

Heritage Statement

Roof Level Research Block Building, External Plant Replacement
for SOAS, University of London WC1H 0XG

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Heritage Statement

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Heritage Statement

Roof Level Research Block Building, External Plant Replacement, Bloomsbury

1.00 Introduction

This Heritage Statement has been prepared in support of a listed building consent and planning application submitted by Kendall Kingscott Limited on behalf of the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London. This statement relates specifically to the Research Block which is linked to the College Building and the Philips Building, or SOAS Library. Collectively the three buildings are referred to by SOAS as the main building.

The address of the Research Block is SOAS, University of London, Thornhaugh Street, London WC1H 0XG.

This statement has been 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 Guidance Historic environment good practice advice in relation to assess the impact of the proposed works on both College Building and the Philips Building, given their respective links to the Research Block.

The purpose of this statement is to provide sufficient information and reasoned 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 to the application and proposed works.



Research Block - North East Elevation

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2.00 Site Description

SOAS is a Higher Education institution specialising in the study of Asia, Africa and the Near and Middle East. It was founded as the School of Oriental Studies and received its Royal Charter in 1916.

This Statement relates to the Research Block at the centre of the SOAS Campus in Bloomsbury.

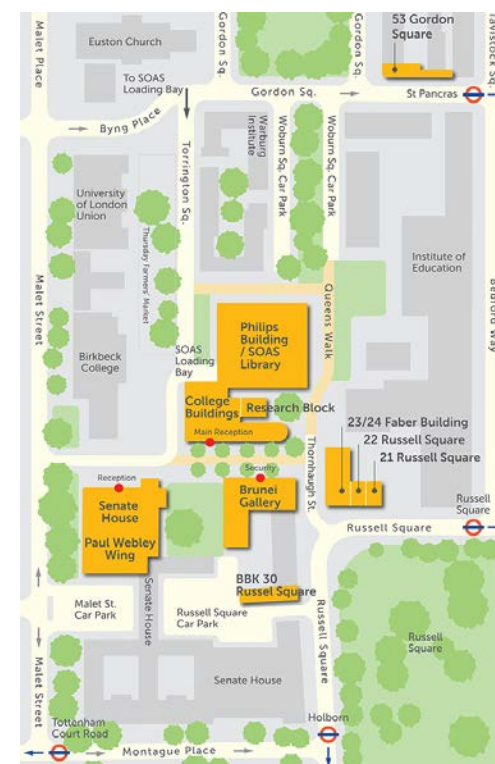
The address is:

SOAS University of London
10 Thornhaugh Street
Russell Square
London
WC1H 0XG.

The Research Block forms part of the SOAS Campus and houses teaching and administration space for SOAS on all floors. It is a steel framed structure with aluminium cladding panels on its flank walls to the north west and south east elevations and glazing to the main north east elevation. It was constructed around 2005, with minor alterations to the external access arrangements and boundary wall treatment carried out in 2015. Access to the Block is via internal link routes only.

The Research Block contains five storeys including a lower ground floor and an external roof terrace at fourth floor level, with level access from the corridor and lifts. The Block is linked via an internal corridor to the College Buildings on the south west side and via linkways to the Philips Building on the north

east side at all floor levels. The Philips Building provides library facilities and office accommodation for the students and staff, while the College Buildings house the main entrance and provide access to the rest of the facilities in the Philips Building and the Research Block, including the Students' Union. Together they form the main SOAS site at Thornhaugh Street.

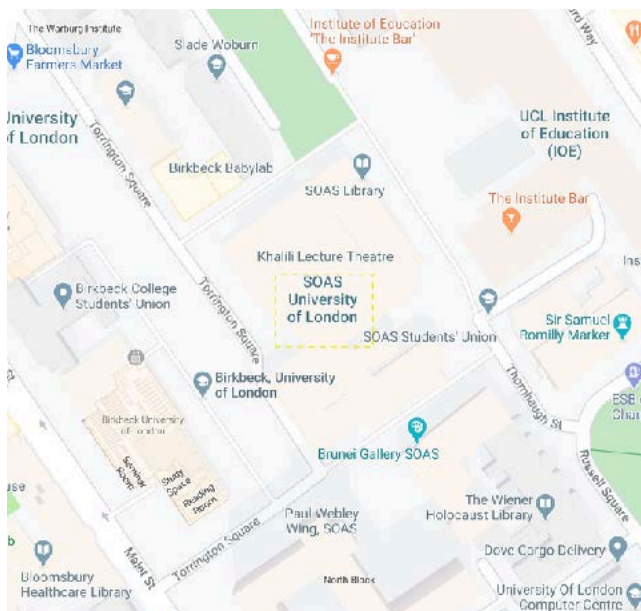


SOAS Campus Map

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The buildings are located in the London Borough of Camden within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area Sub Area 3: University of London/British Museum¹. The Research Block is not locally listed. The site is flanked to the West and South East by Torrington Square; to the North lies Woburn Square Garden and buildings including the Thomas Coram Research Institute. To the East lies Thornhaugh Street, with the UCL Institute of Education opposite.



Google Location Map

3.00 The Adjoining Buildings - Heritage and Listing

Below are extracts taken from the SOAS' website²:

The School of Oriental Studies was founded on 5 June 1916 when it received its Royal Charter as a college of the University of London. The School opened its doors to students at the beginning of 1917. It admitted its first students on 18 January 1917. The School was formally inaugurated a month later on 23 February 1917 by King George V.

The Royal Charter gave the School a unique mission and a dual obligation – to advance academic knowledge of Asia and to impart instruction of a practical nature, providing the University of London with a rival to the famous Oriental schools of Berlin, Petrograd and Paris. The School immediately became integral in training British administrators and colonial officials for overseas postings across the British Empire.

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.

The next impetus to the School's growth came during the Directorship (1957-76) of Professor Sir Cyril Philips.

By the 1970s the School had outgrown its premises and was becoming scattered over several sites. In 1973, the opening of the Library building (now the Philips Building) brought most activities back to Russell Square, and

¹ <https://www.camden.gov.uk/documents/20142/7239578/Bloomsbury+CA+Sub+Area3+Townscape.pdf/059ed81f-26f5-83ff-64ed-bfffa959fca9>

² <https://www.soas.ac.uk/centenary/the-soas-story/>

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provided the Library with facilities appropriate to the international importance of the collection and to growing student numbers. The building was designed by eminent architect Denys Lasdun, who also designed the brutalist Institute of Education and the National Theatre on the South Bank.

The School added 'African' to its name in 1938, and moved to its building (College Building) at Russell Square between 1941 and 1946.



Aerial view of site

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3.01 Philips Building

Building Elements:

In-situ concrete frame with pre-cast concrete panels, eight 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

Refer to **Appendix A** for the Building's Listing Description and Map. Some of the reasons for its listed status are cited as follows: *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.*



Philips Building

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3.02 College Buildings

Building Elements:

Brown brick with Portland stone dressings. five storeys and basements

Ownership: SOAS, University of London

Architect: Charles Holden (c. 1939-45)

Designation: Grade II

Date of listing: 28th-March-1969

Use:

SOAS Library, academic offices, teaching facilities and Students' Union.

Refer to **Appendix A** for the Building's Listing Description and Map. It states that this building is listed *for its special architectural or historic interest*.



College Buildings

4.00 Research Block

4.01 Planning History

A planning application was submitted on 27-07-1999 by John McAslan and Partners, Application Number PS9804730, with Permission granted subject to Section 106 dated 10-07-2000, for the following works: .

The erection of two new teaching / administration blocks, one on the west side of the Philips Building and one on the east side, between the Philips building and the original Building, together with associated landscaping works; the formation of a new library entrance to the Philips Building; the glazing over of the basement well of the original building; the reinstatement, to grade, of the service/access road on the east side of Torrington Square; alterations to the eastern side of Torrington Square associated with the reconstruction of the roadway.

Subsequently a further planning application was submitted on 28-11-2000 by John McAslan and Partners, Application Number PSX0004813, with permission granted subject to a Section 106 Legal Agreement on 15-09-2004, for the following works:

Amendments to the planning permission P9804730/R2 for the erection of the East Wing granted on the 10th July 2000 to bring it into alignment with the Philips Building.

It is understood that the building was constructed by Mansell under a Design and Build contract around 2005.

Subsequently a planning application was submitted on 24-06-2005 by AHP Architects, Application Number 2005/2222/P, with Permission granted on 10-08-2005, for the following works:

Minor external alterations to university building (Class D1) including installation of an additional external condenser unit at roof level and replacement of glass with fixed louvre panel at second floor level (inner elevation) of east block.

The existing heat pump and ventilation systems were installed in 2009.

A further application submitted by Kendall Kingscott Ltd received listed building consent, Application Number 2015/1294/L on 2 June 2015 for the following works:

External alterations to the eastern elevation including the removal of ramp to eastern elevation at ground floor level and associated rebuilding of missing section of brick boundary wall, installation of new security fencing and gates, and alteration to existing metal window at lower ground level to form a door.

Refer to **Appendix B** for the Research Block's planning history.

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4.02 Heritage Contribution

The Research Block sits between the Philips and College Buildings, and is linked to both internally. It is of steel frame structure with rendered blockwork lift towers, aluminium cladding panels on the flank elevations and a fully glazed main elevation facing onto Queen's Walk. Windows between the East Wing lift towers and College Building were intended to provide separation between the East wing and the existing structure.

The listing description for the Philips Building makes reference to:

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.*

On account of the Research Block's proximity to these listed buildings, a listed building consent as well as a planning application has been submitted, in support of which this Heritage Statement has been drawn up.

Historic England's website states the following:

In general, a structure attached to a building, such as adjoining buildings or walls, will also be covered by the listing if the structure was ancillary to the principal building at the date of listing (or possibly 1 January 1969 for buildings listed before that date).³

The Research Block was constructed in 2005, before the listing date of 2011 for the Philips Building.

The Research Block, along with the adjoining buildings, sits within a Conservation Area. The London Borough of Camden's website states: *If you want to make alterations to, or demolish, a property in a conservation area, you will typically need planning permission first.*

It goes on to state: *You will need to apply for full planning permission to install, alter, replace or re-locate any plant, air conditioning, ventilation or extraction equipment where any part of the equipment will be fixed to the outside of the property.*

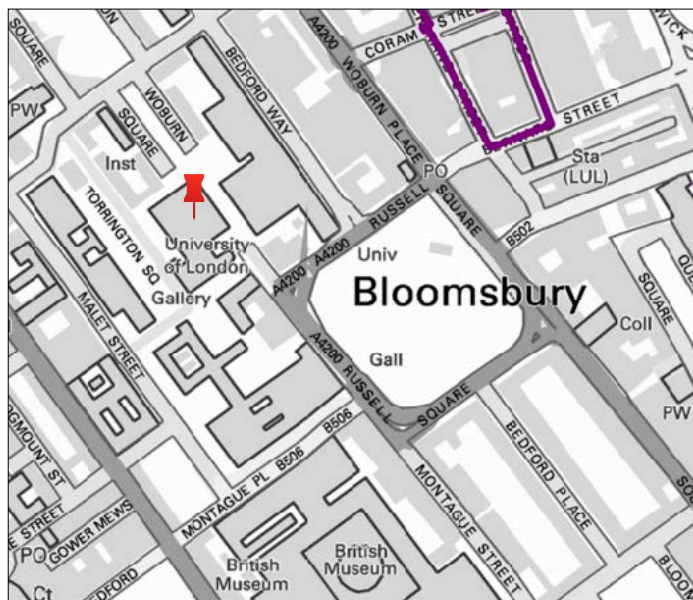
If the property is a listed building (or part of a listed building) and the equipment will be fixed to either the internal or external walls, you will also need to apply for listed building consent.

³ <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/hpg/has/listed-buildings>

5.00 Bloomsbury Conservation Area

The Philips Building does not feature on English Heritage's Heritage at Risk Register. However, advice noted within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy, 2011 has been taken into consideration in the design solution for this project.

The SOAS campus lies within the London Borough of Camden Bloomsbury Conservation Area Sub Area 3: University of London/British Museum. The Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy adopted 18 April 2011 includes the following character analysis and makes specific reference to the Research Block, although the Block is not listed:



Site location within Bloomsbury Conservation Area

The School of African and Oriental Studies (SOAS) building addresses Torrington Square and the wide east-west, tree-lined thoroughfare which links Malet Street to Thornhaugh Street. The original building was designed in the late 1930s by Charles Holden as a continuation of his work for the university; however World War II interrupted construction so it was not completed until the 1950s. The SOAS building is grade II listed and forms the northern frontage to the thoroughfare together with the southern end of the Birkbeck College. They share a palette of materials (pale red brick with stone banding), together with building heights and the rhythm of vertically proportioned windows. The curved semi-circular east end of the block, which signals the entrance to the university precinct from Thornhaugh Street, is a distinct streamlined feature reminiscent of the architecture of Holden's famous London Underground stations. A lightweight infill extension was successfully inserted in the early 21st century to the immediate north of this wing, designed by John McAslan and Partners. The northern side of Senate House forms the southern edge of this route and is of similar scale and height.

The Bloomsbury conservation area appraisal and management strategy defines and analyses what makes the Bloomsbury conservation area 'special' and was officially adopted in 2011. The document provides important information to local residents, community groups, businesses, property owners, architects and developers about the types of alterations and development that are likely to be acceptable or unacceptable within the conservation area.

In relation to the maintenance and repair of listed buildings section of the strategy report, it is considered that the the refurbishment works proposed are the minimum needed to meet the School's needs, whilst preserving the important historic nature of the Property and the architectural features contained within. Internal works are proposed at roof level with the minimum amount of work to supply cooling and fresh air to the occupants of the Research Block. External works proposed are to the roof level of the Research Block only and and to a chilled pipework connection from the Philips Building at lower ground floor level. Therefore it is not considered that these works will cause harm to the setting of either of the the listed buildings or cause harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

6.00 Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 5

Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 5: Planning for the Historic Environment was published in March 2010 by the Department for Communities and Local Government. The document sets out the Government's over arching objective that *the historic environment and its heritage assets should be conserved and enjoyed for the quality of the life they bring to this and future generations*" (DCLG, 2010).

The document further encourages delivery of *sustainable development by ensuring that policies and decisions concerning the historic environment recognise that intelligently managed change may sometimes be necessary if heritage assets are to be maintained for the long term.*

As part of formulating this Heritage Statement, guidance has been obtained from PPS 5 and PPS5 Planning for the Historic Environment: Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide as produced by Historic England. Further to this in 2015 Historic England issued the following guidance:

Good Practice Advice Note1: The Historic Environment in Local Plans.

Good Practice Advice Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment.²

Good Practice Advice Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets.⁴

Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment states in its section on Design and local distinctiveness:

⁴ The Setting of Heritage Assets Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition)

The NPPF (section 7) and PPG J (section ID26) contain detail on why good design is important and how it can be achieved. In terms of the historic environment, some or all of the following factors may influence what will make the scale, height, massing, alignment, materials and proposed use of new development successful in its context:

Views into, through and from the site and its surroundings

The current and historic uses in the area and the urban grain.⁵

The Setting of Heritage Assets states:

The extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to visual considerations. Although views of or from an asset will play an important part, the way in which we experience an asset in its setting is also influenced by other environmental factors such as noise, dust and vibration from other land uses in the vicinity, and by our understanding of the historic relationship between places. For example, buildings that are in close proximity but are not visible from each other may have a historic or aesthetic connection that amplifies the experience of the significance of each.

The advice contained within these key documents has been taken into consideration in the development of a design solution for this project which seeks to upgrade existing conditions for the building's occupants, while preserving features considered to be architecturally significant and historically important.

⁵ <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa2-managing-significance-in-decision-taking/gpa2/>

⁶ <https://www.camden.gov.uk/documents/20142/2247044/Local+area+requirements+for+planning+applications+July+2018.pdf/aae40604-02b3-9cec-a7d0-799b86ba1d00>

7.00 Camden Local Plan 2016 - 2031

The London Borough of Camden's Local Area Requirements for Planning Applications (2018)⁶ state that where a development may give rise to noise, including plant, ventilation, air extraction or conditioning near a "noise sensitive use" (which) may include housing, schools/libraries, hospitals, offices, workshops, laboratories, hotels and open spaces, then an Acoustic Report should be provided in support of the planning application.

Policy Drivers are listed as:

National Planning Policy Framework;

Camden Local Plan Policies A1, and A4;

Relevant Neighbourhood Plans;

Appendix 3 of the Local Plan and Camden Planning Guidance on Amenity.

Guidance cited in Appendix 3 - Proposed Developments likely to be Sensitive to Noise.

Policy A4 Noise and vibration of the Camden Local Plan 2017 states that:

The Council will seek to ensure that noise and vibration is controlled and managed.

Development should have regard to Camden's Noise and Vibration Thresholds (Appendix 3). We will not grant planning permission for:

a. development likely to generate unacceptable noise and vibration impacts; or

b. development sensitive to noise in locations which experience high levels of noise, unless appropriate attenuation measures can be provided and will not harm the continued operation of existing uses.

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We will only grant permission for noise generating development, including any plant and machinery, if it can be operated without causing harm to amenity. We will also seek to minimise the impact on local amenity from deliveries and from the demolition and construction phases of development.

An acoustic report forms part of the supporting documentation for this planning application, and the suggested mitigation measures which have regard for the sensitive setting of the installation have been integrated into the proposed scheme.

8.00 Proposed Works

There has been a recent increase in student numbers at SOAS with consequent demands on teaching space. The rooms on Ground and Second Floors of the Research Block, RG01 and R201 are now in use as classrooms with increased occupancy and therefore demands on ventilation and cooling have increased.

Our proposal is to replace the four existing roof mounted VRV condensing units with a single air cooled chiller unit and roof mounted air handling unit. Associated intake and extract ductwork is proposed to be installed externally through the parapet wall, dropping to the lower fourth floor level external roof terrace. It will then be routed through a new opening formed in the roof terrace into a new fire rated vertical riser which will serve each floor of the Research Block. It will then be distributed horizontally through the ceiling voids to new intake and extract vents sited within the new suspended ceiling in each of the rooms.

The existing louvres on the flank walls will be left in place and the openings sealed internally. This will limit the amount of external work being carried out to roof level and to a small area of hard landscaping in the lower ground floor level lightwell area adjacent to the Philips Building for the proposed chiller unit pipework route. Here a route for the pipework has been identified which will run below the existing hard landscaping in the lightwell, rising to connect to the existing louvre in the Philips Building behind the staircase.

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A Noise Impact Assessment has been carried out to support this Application, and noise mitigation using acoustic screening is incorporated within the design. The recommendation within the Assessment states:

The suggested mitigation measure is the introduction of a suitable noise mitigation scheme by means of attenuators installed on the AHU fresh air in and discharge;

In addition, an open top screen should surround the chiller with a minimum height of 200mm above the unit.

The location of the proposed acoustic screening is shown on the proposed plan and elevations. Suitable structural support will form part of the installation.



Example of acoustic screen

There will be a very limited reduction of amenity space on the external roof terrace but our proposal will not impact on its current use. The external hard landscaping at lower ground floor level is used for access only, and likewise our proposal will not affect this.

9.00 Works Impact and Justification for the Proposal

The proposed works will require access to the roof level. It is envisaged that heavier items of plant including the four existing VRV condensing units be disconnected and removed from the roof using crane access from the service road loading bay to the west or potentially from either the east parking bay / grassed area or the pedestrian walkway to the south between the College and Brunei Buildings, all of which are accessible from Thornhaugh Street. The replacement plant will similarly be delivered to site using crane access.

Refrigerant gas will be removed and recovered prior to the removal of the VRV condensing units from site. Some associated structural works will be required to accommodate the weight of the proposed air handling unit and replacement single chiller unit, as well as support and restraint for the proposed acoustic screen weight and wind loadings.

Flow and return chilled water pipework will be routed through the internal pump room on the upper roof at fifth floor level and will then run internally through an existing riser cupboard route sited within the Research Block. New fire rated access doors will be required at each floor level for maintenance of the pipework. The pipework penetrations and riser cupboard alterations will be fire rated to meet fire compartmentation requirements.

A new opening will be required through the parapet wall of the upper roof to accommodate the proposed ductwork drops.

It is intended that the lifts in the Philips Building be used for site personnel access and for delivery of materials before 09.00 am daily to avoid the periods of high demand.

Works are anticipated to start on site in September 2020. The anticipated programme is 4 weeks.

Refer to **Appendix B** of the Design and Access Statement for a detailed outline of the works proposed and the rationale behind them.

10.00 Sustainability

The principal driver behind this proposal has been the increase in class size within the teaching spaces. The proposed installation will replace a number of smaller, less efficient items of plant and consolidate into a system that although larger will require less maintenance and fewer parts.

The replacement of the individual air conditioning units and full Building Management System control will ensure that there is no simultaneous heating and cooling taking place.

From a heritage perspective, the new cooling plant has been sized to ensure the system is futureproofed, avoiding the need to install additional plant on the roof of the Philips Building.

The centralisation of cooling plant into a chilled water system supports the wider Bloomsbury Heat and Power scheme as the replacement system aims to be zero carbon through the use of heat recovery and heat pumps which can provide heating and cooling simultaneously.

The centralisation of cooling will also allow SOAS to more easily employ and insert new technologies as they emerge in the future.

Finally the proposed plant will consolidate the refrigerants into one system which will be easier to manage in terms of leak control and maintenance.

11.00 Summary and Conclusion

Throughout the design process every effort has been made to consider the impact of the proposal and balance this against the comfort and wellbeing of both students and staff as well as the teaching and administrative requirements of SOAS.

SOAS has engaged the services of three design consultants to design and manage the works. Kendall Kingscott Limited was appointed to deliver Architectural Design Services and Project Management of the works. Hitek was appointed to deliver Mechanical & Electrical Design Services with ongoing site visits and consultation throughout the works. Structural Design Studio has been appointed to provide associated structural services. An Acoustic Consultant has carried out a background noise survey and made recommendations on noise mitigation measures which have been incorporated within the proposed scheme.

A key principle emphasised by SOAS relates to the sustainability of any future works as it has pledged to become a carbon neutral entity by 2030. To this end, in accordance with Camden's approach towards sustainable development within the borough (set out within Policies CS13 and DP22 in Camden Development Policies) the proposed works 'include measures to minimise the effects of, and adapt to, climate change' through mechanical and electrical design.

This proposal responds in an effective way to SOAS' curriculum needs as well as the comfort and wellbeing of both students and staff.

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Throughout the design process every effort has been made to reach developed proposals which not only meet the client's usage requirements but also respect the original features of both the College Buildings and the Philips Building, while respecting the contribution that the Research Block makes to the elevation. The works are intended to rationalise the existing plant installation and improve occupants' comfort and wellbeing, and are not considered to have a detrimental effect on either the Research Block or its adjoining listed structures.

It is hoped this design approach, the information contained within this statement and coupled with the supporting documentation will serve to uphold the validity of our application for Listed Building Consent.

Should any further information be required or a site visit become necessary please contact our offices via email or phone as below.

Mary Moran - Senior Building Surveyor

mary.moran@kendallkingscott.co.uk / 020 8943 5300 / 07384 795841

Appendix A: Listed Building Status



SCHOOL OF ORIENTAL AND AFRICAN STUDIES (UNIVERSITY OF LONDON)

Overview

Heritage Category:

Listed Building

Grade:

II

List Entry Number:

1379007

Date first listed:

28-Mar-1969

Statutory Address:

SCHOOL OF ORIENTAL AND AFRICAN STUDIES (UNIVERSITY OF LONDON), THORNHAUGH STREET

Map

Ordnance survey map of SCHOOL OF ORIENTAL AND AFRICAN STUDIES (UNIVERSITY OF LONDON)

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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.

This copy shows the entry on 20-Mar-2020 at 14:51:17.

Location

Statutory Address:

SCHOOL OF ORIENTAL AND AFRICAN STUDIES (UNIVERSITY OF LONDON), THORNHAUGH STREET

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

County:

Greater London Authority

District:

Camden (London Borough)

National Grid Reference:

TQ 29900 82009

Details

CAMDEN

TQ2982SE THORNHAUGH STREET 798-1/94/1631 (West side) 28/03/69 School of Oriental and African Studies (University of London)

II

University school. c1939-5. By Charles Holden. Brown brick with Portland stone dressings. 5 storeys and basements (4th floor set back). Main south front with 17 windows and curved corner bay (5 windows) treatment at east end. Single storey, 2 window projection at east end. Central entrance with plain stone surround and plaque with name of school over. Flush frame metal windows with horizontally set panes. Stone band and sill string at 1st floor level, echoed by dressing to parapet above 3rd floor. Cartouche with coat of arms centrally at 2nd floor level. Lead rainwater heads and pipes, dated 1940. INTERIOR: not inspected.

Listing NGR: TQ2990082009

Legacy

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System number:

478371

Legacy System:

LBS

Legal

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

End of official listing

Images of England

Images of England was a photographic record of every listed building in England, created as a snap shot of listed buildings at the turn

of the millennium. These photographs of the exterior of listed buildings were taken by volunteers between 1999 and 2008. The project was supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Date: 01 Jul 2007

Reference: IOE01/16624/12

Rights: Copyright IoE Mr Anthony Rau. Source Historic England Archive

Archive image, may not represent current condition of site.



Modern Ordnance Survey mapping: © Crown Copyright and database right 2018. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100024900.

This is an A4 sized map and should be printed full size at A4 with no page scaling set.

Name: SCHOOL OF ORIENTAL AND AFRICAN STUDIES (UNIVERSITY OF LONDON)

Heritage Category:

Listing

List Entry No :

1379007

Grade:

II

County: Greater London Authority

District: Camden

Parish: Non Civil Parish

For all entries pre-dating 4 April 2011 maps and national grid references do not form part of the official record of a listed building. In such cases the map here and the national grid reference are generated from the list entry in the official record and added later to aid identification of the principal listed building or buildings.

For all list entries made on or after 4 April 2011 the map here and the national grid reference do form part of the official record. In such cases the map and the national grid reference are to aid identification of the principal listed building or buildings only and must be read in conjunction with other information in the record.

Any object or structure fixed to the principal building or buildings and any object or structure within the curtilage of the building, which, although not fixed to the building, forms part of the land and has done so since before 1st July, 1948 is by law to be treated as part of the listed building.

This map was delivered electronically and when printed may not be to scale and may be subject to distortions.

List Entry NGR:

TQ 29900 82009

Map Scale:

1:2500

Print Date:

20 March 2020



Historic England

HistoricEngland.org.uk



Philips Building, School of Oriental and African Studies

Overview

Heritage Category:

Listed Building

Grade:

II*

List Entry Number:

1401342

Date first listed:

20-May-2011

Statutory Address:

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

Map

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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**

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.

This copy shows the entry on 20-Mar-2020 at 14:53:41.

Location

Statutory Address:

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

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

County:

Greater London Authority

District:

Camden (London Borough)

Parish:
Non Civil Parish

National Grid Reference:
TQ2988582061

Summary

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.

Sources

None.

Legal

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

End of official listing

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This is an A4 sized map and should be printed full size at A4 with no page scaling set.

Name: Philips Building, School of Oriental and African Studies

Heritage Category:

Listing

List Entry No :

1401342

Grade:

II*

County: Greater London Authority

District: Camden

Parish: Non Civil Parish

For all entries pre-dating 4 April 2011 maps and national grid references do not form part of the official record of a listed building. In such cases the map here and the national grid reference are generated from the list entry in the official record and added later to aid identification of the principal listed building or buildings.

For all list entries made on or after 4 April 2011 the map here and the national grid reference do form part of the official record. In such cases the map and the national grid reference are to aid identification of the principal listed building or buildings only and must be read in conjunction with other information in the record.

Any object or structure fixed to the principal building or buildings and any object or structure within the curtilage of the building, which, although not fixed to the building, forms part of the land and has done so since before 1st July, 1948 is by law to be treated as part of the listed building.

This map was delivered electronically and when printed may not be to scale and may be subject to distortions.

List Entry NGR:

TQ2988582061

Map Scale:

1:1250

Print Date:

20 March 2020



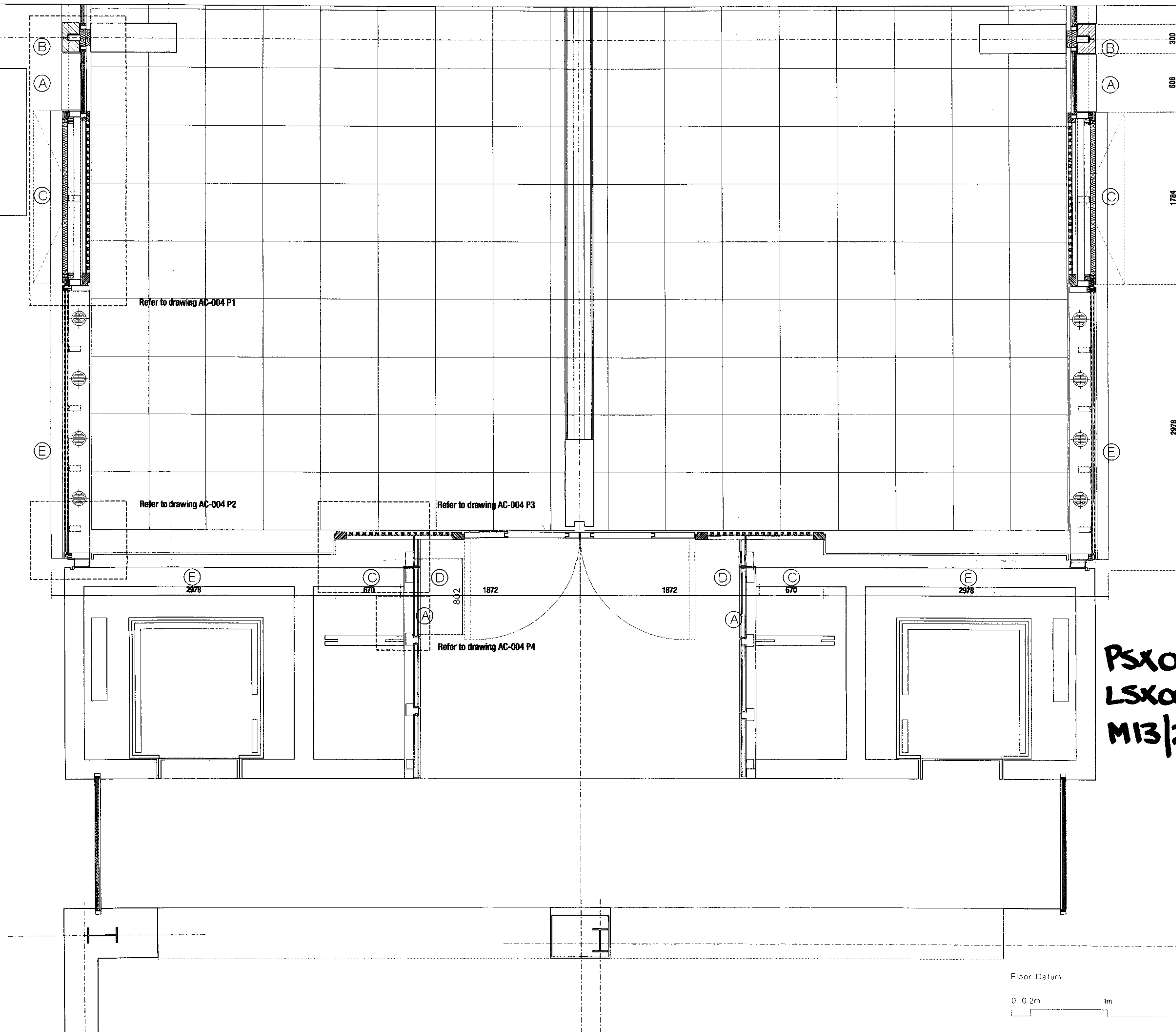
Historic England

HistoricEngland.org.uk

Appendix B: Previous Planning Applications

KEY

- A External Double Glazed Screens
Clause H11/140
- B Pre Cast Concrete Nosing
As Clause H11/110 (Accessories 3)
- C Projecting Top Hung Ventilators
As Clause H11/130
- D Fixed Panel Ventilator
As Clause H11/130
- E Double Glazed Curtain Walling System
As Clause H11/110



PSX0004813
LSX0004814
M13/24X/E

Floor Datum:

0 0.2m 1m 2m



Revisions	Date	Description
Rev. A	13.09.2000	VE Revisions Lift layout.

Drawn
JAG

Checked
AH

NOTE

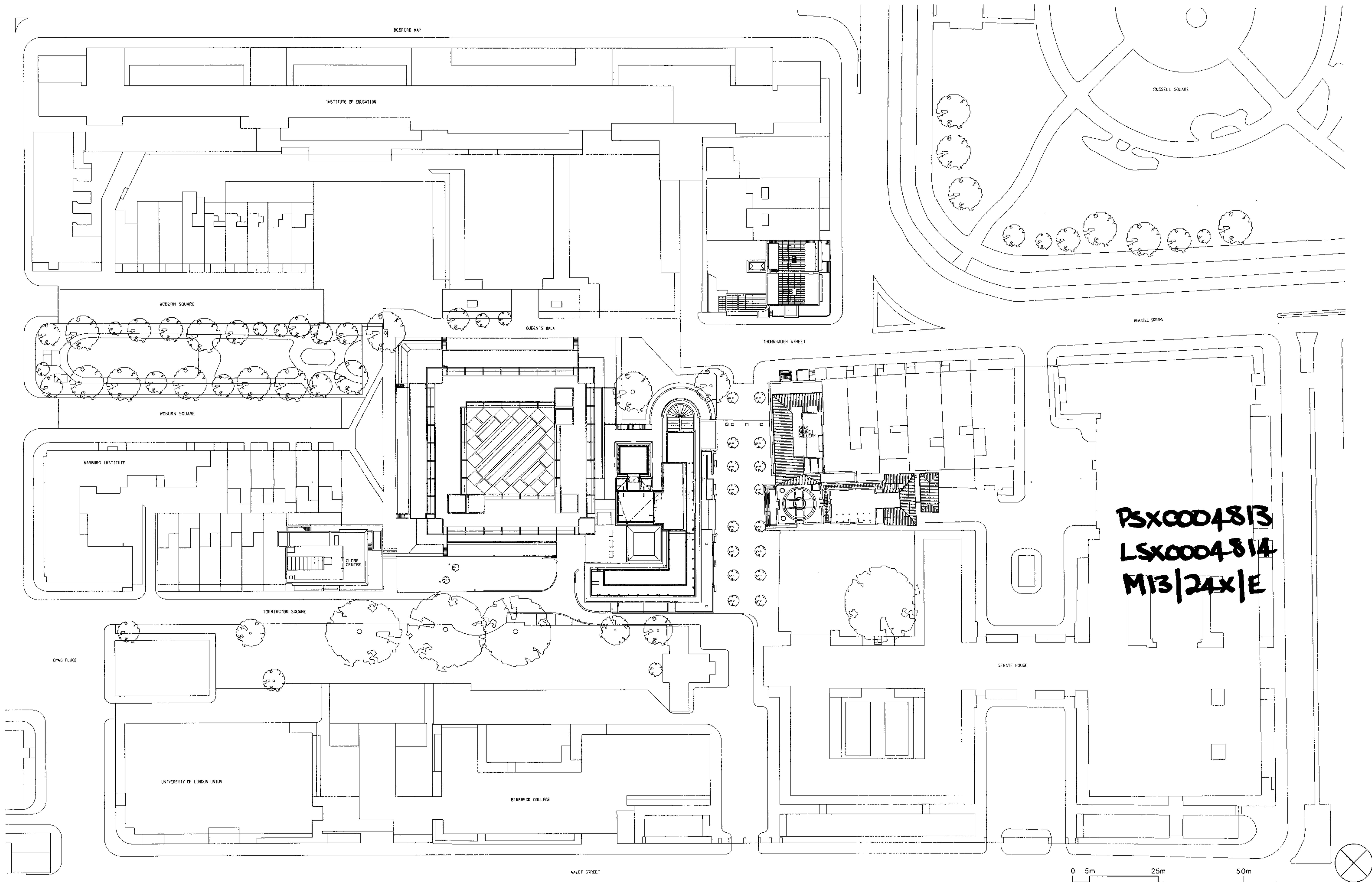
This drawing does not show the entire building.
Refer to drawing AA-142.

School of Oriental & African Studies - East Wing
External Cladding Setting Out Plan

scale	1:20	at A1	job no.	771
date	13.09.2000	drawing by	AD	
drawing status	Planning	checked by	AH	
drawing no.	AA-015	revision	A	

John McAslan + Partners

200 Kensington Church St
London W8 4HP
Telephone: 020 7727 2863
Facsimile: 020 7221 8628
email: j.mcaslan@mcaslan.co.uk
www.mcaslan.co.uk



PSX0004813
LSX0004814
M13/24x/E

<div>Do not scale from this drawing.</div> <div>All dimensions are to be checked on site and any discrepancies must be notified to the architect.</div> <div>It is the user's responsibility to ensure that the drawing is used for the intended purpose.</div>	Revisions		Drawn	Checked				School of Oriental & African Studies - East Wing		<div>John McAslan + Partners</div> <div>202 Kensington Church St</div> <div>London W8 4BP</div> <div>Telephone: 020 7227 2663</div> <div>Facsimile: 020 7221 8500</div> <div>email: jmc@mcaslan.co.uk</div> <div>www.mcaslan.co.uk</div>					
	Rev.	Date						Description	scale		1:500 at A1	job no.	771		
	A	13.09.00						General Revisions. Lifts-Toilets-Staircase layouts.	JAG		AH	date	13.09.2000	drawing by	PW
												drawing status	Planning	checked by	AH
												drawing no.	AL-100	revision	A
Floor Datum:															

Floor Datum:

Section 3-3'
AL-122

Section 3-3'
AL-122

PSX0004813
LSX0004814
M13/24X/E

0 1m 5m 10m



Do not scale from this drawing.
All dimensions are to be checked on site and are
not to be used for construction purposes.
For further information see Contract Documents.

Revisions		Drawn	Checked
Rev.	Date		
A	22.03.2000	PW	AH
B	13.09.2000	JAG	AH

School of Oriental & African Studies - East Wing
Lower Ground Floor Plan

scale: 1:100 at A1 job no. 771
date: 13.09.2000 drawing by: PW
drawing status: Planning checked by: AH
drawing no. AL-102 revision: B

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Section 3-3'
AL-122

Section 3-3'
AL-122

PSX0004813
LSX0004814
M13/24X/E

Floor Datum: 30.280m

0 1m 5m 10m



Revisions

Rev.	Date	Description
A	22.03.2000	General revisions. External door to well added.
B	13.09.2000	VE revisions. Lift layouts. WC layout.

Drawn
PW
JAG

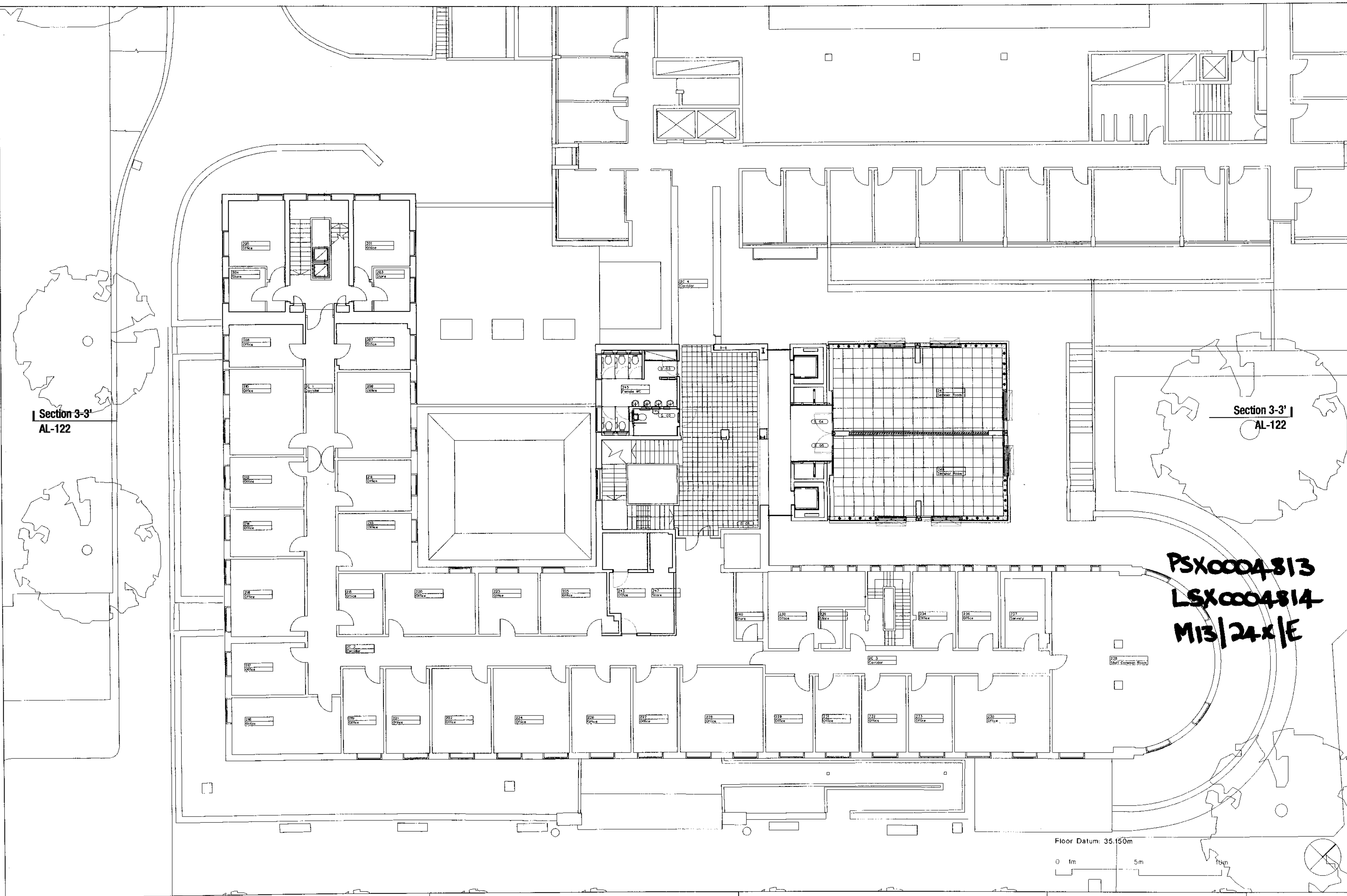
Checked
AH
AH

School of Oriental & African Studies - East Wing
First Floor Plan

scale	1:100 at A1	job no.	771
date	13.09.2000	drawing by	AMD
drawing status	Planning	checked by	AH
drawing no.	AL-104	revision	B

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Section 3-3'
AL-122

Section 3-3'
AL-122

PSX0004813
LSX0004814
M13/24x/E

Floor Datum: 35.150m

0 1m 5m 10m

Revisions	
Rev.	Date
A	22.03.2000
B	13.09.2000

Description
General revisions. External door to well
VE revisions. Lift layouts. WC layout.

Drawn
PW
JAG

Checked
AH
AH

School of Oriental & African Studies - East Wing
Second Floor Plan

scale	1:100 at A1	job no.	771
date	13.09.2000	drawn by	AD
drawing status	Planning	checked by	AH
drawing no.	AL-106	revision	B

John McAslan + Partners

200 Kensington Church St
London W8 4EP
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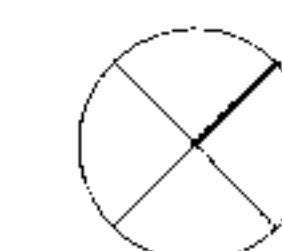
Section 3-3'
AL-122

Section 3-3'
AL-122

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LSX6004814
M13/24X/E

Floor Datum: 38.955m

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Revisions		Description	Drawn	Checked
Rev.	Date			
A	22.03.2000	General revisions. External door to well added.	PW	AH
B	13.09.2000	VE revisions. Lifts layouts. WC layout.	JAG	AH

School of Oriental & African Studies - East Wing
Third Floor Plan

scale	1:100 at A1	job no.	771
date	13.09.2000	drawing by	AMD
drawing status	Planning	checked by	AH
drawing no.	AL-107	revision	B

John McAslan + Partners

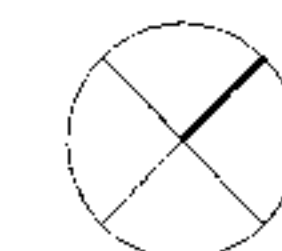
202 Kensington Church St
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www.mcaslan.co.uk

Section 3-3'
AL-122

Section 3-3'
AL-122

PSX0004813
LSX0004814
M13/24x/E

Floor Datum:
0 1m 5m 10m



Revisions		Description
Rev.	Date	
A	22.03.2000	General revisions.
B	13.09.2000	VE revisions. Lifts layouts. WC layout.

Drawn	Checked
AD	AH
JAG	AH

School of Oriental & African Studies - East Wing Fourth Floor Plan			
scale	1:100 at A1	job no.	771
date	13.09.2000	drawn by	AMD
drawing status	Planning	checked by	AH
drawing no.	AL-108	revised	B

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Section 3-3'
AL-122

Section 4-4'
AL-123

Section 3-3'
AL-122

Section 4-4'
AL-123

PSX0004813
LSX0004814
M13/24X/E

Floor Datum:

0 1m 5m 10m



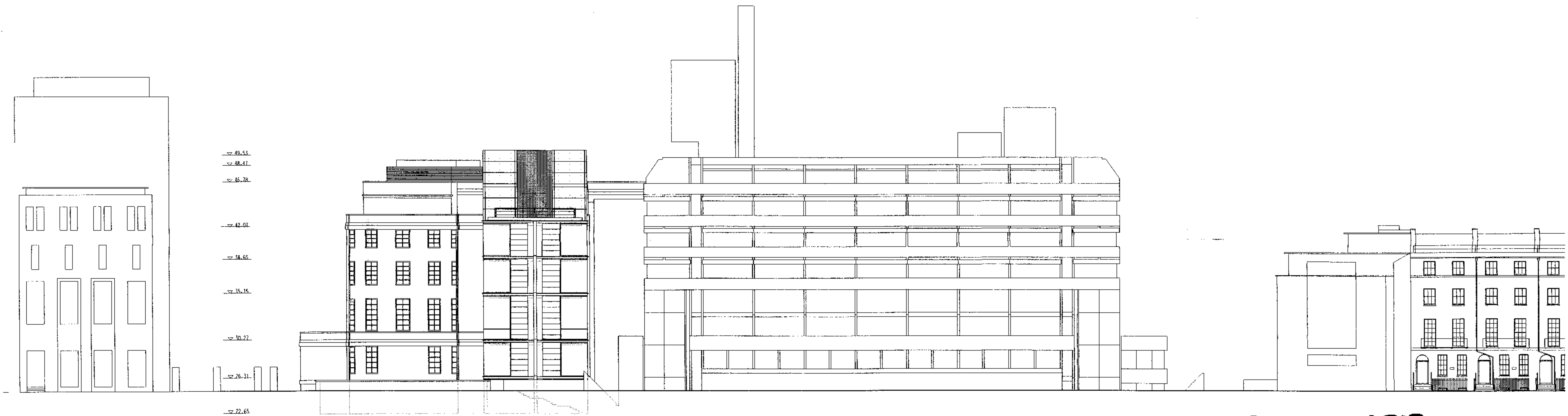
Revisions		Description	Drawn	Checked
Rev.	Date			
A	21.03.2000	Roof plant amended. Lift motor room amended.	AMD	AH
B	15.05.2000	SW Roof plant amended. Enclosure amended.	AMD	AH
C	13.09.2000	Roof plant amended. Lift layouts amended.	JAG	AH

School of Oriental & African Studies - East Wing
Roof Plan

scale	1:100 at A1	job no.	771
date	13.09.2000	drawing by	AMD
drawing status	Planning	checked by	AH
drawing no.	AL-110	revision	C

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PSX0004813
LSX0004814
M13/24x/E

FOR INFORMATION ONLY

0 2m 10m 20m



<div>Do not scale from this drawing. All dimensions are to face unless stated otherwise. All dimensions are to be confirmed with the client. It is the client's responsibility to ensure that the drawing is used for the correct purpose.</div>	Revisions		Drawn	Checked																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																							
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Mr. John Alexander
John Alexander
Kendall Kingscott
Suite 3
Sandford House
1b Claremont Road
Teddington
Surrey
TW11 8DH

Application Ref: **2015/1294/L**

Please ask for: **Victoria Pound**
Telephone: 020 7974 **2659**

2 June 2015

Dear Sir

DECISION

Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Listed Building Consent Granted

Address:

SOAS
10 Thornhaugh Street
London
WC1H 0XG

Proposal:

External alterations to the eastern elevation including the removal of ramp to eastern elevation at ground floor level and associated rebuilding of missing section of brick boundary wall, installation of new security fencing and gates, and alteration to existing metal window at lower ground level to form a door.

Drawing Nos: Site location plan; 140710 L (0)01A; L (0)02 C; L(0)03 B; L(0)04A; L(0)07; heritage statement design and access statement.

The Council has considered your application and decided to grant Listed Building Consent subject to the following conditions:

Conditions And Reasons:

- 1 The works hereby permitted shall be begun not later than the end of three years from the date of this consent.

Reason: In order to comply with the provisions of Section 18 of the Planning (Listed



Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

- 2 All new work and work of making good shall be carried out to match the original work as closely as possible in materials and detailed execution.

Reason: In order to safeguard the special architectural and historic interest of the building in accordance with the requirements of policy CS14 of the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework Core Strategy and policy DP25 of the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework Development Policies.

- 3 The works hereby approved are only those specifically indicated on the drawing(s) referred to above.

Reason: In order to safeguard the special architectural and historic interest of the building in accordance with the requirements of policy CS14 of the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework Core Strategy and policy DP25 of the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework Development Policies.

Informative:

- 1 Reasons for granting listed building consent:

The proposed removal of the non-original escape ramp and rebuilding of the missing section of perimeter wall will improve the building's appearance and setting. Replacing a metal framed window at lower ground level with a single leaf metal framed door will not have a detrimental impact on the building's appearance or character, nor will the installation of taller metal fencing at lower ground level, as this will not be readily visible.

No historic or otherwise significant fabric will be lost or affected by the proposal, and the materials, finish and detailed design of the proposed interventions are considered acceptable. The proposal is therefore considered to preserve the building's character, appearance and special architectural and historic interest.

The site's planning history was taken into account when coming to this decision. No representations were received as a result of consultation.

Special regard has been attached to the desirability of preserving the listed building and its features of special architectural or historic interest, under s.16 of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990 as amended by the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act (ERR) 2013.

As such, the proposal is in general accordance with policy CS14 of the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework Core Strategy, and policy DP25 of the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework Development Policies. The proposed development also accords with policy 7.8 of the London Plan March 2015, consolidated with alterations since 2011, and

paragraphs 14, 17 and 126-141 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

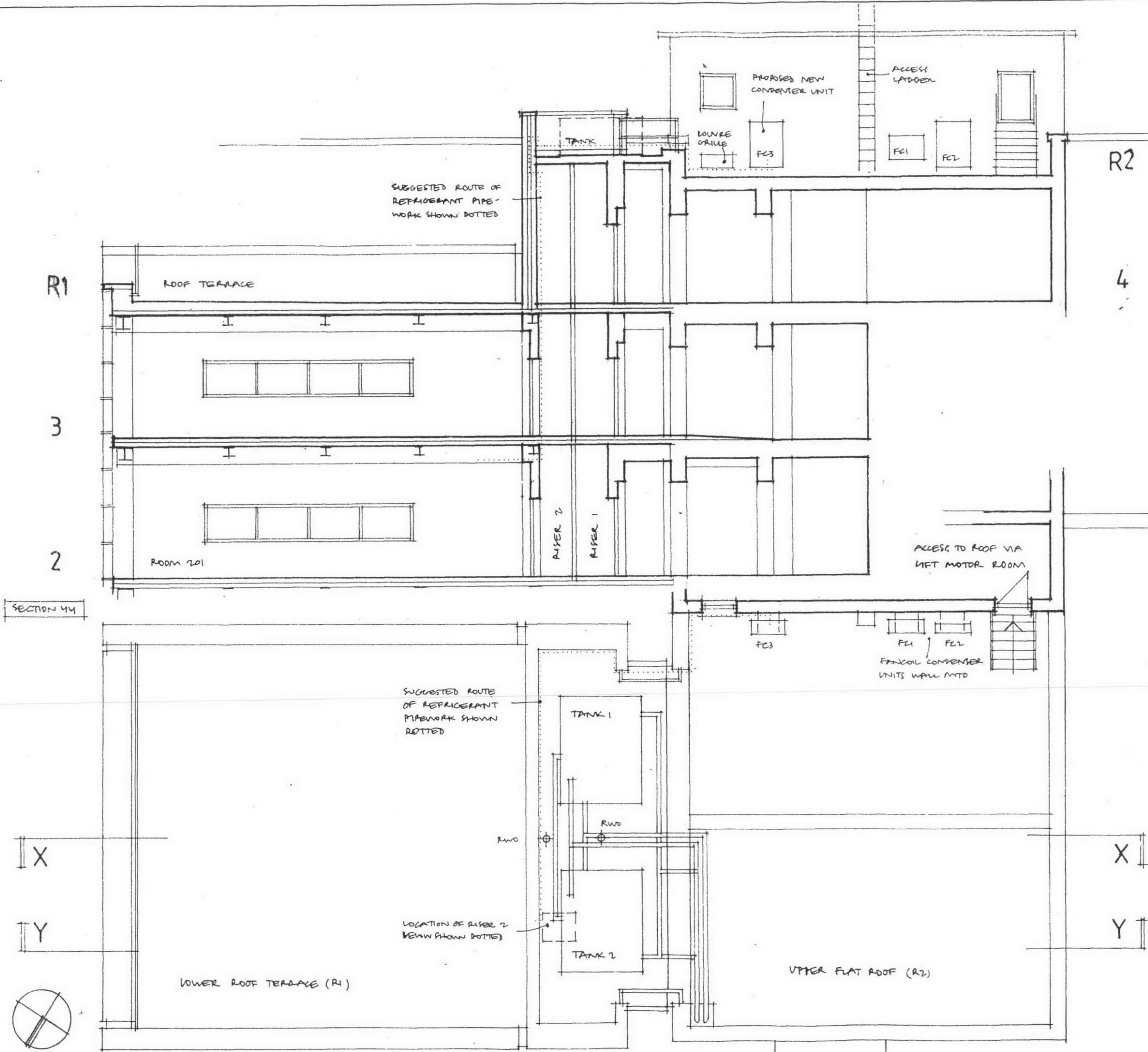
You can find advice about your rights of appeal at:

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/planning/appeals/guidance/guidancecontent>

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ed Watson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Ed Watson
Director of Culture & Environment



R2

4

A/310505: RISER 2, FC3 + ROUTE OF PIPEWORK
revision shown: E PARAPET CORRECTED

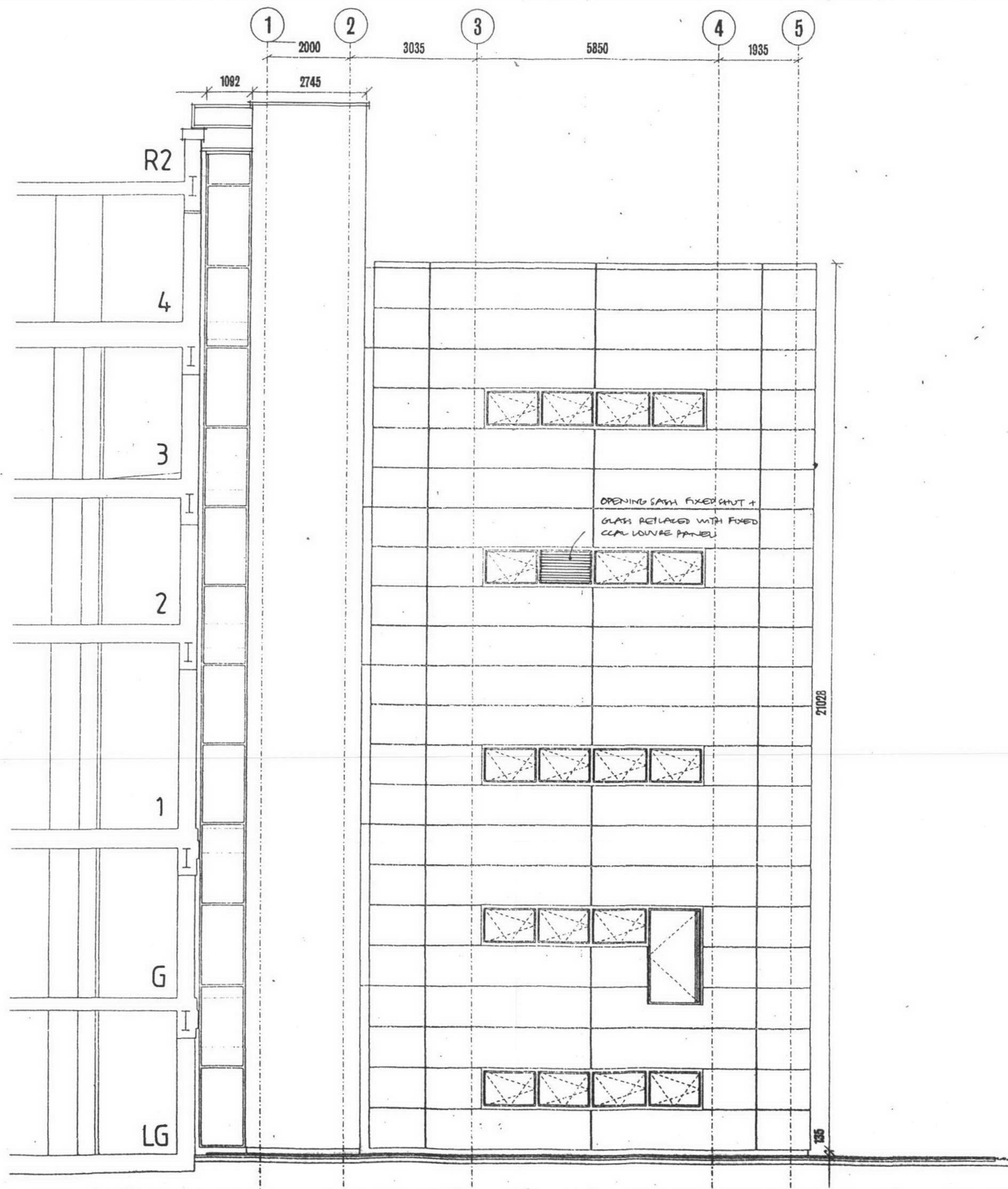
job title
SCHOOL OF ORIENTAL + AFRICAN STUDIES
THORNHAYTH ST, RUSSELL SQ, LONDON WC1
E. BLOCK. PROPOSED FITOUT OF ROOM 201

drawing title
PART ROOF PLAN + SECTION Y-Y
AS PROPOSED

AHP architects
52 LANGHAM ROAD, TEDDINGTON, MIDDLESEX, TW11 9HQ 020-8943 3443

scales	~ 1:100	date	0505	drawn	MY
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job	181	CI/SIB	number	XP3	revision	A
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NOTES

* DRAWING TAKEN FROM JOHN MANSION
+ PARTNER'S DRAWING AL2101D
DATED 10.12.02

A/310505 PARAPET CORRECTED
revision

job title
SCHOOL OF ORIENTAL + AFRICAN STUDIES
THORNHAUGH ST, RUSSELL SQ, LONDON WC1
E BLOCK: PROPOSED FITOUT OF ROOM 201

drawing title
SOUTH EAST ELEVATION OF E BLOCK
AS PROPOSED

AHP architects
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scales ~ 1:100 (A3) date 0505 drawn *

job 181	CI/SIB	number XP4	revision A
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01 South East Elevation