

The Origin And Possible Future Of Hammersmith & West London College

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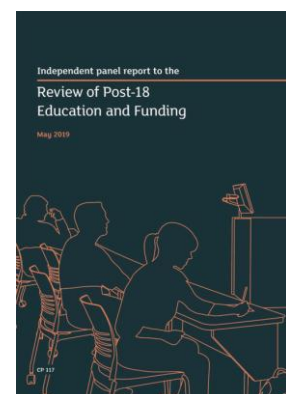


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The origin of H&WL College in Gliddon Road W14 is firmly rooted in the history of the London County Council at the end of the C19 and the actions of the Architect William Lethaby (1857 - 1931) who was appointed in 1894 as the LCC's Inspector to its Technical Education Board. William Lethaby's dominant role in the Arts and Crafts movement, his friendship with William Morris, a Hammersmith resident, as well as his connections with the Weimar Bauhaus through Walter Gropius and Hermann Muthesius, provided a unique and strong European foundation for the LCC's setting up of Hammersmith College of Art and Building in the late 1890s in Lime Grove. This in turn was the foundation of H&WL College.

The May 2019 Independent Panel Report 'Review of Post-18 Education and Funding' includes in chapter 4 an analysis of the current Further Education sector, which shows that the UK FE sector is institutionally and financially no longer viable in its current form and urgently needs to be transformed if it is to meet the demands of the C21.

Compared with some other countries the various UK industries are significantly disadvantaged by unrealistic separations between subject areas and between Primary, Secondary, Further and Higher Education - none more so than the Construction Industry in relation to the Built Environment. This is untenable in light of the current climate and ecological crisis.



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Taking a View

A member contribution published by The Hammersmith Society

To overcome their financial and management problems, Hammersmith & West London College decided on redeveloping their Gliddon Road site, facilitating the demolition of its unique 1980s LCC buildings and replacing them with new housing and a significantly reduced amount of replacement accommodation for the existing College.

This solution is an antithesis of what Hammersmith & Fulham Council is trying to achieve through its Industrial Strategy (2017) and its Climate and Ecological Emergency Commission.

The alternative is to regenerate, repair and reuse the existing world class buildings at the heart of the Hammersmith town-centre in line with the Government's latest educational objectives, as well as with Hammersmith Council's 2017 Industrial Strategy. This would support the formation and development of productive, not extractive, local enterprises and employment for local people.

The existing College would turn into a Community-Wealth-Building organisation, able to direct wealth back into the local economy and placing control into the hands of local people in the spirit of William Morris, the originator of the English Arts & Crafts movement, who lived and worked in Hammersmith 140 years ago, and his close friend William Lethaby, London County Council's first Technical Advisor, as envisaged in the 1890's when the Hammersmith College of Art & Building was set up by the LCC in Lime Grove.

Hans Haenlein, March 2023

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