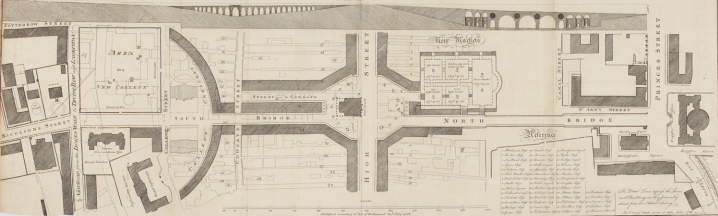


# Plan of a DESIGN for Improving the CITY of Edinburgh





# A P L A N

FOR IMPROVING THE

## CITY OF EDINBURGH.

*By  
James Craig*



**T**H E first circumstance which will probably strike the eye in this Plan, is the range of buildings, in the form of an Octagon, at the entry of the Bridge from the High-street.

The reason of this part of the design was, to prevent the accidents to which both carriages and foot-passengers would be liable, if the entry to so great a thorough-fare was at right angles to the High-street. For it will be obvious, that neither coachmen nor foot-passengers can be sufficiently on their guard, to avoid the danger of running foul of the carriages they may meet

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with at the corners ; and, in consequence, they will be liable not only to continual interruptions, but, in all probability, to many unhappy accidents. Whereas, if the entry to the Bridge from the High-street be as here designed, one hundred feet in breadth upon each side of the Tron-church, drivers and passengers will see carriages either coming along the Bridge or passing along the street, some time before they can interfere, and will be thus prepared to avoid each other.

It is needless to remark how much more elegant in itself, as well as more ornamental and convenient for the public, this approach would be to the Old Town, than any other which has been yet suggested ; for it is impossible to prevent the Bridge from making a curve at the Tron Church, without some expedient to enlarge the area there. The Octagon effectually remedies this inconvenience ; and, instead of such a disagreeable deviation from regularity, presents an elegant figure to the eye.

The Area necessary for forming the south side of the Octagon is all included in the present act of parliament. The diameter of the Octagon, as will be seen from the Design, from east to west, is two hundred and seventy-five feet, and, from north to south,  
three



three hundred and forty-five feet\*. The east and west sides are intersected by the High-street. The south side is intersected by the entry to the South Bridge, and by the street parallel to the Bridge leading down to the Cowgate, with a public building between these streets, in the centre of that side of the Octagon.

The north side of the Octagon, opposite to the Tron Church, shews how the design may be completed, when Miln's Square, and the buildings contiguous, become ruinous. It is intersected by the entry to the North Bridge, and a street to the public markets, opposite to the street leading to the Cowgate, and a public building is placed between these streets, in the centre, opposite to the middle of the Tron Church. The entry to the North Bridge, by the projection of the east end of Miln's Square, is at present only thirty-seven feet seven inches broad, a space by far too narrow: This inconvenience would be rectified, and the entry to the North Bridge would then be fifty feet broad.

The first floor of the south-east and south-west sides of the Octagon would be wholly occupied by shops; and, when circumstances

\* Should it be thought necessary to increase the breadth of the Bridge, the diameter of the Octagon from east to west should be increased accordingly.



stances permit the north half to be executed, the north-east and north-west sides of the Octagon will be similar in their dimensions \*.

From the View, which is annexed, of the elevation of the south side of the Octagon, it is obvious, that, besides the convenience of this opening to the public, the buildings erected in this form would give a very elegant appearance to the town.

I must beg leave to mention a remarkable instance of the hazard carriages run in turning a right angle, where there is a great thorough-fare: His Majesty, and the Prince of Wales, in different carriages, went to Greenwich to meet Admiral Parker, upon the return of the Fleet, after the engagement off the Dogger Bank; the Prince of Wales's carriage passed along the front of Greenwich hospital, and turned down to the river, along the east wing, by which course, any carriages approaching to the transverse street could be easily avoided, being perceived by his coachman.

\* I designed and erected a building next the General Post-office upon the North Bridge; and, from the rents which that building draws, I am confident, from the central situation of the shops, &c. in the Octagon, that the rental would be at least six thousand pounds per annum.



man. His Majesty's carriage, in place of taking the same course, was about to turn down the west wing of the buildings, as being the nearest way to the river; but his coachman could not, till too late, see two carriages which, at the same time, were driving along the transverse street: The consequence of this was, that His Majesty's carriage was beat down with great violence, and broken to pieces, and His Majesty's invaluable life was in the most imminent danger.

The breadth of the road along the South Bridge I have made fifty feet, viz. thirty-eight feet for the breadth of the causeway, and six feet on each side for a foot-path. Was it not for reducing the value of the Town's property on the east side of the South Bridge, I would have made the breadth of the Bridge at least sixty feet in place of fifty \*. The concourse of carriages and foot passengers that must come along this Bridge will be very great; for, besides gentlemens carriages, hackney coaches, and post chaises, numberless carts loaded with coals, and other necessaries, must

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come

\* No design for the South Bridge prior to the 18th July 1785, when this design was made out, had the breadth of the road along the Bridge more than forty feet. What is already built of the South Bridge is forty-seven feet over walls.