

Back in 2015 the Hornsey Town Hall Appreciation Society set out a vision, based on a decade of community consultation, for the TH. In 2016 HTHAS established some principles for negotiating with developers. How has it turned out?

<b>HTHAS Aspirations</b>				<i>That is to say, not the aspirations or plans of Haringey Council or the developer. Different things.</i>
<b>Vision and Uses of HTH Building</b>				
“Our vision is for a Town Hall as a place of social, cultural and business enterprise. A space which marries creativity, versatility and commercial sustainability with a distinctive heritage and role as civic centrepiece, and a project that seizes the opportunity to create an exceptional arts and cultural centre.”	Red	Yellow		<i>Little in the project about enterprise, amber for an optimist about the community centre, which may yet turn into an arts one.</i>
“A prestigious arts centre with regional impact – a profitable enterprise with curated exhibitions, productions, events and festivals, that meets the potential of the major public spaces within the building.”	Red	Yellow		<i>Well, there’s a community centre/venue, but it fails most definitions of arts centre. No detail about a business case for one, anything about how it’ll be funded, or the programming.</i>
“A community hub that ensures public access and use, operated to meet the priorities of local stakeholders and the wider community, including the Town Hall Square.”		Yellow	Green	<i>I don’t know why this has taken precedence over a viable arts operation, but it has, and therefore we have a community centre, a CUA and a steering group. Amber because if they don’t get the other things right, it’ll go bust.</i>
“A micro-business incubator tailored to the needs of the new London economy, offering desk space, studios and workshops.”	Red			<i>Nothing for the producers and creatives, and only a small co-working offer for hot desking. People tell us it is unlikely to be profitable.</i>
<b>Organisational Structure &amp; Viability</b>				
A community asset transfer. “Community governance of the town hall and square via a new Charitable Trust.”	Red			<i>Nope</i>
“Run as a not-for-profit social enterprise.”	Red			<i>It appears likely that a private company will be delivering the arts operation and the community use.</i>
The business plan to support the arts and cultural offer relies upon the following, with an emphasis on commercial activity, – a) studios and offices to rent, commercial and private hires, food and beverage units b) public funding and fundraising c) arts programme	Red			<i>The office spaces no longer exist, the rents from the f&amp;B go to FEC. No public funding or fundraising is identified.  – the business model now requires that the arts centre is subsidised, directly or indirectly, by the hotel/developer –</i>
<b>Conservation, Development, Planning</b>				
A restoration of the listed building. “Development to allow as much of the building as possible to be accessible”			Green	<i>A success (this was always the council’s plan) – should it all go to plan</i>
Preservation of publicly accessible square and green, rights of way. No closures for commercial use.		Yellow	Green	<i>Principle upheld, but commercial and private uses will be possible (again, the council’s plan)</i>
“Residential units within the town hall to be avoided, especially if they would compromise the primary function of the building as an arts, performance, community and micro-business hub”	Red			<i>This refers to the East Wing. It’s now a hotel, so the spaces are lost (unless the hotel now subsidises the arts centre instead – see above).</i>
A fresh full planning application rather than an application for minor amendments. Allowing for full public consideration and new section 106 planning obligations.			Green	<i>Oddly, I think this was due to HTHAS</i>
An increase in affordable housing	Red			<i>Given that overall number of units has increased, the proportion of affordable units will still be very low.</i>