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**Proposed redevelopment of 43, 45 and 49
Gray's Inn Road and 22-30 Kings Mews**
for
Gray's Inn Road Properties Limited

Demolition statement

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1.0 Introduction

The following statement is to accompany the planning application for a proposed development at 22-30 Kings Mews and 43-45 Gray's Inn Road (Camden planning ref 2007/1703/INVALID).

The proposed redevelopment site falls within the Hatton Garden Conservation Area. None of the buildings comprising it are listed, however no 22 Kings Mews has been identified by the planning department as possibly making a contribution to the Conservation Area. A separate Historical building study has been carried out by Montague Evans to establish the extent of this. This report is included with the original submission, and its conclusions are that the no 22 does make a contribution to the Conservation Area albeit a very modest one.

Taking account of this conclusion, the first part of this statement provides justification for the demolition of 22 Kings Mews based on the 3 points set out in PPG15. The second part of the statement provides justification for demolition of the remaining buildings on Kings Mews and the rear extension to no 43 Gray's Inn Road that are of no historical interest but do fall within the conservation area. This follows the 10 point set of questions to determine their contribution to the Conservation Area as set out by English Heritage.

2.0 22 Kings Mews

A separate report has been prepared by Montague Evans to evaluate the historical and architectural importance of this building. Table 1 of the report responds to the 10 questions/criteria set out by English Heritage to be reviewed when considering whether an unlisted building contributes to a conservation area or not.

The report concludes that the building has been altered, and its contribution to the Conservation Area is no more than a very modest one. Based on the fact that there is a limited contribution, justification for its demolition has been considered based on the 3 point criteria set out in PPG15, para 3.19, the details of which are as follows.

i) Condition

- The buildings contribution to the conservation area is based on it being of Victorian appearance using materials such as stock brickwork, and design features such as large openings both of which are characteristic of that period.
- Brickwork to the main elevation has been painted over and it is unclear how much remains of the original materials.
- Some of the original openings have been filled with newer materials. Whilst these could probably be replaced, no details exist of the original design to enable a satisfactory re-instatement.
- Overall, the building has been significantly altered over time, and is in a relatively poor state of repair. Its condition and low architectural/historic interest are reflected in the fact that it has never been listed.
- Re-instatement to what was assumed its original design would require significant structural alterations that would be considerably more cost than its demolition and re-build.
- Given its limited historical and architectural interest, and minimal contribution to the Conservation Area, repair and re-instatement work would not qualify for a Conservation Area Grant nor local authority grant.

ii) Efforts made for retention

- The building has been maintained to provide wholesale warehouse storage to which the spaces are suitable. However, the narrow streets make access difficult for the large lorries that are required for deliveries. It is no longer economically viable to maintain this type of activity in such a central London location.
- Alternative storage uses would not be economic, and the building would not convert readily to residential or office use due to the lack of natural daylight.
- No records exist for it, so re-instatement to its original design would be difficult to achieve.
- Incorporating with the new build scheme would result in a reduced number of residential units on the site, and also the loss of amenity area at the rear of the property.
- Part M compliance would not likely be achieved, due to floor levels, storey heights, etc.

iii) Alternative proposals for site

- The new proposals will tie in with existing massing and parapet lines of the adjacent garage which is a better preserved Mews style building of significantly more architectural interest. With the proposed demolition of nos 23-30 Kings Mews, the proposed redevelopment will then step up to the larger existing houses on Theobalds Road, providing a cohesive massing to unify the street
- The design and materials chosen for the new scheme reflect traditionally what was in the area. Stock bricks have been chosen as the main facing material to the front elevation, whilst large window openings are expressed by exposed steel lintels. Both details typifies the style to be found elsewhere in the Mews and in the Hatton Garden Conservation Area.
- The proposed scheme will provide huge improvements over the existing in terms of energy consumption. A number of energy saving measures will be incorporated, and the provision of 10% of the developments energy consumption will be provided by on-site renewable means.
- The proposed green roof will encourage greater biodiversity on the site, something that at present is limited if non existent, and the existing building would be unable to support.
- All new homes will be to lifetime homes standard, with 3 units providing full wheelchair access. This again would again not be possible to achieve if the existing building is retained.

3.0 23-30 Kings Mews, and rear extensions to no 43 Grays Inn Road

The buildings that make up the remainder of the proposed redevelopment site are not of any architectural or historical significance. In justification of their demolition however, the following English Heritage questions/criteria have been considered to establish whether or not there is any contribution to the Conservation area.

1. Is the building the work of a particular architect of regional or local note?	No. Nos 23-30 Kings Mews were designed in the 1970's, not by an architect of any note worthiness. The rear extension to no 43 Gray's Inn Road, is also of around the same period, and again is not of any architect of noteworthiness
2. Has it qualities of age, style, materials or any other characteristics which reflect those of at least a substantial number of buildings in the Conservation Area?	No. The prevalent building types in the Hatton Garden CA are Georgian and Victorian housing, early social housing, 19 th century warehouse buildings and Edwardian neo-classical buildings. None of the existing buildings fall into these categories
3. Does it relate by age, materials or in any other historically significant way to adjacent listed buildings, and contribute positively to their setting?	No. There are no nearby listed buildings that could be affected
4. Does it individually, or as part of a group, serve as a reminder of the gradual development of the settlement in which it stands, or of an earlier phase or growth?	No. The 1970's were not an era of significant development within the Hatton Garden Conservation Area
5. Does it have significant historic association with established features such as road layout, burgage plots, a town park or a landscape feature?	No. The buildings have no significant association with established features in the Conservation Area
6. Does the building have landmark quality, or contribute to the quality of recognisable spaces, including exteriors or open spaces within a complex of public buildings?	No. the buildings have no landmark qualities nor do they contribute to recognisable spaces
7. Does it reflect the traditional functional character of, or former uses within the area?	No. None of the buildings reflect the traditional function character of the area.
8. Has it significant historic associations with local people or past events?	No. None known
9. Does its use contribute to the character or appearance of the conservation area?	No. The current use is warehouse storage and some office. This is not considered to be contributory
10. If a structure associated within a designed landscape within the conservation area, such as a significant wall, terracing or a minor garden building, is it of identifiable importance to the historic design?	No. Not applicable.

4.0 Conclusions

No 22 Kings Mews is of limited architectural or historical interest given it has been significantly altered over the years, and that few records of its original design and history remain. Its condition is poor, and retention in its current use is uneconomic. Nos 23-30 Kings Mews and the rear extension to no 43 Gray's Inn Road can be seen not to be making any positive contribution to the conservation area.

The demolition of nos 22-30 Kings Mews, and replacement with the proposed scheme will provide a modern standard of accommodation, fully compliant with Camden's policies on energy efficiency, biodiversity, Lifetime Homes and sustainability. It will benefit the mews by improving the harmony of the streetscape, and by drawing on the positive characteristics of the locality will enhance it's setting within the Hatton Garden Conservation Area.