

Application Name: Debenhams Department Store, Staines-upon-Thames

Number: 1478804

Type: New

Heritage Category: Listing

Address:

Debenhams Plc,37-45 High Street,Staines-upon-Thames,TW18 4QU

County	District	District Type	Parish
Surrey	Spelthorne	District Authority	Non Civil Parish

Recommendation: **Reject**

Assessment

Historic England has received two applications asking us to assess Debenhams department store in Staines-upon-Thames, for listing. We have also received communications of support for the building's listing from three community groups: Staines Town Society, Riverside Residents (Staines) Coalition and Riverbank Residents, as well as a petition of over 1,000 signatures against demolition. The store closed in 2020 and there are proposals for redevelopment of the site for housing and retail. The building is not in a conservation area and is not locally listed.

Originally built for local department store, Kennards, the building was constructed in two phases between 1956-1957 and 1961-1962. The design was by George Coles (1884-1963), known for his work designing cinemas for the Odeon cinema chain, several of which are listed at Grade II. The Kennards store replaced a number of smaller units on the site to occupy a prominent corner of Staines High Street. Adopting a late neo-Georgian style, it is faced in red brick with stone, or reconstituted stone, dressings and windows are steel-framed multi-paned casements. Externally the building appears little altered, with the exception of a later canopy, signage and renewed entrance doors.

Based on the information provided and with reference to the Principles of Selection (November 2018) and Historic England's Selection Guides, Debenhams, High Street, Staines-upon-Thames, is not recommended for listing for the following principal reasons.

Degree of Architectural interest:

* the building is a late example of neo-Georgian retail architecture and, despite the interest of its architect, is comparable in quality to a very large number of high street buildings of the inter- and post-war period across the country; it does not possess the quality of design, decoration or craftsmanship to mark it of special architectural interest.

Degree of Historic interest:

* department stores are an important part of the country's retail heritage, and they are increasingly under threat; however, only those with the greatest claims to interest will merit addition to the statutory List.