



**Edgbaston Central Campus Development**  
Hybrid Planning Application

March 2012

**Design and Access Statement - Appendix B**  
**Student Services Hub**



**UNIVERSITY OF**  
**BIRMINGHAM**

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## 1.0 Introduction

The following document is in support of the works proposed to C Block of Chancellors Court (Aston Webb Building) at the University of Birmingham's Edgbaston campus and forms part of the "Hybrid" planning application dated February 2012. The works entail the creation of a new external plant room between C Block and the Great Hall and new rooflights within the existing pitched roof of the hammer head section of C Block. Alongside these works and planning application, internal alteration and works to restore and repair the external envelope will also be carried out, due to the listed nature of the building a full Listed Building and Conservation Area Consent application has been submitted for these works, these works however do not require planning permission and therefore this application only relates to the new plant compound and new rooflights.

## 1.1 Purpose and structure of the Design and Access Statement

In accordance with Section 42 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, this design and access statement has been drafted in support of the detailed planning application. The purpose of this statement is to communicate how excellent and sensitive design has been considered from the outset of the development process in accordance with the requirements of the Act and is structured as follows:

- **Section 2. Context** – A description of the contextual elements that have shaped the proposed scheme.
- **Section 3. Site Details** – A summary of the site and its surroundings.
- **Section 4. Design Development** - A summary of the design process.
- **Section 5. Design** – A description of the scheme's design.
- **Section 6. Access** – A description of the scheme's access arrangements.

The scope of this document is based on the Cobe advice document "Design and access statements How to read, write and use them." Accordingly sections 4 and 5 explain:

### Design

- **Use** - What buildings and spaces will be used for.
- **Amount** - How much will be built on the site.
- **Layout** - How the buildings and public and private spaces will be arranged on the site.
- **Scale** - How big the buildings and spaces will be.
- **Landscaping and Biodiversity** - How open spaces will be treated and biodiversity supported and enhanced.
- **Appearance** - What the building and spaces will look like.
- **Environmental Design** – a summary of how the sustainability has influenced the design.

### Access

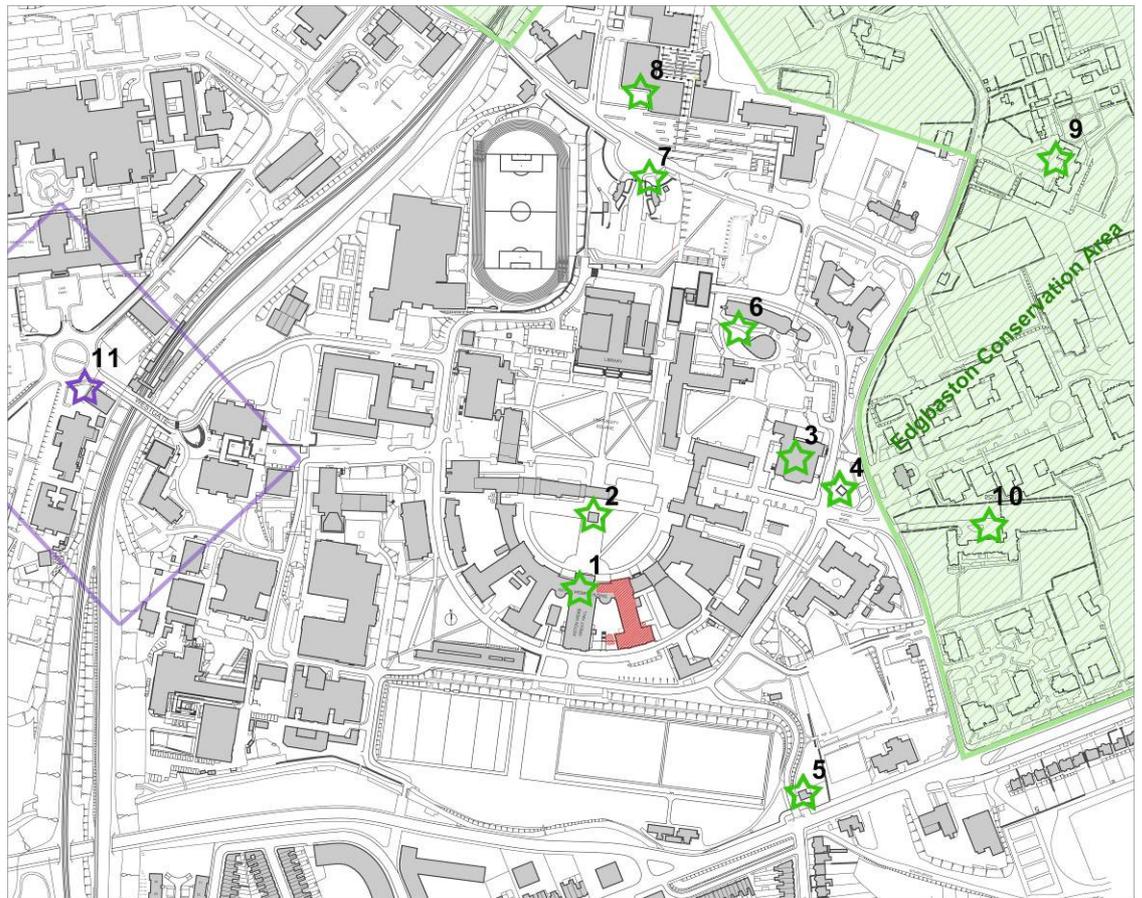
- **Vehicular and transport links** - How the site responds to road layout and public transport provision.
- **Inclusive access** - How everyone can get to and move through the development on equal terms

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## 2.0 Context

### 2.1 Introduction

Aston Webb Block C together with the Great Hall at the University of Birmingham and the other 'quadrant' blocks, is listed at Grade II\*, meaning that it is a 'particularly important building of more than special interest' and putting it in the top 8% of listed buildings. Alongside this the campus sits close to (but not within) the Edgbaston Conservation Area. C Blocks context therefore is important as it forms part of a larger historically significant building, master plan and wider built environment.



OS of Edgbaston Campus with listed buildings

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Chancellors Court (Grade II*)                | 2. Joseph CHamberlain Memorial Clock Tower (Grade II) |
| 3. The Barber Institute (Grade II)              | 4. Statue of George 1st (Grade II)                    |
| 5. South Lodge (Grade II)                       | 6. Ashley and Stratcona Building (Grade II)           |
| 7. North Lodges (Grade II)                      | 8. Metallurgy and Materials Building (Grade II)       |
| 9. Winterbourne House (Grade II)                | 10. University House (Grade II)                       |
| 11. Metchley Roman Fort<br>(Scheduled Monument) |   |

Throughout the design stages continuing observation of the buildings history and its wider context were observed to ensure that the original character of the buildings is retained and enhanced for future generations. Through the study of the buildings wider context at an early stage a clear understanding of constraints and opportunities were gathered to inform the design. The findings and context of the design are set out in the following analysis.

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## 2.2 Planning Policy Context

As part of the development of the proposal various planning documents have been consulted, as follows:

- The Birmingham Plan, Birmingham Unitary Development Plan 2005
- Edgbaston Conservation Area Character Appraisal
- PPS 5 – Planning for the Historical Environment

Aside from the formal documentation listed above other guidance documents which have been consulted are as follows:

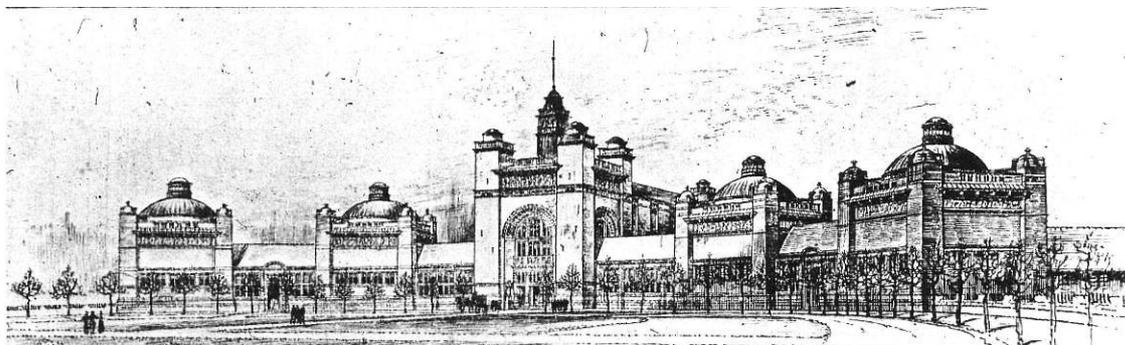
- Conservation Principles, policies and guidance for the sustainable management of the historical environment – English Heritage 2008
- Building Regulations and Historic Buildings – English Heritage 2004

As the design has been developed we have consulted with Andrew Conroy (Birmingham City Council Planner), Julie Taylor (Birmingham City Council Conservation Officer) and Sarah Lewis (English Heritage) at key points to discuss both broad and detailed elements of the design. Notes of the items discussed at these meetings are contained within the appendix of this document. These meetings have aided us determine strategies for dealing with upgrades to the external envelope, internal layout and structure.

This application forms part of a wider plan prepared by the University of Birmingham and MJP Architects which forms a master plan for campus developments over the next 5 years. This master plans aims to re-interpret Webb and Bells original master plan of the campus for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

## 2.3 Chancellors Court

The Chancellors Court Buildings were completed in 1909 and designed by Sir Aston Webb and Ingress Bell. The original land for the University site were gifted to the University shortly after receiving its Royal Charter in 1900. At this time it was an open green field site set in the grounds of the larger Bournbrook Estate. Designed as the first “campus university” in the UK and arguably the first “red brick university” the master plan for the site eludes in several ways to the scientific nature of the universities background in architectural style, materials and form.



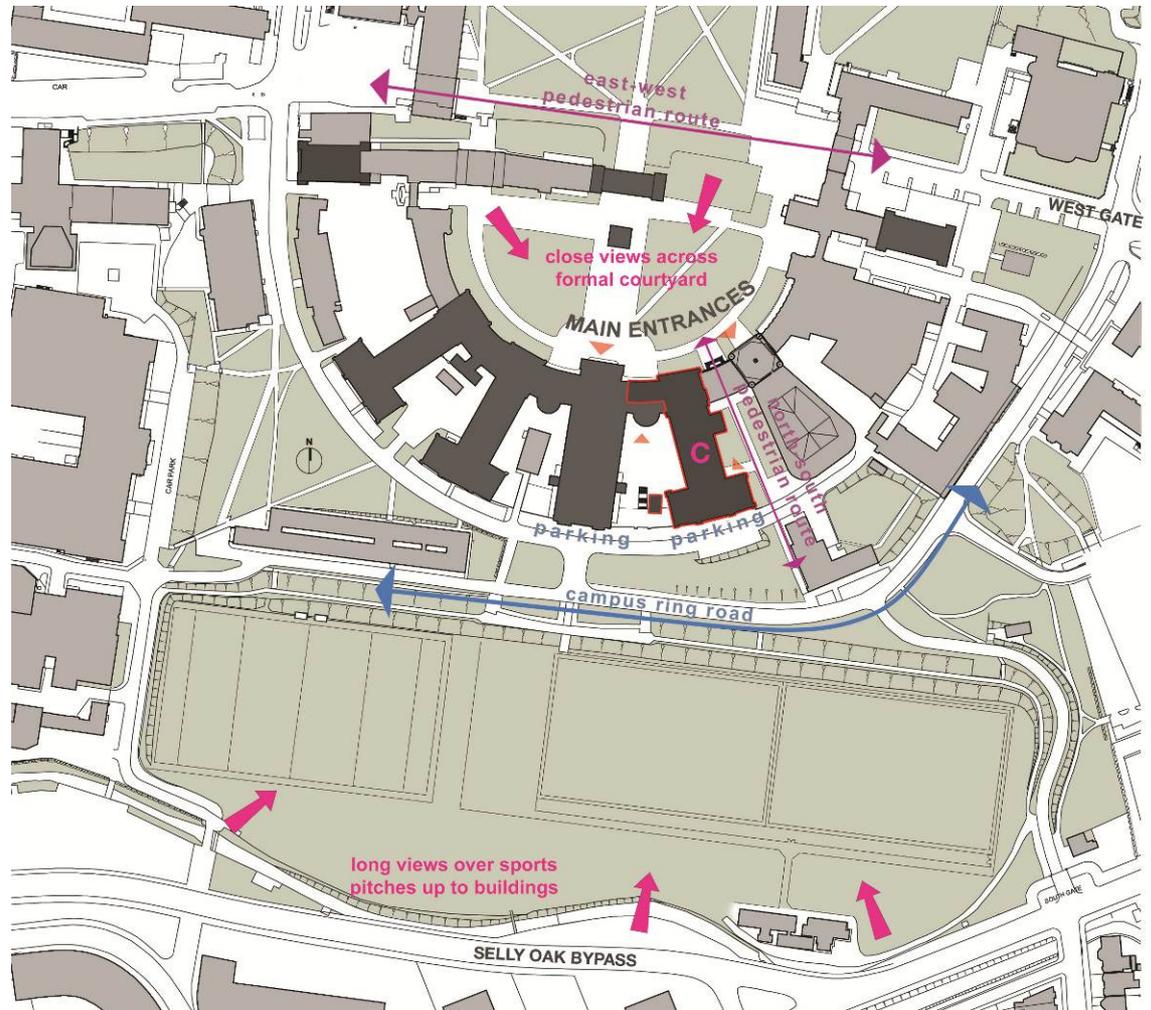
Early artist impression of Chancellors Court

## 2.4 Location

Chancellors Court is punctuated towards the south of the University Of Birmingham's Edgbaston Campus by the Joseph Chamberlain Clock Tower. The radial building forms the

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historic centre to the university but also marks a key central point within the universities pedestrian routes, positioned on the main North/South and East/West axis. The site falls a full storey and half through the building placing the rear elevation in a prominent position above the flood plan of the Bourn Brook at the campuses southern boundary with Selly Oak.



## 2.5 Historical Character

The main curved elevation of Chancellors Court grouped around the clock tower is made up of dome topped pavilions with the much larger central pavilion denoting the main entrance and access to the Great Hall. This main curved façade is characterised with a balance of solid brick geometry and fine stone relief to the windows and cornice all arranged with rigid symmetry. Each pavilion marking the head of the radial blocks beyond with uniquely designed ceramic friezes by the artist Robert Anning Bell depicting the subject of each block; A and B Engineering and C Materials and Metallurgy.

Chancellors court uses its rigorous geometry and modern materials to make a statement about the ethos of the University being underpinned by science and fact. Whereas the Oxbridge universities have a largely Gothic/Tudor language Webb and Bell adopted a Byzantine language which in the late Victorian era was viewed as a more rational and universal system more akin to the scientific grounding of the new University. Where the restrained decoration is evident it deliberately focuses on science and geometry, as seen over the main entrance depicting notable artist, scientists and academic figures from various stages of history.

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View of Chancellors Court main North Elevation

The formal upper courtyard of Chancellors Court is contrasted with the more utilitarian radial blocks to the rear which originally housed the noisier lab and workshops. The simple repetition of form of the rear elevation is punctuated by the grander scale of the Great Hall on the central axis of the building aligned with the Joseph Chamberlin Clock tower. The prominence of the Chancellors Court buildings above the surrounding landscape combined with the rigid radial geometry and domes with cupolas evoke an image of a European Byzantine hill fort.



View of radial block – C Block

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To the East of C Block the original master plan had been left incomplete and was filled at lower level in 1949 by a laboratory building. Recently however this building has been demolished and construction is currently nearing completion on the new Bramall Music building and auditorium. This has been designed in a similar form and material style as the original Chancellors Court buildings.

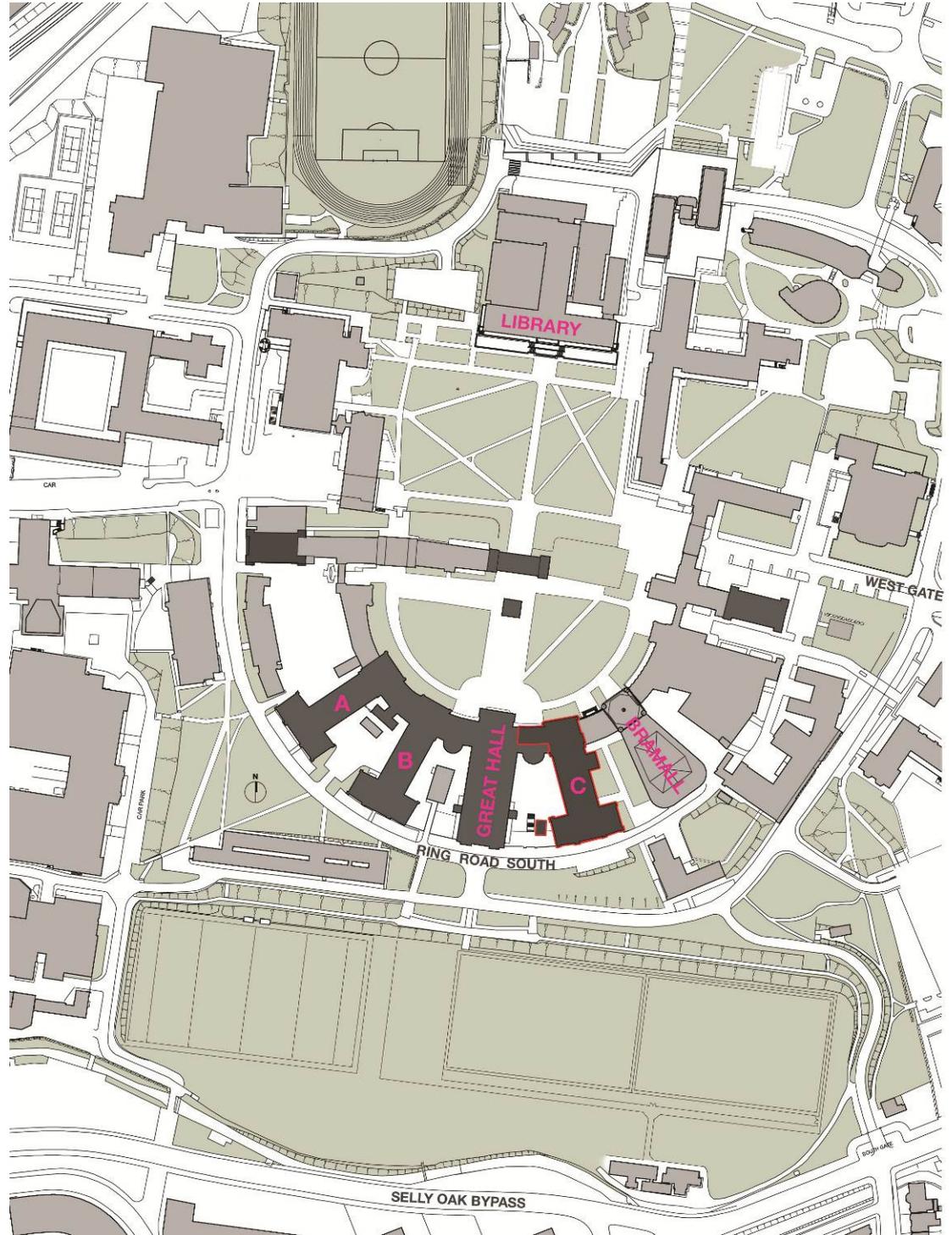


New Bramall Music Building to left of picture completing semicircle elevation

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## 3.0 Site Details

### 3.1 Site Location



Site location plan of C Block (original buildings highlighted in dark grey)

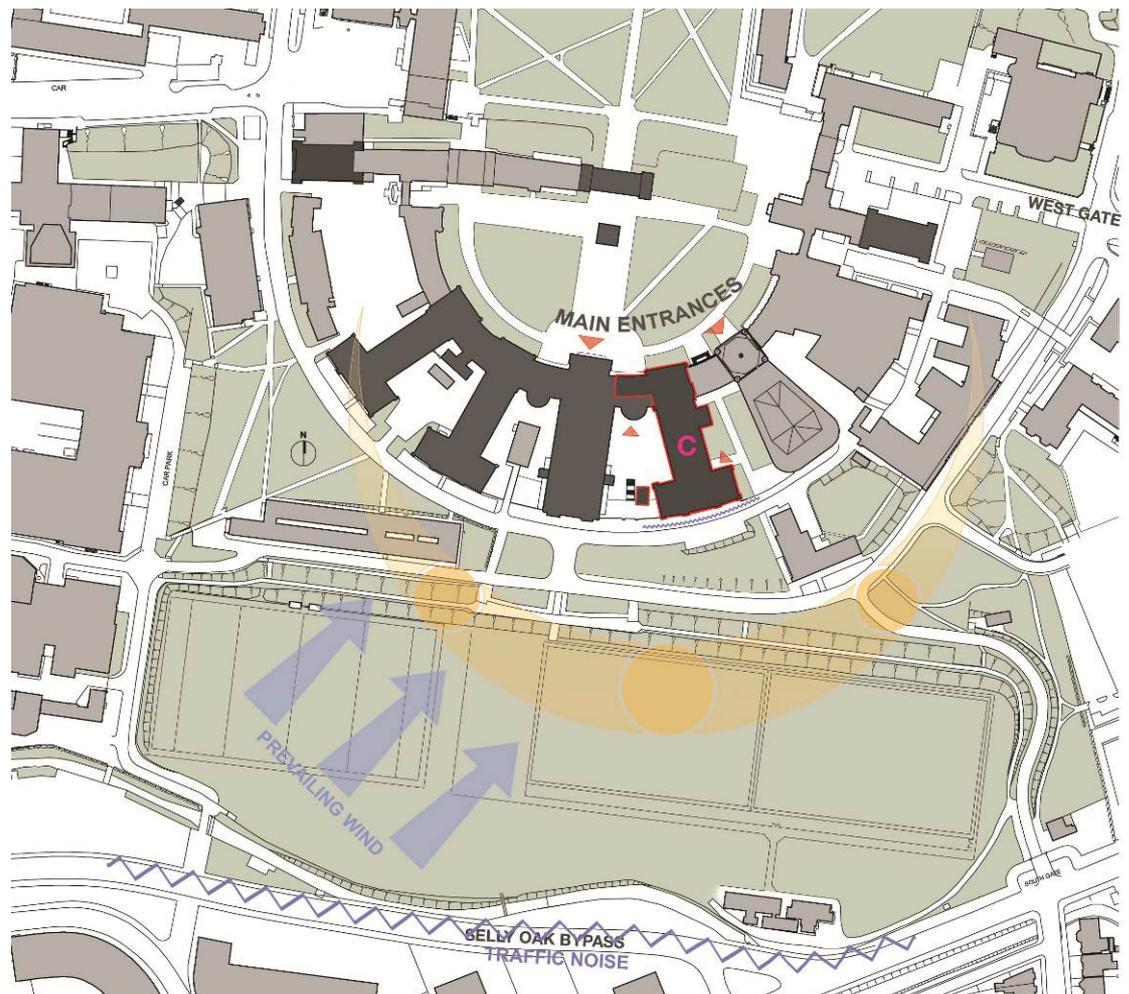
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## 3.2 Site Micro Climate Analysis

C Block sits alongside the North South axis of the original campus master plan. With the form of the building defined by the original master plan the sun path diagram below illustrates that good levels of daylight are achievable to most elevations throughout the day with only small sections either orientated north or in shade. The addition of the Bramall building is predicted to impact on the shading during the early morning hours to the east façade.

The prevailing wind from the south west approaches the site over relatively open, low lying ground giving the south west corner of the building relatively high exposure to wind and rain. The hammer-head shape of the building however does offer a degree of shelter to the longer south west facing elevations and shelters the courtyard between C Block and the Great Hall.

Surrounded by other university buildings and sports pitches back ground noise is generally lower than main town locations. The main campus ring road runs to the south with adjacent street parking giving a degree of background vehicle noise. The recent opening of the A38 Selly Oak New Road will also bring larger volumes of traffic closer to the Southern edge of the site.



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## 3.3 Site Boundaries

The site boundary is defined principally by the external walls of C Block. The site is bounded on all side by university land and buildings. To the North the enclosed courtyard of Chancellors Court offers a “living” historical image of how Webb and Bell imagined the campus in 1900.

To the east the new Bramall Music Building and Auditorium is nearing completion. This is constructed of similar materials to C Block and the rest of Chancellors Court, however with much simpler modern detailing. Between C Block and Bramall is the main pedestrian access from the North to the South of the campus making this route a popular thoroughfare who’s footfall is predicted to increase with the construction of the new sports centre to the South of the site making the edge of the site a key pedestrian route through the campus.

To the south of the site the land slopes away with the South Ring Road siting a storey below the lower ground floor of C Block. The sports pitches sit lower still at the level of the bourne brook and Selly Oak New Road. This southern site boundary is characterised by the slope of the site to open ground.

## 3.4 Site Access

Positioned at the centre of the campus the site has good pedestrian and cycle access. As stated previous the site sits alongside the main North South pedestrian route. To the north this route extends to The Vale student village, while to the south the pedestrian route connects to the centre of Selly Oak. The main East/West route just to the North of the site offers access to the train station and busy local bus services.

Both train and bus routes run close to the site. The “University” rail station is 0.35mile walk from the site. The main bus routes in and out of the city centre running along the A38 are only 0.2 miles walk to the south.

The campus has an active vehicle management plan which limits un-authorized vehicles onto the site. The main vehicle access from the surrounding public roads link into the campus ring road which loops round the inner campus and passes the site just to the south. A small amount of both standard and disable parking is located alongside the ring road to the south. Cycle parking is also positioned adjacent to the ring road as well as to the north on the upper campus.

## 3.5 Site Uses

The current site is used and owned by the university. Its designated use as well as its neighbouring sites is that of education. The university current use the majority of C Block as well as B as administration offices. A Block is currently used by the earth sciences faculty while the great hall at the centre of Chancellors Court is predominantly used for large academic presentations, functions and exhibitions.

## 3.6 Materials

The primary materials of Chancellors Court are a red engineering brick and light gritstone. Through the use of these materials Webb and Bell were able to not only keep the overall budget of the project in line but also portray the principles of the new university.

The Accrington NORI Engineering brick is used throughout C Block and Chancellors Court. It can be suggested that the choice of the NORI not only served as a cheaper alternative to the traditional stonework of grand university buildings but also provided a material which reflected the scientific nature of the university and industrial city. Practically the NORI was also a hard wearing finish to not only the external façade but the internal labs and workshops. Also being

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an engineering brick its precise shape made the articulation of the strong geometric forms easy and cost effective to achieve.

The Daley Dale stone has been carefully used through the building to provide a sense of restrained opulence. The stones use is restricted to that of the buildings plinth, openings and cornice details. To the North elevation a low level stone plinth and banding are used to exaggerate the curvature of the façade and the hierarchy of the pavilions and entrance. To the rear a full storey stone plinth emphasises the fort like character of this elevation with the brick building sitting atop. Again stone is used on the south elevation to highlight the hierarchy of the Great Hall over the teaching blocks where stone is used much less extensively.



North Windows



South Windows

Other significant materials used include the leaded principal domes and cupolas giving the buildings their stylistic character upon the skyline set alongside the pitched slate roofs of the rear radial blocks. Also the amount of glass work within the elevations is large for its time utilising a modern steel framed system. The windows were instrumental in providing light to the laboratory and workshops within.

As a working University building the original Webb and Bells design has had a number of later additions since their inception. Most notably on C Block Dormer windows were added to the original pitched roof and a plant room to the East elevation was added during the 1970s.

### 3.7 Landscaping

Externally the areas to the east and west of C Block are principally designated as open landscape with mostly hard paved landscaping. The eastern landscape is due to be relaid with areas of soft and hard landscaping as part of the Bramall works, however a section of this landscaping scheme will not be completed until after C Block has been completed. To the

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south the landscape falls away with areas of grass landscaping adjacent to the ring road and parking areas. The site further drops to the sports pitches to the south.

To the north of the site at the upper level of the campus the Chancellors Court courtyard is dominated by the clock tower. Surrounding the clocks tower simple grass lawns with mature trees are intersected with pedestrian paths.

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## 4.0 Design Development

### 4.1 Brief

The proposed new plant compound and rooflights are required as part of the wider refurbishment works to C Block. The principal driving the refurbishment of C Block is an aim to bring students back into Chancellors Court. Much of a student's current interaction with the oldest building on the campus only occurs at the beginning of their studies to pay fees and at the end to receive their certificates at graduation. By introducing a new 430 seat lecture theatre and centralising the various student services into a single location at the heart of the campus it is envisaged that the building will once again become a busy and lively place as it would have been shortly after its completion.

To support the above two principal spaces an area of the lower ground floor is to be given over to a learning centre/break space for the lecture theatre and office accommodation is to be provided for the back of house services associated with the Student Hub.



Artist impression of new lecture theatre

### 4.2 Constraints and Opportunities

C Block and Chancellors Court generally have been used continually by the University since their completion in 1909. Seen as both a constraint and opportunity the historically important character of the building and its context have been considered at every stage of the design process. Through reviewing each design decisions impact upon the historic nature of the building we have sought to protect and enhance the longevity of the building.

As a result of this approach we have carefully identified the original and later additions to the building to assess the scope of demolition with the intention to meet the clients brief without adding to the existing form of the building. Opening spaces up from the divided cellular spaces installed in the 1960s and 80s a sense of the buildings original internal volumes can be appreciated.

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While not intending to add to the buildings existing form through the requirements of modern building codes a number of changes to the external envelope of the building are planned.

## 4.3 Scheme Outline

While not the concern of this planning application the below will outline the general changes to the internal layout so as to better understand the following proposals. Much more detail on the amendments to the internal layout are contained within the Heritage Impact Assessment which accompanies the Listed Building Consent application for this project.

The lower ground floor with its connection out onto the main student thoroughfare is intended to be opened up into two larger volumes. The first and largest is that of the 430 seat lecture theatre. Occupying the original space of the mining workshop the area has been divided over the years with a mezzanine and many partitions into small offices, all of these later additions are to be stripped back to open up the hammer head section into one large space. To reflect the industrial nature of the processes originally taking place in this space the new lecture theatre is conceived as a modern insertion utilising industrial materials which pull away from the external walls to form a free standing element within the space. The learning and breakout space to the lower ground floor is intended to reflect the Universities aspiration of a sticky campus where by students are provided with space to collaborate freely in a relaxed area.

The upper ground floor contains the large Student Hub which forms a single point of contact between students and the universities administration services. With a large amount of services being offered in a single location this space has a large through flow of students and when linked to the proposed employability centre opposite the corridor this will enliven the upper ground corridor. The Student Hub itself is a large double height space which opens into the roof exposing the original steel arched trusses with the new insertion of a mezzanine passing over.



Artist impression of Student Services Hub

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The two new mezzanine floors and new first floor provide office accommodation to support the services offered in the Hub. These are mostly open plan spaces either side of a central plant space.

Through consultation with Birmingham City Council it has been agreed that the only elements which require formal planning approval are the addition of rooflights within the existing roof and the formation of the new external chiller plant room to the courtyard between the Great Hall and C Block.

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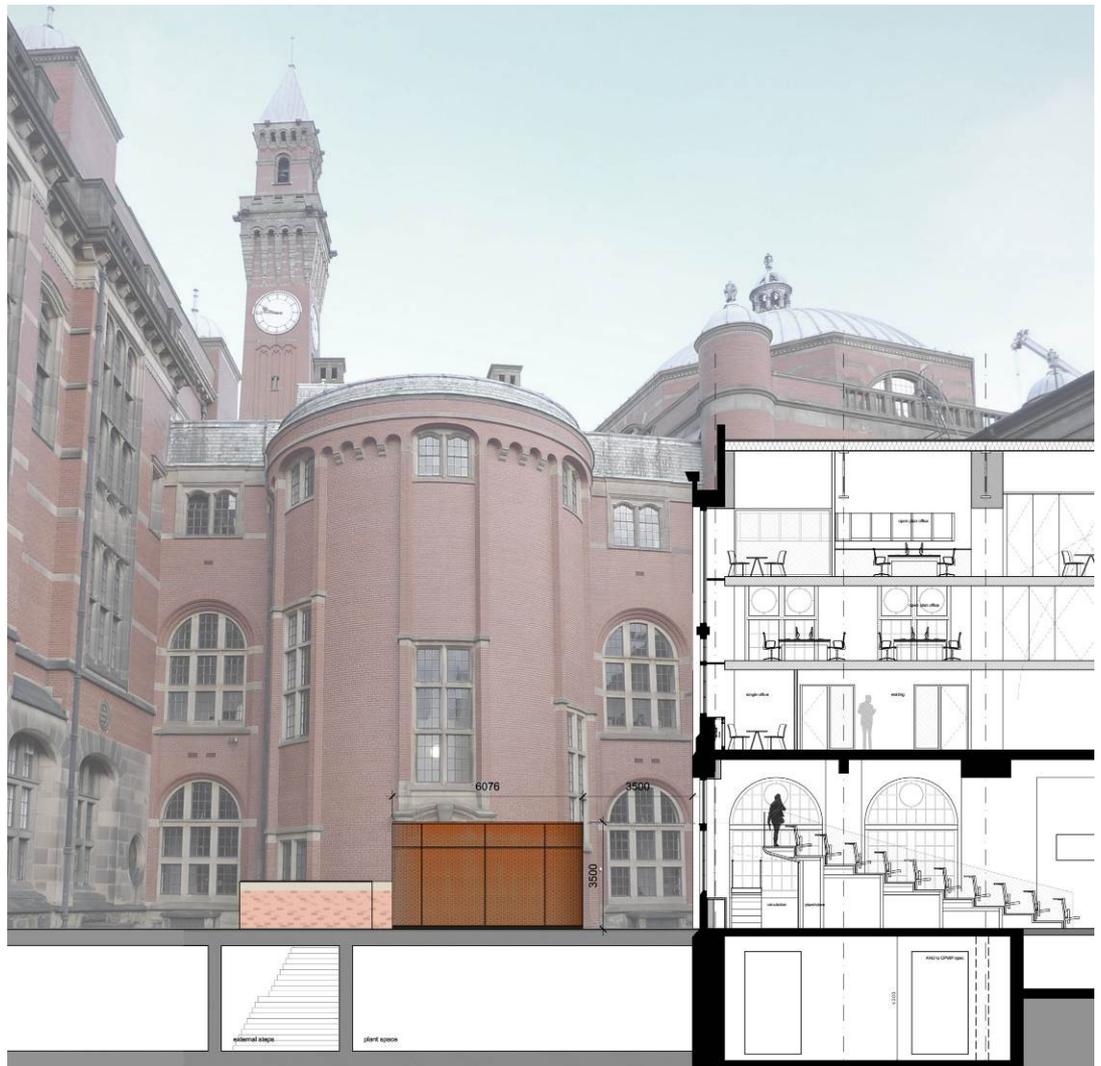
## 5.0 Design

### 5.1 Use

As stated previously the buildings use class is not intended to change. While still being used as office accommodation the addition of a lecture theatre and Student Hub are intended to enliven the building with student activity. A small chiller compound is to be provided between C Block and the Great Hall.

### 5.2 Scale

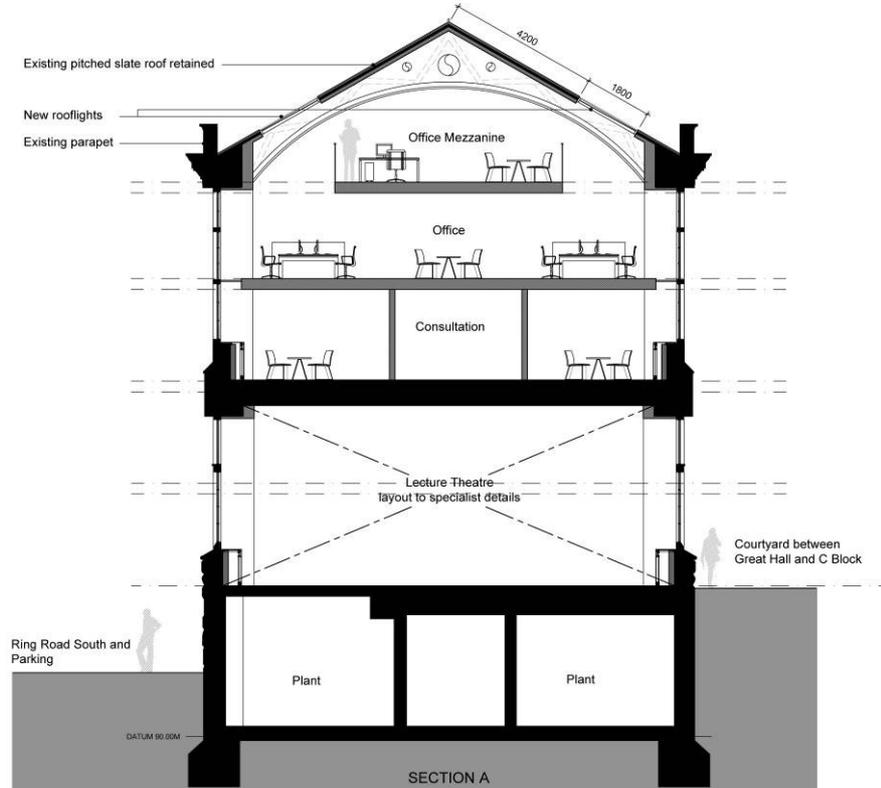
The only impact on scale resulting from this application is the addition of a small chiller compound between C Block and the Great Hall. While minimum dimensions relating to the scale have been set by the size of the chiller plant the careful positioning and form have been used to ensure that the scale of the enclosure does not detract from the various elements of the listed building. Views from within the building have also been considered as well as key historical view around the building.



Montage section between C Block and Great Hall

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The size and extent of the rooflights have been carefully considered with the aim to discreetly position them behind existing parapets or away from main elevations.



Proposed Section showing location of rooflights in roof

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## 5.3 Appearance

The appearance of the proposals is intended to treat the existing building sensitively and in a positive way. Where existing elements are being repaired or amended effort has been made to ensure the original aesthetic is maintained. New insertions are to be characterised by a modern and industrial aesthetic. This is to both reflect the strategy which Webb and Bell utilised in the original design – utilising modern materials to reflect the scientific heritage of the building and university, this strategy also aims to treat the new additions to the building as intervention not integration. This will allow a clear understanding of the original nature of the building and those new elements which have been integrated into it. The treatments of the external changes are designed to be in keeping with the original design of the building and conserve the strong visual character recognising C Block as a constituent part of Chancellors Court.



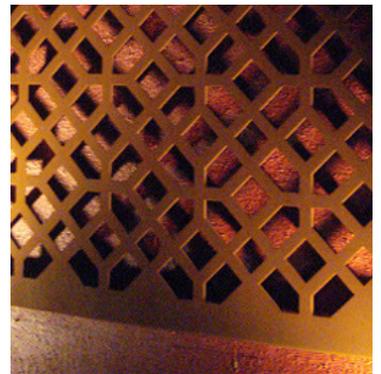
Existing key view between blocks

In siting the chiller compound, consideration has been given to pedestrian route around the building and key view of the buildings at distance and also views created and enclosed within the buildings. The courtyard between the Great Hall and C Block is largely un-used aside from emergency exit and some internal staff movements. A key view from within this courtyard however looks back towards the clock tower (above) where the combination of domes, tower and straight and curved brick geometry creates a striking view which has remained largely unchanged since the buildings completion. The plantroom has therefore been sited to the side of the existing steps to conserve this view. In doing so the appearance of this small building from the distant views will be important. The new plantroom has been set 5m away from the parapet wall which denotes the change in level from the buildings lower floor level to the ring-road below in order to lessen its visual impact on the views from the South. While effort has been made to limit the new structure visual impact from the south due to its height it will sometime be visible, perforated corten steel has been chosen to offer a subtle natural contrast to the red brick. The form of the cladding has also been curved at its corners to visually break it from the strong square edged geometry of the original buildings, subtly blending its edges into its surroundings.

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Montage showing appearance of new chiller compound looking North West



Some typical images of perforated Corten

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Montage showing appearance of new chiller compound looking North East

The appearance of the rooflights have been reduced by positioning them low in the existing pitched roofs meaning their appearance is largely concealed to the south by the existing parapet wall to the edge of the pitched roof. This is illustrated by the below images showing the rooflight zone will not be visible till towards the Selly Oak New Road on the campus boundary.



Photo from Ring Road South illustrating parapet obscuring roof

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Distant photo showing extent of rooflights visible from campus boundary

The style of the rooflights will require final approval from the conservation officer however it is intended to break up the length of rooflights into coupled section and utilise a traditional conservation style rooflights with a slimmer external appearance. This style rooflight would be visually very similar to the original rooflights which were installed within the ridge of C Block as part of the original building, but removed in the 1930s.



## 5.4 Demolition

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It is also noted that aside from the internal alterations it is intended to carry out the demolition of the external plantroom to the east elevation which was constructed in the 1970s. This has listed building consent under application 2010/06204/PA. It is intended to re-instate the façade to its original state.



Existing plantroom to be demolished

## 5.5 Landscape and Biodiversity

A landscape proposal has been approved for the area between C Block and the new Bramall building. While a portion of this will be carried out during the works to C Block. The landscape proposal involves the simple use of hard and soft landscaping to reinforce the pedestrian route between the buildings.

There are no proposed landscape works to the raised courtyard between C Block and the Great Hall with the external finish re-instated following completion of the new plant room.

## 5.6 Environmental Design

The project aims to bring the building up to and beyond modern building code in order to future proof this historical asset for future generations by securing its continual use. This is to be done through largely passive means by improving the buildings envelope both thermally and with opening vents such as the rooflights which will be automatically opened. However modern efficient mechanical and electrical installation is to add to the efficiency of the project, part of achieving this is the inclusion of the chiller plant to offer efficient background cooling to the spaces during the hottest parts of the year.

The re-use of the existing structure greatly lessens the projects use of materials however through the careful specification of materials it is intended to further reduce the embodied energy of the building.

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## 6.0 Heritage Impact Assessment

### 6.1 PPS5 and Heritage Value

The Grade II\* listing of the “Great Hall and Quadrant Range” denotes the group of buildings making up Chancellors Court, including C Block as having “more than special interest” and places it within the top 8% of listed buildings in the UK.

As highlighted in PPS5, it is important to assess the historical significance of heritage assets to both current and future generation. Through the understanding of the significance of a building and its setting opportunities can be understood for development and ensure that any proposals do not have a negative impact and where possible enhance the heritage asset for current and future generations. The value of a Heritage asset can be assess in a number of ways; English Heritage outline four guiding principles; Evidential value, Historic value, Aesthetic value, Communal value. Each of these overlaps in many ways within buildings and sites but together identify value within an asset.

A detailed Heritage Impact Assessment taking in the full extent of the proposed refurbishment works is included within the full Listed Building Consent application. Below is a summary of the value of Chancellors Court/C Block and impact of the proposed plantroom and rooflights.

It can be seen that Chancellors Court holds historical significance and has high heritage value in terms of its Aesthetic and Historical attributes, at both a local and national level. The grouping of the buildings creates a strong visual image when viewed from within and outside the campus giving the area a distinctive historic landmark. It is the visual character of these buildings created through a combination of the above Aesthetic and Historic values which also enforces it communal value to current and former students as well as the larger South Birmingham community. It also offers a small residual of evidential value in some original internal rooms.

Much of the above value goes towards the significance of C Block; externally it forms part of the original master plan with its external materials and form a key element of the overall image of the Byzantine citadel. To the north the domed pavilion and stone openings form a key part of the buildings main elevation viewed from within the campus with high aesthetic value. The radial blocks are much simpler in architectural detail and juxtapose the embellishment of the Great Hall with more utilitarian detailing. C Blocks external significance comes largely in its external form as part of the original collection of buildings when viewed from further afield.

## 6.2 Plant Room

The new plantroom will inevitably have a visual impact upon the group of buildings making up Chancellors Court and the views from the south of the campus. This impact can be read at different levels depending upon the viewers distance from the building however careful consideration of this has been taken to ensure that the heritage value of the original building is not impacted.

Care has been taken in the positioning of the chiller compound to limit the appearance of the structure and reduce its visual impact on the key historical views of Chancellors Court. Specifically the distant view from the campus boundary and the internal view looking north through the courtyard.

The form of the building has been tempered with rounded corners to lessen its visual competition with the strong geometry of the original building. This is especially important from the medium distance views where the juxtaposition of a new structure is potentially most evident.

Through material choice a modern approach has been sought which relates back to the original design intentions of Webb and Bell in using modern, robust materials. The aim has been that of intervention as apposed to trying to integrate the new structure as part of the original design. The tone of this modern material has been an important consideration in order to maintain a visual separation with the brickwork at closer proximity while preventing a strong visual impact at distance.

## 6.3 Rooflights

The impact of the rooflights on the heritage value of C Block and Chancellors Court can be seen as minimal through the carefully positioning and choice of system.

As with the plantroom above the visual impact of the rooflights can be seen to change with the viewer's distance from the building. At closer distances from within the campus boundaries little of the rooflights will be visible due to their low position within the roof. From the southern boundary of the campus the top of the rooflights will in part be visible however due to the low profile of the chosen system it is aimed to reduce the overall impact from this distance.

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## 7.0 Access

### 7.1 Vehicular and pedestrian

Vehicle and pedestrian access is unaltered by this planning application. Vehicle access to the building also remains the same following the wider refurbishment works with no additional parking be provided as part of the project. Refer to the University's parking management plan for detailed information.

Pedestrian access is also to largely remain the same. The two main entrance into the building are into the lower ground floor from the main North-South pedestrian route through the campus. Access at the upper ground level is to remain via the main entrance foyer of the Great Hall, however the new Bramall building will also improve access into the semicircle corridor at the upper ground level.

### 7.2 Inclusive access

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995: Parts 2 and 3 place obligations and duties where services and facilities are provided for the public. In this respect all publicly accessible areas within the development are required to be DDA compliant and have regard to Building Regulations Part M (2004), which necessitates Building Control approval. Approval confers acceptance that the building meets all reasonable standards in respect of physical access for disabled people with regard to the DDA.

As part of good design practice and DDA requirements the following principles have also been observed:

- Any external furniture, paving and landscape features within external circulation routes will not create barriers or hazards for disabled people with impaired vision.
- Night illumination will be suitably designed for pedestrian pathways especially the approach to the main entrance and specific entry points.
- All external surfaces are of known slip resistance in either dry or wet conditions.
- Drainage will avoid ponding and areas where freezing may create hazardous surfaces.
- Surfaces are level without drainage gullies on principal pedestrian access routes.
- All entrance doors will be maintained and available for people to use at all times without requiring assistance.
- Manifestation (either through patterning, logos or obscure glass) will be provided to glazed screens and doors, dependent upon their detailed design.
- Internal finishes will seek to avoid highly reflective surfaces that might confuse or disturb people with sensory disabilities, and use materials with adequate slip resistance to the floor surfaces especially when wet.
- There are no internal ramps and internal changes in level will have lift access.

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## 8.0 Appendix

### 8.1 Planning and Conservation Meeting Minutes

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Ref 3141\_4A\_20110822

**University of Birmingham**  
**Aston Webb C Block Refurbishment**  
**Pre Application Consultation – Site Walk Round**

**Date:** 22<sup>th</sup> August 2011

**Location:** UOB Estates/C Block

## 1.0 Present

		<b>Action</b>
Andrew Conroy	Birmingham City Council - Planning	<b>AC/BCC</b>
Julie Taylor	Birmingham City Council - Conservation	<b>JT/BCC</b>
Sarah Lewis	English Heritage	<b>SL/EH</b>
Matthew Lucas	Associated Architects LLP	<b>ML/AA</b>
Dan Jackson	Associated Architects LLP	<b>DJ/AA</b>

## 2.0 External Envelope

- 2.1 External brickwork and stone was commented upon being in good condition.
- 2.2 The existing appearance of floors cutting through windows was reviewed as a negative impact of the existing mezzanine. Any situation where this occurred in the proposals would require the floors to be set back much further than currently.
- 2.3 Ground floor cills were discussed, it was viewed that removing these would not be favourable as this would then weaken the cills to the upper floors. It was commented that this would not add much visibility.

## 3.0 Windows.

- 3.1 Existing steel windows were discussed. The intention was highlighted for possible replacing the entire windows with similar style Crittall windows and double glazed units, or introducing double glazed units in the existing restored frames, alternatively secondary glazing could also be an option to boost the efficiency of the facade. It was also discussed that additional opening lights might be required to achieve the mixed mode ventilation strategy.
- 3.2 It was commented that some of the opening lights did not look original due to their flat external profiles. AA to review. **AA**
- 3.3 It was noted that much of the glass looked to be original.

*Post meeting note: Email received from Birmingham City Planners portraying that the replacement of the windows and/or introduction of secondary glazing was unlikely to be acceptable as both "would have an adverse impact upon the character and appearance of the listed building".*

## 4.0 Roof

- 4.1 The different dormer arrangements and heights were noted while walking across to C block on blocks A & B.
- 4.2 The proposal to remove the dormers and replace with roof lights was discussed. In principal the dormers were not original features and therefore the removal and reinstatement of the

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original roofline would be positive. The introduction of new roof lights would require a sensitive approach and positioning them low in the roof.

## 5.0 Intermediate Floors

- 5.1 Original floor levels were highlighted as well as the areas where mezzanines were later added.
- 5.2 The position of the new floors was reviewed against the existing floors and windows. It was highlighted that this would require the removal of the existing first floor.
- 5.2 Any insertion of a new floor would require the sensitive connection in to the existing windows with suitable offset.
- 5.3 If removing the existing first floor it would be key to understand the historic purpose of this floor and if other blocks have similar floors making it a common feature or just a one off storage area.

## 6.0 Internal Features

- 6.1 A brief walk through the lower ground and upper ground floor corridors to understand the existing state of the internal building.
- 6.2 It was highlighted that few obviously original features could be seen. With the exception of possibly a couple of column bases and a small section of wall panelling.
- 6.3 The form of the roof trusses was also noted.
- 6.4 The main stairs to the rear of the building were discussed as non-original features which cut through the original windows. It was noted that the new stair core would be positioned to the centre of the plan to alleviate this issue.

## 7.0 Going Forward

- 7.1 A full study of the existing building needs to be carried out to understand how much of the existing design is still present and in what state. It may help to also look at the other two blocks (A and B). **AA**
- 7.1 A study of the historic and more recent plans needs to be carried out to ascertain the extent of any existing internal walls. Shown in a timeline of drawings. **AA**
- 7.2 Internal study of any possible historic finishes. Visual inspection of existing spaces. It would also help to find some historic photos of the original spaces in use to better understand which finishes were used. **AA/UOB**
- 7.3 We need to review the requirements to boost the performance of the envelope. This will be key to forming an argument for improving the windows. CPW need to confirm a minimum requirement to achieve the EPC B/C criteria. Precedent case studies of similarly listed buildings could also help. **AA/CPW**
- 7.2 Positives and negatives comparison needs to be done to weigh up effects of proposals, to be submitted within the design and access statement as a table showing a net improvement gained from the scheme. **AA**

## 8.0 Date of next meeting:

- 8.1 Further meeting will be required prior to planning once the research and proposals have been finalised. **ALL**

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Ref 3141\_4A\_20110921

**University of Birmingham**  
**Aston Webb C Block Refurbishment**  
**Pre Application Consultation**

**Date:** 21<sup>st</sup> September 2011

**Location:** UOB Estates

## 1.0 Present

		<b>Action</b>
Andrew Conroy	Birmingham City Council - Planning	<b>AC/BCC</b>
Julie Taylor	Birmingham City Council - Conservation	<b>JT/BCC</b>
Owen Thompson	University of Birmingham	<b>UOB</b>
Andy Stone	University of Birmingham	<b>UOB</b>
Matthew Lucas	Associated Architects LLP	<b>ML</b>
Dan Jackson	Associated Architects LLP	<b>DJ</b>

## 2.0 Historical Plan Analysis

- 2.1 AA tabled plans showing development of internal layout over time along with archive images showing original curved trusses over Museum and Laboratory in hammerhead.
- 2.2 AA highlighted that through this analysis three walls stood out as being possibly existing. Survey works were carried out the previous week and discovered that the two areas on the lower ground floor showed evidence of timber panelling. The area on the upper ground floor was masonry.
- 2.3 JT requested coloured plans were consolidated into a single drawing per floor showing the age of each wall colour coded. **AA**

## 3.0 Windows and Doors

- 3.1 Proposed model images and drawings were reviewed for dealing with the thermal upgrade of the envelope.
- 3.2 Favoured option of secondary glazing set inside existing piers with floor slab extending up to internal face was received positively however noted as not the ideal set back distance for the floor slab.
- 3.3 Debate was had with regards to the method of dealing with the floor slab. AA to provide precedents and models to better portray proposals in the heritage statement. **AA**
- 3.4 It was noted that the existing windows would be re-decorated and opening lights sealed. Method of sealing to be confirmed. Sealing should not prevent opening up of window in the future.
- 3.5 Details of proposed new external doors to be provided to ensure the sensitive insertion within existing window openings. Review other blocks. **AA**

## 4.0 Roof

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- 4.1 Confirmed that the roof would be stripped back to secondary structure, removing the later addition of dormers, re insulated and original slate finish and ridge roof lights reinstated. Details of roof lights would be required at planning stage. **AA**

## 5.0 Intermediate Floors

- 5.1 In order to remove the first floor it would be required to clearly show the proposal reinstated the character of the expressed structural trusses.
- 5.2 Confirmation of new floor edge treatment would be required.

## 6.0 Internal Features

- 6.1 Building control has confirmed that the link of the block into the semi-circle would need to be a 1hr fire compartment line. This would affect the main entrance doors in the block at Upper Ground level. As existing features the doors would need to be retained. Secondary lobby would need to be introduced. In order to achieve this moving the doors would be acceptable provided the line of the corridor is not interrupted.
- 6.2 Timber cabinets in proposed Employability centre would need to be retained.
- 6.3 More sections and detail would be required of the lecture theatre to access its impact upon the existing windows and also cleaning and access to the windows below.

## 8.0 Date of next meeting:

- 8.1 A further meeting has now been organised with English Heritage to discuss the proposals and walk the building on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2011 – 10am. **ALL**

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Ref 3141\_4A\_20111003

**University of Birmingham**  
**Aston Webb C Block Refurbishment**  
**Pre Application Consultation**

**Date:** 03<sup>rd</sup> October 2011

**Location:** Aston Webb block C

<b>1.0 Present</b>	<b>Action</b>	
Julie Taylor	Birmingham City Council - Conservation	<b>BCC</b>
Sarah Lewis	English Heritage	<b>EH</b>
Matthew Lucas	Associated Architects LLP	<b>AA</b>
<b>2.0 Historical Plan Analysis</b>		
2.1 AA presented plan drawings indicating removal of internal partitions through various refurbishments. The analysis identified three original partitions will are to be retained in the proposed scheme. English Heritage agreed the strategy and extents of demolition are acceptable. AA to include partition drawings in Heritage statement		<b>AA</b>
<b>3.0 Windows and Doors</b>		
3.1 AA presented options for secondary glazing. Agreed option 2 was preferred which includes the integration of a new secondary glazing system which will be positioned to the back face of the existing brickwork piers. English Heritage agreed this principle was acceptable. AA to develop window section sizes and submit details with the planning application.		<b>AA</b>
3.2 Reviewed existing entrance doors from corridor. The corridor creates the 1Hr fire compartment line. However the existing doors are not fire rated. Agreed a second set of doors are to be provided which will act as the fire line. These doors will be on hold opens. AA to submit details with the planning application		<b>AA</b>
<b>Existing first floor</b>		
3.3 Reviewed existing first floor. Various modifications have taken place including the infill of the central void and the boxing out of the existing trusses. AA outlined the option for the retention of the existing floors. Both English Heritage and Birmingham City Council agreed that they prefer the options of removing the existing first floor with the integration of a new mezzanine which creates the double height aesthetic of the original building. AA to confirm preferred option once the scheme has been fully costed.		<b>AA</b>
<b>4.0 Roof</b>		
4.1 Confirmed that the roof would be stripped back to secondary structure, removing the later addition of dormers, re insulated and original slate finish and ridge roof lights reinstated. Details of roof lights would be required at planning stage. English heritage agreed this was the preferred solution.		<b>AA</b>

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Ref 3141\_4A\_20111208

**University of Birmingham**  
**Aston Webb C Block Refurbishment**  
**Pre Application Consultation**

**Date:** 8<sup>th</sup> December 2011

**Location:** Aston Webb block C

## 1.0 Present

## Action

Julie Taylor	Birmingham City Council - Conservation	JT
Andres Conroy	Birmingham City Council	AC
Andy Stone	University of Birmingham	AS
Daniel Jackson	Associated Architects LLP	DJ

## 2.0 Windows and Doors

- 2.1 AA tabled three options which were under consideration. It is intended to determine the best option through careful analysis of the thermal model to both explore the most efficient in terms of construction cost, running cost and user comfort. At present no option had been eliminated. **AA**
- 2.2 JT expressed concern about the rationalisation of the opening light but noted that a clear understand of the chronology of the glazing system needs to be determined as some of the opening light were added after the original construction. Detailed drawings/photos would be required illustrating which opening light were original, which had been added over recent years and the extent of new opening lights. **AA**
- 2.3 Option 2 was discussed (new double glazed system to replace the existing). JT and AC noted that this would not be an acceptable option.
- 2.4 Option 2 was discussed (refurb existing and introduce secondary glazing). JT noted that previously a single fixed pane had been discussed, DJ explained that a sliding system was now proposed to offer natural ventilation for user comfort and greater energy efficiency. JT disliked the introduction of the central mullion and increased frame sizes.
- 2.5 It was noted that whichever option was put forward as the preferred option a clear explanation of the determining factors and comparison with the existing system would be required. To be included within the Heritage statement. **AA**
- 2.6 JT to review window options with Sarah Lewis of English Heritage and provide feedback on the proposals. **JT**
- 2.7 Position of new doors were also confirmed. Details would be required. **AA**
- 2.8 Possible canopies were highlighted over the main entrance areas. JT expressed concern that these would be difficult to tie into the existing architecture. Details to be provided to consideration. If provided by Monday these could again be reviewed with EH. **AA**

## 3.0 External Chiller Plant location

- 3.1 AA explained that a mechanical vent chiller plant would be required to be positioned externally between C Block and the Great Hall. **AA**

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- 3.2 Following discussion of locations inspection of the courtyard was carried out to determine a likely location. It was viewed that positioning the chiller away from the parapet wall would be best given its height. Positioning the chiller to one side of the steps would retain access and views back into the main building.
- 3.3 Discussion was held as to the appropriate treatment of the enclosure around the chiller. Both modern and traditional options were discussed. Green or Brown roofs would also lessen the impact when viewed from above. AA to put forward proposals.

**AA**