Historic England

Mr [redacted]
Barnet Council
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London
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Direct Dial: [redacted]

Our ref: P01580698

22 August 2024

Dear [redacted]

T&CP (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015
& Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990

BROADWALK SHOPPING CENTRE AND ASSOCIATED SURFACE LEVEL CAR PARK, EDGWARE BUS STATION, EDGWARE BUS GARAGE AND REDHILL MEDICAL CENTRE AND DEANS BROOK NATURE RESERVE EDGWARE HA8
Application No. 24/2686/OUT

Thank you for your letter of 2 August 2024 regarding the above application for planning permission. On the basis of the information available to date, we offer the following advice to assist your authority in determining the application.

Historic England Advice

Significance

The development site sits in Edgware's town centre. It is surrounded by areas of a low-rise suburban character and is in the vicinity of several designated heritage assets, including the Watling Estate Conservation Area and grade II listed Railway Hotel.

The Railway Hotel, which the application site borders, is amongst the best examples of a picturesque historicist interwar roadhouse in the country, designed by Truman Brewery's in-house architect, A. E. Sewell. Especially striking are its large chimneys, which can currently be appreciated against clear sky. The building's special architectural and historic interest is reflected in its listing at grade II. Having stood empty since 2013, it has fallen into disrepair and been damaged by fire. It is included on Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register, falling under Category C (slow decay; no solution agreed).

The Watling Estate Conservation Area is an interwar garden suburb built by the London County Council. It is characterised by its low-density residential buildings, spacious layout, and expansive views.

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Impact of the proposals

The proposals are for the comprehensive redevelopment of the site, introducing new tall buildings up to 29 storeys. Due to their scale, the buildings will be visible in views both close to the site and further afield, including in the backdrop of a number of heritage assets.

Most impacted by this would be the Railway Hotel. Due to its proximity to the site, the proposed buildings would rise up immediately behind its main elevation when viewed from Station Road. This would limit the ability to fully appreciate its architecture, and especially its chimneys, thereby causing some harm.

The development also has the potential to detract from the special character of the Watling Estate Conservation Area, with the proposed buildings towering over the low-rise residential buildings in views from within it, causing some harm.

Relevant law and policy

When making a decision on any application affecting a listed building or a conservation area, your Authority must have regard to the duties under sections 16, 66 and 72 of the **Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990**. These require that local authorities must give special regard to preserving a listed building and any of its architectural or historic features, and to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas.

Your authority's **Edgware Growth Area Supplementary Planning Document June 2021** (a) and **Edgware SPD Design Guide June 2021** (b) highlight that redevelopment proposals must carefully consider the setting and context of heritage assets (para. 4.23/5.17). They also set out the importance of the repair and re-use of the Railway Hotel as a key planning consideration:

- The Railway Hotel is a valued landmark heritage building that must be brought back into use as part of the renewal and redevelopment of the wider area (a: para. 4.28).

- A coordinated approach should be taken to realise the full potential of the area, including an opportunity to create a high-quality 'heritage quarter' to enable the restoration of the Railway Hotel as a celebrated landmark asset (a: para. 5.25 / b: para. 6.2).

- New developments must support the restoration of the Railway Hotel and its frontage area of hardstanding, which could benefit the area for example through outdoor seating for a café, restaurant or bar (a: para. 5.28 / b: para. 6.7).

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- The wide frontage to the Railway Hotel offers great potential to activate this section of Station, for example through outdoor seating and appropriate planting (b: para. 83.).

- The delivery timeframe for the Railway Hotel's restoration and reuse is set as short or medium term (a: p. 55).

Government guidance on how to carry out planning duties is found in the **National Planning Policy Framework 2023 (NPPF)**. It sets out that conflict between proposals and the conservation of heritage assets should be avoided or minimised (para. 201) and 'great weight' be given to conserving their significance (para. 205). Any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification (para. 206) and should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposals (para. 208).

Historic England's position

We note that the evolving planning context is broadly supportive of a high-density development on this site. The new buildings will however cause harm by limiting the appreciation of the grade II listed Railway Hotel and detracting from the special character of surrounding conservation areas.

Your 2021 Edgware Growth Area SPD and Edgware SPD Design Guide are clear that redevelopment in this area must support the regeneration of the Railway Hotel. The proposed development has the potential to do so, though the proposals do not currently include plans to realise this. Securing a sustainable future for the building through the proposed development, which would lead to its removal from the Heritage at Risk Register, is likely a once in a generation opportunity. We request your authority explore how the proposed scheme can deliver the repair and use of the building. We would welcome the opportunity to support you in this.

Recommendation

Historic England has concerns regarding the application on heritage grounds.

Your authority should take these representations into account and with your Conservation Officer seek amendments, safeguards or further information as set out in our advice. If there are any material changes to the proposals, or you would like further advice, please contact us.

This response relates to designated heritage assets only. If the proposals meet the Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service's published consultation criteria we recommend that you seek their view as specialist archaeological adviser to the local planning authority.

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The full GLAAS consultation criteria are on our webpage at the following link:

https://www.historicengland.org.uk/services-skills/our-planning-services/greater-london-archaeology-advisory-service/our-advice/

Yours sincerely,

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