



10A SOUTH GROVE
HIGHGATE
LONDON
N6 6BS

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By e-mail

ARCHWAY BRIDGE : HARINGEY'S PLANNING APPLICATION SUBMITTED TO ISLINGTON PLANNING DEPARTMENT

P2018/1482/LBC

The Highgate Society continues to object to this proposal in the strongest possible terms. The previous Assistant Director of Planning, Stephen Kelly, at a meeting on the Bridge to review a full size mock up panel made a promise that Haringey would appoint an architect to work with the Council's engineers, Frankums, to bring design to the fore rather than the utilitarian, bleak engineering solution which was unacceptable to him and those present. That promise has never been kept with the result that this application will harm this Grade II Listed structure for as long as the fencing is in place. Design input with an openness to alternative solutions is needed fast and Stephen Kelly's promise must be honoured. In the meantime this application must be refused.

The application argues that the barrier is reversible but whilst this may be an argument that it will do not permanent harm to the bridge, it is likely to remain there if installed for many decades.

The main objections to this ill considered proposal are on the following grounds:

1. The visual amenity

The views from the bridge over central London would be ruined.

The appearance of the bridge would be made to look like something from a prison camp, only a purely utilitarian approach could have ignored the visual impact and the iconic meaning of such overbearing high security fencing.

2. Damage to the Conservation Area

It is inconceivable that this kind of barrier would be allowed anywhere in this (or any other) Conservation area. Prison and military barriers are wholly incompatible with the area.

3. Material

The material is shiny stainless steel and this would add to its overbearing nature and further detract from the black painted cast iron details of the bridge. The shiny nature of the stainless steel would further disturb views and generally has an inappropriate appearance.

The proposed design would destroy the enjoyment for thousands who traverse the bridge every day who instead of being able to contemplate one of the best views of central London, would have to walk past an oppressive and ugly barrier.

We remain in no doubt whatsoever that a well-designed and engineered solution is perfectly possible and must be found but a successful solution will have to maintain the views and not be the ruination of the Conservation area.

Both Haringey and Islington are rightly seeking to reduce suicides and no one could or does argue against that. However we do note that many suicides attempts have been prevented as a result of the CCTV cameras recently having been installed and the actions of passers by but local residents are aware that one poor person was successful last July. The CCTV cameras have also revealed that most and possibly all those people minded to commit suicide gain access to the parapet via the abutments each end of the bridge, hence the amendment to the design. We would like to see a well -designed solution which takes all this recent knowledge into account, if the present team cannot manage to do any better than this proposal, perhaps some new perspectives from designers who have some regard for appearance as well as function should be sought.

Whilst Haringey has engaged with our local Councillors, it has been remiss in keeping its promises to bring design skills to this problem and it did not inform the Highgate Society of the latest sample panel mock up in January 2018.

This application must be refused.

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