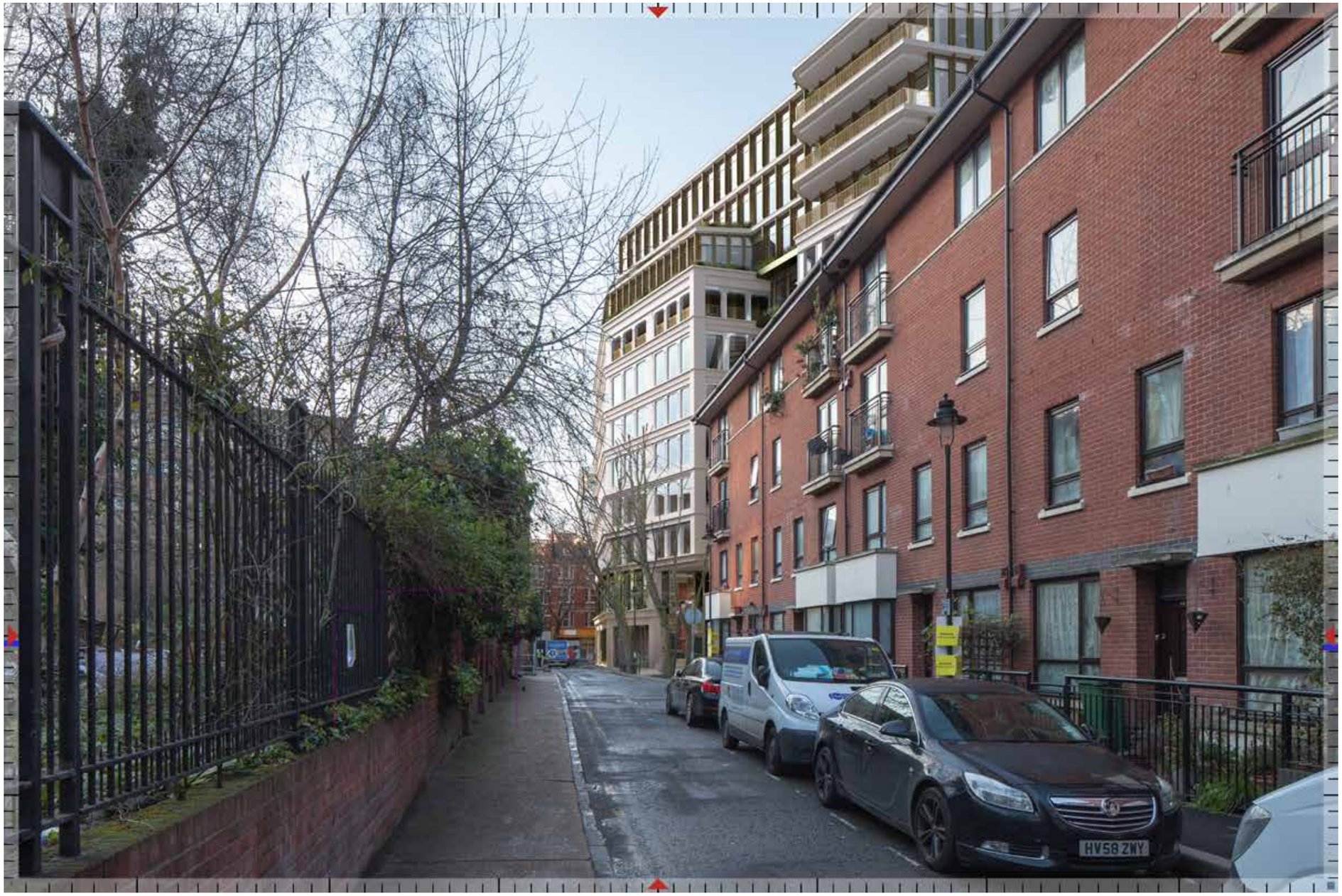
Proposed view with cumulative schemes

5.42 No cumulative schemes will be visible from here.



Cumulative

10 St Giles-In-The-Fields, path running south of Church

3124_2001

Existing

Existing

5.43 This viewpoint is located within the gardens of the grade I listed Church of St Giles-in-the-fields. It lies within the Denmark Street Conservation Area. The view looks south-west across the gardens towards the Site's offices, seen in the centre of the image. While still seen from here in summer, it is partly obscured from view by the garden's trees when in leaf. Late 20th century blocks of flats frame the left side of the image. The right side is framed by the rear façade of the Elms Lester Painting Rooms (grade II). When on site, one is aware of other tall modern development in the surrounding area, including the Central St Giles development, its eye-catching façades prominent in views to the north, beyond the listed church.

Proposed

5.44 This view provides a good sense of how the tiered form of the building will lend it a distinctive silhouette. One will appreciate how the Proposed Development has been shaped to respond to its context, broken down into smaller blocks to relate to the low and mid-rise mainly late 20th century buildings on Stacey Street and New Compton Street. The difference in materials between the upper and lower portions of the building will further help to visually break the composition down. The brass-tinted metal cladding of the upper levels will be seen to carry through to ground level in the slot between the reconstituted stone and brick-clad lower blocks. This should help to draw the eye to the public route through the Site, a colonnade that re-establishes a link between New Compton Street and Old Compton Street.

3124_2005

Proposed

10 St Giles-In-The-Fields, path running south of Church

Proposed view with cumulative schemes

5.45 The new Phoenix Garden Community building will be glimpsed from here, outlined on the left side of the image.

3124_2006

Cumulative

Existing

Existing

5.46 This viewpoint is situated on at the junction of Denmark Street and St Giles High Street, a location that continues to undergo change at the time of writing, with the redevelopment of Centre Point House. The view looks south into the Denmark Street Conservation Area, towards the Site; its offices are seen in the centre of the image. The foreground of the image is occupied by the highway. The grade I listed Church of St Giles-in-the-fields is the focus of the view, framing the left side of the image. The highly trafficked highway detracts from the setting of the church. Its setting has also changed considerably in recent years with the construction of Central Saint Giles, on the north side of the High Street.

5.47 A late Victorian commercial building (no.28 Denmark Street) frames the right side. It is identified as a positive contributor in the Denmark Street Conservation Area Appraisal. The Elms Lester Painting Rooms (grade II) are glimpsed behind the pollarded trees seen in the centre of the image. Orion House is seen to the left of this. The same trees largely obscure the Sites' offices from view from here when regrown.

Proposed

5.48 The top levels of the Development will be visible from here, lighter in tone that those of the existing building. Balconies will add interest to these elevations. Unlike the existing office of the Site, the silhouette of the Development will not be spoilt by intrusive rooftop plant and aerials. Less of the Proposed Development will be seen from here when trees in the churchyard are in leaf. The listed church will remain the focus of this view year-round.

3124_2905

Proposed

Proposed view with cumulative schemes

5.49 No cumulative schemes will be visible from here.

3124_2906

Cumulative

3124_2201

Existing

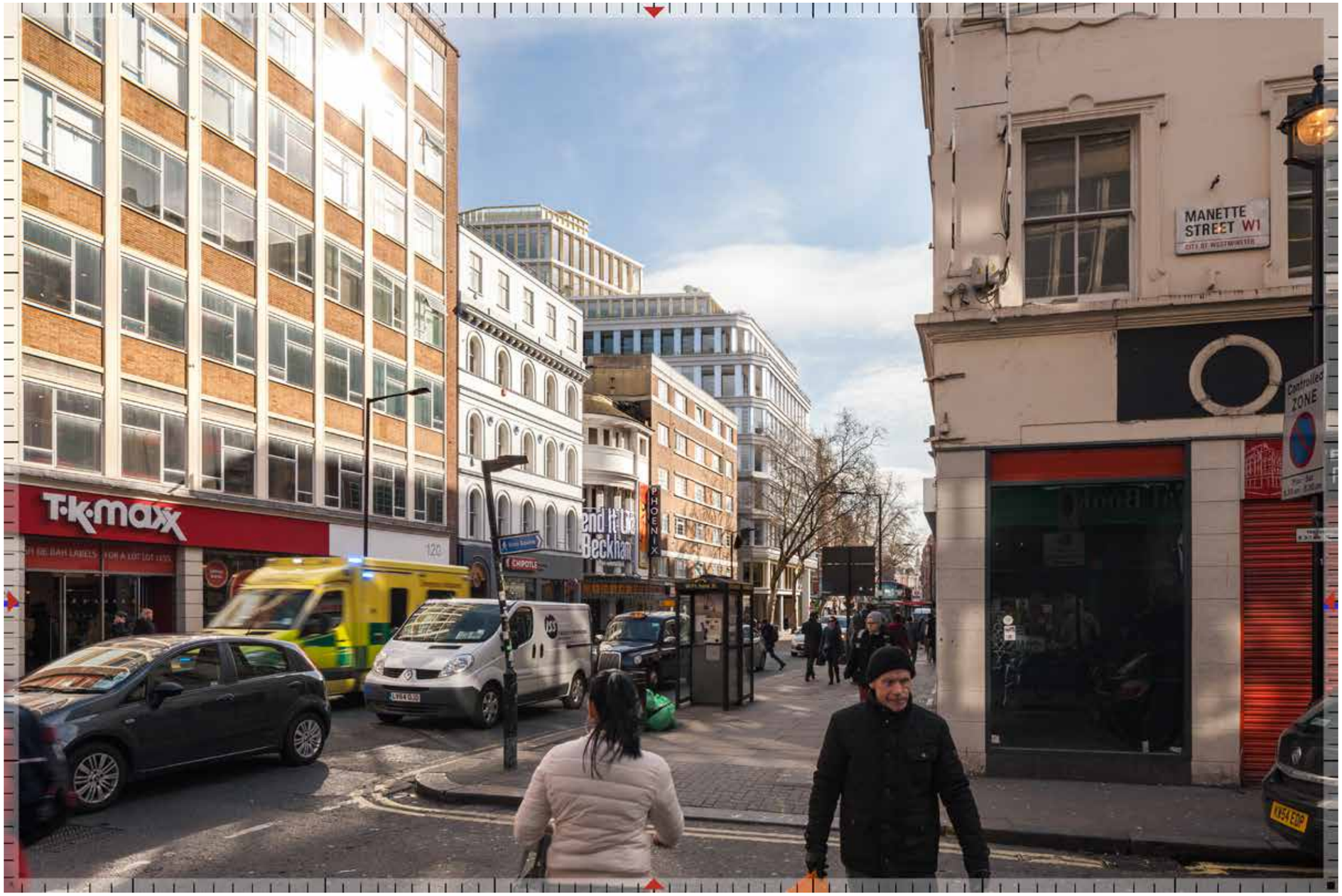
Existing

5.50 This viewpoint is positioned on Manette Street, at its junction with Charing Cross Road. It lies within the Soho Conservation Area (City of Westminster). The view looks south-east, down the trafficked Charing Cross Road, towards the Site. Its existing office building is seen behind street trees, beyond the grade II listed Phoenix Theatre on the east side of the street. The theatre lies within the Denmark Street Conservation Area. The left side of the image is framed by large post-war offices. The adjoining building (nos. 114-116 Charing Cross Road) is identified as a positive contributor in the Denmark Street Conservation Area Appraisal. The right side of the image is framed by the former Foyles bookstore, identified as a building of townscape merit in the Soho and Chinatown Conservation Area Audit. Planning permission was granted in 2016 for its demolition to allow for the construction of offices and shops on this site.

Proposed

5.51 This view shows the Proposed Development's reconstituted stone-clad elevation positively defining the Site's frontage to this major thoroughfare. The light tone of its façade will complement those of its neighbours, including the painted elevation of nos. 114-116 and the Phoenix Theatre's stucco façade. The height of the Proposed Development's principal elevation will be comparable to that of the Site's existing offices. The building's active ground floor will be seen from here.

5.52 The brass-tinted metal-clad upper levels, progressively set back from the main frontage, are clearly distinguishable from the levels below, both in their expression and tone. Visibility of the main frontage from here will reduce when the street trees are in leaf.

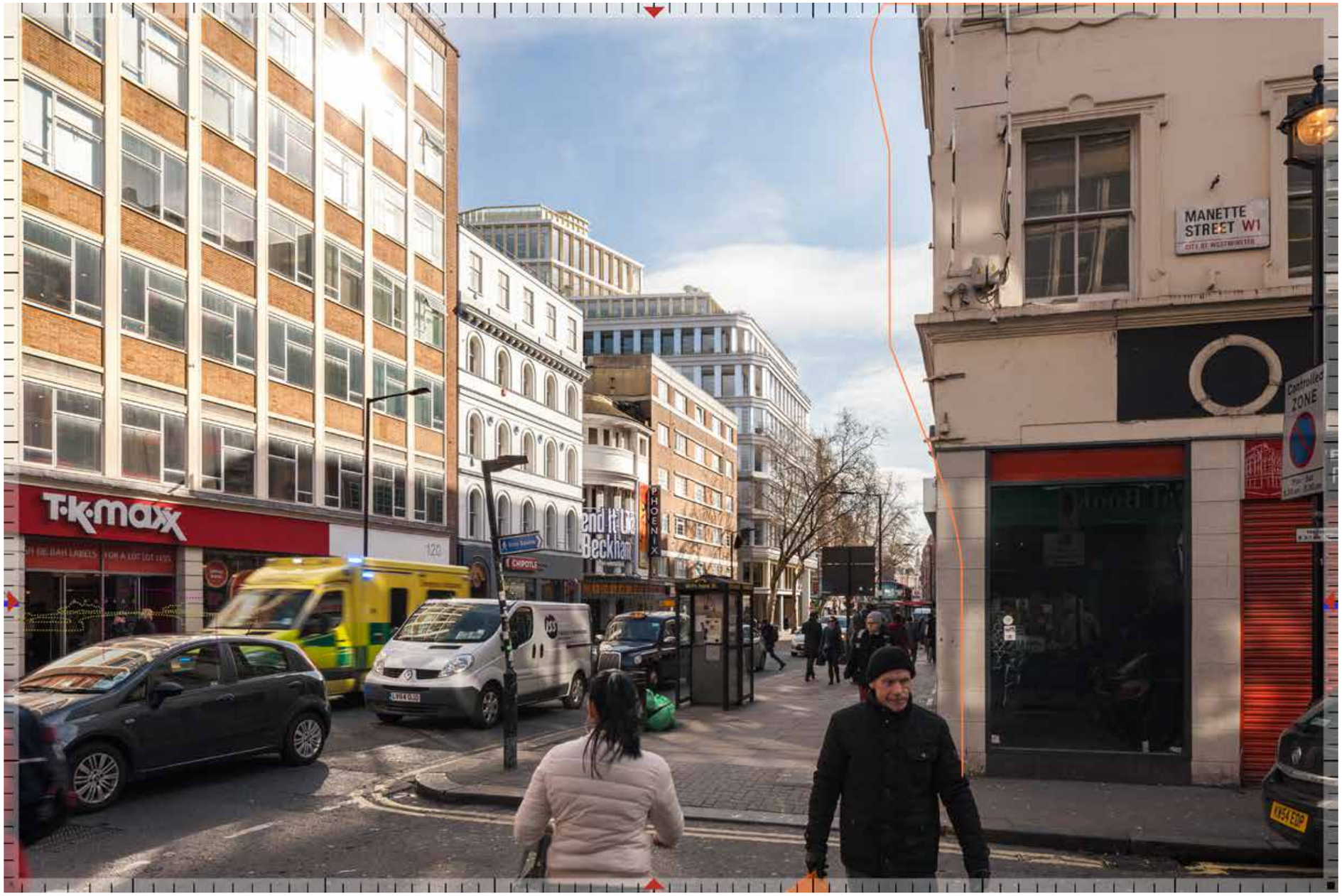


3124_2205

Proposed

Proposed view with cumulative schemes

5.53 Development at the former Foyles site (Ilona Rose House) is outlined on the right side of the image.



3124_2206

Cumulative

13 Cambridge Circus, outside the Palace Theatre

Existing

3124_2301

Existing

5.54 This viewpoint is located on Cambridge Circus, outside the Palace Theatre (grade II*). It lies within the Soho Conservation Area (City of Westminster). The view looks north-east towards the Site across the wide pavement outside the theatre, taking in various items of street clutter, including refuse bins and parked bicycles. The top levels of the Site's existing offices are seen above the rooftops of the circus buildings in the centre of the image. Those buildings (no. 24 Cambridge Circus/nos. 115-119 Shaftesbury Avenue) lie within the Seven Dials Conservation Area (LB Camden) and are identified as positive contributors to the Conservation Area. So too are the adjoining nos. 84a-94 (even) Charing Cross Road. When in leaf, the mature trees seen lining Charing Cross Road further reduce visibility of the Site's frontage from here. The circus buildings opposite, nos. 93-99 Charing Cross Road, are identified as buildings of townscape merit and lie within the City of Westminster.

5.55 There are views of other post-war tall buildings from the circus. Centre Point (grade II) is visible beyond the Site's offices, looking along Charing Cross Road. However, the impact of these tall structures is reduced by the sense of enclosure provided by the unified townscape of the circus buildings. At this very heavily trafficked intersection, the constant movement of traffic and people has a significant bearing on one's experience of the circus.

Proposed

5.56 This view reveals the Proposed Development's positive engagement with Charing Cross Road, and the considered form and massing of its upper levels, visible above the circus buildings. The Development's Charing Cross Road building is seen to relate well in its scale and proportions to the circus buildings and the listed Phoenix Theatre beyond. It presents a robust, pre-cast stone façade, light and neutral in tone, and picking up on the white stone window surrounds of the adjacent mansion block. One's eye is drawn to the active ground floor frontage and the chamfered corner, both contributing to the building's engaging presence on the street. These also give a clue to the presence of the new route through the Site that re-establishes a direct connection between Old Compton Street and New Compton Street.

5.57 The top levels of the scheme are read as a distinct element from the lower buildings and are identifiable as commercial. The curvature to these galleried levels echoes that of the circus buildings. The modelling of these upper storeys and neutral tone of the materials lend these levels a recessive quality that should ensure that the circus buildings remain the focus of the view. Roof plant is concealed behind a designed enclosure that caps the building.

Proposed

13 Cambridge Circus, outside the Palace Theatre

Proposed view with cumulative schemes

5.58 The redeveloped Centre Point is outlined behind the Site's Charing Cross Road block.

Cumulative

Existing

3124_2401

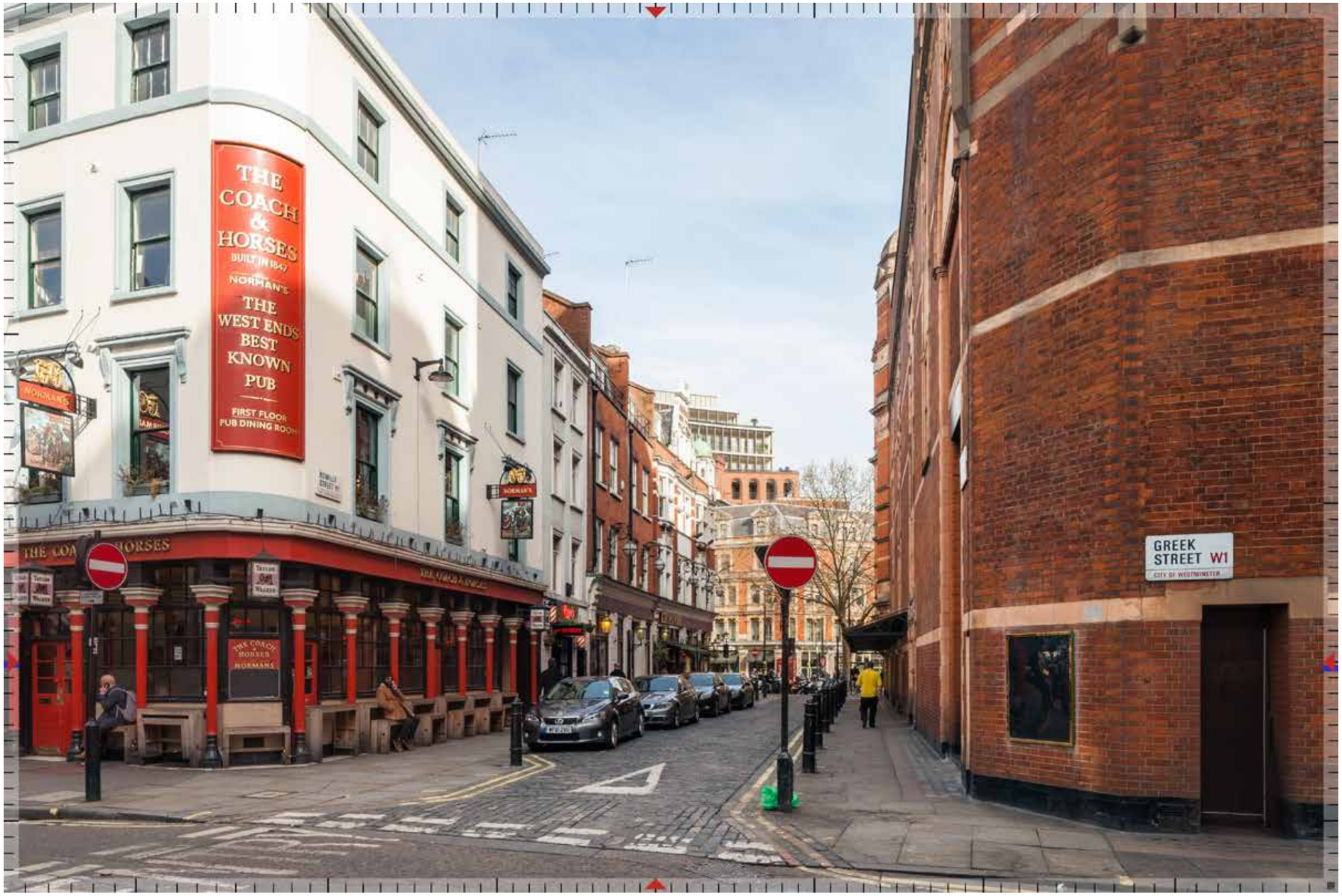
Existing

5.59 This viewpoint is situated at the junction of Romilly Street and Greek Street, within the Soho Conservation Area (City of Westminster). The view looks north-east along Romilly Street towards the Site. The upper levels of its existing office building are seen at the end of the street, beyond the buildings on Cambridge Circus.

5.60 The foreground is occupied by the highway, the grade II* listed Palace Theatre (right side) and grade II listed Coach and Horses public house (left side). No. 34 Romilly Street (grade II) is an early 18th century house with shop lying next door the public house. The remaining buildings on the north side of street are unlisted buildings of merit.

Proposed

5.61 The upper levels of the Proposed Development are visible beyond the circus. The curvature to the top-most galleried levels is seen to echo that of circus building below. One can see the brick flank wall of the Proposed Development's Shaftesbury Avenue building below this, which incorporates arched openings.



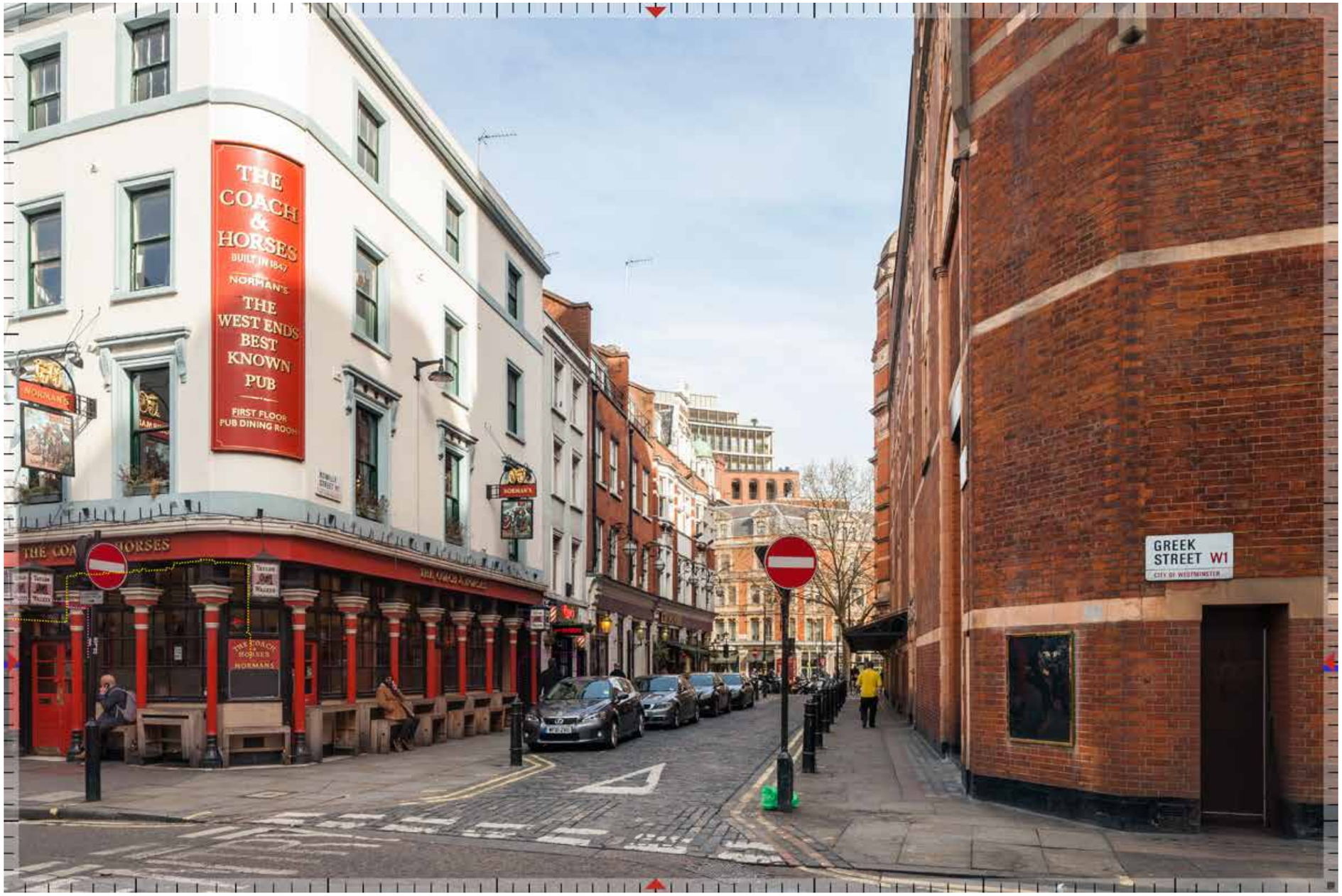
3124_2405

Proposed

14 Romilly Street / Greek Street

Proposed view with cumulative schemes

5.62 No cumulative schemes will be visible from here.



3124_2406

Cumulative

15 Soho Square, north west corner

3124_2601

Existing

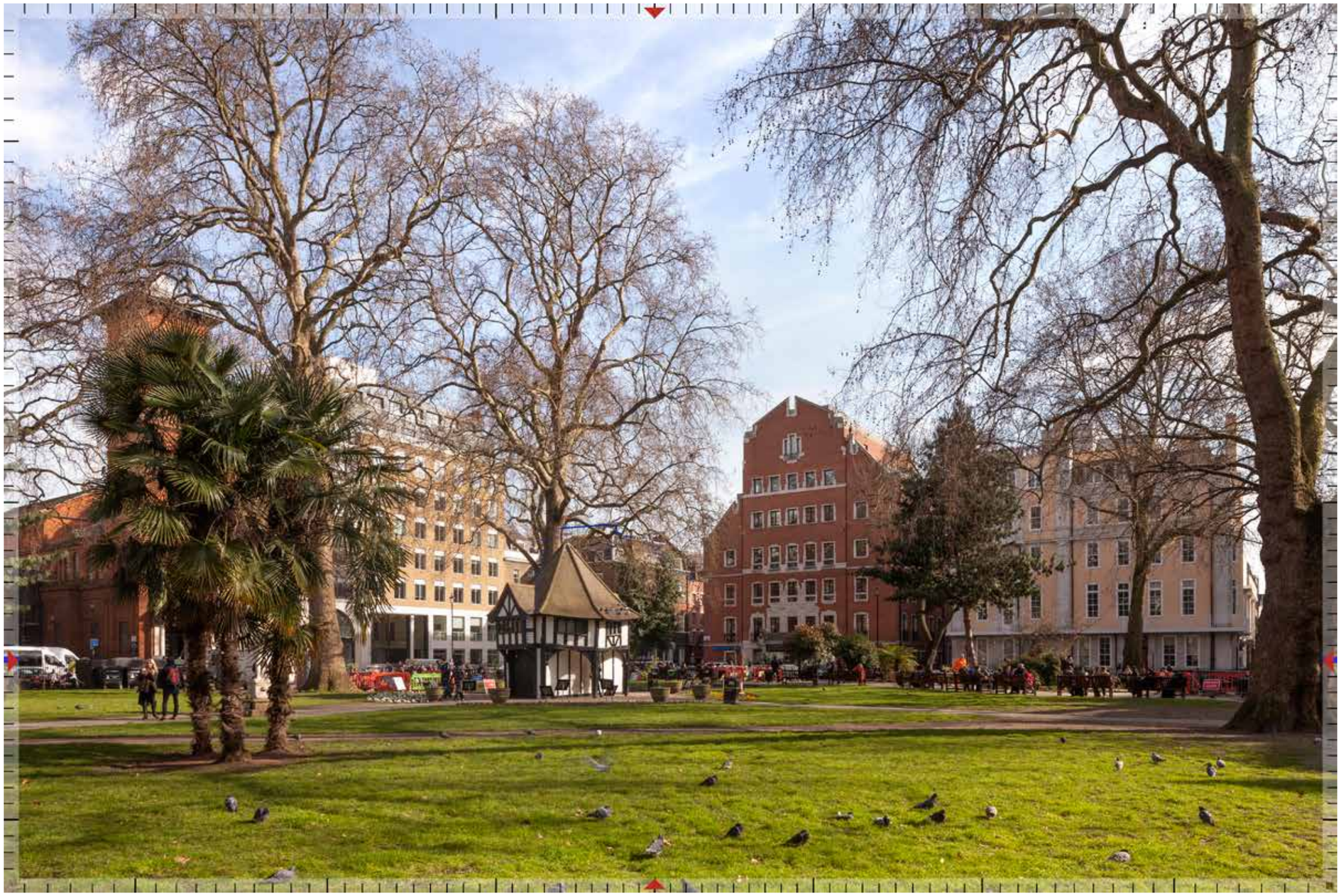
Existing

5.63 This viewpoint is situated in the north-west corner of Soho Square, which lies within the Soho Conservation Area (City of Westminster). It looks south-east in the direction of the Site. Its existing office building is visible beyond no.1 Greek Street (grade I), seen in the centre of the image. The foreground of the image is occupied by the lawns found within the square with a number of mature trees visible, which provide a greater level of containment to the square when the deciduous species are in leaf. A timber-framed arbour (grade II) is seen at the centre of the square.

5.64 The view takes in listed buildings, both around and beyond Soho Square. Listed buildings glimpsed on the east side of the square include (from left to right) the late Victorian Roman Catholic Church of St Patrick's (grade II*) and St Patrick's Presbytery (grade II) next door, a late 18th century house at no.26 (grade II*), and the mid-18th century House of St Barnabas at no.1 Greek Street (grade I). No.27 (not listed) is a mid-rise late 20th century office building on the corner with Greek Street, seen on the right side of the image. A planning application has been permitted for the partial demolition, reconfiguration and extension of no.27, involving the recladding of the external façade in brick and glazed terracotta. The Hospital for Women (grade II) lies to the right of this.

Proposed

5.65 The top level of the Proposed Development would be glimpsed beyond the trees lying within the square and no. 1 Greek Street (grade I). It would not be noticeable to most viewers. While visible in winter months, it would be almost entirely obscured from view when trees are in leaf.

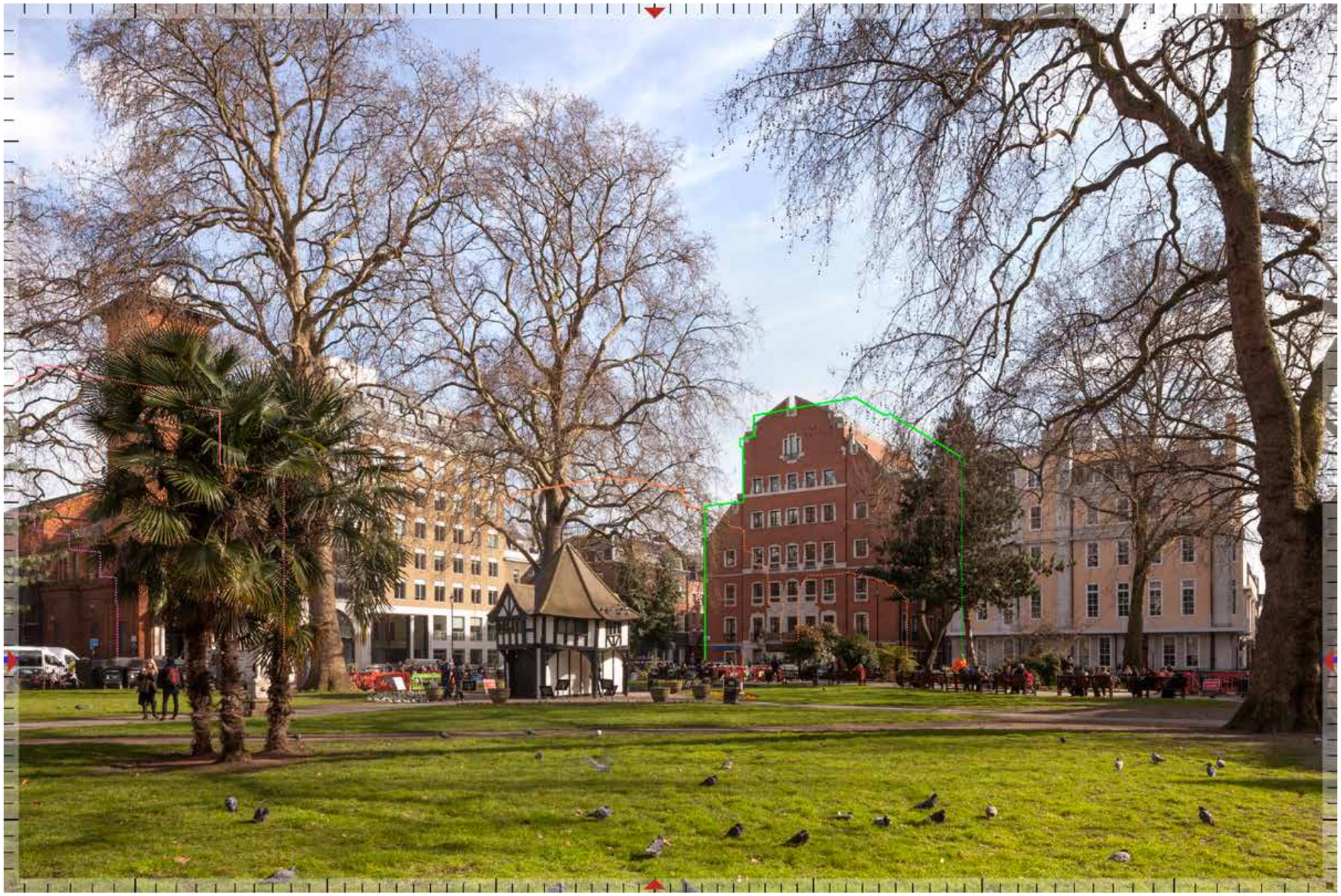


Proposed

15 Soho Square, north west corner

Proposed view with cumulative schemes

5.66 The Development would not be visible from Soho Square on completion of a new building on the former Foyles site on Charing Cross Road (Ilona Rose House). The re-faced and extended no 27 Soho Square will also be seen in this view.



Cumulative

3124_2501

Existing

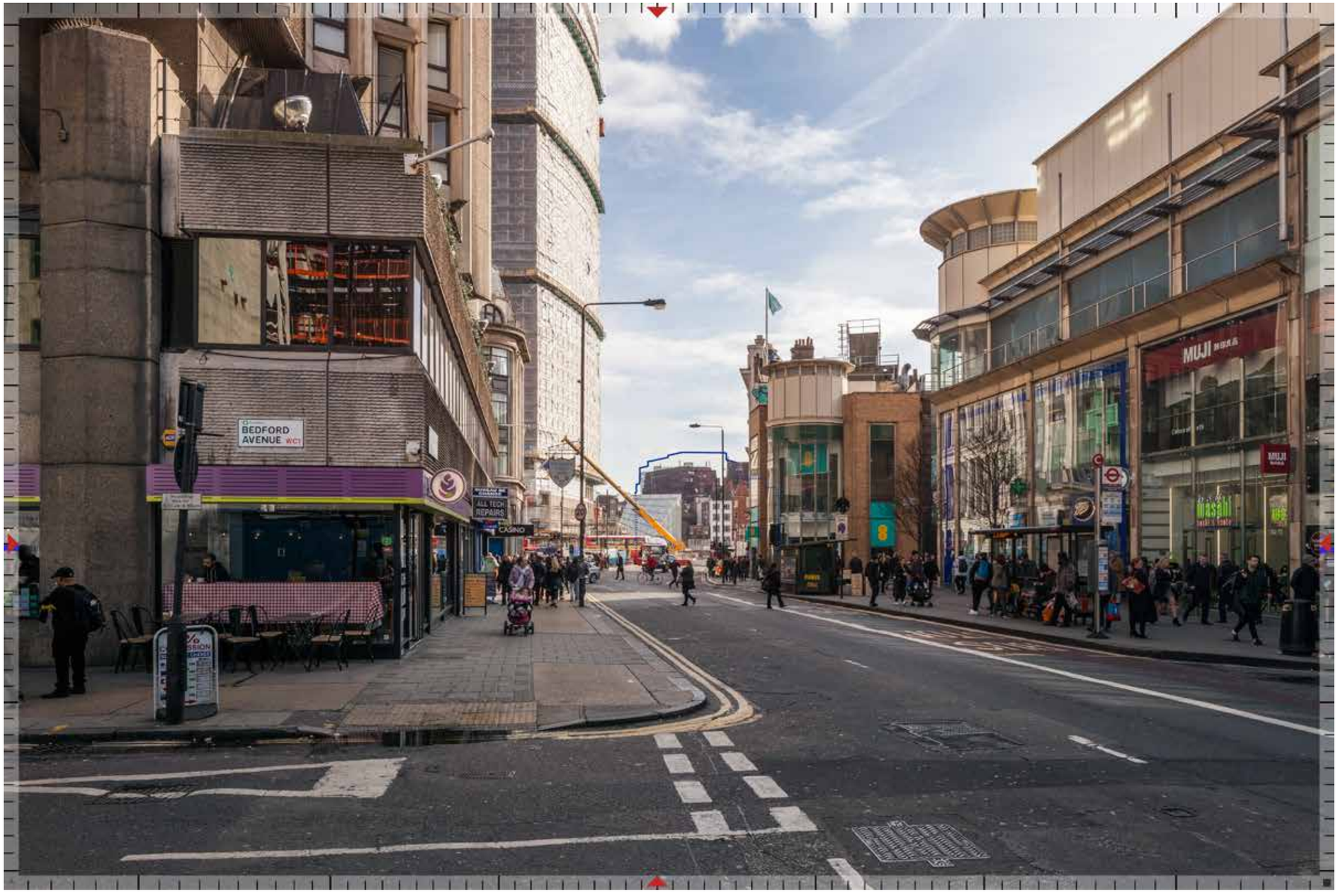
Existing

5.67 This viewpoint is located on Tottenham Court Road, at the junction with Bedford Avenue. The view looks south-east along Tottenham Court Road towards the junction with Oxford Street/ New Oxford Street. The Site's existing office building is seen in the distance in the centre of the image, terminating the view, its roof plant and aerials clearly visible. A new entrance to Tottenham Court Road London Underground Station at the base of Centre Point (grade II) is seen in front of it. That forms part of the major redevelopment taking place at this junction, associated with Crossrail. Centre Point is being converted into housing at the time of writing. This post-war tower remains the focus of the view.

5.68 The foreground of the image takes in the highway, modern retail development on the west side of Tottenham Court Road (right side of image) and the base of a post-war hotel on the east side (left side of image). The buildings seen just beyond the latter lie within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, its southern boundary running along New Oxford Street.

Proposed

5.69 This Site's office building, as redeveloped, would appear comparable in height to the current building. The lighter tone of its elevations will be perceived from here. Roof plant will be contained within a designed enclosure. Centre Point will remain the focus of the view.



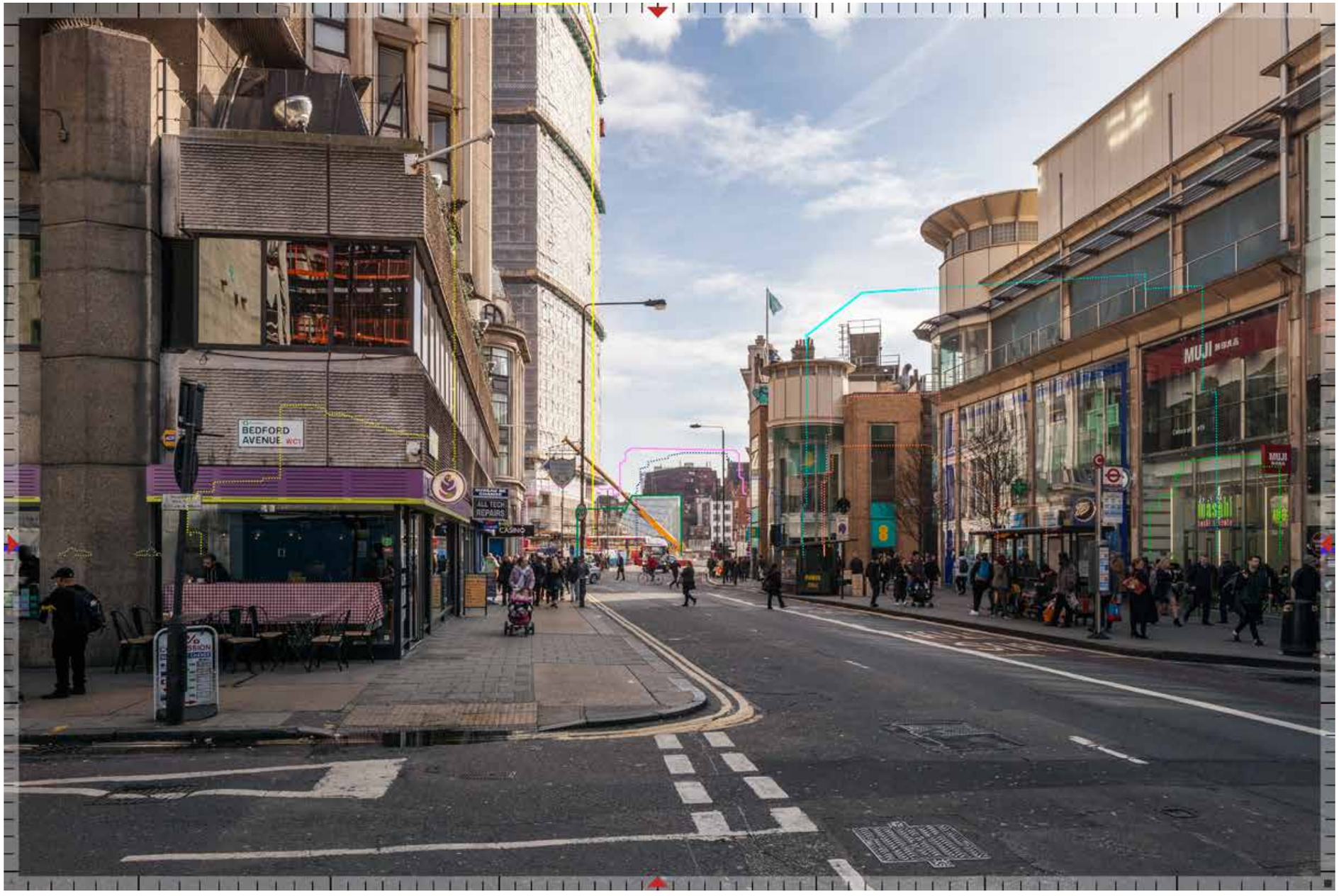
3124_2505

Proposed

16 Tottenham Court Road / Bedford Avenue

Proposed view with cumulative schemes

5.70 Centre Point, as redeveloped, will be the most noticeable cumulative scheme in this view. Others outlined comprise, no. 1 Oxford Street OSD (Site A), the entrance to Tottenham Court Road Crossrail Station and St Giles Circus. The last of these would conceal the Proposed Development from view.



3124_2506

Cumulative

3124_2701

Existing

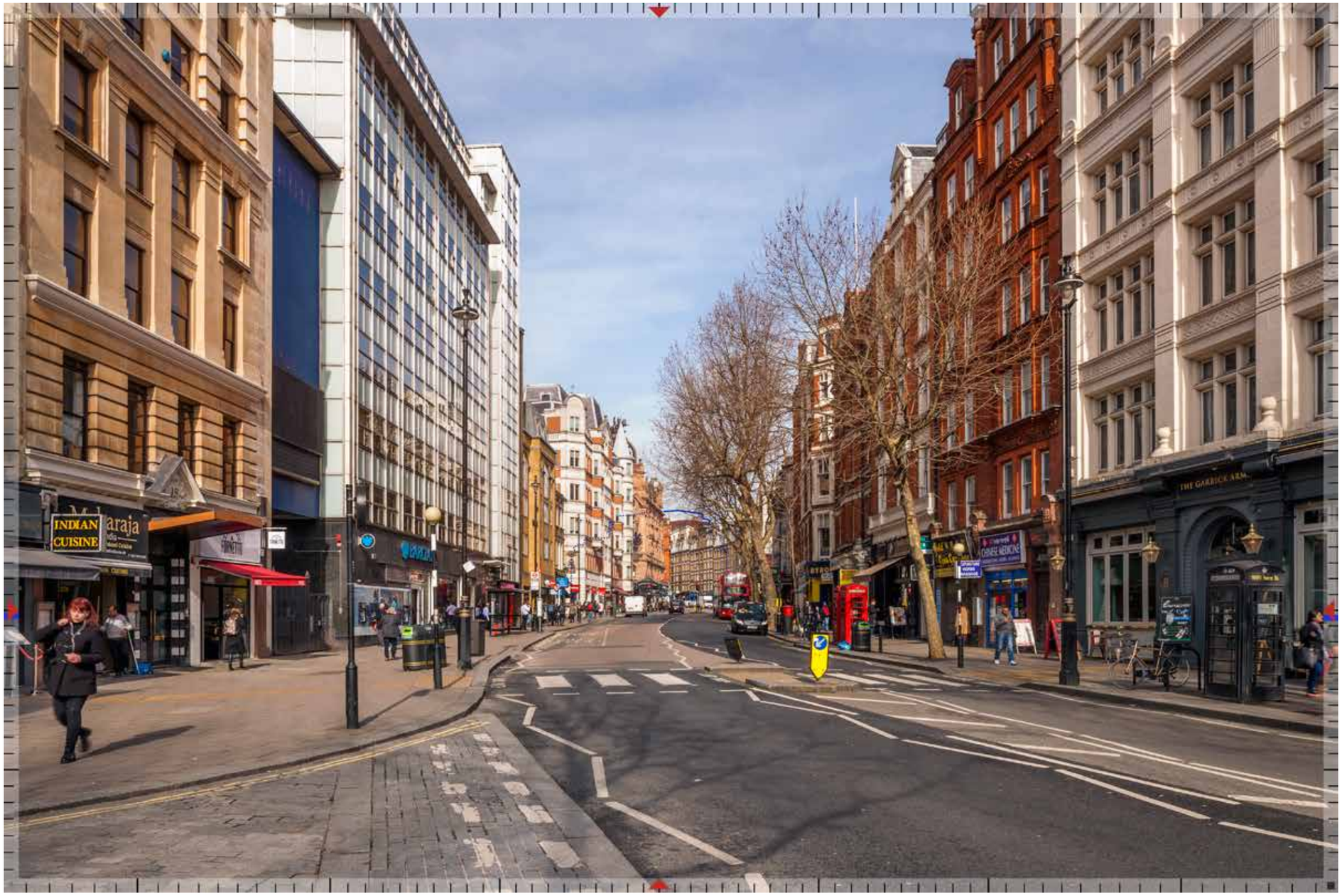
Existing

5.71 The view looks north along Charing Cross Road, which marks the boundary between the City of Westminster's Leicester Square Conservation Area on the west side of street and Covent Garden Conservation Area on the east side. The top levels of the Site's offices are seen above roofline of the late Victorian mansion blocks visible in the centre of the image, but are not very noticeable at this distance. The red sand-stone-faced building seen to the left of this is the London Hippodrome Theatre (grade II).

5.72 The foreground of the image is occupied by the trafficked highway. The left side is framed by late Victorian stone-fronted offices. Alhambra House, re-faced 1930s offices, lie next door. The right side is framed by a tall, late Victorian commercial building. Visibility of the Site's offices is reduced when the mature street trees seen in this image are in leaf.

Proposed

5.73 The upper levels of the Proposed Development would be visible from here, although the light tone of its upper levels will mean it is less noticeable than the dark mass of the existing building. Less still would be seen when the street trees seen in this view are in leaf.



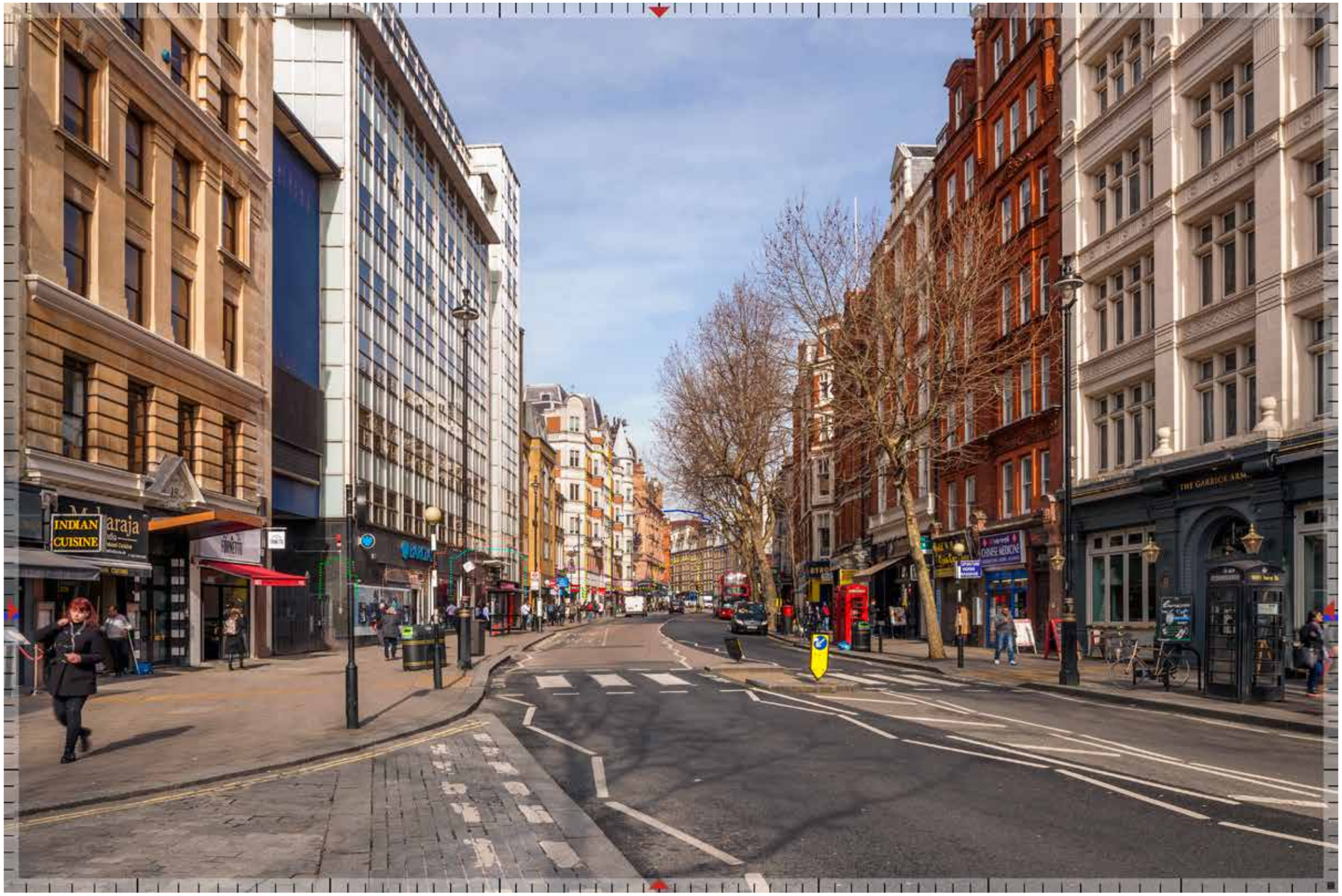
3124_2705

Proposed

17 Charing Cross Road / Irving Street

Proposed view with cumulative schemes

5.74 No cumulative developments will be visible from this location.

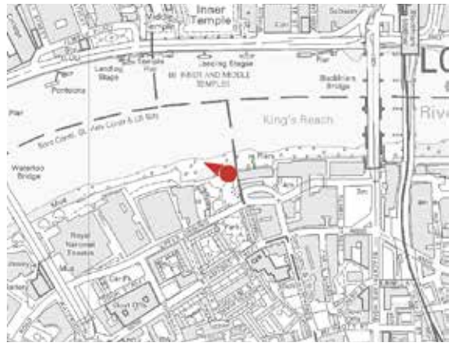


3124_2706

Cumulative

3124_2801

Existing

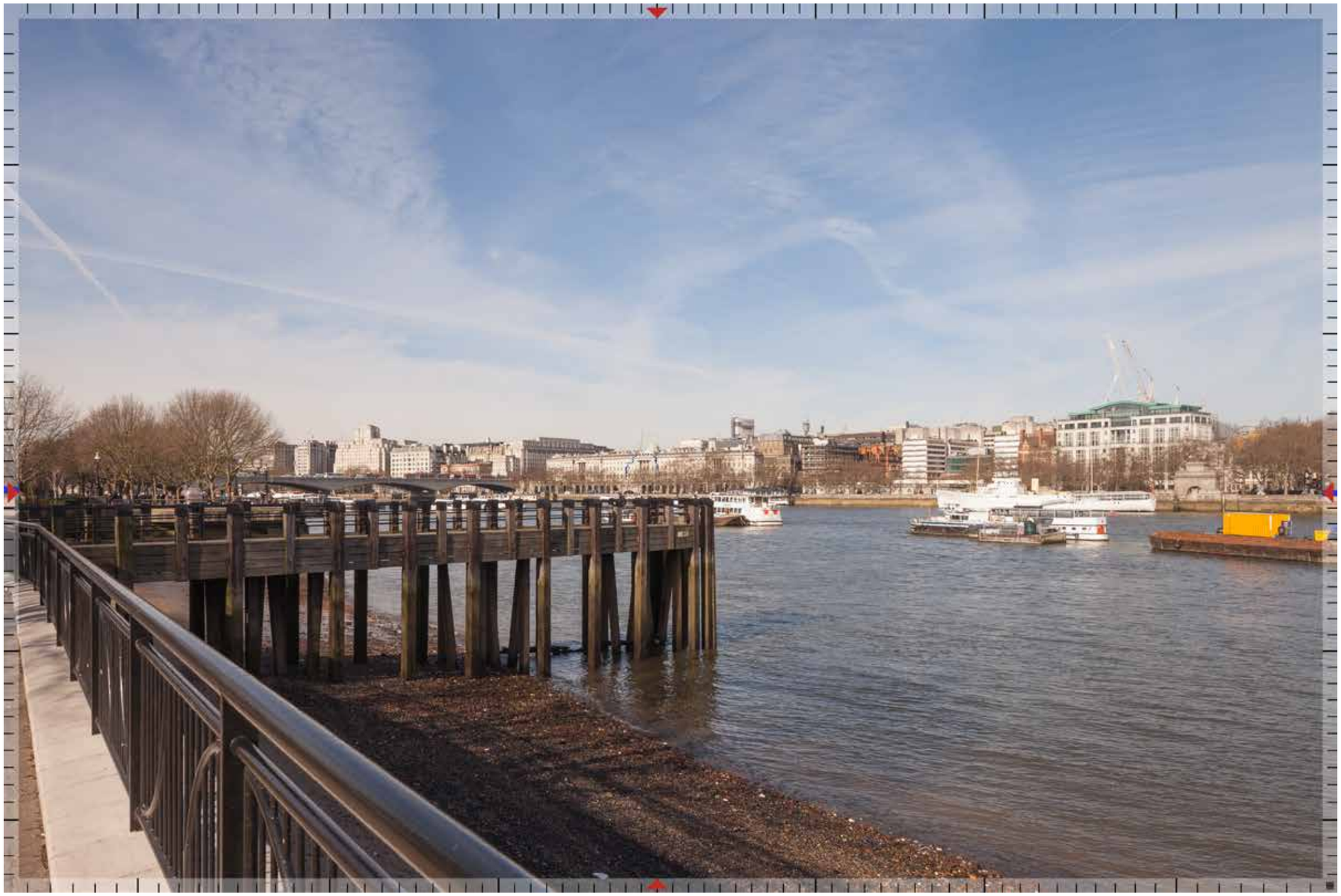


Existing

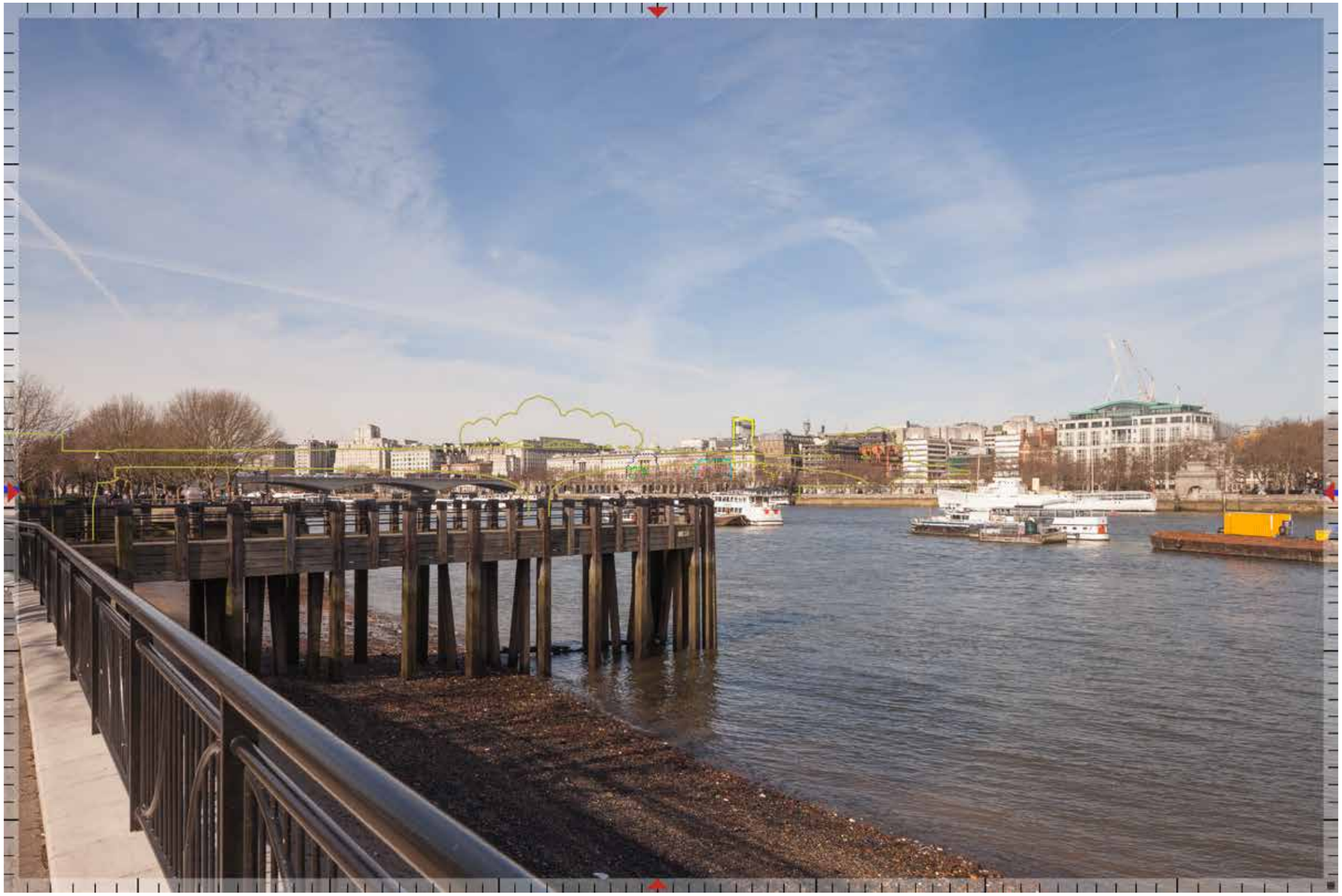
5.75 This viewpoint is situated on the Thames Path on the South Bank, at Bernie Spain Gardens. It lies within the South Bank Conservation Area (LB Lambeth). The view looks north-west towards Somerset House (grade I) on the north bank of the Thames, seen in the centre of the image. The Thames occupies the foreground. Waterloo Bridge (grade II*) is visible to the left of Somerset House. Centre Point (grade II) is seen to be under redevelopment beyond the latter. The BT Tower (grade II) is seen to its right.

Proposed

5.76 The Proposed Development, outlined in the centre of the image would not be visible from this location.



Proposed



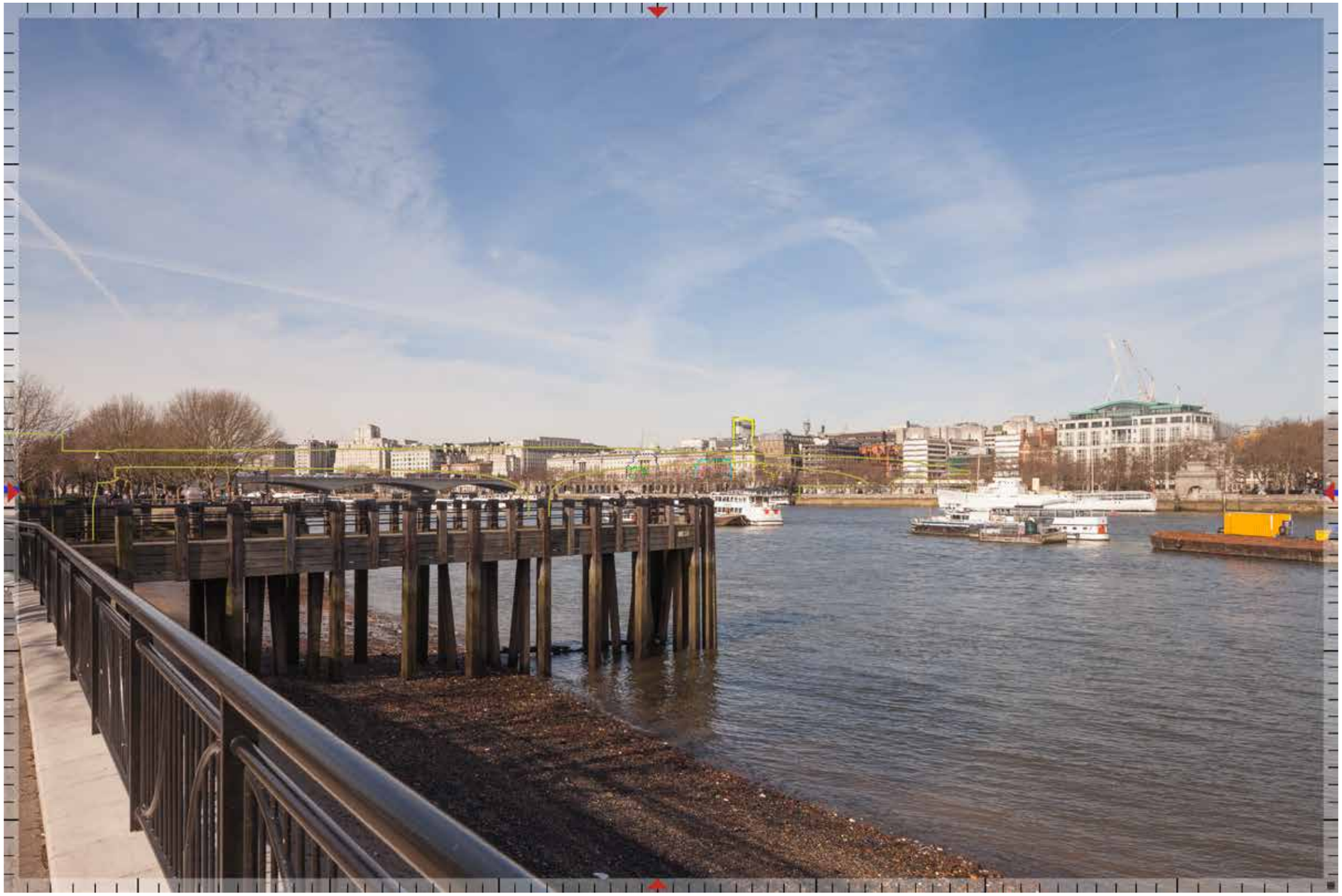
Cumulative (Garden Bridge scheme with trees included)

Proposed view with cumulative schemes

5.77 The Garden Bridge will be the main focus of attention in this view, largely obstructing views of Somerset House from here and from Bernie Spain Gardens. Proposed tree planting on the bridge is shown indicatively in outline in the centre of the image.

Proposed view with cumulative schemes

5.78 This image has been altered to remove trees and other planting (which are illustrative), leaving just the bridge structure outlined. The Garden Bridge will be the main focus of attention in this view, still obstructing views of Somerset House from here and from Bernie Spain Gardens.



Cumulative (Garden Bridge scheme without trees)

6 Assessment and conclusion

Urban design, townscape and architecture

6.1 The Proposed Development would provide a high quality scheme in terms of architecture and urban design, and would represent a noticeable improvement upon the existing situation on the Site.

6.2 As explained in the Design and Access Statement, the Proposed Development is based on a close analysis of the character and history of the St Giles area, surrounding conservation areas and major thoroughfares addressed by the Site. This has informed the approach to its height, plan, form and massing, proportions and expression.

6.3 While the architecture of the Site's existing building makes some response to the streetscape, the building is unappealing in its architecture. It appears as a dour, post-war mass, imposed on the local street grid, blocking a historic route into St Giles from Soho. It creates left-over spaces in the surrounding public realm of the kind that typically attract anti-social behaviour. Internally, the building's plan is circuitous and inefficient. Workspace suffers from both poor light levels and outlook. The Proposed Development has the potential to remedy all these shortcomings. It will deliver an outward facing building that enhances its local context, strengthens both the identity of and access to the historic quarter of St Giles, contributing to the council's wider objectives around connectivity of the area as part of the West End Project.

6.4 The approach to scale, form, massing and architecture of the Development reflects the particular environments of those streets and spaces it addresses. The proposed design strategy allows the Development to respond effectively to the different street conditions on its perimeter.

6.5 The breaking up of a singular large mass into several volumes should ensure that the building relates more comfortably in terms of scale to the principal thoroughfares and secondary and tertiary streets within the St Giles quarter. The Development maintains the existing building's approach of street-scale back-of-pavement frontages to Charing Cross Road and to Shaftesbury Avenue, before stepping up and back to reduce its impact on these streets. The scale of these blocks should relate favourably to the scale of adjacent frontages on these main London streets. The considered approach to façade proportions, which relate to those of Trentishoe Mansions, the office chambers at 117-119 Shaftesbury Avenue and the former Saville Theatre (now Odeon), should reinforce this sense of continuity of scale on these streets. The step down in height where the two blocks meet on Stacey Street takes the building down to a scale similar to that of the flats on Phoenix Street and Stacey Street. The tiered arrangement and sculpted form of the roof-like upper levels provides a fitting completion to the composition.

6.6 The tailoring of façade expression to suit individual street conditions reinforces the massing strategy, helping to further distinguish between the street scale blocks and the upper levels. On Charing Cross Road and Shaftesbury Avenue, the use of pre-cast stone should give the blocks sufficient weight and substance appropriate to these major London streets. Their light stone expression also echoes the stone-fronted ground floors to the Odeon and new Foyles, the stucco frontage of the Phoenix Theatre and stone details to other nearby buildings. The richness of detail to these proposed elevations - such as brass-coloured metal framing to the ground and first floors of the Charing Cross Road frontage – should ensure that there is more to see and appreciate as one gets closer to the building. The brick treatment to the Stacey street 'bridging' block appropriately picks up on the brick façades of the nearby residential blocks.

6.7 The brass-toned balustrades of the external stairs on Charing Cross Road and Stacey Street will draw the eye to the new pedestrian route through the building that will connect these streets. They will also visually tie the brass-toned metal expression of the upper levels to the lower levels on Charing Cross Road, treated in the same metal finish.

6.8 The Development should appeal to companies who are looking for a work environment that encourages interaction and provides places of exchange. This affects the external appearance of the building, being expressed externally through its tiered upper levels, with their planted terraces and colonnades seen in views from the circus and Old Compton Street. These green communal spaces have a particular resonance with the St Giles area as a quarter defined by plane tree-lined avenues to the east and west, with a churchyard forming its green heart. These planted upper levels, which will be glimpsed from parts of Soho, Covent Garden, the southern ends of Tottenham Court Road and Charing Cross Road, will help to signal the location of the St Giles quarter, beckoning people to explore around and beyond the area. The interest and delight that this will bring to the skyline, and the strengthened sense of place generated for the St Giles area, should deliver townscape benefits as well as pay social and environmental dividends.

6.9 The design response should allow the building to relate better to its surroundings, enhancing one's experience of the public realm around the Site. The new route through the Site will re-establish a historic link between Soho and St Giles by re-connecting Old Compton Street with New Compton Street. The threshold spaces at Caxton Walk and Stacey street should benefit from the activity of the building's main entrance and retail uses fronting them, and the flow of pedestrians through that route.

6.10 The Development has the potential to transform a building that is no longer fit for purpose and has a deleterious effect on the townscape into one that provides a working environment fit for modern demands and enhances the local townscape and image of St Giles.

6.11 In line with NPPF policies, London Plan policies, Camden Core Strategy and Development Policies CS14, DP24 and DP25, and SPDs, the Proposed Development is of a high quality of design and based on a clear understanding of the Site context.

Views

6.12 Eighteen views have been assessed in section 5 of this report. These include short, medium, and long-range views from a range of directions. They demonstrate that the Proposed Development, where visible, will appear as an appropriate and beneficial element to the townscape.

6.13 Within St Giles, views 8, 9, 10, and 11 demonstrate how the Proposed Development has been shaped to respond to its context, broken down into smaller blocks to relate to the low and mid-rise mainly late 20th century buildings on Stacey Street and New Compton Street. The Views 8 and 9 will reveal the building's positive engagement with the public realm, improving considerably on the current situation.

6.14 From Cambridge Circus, one will appreciate the sympathetic modelling and expression of the building's top floors, intended to form a neutral backdrop to the circus buildings. The proposed street frontages to Charing Cross Road and Shaftesbury Avenue will be seen as fitting additions to both streets.

6.15 Opportunities to view the Proposed Development from Seven Dials will be very limited. View 6 (Mercer Street / Seven Dials) reveals that only a portion of its upper levels will be seen behind Earlham House. More of these levels would be seen from viewpoint 5 (Shelton Street / Tower Street). Their considered form and lightness in tone will improve considerably on the Site's dark mass seen from there today. Arriving at Shaftesbury Avenue from Mercer Street, one will appreciate the transformative effect of the scheme on this major thoroughfare (View 7), with an engaging street frontage and well proportioned, richly detailed elevations.

6.16 In the case of views from Soho, the impression from views 1 and 2 on Old Compton Street will be of a welcoming building of high architectural quality. Incidental views of the building's upper levels will be possible from streets to the south – Romilly Street (view 14) and Shaftesbury Avenue at Greek Street (view 3). They will not feature prominently in either view. View 12 on Charing Cross Road shows that the scheme will positively define the Site's frontage to this major thoroughfare. The scheme will be glimpsed from Soho Square (view 15), but it would not be noticeable to most viewers.

6.17 The Proposed Development will be picked up in some mid-distance views on Tottenham Court Road (view 16) and Charing Cross Road (View 17), as is the case with the Site's existing building. It will mark a considerable improvement on the current situation in both cases. In these cases, the considered modelling and expression of its upper levels will help to lessen its impact on these views.

6.18 While the Proposed Development may be glimpsed from a few locations on the South Bank, it is unlikely to be noticed. In the case of view 18 (South Bank, at Bernie Spain Gardens) the scheme will not be visible above the roofline of Somerset House. The experience of riverside views from the gardens will change considerably with the construction of the Garden Bridge.

6.19 In line with Core Strategy and Development Policy DP24, there will be no harmful impact on views; on the contrary, they will be enhanced.

Conservation Areas

6.20 Some views towards the Site from parts of the **surrounding conservation areas** will change. However, there will be no harm to any element of setting that contributes to the significance of these conservation areas. At the time of writing, two of these – Denmark Street (LBC) and Soho (WCC) – are undergoing noticeable change associated with Crossrail, both within and on their boundaries, taking place a short distance to the north of the Site. Opportunities to view no.125, as redeveloped, from both conservation areas will be limited mainly to streets in the immediate vicinity of the Site as is the case today. In such views, the Proposed Development would improve the character of the above-mentioned views, by redeveloping the Site's existing building to provide a high quality modern development.

6.21 Of the local views specifically identified in the audits for those conservation areas noted in Section 3 of this assessment, only those identified within the Seven Dials Conservation Area Appraisal and the Bloomsbury Conservation Area have the potential to take in the Proposed Development. In terms of the Seven Dials views, TVIA View 6 reveals that the red brick turreted corner of the Palace Theatre at Cambridge Circus will remain the focus of the local view west along Earlham Street. Equally, the Proposed Development will have no effect one's appreciation of the Post Office Tower in the local view north along Mercer Street. Local views along Shaftesbury Avenue towards Cambridge Circus will take in the Proposed Development. As illustrated in View 7, the refurbished and extended no.125 Shaftesbury Avenue will enhance the quality of such views.

6.22 In respect of the only relevant local view identified from within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area (from Tottenham Court Road), TVIA View 16 reveals that Centre Point will remain the focus of the view. The Proposed Development will appear comparable in height to the Site's existing building, with architecture of a much higher quality. When development at St Giles Circus is complete, it will conceal the Proposed Development from view.

Listed Buildings

6.23 The Proposed Development would be seen in the near and middle distance in certain views, which include the following listed buildings: **Phoenix Theatre, nos. 83, 99a,** and **101 Charing Cross Road; nos. 2, 4, 5, 6,** and **13-17 (odd) Old Compton Street; former Saville Theatre** and **no. 136 Shaftesbury Avenue; no. 13 Moor Street; nos. 4, 28-32 (even), 34,** and **Coach and Horses Public House Romilly Street; nos.22 and 26 Frith Street; Palace Theatre Cambridge Circus; no. 18 (north and south wings)** and **22 Tower Street; no.10 Tower Court; Ambassador's Theatre St Martin's Theatre,** and **no. 24 West Street; nos. 14, 16, 18, 43, 42-48 (even), 53-59 (odd), 61, 63,** and **65-71 (odd) Monmouth Street; nos. 36, 38, 40,** and **Cambridge Theatre Earlham Street; no. 2** and **The Crafts Centre Shorts Gardens; Church of St Giles in the Fields, Lynch gate to the west of Church of St Giles in the Fields, St Giles Vestry Rooms,** and **no. 59 St Giles High Street; nos. 1-5 (Consec), 6,** and **12 Flitcroft Street; nos. 5, 6, 7, 9, 10,20, 26,** and **27 Denmark Street; nos. 1** and **3 Greek Street;** and **nos. 26, 29, 30** and **Roman Catholic Church of St Patrick's Soho Square.**

6.24 The Proposed Development would form a high quality development in the foreground or background of such views, many of which include large and tall 20th and 21st century buildings in a townscape currently undergoing considerable change associated with the development of a new Crossrail Station at Tottenham Court Road.

6.25 The Proposed Development will not harm the setting of any listed building identified in this assessment.

Non-designated Heritage Assets

6.26 Where noticeable in the foreground or backdrop of views of those locally listed buildings, unlisted buildings of merit, and positive contributors in the local area, the Proposed Development will be seen to be of a high quality of design and materials. The majority of such views will already take in existing 20th and 21st century buildings, some of which include tall buildings and other large-scale development in a townscape currently undergoing considerable change associated with the development of a new Crossrail Station at Tottenham Court Road.

Conclusion

6.27 The Site lies in the London Borough of Camden in a densely developed part of the borough with frontages onto two of London's major traffic arteries, Charing Cross Road and Shaftesbury Avenue, as well as onto Stacey Street and Phoenix Street. The Site does not lie in a conservation area or contain any listed buildings. It shares a boundary with the Seven Dials Conservation Area, which lies to the south of the Site. The Soho Conservation Area (WCC) is located on the other side of Charing Cross Road to the west of the Site, while the Denmark Street Conservation Area (LBC) is located on the other side of Phoenix and Stacey Streets to the north of the Site. Both the Denmark Street and Soho conservation areas are currently undergoing considerable change in character and scale, with a new Crossrail station at Tottenham Court Road and associated over-site development under construction at the time of writing.

6.28 The Site's building, no.125 Shaftesbury Avenue, occupies the majority of its urban block. The remainder comprise late Victorian mansions on Caxton Walk, Charing Cross Road and Cambridge Circus, and offices from the same period on Shaftesbury Avenue. No. 125 is one of several large post-war office buildings in this part of Camden, that include Centre Point to the north and Orion House to the south. While Orion House has been refurbished and extended and Centre Point is currently undergoing redevelopment, the Site's outmoded offices form an unprepossessing, dark mass that contributes little positive to its context. It blocks a historic route through the Site from Soho into St Giles, and sterilises the public spaces on its edges.

6.29 In this period of transition for the local area, there is an opportunity to heal those parts of the townscape that still suffer from decisions taken during the post-war years. No. 125 Shaftesbury Avenue falls into this category. This development has the potential to secure a building that is more outward facing and engaged with its surroundings.

6.30 The architect's design strategy for the Site learns from the shortcomings of the existing building. It recognises the potential of the Proposed Development to perform the role of anchor at an historic threshold into St Giles and help improve perceptions of this under-appreciated district of central London. The strategy is a compelling one, envisaging an office building that is rooted in its local context, both in the nature of office and retail space it offers and in the expression of its architecture and attitude to the public realm. It scores highly in environmental terms as well, continuing a trend for refurbishment and extension set by other post-war buildings in the area.

6.31 At ground level, the most obvious benefits will be evident in the reinstatement of a route through the Site with welcoming public spaces at both its entrances, and more extensive retail frontages on Charing Cross Road, Shaftesbury Avenue, Stacey Street and Phoenix Street. The building's new main entrance will be clearly identifiable, positioned at the chamfered corner on Charing Cross Road and Caxton Walk. The building will relate more positively to Stacey Street, with servicing more successfully integrated, rather than allowing it to dominate the look and feel of this frontage and the adjacent public realm.

6.32 The Proposed Development displays a skilful handling of scale, form and massing, rhythm, proportions and materials. One will read a clear distinction between its back-of-pavement frontages and its roof-like, terraced upper levels. The former should provide street-scale definition and continuity at pavement level, and the latter a sense of delight to the local skyline. This difference is reinforced by the contrast in materials and finishes to the elevations, but not at the expense of creating a convincing whole that helps to reinforce a sense of place.

6.33 As demonstrated in the views assessed in this report, this strategy has produced a development that sits comfortably in its context. From those locations from which it will be visible, one will appreciate the building's positive engagement with its surrounding context, by virtue of its considered form, stepped massing, varied articulation and well-chosen materials. A sombre, dark mass will be transformed into a building that lifts the spirits by celebrating a long undervalued quarter of London.

6.34 The local townscape has long accommodated large 20th century buildings that are seen in the backdrop to views from areas such as Cambridge Circus, and will change further with the construction of other permitted developments illustrated in the views assessed. In those instances where no.125 Shaftesbury Avenue is seen today, including from neighbouring conservation areas, it will continue to be seen. The Proposed Development will marginally increase the degree of visibility from areas where the building is experienced in local and medium distance views today due to the modest increase in height proposed. One such area is around the new Crossrail Station at Centre Point, within the Denmark Street Conservation Area, although permitted development at St Giles Circus will change that when built. Another is the circus at Seven Dials, where the top levels of the building are currently seen above the rooftop of the late 20th century Earlham House, a location where several post-war, late 20 and early 21st century tall buildings feature in views.

6.35 As is the case today, no.125 Shaftesbury Avenue will have a presence in views from Cambridge Circus and an increased prominence, but the strength of the circus buildings as a set piece will be undiminished. The Proposed Development will be visible in some views from Soho, principally those streets aligned on the Site, such as Old Compton Street, where it will act as a positive draw to explore the St Giles area. It will be barely noticeable in views from Soho Square, and will not be seen once permitted development on the Former Foyles site is built. Likewise, in those long views that take in the Proposed Development, such as from Bernie Spain Gardens on the South Bank, its presence will be so minor that it will be barely discernible. It will not be seen from those gardens when the Garden Bridge is built.

6.36 The setting of nearby listed buildings will be enhanced by the Proposed Development. The significance of the Church of St Giles in the Fields (grade I), the immediate setting of which has changed considerably in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, would be unaffected by the Proposed Development. The significance of other heritage assets identified in this assessment would also remain unchanged.

6.37 Use, scale, form, massing and architecture would work together to generate a significant improvement on the present circumstances, making the most of the Site's location in townscape and visual terms.

6.38 The new and enhanced public realm, including the new pedestrian route through the building, will represent a substantial public benefit that will help to integrate the scheme with its context, enhancing links between St Giles and Soho.

6.39 The Proposed Development would be consistent with national, regional and local policy. In respect of design, townscape and heritage considerations, it is in line with the policies and guidance on design set out in the NPPF and PPG; London Plan policies 7.1, 7.6 and 7.8; local policies CS14, DP24 and DP25 and SPDs.

6.40 In conclusion, the Proposed Development would mark the Site's location in an appropriate manner, would enhance the quality of local views and townscape, and will provide significant urban design and public realm benefits.

Appendices

A1 Millerhare's technical notes on the Views

Scope

A1.1 This study tests the visual impact of the Proposed Development by Almacantar at 125 Shaftesbury Avenue, London Borough of Camden, London, WC2H 8AD. It consists of a series of accurately prepared photomontage images or Accurate Visual Representations (AVR) which are designed to show the visibility and appearance of the Proposed Development from a range of publicly accessible locations around the site. The views have been prepared by Miller Hare Limited.

A1.2 The views included in the study were selected by the project team and they include, where relevant, standard assessment points defined by the Mayor of London and the Lonndon Borough of Camden. Where requested, view locations have been refined and additional views added. The full list of views is shown in thumbnail form on the following pages, together with a map showing their location. Detailed co-ordinates for the views, together with information about the source photography are shown in Appendix A2 "View Locations".

A1.3 In preparing each AVR a consistent methodology and approach to rendering has been followed. General notes on the AVRs are given in Appendix A4 "Accurate Visual Representations", and the detailed methodology used is described in Appendix A5 "Methodology for the production of Accurate Visual Representations".

A1.4 From each viewpoint a large format photograph has been taken as the basis of the study image. The composition of this photograph has been selected to allow the Proposed Development to be assessed in a meaningful way in relation to relevant elements of the surrounding context. Typically, photographs have been composed with a horizontal axis of view in order to allow vertical elements of the proposals to be shown vertically in the resulting image. If required in order to show the full extent of the proposals in an natural way the horizon line of the image has been allowed to fall above or below the centre of the image. This has been achieved by applying vertical rise at source using a large format camera or by subsequent cropping of the image. In all cases the horizon line and location of the optical axis are clearly shown by red arrow markers at the edges of the image.

A1.5 The lenses chosen for the source photography have been selected to provide a useful Field of View given the distance of the viewpoint from the site location. The lenses used for each view are listed in Appendix A2 "View Locations".

A1.6 In this study the following groups of views have been defined:

- **Distant views** – typically with a horizontal Field of View approximately 48 degrees (equivalent to a 35mm lens on 35mm film camera). LVMF views in addition have been shown with their wider setting
- **Mid-distance views** – horizontal Field of View approximately 74 degrees (equivalent to a 24mm lens on 35mm film camera)
- **Local views** – horizontal Field of View approximately 74 degrees (equivalent to a 24mm lens on 35mm film camera)

A1.7 For each AVR image, the precise Field of View, after any cropping or extension has been applied is shown clearly using indexed markings running around the edges of the image. These indicate increments of 1, 5 and 10 degrees marked away from Optical Axis. Using this peripheral annotation it is possible to detect optical distortions in parts of the image away from the Optical Axis . It is also possible to simulate a different field of view by masking off an appropriate area of the image. More detailed information on the border annotation is contained in Appendix A4 "Accurate Visual Representations".

Conditions

A1.8 From each selected viewpoint a set of accurate images have been created comparing the future view with the current conditions represented by a carefully taken large format photograph. In this study the following conditions are compared:

- **Existing** – the appearance today as recorded on the specified date and time
- **Proposed** – the future appearance were the Proposed Development to be constructed
- **Cumulative** – the Proposed Development is shown in the context of other significant schemes considered relevant by the project team

Styles

A1.9 For each viewpoint, the Proposed Development is shown in a defined graphical style. These styles comply with the definitions of AVR style defined by the London View Management Framework. The styles used in this study are:

- **AVR 1** – a wireline representation showing the silhouette of the proposals. Where a part of the silhouette would be visible in the view it is shown in blue, where it would be invisible, as a result of being occluded by existing structures or dense vegetation, it is shown dotted.
- **AVR 3** – a fully rendered representation of the building showing the likely appearance of the proposed materials under the lighting conditions obtaining in the selected photograph.

Schemes

A1.10 In the Cumulative view, the Proposed Development has been shown in the context of other schemes shown in silhouette form (AVR 1) using multi-coloured lines. Where parts of these schemes would not be visible they are shown as a dotted line. The details of the additional schemes included in the Cumulative view are given in the schedule and overview map included in Appendix A3 "Details of schemes", these include:

- Centrepoint 2013 (1A)
- Tottenham Court Crossrail Station
- St Giles Circus
- 1 Oxford Street OSD (Site A)
- 1 Oxford Street OSD (Site B)
- IlonaRose House
- 27 Soho Square
- The Phoenix Gardens Community Building
- Garden Bridge

A1.11 The Proposed Development shown in the study has been defined by drawings and specifications prepared by the client's design team issued to Millerhare in July 2016. Computer models reflecting the Proposed Development have been assembled and refined by Millerhare and images from these models have been supplied to the project team to be checked for accuracy against the design intent. An overview of the study model annotated with key heights is illustrated in Appendix A3 "Details of schemes".

A2 View Locations

1 | Wardour Street / Old Compton Street

Camera Location
National Grid Reference 529638.6E 180931.0N
Camera height 25.78m AOD
Looking at Centre of Site
Bearing 54.0°, distance 0.3km
Photography Details
Height of camera 1.60m above ground
Date of photograph 03/03/2016
Time of photograph 13:19
Canon EOS 5D Mark II DSLR
Lens 24mm

2 | Old Compton Street / Greek Street

Camera Location
National Grid Reference 529819.9E 181045.3N
Camera height 25.58m AOD
Looking at Centre of Site
Bearing 46.2°, distance 0.1km
Photography Details
Height of camera 1.60m above ground
Date of photograph 03/03/2016
Time of photograph 12:57
Canon EOS 5D Mark II DSLR
Lens 24mm

3 | Shaftesbury Avenue / Greek Street

Camera Location
National Grid Reference 529860.0E 180962.7N
Camera height 25.51m AOD
Looking at Centre of Site
Bearing 30.7°, distance 0.2km
Photography Details
Height of camera 1.60m above ground
Date of photograph 03/03/2016
Time of photograph 12:35
Canon EOS 5D Mark II DSLR
Lens 24mm

4 | Cambridge Circus, outside no. 138 Shaftesbury Avenue

Camera Location
National Grid Reference 529913.9E 181013.1N
Camera height 25.07m AOD
Looking at Centre of Site
Bearing 8.2°, distance 0.1km
Photography Details
Height of camera 1.60m above ground
Date of photograph 03/03/2016
Time of photograph 12:27
Canon EOS 5D Mark II DSLR
Lens 24mm

5 | Shelton Street / Tower Street

Camera Location
National Grid Reference 530059.1E 180982.5N
Camera height 23.46m AOD
Looking at Centre of Site
Bearing 315.0°, distance 0.2km
Photography Details
Height of camera 1.60m above ground
Date of photograph 03/03/2016
Time of photograph 09:37
Canon EOS 5D Mark II DSLR
Lens 24mm

6 | Mercer Street / Seven Dials

Camera Location
National Grid Reference 530078.0E 181079.0N
Camera height 25.13m AOD
Looking at Centre of Site
Bearing 292.7°, distance 0.1km
Photography Details
Height of camera 1.60m above ground
Date of photograph 03/03/2016
Time of photograph 09:29
Canon EOS 5D Mark II DSLR
Lens 24mm

Appendices (continued)

7 | Shaftesbury Avenue / Mercer Street

Camera Location
National Grid Reference 530016.8E 181151.6N
Camera height 24.40m AOD
Looking at Centre of Site
Bearing 234.2°, distance 0.1km
Photography Details
Height of camera 1.60m above ground
Date of photograph 04/03/2016
Time of photograph 13:41
Canon EOS 5D Mark II DSLR
Lens 24mm

8 | New Compton Street, outside no.30

Camera Location
National Grid Reference 530025.7E 181242.5N
Camera height 24.98m AOD
Looking at Centre of Site
Bearing 210.9°, distance 0.2km
Photography Details
Height of camera 1.60m above ground
Date of photograph 04/03/2016
Time of photograph 07:52
Canon EOS 5D Mark II DSLR
Lens 24mm

9 | Stacey Street, outside the Phoenix Garden

Camera Location
National Grid Reference 529926.2E 181207.2N
Camera height 25.29m AOD
Looking at Centre of Site
Bearing 159.2°, distance 0.1km
Photography Details
Height of camera 1.60m above ground
Date of photograph 04/03/2016
Time of photograph 07:29
Canon EOS 5D Mark II DSLR
Lens 24mm

10 | St Giles-In-The-Fields, path running south of Church

Camera Location
National Grid Reference 529984.0E 181237.2N
Camera height 26.43m AOD
Looking at Centre of Site
Bearing 213.0°, distance 0.1km
Photography Details
Height of camera 1.60m above ground
Date of photograph 04/03/2016
Time of photograph 07:44
Canon EOS 5D Mark II DSLR
Lens 24mm

11 | Denmark Street / St Giles High Street

Camera Location
National Grid Reference 529931.1E 181304.7N
Camera height 27.15m AOD
Looking at Centre of Site
Bearing 175.0°, distance 0.2km
Photography Details
Height of camera 1.60m above ground
Date of photograph 04/03/2016
Time of photograph 08:06
Canon EOS 5D Mark II DSLR
Lens 24mm

12 | Charing Cross / Manette Street

Camera Location
National Grid Reference 529848.5E 181210.2N
Camera height 26.70m AOD
Looking at Centre of Site
Bearing 144.0°, distance 0.1km
Photography Details
Height of camera 1.60m above ground
Date of photograph 03/03/2016
Time of photograph 13:38
Canon EOS 5D Mark II DSLR
Lens 24mm

13 | Cambridge Circus, outside the Palace Theatre

Camera Location
National Grid Reference 529899.9E 181024.4N
Camera height 25.14m AOD
Looking at Centre of Site
Bearing 16.3°, distance 0.1km
Photography Details
Height of camera 1.60m above ground
Date of photograph 03/03/2016
Time of photograph 12:20
Canon EOS 5D Mark II DSLR
Lens 24mm

14 | Romilly Street / Greek Street

Camera Location
National Grid Reference 529838.3E 181008.1N
Camera height 25.50m AOD
Looking at Centre of Site
Bearing 44.6°, distance 0.1km
Photography Details
Height of camera 1.60m above ground
Date of photograph 03/03/2016
Time of photograph 12:45
Canon EOS 5D Mark II DSLR
Lens 24mm

15 | Soho Square, north west corner

Camera Location
National Grid Reference 529661.7E 181266.2N
Camera height 27.22m AOD
Looking at Centre of Site
Bearing 120.4°, distance 0.3km
Photography Details
Height of camera 1.60m above ground
Date of photograph 03/03/2016
Time of photograph 13:46
Canon EOS 5D Mark II DSLR
Lens 24mm

16 | Tottenham Court Road / Bedford Avenue

Camera Location
National Grid Reference 529768.7E 181498.7N
Camera height 28.04m AOD
Looking at Centre of Site
Bearing 153.9°, distance 0.4km
Photography Details
Height of camera 1.60m above ground
Date of photograph 03/03/2016
Time of photograph 13:58
Canon EOS 5D Mark II DSLR
Lens 24mm

17 | Charing Cross Road / Irving Street

Camera Location
National Grid Reference 529981.0E 180683.0N
Camera height 19.03m AOD
Looking at Centre of Site
Bearing 354.3°, distance 0.4km
Photography Details
Height of camera 1.60m above ground
Date of photograph 03/03/2016
Time of photograph 11:41
Canon EOS 5D Mark II DSLR
Lens 24mm

18 | South Bank, at Bernie Spain Gardens

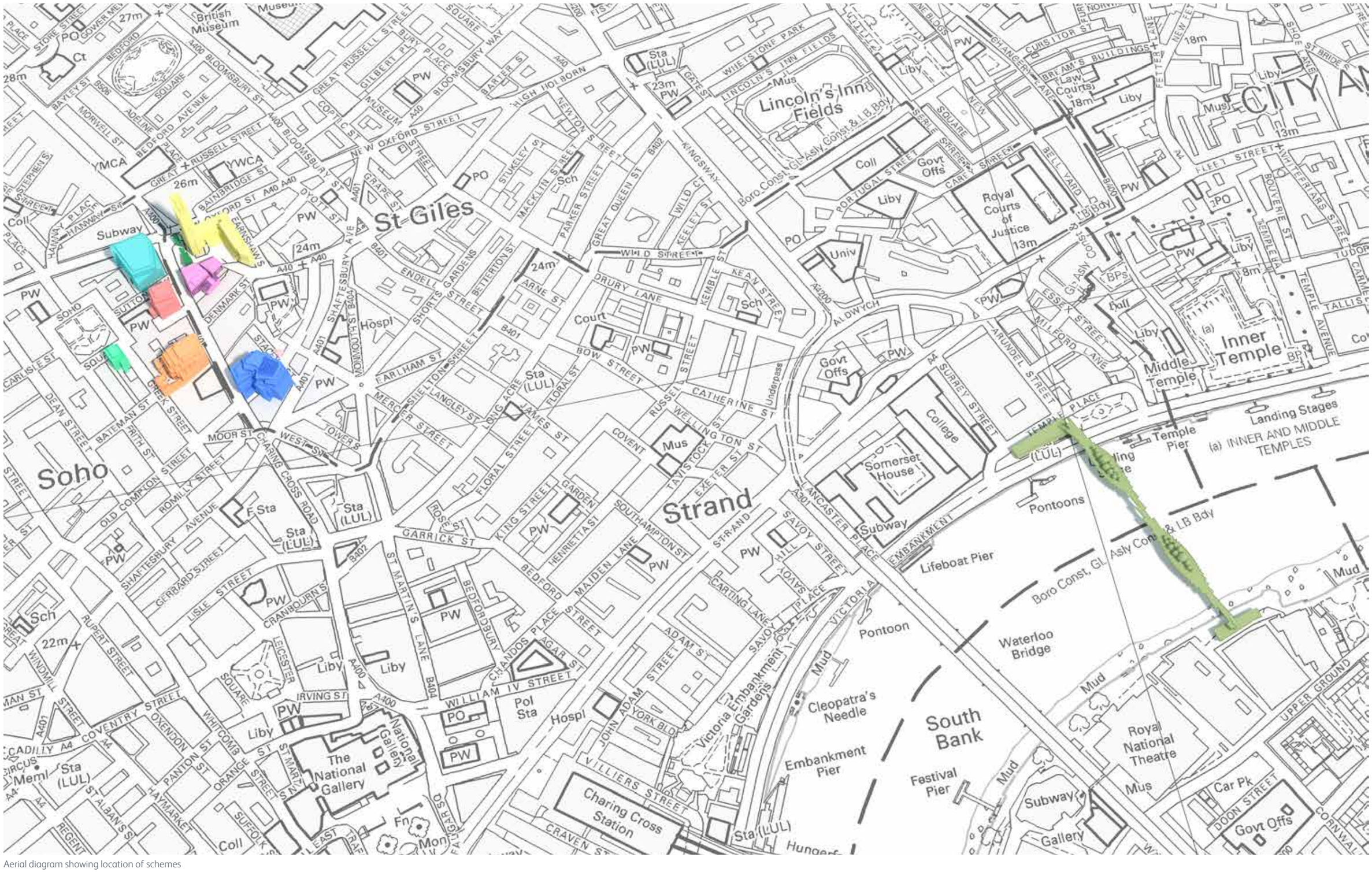
Camera Location
National Grid Reference 531315.8E 180522.9N
Camera height 7.08m AOD
Looking at Centre of Site
Bearing 294.4°, distance 1.5km
Photography Details
Height of camera 1.60m above ground
Date of photograph 03/03/2016
Time of photograph 10:33
Canon EOS 5D Mark II DSLR
Lens 24mm

Appendices (continued)

A3 Details of schemes

index	scheme name	address	reference	PA	status	source of model data	positioning method	MH reference	colour
1	Centrepoint 2013 (1A)	Centrepoint Tower, 103 New Oxford Street, WC1	2013/1957/P	Camden	Completed	n/a	n/a	camd0288.profile130318-rm-proposed	Yellow
2	Tottenham Court Crossrail Station	Plaza Ticket Hall Tottenham Court Road (East) London WC2	2009/4439/P and 2009/4445/P	Camden	Completed	Supplied as part of 2267 - Centrepoint models	Position relative to O.S. supplied by architect	camd0538.profile120402-rm-existing	Dark Green
3	St Giles Circus	St Giles Circus comprising of Denmark Place, Denmark Street, Charing Cross Road, St Giles High Street, Andrew Borde Street and 71 Endell Street	2012/6858/P	Camden	Legal Consent granted	Paper planning application drawings from local authority	Best fit to Ordnance Survey	camd0289.profile120302-dmr-proposed	Pink
4	1 Oxford Street OSD (Site A)	1-23 Oxford Street, 1-6 Falconberg Court and 157-165 Charing Cross Road	11/10043/FULL	WCC	Legal Consent granted	Supplied as part of 2267 - Centrepoint models	Position relative to O.S. supplied by architect	wmin0868.surface130107-kpn-existing	Cyan
5	1 Oxford Street OSD (Site B)	135-155 Charing Cross Road and 12 Sutton Row	11/10045/FULL	WCC	Legal Consent granted	Supplied as part of 2267 - Centrepoint models	Position relative to O.S. supplied by architect	wmin0864-a.profile120320-cp-proposed	Red
6	IlonaRose House	Development Site At 111-119 Charing Cross Road, 1-12 Manette Street, 1-4 Wedgwood Mews And 12 - 14 Greek Street London	15/11234/FULL	WCC	Legal Consent granted	Model supplied by Matt Architecture LLP	Position relative to O.S. supplied by architect	wmin0864-c.surface151030-ma-proposed	Orange
7	27 Soho Square	27 Soho Square, London, W1D 3QR	15/08151/FULL	WCC	Legal Consent granted	Paper planning application drawings from local authority	Best fit to Ordnance Survey	wmin0865.mass160706-rb-consented	Light Green
8	The Phoenix Gardens Community Building	Phoenix Community Garden, 21 Stacey Street, London, WC2H 8DG	2016/2124/P	Camden	Under Construction	Paper planning application drawings from local authority	Best fit to Ordnance Survey	camd0290.profile160706-rb-consented	Purple
9	Garden Bridge	Land To The Front Of The London Television Centre, Queen's Walk And Potential Construction Access Routes From Upper Ground London SE1	14/02792/FUL	LBC	Legal Consent granted	Paper planning application drawings from local authority	Best fit to Ordnance Survey	th22.surface140714-dp-proposed	Brown
10	125 Shaftesbury Avenue	125 Shaftesbury Avenue, Camden, London, WC2H	n/a	Camden	Proposed	Model supplied by DSDHA	Position relative to O.S. supplied by architect	camd0290.detail160727-dsdha-proposed	Blue

Aerial view of Proposed Development



Aerial diagram showing location of schemes

Appendices (continued)

A4 Accurate Visual Representations

A4.1 Each of the views in this study has been prepared as an Accurate Visual Representation (AVR) following a consistent methodology and approach to rendering. Appendix C of the London View Management Framework: Supplementary Planning Guidance (March 2012) defines an AVR as:

> *"An AVR is a static or moving image which shows the location of a proposed development as accurately as possible; it may also illustrate the degree to which the development will be visible, its detailed form or the proposed use of materials. An AVR must be prepared following a well-defined and verifiable procedure and can therefore be relied upon by assessors to represent fairly the selected visual properties of a proposed development. AVRs are produced by accurately combining images of the proposed building (typically created from a three-dimensional computer model) with a representation of its context; this usually being a photograph, a video sequence, or an image created from a second computer model built from survey data. AVRs can be presented in a number of different ways, as either still or moving images, in a variety of digital or printed formats."*

A4.2 In this study the baseline condition is provided by carefully taken large format photography. The proposed condition is represented as an accurate photomontage, which combines a computer generated image with the photographic context. In preparing AVRs of this type certain several key attributes need to be determined, including:

- the Field of View
- the representation of the Proposed Development
- documentation accompanying the AVR

Selection of Field of View

A4.3 The choice of telephoto, standard or wide-angle lens, and consequently the Field of View, is made on the basis of the requirements for assessment which will vary from view to view.

A4.4 In the simple case the lens selection will be that which provides a comfortable Viewing Distance. This would normally entail the use of what most photographers would refer to as a "standard" or "normal" lens, which in practice means the use of a lens with a 35mm equivalent focal length of between about 40 and 58 mm.

A4.5 However in a visual assessment there are three scenarios where constraining the study to this single fixed lens combination would not provide the assessor with the relevant information to properly assess the Proposed Development in its context.

Field Of View

The term 'Field Of View' (FOV) or more specifically Horizontal Field of View (HFOV), refers to the horizontal angle of view visible in a photograph or printed image and is expressed in degrees. It is often generally referred to as 'angle of view', 'included angle' or 'view cone angle'.

Using this measure it becomes practical to make a comparison between photographs taken using lens of various focal lengths captured on to photographic film or digital camera sensors of various size and proportions. It is also possible to compare computer renderings with photographic images.

Studies of this type use a range of camera equipment; in recent times digital cameras have largely superseded the traditional film formats of 35mm, medium format (6cm x 6cm) and large format (5in x 4in). Comparing digital and film formats may be achieved using either the HFOV or the 35mm equivalent lens calculation, however quoting the lens focal length (in mm) is not as consistently applicable as using the HFOV when comparing AVRs.

35mm Lens	HFOV degrees	Lens focal length (mm)
Wide angle lens	74.0	24
Medium wide lens	54.4	35
Telephoto lens	28.8	70
Telephoto lens	20.4	100
Telephoto lens	10.3	200
Telephoto lens	6.9	300

The FOV of digital cameras is dependent on the physical dimensions of the CCD used in the camera. These depend on the make and model of the camera. The comparison table uses the specifications for a Canon EOS-5D Mark II which has CCD dimensions of 36.0mm x 22.0mm.

A4.6 Firstly, where the relationship being assessed is distant, the observer would tend naturally to focus closely on it. At this point the observer might be studying as little as 5 to 10 degrees in plan. The printing technology and image resolution of a print limit the amount of detail that can be resolved on paper when compared to the real world, hence in this situation it is appropriate to make use of a telephoto lens.

A4.7 Secondly, where the wider context of the view must be considered and in making the assessment a viewer would naturally make use of peripheral vision in order to understand the whole. A print has a fixed extent which constrains the angle of view available to the viewer and hence it is logical to use a wide angle lens in these situations in order to include additional context in the print.

A4.8 Thirdly where the viewing point is studied at rest and the eye is free to roam over a very wide field of view and the whole setting of the view can be examined by turning the head. In these situations it is appropriate to provide a panorama comprising of a number of photographs placed side by side.

A4.9 For some views two of these scenarios might be appropriate, and hence the study will include two versions of the same view with different fields of view.

Representation of the Proposed Development and cumulative schemes

Classification of AVRs

A4.10 AVRs are classified according to their purpose using Levels 0 to 3. These are defined in detail in Appendix C of the London View Management Framework: Supplementary Planning Guidance (July 2007). The following table is a summary.

AVR level	showing	purpose
AVR 0	Location and size of proposal	Showing Location and size
AVR 1	Location, size and degree of visibility of proposal	Confirming degree of visibility
AVR 2	As level 1 + description of architectural form	Explaining form
AVR 3	As level 2 + use of materials	Confirming the use of materials

A4.11 In practice the majority of photography based AVRs are either AVR 3 (commonly referred to as "fully rendered" or "photoreal") or AVR 1 (commonly referred to as "wire-line"). Model based AVRs are generally AVR 1.

AVR 3 – Photoreal

Example of AVR 3 – confirming the use of materials (in this case using a 'photo-realistic' rendering technique)

A4.12 The purpose of a Level 3 AVR is to represent the likely appearance of the Proposed Development under the lighting conditions found in the photograph. All aspects of the images that are able to be objectively defined have been created directly from a single detailed description of the building. These include the geometry of the building and the size and shape of shadows cast by the sun.

A4.13 Beyond this it is necessary to move into a somewhat more subjective arena where the judgement of the delineator must be used in order to define the final appearance of the building under the specific conditions captured by the photographic and subsequent printing processes. In this area the delineator is primarily guided by the appearance of similar types of buildings at similar distances in the selected photograph. In large scope studies photography is necessarily executed over a long period of time and sometimes at short notice. This will produce a range of lighting conditions and photographic exposures. The treatment of lighting and materials within these images will respond according to those in the photograph.

A4.14 Where the Proposed Development is shown at night-time, the lightness of the scheme and the treatment of the materials was the best judgment of the visualiser as to the likely appearance of the scheme given the intended lighting strategy and the ambient lighting conditions in the background photograph. In particular the exact lighting levels are not based on photometric calculations and therefore the resulting image is assessed by the Architect and Lighting Designer as being a reasonable interpretation of the concept lighting strategy.

AVR 1 – Outline

Example of AVR 1 confirming degree of visibility (in this case as an occluded 'wire-line' image)

A4.15 The purpose of a wire-line view is to accurately indicate the location and degree of visibility of the Proposed Development in the context of the existing condition and potentially in the context of other proposed schemes.

A4.16 In AVR1 representation each scheme is represented by a single line profile, sometimes with key edges lines to help understand the massing. The width of the profile line is selected to ensure that the diagram is clear, and is always drawn inside the true profile. The colour of the line is selected to contrast with the background. Different coloured lines may be used in order to distinguish between proposed and consented status, or between different schemes.

A4.17 Where more than one scheme is represented in outline form the outlines will obscure each other as if the schemes where opaque. Trees or other foliage will not obscure the outline of schemes behind them. This is because the transparency of trees varies with the seasons, and the practical difficulties of representing a solid line behind a filigree of branches. Elements of a temporary nature (e.g. cars, tower cranes, people) will similarly not obscure the outlines.

Framing the view

A4.18 Typically AVRs are composed with the camera looking horizontally i.e. with a horizontal Optical Axis. This is in order to avoid converging verticals which, although perspectively correct, appear to many viewers as unnatural in print form. The camera is levelled using mechanical levelling devices to ensure the verticality of the Picture Plane, being the plane on to which the image is projected; the film in the case of large format photography or the CCD in the case of digital photography.

A4.19 For a typical townscape view, a Landscape camera format is usually the most appropriate, giving the maximum horizontal angle of view. Vertical rise may be used in order to reduce the proportion of immediate foreground visible in the photograph. Horizontal shift will not be used. Where the prospect is framed by existing buildings, portrait format photographs may be used if this will result in the proposal being wholly visible in the AVR, and will not entirely exclude any relevant existing buildings.

A4.20 Where the Proposed Development would extend off the top of the photograph, the image may be extended vertically to ensure that the full height of the Proposed Development is show. Typically images will be extended only where this can be achieved by the addition of sky and no built structures are amended. Where it is necessary to extend built elements of the view, the method used to check the accuracy of this will be noted in the text.

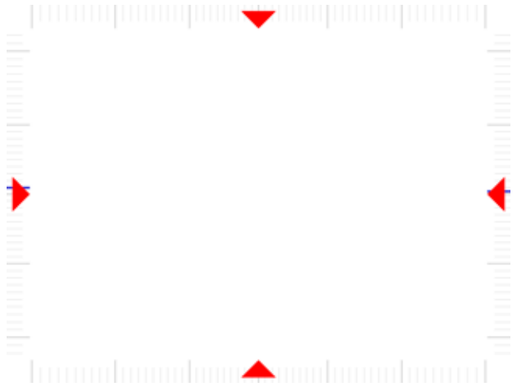
Documenting the AVR

Border annotation

A4.21 A Millerhare AVR image has an annotated border or 'graticule' which indicates the field of view, the optical axis and the horizon line. This annotation helps the user to understand the characteristics of the lens used for the source photograph, whether the photographer applied tilt, vertical rise or horizontal shift during the taking of the shot and if the final image has been cropped on one or more sides.

A4.22 The four red arrows mark the horizontal and vertical location of the 'optical axis'. The optical axis is a line passing through the eye point normal to the projection plane. In photography this line passes through the centre of the lens, assuming that the film plane has not been tilted relative to the lens mount. In computer rendering it is the viewing vector, i.e the line from the eye point to the target point.

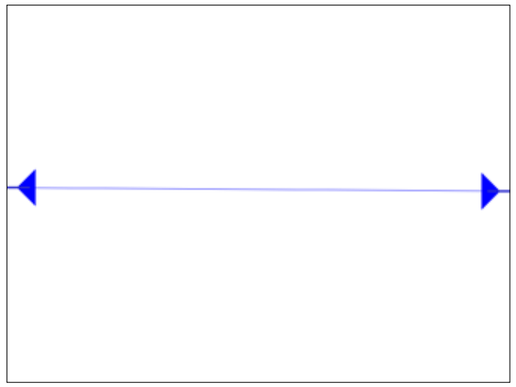
A4.23 If the point indicated by these marks lies above or below the centre of the image, this indicates either that vertical rise was used when taking the photograph or that the image has subsequently been cropped from the top or bottom edge. If it lies to the left or right of the centre of the image then cropping has been applied to one side or the other, or more unusually that horizontal shift was applied to the photograph.



Sample graticule showing optical axis markers

A4.24 The vertical and horizontal field of view of the final image is declared using a graticule consisting of thick lines at ten degree increments and intermediate lines every degree, measured away from the optical axis. Using this graticule it is possible to read off the resultant horizontal and vertical field of view, and thereby to compare the image with others taken using specific lens and camera combinations. Alternatively it can be used to apply precise crops during subsequent analysis.

A4.25 The blue marks on the left and right indicate the calculated location of the horizon line i.e. a plane running horizontally from the location of the camera. Where this line is above or below the optical axis, this indicates that the camera has been tilted; where it is not parallel with the horizontal marking of the optical axis, this indicates that the camera was not exactly horizontal, i.e. that "roll" is present. Note that a small amount of tilt and roll is nearly always present in a photograph, due to the practical limitations of the levelling devices used to align the camera in the field.



Sample graticule showing horizon line markers

Comparing AVRs with different FOVs

A4.26 A key benefit of the index markings is that it becomes practical to crop out a rectangle in order to simulate the effect of an image with a narrower field of view. In order to understand the effect of using a longer lens it is simply necessary to cover up portions of the images using the graticule as a guide.

A5 Methodology for the production of Accurate Visual Representations

Overview of Methodology

A5.1 The study was carried out by Millerhare (the Visualiser) by combining computer generated images of the Proposed Development with a large format photographs at key strategic locations around the site as agreed with the project team. Surveying was executed by Absolute Survey (the Surveyor).

A5.2 The methodology employed by Millerhare is compliant with Appendix C of the London View Management Framework: Supplementary Planning Guidance (March 2012) and Landscape Institute Advice Note 01/11.

A5.3 The project team defined a series of locations in London where the proposed buildings might have a significant visual effect. At each of these locations Millerhare carried out a preliminary study to identify specific Assessment Points from which a representative and informative view could be taken. Once the exact location had been agreed by the project team, a photograph was taken which formed the basis of the study. The precise location of the camera was established by the Surveyor using a combination of differential GPS techniques and conventional observations.

A5.4 For views where a photographic context was to be used additional surveying was carried out. A number of features on existing structures visible from the camera location were surveyed. Using these points, Millerhare has determined the appropriate parameters to permit a view of the computer model to be generated which exactly overlays the appropriate photograph. Each photograph has then been divided into foreground and background elements to determine which parts of the current context should be shown in front of the Proposed Development and which behind. When combined with the computer-generated image these give an accurate impression of the impact of the Proposed Development on the selected view in terms of scale, location and use of materials (AVR Level 3).

Spatial framework and reference database

A5.5 All data was assembled into a consistent spatial framework, expressed in a grid coordinate system with a local plan origin. The vertical datum of this framework is equivalent to Ordnance Survey (OS) Newlyn Datum.

A5.6 By using a transformation between this framework and the OSGB36 (National Grid) reference framework, Millerhare have been able to use other data sets (such as OS land line maps and ortho-corrected aerial photography) to test and document the resulting photomontages.

A5.7 In addition, surveyed observation points and line work from Millerhare's London Model database are used in conjunction with new data in order to ensure consistency and reliability.

A5.8 The models used to represent consented schemes have been assembled from a variety of sources. Some have been supplied by the original project team, the remainder have been built by Millerhare from available drawings, generally paper copies of the submitted planning application. While these models have not been checked for detailed accuracy by the relevant architects, Millerhare has used its best endeavours to ensure that the models are positioned accurately both in plan and in overall height.

Process – photographic context

Reconnaissance

A5.9 At each Study Location the Visualiser conducted a photographic reconnaissance to identify potential Assessment Points. From each candidate position, a digital photograph was taken looking in the direction of the Proposed Development using a wide angle lens. Its position was noted with field observations onto an OS map and recorded by a second digital photograph looking at a marker placed at the Assessment Point.

A5.10 In the situation where, in order to allow the appreciation of the wider setting of the proposal, the assessor requires more context than is practical to capture using a wide angle lens, multiple photographs may be combined to create a panorama, typically as a diptych or triptych. This will be prepared by treating each panel as a separate AVR and then combining in to a single panorama as a final process.

A5.11 The Visualiser assigned a unique reference to each Assessment Point and Photograph.

Final Photography

A5.12 From each selected Assessment Point a series of large format photographs were taken with a camera height of approximately 1.6m. The camera, lens, format and direction of view are determined in accordance with the policies set out above

A5.13 Where a panoramic view is specified the camera/tripod head is rotated through increments of 40 degrees to add additional panels to the left and/or right of the main view.

A5.14 The centre point of the tripod was marked and a digital photograph showing the camera and tripod in situ was taken to allow the Surveyor to return to its location. Measurements and field notes were also taken to record the camera location, lens used, target point and time of day.

Surveying the Assessment Points

A5.15 For each selected Assessment Point a survey brief was prepared, consisting of the Assessment Point study sheet and a marked up photograph indicating alignment points to be surveyed. Care was taken to ensure that a good spread of alignment points was selected, including points close to the camera and close to the target.

A5.16 Using differential GPS techniques the Surveyor established the location of at least two intervisible stations in the vicinity of the camera location. A photograph of the GPS antenna in situ was taken as confirmation of the position.

A5.17 From these the local survey stations, the requested alignment points were surveyed using conventional observation.

A5.18 The resulting survey points were amalgamated into a single data set by the Surveyor. This data set was supplied as a spreadsheet with a set of coordinates transformed and re-projected into OSGB36 (National Grid) coordinates, and with additional interpreted lines to improve the clarity of the surveyed data.

A5.19 From the point set, the Visualiser created a three dimensional alignment model in the visualisation system by placing inverted cones at each surveyed point.

Photo preparation

A5.20 From the set of photographs taken from each Assessment Point, one single photograph was selected for use in the study. This choice was made on the combination of sharpness, exposure and appropriate lighting.

A5.21 The selected photograph was copied into a template image file of predetermined dimensions. The resulting image was then examined and any artefacts related to the digital image capture process were rectified.

A5.22 Where vertical rise has been used the image is analysed and compensation is applied to ensure that the centre of the image corresponds to the location of the camera's optical axis.

Calculating the photographic alignment

A5.23 A preliminary view definition was created within the visualisation system using the surveyed camera location, recorded target point and FOV based on the camera and lens combination selected for the shot

A5.24 A lower resolution version of the annotated photograph was attached as a background to this view, to assist the operator to interpret on-screen displays of the alignment model and other relevant datasets.

A5.25 Using this preliminary view definition, a rendering was created of the alignment model at a resolution to match the scanned photograph. This was overlaid onto the background image to compare the image created by the actual camera and its computer equivalent. Based on the results of this process adjustments were made to the camera definition. When using a wide angle lens observations outside the circle of distortion are given less weighting.

A5.26 This process was iterated until a match had been achieved between the photograph and alignment model. At this stage, a second member of staff verified the judgements made. An A3 print was made of the resulting photograph overlaid with the alignment model as a record of the match. This was annotated to show the extents of the final views to be used in the study.

Example of alignment model overlaid on the photograph

Preparing models of the Proposed Development

A5.27 A CAD model of the Proposed Development was created from 3D CAD models and 2D drawings supplied by the Architect. The level of detail applied to the model is appropriate to the AVR type of the final images.

A5.28 Models of the Proposed Development and other schemes are located within the spatial framework using reference information supplied by the Architect or, when not available, by best fit to other data from the spatial framework reference database . Study renders of the model are supplied back to the Architect for confirmation of the form and the overall height of the Proposed Development. The method used to locate each model is recorded. Each distinct model is assigned a unique reference code by the Visualiser.

Determining occlusion and creating simple renderings

A5.29 A further rendering was created using the aligned camera, which combined the Proposed Development with a computer-generated context. This was used to assist the operator to determine which parts of the source image should appear in front of the Proposed Development and which behind it. Using this image and additional site photography for information, the source file is divided into layers representing foreground and background elements.

A5.30 In cases where the Proposed Development is to be represented in silhouette or massing form (AVR1 or AVR2), final renderings of an accurate massing model were generated and inserted into the background image file between the foreground and background layers.

A5.31 Final graphical treatments were applied to the resulting image as agreed with the Architect and environmental and planning consultants. These included the application of coloured outlines to clarify the reading of the images or the addition of tones to indicate occluded areas.

Creating more sophisticated renderings

A5.32 Where more sophisticated representations of the Proposed Developments were required (AVR3) the initial model is developed to show the building envelope in greater detail. In addition, definitions were applied to the model to illustrate transparency, indicative material properties and inter-reflection with the surrounding buildings.

A5.33 For each final view, lighting was set in the visualisation system to match the theoretical sunlight conditions at the time the source photograph was taken, and additional model lighting placed as required to best approximate the recorded lighting conditions and the representation of its proposed materials.

A5.34 By creating high resolution renderings of the detailed model, using the calculated camera specification and approximated lighting scenario, the operator prepared an image of the building that was indicative of its likely appearance when viewed under the conditions of the study photograph. This rendering was combined with the background and foreground components of the source image to create the final study images.

A5.35 A single CAD model of the Proposed Development has been used for all distant and local views, in which the architectural detail is therefore consistently shown. Similarly a single palette of materials has been applied. In each case the sun angles used for each view are transferred directly from the photography records.

A5.36 Material definitions have been applied to the models assembled as described. The definitions of these materials have been informed by technical notes on the planning drawings and other available visual material, primarily renderings created by others. These resulting models have then been rendered using the lighting conditions of the photographs.

A5.37 Where the Proposed Development is shown at night-time, the lightness of the scheme and the treatment of the materials was the best judgment of the visualiser as to the likely appearance of the scheme given the intended lighting strategy and the ambient lighting conditions in the background photograph.

A5.38 Where a panoramic view is specified each panel is prepared by treating each photograph as an individual AVR following the process described in the previous paragraphs. The panels are then arranged side by side to construct the panorama. Vertical dividers are added to mark the edge of each panel in order to make clear that the final image has been constructed from more than one photograph.

Documenting the study

A5.39 For each Assessment Point a CAD location plan was prepared, onto which a symbol was placed using the coordinates of the camera supplied by the Surveyor. Two images of this symbol were created cross-referencing background mapping supplied by Ordnance Survey.

A5.40 The final report on the Study Location was created which shows side by side, the existing and proposed prospect. These were supplemented by images of the location map, a record of the camera location and descriptive text. The AVR level is described.

A5.41 Peripheral annotation was added to the image to clearly indicate the final FOV used in the image, any tilt or rise, and whether any cropping has been applied.

A5.42 Any exceptions to the applied policies or deviations from the methodology were clearly described.

A5.43 Where appropriate, additional images were included in the study report, showing the Proposed Development in the context of other consented schemes.

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