



Historic England

LONDON OFFICE

Mrs Antonia Powell  
London Borough of Camden  
Development Control Planning Services  
Town Hall  
Argyle Street  
London  
WC1H 8ND

Direct Dial: 020 7973 3763

Our ref: L00511501

9 August 2016

Dear Mrs Powell

**Arrangements for Handling Heritage Applications Direction 2015 & T&CP (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015  
Application for Listed Building Consent**

**UCL MAIN BUILDING, GOWER STREET, LONDON, WC1E 6BT  
Application No 2016/2353/L**

Thank you again for your consultation of 19 May 2016 regarding the proposed installation of luminaires to the Donaldson Library colonnade pilasters which are proposed by UCL to improve the existing emergency lighting provision. I enclose a copy of our original advice for your information (our ref: L00511501). We indicated then that the proposals had the potential to cause unjustified harm to the significance of the Grade I listed building, principally because of the visual impact of the lighting and the associated cable runs, and the physical impact of the proposed wall mounts.

Following the submission of these comments, we visited the Donaldson Library with your Council and the agents on 21 June and viewed a sample of the proposed lighting to the colonnade pilasters. It was suggested on site, that the library interior was reconstructed as part of restoration work by A.E. Richardson following WWII damage, and from on-site observation we consider this to be likely. Also, since this meeting, you have shared with me a copy of a 19<sup>th</sup> century illustration (contained within a previous Heritage Statement for the Wilkins Building by Alan Baxter Associates) which reveals that lighting was previously fixed to the library pilasters.

Therefore, we now consider that a convincing argument could be made for the proposed lighting with the associated cabling discretely accommodated within the colonnade voids. However, as mentioned to the agents, we would normally expect evidence to be provided as part of the submission to justify the proposals, as is required under Paragraphs 128 and 132 of the National Planning Policy Framework. This should include a historic record of the post-war restoration, and potentially some opening up of the colonnade fabric.



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Providing it can be demonstrated to your Authority that the colonnade fabric is post-war, we are content for the proposed lighting to be installed, with additional small openings to conceal cable runs within the pilasters. We would welcome the removal of any clutter to the library interior as part of these proposals in the interest of enhancing the character of this focal part of the Grade I listed Wilkins Building.

**Recommendation**

We would urge your Council to address the above advice and determine the application in accordance with national and local policy guidance and on the basis of your specialist conservation advice.

We have therefore drafted the necessary letter of authorisation (draft attached) for your Council to determine the application as you see fit and referred the case to National Planning Casework Unit. Subject to the Secretary of State not directing reference of the application to him, they will return the letter of authorisation to you. If your authority is minded to grant listed building consent, you will then be able to issue a formal decision. Please send us a copy of your Council's decision notice in due course.

Please note that this response relates to historic building matters only. If there are any archaeological implications to the proposals it is recommended that you contact the Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service for further advice (Tel: 020 7973 3712).

Yours sincerely

**Alasdair Young**

Inspector of Historic Buildings and Areas

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Enc: Draft letter of authorisation

