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# Planning Statement

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61 Birkenhead Street, London, WC1H 8BW

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## 1. Introduction

***'Future Dreams House home to Breast Cancer Haven will empower people and make them feel part of a community. I want it to be seen as a positive place where people can get information in a safe environment, make decisions about their future and 'future dreams'. There is currently nowhere for my patients from the North-West London catchment area or the central London catchment to find such hands-on support'.***

***Justin Stebbing, Professor of Cancer Medicine and Oncology, Consultant Oncologist, Imperial College and Imperial Healthcare NHS Trust and The LOC***

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- 1.1 This Planning Statement is submitted in support of a Full Planning Application on behalf of Breast Cancer Haven to Camden Council for the following development:

*Change of Use of the existing building from offices (Class B1) to cancer support / resource / therapy centre (Class D1), including ancillary administrative functions and enhancement of existing front elevation*

- 1.2 The site is currently occupied by a four storey period building known as Centra House which is utilised for office use (Class B1). The property is located on the northern end of Birkenhead Street within close proximity to King's Cross and St Pancras Station.
- 1.3 Through conversion and refurbishment of the building, the Applicant is seeking to deliver Future Dreams House, a free of charge breast cancer centre which will focus on delivering non-medical treatment and support and advice in the form of image workshops, life-coaching, financial advice and nutritional advice on exercise and healthy eating.
- 1.4 Future Dreams (a charity dedicated to breast cancer research, support and awareness) have partnered with national breast cancer support charity Breast Cancer Haven and require a Central London location to establish the new leading support centre, given that that the lease on Breast Cancer Haven's existing premises elsewhere in London will come to an end in September 2019 as that building is set for redevelopment.
- 1.5 Breast Cancer Haven have been running their dedicated breast cancer support centre since 1999 and in order to continue their work and further the aims of Future Dreams, a new location in a central location is fundamental in order to continue providing aftercare and support for breast cancer sufferers across London.

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1.6 Without this facility being able to continue to provide its services, London will be without a dedicated breast cancer support centre that is free and available to all. There is an opportunity now to further enhance this provision in terms of both facilities and location such that the centre can increase its reach and usability by all.

1.7 The proposals would bring substantial benefits including:

- A central and easily accessible location for London's only free of charge Breast Cancer support centre offering non-medical support;
- Further the aims of Camden's Health and Education Sectors through introduction of a vital new health facility;
- Provide visible, accessible and free support and guidance to those facing breast cancer as well as their families and children;
- Support local individuals and the community in the borough;
- Support the employment of a range of therapists and other professionals who provide the services to those using the centre;
- Refurbishment and continuing investment into upkeep of a distinctive period building;
- A proposal which will enhance an existing building which contributes to the character of the Kings Cross and St Pancras Conservation Area; and
- Encourage collaborative working with the Knowledge Quarter (a cluster of academic, cultural, research, scientific and media organisations within a one mile radius of King's Cross).

1.8 Within the building, the proposed therapy and counselling rooms, multifunction room and kitchen / dining area will facilitate the following:

- Therapies to address the physical and emotional symptoms and side effects of women's breast cancer medical treatment;
- Workshops, life-coaching, financial advice and nutritional advice on exercise and healthy eating; and
- A safe environment where women can form friendships and support networks.

1.9 This statement provides background information relating to the site and a detailed assessment of the proposals against the relevant national London Plan and local planning policy. This statement specifically sets out justification for why this site and characteristics of this location in particular are suitable to meet the needs of the proposed development.

## Submission Documents

1.10 This statement should be read in conjunction with the following documents accompanying this application:

- *Application forms and CIL forms, prepared by Savills;*
- *Architectural plans / elevation drawings, prepared by Allford Hall Monaghan Morris Architects; and*
- *Values and Mission Statement, prepared on behalf of Future Dreams and Breast Cancer Haven.*

1.11 The structure of this document is divided into the following sections:

<b>Section 2</b>	<b><i>describes the site and surrounding area;</i></b>
<b>Section 3</b>	<b><i>considers the planning history of the site;</i></b>
<b>Section 4</b>	<b><i>provides a detailed description of the proposed development and background to the aims of the charity and breast cancer support centre;</i></b>
<b>Section 5</b>	<b><i>Outlines the planning policy framework;</i></b>
<b>Section 6</b>	<b><i>Provides an assessment of the proposals against the planning policy context;</i></b>
<b>Section 7</b>	<b><i>Summarises and concludes the report.</i></b>

## 2. Site and Surroundings

- 2.1 The site is located on Birkenhead Street and forms a part of an urban block located opposite King's Cross Station and close to the junction of Euston Road and Gray's Inn Road (A501). The site is positioned close to the southern boundary of the King's Cross Growth Area which has seen substantial investment and redevelopment in recent years.
- 2.2 The redevelopment of King's Cross is one of the largest regeneration projects in London and the area has been transformed through the introduction of new homes, shops, offices, restaurants, schools and the new Central Saint Martin's arts college.
- 2.3 Subsequently the whole of the King's Cross area has become and will continue to develop as both a key commercial quarter and transport hub, accommodating high-density development and a range of uses. There are linkages between this area of opportunity and the neighbouring City Fringe/ Tech City Opportunity Area, which is home to clusters of digital-creative businesses ('Tech City') and has aspirations to capitalise upon opportunities to promote research around life-sciences, biotech and pharmaceuticals.
- 2.4 The site is a four storey building with distinctive period architectural features, currently known as Centra House. This offers a serviced office (B1 Use) centre providing furnished office floorspace across all floors.
- 2.5 Birkenhead Street comprises of a mix of predominantly office and residential uses and Centra House, located prominently towards the northern end of Birkenhead Street, forms a part of a series of terraced period buildings along the street.
- 2.6 Centra House is situated between number 59-60 Birkenhead Street, a Grade II listed converted residential building and 1 Euston Road which constitutes the rear of the Kings Cross Inn hotel.
- 2.7 Given the property's location close to the rail stations of Kings Cross and St Pancras, the Site benefits from the highest public transport accessibility level (PTAL) of 6b.
- 2.8 King's Cross Station provides mainline services as well as London Underground's Northern, Victoria, Piccadilly, Circle, Metropolitan and Hammersmith & City Lines enabling easy access to the site from across London. Furthermore, numerous bus services run the length of Euston Road providing public transport access in and out of central London.
- 2.9 To the property's front exterior there is also a rank of Santander hire bikes which further increases sustainable methods of transport to and from the building.
- 2.10 The application site is located within the King's Cross and St Pancras Conservation Area and is located in Flood Zone 1 (low risk from flooding), in accordance with the Government's Flood Map for Planning.

## 3. Planning History

### Planning History

3.1 A review of the Council's online planning history records has returned the following results:

Application Number	Development Description	Decision	Decision Date
PSX0004658	Erection of a roof extension for additional office accommodation (Class B1).	Refused	05-06-2000
PSX0004368	The construction of a rear extension at ground floor level.	Granted	23-05-2000
PSX0004367	The construction of a roof extension.	Refused	23-05-2000
PSX0004294	Change of use from use as a dance school falling within Class D1 of the Uses Classes Order to use as an office (Class B1) and the replacement of windows in the front elevation with W20 section steel windows.	Granted	08-05-2000
PS9604200	Change of use from dance studio to use as a hostel for 30 people, as shown on drawing numbers DH/1 and /2.	Granted	15-11-1996
8600267	Erection of new projecting front entrance porch to existing building as shown on drawing numbers 276-01 & 276-02B revised by letter dated 20th March 1986.	Granted	21-03-1986
CTP/L14/9/A/25861	The erection of a lift motor room at roof level, the blocking up of a window on the north elevation, the formation of a window on the south elevation and alterations at the rear including new fenestration.	Granted	18-01-1978
CTP/L14/9/A/24580	Change of use from banqueting hall to educational use, for teachers of dancing with ancillary administrative offices on the third and part of the first floor.	Granted	09-08-1977
CTP/L14/9/A/23805	Change of use to offices on the first, second and third floors with light industrial accommodation on the ground floor and basement.	Granted	08-12-1976
CTP/L14/9/A/19549	Change of use of the first, second and third floors from Banqueting Hall to offices.	Refused	03-10-1974

3.2 Whilst the building's use now is for office accommodation, the building has only been wholly in this use since 2000 when permission was granted for a change of use from a dance school (D1 Use) to an office (B1 Use). Prior to this, the building was operating under D1 Use and the building's planning history indicates that this was the main lawful use from the late 1970s until the change of use to offices was permitted.

3.3 Therefore, this building is not a long-established or traditional office building. It has been put to a variety of uses and the current proposal sits into this mix.

3.4 As can be seen therefore, the site has a history of providing Class D1 use.

## 4. Future Dreams Vision and Rationale for Location Choice

### Breast Cancer Haven Mission Background and Vision

- 4.1 Future Dreams House will accommodate an ambitious project to revolutionise aftercare and support for cancer sufferers and their families across London. In partnership, Future Dreams and Breast Cancer Haven have devised a comprehensive fundraising strategy to deliver the new centre and cover initial running costs for a period of three years. Subsequently once a location has been secured they are ready to deliver Future Dreams House on site immediately.
- 4.2 Future Dreams was established in 2008 by mother and daughter Sylvie Henry and Danielle Leslie. Since their deaths in 2009 and 2010 the charity has worked to facilitate funding for breast cancer research, raise awareness and support those suffering from breast cancer. The charity wishes to take their work one step further and have a more direct impact upon the lives of those who have undergone breast cancer treatment, thus the vision for Future Dreams House was developed.
- 4.3 Breast Cancer Haven is a well-established charity having been in operation since 1999 and operating centres in London, Hereford, Leeds and Titchfield, with a further centre to soon open in Solihull. Furthermore the charity has partnered with the Royal Worcester Hospital, two hospital based outreach services in North London and Maggie's Charity to deliver a support centre in Cheltenham.
- 4.4 The Haven centres provide support and care from clinical nurse specialists and a range of therapies for visitors and Future Dreams and Breast Cancer Haven are seeking to facilitate this type of specialist care through the Future Dreams House.
- 4.5 The new facility will meet a need at a time when the charities recognise that NHS resourcing is restricted and where provision of this type of free after-care is not currently readily available once medical treatment for breast cancer has ended.
- 4.6 There will be a number of positive benefits brought to visitors of the centre including:
  - Access to free high quality care and support services outside of the hospital setting which have been developed through consultation with patients and medical professionals;
  - A place where women can have mental and physical recovery;
  - A place where women can develop support through friendship and networks; and
  - The provision of trained nurses, therapists, counsellors and advisers.



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4.7 To reiterate, the mission of the charities is to achieve the following:

- Provide a breast cancer support centre, free of charge and in a central location to allow greater accessibility to enable more patients to have access to wellbeing support;
- Provide therapies to address the physical and emotional symptoms and side effects of women's breast cancer medical treatment;
- Provide image workshops, life-coaching, financial advice and nutritional advice on exercise and healthy eating; and
- Provide a non-medical environment where women can form friendships and support networks.

4.8 The therapies and workshops offered at Future Dreams House will be akin to those classes, courses and talks already delivered at Breast Cancer Haven centres. Thus the applicant wishes to internally re-configure the building to provide group and individual therapy rooms across the first to third floors of the building where visitors can undertake these activities and treatments. Further detail on the proposal and design of the layout is included within Section 5.

## Rationale for Location

4.9 Future Dreams and Breast Cancer Haven have undertaken a search to find the right location to accommodate Future Dreams House. It has proven difficult to locate a property which can both accommodate the requirements of the support centre and which enables easy access for visitors and their families from across London, whilst also being within the financial means of the charities to access a suitable building.

4.10 Breast Cancer Haven recognise that accessibility is key to the success of Future Dreams House and have acknowledged that accessibility has created a barrier in the past to those seeking help and support from Breast Cancer Haven's current support centre in South West London, which is not so readily accessible.

4.11 Given the type of treatment, it is recommended that visitors limit their journey time as much as possible. Medical professionals suggest journey times of 30-40 minutes only. The location of Birkenhead Street is an average of 33 minutes away from 14 identified hospitals where patients are treated for the disease. Arguably this location is one of the most accessible in London and therefore being located near to a major and centrally located transport hub such as King's Cross is vital for Future Dreams House to operate successfully.

4.12 The site is situated opposite King's Cross Station, site and with plans for the future redevelopment of Euston Station including preparation for construction of HS2 and Crossrail 2 the locality will become an enhanced transport hub with improved accessibility to the station, all of which is beneficial to the Future Dreams House proposal.

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- 4.13 Whilst sustainable modes of transport are preferable, the proximity of Handyside Car Park (capacity up to 250) to the north of King's Cross Station further facilitates accessibility for visitors to this location.
- 4.14 Camden is home to a world-class knowledge economy in the fields of science and creative industries. The institutions associated with this 'Knowledge Quarter' are clustered around Euston and King's Cross which provides the best location of the proposal in this London Location. The location at Birkenhead provides an opportunity for Future Dreams to become a part of this established cluster which opens up the potential for knowledge-spillover, exchange of ideas and collaboration between institutions.
- 4.15 The location of Centra House is also within proximity to a number of hospitals including the breast cancer unit at University College Hospital which is one of the leading facilities providing breast cancer treatment and the Royal Free, Hampstead. Individuals who undergo treatment at these hospitals are likely to utilise Future Dreams House and therefore Birkenhead Street is the ideal location as the journey time to reach the services offered by Future Dreams House will be much reduced.
- 4.16 Should Future Dreams House be located in any other location it would not benefit from these geographical advantages and would make it more difficult for visitors from across London and visiting from hospitals further afield to access the important services which are on offer.
- 4.17 Given the points set out above, it is considered that Centra House is the most suitable location for location of the Future Dreams House to secure both the charities' ongoing work into the future.
- 4.18 A Supporting Statement of Case, summarising the work of both Future Dreams and Breast Cancer Haven together with their intentions for Future Dreams House, is provided as part of this submission.

## 5. Proposals

- 5.1 Planning permission is sought for a change of use and refurbishment of the internal parts of the existing offices (Use Class B1a) to a breast cancer support centre (Class D1).
- 5.2 The centre will be specific and bespoke for the operations of Future Dreams and Breast Cancer Haven to provide 'Future Dreams House', a one-of-a-kind in London support centre to support those fighting breast cancer with no barriers to access.
- 5.3 A full overview of the centre's intended services are set out in the accompanying Supporting Statement of Case that forms part of this application. These services include therapies to address the physical and emotional symptoms and side effects of women's breast cancer medical treatment and image workshops, life-coaching, financial advice and nutritional advice on exercise and healthy eating.
- 5.4 In terms of the spatial layout, the main access is from Birkenhead Street at ground level. The building core will be relocated from the front to the centre of the building to allow for additional room to the front of the building and a more welcoming environment. The reconfiguration will accommodate the following:
  - Basement: Office area (maximum 3 desks) with associated BOH area, plant room, secure cycle storage (5 cycle capacity) and bin and recycle store;
  - Ground Floor: Front desk and reception and waiting room area, with office area (maximum 12 desks) to the rear;
  - First Floor: Counselling Room 1 and kitchen/ dining area which leads onto roof terrace;
  - Second Floor: Counselling Room 2 and group therapy/ multi-function room; and
  - Third Floor: Counselling Rooms 3-7.
- 5.5 Across the building, approximately 60% of floorspace is given over to reception, counselling/ therapy rooms and the kitchen/ dining area and approximately 40% is dedicated to the office areas and plant room.
- 5.6 It is proposed for two rooflights to increase natural light to rooms on the third floor and lightwells at ground level will provide light and natural ventilation to the basement office area. Each floor will have toilet facilities and lift access.
- 5.7 The lightwells at ground level are the only external changes which are proposed.

## 6. Planning Policy Framework

- 6.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) as amended states that the determination of planning applications should be in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 6.2 The Development Plan for Camden Council comprises the following documents:
- *The London Plan (as amended since 2011, including by the Minor Alterations to the London Plan (MALP) published in March 2016);*
  - *The London Borough of Camden Local Plan (adopted July 2017); and*
  - *Policies Map (adopted June 2017).*
- 6.3 Other documents of relevance to the application are:
- *The National Planning Policy Framework, adopted July 2018;*
  - *The National Planning Practice Guidance, first published March 2014; and*
  - *Camden Planning Guidance – Planning for Health and Wellbeing (March 2018).*
- 6.4 The draft of the New London Plan was published in November 2017 with a consultation running until March 2018. Examination in Public is due for November 2018 and relevant policies have been considered where appropriate.

### Site Designations

- 6.5 Consideration has been given to the adopted Policies Map (2017) and the site is subject to the following designations:
- Kings Cross Conservation Area.
- 6.6 From the Council's adopted Policies Map it would appear that the site falls within the safeguarded area for Crossrail 2. However, following review it is understood that the map shows the former Chelsea-Hackney safeguarding zone from 2008 that was superseded by the Crossrail 2 safeguarding zone from 2015. The correct position of the safeguarding zone now runs north of the Euston Road; unfortunately, it would seem that the Policies Map has not been updated accordingly to reflect this.

- 6.7 As such, it is understood that the site sits outside of the safeguarding and this matter is not explored further within this statement.
- 6.8 As previously indicated in Section 2, the site is located in close proximity to the southern edge of the Kings Cross Growth Area, a fast growing commercial quarter encouraging a mix of development uses including office, academic, retail, leisure and housing and development of international importance.
- 6.9 The following section reviews the proposed scheme against the policies which are relevant to the proposal from the aforementioned documents and provides an assessment of the scheme's compliance with planning policy.

## **Beyond Planning Policy**

- 6.10 In addition to the range of planning documents which are relevant to this case, given the nature of these proposals there is a requirement to consider Council-wide strategies on health and well-being that extend beyond specific planning policy documents.
- 6.11 As such, due consideration has also been given to wider documentation addressing the Council's approach to these matters including:
- *Camden's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2016-18 (January 2016);*
  - *Our Camden Plan (February 2018);*
  - *Camden 2025 (February 2018);* and
  - *A range of documents published as part of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.*
- 6.12 These documents offer a strategic drive for the Council and its partners to deliver improved health and well-being for the Borough, of which planning can play a vital part.

## 7. Planning Considerations

7.1 Consideration and assessment of the proposed development with regard to local and national planning policies and guidance is set out under the following headings:

1. ***Provision of a Breast Cancer Support Centre;***
2. ***Maintaining an Employment Function;***
3. ***Heritage and Design; and***
4. ***Transport and Servicing.***

### 1. Provision of a Breast Cancer Support Centre

7.2 As outlined previously in this statement, the Applicant wishes to deliver on site a leading breast cancer support centre in London.

7.3 As also noted, the nature of this proposal is such that its context extends beyond just the reach of planning policy. Supporting health and well-being, delivering services to achieve this and supporting healthy lives for all members of a community forms a much wider element of the Council's strategies both today and into the future.

7.4 In February 2018, the Council adopted both *Our Camden Plan* and *Camden 2025* to develop a long-term vision for how the borough should develop and grow.

7.5 *Our Camden Plan* states very clearly that:

*'We will put health and wellbeing at the forefront of all that we do.'*

7.6 *Camden 2025* develops this. As a specified 'Call to Action', it is noted that:

*'In 2025, everyone in Camden should be able to live a healthy, independent life. Good health helps people to live a full and rewarding life. It is more than an absence of disease and illness, it is about physical, mental and social wellbeing.'*

7.7 These two documents set out the aspiration for the improvement of health and well-being in Camden. But this drive to improve such matters means that there is also a starting point of the current situation that needs to be built upon.

7.8 *Camden's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2016-18 (January 2016)* sets out aspirations for improvements across a range of areas of health and well-being in the borough. This includes ensuring mental health for all, an

element of treatment for physical illnesses that can often be forgotten. Delivering support and therapy to improve mental wellness can substantially improve responses to physical illnesses.

7.9 However, the starkest indicator of the existing situation is the first sentence from one of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment's Factsheets published in April 2017 which simply states:

*'Cancer is the leading cause of death in Camden.'*

7.10 It is in this context that consideration of planning policy and decision-making sits when assessing this proposal.

7.11 Turning to planning policy more specifically, in order to achieve sustainable development, the NPPF advocates for the planning system to support *'healthy, inclusive and safe places'* through providing high quality development and supporting of *'the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community.'*

7.12 Paragraph 92 of the NPPF goes on to state that in determining planning decisions, thought should be given to an integrated approach to considering where community facilities and services could be located.

7.13 The London Plan and Camden Local Plan recognises London's growing and diversifying population which is creating a demand for more social infrastructure including health facilities for local groups and communities. In particular the Draft New London Plan describes an increasing need for healthcare to take place within a community rather than hospital settings, where many hospital sites may not be conducive to a full range of services.

7.14 The draft new London Plan also cites findings from London's Sustainability and Transformation Plans (October 2016). The document forecasts a £6.9 billion investment requirement across a five year period up to 2020/21 for existing and new NHS services across London to keep the infrastructure operational and functioning. This demonstrates a substantial and significant need for continuing investment in London's health facilities and services of which developers contributions can only account for a small proportion of this.

7.15 The Local Plan reiterates the provisions of National and London Plan Policy and reflects these considerations within Policy C1 'Health and Wellbeing' and E1 'Economic Development'. These policies state that the Council will seek to improve and promote strong, vibrant and healthy communities. They will do this by supporting the delivery of new health facilities in line with Camden's Clinical Commissioning Group and NHS England requirements and through supporting the development of Camden's health and education sectors within the Knowledge Quarter around Euston and Kings Cross.

7.16 Though the focus of *Camden Planning Guidance – Health and Wellbeing* is setting out the parameters for the preparation of health impact assessments from major developments, it also offers the following clear statement:

*'The planning process can help to promote the health and wellbeing of residents, workers, students and visitors in the Borough through its role in shaping the built and natural environment. This can influence people's ability to follow healthy behaviours and can have positive impacts on reducing inequalities.'*

7.17 This statement provides a clear steer as to how the planning system will play its part in delivering the aspirations on health and well-being that form a key element of enhancing both Camden and the lives of its residents both now and in the future. In this context, planning must be supportive of appropriate supporting services which reflect the aspirations of policies.

7.18 The need for a facility of the kind that is being proposed is evident, not only because the centre currently located in Fulham is required to relocate but also to provide a service which can supplement the more traditional hospital and health centres settings for both the borough and London.

7.19 The delivery of the new centre will provide a high quality environment and service which seeks to complement, expand and consolidate the existing Knowledge Quarter around King's Cross. As such the proposals will contribute to the objectives of the Local Plan through introducing a leading cancer support service which will promote and increase the quality of health provision within the local community.

7.20 The site's planning history, set out in Section 3, indicates historic use of the building for D1 education use (dance academy) for a large proportion of the building's recent history, demonstrating the acceptability of the principle of Class D1 Use on site. The proposal would reinstate a beneficial Class D1 use in the building and internal refurbishment and upgrading will ensure the buildings long term viability into the future.

7.21 This service also provides a clear community facility, meeting specific requirements of Local Plan Policy C2 which states that:

*'The Council will work with its partners to ensure that community facilities and services are developed and modernised to meet the changing needs of our community and reflect new approaches to the delivery of services.'*

7.22 This centre will be delivered by well-established third-sector parties with the backing and trust of senior NHS medical consultants. By offering something beyond the reach of the NHS, Future Dreams House will be able to deliver additional support to achieving healthy communities in line with the widest aspirations of the Council for improving the lives of all residents in the borough by 2025.

7.23 This is a new approach to delivering an important service for the community. It responds to the noted position of cancer being the leading cause of death in Camden, provides support that will address mental well-being which is acknowledged as one of the priorities for *Camden's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy* and reflects the fifth 'Call to Action' within *Camden 2025* that everyone should be able to live a healthy, independent life.

7.24 This centre will be a clear benefit and important element of ensuring improved health though all parts of local communities. The planning system has a role to play in delivering this.



- 7.25 Given the community benefits of the providing this facilities, the central London location, the range of uses to which the building has been put previously and the proximity to the existing Knowledge Quarter for health and related services in and around King's Cross, this use is an appropriate and complementary option for this site.
- 7.26 When considering the Development Plan as a whole, policies at national, London and local levels all support, encourage and essentially require the delivery of facilities such as is now being proposed. The proposal will allow third sector institutions to deliver a service that will be beneficial to all parts of the community.

## **2. Maintaining an Employment Function**

- 7.27 The existing lawful use of the building is Class B1 offices.
- 7.28 As previously set out in Section 4 of this document, the premises have been chosen due to excellent transport links which will serve the proposed therapy and support centre well in terms of opening up its services to greater numbers of individuals. The close proximity to hospitals and other institutions associated with the Knowledge Quarter, which presents an opportunity for collaboration and sharing of knowledge in this part of the borough, has also been a key consideration when choosing this location.
- 7.29 Local Plan Policy E1 'Economic Development' seeks to safeguard existing employment site and premises in the borough. The proposal will include office / administrative areas associated with the centre and thus administrative functions that would commonly be provided from an office will still be provided.
- 7.30 Further to this, there has been significant investment in the delivery of office floorspace in King's Cross and Euston with a substantial permitted (circa 444,000 sqm according to the Local Plan) and future planned quantum of floorspace targeted for this area. Such purpose built modern floorspace will be more suitable to accommodate employment uses / businesses than the floorspace within the existing period building which is constrained and limited.
- 7.31 The Camden Employment Land Review (2014) recognises that whilst protecting employment uses in the borough should be given some weight, there is a strong competition for space for other non-employment uses. Thus the document goes on to advise that it may be suitable to consider release of some sites where the benefits of the existing employment use are outweighed by the benefits of the proposed use(s).
- 7.32 This suggests flexibility in the application of Local Plan Policy to ensure appropriate planning and allocation of premises to uses which can benefit from the site and contribute more to the area.
- 7.33 Even in this context, it is acknowledged that in most circumstances existing office floorspace is protected with reference to Policy E1. But, any application of an individual policy must be considered both in the context of the Development Plan as a whole and other planning controls.

7.34 The replacement of the existing office accommodation at this site can be acceptable within this context for a range of reasons as follows.

### *The Benefits of the Proposed Use*

7.35 The range of services and quality of support that Future Dreams House will offer to those fighting breast cancer has already been set out in detail both elsewhere in this statement and in the supporting Mission and Values Statement. To reiterate those benefits:

- Providing a breast cancer support centre, free of charge and in a central location to allow greater accessibility to enable more patients to have access to wellbeing support;
- Providing therapies to address the physical and emotional symptoms and side effects of women's breast cancer medical treatment;
- Providing image workshops, life-coaching, financial advice and nutritional advice on exercise and healthy eating; and
- Providing a non-medical environment where women can form friendships and support networks.

7.36 The proposal will not only be a welcome addition to the existing cluster of institutions, renowned for being world-class leaders in their fields of science and medicine, but the proposal will also incorporate some office / administrative floorspace associated with the predominant use. Trained health professionals and support staff will also operate at the premises.

7.37 Clearly, the proposed use offers a facility and service that offers a range of health, social and community benefits over and above what is being provided by the current office facility. It must be reiterated that this is not a generic or common use being proposed; Future Dreams House will be a leading facility offering a service to those living with breast cancer from across the social spectrum that is not available from anywhere else.

### *The Specific Usage of the Facility*

7.38 It should also be reiterated that this building will provide a significant administrative function for Breast Cancer Haven with a proportion of the building continuing to be used for quasi-office type uses. Therefore, the proposed use will not lead to a total removal of the existing functions from the property.

7.39 Additionally, the facility will support the employment of a range of different therapists and support service providers within the building. The 'hub' nature of the centre, where different therapists can share facilities and utilise the building at different times, means that this range of employment will also be supported and provided from the property.

7.40 It is not the case that the change of use will result in the building no longer providing a contribution to local employment. Though the specific use class changes, the property will continue to support a full range of employment opportunities.

### Previous Usage of the Building

7.41 The office floorspace has only been operating under this use since 2000. Prior to this date, another Class D1 use had operated on the site for a significant number of years.

7.42 In this context, this property is not a long-standing office facility. Though such a function has been provided recently, this was not the established use of the building. In essence, this application seeks to return a former Class D1 community facility back into this use.

### Availability of Alternative Accommodation

7.43 The use of the current office building is not restricted to any specific type of office occupier; subject to internal layout the building could be occupied by small, medium or large enterprises, a range of different businesses or a single occupant.

7.44 As noted, substantial increases in office accommodation continues to be delivered locally as part of the redevelopment of King's Cross. This accommodation is also suitable for a range of different business occupiers from large multinationals with significant staffing levels to businesses made up of a handful of employees or even a single worker.

7.45 The local area therefore does not suffer from any lack of office accommodation. In this context, the replacement of the current Class B1 use of this site with an alternative that still offers employment opportunities will have a negligible effect upon the capacity for local employment in the area.

7.46 This property has been proposed for this use because of locational imperatives. This is possibly the most accessible locale in all of London – the centre can serve both local residents within the borough, those travelling more widely across London and even those travelling to the mainline rail terminals.

7.47 From a local perspective, this location is as easily accessible for any and all of the local hospitals and other health facilities. Regardless of the specific location of NHS treatments, any individual can equally access the further support that Future Dreams House can provide. This is simply not possible in other parts of the borough.

7.48 Additionally, this property has been made available to the charities and within a timeframe that ensures that their services can be maintained without a break when the existing centre must close its doors. The property can also be converted relatively easily and funds are in place to support its development.

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7.49 Combining this with the co-locational benefits of the cluster of health services within King's Cross, this is clearly an appropriate option for this building. Employment and commercial activity will not be affected by this development.

## Reversionary Conditions

7.50 With reference to the various items discussed, the proposed use is entirely appropriate in the context of the Development Plan and should be approved on that basis.

7.51 Nonetheless, if considered necessary then the applicant is willing consider the use of a condition on a permission given to provide an opportunity to return the use of the building to Class B1 offices at a future date in the event that Breast Cancer Haven were to vacate. Additionally, a condition to focus the proposed use to a cancer support centre only could also be considered so as to prevent an open Class D1 use if officers consider this as necessary. This is reflective of the essentially unique nature of the services and support that this facility will provide.

7.52 For example:

*The premises shall be used as a cancer support / resource / therapy centre for only and for no other use within Use Class D1, notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended), and the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, as amended.*

7.53 And:

*The cancer support / resource / therapy centre hereby permitted shall be personal to to use by Future Dreams and Breast Cancer Haven only. In the event that both these parties were to vacate the premises, the Class D1 use shall cease and the lawful use of the building shall revert to Class B1 offices upon their vacation*

7.54 If the above provides further reassurance as the specific use of the building, for both the present and then subsequent times, then the applicant is willing to adhere to such requirements if this supports the delivery of breast cancer support and therapy from this location., whilst providing comfort to the LPA that the premises would revert to the employment use within Class B1

## Summary

7.55 The opportunity proposed here will provide an essential, valuable, facility and the benefits it will bring with it, as set out in Section 1, are significant both locally and as part of the Borough's contribution to the success of London as an operational society. This range of benefits is considerable and must be weighted appropriately when assessing the specific policy expectation to maintain office floorspace.

- 7.56 This service will support significant numbers of people living with cancer, provide guidance and help to people when they need it most and allow them to make informed choices or decisions about their ongoing therapy. The centre can be a place for information and fill an important an necessary niche from a third sector provider.
- 7.57 Appropriately worded planning conditions have been proposed that will ensure that office floorspace could be restored to this these premises in the longer term if considered necessary. The applicant is happy to offer these control mechanisms , though these should be considered as being additional to the wide range of benefits that the proposal offers on its own terms.
- 7.58 On planning balance therefore the proposals are acceptable in planning policy terms.

### 3. Heritage and Design

- 7.59 As set out earlier in this document, the premises is located within a period building in the Kings Cross and St Pancras Conservation Area. Therefore it is appropriate to consider the proposals impact on the townscape setting in accordance with Local Plan Policy D1 'Design' which requires development proposals to respect the local context and character in order to protect and enhance its distinctive features.
- 7.60 As part of the change of use, it is also proposed to enhance the existing front elevation through refurbishment, repair and restoration. A lightwell has been proposed to the front of the building in order to increase the light that is received at the basement level.
- 7.61 By maintaining and enhancing the existing external facades, the appearance of the host building will remain intact and preserved and therefore there will be positive impact upon the setting of the Kings Cross and St. Pancras Conservation Area nor the features of the building itself.
- 7.62 The introduction of the lightwell will also enhance the quality and usability of the basement level. It is a modest and discreet alteration that will not materially impact upon the appearance of the existing building.
- 7.63 The removal of the modern and incongruous canopy currently fitted over the main entrance will better reveal the original fabric of the building. Taken together with general refurbishment of the front façade, this will result in an enhanced appearance for the building which will be delivered as part of the package to ensure that the centre is a friendly and accessible location for all.
- 7.64 Therefore, the proposals are acceptable in heritage and design terms.

## 4. Transport and Servicing

- 7.65 Local Plan Policy T1 'Prioritising Walking, Cycling and Public Transport' seeks to promote sustainable methods of transport in the borough, underpinned by the London Plan's and Draft New London Plan's approach to reduce Londoner's dependency on cars.
- 7.66 The site benefits from the highest level of PTAL (level 6b) and thus this strongly supports the location of the health centre in this location which will enable visitors within London and from locations further afield to access the centre easily by public transport, compliant with transport policy aspirations.
- 7.67 The centre will provide travel information to ensure users of the centre are aware of sustainable ways to travel to and from the facility and provision of cycle parking will further ensure sustainable methods of transport to and from the proposed health centre.
- 7.68 Table 6.3 'Cycle Parking Minimum Standards' in the London Plan requires that health centres provide 1 space per 5 staff for long stay cycle parking and 1 space per 3 staff for short stay cycle parking provision. The proposals set out capacity for this storage in accordance with the required standards.
- 7.69 With regard to servicing, internal space for the storage of waste and recycling has been provided. The management of this this will form part of the normal operations of the Centre.
- 7.70 The nature of the Centre's operation is such that waste outputs should be comparable to a normal office use. Given that such a use is established on-site then there should be no material change relative to the existing situation.

## 8. Conclusions

8.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of Breast Cancer Haven in support of a Full Planning Application for:

*Change of Use of the existing building from offices (Class B1) to cancer support / resource / therapy centre (Class D1), including ancillary administrative functions and enhancement of existing front elevation*

8.2 The applicant requires a centrally located new premises for delivery of Future Dreams House, a dedicated breast cancer support centre.

8.3 It is particularly important that a new location is secured soon so that charities Breast Cancer Haven and Future Dreams can establish the new centre before the lease on Breast Cancer Haven's current location comes to an end in September 2019 and allow continuation of the aftercare and support they provide.

8.4 The proposals would bring substantial benefits including delivery of the following:

- A central and easily accessible location for London's only breast cancer support centre that is accessible to all;
- Support the wider drive across the Council to put health and well-being at the forefront of all aspects of community;
- Further the aims of Camden's Health and Education Sectors through provision of complementary support and therapy services;
- Support local individuals and the community in the borough;
- Support the employment of a range of therapists and individuals providing other supporting services;
- Refurbishment and continuing investment into the upkeep of the building;
- A proposal which will preserve an existing building which contributes to the character of the Kings Cross and St Pancras Conservation Area; and
- Encourage collaborative working with the Knowledge Quarter (a cluster of academic, cultural, research, scientific and media organisations within a one mile radius of King's Cross).

8.5 Whilst existing office floorspace will need to be replaced, flexibility should be applied to the Local Plan policy given not only that a Class D1 use has previously occupied the building but (most importantly) because the above benefits outweigh the loss of this existing use. Significant elements of administration will still continue on the site and employment will be maintained within the premises.

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- 8.6 The planning balance is clear that the proposed use will contribute many positive aspects to the borough which reflect an overall strategy from the Council as a whole to support, enhance and improve health and well-being for all individuals within the borough. When cancer is acknowledged within the *Joint Strategic Needs Assessment* as the leading cause of death in Camden but *Camden 2025* calls for everyone to be able to live a healthy, independent life then a service to help address this aspiration should be supported.
- 8.7 The appraisal of the proposal against the relevant planning policy framework also demonstrates that the internal conversion will not create any negative impact upon the building or surrounding character of the Kings Cross and St Pancras Conservation Area and the proposals are acceptable in transport and sustainability terms.
- 8.8 Given the above, it is considered that the proposals respect the intentions of the Development Plan and we respectfully request planning permission is granted.