



Dear Jonathan McClue

I am writing to object in the strongest possible terms against the unsolicited proposal, which also goes against Camden's inspector's recommendations, to move F E McWilliams' culturally important sculpture from its intended position within the area around Basil Spence's Library and Swiss Cottage community Green Space, to another location altogether - ie outside Camden Council's extension to the Sports & Leisure centre on Adelaide Road.

I understand that it is the wish of the developers, Essential Living/M3 Capital Partners that the sculpture be moved to Adelaide Road for reasons of profit & loss.

ie That their massive demolition and construction lorries will be able to drive through Swiss Cottage community's precious Green Space unhindered, saving them time and money.

This is completely unacceptable.

If Essential Living/M3 Capital Partners need to move their lorries to and fro surely they can do so using the A41's six-lane Avenue Road (north side) and the ten lane Swiss Cottage gyratory system - all of which were built for purpose to take exactly this kind of heavy commercial traffic.

The proposed location will compromise the work and its important relationship to Basil Spence's Library - a place of learning, quiet, contemplation and creativity - respected as such by all that use his civic centre and Green Space.

Its present position is sympathetic to the building and the Green Space: essential components in Basil Spence's commission.

By contrast, Essential Living/M3 Capital Partners' proposal flies in the face of education, contemplation and learning and Basil Spence's original remit to meet the needs of the community, and to produce works that would enhance people's lives, inspire original, young minds, and serve the greater good.

The Sports & Leisure centre does not meet those criteria. EL & M3CP propose that the sculpture - which is delicate and would need to be dismantled - be sited immediately outside its highly visible climbing wall.

Now, what do you think might happen to Basil Spence's commission in that location? Not only would it be visually inappropriate but before long, it would be climbed over and possibly vandalised by high-spirited kids who daily use the sports centre.

It would also be a prime target for graffiti.

What's more, I am concerned that there do not seem to be any plans for the conservation of the work and would worry that it may be moved incorrectly and get damaged.

Have Historic England and the artist's family been consulted before the work gets moved? I understand that much of McWilliams' civic works have not survived well since they do not take kindly to being dismantled and moved.

As residents, taxpayers and therefore custodians of Hampstead for all future generations it is our joint civic and moral responsibility to ensure the integrity of Basil Spence & E F McWilliams' works for years to come.

There is already an ideal spot for the sculpture to be moved to on a temporary basis - on the small grassy mound outside the Library where it would continue to be treated with respect by all of those who use Sir Basil Spence's wonderful, light-filled building.

I look forward to receiving your response.

Kind regards

Ruth Blair

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