as being an important centre for the teaching of sciences within the University, the Museum is an important visitor attraction within Oxford. It is popular as a fun, educational attraction and a focus for school groups and families, running regular events. The Museum is also hired out for public events. Equally, its forecourt is used as the setting for plays and performances, as well as public exhibitions and art like the current *Ghost Forest* exhibition or Paul Amey's 2009 *Giraffe and Hunting Dogs*.

The Museum continues to operate successfully in its original function, as a public museum and as a first-class learning environment.

²³ Rice Oxley, L., *Oxford Renowned* (London, 1925).

²⁴ Acland, H.W., and Ruskin, J., *op.cit.*, 109.

²⁵ University Museum website; <http://www.oum.ox.ac.uk/visiting/events1.htm>, accessed 4th November 2011.

²⁶ <http://www.oum.ox.ac.uk/learning/pdfs/swifts.pdf>, accessed 14th November 2011.



VULNERABILITIES

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4 VULNERABILITIES

The ability of the University Museum to fulfil its current function

The University Museum continues to fulfil much the same function as it was originally designed to, that of an institution for the study of Science and Nature, including a public museum and spaces for teaching and research. The Museum was designed for this function and is well suited to it, notably the naturally-lit glazed court with fitted exhibitions in the form of the naturalistic carving and the varied geological specimens that make up the stone columns. The continued use of the University Museum in this form is central to the character of this hugely significant building and is important to its ongoing maintenance and conservation. The listed building has retained its significant character because the building has remained in use and has been maintained and cared for.

Current usage funds the upkeep and conservation of the heritage asset and ensures its continued existence and significance. The usage does not threaten the significant features and the heritage asset's Grade I listing ensures that any future alterations operate within the constraints of an accepted understanding of the building's significance as a heritage asset. Whilst some limited change into the future will be inevitable in order to maintain the active use of the heritage asset, the unique character of the building should be respected in any future plans.

4.1 Accessibility

The ability of the Museum to be accessed and enjoyed by as wide an audience as possible is central to its significance. The significance of the heritage asset is lessened if any person who wishes to legitimately use and enjoy the building is hampered in doing so by inadequate access. The accessibility of the building is hampered by its original design, the lack of consideration given to accessibility being typical of design in the period, but efforts have been made to adapt the building for disabled access. The main entrance is via a narrow wicket door followed by an antechamber and 8 steps with a central handrail, and is not appropriate for disabled use (**Figure 12**). Disabled access is via a side entrance, through the arcaded corridor to the south of the main building. From here there is an internal corridor and then a lift to the main court.

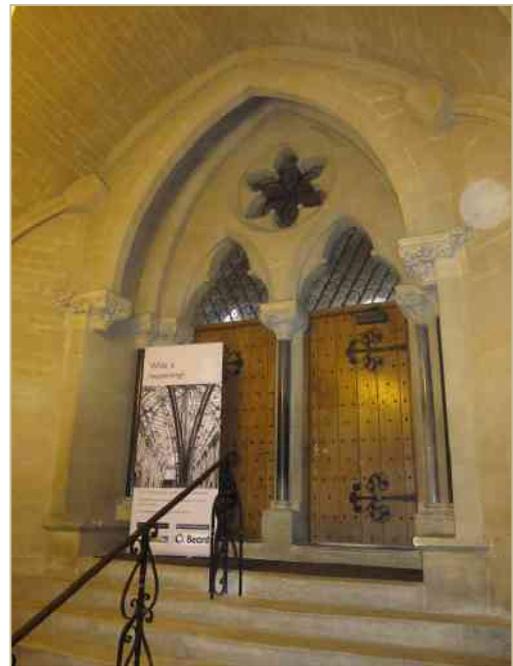


Figure 12. Antechamber and steps to the central court

Within the Museum there is a further internal lift to the upper galleries and lecture theatre (the original staircases in the flanking towers being inappropriate for disabled use), and a platform lift down to the Pitt Rivers Museum. There is a disabled lavatory accessed via a

platform lift and the signage and labelling across the site has been designed with disabled users in mind. The natural lighting within the glazed central court is excellent and there is a hearing loop in the building. There is regularly-spaced seating available around the central court for the use of disabled visitors.²⁷

The limitations of access through of the main entrance are unfortunate as ideally all users should be able to enter through the same point and move freely around the building without disadvantage.

4.2 Maintenance

4.2.1 Exterior Elevations and Setting

The exterior elevations of the University Museum are of high significance. The primary, western elevation is of particular aesthetic and historical value, both in terms of the form of the structure and its unique decorations. It contributes substantially to the character of the surrounding area as well as being significant in its own right. The northern and southern elevations are objectively less significant than the western elevation, but both retain a great deal of significant material; however, both have suffered badly from later infilling which has (especially in the case of the northern elevation) marred and effectively obscured the elevations. The eastern elevation has been obscured in its entirety by the extension of the Pitt Rivers Museum, as anticipated in the original design.

The western elevation (and to a much smaller extent the northern and southern elevations) contributes extensively to its setting. For the most part it has aged well but it is open to weathering, erosion, potential vandalism, and pollution; damage which could detract from the significance of the heritage asset. The western elevation is currently in a clean and attractive state; however, some of the projecting decorative elements have suffered (**Figure 13**) and there is some damage to the arch of the main entrance (**Section 4 Chapter Cover**).

The roof is of some significance (**Figure 14**). The slate-roofed section is arranged in coloured bands of green and black. In some areas this pattern is difficult to discern due to their current state. The glass roof over the central court is of particular significance internally but has been an ongoing maintenance issue since its construction. It is currently being completely overhauled, as it was in



Figure 13. Damage to capital on southern tower of western elevation

²⁷ <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/access/departments/musnathist.shtml> , accessed 7th November 2011.

1929 (southern stretch) and 1956-7. Due to its nature and design, the glass roof will continue to require particular maintenance consideration throughout its life.



Figure 14. The glazed roof from above facing north-westwards. Also note the banding of the slates on the roof to the rear right of the image

The landscape setting of the building has changed substantially during its existence. It was originally situated in open parkland (**Figure 15**), with the approach through the parks from the north being particularly attractive. This setting has been completely lost through the development of the University Science Area. The erosion of this setting began very early on with the construction of the Clarendon Laboratory to the north in 1867-72 but became more rapid into the 20th Century. The approaches from both the north (**Figure 16**) and the south are now blocked by later construction and the Museum can only be approached from the front.



Figure 15. The approach to the Museum through the Parks in the 1920s

The approach from the west has retained some of its character and is a useful and popular space, providing an appropriately monumental approach to the primary façade of the building. It is enjoyed by visitors as a waiting and recreation area. It has suffered somewhat from the amount of parking in front of the Abbot's Kitchen, which does detract from the character of this building. As a general rule the grassed areas are more effective than the paved sections; however, improvements to the paved section, bringing them closer to the original design, have recently been granted planning permission.



Figure 16. The current view along the northern façade looking westwards

4.2.2 Interior Spaces²⁸

The glazed central court is the most significant space in the building. This space consists of several highly significant elements, notably: the carvings and stonework; the iron columns, arches, and associated metalwork; the glass roof in general, including the aforementioned ironwork and the painted rafters; the brickwork and barrel vaults around the courtyard; the original joinery; the tiled and paved floors; and the statuary. The specimen cases within the court have original elements at their bases but have been substantially altered and are of limited significance. The original layout has been retained in the central court, whereas elsewhere in the building later subdivision has altered the layout somewhat.

As the interior features are in regular use and for the most part experience greater human interaction than the external structure of the building, they are vulnerable to vandalism, accidents, and general wear and tear. Some of these issues should be mitigated assuming adequate security and maintenance regimes are in place, but ultimately these significant

²⁸ Oxford University Museum has produced a guide to the carvings of the central court: <http://www.oum.ox.ac.uk/learning/pdfs/columns.pdf>, accessed 15th November 2011.

elements will have limited lifespans. These lives can be lengthened as much as possible through regular, adequate monitoring and maintenance.

As a Grade I listed building any alteration, or repairs made with non-original materials, will require listed building consent.

4.2.2.1 Carvings and Stonework

The stonework within the building is of the highest quality, especially the carvings within the central court. The bases and capitals of the columns around the court are carved into the likeness of various flora and fauna of the British Isles, with the pillars themselves being of differing types of marble with carved labels. The carvings by the O'Shea Brothers, exclusively on the lower floor, are the finest work in the building, retaining a tremendous sense of vitality and verisimilitude. The work by Farmer and Brindley at the gallery level is of a high standard, but objectively less significant. There is also some high-quality carving on the pillar capitals of the antechamber. Consideration should be given to the cleaning of these pieces, and is being undertaken as part of the overhaul of the roof.

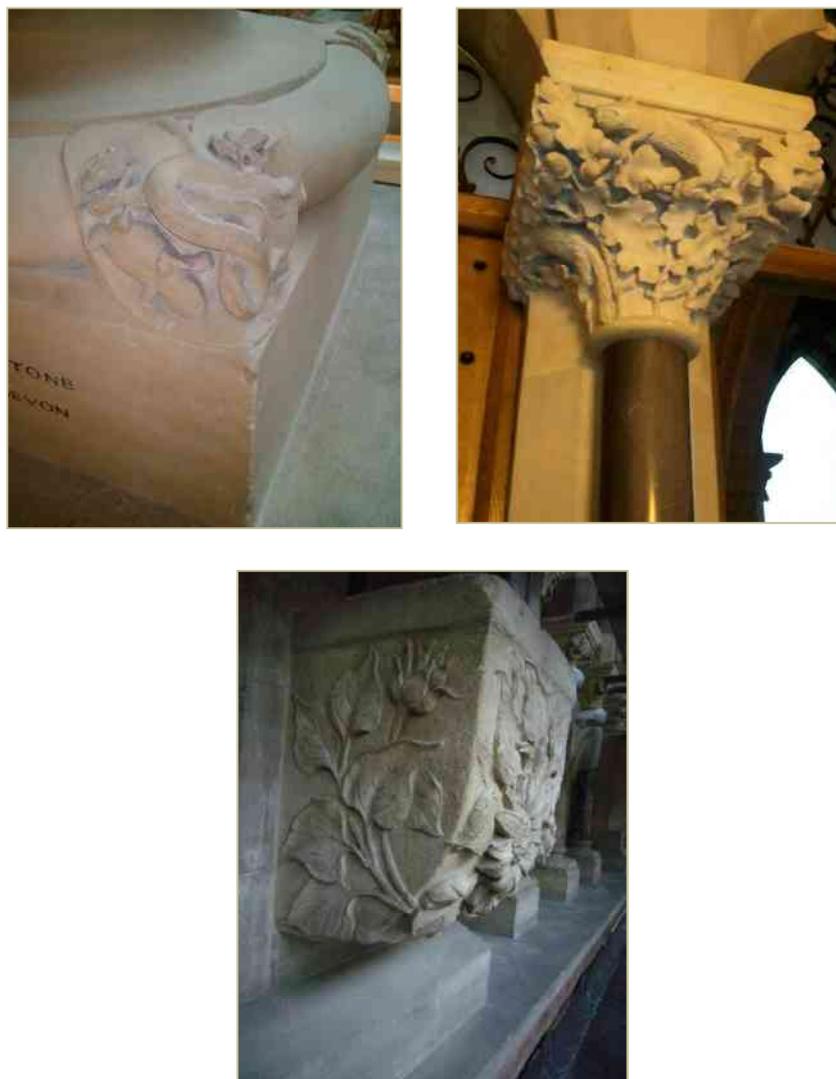


Figure 17. Top left, carving on base on ground floor or central court. Top right, carving of a squirrel on capital in the antechamber. Bottom, Carving at gallery level

4.2.2.2 Iron columns, arches, and associated metalwork

The tubular cast iron columns are one of the most striking features of the central court, drawing the eye up towards the unique roof. The columns have cuffs along their lengths marked with rosettes and rise towards their wrought-iron capitals which, like the carved stone bases around the perimeter of the court, are rendered in the likeness of flora, each piece being unique. The capitals are of exceptional quality and high significance, though consideration should be given to their cleaning. From the height of the capitals spring the iron arches, which form the trusses for the rafters above. Each pair of these forms a sharply-pointed arch, emphasising the gothic, cathedral-like nature of the central court. The arches are painted along their length and, as with the capitals, are in need of conscientious cleaning (a requirement that was identified in 1953 but deemed too costly).²⁹ The horizontal trusses are decorated to a similar standard to the pillar capitals.

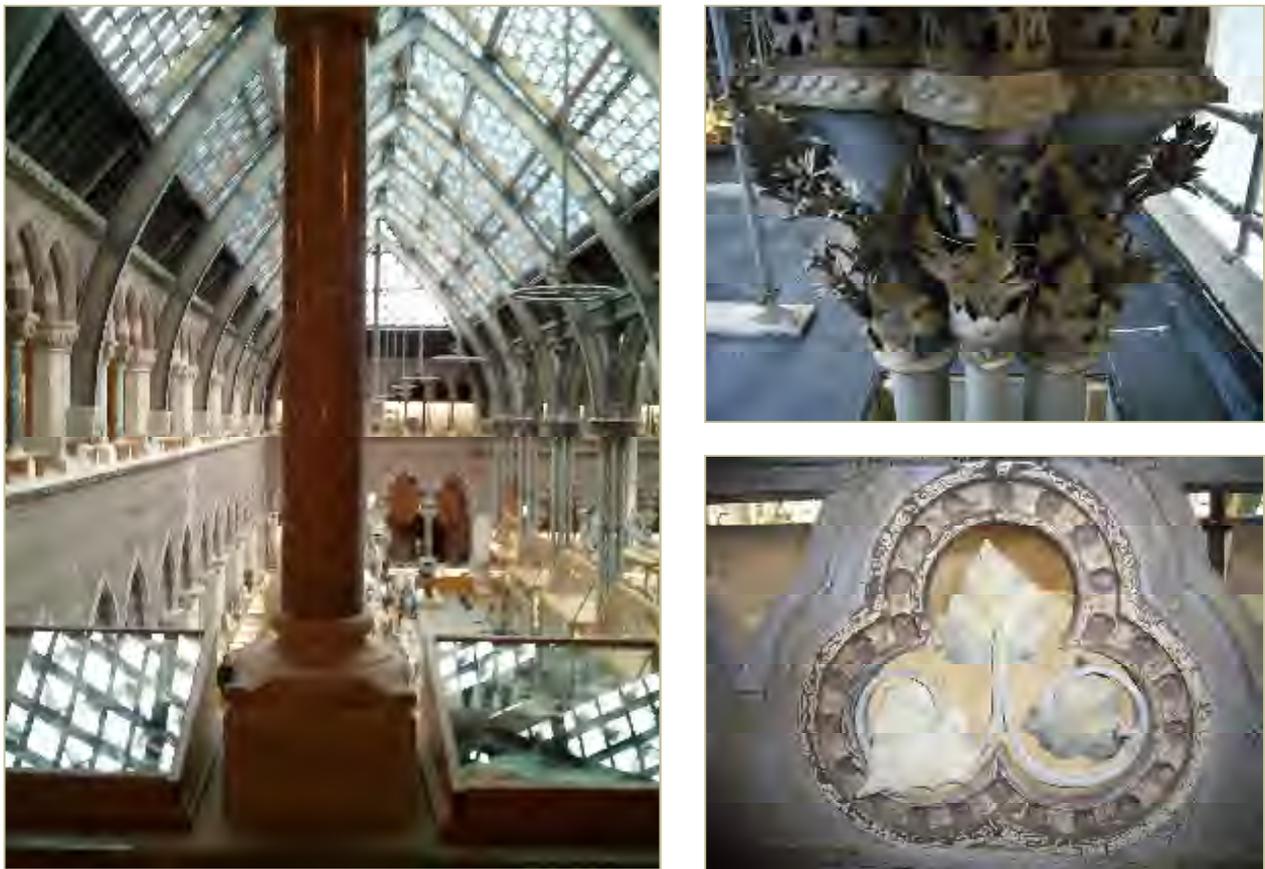


Figure 18. Left, iron columns and arches in the northernmost aisle of the central court. Top right, wrought iron floral decoration on pillar capitals. Bottom right, wrought iron floral decoration on horizontal truss

²⁹ The ironwork is being cleaned as part of ongoing conservation work associated with the glazed ceiling.

4.2.2.3 The glass roof and rafters

The layered glass roof, supported by the cast iron columns and arches along with painted wooden rafters (e.g. **Figure 11**), is a primary feature of the central court. As mentioned above, the design around a naturally-lit glazed court has been influential in the design of museums to this day (e.g. the glazing of the Great Court at the British Museum in 2001). The diagonal pattern of the glass and the natural light and feeling of openness that they provide is of paramount importance to the character of the central court. The glass roof has been a maintenance issue since its construction and is certainly in need of careful cleaning; such work is currently being undertaken as part of a staggered overhaul of the entire roof.



Figure 19. Left, detail of the glass slates from above. Right, the effect of the glazed roof from below

4.2.2.4 Brickwork and barrel vaults

The gallery around the central court is supported by a series of red brick barrel vaults resting on the pillars mentioned in **Section 4.2.2.1**. Inscribed brick arches mirror the stone arches between the pillars and support the vaults. The brickwork is of a high standard and contributes significantly to the character of the central space by forming an attractive perimeter. There may have been some intention to decorate these areas with painted friezes as part of the original design; however, the fair-faced brickwork does not feel unfinished and interacts well with the space as a whole. The barrel-vaulted ambulatory provides additional space for exhibits, as well as providing a covered setting for the reception desk and shop in the circulation space without detracting from the significance of the central court itself.



Figure 20. Left, brickwork and banded stone arches on the western end of the central court. Right, barrel vaulting along the ambulatory at the western end of the central court

4.2.2.5 Joinery and ironmongery and decoration

The building retains a great deal of its original joinery. The rooms off the central court contain carved and painted woodwork, as well as original doors and in many places original fireplaces with the associated ironmongery. The Director's Office contains wall murals painted by Revd. Richard St. John Tyrwhitt in 1859-60. These are very pleasant, though they have suffered from scuffing and craquelure. The joinery of the ceiling above the gallery of the central court is a very pleasant affair. As mentioned above, e.g. **Figure 11**, the woodwork associated with the ceiling is of a high quality and often decorated, in an attractive but seemingly haphazard manner, making (as with so much in this building) each piece unique.



Figure 21. Left, joinery on ceiling over gallery of central court. Right, original joinery and door in Director's Office. Bottom, wall mural in Director's Office

4.2.2.6 Flooring

The gallery around the central court is floored in an attractive pattern of square red and black tiles, which contributes effectively to the character of the space. The floor of the central court itself is constructed of patterns of stone slabs in square and triangular pieces and interspaced with black iron heating grates. Along the central “nave” of the court the flooring is covered with a protective non-slip carpet.

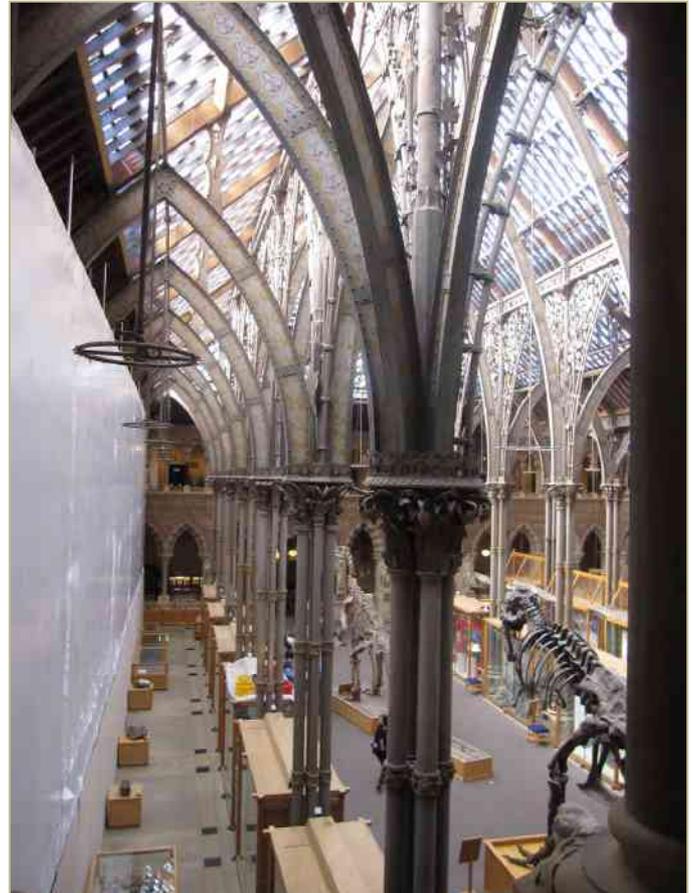


Figure 22. Left, detail of the tiles at the gallery level. Right, central court and flooring looking westwards

4.2.2.7 Statues

As mentioned above (**Section 3.4**) the statuary within the central court is of some significance. There 28 statues and busts within the court, representing various famous scientists ranging two-and-a-half millennia, from the 5th-century Aegean to 19th-century England, as well as the Prince Consort (1819-1861) and Benjamin Woodward himself. Of the 28 statues only 19 were actually finished and there also remain some empty plinths.³⁰



Figure 23. Statue of Francis Bacon at the western end of the central court

³⁰ Oxford University Museum has produced a guide to the statues of the central court: <http://www.oum.ox.ac.uk/learning/pdfs/statues.pdf>, accessed 15th November 2011.

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5

CONSERVATION
POLICY

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5 CONSERVATION POLICY

Having established the significance of the University Museum as a heritage asset, and having identified ways in which the significance of the University Museum 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 to be an active tool for the regular maintenance and long-term management of the University Museum. It needs to be reviewed regularly, and revised as appropriate to take account of additional knowledge and changing priorities.

5.1 **The University Museum's continued use as a public museum, teaching space, and research facility is important to its historical and continued significance. Permit, in line with NPPF paragraphs 131, 132, 133, and 134, alterations intended to facilitate its continued use in this way**

The continued use of the University Museum as a public museum and educational facility concerned with the natural sciences (as emphasised by its architecture and decoration) represents an important aspect of its overall significance. The building was designed to be used and enjoyed rather than to serve as a static monument. Limited alterations will inevitably be required to allow it to retain this significance in line with modern standards and requirements (for instance, specimen storage standards). If alteration is required in the future it should be permitted with the following provisos:

- Any alterations must be sympathetic to the University Museum'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 'wholly 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 **In order to ensure that the University Museum 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**, access to the building has been improved in recent years but the original design does present some difficulty in improving access further. Access will remain a major concern in any plans developed for the site; a vigorous effort should be made to improve access to the site, with the University seeking to exceed its statutory obligations and always viewing this as part of an ongoing process.

5.2 Note that the University Museum is a Grade I listed building and ensure that appropriate consents are obtained for works to the interior and exterior of the building

In order to ensure the heritage asset's significance, alterations may be required in the future, and due to the listed status of the building, even minor routine repairs in the significant spaces 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.

5.3 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.

5.4 Refer to this Conservation Plan 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.

5.5 Any redevelopment needs to respect the character of the surrounding area and the University Museum's setting adjacent to listed buildings (e.g. the Inorganic Chemistry Laboratory, the Radcliffe Science Library, Museum Lodge, the Clarendon-Townsend Building, and Keble College)

The University Museum is significant to the character of Parks Road and the north-eastern portion of the Central (City and University) Conservation Area (**Section 3.1**), forming an axial point for the development of the later buildings around it. Any future alteration should be sympathetic to this fact, and should not diminish its rôle in the character of the area.

5.6 Items of particular concern

5.6.1 Landscape Setting

The setting of the University Museum has been diminished by the development of the Science Area and notably the unsympathetic infilling of the areas adjacent to the northern and southern façades. Consideration should be given to the improvement of these areas. The area immediately in front of the building is an effective space, but could be improved, notably through the rationalisation of the paved areas.

5.7 Conservation of specific factors contributing to overall significance

The University Museum possesses various internal and external features of special significance (**Section 3.1, 3.2, and 4.2**). An effort should be made to identify and conserve

original architectural features, and keep these in use where possible in line with **Section 5.1**; however, it is accepted that all materials have a natural lifespan and some degree of change must be permitted to keep the building safe, usable, and generally fit for function. Some materials, such as the non-decorative elements of the external stonework, will have a very long life expectancy if given routine maintenance; others are impermanent and may need periodic replacement. Within the framework of understanding and valuing what is present in the building a degree of ongoing change is inevitable.

5.7.1 Any alterations to be made to the exterior elevations will respect their significance and contribution to the character of the surrounding area

The exterior elevations, most notably the western elevation, are central to the significance of the University Museum. The decorative elements of the elevations, including the carvings around the windows, are of some significance. The southern and (particularly) northern elevations have suffered from later infilling which has rendered them obscured and some effort could be made to improve their setting (see **Section 5.6.1**); otherwise, any alterations that affect the elevations could significantly affect the character of the building and its impact on the surrounding area. Any alterations that do affect the elevations will be undertaken with a full understanding of and respect for this significance and character in line with **Section 5.1** and **5.1.1**.

5.7.2 The carvings and stonework will remain relatively unchanged

The carvings and stonework within the central court and elsewhere are integral to the significance of the University Museum. They are central to the building's significance as a heritage asset and contribute substantial aesthetic value. They are original (or in some cases early) features of substantial significance. Any alterations that negatively affect them should be avoided and only undertaken with a full understanding of and respect for their significance in line with **Section 5.1** and **5.1.1**.

5.7.3 The iron columns, arches, and associated metalwork will remain relatively unchanged

The ironwork in the central court is of international significance and contributes substantial aesthetic value. Consideration could be given to their cleaning and particularly the conservation of the paintwork. They are central to the character of the court and it is anticipated that, excepting necessary conservation, they will remain relatively unchanged. Any alterations that are planned that may affect the ironwork will only be undertaken with a full understanding of and respect for their character in line with **Section 5.1** and **5.1.1**.

5.7.4 The glass roof and associated wood and paint work will remain relatively unchanged

The glass roof and the associated wood and paint work are of paramount importance to the character of the central court. The disposition of the woodwork and associated paintwork represents the unique and unrepeatable efforts of individual craftsmen, very much in the Ruskinian vein. The glass roof requires particularly-regular maintenance and will ultimately require periodic overhauling and cleaning (as is currently being undertaken); however, it is anticipated that it will remain in something akin to its original form. Any alterations that are

planned that may affect the roof will only be undertaken with a full understanding of and respect for their character in line with **Section 5.1** and **5.1.1**.

5.7.5 The brickwork around the central court will remain relatively unchanged

The brickwork surrounding the central court is of a high standard and contributes effectively to the character of the area, without being a major focus. Any planned alterations that affect the brickwork will only be undertaken with a full understanding of and respect for its character in line with **Section 5.1** and **5.1.1**.

5.7.6 The original joinery, ironmongery, and decoration in the central court and surrounding rooms will remain relatively unchanged

The building is fortunate enough to retain many original features which add aesthetic value and contribute to its significance. Any alterations that are planned to these elements will only be undertaken with a full understanding of and respect for their character in line with **Section 5.1** and **5.1.1**.

5.7.7 The tiles in the gallery and flooring slabs in the central court will remain relatively unchanged

These are attractive original features of substantial aesthetic value and any alterations that are planned to them will only be undertaken with a full understanding of and respect their character in line with **Section 5.1** and **5.1.1**.

5.7.8 The statues in the central court will remain relatively unchanged

The statues in the central court are of substantial historic and aesthetic value. They were all produced for the Museum and are linked to it in both their subject matter and in the circumstances of their construction. Munro's bust of Woodward in particular is linked directly to the Museum. It is anticipated that these statues will remain within the central court. Any alterations that are planned that will affect them will only be undertaken with a full understanding of and respect for their contribution to the character of the space in line with **Section 5.1** and **5.1.1**.

5.8 In the vein of NPPF paragraph 110, efforts should be made to ensure that the University Museum'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.'

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

This is an architecturally significant building containing collections of particular value and academic significance. It is imperative for the safety of the building and its collections that a clear and up-to-date disaster recovery plan exists.

5.10 If during subsequent renovations or alterations any excavation work is carried out beneath the University Museum or the 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 excavation takes place

There is the potential for significant material across the site (**Section 3.3**), and should any excavation work be carried out, an assessment of the archaeological potential should be made. This should include at least a desk-based assessment, but possibly geophysics and trial trenching. A watching brief will almost certainly be required for any excavation.

5.11 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

5.11.1 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 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*.

5.11.2 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.

5.11.3 The Conservation Plan will be circulated to all senior staff who work in the University Museum and to all other members of the University who have responsibility for the building or its contents

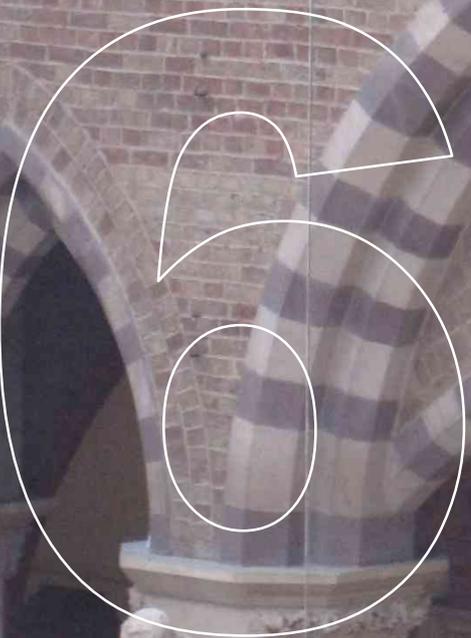
The value of the heritage asset needs to be appreciated by all senior staff managing or working in the building. Only in this way will the heritage asset be properly treated, repaired, and maintained.

5.11.4 The Conservation Plan will be made available to Oxford City Council, English Heritage, and any other party with 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.

5.12 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-year 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.



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- Historical plans, documents, photographs and correspondences courtesy of Oxford University Archives (Ref: MU 4).
- Additional historical plans, documents, photographs and correspondences courtesy of Oxford University Museum of Natural History.
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6.6 Image Credits

- Cover and chapter covers: Estates Services photographs.
- Figure 1: Adapted from Google Maps (see **Section 6.5**).
- Figures 2-3: Courtesy of Oxford University of Natural History Archives.
- Figure 4: Courtesy of Oxfordshire County Archives.
- Figure 5: Adapted from Bing Maps (see **Section 6.5**).
- Figures 6-14: Estates Services photographs.
- Figure 15: Courtesy of Oxford University of Natural History Archives.
- Figures 16-23: Estates Services photographs.

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APPENDICES

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7 Appendices

Appendix 1 Listed Building Description

List entry Summary

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.

Name: THE UNIVERSITY MUSEUM AND PITT RIVERS MUSEUM

List entry Number: 1081534

Location

THE UNIVERSITY MUSEUM AND PITT RIVERS MUSEUM, PARKS ROAD

The building may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County	District	District Type	Parish
Oxfordshire	Oxford	District Authority	

National Park: Not applicable to this List entry.

Grade: I

Date first listed: 12-Jan-1954

Date of most recent amendment: 25-Jun-2007

Legacy System Information

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System: LBS

UID: 245725

Asset Groupings

This list entry does not comprise part of an Asset Grouping. Asset Groupings are not part of the official record but are added later for information.

List entry Description

Summary of Building

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

Reasons for Designation

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

History

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

Details

612/5/114A PARKS ROAD 612/6/114A The University Museum and Pitt Rivers 12-JAN-54
Museum (Formerly listed as: PARKS ROAD THE UNIVERSITY MUSEUM)

GV I University Museum of 1855-60 by Sir Thomas Deane (1792-1871) and Benjamin Woodward (1816-1861); abutting to the rear the Pitt Rivers Museum of 1885-6 by T N Deane & Son.

MATERIALS: UNIVERSITY MUSEUM principally of Bath (Box Ground) stone with detailing in Red Bristol sandstone and Hornton Ironstone; tower cornice in Irish Mountain limestone; arch of porch in red Irish Limestone, green marlstone from Hornton and white Italian marble; slabs of Portland stone in the spandrels; Caen stone bases and caps to the arcade. Other materials include cast iron, slates, and 12 x12 inch glass slates. PITT RIVERS MUSEUM of yellow brick with some red stone; slate roof.

EXTERIOR: The main UNIVERSITY MUSEUM comprises a façade reminiscent of a Flemish cloth hall, with side wings which together form three sides of the spectacular glazed hall which houses most of the main exhibits. The façade, in smooth buff ashlar with some banded detailing in reddish-brown ashlar, runs north-south and facing west. It is of two storeys, with triangular dormers and ventilators piercing the grey-green slate roof. At the centre is a tall, three-storey, tower with a steeply-pitched hipped roof; at the base of the tower is the main door. This, and the six bays of windows along the façade to either side (the first-floor windows more complex and regularly spaced than those below), is in an interpretation of the Early English style. About a third of the windows, and the door surround, are richly carved with naturalistic detail executed by the Irish O'Shea brothers and their nephew Edward Whellan (who were dismissed before their work was completed). Set back behind both rear corners of the façade are angular stair turrets with tall, conical, roofs.

The PITT RIVERS MUSEUM, a large pitched-roof hall, is windowless to the north where the wall carries tall, blind, arcades and is pierced by a single, gothic, doorway. To the east it abuts the Human Anatomy building, while to the south the angle between it and the University Museum is infilled by the Pitt Rivers extension and a new staircase (neither included in the listing), both completed c2007.

INTERIOR: UNIVERSITY MUSEUM: The double-volume glazed court, 110 by 110 feet, is divided into five bays by iron columns and the arched roof they support on a A:B:A:B:A rhythm, with the wide central bay being taller than those to either side. The court is surrounded by a two-storey brick-and-stone arcade which provides circulation. Throughout the University Museum, and especially its public spaces, the carved decoration (some again by the O'Sheas, the remainder completed by 1910), the incorporation of geological specimens, and most of all the innovative and highly ornamental cast iron work of the glazed hall (by F A Skidmore of Coventry) form exhibits in their own right. For instance, the stone columns of the arcades, most with the type of stone and its source inscribed on its base, incorporate exhibit and structural component while their capitals, carved with thistles, daisies, ivy and honeysuckle, serve as an encyclopaedia of nature. So too the slender cast-iron shafts whose wrought iron capitals are formed into leaves of palm, oak, chestnut and sycamore. Set against the columns supporting the ground-floor arcade are life-size statues of eminent scientists (identified in Pevsner).

Set around the glazed court are what were originally rooms for professors and students, lecture rooms, a library, stores for collections, a dissecting room, and a porters' mess room. Some of these were originally double height and open to the roof (and in these instances the roof trusses were generally given a decorative treatment), although incrementally since the later C19 these have generally been subdivided horizontally by inserted floors serviced by new staircases. Throughout these rooms there is much rich decorative work: carved and painted woodwork, painted walls and ceilings, door furniture, carved stone fireplaces, and cast iron grates. Of particular note is the upper part (now the Director's Office) of the former Geological Lecture Room with geologically-themed gable-wall murals of 1859-60 by the Revd Richard St John Tyrwhitt (1827-95), vicar of St Mary Magdalen's in Oxford and a friend of Ruskin.

The PITT RIVERS MUSEUM is a gabled building of seven bays with nave and an aisle to either side created by round cast iron piers with decorative trusses. Two galleries, at first- and second-floor level run around the main open hall. Access to the galleries is via a staircase in the south-west corner of the building, while the hall itself is entered via a connecting door from the University Museum. Here, at the front of the museum, there is a shop and a display area inserted in the later C20; these areas are not of special interest.

HISTORY: The University Museum in Parks Road derives from an initiative of 1847 to create a science building and museum of natural history as finally the conservative museum introduced Natural Science to the curriculum. A meeting in 1849 determined that the planned museum should house 'all the materials explanatory of the organic beings placed upon the globe'. The driving forces behind this movement were David Williams, Warden of New College, and Dr Henry Ackland, Professor of Clinical Medicine, the latter a friend of John Ruskin with whom he travelled with Millais to Scotland in 1853, the year when the final part of Ruskin's 'Stones of Venice' appeared. Ruskin's beliefs, in the Gothic style - or rather the Italian Gothic one - and in the supreme influence of the workman's hand and of nature as a source of inspiration, probably influenced the selection of a design by Benjamin Woodward for the museum and its decorative treatment. A site was bought in 1854, and the building went up between 1855 and 1860. As architectural historian Howard Colvin has observed, this was what would today be called a centre for scientific studies and, besides a large area for displaying specimens, provided lecture rooms, laboratories, dissecting rooms and a library.

Attached to the south side of the original museum is the octagonal former Chemistry

Laboratory, modelled on the Abbot's Kitchen at Glastonbury Abbey (separately listed). The arcaded link which connects the two is of 1901. Behind the Chemistry Laboratory was the large curator's house; this was demolished in the 1950s.

In 1885-6 the Pitt Rivers Museum was added north-east of the museum to house the collections of the pioneer archaeologist and anthropologist General Augustus Henry Lane Fox Pitt Rivers which he had given to the University in 1884. The gift was made on condition that a museum was built to house it, and someone appointed to lecture on anthropology. The architect was T N Deane & Son. It was enlarged in 1907.

SOURCES: J Sherwood and N Pevsner, *The Buildings of England, Oxfordshire* (1974), pp.280-2; H Colvin, *Unbuilt Oxford* (1983), 125-34; B Haward, *Oxford University Museum: Its Architecture and Art* (1991); T Garnham, *Oxford Museum: Deane and Woodward* (1992); M Bowden, *Pitt Rivers* (1991); C Murray, *Exploring England's Heritage: Oxfordshire to Buckinghamshire* (1994), F. O'Dwyer, *The Architecture of Deane and Woodward* (1997), cap.5; 85-6; A Stanley and C Newall, *Pre-Raphaelite Vision: Truth to Nature* (2004), 162.

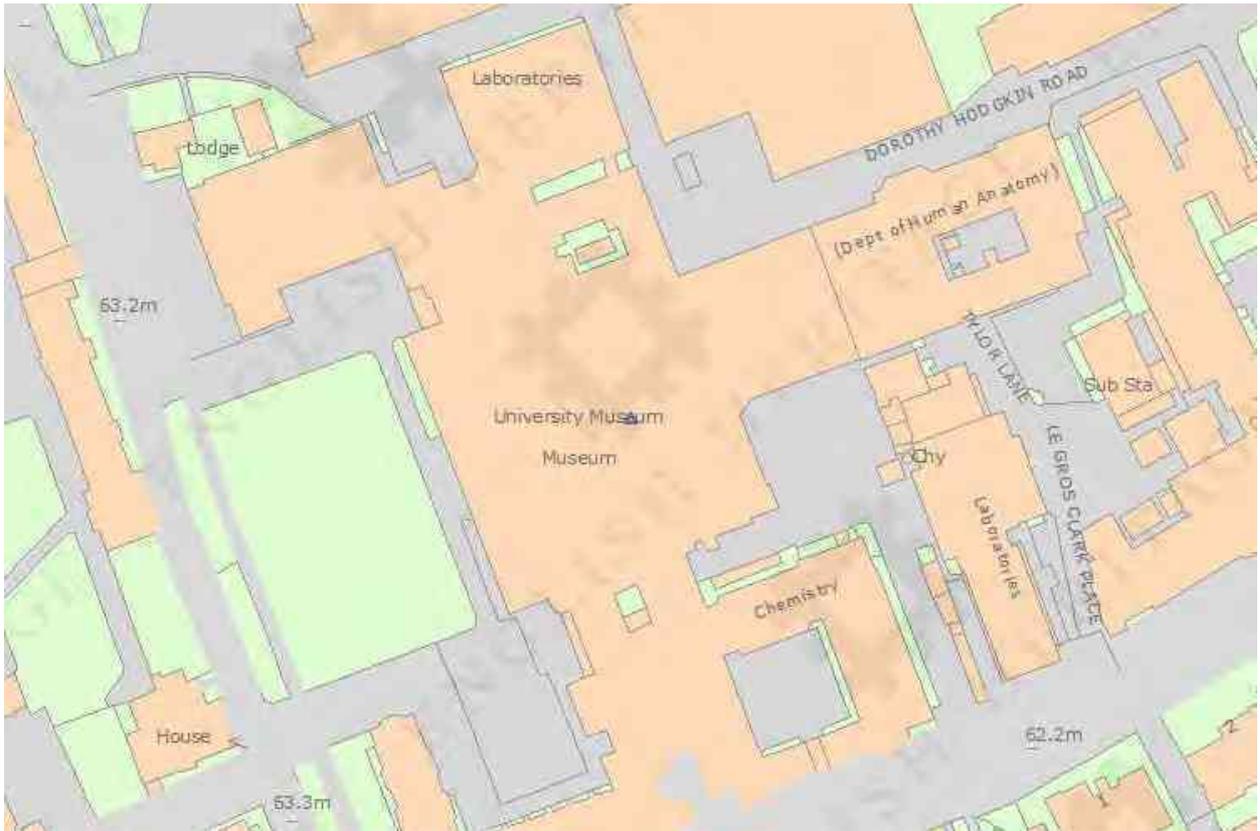
SUMMARY OF IMPORTANCE: The University Museum in Parks Road was built between 1855 and 1860 as a science building and museum of natural history as finally the study of science at Oxford was given importance. Designed by Benjamin Woodward, and probably heavily influenced by John Ruskin, the building comprises a main façade which resembles a Flemish cloth hall with a spectacular glazed exhibition hall behind. Throughout the museum the carved decoration, the incorporation of geological specimens, and most of all the innovative and highly ornamental cast iron work of the glazed hall form exhibits in their own right. Behind is T N Deane & Son's Pitt Rivers Museum of 1885-6, added to house the collections of the pioneer archaeologist and anthropologist General Augustus Henry Lane Fox Pitt Rivers. Together this forms one of the most significant and carefully detailed museum complexes of the mid-late C19, as well as being a seminal monument to Oxford's scientific awakening.

Selected Sources

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details

National Grid Reference: SP 51483 06927

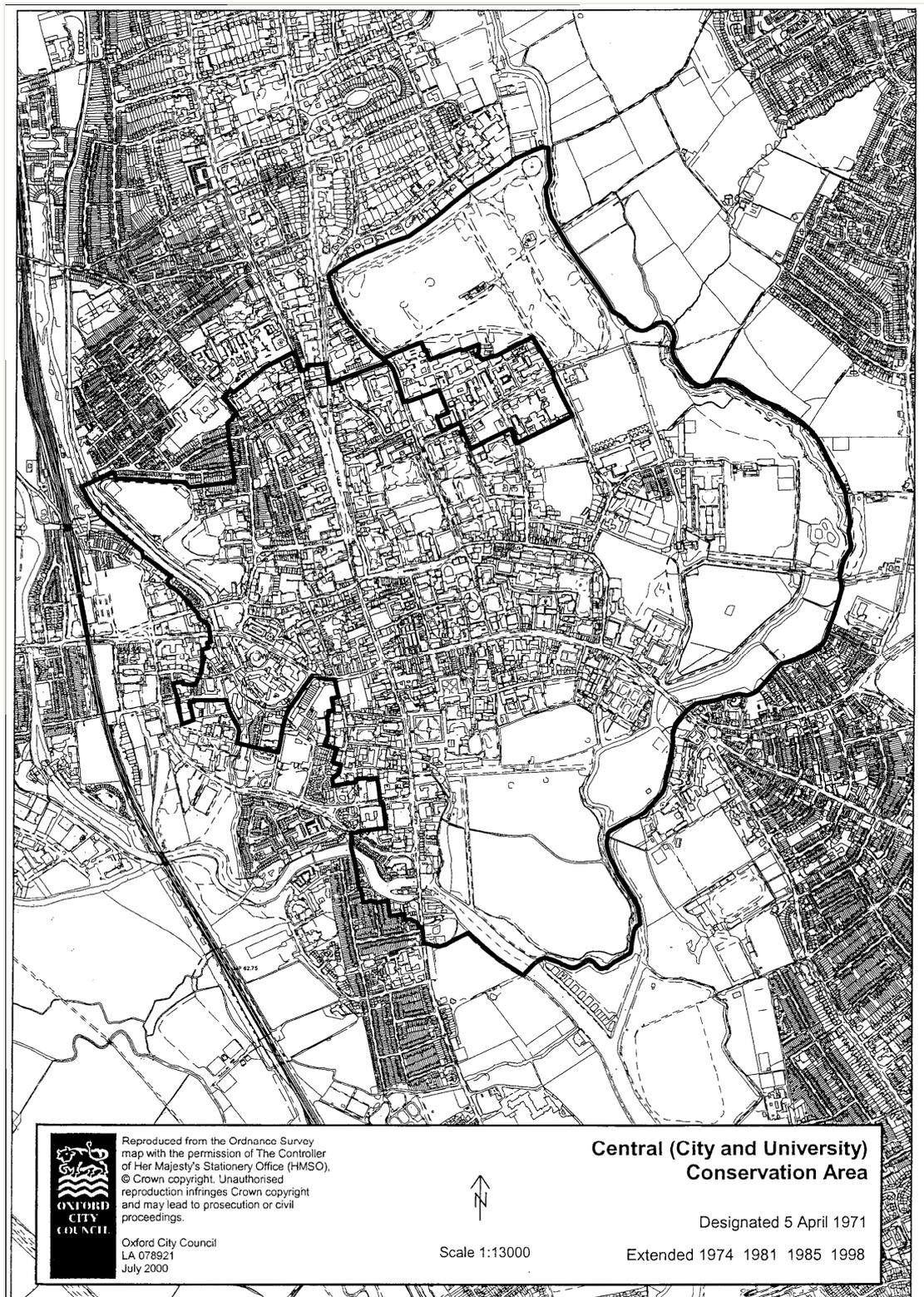
Map



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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 20th 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 University Museum

1847	Conference of the British Association for the Advancement of Science is held in Oxford and the first moves to form a scientific centre are made
1849	Convocation decides to establish a School of Natural Sciences and the Oxford Museum Committee is formed
1850	It is estimated that £50,000 will be required for the construction of the Museum. An appeal for funds from the University Chest is denied
1851-53	Ruskin's <i>Stones of Venice</i> is released in three volumes
1852	The University Commissioners recommend the building of a museum
1853	The University appoints a Delegacy to advance the construction of the Museum
1853	Four acres of the University Parks is acquired for the site from Merton for £4,000
1854	A new Delegacy is appointed in February
1854	£30,000 are made available, from the profits of the University Press
1854	In May a further four acres are acquired for £3,600
1854	The competition to design the Museum is held and Deane and Woodward win in December
1855	Deane and Woodward submit revised plans, which included the incorporation of the Abbot's Kitchen into the design for the Chemistry Laboratory, in February
1855	A tender of £29,041 is accepted from Lucas Brothers of London in 21 st April
1855	Work begins in June
1856	A list of items occurring additional cost is submitted to Convocation
1857	Woodward submits the scheme for heating and ventilation
1857	Testing of roof structure begins in November
1858	Roof collapses in February. Wrought iron columns replaced with cast iron
1858	Sculptors O'Shea and Whellan employed in August
1858	The Chemistry Laboratory is occupied in October
1859	Work begins on interior fittings and carving
1859	The roof is completed
1859-60	Rev. Richard St. John Tyrwhitt completes the geologically-themed wall murals in the Director's Office (formerly the Geological Lecture Room)
1860	Work is abandoned on the carving due to a lack of funds, and is continued off and on for the following 50 years
1860	The famous Wilberforce-Huxley debate on Darwin's theories is held in the Hope Library in June
1860	The Museum is made available to Members of the University in October
1861	Woodward dies of consumption
1867	£87,000 had been spent on the building by this point
1867-72	The original Clarendon Laboratory is built as an additional wing to the north of the Museum
1878	A new chemistry laboratory was provided on the south side of the Museum, near Museum House
1885-6	The Pitt Rivers Museum is added to the northeast of the Museum
1894	The first demonstration of wireless telegraphy is made in the lecture theatre

1899	Human Anatomy is built to the rear of the Pitt Rivers Museum
1901	The arcaded link between the Museum and the former Chemistry Laboratory is built
1903	Southern span of roof refitted due to leaking and lined with asbestos cord
1905	The interior decoration in the lower corridors is completed by Mills and Holt of Messrs Farmer and Brindley by this point
1907	A gale blows some glass roof tiles from the east gable
1907	The Pitt Rivers Museum is enlarged
1905-1910	The capitals in the upper corridors are completed
1926	Electricity installed in the Museum Court
1929	The roof glass is reconditioned and new putty applied
1943	Roof repairs following a gale
1947	Roof repairs following an Easter gale
1949	Cloister to Abbot's Kitchen constructed
1950s	The curator's house is demolished
1953	The ironwork is surveyed and found to be sound but in need of cleaning and redecoration, work rejected on the grounds of its cost
1953	Planning consent granted to convert part of the roof space into a laboratory and workroom for the Hope Department of Entomology
1956	A complete overhaul of the glass roof is begun in the long vacation
1957	The glass roof overhaul is completed in Michaelmas term
1959	Planning consent granted to fit a projecting gallery to form additional seating within the large lecture theatre
1960	Planning consent granted for the insertion of a new floor to form two storeys within a large space, though it is unclear where this was situated
1970	New entrance door and canopy on the façade of the of the Worthington Wing
1970	Construction of an underground extension beneath the southern half of the forecourt
1970	Some minor glass for repairs
1977	Winds damage the glass roof in late December
1978	Planning consent granted for the provision of a mezzanine floor in the old Geology lecture theatre to form a rock store and work room
1978	The Entomology Department left the University Museum, the last department to do so
1980	Planning consent is granted for the construction of two traffic barriers in order to control vehicular access to the forecourt
1987	Listed building consent granted for the insertion of a mezzanine in the Hope Library of Entomology to form a bookstack
1988	Listed building consent granted for the a steel spiral staircase between the tower room and roofspace
1989	Some of the guttering, roof slates, and glass tiles are damaged during lighting protection works
1990	It is noted that the putty holding the glass roof tiles in place has dried out, with 85 tiles being smashed during a January gale
1991	Listed building consent granted for the construction of a mezzanine floor in the Historic and New British (Poulton) Room to form storage and work room
1993	24 glass tiles are ordered for repairs to the museum roof
1994	Listed building consent granted for the refurbishment of the Huxley Room, including the removal of the added ceiling within the roof space of the front

	range
1994	Listed building consent granted for a wheelchair stair lift in the northwest stair basement to the ground-floor level
1996	Listed building consent granted for the provision of an additional doorway, an additional door (to an existing opening) and associated works to the Wilberforce Room, West Gallery
2003	Disabled access ramp constructed adjacent to SW stair tower with associated internal lift
2004	Alterations to the eastern elevation including the removal of 1892 Gable Building and works to form a junction with 3-storey extension to the Pitt Rivers Museum
2009	Internal alterations involving replacement of existing display cases on first-floor north gallery with new, to match existing ground-floor north arcade display cases
2011	Improvements to hard landscape to University Museum

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Appendix 4 Checklist of Significant Features

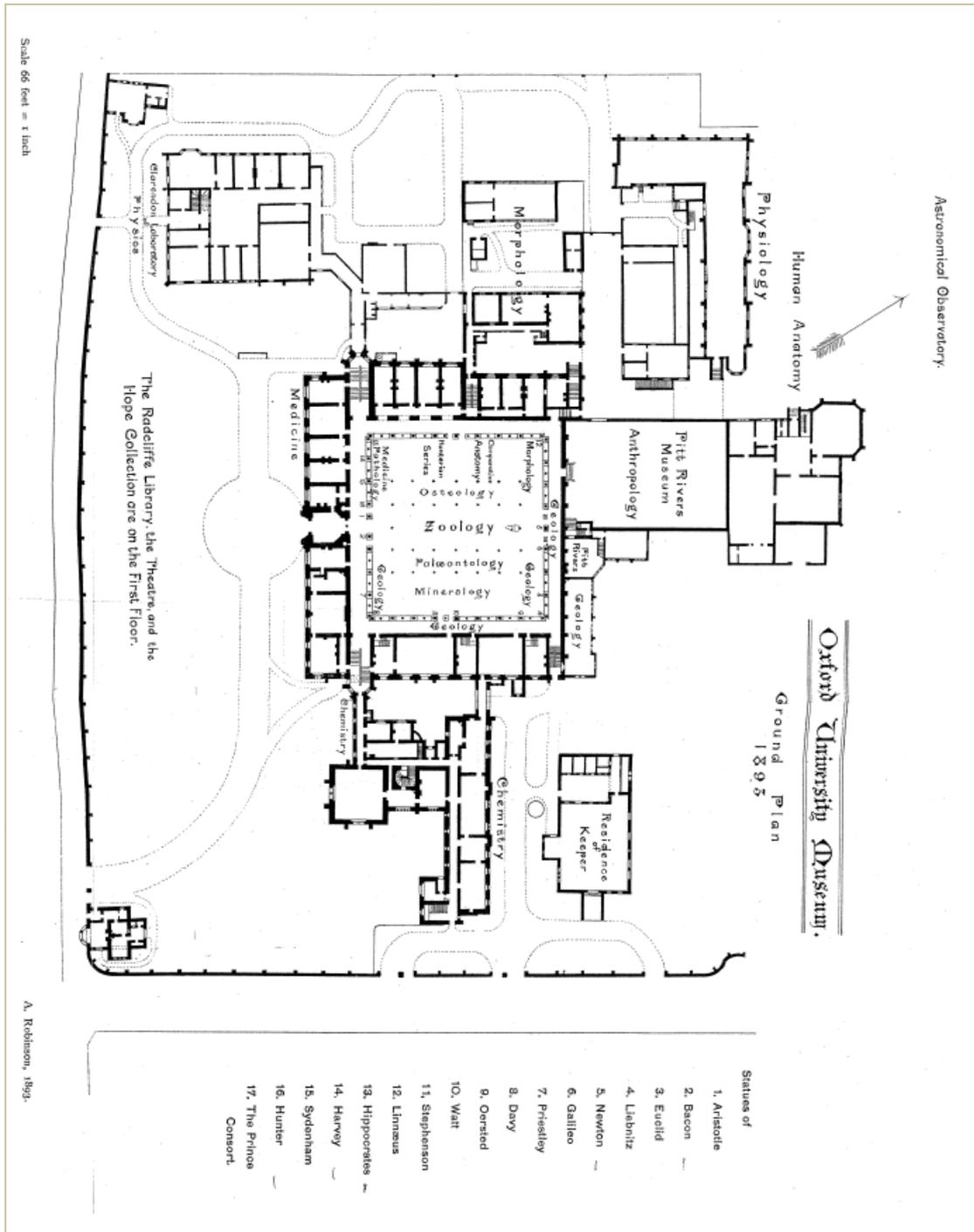
This checklist is intended for the use of those working or planning work on the site or buildings. It highlights features of architectural significance within the University Museum; these may be original features or new additions that nevertheless contribute positively to the character of the building. As this is a Grade I 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 University Museum, Building # 252		
SIGNIFICANT FEATURE	✓	Further Information
General:		
External elevations		p.23-26, 34-36, 48-49
Historic stonework including decorative features		p.16, 23-29, 34, 37, 42-43, 49-50
Metalwork including decorative features		p.16, 26-29, 38-39, 41, 49-50
Original joinery throughout		p.27-29, 39, 41, 49-50
Original flooring materials throughout		p.42, 50
Historic brickwork throughout		p.40, 50
Glass roof and associated materials		p.16, 18, 25-29, 34-35, 39, 49-50
Statues and decorative features throughout		p.16, 23-29, 34, 37, 42-43, 49-50
Roofs		p.16, 18, 23-29, 34-35, 39, 49-50
Windows throughout		p.16, 23-26
Specific Features:		
External Elevations		
-Stonework in general		p.23-26, 34-36, 48-49
-Banded detailing		p.23-26, 34-36, 48-49
-Triangular dormers and ventilators		p.23-26, 34-36, 48-49
- Tower and associated arches, columns, windows, and banding		p.23-26, 34-36, 48-49

-Windows and associated carvings		p.23-26, 34-36, 48-49
-Door and associated carvings		p.23-26, 34-36, 48-49
-Slate roofs		p.23-26, 34-36, 48-49
-Angular stair turrets		p.23-26, 34-36, 48-49
Central Court		
-Carved columns, bases, and capitals at both levels		p.16, 23-29, 34, 37, 42-43, 49-50
-Painted struts and rafters		p.16, 18, 25-29, 34-35, 39, 49-50
-Cast iron columns		p.16, 26-29, 38-39, 41, 49-50
-Wrought iron capitals, arches, and decorative features		p.16, 26-29, 38-39, 41, 49-50
-Glass roof		p.16, 18, 25-29, 34-35, 39, 49-50
-Brickwork and stonework around the perimeter		p.40, 50
-Joinery including ceiling elements and original doors		p.16, 18, 25-29, 34-35 39, 41, 49-50
-Stone flooring in central court		p.42, 50
-Tiled flooring at gallery level		p.42, 50
-Statuary		p.28-29, 43, 50
Other areas		
-Original ironmongery		p.27-29, 41, 50
-Original joinery and carved and painted decoration		
-Murals in Director's Office		

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



Plan of 1893

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Annexes

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8 Annexes

Annexe 1

Development of the University Science Area

- Deane and Woodward's University Museum was built in a neo-Gothic style in 1855-60.
- The original Clarendon Physics Laboratory was constructed to the northwest of the University Museum in 1867-69. This was extended in 1946-58 but the structure has since been enveloped by the Earth Sciences building.
- The Observatory was built to the northeast of the area in 1873-75, and expanded with a lecture room and library in 1877-78.
- The original Inorganic Chemistry Laboratory was extended in 1877-79, and enclosed within the courtyard of the later departmental buildings constructed 1954-60.
- The original Physiology Laboratory was built to the northeast in 1884-85 (and a new wing added in 1907).
- The Pitt Rivers Museum was constructed to the east of the University Museum in 1885-86.
- Human Anatomy was constructed immediately to the east of the Museum in 1891-93, and rebuilt in 1954-56.
- Thomas Graham Jackson's Radcliffe Science Library was constructed to the south of the University Museum in 1898-1900 and subsequently extended in 1933-34.
- The Department of Zoology (now housing Atmospheric Physics) and Stevenson and Redfern's Morphology Laboratory were constructed to the north of the University Museum in 1898-1901.
- The Pathological Laboratory was constructed in 1899-1901. This building was handed over to Pharmacology in 1927.
- The School of Forestry and Rural Economy was constructed to the east in 1906-8, and extended in 1912.
- The Townsend Building was built as the Electrical Laboratory in 1908-10.
- The Dyson Perrins Laboratory to the south of the Museum was constructed in 1913-16. This was extended northwards from its eastern end in 1940-41.
- The Sir William Dunn School of Pathology was constructed at the furthest eastern end of the site in 1926, and was extended by Sir Leslie Martin in 1967-9

- The New Clarendon Laboratory (now the Lindemann Building) was built to the north of the Townsend Building in 1939.
- Physical Chemistry was constructed to the east of the site in 1939-40, and extended in 1958-59.
- Physiology was constructed to the east of the Electrical Laboratory in 1949-53.
- Microbiology was constructed to the northeast of the Museum in 1959-60.
- The Pharmacology Building was constructed directly to the east of the Museum in 1959-61.³¹

³¹ All these dates are reliant upon: Pevsner, N., and Sherwood, J., *Buildings of England: Oxfordshire* (Oxford, 1974) 277-9; and Howell, P., 'Oxford Architecture, 1800-1914' in Brock, M.G., and Curthoys, M.C., (eds.), *The History of the University of Oxford*, Vol. VII (Oxford, 2000) 763-777.

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