



UNIVERSITY OF
OXFORD

**2 South Parks Road
Conservation Plan**

Building No. 162
March 2013

Estates Services
University of Oxford
March 2013

2 SOUTH PARKS ROAD, OXFORD

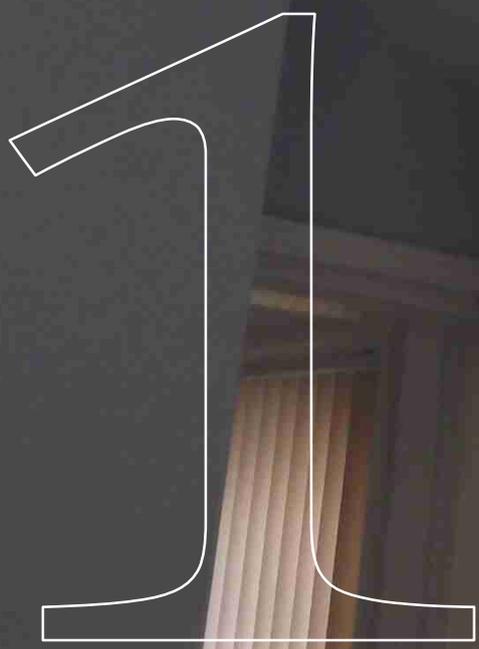
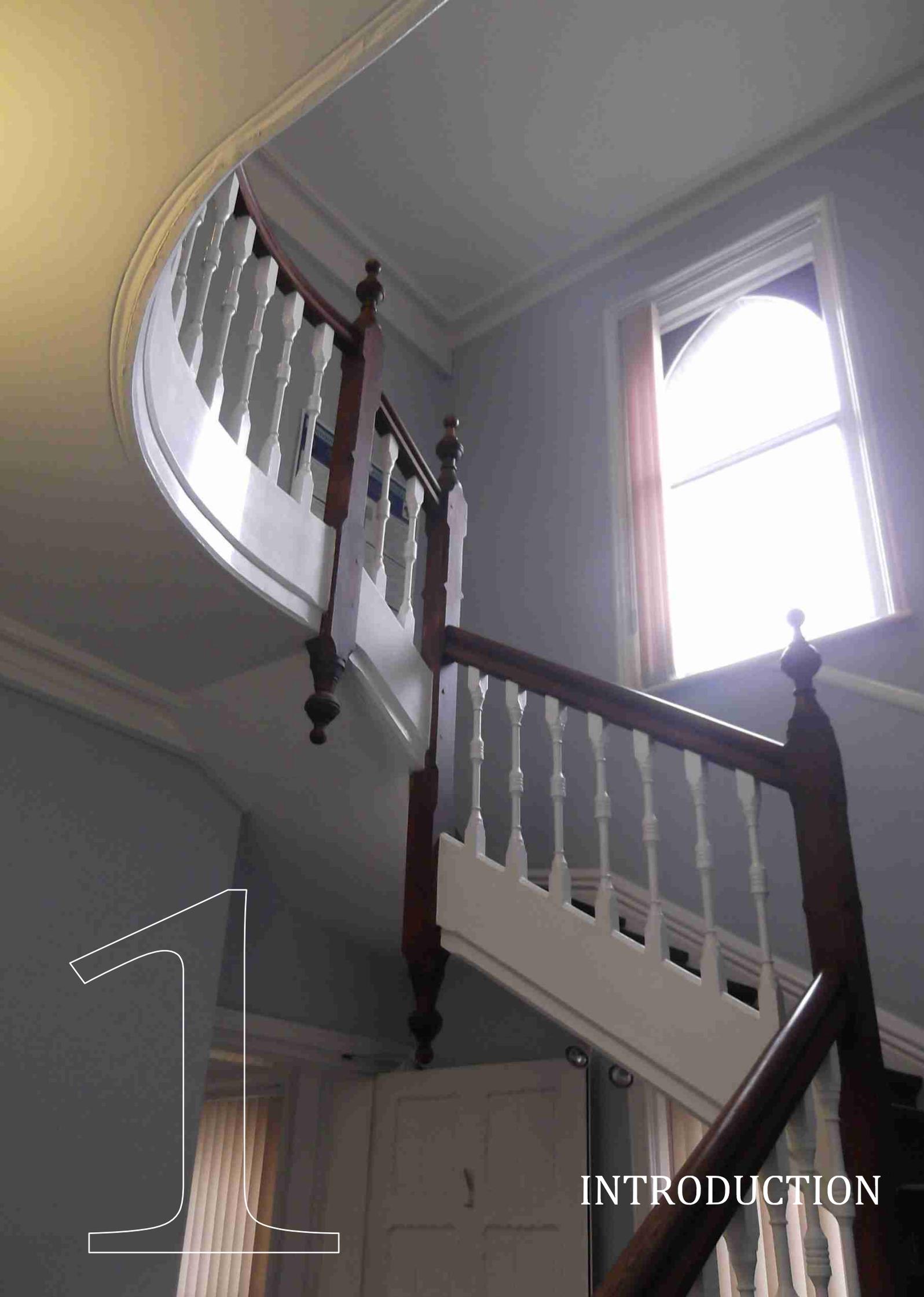
CONSERVATION PLAN



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INTRODUCTION

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1 INTRODUCTION

2 South Parks Road was designed by William Wilkinson, the architect of Norham Manor, in 1865-66. The building was designated Grade-II listed in 2004. It is a fine example of a High Victorian suburban villa, so common in North Oxford, but with an unusually central location. It was originally constructed as a private house for George Rolleston, the Linacre Professor of Anatomy and Physiology, but now forms part of the accommodation for the University of Oxford's Department of Statistics.

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 2 South Parks Road.

The purpose of this Conservation Plan is to update 2 South Parks Road'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 2 South Parks Road'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.

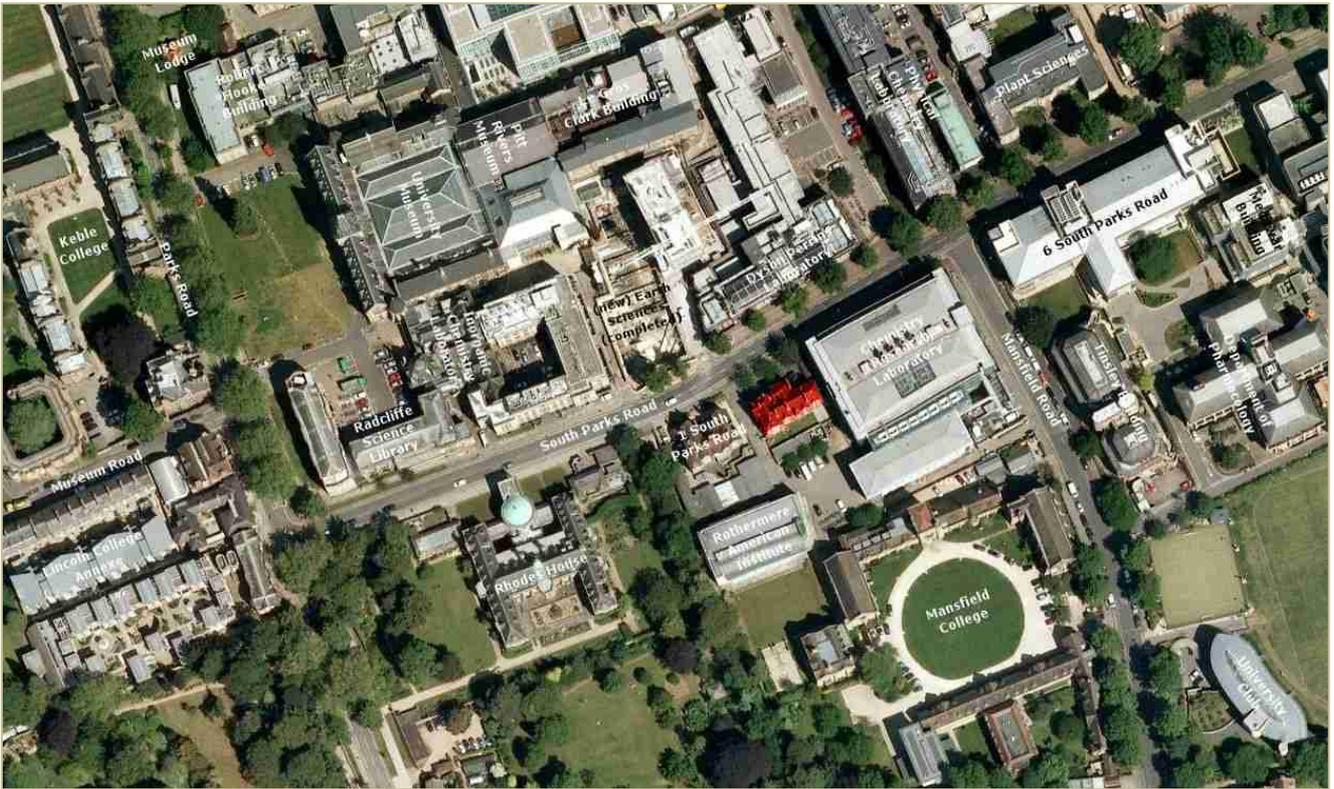


Figure 1. Satellite image showing 2 South Parks Road (highlighted in red) and the surrounding area, orientated with north at the top of the image

1.2 Scope of the Conservation Plan

This plan will cover the interior and exterior of 2 South Parks Road, a Grade-II-listed building on South Parks Road in Holywell Ward in central Oxford.

The plan is not a catalogue and to facilitate its practical use will concentrate only on the most vulnerable aspects of the building’s 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 3** and should be referred to when planning any repair or alteration work.

1.3 Existing Information

There are various forms of useful information available regarding 2 South Parks Road:

The original 2004 listed building description (**Appendix 1**) is the logical starting point for this plan as it lists the heritage asset’s main features and briefly assesses its architectural significance.

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

Oxford University Archives contains various useful historic plans and correspondence regarding this building. Other useful information is available from Estates Services' own archives.

There are several published books and articles that examine the development of the Victorian domestic architecture in Oxford. None cover the heritage asset, but Wilkinson remains an important figure and these publications provide an important resource for studying works of this period in Oxford.

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 2 South Parks Road 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

2 South Parks Road 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.

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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 2 South Parks Road now stands is situated in the northeast of the city. 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 area to the east of Keble and directly to the north of 2 South Parks Road became the focus for University science buildings following the construction of the University Museum in 1855-60. Additions to the University Museum (notably T.G. Jackson's Radcliffe Science Library in 1898-1900) and new laboratory buildings came to fill this area throughout the later 19th and the 20th centuries. The near-continuous history of development in this area has created a crowded space at the south of the University Park's precinct. It is the main centre for the study of sciences within the University, and is now known as the University Science Area.

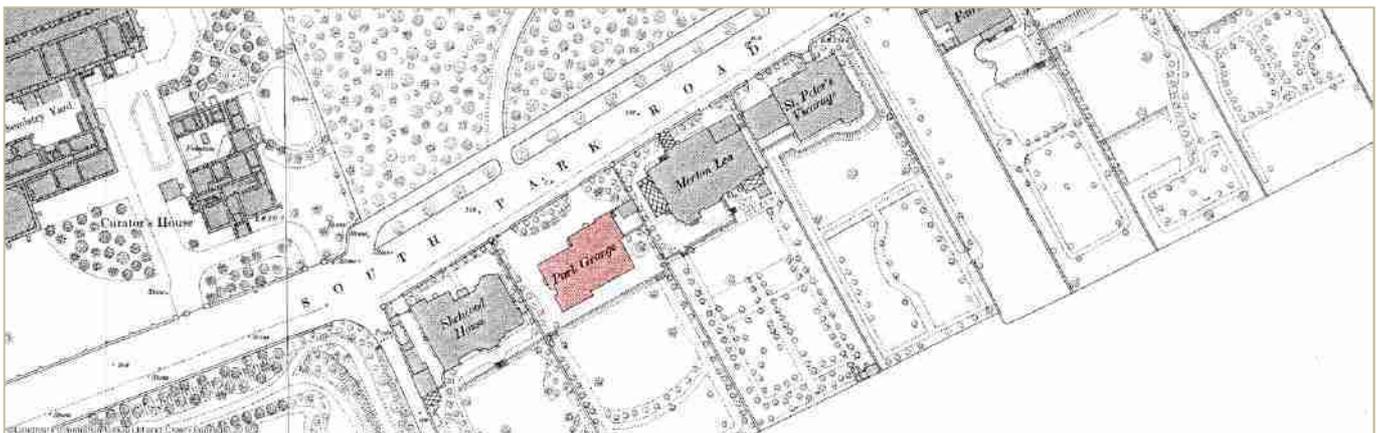


Figure 2. Extract from the 1878 Ordnance Survey map for Oxford showing 2 South Parks Road (highlighted in red) and the surrounding area, orientated with north at the top of the image

2 South Parks Road, originally called Park Grange, was the first of eight suburban villas built along South Parks Road between 1866 and 1876.² It was completed in 1866 and was shortly followed by the construction of 1 South Parks Road (constructed as Shelwood House) in 1869. Initially these houses would have stood relatively isolated in a leafy setting, with the

¹ A short chronology of 2 South Parks Road can be found in **Appendix 2**.

² Saint, A., "Three Oxford Architects" in *Oxoniensia* XXXV (1960) 73.

open green space of the newly-formed University Parks and the University Museum to the north (**Figure 2**). The development of the Science Area and other structures soon changed the setting though and, other than the conspicuous buildings of the Science Area, the most prominent structures around the heritage asset are: Sir Herbert Baker's Rhodes House (completed in 1923) to the west; and Basil Champneys' Mansfield College (constructed 1887-89) immediately to the southeast.

The main developments along South Parks during the 20th century onwards have been related to the Science Area to the north, for instance the construction of the Paul Waterhouse's Dyson Perrins Laboratory in 1913-22, though such development has extended onto the southern side of the road, including: the Experimental Psychology building on the corner of St. Cross Road, built in 1971; the structure of the Chemistry Research Laboratory on the corner of Mansfield Road, constructed 2000-04 in the previous location of 3 and 4 South Parks Road; and the Biomedical Sciences building opened in 2008 (**Figure 1**).

Due to driving restrictions in the city centre, South Parks Road is surprisingly busy with motor traffic, providing a by-pass from North-Oxford to the east of the city. Despite this, the character of the area is of a leafy, academic suburb, defined more by the soft hues and varied geometry of the Victorian and early 20th-century structures than by the rectangular lines of the later laboratory buildings.

2.2 Construction and Subsequent History of 2 South Parks Road

2 South Parks Road was constructed in 1865-66 to a design by William Wilkinson. This was during the peak period of Wilkinson's career, following his development of Norham Manor on behalf of St. John's College from 1860, his design for the Randolph Hotel in 1864, and culminating in his publication of *English Country Houses* in 1870.³ This was the heyday of middle-class suburban development in North Oxford following the development of Samuel Seckham's Park Town from 1853.

2 South Parks Road was built shortly before 1 South Parks Road as part of a mid-to-late 19th-century trend towards the construction of large middle-class villas on land previously held by colleges for the collection of agricultural rents. Both houses are unusual in that they are located in a relatively isolated position away from the main suburban developments in North Oxford. This may represent an historical phenomenon, as some of the North Oxford developments themselves began as isolated groups, such as the Park Villas (7-21) on Banbury Road or even the houses of Norham Manor (where houses were built to individual order as and when plots were leased); Wilkinson's isolated domestic dwellings on South Parks Road seem to represent a situation where an initial availability of leases from Merton College (there were four plots leased between the current site of Rhodes House and Mansfield Road in 1868, and eight in total on South Parks Road by 1876) was not followed by subsequent development.

³ *Ibid*, 56; Wilkinson, W., *English Country Houses* (London, 1870, rev'd 1875).

MISCELLANEOUS.

Improvements of a miscellaneous character are constantly going on, both in the city and suburbs; those most observable are connected with the northern and eastern extension of Oxford. On the Merton estate, the ditch which ran along the west side of Mr. C. Symonds's paddock has been filled up, and oak palings erected on it, the width of the footpath to the Parks being considerably increased. At the corner nearest the Museum, a substantial residence has been erected for Dr. Rolleston. A new road in the same direction, from a central portion of Holywell, is on the *tapis*, and other improvements are contemplated. We may remark that Professor Rolleston's new residence partakes of the same features which characterize other similar works of the same architect—Mr. W. Wilkinson—and like other houses planned by that gentleman, is fitted with Moule's patent earth-closets, with self-acting door apparatus, while provision is made for carrying to the top of the building any foul air which can possibly arise. Several more handsome villas have been erected on the Walton and Norham Manors. On the east side of the Summer Town

Figure 3. Extract from *Jackson's Oxford Journal* for 13th October 1866. Greying out by author

2 South Parks Road was constructed as a private house for George Rolleston (1829-81), the first Linacre Professor of Anatomy and Physiology (1860-81), on land lease-held from Merton College. He died in the house from kidney failure in 1881. The brief description of the house and its setting in *Jackson's Oxford Journal* (Figure 3) emphasises how, when the house was first constructed in 1866, the setting was on the rural side of suburban.⁴ It also emphasises the inclusion of Rev. Moule's earth closets. This was a type of toilet which operated using a hopper full of earth in place of a cistern. The earth and waste was then composted outside. It was intended for use in areas without access to piped water and had been designed as a means of combating cholera.

When George Rolleston died in 1881, he left his estate to his wife, Grace Rolleston. Grace died in 1914 and the lease for 2 South Parks Road was assigned to Rev. David Colville Lusk (1881-1960), the Chaplain to the Presbyterian members of the University of Oxford. The lease was sealed in 1921 and Lusk was definitely still resident as late as 1927.⁵ In 1933, Rev.

⁴ *Jackson's Oxford Journal*, 13th October 1866.

⁵ Lease information kindly provided by Merton College. *The London Gazette* 17th February 1928; Rev. Lusk's address was listed as 2 South Parks Road when he proved the will and codicil of Andrew Lusk in 1927. Lusk was Balliol educated (1901) and his professional service with the University of Oxford began in 1914, so he may have occupied the house from shortly after the death of Grace Rolleston in that year.

Lusk became the Minister of West Coates Church in Edinburgh, so it is likely that he ceased to be resident at this point, though his lease was not assigned back to Merton College until 1948.

A connecting corridor was constructed between 2 and 3 South Parks Road at some point (**Figure 4**). Comparison of Ordnance Survey maps suggests that this must have occurred between 1921 and 1939. It seems sensible to suggest that this would have occurred after Rev. Lusk moved out, with the houses taking on some kind of shared institutional function, so a construction date of 1933-39 might be posited. This corridor ran diagonally between the two buildings and had two doorways on its northern side and one on its southern side. It connected to the eastern doorway which now forms the ground-floor fire exit to 2 South Parks Road.

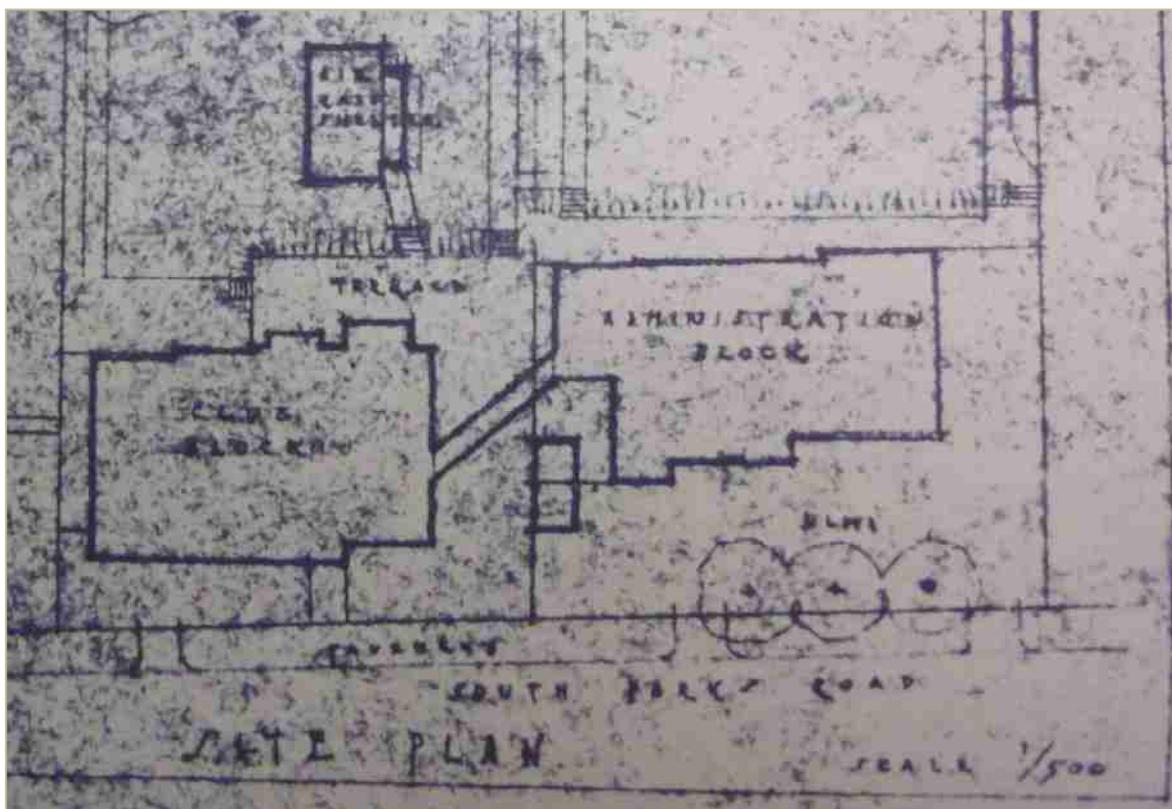


Figure 4. 1951 block plan of 2 and 3 South Parks Road showing the connecting corridor between the two buildings, orientated with north at the bottom of the image. 2 South Parks Road is labelled as the ‘administration block.’

As a connecting corridor had been constructed between the buildings, probably in the 1930s, it might be assumed that the use of the two buildings was linked from this point. The lease to 3 South Parks Road was assigned from John Furnival Esq. back to Merton College on the 31st May 1948, the day before Lusk did the same with his lease for 2 South Parks Road. At some point Shell Mex and BP Ltd., a joint marketing venture between Shell and BP, took over the lease for 3 South Parks Road, and presumably for both buildings. They undertook from Merton College a license to assign their lease in January 1949 and it is probably at this point

that the lease for 2 South Parks Road was assigned to the government's Ministry of Works.⁶ Some internal subdivision had already occurred by this point, for instance the large ground-floor room in the centre of the southern range had already been subdivided into two offices (now 162.10.15 and 162.10.16), as had all of the subdivision of the larger rooms on the first and second floor. A fire-escape staircase on the eastern elevation was also in place by 1951 (the current example is a 1997 replacement).⁷

The Ministry of Works leased the building, which they assigned to the Colonial Office, from c.1949. The Colonial Office used 2 South Parks Road as the administration block of its Colonial Services Club, with 3 South Parks Road serving as the club block. The Colonial Services Club was designed to serve as a social club for foreign nationals undertaking courses at the University of Oxford's Institute of Colonial Studies, which was also based on South Parks Road. This created some mutability in its use as whilst the lease for No.2 was held by the government, its purposes were closely linked to the University's own activities in the same area and consequently the government sub-leased several rooms to the University on various occasions. As early as January 1949 the University's Institute of Colonial Studies rented rooms at No.2, and in September 1950 they changed their address to 2 South Parks Road, suggesting perhaps a fuller occupation of the building. In January 1952, the Institute of Colonial Studies moved to 10 Keble Road but the Colonial Services Club remained based at 2 South Parks Road.⁸

By the end of September 1964, the University of Oxford had secured the freehold for Merton College's holdings on the southern side of South Parks Road, including 2 South Parks Road and Merton's playing fields and Cherwell Edge (part of the site of what is now Linacre College). The lease for 2 South Parks Road, held by the government's Ministry of Works and consequently the Commonwealth Services Club (the successor to the Colonial Services Club), was extended by the University initially until June 1966 and eventually until 1969.

When the University first purchased the leasehold there was some discussion regarding the demolition of 1-4 South Parks Road and their replacement with a "Martin-style building" (i.e. a modernist building in the style of Sir Leslie Martin who had recently completed the St. Cross Building for Oxford University) for Chemistry in the same location. There seems to have been some jostling between departments about the allocation of this space and by 1967 the possibilities under discussion included accommodation for either Computing or Nuclear Physics, and an extension of the Radcliffe Science Library.⁹ In 1968, a very narrow strip of land running along the southern edge of the gardens of both 2 and 3 South Parks Road was provided to Mansfield College on a peppercorn lease to provide the college with better access to its northern elevation.

When possession of the building reverted to the University in July 1969 planning permission was granted for changing its usage to teaching accommodation for Molecular Biophysics and

⁶ Oxford University Archives, ref. US 203/3.

⁷ Oxford University Archives, ref. ET 2/2/173.

⁸ Oxford University Archives, ref. UC/FF/512/1-6.

⁹ Oxford University Archives, ref. UR 6/SCA/4, file 1; minutes of Building and Development Committee, 29th September 1964 and 18th March 1967.

Atmospheric Physics, and for temporary storage accommodation for Zoology (due to the ongoing construction of Sir Leslie Martin's Tinbergen Building). Permission was also granted for the demolition of 3 South Parks Road; however, these changes did not go ahead as the Local Authority's Fire Officer did not deem No.2 suitable for storage or office use without substantial alterations. No.3 was occupied by Molecular Biophysics and Atmospheric Physics, but No.2 remained vacant.¹⁰

By this point, 2 South Parks Road was unoccupied, in a dilapidated state, and suffering from dry rot. A dilapidations payment of £7,500 was available from the government to cover the period of its lease of both 2 and 3 South Parks Road; however, the University Surveyor estimated that in order to get a useful 10-year life out of the buildings renovations amounting to £25,000 would be required. This figure amounted to £9,000 for No.2 and £16,000 for No.3. The Sites and Buildings Subcommittee on Decanting decided that it would not be economical to adapt the buildings for laboratory use, with the only reasonable functional use being as academic offices. Additional academic office space was not required at this time and it was therefore deemed uneconomical to spend the money required to convert the buildings to this use. A compromise was suggested whereby the cheaper of the two refurbishments would go ahead, i.e. that of 2 South Parks Road, and 3 South Parks Road would be demolished. The concept was that No.2 could be used for residential accommodation, either as a residential annexe to Halifax House or to be rented to a college, thus making a contribution to the city's ongoing accommodation problems, and be kept in good order to be rapidly turned to use as academic offices if the need should arise at short notice.¹¹

It seems that 3 South Parks was not immediately demolished, with Ordnance Survey maps suggesting that this happened at some point between 1977 and 1994. No.2 was used by Halifax House (now the University Club) in the interim period as a residential annexe, as suggested by the 1971 Subcommittee on Decanting: in 1972 planning consent was granted for internal alterations (and an extension to the since-demolished garage) and the related plans are labelled '2 South Parks Road [Halifax House].' These internal alterations seem to be related to converting the space to a residential use and were quite substantial. The majority of the fireplaces were bricked or boarded up and panelling and pipework removed. Several doorways were created at this point, for instance the doorway between what had been two ground-floor bathrooms in the single-storeyed area that now forms a kitchenette, photocopy area, and a small entrance corridor (rooms 16.10.08, 09, and 10 in **Appendix 7.4.2**, the doorway being that now between 16.10.08 and 09). The doorway, now a fire exit, from the northernmost of these two bathrooms (now the ground-floor kitchenette, 16.10.10) onto the yard was also formed at this time. Most of the original fitted cupboards in the building were removed and new floor finishes were fitted in most areas. The plans for this work suggest that the link between 2 and 3 South Parks Road had been demolished by this point.¹² If so, this must have only been a recent development, as the 1971 Subcommittee on Decanting had

¹⁰ *Ibid*; letter from Jack Lankester (University Surveyor) to the Committee of Works, 25th February 1970.

¹¹ *Ibid*; minutes of Sites and Buildings Subcommittee on Decanting, 24th April 1971.

¹² Oxford University Archives, ref. ET 2/1/24/4.

discussed the buildings being linked.¹³ If the link corridor was demolished by this point then it may indicate that No.3 itself had been demolished this early.

A 1970 resolution of Congregation had designated the gardens of 2, 3, and 4 South Parks Road as a staff car park to serve the Science Area. This practice continued until 1998. In 1979, planning permission was granted for the provision of two 20,000-gallon underground oil storage tanks in the southwest corner of the car park at the rear.

Survey plans produced in 1985 suggest that the building was still occupied by Halifax House at this time but beginning in 1987 the building was occupied as a Computer Laboratory Annexe and as offices for the newly-formed Oxford University Research and Development Ltd. (which was renamed Isis Innovation Ltd. in August of the following year). Internal and external alterations were made in order to accommodate the new occupants. The fire-door partitions in the first- and second-floor corridors were probably inserted at this time but other internal changes were probably quite minor as most of the larger spaces in the building had already been subdivided by this point. The only later subdivisions, those of two of the ground-floor rooms (now 162.10.14/14A and 162.10.17/17A, see **Appendix 7.4.2**), do not appear on plans of this date and probably did not occur until Statistics occupied the building in 1994. Isis Innovation Ltd. occupied the western wing of the building on the ground and first floors and Computer Science occupied the rest of 2 South Parks Road.

From 1994, the University of Oxford's Department of Statistics occupied 1 and 2 South Parks Road. Isis Innovation Ltd. continued to occupy the western wing of No.2. as they had since 1987. With Isis Innovation Ltd. using the main entrance on the western elevation, with its associated entrance hall and staircase, Statistics needed a separate entrance to the building. A new doorway was cut into the northern elevation and an associated disabled access ramp was constructed (the extant northern entrance). A disabled WC was constructed in the ground-floor space beside the secondary staircase. A first-floor partition was removed, probably from what is now the server room (though modern partitions were also removed from what is now the first-floor seminar room at some point). A doorway was also constructed in the northern wall of one of the southern first-floor offices (162.20.12, see **Appendix 7.4.3**) directly onto the first-floor corridor.¹⁴

In 1996, the space beside the main

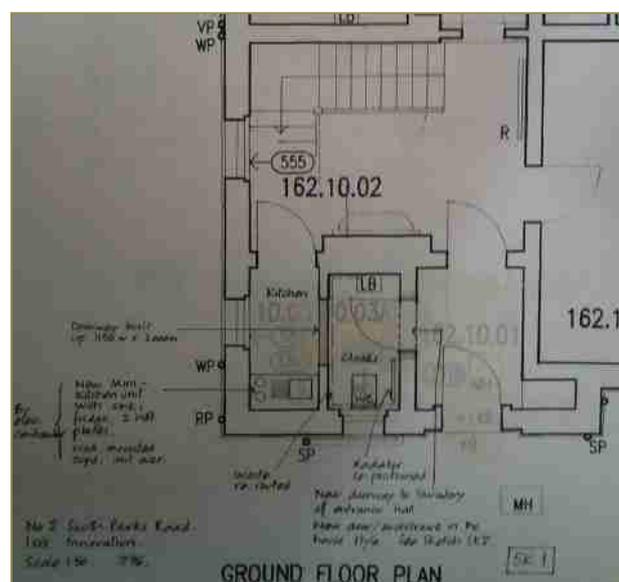


Figure 5. 1996 reconfiguration of kitchenette space adjacent to main western entrance, orientated with north at the left of the image

¹³ *Supra* n.11.

¹⁴ Estates Services archives, ref. 162.

western entrance was reconfigured. This area had historically served as a bathroom and separate WC accessed from the stair lobby. The doorway between the two spaces was blocked up and a new doorway (to match the building's original doorways) cut from the entrance corridor into the WC. The previous bathroom area was then converted into a self-contained kitchenette accessed from the stair lobby (**Figure 5**).

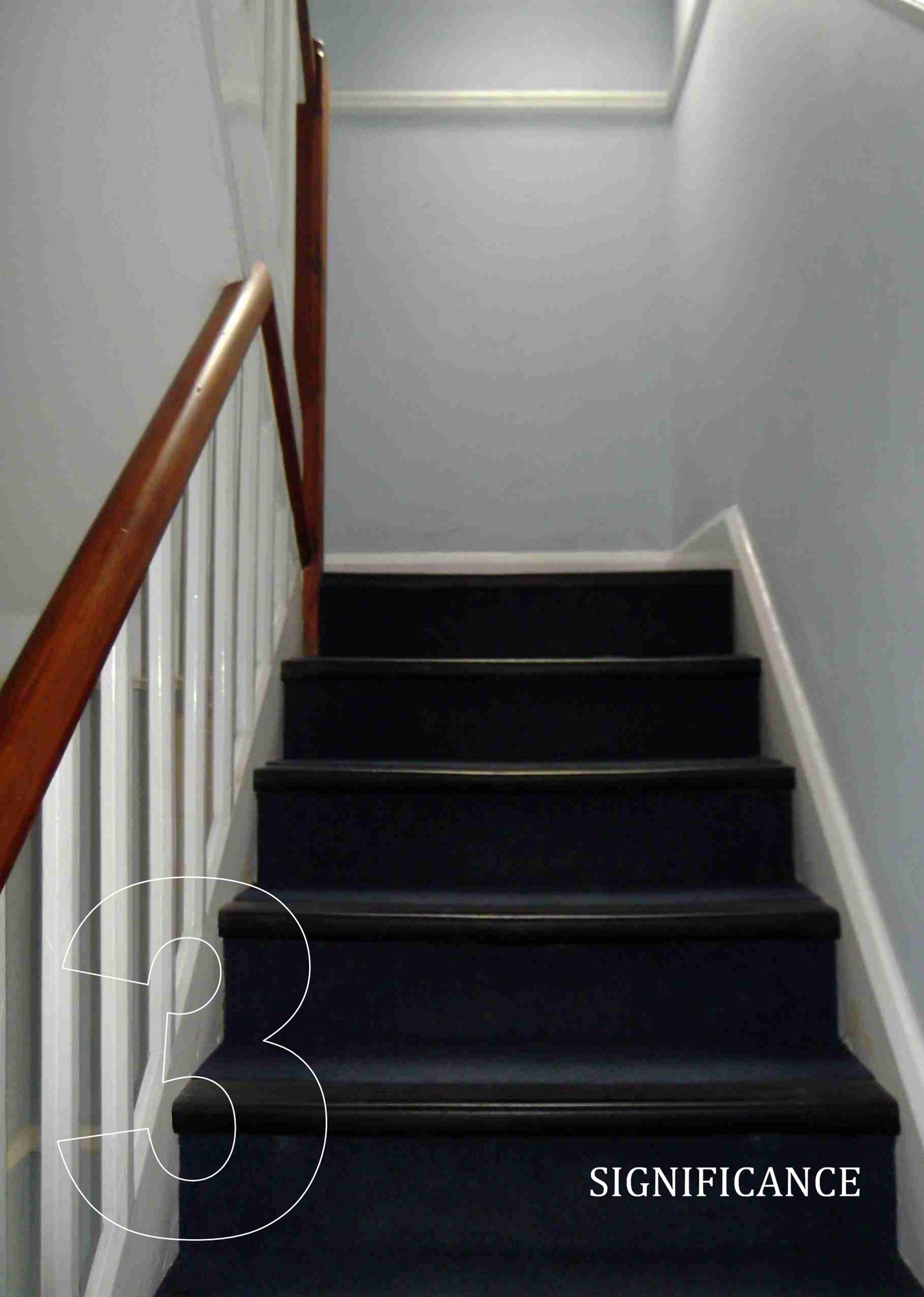
A new external fence was fitted in 1995 and large portions of the northern boundary wall were rebuilt in 1995 and 2000. The external fire escape on the eastern elevation, which was in place by 1951, was replaced in 1997.¹⁵ External renovations and repairs were carried out in 1998.

In 1998, Congregation elected to discontinue the use of the area around 2 South Parks Road as a car park and to allocate the sites of 3 and 4 South Parks Road for the construction of a new Chemistry building. Work began on the Chemistry Research Laboratory in September 2000. The aged plasterwork in 2 South Parks Road was adversely affected by the vibrations caused by the adjacent building work and the ceiling in the first-floor corridor collapsed in 2001. This was subsequently replaced and cracks in the plaster in several of the office spaces were also repaired.

By March 2000 Isis Innovation Ltd. had left 2 South Parks Road and the department of Environmental and Life Sciences had occupied at least part of the area vacated by them. Environmental and Life Sciences vacated the building in 2005 and it was taken over completely by the Department of Statistics. In anticipation of this, substantial refurbishment was carried out in 2005. The garage at the eastern end of the building was demolished and the associated area resurfaced and fitted with a bicycle shelter and racks. The retaining wall facing onto the Chemistry Research Laboratory was also probably constructed or reconstructed at this point. The exterior of the building was repointed and the windows repainted and reglazed where necessary. Internally the building was completely redecorated throughout. The old floor finishes were removed, the floorboards raised and relaid, and new 3mm hardboard fitted over the floorboards with carpet or vinyl finishes fitted as appropriate. Plaster cornices were repaired and replaced as necessary as were skirting and picture rails. Electrical trunking was fitted as rewiring was undertaken. The toilets and kitchens were refurbished and refurnished. Several doors were replaced or rehung on new ironmongery. Some walls and ceilings were replastered.

2 South Parks Road is now fully occupied by the University of Oxford's Department of Statistics and serves as an annexe to its main operations at 1 South Parks Road, providing office and teaching space. The building has benefited from the 2005 renovations and is generally finished to a high quality. Most of the original large rooms have been subdivided but the original floorplan can largely be traced and two rooms in the western wing which were at some point subdivided (the ground-floor common room and the first-floor seminar room) have since been returned to their original proportions.

¹⁵ *Supra* n.12, 14.



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 2 South Parks Road has been publically recognised by its designation as a Grade-II-listed building in 2004 (see **Appendix 1**).

3.1 Significance as part of South Parks Road, Holywell Ward, and east central Oxford

The character of Holywell Ward is that of a leafy, academic suburb; grand yet far removed from the monumentality of Broad Street and the city centre. This character is emphasised by two major factors: the extensive tree cover, which softens the character of the area; and the presence of several important buildings. These structures include Keble College (1868-70) and the University Museum (1855-60); two buildings that are very distinct from one another yet share a projected sense of academic rigour which belies the monumentality afforded by their size.

The character of South Parks Road is defined by the presence of two buildings, the Radcliffe Science Library (1898-1900, extension 1934) and Rhodes House (1928), at its main point of entry, the junction with Parks Road. The impact of some of the newer large glass-and-steel structures, such as the Chemistry Research Laboratory (2004), could be expected to dominate the road; however, the character of the area is defined



Figure 6. 2 South Parks Road (left) and 1 South Parks Road (right) viewed from the northern side of South Parks Road

by these older structures at the junction with Parks Road. Both buildings project a sense of restrained grandeur, so distinct from the unfettered triumphalism of the gothic structures of the city centre. The domestic characters of 1 and 2 Parks Roads complement this, as they remain well-appointed structures but without a hint of pretension. It is the softer lines and light tones of the these structures, aided by abundant tree cover, rather than the harsh lines of

the larger structures such as the Chemistry Research Laboratory, that define the character of the area as a leafy, academic suburb, a venerable area for serious research and study unimpeded by pomp and ceremony.

1 South Parks Road, larger than No.2 and with its blocky, gabled cross wings facing directly onto the road, is the more-visually-dominant partner, with No.2 showing a less-forceful side elevation to the road; however, the pair together play an important rôle in easing the transition from the 17th-century-style eclecticism of Rhodes House to the harsh modernism of the Chemistry Research Laboratory. South Parks Road used to contain eight houses, and 1 and 2 South Parks Road are significant as the only extant reminders of this past residential character.

3.2 Architectural Significance

1 South Parks Road was designed by William Wilkinson, a significant and well-known local architect, most famous for his work on the suburban villas of North Oxford, notably at Norham Manor. His work was a local manifestation of an important mid-to-late 19th-century trend towards middle-class suburban development.

2 South Parks Road was constructed during the most prolific period of his career, leading up to the publication of *English Country Houses* in 1870. This period and publication saw his finest designs, some of which were picked up by the internationally-renowned architect E. Viollet-le-Duc for reproduction in his 1875 portfolio *Habitations Modernes*.¹⁶ Elements of the very designs lauded by Viollet-le-Duc can be clearly seen in 2 South Parks Road, notably the central range juxtaposed with a cross wing and an exterior asymmetry linked to interior function (both features can also be seen more faithfully in the designs for 13 Norham Gardens and 1 South Parks Road).¹⁷ This can be felt especially in the internal configuration where the two primary rectangles (red and blue in **Figure 8**) act as separate spaces, with the central range forming a long corridor with a separate servants' staircase and rooms accessed off it on every floor. On the ground and first floors, the western cross wing forms a separate circulation space, with rooms accessed from the impressive main staircase. The large room beside the main entrance



Figure 7. 2 South Parks Road looking south-eastwards. The gable projecting from the cross wing above the main entrance references the range to the east, which is on a similar alignment

¹⁶ Viollet-le-Duc, E., *Habitations Modernes* (Paris, 1875).

¹⁷ Wilkinson, W., *op. cit.*

and the staircase on the ground floor, currently the Common Room, was presumably originally designed as Rolleston's study, allowing access for work-related guests without requiring them to pass through the private areas of the house; a feature common to Wilkinson's designs.¹⁸ This allowed the western cross wing to act as a semi-public space separately from the rest of the building. The original main entrance faces onto the drive between 1 and 2 South Parks Road, rather than onto the road itself. This space would have been more open when 2 South Parks Road was constructed, as 1 South Parks Road was not yet built.

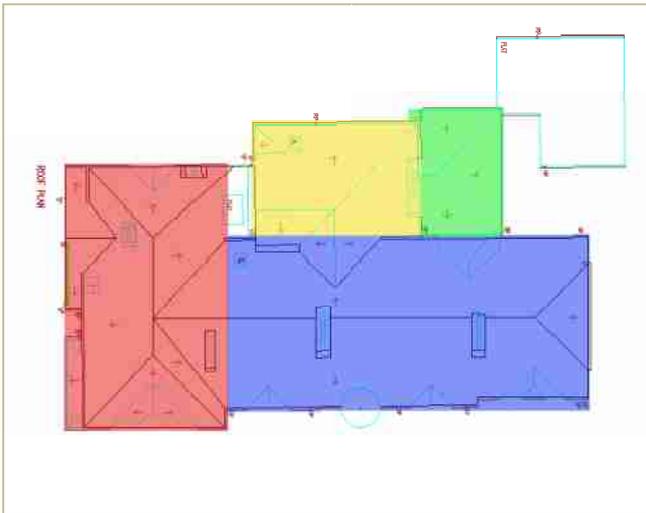


Figure 8. Roof plan showing the configuration of 2 South Parks Road, with north at the top of the image. The main elements of the building are the central range in blue and the cross wing in red. The northwards-projecting range, highlighted in yellow, only reaches to the first-floor level, whilst the green rectangle represents a ground-floor service wing.

As mentioned above, another typical example of Wilkinson's work at this time is 13 Norham Gardens, completed in 1869. This was stylistically similar to 2 South Parks Road, and Tanis Hinchcliffe's characterisation of its design is applicable to both buildings: 'The ground-floor plan of the house, which was composed of two interlocking rectangles, might be expected to generate a rather bland elevation. The gables at roof level avoid this by defining the separate sections of the interior.'¹⁹ The quality of the design and construction is good but its significance is based more on its location, as many examples of comparative quality can be seen in North Oxford.

2 South Parks Road was originally a relatively isolated building, constructed in a small parkland development with a generous and pleasant garden. The design was conceived with this setting in mind, and the encroachment of various outbuildings on the building's curtilage has lessened the impact of the southern and especially eastern elevations.

2 South Parks Road and its neighbour are of the style and quality of form produced by Wilkinson during his most successful period; they remain two of many good examples typical of this prolific architect's work. 2 South Parks Road is produced in an inoffensive Gothic style, more-restrained in its ornamentation than earlier work but still more elaborate, with its red-brick detailing and string courses, than the slightly-later 1 South Parks Road.

¹⁸ Hinchcliffe, T., *North Oxford* (London, 1992) 97-99.

¹⁹ *Ibid*, 101.

Whilst more than competent, Wilkinson was never a “cutting edge” architect, producing uncontroversial domestic work, largely divorced from any wider movement or fashion: ‘He was primarily a practical architect who catered by preference to the wealthy middle classes. He built in Gothic not out of strong religious belief, but because he was most familiar with the style.’²⁰

3.3 Historical Significance

2 South Parks Road has some association value as it was built for George Rolleston (1829-81) and served as his home for 15 years before he eventually died there. Rolleston was a scientist and archaeologist of some note, being trained as both a classicist and a physician. He was an eminent zoologist and a close friend and disciple of Thomas Henry Huxley. He became the first Linacre Professor of Anatomy and Physiology in 1860. His *Forms of Animal Life* was a pioneering work in the systematic classification of animal structures.²¹ The building was also the childhood home of Rolleston’s eldest son, Sir Humphry Davy Rolleston Bt GCVO KCB FRCP FRS, who was perhaps the nation’s pre-eminent physician in the first half of the 20th century (he was president of both the Royal Society of Medicine (1918-20) and Royal College of Physicians (1922-26)) and Regius Professor of Physic at Cambridge (1925-32).

The building’s use as part of the Colonial (and then Commonwealth) Services Club and as rooms for the University’s Institute of Colonial (and then Commonwealth) Studies is of some significance, as this institution was an interesting product of British colonial administration and its links to the Oxbridge system well into the 20th century. A proposal made to the Estates Committee in 1968 described the activities of the Commonwealth Services Club as providing membership of an organised community for overseas nationals, mostly on their first visit to England having already worked for several years for the British government overseas, undertaking heavy workloads and needing ‘to be spared the difficulties of life in digs.’²²

When the University purchased the properties along the southern side of South Parks Road from Merton College in 1964, the long-term intention was clearly to demolish the Victorian townhouses and redevelop the area. This has slowly occurred, leaving 1 and 2 South Parks Road as the only remaining illustrative elements of the small-scale, eight-house residential development that previously defined this part of the road.

²⁰ Saint, A., *op. cit.*, 57.

²¹ Rolleston, G., *Forms of Animal Life: a manual of comparative anatomy with descriptions of selected types* (Oxford, 1870).

²² Oxford University Archives, ref. CW 56.

3.4 Archaeological Significance

Oxford has a long and relatively-continuous history of occupation stretching into the Bronze Age. 2 South Parks Road is located in an area of some archaeological activity. Bronze Age barrows have been found in the University Parks and on the northern side of South Parks Road (on the site of the Rex Richards Building).²³ Moreover, this part of Oxford is known to have experienced Roman rural occupation. For instance, rural ditched enclosures dating from the 1st-2nd century and the 3rd-4th century were discovered in the memorial garden of the Rothermere American Institute, immediately to the southwest of the site, in 1998-99. Oxford's 17th-century Civil War earthworks also extended into this area and followed the length of Love Lane, running between 1 and 2 South Parks Road.²⁴ The construction of the Chemistry Research Laboratory immediately to the east of the site in 2001-04 uncovered further Civil War defences, Neolithic/Bronze Age ditches and a pit, as well as Roman field boundary and a Roman inhumation.²⁵

2 South Parks Road does have a small cellar, the construction of which, along with the foundations of the main building, will have likely destroyed some archaeological material on the site. That being said, the wealth of archaeological material uncovered in the surrounding area, notably during the construction of the Chemistry Research Laboratory to the east (an area which had experienced near-identical 19th-century construction and occupation to 2 South Parks Road), suggests that significant archaeological material may be preserved on the site of 2 South Parks Road and its garden.

3.5 Significance as functioning departmental offices

Oxford has a particularly strong statistics department, being one of the largest departments submitted in the latest (2008) Research Assessment Exercise and having by far the largest proportion of its research categorised as 'world leading in terms of originality, significance, and rigour.' The department also provides undergraduate and postgraduate teaching at a world-class level. The international reputation of the department is of high significance; however, 2 South Parks Road does not play a significant rôle in this. This residential building is not well suited to office use and the department has outgrown this building and the adjacent 1 South Parks Road, which are no longer popular spaces for staff or students, who generally prefer to work and study elsewhere if possible.

²³ Oxford Archaeological Unit, *Land to the Rear of 6-8 South Parks Road, Oxford* (report; July, 1996) 1-2.

²⁴ Oxford Archaeological Unit, *Memorial Garden, Rothermere Library, South Parks Road, Oxford* (report; January 2006) 1-2.

²⁵ Bradley, P., Charles, B., Hardy, A., and Poore, D., 'Prehistoric and Roman activity and a Civil War Ditch: excavations at the Chemistry Research Laboratory, 2-4 South Parks Road, Oxford' in *Oxoniensia* LXX (2005) 141-151.

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VULNERABILITIES

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4 VULNERABILITIES

The ability of 2 South Parks Road to fulfil a contemporary function

2 South Parks Road is not necessarily well suited to provide office accommodation, being designed as a domestic structure and, excluding the western stair lobby, essentially consists of a sequence of unconnected private spaces. The pleasing proportions of many of the large original rooms have been lost to subdivision, which has created some strangely-narrow office spaces configured around the original window provision (e.g. 162.10.14A, see **Appendix 7.4.2**). The building operates as an annexe to 1 South Parks Road, which itself is insufficient to the needs of the occupying department, with the functions of both buildings being based on their proximity to the Science Area and largely unrelated to their forms.

The heritage asset has been periodically under the threat of demolition since the acquisition of Merton College's holdings in this area by the University in 1964. Equally, periods of vacancy allowed the building to fall into a dilapidated state at various stages. It is the institutional use of the building which has resulted in the rectification of such dilapidations and has mitigated the perceived need for such demolition. The significant elements of the building which have survived to this point (notably the external elevations and some internal features such as fireplaces and the joinery on the staircases) have done so because the building has largely remained in use and has been subject to ongoing maintenance and periodic repair and renovation. The pleasant internal character of the building owes much to the widespread renovations in 2005.

Only by continuing to maintain a modern and relevant use, whether this be as office space or not, will the upkeep and conservation of the heritage asset be funded and its continued existence and significance ensured. The current usage does not threaten the significant elements of the building and its listed status ensures that any further alterations operate within the constraints of an accepted understand of the building's significance as a heritage asset.

4.1 Accessibility

The ability of 2 South Parks Road to be accessed and enjoyed by anyone who has a legitimate right to use the building is central to its significance. The significance of the building is lessened if any person who wishes to legitimately use and enjoy the building is hampered in doing so by inadequate access provision. Access provision has been improved but is still hampered by the building's original design. The original main entrance on the building's western elevation is not suitable for disabled access but there is an entrance ramp to the 1994 entrance on the northern elevation. There is a disabled WC with level access on the ground floor. There is no lift access to the upper floor, including the seminar room on the first floor, and these require traversing staircases with handrails. Some of the office spaces, created by subdividing larger rooms, are very narrow and not suitable for wheelchair access.

Whilst improvements have been made to allow ground-floor access, due to the limitations of the original design, it is not possible for all users to move freely through the building without disadvantage. The adjacent building, 1 South Parks Road, was fitted with a lift shaft prior to its designation of listed building status. It seems unlikely that such an adjustment could be made to improve access provision within 2 South Parks Road without affecting its significance as a heritage asset.

4.2 Maintenance

4.2.1 External elevations and setting



Figure 9. 9.1, left, the car park and northern elevation looking eastwards. 9.2, centre, the southern elevation looking north-eastwards. 9.3, right, the eastern elevation and external fire escape looking northwards

The external elevations of 2 South Parks Road are of some significance. The 2004 listed building description (**Appendix 1**) describes the external elevations as:

‘Brick in 3 colours with brick dressings, string course and eaves cornice. Plain tile hipped and gabled roofs with terracotta flashings and various elaborate ridge stacks. High Victorian style with Gothic arched relieving arches of various types over segmental or flat brick stone arches to sash windows. 2 storeys and attic. Front has picturesque outline with scattered fenestration, the element on the left projecting forward. Entrance is on right end in a gable end formed as a frontespiece [sic.] with a window to left of entrance and 2 windows over. Half-timbering in gable apex. To right is a square projecting bay with paired sash and pentice roof. The rear is a long carefully-composed front, its 3 elements receding slightly to right. It includes gables and half-hipped gables and a pepperpot turret corbelled out at 1st floor level and rising through 2 storeys.’²⁶

²⁶ Listed building description (**Appendix 1**).

The northern and western elevations, facing onto South Parks Road, form the public faces of the building (**Figure 7**). They are attractive elevations of some aesthetic and illustrative significance (**Sections 3.1 and 3.2**). The small, rectangular window at first-floor level on the western elevation is presumably a later addition. The ramp and new entrance on the northern elevation only detract minimally from this feature. The configuration of the southern elevation is more regimented than the other elevations but is enlivened by the projecting turret (**Figure 9.2**), which was originally designed to look out over a substantial garden with an open field beyond (**Figure 2**). The capital on the column of the turret at first-floor level is weathered and blackened, at odds with the rest of the elevation. The eastern elevation was always the plainest of the elevations and is now largely obscured by its external fire escape staircase, first fitted before 1952, and the adjacent western elevation of the 2004 Chemistry Research Laboratory (**Figure 9.3**).

The roof and chimneys are also central features in the external impact of the building. These were repaired in 2002 and benefitted from the wider work on the external elevations in 2005.

The external features of the building have aged well due to recent repairs and a good maintenance regime over the last two decades of their existence; however, the external features of the heritage asset remain open to weathering and erosion, potential vandalism, and pollution; damage which could detract from their significance in the future. Bars on the lower windows are a minor visual detraction.

The landscape setting of the building has changed greatly since its initial construction, when it would have stood in near isolation in a semi-rural environment. The major negative effect has been the obscuring of the eastern elevation by the construction of the adjacent Chemistry Research Laboratory. The small lawn at the rear is pleasant (**Figure 9.2**) but the car park at the front, which tends to be quite cluttered with bins etc., does not do the building justice (**Figure 9.1**).

4.2.2 Internal Spaces

The building contains various internal features of some aesthetic and illustrative value. There are several examples of original joinery, for instance the main western staircase is particularly fine. Several original doors are extant, as are the original sash windows and surrounds in many locations. Most of the original fireplaces were blocked up in the early 1970s, but the attractive original fireplace in the ground-floor stair lobby/entrance hall is extant and exposed (**Figure 10.1**). Some of the blocked fireplaces elsewhere retain their mantelpieces and surrounds (e.g. first-floor seminar room or **Figure 10.6**). Plaster cornices have been restored in several spaces, which add to the character of the internal spaces. Overall the building feels finished to a high quality and retains several significant features. There is some surface-mounted electrical trunking which in places does detract from the character of the building, for instance at the base of the secondary staircase on the ground floor (**Figure 10.4**), but generally feels quite restrained.

The most significant space in the building is the double-height stair lobby/entrance hall in the western wing (**Figure 10.1** and **10.2**). This is dominated by an original staircase and first-floor gallery. The ground-floor space benefits from the exposed fireplace (mentioned above), though it remains quite cluttered, with filing cabinets and loose papers stored under the stairs.

The ground-floor common room, the first-floor seminar room, the ground-floor front office, and several of the upstairs spaces retain their original generous proportions and their characters benefit from this. It is unfortunate that this has not been possible in most of the other rooms (e.g. **Figure 10.5**).

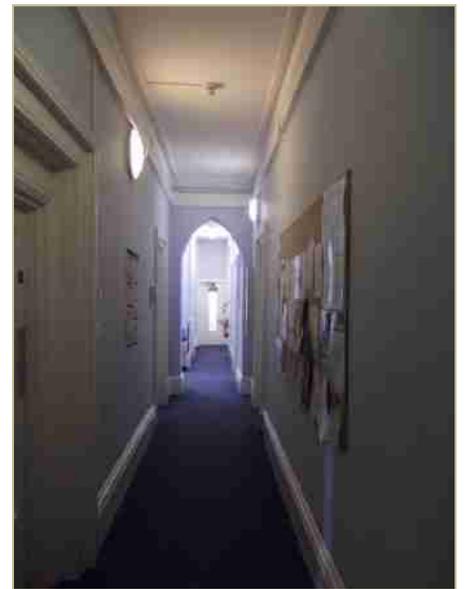


Figure 10. 10.1, top left, the ground-floor stair lobby/entrance hall in the western wing. 10.2, top centre, looking towards the first-floor gallery in the western wing. 10.3, top right, looking eastwards along the ground-floor corridor. 10.4, bottom left, trunking at the base of the secondary stair. 10.5, bottom centre, the narrow proportions of a ground-floor office formed by subdivision. 10.6, bottom right, the preserved mantelpiece in a ground-floor office



CONSERVATION
POLICY

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5 CONSERVATION POLICY

Having established the significance of 2 South Parks Road as a heritage asset, and having identified ways in which the significance of 2 South Parks Road 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 out parameters for managing the fabric of the building.

The Conservation Plan is intended as an active tool for the regular maintenance and long-term management of 2 South Parks Road. It needed to be reviewed regularly, and revised as appropriate to take into account of additional knowledge and changing priorities. Through a process of regular review it should continue to act as a useful resource.

5.1 **2 South Parks Road’s continued use in a contemporary function is important to its continued significance. Permit, in line with NPPF paragraphs 131, 132, 133, and 134, alterations intended to facilitate its continued use in this way**

The significance of 2 South Parks Road as a well-utilised building with a contemporary function is important to its continued use and maintenance; however, limited alterations may be required to improve its performance in this area and encourage wider enjoyment of the building. If alteration is required in the future it should be permitted with the following provisos:

- Any alterations must be sympathetic to 2 South Parks Road’s significance as a heritage asset and, in line with NPPF paragraph 134, any proposals that involve ‘less than substantial harm to the significance’ should deliver ‘substantial public benefits.’ In line with NPPF paragraph 132, any proposals that involve ‘substantial harm or loss’ should be ‘exceptional.’
- Any changes should: ‘...preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset’ (NPPF paragraph 137).

5.1.1 **In order to ensure that 2 South Parks Road 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**, whilst the accessibility of the building has been improved since its original building through the construction of the northern entrance with its associated ramp and the introduction of the ground-floor disabled WC, it remains at far from an ideal standard. Access will remain a concern in any plans developed for the site and a vigorous effort should be made to improve access to the site in any future plans, with the University seeking to exceed its statutory obligations and always viewing this as part of an ongoing process.

5.2 Note that 2 South Parks Road is a Grade II listed building and ensure that appropriate consents are obtained for any alteration works to the interior or exterior of the building

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 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 enquiries 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 alterations or development must respect the character of South Parks Road and 2 South Parks Road's close proximity to several listed buildings (for instance Rhodes House, the Radcliffe Science Library, and the Inorganic Chemistry Laboratory) and most notably its relationship with 1 South Parks Road

2 South Parks Road's location on the western end of South Parks Road and as one of only two remaining examples of the historic residential character of this area is central to its significance. Any plans for alterations should take into account the relationship between buildings in this area.

5.6 Conservation of specific factors contributing to overall significance

2 South Parks Road possesses various external and internal features of some significance (**Section 3.1** and **3.2**). An effort should be made to identify and conserve original or significant architectural features and keep them in use in line with **Section 5.1**; however, it is accepted that all materials have a natural lifespan and some degree of change is permitted to keep the building safe, usable, and generally fit for function. Some material 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.

5.6.1 Any alterations to be made to the external elevations will respect their significance and the contribution they make to the setting

The exterior elevations of 2 South Parks Road are amongst its most significant features. The visual character of the western and southern elevations has not changed greatly since their construction, the changes being primarily signage, lighting, and window bars. The major recent changes to the northern façade has been the removal of the garage (presumably not original) and yard at its eastern end in 2005 and the introduction of the disabled ramp and northern entrance in 1994. The factor that has had the most effect on the presentation of these elevations is the change in the surrounding landscape setting, from semi-rural in the 1860s to its contemporary urban surroundings. This has most effected the eastern elevation which is now almost entirely obscured by both the adjacent western elevation of the Chemistry Research Laboratory and by the attached external fire escape.

The northern, western and southern elevations have retained much of their original impact and aesthetic value and this should be maintained. The eastern elevation has been obscured, but its original features remain intact and should be conserved where possible. If any alterations to the external elevations are considered these should be undertaken with a full understanding of and respect for their character and the impact they make on the surrounding area, in line with **Section 5.1, 5.1.1 and 5.5.**

5.6.2 Any alterations to be made to the interior spaces will respect the significance of both the individual elements and the building as a whole

The interior spaces of the building contain various significant elements, such as historic joinery and fireplaces. Original items such as sash windows and their settings, fireplaces, banisters, and staircases contribute to the character of the building and should be retained. The most significant internal space is the stair lobby/entrance hall in the western wing. The configuration of this space should be maintained. The aesthetic and illustrative value of the building could be enhanced by the removal of some of the modern subpartitioning in the original larger spaces.

Any internal alterations planned in the future should only be undertaken with a full understanding of and respect for the character of the internal spaces in line with **Section 5.1 and 5.1.1.**

5.7 In conformity with NPPF paragraph 110, efforts should be made to ensure that 2 South Parks Road'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.'

5.8 If during any subsequent renovations or alterations any excavation work is carried out beneath 2 South Parks Road, 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

It is possible that there is significant archaeological material beneath 2 South Parks Road (see **Section 3.3**). Should any excavation work be carried out in this area, 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.

5.9 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 maintaining an asset

5.9.1 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 routinely be 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*.

5.9.2 The Conservation Plan will be circulated to all senior staff who work in 2 South Parks Road and to all other members of the University who have responsibility for the building

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.

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

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

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

Policy changes, building alterations, or other changes of circumstance, will affect the conservation duties and requirements of the building. The policy recommendations in the Conservation Plan will inform the future of the building and should be a useful tool for

people carrying out maintenance work or where more significant alterations are being considered. The recommendations need to be kept up to date if they are to remain relevant.

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6.5 Other Documents

- Historic lease information kindly provided by Nicola Harrison, Estates Administrator at Merton College.
- Historic plans and documents courtesy of Oxford University Archives, references: CW 56, ET 2/1/24/4, ET 2/2/173, UC/FF/512/1-6, UR 6/SCA/4, and US 203/3.
- Listed building descriptions courtesy of English Heritage (see **Section 6.6**).
- Other historic plans, documents, and photographs courtesy of Estates Services' archives, reference 162.

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6.7 Image Credits

- Cover and chapter covers: Photographs by author for Estates Services.
- Figure 1: Adapted from Google Maps (see **Section 6.6**).

- Figure 2: Adapted from 1878 OS map (see **Section 6.6**).
- Figure 3: Adapted from *Jackson's Oxford Journal* 13th October 1866.
- Figure 4: Oxford University Archives, ref. ET 2/2/173.
- Figure 5: Estates Services' archives, ref. 162.
- Figures 6 and 7: Photographs by author for Estates Services.
- Figure 8: Adapted by author from Estates Services record plan.
- Figures 9 and 10: Photographs by author for Estates Services.

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APPENDICES

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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: No name for this Entry

List Entry Number: 1391089

Location

2, SOUTH PARKS ROAD

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

County: Oxfordshire

District: Oxford

District Type: District Authority

Parish:

National Park: Not applicable to this List entry.

Grade: II

Date first listed: 15-Sep-2004

Date of most recent amendment: Not applicable to this List entry.

Legacy System Information

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

Legacy System: LBS

UID: 492021

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

612/0/10106 SOUTH PARKS ROAD
15-SEP-04 2

GV II

House, now University of Oxford offices. 1865-6. By William Wilkinson. For George Rolleston. Brick in 3 colours with brick dressings, string course and eaves cornice. Plain tile hipped and gabled roofs with terracotta flashings and various elaborate ridge stacks. High Victorian style with Gothic arched relieving arches of various types over segmental or flat brick stone arches to sash windows. 2 storeys and attic. Front has picturesque outline with scattered fenestration, the element on the left projecting forward. Entrance is on right end in a gable end formed as a frontespiece with a window to left of entrance and 2 windows over. Half-timbering in gable apex. To right is a square projecting bay with paired sash and pentice roof. The rear is a long carefully-composed front, its 3 elements receding slightly to right. It includes gables and half-hipped gables and a pepperpot turret corbelled out at 1st floor level and rising through 2 storeys.

This is a finely-detailed example of a suburban villa of the period by a well-known architect. The house forms part of a good group of historic buildings including No.1 adjacent (q.v.) and Rhodes House (q.v.) opposite.

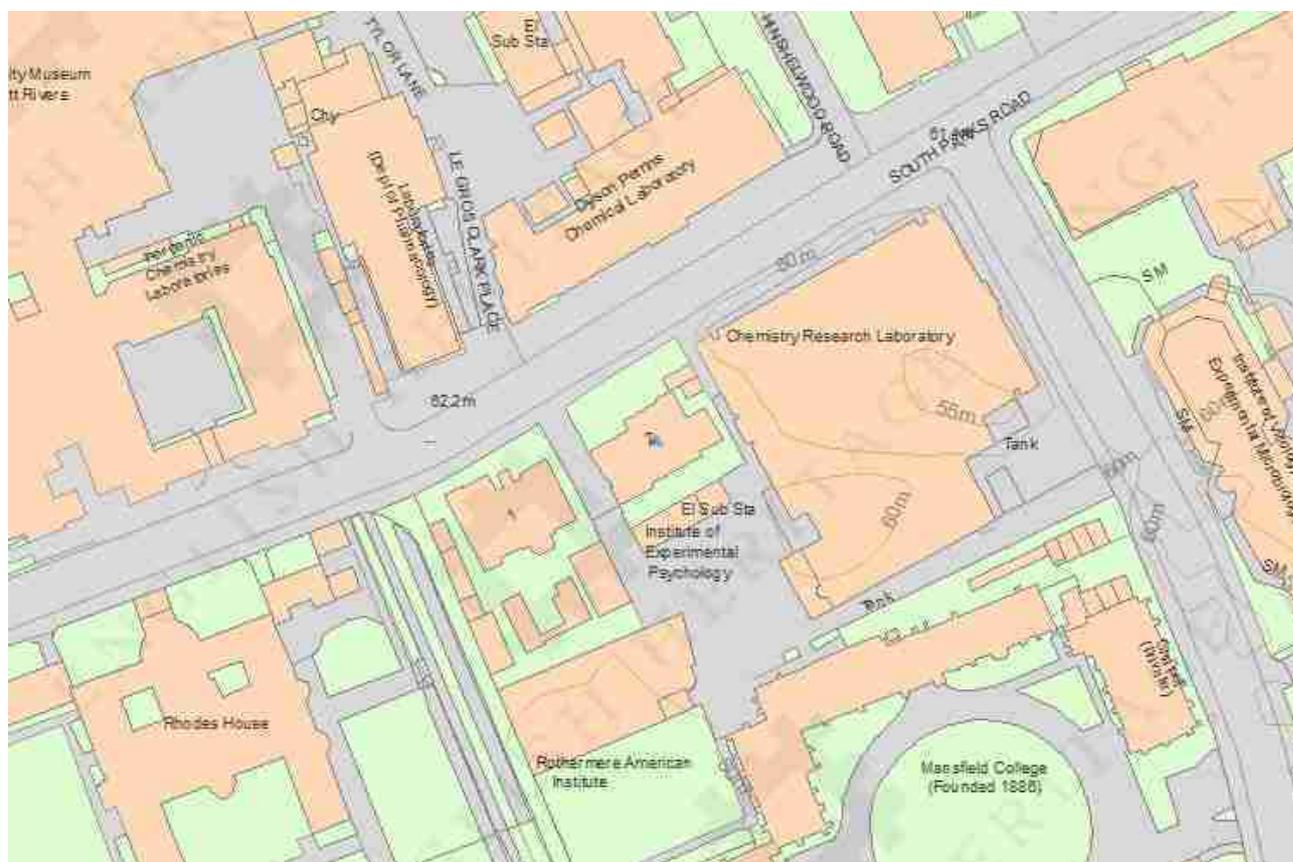
Selected Sources

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

Map

National Grid Reference: SP 51606 06861

The below map is for quick reference purposes only and may not be to scale. For a copy of the full scale map, please see the attached PDF - [1391089.pdf](#)



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Appendix 2 Chronology of 2 South Parks Road

Date	Event
1860	William Wilkinson begins to develop Norham Manor on behalf of St. John's College
1864-66	William Wilkinson designs the Randolph Hotel
1865-66	William Wilkinson designs 2 South Parks Road for George Rolleston who takes up the lease on 30 th December 1865
1869	William Wilkinson designs 1 South Parks Road
1870	William Wilkinson publishes <i>English Country Houses</i>
1881	George Rolleston dies, leaving his property to his wife, Grace Rolleston
1914	Grace Rolleston dies intestate. The lease is assigned to Rev. David Colville Lusk, being sealed in 1921
1921-39	OS maps suggest that the connecting corridor between 2 and 3 South Parks Road is constructed at some point between 1921 and 1939
1927	Rev. David Colville Lusk is still resident of 2 South Parks Road at this date (when he proved the will and codicil of Andrew Lusk, giving this address)
1933	Rev. Lusk becomes the Minister of West Coates Church, Edinburgh, so was presumably no longer resident at 2 South Parks Road
1948	Rev. Lusk's lease is assigned to Merton College
c.1949	The government's Ministry of Works leases the building, assigning it to the Colonial Office
1950	In September the University's Institute of Colonial Studies changes its address to 2 South Parks road, though it had obviously been renting at least some rooms there since at least January 1949 (when a letter addressed to the Institute is sent to No.2). These are rented from the lessee, which is the government Ministry of Works who occupied it with the Colonial Office. The rest of the building seems to be the "administration block" of the Colonial Services Club
1952	The Institute of Colonial Studies moves to 10 Keble Road in January, changing its address from 2 South Parks Road. The Colonial Services Club and its administration remains based at 2 South Parks Road
1964	By the end of September the University secures the freehold for 2 South Parks Road (and much of the southern side of South Parks Road, Merton's playing fields, and Cherwell Edge) from Merton College. The University extends the lease held by the Ministry of Public Building and Works (previously the Ministry of Works), and subsequently that of the Commonwealth Services Club, until June 1966
1964	There is initially some discussion regarding demolishing 1-4 South Parks Road and constructing a "Martin style" (i.e. Sir Leslie Martin style) building for Chemistry
1968	The University extends the government's lease on 2 South Parks Road for a final time to 1969
1968	Mansfield College leases from the University a very narrow strip of land running along the bottom of the gardens of 2 and 3 South Parks Road
1969	2 South Parks Road had been serving as the administration block of the Commonwealth/Colonial Services Club. Possession reverts to the University in July 1969 and planning consent is granted for its change to teaching accommodation for Molecular Biophysics, Atmospheric Physics, and for

	temporary storage space for Zoology. This change in usage does not go ahead as the Local Authority Fire Officer does not deem No.2 suitable for storage or office use
1971	By this point the Commonwealth Services Club has vacated 2 South Parks and it is standing empty in a dilapidated state and suffering from dry rot. The costs for converting 2 and 3 South Parks Road to academic use with a ten-year life are estimated at £25,000 compared to a dilapidations payment from the government of £7,500. The Sites and Buildings Committee recommends that No.3 should be demolished and No.2, which is in a slightly better state, should be converted to a residential use (e.g. for college or graduate accommodation), and be kept in good order in case an academic need for it arises in the future
1972	Planning consent is granted for internal alterations and an extension to the garage (since demolished). Most of the fireplaces are blocked at this point and some new doorways are created. The building is probably now occupied as a residential annexe for Halifax House
1973	Temporary planning permission for a staff car park at 2 and 3 South Parks Road expires at the end of April
1977-94	OS maps suggest that 3 South Parks Road was demolished during this period
1979	Planning permission is granted for the provision of two 20,000-gallon underground oil storage tanks in the southwest corner of the car park at the rear
1987	The building is occupied as a Computer Laboratory Annexe and as offices for the newly-formed Oxford University Research and Development Ltd. (which was renamed Isis Innovation Ltd. in August of the following year). Internal and external alterations are made in order to accommodate the new occupants
1990	Planning permission is granted for a free-standing warning sign
1991	Four temporary portakabins are erected in the grounds of 2 South Parks Road to support building work on Keble Road. Computer Science still occupies the building
1994	The Department of Statistics occupy the building, with Isis Innovation Ltd. retaining the western wing on the ground and first floors. A building control application is approved for a new entrance and ramp on the northern elevation, a WC for disabled users, and other internal alterations
1995	A new external fence is fitted
1996	The cloakroom and kitchenette to the north of the western entrance are reconfigured
1996	A 3-metre stretch of the boundary wall is rebuilt
1997	The external fire escape (in place since before 1952) is replaced
1998	Congregation resolves to cease using the garden of No.2 as a car park and to redevelop the whole area for a new Chemistry building
2000	Part of the boundary wall is again rebuilt following a vehicle collision
2000-04	The Chemistry Research Laboratory is constructed immediately to the east of 2 South Parks Road
2001	The floor in the first-floor corridor collapses and is rebuilt. Several cracks are repaired in the office spaces
2004	1 and 2 South Parks Road are designated as grade-II-listed buildings
2005	Statistics takes over sole occupation of the building. Much of the building is

	refurbished. The garage at the eastern end of the building is demolished. The external brickwork is repointed and cleaned. The interior is redecorated throughout and new floor finishes fitted.
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Appendix 3 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 2 South Parks Road; these may be original features or new additions that nevertheless contribute positively to the character of the building. As this is a Grade-II-listed building any repair or alteration work to factors that contribute to the significance of the building will require listed building consent in order to avoid prosecution under the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990. **If planned work will likely affect any of the aspects featured in the list below advice should immediately be sought from the Building Conservation Team at Estates Services.**

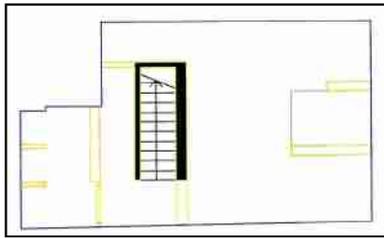
The checklist lists both general significant features that affect the building as a whole and which should be held in mind if working in any space, and specific features of particular significance that should receive special regard if working in these particular spaces. The Further Information column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

2 South Parks Road, Building #162		
SIGNIFICANT FEATURE	✓	Further Information
General:		
External elevations, chimneys, and roof		p.23-27, 32-33, 38-39
Windows throughout		p.23-27, 32-34, 38-39
Joinery (notably doors) and fireplaces throughout		p.33-34, 39
Staircases		p.33-34, 39
Specific Features:		
External Elevations		
-Brickwork throughout, including string courses and window surrounds		p.23-27, 32-33, 38-39
-Painted timber work on western gable		p.23-27, 32-33, 38-39
-Column and capital on southern turret		p.23-27, 32-33, 38-39
-Roof tiles, chimneys, and ceramic flashing		p.23-27, 32-33, 38-39
-Carved stone initial plate		p.23-27, 32-33, 38-39
Internal Spaces		
-Historic doors and doorcases throughout		p.33-34, 39
-Exposed fireplaces throughout, e.g. in ground-floor stair lobby		p.33-34, 39
-Windows and settings throughout		p.23-27, 32-33, 38-39
-Main staircase and associated joinery in western wing		p.33-34, 39
-Secondary staircase and associated joinery		p.33-34, 39
-Plaster ceilings and cornices		p.33-34, 39

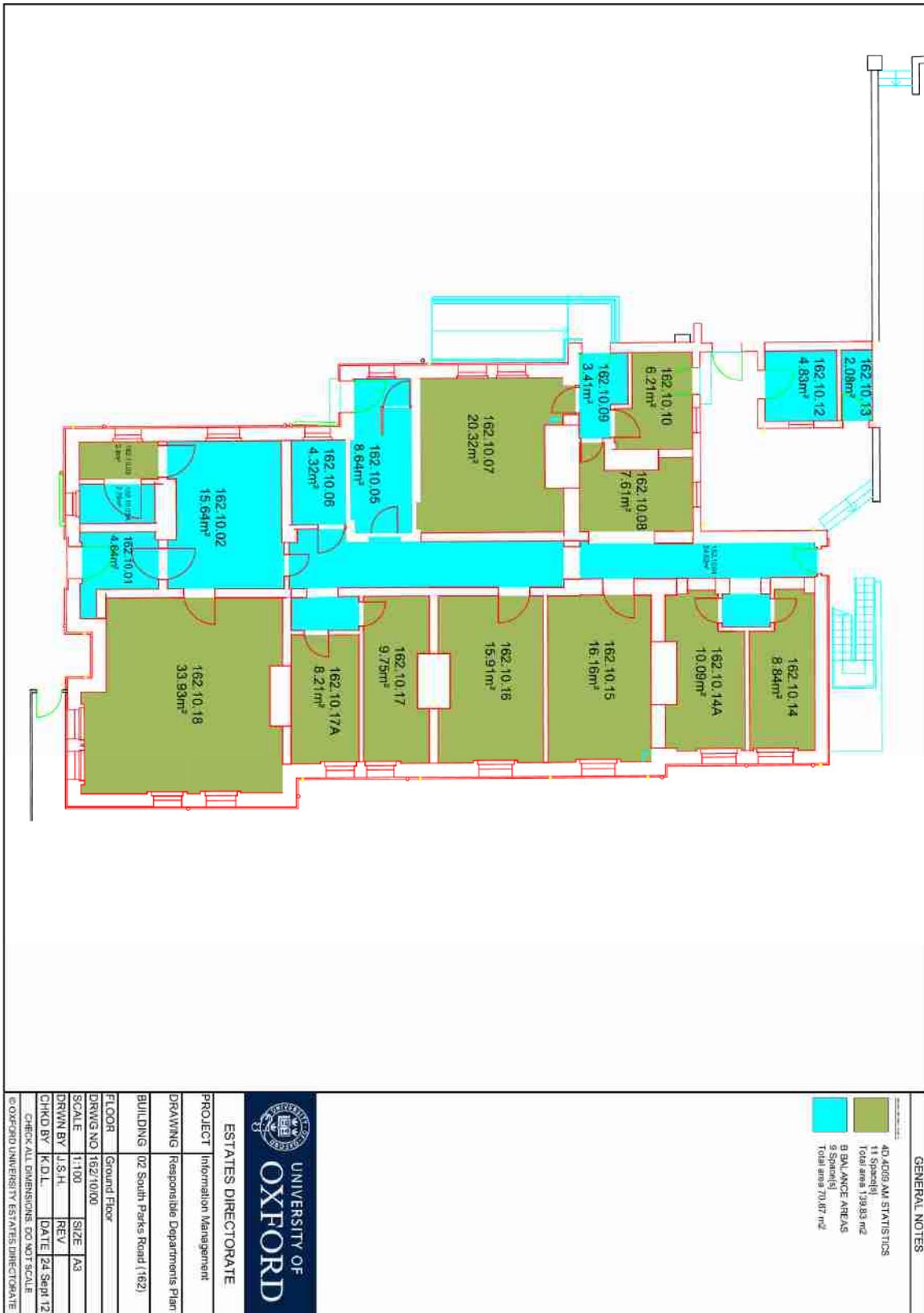
-Skirting boards		p.33-34, 39
-Internal lancet arches		p.33-34, 39

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

Appendix 4 Floor plans



7.4.1. Basement plan



7.4.2. Ground-floor plan



7.4.3. First-floor plan



7.4.4. Second-floor plan

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