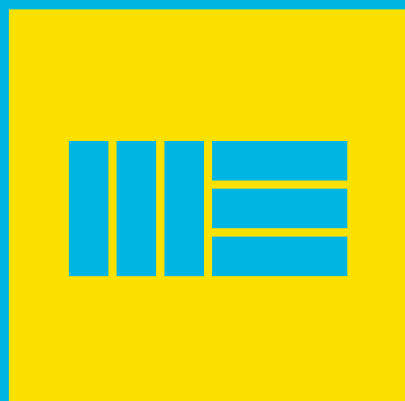


# UNIVERSITY OF YORK

## TECHNICAL PAPER: HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT CONSIDERATIONS RELATING TO CAMPUS WEST CAMPUS

26 AUGUST 2022



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# INTRODUCTION

Montagu Evans has prepared this report on behalf of the University of York, as part of its evidence submitted in support of the proposed expansion of the University under Site Allocation ST27 in the City of York Local Plan Publication Draft (2018). This report is prepared in response to the Inspectors' *Schedule of Matters, Issues and Questions for the Examination: Phase 4 Hearings*; specifically, *Matter 2, University of York*. It comprises an update to the representations prepared in April 2018 by Dr Chris Miele (Montagu Evans), in light of the subsequent heritage designations at the University's West Campus and the recent submissions made by Cushman & Wakefield on behalf of City of York Council.

## BACKGROUND

### LOCAL PLAN REPRESENTATIONS

- 1.1. The City of York Local Plan Publication Draft (2018) contains a Non-Residential Strategic Site Allocation: ST27, which is subject to Policy SS22: *University of York Expansion*. Historic England ('HE') objected to that draft allocation in October 2017; in March 2018 Dr Chris Miele, Senior Partner at Montagu Evans, prepared an Expert Statement on behalf of the University on relevant heritage matters and in response to HE's objection.
- 1.2. Dr Miele's 2018 statement included an assessment of the development potential of West Campus based on heritage considerations. It concluded that intensification would harm the character and heritage interests of the (at that point unlisted) campus (2018 report, p.17-18).
- 1.3. This report comprises an update to Dr Miele's 2018 paper in light of the subsequent statutory designations at the University's West Campus, and specifically in response to recent representations prepared on behalf of the City of York by Cushman & Wakefield<sup>1</sup>.
- 1.4. The Cushman & Wakefield report states that the University of York has not fully considered the ways that it could accommodate future growth needs, and it presents alternative scenarios in which that growth could be accommodated. It concludes that there is scope to intensify the use of the current campuses, including West Campus, notwithstanding the heritage constraints which it acknowledges. It does not advocate expansion northwards onto ST4.
- 1.5. The Cushman & Wakefield report does not appear to have been prepared with reference to any expert heritage advice.
- 1.6. HE has also published a hearing statement restating its original position as set out in its 2018 objection. Neither the HE nor the Cushman & Wakefield report makes any reference to the other.

### 2018 CAMPUS WEST CAMPUS DESIGNATIONS

- 1.7. Campus West occupies the grounds and associated farmland of the 16<sup>th</sup> century Heslington Hall (Grade II\*, with a number of garden features also listed at Grade II), which was chosen for the site of the new University in the late 1950s and developed from 1960. In August 2018, after the submission of Dr Miele's Expert Statement, a number of the original university buildings – Central Hall, Derwent College, Former Langwith College, the covered walkway linking Langwith to Central Hall and Vanbrugh College I – were themselves statutorily listed at Grade II. The designed campus landscape was also designated as a Registered Park and Garden ('RPG', Grade II). The designations are shown on the plan at Appendix 1.0 to this report, and also on

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<sup>1</sup> Technical Appendix entitled '*Providing for the University of York's Needs*' prepared by Cushman & Wakefield and appended to the Council's hearing statement in response to Local Plan Phase 3 Hearings *Matter 2: Universities and Colleges*.

the plans in MIQ responses 2.4 to 2.10, Appendix A, O'Neill Associates. The list entry descriptions are reproduced at Appendices 2.0 and 3.0 of this report.

- 1.8. The designations reflect the increased interest and re-evaluation of 1960s higher education architecture that took place from the 1990s onwards and the importance of the development of the University of York in modern university planning.
- 1.9. Dr Miele's report, prepared prior to the designations, notes that the campus is '*a low-density scheme as befitting its Green Belt location. The extent of building coverage is low, some 20% or so, including many surface car parks, so significantly less if buildings alone are taken into account.*'
- 1.10. The low-density of the campus is important in conveying the open, parkland character of the University, particularly around the lake and on the main approaches. The development brief-led approach is central to the significance and consequent designation of the RPG, and the list entry description (reproduced at Appendix 2.0) notes that '*despite some later alteration and the introduction of new buildings the landscape survives well overall and retains its character and key features*'.
- 1.11. We return to the significance of the campus below in Section 3.0 of this report. Here we note that the heritage designations are weighty planning considerations which inevitably limit development potential.

## **SCOPE OF THIS REPORT**

- 1.12. In particular, we focus on paragraphs 46 - 54 of the Cushman & Wakefield report, which contain the justification supporting the conclusion that there are alternative options that could accommodate the future growth of the University, including the intensification of the University's estate at Campus West.
- 1.13. Accordingly, this report outlines the historic development of Campus West and its significance. We also provide an assessment of the potential impacts of development of the kind suggested by the Cushman & Wakefield on heritage interests.
- 1.14. We do not revisit the impact of the draft allocation ST27 on the City of York as assessed by Dr Miele in his 2018 report but commend that report to the Inspectors. We do, however, consider ST27 in light of the new heritage designations affecting Campus West.
- 1.15. The structure of the report is as follows:
  - Section 2.0 provides a summary of the historic development of the University of York at Campus West
  - Section 3.0 assesses the relative significance of the relevant heritage assets
  - Section 4.0 provides an assessment of likely impacts consequent on intensification, the statutory and policy framework within which those impacts would be assessed, the development opportunities available to the University of York and an analysis of the impact of the proposed allocation in light of the recently designated assets at Campus West
  - Section 5.0 presents our conclusion that the designations at Campus West impose a requirement for a higher level of scrutiny of potential impacts on character and special interest than any previously required; and that the intensification of the campus in the way now proposed by Cushman & Wakefield would in our view be challenging to achieve without altering landscape character and so causing harm to the significance of the RPG or listed buildings through development in their setting. In this case, the listing and landscape designations 'interlock', because the landscape now registered was part of the architectural design.

# 2.0 SUMMARY HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT OF CAMPUS WEST

## THE NEW HESLINGTON CAMPUS

- 2.1. Campus West, the main focus of the University, was the site chosen when the University was founded in 1960. The first designs for the campus date to 1962, the work of Sir Andrew Derbyshire and Maurice Lee of Robert Matthew, Johnson-Marshall and Partners (RMJM).
- 2.2. The University was one of the seven “Plateglass” universities built in association with the Robins Report (1963), all constructed to expand the availability of university places across Britain. The general aim was to create a university based on the collegiate system. Staff and students’ residential rooms, dining room, common rooms, a small library and academic departments were grouped around a nucleus designed to encourage formal and informal social interaction.
- 2.3. The campus was developed on former farmland and the grounds of Heslington Hall, the formal landscape of which was incorporated into the university campus landscape. Heslington Hall itself (Grade II\* listed) lies to the east of the campus, at the eastern point of an engineered sinuous lake at the heart of the campus that was also designed as a balancing reservoir. The lake forms the central focal point of the designed landscape and views are provided from the lakeside edge and paths to the surrounding areas of the landscape and buildings, and vice versa.

## DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS AND RATIONALE

- 2.4. The design of the university campus was governed by a number of development principles, expressed through the University of York Development Plan (1962), jointly written by Lord James the Vice-Chancellor, John West Taylor the Registrar, and a team of architects RMJM led by a noted designer Sir Andrew Derbyshire.
- 2.5. The Development Plan 1962 – 1970 set out four key propositions that determined the architectural implications of the University<sup>2</sup>:
  - The University as a society of individuals living and working together, housed within a limited compass, with no rigid demarcations between the places where members of the University work and the places where they live; facilities must be provided for natural and unforced association
  - The University as a meeting place of many different aptitudes, skills and specialisation and that each be enriched by the greatest possible contact with others; a compactness and ease of communication between all constituent parts; ideally it should be impossible to go from one unit of accommodation to a similar one without coming into contact with at least one of completely different academic or social character on the way
  - Provision for easy growth and flexibility, to accommodate what appeared to be a period of unprecedented expansion for further education; building units to be responsive to change and adaptable to new demands; design and environment to permit and positively encourage growth and change
  - The provision of particular qualities of the environment - order and beauty - through architecture that will enhance the uniqueness of the intellectual and emotional experience of belonging to the university; the characteristic forms and relationship of the buildings in their setting which

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<sup>2</sup> See also Appendix 4.0

correspond to the academic and social ideals of a University on the one hand, and the social and geographical context of the York district on the other.

- 2.6. Other considerations influencing the design of the campus were practical. The topography of the site itself - poorly drained and requiring significant man-made intervention - provided the impetus for the large lake now at the centre of the campus. Financial considerations stemming from the tight budgets imposed by the University Grants Committee meant that the buildings themselves needed to be as economical as possible. Lastly, speed in construction was crucial, to develop the campus and create a “minimum viable university” prior to the arrival of students.
- 2.7. The design of the buildings themselves responded to these factors: Derwent and Old Langwith Colleges (now Grade II listed) were built using a modified version of the CLASP system of prefabricated construction, using a steel frame and external concrete cladding. The system was cheap, quick to build, and could be constructed on the boggy ground upon which the University was established. Ease of communication between the colleges was facilitated by a series of covered walkways, an example of which is also now listed at Grade II.

### **DEVELOPMENT OF THE CAMPUS**

- 2.8. The campus developed from the early 1960s, and from the first, the masterplan was adapted as the University responded to new and changing demands.
- 2.9. The intention was that the first phase should comprise the refurbishment of Heslington Hall and the King’s Manor to allow the University to open with a small number of students and faculty; the second phase was the construction of “the minimum viable university”: two colleges and a science building. The third and fourth phases were to include the construction of three additional colleges in each phase, with an additional science teaching buildings and other facilities. Student numbers were expected to rise from c.200 in the first year to c.3000 by 1970, and nearly 4,000 by 1973.
- 2.10. In the event, the Development Plan’s programme was not followed as exactly originally planned, largely for financial reasons. Only six of the planned eight colleges had been built by 1972, when the main programme of construction ceased. The planned total number of students was also not met in the first instance, with only c.2,500 students by the end of the 1960s instead of the planned c.3,000. It was only in the mid-1970s that student numbers increased to over 3,000, reaching 3,201 in 1977-78, and it was not until the late 1980s that total student numbers exceeded 4,000.
- 2.11. The CLASP buildings have suffered from very poor environmental performance and are inflexible, with major repairs required in the short to medium term. Issues such as poor insulation, inherent inflexibility of spaces, and poor building services integration, were originally reported five years after their construction, and have become more pronounced over time, particularly the extensive use of asbestos.

### **HESLINGTON EAST CAMPUS**

- 2.12. Heslington East Campus was granted planning permission in 2007, and its development has enabled the University to continue to respond flexibly to changing educational need. The functions of Goodricke College moved to Heslington East in 2009-10, and its former buildings on the west campus were repurposed between James College and Vanbrugh. The functions of Langwith College moved to Heslington East in 2012; its buildings were absorbed into Derwent College. The majority of the former accommodation blocks at Wentworth College, which were conventional construction but clad to look like CLASP buildings, have also been replaced with new accommodation.
- 2.13. The student population has also continued to grow, and the University now has almost 22,000 FTE students.

## 3.0 SIGNIFICANCE OF CAMPUS WEST

### EXTENT OF DESIGNATION

- 3.1. As noted, the 2018 designations within the original Heslington campus reflect the increased interest and re-evaluation of 1960s further education architecture that took place from the 1990s onwards. Those designations (in addition to the listed buildings and structures at Heslington Hall itself) comprise:
- The Registered Park and Garden (Grade II)
  - Derwent and Former Langwith colleges (Grade II)
  - Central Hall (Grade II)
  - The Grade II covered walkway linking Central Hall and Former Langwith to Vanburgh College (itself unlisted).
  - The Untitled sculpture set within the boxed concrete ramp which forms part of the main pedestrian walkway around the campus (Grade II).
- 3.2. The assets together comprise a campus that has considerable historic interest as *'part of a wave of seven new universities that improved access to higher education and marked the high point of publicly-funded architecture in post-war Britain'*<sup>3</sup>. The campus as a whole likewise has value as the *'physical manifestation of the University of York Development Plan, which was heralded as the beginning of contemporary university planning in Britain'*<sup>4</sup> The contemporary press praised the landscape-led campus design, labelling it among the best-landscaped post-war universities in Britain<sup>5</sup>.
- 3.3. As an ensemble, the assets have strong group value with each other and also with the Grade II\* Heslington Hall and associated Grade II listed structures, for the way the campus buildings are integrated in a landscape that was carefully designed to complement the pre-existing formal hall landscape. Contemporary critique, such as that in *Country Life*, 1971, noted the successful connection between the old landscape and the new, and the logical progression achieved from the formal style of the historic gardens to the informal style of the campus to provide a rural setting for the modern University buildings<sup>6</sup>.

### REGISTERED PARK AND GARDEN

- 3.4. We start here with the RPG, which incorporates the majority of the listed buildings and covers the central core of the campus. The RPG designation extends across much of Campus West, encompassing the campus landscape of 1963-80, which in turn incorporates the older formal landscape associated with Heslington Hall.
- 3.5. The list entry (Appendix 2.0) describes the reasons for designation: its historic, design and landscape interest, its associations with distinguished architects, and the overall survival of landscape character and key features which convey the original architectural concept. The entry is comprehensive, and we commend it to the Inspectors alongside the summary here.
- 3.6. Importantly, as reinforced by the list entry documentation, the landscape survives in a legible form (along with the original University buildings and structures) as the physical expression of the principles governing the design of the University, which, as noted, was considered the beginning of contemporary university planning in Britain. The RPG has value for this contribution to the overall conception of the University. The Registered

<sup>3</sup> List entry description for Central Hall, Historic England, Appendix 3.0

<sup>4</sup> List entry descriptions for the RPG, Historic England, Appendix 2.0

<sup>5</sup> Concrete Quarterly 122 July-September 1979, *Water Gardens: University of York*, pp.2-5, Appendix 5.0

<sup>6</sup> *Country Life*, 1971, *Landscape for a University, Heslington Hall, York*, A.L.G Hellyer, Appendix 6.0

area retains much of its original design, layout and planting despite the introduction of some later buildings. Trees planted at the outset of the development now have 60 years of mature canopy growth whether as individual trees or in groups. It survives as a well-preserved mid-twentieth century landscape-led masterplan designed largely by Maurice Lee of RMJM, with input from Frank Clarke, Andrew Derbyshire and Tudor Owen.

## DENSITY AND THE INTERACTION OF BUILT FORM AND LANDSCAPE

- 3.7. The landscape was designed as a frame and foil for its buildings as part of the University's original masterplan by RMJM. The lake and associated lakeside planting forms the main focal point at the centre of the campus, giving the campus its cohesive landscape character and setting for the buildings dispersed along its banks. The landscape-led approach to the design and the use of water – the reflective qualities of which were exploited in the careful placement of buildings and structures - was much admired by the contemporary press.
- 3.8. The composition of the original CLASP buildings and covered pedestrian walkways relative to each other and to the landscape remains legible. The masterplan included groups of low-scale loose-knit college ranges, with laboratories behind them and landmark buildings, such as the library (outwith the RPG) and Central Hall set within a careful pattern of circulation<sup>7</sup>. The deliberate interactions between built form and the landscape continues to be understood in key views from the lakeside pedestrian walks.
- 3.9. The low-scale and careful placement of the buildings fosters a sense of openness, which is fundamental to the rural, parkland character of the central campus and its interaction with Heslington Hall. This quality was recognised in a Country Life article of 1971 which describes not only the beauty of the lake and the importance of views across the water, but the provision of a rural setting for modern buildings that were well placed and exciting in character<sup>8</sup>.
- 3.10. The low-density arrangement of the buildings within their integrated landscape setting is a long-established principle; one that has informed subsequent development briefs and policy wording<sup>9</sup>. It is one manifestation of a core University design principle set out in the 1962 Development Plan (see Appendix 4.0):

*'the university community should be provided with particular qualities of environment of the experience of belonging to it... is to have for its members the significance and value that it should. It is part of the architects' task to try and give **the place where this happens the kind of order and beauty** which will enhance and not detract from, or contradict, the uniqueness of the intellectual and emotional experience even though it is such a transient one...*

*In order to meet this tremendous challenge it is necessary to try to discover the **characteristic forms and relationships of the buildings in their setting which correspond to the academic and social ideals of a University on the one hand, and to the social and geographic context of the York district on the other.** If such harmony can be achieved, the University may become in a relatively short time as memorable as some of the older and more influential university establishments of the world.'* [our emphasis]

## COLVIN AND MOGGRIDGE REVIEW 1992<sup>10</sup>

- 3.11. The success of RMJM in delivering this brief has been generally accepted, most emphatically by the designation of the RPG. Colvin and Moggridge noted in their 1992 review of the University campus landscape:

*"The lakeside edges of Derwent and Langwith colleges are also now a significant example of mid-20th century history. An architect of sensibility has been able to **dispose buildings of commonplace pre-fabricated***

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<sup>7</sup> RPG List entry description

<sup>8</sup> Country Life, 1971, *Landscape for a University, Heslington Hall, York*; A. G. L Hellyer p.533, Appendix 6.0

<sup>9</sup> The low-density of the campus, befitting not only its Green Belt location but also its character as a 'Campus University' responding to its landscape context, informed the 20% footprint limit in the Development Brief for Campus West adopted by the City Council in 1999. The Development Brief was adopted to guide development on Campus West, and the constraint was subsequently carried forward (increasing to 23%) into draft policy.

<sup>10</sup> Colvin and Moggridge are a widely reputed landscape practice, with particular experience of working in sensitive historic contexts. See Appendix 7.0.



*materials around space to evoke a response of delighted surprise for new visitors and satisfaction to members of the University.*

*Downstream, towards the west edge of the University where it lies beside open common land, the lake meanders away into trees. Here there is a local evocation of “wildness”, a modern idea in pleasing contrast with the hints of classics of Jacobean Heslington Hall.” (p.4, 1992 report) [our emphasis]*

3.12. Overall, the Colvin and Moggridge review of the campus landscape commissioned by the University established a series of principles to guide the conservation and improvement of the campus as it matured. The recommendations were based on the identification of the special qualities of the landscape that are today recognised through the designation of the RPG. It is evident today that those relationships between built form and landscape identified by Colvin and Moggridge that give the campus its high-quality character have been maintained, sufficient to warrant its designation. They include:

- The lakeside walks at the heart of the campus, offering views towards carefully placed buildings that exploit the reflective qualities of the water
- The ‘cloistered atmosphere’ created by the car free pedestrian landscape at the campus core
- The linear hierarchy across the campus created by the water, with the formal historic garden forming a historic core upstream, and the evocation of ‘wildness’ downstream responding to the campus’s landscape setting.
- Campus buildings alternating with larger waterside spaces, and the convincing handling of the softer spaces through planting

3.13. The sum of these qualities for Colvin and Moggridge was the ‘memorable and enjoyable quality of the landscape’:

*‘The result is a memorable and enjoyable university, the heart of which is lakeside walks, views of water overhung by trees sparkle in the sun, gentle autumnal greys, students, academics and waterfowl silhouetted underfoot. This landscape is a fine artefact. It will retain its quality only if all who need to modify it do so respectfully, adapting their own predilections to the recently created *genus loci*, and if it is constantly renewed for the long-term future’.* (p.3)

3.14. Consistent with the 1962 Development Plan, the 1992 report recognised that the ability for future expansion was crucial. It noted that *‘The energy and size of departments inevitably varies over a period of time, as different subjects fluctuate in ways totally unforeseeable in advance’*, and that the colleges too may benefit from localised extensions within their territories. However, it was recognised that expansion needed to be efficient and also beneficial to the function of the college in question – *‘As they are social rather than administrative units, they need to be kept together to function well’*.

3.15. Thus, in 1992, there was a recognition of the need for a balance to be struck between two of the core development principles as expressed in the Development Plan: the provision for ease of expansion and flexibility - a campus that could be responsive to and positively encourage change and be adaptable to new demands; and the qualities of the environment to enhance the uniqueness of the intellectual and emotional experience of the belonging to the University.

3.16. The quality of the campus environment was understood as fundamental to the continued reputation of the University:

*‘This interior lakeside landscape is the spatial asset most likely to continue to attract staff and students of high calibre. It is vulnerable to disintegration, particularly through an accumulation of small decisions each based on localised expediency. Therefore, it is recommended that a protected lakeside landscape is defined, where people, vegetation and water are predominant, free from vehicles or utilities’.* (p.4)

- 3.17. The critical importance of the high quality of the existing environment in attracting excellent staff and for the reputation of the University was likewise recognised in 2007 by the Inspector advising the Secretary of State on the recovered application for Heslington East Campus (paragraph 111, APP/C2741/V/05/1189972).

## SUMMARY

- 3.18. The spatial qualities of Campus West: the scale of the buildings and the relationships between them, the relationships between the buildings and the key landscape features of lake, mature trees and lower-tier planting, materially contribute to the special interest of the RPG and likewise comprise important setting elements for the listed buildings, including the Grade II\* Heslington Hall. Those qualities have sustained, notwithstanding some later alterations and the introduction of new buildings.
- 3.19. Overall, the campus is a product of its time that has matured into a significant example of mid-20<sup>th</sup> century university planning. This is acknowledged by the 2018 designation, which seeks to conserve landscape character. The RPG entry summarises the reasons for designation:

*Historic interest:*

*\* it is a physical manifestation of the University of York Development Plan, which was heralded as the beginning of contemporary university planning in Britain;*

*Design interest:*

*\* its refined design successfully integrates a series of status buildings within a carefully designed landscape, and was praised by the contemporary architectural press;*

*Landscaping:*

*\* the RMJM landscape complements and enhances the C17/C18 designed landscape of Heslington Hall, and combines both hard and soft landscaping to striking effect with formal and informal spaces, water courts, lawned areas, paths with contrasting straight edges and winding lines, and covered walkways, all drawn together by a large sinuous lake that acts as a key focal point within the campus site;*

*Designers:*

*\* the landscape was designed by the distinguished mid-C20 architects Andrew Derbyshire and Maurice Lee of RMJM, with Frank Clark, co-founder of the Garden History Society (now The Gardens Trust), as consultant;*

*Degree of survival:*

*\* despite some later alteration and the introduction of new buildings the landscape survives well overall and retains its character and key features;*

*Group value:*

*\* it has strong group value with listed features on the campus, including Heslington Hall (Grade II\*), the numerous Grade II structures in the hall's formal gardens, Central Hall (Grade II), Derwent College (Grade II), former Langwith College (Grade II), the covered walkway linking the former Langwith College to Central Hall and Vanbrugh College (Grade II), and Grade II listed sculptures.*

## LISTED BUILDINGS

- 3.20. The listed buildings within the RPG are subject to separate statutory provision in the exercise of planning functions. We have already described the buildings in the context of the campus masterplan but here comment on their significance in their own right, and the contribution made to that significance by their setting. It will be clear that the building design and the landscape interlocked in a carefully considered way – the list entries for the colleges note that the buildings ‘were to be of no more than four storeys so that the landscape remained dominant and the overall sense of place palpable’.

## DERWENT AND FORMER LANGWITH COLLEGES, CENTRAL HALL AND COVERED WALKWAY (GRADE II)

- 3.21. Derwent and Langwith Colleges were the first university buildings to be erected using the CLASP prefabricated system, and so have historic interest for the use of this economical and standardised form of architecture in a university setting. They are likewise of historic and architectural interest for their combination of residential

accommodation, teaching and social facilities within a single unit, enabling them to function instantly as a university, and allowing for future expansion.

- 3.22. Central Hall is the University's centrepiece building and has a striking architectural form, with a bold and imaginative design that means it is the focal point in views across the lake. The covered walkway, listed as it typifies the approach of RMJM's holistic approach to campus design, and expresses one of the core development principles of direct, easy communication between departments, has particular group value with Central Hall and Former Langwith to which it connects.
- 3.23. The list entry description notes that the massing and height relationships of Derwent and Former Langwith to Heslington Hall and the landscape are exceptionally well-thought-out. These scale relationships contribute to the low-density, open character of the historic campus.
- 3.24. Generally speaking, from within the centre of the campus, there is little or no sense of any development beyond the campus boundaries. In views towards Derwent and Langwith, particularly in the vicinity of sinuous paths that skirt the Woodyard, the built form sits within the tree canopy and relates in terms of scale to Heslington Hall.

### **HESLINGTON HALL (GRADE II\*) AND ASSOCIATED GARDEN STRUCTURES (GRADE II)**

- 3.25. Heslington Hall is listed at Grade II\* and is of significance for its considerable historic and architectural interest. It was built 1565-68 for Sir Thomas Eynns and extensively rebuilt 1852-4 to designs by P C Hardwick for Yarburgh Yarburgh. Much of the interior is c.1903 to designs by W Brierley in a sixteenth-century style. It was extensively restored for the University c.1961-63 to designs by Bernard Fielden as part of the first phase of the University's construction and is used for University administration functions. It lies at the head of the engineered lake to the east of the campus.
- 3.26. The listed building's immediate setting includes its historic landscape of lawns, clipped yew trees, various sculptures, its 18<sup>th</sup> century former kitchen walled garden and the first glimpse of the lake as it interacts with Langwith and Derwent. The landscape-led university masterplan achieved the careful integration of the older garden setting into the wider University campus. As noted, Derwent and Former Langwith colleges are sited so as to create visual separation and, in their scale, modulate away from the older building. The list entry descriptions for the 1960s listed buildings notes this setting relationship as successful: *'the relationship of massing and height of the college to its neighbour in Langwith College, Heslington Hall, and the landscape, as well as their layout, are exceptionally well-thought-out'*.
- 3.27. Heslington Hall is now experienced wholly in the context of University campuses, albeit Campus West to the rear of the Hall has matured and provides an attractive parkland setting from which to appreciate the Hall's significance. The Hall's principal frontage is to University Road to the east, and faces away from Campus West.

### **OTHER HERITAGE CONSIDERATIONS: HESLINGTON CONSERVATION AREA AND SIWARDS HOW, SCHEDULED MONUMENT**

- 3.28. Heslington village is designated as a Conservation Area (CA). The CA is centred on Main Street South and Main Street West, but Heslington Church and the open land adjoining the Church to the north also form part of the CA. Despite its proximity to the University, the historic core of the settlement retains a rural village character, with a number of listed buildings along Main Street. Prominent buildings within it are the Grade II listed Heslington Church and the Grade II\* listed Heslington Hall, described above.
- 3.29. The CA is subject to an adopted CA appraisal (2009) which describes the special character of the CA and its setting. The appraisal notes that the 'early campus buildings which have a consistent form and scale in a spacious landscaped setting around a lake, provide a sympathetic context for the northern edge of the Conservation Area'. More recent development in the Science Park (albeit we note this is further from the CA) is noted as less sympathetic to the character and appearance of the CA.
- 3.30. Siwards How is a scheduled monument located inside the northwest boundary of Campus West, outside the RPG boundary north of University Road. We note it here for completeness and as a heritage constraint affecting potential development in this location. It is recorded as an Anglo Saxon burial mound.

# 4.0 CONSIDERATION OF IMPACTS

## INTENSIFICATION OF CAMPUS WEST

- 4.1. Cushman & Wakefield has suggested the intensification of the existing University campuses. The report recognises the constraints imposed by the statutory designations of the RPG and listed CLASP buildings but considers that notwithstanding, there are locations on Campus West where existing buildings can be redeveloped at a greater scale than existing, providing scope to increase the amount of floorspace provided on Campus West.
- 4.2. By way of illustration, the report proposes that ‘a 4,500 sqm building over 3 storeys (1,500 sqm per floor), could accommodate 6,900 sqm, with a 15% increase in footprint and an additional storey, a 53 % increase in overall floorspace. With modern construction techniques net: gross floorspace ratios should also be improved’.
- 4.3. The report does not appear to have been informed by expert heritage advice.
- 4.4. The intensification of Campus West (prior to its designation) was considered by Dr Miele at Section 6.0 of his 2018 Expert Statement:

*“Leaving heritage considerations to one side, it would be challenging to achieve the requisite amount of additional accommodation without fundamentally altering at least the landscape character of the campus.*

*Intensification of the more recent campus, to the east of Heslington, does not present any heritage reason, but intensification here would change the character of the area, introducing a more urban form, The implications of this on Green Belt are dealt with in the landscape submission for the University.*

*Interestingly, the section Inspector who reported to the recovered (under section 77) application (report 20 March 2007) considered and rejected a similar suggestion, albeit then on the grounds of viability and character, and I see no reason to vary from that conclusion now. The SoS granted consent for the eastern extension to the campus.*

*...Therefore, I can see no basis to prefer the HE preferred alternative. It would effect a significant change to the character of Green Belt land and, more to the point (vis a vis my statement) would harm the heritage interest of the first phase of the campus”.*

- 4.5. The designed landscape and some CLASP buildings have now been designated in their own right, and great weight now attaches to their conservation in exercise of planning functions. Below we briefly discuss the statutory and national planning policy requirements that are now applicable and the potential impacts on their significance arising from intensification.

## HERITAGE CONSIDERATIONS

### STATUTE AND NATIONAL POLICY PURSUANT TO THE STATUTORY DESIGNATIONS

- 4.6. In the case of proposed allocations, the relevant national policy is contained within the NPPF and relates to plan-making and ensuring proposed allocation sites will enable the aspiration of sustainable development to be achieved. This differs from the consideration of development proposals, which relates to policies concerned with decision making. For the purposes of this report, however, it is worthwhile setting out the statutory and policy considerations engaged by the heritage designations of Campus West in the exercise of planning functions.
- 4.7. The heritage designations affecting Campus West comprise very sensitive and weighty considerations in planning terms. The listed buildings are subject to separate statutory provision under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Through the operation of national policy, considerable importance and weight attaches to the conservation of designated heritage assets and any contribution made

to their significance by their setting<sup>11</sup>. In this case that comprises the RPG, listed buildings, the Heslington CA and the Scheduled Monument in the north of the campus.

- 4.8. The multiple and overlapping designations affecting Campus West reflect a site of high sensitivity where landscape and built heritage components are integrated as part of a cohesive whole. As a consequence, development proposals affecting the campus have the potential to impact not only landscape character and visual amenity, but the way the core values of the university are expressed through the physical environment, and therefore heritage considerations are engaged.
- 4.9. As noted, the character of the RPG is one of low-scale and low-density, and the 1960s buildings are freestanding elements carefully placed within the landscape and are in many places subservient to the landscape masterplan. Section 3.0 of this report describes how these qualities have long been recognised both by the University (through its 1992 Strategic Review by Colvin and Moggridge) and by City of York Council. The 1999 Development Brief for the University of York imposed constraints on the growth of Campus West through both a limit on footprint (total developed footprint not exceeding 20% of total campus area for buildings and car parks) and height (building envelopes raising little above the mature tree canopy). This density restriction spaced out buildings since car parks were added into the density restriction.
- 4.10. The constraints (since increased to a 23% limit on footprint) were imposed by the City Council to preserve the environmental quality of Campus West and also recognised the benefits of the landscape-led masterplan as critical in appealing to and retaining high quality staff and students. They were considered appropriate by the Inspector advising the SoS on the recovered Heslington East application on this basis, and important to maintain the attractive character of the campus and setting of the neighbouring CA. Indeed, the Inspector found that:
- “A more realistic scenario would be to retain the **existing 20% footprint, which I consider to be important in terms of maintaining the attractive character of the campus and to maintain the setting of the neighbouring Conservation Area, and to maximise the amount of development that can take place on the campus by using multi-storey car parking and demolishing existing low rise buildings and replacing them with 4-story [sic] buildings. The campus could then accommodate some 25% of the whole development planned for Heslington East.***
- However, in my view, the most realistic and acceptable scenario would be to develop the sites identified at Appendix 12 of Mr Street’s **evidence at an average of 3.5 storeys while retaining the 20% footprint.** Such an approach would provide less than 12% of the accommodation required at Heslington East”* (paragraphs 653 and 654, APP/C2741/V/05/1189972) [our emphasis]
- 4.11. The additional heritage designations now affecting the core of the campus itself increases the weight to be given to those considerations which underpinned the decision maker’s conclusions, and inevitably limit development potential.

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<sup>11</sup> If a proposal would result in harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (NPPF paragraph 199), meaning the avoidance of harm and the delivery of enhancement where appropriate. Underpinning the NPPF’s heritage policies is the general principle of proportionality. The more important the designated asset, the greater its sensitivity to change and consequently the greater the weight the decision maker needs to place on material impact.

Notwithstanding the ‘great weight’ provision, it would be unreasonable for an impact that is minor in nature or limited to lead to a refusal of permission. What matters is the nature and extent of any harmful impact.

Any harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset should require ‘clear and convincing justification’, as per NPPF paragraph 200. A clear and convincing justification does not create a freestanding test requiring the demonstration of less damaging alternatives. To the extent that there is a test it is to be found in NPPF paragraphs 201 (in the case of substantial harm) and 202 (in the case of less than substantial harm).

4.12. Whilst the heritage sensitivities identified above do not preclude development within the RPG or its environs, any harm arising from that development attracts great weight in the planning balance and so falls to be justified on the balance of benefits.

#### **PROPOSED REMOVAL OF THE 23% FOOTPRINT LIMIT**

4.13. The Council has recently proposed the removal of the 23% limit on footprint in its draft policy wording. We observe here that the removal of this policy constraint does not affect the provisions of national policy and statute in relation to designated heritage assets. Its removal would mean that greater flexibility could be applied to individual proposals which would be balanced against public benefits rather than against an arbitrary target. However, we would caution against an assumption the removal of such a target means that large areas of Campus West would be thereby 'opened up' for redevelopment.

### **POTENTIAL IMPACTS**

#### **DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

4.14. The University nonetheless accepts that the redevelopment of existing footprint does give some scope to increase building heights and floorspace in order to deliver projects in the period to ST27 becoming available, estimated as around 6 years.

4.15. There are already a number of committed and future capital projects forming part of the University's Integrated Infrastructure Plan (IIP) on Campus West, Campus East and Science Park which seek to optimise development potential. These projects are illustrated on the set of plans submitted with the O'Neill Associates statement, Appendix A; MIQ Statement 2.4-2.10. Two further opportunity sites have also been identified on this campus.

4.16. First is the 'Peninsular Redevelopment' – the renewal of the unlisted buildings at James College, within the centre of the RPG and on the banks the central lake; and second is the redevelopment of the existing Campus South surface car parking on Newton Way.

4.17. All are subject to the heritage considerations outlined above, and in the case of the first, particular sensitivities arising from its prominent location within the RPG and the positive contribution the existing buildings make to the original design concept of the campus. Accordingly, redevelopment at a greater scale here has the potential to cause harm to the RPG as a consequence.

4.18. The second, South Car Park, lies adjacent to the boundary of the Heslington CA and within the wider setting of listed buildings and buildings identified as making a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the CA. Thus, the scale and form of any redevelopment on this site will be subject to considerations of visual and setting impacts from Main Street and Heslington Lane, and development here has the potential to cause harm to the CA and setting of listed buildings as well as the RPG.

4.19. We leave it to others to comment on the extent to which these development options address the University's need for future growth, and how they might inform the University's utilisation of its estate. Nonetheless all three engage the statutory and policy tests discussed above and warrant clear public benefits to outweigh the heritage impacts which seem likely to arise.

#### **CUSHMAN & WAKEFIELD PROPOSAL**

4.20. As noted, it appears that the Cushman & Wakefield report has been prepared without reference to expert heritage advice. The proposition made in the report is a general one: no specific consideration has been given to site particulars beyond the identification of locations on Campus West where there are buildings nearing the end of their economic life and which would not be cost-effective to refurbish (notably the non-listed CLASP buildings). It is suggested that their footprints can potentially be extended to accommodate larger floorplates together with some additional height, thus providing scope to increase floorspace.

- 4.21. As a matter of fact, this is simply not right, and we would refer to our earlier report<sup>12</sup> which was in part prepared to address that proposition.
- 4.22. In addition, we have the following observations on the capacity of Campus West to accommodate increased floorspace:
- 4.22.1. First, that space for further development on the existing campus at Campus West has become increasingly limited with the expansion of the University. That was properly acknowledged by the Inspector in 2007 in recommending the grant of permission for the eastern campus and the University intends to continue to optimise the campus since then through its IIP.
  - 4.22.2. Second, that any extension to the listed buildings themselves<sup>13</sup> is likely to cause an impact on significance, and potentially less than substantial harm to one or more designated heritage assets. It is also doubtful, given the lightweight nature of the CLASP systems which was chosen in part to address the constraints of a boggy site, and which had a specific structural brief, whether this would be feasible structurally.
  - 4.22.3. Third, that the same considerations apply to unlisted CLASP buildings (and non-CLASP buildings which nevertheless follow a similar design approach) within the RPG, which may be considered to contribute positively to the overall design concept of the campus and are subject to the same structural considerations.
  - 4.22.4. Fourth, that whilst redevelopment or extension of later buildings is less sensitive in heritage terms, many are already at a larger scale, and material increases in height or scale have the potential to harm the RPG. There is thus limited capacity for further expansion.
- 4.23. In our view, therefore, that the Cushman & Wakefield proposals do not appear to have taken account of the particular spatial qualities of the landscape and its visual sensitivities; nor the limited capacity the campus to accommodate further growth without compromising its essential character as a campus university.

## THE EFFECT OF ST27 ON CAMPUS WEST

- 4.24. We now turn to the proposed allocation ST27, which is located to the south of Campus East. We do not revisit the assessment made by Dr Miele in his 2018 report but commend its conclusions to the Inspectors:

*“7.1 First, the ST27 land (and the University’s alternative – I conflate the two for the purposes of this report) does not form part of the setting of any designated heritage asset.*

*7.2 Second, that land is not proximate to any historic landscape feature contributing to the historic structure of the ancient city.*

*7.3 There are no views of the Minster or any other listed building, directly, from or across the land, or from the Ring Road.*

*7.4 The land does not occur on any arterial route of historic interest, linking the historic city of York to any historic satellite settlement. Those settlements are distant from the site and located beyond the Ring Road.*

*7.5 Thus, and applying the setting guidance from HE, I do not identify that the ST27 land contributes to our ability to appreciate anything particular about the significance of the ancient city or indeed of any other asset.*

*7.6 There are no historical associations or functional associations between the ST27 land and any asset, not even Heslington whose agricultural hinterland, historically, included the ST27 and now related land.*

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<sup>12</sup> University of York Draft Allocation ST27: Heritage Matters Section 6, Representation to the Submission Local Plan April 2018, O’Neill Associates (ref: CD014U)

<sup>13</sup> This is not suggested by Cushman & Wakefield but we include it as a general observation, in light of the University’s commitment to refurbish the listed Derwent and former Langwith Colleges as part of its IIP.

*7.7 The open land separating the present edge of settlement from the Ring Road serves an undoubted landscape purpose, but its relevance to the significance of any heritage asset is limited at best. I have not been able to identify any specific historic associations between this land and the historic city. Fulford to the south and west is the site of a Conquest-period battle, but that is some distance away (about 2.5 km, WSW of the allocation edge). Hull Road to the north of the University (the modern A1079) is understood to reflect the alignment/position of a Roman Road entering from the east. This is location about 800—1000 metres or so to the north of the northern edge of the allocation (depending on the point where the measurement is taken) and interposing is the University's eastern campus and later suburban development.*

*7.8 And anyway, even the Council, which contends some degree of relevance, accepts the land may be developed acceptably by means of leaving a landscape margin or buffer.*

*7.9 One premise of the HTP, and also of the HE objection, is based on an abstraction, which has a subjective character to it. The HTP recognises its own limitations as involving subjective judgment. The simple way to express this is to ask whether any party driving around the Ring Road would think of York as an ancient place when s/he looks across the carriageway or shoulder to the land and beyond. Some, steeped in the abstraction, might; others, not, wouldn't, or so I conclude. . And even those possessed of special, expert understanding require some mental gymnastics to conflate the historic city of York with this piece of unremarkable farmland and the experience of dual carriageway Ring Road.*

*7.10 Historic England's alternative – the densification of the existing campus – has the unintended, and arguably perverse, consequence of undermining the aesthetic and historic value of the phase 1 campus and also of introducing dense forms of development which add to the impact of existing development on Green Belt.”*

4.25. For completeness we note here that the York Conservation Area Appraisal, which contains a comprehensive views analysis, does not identify any view from the ring road across the allocation site.

#### **ST27 AS IT RELATES TO CAMPUS WEST**

4.26. The proposed extension is located adjacent to Campus East, at a distance of c.1.2km from Heslington Hall. The distances involved, combined with the separating effect of vegetation and development means that we do not identify the ST27 land as a setting element or as contributing anything to our ability to appreciate the significance of the assets under consideration in this report. Accordingly, there would be no harm arising from the development of this site through its allocation.

4.27. In our view, therefore, the new designations at Campus West do not affect the conclusions of the 2018 representations.



## 5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1. In summary and with reference to the Inspectors' questions under *Matter 2*, our comparative assessment of the capacity of Campus West and the proposed allocation of land at ST27 leads us to conclude that in heritage terms ST27 is preferable for the reasons set out in this report.
- 5.2. The high quality of the landscape and built environment at Campus West has long been recognised, both by the University of York and City of York Council, as both of interest and sensitivity in its own right, and as of critical importance in attracting excellent staff and also for the reputation of the University.
- 5.3. That long-held understanding of significance informed the constraints imposed on the growth of Campus West adopted in the 1999 Development Brief and since transferred into draft policy. In 2018 those constraints were considered appropriate by the Inspector advising the SoS on the recovered application and informed the recommendation to grant consent for the eastern extension of the campus.
- 5.4. The formal recognition of the special interest of the campus through the multiple designations by Historic England in 2018 underlines those established principles. It is clear that the spatial qualities of Campus West – the discrete physical form of the buildings, their interaction with one another, and with the landscape setting – make a demonstrable contribution to the significance of the assets.
- 5.5. Intensification of the campus in the way now proposed by Cushman & Wakefield would, in our view, be challenging to achieve without altering landscape character and so causing harm to the significance of the RPG or listed buildings through development in their setting. The statutory designations considerably increase the weight to be given to these considerations.
- 5.6. For this reason, the now-proposed removal of the 23% limit on footprint in the most recent iteration of the policy drafting does not materially alter the position or increase the options available to the University in meeting its future growth needs. The designations at Campus West impose a requirement for a higher level of scrutiny of potential impacts on character and special interest than any previously required.

# APPENDIX 1.0

## HERITAGE ASSET PLAN



# HERITAGE ASSET PLAN

- University of York - Campus
- ST27

- Conservation Areas**
- A. Heslington CA
  - B. The Retreat/Heslington Road CA

- Listed Buildings**
- Grade II\*
  - Grade II

- Scheduled Monuments**
1. Siwards How, south east of the water tower, Heslington Hill

- Registered Park and Gardens**
2. University of York Campus West designed landscape (Grade II)
  3. Grounds associated with the Retreat (Grade II\*)

0 250 500 750 1000 m

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**LOCATION:**  
Insert Address

**DATE:**  
August 2022

**SCALE:**  
1:10,000 @ A3

**FIGURE:**

**▲ NORTH**



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# APPENDIX 2.0

REGISTERED PARK AND GARDEN LIST ENTRY

# University of York Campus West designed landscape

Listed on the National Heritage List for England.

[Search over 400,000 listed places \(https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/\)](https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/)

## Official list entry

Heritage Category: **Park and Garden**

Grade: **II**

List Entry Number: **1456517**

Date first listed: **22-Aug-2018**

Statutory Address 1: **University Of York, Heslington, York, YO10 5DD**

This list entry identifies a Park and/or Garden which is registered because of its special historic interest.

[Understanding registered parks and gardens](https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/what-is-designation/registered-parks-and-gardens/)

[\(https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/what-is-designation/registered-parks-and-gardens/\)](https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/what-is-designation/registered-parks-and-gardens/)

[Corrections and minor amendments](https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/minor-amendments/) [\(https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/minor-amendments/\)](https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/minor-amendments/)

## Location

Statutory Address: **University Of York, Heslington, York, YO10 5DD**

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

District: **York (Unitary Authority)**

Parish: **Heslington**

District: **York (Unitary Authority)**

Parish: **Non Civil Parish**

National Grid Reference: **SE6226250375**

## Summary

University campus landscape of 1963-1980 incorporating a late-C17/early-C18 formal landscape and an early-C19 fishpond belonging to Heslington Hall, by Andrew Derbyshire and Maurice Lee of Robert Matthew, Johnson-Marshall & Partners (RMJM), assisted by David Rendle and Alfred Hoffman, with Herbert Francis (Frank) Clark as landscape consultant

## Reasons for Designation

The University of York Campus West designed landscape, laid out from 1963-1980 to designs by Robert Matthew, Johnson-Marshall & Partners (RMJM), is registered at Grade II for the following principal reasons:

Historic interest:

\* it is a physical manifestation of the University of York Development Plan, which was heralded as the beginning of contemporary university planning in Britain;

Design interest:

\* its refined design successfully integrates a series of status buildings within a carefully designed landscape, and was praised by the contemporary architectural press;

Landscaping:

\* the RMJM landscape complements and enhances the C17/C18 designed landscape of Heslington Hall, and combines both hard and soft landscaping to striking effect with formal and informal spaces, water courts, lawned areas, paths with contrasting straight edges and winding lines, and covered walkways, all drawn together by a large sinuous lake that acts as a key focal point within the campus site;

Designers:

\* the landscape was designed by the distinguished mid-C20 architects Andrew Derbyshire and Maurice Lee of RMJM, with Frank Clark, co-founder of the Garden History Society (now The Gardens Trust), as consultant;

Degree of survival:

\* despite some later alteration and the introduction of new buildings the landscape survives well overall and retains its character and key features;

Group value:

\* it has strong group value with listed features on the campus, including Heslington Hall (Grade II\*), the numerous Grade II structures in the hall's formal gardens, Central Hall (Grade II), Derwent College (Grade II), former Langwith College (Grade II), the covered walkway linking the former Langwith College to Central Hall and Vanbrugh College (Grade II), and Grade II listed sculptures.

# History

After several previous attempts at establishing a university in York had failed, in 1953 York Civic Trust and the Rowntree Trust launched the Institute of Archives and the Institute of Advanced Architectural Studies (IAAS), which became key components of the York Academic Trust founded in 1958 in King's Manor in the city centre. The administrator appointed to run both courses was John West-Taylor, who saw them as a stepping stone to the founding of a new university.

In April 1959 the University Grants Committee (UGC) set up a Sub-Committee on New Universities and invited applications from cities or groups of authorities wanting to promote new universities. York's application was approved in April 1960, along with that of Norwich, with further approvals in the following year. The seven new universities in England (Sussex, York, East Anglia, Essex, Kent, Warwick and Lancaster) differed from older institutions in that they were full universities supported by the UGC and setting their own degrees from the outset. All appointed well-respected architects to prepare detailed masterplans and to design the most important buildings, giving each a sense of unity and a distinctive identity.

In York the C16 Heslington Hall about 1.5 miles south-east of the city centre, which had been secured in 1958 by local benefactor John Bowes Morrell, was chosen as the site for the university and Robert Matthew, Johnson-Marshall and Partners (RMJM) were appointed in 1961-1962 as masterplanners with Stirrat Johnson-Marshall and Andrew Derbyshire as partners in charge, working alongside the vice chancellor, West-Taylor and incoming professors to produce a detailed development plan. The hall was adapted as the administrative centre of the university in the first phase of building work in 1963-1965, with the hall's parkland intended for the campus. More grounds were then acquired to the west and it was agreed on the need for a lake as a balancing reservoir to lower the dangerously high water table on the site. A younger RMJM partner, Maurice Lee, specialised in landscape design, which he produced here in conjunction with Herbert Francis (Frank) Clark, previously landscape architect to the Festival of Britain, and a co-founder of the Garden History Society.

All the new universities experimented with new course structures, particularly in the growth area of social sciences, and this shaped the movement seen at Sussex, UEA and Essex towards pushing the teaching buildings together as megastructures. By contrast, York's course structure was relatively traditional and collegiate, but enabled daytime teaching facilities and residential accommodation to be combined together so that they could share catering, common rooms and bars, encouraging a 24/7 atmosphere and maximising their usage and the available UGC grant. Buildings were to be of no more than four storeys so that the landscape remained dominant and the overall sense of place palpable.

The masterplan included groups of loose-knit college ranges, with the science laboratories behind them and landmark buildings, such as the library and Central Hall set within a careful pattern of circulation. The university was built in phases that progressed westwards from Heslington Hall, with development becoming more piecemeal as funding became more restricted.

A shortage of building labour, expensive materials, and waterlogged ground required a lightweight construction solution in order to avoid expensive piling. In 1946-1947 Johnson-Marshall had devised a prefabricated system using steel frames and concrete panels used by Hertfordshire County Council for building schools, a critically acclaimed programme from which six surviving examples are listed. Its ideals informed the CLASP (Consortium of Local Authorities Special Programme) system developed by Nottinghamshire County Council in 1954-1956. CLASP was designed as a lightweight and flexible structure that could 'ride' the mining of coal seams below them; the first CLASP building, Intake Farm School, Mansfield (Grade II) of 1955-1957 was called the 'rock and roll school'. When York was designed CLASP was at the peak of its success and it was used for fire stations, health centres, libraries and offices. It is used in the design of many of the university's buildings at York.

RMJM was the only architectural practice to design four universities: York, Bath, Stirling, and the University of Ulster at Coleraine, and it specialised in public sector work throughout the 1960s. It began to work outside Britain in the late 1960s and today is a massive international practice with offices in the Middle East, Asia, Africa and the Americas, as well as Europe.

The landscape element of the campus was designed by Andrew Derbyshire and Maurice Lee, assisted by David Rendle and Alfred Hoffman, with Herbert Francis (Frank) Clark as landscape consultant. The waterlogged ground conditions of the proposed campus site coupled with the construction of buildings that would increase the impermeable surface area meant that the threat of flooding had to be addressed. The 1962 masterplan proposed to improve the site's drainage by creating a balancing reservoir (lake) to contain the increased flow of rainwater run-off and release it slowly; the lake was one of the first elements in the plan. Andrew Derbyshire stressed the importance of a lake as a central focus and of the bridges across it as touch of folly, fighting criticisms from the UGC as to the cost – the landscaping, bridges and walkways cost about ten per cent of the budget in the 1960s. H F (Frank) Clark provided advice, but to meet the tight deadlines and tighter budgets Derbyshire and Maurice Lee wrote the final landscape brief. They proposed three tiers of planting with shelter belts to shield the exposed site, small-scale planting to give interest to the clusters of low-rise college buildings scattered around the lake, and a middle range to provide visual links between them. Lee also designed the landscape for the Commonwealth Institute, Kensington, Greater London. The landscaping at York was largely completed by 1980, but some additional buildings and sculptural work have been added later, and tutors' houses on the south side of the lake near to Heslington Hall have been demolished.

A management plan was put in place by Hal Moggeridge in 1993 in consultation with Andrew Derbyshire. The paved area in front of Vanbrugh College was partly remodelled between 2015 and 2016 as Greg's Place by TGP Landscape Architects at the behest of the outgoing chancellor, Greg Dyke.

## Details

University campus landscape of 1963-1980 incorporating a late-C17/early-C18 formal landscape and an early-C19 fishpond belonging to Heslington Hall, by Andrew Derbyshire and Maurice Lee of Robert Matthew, Johnson-Marshall & Partners (RMJM), assisted by David Rendle and Alfred Hoffman, with Herbert Francis (Frank) Clark as landscape consultant

**LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING** The University of York Campus West designed landscape is situated approximately 1.5 miles south-east of York city centre immediately to the north-west of the village of Heslington. Although the campus is approximately 185 acres/0.75 sq km in total the registered designed landscape is concentrated on an area of mainly flat and undulating land with an irregular triangular shape, which is approximately 69 acres/0.28 sq km. The landscape is bounded to the north and east by University Road, to the north-west by Wentworth Way, to the west by the altered Biology Building and Wentworth College, to the south by James College, the sports and fitness centre, Newton Way car park and private housing of Heslington village, and to the south-east by Main Street. The site comprises the landscaped grounds to a series of college buildings and structures linked by a network of paths, covered walkways and bridges, with a large sinuous lake forming the main focal point of the landscape. The remainder of the campus, including the library, is set on higher ground to the north of University Road and is excluded from the Register entry.

**ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES** The main approaches to the site are via the main campus access routes, which are from York to the north-west, via University Road (the former Heslington Road, which was widened and sunk into the side of the hill as part of the 1962 masterplan), and from the A64 to the south via the A19 and Heslington Lane. Entrances to the colleges on the northern shore of the lake, as well as Heslington Hall, lie off University Road, with Newton Way and Spring Lane on the south side of the site providing access off Heslington Lane and Main Street to the southern colleges, from which there is direct access into the designed landscape. The area of the designed landscape around the lake is largely pedestrianised, apart from access for maintenance vehicles.

**HISTORIC BUILDING** Heslington Hall (listed at Grade II\*), which is located at the eastern end of the landscape, was constructed by Sir Thomas Eynns, secretary and keeper of the seal to the Council of the North between 1565-1568. It passed by sale and marriage to the Yarrow family in 1708, and in 1852 to Yarrow Graeme Yarrow, who commissioned P C Hardwick to remodel, rebuild and extend the building between 1852-1856. Further alterations were made in 1876 by David Brandon. The interior was remodelled in 1903 by Walter Brierley (who also lowered the roofline) and in 1939 the Yarrow family (Barons Deramore from 1890) vacated the house. In 1958 the hall was sold to



John Bowes Morrell for academic purposes, and between 1961-1963 the interior was converted for university use by Bernard Feilden for RMJM and a modern stair installed. The hall is constructed of red brick with sandstone ashlar dressings and a plain tile roofs, and has a U-shaped plan with a courtyard and two projecting wings on the north-east front elevation. The centre bays of the south-west facing garden elevation is Victorian, but two flanking staircase towers are original. The original gardens of Heslington Hall extended west to Spring Lane, which was moved further westwards in 1865, and to the north-west was parkland.

**OTHER HISTORIC STRUCTURES** Located approximately 100 metres south-west of Heslington Hall is an early-mid-C18 walled kitchen garden (walls, gate piers and gates listed at Grade II) that contains modern greenhouses as well as a mid-C18 single-storey orangery (listed at Grade II). Incorporated into the south-west wall of the walled garden is the hall's original C16 pedimented entrance porch (listed at Grade II), which is constructed of sandstone ashlar and has paired Corinthian columns and a frieze. Forming the north corner of the walled garden is an early-C18 square gazebo (listed at Grade II, also known as the Quiet Place and used for contemplation and private study), which faces north-west to the site of the hall's former parkland (now the university campus) and a former formal canal. The gazebo is of two storeys and is constructed of mellow red brick with ashlar dressings and a tiled pyramidal roof. An external balustraded stair on the north-east side accesses the first-floor room. A small single-storey extension attached to the north-west side has a large arched opening and contains a garden seat.

#### 1960s DEVELOPMENTS & LANDSCAPING

**MAIN BUILDINGS** RMJM's 1962 masterplan for the University of York proposed a sequence of new low-rise buildings to be constructed in three main phases leading westwards and north from Heslington Hall, and clustered around a lake. Service yards and car parks, which are not of special interest, exist to the rears of all the college buildings away from the lake and are accessed from the approach roads.

Construction began between 1963 and 1965 with two college buildings - Derwent and Langwith (both listed at Grade II and now collectively known as Derwent College) - adjoining Heslington Hall at the eastern end of the site and containing residential accommodation and teaching facilities for the arts and social sciences. These buildings are of CLASP (Consortium of Local Authorities Special Programme) construction, which consists of a steel frame clad in concrete panels with beige aggregate of Trent gravel, and were planned picturesquely as a series of open courtyards linked by covered walkways.

From 1965 to 1968 further colleges were built using CLASP construction, including Vanbrugh and Goodricke, which lie opposite each other on the north and south shores of the lake respectively, and the Biology Department, which is located to the north-west corner of the site and is outside of the area here registered. The Sir Jack Lyons Concert Hall, which lies to the north-east of Biology, was constructed in 1968 and extended between 1999 and 2004 by van Heyningen and Haward.

A multi-purpose assembly hall known as Central Hall (listed at Grade II) forms the centrepiece of the campus landscape and was constructed between 1966 and 1968 on the lake's north shore. The hall projects out into the lake and provides key views to, and from, the lake and grounds. A covered walkway (listed at Grade II) links Central Hall with Derwent College and Vanbrugh College.

The Physics Department of 1965-1967 is located on the south side of the lake opposite Central Hall and to the east of this is the Vice-Chancellor's House, which was one of the first buildings on the campus to be built between 1963 and 1965.

Other later buildings have been added on both sides of the lake and include a health centre and nursery (1980s), Berrick Saul Building (2009), and Spring Lane Building (2016). Wentworth College (1972 with later additions and alterations, including a 2002 curving accommodation block) and James College (1990s) are located towards the western end of the lake and are outside the area here registered.

**THE LAKE & ITS ENVIRONS** The lake, which feeds into Germany Beck, forms the main focal point of the Campus West designed landscape. Key views are provided from the lakeside edge and paths to the surrounding areas of the

designed landscape and buildings, including Heslington Hall, the colleges, Sir Jack Lyons Concert Hall, and most notably to Central Hall. Key views are also returned from the buildings to the lake and grounds.

The lake's origins date back to the early C19 when an informal small lake or fish pond was created to the north-west of Heslington Hall. This small lake still survives as part of the later lake created in 1963 by RMJM, but it remains separate at the eastern end of the site with its own dam and has two small islands. Most of the university is on very flat land, and as part of the 1962 masterplan the existing early-C19 lake/fish pond was extended by nearly a mile to drain the site and form a balancing reservoir, as well as to provide a central focus for the new buildings. The lake covers approximately 15 acres in total, is three to four feet deep, and was one of the first, and largest, lakes in the country to be lined in butyl/polythene sheeting; by the time the sheet began to rupture, the ground had compacted and was largely impervious. Reed beds and lily pads have been introduced into the lake to improve water purity, and a dam provides the lake's south-west termination point.

Some of the colleges are built right on the lake edge, particularly the southern wing of the former Langwith College, which appears to rise straight out of the easternmost C19 section of the lake. Neighbouring Derwent College to the south-east adjacent to Heslington Hall also incorporates a formal 'water court' with a courtyard pool with low-spraying fountains surrounded by a covered walk that offers views in to the pool and buildings and out to the lake into which the pool's overflow cascades.

RMJM's extended lake twists and winds westwards from the early-C19 section through the flat land of the site like a river and the spoil from its construction was used to create undulations and contours in the landscape. The lake's eastern section, adjacent to the original early-C19 part of the lake, is considerably narrower than the rest of the lake with an island, and is the part that most resembles a river with grassy banks on each side. The lake then broadens out around Central Hall to form a harbour-like basin with Vanbrugh College to the north shore, the Physics Department to the south, and a single-jet fountain to the centre of the basin that is practical as well as aesthetic in helping to aerate the water.

Originally there were separate areas reserved for fishing (in the narrow section to the east of Central Hall) and swimming, and the widest area in front of Central Hall was for boating and sailing. Wide flights of steps originally led down into the water to provide access for watersports, but the lake is no longer used for watersports and the steps in front of Vanbrugh College have been removed and replaced by tiered planting, although steps remain around the terrace surrounding Central Hall. Large square stepping stones in the water in front of the Physics Department are designed like pontoons.

A large paved area in front of Vanbrugh College was partly remodelled between 2015 and 2016. Originally the design was composed of a series of squares on level ground with planting, gravel, paving and trees, but the land has been slightly re-graded and gently sloped for better disabled access, areas of lawn and seating introduced, and an area of decking created immediately in front of the lake, upon which is a large sculptural window in which people can sit and admire the views, including a framed view of the fountain. Low concrete lights shaped like boat moorings, which used to pool light from underneath but are no longer operational, survive on the western side of the paved area and are also present on sections of paving on the south side of the lake opposite, which is adjacent to the former Goodricke College, which occupies a headland spur and includes two detached stepped buildings at the fore that follow the line of the lake. Behind the two detached Goodricke blocks is a gently undulating landscape with another water court and fountain by the college's nucleus that are linked to the lake by a leat running westwards and another running eastwards, both planted with reeds.

To the west of the central basin the lake narrows again and continues meandering westwards and then south-westwards where it widens slightly again next to Wentworth College and James College and contains a large island designed as a wild fowl sanctuary and nesting site. A section of early-C21 pressed-red brick flood defence walling has been constructed on the lake edge immediately to the south of the 1972 Wentworth College. The western edge of the lake by the early-C21 buildings of Wentworth College also has later timber cladding, which is disintegrating and is due to be removed. The banks of the lake at the south-western tip, and also to the north and west of James College, are planted with trees.

The lake is spanned by a series of six bridges, all of differing design, which are lit at night. Two eastern bridges have lattice balustrades, including one over the dam by the former Langwith College, which has replaced a set of stepping stones. A bridge with a covered roof spans the lake between Central Hall and the Physics Department, and Goodricke Bridge spans the lake between Vanbrugh College and the former Goodricke College; at the time of writing (2018), Goodricke Bridge, which has lost its original glass canopy and has replaced handrails, has been classed as structurally unsafe and has been closed in advance of repairs. A steel-girder bridge spans the lake between Biology and the former Goodricke College, and a suspension bridge, added in 1993, spans the lake between Wentworth College and James College.

**RMJM LANDSCAPING** The landscape employs both hard and soft landscaping. A mixture of straight and sinuous paths, which comprise in-situ and pre-cast concrete slabs, tarmac and resin bound paths, access the various elements of the landscape, although there is not a path encircling the entire lake. Covered walkways (some of which are listed at Grade II), comprising slender steel columns with flat roofs of timber and aluminium concealing service ducts and covered in asphalt, also link some of the buildings and form integral features of the landscape.

Trees are used to define the contours of the land, with smaller trees used as specimens in areas of lawn, such as to the east of Central Hall and to the west of the Sir Jack Lyons Concert Hall, that provide visual links between the buildings. The range of trees and plants was kept deliberately narrow, with willow trees and silver birch dominant around the lake edge, with alders, poplars, and cherries elsewhere. The planting programme was completed in 1980 and the accent is on foliage rather than flowers; thus flowers are largely confined to tubs for ease of maintenance, apart from in spring when daffodils and other spring bulbs appear in parts of the lawned areas, which are mainly in the eastern half of the landscape and the northern area by the Sir Jack Lyons Concert Hall.

Small-scale planting gives interest to the clusters of low-rise college buildings, courtyards and pedestrian ways scattered around the lake, and a shelter belt exists to the south-west corner of the lake. Further shelter belts exist to the far northern areas of the campus, but are outside of the area here registered.

The land form of the designed landscape is predominantly flat, although to the east of Central Hall is a naturalistic looking mound surmounted by fir trees and a 2006 sculpture entitled 'Meditation on Exhaustion' by Thomas Taylor; the mound was created to conceal a sewage tank underneath. To the south-west of the Sir Jack Lyons Concert Hall and Music Research Centre the land gently undulates and in front of the building's south elevation is a naturalistic open-air amphitheatre with sloping rather than tiered sides.

**HESLINGTON HALL GARDENS** At the eastern end of the site is Heslington Hall, with Derwent College and the start of the sinuous lake just to the north-west. In front of the hall's south-west garden elevation is a grassed terrace used as a croquet lawn, which terminates in a long canal pool installed by RMJM in around 1965 with a line of low-spraying fountains. The pool is aligned at a right angle (north-west - south-east) towards the lake and 1960s university buildings, and both the terrace and pool are enclosed by stone-flagged paths. In front of the terrace and pond, approximately 43 metres south-west of the hall, is an avenue of paired overgrown clipped yews planted by James Yarborough in the late C17/early C18 who created a modest Dutch-style garden, with two further lines of yews to each flanking side. From the 1960s the pool and yews were the setting for a sculpture by Henry Moore entitled 'Family Group', on loan from the Moore Foundation. However, when the loan had to be returned the university commissioned an abstract sculpture by Austin Wright entitled 'Dryad' (listed at Grade II) in 1983; the largely abstract figure was erected on the plinth of the Moore sculpture in 1984. To the south-west of the yews is the C18 walled kitchen garden of the hall with the two-storey gazebo (listed at Grade II) forming its north corner. Extending north-west from the gazebo at a right angle to the hall's terrace and yew avenue is a straight-sided hollow in the lawn that was originally a short formal canal approximately 35 metres long that overlooked the hall's parkland and is depicted in a painting of 1760, but was in-filled in the C19. To the east and west of the former canal are areas of lawn running down to the lake edge, bisected by a meandering path that heads eastwards towards the hall and Derwent College, and westwards and then north following the line of the lake. Alongside the path are globe lighting columns and bench seating, a C19 sandstone-ashlar gate pier believed to have been moved from elsewhere on the site, and a 2006 totem pole-like sculpture by Bill Hodgson entitled 'Aspiration'. To the west is the former site of tutor's houses, which were demolished in around 2014. The site has been grassed over and spring bulbs planted; a solitary palm tree is a survivor from one of the houses' former gardens.

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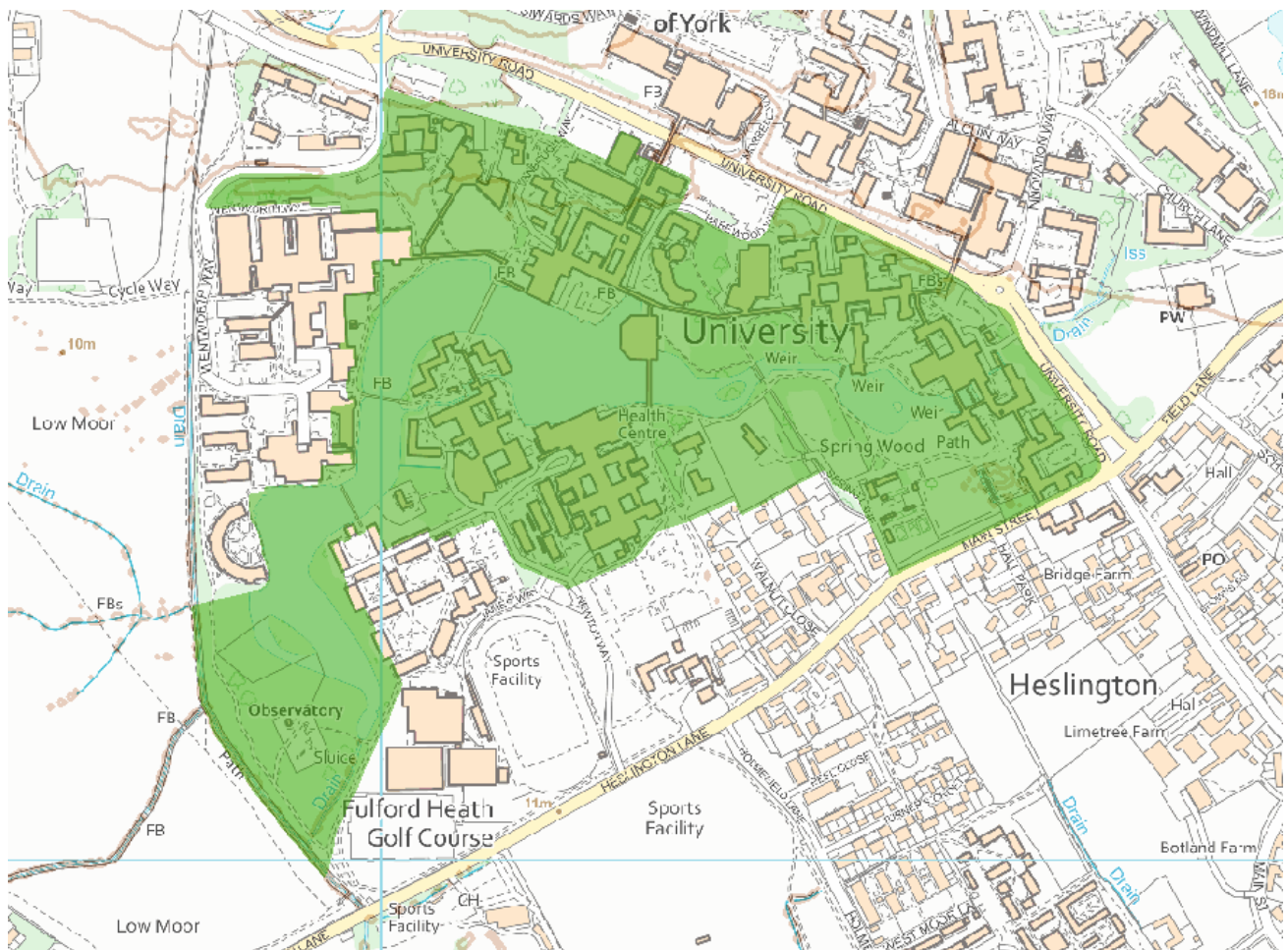
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### Other

University of York Development Plan 1962 - 1972

## Legal

This garden or other land is registered under the Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953 within the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens by Historic England for its special historic interest.



## Map

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# **APPENDIX 3.0**

## **LISTED BUILDINGS - LIST ENTRY DESCRIPTIONS**

# Former Langwith College, University of York

Listed on the National Heritage List for England.

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## Overview

Heritage Category: **Listed Building**

Grade: **II**

List Entry Number: **1457043**

Date first listed: **22-Aug-2018**

Statutory Address: **University Of York, Heslington, York, YO10 5DD**



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## What is the National Heritage List for England?

The [National Heritage List for England](https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/) (<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>) is a unique register of our country's most significant historic buildings and sites. The places on the list are protected by law and most are not open to the public.

The list includes:

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# Untitled sculpture, University of York

Listed on the National Heritage List for England.

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## Official list entry

Heritage Category: **Listed Building**

Grade: **II**

List Entry Number: **1457112**

Date first listed: **22-Aug-2018**

Statutory Address 1: **University Of York, Heslington, York, YO10 5DD**

**This List entry helps identify the building designated at this address for its special architectural or historic interest.**

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For these purposes, to be included within the curtilage of the building, the object or structure must have formed part of the land since before 1st July 1948.

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## Location

Statutory Address: **University Of York, Heslington, York, YO10 5DD**

**The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.**

District: **York (Unitary Authority)**

Parish: **Heslington**

National Grid Reference: **SE6226750699**

## Summary

Public sculpture, 'Untitled', 1967 by Austin Wright. Set within, and including, a boxed concrete ramp designed as part of the main pedestrian walkway around the University of York by the architects Robert Matthew, Johnson-Marshall and Partners (RMJM).

## Reasons for Designation

The sculpture 'Untitled' of 1967, designed by the artist Austin Wright for the University of York, is listed at Grade II for the following principal reasons:

Artistic interest: \* as a sculpture by Austin Wright who was among the most talented later C20 sculptors, exerting a considerable influence on modern art in the North of England; \* as a relatively rare surviving large-scale outdoor commission by Wright, many of whose works have been stolen or destroyed; \* as a sculpture of high aesthetic quality and workmanship, inspired by the artist's experience of the natural world; \* for its place within Wright's oeuvre, representing the maturity of his work in aluminium and his overriding interests at that time.

Architectural interest: \* for its unusual setting within a boxed concrete ramp, allowing it to be appreciated at almost every angle and which formed an integral part of the main walkway around the campus; a key element of the design concept for the university.

Historic interest: \* as a piece commissioned for the contemporary University of York, one of a wave of new universities that improved access to higher education and marked the highpoint of publicly-funded architecture in post-war Britain. \* as a tangible reminder of Wright's close association with the university, whose work inspired the Professor of Music, John Paynter, to produce a piece for chamber orchestra and viola; 'Three Sculptures of Austin Wright'.

Group value: \* with the Dryad sculpture by the same artist, and the contemporary university buildings including the Central Hall, Derwent College and former Langwith College, covered walkways, as well as the designed landscape, all of which are separately listed at Grade II as arguably the greatest work of the influential architects Sir Stiratt Johnson-Marshall and Sir Andrew Derbyshire.

## History

The period after 1945 saw a shift from commemorative sculpture and architectural enrichment to the idea of public sculpture as a primarily aesthetic contribution to the public realm. Sculpture was commissioned for new housing, schools, universities and civic set pieces. It could be an emblem of civic renewal and social progress. Visual language ranged from the abstraction of Victor Pasmore and Philip King to the figurative approach of Elisabeth Frink and Peter Laszlo Peri, via those such as Lynn Chadwick and Barbara Hepworth who bridged the abstract/representational divide.

The sculpture 'Untitled' by Austin Wright was commissioned for the new university at York (built from 1963), with the collaboration of the architects, Robert Matthew, Johnson-Marshall and Partners (RMJM), and integrated within the pedestrian route around the campus.

Austin Wright (1911-1997) was born in Chester and brought up in Cardiff where he attended evening classes at Cardiff Art School before studying modern languages at New College, Oxford. From 1934, he taught languages, painting and sculpture at Downs School, Colwall, Worcestershire, where he lodged with fellow teacher, later poet, W H Auden. In 1937 Wright moved to York and subsequently bought a smallholding on the edge of the Green at Upper Poppleton. He worked in an old barn throughout the rest of his life and, with his wife Susan, created an extensive sculpture garden. Largely self-taught (Henry Moore told him to 'just get on with it'), his earliest surviving sculptures date from around 1940. Echoes of Moore and Barbara Hepworth could be seen in Wright's early figure sculpture, but gradually tall, attenuated, skeletal forms became characteristic of his work and began to set him apart from his contemporaries. He exhibited widely across the North of England, including the show Modern Art in Yorkshire at Wakefield, where in 1953 his work first appeared alongside Eduardo Paolozzi, Kenneth Armitage and Elisabeth Frink. From the 1950s Wright's work appeared in exhibitions in London and then touring exhibitions to Scandinavia and South America, where he won the Acquisition Prize at the Sao Paulo Biennale. In 1955, the art critic Charles Sewter pronounced Wright as 'the most gifted sculptor working in Britain today'. His work advanced from wood and stone to lead and thence to concrete as his pieces grew larger and he began to be given outdoor commissions. It also moved from being semi-figurative to semi-abstract. In 1961-1964, Wright was Gregory Fellow in Sculpture at Leeds University. He began to work predominantly in aluminium and took a renewed interest in plant forms. The late 1960s saw his work reach its maturity. Wright produced pieces for moorland sites in Yorkshire, for schools and offices, for Leeds, Northumbria and York universities and Bretton Hall in Yorkshire, though many were stolen for scrap metal. He exhibited at the Tate Gallery, and, from the 1980s, at the Royal Academy, London. An obituary described his work as 'a whole new school of art developing in parallel with the known world, a new country on a new morning' (Hamilton 1997).

Untitled was installed in 1967 in a square boxed concrete ramp leading, via a bridge, to the J B Morrell Library. This position allows the viewer to move around the sculpture from below, looking up, whilst ascending the ramp. Reviewing an exhibition in 1964, the critic Eric Newton criticised his work for its 'frontality', stating that although inventive, he had never asked the spectator to walk round his sculptures; there being one point of view from which they could most easily be read. This piece seems a deliberate riposte to such an allegation, commissioned specifically for the turn of the ramp, so visitors have to walk all the way around it. Wright himself explained that: 'the idea started from seeing a big splitting rock with a round hole tunnelled through it on a Devon beach. I combined this with the form of an apple core left by birds who had pecked all the fruit away' (Hamilton 1994, 106). Wright was awarded an Honorary Degree by the university in 1977. His sculptures, including Untitled and Dryad, inspired John Paynter, Professor of Music at York, to produce a piece for chamber orchestra and viola; 'Three Sculptures of Austin Wright'.

## Details

Public sculpture, 'Untitled', 1967 by Austin Wright in cast and welded aluminium. It is set within, and includes, a boxed concrete ramp designed as part of the main pedestrian walkway around the University of York by the architects Robert Matthew, Johnson-Marshall and Partners (RMJM).

DESCRIPTION: the sculpture is 2.5m high and 1.7m wide. It is formed of seven thin, vertically-placed, angular segments positioned in a circle. Each one is cut at an angle at the bottom and top of the outer edge, and in a semi-circle on the inside edge so that placed together there is a spherical space or 'hole' at the centre. Though abstract, the sculpture has something of the appearance of a fruit, cut into pieces and missing its core. The surface of the aluminium is rough at the outer edges but smooth towards the middle. The sculpture is set into a concrete base around which are radiating circles of squared, quarry-faced stone. This in turn is surrounded by a covered pedestrian walkway within an in-situ cast concrete boxed ramp. The walkway is paved in concrete slabs with a steel handrail attached to the wall. Externally it is cantilevered out from the centre and finished in vertically board-marked concrete with four recessed horizontal bands. The ramp is approached via an entrance from the south and leads to a concrete bridge at the east, providing access to the J B Morrell Library. An additional entrance has been cut into the top of the ramp at the south, approached by a steel staircase.

## Sources

### Books and journals

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### Other

Newton, E, 'Sculpture by Austin Wright in London', *The Guardian*, 8 May 1964

## Legal

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

The listed building is shown coloured blue on the attached map. Pursuant to s1 (5A) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 ('the Act') structures attached to or within the curtilage of the listed building but not coloured blue on the map, are not to be treated as part of the listed building for the purposes of the Act. However, any works to these structures which have the potential to affect the character of the listed building as a building of special architectural or historic interest may still require Listed Building Consent (LBC) and this is a matter for the Local Planning Authority (LPA) to determine.



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# Central Hall, University of York

Listed on the National Heritage List for England.

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## Overview

Heritage Category: **Listed Building**

Grade: **II**

List Entry Number: **1456551**

Date first listed: **22-Aug-2018**

Statutory Address: **Campus West, University Of York, Heslington, York, YO10 5DD**



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# Covered walkway linking the former Langwith College to Central Hall and Vanbrugh College, University of York

Listed on the National Heritage List for England.

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## Official list entry

Heritage Category: **Listed Building**

Grade: **II**

List Entry Number: **1456641**

Date first listed: **22-Aug-2018**

Statutory Address 1: **Campus West, University Of York, Heslington, York, YO10 5DD**

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For these purposes, to be included within the curtilage of the building, the object or structure must have formed part of the land since before 1st July 1948.

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## Location

Statutory Address: **Campus West, University Of York, Heslington, York, YO10 5DD**

**The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.**

District: **York (Unitary Authority)**

Parish: **Heslington**

National Grid Reference: **SE6232750552**

## Summary

Covered walkway, 1966-1968, by Robert Matthew, Johnson-Marshall and Partners (RMJM).

## Reasons for Designation

The covered walkway linking the former Langwith College to Central Hall and Vanbrugh College is listed at Grade II for the following principal reasons:

Historic interest:

- \* it forms part of a wave of seven new universities that improved access to higher education and marked the high point of publicly-funded architecture in post-war Britain;
- \* it is a physical manifestation of the University of York Development Plan, which was heralded as the beginning of contemporary university planning in Britain.

Architectural interest:

- \* it is both functional in sheltering students and visitors from the elements, and carrying services between buildings, and aesthetic as an elegant pergola-like structure with a stepped profile;
- \* it typifies RMJM's holistic approach to the campus design, where even the smaller details and features were carefully considered;
- \* it retains its original form and character, and later cladding applied to the underside of the canopy does not diminish its special interest.

Group value:

- \* it has particularly strong group value with the Grade-II listed buildings of Central Hall and the former Langwith College to which it is physically connected, and continues the integral walkway within the latter building westwards;
- \* it has additional group value with other listed features on the campus, including Heslington Hall (Grade II\*), the numerous Grade II structures in the hall's formal gardens, Derwent College (Grade II), Grade II listed sculptures, and the Grade II registered designed landscape.

## History

After several previous attempts at establishing a university in York had failed, in 1953 York Civic Trust and the Rowntree Trust launched the Institute of Archives and the Institute of Advanced Architectural Studies (IAAS), which became key components of the York Academic Trust founded in 1958 in King's Manor in the city centre. The administrator appointed to run both courses was John West-Taylor, who saw them as a stepping stone to the founding of a new university.

In April 1959 the University Grants Committee (UGC) set up a Sub-Committee on New Universities and invited applications from cities or groups of authorities wanting to promote new universities. York's application was approved in April 1960, along with that of Norwich, with further approvals in the following year. The new universities differed from older institutions in that they were full universities supported by the UGC and setting their own degrees from the outset. All appointed well-respected architects to prepare detailed masterplans and to design the most important buildings, giving each a sense of unity and a distinctive identity.

In York the C16 Heslington Hall about 1.5 miles south-east of the city centre, which had been secured in 1958 by local benefactor John Bowes Morrell, was chosen as the site for the university and Robert Matthew, Johnson-Marshall and Partners (RMJM) were appointed in 1961/1962 as masterplanners with Stirrat Johnson-Marshall and Andrew Derbyshire as partners in charge, working alongside the vice chancellor, West-Taylor and incoming professors to produce a detailed development plan. The hall was adapted as the administrative centre of the university in the first phase of building work in 1963-1965. More grounds were then acquired to the west and it was agreed on the need for a lake as a balancing reservoir to lower the dangerously high water table on the site. A younger RMJM partner, Maurice Lee, specialised in landscape design, which he produced here in conjunction with Herbert Francis (Frank) Clark, previously landscape architect to the Festival of Britain and a co-founder of the Garden History Society.

All the new universities experimented with new course structures, particularly in the growth area of social sciences, and this shaped the movement seen at Sussex, UEA and Essex towards pushing the teaching buildings together as megastructures. By contrast, York's course structure was relatively traditional and collegiate, but enabled daytime teaching facilities and residential accommodation to be combined together so that they could share catering, common rooms and bars, encouraging a 24/7 atmosphere and maximising their usage and the available UGC grant. Buildings were to be of no more than four storeys so that the landscape remained dominant and the overall sense of place palpable.

The masterplan included groups of loose-knit college ranges, with the science laboratories behind them and landmark buildings, such as the library and Central Hall set within a careful pattern of circulation. The university was built in phases that progressed westwards from Heslington Hall, with development becoming more piecemeal as funding became more restricted.

A shortage of building labour, expensive materials, and waterlogged ground required a lightweight construction solution in order to avoid expensive piling. In 1946-1947 Johnson-Marshall had devised a prefabricated system using steel frames and concrete panels used by Hertfordshire County Council for building schools, a critically acclaimed programme from which six surviving examples are listed. Its ideals informed the CLASP (Consortium of Local Authorities Special Programme) system developed by Nottinghamshire County Council in 1954-1956. CLASP was designed as a lightweight and flexible structure that could 'ride' the mining of coal seams below them; the first CLASP building, Intake Farm School, Mansfield (Grade II) of 1955-1957 was called the 'rock and roll school'. When York was designed CLASP was at the peak of its success and it was used for fire stations, health centres, libraries and offices. It is used in the design of many of the university's buildings at York.

RMJM was the only architectural practice to design four universities: York, Bath, Stirling, and the University of Ulster at Coleraine, and it specialised in public sector work throughout the 1960s. It began to work outside Britain in the late 1960s and today is a massive international practice with offices in the Middle East, Asia, Africa and the Americas, as well as Europe.

The covered walkway linking the former Langwith College to Central Hall and Vanbrugh College was constructed between 1966 and 1968 to designs by RMJM and was designed to provide a degree of shelter for students and tutors passing between buildings, as well as carrying services in the overhead canopies. A number of covered walkways

were constructed on the campus. RMJM also produced covered walkways for the Commonwealth Institute, Kensington, Greater London built in 1960-1962, which have largely been demolished.

## Details

Covered walkway, 1966-1968, by Robert Matthew, Johnson-Marshall and Partners (RMJM).

**MATERIALS:** steel and timber.

**PLAN:** the walkway heads south-west and then north-west from the former Langwith College to connect to Vanbrugh College and is approximately 181m long with a 12m long section branching off southwards to Central Hall.

**DESCRIPTION:** the covered walkway is a pergola-like structure with a flat timber canopied roof incorporating a central aluminium duct carrying services between the buildings that is supported by slender steel columns. The roof is covered in asphalt. The underside of the canopy and services are now hidden from view by later cladding with integral spotlights. Sections of the walkway's roof are stepped, including the entire section branching off to Central Hall.

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### Books and journals

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### Other

University of York Development Plan 1962-1972

## Legal

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

The listed building(s) is/are shown coloured blue on the attached map. Pursuant to s.1 (5A) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 ('the Act'), structures attached to or within the curtilage of the listed building (save those coloured blue on the map) are not to be treated as part of the listed building for the purposes of the Act.



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# Derwent College, University of York

Listed on the National Heritage List for England.

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## Official list entry

Heritage Category: **Listed Building**

Grade: **II**

List Entry Number: **1457040**

Date first listed: **22-Aug-2018**

Statutory Address 1: **University Of York, Heslington, York, YO10 5DD**

**This List entry helps identify the building designated at this address for its special architectural or historic interest.**

Unless the List entry states otherwise, it includes both the structure itself and any object or structure fixed to it (whether inside or outside) as well as any object or structure within the curtilage of the building.

For these purposes, to be included within the curtilage of the building, the object or structure must have formed part of the land since before 1st July 1948.

[Understanding list entries](https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/understanding-list-entries/) (<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/understanding-list-entries/>)

[Corrections and minor amendments](https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/minor-amendments/) (<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/minor-amendments/>)

## Location

Statutory Address: **University Of York, Heslington, York, YO10 5DD**

**The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.**

District: **York (Unitary Authority)**

Parish: **Heslington**

National Grid Reference: **SE6258650433**

## Summary

University college. Built in 1963-1965 to the design of the architects Robert Matthew, Johnson-Marshall and Partners (RMJM), with Stiratt Johnson-Marshall and Andrew Derbyshire as the partners in charge, in association with the CLASP Development Team. The cast relief artist was Fred Millett. The structural engineers were Scott and Wilson, Kirkpatrick and Partners, and the contractor was F Shepherd and Son.

## Reasons for Designation

Derwent College, built at the University of York in 1963-1965 to the design of the architects Robert Matthew and Johnson-Marshall and Partners (RMJM), is listed at Grade II for the following principal reasons:

Historic interest:

\* as one of a wave of new universities that improved access to higher education and marked the highpoint of publicly-funded architecture in post-war Britain; \* as a physical manifestation of the University of York Development Plan, which was heralded as the beginning of contemporary university planning in Britain.

Architectural interest:

\* the University of York is arguably the greatest work of the influential architects Sir Stiratt Johnson-Marshall and Sir Andrew Derbyshire of RMJM, the only practice to design four universities in Britain; \* for the innovative combination of teaching and social facilities as well as residential accommodation in a single college, enabling it to instantly function as a university and allow for expansion by adding further colleges on the same principles; \* Derwent and Langwith Colleges were the first university buildings to be erected using the CLASP prefabricated system, a model for a rapidly-built, economical and standardised form of welfare state architecture, which had never been used on this scale before; \* the relationship of massing and height of the college to its neighbour in Langwith College, Heslington Hall, and the landscape, as well as their layout, are exceptionally well-thought-out; \* for the six sculptural relief panels by the artist Fred Millett, which add flourish to the main pedestrian walkway.

Group value:

\* with the Grade II\*-listed Heslington Hall, as well as the former Langwith College, the covered walkway to the west of that college, Central Hall, two sculptures by Austin Wright ('Dryad' and 'Untitled'), and the designed landscape, which are all listed at Grade II.

## History

After several previous attempts at establishing a university in York had failed, in 1953 York Civic Trust and the Rowntree Trust launched the Institute of Archives and the Institute of Advanced Architectural Studies (IAAS), which became key components of the York Academic Trust founded in 1958 in King's Manor in the city centre. The administrator appointed to run both courses was John West-Taylor, who saw them as a stepping stone to the founding of a new university.

In April 1959 the University Grants Committee (UGC) set up a Sub-Committee on New Universities and invited applications from cities or groups of authorities wanting to promote new universities. York's application was approved in April 1960, along with that of Norwich, with further approvals in the following year. The seven new

universities in England (Sussex, York, East Anglia, Essex, Kent, Warwick and Lancaster) differed from older institutions in that they were full universities setting their own degrees and supported by the UGC from the outset. All appointed well-respected architects to prepare detailed masterplans and to design the most important buildings, giving each a sense of unity and a distinctive identity.

In York the C16 Heslington Hall about 1.5 miles south-east of the city centre, which had been secured in 1958 by local benefactor John Bowes Morrell, was chosen as the site for the university. Robert Matthew, Johnson-Marshall and Partners (RMJM) were appointed in 1961-1962 as masterplanners with Stirrat Johnson-Marshall and Andrew Derbyshire as partners in charge, working alongside the Vice-Chancellor Lord (Eric) James of Rusholme, West-Taylor and incoming professors to produce a detailed development plan. The hall was adapted as the administrative centre of the university in the first phase of building work in 1963-1965. More grounds were then acquired to the west and it was agreed on the need for a lake as a balancing reservoir to lower the dangerously high water table on the site. A younger RMJM partner, Maurice Lee, specialised in landscape design, which he produced here in conjunction with Herbert Francis (Frank) Clark, previously landscape architect to the Festival of Britain and a co-founder of the Garden History Society. All the new universities experimented with new course structures, particularly in the growth area of social sciences, and this shaped the movement seen at Sussex, UEA and Essex towards pushing the teaching buildings together as megastructures. By contrast, York's course structure was relatively traditional and collegiate, but enabled daytime teaching facilities and residential accommodation to be combined together so that they could share catering, common rooms and bars, encouraging a 24/7 atmosphere and maximising their usage and the available UGC grant. Buildings were to be of no more than four storeys so that the landscape remained dominant and the overall sense of place palpable.

The masterplan included groups of loose-knit college ranges, with the science laboratories behind them and landmark buildings, such as the library and Central Hall, set within a careful pattern of circulation. The university was built in phases that progressed westwards from Heslington Hall, with development becoming more piecemeal as funding became more restricted.

A shortage of building labour, expensive materials, and waterlogged ground required a lightweight construction solution in order to avoid expensive piling. In 1946-1947 Johnson-Marshall had devised a prefabricated system using steel frames and concrete panels used by Hertfordshire County Council for building schools, a critically acclaimed programme from which six surviving examples are listed. Its ideals informed the CLASP (Consortium of Local Authorities Special Programme) system developed by Nottinghamshire County Council in 1954-1956. CLASP was designed as a lightweight and flexible structure that could 'ride' the mining of coal seams below them; the first CLASP building, Intake Farm School, Mansfield (Grade II) of 1955-1957 was called the 'rock and roll school'. When York was designed CLASP was at the peak of its success and it was used for fire stations, health centres, libraries and offices. It is used in the design of many of the university's buildings at York.

RMJM was the only architectural practice to design four universities: York, Bath, Stirling, and the University of Ulster at Coleraine, and it specialised in public sector work throughout the 1960s. It began to work outside Britain in the late 1960s and today is a massive international practice with offices in the Middle East, Asia, Africa and the Americas, as well as Europe.

Derwent College was built in December 1963 to July 1965 as part of the first phase of new buildings of the University of York Development Plan, which also included Langwith College and the chemistry department. The exceptionally-detailed development plan was heralded as the beginning of contemporary university planning in Britain (Dober 1966, 48). At its simplest, the aim was to provide for the social and psychological well-being of the students by generating a sense of community. This was embodied at Derwent by combining teaching and social facilities as well as residential accommodation in a single college for 400 people, including 300 undergraduates, of whom about 200 were provided with study bedrooms. The plan enabled the college to instantly function as a university, whilst making it easy to expand year on year by adding further colleges on the same principles. Integral to it was the use of the CLASP system. In the early 1960s it seemed to fulfil the ideal of an economical, flexible system of building that was as efficient as building a car or airplane; the modernists' ideal since Le Corbusier first wrote of it in *Vers Une Architecture* in 1923. More widely, it was deemed as the means of producing a good quality, standardised welfare state architecture, which could be rapidly constructed and rolled out to serve all those that needed it. CLASP went through



several versions, with Marks 1 and 2 being the prototypes. A lighter frame was introduced in 1961 but was then quickly modified with better windows as Mark 3B, adopted at Derwent and Langwith Colleges. The university architects worked in association with the CLASP Development Team co-ordinated by the architect David Parkes during the design and building work. The system ensured the buildings were built both to cost and time; a major problem at other new universities. A distinctive oriel window and pyramidal roof lights were developed specifically for the university, and a grey Trent River Gravel exposed aggregate finish was chosen. Additional flourishes were given by the use of sculptural reliefs designed by the artist Fred Millett. The overall result was deemed a success in the architectural press, though limited insulation from sound caused some subsequent issues in the light structures.

Derwent College continues in use in 2018, although it has been combined with the former Langwith College into a single college. Several of the study bedrooms are now in use as offices, and the café bar, dining hall and several of the teaching rooms, including a lecture theatre, have been refurbished within the last few years.

## Details

University college. Built in 1963-1965 to the design of the architects Robert Matthew, Johnson-Marshall and Partners (RMJM), with Stiratt Johnson-Marshall and Andrew Derbyshire as the partners in charge, in association with the CLASP Development Team. The cast relief artist was Fred Millett. The structural engineers were Scott and Wilson, Kirkpatrick and Partners, and the contractor was F Shepherd and Son.

**MATERIALS:** the construction is a variant of the CLASP Mark 3B system developed by Nottinghamshire County Council for schools and other local authority buildings. It comprises a cold-rolled steel frame clad in pre-cast concrete panels with a Trent River Gravel exposed aggregate finish, softwood-framed windows with aluminium opening lights including projecting oriels, and flat felt-covered roofs.

**PLAN:** the college is orientated north-west to south-east and is situated immediately to the north-west of Heslington Hall (dating from 1565), the original administrative centre of the university. It overlooks an artificial lake to the west and is set around an open rectangular courtyard at the north and an open rectangular pool at the south. The communal and teaching accommodation is concentrated in a two-storey central nucleus around which are arranged three and four storey residential wings. A pedestrian walkway runs through the complex and links it via covered ways to the adjoining buildings on the campus. A double-height foyer and dining hall form the centre of the broadly 'L'-shaped service and teaching core, from which project the three 'L'-shaped wings to the north-west, south-east and, linked only by a walkway across the pool, a wing to the south. To the east of the central foyer and hall is a café bar, kitchen and a lecture theatre, while to the west towards the lake projects a block containing common rooms, teaching rooms and offices. The residential wings contain study bedrooms and communal facilities grouped off staircases reached from the main pedestrian route.

**EXTERIOR:** an asymmetrical composition; at the centre is the two-storey broadly 'L'-shaped service and teaching core, from which project the 'L'-shaped residential blocks of three and four storeys. The treatment of the elevations is similar throughout. The exterior walls are formed of precast concrete panels with a Trent River Gravel exposed aggregate finish attached to steel box stanchions and beams supporting wooden floors internally. A slight variation in texture and projection of the concrete panels differentiates the horizontal floor bands from the vertically set room height panels. There are dry joints between the panels, which have angled drainage channels at their edges, and are set upon a moulded precast concrete plinth. The fenestration to the residential blocks includes a mixture of narrow, half-width windows, and wider, full-width windows, occupying the place of a full precast panel, with a central sliding aluminium light between top and bottom transoms. These are also combined into larger, one-and-a-half width windows with an off centre mullion, or double-width windows; most divided by transoms to conform to the tripartite glazing pattern. Colour is provided by white and blue vitreous enamel panels occupying the positions of the lower subsidiary lights in several of these windows. Further variety is provided by projecting full-width oriel windows, some to the south towards Heslington Hall renewed. All the windows of the south-east residential wing have been replaced with black PVC frames and panels but these correspond to the original glazing pattern. There are flush timber doors and softwood glazed doors providing entry into the blocks at ground level. The main entrances along the walkway have had steel-framed glazed automatic doors fitted in around 1990 and renewed in about 2014, which are not of

special interest.

The elevations towards the lake and open pool are, for the most-part, raised over ground-floor pilotis whilst the other elevations are flush to the ground floor. The central service and teaching core, including the dining hall, common rooms and former first-floor library, are treated with wider expanses of glazing, comprising combinations of multiple lights but replicating the tripartite pattern. Attached to the rear of the kitchen and servery is a single-storey extension, which runs the length of the kitchen but is a single bay wide, with an entrance raised on pilotis to provide service access for deliveries. At ground floor level, in close proximity to the main walkway running through the college, are six sculptural relief panels in cast concrete by Fred Millett. These comprise abstract shapes forming a variety of textures and patterns, which are enlivened by artificial light at night. They have the dual purpose of hiding the steel wind braces that support the structural frame. Outside the dining hall is a stone plaque within an incised inscription that commemorates the opening of the college by HRH Queen Elizabeth II on 22 October 1965. The blocks have flat felt-covered roofs with an extruded aluminium eaves capping. Maintenance and emergency access is provided by square timber-boarded roof porches. Originally there were 25 sharply-pointed pyramidal rooflights, comprising a combination of faceted solid panels and glazing, over the foyer and dining hall but these have been removed or replaced with shallow-pitched polycarbonate lights. Protective steel rails have been added around the perimeter of some of the roofs and are not of special interest.

The covered walkways linking the blocks are constructed of pilotis with precast concrete panels forming a fascia to the flat felt-covered roofs; these are built on the CLASP system. However, where they extend beyond the college to meet the neighbouring buildings the walkways are non-CLASP, comprising steel columns supporting I-beams and timber joists carrying a timber-boarded roof with timber fascias and a felt roof covering. These were designed by the main architects in conjunction with the architect Dick Howard. They incorporate a central overhead services duct constructed of timber, which carries electrical wiring, television and telephone cables between the buildings. The covered walkway extending to the south-east to Heslington Hall is included in the listing. The main pedestrian route is paved in concrete slabs, which continue through the blocks underneath the recently-added tiled carpets. Where it skirts the outside of the open pool, the walkway forms a concrete bridge above a weir constructed of quarry-faced squared stone. Water runs down from the shallow rectangular pool with regularly placed fountains at the east to the artificial lake at the west. In front of the junior common room is a terrace paved in cast-stone slabs and approached by steps to the west, which is included in the listing. There is further hard landscaping in the form of pebbled slopes flanking the walkway where it links to Heslington Hall, which is also included. The semi-enclosed north court is partly paved in cast-stone slabs and also features an original mushroom-shaped concrete light.

INTERIOR: the college has retained most of its original internal layout, room functions and floor plan. The north-west entrance leads along the pedestrian walkway past a residential block and the north courtyard, which is enclosed on three sides, to the double-height central foyer, café bar and dining hall. Above the entrance to the foyer is a decorative ceramic sculptural relief by the artist John Langton and ceramicist David Lloyd-Jones. The café bar and dining hall have been refurbished and contain modern fixtures and fittings from the 2010s, which are not of special interest. The dining hall retains an original parquet floor and has a false ceiling, which has been inserted beneath which the original still survives. On the ground floor, immediately to the east of the dining hall is a servery and kitchen. Next to the kitchen is a lecture room, which was refurbished in around 2016. On the first floor, above the kitchen and lecture room, is a suite of academic offices. To the west of the central foyer are: a lecture theatre, common rooms and offices on the ground floor, with a classroom, a seminar room, and further offices occupying the space of the former library on the first floor; these rooms largely contain modern fittings, which are not of special interest. The pedestrian walkway continues south-east from the central foyer and leads outside and around the open pool, then past two residential blocks to continue towards Heslington Hall. The residential blocks (now referred to as Blocks 'A' to 'D') contain study bedrooms grouped off staircases on each floor, including one and two person bedrooms and flats. The original heater and washer units and wardrobes, the only built-in items, have largely been removed and the fixtures and fittings within these rooms are not of special interest. The groupings share communal kitchens, largely containing modern fittings, as well as laundry rooms, showers and bathrooms. A few study bedrooms have been converted to offices; these mostly on the ground floor of the north-west block (Block 'A').

Among the surviving original fixtures and fittings to the college are: linoleum floors, flush timber doors and glazed softwood doors, plasterboard or plastic-faced plywood partitions, softwood glazed screens and plasterboard or

timber suspended ceilings. The internal staircases have precast concrete stair treads and landing units fixed to steel stringers and landing beams, raking steel balustrades and timber handrails. Some retain the original rubber treads to the stairs and landings.

Pursuant to s1 (5A) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 ('the Act') it is declared that the following are not of special architectural or historic interest: the steel roof rails, lamp posts, air conditioning units, the automatic doors, the steel handrails, and the modern timber decking to the north courtyard of Derwent College. Internally, the fixtures and fittings within the study bedrooms and flats, communal kitchens, laundry rooms, showers and bathrooms, lecture room and offices, as well as those within the kitchen and servery are not of special interest. The café bar and dining hall were refurbished in the 2010s and these later fixtures and fittings, in addition to the modern reception desks and disabled lift, are also not of special interest.

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## Legal

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



## Map

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# **APPENDIX 4.0**

**EXTRACTS FROM YORK UNIVERSITY  
DEVELOPMENT PLAN 1962**

Title page

University of York  
**Development Plan**  
1962-1972

## SECTION 3

### Architectural Implications of the New University

3.1. In the course of discussions on the academic brief for York, certain principles have emerged which appear to define the nature of a modern university in terms which have significant architectural implications. It seems worth while to set these out at this stage not so much as rules to be obeyed, but as a basis for further discussion, and as standards against which the Development Plan and its performance in the course of time may be assessed.

#### The First Proposition

3.2. This is that the University is essentially a society of individuals living and working together for the advancement of learning and the dissemination of knowledge at the highest possible level of intellectual achievement and spiritual aspiration. The society must embrace those who teach as much as those who learn and those who work to extend the limits of knowledge, and it must encourage contact between all the sectors of its population.

3.3. What follows from this is that the University must be housed within a limited compass and that there should be provision for a clear hierarchy of groups from the individual to the whole so that it can have sufficient cohesion to operate as a community. There should be no rigid demarcation between the places where the members of the University work and the places where they live and have their homes, and there must be provision for residence within the University complex for the maximum possible number of teachers, students and staff of all kinds. Facilities must be provided for natural and unforced association and the easy formation of groups through a wide variety of work and leisure activities.

#### The Second Proposition

3.4. This is that the University must be a meeting place of many different aptitudes, skills and specialisations and that each specialisation must be enriched by the greatest possible contact with the others.

3.5. The combination of central timetabling and the dispersal of teaching accommodation among the colleges goes some way towards satisfying this requirement, but the exclusion of teaching space in certain mainly scientific subjects from this arrangement is potentially contradictory, even though avoidance of the customary faculty divisions means that it is broken down into fairly small units. Clearly maximum dispersal of these is also indicated with the avoidance of excessive concentrations of any particular function however convenient financially and administratively. Overriding all is the need for compactness and ease of communications between all the constituent parts. Meeting, both accidental and deliberate, must be provided for by the greatest possible number of intersections en route (without producing congestion) and it should ideally be impossible to go from one unit of accommodation to a similar one without coming into contact with at least one of completely different academic or social character on the way.

#### The Third Proposition

3.6. This is that provision for easy growth and flexibility of use is vital. The universities in this country appear

to be on the threshold of a period of unprecedented expansion which will demand a far greater rate of growth to much bigger numbers than has up to now been thought possible. These factors alone will bring revolutionary changes in teaching method, university administration and management. Another influence operating in the same direction is the accelerating rate of discovery in many fields of knowledge, particularly in the physical, biological and social sciences which are tending to coalesce and overlap as the conventional boundaries and distinctions between them have less meaning. In research particularly, it is axiomatic that the future must depend largely on the discoveries of the present and is, therefore, by definition, unpredictable. It seems more than likely that this state of affairs may well extend into the field of undergraduate work as the divisions between the sciences—and in time those between science and the arts and between pure science and technology—shift and change position, and even collapse.

3.7. The obvious conclusion here is that the Development Plan as a whole and the building units within it must be responsive to change and adaptable to new demands as soon as they become apparent. The effect of this on our attitude to the Plan has been described in paragraphs 1.2 and 1.3.

3.8. The implications for the design of the building units will be discussed in more detail later. The important thing is to try and define for each type of building the limits within which flexibility is required. Flexibility tends to be expensive and it is obviously wrong to spend money on a facility which may never be needed. Lack of it, however, may seriously inhibit the development of the University at a critical time. What is certain is that the design and environment of many of its buildings must permit, and even positively encourage, growth and change.

#### The Fourth Proposition

3.9. This is that the University community should be provided with particular qualities of environment if the experience of belonging to it—if only for three years—is to have for its members the significance and value that it should. As far as the undergraduates are concerned this period is a unique one in their lives—for many it will be the only opportunity they will ever have to enjoy their work without having to worry about the immediate and day-to-day necessities of earning a living. It is part of the architects' task to try and give the place where this happens the kind of order and beauty which will enhance and not detract from, or contradict, the uniqueness of the intellectual and emotional experience even though it is such a transient one, and even though the University society is in a constant state of flux as one year's intake follows another.

3.10. In order to meet this tremendous challenge it is necessary to try to discover the characteristic forms and relationships of the buildings in their setting which correspond to the academic and social ideals of the University on one hand, and to the social and geographic context of the York district on the other. If such a harmony is achieved, the University may

become in a relatively short time as memorable as some of the older and more influential university establishments of the world have become over the years of slower growth. It is this quality of “memorableness” which seems to express, as well as any other, the particular identity of place and experience which we believe must be sought.

3.11. At York the site of the University is potentially near enough (if not at present accessible enough) to the city for each to be able to enrich the life of the other without the identity of either being compromised, and not so far away as to make the life of the University excessively isolated. But this desirable relationship is unlikely to be achieved unless the physical connections between the two are improved in ways such as those which are suggested later in the Report.

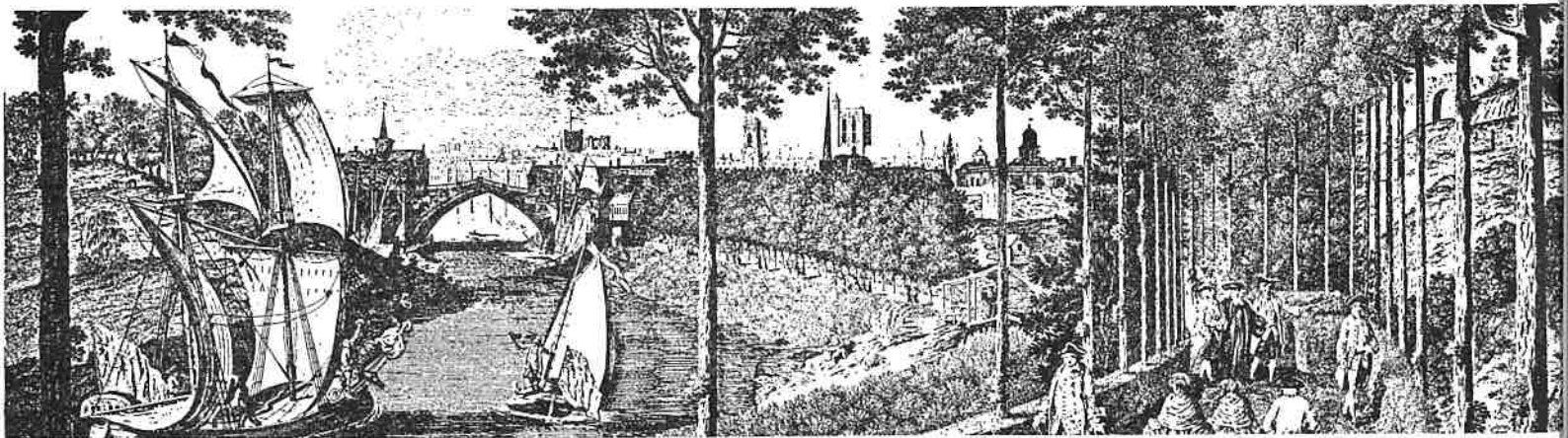


Figure 3.4 “A memorable place”—the image of York as it was and as it may become again—a city of clear contrasts between town and country where each enhances the uniqueness of the other. The University and the City should be in a similar relationship.



## SECTION 13

### Planning Principles

13.1. The application of the theoretical relationships of building units, described in Section 12, to the site itself has been governed by a number of planning decisions relating to the overall development.

13.2. The first of these is the decision to begin development at the Heslington end of the site and then proceed in a north-westerly direction towards the city. This has three main advantages. It locates the University in its early days in a mature landscape and as part of an existing community—both advantageous to a young and growing organisation. It provides accommodation quickly through the conversion of Heslington Hall to allow an early starting date for the University. Finally, as *Fig. 13.1* shows, it also permits subsequent growth to take the form of concentric rings, one for each main phase, naturally increasing in area as the rate of expansion increases and providing a compact area of completed development at the end of each phase.

13.3. The second decision in principle is for the University to grow outwards from Heslington Hall by the addition of small units on a widening front so that distances between adjacent units are short and growth is flexible and easy. This also means that different functions are closely intermixed and this is desirable for academic and social reasons. The alternative would be to segregate uses in large zones. This would mean, however, that communications between the different zones would be extended in the early days, serious interference would be caused to areas in occupation by subsequent building operations, and as the planned development reached completion flexibility would disappear and subsequent growth of certain functions in the centre would become increasingly difficult.

13.4. Thirdly is the decision to provide the main vehicular access by means of a spine service road. This provides shorter routes from one part of the site to another than its alternative, a ring road, and is also less inhibiting to future growth. Other things being equal, it is also less expensive in land and construction. The two solutions might be said to be analogous to vertebrate and crustacean forms of growth in the world of biology—and to carry with them equivalent implications for the evolution of different varieties as changing circumstances demand. Subsidiary access roads and points of interchange such as loading bays and vehicle parks can be added with great freedom to a system based on a spine road, but not so easily to a ring road system whose closed geometry is less amenable to change.

13.5. Following from the spine service road is the need, for reasons of economy, to develop as far as possible equally on both sides of it, and incidentally to use the high steep parts of the site as much as the low flat parts so as to exploit to the full the inherent potentialities of the site to provide an environment of contrasts, variety and richness. Another aspect of this principle is the

need to bring the lake as far as possible into the heart of the site so that all its parts can benefit from it. This involves a certain amount of excavation into the hillside which is used incidentally to provide an open air amphitheatre. The exigencies of the circle of diameter equal to ten minutes' walk—the product of central time-tabling and random use of teaching space which has already been mentioned in Section 9—further demand the spread of accommodation across the north-south axis of the site if the major part of it is to be contained within such limits. All this suggests that there is much to be gained from emphasis of the heights and lowlands of the site in order to make the most of its potential as a social landscape. It is hoped that the disposition of building units, tree planting, communications network and other elements of this plan will be such as to make this possible.

13.6. The fifth decision in principle is to lay particular stress on the dynamics of the plan—to provide for freedom of movement on different time scales by separating incompatible forms of movement and defining suitable limits of flexibility of use and building form. This involves the following considerations—

- (i) The need to provide for free and safe pedestrian movement across the spine road and over the whole site.
- (ii) The need to provide freely flowing routes for vehicles so far as these may be compatible with safety for pedestrians.
- (iii) The need to provide adequate flexibility of internal rearrangement and external addition and alteration for the building user.
- (iv) The need to see each stage of the Plan as no more than a point in time from which a number of different routes of development may be followed. In this connection it is important always to look at any of the Development Plan drawings as essentially incomplete even though certain possible forms of future growth may be more or less implicit at each stage.

13.7. Lastly we wish to stress the importance of identity—of room and undergraduate group in each college, and of each college according to its position on the site and relationship to other building units. This, of course, is a function of the basic attributes of landscape, topography and organisation discussed above, just as much as it is of the way the rooms and spaces of the building units are designed. The principles of the Plan attempt to lay down a framework on which the right relationships may be established, but they must be carried into the detailed design of the building units if the desired result is to be achieved. It is vital that this should happen, for without the facility for each person and group to identify its unique position in the whole, the result may never achieve the status of a community at all, but remain merely a mass of individuals.

## SECTION 19

### Landscape

19.1. The City of York, as described earlier in Section 4 (Fig. 4.1), is characterised by a form of development in which the main concentrations of building have occurred along radial routes outward from the centre, leaving green fingers of undeveloped land reaching from the green belt almost to the city wall. The University site will be treated as an extension of this system in view of its geographical position and its connection with Walmgate Stray and the adjacent allotments and other open space which already form a green wedge within the city boundary.

19.2. Although the density of building within the site is necessarily high in order to achieve compactness, the Plan proposes intensive tree planting and the creation of a varied and interesting landscape which should form a valuable addition to the city's public open space.

19.3. Fig. 19.1 shows the main elements of the landscape design proposed in the Development Plan. The main tree plantations are designed as shelter belts giving protection from the south-west and north-east with additional plantations as screens separating the main phases of site development and reinforcing the sheltering effect of the perimeter plantations. Plantations will also be used as screens enclosing the expansion areas of the science departments which, with their relatively high noise level and possibly continuous state of change and reconstruction, should be insulated but not isolated from the more settled areas of the University complex.

19.4. The shelter belts running at right angles to the contours across the lower part of the site up to the top of the ridge will help to express the fundamental shape and character of the site. The height of the ridge itself will also be emphasised by intensive planting.

19.5. The contrast between ridge and valley will be heightened by the lake on the lower part of the site. One of the many functions of a sheet of water is to give a visual key or point of reference to the landscape as a whole and thus to enhance even small changes of level. Details of the lake, which is really a balancing reservoir for the land drainage and surface water system, have been given earlier in Section 6, Paras. 6.8—6.12. Although it appears that the rate of change of water in the lake will be low, we do not anticipate that this in itself will cause its condition to become objectionable in any way. Water stored in a lake, even if not changed, improves in quality bacteriologically providing it is not subject to pollution. Biological deterioration could occur, but with care it should be possible to obtain a natural balance between plant growth and fish population. Any excessive growth of weeds can probably be controlled by the cultivation of algae, as is practised in some of the Royal Parks. Failing this, the weeds could be removed mechanically from time to time.

19.6. Three scales of trees will be used—

- (a) *Smaller ornamental trees* (to eaves height) for planting in close proximity to buildings.
- (b) *Medium size trees* (up to 50 feet high) for linking groups of buildings to the site and to each other.
- (c) *Large forest trees* for relating the University site to the surrounding landscape.

19.7. The smaller ornamental trees and specimen trees which will be used close to buildings, for example in and around courts, will be chosen so that their shape and structure are complementary to the materials and forms of the adjacent buildings. The shape and colour of the trees are predominant in the summer, and their structure in the winter. St. James's Park is an example of the way in which trees, both as specimens and in groups, can be used to complement buildings. They frame the vistas to the Horse Guards and Buckingham Palace, and slowly reveal the terraces of Carlton House and Queen Anne's Gate in the autumn and winter. Here they act as semi-transparent screens, half concealing and half revealing the architectural framework of the Park.

19.8. Trees will be selected to suit the soil and climatic conditions of the site. These do not present any great difficulties. Sycamore, beech, chestnut, poplar and elm all grow well in the area. Varieties of ash and elm are suitable for smaller scale planting, and beech, sycamore and wych-elm are the types of forest trees which will be used for larger scale planting. This will be carried out with a mixture of coniferous and deciduous trees, the conifers being used as a nurse crop to protect the young deciduous trees. The conifers will later be felled for use as timber.

19.9. Playing fields form an important element within the landscape as a whole. We have had considerable difficulty in calculating the area of playing fields which the University is likely to need from year to year. Allowing for the fact that at York the playing fields will be nearer to the University as a whole than in most other similar institutions, and also that the free afternoons on working days will undoubtedly encourage a far greater use of games facilities than is usual, we have come to the conclusion that total requirements for the final figure of 3,000 students in 1972 will be between 60 and 86 acres in all. Further details are given in Appendix C.

19.10. We have not found it possible to allow more than 35 acres of playing fields within the area of the existing site. A further area of 25 to 51 acres will, therefore, be needed in about 1967 when the 35 acres on the site will become overloaded. This point is taken up further in Section 26 where the long term land requirements of the University are discussed. We recommend that small games areas, such as tennis courts, should be interspersed among the building units and placed close to colleges. The larger areas must be integrated with the general landscape to avoid barren wastes of goalposts and mud. We recommend tree planting and hillocks between pitches to provide shade and elevation for spectators. This will make maintenance and pitch rotation a little more difficult but will pay handsome dividends in visual and functional terms.

19.11. We believe that if the University site at Heslington is developed in terms of landscape according to these recommendations it will become one of the most important units in the system of open spaces around York. We hope that the existence of an amenity area of this character with its favourable effect on rateable and land values in the vicinity will not be lost on the

## SECTION 14 The Development Plan

14.1. In Section 8 we described briefly our proposal for a rhythm of discontinuous development anticipating and keeping ahead of population growth, and illustrated this idea diagrammatically in *Figs. 8.1 and 8.2*. In this section we make this proposition explicit by describing in detail the building units to be completed in each phase.

14.2. We have so far described four main development phases, as follows—

- PHASE I** Opening of the University with 200 undergraduates, 10 postgraduates and 30 teachers in converted buildings existing on the site and in the city. Complete 1963.
- PHASE II** The first new buildings—two colleges with half the undergraduates living in, six associated non-science departments, the first block of practical teaching accommodation nominally accommodating three science departments and the central boiler house to serve (ultimately) the whole University. Complete 1965.
- PHASE III** The period of maximum growth—three colleges with half the undergraduates living in, nine non-science departments, and the second block of practical teaching accommodation. First rearrangement of science departments. Complete 1967.
- PHASE IV** The completion of the Plan—three colleges with two-thirds of the undergraduates living-in, six more non-science departments, the third block of practical teaching accommodation and the second rearrangement of science departments. This phase also includes the building of extra living accommodation to the first five colleges to bring them up to a proportion of two-thirds undergraduates in residence, the expansion taking place around the cores of existing and now redundant non-science departments. Complete 1969.

14.3. In addition to these the Central Buildings must be provided, and to produce a more even rate of capital expenditure we suggest that these should be built in a

parallel series of sub-phases alternating with the main ones one year out of step. At the same time closer examination of the population growth curves and teaching requirements suggests that the third block of practical teaching space for science departments should be advanced by a year to maintain a safe surplus of space provided over space required, and the building of extra living space to the first five colleges should be delayed a year to avoid under-use of other living accommodation. The main hall and library are also needed for use in 1966 when the student population is approaching 1,000. Buildings in these sub-phases (which we designate with the suffix A) anticipate by one year the main phases in their occupation of the site so that our proposition for discontinuous development is not invalidated. No residential building is concerned in these sub-phases apart from the final additions to the first five colleges, and here disturbance cannot be avoided in any case.

14.4. At the same time the proposals in Section 19 for the development and landscaping of the site must be phased in with the main building programme. This also applies to the housing programme proposed in Section 10 which, though conceived as a separate issue, will nevertheless draw on the same financial and manpower resources as the main programme but must not be allowed to act as a competitor to it.

14.5. The final statement of our programme, given in *Table 14.1* is, therefore, more elaborate in detail than the previous tabulation in paragraph 14.2 above. It also shows tentative outline schedules of accommodation for each building.

14.6. If the colleges are to be single sex establishments and of equal size (in terms of membership) the fact that they are not always completed in pairs means that an intake divided equally between men and women cannot always be accommodated in equal numbers in colleges and lodgings. Either there will be a consistently higher proportion of one sex in college during the growth period, or the proportion will fluctuate violently from year to year. Changes from the 50 : 50 intake sex ratio which has been assumed will increase the complexity of this problem. Mixed colleges would provide greater flexibility from the programming point of view but, of course, raise other problems.

Phase	Description of Building and Brief Schedule of Accommodation	To be Ready by
(a)	(b)	(c)
IIIA (cont.)	<b>Concert Hall.</b> Auditorium with 400 seats, stage area with rehearsal rooms suitable for music teaching.	Jul. 1968 17
	<b>Practical Teaching Accommodation 3 (Science Departments).</b> Similar to practical teaching accommodation 1 and 2 with 1 professor's suite and final rearrangement of science subjects between the three buildings.	Jul. 1968 18
IV (1969-70)	<b>Colleges VI, VII and VIII.</b> Similar to Colleges I-V but with living accommodation for 200 undergraduates, 30 postgraduates and 10 teachers, with 7 rooms for domestic staff and guests. College housing remains unchanged.	Jul. 1969 19
	<b>Six Departmental Headquarters (Non-Science).</b> Identical to previous 15 non-science departments.	Jul. 1969 20
IVA (1970-2)	<b>Additional Living Accommodation to Colleges I-V.</b> 5 Sets of living accommodation for 50 undergraduates, 8 postgraduates and 2 teachers to be built around a nucleus of a redundant department H.Q. each set to be attached to one of the first 5 colleges making them equal to Colleges VI-VIII.	Jul. 1970 21



Figure 15.1 *The Plan at the beginning of the academic year 1970-1—complete to the end of Phase IVA.*

## SECTION 15 The Development Plan Complete

15.1. Fig. 15.1 shows the Plan as it will be at the beginning of the academic year 1970-71, complete up to the end of Phase IVA. The key on the figure identifies the various building units. Points to note are—

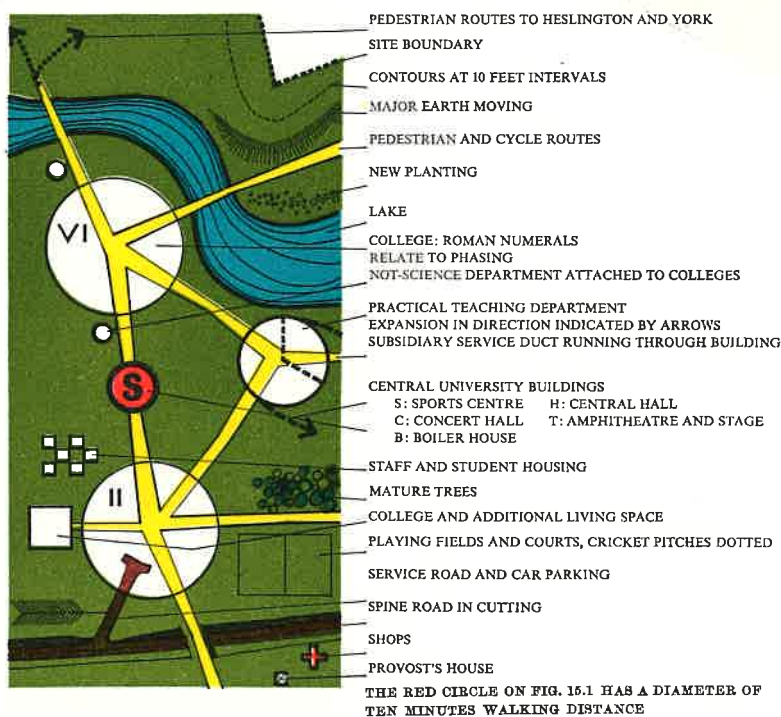
- The Sunk Spine Service road (Heslington Road realigned) giving vehicular access to all but four of the major building units.
- The system of footpaths linking all the building units together by direct routes and forming a virtually uninterrupted vehicle-free pedestrian system with connections to the city and the village. Cycle and trolley paths also follow some of these routes.
- Staff and postgraduate housing associated with each college.
- The smaller size of colleges I to V with their added units of residential accommodation shown separately (Phase IVA) compared with colleges VI, VII and VIII, which are built for two-thirds residence from the start.
- The circle, whose centre is the main hall and radius 5 minutes' walk, within which all the major building units lie.
- The library is built on a terrace projecting out from the hillside over a two-level covered car park and forming a bridge over the spine road. Adequate sound insulation will be provided by the heavy and enclosed nature of the library building itself.
- The theatre is provided with a large open air auditorium for use in summer for dramatic events and large assemblies.
- The main hall, representing one of the chief meeting places, is placed near the busiest inter-

section of pedestrian routes and is connected with Heslington Hall by a route which could, if required, become a processional way. Both these buildings are so placed as to provide a long term nucleus for University development on both sides of Heslington Lane (see Section 26).

15.2. The Plan allocates land as follows within the 180 acre site at present in the University's ownership—

BUILDINGS	acres
Colleges and non-science departments . . . . .	25
Science departments . . . . .	10
Central buildings . . . . .	12
Housing . . . . .	19
	<hr/> 66
<b>OPEN SPACE</b>	
Playing fields . . . . .	35
Lake . . . . .	15
Roads . . . . .	9
Car Parking . . . . .	11
Remainder — including footways, cycle paths, plantations and areas for building expansion . . . . .	44
	<hr/> 114
	<hr/> <hr/> 180

15.3. The academic population at this stage is 3,335 undergraduates, postgraduates and staff. Two-thirds of the undergraduates are in residence.



City Corporation, to whom the University will no doubt look for support in their endeavour to carry this work through to a conclusion.

19.12. The landscaping work which we have described will form an important part of the site development contract units which are set out in Sections 14 and 24. The first stage of site development should include, as far as landscaping is concerned, the main earthmoving to form the lake and to raise levels in the southern part of the site, the main shelter belt tree planting and the establishment of a tree nursery and maintenance headquarters for the site as a whole. The tree nursery, which should provide a continuous source of young stock for all the subsequent stages of the landscaping, might well be established in the south-east corner of the site. Soil, situation and aspect are all good in this position.

19.13. The landscaping for each main phase of building construction should be complete before the buildings start on the site, but the landscape design cannot be settled until the preliminary design of the buildings is agreed. The programme of work for the site development which is shown with the building programmes in Sections 14 and 24 and Fig. 25.1 attempts to reconcile both these requirements. The construction period for site development work has been programmed in every case for a period beginning in the spring, when the weather is suitable for earth moving, and coming to completion in the late autumn when the planting can be done. The landscaping done in advance of the building construction in this way should stop at a boundary far enough away from the building perimeter to provide access for the contractors without damage. Subsequent landscaping up to the building perimeter will be done as part of the building contract.

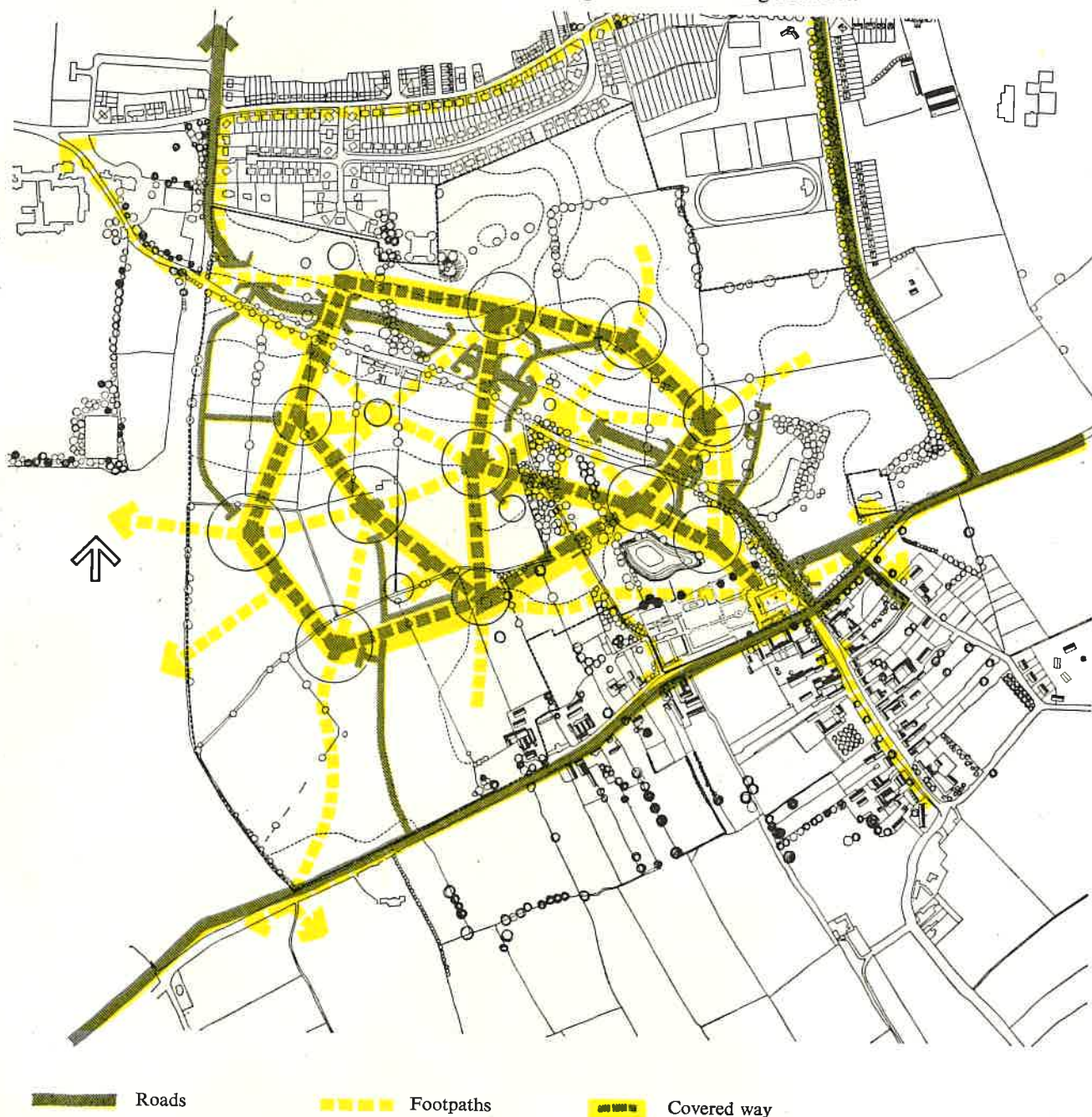


Figure 20.1 The Development Plan—Communications.

# APPENDIX 5.0

EXTRACT FROM CONCRETE  
QUARTERLY

- 1 Editorial
- 2 Water gardens, York University
- 6 An indoor garden, Coutts Bank, London
- 10 A small London garden, Barnes
- 12 A sculpture garden near Harlow
- 20 A Cotswold garden, Chipping Campden
- 23 A garden of fountains, Stuttgart
- 29 The gardens of Zurich
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*Editor:* GEORGE PERKIN, RIBA  
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## The Year of the Garden

Not everyone knows that this is supposed to be the Year of the Garden. Most people know it as the Year of the Child. Interestingly enough, it was the British Tourist Authority that declared it so, presumably aiming to get tourists out into our countryside to see British gardens. Perhaps they also thought that gardens and children were not unconnected: in fact a rose has been specially named to commemorate the Year of the Child.

So it is that this issue of *Concrete Quarterly* has been devoted to gardens. The subject is appropriate enough for concrete: the material lends itself particularly well and naturally to use in all sorts of gardens from small back yards (page 10) to large private gardens designed in the grand manner (page 12) and public parks (page 23). Of course, most people would like to use natural stone for paving their gardens, but when this is neither available nor financially possible, which is usually the case, then concrete offers a very acceptable second choice. And nowadays, advances in technology have seen great improvements not only in the quality of concrete paving and associated garden products, but also in the range of textures and colours available. Gnomes and multi-coloured slabs are by no means the main selling line today.

But apart from the practical aspects of concrete in the garden, there is also a principle of aesthetics to be observed—a principle often formulated in the pages of this journal. And that is that the material concrete, being normally grey and hard, is perfectly complemented and softened by the foil of foliage. The two go well together, whether it is in buildings or gardens. And we might note that the proposals for improving the grim and soulless South Bank terraces in London, recently published in the *Architectural Review*, show copious planting on parapets and walkways as a remedy.

Readers who are also gardeners might like to know that there are two booklets published by the Cement and Concrete Association which have proved very useful over the years. These are called *Concrete in garden making* and *Concrete round the house* and they give plenty of ideas and practical advice on the various uses of concrete in the garden. They are available free of charge if you send a post-card to the Publications Sales Unit, Cement and Concrete Association, Wexham Springs, Slough SL3 6PL.

## Ponti

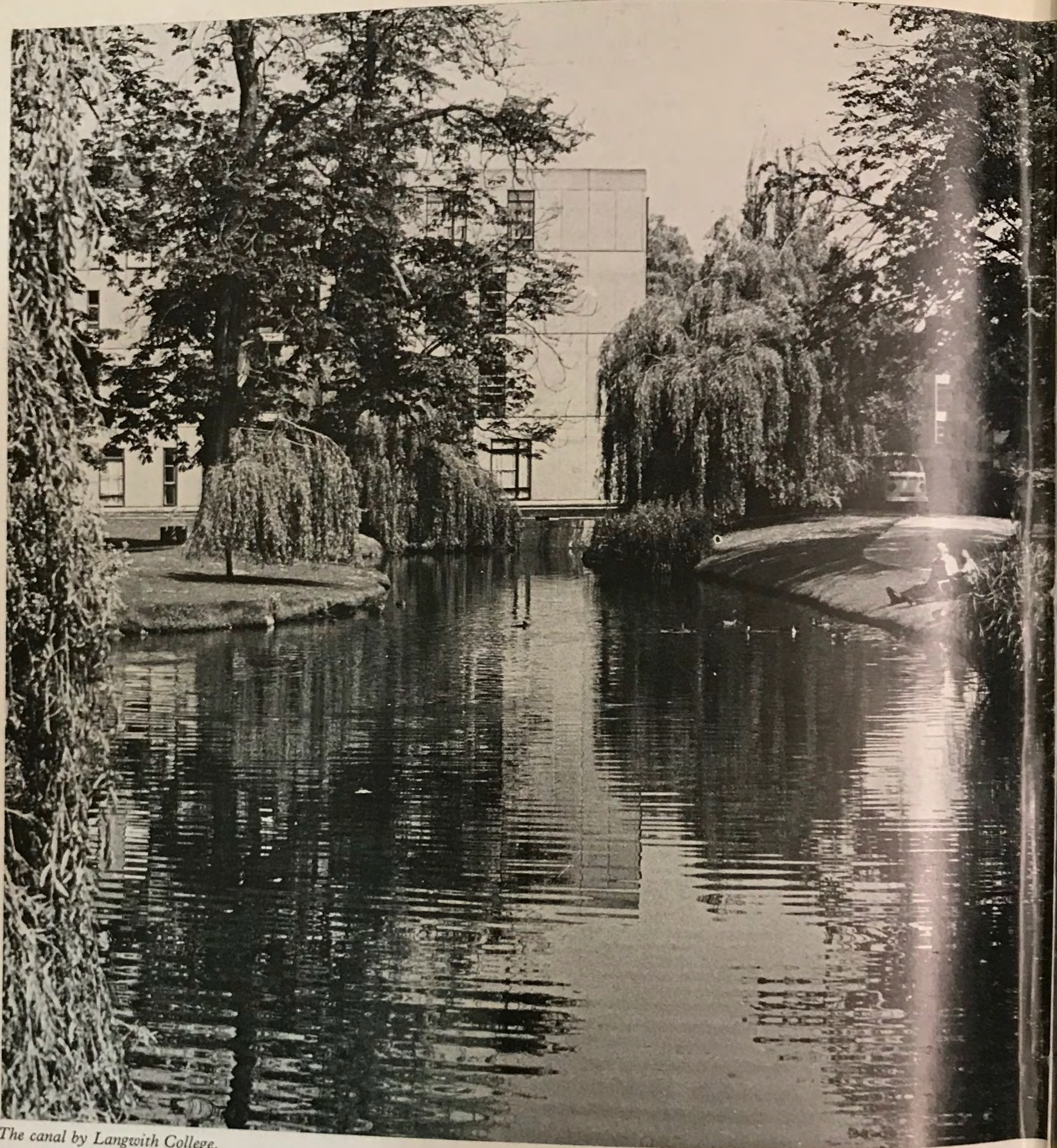
Gio Ponti, the well known Italian architect and designer, died in September 1979 aged 87. His range was astonishingly wide and included not only such famous buildings as the Pirelli skyscraper in Milan (*CQ 51*)—that most elegant of skyscrapers—and Taranto Cathedral (his own article in *CQ 91*), but also the interiors of Italian liners, the costumes and scenery for La Scala operas in Milan, and everything in interior design from furniture to cutlery and curtains. He was also founder and editor of the leading Italian architectural magazine *Domus* and author of the book *In praise of architecture*. The Cement and Concrete Association once gave a cocktail party for him in April 1957 during his visit to this country when he held 120 guests spellbound with a trilingual talk on design in concrete. He was not only a designer of unusual range, he was also a man of vision with a delicious dry dead-pan humour. He was not a design calculator but he did claim powers of intuition for his materials and what they could do. One of his most interesting remarks was that "Concrete has liberated us from the right angle". When he did the article on Taranto Cathedral for us in 1971 (when he was 80), he wrote a series of charming letters all of which ended with his unique multi-coloured signature:



FRONTISPIECE: Evenly textured concrete elements form a paved and terraced garden concealing a car park below. The garden adjoins the new St. Thomas's Hospital in London on one side and Westminster Bridge on the other. Architects: Yorke, Rosenberg and Mardall.

FRONT COVER: The garden at Michelmersh Court, near Romsey, Hampshire. The white painted wirework structure suggests a domed Victorian folly and covers a lead cupid on a concrete plinth. It will eventually be backed by a dark





*The canal by Langwith College.*

# WATER GARDENS

The University of York

*Photographs: Maurice Lee*

Architects:

Partner-in-charge:  
Landscaping partner:  
Consulting engineers  
(site works):

Robert Matthew, Johnson-  
Marshall and Partners  
Andrew Derbyshire  
Maurice Lee  
Scott Wilson Kirkpatrick &  
Partners

Quantity surveyors:

Franklin and Andrews

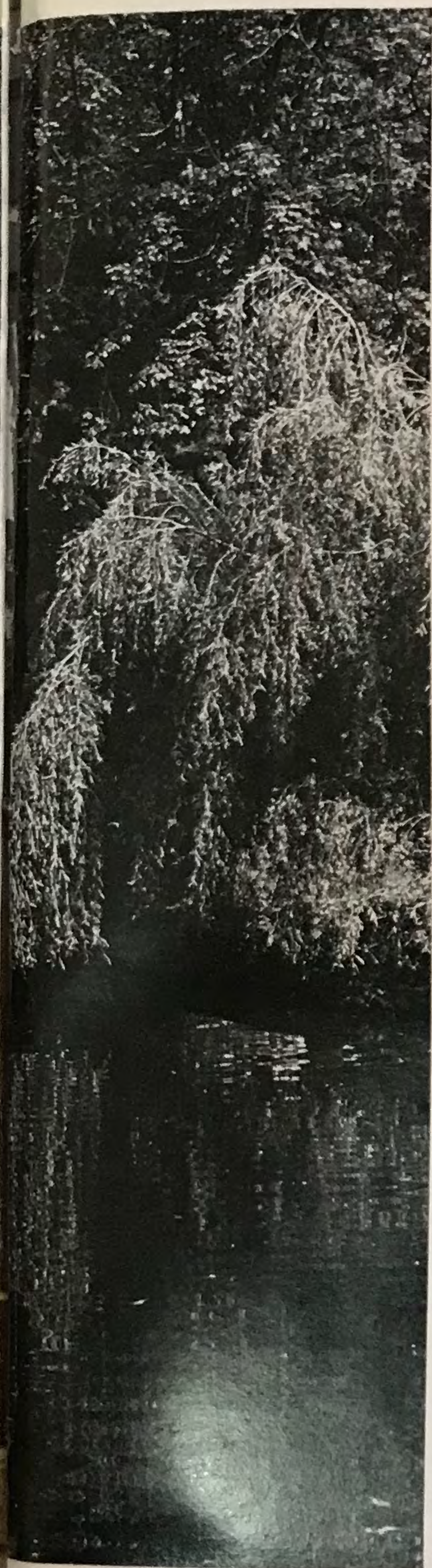
General contractors:

Shepherd Construction Ltd

Lake-lining sub-contractor:

Gordon Low Plastics Ltd

York University is among the best landscaped post-war universities in Britain. Planting is maturing well and it has at its centre an artificial serpentine lake of about 6 hectares which, while satisfying the mundane need for a balancing reservoir to cope with surface water drainage, offers considerable visual, environmental, amenity and ecological advantages. It was one of the first butyl-lined lakes (and possibly the largest) in the country and in its early years posed many ecological problems from which useful



*Above: Waterfront outside the bar at Alcuin College.*

*Below: The canal linking the upper lake with the new serpentine lake.*



Andrews  
Construction Ltd  
Plastics Ltd

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matured well  
serpentine lake  
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lessons have been learned. The lake forms the visual focus of the whole University, and offers a variety of prospects from its shore walks, two dams and four bridges.

The site for the University of York was chosen in 1960. It comprises about 75 hectares of parkland on the south-west side of the City, and radiates from the existing Heslington Hall which was converted to an administrative centre. The University contains within its campus six colleges as well as concert and assembly halls, a main library, computer centre and laboratories. Easy communication was considered important and there are covered pedestrian ways between most buildings of which the majority were

built by the CLASP system of construction with exposed-aggregate precast concrete cladding panels.

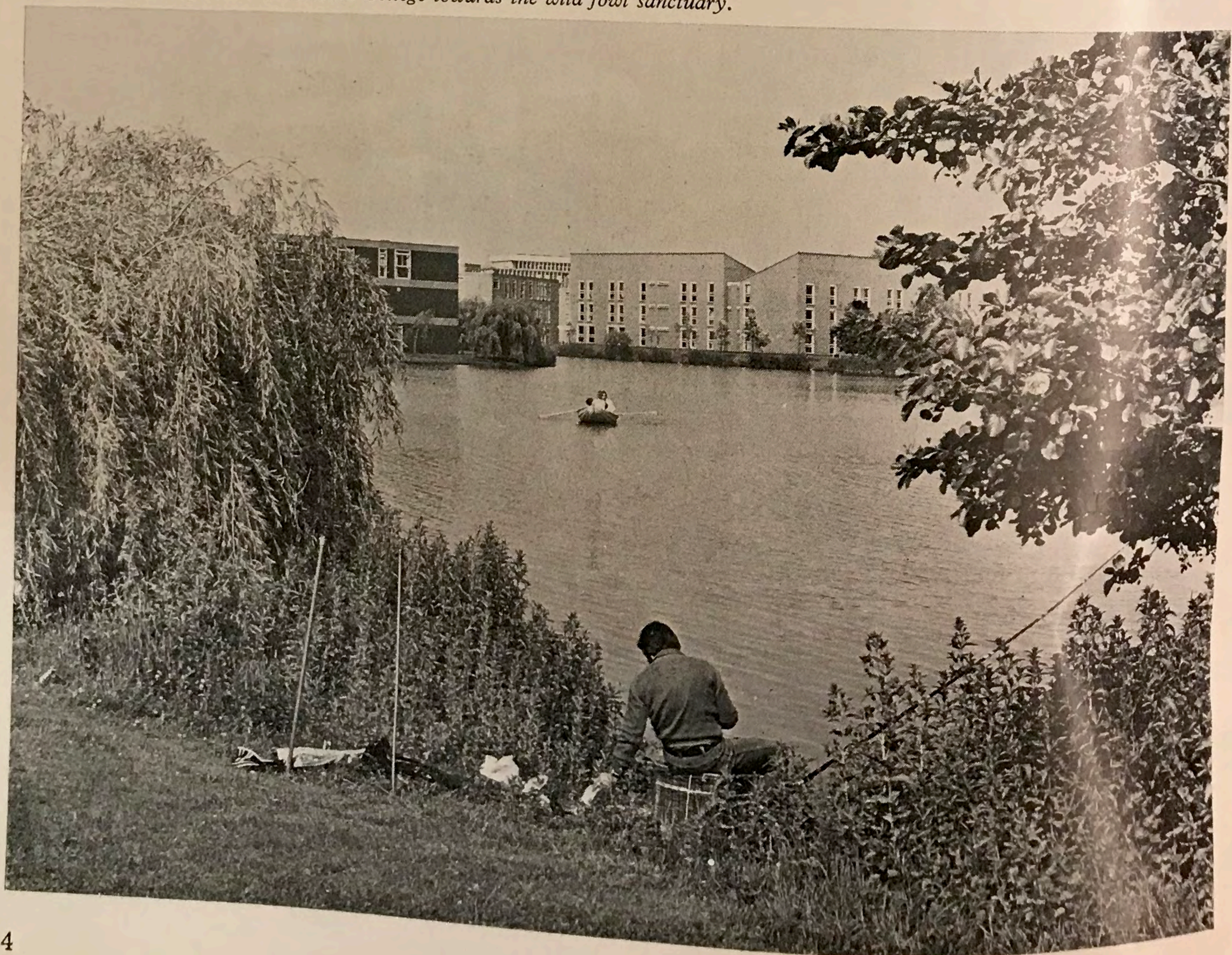
The planting scheme at York may be considered on three different scales. The first is the main structure of tree belts, reflecting the park and agricultural pattern of the locality, and providing some wind shelter. The second is the medium-scale lawn, roadside and waterside planting of the intermediate spaces. The third is the small-scale shrub, ground cover and wall planting of courtyards, pedestrian ways and other areas. Paving includes both in situ and precast concrete slabs laid over extensive areas.

All planting has been designed for permanence



*A landscape for all ages and many pursuits, including concrete landing stages.*

*Fishing and boating below Wentworth College towards the wild fowl sanctuary.*



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# WATER GARDENS

*continued*

and low maintenance. Consequently the range of plants has been fairly strictly limited—a policy demanding considerable restraint from those with horticultural aspirations. Seasonal colour planting is generally in containers which can be more easily maintained than bedding-out areas.

The fact that the permanent planting structure is now maturing well is largely due to the foresight of the University in establishing an enthusiastic and co-operative grounds maintenance department very early on. This department not only maintains but also plants each stage specified by the landscape designers. Over the years, the department has built up shrub stocks by propagation from earlier phases of planting. Hundreds of heavy standard trees have been obtained from the forestry department at Castle Howard a few miles away. Trees have been lifted, conveyed and replanted the same day by the University's own staff and equipment, so that mortality has been very slight.

Besides catering for a variety of water sports and amenities including boating, canoeing, swimming and sub-aqua instruction, the lake has been well

stocked with both trout and coarse fish. Fishing is controlled by a thriving University angling club. There is also a wild fowl sanctuary with an island for nesting at the south end of the lake, and with the increase in plant growth in most parts of the lake, the parallel increase in wild fowl population, both of resident species and migrants, has been remarkable.

The University grounds are open to the public and visited by many hundreds of people during the year, particularly on public holidays. Apart from sporadic acts of vandalism, which seem to decrease as the landscape becomes more established, the wear and tear of excessive use poses its problems, particularly now that maintenance costs have to be closely watched.

For the final phases of tree belt planting and a small arboretum of exotic species, very helpful grants have been made available by the Countryside Commission. After this year's planting programme for 1979-80, the main tree structure for the whole University site will be almost complete, and each year should bring its increasing environmental dividends.

*Courtyard detail of in situ brushed concrete paving with junipers and ivy.*





The canal by Langwith College.

# WATER GARDENS

The University of York

Photographs: Maurice Lee

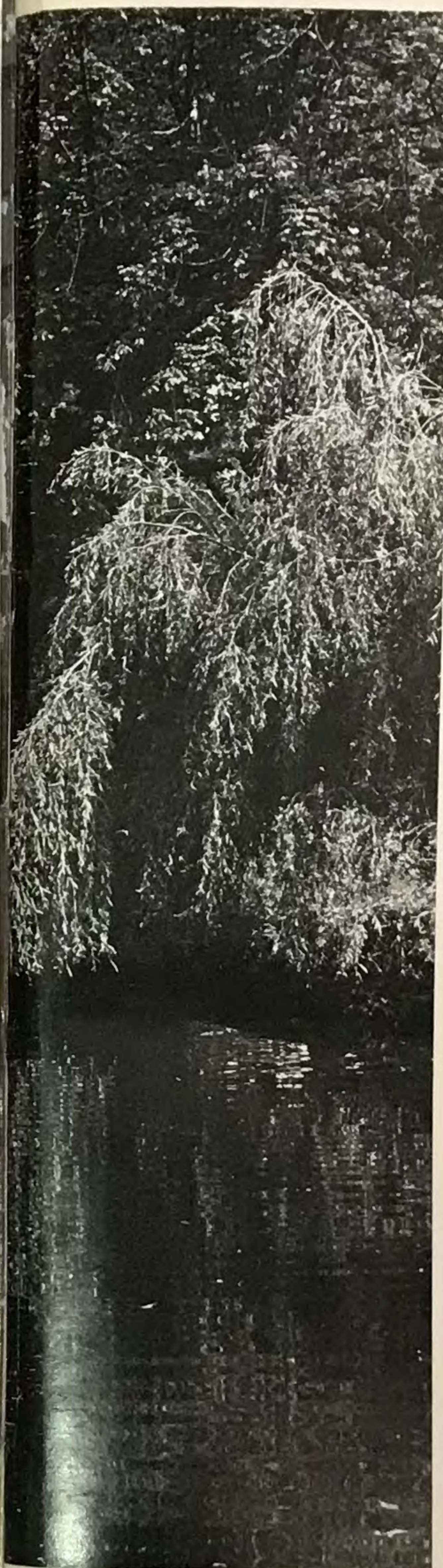
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Above: Waterfront outside the bar at Alcuin College.

Below: The canal linking the upper lake with the new serpentine lake.



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All planting has been designed for permanence

# APPENDIX 6.0

EXTRACT FROM COUNTRY LIFE

# LANDSCAPE FOR A UNIVERSITY

HESLINGTON HALL, YORK *○* By A. G. L. HELLYER



1.—DETAIL FROM AN 18th-CENTURY PAINTING OF HESLINGTON HALL, YORK. The gazebo still stands, but the canal pool in front of it and the rectangular pool (right foreground) were replaced in the 19th century by an irregular fish pond. The Hall was built in the 16th century by Thomas Eynns

WHAT must be one of the most original landscapes created in Britain this century has yet to attract the attention it deserves. It has been designed as a setting for the new University of York and its nucleus is the 16th-century mansion Heslington Hall on the south-eastern outskirts of York. The hall was built in 1568 by Thomas Eynns (or Eymis), Secretary and Keeper of the Seal to the council set up by Queen Elizabeth for the northern part of England. Legend has it that Eynns built it expressly to lodge the queen on one of her visits to Yorkshire, but there is nothing to substantiate this. It seems more probable that, like many another fine mansion built in this period, it was intended to establish the social standing of a man who was rising rapidly in wealth and importance.

Heslington Hall is a suitably imposing red-brick building, not unduly ornamented outside but with fine windows, well proportioned, and occupying three sides of a quadrangle open to the east. It was restored and enlarged in 1854, and an earlier picture shows an almost identical main block flanked by considerably simpler wings.

There is no record of garden-making at Heslington Hall until a century and a half after it was built. In the intervening years the property had passed first to the Heskeths of

Lancashire and then to James Yarborough (or Yarburgh) through his marriage in 1692 to Ann Hesketh, heiress to Thomas Hesketh. He it was, we are told, who planted the avenue of yew trees on the terrace to the west of the house, and he too must almost certainly have built the tall brick pavilion that stands at the north-eastern corner of the terrace, where it commands good views of the house, terrace and park, as well as overlooking the high wall that separates the pleasure garden from the kitchen garden. A painting dated 1760 shows house and garden much as James and Ann must have planned it and also reveals that in those days a little formal canal was centred on the pavilion and extended from it into the park at right angles to the terrace and yew avenue. It is all very neat and formal and the yew trees, though 40 years old, remain remarkably slender and separate.

This is a scene very different from that which existed in 1900, when Heslington Hall and its garden were first described and illustrated in *COUNTRY LIFE*, and the writer could compare the huge clipped yews with the more publicised topiary of Levens Hall, though conceding that those at Heslington were less elaborately shaped. The canal, too, had disappeared, to be replaced by a small ham-shaped lake or fish pond a little farther from the

terrace, in the middle distance of the view from house to park.

Though in itself a modest landscape feature in a by then thoroughly conventional style, this little lake is of importance since it suggested the main feature of the new landscape that was to be created for the University of York. Most of the extra land required for this lies to the west of the hall and is flat, but to the north-west it rises steeply some 70 ft. to Heslington Hill, where once Cromwell's troops were bombarded by Royalists from the beleaguered walls of York. No doubt it was to drain the low-lying garden of Heslington Hall that the 18th-century canal and 19th-century fish pool were constructed; and what could be more sensible than to continue with the same idea but magnified to meet the scale of the new development. A vast waterscape has therefore been created by extending the little fish pool for nearly a mile, almost to the south-west corner of the site, but giving it form and interest by making it wind through the flat land like a river and using the spoil to provide some new and pleasing contours. By this means drainage problems have been solved in an economical way and a design created that is both novel and highly effective.

Maintenance costs are also relatively low since water, unlike lawns and flower borders,



2.—THE OLD GARDEN AS IT IS TODAY. The yew trees shown in the painting in Fig. 1 have grown to an enormous size. The formal pool in the foreground is new and links with the waterscape devised for the university. "Drainage problems have been solved in an economical way and a design created that is both novel and highly effective"

needs no mowing or cultivation. Photographs taken after the construction of this great water feature, but before any building was begun, show that it was in its own right a highly successful treatment of the landscape. Since many of the new buildings are exciting in shape and well placed to exploit the reflective qualities of the water in the most dramatic fashion, the overall effect now that the development approaches completion commands admiration.

In addition to its beauty, there are several points of special technical interest that merit attention. Though the volume of water in this 15-acre lake is immense (its average depth is between 3 and 4 ft. and it contains something like 14 million gallons of water), it is retained by a remarkably small and slim dam. This is possible because at its south-western end the artificial "river" develops into a broad bow containing a lozenge-shaped island and then rapidly narrows, taking an opposite bend to reach the dam. The result is that if the slow flow of water down the "river" is accelerated by strong winds from the north or east the surge is largely absorbed in the bow and further dampened by the island so that no undue pressure ever reaches the dam.

A second point is that for speed and economy in construction the entire area was lined with black polythene delivered in sheets, each about one acre in extent, to be lapped and welded on site. These gigantic sheets were bedded on sand and covered with coarse gravel and sand. This method of construction has proved entirely successful, and though the sheet is now ruptured in places, the soil has meantime

become sufficiently consolidated by the weight of water to be reasonably impervious.

The pillars of bridges crossing the water at several different points have also tapped spring water, and this, bringing up minerals from below, has proved beneficial to the fish with which the lake has been stocked. Over 8,000 fish have been introduced during the

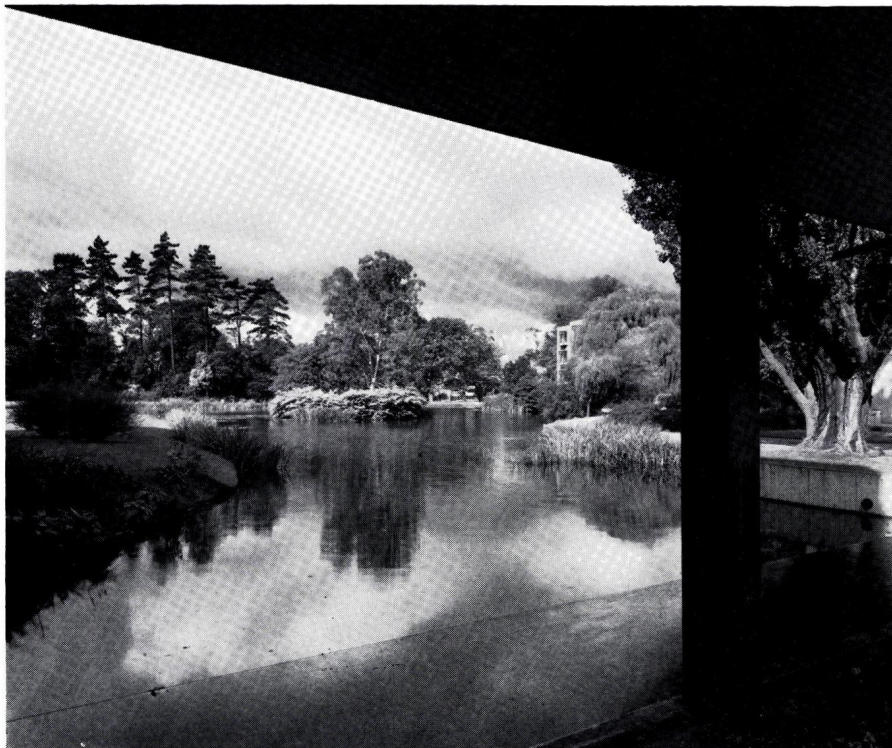
past six years, including carp, tench, rudd, golden orfe, rainbow trout and brown trout. Some sections are reserved for fishing, one for swimming and the widest central area for boating and sailing. Here there is a powerful single-jet fountain that, like so much else at York University, serves a dual role, part aesthetic, part utilitarian. For in addition to making a striking plume of water, which on a windy day can drift right across the lake, it also helps to aerate the water, to the great benefit of the fish.

The whole new water feature has been linked to Heslington Hall in an ingenious way. A section of the old topiary garden near the house has been cleared and a long canal pool with a line of low-spraying fountains has been constructed across it. This leads the eye to the nearest of the new buildings, Derwent College, a short distance to the north, built in part around a rectangular pool with several lines of fountains similar to those on the terrace. These can be seen through the pillars of a covered walk around the pool, and from within this water patio there is a similar outward view to the west to the enlarged fish pond into which its overflow cascades. There is, in consequence, an immediate connection between the old garden and the new, and a logical progression from a formal to an informal style.

Further changes of mood are revealed as the water garden is further explored. The fish pond is generously furnished with marginal plants and stocked with wildfowl, but beyond it the water narrows almost to a stream, the banks are grassy and the area is reserved for fishing. Then it widens to enter the central basin, which might suggest a harbour since there are large paved areas with bollards placed as if for use



3.—WATER PATIO IN DERWENT COLLEGE. This makes the link between the old garden and the new water garden, which can be seen through the cloister



4.—THE OLD FISH POND TRANSFORMED. Seen from Derwent College, this is the headwater of a river-like water feature nearly one mile long



as moorings and wide flights of steps leading down to the water's edge.

Some of the most striking buildings are placed around this basin. To the east is the bulging, irregularly hexagonal shape of Central Hall surmounted by spare roof stays projecting skywards like some strange derrick. To the north is Vanbrugh College with its rows of conical top lights and the largest and most elaborately patterned of all the paved areas. The extensive physics laboratories are to the south, the lecture hall jutting out over the water like an overhanging cliff with large square stepping stones in the water beneath as a pedestrian short cut to Goodricke College to the west. This is simple in construction, but lights from the building play down on to the water and near by there is a sandy beach for swimmers. A long covered bridge crosses the water to rejoin Vanbrugh College and also lead to the biology laboratory to the west, where the water once more resumes a river-like course and flows between meadows that, to turn them into a bird sanctuary, have been fenced against foxes.

To make way for all this development some mature trees had to be felled and others severely lopped, but from 1964 onwards new planting has been undertaken on a large scale, something like four to five thousand trees and shrubs being added every year. Much of the tree planting is in belts running from the lower to the higher land, so that they give maximum protection from the north east and the south west and also emphasise the natural contours of the land. Smaller trees are used as specimens in the many areas of mown grass, and shrubs to give definition



5.—THE HARBOUR-LIKE BASIN AROUND THE CENTRAL HALL OF THE UNIVERSITY. The large paved areas have been designed to provide constant variation in level, material and style, which are further diversified by low-growing plants

and fill in space where this is necessary.

When James Yarborough lived at Heslington Hall in the early 18th century his daughter married John Vanbrugh, who was building Castle Howard for Lord Carlisle, some 14 miles away. Today many of the trees for the new university campus are coming from Castle Howard, and with the aid of a Newman transplanter it is possible

to bring in specimens 30 ft. and more in height with little difficulty or damage—a technical feat that Carlisle would surely have admired. I think that however strange he might find the new buildings he would also approve the boldness of the new landscape garden—a very English style of which he was one of the originators.

*Illustrations: Alex Starkey.*



6.—PART OF THE NEW CAMPUS: A VIEW EMPHASISING THE RURAL SETTING FOR MODERN BUILDINGS. "The overall effect commands admiration"

# **APPENDIX 7.0**

**EXTRACTS FROM COLVIN AND MOGGRIDGE  
REPORT**



**UNIVERSITY OF YORK**

**STRATEGIC REVIEW  
OF THE  
LANDSCAPE**

**September 1992**

**Colvin and Moggridge**

Introduction

The fine landscape given to the University of York by the founders and their consultants has been treated as a blank pastoral site since 1963, the year of the University's foundation. I am now asked to assess what strategic and practical measures are available to enhance and improve the campus as it matures. The paper which follows seeks to identify key strategies needed to achieve this purpose.

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  - 1.1 The reasonable and enjoyable quality of the landscape
  - 1.2 Protection of the ground water
  - 1.3 Expansion of departments
  - 1.4 Compact, convenient and enjoyable pathway system
  - 1.5 Northern Hill top
  - 1.6 The future
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UNIVERSITY OF YORK

STRATEGIC REVIEW OF THE LANDSCAPE

September 1992

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Planning Vice-Chancellor, Lord James  
 Registrar, John West-Taylor  
 Director, David Allen  
 Architectural Support Officer, Norman Mitchell & Partners  
 City Council, Planning Department  
 City Council, Development  
 City Council, Environment

## INTRODUCTION

The fine landscape given to the University of York by its founders and their consultants \* has been created on a bland pastoral site since 1962, the year of the University's foundation. I am now asked to assess what strategic and practical measures are advisable to conserve and improve the campus as it matures. The paper which follows seeks to identify key strategies needed to achieve this purpose.

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\*  
Founding Vice-Chancellor: Lord James  
Registrar: John West-Taylor  
Bursar: David Allen  
Architects: Robert Matthew, Johnson-Marshall & Ptnrs:  
Sir Stirrat Johnson-Marshall,  
Sir Andrew Derbyshire,  
Maurice Lee (Landscape)

## ILLUSTRATIONS

### Photographs

- Before Section 1 Views and open spaces around the lakes
- Before Section 2 Typical places where enrichment vegetation would be suitable
- Before Section 3 Natural vegetation and long-lived trees

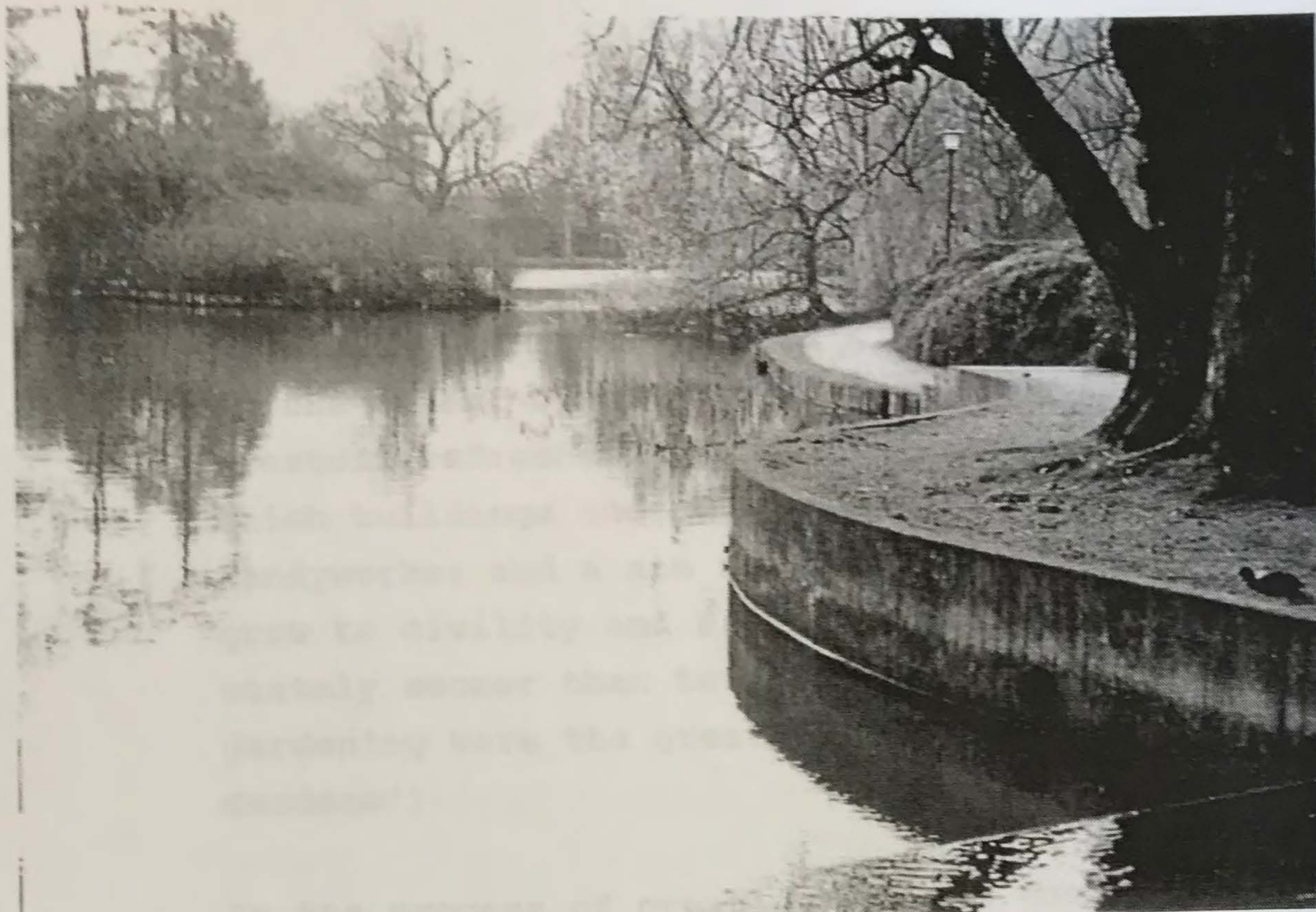
### Diagrammatic plans (at back of paper)

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### APPENDIX (by Harriet the Painter)

#### Ideas for Colour Design

- A Underside of Physics Lecture Hall
- B Wall beneath Vanbrugh College Balcony



Top: A narrow view along the lake is very effective; such views need to be conserved by regular management of lakeside trees

Left: Both views and open spaces beside the lakes are being eroded by tree growth. Here a lovely view of the gazebo across lawns has become invisible in summer. There is no need to remove trees to re-open this view; it is sufficient to remove the lower branches from selected trees and manage them in future to keep the canopy from dropping too low.

University of York

Views and Open Spaces  
around the Lakes

**1. CONSERVATION OF THE EXISTING ASSETS OF THE CAMPUS**

**1.1 The Memorable and Enjoyable Quality of the Landscape**

"God Almighty first planted a garden. And indeed it is the purest of human pleasures. It is the greatest refreshment to the spirits of man; without which buildings and palaces are but gross handyworks; and a man shall ever see that when ages grow to civility and elegancy, men come to build stately sooner than to garden finely; as if gardening were the greater perfection." (Bacon 'Of Gardens')

In the process of creating its new campus, the University of York has aspired to this greater perfection. The result is a memorable and enjoyable university, the heart of which is lakeside walks, views of water overhung by trees, sparkle in the sun, gentle autumnal greys, students, academics and waterfowl silhouetted underfoot. This landscape is a fine artefact. It will retain its quality only if all who need to modify it do so respectfully, adapting their own predilections to the recently created genius loci, and if it is constantly renewed for the long-term future.

**1.2 Protected Spine of Pedestrian Landscape around Water**

The cloistered atmosphere, by which intellectual sharpness has always been stimulated, relies at the University of York on the central car-free pedestrian landscape around water. Because water flows it sets up a linear hierarchy.

Upstream is a sophisticated historic core beside small pools, two rectangular with fountains, one



irregular with islets. Heslington Hall, its splendid yew garden, walled garden and gazebo have been taken over from a previous era to become the administrative centre of the University. The lakeside edges of Derwent and Langwith Colleges are also now a significant example of mid 20th century history. An architect of sensibility has been able to dispose buildings of commonplace prefabricated materials around space to evoke a response of delighted surprise for new visitors and satisfaction to members of the University.

The central mass of the University is arranged along a single lake, buildings alternating with larger waterside spaces. The soft spaces have been handled convincingly. The surroundings of the wide central part of the lake are less successful, in spite of the vigour of the fountain and some adjacent buildings particularly Central Hall (discussed further in 2.9 below).

Downstream, towards the west edge of the University where it lies beside open common land, the lake meanders away into trees. Here there is a local evocation of 'wildness', a modern idea in pleasing contrast with the hints of classicism of Jacobean Heslington Hall.

This interior lakeside landscape is the spatial asset most likely to continue to attract staff and students of high calibre. It is vulnerable to disintegration, particularly through an accumulation of small decisions each based on localised expediency. Therefore it is recommended that a protected lakeside landscape is defined, where people, vegetation and water are predominant, free from vehicles or utilities. Figure 1 is a

preliminary definition of a suitable extent for such an area, including outward links away from the lakes. Some potential improvements to this area, for instance by opening up selected views so that open space flows from place to place, are discussed in section 2 below.

1.3

### **Besky Fringes for Access and Car Parking with Inward Links**

The corollary of a secluded landscape through the centre of the campus is efficiently laid out approaches on the outer side of buildings. Each part of the University is approached from this outer edge; its quality therefore provides first impressions. It is recommended that the outer fringes are sheltered within a strengthened framework of trees connected into the centre of the campus by linear spinneys or avenues. Beneath this besky canopy, cars can be parked and pathways threaded.

Since plenty of car parking is necessary, the actual layout of car parks needs to be efficient avoiding wasted space. As each car occupies the same space as a double office, slight carelessness of layout can deprive departments of much potential expansion space. Figure 2 suggests where cars can be disposed; often a rolled gravel surface may suffice when economy is important.

1.4

### **Expansion of Departments**

The energy and size of departments inevitably varies over a period of time, as different subjects fluctuate in ways totally unforeseeable in advance.

As far as is possible it is therefore wise now to conserve fallow space near each academic department. At the same time invasion of such fallow land needs to be undertaken with particular care to avoid wasteful use of space. For instance the new Institute for Applied Biology, very attractive in itself, may have been so sited as to consume more land area than justified by the area of accommodation provided. Figure 3 indicates possible reserve sites to be protected from use until absolutely essential to the adjacent department. Sites are included at the north-west corner of the Campus, so disposed as to keep open, distant views from the houses beyond. Road access to this area could be obtained from a new roundabout on University Road opposite the Biology/Wentworth road.

Colleges similarly may benefit from localised extensions within their territories. As they are social rather than administrative units, they need to be kept together to function well. Some of the areas nominated as 'undetermined' on Figure 3 may be suitable for college expansion, as well as small internal sites not shown on this map; development of the latter should be handled carefully to respect the strategic layout considerations defined by other figures.

Two of the 'undetermined' sites are now occupied by single storey houses. These have come to seem too small in scale to be suitable occupants of key sites in the centre of the campus, and so seem suitable for redevelopment in due course to a time scale which minimises disruption of residents.

### 1.5. Compact, Convenient and Enjoyable Pathway System

The University of York is compactly laid out. Colleges and departments alternate. It is possible to walk from anywhere to Central Hall in 5 minutes and across the campus between even the most distant destinations in 10 minutes. Thus movement through the campus is not only enjoyable because of the setting, it is also efficient. The network of paths is the mechanism by which this efficiency is provided. Like veins in the human body, they should be unimpeded. As has been pointed out in Brian Towers' 'access survey of campus' of Dec 1991, they should also be detailed for convenience to all users, including gentle unobstructed routes for those in wheelchairs or with walking difficulties, and other options for energetic young people to enjoy.

In several places obstructive features are tending to intrude upon the path network. Figure 4 shows the path network, noting several places where gaps or hazards at present impede straightforward movement. Routes need to be clear as well as reasonably direct. Clarity arises from an identifiable relationship with the main features of the landscape, for instance "along the south side of the lakes" or "overlooking University Road".

It is recommended that the path network is protected where it works well and improved where it is impeded. All money allocated to new development, adaptation or temporary facilities for research should include a sufficient allocation to the path network and the landscape in which this is set to

ensure that the efficiency and quality of the University as a totality is sustained.

1.6

#### **Northern Hilltop**

The ground rises on the north side of University Road to a hill crowned by a keep-like water tower. The Morrell Library is sited on the south edge of this plateau above University Road connected axially to the central lake. The land behind the Library has the potential to become a useful part of the University rising to a fine northerly viewpoint overlooking York Minster and skylines of distant hills. This would be a hillside part of the University with its own special distinctive character. It is recommended that a conical mound is created on the hilltop as a focal point for a long-term layout organising the south facing hill slopes north of University Road. Road access to this area could be obtained along an improved road north of Chemistry and Alcuin, with a road for cars and vans only under the library building to the potential site to its north-west.

Because the Library is such an important element in the University, it is recommended that the level change on the south side of the library bridge is rebuilt to incorporate a fine flight of steps and a lift to provide upward access for anyone in a wheelchair. Figure 7 suggests how this might be achieved in such a way that the lowest steps are visible from as far back as Vanbrugh College. The wide overbridge at the top of the steps could become an arcade enclosed on either side by kiosks containing little shops and information booths, well placed along the central walk of the University for maximum accessibility to students. North of this

mall is the library at the south-west corner of which a new green sun trap would be a pleasant addition. These measures, in part revenue-producing, would help to counteract the unfortunate present atmosphere that the north side of University Road is an ancillary area. It is unlucky that this proposal seems to be made too late for incorporation as part of the recent enlargement of the Computer Science Department; perhaps their next expansion could include this much needed assistance to the campus seen as a whole.

1.7

#### **The Future**

Future development should be an expansion of the concepts already established. There is no need for novelty as the campus has established a successful landscape idea powerful enough to serve a much larger place. Figures 1, 2 and 4 each include diagrammatic extensions to serve the next few decades.

If ever the built-up part of the University should be extended south of Heslington Lane, it would be desirable that the lake system should also be extended. This will avoid creating a disadvantaged part of the University tarnished by an inferior setting.

1.8

#### **Strategic Briefs for Buildings**

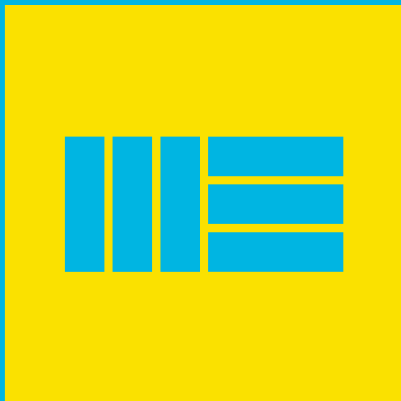
Each architect will need to be lucidly briefed to assure the successful realisation of these concepts. All buildings have to face one way towards a continuous romantic secluded landscape with approaches on the opposite side for both people and servicing. Inventive skill is needed to attain a

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