

Donald Insall Associates

Camden Town Hall Extension

Historic Building Report
for Crosstree Retail Estate Management Limited

December 2014

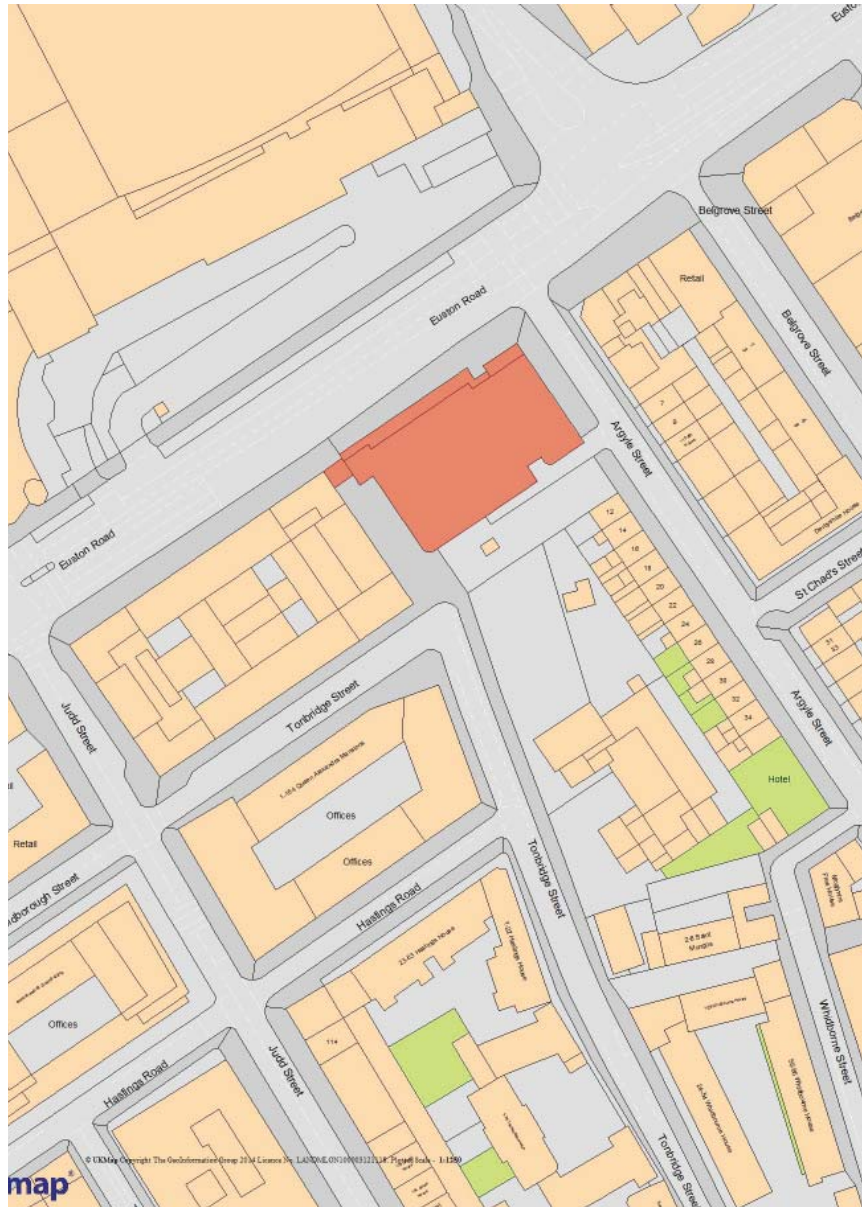


Chartered Architects and Historic Building Consultants

Camden Town Hall Extension

Historic Building Report

For Crosstree Real Estate Management Limited



Ordnance Survey map with the site marked in red.
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1.1 Introduction

Donald Insall Associates was commissioned in July 2014 by Crosstree Real Estate Management Ltd to assist them in the preparation of proposals for the Camden Town Hall Extension building.

The investigation has comprised historical research, using both archival and secondary material, and site inspections. An illustrated history of the site and building, with sources of reference and bibliography, is in Section 2; the site survey findings are in Section 3. The investigation has established the historical and architectural significance of the building, which is set out below. This understanding has informed the development of proposals for change to the building by Orms Architects and Section 4 provides a justification of the scheme according to the relevant planning guidance.

The investigation and this report were undertaken by Vicky Webster, Ashleigh Murray and Kate Green.

1.2 The Building and its Current Legislative Status

Camden Town Hall Extension is an unlisted building located within the Kings Cross Conservation Area and adjacent to the Bloomsbury Conservation Area in the London Borough of Camden. It is surrounded by many listed buildings, some, such as St Pancras and Kings Cross Stations, listed at the highest grade. It is also adjacent to and interconnected with the Grade II –listed Camden Town Hall, a building of 1937, but is not considered by the local planning authority to form part of the listed building and no reference is made to it in the list description for Camden Town Hall (appendix II).

The Planning Statement, Camden Town Hall Extension, Argyle Street, WC1 produced by Camden Council in April 2013 states:

The extension is attached to the old Town Hall, which as outlined above is a listed building. On the basis of case law it is considered that it is not part of the listed building and so listed building consent would not be required for demolition and redevelopment of the THX. However, Listed Building Consent would be required to remove and seal off the existing link to the Town Hall.

Notwithstanding this, as part of the works proposed the two buildings are, in the first instance, to be detached – this is subject of separate listed building consent applications. Once the two buildings have been physically detached the Camden Town Hall Extension could no longer be considered to be ‘any object or structure fixed to the building’ in accordance with section 1(5)(a) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and therefore would no longer fall within the protection, in terms of listed buildings, of the Act.

Development in conservation areas and development which affects the setting of listed buildings requires planning permission. In order for a

local authority to consider granting such permission, the proposed development must be justified according to the policies on the historic environment set out in the *National Planning Policy Framework*.

The key message of the *National Planning Policy Framework* is the concept of 'sustainable development'. The *National Planning Policy Framework* requires that heritage assets (a term that, with regard to UK planning legislation, includes listed buildings, conservation areas, and unlisted buildings of local importance) and their settings should be conserved in a manner 'appropriate to their significance.' It also notes the desirability of 'sustaining and enhancing the significance' of heritage assets and of putting assets to viable uses 'consistent with their conservation.' The *National Planning Policy Framework* recognises the 'positive contribution that the conservation of heritage assets can make towards economic vitality'. However, it also recognises that, in some cases, proposals can lead to a heritage asset losing significance. The *National Planning Policy Framework* thus requires that the 'public benefits' of a proposal – which include securing the optimum viable use of a heritage asset – should outweigh any 'less than substantial' harm caused to the significance of a designated heritage asset.

Copies of the relevant planning policy documents are included in Appendix I.

1.3 Assessment of Significance

The Camden Town Hall Extension was completed in 1977, to designs by Camden Borough Architects' Department, headed by A. Rigby and S.A.G. Cook. It is an eight-storey office building, faced in concave concrete panels with bronze-coloured windows. It adjoins Camden Town Hall (Grade II-listed), which was designed by A.J. Thomas and built in 1937. Like the Alexandra Road Estate, built by the Camden Borough Architects' Department in the same decade, the Town Hall Extension received little positive praise in the press at the time, being hailed by many as a costly 'white elephant'. Since then, however, the Alexandra Road Estate and other housing developments by Camden have grown in stature and reputation; Alexandra Road was one of the first post-war public housing developments to be listed (at Grade II*) in 1993. Camden Town Hall Extension, by contrast, has remained underappreciated and even loathed.

Since completion, the building has been altered little externally, though a ramp from Euston Road to Argyle Street was added in the late 1980s, and changes to the entrance were made when the Shaw Library moved to the building in the mid-1990s. These have had little impact on the legibility of the original design. Internally, the building contains unexciting large floor plates and some awkward windowless spaces, and has little architectural merit. The exterior, however, does have some modest architectural interest. Its design recalls the Pop Art age of Centre Point and it is one of many buildings featuring precast concrete panels that were constructed in the late 1960s and early 70s. While it is a rather late example of the genre, dating to 1977, it presents a strong façade

to Euston Road. This bold façade treatment means that the building is prominent in the street scene, but on Euston Road there is no entrance and the glazing is set back behind a dirty undercroft. As a consequence the building is deadening at street level and in this respect it detracts from the character of the conservation area.

The Kings Cross Conservation Area Statement (2004) identifies Camden Town Hall Extension in its entirety as a building that detracts from the character of the conservation area. Given its quite recent date of construction, and the fact that public and indeed professional opinion about the architectural and historical significance of such structures is very much in flux however, the building's heritage status remains somewhat open to interpretation. In its current condition and use – with little activity at street level, dirty fumed-stained elevations, and dull brown glass – it certainly detracts from the vibrant and rich character of the conservation area, which has been the beneficiary of huge regeneration in recent years. Camden Town Hall Extension is untouched by the new life of Kings Cross and St Pancras, and currently represents the dreariness of much of the area in the second half of the 20th century. The building does have some qualities, however, and there is no reason that a bold and imaginative refurbishment of the building couldn't unlock these, such that it was transformed into a positive contributor to the character of the area and a worthy neighbour to the outstanding listed buildings which surround it.

Camden Town Hall Extension lies within the Kings Cross Conservation Area, which covers the eastern section of Euston Road; it is dominated by its two major termini – Kings Cross and St Pancras Station and Hotel (Grade I-listed). These two structures and associated buildings exemplify, at the highest order, Victorian station architecture and define this principal 'gateway to the city'. To the south of Camden Town Hall Extension is the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, in particular the area surrounding Argyle Square. The significance of this conservation area derives from its Georgian and Victorian townhouses, which were laid out on a number of estates, including the Bedford Estate, in formal squares and terraces in three distinct periods: Bloomsbury Square was the first in 1660; the main phase of development was that of the Bedford Estate in the 18th century; Argyle Square was part of the last phase of development, around 1840. Slotted into the formal grid of the Georgian street plan are larger footprint buildings – including the British Museum, the buildings of the University of London, and University College Hospital – which emerged as a result of the decline in popularity of the residential areas during the 19th century and the rise of Bloomsbury as an institutional and cultural centre. Lining the main arterial routes of the conservation area are 19th and 20th century developments which sprung up as the area developed into a transport hub. Camden Town Hall Extension is visible in places in the Bloomsbury Conservation Area and, as with its relationship to the Kings Cross Conservation Area, currently detracts from the character of the area. If refurbished to a high standard, however, it could come to be a positive feature. Similarly, the building currently compromises the setting of nearby listed buildings, including the outstanding Kings Cross and St Pancras Railway Stations and the Grand Midland Hotel. Improvements

to the façade coupled with a new use that brings vitality to the building, however, could see this situation reversed.

1.4 Summary of Proposals and Justification

The existing office building is beyond its design life and was sold by Camden Council due to the costs associated with upgrading the building to meet modern office standards. The construction of the building limits opportunities to adapt the building and there is limited flexibility to how it can be used. The proposals are described in detail in the Orms Architects drawings and Design and Access Statement which accompany this report. The scheme proposes to convert the now vacant office building into a hotel. In its current condition and use – with little activity at street level, dirty fumed-stained elevations, and dull brown glass – the building detracts from the vibrant and rich character of the conservation area. However, key elements of its Brutalist architecture, including the exposed structural style and its sculptural form, are of interest. The design process has very much centred on how the building's existing qualities can be unlocked to fulfil its role as a landmark building and to become a positive contributor to the character of the area and a worthy neighbour to the outstanding listed buildings which surround it. The scheme has also been driven by ambitions to undertake a sustainable development centred on the retention of the existing sub and super structure and concrete elevations. The works are listed below and discussed in detail in section 4.

- Replacing glazing at ground floor to create a better connection between the building and the public realm;
- Placing the entrance, retail and lobby at ground floor to create a more active street frontage;
- Extending the façade line on Euston Road to reduce the overhang and improve connection with the street;
- Opening up the garden to create an east-west shared pedestrian and cycle route;
- Narrowing the ramp and repairing the crossover pavement which would reduce the visual impact of the ramp and make the pavement pedestrian priority;
- Removing the west core staircase and link bridge, opening up the historic route up Tonbridge Street and views through to St Pancras Station;
- Replacing the tinted windows with clear glass;
- Removing the concrete plant room at 8th floor;
- Extending the building by two floors from the existing top of the roof plant with new hotel accommodation;
- Provision of about 270 hotel rooms and associated hotel ancillary space.

The reuse of the existing vacant building as a hotel and significant improvements to its appearance, including the unashamedly modern rooftop addition and surrounding public realm improvements, would transform this building into a high quality landmark which should be celebrated for its innovative architectural style and sculptural form. These works would create a building which would contribute positively to the

significance of the King's Cross Conservation Area, both through its enlivened appearance and new use, and stand comfortably alongside its significant listed neighbours. The benefits associated with the scheme proposed would outweigh any potential harm caused to the setting of neighbouring heritage assets and would result in the enhancement of the building's architectural quality and its contribution overall to the significance of the Kings Cross Conservation Area. As such it meets the tests for sustainable development in the National Planning Policy Framework.

2.1 Area Development

2.1.1 Euston Road

Euston Road previously formed part of Marylebone Road until 1857 when Marylebone Road was renamed and renumbered in three parts: Marylebone Road, Euston Road and Pentonville Road. Required as an Act of Parliament, Marylebone Road was built in 1756 as part of the 'New Road' which ran from Paddington to Islington. At the time of its construction, and long after, it was unparalleled as a piece of large-scale road-planning in London. Charles Dingley is generally credited as taking the leading role in the promotion of the New Road. He provided evidence to the Parliament Committee in February 1756 predicting that the road would be 'one of the most profitable undertakings he ever knew'. It was argued that the road would connect with all the main roads leading south into London and would also provide a direct link between the western and eastern extremities of the city. Gentlemen of business could travel quickly to the City of London and the road would also deal with traffic. Above all, however, it was developed as a way of taking the twice-weekly flood of sheep and cattle bound for Smithfield away from Oxford Street.¹ When the plan went before Parliament it met with opposition from landowners. The Duke of Bedford was worried that the dust from the road would affect his land immediately east of Tottenham Court, causing an inconvenience to his tenants, whilst roadside building would block the view from his residence, Bedford House. Nevertheless, the Act was passed in May 1756 and by September of that year it was recorded as being used by coaches, carriages and horsemen. Compensation had to be paid to landowners and leaseholders, not only for the 40ft width of the road itself but for another 10ft each side for ditches and fencing. An important clause was also included in the Act which stipulated that building was forbidden within 50ft of the road to admit enough sun and air to keep it dry and to stop dust affecting residents. This resulted in long gardens which extended in front of rows of houses on both sides of the road [plate 1]. This pleasant effect was increased by laying out open squares which faced one another across the road, such as Park Square and Crescent, Endsleigh Gardens and Euston Square. By the 19th century several of these front gardens had been converted into stonemasons' yards and some had been built upon.²

Plate 1. Horwood's Map of London 1792-9



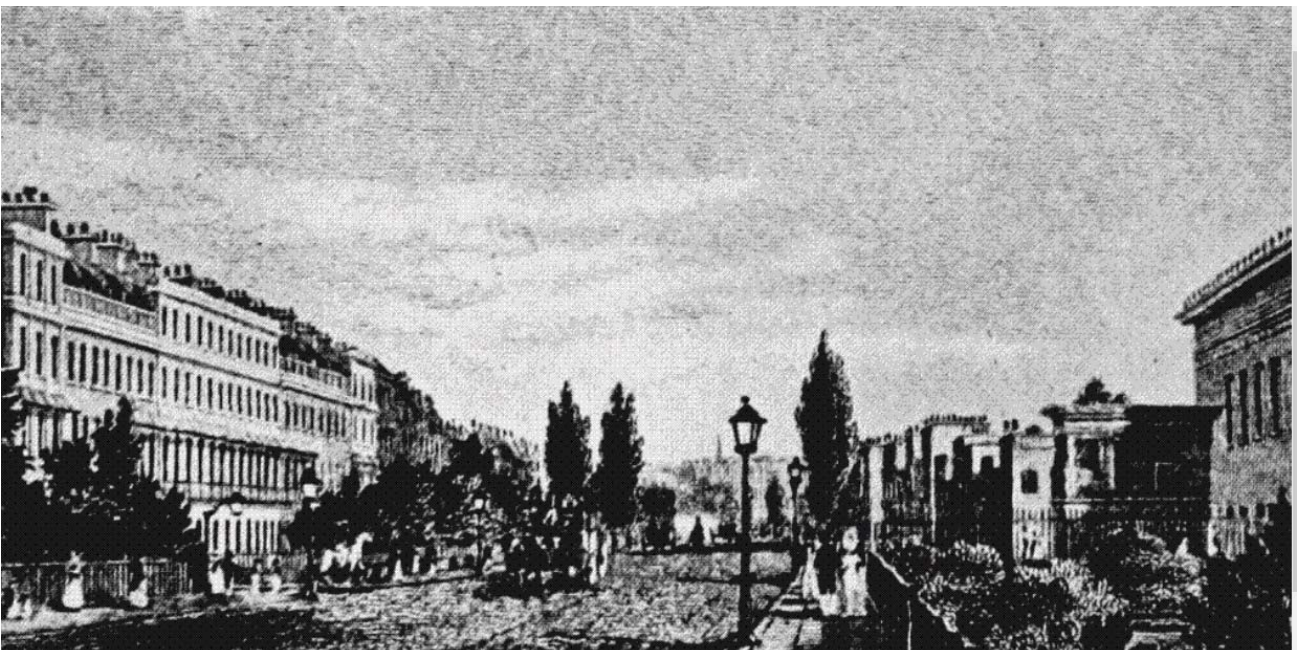


Plate 4 Weston Place by C.J. Richardson, 1871

Plate 2 shows a view of the road in 1825 at the height of its fashion. To the north, opposite St. Pancras (New) Church, was Seymour Place and Somers Place, a commanding block of houses that were built on Lord Somers' Estate (now occupied by Euston Road Fire Station). Beyond these were Judd Place (West and East), commemorating Sir Andrew Judd who gave the houses to the Skinners' Company. These last two terraces were on the site of the present Goods Depot and St. Pancras Station. Christopher Greenwood's *Map of London* of 1827 shows these terraces and also Egremont Place to the east, which extended to Pancras Road, leading to Highgate in the north-west [plate 3]. The lower part of Pancras Road was called Weston Place and the houses on the south-west side are shown in a 1871 drawing by C. J. Richardson with St. Pancras Hotel in course of erection behind them [plate 4]. On the eastern side of Weston Place were the grounds of the Smallpox Hospital on the site of which now stands King's Cross Railway Station. The hospital's association with St Pancras began in 1763 when a house was purchased for inoculations. This house was replaced by a new building erected at St Pancras and opened in 1767. In 1793-4 a new, separate hospital for diseased patients was erected alongside, to designs by James Johnson, which later became the London Fever Hospital. Both hospital buildings are shown together at St Pancras on Greenwood's map of 1827 [plate 3]. The buildings were demolished in the 1840s to make way for the Great Northern Railway Terminus (now King's Cross Station), see James Wyld's 1848-9 Map in plate 5. King's Cross Station, constructed to connect York with London, was designed by Lewis Cubitt (1789-1883). The station officially opened to 1852, although trains had been running since 1850. The goods station, covering some 45 acres, was also under construction in 1850.³

The Metropolitan (Underground) Railway began construction in 1860 and opened in 1863. King's Cross Underground Station occupied the site of St. Chad's Well and was connected to the railway terminus by a subway. An illustration of c.1863, showing the construction of the Metropolitan tube line, with the side elevation of Kings Cross Station to the east with its tall clock tower [plate 7]. In the 1860s, land to the west of King's Cross was

Plate 2. Euston Road looking east, MacKenzie's View 1825



acquired by the Midland Railway Company for the construction of their own passenger and goods stations. The line to the goods station opened in 1867 and the passenger station opened in 1868 but the building itself was not finished until some years later. The masterly design of the station was by the chief engineer, William Henry Barlow (1812-1902). The station hotel, which formed its frontage along Euston Road, was designed by Sir George Gilbert Scott (1811-1878). Scott won the commission in an open competition in 1866 and the building opened in 1873. The Gothic style building was to provide luxurious accommodation for travellers and it is now considered to be the outstanding Victorian railway building in Britain. Photographs show the constructed building in 1881, dominating Euston Road and the surrounding streets [plate 8]. ⁴

The construction of the station and the hotel led to the demolition of many terraced houses, including Egremont Place and Judd Place (West and East). Egremont Place was constructed c.1825 and consisted of 17 terraced houses, plate 7 depicts Egremont Place to the west (in the background).

The development of the railway termini from the mid-19th century gave rise to the establishment of hotels and offices in the area. Around King's Cross, various associated industries sprang up in the vicinity of the River Fleet, such as printing and metalwork. From the late 1840s, many mews and smaller streets declined into slums.

Plate 8. Midland Grand Hotel, Euston Road 1881





Plate 9a. St Pancras, Euston Road 1904

Several historic photographs of 1904 provide an impression of Euston Road at this time [plates 9a and 9b]. The road still retains several buildings of a domestic scale but larger developments are also evident, revealing the varied character of the street. Plate 9b depicts buildings of varying heights, including large-scale commercial buildings. Plate 9a illustrates the great prominence of St Pancras Hotel, with its large clock tower soaring above the surrounding area.

While the character of the street was quite varied by the early 20th century, large scale developments in the later 20th century brought about the most change to Euston Road. Photographs from 1966, showing the construction of the Euston Road underpass, illustrate the diverse character of the area at this time, with many tall modern buildings interspersed with smaller-scale historic buildings [plates 10a and 10b]. In plate 10b, St Pancras Town Hall (1934-37) is depicted in the background with a large modern commercial building to its right.

The area around Tottenham Court Road, in particular, was significantly damaged during the Second World War which led to large developments such as 250 Euston Road (1981), the UCLH building (2005) and Euston Tower (1972) [plate 11]. Other developments along the road include the British Library. Plans for the Library were developed from the 1960s, to designs by Colin St John Wilson. The building was completed in 1997, following years of setbacks and opposition.

2.1.2 Bloomsbury⁵

Widespread development in Bloomsbury began following the Restoration of the Monarchy in 1660, when landowners saw the potential for new fashionable suburbs to be developed, taking their inspiration from Covent Garden, developed in the 1630s. Development extended northwards from St Giles High Street to Great Russell Street and between Holborn and Great Ormond Street. One of the first developments was Bloomsbury Square,

Plate 9b. Euston Road 1904





constructed in c.1661 after the 4th Earl of Southampton was granted a building license for its construction. Another notable development was Great Russell Street which was formed around 1670. Montague House, a former residence, was built twice in the late 17th century following a fire in the 1680s. Since 1759 it has housed the British Museum. The house was redeveloped and extended by Sir Robert Smirke in the 1820s and 1830s with the creation of three wings, forming a quadrangle. East of Southampton Row, Red Lion Square and Queen Square were built from the late 1680s by speculator Nicholas Barbon. Further north, the Foundling Hospital for destitute children was built in 1745 at the end of Red Lion Lane, a fashionable charity of its day reflecting the poor living conditions in the older areas of London.



The later Georgian and Regency period saw the rapid expansion of development northwards from Great Russell Street and Great Ormond Street towards to Euston Road as landowners capitalised on demand from the expanding wealthy classes. On the Bedford Estate, the 4th Duke had initiated the plans to capitalise on the demand for land for building, although the land to the north of Bedford House was deliberately left open to maintain his view of the hills of Hampstead and Highgate. Bedford Square was constructed in 1771, its construction marking the beginning of systematic development of land to the north. The streets surrounding Bedford Square were developed in the following years.

By the beginning of the 19th century, Bedford House was no longer a desirable residence for the Duke and so the previously undeveloped land to the north was laid out in a series of squares and streets, mainly houses in uniform terraces. These developments included Montague Place (1800-1810), Keppel Street (1800-1810), Alfred Place (1800-1810) and Russell Square (c.1822). The pace of building had slowed as a result of the Napoleonic Wars and, consequently, the area between Euston Square and Russell Square remained undeveloped until the 1820s. At this time, Thomas Cubitt took over the development of the Bedford Estate,

Plate 10b. Euston Road, 1966

Plate 11. Euston Tower c1970

Plate 12a. Northern Section of Argyle Street, 1968





Plate 12b. Northern Section of Argyle Street, 1970

completing Tavistock Square, Woburn Place, part of Gordon Square and some neighbouring streets. The Greek Revival Parish Church of St Pancras was also built in 1819-22 by William and Henry William Inwood.

A depression in the building trade then hit during the 1830s meaning that final development of Bloomsbury was slow. Argyle Square was one of the last land parcels to be developed in the 1830s and 1840s. Completed in 1840, it was located to the south of the New Road (Euston Road), across from the future King's Cross Station, on the site of an unsuccessful garden and cultural venue, the Panharmonium Pleasure Gardens. The surrounding streets had been built slightly earlier, including Crestfield Street (1825), Birkenhead Street (1825) and Argyle Street (1827). Photographs of 1968/1970 show the northern section of Argyle Street, before the Camden Town Hall Extension was built [plate 12a-c]. A subsequent photograph of 1978 shows the northern section of the western side of Argyle Street when Camden Town Hall Extension was complete [plate 12c].

Gordon Square was completed in 1860 which marked the substantial completion of the area. However, there was a decline in the desirability of Bloomsbury as a residential area which led to an increase in non-residential uses taking over formerly residential dwellings for office space during the 19th century. These included a number of major institutions including University College and University College Hospital at the north end of Gower Street and various specialist hospitals and educational uses around Queen Square. Furthermore, many 17th-century terraced domestic properties were either rebuilt or refaced in the mid-19th century. With the arrival of the railways, hotel and office redevelopments began to appear around the turn of the 20th century, particularly on the main arterial routes. Other large developments, which replaced the more intricate Georgian and Victorian streets, include late 19th-century mansion

Plate 12c. Northern Section of Argyle Street, 1978





Plate 13a. 33, Euston Road, 1964

blocks and philanthropic housing. UCL expanded further into the former residential areas between Gower Street and Russell Square during the first part of the 20th century. There was significant bomb damage to the area, particularly to Red Lion Square, Brunswick Square and the area south of Kings Cross. Subsequent rebuilding saw the introduction of 20th century housing and commercial buildings, such as the housing on Harrison Street, whilst UCL continued to expand further. Later 20th-century development includes the Brunswick Centre (1972) and Dennis Lasdun's Institute of Education (1977).

2.2 Camden Town Hall Extension

The site of the Camden Town Hall Extension was originally occupied by terraced houses at 33-43 Euston Road and three terraced houses, dating to the 1820s, at the northern end of Argyle Street. Plate 12a shows a terrace on Argyle Street of which the latter houses formed a part. Plate 13a depicts number 33 Euston Road, on the corner of Euston Road and Argyle Street in 1964; this appears to have been a particularly grand house, stone- or stucco-faced, four-bays wide and with a giant order of pilasters to the first and second floors. The houses further along Euston Road to the west, at Nos 35-43, appear from historic maps to have been more typical Georgian terraced houses. They had very long front gardens, the westernmost of which can be seen in the right-hand side of the photograph at Plate 8. In 1900, these plainer houses were demolished and the Euston Theatre of Varieties was built on the site, next to 33 Euston Road, to designs by Wylson & Long. It was built by the builders, Kirk and Kirk [Plate 13b]. This, in turn, was demolished to make way for the Camden Town Hall Extension.

Plate 13b. The Euston 'Music Hall', c1910



In the second half of the 1960s, Camden Borough Council began assessing options for additional space for their overcrowded office accommodation in Holborn, and for ways of centralising Camden's principal administrative functions on one site. The borough had been formed in 1965 from the separate metropolitan boroughs of Holborn, St Pancras and Hampstead.

The option chosen was for an extension to the original St Pancras town hall on Euston Road. St Pancras Town Hall was built 1934-37, in a neo-Classical style to designs by A.J. Thomas. Plate 14 shows the building just after completion c.1937. The site chosen for the new extension, adjacent to the Town Hall, was formerly occupied by the Regent Theatre; this proposed site also spanned Tonbridge Street, closing it at its junction with Euston Road. Development therefore required a Highways Order, which was signed by authority of the Secretary of State on the 27th November 1973.

In 1972, a model of the proposed extension was put on public view as part of a consultation. The building's very conception was derided by the staff, who established a union – NALGO – to oppose its construction. Their main concern was the open plan nature of the spaces within the proposed building; they simply did not wish to work in this environment. They referred to the building as 'Nelly the white elephant'. Early proposals were for a building of ten storeys. The Royal Fine Arts Commission requested that the architects reduce the height of the building by two storeys. An initial application was submitted in July 1972 and a revised scheme was submitted to the planning department in August 1973. Plans from 1972 have been located at Camden Borough Council [Plates 15-23]. Engineer's drawings, which show dated amendments from 1974, are shown in Plates 24-25; these reveal the construction of the floors and panels. Plate 26 shows a model of the building, which was published in the journal *Building*, in 1973. The scheme comprised an eight-storey

Plate 14. St Pancras Town Hall, c1937





Plate 27. Camden Town Hall Extension under Construction. Note: Rears of 14-24 Argyle Street in the background

building with basement and sub-basement, with ground to sixth floors used as offices, a restaurant and recreation rooms on the seventh floor and a bar on the top floor, known as the 'White Elephant'; this had been negotiated for the staff by the unions. Planning permission was granted in 1973, one of the conditions of the permission was concerned with the concrete facing panels and glazing. A sample of Norwegian marble exposed aggregate was approved, along with bronze-tinted glass in November 1973.

Construction began in February 1974 [plate 27]; the building was completed in 1977 [plate 28]. The total construction cost was in excess of £7.5million. The architects for the scheme were the Council's own: Camden Borough Architects' Department, headed by A. Rigby and S.A.G Cook. The consulting engineers were Pell Frischmann, who also consulted on Richard Siefert's Centre Point (1967). A photograph from 1988 shows the pollution-stained façades of both the town hall and the extension [plate 29]. An aerial photograph of the surrounding area in 1999 shows the constructed building and its relationship to Camden Town Hall (to the left) [plate 30]. It also illustrates its relationship with St Pancras Hotel, a similarly tall building, across Euston Road.

2.2.1 Subsequent Changes

Planning files from Camden Borough Council reveal that in 1981, a ramp was planned to provide access to the Argyle Street entrance. In August 1989, proposals were put forward to convert the 7th floor bar to office use. The same year, proposals were made for alterations to the 'wheelchair ramp' on Argyle Street; this scheme was approved September 1990.

Plate 26. Camden Town Hall Extension Model, 1973

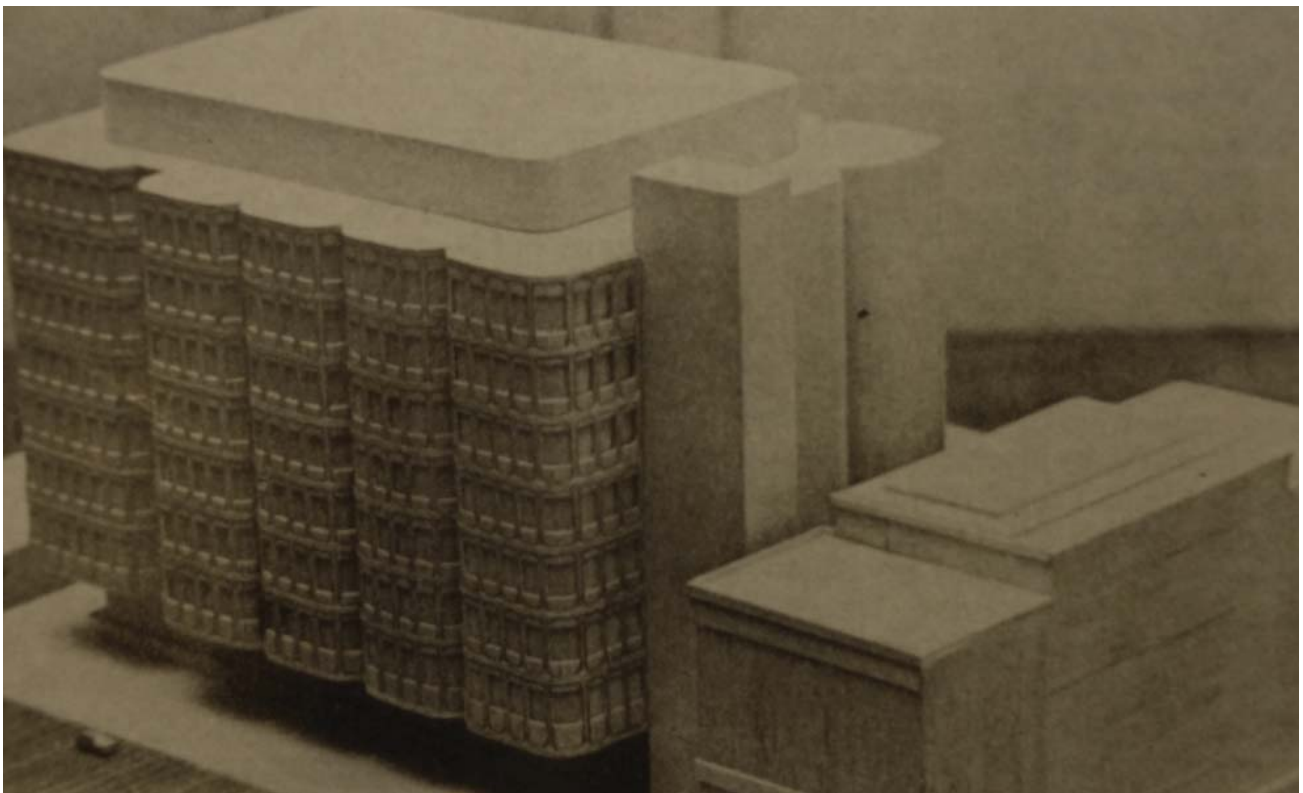




Plate 28. Camden Town Hall Extension, June 1977

Plate 29. Camden Town Hall Extension, 1988

Plate 30. Aerial View of St Pancras and the Camden Town Hall Extension, 1999



In the early 1990s, it was proposed to move the Shaw Library from near the British Library to Camden Town Hall Extension. In 1992, approval granted for change of use of the ground floor from offices to a public library. A ramp and new fire exit door were proposed to the ground floor for the Shaw Library. These drawings were approved in April 1992. In 1994, there were proposals to raise the boundary walls to the garden, east and west.

2.2.2 Camden Borough Council Architects' Department

The Camden Borough Council Architects' Department of the 1960s and 1970s, when it was headed by Sydney Cook, is renowned for its boldness and architectural experimentation, in particular with large housing schemes. Cook refused to build the tower blocks favoured by other local authorities in Camden (not a single one was built during his tenure) and shunned standardised plans and industrial building techniques. Instead, Cook encouraged young architects fresh from university to develop complex sectional plans inspired by traditional terraced housing, which offered high-density housing of generous proportions at relatively low building heights. With schemes at Dunboyne Road, Alexandra Road, and Branch Hill (all of which are now listed), a distinct 'Camden style' emerged from the Council's Architects' Department. As *Building* magazine put it in 1980 '[Camden] represented a faith in an architectural idea and confidence in an individual architect not often found in local authority offices'. Another commentator attributed this distinctiveness to the borough's location, describing Camden as 'the council most prone to visible influence from the fashionable fancies of the architecture schools around its southern extremity (Bartlett, Central Poly, Architectural Association)'.

2.3 Sources

London Metropolitan Archives

GLC Photographs Collection
Maps Collection
Plans (Building Act Case Files)

Camden Local Archives

Historic Photographs
Maps Collection

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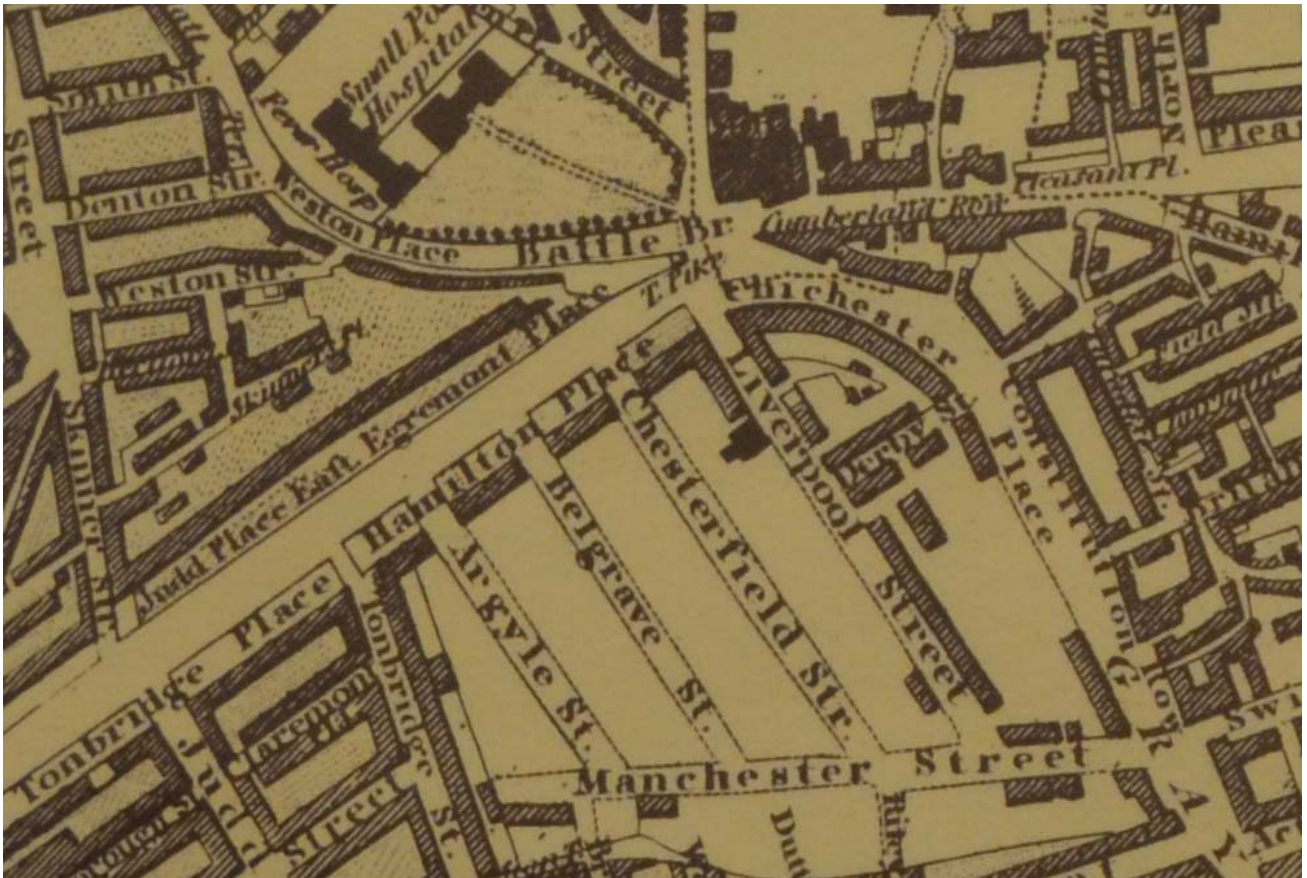


Plate 3. Greenwood's Map of 1827



Plate 5. 1848-9 map, James Wyld



Plate 6. Ordnance Survey Map 1893



Plate 7. Construction of the Metropolitan Line showing Kings Cross Station to the east and Egremont Terrace to the west, c.1863

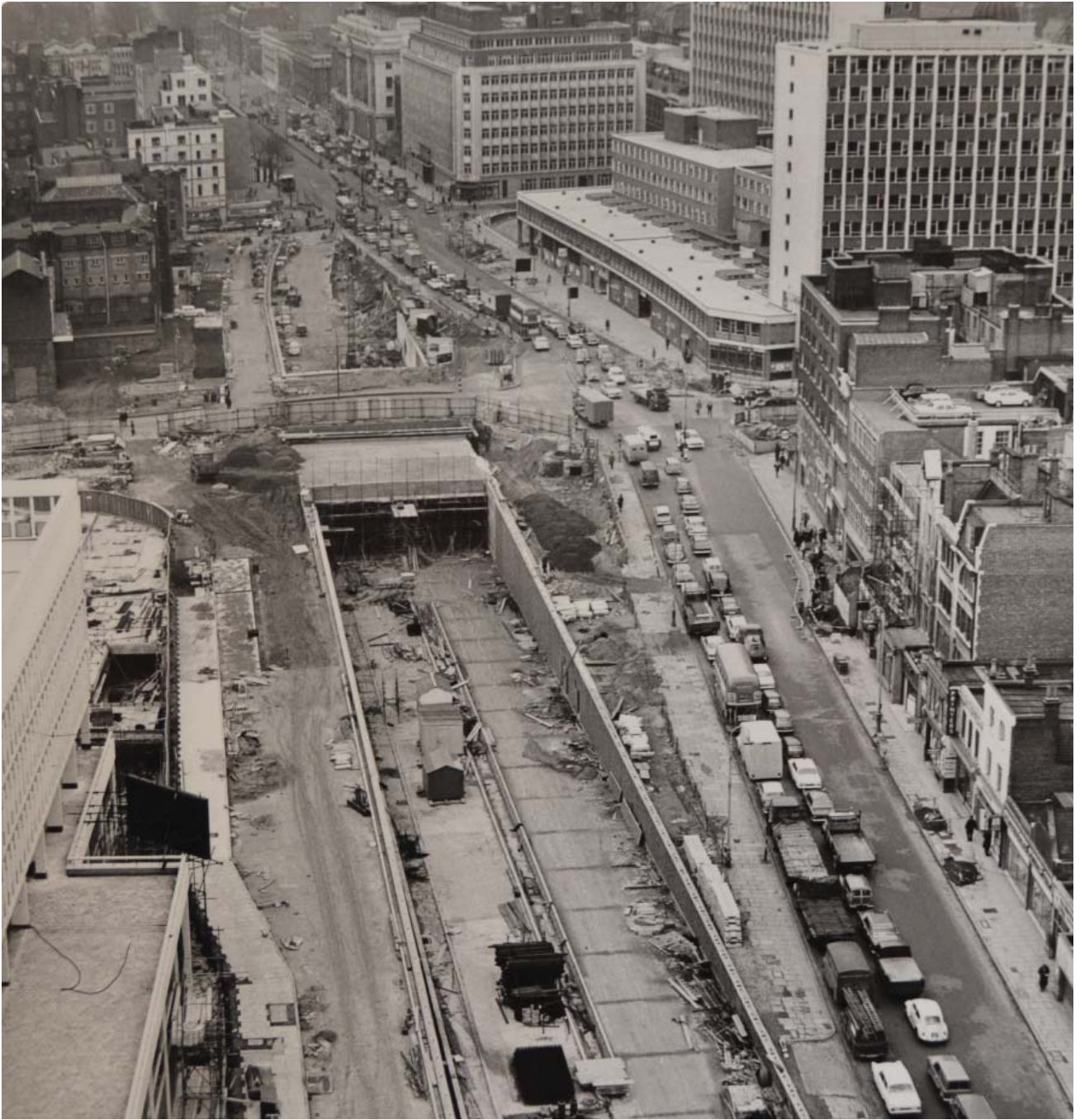
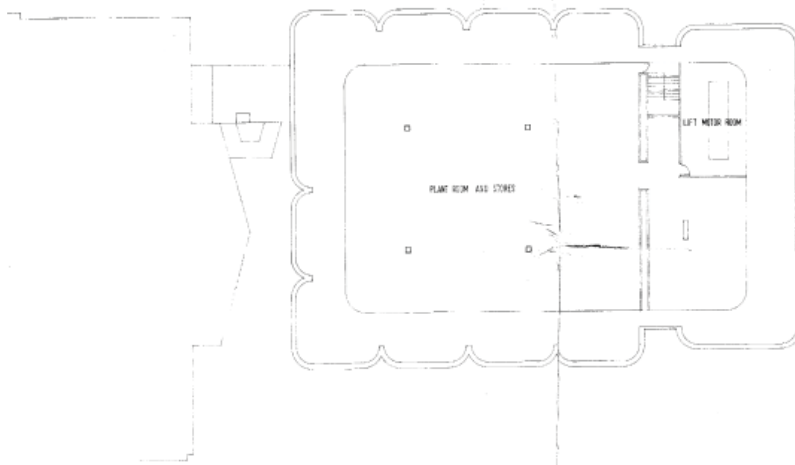
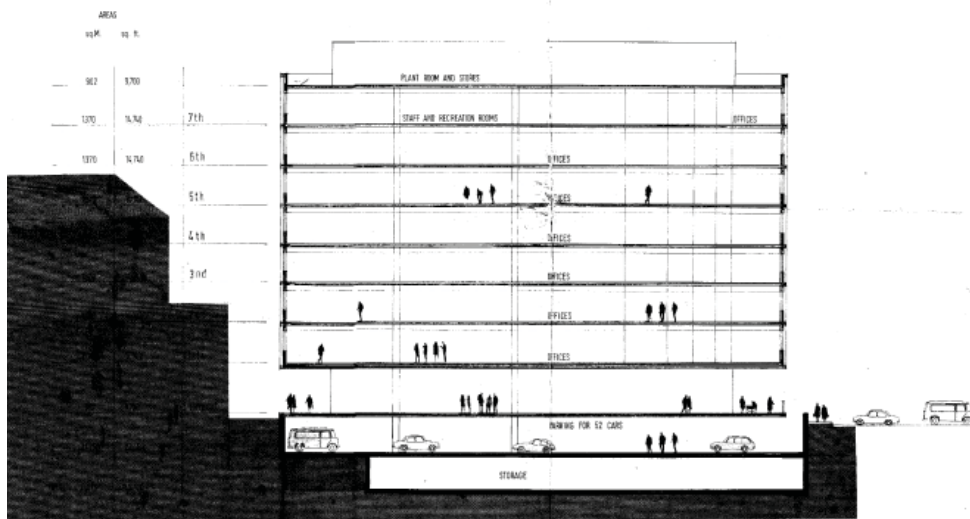


Plate 10a. Euston Road 1966



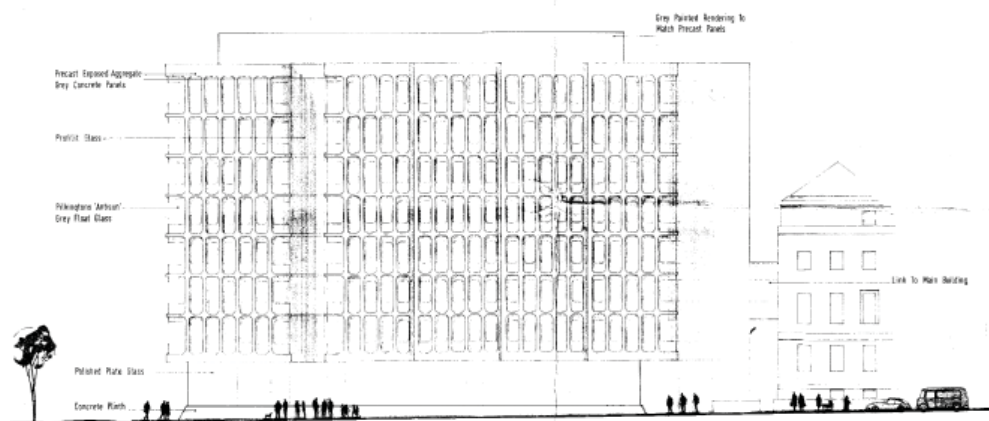
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| <div style="text-align: right;"> 11/12/8 / 11/228 (R) </div> | |
| BOROUGH OF CAMDEN S A G Cook ARIBA Director of Architecture Town Hall High Holborn WC1V 7BG Telephone 01-485 3411 ext. | |
| Job | Job no. |
| TOWN HALL EXTENSION EUSTON ROAD | S 44 |
| drawing title | |
| ROOF PLAN | |
| Scale | Date |
| 1:200 | June 1972 |
| Drawn by | Checked |
| Stage | S 44 / 117 |

Plate 19. Roof Plan 1972



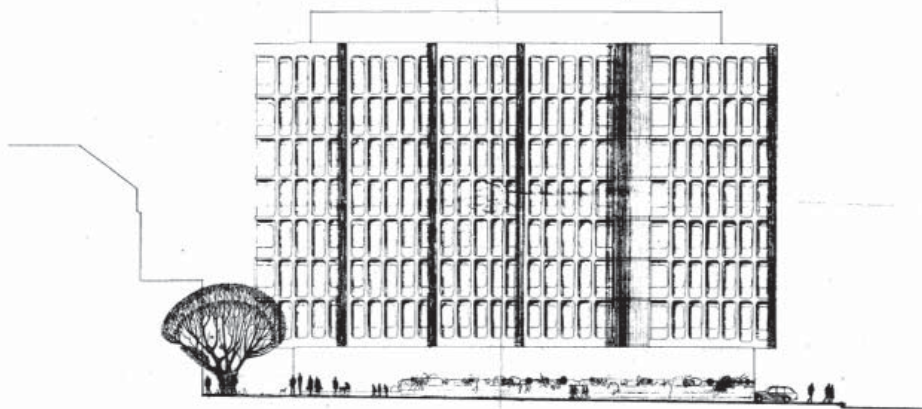
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| BOROUGH OF CAMDEN S A G Cook ARIBA Director of Architecture Town Hall High Holborn WC1V 7BG Telephone 01-485 3411 ext. | |
| Job | Job no. |
| TOWN HALL EXTENSION EUSTON ROAD | S 44 |
| drawing title | |
| SECTION | |
| Scale | Date |
| 1:200 | June 1972 |
| Drawn by | Checked |
| Stage | S 44 / 117 |

Plate 20. Section 1972



| | | | |
|---|--|------------------|---------|
| Revision | OS S.A. ARIBA ARIBA E.L.C.D. | Date | |
| Revision | A | cladding amended | Sept 72 |
| <p>1/14/12/8/14228 (R)</p> <p>BOROUGH OF CAMDEN S.A. G. Cook ARIBA Director of Architecture Town Hall High Holborn WC1V 7BG Telephone 01-405 3411 ext.</p> <p>Job: TOWN HALL EXTENSION EUSTON ROAD Job no. S44</p> <p>drawing title: EUSTON ROAD ELEVATION</p> <p>Scale: 1/200 Date: June 1972</p> <p>Drawn by: Checked:</p> <p>Stage: S44 / 108 A</p> | | | |

Plate 21. Euston Road Elevation 1972



| | | | |
|--|--|------------------|---------|
| Revision | OS S.A. ARIBA ARIBA E.L.C.D. | Date | |
| Revision | A | cladding amended | Sept 72 |
| <p>1/14/12/8/14228 (R)</p> <p>BOROUGH OF CAMDEN S.A. G. Cook ARIBA Director of Architecture Town Hall High Holborn WC1V 7BG Telephone 01-405 3411 ext.</p> <p>Job: TOWN HALL EXTENSION EUSTON ROAD Job no. S44</p> <p>drawing title: REAR (SOUTH) ELEVATION</p> <p>Scale: 1/200 Date: June 1972</p> <p>Drawn by: Checked:</p> <p>Stage: S44 / 109 A</p> | | | |

Plate 22. Rear (South) Elevation 1972

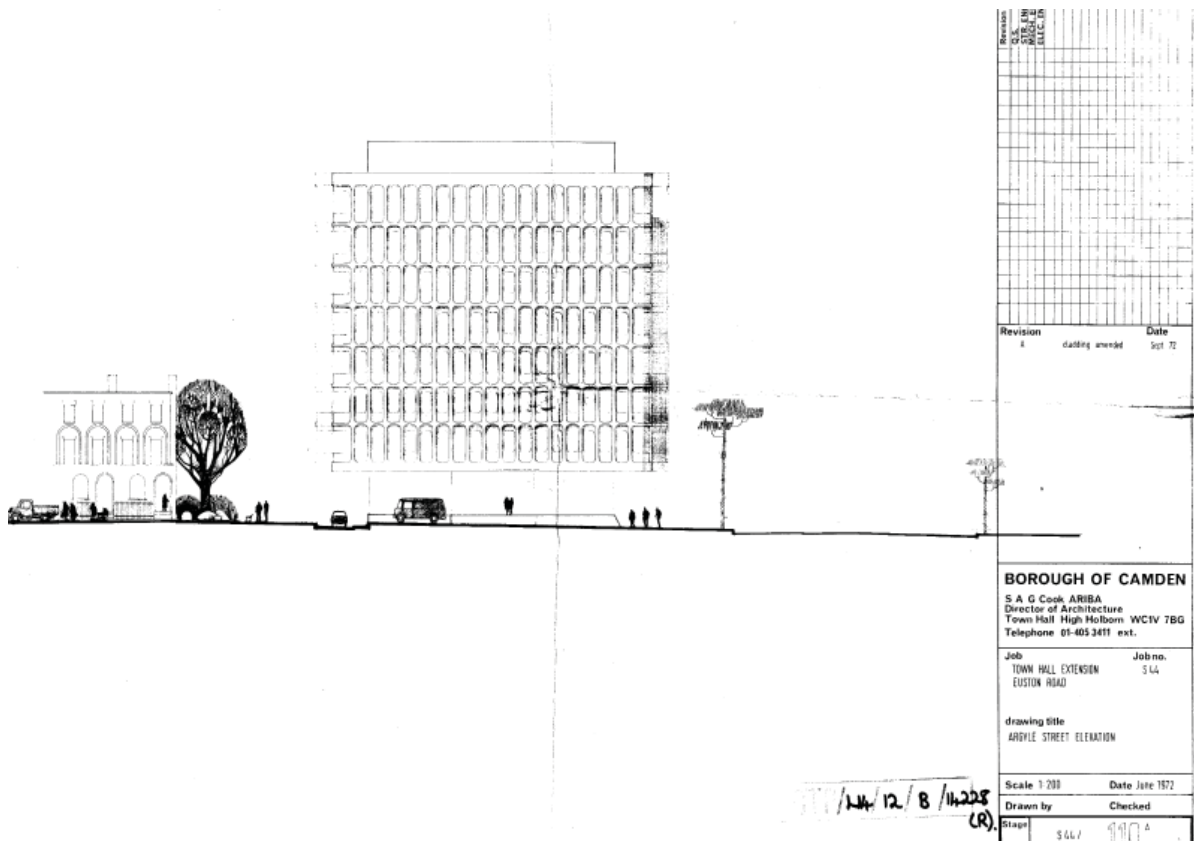


Plate 23. Argyle Street Elevation 1972

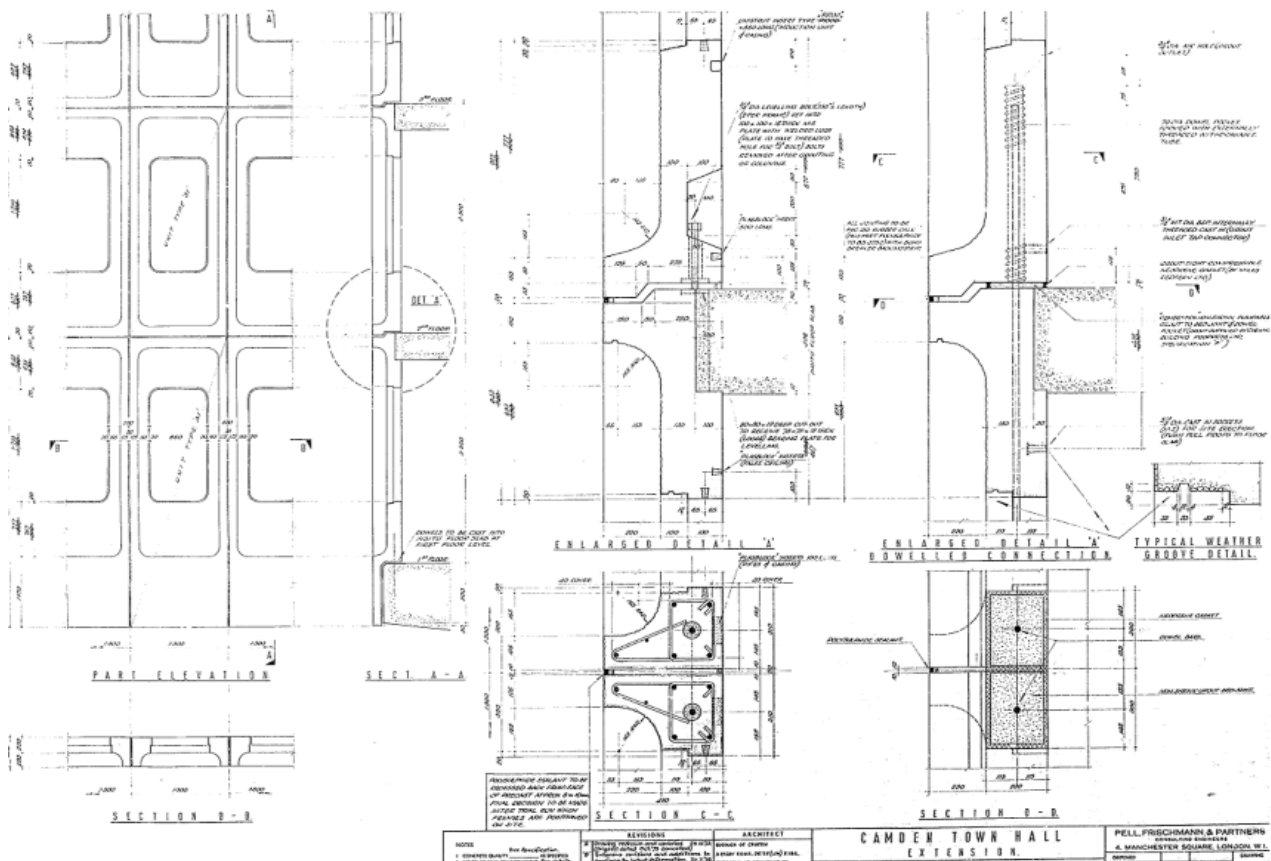


Plate 24. Camden Town Hall Extension Plan c. 1973

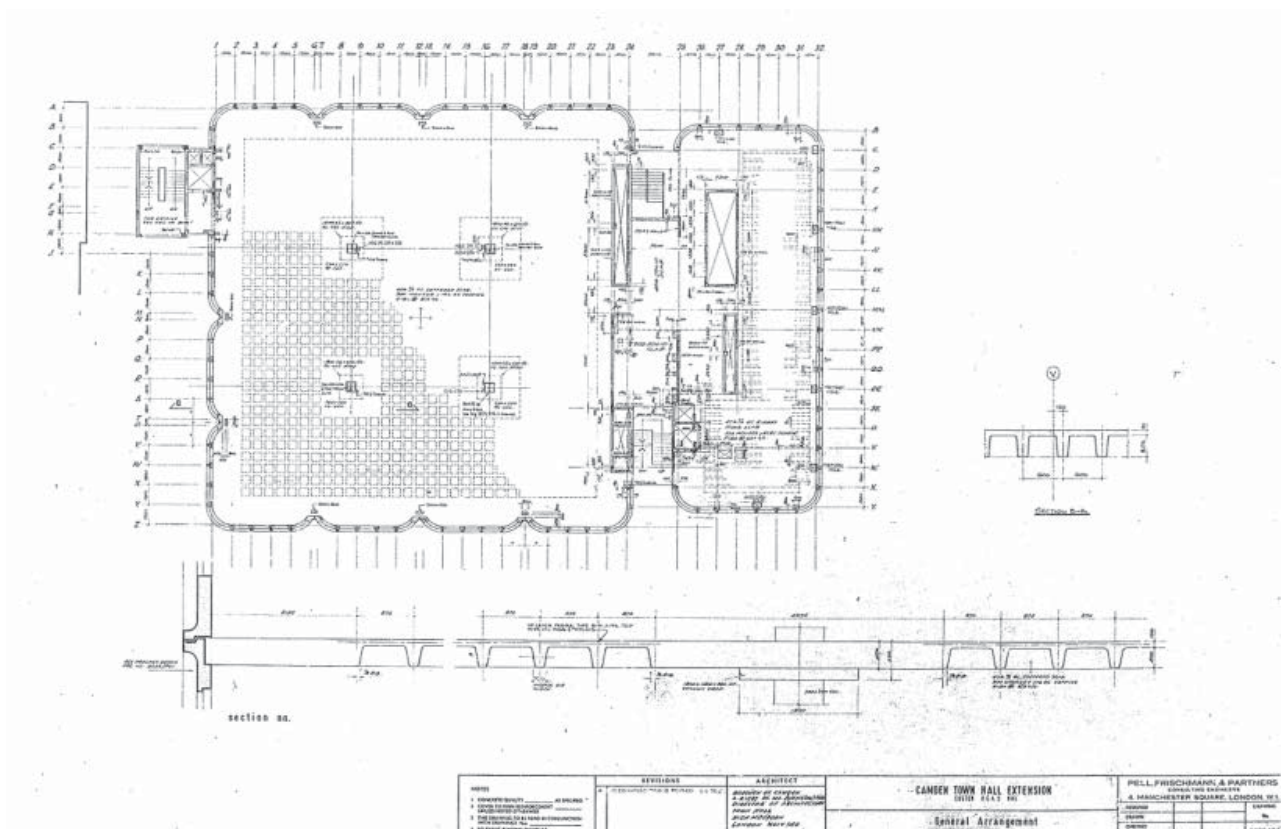


Plate 25. Camden Town Hall Extension Plan c.1973

Site Survey Descriptions **3.1 Setting and Character**

3.1.1 Euston Road

Euston Road is an extremely busy arterial route stretching from west to east from Marylebone Road to Pentonville Road. Initially, it was a fashionable residential area of some distinction with its houses set behind large gardens. From an early date a range of institutional buildings such as the Small Pox Hospital and the Fever Hospital were built in the hinterlands.

The development of the area as the home of health and learning establishments is represented today by its institutional buildings including the Wellcome Trust HQ (2004) and adjacent former HQ (1932) and the various buildings of the University College of London Hospital, as well as University College itself. The character of Euston Road is highly varied, and predominantly consists of large footprint commercial, hotel and institutional buildings, interspersed with smaller-scale Victorian and Edwardian commercial and institutional buildings. 1960s office and hotel developments, typically in sombre grey concrete or glazed cladding, include the Premier Inn, Novotel and former Unison Building, are located further east, closer to the stations. Whilst these vast buildings dominate the road, some key historic buildings manage to jostle for position, including St Pancras Church (1819-22), Euston Fire Station (1901-2), the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital (1889-90), the British Library (1997), Quaker Meeting House (1927), Wellcome Trust HQ (1932), St Pancras Station (1865-69) and Hotel (1868-76) and the newly revitalised Kings Cross Station (1852).

Kings Cross Railway terminus (1850-52) was designed by architect Lewis Cubitt, and engineers Sir William and Joseph Cubitt. Its colossal yellow stock brick façade screens its two arched train sheds (originally one for arrivals, the other for departure), its robust elevation is punctured by two glazed semi-circular openings, framed with recessed arches with central and flanking towers. St Pancras was built as a railway terminus and hotel, comprising train shed, terminus facilities and offices, ancillary buildings. The Station (1865-1869) and former Midland Grand Hotel (1868-76), were both designed by George Gilbert Scott. The train shed (1865-8) was designed by engineer William Henry Barlow. The picturesque Neo-Gothic building has been described as a cathedral to steam power; it reflects the power of the railway companies and the prominence of rail travel in the Victorian age, and as such is listed Grade I. Its soaring spires are visible in views along Euston Road, as well as from the surrounding streets and squares. Located side by side, these two stations represent the finest examples of British, indeed international, railway architecture of their age.

Plans for the British Library were developed from the 1960s, to designs by Colin St John Wilson. The building was completed in 1997, following years of setbacks and opposition. Adjacent to St Pancras, the red-brick building was designed in a lively form of Scandinavian Modernism, with sturdy Post-Modern features.



Plate 31. Camden Town Hall Extension from Euston Road

Camden Town Hall (originally St Pancras Town Hall), was built in 1934-7, to designs by A.J. Thomas. The steel-framed building is clad in a neo-Classical skin of Portland stone, with banded rustication to the base, Corinthian pilasters and pedimented pavilions. Camden Town Hall Extension, as its name suggests, adjoins the original 1930s Camden Town Hall which is now Grade-II listed. Constructed between 1974 and 1977, the distinctive eight storey building is faced with concave precast concrete panels [Plate 31]. The building is located directly opposite the St Pancras Hotel and close to King's Cross Station, all of which lie within the Kings Cross Conservation Area.

The Kings Cross Conservation Area includes the eastern section of Euston Road; the conservation area is dominated by its two major termini – Kings Cross and St Pancras. The boundaries stretch from the Royal Veterinary College in the north to Sinton Street in the south. To the south of the building are the late Georgian Argyle Street and Argyle Square, which are both Grade-II listed and lie within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

3.1.2 Bloomsbury

General

The character of Bloomsbury is first and foremost defined by its Georgian and Victorian townhouses. They were laid out on a number of estates, including the Bedford Estate, in formal squares and terraces in three distinct periods: Bloomsbury Square was the first in 1660; the main phase of development was that of the Bedford Estate in the 18th century; and Argyle Square was amongst the last, around 1840. Slotted into the formal grids, are larger footprint buildings which evolved as a result of the decline in popularity of the residential areas during the 19th century.

Northern Section

The northern section of the conservation area contains Burton Street, Cartwright Gardens and Argyle Street and Square. There is a consistency created by the townhouses, through their composition and architectural treatment. The mansion blocks and commercial buildings range from four to eight storeys. Later 20th century development throughout the area includes some residential towers of up to fifteen storeys. Euston Road, forming the northern boundary, is typified by large-footprint commercial and institutional buildings including Friend's Meeting House and offices (1927), 163 Euston Road, and 1-9 Melton Street (1906-8) which was built as the headquarters of the London, Edinburgh and Glasgow Assurance Company. Exceptions include St Pancras Church (1819-22), and the LCC Fire Station (1902), both listed Grade I and II respectively.



Plate 32. Argyle Street looking North

Argyle Street contains terraces of 1830s houses, built in yellow stock brick with stucco details and slated roofs; many of these are now small hotels (Grade II-listed). On the corner with St Chad's Street is Derbyshire House, an Art Deco-inspired building of pale brick and stone with metal-framed windows. On Argyle Street, Camden Town Hall Extension and St Pancras Hotel and Station are clearly visible [Plate 32]. The rear facades of the western terrace back onto Argyle Primary School, an unlisted

late Victorian London Board School of brown brick with red dressings. Argyle Square contains terraces of 1840s houses set around a square of mature trees and an enclosed playground. The houses are four-storeys with basements, of yellow stock brick with rusticated ground floors and rounded ground floor openings. Again, a number have been converted to small hotels and offices (Grade II-listed). Views from the square include St Pancras Hotel and Station, and glimpsed views of the rear elevation of Camden Town Hall Extension from the northern part of the square. The plain brick rear elevation of Belgrove House (1920s) forms the northern side of the square. Belgrove Street contains an 1830s terrace of eight yellow stock brick houses, which have been restored in the late 20th century. The buildings, which are mostly in hotel use, are all listed at Grade II.

The area bounded by Judd Street and Loxham Street, north of Cromer Street, is typified by a number of large mansion blocks developed from the 1890s. These four-storey blocks in a buff brick, enlivened by red brick dressings and heavy dentil cornices, occupy entire street blocks, with neat gated courtyards within. Where the blocks face Cromer Street, the ground floors contain 1930s shopfronts. Cromer Street also contains a number of later, less-attractive 20th century housing ranging from five to nine storeys.

The area just south of Kings Cross was heavily-bombed during WWII. Harrison Street represents an area of comprehensive redevelopment, and contains a large number of 20th century social housing, comprising large six-storey blocks which pay little regard to the surrounding 19th century terraces. To the south, Regent Square was laid out from 1822 and its south and east sides retain some of these houses. The north and west sides of Regent Square are not in the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, as the area was badly damaged in World War II, and was redeveloped in the late 1950s with five-storey blocks of flats of various materials, designed by Davies and Arnold.

Facing both Hastings and Bidborough streets are three large buildings which each occupy entire street blocks: Hamilton House (1913-14) an Edwardian neo-Classical, red brick building, built as the headquarters for the National Union of Teachers, designed by W H Woodroffe; the interwar Telephone Exchange is in an austere brown brick building with simple stone decorations; and Queen Alexandra Mansions (c.1913) is a handsome eight-storey mansion block, one of a number built in the area. Bidborough House (1960s) is a steel-framed glazed building of little merit; it was purchased by UCL from the Council earlier this year.

North-south running streets such as Sandwich Street, Thanet Street and Tonbridge Street, contain a series of Edwardian mansion blocks of varying heights and scales, all united through use of red brick, with stone dressings. The south side of Leigh Street is lined with four-storey Georgian terraces, some with 19th century shopfronts and is Grade-II listed. On the north side of Leigh Street, at the junction with Judd Street, stands the nine-storey Medway Court (1955), an experimental post-war housing block designed by Denis Clarke-Hall.

Judd Street contains an original Georgian terrace of c.1816, some containing early 19th century shopfronts. Adjacent is the Royal National Institute for Blind People, a red brick Edwardian building with sandstone decoration. Opposite, is another eight-storey red-brick mansion block with stone dressings – Jessel House (c.1913), with later shopfronts. Closer the Euston Road is Kelvin House an austere neo-Classical 1930s commercial building, and a one of the facades of Queen Alexandra Mansions. The west elevation of Camden Town Hall and a faience-fronted pub opposite, frame views north to St Pancras Station and the British Library.

Burton Street contains terraces dating from c.1810-20, named after their architect and builder, James Burton; the terraces are mainly four-storey houses, with some two-storey buildings to the south. To the east, Cartwright Gardens, originally called Burton Crescent, forms a sweeping curve from Hamilton House in the north to Marchmont Street in the south. Later 20th century buildings, including a row of three large student residences, line the east side of Cartwright Gardens - Hughes Parry (1969), Canterbury (1930s) and Commonwealth (1950s) halls. A strong vista is formed at the centre of the gardens, terminated by the rear of the British Medical Association building, designed by Lutyens.

Tavistock Place mostly contains 19th and 20th century development along its busy thoroughfare. Some four-storey Georgian terraces remain, built of brown stock brick with red rubber details, designed by James Burton. The height is fairly constant, at four or five storeys, except where mansion blocks rise to seven or eight storeys. Materials are predominantly red or brown brick, which creates a consistent character. Mary Ward House (c.1903), by Arnold Dunbar Smith and Cecil Brewer presents an interesting frontage to the street and is listed at Grade II.

The Bloomsbury Conservation Area covers a large area from Euston Road in the north to New Oxford Street and Lincolns Inn Fields in the south.

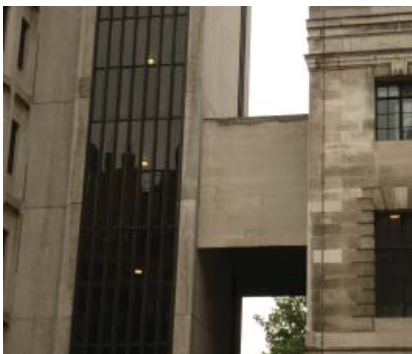
3.2 Camden Town Hall Extension

3.2.1 Front (North) Elevation

The building is eight storeys plus a basement and sub-basement. Its principal elevation faces Euston Road. The façade is divided into five main bays, divided asymmetrically by a narrow bronze-tinted glazed bay with metal fins, containing a staircase. The first bay on the left steps back slightly. These bays overhang the ground floor. A further narrow bay contains another core which rises above the roofline; this is articulated similarly and abuts the bridge to the original Town Hall to the west of the building. The bridge is at third floor level and is blank, it is faced in stone [Plate 33]. The building is faced in Norwegian marble exposed aggregate panels which are concave in section; at the centre of each is a single-pane bronze-tinted window. Each of the five bays is rounded at the corners, where convex panels feature [Plate 34]. The base is of red brick, with bronze-tinted plate glass windows. A railed ramp reaches from this elevation around to Argyle Street to the main entrance.

Plate 33. Link between Camden Town Hall Extension and Camden Town Hall

Plate 34. North and East Elevations of Camden Town Hall Extension



3.2.2 Argyle Street (East) Elevation

This façade is not subdivided into bays and its flush elevation is 17 windows wide. The façade is faced in Norwegian marble exposed aggregate panels which are concave in section; at the centre of each is a single-pane bronze-tinted window. These bays overhang the ground floor. The elevation is rounded at the corners, where convex panels feature. The main entrance is located at raised ground floor; here there are metal-framed bronze-tinted plate glass windows and modern white automatic entrance doors. It is accessed from a base of red brick and red brick steps. A railed ramp reaches around the building from the Euston Road elevation. To the south is a gated entrance to the basement.

3.2.3 Rear (South) Elevation



Plate 35. South Elevation of Camden Town Hall Extension

This elevation faces onto Tonbridge Street. The façade is divided into five main bays, divided asymmetrically by a narrow bronze-tinted glazed bay with metal fins, containing a staircase. The right hand side bay steps back slightly. These bays overhang the ground floor. A further narrow bay contains another core which rises above the roofline; this is articulated similarly and abuts the bridge to the original Town Hall to the west of the building. The bridge is at third floor level and is blank; it is faced in stone. The building is faced in Norwegian marble exposed aggregate panels which are concave in section; at the centre of each is a single-pane bronze-tinted window. Each of the five bays is rounded at the corners, where convex panels feature. The base features metal-framed bronze-tinted plate glass windows [Plate 35].

3.2.4 Side (West) Elevation

This elevation faces Tonbridge Walk. This façade is divided into four main bays; the northern bay contains a core and is largely blank except for a narrow strip of bronze-tinted glazing; its return features bronze-tinted glazing with metal fins. This core is faced with plain Norwegian marble exposed aggregate panels. At third floor level is the link bridge to the original Town Hall. The remaining three bays are faced in Norwegian marble exposed aggregate panels which are concave in section; at the centre of each is a single-pane bronze-tinted window.

3.2.5 Roof

The roof was not inspected; it appears to be flat and asphalted. It steps up a further level behind the parapet, and contains plant rooms and stores.

3.2.6 Construction

The building is constructed in a concrete structural frame with precast structural panels. The structural frame takes the form of a table with a metre deep first floor which cantilevers and supports the structural façade above. Above this level the floors are formed in waffle slabs that span from the 'table leg' framework.

4.1 Description of the Proposals and their Impact on the nearby Listed Buildings and the Conservation Areas

The existing office building is beyond its design life and was sold by Camden Council due to the costs associated with upgrading the building to meet modern office standards. The construction of the building limits opportunities to adapt the building and there is limited flexibility to how it can be used. Key issues with the building include:

- Built without flexibility, the existing layouts are difficult to adapt;
- The deep floor plans are not suitable for contemporary office use;
- The existing services are no longer fit for purpose and the building has a high energy consumption;
- The building has a poor relationship with the public realm - the facades turn away from the street and the dark bronze-tinted glass creates blank facades;
- The west stair-core and link bridge block the historic route and view through from Tonbridge Street to Euston Road;
- The rooftop plant room is of no merit;
- The existing condition of the building does not contribute positively to the conservation area or setting of nearby designated heritage assets.

The proposals are described in detail in the Orms Architects drawings and Design and Access Statement which accompany this report. The scheme proposes to convert the now vacant office building into a hotel. In its current condition and use – with little activity at street level, dirty fumed-stained elevations, and dull brown glass – the building detracts from the vibrant and rich character of the conservation area. However, key elements of its Brutalist architecture, including the exposed structural style and its sculptural form, are of interest. The design process has very much centred on how the building's qualities can be unlocked to fulfil its role as a landmark building and to become a positive contributor to the character of the area and a worthy neighbour to the outstanding listed buildings which surround it. The scheme has also been driven by ambitions to undertake a sustainable development centred on the retention of the existing sub and super structure and concrete elevations, enhanced by associated upgrade works which include:

- Replacing glazing at ground floor to create a better connection between the building and the public realm;
- Placing the entrance, retail and lobby at ground floor to create a more active street frontage;
- Extending the façade line on Euston Road to reduce the overhang and improve connection with the street;
- Opening up the existing garden to create an east-west shared pedestrian and cycle route;
- Narrowing the existing ramp and repairing the crossover pavement which would reduce the visual impact of the ramp and make the pavement pedestrian priority;
- Removing the west core staircase and link bridge, opening up the

historic route up Tonbridge Street and views through to St Pancras Station;

- Replacing the existing tinted windows with clear glass;
- Removing the existing concrete plant room at 8th floor;
- Extending the building by two floors from the existing top of the roof plant with new hotel accommodation;
- Provision of about 270 hotel rooms and associated hotel ancillary space.

The works and their impact are discussed in more detail below:

- Replacing glazing at ground floor to create a better connection between the building and the public realm;

The bronze-tinted glass in the ground floor façade gives the building a hostile appearance and dead frontage which has a poor relationship with the street. Replacing this with clear glass would significantly improve the visual connection between the building and the public realm and better integrate the building with its local context. Furthermore, the creation of an active frontage would enliven this part of the townscape and enhance the Kings Cross Conservation Area.

- Placing the entrance, retail and lobby at ground floor to create a more active street frontage;

Locating publicly accessible parts of the building behind the new glazed ground floor frontage would introduce activity into the street and engage the building with the busy and lively, urban environment along Euston Road. This would contribute positively to the enhancements already made by the huge regeneration undertaken in recent years within the conservation area. The alterations to form the public areas of the building would also create level access throughout, increasing accessibility within the building and to the fully accessible rooms above, located one per floor.

- Extending the façade line on Euston Road to reduce the overhang and improve connection with the street;

The cantilevered overhang on Euston Road forms a dirty undercroft which has an unwelcoming environment – exacerbated by the dark, impenetrable glazing – and effectively turns the building against the street. As part of the scheme it is proposed to push out the façade fronting Euston Road to create a series of ancillary retail units. This would largely infill the overhang (albeit with a recess to maintain the existing relationship with the upper floor levels), resolving this poor element of the public realm. The new ancillary units would be formed in clear glazing to create an active frontage which would significantly enliven the ground floor façade and further address the unwelcoming environment which exists currently. These works would enhance the vibrant character and appearance of this part of the conservation area.

- Opening up the garden to create an east-west shared pedestrian and cycle route;

The gated garden is closed to the public with no access across the rear of the building. As part of the scheme proposed the existing brick wall would be removed and a new soft and hard landscaped garden formed. A pedestrian and cycle route would also be formed running between Tonbridge Walk and Argyle Street. Reintroducing the garden would create a new public space which, owing to its location, would provide a more tranquil respite than the newly formed public spaces around Kings Cross Station. Views from Tonbridge Walk and Argyle Street would be enhanced and connectivity around the building improved. As such, these works would contribute positively to the character and appearance of both the Kings Cross and Bloomsbury Conservation Areas, including in the outlook from surrounding private views.

- Narrowing the ramp and repairing the crossover pavement which would reduce the visual impact of the ramp and make the pavement pedestrian priority;

The further public realm improvements associated with the scheme would significantly improve the street level environment around the building. Improvements to the frontage along Argyle Street include the replacement of the existing UKPN upstand and railings with a flat grille, replacing the existing ramp and stairs to improve access and reducing the existing car park ramp. These works would further improve pedestrian flow around the building and contribute positively to the local townscape and views up the street from the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

- Removing the west core staircase and link bridge, opening up the historic route up Tonbridge Street and views through to St Pancras Station;

The west stair and lift core stands taller than the main building and lacks its sculptural qualities; its appearance is further compromised by the dark glazing. The circulation core forms a physical barrier through to Tonbridge Street and obscures views of St Pancras Station from the south. Removing the west core, including the third floor link bridge to the main Town Hall and ground floor entrance to the Camden Centre, would reopen Tonbridge Walk, visually reconnecting Tonbridge Street and Bidborough Street with Euston Road to the north. In townscape terms, reinstating the historic street would significantly improve permeability around the site and the new area of public realm created would be an enhancement to the conservation areas. Furthermore, the removal of the staircore would allow for views from the south through to St Pancras Station behind, to the benefit of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area and the setting of the Grade I listed building. Removing the staircore would also open up views of the more attractive western façade in views along Euston Road which would improve the contribution of the building to the local townscape.

The removal of the third floor link bridge between the Extension and

the Town Hall would separate the two buildings (this is subject of a separate listed building consent application) and the listed Town Hall would be repaired to match as required. The ground floor entrance to the Camden Centre would also be removed (subject of a further separate listed building consent application), the light-well reduced in size and the upstand and railings removed for better pedestrian flow and views through from Tonbridge Street. These works would form part of the improved public realm between the two buildings and would better define the two contrasting buildings as large, individual architectural pieces. Removing the link to the later extension would enhance the symmetry and proportions of the Town Hall's neo-Classical architectural design. Furthermore, redefinition of the two buildings through their detachment would enhance the setting of the Town Hall – improved further by the surrounding public realm improvements.

- Replacing the tinted windows with clear glass;

The existing dark bronze-tinted windows give the building a hostile appearance and flatten the façades; detracting from the sculptural form of the concave concrete panels. Replacing the windows with clear glazing throughout would enliven the façades and engage the building with its surrounding environment. Creating glimpsing views into the building would further animate the form of the concrete façades and soften the robust and impenetrable appearance of the building. The bronze framing proposed would link the new elements of the building and add further visual interest to the concrete façades. The installation of new double glazing in place of the existing single glazed units would also serve to increase the thermal performance of the building.

- Removing the concrete plant room from 8th floor;

The large rooftop plant room does not provide a successful termination to the building. Without articulation, the sheer, plain concrete finish appears heavy in contrast to the form of the building below and gives the proportions of the building a squat appearance. This detracts in some views from the Bloomsbury Conservation Area to the south and the setting of some of the listed townhouse terraces on Argyle Street and within Argyle Square - the removal of the plant room would have a beneficial impact on the appearance of the building and within these views.

- Extending the building by two floors from the existing top of the roof plant with new hotel accommodation;

The existing plant room at roof level would be removed and replaced with three new floors; one comprising a rooftop hotel restaurant and two further floors forming hotel accommodation. The 8th floor would be recessed and formed in glazing to form a 'waist' to reflect the design of the ground floor and to define the architecture of the two storeys above. This lightweight floor would also serve to reduce the perceived height of the new construction.

The existing façade comprises five bays on the Euston Road elevation,

divided asymmetrically by the glazed staircore which breaks up the massing of the building and separates the eastern most bay which turns on to Argyle Street. This eastern façade is less articulated and reads as a visually distinct element. The pattern of the five bays and repeated concrete concave panels with regular window openings windows gives the building a sculptural quality.

The proposed extension seeks to reflect the sculptural form of the main building; it would follow the rhythm of the floors below, creating individual bays which would serve to elongate the façades and improve the proportions of the main building below. The combination of glazing and bronze-like cladding panels and fins would maintain the sculptural articulation found in the main building but in a lighter material to create a terminating roofline which would not suppress the robust architecture of the main building below and which would soften the building's silhouette in the skyline. The composition of the glazing, cladding panels and fins would give a vertical emphasis to the building façade, reflecting the narrowing window proportions of St Pancras facing. The warm material tones of the bronze-like cladding would complement the historic setting. The extent of glazing and solid panels varies around the new rooftop addition – this would add to the visual interest and sculptural qualities at this high level and would subtly articulate the roofline. Furthermore, the solid-to-void ratio would be increased on the east and southern facades in response to the sensitivity of views from the Bloomsbury Conservation Area which is has a more intimate character that the Euston Road context.

The glazing in the existing east circulation core would be replaced with clear glazing and be extended to serve the upper levels; this would retain the articulation of the building's massing and create a visual link between the ground floor, main body of the building and new roof top addition.

The eastern end of the roof addition would rise taller than the rest, defining this distinct part of the building and emphasising its position on the corner and prominence as a landmark building. This would respond to the roofline of St Pancras Station and Hotel on the north side of Euston Road and the landmark focal point qualities of the south-east clock tower. New plant would be accommodated in this location – replacing the inefficient plant which currently serves the building.

The Townscape, Heritage and Visual Impact Assessment submitted with the application demonstrates that the proposed extension would not intrude into the London View Management Framework (LVMF) panoramic views in which the building appears – 1A.1 Alexandra Palace, 2A.1 Parliament Hill and 4A.1 Primrose Hill. The extension would however be visible in numerous surrounding public views, these are laid out in full in the Townscape, Heritage and Visual Impact Assessment and include from within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area to the south, the Kings Cross Conservation Area within which the building stands and the setting of St Pancras Station opposite and other surrounding listed buildings.

Whilst the additional roof storeys would further increase the height of the building above the flanking buildings on Euston Road – the extension

must be considered as part of the complete architectural approach to the redesign and upgrade of the former Town Hall Extension building. The roof extension is an unashamedly contemporary addition which serves, alongside the other elements of the proposed scheme, to enhance and emphasise the sculptural Brutalist architectural style and transform the building into a landmark of high architectural value which would contribute positively to the conservation area. The additional roof storeys would maximise the potential of the site and the new hotel accommodation would contribute positively to the wider destination created by the substantial regeneration to the northern side of the Euston Road and Kings Cross Conservation Area.

The impact of the proposed scheme on each of the surrounding heritage assets is discussed in turn below.

Kings Cross Conservation Area

The Kings Cross Conservation Area Statement (2004) identifies Camden Town Hall Extension as a building that detracts from the character of the conservation area. Whilst opinion on its Brutalist architectural form may be divided, it is its current condition and use – with little activity at street level, dirty fumed-stained elevations, and dull brown glass – detracts from the vibrant and rich character of the conservation area which has been significantly enhanced by its regeneration in recent years.

The proposed scheme presents a bold and imaginative refurbishment of the building which would significantly improve its appearance; creating an engaging and vibrant piece of architecture. The existing building has a strong presence on Euston Road but a hostile and impenetrable ground floor façade – the creation of an active frontage at street level would connect the building with the street scene and enliven its appearance. Alongside the further substantial improvements to the surrounding public realm, this would greatly improve the quality of the immediate surrounding townscape and the conservation area as it is experienced in dynamic views as people move around the building.

The conservation area is dominated by the two major termini – Kings Cross and St Pancras Station and Hotel (Grade I listed) - however the existing Town Hall Extension is untouched by their new life and vitality. The works proposed would create a landmark building which would respond to the substantial set-piece Victorian Railway architecture which it faces – and contribute to the international gateway which its forms into the City. The reinvigorated architectural design would complement the significant regeneration undertaken within the conservation area and add to the exciting innovative contemporary architecture being constructed to the north of the stations. Furthermore, the proposed hotel use would add to the vitality of the conservation area, defined by uses associated with the railway termini.

Euston Road is an extremely busy arterial route with a highly varied character of 19th and 20th century large footprint commercial, hotel and institutional buildings, interspersed with smaller-scale Victorian and

Edwardian buildings – the upgraded building would form a complementary addition to this rich, varied character. Whilst the building would stand taller than the flanking buildings on Euston Road, this enhances its landmark qualities and the bold expression of its architectural form. The eastern corner has been designed in response to the townscape focal qualities of the St Pancras clock tower which it faces, but it is set at lower height so as to not compete. The creation of an additional focal point within the conservation area would not detract from its character but instead complement the very high quality display of large scale architectural set pieces within it.

Setting of Grade I listed St Pancras Station and Hotel

The scheme of works proposed would resolve the failings of the existing building to the benefit of the facing Grade I listed building. The high quality and innovative design of the alterations proposed would create a stand-out piece of architecture which would complement the landmark, monumental, piece of architecture that it faces. Whilst the increased height of the building would increase its presence in the setting of the listed building, this would not by default cause harm – indeed as part of the wider improvements proposed, the design would create a worthy neighbour to the outstanding listed building, rather than a detracting feature as existing. The eastern bay which turns on to Argyle Street has been designed in response to the south-east clock tower to mirror its presence on the south side of the street. In views along Euston Road the separation of the two buildings by the busy arterial road means that there would be no impact on the appreciation of the varied Gothic roofline of the building. Whilst in some views from the south the additional roof storeys would intrude into the setting of the listed building, the total height has been set so that it does not diminish the dominance of the tower spire as a townscape feature within the local skyline. Any impact on the setting of the listed building in views from the south must also be considered against the substantial benefit of removing the western staircore, link bridge and ground floor entrance to the Camden Centre and the new views that would be created of St Pancras to the benefit of its setting and its role as a landmark anchor for navigation within the local area.

Setting of Grade I listed Kings Cross Station and Grade II listed Great Northern Hotel

The proposed scheme would have a positive impact on the setting of the Grade I Kings Cross Station and Grade II listed Great Northern Hotel. The improved architectural design would complement the role of these substantial set architectural pieces in the local townscape and their value as a group, with St Pancras, of national importance. These buildings form an international gateway into the City which the existing, lack-lustre appearance of the building detracts from. Introducing a high quality and innovative architectural design into the vicinity of these buildings would enhance their setting and complement their regeneration. The proposed use of the building as a hotel would further serve the new destination that the regeneration of the station buildings and hotels has sought to create.

Grade II listed Camden Town Hall

The removal of the existing western staircore, link bridge and ground floor entrance to the Camden Centre would provide a visual break between the two buildings which would have a positive impact on the setting of the original Town Hall – redefining it as originally intended, as a single, large set piece of neo-Classical architecture. Detaching the two buildings would enhance the symmetry and proportions of its architectural design and have a positive impact on its appearance and improvements to the public realm would further enhance its setting. Whilst the additional roof storeys would further increase the height of the extension in comparison to the main Town Hall building, owing to the existing contrasting architectural styles and the vast improvements to the architectural character and appearance of the extension building – this is not considered to cause undue harm to the setting of the listed Town Hall building.

Setting of Bloomsbury Conservation Area and Grade II listed properties on Argyle Street and around Argyle Square.

As existing the extension is a detracting feature in views from the Bloomsbury Conservation Area and within the setting of the listed Victorian terrace townhouses on Argyle Street. It is also present in glimpsing views within the setting of the listed buildings in the northern corner of Argyle Square. The high quality design proposed, including the public realm improvements at the northern end of Argyle Street and removal of the 8th floor plant room, would contribute positively to the setting of the conservation area and the listed terraces. Whilst it is undeniable that the building would have an increased presence, this is countered by the significant improvements to its appearance, and the introduction of innovative architecture and visual interest in these views. The articulation and sculptural form of the additional roof storeys would soften their appearance in comparison to the existing roofline and the warming tones of the bronze cladding would complement the historic material palette in this context. Furthermore, the increased ratio of cladding to glazed panels has sought to prevent the building from being unduly prominent at night.

Whilst the Bloomsbury Conservation Area is defined by its Georgian and Victorian townhouses, this intimate residential character has also accommodated the introduction of a number of far more substantial 19th and 20th century cultural and institutional buildings to the south and west and larger 20th century mansion blocks. The extension stands just outside its northern border and is reflective of the change in scale from the more intimate setting to the distinct character, scale and prominence of buildings which exist along Euston Road. The juxtaposition of scale between immediately adjoining areas within central London and glimpses between them is part of its charm and it would be expected that the scale and character of the larger institutional and transport buildings on the busy Euston Road would contrast with the more intimate residential terrace buildings to the south. As such the proposed increased height is not considered to cause undue harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area or the setting of the listed buildings. Furthermore, the setting of the conservation area would be enhanced by the removal of the west staircore and the views created through to St Pancras.

4.2 Justification of the Proposals

4.2.1 Introduction

One of the most important questions that needs to be addressed when asking if it would be appropriate in heritage terms to undertake the proposals described above and that is would they over all, on balance, improve the heritage environment or not?

The scheme of works outlined above proposes adaptive reuse of the building which would seek to address the current failings of the building and upgrade it to become a new, high quality hotel. Alongside the internal upgrade works proposed the design would also address the negative contribution the building currently makes to the townscape and surrounding conservation areas by undertaking a number of external works including improving access into and around the building, introducing activity at street level and clear glazing to animate the façade and improving the surrounding public realm. The extensions proposed at roof level would be visible and impact on surrounding views, particularly from Bloomsbury Conservation Area to the south, including the setting of the Victorian listed townhouses. However, the unashamedly modern addition has sought to unlock the architectural quality of the building's exposed structural style and sculptural form and enhance its Brutalist architectural style, emphasising the verticality of the bays and creating a landmark building which, as a whole, would contribute positively to the character of the conservation areas and be a worthy neighbour to the outstanding listed buildings which surround it.

4.2.2 Policy

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is the legislative basis for decision making on applications that relate to the historic environment. Sections 66 and 72 of the Act impose a statutory duty upon local planning authorities to consider the impact of proposals upon listed buildings and their setting and conservation areas and to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the special architectural or historic interest of listed buildings and preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area (see Appendix 1 below).

New development should preserve or enhance the setting of listed buildings and the character and appearance of conservation areas. As a minimum, therefore, the impact of development on these heritage assets should be neutral to not engage the presumption within the Act against the grant of planning permission. As outlined above, viewed as a whole, the proposed works to the Town Hall Extension would provide a number of enhancements and as such would preserve the character and appearance of the Kings Cross Conservation Area and the setting of the listed buildings to all but the south of the site. Whilst the additional rooftop accommodation would intrude further into the setting of the listed Victorian townhouses on Argyle Street, and to some extent Argyle Square, tempered against the much improved architectural design visible, the overall impact is considered to be neutral. Therefore the presumption against the grant of planning permission within the Act is not engaged.

Unlike Section 66 of the Act, Section 72 does not include provision for the setting of conservation areas and therefore no statutory duty is engaged with regard to the impact on the setting of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area to the south – however again as outlined above, the scheme proposed would present an enhancement.

Addressing the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework, it expects (paragraph 134) that where changes would result in ‘less than substantial harm’ to a heritage asset (in this case the conservation areas and surrounding listed buildings), the harm should be ‘weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use’. Whilst viewed in the whole it is our view that no harm by the scheme of works proposed, it may be helpful in accordance with the NPPF to consider the public benefits of the scheme which would counter any perceived harm found in the increased height of the building.

As outlined in Paragraph 20 of the National Planning Policy Guide, ‘public benefits may follow from many developments and could be anything that delivers economic, social or environmental progress as described in the National Planning Policy Framework (Paragraph 7)’; the benefits of the proposed scheme fall within all three categories as outlined below:

- **Economic:** the maximisation of the existing vacant site to create a new hotel would contribute positively to the wider regeneration of the area and support the growth and vitality of the St Pancras and Kings Cross railway hub as an international gateway to the city.
- **Social:** the proposed scheme would significantly improve the public realm surrounding the building by replacing the existing hostile environment with an active and engaging frontage and creating a publicly accessible park and cycle route to the rear. The reuse of the existing building and enhanced architectural design would also contribute positively to the quality of the surrounding built environment.
- **Environmental:** the scheme has been driven by ambitions to undertake a sustainable development centred on the retention of the existing sub and super structure and concrete elevations and the upgrade of the building’s performance. The proposed design and associated public realm improvements would transform the existing detracting building into a piece of high quality stand out architecture which would transform its contribution to the conservation area and create a worthy, landmark neighbour to the outstanding listed buildings which surround it.

4.3 Conclusion

The question that was asked at the beginning of the section above has been answered and that is that the proposals, overall, and on balance would leave the heritage environment enhanced.

The reuse of the existing vacant building as a hotel and significant improvements to the building’s appearance, including the unashamedly

modern rooftop addition and surrounding public realm improvements, would transform this building into a high quality landmark building which should be celebrated for its innovative architectural style and sculptural form. These works would create a building which would contribute positively to the significance of the conservation area, both through its appearance and new use, and stand comfortably alongside its significant listed neighbours. The benefits associated with the scheme proposed would outweigh any potential harm caused to the setting of neighbouring heritage assets and would result in the enhancement of the building's architectural quality and its contribution overall to the significance of the Kings Cross Conservation Area. As such it meets the tests for sustainable development in the National Planning Policy Framework.

Appendix I

Planning Policy and Guidance

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

The Act is legislative basis for decision making on applications that relate to the historic environment.

Sections 66 and 72 of the Act impose a statutory duty upon local planning authorities to consider the impact of proposals upon listed buildings and conservation areas.

Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that:

in considering whether to grant permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority, or as the case may be the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Similarly, section 72(1) of the above Act states that:

... with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

National Planning Policy Framework

Any proposals for consent relating to heritage assets are subject to the policies of the NPPF (2012). This sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. With regard to 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment', the framework requires proposals relating to heritage assets to be justified and an explanation of their effect on the heritage asset's significance provided.

The NPPF has the following relevant policies for proposals such as this:

*14. At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a **presumption in favour of sustainable development**, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking.*

The NPPF sets out twelve **core planning principles** that should underpin decision making (paragraph 17). Amongst those are that planning should:

- *not simply be about scrutiny, but instead be a creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which people live their lives;*
- *proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs. Every effort should be made objectively to identify and then meet the housing, business*

and other development needs of an area, and respond positively to wider opportunities for growth. Plans should take account of market signals, such as land prices and housing affordability, and set out a clear strategy for allocating sufficient land which is suitable for development in their area, taking account of the needs of the residential and business communities;

- *always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings;*
- *support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change, and encourage the reuse of existing resources, including conversion of existing buildings, and encourage the use of renewable resources (for example, by the development of renewable energy);*
- *conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations;*

With regard to the **significance** of a heritage asset, the framework contains the following policies:

129. Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

In determining applications local planning authorities are required to take account of significance, viability, sustainability and local character and distinctiveness. Paragraph 131 of the NPPF identifies the following criteria in relation to this:

- *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 vitality; and*
- *the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.*

With regard to potential '**harm**' to the significance designated heritage asset, in paragraph 132 the framework states the following:

...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. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification.

With regard to ‘**less than substantial harm**’ to the significance of a designated heritage asset, of the NPPF states the following;

134. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.

In relation to the consideration of applications for development affecting the **setting of a designated heritage asset**, paragraph 137 of the document states the following:

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.

With regards to the loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to a **Conservation Area**, paragraph 138 states this should be treated:

...As substantial harm under paragraph 133 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 134, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area...as a whole.

National Planning Policy Guidance

The planning practice guidance was published on the 6th March 2014 to support the National Planning Policy Framework and the planning system. It includes particular guidance on matters relating to protecting the historic environment in the section: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment. The relevant guidance is as follows:

Paragraph 3: What is meant by the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment?

The conservation of heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance is a core planning principle. Heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and effective conservation delivers wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits.

Conservation is an active process of maintenance and managing change. It requires a flexible and thoughtful approach to get the best out of assets as diverse as listed buildings in everyday use to as yet undiscovered, undesignated buried remains of archaeological interest.

In the case of buildings, generally the risks of neglect and decay of heritage assets are best addressed through ensuring that they remain in active use that is consistent with their conservation. Ensuring such heritage assets remain used and valued is likely to

require sympathetic changes to be made from time to time. In the case of archaeological sites, many have no active use, and so for those kinds of sites, periodic changes may not be necessary.

Where changes are proposed, the National Planning Policy Framework sets out a clear framework for both plan-making and decision-taking to ensure that heritage assets are conserved, and where appropriate enhanced, in a manner that is consistent with their significance and thereby achieving sustainable development.

Part of the public value of heritage assets is the contribution that they can make to understanding and interpreting our past. So where the complete or partial loss of a heritage asset is justified, the aim then is to capture and record the evidence of the asset's significance which is to be lost, interpret its contribution to the understanding of our past, and make that publicly available.

Paragraph 8: What is “significance”?

“Significance” in terms of heritage policy is defined in the Glossary of the National Planning Policy Framework.

In legislation and designation criteria, the terms ‘special architectural or historic interest’ of a listed building and the ‘national importance’ of a scheduled monument are used to describe all or part of the identified heritage asset’s significance. Some of the more recent designation records are more helpful as they contain a fuller, although not exhaustive, explanation of the significance of the asset.

Paragraph 9: Why is ‘significance’ important in decision-taking?

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.

Paragraph 13: What is the setting of a heritage asset and how should it be taken into account?

The “setting of a heritage asset” is defined in the Glossary of the National Planning Policy Framework.

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.

Setting is the surroundings in which an asset is experienced, and may therefore be more extensive than its curtilage. All heritage assets have a setting, irrespective of the form in which they survive and whether they are designated or not.

The extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to visual considerations. Although views of or from an asset will play an important part, the way in which we experience an asset in its setting is also influenced by other environmental factors such as noise, dust and vibration from other land uses in the vicinity, and by our understanding of the historic relationship between places. For example, buildings that are in close proximity but are not visible from each other may have a historic or aesthetic connection that amplifies the experience of the significance of each.

The contribution that setting makes to the significance of the heritage asset does not depend on there being public rights or an ability to access or experience that setting. This will vary over time and according to circumstance.

When assessing any application for development which may affect the setting of a heritage asset, local planning authorities may need to consider the implications of cumulative change. They may also need to consider the fact that developments which materially detract from the asset's significance may also damage its economic viability now, or in the future, thereby threatening its on-going conservation.

Paragraph 20: What is meant by the term public benefits?

Public benefits may follow from many developments and could be anything that delivers economic, social or environmental progress as described in the National Planning Policy Framework (Paragraph 7). Public benefits should flow from the proposed development. They should be of a nature or scale to be of benefit to the public at large and should not just be a private benefit. However, benefits do not always have to be visible or accessible to the public in order to be genuine public benefits.

Public benefits may include heritage benefits, such as:

- *sustaining or enhancing the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting*
- *reducing or removing risks to a heritage asset*
- *securing the optimum viable use of a heritage asset*

Paragraph 7 states:

There are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles:

- *an economic role – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure;*
- *a social role – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being; and*
- *an environmental role – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.*

English Heritage Guidance

English Heritage's "Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide" (2010) elaborates on the policies set out in the now superseded PPS5 but still applies to the policies contained in the NPPF.

In paragraph 79 the guide addresses potential **benefits** of proposals for alterations to heritage assets. It states the following:

There are a number of potential heritage benefits that could weigh in favour of a proposed scheme:

- *It sustains or enhances the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting.*
- *It reduces or removes risks to a heritage asset.*
- *It secures the optimum viable use of a heritage asset in support of its long term conservation.*
- *It makes a positive contribution to economic vitality and sustainable communities.*
- *It is an appropriate design for its context and makes a positive contribution to the appearance, character, quality and local distinctiveness of the historic environment.*
- *It better reveals the significance of a heritage asset and therefore enhances our enjoyment of it and the sense of place.*

And it adds in paragraph 80:

A successful scheme will be one whose design has taken account of the following characteristics of the surroundings, where appropriate:

- *The significance of nearby assets and the contribution of their setting.*
- *The general character and distinctiveness of the local buildings, spaces, public realm and the landscape.*
- *Landmarks and other features that are key to a sense of place.*
- *The diversity or uniformity in style, construction, materials, detailing, decoration and period of existing buildings and spaces.*
- *The topography.*
- *Views into and from the site and its surroundings.*
- *Green landscaping.*
- *The current and historic uses in the area and the urban grain.*

Some or all of these factors may influence the scale, height, massing, alignment, materials and proposed use in any successful design.

The Guidance has specific advice for **additions and alterations** to heritage assets. This includes the following:

178. The main issues to consider in proposals for additions to heritage assets, including new development in conservation areas, are proportion, height, massing, bulk, use of materials, use, relationship with adjacent assets, alignment and treatment of setting. Replicating a particular style may be less important, though there are circumstances when it may be appropriate. It would not normally be acceptable for new work to dominate the original asset or its setting in either scale, material or as a result of its siting. Assessment of an asset's significance and its relationship to its setting will usually suggest the forms of extension that might be appropriate.

179 The fabric will always be an important part of the asset's significance. Retention of as much historic fabric as possible is therefore a fundamental part of any good alteration or conversion, together with the use of appropriate materials and methods of repair. It is not appropriate to sacrifice old work simply to accommodate the new.

Camden Council

Camden's Local Development Framework was adopted in 2010. The following policies are of relevance:

DP24 – Securing high quality design

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

- a) character, setting, context and the form and scale of neighbouring buildings;*
- b) the character and proportions of the existing building, where alterations and extensions are proposed;*
- c) the quality of materials to be used;*

- d) the provision of visually interesting frontages at street level;
- e) the appropriate location for building services equipment;
- f) existing natural features, such as topography and trees;
- g) the provision of appropriate hard and soft landscaping including boundary treatments;
- h) the provision of appropriate amenity space; and
- i) accessibility.

DP25 – Conserving Camden’s heritage

Conservation Areas

In order to maintain the character of Camden’s conservation areas, the Council will:

- a) take account of conservation area statements, appraisals and management plans when assessing applications within conservation areas;
- b) only permit development within conservation areas that preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the area;
- c) prevent the total or substantial demolition of an unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area where this harms the character or appearance of the conservation area, unless exceptional circumstances are shown that outweigh the case for retention;
- d) not permit development outside of a conservation area that causes harm to the character and appearance of that conservation area; and
- e) preserve trees and garden spaces which contribute to the character of a conservation area and which provide a setting for Camden’s architectural heritage.

Listed Buildings

To preserve or enhance the borough’s listed buildings, the Council will:

- g) not permit development that it considers would cause harm to the setting of a listed building.

Camden’s **Core Strategy** was also adopted in 2010. Of relevance is the following policy:

CS14 - Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage

The Council will ensure that Camden’s places and buildings are attractive, safe and easy to use by:

- a) requiring development of the highest standard of design that respects local context and character;*
- b) preserving and enhancing Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas, listed buildings, archaeological remains, scheduled ancient monuments and historic parks and gardens;*
- c) promoting high quality landscaping and works to streets and public spaces;*
- d) seeking the highest standards of access in all buildings and places and requiring schemes to be designed to be inclusive and accessible.*

The London Plan Policies (Revised Early Minor Alterations 2013)

On 11 October 2013, the Mayor published Revised Early Minor Alterations to the London Plan. These are for consistency with the National Planning Policy Framework. The Revised Early Minor Alterations are operative as formal alterations to the London Plan. The London Plan contains policies that would both affect directly and indirectly the historic environment and development of locations such as this. It states:

Policy 7.8

Heritage assets and archaeology

Strategic

- A London's heritage assets and historic environment, including listed buildings, registered historic parks and gardens and other natural and historic landscapes, conservation areas, World Heritage Sites, registered battlefields, scheduled monuments, archaeological remains and memorials should be identified, so that the desirability of sustaining and enhancing their significance and of utilising their positive role in place shaping can be taken into account.*
- B Development should incorporate measures that identify, record, interpret, protect and, where appropriate, present the site's archaeology.*

Planning decisions

- C Development should identify, value, conserve, restore, re-use and incorporate heritage assets, where appropriate.*
- D Development affecting heritage assets and their settings should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to their form, scale, materials and architectural detail.*

Policy 7.9

Heritage-led regeneration

Strategic

- A *Regeneration schemes should identify and make use of heritage assets and reinforce the qualities that make them significant so they can help stimulate environmental, economic and community regeneration. This includes buildings, landscape features, views, Blue Ribbon Network and public realm.*

Planning decisions

- B *The significance of heritage assets should be assessed when development is proposed and schemes designed so that the heritage significance is recognised both in their own right and as catalysts for regeneration. Wherever possible heritage assets (including buildings at risk) should be repaired, restored and put to a suitable and viable use that is consistent with their conservation and the establishment and maintenance of sustainable communities and economic vitality.*

Appendix II

Statutory Listing Description

Camden Town Hall, Judd Street

GV II

Includes: Camden Town Hall EUSTON ROAD. Town hall. 1934-7. By AJ Thomas. Exterior clad in Portland stone ashlar over a steel frame on all 4 fronts. EXTERIOR: 3 main storeys. Channelled base, with plinth. Keystones over entrances carved by WCH King. Judd Street front: wings of 5 windows width, each with central aedicule and windows with alternating rhythm of channelled and unchannelled surrounds on first floor; projecting centre over entrances of three windows width with giant Corinthian order consisting of outer pilasters and inner attached columns rising to a full pediment embedded in raised attic with pitched roof. Euston Road front: 23 windows width, with wings of 5 windows width as in Judd Street and centre on the model of the Place de la Concorde with projecting pedimented pavilions as in centre of Judd Street front over subsidiary entrances flanking seven bays with giant Corinthian columns, and raised attic with pitched roof over whole centre. Tonbridge Street front: 23 windows width, with slightly recessed centre and raised attic of 13 windows width with pitched roof. East front: with single-storey ground-floor projection including side entrances on flanks, 3 round-arched windows on first floor in centre rising through second storey, and raised central attic of 3 windows width with pitched roof. INTERIOR: Judd Street entrance with black and white marble floor and deep-beamed ceiling. Main balustraded toplit staircase of white marble with dark marble pilasters and variegated marble panels on walls, branching and leading to Members' Lobby on first floor with polished marble Corinthian columns and variegated marble panels. First-floor corridors panelled throughout to impost level and plaster-vaulted in manner of London County Hall (qv Lambeth). Council Chamber in centre of building toplit, rectangular with side lobbies under galleries and giant Corinthian pilasters, oak-panelled to high level with plain frieze over and horseshoe arrangement of oak seating. Along Euston Road front at first-floor level, Mayor's Parlour oak-panelled to full height, lugged and pedimented doorcases and fine marble fireplace with burnished steel grate; Chief Executive's Room panelled to full height in Norfolk cedar with good fireplace; good panelled committee rooms. Assembly Hall on ground floor entered from Tonbridge Street, with foyer at south end, stage at north end with proscenium arch, deep south gallery and narrower west gallery communicating with Council Chamber. Light-fittings, fixtures and furniture throughout of a high standard, especially on first floor, and presumably largely designed by AJ Thomas. HISTORICAL NOTE: Camden Town Hall was designed as St Pancras Town Hall by AJ Thomas, a former assistant of EL Lutyens, the influence of whose Classical style pervades the building. Thomas designed several housing schemes for St Pancras Borough Council from 1924 onwards. (Architect and Building News: 25 June 1937: London; The Builder: 9 July 1937: London; The Building: July 1937).

Listing NGR: TQ3013982795

Appendix III

List of Plates and Endnotes

List of Plates

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3. Christopher Greenwood's *Map of London* 1827 (LMA)
4. Weston Place by C. J. Richardson, 1871 (Survey of London)
5. 1848-9 map of London, James Wyld (LMA)
6. Ordnance Survey Map 1893
7. Construction of the Metropolitan line showing Kings Cross Station to the east and Egremont Terrace to the west, c.1863 (Courtesy of Camden Local Studies and Archives Centre)
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9. a. St Pancras, Euston Road 1904 (Courtesy of Camden Local Studies and Archives Centre)
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21. Camden Town Hall Extension; Euston Road Elevation 1972. Camden Planning Archives
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24. Camden Town Hall Extension Plan c.1973. Camden Planning Archives

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30. Aerial view of St Pancras Station and the surrounding area, 1999 (English Heritage)
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33. Link between Camden Town Hall Extension and Camden Town Hall. DIA
34. North and East Elevations of Camden Town Hall Extension. DIA
35. South Elevation of Camden Town Hall Extension. DIA

Endnotes

- 1 Temple, P., 'Survey of London: volume 47: Northern Clerkenwell and Pentonville', London: 2008
- 2 Information taken from Temple, 'Survey of London' and Walford, E., 'Old and New London: volume 5', London: 1878
- 3 Godfrey, W. H. 'Survey of London: volume 24: The parish of St Pancras part 4: King's Cross Neighbourhood', London: 1952
- 4 Ibid
- 5 Information mainly taken from Camden Council, 'Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and management Strategy', 2011

