

PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT

Development Management Service Planning and Development Division Community Wealth Building Department

PLANNING	SUB COMMITTEE B			
Date:	5 March 2024		Non Exempt Item	
Application number		P2023/1149/FUL	P2023/1149/FUL and P2023/1155/LBC	
Application type		Full Planning App	Full Planning Application and Listed Building Consent	
Ward		St Mary's and St	James'	
Listed building		Yes	Yes	
Conservation area		Upper Street (Nor	Upper Street (North)	
Development Plan Context		Cycle Routes (Lo	vth Area (General)	
Licensing Implications		N/A		
Site Address		Town Hall, Islingto	on Assembly Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD	
Proposal		portacabin extens	Proposed removal of existing external fire escape stair and portacabin extension within a courtyard of the building and construction of a new external escape stair for the chambers room and associated external works to the courtyard area	
Case Office	<u> </u>	Jake Shiels		

Case Officer	Jake Shiels	
Applicant	Islington Council	
Agent	Mr Renato Pimenta	

1. RECOMENDATION

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

2. SITE PLAN (site highlighted in red)

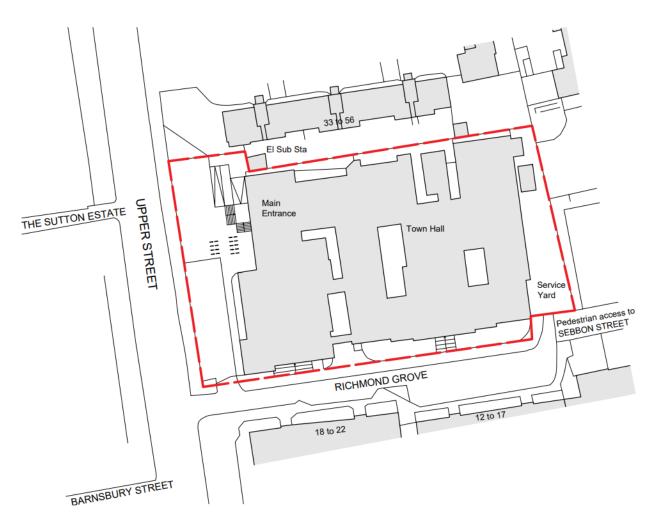


Image 1: Site Plan

3. PHOTOS OF SITE



Image 2: Aerial view (proposal area arrowed)





Images 3 & 4: Stair from neighbouring property and out of use sign





Image 5 & 6: Portacabin and stair to ground level



Image 7: Portacabin and paving area

4. SUMMARY

- 4.1 The proposal seeks planning permission and listed building consent for the removal of an existing external fire escape stair and portacabin extension within the courtyard of the building and construction of a new enclosed external escape stair for the chambers room and associated external works to the courtyard area.
- 4.2 The fire escape to be removed supports emergency evacuation from the Council's Committee Chamber, however it is currently not compliant with Building Control regulations and is not in use. The proposal would also result in the removal of the 1-storey portacabin building erected within the north courtyard in 1983 and the removal of the existing patchwork of paved areas within the courtyard. The removal of the portacabin is required to accommodate the new fire escape stair enclosure but also to improve the inclusivity and environmental conditions of the courtyard.
- 4.3 The proposed replacement fire stair with enclosure and landscaping works would conserve and preserve the character of the conservation area and setting of the Grade II listed building, and is therefore compliant with the NPPF 2023, policies D4 and HC1 of the London Plan 2021, with policies PLAN1, DH1 and DH2 of Islington's Strategic and Development Management Policies (2023).
- 4.4 The proposal complies with Policy D12(A) of the London Plan (2021) bringing about an urgent and much needed compliant fire escape route from the Committee Chamber.
- 4.5 The proposal is considered compliant with policy PLAN1 of Islington's Strategic and Development Management Policies (2023) in regard to impacts on neighbouring amenity providing a fire stair for use in case of emergency and a courtyard space to be used by council staff only during office hours.
- 4.6 The application is referred to committee as it is a Council Own Application.

5. SITE AND SURROUNDING

- 5.1 The application site contains the land and building serving the London Borough of Islington Council and comprises a Grade II listed building, Islington Town Hall.
- 5.2 The site lies within the Upper Street (North) Conservation Area and the Islington Village and Manor House Archaeological Priority Area. Islington Town Hall was built between 1922 and 1925 and was designed by E. C. P. Monson.
- 5.3 The site area relevant to the application is within the north courtyard located in between the Committee Chamber and Council Offices. Originally an open external area, it is primarily occupied by a single storey portacabin extension built in 1983 as a temporary structure. An existing black metal stair is attached to the listed building leading from the Council Chamber. However, this is not compliant with building control regulations and is therefore not in use.

6. PROPOSAL (in Detail)

- 6.1 The application seeks planning permission and listed building consent for the removal of an existing external fire escape stair and portacabin extension within the courtyard of the building and construction of a new enclosed external escape stair for the chambers room and associated external works to the courtyard area.
- 6.2 The fire escape to be removed supports emergency evacuation from the Council's Committee Chamber, however it is not compliant with building control regulations and is not in use. The

replacement would involve the addition of a new fire escape stair providing a compliant means of fire escape from the chamber along with refuge capacity enhancing the means of fire escape from the Chamber, with increased capacity and full Building Control compliance.

- 6.3 The fire escape stair would be an enclosed structure with a total height of 10.1m formed of 3 levels, when viewed externally, consisting of channel glass cladding with white frames.
- 6.4 The proposals have been advanced from pre-application stage and two sets of revised plans were received during the application process. Originally the proposal consisted of a black metal open stair structure, but this was omitted given flights and landings are required to be enclosed as it is for an escape stair serving members of the public. Given the detailed design and massing of the structure changed, officers carried out a re-consultation to members of the public. A minor revision was then required by officers to the colour of the enclosure moving from a green tinge to the framing and glass to a detailed design which is more reflective of the existing white framed and channel glass consisting of a low iron to avoid a strong green hue, and texturised (peel orange) to limit its transparency. This is inspired from the Haddo House Estate precedent, a modern housing block built between 1965-67.
- 6.5 The proposal would also result in the removal of the 1-storey portacabin building erected within the north courtyard in 1983 and the removal of the existing patchwork of paved areas within the courtyard. The removal of the portacabin would include removing and replacing the pavement which ranges in materiality and level and replace with a new paved area and garden including soft and hard landscaping including benches to allow the space to be used as an amenity space. Low level light fittings are also proposed and an emergency light will be provided in the stair and final exit route.

7. RELEVANT HISTORY:

Planning and Listed Building Consent

- 7.1 <u>861991:</u> The erection of a single storey temporary office extension on flat roof area between the Council Chamber and the Assembly Hall. **Approved with conditions** on 11/02/1987.
- 7.2 <u>P090290:</u> Listed Building Consent in connection with refurbishment of the public hall and ancillary spaces. Introduction of a glass lift from the ground level foyer to the basement cloakroom area to give disabled access to male and female lavatories and cloakrooms. **Approved with conditions** on 29/09/2009.
- 7.3 <u>P102019 and P102020:</u> Full planning permission and Listed Building Consent for the installation of a single storey biomass boiler and pellet store adjacent to main plant room to the rear of the Town Hall. **Approved with conditions** on 13/06/2011.
- 7.4 <u>P120129:</u> Advertisement Consent for the erection of unilluminated freestanding notice board on forecourt. **Approved with conditions** on 15/06/2012.
- 7.5 <u>P2014/2329/LBC:</u> Replacement of 9 crittall single glazed metal windows with new crittall windows to match. **Approved with conditions** on 09/10/2014.
- 7.6 <u>P2016/0319/LBC:</u> Additional security to the Town Hall providing a swipe card reader system on 8 internal doors/pairs of doors with locking mechanism to frames. **Approved with conditions** on 26/02/2016.
- 7.7 <u>P2020/3418/FUL-P2020/3485/LBC:</u> Proposed alterations to the external service yard and internal basement spaces to upgrade and provide dedicated cycle storage and changing facilities as well as the reconfiguration of the service yard to accommodate council facilities

- storage, parking, refuse collection (Council Own Application). **Approved with conditions** at Planning Sub-Committee B on 26/02/2021.
- 7.8 <u>P2021/2640/LBC:</u> Internal partition alterations to offices G07a, G07 and G08. **Approved with conditions** at Planning Sub-Committee B 19/11/2021.

Pre-application

7.9 <u>Q2022/4136/MIN:</u> Pre-application: Proposed alterations to improve accessibility, fire escape and operation of the building. **Completed** on 31/03/2023.

CONSULTATION

Public Consultation

- 7.10 Letters were sent to occupants of **179** adjoining and nearby properties on Upper Street, on 03/05/2023.
- 7.11 No comments were received from the public with regard to the application.
- 7.12 A further round of consultation took place on 26/09/23 to notify residents and consultees of the revision to the design of the stair from an open design to one that is enclosed. No comments were received from the public with regard to the application.

Internal Consultees

7.13 Design and Conservation: Approve subject to conditions – full assessment included below.

External Consultees

- 7.14 Historic England: No comment, refer to the views of internal specialist conservation advisers.
- 7.15 <u>Transport for London (TfL):</u> No objection, subject to no obstruction to the Transport for London Road Network (TLRN)/Upper Street.

8. RELEVANT STATUTORY DUTIES & DEVELOPMENT PLAN CONSIDERATION & POLICIES

- 8.1 Islington Council (Planning Sub Committee), in determining the planning application has the following main statutory duties to perform:
 - To have regard to the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application and to any other material considerations (Section 70 Town & Country Planning Act 1990).
 - To determine the application in accordance with the development plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise (Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004) (Note: that the relevant Development Plan is the London Plan and Islington's Local Plan, including adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance).
- 8.2 National Planning Policy Framework 2023 (NPPF): Paragraph 10 states: "at the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 8.3 The National Planning Policy Framework 2023 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.

- 8.4 Since March 2014 Planning Practice Guidance for England has been published online.
- 8.5 In considering the planning 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.
- 8.6 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.
- 8.7 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.
- 8.8 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 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.
- 8.9 The Development Plan is comprised of the London Plan 2021, Islington Strategic and Development Management Policies (SDMP) 2023, Bunhill and Clerkenwell AAP 2023 and Site Allocations 2023. The policies of the Development Plan that are considered relevant to this application are listed at Appendix 2 to this report.
- 8.10 The SPGs and/or SPDs which are considered relevant are listed in Appendix 2.

9. ASSESSMENT

- 9.1 The main issues arising from this proposal relate to:
 - Land Use
 - Design and Conservation
 - Heritage Assets
 - Fire Safety
 - Impact on the amenity of neighbouring residents
 - Sustainability
 - Accessibility.

Land Use

- 9.2 The application site provides council officers with a floor area of approximately 4700sq.m.
- 9.3 The portacabin within the northern courtyard was a temporary office space and was permitted under planning application Ref: 861991, with a condition requiring its removal. The portacabin is unused and its removal would not impact the Council's functions or services.
- 9.4 Overall, the proposal seeks to upgrade and improve the existing building externally to the courtyard which include a fire and building control compliant Committee chamber escape and improved external courtyard area visually and functionally and would not result in any use class change of the building or adverse impact to its use.

Design and Conservation

Policy

- 9.5 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) confirms that the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment, and notes that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and should create better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.
- 9.6 Paragraph 134 of the NPPF (2023) states that in determining applications, great weight should be given to development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes; and/or outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.
- 9.7 Policy PLAN1 of Islington's Strategic and Development Management Policies, amongst other objectives, aims to achieve development that represents a high quality of design that is sustainable and inclusive and that positively contributes to local character, legibility and distinctiveness.
- 9.8 Part A of Policy DH1 supports innovative approaches to development while simultaneously addressing any adverse heritage impacts and protecting and enhancing the unique character of the borough. Part E of the policy states that the Council will conserve or enhance Islington's heritage assets and their setting in a manner appropriate to the significance.
- 9.9 Part B of Policy DH2 states that development within conservation areas and their settings including alterations to existing buildings and new development must conserve or enhance the significance of the area, and must be of a high quality contextual design. Proposals that harm the significance of a conservation area must provide clear and convincing justification for the harm; where proposals will cause substantial harm to the significance of a conservation area, they will be strongly resisted.
- 9.10 Part D of Policy DH2 states that proposals that harm the significance of a listed building (through inappropriate repair, alteration, extension, demolition and/or development within its setting) must provide clear and convincing justification for the harm. Substantial harm to, or loss of, a listed building will be strongly resisted.

Assessment of significance

- 9.11 Islington Town Hall is a Grade II listed asset. The rear wing, facing Richmond Grove, dates 1922, while the northern part in Upper Street dates 1925. The building was designed by E.C.P Monson. It was built between 1922 and 1929 in several stages. The proposed works are to the rear of the Council Chamber which was part of the second phase.
- 9.12 The chamber is an important space for democratic functions, weddings, ceremonies and other council functions, while also making an important contribution to the heritage significance of the building. The public and ceremonial spaces in this part of the building are ornate and there is a good degree of preservation of the original interiors and features.
- 9.13 The current proposal would not affect the interior and would mainly affect the external yard area to the rear of the chamber, which is enclosed within the Town Hall site and not visible from any of the street frontages (although there is some visibility from the rear yard and carpark area of the neighbouring residential properties). This area has been subject to various alterations and is currently quite cluttered and unsightly. Prefabricated/portacabin type extensions in this area are of poor quality and detract from the significance of the heritage asset.

Demolition of existing external stair

9.14 The existing stair makes no contribution to heritage interest and there is no objection to its removal. It is of generally poor quality and currently detracts from the character of the building. Elevation drawings have been provided showing the new doors and façade alterations in the area where the structure would be removed. These are considered broadly appropriate. Further details of the door and materials are recommended to be secured by condition 5 (condition 3 of LBC).

Replacement external stair

- 9.15 The proposed replacement stair would be located in the enclosed courtyard area and would replace the existing stair.
- 9.16 The proposals have been advanced from pre-application stage and two sets of revised plans were received during the application process. Originally the proposal consisted of a black metal open stair structure, but this was omitted given flights and landings are required to be enclosed as for an escape stair serving members of the public. A minor revision was then required by officers to the colour of the enclosure moving from a green tinge to the framing and glass to a detailed design which is more reflective of the existing white framed and channel glass consisting of a Low iron to avoid a strong green hue, and texturised (peel orange) to limit its transparency.
- 9.17 The massing and scale of the stair is modelled on Building Regulation requirements which would result in the new stair being much more prominent and noticeable than the existing. It would be larger than the existing stair and would be set away from the building with an access bridge, and it is required to be an enclosed structure with a roof and walls rather than a lightweight external stair. The fire escape stair would be an enclosed structure with a total height of 10.1m forming of 3 levels viewed externally consisting of channel glass cladding with white frames. The difference of level between top and bottom of the stairs is approximately 6.88m. The proposed stairs have a total of 41 steps distributed into 5 flights, the first with 9 steps, the other flights with 8 steps each.

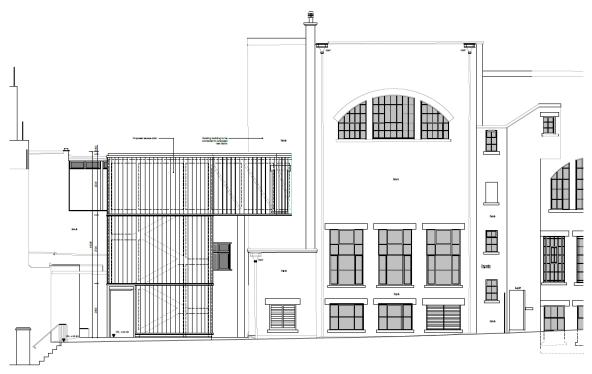


Image 8: Proposed elevation (north)

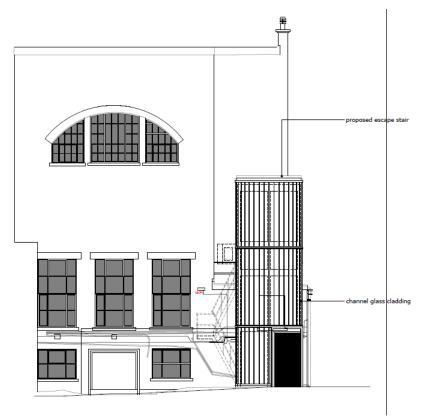
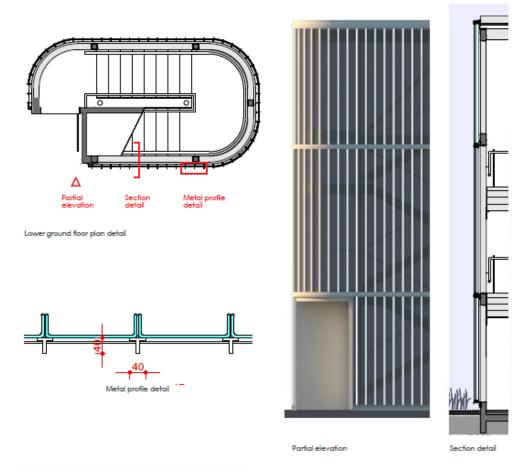


Image 9: Proposed elevation (east)







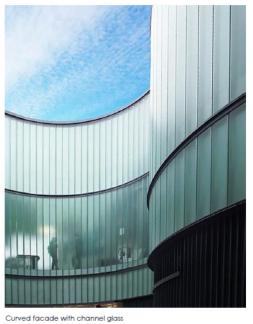


Image 10 & 11: Proposed detailed design including materiality

- 9.18 The new stair would not be visible from the street or affect any of the principal frontages of the building. However, it would be attached to a significant part of the historic building and would be visible from some areas within the Town Hall site and from localised areas in the neighbouring sites most notably the rear yard and car park area of Tyndale Mansions to the north, albeit it would be hidden from view behind existing buildings throughout most of that estate.
- 9.19 The existing single storey extension is itself an incongruous addition (which would be removed as part of the proposal), but only limited views are afforded from outside the site. The new structure would be a much more visible addition due to its height and unusual shape. Officers acknowledge that it would therefore cause less than substantial and minor harm to the significance of the listed building and to the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 9.20 Officers raised concern that an earlier version of this proposal would have appeared highly incongruous due to its design and would not have related well to the historic building. The façade treatment, materials and detailing have been refined following officer advice (including introduction of vertical metal mullions to break up the glazing, refinements to materials and roof profile), and additional details including large scale construction details have been provided showing sufficient attention to detailing of the structure. It is now considered to be an appropriate response to context that would deliver a high quality design, and one which has been inspired from the Haddo House Estate precedent, a modern housing block built between 1965-67 which staircases have curved enclosures protruding from the façade which are glazed, interspaced by white vertical framing.
- 9.21 Whilst the detailed design has been closely considered, the replacement stair would remain prominent due to its height and would cause some harm to the historic building. However, officers are satisfied that the harmful impact has been reduced as far is compatible with the other constraints and objectives. It is accepted that an enclosed external stair of approximately the proposed dimensions and configuration is required to ensure that the Council Chamber can remain in use and to meet fire safety and access requirements. This is considered to be a public benefit that can be weighed against less than substantial heritage harm caused.
- 9.22 No information about lighting requirements have been provided. It is understood that the stair would not be internally lit except during an emergency. Notwithstanding this, details of the proposed lighting arrangements are to be secured by condition 5 (Condition 3 of LBC). An additional condition (Condition 6 Condition 4 of LBC) is recommended requiring further details of demolition to any associated existing gates and walls within the courtyard and any proposed replacement is to be approved prior to the removal of the existing gate.

Landscaped area

9.23 The proposal would also result in the removal of the 1-storey portacabin building within the north courtyard and the removal of the existing patchwork of paved areas. The removal of the portacabin is required to accommodate the new fire escape stair enclosure but also to improve the inclusivity and environmental conditions of the courtyard. This would include removing and replacing the pavement, which ranges in materiality and level and replace this with a new paved area and garden including soft and hard landscaping. This will include benches to allow the space to be used as an amenity space. Low level light fittings are also proposed and an emergency light will be provided in the stair and final exit route.

9.24 The provision of a landscaped courtyard for the use of Town Hall staff in the area currently occupied by the pre-fabricated porta-cabin is welcomed by officers in consideration of the impact on the heritage asset. This could provide a valuable amenity space as well as improving urban greening, biodiversity and the general appearance in the courtyard area. It would deliver a further enhancement to the significance of the listed building through an improvement to its setting. Access arrangements, landscaping, seating and planting are well considered and are supported from a heritage and design perspective, but full details of landscaping (including any lighting) are recommended to be secured by condition 5 (Condition 3 of LBC).

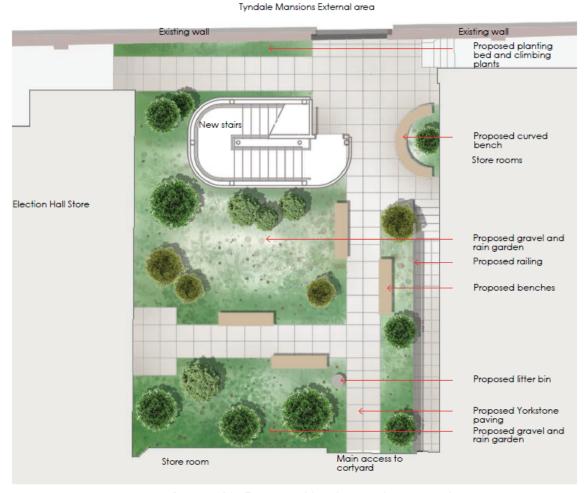


Image 12: Proposed landscaped courtyard

9.25 The site is included in the Islington Village Archaeological Priority Area (APA) – Tier II, reference number 76553. The portacabin and uneven hard landscaped surfaces below and around the portacabin would be excavated and made good at surface level with new paving in line with the details made to ensure the courtyard is accessible. Given the location within an APA and the proposed ground works a condition is recommended requiring a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) to ensure no demolition or development shall take place other than in accordance with the agreed WSI, and the programme and methodology of site evaluation and the nomination of a competent person(s) or organisation to undertake the agreed works (Condition 7).

Design and Conservation Conclusion

9.26 In line with Sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas)
Act 1990, in assessing the proposals hereby under consideration, special regard has been

given to the desirability of preserving the listed building, its setting and any of its features of special architectural or historic interest.

- 9.27 The proposed works to remove the existing extension and fire escape, with the erection of a fire escape stair would cause less than substantial and minor harm to the special architectural or historic interest of the listed building by adversely affecting visual amenity and setting. There would be a corresponding very minor harmful impact to the character and appearance of the conservation area (though this would be very localised). The landscaping proposal would result in improvements to the heritage setting, but this is not considered to be sufficient to outweigh the visual impact of the fire escape structure.
- 9.28 The harm would be less than substantial, but decision makers should give considerable importance and weight to any finding of harm to a designated heritage asset. As set out in the NPPF, decision makers should consider whether the harm would be clearly and convincingly justified in this case. In accordance with paragraph 202, the harm should be weighed against the public benefits resulting from the proposal. The proposal would allow the Council Chamber to continue to be safely used for its intended democratic functions, which is a public benefit. This should also be regarded as a heritage benefit because the democratic and ceremonial functions of the building are linked to its history and significance, and significance would be harmed if these were no longer able to continue.
- 9.29 It is also relevant for decision makers to consider whether the harmful impacts have been minimised (as set out in stage 4 of the four-stage process from *Historic England GPA3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (2017)* and in *Conservation Principles, policies and guidance (Historic England 2007)* which advises that changes which would harm the heritage values of a significant place should be unacceptable unless the harm has been reduced to the minimum consistent with achieving the objectives of the proposal.) In this case applicants have engaged with the planning department throughout re. the most appropriate design for this site (including pre-app advice and several revisions to the design at application stage in response to our comments) and officers consider that the harmful impacts have been minimised as far as is compatible with other constraints (such as fire regulations).
- 9.30 In accordance with Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, in assessing the proposal hereby under consideration, special attention has been paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the Canonbury Conservation Area. The proposal is not considered to cause harm to the character of the Conservation Area and the works would preserve the listed building, it's setting and its special architectural features.
- 9.31 The proposal is considered compliant with the NPPF 2023, policies D4 and HC1 of the London Plan 2021, with policies PLAN1, DH1 and DH2 of Islington's Strategic and Development Management Policies (2023).

Fire Safety

- 9.32 Policy D12(A) of the London Plan (2021) requires new developments to achieve the highest standards of fire safety, embedding these at the earliest possible stage.
- 9.33 The proposal is heavily influenced to ensure the Town Hall and the Committee Chamber specifically meets fire safety and Building Regulations.
- 9.34 The Council's Building Control Service have been closely consulted throughout the application process, including the original design open stair design which required that a building management strategy is required to be developed to ensure escape from the refuge, and to check the route is clear of obstruction. Additionally, Building Control advice stated where it is

proposed that members of the public will be using the escape, the route cannot be via an 'external stair' (Approved Document B - 3.31): and Building Control advice is that a form of enclosure was therefore required. The result of this advice has enabled the design to be finalised to include an enclosure by the applicants to ensure the new stair enclosure meets fire safety and building control regulations. Additionally, Atkins' Fire Engineering Review of 2021 illustrated an in person encounter with the steps. The report notes how the building plan:

'does not adequately show how steep the existing staircase is. In addition, the very narrow landing makes the stair unsafe to use and currently is not used. [...] Furthermore, no provisions (e.g., refuges, EVC, etc.) for mobility restricted persons are provided.'

- 9.35 The applicants have included a Technical Note from *Atkins Fire* assessing the proposed fire escape from the Chambers through the proposed new stairs. In conclusion, Atkins confirmed that the installation of an enclosed external escape stair will provide an alternative escape route for Chamber occupants. With the addition of this second route, the maximum occupancy capacity of the Chamber can be expanded to 110 persons.
- 9.36 In line with Building Control's advice, the Atkins report includes travel distances from the Committee Chamber including the new proposed stairs, which are within the limits recommended within Approved Document B (Table 2.1) with dead end travel distance at approximately 13 metres and the total travel distance at 21 metres to the existing exit and 29 metres to the new stair. The main fire escape route from the Chamber remains, through the rooms main entrance doors, down the stairs to the building's main entrance. This is shown within image 13 below.
- 9.37 In regard to fire escape routes from the North Courtyard, the main escape route is through the adjoining property, the Tyndale Mansions. Escape will be via two gates opening outwards allowing evacuation to the assembly point at Upper Street. The gates will be equipped with emergency push bars and the gates will be alarmed for security reasons. A secondary route is through the external corridor allowing evacuation to Upper Street. This is shown in the image 14 below.

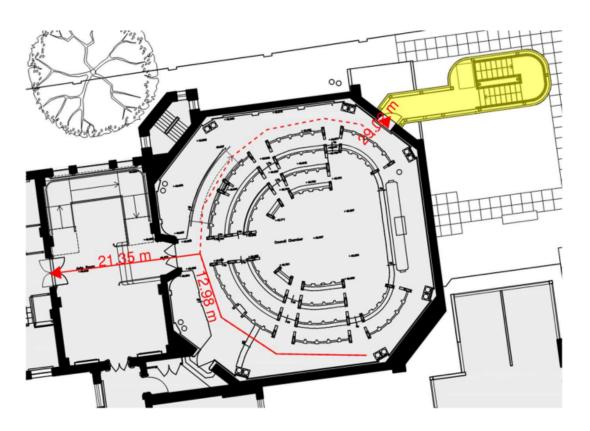


Image 13: Travel distances including new stair

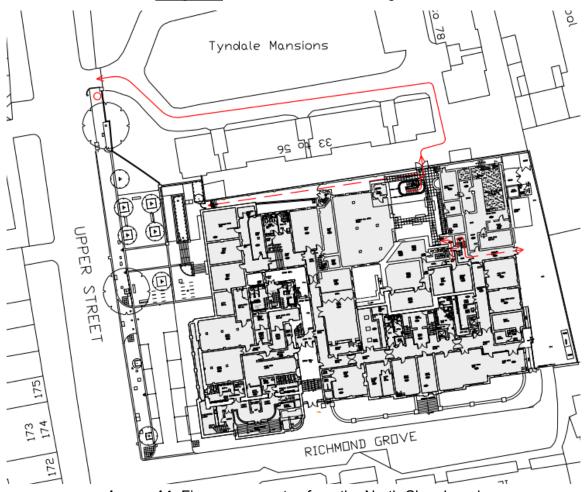


Image 14: Fire escape routes from the North Churchyard

Main escape route

← — Secondary escape route

Assembly point

9.38 Overall, the proposal complies with Policy D12(A) of the London Plan (2021) bringing about urgent and a much needed compliant fire escape route from the Committee chamber.

Neighbouring Amenity

- 9.39 All new developments are subject to an assessment of their impact on neighbouring amenity in terms of loss of daylight, sunlight, privacy and an increased sense of enclosure. A development's likely impact in terms of air quality, dust, safety, security, noise and disturbance is also assessed. The proposal is subject to London Plan Policy D6 as well Islington's Strategic and Development Management Policies policy PLAN1 applies to all new developments including alterations and extensions to existing buildings.
- 9.40 Part B(i) of this policy requires compliance with contextual design principle and requires all development to provide a good level of amenity, including consideration of noise and the impact of disturbance, hours of operation, vibration, pollution (such as air, light and noise), fumes between and within developments, overshadowing, overlooking, privacy, direct sunlight and daylight, over-dominance, sense of enclosure and outlook.
- 9.41 It's considered that the replacement staircase, given that it is for the same purpose as the existing staircase, would not cause harm to residential amenity through loss of privacy given the escape should only be used in case of fire or emergency. The structure would be enclosed also so when in use there would not be adverse overlooking from the stair. It's acknowledged that the main route of access in case of fire is through the adjoining property, the Tyndale Mansions via two gates opening outwards allowing evacuation to the assembly point at Upper Street. Considering this would only be used in case of an emergency it's considered reasonable and would not cause harm to neighbouring amenity in exceptional circumstances.
- 9.42 In regard to the massing, the stair would be 8.45m from the rear elevation of the closest façade and windows of Tynedale Mansions and 2.45m from the shared boundary wall. The stair and enclosure would be a visible structure from the neighbouring windows facing the proposal area but in the context of the host brick-built building at four storeys which encloses the site in this location it's not considered that the proposal would not appear prominent or overbearing given the site context. The addition would sit well below the massing of the adjacent residential building and the town hall structure and is as low as feasibly possible to serve the emergency access. In addition to the massing, the primarily channel glass which appears frosted with slender white frames would allow light through and it would read as a lightweight addition that would not be overbearing from the neighbouring windows of the host property and not result in adverse loss of daylight or sunlight.
- 9.43 The use of the newly created courtyard space has the potential to have amenity impacts towards the residential properties adjacent in regard to privacy, noise and disturbance and from overlooking that require consideration.
- 9.44 The flats at Tyndale Mansions have existing levels of mutual overlooking with the Town Hall and (portacabin which includes windows facing the flats) which serves primarily as office space. The courtyard is to be used for amenity space for office workers only during office hours only and as such is not considered to result in such adverse impacts to residential amenity from this ground floor aspect. Condition 3 and 4 of the planning permission include restrictions on operational hours for the use of the amenity space and for no amplified music to be played.
- 9.45 Additionally, the newly landscaped area would largely contain soft landscaping consisting of planting with a mix of biodiversity, paving areas for access and a handful of benches for seating. It would not be a location for largescale meeting or events by nature of the space and its functionality which would primarily allow fire escape access from the Committee chamber. Additionally, as an amenity space for workers as a quite tranquil space and emergency exit from

the Council Chamber only it is not expected to result in adverse amenity impacts. Condition 3 has been added to the planning permission to ensure the space is used during standard office hours between 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday and not cause adverse noise to neighbours.

- 9.46 In line with other amenity spaces and terraces within the borough, conditions are to be applied for no amplified music and for the space to be open used only during standard office hours in order to protect the amenity of adjoining properties.
- 9.47 Overall, the proposal is considered compliant with policy PLAN1 of Islington's Strategic and Development Management Policies (2023) in regard to impacts on neighbouring amenity.

Sustainability

- 9.48 The NPPF confirms that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, and policies relevant to sustainability are set out throughout the NPPF.
- 9.49 It is the council's and the Mayor's objective that all developments meet the highest standards of sustainable design and construction and make the fullest contribution to the mitigation of and adaptation to climate change. Developments must demonstrate that they achieve a significant and measurable reduction in C02 emissions, following the London Plan energy hierarchy. All developments will be expected to demonstrate that energy efficiency has been maximised and that their heating, cooling and power systems have been selected to minimise C02 emissions.
- 9.50 Policy S1 of states that the council will seek to ensure the borough develops in a way that maximises positive effects on the environment and improves quality of life, whilst minimising or avoiding negative impacts. The policy also states that the Council will promote zero carbon development, with the aim that all buildings in Islington will be net zero carbon by 2050 and will work with partners and local communities to improve the energy efficiency of the existing building stock and wider public realm. Policy S2 of the Islington Strategic and Development Management Policies (2023) requires development proposals to submit a Sustainable Design and Construction Statement which must demonstrate that the proposal meets all relevant sustainable design policies.
- 9.51 Aside from the replacement stair with new enclosure, the remaining areas of the courtyard are proposed to have soft landscape with the additional benefits of increasing the permeable surface area of the site, together with increased greening.
- 9.52 Importantly the removal of a redundant and unsustainable portacabin would result in a net gain in bio-diversity within the north courtyard which would be a benefit to the local environment and council staff.
- 9.53 The landscaping details have carefully considered the shading of the courtyard in their choice of planting with 3 different planting zones which will consist of large shrub and small tree planting. The soft landscape strategy seeks to ensure that dry and drought tolerant plants that form the basis of the sunnier part of the courtyard run into the woodland edges and gradually take on woodland character. Additionally, all plants are to be planted in shallow gravelled depressions designed to hold water until it soaks into the soil. In addition to small trees a range of tough grasses and smaller shrubs are to be used in planting beds around the courtyard.
- 9.54 In regard to the hard landscaping strategy, the principles are for that materials must be high quality, robust and hardwearing, Permeable materials are chosen to provide a long-lasting natural look, and easy to maintain surface finish in mix of natural shades.

9.55 Overall, the details are considered satisfactory for the minor development proposed and the proposal would contribute to net gain in biodiversity.

Accessibility

- 9.56 Policy PLAN1 of Islington's Strategic and Development Management Policies states at Part B that I developments shall demonstrate that to ensure that the vision and objectives of the Local Plan are realised, all development in Islington must, from the very first iteration of the proposal, comply with four key design principles, one of which includes part:
- 9.57 iii) Inclusive development must be adaptable, functional and resilient, and able to respond to the spatial, social and economic needs of the borough's increasingly diverse communities and their different and evolving demands. This includes sustaining and reinforcing a variety and mix of uses in line with any relevant land use priorities of the Local Plan.
- 9.58 The fire escape to be removed supports emergency evacuation from the Council's Committee Chamber, however it is currently not compliant with Building Control regulations and is not in use. As detailed within the submission also, it is extremely steep in an open stair design.
- 9.59 The replacement would involve the addition of a new fire escape stair providing a compliant means of fire escape from the chamber along with refuge capacity enhancing the means of fire escape from the Chamber, with increased capacity and full Building Control compliance.
- 9.60 The stair design incorporates the inclusive design principles within policy PLAN1 also ensuring Part M compliance with Building Regulations in that the proposed stairs will provide for a refuge area at the top. The refuge will allow level access from inside the Chamber, to outside the building. From the refuge point, escape is to be carried out with assistance from trained staff and the Fire Brigade. In compliance with Part B of the Building Regulations the proposed stairs will have 1200mm wide flights and landings and will be enclosed as required for an escape stair serving members of the public. Overall, due consideration has been provided to accessibility in line with policy.

10. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

- 10.1 The proposal would ensure that the Town Hall and the Committee Chamber meets fire safety and Building Regulations. The proposed replacement stair with enclosure complies with Policy D12(A) of the London Plan (2021) bringing about urgent and a much needed compliant fire escape route from the Committee chamber.
- 10.2 The proposed replacement fire stair with enclosure and landscaping works would cause less than substantial and minor harm to the character of the conservation area and setting of the Grade II listed building. However, given the heritage benefit of removing the existing porta-cabin and inappropriate fire escape, and the continued functionality of the Council Chamber, which is part of the significance of the heritage asset, together with the public benefit of greater fire safety, it is considered that the less than substantial harm has been outweighed by the benefits. Given this, the proposal is considered to be compliant with the NPPF 2023, policies D4 and HC1 of the London Plan 2021, with policies PLAN1, DH1 and DH2 of Islington's Strategic and Development Management Policies (2023).
- 10.3 The proposal is considered compliant with policy PLAN1 of Islington's Strategic and Development Management Policies (2023) in regard to impacts on neighbouring amenity providing a fire stair for use in case of emergency and a courtyard space to be used by council staff only during office hours.

10.4 It is recommended that planning permission be granted subject to conditions as set out in Appendix 1 – RECOMMENDATION.

APPENDIX 1 – RECOMMENDATIONS

That the grant of planning permission and listed building consent be subject to **conditions** to secure the following, and that there is delegated to each of the following: the Head of Development Management the Team Leader Major Applications and the Team Leader Planning Applications to make minor changes (additions removals or amendments) to the conditions:

RECOMMENDATION A

That Planning permission be GRANTED subject to the following conditions:

1	COMMENCEMENT (3 YEAR CONSENT PERIOD)
	CONDITION: The development hereby permitted shall be begun not later than the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
	REASON: To comply with the provisions of Section 91(1) (a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (Chapter 5).
2	APPROVED PLANS LIST (COMPLIANCE)
	CONDITION: The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:
	DT168-IA-00-00-DR-A-1109-00-PL Rev 00, DT168-IA-00-00-DR-A-1010-PL Rev 00, DT168-IA-00-00-DR-A-1100-PL Rev 00, DT168-IA-00-00-DR-A-2001-PL Rev 01, DT168-IA-00-00-DR-A-2009-PL Rev 02, DT168-IA-00-00-DR-A-2010-PL Rev 01, DT168-IA-00-00-DR-A-2011-PL Rev 01, DT168-IA-00-DR-A-2012-PL Rev 02, DT168-IA-00-ZC-DR-A-2109-PL Rev 04, DT168-IA-00-ZC-DR-A-2109-PL (Basement Zone C) Rev 04, DT168-IA-00-ZC-DR-A-2100-PL Rev 04, DT168-IA-00-ZC-DR-A-2601-PL Rev 03, DT168-IA-00-ZC-DR-A-2602-PL Rev 03, DT168-IA-00-ZC-DR-A-3501-PL Rev 01, DT168-IA-00-ZC-DR-A-3502-PL Rev 01, DT168-IA-00-ZC-DR-A-3561-PL Rev 03, DT168-IA-00-ZC-DR-A-3562-PL Rev 03, DT168-IA-00-ZC-DR-A-3571-PL Rev 03, DT168-IA-00-ZC-DR-A-3572-PL Rev 03 DT168-IA-00-ZC-DR-A-3573-PL Rev 01, DT168-IA-00-ZC-DR-A-3581-PL Rev 03, DT168-IA-00-ZC-DR-A-3582-PL Rev 00, Islington Town Hall - North Courtyard Application for planning permission Design & Access Statement April 2023 (Updated January 2024) by Islington architects, Islington Town Hall - North Courtyard Application for planning permission Heritage Impact Assessment February 2023 (21/12/2023 (Page 27 updated only)) by Islington architects and Technical Note by Atkins (08/12/23).
	REASON: To comply with Section 70(1) (a) of the Town and Country Act 1990 as amended and the Reason for Grant and also for the avoidance of doubt and in the interest of proper planning.
3	HOURS OF USE FOR COURTYARD AMENITY SPACE (COMPLIANCE)
	CONDITION: The use of the courtyard amenity space shall only be used between the following hours:
	Monday to Friday: 08:00-18:00 hours.

	REASON: To protect the amenity of adjacent properties.
4	NO AMPLIFIED MUSIC (COMPLIANCE)
7	CONDITION: No amplified music shall be played at any time within the courtyard area as shown on the approved plan ref DT168-IA-00-ZC-DR-A-2109-01-PL Rev 02.
	REASON: To protect the residential amenity of neighbouring properties.
5	MATERIALS (DETAILS)
	CONDITION: Details and samples of all facing materials shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to any superstructure work commencing on site. The details and samples shall include:
	 a) Details and samples of all materials and fixture for use in the fire escape including detailed drawings of the proposed door. b) Details and samples of all materials and fixture for use in the area of the new doorway providing access to the courtyard garden including detailed drawings of the proposed door c) Details of landscaping including a planting scheme, details of and samples of all landscaping materials, details of all external fixtures and furniture including benches, balustrades, lighting, retaining walls and steps d) Details of proposed internal and external lighting of the fire escape stair including timings/hours of operation and brightness.
	The development shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the details so approved and shall be maintained as such thereafter.
	REASON: In the interest of securing sustainable development and to ensure that the resulting appearance and construction of the development is of a high standard.
6	NO PERMISSION FOR DEMOLITION (DETAILS)
	CONDITION: Notwithstanding the plans hereby approved, no permission is granted for demolition of the gate in the north side boundary wall until further details of the existing gate and proposed replacement or alterations have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
	The details shall include:
	 a) Details and photographs of the existing gate, sufficient to understand its contribution to heritage interest (if any) and b) Details including large scale elevation and section drawings, material, colour and finish of the proposed new gate or alterations.
	The work shall be carried out in accordance with the details so approved and shall be maintained as such thereafter.
7	WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION (DETAILS)
•	CONDITION: No demolition or development shall take place until a stage 1 written scheme of investigation (WSI) has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing. For land that is included within the WSI, no demolition or development shall take place other than in accordance with the agreed WSI, and the programme and methodology of site evaluation and the nomination of a competent person(s) or organisation to undertake the agreed works.

If heritage assets of archaeological interest are identified by stage 1 then for those parts of the site which have archaeological interest a stage 2 WSI shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing. For land that is included within the stage 2 WSI, no demolition/development shall take place other than in accordance with the agreed stage 2 WSI which shall include:

- A. The statement of significance and research objectives, the programme and methodology of site investigation and recording and the nomination of a competent person(s) or organisation to undertake the agreed works.
- B. The programme for post-investigation assessment and subsequent analysis, publication & dissemination and deposition of resulting material. This part of the condition shall not be discharged until these elements have been fulfilled in accordance with the programme set out in the stage 2 WSI.

Informative Written schemes of investigation will need to be prepared and implemented by a suitably qualified professionally accredited archaeological practice in accordance with Historic England's Guidelines for Archaeological Projects in Greater London. This condition is exempt from deemed discharge under schedule 6 of The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

REASON: This pre-commencement condition is necessary to safeguard the archaeological interest on this site. Approval of the WSI before works begin on site provides clarity on what investigations are required, and their timing in relation to the development programme.

8 STAIR ENCLOSURE USE (COMPLIANCE)

CONDITION: The stair shall only be used in case of emergency only and should not be used for informal and frequent access at any time.

REASON: To protect the residential amenity of neighbouring properties.

9 CONSTRUCTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN (DETAILS)

CONDITION: Notwithstanding the details submitted with the application, a Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development. The CEMP should refer to Islington's Code of Practice for Construction Sites (2018) and include details and arrangements regarding:

- a) The notification of neighbours with regard to specific works;
- b) Advance notification of any access way, pavement, or road closures;
- c) Details regarding parking, deliveries and storage including details of the routing, loading, off-loading, parking and turning of delivery and construction vehicles and the accommodation of all site operatives', visitors' and construction vehicles during the construction period;
- d) Details regarding any demolition and construction vehicle routes and access to the site;
- e) Details regarding dust mitigation and measures to prevent the deposit of mud and debris on the public highway. No vehicles shall leave the site until their wheels, chassis and external bodywork have been effectively cleaned and washed free of earth, mud, clay, gravel, stones or any other similar substance;
- f) Details of waste storage within the site to prevent debris on the surrounding estate and the highway and a scheme for recycling/disposing of waste resulting from demolition and construction works;

- g) The proposed hours and days of work (with reference to the limitations of noisy work which shall not take place outside the hours of 08.00-18.00 Monday to Friday, 08.00-13.00 on Saturdays, and none on Sundays or Bank Holidays.)
- h) Details of any proposed external illumination and/or floodlighting during construction, including positions and hours of lighting;
 - Details of measures taken to prevent noise disturbance to surrounding residents;
- j) Information on access and security measures proposed to prevent security breaches at the existing entrances to the site, to prevent danger or harm to the neighbouring residents, and to avoid harm to neighbour amenity caused by site workers at the entrances to the site:
- k) Details addressing environmental and amenity impacts (including (but not limited to) noise, air quality, smoke and odour, vibration, water, TV and internet reception)
- l) Details as to how safe and convenient vehicle access will be maintained for all existing vehicle traffic at all times, including emergency service vehicles;
- m) Details of any construction compound including the siting of any temporary site office, toilets, skips or any other structure; and
- n) Details of any further measures taken to limit and mitigate the impact of construction upon the operation of the highway and the amenity of the area.
- o) Details of measures taken to minimise the impacts of the construction process on air quality, including NRMM registration.

The report shall assess the impacts during the preparation/demolition, excavation and construction phases of the development on the surrounding roads, together with means of mitigating any identified impacts. The report shall also identify other local developments and highways works, and demonstrate how vehicle movements would be planned to avoid clashes and/or highway obstruction on the surrounding roads.

The demolition and development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details and measures.

REASON: In order to secure the safe and efficient operation of the highway network, local residential amenity and to mitigate the impacts of the development.

RECOMMENDATION B

That Listed Building Consent be GRANTED subject to the following conditions:

1	COMMENCEMENT (3 YEAR CONSENT PERIOD FOR LBC)
	CONDITION: 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).
	REASON: To comply with the provisions of Section 91(1) (a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (Chapter 5).

2	ALL EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL WORKS TO MATCH (COMPLIANCE)		
	CONDITION: All 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. All such works and finishes shall be maintained as such thereafter.		
	REASON: In order to safeguard the special architectural or historic interest of the heritage asset.		
3	MATERIALS (DETAILS)		
	CONDITION: Details and samples of all facing materials shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to any superstructure work commencing on site. The details and samples shall include:		
	a) Details and samples of all materials and fixture for use in the fire escape including detailed drawings of the proposed door.		
	b) Details and samples of all materials and fixture for use in the area of the new doorway providing access to the courtyard garden including detailed drawings of the proposed door		
	c) Details of landscaping including a planting scheme, details of and samples of all landscaping materials, details of all external fixtures and furniture including benches, balustrades, lighting, retaining walls and steps		
	d) Details of proposed internal and external lighting of the fire escape stair including timings/hours of operation and brightness.		
	The development shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the details so approved and shall be maintained as such thereafter.		
	REASON: In the interest of securing sustainable development and to ensure that the resulting appearance and construction of the development is of a high standard.		
4	NO PERMISSION FOR DEMOLITION OF GATE (DETAILS)		
	CONDITION: Notwithstanding the plans hereby approved, no permission is granted for demolition of the gate in the north side boundary wall until further details of the existing gate and proposed replacement or alterations have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.		
	The details shall include:		
	 a) Details and photographs of the existing gate, sufficient to understand its contribution to heritage interest (if any) and b) Details including large scale elevation and section drawings, material, colour and finish of the proposed new gate or alterations. 		
	The work shall be carried out in accordance with the details so approved and shall be maintained as such thereafter.		

INFORMATIVES (LBC):

<u>BUILDING CONTROL:</u> This consent relates solely to listed building matters. Should it become necessary to make alterations to the consented scheme in order to comply with other legislation, such as Building Regulations, a further consent may be required. Such a consent should be sought and obtained prior to the relevant works being undertaken.

APPENDIX 2 - RELEVANT DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

This appendix lists all relevant development plan polices and guidance notes pertinent to the determination of this planning application.

1. National and Regional Guidance

The National Planning Policy Framework 2023 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.

• NPPF (2023)

2. Development Plan

The Development Plan is comprised of the London Plan 2021, Islington Strategic and Development Management Policies (SDMP) 2023, Bunhill and Clerkenwell AAP 2023 and Site Allocations 2023. The following policies of the Development Plan are considered relevant to pre- application:

A) The London Plan 2021 - Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London

Policy GG1 Building strong and inclusive communities

Policy GG2 Making the best use of land

Policy D3 Optimising site capacity through the design-led approach

Policy D4 Delivering good design

Policy D5 Inclusive design

Policy E1 Offices

Policy HC1 Heritage conservation and growth

B) Islington Strategic and Development Management Policies September 2023

Policy PLAN1 Site appraisal, design principles and process

Policy B3 Existing business floorspace

Policy G1 Green infrastructure

Policy G4 Biodiversity, landscape design and trees

Policy SP4 Angel and Upper Street

Policy DH1 Fostering innovation and conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Policy DH2 Heritage assets

Policy S1 Delivering Sustainable Design

Policy S2 Sustainable Design and Construction

3. Designations

The site has the following designations under the Islington Strategic and Development Management Policies (SDMP) 2023:

- Archaeological Priority Area (Islington Village and Manor House)
- Conservation Areas (Upper Street North)
- Cycle Routes (Local and Strategic)
- Employment Growth Area (General)
- Listed Buildings (Grade II)
- Open Space (Islington Town Hall Forecourt)

4. Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) / Document (SPD)

The following SPGs and/or SPDs are relevant:

Islington Local Development Plan

- Environmental Design (2012)
- Inclusive Design in Islington (2014)
- Islington Urban Design Guide (2017)