

Q. Why is it important for Hornsey Town Hall to be brought back into long term use?

A. Hornsey Town Hall is a really important landmark for Crouch End and Haringey, with a rich arts and culture heritage. We want to see the Grade II* listed building restored and made accessible to the public and Crouch End community on a permanent basis. Hornsey Town Hall was built in 1935 and is notable as one of the earliest modernist, continental-inspired Town Halls built in inter-war England. Much of the original decorative scheme survives, but it is fragile. The building is on English Heritage's 'Heritage at Risk' register, making restoration even more important.

Q. How can you be sure that there will be community access/use if the site is sold off?

A. Securing public access to, and community use of, parts of the building is central to the council's vision for Hornsey Town Hall and community access was a minimum requirement for bidders. We have been liaising with Hornsey Town Hall Creative Trust (HTHCT – www.hornsey-town-hall.org.uk), the independent buildings preservation trust comprised of local residents, who have been working to ensure the community can access the town hall. The Trust has worked with us to ensure community use is included in the final scheme and have been involved in developing the community requirements, preparing the community use questions in the tender and assessing the bidder responses to these questions. We will ensure on-going community access to the building is secured through legal agreements.

Q. How will the developer protect this listed building?

A. The Grade II* listed status of Hornsey Town Hall means that any future development will have to obtain a Listed Building Consent and so it would have to comply with strict rules designed to protect its architectural heritage, and those involved with any chosen scheme will be required to work closely with Historic England to ensure compliance.

Q. Why can't the Town Hall be left as it is now, with ANA running the Arts Centre there?

A. The Town Hall requires substantial restoration and refurbishment to allow it to be fully re-opened safely and securely and it's not possible for us to meet the costs of this work without a contribution from an external party. ANA Arts Project Ltd has done a fantastic job of bringing parts of the building back into use, however both ANA and us recognise the limitations of the building given the current state it is in. Small scale refurbishment fails to address the long-term restoration that is needed to preserve the building for a sustainable future.

In addition to the required capital investment, there are significant annual operating and maintenance costs for the building which is still heavily subsidised by Haringey. Simply leaving Hornsey Town Hall as it is will fail to deliver the necessary refurbishment works or fund the running costs of this ageing building.

Q. What is the developer going to do to the building and site?

The developer is planning a mixed-use scheme combining community spaces, a boutique hotel, cafe/restaurants and residential development.

Q. Which parts of the building will be community use?

The details of the community based activities in the town hall are still being developed, however it is the intention that these will mostly be concentrated in, but not limited to, the more historically significant parts of the building, including the assembly hall, committee room and council chamber.

Q. Is the hotel going to take up the whole building?

No, absolutely not. The hotel is mostly concentrated in the less historically significant parts of the building, a lot of which already has planning consent for residential use (granted in 2010).

Q. Will the new scheme need a new planning consent?

The new scheme intends to use the existing planning consent, however it will require some amendments for any parts of the listed buildings which now have a different use e.g. the hotel. The preferred bidder needs to develop its designs and work with our planning department to agree a planning strategy. There is not an active Listed Building Consent for the scheme and the preferred bidder will need to obtain this.

Q. How is public use of the Town Hall square and green being secured?

The town hall square is an integral part of the scheme as it is the gateway to the town hall building and therefore has been included in the site boundary for the lease to ensure improvement works are undertaken in line with the restoration and increased activity inside the building.

The square will remain accessible to the public at all times and the developer and operator of the building is signing up to this in its lease with us. The developer recognises that community use of both the outdoor and indoor spaces is integral to the success of the town hall.

We set strict rules for every bid to keep the square publicly accessible at all times and this will be written into legal agreements with the successful bidder.

Q. What is going to happen to the current occupiers of the building?

ANA worked with the preferred bidder during the tender stage and looked at ways of the current uses continuing until works begin - they are also reviewing longer term opportunities.

All of those hiring space from ANA are on short term hire agreements, and we will work with occupiers and advise on whether there are other local Council owned premises they can operate from.

Q. Is there any affordable housing included in the residential scheme?

Affordable housing is important to us and we recognise the importance of building more of this type of housing in the borough. However Hornsey Town Hall has been recognised as a challenging project because the responsibility of carrying out the necessary extensive works to improve a dilapidated Grade II* listed building and finding a financially sustainable long term operation for the building has significant cost implications. This is a unique project in which the restoration of the art deco listed building, and our guarantee of community access have been prioritised.

The preferred bidder intends to use the existing planning consent for the site which includes four residential units. Any increase in the amount of affordable housing within the scheme will impact on the viability of the project.

Q. The preferred bidder includes a company from Hong Kong, does this prohibit the lease from being enforceable?

No, we will not enter into a lease which is not enforceable.

Q. What are the next steps and when will the public see the plans?

The preferred bidder is being recommended to our Cabinet on 18th October 2016. Once a decision has been made the preferred bidder can have further discussions with ANA and develop the details of the community activities to take place in the building.

Following exchange of the lease (expected to be by early 2017) the winning bidder will develop its designs and obtain necessary consents to implement the scheme. They will engage with the community throughout their time on the project and share plans and information on uses when these are available.

Work on site could start as early as autumn 2017, which should enable the restored building to open by 2020.