

# SAVE

BRITAIN'S HERITAGE

## AYR STATION HOTEL

*Proposals for alternative use*

March 2022



# C CONTENTS

Introduction .....	3
Options and Costs .....	5
Funding .....	7
The Vehicle .....	9
What happens next .....	12
Why SAVE? .....	13
Comparables .....	18
Creative Arts Hubs .....	19
Art Gallery & Exhibition Space .....	27
Enterprise Hubs .....	29
Hotel, restaurant and cafe use .....	35
Our proposals .....	38
Option 1 .....	40
Option 2 .....	44
Option 3 .....	48
Option 4 .....	52
Option 5 .....	56
Cost Estimates .....	61
What you can do .....	63
Acknowledgements .....	65
2019 Report - Ayr Station Hotel: A New Journey ....	67

*Front cover image: the station hotel in 2014 (Credit: Nigel Hackett)*

*View looking from the south wing over the station canopy and north wing, with signs of water damage clearly evident (Credit: UBA)*



# INTRODUCTION

**The purpose of this SAVE Britain's Heritage report is to suggest a long term use for Ayr Station Hotel.**

**Included is a proposed road map for achieving this by securing the necessary finance and establishing an organisation or means to carry out renovation and run the completed building.**

The intention is to secure and establish a combination of tried and tested uses which will take advantage of the station's central location in the town and attract investors, tenants and customers.

Ayr Station Hotel, for all its splendid architecture, was designed as a commercial, working building, robustly constructed for the long term, and capable of earning its keep. This it did for well over a century.

Since the hotel closed in 2013, its condition has deteriorated for want of basic maintenance and necessary repair.

As a result, renovation cannot be purely a matter of securing commercial investment. Grants are needed to put the hotel back in a stable, usable condition.

This has of course been the case for many fine but neglected historic buildings in Scotland, both public and private, castles, tower houses, churches, commercial and public buildings of many kinds.

Once repaired, and with new owners and tenants, these buildings do not need to be permanent pensioners of the State but can become good long-term investments.

This report has been supported by funding from the Architectural Heritage Fund.

**AHF** Transforming  
Heritage  
[www.ahfund.org.uk](http://www.ahfund.org.uk)

*Many of the hotel's grand interiors in the south wing have now suffered from considerable water ingress (Credit: UBA)*



# THE OPTIONS

This report outlines five options put forward by SAVE for reusing the Ayr Station Hotel and station premises, illustrated with floor plans drawn up by Scottish conservation architects Smith Scott Mullan Associates:

- Option 1** Enterprise Hub/Arts & Crafts
- Option 2** Hotel
- Option 3** Hotel/Hostel
- Option 4** Mixed use
- Option 5** Maximum mixed use including station offices and passenger facilities

# COSTS

To assess the potential for repair and reuse, SAVE approached Smith Scott Mullan Associates to work up plans for a range of uses for the building. These proposals, illustrated here, show a series of uses which have worked well elsewhere in Scotland, and include Artists' studios, exhibition and meeting rooms; Community uses with workshop and spaces for small businesses with communal facilities. One attraction of this approach is that grants are available, including Lottery Funding, for such uses.

A second group of uses include a hotel with catering and events space available for conference, reception and celebration hire. A variant of this is a destination pub based on the model of the other highly successful craft breweries in Scotland, with hotel accommodation attached. Such accommodation can range from budget hostel to high-end boutique.

The elephant in the room is railway use. When built the station building comprised a hotel, passenger facilities and railway offices. Passenger facilities will still be needed whether the hotel is restored or demolished, and railway offices are currently provided in portacabins. These could be placed back in the existing station buildings, in the north range of the complex. SAVE puts a figure of £7 - 10 million for repair and fit out for railway use – competitive with the estimated cost of demolition and construction of a new station.

Figures from engineering firm Mott Macdonald, updated by engineers Atkins suggest a figure of £10 million to bring the station buildings back into good structural order. Given the floor space of hotel and station this appears a reasonable figure.

For SAVE, Quantity Surveyors Hardies have calculated fit out figures on a square metre basis for the various alternative use options and combinations proposed by SAVE and the architects in this report. These range from £7.6 to 8.8 million for options 1 to 4.

*Pictured here in 2014, the grand facade of Ayr Station Hotel overlooks a generous forecourt and car park area (Credit: Nigel Hackett)*



# FUNDING

SAVE proposes that the rescue and reuse programme is divided into two packages. The South Wing will be refurbished for the uses set out in options 1 to 5, with option 5 being the preferred option. Under option 5, the North Wing will be assigned for station uses, including passenger facilities and station offices.

## RESTORED AND REUSED HOTEL BUILDINGS (Option 5)

Average refurbishment costs:	£5,544,000
Atkins estimated repair costs:	£6,850,000
<b>Total:</b>	<b>£12,394,000</b>

Lottery Grant:	£4,900,000
Fundraising and other grants:	£4,000,000
Commercial Investment:	£3,500,000
<b>Total:</b>	<b>£12,400,000</b>

## RESTORED AND MODERNISED STATION PREMISES (Option 5)

Funded by Network Rail / Transport Scotland:	£10,000,000
--	-------------

These are figures produced by experienced professionals and equate with current costs for fitting out comparable historic buildings.

Round figures can be disputed, but on the basis of the Mott MacDonald report, we believe this is a reasonable working figure.

## LOTTERY FUNDING

This will be an approach to the National Lottery Heritage Fund, which offers grants of up to £4.9 million under a number of programmes – for example Heritage Enterprise Grants and Scottish project grants (capped at £5 million). Projects over this figure are considered at national level and are in competition with other major national proposals.

## OTHER GRANTS

The proposal here is to secure a degree of development and enterprise funding, as has been secured for comparable projects illustrated later in this report.

One of our reuse proposals is for artists' studios, workshops and gallery space, which may also open the way to arts lottery funding. There is also the possibility of further grants from foundations and grant giving charities.

## COMMERCIAL INVESTMENT

The uses proposed will command rents, some of them market rents, some lower, but together will be capable of attracting a commercial investor.



*The station hotel is currently cocooned in plastic scaffold wrapping (Credit: Ayrshire Post)*

# THE VEHICLE

In view of the grants being sought, the project will initially (and may be in the long-term too) be taken forward by a charitable trust in the form of a standard Building Preservation Trust (company limited by guarantee) or Social Enterprise Organisation, which if desired, could sell or transfer the property once it is established and running. It could also be a commercial undertaking.

Despite its lamentable neglect, the station and station hotel are robust and solidly built structures - as one would expect from a leading Scottish Railway engineer. Once repaired and refitted, they will have a life expectancy at least as long as that of a new building, and a further repair and fit out will extend the working life of the buildings still further.



*Ayr station hotel in 2018 (Credit: Alamy)*

## CARBON FOOTPRINT

When the Station hotel closed in 2013, and demolition was first proposed in 2017, government, councils, infrastructure owners and managers were less conscious of the huge adverse carbon cost of the large scale demolition and rebuilding of robust structures.

Instead it was generally considered that in order to meet carbon reduction targets (now net zero), demolishing older, less energy efficient buildings and building replacements was desirable, even if such efficiency savings were only realised across long periods of time, often around 30 years or more.

With Scottish Councils and central government now setting ambitious net zero targets within the next 5 to 10 years, it is becoming harder to justify the huge up-front carbon cost inherent in largescale demolition and rebuild, which comes in one massive hit in the first phase of demolition (typically the first three years).

Evidence of this is demonstrated by a number of recent studies, including the one [commissioned by SAVE](#) from leading embodied energy expert Simon Sturgis of Targeting Zero in [February 2022](#).

Given the monthly cost of scaffolding the station hotel, establishing its reuse is now an urgent issue, but SAVE argues that if Network Rail, Transport Scotland and South Ayrshire Council can set aside thoughts of demolition in favour of looking constructively at renovation, the problem can be solved.

## DEMOLITION IS NOT AN EASY OPTION

Recent press reports have suggested that South Ayrshire Council is considering sending in the bulldozers. According to the Daily Record of February 16th 2022, options discussed behind closed doors include flattening the building entirely, or even chopping off the hotel's top two floors.

However, the Council does not own the building, which remains under the ownership of Mr Eng Huat Ung, a Malaysian businessman who acquired the hotel in 2014, reportedly with a view to renovating it.

For Network Rail / Transport Scotland, demolition is not an option. Indeed, neither is proposing demolition of the station which they recognise is a listed building. It has an obligation to look after its historic estate.

The SAVE proposals offer a means of attracting funding for renovating the station hotel and providing space for full and improved passenger facilities and railway offices once again.

*The station hotel's central tower (Credit: Nigel Hackett)*



*One of the grand reception rooms in the south wing in 2016, shortly after the hotel's closure (Credit: SSMA)*



# WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

## STAGE 1

1. Secure an in principle agreement from public sector partners that SAVE should be given opportunity to save the hotel for an initial two year period.

## STAGE 2

1. Create a Building Preservation Trust (BPT) and recruit board members.
2. Submit Expression of Interest (EOI) to Heritage Enterprise and apply for development finance to cover professional fees, design development, statutory consents, development appraisal and staffing costs etc.
3. Establish steering group of key partners to ensure flow of information and input of requirements, including Network Rail, Transport Scotland and South Ayrshire Council etc.
4. Refine redevelopment costs based on 5 options - initial minimum phase being to repair the building to be wind and water tight and meet Transport Scotland requirements.

*Aerial view of the station hotel in 2018 (Credit: Network Rail)*

5. Apply for statutory consents for preferred scheme.
6. Develop fund raising campaign and grant applications based on preferred scheme.
7. Develop programme of public consultation / PR / information to inform public of progress and aid fund raising.

## STAGE 3

1. Funding and all consents confirmed.
2. Appropriate public body compulsorily purchases the building with legal agreement to immediately transfer ownership to BPT.
3. BPT lets construction contracting in accordance with preferred scheme and phasing options.



# WHY SAVE?

Ayr is one of the most handsome towns of its size in Scotland. It has a rich architectural heritage, is laid out with numerous fine streets, and enjoys a lovely situation with both a broad river, beautiful beaches and promenades as well as stunning sea views.

Under the initiative of an earlier regeneration body in 2016/17, the 1960s eyesores were demolished, which had blighted the riverside between Ayr's renowned medieval bridge (inspiration of one of Robert Burns' greatest poems) and its companion Victorian bridge. Other fine 18th century buildings were restored and a splendid free-standing Victorian bank in the High Street was rescued to become a centre for craft fairs and festivals.

However, in the last few years the handsome legacy of previous generations has become degraded through the long-term neglect and decline of the historic centre – leading to despair amongst Ayr's residents and of the wider county who love their town.

All over Scotland and the rest of the UK, conservation policies have brought life and investment to county towns like Ayr.

By taking bold, practical and cost effective initiatives such as those outlined in this report, Ayr's planners and politicians have the golden opportunity to revive their fine embattled town. There is no doubt that the size of this building makes it a major challenge, but SAVE has successfully initiated ventures on this scale.

## DUMFRIES HOUSE, AYRSHIRE

One example is nearby Dumfries House, where in 2007 SAVE launched the initial £25 million appeal to acquire the house, land and contents. SAVE, with its Scottish supporters, notably James Knox, had raised £19 million in pledges when HRH The Prince of Wales took over the project and made it the huge success it is today.



*Dumfries House in 2020 (Credit: Alamy)*

## SEAFIELD HOUSE, AYRSHIRE

Following a fire in 2008, the owners of Seafield House, NHS Estates, sought permission to demolish this handsome house built by Sir William Arrol, forever famous as the engineer-contractor of the mighty Forth Bridge.



*Seafield House following the fire in 2008 (Credit: Alamy)*

SAVE supported the newly formed Friends of Seafield House who worked closely with Robin Ghosh of Econstruct Design + Build Ltd. They drew up plans for 10 apartments in Seafield House itself and an enabling development of new-build homes in the grounds.

The new houses have been built by Westpoint Homes, while Econstruct have carried out the sympathetic restoration of Seafield House and its conversion into apartments. The scheme is now nearing completion.



*Under restoration in 2021 (Credit: Marcus Binney)*

## ANCHOR MILLS, PAISLEY

Another example of rescue and reuse in Scotland is the landmark Grade A listed Anchor Mills in Paisley - described in SAVE's 2016 publication [Big Saves](#). Here, a series of substantial business partners, including Persimmon and Morrisons came together to participate, finance and carry out the rescue and reuse of an important listed building.

This rescue case also highlights the need to keep demolition off the table for Ayr Station Hotel, to avoid sending out the wrong signals to those who might best be able to help.



*A follorn Anchor Mills in 2003 (Credit: Alamy)*



*Fully restored and looking resplendent in 2019 (Credit: Abbey Mill Business Centre)*

## TOBACCO WAREHOUSE, LIVERPOOL

A third is the mighty Tobacco Warehouse in Liverpool. In 1991 SAVE produced a scheme with architect Sir Terry Farrell for converting this vast 12-storey warehouse into apartments. At the time it seemed an impossible dream but today, developer Harcourt Developments is half way through a £250 million transformation into resident use.

192 of the proposed 538 loft style apartments have been finished and many are occupied, evidenced by the lights twinkling at night in the water of the dock below.

More than half of the overall apartments have now been sold or reserved. Back in 1989 SAVE called it “one of the most stupendous industrial buildings in Britain” – a phrase now used for marketing the building.



*Aerial view of the Tobacco Warehouse overlooking Stanley Dock  
(Credit: Tobacco Warehouse)*



*The restored Titanic Hotel with the Tobacco Warehouse beyond  
(Credit: Tobacco Warehouse)*



*Ayr Station Hotel's south wing in 2018,  
with roof tiles and coverings missing  
(Credit: Catherine Hunter)*

## COMPARABLES - CREATIVE ARTS HUBS

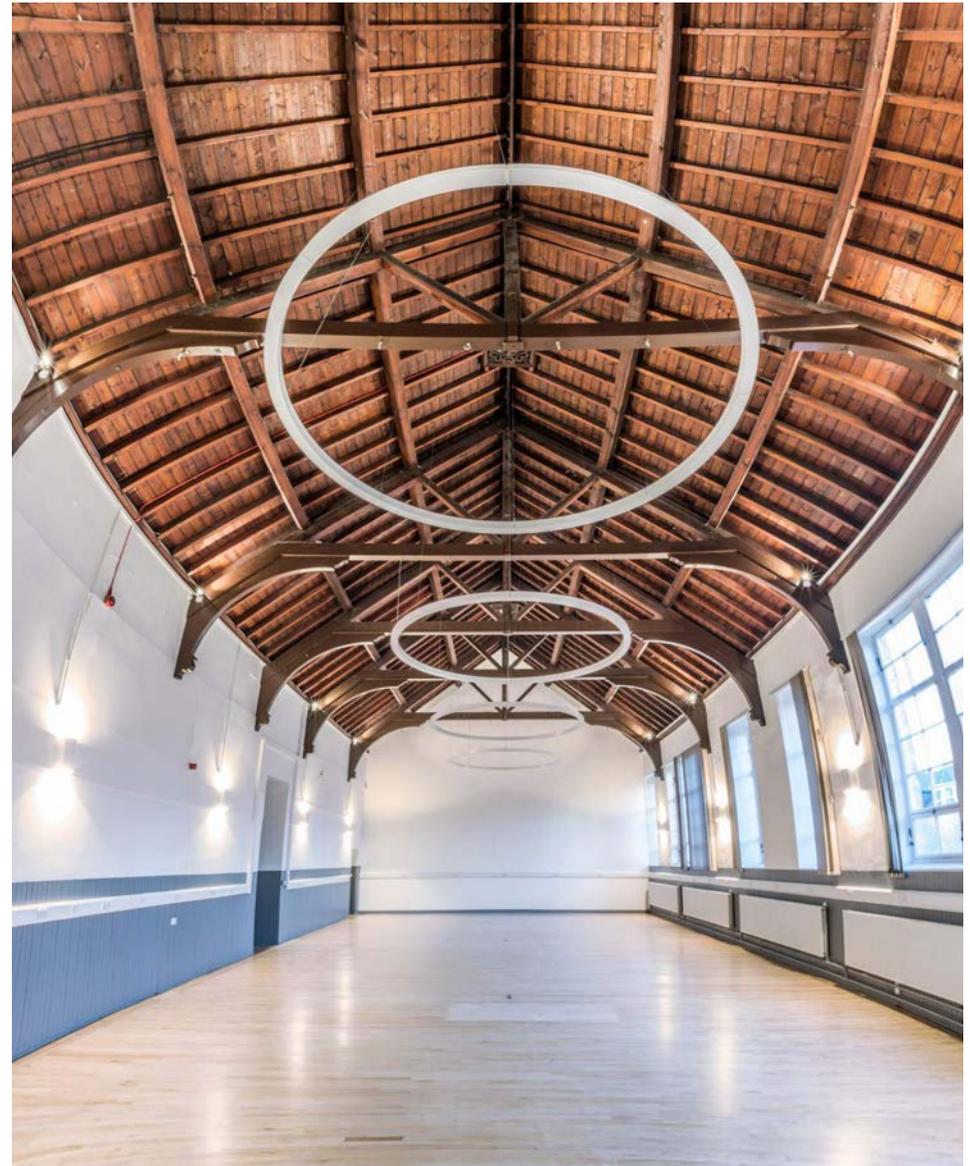
The following cases illustrate a series of historic buildings of substantial size, mainly in Scotland, which have been rescued from disuse and decay and given a new use with a variety of community, arts, and employment activities.

These examples have been pioneered by the Wasps Trust - Workshop and Artists Studio Provision (Scotland) - based in Glasgow, a highly successful operator and manager. Wasps state:

*“As Scotland’s studio specialists, we’ve been providing artists, makers & creators with inspiring spaces and places to work from for over 40 years. We operate and manage 20 character filled buildings across the country, providing a canvas for creativity for almost 1,000 creative practitioners & businesses.”*

Physical distancing and safe working measures are in place at all Wasps buildings.

*Hall within the Wasps Creative Academy, Inverness (Credit: Wasps)*



# wasps\_

# THE BRIGGAI, GLASGOW

A good example is The Briggait in Glasgow, an impressive and flamboyant building which had, except for temporary use, lain empty for the best part of 20 years. Wasps set out to redevelop the building in 2001, finally completing the project in late 2009.

The Briggait now houses over 5,500 sqm of public and private space including:

- 45 studios for visual artists.
- 24 offices for cultural organisations.
- 4 shop-front units for creative industry companies.
- A beautiful public courtyard that dates back to 1873.
- 2 street-front exhibition spaces, 2 meeting room spaces, and a heritage interpretation room.
- The Briggait is fully accessible with designated entrance, lift, and bathroom facilities, except for first floor studios on the Bridgegate elevation of the building.

A great deal of work went into repairing the Briggait's historic fabric to make the building habitable again.

The stunning 1873 Courtyard, perhaps the most impressive space architecturally, is open to the public on a daily basis between 9:30am and 5:30pm, Monday to Friday.

There are two meeting rooms available for hire on an hourly, half day, and full day basis.

These are bright rooms on the ground floor, adjacent to the main 1873 Courtyard.



*Romanesque entrance to the Briggait on Bridgegate, Glasgow  
(Credit: Wasps)*

*The Briggait in Glasgow has provided new uses for several important historic buildings (Credit: Alamy)*



# THE CREATIVE EXCHANGE, PERTH

This is a £4.5m partnership project between Wasps and Perth and Kinross Council and transformed the former St John's School building to create Perth's inspiring home for artists, makers, creative industry professionals and the general public.

Crowned 'Regeneration Project of the Year' at the 2021 Scottish Property Awards, Perth Creative Exchange is the regions first cultural hub of its kind. Perth Creative Exchange is Wasps' 20th building in Scotland, opening to tenants in October 2019.

Perth Creative Exchange provides space over three floors including:

- 26 studio spaces for designers, artists and makers, ranging in size from 150 - 580 sqft.
- 13 workspaces for creative industries and cultural social enterprises, ranging in size from 100 - 1,400 sqft.
- The Famous Grouse Ideas Centre.
- Creative business incubation space.
- The Gannochy Project Space: exhibition and gallery space.
- Meeting rooms available to hire.
- Hot-desking 'drop-in' zone with flexible rates.

*Top image: Building before renovation in 2017 (Credit: Wasps)*

*Bottom image: Interior spaces in 2021 are smart and light (Credit: Wasps)*





# MEADOW MILL STUDIOS, DUNDEE

Wasps launched in Dundee in 1977 at Meadow Mill, a historic but disused jute mill. In 2012, Wasps successfully redeveloped Meadow Mill studios to create:

- 58 Studios across three floors housing up to 100 artists.
- A large open-plan studio divided into smaller, more affordable bays aimed at new graduates.
- Better natural light, fixed heating in studios and enhanced signage.

- Greater circulation space, a new lift and improved accessibility.

There is also a large project space on the top floor, used for exhibitions, performances and events.

*Left image: Wasps launch weekend poster (Credit: Wasps)*

*Right image: One of the interior studio spaces within Meadow Mill today (Credit: Wasps)*



*Meadow Mill Studios in Dundee  
(Credit: Alamy)*



# THE CREATIVE ACADEMY, INVERNESS

In January 2018, Wasps acquired the Category B Listed Victorian Midmills buildings in the centre of Inverness which had stood vacant since 2015.

Dating from 1895 and 1913, and originally Inverness Royal Academy and latterly Inverness College, these are two of the most historic buildings in the city - socially and architecturally.

The project is being delivered in two phases. Phase 1, the 'artists and makers' wing was completed in November 2018. Phase 2 will provide the 'creative industries' wing.

The completed first phase of the building brought the 1913 Arts & Science Extension back into use as the 'artists and makers' wing, providing 32 artist studios, a community run traditional darkroom, a designated workshop space for classes, and an events/exhibition space in the beautifully refurbished old gym.

This building is now fully let to over 30 Highlands based artists and creatives.

*Images: Impressive historic interior spaces are being converted for modern use by the Creative Academy, including the now restored former gym (Credit: Wasps)*





*The Creative Academy in Inverness resides within some of the most historic buildings in the city (Credit: Alamy)*

# COMPARABLES - ART GALLERY & EXHIBITION SPACE

Another use under consideration for part of the building (a floor or part of a floor) is for an Art Gallery. The Creative Hubs described above will also provide gallery and exhibition space for contemporary arts.

The proposals below, put forward by James Knox, are for exhibitions to show off local artistic and historic collections on both a long term and revolving basis.

**Mackintosh by the Sea:** One of Scotland's greatest architects, Charles Rennie Mackintosh, spent summers of his youth in the 1890s on the Ayrshire coast as the guest of his friend and future architectural partner, John Keppie.

Based from Keppie's house in Prestwick, they made frequent visits to the little harbour of Dunure, staying with Keppie's sister, Jessie, who Mackintosh had taken a shine to. His sketches from his trips reveal his keen interest in Ayrshire castles which had a direct influence on his masterpiece, Glasgow School of Art.

Mackintosh also met his future wife, Margaret Macdonald in Ayrshire when she was staying with Jessie Keppie and other women artists at Dunure.

The exhibition would display Mackintosh's Ayrshire drawings and photographs of the seaside. There would also be photographs of Mackintosh inspired architecture in Ayrshire such as the art studios in Ayr Academy (now part of the archive complex).

Mackintosh material could also be sold in the station shop.



*Gallery space in Aberdeen (Credit: Alamy)*

*The Road Through The Rocks* by Charles Rennie Mackintosh (Credit: Alamy)



# COMPARABLES - ENTERPRISE HUBS

These operate on a similar basis to Wasps and provide space for a range of small enterprises, individual operators, professionals and consultants as well as community activities.

## INGRAM ENTERPRISE CENTRE, KILMARNOCK

This is the latest in a series of 25 buildings in Kilmarnock's town centre to undergo a comprehensive programme of restoration and refurbishment through the Kilmarnock Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) and the Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI).

John Finnie Street in Kilmarnock started life in the 1860s. It was to be a grand Victorian thoroughfare for the town, with the railway station located at northern end.

30-38 John Finnie Street was built in 1895. It has been home to businesses as diverse as the Bright Hosiery Manufacturer and the Department of Health for Scotland. The upper floors originally contained tenements and rooming apartments.

When the Kilmarnock Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme/ Townscape Heritage Initiative (CARS/THI) was initiated in 2007, the building was completely vacant.

East Ayrshire Council owned a number of the residential units and one of the ground floor units, but without owning the entire building, they were very unlikely to be able to redevelop it, or attract an investor.

The Council therefore agreed to try to purchase the remaining properties within the building. The process took several years, and at one point compulsory purchase powers were under consideration but in the end were not necessary.

Options for reusing the building as a hotel, and then artist studios were explored. This was in the aftermath of the economic downturn in 2008, and ultimately both failed. Finally, they settled upon the concept of a business incubation centre.

*Ingram Enterprise Centre in Kilmarnock in 1954 and after restoration in 2007 (Credit: IECK)*



# ORKNEY STREET ENTERPRISE CENTRE, GOVAN

The Orkney Street Enterprise Centre provides attractive, accessible and multi-functional space for a diverse mix of local businesses and community support organisations.

The building was restored as part of the Central Govan Action Plan during 2007 and 2009, and now offers state-of-the-art office space ranging from 800 to 2,800 sq ft. The centrepiece is the restored Edwardian Cell Block, where the converted cells provide a wow factor as serviced office space for small and fledgling businesses.

The £3.6 million refurbishment, led by Glasgow South West Regeneration Agency, has successfully preserved and revived this unusual building.

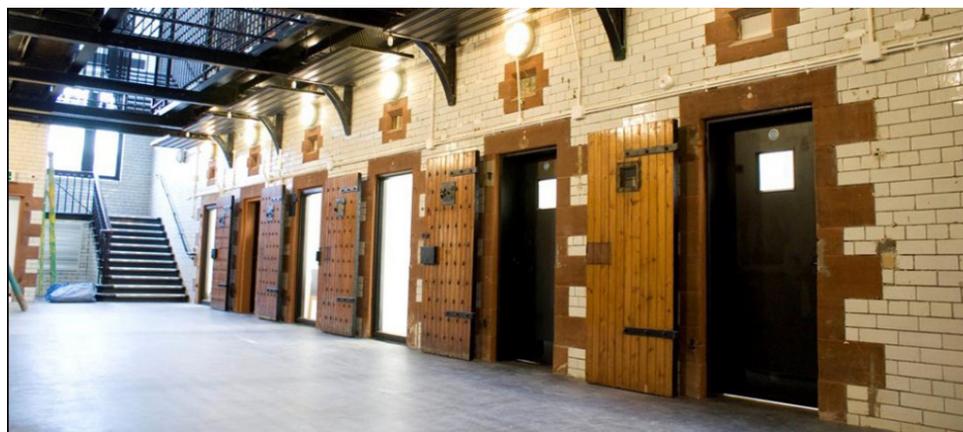
The restoration also provides economic and social benefits for the Govan Community. Day-to-day users of the building, including Jobs and Business Glasgow, Money Matters Advice Service and Govan Law Centre, are key access points for advice and assistance for the local community.

Orkney Street is also home to private businesses and the Central Govan Action Plan and Govan Cross Townscape

Heritage Initiative Team, all helping to increase the number of people working and spending in Govan's local economy.

The Category B listed building was originally designed by John Burnet Snr and was completed in 1867. It served as Govan's original town hall, fire station and, most notably, the police station from the days before Govan merged with Glasgow, right up to the final decade of the 20th century.

The building lay derelict for nearly 10 years before being transformed to once again play a vital role in the life and prosperity of Govan.



*Some of the former prison cells which are now converted into characterful office spaces and meeting rooms (Credit: OSEC)*



*Orkney Street Enterprise Centre is housed within a former 1867 prison (Credit: Alamy)*

# KIRKHAVEN ENTERPRISE CENTRE, GLASGOW

Kirkhaven Enterprise Centre comprises the B listed former Wellpark School comprehensively re-developed and interconnected with the A listed former Kirkhaven Church, which is an imposing property with a mezzanine constructed internally.

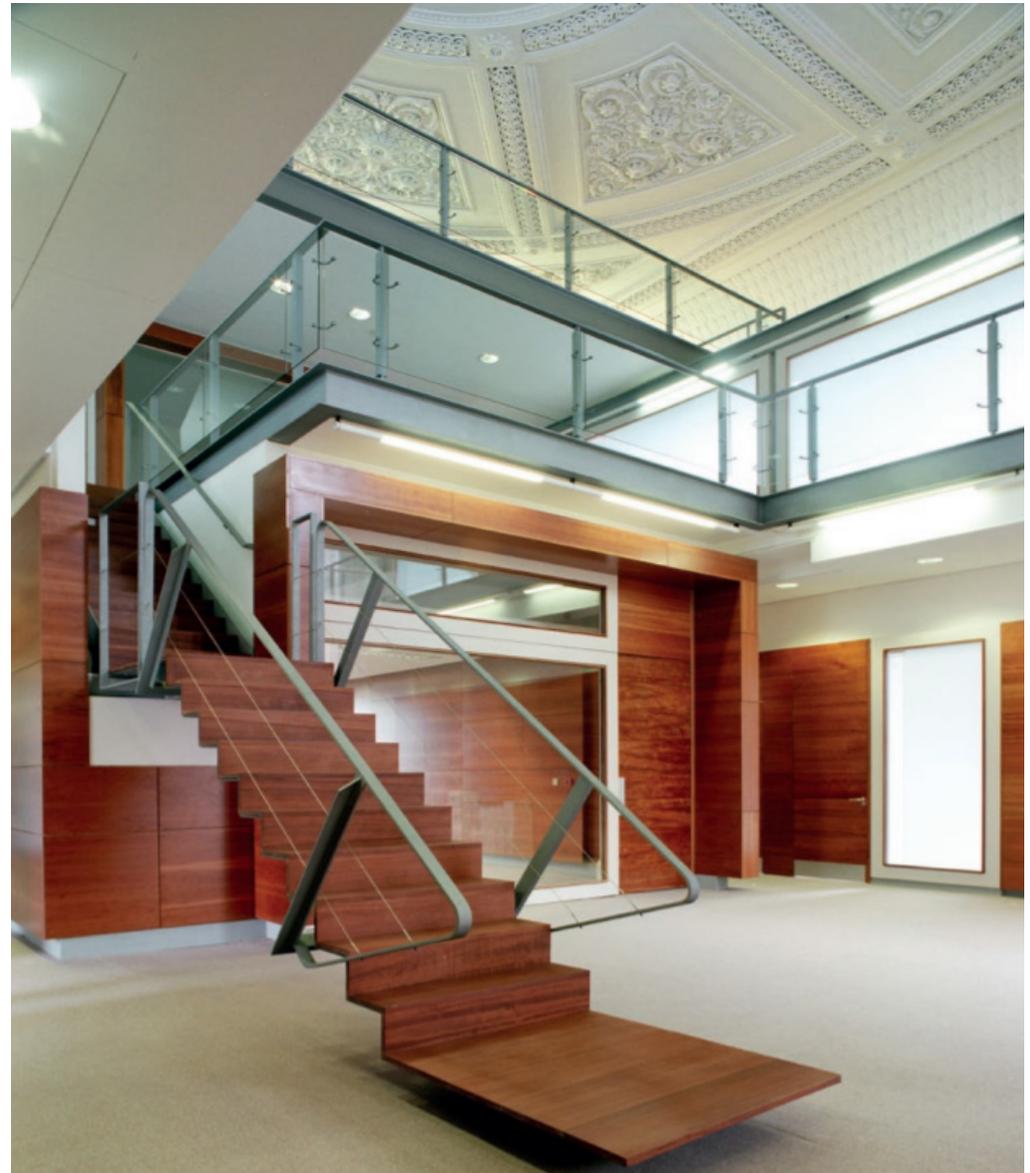
Within the grounds, there is the outdoor play area for the nursery and an area of landscaped ground at the corner of Duke Street and Melbourne Street.

Overlooking Duke Street to the north and Wellpark Street to the south, the premises are located around 0.5 miles east of Glasgow City Centre.

The principal access for the subjects is from Wellpark at 120 Sydney Street to a reception area with the stairs to the upper floors and a lift operating to all floors. The reception area and staircases are attractively designed incorporating exposed stonework and glass.

Internally, the premises have been refurbished to provide office suites of various sizes throughout. The Kirkhaven accommodation is arranged around a central atrium where there are breakout facilities for the tenants within the open plan ground floor core area.

Ornate ceilings and cornices have also been retained in the refurbishment.



*The building's striking historic interiors of the enterprise centre's striking*  
(Credit: Alamy)



**Kirkhaven Enterprise Centre, Glasgow resides in a converted grade B listed school building (Credit: Alamy)**

# COMPARABLES - HOTEL, RESTAURANT AND CAFE USE

This will be explored in parallel and is based on finding a lead operator/tenant such as Wetherspoons for ground and first floors (and probably basement) and using former hotel reception rooms and dining rooms as a public bar and restaurants, with party rooms on the first floor.

The upper two stories can become a low-cost Easy Hotel style hotel/hostel, with rooms benefitting from good views out to sea and across to the island of Arran.

Another impressive example are the Brewdog Hotels in Edinburgh and Aberdeen. This is a vibrant and well-established operator, founded in Scotland, which operates 50 bars across the UK and 24 international bars.

The potential for local drinks and food companies to generate jobs and build destinations is exemplified by the Ayr Brewing Company founded in 2009.

The award-winning micro-brewery which operates close to the Station Hotel complex, succeeds brilliantly in capitalising on Ayrshire's cultural roots with its strapline: 'Hand Crafted High Quality Ales, Brewed in the Heart of Burns Country.'

This hugely successful local initiative highlights the potential for the Ayr Station Hotel complex to harness its cultural and historical roots to entrepreneurial and cultural activities.

This remains an open goal for Ayr, capital of Burns country, given that research shows that Burns is worth just over £200m a year to the Scottish economy whereas Mozart is worth £5bn to the Austrian economy.

*BrewDog has converted the Athenaeum building at the east end of Union Street in Castlegate, Aberdeen, into a destination pub (Credit: BrewDog)*



*The Booking Office Wetherspoons pub  
above Edinburgh Waverley Station  
(Credit: Alamy)*



# **O**UR PROPOSALS

**T**HE SUGGESTED LAYOUTS ARE NOT INTENDED TO BE FINAL PLANS, BUT ARE DESIGNED TO DEMONSTRATE THE RANGE OF POSSIBILITIES FOR DISCUSSION WITH THE RELEVANT AUTHORITIES, POTENTIAL INVESTORS AND USERS.



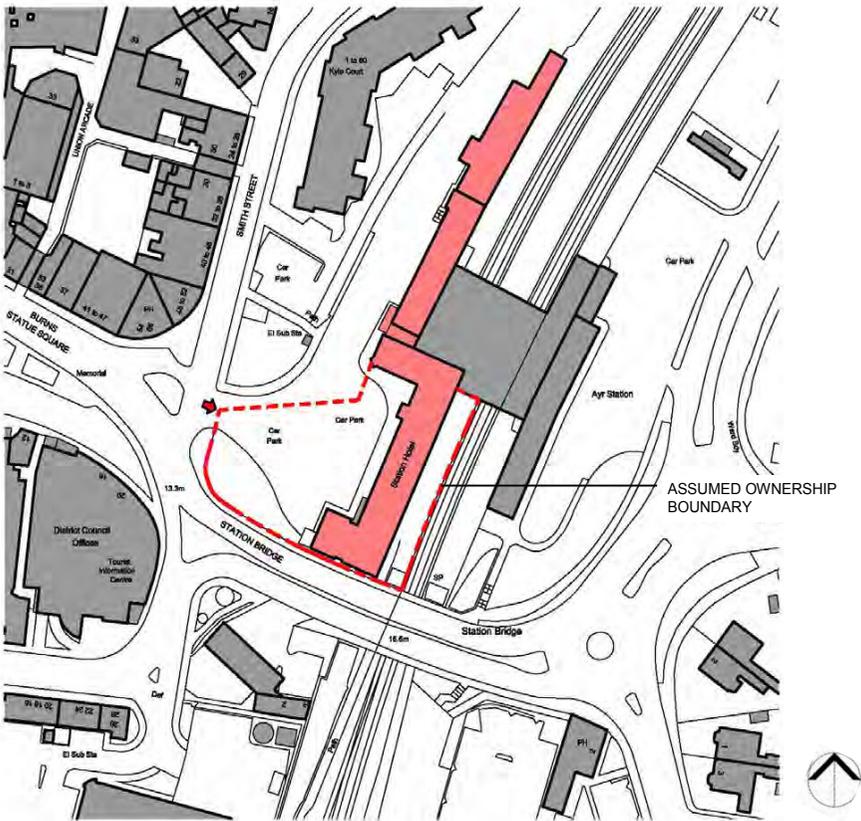
VIEW FROM WEST



VIEW OF NORTH WING



VIEW FROM SOUTH WEST



LOCATION PLAN



AERIAL PHOTO

© THIS DRAWING IS COPYRIGHT OF  
SMITH SCOTT MULLAN ASSOCIATES  
REVISIONS

STATION HOTEL, AYR

LOCATION PLAN

NOT TO SCALE 08.07.2013  
1223-SK-13

SMITH SCOTT MULLAN ASSOCIATES

T 0131 555 1414  
F 0131 555 1448  
E mail@smith-scott-mullan.co.uk

378  
LEITH WALK  
EDINBURGH  
EH7 4PF

# OPTION 1

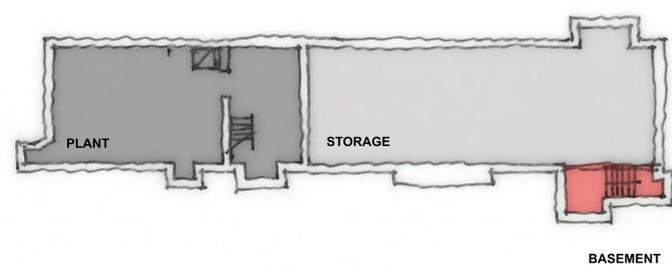
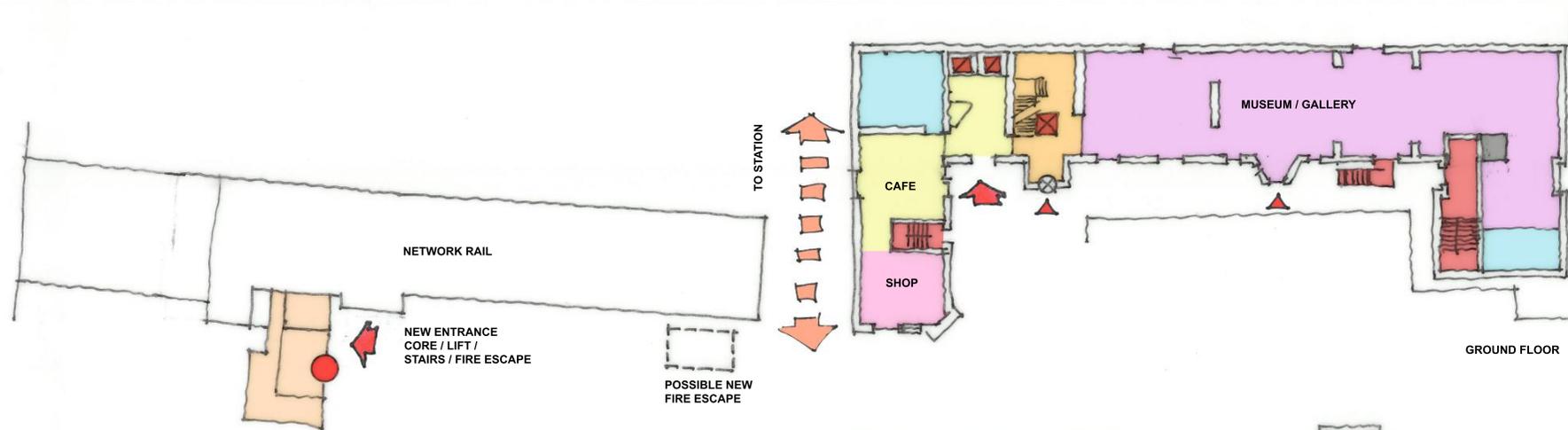
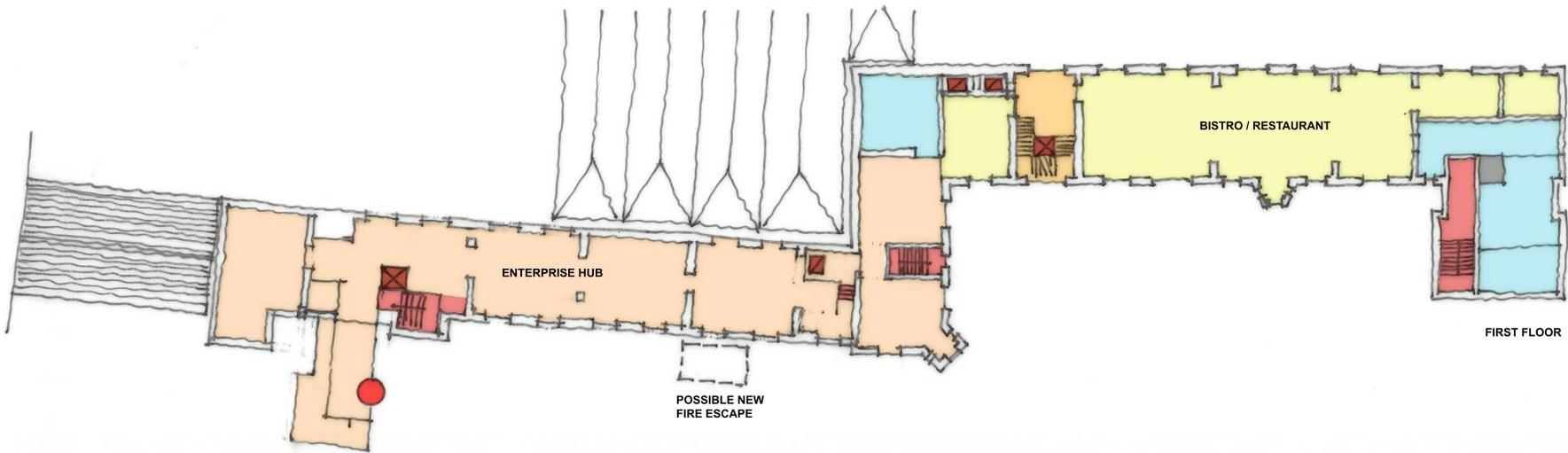
## ENTERPRISE HUB, ART GALLERY & STUDIOS

**South wing**     Museum and Art Gallery space on ground and first floor  
Arts and crafts studios on second and third floors

**North wing**     Railway facilities on ground floor  
Enterprise hub spaces on upper three floors



**Flexible art gallery and exhibition space at the Perth Museum & Art Gallery (Credit: Visit Scotland)**

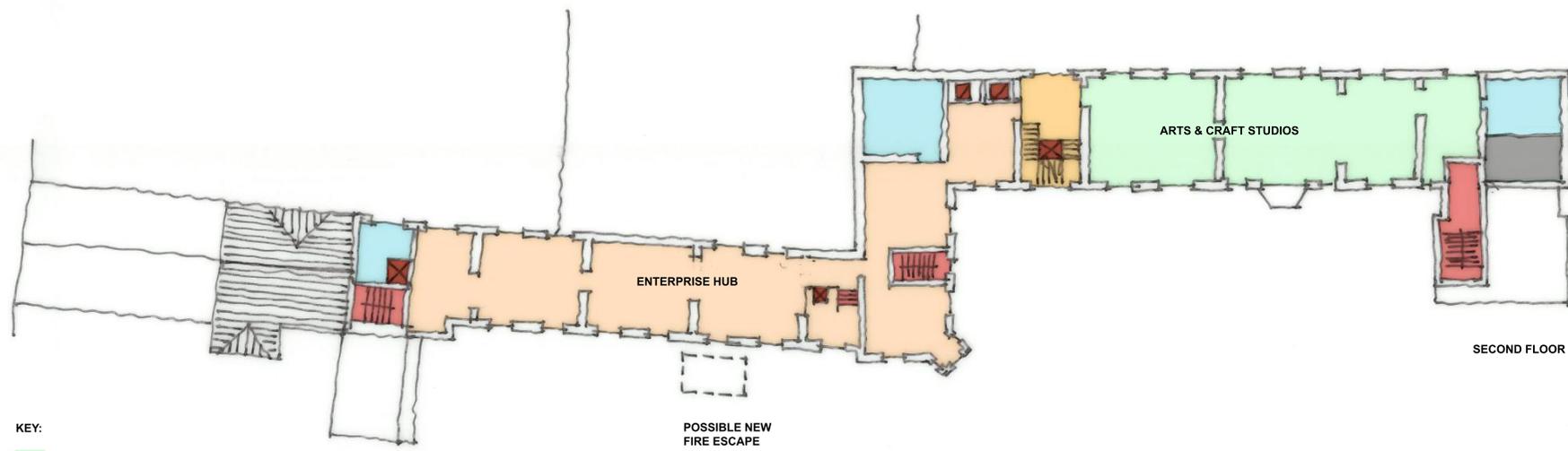
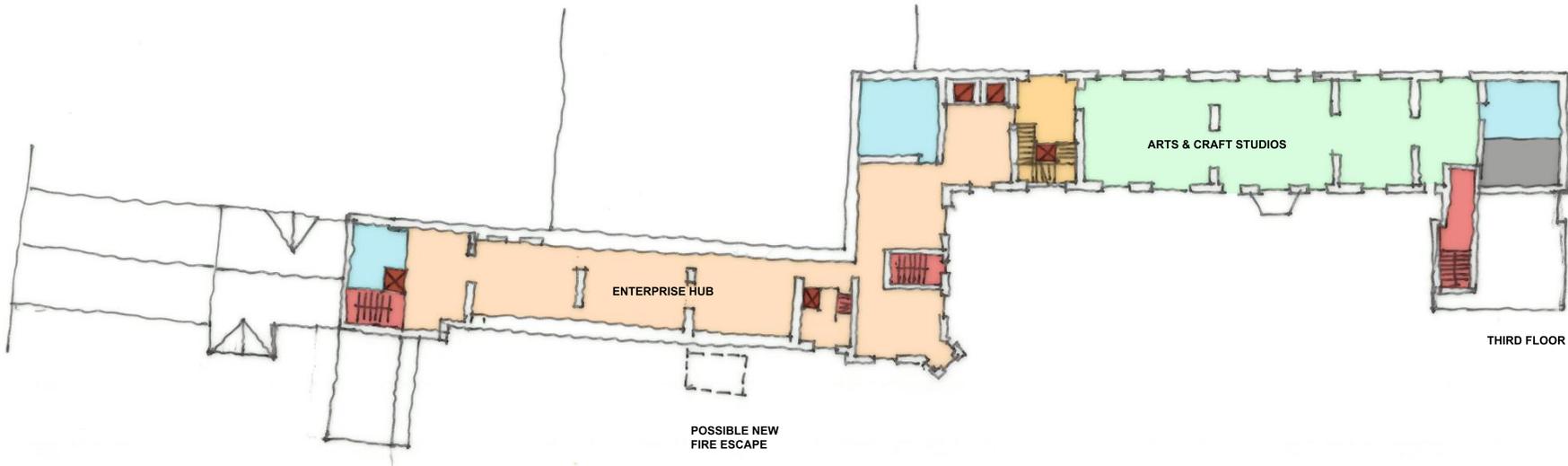


- KEY:
- FUNCTION / DINING
  - HISTORIC LIFT LOBBY
  - ENTERPRISE HUB
  - KITCHEN / TOILETS
  - VERTICAL CIRCULATION / FIRE EXITS
  - MUSEUM / GALLERY
  - SHOP
  - STORAGE
  - PLANT

NOTE: THIS DRAWING IS NOT BASED ON AN ACCURATE SURVEY, BUT DERIVED FROM A VARIETY OF SOURCES. IT IS ONLY SUITABLE FOR USE IN INITIAL DISCUSSIONS.

FIRST ISSUE 14.12.21 AJS LR NOT TO SCALE

**OPTION 1 - ENTERPRISE HUB / ART & CRAFTS (SHEET 1)**



- KEY:
- ARTS & CRAFT STUDIOS
  - HISTORIC LIFT LOBBY
  - ENTERPRISE HUB
  - KITCHEN / TOILETS
  - VERTICAL CIRCULATION / FIRE EXITS
  - PLANT

NOTE: THIS DRAWING IS NOT BASED ON AN ACCURATE SURVEY, BUT DERIVED FROM A VARIETY OF SOURCES. IT IS ONLY SUITABLE FOR USE IN INITIAL DISCUSSIONS.

**OPTION 1 - ENTERPRISE HUB / ARTS & CRAFTS (SHEET 2)**

FIRST ISSUE 14.12.21 AJS LR NOT TO SCALE

# OPTION 2

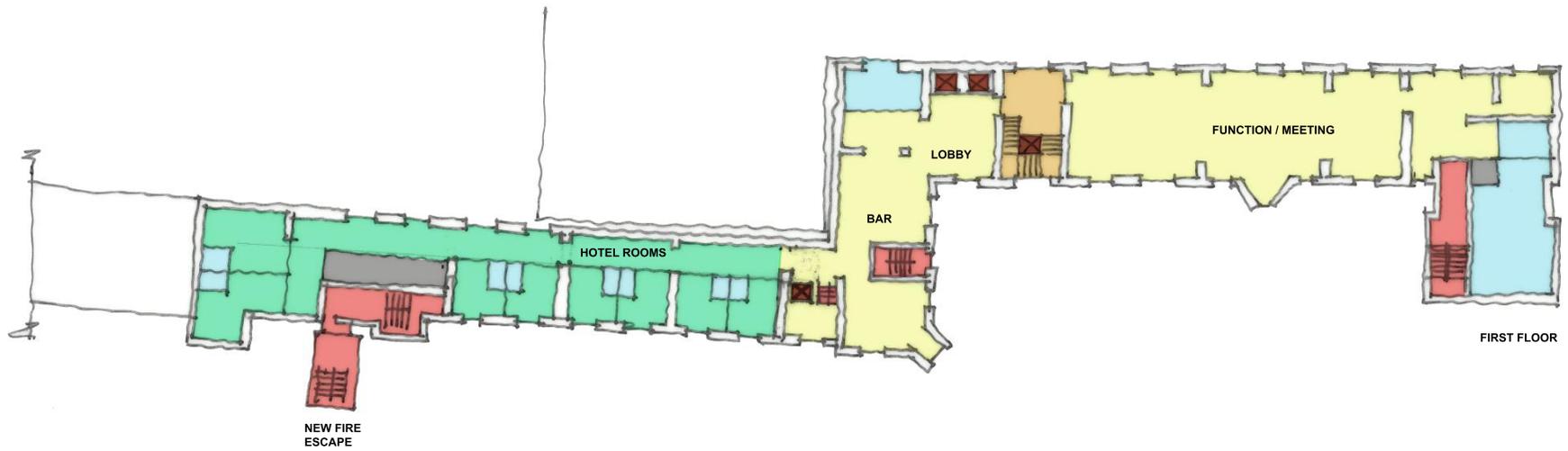
## HOTEL, EVENTS SPACE AND RESTAURANT BAR USE

42

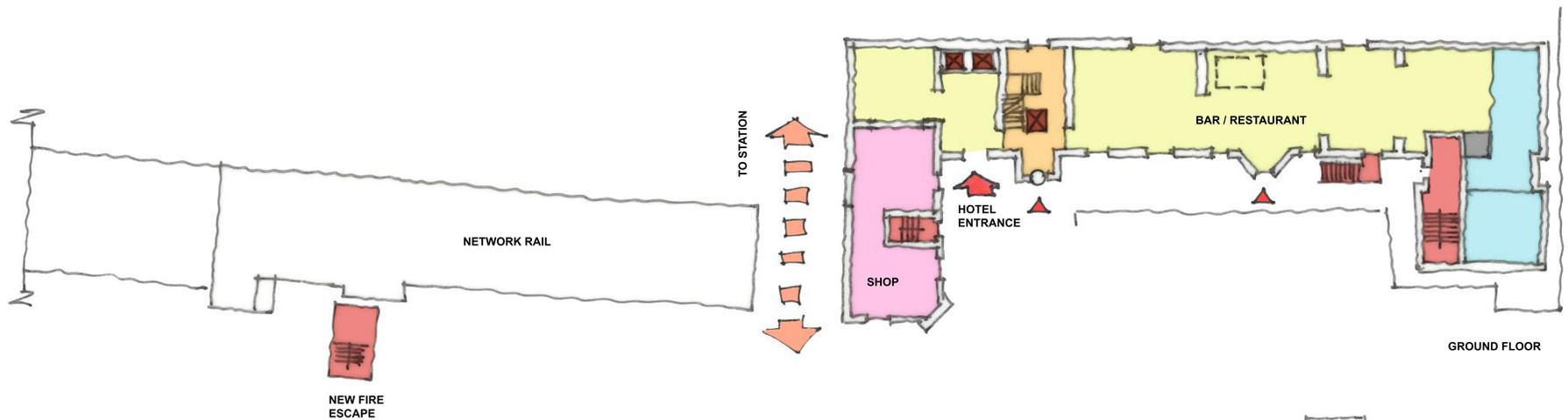
- South wing** Bar and restaurant on ground floor, and function rooms, meeting rooms on first floor  
Hotel rooms on second and third floors
- North wing** Railway facilities on ground floor  
Hotel rooms on second and third floors



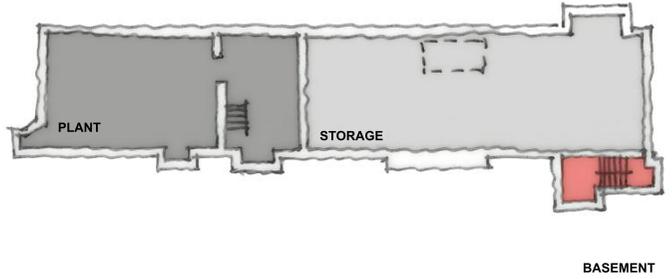
Lounge bar at the  
Blythswood Square Hotel in  
Glasgow (Credit: BSHG)



FIRST FLOOR



GROUND FLOOR



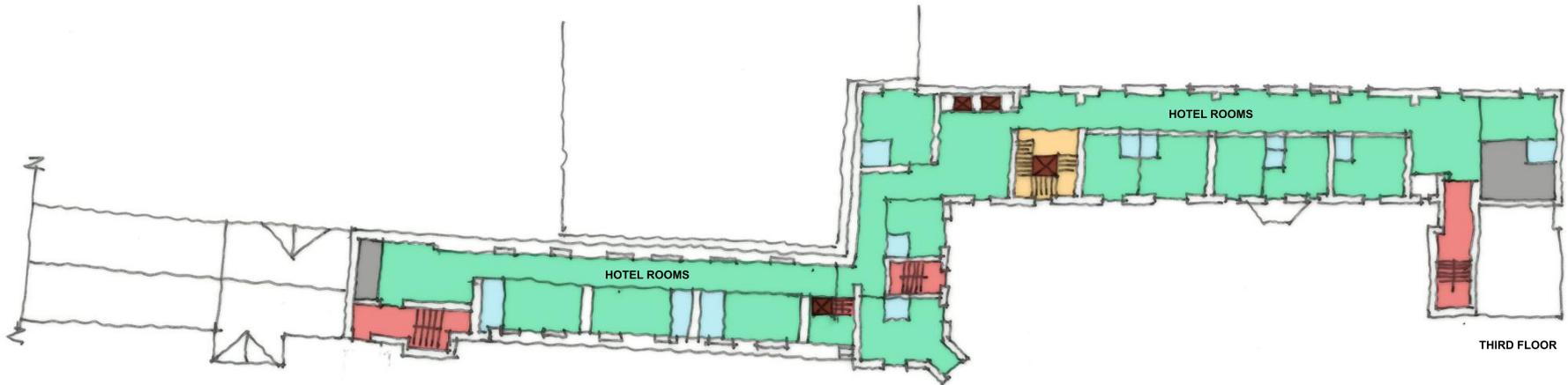
BASEMENT

- KEY:
- HOTEL ROOMS
  - FUNCTION / DINING
  - HISTORIC LIFT LOBBY
  - KITCHEN / TOILETS
  - VERTICAL CIRCULATION / FIRE EXITS
  - SHOP
  - STORAGE
  - PLANT

NOTE: THIS DRAWING IS NOT BASED ON AN ACCURATE SURVEY, BUT DERIVED FROM A VARIETY OF SOURCES. IT IS ONLY SUITABLE FOR USE IN INITIAL DISCUSSIONS.

FIRST ISSUE 14.12.21 AJS LR NOT TO SCALE

## OPTION 2 - HOTEL (SHEET 1)



THIRD FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR

- KEY:
- HOTEL ROOMS (34 TOTAL)
  - HISTORIC LIFT LOBBY
  - VERTICAL CIRCULATION / FIRE EXITS
  - KITCHEN / TOILETS
  - PLANT

NOTE: THIS DRAWING IS NOT BASED ON AN ACCURATE SURVEY, BUT DERIVED FROM A VARIETY OF SOURCES. IT IS ONLY SUITABLE FOR USE IN INITIAL DISCUSSIONS.

FIRST ISSUE 14.12.21 NOT TO SCALE

**OPTION 2 - HOTEL (SHEET 2)**

# OPTION 3

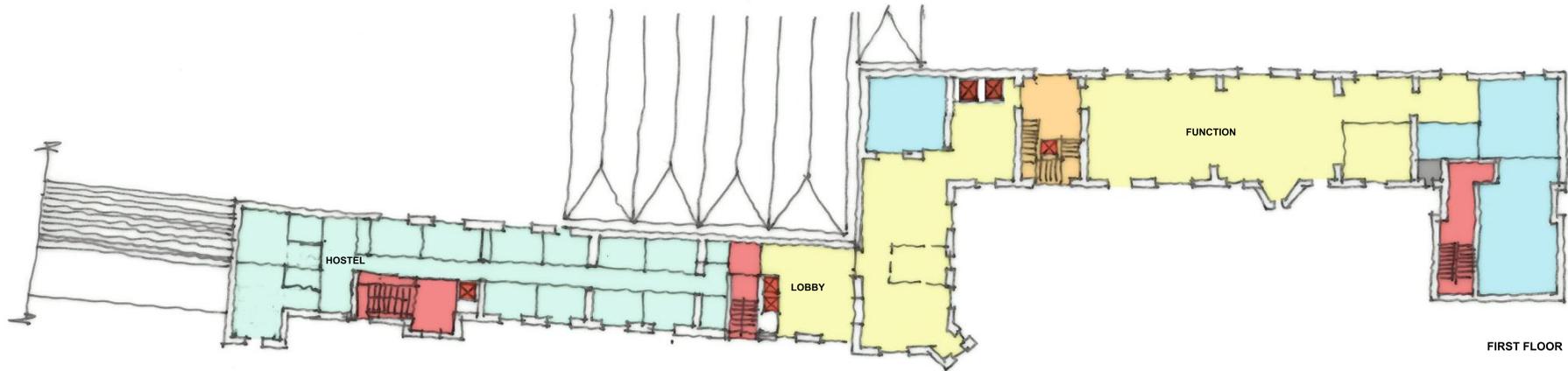
## HOTEL, HOSTEL AND FUNCTION USE

**South wing** Bar and restaurant on ground floor, and function rooms on first floor  
Hotel bedrooms on upper two floors

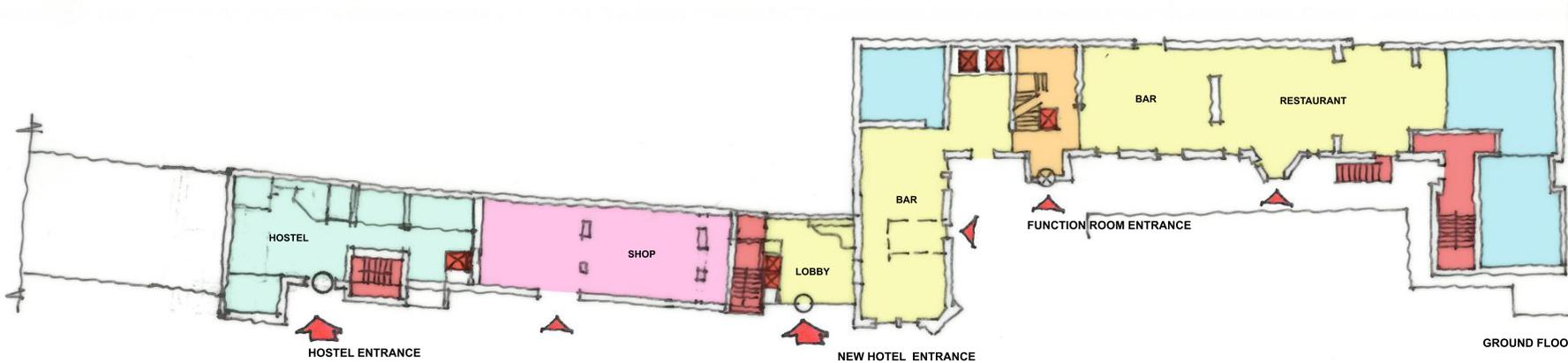
**North wing** Retail and hostel premises, with bedrooms on first, second and third floors

*The main lounge at Castle Rock Hostel in Edinburgh  
(Credit: Wayfaring Kiwi)*





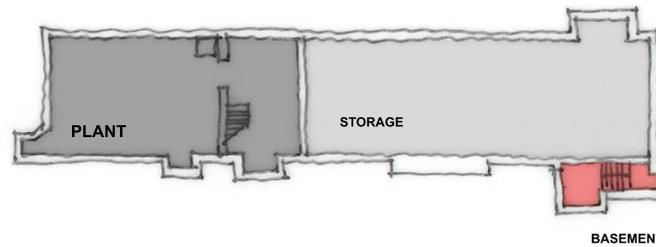
FIRST FLOOR



GROUND FLOOR

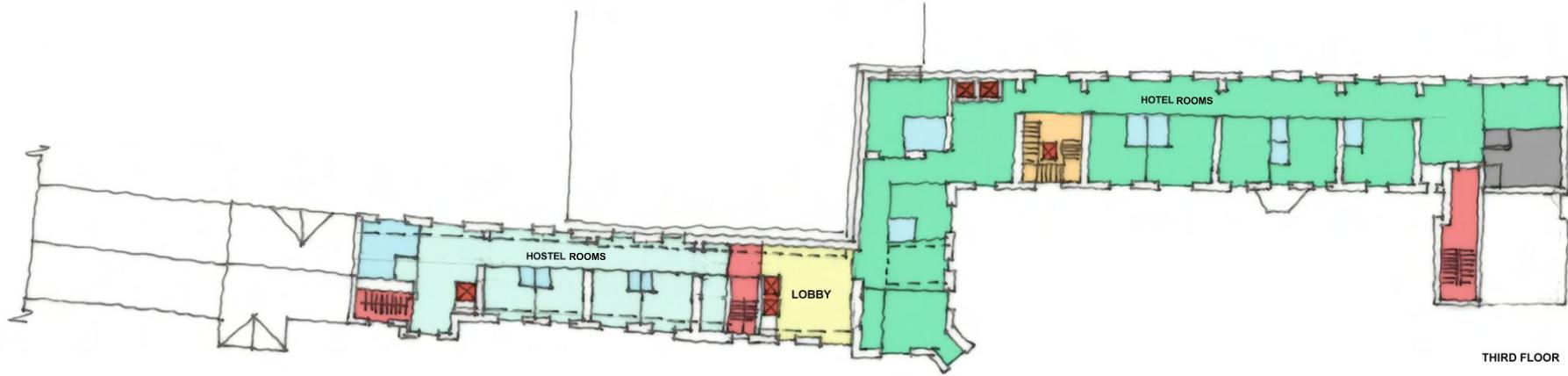
KEY:

- HOSTEL
- FUNCTION / DINING
- SHOP
- HISTORIC LIFT LOBBY
- VERTICAL CIRCULATION / FIRE ESCAPE
- KITCHEN / TOILETS
- SUPPORT / STORAGE
- PLANT

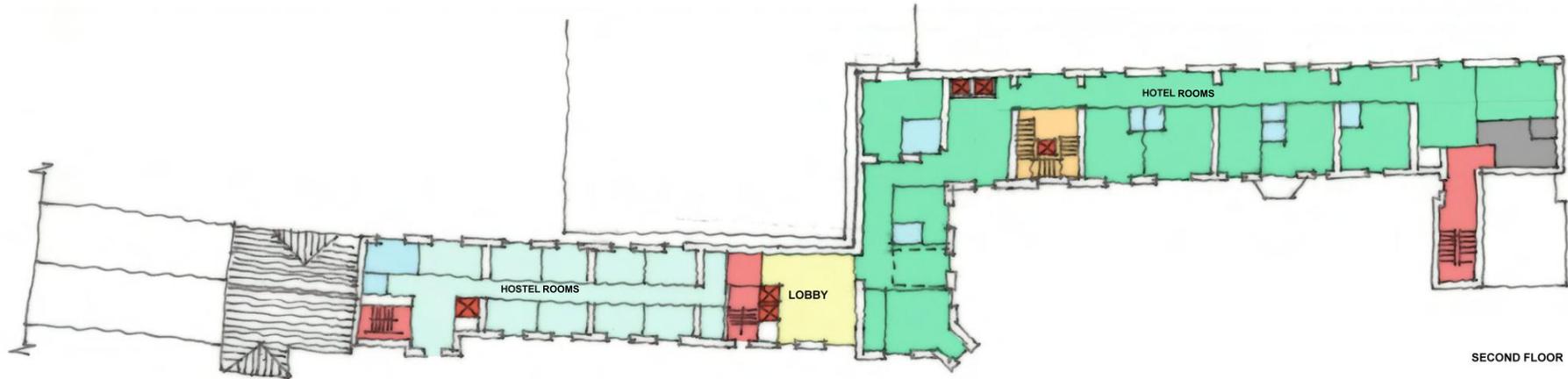


BASEMENT

NOTE: THIS DRAWING IS NOT BASED ON AN ACCURATE SURVEY, BUT DERIVED FROM A VARIETY OF SOURCES. IT IS ONLY SUITABLE FOR USE IN INITIAL DISCUSSIONS.



THIRD FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR

KEY:

- HOTEL ROOMS (18 TOTAL)
- HOSTEL ROOMS (25 TOTAL)
- HISTORIC LIFT LOBBY
- VERTICAL CIRCULATION / FIRE EXITS
- TOILETS / KITCHEN
- SUPPORT / STORAGE
- PLANT
- LOBBY

NOTE: THIS DRAWING IS NOT BASED ON AN ACCURATE SURVEY, BUT DERIVED FROM A VARIETY OF SOURCES. IT IS ONLY SUITABLE FOR USE IN INITIAL DISCUSSIONS.

FIRST ISSUE 14.12.21 AJS LR NOT TO SCALE

**OPTION 3 - HOTEL / FULL BUILDING (SHEET 2)**

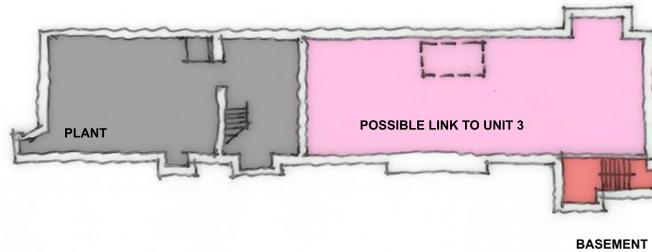
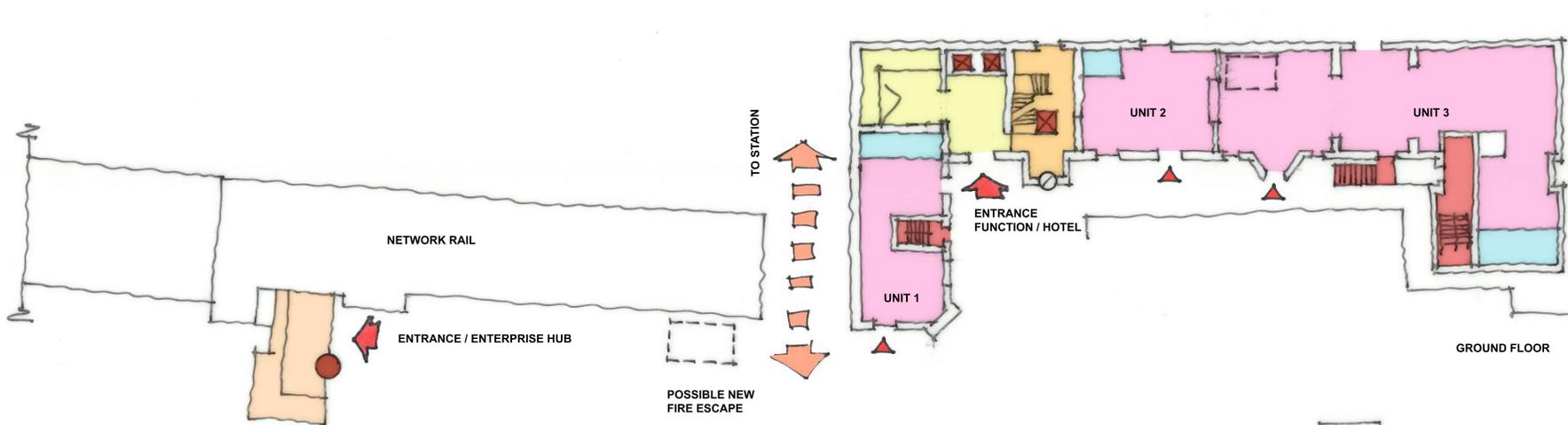
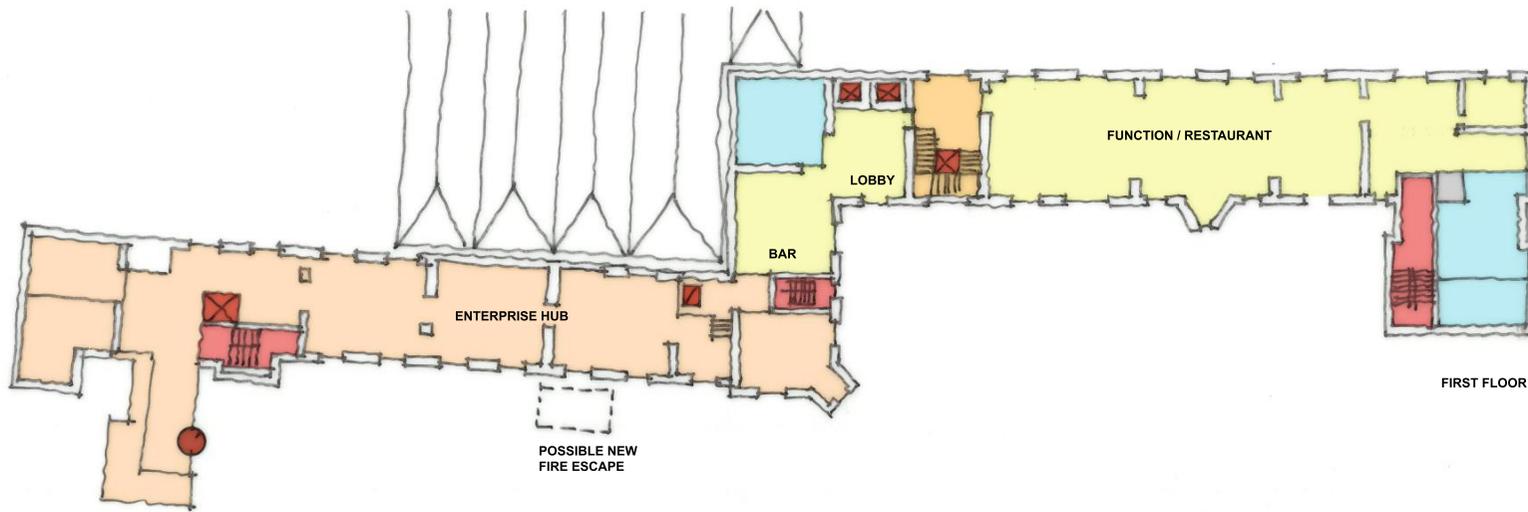
# OPTION 4

## MIXED HOTEL, ENTERPRISE AND FUNCTION SPACE

- South wing** Enterprise units on ground floor, and bar, restaurant and function rooms on first floor  
Hotel bedrooms on second and third floors
- North wing** Railway facilities on the ground floor  
Enterprise hub and craft studios on first second and third floors



*Hotel lobby and public areas  
at the Charlotte Square Hotel  
in Edinburgh  
(Credit: Kimpton)*

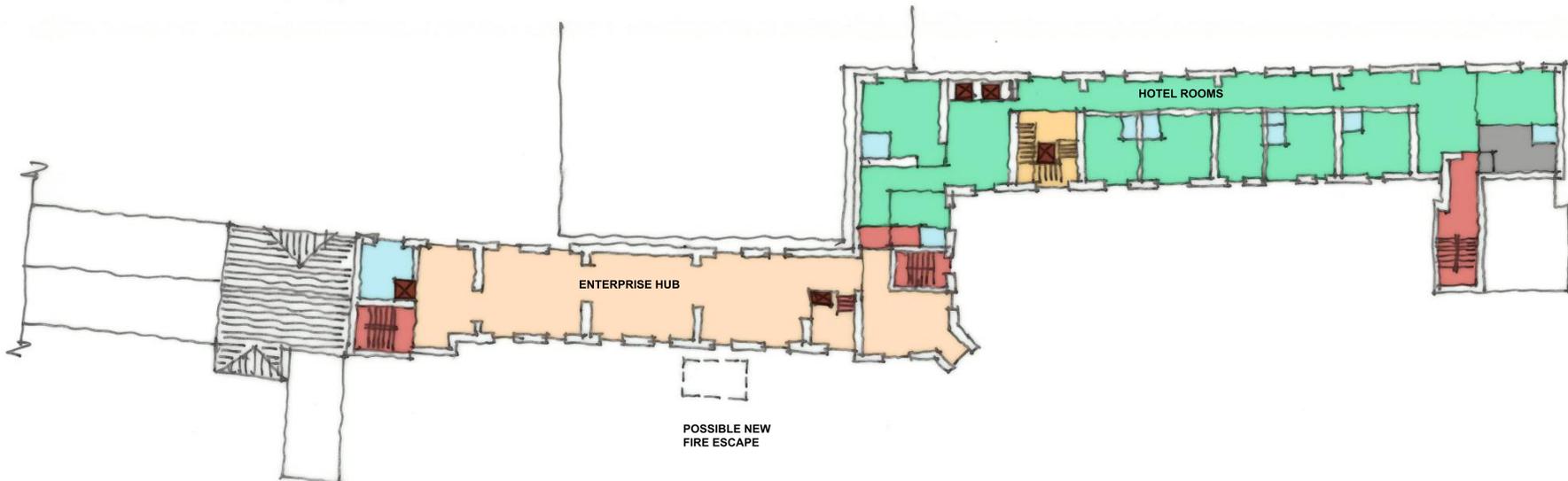
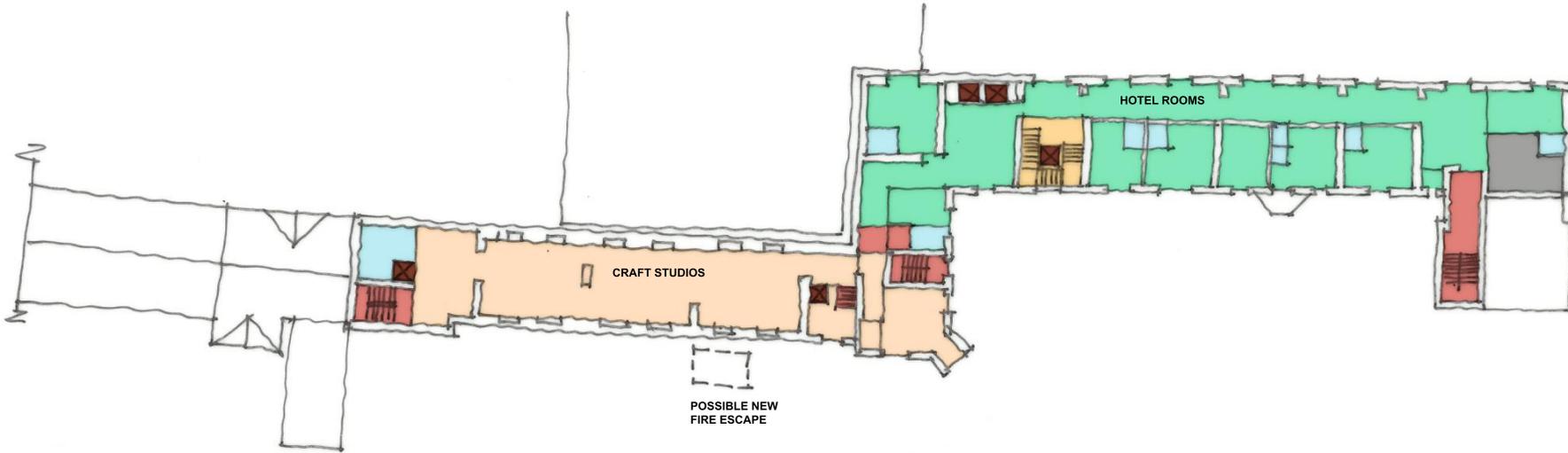


- KEY:
- FUNCTION / DINING
  - HISTORIC LIFT LOBBY
  - VERTICAL CIRCULATION / FIRE ESCAPE
  - KITCHEN / TOILETS
  - ENTERPRISE HUB
  - COMMERCIAL
  - SUPPORT / STORAGE
  - PLANT

NOTE: THIS DRAWING IS NOT BASED ON AN ACCURATE SURVEY, BUT DERIVED FROM A VARIETY OF SOURCES. IT IS ONLY SUITABLE FOR USE IN INITIAL DISCUSSIONS.

FIRST ISSUE 14.12.21 AJS LR NOT TO SCALE

**OPTION 4 - MAXIMUM MIXED USE (SHEET 1)**



- KEY:
- HOTEL ROOMS (16 TOTAL)
  - HISTORIC LIFT LOBBY
  - KITCHEN / TOILETS
  - VERTICAL CIRCULATION / FIRE EXITS
  - ENTERPRISE HUB / CRAFT STUDIOS
  - PLANT

NOTE: THIS DRAWING IS NOT BASED ON AN ACCURATE SURVEY, BUT DERIVED FROM A VARIETY OF SOURCES. IT IS ONLY SUITABLE FOR USE IN INITIAL DISCUSSIONS.

FIRST ISSUE 14.12.21 AJS LR

**OPTION 4 - MAXIMUM MIXED USE (SHEET 2)**

# OPTION 5

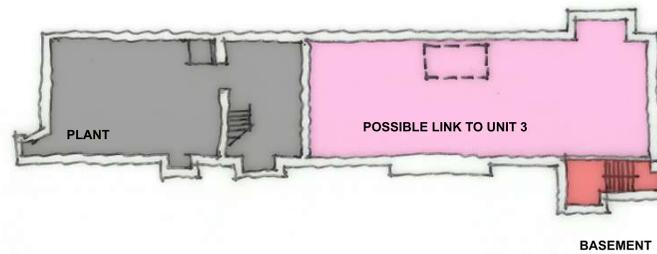
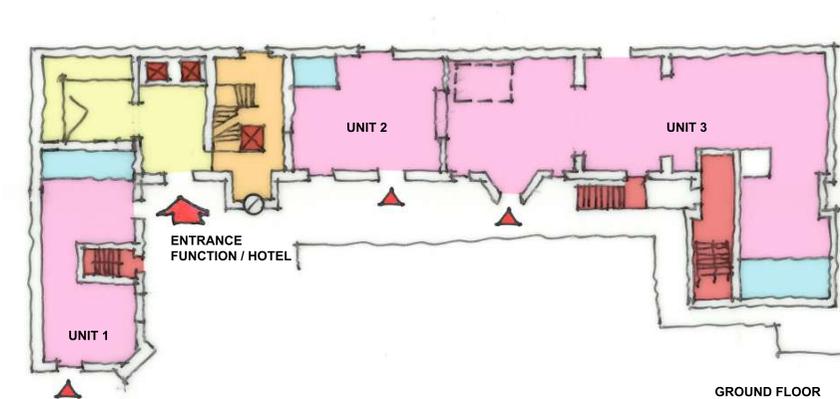
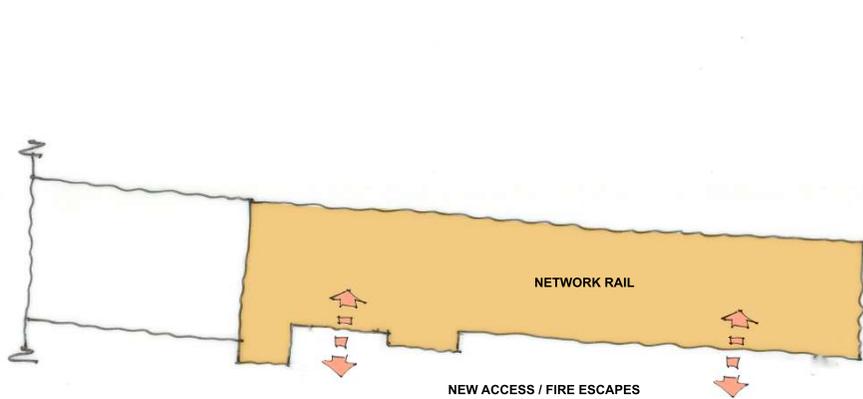
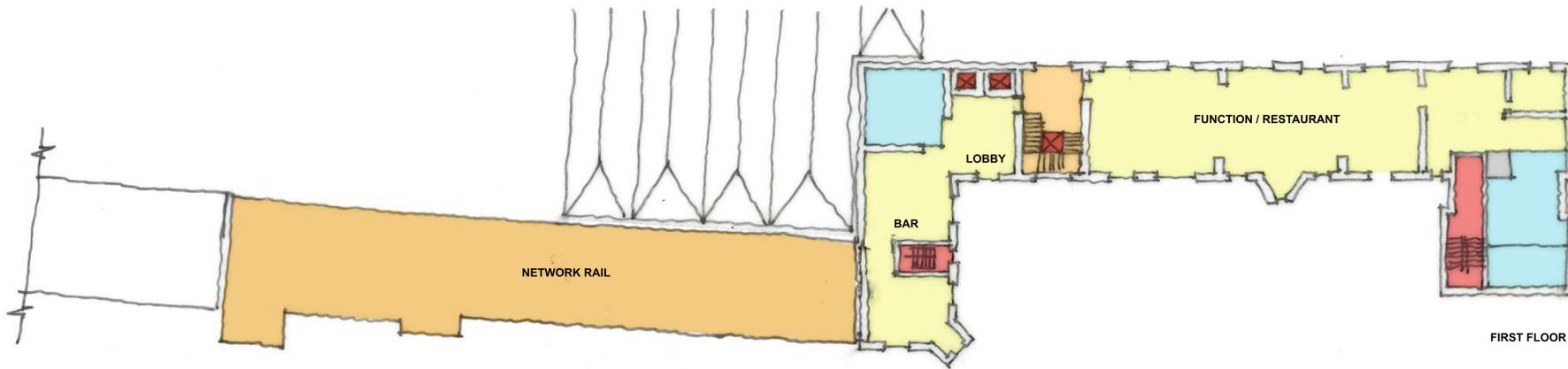
## MAXIMUM MIXED USE INCLUDING STATION OFFICES AND PASSENGER FACILITIES

**South wing**     Enterprise hub / Art Gallery / Studios or Hotel as in Options 1-3

**North wing**     Railway use throughout with passenger facilities on ground floor  
Station offices on upper floors

*Lobby and functions space at  
the Grant Hotel in Edinburgh  
(Credit: EGH)*



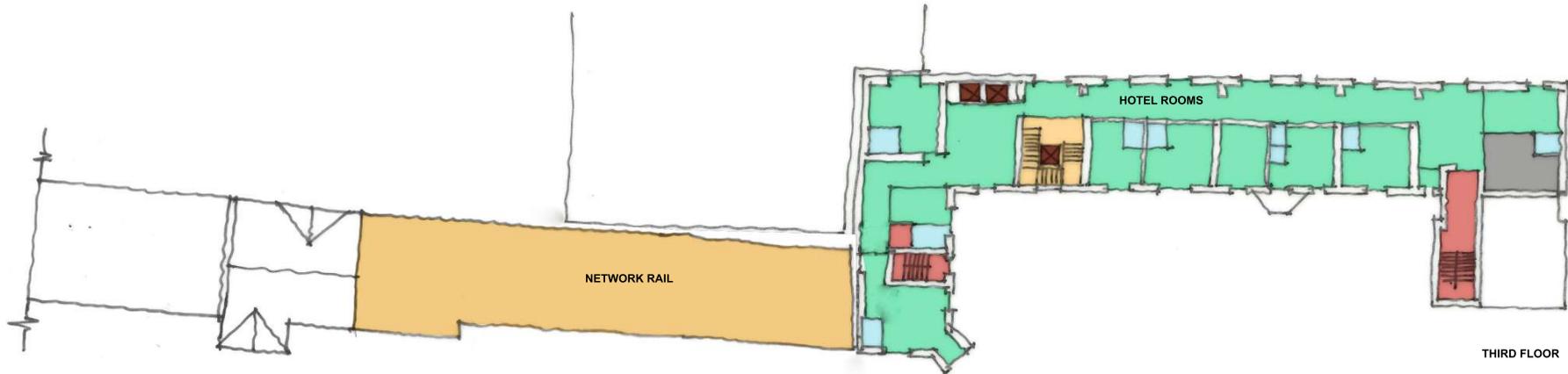


- KEY:
- FUNCTION / DINING
  - HISTORIC LIFT LOBBY
  - VERTICAL CIRCULATION / FIRE ESCAPE
  - KITCHEN / TOILETS
  - NETWORK RAIL
  - COMMERCIAL
  - SUPPORT / STORAGE
  - PLANT

NOTE: THIS DRAWING IS NOT BASED ON AN ACCURATE SURVEY, BUT DERIVED FROM A VARIETY OF SOURCES. IT IS ONLY SUITABLE FOR USE IN INITIAL DISCUSSIONS.

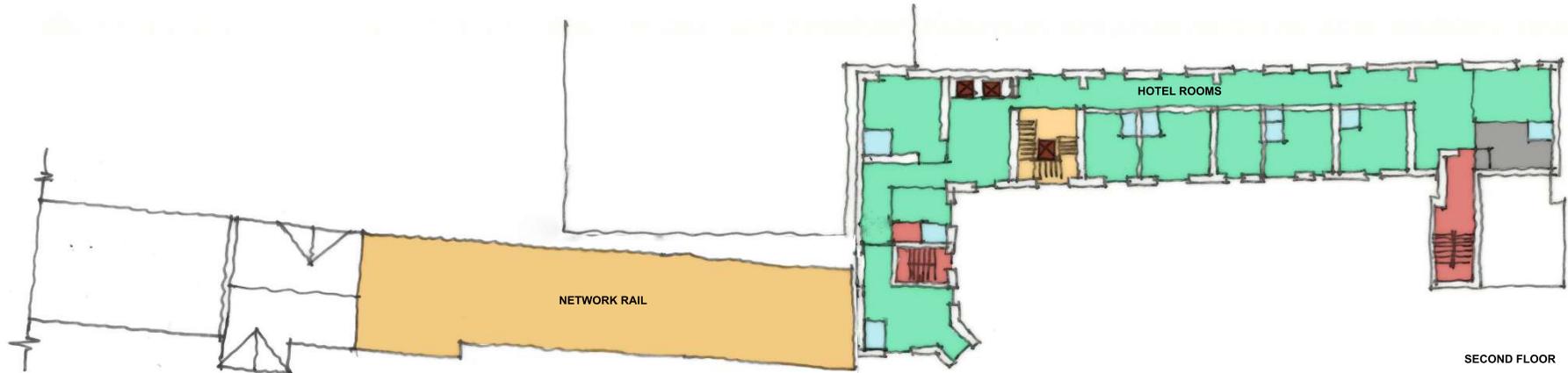
**OPTION 5 - SOUTH WING ONLY MAXIMUM MIXED USE (SHEET 1)**

FIRST ISSUE 23.02.22 AJS LR NOT TO SCALE  
 REV A 04.03.22 AJS LR



POSSIBLE NEW  
FIRE ESCAPE

THIRD FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR

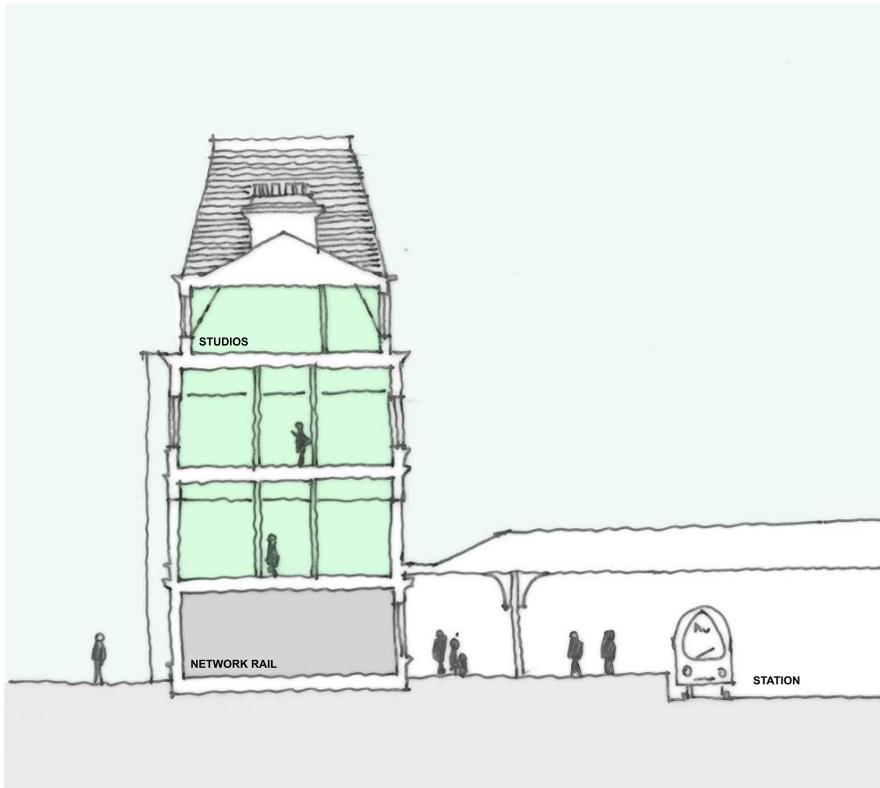
KEY:

- HOTEL ROOMS (18 TOTAL)
- HISTORIC LIFT LOBBY
- KITCHEN / TOILETS
- VERTICAL CIRCULATION / FIRE EXITS
- NETWORK RAIL
- PLANT

NOTE: THIS DRAWING IS NOT BASED ON AN ACCURATE SURVEY, BUT DERIVED FROM A VARIETY OF SOURCES. IT IS ONLY SUITABLE FOR USE IN INITIAL DISCUSSIONS.

FIRST ISSUE 23.02.22 AJS LR NOT TO SCALE  
REV A 04.03.22 AJS LR

**OPTION 5 - SOUTH WING ONLY MAXIMUM MIXED USE (SHEET 2)**



SECTION A - NORTH WING



SECTION B - SOUTH WING



AERIAL VIEW



VIEW FROM WEST



FIRST FLOOR SPACE



VIEW FROM SOUTH WEST

KEY:

- CELLULAR SPACES / HOTEL ROOMS / CRAFT STUDIOS
- GRAND SPACES / RESTAURANT / FUNCTION / MEETING
- OPEN SPACES / FUNCTION / SHOP / MUSEUM
- SUPPORT SPACES / PLANT / STORAGE

NOTE: THIS DRAWING IS NOT BASED ON AN ACCURATE SURVEY, BUT DERIVED FROM A VARIETY OF SOURCES. IT IS ONLY SUITABLE FOR USE IN INITIAL DISCUSSIONS.

## TYPICAL SECTION

# COST ESTIMATES

All options have been appraised by professional quantity surveyor Graeme Davidson of Hardies Property & Construction Consultants, one of the leading independent firms of Chartered Surveyors in Scotland.

The following tables show both the high-level and detailed cost estimates of the construction costs at present day rates for the refurbishment and conversion of the building for the various uses detailed in the five options above.

<b>STATION HOTEL, AYR - OPTION APPRAISAL</b>				
	<b>Total (m<sup>2</sup>)</b>	<b>Average Refurb Costs</b>	<b>Atkins Repair Costs</b>	<b>Total Estimated Construction Costs</b>
<b>Enterprise Hub/Arts &amp; Crafts</b>	4815	£ 8,472,000	£ 10,000,000.00	<b>£ 18,472,000.00</b>
<b>Hotel</b>	4712	£ 8,226,000	£ 10,000,000.00	<b>£ 18,226,000.00</b>
<b>Hotel/Hostel</b>	5140	£ 8,820,000	£ 10,000,000.00	<b>£ 18,820,000.00</b>
<b>Mixed Use (Option 4)</b>	4870	£ 7,674,000	£ 10,000,000.00	<b>£ 17,674,000.00</b>
<b>Mixed Use (Option 5)</b>	3493	£ 5,544,000	£ 6,850,000.00	<b>£ 12,394,000.00</b>

STATION HOTEL, AYR - OPTION APPRAISAL																		
		South Wing (m <sup>2</sup> )		Range £/m2		Range £				North Wing (m <sup>2</sup> )		Range £/m2		Range £		Total (m <sup>2</sup> )	Option Total Range £	
<b>Enterprise Hub/Arts &amp; Crafts</b>		<b>Option 1</b>						<b>Option 1</b>								4815	£ 6,510,200	£ 7,599,600
	Basement	Plant/Storage	458	£ 700	£ 900	£ 320,600	£ 412,200											
	Ground	Café/Shop/Museum	785	£ 1,800	£ 2,000	£ 1,413,000	£ 1,570,000	Entrance	70	£ 1,800	£ 2,000	£ 126,000	£ 140,000					
	First	Bar/Restaurant	712	£ 1,800	£ 2,000	£ 1,281,600	£ 1,424,000	Enterprise Hub	630	£ 1,200	£ 1,400	£ 756,000	£ 882,000					
	Second	Arts & Crafts Studio/Bar	632	£ 1,200	£ 1,500	£ 758,400	£ 948,000	Enterprise Hub	413	£ 1,200	£ 1,400	£ 495,600	£ 578,200					
	Third	Arts & Crafts Studio/Bar	632	£ 1,200	£ 1,500	£ 758,400	£ 948,000	Enterprise Hub	413	£ 1,200	£ 1,400	£ 495,600	£ 578,200					
	Tower	Meeting Space	70	£ 1,500	£ 1,700	£ 105,000	£ 119,000											
		<b>Total</b>	<b>3289</b>	<b>£ 1,410</b>		<b>£ 4,637,000</b>	<b>£ 5,421,200</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>1526</b>	<b>£ 1,228</b>		<b>£ 1,873,200</b>	<b>£ 2,178,400</b>					
<b>Hotel</b>		<b>Option 2</b>						<b>Option 2</b>								4712	£ 6,471,200	£ 7,226,200
	Basement	Plant/Storage	458	£ 700	£ 900	£ 320,600	£ 412,200											
	Ground	Shop/Bar/Restaurant	785	£ 1,800	£ 2,000	£ 1,413,000	£ 1,570,000	Fire escape	25	£ 2,000	£ 2,500	£ 50,000	£ 62,500					
	First	Meetings/Bar	712	£ 1,200	£ 1,500	£ 854,400	£ 1,068,000	Hotel Rooms	575	£ 1,400	£ 1,500	£ 805,000	£ 862,500					
	Second	Hotel Rooms	632	£ 1,400	£ 1,500	£ 884,800	£ 948,000	Hotel Rooms	412	£ 1,400	£ 1,500	£ 576,800	£ 618,000					
	Third	Hotel Rooms	632	£ 1,400	£ 1,500	£ 884,800	£ 948,000	Hotel Rooms	412	£ 1,400	£ 1,500	£ 576,800	£ 618,000					
	Tower	Meeting Space	70	£ 1,500	£ 1,700	£ 105,000	£ 119,000											
		<b>Total</b>	<b>3289</b>	<b>£ 1,357</b>		<b>£ 4,462,600</b>	<b>£ 5,065,200</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>1424</b>	<b>£ 1,411</b>		<b>£ 2,008,600</b>	<b>£ 2,161,000</b>					
<b>Hotel/Hostel</b>		<b>Option 3</b>						<b>Option 3</b>								5140	£ 6,933,350	£ 7,752,750
	Basement	Plant/Storage	458	£ 700	£ 900	£ 320,600	£ 412,200											
	Ground	Bar/Restaurant	846	£ 1,800	£ 2,000	£ 1,522,800	£ 1,692,000	Hostel/Shop	423	£ 1,350	£ 1,450	£ 571,050	£ 613,350					
	First	Function/Bar	840	£ 1,200	£ 1,500	£ 1,008,000	£ 1,260,000	Hostel	423	£ 1,300	£ 1,400	£ 549,900	£ 592,200					
	Second	Hotel Rooms	760	£ 1,400	£ 1,500	£ 1,064,000	£ 1,140,000	Hostel	280	£ 1,300	£ 1,400	£ 364,000	£ 392,000					
	Third	Hotel Rooms	760	£ 1,400	£ 1,500	£ 1,064,000	£ 1,140,000	Hostel	280	£ 1,300	£ 1,400	£ 364,000	£ 392,000					
	Tower	Meeting Space	70	£ 1,500	£ 1,700	£ 105,000	£ 119,000											
		<b>Total</b>	<b>3734</b>	<b>£ 1,362</b>		<b>£ 5,084,400</b>	<b>£ 5,763,200</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>1406</b>	<b>£ 1,315</b>		<b>£ 1,848,950</b>	<b>£ 1,989,550</b>					
<b>Mixed Use</b>		<b>Option 4</b>						<b>Option 4</b>								4870	£ 5,965,500	£ 6,813,100
	Basement	Plant	458	£ 700	£ 900	£ 320,600	£ 412,200											
	Ground	Retail Units	785	£ 700	£ 900	£ 549,500	£ 706,500	Entrance	70	£ 1,800	£ 2,000	£ 126,000	£ 140,000					
	First	Function/Bar/Restaurant	712	£ 1,800	£ 2,000	£ 1,281,600	£ 1,424,000	Enterprise Hub	685	£ 1,200	£ 1,400	£ 822,000	£ 959,000					
	Second	Hotel Rooms	632	£ 1,400	£ 1,500	£ 884,800	£ 948,000	Enterprise Hub	413	£ 1,200	£ 1,400	£ 495,600	£ 578,200					
	Third	Hotel Rooms	632	£ 1,400	£ 1,500	£ 884,800	£ 948,000	Enterprise Hub	413	£ 1,200	£ 1,400	£ 495,600	£ 578,200					
	Tower	Meeting Space	70	£ 1,500	£ 1,700	£ 105,000	£ 119,000											
		<b>Total</b>	<b>3289</b>	<b>£ 1,224.17</b>		<b>£ 4,026,300</b>	<b>£ 4,557,700</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>1581</b>	<b>£ 1,227</b>		<b>£ 1,939,200</b>	<b>£ 2,255,400</b>					
<b>Mixed Use</b>		<b>Option 5</b>						<b>Option 5</b>								3493	£ 4,339,100	£ 4,897,700
	Basement	Plant	458	£ 700	£ 900	£ 320,600	£ 412,200											
	Ground	Retail Units	785	£ 700	£ 900	£ 549,500	£ 706,500											
	First	Function/Bar/Restaurant	780	£ 1,800	£ 2,000	£ 1,404,000	£ 1,560,000											
	Second	Hotel Rooms	700	£ 1,400	£ 1,500	£ 980,000	£ 1,050,000											
	Third	Hotel Rooms	700	£ 1,400	£ 1,500	£ 980,000	£ 1,050,000											
	Tower	Meeting Space	70	£ 1,500	£ 1,700	£ 105,000	£ 119,000											
		<b>Total</b>	<b>3493</b>	<b>£ 1,242.23</b>		<b>£ 4,339,100</b>	<b>£ 4,897,700</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>£ -</b>		<b>£ -</b>	<b>£ -</b>					

# WHAT YOU CAN DO

## PLEASE WRITE TO THE FOLLOWING:

1. Hugh Gillies, Acting Chief Executive Transport Scotland:
1. Sir Peter Hendy, Chairman Network Rail:
2. Jenny Gilruth, Minister for Transport:
3. Michael Matheson Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero, Energy and Transport:
4. Mairi McAllan MSP, Environment Minister:
5. Siobhian Brown, MSP for Ayr:
6. Peter Henderson, Leader of South Ayrshire Council
7. Eileen Howat, CEO of South Ayrshire Council:
8. Allan Dorans, Westminster MP for Ayr and Carrick:

[hugh.gillies@transport.gov.scot](mailto:hugh.gillies@transport.gov.scot)  
[peter.hendy@networkrail.co.uk](mailto:peter.hendy@networkrail.co.uk)  
[ministerFT@gov.scot](mailto:ministerFT@gov.scot)

[cabsecnetzet@gov.scot](mailto:cabsecnetzet@gov.scot)  
[mairi.mcallan.msp@parliament.scot](mailto:mairi.mcallan.msp@parliament.scot)  
[siobhian.brown.msp@parliament.scot](mailto:siobhian.brown.msp@parliament.scot)  
[peter.henderson@south-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:peter.henderson@south-ayrshire.gov.uk)  
[eileen.howat@south-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:eileen.howat@south-ayrshire.gov.uk)  
[allan.dorans.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:allan.dorans.mp@parliament.uk)

## POINTS YOU CAN STATE:

1. Your support for preserving Ayr station hotel, stressing its landmark value and potential.
2. Your belief that, in environmental terms, repair and reuse must be preferable to demolition and rebuilding.
3. Your support for SAVE's proposals for reusing the station hotel for lively uses, including Enterprise Hub,
4. artists' studios and exhibition gallery, destination pub and events use.
5. Your belief that demolition must not be the easy option – so many abandoned, decaying and empty historic buildings have found new owners and new uses, as SAVE has demonstrated repeatedly over the years.
6. Your belief that SAVE's three-stage roadmap to saving the Station Hotel complex must be adopted.
7. Your belief that Ayr is a beautiful town which must make more of its history and architecture.

*Ayr Station Hotel's grand staircase  
looking through to the former south  
wing functions rooms  
(Credit: UE Archive)*



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report has been supported by funding from the Architectural Heritage Fund.

The plans and costings in this report have been kindly prepared for SAVE by Smith Scott Mullan Associates and Hardies Property and Construction Consultants.

**Smith Scott Mullan Associates (SSMA)** are leading Edinburgh-based architects with a nationwide portfolio including key conservation projects. These include Edinburgh City Chambers, Lothian Chambers (now the Institut Francais d'Ecosse), the Kings Theatre, The National Museum of Flight and the current refurbishment of The Royal Botanic Garden in Edinburgh.

Project Leader Alistair Scott is a founder of SSMA and was brought up in Ayr, giving him a personal interest in the future of the building. SSMA Director Jamie Bateman is a registered Conservation Architect.

**Hardies Property and Construction Consultants** are one of the leading independent firms of Chartered Surveyors in Scotland with ten offices in Scotland and have recently expanded into England and Northern Ireland with offices in Leeds, London and Belfast.

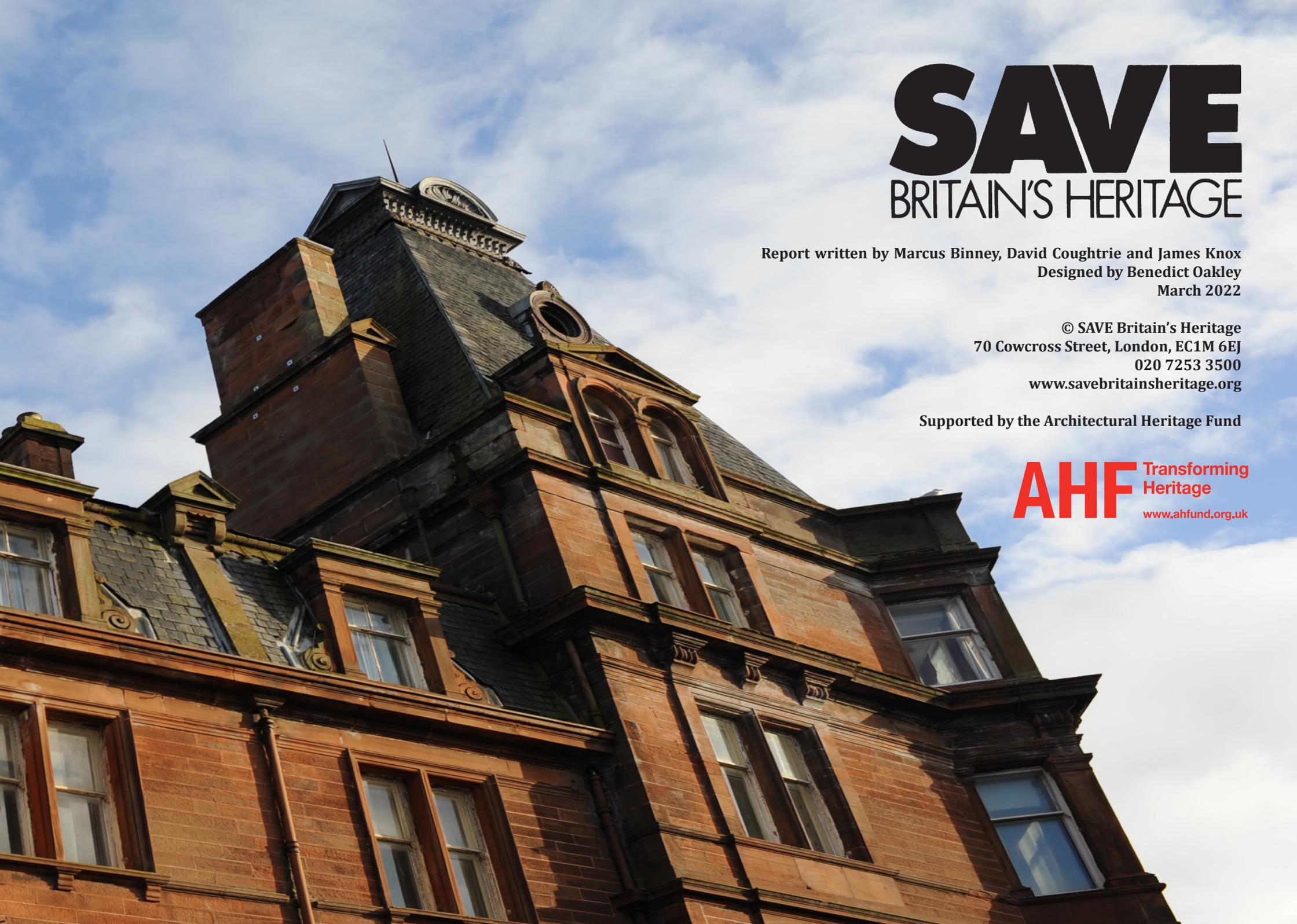
They offer Project Management, Quantity Surveying, Building Surveying, Energy Services and Health & Safety Consultancy within a wide variety of sectors.

Hardies have provided surveying services on many conservation projects such as Paisley Town Hall, A-Listed Art Deco Botanic Gardens Garage in Glasgow, DC Thomson Building in Dundee, National Registers of Scotland portfolio of Listed Building in Edinburgh and Sir Charles Wilson Church at Glasgow University.

Both SSMA and Hardies are kindly acting on a Pro-Bono basis for this stage of the project.

SAVE has not been allowed access to the station hotel buildings and the costs in this report are therefore based on original estimates by Network Rail's consultants, Mott MacDonald and Atkins and interpreted by Hardies as far as possible at this stage.

*Back page image: The striking central tower of Ayr Station Hotel (Credit: Nigel Hackett)*



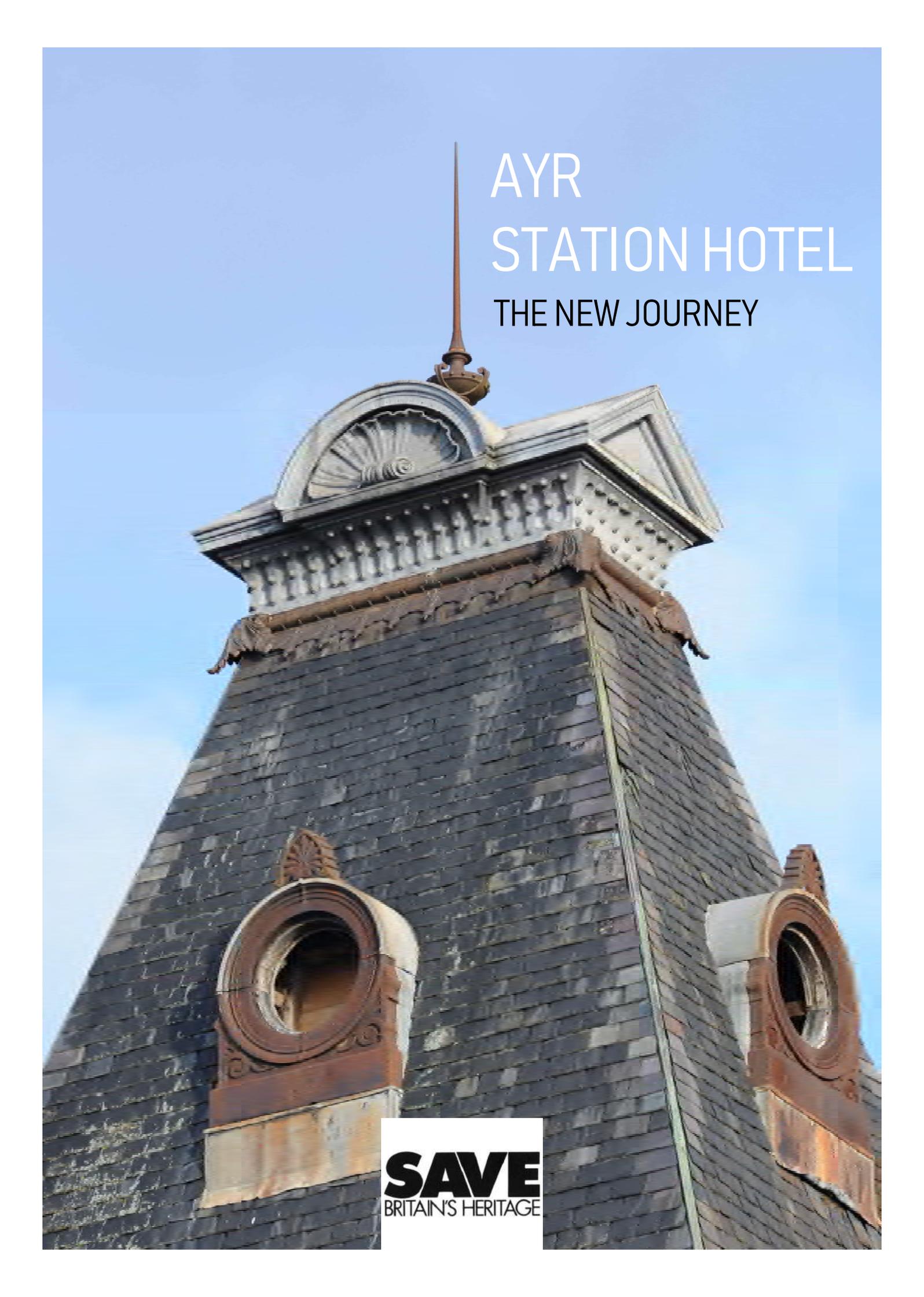
# SAVE BRITAIN'S HERITAGE

Report written by Marcus Binney, David Coughtrie and James Knox  
Designed by Benedict Oakley  
March 2022

© SAVE Britain's Heritage  
70 Cowcross Street, London, EC1M 6EJ  
020 7253 3500  
[www.savebritainsheritage.org](http://www.savebritainsheritage.org)

Supported by the Architectural Heritage Fund

**AHF** Transforming  
Heritage  
[www.ahfund.org.uk](http://www.ahfund.org.uk)



AYR  
STATION HOTEL  
THE NEW JOURNEY

**SAVE**  
BRITAIN'S HERITAGE

The Station Hotel in Ayr is opulently decorated in a rich French Renaissance style.





## Welcome to Ayr

Ayr is located about 40 miles to the south of Glasgow on the Scottish west coast. Ayr's history goes back to the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Ayr has always been an important market town and port. With the arrival of the railway in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Ayr became a popular seaside resort. The grand Station Hotel was built during this period.

Ayr is an important retail town in Scotland. It boasts a charming old town, an attractive seafront and many beautiful historic buildings such as the town hall with its magnificent steeple.



## The building

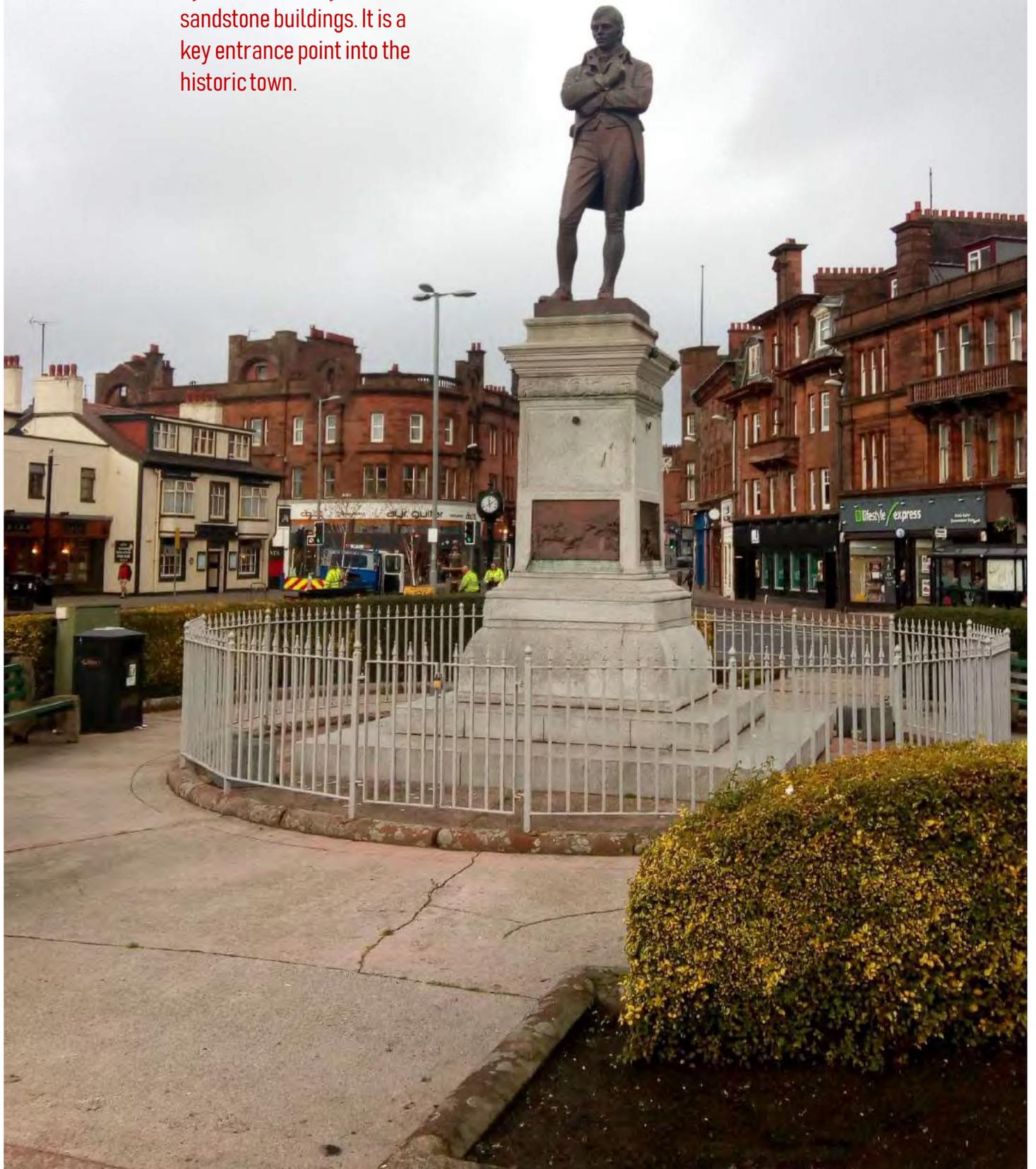
Ayr Station Hotel was designed by renowned Scottish architect Andrew Galloway as an opulent French Renaissance château. The hotel opened in 1885. Its 75 luxurious rooms and lavish facilities catered for an affluent clientele who spent their summer holidays on the Ayrshire coast.

The hotel was designed by Galloway in conjunction with the station building and the impressive ironwork of the station canopies. It is an impressive three-storey

building, constructed in solid Ballochmyle sandstone with handsome stone detailing. The pavilion roofs are topped with iron decorations. The interiors boasts many of the original fixtures and fittings, such as the elegant stairs, marble fireplace and the coffered ceiling.

The building's special interest is reflected by the fact that it was listed (category B) in 1980.

The Station Hotel overlooks Burns Statue Square, an important public space of Ayr surrounded by solid sandstone buildings. It is a key entrance point into the historic town.







## The potential

The Station Hotel is Ayr's grandest and oldest hotel. Despite standing vacant for several years, the interiors are in surprisingly good condition as can be seen in these photos taken in February 2018. The photos show the splendid rooms of the Victorian hotel.

The ceilings, wall finishes, carpets and furniture seem to be waiting for the next guests. Water ingress has occurred in some of the corridors and rooms, however.

The hotel changed ownership several times over the years and closed down in 2015. Repair and maintenance had already been reduced to a minimum during the years before closure.

In March 2018, South Ayrshire Council served a second Dangerous Building Notice (DBN) on the hotel owners on the ground of public safety. Contractors identified crumbling and exposed roof areas that presented a significant and immediate danger. The building is now encapsulated. This serves to protect the public, enable full rail services and allow the building to dry out. However, no plan is yet in place for full restoration to commence.

**Urgent action is required now to save Ayr Station Hotel!**







The station hotel under scaffolding, autumn 2018

## Case studies

Too many interesting buildings and places are at risk because they are standing empty and, in many cases, being allowed or encouraged to fall into decay. Often this is happening with a clear intent of claiming the properties were beyond economic repair or “at the end of their useful life”. However, if the owners no longer have need of these buildings, this does not exclude the possibility that they might be of value or use to someone else again. Many historic hotel and station buildings across the country have thus been given a new lease of life.

Most hotels have cellular floor plan which would lend themselves to a range of uses, including flats, student residences, and office accommodation. The examples on the next pages demonstrate how a successful conversion can be achieved and how some large historic hotel buildings have been rescued and their life as hotels extended.. Some towns and cities have retained their station hotels: an old grand hotel with magnificent architecture and a touch of luxury, quality and dignity welcomes visitors to those places.

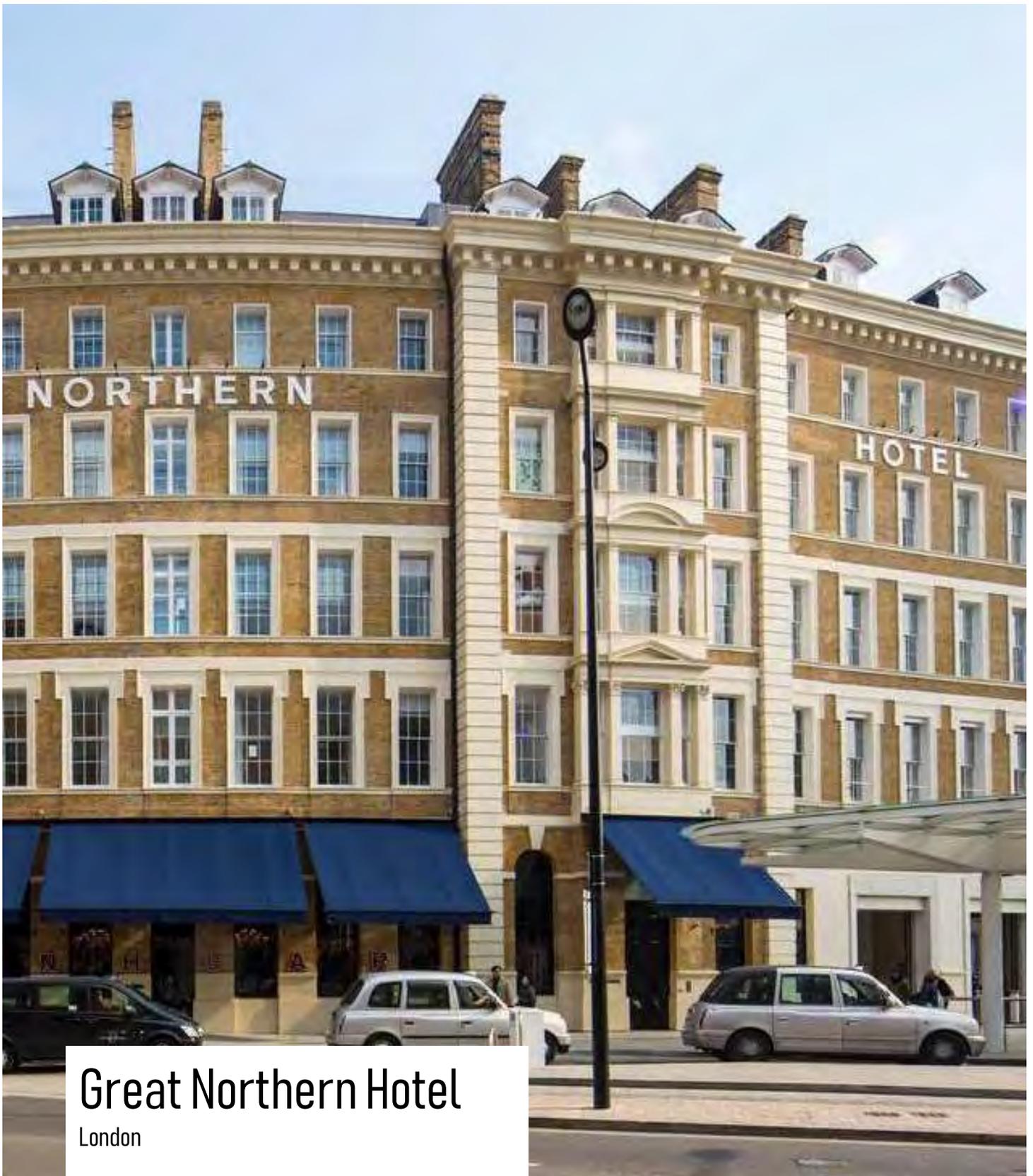
“Hope springs exulting on  
triumphant wing.”  
*Robert Burns*



# Central Station

Glasgow

Central Station is Glasgow's main train station. It includes the Grand Central Hotel. The station opened in 1879, the hotel a few years later. Recently refurbished, both the hotel and the station building now provide a welcoming grand arrival to visitors to Glasgow.



## Great Northern Hotel

London

Designed by Lewis Cubitt and opened in 1854, the hotel was already earmarked for demolition as part of the King's Cross and St Pancras redevelopment plans. However, when the architect John McAslan conceived a new ticket hall for King's Cross the historic hotel could be preserved. Now the historic King's Cross Station and the old hotel form one ensemble again.



## The Langham Hotel

London

The Langham Hotel looks back over a long history. Completed in 1865, the hotel quickly earned the reputation as one of London's most fashionable hotels. However, in the 1930s it had to close down and deteriorated, in the 1980s its future looked doomed. A replacement scheme for the BBC was drawn up by Richard Rogers. This was refused permission and after the site had been sold, the new owners carried out major restoration works which restored the original splendour.

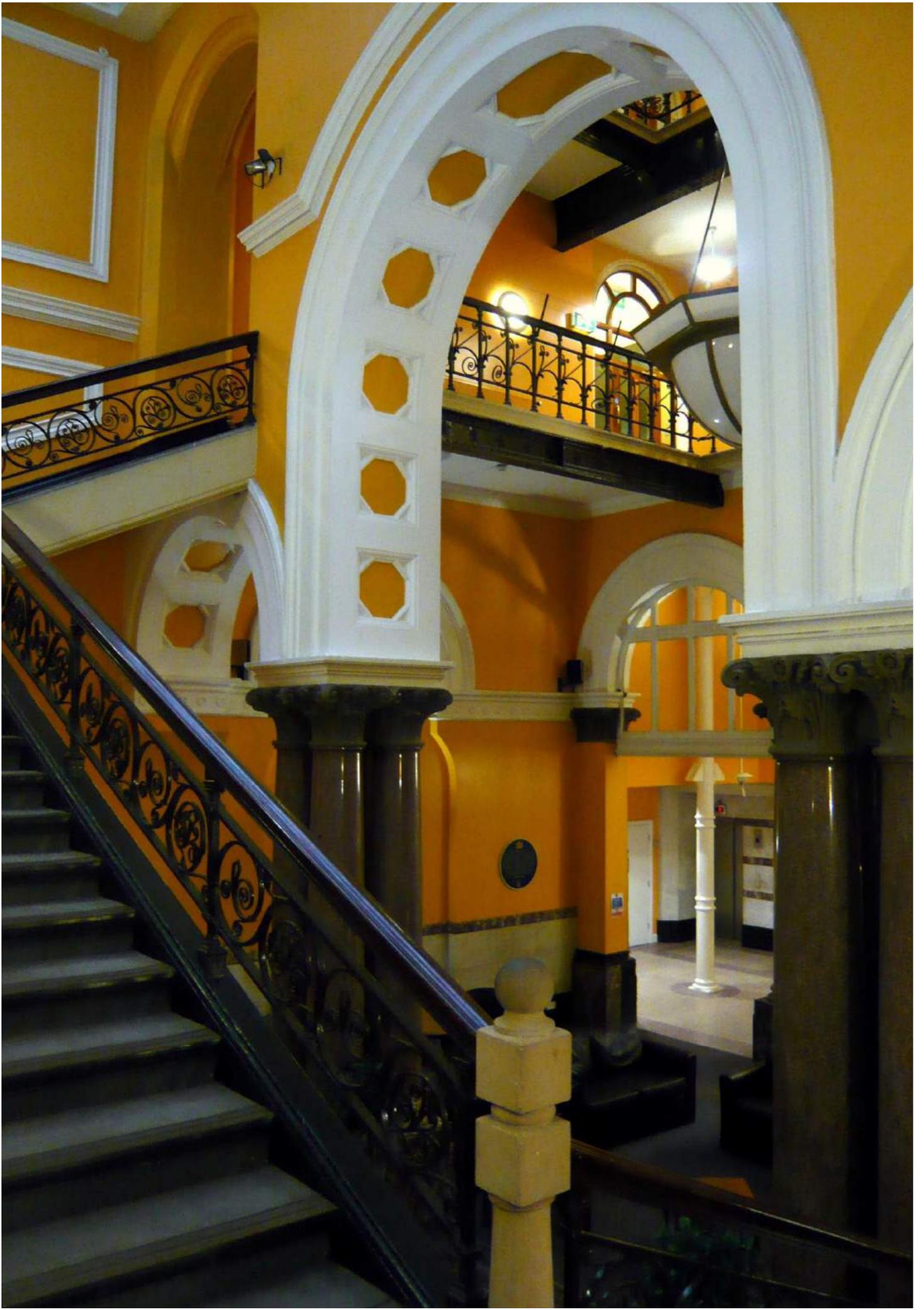




## Lime Street Station Hotel

Liverpool

This splendid hotel was designed by Alfred Waterhouse and built in 1868-71. For several decades it was used as railway offices. The building was then vacated and seen as a development site. Salvation came in 1994 when it was bought by John Moores University and converted into a hall of residence for students.





# Grand Hotel

Birmingham

Built from 1875-79, this impressive Victorian hotel ceased to operate in 2002. Works have now started to restore this beautiful grade II\* listed building back to its former glory.

# Station hotels in Scotland

## Perth

Opened in 1885, the Station Hotel is an elegant building in a Flemish Gothic style with gables and turrets. After plans fell through to convert the category B listed building into a care home, the hotel reopened as a small boutique hotel.



## Aberdeen

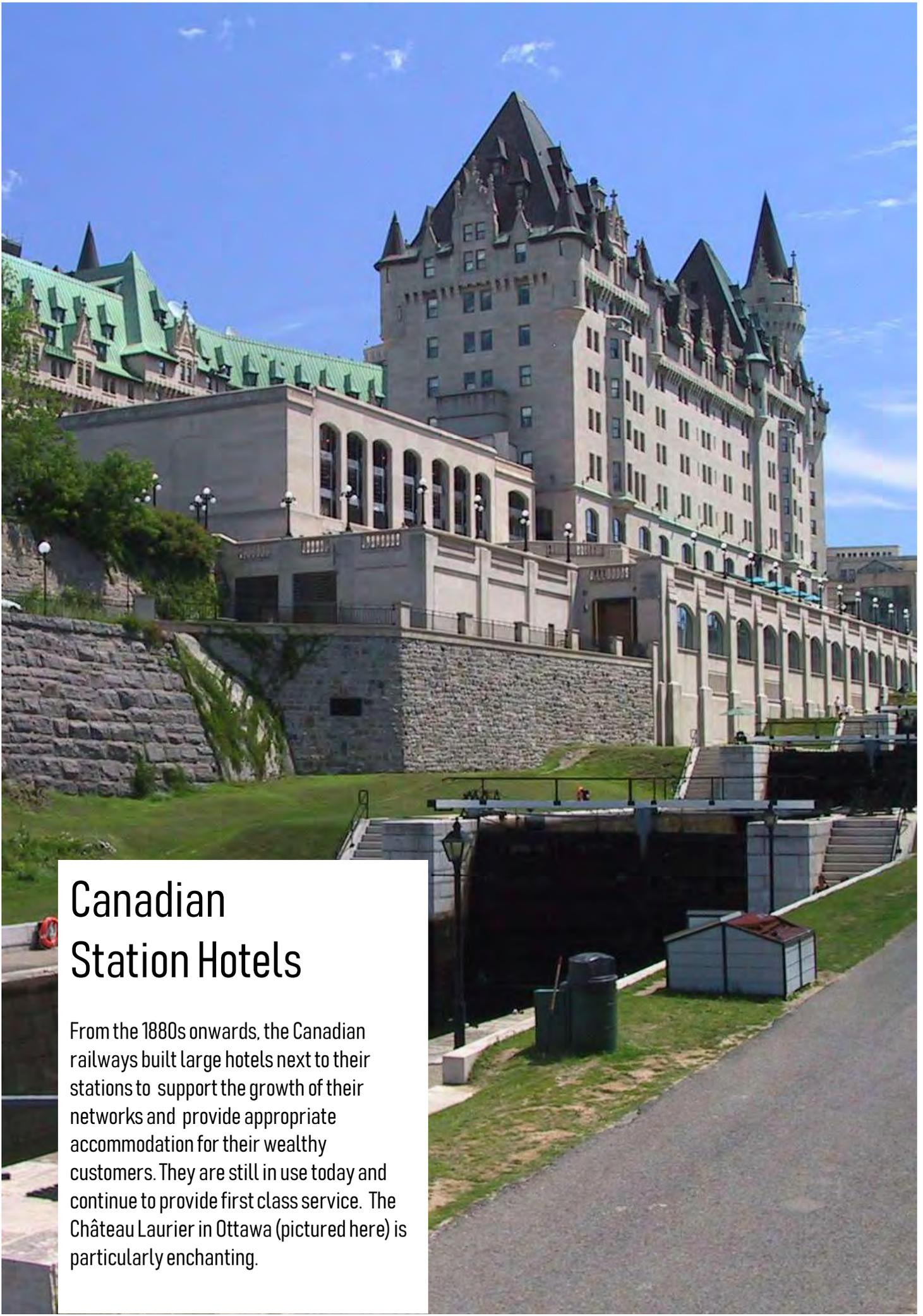
The station hotel is formed of two adjoining buildings which were built as railway headquarters around 1900. They were later converted to a hotel. An extension of the hotel is under construction.



## Inverness

For over 150 years, the station hotel has welcomed guests. The building is built in an Italianate style and has some lavish interiors. Today the hotel is a grade B listed building.





## Canadian Station Hotels

From the 1880s onwards, the Canadian railways built large hotels next to their stations to support the growth of their networks and provide appropriate accommodation for their wealthy customers. They are still in use today and continue to provide first class service. The Château Laurier in Ottawa (pictured here) is particularly enchanting.

# Station hotels in Canada

## Banff Springs

Opened in 1888, the hotel was extended several times until it partially burnt down in 1926. A replacement building opened shortly afterwards. It is located in the Banff National Park.



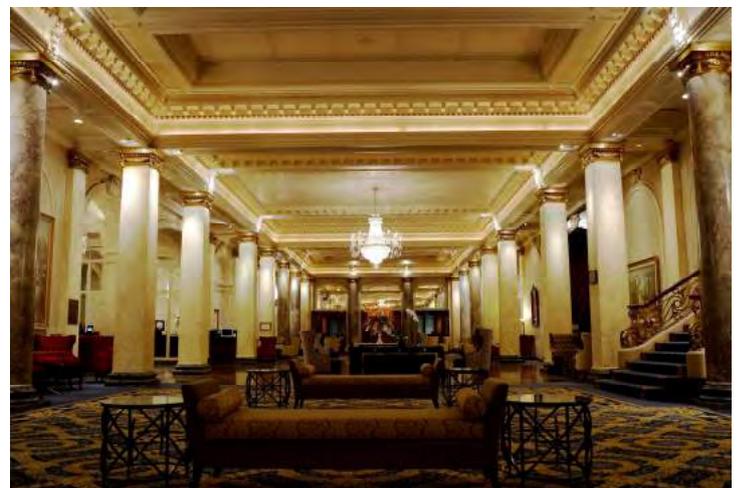
## Quebec

The Château Frontenac is a hotel in Quebec. It opened in 1893 and has more than 600 rooms. The hotel is designed in a picturesque Gothic style and was designated a National Historic Site of Canada in 1981.



## Calgary

In Calgary, the railway company built the Palliser Hotel which opened in 1914. It was since then the city's grandest and most luxurious hotel.





STATION HOTEL

ENTRANCE



**SAVE**  
BRITAIN'S HERITAGE

© 2019

70 Cowcross Street  
London EC1M 6EJ

Images

Nigel Hackett (outer cover and inner cover, 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8); SAVE Britain's Heritage (3); Behind Closed Doors/Urban Explorations (4, 5); BIG SAVES (10, 11, 12, 13, 14); Wikipedia Commons (9, 15, 16), Ken Watson (17), Stephen Swift (18, top), Bernard Gagnon (18, middle), Goldnpuppy (18, bottom)