

D I X O N J O N E S

Sarah Wilson
Head of Development Management & Building Control
Islington Council
245 St John Street
London
EC1V 4NB

21st August 2018

Dear Sarah Wilson,

15 Clerkenwell Close

I am writing as an architect with some experience of buildings in public places including the rebuilding of the Royal Opera House and Covent Garden Square, the National Portrait Gallery, National Gallery, Somerset House, Quadrant 3, Exhibition Road, and in Islington, Kings Place.

I would like to strongly support the recently completed design by Amin Taha for the site known as 15 Clerkenwell Close. I came across this building by chance over the weekend and was instantly engaged and intrigued by its unusual and forceful presence. Subsequently, I read the excellent article from the Guardian by architectural critic, Rowan Moore, including a very convincing description of the façade treatment together with the rather alarming information that Islington Planning Department has issued an enforcement notice requiring its demolition.

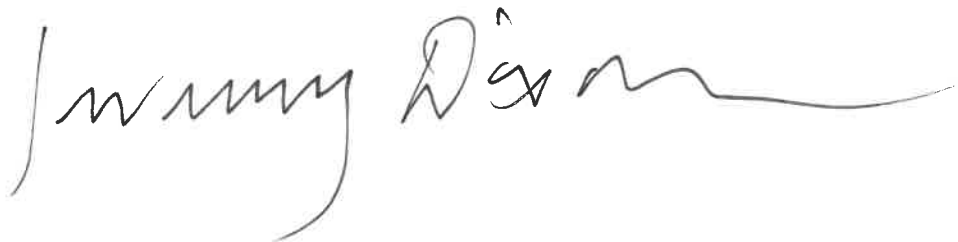
Why do I like this building so much? I believe it uses stone in a most original way to establish a convincing sense of monumentality without recourse to traditional formulae. The stone is massive, heavy and completely expressive of where it came from, much in the way that stone quarries show off stone at its best, before it loses its essence in the process of being refined and finished. This feeling for stone has been admirably expressed by recent sculptors and it is part of what is so interesting about the elevation that it picks up accurately on this kind of recent artistic sensibility.

The stone in the new façade makes for a powerful and instructive comparison with the fine elevation and tower of St James' Church opposite. The two play off against each other in a truly poetic manner and the civic grouping works really well. I believe that this building is the work of a talented architect and that his design should be celebrated rather than subject to something so crude as an enforcement notice.

I do hope that you and the planning department can be persuaded to change your minds in this rather important case.

With the very best wishes

Sir Jeremy Dixon



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