

case study: **urban value**

Saxe-Coburg Place and Glenogle Baths

The construction of 16 to 22 Saxe-Coburg Place would have completed a unique piece of Edinburgh's urban heritage. As it stands, the crescent is numbered from 1 to 15 and from 23 to 32: our proposal was to build the seven houses left out of the original plan when construction was halted by the builder's bankruptcy in 1834, and to replace Glenogle Baths with a new swimming pool and gym on the open ground alongside.

In our design, the frontage to Saxe-Coburg Place follows the design originally proposed by Adam Turnbull, adapted to place an entrance to the new pool at its centre. The shell of the existing Baths building is incorporated into the new houses; the well-loved red sandstone façade and corner towers on Glenogle Road remain.

The magnificent houses are conventional from the Ground floor up (though two of them have additional rooms in the retained corner towers), but they have large basement floors extending through to the retained wall of the Baths and looking over Glenogle Road and the Colonies. At sub-basement level there are ancillary and storage spaces, with a back door leading to a shared parking garage; vehicle access is via the existing gateway off Glenogle Road. The main doors at nos. 16 and 17, on either side of the pool entrance, lead to double-fronted apartments, one at First floor and one at Second floor, above the pool and gym.

The new pool is an elegant and discreet modern building nestling in the space between the crescent and Glenogle Road. Its entrance is at the centre of the crescent, with stairs and a lift down to changing and showers at basement level; a path leads up from Glenogle Road, replicating the existing connection. The sub-basement would have a 25m pool to the rear and a gym at the front. Building the new facility on open ground would have allowed the existing Baths to remain in operation while the new building was constructed.

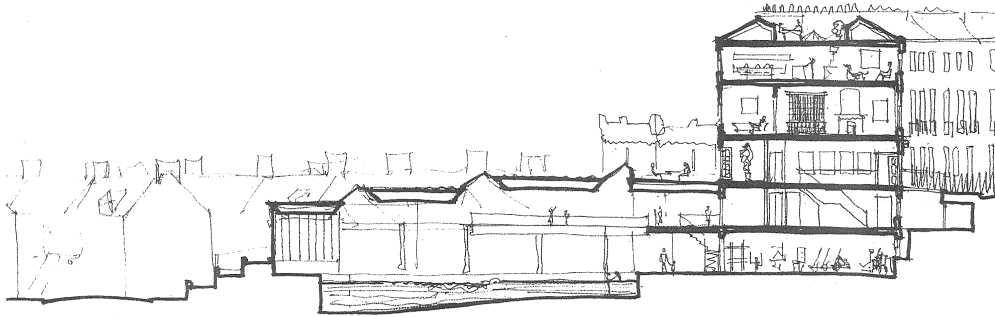
If this proposal had been followed Edinburgh would have seen one of its oldest 'holes in the ground' replaced by a piece of lost heritage, and houses appropriate to its standing as a world-class city. The City Council would have had a 100-year-old swimming pool replaced by a new pool and gym at no cost, and the local Stockbridge community would, with its Primary School, have enjoyed uninterrupted use of an important recreational and educational facility.

Unfortunately, none of this has happened. Glenogle Baths closed for refurbishment in October 2008; the work, which is projected to cost £5.4 million, is due for completion in Spring 2010.

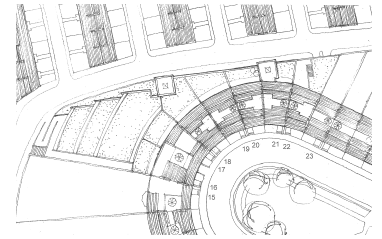


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sketch section through pool/gym and two double-fronted apartments



sketch plan at roof level



sketch section through 5-storey townhouse with terrace garden and garage