

# PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT

Development Management Service  
Planning and Development Division  
Environment and Regeneration Department

<b>PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE A</b>		<b>AGENDA ITEM : B6</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>6 September 2018</b>	<b>NON-EXEMP</b>

Application number	P2018/1482/LBC
Application type	Listed Building Consent
Ward	Junction/Hillrise
Listed building	Listed Grade II
Conservation area	Whitehall Park
Development Plan Context	Article 4(2) Whitehall Park (2) Local cycle routes Strategic Cycle Route Local Flood Risk Zone (LFRZ) Site within 100m of a TLRN Road
Licensing Implications	None
Site Address	Archway Bridge, Archway Road, London, N1
Proposal	Erection of stainless steel fencing (approximately 3.3 metre-high) in front of the bridge parapets and removal of some of the previously installed features including spikes and mesh.

Case Officer	Luciana Grave
Applicant	Haringey Council, Dana Rasheed
Agent	n/a

## 1. RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is asked to resolve to **GRANT** listed building consent subject to the conditions set out in Appendix 1.

2. SITE PLAN (site outlined in red)



3. PHOTOS OF SITE



*Fig 1: Looking east, Islington to the south*



*Fig 2: View from Islington to the south*

## 4. SUMMARY

- 4.1 This proposal is for the installation of suicide prevention measures on Archway Bridge in the form of fencing. Applications have been submitted to both Islington and Haringey councils as the borough boundary extends down the middle of the bridge. The application has been brought to committee due to the level of public interest in the proposals and the sensitive nature of the application which has attracted both public support and objections.
- 4.2 A listed building consent application for a very similar proposal was submitted by Transport for London (TfL) to both Haringey and Islington councils in 2014 – Haringey’s application reference: HGY/2014/3527 and Islington’s application reference: P2014/5019/LBC. This previous proposal included a fencing section to cover the main span of the bridge and spiked barriers near the bridge plinths on the outside of the bridge. Haringey and Islington Councils granted listed building consent to the proposals in October 2015 subject to a number of conditions. These included installing a sample section of fencing along with CCTV surveillance of the bridge. CCTV cameras were installed on the bridge in late 2016. Since that period, the Police have been alerted to 41 incidents involving a potential suicide including tragically an incident where a person was able to jump from the bridge.
- 4.3 Following the construction of a sample section of fencing and testing, as well as information gathered from CCTV surveillance, it became apparent that changes would need to be made to the design in order for it to be effective. Changes include the height and length of the fencing as well as the spacing and diameter of the vertical bars which are the subject of this amended proposal.
- 4.4 The main issues arising from the proposals hereby under consideration relate to their effect on the character and significance of the statutorily listed bridge by virtue of the impact on its special architectural and historic interest and special character.
- 4.5 Issues raised in consultation responses include: the harm to the architectural and historic appearance of the bridge; disruption of views from the bridge; concern that alternative designs had not been adequately explored; concern that insufficient expert advice had been sought; and concern over the lack of public consultation prior to the submission of the application.
- 4.6 A number of other issues have been raised including concern over whether the proposals will be effective in their aim to deter and prevent suicides from taking place at the bridge; and concern that the proposals will not stop suicide or save lives, only relocate the suicide attempts elsewhere.
- 4.7 The Metropolitan Police commented that the proposed barrier could compromise the emergency services ability to retrieve any individual who succeeds in climbing over the fence. As a result, amended drawings are to be secured via condition showing a secured gate (minimum 900mm width) on the fence which would allow emergency services’ access.
- 4.8 It is considered that the, revised proposals including the insertion of a gate are a considerable improvement on the previously approved design in terms of deterrence although the visual impact will be greater. However, when viewed at a distance from the south (and north) the fencing should still be fairly hard to perceive. The vertical steel cables will allow views across London, from the bridge, as well as to the original balustrade which will be more visible as the existing wire mesh obscuring the decorative detailing can be removed. The proposals also allow for the removal of the existing steel spikes to the external face of the central plinth. These two improvements weigh in favour of the proposal.
- 4.9 While it is accepted that the proposals will cause some visual harm to the heritage asset the harm is considered to be less than substantial, reversible and to be outweighed by the substantial public benefit of deterring and preventing suicide from taking place at the bridge. Therefore, the proposals will not unacceptably harm the significance of the heritage asset and are considered to comply with national and local policy.

- 4.10 Taking all material considerations into account, it is considered that the proposal is acceptable on balance, and that the application should be approved.

## **5. SITE AND SURROUNDINGS**

- 5.1 The northern part of Archway Bridge is located within the London Borough of Haringey and is separately listed to the part within Islington. A separate application for Listed Building Consent has been submitted to the London Borough of Haringey. At the time of writing this report officers at Haringey Council have indicated that they intend to recommend the application for approval but had yet to make a determination. Officers will report any update to the Committee.
- 5.2 Archway Bridge has architectural and historic significance for the age and quality of its design. It is Grade II listed and located within the Whitehall Park Conservation Area which is considered to be of importance by virtue of its Victorian development. It is a local landmark and there are important views of the bridge, especially from within Islington to the south, as well as views from the bridge over London.
- 5.3 The list description states:

*'Bridge carrying Hornsey Lane over Archway Road, and designed to replace a bridge of brick and stone construction designed in 1813 by John Nash. Dated 1897 in panel at crown of arch, and completed 1900. By Sir Alexander Binnie, for London County Council. Portland stone, steel and iron. Portland stone piers to either side with splayed bases having vermiculated quoins, the body of the piers rusticated and vermiculated. Segmental-arched span of 120 feet, of steel and cast-iron construction with rope mouldings to archivolt and circular ornament and arabesques in the spandrels; modillion cornice. Balustrade of Portland stone piers to either end, carrying cast iron lamp standards of the type designed by Lewis Vulliamy for the Thames Embankment in the 1860s, with the initials of the LCC on the south-eastern and north-western lamps, and the date 1897 on the other pair; smaller central piers, now painted, with lamp standards flanked by griffins; intermediate piers surmounted by ball and spike finials with spiked rail between; the cast-iron panels between with wheel motifs and scrolling ornament.'*

## **6. PROPOSAL (IN DETAIL)**

- 6.1 It is proposed to erect stainless steel fencing approximately 3.3m high above existing footway level, positioned in front of the existing parapet to cover the full length of the bridge and expanding further beyond the bridge plinth to end at the brick wall adjacent to the bridge at all corners of the bridge. The stainless steel fence will be supported on the footway and clamped, but not permanently fixed, to the bridge parapet by means of stainless steel straps and brackets.
- 6.2 The proposed fence height beyond the bridge main span will be gradually increased to about 4.1m (varies on each corner of the bridge depending on the existing footpath level). The increase in fence height is to maintain a minimum of 2.4m of fence above the adjacent brick wall to stop a person from climbing the new fence using the brick wall as a foothold. The last panel on each corner will be fixed into the existing brick wall using 10mm stainless steel plate connected to a newly installed steel plate on the existing brick wall.
- 6.3 Following a number of trials, it was found that vertical bars 20mm in diameter would be sufficiently resilient to bending from external forces and these have been adopted in the design.
- 6.4 The existing cages located at each extremity of the bridge and the central pier will be permanently removed. A new spiked barrier made from mild steel and filled with anti-climb mesh, all painted black, will be erected at each end of the fence, mounted on the outside of the brick wall, to stop a person climbing around the new fence.

6.5 The design has changed from the previous application for two main reasons:

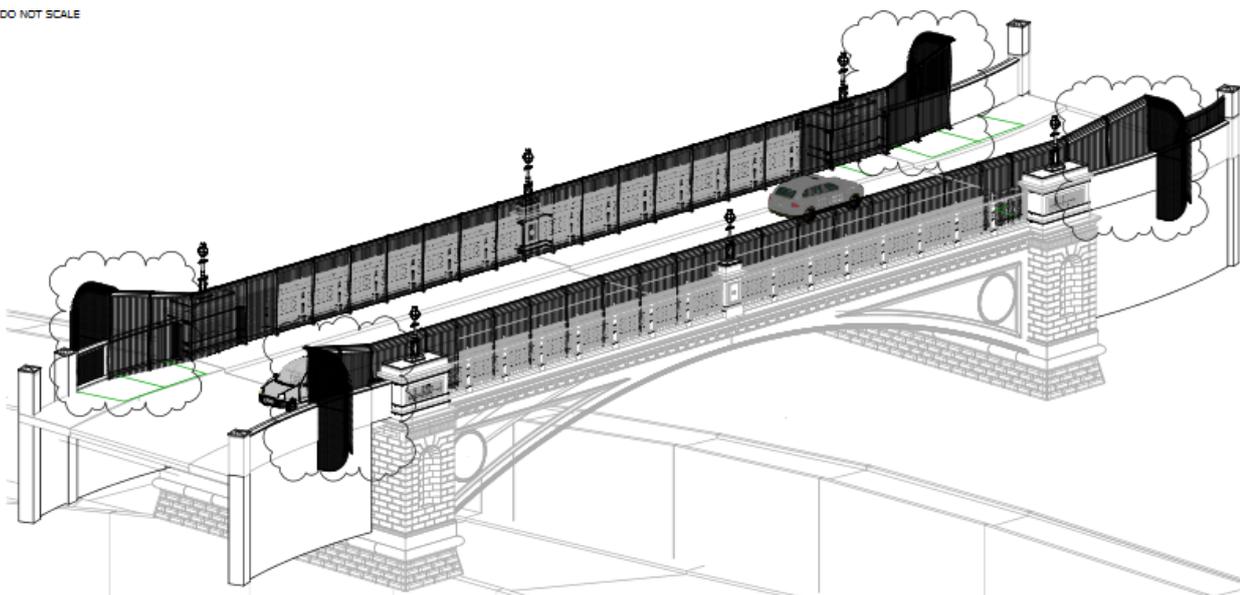
- a) The design of the fence submitted on the previous application only covered the main bridge span and stopped by the plinths. The evidence gathered from recent CCTV surveillance including that of the most recent suicide, showed that people are able to use the plinths to scale the existing fence. The applicants also commissioned an expert climber to assess the bridge and they identified the plinths and brick walls adjoining the bridge as providing opportunities for people to climb over the existing fence. The new design therefore, addresses this issue by extending the fence to cover all of the bridge plinths and adjoining brick walls.
- b) The design of the fence panel of the previous application shows an 8mm tensioned bar used for the vertical bars to minimise visual impact of the fence. Following a fabrication of a trial panel, it was found that the 8mm tensioned bar could be pulled apart sufficiently to allow a person to squeeze through using only minimal hand force. This is because the length of the tensioned bar (about 3 metres) made the bars easier to push apart. In addition, there were no braces on the bar, as they could be used as footsteps for anyone trying to climb the fence. This was considered unacceptable and the diameter of the vertical bar had to be increased. Following a number of trials, it was found that 20mm diameter bars would be sufficiently resilient to bending from external forces.

6.6 As a consequence of these design changes, there have been some additional modifications. The total number of vertical bars has decreased because of their increased diameter. The top and bottom horizontal bars have been reduced from 80mm x 50mm to 60mm x 50mm, and the vertical bars will be extended below the bottom horizontal bar to stop at 100mm above footway surface level.

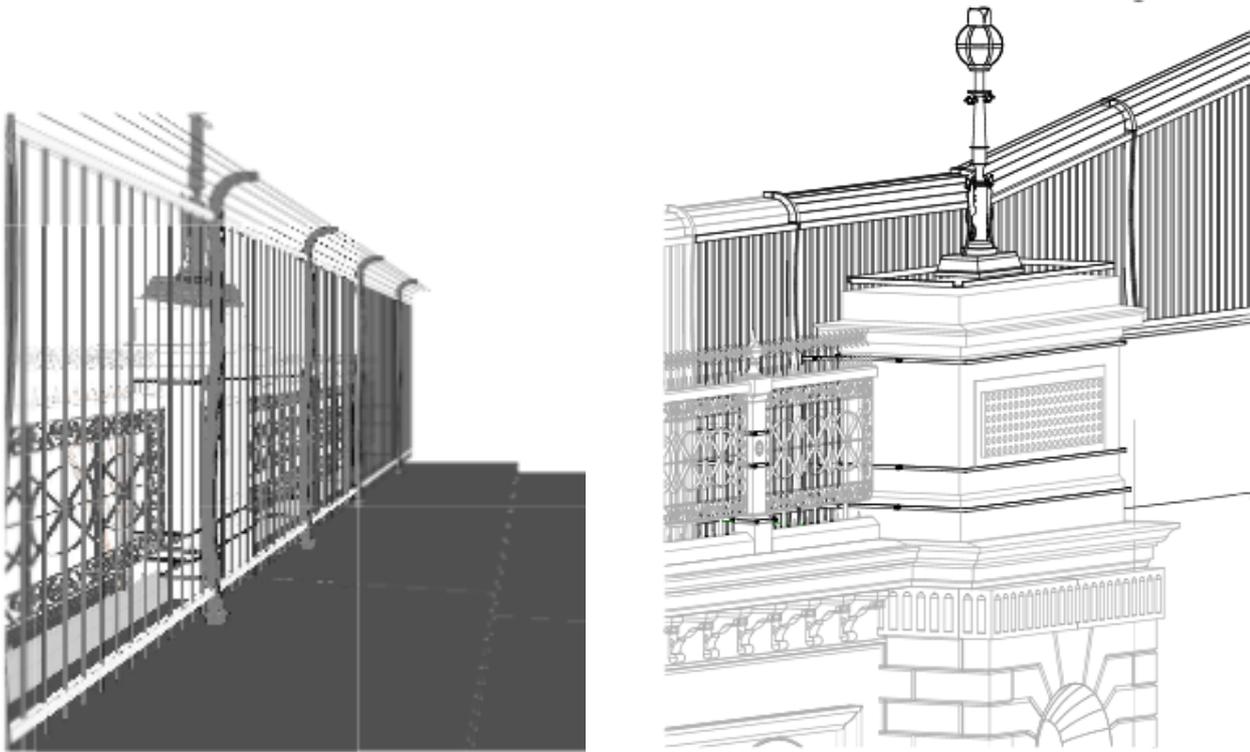
6.7 Another change following the extension of the fence beyond the plinths is to relocate the proposed spiked barriers outside the bridge span, to a new location on the outside of the brick wall adjacent to the Bridge.

6.8 A final change will be sought by condition in response to concerns raised by Haringey's and Islington's/Camden's Designing Out Crime Officers that the proposed barrier could compromise the emergency services ability to retrieve any individual who succeeds climbing over the fence. As a result, a condition will be attached to this permission which will require amended drawings to be submitted for approval showing a secured gate (minimum width 900mm) on one of the panels of the fence which would allow emergency services access.

DO NOT SCALE



**Fig 3: Proposal - 3D View**



***Figs 4 and 5: 3D Views of proposal at central pier and end pier***



***Fig 6: Proposed view from road below***

## **7. RELEVANT HISTORY**

- 7.1 Since its completion in 1900 Archway Bridge has been used by people to commit suicide and has gained the unfortunate alternative name of 'Suicide Bridge'. This is a cause of great distress to the local community. In 2001 the Hornsey Lane Association, with funding from Camden and Islington Health Authority, commissioned a feasibility study by Robert Dearman Architects to consider options for preventing suicides at the bridge. The options were not taken forward. When, at the end of 2010, three men in three weeks committed suicide by jumping from the bridge, a campaign was set up by local residents for anti-suicide measures to be put in place. In addition, suicide attempts which are prevented by the emergency services also cause distress and TfL has also explained that this results in the closure of the A1 to traffic which leads to disruption of the

strategic and local road networks.

### **Listed building consent applications**

- 7.2 **P2014/5019/LBC** dated 15 October 2015 (Planning Sub Committee B) - a Listed Building Consent application for similar proposals was submitted by Transport for London (TfL) to both Haringey and Islington Councils in 2014 - Haringey Council Application Reference: HGY/2014/3527 and Islington Council Application Reference: P2014/5019/LBC. The application had a fencing section to cover the main span of the bridge, and spiked barriers near the bridge plinths on the outside of the bridge. Haringey and Islington Councils granted listed building consent to the proposals in October 2015 subject to a number of conditions. These included installing a sample section of fencing along with CCTV surveillance of the bridge. Please see Appendix 3 for a copy of the Committee report and decision notice.

### **Other planning applications**

- 7.3 None relevant

### **Enforcement**

- 7.4 None relevant

### **Pre-application advice**

- 7.5 Informal advice has been provided since consent was granted in October 2015. It was advised that any proposals should minimise the visual impact on the bridge and having explored all possible options, be effective and justified.

## **8. CONSULTATION**

### **Public Consultation**

- 8.1 A notice was displayed on site and a press notice published in the Islington Gazette on 17 May 2018. In addition, letters were sent to 15 adjoining and nearby properties on Hornsey Lane and Fitzwarren Gardens on 9 May 2018.
- 8.2 The public consultation of the application expired on 7 June 2018. At the time of writing of this report, a total of 12 objections had been received from the public with regard to the application although it is the council's practice to continue to consider representations made up until the date of a decision, therefore any subsequent representation will be reported at the committee meeting. The issues raised can be summarised as follows (with the paragraph that provides responses to each issue indicated in brackets):
- Objection to the harm to the architectural and historic appearance of the bridge and disruption of views from the bridge (**10.4-10.19**);
  - Concern that alternative designs had not been adequately explored and that insufficient expert advice had been sought (**10.20-10.25**);
  - Concern over whether the proposals will be effective in their aim of stopping suicides occurring from the bridge (**10.23**);
  - Concern that the proposals won't stop suicide or save lives, only relocate the suicide attempt (**10.24**);
  - Concern that proposals ignore the decrease in suicide attempts following the introduction of CCTV (**4.2**);
  - Concern that comments from the Metropolitan Police Service show that there has been a lack of consultation with the emergency services or consideration of the implications for the emergency services in terms of the proposals (**10.20-10.25**).

- 8.3 Two representations were received in support of the application including strong support from the Haringey Suicide Prevention Group (HSPG).

#### **Internal Consultees**

- 8.4 **Highways** - No comments.
- 8.5 **Traffic and Engineering** - No comments.
- 8.6 **Transport Planning** - No comments.

#### **External Consultees**

- 8.6 **Highgate Society** - The issues raised can be summarised as follows (with the paragraph that provides responses to each issue indicated in brackets):
- Objection to the harm to the architectural and historic appearance of the bridge and disruption of views from the bridge (**10.4-10.19**);
  - Concern that alternative designs had not been adequately explored and that insufficient expert advice had been sought (**10.20-10.25**);
  - Concern that proposals ignore the decrease in suicide attempts following the introduction of CCTV (**4.2**).
- 8.7 **Historic England** - Comments received to inform that this now falls outside of their criteria for offering comments.
- 8.8 **London Borough of Haringey** - No formal response received.

#### **Applicant's own consultation**

- 8.9 The Metropolitan Police's Designing Out Crime Officer at Haringey as well as the Islington designing out crime officer commented on the parallel Haringey listed building consent application. Concern was raised that the emergency services may not be able to rescue individuals who may succeed at climbing over the fence. These comments are relevant to the Islington application. Further discussions took place between the applicant and the Fire Brigade and Metropolitan Police and as a result, amended drawings have been discussed showing a secure gate on one of the panels of the proposed fences on both the Haringey side and the Islington side of the bridge which would allow the emergency services access should an individual succeed at climbing over the fence.
- 8.10 The drawings showing the gate have not been formally submitted to the council, however the images are provided overleaf. It has been demonstrated this option is acceptable and a detailed submission of details and additional drawings to be attached to this permission will further secure this feature.
- 8.11 The applicant carried out further consultation with the Metropolitan Police subsequent to the introduction of the gate and received the following comments:
- Officers of the Metropolitan Police reviewed the plans for the design of the proposed gate for Archway Bridge and are satisfied that this will be a solution for the problems discussed during previous meetings;
  - The use of Sold Secure padlocks (Gold Standard) positioned top and bottom of the frame that will secure the gate is considered to be adequate to prevent an opportunist attack and will only be opened by the use of mechanical machinery;
  - The width of the gate is considered to be adequate for entering the rescue space and there appears to be no risk with the addition of the padlock points to aid climbing due to the separation between the tow. The risk of crawling under the fence and gate is as on the previous iteration very low;



## **9. RELEVANT STATUTORY DUTIES, DEVELOPMENT PLAN CONSIDERATIONS AND POLICIES**

9.1 Islington Council (Planning Sub Committee A), in determining this listed building consent application, has the following main statutory duties to perform:

- To have special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed building, its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses in line with Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and;
- To pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area in accordance with Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and;
- To determine the application in accordance with the development plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise in line with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

9.2 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2018): Paragraph 11 states: “at the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking. For decision-taking this means: approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay.

9.3 At paragraph 8 the NPPF (2018) states: “that sustainable development has an economic, social and environmental role”.

9.4 The updated National Planning Policy Framework 2018 seeks to secure positive growth in a way that effectively balances economic, environmental and social progress for this and future generations. The NPPF is a material consideration and has been taken into account as part of the assessment of these proposals. Since March 2014 Planning Practice Guidance for England has been published online.

9.5 The Human Rights Act 1998 incorporates the key articles of the European Convention on Human Rights into domestic law. These include:

- Article 1 of the First Protocol: Protection of property. Every natural or legal person is entitled to the peaceful enjoyment of his possessions. No one shall be deprived of his possessions except in the public interest and subject to the conditions provided for by law and by the general principles of international law.
- Article 14: Prohibition of discrimination. The enjoyment of the rights and freedoms set forth in this Convention shall be secured without discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth, or other status.

9.6 Members of the Planning Sub-Committee must be aware of the rights contained in the Convention (particularly those set out above) when making any Planning decisions. However, most Convention rights are not absolute and set out circumstances when an interference with a person's rights is permitted. Any interference with any of the rights contained in the Convention must be sanctioned by law and be aimed at pursuing a legitimate aim and must go no further than is necessary and be proportionate.

- 9.7 The Equality Act 2010 provides protection from discrimination in respect of certain protected characteristics, namely: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or beliefs and sex and sexual orientation. It places the Council under a legal duty to have due regard to the advancement of equality in the exercise of its powers including planning powers. The Committee must be mindful of this duty inter alia when determining all planning applications. In particular, the Committee must pay due regard to the need to: (1) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act; (2) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and (3) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 9.8 In considering the listed building consent application account has to be taken of the statutory and policy framework, the documentation accompanying the application, and views of both statutory and non-statutory consultees.

#### **Development Plan**

- 9.9 The Development Plan is comprised of the London Plan 2016, Islington Core Strategy 2011, Development Management Policies 2013, Finsbury Local Plan 2013 and Site Allocations 2013. The policies of the Development Plan are considered relevant to this application and are listed at Appendix 2 to this report.

### **10. ASSESSMENT**

The main issues arising from this proposal relate to:

- principle of the development;
- the impact on the 'special architectural and historic interest' of the listed bridge; and
- other matters.

#### **Principle of the development**

- 10.2 Since its completion in 1900 Archway Bridge has been used by people to commit and to attempt suicide and, as a result, the bridge has gained the unfortunate alternative name of 'Suicide Bridge'. This is a cause of great distress to the individuals involved, their families and the local community. In addition, suicide attempts which are prevented by the emergency services also cause distress and disruption to the road network. A listed building consent application for similar proposals for fencing was approved in 2015 as explained in section 7 of this report.
- 10.3 Proposals to deter and prevent suicides being committed from the bridge are considered to be a significant and clear public benefit and the principle of such measures is, therefore, supported in principle.

#### **Impact on the special architectural and historic interest of the listed bridge**

- 10.4 The previously approved application was for a proposal to erect a 2.83m high fence set back from the inner face of the existing balustrade to the bridge. To prevent climbing of the fence it consisted of 8mm vertical stainless steel vertical rods at 108mm spacing supported by 60x60mm stanchions with a recessive matt finish. Each span of vertical rods would be welded together and independently fixed to the stanchions to allow temporary removal for maintenance and cleaning of the original parapet. The stanchions would be clamped with steel straps to the original cast iron parapet piers and the installations would be reversible.

- 10.5 For additional security 6 stretched catenary cables were proposed to be erected above the fence curving inwards for 350mm to a height of 3.14m. At the stone caps to the end piers the terminal frames would be fixed by steel straps requiring fixings into the masonry. At each extremity of the bridge, there would be cages with padlocked access gates to prevent access to the bridge ledges located outside the parapets. It was intended to enhance these protection measures by extending the height of the cage and the addition of painted steel spikes. These would be screened by existing vegetation.
- 10.6 Haringey and Islington Councils granted listed building consent for the proposals in October 2015 subject to a number of conditions. These included installing a sample section of fencing along with CCTV surveillance of the bridge. Following the construction of a sample section of fencing and testing, as well as information gathered from CCTV surveillance, it became apparent that changes were needed in order for the fencing to be effective. Changes include the increase of the height and extension of the length of the fencing as well as the spacing and diameter of the vertical bars.
- 10.7 It is now proposed to erect stainless steel fencing approximately 3.3m high above existing footway level, positioned in front of the existing parapet to cover the full length of the bridge and expanding further beyond the bridge plinth to end at the brick wall adjacent to the bridge at all corners of the bridge. The stainless steel fence will be supported on the footway and clamped, but not permanently fixed, to the bridge parapet by means of stainless steel straps and brackets.
- 10.8 The proposed fence height beyond the bridge main span will be gradually increased to about 4.1m (varies on each corner of the bridge depending on the existing footpath level). The increase in fence height is to maintain a minimum of 2.4m of fence above the adjacent brick wall to stop a person from climbing the new fence using the brick wall as a foothold. The last panel on each corner will be fixed into the existing brick wall using 10mm stainless steel plate connected to a newly installed steel plate on the existing brick wall.
- 10.9 The existing cages located at each extremity of the bridge and the central pier will be permanently removed. A new spiked barrier made from mild steel and filled with anti-climb mesh, all painted black, will be erected at each end of the fence, mounted on the outside of the brick wall, to stop a person climbing around the new fence.
- 10.10 As explained in Section 6 above, the design has changed from the previous application as a result of evidence gathered from CCTV surveillance and the climbing expert. This evidence indicates that a person could use the plinths and brick walls adjoining the bridge to climb over the fence that was proposed under the previous application. The new design therefore, addresses this issue by extending the fence to cover all of the bridge plinths and adjoining brick walls.
- 10.11 The design of the fence panel of the previous application showed an 8mm tensioned bar used for the vertical bars to minimise visual impact of the fence. Following a fabrication of a trial panel, it was found that the 8mm tensioned bar could be pulled apart sufficiently to allow a person to squeeze through using only minimal hand force. In addition, there were no braces on the bar, as they could be used as footsteps for anyone trying to climb the fence. This was considered unacceptable and the diameter of the vertical bar had to be increased. Following a number of trials, it was found that 20mm diameter bars would be sufficiently resilient to bending from external forces and these have been adopted in the amended design hereby under consideration.
- 10.12 As a consequence of these design changes, there have been some additional modifications. The total number of vertical bars has decreased because of their increased diameter. The top and bottom horizontal bars have been reduced from 80mm x 50mm to 60mm x 50mm, and the vertical bars will be extended below the bottom horizontal bar to stop at 100mm above footway surface level.
- 10.13 Another change following the extension of the fence beyond the plinths is to relocate the proposed spiked barriers outside the bridge span, to a new location on the outside of the brick wall adjacent to the bridge.

- 10.14 Finally, following public consultation, a secure gate is needed to be secured on one of the panels of the fence to address concerns raised that the emergency services would have difficulty rescuing any individuals in the unlikely but possible event that they succeed in climbing over the fence. This is only a minor change to the fence and it does not significantly alter its overall appearance.
- 10.15 The NPPF states the following:
- 193. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.*
- 196. Where 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.*
- 10.16 Islington's DM Policy 2.3 (Heritage) part C (Listed buildings) states:
- i. The significance of Islington's listed buildings is required to be conserved or enhanced. Appropriate repair and reuse of listed buildings will be encouraged.*
- ii. The significance of a listed building can be harmed by inappropriate repair, alteration or extension. Proposals to repair, alter or extend a listed building must be justified and appropriate. Consequently, a high level of professional skill and craftsmanship will be required. Proposals to repair, alter or extend a listed building which harm its significance will not be permitted unless there is a clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of a listed building will be strongly resisted.*
- 10.17 Objections have been received regarding the harm of the proposal to the appearance of the bridge and the disruption of views from the bridge. It is considered that the revised proposals are a considerable improvement on the approved design in terms of deterring people from climbing over the bridge. It is accepted that the visual impact will be greater than that of the previously approved design. However, when viewed at a distance from the south (and north) the fencing should still be fairly hard to perceive and vertical steel cables will continue to allow views across London, from the bridge. A non-reflective matt finish to the steel structure of the fence would assist in making it less conspicuous and this is recommended as a condition (condition 4).
- 10.18 The current proposals also involve two aspects which are considered to be enhancements: the original balustrade will be more visible as the existing wire mesh obscuring the decorative detailing can be removed and the existing steel spikes to the external face of the central plinth will be removed. These weigh in favour of the proposal and are recommended to be secured by a condition should Committee resolve to grant listed building consent (condition 3).
- 10.19 While it is accepted that the proposals will cause some visual harm to the heritage asset, there will be no irreversible or substantial harm to the fabric of the bridge, its main architectural features will remain visible and the works are reversible should there be a better solution in the future as a result of any technological advancements. Therefore, the harm is considered to be less than substantial and to be outweighed by the significant public benefit of deterring and preventing suicide from taking place at the bridge as well as preventing closures/disruptions to strategic and local road networks.

### **Other Matters**

- 10.20 Objectors have raised concerns that alternative designs have not been adequately explored and that insufficient expert advice had been sought. Whether alternative designs have been sufficiently adequately explored and whether sufficient expert advice has been sought is a question of individual judgement. As part of the previous application and the current one, it has been demonstrated that designs have been explored to minimise impact whilst providing an effective solution in deterring suicide attempts. There have been tests and samples which demonstrate rigour

in the design development. The applicant has demonstrated that the emergency services have been consulted as well as both Haringey's and Islington's heritage specialists.

- 10.21 Objectors have also raised concern that comments from the Metropolitan Police Service show that there has been a lack of consultation with the emergency services or consideration of the implications for the emergency services in terms of the proposals. Since that, comments provided by the Metropolitan Police to Haringey have been forwarded to Islington and are explained in paragraph 8.10 above.
- 10.22 Currently when an individual climb over the existing barrier it is possible for the emergency services to retrieve them or for them to be helped by members of the public. The Police have advised that careful consideration needs to be given to how an individual who climbs the proposed barrier could be retrieved by the emergency services or helped by members of the public. Objectors have claimed that the proposal might 'actually make it harder to save lives'. In response to these concerns, the design has been amended with the addition of a gate (on each side of the bridge) on one of the panels of the proposed fence, to allow the emergency services' access to retrieve people. Whilst revised drawings have not been formally submitted, amended drawings have been discussed and accepted by planning officers and the Metropolitan Police Service and London Fire Brigade it has been concluded that an operational 'rescue' strategy is necessary. The preparation of a rescue strategy has been secured by Condition 5 although it must be noted that the Police and Emergency Services will adapt their strategies on the day to the specific circumstances of a particular incident. During the course of a rescue it may be necessary for the Fire Brigade to use specialist equipment to break through either the locks to the gate or the fence. In order to protect the safety and visual appearance of the fence, the rescue strategy should include details of how damage to the locks or fence will be remediated.
- 10.23 While no anti-suicide measures are likely to be 100% successful in preventing suicides other similar schemes (for example to the Clifton Suspension Bridge) have shown that such measures have a significant impact on reducing the incidence of suicide at a particular location because the measures give the emergency services a greater opportunity to intervene if someone appears to be distressed and to ensure that potential suicides are directed to appropriate care and support.
- 10.24 While it may be possible that security measures in one location may disperse suicide attempts elsewhere, the Haringey Suicide Prevention Group has stated that according to the evidence review carried out by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) 'studies show a statistically significant reduction in the number of suicides at sites where physical barriers were installed with no statistically significant increase of suicides at other sites'.
- 10.25 Additionally, the applicants have agreed to review the anti-suicide signage on and around the bridge in conjunction with the Samaritans. The applicants have also agreed to work with TfL to seek to relocate a bus stop which provides a place where distressed people can conceal themselves.

## **11. SUMMARY & CONCLUSION**

### **Summary**

- 11.1 This proposal is for anti-suicide measures to Archway Bridge in the form of fencing. Following the construction of a sample section of fencing, testing and information gathered from CCTV surveillance, which were undertaken as part of conditions relating to a previously approved proposal for very similar works (LBI ref: P2014/5019/LBC) and the advice of a climbing expert, changes to the design of the fence were required in order for it to be effective. These changes include increasing the height and extending the length of the fencing, reducing the spacing and increasing the diameter of the vertical bars as well as the introduction of a secure gate and form part of the current revised proposal.
- 11.2 Issues raised in response to the public consultation include:

- the harm to the architectural and historic appearance of the bridge;
- disruption of views from the bridge;
- concern that alternative designs had not been adequately explored;
- concern that insufficient expert advice had been sought;
- lack of consultation prior to the submission of the application;
- whether the proposals will be effective in their aim to deter and prevent suicides from taking place at the bridge;
- concern that the proposals will not stop suicide or save lives, only relocate the suicide attempt.

11.3 Concern was also raised by the Metropolitan Police that it might be difficult for the emergency services to rescue individuals who succeed at climbing over the fence. Amended drawings showing the insertion of a secured gate and evidence of discussions with the emergency services have been discussed to address this concern. These revised details have not yet been formally submitted and will be secured by condition 6. The preparation of a rescue strategy has been secured by condition 5.

11.4 It is considered that the revised proposals represent a significant improvement on the previously approved design in terms of deterrence although it is accepted that the visual impact will be greater due to the increased height and thicker bars. Nevertheless, it is felt that when viewed at a distance the fencing should still be fairly hard to perceive. The vertical steel cables will allow views across London, from the bridge, as well as to the original balustrade. The new proposals also allow for two enhancements: the removal of the existing wire mesh obscuring the decorative detailing of the balustrade and the removal of the existing steel spikes to the external face of the central plinth, which are unsightly and were not achieved in the previous approval.

11.5 While it is accepted that the proposals will cause some visual harm to the heritage asset, there will be no irreversible or substantial harm to the fabric of the bridge and its main architectural features will remain visible and in some cases made more visible. Therefore, the harm is considered to be less than substantial and to be outweighed by the significant public benefit of deterring and preventing suicide from taking place at the bridge as well as preventing disruptions to strategic and local road networks.

### **Conclusion**

11.6 It is recommended that listed building consent be granted subject to conditions as set out in Appendix 1 – RECOMMENDATIONS, including informatives.

## APPENDIX 1 – RECOMMENDATIONS

### RECOMMENDATION A

That the Planning Sub-Committee A resolve to GRANT listed building consent subject to **conditions** to secure the following:

#### List of Conditions

1	<b>3 YEAR CONSENT</b>
	<p>CONDITION: The works hereby permitted shall be begun not later than three years from the date of this consent.</p> <p>REASON: To comply with the provisions of Section 18(1)(a) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (Chapter 5).</p>
2	<b>WORKS OF MAKING GOOD THE FABRIC</b>
	<p>CONDITION: All new external and internal works and finishes and works of making good to the retained fabric, shall match the existing adjacent work with regard to the methods used and to material, colour, texture and profile, unless shown otherwise on the drawings or other documentation hereby approved or required by any condition(s) attached to this consent.</p> <p>REASON: In order to conserve the significance of the heritage asset.</p>
3	<b>REMEDICATION WORKS</b>
	<p>CONDITION: The following, which help weigh in favour of the approved scheme, shall be undertaken within three months of works commencing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Removal of the modern mesh to the existing balustrade</li><li>- Removal of the existing spikes placed to the external face of the central plinth</li><li>- Review undertaken of the anti-suicide signage on and around the bridge in conjunction with the Samaritans.</li></ul> <p>REASON: In order to conserve the significance of the heritage asset and secure heritage benefits that weighed in favour of the scheme containing heritage benefits as well as significant public benefits to obtain approval of the proposal and secure compliance with the NPPF 2018.</p>
4	<b>DETAILS APPROVAL</b>
	<p>CONDITION: The following detail/samples shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the relevant works commencing and shall be maintained as such thereafter into perpetuity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- - Details of the CCTV alarm cable to be attached to 4mm s/s wire.</li><li>- - Details of any other element which may vary due to the construction needs.</li><li>- - A sample of the steel confirming the non-reflective recessive matt finish.</li></ul> <p>REASON: In order to conserve the significance of the heritage asset.</p>

<b>5</b>	<b>RESCUE AND REPAIR STRATEGY</b>
	<p>CONDITION: The following shall be agreed with the Police, Fire Service and Ambulance Service and submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the works commencing:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 A rescue strategy setting out how the Police, Fire Service and Ambulance Service will be alerted in the event of an incident on the bridge together with details of how the gates and fencing will be re – secured and repaired in the event that they are damaged during a rescue.</li> <li>2 Any repair works required to the gate/fence subsequent to a rescue, shall be implemented in accordance with these details and carried out at the earliest possible moment and shall be maintained as such thereafter into perpetuity.</li> </ol> <p>Reason: In order to conserve the effectiveness, safety and visual appearance of the fence.</p>
<b>6</b>	<b>Final gate details and finish (submission of details)</b>
	<p>CONDITION: Notwithstanding the hereby approved plans, detailed final plans/details of the final gate design, location and finish including all the elements below shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority (in consultation with the Fire Brigade and Metropolitan Police) prior to the commencement of development hereby approved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Details of final width of proposed gate (minimum 900mm width)</li> <li>• Details showing an outward opening gate.</li> <li>• Details showing the use of anti-tamper screws, secure hinges and fixings and fixings for the gate.</li> <li>• Final details and location for replacement keys for the gate.</li> <li>• Final details regarding the use of Sold Secure padlocks (Gold Standard) positioned top and bottom of the frame.</li> <li>• Any other required security details and plans in relation to the gate.</li> </ul> <p>The development shall be constructed and operated strictly in accordance with the details so approved, shall be maintained as such thereafter and no change therefrom shall take place without the prior written consent of the Local Planning Authority.</p> <p>REASON: To ensure that the emergency services have quick and effective access behind the fence to retrieve successful climbers without undue difficulty and to address the requirements of the Police and London Fire Brigade.</p>

**List of Informatives:**

<b>1</b>	<b>Signage and Samaritans</b>
	The council would like to encourage the applicants to work closely with the Samaritans to devise/design a useful and visually appropriate future signage for the related works to the anti-suicide measures to be installed on the bridge.
<b>2</b>	<b>Meeting to collaborate between Metropolitan Police, fire brigade and London Ambulances.</b>
	The council would encourage a meeting between all the parties to discuss a successful and workable rescue strategy for the bridge.

## **APPENDIX 2: RELEVANT POLICIES**

This appendix lists all relevant development plan policies and guidance notes pertinent to the determination of this application for listed building consent.

### **1 National Policy and Guidance**

The following national and regional policy and guidance are considered particularly relevant to this application:

- **National Planning Policy Framework (2018)**  
Chapter 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment
- **The Planning Practice Guidance (2018)**  
Conserving and enhancing the historic environment
- **Conservation Principles (English Heritage, 2008)**
- **Historic England Advice Note 2: Making Changes to Heritage Assets (2016)**

### **2 Development Plan**

The Development Plan is comprised of the London Plan 2016, Islington Core Strategy 2011, Development Management Policies 2013, Finsbury Local Plan 2013 and Site Allocations 2013. The following policies of the Development Plan are considered relevant to this application:

- **The London Plan 2016 - Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London**  
Policy 7.4 - Local Character Policy 7.8 Heritage assets and archaeology
- **Islington Core Strategy 2011**  
Policy CS8 - Enhancing Islington's character  
Policy CS9 - Protecting and Enhancing Islington's Built and Historic Environment
- **Development Management Policies June 2013**  
Design and Heritage  
Policy DM2.3 - Heritage
- **SPD/SPGs**  
Islington Urban Design Guide 2017  
Whitehall Park Conservation Area Design Guidelines 2002

**APPENDIX 3: PREVIOUS DECISION**

This appendix contains a copy of the decision notice in relation to the previous consent under reference P2014/5019/LBC.

**PLANNING DECISION NOTICE**

Frankham Consultancy - Mr Al Grant  
7B Irene House  
Five Arches Business Estate  
Maidstone Road  
Sidcup  
Kent  
DA14 5AE



Development Management Service  
Planning and Development Division  
Environment & Regeneration Department  
PO Box 3333  
222 Upper Street  
LONDON N1 1YA

**Case Officer:** Kristian Kaminski  
**T:** 020 7527 2524  
**E:** [planning@islington.gov.uk](mailto:planning@islington.gov.uk)

**Issue Date:** 15 October 2015  
**Application No:** P2014/5019/LBC

*(Please quote in all correspondence)*

Dear Sir or Madam

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACTS  
LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS ACTS AND REGULATIONS**

**BOROUGH COUNCIL'S DECISION:** Approve with conditions

Notice is hereby given of the above stated decision of Islington Borough Council, the Local Planning Authority, in pursuance of its powers under the above mentioned Acts and Rules, Orders and Regulations made thereunder, relating to the application / development referred to below, at the location indicated, subject to the condition(s) listed and in accordance with the plans submitted, save insofar as may be otherwise required by the condition(s).

<b>Location:</b>	<b>Archway Bridge, Archway Road, London, N19</b>
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<b>Application Type:</b>	<b>Listed Building</b>		
<b>Date of Application:</b>	17 November 2014	<b>Application Received:</b>	04 December 2014
<b>Application Valid:</b>	23 January 2015	<b>Application Target:</b>	20 March 2015

**DEVELOPMENT:**

Listed Building Consent application in connection with proposed anti suicide measures by installation of fencing to bridge parapet.

**PLAN NOS:**

31S4PL1, 32S4PL2, 33S4PL2, Statement of Revised Design, Historic Building Report and Heritage Assessment

**CONDITIONS:**

- 1 The works hereby permitted shall be begun not later than three years from the date of this consent.

**REASON:** To comply with the provisions of Section 18(1)(a) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (Chapter 5).

All new external and internal works and finishes and works of making good to the retained fabric, shall match the existing adjacent work with regard to the methods used and to material,

P-DEC-AP2

colour, texture and profile, unless shown otherwise on the drawings or other documentation hereby approved or required by any condition(s) attached to this consent.

REASON: In order to conserve the significance of the heritage asset.

- 3 The following shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the relevant works commencing:

- In situ installation of a sample section of fencing
- Justification for the extended spikes to the flank piers
- Details for a reversible fixing method that can be used to the end plinths or demonstration that that it is not possible

REASON: In order to conserve the significance of the heritage asset.

- 4 The following, which help weigh in favour of the approved scheme, shall be undertaken within three months of works commencing:

- Removal of the modern mesh to the existing balustrade
- Removal of the existing spikes placed to the external face of the central plinth
- Agreed plan submitted for CCTV surveillance of the bridge in conjunction with Council and the London Borough of Haringey
- Review undertaken of the anti-suicide signage on the bridge in conjunction with the Samaritans.

REASON: In order to conserve the significance of the heritage asset.

Your attention is drawn to any **INFORMATIVES** that may be listed below

Certified that this document contains a true record of a decision of the Council

Yours faithfully



**KAREN SULLIVAN**  
**SERVICE DIRECTOR - PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT**  
**AND PROPER OFFICER**