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Dear Sirs,

We respectfully request that you, as the elected leaders of the council, do everything in your power to reconsider the future of this building and the impact of your decision on the people it serves

For over 16 years the Irish Cultural Centre has been providing a wide range of educational and cultural programmes to both the local community in Hammersmith and to the wider population in London. Its services are widely used by both the Irish population in the borough and many other communities of diverse backgrounds. The Centre also offers support programmes and activities aimed specifically aimed at the elderly

The Centre provides facilities and offices for the Irish Support and Advice Service which administers to the welfare needs of the local community. The Centre also provides offices and services to the Irish Youth Foundation, another charity providing welfare needs.

Over the years of its existence it has acquired a national and international reputation as a centre of excellence in the arts and for the quality of its educational services for both children and adults. It is recognised as such by the Irish government which has provided valuable financial support to the Centre since 2007.

It has been recently visited by leading figures such as the President of Ireland, Mary McAleese, and former President, Mary Robinson, all of whom have been lavish in their praise for the activities of the Centre, its pivotal role in London and the regard in which it is held both within Britain and abroad.

Additionally, many local voluntary organisations, council departments and local bodies regularly benefit by using the Centre and its services as an easily accessible, friendly and relatively inexpensive venue.

The Council has stated that it wishes to put people and services before buildings. The loss of this building would destroy all the many services, educational, welfare and cultural, which are provided in the Centre. It would deliver a major blow to a great number of people who live and work in the borough both within the Irish and the wider communities.

We request the Council to reconsider the proposal to sell the building, or, at the very least, to adhere to the earlier agreement between the Centre and the Council to extend the lease until 2017, thereby giving the Centre a much more realistic timeframe to raise the funds required for purchase.

Jim O' Hara



Chairman - Irish Cultural Centre Hammersmith Ltd