



EVALUATION OF APPEAL SCHEME FROM VIEWPOINTS

73. **Viewpoint 1** – The additional storey will appear alien to the building itself and over dominant in relation to the church. In place of the diminished top storey will be a top heavy composition.
74. **Viewpoint 2** – The impact of viewpoint 1 from a closer position will be exaggerated. The building will appear excessively large in relation to the street scene in sequence. The emphasis of the central tower will be diminished.
75. **Viewpoint 3** – In addition to the impact of viewpoint 2, the further storey will fill more of the skyline.
76. **Viewpoint 4** - The lower corner block of the front will be “filled in,” damaging the carefully controlled stepped composition at this point. The

appealing rhythm created by the corner blocks and central tower of the side elevation will be completely lost.

77. **Viewpoint 5** – The additional storey would appear alien and oppressive against the sky, filling more of it. Winter visibility would be even more harmful.
78. **Viewpoint 6** - Much of the backdrop tree line would be lost. The additional bulk would appear over dominant in context. The stepped composition would be lost and the strength of the central tower would be diminished.
79. **Viewpoint 7** – Similar impact to viewpoint 6 with the additional loss of the Church bellcote and spire, just visible above the near curved corner. Both the Boathouse and 61 Hartington Road will be excessively dominated by the additional bulk and height. A close up view emphasizes these negative impacts.
80. **Viewpoint 8** – In this view Hartington Court, the Boathouse and the Church are “framed” together. Note how the Boathouse frontage steps from left to right from single to three storeys, making an easy transition to the four storeys of Hartington Court, which in turn steps down again at the other end, in deference to 61 Hartington Road. The ridge line of the church is higher than the top of Hartington Court. The additional storeys of the appeal scheme will reverse that position. The easy transitions between the buildings on the river frontage will be lost, and Hartington Court will appear over dominant in context. The effects will be more pronounced in winter.
81. **Viewpoint 9** - In this long view Hartington Court is seen at the far end in harmony with other Thames buildings, the whole stretch much softened by greenery. The additional bulk and height of an extra storey will upset the well balanced delicacy of the whole, thus harming the setting of the Strand on the Green Conservation Area as well as the character of the Grove Park CA.

82. **Viewpoint 10** Unlike the preceding views Viewpoint 10 is inherently dynamic, here freezing a continuous sequence from moving river craft. Experience of this stretch from the river is possibly the most important and telling of all. For tens of thousands of river boat passengers annually, this scene unrolls like a film before them. The legendary history and beauty of the Thames and the qualities of its best buildings is why they choose to take this journey. The deliberate, controlled design of Hartington Court is most effectively displayed from this position. It simply appears complete, needing no enhancement. From the submitted elevations, the respective road and river frontages will lose their symmetry. Viewed in this way the alterations are manifestly degrading.
83. It is also important to note that, as a locally listed building, the impacts of the appeal scheme must also be considered from within the site itself. Photos **[JWP1-10]** depict various views within the appeal site. Any architectural degradation as described above, experienced by passers by from without, would of course be suffered close-up and interminably by residents and frequently by their guests and other visitors to the site.
84. The courtyard aspect should not be made worse by the appeal scheme. The appellants' courtyard elevation demonstrates that it would be made worse. Superimposed upon an actual perspective view, this indicative montage shows that the additional mass would have an unduly dominant impact, blocking out almost the whole backdrop of trees to considerably greater extent than has been depicted in the drawing.



History and development

85. As previously noted, Hartington Court was built in 1938. Maps of that year however do not show the building which first appears in an edition of 1960. This shows the garage block in the courtyard. Although no original design drawings have emerged, it appears from building records that the garage block was not part of the original design, but was permitted and constructed soon afterwards. **[JW8]**
86. John E Adams appears to have been an engineer-architect. He held a BSc in Engineering, was a Member, later Fellow of the Institute of Structural Engineers and Member of the Faculty of Architects and Surveyors. He seemed to have been interested in the technical properties of concrete and published two articles on the subject in *Concrete and Constructional Engineering* in 1929. His only other known surviving building is Wendover Court in Acton, a similarly conceived, less dramatic mansion block, which was published and illustrated in *The Builder*, 9 July 1937. [photo below].



Wendover Court, Acton

87. Adams' more mature work at Hartington Court, only 2 years later than the listed, reinforced concrete boathouse, admirably demonstrates his ability to handle the reinforced concrete structure as well as its cladding and detailing, particularly where it has a public face. The composition relies as much on the relationship, proportions, details and colours of materials as it does on its overall, dramatic form, with its exaggerated central towers and rather nautical, cruise liner like, curved and set back balcony, wall and roof forms. What emerges is a set-piece symmetrical composition in its principal elevations, considered *and finite*. as a means by which the building would take its place between the two pre-existing ones either side. In this Adams showed a degree of restraint and sensitivity worthy of many a better known architect.
88. The style, often characterised by formal massing, curved forms and elements, which originated in 1920's Paris, quickly spread internationally. It is sometimes described as Odeon, after the similarly styled 1930s cinemas. Other building types in which the style took hold included airports, offices, pubs, and houses. Seaside buildings, such as Midland Grand Hotel, Morecambe, and many lidos, seemed especially to capture the spirit of the age. The style featured in the greatest ocean liners of their day, the Queen Mary and Queen Elizabeth and was liberally applied to furniture, interiors, ceramics, sculpture and textiles. In buildings, the facing materials most commonly used were concrete and brick or block masonry. The windows were of steel, sometimes, as with Hartington Court, curved in line with the wall plane, with glazing bars and mullions creating a horizontal emphasis.
89. Whether by intent or good fortune, these motifs, now occupying an established and cherished context, representing a more innocent, romantic, seem particularly appropriate for this Thames frontage. This more restrained, English Art Deco variant, can nonetheless be better likened in form, construction, period and spirit, to the Art Deco hotels and apartments of Miami South Beach, as exemplified in the photo below, than to any of more avant garde modernist, mainly curtain walled examples cited in the appellants' architects' design statement.



Another more comparable example closer to home is Speke Airport



Why is Hartington Court special?

90. As with any historic building, whether of national or local interest, area, it is important to understand why Hartington Court is special, within the obvious limits of non-statutory (but included in UDP) designation, which excludes control over internal works. English Heritage, the Heritage Lottery Fund and other authoritative bodies strongly support the preparation of Conservation Plans (also called Conservation Management Plans) as a means of understanding the significance of a heritage asset and providing for its long-term conservation.
91. A Conservation Plan (CP) should explain what it is about the building that in heritage terms is considered to be significant. It should analyse possible threats to this significance and set out what action can be taken to protect what is special. Such understanding of significance will allow for the better management of the building in terms of its repair and, where necessary, the more sympathetic development of future proposals for its use.
92. In line with the advice of PPG15 3.12 that “...In judging the effect of any alteration or extension it is essential to have assessed the elements that make up the special interest of the building in question...” a technique frequently employed in the preparation of CPs involves identifying and evaluating each feature. This will then form the basis of an Impact Assessment of proposed changes. I have prepared many such evaluations as part of full conservation plans, using the following values:
- 1 = essential feature, demanding preservation without change;
 - 2 = highly desirable feature, where any change should be avoided unless there are exceptional reasons;
 - 3 = feature which may be tradable to achieve a greater benefit, e.g. relocating a chimneypiece in order to facilitate an otherwise good plan for adaptive reuse of a building
 - 4 = negative feature, typically a disfiguring alteration or addition, removal of which would enhance the character or significance of the asset.

93. Application of the above values to the features of Hartington Court yields the following results:

Feature	Value
Overall form and massing	1
Structural design and expression	1
Unaltered river elevation complete	1
Unaltered street elevation complete	1
Rebuilt link block external elevation	2
Internal courtyard elevations	2
Original facing materials	1
Original windows and doors	1
Replacement windows and doors	4
Original street boundary treatment	1
Site landscape layout	2
Perimeter planting	2
Courtyard garage block	4
Courtyard storage/plant block	4
External cabling and ducting	4
External soil and vent pipes	4
'Fletton' brickwork to internal elevation of link block	3
Vehicle access and parking finishes	3
Roof mounted pipes and ducts (internal visibility)	4
Roof mounted dish aerials and air conditioning units	4
Modern external ironmongery to some doors	4

It will be evident from the above that the negative features, mainly cumulative minor alterations should be accorded little weight against the essential major features such as form, massing and materials. It also shows that it is the utilitarian courtyard environment which is mainly affected by alteration, not the principal elevations and public views which remain virtually intact.

SPECIAL INTEREST

Locally listed building

94. The special interest of the building lies in its distinctive architectural design and execution, and its survival largely unaltered. I consider that it is a building of serious artistic intent. The *British Standard Guide to the Conservation of Historic Buildings*, BS7913, explains at para 6.2.4. that the value of a building of serious artistic intent is quite independent of its contribution to the immediate environment. It is intrinsic to the building, like that of a painting or a piece of sculpture. It is intolerant of change. It is significant that, despite partial destruction in WWII it was considered important enough to rebuild in its original form after the war, the relatively minor impairment being an apparent difficulty in getting the very scarce brick supply of the day to precisely match the quality of the original.
95. Like a painting, a building of single, dominant architectural design cannot easily be considered capable of or requiring 'improvement.' It is already finished. Adding or removing anything diminishes the aesthetic value of the whole. This principle is not confined to any particular period or style.
96. BS7913 6.2.4. then considers the aesthetic component of cultural value, which can depend on a number of factors, including "...a single dominant architectural design...romantic associations...setting or context..." and advises that "...Where the aesthetic and sensuous appeal of a building derives from the quality of its materials and craftsmanship, patina, etc as well as its narrative power, the fact that it is picturesque, pretty and so on, the approach should be firmly based on the principles of minimum intervention and conservative repair..."
97. 7.4.4. of BS 7913 goes further to state that:

“The criteria for alteration work (6.4.3) apply equally to additions. Careful regard should also be given to the following aspects when considering the construction of new additions

- a) Buildings whose external form and elevations have been carefully contrived , or whose settings are particularly sensitive, may not be capable of being extended in an architecturally satisfactory way... and
- e) Additions should neither dominate, mask or challenge the authority of the old nor detract architecturally or visually from it.

98. It is a generally acknowledged principle in modern UK conservation practice that conservation does not necessarily equal preservation. Adaptability, including alteration and/or extension in the cause of preserving or enhancing character can be a valid, even necessary approach, for example where a building is at risk and its survival may be at stake. Equally it is acknowledged, at BS7913 7.4.1 that some buildings (not just listed buildings I would contend) are so sensitive as to preclude alterations. Where as in this case, the building is not only a set piece, but also is largely unaltered, in use and in good condition, there should be a presumption in favour of preservation. Where as in this case, the building and its context are of acknowledged importance, judgements of proposed changes should be set against criteria set out in ENV-B.2.7 and other material considerations such as:

- a) the importance of the building, its intrinsic architectural and historic interest and rarity, in local terms ;
- b) the features of the building which justify its inclusion in the local list;
- c) the building's setting and its contribution to the local scene,
- d) the extent to which the proposed works would bring substantial benefits for the community.

99. It is my contention that the appeal scheme fails to satisfy any of the above criteria. In particular:

- i. the building is of acknowledged importance; it possesses intrinsic architectural interest. The proposed extensions would detract

- from its interest because they are discordant in appearance, dominant (they sit on top) in view, degrading to the artistic intent and excessively bulky in relation to street context, Thameside setting and the setting of adjacent listed and locally listed buildings
- ii. the design and materials are important physical features. The elevations are of such sensitivity as to conclude that alteration or extension would degrade them. The proposed extensions would, in any variation, degrade.
 - iii. The building forms a centrepiece and landmark along its stretch of the Thames; it is so confirmed in both the Council's SPG and The Thames Strategy. It contributes by its individuality and difference rather than as part of a group. There is no other building anywhere on the Thames which remotely resembles it. Good representatives of this building type, period and style are rare in any location. The proposed development would fail to preserve, let alone enhance the setting. It would obtrude adversely on the settings of the University Boathouse and St Paul's Church, as well as appearing oppressive and over-dominant in relation to No. 61 Hartington Road.
 - iv. No substantial benefit to the local or city-wide or visitor community or to the residents of Hartington Court have been put forward. There are none to put. The community and residents, in very large numbers are wholly opposed. The provision of housing units in PPG 3 or any other terms can neither justify nor outweigh proper application of statute, policy and guidance on historic environment, townscape and design.

The Thames

100. The Thames is a different river now from what it was in the past. Its level is higher today by some 45cm; hence the construction of flood walls, including one at Hartington Court. Though there are no longer fishing boats on the river, boat racing has become more popular. The demise of