

Harrington Square,
London NW1

Heritage Impact Assessment

August 2023

Consultancy for the
Historic Built Environment

KMIHeritage

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This report has been prepared in support of a planning application for new development in Harrington Square, London, NW1.

Purpose

- 1.2 The purpose of the report is to assess the effect of the proposed scheme on the significance of the Camden Town Conservation Area and other heritage assets in the vicinity of the Site and to measure that effect against national and local policies relating to urban design and the historic built environment.

- 1.3 This report should be read in conjunction with the drawings and Design & Access Statement prepared by Studio Power and other application documents.

Organisation

- 1.4 This introduction is followed by an assessment of the history and significance of heritage assets in the vicinity of the site, and a description in Section 3 of the national and local policy and guidance that is relevant to this matter. Section 4 describes the proposed development and its effects. Section 5 assesses the proposed development against policy and guidance. Section 6 contains a conclusion.

Nomenclature

- 1.5 In 2015 English Heritage changed its name to 'Historic England' and a new charity, officially called the English Heritage Trust, took the name of English Heritage and responsibility for managing the National Heritage Collection of state-owned historic sites and monuments across England. In this report reference is made both to 'English Heritage' and 'Historic England'.

Author

- 1.6 The author of this report is Nick Collins MSc MRICS IHBC. Nick has twenty years' experience in the property sector, including most recently as a Director of the Conservation Team at integrated design consultants, Alan Baxter & Associates. Nick spent nine years at English Heritage as Principal Inspector of Historic Buildings & Areas where he led a specialist team of

historic building inspectors, architects, and archaeologists on a wide range of heritage projects in East & South London. Previously Conservation Officer at the London Borough of Bromley, Nick began his career at international real estate consultancy Jones Lang LaSalle as a Chartered Surveyor. This experience has given Nick an in-depth understanding of the property industry, listed building and planning process, heritage policy and guidance and funding bodies.

2 The site and its context

- 2.1 The Site is located at the southern end of the Camden Town Conservation Area in the London Borough of Camden.

Historical background

The development of Camden and Harrington Square

- 2.2 The Parish of St Pancras, centred around the ancient St. Pancras Old Church, covered an area extending from Hampstead in the north to Tottenham Court Road to the south and equates roughly to the area covered by the London Borough of Camden today.
- 2.3 The late 17th century saw the fields north of Oxford Street begin to be built upon by the landowners such as the Bedford and Portman Estates.
- 2.4 The construction of the New Road (now Euston Road) between Paddington and Islington from 1756 onwards, acted as a further stimulus for development on the northern edge of the Georgian city and a web of new streets began to spread northwards into the surrounding countryside.
- 2.5 The 1790s saw the creation of Somers Town on land owned by the Earl of Camden and development grew northwards. The fork in the ancient road which led from London to Hampstead and to Highgate - now known as Camden High Street and Kentish Town Road respectively - is recorded in maps from the 17th century onwards.
- 2.6 A convenient stopping place for travellers, the Mother Red Cap Inn is noted here as well as The Britannia Hotel and Public House (known to have existed in 1777) which gave its name to the junction (fig. 1¹).

¹ 'New and accurate plan of London and Westminster, the borough of Southwark and parts adjacent viz. Kensington, Chelsea, Islington, Hackney, Walworth, Newington, &c. with an alphabetical list of 500 of the most principal streets with references to their situation', John Cary, 1792.



Figure 1: Somers Town and to the north, Britannia Junction, showing the Hampstead Road and the nascent routes of Kentish Town Road and Parkway, 1792

Camden Town

- 2.7 Camden Town stands on land which was once part of the manor of Kentish Town and was named after Charles Pratt, the first Earl Camden, who started its development in 1791. Beginning life as a handful of buildings beside the main Hampstead Road, its success as a major centre came with the success of the nearby Regent's Canal.
- 2.8 The Regent's Canal was completed in 1820, connecting the River Thames at Limehouse with the Grand Junction Canal in Paddington. The canal was lined with basins and wharves and its arrival was a major influence on the development of the built environment in its sphere of influence prompting an extensive development of canalside industrial buildings. Residential development in the area also intensified during this period with the surrounding fields being used for brick making ahead of large-scale house building. After the Second World War that the canal business went into decline and the last commercial traffic had passed on the canal by the late 1960s, although it remained in use for leisure purposes.
- 2.9 The influence of both the canal and the development of the nearby Regent's Park was rapid and by the time of Greenwood's map of 1827, the core of Camden Town had been developed within an enclave south of the Regent's Canal as far

south as Crowndale Road. Large areas remain open fields (fig. 2²).



Figure 2: Camden Town, 1827

- 2.10 By 1827, whilst Mornington Crescent appears on the map, with its gardens in front of Hampstead Road, the only land undeveloped between Somers Town, to the south, and the emerging Camden Town to the north was the land that now forms Harrington Square.
- 2.11 Harrington Square was developed in the 1830-40s on land owned by the Duke of Bedford and initially known as Bedford New Town. The triangular gardens were laid out to the west of Mornington Crescent Gardens, with Hampstead Road bisecting the landscaped space.
- 2.12 Harrington Square filled the eastern and southern side of the Gardens, west of Eversholt Street.
- 2.13 The houses are in the Italianate style, fashionable at that time with stucco'd ground floors and yellow brick above. Balconies at first floor open on to projecting doric columned porches and have windows that have semi-circular rendered surrounds. The

² 'Map of London, from an actual survey made in the years 1824, 1825 & 1826', Christopher & John Greenwood, 1827.

third floor sits above a deep stucco cornice, with a simpler parapet above that hides slate roofs on top.



Figure 3: Harrington Square Gardens 1915

- 2.14 By the end of the 19th century, Camden was a very mixed area with the well-off living close to those less so. Booth's map shows how the middle classes occupied the large houses fronting the main thoroughfares (red) whilst in the smaller streets behind, households ranged from comfortable (hatched red) to poor (blue). This was a fairly common pattern of tenure at this time (fig. 4³).



Figure 4: Camden Town, extract from Booth's Maps Descriptive of London Poverty, 1889

³ Booth's Inquiry into Life and Labour in London (1886-1903). Online: <https://booth.lse.ac.uk> © 2016 London School of Economics & Political Science.

20th century

- 2.15 Whilst the general street pattern remained largely un-changed, the area changed considerably over the course of the twentieth century.
- 2.16 During the inter-war period the Mornington Crescent Gardens were replaced with the giant former Carreras Tobacco Factory, with its jazzy Egyptian deco detailing.
- 2.17 The Second World War also had a major impact.

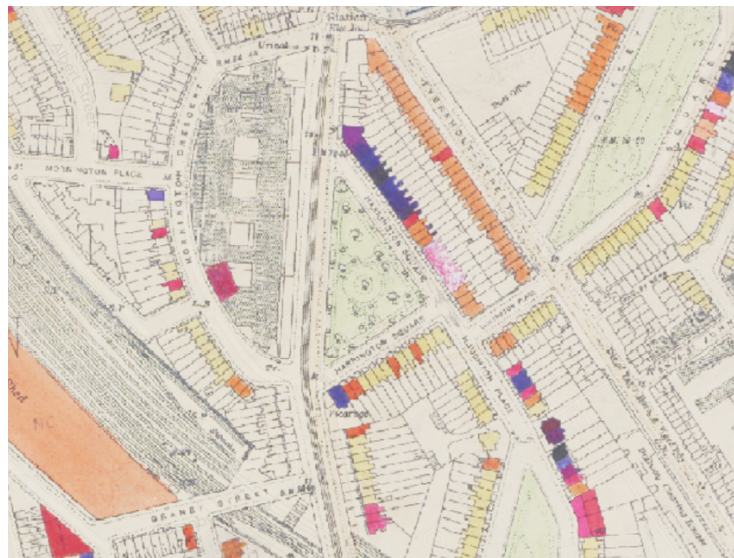


Figure 5: London Bomb Map © London Metropolitan Archives

- 2.18 Figure 5 shows the complete obliteration of the northern end of Harrington Square. The famous press image below shows a double decker bus hit in an air raid leaning against No.34 Harrington Square on 9th September 1940.



Figure 6: Bomb Damage in Harrington Square

- 2.19 In the post-war period the bombed northern end of the terrace was replaced by a post-war housing block and the southern side of the square was demolished for the local authority Ampthill Square Estate in the 1960s which is dominated by its three giant towers.

The Site

- 2.20 The Site is an undeveloped plot of land, currently used as car parking, created by the bomb damage and subsequent clearance during and after the Second World War.
- 2.21 To its south is Hurdwick House – a post-war housing development which whilst primarily fronting Harrington Square steps back from the historic building line and then angles away from the road to the north to create an entrance with full height glazing in front of the stairway.
- 2.22 The design reflects nothing of the proportions, building line or scale of either the remaining or lost buildings in the immediate vicinity.
- 2.23 To the north are 1-5 Hurdwick Place – abruptly ended by the sheer flank elevation of No.5 Hurdwick Place – at the point that it was severed from its bomb-damaged neighbour in Harrington Square.

- 2.24 Designed as part of the same scheme, the houses have much of the same stylistic detailing as Harrington Square, but slightly less grandeur and with no projecting porches. No.5 Hurdwick Place has been painted white.



Figure 7: Hurdwick Place

Heritage significance

Definitions

- 2.25 Statutory Listed buildings and the Camden Town Conservation Area are all 'designated heritage assets', as defined by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Locally listed buildings are 'non-designated heritage assets'.
- 2.26 'Significance' is defined in the NPPF as 'the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting'. The English Heritage 'Planning for the Historic Environment Practice Guide' puts it slightly differently – as 'the sum of its architectural, historic, artistic or archaeological interest'.
- 2.27 'Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the sustainable management of the historic environment' (English Heritage, April 2008) describes a number of 'heritage values' that may be present in a 'significant place'. These are evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal value.

Heritage context

Conservation area

- 2.28 The site is located in the Camden Town Conservation Area which was first designated by Camden Council in November 1986 and extended in 1997. The Camden Town Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy was adopted on 4 October 2007.
- 2.29 Neither the site, nor the adjacent Hurdwick House are identified specifically on the Conservation Area Townscape Appraisal Map (2006), however the remaining terraces on Hurdwick Place to the north and Eversholt Street to the east are noted as being buildings that make a positive contribution to the conservation area – as is 'Greater London House', the former Carreras Tobacco Factory to the west of Hampstead Road and Harrington Road Gardens.
- 2.30 Nos. 15-24 Harrington Square, to the south east, are listed Grade II. They are the only remaining original houses on the 'Square' and whilst many have now been converted into flats (and the interiors were not inspected at the time of their listing in 1999) they nevertheless retain the fine architectural set-piece detailing of their origins.

- 2.31 They are a characterful representative remnant of the grandeur of the early 19th century residential development of this part of Camden.

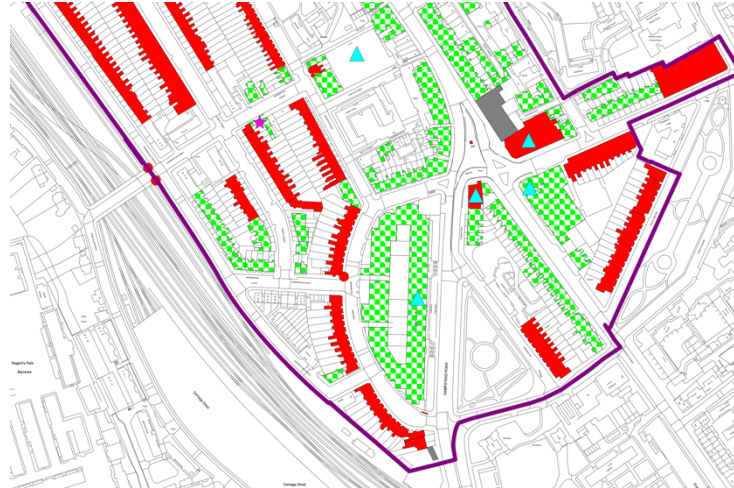


Figure 8: Extract from Camden Conservation Area Townscape Appraisal 2006 (hatched green: positive contributor; red: listed; blue triangle: focal buildings)

- 2.32 The Camden Town Conservation area undoubtedly contains buildings of 'architectural' and 'artistic interest' (NPPF) or 'aesthetic value' ('Conservation Principles'). In respect of design, 'Conservation Principles' says that 'design value... embraces composition (form, proportions, massing, silhouette, views and vistas, circulation) and usually materials or planting, decoration or detailing, and craftsmanship'. The evolution of the area over a period of two hundred years has left variety of buildings of different age, style and quality. And this is articulated in the description given in the conservation area appraisal (below).
- 2.33 Similarly, in terms of Historic England's 'Conservation Principles' the buildings provide us with 'evidence about past human activity' and by means of their fabric, design and appearance communicates information about its past. Subsequent alteration has not entirely removed the ability to understand this historical past although a number of the buildings in the area clearly detract from the overall character of the area.
- 2.34 The significance of the conservation area is articulated through its special character and appearance. This is identified within the conservation area appraisal.
- 2.35 This part of the conservation area is summarised thus:

- 2.36 *The residential parts of the conservation area are largely homogeneous in scale and character, having been laid out within a period of three decades spanning the years 1820-1850. The western part of the conservation area comprises long residential terraces running in a north-south direction on a planned rectilinear grid (Mornington Crescent, Albert Street and Arlington Road) intersected by shorter terraces (Delancey Street and Mornington Street). A second pocket of residential development, originally made-up of slightly grander terraces, falls southeast of the High Street (Harrington Square and Oakley Square). The area contains a large number of good examples of early mid 19th century speculatively built terraced London houses, generally of a uniform appearance, and many statutorily listed for their special interest.*
- 2.37 *Buildings are set back from the street to make room for basement areas, or in more generous developments for front gardens. Houses are generally three storeys raised on basements, sometimes with attic storeys, and may rise to four or five storeys to articulate a formal architectural composition. Terraces tend to end in a flank brick wall; and on street corners may have had windows and entrance doors inserted.*
- 2.38 *The Appraisal describes the area around the site thus:*
'Harrington Square has been much altered. It was originally laid out as a planned mid-19th century composition, comprising two terraces overlooking a triangular open space, separated from Mornington Crescent Gardens by Hampstead Road. Part of the east side remains, a stucco-trimmed yellow stock brick terrace dating from 1834 with arched first floor windows set in stucco panels. The northernmost stretch of this terrace was destroyed by World War II bomb damage and has been replaced by a post-war housing block Hurdwick House, which does not attempt to blend with its historic neighbour. The terrace on the south side of the square was demolished for local authority housing redevelopment in the 1960s. Today the gardens are overshadowed by the towers of the high-rise Amptill Square Estate (situated outside the Conservation Area). Nonetheless, Harrington Square Gardens are the most significant green open space within the Conservation Area, containing a good tree group, shrubs and lawns.
- The heritage significance of the site
- 2.39 *The site, the product of bomb damage and clearance, makes no positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area – in fact its open nature, revealing the flank*

elevation of No.5 Hurdwick Place disrupts the former set piece residential development of Harrington Square in a negative fashion.

- 2.40 The site provides a unique opportunity to stitch back together an element of the townscape of this part of Camden.

3 The policy context

- 3.1 This section of the report briefly sets out the range of national and local policy and guidance relevant to the consideration of change in the built environment.

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

- 3.2 The legislation governing listed buildings and conservation areas is the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 ('the Act'). Section 66(1) of the Act requires decision makers to 'have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses' when determining applications which affect a listed building or its setting. Section 72(1) of the Act requires decision makers with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area to pay 'special attention... to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area'.

The National Planning Policy Framework

- 3.3 The revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in July 2021.

Design

- 3.4 Chapter 12. of the National Planning Policy Framework deals with design: Achieving well-designed places. It begins:

'The creation of high quality beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process' (paragraph 126).'

- 3.5 Paragraph 130 sets out a series of expectations regarding design quality:

'Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

'a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the

area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;

b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;

c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);

d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;

e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and

f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.’

Proposals affecting heritage assets

- 3.6 Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework: ‘Conserving and enhancing the historic environment’ deals with Heritage Assets describing them as ‘an irreplaceable resource’ that ‘should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations’.⁴
- 3.7 Paragraph 194 brings the NPPF in line with statute and case law on listed buildings and conservation areas. It says that: ‘In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.’

⁴ The policies set out in this chapter relate, as applicable, to the heritage-related consent regimes for which local planning authorities are responsible under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, as well as to plan-making and decision-making.

3.8 In terms of the local authority, paragraph 195 requires that they
‘identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset’s conservation and any aspect of the proposal.’

3.9 Paragraph 197 says that
‘In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:
‘a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.’

Considering potential impacts

3.10 Paragraph 199 advises local planning authorities that ‘When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.’

3.11 Paragraph 201 says:
‘where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:
• the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and
• no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and

- conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
- the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.’

3.12 Paragraph 202 says that

‘where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use’.

3.13 In taking into account the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset the local authority should employ a ‘a balanced judgement’ in regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset (paragraph 203).

3.14 The NPPF introduces the requirement that ‘Local planning authorities should not permit the loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred.’ (paragraph 204).

3.15 Where a heritage asset is to be lost, the developer will be required to ‘record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible’ (paragraph 205).⁵

3.16 In terms of enhancing the setting of heritage assets the NPPF states that ‘local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably. (paragraph 206).

3.17 It goes on however that ‘Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 195 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 196, as appropriate, taking

⁵ Copies of evidence should be deposited with the relevant historic environment record, and any archives with a local museum or other public depository.

into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage site as a whole' (paragraph 207).

- 3.18 Finally, paragraph 208 requires that the onus will be on local planning authorities to 'assess whether the benefits of a proposal for enabling development, which would otherwise conflict with planning policies but which would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, outweigh the disbenefits of departing from those policies'.

Planning Practice Guidance

- 3.19 Planning Practice Guidance⁶ provides streamlined guidance for the National Planning Policy Framework and the planning system. It includes guidance on matters relating to protecting the historic environment in the section entitled 'Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment'. It is subdivided into sections giving specific advice in the following areas:

- Overview: historic environment
- Plan making: historic environment
- Decision-taking: historic environment
- Designated heritage assets
- Non-designated heritage assets
- Heritage Consent Processes and
- Consultation and notification requirements for heritage related applications.

Historic England's Planning Advice⁷

Good Practice Advice

- 3.20 Historic England provide guidance regarding the setting of heritage assets and how to assess the effect of change on that setting. They provide 'information on good practice to assist local authorities, planning and other consultants, owners, applicants and other interested parties in implementing historic environment policy in the National Planning Policy Framework

⁶ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, Online: www.gov.uk/guidance/conserving-and-enhancing-the-historic-environment

⁷ Historic England, *The Planning System*, Online: historicengland.org.uk/advice/planning/planning-system

(NPPF) and the related guidance given in the national Planning Practice Guide (PPG)'.

3.21 These notes are:

- GPA 1: The Historic Environment in Local Plans (2015);
- GPA 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (2015);
- GPA 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (2nd ed., 2017);
- GPA 4: Enabling development and heritage assets (2020).

GPA 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets

3.22 This provides guidance regarding the setting of heritage assets and how to assess the effect of change on that setting. The guidance echoes the definition of 'setting' in the NPPF as 'the surroundings in which [the asset] is experienced' and continues: 'its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral'.

3.23 The guidance provides, at Paragraph 12, a step-by-step methodology for identifying setting, its contribution to the significance of a heritage asset, and the assessment of the effect of proposed development on that significance. The document then sets out how the step-by-step methodology is used and considers each step in more detail.

Historic England Advice Notes

3.24 These advice notes covering various planning topics in more detail and at a more practical level. They have been prepared by Historic England following public consultation.

3.25 The documents most relevant to the proposed development is

- HEAN 1 - Conservation Areas;
- HEAN 12: Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets.

Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the sustainable management of the historic environment

3.26 This document⁸ has been referred to in Section 2 of this report. It describes a number of 'heritage values' that may be present

⁸ English Heritage (2008) *Conservation principles, policies and guidance for the sustainable management of the historic environment*.

in a 'significant place'. These are evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal value. The conservation areas and nearby listed buildings have evident special architectural and historic interest. Any proposals for the site must have regard for the preservation of this special interest.

The London Plan

- 3.27 The new London Plan 2021 was adopted in March 2021. It is the overall strategic plan for London, and sets out an integrated economic, environmental, transport and social framework for the development of the city over the next 20-25 years.
- 3.28 Chapter 3 'Design' deals with overarching themes in relation to design in the built environment and provides a range of policies concerning the design of new development in London.
- 3.29 Policy D3 'Optimising site capacity through the design-led approach' requires that development proposals should 'enhance local context by delivering buildings and spaces that positively respond to local distinctiveness through their layout, orientation, scale, appearance and shape, with due regard to existing and emerging street hierarchy, building types, forms and proportions.' Further that proposals should 'respond to the existing character of a place by identifying the special and valued features and characteristics that are unique to the locality and respect, enhance and utilise the heritage assets and architectural features that contribute towards the local character.' Policy D4 'Delivering good design' expounds upon the procedures which will be used to oversee this ambition.
- 3.30 Policy D9 deals with 'Tall Buildings' and how their impacts should be assessed and addressed.
- 3.31 Section C (1) requires that development proposals address 'Visual Impacts' as follows:
 - a) the views of buildings from different distances:
 - i. long-range views – these require attention to be paid to the design of the top of the building. It should make a positive contribution to the existing and emerging skyline and not adversely affect local or strategic views
 - ii. mid-range views from the surrounding neighbourhood – particular attention should be paid to the form and proportions of the building. It should make a positive contribution to the local townscape in terms of legibility, proportions and materiality

iii. immediate views from the surrounding streets – attention should be paid to the base of the building. It should have a direct relationship with the street, maintaining the pedestrian scale, character and vitality of the street. Where the edges of the site are adjacent to buildings of significantly lower height or parks and other open spaces there should be an appropriate transition in scale between the tall building and its surrounding context to protect amenity or privacy.

b) whether part of a group or stand-alone, tall buildings should reinforce the spatial hierarchy of the local and wider context and aid legibility and wayfinding

c) architectural quality and materials should be of an exemplary standard to ensure that the appearance and architectural integrity of the building is maintained through its lifespan

d) proposals should take account of, and avoid harm to, the significance of London's heritage assets and their settings. Proposals resulting in harm will require clear and convincing justification, demonstrating that alternatives have been explored and that there are clear public benefits that outweigh that harm. The buildings should positively contribute to the character of the area

e) buildings in the setting of a World Heritage Site must preserve, and not harm, the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site, and the ability to appreciate it

f) buildings near the River Thames, particularly in the Thames Policy Area, should protect and enhance the open quality of the river and the riverside public realm, including views, and not contribute to a canyon effect along the river g) buildings should not cause adverse reflected glare

h) buildings should be designed to minimise light pollution from internal and external lighting.

3.32 Chapter 7 'Heritage and Culture' defines 'Heritage significance' (para 7.1.7) as:

'the archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic interest of a heritage asset. This may be represented in many ways, in an asset's visual attributes, such as - form, scale, materials, and architectural detail, design and setting, as well as through historic associations between people and a place, and, where relevant, the historic relationships between heritage assets.' It goes on to say that 'development that affects heritage assets and their settings should respond positively to the assets' significance, local context and character to protect the

contribution that settings make to the assets' significance. In particular, consideration will need to be given to mitigating impacts from development that is not sympathetic in terms of scale, materials, details and form'.

- 3.33 In terms of development proposals, Policy HC1 'Heritage conservation and growth', says that:
'Development proposals affecting heritage assets, and their settings, should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to the assets' significance and appreciation within their surroundings. The cumulative impacts of incremental change from development on heritage assets and their settings should also be actively managed. Development proposals should avoid harm and identify enhancement opportunities by integrating heritage considerations early on in the design process.'
- 3.34 Policy HC3 'Strategic and Local Views' and Policy HC4 'London View Management Framework' describe how The Mayor has designated a list of Strategic Views that will be kept under review and requires that development proposals must be assessed for their impact on a designated view if they fall within the foreground, middle ground or background of that view
Camden Council's Local Development Framework
- 3.35 Camden Council adopted its Local Plan in July 2017. The Plan sets out the Council's planning policies. It replaces Camden's Core Strategy and Development Policies planning documents (adopted in 2010).
- 3.36 Section 7 of the Plan deals with Design and Heritage saying that 'the Council places great importance on preserving the historic environment'.
- 3.37 Policy D1 Design says that:
'The Council will seek to secure high quality design in development. The Council will require that development:
 - a. respects local context and character;
 - b. preserves or enhances the historic environment and heritage assets in accordance with "Policy D2 Heritage";
 - c. is sustainable in design and construction, incorporating best practice in resource management and climate change mitigation and adaptation;
 - d. is of sustainable and durable construction and adaptable to different activities and land uses;

- e. comprises details and materials that are of high quality and complement the local character;
- f. integrates well with the surrounding streets and open spaces, improving movement through the site and wider area with direct, accessible and easily recognisable routes and contributes positively to the street frontage;
- g. is inclusive and accessible for all;
- h. promotes health;
- i. is secure and designed to minimise crime and antisocial behaviour;
- j. responds to natural features and preserves gardens and other open space;
- k. incorporates high quality landscape design (including public art, where appropriate) and maximises opportunities for greening for example through planting of trees and other soft landscaping,
- l. incorporates outdoor amenity space; m. preserves strategic and local views;
- n. for housing, provides a high standard of accommodation; and
- o. carefully integrates building services equipment. The Council will resist development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.'

3.38 Policy D1 also addresses Tall Buildings, Public Art and Excellence in Design.

3.39 Policy D2 Heritage deals with Camden's heritage assets. The policy says that:

'The Council will preserve and, where appropriate, enhance Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas, listed buildings, archaeological remains, scheduled ancient monuments and historic parks and gardens and locally listed heritage assets.'

3.40 In relation to designated heritage assets generally the policy says:

'The Council will not permit the loss of or substantial harm to a designated heritage asset, including conservation areas and Listed Buildings, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is

necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- a. the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site;
- b. no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation;
- c. conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
- d. the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.'

3.41 The Council will not permit development that results in harm that is less than substantial to the significance of a designated heritage asset unless the public benefits of the proposal convincingly outweigh that harm'.

3.42 In relation to Conservation Areas the policy says:

'In order to maintain the character of Camden's conservation areas, the Council will take account of conservation area statements, appraisals and management strategies when assessing applications within conservation areas. The Council will:

- e. require that development within conservation areas preserves or, where possible, enhances the character or appearance of the area;
- f. resist the total or substantial demolition of an unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area;
- g. resist development outside of a conservation area that causes harm to the character or appearance of that conservation area; and
- h. preserve trees and garden spaces which contribute to the character and appearance of a conservation area or which provide a setting for Camden's architectural heritage.'

3.43 In relation to Listed Buildings the policy says:

'To preserve or enhance the borough's listed buildings, the Council will:

- i. resist the total or substantial demolition of a listed building;

j. resist proposals for a change of use or alterations and extensions to a listed building where this would cause harm to the special architectural and historic interest of the building; and

k. resist development that would cause harm to significance of a listed building through an effect on its setting.'

3.44 In relation to Archaeology:

'The Council will protect remains of archaeological importance by ensuring acceptable measures are taken proportionate to the significance of the heritage asset to preserve them and their setting, including physical preservation, where appropriate.'

3.45 In relation to other heritage assets and non-designated heritage assets including those on and off the local list, Registered Parks and Gardens and London Squares the policy states:

'The effect of a proposal on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset will be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, balancing the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.'

3.46 Sections 7 7.42-7.69 discuss the detail of the Council's approach to implementing Policy D2 under the following headings: Enhancing the historic environment (7.42-7.43); Designated Heritage Assets (7.44-45); Conservation Areas (7.46-7.56); Listed Buildings (7.57-7.62); Archaeology (7.63-7.67); 'Other' and Non-designated heritage Assets (7.68-7.69).

4 The proposed development and its effect

4.1 This section of the report describes the proposed scheme for Harrington Square and its effect on the heritage significance described in the previous section.

4.2 The proposed scheme is illustrated in the drawings and Design & Access Statement prepared by Studio Power.

The proposed scheme

4.3 The proposed scheme is illustrated in the drawings and Design & Access Statement prepared by Studio Power. This also provides a detailed explanation of the design rationale and process, including the rigorous pre-planning discussion and Design Review process.

4.4 As described in that document, the proposed massing of the scheme aims to sit comfortably next to neighbouring Hurdwick Place terraces to the north and Hurdwick House to the south. It aims to reintroduce mass that was historically present on the site and improve the overall streetscape of Harrington Square.

4.5 The articulation of the mass has attempted to reflect and reinterpret the scale and façade details of the historic terraces surrounding the site.

4.6 This is particularly important in respect of the setting of the remaining listed terrace on Harrington Square and the character of the conservation area in this part of Camden Town – effectively stitching the historic streetscape back together again.

4.7 In terms of the detail of the design, a comprehensive character area study was undertaken by the architects to fully understand the surrounding 19th century terrace façade – specifically consideration of ground floor treatment; entrances; window detailing; metal work; balustrades; parapets; and roof level/top floors.

4.8 The concept for the façade aims to capture the essence of the historic context while embracing a contemporary vision. It is proposed that the façade is split horizontally into base, middle and top typology, each with defining characteristics. There will be an increased height to the ground floor to align with neighbouring buildings and the façade is split into uniform vertical bays to reintroduce the historic façade pattern to the site.

- 4.9 The windows have a regular pattern within the façade bays with deep window reveals to help emphasises the horizontal and vertical elements and create a clear grid.
- 4.10 An increased level of decoration to the ground floor façade and gardens that front on to Harrington Square aim to improve the overall streetscape from its existing condition and importantly contribute positively to the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 4.11 The window hierarchy moving up the façade also reflects a more historic form. Re-constituted stone detailing at ground and first floor provide detail that reflects this historic hierarchy and provides emphasis to these two floors.
- 4.12 A raised decorative parapet to the central bay helps signify the central entrance which is further celebrated through a projecting reconstituted stone portico. The raised parapet helps break up the horizontality of the façade.
- 4.13 It is proposed that brick is the predominant material, decoratively applied to the upper floor parapets to provide interest and variation. The ground floor incorporates white glazed sawtooth brickwork, making reference to the decorative rusticated stucco often found at this level on 19th century terraces.
- 4.14 The proposals have been articulated to fit comfortably into its context. The proposed parapet line follows that of the adjoining Hurdwick Place terraces with a varying parapet to the central bay creating an interest to the front elevation – but always ensuring a contextual scale to its surroundings.
- 4.15 Overall, the proposals, as detailed in the Design & Access Statement, have been designed to not only contribute a new high-quality piece of architecture into Harrington Square, but to do so in a manner that both preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the conservation area as well as the setting of nearby listed buildings.
- 4.16 This has been achieved through careful consideration of historic forms, massing, details and materials – which have been carefully combined to create a contemporary composition which sits contextually within its setting.

5 Compliance with legislation, policy and guidance

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

- 5.1 The conclusion of our assessment, contained in previous sections in this report, is that the proposed scheme preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the Camden Town Conservation Area by virtue of the positive effect that the development will have on the setting of the conservation area and the nearby listed building. The proposed development thus complies with S.66(1) and S.72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

The National Planning Policy Framework

Design

- 5.2 The proposed scheme is wholly consistent with Chapter 12 of the NPPF. It will clearly ‘function well’ and ‘add to the overall quality of the area’, will be ‘visually attractive’, is certainly related to its context and helps in place-making and reinforcing the existing urban context. In our opinion, the proposed scheme will ‘help raise the standard of design more generally in [the] area’ and will ‘fit in with the overall form and layout of [its] surroundings’.
- 5.3 The proposed scheme is, undoubtedly, a good example of the ‘innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings’ that is sought by Paragraph 131 of the NPPF

Historic Environment

- 5.4 This report has provided a detailed description and analysis of the significance of the site and its heritage context, as required by Paragraph 194 of the Planning Policy Framework.
- 5.5 The proposal satisfies paragraph 197 in making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
- 5.6 As outlined earlier, the NPPF identifies two levels of potential ‘harm’ that might be caused to a heritage asset by a development: ‘substantial harm...or total loss of significance’ or ‘less than substantial’. Both levels of harm must be caused to a *designated* heritage asset – in this case, the listed buildings and conservation areas whose setting can be considered to be affected by the proposed development.

- 5.7 With regards to Paragraph 201, the only potential for ‘substantial’ harm would be if the proposed scheme for the site caused the loss of something *central* to the special interest of these heritage assets. The proposal evidently does not give rise to this level of harm.
- 5.8 Similarly, in terms of Paragraph 202, for the reasons given earlier, we also do not believe, overall, that any ‘less than substantial harm’ is caused by the scheme. There will be change in the setting of the heritage assets in question, but we believe that this change is, overall, positive – the character and appearance of the conservation area will be enhanced by the re-stitching of the historic streetscape along Hurdwick Place/Harrington Gardens, and the setting of the remaining listed terrace will also be further enhanced by the proposals.

London Plan 2021

- 5.9 The proposed scheme is consistent with the London Plan and fully complies with its design (Chapter 3) and heritage (Chapter 7) policies.
- 5.10 The proposed scheme is of the highest architectural quality and responds to Policy D3 ‘Optimising site capacity through the design-led approach’ by positively responding to local distinctiveness and successfully responding to the existing character of the place and in that respects, enhances and utilises the heritage assets and architectural features that contribute towards the local character.
- 5.11 It is also consistent with Policy HC1 Heritage Conservation and Growth in that the applicants have sought to identify, understand and conserve the historic environment and the proposals clearly conserve the significance of nearby heritage assets, and their settings, by being ‘sympathetic to their significance and appreciation within their surroundings’.

Camden’s Local Plan

- 5.12 As has been shown, and for the same reasons that are given in respect of the NPPF, the scheme would make a positive contribution to the surrounding townscape and also preserve *and enhance* the character and appearance of the conservation area and the setting of listed structures.
- 5.13 For these reasons, and those given earlier, the proposed development is consistent with Camden’s Local Development Framework policies regarding demolition and new development in conservation areas.

- 5.14 With regards Policy D1 the proposals are clearly provide a high quality design that respects local context and character and preserves and enhances the historic environment and heritage assets. It will also be sustainable in design and construction.
- 5.15 In terms of Policy D2, the proposals have had full regard for the conservation area appraisal and overall character of the area. The resultant proposal will, we believe, preserve and enhance the character of the conservation area, making a positive contribution to its overall character and Harrington Gardens in particular.
- 5.16 In conclusion, we believe that the proposals will positively preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area and the setting of nearby listed buildings and thus comply with national legislation and national and local planning policy with regards the historic built environment.

Appendix A: Camden Town Conservation Area



Source: <https://www.camden.gov.uk>



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