

Last chance for Library Walk - Friends appeal for support at Thursday's planning meeting

The fate of one of Manchester's most unusual walkways, Library Walk off St. Peter's Square, will be decided at a meeting of Manchester City Council's Planning Committee on Thursday afternoon (2.00pm, 25 October, 2012). The meeting follows special debates at meetings of the council's Executive Committee and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Committee on its plans to gate and glaze the passage, as well as a well-attended public celebration event last month organised by the Friends of Library Walk.

The Friends plan to attend the meeting to make their case for the plans to be rejected, arguing that the glazed link proposed between Manchester Central Library and the Town Hall Extension isn't necessary and would harm an important part of Manchester's built heritage. They are appealing for people who share their views to demonstrate their support by attending the meeting at the Town Hall.

Spokesperson Tom Hiles said: "We've already received huge support from community and campaign groups and thousands of members of the public in the fight to preserve this distinctive space, and are really proud of everyone who's been involved. The campaign has been long and has taken several unexpected turns, but we've continued to engage with the council to make sure they understand that a great many people oppose their plans.

"Thanks to the council's own planning report we know that no members of the public have expressed support for the plans, and that hundreds have taken the time to write and voice their opposition, yet the planning department has endorsed the plans. We're now going to speak directly to the ultimate decisions makers, in the hope that we can persuade them to open a proper public discussion on Library Walk's future, and call on everybody who values it to show their opposition to the proposals by joining us at the planning meeting."

ENDS

NOTES TO EDITORS

Library Walk is a pedestrian walkway between St. Peter's Square and Mount Street in Manchester city centre. Its distinctive curved shape is formed by the interlocking of Grade-II* listed buildings Manchester Central Library and the Town Hall Extension, both created by the celebrated architect E. Vincent Harris in the 1930s.

1200 people have signed a petition to protest plans drawn up by Beetham Tower architect Ian Simpson, as part of the refurbishment of the two buildings and St. Peter's Square, which would gate and glaze the passage and make it inaccessible for eight hours each night.

Manchester City Council's Planning Committee meeting is open to the public and will take place in **the Banqueting Hall, Level 2, Manchester Town Hall at 2.00pm on Thursday 25 October, 2012.**

Details of the Friends' campaign can be found at friendsoflibrarywalk.wordpress.com.

Distributed on behalf of the Friends of Library Walk. For more information or to interview a spokesperson please contact Morag Rose on 07974 929589 or savelibrarywalk@gmail.com.