

Controlled wildfowling is permitted on four coastal reserves, and several reserves in North Wales include cliffs which are intensively climbed. Luckily the cliffs which interest climbers are seldom those which have rare arctic-alpine plants. Ski-ing, however, presents a problem, especially at Great Dun Fell in the Pennines, where increasing numbers of visitors represent a threat to valuable areas. A compromise has been found and skiers will continue to use a defined area while the conservancy makes a careful study of the effects, and the Northern Advisory Council for Sport and Recreation looks for other sites suitable for ski-ing.

On the coast, sailing has come into conflict with conservation with the demand for marinas to provide fresh moorings. The Minister of Housing and Local Government refused planning permission for a proposed marina at the Swale on the north coast of Kent, because the marina would intrude on the area where there was the greatest need for conservation.

The work of the conservation branch is backed up by that of the six research stations, where various studies of the effects of disruptive influences, such as cutting and grazing, on different habitats are in progress. A survey of oak woodlands which grow on Lake District slates has shown that not even the minimum number of oak seedlings are surviving. It seems that these woodlands will eventually disappear unless extensive felling and replanting are undertaken, or until it is possible somehow to improve the fertility of the soil. Red deer, which cause considerable damage in Scottish forests, are another subject of research in several areas. The aim is to develop a system of management for deer consistent with conserving the countryside in which they live.

ARCHITECTURE

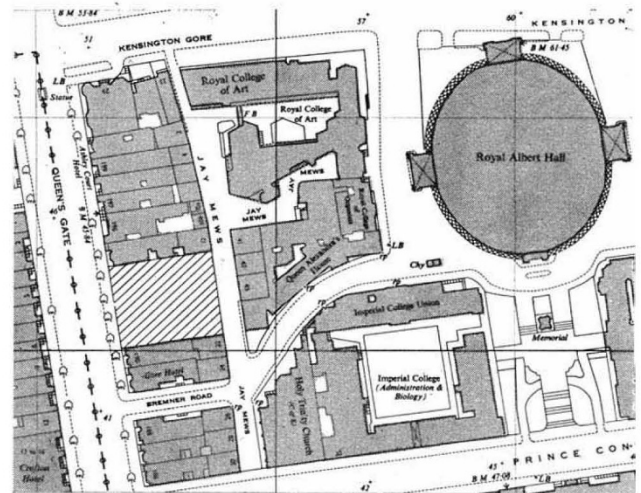
**School Appeals for Funds**

THE sum of £500,000 will have to be raised by the Architectural Association if it is to go ahead with its proposed merger with the Imperial College of Science and Technology. The association, with premises in Bedford Square, Bloomsbury, is a private educational foundation and it runs the oldest, the largest and the only independent architectural school in the country. It has been promised a site in South Kensington which the Government will purchase, and the University Grants Committee has assumed financial responsibility for the running of the school; but both these offers are conditional on the raising by the association of the capital sum for the cost of a new building. Next spring, providing the appeal is going well, the association will announce an international competition to decide on the architect for the new building.

In 1958, the resolution that independent schools of architecture should transfer to the universities, was passed at the Oxford Conference on Architectural Education. This the Architectural Association accepted, and negotiations between the AA, Imperial College and the UGC have been continuing for several years. A year ago, the UGC finally gave its approval to the merger provided the AA raised the money, and last week the appeal for funds was publicly launched by the president of the association, Francis Baden-Powell. On the same occasion, a plan of the proposed site was announced, and for the first time the association pub-

lished an official declaration of intent—that it will leave Bedford Square to become the fourth constituent college of Imperial College (the other three colleges are the Royal College of Science, the Royal School of Mines and the City and Guilds College).

The lease of the AA's present buildings expires in 1976, and, as the cost of its renewal would be prohibitive for the continued existence of the school, there is some urgency in the appeal for funds. If money cannot be raised within one year, the school will be unable to accept students for the start of the 1970 session—the school retains responsibility for each student for 6 years. The Royal Institution of British Architects and the University of London are giving the merger their full support. Some architects, however, are concerned that the AA will lose its independence and even consider that independence ought to be retained at all costs, even if it means moving to makeshift buildings. The council of the AA is optimistic, however, that the association with Imperial College, with its engineering, computer, transport and other studies, should more than outweigh the misgivings of members.



Site (hatched) for the new building for the Architectural Association at 191-194 Queen's Gate, London SW7.

Another merger of an architectural school with a university has not been so successful. The University of Leeds has been trying for some time to arrange for the transfer of the Leeds Schools of Architecture and Town Planning to the university. Now the university has learnt that it has been unsuccessful in its appeal for assistance with a plan to transfer the schools to buildings in the university precincts in the 1970s. The schools instead are to become part of the new Leeds polytechnic. The university is disappointed, but it has already announced that it intends to promote links between the schools and the university, and a joint working party has been set up under the chairmanship of Professor Patrick Nuttgens.

ENGINEERING

**A Prize for Engineers**

A SUBSTANTIAL consolation prize has now been made available for engineers and technologists who, by the