

103 Camley Street, Camden NW1

Planning Statement



103 CAMLEY STREET, CAMDEN, NW1 0PF

PLANNING STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

for

Urbanest and Regent Regeneration Ltd

31 October 2011

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This planning statement is submitted in support of a detailed planning application made on behalf of Urbanest and Regent Regeneration Ltd ('the applicant') for the redevelopment of the site known as 103 Camley Street. This statement sets out the planning case in support of the application for market housing, student accommodation, cross-subsidised Class B1 business 'incubator' enterprise space, retail provision, a café unit and improvement works to the Canal side.

1.2 The application proposes a development as follows:

"The demolition of the existing, vacant, industrial buildings and the subsequent redevelopment for a building of mixed use ranging from 4-12 storeys comprising 307 units of student accommodation, 40 market housing units (Class C3), incubator business floorspace (Class B1 - 1,653 sqm) and two retail units (Class A1/A3 - 406 sqm) together with improvements to the public realm, Canal towpath and other associated works."

1.3 The proposals are described in greater detail in section 3.0 of this planning statement. In summary, the proposal is for the demolition of the existing industrial buildings and the subsequent redevelopment to provide a new mixed use building to bring forward 307 student bedrooms to accommodate 320 students, 40 market housing units, 1,653sqm of cross-funded business incubator enterprise space and 406sqm of retail and café provision. The proposal intends to provide improvement works to the public realm, improvements to the legibility and permeability of the site and the creation of new pedestrian connections including to the Canal towpath.

1.4 This statement sets out a planning assessment of the Development. It assesses the development in the context of national, regional and local planning policy and guidance. This Statement should be read in conjunction with the plans and drawings submitted as part of this application.

1.5 The submission of this application follows discussions with a wide range of stakeholders and statutory consultees, including both the planning and design teams at LB Camden ('LBC'), officers at the Greater London Authority ('GLA'), British Waterways, local businesses, ward councillors, local groups and residents.

- 1.6 The redevelopment of this site responds to a number of known needs within the area. The site is largely vacant with the exception of part of the site in use temporarily by a taxi operator and offers no opportunity for future occupation in its current form or use. The site's redevelopment will provide significant enhancement to the physical and environmental condition of the site and provides high quality accommodation and business enterprise floorspace.
- 1.7 A student led redevelopment will add to the range of accommodation currently available in the area through direct provision of student accommodation, but also by reducing demand from students on private rented property, allowing for additional, affordable market accommodation locally to become available to non-students.
- 1.8 Paragraph 10 of Planning Policy Statement 1 (The Planning System: General Principles) sets out the requirement that local planning authorities must determine planning applications in accordance with the statutory development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The statutory development plan for the purposes of Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 comprises (i) The London Plan, being the Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London, adopted by the Mayor of London in July 2011, and (ii) The London Borough of Camden's Local Development Framework containing both the Core Strategy and Development Policies documents both of which were adopted in November 2010.
- 1.9 This statement is submitted in conjunction with the following supporting information which has been confirmed by the Council as required for the validation of the planning application.
- Planning Statement, prepared by DP9 Planning Consultants;
 - Design & Access Statement, prepared by Allford Hall Monaghan Morris Architects;
 - Townscape, Heritage & Visual Impact Assessment, prepared by Richard Coleman Citydesigner;
 - Student Accommodation Management Plan, prepared by Urbanest;
 - Incubator Operational Management Statement by Camden Town Unlimited and UCL Advances;
 - Socio-economic Context Report, prepared by Hunt Dobson Stringer;
 - Development Viability Assessment, prepared by Montagu Evans and Shaw Corporation;

- Transport Assessment, prepared by TTP Consulting;
- Construction Method Statement, prepared by Mansell;
- Traffic Management Plan, prepared by Mansell;
- Daylight & Sunlight Report, prepared by Anstey Horne;
- Energy & Sustainability Report, prepared by McBains Cooper;
- Ecological Appraisal Report, prepared by Aspect Ecology;
- Contamination & Remediation Assessment, prepared by Card;
- Arboricultural Implication Study & Tree Protection Strategy, prepared by Michael Honey;
- Statement of Community Involvement, prepared by Four Communications;
- Microclimate Assessment, prepared by RWDI; and
- Environmental Noise Survey & External Building Fabric Report, prepared by RBA Acoustics.

1.10 This planning statement is arranged as follows:

- Section 1 provides an introduction to the document;
- Section 2 presents an executive summary identifying the planning benefits of the development;
- Section 3 describes and assesses the site and surrounding area;
- Section 4 provides a description of the development proposals;
- Section 5 outlines the planning history of the site;
- Section 6 outlines the various consultations undertaken;
- Section 7 outlines relevant national, regional and local planning policy;
- Section 8 provides an assessment of the proposals against national, regional and local planning policy and guidance;
- Section 9 provides draft heads of terms contents for a Section 106 agreement; and
- Section 10 provides conclusions on the development proposal.
- Appendices

2.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: THE PLANNING BENEFITS OF THE DEVELOPMENT

- 2.1 Provision of market rented housing together with student accommodation will help meet the housing needs of the borough directly as well as assisting with relieving pressure on housing locally and generally.
- 2.2 The area surrounding the street is dominated by public sector and social rented housing. As there is insufficient student housing in Camden generally and this area is close to the Higher Education Institutions (HEI) specifically, this area has a disproportionately high percentage of students occupying private rented accommodation and depriving the private sector of family accommodation for rent. Of all the homes in the St Pancras and Somers Town ward, nearly 70% are of social-rented tenure. This is significantly above the borough-level rate of 38% and above the rate for London as a whole where social-rented tenures comprise 26% of the total.
- 2.3 The result of a lack of student accommodation in the St Pancras and Somers Town Ward is that a disproportionately high percentage of students live in private-rented accommodation (35%) compared to Camden as a whole (30%) and across London (28%). The Census showed the ward to have 622 private-rented units and 255 students living in the private rented accommodation. This emphasises how private rented accommodation is being occupied by students depriving the private sector of family accommodation for private rent.
- 2.4 The evidence indicates that the provision of student housing could potentially reduce demand arising from students for private rented properties allowing these to become available to non-students looking for more affordable market accommodation.
- 2.5 The provision of student accommodation is supported by evidence of a demonstrable and continued demand within Central London and Camden. Camden has the highest number of students of any London Borough and a disproportionate low provision.
- 2.6 A proposal incorporating market and student housing would help to achieve and promote mixed and inclusive communities to balance the area and add to the range and tenure of accommodation available. The rented accommodation for example can provide an opportunity for younger local adults residents who wish to leave home to flat share whilst begin close to their families and to remain in the neighbourhood and

the local community.

- 2.7 The proposed development would significantly enhance the employment use offer at the site and the potential availability of jobs. The Incubator business use would increase the employment floorspace available on the site from 583 sq.m to 1,653sq.m. This is an increase of 1,070sq.m which equates to 180% increase in floorspace in employment use. However the intense and modern nature of the offices proposed will see office occupancy levels rising from less than 10 to potentially greater than 300 (a thirtyfold increase) to the same site. The existing business space on site is semi derelict and of a very poor quality.
- 2.8 Business incubator enterprise space brought forward by the development will not just add to the limited modern B1 floorspace currently available around Somers Town but will also provide a very different floorspace offer to that expected to come forward in the neighbouring Growth Areas, namely large office floor plates. This Incubator space is entirely cross funded by the development and will help foster entrepreneurship and enterprise in the borough as a whole capturing the knowledge economy and helping in offsetting the burgeoning increase in student unemployment as well as forging links with established businesses and HEI's in the borough and brought in by the Growth Areas. Mentoring emerging enterprises and businesses is a key objective of the Councils and European Commissions four pillars of Corporate Social Responsibility in the Workplace. CTU has established links with KCRA and Camden Town businesses to mentor new enterprises at the Incubator. UCL has strong links with the business community.
- 2.9 London's economic future depends on high skill, high value added sectors. Higher education is vital for these sectors to grow – universities bring skilled people from around the world and the graduates from these universities are the fuel of the knowledge economy. Research by London Higher found that London HEIs have a *"cumulative portfolio of nearly 4,000 patents"* and in 2008/09 *"London had just over 900 active spin-off companies, mostly graduates start-ups, the same number as the south-east"*. The ability to take and promote these entrepreneurial concepts beyond mere ideas into actual real enterprises on this scale will be unique within Camden and in London as a whole. The Incubator is the next step in the process established by CTU's Collective and will be its replacement when the facility closes in 2013. These initiatives are strongly advocated in the policies of the Council, GLA and Central

Government. The Council is a key stakeholder in CTU's Collective.

- 2.10 The railway hinterlands area suffers from high levels of deprivation and higher than average levels of worklessness and there is relatively low economic activity in the immediate area between the Kings Cross and Euston Growth Areas. Public consultation clearly shows that residents feel dispossessed and isolated from other areas of the borough whilst they are very supportive of the mixed use proposals that comprise this application.
- 2.11 Camden's 2008 Employment Land Review acknowledged that warehouse activities in this area have become marginalised as a result of the significant changes occurring around Kings Cross and St Pancras and that it is increasingly impractical to seek to protect them in an area that is no longer a coherent industrial area.
- 2.12 The Council's draft Site Allocation identifies that the site has been vacant and underutilised for some time and that redevelopment of the site for a mixed use redevelopment of residential and flexible employment uses is appropriate.
- 2.13 The application provides an opportunity to develop a high quality mixed use scheme and the reuse of a vacant brownfield site to benefit the local area and secure important economic, social and environmental benefits whilst achieving the essential objectives of sustainability and inclusivity.
- 2.14 Allford Hall Monaghan Morris Architects who were appointed following a competition process have designed a building of architectural excellence which relates positively and sensitively to the setting of site. This will be the first significant building visible when leaving or entering St Pancras International station.
- 2.15 The proposals are sustainable in that they constitute development which maximises the potential of the site in a location that is highly accessible by public transport and is located within a short walking distance of major transport interchanges and higher education institutions.
- 2.16 The development is designed to meet the exacting sustainability requirements of both local and regional policies. The building will combine energy efficient measures, Combined Heat and Power Plant and Photovoltaic Cells to minimise carbon emissions generating 8% of its power requirements by renewable energy and will be

targeting a BREEAM multi residential rating of at least very good and aspiring for excellent.

- 2.17 The location of the building as the next a site to the Kings Cross Regeneration Area and a short distance from Camden Town supports the Councils aims of improved linkage with and between Kings Cross and Camden Town

3.0 THE SITE AND SURROUNDING CONTEXT

The Site

- 3.1 The application site currently comprises small-scale, vacant warehouse buildings at 103 Camley Street. The 0.34ha site is entirely previously developed land and represents a longstanding brownfield regeneration opportunity.
- 3.2 The site is located on Camley Street, immediately to the north-west and north of King's Cross and St Pancras Stations, respectively and adjacent to the Regents Canal.
- 3.3 The site forms part of the Camley Street triangle as visually and practically distinct from surrounding uses and the activity of the King's Cross area. This is largely due to the separation caused by the Regent's Canal to the south of the site and the railway line to the east. A single access road runs on a south – north axis, dissecting this triangular 'hinterland' which stands isolated from the growth areas at King's Cross, Euston and Camden Town, all incredibly close by.
- 3.4 103 Camley Street is currently occupied by short term uses and vacant warehouse buildings forming *a sui generis* industrial use. It is understood that over the last 15 years or more the site has stood vacant for long periods of time and has been a source of commercial squatting and drug related anti social behaviour (raves etc). The only sustainable uses have been as a short term assembly facility used by CTRL and Union Rail related to the creation of St Pancras International.
- 3.5 Camden's 2008 Employment Land Review acknowledged that warehouse activities in this area have become marginalised as a result of the significant changes occurring around Kings Cross and St Pancras and that it is increasingly impractical to seek to protect them in an area that is no longer a coherent industrial area.
- 3.6. The site is in the viewing corridor for the protected vista from Parliament Hill to St Paul's Cathedral. Although the site is not within a Conservation Area the Regents Canal Conservation Area abuts the site on the outer face of the wall to the towpath (which is we understand within the title of the subject property) which is identified for part of its length as making a positive contribution to the conservation area, apart from sections to the south east close to the bridge that make a negative contribution.

The Surrounding Area

- 3.7.6 The surrounding area comprises a mixture of residential streets and light industrial and storage uses. The residential streets are dominated by social rented housing. Only 13% of housing in the Ward is in the private-rented tenure and a proportion of this private rented sector accommodation is rented by students.
- 3.8. The St Pancras and Somers Town ward was recorded as having a population of 12,500 people. According to GLA population projections from 2008, the population of the St Pancras and Somers Town ward is expected to have risen to 13,000 people by 2010.
- 3.9 The age profile of the St Pancras and Somers Town ward is largely in line with the profile for the London Borough of Camden. The main difference between the two spatial areas is that the ward has a larger proportion of 0 to 15 year olds (25%) compared to Camden (17%).
- 3.10 The working age population of the ward has less qualification attainment than across Camden as a whole. The proportion of people with no qualifications is at 33% compared to 17% at the Borough-level and the proportion of those with Level 4/5 qualifications (degree level and equivalent) is at 26% compared to 47% at the Borough-level.
- 3.11 The majority of dwellings found in the St Pancras and Somers Town ward are flats which account for 88% of all homes in the area. This is above with the Borough-level figure at 78%.
- 3.12 Of all the homes in the St Pancras and Somers Town ward, nearly 70% are of social-rented tenure. This is significantly above the borough-level rate of 38% and above the rate for London as a whole where social-rented tenures comprise 26% of the total. The private-rented sector accounts for less than 20% of all residential stock in the ward area.
- 3.13 Data from the Department of Work and Pensions (February 2010) which records information on the claimant rates of a number of different types of benefit shows that the rate of those claiming out-of-work benefits in the St Pancras and Somers Town

ward at 20% is significantly above both the Camden rate (12%) and the London rate (13%).

- 3.14 Despite the physical restrictions hemming in the hinterland, the site has an extremely good public transport accessibility rating, being only a short walk from the international terminal at St Pancras as well as the national rail, tube and bus services at Kings Cross and St Pancras.
- 3.15 In relation to Kings Cross and St Pancras transport interchanges, new station entrances have recently been opened which reduces the walk distances from the site which can have a significant effect upon the PTAL of certain locations. It is clear that the current walk distances to Kings Cross and St Pancras are not reflected in the current PTAL calculations and in light of this TPP have undertaken a manual PTAL assessment which concludes that the site has a PTAL rating of 6a. This has been accepted by LB Camden.
- 3.16. There is relatively low economic activity in this hinterland area between the King's Cross and Euston Growth Areas and the rate of those in receipt of out-of-work benefits and those encountering long term and systemic worklessness is higher than the Camden and London averages.

Heritage Considerations

- 3.17.1 There are no statutorily listed buildings within the curtilage of the application site nor does the site fall within a designated conservation area. The site does lie in relatively close proximity to the King's Cross Conservation Area and sits on the boundary of the Regent's Canal Conservation Area.
- 3.17 Further information on the location of listed buildings and their settings in the wider area surrounding the site can be found in the Townscape, Heritage and Visual Impact Assessment by Richard Coleman Citydesigner, submitted with this application.

4.0 THE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

Summary of Overall Concept

- 3.1 A full assessment of the proposal is contained in the Design and Access Statement produced by Allford Hall Monaghan Morris Architects. This statement should be read in conjunction with the plans and drawings submitted as part of the application.
- 3.2 The concept behind the proposal is to provide a mixed use sustainable development that contributes to and enables a balanced and mixed community in the area and creates employment and enterprise opportunities as well as the provision of local retail and café facilities for the community and visitors to the area. At present the closest retail facilities available for local residents is either at Kings Cross or Camden Town as no local facilities currently exist. The development also intends to bring much needed improvements to the public realm, improvements to the permeability of the site and creation of new connections including to the Canal towpath. As identified in the draft site Allocation, the development proposed would set the benchmark in terms of mixed use and quality of design to set the standard for the wider enhancement and regeneration of the area. The Southern end of the site will benefit from greatly improved stepped access and visibility from the road to the Canal towpath from a newly created landscaped public realm.

The Application Scheme

- 3.3 The key details are summarised in this section. The application proposes a development as follows:

“The demolition of the existing, vacant, industrial buildings and the subsequent redevelopment for a building of mixed use ranging from 4-12 storeys comprising 307 units of student accommodation, 40 market housing units (Class C3), incubator business floorspace (Class B1 - 1,653 sqm) and two retail units (Class A1/A3 - 406 sqm) together with improvements to the public realm, Canal towpath and other associated works..”

- 3.4 The scheme design proposes the demolition of the existing industrial buildings and the construction of a mixed use building with three ‘cores’ to provide residential accommodation, student housing and business incubator floorspace at lower level.

There will also be provision of a café and small retail unit to serve the needs of the new development, local residents, visitors and the nearby workforce.

- 3.5 Enhancement works will be undertaken to the canal towpath wall to improve the experience of walking along the Regent's Canal and allow 'openings' into the courtyard of the development where there will be seating areas and the café. Disabled access will also be provided to the Regent's Canal towpath through a lift, privately managed by Urbanest, as well as improvement works to the public realm at the ground level of Camley Street.
- 3.6 In designing the proposed development, careful consideration has been given to the detailed treatment of the building elevations to provide a high level of articulation and a combination of materials. This will enhance the visual appeal of the building facades and provide a contemporary design, which will respond to and respect the surrounding environment and the neighbouring Conservation Area.
- 3.7 A full breakdown of the accommodation and floorspace is set out as follows:

Use	Accommodation	Size (sqm)	Cycling	Car Parking
Market rented Housing 40 units	14 x 2b4p	5,573	102 2-tier josta (in towpath cycle store)	2 disabled parking spaces
	4 x 3b5p		4 visitor Sheffield stands (outside retail area)	
	11 x 3b6p			
	11 x 4b6p			
Student Housing 307 bedrooms (320 students)	26 studios	9,652	48 2-tier josta + 84 fold up bikes in lockers + 4 staff 2-tie josta (in towpath cycle store)	2 disabled parking spaces
	31, 3 bed non en-suite clusters		32 2-tier josta (in secure store outside north wing)	
	25 en-suite clusters			
Incubator	N/A	1,653	8 2-tier josta (in towpath cycle store) 4 visitor/staff Sheffield stand (in	None

			courtyard)	
Retail	N/A	285	2 staff/visitor Sheffield stands (outside retail area)	None
Café	N/A	121	4 cycles Sheffield stand (in courtyard)	None
TOTAL		17,284		

4.0 RELEVANT HISTORY

The Site

- 4.1 Most recently, 103 Camley Street was used for works associated with the Channel Tunnel Rail Link resulting in a change of use from depot (Class B8) to storage/light industrial (Class B8/B1c) (Ref: 2000/1888/P). It would appear from a recent site visit that the site is largely vacant with a small area presently being used by a taxi firm for business use resulting in a high number of vehicles accessing the site from Camley Street.
- 4.2 An application was refused in 2001 for the development of a part five storey, part ten storey building that would have provided Class B1 offices and 96 residential units with basement car park and recreation area (Ref: PEX0000571).
- 4.3 Immediately prior to the application in paragraph 4.2 a similar application was withdrawn that was largely similar except with the provision of only 81 residential units (PEX0000572).
- 4.4 The only other recent application of note was in 1988 where permission was refused for the redevelopment of part of the site to provide 59 flats in 3 blocks with basement car parking and the office building fronting Camley Street retained (8701520).
- 4.5 The Site is draft allocated for mixed use including permanent residential and flexible employment floorspace alongside other complementary uses or permanent residential and community use. It is identified in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment as being capable of accommodating 37 units of residential accommodation.
- 4.6 More historical information on the site can be found in the “Townscape Heritage and Visual Impact Assessment Report” prepared by Richard Coleman City Designer and submitted as part of the planning application.

5.0 CONSULTATIONS

Pre-Application Consultation introduction

- 5.1 The submission of this application follows extensive consultation undertaken over a period of circa 1 year which is described in more detail below. This process has seen the scheme develop through close consultation with Camden Council's officers as well as local residents, organisations and ward members.
- 5.2 Full details of the pre-application consultation can be seen in the Statement of Community Involvement submitted as part of this application. Pre-application feedback is also included in the appendices of this planning statement.

London Borough of Camden

- 5.3 The project team have met with planning and design officers on two occasions through formal pre-application meetings, the results of which can be found in the appendices to this statement. The first meeting was held on the 1st December 2010 with Conor McDonagh as planning officer and the second meeting was held on the 3rd August 2011 with Neil McDonald.
- 5.4 The design has evolved as a result of these meetings with Camden's planning and design officers in line with the advice and comments provided, most notably in terms of the reduction in scale and height of the development and the introduction of market housing.
- 5.5 As well as these discussions members of the project team have met with the Placeshaping, Policy and Property Teams at LB Camden to discuss development in the Kings Cross Hinterland Area.

Greater London Authority

- 5.6 Two formal pre-application meetings have also taken place with the GLA and again, details of these meetings can be found in the appendices of this document. The first meeting was held on the 14th December 2010 and the second meeting was held on the 2nd August 2011.

- 5.7 Overall, the feedback from the GLA has been positive and in particular supportive of the scale and height of development proposed, provision of flexible employment space in the form of the incubator concept and retail provision. The public realm improvements incorporating the steps to the tow path and additional connectivity to the Canal were also welcomed. In addition, the mix of unit types and car free provision were also supported.
- 5.8 As with Camden's pre-application comments, the comments received from the GLA have also helped to shape the scheme as it is presented for submission in line with their comments and advice.
- 5.9 On 6th May 2011, representatives of the project team met with Lyn Garner and Giles Dolphin of the Greater London Authority at City Hall where again the proposals were explained and feedback received. We understand Ms Garner agreed that it was the right time for an Incubator, understood the requirement for cross funding and thought the proposals were positive.

British Waterways

- 5.10 Three meetings have been held with representatives of British Waterways where the scheme has been met with a positive response. British Waterways is supportive of the new steps and access to the towpath, the provision of a shop, the alterations to the towpath wall and its opening up to improve access and passive surveillance. The reduction in the height of the building was welcomed and the developer has agreed to look at various ways of assisting British Waterways in the security and maintenance of this part of the Regents Canal.

Transport for London

- 5.11 TfL have attended both of the Pre-Application meetings hosted by the GLA referred to at 5.6 and 5.7 above and support the proposals. The Transport Assessment by TPP sets out how the application meets TfL's guidance.

Local Members

- 5.12 The project team have met Ward councillors on 1st April 2011 and 24 August 2011 at Camden Town Hall where the proposals were outlined. Members were enthusiastic

about the proposals and saw how the mixed use scheme could bring significant opportunities to what everyone agreed was a vastly undeveloped and unwelcoming part of the borough. Members visited the site and surrounding area and then viewed the CTU's Collective in Camden Town.

Local Groups

- 5.13 The project team have met a number of local community groups, including the St Pancras & Somers Town Community Centre, Plot 10 and the Edith Neville School. All groups have expressed interest in the scheme and recognised the benefit of the proposals to the local area.

Public Consultation

- 5.14 Two public exhibitions were held at the Frank Barnes School for the Deaf that adjoins the development site at 103 Camley Street and is located within the residential streets of Elm Village. These exhibitions were held on the 31st March and 23rd June 2011. Invitations to both were sent to all the local residents around Camley Street, including Elm Village and the new residential properties on the other side of the Regent's Canal. In total approximately 470 invitations were sent out for each exhibition.
- 5.15 The first exhibition was held between 5pm and 8pm in the school hall and was well attended, with a total of 15 residents and 14 feedback forms being returned.
- 5.16 The second exhibition was also held between 5pm and 8pm in the school hall and was attended by a total of 11 residents and 8 feedback forms being returned.
- 5.17 Following on from the public exhibitions, Urbanest and the project team continue to engage with the local community to keep them up to date on the progress of the development.

Conclusions on Pre-application Consultation

- 5.18 The consultation undertaken on the proposals has returned very positive levels of support for the scheme. There is a strong desire from the local residents to see the development brought forward, to see investment in their part of Camden and to see a new retail outlet and enterprise space. They have welcomed the early and committed