

Employment Viability Report

160 Malden Road, Camden, NW5 4BT

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1.0 Introduction

Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This Employment Viability Report has been prepared on behalf of Andreas Kyprianides (the applicant) to accompany a planning application for the demolition of the existing buildings at 160 Malden Road, NW5 4BT, consisting of an MOT repair garage (Class B2) and hand car wash, and construction of a new building providing 15 residential apartments with 146 sqm of commercial (office) floorspace (Class E) at ground floor level.
- 1.2 This report is being submitted to accompany the application further to refusal of planning application ref: 2022/5508/P on 27 April 2023 (which proposed a similar scheme). The Officers Report accompanying this application concluded that the loss of the existing employment use and its replacement with office use was acceptable, but that further information was required in relation to the demand for new office accommodation in the locality. As such, Strettons have been appointed to prepare a report outlining the demand for office use, which is provided in Appendix C.
- 1.3 As such, the content of this report is broadly identical to that previously submitted in 2022, particularly in relation to Chapter 3.0. For convenience, the parts of this report that have been amended since 2022 are highlighted below:
- Para 2.9 – has been amended to reflect the types of demand for the employment floorspace, based upon advice from Strettons in Appendix C.
 - Para 2.21 – has been amended to reflect the suitability of the site, based upon advice from Strettons in Appendix C.
 - Para 2.33 – has been amended to reflect the updated employment density figures, given the slight change in floorspace since 2022.
 - Chapter 4.0 – the bullet points in para 4.4 have been updated to reflect the Strettons report in Appendix C.
- 1.4 This report seeks to respond to the requirements of **Policy E2** (Employment premises and sites) of the **Camden Local Plan 2017** which generally seeks to protect premises or sites that are suitable for continued business use, but may allow redevelopment of these subject to the criteria set out in the policy. This report also seeks to respond to **Camden’s Planning Guidance on ‘Employment Sites & Business Premises’** (hereafter referred to as ‘the **CPG**’) January 2021 which sets out factors to be taken into account when assessing proposals that involve the loss of a business use.
- 1.5 This report considers how the proposed development meets the relevant requirements set out in the above policy and guidance. It also includes a survey of other MOT repair garages and car wash facilities in the local area, together with information on the availability of alternative ‘mobile’ car repair and car wash services. The report also makes reference to supply and demand in the Borough in respect of the existing and proposed uses, as identified in Camden’s **Employment Land Study 2014**.

Background

- 1.6 The existing site consists of a former petrol filling station which is now in use as a MOT repair facility and hand car wash. The site comprises single storey buildings (circa 150 sqm of floorspace in total), a parking

forecourt fronting Malden Road and a small open yard to the rear of the site. Further details relating to the site and proposed development are set out in the accompanying **Planning Statement**.

- 1.7 The applicant sought pre-application advice from officers at London Borough of Camden in May 2020 in relation to a similar proposed development involving 24 flats at the site but without employment space. A meeting with officers took place on 16th July 2020 (Pre-App Ref. 2020/2451/PRE).
- 1.8 In the pre-application advice letter received from Camden Council dated 9th November 2020, the key feedback received with regard to the proposed loss of employment space at the site was that:
 - Evidence would be required to support an application for a change of use to a non-business use at the site, in accordance with **Policy E2**, including a thorough marketing exercise sustained over at least two years; and
 - While the existing use is sui generis, it is considered to fall within the scope of the Council's 'economy and jobs' policies, and it was noted that the existing MOT centre and car wash are still operating.
- 1.8 Following the above pre-application advice, the applicant amended the proposals to include replacement commercial space at ground floor level with 15 residential units above. At the same time the applicant's agent sought advice from London Borough of Camden with regard to whether or not a marketing exercise would be necessary in this case in order to justify the loss of the existing business and replacement with a commercial (office) use at the site with residential above. In response, the following advice was received from London Borough of Camden by email on 21st April 2022:

'The Local Plan's policies provide support for businesses of all sizes and state (Policy E1 b) stating that we'll "maintain a stock of premises that are suitable for a variety of business activities, for firms of differing sizes, and available on a range of terms and conditions for firms with differing resources". This means that the existing sui-generis employment use does have policy protection so there would need to be very good reasons for us to be convinced we should be allowing the loss of this. Simply proposing a greater floor area of E-class employment in itself would not be enough to make a case. There would need to be evidence of marketing in line with the Camden Planning Guidance to demonstrate that the site is incapable of continued use as a car wash / car repair shop or similar type of industrial activity. The site being occupied would generally suggest that it is still suitable for continued employment use of this type. Marketing would only be waived exceptionally if there were wider strategic benefits which on balance exceeded the contribution this site currently appears to be making to a healthy and diverse local economy as well as locational advantages of having these sorts of services close to Camden's residential population without necessitating unsustainable travel outside the Borough. I hope this free advice is useful'.
- 1.9 On further review of the relevant planning policy and guidance by the applicant, it is clear to the applicant that the principal use at the site is the MOT repair garage (Use Class B2) which occupies the main building at the site, while the hand car wash facility (sui generis) which occupies a smaller, temporary building and part of the forecourt is considered to be ancillary to the site's main use. Therefore, the site's principal use is considered to fall into Class B2 (General Industry) of the Use Classes Order.
- 1.10 With regard to Local Plan **Policy E2**, the current application does not include marketing evidence to support the proposed redevelopment and intensification of development at the site, including the proposed change

of business use at the site from B2 (MOT repair garage with ancillary hand car wash) to commercial (office) use (Class E). The applicant considers there are clear reasons to waive any marketing evidence for reasons set out in this report and in the **Planning Statement** accompanying the planning application.

Structure of Report

1.11 The structure of this report is as follows:

- **Chapter 2.0** provides an analysis of the existing and proposed business use, taking account of relevant criteria set out in **Policy E2** of the Local Plan and the **CPG** with regard to the proposed change of use at the site.
- **Chapter 3.0** presents land use survey data on similar existing uses in the local area (MOT/repair garages and car wash facilities), and then considers identified demand for industrial uses and for SMEs/start-up businesses in the Borough.
- **Chapter 4.0** provides a summary and conclusions.

2.0 Existing and Proposed Business Use

Overview

- 2.1 This Chapter provides a review of the existing business operating at the site and the proposed commercial (office) space, with reference to **Policy E2** of the Local Plan and in response to the criteria in **paragraph 7 of the CPG**. Paragraph 7 states that:

“When assessing proposals that involve the loss of a business use the Council will consider whether there is potential for that use to continue. We will take into account various factors including:

- whether the premises are in a reasonable condition to allow the use to continue;*
- the range of unit sizes it provides, particularly suitability for small businesses;*
- the suitability of the location for any business use;*
- how the business use is related to other neighbouring/nearby land uses;*
- whether a lower quantum of replacement employment space is proposed as part of the development, and if so whether the nature of this space is considered to have the potential to offer equal or greater benefits to local people or businesses than the existing space.”*

- 2.2 This Chapter has been structured to consider each of the above factors in turn, looking at both the existing use of the site and the proposed use. The final section then discusses ‘other considerations’ at the end of the Chapter.

Condition of Buildings / Facilities

- 2.3 This section considers: *‘whether the premises are in a reasonable condition to allow the use to continue’*.
- 2.4 As set out above, the existing site consists of a former petrol filling station, constructed circa 1960, now in use as an MOT repair garage and car wash facility. As such the existing business is not a purpose-built repair garage. The existing buildings are now in very poor condition and detract from the street scene on Malden Road. The condition of the site and buildings can be seen in the photos at **Appendix B** of this report.
- 2.5 The proposed development would bring new, purpose-built commercial (office) floorspace to the site, which will secure the long-term employment use at the site while bringing a new development which will enhance the street scene and quality of the local environment.

Range of Units and Suitability for Small Businesses

- 2.6 This section considers: *‘the range of unit sizes it provides, particularly suitability for small businesses’*.
- 2.7 The existing buildings provide limited accommodation and floorspace (circa 150 sqm) in very poor condition. As such the site does not provide floorspace that would be suitable for a wide range of small businesses. The existing site is only considered to be suitable for its existing MOT and car wash facility use without being redeveloped.

- 2.8 By contrast the new proposed commercial floorspace will provide 146 sqm of brand new, flexible, ground floor accommodation, with convenient and direct access to Malden Road, within walking distance to public transport connections and a range of local services. It will be suitable for occupation by start-up businesses or SME's (in accordance with **Policy E2 (f)**), therefore providing an opportunity for small and growing businesses and social enterprises in the local area. The proposal therefore supports **paragraph 12 of the CPG** which states that the Council will support the re-provision of employment space "*particularly where this consists of space that is suitable and affordable for micro and small businesses and particularly where this space is suitable for our growth and other important sectors and business clusters*".
- 2.9 The proposed office accommodation is likely to be suitable for many small-scale businesses, such as small design-based companies, such as architectural firms, design firms, office based medical occupiers such as dental practices and surgeries (see Strettons report in **Appendix C**). These are both key growth sectors in Camden as identified in **paragraphs 5.19-5.22 of the Local Plan**.
- 2.10 The office accommodation provides a suitable floor to ceiling height of 2.7m and is designed to have clear separation from the residential element in line with **paragraph 5.41 of the Local Plan**. The space also offers a flexible layout that will allow for networking, socialising and meeting space (including outdoor space) to meet the needs of a range of business types in line with **paragraph 5.9 of the Local Plan**. There is also an opportunity to provide flexible occupancy terms to further support local businesses.
- 2.11 It is also relevant that the application is accompanied by an **Employment and Training Strategy** (in accordance with **Policy E1** (Economic Development) of the Local Plan and supporting **paragraphs 5.11 to 5.16**, as well as the **CPG**. The Strategy includes proposed measurable obligations and financial contributions, to be secured by Section 106 Agreement, which will help to maximise the benefits for the local community in terms of employment and training associated with the delivery of the proposed development. Therefore, the proposal will increase employment opportunities for local residents including training and apprenticeships in line with **Policy E2 (g)**.

Suitability of Location for any Business Use

- 2.12 This section considers: '*the suitability of the location for any business use*'.
- 2.13 While the site may be well located for much of its existing customer base as an MOT repair garage and car wash facility, benefiting from a large frontage on Malden Road (a 'B' road) within a predominantly residential area, the site does not form part of a wider industrial area is not surrounded by any similar, compatible land uses (as discussed in the next sub-section below).
- 2.14 Importantly, the site is limited in size, extending to approximately 735 sqm. It is not a designated employment site and is not part of comprehensive scheme. For these reasons the suitability of the location for B2 industrial use is limited.
- 2.15 A further related consideration which is highlighted in both **Policy E2** (Employment premises and sites) and the **CPG**, is whether or not the loss of the existing business will impact on both the Central Activities Zone (CAZ) or the local economy.
- 2.16 **Policy E2** states that:

'The Council will encourage the provision of employment premises and sites in the borough. We will protect premises or sites that are suitable for continued business use, in particular premises for small businesses, businesses and services that provide employment for Camden residents and those that support the functioning of the Central Activities Zone (CAZ) or the local economy.'

- 2.17 With regard to proposals for higher intensity redevelopment of premises or sites that are suitable for continued business use, **Policy E2 (d)** states that these will be considered provided that:

"...the redevelopment retains existing businesses on the site as far as possible, and in particular industry, light industry, and warehouse/logistic uses that support the functioning of the CAZ or the local economy".

- 2.18 The **CPG states at paragraph 42** that:

"The loss of a business supporting the CAZ or the local economy as part of a redevelopment scheme will only be permitted if it is demonstrated that it is possible for the existing business to be relocated to a sustainable location and that this would not cause harm to CAZ functions or Camden's local economy. A sustainable location in this regard is considered to be one that allows for continued successful operation of the business and does not lead to an excessive increase in motor vehicle trips".

- 2.19 Firstly, with regard to the CAZ, it is clear that the existing use of the site does not directly support the CAZ, taking account of the CAZ functions listed at **paragraph 43 of the CPG**. Therefore, the loss of the existing MOT repair garage and car wash facility on Malden Road is not expected to harm these functions.
- 2.20 In relation to any potential impacts on the local economy arising from the loss of the existing use at the site, this is considered further in Chapter 3.0 below. Chapter 3.0 assesses impacts in terms of alternative and comparable facilities in the local area and changing habits within the wider population for buying goods and services.
- 2.21 With regard to the proposed commercial (office) use of the site, the Strettons report in **Appendix C** concludes that *"the proposal is unique to this small submarket in that it offers a new build and self-contained accommodation, which fronts onto a road with good access as well as good public transport links"*. Therefore, it is considered that the site is well suited for an SME or start-up business to be located here.

Relationship with Neighbouring Uses

- 2.22 This section considers: *'how the business use is related to other neighbouring/nearby land uses'*.
- 2.23 In terms of surrounding land uses, the site abuts three-storey Georgian terraced property (no.162 Malden Road) which forms a terrace of properties (along with no.164) and the three-storey Gypsy Queen pub beyond this. No.162-164 appear to provide residential or office space on upper floors (partly vacant) with commercial units at ground floor.
- 2.24 Immediately to the north of the site is Wellesley Road Care Home. Adjacent to the site to the south-east is a public open space which includes the Malden Road sports pitches. On the other side of Malden Road

opposite the site are three/four-storey Georgian properties mainly in residential use, some with commercial/retail units at ground floor.

- 2.25 Given these surrounding land uses, particularly the sensitive residential receptors, it is considered that the existing MOT repair garage and hand car wash uses conflict with the surrounding uses in a number of ways.
- 2.26 Firstly, the existing use is likely to have a detrimental impact on the amenity of occupiers of the neighbouring residential properties (for example by way of noise, disturbance and emissions), particularly in relation to the adjacent care home. The presence of sensitive land uses adjacent to a proposal for an industrial related use is commonly seen as a constraint for the industrial related use, as it can result in restrictions for example in terms of hours of operation, noise, deliveries and emissions. By contrast, businesses that are located away from sensitive receptors can often benefit from more flexible hours of operation and are less constrained by surrounding land uses.
- 2.27 The existing use also conflicts with the adjacent public open space / green space land use where the local community can go for exercise, relaxation, contact with nature, socialising or fresh air. The noise and disturbance arising from the garage and car wash, together with the poor quality of the environment of the site at 160 Malden Road, are considered to detract from the quality of this green space.
- 2.28 It is also relevant that the existing use represents a very low density of development, whilst surrounding built development is at a considerably higher density. In this way the site at 160 Malden Road offers a unique opportunity to provide additional homes (including much needed affordable housing units) whilst also retaining business use at the site in form that is more compatible with the surrounding land uses.
- 2.29 In summary the existing MOT repair garage and hand car wash use at the site is clearly not well related to nearby land uses, which is an important factor in assessing the loss of this use in line with **paragraph 5.37 of the Local Plan**. The site is not considered suitable for the existing use due to amenity impacts (such as noise and disturbance) on surrounding residential uses arising from the use, particularly the adjacent care home, as well as impacts on users of the public open space. The site also detracts from the quality of the street scene and does not make efficient use of land in this urban location, as it currently has a very low density of development.
- 2.30 The proposed replacement business space, consisting of ground floor office space (suitable for start-ups and SMEs) is considered to be very compatible with existing surrounding land uses and built form, including the adjacent care home. It provides an excellent opportunity for replacement ground floor commercial floorspace with residential use above and also supports **Paragraph 5.36 of the Local Plan** which states that: *'We will seek to ensure that existing and future employment uses can operate effectively without being in conflict with other sensitive uses such as housing'*. In this way the proposed development would bring benefits for the occupiers of neighbouring sites and users of the open space.

Quantum of Floorspace

- 2.31 This section considers: *'whether a lower quantum of replacement employment space is proposed as part of the development, and if so whether the nature of this space is considered to have the potential to offer equal or greater benefits to local people or businesses than the existing space'*.

- 2.32 The proposed commercial (office) space (Class E) which extends to 146 sqm is a similar quantum to the existing built floorspace which extends to circa 150 sqm.
- 2.33 Using the employment density guide figures for B1a office use provided at Appendix 1 of the **CPG**, the proposed development is likely to directly generate around 11-14 jobs (full time equivalent) (FTE). This compares with the MOT repair garage and car wash facility which are understood to provide approximately 5 full-time jobs (FTE) across the site.
- 2.34 As the above indicates that the proposal will increase employment opportunities at the site by supporting a higher number of full-time equivalent jobs in comparison with the existing use, it is considered that the proposal offers greater benefits to local people and businesses than the existing use both in terms of job opportunities and provision of new business floorspace.

Other Considerations

- 2.35 **Policy E2 (h)** of the Local Plan states that the Council will consider higher intensity redevelopment of premises or sites that are suitable for continued business provide that: *'the scheme includes other priority uses, such as housing, affordable housing and open space, where relevant, and where this would not prejudice the continued operation of businesses on the site'*.
- 2.36 The proposed development provides a 'higher intensity' development which includes housing and affordable housing. At the same time, the residential floorspace has been carefully designed to ensure the effective operation of the proposed commercial (office) space at ground floor, whilst protecting the residential amenity of new occupants. This is achieved by providing a separate entrance to the office space direct from Malden Road and minimising or eliminating any overlooking between the two uses. In this way the proposed development fully accords with **Policy E2 (h)** and the provision of housing and affordable housing at the site is considered to be an important benefit which supports the proposal for a change of use.

3.0 Alternative Local Facilities and Demand

Overview

- 3.1 As set out in Chapter 1.0, feedback received from Camden Council following the initial pre-application process indicates that the Council normally seeks to protect existing businesses unless there are/were:

“wider strategic benefits which on balance exceeded the contribution this site currently appears to be making to a healthy and diverse local economy as well as locational advantages of having these sorts of services close to Camden’s residential population without necessitating unsustainable travel outside the Borough” (words taken from email from Camden dated 21st April 2022).

- 3.2 In order to help assess the impact of the loss of the existing MOT repair garage and car wash facility on the local economy and residents, Grade Planning has undertaken a survey of other comparable facilities in the local area.

MOT/Car Repair Garages

- 3.3 **Plan 1 at Appendix A** of this Report identifies a range of car repair garages, the majority of which also offer MOT testing, located within a 2 km radius of Malden Road. The Table on Plan 1 is replicated here:

Number (shown on Plan 1)	Name	Address	Driving distance from site (minutes)	Driving distance from site (km)
1	The Car Surgery	2-4 Arctic Street	5	1.4
2	West Hampstead Motors	155-161 Grafton Road	5	1.4
3	Cresta Motors	3 Patshill Road	7	1.6
4	M&A Coachworks	52 Fortess Grove	7	2
5	M&A Coachworks	135 Highgate Road	4	1.6
6	Dar Cars	132-134 Highgate Road	4	1.6
7	Kwik Fit	6 Lissenden Gardens	3	1.6
8-12	Belsize Motors Little & Pace Motors Hampstead Motor Services Autotech Hampstead Porschewax Engineering	Lambelle Place	4	1.6
13	Modern Motors	95 Adelaide Road	5	1.6

14	Buchanan Motors	128A Camden Road	8	1.9
15	J&J Autos	17 Camden Mews	9	2.5
16	Lucky Motors	61 Camden Mews	8	2.5
17	London TVR	Bush Industrial Estate	8	2.5
18	Kar Dok	97 Avenue Road	9	2.7
19-25	D&J Motors AW Motors Mikes Mechanics German Car Centre Transauto Garage BMW Auto Services Mikes Coachworks	120-136 Camley Street	11	3.7

- 3.4 The survey found 25 repair garages within a 2 km radius of the site, including 8 garages within 1.6 km 'driving distance' from the site. This indicates a reasonable selection of alternative MOT/car repair facilities in the local area.
- 3.5 In addition to these local garages, it should also be noted that there appears to be a growing market for 'mobile' car repair services (including MOT) where individuals can opt to pay for such services to be carried out at their home or place of work, or via a car collection service. It is likely that demand for these sorts of services will continue to rise with the increasing use of the internet for purchasing goods and services, and with the recent shifts towards 'working from home' since the start of the Covid 19 pandemic.
- 3.6 **Table A** below provides examples of companies offering these sort of 'mobile' car repair services serving the local area, most of which also offer MOT services. This list is in no way exhaustive but provides examples of companies that are currently offering these sorts of services to residents in the local area.

Table A: Examples of 'mobile' MOT/car repair services serving the local area

Company Name	Contact Details / Location	Comments
J B Mechanics	Serves 40 mile area Based in North West London www.jbmechanics.com	Website says: 'We provide a personal service at your doorstep – whether at home or at your work place – no need for you to travel. We also provide a car collection service, arrange MOTs & bodywork etc.'

Auto Eng Repair	Serves Kentish Town www.clickmechanic.com	Website says: 'You'll be able to select either for a mobile mechanic to come out to you or for a garage to collect the vehicle to undertake the work in their workshop.' It also says: 'Save time on your next MOT test – we collect and drop off your car for you!'
CMS Engineering Ltd	Serves North London www.cmsengineeringltd.com	Website says: 'Cms Engineering is a mobile service which comes to you at your door step. We also work on cars to carry out Diagnostic servicing and general repairs.'
Mobile Mechanics Finchley	157 Fortress Road, NW5 2HR Tel. 07948 090149	Business address located approximately 1.3 miles from the site.
Mobile Mechanic Kentish Town	Lissenden Gardens, NW5 1LX Tel. 07818 005902	Yellow pages webpage says: 'Here at QX mobile mechanic has over 20 years experience. We come to your home or work place to assist with any car problems. We provide guaranteed work on Parts and labour.'
Servicing Stop	Nationwide www.servicingstop.co.uk	For MOTs the website states: 'Free nationwide collection & delivery from home or work'.
AA	Nationwide www.theaa.com	Website says: 'AA approved MOTs, services & repairs, brought to you through the convenience of our local garage network' and 'Free vehicle collection and drop off when you book a service, subject to availability'.

- 3.7 It is clear from the list of businesses shown in Plan Table 1 and in Table A, that there are a wide range of options available in terms of car repair/MOT services in the local area.
- 3.8 It is also relevant that any move towards these more 'mobile' services will tend to support more sustainable patterns of development and travel, as these businesses tend to be associated with a reduced land requirement (or more efficient use of land) and less vehicle trips.

3.9 With regard to the car repair industry as a whole, evidence has been found that overall demand for car repairs in the UK has fallen over recent years. According to an article dated July 2019 on the website www.marketingdonut.co.uk (article found at <https://www.marketingdonut.co.uk/market-research/sector-trends/car-repairer-sector-trends>) this fall in demand is for a number of reasons including:

- *the improved reliability of new cars*
- *longer servicing intervals*
- *increasing use of replacement parts rather than making repairs*
- *extended warranties on new cars*
- *the economic recovery stalling due to the uncertainty over the Brexit negotiations following the vote in 2016 to leave the EU. To reduce expenditure, many motorists chose to skip scheduled services and ignore minor damage to their vehicles*

3.10 The article concludes that '*the independent car repair sector is forecast to slowly decline in real terms in the years to come and further falls are expected in the number of independent car repair businesses in the UK.*' This is a further consideration which is relevant in assessing any impacts relating to the loss of the MOT/car repair garage at this site.

3.11 Given the range of alternative local services identified above, together with the possible future falls in demand for car repair at independent garages, the loss of the car repair facility at the site is not expected to impact on local people in terms of access to any of these services or harm Camden's local economy.

Car Wash Facilities

3.12 In respect of the existing car wash facility, **Plan 2 at Appendix A** of this Report identifies 5 car wash facilities within a 2 km radius of Malden Road. The table on Plan 2 is replicated here:

Number	Name	Address	Driving distance from site (minutes)	Driving distance from site (km)
1	BP Car Wash	215 Haverstock Hill	4	1.4
2	Car Wash Valeting Centre	128A Camden Road	8	1.9
3	Car Carers	Rochester Square	8	1.9
4	Car Wash and Valeting Centre	869 Kentish Town Road	8	2
5	Imo Car Wash	02 Centre	12	3.2

3.13 The survey found 5 formal car wash facilities within a 2 km radius of the site, including 4 within 2 km 'driving distance' from the site.

3.14 It should be noted that the above list of car wash facilities is unlikely to provide a true representation of the local services available, as there are also likely to be informal or temporary car washing facilities

located within other business sites, for example within supermarket car parks, Council car parks and at community centres. Therefore there may be a much higher number of car wash facilities in the local area than those identified on Plan 2.

- 3.15 In addition to these businesses, as with the car repair services, there are a number of 'mobile' car washing businesses that operate in the area, that will come to your home to wash your car on the driveway, on the street outside your house or your place of work. **Table B** below provides a list of local companies offering these sort of 'mobile' car wash services serving the local area. This list is not exhaustive but provides a good indication of services that are available.

Table B: Examples of 'mobile' car wash services serving the local area

Company Name	Address / Location	Comments
Car Cleanic	Serves Kentish Town and other London areas www.kentish-town.carcleanic.co.uk	Website describes the company as a: 'Mobile car valet'.
Mr Shine Mobile Car Valeting	Based in North London. www.mrshinemobilecarvaleting.co.uk	Website says: 'We are a small and successful car valeting company based in London'.
The London Car Wash Company	London, NW1 www.thelondoncarwashcompany.co.uk	Website says: 'We are London's most trusted mobile carwash and we come direct to you.'
Go Wash My Car	National www.gowashmycar.com	Website allows you to book a car wash at any location of your choosing.

- 3.16 Taking account of all the services identified above, it is considered that there is a reasonable selection of alternative car wash services available in the local area and the loss of this facility at the site is not expected to harm Camden's local economy.

Employment Land Supply and Demand

- 3.17 London Borough of Camden's **Employment Land Study 2014** highlights the importance of maintaining industrial land in the Borough due to the constrained availability of this land (page 31) and generally identifies low levels of vacancy for industrial uses within the Borough – with a tendency for any vacancies to be among smaller units.
- 3.18 It is noted that page 34 of the **Employment Land Study** states that '*Kentish Town is emerging as a hub providing workspace for start-up, micro and small business and there is evidence that former industrial buildings have recently been converted to accommodate these types of occupiers*'.
- 3.19 More specifically on the protection of industrial sites, the **Employment Land Study** recognises that clusters of industrial related facilities are generally preferable, stating on page 48 that:

This analysis suggests that LB Camden should be seeking to protect industrial land and properties, particularly where the businesses are viable and sustainable. In this context, viable

and sustainable will translate into sites that are in locations where industrial activities are in some sense concentrated, and where the properties are purpose built and/or renewable. Industrial properties in residential areas, properties isolated in minor streets and properties that are clearly obsolete should be looked at differently.

- 3.20 As indicated by the low staff levels at the existing site and the limited built floorspace, this is a small car repair garage and car wash facility on an 'isolated' industrial site within a predominantly residential area. It is considered that larger sites (including those with purpose-built facilities), which are more appropriately located in predominantly industrial areas and away from sensitive residential receptors, support a more sustainable pattern of development and more efficient use of land.
- 3.21 In line with the findings of this Study, it is not considered that the existing site would be an appropriate site for the intensification of industrial (B2) uses due to the surrounding sensitive receptors and the lack of other industrial uses in the surrounding sites.
- 3.22 It is further noted that page 49 of the Study recognises a growth in opportunities in 'clean industries' such as '*building services, catering, cleaning, courier services, design, hospitality services, IT back-up services, marketing services, media production, office supplies, printing, security, training and many others*' and also states that:
- 'Because of their attractiveness to growth sectors and SMEs, it is such properties that LB Camden could be looking to re-provide within the borough. As noted elsewhere, Kentish Town has been successful in attracting SMEs and micro-businesses to converted industrial buildings, and such conversions should be encouraged.'*
- 3.23 As discussed in Chapter 2.0 above, the proposed development provides accommodation that is considered highly suitable for SMEs or start-up businesses, in a suitable location in the Kentish Town area.

4.0 Summary and Conclusions

- 4.1 This Employment Viability Report supports a planning application for the demolition of the existing buildings at 160 Malden Road, NW5 4BT, consisting of an MOT repair garage (Class B2) and hand car wash, and construction of a new building providing 15 residential apartments with 146 sqm of commercial (office) floorspace (Class E) at ground floor level.
- 4.2 This report seeks to respond to the requirements of **Policy E2** (Employment premises and sites) of the **Camden Local Plan 2017** which generally seeks to protect premises or sites that are suitable for continued business use, as well as **Camden's Planning Guidance on 'Employment Sites & Business Premises' (CPG) January 2021** which provides further guidance on assessing proposals that involve the loss of a business use. This report also includes a survey of other MOT repair garages and car wash facilities available to the local community and makes reference to Camden's (latest) **Employment Land Study 2014** with regard to supply and demand for the existing and proposed uses.
- 4.3 The applicant has received pre-application advice in respect of an initial proposal for a change of use to residential at the site (without any replacement business space). The applicant has since amended its proposals to include 146 sqm of ground floor commercial (office) space (Class E).
- 4.4 A review of relevant policy and guidance together with research into alternative similar services which are available to the local community indicates that there are a number of factors to justify a change of use to office and residential at the site, rather than reprovision of the MOT repair garage and hand car wash. This includes the following factors:
- The site consists of a former petrol filling station, not a purpose-built repair garage, and these buildings are now in very poor condition and detract from the street scene. The proposed development would bring new, purpose-built commercial (office) floorspace to the site.
 - The existing site which provides limited, poor quality floorspace is only considered to be suitable for its existing MOT and car wash facility use without being redeveloped. The new commercial floorspace will be suitable for occupation by start-up businesses or SME's in accordance with **Policy E2 (f)** and supported by the **CPG**.
 - The proposed office accommodation is likely to be suitable for many small-scale businesses, such as small design-based companies, such as architectural firms, design firms, office based medical occupiers such as dental practices and surgeries (see Strettons report in **Appendix C**). These are key growth sectors in Camden as identified in **paragraphs 5.19-5.22 of the Local Plan**.
 - The **Employment and Training Strategy** accompanying the application includes measurable obligations and financial contributions which will help to maximise benefits for the local community in terms of employment and training associated with the delivery of the proposed development (in support of **Policy E2 (g)**).
 - The site location is not ideally suited to B2 industrial use as it is not surrounded by any similar, compatible land uses, it is not part of a wider industrial area and is not a designated employment site. With regards to the proposed commercial (office) use, the site is well located in terms of

access to public transport for employees, and this sort of use will also complement other ground floor commercial uses along Malden Road.

- With regard to the proposed commercial (office) use of the site, the Strettons report in **Appendix C** concludes that *“the proposal is unique to this small submarket in that it offers a new build and self-contained accommodation, which fronts onto a road with good access as well as good public transport links”*. Therefore, it is considered that the site is well suited for an SME or start-up business to be located here.
- The existing use of the site does not directly support the CAZ and is not expected to harm the strategic functions of the CAZ.
- Surrounding land uses generally consist of residential with commercial/office uses to the ground floor (to the west and south), with a residential care home to the north and public open space to the east. The existing MOT repair garage and hand car wash is considered to conflict with these land uses due to the likely amenity impacts such as noise, disturbance and emissions arising from the existing use. In turn, the surrounding uses may also constrain the industrial use of the site for example in terms of hours of operation, noise and deliveries.
- The existing site is very low density whilst surrounding built development is considerably higher density. Therefore the site offers a unique opportunity to provide additional homes (including much needed affordable housing units) whilst also retaining business use at the site.
- The proposed commercial (office) space (146 sqm) is a similar quantum than the existing built floorspace (circa 150 sqm). This proposed increase in the level of employment floorspace is supported by **Policy E2 (c)**. The proposed development is also expected to generate around 11-14 jobs (full-time equivalent) compared with the existing site which generates approximately 5 jobs FTE.
- The proposed development provides a ‘higher intensity’ development including housing and affordable housing which are priority uses in Camden, as supported by **Policy E (h)**.
- A review of alternative facilities available to the local community (similar to the existing uses at the site) indicates that local residents are able to access a wide range of similar services at other locations within the local area or via ‘mobile’ car repair and car washing services. In this way the existing uses at the site are not necessarily dependent upon close proximity to their client base. At the same time, evidence has been found that overall demand for car repairs in the UK has fallen over recent years.
- Given the range of alternative local services identified, together with the possible future falls in demand for car repair, it is considered that local residents will continue to have good access to alternative services and the loss of the car wash facility at the site is not expected to harm Camden’s local economy.
- London Borough of Camden’s **Employment Land Study 2014** highlights the importance of maintaining industrial land in the Borough due to the constrained availability of such sites. It also identifies Kentish Town as an emerging hub providing workspace for start-up, micro and small business. The Study suggests that the Council’s protection of industrial sites should focus on

properties that are purpose built and/or renewable and where there are clusters of employment uses. As the existing site is an isolated industrial site providing poor quality accommodation, it is considered that redevelopment and intensification of this site for office and residential is appropriate and supported by the findings of this Study.

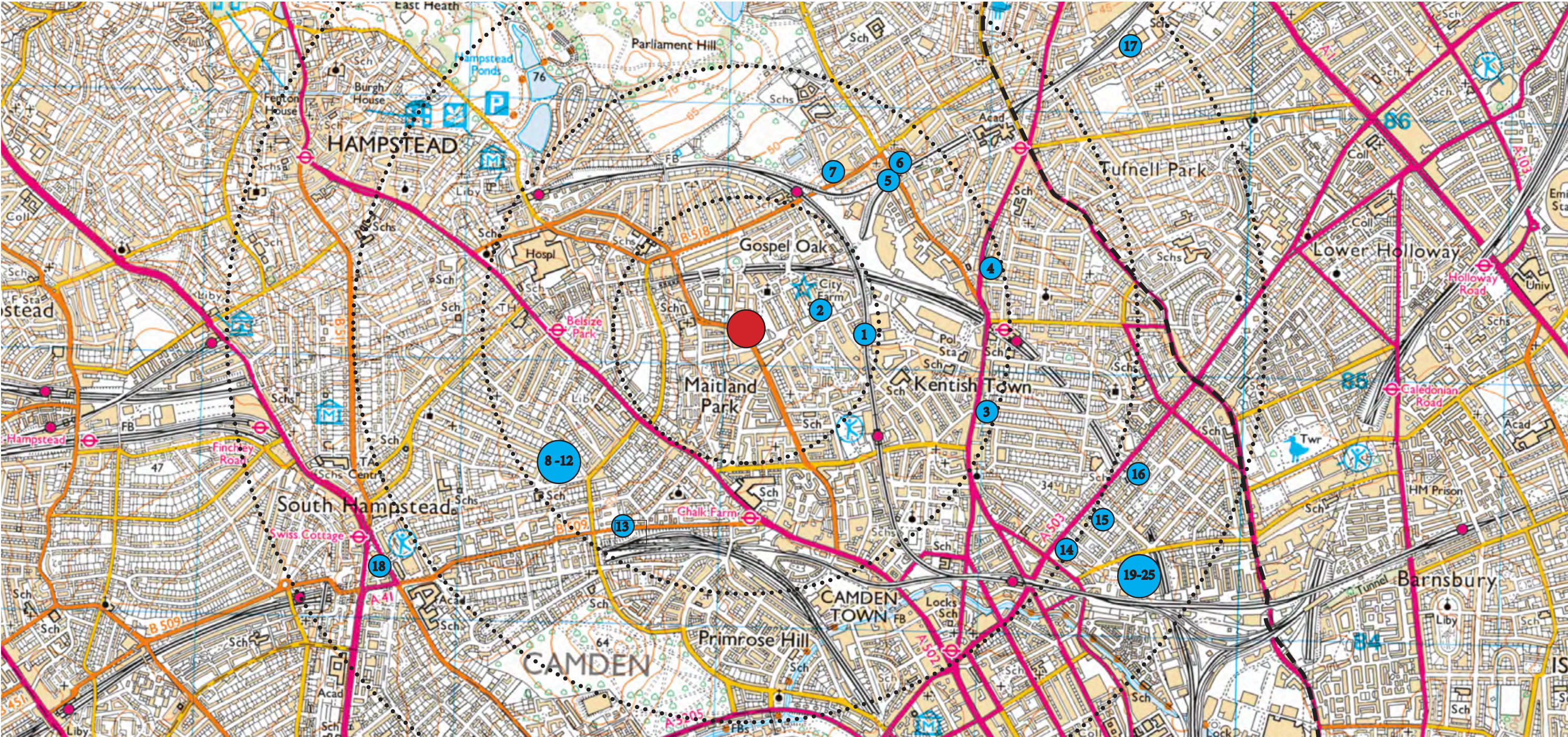
- 4.5 When considering the proposed redevelopment of the site at 160 Malden Road there is a clear need to take a balanced approach which is sensitive to the direction and changing shape of the affected businesses, also taking account of the potential benefits that redevelopment of the site would bring to the local community, local environment and other business sectors.
- 4.6 In summary the existing site is currently very low density and consists of poor quality buildings. Research shows that local residents will continue to have good access to similar, alternative services without the existing uses at this site. By contrast the proposed development will bring new, purpose-built business space to the site, suitable for Camden's key growth sectors such as professional and business administration and creative industries sectors, while also delivering new housing including affordable housing which are key priorities in Camden. Any redevelopment would also bring considerable improvements to the quality of the site's environment and an increase in job opportunities, with subsequent benefits to the local community.

Appendix A

Plan 1: Location of Hand Car Washes within 2km of 160 Malden Road




Plan 2: Location of Car Repair/MOT Centres within 2km of 160 Malden Road

Plan 2: Location of Car Repair/MOT Centres within 2km of 160 Malden Road

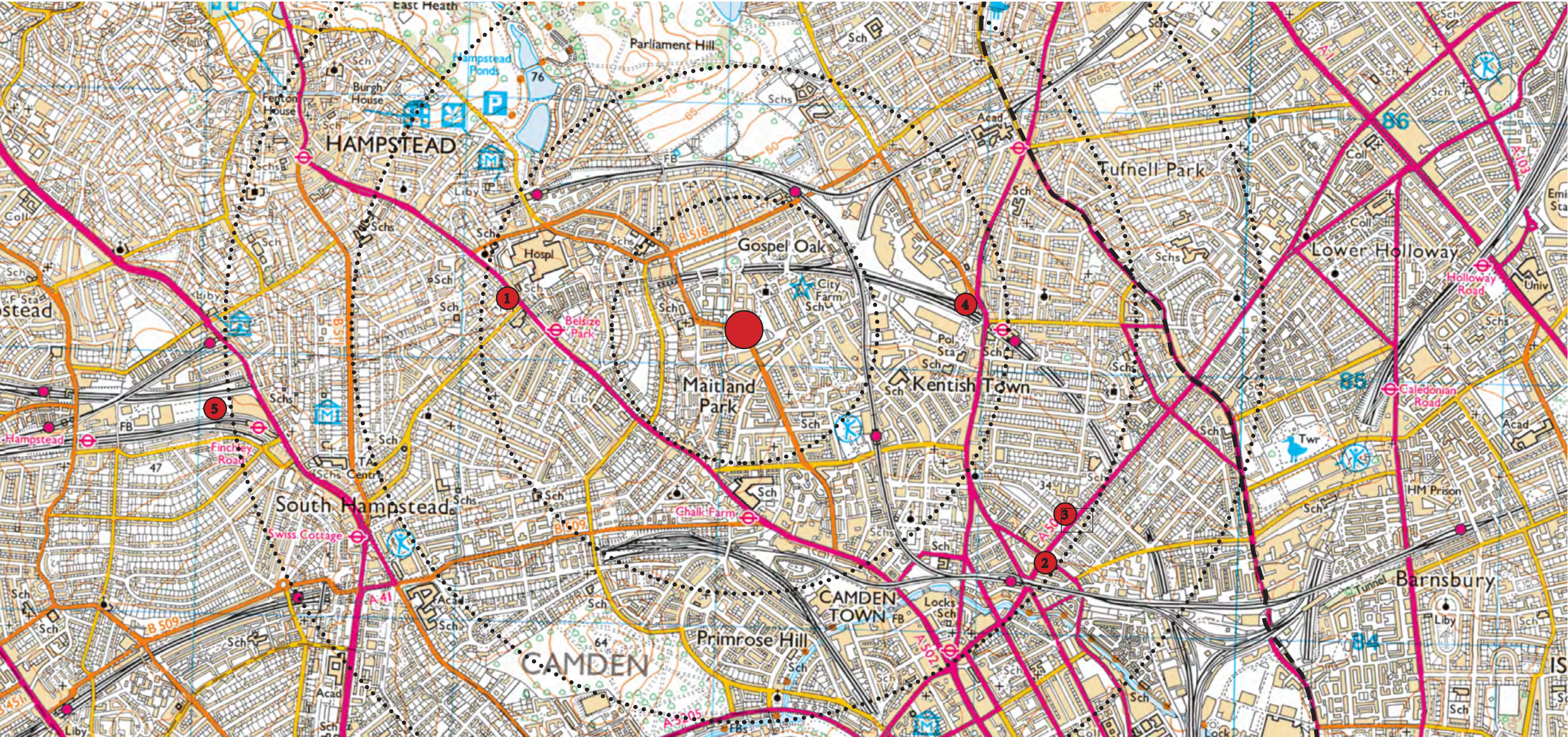


Number	Name	Address	Driving distance from site (minutes)	Driving distance from site (km)
1	The Car Surgery	2-4 Arctic Street	5	1.4
2	West Hampstead Motors	155-161 Grafton Road	5	1.4
3	Cresta Motors	3 Patshill Road	7	1.6
4	M&A Coachworks	52 Fortess Grove	7	2
5	M&A Coachworks	135 Highgate Road	4	1.6
6	Dar Cars	132-134 Highgate Road	4	1.6
7	Kwik Fit	6 Lissenden Gardens	3	1.6
8-12	Belsize Motors Little & Pace Motors Hampstead Motor Services Autotech Hampstead Porschewax Engineering	Lambelle Place	4	1.6




Number	Name	Address	Driving distance from site (minutes)	Driving distance from site (km)
13	Modern Motors	95 Adelaide Road	5	1.6
14	Buchanan Motors	128A Camden Road	8	1.9
15	J&J Autos	17 Camden Mews	9	2.5
16	Lucky Motors	61 Camden Mews	8	2.5
17	London TVR	Bush Industrial Estate	8	2.5
18	Kar Dok	97 Avenue Road	9	2.7
19-25	D&J Motors AW Motors Mikes Mechanics German Car Centre Transauto Garage BMW Auto Services Mikes Coachworks	120-136 Camley Street	11	3.7

-  160 Malden Road (the site)
-  LB Camden Boundary
-  500m radius lines from site

Plan 1: Location of Hand Car Washes within 2km of 160 Malden Road



Number	Name	Address	Driving distance from site (minutes)	Driving distance from site (km)
1	BP Car Wash	215 Haverstock Hill	4	1.4
2	Car Wash Valeting Centre	128A Camden Road	8	1.9
3	Car Carers	Rochester Square	8	1.9
4	Car Wash and Valeting Centre	869 Kentish Town Road	8	2
5	Imo Car Wash	02 Centre	12	3.2

-  160 Malden Road (the site)
-  LB Camden Boundary
-  500m radius lines from site

Appendix B

Site Photos

Photo 1: View of existing site from Malden Road looking north-west (with Wellesley Road Care Home immediately adjacent to the rear)



Photo 2: View of northern boundary of site adjoining Wellesley Road Care Home



Photo 3: View of site looking west along Malden Road



Photo 4: View of site looking east along Malden Road



Appendix C

Employment Viability Report, prepared by Strettons
1 August 2023.

Employment Viability Report

**160 Malden Road
London
NW5 4AS**

Grade Planning

01 August 2023

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1 INSTRUCTIONS & TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT

1.1 Strettons Ref	0010484
1.2 Property Address	160 Malden Road, London, NW5 4AS
1.3 The Property	Existing MOT repair garage and hand car wash.
1.4 Date of Report	01 August 2023
1.5 Client	Grade Planning
1.6 Addressee	Ben Rogers
1.7 Instructions & Purpose of Report	<p>Confirmed in our email on 11 July 2023 with our terms and conditions of engagement attached.</p> <p>We have been instructed to provide an Employment Viability Report to assist with the ongoing planning application at the above property. We understand that the application at the above site is for 'Erection of 4 storey building to provide 14 self-contained flats at ground, first, second and third floor levels and office use at ground floor level, following demolition of existing MOT repair garage and hand car wash'.</p> <p>In providing this advice, we assess the level of demand for the proposed office accommodation included as part of this application.</p>
1.8 Sources of Information	We have relied on the information provided to us by the client as detailed within the report and also from third parties. Where we have undertaken checks on some of this information as stated within the report. We recommend that you undertake your own checks to confirm the information provided by you to us is correct before it is relied upon. We accept no responsibility for errors or omissions with the information or documents provided.
1.9 Liability Cap	As stated in our terms of engagement
1.10 Conflicts of Interest	We confirm that no conflict of interest arises in Strettons or the Surveyor providing this Report.
1.11 Confidentiality & Disclosure of Report	This is a confidential Report for use only by the addressee or the addressee's professional advisers and only for the purpose mentioned in our instructions. It may not be published or disclosed to any third party without our prior written permission as to the form and context in which it may appear; otherwise, we accept no responsibility to third parties.

2 LOCATION

2.1 LOCATION & SITUATION

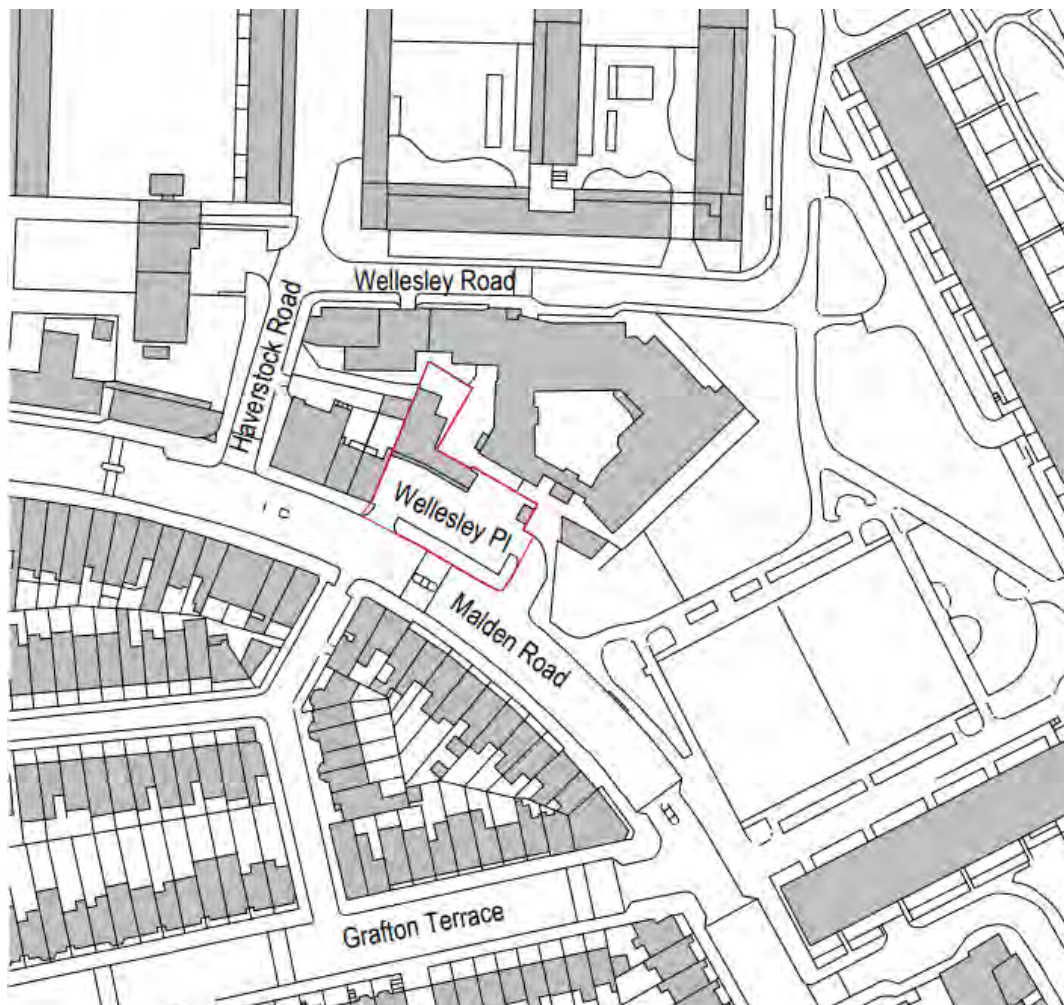
We do not go into detail on the location of the property as this is well known to yourselves and will be covered in detail within other planning documents. We only include an overview to provide context to our report.

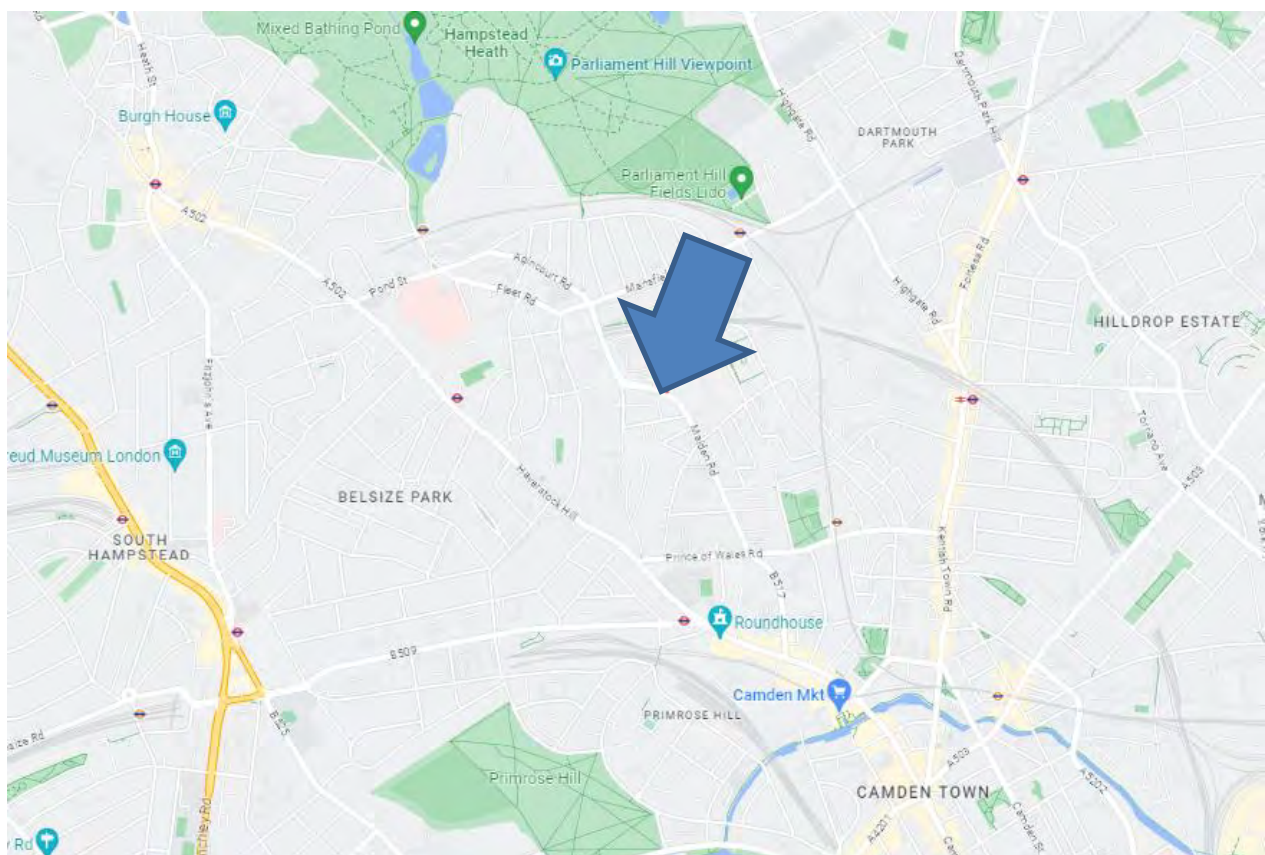
The site is located at the north side of Malden Road, nearby to Belsize Park within the London Borough of Camden. The direct locality of the subject site is predominantly residential, with a retail parade located on Malden Road, providing a number of shops as well as a Public House being located adjacent to the site. The residential provision in the area is a mixture of what appears to be period terrace housing alongside more modern ex local authority blocks of flats.

The site is well served by public transport with Belsize Park, Gospel Oak, Kentish Town and Chalk Farm stations all located within c.0.5 miles.

2.2 LOCATION MAPS/PLANS

The street map, site plan and aerial photograph below show the location of the Property; they are not to scale and for identification purposes only.





3 THE PROPOSALS

3.1 CURRENT SITE

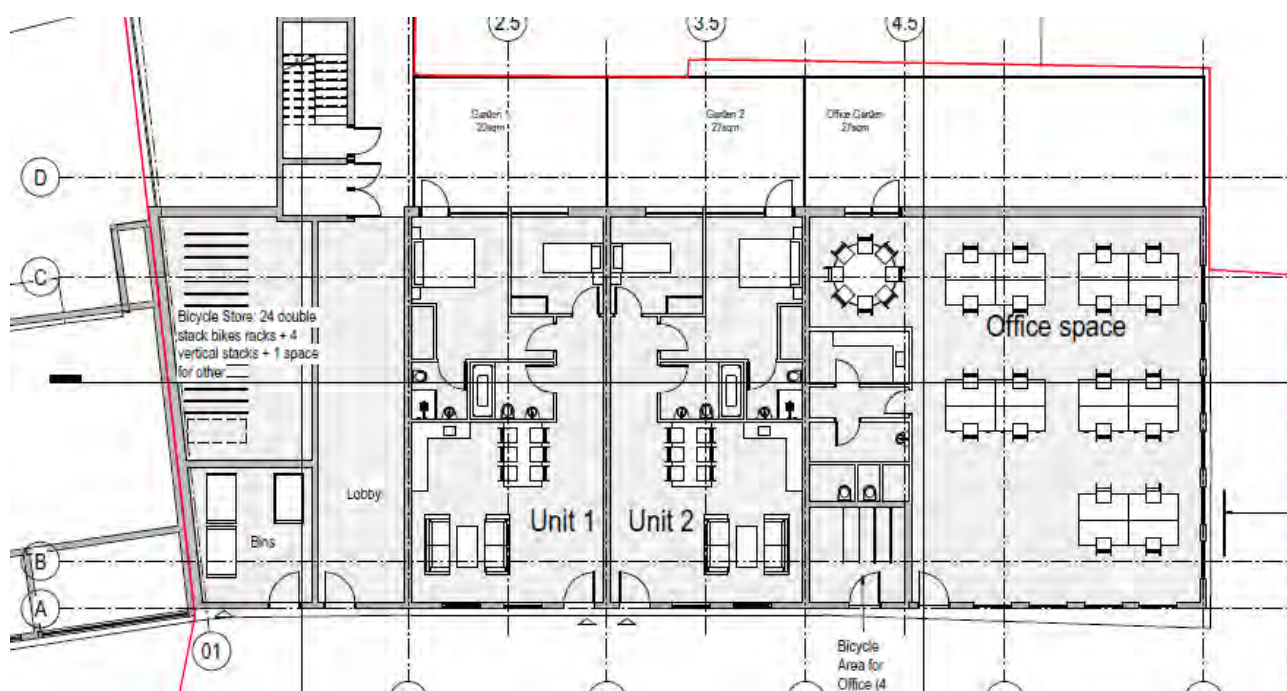
The current use of the site is an MOT repair garage and hand car wash. The MOT repair garage is located at the northwest side of the site, with the hand car wash located at the east side. There is a forecourt at the southern side which provides car parking. Access to the site is from both the western and eastern sides.

3.2 PROPOSALS

The client has provided us with a breakdown of the proposed accommodation for the scheme as included within the planning application. We understand that the proposals will include 14 private tenure residential units as well as 150 sq m / 1,615 sq ft of commercial office space. We include a full breakdown of the accommodation by floor level below.

Floor Level	Accommodation
Ground Floor	2 x 2-bedroom apartments, 150 sq m commercial space
First Floor	2 x 3-bedroom apartments, 2 x 1-bedroom apartments
Second Floor	2 x 3-bedroom apartments, 2 x 1-bedroom apartments
Third Floor	4 x 2-bedroom apartments

3.3 FLOOR PLANS



As shown above, the floor plate of the office space is open plan in nature with a high degree of flexibility for many uses. The rear garden space is also an attractive aspect for any occupier. The layout of the space lends itself to a wide variety of potential uses. The open plan entrance would be well suited to either office accommodation or office based medical uses as it would allow for a small entrance area, with the rear areas giving greater privacy from street level and this area would be well suited to desk based activity.

The strong return frontage onto Malden Road would appeal to many office occupiers who require active frontage and/or an easily navigable entrance for visitors as well as a welcoming area as a reception for greeting clients and providing a relaxing end of journey experience for staff as they arrive.

Unlike the majority of the available space in the area, the open plan flexible floor plate accessed directly from street level offers a unique opportunity for occupiers. The majority of the available space is either part of more fragmented conversion of period warehousing / industrial space or part of more traditional multi let offices with weaker access through shared cores, that would not necessarily suit occupiers on this small scale.

The bicycle store is located in an ideal place in relation to the rest of the office floor plate as it does not mask the majority of the accommodation. The return frontage at the southern and eastern sides would allow for a large amount of natural light which is crucial for office occupiers.

The W/Cs being located at the rear of the bicycle store also minimises the fragmentation of the space and efficiently improves the open plan nature of the space.

3.4 ELEVATIONS

The below, shows the elevation drawings for the proposed scheme. The commercial unit is highlighted. The glazed frontage gives good natural light to the space at both the southern and eastern sides as well as making the commercial unit prominent, which would appeal to occupiers, giving them greater brand visibility.



3.5 OFFICE FIT OUT

We understand that the office space at the ground floor level will be provided to Cat A spec. Cat A Specification means the basic finishing of an interior space which includes the installation of a building's mechanical and electrical services; finished internal walls; reception areas and lift lobbies.

4 ECONOMIC UPDATE AND COMMERCIAL MARKETS

4.1 ECONOMIC UPDATE

On Thursday 22 June 2023, to further combat inflation the Bank of England raised its interest rate (Bank Rate) by 0.50 percentage points to 5.0%, which is the highest it's been in 15 years and the 13th rate rise in a row. Inflation measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) remained at the April 8.7% rate in May and was at levels not seen in over 40 years, whilst the inflation target is 2%. Although this fell to 7.9% in June. Inflation is proving to be a difficult to reduce and the falls have been lower than expected, with core inflation (excludes food and energy) rising in recent times. This has resulted in higher borrowing costs for many people and businesses as interest rates have risen from 0.1% in December 2021 and further rises are predicted. Low and stable inflation is important for a healthy economy and the Bank of England expects inflation to fall quickly from the middle of the year. The increase will affect loan and mortgage payments but may provide higher returns for savings accounts. The expectation is for a significant decrease in inflation this year. The next interest rate decision will be made on August 3, 2023.

According to the CBI's latest Economic Forecast, 12 June 2023, the economy looks to have fared better than expected in first half of 2023 and is set to steer clear of a recession. The CBI is forecasting 0.4% growth in GDP over 2023, picking up to 1.8% in 2024, upgraded from -0.4% and 1.6% respectively. Economists and Mr Sunak, whilst on his recent visit to Washington, warned that they are prepared to risk a recession to curb inflation, resulting in further borrowing costs for mortgages and loans. Rishi Sunak has been cautioned about the potential economic instability, with critics accusing him and Chancellor Jeremy Hunt of downplaying the impact on households already struggling with the cost-of-living crisis. Financial markets anticipate that the Bank of England will raise its key base rate to as high as 5.5% by the end of the year. Lenders such as Virgin Money and Nationwide have already increased mortgage rates, and experts are advising borrowers to prepare for fixed-rate deals above 5%. There are concerns that rising interest rates, inflation, and borrowing costs could lead to stagflation, a situation characterized by inadequate economic growth and increased hardship for the poor.

The summary of the latest RICS 'UK Valuation Dashboard' for June 2023, states "UK economy avoids recession for now, but headwinds remain significant". 'The UK economy posted a slender 0.1% expansion during Q1, leaving total output still 0.5% below its pre-Covid level. Although the latest figures suggest momentum remains both subdued and fragile, the UK has so far defied concerns that intense inflationary pressures and a tighter lending climate could pull the economy into outright recession. That said, with the Monetary Policy Committee voting to increase interest rates for a twelfth meeting in succession during May (lifting Bank rate to 4.5%), higher borrowing costs will remain a significant near-term headwind. As for inflation, although the pace of consumer price growth has now peaked, the past few months have seen a smaller than expected easing in the headline CPI rate. Moreover, there was a surprise pick-up in services inflation from 6.6% to 6.9% during April. This is of particular importance as the MPC looks closely at services inflation to gauge the strength of domestically generated price pressures. As such, this increases the likelihood that the MPC will feel compelled to raise interest rates again at their next meeting, albeit another round of labour market and inflation data will be available to assess before then.

4.2 COMMERCIAL MARKETS

The summary of the latest RICS 'UK Valuation Dashboard' for June 2023, states the following for the commercial property investment market.

"Despite picking up slightly in Q1, investment activity across the UK commercial property market remains subdued when viewed in a longer-term context. Indeed, CoStar figures show the twelve-month rolling sum of volumes stands at just over £33bn, comfortably below the average of £40bn seen since 2009. Amidst this weaker backdrop, yields have continued to edge higher in recent months, rising to 6.1% in terms of the all-sector average. That said, following the sharp upwards adjustment in the wake of the 'mini-budget' last year, the rise in property yields over the first quarter of 2023 has come on a much shallower trajectory. Alongside this, the latest CBRE data shows headline capital values recovered marginally in each of the past two months, albeit this comes after a cumulative 20% fall between July 2022 and February 2023. Within this, the downward trend in values has abated for both retail and industrial assets in recent months, although office values continue to slip according to the latest data".

The summary of the latest RICS 'UK Commercial Property Monitor for Q1 2023, states "Headline occupier demand metric stabilises as the weaker trend in investor activity eases."

- Industrial capital value expectations recover slightly, with occupier fundamentals still solid
- Secondary offices and retail continue to struggle but prime offices post firmer expectations
- Majority of respondents still view the market to be in a downturn although a rising share now feel conditions are stabilising (or beginning to improve) relative to last quarter

4.3 LOCAL MARKET TRENDS

4.3.1 Overview

We have taken the below research from CoStar which relates to the Northern Fringe office market.

London's Northern Fringe contains around 20 million SF of office space, mostly in trendy areas like Shoreditch, Angel, Hoxton and Camden Town, where office demand is driven by the media, tech and creative industries. The area has risen to prominence over the past decade as firms have spread out beyond central London in search of cheaper space in popular residential locations with a vibrant social scene. Developers have responded accordingly, with a glut new supply delivering over the past few years.

Leasing activity remained relatively busy during the pandemic, although mainly concentrated at the smaller, sub-5,000-SF end of the market. Areas like Hoxton, Dalston and Shoreditch have been busiest, although a big deal occurred in Camden Town in the second half of 2022 when business services firm Moo.com signed for 20,000 SF. The public sector is helping to drive demand elsewhere.

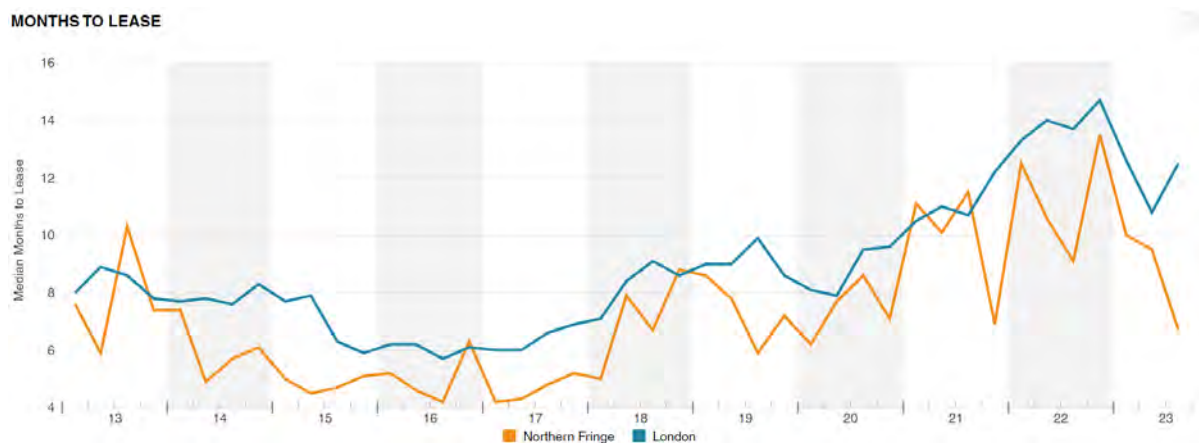
Annual rent growth has plateaued in recent quarters in tandem with a steady rebound in demand and a stabilising vacancy rate, after having turned mildly negative during the pandemic. Average rents could soften again in the near term to battle any vacancy pressures, but popular areas like Camden Town and Hoxton are likely to continue their recent outperformance.

We have reviewed the current CoStar data which shows that in the northern fringe, the average 'months to lease' in the submarket is outperforming London as a whole. This data suggests that at present the submarket is currently showing a c.7-month void period, way ahead of wider London at c.13 months.

4.3.2 Leasing

Recent leasing has been concentrated in the smaller, sub-5,000-SF end of the market, which caters more to start-ups and growing firms. The submarket has become a natural home for small tech and creative firms over the past decade, particularly in trendy areas like Dalston, Hoxton, Shoreditch and Camden Town. Hoxton and Camden Town have been a hive of activity in recent quarters.

The public sector is helping to support demand in areas outside the tech hotspots. The Department for Work & Pensions has signed several deals over the past couple of years, including a 25,000-SF letting at 2 Hillman Street, Hackney Council's offices. The department also leased 14,000 SF at Cally Yard on Caledonian Road and 9,000 SF at 1 Hermes Street.



The current vacancy rates in the submarket are shown below. Here, a vacancy rate of 6.4% is shown which is below the London average meaning that demand / supply in the area is at a healthier equilibrium than the rest of London.



Only a modest increase has been felt over the last year 6 months, which is a strong position considering the strong economic uncertainty that has been felt nationally.

5 LOCAL MARKET SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Availability

In order to assess the likely demand for the proposed space, we first look at the current availability within the direct locality for similar space. We have filtered our search down to similarly sized space of say 1,000 sq ft to 2,000 sq ft, and we have also prioritised similarly open plan floor plates.

We include below the current availability within the Belsize Park area.

Property Address	Building NIA (sq ft)	Total Available Space (sq ft)	Year Built	Year Renovated	Smallest Available Space (sq ft)	Total Vacant Space (sq ft)	Comment
32-40 Gordon House Rd	46,044	14,659	1977		493	6,268	Newly refurbished, creative media style office spaces available on flexible lease terms direct from the landlord.
53-79 Highgate Rd	211,182	34,127	1902	2000	570	34,127	Large office block acquired in 2022. Newly refurbished Victorian Warehouse, open plan floor plates with large structural columns.
Perren St	26,744	64,83	1905		662	6,483	Warehouse conversion. Newly refurbished Victorian Warehouse, open plan floor plates with large structural columns.
4-7 Agincourt Rd	8,067	26,33	2000		585	2,035	Traditional purpose brick built office accommodation. Similar scale in terms of total vacant space. Ground floor space available.
27 Greenwood Pl	39,821	10,199	1957	2003	1496	10,199	Dated office traditional office accommodation. Multi let office space. Availability from 1st to 3rd floors. The property is of steel frame construction arranged over a basement, ground and three upper floors with office space throughout.
233-233A Kentish Town Rd	1,884	1,884	1975		942	1,844	Office space above retail unit on parade. Would not appeal to the same market.
293-299 Kentish Town Rd	14,919	7,277	1980		219	7,277	Office space above retail unit on parade. Would not appeal to the same market.
301-305 Kentish Town Rd	13,554	7,599	1987		413	7599	Office space above retail unit on parade. Would not appeal to the same market.

We include above the current properties to let where there is a 'smallest available space' of between 1,000 and 2,000 sq ft, which is therefore a similar scale to the proposed space within this application. Our initial findings from this research shows that there is currently no space to let of a similar nature to the proposed scheme in terms of being newbuild space that is self-contained in nature and not within a multi let block. The proposal is unique to this small submarket in that it offers a new build and self-contained accommodation, which fronts onto a road with good access as well as good public transport links.

There is availability on Kentish Town Road, however these offices all are located above ground floor retail, and this would not appeal to occupiers other than those in the traditional desk-based office use. The lack of brand visibility offered in occupying these spaces would reduce the demand from occupiers. The availability at Gordon House Road, Highgate Road and Greenwood Place are all offering space within large scale multi let blocks that is again more suitable to traditional office occupiers which requires limited visibility at street level. These types of spaces do not appeal to those requiring either creative space or other uses such as medical where visitors to the space are much more frequent.

Agincourt Road is the most similar to the proposal due to it's ground floor frontage onto Agincourt Road and Mansfield Road. Further to the above, we are also aware of space to let at 84-87 Agincourt Road, which is smaller at 410 sq ft, and is on the corner of Agincourt Road and Mansfield Road.

5.2 Recent Lettings

To fully demonstrate the demand for the space as also look at recent lettings of office space in the same area over the last 10 months. These are included below.

Sign Date	Address	Floor	On The Market	Total SF Leased	Term	Tenant
29/05/2023	3 Bridge Approach	GRND,1	4 months	1,195		
12/05/2023	Perren St	2nd	7 months	662	2 yrs	Consara Construction
03/05/2023	Berkley Grove	1st	5 months	1,230	5 yrs	
04/04/2023	70 Chalk Farm Rd	GRND	42 months	1,300	5 yrs	
08/03/2023	27 Greenwood Pl	3rd	44 months	1,658	5 yrs	James Ellis Studios
12/02/2023	32-34 Gordon House	GRND	56 months	2,252		
05/02/2023	32-34 Gordon House	1st	13 months	290		
10/01/2023	17-27 Ferdinand St	GRND,MEZZ	2 months	892	5 yrs	Arterton
16/12/2022	3 Bridge Approach	GRND,1	13 months	2,453	7 yrs	
01/12/2022	Perren St	GRND	27 months	1,825		
24/11/2022	32-34 Gordon House	1st	7 months	203	3 yrs	Wilkinson King Architects
17/10/2022	53-79 Highgate	GRND	Unknown	2,698	5 yrs	Nest Performance
06/10/2022	32-40 Gordon House Rd	1st	Unknown	493		Makosch Ltd
01/09/2022	84 Haverstock HI	BSMT,MEZZ,GRND	16 months	725	9 yrs	

As can be seen there have been many lettings in the last 10 months, which suggests there is still a demand for office space in the local area. The lettings have been to a wide range of different occupiers such as construction companies, e-commerce as well as retailers.

The length of time on the market is also shown above, which typically shows between 4-13 months with a number showing much higher figures. We suspect that with the longer voids, works had been carried out as these void periods look higher than expected. We anticipate that a letting of the proposed space could take up to 6 months from completion of the works which is reasonable for any market.

5.3 Conclusions

We expect that due to the location, and layout & size of the accommodation, the proposed office space would likely appeal to many small-scale businesses in the locality such as small design-based companies such as architecture firms, design firms as well as other small-scale occupiers. We also consider that there would be a good level of demand from office based medical occupiers such as small dental practices & surgeries that are driven by the demand from residents in the local area.

Three key factors significantly impact demand for office space – location, levels of daylight, and specification. The new build nature of the space with a Cat A finish will appeal to many occupiers of an office of this scale who will not be required to make many fit out improvements prior to occupation. From our research, there is a shortage of new build space in the direct locality, particularly for this size and therefore this offers a unique opportunity.

As we have discussed, the location of the office is not within a necessarily established office market, however it will appeal to occupiers who need to be in the area, such as medical occupiers, or office occupiers who are offering walk to work space.

The strong active return frontage would appeal to these types of occupiers as this increase's visibility, which would not be achieved through multi let accommodation. This is critical for the occupiers mentioned above who rely largely on customers entering the property. Further to this, the ground floor street access would also be advantageous. The self-contained and small-scale nature of the property is desirable to these industries. This also improves the natural light into the space.

In summary, we would expect that a void period from completion of construction to a letting of the commercial space would be around 6 months and there would be a good level of demand from a number of small-scale businesses from a wide range of different industries.

Commercial

Commercial Agency
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Lease Advisory
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Insolvency & Receivership
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Insurance

Residential

Residential Agency
Residential Valuation
Lettings Management
Block Management
Leasehold Reform
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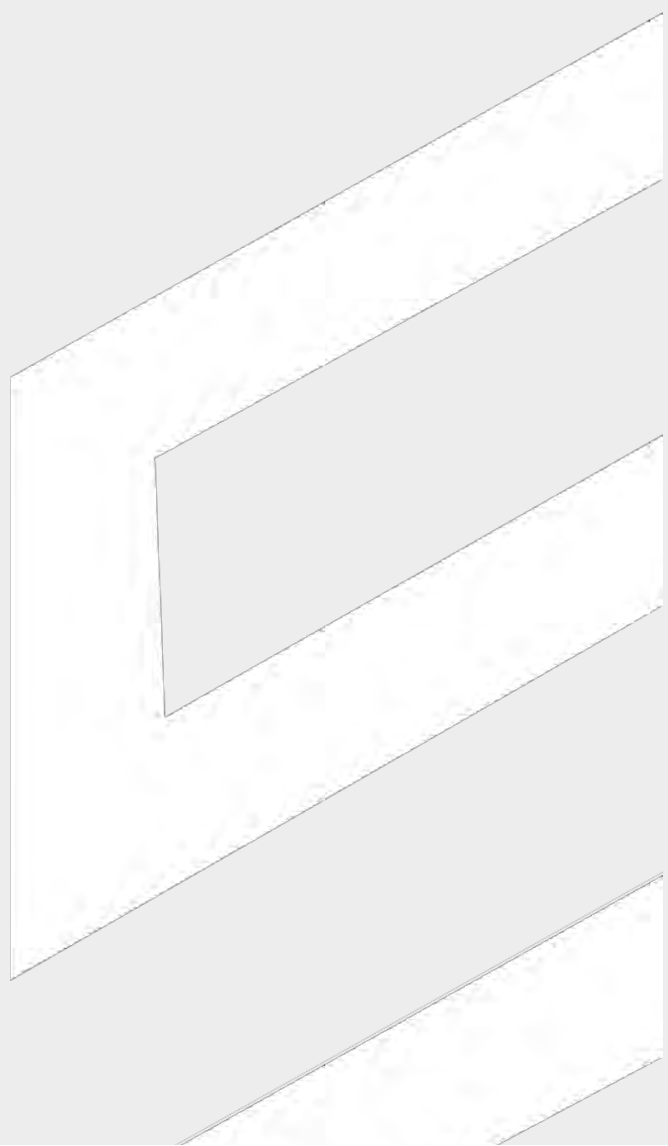
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