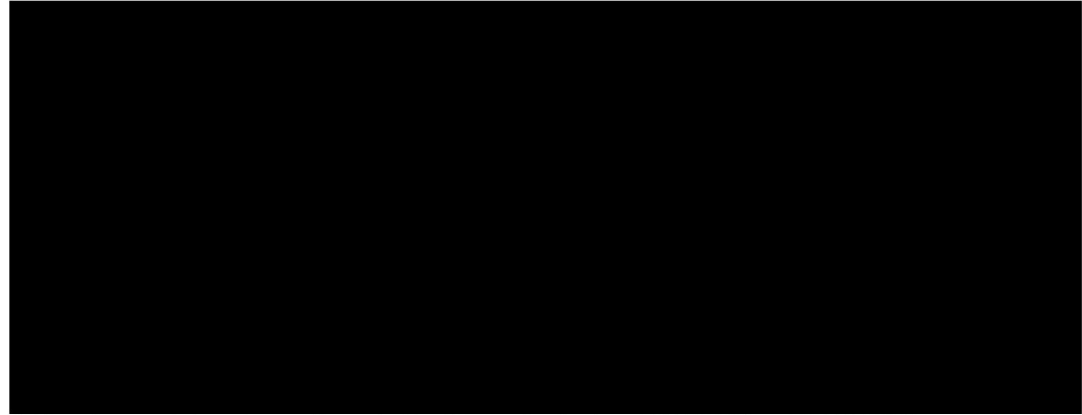




Docomomo UK is writing to express our concern and objection to the replacement of the estate-wide heating system described in the planning applications listed above. We consider that these proposals will harm the significance of the Alexandra Road Estate, a Grade II* listed building.

Neave Brown is one of the most significant twentieth century architects in Britain and all his buildings have now been listed. He has an international reputation and represents the highest level of thought and achievement in housing design. Most of his buildings are owned by LB Camden who have a duty to care for them that is commensurate with their significance.

Good practice in conservation requires that work of this scale and significance should be planned and carried out in accordance and in reference to an established Conservation Management Plan that has been developed and agreed with residents. We have not seen evidence that this protocol for good practice has been followed.

We condemn the unexpected publication of these applications and lack of consultation with residents, many of whom are well-qualified with technical expertise in building professions.

There is insufficient detail on the impact on the flat interiors for the new heating units and without this, it is evident that the proposals will cause great harm to the significance of the exterior of the building and severely damage the integrity of the interiors, requiring intrusive radiators, pipework and large skirtings that are completely out of character to the carefully composed internal joinery, including cupboards and bespoke sliding doors of the original, still existing design. A credible listed building application for a Grade II* building requires detailed drawings for each flat and area which will be affected by the new pipework. As this does not currently exist this application for alterations to a Grade II* building is inadequate and the fitness of the proposals cannot be substantiated.

We are concerned that the potential effects of switching off the heated walls have not been fully examined, leaving open the possibility of negative health outcomes to the occupants and the potential for interstitial condensation in the fabric of the building leading in turn to accelerated frost damage to the concrete.

There appears to be no proposal to remove redundant rooftop pipework, and this omission is deplored. As well as retention of pipework, it is highly shocking to understand that there are no proposals to insulate roofs or stepped soffits of the main block where insulation could be discreetly installed. In terms of pipework it is reasonable to expect that, where they are available, existing internal routes will be used for services installations on a Grade II* building. Otherwise it is essential that a proposed mock-up of pipework on the rear concrete fins should be installed in public view before any decision is made.

We are very concerned that the application has not addressed the requirements of the NPPF to a sufficient degree that justifies the work. If these proposals were to proceed it would reflect extremely poorly on Camden as a social landlord that is entrusted to care for national heritage of the highest order. Camden should take this moment to pause, reconsider and change the approach and proposals in these applications.

Yours sincerely,

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