



PRESS RELEASE 15/08/2012

## **The London We Love: SAVE Britain's Heritage's ongoing London campaigns**

**London has been the centre of world attention for the last few weeks, its culture and buildings celebrated. Many of these buildings, some of them iconic and internationally known, others important as anchors of local community, are under threat. In the coming year SAVE is going to be compiling a report of buildings at risk in London; we open our campaign with a short list of sites of concern to us now.**

### **BATTERSEA POWER STATION**

SAVE was delighted to see Battersea Power Station playing a starring role in both the opening and closing ceremonies for the Olympic Games: in the opening ceremony the camera panned over the famous column chimneys as it swept along the Thames, and in the closing ceremony it was chosen along with St Paul's, Big Ben, the Gherkin and the Millennium Wheel as one of London's icons. Both ceremonies were watched by some 25 million viewers in the UK, and a huge audience worldwide.

SAVE has campaigned for Battersea Power Station for over 30 years, and in 1981 secured the first planning permission for its conversion - for sport and leisure use. SAVE believes that the power station has the potential to be an excellent major events and concert venue, something that central London sorely lacks.

The main arena would be substantially larger than the Albert Hall and therefore suitable for pop concerts and events such as national television, film and music industry awards. It would seat up to 11,000 spectators.

The site was recently purchased by a Malaysian consortium.

Planning Permission exists for it to be converted to residential use but SAVE has teamed up with Allies and Morrison Architects to devise a step by step proposal to re-use and save Battersea Power Station for events and business use with the potential to create thousands of jobs. Unlike some recent proposals this route to development retains the whole magnificent building.

The key to its re-use lies in a gradual approach - inhabiting the great former Boiler House

between the four chimneys at first in a raw state for temporary events, and progressively attracting further uses and converting the building as the venue starts to establish a new focal point on the south bank.

**Step 1** is to use it in a raw state with the minimum necessary structural support and repair, as an open air venue for concerts. There will be a covered stage and temporary raked seating.

**Step 2** introduces a lightweight roof, a permanent raised floor with facilities below, permanent stage, side stages and raked seating.

**Step 3** introduces hospitality boxes for sponsors.

For more information see our [press release](#) dedicated to Battersea Power Station



Fig.1 Battersea Power Station as events and concert venue, as conceived by Allies and Morrison Architects



Fig.2 Battersea Power Station as one of London's iconic buildings in the 2012 Closing Ceremony for the Olympic Games. Copyright: Getty Images

## SMITHFIELD MARKET

SAVE won a major Public Inquiry halting a proposed development for the General Market building at Smithfield in 2008, which involved demolition and replacement with a 15-storey building. The new owners of the site, Henderson Development, will be unveiling their new plans in the next couple of months.

The redevelopment site includes the General Market, its annex, the Red House cold store and elegant public lavatories that were built at the same time. The General Market is one of four market buildings constructed in the second half of the 19th century by city surveyor Horace Jones. Marcus Binney, President of SAVE, describes Smithfield as “one of the grandest processions of market buildings in Europe.”

London’s markets are crucial common spaces – Covent Garden, Spitalfields, Camden Lock market. Smithfield, serving a thriving area around it, is perfectly placed to be a new hub.

SAVE believes that the site lends itself perfectly to re-use as it is. At present the late 19th-century market building has a beautiful roof structure of iron, wood and glass that lets natural light in and would serve as an elegant canopy for small shops and cafés as in Covent Garden.

SAVE believes it is crucial to retain the scale of the building, and work with its historic grain. The building is in a conservation area and if regenerated would lift up the Farringdon Road end of the market to great advantage.

SAVE is to shortly see the new Smithfield plans, drawn up by John McAslan in consultation with English Heritage: we will report our reaction to the press.



Fig.3 The General Market showing the central cupola and fine roof structure as part of the procession of market buildings at Smithfield.

## WARD'S CORNER

Less well-known, but of crucial importance to the community it serves, this small corner of Tottenham is at present the site of a hotly-contested planning application. Only one mile from the scene of last summer's riots, Ward's Corner is an elegant Edwardian market building that has been partially empty for 40 years.

This large site is in good repair, but only partially occupied. It consists of a three storey market building that forms an elegant corner overlooking Tottenham High Road, a row of terraced housing and two rows of shops. The corner building is glazed floor to ceiling on each level, divided by slender glazing bars.

However, a large portion of the site is still in use and it is thriving, the ground floor of the market building being a hub of London's South American community. Of the shops, many are family businesses representing a broad ethnic mix, and all are successful.

The banal new development proposed by Grainger has been approved by London Mayor Boris Johnson's Task Force that is masterminding the regeneration of the area, headed by Stuart Lipton. Lipton was commissioned to resolve issues around the proposed development for Ward's Corner but has not yet talked to the highly articulate and representative Wards Corner Community Coalition (WCC), who successfully fought off Grainger Development's first planning application for the area four years ago, and who have drawn up alternative plans that retain the existing buildings.

SAVE will be issuing a more detailed press release about Ward's Corner soon.



Fig.4 Wards Corner Market – the corner building has been empty for 40 years, while the market is home to a thriving South American community.

Click [here](#) to see 360 degree pictures of the site and the interior of the department store by photographer Lea Minshull.

**For further press information and images, please contact SAVE Director Clem Cecil or Deputy Director Rhiannon Wicks on 0207 253 3500 or on [office@savebritainsheritage.org](mailto:office@savebritainsheritage.org)**

### NOTES TO EDITORS:

SAVE Britain's Heritage has been campaigning for historic buildings since its formation in 1975 by a group of architects, journalists and planners. It is a strong, independent voice in

conservation, free to respond rapidly to emergencies and to speak out loud for the historic built environment.

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