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London Borough of Camden  
Development Management Team  
5 Pancras Square  
London  
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17<sup>th</sup> January 2022

Dear David and Colette,

## **Application for Advertisement and Listed Building Consent | Camden Town Hall**

### **Introduction**

Enclosed is an application for advertisement and listed building consent, made on behalf of Lendlease, acting as Project Managers on behalf of the London Borough of Camden (LBC) in relation to the comprehensive refurbishment of the Grade II-listed Town Hall, Judd Street, London, WC1H 9JE. The application is for a new wayfinding strategy within the building alongside LBC's motto carved into the stone steps at the entrance on Judd Street.

The new wayfinding approach is required to address the changes internally and help visitors navigate within the refurbished building. New signage will be installed at ground, first and basement of the building, mostly in key visitor circulation spaces and back of house areas. The aim is to improve accessibility and the overall visitor experience of the revitalised building, ensuring visitors to all uses located in the building can navigate through new links and spaces across all floors, whilst conserving the architectural and historical significance of the listed building.

The strategy is presented in the accompanying documents prepared by Whybrow in collaboration with Purcell and LBC. These documents include the proposals for updated signage within the interior of the building and the stone carving of LBC's motto at the Judd Street entrance.

The proposed description of development for the advertisement consent application is: *Stone carving of London Borough of Camden's motto into the steps outside the Judd Street entrance.*

The proposed description of development for the listed building consent is: *Stone carving of London Borough of Camden's motto into the steps outside the Judd Street entrance and new fixed wayfinding signage within the Camden Town Hall.*

### **Application content**

This application has been submitted via the Planning Portal (ref: PP-10419320 and 10419326). The following make up the application and supporting documents:

- Application form
- Location Plan at scale 1:1250
- Design Statement by Whybrow
- Existing and proposed drawings showing details of signage
- Heritage commentary by Purcell (included in this covering letter)

The relevant application fee of £132 has also been submitted in support of the advertisement consent application.

## The site

Camden Town Hall ('CTH'), formerly St Pancras Town Hall, was built between 1934-37 to designs by A.J. Thomas. It is a Grade II listed building, bounded by Judd Street, Euston Road, Tonbridge Walk and Bidborough Street. It is located within the King's Cross Conservation Area, and on the boundary of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. It has been the primary public building and focus of the civic and democratic functions of the London Borough of Camden. The former Assembly Room, previously known as the Camden Centre, lies at the east end of the building with its foyer currently accessed from Bidborough Street.

The site is bounded to the north by Euston Road, a major road with fast flowing traffic, bus and cycle routes. Directly to the north of the site is St Pancras Station and Chambers and the St Pancras Renaissance Hotel. Adjacent to this, on either side, are the Grade I listed British Library and King's Cross Station.

## Background to the refurbishment project

The CTH refurbishment project will revitalise this iconic Camden landmark whilst retaining CTH as the civic and democratic heart of Camden. The proposals, which are currently under construction, will deliver essential building work to upgrade the whole building, whilst protecting its historic significance. The project will create a partnership with new commercial organisations, which will enhance the local economy and provide employment opportunities, while generating a long-term income stream to support the initial investment made by LBC.

The refurbishment of the Town Hall will deliver:

- Modernised spaces for civic and democratic functions and public services to improve and enhance public access to services and the democratic process;
- In line with the Council's digital strategy, enhanced use of technology and a wider digital offer for increased effectiveness, transparency and public access;
- A partnership with commercial organisations which will enhance the local economy and employment opportunities;
- Spaces for businesses to occupy the 2nd and 3rd floors of the Town Hall;
- Spaces for small and medium enterprises (SMEs);
- A major investment in building infrastructure to ensure the long-term future of the Town Hall at no cost to the local taxpayer; and
- An opportunity to obtain a long-term income stream to support the initial investment and raise money for services through increasing the rental capacity of the council.

The full planning and listed building consent application (ref: 2019/2238/P +2019/2257/L) was approved in December 2019.

## The wayfinding proposals

**Need for works** | The wayfinding strategy is critically important to the delivery of this revitalised landmark building, incorporating a variety of civic, public and private uses. The strategy aims to improve the overall visitor experience and enhance accessibility across the building. The proposals detailed below have been conceived with the architectural and historical significance of the listed building in mind. The style of the signage is taken from existing features and colour palette.

**Areas affected** | The wayfinding scheme proposed in this application focuses on both the proposed visitor-facing and back of house areas of The building. These include the lifts/stairs and lobby area, corridors and entrances.

There are **3 types of signage proposed**:

Type 1: Identification signs | 102no. identification signs are proposed in total, including:

- 85no. room and toilet door signs (front – ID4/ID5 - and back of house locations – ID7/ID8) made from 6mm panels with printed graphics/engraved characters and mounted to doors using VHB tape;
- 1no. suspended identification signs (ID6) located outside the Council Chamber made from 6mm panel with printed graphics to both faces and fixed to ceiling using Ormiston fixings and stainless-steel wire drops;
- 5no. projecting signs (ID3) located outside toilets in visitor areas, to be made from 6mm recessed panels, with printed graphics to both faces and aluminium frame fixed flush to wall using concealed keyhole fixings;

- 10no. sign written identification signs (ID2) to be hand painted onto existing glass panels or direct to wall in visitor circulation areas; and,
  - 1no. stone carved Camden motto (ID1) to be hand-carved direct to one of the steps at the Judd Street entrance, which are being replaced as part of the original application.
- Type 2: Directional signs | This signage comprises 3 different types, all to be located at key points within visitor circulation areas, including:
    - 2no. wall mounted directional signs (single – DR1) and 4no. wall mounted directional signs (double – DR2), both to be made from 6mm panels with printed graphics with aluminium frame and installed using aluminium drilling template; and,
    - 2no. sign written directional signs.

Type 3: Information signs | This category comprises 3 signage types:

- 4no. wall mounted building directory signs (IF1) to be located in the main lobby areas at ground and first floor levels, again made from 6mm panels with printed graphics and aluminium frame to be installed using aluminium drilling template;
- 1no. wall mounted floor maps (back of house – IF2) to be located in the main/key corridor of the basement level; and,
- A number of freestanding notice signs made from 2mm acrylic with aluminium frame for updateable A3 paper inserts between the acrylic. These are not attached to the building and therefore these do not require listed building consent.

The content on these signs is all indicative. The design statement and drawings prepared by Whybrow accompany the application and provide further details on the wayfinding proposals at each location and the fixing methods applied at for each type of signage at each location.

### **Planning Framework and Assessment**

The policies within The National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF) including the Planning Practice Guidance 2021 (PPG), and the Development Plan form a material consideration in the determination of this application. The Development Plan is formed of the GLA's London Plan 2021, and the Camden Local Plan comprised of: The Camden Local Plan July 2017; the Site Allocations Plan September 2013 and the Policies Map (updated version) January 2019.

Other relevant guidance is within LBC Kings Cross/St Pancras Conservation Area Statement (December 2003), LBC Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (April 2011). The following policies have been considered in devising this proposal: NPPF Section 12 'Well-designed Places' and new Section 16 'Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment'; LBC strategic policy D1 Design, D2 Heritage, D4 Advertisements. CPG Advertisements (2018).

### **Assessment of proposals**

#### **Heritage statement**

The NPPF notes that the quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed. Advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts. LBC Policy D4 advertisement supports signs and advertisements that are well designed and sensitively located within the street scene and relate to the character, scale and architectural features of the building to which they are fixed on, especially on a listed building. Consent will normally be given to adverts at fascia level or below.

The proposal has been informed by the Conservation Plan prepared by Purcell (dated 2019). The majority of signage will be located in areas of high significance within the Grade II-listed building. For this reason, Whybrow has carefully considered the position, the design and material of the proposed signs and has progressed a minimal scheme that provides sufficient information while not over cluttering the historic spaces or requiring an excessive number of new insertions to fabric. Most of the proposed signs will be located in existing signage locations and existing holes will be reused where possible. The appearance of the building internally will also not be affected. These signs will also help deliver the longer-term public benefits associated with the newly refurbished CTH. The design of the proposed signage is high quality and has been carefully considered. Therefore, the proposal complies with the requirements of Camden Local Plan policy D4.

Purcell has reviewed the proposals from a heritage perspective and commented as follows –

*The existing signage in the Town Hall is both unsympathetic and incohesive. Having been added to in an ad-hoc fashion over the years, the existing signage has become extensive, unsympathetic to the nature of the historic building and damaging to the historic fabric itself.*

*Existing signage, especially that located at Ground Floor does not reflect original features and often, multiple fixings have been used for each sign fixing back to historic fabric.*

*With extensive repair works already proposed within LBC application 2019/2257/L, this provides a great opportunity for the full removal and associated repairs of existing signage and the introduction of a cohesive signage strategy, that not only complements the historic fabric, but is rationalised and considered – avoiding extensive and often confusing signage.*

*The new Wayfinding scheme enhances the existing symmetry of the building, part of the power and success of the Town Hall. The 'framework' signage reads as a contemporary addition, whilst complementing the historic fabric; the chosen black framework echoes from the existing fenestration and decorative metalwork in the existing building, and the warm cream 'Hi-Macs' sign has been selected within the ambient light of the Town Hall. The 'flourishes' read as part of the heritage of the building, using fonts based on the building vernacular and re-purposing existing features such as the period glass and brass signage located over doors in the Grand Lobby G.20.*

*It is appreciated that the new 'framework' signage uses mechanical fixings into the historic fabric, but it is noted that these are minimised, applying less fixings per sign, and are all concealed. There is also an endeavour for existing fixing holes to be reused where feasible. Framework signage has been designed so that the sign itself can be changed, without removing the frame and fixings, meaning the signs can be updated/refreshed to suit future development, without causing any further harm.*

*The text and layout of the new signage is designed to accommodate all building users. This in keeping with the approach of the rest of the works in improving accessibility and is important for London Borough of Camden Council to celebrate equality.*

*Although it is appreciated that there is some minor harm caused due to the fixing of new signage, overall, the proposed wayfinding strategy will remedy the poor approach of the existing signage and present a scheme that is cohesive, in keeping with the character and of great benefit to the Town Hall's use. Therefore, on balance, the proposed signage is considered less than substantial harm and outweighed by the heritage and public benefits of the strategy.*

The proposed signage will complement the architecture of the listed building and enhance the significance of CTH's use in support of its primary purpose and role as a public building. The very minor insertions required in carefully selected locations to accommodate the fixings are not anticipated to cause harm to the significance of listed building overall. The proposal will have a tangible heritage benefit as the proposed wayfinding scheme will better reveal the interior architecture and help to increase public access and the appreciation and understanding of the listed building. The proposals are sympathetic to the historic significance of the building and will help to secure its long-term viable use as a public asset. The works are also entirely reversible. They are, therefore, in accordance with Camden Local Plan Policies D1 and D2.

**Accessibility** | CTH is being refurbished with new configurations and uses. The proposed wayfinding signage is designed to help the public identify the rooms and navigate through the building internally. These signs will be updated and modernised to be in line and consistent with the overall LBC branding and modern accessibility standards to accommodate all CTH visitors.

**Advertisement consent** | Advertisement consent is only required for the LBC motto located on the steps outside the Judd Street entrance. There will be no illumination. Comprising the Council's motto, the text is considered to be appropriate within the context of the public building. The motto is carved into the steps so it will not project onto the pavement or harm local amenity or public safety in any way. This is in accordance with the CPG Advertisement guidance. The steps are also new, approved as part of the overall original planning and listed building consent, so the carving will not affect any historic fabric. In accordance with the principles of the NPPF and LBC policies, the proposal is not considered to impact the setting of the listed building or the character and appearance of the conservation area.

## **Summary**

CTH is an important building in Camden. The proposals have been carefully designed to ensure they are sympathetic to and enhance the architecture of the listed building and the character and appearance of the King's Cross Conservation Area. The proposals fully meet the requirements of the relevant NPPF and LBC Policies as well as Camden Planning Guidance. The proposals are considered to deliver heritage

gains alongside public benefits. The proposed signs will improve the overall visitors' experience which in turn will help CTH maintain its objectives as a public building, meet with the objectives of Policies D1 and D2 and thus continue to enhance its status and significance.

If you have any questions, please contact [susie@theplanninglab.com](mailto:susie@theplanninglab.com) or [melanie@theplanninglab.com](mailto:melanie@theplanninglab.com) (0207 257 9363).

Yours sincerely,

**The Planning Lab**