

## **Planning Statement**

**Site: 50-52 Eversholt Street, NW1 1DA.**

### **Proposal:**

Change of use from Class A1 to two class A1 units at the front and 4 self-contained short term residential lets at the rear.

## **1.0 Application Site and Location**

The site lies within the designated Neighbourhood Centre

The site lies within a designated “safeguarded area” due to possible future use as part of Crossrail 2.

The site lies within Flood zone 1

## **2.0 Relevant Planning History**

Prior approval was refused for: *“Change of use of the ground floor level from A1 (retail) to 4x studios (Class C3).”*

## **3.0 Proposal**

Change of use from Class A1 to two class A1 units at the front and 4 self-contained short term residential lets at the rear.

The proposal would protect the existing retail frontage by providing two retail units. The smallest unit has been leased to a “money exchange shop” on a ten-year lease commencing 4<sup>th</sup> July 2017 - refer to lease agreement which has been submitted as part of the application documents.

## **4.0 Planning Policy Context and Assessment**

Government policy is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (“NPPF”). Of relevance are the following:

Paragraph 6 states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

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

Paragraph 187 states 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.

## **Relevant adopted Local Policies**

### **Policy E1 - Economic development**

This policy “recognises the contribution that tourism makes to the character of Camden and the way that is perceived by those living outside the borough, and also the substantial number of jobs it provides.” (paragraph 5.54).

### **Policy E3 – Tourism**

This policy sets out the detailed approach to supporting tourism and providing accommodation for those visiting the borough.

This policy states that; “the Council recognises the importance of the visitor economy in Camden and will support tourism development and visitor accommodation.”

### **Policy E3 states, inter alia:**

“We will:

*c. consider tourism development outside of the areas listed above where it would have a local or specialist focus and would attract limited numbers of visitors from outside the borough;*

*All tourism development and visitor accommodation must: f. be easily reached by public transport;*

*g. provide any necessary pickup and set down points for private hire cars and coaches and provide taxi ranks and coach parking where necessary; #*

*h. not harm the balance and mix of uses in the area, local character, residential amenity, services for the local community, the environment or transport systems;*

*and*

*i. not lead to the loss of permanent residential accommodation.”*

Paragraph 5.58 of the Local Plan states: “The Council will guide tourism development that is likely to attract large numbers of people to Camden’s part of Central London, particularly the growth areas of King’s Cross, Euston, Holborn and Tottenham Court Road.” – the application site is within the Euston area.

### **Policy TC2 - Camden’s centres and other shopping areas**

This policy in part seeks to protect retail frontages.

In Neighbourhood Centres, which the application site falls within, the Council “will seek to retain convenience shopping for local residents in Camden’s Neighbourhood Centres and will ensure that development in them does not harm the function, character or success of that centre.”

Paragraph 9.23 of the Local Plan states: *“The Council will seek to retain a strong element of convenience shopping for local residents in Camden’s neighbourhood centres and ensure that any development in them does not harm the function, character or success of that centre. We will take into account the individual character of the centre when assessing development proposals but, as a guide, we will resist schemes that would result in less than half of ground floor premises in a neighbourhood centre from being in retail use or in more than three consecutive premises being in non-retail use. We will also take into account any history of vacancy in shop units and the prospect of achieving an alternative occupier for vacant premises.”*

## **5.0 Planning Assessment**

The main planning considerations are as follows:

- Principle of short term holiday lets
- Quality of units
- The proposed impact on the character, function, vitality and viability of the wider Eversholt Street.
- Car free development

### **Principle of short term lets**

There are no policies which prohibit short term holiday lets subject to other policies being complied with.

### **Quality of units**

While there are no standards that need to be met when providing short term holiday lets, the proposed units would provide good quality short-term accommodation in a highly accessible location to Camden and London wide tourist attractions.

### **The proposed impact on the character, function, vitality and viability of the wider Eversholt Street.**

The application site is located within a designated Neighbourhood Centre within the Central London Area [16-76 Eversholt Street (Euston House) (east side); 42-44 Doric Way and 80-118 Eversholt Street (east side)].

A marketing statement (dated October) has been submitted as part of the application documents.

This statement confirms that securing tenants for the retail premises is difficult because of the low footfall of pedestrians and the fact the terrace has been designated for compulsory purchase for the future Crossrail 2 project.

The statement comments that those businesses surviving in this street are specialist retailers, betting offices or restaurants.

The marketing statement confirms the terrace had been designated as a “safeguarded area” due to possible future use as part of Crossrail 2. And this poses the biggest challenge to secure retail tenants because the safeguard designation for the Cross-Rail project serves as a negative blight to securing retail occupiers.

The application documents include a Cross Rail 2 Fact Sheet. This sheet confirms that the application site is located within a “designated area”.

Despite the challenges to rent the premises the applicant has been successful in leasing one of the retail units on a ten-year lease (money exchange shop). The other unit remains vacant but the applicant intends to persevere with renting this premise.

While the proposal would lead to a loss of retail floorspace at the rear, the retail frontage will be protected in compliance with Local Plan policy - there are no policies which restrict the change of use of retail floorspace at the rear. The smallest unit has been proven to be unaffected by the smaller provision of retail floor space demonstrated by the lease agreement the applicant has secured for ten years.

### **Car-free development**

Policy DP18 states that the Council seeks to ensure that developments provide the minimum necessary car parking provision. The site is close to Euston, Kings Cross and Mornington Crescent underground stations also mainline railway services interchanges. The application site has a PTAL rating (public transport access level) of 6a (Excellent).

The council routinely allow car free development in highly accessible locations like this one, subject to a Section 106 legal agreement designating the development as ‘car free’. The applicant is willing to enter into such an agreement.