



University of Leicester

Archaeological Services

**A photographic survey College Hall,
Knighton Road, Leicester
NGR: SK 600 017**

Sophie Clarke



**A photographic survey of
College Hall, Knighton Road, Leicester**

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For: University of Leicester Estates

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A photographic survey of College Hall, Knighton Road, Leicester SK 600 017

Summary

A photographic survey of College Hall, Knighton Road, Leicester was undertaken on behalf of University of Leicester Estates Services and Associated Architects, by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS), in advance of the proposed redevelopment of the former halls of residence. The archive will be held by Leicester City museums Service under the accession number A9.2012.

Background

This document presents the results of a photographic survey of College Hall, undertaken on behalf of the University of Leicester, by University of Leicester Archaeological Services. The work was requested by the Planning Authority, following NPPF guidelines (Planning for the Historic Environment) in response to proposals for the re-development of the site.

The buildings of College Hall were designed by Sir Leslie Martin and Mr. Trevor Dannatt and built in 1960 as a residential campus of the University of Leicester. The buildings are Grade II listed, described by Pevsner (1984) as ‘an extremely handsome group of moderately sized blocks, placed sensitively, showing very good planning in detail, with similarities to Churchill College, Oxford, of the same date’. The architectural significance of the site has been identified by the City Archaeologist at Leicester City Council, who recommended to the Planning Authority that a photographic survey be undertaken prior to the commencement of the redevelopment.

Proposals for the re-development of the site involve the construction of a new residential block, which will link two of the existing, listed College Hall buildings, within an area that is currently under tarmac and the refurbishment of the interiors of the existing buildings.

The site lies close to the junction of Queens Road and Knighton Road, in South Knighton, approximately 2 miles to the south of Leicester city centre.

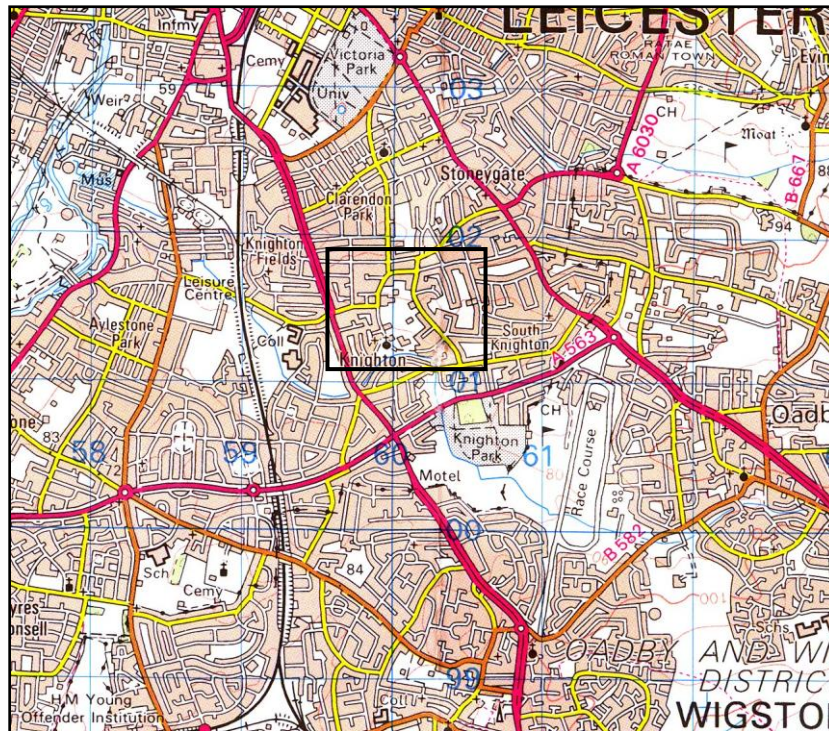


Figure 1. Site location, Knighton, Leicester

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Methods

The photographic record approximated to Level 2 of English Heritage's 'Understanding Historic Buildings' (2006). It included:

Item 1: General view or views of the exterior of the building.

Item 2: The overall appearance of principal rooms and circulation areas.

Item 3: Detailed coverage of the building's exterior appearance.

Item 4: Any external detail, structural or decorative, which is relevant to the building's design, development and use and which does not show adequately on general photographs.

Item 5: The building's relationship to its setting, to other buildings, or to a significant viewpoint.

Item 6: Internal detail, structural and decorative, which is relevant to the building's design, development and use, and which does not show adequately on general photographs.

A summary of the building's type or purpose, historically and at present, its materials and possible date (s).

All work followed the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) *Code of Conduct* (rev. 2010) and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing buildings or Structures* (2008). In addition, Leicestershire County Council's *Guidelines and Procedures for Archaeological Work in Leicestershire* was adhered to.

The buildings were photographed using a Pentax K-7 digital camera and Pentax P30 35mm film camera. The film used was Ilford HP5 rated at 400asa. Digital images were shot in proprietary RAW format and converted into TIFFs for the archive. Some parts of the complex were occupied by private tenants and were not accessible during the site visit: on the basis of advice given by the client, it is understood that the occupied areas of the site will not be affected by the proposed redevelopment.

Results

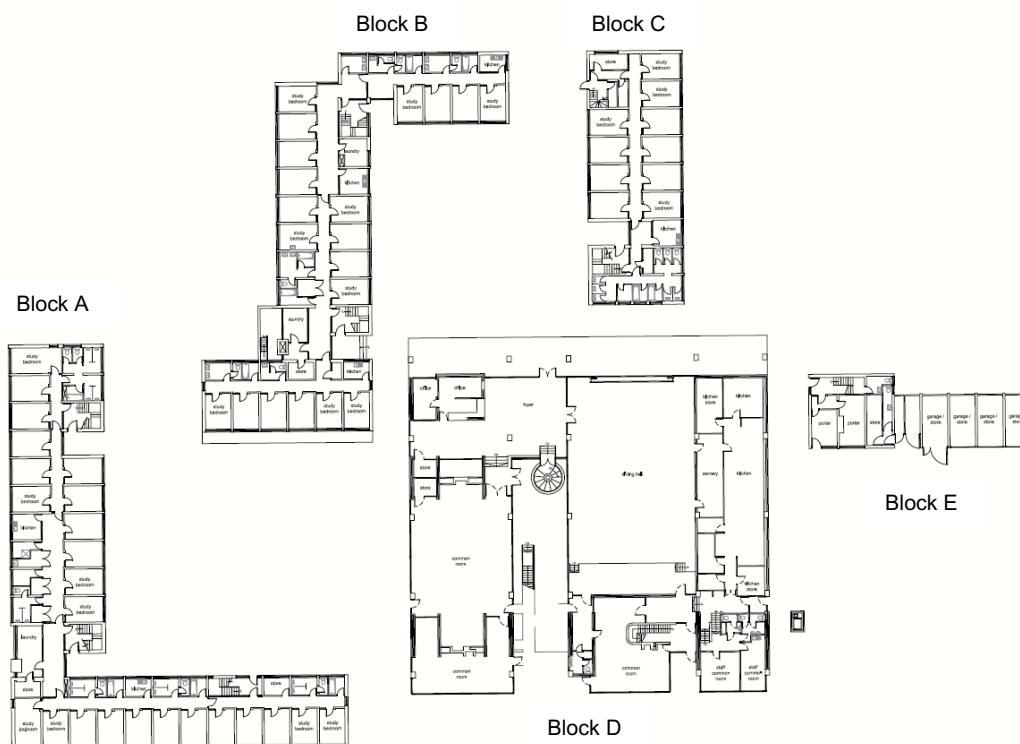


Figure 2. Site Layout (based on plans supplied by Associated Architects; not to scale)

The College Hall campus has stood empty since the closure of the halls of residence in 2005. The site consists of 5, Grade II listed residential blocks A-E, with an associated bicycle shed located on the northern boundary. At the time of the site visit in May 2012, work to clear all of the buildings, including soft stripping of original fitted furniture, such as beds, desks and refectory furniture had already commenced, although fixtures such as wardrobes and suspended shelf units within the bedroom units survived.

The focal point of the campus is Block D, a square-shaped building of two stories, located towards the centre of the site. The listing description records this as the Social Block, containing a library, bar, canteen kitchen and refectory on the ground floor, with common rooms, sound-proofed music practice rooms, telephone cabinets and a dark-room located on the first floor. Blocks A-C are more uniformly institutional in character, consisting of a series of rectilinear blocks on 3 levels. On every floor within each block, a central service corridor runs the length of the building, flanked on either side by identical cell-like bedrooms, each originally fitted with matching bed, wardrobe, desk, pinboard and shelf unit. Small, communal kitchens located on each floor within each building appeared to have been refitted since construction, probably *c.*1990, whereas updating of communal bathrooms had been undertaken on a more *ad hoc* basis. Block E is of two stories, with the ground floor appearing to have been used perhaps as offices or administrative space, with student accommodation located on the first floor only.

In general terms, all of the buildings were in a somewhat dilapidated and derelict state at the time of survey, reflecting the 7 year period during which they have stood empty, and the partial strip to which they have been subject. Accordingly, few original fixtures and fittings worthy of record have survived intact and the photographic survey focuses therefore on external appearance, architectural features of note and communal areas within Social Block D. Limited photographs of the interiors of Blocks A-C and E were taken in order to represent their general appearance: any perceived gaps in the photographic record are due to the fact of the buildings being near-identical in appearance.

Listing Descriptions

Block A

718/17/10011 Block A (Residential 718/18/10011 Block to W.) at College Hall, University of Leicester GV II

LEICESTER, LEICESTERSHIRE. KNIGHTON OADBY ROAD SK 50 SE
SK 60 SW Residential block to W. at College 718/17/10011 Hall, University
718/18/10011 of Leicester GV II.

Residential block at University hall of residence. 1958-60. Sir Leslie Martin and Trevor Dannatt. Buff brick, timber cladding, concrete flat roof. L shaped block of 3 storeys with rooms to south range facing south. Recessed ground floor and projecting first and second floors giving balconies to upper rooms. Large plate glass windows set in timber frames, those to upper floors with timber panels to their right. An integral part of the College Hall layout.

Block B

718/17/10012 Block B (Block to NW 718/18/10012 of social block) at College Hall, University of Leicester GV II.

LEICESTER, LEICESTERSHIRE; KNIGHTON OADBY ROAD. SK 50 SE
SK 60 SW Block to NW of social block at 718/17/10012 College Hall

718/18/10012 Uni. of Leicester. GV II

Residential block at University hall of residence. 1958-60. Sir Leslie Martin and Trevor Dannatt. Buff brick, timber cladding, concrete, flat roof. Orthogonal 'S' shaped block of 3 storeys with rooms to north and south wings, oriented to south. Recessed ground floor. Upper floors with balconies. Large plate glass windows set in timber frames, those to upper floors with timber panels adjacent to windows. An integral part of the College Hall layout.

Block C

718/17/10013 Block C (Residential block due N of social block) at College Hall, University of Leicester GV II.

LEICESTER, LEICESTERSHIRE, KNIGHTON OADBY ROAD, SK 50 SE
Residential block SK 60 SW due N of social 718/17/10013 block at College
718/18/10013 Hall, University of Leicester. GVII

Residential block at University hall of residence. 1958-60. Sir Leslie Martin and Trevor Dannatt. Buff brick, timber cladding, concrete, flat roof. Rectangular plan with central corridor and rooms on either side. Three storeys. Large rectangular windows arranged in horizontal strips. Timber frames. Attached single storey brick block to east. An integral part of the College Hall layout.

Block D

LEICESTER, LEICESTERSHIRE KNIGHTON OADBY ROAD SK 50 SE
SK 60 SW Social block, College Hall, 718/17/10010 Uni. of Leicester
718/18/10010 GV II

Social block of University hall of residence, 1958-60. Sir Leslie Martin and Trevor Dannatt. Buff brick, concrete, timber cladding, flat roof. 2 storeys. Square in plan but with narrow central courtyard containing circular brick staircase. Ground floor recessed to parts, with some floor to ceiling windows. Strip windows above. Timber window frames. Exposed brick internally. Double height space to Junior Common Room. Integral part of College Hall layout.

Block E

LEICESTER KNIGHTON ROAD SK 50 SE SK 60 SW
17/10017 Block D (Block to East 18/10017 of Social Block) at College
Hall, University of Leicester – II

Residential block with garages to ground floor, forming part of University hall of residence. 1958-60. Sir Leslie Martin and Trevor Dannatt. Buff brick, concrete, flat roof. 2 storeys. Large plate glass windows to upper floor set in timber frames. An integral part of the College Hall layout.

Selected photographs from the archive

The following photographs have been selected from the site archive to illustrate the above account and are located on the plans below.

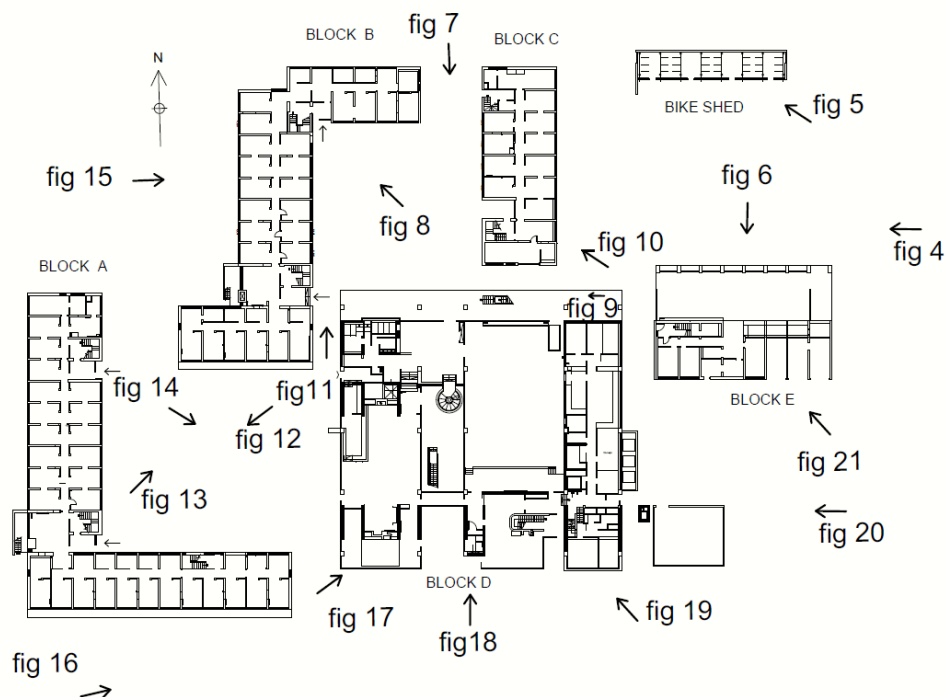


Figure 3. Location of external photographs (figs 4-21 below).



Figure 4. College Hall campus, looking west.



Figure 5. Bike shed, looking north-west.



Figure 6. Block E, looking south.



Figure 7. Corridor between blocks B and C, looking south towards Block D.



Figure 8. Central precinct, looking north-west towards Block B.



Figure 9. Block D, first floor walkway, looking west.



Figure 10. Block C, looking north-west.



Figure 11. Corridor between Blocks B and D, looking north towards Block B.



Figure 12. Southern courtyard, looking west towards Block A.



Figure 13. As above, looking north-east towards Block B.



Figure 14. As above, looking south-east towards Block D.



Figure 15. Block B, looking east.



Figure 16. Blocks A and D, looking north-east.



Figure 17. Block D, looking north-east.



Figure 18. Block D, looking north.



Figure 19. Block D, looking north-west.



Figure 20. Block D, looking west.



Figure 21. Block E, looking north-west.

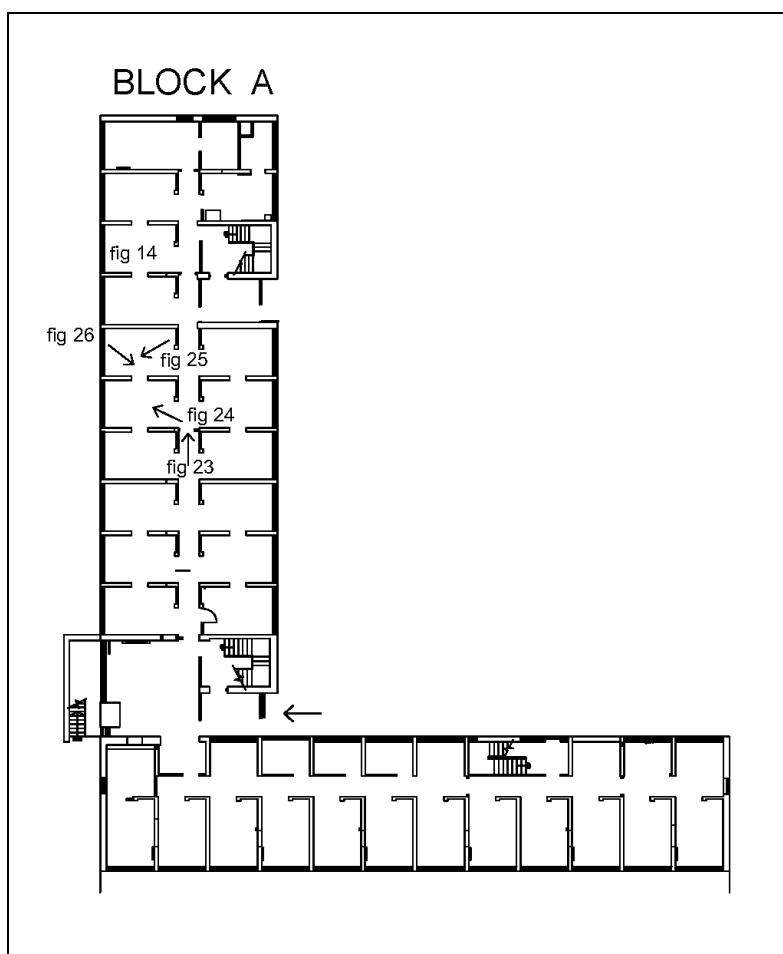


Figure 22. Location of interior photographs of Block A (figs 23-26).



Figure 23. Central corridor, Block A, looking north.



Figure 24. Block A, communal kitchen, looking west.



Figure 25. Block A bedroom, looking west.



Figure 26. As above, looking east.

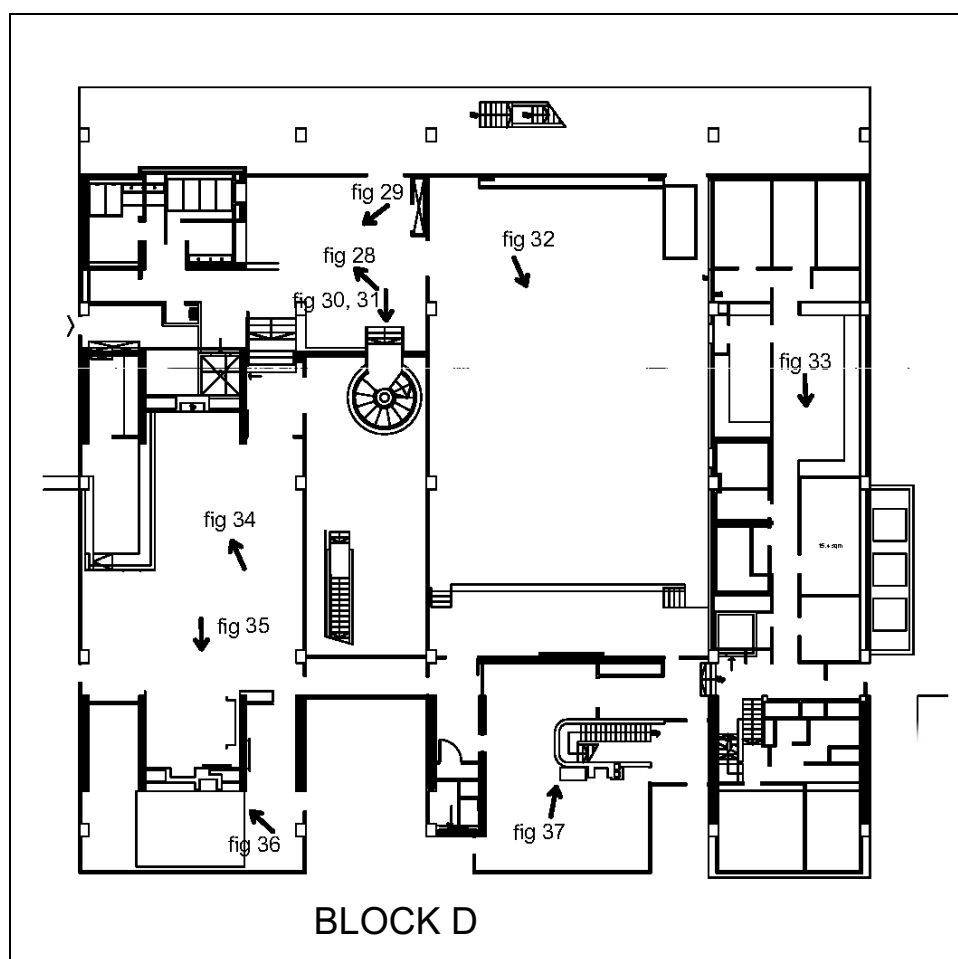


Figure 27. Location of interior photographs of Block D (figs 28-37).



Figure 28. Block D, foyer and reception, looking north-west.



Figure 29. As above, looking south-west.



Figure 30. As above, looking south towards stairwell.



Figure 31. Top of staircase, Block D first floor, looking south.



Figure 32. Refectory, looking south-east.



Figure 33. Kitchen, looking south.



Figure 34. Bar, looking north-west.



Figure 35. Bar, looking south.



Figure 36. Heated library, looking north-west.



Figure 37. Ground floor common room, looking north-east.

Archive

The archive consists of the digital image files on DVD, digital contact sheets, monochrome film and associated contact prints, and a plan of the building showing position and direction of all photographs taken. It will be deposited with Leicester City Council under the accession number A9.2012.

Publication

A version of the summary will appear in *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society* in due course. The report will be added to the Archaeology Data Service's (ADS) Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) database.

Bibliography

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