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## Planning, Design & Access Statement

**28-30 Hanway Street, London W1T 1UL**



On behalf of **Hanway 2 Limited**

June 2015 - V1

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**Submission Documents:**

- Architectural Plans by Form Design Architecture
- Design Statement by Form Design Architecture
- 4 x Verified CGI Visual Views
- Lifetime Homes Statement by Form Design Architecture
- Daylight, Sunlight and Overshadowing Assessment by Aurora Daylight Consulting
- Noise Impact Assessment by 24 Acoustics
- BREEAM Pre-Assessment by Verte Ltd
- Code for Sustainable Homes Pre-Assessment by Verte Ltd
- Energy Statement by Verte Ltd
- Draft Construction Management Plan by CorraMore Construction Ltd
- Structural Report by Price & Myers
- Basement Impact Assessment by Price & Myers
- Heritage Statement & Appendices by RMA Heritage
- Viability & Development Feasibility by CBRE
- Marketing Evidence Letter April 2014 from James Lewis and Company
- Marketing Report 2014 by James Lewis and Company
- Marketing Report 2014 by Savoy Stewart
- Office Availability Schedule Nov 2014 by Savoy Stewart
- Office Availability Schedule June 2015 by Savoy Stewart
- Marketing Letter from James Lewis and Company May 2015
- Marketing Letter from Savoy Stewart May 2015
- Supporting Letter from Plan Projects 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2015
- Community Infrastructure Levy Form completed by Washbourne Field Planning

## 1. Introduction

This Statement has been prepared by **Washbourne Field Planning** to accompany a full planning application made to Camden Council for scheme proposals that require planning permission and conservation area consent at Nos. 28-30 Hanway Street, London, W1T 1UL.

The submitted scheme proposes to demolish the existing building (Class B1 - currently in mixed-use as a wholesale fabric retailers, with ancillary storage and offices) and to replace it with a new mixed-use building comprising offices (Class B1) at basement, ground and first floors, with residential units (Class C3) on the upper floors (one x 1-bed flat, one x 2-bed flat and one x 3-bed flat), including private and communal amenity space.

The purpose of the statement is:

- To understand the site and its context;
- To explain the principles of the proposal, and of the reasoning, design process and concepts behind them;
- To take into account the significance of the building within the conservation area context;
- To describe the make-up and configuration of the proposed uses and development on the site;
- To show the way in which the proposals have responded to an understanding of the site and its urban context;
- To describe and show that the final scheme proposals have been informed by, and carefully designed to incorporate feedback and guidance from Officers at Camden Council following detailed pre-application discussions and meetings; and
- To demonstrate that an inclusive and integrated approach has been adopted in the formulation of the development that responds to the relevant planning policy framework.

This statement is accompanied by design and architectural plans by award winning architectural practice, **Form Design Architecture (FDA)**. FDA are an award winning Central London practice, with an excellent professional reputation for thoughtful, innovative, skilled design work of the highest quality.

The submitted proposals have also been informed by expert heritage and conservation advice and input from Richard MacCullagh MRTPI IHBC from **RMA Heritage**. Richard has 20 years professional experience of advising on historic environment and design issues. Before establishing RMA Heritage, Richard managed the Conservation and Design Team at Winchester City Council, 1998-2008. He has also had articles published in the Building Conservation Directory on conservation areas (2009) and extending listed buildings (2013).

This statement and accompanying supporting documentation provide a comprehensive explanation of the proposal, which have been informed by, and carefully designed to incorporate feedback and guidance from Officers following detailed discussions and two meetings with Officers. In summary, the proposed development will comprise of the following elements:

- Demolition of the existing building at nos. 28-30 Hanway Street, comprising of basement, ground, first and second floors;
- Redevelopment and erection of a new building on site, comprising of basement, ground, first, second, and third floors with a set-back roof extension at fourth floor level;
- Change of use of the existing inefficient building in single use as a fabric storage/business, to a mixed-use building with more accessible, flexible and efficient modern flexible office floorspace on basement, ground and first floors for SMEs (increase of 15sqm of useable floorspace) and residential use on the upper floors;
- Mix of provision of 3 private market residential units (1 x 1 bedroom flat, 1 x 2 bedroom flat, and 1 x 3 bedroom flat) with private and communal amenity areas;
- Introduction of active frontages and improved public realm on Hanway Street and Hanway Place, in particular a new shopfront on Hanway Street; and
- A legal agreement to secure, amongst other items, the provision of a bespoke piece of public artwork to be commissioned and installed at no. 32 Hanway Street.

## 2. Site Context and Surrounding Area

The site is located within the London Borough of Camden, and is adjacent to the borough boundary with the City of Westminster. The site is on the northern side of Hanway Street which is a short, narrow street parallel to Oxford Street to the South of the site. The site forms part of a single 'island' terrace, which also fronts onto and Hanway Place. As the site is located just off Oxford Street, the site is located in the Central Activity Zone and has a Public Transport Accessibility Rating of 6B (Excellent).

The site is located within the Hanway Street Conservation Area, which incorporates Hanway Street, Hanway Place and the western side of Tottenham Court Road that forms part of Hanway Place. The conservation area is bounded by the rear of commercial properties on Oxford Street to the south, with the southern end of Hanway Street extending to the south west (which is within the Westminster City Council Hanway Street Conservation Area).

The existing building is an early Victorian rebuild on the site - which is underwhelming and heavily compromised due to alterations over the years. From historic research, it appears that the site was redeveloped in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> Century with two deeper plan buildings, which were converted into one premise between 1872 and 1895.

The existing building comprises of basement, raised ground, first, second and third floor levels, previously occupied and used as a wholesale fabric retailers (E I Rogooff Ltd) for several years. The business have recently decided to relocate out of town to more suitable space that can be better serviced and accessed. The company, which has always occupied the whole building, has only ever employed a maximum of 14 employees. The basement is ancillary storage space with no natural daylight, ventilation or sense or outlook.

The surrounding area is mixed in character with residential, commercial and retail uses in a mix of building types and forms, as would be expected in this through-fare pocket of Central London. This statement is accompanied by a Planning & Development Context document, under **Appendix 1**, which succinctly identifies the extraordinary wider context of mixed-use, commercial and residential development schemes within the locality - and also identifies the increasing investment and infrastructure improvements planned and on-going in this part of Camden and Westminster. All of these proposals and improvements are going to transform this area into one of the busiest and most sustainable areas in the UK.

The northern side of Hanway Street is in mixed use with commercial, retail and restaurant uses at ground floor level and residential and office uses above. The southern side of Hanway Street comprises of the rear of larger retail units which front onto Oxford Street. However, directly adjacent to the site at no. 24-49 Oxford Street which backs onto the southern side of Hanway Street, Westminster City Council granted planning permission (12/09915/FULL) for:

*“Partial demolition of Nos. 34-36, 40-42 and 48 Oxford Street. Erection of a new building rising to seven storeys around retained parts of existing buildings to provide retail (Class A1) use at basement, ground and first floor levels and on parts of the third and fourth floors, and residential use (Class C3) on the remaining parts of the third and fourth floors and at second, fifth and sixth floor levels, including new building to infill open yard on part of Hanway Street frontage. Screened plant at roof level on Oxford Street and on second floor flat roof on Hanway Street.”*

Hanway Place mainly comprises of the rear elevations of buildings along Hanway Street and is generally four storeys in height. The northern side of Hanway Place is mainly in residential use within Georgian style buildings.

### **3. Planning History**

In 1980, planning permission (30071) was granted for alterations to the Hanway Street elevation.

Significantly later, in 1999, planning permission (PS9805091) planning permission was refused for the retention of six air conditions units on the Hanway Place elevation at first floor level.

In 2000, planning permission (PS9904771) was granted with conditions for the installation of six air conditioning units on the centre of the main roof of the building.

Planning permission (PSX0104196) was refused in 2001 for the construction of a flat on the roof.

Following this application, another planning application (PSX0105123) was submitted and subsequently refused for the erection of a single storey roof extension to provide a two bedroom flat.

#### 4. Relevant Planning Decisions

Whilst we accept that every case is to be determined on its own merits, we have focused on the principle application and interpretation of policy and identified a number of cases in the surrounding area (Central Activity Zone and commercial areas) where the Council have allowed the change of use from offices to residential. In particular, we have identified how the Council has applied the key planning policies CS8 and DP13. A key policy consideration and consistent view from the Council is that the Council are promoting modern office space to meet projected demand, and so therefore the policy has allowed the Council to apply a general presumption that older office spaces can be released where housing or community uses are proposed.

- Planning permission (2013/2950) was granted in 2013 at the adjoining site of **no. 32 Hanway Street** for the change of use from offices (Class B1) to single family dwelling house (Class C3) including alterations to Hanway Street elevation involving replacement of entrance door with windows, roof addition and roof terrace with balustrading.
- Planning permission (2011/5439) was granted in 2012 at **no. 18 Hanway Street** for the erection of roof extension and change of use of part lower ground/ground floor and entire first, second and third floor from offices (Class B1) to residential (Class C3) to provide 3 x 1-bedroom and 2 x studio intermediate units and 1 x 3-bedroom market housing unit.

In considering the loss of employment, the Council's report states:

*"The existing building, although in a central London location, is on a very narrow street and does not lend itself well to flexible office space, nor does it provide accommodation that offers a range of unit sizes. Furthermore, considerable investment would be required to bring it up to modern office accommodation standards. It is acknowledged that the property has easy access to public transport and to the London road network but there is no space for on-site servicing either to the front or rear of the building at Hanway Place. Consequently, it is considered that the upper floors are not suitable for any other use other than B1a office."*

The report further states:

*"It is welcomed that office space will be retained and refurbished at lower ground and ground floor levels. Taking in consideration the retention and enhancement of this space alongside the proposed conversion of the upper floors to the Council's priority use as housing (and including a proportion of intermediate housing) officers are content that no further information in the form of marketing evidence is required in this case to justify the loss of office space. The principle of the change of use from office to residential is*



*considered to comply with Policy DP13 and the relevant supplementary planning guidance.”*

- A similar planning application (2013/5825/P) was submitted at the same property, for erection of mansard roof extension and change of use of the first, second and third floors from offices (Class B1) to residential (Class C3) to provide 5x1 bedroom flats and 1x3 bed flat. This application was refused and was the subject on an appeal, which was allowed in June this year (APP/X5210/A/14/2212879).
- Planning permission (2012/3537/P) at **no. 64 Charlotte Street** was refused for the erection of extensions at first to third floor level, raising of cornice by 240mm, alterations to fenestration, shopfront and addition of railings and stairs to open frontage lightwells all in connection with change of use from offices (Class B1) to residential (Class C3) on part of the ground floor and on the first to third floors (1x3 bed, 2x2 bed and 3x1 bed). This application was also the subject of an appeal (APP/X5210/A/13/2198369) to the Secretary of State, where the Inspector allowed the appeal.

In considering the loss of employment for a mixed-use scheme, the Inspector found that with the marketing information and a study showing the surplus of office accommodation within the local area, there was little commercial demand for the space. In addition, the Inspector considered the creation of better, more efficient office accommodation on the ground and basement floors and stated:

*“Any impact, from its loss, upon economic activity or employment opportunities in the Borough, is likely to be small and would not amount to a strong economic reason why the proposed change of use would be inappropriate, such as is referred to in paragraph 51 of the National Planning Policy Framework. In the light of the advice in that paragraph and other material considerations including the Council’s aim of maximising the supply of additional housing, and that the proposed work on the basement would effectively create new employment space, I conclude the proposed change of use of the upper floors and rear ground floor to residential use to be justified.”*

- Planning permission (2013/7434/P) was approved at **no. 64 Lincoln’s Inn Fields** for the change of use from offices (Class B1a) to residential (Class C3) and partial demolition, alteration and extension to create 9 residential units.

Paragraph 6.2 of the Committee Report stated:

*“LDF policies CS8 and DP13 provide a context for the loss of employment, in this instance office floorspace. Policy CS8 seeks to secure a strong economy in the borough by (amongst other things) safeguarding existing office premises in the borough which meet the needs of modern industry and employers. However, more specifically paragraph 8.8 indicates that the Council are promoting newly built office*

*space to meet projected demand, and so there is a general presumption that older office spaces can be released where housing or community uses are proposed."*

Paragraph 6.17 of the report further states:

*"It is acknowledged that the site owner could undertake refurbishment works to make the building attractive for business tenants. However in light of the site not meeting many of the DP13 requirements for an attractive business use location or condition, and by virtue of it falling under CPG5 Category 2/3, it would be unreasonable to request that the owner undertakes such a significant investment and risk. To request this could inappropriately result in significant piece of unused and underused land to continue lain vacant, whereas it could otherwise be redeveloped for an alternative use. In this case housing which is the council's top land use priority."*

- Planning permission (2014/3425/P) was approved at **no. 22 Tower Street** for the change of use and conversion from offices to 22 residential units.

**Paragraph 6.10 of the committee report** states:

*"In support of the policy DP13 requirements, Camden Planning Guidance 5 (CPG5) goes further to categorise employment sites in the borough. Category 1 is the highest quality, most rare and will always be protected. Category 3 is the lowest quality, most common and once empty are generally in of need significant investment to bring back into viable use. Following an inspection by officers, the buildings and site can reasonably be categorised between 2 and 3. Importantly, a consideration under Category 3 is to include sites that have become vacant and require significant investment to make them attractive for continued business use. This is applicable to this this site and to help demonstrate the investment needed the applicant has provided an estimate that refurbishment works are likely to costs in the region of £150/sqft which would amount to circa £2.5m. This is a reflection on the poor condition of the property and the works required to bring it up to modern standards. Necessary works would include new damp and water proofing and fixing existing damp issues, modernisation of existing mechanical and electrical services, and upgrades to comply with DDA."*

Paragraph 6.11 further states:

*"In summary, the requirements of policy DP13 part (a) and guidance under CPG5 demonstrate that there substantial works are required for the site to be attractive for modern day occupants a significant refurbishment would be necessary. This subsequently demonstrates that the site is not suitable for any other uses other than B1a offices, as such a permanent change of use to housing is supported by policy DP13."*

The committee report for this application had the same **Paragraph 6.17** to the above case at no 64 Lincoln Inn Fields.

- Planning permission (2014/2113/P) was approved at **Third Floor & Roof Level, 40-42 Parker Street** for the change of use from business floorspace to residential use.

Paragraph 62 of the committee report states:

*“The proposal involves the loss of 238sqm of business floorspace at the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor level. Meanwhile, business floorspace will be retained at the ground, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floor levels of the existing building. The proposed includes extension at roof level to provide 2 additional storeys plus roof terraces at the front and rear elevations. The proposed residential units would share the existing means of access.... Policy CS8 seeks to secure a strong economy in the borough by (amongst other things) safeguarding existing office premises in the borough which meet the needs of modern industry and employers. However, more specifically paragraph 8.8 indicates that the Council are promoting sufficient office space to meet projected demand, and so there is a general presumption that older office spaces can be released where housing or community uses are proposed.”*

In considering the loss of office accommodation (238sqm), **Paragraph 6.6** states:

*“At the time of the officer site visit the 3rd floor level was seen to be partially occupied as business floorspace use. However, the applicant has explained that it is let to an existing tenant of the building on a short term basis, after a separate unsuccessful marketing exercise was undertaken for the space. Locational factors and incompatibility with nearby uses were stated as to why the space was not let. The applicant has provided evidence to demonstrate various physical deficiencies with the third floor space neither providing, nor being capable of providing, high quality modern office floorspace. Factors include the sub-standard nature of the floorspace, in terms access, dedicated space for cabling; no voided ceilings for air handling equipment and no vertical service riser for modern communication or server support. Owing the above factors, the applicant has indicated that the current occupier would vacate the 3rd floor within the next 6 months. Furthermore, supply and demand data of the local area has been provided, which concludes that supply is more than sufficient for demand in this specific area. With the above in mind, it is considered that the applicant has adequately justified the loss of office accommodation at this floor of the building.”*

**Paragraph 6.7** states:

*“In addition, DP13 details that where a change of use has been justified to the Council’s satisfaction, it will be sought for some business use to be maintained on site. This has been incorporated within this proposal, with the ground to second floors remaining in office use. As such, the proposal is considered to be in line with the general thrust of policies CS8 and DP13. When the NPPF guidance is also given due consideration, it is concluded that the loss of employment floor at the 3rd floor level of the building has been established.”*

In the next section, we deal in detail with Planning Policy considerations.

## 5. Planning Policy

### (a) National Planning Policy Framework (DCLG, March 2012)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2012, and contains the Government's planning policies for England and explains how these are expected to be applied. Section 38 (6) requires that applications for development must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions.

The Framework is a key output resulting from the Plan for Growth and the Government's proposals to reform the planning system. It sets the planning agenda for supporting and pro-actively driving sustainable economic growth.

The Ministerial Foreword to NPPF states that:

*"The purpose of planning is to help sustainable development. Sustainable means ensuring that better lives for ourselves don't mean worse lives for future generations. Development means growth. We must accommodate the new ways by which we will earn our living in a competitive world... We must respond to the changes that new technologies offer us. Our lives, and the places in which we live them, can be better, but they will certainly be worse if things stagnate."*

**Paragraph 9** is also of relevance and states that *"pursuing sustainable development involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as in people's quality of life, including (but not limited to):*

- *Replacing poor design with better design;*
- *Improving the conditions in which people live, work, travel and take leisure; and*
- *Widening the choice of high quality homes".*

The Core Principles of the NPPF are found in **paragraph 17** which advises that within the overarching roles that the planning system ought to play, a set of core land-use planning principles should underpin both plan-making and decision-taking. Of these 12 principles, are that planning should amongst other matters, *"proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs... taking account of the needs of the residential and business communities."*

Also in **paragraph 17**, one of these core principles states that planning should also *"always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings."*

**Paragraph 20** states that to help achieve economic growth, local planning authorities should plan proactively to meet the development needs of business and support an economy fit for the 21st century.

**Paragraph 51** requires that local planning authorities should approve planning applications for change to residential use and any associated development from commercial buildings (currently in the B use classes) where there is an identified need for additional housing in that area, provided that there are not strong economic reasons why such development would be inappropriate.

**Paragraph 56** confirms that the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people.

Furthermore, **paragraph 57** states that it is important to plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings.

**Paragraph 60** adds that planning policies and decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles. It is, however, proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness.

Section 12 of the NPPF provides guidance in relation to conserving and enhancing the historic environment. **Paragraph 128** confirms that in determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected. The paragraph further adds that explains that the level of detail required need not be exhaustive and that it should be proportionate to the asset's importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal in question on the significance of the heritage asset in question.

**Paragraph 131** states that *"in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:*

- *the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- *the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic viability; and*
- *the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness".*

**Paragraph 134** states *"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."*

**Paragraph 137** states that *“Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. 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.”*

**Paragraph 138** states that not all elements of a conservation area will necessarily contribute to its significance. The NPPF further states that the loss of a building which makes a positive contribution to the conservation area should be treated either 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.

**Paragraph 187** advises that local planning authorities should look for solutions rather than problems, and decision-takers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible. Local planning authorities should work proactively with applicants to secure developments that improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area.

For the purposes of pre-application engagement and front loading, **paragraph 188** states that *“early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community”*.

In addition, **paragraph 190** advises *“the more issues that can be resolved at pre-application stage, the greater the benefits”*.

In determining planning applications, **paragraph 197** concludes *“in assessing and determining development proposals, local planning authorities should apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development.”*

#### **(b) National Planning Policy Guidance (DCLG, March 2014)**

The application has also carefully considered all of the following National Planning Policy Guidance documents, in particular:

- Conserving and enhancing the historic environment;
- Design; and
- Making an application.

### (c) The Development Plan

The Statutory Development Plan for this application comprises the July 2011 London Plan (amended by Revised Early Minor Modifications to the London Plan October 2013 and Further Alterations March 2015) together with Camden Council's Core Strategy adopted in 2010, which sets out the key elements of their vision for the borough and is a central part of their Local Development Framework. Alongside the Core Strategy, Camden Council also adopted Development Policies in 2010, which set out detailed planning criteria that are used to determine applications in the borough. The proposals have also considered the relevant supplementary planning documents (Camden Planning Guidance - CPGs), the Charlotte Street Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy and the Fitzrovia Area Action Plan.

#### The London Plan

Regional planning policy for London is contained within the July 2011 London Plan which sets out planning policy for the capital until 2031, integrating social, economic and environmental policy. The underlying objective is to accommodate London's population and economic growth through sustainable development. The key policies and paragraphs have been set out below.

The London Plan objectives (as set out under **Policy 1.1**) are to ensure London is:

1. A city that meets the challenges of the economic and population growth;
2. An internationally competitive and successful city;
3. A City of diverse, strong, secure and accessible neighbourhoods;
4. A City that delights the senses;
5. A City that becomes a world leader in improving the environment; and
6. A City where it is easy, safe and convenient for everyone to access jobs, opportunities and facilities.

**Paragraph 1.4** of the Plan states that London's population is likely to continue to grow and by the 2020s there are likely to be more Londoners than at any time in the city's history.

**Paragraph 1.15C** concerns household size and growth, and states, *"these trends mean we will have to plan for more homes, particularly meeting the accommodation needs of families and single person households including older people, both of which are likely to increase in number."*

**Paragraph 1.23** of the Plan recognises that without economic growth, the situation would be dire for London.



**Paragraph 1.47** identifies that only prudent course is to plan for continued growth. The paragraph continues stating these action plans, set out below, are essential to ensuring the capital remains a safe and attractive place to live in and to do business:

- **Substantial population growth**, ensuring London has the homes, jobs, services and opportunities a growing and ever more diverse population requires. Doing this in ways that do not worsen quality of life for London as a whole means we will have to ensure we make the best use of land that is currently vacant or under-used;
- **A growing and ever changing economy** by promoting and supporting innovation and ensure there are policies in place that allow them the space to grow in places meeting their needs.
- **Making real progress in addressing climate change**, in making sure buildings and the public realm are designed with climate change in mind, and reducing our emissions. Development can be managed to help this - designing buildings to be energy efficient, promoting decentralised and renewable energy and patterns of development that reduce the need to travel by less environmentally friendly modes of transport.
- **Improving quality of life for all Londoners and all of London** – enabling growth and change, while also supporting the retention of London’s heritage and distinctiveness, and making living here a better and more enriching experience for all.

**Paragraph 1.49** supports and recognises the **importance of improving and modernising the capitals building stock and private investment in the built environment**, and states, *“In looking at how these challenges are to be met, it is important to remember that the private sector dominates London’s economy, accounting for 84 per cent of output and employment. Achieving all the environmental, economic and social objectives outlined in this Plan relies upon modernisation and improvement of the capital’s stock of buildings and public realm, and this in turn means encouraging private investment and development.”*

**Policy 2.11** of the Plan concerns the **Central Activities Zone** and part A (b) states that Boroughs should *“seek solutions to constraints on office provision and other commercial development imposed by heritage designations without compromising local environmental quality, including through high quality design to complement these designations.”*

**Policy 3.1** states that planning decisions for development should protect and enhance facilities and services that meet needs of particular groups and communities.

Supporting **Paragraph 3.3** acknowledges that to provide **equal life in London** and to enable all people can make full contribution to the economic success of their city, there are physical and social barriers that need to be addressed. The paragraph further states, *“Addressing the spatial needs of London’s people and communities is essential to enable them to enjoy and*



*contribute to a safe, secure, accessible, inclusive and sustainable environment, and to ensure these are taken into account in new development.”*

**Policy 3.3** states that the Mayor recognises the pressing need for more **homes** in London. **Parts D** of this policy encourages Boroughs to achieve and exceed the relevant minimum borough annual average housing targets (8,892 - min. 10 year target).

**Part E** states that Boroughs should identify and seek to enable additional development capacity to be brought forward to supplement these targets having regard to the other policies of this Plan and in particular the potential to realise brownfield housing capacity, including (d) *“mixed use redevelopment, especially of surplus commercial capacity and surplus public land, and particularly that with good transport accessibility.”*

**Policy 3.5** states **housing** developments should be of the highest quality internally, externally and in relation to their context and to the wider environment, taking account of strategic policies in this Plan to protect and enhance London’s residential environment and attractiveness as a place to live. Table 3.3 provides the minimum space standards for new development.

**Policy 4.2** concerns **offices** and Part (A)(a) states that boroughs should support the management and mixed use development and redevelopment of office provision to improve London’s competitiveness and to address the wider objectives of this Plan, including enhancing its varied attractions for businesses of different types and sizes including small and medium sized enterprises.

**Part (A)** further states, under **point (b)** that boroughs should recognise and address strategic as well as local differences in implementing this policy to *“consolidate and extend the strengths of the diverse office markets elsewhere in the capital by promoting their competitive advantages, focusing new development on viable locations with good public transport, enhancing the business environment including through mixed use redevelopment, and supporting managed conversion of surplus capacity to more viable, complementary uses.”*

Furthermore, and of particular importance to this application, **point (c)** continues stating that to achieve this policy boroughs should *“encourage renewal and modernisation of the existing office stock in viable locations to improve its quality and flexibility.”*

**Part (B), under point (a)**, of policy 4.2 continues stating that LDFs should enhance the environment and offer of London’s office locations in terms of physical attractiveness, amenities, ancillary and supporting activities as well as services, accessibility, safety and security.

**Policy 4.3** concerns **mixed use development and offices**. Part (A) states that within the CAZ, increases in office floorspace, or those above a local threshold, should provide for a mix of uses including housing.

**Paragraph 4.15** states that the Mayor encourages mixed use development, with different approaches for places where high office values will generally support other uses, and those where values for other uses (such as residential) may be higher and support some office space renewal.

**Paragraph 4.15** further states, *“London’s economic growth depends heavily on an efficient labour market and this in turn requires adequate housing provision to sustain it. This can be partly addressed through mixed use development.”*

**Paragraph 4.18** acknowledges that Boroughs concerns over the loss of smaller scale offices, which usually form part of vibrant and missed use localities, and the importance of sustaining office capacity in these areas. However the Plan states that boroughs should still actively encourage office renewal to contribute to housing provision, and that justification should be provided by strategic and local assessments of office need.

**Policy 5.2** seeks to minimise carbon emissions and provides detailed targets for carbon dioxide emission reductions for residential and non-domestic buildings.

**Policy 5.3** concerns **sustainable design and construction** and provides key sustainable design principles. The policy further states that development proposals should demonstrate that sustainable design standards are integral to the proposal, including its construction and operation, and ensure that they are considered at the beginning of the design process.

**Policy 6.9** seeks to encourage **cycling** in London and states that developments should provide secure, integrated convenient and accessible cycle parking facilities, in line with the minimum standards set in Table 6.3.

**Policy 6.13** relates to **parking** and states that the maximum standards set out in the Parking Addendum to Chapter 6 should be the basis for considering planning applications.

**Policy 7.2** seeks the provision of an **inclusive environment** and confirms that the Mayor will require all new development in London to achieve the highest standards of accessible and inclusive design and supports the principles of inclusive design. For planning decisions, this means that proposals are required to comply with standards defined by Boroughs and cited within Policy 7.2.

**Policy 7.4** states that developments should have regard to the form, function, and structure of an area, place or street and the scale, mass and orientation of surrounding buildings. Planning decisions for buildings should provide a high quality design response that considers the criteria set out under Policy 7.4

**Policy 7.6** confirms that at a strategic level architecture should make a positive contribution to a coherent public realm, streetscape and wider cityscape. It should incorporate the highest quality materials and design appropriate to its context. In relating this to planning decisions, the policy requires that buildings and structures should be of the highest architectural quality, be of a proportion, composition, scale and orientation that enhances, activates and appropriately defines the public realm, comprises details and materials that complement, not necessarily replicate, the local architectural character.

**Policy 7.8** concerns heritage assets and archaeology and advises that development should incorporate measures that identify record, interpret, protect and, where appropriate, present the site's archaeology. For planning decisions, development should identify value, conserve, restore, re-use and incorporate heritage assets, where appropriate. Development affecting heritage assets and their settings should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to their form, scale, materials and architectural detail.

**Paragraph 7.31A** states *"Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimal viable use."*

#### **Camden Local Development Framework (Camden Council, 2010)**

Camden Council is currently in the process of preparing a draft Camden Local Plan. This will seek to replace the Council's adopted Core Strategy and Development Policies documents to ensure the Council's planning policies are consistent and take account of new national legislation (NPPF), a new London Plan and other legislative changes.

To develop these policies, the Council have already undertaken early consultant and engagement on the draft Local Plan. The local plan is not considered to be advanced enough to be used for determining planning applications. It is clear that these policies cannot carry any weight in the decision making process given the absence of draft wording, statutory regulation 19 consultation, and an examination in public - expected to be late 2015/early 2016.

**Core Strategy Policies: Policy CS1** sets out the Council's overall approach to growth and development stating, *"the Council will focus Camden's growth in the most suitable locations, and manage it to make sure that we deliver its opportunities and benefits and achieve sustainable development, while continuing to preserve and enhance the features that make Camden such an attractive place to live, work and visit."*

In addition, the policy states that they Council will promote appropriate development in growth areas and other highly sustainable locations, in particular in Central London.

**Policy CS1** further states that the Council will promote the efficient use of land and buildings in Camden by:

- d) seeking development that makes full use of its site, taking into account quality of design, its surroundings, sustainability, amenity, heritage, transport accessibility and any other considerations relevant to the site;*
- e) resisting development that makes inefficient use of Camden's limited land;*
- f) expecting development that will significantly increase the demand of travel to be located in growth areas and other highly accessible parts of the borough;*
- g) expecting high density development in Central London, town centres and other locations well served by public transport; and*
- h) expecting the provision of a mix of uses in suitable schemes, in particular in the most accessible parts of the borough, including an element of housing where possible.*

**Policy CS6** identifies that the Council will aim to make full use of Camden's capacity for housing by maximising the supply of additional housing to meet or exceed Camden's target of 5,950 homes from 2007-2017, including 4,370 additional self contained homes. The policy also continues and states that it regards 'housing as the priority land-use of Camden's Local Development Framework.'

**Policy CS8** promotes a successful and inclusive economy in the Borough and seeks to ensure that the Borough retains a strong economy. The policy states: "the Council will secure a strong economy in Camden and seeks to ensure that no-one is excluded from its success. We will:

- a) promote the provision of 444,000 sq m of permitted office floorspace at King's Cross as well as in the range of 70,000 sq m of office provision at Euston with further provision in the other growth areas and Central London to meet the forecast demand of 615,000 sq m to 2026;*
- b) support Camden's industries by:*
  - safeguarding existing employment sites and premises in the borough that meet the needs of modern industry and other employers;*
  - safeguarding the borough's main Industry Area; and*
  - promoting and protecting the jewellery industry in Hatton Garden;*
- c) expect a mix of employment facilities and types, including the provision of facilities suitable for small and medium sized enterprises, such as managed, affordable workspace;*
- d) support local enterprise development, employment and training schemes for Camden residents;*
- e) recognise and encourage the concentrations of creative and cultural businesses in the borough as well as supporting the development of Camden's tourism sector whilst ensuring that any new facilities meet the other strategic objectives of the Core Strategy;*
- f) recognise the importance of other employment generating uses, including retail, markets, leisure, education, tourism and health.*

**Paragraph 8.8** states that the provision above means that the future supply of offices in the borough can meet projected demand. Consequently the Council will consider proposals for other uses of older office premises if they involve the provision of permanent housing (in particular, affordable housing) and community uses.

**Paragraph 8.20** concerning small businesses states that the Council will seek the provision of innovative new employment floorspace in developments that will provide a range of facilities including flexible occupancy terms, flexible layouts, studios, workshops, networking, socializing and meeting space that will meet the needs of a range of business types and sizes.

**Policy CS9** seeks to achieve a successful Central London and the policy approach to the unique pressures and challenges faced by Central London and how we will manage growth in the area to ensure it brings benefits to the borough and beyond and protects and enhances the factors that make it a popular place to live, visit and do business. The Policy states that the Council will support and promote the Central London area of Camden, and the Council will:

- a) *“recognise its unique role, character and challenges;*
- b) *support Central London as a focus for Camden’s future growth in homes, offices, shops, hotels and other uses;*
- c) *seek to ensure that development in Central London, in the growth areas of King’s Cross, Euston, Tottenham Court Road and Holborn and beyond, contributes to London’s economic, social and cultural role while meeting the needs of local residents and respecting their quality of life;*
- d) *support residential communities within Central London by protecting amenity and supporting community facilities;*
- e) *seek to secure additional housing and affordable homes, including as part of appropriate mixed use developments;*
- f) *take into account the specific identity of the areas within Central London when taking decisions on planning applications and in relevant initiatives and works;*
- g) *promote and protect areas of specialist activity, such as the Museum Street area and Hatton Garden;*
- h) *support the concentration of medical, educational, cultural and research institutions within central London;*
- i) *preserve and enhance the area’s historic environment;*
- j) *seek to improve the quality of the area’s streets and places, the connections between them and the ease of movement into, and through, the area;*
- k) *continue to designate Central London as a Clear Zone Region to reduce congestion, promote walking and cycling and improve air quality;*
- l) *promote improved community safety;*
- m) *manage the location and concentration of food, drink and entertainment uses and their impact;*
- n) *allocate sites within Central London for appropriate uses, including offices and housing, in the Camden Site Allocations document.”*

**Policy CS11** seeks to make private transport more sustainable by minimising the provision for private parking in new developments and promoting sustainable travel.

**Policy CS13** concerns climate changes through promoting higher environmental standards. The policy states that the Council will encourage all development to meet the highest standards that are viable by promoting the efficient use of land and buildings; minimising

carbon emissions; ensuring developments use less energy; and ensuring buildings are designed to cope with, and minimise the effects of climate change.

**Policy CS14** seeks to promote high quality places and to conserve the heritage of the borough. The policy states that 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;*
- e) *protecting important views of St Paul's Cathedral and the Palace of Westminster from sites inside and outside the borough and protecting important local views.”*

**Policy CS15** encourages biodiversity through the provision of new or enhanced habitats, where possible, including through biodiverse green or brown roofs.

**Development Management Policies: Policy DP2** encourages making full use of Camden's capacity for housing. The policy states that it will expect *‘the maximum appropriate contribution to supply of housing on sites that are underused or vacant, taking into account any other uses that are needed on the site.’*

**Policy DP5** states that the Council will contribute to the creation of mixed and inclusive communities by securing a range of self-contained homes of different sizes. The Council will seek to ensure that all residential development contributes to meeting the priorities set out in the Dwelling Size Priorities Table, and expect a mix of large and small homes. Within the Dwelling Size Priorities Table, there is a very high priority for 2-bedroom units, a medium priority for 3-bedroom units and lower priority for 1-bedroom units.

**Policy DP6** states that all housing developments should meeting lifetime homes standards.

**Policy DP13** relates to employment space and provides more detailed information as to how the aims in CS8 will be implemented. It states that the Council will retain land and buildings that are suitable for continued business use and resist a change to non-business use unless it can be demonstrated that the site or building is no longer suitable for its existing business use. Policy DP13 also states that where site is not suitable for continued business use, the Council will consider redevelopment mixed-use schemes.

**Paragraph 13.3** states that when assessing proposals that involve the loss of a business use we will consider whether there is potential for that use to continue, taking into account whether the site:

- is located in or adjacent to the Industry Area, or other locations suitable for large scale general industry and warehousing;
- is in a location suitable for a mix of uses including light industry and local distribution warehousing;
- is easily accessible to the Transport for London Road Network and/or London Distributor Roads;
- is, or will be, accessible by means other than the car and has the potential to be serviced by rail or water;
- has adequate on-site vehicle space for servicing;
- is well related to nearby land uses;
- is in a reasonable condition to allow the use to continue;
- is near to other industry and warehousing, noise/vibration generating uses, pollution and hazards;
- provides a range of unit sizes, particularly those suitable for small businesses (under 100sqm).

**Policy DP17** promotes walking, cycling and public transport use. The policy states that developments should make suitable provision for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport.

**Policy DP18** sets out the Council's parking standards and states, *"the Council will seek to ensure that developments provide the minimum necessary car parking provision. The Council will expect development to be car free in the Central London Area."* The policy also states that developments will be expected to meet the minimum standards for cycle parking.

**Policy DP22** promotes sustainable design and construction measures and states that schemes must (a) demonstrate how sustainable development principles have been incorporated into the design and proposed implementation; and (b) incorporate green or brown roofs and green walls wherever suitable. The policy further states that the Council will promote and expect new building housing to meet Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4 by 2013.

**Policy DP24** aims to secure high quality 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) provision of appropriate hard and soft landscaping including boundary treatments;*
- h) the provision of appropriate amenity space; and*
- i) accessibility."*

**Policy DP25** aims to maintain the character of Camden's conservation areas, and 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.”*

**Paragraph 25.6** states: *“The Council has a general presumption in favour of retaining buildings that make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area, whether they are listed or not so as to preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area. We will not grant conservation area consent for the total or substantial demolition of such a building where this would harm the appearance of the conservation area, unless exceptional circumstances are shown that outweigh the case for retention. Applicants will be required to justify the demolition of a building that makes a positive contribution to a conservation area, having regard to Policy HE7 of Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 5: Planning for the Historic Environment, Camden’s conservation area statements, appraisals and management plans and any other relevant supplementary guidance produced by the Council.”*

**Policy DP26** seeks to manage the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours to protect the quality of life of occupiers and neighbours by only granting permission for development that does not cause harm to amenity. In addition, the policy also requires developments are to provide:

- h) an acceptable standard of accommodation in terms of internal arrangements, dwelling and room sizes and amenity space;*
- i) facilities for the storage, recycling and disposal of waste;*
- j) facilities for bicycle storage; and*
- k) outdoor space for private or communal amenity space, wherever practical.*

**Policy DP28** concerns noise and vibration and seeks to ensure that these are controlled and managed. The policy states that the Council will only grant planning permission for plant or machinery if it can be operated without causing harm to amenity and does not exceed the Council’s thresholds.

**Policy DP29** seeks to improve access and states the Council will seek to promote fair access and remove the barriers that prevent people from accessing facilities and opportunities. The Council will:



- a) expect all buildings and places meet the highest practicable standards of access and inclusion;
- b) require buildings and spaces that the public may use to be designed to be as accessible as possible;
- c) expect facilities to be located in the most accessible parts of the borough;
- d) expect spaces between buildings to be fully accessible;
- e) encourage accessible public transport;
- f) secure car parking for disabled people; and
- g) secure accessible homes.

### Camden Planning Guidance SPDs

**Camden Planning Guidance 1 (Design) (CPG1)** was adopted in 2011, and updated in September 2013. This guidance seeks to support the policies in the Council's Core Strategy and Development Policies - and forms a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

**Section 2 of CPG1** identifies the Camden is committed to excellence in design and schemes should consider:

- *The context of a development and its surrounding area;*
- *The design of the building itself;*
- *The use of the building;*
- *The materials used; and*
- *Public spaces.*

**Section 3 of CPG1** relates to heritage and states that Camden has rich architectural heritage and that there is a responsibility for the Council to preserve, and where possible, enhance these areas and buildings.

- *We will only permit development within conservation areas that preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the area*
- *Our conservation area statements, appraisals and management plans contain more information on all the conservation areas*
- *Historic buildings can and should address sustainability*

**Paragraph 3.9** specifically relates to demolition in conservation areas and states:

*“Conservation Area Consent is required to demolish or substantially demolish a building over 115 cubic metres or a structure such as a wall over 1 metre high that adjoins a highway, or more than 2 metres high elsewhere. When determining your application we will follow the guidance in PPS5, Core Strategy policy CS14 and Development Policy DP24 as well as that in our conservation area statements, appraisals and management plans (see below). It is an offence to totally or substantially demolish a building or structure in a conservation area without first getting consent from us and we would not normally allow their demolition*

*without substantial justification, in accordance with criteria set out in government guidance PPS5 – Planning for the Historic Environment.”*

**Paragraphs 5.23-5.24** provide detailed guidance in relation to balconies and terraces. The guidance states that whilst they can provide valuable amenity space for flats that would otherwise have little or no private exterior space, they need to form an integral element of the design. The key to whether a design is acceptable is the degree to which the balcony or terrace complements the elevation - consideration should be given to the following:

- *detailed design to reduce the impact on the existing elevation;*
- *careful choice of materials and colour to match the existing elevation;*
- *possible use of setbacks to minimise overlooking – a balcony need not necessarily cover the entire available roof space;*
- *possible use of screens or planting to prevent overlooking of habitable rooms or nearby gardens, without reducing daylight and sunlight or outlook; and*
- *need to avoid creating climbing opportunities for burglars.*

**Camden Planning Guidance 5 (Town Centres, Retail and Employment) (CPG5)** states that the Council ‘*may allow the change of use from B1(a) offices to another use in some circumstances, such as older office premises or buildings that were originally built as residential dwellings.*’

The guidance further states that the Council’s priority will be for the replacement use to be for housing or community use. This policy guidance states that when it would be difficult to make an assessment against the following list of criteria (**paragraph 7.4**), then additional marketing evidence would be required:

- the criteria listed in paragraph 13.3 of policy DP13 of the Camden Development Policies;
- the age of the premises. Some older premises may be more suitable to conversion;
- whether the premises include features required by tenants seeking modern office accommodation;
- the quality of the premises and whether it is purpose built accommodation. Poor quality premises that require significant investment to bring up to modern standards may be suitable for conversion;
- whether there are existing tenants in the building, and whether these tenants intend to relocate;
- the location of the premises and evidence of demand for office space in this location; and
- whether the premises currently provide accommodation for small and medium businesses.

### **Fitzrovia Area Action Plan**

The Fitzrovia Area Action Plan (AAP) was adopted in March 2014 and seeks to help shape future of Fitzrovia by developing a vision for the area; ensuring growth takes place that

balances the need for residential, institutional and commercial uses whilst supporting the residential community and future needs; ensuring that growth delivers the maximum benefits to the area; creating a high quality environment; and ensuring an environmentally sustainable future.

**Policy F1** relates to planning decision in Fitzrovia and states that *“the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. It will always work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.”*

This policy further states *“planning applications that accord with up-to-date land use, design and development principles in the Fitzrovia Area Action Plan (and with the up-to-date policies in the Camden Core Strategy, Camden Development Policies 2010 and, where relevant, any neighbourhood plans) will be approved without delay and applications that conflict will be refused, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.”*

The AAP identifies the following key aspects of Fitzrovia’s character:

- *a mix of residential, commercial and institutional uses; within the area as a whole, within streets and often within individual buildings;*
- *a significant residential community, a large number of jobs based in the area, a substantial student population and a lack of affordable homes;*
- *numerous heritage assets, including Georgian terraces with a harmony of height, windows and materials, contrasting with a variety of modern scales and styles*

**Principle 1** of the AAP concerns housing and states, *“the Council will promote the development of permanent self-contained housing unless there are strong economic reasons why such development would be inappropriate.”*

**Principle 4** of the APP concerns small and medium enterprises and states the Council will support small and medium enterprises by seeking to ensure that where appropriate, existing business premises suitable for SME use are retained; and new business development is designed flexibly to allow parts of the property to be occupied by SMEs.

Supporting text for this principle states, *“Increases in housing stock in Fitzrovia are welcome, and the Council will be flexible in its consideration of residential proposals, particularly in the case of vacant premises originally designed as housing. However, we will seek to ensure that stock of business premises is not reduced in a way that would harm business growth in general, and particularly the birth and growth of SMEs.”*

**Principle 9** of the AAP concerns residential amenity and states that the Council will have regard to the particular impacts on residential amenity and will seeks a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.

**Principle 10** seeks to ensure that all development in Fitzrovia will incorporate appropriate measures to make the area more sustainable and tackle climate change.

**Part 5** of the AAP relates to character areas and urban design principles. The APP states *“development should respond positively to the prevailing form of nearby buildings and frontages in terms of scale and grain.”*

In the character appraisals within the AAP, in considering Hanway Street, the AAP states, *“The narrow, curving streets, tight grain and the intimate quiet feel of this area contrasts to the open planned grid to the north, and to the large Central Cross complex. Small shops, offices and restaurants are on located on the ground floor of Hanway Street with residential above. The cul-de-sac of Hanway Place is very quiet. Buildings are terraced properties of mixed age and style and are predominantly 3-4 storeys.”*

## 6. Conservation Area Context

The site is located within Hanway Street Conservation Area. The area is bounded by the rear of commercial properties on Oxford Street to the south, with the southern end of Hanway Street extending to the south west (which is within the Westminster City Council Hanway Street Conservation Area).

The Conservation Area was previously within and now directly adjoins the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, and is close to the boundary of Denmark Street and Charlotte Street Conservation Areas. The wider area is predominantly residential and commercial, with shops and small business interspersed with hotels, restaurants and public houses. Residential uses are retained above and within some properties and there are blocks of modern flats within the wider area.

The pre-application submission has also considered the key points identified in the study by English Heritage relating to Hanway Street - as set out in English Heritage's publication '*Valuing Places: Good Practice in Conservation Areas*'. We have requested a copy of this from English Heritage and hope to review this study alongside the emerging scheme proposal, in due course.

**Part One - Conservation Area Appraisal:** The adopted Hanway Street Conservation Area Appraisal is based on the Hanway Street sub area that was designated in 1985. The appraisal has been based on survey work undertaken in 2010 and as a result of this survey and extensive consideration, the Hanway Street area was considered to have a very different character and should be the subject of an Appraisal and Management Plan in its own right.

Importantly, **paragraph 1.6** states *"future development proposals must be considered in the context of this character appraisal and a thorough assessment at the time of the specific character and appearance of that part of the conservation area."*

**Paragraph 5.7** concerns **Nos.28-32 Hanway Street** and state that these are *"four storey terraces in a yellow brick, with sash windows with stucco surrounds, some with rubbed brick window heads. The ground floor frontages and the rear, backing onto Hanway Place, have been significantly altered and include poorly executed alterations to the fenestration."*

**Paragraph 5.9** describes the **characteristic local details and prevalent building materials:** *"Yellow and brown brick are the predominant facing materials with a variety of red brick and stucco detailing to sash timber windows and to door heads. Timber shopfronts are prevalent on Hanway Street, varying in age, detailing and quality. There are some metal windows and shutters on later buildings. Rubbed brick arches, stucco window surrounds and decorative dressings are characteristic. Elaborate pilasters survive on some shopfronts and are another important feature."*

**Paragraphs 5.10 and 5.11** identify the key views and vistas within the conservation area. These are mainly the vistas into and along the narrow widths of the road, allowing glimpses of Hanway Street and the curve of the terraces on the approach from Oxford Street. The Appraisal also highlights *“the junction of Hanway Street and Hanway Place at the western extremity of the conservation area is another focal point, the eye is drawn to the narrow opening that leads to Hanway Place and the lively and colourful shopfronts on Hanway Street.”*

**Paragraph 6.4** identifies that there are a number of individual buildings and groups of buildings that contribute to the character and appearance of their immediate surroundings and the conservation area as a whole. The application site (28-30 Hanway Street) is identified as a positive contributor.

**Paragraph 6.6** highlights that there are negative elements within the conservation area, such as UPVC windows.

**Paragraph 7.3** states *“Shopfronts, including well designed contemporary ones can make an important contribution to the character and appearance of both individual buildings and the conservation areas as a whole, as well as being of historic and architectural interest in their own right. Historic shopfronts in the conservation area do survive, although some have been altered and replaced.”*

**Part Two - Management Strategy:** As part of the Management Strategy, the Council are to review the Conservation Area to ensure that the character and appearance is being maintained and protected to re-evaluate boundaries and see whether there are areas which justify inclusion or whether there are areas which have deteriorated to such an extent that their character and appearance has been lost.

The most recent and up to date review of the character appraisal was in March 2011 (over 3 years ago). The next review will be in 2016, which will be five years from the current review.

**Paragraph 12.9** states that the area comprises a variety of built forms, generally comprising 3 and 4 storey terraced buildings - and further states *“new design should respect the scale and layout of the particular location, and complement the appearance, character and setting of the existing buildings and structures, historic street pattern, areas of open space, and the environment as a whole.”*

**Paragraph 12.11** sets out the statutory consideration that *“development proposals will be expected to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Hanway Street Conservation Area.”*

**Paragraph 12.16** identifies that new applications for replacement shopfronts represent an opportunity for improvement and enhancement of the character and appearance of the area.

**Paragraphs 13.10-13.11** concerns demolition within the conservation area. Paragraph 13.11 states:

*“The Council will seek the retention of those buildings that are considered to make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area. Consent will not be granted for demolition of any building in the conservation area unless a redevelopment scheme has been approved which will preserve or enhance the conservation area.”*

**Paragraph 13.21** identifies opportunities for enhancement. The Strategy states *“the rear of 24/26 and 28 and 30 Hanway Street (fronting Hanway Place) and 1a Hanway Place would benefit from enhancement, the poor unkempt appear of these properties in particular, along with a high incidence of alterations to windows, unsightly down pipes and equipment give the area a run down appearance.”*

## 7. Pre-application Advice & Consultation

The submitted planning application has been developed and designed following extensive pre-application advice and discussions with senior planning, and design and conservation officers from Camden Council (pre-application reference: 2014/7574/PRE).

The pre-application advice and consultation with Camden Council comprised of formal written advice in the form of a letter and follow-up pre-application advice sent via email from Eimear Heavey and Hannah Walker. Follow-up email pre-application advice and discussions, including a meeting with officers, followed the submission of revised proposals, which sought to address and respond to the original pre-application letter.

Pre-application advice from the Council confirmed that in relation to the demolition of the existing building, this would cause 'less than substantial' harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area – and as such, paragraph 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework would apply. In relation to the detailed design of a replacement building, the Council considered both the initial and revised design of the replacement building to be of sympathetic design, scale and height and Officers found the front elevation to be of elegant composition. The design of the rear elevation was also considered to be appropriate and sympathetic.

On land-use considerations, the Council's advice was supportive in-principle of the provision of residential use on the site. However, the Council were concerned with initial scheme proposals where there was a loss of employment floorspace, with only office at ground and basement floor levels. Therefore, following the Council's advice, which stated that the Council would consider a redevelopment proposal for a mixed-use scheme that maintained or increased the level of employment floorspace and premises suitable for SMEs.

In response to the pre-application advice on various topic areas received in meetings, letters, emails, and from discussions with Camden Council, the scheme proposals have been appropriately amended and further details have been added where requested. The submission includes, and has been informed by technical assessments, reports, and advice to provide details and information relating to a number of specialist areas:

- Materiality and visual treatment;
- Daylight and Sunlight;
- Background Noise Levels;
- Proposed Plant Specification and Noise Impact;
- Heritage & Conservation Area impacts;
- Sustainability;
- Structural and construction considerations; and
- Draft Heads of Terms.



## 8. Draft Heads of Terms

This section sets out the proposed draft S106 Heads of Terms for the full planning application, and identifies where financial contributions will be made and where legal obligations and works 'in kind' are proposed.

It is envisaged that discussions relating to the obligations and the Section 106 Agreement will continue with Camden Council during the determination of the application to formally agree on the heads of terms, financial contributions and any proposed works in lieu of payments.

The development scheme is also liable to pay the Mayoral Community Infrastructure Levy and Camden Council's Community Infrastructure Levy based on the net increase in floor area of 232sqm.

At this stage in discussions with the Council, the application will seek to make contributions and commitments to the following areas:

- 1) **Construction Management Plan** - Legal obligation to secure approval and implementation of construction and demolition details approved by the Council.
- 2) **Demolition Contract Details** - Legal obligation to secure approval implementation of demolition contracts prior to demolition.
- 3) **Level Plans** - Legal obligation to secure approval and implementation of proposed levels where the site adjoins the public highway.
- 4) **Car Free Housing** - Legal obligation/covenant to ensure the residential units forming part of the development shall not be entitled to a Residents Parking Permit to park a vehicle in a Residents Parking Bay and will not be able to buy a contract to park within any car park owned, controlled or licensed by the Council.
- 5) **Highways/Public Realm Improvements** - Legal obligation/financial contribution towards site-related highways and public realm improvements on Hanway Street and Hanway Place.
- 6) **Public Art** - Legal obligation to secure the Council's prior approval and implementation/installation of a bespoke piece of artwork to be commissioned for the prominent corner, and important view in the conservation area, of no. 32 Hanway Street.

## 9. Planning Appraisal & Assessment

### (a) Introduction

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 refers to the development plan as a whole and states that:

*“If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the Planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.”*

The Framework makes it clear that development plans must be prepared with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development and that they should be consistent with its policies and kept up to date. Wherever a development plan is absent, silent or its policies are out of date, or where there is more than limited conflict with the Framework, the Framework will carry greater weight as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

On this basis, this section assesses the key issues to be considered by Camden Council in determining the submitted applications, which are identified below:

- i. Whether the proposals accord with the relevant policies of the development plan;
- ii. The overall need for housing, and flexible, modern and accessible employment floorspace in Central London;
- iii. The contribution of the existing building within the conservation area, and whether the proposed replacement building enhances this contribution;
- iv. Whether the public benefits arising from the proposal outweigh the harm when considering securing the site's optimum viable use and demolition of the existing building; and
- v. If the proposals would amount to sustainable development as defined in the Framework.

### (b) Land Use Considerations

The proposal seeks the change of use of the site from offices that have been used for storage/retail space by a fabric company, to a mixed-use comprising of inclusive, accessible flexible modern commercial use at basement, ground and first floors and residential use on the upper floors.

#### **The Existing Building & Land Use**

The existing fabric retail company (E I Rogoff Ltd) who have been using the building for several years have recently decided to relocate out of town to more suitable space that can

be better serviced and accessed. The company, which has always occupied the whole building, has only ever employed a maximum of 14 employees. The company do not use the basement for commercial or employment uses, and have historically used this floorspace for storage purposes due to the poor floor to ceiling heights and the lack of daylight or natural ventilation. In addition, there is no lift or inclusive access to this floor, which has restricted its use.

This company intends to relocate to the North of the Borough outside of the congestion charging zone and with space for one or two vehicles to better meet their business needs and requirements. The submitted letter and report by James Lewis & Company highlights the brief and advice given to the occupier to sell the building and pursue relocating. The submitted letter shows the decision and intention of the existing occupier and the property has now been contractually sold and the business is set on relocating.

As demonstrated by the existing tenant relocating to more suitable, attractive and useable premises, the building is considered to be no longer suitable for continued employment use. The building fabric and accommodation is tired and unattractive, and is in desperate need of significant investment and upgrading to be used for modern employment accommodation - and to attract young and creative companies who require flexible accommodation with basic facilities such as secure cycle parking, shower and changing facilities, lift access, and disability compliant access within the building.

As highlighted above, the existing building does not provide attractive, flexible high quality office accommodation of a modern-day standard, which is expected by both corporate companies as well as small to medium enterprises and start-up companies (SMEs). We have objectively appraised the existing building and its accommodation, and set out a summary below, and these use the principles with Paragraph 7.4 of CPG5, which is applied where there is a change of use from office to a non-business use which is not the case for this application, however the principles are useful in objectively assessing the continued use of the building:

1. The premises are old and tired, and have never been refurbished by the previous long-term occupant.
2. The existing accommodation does not appear to be compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act, and does not provide inclusive access.
3. The building does not have level access with the public highway is only accessible using a number of steps before being able to enter the building's uninviting lobby area at raised ground floor level.
4. There is also no lift access within the building, which is crucial to the building's potential to be flexible to ensure its long-term future to provide employment in Camden - in particular, its attractiveness and flexibility for SMEs.
5. The existing staircase is narrow with some places being less than 700m.

6. The existing building does not have kitchenettes, WCs, or disabled WCs on each floor, which further restricts the building's potential to provide flexible accommodation - once again, restricting the building's potential to attract SMEs.
7. Setting aside the difficulty of accessing the building from pavement level, which is pretty fundamental to the building's usability, even if a client or employee who was disabled were able to access the ground floor, there are no WC or kitchenette facilities for this individual.
8. The existing basement has no natural daylight or sunlight, and does not benefit from any natural ventilation or sense of outlook.
9. The existing basement accommodation provides an unattractive environment with awkward and varied ceiling heights at low levels, which is why the existing tenant has only used this floor for storage purposes for many years.
10. The existing building and accommodation does not provide any safe or secure cycle spaces. There is no provision for bicycles within the existing building, which does not encourage or support sustainable travel patterns and cycling.
11. The existing building and accommodation does not provide any showering or changing facilities for those who may cycle to work and park the bicycles on public cycle stands in and around Oxford Street and Tottenham Court Road - occupying spaces which should be free and available for short-term use and visitors to these areas.
12. The existing accommodation does not provide for features required by tenants seeking modern office accommodation, such as raised floors, suspended ceilings, modern servicing and the facilities highlighted above.

Focussing more closely on the basement level and its usability, the current basement cannot be objectively or reasonably considered as office or employment generating floorspace as it does not benefit from natural daylight or ventilation, and does not meet the current required standards for office use. In reviewing the usable floorspace within the existing building, the basement cannot be included within this calculation for the reasons above, and because the space itself is unattractive with an awkward layout and inconsistent floor to ceiling heights.

With the above in mind, we would draw to the Council's attention a recent appeal decision relating to no. 64 Charlotte Street (APP/X5210/A/13/2198369) where the Inspector agreed that notwithstanding its poor physical condition, the basement's awkward layout and unsatisfactory levels of natural daylight would render it unsuitable for continued office use. Therefore, when considering the loss of employment floorspace and the proposed improvement of floorspace at this level, the Inspector at the Appeal Hearing considered this would be new floorspace/an increase when compared with the existing provision, which the Council agreed.

In terms of alternative business uses for the property, the site does not have good access, which is particularly important for light industrial, industrial and storage and distribution uses. Hanway Street is a very narrow, single carriageway road. Hanway place is even

narrower and has poor visibility for vehicles. These streets are not appropriate or sufficient for the level of servicing and deliveries and type of vehicles required for these uses. With particular regard to regularly serviced business and storage and distribution uses, the site is not in an appropriate location. These uses are inherently constrained by ease of access and the nature of the surrounding highway network, including the distance from the national trunk/motorway network.

The attractiveness and functionality of this building for continued use is evident through the lack of interest and offers to rent the building over a 2-year period. The building has been marketed to let by reputable West End agencies, James Lewis & Company and Savoy Stewart from March 2013, where there has been little to no interest in letting the building or finding tenants in over 2 years.

Paragraph 7.17 of CPG5 applies where there is a loss of employment uses. We do not consider this policy assessment is required as the proposal is for a mixed-use with an increase in useable floorspace and does not result in the loss of employment floorspace within the borough. However, it is useful to use these policy considerations to further demonstrate how the market considers the attractiveness of the building for employment use, which emphasizes the need for new, flexible, modern floorspace which will appeal to the market. The submitted marketing information demonstrates:

- The property has been valued and marketed by reputable local or national agents with a track record of letting employment space in Camden;
- Visible letting boards have been erected on the property throughout the marketing period - with letting boards on both Hanway Place and Hanway Street;
- The property particulars have been published on the internet and remain on both agents websites today;
- The property has been marketed for over a 2 year period with 2 different agents, which meets the Council's policy criteria which states that the Council will consider shorter marketing periods for B1 (a) office premises.
- The property has been advertised on reasonable rent levels reflecting market rents in the local area and the condition of the property - circa. £45psf for the upper floors and £20-30psf for the basement.
- The property has been marketed on attractive terms, and has not been marketing on strict or fixed terms. Both agents have made it clear to interested parties that the property is available on flexible terms with the landlord prepared to consider any lease length.
- Both agents have provided commentary on the interest shown in the building and what details they were able to secure on why the interest was not pursued.

#### **Proposed Land Uses**

Pre-application advice from the Council stated that the Council will consider a redevelopment proposal for the site for a mixed-use scheme providing the level of

employment floorspace is maintained or increased and premises suitable for new SME's are provided. Officer's advice suggested exploring a route whereby there would be no overall loss of office space in the scheme.

The submitted scheme proposals have been revised to directly respond to the Council's advice and discussions with officers raised in respect of the loss of office space in the CAZ. The scheme now proposes **a balanced mixed-use development** creating high quality, flexible and modern office floorspace at basement, ground, and part of the first floors, with a mix of residential housing unit types and sizes on second, third and fourth floors.

The scheme's mixed-use approach is policy compliant with the London Plan which states that London's economic growth depends heavily on an efficient labour marketing and this in turn requires adequate housing provision to sustain it, which can be addressed through mixed-use development.

Turning firstly to the office component of the scheme, the scheme architects have rigorously reviewed the usable office floorspace and taken a conservative and academic approach to maintain the same level of employment generating floorspace within the scheme proposal, which is more flexible and attractive to SMEs than the existing building and accommodation. The submitted scheme proposes office accommodation at basement, ground and first floor levels. This has resulted in a marked improvement and increase in the provision of employment floorspace within the scheme when compared to the original pre-application scheme proposals.

The proposed basement, ground and first floors have been designed to provide high quality, flexible and modern office accommodation. Each floor has been designed with a kitchenette and WC facilities - shower and changing facilities have been provided at ground and first floor levels. The proposed building will provide level access to the office accommodation from the public highway, ensuring those who are less mobile are able to enter the accommodation easily, and those using the first floor are able to enter the building easily and use the proposed lift to access the first floor office accommodation.

The enhancement of facilities and services, including addressing the site's accessibility for all, is supported and encouraged by development plan policies including, London Plan Policies 3.1 Furthermore, Paragraph 3.3, which makes it clear that addressing these barriers, is essential to provide equal life in London and to ensure all people can make full contribution to the economic success of their city. London Plan Policy 4.2(B)(a) is particularly relevant to this application which states that LDFs should enhance the physical attractiveness, amenities, ancillary and supporting activities as well as services, accessibility, safety and security of office uses.

The proposed basement floorspace will provide an attractive working environment when compared to the existing uninhabitable storage area. The basement will be usable floorspace with consistent and acceptable floor to ceiling heights. Most importantly, the

floorspace will benefit from natural daylight and sunlight and sense of outlook from the cutback and voids to the front of the floor at ground floor and via the staircase at the rear. The proposal will result in well ventilated, light and attractive office floorspace.

Therefore, in contemplating the employment use of the site, as can be seen on the submitted plans, the usable floorspace for office use within **the existing building, at ground, first and second floors comprise of approx. 243sqm usable floorspace**. Based on a conservative and accepted rate of 10sqm per person for office space, if the building were to be refurbished or left with no further investment, it could only realistically **employ 24 people**. The existing business, which are vacating the building as set out in in this statement, have only ever employed a maximum of 14 employees. If the building were to be upgraded with new WC, showering and changing facilities, as well as secure cycle parking, this figure would be further reduced.

The scheme proposals submitted for a 'balanced' mixed-use proposal include usable office floorspace at **basement, ground and first floors of approx. 258sqm of usable floorspace**. Based on the same accepted rate of 10sqm per person for office space, the proposed floorspace could **employ 26 people**. The proposal will result in the net increase of 15sqm of usable office floorspace. This increase of usable, high quality, flexible office floorspace is supported by a range of development plan policies.

Furthermore, the scheme is compliant in providing innovative new employment floorspace with a range of facilities, offering the potential for flexible layouts, studios, workshops, networking, socializing and meeting spaces that will meet the needs of a range of business types and sizes. This is supported by policy CS8, CS9 and supporting Paragraph 8.20. The proposals have considered emerging non-adopted planning policy guidance on SME workspace in Camden. The proposal seeks to create office accommodation, which meets the ideal SME workspace characteristics by including:

- Flexible spaces that can be expanded or contracted to suit the changing needs of occupiers;
- Access to common areas and informal meeting spaces;
- Access to small meeting rooms with fixed projector and interactive whiteboard facilities and voice conferencing;
- Access to shared kitchens;
- ICT Infrastructure: voice and data services; and
- Secure cycle storage.

These sorts of characteristics, of which the existing building struggles to provide (such as secure cycle storage), are important to meet the needs of growth sectors such as professional and business administrations, creative and cultural industries, and science. In particular, proposed floorspace seeks to attract and encourage growth in the creative and cultural sector given the site's location is within the heartland of the creative and cultural character businesses in Soho and Noho. **Appendix 2** of this statement includes an illustrative

and conceptual plan for how the proposed floorspace in detailed design could be developed for SMEs.

Turning to the residential component of the proposals, and as the priority land-use within the borough, the scheme seeks to be policy compliant by providing a mix of private market housing sizes. Discussions and pre-application advice from the Council has confirmed that the principle of providing residential accommodation at the site is supported in policy. Pre-application advice from the Council has also confirmed that affordable housing is not required due to the size and nature of the scheme, and the scheme is policy compliant in this respect. The original pre-application scheme proposed two x 1bed-flats and one x 2bed-flat, which was considered to be appropriate. However, subsequent follow-up pre-application advice from the Council advised that there is a shortage of 3-bed units in the borough and a family sized unit would be welcomed.

Therefore, the scheme submitted proposes one x 3bed-flat, one x 2bed-flat, and one x 1bed-flat. The scheme has carefully considered Officer's pre-application advice and the Dwelling Size Priorities Table in developing the housing mix. The scheme has also reflected upon the emphasis on single person households, family sized units and the need for different unit sizes to meet the challenges of population growth in Central London. The proposal for a mix of housing within a mixed-use scheme is compliant and fully supported by London Plan Policies 1.1, 1.4, 3.3, 3.5 and 4.3 Local Development Plan Policies CS6, CS9, DP2 and DP5.

### **Summary of Policy Assessment on Employment & Mixed-uses**

Focusing more closely on the relevant planning policies, as already set out and supported above, the London Plan fully encourages improving and modernizing of London's building stock and private investment in the built environment. In particular, there is a strong emphasis to meet the challenges of an ever-changing economy with substantial population growth, which the scheme proposals seek to address.

In terms of the proposed mixed-use scheme in a highly sustainable location in Central London, the proposal is fully supported by London Plan Policy 3.3 (Part E) which states that Boroughs should identify and seek to enable additional development capacity to be brought forward to supplement their targets having regard to the other policies of the Plan and in particular the potential to realise brownfield housing capacity, including mixed use redevelopment, especially of surplus commercial capacity and surplus public land, and particularly that with good transport accessibility.

Furthermore, Policy 4.2 (A)(b) states that boroughs should recognise and address strategic as well as local differences in implementing this policy to consolidate and extend the strengths of the diverse office markets elsewhere in the capital by promoting their competitive advantages, focusing new development on viable locations with good public transport, enhancing the business environment including through mixed use redevelopment, and supporting managed conversion of surplus capacity to more viable,



complementary uses. Of particular relevance to this application, the London Plan (4.2 (A)(c)) states that to achieve this, boroughs *should encourage renewal and modernisation of the existing office stock in viable locations to improve its quality and flexibility.*

LDF Policies CS8 and DP13 provide a context for the continued employment uses and redevelopment for mixed-uses. Paragraph 13.2 confirms that it is important to refer to Policy CS8 alongside Policy DP13. Policy CS8 seeks to secure a strong economy in the borough by (amongst other things) safeguarding existing office premises in the borough, which meet the needs of modern industry and employers. However, more specifically **paragraph 8.8 indicates that the Council are promoting newly built office space to meet projected demand, and so there is a general presumption that older office spaces can be released where housing or community uses are proposed.** This is the consistent approach the Council has taken in a number of recent decisions by the Council - the Council has applied this principle to permit the loss of older office floorspace to be released to housing - 2013/7434/P, 2014/3425/P, 2014/2113/P, and 2014/4870/P. Whilst it is acknowledged each case is determined on its own merits, the principle of the loss of older office floorspace in the Central Activities Zone to be released to housing, this approach has been consistently applied.

On the application of these policies, and on the consideration of the loss of employment floorspace, it is important to consider that decision-makers, including Local Planning Authorities, must be consistent in their decision making, as supported by *Fox Strategic Land & Property v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government [2013] P & CR 6.*

Important to note is that the first part of Policy DP13 states that the Council will retain land and buildings that are suitable for continued business use and will resist a change to non-business uses unless, (a) it can be demonstrated that a site or building is no longer suitable for its existing use, and (b) there is evidence that the possibility of retaining, reusing or redeveloping the site or building for similar or alternative business use has been fully explored over an appropriate period of time.

The scheme proposals are considered to be entirely policy compliant in respect of Policy DP13 (a) and (b). This statement and supporting evidence, including marketing evidence and viability & development appraisals, have very clearly demonstrated that the existing building is no longer suitable or appropriate for its existing business use. The building comprises of poor quality accommodation, lacking important features requires by tenants seeking modern, accessible and flexible office accommodation. The submission also provides evidence through marketing material for a period of over 2 years with two independent agencies, as well as an viability and development appraisal by CBRE, that the possibility of retaining or reusing the existing building is unreasonable; and that the redevelopment of the site could provide like-for-like employment generating floorspace as part of a mixed-use redevelopment scheme to also provide much needed housing in Central London.

DP13 continues that where a change of use has been justified the Council will seek to maintain some business use on site, with a higher priority for retaining flexible space that is suitable for a variety of business uses. As previously highlighted within this appraisal and assessment, the scheme proposals do not result in the less of business use on site. The proposal is compliant and has been designed to provide flexible space, with improved facilities, services and accessibility suitable for a variety of businesses.

The policy text further states that the Council may allow a change to permanent residential use when it can be demonstrated that the site is not suitable for any business use other than B1(a) offices. The proposed redevelopment scheme does not seek a change of use of the site on this ground and retains the employment use, whilst also seeking to provide permanent residential use in accordance with this policy approach.

Finally, DP13 then considers that where premises or sites are suitable for continued business use, the Council will consider redevelopment proposals for mixed-use schemes provided that, (c) the level of employment floorspace is maintained or increased, (d) they include priority uses such as housing, (e) and premises are suitable for new, small or medium enterprises are provided. This appraisal has clearly demonstrated that the proposal is clearly compliant with criteria (c-e).

The proposal is considered to fully policy compliant in the context and application of Policy DP13, as the existing building is no longer suitable for continued business use. It has been demonstrated within this appraisal and supporting evidence from reputable marketing agents and the previous long-term occupant of the building that there are significant difficulties and barriers to retain or reuse the existing building. Therefore, the proposal complies and satisfies criteria (a) and (b).

The site's highly sustainable location, and need for active ground floor frontage and activity, supports a balanced mixed-use redevelopment scheme, in accordance with DP13 (c-e). The proposed mixed-use scheme provides an increase of usable employment floorspace, of a substantially higher quality, with improved facilities, accessibility and flexibility to meet the needs of Londoners and Camden workforce, and in particular the needs of SMEs, and provides residential use as one of the priority uses in the Borough.

In relation to the application of the policy, the proposed scheme increases the provision of usable floorspace, which differs from the Gross Internal Areas (GIAs), which we have set out below. This is a result of not including the uninhabitable storage basement accommodation within the calculation of usable employment floorspace, this is in accordance with the Council's adopted Policy DP13 which states that the Council will consider mixed-use scheme provided that the "level of employment floorspace" is maintained or increased. Therefore, as demonstrated in this appraisal, the scheme is policy compliant in increasing the level of employment floorspace - it is logical and reasonable that this should be considered floorspace, which generates employment to meet the aim and objective of the policy.

	Existing	Proposed	+/-	Residential Floorspace
<b>Gross Internal Area (B1)</b>	<b>430sqm</b>	<b>359sqm</b>	<b>-71sqm</b>	<b>+313sqm</b>
<b>Level of Employment Floorspace (B1)</b>	<b>243sqm</b>	<b>258sqm</b>	<b>+15sqm</b>	<b>0sqm</b>

As clearly highlighted above, the proposal seeks to enhance the site’s uses by provide a mix of residential units on the upper floors, with an improved level of employment floorspace through the provision of high quality, active employment uses at basement, ground and first floor levels. The proposal will involve the creation of new, flexible, high quality and modern accommodation. It is anticipated that the proposed accommodation will attract small and medium businesses, with efficient and accessible floorspace with shared facilities suitable for a variety of business uses. **The proposed flexible and modern employment floorspace will be capable of employing up to 26 people, opposed to the existing building with unattractive, inefficient, poor quality, unsustainable, and inaccessible employment floorspace which is only capable of employing 24 people.**

**Paragraph 51** of the **National Planning Policy Framework** stipulates that local planning authorities should, *“normally approve planning applications for change to residential use and any associated development from commercial buildings (currently in the B use classes) where there is an identified need for additional housing in that area, provided that there are not strong economic reasons why such development would be inappropriate.”* There is no economic reason why the proposed mixed-use redevelopment proposal, which seeks to provide, increased useable, attractive and fully accessible employment floorspace is in appropriate and should therefore be approved.

Overall, the scheme meets the objectives and policies within the NPPF and local development plan policies, including the London Plan, which support the high quality, efficient mixed-use schemes supporting economic and housing growth in highly sustainable locations.

**(c) Demolition & New Replacement Building within the Conservation Area**

Planning policy both at a national and local level clearly aims to preserve heritage assets, including conservation areas, and a high quality of design is the objective for new development.

The proposed scheme seeks to demolish the existing building, which has been significantly altered over the years, and erect a new building, which seeks to respond to the site's history and significance whilst making an improved, positive contribution to the conservation area.

The Council has confirmed that the loss of the building would cause 'less than substantial' harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area and as such, paragraph 134 of the NPPF would apply; which states that the harm as a result of the proposal should be weighed against the public benefits, including securing its optimum viable use.

The application submission is supported by a heritage significance and planning policy assessment of the site by RMA Heritage. This report focuses on a thorough assessment of the site, its context and history. The report also discusses the design merits of the proposed replacement building and whether the requirements to 'preserve or enhance' the character and appearance of the conservation area can be met. The report includes an assessment of the site's architectural and heritage significance, including a comparison with other positive buildings in the Conservation Area. The report assesses the potential to restore the building, whether it is worthy of retention, and whether the proposed replacement building makes a positive contribution to the conservation area, alongside key public benefits.

The existing building was erected in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century (post 1819). The building, which was historically developed and used as two properties and premises, has over time been converted into one property. The building has been significantly altered over the years, and it is considered, in our assessment, that this has been to its own detriment - resulting in a loss of the site's contribution to the conservation area. The existing building is considered to be heavily compromised and unrepresentative. Please refer to RMA's Heritage Assessment for a comprehensive description of the site and environs and assessment of the site's architectural and heritage significance. In short, the building's contribution to the Conservation Area is limited and its integrity as a historic building has been severely compromised by a number of insensitive alterations including; the replacement of its historic shopfronts with a very poor quality brick frontage, together with UPVC replacement windows, unattractive alterations to the rear elevation, internal gutting of the building and removal of its historic roof structure. These insensitive alterations are judged to detract from the character and appearance of the conservation area

The pre-application advice received from the Council has confirmed that the Council consider that *"the fenestration has been replaced with inappropriate PVCu units and that the ground floor has been altered in an unsympathetic manner that does not relate well to the upper floors of the building."* The advice also confirms that the rear elevation is 'undistinguishable' with a render finish and PVCu window units. However, the Council does consider that the building has an *'overall positive front façade'* and shares similarities of age, scale, materials and proportion with other positive contributors within the conservation area, forming an integral part of the established historic townscape of the street.

Paragraph 4.2 of RMA's report considers the architectural and heritage significance of the site:

*“The building is clearly historic and is of similar age to many of its neighbours and the c.1950 (Appendix 7) shows an attractive building with historic shopfront and original 4-pane sash windows above. However it has been significantly altered over time, with an unattractive modern brick frontage added at ground floor level. The modern uPVC windows, cement pointed brickwork to 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floor front façade and modern roughcast render to rear façade all detract significantly from the building's appearance – and are considered harmful to the character and appearance of the conservation area. The historic roof structure has been completely removed and its interior extensively gutted, with encased steel beams inserted and the ground floor appears to have been raised. While the tall 1<sup>st</sup> floor window openings are of handsome proportion and contribute positively to the rhythm of the street, unfortunately, the rest of the building has been badly disfigured, so its intrinsic value as a historic building has been clearly diminished. So, we would question its ‘worth’ as a ‘positive building’; the ground floor frontage and rear elevations being of particularly poor quality and considered, in our opinion, to be key detractors to this part of the conservation area.”*

Based on a comparative analysis of the 18 positive buildings in Camden and Westminster's Conservation Area for this context, the site's contribution has been assessed as having 'low value' to the Hanway Street Conservation Area. RMA Heritage have considered that whilst their assessment can recognise that the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the front façade does have some townscape value on account of the window proportions and the repetition of the windows helps provide a rhythm in views along this narrow street, these are qualities that most of the historic buildings in the conservation area have on account of the vertical emphasis of their traditional window openings and could be used on a sympathetically designed replacement building.

In assessing the proposals, RMA's assessment and justification has carefully considered national and local planning legislation and guidance. Of particular interest in considering the value or contribution of the existing building in the Conservation Area, and the potential for a high quality replacement, RMA's statement draws attention to key heritage guidance on positive buildings in *Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management* published by English Heritage, which identifies:

*“Most of the buildings in a conservation area will help to shape its character. The extent to which their contribution is considered as positive depends not just on their street elevations, but also on their integrity as historic structures and the impact they have in three dimensions, perhaps in an interesting roofscape, or skyline. Back elevations can be important, as can side views from alleys and yards. It will be helpful to identify those key unlisted buildings that make an important contribution*

*to the character of the conservation area, as well as those which clearly detract from it and could be replaced.”*

The heritage assessment confirms and asserts that in terms of restoring the existing building, the rationale behind this approach is questionable given the loss of architectural interest over time. The assessment further confirms that there would be multiple difficulties in trying to achieve works to restore the building with level access and a shopfront - and there are also likely to be considerable risks of damaging the building in attempting to restore the limited areas of value, such as the brickwork to the upper floors on the front elevations. The assessment further considers that the building is not considered to be of sufficient architectural interest to justify a façade retention scheme.

Key to the consideration of this application, the assessment further considers whether the building is worthy of retention, and concludes that the existing building ***“building is not indispensable to preserving the character or appearance of the conservation area – and a replacement building of very high quality could contribute more to enhancing the conservation area than the present building.”***

Focusing more closely on the replacement building and RMA’s heritage assessment of whether this new building makes a positive contribution to the Conservation Area. It is clear that the proposal will result in a replacement building that will make a positive contribution to local character and local distinctiveness in the Conservation area, through proposing:

1. A replacement building which is considered to be of a sympathetic scale and high quality design with aesthetically pleasing front and rear elevations and good attention to detail.
2. A building, which displays a high degree of aesthetic understanding, finesse and rigour, demonstrated by the verified CGI visuals, as seen under **Appendix 3**.
3. Vertical window proportions and diminishing heights for the window openings, which are respectful to the local context and can be found on many of the positive buildings in the conservation area.
4. A choice of materials, which is considered appropriate by using London stock brick, a stucco shopfront, parapet and window surrounds, the building will complement its neighbours too.
5. Contemporary elements such as the design of the shopfronts, French windows, balustrades and zinc roof which are of high quality and will add interest to this part of the conservation area. The attention to detailing on the shopfront and choice of materials i.e. bronze framed shop windows is to be commended and the backlit bronze cut screen for no.28 is considered to be a novel approach and likely to prove an attractive feature.
6. The reinstatement of the shopfrontage, which will help also animate the streetscene.
7. The transformation of Hanway Place through replacing an unattractive building with a handsome façade and active frontages.

8. An attic storey, which will provide an interesting skyline feature for both streets and a new roofscape where one no longer exists.

### **Summary of Policy Assessment on Conservation & Public Benefits**

Turning to the key planning and conservation area policy test, paragraph 134 of the NPPF states that where harm to the significance of the heritage asset is less than substantial, then this harm should be weighed against the public benefits, including securing its optimal viable use. RMA's assessment clearly sets out that the benefits of the proposals are significant and that a balance has been struck, as the proposals will:

- secure the optimum viable use of the site by providing much needed high quality office space and housing;
- sustain and enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area;
- make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness;
- remove risks to the heritage asset by removing the uncertainty about the future of the present building and site.

Further developing on these points, we consider it is prudent to further elaborate on the public benefits arising from the submitted proposals. The proposed building of an exemplary design and aesthetic quality will be a considerable public benefit, as demonstrated by the submitted verified CGI visuals under **Appendix 3**. The proposed scheme design and the quality of materials included fully accords with London Plan policies 7.4 and 7.6, and the Council's policies DP24 and DP25.

Furthermore, one of the key public benefits that will arise will be the re-introduction of a shopfront on the front elevation on Hanway Street. The scheme seeks to respond to the site's significance and history and proposes a well-designed contemporary contextual shopfront on this elevation of Hanway Street, with materials and detailed design reflecting the site's history and significance. This will make a significant historic and architectural contribution to the conservation area - in particular; it will enhance important views and visual interest as you enter Hanway Street from Oxford Street.

Given the Applicant also owns the adjoining building at 32 Hanway Street; the scheme proposal also seeks to introduce some form of artwork on the curvature of this building. The enhancement of this focal building and the important view within the conservation area from Oxford Street is a considerable public benefit arising from the scheme. This can be seen on the verified CGI views submitted under **Appendix 3**, which show an 'indicative' piece of artwork. We have proposed this to be secured via legal agreement and condition, to allow the Council's prior approval of the detailed design and it's installation.

At this stage, the Applicant is engaging with Plan Projects, who have a wealth of experience in advising and procuring artwork with the built environment, and have produced artwork for the Crown Estate, the Chancery Lane Association and several major developers in this



part of Central London. The Applicant is undertaking these early discussions to develop a potential strategy to include and involve the local community and interested parties for their input, which could lead to a local competition or commissioning the art work by a local artist or designer to reflect the conservation area's history and significance.

The proposed mix of uses within the building will secure the optimum viable use of the site within the conservation area. The proposed scheme has been well-composed to create high quality, accessible, flexible office floorspace creating an active frontage on Hanway Street and Hanway Place, as well as contributing towards employment within the Borough. Alongside the employment floorspace, the scheme proposal also seeks to provide a mix of highly sustainable and accessible residential flats, the priority land use identified by the Council. The proposal will make efficient and effective use of the site to meet an increasing and important housing need within Central London, which is a clear public benefit.

The proposal has been designed with care and attention to all national planning policies and guidance, and had particular regard to London Plan policies 7.4, 7.6 and 7.8, and local development plan policies CS9, DP24 and DP26.

In conclusion, the proposals will contribute more towards enhancing the conservation area as the heritage asset in question, which is very clearly demonstrated by the verified CGI visuals. Therefore, the proposals are considered to be fully compliant with the requirements of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the NPPF and national planning guidance, the London Plan and local development plan documents, including relevant supplementary planning documents.

#### **(d) Accommodation & Amenity**

The scheme would result in the provision of 3 new private market residential units (1 x 1 bed flat, 1 x 2 bed flat and 1 x 3 bed flat). The scheme provides high quality and well-designed residential accommodation, which meets and exceeds the space standards set by the Mayor and the Council. The residential accommodation has been designed to be fully inclusive and accessible to all.

The proposed commercial and residential units have all been designed to be dual aspect where possible - if the commercial floorspace were to be subdivided for SMEs, the units would still benefit from natural daylight and ventilation. The scheme has considered the requirements of London Plan policies 3.5, 7.2 and 7.4, and Camden policies DP6, DP26 and DP29. A Lifetime Homes Statement accompanies this application demonstrate the care and attention to provide inclusive and high quality accommodation in Central London.

The scheme proposal has been designed to ensure there will be no adverse impacts on neighbouring properties. The proposed roof extension at fourth floor has been setback from the parapet edge to protect the amenity of future occupiers and existing neighbours. The proposed terraces at roof level can be appropriately screened and landscaped to ensure that



any direct overlooking is mitigated. As a result of the mansard roof form, the proposed roof terraces have been set back and will not be visible from the streetscene and will not have a detrimental impact on any neighbouring buildings.

The submitted Noise Impact Assessment by 24 Acoustics considers the proposed installation of plant equipment designed within the new replacement building. The submitted document concludes that following a background noise survey, an assessment of the potential impact from the proposed plant has been undertaken which indicates that the noise impact from the plant at the nearest residential properties will fall below the defined plant noise limits stipulated by the Council. In short, the proposal is entirely policy compliant in this respect.

The submitted Daylight & Sunlight Assessment considers that the scheme impact from the re-development of site is reasonable with regard to daylight, sunlight and overshadowing on the basis it does not breach the BRE impact guidelines on adjacent neighbours.

The scheme has been carefully designed to respect the amenity of neighbouring buildings, and is considered to be policy compliant with London Plan policies 1.1, 3.5 and 7.6, and local development plan policies CS9, DP24, and DP26.

#### **(e) Transport & Accessibility**

The scheme is policy compliant with the parking standards and principles set out within London Plan policies 6.9 and 6.13, and Camden policies CS11, DP17 and DP18. The scheme proposes no car parking and will be car-free. As supported in the Council's pre-application advice, the draft heads of terms submitted with this application include a provision to secure car free residential development through the proposed legal agreement.

The scheme proposes the required standard of safe and secure cycle parking within the replacement building (3 long-stay office cycle spaces & 1 short-stay office space - and 1 cycle space for the 1-bed flat and 4 cycle spaces -2 per dwelling - for the 2-bed flat and 3-bed flat) - exceeding the standard within Appendix 2 of Camden's Development Policies, and achieving the London Plan standards in Policy 6.9 and Table 6.3.

In relation to the provision for the office use, this is a significant improvement when assessed against the existing building. The existing building has no accessible or secure cycle parking, which is unsustainable and unattractive for its long-term use in Central London and does not encourage or support sustainable travel patterns.

Whilst the proposal is for a new build, the existing pedestrian access points onto the public highway from the existing building have been retained and form part of the scheme design. Access from Hanway Street will be used for the entrance to the basement, ground and first floor office uses. Access for the residential units will also be from Hanway Street. The scheme ensures inclusive access for all through the provision of level access from the public highway, as well as a modern lift serving all floors for both residential and commercial usage.

## (f) Sustainable Development

Based on the detailed assessment of the proposals undertaken against the relevant policy objectives of the development plan and the Framework, contained in this statement above, the following conclusions can be drawn.

**Economic Considerations:** The proposed development will positively contribute towards building a strong, responsive and competitive UK economy; in particular the scheme will contribute towards supporting the innovative and creative SMEs in Central London.

The proposal provides an increase of usable employment floorspace, of a substantially higher quality, with improved facilities, accessibility and flexibility to meet the needs of Londoners and Camden's workforce, and in particular the needs of SMEs.

Paragraph 19 of the NPPF advises that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth through the planning system. The proposal represents important investment to improve the quality and attractiveness of this highly sustainable site for continued flexible business use and can be considered essential to sustainable economic growth.

Very substantial weight must therefore be attached to the economic dimension of the development and the range of benefits it will deliver in the sustainability assessment.

**Social considerations:** The social dimension of the development is measured by its contribution to local community well-being, the protection of local amenity and the living conditions of local residents.

The proposal fully recognises the need to protect the quality of life and residential amenities of the local community living in proximity to the development. The scheme is designed to provide a high-quality built environment and careful attention has been paid to the relationship with surrounding properties to ensure they are not harmed by undue noise, vibration, loss of outlook, loss of privacy or other nuisance or disturbance during the construction and operation of the development. A draft construction management plan, structural report and basement impact assessment have all been submitted in accordance with the Council's pre-application advice and policy guidance to mitigate any harm on the amenity of neighbouring properties and occupiers.

The scheme proposals provide a mix of family and smaller sized residential units to meet the needs of Londoners, and seeks to provide high quality homes designed to Lifetime Homes standards, to meet the needs of the project substantial population growth and the ever more diverse local population in London.

The scheme enhances the site's accessibility and encourages equality by providing purpose-built and designed office and residential uses which meet the needs of all - providing inclusive level access from the public highway, as well as lift access from ground to all of the

upper floors. The existing building does not offer equal life in London, as supported and encouraged by the London Plan policies 3.1 and 7.2, and local development plan policy DP29.

Alongside this appraisal and assessment, the submitted scheme is also supported by a Noise Impact Assessment and Daylight and Sunlight Assessment, which successfully demonstrate that the scheme proposals will not result in the loss of any amenity, or impact to a detrimental extent, the living conditions of local residents.

Overall, whilst the development will have some effects on local residents, these have all been carefully addressed, where appropriate. Overall, the social dimension of the proposals is positive and beneficial and should therefore carry considerable weight in the sustainability balance.

**Environmental Consideration:** The site is not affected by any environmental constraints that cannot be mitigated and the proposed development has been designed to minimise its effect upon the natural, built and historic environment.

The development presents no harm to below ground heritage assets, and where there is less than substantial harm to above ground heritage assets through the demolition of the building, these have been carefully weighed against the public benefits arising and the replacement building, which has been demonstrated above, will positively contribute to the conservation area, and enhance the site's contribution towards the historic environment on Hanway Street and Hanway Place.

The scheme proposals have been devised with an energy efficient design through an integrated approach considering solar gain, access to daylight, insulation, construction, materials, ventilation, and heating and cooling. The proposed building has been designed to reach required policy standards of sustainable design and construction.

The supporting pre-assessments demonstrate that the office floorspace will achieve a BREEAM level of Very Good and the residential floorspace will achieve Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4. An Energy Statement has also been submitted accompanying the submission demonstrating that the scheme achieves a carbon saving of 30.1%. The proposed dwellings achieve a total carbon saving of 35.9%, with a 17% contribution by energy efficiency measures and a further 23% achieved through the provision of the PV collectors (these are not visible from street level, as shown on the verified views).

Substantial weight should be attached to the environmental dimension of the development and the improvement in the sustainability assessment.

## 10. Planning Policy Summary

The scheme fully accords with the key considerations confirmed in the National Planning Policy Framework and Local Development Plan. It is compliant with the relevant policy context as confirmed below:

- ✓ The scheme seeks to provide a balanced mixed-use scheme comprising of flexible, accessible, modern employment floorspace (B1) and high quality residential floorspace (C3).
- ✓ The scheme seeks to provide the priority land use identified by the Council's Core Strategy (residential), which is considered compatible and acceptable in the site's location.
- ✓ The proposal makes efficient and effective use of the site, proposing a high-density development in Central London to meet housing need and encourage economic growth within Central London.
- ✓ There is no strong economic reason why the change of use of the existing building to a mixed-use scheme, including residential use, would be inappropriate, and therefore the application should be approved.
- ✓ The proposed scheme design has been approached with care and consideration to the character, appearance and views within the Hanway Street Conservation Area.
- ✓ The scheme will contribute more to enhancing the Hanway Street Conservation Area than the existing building.
- ✓ When assessed against paragraph 134 of the NPPF, it is clear that the benefits are significant and the proposal secures the optimum viable use of the site.
- ✓ The scheme carefully seeks to respond to the site's history and significance.
- ✓ The proposed scheme has been well-composed to create high quality and flexible commercial office floorspace at basement, ground and first floors, which will also create an active frontage on Hanway Street with a contextually designed new shopfront.
- ✓ The scheme increases the level of employment floorspace within the Borough, as the scheme proposes an increase of 15sqm of usable office floorspace across 3 floors all-benefiting from natural daylight and ventilation, WC facilities, policy compliant secure cycle parking provision, and shower and changing facilities.
- ✓ The scheme provides residential units within a highly accessible and sustainable location in Central London and provides car-free development with provision for cycle parking.
- ✓ The amenity of adjoining properties would not be affected adversely in any way.
- ✓ The scheme proposals have been designed with expert structural and construction input, as found within the draft construction management plan, structural report and basement impact assessment.
- ✓ The scheme proposes office accommodation achieving BREEAM Very Good and residential floorspace achieving Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4.
- ✓ The submitted application includes draft heads of terms to ensure the scheme contributes for financial contributions, developer commitments, and legal obligations are sought as part of the proposed scheme.
- ✓ It has been demonstrated that the proposals will amount to sustainable development in accordance with the Framework and in all other regards they would not give rise to any adverse impacts, which significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the Framework as a whole.
- ✓ The scheme proposals constitute sustainable development and should be approved in accordance with the NPPF.

## 11. Conclusions

This Statement has been prepared in support of a mixed-use conservation led scheme proposing the demolition of the existing building (fabric storage/retail B1) and the erection of a new building comprising of flexible and modern office (B1) floorspace at basement, ground, and first floors and residential units (C3) on the upper floors (one x 1 bed flat, one x 2-bed flat and 1 x 3 bed flat) with private and communal terraces.

The comprehensive and detailed submission demonstrates clearly, in our view, that the submitted scheme proposal should be supported. It accords with planning legislation and guidance at local and national levels; and the new-build proposal makes effective use of the subject site, embraces high quality design principles and a close attention to detail in its aesthetic composition, will respect its surroundings, factor in sustainability through good design, maintain local amenity interests, accord with heritage planning best practice, and meet other considerations satisfactorily.

Our client's proposed mixed-use redevelopment scheme seeks to increase the usable employment accommodation on site, compared to the current position, whilst seeking to promote and support economic growth in this part of Camden. The development represents a net increase in usable office floor area of some 15 square metres, compared to the existing building. The proposed office accommodation has been designed with particular care and attention to the requirements and aspirations that attract innovative businesses (particularly small and medium sized enterprises). Compared to the existing floorspace, the proposed accommodation will be of a much higher quality – with all floors benefiting from good daylight and sunlight and natural ventilation. Furthermore, the scheme has been designed to allow the flexibility and options the market requires to attract SMEs, such as providing WC and kitchenette facilities on each floor, inclusive and level access from the public highway, lift access from ground floor to the upper floors, safe and secure cycle parking, changing and showering facilities, and flexible floor plates to allow the creation of studios, workshops, meeting spaces, and networking areas.

In contemplating the loss of the existing building and its replacement, it has been demonstrated through a practical, rigorous and academic heritage assessment that retaining the existing building is not essential to preserving the character or appearance of the conservation area; and the proposed replacement building that is of such high quality will contribute more to enhancing the conservation area than the present building.

The loss of the building is judged to cause less than substantial harm and the public benefits should be weighed against the harm. In this case, the public benefits arising including an aesthetically pleasing building that will complement its neighbours, the provision of flexible office space and a mix of residential units, and a legal agreement to secure the commissioning and installation of public art in the Conservation Area, will all outweigh the harm caused, and secure the optimum viable use of the site sustaining and enhancing the conservation area.

In our view, the scheme accords with the development plan, and is considered to constitute sustainable development; and therefore in accordance with paragraph 14 of the NPPF, the scheme be approved without delay.

Taking into account this assessment and all relevant planning and conservation related matters; we consider that there are sound planning and conservation reasons to support this scheme. We trust that these development proposals and the private investment that they represent will be supported by your Officers.