

PD9849/TM/CP

Camden Council
Planning - Development Control,
Camden Council,
Camden Town Hall,
London,
WC1H 8ND
02079744444

30th November 2022

Dear Sir/Madam,

INTRODUCTION

On behalf of our client, The Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn, please find enclosed an application (hereafter "Application") made under please find enclosed an application seeking listed building consent for the refurbishment of the existing lifts within the Great Hall, Lincoln's Inn, WC2A 3PD. The description of the proposed development is as follows:

"Replacement of existing disabled access lift and lift enclosure within the existing lift shaft"

The application has been submitted under Planning Portal Reference PP-11747228.

The following documents accompany this application:

- This cover letter (which comprises a Heritage Statement and Design and Access Statement)
- Application Form by Montagu Evans;
- The relevant existing and Proposed Drawings and Site Location Plan by Stamos Yeoh Architects
- Drawing Schedule by Montagu Evans

BACKGROUND

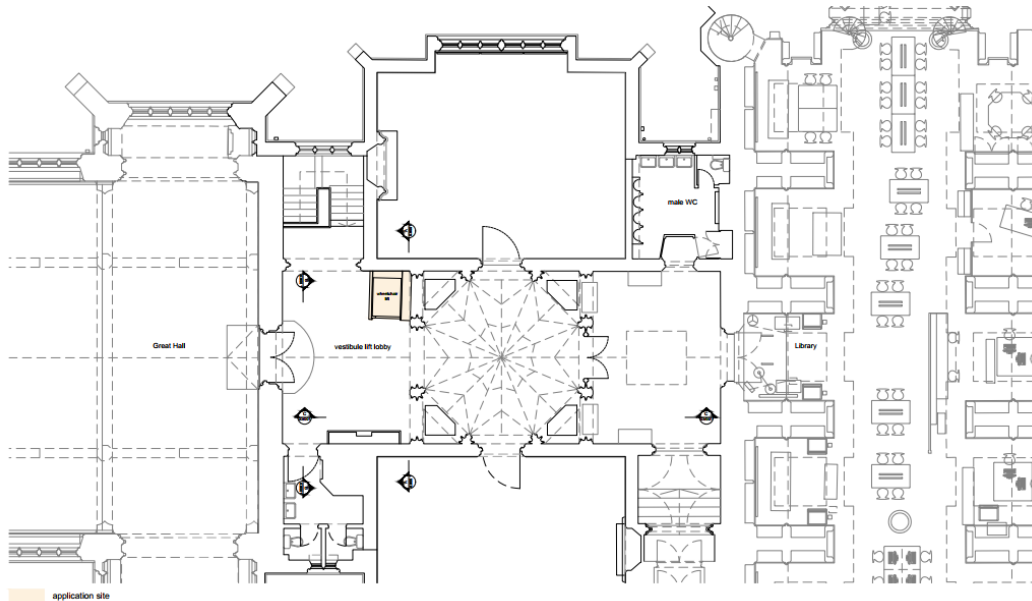


Figure 1 Extract from Plan 1421/01/ 001 showing site (highlighted in pale orange) in first floor Vestibule lobby

The existing platform lift connects a first-floor lift lobby with the ground floor.

At the ground floor, the lift is currently enclosed within an aluminium panelled cover and glass panel fascia as demonstrated in the accompanying layout drawings and 'Site photo sheet 2' images submitted with this application. Upon ascending to the first floor, the lift comes into an open shaft. The shaft is currently kept in design with the original architectural detail of Philip Hardwick's design where can be assumed that the western radiator casing was expanded to house the platform lift (subsequently refurbished in 2004).

At first floor level, the open platform lift is enclosed by a metal balustrade and provides step free access to this part of the building. Step free access as tis end of the Great Hall is important or the ceremonial use of the hall, and for access when the hall is occupied.

The current lift has an open shaft, which conflicts with the current British standards for such lifts (BSEN81-41 2010 Safety rules for the construction and installation of lifts – Special lifts for the transport of persons and goods), the British Standards specify that vertical lifts intended to be used by person with impaired mobility requires lifts with a travel exceeding more than 3 metres- to have a minimum 2m height door and enclosure at all floors.



Figure 3 Lift view on the Ground Floor level



Figure 2 Lift view on the First Floor (Vestibule Lobby)

Following the advice of a lift specialist, the proposal is to prepare a new enclosure and lift with the following specification:

Proposed Lift Specification

- Cibes Platform Lift Type A5000/AIR
- Platform Lift Size 16
- Car Size: 1100mm W x 1467mm D
- Shaft size: 1460mm W x 1515mm D **
- Cut out size: 1500mm W x 1580mm D
- Headroom: 2450mm
- Travel: 3820mm Gr Fl to 1st Fl
- Door type: AL5 single hinged door with 900x2070mm glazed panel

By way of background, a replacement platform lift was proposed in the planning permission and listed building consent granted for the comprehensive refurbishment of the Great Hall in 2015 under listed building consent reference

2015/4500/L. That consent did not however provide for a fully enclosed platform lift at first floor level, that aspect of the scheme was not undertaken, and the client is now seeking a replacement in accordance with the relative British Standard.

The Great Hall is listed in the Grade II* category. The Great Hall is central to the day to day and ceremonial life of the Inn. A summary statement of significance is provided below. The lift currently connects the ground floor to the first-floor vestibule lobby which leads the Benchers into the Great Hall, a space that functions as a ceremonial event space.

The lift is situated to bring step free access to the Great Hall for those with impaired mobility at this end of the building and is therefore integral to the ceremonial function of the Inn and Great Hall.

PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 stipulates that when determining a planning application, under the Planning Act, regard is to be had to the development plan, and the determination must be made in accordance with that plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that “in considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority or the Secretary of State shall have regard special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses”

The Development Plan for the Site comprises the following:

- Camden Local Plan (2017); and
- Camden Local Plan 2017) Policies Map
- The London Plan (2021).

Relevant Local Policies

The following policies listed are most relevant to this proposal: -

- Policy C6 (Access for all)
- Policy D1 (Design)
- Policy D2 Heritage

Other material considerations

National Guidance

At the national level, the revised National Planning Policy Framework (the “NPPF”) was revised and published on 20th July 2021, setting out the Government’s approach to planning matters, and is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. This is supported by the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), which provides further guidance on key planning matters.

Sustainable Development

At the heart of the NPPF there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraphs 10 and 11). For decision-taking (section 2 of paragraph 11), this means:

“c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or

d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out of date, granting permission unless:

- i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or*
- ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.”*

Paragraph 11 states that plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development, and paragraph 12 confirms that the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making.

Heritage

Paragraph 190 outlines that plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should take into account:

- a.** The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation.
- b.** The wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring
- c.** The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness
- d.** The opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place

Paragraph 194 details how applications should describe the significance of any heritage assets affected including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. The historic environment record should have been consulted.

Paragraph 199 outlines the consideration of potential impacts with great weight being given to the asset's conservation which is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

Paragraph 200 outlines that any harm to or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset requires clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of Grade II listed buildings or grade II registered parks or gardens should be exceptional.

Paragraph 201 details how where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss or all of the following apply:

2. The nature of the heritage assets prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and
3. No viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
4. Conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
5. The harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use

Paragraph 202 describes that a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Access

Camden Local Plan ("CLP") Policy C6 (Access for all) requires for all development's design approach be inclusive of those with impaired mobility concerns. Part A of Policy C6 states

a. expect all buildings and places to meet the highest practicable standards of accessible and inclusive design so they can be used safely, easily and with dignity by all;

The proposal seeks to provide a safer and building regulations compliant operation of the disabled lift. The proposed enclosure will allow the lift to comply with the safety standards set out in the British Standards BSEN81-41 2010 Safety rules therefore complying with Policy C6 by allowing continued access to this part of the building, in particular sustaining the ceremonial function of the building.

Design and Heritage

CLP Policy D1 (Design) expects for all proposals to adhere to high design standards that incorporate sustainable design and construction in the design stages. Design needs to be sympathetic to the local surroundings and character. High quality and inclusive design are encouraged at all policy levels. The NPPF notes that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and should contribute positively to making places better for people. Part 12 of the NPPF outlines the requirement for good design in order to achieve well-designed places.

CLP Policy D2 (Heritage) requires development to be sympathetic to the existing historical character and setting of the surrounding area. Part J specifies:

“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;”

Multiple design choices have been considered to ensure best design practice. The enclosure will fit inside the current shaft, requiring no changes to the lift shaft size. The floor layout will remain unchanged, and there is no additional impact on any historic detailing or fixtures.

The incorporation of a transparent glazed window will mitigate the appearance of the lift. Internal aluminium panels will cover the mechanical works.

HERITAGE STATEMENT

The significance of the Great Hall can be summarised as;

The Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn has been evolving and expanding since its foundation in 1422. During the 19th century the construction of the Great Hall was first considered (1835) as a way to relieve the burden on the Old Hall which was no longer suitable to fulfil the daily and ceremonial needs of the Inn. A possible site was identified close to the Stone Buildings, although this location changed and its current location overlooking Lincoln's Inn Fields was decided later. This new building was to include a new hall and Library which would fulfil the dining and ceremonial functions of the Inn, as well as a repository for the Inn's books with suitable space for scholars.

The first floor Vestibule still retains a vital ceremonial role within the Great Hall Complex. Whilst a majority of guests to the Great Hall enter via the southern end, the Benchers are received for pre-dinner assembly in the Drawing Room to the west of the vestibule. From here, they enter the Great Hall at the northern end, onto the Dais.. At some point within the twentieth century, probably alongside other accessibility improvements within the southern lobby, the western most radiator casing was expanded to house the platform lift (subsequently refurbished in 2004). With its ornate vaulted ceiling, the upper vestibule has significant aesthetic value as it remains largely as Hardwick's original design.

The Great Hall was designed to include a large dining hall, designated Bencher's Meeting rooms and administrative spaces. In 1839, Philip Hardwick (1792-1870) was asked to submit plans for the new Hall following an initial design by Mr John White. The site was confirmed in 1842, the foundation stone to the building was laid in 1843 and it opened in 1845. Following Hardwick's appointment, he fell ill and was replaced by his son Philip Charles Hardwick (1822-1892). John Loughborough Pearson (1817- 1897) is also associated with works to the hall at this time, but the extent of his involvement is unknown.

Following the construction of the Great Hall, the Inn found need to further extend the building, in particular the Library. Sir George Gilbert Scott (1811-1878) was appointed by the Inn and his scheme to extend the Library by three bays to the

east was executed in 1870. This was to house the ever - increasing number of books and manuscripts whilst still providing space for the members of the Inn to study. This is particularly significant as the Library collection dates from 1470 and is the oldest Library in existence in London.

More recently further works have taken place and a number of internal spaces have been re-configured for the modern-day needs of the Inn within the confines of the Victorian building. Works were carried out by Acanthus Clews and conservation work by Donald Insall Associates.

The Great Hall and Library has an important ceremonial function in the daily life of the Inn. It provides a place to dine, meet and participate in ceremonies and celebrations associated with the Inn. This is a consistent link to the past and the historical function of the buildings, in particular the historical associations with the legal profession and the educational function of the Inn.

The Great Hall and Library has an important illustrative and historical value as a building with a clear expression of an important period in architectural history relating to the development of the Hall and the Library in Victorian times. It is also associated with a number of architects of note, including Philip Hardwick, John Loughborough Pearson and Sir George Gilbert Scott. The Great Hall and Library also has a substantial aesthetic value as a relatively intact example of Gothic Revival Architecture with associations to some prominent architects of the period.

We do not consider that the installation of the lift affects the principal aspects of significance of the building set out above, and in any event comprises a necessary and justifiable alteration to provide step free access to this part of the Great Hall in the position of existing lift. We consider that the alteration will generate public benefits in terms of continued disabled access to this building which outweighs any minor concern there may be about the impact of the enlarged enclosure within this space.

We consider that the proposed lift replacement is a necessary and justified alteration to the building to maintain disabled access compliant with the relevant regulations. The design has been devised to minimise impact relative to the existing lift structure. We consider that the application complies with Local Plan Policies D1 and D2 and is consistent with the guidance contained within the NPPF and Section 16 of the Act.

HISTORIC ENGLAND CONSULTATION

Pre-application advice has been sought from Historic England who have not objected to the proposal.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

The application has been submitted via the Planning Portal under reference: PP-11747228

There is no fee for Listed Building Consent applications as calculated in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications and Deemed Applications, Requests and Site Visits) (England) Regulations 2015 (as Amended 2017). Payment of the fee will be made via the Planning Portal.

We would be grateful if London Borough of Camden could confirm that our application is complete and will be validated shortly. If you have any outstanding queries on this matter, please contact Tim Miles (Tim.miles@montagu-evans.co.uk / 020 7493 4002) or Coco Pemberton (coco.pemberton@montagu-evans.co.uk / 07584 154 675) at this office.

Yours sincerely,

MONTAGU EVANS