

**TWENTIETH
CENTURY
SOCIETY**



Robert Lester
Regeneration and Planning Management
London Borough of Camden
Town Hall
Judd Street
London WC1H 9JE

Sent by email: robert.lester@camden.gov.uk

19 October 2016

Our ref: 16 10 09

Dear Robert Lester,

2016/4457/P Replacement of horizontal aluminium sliding sash windows with polyester powder coated aluminium casement windows, 2 Blocks at Millman Place London WC1N

The Twentieth Century Society has been notified of the above planning application at Millman Place, an estate designed by Terry Farrell and Nicholas Grimshaw who established their practice in 1965. It was constructed in 1974 for the London Borough of Camden, and is one of a small number of projects the architects completed together before setting up their individual practices in 1980. The Twentieth Century Society has been instrumental in achieving listed building status for Farrell and Grimshaw's work at the Herman Miller Factory in Bath (Grade II) and Park Road Apartments (Grade II), and considers both Farrell and Grimshaw to be amongst the most important contemporary architects practicing in Britain.

Millman Place lies within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, and is referenced in the CA appraisal. It features in the influential Buildings of England's guide Camden edition, where it is described as 'unusual for public housing at the time', reflecting 'the shift towards sympathetic infilling in historic settings' (London: North, Bridget Cherry and Nikolaus Pevsner, 1998, p. 312). We strongly consider that Millman Place is a non-designated heritage asset, and one which makes a unique contribution to the conservation area in which it resides.

The application concerns the replacement of the original aluminium sliding windows with new, powder coated aluminium casement windows. The Society wishes to object to this alteration. We consider that the original sliding casement windows are a small but important detail that are central to the buildings character. An apparently conventional brick faced building with traditional arched doorways is made complex and unusual by these sleek sliding windows, which hint at the hi-tech sensibilities of the architects. They are similar, if not identical to those used at the listed Park Road flats, where they are acknowledged as a fundamental part of the design.

We are concerned that the replacement of sliding windows at 20a-50 Millman Street in 2012 has set a precedent for inappropriate window replacement. The windows in this block have already been replaced with powder-coated aluminium windows, which are widely acknowledged as being

The Twentieth Century Society, 70 Cowcross Street, London EC1M 6EJ



inappropriate insertions into listed buildings. Although Millman Street is currently unlisted, due to its architectural significance we consider that great weight should be afforded to its conservation, and that in material, type and increased dimensions of the glazing bars these new windows will detract from the composition and quality of the building.

Policy

The *Bloomsbury Conservation Area management strategy* (adopted April 2011) states that:

5.32 The appearance of all buildings of historic interest (listed and unlisted) within the Conservation Area is harmed by the removal or loss of original architectural features and the use of inappropriate materials. For example, the loss of original joinery, sash windows, porches and front doors, can have considerable negative impact on the appearance of a historic building and the area. Insensitive re-pointing, painting or inappropriate render will harm the appearance and the long-term durability of historic brickwork.

5.33 In all cases the Council will expect original architectural features and detailing to be retained, repaired, protected, or refurbished in the appropriate manner, and only replaced where it can be demonstrated that they are beyond repair.

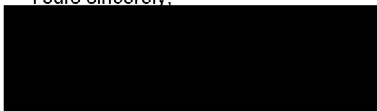
The *Camden Planning Guidance: Design* (adopted April 2015) good practice principles for external alterations states that:

4.7 Alterations should always take into account the character and design of the property and its surroundings... Where it is necessary to alter or replace windows that are original or in the style of the originals, they should be replaced like with like wherever possible in order to preserve the character of the property and the surrounding area. New windows should match the originals as closely as possible in terms of type, glazing patterns and proportions (including the shape, size and placement of glazing bars), opening method, materials and finishes, detailing and the overall size of the window opening.

In line with the above advice, we consider that the proposed window alterations are inappropriate and recommend that the original windows are refurbished, or replaced with as close to like-for-like as possible. We also recommend that the same approach is taken at 20a-50 Millman Street in any future works.

I trust that these comments are of use to you in your consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further queries.

Yours sincerely,



Tess Pinto
Conservation Adviser
Twentieth Century Society

Remit: The Twentieth Century Society was founded in 1979 and is the national amenity society concerned with the protection, appreciation, and study of post-1914 architecture, townscape and design. The Society is acknowledged in national planning guidance as the key organisation concerned with the modern period and is a constituent member of the Joint Committee of the National Amenity Societies. Under the procedures set out in *ODPM Circular 09/2005*, all English local planning authorities must inform the Twentieth Century Society when an application for listed building consent involving partial or total demolition is received, and they must notify us of the decisions taken on these applications.

The Twentieth Century Society, 70 Cowcross Street, London EC1M 6EJ



