The Team

Castleforge Partners

Castleforge Partners is a UK-based property investor established in 2010 by our two founders, Brandon Hollihan and Michael Kovacs. We are funded by endowments, foundations and pension funds based in the UK, US and continental Europe.

We actively invest in a broad range of projects throughout the UK. We have a long history of managing large construction, redevelopment and refurbishment works and have a strong track record with buildings of historical importance and of a listed nature.

Squire & Partners

Squire and Partners is an architecture and design practice with experience spanning four decades, earning it an international reputation for architecture informed by the history and culture of where it is placed. Their award winning portfolio, for some of the world’s leading developers, includes masterplans, private and affordable residential, workspace, retail, education and public buildings.

In addition, the practice has a series of dedicated teams for modelmaking, computer generated imaging, illustration, graphics and an established interior design department, which has created a number of bespoke product ranges.

Squire and Partners’ approach responds to the unique heritage and context of each site, considering established street patterns, scale and proportions, to create timeless architecture rooted in its location. Embracing traditional and emerging technologies in craft and construction, the practice is renowned for delivering a rigorously detailed product.

As both designers and developers of workplaces, hotels and residences, the practice has a unique commercial sensibility and the skills to create value through good design.

Donald Insall Associates

Since its foundation in 1958, Donald Insall Associates has pioneered the creative conservation and adaptation of historic buildings. The practice has worked on many of London’s most significant historic sites including: the Palace of Westminster; Somerset House; Regent Street; and Kew Gardens. Over the last decade, Donald Insall Associates has become a leading consultant on the development and regeneration of historic sites and buildings; our approach is distinguished by the expertise of our research and advice together with our constructive and imaginative attitude to building conservation.

DPg

DPg is established as one of the leading expert consultancies in planning, development and regeneration in the UK. Formed in 2004, the business was specifically created to focus on advising on the largest, most complex and challenging development propositions in central London. Since then it has grown to a company of around 70 employees.

DPg has a proven track record of delivering high profile planning consents and is currently advising on more than 500 live projects, ranging from small scale instructions to large, complex master planning proposals across all sectors.

JLL

JLL (Jones Lang LaSalle) is domestic and international professional services and investment management company specialising in real estate.

The Company’s real estate services are varied but for this project are focused on agency leasing, capital markets, energy and sustainability services, heritage and planning, and consulting.

Kanda

Kanda is a consultation agency that is passionate about regeneration and place-making. We use our breadth and depth of experience to work intelligently and imaginatively to get the best results for developers, decision makers and communities. Our approach creates conditions for constructive dialogue that aims to resolve conflict and deliver development that is financially viable and socially valuable.

Funding Proposal

Castleforge proposes to fund this development using its own funds. The two founders of Castleforge have full investment authority over the funds it manages. Further, Castleforge has access to a bank credit facility that allows it to fund the purchase of its investments and any associated build costs on short notice. Unlike many property developers, Castleforge does not require any funding by external investors or approvals by external investment committees to fund the capital expenditure required to deliver its proposals for Walworth Town Hall.
Previous Projects

Castleforge Partners

160 Aldersgate, City of London

Back-to-frame refurbishment of a commercial office building in the City of London to deliver 220,000 sq ft of commercial office space. Planning permission secured in 2015. Works included a full replacement of the façade, a dramatic reconfiguration of the existing atrium and main entrance, reconfiguration of existing floorspace to provide Grade A offices and amenities in line with present day design codes, new mechanical and electrical services and new open roof terraces. Leased to DLA Piper, a global law firm, as their new headquarters. Completed in 2017.

Edward Pavilion, Albert Docks, Liverpool

Refurbishment of a 70,000 sq ft, Grade I listed, Victorian warehouse located in a UNESCO World Heritage site. Acquired 2017. Castleforge is currently refurbishing the office space and has increased the specification of this refurbishment to a like-new standard, including new reception, lifts, mechanical and electrical services, bathrooms and floors. Castleforge anticipates launching its serviced office offering in a portion of the office space, providing a flexible leasing offer and amenity space to the whole building.

Squire & Partners

The Department Store, Brixton, Lambeth

Squire and Partners purchased a dilapidated Edwardian department store in Brixton, and entirely reimagined the space allowing the existing fabric and layers of history to inform the new design. Collaborating with craftspeople and furniture makers, the design of the space has been informed by the existing fabric and layers of history, and provides an array of spaces for the various design disciplines within the practice, as well as a series of external creative and retail units. Externally, the design reverses years of neglect - revealing original brickwork, stone, marble and terracotta - and reactivates the street level through animation and display. A new social rooftop level comprises a series of oak framed pavilions topped with copper shingle, and a crafted glass dome replaces a dilapidated existing cupola. Original interior elements such as mahogany and teak parquet flooring, a grand tiled staircase and a patina of colours documenting the building's history were preserved.

The Ministry, Southwark

The Ministry is the first social workspace and co-working hub for creative industries by Ministry of Sound, housed in a former Victorian print works in Southwark. Combining the creative, social and networking aspects of a club with dynamic workspace for up to 850 people, the aim was not just to offer a place to do business, but to provide an environment for a convivial and creative way of life. The design concept stays true to the origins of the mother brand with bold, raw elements contrasting with a layer of premium finish. Original exposed timber floors, untreated textured walls and black painted steelwork provide a canvas for a carefully curated layer of refined elements including furniture, fabrics, lighting and artworks. The entire ground floor is designed as a generous social space with areas for meeting, eating and drinking.
History of Walworth Town Hall

Context and Description

The Grade II listed Walworth Town Hall complex consists of three separate but interlinked Victorian municipal buildings all originally designed to serve the population of Southwark. The buildings comprise Walworth Town Hall, originally a 1902 extension of the 1865 Vestry Hall to house the newly formed Metropolitan Borough of Southwark; a public reference library built in 1893; and the Cuming Museum, built 1902-6 to house a donated personal collection of ethnographic and natural history artefacts.

In 2013 a fire put the buildings out of action. The fire caused significant damage, particularly to the roof structure, which was completely destroyed, along with the main council chamber. In addition, the extensive fire services operation undertaken to extinguish the fire resulted in further water damage to the lower floors. Since then the council has committed significant public funds to dry out and stabilise the fabric of the building and reinstate the Vestry Hall roof on Walworth Road.

The site is bounded:
- On the north by Walworth Square
- On the west by Walworth Road
- On the south by the Walworth Clinic
- On the east by Ethel Street

Adjacent to the site is the Elephant Park development providing 3,000 new homes on the site of the former Heygate Estate. Also included is space for 50 shops, restaurants and cafés, many of which are located along Sayer Street which terminates at the newly created Walworth Square immediately adjacent to the Walworth Town Hall.

Local Vernacular

The surrounding streets are varied in scale and character. To the south of the site, the streets are relatively low rise and predominantly residential. Immediately north of the site, the scale and character of the buildings changes significantly to higher density and taller buildings, rising in height closer to the Elephant and Castle junction.

Whilst there are exceptions in the immediate vicinity, the dominant material used in the area is brick and in the case of the site, red brick with Portland stone details. The new Elephant Park development across the street follows a similar palette of brick and stone.
Castleforge and Partners’ Proposals for Walworth Town Hall

Our proposed scheme seeks to enliven Walworth Town Hall and Newington Library and transform it into a key resource for the local business and resident communities, offering shared workspaces, studio and workshop spaces, a restaurant and community, art, education and exhibition spaces.

Through this transformation, we aim to bring new uses and jobs while retaining this building as a hub for community interaction. We will create this positive community-focused environment while giving careful consideration to the physical interaction between the new and old spaces and remaining respectful to the key heritage elements of the original building. We also intend to align our proposed public and community uses with the main historical elements of the building and preserve the original character and layout of these spaces. We aim to ensure it continues to be seen as a public asset alongside providing a regular function as an employment-led building.

By drawing on the features of the existing building and the purpose for which it was built we aim to create a palette of materials and activities that inform the final design. We have identified 5 elements that we feel should feature strongly:

**Building Heritage** - The existing building retains many original features despite the damage caused by the fire and as such will be restored or conserved by way of a record of its past life. Original features and materials will be translated into contemporary interiors and recent additions that detract from the historic value of the buildings will be removed.

**Celebration** - The Town Hall has through its history been the venue and back drop of many celebrations, particularly weddings. We would like to restore this tradition through the provision of events spaces and reinstatement of the council chamber as a grand venue befitting of the event.

**City and Nature** - As a place to work and play, we believe it is critical to bring nature into the building. As an inner city building where green space can be rare, providing plants inside is transformative - from an urban environment to a peaceful green oasis.

**Art Workshops** - Creativity is prevalent in the area with numerous arts groups nearby and we wish to build on that with spaces that provide new outlets and ways to engage with the local community, including: studio workspace, hosting workshops, exhibitions and events.

**Phoenix** - The symbolism of the phoenix rising from the ashes of its predecessor is a striking analogy that clearly draws parallels with what we want to create for Walworth Town Hall. We want to use this as a means to inspire the material and colour palette of the interior spaces.

Our proposals therefore comprise of the following:

**Workspace** - The provision of shared workspaces, or ‘co-working’ spaces, is ideally suited to the layout and historic character of the existing building. These spaces will be available to small businesses and entrepreneurs at more affordable rates compared to conventional office spaces.

**Public Accessibility** - Our proposals will seek to open up areas of the building that the public has been unable to access since the fire, including a new restaurant, studios, education space and spaces for exhibitions, screenings, weddings and events.

A new atrium space will link all floors both physically and visually. This new space would accommodate art and culture exhibitions whilst providing an opportunity to bring nature inside with extensive planting throughout.

**Cultural/Civic Use** - Flexible space for events, talks, screenings and performances in the evenings and weekends will be provided.

**Community Access** - Our proposal will return Walworth Town Hall to a vibrant, animated, landmark building within the local community. The specific detail of the community uses to be included in the building will emerge as we continue to engage with the community and various stakeholders.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary of Proposed Offering</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Over 500 desks of workspaces, including single desks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ground floor restaurant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newington Suite – workspaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education / workshop / multi-purpose event spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-purpose conference rooms and dining rooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event/performance space and workspace in former council chamber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A new atrium to house art and culture exhibitions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cycle storage and showers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 new lifts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Proposed Uses

### Employment Space
This echoes the previous building use as an employment-led hub, supported by public services. Flexible and affordable workspace options for local people will support local economic growth and opportunities for small business and start-ups.

### Function Space for Community Hire
The proposals provide a range of large and small spaces that can be available for community hire for events or meetings and could be available for local schools to hire.

### Cultural Events
The former Council Chamber will become a programmed event venue for Southwark providing opportunities for people to access performances, music, talks and lectures.

### New Restaurant
A new restaurant will be open to people working in or using the new building, as well as local residents and the wider public.

The new restaurant will serve both the buildings’ core users and visitors alike, complimenting the food offerings on Walworth Square while also providing an animated and active street frontage.

### Education and Training Opportunities
Flexible rooms within the building are designed to be used for workshops and classes and will be available for hire.

### Flexible Spaces
The building will deliver a versatile and flexible public function, with community benefit and cultural/civic use at its core. The specific needs of the community, and how the development can provide much needed community benefits, will emerge as we continue to engage with the community and various stakeholders.
Proposed section through Walworth Town Hall showing the proposed atrium
Proposed Floor Plans

Lower Ground Floor

Ground Floor

Ground Floor Mezzanine - Newington Suite

First Floor

First Floor Mezzanine - Newington Suite

Second Floor

Third Floor

Third Floor Mezzanine
Design Proposals

Arrival

The entrance is friendly and welcoming, with a cosy snug to the left and the smell of fresh coffee. Daylight pours through the grand hall beyond as relaxing background music fills the air.

Atrium

As the most contemporary intervention in the building, the light filled atrium will provide access to all floors through a series of bridge links. Indoor planting brings nature within. Artwork adorns the walls throughout, creating a vertical gallery to be enjoyed by visitors and workspace users alike.

Restaurant

The ground floor restaurant will provide guests with a relaxing space to enjoy food and drink, transitioning throughout the day from breakfast till dinner. Beautifully restored architecture will provide a subtle back-drop to the rich colours and textures from the new furniture.

Education, Studio, Event Space

New openings provide natural light to a workspace for artists or creatives by day and workshops, education and exhibition events by night.

Council Chamber

The Chamber is lightly restored, preserving traces of events past. Revived as a flexible space with the ability to host diverse functions from talks to performances to quiet co-working. In a nod to the building’s history, a palette of dark colours, materials and charred timber encompass the space.
Public Access

Our proposals recognise the council’s aims for maximum public accessibility to the site, in particular the areas previously accessible to the public, whilst still maintaining the commercial viability of the site. Accordingly, our proposal will return Walworth Town Hall to a vibrant, animated, landmark building within the local area and will engage the local community by providing access to employment space, cultural events, exhibitions, creative workshops, and performances. This combination of uses means that the building will be in regular active use and can be used by a variety of people for different functions.

Public access can be categorised in five ways:

- Free public access to the new atrium
- Access to a new restaurant
- Membership fee to access the co-working spaces
- Ticketed events or classes (some of these may be free but will depend on the event provider) in the council chamber and other event spaces
- Venue hire for the community or event providers

44% of the building area will be accessible to the public, either as event or education space, flexible workspaces or dining areas. Of this, 13% will require some form of payment – this could be venue hire, ticketed events, desk hire (membership) or restaurant charges. The public will be able to access the new atrium and restaurant for free. And for certain classes, exhibitions, workshops, performances and events the public will be able to access the new council chamber, education, studio and event spaces, meeting rooms and ground floor of the former library building.
Stakeholder Engagement

We understand that the Town Hall is a significant building for the local area, representing local heritage and civic status.

We are keen to work with the community to evolve our initial proposals and understand how the community would like to use the spaces and ensure that our proposals provide a benefit to the area. Engagement will be with immediate neighbours and residents living near the Town Hall, local community organisations and interest groups, local businesses and future users and occupiers.

The aspects we would seek to engage the community on are:

- Who should be involved
- Understanding the history of the building and its significance to the area and local people
- Any aspects of the building the community are keen to see retained or reused
- Current opportunities in the area
- Examples of other successful facilities of a similar type
- Types of public uses or events that would be beneficial to the area
- How regular or flexible public access should be

We would propose to work with the local community in the following ways:

- Local ‘pop-up’ events to raise awareness of the project and seek broad community ideas
- Public workshops to explore key themes for the redevelopment of the building, such as heritage, character and public uses
- Online engagement tools to capture ideas from the wider community
- Explore partnerships, with stakeholders or local artists, to design aspects of the spaces (such as the education spaces)
- Explore a local launch event on completion of the building inspired or curated by the local community
Proposals: The Atrium

Atrium Proposal

Atrium Inspiration
Proposals: The Council Chamber
Proposals: The Newington Suite

Newington Suite Inspiration
Proposals: Space for Arts/Education/Events

Space for Arts/Education/Events

Inspiration

Flexible Space: Exhibition Layout

Flexible Space: Workshop Layout