



Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule Zürich
Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich

Ms Samantha Hardingham
AA Interim Director
36 Bedford Square
London WC1B 3ES

**Departement Architektur
Institut für Geschichte und Theorie der
Architektur (gta)**

ETH Zürich
Prof. Dr Laurent Stalder
Professor für Architekturtheorie
Vorsteher des Instituts
HIL F 64.1
Stefano-Frascini-Platz 5
8093 Zürich

Telefon +41 44 633 76 63
Telefax +41 44 633 18 82
laurent.stalder@gta.arch.ethz.ch
www.stalder.arch.ethz.ch

Zurich, 19 November 2017

Open letter to Ms Samantha Hardingham

Dear Madam

The President of the Board of the Architectural Association School of Architecture has informed us that you are going to restructure the “non-academic areas” of your institution and that AA Publications, with its highly influential journal *AA Files*, might undergo a profound change as consultations about redundancies are currently conducted.

Our Institute for the History and Theory of Architecture has always admired the AA School of Architecture as one of the most original and intellectually stimulating places in the world for architectural education. The strength of the school has always been its incomparable capacity to combine the most advanced architecture with a true depth in architectural history and theory. More than in other places, at the AA School of Architecture the avant-garde seemed to be anchored in a deep knowledge of history. In this tradition, teaching, researching and publishing are considered equal parts of academic activity.

Without a doubt, AA Publications, since its foundation 29 years ago, and especially *AA Files* have been strong, if not the strongest voices of this tradition. The architectural community, professionals and historians alike, read *AA Files*, and we have all aspired to publish in it, not because it is easy to do so but precisely because the scientific and formal standards are so high. The texts of *AA Files* have permeated our syllabi and our teaching practices, which is why *AA Files* is considered today, by architects and historians, students and professionals alike, as one of the best architectural publications in the world. *AA Files* has a long tradition, but it is the merit of the current team to have made it such a unique intellectual platform. As we all know, good research needs the best possible editors.

It is not our role to comment on the restructuring measures at the AA. But our role – as international peers – is to inform you that making AA Publications redundant would, in our opinion, not strengthen the AA School of

Architecture. On the contrary, it would deeply weaken the school's intellectual quality – precisely the aspect which has retained all our admiration.

In the hope that our fears are not justified, we remain

Yours Sincerely,



Prof. Dr M. Delbeke



Prof. Dr I. Heinze-Greenberg

 

Prof. Dr L. Stalder
Head of the Institute

Prof. Dr P. Ursprung
Dean of the Department