

**Heritage, Design and Access Statement (May 2018) (v.4)**

**Unit 4 and 22 – 24 Bagley Walk ('The Anchor Unit')**

**Western Coal Drops Yard**

**King's Cross Central**

We are seeking planning permission and advertisement consent for the fit-out of:  
"External seating areas for two restaurants at viaduct and yard level including demountable canopy structure (viaduct level only) and at both levels for landscape planters; tables and chairs; lighting; and, ancillary restaurant facilities."

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1. **Introduction:** This statement supports the planning and advertisement applications that if approved will enable our client to fit-out the external seating areas adjacent to Unit 4, the south anchor unit of the Western Coal Drops Yard (including Arches 22–24 Bagley Walk). The proposals for the South Anchor Unit comprise two separate restaurants; Plaza Pastor at Yard Level and Barrafinna at viaduct level, above.
2. **The proposals for Plaza Pastor at Yard Level** beneath the viaduct are contained within an area of approximately 500 m<sup>2</sup> of proposed outdoor seating, circulation and pavement. The proposal is for the restaurant to offer 136 external covers, plus 24 external cocktail chairs around six tables outside the wine bar – see plan 17007–100 – C2 etc.
3. Plaza Pastor’s central outside bar and kitchen is a demountable structure and will include cooking facilities for the preparation and serving of Mexican food and drink.
4. The proposed signage for Plaza Pastor includes signage behind glazing; projecting signage and the name of the restaurant on the high-level fascia above the outside kitchen/bar.
5. **At viaduct level Barrafinna** will offer within an area also of about 500 m<sup>2</sup> 103 external covers and a bar 7.2 m x 2.2 m. There will be strategically positioned perimeter landscape planters. Above 82 of those covers will be an elegant three-part canopy of black metal approximately 2.2 m to 2.4 m above the level of the viaduct. The remaining 21 covers are not under the canopy and would be used during warmer days, predominantly during the summer.
6. **Signage for Barrafinna** will include the name of the restaurant behind glazing and on a projecting sign.

7. **The evolution of the proposals:** alongside this Design and Access Statement, there is a Statement by the Applicant: Hart Bros Restaurants Ltd (May 2018) about their background and experience running restaurant businesses. Their Statement also sets out their commitment to submitting designs that have been heritage-led for their high quality restaurants.
8. Over the last 12 months the emerging proposals have been developed and improved in the light of intensive pre-application guidance from the L.B. of Camden (LBC). Detailed Pre-Application Advice, suggested improvements and support was given in November 2017 and again in March/April 2018 for the proposals, in particular, in the development of the proposed design, materiality and massing of the structure at viaduct level for Barrafinna and at yard level for Plaza Pastor.

### **Heritage and design assessment**

9. This detailed planning application and application for advertisement consent (May 2018) accords with the suite of approvals granted for the Coal Drops Yard – the planning permission 2015/6015/P, the listed building consent 2015/6016/L and a Reserved Matters Consent 2015/6018/P for internal and external alterations to the Coal Drops Yard complex. The 2016 permissions included the sub-division of units, the proposed change of use and various alterations to the exterior and the interior of the buildings within the complex.
10. The current proposals fall within the framework of the 2016 permission and provide the details of the tenant's fit-out for the outdoor dining spaces at yard and viaduct level of the south anchor unit of the Western Coal Drops, Unit 4. The proposal is for Unit 4 to be split into two separate restaurants.

11. This part of the Statement is written to comply with paragraphs 128 and 129 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF - 2012), which set out the requirements for applicants to assess the significance of heritage assets and their settings to minimise any potential conflicts between the assets' conservation and the proposed alterations.
12. The assessment of the significance and 'special interest' has been informed primarily by a detailed inspection of the building and its setting. It also draws on the Conservation Plan and Heritage Statements which have accompanied previous planning applications for the site.
13. This assessment should be read in conjunction with drawings by Michaelis Boyd Associates and Andy Martin Architecture.
14. **Summary of heritage significance**

Any assessment of heritage impact relies on first understanding what constitutes heritage significance. *'Significance' is defined (in the NPPF) as 'The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.'*
15. The historic and architectural significance of the Coal Drops Yard site and its respective buildings are already well documented and described in the Heritage Statement by Giles Quarme & Associates which was approved as part of the aforementioned principal planning permissions. It is not repeated here but is briefly summarised below.
16. The Western Coal Drops (WCD) was constructed in 1859 to cater for the increasing demand for coal delivered by the GNR from the northern coalfields. Coal wagons entered the building on 4 lines at the upper level and discharged

coal into hoppers below. The hoppers were slung from the cast iron floor structure which supported the railway tracks. The use was relatively short-lived as in 1897 the building became a food warehouse and the viaduct, which previously ran alongside the west side of the coal drops, was dismantled and relocated to the east for use by vehicles rather than goods trains. The building was much altered to accommodate this and later changes in use. Nevertheless, it is a significant survivor of a particular type of building. The building is not listed but has moderate heritage significance, as part of the wider heritage complex.

17. The Western Wharf Road Viaduct and Arches run roughly east/west along the southern part of the site. They were built to provide access between the southern part of the goods yard and the sheds to the north. They also created the southern boundary of the Coal Drops Yard along the footpath of the canal to the south. Extensive stabling was accommodated within the arches. It was originally constructed c.1850, but widened in 1860 and then again in 1897. The viaduct is not listed but has moderate heritage significance as part of the wider heritage complex.
18. The Western Coal Drops and the Wharf Road Viaduct enclose two sides of the Coal Drops Yard which takes the form of an elongated triangle. On the third side is the Eastern Coal Drops which date from 1850 and are Grade II listed. The Eastern Coal Drops were earlier, more innovative and larger than the Western Coal Drops which explains why they are listed. Of course, statutory listing is formal recognition of the building's special architectural and historic interest.
19. The Western Coal Drops and the Wharf Road Viaduct contribute to the setting of various Grade II listed buildings including the Eastern Coal Drops, The Lock Keeper's Cottage and Gas Holder Number 8. Conversely, those buildings

contribute to the setting of the Western Coal Drops and collectively they have group value.

20. The Western Coal Drops and the Wharf Road Viaduct are not listed buildings, but they undoubtedly possess heritage significance in their own right and as an integral part of the canal and railway heritage complex. They are both identified in the Regent's Canal Conservation Area Management Strategy (adopted 2008) as making a positive contribution to the special character of the Conservation Area.

### **Description of the proposed alterations (in heritage terms)**

21. The principle of the change of use to a restaurant, and most of the structural alterations to the building, have already been consented in 2016 and are indeed now being 'built-out' on site. Alterations which have already been granted planning permission are not described below.
22. However, the tenant now proposes a small number of items to accommodate the specific requirements of the proposed new restaurants.
23. Some of the alterations arise from the fact that the original applications anticipated just one restaurant user whereas the current proposal is for two, one at each level.
24. Other alterations also arise from the aforementioned principal permissions allowing outdoor seating outside Unit 4 at both levels. Of course, no operator(s) had been identified at that time. The May 2018 proposals resolve this.
25. **(i) The proposed alterations at yard level:** An outdoor kitchen and bar is proposed in the external space underneath the viaduct. It will be a free-standing structure with a ducted extract system.

26. **Assessment of heritage impact of (i):** The demountable kitchen has been designed to be freestanding with no direct connection to the buildings. It will help to bring life and vitality to what could be a dark corner of the Coal Drops Yard development. It will have a small visual impact as it is set well back and underneath the viaduct. The structure has been designed to maintain visibility of the south elevation and to respond positively to its historic context. **Its heritage impact will be neutral or positive.**
27. **(ii) The proposed alterations at viaduct level:** The proposal involves a canopy to create a covered seating area and outdoor bar.
28. **Assessment of heritage impact of (ii):** The covered outside seating area will add vitality and interest to the area which will have a positive impact on the character and appearance of the area. The outdoor bar has been designed to be modest to avoid creating a visual barrier. The seating arrangement and landscaping has also been designed to allow open views of the south gable of the WCD from various viewpoints. The architectural team have produced several viewpoints and these have been discussed in detail with the LB of Camden with particular respect to the view from: the Wharf Road Viaduct; from Granary Square and from Gas holder Gardens to the west. The seating area at viaduct level has been designed to feel open to the surrounding public realm and not unduly 'inward looking'. The proposals have also been developed in consultation with Heatherwick Studio, Argent and LB of Camden and are intended, first and foremost to be subservient to the Coal Drops Building. **The heritage impact of the proposed viaduct level outdoor seating, canopy and bar will be neutral or positive.**

## **Access and inclusivity assessment**

29. The principal planning and listed building permissions approved a Design & Access Statement that deals with this matter in considerable detail. A Company called All Clear Design Ltd (October 2015) set out in part of that Design & Access Statement their access and inclusivity proposals. These are now being implemented by the Landlord and development partners and tenants.
30. The Hart Bros Team wholly support this strategy and have applied those principles to the design and layout of Barrafinna and Plaza Pastor, in terms of:
- creating a smooth transition between public and private realms to facilitate access and use by all; and,
  - meeting required design standards and good practice and Building Regulations regarding access.
31. The May 2018 scheme takes into account the needs of people with mobility impairments including wheelchair users and those with sensory and cognitive impairments, as well as the convenience of access for all users. Particular attention has been paid to entrances, horizontal and vertical circulation, all fixtures and fittings facilities and sanitary accommodation, as is the case throughout CDY. The applicant fully supports the landlord's over-arching accessibility and inclusivity role.



## **Heritage, Design and Access Summary and Conclusions**

32. The Western Coal Drops building is not listed. However, it forms a key part of the Coal Drops Yard complex and Regent's Canal Conservation Area. It is also part of the setting to the Eastern Coal Drops building, Gas Holder No. 8 and the Lock Keeper's Cottage to the west - all of which are Grade II listed buildings.
33. The current proposals are for the 'fit-out' of Unit 4 of the Western Coal Drops to facilitate the restaurant use which was always anticipated in the 2016 planning permissions. Those planning permissions dealt with all the significant changes to the Western Coal Drops building and included proposed seating areas outside the anchor units of the buildings. The current proposals involve minor proposals to create external seating areas that will provide lively and vibrant areas of public realm that will be readily accessible to everybody and contribute to the successful operation of the restaurants within the building.
34. None of the proposals are considered to be significant enough to have any harmful impact on the setting of the nearby listed buildings.
35. The proposed alterations to the existing external seating areas will bring life and vitality to the area and will benefit the Coal Drop Yards development. As such they will have a positive impact on the character and the appearance of the Conservation Area. Likewise, the restrained and attractive signage will also be suitable and enhance the buildings and Conservation Area.

36. As such the proposals accord with the advice on conserving and enhancing the historic environment in the NPPF and NPPG, relevant local policies and the statutory duty set out in S66 and S72 of The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The proposals also accord with relevant legislation regarding access and inclusiveness.

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