

Dear Sirs

I write on behalf of the Hornsey Town Hall Trust (registered charity) to comment on the planning applications for Planning Consent, for Listed Building Consent, and for Conservation Area Consent recently lodged with Haringey Planning Department.

The Hornsey Town Hall Trust (not to be confused with the Hornsey Town Hall Creative Trust) was set up in 2004 by local residents who were concerned to safeguard the future of this landmark 20th C building from being sold off and redeveloped into flats. The Trust carried out extensive research (funded by donations from local residents) into the possible uses for the building and its site, hiring top consultants in the field of urban regeneration. It produced a comprehensive Business Plan for the site which was presented to the Council by the (then) MP.

We have always sought to promote constructive initiatives for this important site. It is therefore with a heavy heart that we must write to express several grave concerns over the proposals submitted. We list these (in no particular order) as follows:

- Haringey's various consultations for the site have indicated the majority of residents overwhelmingly favour:
 - The incorporation of a Cinema in the Town Hall.
 - The provision of adequate parking for users of the Town Hall facilities (& visitors / shoppers). as well as for any facilitating development.

These wishes were expressed to the Council / HTHCT at the previous presentations of their proposals. The Council and its Trust have chosen to ignore these wishes -the purpose built Cinema has been dropped and only 64 parking spaces provided for the whole site (inc 10 disabled) (123 flats, 98,000 sq ft, 250 people))

- The Design Statement does not acknowledge that Haringey's own assessment of the Public Transport Accessibility of the site is 'Low to Medium'. The “travel plans” written by the transport consultant refer to the Public Transport Accessibility as “Good” - NOT the experience of local people

- Expert research conducted by local people indicate that Orchestral Rehearsals in the Halls during the day was the best way of ensuring a revenue stream, and hence the sustainability of the restoration. Will not orchestras (with the need to bring valuable instruments) or other users be put off by the absence of any parking when other facilities exist that do not have this problem? What parking facilities might be needed for travelling productions? What provision has been made for minibuses or coaches?
- We are concerned about the effect of the large number of flats on already stretched local services, including schools, doctor's surgeries and especially bus services in peak hours. What steps are proposed to address these issues, given the major shortcomings so evident in these services?
- The drawings indicate flats in the central link block. This part contains fine panelled rooms of significant interest and this is contrary to the recommendations of the Conservation Report.
- Whilst we acknowledge the need for enabling development, the 2004 Development Brief envisaged 3-4 storey housing on the rear of the site
- why is it now acceptable to propose 5-6 storey blocks? These blocks overshadow the existing Listed Building, which is only three storeys.
- Should the proposals not be driven by what is appropriate for a conservation area, rather than trying to maximise capital receipts? We believe the scale, massing and design of the residential blocks is inappropriate to the surrounding conservation area.
- There are no assurances that the Town Hall will be restored. In many previous schemes, the facilitating development has gone ahead without the associated restoration work being carried out. It should therefore be stipulated that the restoration work be completed before the facilitating development goes ahead.
- There are numerous technical issues with the application, which appears to have been rushed. There are inconsistencies between the Design Statement and the drawings.

In addition the consultation period has been unfortunately timed to run over the Easter holidays.

It is important to note that our proposals for the site included both parking and trees at the rear of the site without resorting to costly basement parking. It also linked the rear of the site to the main square - something the current proposal ignores.

In summary we believe these proposals, whilst submitted by architects of high quality, are flawed due to the brief that has been given. For the reasons stated above, the proposals miss the great opportunity of delivering a restored and sustainable future for this important building.

Yours sincerely

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