



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Ms Kristina Smith
Planning Officer
Camden Council
2nd Floor, 5 Pancras Square
Judd Street
London
WC1H 9JE

10 June 2020

Dear Ms Smith

Re: Supporting the Redevelopment of the London Irish Centre – Application No: 2020/1481/P

I am writing on behalf of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Ireland and Irish in Britain to express support for the proposed redevelopment of the London Irish Centre.

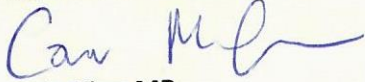
For decades now, the London Irish Centre has been at the heart of the Irish community in London. Providing welfare advice, support and an extensive social, cultural and educational programme - it is a beacon of pride to Irish people of all generations in Britain. As you will know, London is home to a vibrant Irish community who have contributed so much over the decades - and continue to do so today. As we look to the future, the work of organisations like the London Irish Centre will have a central role to play in creating social and cultural connections across these islands - particularly as we navigate complex social, economic and political change.

The London Irish Centre has a proven track record of delivering for the community and continues to go from strength to strength – and it has ambitions to do so much more. In order to achieve its latest goals, it needs to expand its operations to continue to provide the world class service that it currently does. Sadly, the existing building is no longer fit for purpose. To continue to meet the growing demands and be fit for the future - there is a genuine need for a modern centre to be built.

As you will be aware, there are current limitations with the existing building. With no outside space, cramped offices and working conditions, accessibility issues for disabled and elderly patrons and no single-entry point; you will appreciate why the London Irish Centre is seeking to modernise urgently. The proposed application will vastly improve the facilities and services on offer for the Irish community in Camden, London and beyond. Aside from being a beautiful contemporary building in line with Camden Council's green initiatives, the new building will be accessible for all, provide efficient work space for staff and allow more cultural events for the benefit of so many people and the local economy. With a new library, exhibition space and digital archive and better venue space, the new development will allow London Irish Centre to become financially independent for the future. It will be an asset to the local area and become an enduring cultural bridge between Ireland and London for many decades to come.

The Irish community has given so much and I hope that we will be able to give something back. I hope you will think favourably on this application and if you'd like to discuss any of the details further, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Le meas - and with best wishes

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Conor McGinn', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Conor McGinn MP

Chair APPG Ireland and Irish in Britain