SOAS, University of London

Philips Building Academic Office Alterations

Heritage, Design and Access Statement

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FAITHFUL+GOULD

Member of the SNC-Lavalin Group

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	10.05.2018	Draft	C. Phillipps	L. Yerolemides	R. Stocking
	12.09.2018	Final	C. Phillipps	L. Yerolemides	R. Stocking

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Contents

1.0 Introduction

Purpose of The Statement

This Heritage Statement has been prepared to accompany a listed building consent application prepared and submitted by Faithful+Gould for the proposed works defined within this document. This supporting statement should be read and referenced in conjunction with other submitted planning issue drawings and work specifications as part of the aforementioned listed building application.

This statement is prepared in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Act 1990, hereafter referred to as 'the Act' and uses Historic England (formerly English Heritage) Guidance 'Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance' (2008) to assess the significance of the SOAS Philips Building. A heritage impact assessment is included within this statement.

The purpose of this supporting statement is to:

- Identify, assess and provide evidence and justification on whether the proposed works will result in less than substantial harm to the significance of the building.
- Provide sufficient information and justification for the submitted information to be assessed and verified by London Borough of Camden Planners and Conservation Officers, Historic England and any other amenity societies or advisory bodies consulted in relation the application and proposed works.

Background

The building is currently providing library facilities and office accommodation for the students and staff of the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London. Alterations to the layout of some of the offices on floors two through five are proposed, with the removal of a number of internal partition walls, installation of several new doors, widening of two existing doorways, and the installation of one new partition wall. These alterations will open up restricted office spaces to better accommodate the current and future teaching and staffing needs of the School, whilst also serving to improve mobility impaired access to some facilities. The proposed alterations have been designed to be sympathetic to the original building fabric. As such, they make use of existing openings and remove non-original partition walls wherever possible, whilst leaving the inner concrete core of the structure unaltered.

Existing Information and Resources

The Principle information and sources are as follows:

- English Heritage (2008) 'Conservation Principles, Polices and Guidance'
- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Act 1990
- National Planning Policy Framework 2012
- Camden Core Strategy 2010-2025 'Policy CS14 – Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage'

2.0 Building Description & History

2.1 Building Overview

Building Address: SOAS, University of London, Thornhaugh Street, London, WC1H 0XG
Heritage Asset: Philips Building (also known as the SOAS Library)
Building Elements: In-situ concrete frame with pre-cast concrete panels, 8 storeys
Ownership: SOAS, University of London
Architect: Denys Lasdun (c.1970-3)
Designation: Grade II*
Date of listing: 20th May 2011
Use: SOAS Library, academic offices and teaching facilities

Fig. 01 – Present Day, Philips Building, Northern and Western Elevations, Author's own.

2.2 Building Location

The Philips Building is located in the London Borough of Camden. The site is flanked to the South by the SOAS Holden Building, connected to the Philips Building via a link bridge. To the West lies Torrington Square; to the North there are Woburn Square Garden and buildings including the Thomas Coram Research Institute. To the East lies Thornhaugh Street, with the UCL Institute of Education opposite (Figures 2&3).

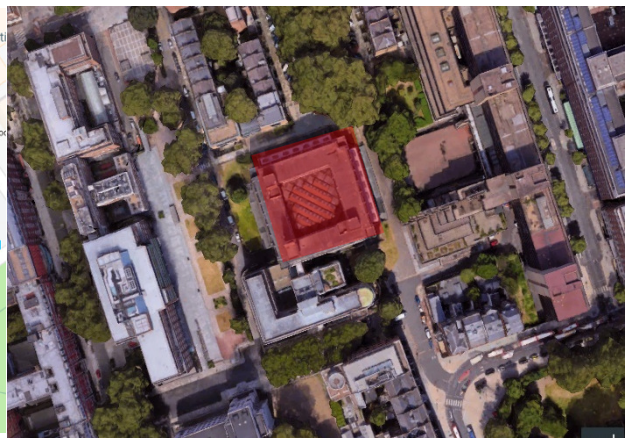


Fig. 02 & 03 – Location map and aerial photograph of the Philips Building [Google Maps 2018]

2.0 Building Description & History (continued)

2.3 Building Description

Externals: The building is formed of a reinforced frame of in-situ cast concrete service towers, supported by interlocking structural pre-cast concrete panels and other pre-cast elements. The concrete composition is Ballidon limestone aggregate mixed with white cement, which has been grit-blasted to a smooth finish.

The detached building conjures military allusions with its dry service moat and lack of obvious ground-level entrances, access primarily being gained via a brick link bridge to the Holden Building (an earlier SOAS University building), which can be found to the south-east of the Philips Building. The exterior style embodies many classic elements of Lasdun's work, incorporating 'strong horizontals…lack of emphasis given to the entrance and the skilled use of concrete' (Historic England 2018). The stark and foreboding exterior serves to offset the enlightened, almost sacred, interior.

The building plan is a square with the top corner-oriented North, and the link bridge to the Holden Building extending from the east side of the building, but adjacent to the southern corner. The building has eight storeys including a basement, lower ground, ground, first, second, third, fourth, and fifth. There are additional plant rooms situated in the basement and above the fifth floor. The main views of the building's elevations are from Torrington Square to the West and Thornhaugh Street to the East.

Each of the building facades is composed of nine bays separated by concrete mullions where the internal pre-cast panels protrude from the building framework. There are set-back corners on the four lower storeys and uncovered concrete projecting balconies on the south and west elevations. The roof is flat, finished with asphalt, 'with a series of diagonally-arranged north-facing roof lights' (Historic England 2018) invisible from the ground level. A concealed rainwater-goods system transports water from roof to ground level. The majority of the windows are horizontal sliding sash-style single glazed units set back from the pre-cast concrete panels, frames composed of an anodised aluminium and bronze finish.

Internals: The building design cleverly blends modern materials and external detailing with a classical internal structure, the atrium library allowing light to penetrate down through the levels via a concrete coffered diagrid ceiling. Three levels of concrete-fronted balconies terrace down to a central study area and reading space, these 'trays' being a common feature of Lasdun's work, as seen at the National Theatre. These features, combined with high-quality finishes, mean the building is a 'dramatic and memorable learning environment' (Historic England 2018). The external theme of security is mirrored internally, with the internal architecture of the space accentuating the impression of the library as a vault, safeguarding rare books and precious manuscripts.

The centre of the atrium is now a computer space, and rooms lead off from the library levels to provide tutorial and study spaces. Concrete partitions and fins delineate sub-spaces within the library levels, framing openings and providing work spaces. The original book counters were cast in concrete, and two remain, one still utilised as the book issue counter. The library stairs feature a concrete parapet and metal tubular handrail. The higher floors above the library feature separate offices and classrooms surrounding the main atrium core.

Doors are primarily of timber-groove construction with timber architraves. Internal concrete finishes vary by location, comprising a mixture of styles including fair-faced, close-boarded with wood patterning visible, and rough concrete with aggregates. The floor construction throughout comprises of a solid concrete slab upon which there is a combination of the original cork flooring and later flooring finishes including carpet tiles and linoleum. Ceilings are formed with a mixture of powder coated metal, skimmed plasterboard, and square fibre suspended ceiling tiles. Walls, where not pre-cast concrete, are normally stud partitions finished with gypsum plaster or blockwork finished with skimmed plaster.

2.0 Building Description & History (continued)

2.4 History of The Building

History and Historical Development of the Site

The School of African and Oriental Studies, also known as SOAS, received its London University Charter in 1913. Its original mission was to train people working in Africa and Asia, whilst it later aimed to advance British scholarship in science and commerce relating to these regions.

Architect Charles Holden designed SOAS's first purpose-built headquarters (completed 1940) and was later commissioned to design and build a series of new University buildings to accommodate an ever-growing population of students. Whilst the University's original plan 'marched a linear spine of buildings north through Bloomsbury' (Historic England 2018), after the Second World War a struggle for funds meant that Holden's original master architectural plan gave way to a reduced version, also known as 'the balanced plan' (Thompson 1990, 37). This was a piecemeal programme of separate buildings with steel and brick structures, loosely following a configuration of a Georgian street pattern. Lasdun was later commissioned to further develop this vision, implementing the 'London University spinal development plan of 1959, devised by the renowned LCC architects Sir Leslie Martin and Trevor Dannatt (Historic England 2018). Lasdun's SOAS library, alongside its companion UCL Institute of Education building, created an 'architectural set piece out of what was a truncated scheme' (Historic England 2018), forming a new pedestrianised square to mirror those remaining from Georgian times and preserving more of the surrounding fabric of the Georgian terraces.

Whilst not part of an official Asset Grouping by Historic England, they still recognise the important role the Philips Building plays in the wider architectural ensemble of the Bloomsbury area. Historic England are of the opinion that 'the library groups well with the Grade II Holden building it was built to serve, the Grade II late-C18 terraces of Woburn square (glimpses of which are caught from the impressive windows of the library); and Lasdun's own Grade II* Institute of Education, the striking massing and materials of which it emulates'. The apparently complementary setting of the building alongside the terraces of Woburn Square is somewhat ironic given that areas of these terraces were demolished to make way for the library and there was a bitter battle over this re-imagining of the city scape at this time (Figures 4&5).

Fig. 4 & 5 – Woburn Square Georgian terraces to be demolished (1969), Woburn Square terraces being demolished to make way for the Philips Building (1969) [SOAS Picture Archive 2018]

2.0 Building Description & History (continued)

2.4 History of The Building (continued)

Building Development

The Philips building was designed by Denys Lasdun (1914-2002) and is now seen as an important example of post-War Brutalism. Lasdun was 'perhaps Britain's most important architect of 1950-1980 and his works are only now becoming more widely appreciated, with 29 listed buildings to his name' (Historic England 2014) including this SOAS library pavilion. Commissioned in 1960 as a library to house SOAS's then 500,000 strong collection of books, construction started in 1970 and it was completed in May 1973. One of Lasdun's less well-known commissions, the SOAS library never-the-less embodies many of the principles found in his more iconic commissions such as the National Theatre on the South Bank (1976), and the Royal College of Physicians (1964). The building is named after Sir Cyril Philips, Director of SOAS from 1957-1976, whose idea it was.

The SOAS Picture Archive contains a wealth of photographic material documenting the area prior to the development of the Philips Building, the construction itself, and the resulting changes to the locale (Figures 6,7, & 8). SOAS also hold full plans for the building within their Archive and Estates department which are an important resource allowing us to better understand this architectural masterpiece.

Fig. 6,7, & 8 – Initial construction (1970); Philips Building under construction (ND), SOAS staff in front of the Philips Building, the balcony in the foreground has not yet been glazed-in (1982) [SOAS Picture Archive 2018]

2.0 Building Description & History (continued)

2.4 History of The Building (continued)

Building Development (continued)

Previous alteration works have taken place both internally and externally to the Philips Building.

External changes: The original design had the concrete projecting balconies of the library extending to the exterior on all four elevations at ground floor level. In 2007 these were glazed in on the north and east elevations to the design of John McAslan and Partners to increase library reader spaces by 170, although it is understood that Lasdun gave his blessing to this project shortly before his death. These extensions also provide increased book shelving space and natural ventilation for the library area.

Internal changes: Numerous partition walls were added during refurbishments in the 1970s and later, overseen by Adams, Holden & Pearson architects. Doors were also added to the library corridors and to many of the encircling corridors above. A staircase leading from the ground floor to the level below was inserted near the lifts by John McAslan and Partners approximately two decades ago. On the upper floors light was provided by windows at the end of each corridor, but over the years lockers and new infill rooms have blocked some of these windows. The toilets were refurbished in 2009. In 2010 a library refurbishment project led by John McAslan and Partners added new study rooms to the eastern side, an enhanced reception area, and the Wolfson Gallery. This work increased the library's reader seating by forty percent. Refurbishment work carried out simultaneously involved removing original broken and damaged ceiling tiles to expose the concrete above, providing an increased sense of space and light. In the summer of 2012 a number of teaching rooms were refurbished under the direction of Kendall Kingscott.

The building was listed in 2011, per the Historic England documentation in Appendix A.

3.0 Current and Proposed Use & Access

Building Access

Main access to the building is currently via the link bridge from the Holden Building to the south-east. The Holden Building provides both stepped and ramped access from street level. A delivery entrance is located on the west side of the Philips building.

2nr lifts provide access to all floors of the Philips Building. Furthermore, 1nr lift situated in the Holden Building can also provide access to the Philips Building via the link bridge at each floor level.

Building Use

The Philips Building, adjoining and associated buildings remain in use as designed and built for the university community. The Philips Building is an essential component of SOAS's service provision to students and staff, the 'pavilion' library forming the heart of the SOAS campus and perfectly complementing the UCL Institute of Education opposite. It continues to serve as a central repository of learning and knowledge, now housing over 1.3 million books alongside specialist reading and map rooms, whilst also designated as one of only five National Research Libraries. The upper floors - with some 220 language labs, offices and teaching rooms - provide essential space for the university's academics and students to study, research and collaborate.

The changes proposed to various teaching rooms are requested to enable them to meet the needs of modern teaching and learning environments. Their expanded size will improve SOAS's ability to hold larger teaching gatherings, group discussions, and forums; whilst the removal of partitions will increase the sense of space for users. Additional doors between partition rooms will help to open up previously segregated spaces, creating a more modern and collaborative learning environment. The proposed widening of 2nr doors to rooms 253a and 299a on the second floor are intentionally situated close by to passenger lifts and will improve access in these locations to the requirements of Part M of the Building Regulations - Access to and Use of Buildings.

4.0 Proposed Works

List of Proposed Works

An impact assessment has been made of the proposed works to assess the significance of the affected areas and identify potential impacts on that significance.

Proposed Works	
Removal of 13nr existing studwork and blockwork partitions between teaching rooms	The existing partition walls are to be carefully disassembled and removed. This is to create larger, more open spaces for collaborative teaching and learning. Special care will be taken to ensure that limited disturbance occurs to the existing finishes where they meet the partition walls. All areas where walls are removed will be finished to match existing teaching room finishes. Ceiling to be skimmed plasterboard, painted white. New carpet to match existing in terms of colour, texture, materials. Strips of skirting where walls removed to match existing in colour and style. Existing skirting is to be retained and carefully stored should it be required for future use. All cabling to be surface-mounted, run in white plastic trunking, as with existing. Any new power sockets required to be white plastic, style to match existing.
Installation of 1nr new partition wall	Installation of 1nr new partition wall will provide smaller academic offices in place of a larger teaching room to better meet current and future fifth floor usage requirements. Wall to be constructed as a stud partition, finished in white skimmed plaster. All cabling to be surface-mounted, run in white plastic trunking, as with existing later installed cabling. Joints with ceiling, walls, to match existing – filled with white mastic. Joint with floor to be covered with skirting board to match existing. Any new power sockets required to be white plastic, style to match existing.
Installation of 11nr new doors within partition walls (to match existing in appearance)	Installation of 11nr doors to increase ease of access between teaching rooms and between teaching rooms and academic offices. Doors will sit within architraves that match the existing architraves as closely as possible in style and materials. Door construction to be to current standards, but colour and style is to match existing on each floor. The doors will be identifiable as later insertions
Widening of 2nr doors to teaching rooms on second floor	Doors to newly created teaching rooms to be widened to comply with current Building Regulations Part M (750mm effective clear width). Current door width is 742mm. Components of existing door architraves to be re-used where possible, new material to be spliced in as necessary and prepared to match existing. New doors to be constructed to current standards but styled to match existing doors on second floor. Door furniture to be re-used on new doors or sourced to match existing as closely as possible. Existing doors will be carefully removed and stored on-site for re-installation, should they be required at a later date.

5.0 Proposed Works (continued)

List of Proposed Works (continued)

Floor Finishes	Carpet floor finishes are in place to each of the rooms. Replacement carpets will match existing to address former partition locations.
Ceiling Finishes	Suspended ceilings within each room will be replaced to match existing, to address the former partitions where removed.
Power Provisions	Any new power provisions required will be surface mounted to walls and ceilings via conduit (as per existing). Light fittings where different in 2 rooms now joined together will have one fitting changed to match the other and minimise work required.

Proposed Works Photographs & Location

The photographs below show the main features of the academic offices and teaching rooms proposed to be remodelled during the works. The existing finishes will be replicated where new walls or doors are installed.

Fig. 9 - Existing stud partition wall between offices

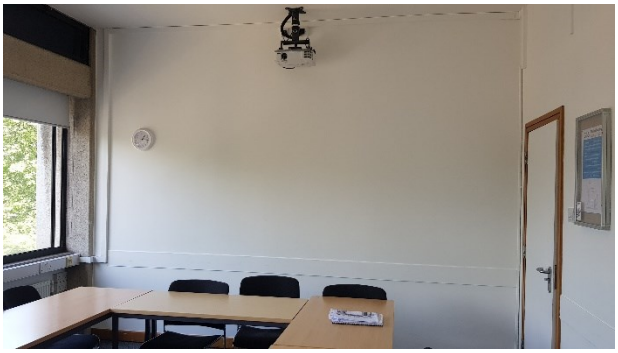


Fig. 10 - Existing block wall between offices

Fig. 11 – Existing finishes to academic office ceilings

Fig. 12 – Existing finishes to academic office floors

6.0 Proposed Works (continued)

Proposed Works Photographs & Location (continued)

Fig. 13 – Existing teaching room AV equipment

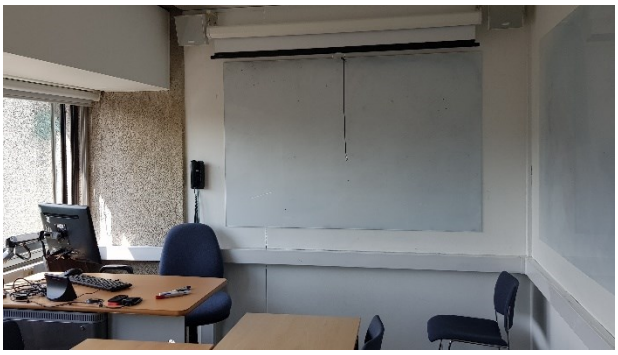
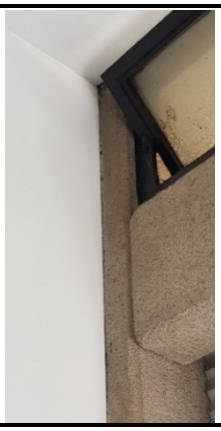


Fig. 14 – Existing teaching room whiteboards

Fig. 15 – Existing academic office skirting

Fig. 16 – Existing academic office door architrave, details



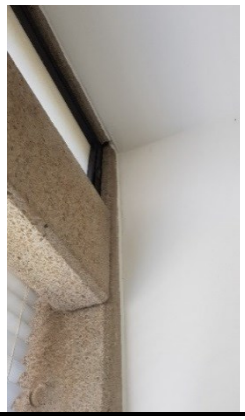


Fig. 17 – Existing joints where partition wall meets concrete superstructure (exposed concrete sections to be carefully treated to remove traces of the partition from the exposed aggregate.

Fig. 18 – Existing white plastic trunking in academic office, running along wall/ceiling join

4.0 Proposed Works (continued)

Proposed Works Photographs & Location (continued)

Fig. 19 – Existing door threshold

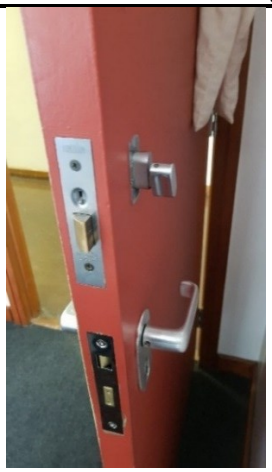


Fig. 20 – Existing door furniture

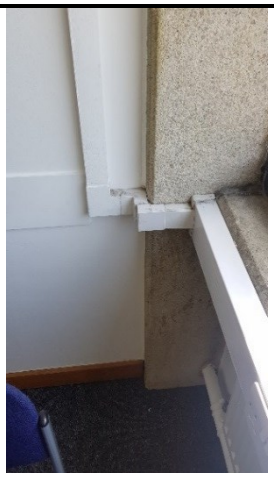


Fig. 21 – Existing white plastic trunking in office, partition wall/superstructure wall join, ideally removed from exposed concrete finishes and re-directed. No new trunking to be installed onto concrete surfaces.

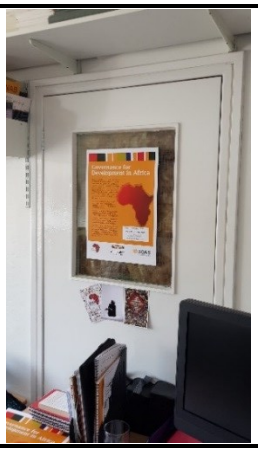


Fig. 22 – Blocked up existing doorway in academic office

Fig. 23 – Blocked up existing doorway in academic office, alternate view

5.0 Significance

Principle 3.2 of English Heritage's (2008) Conservation Principles states:

"The significance of a place embraces all the diverse cultural and natural heritage values that people associate with it, or which prompt them to respond to it. These values tend to grow in strength and complexity over time, as understanding deepens and people's perceptions of a place evolve".

The sum of the various values that people place upon a given heritage asset equates to its overall significance, whilst the assets' value to future generations also needs to be considered.

Understanding the significance of the Philips Building within SOAS and the various values that contribute to it are crucial when considering change and how best to manage that change. As Historic England opine - "significance lies at the heart of every conservation action...unless we understand why a place is worthy of conservation, the whole business of conservation makes very little sense" (ibid.)

The following assessment of significance is intended to form the foundation for understanding the heritage values of the Philips Building, in order to inform any proposed works. Faithful+Gould assesses significance using the 'values-based' approach that underpins the 2008 Conservation Principles. Four primary categories of heritage value are defined in the Conservation Principles.

EVIDENTIAL VALUE	The potential of a place to yield significant evidence, usually from physical remains, about past human activity
HISTORICAL VALUE	The way in which the present can be connected by a place to people, events and aspects of life in the past
AESTHETIC VALUE	The ability of a place to provide sensory and intellectual stimulation
COMMUNAL VALUE	The meanings of a place for people who relate to it – a collective experience or memory. A shared cultural frame of reference

The significance of the Philips Building has been assessed using a scale of significance ratings ranging from very high significance to intrusive. The definitions of these levels are provided here:

VERY HIGH SIGNIFICANCE	This represents the most valuable themes, features, fabric or characteristics of the SOAS building. These elements are considered to be essential to the understanding and appreciation of the building and as being key contributors to its overall character as well as its local, regional and national importance.
HIGH SIGNIFICANCE	This can be attributed to a theme, feature, built fabric or characteristic which has a high cultural value and forms an essential part of understanding the historic value of the SOAS building, while greatly contributing towards its character and appearance.
MEDIUM SIGNIFICANCE	This can be attributed to a theme, feature, built fabric or characteristic which has some cultural importance and helps to define the historic value, character and appearance. These elements are often important for only a few values, for example it may be either the survival of physical built fabric or association with an historic use, but not both.

5.0 Significance (continued)

LOW SIGNIFICANCE	This can be attributed to a theme, feature, built fabric or characteristic which has minor cultural value, but which may, even to a small degree, contribute towards the character and appearance of the SOAS building and its constituent parts.
NEUTRAL SIGNIFICANCE	Elements of neutral significance typically do not possess any heritage values which are important to the SOAS building and its constituent parts. As such, they neither contribute to – nor detract from – its overall character and understanding.
INTRUSIVE	Elements that are Intrusive to heritage value have characteristics which detract from the overall significance and character of the SOAS building and its constituent parts.

5.1 Evidential Value

Evidential value is normally associated with older heritage assets, but all buildings encapsulate unique information about their historical development. The Philips Building's internal fabric has been subject to numerous adaptations since shortly after the building's completion in 1973. It is relatively straightforward to identify the phases of alteration through the assessment of historic architectural plans, photographs, and the change of materials and decorative finishes used on site. The external fabric has seen relatively less alteration, remaining largely unchanged excepting the glazing over of two balconies in 2007.

Despite these alterations the Philips Building retains much of its original character and continues to embody the architectural principles under which it was constructed by Lasdun. The external elevations are important evidence of Lasdun's vision and intentions and remain as such. The library atrium is the heart of the building and the most important internal feature, and this also remains largely unaltered and true to Lasdun's design with no structural alterations having taken place and the aesthetics broadly unchanged.

Therefore, the evidential value of the Philips Building is considered as having a HIGH SIGNIFICANCE. The upper office floors surrounding the central atrium may be said to have a lower significance than the overall building since they have been more heavily modified and embody less of Lasdun's style.

5.2 Historical Value

Historic value tends to be either illustrative or associative (Historic England 2008). Due to its relatively recent construction, the Philips Building can be said to have limited illustrative value since there has perforce been little time for generations to have built up a shared experience of the building and it does not fundamentally embody a truly unique innovation in terms of design or construction, instead being a good representative piece of Lasdun's work when placed in context. However, it might be said to have some illustrative historical value in that it is a rare example of a post-war brutalist library, with the library interior remaining little-changed since its construction.

The associative historical value of the Philips Building can be categorised as high. It holds a key place as part of the wider SOAS complex, and in the broader University of London development given its essential role in off-setting the UCL Institute of Education, creating the pedestrian square in between them and counter-balancing the Institute of Education's low, narrow construction. Furthermore, it helps to mirror the previous Georgian developments of the area with a modern context. The Philips Building also shares similar characteristics with its immediate neighbours – the Holden Building, Birkbeck buildings across Torrington Square, Senate House, and the UCL Institute of Education – they are all purpose-built University buildings and their construction primarily dates from a period of post-war architectural innovation.

5.0 Significance (continued)

5.2 Historical Value (continued)

The Philips Building also gains significant historical value via its connection with Denys Lasdun, both in terms of embodying his tenets of design, and forming part of a significant oeuvre of similar works throughout the country. The fact that the exterior remains little-altered adds to this historical value as it still demonstrates the design ethos and construction techniques of the 1970s.

Overall the historical value is deemed to have a VERY HIGH SIGNIFICANCE.

5.3 Aesthetic Value

The Philips Building has a high design value primarily due to the aesthetic qualities generated by Lasdun's use of strong horizontal planes, minimal external detailing, and monolithic scale. The scale is especially important in making the building stand out against the surrounding buildings whilst emphasising the contrasting styles at work in this relatively small area. The building's aesthetic value is enhanced by this contrast with the succession of listed University buildings in the immediate area, designed by Holden and other notable architects, as well as the more modest Georgian terraces to the North and South.

The internal library space is well known for its aesthetic appeal and unique ambience, showing a stark beauty in economy of design, aided by use of natural light to create a pleasant atmosphere.

Overall the Philips Building is aesthetically interesting in itself, and as part of the broader local city-scape, leading to its aesthetic value being granted a VERY HIGH SIGNIFICANCE.

5.4 Communal Value

In order to identify the communal value attributed to a building, it is important to firstly identify its various stakeholders. The range of these can be extremely diverse and a building may be important to various groups if it is associated with a particular event in their lives. Value can be attributed to the building's use and any subsequent association or loyalty felt towards it.

The Philips Building is a purpose-built University facility, which maintains a position as the main SOAS library in addition to providing offices for academics, language labs for researchers, and classrooms for students. Students, lecturers, and the wider University community will therefore value the Philips Building. Additionally, it is likely to be valued by local residents as an iconic landmark, by more distant researchers and academics as a National Research Library, by architects and architectural enthusiasts as a prime example of brutalism and the work of Lasdun, and by other visitors to the area due to its striking appearance, although this list of stakeholders is by no means exhaustive. The Philips Building can therefore be said to have a communal value of HIGH SIGNIFICANCE, providing a core function for generations of students and a wider social function for other interested parties.

6.0 Historical Impact to Significance

The work items identified within the 'Proposed Work' section of this statement are revisited to determine their potential for impact on the identified significance. The two keys below define the various levels of significance and impacts on this. It is hoped that this table will provide a way of quickly identifying those fabric elements of highest value and significance and the resulting impact.

The level of impact upon significance is felt to be self-explanatory. The colours for each level of impact are identified in the key below. The elemental impact assessment is appended to this statement. The impact assessment refers to the acronym CoBRA, detailed as a Conservation Based Research Assessment, to gain further knowledge in making a decision on the impact, significance and mitigation of the works.

6.1 Significance of Fabric Affected

VERY HIGH SIGNIFICANCE	This represents the most valuable themes, features, fabric or characteristics of the building. These elements are considered to be essential to the understanding and appreciation of the building and as being key contributors to its overall character as well as its local, regional and national importance.
HIGH SIGNIFICANCE	This can be attributed to a theme, feature, built fabric or characteristic which has a high cultural value and forms an essential part of understanding the historic value of the building, while greatly contributing towards its character and appearance.
MEDIUM SIGNIFICANCE	This can be attributed to a theme, feature, built fabric or characteristic which has some cultural importance and helps to define the historic value, character and appearance. These elements are often important for only a few values, for example it may be either the survival of physical built fabric or association with an historic use, but not both.
LOW SIGNIFICANCE	This can be attributed to a theme, feature, built fabric or characteristic which has minor cultural value and which may, even to a small degree, contribute towards the character and appearance of the building and its constituent parts.
NEUTRAL SIGNIFICANCE	Elements of neutral significance typically do not possess any heritage values which are important to the building and is constituent parts. As such, they neither contribute to – nor detract from – its overall character and understanding
INTRUSIVE	Elements that are intrusive to heritage value have characteristics which detract from the overall significance and character to the building

Impact Key

HIGH IMPACT
SOME IMPACT
LOW IMPACT
NO IMPACT

6.0 Historical Impact to Significance (continued)

6.2 Heritage Impact Assessment

The Heritage Impact Assessment describes and identifies the significance and impact to the fabric of all elements of work. This has been included within Appendix B of the document.

7.0 Justification for The Proposed Works

Improved Building Accessibility

SOAS has identified that several rooms are required to have doorways widened to facilitate wheelchair access. Once all other potential locations had been assessed, appraised and the works confirmed to be required, the works have been limited to the two most suitable rooms within the second floor situated close by to the lifts to facilitate convenience of access.

Further thought should be given to the future Conservation Strategy of the building, including the use of the rooms and methodology for the continued approach across all upper floors of the building. This also includes the availability of suitable lifts to these areas from the ground floor and the location of close by disabled toilet facilities.

Maintaining use of a key area of the University Portfolio

The University has identified the requirement for additional and larger teaching facilities within the Philips Building. To continue to support and enhance the long-term usability of the building, alterations are required to a number of block and stud partition walls. This includes the removal of walls, and creation of new door openings between rooms.

A number of door openings have historically already been installed between rooms. These have been utilised as much as possible for the design of the updated requirements to ensure that the impact of the proposed works remains limited. The design has also been carefully considered to try and minimise the impact of the works by removing six (non-original) stud partition walls instead of twelve block work walls.

The building was originally designed by Denys Lasdun to allow for flexible use of the space and sub-dividing rooms from 2nd to 4th floor levels. By removing or installing these new partitions, the original design principles of Lasdun remain firmly in place. Meanwhile, the inner library atrium of the building – arguably the most significant interior architectural feature – remains unaffected by the proposed works.

8.0 Conclusion

Faithful+Gould are of the opinion that the proposed works have some impact upon the significance, and architectural and historic importance, of the SOAS Philips Building.

It is our opinion that the Philips Building architecture (especially the external aesthetic and main library atrium), links to the famous architect Denys Lasdun, and its central place in the core group of University of London buildings designed by Charles Holden and others ensure its importance at the heart of the university community and therefore high significance for all of the values identified under the historic principles.

The proposed works are deemed to have some impact on the building structure, but no impact on the most significant architectural elements – the façade structure and central library atrium. The works will provide significant benefits to the building users and occupants by increasing the sense of space in which to work and collaborate, encouraging meeting and teaching in larger groups which can improve the exchange of information and generation of ideas, and providing some improved access to teaching and learning facilities for users of all mobility levels.

Care has been taken to ensure that minimal impact is caused to existing finishes. All new finishes will be installed to match the existing finishes and general aesthetic of the building wherever possible.

8.0 Conclusion (continued)

The long term holistic methodology and approach of changes to the building should be considered, especially where widening doorways to locations only where absolutely necessary. This should be considered alongside other needs for accessibility including nearby lift access to the required floor level and near location of suitable bathroom facilities.

Appendices

Appendix A	-	Historic England Listing Detail
Appendix B	-	Heritage Impact Assessment

Appendix A

Historic England Listing Detail

Historic England

Philips Building, School of Oriental and African Studies

List Entry Summary

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.

Name: Philips Building, School of Oriental and African Studies

List entry Number: 1401342

Location

Philips Building, School of Oriental and African Studies, THORNHAUGH STREET, CAMDEN, LONDON

The building may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County: Greater London Authority

District: Camden

District Type: London Borough

Parish: Non Civil Parish

National Park: Not applicable to this List entry.

Grade: II*

Date first listed: 20-May-2011

Date of most recent amendment: Not applicable to this List entry.

Asset Groupings

This list entry does not comprise part of an Asset Grouping. Asset Groupings are not part of the official record but are added later for information.

List entry Description

Summary of Building

University Library for the School of Oriental and African Studies. It was commissioned in 1960, full planning approval was granted in 1968, the contract began in 1970 and the building was completed in May 1973. Denys Lasdun for London University.

Reasons for Designation

The Philips Building at SOAS, Thornhaugh Street, a university library completed in 1973 to designs by Denys Lasdun, is designated at Grade II* for the following principal reasons: * Architectural interest: while relatively little-known, this pavilion library is one of the most powerful library designs of the post-war period, also of interest for being a work of this major post-war architect * Interior quality: the main library space is remarkable. Through a complex structure of terraces, a skilful employment of natural light via a concrete diagrid ceiling and good-quality finishes throughout, Lasdun created a dramatic and memorable learning environment * Planning: a manifestation of the continuous teaching building which Lasdun successfully explored; it pre-dates his designated University of East Anglia; and also managed to make an architectural set piece out of what was a truncated scheme * Group value: the library groups well with the Grade II Holden building it was built to serve, the Grade II late-C18 terraces of Woburn square (glimpses of which are caught from the impressive windows of the library); and Lasdun's own Grade II* Institute of Education, the striking massing and materials of which it emulates

History

The Philips Building at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) has its origins in the London University spinal development plan of 1959, devised by the renowned LCC architects Sir Leslie Martin and Trevor Dannatt. It was Martin who recommended Denys Lasdun (1914-2002) as the architect for the new buildings at SOAS which were to form part of the development of the central area of the University's Bloomsbury site. The University had moved its principal headquarters (at Charles Holden's iconic Senate House, now designated Grade II*) and some of the smaller institutes, such as SOAS, to Bloomsbury in the 1930s although the war prevented implementation of the ambitious (and forbidding) masterplan that would have marched a linear spine of buildings north through Bloomsbury. SOAS was established in Finsbury Circus in order to train people working in Asia and Africa, and it received its London University Charter in 1913. Its original building was housed in the building of 1940, purpose-built also by Holden to hold what was by then a well-established school. This building was designated at Grade II just 29 years after it was built.

Lasdun accepted the commission for the SOAS library in 1960 and full planning approval was granted in 1968. The chosen site, to the north of the Holden building, infringed on the small but well-formed Woburn Square. This prompted a conservation fight of the type emerging in London at this time. It was long enough after the war for Londoners to have views on what should be preserved in the face of new building, and students, faculty and local residents protested the demolition of the increasingly-appreciated Georgian town houses. A London University Special Committee narrowly rejected the calls to preserve the square and demolition began in July 1969. The building contract officially began in January 1970 and was completed in May 1973.

Lasdun's design changed the concept that Martin and Dannatt had promoted in their master plan for the site. This resulted from his brief to create more pedestrian areas, as well as being a response to the truncated nature of the scheme when financial and conservation issues emerged. He implemented the envisioned dominant 'spine' in his impressive Institute of Education (to the east along Bedford Way, and designated Grade II*) and instead turned the library into a distinct 'pavilion' that formed part of a new pedestrianised square. The library was designed at about the same time as the library in his major scheme for the University of East Anglia (UEA).

Denys Lasdun is one of the most distinctive and creative of post-war architects. He is one of the few to have begun practicing before WWII, when he worked for Wells Coates, and after a distinguished military service he

joined Lubetkin and Tecton, and Fry and Drew, before establishing his own practice in 1960 when his own style emerged. This was a synthesis of 1930's modernism with a strong horizontality derived from Frank Lloyd Wright (whose planning he came to admire in the 1950s) and an interest in expressing services that makes for comparison with another American architect, Louis Kahn. Perhaps of all British architects, Lasdun's work best demonstrates the cool, four-square and intellectually rigorous qualities of Kahn's work. Most of Lasdun's surviving buildings in England are now designated, many at high grades, such as the Royal College of Physicians at Grade I, and the nearby London University Institute of Education, the UEA Ziggurats, Keeling House and the National Theatre at Grade II*.

Details

MATERIALS: A reinforced concrete frame of in situ concrete and interlocking structural pre-cast concrete panels with a white cement and Ballidon limestone aggregate mix, with a grit-basted finish. The windows are mostly horizontal sliding sashes with aluminium and bronze anodised finish, set back from the precast panels.

EXTERIOR: The Philips Building closes the southern end of Woburn Square, and the leafy trees and late-Georgian terraces were intended to be glimpsed from the building. It is essentially a library, built to house its collection of then half a million books (now grown to over a million), also with teaching rooms and offices. The eight-storey building does not have its own external ceremonial entrance, which was always through the listed Holden block. The roofs are flat, with a series of diagonally-arranged north-facing roof lights, hidden from the outside. The central library dominates and projects on three floors with a set-back range of academic offices and classrooms (totalling 220 separate rooms) above. Each of the facades of this square, pavilion-plan building has nine bays and there are set-back corners on the four lower storeys. The ground floor formerly had projecting balconies, or terraces, but these were glazed in on the north and east elevations around 2007 (also by John McAslan and Partners, and apparently with the blessing of Lasdun, before he died). A service moat around the building provides light to the basement levels and a delivery entrance on the west side.

INTERIOR: The set piece is the central, top-lit library. This features three levels of concrete-fronted balconies and natural light comes in through a diagonally-set grid of slender concrete ceiling beams. On the lower floors, rooms lead off to provide study and tutorial space within the library, and

computer areas to which the centre of the lower level is now dedicated.

Reading areas extend into the former terraces, which are now part of the library's interior, and include a mezzanine level divided by concrete fins. There are other concrete partitions within the stacks that frame openings while supporting the floors. Two original concrete book counters survive: the book issue counter on the lower level of the library, and the book return counter, now isolated in a room on the ground floor. The original model for the building is housed in a case in the basement. The main, full-height library stair has a concrete parapet with metal tubular hand rail (currently painted red, but original colour to be confirmed). The concrete here, and in the main stair outside the library, which is nestled into a concrete service core, has a fair-faced horizontal close boarded finish. A further stair from the ground floor down was added near the lifts by John McAslan and Partners around 2000. The upper corridors, which wrap around the central library, largely retain the simple grooved timber doors and architraves and some original cork floors. The original arrangement with a window at the end of each corridor largely remains, although some temporary rooms have been added to these spaces, blocking off the light and the view. The toilets were refurbished in 2009. There is a lecture hall with slatted wooden wall covering on the lower ground floor.

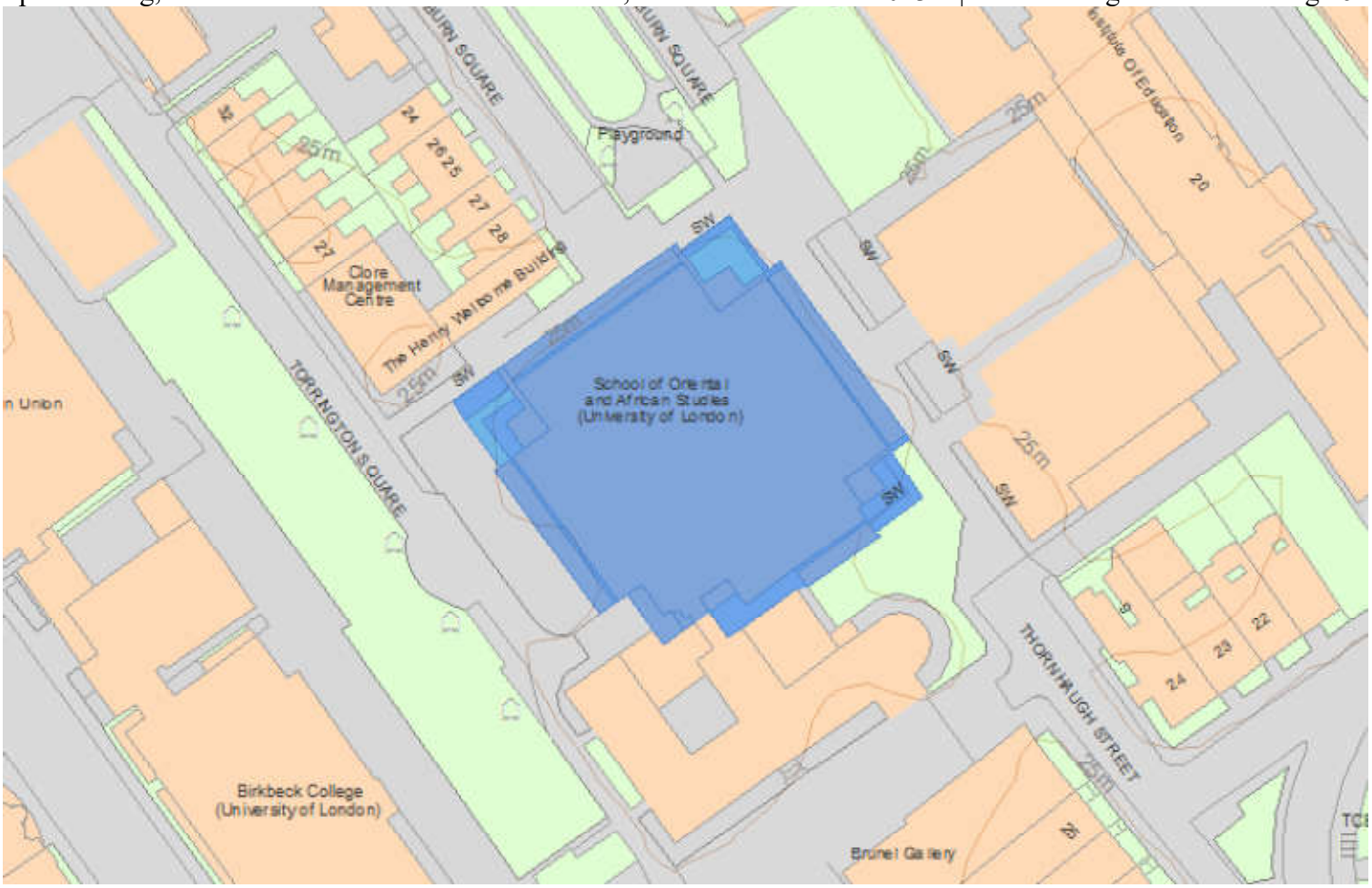
SOURCES: The Architects' Journal, (14 June 1967) 'New Buildings for London University, Bloomsbury', The Architectural Review, (March 1980) Cherry, B, Pevsner, N, Buildings of England, London 4, North (1999), 274-8.

Selected Sources

None.

National Grid Reference: TQ2988582061

Map



The above map is for quick reference purposes only and may not be to scale. For a copy of the full scale map, please see the attached PDF - 1401342 .pdf (http: mapservices.HistoricEngland.org.uk printwebservicehle StatutoryPrint.svc 464339 HLE A4L Grade HLE A3L Grade.pdf)

The PDF will be generated from our live systems and may take a few minutes to download depending on how busy our servers are. We apologise for this delay.

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End of official listing

Appendix B

Heritage Impact Assessment

ITEM	FLOOR	LOCATION	PROPOSED WORK	SIGNIFICANCE OF FABRIC AFFECTED	POTENTIAL IMPACT OF WORK	COBRA INFORMATON	POSSIBLE MITIGATION
1	Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth	Philips Building	Remove existing stud partition walls 6nr	LOW SIGNIFICANCE - most stud partition walls are modern additions to the building from previous refurbishments. They do not contribute to the value of the building aesthetically, and have only very minor evidentiary value.	LOW IMPACT - The intention of Lasdun to make the partitions between the rooms at upper levels flexible ensures that the removal of the stud partitions maintains a limited impact upon the significance of the building.	Pictoral records of existing partition walls to be made available to SOAS and kept as part of the historic record.	Ensure removal of partition walls is carried out with care so as not to damage surrounding historic fabric.
2	Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth	Philips Building	Remove block partition walls 6nr	MEDIUM SIGNIFICANCE - Whilst these block partition walls appear to be original, they contribute little to the internal aesthetics of character of the building. Not being of cast concrete, they do not hold significant evidentiary or historic value relating to the building's construction. Lasdun had always intended for the internal partition walls to be easily moveable as spatial use requirements changed over time.	SOME IMPACT - Removing these walls will alter the original building fabric. However, they are not considered to contribute in a meaningful sense to the significance of the building since the original design of the building allowed for the partitions between the rooms at upper levels to be placed in flexible and changing locations to suit the need of the University.	Pictoral records of existing partition walls to be made available to SOAS and kept as part of the historic record.	Ensure removal of partition walls is carried out with care so as not to damage surrounding historic fabric.
3	Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth	Philips Building	Insertion of new doorways and doors into partition walls between academic offices (mixture of block and stud walls)	MEDIUM SIGNIFICANCE - The existing partition walls appear to be a mixture of originals and more recently constructed as the building's internal layout has been reconfigured over time. Neither existing or new partition walls contribute significantly to the building's character. Many unaltered examples will remain of both types after several are modified.	LOW IMPACT - The proposed doorways and doors will be designed to complement the existing doors into the academic offices and those between offices. They will also contribute positively to the continued use of these spaces, allowing smoother movement between rooms. Whilst there will be a loss of original fabric, the insertion of doors between rooms is a continuation of the theme of flexible room design envisaged by Lasdun.	Refer to drawings and photographs included with the application.	Doors will be constructed using similar materials to existing doors, with the aim of achieving a matching style and finish to those currently in situ at office entrances. This will ensure the new doors are unobtrusive, sympathetically blending into the existing aesthetic of the building.
4	Second	Philips Building	Widen 2nr existing room entrance doorways within the corridor.	MEDIUM SIGNIFICANCE - Current doorways appear to be original with consistent architrave detailing throughout the building. Doorways to be widened contribute to the aesthetic of the building interior and embody some evidentiary value relating to Lasdun's original design intentions. Contribute moderately to building character. The sheer quantity and uniformity of the appearance and size of the doors throughout each floor identify a greater significance.	HIGH IMPACT - Widening of doors will irreversibly alter original building fabric. Widened doorways will affect building character as they will be out of keeping with the rest of the doorways and overall internal aesthetic of academic office areas. The construction of the walls will need to be determined in order to carefully cut a larger opening to the existing doorway. Accessibility should also be considered to these rooms, as to whether wheel chair users can adequately reach the rooms with current lift provisions or toilet facilities located close by.	Pictoral records, diagrams, and measurements of existing doorways to be made available to SOAS and kept as part of the historic record.	Every effort should be made prior to undertaking these works to ensure that no other possible location can be found for the widened doorways, within an area of the modernised lower library floor levels or another part of the estate. Justification will need to be provided to ensure that the rooms selected are widened for future long term use of the building and a future plan for other floors is considered for uniformity, if required. Re-use as many elements of existing door architraves and door furniture as necessary, to maintain stylistic continuity with the current building interior. Ensure new architrave elements, door furniture, and new wider doors themselves match existing elements in terms of style and finish.

ITEM	FLOOR	LOCATION	PROPOSED WORK	SIGNIFICANCE OF FABRIC AFFECTED	POTENTIAL IMPACT OF WORK	COBRA INFORMATON	POSSIBLE MITIGATION
5	Fifth	Philips Building	Install new stud partition wall	NEUTRAL SIGNIFICANCE - Being an addition to the original building fabric, this new element contains no inherent significance. Installation is not believed to negatively affect building fabric/character. The wall will be situated in between 2 bays, at the correct location to separate any room throughout the building.	SOME IMPACT - Installing this partition wall will require the fixing of ceiling and sole plates into the original building fabric, causing damage to the original structure which would need to be made good on removal. The stud wall will also require fixing into both the internal teaching room wall and the external concrete wall to secure it, especially if the wall is required to meet specific sound-proofing/fire safety standards.	Pictoral records of existing area prior to new partition wall installation to be made available to SOAS and kept as part of the historic record.	Ensure new partition walls are attached to existing structure in such a way as to minimise disturbance to the original fabric - perhaps by less frequent use of fixings where it is connected to the external cast concrete wall, and more towards ceiling and floor areas. The installation will be reversible if required, with the option to make good fixing holes created during the works, although some damage to original building fabric is inevitable.
6	Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth	Philips Building	Install new cabling and conduit as necessary for modified room usages	NEUTRAL SIGNIFICANCE - This addition to the original building fabric contains no inherent significance. Providing it is installed sensitively and carefully, the significance of the affected fabric should be unaffected.	LOW IMPACT - Given the large presence of similar conduit throughout the building this additional conduit is unlikely to have a large impact on the structure's qualities. Aesthetically and in terms of character the impact will be minimal. In terms of fixing the conduit to surfaces provided this is carried out in keeping with the existing conduit and avoids damage to the concrete superstructure then this should not greatly affect significance.	N/A	Existing openings in walls or existing trunking layouts will be re-used for the installation of new cabling wherever possible. New trunking can be installed following methods used to install previous trunking, for consistency.
7	Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth	Philips Building	Replacement floor finishes where walls are removed.	NEUTRAL SIGNIFICANCE - The existing floor finishes throughout office and classroom areas on the 2nd to 4th floors are carpet sheet or tiles. The carpet finishes have no significance to the fabric of the building.	NO IMPACT - Replacement floor finishes will not impact upon the significance of the building. The new carpet will be required to address the newly opened join between rooms where partition walls have been removed.	N/A	N/A
8	Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth	Philips Building	Replacement suspended plasterboard ceilings where walls have been removed.	NEUTRAL SIGNIFICANCE - This addition to the original building fabric contains no inherent significance. Providing it is installed sensitively and carefully, the significance of the affected fabric should be unaffected.	NO IMPACT - Proposed suspended ceilings will match the existing, re-using existing fixings. This will result in little to no impact the building fabric.	N/A	Existing fixings for suspended ceilings are to be re-used throughout to minimise damage to existing fabric.

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