Design and Access Statement

180 Arlington Road, Camden

April 2017

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1. This Design and Access Statement supports a planning application by Rank Group Gaming Division Limited for proposed external alterations to the existing building at 180 Arlington Road, Camden.

**The Site**

1. The application site is located at the junction between Arlington Road to the west and Inverness Street to the north. Inverness Street has restricted vehicular access at this point, with the market held at its eastern end. The building has a mixed dark brick exterior, with various flat roof sections. It had numerous openings, although the majority have either been filled or used as advertisement space. The Arlington Road elevation also has a steep roof hung with red tiles.
2. The main entrance to the building is to the southern side of the Arlington Road elevation, and consists of a glazed area set above the blue entrance doors. The doors are slightly recessed from the edge of the footpath.
3. The site is located is located within the Camden Town Conservation Area, and within the designated Town Centre area.

**Proposed Alterations**

1. This application consists of a number of alterations to the exterior of the building, and these are listed below:
* Upgrade to existing entrance along Arlington Road, including new entrance feature, removal of existing advertising, and new entrance doors and glazed screening.
* Recladding of existing fascia and removal of second storey fascia along Arlington Road, and new fascia along Inverness Street.
* New entrance into building from Inverness Street, including new doors and glazed screens, matching entrance feature.
* Addition of plant equipment to roof.
1. The building will remain in D2 use, with bingo remaining the primary activity.

**Planning History**

1. The planning history for the site includes the planning applications listed below.
* 2007/1797/P – Retention of a metal canopy at the rear of the building, to be used as a smoking shelter for bingo hall – Approved
* PE96/06093/R1 – Alterations to the front elevation to form ramped access, new entrance canopy with illuminated fascia above, blocking up of existing openings, new security shutters to the front recessed entrance and formation of new fire exit – Approved
* AE96/06109/R1 - The display of a new illuminated fascia sign, two new projecting box signs and new fascia strip with illuminated detailing – Approved
* PE96/06093 - Alterations to form ramped access and new entrance canopy with feature metal gable framework above, and block up existing fire exit and reposition, and fascia signage panel – Withdrawn
* AE98/06109 - Display of an internally illuminated fascia sign and projecting sign – Withdrawn
* AD183 - Retention of three non-illuminated 4 sheet poster units faced with clear acrylic panels, measuring 1.03m (3'4 1/2") wide by 1.55m (5'1") high, erected 0.76m (2'6") above ground level – Approved

**Planning Policy**

1. At present, the Local Plan consists of the Camden Core Strategy 2010-2025 and Camden Development Policies 2010-2025. Policies considered relevant to the determination of this application are noted below.
2. Core Strategy Policy CS14 *Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage* states the Council will ensure Camden’s places are attractive, safe and easy to use by, amongst others, requiring development of the highest standard of design that respects local context and character, preserving and enhancing Camden’s rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, and seeking the highest standards of access in all buildings and places and requiring schemes to be designed to be inclusive and accessible.
3. Core Strategy Policy CS17 *Making Camden a Safer Place* seeks to promote safer streets and public areas.
4. Development Policies DP24 *Securing high quality design* seeks all development including alterations to existing buildings, to be of the highest standard of design, and is expected to consider the character, setting, context and the form and scale of neighbouring buildings.
5. Development Policies DP25 *Conserving Camden’s heritage* states Council’s will only permit development within conservation areas that, amongst others, preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the area.

**Design**

1. The proposed alterations to the building are the result of internal alterations at the venue. This seeks to reduce the size of the open hall, by offering the use of a number of smaller lounge areas. These are defined as the bar, games or slots lounge. Bingo will be available in all, and the internal circulation allows the free flow of customers between lounges.
2. The main alteration is the creation of a new main entrance into the building. At present, the only access is that from Arlington Road in the south west corner of the building. The proposal seeks alterations to this entrance, and a new main entrance into the building from Inverness Street.
3. The Arlington Road entrance is in need of an upgrade. It consists of two sets of double doors recessed under a canopy. There is glazing at the first floor above, with a large advert to its top. The proposal seeks to create a new entrance way on this location. This will be set under a new entrance feature, which will incorporate grey clad panels, the colour for which will be extended along the existing fascia. Existing fire doors will be repainted in matching colour, and the first floor fascia will be removed to ensure less clutter.
4. The result will be a more simplified entrance, which will be an enhancement to the Arlington Road elevation and the Camden Town Conservation Area.
5. The Inverness Street elevation is currently a featureless façade facing onto the restricted-vehicle road. This road has a busy footfall given the presence of the market and its links from Camden High Street westwards. The application allows an opportunity to add interest to this elevation, to the benefit of the street scene of Inverness Street.
6. The proposal seeks two new entrances, the main entrance (the western entrance) which will be constructed with an entrance feature to match the proposed Arlington Road entrance. The more central new entrance will have a matching door but not have the entrance feature around. The proposal also includes two sets of triple doors, all set under a new fascia.
7. As noted, the elevation will add interest to the Inverness Street elevation, and will also increase transparency into and out of the building in this location. This will have numerous benefits in terms of security in the area, whilst attractive footfall for the building.
8. The location of the site within the conservation area is noted. The use of good quality materials, and the ability to add interest to the Inverness Street elevation ensures that the development will enhance this elevation too.

1.21 The application also includes plant equipment to be located on the roof area and wall. This includes an air-handling unit and condenser units. Given their location, they will not be visible from the public domain.

**Access**

* 1. The proposed upgrade to the existing Arlington Road entrance will utilise the existing openings, although it will include new frames and glazing. The new doors will remain flush with the footpath to allow access for all. The gentle slope will remain, although the building remains accessible to all. Assistance from members of staff remains available where necessary
	2. Again, the new entrance along Inverness Street will have all doors flush with the footway to ensure accessibility is available to all. There are various changes in levels throughout the building, and stairs are necessary to move around. Hoists or platform lifts will be available at some areas to ensure wheelchair users are able to safely circulate around the building.

**Conclusion**

* 1. The proposal would upgrade the existing Arlington Road entrance to the benefit of the street scene and conservation area in this location. This is achieved by using appropriate matching materials across the frontage. The Inverness Street frontage will benefit from the new openings, allowing greater transparency into and out of the site. It will add interest to what is currently a blank façade.
	2. Both new entrances will ensure that they are accessible to all, and the building will remain wheelchair friendly.