

Dear Mr Orton

Thank you for your email of 6 December 2016 concerning the future of post war buildings in Birmingham. This is a matter that has been given significant consideration in recent times, both through the planning process and as part of wider public debate.

The post war buildings of Birmingham are significant to the historic evolution of our city, and nationally, Birmingham was a leading light in the modernist, brutalist and other architectural movements throughout the 1950's, 60's and 70's. Today the resurgence in the interest in these periods of architecture along with its associated arts and culture has resulted in groups such as yours campaigning for the retained role of these buildings in our cityscape.

You note the City's past success in retaining and reusing buildings from this period including the Rotunda and Alpha Tower. It must be noted that both these buildings are statutorily listed and there lies a key factor in their retention. Most of the post war buildings in the city are neither listed or within a conservation area and therefore retaining them, due to their historical and architectural merit, is not a material consideration unless they are locally listed. That said without one of the former designations (listing or being within a conservation area) the submission of a prior notification application for demolition cannot be resisted, and this remains their greatest threat. Such a notice does not take into account any matters other than the process of demolition.

Regrettably, without the commitment of Historic England to list these buildings, there can be no guarantee over their future. As you know, this debate has been held at the Birmingham's Conservation and Heritage Panel and is partly the reason why a request has been made for that panel to meet with a representative of Historic England's 'Designations Team'. It is anticipated that such a meeting will be held in the New Year.

Without listing status the challenge to retain Birmingham's post war architectural legacy will be difficult as much of it will likely be the subject of redevelopment proposals in the future. Considering the complexity of these buildings and the nature of their decay and deterioration (including integrated asbestos and failing reinforcements etc.) the value of these structures will continue to be a hard fought campaign through the planning process where developers will need convincing of the need to undertake the costly conservation of an undesignated heritage asset.

It should be noted that the City Council does take its post war architecture seriously and though difficult decisions have had to be made 'Certificates of Immunity from Listing' have already been issued on a number of key buildings from this period.

I hope that we can arrive at a satisfactory position with regards this matter and suggest that you work with Simon Delahunty-Forrest the City Design and Conservation Manager to discuss this matter further and advise you on the exact date on which the Conservation and Heritage Panel will meet with Historic England's

'Designation Team'.

Yours sincerely

Councillor John Clancy

Leader of the Council