



DESIGN STATEMENT
NEW SIGNAGE

CASTLEHAVEN COMMUNITY CENTRE
LONDON, NW1 8RU
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Castlehaven Community Association

HISTORY

This two storey building lies directly adjacent to the elevated railway line on Castlehaven Road, close to Camden Market and the large mixed-use development extending through to the canal. It is not in a conservation area.

Castlehaven Community Association was established in 1985 by a group of local residents to provide facilities for children and older people. The initial location in a refurbished piano warehouse soon became too small and a new purpose built centre was built during the 2000s.

Operating in part as a charity, further expansion has allowed the creation of the Castlehaven Community Park to include sports facilities and the addition of a nursery on the adjacent site beyond the railway arches.



The Haven Community Centre

ISSUES

The community centre building, known as The Haven, has intensive use and is overdue for a facelift. Internal refurbishment programmed for August 2019 will improve flexibility and allow activities to adapt to the changing needs of the community. Minor changes to the layout will improve the operation of the building and allow staff to better control entry. The entrance is currently located on the corner of the building, close to the pavement and cycle path. Moving this around to the north elevation takes advantage of a more generous external space and shifts the stance of the centre towards the Community Park. External alterations to windows and doors require planning permission and these are the subject of a separate application.

The building provides a blank canvas for graffiti and requires regular repainting. This is not unusual in the local area and is likely to persist, however it is hoped that repainting the lower level in a neutral grey colour will contain the problem and allow regular maintenance to keep the building looking reasonable.

The building also suffers from a lack of identity; many passers-by are uncertain about its' use and function. Various attempts have been made to address this issue using banners and signs, none entirely successful. A recent exercise has developed new branding which will be used for all the buildings within the association. This planning application covers signage to be applied to The Haven to help identify the building and highlight the community link.



View of the Main Entrance



View of the East Elevation



Signage on the North Elevation

PROPOSALS

The render finish to the building incorporates visible joint lines relating to the fenestration pattern which divide the facades into subtle panels. This creates a series of three horizontal bands running around the curve and across both elevations. The concept for signage adopts the central band, between the ground and first floor windows, as a zone for signs and lettering, leaving the upper and lower bands clear. This should provide a format to accommodate changes in the future within a controlling design concept. At low level, where the render finish is most susceptible to graffiti, the wall will be painted in a neutral grey shade that can easily be refinished, (although no doubt this will be required frequently).

The building is approached from both directions of Castlehaven Road and on foot from the Community Park to the north and west. Signs need to announce the identity of the building from each angle to ensure that its purpose and function is obvious. Lettering is proposed on the central band to the north and east elevations to make this clear.

The curved corner is an obvious feature of the building that acknowledges the site geometry and makes reference to the original piano warehouse. A version of the Community heart logo is proposed on the central band at this prominent prow position.



Moving the entrance allows the building to better address the wider prospect of the Park and reinforce the link between all the buildings within the Community. The importance of this facade is highlighted with a kinetic sign incorporating the Community branding. This will be constructed in aluminium or perspex sheets suspended from powder coated aluminium sections fixed to the facade. The sheets will be printed with the colour pattern from the branding and be fixed in such a way as to allow gentle movement, a fluttering in the breeze. This will brighten the overall appearance and help add a sense of animation to the building

Examples of similar treatments are included adjacent, including the facade of Debenhams in Oxford Street, the Sainsbury Wellcome Centre in Fitzrovia and the pixel wall at the Olympic Park.

The building currently has spotlights on the facade to provide general external lighting. There is also an arrangement of concealed lighting in the overhanging fascia to the roof - although not working at present this is to be repaired and reinstated. New LED strips will be added to the support framework of the hanging panels to provide subtle inconspicuous lighting to this feature.

