

24 October 1982

From Victor Pasmore to Gary Philipson Peterlee Development Corporation

Dear Gary

Obviously you have known for some time that the Pavilion in Sunny Blunts is in serious trouble with the Easington District Council. The Newcastle Journal telephoned me the other day saying that the Council have been asked by the local residents to blow it up: Hurrah; evidently its naked walls have become a centre for local pornography: This of course was inevitable once the maintenance of the South West Area became the responsibility of a District Council with ratepayers' money to account for. But unfortunately not only is the cost of maintenance beyond the range of the Council's pocket, but also the price of the necessary atom bomb to blow it up. So evidently the Pavilion is still there.

However, I understand from the Journal reporter that the Council has decided first to try and pass the buck of responsibility on to the local residents. If so, this would surely be a good idea if it can be made to work. But it might need a concrete 21 gun salute to set the ball rolling:

Personally I think that the Corporation made a big mistake in the first place by not following up the completion of the Pavilion with a formal Opening with the Mayor, Town Clerk and perhaps the Minister of Art or chairman of the Arts Council to speak. Also I felt that the Pavilion should have been given a stimulating title – I wanted it called the “Apollo Pavilion” because its completion coincided with the first rocket on the moon. But the Corporation would have none of this; no doubt for good reasons at the time. But had all this been done it might have established a sense of responsibility and impressed on the local community the significance of a major urban environmental experiment which is unique in modern town planning anywhere. The fact that the building and lake are modern and not Gothic or Renaissance is immaterial. I explained all this to the Journal's reporter who agreed; indeed he offered to try and get the ball rolling for a belated opening. I feel certain that only by some concrete initiative of this kind will it be possible for the Easington Council to get the residents interested.

Regards to June and yourself

Victor

P.S. If you are interested I will send you a copy of the monograph on my work published by Thames & Hudson last year in which both the Pavilion and the S.W. area are fully documented and illustrated.