

Camden Town Hall Annex

Townscape Heritage and Visual Impact Assessment

December 2014

Tavernor **AVR****London**

TOWNSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT FOR CAMDEN TOWN HALL ANNEX

Professor Robert Tavernor Consultancy, December 2014

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document provides an assessment of the potential townscape and visual impacts of the proposals for the Camden Town Hall Annex, designed by architect, Orms, for the applicant, Crosstree Real Estate Management Ltd.
- 1.2 It provides an assessment of the potential impacts that the remodelling and extension of the Camden Town Hall Annex would have on the surrounding townscape character and composition of local views. The assessment has been undertaken by the Professor Robert Tavernor Consultancy Limited ('Tavernor Consultancy') and is based on architectural drawings by Orms, which are being submitted as part of the planning application, and verified images by AVR London, which are included within this report. This document should be read in conjunction with the Design and Access Statement (DAS) produced by Orms, the Conservation and Heritage Assessment produced by Donald Insall Associates and the full planning application documentation.

2.0 ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY AND SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

- 2.1 This assessment has taken into account the existing physical fabric of the area, the character and settings of conservation areas and listed buildings in the vicinity, the appropriateness of the Site for the Proposed Development, and the character of the proposed design. Assessments of impact on townscape and visual impacts are intrinsically linked and have been combined in the views assessment in Section 6, describes how the Proposed Development would affect the character of the built and spatial components of the townscape on and around the Site and how the composition and character of local, mid-distance and distant views towards the Site might be affected by the Proposed Development.
- 2.2 Structured, informed and reasoned professional judgement has been used to take account of quantitative and qualitative factors. This is widely accepted as best practice and was based on an analysis of desk research and field assessment. It is recognised that the character of London is one of contrasts, of historic and modern buildings, and that modern buildings of high design quality do not necessarily harm the character of historic townscape.
- 2.3 The available guidance for assessing the impacts on townscape, heritage assets and visual amenity of a development is as follows:
- *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA) Third Edition (2013)* (Ref 1-1) produced jointly by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment;
 - *London View Management Framework Supplementary Planning Guidance (LVMF SPG) (2012)* (Ref 1-2); and
 - *Seeing the History in the View (2011)* (Ref 1-3), produced by English Heritage (EH).
- 2.4 The GLVIA (Ref 1-1) provides advice on good practice and is equally applicable to all forms of 'landscape', including urban townscape. The GLVIA states that an assessment should in most cases clearly address both how the proposal would affect the elements that make up the aesthetic and perceptual aspects of the landscape and its distinctive character, and how observers may be affected by changes in the content and character of views. The methodology employed for this assessment is based on approaches recommended in the GLVIA. However, the guidance states that its methodology is not prescriptive in that it does not provide a detailed universal methodology that can be followed in every situation (Ref 1-1 para 1.20); the assessment should be tailored to the particular circumstances in each case with an approach that is in proportion to the scale of the project that is being assessed and the nature of its potential impacts. The guidance recognises that much of the assessment must rely on professional judgement (Ref 1-1, paras 2.23-2.26).

- 2.5 The LVMF SPG (Ref 1-2) identifies and protects a number of strategic views within London and provides guidance on the qualitative visual assessment of the designated views, which is also applicable to assessing the potential impacts on undesignated views within London more generally. Seeing the History in the View (Ref 1-3) provides a methodology for identifying heritage significance within views and assessing how development may impact on heritage significance in views. Elements of the advice contained in these documents have been used to supplement the GLVIA-based methodology used for this assessment where appropriate.

Table 2-1: Significance description

Impact	Significance
Major adverse	The proposed change would form a major and immediately apparent part of a valued view or would adversely affect and change the character and quality of a highly sensitive townscape
Moderate adverse	Where the proposed change would form a recognisable new element within the scene that would cause a noticeable deterioration in the view or would adversely affect and change the character and quality of a sensitive townscape
Minor adverse	Where the proposed change would form a minor component of the wider scene that would cause a slight deterioration in the view that might be missed by a casual observer or would cause a slight adversely affect and change the character and quality of a townscape
Negligible	Where the proposed change would be imperceptible to a casual observer in a view or would cause an imperceptible change to the setting of a townscape
No impact	Where the Development would have no impact on the view or townscape character or heritage setting.
Minor beneficial	Where the proposed change would form a minor component of the wider scene that would slightly enhance the view or would cause a slight improvement to the character and quality of the townscape
Moderate beneficial	Where the proposed change would form a recognisable new element within the scene that would noticeably enhance the quality and character of the existing view or would improve the character and quality of a townscape area
Major beneficial	The proposed change would greatly improve and enhance the quality and character of a valued view through the removal of visually detracting or discordant features or would improve the character and quality of a highly sensitive townscape

Source: Developed by the Tavernor Consultancy based on *GLVIA* (Ref 1-1)

- 2.6 The baseline examination of the existing townscape character in the vicinity of the Site has been made through the analysis of the local area in Section 4 and the description of the existing views in the Visual Assessment, which form the basis of the assessment. The Site is within the Kings Cross Conservation Area and adjacent to the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. There are a number of listed buildings in the vicinity of the Site, most notably the Grade I listed St Pancras Station and former Midland Grand Hotel (St Pancras) and Kings Cross Station, and the Grade II listed Town Hall, which all contribute to the local townscape character. The character and significance of conservation areas and listed buildings in the vicinity of the Site are described in Section 4.
- 2.7 Prediction of the extent and severity of effects on the existing townscape character or its setting is related to the sensitivity of the townscape and its setting to change. Criteria for assessing townscape sensitivity have been based on a variety of factors and attributes which are generally agreed to influence the existing character and value of the townscape. Considering the attributes of the townscape, its sensitivity to change has been allocated to one of five categories according to the criteria in Table 2-2.
- 2.8 The 15 views, selected for assessment in consultation with the London Borough of Camden (LBC), are a selection of representative views from publicly accessible locations around the Site and allow assessment of the Proposed Development in the round. Public views are generally attributed greater value than views from private property because they are experienced by a greater number of people and can be more accurately assessed through the use of surveyed viewing points. The detailed location of the viewpoint has been carefully considered to be typical or representative of the view likely to be experienced there. All views have therefore been taken from publicly accessible land. The potential visual impacts on views from inside buildings or from private land are not within the scope of this assessment. The views selected allow a methodical 360 degree view analysis of near, middle and distant views of the Proposed Development.

Table 2-2: Table of existing townscape sensitivity

Value	Criteria	Sensitivity to change
Exceptional	Strong townscape or landscape structure, distinctive features and buildings worthy of conservation, exhibiting unity, richness and harmony, no detracting features, and a strong sense of place. Likely to be internationally or nationally recognised, e.g. a World Heritage Site, a group of Grade I listed buildings or a Grade I registered historic park or garden.	Very high
High	Strong townscape structure, distinctive features and buildings worthy of conservation, strong sense of place, only occasional detracting features. The townscape is likely to be of importance at the county, borough or district level and contain features of national importance, e.g. a Grade II* or Grade II Registered historic park or garden, a conservation area containing a high proportion of listed buildings.	High
Good	Recognisable townscape structure, some features and buildings worthy of conservation, some detracting features, recognisable sense of place. May be a locally valued townscape, conservation area or contain groups of Grade II listed or locally listed buildings.	Medium
Ordinary	Distinguishable townscape structure, some features and buildings worthy of conservation, prominent detracting features.	Low
Poor	Weak or disjointed townscape structure, frequent discordant and detracting features.	Very low

Source: Developed by the Tavernor Consultancy based on GLVIA (Ref 1-1)

- 2.9 The baseline characteristics of each view, and the contributions of any heritage assets to the view (considered in accordance with the guidance contained in the EH Guidance *Seeing the History in the View* (Ref 1-3)) are set out in Section 6. Views have been assessed using photos taken in summer and spring (with leaves in bud) where foliage was considered to play an important role in a sensitive view. In the knowledge of the foliage that will be lost, professional judgement has been applied to assess the impacts on views in winter. The assessment considers how potential impacts would vary with seasonal change and changes in atmospheric conditions where applicable. Views are often kinetic, therefore, where appropriate, consideration of how a view may change as the observer moves around the viewing position is included in the assessment of

views in Section 6. Sensitivity to change is ascribed to each view based on the recognition of value attached to particular views through planning designations or the contribution made by existing townscape quality and designated heritage assets.

2.10 In order to assess the full range of potential visual impacts of the Proposed Development, two separate verified images have been prepared from each viewing location selected:

1. Existing – the view as it exists currently; and

2. Proposed – with the Proposed Development inserted in wireline or render form.

2.11 The Proposed Development has been shown in a red wireline where visible and, where it would not be visible, its location is indicated with a dashed wireline. The methodology employed by the visualisation firm AVR London to create the verified views is provided in Appendix B. The assessment in Section 6 of this report is based on the images prepared by AVR London which are, in turn, based on the computer generated model of the Proposed Development prepared by the architect, Orms, who have confirmed the accuracy of the AVR London visualisations in relation to their design proposals before the Tavernor Consultancy have assessed them.

2.12 The magnitude of the change to the composition and character of the view as a result of the Proposed Development takes account of factors including the proximity, scale and the contribution of the Proposed Development to the character of the view. The final assessment of the significance of the potential impact is based on an assessment of the nature of the existing townscape and its sensitivity to change combined with an assessment of the nature and magnitude of proposed change, made through relevant guidance and policy and based on professional judgement and experience. The wireline views in this document provide an accurate indication of the location and size of the Proposed Development. Rendered illustrative views of the Proposed Development, which demonstrate the detailed architectural articulation and proposed materials, are provided in the architect's DAS; the assessment of the impact of the Proposed Development takes into account the accurate wireline views in combination with the detailed architectural treatment shown in the DAS. The rationale for assessments of significance based on the broad categories set out in Table 2-1 is explained and justified in the accompanying assessment text in Section 6.

2.13 The potential impacts have been categorised as causing no change, having a negligible impact or a minor, moderate or major impact. Where negligible, the Proposed Development has been deemed likely to cause little or no change to the townscape or view. For impacts judged to be minor, moderate or major, the significance of that impact has been further categorised as beneficial or adverse. Adverse impacts are those that detract from the value of the view. This may

be through a removal of valuable characterising elements or addition of new intrusive or discordant features. Beneficial impacts are those that contribute to the value of the view. This may be through the introduction of new, positive attributes; for example, through remodelled legibility or setting. Where the impact is minor, moderate or major, good design can reduce or remove potential harm or provide enhancement, and design quality may be the main consideration in determining the balance of harm and benefit.

2.14 Additional views were tested during the design process but have not been included in the visual assessment in section 6 because the Development would not be visible, its effect would be insignificant or an alternative viewpoint from a comparable nearby location has been selected in preference in consultation with LBTH. For reference, a selection of the key views tested but omitted from the assessment are included as Appendix A.

3.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

National Planning Policy and Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (March 2012) (Ref 1-4)

- 3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework aims to streamline national planning policy into a consolidated set of priorities and replaces previous planning policy statements (PPS) including PPS1 - Delivering Sustainable Development (2005) and PPS5 - Planning and the Historic Environment (2010).
- 3.2 In Section 7 Requiring Good Design the Framework considers that *“Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people”* (Ref 1-4, para 56). Paragraph 58 states that Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) should ensure that developments:
- *“will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
 - *establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit;*
 - *optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development, create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses (including incorporation of green and other public space as part of developments) and support local facilities and transport networks;*
 - *respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation;*
 - *create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion; and*
 - *are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping”* (Ref 1-4, para 58)
- 3.3 Section 12 Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment sets out the Government’s overarching planning policies put in place to conserve the historic environment and its heritage assets so that they may be enjoyed by future generations. It outlines a balanced approach to the conservation of the historic environment. In paragraph 131 it states that local planning authorities should take account of:
- *“the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
 - *the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic viability; and*

- *the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.”* (Ref 1-4, para 131)

- 3.4 In determining applications, LPAs should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. *“The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance”* (Ref 1-4, para 129). Paragraph 132 states that *“when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be.”* Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. Any harm or loss of significance should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of a Grade II listed building, park or garden should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, Grade I and II* listed buildings, Grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites (WHS’s), should be wholly exceptional.
- 3.5 Paragraph 134 states that where a proposed development will lead to harm or loss, to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. Paragraph 135 states that, in considering applications that affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgment will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.
- 3.6 Not all elements of a conservation area will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the conservation area should be treated either as substantial harm or less than substantial harm taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the conservation area as a whole. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably (Ref 1-4, para 137).

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) (March 2014) (Ref 1-5)

- 3.7 The PPG, recently launched by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), is an online resource providing guidance on implementing the policies of the NPPF (Ref 1-4). The web resource replaces various guidance documents, including By Design (2000). There are two sections of the PPG that are of particular relevance to this assessment:
- Design; and
 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

3.8 The PPG on Design, which supports Section 7 of the NPPF, states that local planning authorities are required to take design into consideration and should give great weight to outstanding or innovative designs which help to raise the standard of design more generally in the area: *“Planning permission should not be refused for buildings and infrastructure that promote high levels of sustainability because of concerns about incompatibility with an existing townscape, if those concerns have been mitigated by good design (unless the concern relates to a designated heritage asset and the impact would cause material harm to the asset or its setting which is not outweighed by the proposal’s economic, social and environmental benefits)”* (Ref 1-5, para 004).

3.9 The guidance states (Ref 1-5, para 015) that new or changing places should have the following qualities commonly exhibited by successful, well-designed places:

- be functional;
- support mixed uses and tenures;
- include successful public spaces;
- be adaptable and resilient;
- have a distinctive character;
- be attractive; and
- encourage ease of movement.

3.10 The PPG on Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment supports Section 12 of the NPPF. Heritage assets may be affected by direct physical change or by change in their setting. Being able to properly assess the nature, extent and importance of the significance of a heritage asset, and the contribution of its setting, is very important to understanding the potential impact and acceptability of development proposals. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting therefore a thorough assessment of the impact on setting needs to take into account, and be proportionate to, the significance of the heritage asset under consideration and the degree to which proposed changes enhance or detract from that significance and the ability to appreciate it.

3.11 In considering assessment of substantial harm, Paragraph 017 of the guidance states: *“In general terms, substantial harm is a high test, so it may not arise in many cases. For example, in determining whether works to a listed building constitute substantial harm, an important consideration would be whether the adverse impact seriously affects a key element of its special architectural or historic interest. It is the degree of harm to the asset’s significance rather than the scale of the development that is to be assessed. The harm may arise from works to the asset or from development within its setting. While the impact of total destruction is obvious, partial destruction is likely to have a considerable impact but, depending on the circumstances, it may still be less than substantial harm or conceivably not harmful at all, for example, when removing*

later inappropriate additions to historic buildings which harm their significance. Similarly, works that are moderate or minor in scale are likely to cause less than substantial harm or no harm at all. However, even minor works have the potential to cause substantial harm.”

3.12 Considering potential harm in relation to conservation areas, Paragraph 018 of the guidance states: *“An unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to a conservation area is individually of lesser importance than a listed building (paragraph 132 of the National Planning Policy Framework). If the building is important or integral to the character or appearance of the conservation area then its demolition is more likely to amount to substantial harm to the conservation area, engaging the tests in paragraph 133 of the National Planning Policy Framework. However, the justification for its demolition will still be proportionate to the relative significance of the building and its contribution to the significance of the conservation area as a whole.”* The existing Camden Town Hall Annex has been identified as a negative contributor to the Kings Cross Conservation Area; the proposed development would enhance its contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area and the settings of other designated heritage assets.

Regional Planning Policy

The London Plan: Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London (July 2011 – including Revised Early Minor Alterations (REMA) June 2012 and October 2013 and draft Further Alterations to the London Plan (FALP) January 2014) (Ref 1-6)

3.13 The London Plan: Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London was adopted in July 2011. Minor amendments were made to the Plan in June 2012 and October 2013 and draft further alterations were published in January 2014. The London Plan is the overall strategic plan for London, which sets out the economic, environmental, transport and social framework for development over the next 25 years. The Plan continues the GLA’s support of high quality design which relates successfully to its context. The London Plan contains policies that must be considered in relation to the Development, these are outlined below. The June 2012 and October 2013 Revised Early Minor Alterations (REMA) and draft Further Alterations to the London Plan (FALP) of January 2014 do not make any revisions of relevance to this assessment.

3.14 Chapter 7 focuses on policies relating to the built environment, both the historic built environment and new development. These policies have been taken into careful consideration in the formation and assessment of these proposals. Of particular relevance are Policy 7.1, Building London’s neighbourhoods and communities, Policy 7.2 which promotes the highest standards of accessible and inclusive design and Policies 7.4 and 7.5, which protect local character and public realm. Policy 7.6 which makes provision for the highest quality architectural design (7.6B) and that

architecture should make a positive contribution to the city (7.6A). 7.6C provides for the creation of an inclusive and cohesive environment (also in Policy 7.5).

- 3.15 Policy 7.7, on the location and design of tall and large buildings, emphasises that tall and large buildings should not have an unacceptably harmful effect on their surroundings and should not affect adversely on local or strategic views. Urban design analysis should demonstrate that the proposal is part of a strategy that will meet the criteria below:
- Generally be limited to sites in the Central Activity Zone, opportunity areas, areas of intensification or town centres that have good access to public transport;
 - Only be considered in areas whose character would not be affected adversely by the scale, mass or bulk of a tall or large building;
 - Relate well to the form, proportion, composition, scale and character of surrounding buildings, urban grain and public realm (including landscape features), particularly at street level;
 - Individually or as a group, improve the legibility of an area, by emphasising a point of civic or visual significance where appropriate, and enhance the skyline and image of London;
 - Incorporate the highest standards of architecture and materials, including sustainable design and construction practices;
 - Have ground floor activities that provide a positive relationship to the surrounding streets;
 - Contribute to improving the permeability of the site and wider area, where possible;
 - Incorporate publicly accessible areas on the upper floors, where appropriate.

- 3.16 Policy 7.8 considers the Historic Environment, 7.8C states that *“Development affecting heritage assets and their settings should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to their form, scale, materials and architectural detail”* (Ref 1-6, p.219). Paragraph 7.31 expands on the Policy 7.8, stating that:

“Heritage assets such as conservation areas make a significant contribution to local character and should be protected from inappropriate development that is not sympathetic in terms of scale, materials, details and form. Development that affects the setting of listed buildings or conservation areas should be of the highest quality of architecture and design, and respond positively to local context and character”

- 3.17 Policy 7.11 and 7.12 acknowledge the London View Management Framework Supplementary Planning Guidance (LVMF SPG) (Ref 1-2) and the requirement that any development must be considered against the list of designated strategic views to assess the level of effect the development would have on these views. The LVMF SPG is outlined in greater detail below.

London View Management Framework Supplementary Planning Guidance (LVMF SPG) (March 2012) (Ref 1-2)

- 3.18 The London View Management Framework SPG (LVMF SPG) (Ref 1-2) was created to provide additional clarity and detail to the sections of The London Plan that deal with management of important London views. The LVMF SPG includes 27 designated views identified in the LVMF SPG under the categories ‘London Panoramas’, ‘River Prospects’, ‘Townscape Views’ and ‘Linear Views’. The LVMF SPG requires that each view designated within the LVMF SPG that could be affected by development proposals should be accompanied by analysis that explains, evaluates and justifies any visual effect on that view and demonstrates that the proposal is consistent with the relevant London Plan policies in accordance with Section 3 of the SPG.
- 3.19 The Site does not lie in the Protected Vista or Wider Setting Consultation Area of any designated views. Development on the Site would likely be technically visible in the background of London Panoramas from Assessment Points 1A.1, 2A.1 and 4A.1. These views are modelled and assessed in Section 6. The LVMF SPG states that:
- “Development in the foreground, middle ground or background of a London Panorama should provide an appropriate setting for Strategically Important Landmarks by not crowding in too close to them and by not contributing to a canyon effect either side of the Protected Vista.”* (Ref 1-2, para 61)

Local Planning Policy

Camden Core Strategy 2010-2025 (2010) (Ref 1-7)

- 3.20 The core strategy sets out the key elements of Camden’s vision for the borough and is a central part of the Local Development Framework (LDF). The Core Strategy supersedes the Unitary Development Plan from which no relevant policies have been saved.
- 3.21 Policy CS14 – Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage, requires development of *“the highest standard of design that respects local context and character”*. It also aims to preserve and enhance Camden’s heritage assets and their settings, promote high quality streets and public spaces, and protect important views of St Paul’s Cathedral and the Palace of Westminster and important local views. *“Where tall buildings offer the opportunity for intensive use, their siting and design should be carefully considered in order to not detract from the nature of surrounding places...”* Paragraph 14.8 states that applications for tall buildings will be assessed against policy CS14 and Camden Development Policies DP24 and DP25. The effect on views and the provision of amenity space will also be important considerations.

3.22 The council also seeks to protect locally important views that contribute to the interest and character of the borough, ensuring that “development is compatible with such views in terms of setting, scale and massing and will resist proposals that we consider would cause harm to them. Development will not generally be acceptable if it obstructs important views or skylines, appears too close or too high in relation to a landmark or impairs outlines that form part of the view” (Ref 1-7, para 14.25). These views may include:

- “Views of and from large public parks and open spaces, such as Hampstead Heath, Kenwood Estate, Primrose Hill and Regent’s Park, including panoramic views, as well as views of London Squares and historic parks and gardens;
- Views relating to Regent’s Canal;
- Views into and from conservation areas; and
- Views of listed and landmark buildings and monuments and statues (for example, Centrepont, St Stephen’s, Rosslyn Hill and St George’s, Bloomsbury).” (Ref 1-7, p. 125)

Camden Development Policies 2010-2025 (2010) (Ref 1-8)

3.23 The Development Policies set out Camden’s detailed approach to the design of new developments and the detailed planning criteria that Camden will use to determine applications for planning permission in the borough.

3.24 Policy DP24 – *Securing high quality design*, sets out that new development is expected to consider points including the character, setting, context and form and scale of neighbouring buildings, the quality of materials to be used, the provision of visually interesting frontages at street level and the provision of appropriate hard and soft landscaping and amenity space.

3.25 Policy DP25 – *Conserving Camden’s heritage*, states that Camden will not permit development that causes harm to the character and appearance of a conservation area or to the setting of a listed building and will seek to protect other heritage assets including Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest and London Squares. The existing Camden Town Hall Annex has been identified as a negative contributor to the Kings Cross Conservation Area; the proposed development would enhance its contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area and the settings of other designated heritage assets.

Camden Site Allocations Local Development Document (LDD) (September 2013) (Ref 1-9)

3.26 Camden’s site allocations document forms part of the Local Development Framework and sets out some key objectives and guidance for future development on significant sites which have been or are likely to be subject to development proposals. The Camden Town Hall Extension is designated as Site 2.

3.27 The site allocation guidance states: “Refurbishment or redevelopment for new offices, residential, community and/or other appropriate Central London uses to facilitate relocation of existing uses. Development will be expected to:

- Where demolition is proposed be an architecturally excellent building which contributes positively to its sensitive location
- Fully appreciate and respect the setting of the Grade I listed St Pancras and King’s Cross stations and Grade II listed Town Hall and nearby listed terraced housing
- Facilitate the planned re-provision of Council offices, facilities and library accommodation
- Provide appropriately designed active frontages and positively enhance the townscape of Euston Road
- Maintain and enhance the pedestrian route through to Tonbridge Street
- Contribute towards an improved public realm and streetscape which responds to the other streetscape and public space improvements around King’s Cross
- Provide infrastructure for supporting local energy generation on site and/or connections to existing or future networks where feasible.” (Ref 1-9, p.20)

3.28 The guidance goes on to state that new development would need to be both sensitive to its existing historic context and respond positively to its changing context, “New development is likely to be acceptable where it (amongst other design considerations):

- successfully integrates itself with the surrounding townscape and respects the built form and historic context of the immediate area
- respects and appreciably improves the setting of, and relationship with, the adjacent Town Hall
- is appreciably sensitive and respectful in scale and form to its relationship with the important landmark of St Pancras Chambers, and its wider setting
- positively contributes to improving pedestrian permeability and accessibility
- positively responds to, and respects the context of ,its surroundings including public spaces , residential amenity, and the adjacent school
- positively responds to and respects the context of its surroundings including the scale and form; building ,roof and sky lines; and appropriate architectural
- characteristics of surrounding buildings;
- redresses the design, scale and massing shortcomings of the existing building and appreciably improves on the streetscape, particularly at street level
- respects and enhances existing important views, or assists in revealing new views, of the important landmark of St Pancras Chambers and its towers and spire.” (Ref 1-9, p.21)

3.29 *“The interaction of the building with Euston Road, particularly at street level, the quality of the public realm around the site and route from Euston Road through to Tonbridge Street would benefit from greater clarity and enhancement. Given the relatively constrained nature of the site it is unlikely that a significant open space could be feasibly provided on site at ground level. Redevelopment could offer an opportunity for an east-west link to the rear and a secure and overlooked small scale garden/sitting area to escape the busy nature of Euston Road might also be integrated.”* (Ref 1-9, p. 22)

3.30 The Inspector's Report on the Examination into the document (Ref 1-10) states *“The Council, who own the site, believe that the policy should be flexible enough to allow for creative design solutions. They say that a building higher than the existing could be acceptable, for example, on an area of the site if it is part of a high quality design solution that reduces the overall bulk and visual impact of the existing building. I can see some merit in this approach.”* (Ref 1-10 para. 62)

Camden Planning Guidance CPG1 – Design (2011) (Ref 1-11)

3.31 This SPD considers building design in more detail. It reiterates that good design should enhance the character of existing buildings on the site, the setting of the existing context of the site and strategic and local views; this is particularly important in conservation areas. Good design should provide visual interest from all aspects and distances. Materials should form an integral part of the design process and should relate to the character and appearance of an area, particularly in conservation areas and within the settings of listed buildings.

London Borough of Camden: Planning Statement Camden Town Hall Extension, Argyle Street WC1 (April 2013) (Ref 1-12)

3.32 This Planning Statement expands on the Camden Site Allocations LDD to outline the relevant planning considerations for the Site. It describes the existing Town Hall Extension and its context and provides development options for the Site,

3.33 Retention and extension of the existing building is described in section 4.1. It states that any extension or alteration to the existing building should consider the following townscape factors:

- The appropriateness and quality of any extension or alteration
- The extent to which the extension or alteration is consistent with national and local heritage policies and guidance in relation to:
 - the effect on the setting of listed buildings of national importance; and
 - preserving and enhancing the setting, views into and out of and character or appearance of the conservation areas.

4.0 BASELINE CONDITIONS

Introduction

- 4.1 The urban development of London has resulted from a combination of careful foresight and planning, and a pragmatic, sometimes expedient response to opportunities and events. It is not the result of a comprehensive unified vision. Consequently, it is a city of many distinctive parts. These have combined to create a rich urban environment. Through complex interactions London's fabric has become highly stratified and is represented by a great variety of architectural styles and building types. These have been built over many centuries in response to changing opportunities, and to the expectations and demands of London's citizens.
- 4.2 Successive eras – Georgian, Victorian, Edwardian and Modern – have all added to the City's building stock within the existing framework of streets. Therefore the City has not been defined physically by any single overriding architectural idea or stylistic era: its buildings and places are multi-layered palimpsest, having been constructed across the ages. This is key to appreciating the qualities of the City's urban character, and herein lies its potential for developmental flexibility and continued economic success into the future.

History of the Site and the surrounding area

- 4.3 Although there have been some Roman finds during archaeological excavations there is no evidence of settlement in the area of the Site until the development of the hamlet of Battle Bridge at the point where Maiden Lane (now York Way) crossed the River Fleet, to the north-east of the Site. During the medieval period the River Fleet, before it was culverted in 1825, flowed along the western side of Pancras Road and then eastward along the south side of the common, crossing Gray's Inn Road north of St. Chad's Place. The small settlements of Battle Bridge and St Pancras to its north-west remained relatively isolated and were surrounded by open fields until the mid-18th Century. Gray's Inn Road, to the east of the Site, has been a significant route out of the City of London towards Hampstead and Highgate since at least the 13th century.
- 4.4 The New Road (now Euston Road) was built in 1756, to drive livestock to Smithfield and until around 1800 it marked the northern edge of the built up area. When the New (Euston) Road was formed, the northern part of Battle Bridge Field, to the west of Gray's Inn Road, was cut off and its area reduced. In Horwood's map of 1799-1819 (Fig 4-1) it is shown divided into two parts, the New Road Nursery occupying the area between Euston Road and Gray's Inn Road in which the Site now sits. Where the New Road joined Gray's Inn Road stood the great Dust Heap, removed in 1826 when the ground was sold to the Panharmonium Company. The Act of Parliament that endorsed the development of the New Road required that no foundations should be erected

within 50 feet of it. New houses were built fronting the New Road towards the end of the 18th century, with long gardens fronting onto the road, as shown on Horwood's map (Fig 4-1). Other developments in the area during this period include the Small Pox Hospital, which was built in 1767 on land north-west of Battle Bridge, now occupied by King's Cross Station, the Fever Hospital constructed next to it in 1802, and the Royal Veterinary College in 1791. At the southern end of Pancras Way, a workhouse was also built in 1809 and rebuilt and its infirmary accommodation much enlarged after 1880. The rest of the area to the north of Euston Road developed with residential streets during the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The neighbourhood was generally known as Battle Bridge until the erection of King's Cross (a memorial to George IV) in 1830 when name King's Cross superseded it. The Battle Bridge area was never "highly respectable" in the social sense of the day, the occupants being labourers, beggars and street traders.

- 4.5 South of Euston Road, the later Georgian and Regency period saw the rapid expansion of development of Bloomsbury northwards as landowners capitalised on demand from the expanding wealthy classes. The pace of building slowed significantly as a result of the Napoleonic Wars and the northern part of Bloomsbury consequently remained undeveloped until the 1820s when the period of stagnation came to an end. A depression in the building trade during the 1830s meant that residential building on the final pieces of Bloomsbury was slow. Argyle Square was developed to the south-east of the site on the former New Road Nursery, which had subsequently been the site of the unsuccessful Panharmonium Pleasure Gardens, and works were completed between 1840 and 1849. The Panharmonium Pleasure Gardens was a short-lived project planned as a large entertainment complex with a theatre, galleries, and reading rooms as well as gardens and pleasure grounds; it opened in 1830 but closed after two years without having been fully realised. The streets surrounding Argyle Square, are likely to have been built earlier than the square, Crestfield Street and Birkenhead Street were laid out from 1825; Argyle Street from 1826 and St Chad's Street from 1827.
- 4.6 There were dramatic changes in the area in the mid-19th century; the arrival of the railways had a profound effect on the urban fabric of London. The first Euston Station was built in 1833-37. A Parliamentary Commission decreed in 1846 that central London was not suitable for mainline railway termini and as a result St Pancras and Kings Cross stations were also constructed on the north side of Euston Road. Kings Cross Station, designed by Lewis Cubitt for the Great Northern Railway was completed in 1850-52. St Pancras Station was completed in 1866. The construction of the stations and their goods yards followed substantial clearance of the existing residential slums to the north of Euston Road: Battle Bridge, Somers Town and Agar Town. Lines of the Midland Railway leading to the new station cut through large tracts of the St Pancras Churchyard leading to the controversial relocation of part of the burial ground. Both stations were

accompanied by grand hotels, in the case of Kings Cross, the Great Northern Hotel to the west of the station and for St Pancras, the Midland Grand Hotel designed by Sir George Gilbert Scott, which fronts the station shed on Euston Road and was opened in 1876. In addition, the Metropolitan Railway's underground line opened in 1863 and included a station at Kings Cross to the east of the main station. As the character of the New Road - now Euston Road - became more commercial, shops replaced the large front gardens that previously fronted the south side of the road and many of the area's earlier properties were redeveloped and converted into hotels to serve the passengers on the Great Northern Railway and Midland Railway. The OS map of 1871 (Fig 4-2) shows the south side of Euston Road in the area of the Site between Tonbridge Street and Argyle Street and to its east and west still lined with large terraced houses with long front gardens. The St Pancras train shed is shown but the Midland Grand Hotel is yet to be completed. By the OS map of 1894 (Fig 4-3) there is little change to the south of Euston Road, but to the north the Midland Grand Hotel has been completed and much of the area of pre-existing terraced housing between Kings Cross and St Pancras has been replaced by industrial buildings.

4.7 As a result of the construction and running of the new railway termini and good yards, railway workers flooded to the area; the swelling population occupied poor quality housing which became increasingly overcrowded. Philanthropic initiatives to improve the conditions in the area, both north and south of Euston Road began in the late 19th century. The East End Dwelling Company founded in 1884 by the clergyman and social reformer Rev. Samuel Barnett, built a series of model tenement blocks in 1893, described by Pevsner as "*depressingly grim... arranged around cramped internal courts*" (Ref 1-13), which occupy the street blocks to the east of Tonbridge Street between Tonbridge Street, Whidborne Street, Midhope Street, Tankerton Street and Loxham Street. Tonbridge Houses of 1904 on the west side of Tonbridge Street is more spacious later social housing development by the same organisation. To its north is the grander, eight-storey Alexandra Mansions. On the east side of Tonbridge Street is Argyle Primary School, a good late Victorian example of a London Board School from the same period, which stands back from the street behind a high brick wall. The OS map of 1914 (Fig 4-4) shows these new housing developments completed to the south of the Site. On the Site itself is the Euston Theatre dating from 1900 and to the west the site of the future Town Hall has been partly cleared of terraced house.

4.8 A huge number of town halls were constructed during inter-war years in response to the vastly increased responsibilities of local government. The St Pancras Town Hall, which would become Camden Town Hall, was designed by AJ Thomas, a former assistant of EL Lutyens, the influence of whose Classical style pervades the building, and was constructed in 1935; the building is now Grade II listed. The extension to the town hall was constructed in 1943-77 by the Camden Architects Department.

4.9 The area suffered extensive damage during WWII as illustrated on the bomb damage map of 1945 (Fig 4-5). St Pancras suffered general blast damage but no structural damage. The Town Hall and part of the Site suffered minor blast damage but there was much more serious damage and destruction to the south and east of Argyle Square and to the west of the Site along Euston Road. The bomb damaged sites to the south and east of Argyle Square were redeveloped as a series of parallel six storey residential slab blocks in 1946-50 for Camden Council to designs by Hening and Chitty. To the west along the Euston Road larger scale post-war commercial buildings replaced some of the bomb damage sites. The original Victorian Euston Station was redeveloped in its current form in 1962-68, with three squat black commercial towers designed by Siefert & Partners added in 1974-8 to the northern edge of Euston Square Gardens. To its east The British Library was built between 1978 and 1997. In recent years both St Pancras and Kings Cross stations have undergone major regeneration and extension, both to great critical acclaim. The outline planning consent for the Kings Cross Masterplan drawn up by Allies & Morrison for the land between the two stations was received in 2006 and the area is currently undergoing redevelopment with high quality new buildings and public realm.

The existing Camden Town Hall Annex

4.10 The existing Town Hall Extension is an eight-storey office building, faced in profiled concrete panels with bronze-coloured window frames and grey tinted windows. The ground floor is set back behind a deep undercroft. It adjoins Camden Town Hall (Grade II listed), which was designed by A.J. Thomas and built in 1937. The site of the Camden Town Hall Extension was originally occupied by terraced houses at Nos. 33-43 Euston Road and three terraced houses, dating from the 1820s, at the northern end of Argyle Street. In 1900, these houses were demolished and the Euston Theatre of Varieties was built on the site to designs by Wylson & Long. It was renamed the Regent Theatre in 1920 and from 1935-50 was used as a cinema. In the second half of the 1960s the site was selected for an extension to the Town Hall to be designed by Camden Architect's Department. Sydney Cook was Borough Architect from 1965 to 1973 and the work of the Camden Architect's Department during the 1970s was critically very well regarded. Although mainly known for an ambitious programme to build high-density, low-rise social housing, the Camden architects department under Cook also designed a small number of non-residential buildings including the Town Hall Extension.

4.11 Planning permission for an eight storey scheme with basement and sub-basement was granted in 1973 and the building was completed in 1977. The ramp to the Argyle Street entrance was added in 1981 and in 1992 the ground floor offices were converted to library use. The Town Hall Extension received a lukewarm reaction from contemporary critics. An article from Building Design of 1977, described the building as "*unlikely to make the next edition of Guide to Modern*

Buildings in London and may well achieve the same tribute accorded to its mother by Pevsner: "completely unremarkable". The building has not been well loved by the public and is noted in the Kings Cross Conservation Area Statement (Ref 1-14) written in 2004, as a building that detracts from the character of the conservation area. As part of the more recent widespread re-appraisal for the buildings of the post-war era, the group Conserving the Twentieth Century considered proposing the building for listing, it has been included on the London List's Top Ten of Brutalist Buildings being described as: "*distinctly curvy (for Brutalism) and attractive*" and in 2013 featured on the flyer for the English Heritage Brutal and Beautiful debate on the history and listing of post-war architecture. The building's architectural value remains subject to differences of opinion.

Designated Heritage Assets

Conservation Areas

Kings Cross St Pancras Conservation Area

- 4.12 The Site is at the southern edge of the King's Cross St Pancras Conservation Area, in sub-area 3. The conservation area was initially designated by the Greater London Council in 1986. It adjoins the Bloomsbury Conservation Area on its southern boundary. The conservation area has been extended twice, in 1991 and 1994. LBC produced a Conservation Area Statement for the area in June 2004 (Ref 1-14).
- 4.13 The area began to develop into a transport and industrial hub in the 19th century, a character which it retains today. The overall character of the conservation area varies greatly. The stations of King's Cross and St Pancras form the heart of the conservation area. These Grade I listed structures are heritage assets of national importance. While some parts of the conservation area are dominated by the two stations, the streets to the south of Euston Road are more characteristic of the general grain and land uses beyond the Conservation Area boundary.
- 4.14 The south-west section of the conservation area, sub-area 3, in which the Site is located, comprises the south side of Euston Road and the northern ends of adjoining streets. The sub-area is characterised by its relationship to the busy Euston Road and provides the close setting to the listed stations to the north. Many of the premises here provide a retail or hotel function, with the exception of Camden Town Hall (Grade II), formerly St Pancras Town Hall. This classical, civic building dates from 1937 and was designed by A. J. Thomas. Adjoining this building to the east is the Town Hall Annex, on the Site, which was built in 1977 as an extension to the main town hall; the Annex is noted in the Conservation Area Statement as a building that detracts from the character of the conservation area. Argyle House, at nos. 29-31 Euston Road, opposite the Town Hall Extension, is a four-storey mid-20th century building in brown brick, with a sandstone

ground floor and flat roof. The adjacent building at nos. 23-27 Euston Road is a four-storey corner property, plus a mansard attic storey, with highly decorated elevations to both Euston Road and Belgrove Street. Argyle House and Nos. 23-27 Euston Road are considered to make a positive contribution to the conservation area. To the east of Belgrove Street, Belgrove House, at nos. 13-21 Euston Road, is a three storey building dating from the early 20th century constructed in brown brick. The building's entrance and primary elevation addresses Euston Road and turns the corner into Belgrove Street and Crestfield Street with plainer utilitarian facades beyond. At its southern end it encloses the northern end of Argyle Square.

- 4.15 The Conservation Area Statement notes the following views of St Pancras:
"There are several viewpoints of the Chambers along Euston Road, where the Chambers forms a dominant part of the street scene. It is an important local landmark, with its rising mass. Other key views are from Pentonville Road and Gray's Inn Road. The Chambers forms framed views from other streets including Judd Street and Argyle Street. The huge mass of the train shed and the Chambers are prominent in views from Euston Road looking north along both Midland Road and Pancras Road." (Ref 1-14, para 2.2.47.)
 Bloomsbury Conservation Area
- 4.16 The Bloomsbury Conservation Area lies directly to the south of the Site, adjoining the southern boundary of the Kings Cross Conservation Area; it was originally designated in 1968 but has been expanded several times. The conservation area extends from Euston Road in the north to High Holborn in the south and from Tottenham Court Road in the west to Gray's Inn Road in the east. The Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy was adopted by the LBC in April 2011 (Ref 1-15). Due to its large size the conservation area is divided into fourteen sub-areas; the closest to the Site is Sub-Area 13: Cartwright Gardens/Argyle Square.
- 4.17 During the 17th century the growth of London began to spread outwards from the main roads with the development of new residential streets and squares in a large swath of land between Tottenham Court Road and Gray's Inn Road on the estate of the Duke of Bedford. The area now known as Bloomsbury was developed roughly from south to north between 1660 and 1840. Earlier development created a mix of housing and commercial uses, while later expansion provided grander residential districts developed speculatively by builders leasing the land from landowners and following the formal grid pattern of streets and garden squares for which the area is renowned. The northern part of the conservation area which includes the Site was among the last parts to be developed during the early to mid-19th century.
- 4.18 The Conservation Area Appraisal defines the special interest of Sub-Area 13: Cartwright Gardens/Argyle Square, as originating from "*the formal early 19th century street pattern and layout of open spaces, and the relatively intact surviving terraces of houses*" (Ref 1-15). Within

Bloomsbury this part was one of the later areas to be completed; it was developed mainly by James Burton in the 1810s-1830s. This development is of a consistent style, three to four storeys with attics and basements, adhering to classical proportions; common features include sash windows, round arched doorways, iron balconies, cast-iron front boundary railings. The mature trees to be found in the large formal gardens soften the urban area and provide a foil for the built environment in the summer months.

- 4.19 The area around Argyle Square was one of the last land parcels of the conservation area to be developed in the 1830s and 1840s having been previously the site of the failed Panharmonium Pleasure Gardens. The surrounding streets, however, are likely to have been built earlier, Crestfield Street and Birkenhead Street were laid out from 1825; Argyle Street from 1826 and St Chad's Street from 1827. The architectural and historic interest of this area is reflected in the fact that the majority of the buildings are listed. Four-storey townhouses around Argyle Square have a restrained classical appearance with consistent parapet lines, decorative stucco banding, large first-floor windows with stucco surrounds, arched ground-floor doors and a parapet concealing the roof. The east and west sides are almost intact, but the northern edge is defined by Belgrove House within the Kings Cross Conservation Area and the south-east corner was destroyed in WWII. Post-war housing blocks designed by Hening and Chitty were built on the bomb-damaged site (which is outside the conservation area) and are highly visible in views from the square; four similar blocks were also built to the east of the square which form the Birkenhead Street Estate. Away from Argyle Square, the buildings are slightly older, more modest in scale and tend to have plainer detailing. The houses in Argyle Street, to the south-east of the Site were constructed c.1826 and the majority are listed at Grade II.
- 4.20 The sub area also includes a tranche of slightly later philanthropic tenements and mansion blocks from the turn of the 20th century, which were developed to replace run-down terraced houses. Closest to the Site are the eight storey Alexandra Mansions on the west side of Tonbridge Street dating from 1912-14 and the Argyle Primary School, on the east side, which is a good late Victorian example of a London Board School. None of these buildings is listed.
- 4.21 Although the layout of the conservation area is strongly influenced by a formal pattern of streets and spaces it was not planned to create distinctive formal vistas to architectural set pieces, other than the view to the Foundling Hospital; historically, it was the undeveloped views northwards to the hills of Highgate and Hampstead that were prized by the area's original developers and residents, prior to the construction of the railway termini on Euston Road. The Conservation Area Appraisal (Ref 1-15) notes that there are just a few notable views to landmarks within and outside the Conservation Area that assist orientation and navigation, those of relevance to this assessment being:

- Views east and west along Euston Road to St Pancras Church; and
- View north along Judd Street to St Pancras and the British Library.

Listed Buildings

Camden Town Hall – Grade II

- 4.22 Camden Town Hall dates from 1934-7 and was originally built as St Pancras Town Hall on the site of Georgian terraced housing. It was known as St Pancras Town Hall until 1965. The architect A J Thomas was a former assistant of Sir Edwin Lutyens, whose interpretation of the Classical style permeates the building. The exterior is clad in Portland stone ashlar constructed over a steel frame on all four fronts. The building has three main storeys with a channelled base and plinth, with symmetrically composed elevations to all four sides. The main entrance is from Judd Street and there are secondary entrances in the other elevations. The listing includes interior fixtures, light fittings and furniture of a high standard and thought to be designed by AJ Thomas, including the Council Chamber, entrance hall, and Assembly Room.
- 4.23 The Town Hall was extended in 1974-77 by the Camden Architect's Department. The majority of this extension is not included in the listing. However it is connected to the listed Town Hall by a corridor link second floor level and a ground floor single storey, now containing the entrance to the Camden Centre, which blocks the route between the Town Hall and the Town Hall Extension from Tonbridge Street.

St Pancras Station and Former Midland Grand Hotel – Grade I

- 4.24 The listing of St Pancras includes the station (1865-1869) and the former Midland Grand Hotel (1868-76) both designed by George Gilbert Scott. The iron train shed (1866-8) with the impressive span of 240ft and the length of 690ft was designed by the Midland Railway's consulting engineer, William Henry Barlow, assisted by R. M Ordish. A competition was run for the full design of the station and hotel; Gilbert Scott's brick Gothic revival designs won the competition in May 1865. The grandeur of Scott's design resulted in St Pancras Station and the former Midland Grand Hotel becoming two of the most celebrated structures in Victorian Britain. St Pancras is often termed the 'cathedral of the railways' and the structure's sheer visual power is very evident – internally and externally. The exterior of the station and hotel is in deep red Gripper's Nottingham patent bricks with Ancaster stone dressings and shafts of grey and red Peterhead granite. The hotel to Euston Road has four main storeys with two extra storeys in the roof lit by stacks of gabled dormers. The slim south-east tower is surmounted by gabled clocks on each face and pinnacles at each corner and spire. The broader westerly tower has three storeys

of elaborately arcaded windows above the hotel entrance and a steep pavilion roof with dormers, and spires at each corner. The dramatic roof line with gables and spires forms an important landmark.

Kings Cross Station – Grade I

- 4.25 King's Cross Station was originally built as the London hub of the Great Northern Railway and the terminus of the East Coast Main Line. Lewis Cubitt was the architect behind the project and Sir William and Joseph Cubitt were the engineers. The station was built within two years from 1850 to 1852. The Site had previously housed a fever and smallpox hospital. The main part of the station, which today houses platforms 1-8 was opened on the 14th October 1852. The station is constructed of yellow stock brick and has a striking central tower with a rectangular clock turret with a pyramidal roof, eaves cornice and weather vane. There is a powerful contrast of its functional simplicity with the elaborate Gothic architecture of the adjacent St Pancras Station, which forms an important element of the station's setting. In 1972 a single storey extension was added to the front of the station which has recently been demolished, returning the station front to the grandeur of Lewis Cubitt's original design. Redevelopment of the station, including a new western concourse, was completed in 2014.

Great Northern Hotel and attached railings – Grade II

- 4.26 The Great Northern Hotel also designed by Lewis Cubitt was completed in 1854. The Italianate style building is in yellow stock brick with stucco dressings and has a slate roof. The hotel is an attractive crescent shape, with the concave main facade facing towards King's Cross Station, on Euston Road. The curved plan reflects the original alignment of Pancras Place, now Pancras Road.

No.26 Pancras Road (the German Gymnasium) – Grade II

- 4.27 The building, which dates from 1864-65, was originally a gymnasium and library. It was designed by Edward Gruning for the German Gymnastic Society. The three storey building has a rectangular plan with narrow, slightly projecting entrance frontage to Pancras Road and a pitched roof with a continuous lantern along the ridge. The exterior is in multi-coloured stock brick and the east and west elevations are gabled. Internally the piers support arched, laminated wood roof trusses some 20m wide, as experimented with but replaced at King's Cross Station, and the building is significant as an important early example of the use of laminated timber to give broad spans. It is currently being refurbished for restaurant use.

Stanley Building – Grade II

- 4.28 These philanthropic flats dating from 1865 were designed by Matthew Allen for the Improved Industrial Dwellings Company (IIDC) under the guidance of Sydney Waterlow and were among the earliest blocks built by Waterlow's influential and prolific IIDC. The five-storey block has painted stucco to ground floor where it is treated as rustication, with brick above and a parapeted roof.

Nos. 7-19, 12-36 and 27-43 Argyle Street and attached railings – Grade II

- 4.29 Three terraces of 7, 13 and 8 houses respectively, each separately listed, which line both sides of the northern leg of Argyle Street. All the houses, many of which have been converted into hotels, date from c.1833-9. The area around Argyle Square was one of the last land parcels of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area to be developed in the 1830s having been previously the site of the failed Panharmonium Pleasure Gardens, an over-ambitious and short-lived project from 1830-32. Each house is two windows wide and three storeys high with a basement; many have mansard roofs with dormers added. All the houses are constructed in yellow stock brick. Ground floor treatments vary: some have channelled stucco or rendered bases, others are in stock brick as the upper floors; all have a painted band between ground and first floor. Each house has a round arched doorway with a semi-circular fanlight, although some have been altered, and a round arched ground floor sash window. The first floor windows are square-headed sashes set within shallow round-arched recesses and have individual cast-iron balconies. The small second floor windows are square-headed sashes within white painted reveals. There is a plain parapet above and cast iron railings with tasselled spearhead finials to the basement areas.

No. 46 Argyle Street and No 1 Whidborne Street and attached railings and the Duke of Wellington Public House – Grade II

- 4.30 The two terraced houses and a pub form a group at the northern end of Whidborne Street and date from c. 1839-49. All three are constructed in yellow stock brick, three storeys high, with basements below and plain parapets. No 46 is two windows wide to Argyle Street with a single bay return to Whidborne Street. No 1 is two bays wide to Whidborne Street. The houses have round arched openings at ground level. The pub's principle elevation of the pub is to the west with a single bay return to the north. The ground floor timber public house frontage with splayed corner dates from the later 19th century; pilasters carry an entablature with a projecting cornice, there is a panelled dado below, large windows and part glazed panelled entrance doors. The

upper floors of the group have square-headed sashes with painted reveals. Cast iron railings with urn finials to the basement areas of the houses are included in the listing.

Nos. 7-25 (east side), 26-35 (south) 36-47(west side) Argyle Square

- 4.31 Three terraces of 19, 10 and 12 houses respectively, each separately listed, forming the east, south and west sides of Argyle Square. The houses now mostly small hotels date from 1840-49, although the square was laid out in around 1832. Each house is of 2-bays, and 4-storeys plus basement, with a raised parapet. The houses have a restrained classical appearance with consistent parapet lines and detailing. All the houses are constructed in yellow stock brick although No. 42 has been stuccoed. Ground floor treatments vary: the ground floor doors and windows are generally round-headed and have moulded architraves but end of terrace houses at Nos. 7 and 25, Nos. 26 and 35, and Nos. 36 and 47, have square-headed ground floor windows. Some houses have channelled stucco or rendered bases, others are in stock brick as the upper floors; all have a continuous sill band between ground and first floor. The first floor windows have moulded architraves, while the second and third floor windows are recessed with gauged brick flat arches. The first floor windows have a cast-iron balcony. There are attached cast-iron railings, which are included in the listing of each terrace.
- 4.32 Argyle Square, developed mainly by James Burton, was one of the last land parcels to be developed in the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. It was previously the site of the New Road Nursery and its Dust Heap and subsequently the short lived Panharmonium Pleasure Gardens of 1830-32. The east and west sides are almost intact. The south-east corner and an adjacent terrace and church were destroyed in WWII. Post-war housing dating from 1949-51 on the bomb damaged site designed by Hening and Chitty is highly visible from within the square. Although unlisted and altered, Nos. 45-47 Argyle Square date from the early 19th century and use consistent materials and detailing. The north side of the square, is defined by the rear of Belgrove House, a large utilitarian red brick early 20th century storage facility of three storeys, which contributes negatively to the character of the architectural square. In the north-west corner the unlisted Derbyshire House has a balanced façade in a pale brick with a stone ground floor and with metal windows in stone surrounds with horizontal mullions and other Art Deco influenced details. Although it is of five storeys, it blends well with the predominant 19th century character of the streetscape.
- 4.33 Each of the terraces to Argyle Square is of special interest as part of the remaining 1840s square and the three terraces have group value with the central garden square. The garden square is publicly accessible. Mature trees to its edges screen views across the square and of taller post-war development beyond particularly in summer.

5.0 VISUAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 5.1 The following changes to the existing Town Hall Annex are proposed:
- Place the entrance, retail and lobby at ground floor to create a more active street frontage and replace the existing tinted glazing at ground floor;
 - Extend the façade line on Euston Road to reduce the depth of the overhang;
 - Open up the existing garden and create an east-west shared pedestrian and cycle route. This would include narrowing the existing service ramp to reduce its visual impact at ground level;
 - Remove the west core staircase;
 - Replace the existing tinted windows with clear glass;
 - Replace the existing tinted glass to the existing stair core on Euston Road and add an external glass lift; and
 - Remove the existing concrete plant room from 8th floor and extend the building by two floors from the existing top of roof plant with new hotel accommodation
- 5.2 The new eighth floor will be formed from a recessed, glazed 'waist' which would echo the setback ground floor and would help to articulate the junction with the two storey extension above. The existing vertical circulation core's dark glass would be removed and replaced with clear glass which would be extended to the upper levels. The additional storeys take reference from the form of the existing Annex and would crown the existing building. The two upper floors, clad in glass and bronze-like metal panels, would echo and amplify the rhythm of the vertical bays in the existing building below to create a lighter weight softer form that would temper the impact of the building on the skyline. The warm material tones would complement to historic setting of the proposed development; the ratio of glass to solid panels would vary across the facades in response to the building's context.

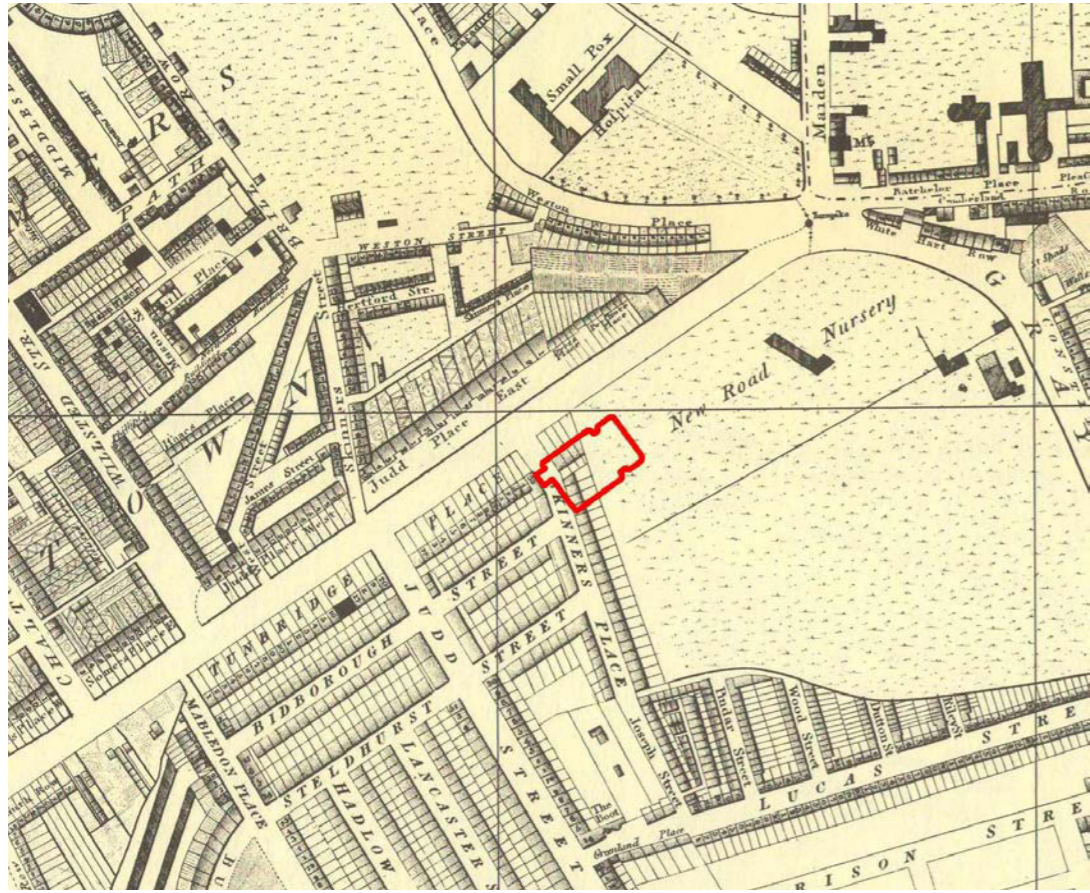


Fig 4-1 Horwood's map of 1819



Fig 4-2 Ordnance Survey map of 1871

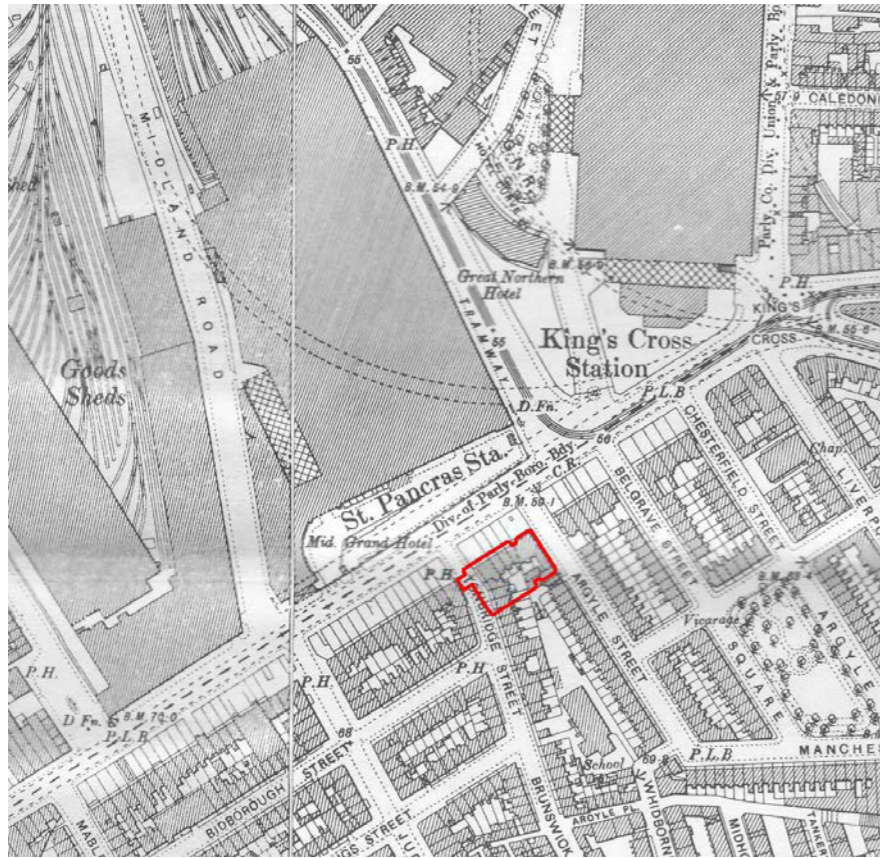


Fig 4-3 Ordnance Survey map of 1894

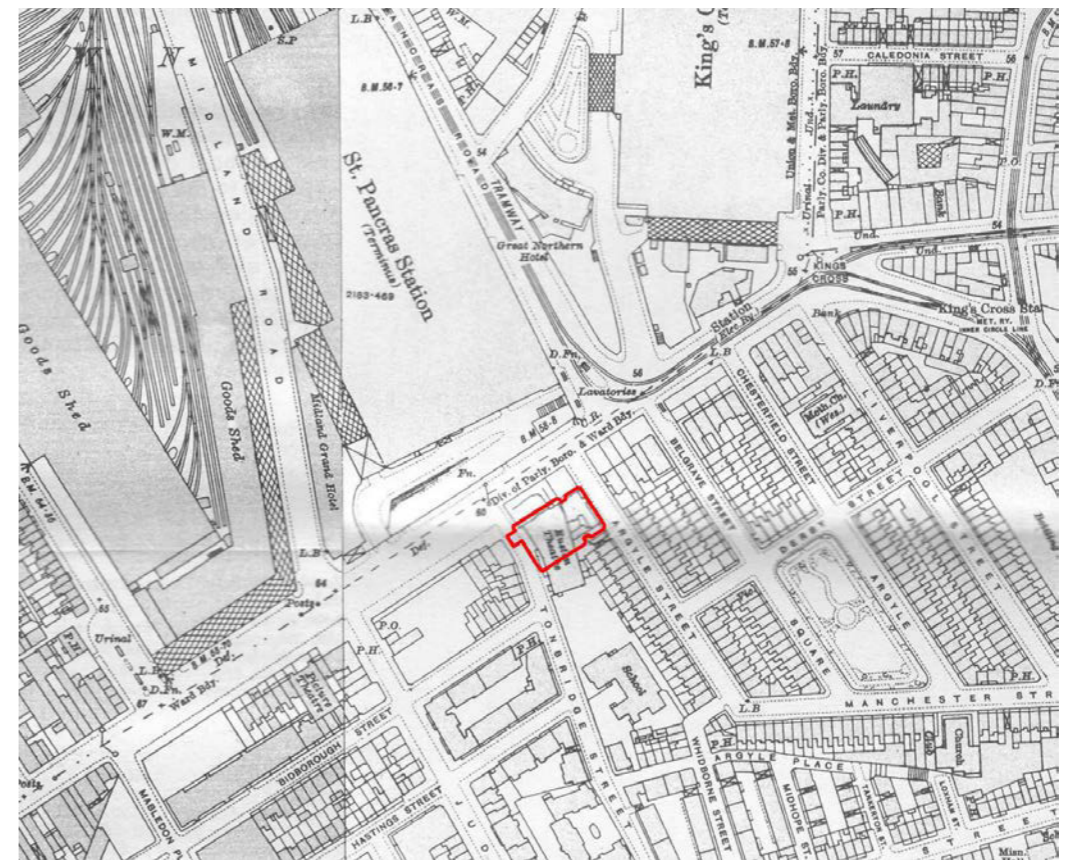


Fig 4-4 Ordnance Survey map of 1914



Fig 4-5 LCC Bomb damage map of 1945

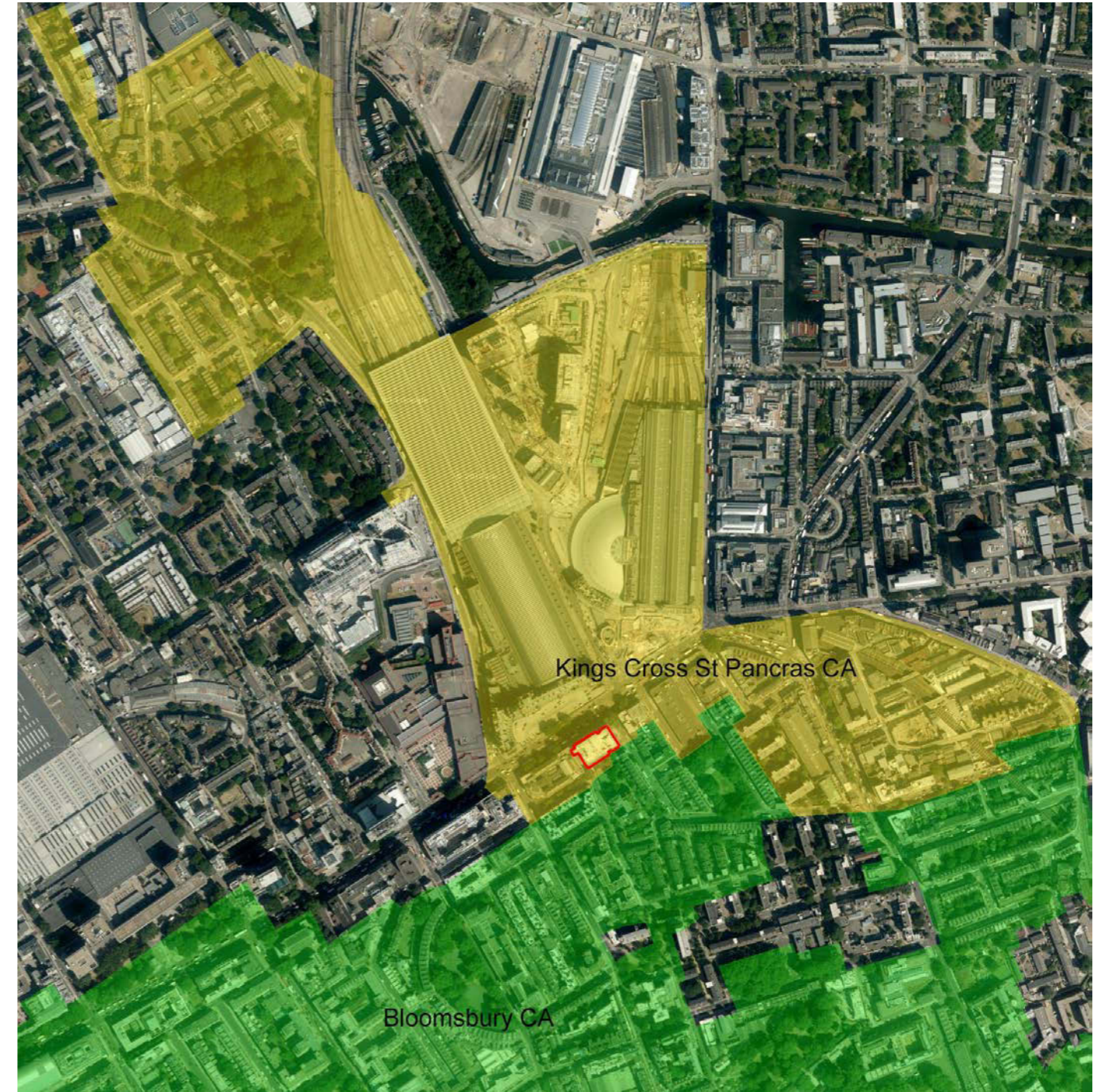


Fig 4-6 Conservation Area map



Listed Buildings map key

Blue – Grade II

Yellow – Grade I

1. Camden Town Hall – Grade II
2. St Pancras Station and Former Midland Grand Hotel – Grade I
3. Kings Cross Station – Grade I
4. Great Northern Hotel and attached railings – Grade II
5. Nos. 7-19 Argyle Street and attached railings – Grade II
6. 12-36 Argyle Street and attached railings – Grade II
7. 27-43 Argyle Street and attached railings – Grade II
8. No. 46 Argyle Street – Grade II
9. 1 Whidborne Street and attached railings – Grade II
10. Duke of Wellington Public House – Grade II
11. 7-25 Argyle Square – Grade II
12. 26-35 Argyle Square – Grade II
13. 36-47 Argyle Square – Grade II

Fig 4-7 Listed Buildings map

6.0 VIEWS ASSESSMENT

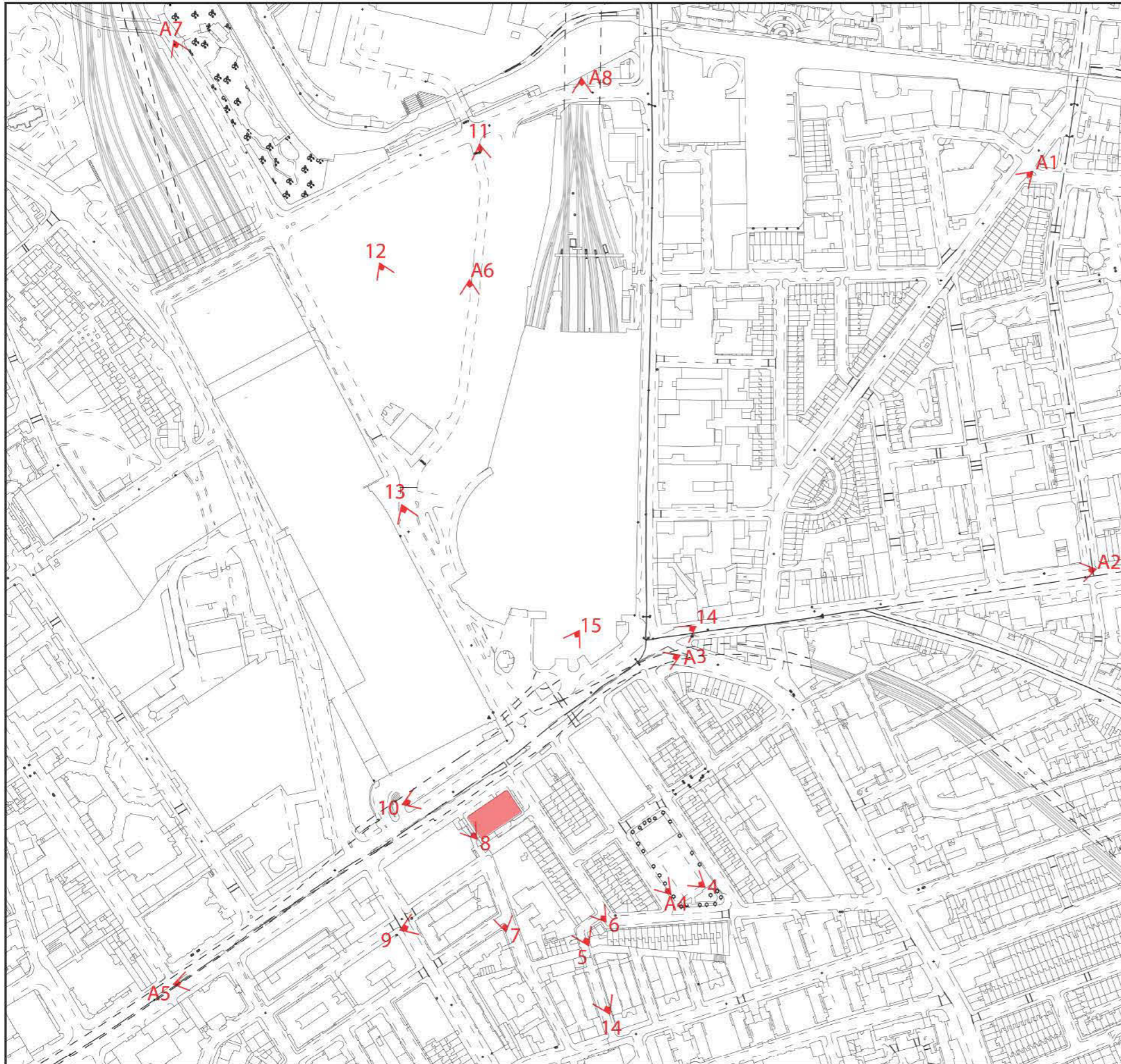
Table 6-1 Assessment views

View Ref.	Viewing position	Render/ wireline
1	Alexandra Palace (LVMF 1A.1)	W
2	Parliament Hill (LVMF 2A.1)	W
3	Primrose Hill (LVMF 4A.1)	W
4	Argyle Square	R
5	Whidborne Street	W
6	Argyle Street	R
7	Tonbridge Street, junction with Hastings Street	R
8	Tonbridge Street, at the Town Hall	R
9	Judd Street	W
10	Euston Road, junction with Midland Road	R
11	King's Boulevard	W
12	Pancras Square	W
13	Pancras Road	W
14	Pentonville Road	W
15	King's Cross Station	R

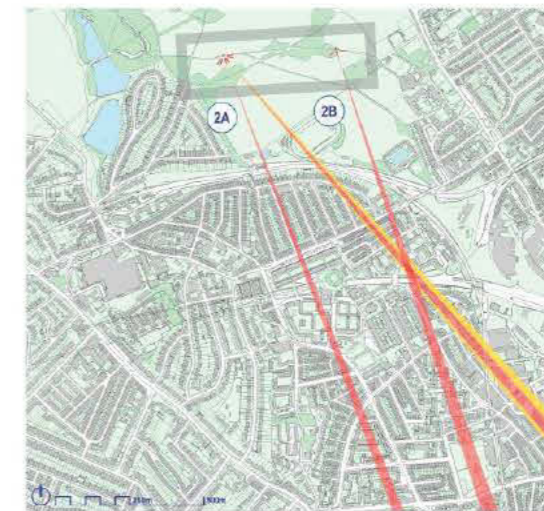
Supplementary unverified test views (Appendix A)

A1	Caledonian Road, E pavement at junction with Wynford Road
A2	Pentonville Road, N pavement junction with Calshot Street
A3	Gray's Inn Road, N end, E pavement
A4	Eastern edge of Argyle Square
A5	Euston Road, N pavement, junction with Churchway
A6	Kings Boulevard
A7	Camley Street
A8	The Filling Station
A9	Coram's Fields
A10	Wakefield Street, entrance to St George's Gardens

Map of Viewing Positions



Map of View 1 Alexandra Palace

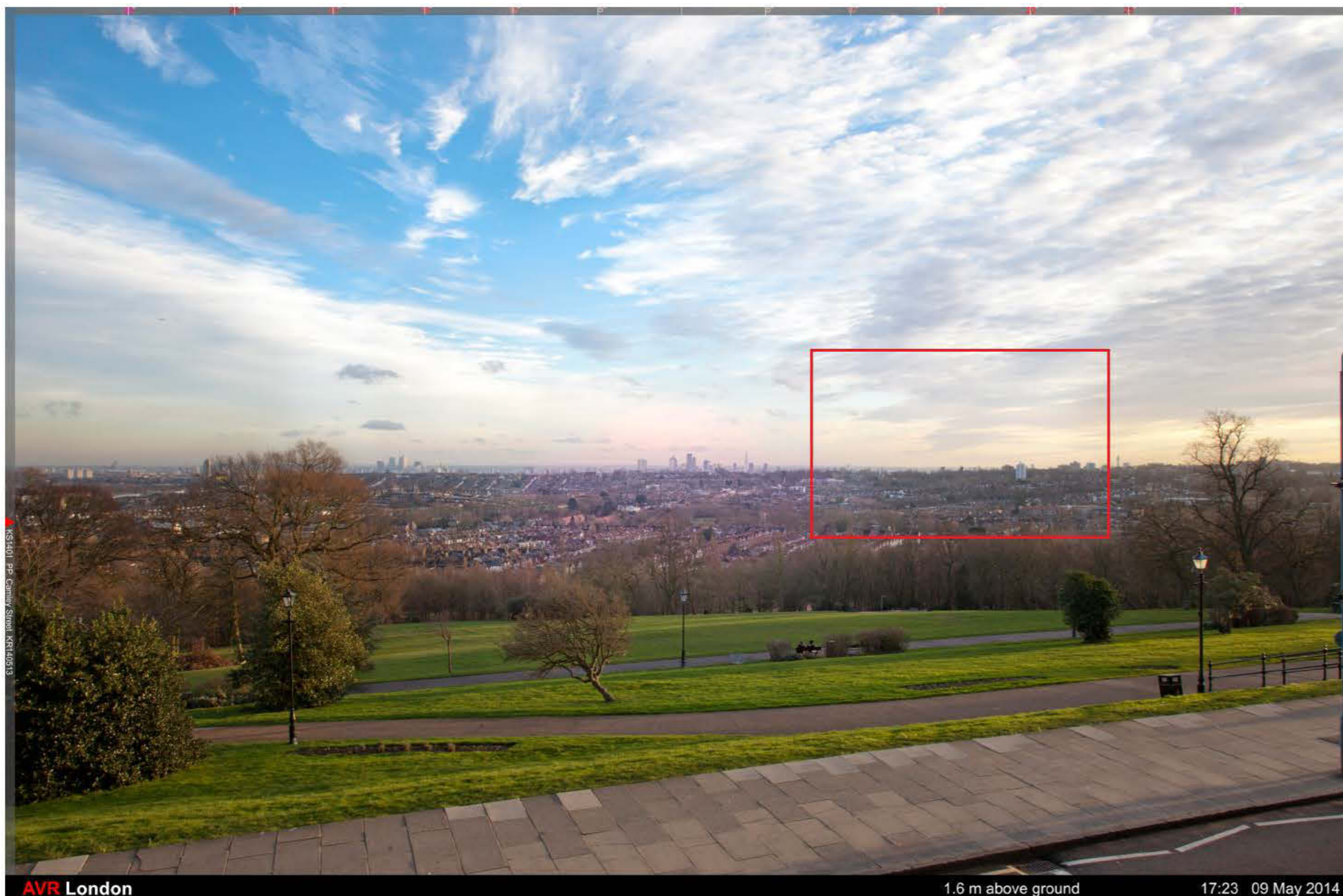


Map of View 2 Parliament Hill



Map of View 3 Primrose Hill

View 1 Alexandra Palace



VIEW 1: ALEXANDRA PALACE (LVMF LONDON PANORMA 1A.1)

Existing

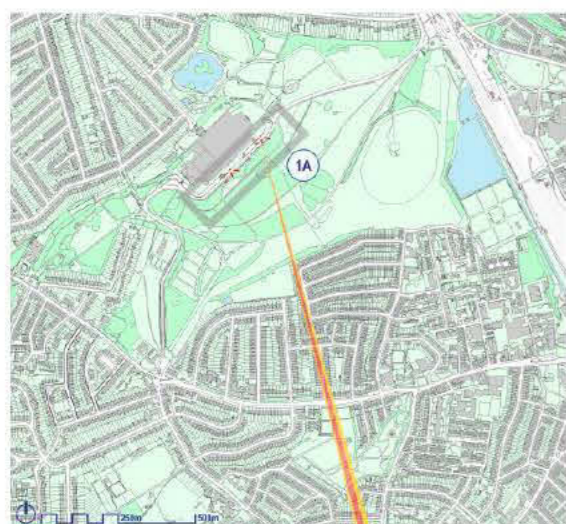
The view is one of six London Panoramas designated as part of the LVMF SPG (Ref 1-2). The viewing terrace at Alexandra Palace (Grade II listed), set in 196 acres of parkland, provides panoramic views of London to the south. This view is the panorama from Assessment Point 1A.1, which represents the best position to see the wider panorama, and does not include a Protected Vista. The trees in Alexandra Park, which is a Grade II Registered landscape, dominate the foreground of the view. The middle ground rises from the park to a ridge running east-west across the panorama. In the broad distant backdrop a cluster of tall buildings in the City of London is visible, with the Shard seen beyond it as the pinnacle of the cluster. The panorama provides a strong sense of the geography and topography of London. The roofline of St Pancras is barely discernible in the view sitting well below the skyline on the right of the view.

Proposed

No change; the Proposed Development would not be visible.

Significance of potential impact: **no impact**

Existing





AVR London

Preliminary Alignment

1.6 m above ground

17:23 09 May 2014

Proposed

View 1 Alexandra Place (Magnified)



Existing



Proposed

View 2 Parliament Hill



VIEW 2: PARLIAMENT HILL (LVMF LONDON PANORMA 2A.1)

Existing

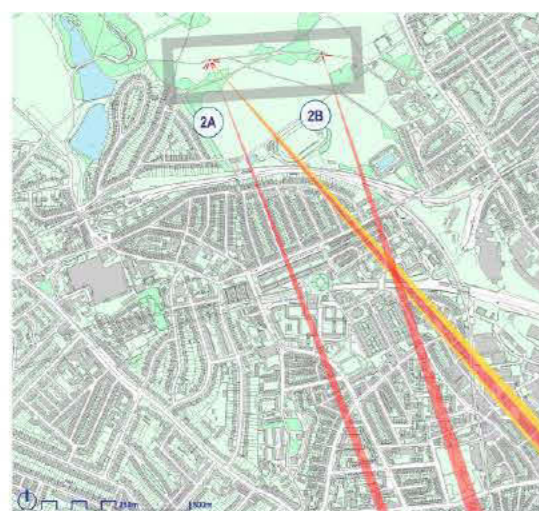
The view is one of six London Panoramas designated as part of the LVMF SPG (Ref 1-2). Parliament Hill forms part of the prominent ridge that crosses Hampstead Heath. It is an open public area of fields, hedgerows and woodland. From the summit there are excellent panoramic views towards the City of London, St Paul's Cathedral and the Palace of Westminster, framed by planting in the foreground. This view is the panorama from Assessment Point 2A.1, directed towards St Paul's Cathedral. The Shard rises directly behind St Paul's Cathedral, landmarking its lower domed form on the horizon and forming a group with the Guy's Hospital tower. The view also includes the prominent clusters of tall buildings in the City and at Canary Wharf. The skyline of St Pancras is visible to the right of the Shard embedded within the middle ground townscape. The clock tower is seen beyond the arch of the train shed, but the west tower is now partly concealed by the Francis Crick Institute which is under construction to the north-west of St Pancras.

Proposed

The proposed development would be visible beyond the Grade I listed St Pancras between the clock tower and the west tower of the former Midland Grand Hotel. It would be seen against the taller backdrop of existing buildings to its south, integrated within the existing complex layered skyline and barely discernible in this distant view. It would be lower than both the clock tower and the west tower, which would remain the most prominent elements of St Pancras on the distant skyline. The impact on the skyline and on the recognisability of St Pancras in this view would be negligible.

Significance of potential impact: **negligible**

Existing





AVR London

1.6 m above ground

17:23 09 May 2014

Proposed