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Heritage Statement



61, 63, 65 Charlotte Street, Camden

On behalf of Charlotte Investment Holding Ltd.

December 2012

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Heritage Collective LLP on behalf of Charlotte Investment Holding Ltd., the owner of Nos 61, 63 and 65 Charlotte Street, London Borough of Camden.
- 1.2 Nos 61, 63 and 65 (the site) are located within the Charlotte Street Conservation Area (a designated heritage asset). The properties are non-designated heritage assets identified as buildings of merit within the Charlotte Street Conservation Area Appraisal. The properties were built towards the end of the 18th century (c.1790) and have been subject to change of use and considerable internal alteration and extension.
- 1.3 At present, No.61 is a much altered and vacant property in a gradually declining state of repair. No.63 comprises a derelict and vacant basement, commercial use at ground floor and offices above. No.65 comprises a basement in a poor state of repair (currently used for storage and office space). At ground floor, No.65 is in commercial use whilst the upper floors are in residential use (subdivided into flats). The upper floors of no. 65 do not form part of the proposals.

Purpose of this Statement

- 1.4 The site is subject to proposals for alteration and extension that require conservation area consent and planning permission. This statement accompanies those applications and describes the heritage values and significance of the heritage assets affected in accordance with the NPPF (2012).
- 1.5 The purpose of this statement is to demonstrate that the proposals:
- i Are informed and appropriate;
 - ii Will not result in harm or loss of significance of the heritage assets; and,
 - iii Comply with national and local policy.

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Methodology

- 1.6 The statement follows internal and external observations of the buildings, their setting and context undertaken in August and October 2012 by the author of this statement. Observations on the form, appearance, originality and extent of alteration were made and have informed the value based judgements on the significance set out within this statement.
- 1.7 Documentary research has been undertaken to inform this assessment. A full list of sources is included at the back of this assessment.

The proposals

- 1.8 It is proposed to undertake internal alterations at basement to 3rd floor to provide a mixture of retail (at ground floor and basement) and residential. The proposals introduce a positive change to the external appearance of the buildings and their setting.
- 1.9 Proposals are detailed in drawings provided within the Design Concept document prepared by Hugh Cullum Architects and ARA which are to be submitted with the application.
- 1.10 The effects of the proposals on the heritage values and significance of the heritage assets is described and considered against Part 12 of the Framework, discussed further on in this statement. The proposal drawings are not reproduced here but should be referred to when reading this statement.
- 1.11 Principally, the effects of the proposals are considered to relate to the conservation area (the designated heritage asset) within which the site is located and is a positive contributor. Proposals are considered to have a negligible effect on the significance of the properties themselves, as non-designated heritage assets.

2.0 HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT

- 2.1 Provided below is a summary of the history and development of Nos 61, 63 and 65 Charlotte Street and the area within which the site is located. It should be read in conjunction with the historic map regression provided at Appendix 2 and the historic plans at Appendix 3. Consideration should also be given to the survey drawings provided with the application which show the current layout of the properties.

Charlotte Street

- 2.2 Charlotte Street was developed from the 1760s, with the west side of the street started first. During the 18th century the street was inhabited by numerous artists, including several members of the Royal Academy. Rooms were easily altered for the artists needs, and painters built on rooms for studios. In the 19th century leases fell in, and numerous buildings were refaced.
- 2.3 Pevsner notes that the street has many Georgian survivals.

The Site

- 2.4 Charlotte Street was formerly in the Parish of St Pancras and features in the Survey of London.

61 Charlotte Street

- 2.5 According to the Survey of London, 61 Charlotte Street has the 'original 18th-century brickwork in the upper storeys'.
- 2.6 Horwood's map of London 1792-99 (Appendix 2) is the first detailed map that shows the building, numbering it 73. Tallis's London street views first published in 1838 show the building as four storeys high, and three windows wide (see ARA proposals). Railings are shown on the ground floor level.
- 2.7 The first edition Ordnance Survey map, dated 1870, shows two buildings on the site. The 1894 OS map shows the building as one. An 1892 drainage application includes a part plan of the ground floor or basement, but is very basic. The 1900 Goad fire insurance plan is of more use. The plan shows

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three buildings on the site. The main building is used as a drug store, and to the rear is a two storey building, followed by a larger one storey building with glass roof.

- 2.8 A plan that accompanies a 1914 drainage application shows a new building was erected at the rear of the site. The long rectangular building had a large mixing room, followed by an ointment room. Under the ointment room was a storeroom (now a cinema room).
- 2.9 Two postcards reproduced in the book 'Girling, Bloomsbury and Fitzrovia Through Time', show the front elevation of the building. The first postcard, dated c.1904, only shows part of the elevation whilst the second postcard, dated c.1900, provides more detail. The building has two large glass windows set either side of a central doorway. Another doorway with stone ramp and railing is located at the side of the windows. The property at this time was used by Rouse Brothers, who were wholesale manufacturing druggists.
- 2.10 According to the LCC bomb damage map the building suffered bomb damage described as 'general blast damage – not structural' during the Second World War.
- 2.11 The Goad fire insurance plan revised to February 1948 shows the changes and alterations that were made in 1914. The roof of the building at the rear is partly glazed, and is a steel truss roof. The plan notes that the floors of the building are concrete. The use of the building is still given as a drugs store.
- 2.12 The Goad plan revised to May 1957 is similar to the 1948 plan.
- 2.13 In 1968 a drainage application was submitted for a new toilet to be built. The accompanying plans to this application include a part plan and a cross section. The rear elevation of the building is also shown.
- 2.14 A photograph of the front of the building from 1974 shows that the doorway in the middle of the elevation between the two large windows that was shown in the c.1900 postcard, has been removed and replaced with a window. The doorway on the side of the windows, with the railing and stone ramp, is still there. A photograph from 1975 shows that a number of changes have been made to the ground floor front elevation. The building is now occupied, and a

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doorway has been inserted in the middle of the elevation, between two large windows. A modern day photograph of the front of the building, shows further changes. The railing, and stone ramp have been removed, and the central doorway is now within a recess.

- 2.15 In 1976 a drainage application was submitted for staff toilets in the basement of the building. The accompanying plan is basic and shows part of the layout of the basement.

63 Charlotte Street

- 2.16 According to the Survey of London, 63 Charlotte Street has a modern brick façade, but may be older inside. [it should be noted that the Survey of London was produced in 1949].
- 2.17 Horwood's map of London 1792-99 is the first detailed map that shows the building, numbering it 72. Tallis's London street views first published in 1838 show the building as four storeys high, and three windows wide. Railings are shown on the ground floor level, and on the first floor, for what is presumably a small balcony.
- 2.18 The first edition OS map shows two buildings on the site, separated by a small yard. An 1895 drainage application, has a plan that shows what is presumably the ground floor. The plan shows that the building at the front has two rooms, with a corridor at the side. A yard is shown between the front building and the building at the rear. The 1900 Goad plan shows that the building at the rear was one storey, with a glazed roof.
- 2.19 The two postcards from the early 20th century show the front elevation of the building. The building is in use as a shop, known as Schauer and Buchhandlung, who were a foreign book and magazine seller.
- 2.20 The ground floor elevation had a glazed shop front with entrance to the shop to the side. Next to the shop entrance was another door which would have led through to the building/rooms behind the shop. The 1974 photograph of the front elevation has the shop sign M. Rudin, but looks derelict. The photograph appears to show that the ground floor front elevation has actually been removed, but this photograph is of very poor quality and taken from an

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unhelpful angle. The 1975 photograph has the shop as occupied, with a recessed doorway between two shop windows. The door for the entrance to the rooms behind, is still in the same location.

- 2.21 According to the LCC bomb damage the building suffered 'general blast damage – not structural ' during the Second World War.
- 2.22 The 1948 Goad plan is similar to the 1900 plan, as is the 1957 plan, although the use of the rear building is given for the 1957 plan, where it is noted that the building is used for packing.
- 2.23 The OS maps have a similar footprint for the site.

65 Charlotte Street

- 2.24 Like 63 Charlotte Street, the Survey of London describes 65 Charlotte Street as having a modern brick façade, and that it may be older inside.
- 2.25 Horwood's map of London 1792-99 is the first detailed map that shows the building, numbering it 71. Tallis's London street views first published in 1838 show the building as four storeys high, and three windows wide. The ground floor has a glazed shop front, and two entrances, one to the shop, and the other presumably to the dwellings above, and the buildings to the rear.
- 2.26 The first plan of the building is a basic floor plan of presumably the basement floor that accompanies a drainage application. This plan shows that the site is split into three. The 1870 OS map shows that there are two buildings with a yard in the middle. An 1895 drainage plan is similar to the 1860 plan, but only shows the rear part of the property.
- 2.27 The 1900 Goad plan shows that the building at the rear is in use as a silversmith, is one storey high, and has a glazed roof. Between this building and the main building is a yard in which there are two further buildings, one is two storeys, and the other one storey.
- 2.28 The two postcards from the early 20th century show that the building is used as shop. The photograph dated 1974 shows that work is being done to the building, as there is a scaffolding, and a pile of rubble outside the front. The

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building is being used as a greengrocers, and has large glass windows. An entrance to the buildings/rooms behind is through a door to the side.

- 2.29 According to the LCC bomb damage the building suffered 'general blast damage – not structural ' during the Second World War.
- 2.30 The 1948 Goad plan is similar to the one produced in 1900, although the use of the building at the rear is no longer a silversmith, but it used as a joiners. The 1957 Goad plan is similar to the 1948 edition.
- 2.31 In 1979 a drainage application was submitted for the property, for its conversion into a delicatessen. The accompanying plans show the layout of the basement and ground floor. The basement had two rooms, with a store off the courtyard. The building at the rear is labelled as a workshop. The ground floor shows the changes that were to be made to the building. A new shop front was inserted, and a new partition wall and doorway in the interior of the building. A partition was removed from the room at the front.
- 2.32 Three years later, in 1983, another drainage application was submitted. This was for the refurbishment of the three flats. New kitchens, and bathrooms were installed on each of the three floors. The first floor flat was a two bed flat with living room, whilst the second and third floor flat were one beds, with living room. On the third floor, new gas fires were installed.
- 2.33 The OS maps show the footprint of the building as unchanged.
- 2.34 Key dates therefore are:
- 1740s – The site is undeveloped arable land;
 - 1790s – terraced properties are present without rear extensions;
 - 1870 – rear extensions added;
 - 1895 – alterations made to the basement of No.63;
 - 1900 – Goad plan shows single storey rear extensions with roof lights;

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- 1914 – the drainage application for No.61 shows a two storey new buildings to the rear (currently basement cinema with vacant room above at ground floor – see Appendix 3);
- 1968 – No.61 is subject to internal alterations and the addition of a toilette;
- 1970s – shop fronts differ to those currently seen on the properties;
- 1976 – at this time, drainage applications show a very different basement and subsequent alterations, significant in scale, have been carried out since;
- 1979 – No.65 has a similar layout to today at basement and upper floors;
- 1983 – the refurbishment of three residential flats and the provision of new bathrooms within No.65.

3.0 CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

- 3.1 The Charlotte Street Conservation Area was designated in 1974 with extensions in 1981, 1885 and 1999. It is a designated heritage asset, as defined within the NPPF (2012).
- 3.2 The conservation area extends from Tottenham Court Road to the east, Cleveland Street and boundary with Westminster to the west, Chitty Street to the north and Gresse Street to the south. It is within an area of London known as Fitzrovia which was developed speculatively within a short space of time (between 1750-1770) as a wealthy residential area.
- 3.3 The properties within the area predominantly 3-4 storey Georgian townhouses with basements defined at street level by wrought iron railings (although some of these have been filled in, as will the application buildings).
- 3.4 The popularity of the area declined during the late 18th and 19th century and as the wealthy inhabitants began to move out, the artists, craftsmen and immigrant communities moved in introducing a variety of commercial uses and other businesses. Today, it is this eclectic and artistic mix that contributes to the character of the area.
- 3.5 Shop fronts along Charlotte Street vary considerably in quality (evident when considering the existing shop fronts of the Nos 61, 63 and 65 – the shop front of No.61 being in stark contrast to that of the neighbouring 63). The variation in shop fronts, and particularly those of good quality and sympathetic to the character of the area, continue the evolution of the street.

4.0 ASSESSMENT

Charlotte Street Conservation Area – summary of significance

- 4.1 The Charlotte Street Conservation Area is of high architectural and historical value/significance. It is the eclectic mix of independent commercial uses, cafes, residential and offices spaces within the buildings along Charlotte Street which define its character today. Their presence charts the progression of Charlotte Street as it changed from a wealthy residential area to an area that became popular with artists and craftsmen into the 19th century. It is a lively, somewhat bohemian street which retains evidential value.
- 4.2 The later development within the area, built from the late 19th century onwards, is more detailed in nature with many properties from this later period processing Gothic or Italianate detailing.
- 4.3 Alteration to shop fronts and the elevations of the properties fronting Charlotte Street, particularly at the northern end of the street, have had an impact on the conservation area. Although some of the alterations have considerably improved the area, there are a number which have not. Likewise, there are a number of properties currently vacant and in need of repair/refurbishment and reuse (including No.61).
- 4.4 The definition of individual building plots, which are generally quite narrow, along with the historic roof forms and overall uniformity of the Georgian terraces are all of significance and important aspects of the character of the conservation area.

61, 63, 65 Charlotte Street

- 4.5 Nos 61, 63 and 65 Charlotte Street are non-designated heritage assets located within a conservation area and deemed by Camden Council as buildings of 'merit'. Below is a summary of significance based on observations made on site, during both site visits in August and October 2012, and archival research.

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Architectural/aesthetic value

- 4.6 Although varying degrees of alteration (much of it considerable) is evident across all three properties (see site photographs at Appendix 4), the form and elegant proportions of their Georgian facades remain, as do the original roof forms. As such, it is the elevations and roofs that are of primary significance.
- 4.7 Nos 61, 63 and 65 are not the best preserved examples of their type, in architectural terms, within either the Charlotte Street Conservation Area or generally within Camden. This has, quite rightly, been recognised through their lack of designation. However, their overall appearance and quality of their elevations is acknowledged by their inclusion within the conservation area and their identification, within the Charlotte Street Conservation Area Appraisal, as buildings of merit.
- 4.8 At ground floor, the shop fronts to all three properties are unexceptional and not original (in the case of Nos 61 and 65 mid/late 20th century in date), whilst all properties have been extended to the rear in some form. The Survey of London (produced in 1949) notes that both Nos 63 and 65 Charlotte Street have a 'modern brick facade'.
- 4.9 Internally, significant alteration is evident throughout (particularly at ground and basement levels in No.61) and although some mouldings survive these are limited and generally unimpressive. Those other areas within the properties where cornices and skirting boards are found generally comprise later replicas, sympathetic to the character of the properties but of no heritage value.
- 4.10 A significant number of partitions have been added throughout all properties at first floor and above. These have been added incrementally over the years (as the drainage plans and other archival material suggests) to accommodate changing user needs, and although the main staircase survive in their original locations across the three properties, these too of limited value and have been subject to replacement and alteration.
- 4.11 There have been a number of phases of refurbishment within the properties which have resulted in a very mixed character internally which comprises very flat finished walls in a number of locations, lowered or false ceilings (to insert

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spotlights) and fireplaces have either been entirely removed or where poor replicas inserted.

4.12 The site photographs provided at Appendix 4 demonstrate how much alteration has occurred.

4.13 Windows differ across all three properties and are not original. The rear elevations are subservient and have suffered somewhat from the considerable extension and alteration which occurred incrementally from the late 19th century onwards. Windows in the rear elevations vary in date and quality.

Historical value

4.14 Nos 61, 63 and 65 are of historical significance as part of the gradual development of Charlotte Street which started on the western side from the 1760s onwards and was completed within a relatively short space of time. All three properties are present in Horwood's Map of London, 1792-99. They contribute most to the conservation area as part of a larger group of similar buildings which are generally uniform in form/proportions and detailing.

Artistic value

4.15 These properties are of no artistic value.

Archaeological/evidential value

4.16 These properties are of no archaeological significance and very limited evidential value given the amount of alteration they have already sustained internally. Aside from the external form of these buildings remaining (albeit with evident alteration) the best indication of the original layout of these properties is from the hallway and stairwells with most change occurring behind the doors leading from them.

Summary of significance

4.17 Following observation made of the exterior and interior of the properties it is clear that they are of value as part of a wider group of similar buildings within the Charlotte Street Conservation Area and contribute more to it as part of a group than they do individually. This is partly due to the overall aesthetic

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achieved through experiencing similar buildings together which were designed in effectively one phase.

- 4.18 There are differences in brickwork between each of the three properties, and windows differ from one property to the next with varying numbers of lights and forms.
- 4.19 Internally the properties retain some original detailing but nothing of significant heritage value. Alterations associated with conversion from single dwelling to multi-occupancy residences and finally offices has taken their toll. The staircases within each property, connecting ground and upper floors, retain the sense of hierarchy and original plan form but beyond this the insertion of partitions and modern fixtures and fittings have considerably reduced significance.
- 4.20 The primary consideration has to be the impact of proposals on the character and appearance of the conservation area (a designated heritage asset), followed then by the impact of proposals on the already much altered interiors of the non-designated heritage assets.

Policy Framework

- 4.21 With reference specifically to undesignated heritage assets (in this case Nos 61, 63, and 65 Charlotte Street) "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" (paragraph 128, NPPF).
- 4.22 Paragraph 135 of the NPPF states that, "in weighing applications that affect directly or indirectly non designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset".
- 4.23 Paragraph 137 of the NPPF states,

"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

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preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably"

- 4.24 The existing shop fronts, particularly in the case of Nos 61 and 65, make at most, only a neutral contribution to the conservation area. Reinstatement of more sympathetic shop fronts, along general repair and improvement to elevations, will result in a positive change which will help to better reveal the significance of the properties themselves and that of the conservation area.
- 4.25 Policy DP25 'Conserving Camden's Heritage' is applicable. Parts (b), (e) and (f) are considered most applicable.

Policy DP25 –

Conservation Areas

In order to maintain the character of Camden's conservation areas, the council will:

Take account of conservation area statements, appraisals and management plans when assessing applications within conservation areas;

- *Only permit development within conservation areas that preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the area;*
- *Prevent the total or substantial demolition of an unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area where this harms the character or appearance of the conservation area, unless exceptional circumstances are shown that outweigh the case for retention;*
- *Not permit development outside of a conservation area that causes harm to the character and appearance of that conservation area; and,*
- *Preserve trees and garden spaces which contribute to the character of a conservation area and which provide a setting for Camden's architectural heritage.*

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- 4.26 The Charlotte Street Conservation Area Statement forms supplementary planning guidance. It includes a description of the character and appearance of the conservation area and its constituent parts. In this instance, most weight should be given to the impact of proposals on the Charlotte Street Conservation Area (as a designated heritage asset) - it is the appearance of, and contribution made by, the properties within the conservation area which is of most significance here.

5.0 THE PROPOSALS

Effects of the Proposals

- 5.1 The proposal and their impacts upon the heritage significance and value of Nos 61, 63 and 65 Charlotte Street are detailed below.

Exterior

- 5.2 Please refer to architects drawings for detail.
- 5.3 The proposed external alterations are kept to the minimum required to,
- i Satisfy the new use at ground floor and merging of ground floor units;
 - ii Bring the quality of all three properties up to the highest standard.
- 5.4 Alterations and repairs to the elevations of the three properties comprise a) the removal of existing windows and replacement with sympathetic and appropriate timber alternatives (see Architect's drawings); b) replacement of existing shop fronts; and, c) general repairs to the brickwork.
- 5.5 All the above proposed alterations have been informed by archival research and assessment. The existing windows differ across all three properties, none of them original. It is proposed to reintroduce the uniformity of these terraces properties through the insertion of new, sash windows which match across the three facades. A traditional sash window with slender glazing bars, appropriate for Georgian property and for the wider conservation area, will be used.
- 5.6 The definition of individual building plots is important to retain, as this is part of the character of the area. Although it is proposed to create one commercial space at ground floor, behind the shop frontages, the new shop fronts will retain individual and retain the existing definition and individuality through varied colour treatment. The new shop fronts will make a more positive contribution to the conservation area than the existing, particularly in the case of Nos 61 and 63, and are closely based, in terms of the design, on the existing shop front of No.63 (please refer to Architect's drawings).

Comment [LJ1]: Pending final detail from Hugh

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Interior

- 5.7 Basement: Alteration is evident across the basements of all three properties. The basement of No.61 has seen the most significant changes with multiple partitions added, false ceilings inserted and modern flooring. The basement, accessible from No.61, extends partially across the rear of Nos 63 and 65 and alterations have been carried out to link these spaces, including the construction of brick infill to break up the spaces within the later, late 19th century extensions.
- 5.8 It is proposed to retain the existing link between all basement areas, improve circulation throughout and remove many of the later partitions to provide larger, open-plan spaces.
- 5.9 Given the amount of alteration which has already occurred here it is considered that the proposed alterations improve on the existing arrangement whilst retaining those elements and fabric of most heritage value. This is most evident through the retention of valued spaces beneath the pavement which will be retained.
- 5.10 Ground Floor: Alteration at ground floor primarily includes the creation of one open shop floor, opening up the area internally to provide one large retail/commercial space. The impression and definition of the individual plots, which is of primary interest, will be retained externally as previously mentioned.
- 5.11 The proposed opening up and unifying of these ground floor areas will result in the loss of some historic fabric but reference to the original form will be kept through retention of numerous structural elements such as piers.
- 5.12 The ground floor of No.61 is of lesser significance than that of Nos 63 and 65, as it has already been subject to substantial reconfiguration.
- 5.13 First and Second Floor: Alteration is evident across all three properties from 1st to 4th floors as a result of previous residential and office conversion. Alteration to No.65 at these levels is kept to a minimum, retaining the existing staircase and the current residential use. A new staircase will be inserted in No.61 as part of the wider redevelopment which will introduce a

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new access from street level. No.61 retains corning and skirting boards throughout the upper floors, but the survival of this is inconsistent and in most cases not original. These features are found alongside the insertion of new ceilings to accommodate spot lights.

- 5.14 Alteration to the existing layout of Nos 63 and 65 is kept to a minimum as the existing spaces are already in either residential or office use.
- 5.15 At 1st and 2nd floor Nos 61 and 63 are linked by a modest opening in the stud wall to provide two new 2-bedroom apartments.
- 5.16 Third Floor: . Whilst Nos 61 and 63 are linked via a modest opening in the existing wall to create a new 2-bedroom apartment. The existing exposed timber ceiling will remain as a feature within No.61 and No.63 will be reconfigured through the removal and relocation of partitions.

Summary

- 5.17 Proposals affect fabric in areas across all three properties that is of lesser architectural integrity, quality and order than the elevations due to the amount of alteration which has occurred.
- 5.18 The proposals will not cause substantial harm to the plan form of these non-designated heritage assets, which have already (as is evident through historic plans and maps) been subject to significant alteration and reconfigurations, particularly at basement and ground floor levels.
- 5.19 The internal alterations will not be apparent from the exterior, and therefore from within the conservation area.
- 5.20 When executed, the lasting effects of the proposals on the historic and architectural value of the properties (which resides primarily in the quality of their elevations) would be slight. The effect of the proposals on the character and appearance of the Charlotte Street Conservation Area (the designated heritage asset) is considered to be positive for the following reasons:
- Proposals bring the buildings back into long-term use;

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- Proposals considerably improve on the quality of the shop fronts across all three properties, replacing unoriginal frontages with high quality, sympathetic and traditional replacements;
- Proposals will re-establish a sense of the original uniformity across all three properties and ensure the definition of historic building plots from ground floor upwards, is retained.

Compliance with national and local policy and guidance

5.21 Proposals accord with the NPPF (Part 12) in that they:

- i Sustain and enhance the significance of heritage assets by ensuring a viable use for the buildings consistent with their conservation (paragraph 131);
- ii Improvements to the elevations of the properties will result in a positive contribution to the Charlotte Street Conservation Area and the local distinctiveness of Charlotte Street (paragraph 131);

5.22 Paragraphs 133 and 134 of the NPPF deal with levels of harm, the essential points being:

- i Where a proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset (in this case the Charlotte Street Conservation Area), this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposals, including securing an optimum viable use;
- ii Where proposals will lead to substantial harm or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset (again, the Charlotte Street Conservation Area in this case), 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.

5.23 The points relating to viable uses in paragraph 133 and 134 are not applicable to the conservation area as a designated heritage asset, but they have been considered in relation to site-specific harm resulting from the proposals to Nos 61, 63 and 65 (non-designated heritage assets), as advised in paragraph 138 of the NPPF.

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5.24 The Camden development policies and supporting text set out the Borough's measures to protect the historic built environment. It is considered that proposals accord with the policy and guidance insofar as:

- i Account has been given to the Charlotte Street Conservation Area Character Statement. The proposals are not considered to be contrary to the advice offered therein;
- ii The proposals respect the local character and would integrate well into their wider context. This is based on the quality of the design and sympathetic alterations being carried out. The proposals do not undermine, but rather enhance the general uniformity and embrace the subtle variations between each building. The proposals are therefore considered to enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area;
- iii The proposals work, for the most part, within the footprint of the existing buildings seeking to retain those features of particular significance and value internally;
- iv The proposed architectural detailing is traditional and in keeping with the architecture to which it relates;
- v It is noted that the interiors have undergone incremental refurbishment and alteration over time that has had a significant impact on the internal character of the properties. Those aspects of the interiors which help to retain a sense of the original hierarchy and planform will be retained when appropriate;
- vi As demonstrated, proposals would enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area through repairs and improvements to the existing facades. The proposed alterations maintain and sustain the special interests of the buildings, including the original roof forms, as a group, and allow them to remain legible as 18th century private dwellings from within the conservation area, which is of primary importance.

5.25 Furthermore, the Charlotte Street Conservation Area Appraisal states (at paragraph 6.12) that,

"Where the integration of two or more shops into a larger unit are proposed, consideration should be given to signage, shop front design, and the external

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appearance of the resulting unit so as to avoid harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area”.

- 5.26 The above factors have been considered carefully during the development of proposals. Particular attention has been paid to the design and treatment of the shop fronts and the retention of, and ability to appreciate, the individual historic building plots externally.
- 5.27 The conservation area appraisal notes, at paragraph 13.12, that the “council will encourage the re-use of premises above shops and other commercial buildings to prevent vacancies and maintain vibrancy in and along shopping streets...”. Again, this has been taken on board during the development of proposals. No.61 is currently a vacant building, and there are vacant parts of both Nos 63 and 65 (although this is less evident from the street). Putting these buildings back into a long term, sustainable use will considerably improve this part of Charlotte Street, increasing activity and the vibrancy of the area, as articulated in the appraisal.
- 5.28 Finally, the proposals are in accordance with paragraph 13.14 of the conservation area appraisal insofar as they are informed and appropriate for the context of the area. This heritage statement has assessed the significance of the heritage assets involved and provides the relevant amount of information required to enable the Council to determine the effect of the new development on the character and appearance of the Charlotte Street Conservation Area.
- 5.29 On balance, and with due consideration to the Council’s duty to consider the desirability of preserving the character and appearance of the conservation area, and the special interest of these non-designated heritage assets, it is considered that current proposals are appropriate and sympathetic to the heritage interests and significance.

6.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 This report has described the significance of the Charlotte Street Conservation Area and Nos 61, 63, and 65 Charlotte Street (the site) and identified that proposals do not harm the heritage values of the buildings or the significance of the Charlotte Street Conservation Area.
- 6.2 All three properties have undergone considerable internal alteration and adaptation since the late 19th century onwards. Their elevations have also been subject to change, particularly at street level.
- 6.3 Careful consideration has been given to the properties through on-site observations and particularly to archival research. This has allowed for a full understanding of the history, development and overall heritage value of the buildings on the site, their settings and context, and those parts of them which are of particular significance.
- 6.4 Proposals have been assessed against the policy and guidance set out within the National Planning Policy Framework (Part 12) and the Camden Development Plan. This assessment concludes that the proposal accord with that policy and guidance and offer sympathetic and informed alteration with minimal effect on heritage significance.

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