

**Impact case study (REF3b)**

<b>Institution:</b> University of Dundee
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 30 History
<b>Title of case study:</b> Urban and Architectural History of Scotland, c.1500-c.1800
<b>1. Summary of the impact</b> (indicative maximum 100 words)

The focus of the research in question has been to establish how far the architectural and urban culture of Scotland before the Union in 1707 was ‘European’ and the consequences for Scotland’s architecture after 1707 within the UK, including the issue of its assimilation with that of the rest of Britain. Initially the work, beginning in the later 1990s, concentrated on particular Scottish cities, notably Dundee and Edinburgh, more recently widening to include a large sample of Scotland’s other smaller towns. The impact of what is a major body of diverse but inter-related research (at the heart of which are buildings and the built environment) is demonstrated at several levels, through local dissemination and community engagement, through to changing public discourse at national level about much of Scotland’s architectural heritage and its implications for today. This has been achieved through the role of the lead researcher (Charles McKean) in major advisory bodies, as chairman of Edinburgh World Heritage Trust (2006-2012) to the Historic Environment Advisory Council for Scotland, and on the Scottish Committee of the Heritage Lottery Fund (Section 5: 1,2,3,4,5 and 8).

<b>2. Underpinning research</b> (indicative maximum 500 words)
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The lead researcher, Charles McKean, was Professor of Scottish Architectural History since 1997 until his death in October 2013. His examination of the European origins of Scots cities (such as Dundee, with its Baltic features) highlighted significant contrasts with the ‘British’ form of the ‘New Towns’ of places such as Edinburgh and Glasgow. The work culminated in a 3-year AHRC-funded project (£600k, 2007-10), ‘The Smaller Scottish Towns during the Enlightenment, c.1745-c.1820), with Christopher Whatley (Professor of Scottish History, 1997-present) and Bob Harris (Professor of History, Dundee, until 2006 and subsequently Worcester College, Oxford), papers from which have been published, with a monograph near to completion. The architectural history research for the project has resulted in the questioning of whether, contrary to received wisdom, there ever was a ‘British’ Georgian Town (*Historical Research*, April 2013, 253-91).

McKean’s research on Dundee was as a collaborator on the University of Dundee’s ambitious, multi-scholar History of Dundee project (initiated by Whatley), 1997-present, which has resulted in three substantial edited books and a series of papers in refereed journal. ‘Why Dundee never built a New Town’ (in *Victorian Dundee*, 2000; new, extended edition, 2012), and nine further chapters/papers. In the case of Dundee, the research challenged the received history of the city. In the following publication in this series – *Dundee: Renaissance to Enlightenment*, edited by McKean, Harris and Whatley (2009), McKean’s research-based chapter ‘What kind of a Renaissance port was Dundee?’ fundamentally re-assessed the nature and architectural character of pre-jute Dundee, the burgh’s role in national history and argued that far from being the forgotten town of Scotland Dundee was the second city of the country during the Renaissance. Critical too was the identification of architectural features of the medieval burgh which revealed that there were close parallels – in terms of the burgh’s form for example - with Baltic ports like Lubeck.

A criticism of Scottish architectural history has been its stress on exceptionalism. McKean’s highly-regarded *The Scottish Chateau* (Sutton Press, 2001), shortlisted for the Saltire Society’s Scottish History Book of the Year in 2002, offered a radically new interpretation of what were previously assumed to be castles by demonstrating that many were in reality Europe-influenced Renaissance country houses, with a new methodology of how to study these buildings. The work joined detailed architectural analysis of the buildings’ structures to social, cultural and political history (particularly European) to examine them in terms of evolution, function, political symbolism and self-

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sustainability. The result was to place unknown Scottish Renaissance architecture within the context of European cultural history. The *Scottish Chateau* was followed by 15 other chapters and conference papers developing different aspects of Scottish Renaissance architecture - five published in England - including 'A Scottish Problem with Castles' (*Historical Research*, 79, 2006), and four in France.

The university continues to research in this area and **Tindley** is developing a research project on the planned towns of the Highlands and Islands in the eighteenth century.

<b>3. References to the research</b> (indicative maximum of six references)
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1. C. McKean, 'Why Dundee never built a New Town' in L. Miskell, Bob Harris and C. A. Whatley, (eds.), *Victorian Dundee: Image and Realities* (East Linton, 2000; Dundee, 2011).
2. C. McKean, *The Scottish Chateau: The Country House in Renaissance Scotland* (Stroud, 2001)
3. C. McKean, 'A Scottish Problem with Castles' in *Historical Research*, Vol 79, No. 204 (2006), pp.166-198.
4. C. McKean (with P. Whatley), *Lost Dundee: Dundee's Lost Architectural Heritage* (Edinburgh, 2008).
5. C. McKean, 'What kind of port was Renaissance Dundee?' in C. McKean., Bob Harris and C. A. Whatley (eds.), *Dundee: Renaissance to Enlightenment.*(Dundee, 2009).
6. C. McKean, 'The Controlling Urban Code of Enlightenment Scotland' in S. Marshall, (ed.), *Urban Coding* (London, 2010),
7. C. McKean, 'The architecture of three religions: Scottish Religious Architecture after the Council of Trent' in Chatenet et Mignot (eds) *L'architecture religieuse europeenne au temps des Reformes*, (Paris, 2009)
8. C. McKean, 'Was there a British Georgian Town? A comparison between selected Scottish burghs and English towns' *Historical Research*, Vol. 86, Issue 232 (May 2013), 253-291.
9. C. McKean, 'The anglification of Perth?', in D. Strachan (ed.), *Perth: A Place in History* (Perth, 2011), pp.63-72.

<b>4. Details of the impact</b> (indicative maximum 750 words)
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Beginning with a focus on particular Scottish cities and towns, the research has come to have a major impact in enhancing public understanding of the architectural history of their towns and how this impacts on wider historical understanding; and changing public discourse about Scotland's architectural heritage and the implications of this for heritage and preservation issues today (Section 5.1 and 6).

**a. Dundee impact**

One initial objective behind the History of Dundee project was 'to give Dundonians their history back', and the research was disseminated through evening classes, media interviews, lectures to groups (average 15 lectures annually between 2000 and 2010), and guided walks exploring the city (average 15-20 annually over the same period) for residents, students, local societies, visiting academics and others, which for the first time revealed the survival of parts of the pre-modern burgh. This process of engagement/enhancement of understanding is ongoing through the

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production of freely available leaflet guides to Dundee's built heritage and the work of the Dundee Civic Trust and the Dundee Historical Environment Trust, in both of which McKean was heavily involved (Section 5.7). The re-interpretation of the city's past by the History of Dundee project team has led to the re-presentation of the city's heritage by the City Council and has contributed indirectly to the current bid for UK City of Culture (2017), currently under development. The newspaper group D C Thomson Ltd purchased copies of *Dundee: Renaissance to Enlightenment* to gift to each secondary school in the city. Its heavy focus on original hitherto unknown illustrations increased the demand for public lectures. McKean was invited to join the medieval Guildry of Dundee in 2009, and became an Assessor to the Lord Dean of Guild in 2010 (Section 5: 8). Through this connection, the Guildry has developed a new policy of engagement with the city's fabric, beginning with a substantial annual award/prize for the School of Architecture for work in pursuance of the Guildry agenda. Public interest in McKean's identification of buildings apparently lost to history was such that the first edition of *Lost Dundee* sold out and has now been reprinted (Birlinn, 2013).

### b. Scotland impact

Urban research into how Glasgow and Edinburgh changed after the Enlightenment was enhanced by the AHRC grant referred to above. Scottish towns had a fundamentally European form until the later eighteenth century when Scotland became more obviously 'north Britain'. Thus Edinburgh may be viewed less as 'old' and 'new' so much as 'European' and 'British'. New conceptualisations of this kind have a profound implication for understanding the historical development of Scotland. Work on Edinburgh and Dundee led, *inter alia*, to the re-assessment of the architectural history of Perth along with other little-explored aspects of the burgh, which culminated in a conference attended by some 500 delegates and a book (D. Strachan, ed. *Perth: A Place in History*, 2011) to which McKean (and Whatley) contributed substantial chapters and which became part of Perth's successful bid for city status in 2012. McKean's pioneering work in urban history research has led to his appointment to Historic Scotland Burgh Survey teams dedicated to research the histories and urban forms of Tain, Whithorn, Wigtown, Galashiels and Fraserburgh (four books to date, which are used by planners, architects and others as new developments are instigated, applied for and considered. In 2006, McKean's research reputation and the knowledge he has amassed on pre-modern Edinburgh led to his appointment as chairman of Edinburgh World Heritage Trust, a body which is directly involved in influencing national and local government in the management of this particular world heritage site; and also contributes to the interpretation of its Outstanding Universal Values (OUVs) (Section 5: 1, 2, 3 and 5). This post involved McKean in regular policy-considering meetings with ministers and senior officials at national and Edinburgh level, and active participation in the City Centre Partnership-in particular, selecting the best option for the renovation of the city's Calton Hill site. Professor McKean also created a series of podcasts for the Trust (Section 5: 10).

### c. Architectural Impact

*The Scottish Chateau* opened up new ways of studying our architecture in a manner that moves from stylistic categorisation to examining the fabric against the broader historical context. This is important within a European context where mock-martial country houses are common without the necessary predicate (as in Scotland, pre-McKean) of castles and constant warfare. This research knowledge led to McKean's appointment as a founder Councillor of the Scottish Government's Historic Environment Advisory Council and to chairing its committee on Properties in Care; and then to the Scottish Committee of the Heritage Lottery Fund (Section 5:2). HEACS was the heritage 'think tank' for the Scottish Government, and most HEACS reports were partially or wholly accepted by the Government. McKean has also been an expert witness at several public enquiries concerning the interpretation of buildings, their historic value and the appropriateness of proposed development. He has made numerous appearances on TV and organized an annual tour of private historic houses in Angus to study their building evolution against received wisdom (Section 5:9). Most recently, his pathbreaking work on Scottish 'castles' (or *chateaux*) has led to his election (2011) as president of the Scottish Castles Association, and as consultant advisor to Historic Scotland's interpretative unit on the re-interpretation of five major properties (Section 5: 3 and 4).

#### d. Beneficiaries

The beneficiaries are both local and national. In the first case, residents of Edinburgh, Dundee, Fraserburgh, Perth and the other towns, with their civic organisations, schools, clubs, and city councils. In the second case, national impact has been achieved amongst those more broadly interested in the nation's heritage (such as the Historic Houses Association), the national heritage body Historic Scotland, the National Trust for Scotland and similar organisations, and Scottish Government. Tourists and visitors are also beneficiaries; by placing Scotland's historic culture within a European context adds value to its interpretation.

#### 5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

1. Edinburgh World Heritage Website for direct impact on urban renewal in Edinburgh
2. Appointment to HEACS, direct input on policy  
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/News/Releases/2006/08/09160904>
3. Historic Scotland – particularly Interpretation Unit, reinterpretation of five properties  
[www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/news\\_search\\_results.htm/news\\_article.htm?articleid=18940](http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/news_search_results.htm/news_article.htm?articleid=18940)  
[www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/index/news/indepth/castleioram/publicinquiryreport.htm](http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/index/news/indepth/castleioram/publicinquiryreport.htm)
4. Scottish Castles Association, pathbreaking work guiding non-government organisation  
[http://www.scottishcastlesassociation.com/downloads/images/uploads/general/rec-id-331-cat\\_id-3-highlight-2.htm](http://www.scottishcastlesassociation.com/downloads/images/uploads/general/rec-id-331-cat_id-3-highlight-2.htm)  
<http://www.scottishcastlesassociation.com/search-site.php?cmd=search&words=mckean&submit.x=0&submit.y=0>
5. Heritage Lottery Fund, policy on support for urban projects  
<http://www.hlf.org.uk/InYourArea/Scotland/>
6. Scottish Parliament: Motion recognising McKean's Impact. Motion S4M-07904 (<http://www.jennymarra.com/02102013/4579959466>). Corroboration from member of the Scottish Parliament for North East Scotland.
7. The Courier – Local Impact on civil society  
<http://www.thecourier.co.uk/news/local/dundee/book-helps-pupils-take-pride-in-city-1.22843>
8. Clerk to Guildry of Dundee to provide corroboration on the impact of the recovery of the architectural heritage of Dundee.
9. BBC Two - The Great British Story: A People's History, informing debate about the past in civil society [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/tayside\\_and\\_central/6135382.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/tayside_and_central/6135382.stm)
10. Series of podcasts <http://www.ewht.org.uk/sense-of-place-2>