

7 VISUAL AND TOWNSCAPE EFFECTS: CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Informed by the views assessment, it is possible to assess the effect of the Development on each of the townscape areas previously identified. As explained above in the section on the guidance By Design, such effects are not limited to visual effects; the assessment takes into account other aspects of urban design.

7.2 All of the effects of the Development described in this section are long-term effects.

7.3 All of the effects of the Development described in this section are local in scale, except for the effects on the LVMF views which apply over the extent to which the panoramas in question are visible.

Area 1 – the canal and adjoining areas

7.4 The visual effect of the Development on this area is shown in views 1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 17 and 18.

7.5 The Development will transform a run down and unattractive area through the construction of a visually rich and attractive group of good quality new buildings with a variety of uses, set in a new hard and soft landscape of routes and spaces providing good pedestrian permeability and connectivity. In respect of Area 1, the Development will bring a modern version of the liveliness and visual interest of the existing Camden Market complex west of Chalk Farm Road Bridge to the Site east of the bridge. The building facing the canal will provide a distinctive new frontage appropriate to its use and to this town centre location.

7.6 The effect on this townscape area will be moderate to substantial and beneficial.

Area 2 – Camden High Street / Chalk Farm Road

7.7 The visual effect of the Development on this area is shown in views 1, 10 and 11.

7.8 The principal townscape effect will be the restoration of 1-6 Chalk Farm Road and the addition of the new building to its north. This will be a significant improvement to the street.

7.9 The remainder of the Development will be a minor visual presence from some points north and south of the Chalk Farm Road canal bridge but it will not be very noticeable other than from the vicinity of the bridge itself, from which it will be prominent. It will form an attractive modern counterpoint to the existing market complex on the other side of Chalk Farm Road, extending the critical mass of buildings in this area at a scale appropriate to the town centre location and the Regents Canal CA.

7.10 The effect on this townscape area will be moderate and beneficial.

Area 3 – Castlehaven Road (west of the Northwest-East Viaduct) and environs

7.11 The visual effect of the Development on this area is shown in view 4.

7.12 The principal townscape effects on this area will be:

- The provision of a good quality new frontage to Castlehaven Road, replacing nondescript existing buildings. The scale of the new buildings will be appropriate to the main road and the existing open space that they face. This will offer continuity and enclosure in the place of the present fragmented frontage.
- The infilling of the backlands part of the Site in this area, which will be a very significant townscape benefit, replacing a run down and underused area which is entirely inappropriate to the town centre location.

The routes through from this area to the canal will be direct, attractive and lively, whereas the present routes are distinctly uninviting. The Development will improve greatly on the quality of the connectivity of this area.

7.13 The effect on this townscape area will be moderate to substantial and beneficial.

Area 4 – Hawley Road (east of the Northwest-East Viaduct) and environs

7.14 The visual effect of the Development on this area is shown in views 5, 6, 7, 12 and 13.

7.15 The principal townscape effects will be:

- The provision of a good quality new residential frontage to Hawley Road, replacing nondescript and run down existing buildings. The scale of the new buildings will be appropriate to the scale of the main road that they face.
- The infilling of the backlands of the Site in this area, which will be a very significant townscape benefit, replacing a run down and underused area which is entirely inappropriate to the location. The variation in the form of the school building that is possible as a result of the definitions in the Parameter Plans has been taken into account in reaching this conclusion and the conclusion applies whatever the form of the school building within the limits provided for.

7.16 The effect on this townscape area will be moderate to substantial and beneficial.

Conservation areas

7.17 The visual effect of the Development on the **Regents Canal CA** is shown in views 1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 17 and 18. The comments made concerning townscape area 1 above apply to the effect on this CA.

7.18 In respect of the design guidance for new development set out in the CA appraisal and referred to above, the design of the Development has been informed by this guidance and it achieves the objectives set out. The new designs respect the scale of particular locations, as explained in the above assessment. The designs of the new buildings complement the appearance, character and setting of existing buildings and structures, the canal, and the environment of this part of the CA as a whole. The building heights proposed do not interfere with significant views.

7.19 The CA appraisal states that *“the enclosure or openness of particular sections of the canal should be respected as this quality contributes significantly to its varying character”*. While the existing openness of the Site itself will largely disappear as a result of the Development, the openness does not make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the CA, as the views above of the Site as existing demonstrate. Other stretches of the canal between Camden and King’s Cross benefit from qualities of openness of an attractive semi-rural character, but the Site is not like that at all, and its underdevelopment is uncharacteristic of and inappropriate to a town centre location. The Development will enhance the townscape distinction along the length of the canal between built up town centre and less built up periphery. The sense of enclosure along the canal edge of the Site offered by the Development is comparable with that found enclosing the canal on the other side of Chalk Farm Road, and will enhance the character and appearance of the CA.

7.20 The effect on the townscape of the **Regents Canal CA** will be moderate and beneficial.

7.21 The visual effect of the Development on the **Jeffrey’s Street CA** is shown in view 7. The comments made concerning view 7 above apply to the effect on this CA. In winter, the new buildings on Area B, and behind them building C2, will be seen on the skyline at the end of Jeffreys Street when looking towards the Site. Their apparent height is less than that of the existing buildings at the end of the street. They will not be prominent and will share the characteristics of existing buildings seen beyond the end of the street.

7.22 The effect on townscape of this conservation area will be minor. Its effect will be neutral.

7.23 The effect on the other CAs considered above, the Camden Town CA and Kelly Street CA, will be negligible because of the distance of these CA’s from the Site and the limited visibility of the Development from them.

Listed buildings

7.24 The visual effect of the Development on the setting of **1 Hawley Road** is shown from one location in view 12, but it is seen from elsewhere in Hawley Road and there is also a visual and townscape relationship between the Development and the rear of the building. The existing setting of Number 1 Hawley Road is poor in respect of townscape and visual amenity. The removal of the existing garage structure at the side of Number 1 Hawley Road will improve its appearance. The neighbouring buildings, with the exception of the single storey moped shop and the adjacent unit, are of comparable age and form and scale to the listed building, but those which are on the Site are in poor condition and with a poor landscape setting. Their loss and replacement by a new development which is larger in scale results in the listed building having a slightly less visually coherent setting in respect of built form, but this is balanced by the fact that the buildings being replaced are of poor quality and are being replaced by new buildings of good quality, and that there is a very substantial overall improvement in townscape quality across the whole of Area B, including the backlands area which forms part of the setting of the listed building. Considered in the round, therefore, the effect of the Development on the setting of Number 1 Hawley Road will be moderate and adverse; but it is capable of mitigation to result in a moderate and beneficial effect through detailed design in accordance with the Design Principles at the reserved matters stage. The variation in the form of the school building that is possible as a result of the definitions in the Parameter Plans has been taken into account in reaching this conclusion and the conclusion applies whatever the form of the school building within the limits provided for.

7.25 The visual effect of the Development on the setting of the canal group of listed buildings (as set out above at section 4) will be moderate and beneficial.

7.26 The visual effect of the Development on the setting of the Jeffrey’s Street / Kentish Town Road group of listed buildings (as set out above at section 4) will be minor and neutral.

LVMF views

7.27 The visual effect of the Development on the LVMF views considered above is minor and neutral.

	Urban design considerations
7.28	In addition to the assessment of views and townscape areas, it is possible to consider the effect of the Development considered as a whole on its surroundings in respect of the aspects of urban form set out in <i>By Design</i> and referred to above.
7.29	It is apparent from the planning application drawings, the Design and Access Statement and the views in this document that the design of the Development is informed by consideration of the form of its surroundings.
7.30	In respect of urban structure and urban grain , the proposed buildings are consistent with the established pattern on and around the Site. The form of the urban structure is largely retained, although enhanced in quality, and the grain of the new buildings is comparable with that which exists in the vicinity of the canal in the centre of Camden.
7.31	In respect of height and scale , the buildings are also comparable with other buildings in the vicinity of the canal. Building C2, at 9 storeys high at its highest point, is taller than other buildings in the area but not significantly so, and its scale is mediated by varying height levels within Building C2 and by that of the other new buildings around it, as are the taller elements of the new buildings in Area B. The view illustrations demonstrate that the new buildings sit comfortably in their townscape setting and while they are prominent in certain views, their distinctive appearance and crisp, high quality architecture are appropriate to this prominence.
7.32	In respect of materials and details , the Development makes use of brick as the predominant external material. This is the most common material used in existing buildings in the area, in the form of both London stock bricks and red bricks, although a variety of other materials are found as well. The use of brick in the new buildings will lend therefore contribute to the coherence of the wider townscape.
7.33	The Development makes significant contributions to all of the objectives of urban design set out in <i>By Design</i> and referred to above.
7.34	It provides continuity and enclosure to the frontage to the canal, to the existing street frontages, and to the new routes and public spaces within the Site. It will be a place with character and its own identity , but one that is clearly derived from elements of its townscape setting; in particular, it derives from, and enhances, the particular canalside character of Camden Lock market. It will offer a high quality design for the public realm , with new hard and soft landscape provided to a variety of attractive outdoor areas. The layout makes a major contribution to ease of pedestrian movement in the area, by improving greatly on the quality and directness of pedestrian routes and adding new routes across the Site. The development will contribute to legibility , with its clear and easily understood

layout and image. While residential uses are inherently likely to remain, the non-residential elements of the scheme are **adaptable** to provide for future change. And finally the scheme is **diverse** and offers variety and choice, in respect of the differentiated areas of the Site, and the different types of building form and types of building use proposed.

Conclusions

7.35	The Development successfully delivers all of the design aspirations of the Hawley Wharf Area Planning Framework, set out above. In particular the Development significantly enhances the attractiveness and contribution of this presently run down area to Camden Town as a whole, builds on the town centre's strengths and qualities, and provides a mix of appropriate uses. As explained in the above assessment, the architecture offers high quality designs which understand, value and respond positively to local character, heritage and the canal. The public realm design creates safe and attractive streets, routes and public spaces, and makes walking and cycling on the Site more attractive.
7.36	The degree of change brought about by the Development is significant. In particular, a presently very underdeveloped Site will be developed to a greater density than its surroundings. The present state of underdevelopment is inappropriate to this town centre location, and there are no positive or beneficial qualities of this present state that are harmed by the Development; it is entirely beneficial.
7.37	Given the scale of development proposed, there will be no significant effects on the wider townscape or on heritage assets beyond the areas and buildings considered in the above assessment.
7.38	The preceding views and assessment demonstrate that the design is consistent with the relevant requirements of national, regional and local policy and guidance.

8 DEMOLITION AND CONSTRUCTION EFFECTS

- 8.1 Construction effects are broadly covered in Chapter 6 of Volume 1 of the ES. This section considers the visual effects of the construction process.
- 8.2 There are no special visual effects that are generated as a result of the construction process outside of those that are inherent in constructing buildings of the type proposed.
- 8.3 The most significant medium and long range visual effects associated with the construction process will be the presence of tower cranes. Their presence is inevitable in connection with construction of the type and scale envisaged.
- 8.4 The top of a tower crane is likely to be higher than the top of the building, so it will be more visible than the finished building. This temporary state of affairs is common as a consequence of building activity and there is no practical way of avoiding it.
- 8.5 During construction the perimeter of the Site will be surrounded by hoarding in the conventional manner.
- 8.6 Visual and townscape effects of demolition and construction would be temporary, local effects of moderate adverse significance. There would be temporary, local effects of moderate adverse significance on the settings of the conservation areas and listed buildings referred to above.
- 8.7 As well as visual effects, these effects would include effects on townscape in respect of pedestrian permeability and amenity. Given the importance of the tourist economy to Camden town centre and the high pedestrian usage of the canal towpath, there would be temporary local effects of moderate adverse significance, during demolition and construction, relating to the ability to move around in and around the Site, and the effects on amenity of doing so in the vicinity of a major construction site.

9 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

- 9.1

One proposed development in the vicinity of the Site is considered in the Environmental Statement in respect of potential cumulative effects.
- 9.2

13 Hawley Crescent & 29 Kentish Town Road. This site is located approximately 180m southwest of the Site. For details of this scheme see Chapter 19, Cumulative Effects, of Volume 1 of the ES. There is no significant intervisibility with the Site and at the scale of development envisaged there is no cumulative townscape effect.
- 9.3

In the LVMF views illustrated (views 14, 15, 16) a number of major projects for tall buildings in the City of London and Docklands that have been granted planning permission will be visible. None of these projects is close to the Site and none will have a cumulative effect relevant to consideration of the effects of the Development.

10 MITIGATION

- 10.1 Chapter 4 of Volume 1 of the Environmental Statement describes the evolution of the design, which included the exploration of a number of options. The iterative design process for a complex project on an urban site such as the subject of this assessment is inherently one whereby visual effects are taken into account at each stage. Any unacceptable visual effects are mitigated by the design team as an integral part of the design development iterations. The comments of the local authority's planning officers, based on detailed knowledge of the Site and surroundings and of planning policies affecting them, and the feedback received during design development in consultations, are part of the input into this process.
- 10.2 By virtue of the careful attention that has been given to the design of the new buildings and the public realm through this thorough process, therefore, the completed Development in the form in which it is submitted for planning permission does not give rise to any adverse townscape or visual effects. This conclusion is based on the method of assessment of the outline elements of the application set out in section 2 above.