



MAY 2021

193-197 High Holborn, London

Design and Heritage Statement

Iceni Projects Limited on behalf of
Noor Group of Hotels Ltd

May 2021

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ON BEHALF OF NOOR
GROUP OF HOTELS LTD

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DESIGN AND HERITAGE STATEMENT

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APPENDICES

A1. LISTED BUILDING DESCRIPTIONS

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Icen Projects was approached by Noor Group of Hotels (the “Client”) to assist with the submission of an Advertisement Consent and Listed Building Consent applications to the London Borough of Camden (LBC) in respect of the minor advertisements and redecoration of the currently vacant restaurant in the former Holborn Town Hall & Library at 193-197 High Holborn (the “Site”). 193-197 High Holborn is listed Grade II on Historic England's Statutory Register and lies within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.
- 1.2 The Hotel Group have recently signed a lease with the landlord to take over the vacant A3 Restaurant occupying part of the basement, ground and mezzanine levels of part of 193-197 High Holborn. The A3 Restaurant use first came into existence in 2004 when a Chinese restaurant known as Shanghai Blues obtained consent to operate from the unit. Thereafter, in 2016, the Burger & Lobster group purchased the lease, undertook extensive refurbishment works and opened to the public. In 2019, further alterations were approved by Camden Council for the subsequent Lessees, Gezellig's.
- 1.3 This Design & Access Statement with Heritage Statement describes the existing building and restaurant; establishes the recent planning history; explains current proposals; sets out the relevant LBC policy context; and assesses the impact of the proposals on the affected heritage assets (the Grade II listed building and the Conservation Area) and on access. The Statement concludes with an overall assessment of the proposals in terms of Camden's prevailing policy and a set of conclusions & recommendations.
- 1.4 The existing Site and surrounding area were appraised during site visits in February and March 2021. Whilst access to Archives has been impeded by restrictions due to Covid-19, sufficient information has been gathered through online sources, details of past applications to provide a sufficient understanding of the fabric and significance of the building. This information is set out in the following sections.
- 1.5 The report is produced by Icen Projects. Specifically, it is authored by Nairita Chakraborty, BA (Hons) MSc, IHBC Associate-Heritage, with guidance and review by Laurie Handcock MA (Cantab) MSc IHBC, Director – Heritage.

2. RELEVANT LEGISLATION, POLICY, AND GUIDANCE

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

- 2.1 Where any development may have a direct or indirect effect on designated heritage assets, there is a legislative framework to ensure the proposals are considered with due regard for their impact on the historic environment.
- 2.2 Section 7 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (PLBCAA 1990) states that ‘no person shall execute any works for the demolition of a listed building or for its alteration or extension in any manner which would affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest unless the works are authorised’.
- 2.3 The provision for Certificates of Lawfulness applications is under section 26H of the amended PLBCAA 1990, this states:

‘(1) A person who wishes to ascertain whether proposed works for the alteration or extension of a listed building in England would be lawful may make an application to the local planning authority specifying the building and describing the works.

(2) For the purposes of this section works would be lawful if they would not affect the character of the listed building as a building of special architectural or historical interest.’

National Planning Policy Framework 2012

- 2.4 Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) deals with the consideration of cultural heritage assets and sets out the importance of being able to assess the impact of a development on the significance of heritage assets. Significance is defined in Annex 2 as the value of an asset because of its heritage interest. This interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic and can extend to its setting. The setting of a heritage asset is defined in Annex 2 as the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. A designated heritage asset is recognised by the NPPF to be a World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.
- 2.5 The NPPF recognises that a balance needs to be struck between the preservation of the significance of a heritage asset and delivering public benefit. With regard to designated assets, paragraph 132 states that the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be on its conservation. Distinction is drawn between those assets of highest significance and those of a lesser significance.

- 2.6 The NPPF identifies harm as being either substantial or less than substantial. Paragraph 133 states that where the proposal would lead to substantial harm to the significance of a designated asset consent should be refused unless the harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefit that outweighs that harm. In cases where less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated asset is anticipated, paragraph 134 requires that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. In respect of non-designated assets, paragraph 135 requires a balanced judgement having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the asset.
- 2.7 In accordance with the NPPF, this Heritage Statement sets out the significance of heritage assets likely to be affected by the proposed works. The information provided in this assessment conforms to paragraph 128 of the NPPF, thus the level of detail provided is proportionate to the significance of the affected heritage assets and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on that significance.
- 2.8 Section 9 of the NPPF outlines appropriate actions for Protecting Green Belt land. Paragraph 88 advises local planning authorities dealing with planning permissions affecting the Green Belt should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.
- 2.9 Guidance on the application of heritage policy within the NPPF is provided within the on-line National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG).

Planning Practice Guidance ("PPG") (Department for Communities and Local Government, last updated July 2019)

- 2.10 The guidance on Conserving and enhancing the historic environment in the PPG supports the NPPF. Paragraph 002 states that conservation is an active process of maintenance and managing change that requires a flexible and thoughtful approach, and that neglect and decay of heritage assets is best addressed through ensuring that they remain in active use that is consistent with their conservation.
- 2.11 Paragraph 006 sets out how heritage significance can be understood in the planning context as archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic, defined as follows:

archaeological interest: As defined in the Glossary to the National Planning Policy Framework, there will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.

architectural and artistic interest: These are interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place. They can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved.

More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures of all types. Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skill, like sculpture.

historic interest: An interest in past lives and events (including pre-historic). Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with them. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of our nation's history, but can also provide meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity.

- 2.12 The PPG emphasises in paragraph 007 the importance of assessing the nature, extent and importance of a heritage asset in understanding the potential impact and acceptability of development proposals.
- 2.13 Paragraph 018 explains that, where potential harm to designated heritage assets is identified, it needs to be categorised as either less than substantial harm or substantial harm (which includes total loss) in order to identify which policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraphs 194-196) apply. It goes on to state that whether a proposal causes substantial harm will be a judgment for the decision-maker, having regard to the circumstances of the case and the policy in the National Planning Policy Framework. In general terms, substantial harm is a high test, so it may not arise in many cases. For example, in determining whether works to a listed building constitute substantial harm, an important consideration would be whether the adverse impact seriously affects a key element of its special architectural or historic interest.
- 2.14 Harm may arise from works to the heritage asset or from development within its setting. A thorough assessment of the impact on setting needs to take into account, and be proportionate to, the significance of the heritage asset and the degree to which proposed changes enhance or detract from that significance and the ability to appreciate it.
- 2.15 The PPG also provides clear guidance in paragraph 020 on the meaning of 'public benefits', particularly in relation to historic environment policy, including paragraphs 193 to 196 of the NPPF. The PPG makes clear that public benefits should be measured according to the delivery of the three key drivers of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental outcomes, all of which are reflected in the objectives of the planning system, as per Paragraph 8 of the NPPF. Public benefits include heritage benefits, and do not always have to be visible or accessible to the public in order to be genuine public benefits, for example, works to a listed private dwelling which secure its future as a designated heritage asset could be a public benefit.

Strategic Policy

The London Plan

- 2.16 The new London Plan is undergoing review following comments by the Secretary of State. The current draft London Plan (Intend to Publish version) was released in December 2019. This version, although not fully adopted, does carry significant weight. Heritage and Historic Environment policies in this plan are within Chapter 7.
- 2.17 The current adopted London Plan therefore remains the 2016 version, set out below.

London Plan Consolidated with Amendments (2016)

- 2.18 The London Plan (2016) incorporates the changes made in the Revised Early Minor Alterations to the London Plan (2013), Further Alterations to the London Plan (2014), and Minor Alterations to the London Plan (2015). The Revised Early Minor Alterations to the London Plan (REMA) set out minor alterations in relation to the London Plan and changes to UK legislation including the Localism Act (2011) and the NPPF. The revisions amend and split paragraph 7.31 supporting Policy 7.8 Heritage Assets and Archaeology with regard to developments affecting the setting of heritage assets, the need to weigh developments causing less than substantial harm on heritage assets against the public benefit and the reuse or refurbishment of heritage assets to secure sustainable development. The Glossary for the REMA also contains definitions for 'Heritage Assets' and 'Substantial Harm'. The Further Alterations to the London Plan (2014) updated policy in relation to World Heritage Sites in London and the assessment of their setting.
- 2.19 The London Plan deals with heritage issues in Chapter 7, London's Living Spaces and Places – Historic environment and landscapes.
- 2.20 Policy 7.8 'Heritage assets and archaeology' establishes the following clauses regarding heritage assets in London:

Strategic: London's heritage assets and historic environment, including listed buildings, registered historic parks and gardens and other natural and historic landscapes, conservation areas, World Heritage Sites, registered battlefields, scheduled monuments, archaeological remains and memorials should be identified, so that the desirability of sustaining and enhancing their significance and of utilising their positive role in place shaping can be taken into account.

Planning Decisions: Development should identify value, conserve, restore, re-use and incorporate heritage assets, where appropriate.

- 2.21 Development affecting heritage assets and their settings should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to their form, scale, materials and architectural detail.

Local Development Plan

2.22 The London Borough of Camden's Local Plan was adopted by the Council on 3 July 2017. Along with the Local Plan, Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) also form a key part of LB Camden's Local Development Framework.

2.23 Relevant heritage policies contained within Local Development Plan documents are as follows:

- Local Plan: Policy D1 Design (a-k); Policy D2 Heritage; Policy D3 Shopfronts and Policy D4 Advertisements
- SPDs: Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal

2.24 Policy D1: Design

The Council will seek to secure high quality design in development. The Council will require that development:

- a) respects local context and character;*
- b) preserves or enhances the historic environment and heritage assets in accordance with Policy D2 Heritage;*
- c) is sustainable in design and construction, incorporating best practice in resource management and climate change mitigation and adaptation;*
- d) is of sustainable and durable construction and adaptable to different activities and land uses;*
- e) comprises details and materials that are of high quality and complement the local character;*
- f) integrates well with the surrounding streets and open spaces, improving movement through the site and wider area with direct, accessible and easily recognisable routes and contributes positively to the street frontage;*
- g) is inclusive and accessible for all;*
- h) promotes health;*
- i) is secure and designed to minimise crime and antisocial behaviour;*
- j) responds to natural features and preserves gardens and other open space;*

- k) incorporates high quality landscape design (including public art, where appropriate) and maximises opportunities for greening for example through planting of trees and other soft landscaping,*

The Council will resist development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.

2.25 Policy D2 Heritage

The Council will preserve and, where appropriate, enhance Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas, listed buildings, archaeological remains, scheduled ancient monuments and historic parks and gardens and locally listed heritage assets.

Designated heritage assets

Designated heritage assets include conservation areas and listed buildings. The Council will not permit the loss of or substantial harm to a designated heritage asset, including conservation areas and Listed Buildings, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site;*
- b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation;*
- c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and*
- d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.*

The Council will not permit development that results in harm that is less than substantial to the significance of a designated heritage asset unless the public benefits of the proposal convincingly outweigh that harm.

Conservation areas

Conservation areas are designated heritage assets and this section should be read in conjunction with the section above headed 'designated heritage assets'. In order to maintain the character of Camden's conservation areas, the Council will take account of conservation area statements, appraisals and management strategies when assessing applications within conservation areas.

The Council will:

- e) require that development within conservation areas preserves or, where possible, enhances the character or appearance of the area;*
- f) resist the total or substantial demolition of an unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area;*
- g) resist development outside of a conservation area that causes harm to the character or appearance of that conservation area; and*
- h) preserve trees and garden spaces which contribute to the character and appearance of a conservation area or which provide a setting for Camden's architectural heritage.*

Listed Buildings

Listed buildings are designated heritage assets and this section should be read in conjunction with the section above headed 'designated heritage assets'.

To preserve or enhance the borough's listed buildings, the Council will:

- i) resist the total or substantial demolition of a listed building;*
- j) resist proposals for a change of use or alterations and extensions to a listed building where this would cause harm to the special architectural and historic interest of the building; and*
- k) resist development that would cause harm to significance of a listed building through an effect on its setting.*

2.26 Policy D3 Shopfronts

The Council will expect a high standard of design in new and altered shopfronts, canopies, blinds, security measures and other features.

When determining proposals for shopfront development the Council will consider:

- a) the design of the shopfront or feature, including its details and materials;*
- b) the existing character, architectural and historic merit and design of the building and its shopfront;*

- c) *the relationship between the shopfront and the upper floors of the building and surrounding properties, including the relationship between the shopfront and any forecourt or lightwell;*
- d) *the general characteristics of shopfronts in the area;*
- e) *community safety and the contribution made by shopfronts to natural surveillance; and*
- f) *the degree of accessibility.*

The Council will resist the removal of shop windows without a suitable replacement and will ensure that where shop, service, food, drink and entertainment uses are lost, a shop window and visual display is maintained.

Where an original shopfront of architectural or historic value survives, in whole or in substantial part, there will be a presumption in favour of its retention. Where a new shopfront forms part of a group where original shop fronts survive, its design should complement their quality and character.

2.27 Policy D4 Advertisements

The Council will require advertisements to preserve or enhance the character of their setting and host building. Advertisements must respect the form, fabric, design and scale of their setting and host building and be of the highest standard of design, material and detail.

We will support advertisements that:

- a) *preserve the character and amenity of the area; and*
- b) *preserve or enhance heritage assets and conservation areas.*

We will resist advertisements that:

- c) *contribute to an unsightly proliferation of signage in the area;*
- d) *contribute to street clutter in the public realm;*
- e) *cause light pollution to nearby residential properties or wildlife habitats;*
- f) *have flashing illuminated elements; or*
- g) *impact upon public safety.*

The Council will resist advertisements on shopfronts that are above fascia level or ground floor level, except in exceptional circumstances. Shroud advertisements, banners, hoardings / billboards / large outdoor signboards are subject to further criteria as set out in supplementary planning document Camden Planning Guidance on advertisements.

3. HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

Early History

Prehistoric

- 3.1 The site's location on the well-drained Lynch Hill gravel terrace close to predictable resources of the River Thames and River Fleet would have made the area attractive for settlement. Despite this, there is no evidence for prehistoric activity within the study area, other than Palaeolithic axes, Mesolithic flint tools and an isolated Iron Age find. It is not known whether these were insitu.

Roman

- 3.2 The site lies adjacent to a major Roman route and evidence of the roadway or ditches associated with it may be present. Although there is little evidence of settlement around the site, Roman burials and other chance finds have been recorded in the site vicinity. There is thus a general background potential in this area for Roman funerary evidence or other artefacts. Burials, as deeper cut features, have a greater chance of survival. Roman relict agricultural features (such as field ditches) could be present beside the roadways as could quarry pits into the gravel, to provide for the frequent repair/re-metalling of the nearby roads.

Saxon and Medieval

- 3.3 The Roman road along High Holborn/Oxford Street continued in use in the Saxon period. and by the 10th century a settlement had developed in the area of the Fleet. The Site is located in the Holborn district, which takes its name from the Holebourne stream (tributary of the Fleet River) and is first recorded in the 10th century whereby land was granted to Westminster Abbey by King Edgar.¹
- 3.4 The street Holborn (which becomes High Holborn west of Gray's Inn Road) has supplied the city with goods since the thirteenth century, when it was an important trade route for wool, hides, corn, cheese and timber. Holborn developed as a medieval suburb of the city, and from the Middle Ages grand suburban houses of London were built along Holborn. Several of these were later established as lawyers' colleges. Of the colleges in the area, two now survive in Gray's Inn (established 1569) and Lincoln's Inn (1422).
- 3.5 The Site has undergone archaeological evaluation by the Museum of London Archaeology Service, August 1999; site code HHN99. During excavation, two fragments of late medieval or early post-

¹ Panton K., London: A Historical Companion (Tempus 2001), p183

medieval tile were uncovered (GLHER 2839138). A ditch also produced the rim of a cooking pot dated between 1140-1300 (GLHER 2839137).

17th Century onwards

- 3.6 Although, it is not clear when the south side of High Holborn was first built upon, but it is likely that the area would have had some scattered buildings in Elizabeth's reign.² The first evidence of building operations on a large scale appears after the acquisition of the lease of Purse Fields [to the south of the Site] by Sir Charles Cornwallis in 1613. Cornwallis sub-leased certain portions of the Holborn frontage, extending south to the site of Parker Street, and on these portions, houses had been erected before 1650.
- 3.7 The later eighteenth century saw the growth of the fashionable Bloomsbury, with new squares and streets developing to the north of Holborn. Development also continued to the west, where it became increasingly desirable to live, creating poorer, crowded conditions in the east. New roads were instated in the later nineteenth century to create better connection to the city and alleviate overcrowding, with New Oxford Street, which meets High Holborn opposite the Site, being the first to pave the way.
- 3.8 By 1807 the leases of the property expired along the south side of High Holborn had expired, and an arrangement was come to between the Vestry of St. Giles and the Crown, by which the latter and its lessees gave up sufficient land to enable the street front to High Holborn to be amended. This road expansion attracted the Georgian terraces along High Holborn. The Holborn Viaduct was opened in 1869, and since its opening the area attracted greater business and seen the increased redevelopment of offices in the area.

History of Holborn Town Hall

- 3.9 Holborn Town Hall was originally located in Clerkenwell, on Grays Inn Road, and was built in 1878-79 to the designs of Lewis Isaacs, surveyor to Holborn Board of Works (for whom the building was erected), and his partner Henry Louis Florence. However, its period of civic use was short, as it was sold in 1906 by the successor to the Holborn Board, Holborn Metropolitan Borough Council.
- 3.10 Meanwhile, the current Site was being occupied by St Giles District Board of Works by late 19th Century. In 1893, they sold some adjoining property to the Commissioners for St Giles Library. A

² <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/survey-london/vol5/pt2/pp16-17>

limited competition was then held, with the requirement that the existing passageway to the board offices and a rear yard be incorporated into the design.

- 3.11 This was awarded to Mr W. Rushworth. Construction of the new library commenced in 1893 and was completed the next year. In 1900 Holborn Metropolitan Borough Council was formed by the amalgamation of the St. Giles and Holborn District Board of Works. The new authority inherited both the building on High Holborn and Holborn Town Hall on the Grays Inn Road. Although the latter building was the more impressive, much of the space was taken up by a large public hall which made it difficult to adapt without destroying its letting value.
- 3.12 It was therefore, decided to acquire further land on High Holborn and expand the Library building. Once again, a limited competition was held, with the successful design being that of Messrs H. Anselm Hall and Septimus Warwick. Building began in 1906 and was completed in 1908. The front elevation of the building is very early Renaissance in style, with large mullioned windows, deliberately designed to appear sympathetic to the adjoining former Library.
- 3.13 In 1965 the borough was merged with St Pancras to form the new London Borough of Camden. It was decided to consolidate the civic government at St Pancras Town Hall. The building was awarded Grade II listing on 15th January 1973.

Map regression

- 3.14 The earliest map consulted which shows the location of the Site in detail is the *Londini Angliae Regni Metropolis* c.1690 (Figure 3.1). This map depicts the Site as a row of densely terraced housing, with an open courtyard space created between these buildings and the backs of the houses in the parallel street to the south. The street frontage opposite follows the historic street pattern of Holborn, with small strips of housing located where New Oxford Street now exists.



Figure 3.1 *Londini Angliae Regni Metropolis* c.1690 by Jacques de la Feuille
Source: British Library

- 3.15 Blome's Map of 1720 [Fig 3.2] shows the built form of the area in greater detail. The Site appears immediately to the east of Harrow Alley [no.26 on the map]. The courtyard space to the rear shows various plot divisions corresponding to the buildings on the street frontage.



Figure 3.2 Richard Blome's Map of St Giles's Parish, 1720
Source: British Library

- 3.16 The first OS series map dates from 1875 [Fig 3.3]. By this time, the street improvements envisaged following the renewal of leases are clear, with continuous buildings along High Holborn. The addition of New Oxford Street provided a new setting to the row of buildings overlooking the intersection. The Site appears to be occupied by six different properties with a stone yard to the rear. There is also a Foundry to the south of the Site.



Figure 3.3 OS Map 1875 © 100035207
Source: Ordnance Survey historic map series



Figure 3.4 OS Map 1896 © 100035207
Source: Ordnance Survey historic map series

- 3.17 The OS map from 1896 [Fig 3.4] does not show many changes in the area. However, within the wider area, Kingsway had been built to the east. The Library on the Site was built at this time, but is not evident on the map.
- 3.18 By 1915, both the Public Library and 'Municipal Offices' were depicted on the OS map [Figure 3.5]. Stone Yard was still present to the rear of the Site, however buildings had been erected within the courtyard, enclosing the open space.



Figure 3.5 OS Map 1915 ©100035207
Source: Ordnance Survey historic map series



Figure 3.6 OS Map 1965 ©100035207
Source: Ordnance Survey historic map series

- 3.19 The 1965 OS Map [Figure 3.6] highlights Holborn Town Hall with the removal of building boundaries on the Site. The open courtyard within the Site has been infilled with the development of the Town Hall's canteen. This map also highlights the Site's enclosure by surrounding buildings, with substantial development to the east, west and south, separating the building from the listed buildings to the south. Dragon's Yard passageway continues to separate the Site from the listed building adjacent, and provides access from High Holborn to the historic Stone Yard, shown as the Council Depot in this map.
- 3.20 The next maps from 1982-87 [Fig 3.7] and 2003 [Fig 3.8] do not show much change. The Town Hall and Library was converted into offices and a restaurant in the year 2000, including the five storey rear extension to the building.



Figure 3.7 OS Map 1982-87 ©100035207
Source: Ordnance Survey historic map series



Figure 3.8 OS Map 2003 ©100035207
Source: Ordnance Survey historic map series

4. DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE AND STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Site

4.1 The Site comprises the former Holborn Town Hall and Library, which is grade II listed. The Site is bounded by High Holborn on the north and retail/restaurant/office buildings on the south, east and west sides. The Site is located within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

4.2 The Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal describes the listed building as:

The grade II listed, five storey former Holborn Town Hall [which] has a decorative stone façade with Baroque-style details, and was built to the designs of Hall and Warwick in 1906-08. The eastern wing is earlier, dating from 1894, and designed in a French Renaissance style by W Rushworth; it was formerly the St Giles' Library at the western end of High Holborn, on a triangular site formed by the junction of New Oxford Street and High Holborn.

4.3 The application particularly deals with the restaurant part of the building, which is ground and mezzanine floors within the former St. Giles Library, the eastern wing of the building. It was constructed circa 1895, with Holborn Town Hall (centre and western wing) being constructed between 1906-08. The building has been comprehensively extended and refurbished over the last 100 years including the amalgamation of the library and Town Hall and reconfiguration of internal spaces.

4.4 The listed building is four storeys tall, with basements and attic levels, faced in Ancaster and Portland stone. Its roof is steeply pitched and slated with pedimented dormers and pilastered Dutch gables, which terminate in segmental pediments to end bays. The eastern building (to the left), the former Library, is mirrored in the detail of the Town Hall; creating a symmetrical façade of nine windows.

4.5 The façade of the listed building addresses High Holborn, which forms its immediate setting. It is a busy street, flanked by tall buildings on each side with narrow streets feeding into it. Looking west along the street, the grade II listed 199, 200 and 201, High Holborn (List UID: 1378880) can be seen, with the former library and town hall behind. The curve in the road reduces visibility of the Site from this angle.

4.6 In October 2000, Camden Council granted approval (LBC App No PS9905224/R1) for the major conversion and extension of the municipal building, including the introduction of an A3 Restaurant use at basement, ground and mezzanine level within the eastern and central sections of the Library building. Further approvals for the refurbishment of the restaurant element followed in 2004

(2004/0813/P & 2004/0814/L) and 2016 (2016/0942/L) when first Shanghai Blues and then Burger & Lobster occupied the space. The A3 unit was leased again in 2019 and has been vacated recently.

- 4.7 The Restaurant comprises three levels of accommodation with plant, storage and other ancillary facilities at basement level, the main restaurant, bar and kitchen at ground floor level and an additional area of restaurant seating on the mezzanine. The cellular basement accommodation was recently refurbished by Gezellig and little of the original fabric is now visible. At ground floor level, the spaces are of a grander scale with two large double height rooms with tall windows, formerly the public library reading rooms, occupying the space behind the central and eastern sections of the High Holborn frontage and the narrow side alleyway running down the eastern side of the building. The double height nature of the ground floor space also allowed the introduction in 2004 of a mezzanine dining level over a large kitchen at the rear of the floor plate with views down into the main restaurant space. This mezzanine provides window access to a rear lightwell where the air intake grille and the fume extract stack for the restaurant plant are located.
- 4.8 Externally, there are previously-approved externally-lit and other signage and menu boards.

Assessment of significance

Assessment Methodology

- 4.9 The assessment methodology used here for assessing the significance of the identified heritage assets and their settings is the framework set out in the November 2017 consultation draft of Historic England's best-practice guidance document Conservation Principles. This proposes the use of three heritage interests – historical, archaeological, and architectural and artistic - in assessing what makes a place and its wider context special. These are broadly in line with the values – evidential [now archaeological], historical, aesthetic [now architectural and artistic], and communal [now part of historical] – set out in the previous, 2008 version, but are consistent with the heritage interests in the NPPF, the definitions for which are now included in the updated Planning Practice Guidance:
- archaeological interest: As defined in the Glossary to the National Planning Policy Framework, there will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.
 - architectural and artistic interest: These are interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place. They can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures of all types. Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skill, like sculpture.
 - historic interest: An interest in past lives and events (including pre-historic). Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with them. Heritage assets with historic interest not only

provide a material record of our nation's history, but can also provide meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity.

Significance Criteria

- 4.10 The intrinsic significance unique to each heritage asset can be defined as the sum of tangible and intangible values which make it important to society. The significance of an asset or place may reflect its age, aesthetic, architectural quality or fabric, as well as intangible qualities such as associations with historic people or events.
- 4.11 The significance of the identified heritage assets will be assessed using a number of significance ratings:
- High: A feature, space or theme which is significant at national or international level. These will tend to have a high cultural value and form an important element of a building or site.
 - Medium: A feature, space or theme which is significant at a regional or national level. These will tend to have some cultural merit and form a significant part of the building or site.
 - Low: A feature, space or theme which is of local or regional significance.
 - Neutral: A feature, space or theme which has no cultural significance but is also not considered intrusive to heritage value.
 - Intrusive: A feature, space or theme which detracts from heritage value.

Assessment of special interest

Archaeological Interest

- 4.12 The Library and Town Hall were constructed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries respectively. This was perhaps the third iteration of the Site, earliest being Elizabethan terraces. As such, any potential for archaeological evidence has likely been lost due to repeated redevelopment of the Site.

Architectural and Artistic Interest

- 4.13 The significance of the heritage asset is principally derived from its High Holborn façade, which is of high historic and architectural interest and has retained features of its previous use as Holborn Town Hall and Library. The flamboyant appearance and French Renaissance architectural style and delicate features stands out within the street and contributes to the local townscape. Purpose built as civic buildings, the Town Hall was deliberately designed to appear symmetrical to the Library, thus forming a significant group. The elaborate facade detail gives the buildings a high artistic and architectural interest. The A3 premise, however, has gone substantial changes and does not retain

much of the original fabric internally. As such, the overall architectural and artistic interest of the interior of the restaurant is considered to be low.

Historic Interest

- 4.14 The Library and Town Hall were constructed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries respectively, and are significant regionally to the London Borough of Camden, acting as a Town Hall throughout the majority of the twentieth century, and more widely as an example of an early twentieth-century municipal building within London. The building's previous use as Holborn Town Hall informs much of its historical significance, as it has been strongly associated with municipal activities and provided a backdrop for events and key decision making for the district throughout the twentieth century.
- 4.15 Additionally, the historic use of the building as a Library and Town Hall provides the Site with an important communal aspect to the building. The Site has historically facilitated high levels of public interaction, resulting in the building being of value to the local community. The building has retained features that highlight its history as a communal building, enhancing appreciation and understanding of the history and former use of the heritage asset. As such, its historic interest is considered to be high.

5. DESCRIPTION OF THE WORKS AND IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Description of proposals

- 5.1 The proposals are outlined in the schedule of works as below:
- Installation of retractable canvas awnings on the three windows on the front elevation, with new restaurant's name painted on them.
 - Installation of removable planters.

Assessment Methodology

- 5.2 The impact assessment utilises the guidance as set out in Historic England's Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment (July 2015).

Impact Assessment

- 5.3 In preparing the latest proposals, the applicant has designed the awnings that appear traditional and contextual, with minimal impact on the façade due to its sensitivity. The external planters are removable and would be used to enhance the appearance of the building by introducing a level of soft landscaping.
- 5.4 Following the lease being transferred to the new restaurant, the existing signage would be rebranded with no alterations to them. The awning would be a new addition, but these would be to identify the restaurant. These do not appear out of character on the listed building or within this part of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, where similar signs abound. In addition, the awnings will not damage the fabric of the listed building to any material degree.

Policy assessment of proposals

- 5.5 With regard to design policy in the Camden Local Plan (July 2017), CLP Policy 01 Design confirms the Council's intention to secure high quality design in development that, *inter alia*, respects local context and character; preserves or enhances the historic environment and heritage assets in accordance with Policy D2 Heritage; is sustainable in design and construction; comprises details and materials that are of high quality and complement the local character; integrates well with the surrounding streets; and contributes positively to the street frontage. Policy D4 Advertisements also seeks to control the proliferation of unacceptable signage.

- 5.6 In this instance, the only external changes to the street frontage of the existing building comprise the retractable awnings and the removable planters. These elements would help to identify the new restaurant and add a degree of soft landscaping to the façade. The proposal would reuse the existing signages, previously granted by the Council. The awnings and the planters demonstrably do not contribute to an unsightly proliferation of signage in the area or to public realm street clutter. In addition, the A3 use brings beneficial day-long activity to this large frontage and its on-going viability helps to keep the fabric of the listed building in good repair.
- 5.7 Consequently, Iceni considers the proposal meets current design policy as set out in paragraphs 193 to 196 of the NPPF 2019; the London Plan and CLP Policies 01 Design and 04 Advertisements of the Camden Local Plan (July 2017) and Camden Planning Guidance.

Access

- 5.8 The external works required to sign the restaurant have no additional access implications for the listed building or its users.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The report has been supplied on behalf of Noor Group of Hotels Ltd to support an application for Advertisement Consent. It has been written with regard to Historic England Advice notes and relevant Camden Council's Strategic policies and supplementary documents.
- 6.2 The assessment has considered the historic development of the Site and the surrounding area to demonstrate and inform an assessment of significance of the property. Site visits reveal that the interior of the building has been altered repeatedly in the past. Furthermore, there are little original/existing period features within the internal parts of the property.
- 6.3 The proposals are considered not to affect the character of the listed building, 193-197 High Holborn as a building of special architectural and historical interest. This has been demonstrated within the assessment of impact and with reference to the assessment of significance. The new awnings and planters would be reversible and would not have any impact on the architectural and historic interest of the building.
- 6.4 As such, we consider that the proposal accords with the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the relevant National Planning Policies and Guidance.

A1. LISTED BUILDING DESCRIPTIONS

Holborn Town Hall and Library, High Holborn

Heritage Category: Listed Building

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1378893

Date first listed: 15-Jan-1973

Statutory Address: Holborn Town Hall & Library, High Holborn

County: Greater London Authority

District: Camden (London Borough)

National Grid Reference: TQ 30363 81452

Town hall and library, now municipal offices. Library (formerly St Giles's Library), 1894 by W Rushworth (eastern wing); town hall, 1906-8 by Hall and Warwick (centre and western wing). Ancaster and Portland stone faced. Steeply pitched slated roof with pedimented dormers and pilastered Dutch gables terminating in segmental pediments to end bays. STYLE: the library with early French Renaissance detail, the town hall in similar style but Baroque details. EXTERIOR: 4 storeys, basements and attics. Both buildings form a symmetrical facade of 9 windows. End bays slightly projecting. Eastern wing with entrance to former library of elliptical arch flanked by Corinthian pilasters supporting an entablature; enriched double doors. Former vehicle entrance to left in similar style with wrought-iron gate by the Bromsgrove Guild of Applied Art. Central 3-light oriel through 1st and 2nd floors. At 1st floor level a band of Renaissance enrichment covering the oriel apron and having flanking oculi. Upper floors pilastered, the 1st and 2nd floors with bands, 3rd floor with diapers. Western wing has round-arched entrance to former town hall with moulded head and keystone flanked by attached columns supporting an open segmental pediment with carved coat of arms in tympanum with festoon and putti heads. Central 3-light oriel through 1st and 2nd floors. A band of similar enrichment at 1st floor level covering the oriel apron. 3rd floor windows round-arched with moulded heads and keystones. Central bays have round-arched windows at ground floor level; 1st and 2nd floor, square-headed separated by pilasters, the 1st floor with a wrought-iron balcony by the Bromsgrove Guild; 3rd floor, 3 oculi linked by festoons. Most windows transom and mullion. INTERIOR: former town hall has large circular hall running up through each floor and adjoining the main stair and lift. At ground floor level main hall with floor of marble in a compass design and arcade of Doric half columns supporting an entablature under a shallow dome; oak double doors, with oculi and brass plates incorporating a coat of arms, in Baroque frames; 3 stained glass First and Second

World War memorial windows; original brass pendant light. Open well main stair of artificial stone and granolithic paving with marble dado. Original wrought-iron lift enclosure, in well of stair, by the

Bromsgrove Guild. Corridors mostly vaulted with granolithic paving and oak doors. Interiors of note are: the rear 1st floor Council Chamber of square plan surmounted by a central dome with small cupola light. Walls panelled in Austrian oak with Ionic pilasters and columns supporting an enriched cornice. Windows of small, patterned, leaded panes. Original brass pendant light. Beneath, on the ground floor, the former Court Room, panelled and enriched in Baroque style.

Listing NGR: TQ3036381452

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1378893>