

Canning Town library Nando's plan shelved

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GMB, Britain's general union, has backed a decision by Newham planning committee to defer plans to turn Grade II listed Canning Town library into a Nando's.

The site, which hosted political speakers such as Keir Hardie and Sylvia Pankhurst, and gave birth to GMB in the 1880s, was granted a reprieve last night - on the 161st anniversary of the birth of GMB union founder Will Thorne, who regularly addressed meetings there.

GMB congratulated Newham Council's Local Development Committee on last night's decision to defer the Nando's proposal - which it last week labelled 'bird-brained' - until the local community and trade unions was consulted ahead of a crunch meeting of the Committee on 12 November.

Local councillors Shaban Mohammed and Rohit Dasgupta have spearheaded local opposition to the proposals, and a campaign to make Canning Town Library a community asset.

Warren Kenny, GMB Regional Secretary said:

"The planning committee have listened to the strength of feeling, seen sense at the eleventh hour, and shelved this lousy plan to replace our history with chicken.

"GMB welcomes the committee's decision to rethink these proposals and we look forward to them genuinely listening to the views of community and trade union groups ahead of November's crunch meeting.

"It's particularly poignant on the birthday of Will Thorne, a local hero who founded our union in Canning Town.

"GMB will continue campaigning with the community to defend and preserve our legacy for future generations.

"This historic building's heritage should be reflected in its future use – and that means as a community asset. It should be local people who benefit from its valued place in our society"

"There are plenty of other places for chicken in Newham, but not in Canning Town Library."



