

FORMER SPIRITUALIST TEMPLE, ROCHESTER SQUARE LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN

PLANNING STATEMENT PROPOSED MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT

Prepared By

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This statement is prepared on behalf of the applicants/prospective purchasers of the former Rochester Square Spiritualist Temple, Camden NW1 9RY.
- 1.2 The applicants submitted a planning application earlier this year which sought '*redevelopment of the site involving demolition of the building (Use Class D1) and erection of a 3 storey building, plus basement level, to accommodate an art workshop/gallery (Use Class D1) and 9 self-contained flats (Use Class C3) comprising 8 x 2 bed and 1 x 1 bed, together with landscape works*' (application reference: 2016/7088/P).
- 1.3 Since the above submission, the applicants have continued to liaise with local stakeholders, including local neighbours and community groups. Concerns were raised with the submitted development, principally involving; 1) the loss of the church building – a non-designated heritage asset; and, 2) the mass and bulk of the proposed replacement.
- 1.4 The applicants have taken on board the comments received. Accordingly, they submit alternative development proposals for consideration.
- 1.5 In summary, **this revised application** seeks to retain the existing church building, with the exception of the single storey ancillary wing to the rear. The wing is proposed to be demolished however it's floorspace is to be reintroduced into the main church space through provision of a mezzanine, and as part of the buildings overall refurbishment.
- 1.6 The resulting 208m² of refurbished space is proposed to be used as a community centre (Use Class D1).
- 1.7 To the rear, it is proposed to construct a 2 storey extension, a reduction of a storey from the previous scheme, together with a part basement level. This rear wing is proposed to accommodate 5 self-contained flats (Use Class C3) comprising 1 x studio and 4 x 2 bed flats.
- 1.8 It is considered that the revised proposals address the principal concerns raised with the original application. In summary;
- i. With regard to the loss of the non-designated heritage asset, Camden Planning Policy states that "*The effect of a proposal on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset will be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, balancing the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset*". The building is retained; save for the utilitarian rear wing, the amount of D1 floorspace is however preserved and the building refurbished.
 - ii. Through the retention of the church, there will be no increase in mass or bulk to the southern end of the site. To the northern end, the proposals incorporate only a 2 storey extension. Having regard to the established context of the site, characterised by 4-7 storey buildings, discussions with Camden design officers and local residents, the reduced height and overall mass and bulk is considered appropriate and will appear subordinate to its host.
- 1.9 Notwithstanding the above, the proposed development continues to offer many benefits including but not limited to;
- An improved community use, both in quantum and quality; and,
 - Housing gain of 5 units, prioritising 2 bed units in line with the Borough's most acute need.

1.10 As part of the planning application the applicants submit the following documents which should be read alongside this Planning Statement.

- Design and Access Statement
- Heritage Statement
- Daylight/Sunlight Assessment
- Basement Impact Assessment
- Arboricultural Report
- Construction Management Plan Pro-Forma
- Energy Statement

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

2.1 The site has an area of 0.04 hectares and benefits from frontage/access onto both the north and south approach roads to Rochester Square. The site falls within the Camden Square Conservation Area.



SITE CONTEXT PLAN

2.2 The existing building accommodates approximately half of its site; the principal axis of the building runs southwest-northeast. The main entrance to the property fronts the southern approach road to Rochester Square, set back slightly behind iron railings. The main entrance is formed by a small porch.

2.3 The building’s character is ecclesiastical and consists of a worship space rising to approximately second-floor level. To the rear is a single-storey wing, approximately half of which is occupied by a function room extending its full length; the remainder is occupied by a corridor with various ancillary spaces (toilet, kitchen, etc).

2.4 To the rear is an area of open yard, predominantly hard landscaped with concrete paving slab and accommodates a large metal outbuilding/ shed.



REAR OF APPLICATION SITE

2.5 At the north end of the site, this garden is enclosed by a tall boundary wall (circa 2m in height) running along the northern approach road to Rochester Square, enclosing the site from the public highway.

- 2.6 The building is built of red brick laid in Flemish bond, with elements of painted pebbledash. The worship space has a pitched roof covered in slate. The rear wing has a flat roof, probably of concrete, screened by a low parapet. The building is not statutorily nor locally listed but is considered to be a non-designated heritage asset in light of its location within a Conservation Area.



ROCHESTER SQUARE SPIRITULAIST TEMPLE (SOUTH ELEVATION)

- 2.7 There is minimal use of stone, and in some instances cast concrete, dressings for details such as cornices, while some of the window heads and surrounds are finished in tiles. Windows are a mixture of timber and metal frames. The rear wing is simpler and decorative touches are few.
- 2.8 There is no car or cycle parking on site.
- 2.9 The surrounding area is predominantly residential, both in use and character. There is a variety of building heights, styles, and use of materials.
- 2.10 To the north the site fronts the junction of Rochester Square and Camden Mews.
- 2.11 The east side of Camden Mews accommodates the NHS' Community Recovery Service for Older People - a single storey brick building with pitched tiled roof over, the building presents a blank facade to Rochester Sq.



CAMDEN MEWS (NORTH OF THE APPLICATION SITE)
[NHS RECOVERY BUILDING. LEFT]

2.12 On the west side of the Mews, is a terrace of three storey dwellings, with raised ground floor level. Elevations are again formed from a contextual mid brown brick (see image below).

2.13 To the immediate east is 29-36 Rochester Square, a terrace of 8 four storey Victorian townhouses which overlook Rochester Square. The rear elevations feature windows which overlook the application site.



29-36 ROCHESTER SQUARE

2.14 To the south is Rochester Court, a large part 6, part 7 storey estate block comprising multiple flats. The building is set back from the road by approximately 15m; elevations are formed from a mid brown brick and accommodate elevated walkways framed in white metal balustrades. A near identical block, Inwood Court, sits alongside the east of Rochester Court.



ROCHESTER COURT

2.15 To the immediate west of the site is the ‘in-progress’ development of a single dwellinghouse granted under planning consent 2010/2152/P, revised under 2011/0044/P.

2.16 When complete the dwelling will comprise basement, ground and first floors, flat roofed and elevated in a mixture of brick and timber. The building is of a modern design aesthetic (approved CGI extract below).



CGI OF APPROVED DWELLING ADJACENT TEMPLE

- 2.17 To the north west is 150 Camden Road, also known as Julian Court, a raised ground four storey mansion block of flats.
- 2.18 Elevations are formed from a dark brown brick and accommodate projecting balconies finished in contrasting white painted slab and railings.
- 2.19 Julian Court benefits from a basement car park, the entrance to which sits alongside the north-western boundary of the application site.

**JULIAN COURT**

- 2.20 The site has good access public transport. Camden Road Overground Station sits approx 200m to the south west. Bus services are also available in the local area, for example services 29, 253, N29, N253 and N279 operate along Camden Road. The site has a PTAL of 6, on a scale where 1 is the worst and 6 is the best, making it one of the most accessible and sustainable locations in the London.
- 2.21 There is an active local CPZ in operation, restricting on-street parking to local residents/permit holders. The site falls within Zone CA-N, where parking is restricted Mon-Fri, 8:30am - 6:30pm.

3.0 BACKGROUND TO THE PROPOSALS/ PLANNING HISTORY

BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Temple was first erected in 1926.
- 3.2 A Heritage Statement has been prepared by The Built Heritage Consultancy, which provides further detail on the history of the building, together with an assessment of its heritage value. Please refer to that Statement which provides a comprehensive account of the sites development and statement of its significance.
- 3.3 We are advised that the Temple was in use up until approximately 2012 when it was vacated due to the buildings dilapidated condition. The Spiritualist Union had hoped to raise funds to undertake improvement work to the building, including overhauling the heating system and bringing the building up to more modern standards generally.
- 3.4 However, during this period and before any works were undertaken, the building was squatted by a rival religious sect, The Rainbow Family of Living Light (c.2014). The group was eventually removed by court order, however the church has since suffered from a number of squatting episodes and its fabric has further deteriorated.
- 3.5 Last year and to date, the site is occupied by live-in security/guardians who have secured the building temporarily, and until a new permanent use for the site is secured.
- 3.6 In the meantime, the applicants are advised that the Spiritualist Union have found new premises within the Borough and that the building is surplus to the Spiritualists Union's requirements. This is reflected in the SNU's decision to dispose of the site last year.

TREE WORKS (2016/3236/T)

- 3.7 Under application 2016/3236/T, it was sought to remove a lime tree from the site. The lime was fraught with decay, several fruiting bodies of *Ganoderma applanatum/adspersum* were found.
- 3.8 After invasive investigation, the pattern and extent of decay found indicated that the decay was historic and probably dated back to the time when the tree was first cut back some years ago. The tree had failed to compartmentalise the decay which had spread to a point where the structural integrity of the tree had become compromised.
- 3.9 The retention of the lime tree presented an unacceptably high risk of structural failure. Moreover, the tree was causing structural issues to the adjacent site boundary wall along the public pavement. The wall was significantly out of plumb. In order to minimise the risk of collapse of the boundary wall into public space, and as no structural remedial works to the wall were practicable, it was proposed to remove the tree.
- 3.10 The above was assessed by Camden officers who granted removal of lime. The works have been implemented.
- 3.11 The consent was granted on condition that *'within the first available planting season following the completion of works, a Hornbeam (or similar subject to approval by the LPA) shall be planted within 5m of the removed tree unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local authority.*

PLANNING APPLICATION (LPA REF: 2016/7088)

- 3.12 The applicants submitted a planning application earlier this year which sought the *'redevelopment of the site involving demolition of the building (Use Class D1) and erection of a 3 storey building, plus basement level, to accommodate an art workshop/gallery (Use Class B1) and 9 self-contained flats (Use Class C3) comprising 8 x 2 bed and 1 x 1 bed, together with landscape works.*
- 3.13 Since the submission of that application, the applicants have continued to liaise with local residents. Concerns have been raised with the submitted development, principally involving 1) the loss of the church building – a non-designated heritage asset, and 2) the mass and bulk of the proposed replacement.
- 3.14 The applicants have considered these principal comments amongst other more detailed observations, which are the basis for the submission of this alternative development proposals sought.
- 3.15 The following section (section 4) provides further detail on the consultation undertaken with third parties, followed by a detailed description of the alternative proposals for which permission is now sought (section 5).

4.0 PRE-APPLICATION CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Prior to the submission of this application, pre-application advice has been sought from Camden Officers and local residents/stakeholders. We provide a summary below.

CAMDEN COUNCIL PRE-APP (SEPTEMBER 2017) LPA REF: 2017/5394/PRE

- 4.2 Draft proposals were submitted to LB Camden in September 2017. It was proposed to retain and refurbish the existing building but demolish the single storey rear wing. The floorspace from the wing was proposed to be re-provided through a mezzanine level within the main church space, as part of the buildings refurbishment.
- 4.3 The ground floor of the existing building was sought to be retained as a large single useable space of 128.8m², incorporating a kitchenette/tea point and WC, more efficiently than at preset. A disabled WC was also added which is currently lacking. The mezzanine level incorporated a further useable space of 79.6m². The total proposed floorspace was 208.4m².
- 4.4 Internally and externally, a light touch refurbishment of the existing building was proposed. Elements of potential heritage significance, including but not limited Foundation Stones to the entrance are retained (or could be donated to the Spiritualist Union for use elsewhere, should they wish). The proposed floorspace was proposed to continue in Use Class D1, to operate as a community centre.
- 4.5 The remainder of the site was proposed to accommodate a two storey rear extension, plus basement, comprising 5 flats (1 x 1 bed and 4 x 2 bed). All units were designed to comply with the minimum internal space standards and outdoor amenity space standards.
- 4.6 The rear extension continued the modern form and character as per the original planning application. The design comprised a mixture of contextual brick, together with cladding detail, making a positive and quality contribution to the area.
- 4.7 In addressing concerns raised by local stakeholders, the scale had been kept deliberately subservient to its adjacent neighbours. The height was limited to two storeys above ground. Moreover, the development proposed a mass which stepped off the eastern boundary in a staggered fashion; the east elevation presenting neighbours with a greatly articulated facade.



DRAFT PRE-APP PROPOSAL (SEPTEMBER 2017)

- 4.8 Officers considered that the proposed massIt was proposed to plant a replacement hornbeam at the northern end of the site. Two additional Himalayan birch trees were proposed at the southern end of the site, on either side of the main entrance to the retained church building/proposed community space. All trees were planted in sunken tree pits to control root growth.
- 4.9 Officers advised that, notwithstanding a broadly acceptable form - whilst provision was made for tree pits to accommodate semi-mature replacement trees on-site, the planters were small and that the above ground space for the trees to develop a full crown was limited. Additional planting potential was therefore sought.

CAMDEN COUNCIL FOLLOW-UP PRE-APP (OCTOBER 2017)

- 4.10 After further re-planning of the rear extension, the footprint was reduced by 1m from the northern boundary of the site.
- 4.11 Taking into account this further 1m step back, 33.7% of the land to the rear of the retained church was without buildings, equivalent to more than a third as open area.
- 4.12 The reduced extension provided much greater breathing room around the proposed trees. Moreover, the 3 tree pits were increased significantly to 43m³, 30.6m³ and 20.8m³ respectively. The area in front of unit 3 (GF) provides further opportunity for planting.
- 4.13 Officers advised that, notwithstanding the broadly acceptable form, the above ground space for the trees to develop a full crown remained limited and their position would likely result in the requirement to prune the trees with excessive regularity.

CAMDEN COUNCIL FOLLOW-UP PRE-APP (NOVEMBER 2017)

- 4.14 On November 23rd 2017, the applicants submitted a further set of revised proposals to Camden. An additional 1m set-back along the north frontage was proposed, with this building line standing approx 4m back from pavement.
- 4.15 The amount of D1 community space was unaffected, although the amount of residential floorspace was reduced considerably. The applicants maintained 4 x 2 bed units, in accordance with Camden Council's most acute housing need, however the 1 x 1 bed flat proposed was reduced to a studio unit.
- 4.16 The additional set-back allowed a larger tree planting pits, and a greater area above ground for canopy growth. A fastigate hornbeam was proposed in the north east corner to satisfy the planning condition under the TPO consent. The set-back form of the extension allowed for the radial spread of circa 3m expected from this tree. 3 additional were proposed, comprising fastigate birches. These grow taller to full maturity, (circa 13-15m), but their radial spread is more appropriate at c1.5m.
- 4.17 The revised proposals included an extended area for additional low level planting, hedges and flower beds to the frontage and along the access way into the site, together with climbers along the west elevation.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION (OCTOBER 2017)

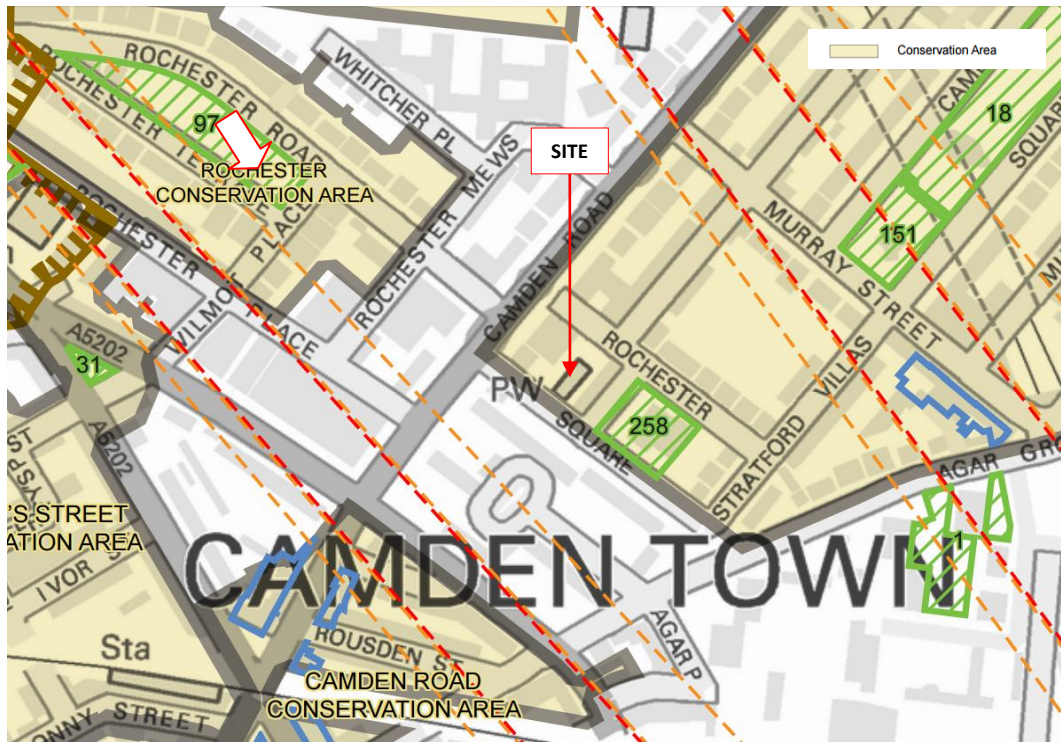
- 4.18 In response to some of the local residents wish to see the existing building retained, the applicants amended the proposals as per the above. The revised proposals were presented at public consultation on 17th October 2017, held at the London Irish Centre, Camden Square.
- 4.19 Residents from Julian Court, 144-146 Camden Road, 28-36 Rochester Square, together with the St Pancras Way Estate TRA, Camden Square CAAC, Camden Square Neighbourhood Association and Ward Councillors were invited to the consultation. The consultation was well attended.
- 4.20 It is fair to say that the retention of the church was well received, as was the reduced mass of the new building/rear extension.
- 4.21 The remaining principal concern raised at the consultation was in regard to the provision of the basement and ensuring that its impacts were fully assessed; including any cumulative impact with adjacent basement works. (A Basement Impact Assessment is submitted as part of the application).
- 4.22 A further detailed comment in respect the proposed cladding material (balcony louvers) was received. The resident requested that Core-Ten (weathering steel) was avoided. The applicants have considered this but remain of the view that Core-Ten is an appropriate response. Notwithstanding this, the applicants invite the final colour and texture of the louvers to be secured by way of condition prior to installation.
- 4.23 Finally, whilst most residents welcomed the return of a community facility to the site, some queried the actual uses that would be held in the venue. Residents wished to be satisfied that potential noise and disturbance was avoided. This aspect is considered in further detail in section 7 of this Statement; the avoidance of noise and disturbance can be secured by way of appropriately worded planning conditions.

5.0 THE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

- 5.1 It is sought to retain and refurbish the existing building.
- 5.2 As part of these works, it is proposed to demolish the single storey rear wing. The wing is utilitarian in appearance, and accommodates ancillary spaces, e.g. toilet, kitchen and a secondary function space. The floorspace from the wing is proposed to be re-provided through a new mezzanine level within the main church space, as part of the buildings overall refurbishment.
- 5.3 Internally and externally a light touch refurbishment of the existing building is proposed, with all elements of significance, including but not limited the Foundation Stones on the sought elevation retained in situ.
- 5.4 The ground floor will continue to accommodate a large single useable space of 128.8m², incorporating a kitchenette/tea point, and WC more efficiently than at preset. A disabled WC is also provided. The mezzanine level will incorporate a further useable space of 79.6m². The total proposed D1 floorspace is 208.4m², an increase of 10.1m² over the existing building (198.3m²).
- 5.5 The proposed floorspace will continue in Use Class D1 and will operate as a multi-purpose community centre, offering a range of services, activities and meeting space for people of all ages. Uses are expected to include, but not limited to, yoga, group meetings, crèche etc. There is also expected to be a core element of classes dedicated to 'the arts', again including but not limited to, drawing classes, pottery, performing arts etc. The community centre will be operated by The Lab Foundation, a Community Interest Company (CIC).
- 5.6 The remainder of the site is proposed to accommodate a two storey rear extension, plus basement, comprising 5 self-contained flats (1 x studio and 4 x 2 bed). All units have been designed to comply with the minimum internal space standards. Outdoor amenity space is provided to each dwelling in accordance with adopted guidelines.
- 5.7 In order to satisfy conditions associated with a prior consent to remove a defective lime tree at the site (Application Ref: 2016/3236/T), it is proposed to plant a replacement hornbeam at the northern end of the site.
- 5.8 Three additional trees are proposed to the north-west and south west corners of the site. All trees will be planted in tree pits to control their root growth. Further opportunity for planting is proposed in the form of planter beds along the north/ north-east boundaries.
- 5.9 A dedicated long stay cycle store is provided within the building for residents, accommodating 10 spaces. A further 2 spaces are provided adjacent to the site entrance (north) facilitating short stay/visitor cycles.
- 5.10 2 Sheffield stands accommodating 4 cycle spaces are also provided at the south east corner of the site, for the benefit of the community use.
- 5.11 A secure and covered refuse store for the 5 flats is accommodated within the north east corner of the site.

6.0 RELEVANT PLANNING FRAMEWORK

- 6.1 The relevant planning framework includes the London Plan and Camden's Local Plan.
- 6.2 The Local Plan was adopted by the Council on 3 July 2017 and has replaced the Core Strategy and Camden Development Policies documents as the basis for planning decisions and future development in the borough.
- 6.3 The Camden Proposals Map confirms that the site's only designation is that it falls within the Camden Square Conservation Area (extract below).



PROPOSALS MAP EXTRACT

- 6.4 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2012) is also materially relevant.

7.0 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 This section provides an assessment of the application proposals against adopted policy.
- 7.2 Having regard to pre-application advice from officers, the key planning matters are considered to be:
- a. Land Use
 - b. Impact on Non-Designated Heritage Asset / Design
 - c. Housing
 - d. Transport
 - e. Neighbouring Amenity
 - f. Impact of Basement Development
 - g. Trees
 - h. Energy

a. LAND USE

- 7.3 The existing church (Use Class D1) is defined as a community facility.
- 7.4 Camden Policy C2 '*Community facilities*' states that the Council will work with its partners to ensure that community facilities and services are developed in locations that are easily accessed by foot and by sustainable modes of travel (e.g. cycles).
- 7.5 The policy also seeks that facilities are modernised to meet the changing needs of the community and to reflect new approaches to the delivery of services.
- 7.6 The policy advocates multi-purpose community facilities and the secure sharing or extended use of facilities that can be accessed by the wider community and support the investment plans of educational health, scientific and research bodies to expand and enhance their operations, taking into account the social and economic benefits they generate for Camden, London and the UK.
- 7.7 The policy also requests a commitment from applicants to the continuing maintenance and other future funding requirements of any proposed facility.
- 7.8 The site benefits from a PTAL of 6, on a scale where 6 is the highest - making it one of the most accessible and sustainable locations in London. The principle of a continued D1 use at this site is acceptable.
- 7.9 The applicants will retain and refurbish the existing building with the exception of the existing rear wing which is sought to be demolished. The rear wing comprises unsatisfactory ancillary spaces, e.g. toilet, kitchen and a secondary function space. The demolished floorspace will be re-provided with the main church space as a mezzanine, and as part of the buildings overall refurbishment, modernisation and use as a multi-purpose community centre (Use Class D1).
- 7.10 The ground floor accommodates a large useable space of 128.8m². As part of its refurbishment, the space will include a modern kitchenette/tea point, WC and disabled WC. The mezzanine level provide a further useable space of 79.6m². The total D1 floorspace is 208.4m² (an increase of 10.1m² over the existing building).

- 7.11 The community centre will be operated by ‘The Lab Foundation’, a Community Interest Company (CIC), established by the applicants UrbanLab/Spacelab. The Lab Foundation is funded through a 10% donation of profits from UrbanLab (development company) and 10% from Spacelab (award winning Architects), together with time and skills of the personnel that they employ (including architects, designers etc). These donations will assist in the continued running of and investment in the space, together with funds generated from the hire of the spaces.
- 7.12 The refurbished building will operate as a multi-purpose community centre, offering a range of services, activities and meeting space for people of all ages. Uses are expected to include, but not limited to, yoga, group meetings, crèche etc. The Lab Foundation has an interest in ‘the arts’. Accordingly, there is also expected to be a core element of classes dedicated to, again including but not limited to, drawing classes, pottery, performing arts etc.
- 7.13 Noisy or disruptive uses will be avoided and operating hours controlled to avoid harm to the reasonable enjoyment of neighbouring amenity. It is premature to confirm the final use of the community space; it is expected that the use will resolve once the facility is close to being established on site. A community use management plan condition, with details to be submitted prior to occupation, is welcomed.
- 7.14 The continued and improved use of the site as a multi-purpose community facility, together with a commitment for continued maintenance is in complete accordance with the policy. The return of the building to community use is a significant planning gain.

b. IMPACT ON NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSET / DESIGN

- 7.15 Policy D2 ‘Heritage’ seeks to preserve and where appropriate, enhance Camden’s rich and diverse heritage assets, their setting. The application site falls within the Camden Square Conservation Area; however it is not listed nor locally listed. In these cases (non-designated heritage asset) the effect of a proposal on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset will be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, balancing the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.
- 7.16 The Rochester Square Spiritualist Temple is identified in the Camden Square Conservation Area Appraisal as a building that makes a positive contribution to its surroundings. This derives principally from the modest intrinsic aesthetic significance of the Arts and Crafts street front and the siting and massing, which make the building visually subservient to the 1840s terraces and villas located in the vicinity that define the core special interest of this character area.
- 7.17 The proposed scheme retains the main church building along the street.
- 7.18 The single-storey, flat-roofed rear wing is of lesser significance. Its architectural treatment is plain and it makes little contribution. The interiors of this wing are utilitarian, with only sparing decorative touches. Its ancillary facilities are also outdated.
- 7.19 The scheme would upgrade the ancillary facilities as part of the modernisation of the former worship space.



EXISTING ANCILLARY SPACES IN REAR WING

- 7.20 As part of the refurbishment, the applicants will retain those features, such as the dais and stained glass windows, which identify the former function of the building and the worshipping community that used it.
- 7.21 This above with Camden Local Plan Policy D2, as well as the requirement in paragraph 131 of the NPPF, specifically *'The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation'*.
- 7.22 The residential extension is visually subservient to the retained building, being set at a lower level with its roofline well below that of the host building. This is deliberate to avoid challenge or to diminish the positive contribution that the host makes to the streetscape. The extension is also visually subservient to the adjacent terrace of Nos. 29-36 Rochester Square and other buildings in the vicinity, identified as positive contributors to the Conservation Area, again in accordance Camden Local Plan Policy D2.
- 7.23 The extension is considered to respond well in terms of materials and architectural character. In particular, it follows the tradition established in the 1960s of high quality infill developments on vacant mews sites.
- 7.24 Alongside the high design quality, the additional public benefits of the scheme include the provision of housing units, and most particularly the provision of a large and well-appointed community space. These benefits and the weight afforded to them are considered in more detail in the accompanying Heritage Statement. The proposed development accords with Policy D2.
- 7.25 With regard to the detailed design of the residential extension, Policy D1 'Design' seeks to secure high quality design in development. Under this policy, the Council will require that development respects local context and character; is sustainable in design and construction and comprise details and materials that are of high quality and complement the local character. The policy also looks for integration with surrounding streets, to be inclusive and accessible for all; be secure and designed to minimise crime; respond to natural features incorporates high quality landscape design.
- 7.26 The project architects, Spacelab, submit a Design and Access Statement as part of the planning application. That statement provides further rationale for the design, scale, materiality etc. We provide a summary below.
- 7.27 The proposed scale, massing and form address the surrounding buildings appropriately and reflects the scale of the existing building that currently occupies the site.
- 7.28 The proposed design creates a contemporary, striking mixed use development in this urban context. The materials and finishes, and the articulation of form, create interest to the elevations. Inspiration has been taken from the local vernacular and in particular the form and materials of similar scale 'mews' type developments within the borough of Camden.
- 7.29 In keeping with the local context, the predominant material to be used is a mid-brown brick, albeit articulated in a contemporary way using crisp and precise detailing. Cor-ten steel elements will be introduced to complement but also break up this brickwork.
- 7.30 The proposal incorporates a green roof and photovoltaic panels on the roof as part of the sustainability measures.

- 7.31 The thermal, acoustic and power conservation requirements of the building regulations will be achieved by the specification of appropriate materials and construction details. The new building will be constructed from locally sourced and sustainable construction materials where possible, with local labour used for construction purposes.



PROPOSED VIEW FROM CAMDEN MEWS

- 7.32 The proposed development is considered to comply with Policy D1.

c. HOUSING

- 7.33 Local Plan Policy H1 seeks to maximise housing supply.
- 7.34 The policy confirms that the Council will aim to secure a sufficient supply of homes to meet the needs of existing and future households by maximising the supply of housing and exceeding a target of 16,800 additional homes from 2016/17 - 2030/31, including 11,130 additional self-contained homes.
- 7.35 **Camden Council will seek to exceed the target for additional homes, particularly self-contained homes by regarding self-contained housing as the priority land-use of the Local Plan.**
- 7.36 Furthermore, Camden will look to exceed housing targets by utilising sites that are underused or vacant, expecting the maximum reasonable provision of housing that is compatible with any needed on the site.
- 7.37 In addition, Policy H2 'Maximising the supply of self-contained housing from mixed-use schemes', supports the aims of Policy H1, **where non-residential development is proposed the Council will promote the inclusion of self-contained homes as part of a mix of uses.**
- 7.38 Local Plan Policy H6 'Housing choice and mix', states that the Council will aim to minimise social polarisation and create mixed, inclusive and sustainable communities by seeking high quality accessible homes and by seeking a variety of housing suitable for Camden's existing and future

households. The Council seek high quality accessible homes which meet the nationally described space standard.

7.39 Finally, under Policy H7 ‘Large and small homes’, the Council will aim to secure a range of homes of different sizes that will contribute to creation of mixed, inclusive and sustainable communities. The Council will seek to ensure that all housing developments contribute to meeting the priorities set out in the Dwelling Size Priorities Table (extract below).

	1-bedroom (or studio)	2-bedroom	3-bedroom	4-bedroom (or more)
Social-affordable rented	lower	high	high	medium
Intermediate affordable	high	medium	lower	lower
Market	lower	high	high	lower

EXTRACT | CAMDEN LOCAL PLAN TABLE 1: DWELLING SIZE PRIORITIES

7.40 The proposed development seeks to maximise the provision of self contained flats on site. The development will deliver 5 flats in compliance with the above policies, making a welcome contribution to the Borough’s housing needs.

7.41 With regard to mix, in accordance with Policy H7 the proposed development has sought to maximise 2 bed dwellings. The proposals deliver 4 x 2 bed flats together with 1 x studio flat.

7.42 The 2 bed flat provision constitutes 80% of the overall unit provision, making a significant contribution towards the Council’s most acute housing needs.

7.43 All 5 flats have been designed to comply with the nationally described space standards including internal space standards, and the outdoor residential amenity space sought set out in the Mayors’ guidance.

- AFFORDABLE HOUSING

7.44 Policy H4 ‘Maximising the supply of affordable housing’ expects a contribution to affordable housing from all developments that provide one or more additional homes and involve a total addition to residential floorspace of 100sqm GIA or more.

7.45 A sliding scale target applies to developments that provide one or more additional homes and have capacity for fewer than 25 additional homes, starting at 2% for one home and increasing by 2% of for each home added to capacity. Where developments have capacity for fewer than 10 additional dwellings, the Council will accept a payment-in-lieu of affordable housing.

7.46 In considering whether affordable housing provision should be sought, the Council will consider the economics and financial viability of the development including any particular costs associated with it, having regard to any distinctive viability characteristics.

7.47 Applying this rate to the proposed scheme, the maximum rate chargeable for an off-site contribution toward affordable housing would be £84,005.

7.48 Notwithstanding the above, it should be noted that due to the specific nature of the development the applicant is already providing a significant planning gain contribution in the form of the refurbished community facility, from which they will receive no financial return. The cost of providing this facility is estimated to be £500,000 in refurbishment and upgrade costs. This is an enabling cost to the scheme and will be far in excess of the estimated charge attributable to the payment in lieu of affordable housing. It is therefore considered that any payment would be better served towards the betterment of the community space.

d. TRANSPORT

7.49 Policy T1 'Prioritising walking, cycling and public transport' promotes sustainable transport by prioritising walking, cycling and public transport in the borough.

7.50 The Council seek to ensure that developments are easy and safe to walk through ('permeable'), are adequately lit, and provide high quality footpaths.

7.51 Additionally, the Council seek to promote cycling in the borough. The Council will look to ensure that development provide for convenient and secure cycle parking facilities exceeding minimum standards outlined within the London Plan.

7.52 The London Plan requires the provision of 1 cycle space per studio/1 bed flat and 2 spaces per all other dwellings. 1 short stay space is required per 40 dwellings for visitors.

7.53 The development provides 2 secure and covered cycle spaces per flat, 10 in total, exceeding the London Plan requirement. In addition, 2 short stay spaces are provided for visitors inside the communal entrance to the site (north side of the building), again exceeding London Plan minimum requirements.

7.54 With regard to the community facility, the London Plan requires provision of 1 space per 8 staff and 1 space per 100m² of floorspace.

7.55 The 208m² community facility is expected to employ up to 8 persons. Accordingly, the cycle requirement would be 3 spaces. Again, the proposed development exceeds minimum standards, providing 4 secure spaces (2 x Sheffield stands) adjacent to the entrance of the community facility (on the sought side of the building).

7.56 To further promote more sustainable modes of transportation, Local Plan Policy T2 'Parking and car-free development' looks to limit the availability of parking and require all new developments in the borough to be car-free.

7.57 It is confirmed that all 5 of the flats proposed will be secured as car free via section 106 Agreement.

7.58 Servicing of the community space is expected to be taken on street, on the south side of Rochester Square, adjacent to the main entrance. Rochester Square is a lightly trafficked road, accordingly servicing from street is considered to raise no highway safety issues.

e. AMENITY

- 7.59 Policy A1 'Managing the impact of development' seeks to protect the quality of life of occupiers and neighbours.
- 7.60 The Council will grant permission for development unless it causes unacceptable harm to amenity. The policy seeks to ensure that the amenity of communities/ neighbours is protected. Of particular note the factors to consider include; visual privacy, outlook; sunlight, daylight and overshadowing; transport impacts; and impacts of the construction phase.

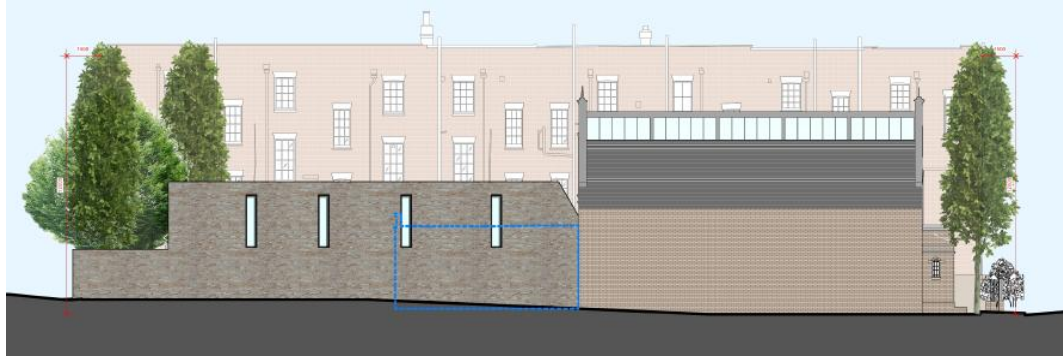
- VISUAL PRIVACY, OUTLOOK AND OVERLOOKING

- 7.61 The closest properties with views across the development site are 29-36 Rochester Square, which adjoin the eastern boundary of the site. Those properties feature rear facing windows at a distance of approximately 8-15m to their rear boundary, which it shares with the application site.
- 7.62 The existing building on the site sits hard up against this boundary and presents a blank brick wall to the adjacent neighbours. At this southern end of the site, there will be no change.
- 7.63 At the northern end of the site which is currently clear of buildings, the proposal will introduce new mass. However, this mass is kept to 2 storeys above ground, and is flat roofed. The mass also steps off the boundary; the east elevation presented to these neighbours is heavily articulated and breaks down any apparent mass from views.
- 7.64 The proposed units have been designed so that their principal outlook is north and south facing. No clear windows are proposed along the east or west facades. Where windows are proposed on the east facade, these are set back significantly and screened behind louvered panels to prevent views across the neighbouring units.. This is further detailed in the accompanying design and access statement (east elevation extract below).



PROPOSED EAST ELEVATION

- 7.65 On the west elevation to property faces towards Julian Court. 4 slot windows are proposed in the residential extension. Whilst Julian Court is set further back from the application site than the properties in Rochester Square, and the potential for overlooking is less sensitive, nonetheless the slot windows are proposed to be obscure glazed.



PROPOSED WEST ELEVATION

- DAYLIGHT/SUNLIGHT/OVERSHADOWING

7.66 The proposed development has assessed the potential impact on adjacent neighbours on all sides. An assessment prepared by Brook Vincent and Partners is submitted as part of the application. In summary;

Neighbouring Daylight

7.67 To the north of the site, there is a block of residential flats known as Julian Court. In all locations, the windows would remain well above 0.8 the existing VSC value, and there would be no adverse effect.

7.68 With regard to room sizes and Daylight Distribution, the results confirm that the rooms would remain above 0.8 the existing value and there would be no adverse effect. BRE criterion has been satisfied.

7.69 To the east of the site, there is a row of terraced properties. BVP have analysed the closest property known as No.28 Rochester Square. The results confirm VSC values well above the requirements and BRE criterion has been fully satisfied.

7.70 To the south of the site, a row of terraced properties stand opposite the site. The VSC results confirm a majority of windows are well above the recommended values of 0.8. With regard to Daylight Distribution within the rooms, the results confirm that all rooms would remain equivalent or above 0.8 the existing value and there would be no adverse effect. BRE criterion has been satisfied.

7.71 The combination of VSC and Daylight Distribution results confirm good daylight would be maintained in accordance with BRE guidelines.

Neighbouring Sunlight

7.72 Windows that do not face within 90 degrees of south are classified as 'north facing'. In these circumstances there is no criterion to meet.

7.73 The results for windows that face within 90 degrees of south demonstrate that when consideration is given to BRE's recommended values, there would be no adverse effect.

Proposed Flats - Sunlight and Daylight

7.74 BVP have analysed ADF to all habitable rooms and the results are detailed within Appendix 3 of their report. The results confirm ADF in all but one location would be above to the BRE's

recommended values; the exception is only marginally below BRE recommended value of 1% for bedrooms.

- 7.75 All habitable accommodation is on the south side of the building and will collectively receive direct sunlight. All flats satisfy the London Plan 'Standard 32' that homes should provide for direct sunlight to enter at least one habitable room for part of the day. In relation to the BRE guidelines, each living room would benefit from sunlight availability in accordance with BRE recommendations and the proposed accommodation has a layout which has been well considered.

- TRANSPORTATION

- 7.76 The proposed development will be delivered as car free. This is reflective of the highly sustainable location of the site benefiting from a PTAL of 6 on a scale where 6 is the highest.
- 7.77 It is expected that all residents and visitors to the site, including the community facility will arrive by foot or cycle, or utilising the public transport network (bus, train, taxi).
- 7.78 The property will be serviced from street, in line with neighbouring properties. Servicing, including refuse and recycling collection, is expected to occur once or twice a week. There will be negligible impact in transport terms.

- CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT

- 7.79 Disturbance from development can occur during the construction phase. Measures required to reduce the impact of demolition, excavation and construction works are outlined in a Construction Management Plan, submitted as part of the application.

f. IMPACT OF BASEMENT DEVELOPMENT

- 7.80 Policy A5 'Basements' states that the Council will only permit basement development where it is demonstrated to its satisfaction that the proposal would not cause harm to neighbouring properties, the structural, ground, or water conditions of the area, the character and amenity of the area, the architectural character of the building, and the significance of heritage assets.
- 7.81 In determining proposals for basements the Council will require an assessment of the scheme's impact on drainage, flooding, groundwater conditions and structural stability in the form of a Basement Impact Assessment (BIA).
- 7.82 A BIA has been prepared by Symmetry's engineers, submitted as part of the application.
- 7.83 In addition to the need for a BIA, Policy A5 states that basement development should:
- f. not comprise of more than one storey;
 - g. not be built under an existing basement;
 - h. not exceed 50% of each garden within the property;
 - i. be less than 1.5 times the footprint of the host building in area;
 - j. extend into the garden no further than 50% of the depth of the host building measured from the principal rear elevation
 - k. not extend into or underneath the garden further than 50% of the depth of the garden

- l. be set back from neighbouring property boundaries where it extends beyond the footprint of the host building;
- m. avoid the loss of garden space or trees of townscape or amenity value.
- 7.84 Exceptions to f. to k. above may be made on large comprehensively planned sites which include developments the size of an entire or substantial part of an urban block, such as the application site.
- 7.85 The proposed basement does not comprise more than one storey. It will not be built under an existing basement.
- 7.86 The rear yard of the existing church cannot reasonably be described as a garden. Nonetheless, the submitted BIA confirms that the proposed works at the land at the rear of host have been designed with robust structural principles and methods of construction that are widely used and known. This will ensure the integrity of neighbouring structures and roadways are not compromised during its construction.
- 7.87 In light of the many factors that have informed the evolution of the proposed development, including but not limited the retention of the host building and viability, the extent of basement sought is required. Without the basement, the proposed development is unviable, the refurbishment and re-use of the non-designated asset cannot be realised.
- 7.88 The refurbishment and re-use of the building is considered to constitute a significant local and planning gain. Taken together with the provision of 5 new homes, the mix of which is weighted in favour of 2 bed units – reflecting the Borough’s highest need – the minor breaches to parts h-j and l above, should be appropriately considered in the planning balance.

g. LANDSCAPING

- 7.89 Policy D1 ‘Design’ requires development to incorporate high quality landscape design and maximise opportunities for greening, for example thorough planting of trees and other soft landscaping. Furthermore, Policy A5 seeks to avoid the loss of garden space or trees of townscape or amenity value.
- 7.90 An Arboricultural Report prepared by Crown Trees is submitted with the application, in accordance with BS5837:2012 (trees in relation to design, demolition and construction). The proposal requires excavations for a proposed basement. The report confirms that all trees surveyed on adjacent sites are to be retained.
- 7.91 In order to satisfy a condition associated with consent to remove a defective lime tree at the site, granted on 9th September 2016 (Application Ref: 2016/3236/T) a fastigate hornbeam is proposed in the north east corner. The submitted drawings show the proposed tree at its likely full mature state of 10m tall and radial spread of circa 3m.
- 7.92 3 additional trees (fastigate birches) are proposed (2 along the northern frontage and 1 at the southern frontage). These grow taller to full maturity, (circa 13-15m), but their radial spread is more appropriate for the site at c1.5m.



PROPOSED VIEW FROM NORTH

- 7.93 The plans also include an extended area for additional low level planting, hedges and flower beds to the frontage and along the access way into the site.
- 7.94 Finally, 'climbers' are proposed along the east elevation to maximise the opportunity for greening at the site. The proposed development is considered to accord with the relevant parts of Policies D1 and A5.

h. ENERGY

- 7.95 Policy CC1 '*Climate change mitigation*' requires all development to minimise the effects of climate change and encourage all developments to meet the highest feasible environmental standards that are financially viable during construction and occupation.
- 7.96 The Council promote zero carbon development and require all development to reduce carbon dioxide emissions.
- 7.97 Policy CC2 '*Adapting to climate change*' requires development to be resilient to climate change. All development should adopt appropriate climate change adaptation measures such as incorporating bio-diverse roofs, combination green and blue roofs and green walls where appropriate. Any development involving 5 or more residential units is required to demonstrate the above in a Sustainability Statement.
- 7.98 An Energy/ Sustainability Statement has been prepared by Energylab and is submitted as part of the planning application. The report demonstrates that the proposed development will comply with the water, materials and energy requirements highlighted in the Camden and London Plan planning policies.
- 7.99 The design team are committed to achieving the water usage and sustainable use of materials targets. They will also incorporate all suitable energy saving measures into the proposed architecture and services design to meet the CO2 emissions reduction requirements highlighted in the Approved Document 2013 Part L1A, Camden Council planning policies. Any remaining CO2 emissions towards the zero carbon target will be offset by fixed payments.

8.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 The Spiritualist Temple closed in 2012 and remains vacant. The Temple was surplus to requirements and subsequently placed on the open market for sale, purchased by the applicants who seek to bring the site back into purposeful use.
- 8.2 The revised proposals have taken on board local stakeholder comments since the submission of the current application 2016/7088/P.
- 8.3 The existing temple - a non-designated heritage asset - is preserved and refurbished. Its utilitarian rear wing is demolished but its floorspace replaced through a new mezzanine level within the main body of the former church, and as part of the buildings refurbishment for continued community use (Use Class D1).
- 8.4 The space is envisaged to operate as a multi-purpose community centre, offering a range of services, activities and meeting space for people of all ages.
- 8.5 To the rear, a two storey extension is proposed, accommodating 5 self-contained flats. The height, mass and bulk has been significantly reduced, subservient to the host building and local context. The reduced height, mass and bulk improves its relationship with neighbours, avoiding amenity harm.
- 8.6 Of the 5 flats proposed four are 2 beds, reflecting the Borough's highest need for this type of accommodation. .
- 8.7 The design of the revised development is exemplary and will make a positive contribution to the conservation area setting and the non-designated heritage asset host. The form and footprint of the development allows for the provision of substantial areas of new surface level planting, including 4 trees and low level planting, in addition to green/brown roofs.
- 8.8 The refurbishment and re-use of the vacant building, a non-designated heritage asset, as a multi-use community facility constitutes a significant local and planning gain. Furthermore, the provision of 5 new homes, 4 of which are 2 bed units reflecting the Borough's most acute housing need, the proposals contribute towards the priority land-use of the Local Plan.
- 8.9 We respectfully ask that permission is granted.