**Heritage Design Statement**

**Listed Building Status:**

Senate House is a building of considerable architectural character and historical significance. It was designed by Charles Holden and completed in the late 1930’s. The ‘Senate House and Institute of Education’ were added to the Department of the Environment’s statutory list of buildings of special architectural and historic interest on 28 March 1969 and designated grade II. This was upgraded to grade II\* in January 1999. All the external and internal fabric of the building is listed and any works that propose to alter, disturb or remove any part of the building fabric require Listed Building Consent.

**Ground Floor:**

Formation of various sized Meeting Rooms on North, West south side sectors of the South Block utilising the existing large open plan rooms in North south west sector; None of the new rooms will have mechanical ventilation the two largest meeting rooms will have a new sliding folding mobile partition is introduced to allow flexible subdivision of this large space.

Some additional cross partitions are removed in the West /South West sector to create medium sized Meeting Rooms. The Meeting rooms will have new audio visual facilities. There is no fixed furniture and room functions can be varied for either lecture, seminar or meeting table formats.

The North Sector will also provide a storage room to facilitate the equipping of the rooms to which ever style is required.

**Design Objective:**

The characteristics of Holden’s original design for Senate House have been recognised when the building was listed and are therefore to be included in all newly proposed works to the building by the University

The common features in areas that are proposed to be refurbished include

teak floors, broadloom carpet, plaster finish brickwork partitions, cornices, dado rails, picture rails, plain plaster ceilings, these elements of the design will be retained intact or refurnished where required throughout the areas. Thus the strong visual interior character of Senate House is retained and reinstated and the interventions for new functions and facilities consist of modern elements

and fittings set within the context of this Senate House envelope.

The proposals are derived from an understanding of Holden’s original design for Senate House. The Listed Building Management Guidelines identify areas of importance and these have been significant in terms of the amount of and approach to alteration in certain spaces, where changes are proposed these are to be sympathetically undertaken.

**Floor Slabs:**

The floor slabs are constructed from inverted concrete hollow pots with plastered soffits. The slabs are supported on paired cased upstand steel beams spanning between the external masonry walls. The beams are generally located at 2.725 metre centres, but there are numerous variations.

The beams have the original 63mm diameter holes to allow electrical services to pass through them horizontally.

**Demolition and Building Works:**

A small number of internal partitions are to be demolished to form the proposed teaching/meeting room configuration of the Ground Floor area. Partitions to be demolished are of varying ages (as shown on the drawings issued with this application) and being constructed of Plaster finished brickwork, with cornices repaired in place on the ceilings

**Decoration and Finishes:**

The common features in the area that are to be refurbished include Teak floor boards, broadloom carpets, plaster finished brickwork partitions, timber finish doors & plain plaster ceilings and new DAL light fittings. These elements of the design are retained intact and made good where the demolition has occurred. Walls and ceilings have been painted with a scrubbable acrylic emulsion paints in colours sympathetic to the period.

**Lighting:**

No new works are proposed to the lighting scheme which provide current standards of illumination to teaching/meeting spaces with luminaries that use an uplight and downlight component. Lighting control systems include presence detection and daylight sensing control elements which are to be kept. No changes are proposed to Emergency lighting system which was developed in accordance with the University’s Fire Consultant’s report.

**Floor Finishes:**

The teak flooring is currently covered with a carpet finish in most areas. In rooms this is generally broadloom carpet wall to wall, covering and protecting the teak boards. The proposal is to use:

• Low pile woven carpet tile fixed using a non-solvent based tackifier in the newly formed teaching rooms;

**Application of Policy to Design Solutions:**

The proposals have evolved in adherence to the policies outlined:

• Removal and addition of partitions.

• Protection of teak floor with carpet.

• Reinstatement of original fabric and volume.

We believe that this strategic project complies with PPG 15 and Camden’s Adopted UDP policies which state, *“Generally the best way of securing the upkeep of historic buildings and areas is to keep them in active use.”* paragraph 3.8 PPG 15

The advice goes on to note that,

*“The best use will very often be the use for which the building was originally designed, and the continuation or reinstatement of that use should certainly be the first option when the future of a building is considered.”* Paragraph 3.10

Camden UDP supports this principle through Policy EN39 which states, *“The Council will seek to ensure that listed buildings are used for purposes which make a positive contribution to their fabric, interior, and setting. Proposals for the continued use of buildings for the purpose for which they*

*were originally designed, or for the reversion to that use where it has been changed, will be particularly welcomed and, where possible, supported, provided this would not be in conflict with other policies of the Plan”*

Para 3.58 of the proposed replacement plan modifications states, *"The best way of securing the upkeep of historic buildings is to keep them in active use. The best use for a historic building is usually the use for which the building was originally designed, and wherever possible this should continue or be reintroduced if at all possible.*

Therefore, in order to accommodate new facilities within Senate House and support its continued education use, it is necessary to adapt and refurbish certain areas.

**Application of Policy to Design Solutions:**

The proposals have evolved in adherence to the policies outlined:

• Removal and addition of partitions.

We believe that the removal of partitions in this particular instance does not detrimentally affect the special interest of the building and that overrides considerations do exist for the following reasons:

1. Holden recognised that the layout of Senate House had to be flexible,

*“The building which I have in mind is one that will be built substantially and will have all the services…permanently installed – the remainder of the floor space would be in the form of a shell which would be capable of infinite variety of subdivision by means of light partitions.”*

2. The location of the works is principally within areas of medium importance. This refers to their designation within the Listed Building Management Guidelines. There will be no loss of any historic fabric to areas of greatest importance.

3. The loss of historic fabric is limited in relative terms given the extent of similar fabric remaining within the building as a whole. The spaces that are the subject of these proposals are found extensively throughout the building. The majority of the accommodation is to remain as per the original layout.