

9th OCTOBER 2017

Ref: GSA936

**PLANNING STATEMENT**  
13 LEEKE STREET, LONDON

**General**

This statement is to be read in conjunction with all other materials submitted in support of the current Planning Application for the above address. Please refer to the submitted planning drawings for further information. Arrangements to inspect the site can be made with Guy Stansfeld Architects Limited.

The proposal is described as:

*Change of use from residential flat (Use class C3) to office space (Class B1) in conjunction with the existing use at 5-11 Leeke Street. Installation of new brick front facade and erection of a roof and rear extension.*



Figure 1 – Building Massing

**Camden Local Plan – Policy H3**

According to the Camden Local Plan (adopted June 2017):

*Policy H3 seeks to protect all housing floorspace where people live long-term...*

It goes on to note that:

*The Council will aim to ensure that existing housing continues to meet the needs of existing and future households...*

Whilst the proposed development would replace existing C3 residential use with B1 office use, it should be noted that the residential use on this site was substandard when it was built and has proven to be unsustainable due to local conditions. In effect, although there is a

residential use on the site, it does not *meet the needs of existing and future households* (as required in the policy)...

A letter from the previous owner of the property (appendix A) illustrates how the residential use has failed to be viable.



Figure 2 – Site

### **London Housing Standards**

The London Housing Design Guide produced by the Mayor of London lists criteria for new housing. These standards were in effect by 2010, when this dwelling was developed. However, the dwelling is sub-standard in many ways:

The minimum area for a 1 bed house should be 50m<sup>2</sup> in a single storey. The existing dwelling is only just over 40m<sup>2</sup> split over 2 storeys. The fact that it is split over 2 storeys with a long stair makes it less efficient, bringing the usable internal area to less than 40m<sup>2</sup>. The stair also makes the dwelling less accessible than a flat situated at a single level.

The minimum area for living, dining and kitchen in the guide is listed as 23m<sup>2</sup>. The existing dwelling only has 20m<sup>2</sup> combined for these purposes.

The guide notes that North-facing single aspect homes should be avoided. The existing dwelling is both single aspect and North-facing.

Also, there is a lack of any amenity space for this use.

## Central Activity Zone

The site is within the Central Activities Zone, which is described in the CAZ Supplementary Planning Guidance as:

*London's globally iconic core and one of the world's most attractive and competitive business locations. It accommodates one third of London's jobs and generates almost 10% of the UK's output. It contains the seat of national Government and has international renown for its shopping, culture and heritage. It is also home to more than 237,000 residents...*

Whilst a mix of business, culture, entertainment, shopping, tourism and housing are what make the CAZ the vibrant area that it is, in the introduction to the SPG, the Mayor emphasizes that:

*the need to accommodate housing growth does not have to be at the expense of the business, culture and other strategic functions of the Zone.*

## NPPF

Paragraph 7 of the NPPF identifies that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental:

### Economically Sustainable

- The proposal will replace an unviable site that does not currently contribute to the local economy;
- The proposals will deliver additional high quality and modern office floorspace in the heart of the Central Activity Zone, increasing local employment opportunities, benefitting the local economy;
- As a stand-alone property, the small site footprint provides an obstacle to efficient circulation within any proposed development. Even as a two storey building the existing residential use does not meet the minimum space standards for a single bedroom dwelling. However, as an annex to 5-11 Leek Street, the proposed development can utilize the existing stair at PHF, making it a much more spatially efficient and economically viable.

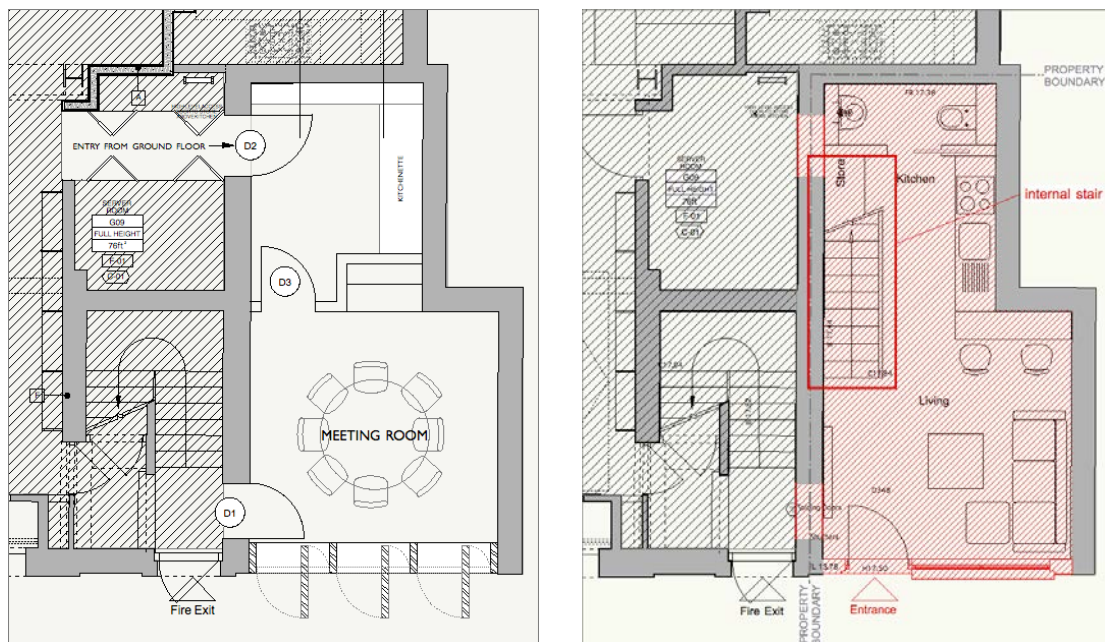
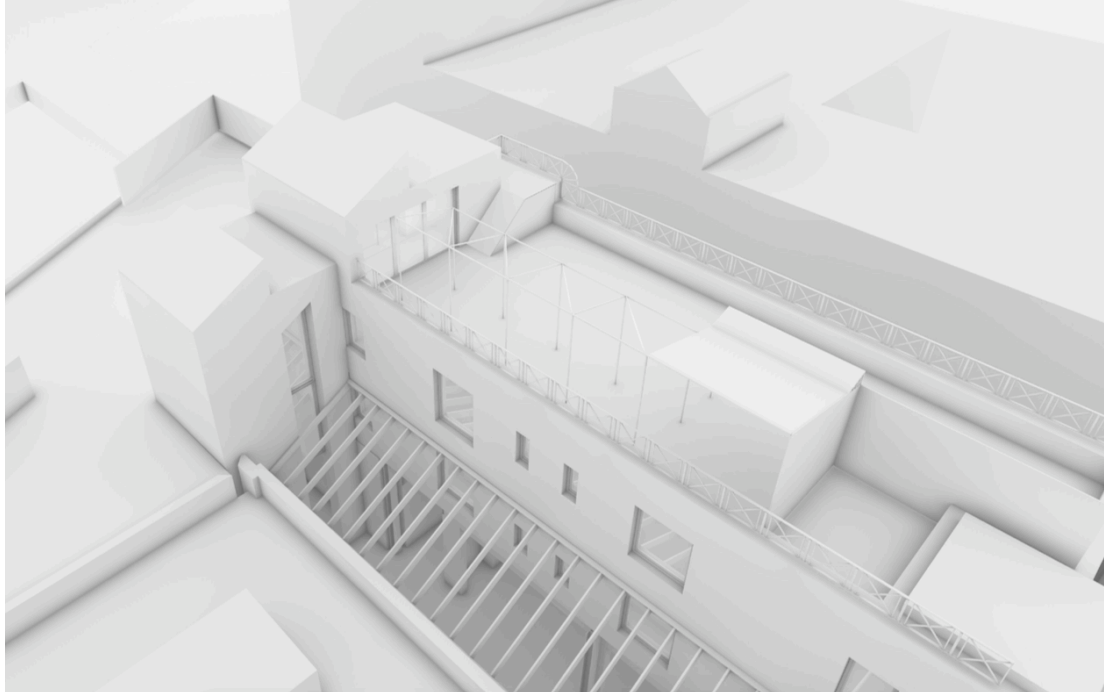


Figure 3-4 – Proposed and Existing Ground floor plans

### ***Socially Sustainable***

- The proposed office floorspace will be flexible and will add capacity to the PHF, which is in need of additional space for its charitable operations;
- The proposals have been carefully designed to ensure the new building will not cause harm to the amenity of the surrounding residential and commercial properties through its scale, bulk, height and massing;
- The street maintains a mix of uses. Where this property failed as a residential unit, a larger development across the street is better able to provide secure residential units, raised above ground level, with added layers of security and communal space.



*Figure 5 – Building Massing at Rear*

### ***Environmentally sustainable***

- The proposed scheme will make efficient and sustainable use of an existing unviable residential site within central London, recycling it for a viable new office use;
- The proposals will replace a currently dated and environmentally inefficient residential building with a modern and highly efficient building, improving the environmental credentials for the site;
- The site is situated within a highly accessible location, allowing staff to access the property via environmentally considerate routes;
- The site will be annexed by the existing building at 5-11 Leeke street, which has an installation of solar PVs on the roof, providing renewable energy back to the grid.

### **Conclusion**

A residential use in this location has been shown to not be viable. Redevelopment of the site as a stand-alone building is inefficient and quite limiting. The current antisocial behaviour on the street also limits the viability of many uses. However, a local business, which is currently thriving in this location, wishes to expand by annexing 13 Leeke Street. This expansion will provide employment in the area, which will help the Paul Hamlyn Foundation to further its goals of charitable work in the UK and abroad.



## APPENDIX A

**BLUE SUEDE LIMITED  
4 RUE DE LA FORGE  
GROUVILLE  
JERSEY JE3 9BH  
CHANNEL ISLANDS  
  
TEL 07768 252 872**

06 October 2017

Dear Ms Palfreyman

### **House at 13 Leeke Street**

In January 2015, we entered into a tenancy of 13 Leeke Street with a single male tenant.

Sometime during 2015, Rail Track closed the railway bridge in Leeke Street. At same time, there was an influx of homeless people into the hostel on the corner of Leeke Street and Kings Cross Road.

Within a very short time, the residential tenant at 13 Leeke Street advised us that there were homeless people camping at night in the street opposite what was then a restaurant called Smithy's. He considered their behaviour disconcerting.

I went down to Leeke Street myself on a Sunday around 10pm. There were around 20 people in the street. I was approached and asked if I wanted to buy crack. When I declined and passed by, the behaviour of the group was quite threatening.

The residential tenant gave notice and later in the year we rented the house to a photographer and his fiancée. On the first night they stayed in the property, the fiancée heard a drug deal going on outside the window of the house. Then at 5am, there was a loud banging on the door. The tenant looked out of the first-floor window and saw two unsavoury types. The exchange the tenant had with the two men made it clear they were looking for a drug dealer. Not surprisingly, the tenants moved out that day.

The situation has not improved greatly since 2015. We own an office building at 8 to 12 Leeke Street. The manager advised me that working late one evening in December 2016, he witnessed a young man outside 13 Leeke Street, with his trousers round his ankles, shooting up.

Subsequently we sold the property to PHF who are owners of 5 to 11 Leeke Street.

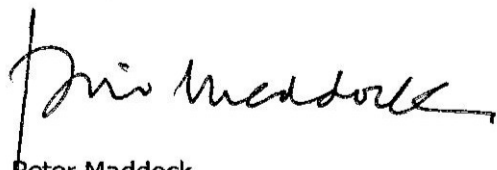
Since 2015, we have been pro-active in trying to resolve the Leeke Street security issues and have corresponding with the Metropolitan Police, Camden Council's Environment team, Camden's Safer Neighbourhood team and several other parties, including Jonathan Simpson, the Councillor responsible for anti-social behaviour.

I understand the authorities are trying their best but there is a lack of funding and resources etc.

Continued .....

We have 10 houses and apartments in the WC1 area. Until such time as the railway bridge is repaired and the police are able to prevent derelict persons squatting on Leeke Street after 10pm, we do not consider 13 Leeke Street a suitable or viable property for residential letting. As offices tend to close around 7pm, office dwellers are less confronted by the homeless and drug problem in Leeke Street.

Cordially

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Maddock', with a stylized, flowing script.

Peter Maddock  
Property Manager  
Blue Suede Limited