
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 02 June 2020 10:03
To: Smith, Kristina
Cc: Ruaidhri.Dowling@dfa.ie
Subject: London Irish Centre

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Beware – This email originated outside Camden Council and may be malicious Please take extra care with any links, attachments, requests to take action or for you to verify your password etc. Please note there have been reports of emails purporting to be about Covid 19 being used as cover for scams so extra vigilance is required.

2 June 2020

Ms Kristina Smith
Planning Case officer
Camden Council

Dear Ms Smith

As Ambassador of Ireland to the United Kingdom, I am writing to you in regard to the proposed future development of the London Irish Centre (LIC) to emphasise the continuing importance of the Centre to the wider story of the Irish community in London.

Irish people have a long history of migration to and settlement in London and in Britain more generally. However in the 1940s and 50s, a great wave of Irish workers arrived to help with reconstruction after the damage caused during the Second World War. The London Irish Centre was founded to assist those who came at that time and has continued to support new arrivals and existing residents ever since. Over recent decades, it has played a pivotal role in supporting the Irish community and that community has in turn made a rich contribution to civic life in London, including in Camden.

While much has changed since its founding in 1955, the Centre in Camden continues to be at the heart of the community. It is a place of sanctuary and respite for many, supporting those most in need as well as providing a place to experience the very

best of Irish culture and heritage. Several other Irish community organisations are also located in the Centre, including the Irish Elderly Advice Network, the Irish Chaplaincy and the Council of Irish Counties Association. The London Irish Centre is the largest recipient of ongoing financial support from the Irish Government through its Emigrant Support Programme, the current grant being £453,000 per annum. This financial assistance provides service support for residents of Camden and other nearby London boroughs.

The Centre faces many challenges in providing services utilising its current facilities. The current building has poor disabled access, an incoherent layout and a deteriorating structure. It now needs to be modernised to meet the changing needs of the community and remain fit for purpose for decades to come. I know that the LIC want to rebuild the structure behind the historic façade to create a fine new building which can provide improved services to those it serves, enhance the visual aspect of the neighbourhood and strengthen the cultural bridge between Ireland and London.

The Irish Government has provided financial support for the proposed new development, as we see it as a strategic investment in the future of the Irish community in London. Securing such community connections for the future will also be very important in strengthening wider bilateral relations between Britain and Ireland. I hope that the Centre will continue to be a community and cultural resource for many years to come and a place of which the Irish Government and Camden Council can be proud.

Yours sincerely

Adrian O'Neill

Adrian O'Neill
Ambassador

Embassy of Ireland
17 Grosvenor Place
London SW1X 7HR
E-Mail/R-Phost: adrian.oneill@dfat.ie
Tel/Teil: +44 (0) 2072358483 | Web/Idirlíon: www.embassyofireland.co.uk



[Email Disclaimer](#)

[Fógra Séanta Ríomhphoist](#)