

Application No: 2016/174P
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Comment: INT
Response:
I have written already to the conservation officers and spoken also to Historic England in the Holborn branch with my concerns that all replacement fittings properly reflect the historic nature of this building. I have also spoken at some length with Steve Brewer from Heritage Surveyors who I know are in charge of sourcing/raising the work at Levita House. I included in that correspondence images of the current windows, the ones they appear to be installing in the south yard and also examples of very simple and sympathetic replacements that Origin Housing have installed in the flats which they manage here their similarity to existing fittings is something I want to see replicated. It is a great concern to me given the listing and moreover the very fascinating provenance of Levita House that it be well respected in all aspects of it's design as is the building in Vienna that it is based upon that is quite correctly highly prized. I would hope that Camden and the occupants Levita be made aware of this and learn to engage with it's history and maintenance but moreover that the historic value is not slowly eroded by the wrong decisions being taken. I will be keenly involved in ensuring this does not happen and gathering support also for full consultations with all relevant conservators. Unfortunately work has begun in the south yard as I say which I was not available to comment upon but I gather there are opposing voices - and I absolutely will refute that any precedent has been set by unsuitable fittings having been passed - we must conserve what we can even if it takes a little while longer to find the correct solutions to conform also to current regulations. Listed status must be a strong element in decision making always. I might also add that the flats already struggle with condensation and that to seal them further is a travesty. It is hardly fuel efficient to have to keep windows open whilst trying to heat the rooms. There appears to be no consideration to this issue in deciding simply to follow guidelines - architecture and living spaces are a holistic science/art. As are respecting the very honourable heritage of social housing projects such as Levita House. Engaging with our environment I believe is something all tenants and councils should have as a strong principle in managing estates. I for one do and will continue to campaign for such along with the right to full and proper consultation. We have not yet had the tenants consultation but we do have the opportunity to not make the same unsympathetic mistakes as in the south yard at Levita House. I can forward images of my concerns but do not see that facility here.