



EDUCATION | ARUP BUILDING

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Refurbishment and extension of 1971 'Brutalist' building for University of Cambridge in Historic Core Conservation Area.

DESCRIPTION

The Arup Building, designed by Philip Dowson of Arup Associates, was built as the 'Laboratories for Mathematics, Metallurgy and Zoology' for the University of Cambridge in 1971. It was the only part of a controversial 1960s plan to redevelop the University's New Museums Site, to actually be built.

An uncompromising building, it is considered a work of architectural interest and it is of a type unlikely to be approved again in Cambridge. The building has several deficiencies, notably difficult level changes, poor townscape presence, failing materials and a number of recent alterations. Several of the building's occupants were relocating to new facilities at another university site, to be replaced by the Cambridge Conservation Initiative (CCI) who have different requirements of the building. The university decided to overhaul the building, removing later inappropriate additions, improving energy efficiency and replacing materials.

Beacon were appointed to prepare a heritage statement to support proposals for the building refurbishment and to justify a new foyer extension for the Museum of Zoology and other alterations.

Following the planning application, a request to spot list the building was received by English Heritage. Despite pre-application discussions with the Twentieth Century Society and the City Council, this turn had been anticipated by the University because of past

Client University of Cambridge

Location Cambridge

Appointed January 2013

Services Advice

BP team Jenni Mason

Architect Nicholas Hare
Architects



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interest in the Arup Building and Beacon had, in 2011, been asked by the University to produce a report assessing the quality and special interest of the building. This was then submitted to English Heritage during consideration of the listing request which was subsequently rejected. Planning permission for the refurbishment and extension of the Arup Building was granted shortly after the decision not to list was received.

OUTCOME

Planning permission granted in July 2013.

The building - now known as the David Attenborough Building - was completed at the end of 2015 and the Museum of Zoology reopened the following year. The project was awarded best Office (2,000 - 10,000 square meters) at the AJ Retrofit Award and two awards at the 2016 Cambridge Design and Construction Awards: Engineering and Sustainability Project of the Year and Best Conservation Alteration or Extension Award.

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Architect	Nicholas Hare Architects