



John Diver
Senior Planner
Development Management
Supporting Communities
London Borough of Camden
2nd Floor, 5 Pancras Square
London N1C 4AG

Sent by email: john.diver@camden.gov.uk

17 August 2018

Our ref: 04 07 13

Dear John Diver,

2018/3322/L (2018/2874/P) Institute of Education, 20 Bedford Way

The Twentieth Century Society has been notified of the above application. The application seeks permission for refurbishment works to Wing A of the Grade II* listed Institute of Education. The Society's views are set out below.

The Institute of Education was designed by Denys Lasdun, a major post-war architect, and built 1970-76. The building's more than special architectural and historic interest is reflected in its Grade II* listing, a rare grade for a post-war building. Its composition is more formal than other examples of Lasdun's work, with soaring concrete towers balancing the long elevations along Bedford Way. Wing A is perhaps the most recognisable element of the building, and features staggered terraces with bronzed ribbon glazing, interspersed with horizontal rows of bronze anodized aluminium spandrel panels. Elain Harwood, in the 2015 book *England's Post-war Listed Buildings*, describes Wing A as a "great spur with a deliciously over-scaled escape stair; five were originally intended, and Lasdun long wished to build two as to embrace the SOAS pavilion."

The Society is pleased to see UCL investing in the long-term use of the IOE building through a multi-phased refurbishment plan. We hope that the conservation-led approach seen in this phase will be consistent throughout the project.

There are limited internal fittings to Wing A that hold architectural interest, as the spaces were originally designed to be flexible and free of ornamentation. Above ground level, three external walls of Wing A feature sash windows with bronze glass, interspersed with exposed concrete mullions to the interior, with the fourth eastern elevation forming the connection to the main block. Notable interior features include the regimented run of concrete mullions to the external walls, a large floor plate, a suspended cast concrete stair linking floors 4 and 5, and tubular metal balustrading to stairways. The interior of Wing A is typical of the whole of the IOE building, and we hope that appropriate treatments and finishes to original structures and fittings will be carried across all phases of refurbishment.

We support the principle of refurbishment of the IOE building, however we have a few concerns that we hope the planning officer can address in the conditions of listed building consent. Piecemeal superficial changes to

the IOE building have occurred since its opening, and the approach taken in this phase of refurbishment will have a significant impact when applied across the entire building. We therefore consider a high level of scrutiny to be appropriate to ensure a consistent finish is achieved across the entire scheme.

The partial installation and partial replacement of secondary glazing provides an opportunity to correct previous unsympathetic alterations. We consider the specification of secondary glazing units already installed on the third floor to be appropriate, however the exterior colour of the integrated blinds should be much darker to limit their visibility from the exterior. Across the building, the mixed range of blind styles and colours (mostly too light in tone) is a clearly visible detractor from the impact of the bronze glazing, and we hope this can be addressed to create a more appropriate and consistent finish.

The uniformity of the curtain glazing is a main feature of Lasdun's design, and although the individual units are simple, the proportions of the panels and their horizontal division are integral to the building's aesthetic. We therefore would like to see greater attention paid to the design of the proposed new doors, so they better replicate the finish and proportions of the glazing to reduce the interruption of the current uniformity. Previous door insertions do not share the proportions of the glazing, and we consider these to be detractors from the building's architectural significance. We hope this refurbishment scheme will use this opportunity to rectify previous unsympathetic alterations.

The application also proposes the removal of windows and their replacement with louvred panels to the southern façade of the fourth floor. It is considered that this would have a negative impact on the significance of the listed building, however the position of the proposed new panels is not prominent when viewed from the exterior, and the disbenefits will be balanced to some extent by the removal of ventilation plant from the fourth floor terrace. The proposed frosted film to be applied to the interior is not considered to be harmful as it is reversible, however we do consider a more appropriate tone could be chosen to mimic the finish of the glazing, reducing the film's visibility from the exterior of the building.

The Society welcomes the holistic approach that has been taken to the refurbishment of this significant post-war building. We would like to emphasise the importance of perfecting small details that will have a great cumulative impact when later applied across the whole scheme. The detailing to Lasdun's design appears simplistic, but particular attention is required to ensure that impact of uniformity for a building of this scale is maintained.

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

Yours sincerely,



Grace Etherington

Caseworker

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.