



For the attention of Joedee McKenzie, Planning Officer

Ref: P/2024/2890 – Chiswick Town Hall, Heathfield Terrace, W4 4JN

Replacement of existing single glazed timber sash and casement windows with double glazed timber sash and casement windows.

The London and Middlesex Archaeological Society (LAMAS) promotes London's archaeology, local history, and historic buildings. The LAMAS Historic Buildings and Conservation Committee reviews planning applications relating to important historic buildings and seeks to ensure a sustainable future for vital aspects of London's built heritage.

We are concerned with the proposal to replace all the original windows on this Grade II listed building and query the need for their wholesale replacement.

The DAS states (2.2 Appraisal) that *'the existing windows on Chiswick Town Hall are in dilapidated condition with significant signs of wear. With the majority of windows presenting a Condition Rating of 'D' within the photographic window schedule included within Appendix A, including but not limited to; broken sash cords, cracked panes, and flaking painted frames, **minor repair works is not suitable to restore the windows at Chiswick Town Hall.** Furthermore, windows have previously been seen to become loose and fall from the first floor, where noted and replaced as single-glazed by RLB. Replacement of the existing windows is necessary due to the significant current health and safety dangers, where there is a likelihood of further windows deteriorating, becoming loose, and falling'.*

However, section 2.2 goes on to appraise the windows on each of the elevations, concluding that the windows on the North (front) elevation *'are **generally in a better visual condition** with no windows being D-rated'*; those on the West elevation including **only three D-rated**; and those on the East elevation *'generally in poor condition with flaking finishes identified both internally and externally. However, based on the visual inspection the window frames and sashes/casements **didn't appear to be suffering from rot**.'*

We therefore query the need for the replacement of all the windows, which are a significant feature of the building and mentioned prominently in Historic England's Official List Entry (1260615). We note also Historic England's January 2023 Technical Guidance Note *Modifying Historic Windows as Part of Retrofitting Energy Saving Measures*, which states:

Conserve rather than replace

We strongly encourage owners to conserve significant historic windows wherever possible and not to replace them without good justification...

Repair and maintenance are usually more sustainable than replacement. A well-maintained and repaired historic window will last longer than a poor-quality replacement. Many historic windows were made with materials such as old growth timber that are no longer available. Sympathetic repairs will prolong the life of these materials, minimising environmental impact and sustaining the significance of the building for present and future generations to use and enjoy.

We do not want to cast doubt on the accuracy of the technical reports used in assessing the state of the windows, but we are concerned that the proposed replacement of all the windows would cause unjustifiable and, in many cases, unnecessary harm to the original fabric of the listed building. **We therefore urge the London Borough of Hounslow to consider repairing the windows where at all possible, in line with Historic England's guidelines.**

Vicki Fox (Hon. Secretary)

LAMAS – Historic Buildings & Conservation Committee

1 October 2024