

APPLICANT:

Jill Worldwide Corporation

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

IN SUPPORT OF AN APPLICATION FOR FULL PLANNING PERMISSION FOR

**THE CONVERSION AND CHANGE OF USE OF
THE REAR OF NO.26 ARGYLE SQUARE, LONDON WC1**

**FROM B1 / D1 USE TO RESIDENTIAL USE (USE CLASS C3) COMPRISING
3 RESIDENTIAL UNITS AND RETAINING 111SQ.M OF B1 / D1 USE**

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16 November 2006

**EXPLANATORY STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF A FULL PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE
CONVERSION AND CHANGE OF USE OF THE REAR OF NO.26 ARGYLE SQUARE, LONDON WC1
FROM B1 / D1 USE TO USE CLASS C3, COMPRISING THREE RESIDENTIAL UNITS,
AND RETAINING 111SQ.M OF B1 / D1 USE**

CONTENTS

1.0 GENERAL BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Pre-application Advice and the Previous Applications
- 1.3 Listed Building Status
- 1.4 History of No.26 Argyle Square
- 1.5 Recent Planning History of the Premises
- 1.6 Reason for the Proposed Development

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTY AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1 Location
- 2.2 Description of the Rear of No.26 Argyle Square
- 2.3 Surrounding Development

3.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

- 3.1 Overall Development Objective and Design Approach
- 3.2 Proposed Residential Accommodation
- 3.3 Proposed Office (B1) Accommodation
- 3.4 Proposed Facing Materials
- 3.5 Sunlight, Privacy and Overlooking
- 3.6 Habitable Rooms / Density
- 3.7 Access and Servicing
- 3.8 Landscaping
- 3.9 Security

4.0 CONFORMITY TO PLANNING POLICIES

- 4.1 Relevant Planning Policies
- 4.2 Conformity to Housing, Mixed Use and Employment Policies
- 4.3 Business Use Policies
- 4.4 Policies for Parking and Servicing
- 4.5 Policies for Security
- 4.6 Policies for Private Amenity

5.0 SUMMARY OF BENEFITS AND CONCLUSION

**EXPLANATORY STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF A FULL PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE
CONVERSION AND CHANGE OF USE OF THE REAR OF NO.26 ARGYLE SQUARE, LONDON WC1
FROM B1 / D1 USE TO USE CLASS C3, COMPRISING THREE RESIDENTIAL UNITS,
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Figures and Photographs

Photographs 1 - 6

Fig. P1 **Site Location Plan (scale 1:1250)**

Drawings dated 15 September, 2006

Fig. MU-EX1 RevA	Existing Lower Ground Floor Plan
Fig. MU-EX2 RevA	Existing Ground Floor Plan
Fig. MU-EX3	Existing First Floor Plan
Fig. MU-EX4	Existing Second Floor Plan
Fig. MU-EX5	Existing Third Floor Plan
Fig. MU-EX6	Existing East Elevation
Fig. MU-EX7	Existing South Elevation
Fig. MU-EX8	Existing West Elevation
Fig. MU-EX9	Existing Section A - A
Fig. MU-EX10	Existing Section B - B
Fig. MU-EX11	Existing View Looking North-west

Drawings dated 10 November, 2006

Fig. MU-PR1 RevD	Proposed Lower Ground Floor Plan
Fig. MU-PR2 RevF	Proposed Ground Floor Plan
Fig. MU-PR3	Proposed Roof Plan
Fig. MU-PR4 RevB	Proposed East Elevation
Fig. MU-PR5	Proposed South Elevation
Fig. MU-PR6	Proposed West Elevation
Fig. MU-PR7	Proposed Facing Materials - East Elevation
Fig. MU-PR8	Proposed Facing Materials - South Elevation
Fig. MU-PR9	Proposed Section A - A
Fig. MU-PR10	Proposed Section B - B
Fig. MU-PR11	Building Fabric to be Removed
Fig. MU-PR12	Proposed View Looking North-west

**EXPLANATORY STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF A FULL PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE
CONVERSION AND CHANGE OF USE OF THE REAR OF NO.26 ARGYLE SQUARE, LONDON WC1
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1.0 GENERAL BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

This document accompanies an application for full planning permission for:

**"The conversion and change of use of the rear of the building from B1 / D1
use to residential use (Use Class C3) comprising 3 self-contained dwellings,
and retaining 111sq.m of the B1 / D1 use."**

This document sets out the current planning situation and describes the proposed development of the rear of No.26 Argyle Square. A separate Design and Access Statement, following the guidelines set out by CABE, is included as part of this application and should be read in conjunction with the information and illustrative material set out in this Explanatory Statement. In parallel with this is an application for listed building consent.

This application has been submitted by Adrian Salt And Pang Limited (ASAP) on behalf of the freehold owner of the property, Jill Worldwide Corporation (JWC). The application has been preceded by a pre-application submission made to the Council in June 2006, followed by applications for planning permission and listed building consent on 19 September 2006 (ref. 2006/4299/P and 2006/4303/L). Both the latter applications were withdrawn on 1 November 2006.

1.2 Pre-application Advice and the Previous Applications

The development proposal described in the pre-application scheme submitted to the Council in June 2006, comprised, in addition to the conversion of the existing building, a two-storey extension on the roof.

The advice from the planning officer who reviewed the scheme (Mr Alex Bushell) was that the principle of a mixed-use scheme was appropriate in this location, but that the design needed modifying, in particular, the two-storey extension was excessive in that it obscured the view of the rear elevation of the Georgian terrace. His advice was to reduce the two-storey extension down to one-storey as this would allow more of the listed building to be visible from Loxham Street. However, the overall comment from the Council was that, subject to reducing the roof extension to one-storey, the proposed development was an improvement on what was there at present.

Accordingly, the subsequent planning application, submitted on 19 September 2006, was for the conversion of the existing building and for a one-storey extension on the roof (ref. 2006/4299/P and 2006/4303/L).

Following public consultation, a number of criticisms were levelled at the proposed scheme:

- The unacceptable sense of bulk created by the proximity of the extension to the listed building and there being no set back from Loxham Street. There was also a lack of reference to the relationship between the proposed extension and the listed building. This, it was contended, would detract from the setting of the listed building and the character and appearance of the wider conservation area.

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CONVERSION AND CHANGE OF USE OF THE REAR OF NO.26 ARGYLE SQUARE, LONDON WC1
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- The issue of overlooking into 26 Argyle Square and the adjoining terrace buildings from the roof terrace.
- The need to address the issue of 'lifetime homes' and to fulfil the 16 design features for accessible living.

As a consequence of these adverse comments, and despite being in direct contradiction to the pre-consultation advice offered by the Council, the application was withdrawn on 1 November 2006 and the whole development proposal reviewed.

1.3 Listed Building Status

The building at the rear of No.26 Argyle Square occupies what were the rear gardens to Nos.26 and 27 Argyle Square (see Fig.P.1: Location Plan). This extension is relatively modern, built in 1963/4 to provide function rooms to a club, and is of no architectural merit. However, because it originally was part of No.26 Argyle Square, which is a Grade II listed building (Georgian, built 1840 - 49), it was listed by default. Unfortunately, the rear extension cannot be deleted from the statutory list, but acknowledgement that it is of no historic or architectural importance was confirmed when the listing description was amended in June 2006 by English Heritage with the following:

"The 1960s extension to the rear of Nos.26 and 27 is not of special interest"

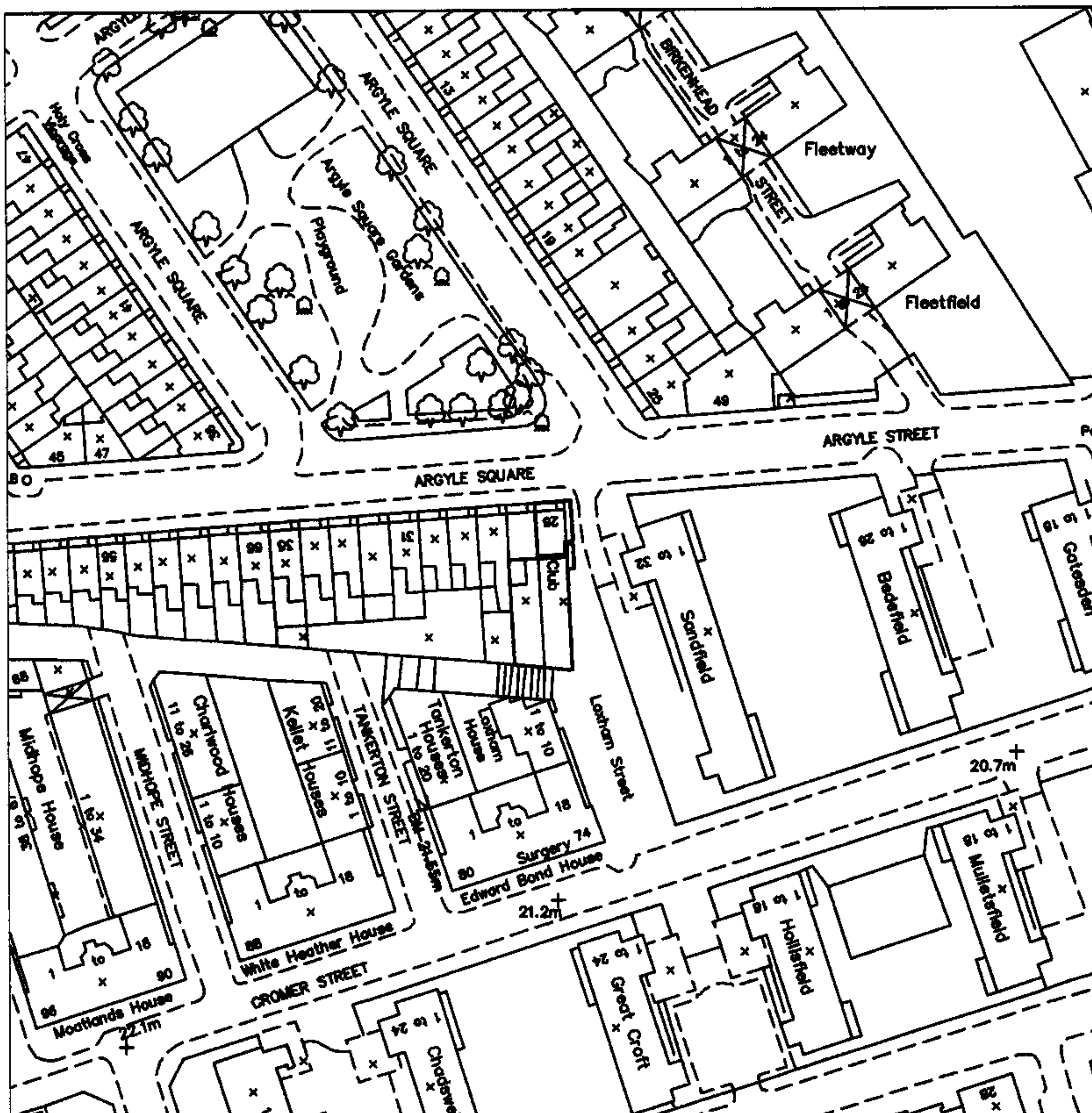
Therefore, proposals for the rear of No.26 Argyle Square, which are the subject of this planning application, will need Listed Building Consent, but that the Council should consider this only as a formality. Accordingly, an application for Listed building Consent accompanies this application.



1.4 History of No.26 Argyle Square

The building of No.26 Argyle Square was originally part of a much longer terrace of residential Georgian buildings, each with rear gardens backing onto Argyle Walk. However, it would appear that bomb damage in World War II removed a substantial number of buildings in Argyle Street, to the east of No.26 Argyle Square, leaving No.26 as an end-of-terrace. Repairs made to the party wall, to make it a flank wall, are visible, and the existing front entrance in the flank wall is clearly not original (see Photo 1).

Following the end of the War, the S.E. St Pancras Unionist Club acquired the premises of both Nos.26 and 27 Argyle Square and, up until 2003, the two properties were designated as having a use as a club (Use Class: 'sui generis'). During the period that the two premises were used as a club, No.27 Argyle Square was used solely to accommodate the staff who worked in the club.

At about the same time, the Council acquired the adjoining site containing the bombed buildings and, in the 1960's, constructed a row of 6-storey blocks of flats - Sandfield House (with 32 flats), Bedefield House (with 26 flats) and Gotesden House (with 18 flats). Sandfield is the block adjoining Nos.26 Argyle Square (see Photo 2). At about the same time as Sandfield was built, Loxham Street was extended to join with Argyle Square, providing a pedestrian link between Cromer Street and Argyle Square (see Photos 4 and 5).



-  APPLICATION SITE
 ADJOINING LAND OWNED BY APPLICANT



**No.26 ARGYLE SQUARE
LONDON WC1H 8AP**

FIG. P.1: LOCATION PLAN

Scale 1:1250

28 JUNE 2006

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In 1965/66, planning consent was granted by the London County Council for a two-storey, flat-roofed, rear extension that spanned across the back of both Nos.26 and 27 Argyle Square, on land that had previously been the rear gardens to the two properties. This extension was constructed in 1966/67. In 1974, the south side of Argyle Square (Nos.26 - 35) was listed Grade II (Ref. No: 17948 90 1) and, by default (as described above), the listing included the rear extension to Nos.26 and 27, even though it had only been built less than 10 years earlier.

1.5 Recent Planning History of the Premises

In 2000, following the granting of planning permission and listed building consent, a new entrance was installed in the flank wall to No.26. This entrance enabled independent access to the rear extension without the need to use the front of the building. At about this time, No.27 Argyle Square, which had remained independent of No.26, was sold by the, now renamed, St Pancras Conservative Club. No.27 Argyle Square is now a set of flats.

In 2002, the St Pancras Conservative Club decided to sell the remainder of the club premises, i.e. No.26, and the 1960's extension at its rear. The whole property was acquired by the present owner who is also the Applicant of this planning application submission. Following the purchase of the premises, a number of planning applications were submitted, granted consent, and work carried out:

Permission (1) Temporary change of use of the rear part of the property from a club (Class D2) to exhibition use (Class D1) (retrospective application, 11 October 2003 to 9 November 2003, Ref: 2003/2422/P), granted consent 14 November 2003. (Implemented)

Permission (2) Planning permission was granted on 6 February 2004 (Ref.2003/3160/P) for change of use from a club to mixed use, including exhibition space (Class D1), office use (Class B1), with ancillary residential accommodation at second and third floors. **Within this consent, the permitted uses that are relevant to this application are exhibition space and office use.** (Part Implemented)

Permission (3) In parallel with the application for the above, retrospective listed building consent (Ref.2003/3164/L) was granted on 6 February 2004, for various works carried out on the inside of the property.

Permission (4) On 26 March 2004, planning permission (Ref:2004/0530/P) was granted for the change of use of the premises from club, exhibition space (Class D1), office use (Class B1) and residential use (Class C3), to office use (Class B1) in the two-storey rear extension and a single dwelling house (Class C3) in the rest of the building. **Within this consent, the permitted use that is relevant to this application is office use.** (Part implemented)

**EXPLANATORY STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF A FULL PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE
CONVERSION AND CHANGE OF USE OF THE REAR OF NO.26 ARGYLE SQUARE, LONDON WC1
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Permission (5) On 29 June 2004, planning permission (Ref:2004/1995/P) was granted for the installation of planter boxes, alteration to the external doors, installation of a pedestrian ramp and CCTV, and installation of a new staircase to the front basement. (Partly implemented)

Permission (6) In parallel with the application for the various small works listed above, listed building consent was granted for them on 29 June 2004 (Ref.2004/1996/L).

Permission (7) Planning permission was granted on 30 September 2005, (Ref.2005/3077/P) for conversion of the single dwelling at the front of the property into 2 self-contained units, comprising basement studio flat and a 3-bedroom unit on the upper floors, with associated internal and external alterations. (Part implemented)

Permission (8) In parallel with the application for the above, listed building consent (Ref.2005/3078/L) was granted on 30 September 2005.

It should be noted that the reference for the numbering of the property in this application corresponds to the above applications as follows:

- No.26 (Front) Argyle Square (Georgian part of the building) in this document is referred to as No.26A Argyle Square in the above applications.
- No.26 (Rear) Argyle Square in this document is referred to as No.26 Argyle Square in the above applications.

1.6 Reason for the Proposed Development

Planning permissions (2) and (4) above have been implemented, creating at the rear of No.26 a large usable space with its own entrance and ancillary facilities (kitchen, WCs and storage). These permissions gave the owner the flexibility to use the 2-storey extension as an exhibition space (D1) and/or for office use (B1).

However, despite the premises being in an immaculate condition, it should be noted that the rear extension has remained vacant since 2002, except during the short period of the temporary planning consent (Permission (1) above). The lack of demand for office use and exhibition, art and fashion-related business in this particular location has meant that the premises have never been occupied.

It is unsustainable to have this building lying vacant and therefore the owner sought advice from local property agents as to the best use of the property. The response was that residential use was in strong demand and that, whilst office use was also in demand, only small units were required. Accordingly, the owner investigated converting the rear extension into residential use, whilst still retaining some office / exhibition use, albeit the latter scaled down in size. This application reflects the outcome of those investigations.

The net area of the site that is the subject of this planning application is 216sq.m.

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2.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTY AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

2.1 Location

The terrace fronting Argyle Square, built of yellow stock brick, is listed Grade II. The building of No.26, on its frontage to Argyle Square, has 4 storeys and a basement (see Photo 3) and comprises two residential units. Most of the other buildings in the terrace are in hotel use.

Argyle Square itself is an attractive small public park of 0.36ha (0.9 acres) with mature trees.

The rear of No.26 Argyle Square, which is the subject of this planning application, is a large two-storey extension, built in the 1960's, which extends across the back of Nos.26 and 27 that are part of the Georgian terrace (see Photo 4).

2.2 Description of the Rear of No.26 Argyle Square

The rear of No.26 Argyle Square is an approximately rectangular two-storey rear extension building with a flat roof (see Figs. MU-EX1, MU-EX2 and MU-EX3).

The extension, which was constructed in the late 1960's to provide function rooms to the St Pancras Conservative Club, is of two-storeys (lower ground and ground level), flat-roofed, and constructed in reinforced concrete and faced in London stock bricks. This extension, which is only accessible from its own entrance, has a footprint of approximately 200sq.m and a total gross external floor area of 353sq.m (excluding the roof terrace).

The entrance to No.26 is situated at the side of the building and accessed from the pedestrian footpath of Loxham Street. The entrance opens into a small hall of 6sq.m, with a staircase of 9 steps leading up to ground floor level, and a staircase of 9 steps leading down to the lower ground floor level.

The lower ground floor has a floor-to-ceiling height of 2.8m, with beams supporting the upper floor of 0.4m deep, giving a clear floor-to-under-beam height of 2.4m. The ground floor level has a floor-to-ceiling height of approximately 3.5m, with beams supporting the roof of 0.4m deep, giving a clear floor-to-under-beam height of 3.1m. Both floors have a clear span, with no internal walls or partitions. The floors on both levels have a concrete finish and the walls are plastered and painted white.

At ground level, in addition to the main office floor space, there is a store of approximately 8sq.m, and (reached by three steps) a kitchen of approximately 9sq.m, and a WC. At lower ground level, in addition to the main office floor space, there is a small, at-grade, WC.

There are two emergency exits, one from ground level and one from lower ground level. Both emergency exits are reached by a small flight of stairs and both open onto the pedestrian alleyway of Argyle Walk.

The extension is fully served by all mains services (electricity, gas, water, mains sewerage and telecommunications).

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Access onto the roof of the extension, which is not used except as a fire safety assembly point, is currently from the landing between the first and second floors of No.26 (the front part of the building). The roof has a 1m-high parapet brick wall around it, topped by a discrete 1m-high metal fence with supporting uprights at approximately 2m intervals.

The windows in the extension are metal and have security grills over them. Despite the use of London stock bricks as the facing material, the overall impression of the extension is that it is a utilitarian building, with somewhat clumsy external detailing, that has little or no architectural merit.

It should be noted that the rear extension of No.26 Argyle Square is now separate from the original Georgian building fronting Argyle Square.

2.3 Surrounding Development

The east side of No.26 is bordered by Loxham Street, a pedestrianised thoroughfare linking Argyle Square with Cromer Street (see Photos 4 and 5). On the opposite side of Loxham Street from No.26 is Sandfield House, a 6-storeyed residential block of flats, built in the late '60's, which is owned and managed by the Council (see Photo 6).

The south side of No.26 Argyle Square is bordered by the continuation of the pedestrianised thoroughfare of Loxham Street, where it is known as 'Argyle Walk' (see Photo 7). Argyle Walk leads westwards to Tankerton Street and, beyond that, to Midhope Street.

Loxham House (No.1-10 Loxham Street) is situated opposite the south elevation of No.26 and comprises a 1940's, 6-storeyed, residential block. There are north-facing windows in Loxham House which overlook the rear of No.26 (see Photo 8).

On the west side of the rear of No.26 is a party wall which forms the boundary with the neighbouring building which is at the rear of No.28 Argyle Square. Immediately adjacent to the rear of No.26 is a pitched-roof, single-storey building, 3m-high, which is vacant and in a derelict condition. This building, which fronts onto Argyle Walk, appears to have been in some form of industrial or storage use.

Beyond No.28 Argyle Square is a new development, nearly completed, on the site of the old Tankerton Works, and called 'Tankerton House'. This 3-storey development, which is accessed from Argyle Walk, contains 4 dwellings (Planning Permission ref. no.: 2003/1714), comprising 2 x 1-bedroomed flats (on the ground floor) and 2 x 3-bedroomed duplexes (on 1st and 2nd floors).

'Tankerton House' has a total of 13 to 14 habitable rooms, giving a density of 1,040 - 1,120 habitable rooms per hectare.

Tankerton House has been constructed to be slightly over 9m-high above ground level and is approximately 1.5m higher than the top of the parapet wall to the flat roof of the rear of No.26 Argyle Square (see Photo 9).



Photo 1: General View of No. 26, Argyle Square.



Photo 2: View looking south-east towards No. 26 with Sandfield, Bedefield and Gotesden House beyond.



Photo 3: Front of 26 Argyle Square.



Photo 4: View of rear of No.26 looking north-west from Loxham Street.



Photo 5: View looking south-east from Argyle Square down Loxham Street, with the entrance to Sandfield House on the left & No. 26 on the right.



Photo 6: Sandfield House seen from Argyle Square



Photo 7: View looking west down Argyle Walk at the rear of the property.



Photo 8: Windows in the side of Loxham House overlooking rear of No. 26.



Photo 9: View of the flank wall of Tankerton House, currently under construction.

**EXPLANATORY STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF A FULL PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE
CONVERSION AND CHANGE OF USE OF THE REAR OF NO.26 ARGYLE SQUARE, LONDON WC1
FROM B1 / D1 USE TO USE CLASS C3, COMPRISING THREE RESIDENTIAL UNITS,
AND RETAINING 111SQ.M OF B1 / D1 USE**

3.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

3.1 Overall Development Objective and Design Approach

As explained in Section 1.6 above, the large office / exhibition space in the rear extension to No.26 has been on the market for over 3 years but has not attracted any potential occupiers, despite being ready to move into.

The existing extension, because of its rather utilitarian 'blockhouse-type' appearance, is not visually complementary to the Georgian listed building - the only redeeming feature that acknowledges the Georgian building is the matching facing bricks that have been used. Therefore, a design which improves the visual appearance of the existing elevations would be desirable.

Although somewhat ungainly, the extension was well-built and is very solid. Accordingly, it would be more economical to convert the existing building rather than demolish it and build from scratch (as has happened in the case of Tankerton House). This approach, which is environmentally sustainable, also satisfies the Council's policy to enhance the setting of a listed building, and at the same time increases the number of dwellings in the borough.

A variety of design options were looked at and a scheme was prepared that developed on the flat roof, as advised by the Council in a pre-consultation application. An application was submitted but this scheme did not meet with general approval and it was decided to withdraw it. This current scheme has no extension on the roof and so the view of the rear of the grade II listed building is not obscured.

The other key aspect of the design is the location, size, configuration and material/colour of the new windows and external doors in the building. The current windows resemble what might be found at an industrial store and this image had to be changed to one that is more residential in character. In parallel, the windows and doors had to compliment the listed building. In assessing the visual impact of the proposed changes, the view looking north from Loxham Street towards Argyle Square was judged as being the most significant and therefore a photomontage has been prepared to illustrate the 'before' and 'after' view of the building (see Fig. MU-EX11 Existing View Looking North-west and Fig. MU-PR12 Proposed View Looking North-west). There is no doubt that the proposed development is a significant improvement on what is there at present.

The overall objective of the proposed development, therefore, is to convert this vacant space into a mixed-use development comprising a small suite of offices or exhibition space (111sq.m gross external / sq.m net), and three self-contained residential units (1 x Studio flat, 1 x 1-bedroomed unit and 1 x 2-bedroomed units), with a total floor area of 209sq.m.

The majority of the construction work will be internal subdivision of the existing large volumes. Where appropriate, the existing ground floor and roof slab will need to be penetrated to allow vertical access. With regard to the outside of the property, the existing external brickwork will be cleaned and new windows will be inserted, as illustrated in the accompanying drawings. A new front entrance door providing access to the proposed 3 new flats will be inserted in the Loxham Street elevation. Except for the removal of the chimney, no change is proposed to the flat roof.

**EXPLANATORY STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF A FULL PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE
CONVERSION AND CHANGE OF USE OF THE REAR OF NO.26 ARGYLE SQUARE, LONDON WC1
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3.2 Proposed Residential (C3) Accommodation

The proposed development comprises:

Two duplexes within the existing extension building at Lower Ground and Ground Floor level (Unit 1 and Unit 2) and a studio flat at Ground Floor Level (Unit 3). These three conversion units are accessed from the proposed new front entrance that accesses directly onto Loxham Street, at grade.

The two existing fire escape doors on the south elevation will be blocked up. Some of the existing window openings will be kept in-situ on the rear but more windows will be inserted to match the layout of the proposed dwellings.

A detailed floor area schedule is provided in Table 1: Floor Area Schedule.

Unit 1 2-bedroomed duplex: 78.3sq.m (gross external):

Accommodation:

Shared Ground Floor Entrance leading to own front door and
Ground floor Open plan Living/Dining/Kitchen; and stairs to Lower Ground: two bedrooms, 2 bathrooms/W.C. (1 ensuite), store and laundry rooms.

Unit 2 1-bedroomed duplex: 113.1sq.m (gross external)

Accommodation:

Shared Ground Floor Entrance leading to own front door and
Ground floor Open-plan Living/Dining/Kitchen; and stairs to Basement: one bedroom, 1 bathroom/W.C., store and laundry room.

Unit 3 Studio flat: 42.8sq.m (gross external).

Accommodation:

Shared Ground Floor Entrance leading to own front door, and
Ground floor Studio flat and bathroom and dressing room.

3.3 Proposed Office / Exhibition (B1 / D1) Accommodation

The intention is to reduce the size of the existing office / exhibition space from 353sq.m, down to a total gross external floor area of 111sq.m, to create a two-storey unit with its own dedicated access from Loxham Street. This scale of office / exhibition space is considered by local property agents to be much more in demand in this area than larger units.

As regards the net internal floor area, the B1 / D1 accommodation comprises:

Employment / exhibition space and store:	62sq.m
Circulation/reception:	10sq.m
Kitchen:	12sq.m
WC (x2):	6sq.m
Total Net Floor Area:	90sq.m

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3.4 Proposed Facing Materials

The choice of facing materials are shown on the elevational drawings: Fig.MU-PR 7 and Fig.MU-PR 8, and are as follows:

Ground and Lower Ground:

Walls:	Brick to be retained and cleaned, but where infilling is required, (e.g. blocking in the existing emergency doors), the brick and mortar colour will match existing;
Windows:	Dark grey coloured steel window frames and security bars;
Entrance doors:	Wooden door and frame, painted dark grey.

3.5 Sunlight, Privacy and Overlooking

The proposed development, because it does not involve any additional external construction, will not impinge on the neighbours' right to light (sunlight and daylight) and their view will remain unchanged.

On Loxham Street, the windows to the lower ground floor are proposed to be blocked up and the brick planter box extended the length of the wall as far as the proposed new front entrance door.

As there are already windows which are clear-glazed on the south and east elevations of the existing buildings, the introduction of living accommodation within the existing levels will not have any adverse influence on the future situation.

3.6 Habitable Rooms / Density

The proposed development results in an additional 6 habitable rooms. The footprint of the residential part of the building is 146sq.m, so the density would be 411 habitable rooms per hectare (hrha).

3.7 Access and Servicing

As already described, access to the offices / exhibition space is via an existing entrance opening onto Loxham Street, via a short ramp which is suitable for wheelchairs. The base of the ramp is at-grade with the entrance hall. Wheelchair lifts could be easily fitted to the short flight of stairs that lead to the two office / exhibition floors (lower ground floor and ground floor).

Access to the residential units is via a new entrance from Loxham Street. The door and entrance hall are at grade with the Loxham Street footpath. There is a canopy over the new entrance.

Emergency access for the two duplexes (Units 1 and 2) can be incorporated via 'knock-out' windows in the lower ground floor bedrooms.

**EXPLANATORY STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF A FULL PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE
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AND RETAINING 111SQ.M OF B1 / D1 USE**

The existing building is already served by mains services (telecommunications, gas, water, electricity and foul water drainage) and these services will be used by the proposed new accommodation. Servicing is proposed to be as existing - refuse and recycling bins will be put out on collection days, close to the respective entrance doors.

3.8 Landscaping

Planning permission already exists for building planters along the eastern elevation of the building. In this application, the location of the planters, which are to be of brick to match the existing bricks, have been slightly altered to allow for the inclusion of the new entrance door to the flats.

3.9 Security

Planning permission already exists for a CCTV camera to be installed above, and covering, the eastern elevation of the building. As already described, steel grills will be fitted to the outside window openings.

**EXPLANATORY STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF A FULL PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE
CONVERSION AND CHANGE OF USE OF THE REAR OF NO.26 ARGYLE SQUARE, LONDON WC1
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TABLE 1 - FLOOR AREA SCHEDULE

COMMERCIAL	FLOOR	GROSS FLOOR AREA
		sq.m.
B1 / D1 UNIT	LOWER GROUND GROUND	47.2 64.2
TOTAL B1 / D1		111.4
RESIDENTIAL	FLOOR	GROSS FLOOR AREA
		sq.m.
UNIT 1	LOWER GROUND GROUND	47.5 30.8
Total Unit 1		78.3
UNIT 2	LOWER GROUND GROUND	70.0 43.1
Total Unit 2		113.1
UNIT 3	GROUND	42.8
Total Unit 3		42.8
Communal Entrance to Units 1, 2 and 3	GROUND	17.5
TOTAL RESIDENTIAL		251.7
TOTAL GROSS EXTERNAL FLOOR AREA		363.1
Landscaping		7.0
TOTAL INCL. LANDSCAPING		370.1



**No.26 ARGYLE SQUARE
LONDON WC1H 8AP**

FIG. MU-EX 11: EXISTING VIEW LOOKING
NORTH-WEST

15 SEP 2006

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AP**



**No.26 ARGYLE SQUARE
LONDON WC1H 8AP**

FIG. MU-PR 12: PROPOSED VIEW LOOKING
NORTH-WEST

10 NOV 2006

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4.0 CONFORMITY TO PLANNING POLICIES

4.1 Relevant Planning Policies

Policies relevant to this proposal are given in the Camden Adopted UDP and the Revised Deposit Draft UDP 2004 and also in the government's strategic planning guidelines (PPG1 and PPG 3). The degree to which this application conforms to those policies is assessed below. A separate Design and Access Statement has been prepared and included as part of this application.

No.26 Argyle Square is within the designated Central London Area (CLA) of Camden.

4.2 Conformity to Housing, Mixed Use and Employment Policies

The site is within the designated CLA where mixed use is encouraged. As the site is not identified or designated as a housing site, the proposal to convert and extend the existing building to provide three dwellings and retain a proportion of B1 employment space supports the Council's Mixed-use, Housing and B1 Use policies.

Windfall Increase to the Housing Stock

The proposal offers a small windfall increase to the borough's housing stock especially in the Central London Area, in support of the stated policies in the Adopted UDP and Revised Deposit Draft 2004 Section 2 Housing:

Revised Deposit Draft 2004 Section 2 Housing:

- aims to provide for and retain a range of high quality housing to meet housing needs;
- to promote housing that is accessible to all members of the community.

Revised Deposit Draft 2004 Policy H1 - New Housing:

- states that the Council will grant planning permission for development that increases the amount of land and floorspace in residential use and provides residential accommodation, provided that the accommodation reaches acceptable standards.
- states that the Council will seek to secure the fullest possible residential use of vacant and underused sites and buildings, and may require suitable sites to be developed for primarily or wholly residential use.

Sustainability: Previously-used Site

- By undertaking a conversion rather than redevelopment, thus re-using the building fabric, the proposal is a sustainable one and makes the best use of "previously-built" land and buildings, in support of stated policies in Section 1 of the Revised Deposit Draft 2004, in particular, Policy SD1 B Regeneration in which King's Cross and Brunswick is highlighted as an area for renewal.

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Suitable Housing Mix

The proposal provides three residential dwellings: a studio flat, a one-bedroomed flat and a two-bedroomed flat. This accommodation is suitable, respectively, for a single person, a couple and a small family. The proposal supports Revised Deposit Draft 2004 Policy H8 - Mix of Units and Para. 2.61 which seeks a mix of large and small residential units.

Access to Amenity Space

The property is only 40m from Argyle Square public garden which offers a range of passive recreational areas and active children's play area. The occupiers will be able to access this facility easily. The proposal conforms to the Council's criteria which only requires access to gardens or public open space or to be within 400 metres of public open space for units with three or more bedrooms.

Lifetime Homes

Access to the residential units from the front entrance hall is possible using a stairlift if required for lifetime homes. Therefore the proposal conforms to Revised Deposit Draft 2004 Policy H7 – Lifetime Homes and Wheelchair Housing. Wheelchair access is also possible for the retained B1 / D1 floor area, as explained in Section 4.3 below.

4.3 Business Use Policies

The proposal to retain 111sq.m of B1 floor area within a mixed-use scheme to provide one small unit that is suitable for small and start up businesses or exhibition space conform with the Council's policies to support and encourage small firms in the CLA and for mixed-use developments:

Mixed Use

The proposal accords with Adopted UDP Policy EC3 and para. 7.26 which seeks to incorporate mixed-uses in new developments and Revised Deposit Draft 2004 Policy E1 - Location of Business Uses which encourages business to be located in the CLA or other locations suitable for a mix of uses.

Location of Business in the CLA

The proposal supports the Council's objective to maintain economic activity in the CLA, in accordance to Adopted UDP Policy EC3 and para. 7.26 and Revised Deposit Draft 2004 Section 7 - Economic Activities which:

- recognise the role of the CLA for economic and employment generation; and
- states that Use Class B1 as a desired land use;

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Sequential Test and Sustainability

The site satisfies the "sequential test" for the location of new employment developments to be within the existing areas of business in accordance with the policies and conforms to Adopted UDP Policy EC3: sequential test will be applied to new developments.

No.26 Argyle Square is situated in the heart of the Central London business, commercial and entertainment core, being in close proximity to key public transport facilities. The site is therefore unequivocally an appropriate location for employment accommodation for workers to travel-to-work by all forms of public transport and where facilities are easily available for employees (e.g. restaurants and shops and, etc.) The application site therefore satisfies the above policies - UDP Policy RE4 and Revised Deposit Draft Policy SD5 regarding the location of development and accessibility; and UDP Paragraph 3.43, which highlights the need for land uses to comply with current Government guidance on sustainability.

Wheelchair Access

The B1 / D1 unit is situated on the Ground and Lower Ground Floor, accessed by an existing ramped entrance. The Lower Ground Floor unit can be accessed by a chairlift or stairlift which would be provided by the occupier of the premises. The W.C. on the lower ground level is at grade and can be accessed by wheelchair users.

With regard to the residential units, these are accessed from an internal landing via a communal hall at-grade with the public footpath. Five steps lead to the landing. A space has been reserved to provide, if required in the future, a chairlift between the hall and the landing. The two maisonettes have internal staircases which have been designed to accommodate a stairlift if necessary.

4.4 Policies for Parking and Servicing

Parking

The applicant already has two resident parking permits but, in support of the Council's policies to discourage car use in the CLA (Revised Deposit Draft 2004 Policy T8), will agree to be limited to that number of permits. No parking spaces are provided for the B1 / D1 use.

The proposed B1 / D1 space is now only 111sq.m and therefore no specific requirements apply for parking for people with disabilities:

Cycle Parking

Revised Deposit Draft 2004 Policy T3 - Pedestrians and Cycling:

- encourages walking and cycling and seeks the provision of secure cycle parking and related facilities.

According to Revised Deposit Draft 2004 Appendix 6 - Cycle Parking Standards, cycle spaces are only required for B1 Uses of 500sq.m or more, therefore there is no requirement for this proposal. One cycle space per unit is sought for the C3 Residential uses. Three cycle spaces have been provided in the communal hall which is at street level.

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CONVERSION AND CHANGE OF USE OF THE REAR OF NO.26 ARGYLE SQUARE, LONDON WC1
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Transport Assessment/Travel Plans

Revised Deposit Draft 2004 Policy T1 Sustainable Transport requires transport assessments and travel plans to be provided in support of development that significantly increases travel demand.

- The proposed scheme is below the gross floorspace threshold for requiring a Transport Impact Assessment.
- As the site is well located within Central London and that as there is no on-site parking, there is no requirement to provide a Green Travel Plan (ref. Policy TR3).

4.5 Policies for Security

Revised UDP Deposit Draft 2004: Policy SD1 Quality of Life -(D) - Community Safety requires development to incorporate design, layout and access measures which address personal safety, including fear of crime, security and crime prevention. Special Planning Guidance 2002 (SPG2002) Section 3.2 Community Safety gives clear guidelines on how to plan for community safety by:

- a. encouraging greater surveillance of the public realm by promoting frontages, informal surveillance and monitored, electronic surveillance; and....
- c. develop site layouts on all development sites to take account of personal safety.

(SPG2002) New Developments Para 3.2.17 recommends front boundary treatments should be no higher than 1m and that set backs should be avoided. Hard and soft landscaping should be carefully used so as to provide clear surveillance and to define public and private space and to provide a buffer zone between pedestrian routes and ground floor windows, preferably a distance sufficient for privacy and security without compromising surveillance potential. The proposed scheme has taken account of and conforms with this guidance:

Electronic surveillance and security bars

As described above, planning permission already exists for a CCTV camera to be installed covering the eastern elevation of No.26 Argyle Square. As already described, steel grills will be fitted to the outside window openings.

Landscaping

The planter boxes to be positioned along the eastern boundary of the site will demarcate the "public" from the "private" realm and also provide a buffer zone.

4.6 Policies for Private Amenity

Revised Deposit Draft 2004 - Policy H8 - Mix of Units Para.2.61 requires residential units for families to have access to gardens or public space within 400 metres. As stated in 4.2 above, the property is only 40m from Argyle Square public garden which offers a range of passive recreational areas and active children's play area. The occupiers of all the units will be able to access this facility easily and therefore the proposal conforms to the Council's amenity criteria.

**EXPLANATORY STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF A FULL PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE
CONVERSION AND CHANGE OF USE OF THE REAR OF NO.26 ARGYLE SQUARE, LONDON WC1
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5.0 SUMMARY OF BENEFITS AND CONCLUSION

There are undoubtedly many benefits that the proposed development will bring to the area and some of these are listed, by topic, below.

Regeneration and Sustainability

The proposal satisfies the Government's sequential test criteria for development of a previously developed site. It also satisfies the planning objectives of the Greater London Plan for the CAZ.

The proposal maximises the use of a currently under-used site in the centre of the Capital, to provide a well-designed mixed-use (residential and office/exhibition) scheme.

The proposal creates an opportunity to inject energy into a part of the borough which currently includes buildings and streetscapes of no particular architectural merit or interest.

Residential Accommodation

The Application scheme provides an addition of 209sq.m of residential accommodation in three dwelling units: 1 x studio flat, 1 x one-bedroomed flat, and 1 x two-bedroomed flat. No on-site affordable housing provision is required in support of the Council's housing objectives. A windfall housing provision accrues to the borough.

Argyle Square provides a public open space in the immediate vicinity so that all future residents will have easy access to this facility.

The building conversion has been designed for easy conversion of the flats to lifetime homes standards. The B1 / D1 unit can be provided with wheelchair access if necessary.

With a total of 6 habitable rooms, density on the site would be 411 habitable rooms per hectare (hrha), which is midway between the Council's guidelines of 247 to 617hrha.

Offices / Exhibition Space

The retained office / exhibition floor space maintains employment use on the site, although it is reduced in area. The proposed floorspace of 111sq.m (gross external) compares to the existing area, designated for exhibition use and/or office use, of 353sq.m. The proposed new unit is fully self-contained, including having its own entrance onto Loxham Street.

Benefits to the Area

The 1950's building at the rear of No.26 Argyle Square is currently an unattractive, utilitarian extension that does not contribute positively to the character of the area and has a detrimental visual impact on the adjoining listed building. The proposed scheme will improve the appearance of the rear extension and will enhance the conservation area and lift the quality of the general environment. In particular, the overlooking of public footpaths / pedestrian areas by the residential occupants will afford extra security to pedestrians.

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CONVERSION AND CHANGE OF USE OF THE REAR OF NO.26 ARGYLE SQUARE, LONDON WC1
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Sequential Test / Development in CLA

- The site is situated within the CLA and in close proximity to the hub of public transport and international transportation network (not least the new St Pancras International Eurotunnel Station, Kings Cross Station (LUL and National Rail links) as well as bus links. Therefore, the proposal satisfies the sequential test:

Adopted UDP Policy RE4 states with reference to RE4b Central London Area:

"..In assessing such developments, the Council will apply a sequential test..." and

Para 3.43 of the UDP states:

"...The approach adopted is to guide new development to locations which reduce the need for car journeys and the distances driven, or which permit the choice of more energy-efficient public transport - without encouraging more or longer journeys. This approach further suggests locating new development types that attract trips (for example, office employment, shopping, higher education and leisure) at points such as town centres which are capable of acting as nodes for public transport networks to avoid encouraging substantial increase in car use and where there may be advantages in enabling one journey to serve several purposes."

Revised Deposit Draft 2004 Policy SD5 - Location of development with significant travel demand:

- Central London Area is one of the first order of preference for development that significantly increases travel demand.

Residential Density

The proposed density for the residential uses is 411hrha. The proposed development maximises the use of the site with an appropriate residential density. The proposal is supported by adopted UDP policies which suggests a density range in the Central Area density standard for mixed or non-family housing of between 247 to 617 hrha (habitable rooms per hectare) .

Revised Deposit Draft 2004 Policy SD4 Density of Development:

- states that the Council will grant planning permission for development that makes full use of the potential of a site;
- expects high density development in Central London Area locations;
- factors which will be taken into account include: the character, amenity and density of the surrounding area; the nature of the site; the quality of the design; the type of development being provided; the availability of local facilities, services and open space; accessibility by public transport and the potential impact on the local transport network.

**EXPLANATORY STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF A FULL PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE
CONVERSION AND CHANGE OF USE OF THE REAR OF NO.26 ARGYLE SQUARE, LONDON WC1
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Providing Suitable Accommodation for Small Firms

The proposal aims to make the existing accommodation suitable to the needs of small firms and accords with Adopted UDP Policy EC3, EC5 and para. 7.26 and Revised Deposit Draft 2004.

Adopted UDP Policy EC5 and Revised Deposit Draft 2004 Policy E3 C and Policy E3 E which seeks accommodation for small firms (50 to 120sq.m) and to retain and promote creative and environmental industries. Revised Deposit Draft 2004 Section 7 - Economic Activities seeks to:

- guide business development to appropriate locations in the borough; and
- provide for a range of business needs and to maximise job opportunities.

High Degree of Accessibility to Public Transport

The application site is situated within immediate walking distance to the road, rail and LUL network, accessible to London, national and international destinations. The proposal to retain some of the B1 floorspace in the small units that are in demand satisfies the local plan's criteria to locate business uses in suitable CLA locations. The proposal supports Revised Deposit Draft 2004 Policy E1 - Location of Business Uses; Policy E2 and paragraphs 7.12, 7.13 and 7.14:

- permission for office development in locations accessible by a choice of means of transport, subject to SD5 (sequential test).
- located in the CLA or other locations suitable for a mix of uses;
- is easily accessible to the Transport for London Road Network and/or London Distributor Roads;
- is, or will be, accessible by means other than car;
- provides adequate on-site vehicle space for servicing'
- is well related to nearby land uses;
- protects residential amenity; (Revised Deposit Draft 2004 Policy E1)

Revised Deposit Draft 2004 Policy E2 and paragraphs 7.12, 7.13 and 7.14:

- states that the Council will not grant planning permission for development that involves the loss of a business use on a site where there is potential for that use to continue.
- whether the site is particularly suitable for small firms;
- the accessibility of the site by public transport and by service vehicles;
- the relationship of the site to nearby land uses;
- the demand, supply and variety of sites that are suitable for employment uses, firstly in the particular use class, and secondly in business use in general;
- seek to retain land and buildings that are currently suitable or have the potential to remain suitable either through redevelopment or alteration for business use, and will resist a change to non-business use.

**EXPLANATORY STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF A FULL PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE
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FROM B1 / D1 USE TO USE CLASS C3, COMPRISING THREE RESIDENTIAL UNITS,
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NO.26 ARGYLE SQUARE, LONDON WC1

**APPLICATION FOR FULL PLANNING CONSENT FOR THE CONVERSION AND CHANGE OF USE OF
THE REAR OF NO.26 ARGYLE SQUARE, LONDON WC1, FROM B1 / D1 USE TO USE CLASS C3,
COMPRISING THREE RESIDENTIAL UNITS, AND RETAINING 111SQ.M OF B1 / D1 USE**

Figures and Photographs

Photographs 1 - 6

Fig. P1 Site Location Plan (scale 1:1250)

Drawings dated 15 September, 2006

Fig. MU-EX1 RevA	Existing Lower Ground Floor Plan
Fig. MU-EX2 RevA	Existing Ground Floor Plan
Fig. MU-EX3	Existing First Floor Plan
Fig. MU-EX4	Existing Second Floor Plan
Fig. MU-EX5	Existing Third Floor Plan
Fig. MU-EX6	Existing East Elevation
Fig. MU-EX7	Existing South Elevation
Fig. MU-EX8	Existing West Elevation
Fig. MU-EX9	Existing Section A - A
Fig. MU-EX10	Existing Section B - B
Fig. MU-EX11	Existing View Looking North-west

Drawings dated 10 November, 2006

Fig. MU-PR1 RevD	Proposed Lower Ground Floor Plan
Fig. MU-PR2 RevF	Proposed Ground Floor Plan
Fig. MU-PR3	Proposed Roof Plan
Fig. MU-PR4 RevB	Proposed East Elevation
Fig. MU-PR5	Proposed South Elevation
Fig. MU-PR6	Proposed West Elevation
Fig. MU-PR7	Proposed Facing Materials - East Elevation
Fig. MU-PR8	Proposed Facing Materials - South Elevation
Fig. MU-PR9	Proposed Section A - A
Fig. MU-PR10	Proposed Section B - B
Fig. MU-PR11	Building Fabric to be Removed
Fig. MU-PR12	Proposed View Looking North-west