



Camden Lock Village

Retail Report

RPS



RETAIL ASSESSMENT

CAMDEN LOCK VILLAGE (HAWLEY WHARF)

ON BEHALF OF STANLEY SIDINGS LIMITED

August 2012

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report has been prepared on behalf of Stanley Sidings Limited (the 'Applicant') in support of their planning application which proposes the comprehensive redevelopment of nos. 1-9 Chalk Farm Road, together with land to the rear comprising Hawley Wharf bounded by Castlehaven Road, Hawley Road, Kentish Town Road and the Grand Union/Regent Canals. The Applicant is an experienced operator of markets within Camden Town including The Stables Market and Camden Canal Market (comprising part of the application site).
- 1.2 The proposals seek to provide a sustainable mixed-use development, consistent with the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), comprising substantially; Class A1 retail (including replacement market retail and local retail), food and drink uses (Use Classes A3/A5), employment uses (B Classes), a cinema, residential and a new school. In principal the range and mix of uses proposed fully accord with the provisions of the development plan.
- 1.3 In retail terms, the proposals provide a substantially enhanced 'local' retail offer (Area C) which is physically separate and distinct to the retail offer to be provided within the canal side market building (Area A) which aims to broaden the appeal of Camden Town for visitors, providing a different type of market retail experience rather than duplicating existing provision. A significant amount of the floorspace proposed within Buildings C1 and C2 (Site C) at ground floor level is intended to provide flexible space for a range of uses including retail, workspace, gallery and cafes. In this report references to retail floorspace represent maximum levels assuming that all of this flexible floorspace proposed within Area C is occupied for Class A1 purposes.
- 1.4 Significantly, the proposals respond to the reasons for refusal in respect of the applicants' previous proposals for the site (application reference no. 2011/4932/P, decision dated 4th May 2012). Despite receiving a positive recommendation from planning officers, the previous planning application was refused by Camden's Planning Committee. The latest proposals have evolved through detailed discussions between the Applicant, their consultants and the Council's officers and engagement with local community groups and other third parties.
- 1.5 The proposed Class A floorspace is predominantly located within the defined town centre of Camden Town and therefore accords with the government's town centre first policy and the policies of the development plan in terms of the location of new Class A uses.
- 1.6 The proposed Class A development has been designed to maintain and fully integrate with the established character and feel of Camden Town extending the existing retail circuit, providing local shops for local people and broadening the retail experience for visitors. The scheme will include replacement 'market' retail floorspace comprised within a range of small units and market stalls (permanent and temporary/seasonal). In addition, the scheme makes provision for a local produce market within the local open space (Area C) around which the 'local' retail offer of the proposed scheme is arranged – a range of flexible units and floorspace dedicated to meeting the needs of local residents. The operation of the market will be determined post planning as part of the S106 Agreement in consultation with a community liaison group.
- 1.7 The scheme provides a diverse range and mix of units. The overwhelming character is a scheme comprised of small units (typically 15-50sqm in size). However a limited range of larger units (>100sqm) are proposed which are capable of being controlled through a mixture of appropriate

planning conditions and legal agreements. This flexibility is necessary to ensure the scheme is attractive to a range and mix of traders and helps to overcome the physical constraints imposed by developing the site. The proposed range and mix of uses and the layout of the scheme will make a positive contribution to the overall vitality and viability of Camden Town and its streetscape. Furthermore, the proposals will have significant benefits in terms of stimulating the local economy through job creation attracting new businesses and enabling established traders to grow. Importantly, the scheme strikes a balance between meeting the needs of local residents and those of visitors. The 'local' and 'visitor' retail elements of the proposals will be very distinct and physically separate (albeit that a pedestrian link is to be provided via a skewed arch which is subject to post planning discussions via the S106 Agreement or planning condition) thereby minimising conflicts and ensuring respective groups are able to enjoy the development simultaneously for the purpose of their visit.

1.8 The purpose of this report is to focus exclusively upon retail planning matters i.e. this report assesses the proposed retail (Class A1) and Class A3/A5 uses (restaurants/takeaway hot food stalls etc) against the relevant policies of the development plan, national planning policy tests and recent Ministerial Statements. The location and nature of the proposed Class A1 and A3/A5 floorspace and the site's allocation in the development plan means that the application proposals are not required to be assessed in terms of the NPPF tests of retail impact or the sequential approach. These issues are examined by subsequent sections of this report.

1.9 Significantly, the proposed Class A1 and A3/A5 elements of the scheme should be favourably considered for the following reasons:

- The proposed retail floorspace is primarily located within the defined town centre of Camden Town (south western part of the site – Area A and part Area C) and includes primary retail frontage to Chalk Farm Road. This is the preferred location for new retail development. Furthermore, the application site is allocated in the development plan for mixed use development including retail uses. Accordingly there is no requirement to examine sequential sites
- Area A is currently in active retail use (Class A1, A3 and A5) as a market (Camden Canal Market) and unit shops (nos 1-6 Chalk Farm Road). Accordingly, shopping and other trips are already occurring on this part of the application site. The market (and Camden Town as a whole) is a substantial tourist attraction, attracting visitors from a wide geographical area including domestic and international tourists. The Camden Town markets make a major contribution to the local economy. Accordingly, the proposals are not solely supported by locally generated expenditure. It is important that markets, including the Camden Canal Market evolve through improvements such as those being promoted by the application proposals in order to maintain their attraction to visitors and their important contribution to the local economy. The proposed market retail will cater for a different type of visitor broadening the appeal of Camden Town for visitors whilst positively responding to the needs of local residents. In this respect the proposals do not seek to replicate the largely clothing based retail offer of Camden Town's existing markets
- The proposals provide Class A1 retail floorspace including replacement market retail and include a range and mix of units suitable for a variety of traders (Area A). In addition, Area C includes flexible 'local' retail floorspace designed to meet the needs of the local community, for example by providing opportunities to establish small convenience and service based operators e.g. butchers, bakers etc. This will be supplemented by the operation of a local produce market within Area C
- The proposals have been designed to maintain the feel and the established character of this part of Camden Town by providing a range and mix of units. The predominant character is

that of small flexible units. The provision of a limited number of larger units is necessary to overcome physical constraints imposed by developing the site and this in turn helps to meet demand expressed by traders. The larger units will be Camden type units e.g. similar to Cyberdog in the Stables market rather than high street shops. These units will be located within the Canal buildings and will help to ensure an even distribution of footfall across the building to the overall benefit of visitors and traders alike. The provision of a diverse mix and range of units will assist by drawing visitors across the scheme, in particular ensuring activity at all levels of the Canal buildings and Chalk Farm Road (Area A) helping to cement the success of the scheme. The recent Ministerial Statement on *Planning for Growth* recognises the need for flexibility and realism and seeks to remove unnecessary burdens on town centre development. Subsequently this has been transposed into the NPPF. It is important the Applicant retains maximum flexibility regarding the size, number of units and range of uses in order to maximise the commercial viability of the scheme and respond to demand expressed by traders. The overall character of the scheme is one comprised of small units (typically 15-50sqm in size as shown on the indicative floor plans within the Design and Access Statement) with a limited range of larger units.

- The proposals present an opportunity to 'balance' the needs of local residents with those of visitors, for example by including flexible floorspace suitable for Class A1/A3/B1/D1 purposes to meet the needs of Camden Town residents (Building C) which will contribute to the overall vitality and viability of the town centre. This floorspace is arranged around a new local open space which is intended to host a produce market at certain times.
- The scale of the proposed retail development is consistent with the role and function of Camden Town as a 'major centre'. This is confirmed by the Planning Officer's report (paragraph 6.103) relating to the previous application proposals (application reference 2011/4932/P). Part of the proposed retail floorspace will provide replacement market floorspace. When compared to the existing market, the uplift in Class A1 retail floorspace is 5,139sqm GEA (maximum) and represents less than 5% of the overall retail floorspace within Camden Town. The scale of retail floorspace proposed is therefore not significant and does not raise any impact issues in terms of the NPPF. The proposed floorspace is entirely in scale with the role, function and designation of Camden Town as a 'major' centre where the development plan envisages the bulk of new retail floorspace to be accommodated within the Borough outside of Kings Cross, St. Pancras and Euston. Indeed, the application site secures a specific retail designation in the Council's development plan.
- The majority (90%) of the Class A1 and A3/A5 floorspace is proposed within Area A (Canal buildings, southern railway arches and 1-8 Chalk Farm Road) which is allocated for retail use in the development plan. Furthermore, there is additional support for the type of development proposed in the *Hawley Wharf Area Planning Framework* and the Council's Site Allocations Proposed Submission Document. Accordingly the use of the site for these purposes is established in principle. There are no floorspace thresholds imposed by the policies of the development plan in terms of testing the scale of retail development permissible.
- The Ministerial Statement on *Planning for Growth* and the NPPF explain that local planning authorities should support proposals which promote sustainable economic growth. As the Economic Study prepared in support of the application demonstrates, the proposed Class A uses will create a number of employment opportunities, support local business enterprise and increase consumer choice. These positive benefits should be given considerable weight. Indeed, the NPPF makes it clear that the government places significant weight on proposals which generate economic growth and job creation except where the adverse impacts of allowing development would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

- 1.10 The NPPF does not require the application proposals to be tested in impact terms. The proposed uplift in retail floorspace proposed is modest and ultimately is in scale with the role, function and designation of Camden Town and that envisaged by the development plan. Nevertheless, in consultation with the Council's planning officer's RPS has agreed to conduct a qualitative appraisal examining the compatibility of the proposals in terms of their scale, nature, composition

and 'fit' with the character of this part of Camden Town centre and the policy requirements of the development plan.

1.11 The remainder of this report is organised into the following sections:

- Section 2 comprises a description of the site and surrounding area together with details of the proposed Class A floorspace and any planning policy designations affecting the application site in so far as they are relevant to retail policy matters
- A full examination of the relevant retail planning policy background is contained within Section 3 of this report
- Section 4 provides a review of the established network of centres within Camden, in particular focusing upon the role and function of Camden Town within the retail hierarchy and the capacity for additional retail floorspace in centres
- The compatibility of the proposals in terms of 'scale' and 'locally important impacts' is considered in section 5
- Finally the conclusions are drawn in section 6.

1.12 In summary, this report sets out a compelling case in support of the Class A component of the application proposals. The application site is the preferred location for new Class A development within Camden Town and can take place without harm to the character, role or function of Camden Town or other centres. Indeed, there are a number of positive economic benefits that would stem from the application proposals including improvements to the range and choice of retail facilities within Camden Town. Furthermore, the proposals fully accord with the governments' policy to stimulate the economy and lessen the burden on developers promoting schemes in town centres which are consistent with development plan allocations such as this.

2 FACTUAL BACKGROUND

a) Existing site and surrounding area

- 2.1 The part of the application site where it is proposed to locate the Class A uses (Areas A, C and D) is located within the heart of the defined centre of Camden Town with frontage to the principal shopping street (Chalk Farm Road). Nos 1-9 Chalk Farm Road comprise a terrace of Victorian buildings (no 7-9 having been destroyed by fire) with the Camden Canal Market located to the rear. The existing market is accessible from Haven Street, leading from Castlehaven Road (pedestrian and vehicular access) and also directly from Chalk Farm Road adjacent to the Grand Union Canal and the railway viaduct.
- 2.2 A significant proportion of Area A is currently within retail use (Class A1), including nos. 1-6 Chalk Farm Road and permanent individual units/stalls comprising Camden Canal Market. Markets fall within Class A1 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended). In addition there are a range of Class A3/A5 uses (restaurants and hot food takeaways).
- 2.3 The remainder of the site includes railway arches and is in a mix of uses including B Class Uses, retail and residential. The full range of uses and the amount of floorspace devoted to each use are explained in other documents submitted in support of the application proposals.
- 2.4 The overall application site is bounded by Chalk Farm Road, the canal, Castlehaven Road, Kentish Town Road and Hawley Road and includes two railway viaducts, Haven Street, Leybourne Road and Torbay Street. The town centre town centre boundary crosses the site, the extent of which is defined by Castlehaven Road and Leybourne Road. The majority of the proposed Class A development is located within this area.
- 2.5 Area A (the south western part of the site) encompassing premises to Chalk Farm Road and the market was devastated by fire in February 2008. Nos 7-9 Chalk Farm Road were completely destroyed by the fire and were subsequently demolished. As a result, the market was closed for 16 months, eventually reopening in May 2009. The refurbished market enabled a number of interim improvements to be made pending the future redevelopment of the market as proposed by the current planning application. The market stalls predominately sell clothing, bags and jewellery. The existing market is open throughout the week.
- 2.6 In agreement with Camden officers, this report considers the effect of the net uplift in floorspace (Use Classes A1, A3 & A5) on the basis of the pre-fire rather than the post fire floorspace. The pre-fire site comprised a total of 3,068sqm (Class A1 retail including 352sqm Class A1/A3 use) and 997sqm (Class A4/A5) floorspace (4,065sqm in total).

b) Proposed Class A1 and A3/A5 Development

- 2.7 The application site comprises four adjoining parcels of land (Areas A, B, C and D) separated by two railway viaducts. The proposals include the opening up of certain arches under the railway viaducts to enable movement and integration of the four areas and enable a range of compatible commercial uses. In particular part of the arches forming the southern railway viaduct are proposed for Class A1 and Class A3/A5 purposes. The current proposals however seek to restrict the flow of visitors between the Canal building and the public local open space in order to

reinforce the differentiation between the two types of retail offer to be provided i.e. shops for local people and a market retail offer for visitors. Furthermore, the revised scheme provides clear separation between the canal tow path and visitors to the market building thereby ensuring the tow path continues to function as a separate leisure assets.

2.8 The Applicant has received advice from CWM, specialist retail property advisors, to help inform the proposed mix of Class A uses, the layout and distribution of and size of units. CWM's advice is based upon research conducted into the operation of other markets including those both situated within Camden Town (e.g. Camden Lock Market, Stables Market) and elsewhere within London (e.g. Borough Market, Spitalfields Markets). In particular, CWM identify the following key requirements in order for the scheme to be successful:

- Units need to be of a suitable range of sizes to draw footfall and ensure a diverse range of traders
- To provide clear pedestrian routes throughout the completed development
- To seduce customers away from competition
- To offer the correct mix of tenants
- Specification of units
- Servicing provision for units

2.9 CWM identifies the principal objectives of the proposed Class A uses as follows:

- To be viable both from a financial and design points of view
- To enhance the entire mixed use development
- To blend with the character and cultures of Camden
- To be of sufficient quantum to be considered as an entirely new draw for the area whilst also serving the local community
- To offer significant points of different for other London retailing particularly in the case of the multi-storey market buildings

2.10 CWM's advice together with views expressed by local community groups and planning officers has guided the composition of the application proposals. The Applicants have also drawn upon their own extensive experience of operating markets in Camden Town to inform the scheme. .

2.11 The table 1 below provides a summary of the proposed floorspace including the uplift compared to the pre-fire floorspace. Some of the floorspace comprised within Building C2 is intended for flexible use (Use Classes A, B and D). The table assumes that all of this floorspace is used for Class A1 purposes (i.e. a maximum worst case scenario is presented). As can be seen, the total proposed Class A1, A3 and A5 floorspace is 10,954sqm gross. This represents an increase of 6,889sqm gross compared to the pre-fire floorspace on the application site used for Class A1, A3 and A5 purposes. The floorspace figures referred to in the table include circulation space.

Table 1: Proposed and existing floorspace by Use Class (A1, A3 & A5)

Use Class	Floorspace sqm (GEA)		
	Proposed 2012	Pre-Fire	Increase
A1	8,207	3,068*	5,139
A3/A5	2,747	997**	1,750
Total	10,954	4,065	6,889

Assumes *4/5 Chalk Farm Road is for A1 purposes rather than A1/A3 (352sqm) ** 7/8 Chalk Farm Road pre-fire A4 Use

2.12 Following extensive discussions with Camden's officers, the proposed Class A floorspace is predominately confined to areas which are located within the town centre. The majority of the

Class A uses are proposed within the Canal Buildings and the Southern Railway Arches (Area A) and currently occupied by the Camden Canal Market. The Canal Buildings comprise two multi-storey buildings linked by pedestrian walkways which span a central vista through the site leading from Castlehaven Road or Chalk Farm Road to the canal. The building will include a range and mix of units consistent with the development plan (policies DP10 and DP11). In order to maintain the feel and unique identity of the Camden markets, the proposed Class A1 retail floorspace will comprise a range of unit sizes, the majority of which will comprise very small units, typically 15-50sqm – well below the threshold set by the development plan (<100sqm). The following paragraphs examine the proposed retail and food and drink floorspace in greater detail on an area by area/building by building basis.

- 2.13 The overwhelming character of the scheme is one comprised of small units (typically 15-50sqm in size). However a limited number of larger units (>100sqm) are proposed. These larger units are confined to the southern railway arches (re-use of existing units) where it is proposed to install mezzanine floorspace, the Canal buildings where it is proposed to connect the basement and ground floors vertically and the re-use of existing buildings to Chalk Farm Road involving vertical and horizontal connection. Units which have frontages to Chalk Farm Road/Camden High Street are typical high street units >100sqm. This is necessary to address the physical constraints imposed by developing the site including the re-use of premises to Chalk Farm Road. Furthermore, the vertical connection will ensure full and productive use of the basement which unless connected to ground floor is unlikely to prove attractive space to either traders or visitors. The benefit of these larger units is that they assist in meeting the demand expressed by certain traders. These larger units also provide traders with opportunities to expand and grow their business. Furthermore, the location of these larger units strategically assists the attraction and flow of visitors within the building. This flexibility will allow a range and mix of traders to be attracted to the scheme and enhance its overall commercial viability. The overall character of the scheme is nevertheless in the spirit of the Council's policy aspirations which seek to support the retention and creation of small units.
- 2.14 As recent Ministerial Statements and the NPPF recognise, it is important for Councils to support economic development, such as the application proposals, and that they should not impose unnecessary burdens on development. In this type of economic climate it is essential to maintain maximum flexibility to enable schemes to adapt to prevailing market conditions.
- 2.15 Table 2 below provides a breakdown of floorspace (net) by building/area and Use Class. The figures relate to net areas i.e. they exclude circulation space etc. The applicant has provided to the Council indicative layout plans for the Class A units contained within the Design and Access Statement. This indicative arrangement is necessary to provide for future flexibility as described above. Nevertheless, the combination of units and the proposed uses will not exceed the following maximums (%) in respect of the Canal buildings, Chalk Farm Road and the Southern Railway Arches (this ratio has been maintained consistent with the previous planning proposals for the site):
- Class A1 uses – 83% of total Class A floorspace in Area A excluding restaurants (Level 4)
 - Class A3 uses – 7% of the total Class A floorspace in Area A excluding roof top restaurants
 - Class A5 uses – 10% of total net Class A floorspace in Area A

Table 2: Proposed maximum floorspace by area, building and Use Class (A1, A3 & A5)

Area/ Building Name	Floor	Maximum Floorspace by Use Class (NIA m ²)								
		Use Class A1		Use Class A3		Use Class A5		Total		
		m ²	%	m ²	%	m ²	%	m ²	%**	
Area A										
Canal Buildings (Market retail)		3,662	67%	1,363	25%	478	9%	5,503	73%	
Chalk Farm Road		989	96%	38	4%	0	0%	1,027	14%	
South Arches		713	74%	55	6%	201	20%	969	13%	
Area A Sub-Total		5,364	72%	1,456	19%	679	9%	7,499	100%	
Area C										
Building C1		287	100%	0	0%	0	0%	287	31%	
Building C2		632*	100%	0	0%	0	0%	632*	69%	
Area C Sub-Total		919	100%	0	0%	0	0%	919	100%	
Area D										
Water Lane		0	0%	72	100%	0	0%	72	100%	
Total		6,283	74%	1,528	18%	679	8%	8,490	100%	

Notes: * flexible floorspace includes Class A1/A3/gallery/work. ** Expressed as a % of Area total

- 2.16 The table shows that the majority of Class A3/A5 uses are proposed to be contained within Area A, the only exceptions being the potential provision of small café (Class A3) within Building C2 (local retail) and to the apex of the Water Lane Building adjacent to the canal.

i. Chalk Farm Road Frontage

- 2.17 The scheme incorporates the existing shop units to Chalk Farm Road (nos 1-6 and former units nos 7-8). These units are of a typical high street format where the floorspace is spread across a number of floors. They are proposed for Class A purposes. The size and format of these units is distinct from the market units. The retention of these units dictates a need for any future use to draw visitors across all floors in order to maintain an active street frontage and improve the commercial viability of the scheme. This is particularly important in respect of securing viable uses for the basement and upper trading floors. This will not be achieved by sub-division, for example into a greater number of smaller units. The historic fabric and configuration of these buildings does not lend itself to such a proposition. Accordingly, these units, consistent with their established high street character, will continue to form some of the larger units within the proposed scheme. The Applicant envisages that the units will be occupied by a similar range and mix of traders as other nearby shops which have frontage to Chalk Farm Road/Camden High Street in the northern part of Camden Town.

ii. Canal Buildings

- 2.18 As can be seen from the table above, the Canal buildings (Area A) will comprise the majority of the proposed Class A floorspace. In summary, the buildings will provide the following mix of Class A uses:

- Class A1 retail floorspace = 3,662sqm net (67%)
- Class A3 floorspace (including roof top restaurants) = 1,363sqm net (25%)
- Class A5 floorspace = 478sqm net (9%)

- 2.19 The overwhelming character of the Canal buildings will comprise small units typically 15-50sqm in size. These units will help to attract a range and mix of traders and consequently will have a similar character to the established Camden Town markets.
- 2.20 Like the Chalk Farm Road buildings, the Canal buildings include Class A1 retail floorspace located at basement level. Consequently to ensure that the floorspace is useable and economically attractive to traders and visitors it is envisaged that some units will be connected between the basement and lower ground floor of the building.
- 2.21 The Canal buildings will provide 1,363sqm net of Class A3 floorspace. Of this, 973sqm comprises roof top restaurant(s) with the balance of Class A3 floorspace (390sqm) distributed across lower ground to first floor level in a variety of small units. There will also be a variety of small units in Class A5 use (478sqm).

iii. Southern Arches

- 2.22 The southern arches will include 713sqm net Class A1 floorspace of which 215sqm will be provided at mezzanine level. In addition, there will be 201sqm net floorspace for Class A5 (hot food takeaway) and 55sqm net for Class A3 (cafe) purposes.

iv. Castlehaven Road (Building C1 and C2)

- 2.23 The Castlehaven Road Buildings (Area C) will incorporate flexible floorspace for Class A1 (local retail), gallery space, cafe and workspace. This floorspace comprises 919sqm net. The provision of this floorspace is consistent with the Council's Development Framework and development plan policies and also meets a requirement expressed by the local community. The floorspace is arranged around a public local open space.
- 2.24 This retail floorspace will be distinct in appearance, role and function to that provided in Area A. The local retail floorspace together with the community space enjoys physical separation from other parts of the application site which are market/visitor orientated. Nevertheless, a link is provided between areas A and C via a skewed arch route under the railway arches.
- 2.25 The Use Classes Order does not distinguish between types of retail shops/operators. As a consequence it is difficult to ensure units are operated by traders that provide a 'local' retail offer. There is no universally accepted definition of 'local' in the context of a retail offer. It is easy and common place to restrict the sales of certain types of goods and indeed the amount of floorspace. It is more difficult to link specific ranges of goods to a type of retail offer i.e. a 'local' retail offer.
- 2.26 Nevertheless, the Applicant is committed to providing dedicated floorspace in Building C1 as part of the proposed scheme of development to accommodate retailers and other traders which provide goods and services required by local residents on a daily basis, for example, grocers, butchers, fishmonger, bakers etc. In order to maintain that commitment, the Applicant is prepared to accept a condition/legal agreement which requires this floorspace to be occupied in perpetuity solely for these purposes. Weekend Local Produce Market
- 2.27 Area C includes local open space which is proposed to be used as a produce market, the operation of which will be agreed via the S106 agreement. This element of the proposals is intended to cater for the convenience goods needs of the local community. It is envisaged that this area will include temporary/demountable stalls from which a range of produce can be

displayed and sold. Local community groups have been heavily involved with the details of this type of market (and also local retail occupiers).

v. *Water Lane Building (Area D)*

- 2.28 The Water Lane Building fronts the Regent's Canal (Area D) and comprises predominately employment uses with residential uses above. However, the apex of the building at ground floor level is proposed to include a small café (Class A3, 72sqm) to enliven the water front and the adjacent public arches space, thereby providing for the needs of both visitors and workers. A small cafe is also proposed within two of the arches in the arches open space.

c) Market Operation

- 2.29 The Applicant has considerable experience in managing and operating markets within Camden Town. In addition to the Camden Canal Market (on the application site), the Applicant also owns and manages the Stables Market, located on the opposite side of Chalk Farm Road.
- 2.30 The existing Camden Canal and Stables markets are managed and operated in a similar manner. These day-to-day management practices would be employed as part of an enhanced market offer provided as part of the redevelopment of the Camden Canal Market. The management style is duly described below.
- 2.31 In recent years Stanley Sidings has been successful in securing a number of improvements to the Stables Market principally through planning approval that has the effect of increasing the amount of market floorspace together with the introduction of other enhancements both to the overall appearance of the market and the range of facilities available to traders and visitors. The Stables and existing Camden Canal Market are a considerable attraction and make a significant contribute to the overall vitality and viability of Camden Town. The Camden markets represent one of London's most significant tourist attractions and are at their most popular at weekends and on Bank Holidays. Many of the stalls/units are also open at other times during the week depending upon the trader and location of the units. The proposed market however will seek to distinguish its retail offer from the other established Camden Town markets and therefore provide a unique and genuinely different and vibrant retail leisure offer to visitors to Camden Town.
- 2.32 The daily operation of the two markets including the letting of individual units is strictly controlled by Stanley Sidings. Together both markets provide a substantial number of market units for rental. Clearly with such a large number of units/traders it is important to adopt a proactive management style to ensure the smooth operation of the market. This relies upon having a dedicated team of people to manage all aspects of the day to day running of the market.
- 2.33 Stanley Sidings employs a wide range of personnel including managers, cashiers, caretakers, cleaners, a design team and security staff etc. Consequently matters such as tenant mix, retail offer, security etc can all be coordinated by a central management team in a manner that ensures the markets are attractive to visitors and traders alike.

i) *Lettings*

- 2.34 Unlike major town centre shopping centres and high street shops where leases are typically granted to retailers for in excess of 10 years, units within the markets are let to individual traders on a weekly basis. Some of the larger units however involve more formal arrangement providing

both the trader and Applicant with greater certainty given increased investment on the part of both parties. There is a turnover of small units during the year although a significant proportion of traders are long standing tenants. Nevertheless, there remains an extensive list of traders (in excess of 3,500 with an average of 70 new enquiries every week) currently seeking representation within the two markets – that demand cannot currently be fulfilled. The application proposals will assist in meeting that demand.

- 2.35 Weekly rental agreements afford considerable flexibility enabling traders to move, merge and sub-divide units and change uses. This system of lettings has proved particularly important in attracting new traders to the market and fostering new business start-ups. This letting strategy will be adopted as part of the redeveloped market. The system enables new businesses to test trading conditions at the market without making any long-term commitments. Similarly, weekly lettings of small units enable the market managers to carefully monitor traders in terms of the range and quality of products being made available for sale and their relative attraction to customers. If the standard of goods sold by individual traders etc is found to be below the high standard expected then the management is able to give the trader notice to quit at relatively short notice. Conversely, the system allows successful traders to upgrade to more prominent or larger premises as and when suitable units become available.
- 2.36 Indeed, such is the popularity of the markets that Stanley Sidings currently have a waiting list in excess of 3500 traders seeking pitches across both the Stables and existing Camden Canal Market. Such demand needs to be managed carefully and ultimately means that many prospective traders will be declined an opportunity to trade simply because of the physical capacity of the existing markets.
- 2.37 Accordingly, Stanley Sidings has to be very selective in choosing traders to fill vacant units. In this respect the product range and type of trader has to fit with the character of the existing markets. Stanley Sidings manage the location of specific traders within the market, for example, to provide key attractors and then to co-locate complementary traders to maximise the retail offer. In this way, consideration is given to the location of individual and groups of market traders to ensure the best visitor experience.
- 2.38 Due to the high demand for market units, individual traders are often required to submit samples of the goods that they intend to sell to the management team. In some cases, photographs of the products may be acceptable. If the goods are considered suitable (quality, range, fit with the existing retail mix etc) then a unit will be offered (subject to suitable units being available) otherwise traders will be placed on a waiting list.
- 2.39 There are strict rules and regulations that traders must abide by in relation to the rental of market units. Briefly, these can be summarised as follows:
- Rents must be paid on a weekly basis
 - Units must be vacated of all their goods on the Monday following the last weekend of trade
 - A minimum of 2 weeks deposit is required. The deposit is refundable if no rent is outstanding and no damage has been sustained to the unit
 - All units are required to open on Saturday and Sunday
 - Tenancies are generally granted on a weekly basis and automatically renewed. This provides both traders and Stanley Sidings with flexibility and allows short notice to be given to vacate units. In the case of larger units, short term and long term tenancies may be considered

- 2.40 In summary, the weekly lettings practice enables Stanley Sidings to exert greater control over traders activities than may otherwise be the case in say a traditional High Street shop environment where leases are generally let on the basis of much longer periods. It also ensures that successful traders needs are met and that traders that are less successful are either relocated or asked to vacate the unit in order to allow traders on the waiting list to be given the opportunity to trade and contribute to the overall attraction and vibrancy of the market.

ii) Design and Fit out of market units

- 2.41 Stanley Sidings ensure a very hands-on approach in relation to its property portfolio. The design and fitting out process of market units is entirely undertaken by Stanley Sidings (or by appointed contractors) in liaison with traders. In this way Stanley Sidings maintains complete control of the appearance of the market ensuring quality of materials, workmanship and compliance with regulations such as health and safety, planning etc. Again this ensures the smooth operation of the market.

iii) Security

- 2.42 Security for both traders and visitors within the market is taken very seriously by Stanley Sidings. Stanley Sidings maintains a highly visible security presence within the markets, which helps to prevent crime, and ensure the health and safety of traders and visitors. Over the years Stanley Sidings has developed good working relationships with other private security guards patrolling Camden and the metropolitan police. Stanley Sidings therefore have first hand experience of maintaining an effective security regime.
- 2.43 Stanley Sidings maintain 24 hour security for both the Stables and Camden Canal Markets. This includes the provision of CCTV with a central control room and the deployment of security guards. The presence of security personnel at weekends is increased.
- 2.44 All traders are given direct contact numbers for security staff in the event of an emergency. Security staff regularly patrol the markets. Their movements are closely monitored by CCTV and 2 way radio. In combination these measures enable the location of individual security guards to be monitored so that in the event of an emergency the most appropriate guards (in terms of their location) can be deployed to assist. Simultaneously the system ensures the personnel safety of the security guards themselves. Security staff numbers vary between weekends and weekdays and day and night according to needs.
- 2.45 The above management practices will be deployed in respect of the redeveloped market and assist its smooth operation thereby ensuring an excellent visitor experience and protection of local residential amenity.

d) Planning Designation

- 2.46 The statutory development plan covering the application site at the local level comprises the Camden Core Strategy and Development Policies adopted on the 8th November 2010. The Core Strategy and Development Policies replace the 'saved' policies of the Camden Unitary Development Plan (June 2006) except in relation to land use proposals. Proposal LU1 of the Camden UDP remains 'saved' and relevant although it will eventually be replaced by the Council's Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPP). The Site Allocations DPP is currently at 'Proposed Submission' stage having been subject to consultation in March 2012. A

full examination of relevant policies is included within the next section of this report. The purpose here is to explore any site-specific policy designations affecting the redevelopment of the application site.

- 2.47 Hawley Wharf, together with the part of the application site occupied by nos. 1-9 Chalk Farm Road and the existing market, is shown on the Proposals Map as forming part of the designated Camden Town centre. RPS understands that there have been no changes to the boundary of the town centre in respect of the application site since the Camden UDP. The extent of the town centre is defined by Leybourne Road. Accordingly in terms of the Council's retail policies and the guidance set out in current national planning policy (NPPF) the part of the site where it is proposed to locate the new retail floorspace (predominately Area A with some specialist provision on Area C (local retail) and Area D (café) comprises a town centre location i.e. the most preferable location within which to locate new retail and other town centre uses.
- 2.48 It is significant that Hawley Wharf is also specifically designated on the Proposals Map to the Camden UDP under land use proposal 24 (saved policy LU1). Proposal LU1 allocates the site as a redevelopment opportunity to provide a mix of uses including, "residential with other appropriate town centre uses including B1 workshops and retail". Notably the policy schedule describes the current use of Hawley Wharf as a weekend market and class B1 uses. Nevertheless, the Council has accepted that the market has been operating for a considerable period of time through the week with the added complication arising from the devastating fire in the early 2008.
- 2.49 In addition the Council has adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance in the form of a planning brief for Hawley Wharf (Hawley Wharf Planning Framework, February 2009). The Planning Framework covers the entire application site and some limited additional land and acknowledges (paragraph 2.13) that Hawley Wharf is not well integrated with the surrounding area due to physical barriers to pedestrian movement created by the railway viaducts. The application proposals fully address such issues. Furthermore, the Framework recognises that although Camden Town is the borough's main town centre there is a perceived lack of retail provision for local needs. Indeed, this is consistent with the *Camden Town Vision* which seeks to improve the range and quality of shopping provision in the town centre including shops to meet the day to day needs of local people as opposed to visitors. The Council's broad aspirations for the Hawley Wharf area include:
- Building on town centre strengths and unique qualities
 - Fostering a mix of appropriate town centre uses including retail, market retail, leisure uses, new homes (and affordable housing), access to work and training opportunities and creating new business space
- 2.50 Furthermore, the Framework states that the Council will support a mix of uses that includes retail (including markets, small-scale speciality retail and local shops). Paragraph 5.6 advises that 'of vital importance to the future success of the overall town centre will be striking an appropriate balance of the needs of visitors and those of local residents, particularly in terms of the mix of uses which emerges across the framework area'. Again the application proposals seek to address this balance and significantly include the provision of 'local' retail and community space.
- 2.51 In relation to retail uses, the Framework recognises that Area A of the application site area is located within the town centre and is a location where growth in retail floorspace can be accommodated (paragraph 5.18).

- 2.52 The Framework states that the following issues will require consideration in relation to the development of new retail floorspace:
- The scale and nature of the proposed retail uses. The Council will have regard to the 2006 markets study and 2008 retail study in assessing the suitability of retail proposals in this area.
 - Potential effects on the vitality and viability of the retail 'offer' that contribute to Camden's unique character
 - The need to include variety in retail provision (i.e. different sizes and types of units and both formal and informal market layouts) and shops that meet local peoples' needs.
- 2.53 The Planning Framework and the Council's Core Strategy (policy CS1, CS3 and CS7) confirm that the site (and Camden Town generally) is a suitable location for accommodating growth in retail floorspace.
- 2.54 Finally, the Council's draft Site Allocations DPD – Proposed Submission Document (March 2012) identifies the application site as Site 36: Hawley Wharf and 39-45 Kentish Road. The existing use of the site is noted as including Class B1, workshops, retail including market retail and residential uses. The proposed allocation of the site is for:
- “Mixed use development across the site which includes residential, retail (including market use) and other appropriate town centre uses alongside new or retained/improved employment floorspace, community uses and public spaces.”**
- 2.55 The DPD confirms that the site occupies a *strategically important position within Camden Town*. Furthermore, comprehensive redevelopment of the site should meet the council's aspirations for Camden Town Centre (policy CS7) *including the provision of replacement market retailing (policy DP11) as well as enhancing the retail offer of the town centre (policy CS7)*. Furthermore, retail and other town centre uses should be located within the town centre boundaries, particularly in the south western corner of the site adjoining Chalk Farm Road and the canal. The draft Site Allocations DPD states that a limited amount of food and drink uses may be suitable in this area. In relation to the retail element of any proposals the DPD states that it should include *a significant market component which will be important in integrating proposals with the surrounding activities and maintaining the eclectic character of this part of Camden Town*.
- 2.56 The application proposals conform to these policy requirements. Significantly they provide replacement market retail floorspace albeit comprised in a modern development but one which affords greater weather protection for visitors thereby improving the attraction. The scheme will include a diverse mixture of uses and traders comprised predominately within small units i.e. typically 15-50sqm. The range of unit sizes proposed will help to address the physical constraints imposed by the application site and to make the mechanics of the scheme work particularly in relation to distributing footfall across the development, managing traders and visitors expectations and fully utilising basement floorspace and units within the Canal Buildings and Chalk Farm Road.
- 2.57 The next section of this report examines the retail planning policy background against which the application proposals need to be judged.

3 RETAIL PLANNING POLICY

3.1 This section of the report provides a commentary on relevant national, regional and local retail planning policies against which the application proposals need to be considered (excluding site specific designations).

3.2 In this case, the development plan comprises the adopted Camden Core Strategy and Development Policies DPD's (November 2010), 'saved' Proposal LU1 of the Camden UDP (June 2006) together with the adopted London Plan (July 2011). In addition, there are a range of draft development plan documents which have reached various stages of formulation, the implications of which are also explored below. There have also been a number of Ministerial Statements on planning for economic growth and sustainable development. These Statements are material considerations in the determination of planning applications. The Government has also recently issued the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This section first examines current national retail planning policy.

a) NPPF

3.3 On the 27th March 2012, the Government published the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF builds upon the Ministerial Statements on *Planning for Growth* (March 2011) and *Positive Planning* (June 2011). The NPPF combines the government's economic, environmental and social planning policies. The NPPF revokes previous planning policy issued in the form of planning policy statements and guidance including PPS4 (*Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth*). However, DCLG has confirmed that the *Practice Guidance on need, impact and the sequential approach* (Practice Guidance) remains valid and relevant to the consideration of retail planning applications such as this.

3.4 The Ministerial foreword to the NPPF states that the purpose of planning is to help achieve sustainable development. Sustainable development is defined as ensuring 'that better lives for ourselves don't mean worse lives for future generations', whereas development means 'growth'.

3.5 Fundamentally, 'development that is sustainable should go ahead, without delay – a presumption in favour of sustainable development that is the basis for every plan, and every decision'.

3.6 Furthermore the NPPF states that, 'planning must not simply be about scrutiny. Planning must be a creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which we live our lives'.

3.7 The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development (paragraph 6). The NPPF states that there is three dimensions to sustainable development:

- **"An economic role – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy;**
- **A social role – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities; and**
- **An environmental role – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment."**

3.8 At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. In relation to decision making this means:

- Approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and
- Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date, granting permission unless:
 - any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or
 - specific policies in the Framework indicate development should be restricted.

3.9 Economic development is defined in the Annex as ‘B Use Classes, public and community uses and main town centre uses (but excluding housing development).’ Main town centre uses in turn are described (consistently with the government’s predecessor to the NPPF as set out in PPS4) as, ‘retail development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment facilities the more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, night clubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres, and bingo halls); offices; and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concerts halls, hotels and conference facilities).’

3.10 The Government proposes to deliver sustainable development by securing economic growth in order to create jobs and prosperity (paragraph 18). Indeed, paragraph 19 confirms that:

“The government is committed to ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth. Planning should operate to encourage and not act as an impediment to sustainable growth. Therefore significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth through the planning system.”

3.11 Paragraph 21 advises that ‘investment in business should not be over-burdened by the combined requirements of planning policy expectations. Planning policies should recognise and seek to address potential barriers to investment’. In particular the NPPF emphasises:

“support existing business sectors, taking account of whether they are expanding or contracting and, where possible, identify and plan for new or emerging sectors likely to locate in their area. Policies should be flexible enough to accommodate needs not anticipated in the plan and to allow rapid response to changes in economic circumstances.”

3.12 The Government’s planning policies for town centres are set out at paragraphs 23 – 27. The NPPF, like its PPS4 predecessor, directs new retail development to town centres. Proposals outside town centres and not in accordance with an up to date development plan should be subject to sequential and impact testing. Accordingly, the application site is the preferred location for new retail development and other forms of main town centre uses.

3.13 Paragraph 23 recognises that it is important ‘that needs for retail...uses are met in full and are not compromised by limited site availability’ in relation to plan making. The same principal must reasonably be applicable to decision taking.

3.14 The sequential test now applies to all main town centre uses outside town centres or not in accordance with the development regardless of the size of a proposal. Under the old guidance (PPS4) the test was only applicable to proposals of 200sqm or more. The only exception relates to small scale rural development.

3.15 In respect of impact, paragraph 26 states:

“When assessing applications for retail, leisure and office development outside of town centres, which are not in accordance with an up to date Local Plan, local planning authorities should require an impact assessment if the development is over a proportionate, locally set floorspace threshold (if there is no locally set threshold, the default threshold is 2,500sqm). This should include assessment of:

- **The impact of the proposal on existing, committed and planned public and private investment in a centre or centres in the catchment area of the proposal; and**
- **The impact of the proposal on town centre vitality and viability, including local consumer choice and trade in the town centre and wider area, up to five years from the time the application was made. For major schemes where the full impact will not be realised in five years, the impact should also be assessed up to ten years from the time the application is made.”**

3.16 There is no requirement in the NPPF for town centre proposals to be tested in terms of retail impact – town centres are the preferred location for new retail development.

3.17 In relation to plan making, the NPPF advises local authorities to have a clear understanding of business needs (paragraph 160). In respect of decision taking:

“Local planning authorities should look for solutions rather than problems, and decision-takers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible. Local planning authorities should work proactively with the applicant to secure developments that improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area.” (paragraph 187)

3.18 In relation to markets, paragraph 23 of the NPPF states:

“retain and enhance existing markets and, where appropriate, re-introduce or create new ones, ensuring that markets remain attractive and competitive.”

3.19 The proposals will create a significant number of small retail units suitable to meet the needs of local residents, visitors and traders. There is currently a long waiting list of traders wishing to take units/stalls at Camden Canal and Stables markets. As evidenced earlier, the application site has been specifically and consistently allocated for mixed use development including retail uses in various Council policy documents. Furthermore, the design of and the mix and juxtaposition of uses comprising the proposed development has evolved from the established character of this part of Camden Town – the proposed development respects that established character but at the same time aims to provide a vibrant new type of attraction that will make a major positive and beneficial contribution to the vitality and viability of Camden Town. The proposals aim to strike a balance between meeting the needs of local residents (for example, through the provision of flexible community space, new residential development and local service shops and a new school) and visitors.

- 3.20 In summary, the draft NPPF sets out a strong support for planning proposals which accord with an up to date development plan and which deliver new sustainable economic development through the creation of new retail and leisure development in town centres.

Ministerial Statement on 'Planning for Growth'

- 3.21 *Planning for Growth* (Ministerial Statement by Greg Clark, 23rd March 2011) was issued as part of a range of measures introduced by the Budget. It is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. The Statement establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable economic development. The Statement sets out a clear direction that planning applications which promote economic growth (such as the application proposals) should generally be permitted except where proposals would compromise the key sustainable development principles set out in national planning policy. The Statement refers to the then forthcoming draft National Planning Policy Framework and states that local planning authorities will be expected to:

- Plan positively for new development
- Deal promptly and favourably with applications that comply with up-to-date plans and national planning policies
- Wherever possible to approve applications where plans are absent, out of date, silent or indeterminate

- 3.22 Furthermore the Statement requires local planning authorities when deciding whether to grant planning permission should support enterprise and facilitate housing, economic and other forms of sustainable development. Where relevant local authorities should:

- Consider fully the importance of national planning policies aimed at fostering economic growth and employment, given the need to ensure a return to robust growth after the recent recession.
- Take into account the need to maintain a flexible and responsive supply of land for key sectors, including housing
- Consider the range of likely economic, environmental and social benefits of proposals; including long term and indirect benefits such as increased consumer choice, more viable communities and more robust local economies (which may, where relevant, include matters such as job creation and business productivity)
- Be sensitive to the fact that local economies are subject to change and so take a positive approach to development where new economic data suggests that prior assessments of needs are no longer up-to-date
- Ensure that they do not impose unnecessary burdens on development

- 3.23 The above advice is particularly pertinent to the application proposals. The proposals seek flexible Class A floorspace to enable the development to respond to prevailing economic conditions and also demand expressed by traders. The market retail nature of the proposals means that flexibility is key to the success of the scheme however in order to provide the Council with greater certainty, the Applicant is prepared to limit the extent of floorspace within the Canal buildings and railway arches in terms of the mix use uses provided as described earlier.

- 3.24 The Statement advises local planning authorities to give appropriate weight to the need to support economic recovery and those applications that secure sustainable growth should be treated favourably.

- 3.25 The proposals have a number of important economic benefits including:

- Creation of an extensive number and range of local employment opportunities (see Economic Study)
- Attract new businesses/traders to 'start-up' whilst simultaneously providing an opportunity for existing businesses to grow, retaining them within Camden Town and thereby contributing to the continued economic prosperity of the town
- Retention of local retail expenditure
- Promote tourism within Camden Town by providing significant investment in upgraded market facilities maximising the sites' canal side setting and in the process maintaining the character and attraction of Camden Town
- Provide an increased range and choice of shops and services aimed at meeting the day to day needs of local residents

3.26 These are the types of benefits arising from economic development proposals such as these which are recognised by the Ministerial Statement as being clearly capable of stimulating growth in the local economy. Accordingly, such benefits should weigh heavily in favour of permitting the proposals. Furthermore, this growth can be sustained without harm to the established and unique character of Camden Town. The proposals reinforce the established character of the northern part of the town centre through the provision of small flexible units for a range of Class A purposes.

Ministerial Statement 'Positive Planning'

3.27 The Ministerial Statement by Gregg Clark (June 2011) establishes a clear 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. This presumption forms the cornerstone of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Furthermore, the Minister stated that the presumption 'will help with the country's economic recovery by ensuring proposals in line with Local Plans get approved without delay'. Furthermore, development will not be allowed where it is clearly in conflict with the environmental and other safeguards in the NPPF.

b) The London Plan

3.28 The London Plan was recently adopted by the Mayor in July 2011. The Plan sets out the planning policy basis for retail development and other town centre uses in London. The following paragraphs briefly explore the policy tests applicable to new town centre development.

3.29 The overarching objectives of the London Plan are:

- A city that meets the challenges of economic and population growth
- An internationally competitive and successful city
- A city of diverse, strong, secure and accessible neighbourhoods
- A city that delights the senses
- A city that becomes a world leader in improving the environment
- A city where it is easy, safe and convenient for everyone to access jobs, opportunities and facilities

3.30 The Plan identifies the key forces driving change in London as population growth and economic and employment change. Increases in population will result in simultaneous increases in available retail expenditure and additional demand for new retail facilities within London. In this respect, the application proposals will help to fulfil part of that need through the provision of additional retail floorspace that is attractive to both local residents and visitors.

3.31 To meet this growing requirement, the London Plan establishes a network of town centres within its overall strategy, which can inter-relate with each other and the specific sub-regions that they

serve. The London Plan defines five broad types of town centre within London, namely; International Centres, Metropolitan Centres; Major Centres, District Centres and Neighbourhood and Local Centres. Camden Town continues to be defined as a Major Centre.

3.32 Policy 2.15 states that town centres will provide:

- The main foci beyond the Central Activities Zone for commercial development and intensification, including residential development
- The structure for sustaining and improving a competitive choice of goods and services conveniently accessible to all Londoners, particularly by public transport, cycling and walking
- Together with local neighbourhoods, the main foci for most Londoner's sense of place and local identity within the capital

3.33 Development proposals in town centres are required to conform with policies 4.7 and 4.8 and the following criteria set out in policy 2.15 (a) to (h):

- Sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of the centre
- Accommodate economic and/or housing growth through intensification and selective expansion in appropriate locations
- Support and enhance the competitiveness, quality and diversity of town centre retail, leisure, arts and cultural, other consumer services and public services
- Be in scale with the centre
- Promote access by public transport, walking and cycling
- Promote safety, security and lifetime neighbourhoods
- Contribute towards an enhanced environment, urban greening, public realm and links to green infrastructure
- Reduce delivery, servicing and road user conflict

3.34 The supporting text to the policy recognises a wide range of uses will enhance the vitality and viability of town centres. Leisure uses including Class A3/A5 uses and cinemas contribute to London's evening economy and ensure that town centres remain lively beyond shopping hours.

3.35 Camden Town remains identified as a 'major' centre within the hierarchy of London town centres in the London Plan. Annex 2 of the Plan provides strategic guidance on policy directions for individual town centres, including their potential for growth. Camden Town is identified as a regional/sub-regional night time economy cluster with a 'medium' policy direction meaning centres '*with moderate levels of demand for retail, leisure or office floorspace and with physical and public transport to accommodate it*'.

3.36 Policy 4.7 establishes a series of principles against which proposals for new retail and town centre development should be considered against. These include:

- The scale of retail, commercial, cultural and leisure development should be related to the size, role and function of a town centre and its catchment
- Retail, commercial, cultural and leisure development should be focused on sites within town centres, or if no in-centre sites are available, on sites on the edges of centres that are, or can be, well integrated with the existing centre and public transport
- Proposals for new, or extensions to existing, edge or out of centre development will be subject to an assessment of impact.

3.37 The application proposals are consistent with the thrust of policy 4.7.

3.38 Furthermore, policy 4.8 requires local planning authorities to take a proactive approach to planning for retailing by:

- Bringing forward capacity for additional comparison goods retailing
- Support convenience retailing
- Provide a policy framework for maintaining, managing and enhancing local shopping facilities and to develop policies to prevent the loss of retail and related facilities that provide essential convenience and specialist shopping
- Identify areas under served in local convenience shopping facilities and services
- Support the range of London's markets, including street, farmers' and, where relevant, strategic markets, complementing other measures to improve their management, enhance their offer and contribute to vitality of town centres

3.39 The supporting text identifies (paragraph 4.48) larger centres as being appropriate locations for accommodating much of the growth in comparison goods retail expenditure and floorspace. The availability of accessible local shops and related uses meeting local needs for goods and services is also important in securing 'lifetime neighbourhoods' – places that are welcoming, accessible and inviting to everyone. The application proposals have been designed in the spirit of this policy objective.

3.40 Paragraph 4.49 recognises that street and farmer's markets can make valuable and distinctive contributions to meeting Londoners varied dietary requirements and extending competitive choice and access to a range of goods, as well as contributing to the vitality and wider offer of town centres. The application proposals provide flexible outdoor community space where it is proposed to host a produce market which will add to the vibrancy of the area and provide a new attraction within the town of benefit to local people.

3.41 Policy 4.9 concerns small shops. The policy seeks contributions through planning obligations from large retail developments for the provision of affordable shop units suitable for small or independent retailers. The supporting justification set out at paragraph 4.51 states:

“The Mayor is committed to supporting a dynamic, competitive and diverse retail sector and supporting small and medium sizes enterprises. In parts of London, small shops are in short supply and affordability is a key concern, particularly for independent retailers and small enterprises. In considering proposals for large retail developments (typically over 2,500sqm), the Mayor and boroughs may impose planning conditions or seek to negotiate planning obligations where appropriate, feasible and viable, to mitigate the loss of, and/or provide or support affordable shop units suitable for small or independent traders.”

3.42 The Class A floorspace proposed is predominately in the form of small units for market traders thereby preserving the status quo of the existing market however the new floorspace is to be largely provided as part of a purpose built development thereby extending the all weather appeal of the market. The proposed scheme, consistent with policy and demand expressed by traders, will provide a range of unit sizes which will be attractive to a variety and mix of traders. The overwhelming character will comprise small units typically 15-50sqm in size.

c) Camden Development Plan Documents

3.43 The Camden UDP was adopted by the Council in June 2006. Until the 8th November 2010 the UDP was the operative development plan for the Borough. Since then, with the exception of the site specific proposals described earlier, the Camden Core Strategy and Development policies DPD's have superseded the UDP and now comprise the development plan, against which the

application proposals need to be tested. The evidence base underpinning the relevant retail policies is also explored.

- 3.44 The Camden Core Strategy covers the period 2010-2025 and includes a range of policies relevant to the consideration of the application proposals. Policy CS1 sets out the distribution of growth within the Borough. The policy seeks sustainable development which makes the most efficient use of limited land and buildings. The policy directs new development to be concentrated in 'growth areas' and other 'appropriate development at other highly accessible locations' including Camden Town. Paragraph 1.15 expands upon the policy stating that 'these areas are considered to be particularly suitable locations for uses that are likely to lead to a significant increase in travel demand (for example, retail, offices, leisure and tourism), although the scale of development at these locations is expected to be less than that in the growth areas'.
- 3.45 Specific sites and opportunities for growth are being progressed via the Council's Site Allocations DPD (Proposed Submission Document, March 2012).
- 3.46 Policy CS3 of the Core Strategy provides additional guidance on the other *highly accessible areas*. Paragraph 3.3 confirms that:

"The boundaries of the Borough's town centres are drawn fairly tightly around their main retail areas and, with the exception of Camden Town, there are generally limited development opportunities within designated centres themselves...Camden Town is expected to be the location of a significant amount of additional shop floorspace over the lifetime of the Core Strategy..."

- 3.47 Paragraph 7.7 of the Core Strategy specifically identifies Hawley Wharf (part of the application site) as an opportunity to deliver new retail floorspace. The supporting justification confirms that the precise quantum and type of retail floorspace provided on such sites will be subject to detailed site specific assessments and identified in the Camden Site Allocations DPD. The draft Site Allocations document does not however specify the proportion of floorspace to be put to particular uses nor does it impose a floorspace cap. Nevertheless, these are matters which the Council will have had to consider in allocating the site.
- 3.48 Furthermore, it is clear from the Council's Site Allocations DPD Preferred Options that the application site is the main site within Camden Town which is envisaged to accommodate new retail development. Furthermore, the supporting justification makes reference to policy CS7 of the Core Strategy which relates to the Council's strategy for promoting Camden's centres and shops, including the provision of additional retail floorspace. The Core Strategy recognises a need for between 27,000sqm and 31,000sqm new retail floorspace in the borough by 2026, in addition to that planned for King's Cross and St. Pancras. This is significant and the application proposals albeit providing a different type of retail experience are clearly well placed in terms of helping to meet the identified need for new retail floorspace in the Borough. Policy CS7 states:

**"The Council will promote the following distribution of retail growth across the borough:
b) in the range of 20-30,000sqm additional retail at Euston and Camden Town, with the majority expected to take place at Euston.**

We will apply a sequential approach to retail and other town centre uses outside of these areas to support the network of centres:...

We will also support:

- **limited provision of small shops outside centres to meet local needs;**
- **Protecting and enhancing Camden's centres**

The Council will promote successful and vibrant centres throughout the borough to serve the needs of residents, workers and visitors by:

- e) **seeking to protect and enhance the role and unique character of each of Camden's centres, ensuring that new development is of an appropriate scale and character for the centre in which it is located;**
- f) **providing for, and maintaining, a range of shops, services, food and drink and entertainment and other suitable uses to provide variety, vibrancy and choice;**
- g) **protecting and promoting small and independent shops, and resisting the loss of shops where this would cause harm to the character and function of a centre;**
- h) **making sure that food, drink and entertainment uses do not have a harmful impact on residents and the local area, and focusing such uses in Camden's Central London Frontages, town Centres and the King's Cross Opportunity Area;**
- i) **supporting and protecting Camden's local shops, markets and areas of specialist shopping;**
- j) **pursuing the individual planning objectives for each centre, as set out below, including through the delivery of environmental, design, transport and public safety measures."**

3.49 Paragraph 7.12 confirms that:

"The Council will require an impact assessment for large scale retail development proposals that are not in accordance with the approach in this Core Strategy and

- **Would be in an edge of centre or out of centre location, or**
- **Would be in an existing centre and could have the potential to have a harmful impact upon other centres."**

3.50 The application proposals are in scale with the role and function of Camden Town and given their unique nature would not have trading consequences for other centres. Indeed, as evidenced in our review of the draft NPPF, the government is no longer seeking to impose a requirement on town centre development to consider impact upon centres.

3.51 In relation to centre specific planning objectives for Camden Town, the third bullet point relates to the protection of the special character and attractiveness of Camden Town through the provision of small shops and states:

Development schemes in the upper part of Camden High Street/markets area (north of Inverness Street and south of the railway bridge) will be expected to provide small shop units

consistent with this part of the centre, which is characterised by small ground floor premises. Larger units in this location would be harmful to the character and diversity of Camden Town, and to the viability of small, independent traders. As a guide, units larger than 100sqm will not be permitted in this part of the centre. Larger shop units will be supported in the southern part of Camden High Street”.

3.52 The policy is clearly designed to prevent high street multi nationals occupying large shops in this part of the town centre. Large shops are defined as comprising units in excess of 100sqm. In contrast the application proposals are designed specifically to support small and unique businesses that maintain but evolve the existing character of the markets.

3.53 In terms of retail policies the Camden Development Policies DPD includes policies relating to *helping and promoting small and independent shops* (policy DP10), *markets* (policy DP11) and *supporting strong centres and managing the impact of food, drink, entertainment and other town centre uses* (policy DP12). These are duly examined below.

3.54 Policy DP10 states that:

“The council will encourage the provision of small shop premises suitable for small and independent businesses by:

- a) expecting large retail developments to include a proportion of smaller units;**
- b) attaching conditions to planning permissions for retail developments to remove their ability to combine units into larger premises, where appropriate;**
- c) encouraging the occupation of shops by independent businesses and the provision of affordable premises....”**

3.55 The supporting text (paragraph 10.4) to the policy explains that:

“The council will expect the provision of small shop units as part of large retail developments, provided that this is considered appropriate to the centre. The character of our centres and the council’s general approach to them is set out in policy CS7 of Camden’s Core Strategy. Whilst the need for the provision of small units will vary on a case by case basis, we will consider the need for the provision of small units for schemes of 5,000sqm of retail or more. As a guide small units are considered to be those that are less than 100sqm gross floorspace, although we will take into account the character and size of shops in the local area when assessing the appropriate scale of new premises...”

3.56 It is clear therefore that the policy is applicable to the current application proposals given the scale of retail floorspace proposed. The application proposals will provide small units suitable for a variety and mix of traders. The majority of units will typically comprise just 15-50sqm or less. The supporting text also states that the Council may, where appropriate, impose conditions to prevent the amalgamation of smaller units to create large shops units. The supporting text continues by stating:

“...The centre-specific policies that support Core Strategy policy CS7 set out locations where the Council will expect the provision of small units where this is relevant to the character and function of particular centres (for example to the north of Camden High Street), and also where the provision of larger units will be

supported (for example at Kilburn High Road and to the south of Camden High Street).

- 3.57 Policy DP11 concerns the contribution that markets make to the vitality and viability of the Borough's town centres. The Camden Town markets (including the Camden Canal Market) are noted as major visitor attractions within the Borough. Policy DP11 should be read in conjunction with the advice provided by policy CS7 of the Camden Core Strategy as described above. Policy DP11 states:

"The Council will promote and protect markets in Camden by:

- a) resisting the permanent loss of market uses unless comparable replacement provision is made or there is no demand for continued market use;**
- b) taking into account the character of the existing market when assessing proposals for the refurbishment and redevelopment of markets;**
- c) supporting new markets that will not cause individual or cumulative harm to the local area**

When assessing planning applications for new markets we will consider

- d) their effect on local residents and environmental conditions;**
- e) their impact on transportation and pedestrian movement, including the effect on access and circulation, highways, parking and servicing;**
- f) their effect on local centres and shopping provision;**
- g) the storage and disposals of litter and refuse;**
- h) community safety and noise; and**
- i) toilet provision"**

- 3.58 The supporting text to the policy set out at paragraph 11.3 states that:

"The character of a market depends on many factors including the type, range and quality of goods sold, the size of stalls and pitches and its environmental quality. Changes to markets can affect their character and consequently the character and attraction of the local area or centre. Where a market is refurbished or redeveloped we will take into account its existing character, and its importance to the character, vitality and viability of the centre or area in which it is located. We will expect proposals to consider and, where appropriate, reflect this character."

- 3.59 The Applicant will run and manage the proposed development in the same manner as the existing Camden Canal Market albeit the replacement market will be largely contained within a purpose built building. The previous section of this report has explained the management style deployed in the existing market which ensures a high quality mix and range of traders and goods and excellent security.
- 3.60 Finally, policy DP12 relates to food and drink uses which have the potential to impact upon the local area:

“The council will ensure that the development of shopping, services, food, drink, entertainment and other town centre uses does not cause harm to the character, function and vitality and viability of a centre, the local area or the amenity of neighbours. We will consider:

- a) the effect of non-retail development on shopping provision and the character of the centre in which it is located;**
- b) the cumulative impact of food, drink and entertainment uses taking into account the number and distribution of existing uses and non-implemented planning permissions, and any record of harm caused by such uses;**
- c) the impact of the development on nearby residents uses and amenity, and any prejudice to future residential development;**
- d) parking, stopping and servicing and the effect of the development on ease of movement on the footpath;**
- e) noise and vibration generated either inside or outside of the site;**
- f) fumes likely to be generated and the potential for effective and unobtrusive ventilation;**
- g) the potential for crime and anti-social behaviour, including littering;**

To manage potential harm to amenity or the local area, the council will, in appropriate cases use planning conditions and obligations to address the following issues....”

- 3.61 Paragraph 12.6 of the supporting text confirms that the Council will not grant planning permission for development that it considers would cause:

“...harm to the character, amenity, function, vitality and viability of a centre or local area. We consider that harm is caused when an impact is at an unacceptable level, in terms of trade/turnover; vitality and viability; the character, quality and attractiveness of a centre; levels of vacancy; crime and antisocial behaviour; the range of services provided; and a centre’s character and role in the social and economic life of the local community. We will consider the cumulative impact of additional shopping floorspace (whether in a centre or not) on the viability of other centres, and the cumulative impact of non-shopping uses on the character of the area.”

- 3.62 The supporting text mirrors many of the components of the impact test prescribed by NPPF in respect of retail developments which are not in a centre and do not conform to an up to date development plan. In this case, the development plan specifically envisages mixed use development including retail uses on the application site.
- 3.63 The Core Strategy and Development Policies are supplemented by a range of SPDs including those which give specific advice in relation to food, drink and entertainment uses in Camden Town. These are briefly examined below.

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- 3.64 Camden has prepared a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in respect of food, drink and entertainment uses in Camden Town (February 2008). The adopted SPD provides area guidance on how the policies in the Camden UDP (since superseded by the Council’s Core Strategy and Development policies) should be implemented in relation to Camden Town.

3.65 The SPD was subject to public consultation and therefore its policies should be afforded appropriate weight in the determination of planning applications. The SPD draws together the Council's planning and licensing policies relating to food, drink and entertainment activities. The introduction to the SPG confirms that:

“Camden Town is the largest of the Borough’s town centres and it has a highly visible night time entertainment scene centred around its market and music venues...”

3.66 Furthermore, paragraph 1.2 of the guidance states that:

“The Council wants to build on Camden Town’s success and strong identity to develop a unique, vibrant, safe and diverse centre, which offers something for everyone throughout the day and evening, whilst also creating an environment which provides a high quality standard of amenity for residents”

3.67 The guidance covers the full range of retail and entertainment uses. The key objectives of the guidance include:

- Protecting and Enhancing Camden Town centre
- Manage the location and concentration of food, drink and entertainment uses
- Guiding development to accessible locations
- Making Camden Town safe for everyone
- Protecting the environmental the character of the area

3.68 The guidance recognises that a number of conflicts can occur between these key policy objectives and the purpose of the guidance is therefore to strike a balance between competing aims to ensure that any negative impacts are minimised whilst maintaining varied and vibrant retail uses in entertainment areas. Paragraph 5.14 confirms that this approach allows for “controlled diversification and enhancement of food, drink and entertainment activities in Camden Town”. Key criteria in assessing the acceptability or otherwise of planning applications for food/drink and entertainment uses include:

- The proposals should lie within the area where food, drink and entertainment uses may be acceptable;
- The proposals should conform with the criteria for the particular street frontage; and
- The proposals should not create unacceptable harm

3.69 Map 2 appended to the SPD shows the broad location of predominately residential areas. Parts of the application site are situated in close to existing residential areas (Areas B, C and D) however it is significant that those areas are screened from the application site by both the presence of the canal and the railway viaducts. The effect of these barriers is to help minimise any impacts arising from the application proposals in relation to the operation of food and drink premises including restaurants which are predominately confined to Area A.

3.70 Paragraph 5.6 of the guidance notes that some types of food, drink and entertainment activity may create greater impacts than others. For example larger establishments that focus on serving alcohol may generate major impacts than smaller premises that focus of serving food e.g. cafes and restaurants. The application proposals do not include any premises where the sole purpose is to serve alcohol (i.e. Class A4 uses).

- 3.71 Furthermore, the guidance goes on to state that it is considered that “while there is some scope for additional restaurants/cafes in Camden Town, new, expanded or extended bars, pubs, clubs and takeaways may not be appropriate if they are likely to generate significant negative impacts”.
- 3.72 Map 2 that accompanies the SPD shows four different types of street frontage including the main shopping frontage (formerly primary), environmental frontages, other frontages and areas and predominantly residential areas within Camden Town. The application site is shown as a main shopping frontage to Chalk Farm Road where new food, drink and entertainment uses may be acceptable up to a maximum of 20% of each frontage with no more than two consecutive uses for non-retail (Class A1) purposes. The remainder the application site (Area A) is designated as ‘other frontages and areas’. In such locations the SPD advises that new food, drink and entertainment uses may be acceptable. Impacts are tested against the criteria set out in Appendix D.
- 3.73 The Council is currently in the process of preparing revised supplementary planning guidance - Camden Planning Guidance. This will replace the existing 2006 guidance. Stage 1 of the document was adopted by the Council on 6th April 2011. Stage 2, which includes policies relating to retail and town centres was out to consultation until 7th July 2011. The document includes guidance relating to:
- Specific centres
 - Small shops
 - Controlling the impact of food, drink and entertainment uses
- 3.74 In terms of the range of uses acceptable within the Borough’s town centres, the guidance adopts three types of frontage in respect of Camden Town:
- Core shopping frontages
 - Secondary frontages and areas; and
 - Sensitive frontages
- 3.75 The Chalk Farm Road frontage to the application site is defined as a core shopping frontage, with the land currently occupied by the market (to the rear) identified as a secondary frontage. The frontage of the site to Castlehaven Road is allocated as a sensitive frontage.
- 3.76 The guidance sets limitations on the types of uses acceptable to each frontage so as to minimise potential conflicts with sensitive neighbouring uses. In this respect the application proposals focus the majority of Class A1 (retail) and Class A3/A5 (restaurants and takeaways) uses to the defined primary and secondary frontages (i.e. Areas A and D of the application site). More limited ‘local’ retail floorspace (Class A1) is proposed to Castlehaven Road. All of these uses are located primarily within the defined town centre of Camden Town. Importantly, the proposed development will maintain and increase the amount of Class A1 retail floorspace within the core shopping frontage (Chalk Farm Road) through the retention and conversion of existing buildings and their incorporation into the scheme. The market area will similarly provide an increased amount of floorspace in Class A1 use comprised of small units with a range of food and drink uses within the market building providing a mix of uses and facilities that are necessary to provide an attractive environment to visitors to the market. Furthermore, Area C will provide flexible outdoor local space space for community use, produce market and informal recreation. In summary the proposed mix and location of the various town centre uses are consistent with the guidance provided in the Council’s draft Camden Planning Guidance.

- 3.77 Having provided an overview of the relevant retail planning policies it is now necessary to examine the network of established shopping centres within Camden and in particular to examine the unique and vibrant mix of uses that comprise Camden Town and the 'fit' of the application proposals.

4 NETWORK OF CENTRES AND CAPACITY

- 4.1 The purpose of this section of the report is to provide a review of the existing network of shopping centres and patterns of shopping within Camden Borough and to examine the capacity within those centres for new retail development.
- 4.2 A number of shopping studies and surveys have been undertaken in recent years, both specific to Camden Town and the Borough as a whole. In particular the most relevant studies are those prepared by way of background documents to support the Camden UDP and the Camden Core Strategy, namely the Camden Retail Study published in November 2004 and updated in October 2008 together with the report entitled *The Role the Markets Play in the Vitality and Viability of Camden Town* published in October 2006. The reports were prepared by Roger Tym and Partners. These studies provide a useful background in terms of illustrating the attraction of Camden Town as a major shopping, tourist and entertainment centre. The studies illustrate the wide attraction of Camden Town.
- 4.3 It is perhaps helpful to first examine the nature and range of town centres within the Borough and their position within the established retail hierarchy in the Central London sub region. The London Plan establishes a London wide hierarchy of centres. Centres are defined in order of their role and function as international, metropolitan, major, district and neighbourhood centres. Camden contains a range of centres, the largest centre being Camden Town, which is defined as a major centre. Nevertheless, it is important to recognise that the Camden Town markets are a major tourist attraction and make a substantial contribution to the local economy. Other centres include Kentish Town (district centre), Swiss Cottage/Finchley Road (district centre), West Hampstead (district centre), Hampstead (district centre) and Kilburn (major centre).
- 4.4 Kilburn is partially located within the London Borough of Camden and Brent. Although Kilburn is designated as a major centre on a similar par to Camden Town, the retail offer of the two towns could not be more different. Kilburn provides a traditional range and mix of shops and services, including a significant number of major high street national retailers, whereas Camden is characterised by a high proportion of independent traders and markets.
- 4.5 The London Plan states that regular health checks will be undertaken to ensure that each centre is performing its role and function within the retail hierarchy. The Mayor published the latest series of health checks in December 2009 (London Wide Town Centre Health Checks Analysis Report). The health checks are comparable to those undertaken by the GLA in 2006/7 and those previously prepared by the London Planning Advisory Committee (LPAC) in 1994 and 1999/2000. The analysis is based upon research undertaken over the period 2000-2009 and draws upon various sources of data, including that produced by Goad etc. The Mayor's health checks are largely quantitative in nature, but provide a useful benchmark against which improvements/decline over time in retail rents, yields and vacancy rates etc can be measured.
- 4.6 Similarly, health checks were undertaken as part of the Camden Retail Study in order to assess the vitality and viability of centres within the borough and establish the need for additional retail and other town centre floorspace within each centre. Similarly, RPS undertook survey work in both 2007 and 2010 to ascertain the health of all the defined centres within the Borough which confirm the findings of the Borough retail study.

- 4.7 The following paragraphs draw upon our research together with the findings of the Borough Retail Study in order to inform the 'fit' of the application proposals and to determine the extent of which other centres within the borough may be impacted upon by the application proposals. As the previous section of this report has explained, the application proposals are located within a defined town centre where there is a strong policy support for new retail floorspace- a preferred location for the type and scale of retail floorspace proposed. There is no requirement for the proposals to be tested in terms of retail impact although this report seeks to adopt a robust approach and therefore draws broad conclusions regarding the potential effects of the proposals relation to matters of scale and local impacts.
- 4.8 The Council's report, The Role the Markets Play and the Vitality and Viability of Camden Town provides detailed background information in relation to the operation of each of the markets primarily based upon survey work (see below). The health checks confirm that Camden Town is unlike any other centre within the Borough in terms of its overall retail offer which predominantly comprises a mix of independent fashion retailers, many of whom trade from the six markets within the town centre, namely:
- Electric Market;
 - Inverness Street Market;
 - Camden Lock Market;
 - Camden Market;
 - Camden Canal Market (the application site); and
 - Stables Market (also owned by the Applicant).
- 4.9 Each of the markets is different in terms of scale, character and shopping experience. Most of the markets retail offer is underpinned by the sale of fashion and clothing goods. The market units are much smaller than traditional high street shops and therefore there is a wide range of traders represented with the town, for example many market traders operate from very small units (e.g. <20sqm) which is significantly smaller than the 100sqm threshold defined by Camden's development plan policy as 'small'. The markets provide flexible units in terms of their size (i.e. units can be merged and sub-divided) and use according to demand expressed by traders.
- 4.10 The application proposals will maintain the established character of the existing market where the predominant size of units created are very small. These will be supplemented by a limited number of larger units which will be of a similar style and nature as those found elsewhere within the Camden Town markets. This mix of units is necessary to ensure the attractiveness of the scheme to a range of traders and also to address the physical constraints of developing the application site, particularly the need to secure viable and productive use of basements and upper floors. This is particularly important in respect of the existing Chalk Farm Road units which it is proposed to connect to horizontally and vertically thereby maximising the full potential of this existing historic floorspace which has been incorporated into the scheme at the request of planning officers.
- 4.11 The proposed mix of units will help to fulfil demand from traders enabling them grow their business. Indeed, in common with other markets, it is important to provide a diverse mix of units in order to attract suitable traders and provide an interesting and stimulating environment for visitors to the market. Indeed, this is consistent with the evolution of other markets in Camden

Town which have themselves undergone considerable transformation in recent years where a mix of unit sizes is provided but where the overall character is formed of very small units.

- 4.12 In addition Camden Town has a traditional high street retail offer comprised of a limited number of high street multiple national retailers. Such outlets are predominately focused to the south of the Camden underground station. The town centre is characterised by the presence of the markets and independent shop fascias. The centre is noted as being at its busiest during weekends when considerable numbers of visitors are drawn to the town. Indeed the centre is within the top 5 tourist attractions by visitor numbers.
- 4.13 There are few opportunities within Camden Town on which to locate new retail development, the application site represents the most significant opportunity albeit achieved through redevelopment of existing uses. There are very few vacant units within the primary shopping frontage of the town centre (to the north) and where vacancies do occur these are generally short lived and are often the result of refurbishment works pending the arrival of a new tenant. Indeed, in the markets there is a long waiting list of traders seeking representation.
- 4.14 Vacancies to the south of the Camden Town underground station are more prevalent as you travel towards Mornington Crescent. This area of the town centre comprises secondary shopping frontage and is less attractive to potential retailers and other users. Indeed the focus of activity within the town centre lies firmly around the Camden underground station and Camden Lock and Stables markets. These are the principal attractors of the centre.
- 4.15 In contrast, other centres with the exception of Kilburn perform a more local shopping role distinct from that of Camden Town. Centres such as Swiss Cottage and West Hampstead provide a limited range of national multiple retailers selling comparison goods. They predominantly perform a convenience/top-up shopping function. No other centres comprise markets comparable in nature to those of Camden Town although there are a number of small fruit and vegetable and indoor clothing markets similar to what you would expect to find in most small shopping centres. In this respect it is clear that the application proposals would have no direct consequences for other centres proximate to Camden Town given the qualitative differences in the retail offer and trading environment. The application proposals will maintain the character of north Camden Town i.e. a market led retail development comprised of small units.
- 4.16 In contrast Hampstead provides a specialist boutique type of retail offer, providing high quality goods together with a range of food and drink establishments which contribute to its character and overall vitality and viability.
- 4.17 Chapter 4 of the Camden Retail Study provides a review of the profile of visitors to Camden Town amongst other centres. This is based upon empirical research in the form of an on street survey (conducted in September 2003) specially commissioned for the purposes of the assessment. RPS considers that the survey findings remain valid today given the character of Camden Town has not changed. Although the survey only conducted 100 interviews within each centre it nevertheless is a useful guide to informing visitor patterns.
- 4.18 Significantly, the survey results illustrate the wide appeal that Camden Town has across London as a whole. Just 39% of respondents were from the Borough. Significantly 25% of people were from outside London and the UK. In terms of the main reason for visiting Camden Town, there was a fairly even split (47%/53%) between those undertaking shopping and non-shopping

activities. 89% of those interviewed did not consider Camden Town as their main centre for comparison goods shopping purposes. This confirms Camden's specialist retail offer mainly in the form of markets selling clothing and fashion accessories and as an entertainment/leisure destination. Indeed 18% of those visiting Camden Town stated the primary reason was to visit the markets. The concluding remarks set out in paragraph 4.68 of the Retail Study state:

"The survey shows Camden Town is a centre that attracts proportionately far more visitors from elsewhere in the UK and from abroad than any other surveyed centre in Camden or Islington. Camden Town also has a fairly even split, by visitor numbers, between convenience and comparison expenditure and a larger proportion (28%) of visitors travelling by tube than any other Camden or Islington centre in the survey.

The centre's strength derives from comparison and A3 expenditure and leisure activities. Of the eight centres included in the Visitor survey, Camden Town is proportionately the most popular for indoor leisure activities and the second most popular for meeting in cafes, bars and restaurants..."

4.19 The need for additional retail floorspace is underpinned by the findings of a household survey conducted across a wide area centred upon Camden Borough, stretching from Kilburn in the west to Islington in the east. The survey was undertaken in September 2003 and consisted of 1,000 interviews. The principal findings of the survey in terms of shopping patterns are considered to remain relevant today having regard to any new significant retail developments that may have occurred within the interim period. The study area is split into eight homogenous zones with Camden Town forming part of zone 2.

4.20 Overall, the survey findings point to Camden Town having only a 5% share of comparison goods shopping trips drawn from the study area. The purpose here is not to repeat those findings in detail but rather to draw upon any conclusions relevant to the consideration of the application proposals. Inflows of retail expenditure which are particularly important to Camden Town and are measured by the on-street shopper survey.

4.21 Paragraph 6.5 of the Camden Retail Study (2008) notes:

"in terms of A1 floorspace, Camden Town is the largest centre in LB Camden, with 55,250sqm. A very low proportion of this is in service use. The centre's street markets are a national and international tourist attraction. The scale of these, combined with the attractive environment in the market areas, provides Camden with its unique selling point. The market area is to the north west of Camden underground station towards Chalk Farm, and is renowned for an emphasis on fashion and clothing provided by in large measure independent traders, which adds to the uniqueness and interest and attracts a young clientele. Away from the market area in the south of the centre the high street area is increasingly dominated by multiple traders who are attracted by Camden Town's fashionable image, and whose impact continues to be to drive up rents. The two areas offer quite different shopping and attract different groups of shoppers."

4.22 Paragraph 6.10 provides an overview in relation to the role and function of Camden Town and states:

“Much of the new retail development in recent years has involved consolidating a number of smaller units into larger stores for the national chains, such as Virgin and Gap. The expansion of the multiple traders northwards towards the market area could in the future threaten the viability of market traders housed in the smaller units as rents are driven higher because of the supply-side shortages...”

- 4.23 The report reaches the following conclusion in respect of the opportunities for growth in Camden Town (paragraph 6.11 refers):

“Camden Town is predominately a linear centre with little opportunity for expansion within its existing boundaries, and the provision of large modern retail floorplates that are attractive to the national chains may only be possible through the comprehensive redevelopment of existing buildings. However, any development proposals that sought to expand the mainstream retailer area northwards into the markets area may lead to an erosion of Camden Town’s uniqueness. On the other hand, there may be spin-off benefits from redevelopment in key locations. Consideration should therefore be given to opportunities for relocation of displaced market stalls should redevelopment proposals for parts of the existing markets be brought forward.”

- 4.24 It is clear therefore that redevelopment opportunities whether they are located within the markets or elsewhere within the northern parts of the town centre need to be carefully ‘balanced’.
- 4.25 The London Borough of Camden commissioned Roger Tym & Partners to prepare a study that examines the role and function of the various markets within Camden Town. The findings of that report are therefore directly relevant to the consideration of the application proposals. The report entitled, *The Role the Markets Play in the Vitality and Viability of Camden Town* (the ‘Markets Report’) was published in October 2006. The report was prepared following a public inquiry into proposals that sought the redevelopment of the Camden Market (at Buck Street) to allow Camden Town underground station to be upgraded to overcome capacity issues with the current station. Accordingly, the main focus of the study is to determine the specific role that the Camden Market has and the contribution it makes to the vitality and viability of the town centre. In doing so, the study also considers the wider role of the various markets within Camden Town.
- 4.26 The Markets Report is based upon the findings of two separate surveys; one undertaken on-street to canvass visitors views on the markets (406 interviews across four separate locations) and the other a survey of market managers.
- 4.27 The report provides a review of each of the markets within the town centre in terms of location, ranges of goods sold, environment, accessibility etc. In relation to Camden Canal Market paragraph 4.9 of the Markets Report states:

“...a smaller market operating from both fixed units and out-door stalls, selling mainly clothing and prepared food. Many of the stalls are not open during the week. The market is accessed down a long passageway off the main road and has an isolated and run down feel. Despite this, visitor numbers within the market did not appear substantially different to those at the Camden Lock Market, opposite.”

- 4.28 In contrast, the commentary provided in relation to the Stables Market states (paragraph 4.11 refers):

“...The market is the largest in terms of both market area and number of stalls, and provides a vibrant and busy shopping environment, consisting of purpose built wooden and glass fixed units around cobbled areas. These sell clothing, furniture and specialist goods. There are also shops in the ‘catacombs’ (railway arches), a group of food stalls and a seating area and public toilets. The market has an attractive character and includes the listed former Horse Hospital Building.”

- 4.29 It is significant of course, that since the Study was prepared the application site was devastated by a fire. The refurbished market remains very popular with traders and visitors. The on street survey indicated the most popular markets were Camden Lock and Stables markets. In contrast, Camden Lock Village (Camden Canal market) attracted just 2-3% on weekends/weekdays. This is likely to have changed since the fire as the re-built market secures improved street presence and visibility from Chalk Farm Road and changes to the layout of the market thereby more effectively drawing visitors into the market

- 4.30 Table 4.2 of the Markets Report provides a comparative analysis of the floorspace provided by each of the Camden markets, calculated by reference to Ordnance Survey floorspace data. The Camden Lock Village market, although significantly larger than the Camden, Electric Ballroom and Inverness Street Markets, is quoted as comprising just 7% of the overall market floorspace within Camden (2,045sqm) which is considerably less than Camden’s two largest markets namely the Stables (60%) and Camden Lock (22%) markets. Similarly, the Camden Lock Village market is stated as comprising 54 market stalls compared to the 358 provided at the Stables Market (Table 4.3). In contrast, the applicant’s records for the site pre-fire indicate a total of 75 units comprising over 4,065sqm of floorspace.

- 4.31 Today the Camden Canal Market comprises 170 units (including some units exclusively used for storage purposes) ranging in size from 10-115sqm. The existing market includes a range of units selling comparison goods (mainly clothing) and hot food.

- 4.32 Nevertheless, Paragraph 4.19 records:

“There is currently minimal capacity to accommodate further traders at the weekend. While the quantity of vacant stalls increases substantially during the week, many of these stalls are fixed lock-up style units, which traders tend to rent on a weekly basis and so lock their stock in all week long. As such it may not be feasible for many of these stalls to accommodate a second separate trader on weekdays.”

- 4.33 A similar position exists today with long waiting lists of traders seeking representation on the Stables and Camden Canal markets. The application proposals will assist in addressing the demand being expressed providing opportunities for established traders to expand and also to attract new traders to the market in a purpose built weather protected environment which should appeal to both traders and visitors alike.

- 4.34 It is clear from the on street survey results that over 76% (75% on weekdays and 85% at weekends) of visitors to Camden Town visit the markets. However this contrasts with the main purpose of trips which is to visit town centre shops (67-80% on weekdays and weekends).

Furthermore, the survey shows that there is a reasonably even spread of visitors to each of the main markets located within Camden Town. Most people (>70%) travel to Camden Town via the underground suggesting that many of the visitors are from outside the local area. Indeed, in answer to the question 'where do you live' the following answers were recorded on weekdays; 10% locally (Camden), 54% elsewhere in London, 28% outside London, 9% outside the UK. There is little fluctuation at weekends although it is however notable that the number of local people visiting Camden Town drops to just 5%. Indeed, the survey notes that just under 40% of those interviewed which visited the markets lived outside London. This points not only to the wide draw of Camden Town but also suggests that the town centre is not particularly attractive to local people and at weekends the influx of visitors means that local people are even less likely to visit. This suggests a balance in retail provision needs to be struck, one which provides a more even distribution and mix of uses and activities across the site but which maintains the unique character of this part of the town centre. The application proposals seek to address this by incorporating a range of local retail and community facilities. The Applicant conducted their own on street survey of visitors to Camden in January 2012, the results of which are appended to the submitted Transport Assessment. The data has been used to forecast how people will travel to the market retail element of the proposed development.

- 4.35 In relation to the survey of market managers, the report reaches the following conclusions (paragraphs 5.41-5.42):

“Most traders in all six of the Camden markets are permanent operators with some form of long-term tenure...

The Camden Canal and Stables Markets do not accommodate any casual traders...”

- 4.36 In relation to the changing demand for market units the report makes the following observations:
- Demand for units is particularly strong in the pre-Christmas period.
 - Markets have broadly expanded in recent years creating greater capacity for stalls, although demand has remained fairly strong
 - At Stables market, demand for space was high however the market has a vetting process for traders. Potential traders need to show samples first to ensure goods are unique and suitable for the market
 - Demand for stalls has increased in recent years
- 4.37 Retail assessments prepared for Camden (2004 and 2008) and the Greater London Authority (2004 and 2009) examine the need for additional comparison goods retail floorspace within Camden. These reports do not explicitly consider the need for market type retail floorspace which in certain circumstances is considered to represent a type of 'special form of trading' (SFT) e.g. retail spending outside traditional high street stores. Expenditure on SFT is generally excluded from retail capacity assessments.
- 4.38 The table below summarises the principal conclusions reached by each of the retail studies (past and present) in relation to comparison goods retail floorspace need (sqm net).

Year	Comparison Goods Retail Floorspace Requirement for Camden sqm net		
	Camden Retail Study 2004	Camden Retail Study 2008	GLA Retail Study 2009
2006	6,296		
2011	18,982		2,788 (1,091)
2012		3,534	
2016	33,686		9,685 (3,621)
2017		4,944	
2021			23,451 (8,564)
2022		12,850	

Notes: Figures in brackets relate specifically to capacity in Camden Town as opposed to Camden Borough

- 4.39 The 2004 Camden Retail Study did not take into account the effect of major proposals at Kings Cross or Brent Cross in contrast to the methodology adopted by the 2008 study and the GLA study. In relation to the more recent studies, there is a considerable difference between the amounts of retail floorspace required.
- 4.40 The 2008 Camden Retail Study points to there being a need for an additional 3,534sqm net comparison goods retail floorspace by 2012 increasing to 4,944sqm net retail floorspace by 2017. These floorspace figures relate to the entire Borough and are not specific to Camden Town. Nevertheless Camden Town is the Borough's largest town centre and therefore it should be reasonable to expect (and indeed this is supported by references in the development plan) that a significant proportion of the identified need should be directed to Camden Town. Indeed, such sentiments are expressed in the Council's Core Strategy.
- 4.41 In contrast, the more recent GLA study provides a figure specifically for Camden Town of 3,621sqm net by 2016 increasing to 8,564sqm net by 2021. The GLA study is based upon conservative growth rates which take into account the effect of the recession and the continuing slow recovery. Even so, the GLA study points to there being a 3,621sqm (net) requirement for comparison floorspace by 2016 within Camden Town. This broadly compares to the 5,139sqm (gross) uplift in Class A1 floorspace sought by the application proposals. Accordingly, it is clear that the scale of the proposed development (in retail terms) is appropriate.
- 4.42 Table 3.7 of the Camden Retail Study highlights the significance of tourist spend to Camden Town. 50% of the total turnover of Camden Town is derived from shoppers living beyond the adopted study area. There is an even split between expenditure inflows from London and UK/foreign tourists. In this respect, Camden Town attracts a significantly higher proportion of expenditure from outside London than that of the West End. 25% compared to 20%. This serves to demonstrate the attraction of Camden Town as an important tourist destination. This conclusion is set out in paragraph 5.26 of the Retail Report, which states:

“The table indicates that Camden Town attracts half its comparison goods turnover (£89.3M) from beyond the Study Area. This reflects the specialist fashion wear content of much of

Camden Town's retail offer, and the high numbers of UK and foreign tourists that are attracted to visit by the centre's reputation. Camden Town is the only one of the six LB Camden town centres where we consider tourist expenditure accounts for a very significant proportion of centre turnover...The figures demonstrate that very few of the centres are considered to attract significant expenditure from beyond London. Apart from Camden Town, the centres located within the Study Area derive the vast majority of their turnover from the Study Area."

- 4.43 As the Camden Retail Study records, opportunities for expansion of retail floorspace in other designated centres within Camden are limited.
- 4.44 In summary, the above analysis demonstrates that Camden Town has a different role and function to other centres within the Borough and beyond. Its character is underpinned by its 'market' offer which acts as a significant draw for both Londoners, domestic and overseas visitors. This helps to distinguish the retail offer from that of other centres. The application proposals seek to build upon the established market character of Camden Town providing a modern and distinctive mixed use scheme and also seek to provide an improved mix of uses to meet the needs of the local community. The scale of the proposed uplift in retail floorspace and the character of the proposals are compatible with the existing town centre. Consequently, there can be no harm arising from the application proposals on other centres both within the Borough and beyond. Such centres have a different role and function. Importantly, the majority of new units created will be small in size, typically just 15-50sqm. Such units will only be attractive to market type traders.

5 RETAIL CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 This section of the report examines the proposals against the key policy tests established by the NPPF and the development plan. For the reasons previously advanced in this report, the applicant is not required to justify the proposals in terms of location (sequential approach to site selection) or impact (matters prescribed by the NPPF). The Council has previously accepted this point in writing albeit in the form of an officer's opinion (letter dated 18th July 2007).
- 5.2 The proposed Class A floorspace is to be located within the town centre (the preferred location for this type of development) and the scale of the floorspace in terms of the uplift compared to the pre-fire floorspace is modest and appropriate. Furthermore, the proposals accord with the up to date development plan allocation for mixed use development including retail uses. The proposals will deliver a range of economic benefits consistent with the NPPF. Such factors weigh heavily in favour of permitting the application proposals.
- 5.3 The NPPF focuses upon a sustainable development agenda, at the heart of which is an urgent need to stimulate the economy. Simultaneously, the government is seeking to lessen the planning burden upon developers proposing new town centre schemes such as this. Indeed, the government requires local planning authorities to approve development proposals that accord with statutory unless the adverse impacts of allowing development would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.
- 5.4 Significantly, the NPPF no longer requires developers of town centre schemes to test the impact of their proposals. This significant change is of course entirely consistent with the government's retained town centre first policy.
- 5.5 In allocating the site for retail purposes the Council will have had to consider the appropriateness of the overall location, scale and type of development in terms of the national policy tests prescribed by the then PPS4 (now the NPPF) i.e. retail impact and the sequential approach to site selection. Indeed, that consideration will have included a degree of knowledge regarding the applicant's proposals for the site given the wide ranging discussions that have taken place between the council's officers, the Applicant and their consultants over the last 5 years.
- 5.6 The application site represents the only significant redevelopment opportunity within Camden Town centre capable of meeting an identified need for new retail floorspace. Indeed this is recognised by the Council's retail study and the Core Strategy. The adopted development plan documents do not seek to impose limitations on the amount of retail floorspace to be provided on the site, which as government guidance advises is necessary in cases where there are any concerns regarding the impact of the proposals. Nevertheless, the development plan in the form of both site specific and general development control policies specify a number of locally important 'impact' considerations against which redevelopment proposals for the site and elsewhere within the town centre are required to be tested against.
- 5.7 In this respect, two inter-related matters are relevant to the consideration of the proposals because they are raised by policies set out in the development plan namely:
- appropriateness of scale
 - locally important impacts

- 5.8 Significantly, matters of scale are no longer a test prescribed by the NPPF in relation to the assessment of main town centre uses proposed in town centre locations such as this. Accordingly this section of the report seeks to draw out some broad conclusions regarding the ‘fit’ of application proposals in terms of the policies of the development plan relating to scale (including need issues) and locally important impacts (i.e. in this case the preservation of the character, role and function of Camden Town whilst providing a new vibrant and exciting development which caters for the needs of the local community and also provides a unique market retail offer of a type not currently available within Camden Town).

a) Scale of the development

- 5.9 The application proposals involve the redevelopment of an existing market within Camden Town centre. The proposals will include the re-provision of Class A1 and A3/A5 floorspace in a modern purpose built and weather protected environment. The proposals are larger in scale than those which they replace however the scheme is intended to meet the identified demand, in particular, for new Class A1 retail floorspace. The total proposed Class A1/A3 and A5 floorspace is 10,954sqm gross. However, the net increase in Class A1 floorspace over that in existence pre-fire is just 5,139sqm (GEA). Similarly, the net increase in A3/A5 floorspace is 1,750sqm (GEA). Overall there is an increase in Class A floorspace of 6,889sqm (GEA). This is equivalent to just 5% of the total amount of floorspace comprised within Camden Town Centre according to GOAD.
- 5.10 Area A of the application site is in established retail use. The proposed Canal Market Retail Buildings will accommodate the majority of the Class A floorspace (3,662sqm Class A1, 1,363sqm Class A3 and 478sqm Class A5 = 5,503sqm NIA total) arranged over basement to third floors thereby distributing visitors across the floorspace. The remainder of the Class A floorspace will be comprised within the Southern Railway Arches (713sqm net Class A1, 55sqm Class A3 and 201sqm Class A5), Buildings C1 and C2 (adjacent to Castlehaven Road)(919sqm flexible floorspace for Class A1 ‘local’ retail and/or Class A3/B1a/B1c/D1 uses) and Building D (the Water Lane Building, 72sqm net Class A3).
- 5.11 In total, the application proposals comprise 6,283sqm Class A1, 1,528sqm Class A3 and 679sqm Class A5 floorspace (net area). In reality, the amount of Class A1 floorspace represents a maximum and is likely to decrease given the flexible nature of the proposed floorspace located within Building C2. It is clear that this scale of floorspace would be entirely consistent and in keeping with the role and function of Camden Town as a ‘major’ town centre and substantial tourist destination. Indeed, given the lack of other significant opportunities within Camden Town, this level of retail floorspace (after taking into account the amount of pre-fire Class A floorspace) is comparable to that identified in the Camden and GLA retail studies for Class A1 comparison goods retail floorspace required over the period to 2016.
- 5.12 The nature of the proposals mean that they would preserve and enhance the unique character of Camden Town but enable a greater ‘balance’ to be struck in terms of the retail offer for visitors and local residents. The proposals provide two distinct but related ‘retail’ offers – one which caters for the needs of the local residential population and the other providing a new type of market retail experience which will differentiate itself from the existing Camden markets in terms of the range of goods and services available and the environment within which goods are traded. This is consistent with the Planning Framework for the site.

- 5.13 The proposals will regenerate a strategically important site within the town centre for mixed use development. It is entirely appropriate for a scheme of the scale proposed to be located within Camden Town - a designated 'major' centre. Indeed a significant proportion of the site is currently within retail use with frontage to the principal shopping street.
- 5.14 Designated town centres within the study area have limited capacity to absorb the substantial level of need, either through gains in floorspace productivity or new build retail floorspace. A fact acknowledged by the Camden Retail Study. The overall quantum of retail floorspace would be out of scale with many of the other centres located within the Borough, save for Camden Town and Kilburn. There are nevertheless clear differences in the retail offer of these respective centres. In contrast, Camden has a high proportion of independent fashion retailers and markets whereas Kilburn has a traditional mix of national multiple retailers and a corresponding difference in average unit size.

b) Nature of the proposed floorspace

- 5.15 Consistent with policy, the application proposals will retain and reinforce the distinctive market feel of this part of Camden Town. The application proposals respond positively to this challenge through the provision of a range and mix of units and uses. The overall character of the scheme is one comprised of small units suitable for a range and mix of traders. Typically units will be 15-50sqm in size i.e. very small. A limited number of larger units are proposed. These assist in addressing the physical constraints imposed by developing the site and usefully help to meet demand being expressed from traders. The provision of some larger units will enable existing traders to grow and thereby help to retain them within Camden Town. The retention of such traders is important in nurturing new small businesses. The creation of a mix of units is also important in assisting the distribution of visitor footfall and enhancing the overall visitor experience and trading environment. These attributes will help to ensure the success of the scheme as advised by CWM.
- 5.16 The proposed scheme re-provides all the pre-fire market floorspace with additional units provided to meet demand which continues to be expressed by traders. The range and mix of units comprising the Class A floorspace will enable the scheme to provide a new attraction with Camden Town, one which reinforces the centres existing identity
- 5.17 The predominant unit size will typically be 15-50sqm in size. These units will only be attractive to and suitable for market type traders. The recession and slow recovery have focused attention on the need for flexible retail space to meet the ever changing needs of traders. The absence of such flexibility could result in missed opportunities and benefits for the wider town centre. In a similar vein, the proposed 'local' retail offer provides modern flexible floorspace which can be easily adapted to meet the needs of potential tenants who will provide a range of goods and other services for local residents.
- 5.18 Because much of the proposed Class A1 floorspace is comprised within purpose built multi-level buildings in Area A, this distinguishes the proposals from the street facing units which characterise traditional high streets etc. The units to Chalk Farm Road are to be retained. These units already comprise in excess of 100sqm and their proposed incorporation into the overall scheme should be viewed as a benefit.

- 5.19 The principal driver for the redevelopment of Area A and C is to regenerate the area and to provide the local community and visitors with a new type of attraction in a more pleasant weather protected environment with an enhanced retail and food offer, but one which maintains the charm and unique character of this part of the town which draw visitors to the area.
- 5.20 Importantly, in response to local residents needs, the scheme also affords an opportunity to accommodate a range of 'local' retail operators. This 'local' retail floorspace is proposed within Buildings C1 and C2 located on Area C. The Applicant is prepared to accept a condition/enter into a legal agreement which requires the 'local' retail floorspace in Building C1 to be retained in perpetuity for local retail purposes only and the flexible space in Building C2 to be marketed in the first instance for 'local' retail purposes.
- 5.21 The proposed development will meet the demand for flexible retail units within Camden Town expressed by both existing and new traders/retailers including those seeking to start up businesses within the local area. The proposals also include a significant number of retail units proposed within the railways arches which would be particularly suited to craft persons who make and sell products on the premises.
- 5.22 The application proposals present a significant opportunity to provide Camden Town with an enhanced retail offer including replacement market floorspace as part of a large mixed-use scheme of development but one which maintains the character and contributes to the unique retail environment of Camden Town, distinct from other major town centres within the borough and London.
- 5.23 The Applicant and their consultants have engaged with the Council and local community groups for a considerable period of time through the formal pre-application (and post 2011 application) process in order to achieve an appropriately designed scheme which seeks to retain the charm and feel of the Camden markets but in a modern development with benefits such as better on site visitor facilities and weather protection. Other reports submitted in support of the application proposals demonstrate the compliance of the proposals in terms of their design against the criteria set out in policy DP12. The proposals will not result in a 'new' market but rather new flexible Class A1 floorspace that is better suited to meet current and future needs. The proposals would not result in the permanent loss of a market. The new market will be distinct from the retail offer of other Camden Town markets. This will assist in altering the demographics of visitors to Camden Town – creating a diverse visitor attraction and an enhanced range of community uses.
- 5.24 The proposals provide an opportunity for a range of different types of retail activity and operators to become established consistent with the aspirations of the Council's Planning Framework and national retail planning policy (NPPF). The proposals will have a number of economic benefits for Camden town.

c) A3/A5 uses

- 5.25 The application proposals comprise 2,207sqm net Class A3/A5 floorspace. Most of this floorspace (1,841sqm net, 83%) is comprised within the Canal Buildings of which approximately half is to be provided in the form of roof top restaurants (973sqm). The balance of Class A3/A5 floorspace is provided within the Southern Railway Arches (256sqm Class A3/A5), Building C2 (up to 68sqm net) and a further 72sqm (Class A3) in the Water Lane Building. In each case, the proposed A3/A5 uses are located away from potentially sensitive residential areas.

- 5.26 The application proposals will provide a range of new food establishments e.g. restaurants, café and takeaways within a controlled environment. Such uses should not result in congregations of people late at night, which has the potential to cause general disturbance to nearby residential areas. In this respect it is significant to note that the proposals do not include any establishments that solely sell alcohol. The restaurants are proposed at roof top level of the Canal buildings and will operate both during and outside market trading hours. Conversely, due to the likely nature of the proposed A5 units these will solely operate during market trading hours.
- 5.27 The application proposals will provide a unique blend and mix of uses. Furthermore, the intention is to attract operators that are of high quality and thereby distinguish their food offer from other establishments currently trading within Camden Town. In this way, the application proposals will have a limited impact upon established food and drink businesses within Camden Town.
- 5.28 The proposed Class A3/A5 uses are located broadly in accordance with locations prescribed by the Camden Town SPD - it is then necessary to assess whether the proposed Class A3/A5 uses would have an unacceptable harm. Appendix D of the SPD provides an overview of how impacts are considered. The table relates to the superseded policies of the Camden UDP. Nevertheless, key indicators of harm can include; air conditioning units, placement of tables and chairs, smoking ban, amplified music and hours of operation. These matters are duly assessed within the other technical reports that have been submitted in support of the application proposals.
- 5.29 The application proposals provide replacement Class A3/A5 floorspace. The uplift in Class A3/A5 is 1,750sqm gross which is in scale with the level of proposed development. Over half of the proposed Class A3/A5 floorspace is for Class A3 restaurant purposes which will assist in minimising impacts on the environment. The Applicant is prepared to accept a condition which limits the maximum amount of floorspace (net area) for Class A3/A5 purposes within Area A to 17% (excluding the roof top restaurants).

d) Impact Issues

- 5.30 In allocating the application site for retail purposes the Council will have had to consider retail expenditure capacity and impact matters. The Class A element of the application proposals comprises 10,954sqm gross floorspace of which 4,065sqm gross comprises replacement floorspace (including A1 and A3/A5 uses). The net increase in Class A floorspace proposed is 6,889sqm gross. The allocation of the site is intended to improve the retail offer of Camden Town and in this context any development of the site would reasonably be expected to be significant i.e. in excess of 2,500sqm threshold prescribed by the NPPF. Accordingly, in allocating the application site for retail purposes, in accordance with the then national retail planning policy (PPS4), the Council would have had to consider the potential impact of such a scheme of redevelopment as part of its plan making process notwithstanding the fact that none of the Council's adopted policy documents specify the quantum of retail floorspace permissible.
- 5.31 Unlike, PPS4 the NPPF does not require proposals for new retail and other main town centre uses on sites within town centres to be considered in impact terms. Put simply, town centres are the preferred location for new development of the type proposed. Such development can only have a positive effect on the overall vitality and viability of centres such as Camden Town.
- 5.32 The proposed development will provide for the physical regeneration of the site and will help to improve the overall retail offer of Camden Town including the provision of a range of shop units

including replacement market floorspace which will maintain the feel and character of Camden's markets. Numerous studies highlight a shortfall in shops for local people within Camden Town, particularly in the area that is dominated by the markets which tend to attract a greater number of visitors from outside the town and the Borough. The application proposals will assist in 'balancing' these needs. The proposals include the provision of 919sqm net flexible 'local' floorspace. This floorspace is intended to be let to a range of local businesses such as bakers and butchers etc. The floorspace is easily adaptable to meet the needs of specific businesses and is proposed for flexible Class A1 'local' retail and/or Class A3/D1/B1a and B1c uses. These uses are proposed to be arranged around a local public open space and produce market and this area will feel separate from the 'market' retail offer to be provided in Area A thereby keeping a distinctive local feel with physical separation provided by the presence of the railway viaduct albeit that a link through the site will be possible from the canal to Castlehaven Road

- 5.33 The Class A element of the application proposals is predominately located within the town centre. Part of the application site also benefits from a number of specific designations in an up to date development plan and supplementary planning guidance for retail purposes. Although it is necessary to examine the conformity of the composition of the proposed scheme against these policy designations it nevertheless remains clear that an impact assessment of the nature described by the NPPF is not required. The application proposals comprise a major development within the town centre and are directly supported by the development plan.
- 5.34 Notwithstanding the fact that the application proposals are not required to be tested in terms of impact, RPS is conscious of the need to provide reassurances regarding the scale of retail floorspace proposed, its nature, composition and 'fit' with the existing retail offer, role and function of Camden Town. RPS views on these matters are informed by our assessment of the vitality and viability of individual centres within the Borough. Our conclusions mirror those of the Council's retail study, namely that all centres are healthy notwithstanding the impact on those centres arising from the recession and slow recovery. It is however important to recognise that a significant proportion of shoppers drawn to the proposed development will be visitors from outside the Borough including domestic and international tourists.
- 5.35 The proposed market retail offer seeks to attract a different type of visitor to Camden Town and thereby improve the demographic range of visitors. This will be achieved through attracting and selecting traders which sell different types of goods in accordance with the Applicant's vision for the market i.e. a shift away from a dominant clothing offer which characterises so many of the existing markets within Camden Town.
- 5.36 There is evidence which suggests each of the centres within Camden is healthy. Those centres perform different roles and functions to Camden Town. Camden Town is the largest and only 'major' centre within the borough. Accordingly it is appropriate that any large scale development such as this is directed to the centre. The following observations are pertinent to our assessment:
- Larger centres have a diverse range and mix of town centre uses
 - Many centres have evolved to provide a niche/specialist retail offer
 - Other centres do not have the capacity to accommodate any significant level of additional retail floorspace
- 5.37 The unique nature of the application proposals means that any impact would fall upon comparable facilities within Camden Town as opposed to shops within other defined centres. However any impact would be negligible as the proposals would mainly draw from the growing

pool of available expenditure rather than divert trade from existing markets/shopping facilities. Furthermore, the attraction of the centre means that expenditure will be drawn from a wide geographical area, including a significant proportion of domestic and international visitors.

5.38 In this case there is a unique set of circumstances that assist in limiting any effects on centres. These can be summarised as follows:

- The application site is an established retail destination (Camden Canal Market) to which shopping trips are already occurring
- Some of the proposed floorspace will be offset through the loss of existing retail floorspace. Consequently there will be a transfer of trade between the existing Class A1 floorspace and that of the proposed development
- The proposed retail floorspace will draw trade from the growing pool of available expenditure. The Camden Retail Study does not provide a specific estimate for market retail floorspace need in Camden Town however it is relevant that that study concludes that Camden Town is the only centre that could realistically accommodate significant additional comparison goods floorspace. The GLA's study *London Town Centre Assessment* indicates a comparison goods floorspace need of up to 3,621m² by 2016 within Camden Town. Both studies suggest significant additional retail floorspace can be accommodated within Camden. Such floorspace would draw from the growing pool of available expenditure rather than impact upon existing retailers. It is well documented that Camden Town draws visitors from a wide geographical area - across London and beyond.
- A number of existing market traders also operate from other locations within Camden Town including the Stables Market. Accordingly the temporary closure of the existing market during the course of construction of the new development will not result in those businesses being unable to trade.
- The proposed units would help to meet the demand for additional retail units in a manner which preserves and enhances the character of the town centre.
- Existing town centres perform a vital role and function within the retail hierarchy. Each of those centres will grow according to increases in available expenditure and therefore any impact arising from the application proposals will be phased and short lived.
- No other centre within Camden provides the same diverse and unique mix of retail and other uses as Camden Town. The application proposals will enhance the vitality and viability of Camden Town

5.39 In summary, it is clear that the application site is a preferred location and RPS believes that there can be no in principle dispute regarding the acceptability of the proposed mix of retail uses on the site. Indeed, these are actively supported by the allocation of the site in the Camden UDP, Core Strategy, Site Allocations Proposed Submission Document and the Planning Framework.

5.40 The character of the application proposals is defined by the provision of small units suitable for a variety of traders. The majority of the units will typically comprise 15-50sqm which is significantly smaller than the size of units envisaged by development plan policy (<100sqm). The result is a far greater number of small units which significantly add to the vibrancy of the scheme and this part of Camden Town..

6 CONCLUSIONS

6.1 The previous sections of this report assess the application proposals against national retail planning policy and the development plan. In summary the following conclusions can be drawn:

- The proposals would maintain and enhance the unique character and diversity of Camden Town and will improve the general appeal of the town centre to local residents, shoppers and visitors alike
- The Class A elements of the application proposals are predominately located within Camden Town centre – the preferred location for new retail development. Furthermore, the site secures a number of specific allocations for redevelopment for retail purposes within the development plan. The application proposals accord with the provisions an up to date development plan in terms of the principal of development. Accordingly there is no requirement to test the proposals sequentially or in impact terms as prescribed by the NPPF
- There is a substantial demand and need for additional Class A1 retail floorspace within Camden Town. The application proposals will help to meet that demand in a manner consistent with the established markets character of the northern part of Camden Town. The proposed floorspace will provide a range and mix of retail units suitable for a variety of traders
- There are important qualitative benefits that would stem from the proposals including the provision of modern floorspace that is both attractive to a range of traders/retailers and visitors coupled with enhanced facilities and a wider range of food and drink establishments. The proposed A3/A5 uses can operate without detriment to the amenity of local businesses and residents.
- The net uplift in retail floorspace (Class A1/A3/A5) is relatively modest (6,889sqm gross). This is entirely in keeping with the scale of the retail offer of Camden Town. Furthermore, the nature of that floorspace limits its potential effect on other centres. The nature of proposals means that considerable floorspace will be used for circulation.
- The proposed 'local' retail floorspace is separated from the main Canal buildings to ensure it is attractive to local residents and target businesses, e.g. local retailers and service operators such as butchers, bakers, chemists etc.
- The scheme includes the provision of a public local open space for use by local residents which will enable a range of activities to take place, including a produce market.
- The proposed retail floorspace will provide a replacement market thereby retaining the established character and use of the application site consistent with the northern part of Camden Town. Consistent with policy requirements, the predominant size of the units will be small, in many cases 15-50sqm. Importantly, the scheme will increase the attractiveness and the range of existing markets within Camden Town to the benefit of the local economy.
- The buildings to Chalk Farm Road are being retained and incorporated as part of the overall scheme. These buildings are different in nature, size and fabric to the market units. They are in fact representative of units found on a typical high street, where the floorspace is spread over several levels. They are generally inefficient and upper and basement floors present a particular problem in terms of letting. In order to ensure their future viability, it is important that the floorspace is put to full economic use which means these units need to draw visitors across the various trading floors (including basement and upper floors) and secure the necessary integration with the Canal buildings. Their sub-division, for example, to provide a number of smaller units will simply not work given the layout, fabric and configuration of the buildings. Consequently, these units will inevitably be some of the largest units provided within the scheme for Class A purposes.

- The proposed Class A floorspace builds upon the established and unique character and diverse mix of uses making up this part of Camden Town centre in accordance with the designation of the site for mixed use development including retail uses in the Camden UDP ('saved' policies), Camden Core Strategy, the Hawley Wharf Planning Framework and the Site Allocations Proposed Submission Document. Furthermore, the proposals strike a balance between accommodating the needs of local residents and those of visitors. Consistent with the Planning Framework, the proposals will deliver the necessary variety in retail provision (i.e. different sizes and types of units and both formal and informal market layouts) and shops that meet local people's needs.
- The proposals will deliver a replacement market and other retail floorspace in accordance with the policies CS7 and CS11 of the Camden Core Strategy and the Site Allocations Proposed Submission Document. The scale and location of the proposed Class A floorspace is appropriate and consistent with national and local retail planning policies and the allocation of the application site. The proposals do not give rise to any concerns regard retail impact. Indeed, no such assessment is required given the proposals accord with an up to date development plan and are located within the town centre – the preferred location for this type of development
- Maintaining flexibility in terms of the range and mix of uses within the Canal buildings is extremely important. This means that providing a rigid structure of unit sizes and uses is not feasible. Nevertheless, in order to provide controls over the nature and mix of uses the Applicant is prepared to accept a condition which limits the proportion of each of the Class A uses within the Canal buildings and southern railway arches a maximum % of floorspace

6.2 For the reasons set out in this report, it is considered that there is no retail planning reason to resist the granting of planning consent for the retail element of the application proposals.