

## **Statement Regarding the Loss of Office Space at 11-13 Camden High Street, London, NW1 7JE**

This statement has been produced to address the requirement for marketing evidence or a report concerning the loss of office space at 11-13 Camden High Street, London, NW1 7JE, as part of the planning application process.

### **Background:**

The rear storage unit at 11-13 Camden High Street has always functioned as storage since its creation and has never been utilized as a commercial office space. At one point, a group expressed interest in leasing the unit for office use, prompting an application for temporary planning permission to convert the space to business offices (formerly Class B1). However, this interest subsided when it became clear that the unit would require significant work and adaptation to be viable as an office, which was not financially feasible.

### **Clarification on the Appeal Report:**

It is important to clarify that the previous appeal report contains inaccuracies regarding the usage of the unit and the perceived loss of office space. Contrary to the report's assertion, no internal modifications were made to facilitate office use, and the space was never actually used as an office. The unit has consistently served as a storage area, and no viable office activity ever took place. As such, the notion of a "loss" of office space is incorrect, as the unit was never utilized as office space.

### **Changes in Use Class Designation:**

Since the previous application, significant changes have been made to the planning use class system in England. The former B1 use class, which covered offices and light industrial uses, has now been incorporated into Class E (Commercial, Business, and Service). Under Class E, there is a flexible use category that allows for various commercial activities, including offices, without the need for separate planning permission.

This reclassification means that the space in question is no longer required to be designated solely as office space. The flexibility provided by Class E allows for a variety of potential uses without the necessity of maintaining it as an office. Therefore, it is not possible to consider this a "loss" of office space under the current regulations, as the unit is not restricted to that specific use.

## **Reasons for Shortfall vs. Expectations:**

There are several key reasons why the unit has consistently fallen short of expectations for office use:

- **No Direct Access from the Main Road:** The unit is accessed via a side alleyway, rather than directly from Camden High Street. This lack of visibility and accessibility from the main road makes it less attractive to businesses that rely on foot traffic or easy client access.
- **Lack of Ventilation and Natural Light:** The unit lacks proper ventilation and has limited natural light, with no windows in the basement and only minimal roof lanterns on the ground floor. These conditions do not meet the standards typically expected for a modern, comfortable office environment.
- **Limited Space and Poor Layout:** The internal layout of the unit, combined with its relatively small size, limits its functionality as a workspace. The space is not conducive to creating a productive office environment without substantial and costly renovations.

Given these factors, the unit's potential as a business premises has always been severely limited. The financial implications of making the necessary adaptations were not justifiable given the unit's constraints, leading to the decision to continue using the space as storage, as it has always been.

## **Policy Considerations:**

Camden's Core Strategy (CS) Policy CS8 and Development Policies (DP) Policy DP13 emphasize the importance of safeguarding employment sites that meet the needs of modern industry. However, the unit in question does not meet these needs and has never functioned as viable office space. Its continued classification as a business premises would not contribute to the local supply of functional office space.

The proposal to convert the unit to residential use represents a more practical and beneficial use of the space, ensuring that it serves a productive purpose rather than remaining underutilized.

## **Conclusion:**

In light of the unit's historical use, the lack of viable interest due to significant adaptation costs, the inherent limitations of the space, and the recent changes to the use class system, we submit this statement as an alternative to traditional marketing evidence. We also wish to clarify that the unit has never contributed to the available office space, and its conversion to residential use would not result in a loss of office premises.

We trust this statement will be sufficient to satisfy the validation requirements and enable the planning application to proceed.