



7<sup>th</sup> June 2022

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By email

#### **Comments by the Crouch End Neighbourhood Forum**

LBH ref: **HGY/2022/1211**

26 The Broadway, Crouch End, London N8 9ST

*Installation of a canopy to create a new external seating area on the south elevation.*

LBH ref: **HGY/2022/1212**

*Listed building consent for installation of a canopy to create a new external seating area on the south elevation.*

Related planning applications: HGY/2022/1241; HGY/2022/1243 (LBC)

Dear Mark

Hornsey Town Hall Square is an iconic 1930s civic space surrounded by listed buildings including 26 The Broadway. An amenity possessing significant local placemaking value, the conservation of the integrity of the space demands a high level of attention (in compliance with policy DM9).

We were thus somewhat surprised to see a proposal that seeks to reinstate a permanent canopy structure to the front of 26 The Broadway, located on the square. Such a structure was, as detailed by the applicant, the subject of dispute over the years until finally ruled against by the Planning Inspector.

Nevertheless, our position, one shared widely across Crouch End, is that al fresco dining can be achieved in harmony with the heritage assets and civic space and is to be welcomed if not encouraged. It is also accepted that some protection from the elements is needed. It may be this proposal is the right solution, though if the application fails (it is a risk), we suggest to the restaurateur that more flexible and removable alternatives such as umbrellas or other bespoke parasols are readily available (compliant with planning policies DM9, DM8C *on street dining*, DM3B *public realm*, DM2 *accessible environments*). Regardless of the eventual outcome, lightness and transparency are required.

The civic square, now privately owned land, is currently undergoing a complete refurbishment and is obliged to comply with various conditions attached to the 2017 planning consents for the Hornsey Town Hall project – not least a condition that requires a street furniture management plan. It would therefore be highly desirable if the LPA approached the owners of the space (FEC) and their designers for comments on this current proposal:

*Is a permanent structure something they believe will work in this setting? Are adequate widths, desire lines and pedestrian movement respected? Would it restrict events on the square? Will it obstruct the approach to the other café restaurant in the adjoining part of the annex? Instead of a seating plan that turns the outdoor tables away from the green space and places them behind planters, would it not be preferable if the café area was open and furniture oriented to relate to the wider square?*

Of course such factors may be commercial decisions but we would like to see positive placemaking and the whole square animated by the al fresco cafés.

Three further observations:

We note that no details of proposed signage are included and suggest that such designs are an integral part of a refurbishment proposal. The entire design and look should be holistic, sympathetic to the 1930s buildings. If advertisement consent is required, this separate process can be pursued after the design of the alterations to the listed structure have been settled, but the details of the signage must be presented as part of the application for Listed Building Consent.

The drawings do not show the position of the columns of the new streetlights which may constrain the space available for the fixed canopy structure (see image below).

With reference to the related planning applications, we note that the various entrance doorways have been altered over time, though a new door should match the shopfront mullions.



*Image: a recent 2022 CGI published by the owners of the Square. Note pavement seating arrangements and position of new lighting columns.*

Yours sincerely,

Mark Afford

Chair, Crouch End Neighbourhood Forum, Crouch End Conservation Area Advisory Committee