

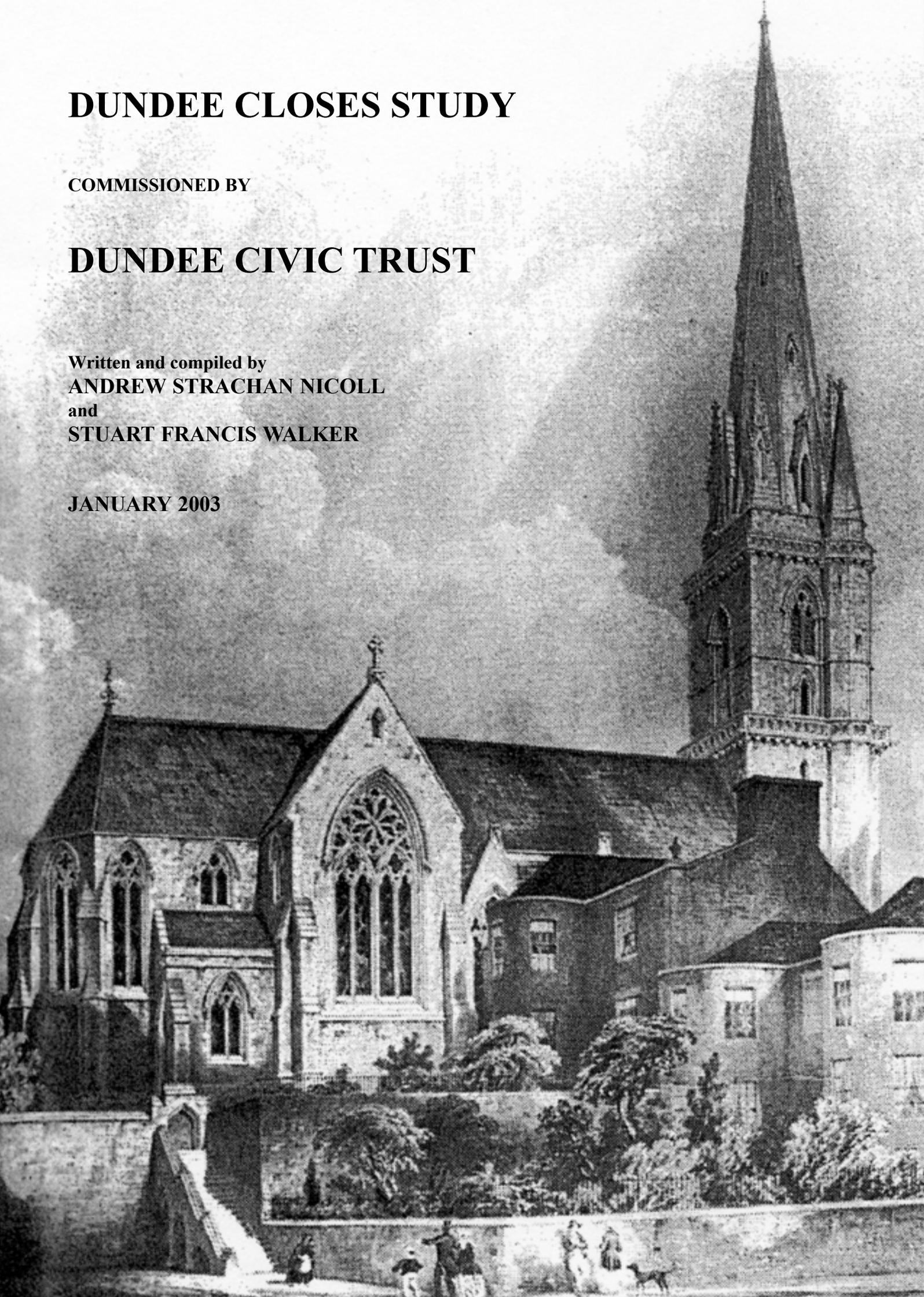
DUNDEE CLOSES STUDY

COMMISSIONED BY

DUNDEE CIVIC TRUST

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BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The City of Dundee can be justifiably proud of the dynamic, pro-active approach taken in re-inventing itself in the course of meeting head-on the problems and opportunities presented by the post-industrial 21st century.

This might well cause some surprise to an impartial observer, attempting to judge this success in the context of the city's historical "ups and downs".

Indeed a lesser people might well have "given up" at some point in the face of the recurring damage done to the city's fabric over the centuries – damage ranging from the bloody 16th century sacking by Cromwell's General Monck, to the degradation of mass unemployment, to the 20th century evisceration of the old Overgate by City Fathers who, hindsight tells us, should have known better.

However – despite these recurring waves of threatened perdition – we now have a city which looks to the future with a new confidence. No longer glancing fearfully over its shoulder at the ghosts of past manufacturing roots, Dundee heralds new and exciting horizons in industry: the Arts flourish to a degree previously thought to be implausible and the city's "cultural quarter" is reality instead of just a pipe dream.

Yet there are those who complain – while admitting that Dundee now boasts some excellent modern buildings – that the essential "character" of the city is lost for all time. "It's all gone ... swept away with the old Overgate!" they cry.

How wrong this is. Quite apart from the Victorian city environment which still characterises the City Centre, all it takes is a side-step down an alleyway or a short-cut through a "closie" to begin to make a discovery: there is also a wealth of medieval heritage right in the heart of the city! It may be ignored and neglected but it is still there to be seen and experienced!

This study seeks to begin to redress the otherwise inevitable consequences of such ignorance and apathy. It is in a sense therefore the initial step on a voyage of discovery: not this time a far flung search for distant shores, but a rediscovery of what has been with us all along unseen, unheard and ignored.

Initially Dundee Civic Trust took a lead from Professor Charles McKean, eminent architectural historian well known for his prolific writing and conducted tours of Dundee's historic closes and decided that a permanent record of the closes was required. Furthermore this focus could produce ideas for not only their conservation but for the added value of their potential role as catalysts to future developments within the "grain" of the city. A successful Lottery Grant Application was then made to fund the study required to achieve this.

APPROACH TO THE STUDY

It was decided after a preliminary analysis of the City's closes that the study should concentrate on the five locations which effect the greatest potential. The character of

each one of the sites chosen is quite different in its terms of reference from every other one – both in actuality and in its potential – whether this is for only conservation or redevelopment.

As for the choice of the particular locations each site has been considered in terms of two separate but inter-linking sets of criteria:-

- a) History: what makes this particular piece of Dundee interesting?
- b) Survey: what is the extent and condition of remaining buildings of interest or parts thereof and the spaces in between them and are there relevant plans for redevelopment under consideration?

Due consideration of these sets of criteria leads to the third, viz:-

- c) Opportunity: the agenda generated from (a) and (b) gives each location its unique potential for regeneration.

The five study areas illustrated in this report may be summarised as follows:

AREA 1: NETHERGATE

Directly opposite the City Churches (St Mary's Church, Mary Slessor Centre and Old Steeple), by far the largest non-cathedral church in Scotland, this area is steeped in history.

There are connections with Scotland's royalty in the historic site of Lord Lindsay, Earl of Crawford's Lodging or "Earl's Palace" – pre-dating 1400: Lord Lindsay married a daughter of King Robert II.

The several historic closes and one of Dundee's oldest town houses (St David's Halls) combine here to offer interesting potential for conservation in symbiosis with redevelopment. The area is however physically dominated by the Nethergate Centre and without the integration of this into any proposals, the full potential for the future may not be realisable.

The same sentiment applies – albeit on a lesser scale – to St David's Halls, which represent a challenge as well as an opportunity for regeneration through conservation on a scale similar to that of Gardyne's Land (see under Area 2).

Accordingly ongoing liaison has been established with the building owners, Standard Life and St Paul's Lodge Masonic Order and there is therefore an opportunity for initial conceptual proposals shown here to be developed to mutual benefit.

No fewer than 7 pends or access ways still exist here, along with several open spaces, all fulfilling separate functions to a greater or lesser degree: each one is however isolated from every other one.

What is needed now is some creative thought as to how these closes and isolated open spaces can be inter-linked to connect with a series of developments to draw people into the area.

Thus the backs of the buildings on to Nethergate, which are under-used and neglected could be transformed into vibrant attractions, fed by the busy throngs populating the re-animated network of closes and open spaces.

AREA 2: NEW INN ENTRY

Running North-West from High Street to Albert Square this was, until the advent of Reform Street, the main road between town centre and the Meadows.

Along its North-East side the Keillor Jam Factory, produced the famous marmalade until its 1970s demolition and replacement by “The Forum” shopping centre complete with utilitarian upgrading of New Inn Entry as existing.

Each extreme end of this study area is already the subject of independent significant redevelopment proposals by others, viz:

- a) High Street/New Inn Entry (South)
Facing on to High Street are two discrete proposed developments:
 - (i) The Arnott’s redevelopment which will retain the existing exterior and access route afforded by Rankine’s Court.
And
 - (ii) Gardyne’s Land: the redevelopment of a group of ancient town houses to accommodate a new back-packers’ hostel. This will be a remarkable achievement since, having lain neglected for over 40 years, against the odds they have survived and look set to become an exemplar in how a city can celebrate its heritage through the regeneration of its historic building stock.

- b) Albert Square/New Inn Entry (North)
Both the McManus Galleries themselves and the surrounding Albert Square are currently the subjects of a City Council-initiated regeneration programme. New Inn Entry leads directly on to Albert Square (per Chapel Street) giving the opportunity to achieve design integration of the two.

In the case of both (a) and (b) above, liaison has been established with the developer and this has revealed a mutual desire to encourage the owners of the street-frontage properties to work towards re-energising New Inn Entry by enhancing both Entry points and “opening up” dead frontages with new shopfronts, open air sitting areas, upgraded car parking and landscape design.

Added value will result from the symbiosis between New Inn Entry’s transformation and that of both Gardyne’s Land and McManus Galleries.

AREA 3: MURRAYGATE (from Meadow Entry to Seagate)

The street name hints at its history, derived as it is from Thomas Randolph, Earl of Moray, Companion-in-Arms to Sir William Wallace and nephew to King Robert the

Bruce. This implies that Murraygate's origin is at least 14th century although, as the main route North, it must have existed earlier.

By the 18th century most houses here had timber fronts, creating a form of piazza and by 1805 several older houses had gardens "well stocked with trees, bushes and wells".

Several closes led off both sides and some survive in whole or in part today, a good example being Meadow Entry, opened up in 1775 to allow the passage of carts from Murraygate to the Meadows.

Prior to 1874 it terminated at Ward Road but with the construction of Commercial Street it was cut short and re-aligned to meet with the new street (now adjacent to the City Registrar's offices).

The fragmented ownership of the pieces of ground, to which Meadow Entry connects as it leads North from Murraygate, gives the lead as to how this area could be regenerated and accordingly there is liaison with the main property owners and general agreement on a retrieval mission to bring about facilities which could have been provided years ago, viz:

- a) Rationalised (and increased!) car parking provision.
- b) Enjoyable, landscaped pathways and sitting spaces.
- c) The opportunity for "back shops" to be transformed into "shop fronts" or some other form of accessible retail space.
- d) Improved fire escape as well as crime prevention measures.

Similar liaison has been established with key owners of the ground between Murraygate and Seagate and indeed this process could continue as far South as Dock Street.

There is therefore an opportunity for the indigenous business community to transform this area from one of shambolic back-court car parking and anonymous, under-used alley ways to a vibrant sequence of inter-connecting lanes, opening up the backs of properties facing the main streets and punctuated by pleasant landscaped pockets of rationalised car parking and sitting places.

AREA 4: CASTLE HILL

Few parts of Dundee have so much "unsung" history about them as that bounded by Exchange Street to the South, High Street to the North and Commercial Street and Castle Street respectively to the East and West.

Apart from the origins of the Castle itself, there are St Paul's Cathedral, several remains of ancient houses and closes built in to the present tenements and – most surprising of all – a large area of medieval underground masonry vaults, well preserved despite having remained undiscovered until late 2000.

This discovery highlights Dundee's ancient maritime history, reminding us that wharfage was once close to the present Exchange Street. It is therefore likely that the vaults were built as warehousing, conveniently close to the tidal edge of the River Tay.

The area is the subject of the City Council's "Site Planning Brief", a guide for the several developments currently being planned and again ongoing liaison has been established with the various Consulting Architects involved.

The added value of this section of the Dundee Closes Study will therefore be as a counterpoint to the City Council's own Planning Brief, acting as an "enabler" in encouraging the developers and designers who are already involved. In this way it is intended that the South face of the Cathedral and its environs will be "opened up" and permeation of the area with "liveliness" will be achieved by inter-linking remaining parts of the previous closes.

As to the future of the "underground" vaulting, an initial archaeological investigation by SUAT (Scottish Urban Archaeological Trust) in December 2000 revealed the condition of the vaults to be surprisingly good, despite being flooded: however since the purpose of that study was limited to establishing the status quo, no pro-active proposals for the vaults' future have yet been forthcoming.

One option would be for Dundee Civic Trust to take on the role of "champion" in developing a strategy which would facilitate the realisation of the full potential here. The issues involved range from ground ownership and vaults provenance to future accessibility, possible usage and Health and Safety.

AREA 5: COUTTIE'S WYND

(also known as Abbott's Wynd or Spalding's Wynd)

The modest impact of Couttie's Wynd, which runs from High Street South to Whitehall Crescent, belies its actual status as an historic main thoroughfare – one of the very few connecting City Centre and Harbour in days of yore. Even a rudimentary "face-lift" would give the passer-by a glimpse of what life must have been like when this street was in its prime or as it can be seen here in David Small's 19th century drawing.

Several theories exist as to the origins of various names of this Wynd. Favourite is that the land was given to a drover, named Coutie (sic), by King James V. This was a reward for the drover's valour in helping the King, with whom he had met up by chance on a journey, to drive off a band of would-be robbers.

The Wynd certainly pre-dated 1200, when it was chosen as the site of a mansion for David, Earl of Huntingdon.

Opportunity abounds here for regeneration – from the simplest “spring clean” and removal of bins through the adoption of an appropriate refuse strategy – to the addition of appropriate signage, lighting and interpretation and even wholesale re-introduction of retail shop fronts, entrances and street cafes. Indeed there are developments being considered along the length of Couttie’s Wynd – most notably the current alternative proposals for the redevelopment of the old Debenham’s (previously Draffen’s) Department Store.

Liaison has been established with developers’ Architects with a view to encouraging them to look upon the properties’ boundaries on to Couttie’s Wynd not as back shops but as potential shop fronts, from which street cafes could extend.

Physically unconnected to Couttie’s Wynd, but nearby and of great interest (if less intact) are other closes and wynds which are indicated on the accompanying plans:

- * St Mary’s Close (formerly St Margaret’s Close): No.30 Nethergate
- * Hary Ogilvie’s Close or Scott’s Close: No. 29 High Street to No.17 Crichton Street
- * “The Vault” to Castle Court and Greenmarket: No.17 High Street
- * Castle Wynd/Tendall’s (Tindal’s) Wynd: formerly No.4 High Street.

These speak little of their vivid history to the passer-by and all therefore present opportunities for full archaeological investigation to be completed and appropriate interpretative material to be prominently displayed in situ. A prerequisite here – as in all other closes in this study – would be that such consideration of interpretation is in the context of public art, providing innovative methods to promote understanding of the significance of the history which abounds.

AREA 1 –NETHERGATE

GRADING

The star rating shows how penetrable the close is. Thus * means the close is not penetrable and *** means it is fully penetrable. The letter C to A indicates how much historic fabric survives, C being the lowest and A denoting the highest.

Atholl Buildings, 60-64 Nethergate adjacent to close at 64 Nethergate () C**

History

This close does not have a name although the entrance on the left of the close informs that these are the Atholl Buildings, formerly occupied by a dentist in the 19th century. In the early 1950s the building served as the Atholl Hotel and latterly became an insurance brokers’ offices, the evidence of which still remains on the windows of its upper floors. The Rossleigh Garage formerly occupied part of the adjacent site to the West before it moved to the Western part of the Nethergate on the site now occupied by Dundee Contemporary Arts. This close, which appears to be a combination of older and modern architecture, turns East and meets with Malthouse Close.

Survey

The unattractive frontage greatly disguises the historic nature of this property. This close appears to have been redeveloped when the Nethergate Centre was built in 1975. Visual inspection shows that it once catered for car insurance, pensions, mortgages and investment companies. During its history the building has been harled, had its rubble exposed, painted black and later had a white rendering. Examination of photographs shows the building has been refaced between 1965 and 1975 with cement and the windows have been radically altered with modern dormers being formed

There was once a large amount of space between the Atholl Buildings and the tenement to the rear, however this has been built up, this being an all-too-common example of the character of an ancient building being hidden and disguised by successive building work. The East elevation of the close is a combination of different types of stonework. In order to determine how ancient it is a professional survey would be required. It appears to the observer to be closed whenever the property owners decide to lock the gates placed across it.

Examination of the South facing window viewed down the close shows that it is very similar to those of the 17th century section of Gardyne's Land facing the High Street and it is therefore likely that this is at least a 17th century building. Modern stonework has been used to unsympathetically alter the roof.

Opportunity

This close presents dual opportunities to access Yeaman Shore and explore the potential of Atholl Buildings and their enhancement. Perhaps the building could house flats. The unattractive cement facing on the Nethergate frontage should be removed, as should the gate. It should be cleaned and enhanced as a "backland" development forming a permanently re-opened alternative access to the Southern part of Malthouse Close and Yeaman Shore, re-invigorated as a busy thoroughfare.

Malthouse Close, 58 Nethergate to Yeaman Shore () A**

History

This close retains a wealth of artefacts. It gives access to part of the site of the Earl of Crawford's Lodging, some of which may still exist, although the site is difficult to survey as it is often closed by locked gates. It is recorded that the whole of Crawford's Lodging was completely demolished for the construction of Union Street (although the comprehensiveness of this demolition is highly debatable).ⁱ Its occupiers, the Lindsay Earls of Crawford, were a family of great aspiration and patronage. David de Lindsay married Princess Elizabeth Stewart a daughter of King Robert II, a "union which would fuel his descendants' claims to be of royal blood."ⁱⁱ At "about 1390 James Lindsay, (a relation of David Lindsay later knight and Earl of Crawford) granted a tenement in the burgh to the Trinitarian Canons or "Red Friars" for a hospital for the support of the brethren, infirm, aged and ailing."ⁱⁱⁱ This grant was later confirmed by King Robert III.^{iv}

Crawford's Lodging was once described as "vast" and predated 1400."^v This was the "...most ancient, extensive, of the many private aristocratic edifices in the town was the great house of the Earls of Crawford, called the 'Earl's Lodging' or 'Earl's Palace' with which its grounds and gardens extended from the Nethergate Southward to the shore, at that time part of the solum or strand of the river, and from Couttie's Wynd on the East, as far West as the School Wynd (also known as Kirk Style and South Lindsay Street)."^{vi} It can be ascertained from William Crawford Senior's map of 1776 that the main block was square in plan with round towers at each corner.^{vii} The lodging "was entered by a noble gateway, on the battlement of which was the legend - DAVID LORD LINDSAY, EARL OF CRAWFORD."^{viii}

Furthermore "a part of these extensive buildings, which must have been erected in the thirteenth century, was standing about 80 years ago with the letters "LINDESAY" embossed on the battlements."^{ix} The "urban dwelling of the Crawford house was situated in Dundee, of which the Lindsays were long the 'great folks' if not properly the 'lords'."^x Crawford's lodging was an extraordinary complex of buildings which reflected the wealth and high aspirations of the family which occupied it. The lightsome Lindsays were "a gifted, gallant, turbulent, carefree and tragic noble family."^{xi}

The construction of such an elaborate building by the Lindsays in Dundee was an act of significant shrewdness. The architecture reinforced to the locals that they were the most powerful family, which may have acted as a propaganda weapon when attempting to exhort the customs of Dundee. If family members could anticipate the movements and mood of the monarch they could hold an appropriate opinion and express it to the monarch to gain the greatest of royal favour. Conveniently Crawford's lodging was very close to St. Margaret's Palace and the Royal Palace in Whitehall Close to where visits could be made when the monarch visited Dundee.

On the 26th March 1777 there was "a fire up a closs in a malt kiln on the South side of the Nethergate in the fore part of the night got on fire and was burnt down but happily no damage was done but a steeping of malt was lost belonging to A Millar."^{xii} Such a fire would have been in close proximity to Crawford's Lodging which was still complete at this time. A. J. Warden states "after the downfall of the Lindsays (it) passed to other hands, and the Earl of Kellie built a mansion on part of the ground. In 1828 it was occupied by poor tenants but the rooms were large, the walls finely panelled with handsome carved corners and splendid large sculptured marble mantelpieces. It stood about the spot where the Thistle Hall in Union Street now stands and was taken down when that street was formed. The author was frequently in it collecting the rents for the Town Chamberlain."^{xiii}

In 1842 part of the site of Crawford's Lodging formed a garden.^{xiv} In 1910 parts of the Earl of Crawford's lodging allegedly still existed.^{xv} These may still exist. Alexander Maxwell states "it is said that part of its vaulted underbuilding yet remains underneath a modern superstructure."^{xvi} The Earls Inn was a substantial bow fronted villa built South of the site of Crawford's Lodging. The Earls Inn was demolished between 1921-1952.^{xvii} This site was later redeveloped for occupancy by one of the Rossleigh

Garages. The site was cleared later for the construction of the Nethergate Centre, which began in 1974.

Survey

This is one of the few closes which displays its name at the entrance although it has a controlled entry gate. The close is greatly underused. Several of the roof timbers are disturbingly exposed beyond the swing door entrance, where there are obvious signs of neglect. There are four floor levels which appear to be unused. There appear to be blocked up shop frontages in this close. Visual inspection shows the refurbishment of the Royal Hotel to the East followed a patch and mend approach. The rear of the Royal Hotel shows older stonework and the imprints of demolished buildings. The Yeaman Shore entrance to the close reveals a large wall which may have formed part of Crawford's Lodging or the Earl's Inn.

Nos. 21-25 Union Street is a neglected B listed building which appears to have been the victim of a fire. It has a fine stair tower to the rear, which is one of the most attractive features of this close. The rear of the West side of Union Street is where this close meets Yeaman Shore. The close is extremely unwelcoming with uncollected rubbish, apparently broken or blocked drains and low-hanging electricity cables. It has also acquired a wooden partition and a steel gate to block the route.

Opportunity

It could, as it has done for several centuries, provide access to Yeaman Shore and possibly house specialist shops of an historic nature as it may have performed a similar role in the past. There is a great likelihood that some archaeological levels from buildings such as the Malthouse survive and foundations of Crawford's Lodging may also still survive in this close and its vicinity from School Wynd to Couttie's Wynd. Their publicised investigation could be an example of Dundee rediscovering itself. Despite excellent exterior conservation on the Royal Hotel, the rear of the building is heavily degraded and requires enhancement. The removal of the corrugated iron, the two gates to the Southern entrance, the controlled nature of the Northern gate and the rebuilding of the derelict section should be an enhancement priority of a wider Nethergate townscape scheme. Once conserved the derelict section could add to the housing already in the Royal Hotel potentially increasing the value of those properties.

104 Nethergate to Yeaman Shore (*) C

History

Nothing is presently known of the history of this close but it once accommodated the kitchen of the first version of Green's Playhouse, latterly a bingo hall, whose exterior has been reconstructed after being destroyed by fire. In 1993 ground below Green's Playhouse was archaeologically excavated and a wide variety of fish and human bones were found.

Survey

The historic buildings of this close have long since disappeared. However the sight line and route still exist and the number of the close is on the wall of the adjacent 20th century public house.

Opportunity

The route could be opened down to Yeaman Shore and link into a network of re-invigorated closes to the East, both connecting and encouraging developments in Nethergate, the Nethergate Centre itself and Yeaman Shore.

Dick's Entry, 94 Nethergate (*) A**

History

Nothing is known of the history of the close.

Survey

This close leads to two ancient but overgrown gardens which illustrate the condition that closes can deteriorate into due to lack of access. Three buildings are of interest: the street frontage containing the Auld Steeple Guest House, the West elevation of Scott's Close or St. David's Court which is an apparently much older building and the rear building which has a steep staircase. There is evidence of rebuilding when the lower and upper levels are compared. The lower level of the rear building is clearly older as the stonework differs from the upper levels. The 1950s "improvements" attached to the Western wall of St. David's Halls can be viewed from the gardens in Dick's Entry. Camillo Sitte highlighted the importance of such spaces by stating "it is quite astonishing how many delightful small gardens are to be found in the interior of the building lots of towns; one has no suspicion of their existence before entering the courtyards and rear areas."^{xviii}

Opportunity

This close with its "secret" gardens could be re-opened to connect into a network of reinvigorated closes both connecting and encouraging developments in Nethergate, the Nethergate Centre itself and Yeaman Shore. In particular the gardens could become a delightful resting place, perhaps accommodating café/bar and retail outlets.

Gellatly's Square, 91 Nethergate (*) C

History

The best available knowledge implies this court lay in the Nethergate^{xix} and although no details of its past are presently known it appears to have had its entrance between St. David's Court and Dick's Entry.

Survey

Visual inspection implies that there may have been a close here, perhaps at the doorway of the property now occupied by Dollond & Aitchison but it is difficult to determine whether or not it still exists as it appears to have been blocked.

Opportunity

An opportunity exists to survey this close and if feasible reopen it.

Our Lady Gait, Scott's Close (including St. David's Rooms and "Court") 86 Nethergate (*) A**

History

Alexander Maxwell states "upon the South side of the kirkyard there stood a line of houses fronting the narrow lane called Our Lady Gait, the ground rents of which had been uplifted by the burgh treasurer."^{xx} However "the Council appointed hail feu-mails and annual rents in the kirkyard appertene to the kirkwark, and ordained the kirkmaster to collect and insert them in his rental, quhairwith he sall be chargit in his compts."^{xxi} In addition "one of these houses was 'ye Mason ludge' and the rental roll of 1581 shows that a feu of sixteen shillings was derived from it."^{xxii}

The unique archway at a lower level in the courtyard takes the close underneath the Masonic Lodge. In the 1916 Photographic Survey of Dundee Dr. A. H. Millar comments "the archway is caused by the passage being carried under a tenement, of which there were many such examples in the old closes between Nethergate and Fish Street. These were dominated by Cross Houses in old documents."^{xxiii} By its nature a Cross House can be explored by not actually going into the building but by using the close which penetrates it.

Survey

This is a critically significant group of buildings. An archaeological dig was done here in the post war period which apparently excavated some cellars of an architectural mix although it is doubtful if this event was ever recorded. It is described in the statutory list as "early 17th century, upper floors rebuilt early 18th century, extended to the South in the early 19th century"^{xxiv} but the archway at lower ground level appears to date from the Renaissance. However it is in urgent need of remedial work to both masonry and joinerwork and is currently blocked by a broken gate and bags of building materials.

The statutory list states "with Gardyne's House, this is the only pre-1700 secular building in the old burgh (a highly inaccurate statement). It is near the site of the Earl of Crawford's 15th century lodging (now probably beneath the Nethergate Centre)."^{xxv} However Historic Scotland who are the authors of the statutory list fail to consider several other properties such as 63 Seagate, 60-64 Nethergate, 68-70 Murraygate and 22 New Inn Entry. The word "probably" indicates a distinct lack of knowledge about

any remains of the Earl of Crawford's lodging which may have existed or indeed still do exist.

The Western and Southern buildings in this court are ancient. The archway is of particular importance. These buildings are perhaps the remains of one and possibly two substantial ancient merchant's houses, whose interiors have still to be surveyed.

Opportunity

These houses are a unique opportunity to evoke ancient Dundee. Perhaps the ancient crafts and skills of the masons could be implemented on their own premises. New windows could replace those bricked up; the modern cement rendering should be removed for archaeological investigation prior to harling. The removal of the binding material on the roof slates could also be investigated. The building masonry in the archway could be removed and the archway made penetrable again to Yeaman Shore. The character of the courtyard should be resurrected when redeveloped. The close receives a large amount of sun and could form an attractive alfresco seating area as part of a major redevelopment. Cafes have been opened in a similar environment in Flensburg in an initiative which radically regenerated the whole town centre.

Blair's Court, Mackenzie's Buildings, 82 Nethergate to Yeaman Shore (*) B**

History

No history is presently known about this close.

Survey

The curious can penetrate to the rear of St. David's Rooms and gain a long perspective down to Yeaman Shore. The East elevation of the Masonic Hall consists of a substantial ancient rubble wall, in urgent need of conservation work. There is a dental surgery and housing above the main tenement entrance. Access is considerably easier than in other parts of the city centre and yet it appears to be used only as a fire escape and rear entrance to the Nethergate Centre, laid out in a very space-consuming way.

Opportunity

Replacing the 1970s surface with more attractive paving could significantly enhance this close along with removal of the steel door at the Southern entrance. The large amount of space allocated to fire escape provision could be more imaginatively used and opened up to link into a network of re-invigorated closes both connecting and encouraging developments in Nethergate, the Nethergate Centre itself, St David's Rooms and Yeaman Shore.

AREA 2 – NEW INN ENTRY

GRADING

The star rating shows how penetrable the close is. Thus * means the close is not penetrable and *** means it is fully penetrable. The letter C to A indicates how much historic fabric survives, C being the lowest and A denoting the highest.

Rankine’s Court, 79 High Street (*) B**

History

This close obtained its name from Andrew Rankine who lived here previous to 1607 and the name has persisted till the present day. He was an energetic burgess who built a remarkable house in the Vault called Andrew Rankine’s Tower in 1607 which was demolished in 1868.^{xxvi} In 1677 the first George Dempster was born in Monifieth and settled early in Dundee, where he became a leading merchant and banker. Andrew Rankine acquired the estates of Dunnichen, Newbigging, Conachie, Laws and Ethiebeaton, all in Forfarshire.^{xxvii} The most notable fact in connection with Rankine’s Court is that the second George Dempster was born here in 1732 and spent his early years here.^{xxviii}

George Dempster “made his fortune as an exporter of grain and was so blamed by the inhabitants for this traffic during a time of famine that in 1720 his house in this close was raided by the mob and many valuables were taken away.”^{xxix} As a result of his considerable wealth George became proprietor of an earlier version of Skibo Castle circa 1786^{xxx} although it had originally belonged to the Bishops of Caithness and Sutherland.^{xxxi} During his eventful life he was also an MP for Forfar and Fife and a Provost of St. Andrews.^{xxxii}

Keillers the confectionery and preserve manufacturer later dominated the rear of the Northern High Street. For example the “extension to Keillers confectionery works in 1887 absorbed some of the buildings in Rankine’s Court and the adjoining Gray’s Close the latter of which has been in existence for over 400 years.”^{xxxiii} This may have severely altered the composition of the property in its adaptation for industrial use.

Survey

Rankine's Court has been considerably reconstructed although it continues to display qualities many thought had been eradicated. For example "there is a semi-octagonal 17th century stair tower to the rear of Arnott's. There are other walls, remains of buildings, stumps of closes etc. Collectively, there may be a greater concentration of remnants of 16th and 17th century than anywhere else."^{xxxiv} The stair tower may have once formed part of Andrew Rankine's House. The fine windows of this building can be viewed from New Inn Entry and have inner patterned glass shutters. Legal and General own the former jewellers Ernest & Jones that lies to the West of the entrance. There is an obscure space on the East elevation of the Forum Centre as viewed from the rear of the Forum Centre near Chapel Street. Like New Inn Entry, Rankine's Court is defaced by advertising boards which greatly degrade its character.

Opportunity

Rankine's Court, like Campbell's Close and Thom's Close once gave access to Meadowside and could do so again if the present Forum Centre is redeveloped. The significance of the stair tower needs to be established by thorough investigation so that it can play a part in redevelopment proposals

Thom's Close (99% demolished), 77 High Street (*) C

History

No historical facts are presently known about this close.

Survey

The West side of the 17th century stair tower in Rankine's Court forms part of what may have been this close, however it is completely inaccessible as it has been closed up. This may have been the site of the Fleece Inn, which was known to be in this area.

Opportunity

If a stump of this close does prove to exist to the rear of the Forum Centre, it could be preserved as a feature in any redevelopment. In any case full investigation should be carried out so that an interpretation installation can tell the story of this close in situ.

Campbell's Close, 74 High Street () B**

History

No history is presently known about this close.

Survey

Still retaining significant elements of character, the building that makes up the East of this close is part of the Arnott's complex of buildings whose redevelopment as several separate retail units is proposed. It is presently an anomaly, giving access to a largely

unoccupied building in a central busy High Street location. Currently the only occupant is a hairdressing salon. Generally the upper floors are in poor condition.

Opportunity

Opportunity exists here for the close as well as the properties it feeds to be redeveloped to more effectively capitalise on its busy High Street setting and its potential as a link through into a redeveloped Forum Centre.

Indeed there is further potential in that the latter could additionally link through to the adjacent Gardyne's Land

Bogmill Close, Alexander Kyd's Close, Gray's Close, 71 High Street (*) A

History

This is the Holy Grail of closes as it contains Gardyne's Land, a late medieval merchant's house and countless other unappreciated features. The building has three sections that were built in three different centuries. Gardyne's Land is a four storeyed and attic tenement, which has been partially industrially used. The rear of the building was remodelled early in the 19th century. Indeed although A.H. Millar thought that this close had "disappeared entirely!" this is Dundee's oldest complete domestic building and the oldest section was built in 1560.

In 1520 Bailie Andrew Barrie owned land called "Andrew Barrie's Meadow" at what is now the Northern end of Reform Street..^{xxxv} The High Street or Mercat Gait was well protected by its fine buildings in the 16th century. Alexander Maxwell records that "many of the houses in the market area had wooden fronts supported at the ground floor upon pillars within which were open piazzas which were sometimes used as workshops of craftsmen and often as the booths of merchants."^{xxxvi} Tibbie Barrie purchased an annual rent leviable from the ground of Gray's Close from her brothers, Andrew and James and at that time the buildings consisted of merely two merchant booths or ale cellars.

Andrew Barrie later sold the land to John Gardyne in 1560 and he built the oldest house in Gray's Close. George and David Gardyne were the sons of John Gardyne and became involved in the Earl of Huntly's rebellion in Aberdeen against King James VI in 1589. They were accused of "coming in apparel of war with flying standards against the king and the kings authority at Aberdeen to the Bridge of Dee and for other offences by the said persons excepting the murder of the kings father (Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley) and the Regents (James Stewart, Mary Queen of Scots half brother) and James Douglas, Earl of Morton."

At this stage there were not many luckenbooths (locked trading booths). Instead "the goods being usually displayed upon benches within the open front, and sometimes on permanent stone erections upon the street."^{xxxvii} On the 29th January 1556 a dispute arose concerning these booths between John Gardyne and Alexander Kyd. For

example “Alexander Kyd had a heich buith and John Gardine had a laich buith in ane fore land lying upon the North side of the Hie Mercat Gait.”^{xxxviii} There was a “stane bink” at the entrance which was used “for outsetting of stands affore the buith.”^{xxxix} This was removed and Alexander accused John of “the wrangous away-taking of the bink.”^{xl} After much fact finding and listening to various witnesses the baillies found “that the bink wes affore the burning of the burgh of twa stanes, the ane of thicker less quantitie than the other.”^{xli}

As is stated previously the first recorded owner of the building was John Gardyne who purchased ground from Andrew Barrie who appears to have possessed the property after his sister. John Gardyne built and became the first occupier of the house in 1560. The house was built on land which was previously occupied by luckenbooths (locked trading booths).^{xlii} In July 1590 George and David Gardyne were pardoned for their treason. The Gardyne family also possessed the 16th century unfortified Gardyne Castle at Gardyne in Angus.^{xliii}

The next time Gardyne’s Land is mentioned is in connection with James Kyd. “He was chosen as a lieutenant for the defence of the Seagate quarter of the town in September 1643.”^{xliv} During this time the town was being besieged during the Civil War and some of it was burned by the Royalist army led by General James Graham, Marquis of Montrose in support of King Charles I. At this time “the Town Council decreed that the town should be watched nightly and quhil it pleases the Lord to settle the present troubles.”^{xlv} Later “the house was in possession of John Melville, who was Treasurer of the Burgh in 1665 and Bailie and three times Dean of Guild. He disponed it to William Donaldson and Patrick Smith, sometime Deacon of the Hammermen.”^{xlvi}

For several generations Patrick Smith’s family were clockmakers or “knock-smiths” in this close from 1660 to 1732. The clock in William Adam’s Town House was made by one of them. From 1605 this passage was known as Alexander Kyd’s close. In 1723 it became known as Bogmill’s Close after David Maxwell of Bogmill and from 1810 to the present day it has been known as Gray’s Close after James Gray who became a proprietor of Gardyne’s Land. He was also son-in-law of Samuel Bell (possibly the architect) and grandfather of William Flowerdew of Graybank,^{xlvii} which appropriately links back to the Gray family of the House of Gray mansion West of Dundee.

Dr. William Raitt an eminent physician lived in the close in the 18th century. Dr. George Buist published the Dundee Guardian in 1834 from Gray’s Close and one of the first penny newspapers circulated in the locality, the Dundee Times, was printed here by D. R. Clark in 1855.^{xlviii}

Several Lord Provosts of Dundee have also lived in the land and the adjacent buildings such as^{xlix}:

William Kinneris 1646-47;
 Sir Thomas Mudie 1648-53;
 David Maxwell 1723-25;
 James Fairweather 1729-34;

Patrick Maxwell 1734-36;
David Brown 1820-35.

Sir Thomas Mudie was Provost of Dundee in 1651 when Dundee was besieged by Cromwell's army led by General Monck. David Maxwell was the developer of Newport-on-Tay and was made bankrupt by that speculation. Gardyne's Land later became the possession of John Melville who was Treasurer of the Burgh in 1665; subsequently he became a Baillie and was the Dean of Guild on three occasions. It was James Fairweather who proposed and carried through the building of the Town House in 1732.¹ It appears that the 16th century section of Gardyne's Land was a public house in 1858.^{li}

In 1887 Gardyne's Land was in the possession of John M. Keiller who removed the timber joists inscribed with poetry dating from 1635 from a house in Gray's Close, possibly from the 17th century section of Gardynes Land.^{lii} These were allegedly placed in the care of Dundee Museum's staff and are supposedly "lost". However it is possible that they are in obscure storage with several other "forgotten" artefacts. If so they could go on public display in a restored Gardyne's Land. This was the beginning of the industrial phase of the land's history dominated by Keillers the confectioners. This period lasted from the 1880s to 1974.^{liii} In 1978 Keillers factory was demolished and soon after the Keiller Centre, later known as the Forum Centre, was constructed. Signs of several more recent occupants of the property are still included in the building such as MacLeod the Bagpipemaker, W. C. Ferguson the Watchmaker and the Windsor Guest House which catered for the lower end of the residential market.

Survey

The only view the public can obtain of the oldest section of Gardyne's Land, is from the uncovered section of New Inn Entry. The 17th and 18th century sections front the High Street. This close currently performs the function of a locked fire escape for the Key Centre. It is blocked to the public and does not appear to have been open for some considerable time.

Aerial photographs show that Keillers site was a labyrinth of old reused buildings and modern manufacturing buildings. In 1995 the Scottish Urban Archaeological Trust found 17 shards of pottery dating from the 12th to the 15th century in Gray's Close. In addition they excavated fragments of stone roofing slate, an oyster shell, and various domestic animal bones. They also excavated part of a well here, which dates from the 13th century.^{liv} Negotiations did persist between Tayside Building Preservation Trust and the owner, Prudential Assurance Company until 2000.

When the redevelopment of land formerly occupied by Keillers factory was considered, the main concerns of the Development Control committee were residential amenity and car parking standards. This meant that there had to be a specific amount of parking spaces and the Forum Centre was to be a low-level development so it would not overlook housing.^{lv} (Note the pastiche arcading at the entrance to the Forum Centre which lies adjacent to the Arctic Bar. Unlocking the historic potential of Gardyne's Land was apparently not considered at that time).

Gardyne's Land has been the subject of several unrealistic and unsympathetic plans. One of the most ill informed was a 1974 plan, which proposed that it "be taken down stone by stone and re-erected to appear exactly the same in New Inn Entry, about 40 feet to the West."^{lvi} The section of Gardyne's Land which fronts the High Street at 68-76 would have been "demolished and rebuilt to look exactly the same as it does today."^{lvii} This was to enable Boots the Chemist to attach a large department store to the building. Corrugated iron has roofed the oldest section since 1974.

Opportunity

Gardyne's Land is the oldest domestic property of the 16th century in Dundee^{lviii} and for the last 30 years could have made a valuable contribution to Dundee's economy and image with the 16th century section as a first class visitor attraction in the city centre.

Gardyne's Land requires a large amount of consistent publicity to bring it into the public domain and to keep it there. The fact that it is Dundee's oldest domestic building more than justifies its conservation.

This close represents a heritage-rich standard to which the restoration of other closes can aspire. It could provide access to a new public square around Gardyne's Land and give access to a rebuilt Forum Centre, which does not presently address itself in any way to one of the best surviving historic areas of Dundee. The opportunity to extend the close North into the surrounding area more constructively must be a priority.

Croom's Close, 66 High Street to New Inn Entry (*) B**

History

This narrow, dark close leads from the High Street, turns East and meets New Inn Entry. It retains an ancient stair tower and a blocked up well. It is likely that this close was named after William Croom, a local businessman, and prominent individual. According to A.C. Lamb, when referring to Miln's buildings in the Nethergate, "another proprietor in this building was John Croom, haberdasher, probably the son of William Croom."^{lix} The "ground floor of the Union Hall consisted of shops which were let to traders of various kinds while the upper portion was reserved for ecclesiastical purposes (the upper section was known as the English Chapel). One of the shops was possessed by John Croom, haberdasher and wholesale merchant by whom the Dundee halfpenny of 1798 bearing the Towns Arms was issued."^{lx} In March 2001 it acquired a gate as it is deemed a "private close" although it has been accessible since the 17th century.

Survey

It is fortunate that an expanding Timpsons or H. Samuel has not swallowed up Croom's Close as it presently provides an historic alternative route from the High Street to the open section of New Inn Entry. The building should be the subject of a survey prior to being considered for possible refurbishment, e.g. as housing. This would provide the opportunity to photograph any historic interiors and sympathetically redevelop it. The degrading gate near the Northern exit of the close

has recently been closed and its removal can become a stimulant to regeneration. (Both the High Street and New Inn Entry entrances acquired gates in March 2001). The close is sometimes filled with a variety of rubbish and therefore it can be reasonably argued that its poor condition is not only an eyesore but a fire hazard.

Opportunity

An opportunity exists here for “backland” development. The quality of the building on the East elevation of Croom’s Close should be thoroughly investigated. The enhancement of this close would involve the unlocking of all three gates and consideration of housing in upper floors, accessed from the (refurbished) ancient stair tower. The opening and enhancement of the rear of properties such as Costa Coffee and McDonalds in Reform Street would encourage people to use the close and in so doing to enjoy the sheltered alfresco sitting areas which could be provided.

New Inn Entry, 67 High Street to Meadowside via Chapel Street (*) A**

History

Prior to the construction of Reform Street this was the premier access from the town to the Meadows and it still provides a pleasantly sheltered access, though curtailed, to Meadowside. This close was named after a hotel at the junction of the High Street in the early 19th century.^{lxi}

Historian James Thomson comments that “the theatre (this predates that formerly in Yeaman Shore) in the New Inn Entry was purchased and converted into a church by the relief congregation in 1799.”^{lxii} This is reinforced by the Missionary Magazine for October 1799 which states “a number of people adhering to the Relief connection have recently purchased a house, formerly occupied as a place of public amusement and have fitted it up as a meeting house.”^{lxiii} This property “was sold for £650 to the Constitutionals who had left Overgate Church in 1802.”^{lxiv} Later the congregation disintegrated and in 1819 the minister John Lawson moved to Manchester.^{lxv}

This close appears to have existed in some form, long before it was given its present name, as a footpath which provided access from the High Street to the Meadows in 1776.^{lxvi} In 1793 William Wilson, a wood merchant, built up the West frontage of this entry with tenements and gardens.^{lxvii} The frontage buildings of the close have been repeatedly altered and reconstructed: for example in 1832 the West elevation of the close was cleared to allow development of the East elevation of Reform Street. However it does not appear this demolition was comprehensive. According to Charles Edward and his 1846 map of Dundee the former relief mission church is marked as “FC”. Using the context of the rest of this map in which many churches are highlighted the implication is that this building appears to have been used as a Free Church in 1846. City Engineer and Architect James Thomson produced a map of Dundee and its suburbs in 1915 and the same building is still designated as a church.

Alexander Lamb claims that the zigzag conformation and irregular level of the old footpath was maintained at the end of the 19th century. In the 19th century several publications were produced from New Inn Entry such as the Dundee Courier and

Argus, Northern Warder and the Weekly News.^{lxviii} It probably acquired its newest name when the Arctic Bar was constructed and this became the “new inn”. Prior to this it was probably the footpath to the Meadows. By 1900 the North East and South West frontages were redeveloped with the extension of Keillers confectionery works. These frontages were maintained until the development of the Keiller Centre, now called the Forum Centre.^{lxix} The North East frontage may survive beneath along the line of the cobbled street and the 1970s Forum Centre frontage.

Survey

There are two substantial properties at 20 - 22 New Inn Entry, which retain characteristics which are at least 18th century and possibly earlier. One of these appears to have been the theatre which later became a church. The Northern property has the remains of a high relieving arch in dressed stone, like Gardyne’s Land. It is also illustrated on Crawford’s Plan of 1776 and survived the demolition involved in the development of Reform Street. Both properties have rubble stonework, and may once have formed a church complex. The Southern property has been radically altered, whilst the Northern property shows a greater amount of ancient stonework.

The Southern building appears to have been an Evangelical Union Chapel during the 19th century. In the 20th century it has been used as a pool hall.

The 1952 Survey and Plan Advisory Report proposes a brave new world of demolition, renewal and uniformity of design which still has the power to terrify. It states “as an ultimate proposal it is strongly recommended that this industry (former Keillers sweet factory) be eventually removed from the central area leaving an area free for the creation of a further intimate shopping group. The interior of this block could be converted into a very attractive shopping court.”^{lxx} Furthermore “the backs of existing shops fronting the surrounding streets would be concealed by lining the interior of the court with additional shops facing into the court and behind which shops would be a service road serving both the inner and outer shops.”^{lxxi} The 1952 Survey and Plan suggests that “the pedestrian entrances (such as New Inn Entry and Rankines Court) to the shopping court would be from High Street to Meadowside, and would be of such a nature as to permit additional window display space to be incorporated along the entrance sides.” This example of the freedom given to retailers makes the survival of the priceless closes on the North side of the High Street remarkable.

Inappropriate advertising boards do not enhance each side of this well used close and B listed building and do nothing to enhance Dundee’s public face. The property presently occupied by the Northern Rock Building Society has a historic rear stair similar to that, which once stood in the Vault. Interestingly, the lower half is whitewashed while the upper section is not. The door to the West of the stair tower has acquired a degrading roller shutter contrary to local plan policy. Ironically the Arctic Bar proudly promote their “patio garden” adjacent to their premises.

Opportunity

A comprehensive survey must be undertaken of this close and the adjacent related closes and their future role. There are a number of factors, which should be considered here such as floorscape and restrictions which could be placed on parking in order to upgrade this area. Trading vehicles should have restricted access instead of the domination they hold at present. The possible demolition and reconstruction of the present Forum Centre should be considered. Such a space in the centre of Warsaw has been completely pedestrianised with cafes, restaurants, and museums, in addition to residences.^{lxxii} All the buildings here must be encouraged to fulfil a more imaginative role as part of historic Dundee and high quality housing could be incorporated as a way of promoting the benefits of living in historic central Dundee.

Once enhanced, this close would continue to provide an alternative highly attractive route from Meadowside to the High Street and vice versa. Current development plans at both ends of New Inn Entry are indeed timely: encompassing Albert Square and the McManus Galleries to the North and Gardyne's Land and the Arnott's Building to the South, this up-grading of New Inn Entry would generate an unusually potent symbiotic effect both enhancing and being enhanced by all of these developments.

AREA 3 – MURRAYGATE

GRADING

The star rating shows how penetrable the close is. Thus * means the close is not penetrable and *** means it is fully penetrable. The letter C to A indicates how much historic fabric survives, C being the lowest and A denoting the highest.

The Murraygate takes its name from Thomas Randolph, Earl of Moray, who was a companion in arms of Sir William Wallace and of King Robert the Bruce, while also being the King's nephew.^{lxxiii} This strongly implies that the route dates from at least the 14th century although there must have been a route here prior to this, as this was the principal route North. During the 18th century the majority of houses in the Murraygate had timber-fronted additions creating a piazza.^{lxxiv} In 1805 several older houses were described as having gardens well stocked with trees, bushes and wells.^{lxxv} These gardens are well illustrated on maps of central Dundee by William Crawford Senior (in 1776) and his son William Crawford Junior (in 1793). Furthermore houses on the North side were in a fair state of repair though back tenements which abutted on to the town wall were described then as “waste and burned.”^{lxxvi}

The 1871 Improvement Act radically changed the numbering of Murraygate properties between the Victorian period and the twentieth century. The properties known as “the narrows” were very tightly packed together which is in contrast to the present architecture. Historically, prior to the 1871 Improvement Act, the Murraygate met with the High Street at Rankine's Court. During the implementation of this act the relationship between the Murraygate and the High Street changed considerably. For example it is recorded as the “site of the Narrows site now renamed West High Street.”^{lxxvii} This is actually the North Eastern part of the modern High Street. Furthermore St. Paul's Court in 1853-54 was No. 61 Murraygate although it is now No. 23 as its Murraygate entrance indicates.^{lxxviii} This change is the reason for confusion over exactly what is or is not the High Street or Murraygate. It is suggested that “archaeological deposits in the Narrows area are probably sealed and of potential interest.”^{lxxix} The Murraygate once had numerous closes leading off it on the East and West sides. Several have since been demolished, amalgamated or buildings have been replaced to expand floorspace, which makes the existing closes all the more valuable.

Regrettably in contrast to the impression of bustle given in the foregoing description the Murraygate is nowadays almost deserted at night.

Coupar's Alley, 66 Murraygate (demolished) (*) C

History

It is likely that this was beside Coupar's or Peter Cooper's Tavern in the Murraygate, where in 1801 two American medical students were arrested as French spies.^{lxxx}

Survey

This close ran between Pullar's and Miller's closes, possibly where a ceramic shop formerly operated. This fine late 19th / early 20th century building now operates as a jeweller.

Opportunity

There may be a possibility of reinstating closes as part of future redevelopment and this close should be considered as part of such a scheme.

Peter Street, 102 Murraygate to Seagate (*) B**

History

Peter Street leads from the Murraygate to the Seagate and was constructed between 1776 and 1793 through the frontage of the Murraygate (probably combining several closes). John Peter, a Wright, developed the North and South frontages in 1793.^{lxxxii} He appears to have given his name to the street.

Survey

This street is an example of what can be achieved in terms of paving technique. However in contrast it is surprising that its 18th century Murraygate tenement, archway and stair tower have been demolished when listed buildings are so heavily protected. This appears to have been done for commercial reasons. The street has many dead frontages, which include properties which do not serve any useful purpose such as commercial or housing. There is only a Masonic lodge on the Western side and it has an unexplored, inaccessible close at No.21, which appears to contain a valuable part of old Dundee. Inside this close there is a stair of Victorian white stonework.

Opportunity

This street has a great deal of unfulfilled potential in both retail and housing aspects. According to signage it is supposed to be a pedestrian zone although traffic can often be seen in it. The frontages could be reopened to provide a greater amount and variety of uses to bring new life to this passage, with new shop fronts, signage, lighting and street furniture. It should be considered in the context of being one link in the chain of alternative routes between Albert Square, Murraygate, Seagate and Dock Street.

Horse Wynd, Kings Vennel, Murraygate to Seagate (*) C**

History

In ancient times this formed almost the only communication between the Murraygate and Seagate and it is of unrecorded antiquity. It is found as early as 1449 when it was described as being built on both sides which implies that it is far older than this date. It is described in a charter of 1465 as the "Kings Vennel, anciently called Horse Wynd."^{lxxxiii} It would have been under the jurisdiction of King James III as he occupied the Scottish throne at the time. At this time the property on Western side belonged to

Robert Graham of Fintry, who was Lord Provost of Dundee in 1466 and many of the principal burgesses had mansions in Horse Wynd.^{lxxxiii} Conveniently, Robert Graham of Fintry's Chaplaincy was only a few hundred yards away in Mitchell's Close in the Seagate. Unfortunately it appears that "Sir David (Graham) was probably the first to make Mains his principal place of residence, possibly because his house was burnt by the English in 1548."^{lxxxiv} As the first market cross and tollbooth stood in the Seagate, this passage would have given easy access from the Murraygate to what was the centre of the burgh.

"The extent of the frontages had been maintained up to 1776 and again in 1793".^{lxxxv} In 1858 the wynd was slightly widened and in 1868 the Bank of Scotland building was constructed. This building was attached to an earlier structure, that of Beattie's Close, the remains of which can be viewed (with permission) to the rear of the Bank of Scotland. The wynd's relationship with the Seagate has changed considerably and in 1900 its junction with the Seagate was cleared on the North side. It was rebuilt in 1921 with an extensive basement.^{lxxxvi} Perhaps it was near this street where a horse is alleged to have trampled and killed a small baker's boy in Dundee in the 1820s.^{lxxxvii} The apparition of this boy is said to appear in July following the route he took to work. In 1905-06 there was a messenger, registrar, fishcurer as well as warehousemen and wine merchants who all had their premises in Horse Wynd.^{lxxxviii} However only 53 years later in 1958-59 electrical wholesalers McColl & Sheppard were the last business to occupy premises accessed directly from Horse Wynd.^{lxxxix}

Survey

The extensive rebuilding of Horse Wynd between 1900-1921 changed the historic, physical and economic nature of the wynd. From a historic and physical perspective, older buildings would have been cleared to allow the expansion of Marks & Spencer and making Dundee "more modern" in doing so. Architecturally the businesses that were established in the older buildings would have been demolished to give way to new large-scale retailing. Therefore frontages in Horse Wynd appear to have declined as Marks & Spencer began to dominate.

This is one of two closes which have been resurfaced. However no attention has been given to the building frontages on to the street. There are few remains of any ancient building in this wynd although foundations may still exist and the name provides an interesting link with its previous use. Today however all it gives access to is Bank of Scotland senior employees' car parking. The character of Horse Wynd is similar to that of Couttie's Wynd. There are no street signs at the Southern entrance to indicate the name of the wynd, while the sign at the Northern entrance requires repainting.

Opportunity

This wynd needs to have a more purposeful function linked to its early history rather than its present bland status. Enhancement of properties in this wynd, particularly that of Marks & Spencer, should be considered, perhaps taking inspiration from improvements in Globe Close in Dumfries, which has artwork based on the works of Robert Burns.^{xc} This "is a commendable example of art being incorporated imaginatively, historically and creatively into the culture of these Closes and Vennels

resulting in the improvement of the built environment, public open space, enhanced pedestrian links and promotion of greater use of these spaces.”^{xc1} It might be that such a scheme could be led by disenfranchised local people of all ages, developing social inclusion and discouraging graffiti and vandalism of other closes and buildings. Initially a full archaeological investigation should be carried out prior to drawing up proposals for appropriate upgrading of buildings and installation of an interpretative display. This should be considered in the context of being one link in the chain of alternative pedestrian routes between Albert Square/Murraygate and Dock Street.

Beattie’s Close, 93 Murraygate (*) C

History

Nothing is known of the history of this close.

Survey

A stump of what appears to be Beattie’s Close still exists and is built into the rear of the Bank of Scotland. Full archaeological investigation should be carried out to allow an appropriate interpretative installation to be displayed at a suitable point in Horse Wynd.

Opportunity

Even this fragmentary example of ancient Dundee has an educational role of illustrating the ancient nature of the Murraygate.

“St. Paul’s Court”, 23 Murraygate to 36 Seagate (*) A**

History

The name of this close is obtained from “a tradition supported by some early 19th century historians, that the first church in Dundee was that of St. Pauls, a Culdee establishment between Murraygate and Seagate.”^{xcii} The Culdee movement was active “in Ireland as early as the 8th century. Keledei, Celi De or Culdees - friends of God set up isolated religious communities.”^{xciii} One such community was established at Monifieth whose sculptured stones “suggest continuity through the 8th to the 10th centuries.”^{xciv} Between “1201-04 Malcolm Gilchrist, Earl of Angus gave the church with its dependant chapels, lands, teinds and pastures to Arbroath Abbey.”^{xcv} However there was Culdee community at Monifieth until circa 1220.^{xcvi} St. Paul’s may have been a dependant chapel of Monifieth and possibly of a similar age.

It is alleged “St. Paul’s Church (and graveyard that were allegedly once upon this site according to the 1858 Government Survey map) stood between the Murraygate and Seagate nearly opposite Mauchline Tower Court.”^{xcvii} It is “the first church known in Dundee seems to have been that dedicated to St. Paul. At what time it was erected, or how it was endowed, or by whom are alike unknown. Even the place where it stood, and its burying ground, have been for ages occupied by other buildings.”^{xcviii} If it did

exist, it was one of Dundee's seventeen or so medieval churches, chapels and altars.^{xcix}

The anonymous M. S. writing in 1776 states "St. Paul's Church stood betwixt Murraygate and Seagate streets is also said to have been a stately building, a cross stood at mouth of the broad Murraygate street over against where the Closs. A coach road came from the house of Dudhope straight over to this church."^c Unfortunately A. Nicoll does not appear to have visited the site in 1776. If a visit had been made "niches, sculptured stones and pieces of mouldings, relics of the demolished and decorated pile" which are alleged to have been part of St. Paul's Church may have been discovered.^{ci} It is alleged there "is nothing to prove however that the early architectural fragments, possibly with religious associations incorporated into later buildings came from ecclesiastical buildings redevelopment in the 19th century."^{cii} In contrast S.U.A.T. state "although widely recorded in the nineteenth-century literature this site can be dismissed as a result of confusion with the altarage of St. Paul."^{ciii}

The existence of this church is also disputed by Alexander Lamb. He argues "it has been supposed that there was a chapel dedicated to St. Paul which has been designated as the first church known in Dundee and which was located between Murraygate and Seagate."^{civ} Moreover "in proof of this statement allusion has been made by writers on the subject to 'St. Paul's Land' and 'St. Paul's Court'. There is no foundation for this theory and it is directly contradicted by existing documents."^{cv} At the very least there was a religious house located here and this has probably been the source of the niches, sculptured stones and mouldings said to have come from a religious building whether a church or a tenement.

The Ye Olde Hat and Hosiery House formerly occupied the present JD Sports building in 1896.^{cvi} It has been recorded that "an entry called St. Paul's Close giving access to the church from the Murraygate, was only shut up in the last few years."^{cvii} This would have been in the 1872/73 period as part of the 1871 Improvement Act implementation. This close is a modern combination of the entrance to Lamb's coffee-house and St. Paul's Court. It is understood that the coffee house entrance lay in between what is now Dixons and JD Sports. It still retains the interesting "True Rest Furniture" sign above the entrance although this business has long since left the area.

Survey

Only archaeological investigation can confirm or deny the existence of this church. If it did exist it would be extremely interesting and pioneering to establish the dimensions and size of this church and its graveyard. It may have suffered grievously at the hands of Reformation minded mobs, as did several other buildings when Dundee was the "Geneva of the North". However it is interesting that not all of Dundee's religious buildings suffered the same fate.

The site appears to have been redeveloped several times and contains several blocked up doorways. The character is narrow where it leads down from the Murraygate, widening as it moves West and develops into a sheltered courtyard. Immediately to

the East are ancient groined vaulted foundations of what appears to have been part of the Star Inn, forming the lower levels of what became the Old Bank Bar. This frontage is now occupied by Dixons. The close is easily penetrable and invites the interested student to examine a number of architectural features. At the West end of the close there is an L-shaped stair, which may have been part of Ferguson's Close, Mason Lodge Close or Cathro's Close which lay to the West of St. Paul's Court. There are five floors of fine stained glass windows in the rear elevation of Burton's.

Opportunity

A full archaeological investigation is essential here, but as a first step measures should be taken to remove the present "log jam" of informal car parking which contests for space. This close has great character and provides excellent access from the Murraygate to the Seagate. This area could form another excellent, atmospheric sheltered café/seating area to add to Dundee's growing "café culture". In conjunction with such enhancement the groined vaulted section could be opened up and developed. Indeed opportunities abound here for traders to benefit from additional retail frontages on to St Paul's Court, thus encouraging public use of it and reinstating it as a main alternative route, linking Albert Square/Murraygate and Dock Street.

Mauchline Tower Court, 14 Murraygate () B**

History

The Mauchline tower was a large tower house that occupied this site in medieval times. It was a substantial dwelling of four floors whose architecture was similar to the tower which once stood in Fish Street. W.J. Smith comments "at the North-West corner of the broad of the Murraygate stood the Mauchline Tower; no date can be assigned for the erection of this building but it must have been very ancient for when the 'Town Walls' were erected, they were built against the walls of the tower, which in ancient times was the town residence of the Lords Mauchline (the secondary title of the noble family of Loudon, a branch of that of Argyle)."^{cviii}

The Scottish Urban Archaeological Trust claim it was demolished in 1812 and they claim there is no detailed record of its appearance.^{cix} This statement is incorrect as it was actually demolished between 1870-73 as part of the 1871 Improvement Act.^{cx} Several photographic collections including the Archive Department of the University of Dundee possess photographs of this building. The Dog Well lies near the Murraygate entrance.

In 1896 this building served as the "Machlan Tower Temperance Hotel". The family of Alexander Crawford Lamb owned the hotel. The "Temperance" was a religious movement which promoted abstinence from alcohol.

Survey

Part of the Mauchline Tower appears to still exist and is attached to the rear of 12-16 Murraygate. The entrance is blocked with a false covering and the close has been filled with rubble. Photographs from the Charles Wilson Collection in the Wellgate

Library Local Studies section prove that this was once used as an entrance.^{cxii} More recently this property housed Potter's shoeshop, although 12-16 Murraygate is now occupied by Radio Rentals. It is a historic property, which is timber fronted on the fifth and sixth floors and has fine early 20th century Arts and Crafts windows. The first three floors date from the 18th century and this can be observed in photographs of old Dundee. The fourth and fifth floors date from the 1911 Arts and Crafts refurbishment of the property. The third, fourth and fifth floors are all vacant.

The stair tower seen from Meadow Entry has been severely altered. An additional floor has been added to the stair tower and this section is harled. It is likely that historic interiors will have survived, most of these would have dated from the Arts and Crafts period and perhaps even from the 18th century.

Opportunity

Such surviving examples should be conserved. The possibility of using the long since vacant third, fourth and fifth floors as housing could be explored using an enhanced stair tower and/or a reopened Mauchline Tower Court. The housing could be accessed using the stair tower if the bland wooden partition dividing Meadow Entry from the Mauchline Tower Court could be removed. Any historic interiors could be photographed and used as a marketing tool to promote such a venture.

This close like many others presents considerable opportunities for enhancement and re-use. The false covering and the rubble could be removed creating an entrance to access the upper floors which could be used more constructively perhaps as housing - just as the Mauchline Tower was once used. This building could form part of an enhanced closes walk programme in addition to becoming a prominent part of "Doors Open Day" like Upper Dens Mill, which latterly has been converted to housing.

Meadow Entry, 16-20 Murraygate (*) A**

History

This fascinating, long close was opened up in 1775 and offered passage for carts from the Meadows to the Murraygate. The close was further developed by the construction of a simple 1783 tenement by Wright David Rait who laid out the West side of the entry and Mason Thomas Wood who laid out the East side. Originally it connected Murraygate to the Meadows but prior to 1874, Meadow Entry terminated when it met Ward Road and when Commercial Street was constructed it was realigned West to meet with the new street.

Survey

Where it now turns West to meet with Commercial Street; one side of the Entry still retains the close sign. Its architecture ranges from the ancient stair of the Mauchline Tower to the curving bow of the Registrars Offices. 14-20 Murraygate and 2-4 Meadow Entry represent the 18th century buildings in the entry and indicate the frontage line.^{cxiii} In 1965 a Mrs. E.S.J. Petrie lived here.^{cxiii} In the late 1980s this

complex of buildings was radically changed involving much rebuilding. What is not clear is the previous condition of the building, why and how it was altered and what these changes ultimately achieved. However the building was probably altered like many in the Murraygate for commercial reasons motivated by private sector concerns as opposed to those of the public sector.

Opportunity

Redeveloped housing in the Mauchline Tower could be accessed from Mauchline Tower Court as well as Meadow Entry. The most striking opportunities here however are for a whole series of initiatives, which could be taken to allow property owners to exploit the symbiotic relationships to be developed between Meadow Entry and each other. This would result in additional, rationalised car parking, pleasant landscaped pathways and improved service and fire escape access as well as business opportunities for additional frontages on to Meadow Entry.

Cameron's Close, 24 Murraygate to Meadowside (partially blocked circa 1986) () B**

History

Like many other closes, little is known of the history of this one.

Survey

This close can only be partially used now as only a small part remains. The fragment, which does remain runs from Meadowside into the backcourts of the Murraygate properties. It is clear that Etam have swallowed up this close and have questionably traversed two properties in doing so. This close still existed and was fully penetrable in the early 1980s and it was as a result of the substantial reconstruction of this building in the late 1980s Cameron's Close became blocked.

No 21 Albert Square is a Victorian building which has elevations on to both Albert Square and Cameron's Close. The frontage has been unattractively clad but photographic evidence shows that it was once adorned by sculpted classical maidens which may yet be in place behind the added cladding.

Opportunity

The classical maidens could be re-carved by apprentice stonemasons and perhaps improvement of the Albert Square property could take place using the facade enhancement grant scheme or a similar initiative. An opportunity exists to upgrade this close and detailed enhancement proposals should be prepared to maximise the integration of its new floorscape, signage and street furniture with those of the currently proposed enhancement of Albert Square.

McIntosh's Close 38 Murraygate to Meadowside (*) C

History

No history concerning this close is presently known.

Survey

This close has long since been closed up, cutting off another route from the Murraygate to Meadowside. No historic facts have been discovered on the history of this close. Part of the access still remains through the arch of the former Prudential building in Meadowside. The access of the close in the Murraygate appears to have been insensitively redeveloped in the 1980's. The older building was demolished and replaced by a property which no longer retains a Murraygate entrance.

Opportunity

There is an opportunity for the integration of new floorscape, signage and street furniture with that of the upgraded Albert Square. Perhaps this could be done under the auspices of a Dundee renewal trust.

Pullar's Close, 62 Murraygate to Meadowside (unblocked on 14.4.1988^{cxiv} - "partially blocked circa 7/1988") () C**

History

James Pullar was a baker who lived from 1735 to 1811 and may have lived and/or had his premises in this close. When he died he bequeathed his means to the Dundee Royal Infirmary, the Kirk Session and the Nine Trades and for the education of ten poor boys by the name of Pullar.^{cxv} The Meadowside entrance to this close was the site of the Lion's Round, which was a blockhouse.^{cxvi} Apparently "this was probably contemporary and integral with the sixteenth century town wall. It is probable that the site is now archaeologically sterile but a number of questions remain to be answered regarding the relationship between the tower, the walls and the town buildings and the date at which the site was cleared."^{cxvii}

Survey

This close has been "plugged"^{cxviii} and Miller's and Pullar's Closes appear to have "merged". By 1858 the site of the Lion's Round was "replete and the site built over."^{cxix} Photographs indicate that this site was occupied by an ironmonger's premises and these buildings were removed after 1952.^{cxx} Bracken Fabrics in Miller's Close was demolished circa 1974 and the former Woolworth's building was extended and attached itself to the stair tower in Miller's Close at 68 Murraygate.

Opportunity

There is an opportunity for the integration of new floorscape, signage and street furniture with that of the upgraded Albert Square. Perhaps this could be done under the auspices of a Dundee renewal trust.

Miller's Close, 68 Murraygate to (Panmure Street formerly) now to Meadowside via Pullar's Close (*) B**

History

This close and the remains of one stair tower leads to what could be single roomed houses, which still exist at 68 Murraygate. Opposite this is what appears to be a complete stair tower, which has been heavily degraded by cement rendering and white paint. The former Woolworth's/John Menzies building has attached itself to the tower. The tower appears to give access to the Victorian building at 66 Murraygate.

68 - 70 Murraygate was once occupied by "the bootery" in 1905 who then advertised their "great alteration sale". This was to advertise their business publicly from their premises where modern changes were being made to the building. In 1905 Miller's Close formerly housed Watson & Stewart who were cutlers and gunsmiths.^{cxxi}

This close once contained a naval tailor accessed by the stair tower. The close also housed the Regular Forces Employment Association shown by the sign at the Murraygate entrance. The combined image implies a well known place to become enlisted. The Bracken Fabrics business lay adjacent to the stair tower and was demolished circa 1974, to allow for the alterations to the former John Menzies building. At some stage in history Miller's Close appeared to move North West terminating in Panmure Street. The close retains some architectural character, which desperately requires maintenance, and it has the number of the property on the entrance gate which was of substantial assistance in its identification. The rear door of Caws bar is occasionally open which adds to the atmosphere and gives a glimpse of the sense which results from "opening up" instead of ignoring the old closes of Dundee.

Survey

This close continues to provide excellent access from the Murraygate to Meadowside by joining Pullar's Close. Neither 66-68 nor 68-70 Murraygate are listed, however both have elevations in this close. 68-70 appears to be at least 18th century. Personal observation strongly implies they are both historic properties and that the upper floors of the Victorian property are unoccupied. There is one stair tower which appears to give access to 66-68. The stair tower is blocked up, rendered with cement and the rear windows have been boarded up in an unsightly manner.

On the site of the Next clothes shop an archaeological dig was carried out in 1998. The excavation by the Scottish Urban Archaeological Trust was "one of the most productive digs ever in Dundee."^{cxxii} The excavation "uncovered medieval building foundations as well as a large number of assorted artefacts which will now go on display."^{cxxiii} These artefacts include "a large iron axe head and a large quantity of medieval pottery."^{cxxiv} Despite the claimed productivity of this excavation, the public was only informed of it occurring after the event and it should be noted that in October 2000 McManus Galleries had no medieval pottery whatsoever on display.

Opportunity

The stair tower, the Victorian property on the Murraygate and its upper floors could be surveyed, enhanced and photographed for an official record such as the Royal Commission for Ancient and Historical Monuments. A full archaeological investigation of this close requires to be carried out and the potential of the first floor of 66-68 and the upper floors of 68-70 should also be accessed, explored and photographed. If the opportunity arises the foundations could be viewed through a new floor. The potential of these properties for conversion to housing should be explored and there is an opportunity for the integration of new floorscape, signage and street furniture with that of the upgraded Albert Square. Perhaps this could be done under the auspices of a Dundee renewal trust.

To the South of this pend is the bizarre false “building” which houses the service access to the rear of the Tesco “Metro” in Murraygate. It should be put to the owners that the quality of the architecture of Albert Square demands an imaginative, sensitive work of contextual civic design for this frontage, especially since proposals are now being formulated for the upgrading of both the McManus Galleries and Albert Square itself.

AREA 4 – CASTLEHILL

GRADING

The star rating shows how penetrable the close is. Thus * means the close is not penetrable and *** means it is fully penetrable. The letter C to A indicates how much historic fabric survives, C being the lowest and A denoting the highest.

“Castle Hill Lane”, 34 Commercial Street () A**

History

Little is presently known about the history of this un-named close but for the purposes of this study it has been given a name because it deserves one.

Survey

There are ancient origins in this lane. For example “there is a single storey arcade which may have screened some form of covered market, for which a grid of pier foundations survive: and another arcade, probably added as a new 17th century facade to earlier buildings which survive in the basement of the Central Bar.”^{xxxv} Whether or how this connects with the adjacent ancient masonry vaults discovered in 2000, below what was thought to be ground level, will require to be part of a further archaeological investigation.

Opportunity

Although presently a dead-end, used almost solely by pub patrons, an opportunity exists to give this lane back some of the elegance which it had originally. (See copy of Sir George Gilbert Scott’s original perspective drawing). Liaison already established with the Cathedral’s Provost should be continued to maximise fulfilment of potential in the symbiotic relationship between church properties. The opening up of the walkway around the church and the re-opening of retail windows and doors to the steps, the “Old Mill” and lane enhancement of ground finishes, lighting, signage and street furniture should be included. Dundee City Council has proposed an overall strategy plan for the area on which private developers and property owners are working. A valuable role could be played by an appropriate body such as Dundee Civic Trust in acting as a co-ordinator.

20 Commercial Street: Calcutta Buildings “Court” ()A**

History

The history of this close dates back to the beginnings of industry in Dundee but accurate details have yet to be accumulated. The East block once served as the City Flour Mill, which had easy harbour access. Indeed it is thought that the present West block was built over the route to the docks, which ran between the East block and the subsequently demolished building to the West which, when removed, revealed that

the solum was in fact the “roof” of an ancient vaulted structure below. (See No.30 Exchange Street: Cathedral Court).

Survey

The close runs North/South between No.30 Commercial Street and the less ancient buildings fronting on to Commercial Street and it has an interesting and stimulating “feel” to it. It terminates at the South wall of the building in Castle Hill Lane currently occupied in part by the Central Bar and Old Mill Party Room. A quoined archway is an architectural feature of the close which yet has many secrets to tell in the history of Dundee’s industrial development.

Opportunity

This complex of buildings is only partially occupied and like Cathedral Court, it should be conserved and developed both imaginatively and sympathetically. The potential linkages between this courtyard and Cathedral Court are numerous and should be explored as part of a full investigative survey as a precursor to any development plan. In the meantime it should be ensured that this pend remains as a pleasant and interesting alternative path linking Commercial Street with Exchange Street.

Exchange Street

Exchange Street was developed on a beach reclaimed from the river at the Southern side of the Castle Rock.^{cxxvi} In 1776 the site was occupied by a woodyard and reclamation had further developed by 1793. The name was obtained from the Exchange which was established in 1807 and extended in 1828.^{cxxvii}

“Cathedral Court” 30 Exchange Street () A**

History

This area was densely built up according to Alexander Lamb. However few if any references are made to it other than on his map of central Dundee. Within the fabric of the demolished mill there are remains of ancient arcading and cavernous vaults which were discovered beneath the building. The mill was demolished in November and December of 2000.

The history of the “underground” masonry vaulting, discovered in 2000 (see below) remains to be clarified and a follow-up archaeological investigation to that undertaken in December 2000 is essential.

Survey

Within this courtyard there are remains of a sequence of arcades and a substantial gable of a merchant’s house. The listed building which occupied this site was reluctantly deemed unsuitable for conversion to a new use both in practical and

economic terms. Therefore the area is being developed with modern housing. There is a substantial gable wall of a demolished house, which remains at the rear of the Castle Street properties.

The surprising discovery in 2000 of a whole sequence of inter-linking masonry vaults below what had been assumed to be ground level in this area resulted in an initial archaeological investigation by SUAT (Scottish Urban Architectural Trust).

Opportunity

The arcades and the gable wall of the former Merchant's house could form features and perhaps be sympathetically incorporated into new buildings to the enhancement of the South-facing court. A pleasant, sunny sitting area could be included as part of the network of pends and walkways proposed to link Castle Street, Commercial Street and Exchange Street. Initially however the most exciting opportunity is presented by the discovery of the "underground" vaulting and consideration must be given to an appropriate follow-up to the SUAT investigation report of December 2000.

Castle Street

Dundee Castle was sited on Castle Hill. Gilbert de Umfraville, Earl of Angus refused to hand over the keys to the Castle of Dundee when King Edward I demanded he relinquish them. Despite the Earl's refusal, Edward I appointed Brian FitzAlan as custodian of Dundee and Forfar Castles in 1290.^{cxxviii} The keys alleged to have given access to the castle were displayed by the Dundee Watt Institute in their 1842 exhibition.^{cxxix} The castle was taken by the English at the beginning of the wars of independence and damaged by Sir William Wallace assisted by Sir Alexander Scrymgeour in 1297.^{cxxx} On the 29th March 1298 William Wallace appointed Sir Alexander Scrymgeour as Constable of the Castle of Dundee.^{cxxxi} After it was damaged the castle was later repaired by King Edward I of England and likely to have been almost destroyed by King Robert the Bruce after his victory at Bannockburn to prevent it being captured by invading English armies. In 1318 King Robert the Bruce granted a charter to Nicol Scrymgeour continuing him in the office of Constable of Dundee which makes no mention of the castle.^{cxxxii} However ruins of the castle were still present in the 16th century.^{cxxxiii} Ruins of the castle may still be evident on the Crawford plans of the 18th century.

Castle Street was formed in 1795 when part of the Castle Hill was blown up to form a new street to the harbour.^{cxxxiv} Some of the black dolerite rock on which the castle was built projects from the wall of St. Paul's Cathedral while more is incorporated into the library of the Cathedral. There are a number of remnants of old Dundee at the rear of St. Paul's Cathedral. This site is currently being redeveloped. The street is fascinating and very important to Dundee's past, present and future. The Dundee City Council's Planning Brief/overall Strategy Plan could be developed by an enterprising organisation such as Dundee Civic Trust to act as a co-ordinator of the various private interests involved.

36 Castle Street

History

Exact history of this close is not known.

Survey

It is difficult to survey this close as entry is barred by a locked gate.

Opportunity

Liaison, already established with the owners, should be continued to seek their co-operation in follow-up investigation work to Cathedral Court. If nothing else, this would facilitate the preparation of appropriate interpretative material which could then be prominently displayed in situ.

Doig's Court, 33 Castle Street to City Square Undercroft () B**

History

Little historic information is presently available on this close.

Survey

This close is penetrable depending on what time of the day a visit is made, and offers an interesting insight into the "backlands" of Castle Street. The close is steep and dark, encouraging explorers to use their imagination as to what secrets it holds as it leads into the underground car park beneath City Square. In the darker recesses there is a blocked close which appears to have linked at one time Doig's Court to Castle Court. Its walls appear to be new but the foundations are ancient. A new gate has been installed displaying the name of the close.

Opportunity

The possibility of this close being reopened to Castle Court could be investigated. In order to explore this, the close that formerly linked Castle Court to Doig's Court must be penetrated and photographed.

Castle Court, 27 Castle Street to City Square (*) C**

History

According to a plaque in this close the Lion Tavern was sited here and this is the only known history of this close.

Survey

This close leads from the City Square to Castle Street/Castle Court, once linked with the arched entry of the Vault to the North and the Greenmarket was accessible to the

South. It is an easily penetrable close. Multi-coloured tiles cover both sides of this close. Steel gates are also much in evidence particularly on the North side. Buildings of strong and possibly ancient character can be viewed through the skylight and these appear to have been used as housing during the early history of this close. The architecture is unfortunately difficult to assess as access to it has been impeded.

Opportunity

A “face-lift” would benefit this close, a main access to City Square as it is and its story needs to be better told. There is the opportunity, after full archaeological investigation, for appropriate interpretative material to be prepared and prominently displayed.

20 Castle Street () C**

History

No historic information is presently available about specifically this close.

Survey

The townscape of the North-Eastern part of Castle Street indicates that there are significant courtyards to the rear of these buildings. An authoritative survey must be done to establish a firm role for this close.

Opportunity

The opportunity exists for a comprehensive survey to be undertaken to clarify history and ascertain ownerships. Thereafter proposals should be formulated for developing a chain of linked closes and open spaces to provide a pleasant alternative route linking Castle Street/Exchange Street/Commercial Street and St Paul’s Cathedral. This is in line with Dundee City Council Planning Brief for the area.

24 Castle Street (*) C

History

Little history of this close is currently known.

Survey

There is a significant space to the rear of the former Episcopal Chapel, now Dexter’s Bar in Castle Street. The metal staircase which gave access to this court from Cathedral Court has recently been disconnected from the doorway. It appears that the doorway and wall once formed part of a large villa.

Opportunity

The opportunity exists for a comprehensive survey to be undertaken to clarify history and ascertain ownerships. Thereafter proposals should be formulated for developing a chain of linked closes and open spaces to provide a pleasant alternative route linking Castle Street/Exchange Street/Commercial Street and St Paul's Cathedral. This is in line with Dundee City Council Planning Brief for the area

8 Castle Street () C**

History

No history is known about specifically this close.

Survey

This close appears to have the same "locked fire exit" role as Gray's Close at 70 High Street and seems to have been closed for some considerable time. A point of interest is the octagonal stone pillar in this court.^{CXXXV}

Opportunity

The opportunity exists for a comprehensive survey to be undertaken to clarify history and ascertain ownerships. Thereafter proposals should be formulated for developing a chain of linked closes and open spaces to provide a pleasant alternative route linking Castle Street/Exchange Street/Commercial Street and St Paul's Cathedral. This is in line with Dundee City Council Planning Brief for the area

AREA 5 – COUTTIE’S WYND & HARY OGILVIE’S CLOSE/ SCOTT’S CLOSE

GRADING

The star rating shows how penetrable the close is. Thus * means the close is not penetrable and *** means it is fully penetrable. The letter C to A indicates how much historic fabric survives, C being the lowest and A denoting the highest.

Hary Ogilvie’s Close or Scott’s Close, 29 High Street to 17 Crichton Street (close formerly led to Fish Street) (*) B**

History

This close formerly met Fish Street at its Southern end but when this street was demolished this close became blocked. Alexander Elliot in the 1916 Dundee Photographic Survey states “sometimes designated Ogilvie’s Close from name of the proprietor of public house which adjoined at West corner of Crichton Street.”^{cxv} William Crawford Senior also designates this close Hary Ogilvie’s Close in the key of his 1776 map of Dundee.

Alternatively the close may have acquired its name from an individual of a more modest background.

Survey

The close is easily penetrable and links with an unnamed close accessed from 17 Crichton Street. Near the Crichton Street entrance a corbelled stair projects from the building. The rear elevations of Whitehall Street lie to the East of the close and are much less interesting than those to the West.

This close is a residual one, which survived the construction of Crichton Street. Most of the covered part of the close recently had its timbers exposed and some though not all of the exposed timbers have been repaired. Indeed most of the buildings which make up this close have undergone considerable reconstruction. Rubbish is frequently dumped in the close and there appears to be a problem with its regular removal. 27-29 High Street has recently been enhanced by whitewashing and the removal of foliage. This property has fine indented painted panelling on each side of first floor windows.

Opportunity

The small courtyard section near the entrance of the close could be one of the creative features of this close. The corbelled stair must be studied in more detail. Dendrochronological dating of timbers could be used to establish construction dates of the older buildings. Surveys of the interiors and exteriors could take place and result in creative proposals being produced. This close could be another candidate for “backland” development by opening up the doors of properties such as the Pillars Bar,

giving an alternative access route as well as encouraging people to use the close in a positive manner. One essential here is to obtain necessary agreements on a strategy for waste bin storage and emptying.

St. Mary's Close, 30 Nethergate formerly to St. Margaret's Close (now blocked by former Debenhams) () C**

History

According to M.S. "a church which I know not the name off stood a little to the Eastward of Coutie's Wynd, part of the ruins of it are yet to be seen in the closs on the East of said wynd and shew it to have been a considerable building. I am apt to believe that this might have been the church belonging to the Minorites, who we are very certain had a church here, This I suppose might have no other name but from them."^{cxvii} There are the remains of a drainage feature, which may have been a well. While a building in this close was being demolished in 1882 five carved panels were found behind plaster.^{cxviii} All five were lent to the Albert Institute Old Dundee Exhibition in 1892-93. Two were given by the Dundee Police Commissioners and the other three by historian Mr. Alex Hutcheson.^{cxix}

Survey

This building dates from prior to 1700. This can be ascertained by the style of architecture which contrasts with the former Draffens & Debenhams building. The rear wall is constructed of random rubble to which a twentieth century extension has been added. The gate is occasionally open during office hours. The frontage of the building dates from the 1930s, with alterations and additions made to the roof.

At least one modern frontage has been added to this building and substantial additions have also been made to the roof. The original building shows a large amount of rubble stonework which has been partially cement rendered. The rear stair is modern in style, having been added in the twentieth century. Metal bars block some of the rear windows and a wire mesh covers the opening to the sky. The Debenhams' elevation has some fine early 20th century glass similar to that in Rankine's Court.

Fine Art Nouveau patterned glass can be seen in the lower half of the first floor windows. In addition some fine woodwork, opaque glass and a plastered ceiling adorns the first floor office. The gate, windows and frontage were probably added at the time of the 1930s re-fronting of the property.

Opportunity

The close should continue to give access to the upper floors and the marketing potential of the interiors could also be explored. If still in existence perhaps the panels can be unearthed within the City's museums as Dundee continues to rediscover its past.

Abbott's Wynd, Spalding's Wynd, Couttie's Wynd, 38 Nethergate to Whitehall Crescent (*) A**

History

This was the principal North-South route of ancient Dundee. It became known as Abbott's Wynd when the monks of Arbroath Abbey acquired property at the Northern entrance. It rose from the harbour up to the Nethergate, past the East gable of St. Mary's, along Tally Street, across the Overgate and up Friar's Vennel (later Burial Wynd and now Barrack Street) to the Howff Graveyard and the Meadows. Furthermore, it "can claim remote antiquity. It was the oldest access from the shore to the burgh and was certainly a passage before 1200 and was chosen at that time for the site of the mansion of David, Earl of Huntingdon."^{cxl} Therefore the route is approximately 800 years old, if not older.

David, Earl of Huntingdon, brother of King William the Lion (heir apparent to the Scottish throne and grandson of King David I) may have even used it when he founded St. Mary's Church in thanksgiving after returning from the third Crusade in 1190. In 1178 King William the Lion confers on his brother David "the earldom of Lennox which was the Northern part of the historical Strathclyde and also various properties including Garioch (an extensive territory in Aberdeenshire), Lindores and Dundee."^{cxli} At this time "Dundee was already an important trading centre and port and David was to give it burgh status by 1195, when he may have provided it with a castle. Thereafter he continued to take an interest in its development and growing prosperity."^{cxlii} All burghs such as Dundee, Forfar, Aberdeen and Perth had castles to defend themselves. The 140 knights of Dundee Castle may have been involved like David with the third Crusade and the wider movement. In thanksgiving for his safe return he founded St. Mary's Church.

The origin of the wynd's second name came from Peter de Spalding from Berwick-upon-Tweed who was a personal attendant of King Robert the Bruce and obtained from that monarch in 1319 "the lands of Balzcondie in Petmethie in Forfarshire."^{cxliii} His son, Richard Spalding, settled in Dundee previous to 1342 and held important offices in the burgh, being a bailie and Collector of the Kings Customs. He later became Lord Provost in 1376.^{cxliv}

Patrick de Inverpeffer was also a Collector of the Kings Customs in the time of King David II. In addition "was a favourite of Robert II who presented to him in 1379 the lands of Balmalady, Balmethnac, Smythyhill, Halton and Arbuthnot for his homage and services."^{cxlv} The earliest document found regarding this wynd is a charter dated 18th December 1380. King Robert II confirms to "our beloved and faithful Patrick of Inverpeffer, our burgesses of Dundee 52 feet in length and 14 feet in width of the Kings highway contiguous to his tenement and lane, Spalding's wynd which is situated in the High Street of the said burgh."^{cxlvi} The witnesses to this charter were "the venerable fathers in Christ, William and John, our bishops of St. Andrews and Dunkeld; John of Carrick, our first born son and Steward (who in 1390 insisted on being crowned King Robert III, as John being an English king's name was considered unlucky); Robert of Fife and Monteith, our dear son; William of Douglas and of Mar, our cousin; together with James de Lyndesay, our dearest nephew; and Alexander de Lyndesay our cousin."^{cxlvii}

This extensive list of witnesses illustrates the respect that Patrick commanded from the Scottish monarchy. Patrick was later to become Dundee's Lord Provost in 1391.^{cxlviii} David Spalding, his descendant, was prominent in local affairs in 1430 and was member of the Scottish Parliament from 1456-1458. As he became well known for residing in this Vennel, it came to be known as Spalding's Wynd.^{cxlix} By 1453 conditions in this wynd had deteriorated to a notorious level when it was described as "the common Vennel vulgarly called Spalding's Wynd."^{cl} Prior to this date no official name is attached to the wynd. The name continued till 1521 when William Couttie, butcher and probably one of the early members of the Flesher trade acquired property here on the West elevation of the wynd, thereafter it became known as Couttie's Wynd. His last descendant died in 1604.^{cli}

There is an additional theory on the origin of the third name of the wynd. M.S. comments "in the beginning of the reign of King James V many robberies and frauds were committed, the King in order to detect such iniquities went thro' several parts of the nation in disguise with his court or guard at a considerable distance from him."^{clii} His disguise became so established his character was known as the "Gude man of Ballochgeich."^{cliii} M.S. also relates that "the King in his journey over the munth, met with one named Coutie a drover belonging to Dundee who was going for cattle, and they walked together talking most comfortably when they were espyed by a band of robbers who came and attacked them."^{cliv} This confrontation apparently took place in Glen Ogilvy in Angus later a site of an extensive property owned by the Grahams of Claverhouse.

The "King and Coutie fought long and defended themselves most manfully, they both being very able men, especialy the King, who it is reported was a match for any two men if not more."^{clv} Fortunately "Coutie had a dog with him which did more than both and all growing feint by reason of the many villans they had to encounter were almost overcome, when the King said 'feight on, Cowtie' The villans hearing this understood the meaning of these, fled off with great precipetation, fearing they would all be taken."^{clvi} This left the King and Coutie "together for which it is said the King rewarded Couties Noble action with a complement of the place he lived in giving him the wynd which is to this day called Cowtie's wynd from him."^{clvii}

Perhaps a combination of these two theories is the origin of the wynd's name. William Couttie may well have acquired property here but it was perhaps on the command of King James V that it was named after him after their meeting. A drover and a flesher may have been William Couttie's dual occupations. M.S. does not state the year the King and Couttie met, although the chronology of the events described prior to and after this meeting makes 1521 a very likely year for this meeting.

On the 29th March 1777 "a fire broke out in the house of James MacKay, Merchant in Couty's Wynd in the forenoon but the fire ingins and the ready assistance was got under before it did any more harm than the burning of furniture and other goods in the lower story where the fire began."^{clviii} Couttie's Wynd has experienced a number of alterations during its long history. In 1769 it was widened to 10 feet (3.05m). In addition the South-West frontage was redeveloped between 1837-1858. The North-East frontage was rebuilt and centrally widened in 1871-1900 although the alignment

was maintained.^{clix} There are “existing rights” of property ownership concerning this wynd.

Survey

It is easily penetrated although it is presently dark and unattractive. There is strong evidence to suggest that businesses had frontages facing Couttie’s Wynd as there are blocked up frontages on both sides and commercial lettering on an elaborate string course. On the wynd’s South East elevation further evidence of the wynd’s bustling past is in the cornice above blocked up windows reading “Beadsteads and Every Description”

Opportunity

It could effectively be reborn as a shopping street if the frontages were enhanced and reopened. The string course and its lettering on the Debenhams frontage in the wynd could be enhanced and used as a model for this. For Couttie’s Wynd to be re-invigorated its existence must first be promoted and enhancement ideas must become public knowledge, raising awareness of this as an alternative access from Nethergate to Whitehall Crescent and encouraging people to make use of the wynd. It would also change the image of the route from being a disused bin store to a dynamic new shopping street, proud to show off its 800 years of heritage. Essential to this will be the successful resolution of such mundane issues as a strategy for bin storage

The Vault, 17 High Street (demolished) to Castle Court and Greenmarket via Arched Pend to the East at St. Clement’s Lane which met (also sometimes known as) School Wynd (*) A

History

The Vault lay behind William Adam’s fine 1732 Town House. It curved East to meet St. Clement’s Lane and could also be entered from the South through a large archway. This whole area was demolished between 1930-32 to make way for the Caird Hall and City Square. The Vault acquired its name from being the graveyard of St. Clement’s church. This was an intricate network of buildings including a substantial 17th century stair, the 16th century Weigh House, Andrew Rankine’s remarkable tower, the Baron of Strathmartine’s Lodging and fragments of St. Clement’s Church incorporated into the rear of William Adam’s 1732 Town House.^{clx}

Survey

There are a few fragments of walling remaining from the complex layout of buildings which made up this historic area. Glimpses of these can be had from the rear of the buildings on the West side of Castle Street, but the original layout of the now-demolished streets may be best understood by studying the Ordnance Survey Map of 1870.

Opportunity

Even though it has long since been demolished the Vault continues to capture the imagination and, through the McManus Galleries' old town model, it provides a valuable insight into our ancient townscape. The 1916 Photographic Survey available in the Local Studies Department of the Central Library provides more physical insight into this fascinating group of buildings. What is now required is a thorough archaeological investigation and the preparation of appropriate interpretative material displayed in situ. Such a display could be linked electronically to, e.g. the old town model in the McManus Galleries.

Castle Wynd, Tendall's/Tindall's Wynd (90% demolished), formerly 4 High Street to 6 Shore Terrace (*) C

History

According to A.H. Millar this was the oldest street in Dundee. It has been known as Tindall's Wynd for four centuries. From medieval times merchants, goods and invading armies travelled up and down this ancient route between the harbour and the castle. The narrow width made it easily defensible in time of attack and gave shelter from the wind.^{clxi} In the earliest times this formed the only access from the harbour to the castle, hence its original name "Castle Wynd". The ground beside this passage had formed part of the endowment of the Abbey of Balmerino when founded by Queen Ermengarde (queen of King William the Lion) in 1199 and the Abbot's House was located here.^{clxii}

Around "1270 the Abbott with the consent of the convent, demitted that piece of ground in feu farm to William Welyeuth and his heirs on condition that they 'shall find for us and our successors a sufficient hostility, on the said piece of ground, whensoever it shall happen that we or any our brethren shall have reason to go to said burgh and require the use of our house.'^{clxiii}

One of the earliest recorded burgesses of Dundee was Roger del Vend (Roger of the Wynd) and he lived there in 1270 while the castle was still in existence. His reputed son Geoffrey del Vend of Dundee received a pardon in 1296 from King Edward I for the murder of Ralph Chapman of Montrose.^{clxiv} Unfortunately the Scottish King John Balliol was occupied with other matters such as trying to rule a divided country and maintaining his throne in the face of Edward I. In the thirteenth century charters the wynd was described as "the road that leadeth to the castle."^{clxv} Between 1314-17 the castle appears to have been partially demolished and the name of the close changed to Skirling's Wynd from Bailie Alexander Skirling or Scralynge who occupied a house there.^{clxvi}

The brother of George Gardyne, David had a tenement which adjoined that of a George Black in this wynd. On October 19th 1556 he was entered as a burges. In 1562 he wished "to make an outside stair to his house, with a shed under on the East side of Skirling's Wynd, projecting on this narrow thoroughfare, but the council refused to give their consent to this proposal."^{clxvii} He was allowed to "build the shed under the stair as broad as Thomas Crystall's shed or penthouse which was on the South side of David Gardynes property."^{clxviii}

The most recently used name was given to the wynd when David Tindall or Tendall, a prominent baker and town councillor, acquired a property at the North East corner of this thoroughfare in 1563 where the Royal Bank of Scotland now stands. Part of this wynd still exists to the rear of the bank where it merged with part of Castle Court, fragments of which still exist underneath what is now the connecting pend between City Square and Castle Street.

Courts off Tendall's Wynd accessed a number of houses. One such house was that of Provost James Auchinleck whose first recorded owner was Thomas Kinloch. In 1564 the house became the residence of the Auchinleck family of Woodhill. James Auchinleck was Provost of Dundee from 1593-94. The Provost's house was constructed mainly of dressed ashlar and was described as a round angle turret containing a turnpike stair to upper flats.^{clxix} In the vicinity of the Auchinleck house was that of shipmaster Thomas Crystall whose house was described as being a stone built four storeyed house and attic. He lived here circa 1567. Alexander Lamb recorded the building as being ruinous for many years in 1895. According to Alexander Lamb, the 18th century frontages when viewed by him in the 19th century "were identical with those of the mid 16th century."^{clxx} He also stated "seldom does one find within so short a space so much architectural variety as is displayed in this ancient thoroughfare."^{clxxi} The Lords of Justiciary described Tendall's Wynd on the 26th August 1720 in a sentence against a cordiner of Dundee at Edinburgh as "one of the five most public places where the offender concerned should be scourged."^{clxxii}

This whole complex of buildings became a victim of the development of the City Square 1930-32.^{clxxiii} The part of Tendall's Wynd, which was not demolished, was hidden behind the City Square and Castle Street buildings. The Scottish Urban Archaeological Trust conclude with "many of buildings cleared at demolition 1930-32 dated from 16th and 17th centuries cleared to make way for the development of City Square. Unlikely that any remains survive."^{clxxiv} What is not recognised is that, excluding the City Square buildings, the townscape and urban form of Castle Street and the High Street is much the same as it was when Tendall's Wynd existed and was in use.

Furthermore it should be noted that Dundee can be particularly misinformed about its architectural history. For example "other buildings lost included Provost Pierson's Mansion in Tendall's Wynd."^{clxxv} Provost Pierson's Mansion was actually located on the West Side of the Greenmarket several hundred yards from the Western entrance to Castle Lane which gave access from the West to one of several routes accessing Tendall's Wynd.

Survey

What remains of Tendall's Wynd can be viewed from a variety of locations. The office of Angus and Dundee Tourist Board may be accessed from Castle Court in Castle Street. According to the Dundee City Plan of 1984 there is a gap between the rear of the City Square buildings and the rear of those on Castle Street. A gate in Castle Court appears to access them.

Opportunity

The qualities of Tendall's Wynd have been forgotten for much of the 20th century and it is only through architectural investigations that a role for this close can be established. Reopening gates costs nothing and could provide yet another insight into ancient Dundee. Exploration of the underground car parking area beneath the City Square can also reveal much of what remains of Tendall's Wynd.

At the very least appropriate interpretative material requires to be researched, prepared and exhibited in situ – perhaps linked electronically to the old town model in the McManus Galleries' Local History Section.

CONCLUSION

Clearly the variety of opportunities emerging from this study is extremely wide-ranging in scale.

At the “modest” extreme is the close where only a fragment of the original remains and it is therefore impracticable to propose anything more than an interpretative installation (which is not to say of course that a strategy for the interpretation of Dundee’s historic buildings and closes is not an urgent requirement!). Public Art would of course be a prerequisite to even the most modest installation.

At the “significant” extreme is the situation where building owners have been identified who would benefit from the symbiotic relationship between their own business development plans and upgrading of adjacent pends.

Similarly the likely time frames within which these opportunities might be realised vary enormously.

For example it will require a sponsor as well as a considerable amount of time for a strategy for interpretation incorporating public art to be finalised before any interpretative installation emerges: on the other hand and on the basis of discussions which have already been held with property owners it would seem reasonable to assume that – depending upon costs and the availability of financial incentives – the example of the proposal for Meadow Entry could proceed apace. (See Area 3).

By the same token the proper realisation of the exciting potential offered by the discovery of the Castle Hill/Exchange Street medieval vaulting (see Area 4) would necessarily be a long-term affair: on the other hand the Nethergate pends (see Area 1) might well see speedy progress due to the owner’s desire to transform the area’s physically dominating but under-utilised Nethergate Centre into a fully-let, vibrant point of convergence within the City Centre.

The foregoing attempts to give a flavour of the diversity of opportunity which awaits in Dundee’s historic closes. For too long these have been ignored and neglected and indeed the process of examining them during this initial study has now thrown into highlight what had been almost forgotten.

What is now essential is that this study is used not only as a tool to put an end to past inertia but as a lever for the use of all parties who have an interest in setting in motion a City Centre Initiative which does justice to the rich and multi-faceted heritage of Dundee.

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- cxixvii (S.U.A.T. 1988 p.70).
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- cxixxxix (Albert Institute 1892 Articles 696 & 697 p.114).
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clxxv (Dundee District Council - A Guide to the City Chambers and City Square 1992 p.2)