

From: Fowler, David
Sent: 13 February 2015 08:37
To: Planning
Subject: FW: 2014/7874/P Town Hall Extension - response from BCAAC

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From: Bloomsbury Conservation Area Advisory Committee [mailto:BCAAC@hughcullum.com]
Sent: 12 February 2015 16:05
To: Bushell, Alex; Fowler, David; Jarvis, Edward; Sexton, Gavin; Rose, Charles
Subject: 2014/7874/P Town Hall Extension - response from BCAAC

Bloomsbury Conservation Area Advisory Committee

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Response from BCAAC to Camden re: 2014/7874/P Town Hall Extension (also registered on Camden Website application comments box)

Statement of Objection

Setting

This site is in the King's Cross Conservation Area and on the immediate edge of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. As it is very visible from the latter it comes within the remit of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area Advisory Committee.

The existing town hall annexe building is a very prominent element in the context and setting of many Listed buildings, indeed is almost entirely surrounded by them: the Listed terraces to the south (12-36 and 7-19 Argyle Street), the Listed Camden Town Hall to the west, the Grade I listed St Pancras Chambers to the north and the Grade I Listed King's Cross Station to the north-east. This close proximity to the stations, including Eurostar, makes the site internationally

significant. For many visitors this building will be their first impression of England.

Existing building

At one time considered to have a negative impact on the Conservation Area, the merits of this building are now recognised. But there is no doubt that it is a large, bulky building, already straining the site to its capacity, and overly dominating and harmful to views of all the Listed buildings referred to above.

Roof extension

The existing building earns its place on this important site by the quality of its design, but would lose that entitlement with this inappropriately large and unduly prominent extension on the roof. The proposed extension takes no account of the context and fails to enhance or preserve the settings of all the surrounding Listed buildings and that of the conservation area.

The relatively minor improvements brought about by the removal of the stair-tower, in no way compensate for the considerable harm caused by the excessive roof extension. The removal of the stair-tower is an improvement to just one side of the Town Hall and brings little benefit to offer to any of the other Listed buildings. While the removal of the stair-tower provides a slightly better view through to Euston Road from Tonbridge Street it nonetheless removes a useful buffer protecting the backstreets from the noise, pollution and bustle of Euston Road. The stair-tower was designed as an integral element to the Annexe; its removal would leave scars on both the Annexe itself and on the Town Hall, which will need to be modified in some way but which will always show as “repairs”. Although it will be a cost to the applicant, its removal would actually provide some additional usable floor space (being the lobby space on each floor giving access to those stairs) which could be used for hotel accommodation.

Conclusion

In summary The Advisory Committee considers that were this proposal developed it would do considerable harm to the two Conservation Areas and the settings of Listed buildings of outstanding importance. We strongly recommend that this proposal is not granted consent.

Hugh Cullum

Chairman, Bloomsbury Conservation Area Advisory Committee

February 12th, 2015