

THOMAS MUIRHEAD

Comment on Planning application 2023/5339/P

Type of comment: **OBJECTION**

As an architect with significant experience in heritage matters, and as a long-time resident of the estate, I have many objections to this application, of which the two most important are:

MAJOR HERITAGE CONCERNS

- The proposed works would irreversibly harm the architectural integrity of all 520 listed interiors. The alterations would include:
- New radiators and the associated pipework in every room, along with a grotesquely ugly new skirting intended to hide the pipework but in fact emphasising it. This skirting would be taller and thicker than the original flush skirting, which was designed with great care to maximise the usable space.
- Of itself the proposed new skirting is bad enough. But worse, in order for it to be able to pass from room to room, a profiled cut would have to be made into the lip of all the sliding screens that separate the rooms. (Given that the works would be carried out by unsupervised labour it is unlikely that all these cuts would be made and finished carefully).
- As an alternative to the radiators, residents of Block A would be offered the option of a heated extension to the plinth that runs below the large front windows for the full width of the flats. This extension would protrude by a further 37 cm into the room, severely reducing (by approximately 2 m²) the generous floorspace that Neave Brown worked so hard to create. This plinth extension would, incidentally, make it impossible to reach window handles, blind cords, etc.
- These proposed new radiators, skirtings, and plinth extensions would make it impossible for residents to keep their furniture in its current positions. Much of it would not fit.

THE WORKS WOULD CAUSE CONDENSATION AND BLACK MOULD

- Over the 50 years of life of this estate, there have never been any issues with condensation or mould, thanks to the heating system of radiant walls (still in operation). These distribute heat evenly throughout the whole space of each flat.
- Replacing the radiant walls with radiators will heat the spaces unevenly, leaving many surfaces cold. Condensation will form on them, and will quickly turn to black mould.
- This major health and safety issue is stacking up future trouble for Camden Council. Curiously, given the presumed expertise of the engineers, it is not mentioned anywhere in the applications.

Therefore I submit that, along with the other two associated applications,

THIS APPLICATION MUST BE COMPLETELY REFUSED

This submission is dated Thursday, 1 February 2024. I may add further comments later.