

LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN	WARDS: King's Cross
REPORT TITLE Camden Town Hall refurbishment – Design for Accessibility	
REPORT OF Programme Manager Corporate Accommodation	
FOR SUBMISSION TO Disability Oversight Panel	DATE 24 th July 2019
SUMMARY OF REPORT <p>This report updated the Disability Oversight Panel on the current stage of design development on the refurbishment of Camden Town Hall as regards design for accessibility and seeks from the Panel on the access features of the developed designs which can be reflected in further stages of development. A short design for access presentation will be given at the meeting.</p> <p>Local Government Act 1972 – Access to Information</p> <p>No documents which require listing were used in the preparation of the report.</p> <p>Contact Officer: Ian Patterson Programme Manager Corporate Accommodation Development – Supporting Communities 3rd Floor, 5 Pancras Square London N1C 4AG E-mail: ian.patterson@camden.gov.uk Telephone: 020 7974 8635</p>	
WHAT DECISIONS ARE BEING ASKED FOR? <p>The Panel is asked to review and comment upon the current stage of Town Hall design as regards disability access improvements.</p>	

Signed: Neil Vokes, Director of Development

Date: 9th July 2019

1. WHAT IS THIS REPORT ABOUT?

- 1.1 This report reviews the refurbishment proposals for Camden Town Hall with specific focus on design to improve disability access.

2. WHY IS THIS REPORT NECESSARY?

- 2.1 The Disability Oversight Panel received a presentation on Town Hall access in the earlier stages of design in mid-2018. Since that time more detailed design development has taken place and a planning application has been submitted. This report seeks views from the Panel on the access features of the developed designs which can be reflected in further stages of development.

3. OPTIONS

- 3.1 The business case for the refurbishment of Camden Town Hall approved by the Cabinet includes:
- Modernised spaces for civic and democratic functions and public services to improve and enhance public access to services and the democratic process
 - In line with the Council's digital strategy, enhanced use of technology and a wider digital offer for increased effectiveness, transparency and public access
 - Space for business to occupy the 2nd and 3rd floors of the Town Hall.
 - Space for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the basement.
 - A major investment in building infrastructure to ensure the long term future of the Town Hall as the Council's main democratic and civic space.
 - Long term income to support the initial investment including lease income from a commercial operator of the Camden Centre
- 3.2 Improving disability access has been an important part of the design development for the Town Hall refurbishment project. This is challenging in the context of a Grade II listed building with significant heritage features. A planning application for the Town Hall refurbishment project has been submitted which include a Design and Access Statement. The relevant section 'Design for Accessibility' is attached as an extract at Appendix A.
- 3.3 Further detailed review and design development is taking place prior to the start of works in early 2020. This report and the associated design presentation to be given at the meeting invites the Panel to comment on the proposals and options which can be reflected in the next stages of design.
- ## **4. WHAT ARE THE REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS?**
- 4.1 To obtain the views of the Disability Oversight Panel on accessible design proposals to be included within the proposals for the Town Hall.

5. WHAT ARE THE KEY IMPACTS / RISKS? HOW WILL THEY BE ADDRESSED?

- 5.1 The design proposals will increase access to the Town Hall. However the fact that the Town Hall is a Grade II listed building presents both a challenge and a risk to achieving enhanced access. Design development has taken place with input from specialist heritage and disability access advisers to ensure that the best solution possible in the context of the Town Hall is achieved.

6. WHAT ACTIONS WILL BE TAKEN AND WHEN FOLLOWING THE DECISION AND HOW WILL THIS BE MONITORED?

- 6.1 Views from the Panel will be included in later stages of design development. Progress will be reported to the Executive Director Corporate Services, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation and subsequent meetings of the Town Hall Councillors Steering Group and the Disability Oversight Panel.

7. LINKS TO THE CAMDEN PLAN OBJECTIVES

- 7.1 The proposals will support delivery of the overall Camden Town Hall project which in turn supports several Camden Plan objectives:

Camden 2025

Call to action two: In 2025, growth in Camden should be strong and inclusive – everyone should be able to access the work that is right for them.

We need to make Camden the best place in London to do business, with the infrastructure that business needs to grow.

Our Camden Plan

Strong growth and access to jobs

We will help to make Camden the best place in London to do business and to work, working with the business community to deliver genuinely inclusive growth that benefits everyone.

We will create the conditions for jobs in the life sciences and the digital, data and creative sectors to grow, and ensure clear pathways into these for local people.

We will increase the number of affordable workspaces in the borough, supporting small businesses to gain a foothold here and to grow. We will use all our levers as a planning authority, and through our Community Investment Programme, to deliver high-quality flexible workspaces that can respond to our growth sectors and changing patterns of employment.

8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS (comments from the Borough Solicitor)

8.1 The Borough Solicitor has been consulted on this report and has no further comments.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (comments from the Executive Director Corporate Services)

9.1 Accessible design improvements form an integral part of the approved capital budget for the Camden Town Hall refurbishment. The cost plan will be refined further as the design proposals are developed.

REPORT ENDS

APPENDIX A – Extract from Camden Town Hall Design and Access Statement

6.3 DESIGN FOR ACCESSIBILITY

In essence the project aims to bring Camden Town Hall's facilities up to modern standards and optimise use of parts of the building, where council departments have been relocated elsewhere. Currently the building does have ramped and stepped entrances; but to reach the upper floor levels there are two inadequate lifts within the Council areas, which require upgrading to improve accessibility. There is no lift access to the upper levels in the Camden Centre. Other facilities, such as the existing wheelchair accessible WC cubicles do not meet current access guidelines.

The proposals will clearly divide the Town Hall into three zones, each with their own upgraded accessible entrances and circulation cores. These three zones are LBC Civic and Democratic Services at the west end; lettable office accommodation for start-up and more established businesses at basement, second and third floor levels; and the former Camden Centre operated as a prestigious events venue at the east end.

The entrances will be fully accessible, either level, via ramps or platform lifts, and via steps, taking account of the Grade II listed status of the building. Each zone will have at least one lift and the building will be organised in a logical way, making use of existing circulation and augmenting facilities, such as WCs, where required. These will be better distributed on all floor levels so that the building users will not need to negotiate stairs and lifts to reach them.

Access improvements to the LBC areas will include improvements to the main entrance ramp and refurbishment of the two existing lifts. There will be level access to the reorganised Wedding Suites and Registrar's interview rooms, and the Council Chamber, Committee and Members' Rooms on the first floor will be refurbished. Provision has been made to improve accessible seating areas in the Council Chamber.

There will be a new level entrance into the SME and office reception area, and the offices at basement, second and third floor levels will be accessible by new two passenger lifts. One of these will be equipped as an evacuation lift, to furnish easy means of escape for disabled people. The offices themselves will have fully flexible layouts, served by wheelchair accessible WCs and breakout facilities. On the third floor, a smaller office area will be on a raised platform, reached up a short flight of steps or via a platform lift.

The Camden Centre will have an improved entrance from Bidborough Street, with new steps and ramps designed to current access standards. A new main entrance from Tonbridge Walk will have a platform lift adjacent to the new entrance steps. Internally there will be a new lift up to the first floor gallery and an updated unisex wheelchair accessible WC.

At this detailed design stage the stairs, lifts, WCs, doors and door furniture are being continually reviewed in terms of their accessibility. The design of the visual

environment will make sure that there is sufficient contrast between walls, floors, doors, ironmongery and sanitary fittings. The lighting scheme will ensure adequate illumination, particularly on circulation routes and will minimise glare and reflections. Reception facilities and new Wedding Suites will have induction loops and there will be audio enhancement (fixed induction loops and portable audio-assistance systems) in LBC rooms and meeting rooms. People with dementia and learning disabilities will appreciate the more logical circulation and the improved visual and audio environment.

Once complete the proposals for Camden Town Hall will considerably enhance access for people with a range of disabilities, and all building users.