

Rough Luxe Hotel Planning Report

Supporting Statement
Incorporating Design and Access

1, Birkenhead Street
London WC1H 8BA

MAY 2012

SOMETHING OLD
Influenced by local history
Industrial/transport aesthetic

**SOMETHING
NEW**
A new type of hotel
A bold style

FLEXIBLE
Allows the mews and hotel
terrace to operate below

DESIGN AIMS

SUSTAINABLE
re-uses energy and water
reclaimed materials

INCLUSIVE
offers inclusive aspect to
listed hotel

LOW IMPACT
lightweight construction
compact design

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1. Introduction

All design submit this planning application to the London Borough of Camden on behalf of their client Lonprop Establishment, owners of the Rough Luxe Hotel.

The proposal is for construction of 3 no. 2-storey hotel pods and 1 no. single storey hotel pod as extension to the existing Rough Luxe Hotel at 1, Birkenhead Street. The 2-storey pods include associated stair and walkway. The proposal sits within the backland mews off Birkenhead Street and contains 140sqm of internal floor space.

The mews is situated within the Kings Cross Conservation Area, however is not visible from the street. The site has extremely high public transport accessibility due to close proximity to Kings Cross and St Pancras stations. The Public Transport Accessibility Level rating for the site is 6b.

The proposal uses a lightweight steel structure, which would require minimal foundations. The pods themselves would be prefabricated and craned onto site to aid the speed of construction. These techniques would ensure minimal disturbance for the local area.

The pods would contain integrated sustainable measures such as reclaimed materials, high levels of insulation, natural ventilation and reclaimed energy and water usage.

A formal pre-application was submitted to the London Borough of Camden this year. Their concerns regarding appearance, scale, access, rights to light and impact on surrounding amenity have been addressed within this report.

This report is supported by a set of drawings, a schedule of which can be found in the appendix.

This report has been prepared pursuant to section 8 (2) the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010 (SI 2184) which requires that an application for planning permission shall be accompanied by a design and access statement which describes:

- The design principles and concepts that have been applied to the development; and
- How issues relating to access to the development have been dealt with.

Section 8(3) of the 2010 Order requires that design and access statements should:

- Explain the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the following aspects of the development:-
 - o Amount
 - o Layout
 - o Scale
 - o Landscaping; and
 - o Appearance
- Demonstrate the steps taken to appraise the context of the development and how the design of the development takes that context into account in relation to its proposed use.

The statement has also been prepared with reference to the guidance contained in CLG Circular 01/2006 'Guidance on Changes to the Development Control System'[CLG, 2006] and the CABE publication 'Design and access statements; how to write, read and use them' [CABE, 2006].

In summary, the design and access statement has been prepared to illustrate the process that has led to the formulation of the proposed development and to explain and justify the approach adopted to both design and access.

About Rough Luxe

Rough Luxe is half rough, half luxury. A little bit of luxury in a rough part of London. A little bit of rough in a luxurious London. The Grade II listed hotel was transformed by acclaimed interior designer Rabih Hage in 2008 and the philosophy is to make guests feel at home.

Guests at a Rough Luxe hotel might have a small room or a small shower cubicle, but the luxury is in the choice of the wine, the bed linen, the art on the walls and the people looking after you. The look is a mix of old and new, furniture and art; combining colours and beautiful fabrics with cheap materials and existing distressed original walls. Cheap materials are treated as precious items and preserved for their beauty and memory of the site.

“The creator of the hotel, designer and gallery curator Rabih Hage, says: ‘Perfection doesn’t mean beauty. That’s not important. What makes a place great to stay is the location, the welcome you get and how well you are looked after.’

On these criteria, the hotel succeeds handsomely. King’s Cross is a great central location and is slowly being glammed up, with the spectacular Eurostar terminal at St Pancras, a new concert hall at Kings Place, and new art galleries and restaurants all within a few minutes’ walk,”
The Guardian, 16th November 2008



Clients & the creative industry

**"There are many mid- and small-scale creative organisations operating in the borough, such as Camden Arts Centre and the Roundhouse; Camden is also famous for its music venues, including Koko, the Roundhouse, the Forum and many smaller venues, notably in and around Camden Town."
Camden Core Strategy 2010-2025
Local Development Framework**

The Rough Luxe hotel has become an important component of the London creative industries. Constantly hopping from city to city, designers and creatives have come to view the hotel as a home from home. This can be more than just a hotel to the borough, but can help to underpin Camden Town Unlimited's vision to **"establish Camden Town, and the nearby developments at Kings Cross and Euston, as the heart of London's creative community. We believe that providing a unique, eye-catching and innovative business offer will attract footfall and like-minded companies that will strengthen the business offer and make it an international destination for arts, design, fashion, music and media."**

The hotel is always booked up for big London events such as the Frieze Art Fair and London Fashion Week. The hotel's mantra of including the best British artists and designers work in the building adds to its cultural importance. We believe that by allowing the extension of the hotel, it can benefit the borough on the whole and boost London's creative industries.

Indeed LB Camden already perceives that **"cultural activity and infrastructure is a vital part of the infrastructure of cities, where creative industries are generally concentrated, operates as an attractor for the location of creative individuals and businesses and provides spaces and places for the development of creative industries' networks and serendipitous exchanges."**

**Creative and Cultural Industries in Camden
A Research Report and Action Plan commissioned by LB Camden**

London proudly promotes itself worldwide as one of the most important cultural capitals on the planet yet has played little attention to the real needs of the drivers of this reputation.

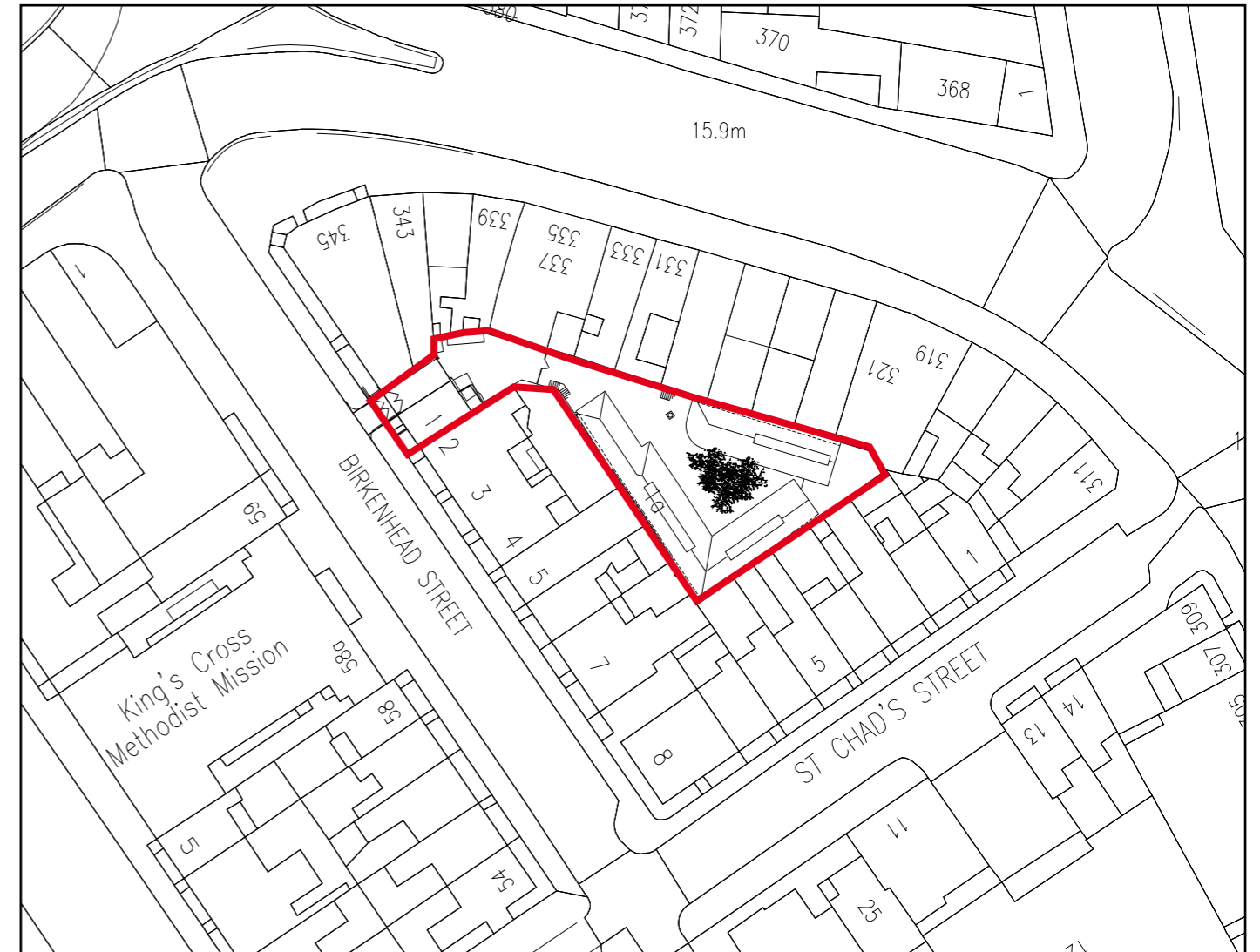


2. Project Brief

The brief from the client was to provide extra accomodation to the hotel. This was to be designed so as not to impact on the use of the mews behind the building, and to retain the external terrace to the rear of the hotel.

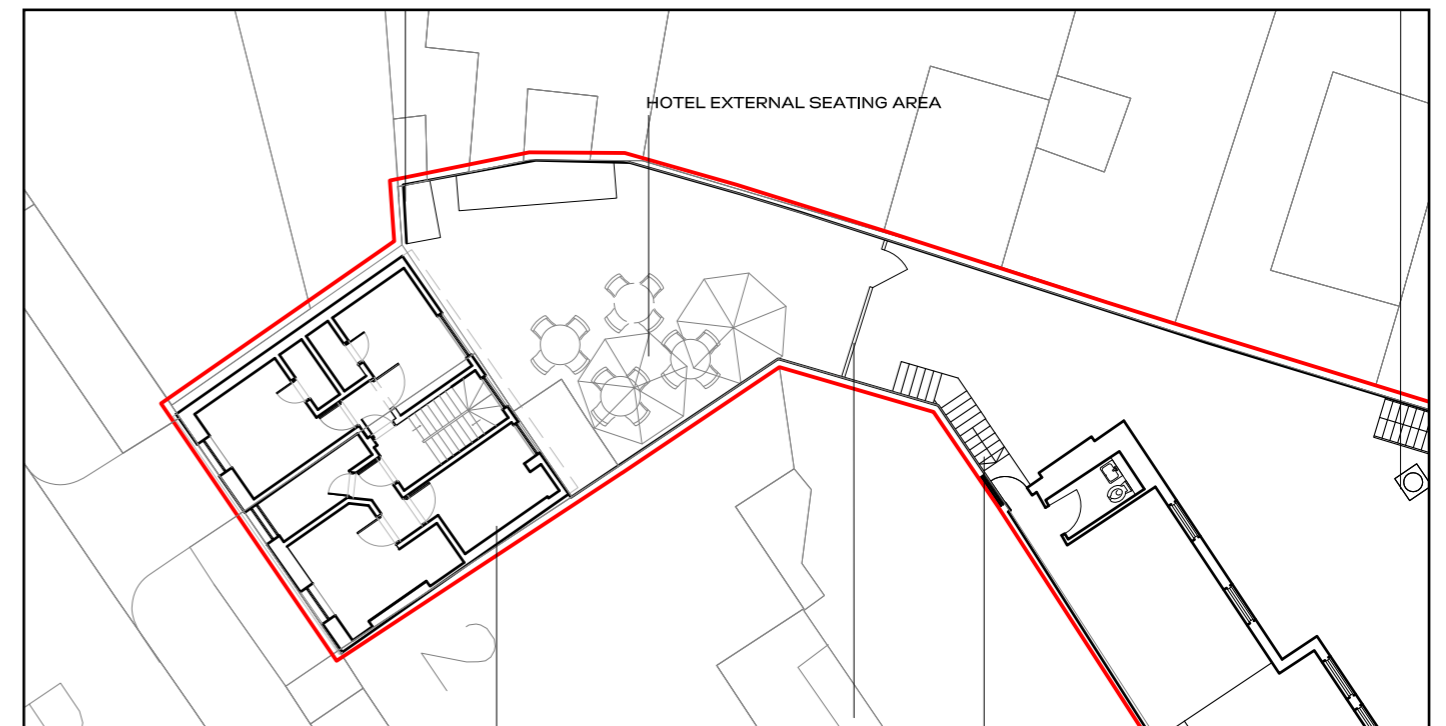
The existing hotel is a three-storey, grade II listed terraced property with basement. The site includes the hotel as well as a backland mews area behind the hotel, accessed to the side. The mews contains a U-shaped 2-storey building currently used as offices, owned by our client.

The mews is currently used as breakfast and drinks terrace for the hotel, as well as to access the office buildings. It is private and not accesible to the general public.



Existing Site Plan

Existing Hotel Plan



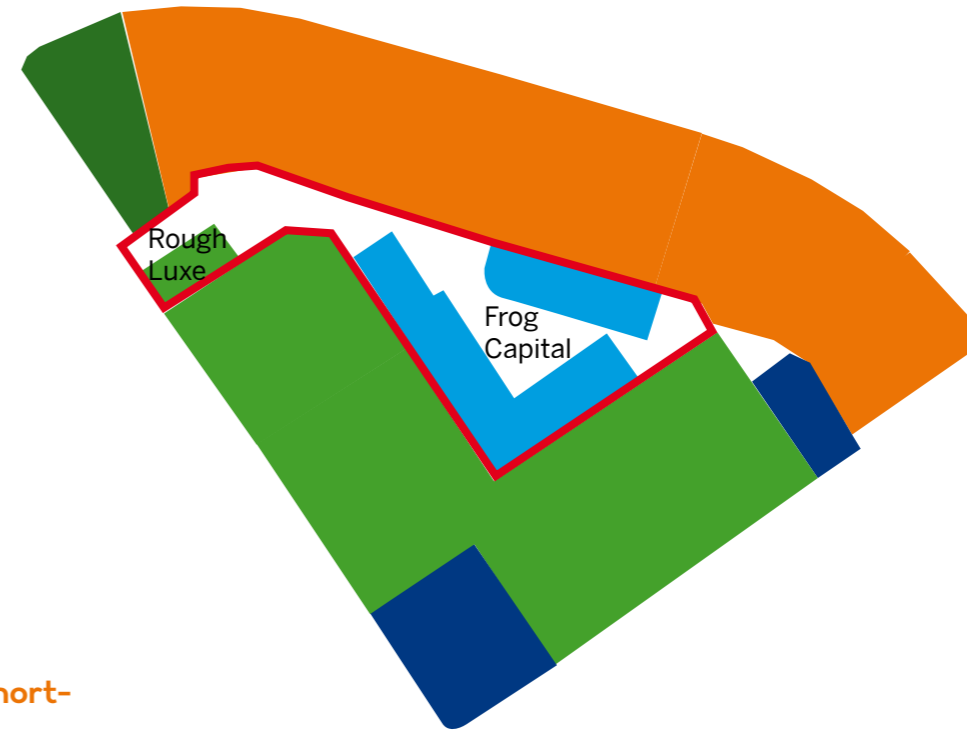
3. Site Context

The site is shown on this red line plan, with the hotel and offices owned by the client illustrated within. There is no known contamination to the land within the site.

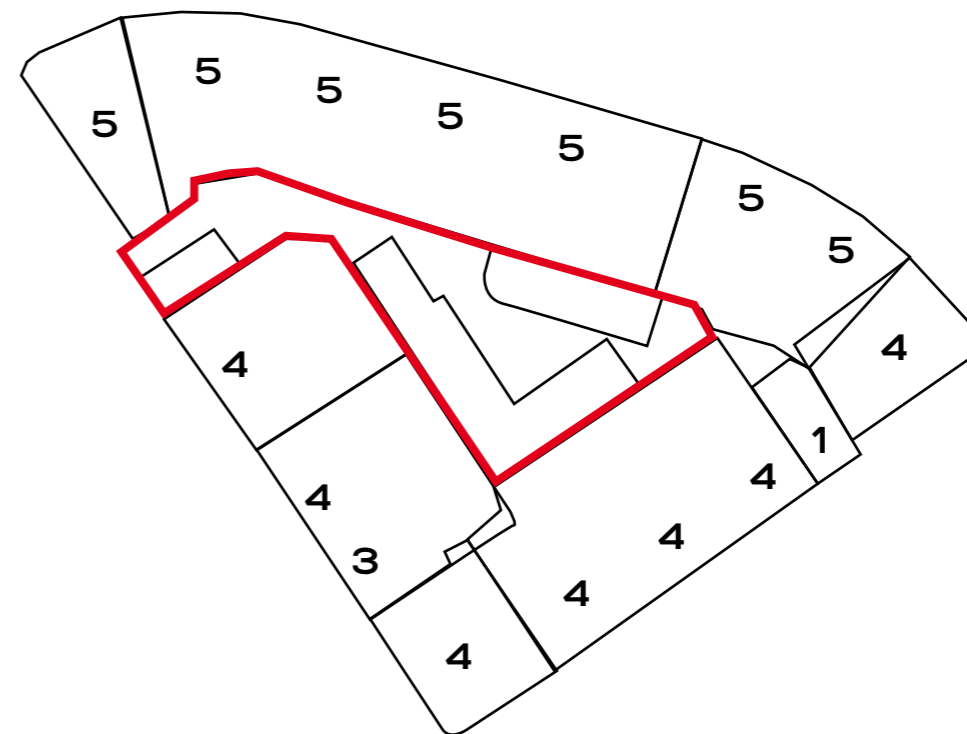
The surrounding uses around the perimeter of this island are illustrated to the right- residential and hotel/hostel to the south, south-east and south-west, and A1/A3/A5 with short term residential units above them to the north and west.

The heights of the surrounding buildings are indicated below, predominantly four storeys to the south-east and south-west, and five storeys to the north (including pitched roof).

Almost all of the buildings to the north, along Grays Inn Road, have filled in their ground level rear amenity space with single-storey extensions. These are usually to accommodate shops and fast food kitchens.



- Surrounding uses**
- C1 Hotel/hostel
 - Residential
 - A1/A3/A5 with short-term residential above
 - A2 with C1 above
 - B1 Offices



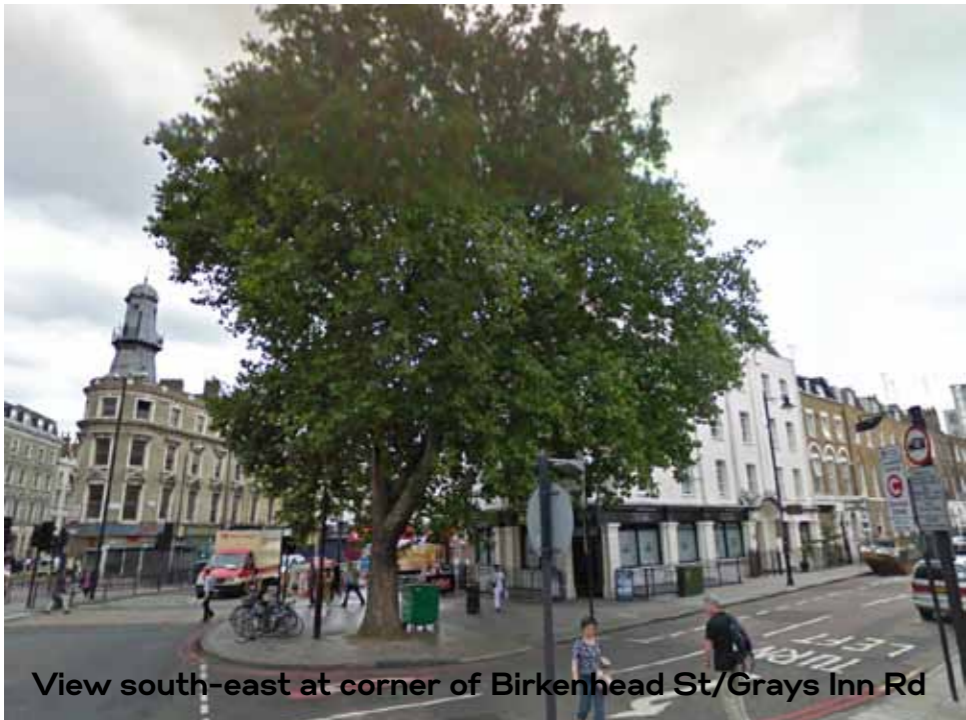
Surrounding heights (storeys)

Site photos





View west along Grays Inn Rd



View south-east at corner of Birkenhead St/Grays Inn Rd



Rough Luxe rear terrace



View of neighbours to the north from Rough Luxe Hotel



View of mews from Rough Luxe Hotel



View of rear terrace from Rough Luxe Hotel



The Mews



The Mews



The Mews

Conservation Area

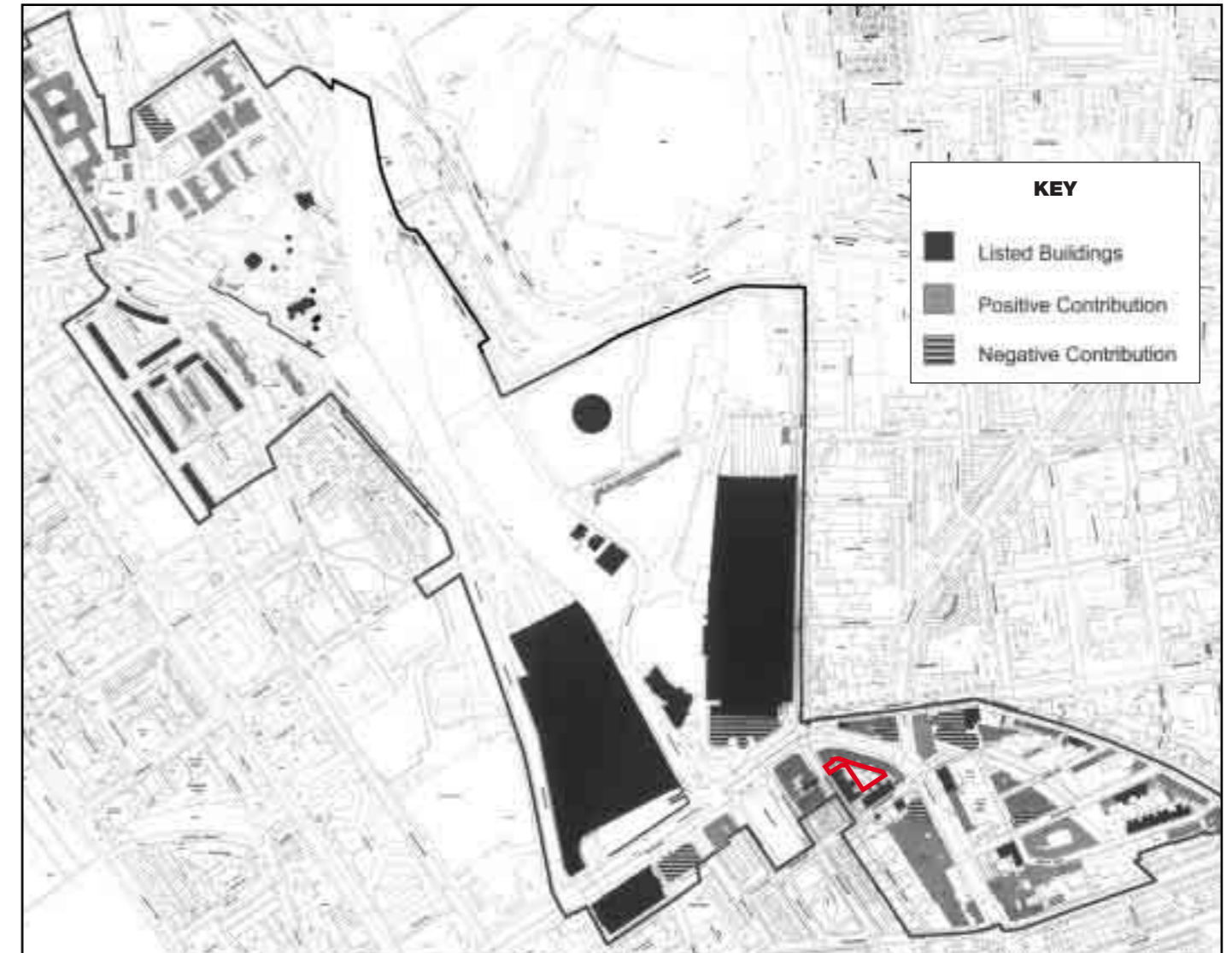
The site is located within the Kings Cross Conservation Area. This conservation area sits around important historic infrastructure such as Kings Cross and St Pancras Stations and the Regents Canal. Recently parts of the conservation area have seen great change, such as the construction of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link and extension of St Pancras Station. Work has also commenced on the Kings Cross Station extension and the Opportunity Area behind it- a designated major development opportunity. The Regent Quarter has also seen much recent transformation.

“To the south of Euston Road, St Chad’s Street, Chesterfield (now Crestfield) Street and Liverpool (now Birkenhead) Street were laid out and standardised late Georgian, “third class” housing, consisting of three storeys plus a basement level, were developed from the 1820s onwards.”

Conservation Area Statement 22- King’s Cross, London Borough of Camden

The site is located within Conservation Sub-area 3: Euston Road, which is dominated by Kings Cross and St Pancras Stations. These have been redesigned and extended with futuristic, high tech elements by world-class architects. We are proposing a similar lightweight, high tech structure, and although we recognise that at first it might seem out of scale and out of place in the conservation area- Paragraph 24.6 of policy DP24 outlines how the Borough seeks to encourage outstanding architecture and design, both in contemporary and traditional styles.

We intend that by understanding our design process, a high quality, more modern design will seem appropriate.



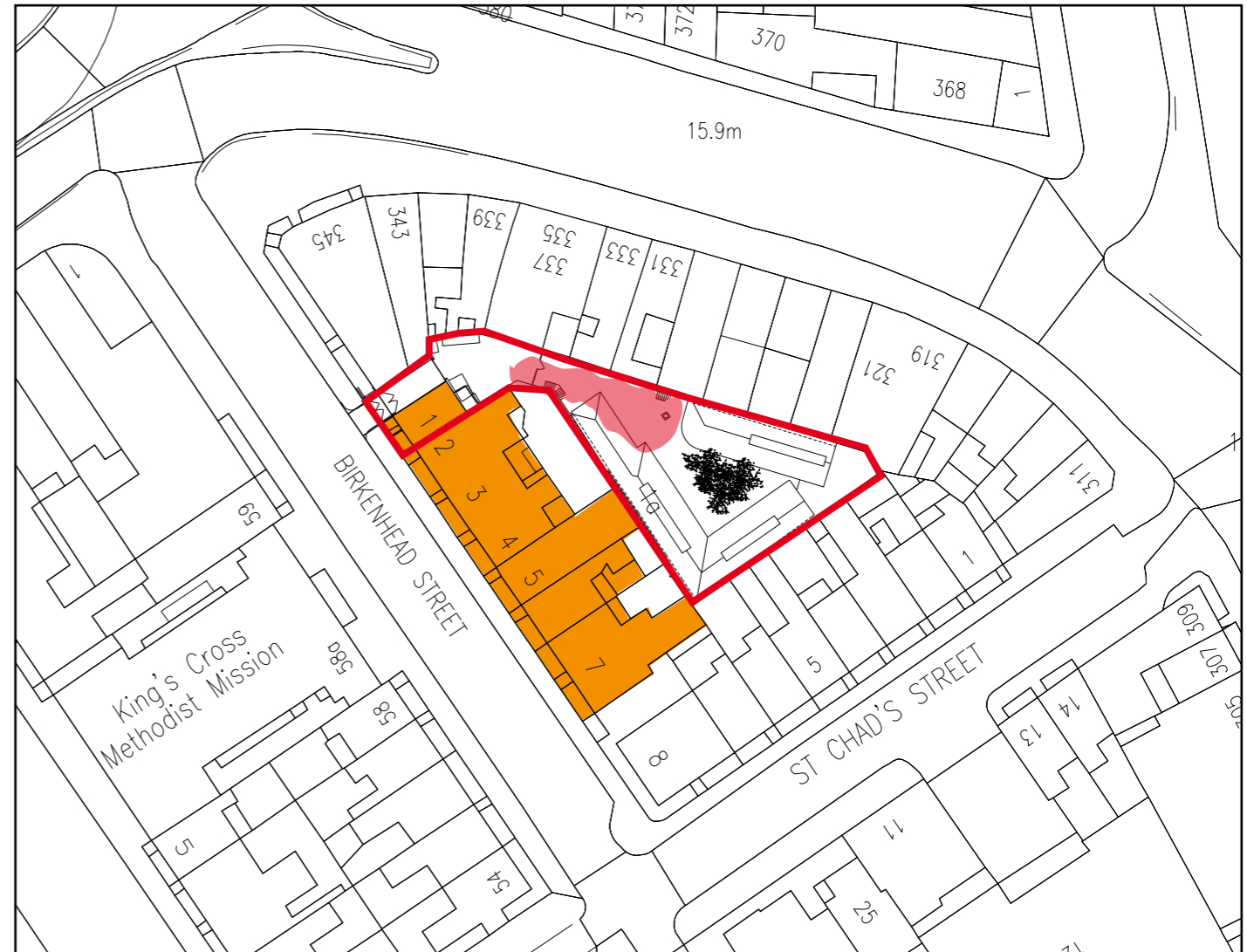
Kings Cross Conservation Area Plan indicating site location

Listed Buildings

“Nos. 1-7 Birkenhead Street are a terrace of 7 houses dating to c1827-32. They are of stock brick with three storeys, and railings around a small front area. Nos 4, 5 & 6 have mansard roof extensions, nos. 5 & 6 have set back roof extensions with railings set on the front parapet wall. Timber sliding sash windows remain except at no.1, where they have been replaced by unsympathetic modern windows. They are listed at grade II.”

Conservation Area Statement 22- King's Cross, London Borough of Camden

We have consciously positioned our proposal so that its construction does not impact on the listed buildings. The proposed lightweight structure could be built with unintrusive pad foundations.



Existing Site Plan indicating positions of listed buildings in orange and proposed site in pink



Listed terrace (1-7 Birkenhead St)

Constructive Conservation

Government planning policy in the form of PPS5 'Planning for the Historic Environment' [2010] requires that local planning authorities should seek to identify and assess the impact of a development proposal on the significance of a designated heritage asset. A designated asset includes a listed building and conservation area.

As the Government's statutory advisor on the historic environment in England, in 2008 English Heritage provided the document 'Conservation Principles, policies and guidance.' **"English Heritage leads the sector in a positive, well-informed and collaborative approach to conservation that we call 'Constructive Conservation'."**

Point 25 in the introduction sets out their will that **"The concept of conservation area designation, with its requirement 'to preserve or enhance', also recognises the potential for beneficial change to significant places, to reveal and reinforce value. 'To sustain' embraces both preservation and enhancement to the extent that the values of a place allow. Considered change offers the potential to enhance and add value to places, as well as generating the need to protect their established heritage values."**

We wish to restate our belief that the extension to the Rough Luxe Hotel will not only benefit the Borough economically by supporting the hotel and creative industries, but it will also add another design by a world-renowned architect to a part of London which is already blossoming with positive change.

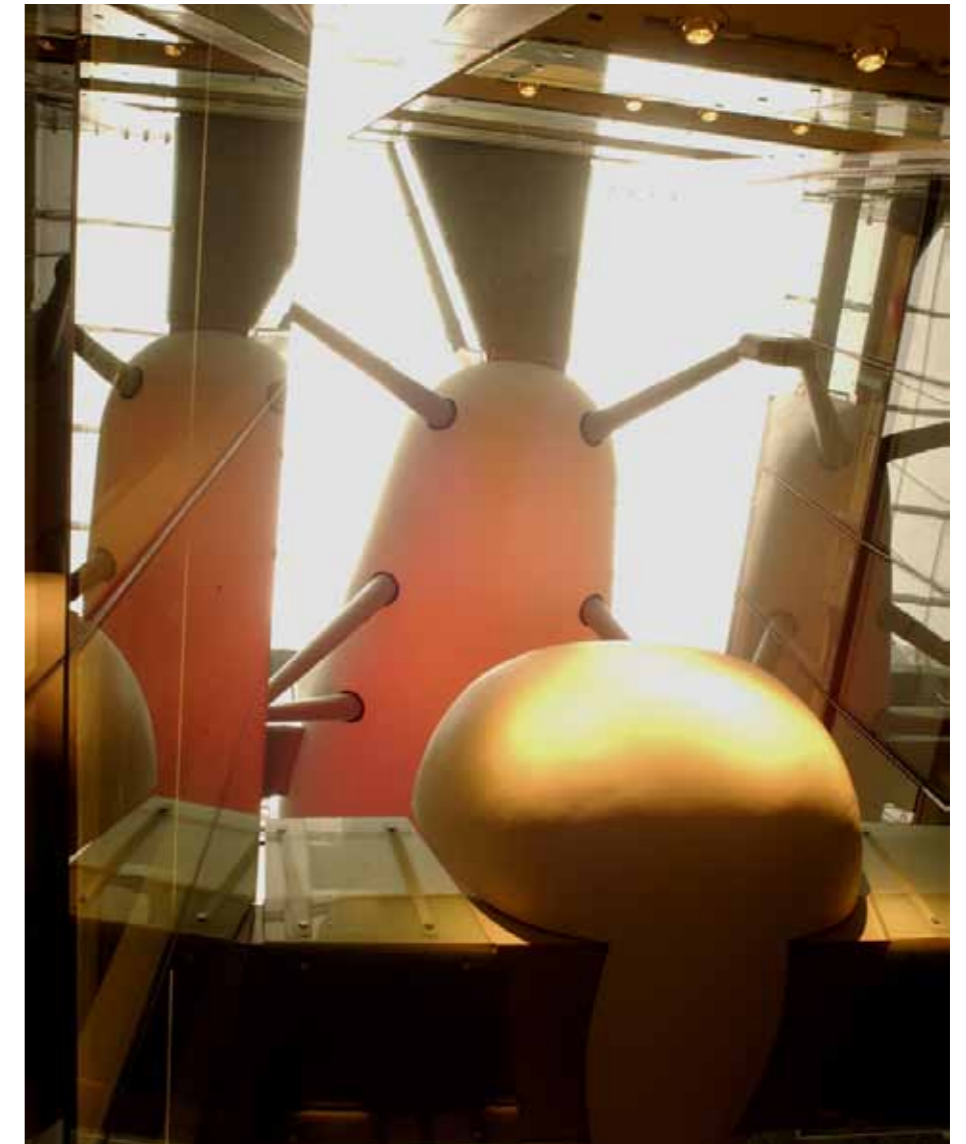
The site is not visible on the street, so a proposal that is smaller than the existing terraces will not have a visual impact on the conservation area. Our proposal is designed to have no impact on the listed buildings. The backland area in which the proposal is sited has no beauty and is not particularly cherished by the buildings that face onto it.

'Comparative significance'

"151 The greater the significance of a place to society, the greater the weight that should be attached to sustaining its heritage values. This concept of 'proportionality' (Principle 5.4) relies on judgement rather than formulae, but is fundamental to equitable reconciliation of the public interest in heritage with other public and private interests."
'Conservation Principles, policies and guidance.'
English Heritage

PPS5 policy HE7.2 considers the impact of a proposal on any heritage asset. It calls on local planning authorities to take into account the particular nature of the significance of the heritage asset and the value that it holds for this and future generations. This understanding should be used by the local planning authority to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposals.

We call on Camden to look at the significance of this particularly unloved backland site. Also to compare the visual significance and impact of the proposal on the conservation area with the economic need to extend the hotel and the benefit it could have on the wider Borough. The proposal is not visible from the street, yet will have a beneficial impact on the business and contemporary image of Camden as a whole.



Will Alsop's pods, built as part of a refurbishment of the grade 1 listed Victoria House, London.
Will Alsop is director at All Design



Wilkinson Eyre's bridge link to the grade 1 listed Royal Ballet School, London



Foster & Partners Great Court roof for the grade 1 listed British Museum.

Scott Lawrie, director at All Design, was project architect.



Will Alsop's Blizard Building at Queen Mary University, with its distinctive pods. Set within Myrdle Street Conservation Area in Whitechapel



Transport Links

The site is very accessible by public transport, which has helped the success of the hotel and led to its need for expansion. The Public Transport Accessibility Level rating for the site is 6b.

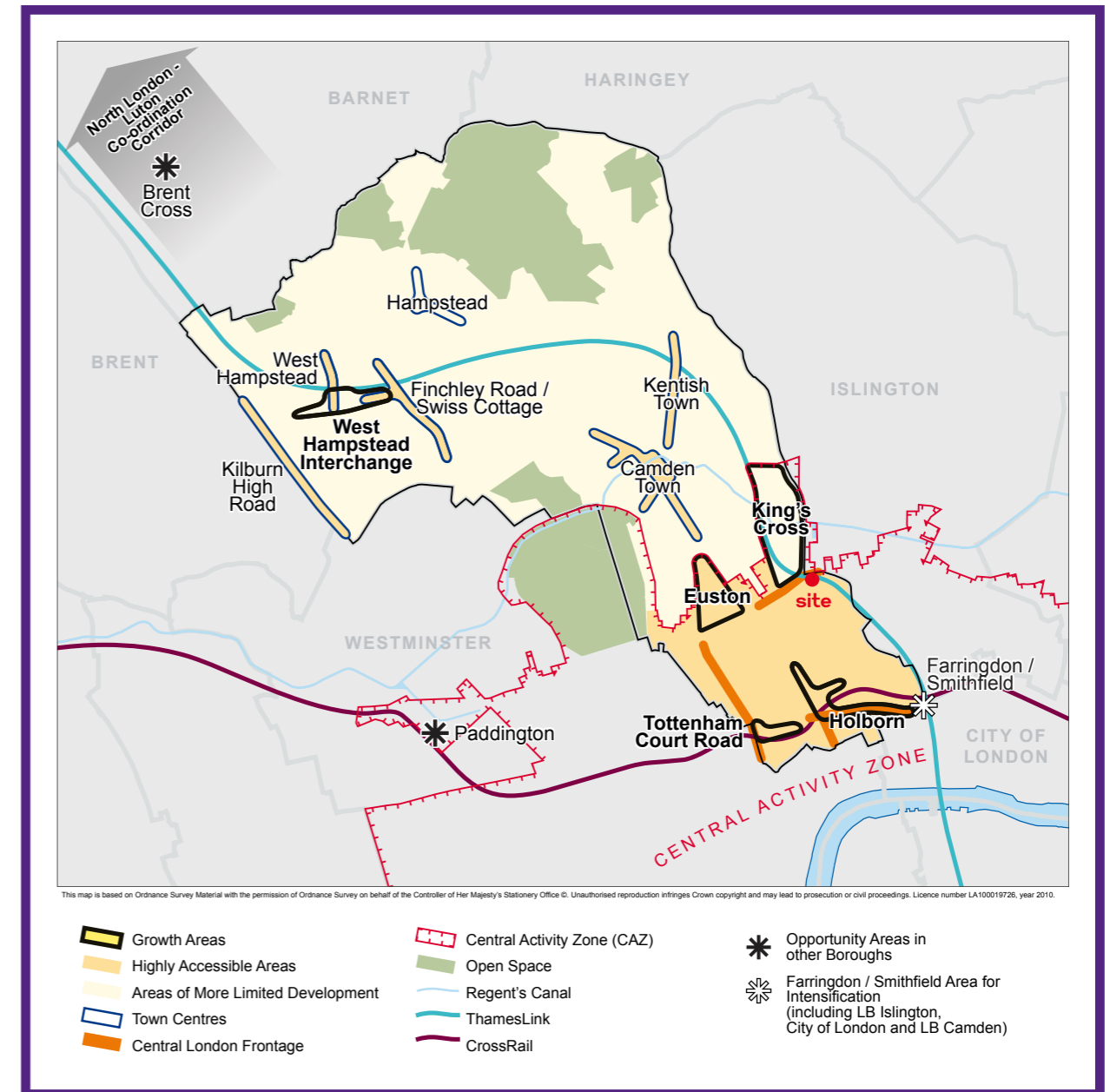
In particular, its proximity to St Pancras International train station and Kings Cross Station sees immediate connections to the continent, Scotland and the north of England. The 'Crossrail 2' project will include a new surface station on the south side of Euston Road, at a date after 2016.

More immediate connections include the tube from Kings Cross St Pancras, which runs trains on the Northern, Victoria, Piccadilly, Circle, Metropolitan and Hammersmith & City lines. The 10, 205, 30, 390, 476, 59, 73, 91, N73 and N91 buses all stop around Kings Cross Station, travelling to all parts of London. The Thameslink service runs from Kings Cross. There are also numerous bicycle hire points.

The map to the right is taken from the Camden Core Strategy. It illustrates that our site, just below the black Kings Cross marked boundary, is a highly accessible area. The Core Strategy states that "Beyond the growth areas there are a number of other parts of the borough which are considered suitable locations for significant development as they are highly accessible by a range of means of transport."

Policy on Conservation Areas dictates caution when making judgement on planning applications. We would hope that as an exciting piece of high quality modern design within a highly accessible area, that Camden would encourage the extension of the Rough Luxe Hotel.

Map 1: Key Diagram





Aerial photograph of Kings Cross Area indicating transport links

4. Government Growth Agenda & The London Plan

The Government's Growth Agenda seeks to support business and economic development, with a presumption in favour of development. The importance of this was reinforced by Greg Clark, Minister for Decentralisation and Cities in his statement of 23 March 2011. He stated that the Government's top priority is

"...to promote sustainable economic growth and jobs. Government's clear expectation is that the answer to development and growth should wherever possible be 'yes', except where this would compromise the key sustainable development principles set out in national planning policy."

He emphasised that **"when deciding whether to grant planning permission, local planning authorities should support enterprise and facilitate housing, economic and other forms of sustainable development"**.

In addition to the existing policy documents, in its growth review of March 2011 the Government committed to replacing the current suite of national policy in the form of a 'shorter, more focussed and inherently pro-growth' National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The Government published its draft NPPF in July 2011 for consultation. It is intended that this Framework will form a key part of the Government's reforms to make the planning system less complex and more accessible, and to promote sustainable growth.

The Mayors strategic plan for London looks at the growth of the capital and how planning can help the city economically as well as socially.

Our site is within the Central Activities Zone, which in policy 2.10, the Mayor intends to:

"a- enhance and promote the unique international, national and Londonwide roles of the Central Activities Zone (CAZ), supporting the distinct offer of the Zone based on a rich mix of local as well as strategic uses and

forming the globally iconic core of one of the world's most attractive and competitive business locations. g- sustain and manage the attractions of CAZ as the world's leading visitor destination."

In policy 4.5 he addresses hotel provision: **"c- ensure that new visitor accommodation is in appropriate locations: within the CAZ strategically important hotel provision should be focussed on its opportunity areas, with smaller scale provision in CAZ fringe locations with good public transport."**

Policy 7.1 requires a project to preserve access to amenity space: **"The design of new buildings and the spaces they create should help reinforce or enhance the character, legibility, permeability and accessibility of the neighbourhood."**

By elevating our proposal we plan to preserve access to the mews site and the rear of the hotel.

These policies look to support a project such as this, its innovation, location and great design qualities can help the Borough and the city in these economic times. We would also look to fulfil the Mayors requirements on sustainability

Policy 7.9 deals with heritage: **"The significance of heritage assets should be assessed when development is proposed and schemes designed so that the heritage significance is recognised both in their own right and as catalysts for regeneration."**

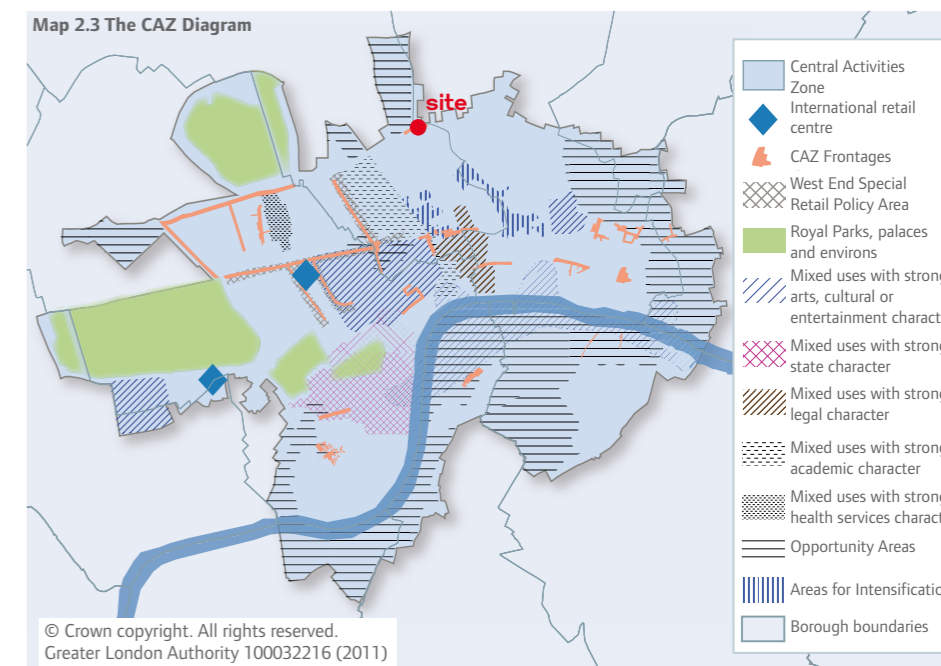
We hope that the Borough will assess the significance of an unseen backland site, in that it does not impact at all on the conservation area or listed buildings. The heritage aspect of the scheme should not hold back the regeneration of the area.

Policy 7.4 seems to address the key issues with this proposal:

"A Development should have regard to the form, function, and structure of an area, place or street and the scale, mass and orientation of surrounding buildings.

It should improve an area's visual or physical connection with natural features. In areas of poor or ill-defined character, development should build on the positive elements that can contribute to establishing an enhanced character for the future function of the area."

It is our view that the backland area in which we make out proposal has a **"poor or ill-defined character."** Our proposal positions itself well in response to the need to use the mews and rear of the hotel. A bold design with character and quality can also **"contribute to establishing an enhanced character for the future function of the area."**



Site location on the fringe of the CAZ

5. Planning Policy

Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requires local planning authorities when determining planning applications to **“have regard to the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations”**.

The Borough’s principal planning policy document is the Local Development Framework 2010-2025. This document shapes the kind of place that Camden will be in the future. The Core Strategy within that contains the policies which inform development within the borough. This is also supported by the Borough’s development policies. In our pre-planning application, Camden Planning stated that the following policies apply to this application:

Core Strategy:

CS1 – Distribution and growth

CS3 – Other highly accessible areas

CS5 – Managing the impact of growth and development

CS8- Promoting a successful and inclusive Camden economy

CS9- Achieving a successful Central London

CS11- Promoting sustainable and efficient travel

CS14- Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage

CS15- Protecting and improving our parks and open spaces & encouraging diversity

Development Policies:

DP1 – Mixed use development

DP14- Tourism development and visitor accommodation

DP16- The transport implications of development

DP22-Promoting sustainable design and construction

DP24- Securing high quality design

DP25- Conserving Camden’s heritage

DP26- Managing the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours

The Core Strategy policies aim **“to shape the future of Camden to create a unique, successful and vibrant place to live, work and visit.**

To make sure that development in Camden achieves high environmental standards and is designed to adapt to, and reduce the effect of, climate change.

To support the successful development of the growth areas of King’s Cross, Euston, Tottenham Court Road, Holborn and West Hampstead, and ensure that development, both there and elsewhere, is supported by necessary infrastructure and maximises the opportunities and benefits for the local community and the borough as a whole.”

We believe that our proposal provides necessary expansion for a hotel that is important to its industry, and is situated in an area highlighted as an area for growth. It’s expansion would offer opportunities and benefits to the borough as a whole.

“To support Camden’s valuable contribution to London’s regional, national and international role, in terms of business and employment; research, education and medicine; shopping and entertainment; culture and tourism, and make sure that this meets the needs of, and bring benefits to, residential communities (in particular those adjacent to growth areas) as well as those who work in and visit the borough.”

The Camden Core Strategy

Addressing the proposal on a policy by policy basis:

CS1- The Borough is “seeking development that makes full use of its site, taking into account quality of design, its surroundings, sustainability, amenity, heritage, transport accessibility and any other considerations relevant to the site”

“1.22 Good design can increase density while protecting and enhancing the character of an area.”

Our proposal aims to make full use of the site without impacting on the listed buildings or the operation of the hotel.

“2.2 The level of development opportunities and transport accessibility in the areas of King’s Cross, Euston, Tottenham Court Road, Holborn and West Hampstead make them the most appropriate locations to focus the provision of additional homes, jobs and facilities in Camden to 2025.”

“CS3.5 all development in these locations is of a size and nature compatible with its site and the character of its surroundings and the wider area.”

Our proposal is of a smaller scale than it’s neighbours.

“CS5.8 We will expect development to avoid harmful effects on the amenity of existing and future occupiers and nearby properties”

Our proposal seeks to preserve the amenity space of the mews by elevating the extension.

The impact of the proposal on surrounding amenity spaces is covered in the rights to light section of this document.

CS8- The expansion of the hotel will support Camden’s thriving tourist industry, helping to bolster the local economy.

Planning Policy

CS9- As part of London's Central Activities Zone and one of Camdens Highly Accessible Areas, the hotel is an ideal spot for visitors to London to stay in with easy access to the city. As such, we feel that Camden should support the extension of the hotel. **"We will seek to make sure that the design of new development contributes positively to the area and respects Central London's full range of heritage assets."**

Our proposal respects the heritage on the site by being hidden from street view and positioning itself away from the listed buildings. The proposal is of the highest quality sustainable design.

CS11- The hotel expects visitors to travel by public transport as it provides no parking spaces.

CS14.3- We would like to reassure Camden of All Design's architectural pedigree. Will Alsop has won numerous awards, including RIBA regional awards and the RIBA Stirling Prize in 2000.

CS14.4- We believe that our proposal is wholly appropriate to its context, when seen as a reaction to the site constraints and the need to negate impact on the listed buildings and the operation of the mews and hotel. It is also smaller in scale than its neighbours. The backland site is currently a mixture of different scale extensions with no overall order to it.

Our rights of light study also provides evidence that neighbours' way of life will not be adversely affected.

CS14.24- Views within the conservation area will not be affected by our proposal

CS15- Our proposal is raised on legs in order to preserve the ground level amenity space of the mews. The trees in the mews will not be adversely affected by the proposal. We feel that a traditional extension to the hotel would have a negative impact on the mews.

DP1- The gross internal floor area of 140sqm bypasses the Borough's need for development in excess of 200sqm to be 50% housing.

DP14- We understand that the planned hotel use is in keeping with designated uses for this area.

DP16- The scale of the proposal will not have a noticeable effect on the public transport system. With no proposed or existing car parking spaces, there will be no impact on traffic congestion. We would be willing to undertake a transport assessment of the proposal.

The proposal is designed to be largely built off-site, with only minor groundworks to be built in-situ, and the main elements to be craned onto site and bolted in place. Therefore, the construction will have little impact on local traffic. Our contractor would be expected to operate within standard safety regulations during construction. Suitable protected access would be provided to the mews.

DP22- Our proposal will be highly sustainable in nature, using reclaimed or recycled materials where possible, and designed to minimise the loss of energy. Our section on sustainability looks at this in more detail.

DP24- The Council will require all developments, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings, to be of the highest standard of design and will expect developments to consider:

a) character, setting, context and the form and scale of neighbouring buildings

We are encouraged to see that Camden has a positive attitude towards modern architecture. Whilst the setting for our proposal is a conservation area with listed buildings close by, we feel as previously expressed, that the backland site offers an opportunity to improve the architectural setting with a high quality modern proposal.

Whilst the design is raised up by two storeys, reaching four storeys in height, we feel that this works better with the mews below, and does not have a negative impact on its surroundings.

b) the character and proportions of the existing building, where alterations and extensions are proposed;

Whilst we do not advocate replicating the style of the existing hotel, we have aimed to keep the height of the extension subservient to the existing, whilst also trying to preserve the use of the mews and external terrace.

c) the quality of materials to be used;

Whilst not using materials that are historic in nature, we propose a panel-beaten, curved vitreous enamel coated steel panelling to clad the pods. This is a hard-wearing, high quality material that would be a neutral white colour.

d) the provision of visually interesting frontages at street level;

We do not propose any amendment to the street frontage

e) the appropriate location for building services equipment;

The proposed services would run from the existing hotel and not be visible externally.

f) existing natural features, such as topography and trees;

Our proposal would not impact on any trees or natural landscaping.

g) the provision of appropriate hard and soft landscaping including boundary treatments;

We have no space on the site to provide soft landscaping

h) the provision of appropriate amenity space;

Our proposal aims to preserve the existing amenity space in the mews as well as to the rear of the hotel. This would be achieved by elevating the proposed pods.

i) accessibility.

We have proposed an additional pod at ground level which would be fully compliant with Part M of the Approved Documents. Further details follow.

Planning Policy

DP25.2- “We will seek to manage change in a way that retains the distinctive characters of our conservation areas and will expect new development to contribute positively to this. The Council will therefore only grant planning permission for development in Camden’s conservation areas that preserves and enhances the special character or appearance of the area.”

Our proposal does not impact on the special character or appearance of the Kings Cross conservation area in which it sits. Set in the backland mews site, it is not visible from the street, and the backland area itself is a non-structured mix of different scaled extensions and storage areas.

“The character of conservation areas derive from the combination of a number of factors, including scale, density, pattern of development, landscape, topography, open space, materials, architectural detailing, and uses.”

The density of the proposed extension is minimal, with only 140sqm internal area. The issue is the height as it is raised by two storeys. As previously stated, this is the only option as extension to avoid impact on the mews and hotel amenity space. As such our proposal does not have a negative impact on landscape, topography and open space. We propose a new form of industrial aesthetic for the pods, entirely appropriate when considering the industrial nature of Kings Cross’ history.

25.18 Our proposal is not situated in an archaeologically sensitive area.

DP26 – “Managing the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours

The Council will protect the quality of life of occupiers and neighbours by only granting permission for development that does not cause harm to amenity. The factors we will consider include:

a) visual privacy and overlooking;

This is a key consideration in this proposal. To maintain privacy, it is recommended by the BRE guidelines that a distance between 18 and 35 metres should be maintained between residential windows which directly face each other. Within a central urban location, such as this, this distance is typically unachievable due to the built up nature of the area. It has been found that the rooms directly to the north of the proposal are bathrooms or kitchens with translucent glass or very small windows.

There is also a 4-storey fire escape and a roof terrace to the north of the site, already overlooking the properties close by including the hotel, reducing privacy in the mews.

b) overshadowing and outlook;

This is dealt with in a dedicated rights to light study in this report

c) sunlight, daylight and artificial light levels;

This is dealt with in a dedicated rights to light study in this report

d) noise and vibration levels;

e) odour, fumes and dust;

The proposal does not pose any problems in this respect

f) microclimate;

As a sheltered and partially enclosed site, the small scale of the proposal will not have any adverse effect on the microclimate.

g) the inclusion of appropriate attenuation measures.

The proposal does not pose any problems in this respect

We will also require developments to provide:

h) an acceptable standard of accommodation in terms of internal arrangements, dwelling and room sizes and amenity space;

We have designed our rooms to be small in scale to suit the short-stay creative client, in the style of the existing hotel rooms. We also want the proposed pods to be compact in order to have as little impact as possible on the neighbouring properties.

i) facilities for the storage, recycling and disposal of waste;

As existing hotel provision

j) facilities for bicycle storage;

As existing hotel provision

k) outdoor space for private or communal amenity space, wherever practical.

As previously stated, our proposal aims to retain the small amount of communal amenity space in the mews and to the rear of the hotel by elevating the pods.

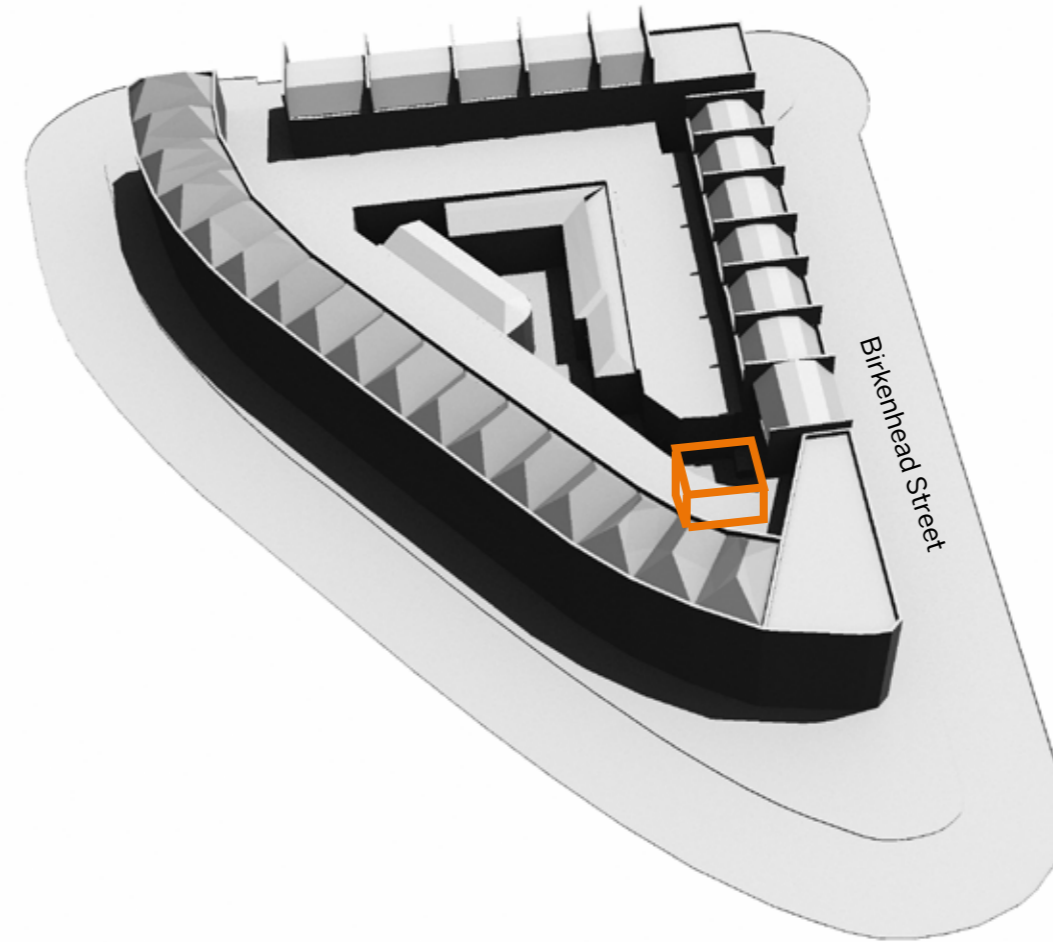
6. Site Constraints

As we have already established, a conventional extension to the rear of the hotel would not work due to the need to retain the external terrace and also the wish to preserve the listed building.

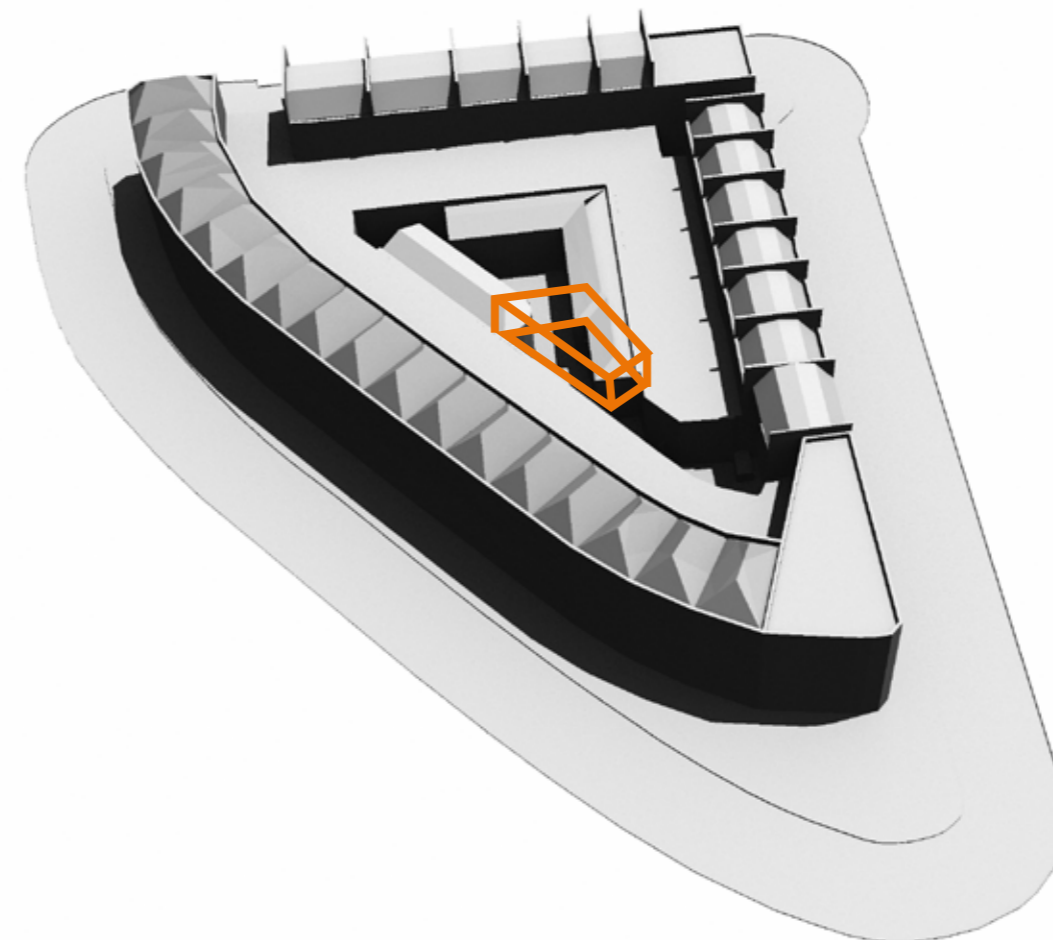
We then looked at the mews as a potential location for the extension. The location along the northern boundary of the mews already presents a 'bottleneck', however the air space above the 'bottleneck' area can receive objects of beauty without devaluing either the triangular mews space or the hotel terrace area.

Constraints posed by the site include:

- Location in conservation area
- Proximity to listed buildings
- Potential impact on neighbours
- Requirement to maintain access to mews
- Desire to retain hotel terrace to rear
- Potential impact on mews offices



We do not wish to locate the extension adjacent to the existing listed hotel, as we wish to limit any impact that construction might cause.



A more suitable site would be within the mews, raised off the ground to maintain access to the mews, preserve the terrace and not impact on the listed terrace

- Notes
1. Do not scale off this drawing.
 2. All dimensions are in millimetres unless otherwise stated.
 3. This drawings to be read in conjunction with all relevant architectural, civil/structural, and services engineer's drawings and specifications.



Description	Drn. Chkd Appd.
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Issue Status: **PLANNING**

Project Title
**ROUGH_LUXE
 KINGS_CROSS**
 Drawing Title
**LEVEL_01_PLAN
 EXISTING**

Scale at A3	Date	Drawn	Checked	Approved
1:200	20.10.11	MP	GW	GW

all Design
 42 Elcho Street London SW11 4AU
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 LONDON CHONGQING TORONTO

Job No.	Drawing No.	Rev.
LON.09125.00	LON.09125.00-006	-

Site Opportunities

“Successful refurbishment and modern design should contribute positively to the character of the area.”
Conservation Area Statement 22- King’s Cross,
London Borough of Camden

There is much redevelopment happening in Kings Cross at the moment. Large scale development such as Kings Place, Kings Cross and St Pancras Stations are leading the way for bold, contemporary architecture in the Borough.

We see the mews at 1, Birkenhead Street as another expression of the areas’s contemporary renaissance. The existing mews office buildings already have a fresh modern feel to them. Will Alsop has outlined a mini master plan for the mews, illustrated on the opposite page. If approved by Camden in seperate applications, this would see innovative movable meeting pods, a new roof structure for the hotel terrace and potential basement kitchen with glass roof.

The vision is to transform the mews into a hub, a breeding ground of innovation, where businesses can use the meeting pods and design professionals will be attracted to stay in the hotel. This can have a hugely positive impact on the Borough, outweighing the minimal conservation issues.



Kings Place



Design for a moveable meeting pod
 3d concept images
 October 2011

Pods to be constructed off site in curved timber frame with galvalume, varnished, curved, glazed panel cladding to be constructed on site to provide excellent insulation. Pods are to be fixed to concrete in place and to be anchored around perimeter to be protected by cast concrete. Pods are to be finished to suit interior. Pods are to be finished with a light neutral color. Pods are to be finished with a light neutral color. Pods are to be finished with a light neutral color.

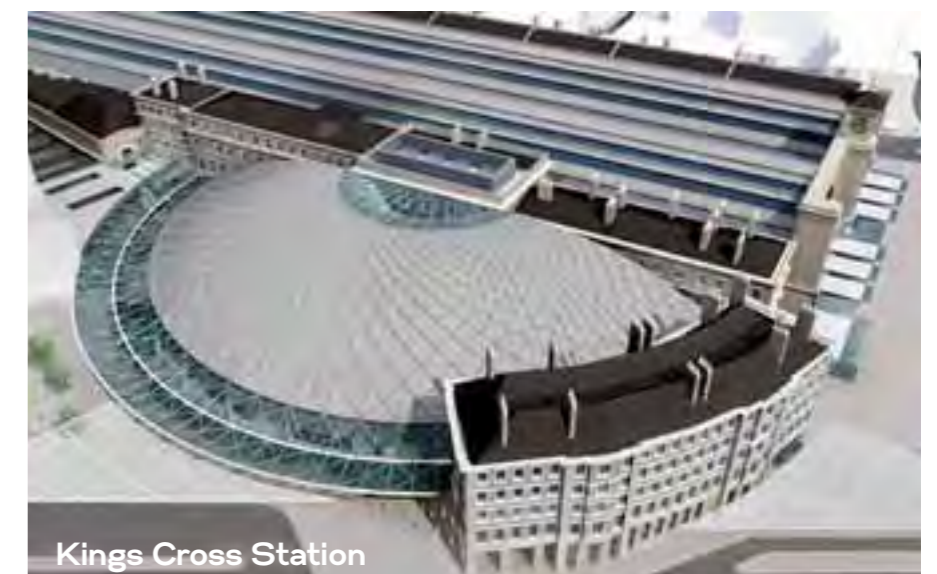
Design for moving pod



Rough Luxe Hotel



The Mews



Kings Cross Station





- Notes**
1. Do not scale off this drawing.
 2. All dimensions are in millimetres unless otherwise stated.
 3. This drawings to be read in conjunction with all relevant architectural, civil/structural, and services engineer's drawings and specifications.



Rev.	Date	Description	Drn.	Chkd.	Appd.
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Issue Status: **PLANNING**

Project Title
**ROUGH_LUXE
 KINGS_CROSS**
 Drawing Title
**FUTURE_MASTERPLAN
 PROPOSED**

Scale of A3	Date	Drawn	Checked	Approved
1:200	30.4.12	MP	GW	WA

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 LONDON CHONGQING TORONTO

Job No.	Drawing No.	Rev.
LON.09125.00	LON.09125.00-002	-

7. Pre-planning

In June 2011 we submitted drawings to Camden Planning Department for initial feedback. Comments on the scheme were:

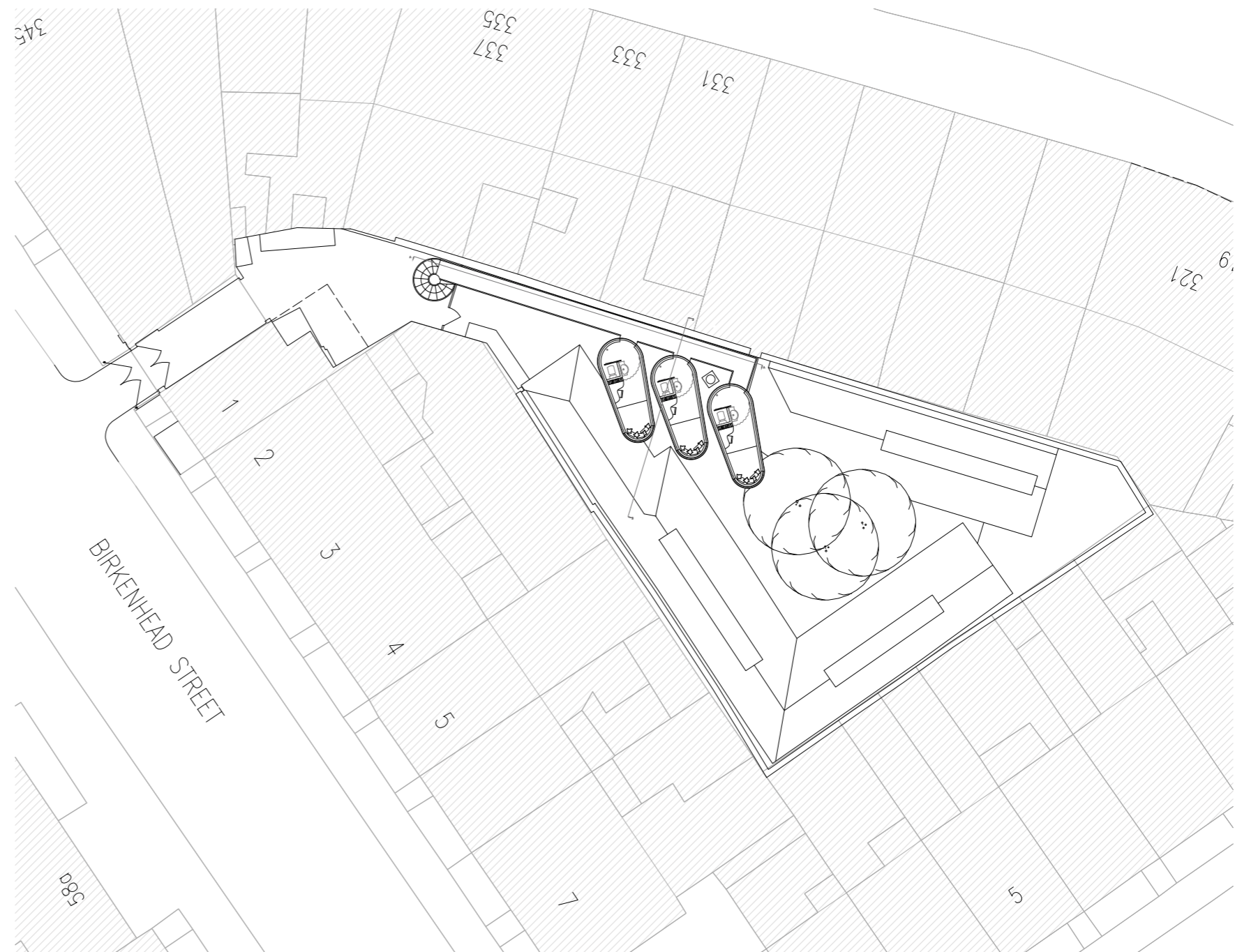
“The Council will not approve design which is inappropriate to its context or fails to improve the character of an area. In order to achieve high quality design in the borough the Council require applicants to consider buildings in terms of context, height, accessibility, orientation, siting, detailing and materials. Materials should form an integral part of the design process and should relate to the character and appearance of the area, particularly in conservation areas or within the setting of listed buildings.”

“The height of the overall structure and accompanying walkways with screening would result in what is considered to be an intrusive and dominant structure in the context of the mews. It would also be at a height which would compete with the taller buildings that ring the site. There is considered to be a distinct sense of hierarchy on the site with the mews being subservient in scale and height to the perimeter buildings. The proposed development would not be in keeping with this.

It appears that the pods may be clad in timber or metal. It is considered that metal would give them a stark industrial appearance that would be totally out of character with the site.”

“I would advice you that issues such as access arrangements, potential loss of outlook, the potential loss of natural light, the setting of the listed buildings, and the character and appearance of the conservation area need to be taken into account

when considering proposals for a development in the backland location. In particular the sunlight/daylight issues are likely to be of fundamental importance and a sunlight/daylight report is likely to be required with an application of this nature.”



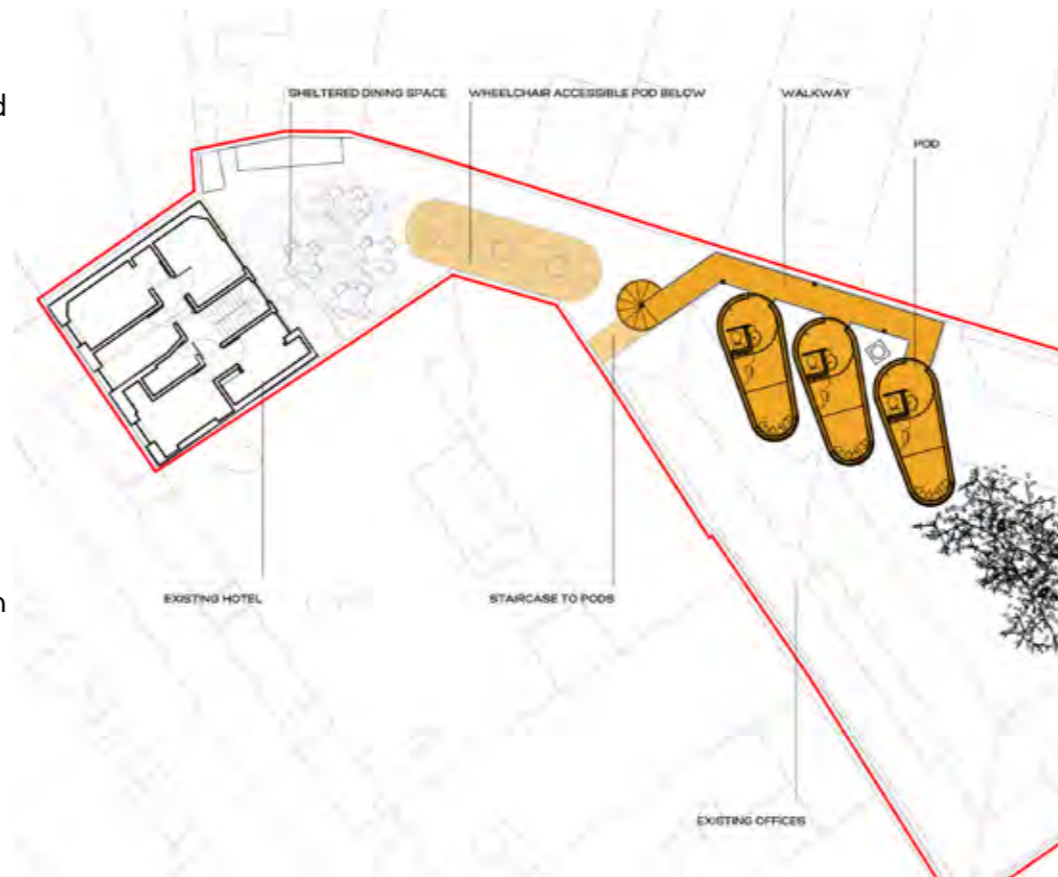
Original scheme submitted to Camden- June 2011

Pre-planning

Following this feedback, we amended the scheme so as to limit the impact of the walkway on the neighbouring buildings to the north. We also included an accessible pod at ground level. The amended plan is shown at the top of this page. We then arranged for a pre-planning meeting with Camden and subsequently a site visit with the duty planning officer and conservation officer. Comments on the amended scheme included:

“The Council’s initial comment about the unacceptability of the proposed two-storey pods remains, by virtue of their height which would dominate the intimate scale of the mews and compete with the scale of the terraced houses which surround the site.”

“In relation to amenity matters, overlooking/privacy and outlook/sense of enclosure issues are also key considerations. These issues will need to be addressed in any future applications. The positioning of the proposed pods, proposed stair and walkway and associated alterations will be assessed on a site visit in the event that a formal application has been submitted. Measures to minimise overlooking/loss of outlook and ensure adequate levels of sunlight/daylight between the proposed units will be expected.”



We have now amended the layout to take into account the planners’ comments. We were previously reluctant to move the access stair towards the end of the mews, so as to preserve a separation between the hotel and the offices.

However, we have now moved the stair so as to remove any overlooking of the neighbouring properties. The stair and walkway would include opaque glass panels to block these views. As the walkway is now to the south of the pods, this would not have any sunlight/daylight impact on the properties to the north.

The owners and occupiers of the offices within the mews are also happy with this layout and understand the need to make these changes to the design. The pods have also been flipped in plan to access from the south end.

8. Design Principles

The London Plan policy 7.6 states that:

“B- Buildings and structures should:

- a) be of the highest architectural quality**
- b) be of a proportion, composition, scale and orientation that enhances, activates and appropriately defines the public realm**
- c) comprise details and materials that complement, not necessarily replicate, the local architectural character**
- d) not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of surrounding land and buildings, particularly residential buildings, in relation to privacy, overshadowing, wind and microclimate.**

This is particularly important for tall buildings

- e) incorporate best practice in resource management and climate change mitigation and adaptation**
- f) provide high quality indoor and outdoor spaces and integrate well with the surrounding streets and open spaces**
- g) be adaptable to different activities and land uses, particularly at ground level.”**

These criteria form the basis of our design decisions for the concept. In this section of the report we aim to illustrate each point in turn.

a) Design quality

Will Alsop’s concept for this project is entitled ‘living out of a suitcase.’ His intention is for a series of pods that are detail designed to such precision that they are like products or pieces of furniture. These pods will be designed by Alsop and engineered by AKT, both of whom are designers of repute with numerous awards. The pods will be built off-site to allow a higher quality of craftsmanship.

