

PLANNING STATEMENT

In respect of

Ground and Basement Floors
26 Parker Street, Holborn, London, WC2B 5PH

On behalf of

Royal Masonic Trust for Girls and Boys

CH/PG/24384
Planning Statement
1.0
April 2019

REPORT

Document status

Version	Purpose of document	Authored by	Approved by	Review date
1.0	Planning Statement	Phil Gordon	Chris Hicks	April 2019

Approval for issue

Chris Hicks

April 2019

© Copyright RPS Group Plc. All rights reserved.

The report has been prepared for the exclusive use of our client and unless otherwise agreed in writing by RPS Group Plc, any of its subsidiaries, or a related entity (collectively 'RPS'), no other party may use, make use of, or rely on the contents of this report. The report has been compiled using the resources agreed with the client and in accordance with the scope of work agreed with the client. No liability is accepted by RPS for any use of this report, other than the purpose for which it was prepared. The report does not account for any changes relating to the subject matter of the report, or any legislative or regulatory changes that have occurred since the report was produced and that may affect the report. RPS does not accept any responsibility or liability for loss whatsoever to any third party caused by, related to or arising out of any use or reliance on the report.

RPS accepts no responsibility for any documents or information supplied to RPS by others and no legal liability arising from the use by others of opinions or data contained in this report. It is expressly stated that no independent verification of any documents or information supplied by others has been made. RPS has used reasonable skill, care and diligence in compiling this report and no warranty is provided as to the report's accuracy. No part of this report may be copied or reproduced, by any means, without the prior written consent of RPS.

Prepared by:

Prepared for:

RPS

Royal Masonic Trust for Girls and Boys

Chris Hicks
Director

140 London Wall
London, EC2Y 5DN

E chris.hicks@rpsgroup.com

Contents

1	INTRODUCTION	1
2	SITE CONTEXT	3
3	PLANNING HISTORY	4
4	PREVIOUS USER	5
5	PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT	7
6	DEVELOPMENT PLAN	8
7	PLANNING ASSESSMENT	9
8	CONCLUSIONS	11

Appendices

Appendix A	Bailiff's Site Photographs
Appendix B	Statutory Declaration
Appendix C	Parker Street, Google Street Views – 2012 and 2018
Appendix D	Communication from Farebrother

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 We act on behalf of the Royal Masonic Trust for Girls and Boys (RMTGB) who are the freeholder owner of this property. The main property occupies 30-31 Great Queen Street, which runs through to 26 (and 28) Parker Street. It originally accommodated offices for the school, but has subsequently been subdivided, and is now occupied by a number of different business and planning units. 30-31 Great Queen Street is listed grade II. As it runs through to 26 that too is to be treated as being listed, although there is no separate listing.
- 1.2 No. 26 has been vacant for over a year when the previous tenant – London Fashion Workrooms (a tailoring and clothing alterations business - B1 use) ceased trading. A new potential tenant has now been identified – Coincraft (who trade in specialist coins, banknotes, medallions, antiquities, books and other collectibles) and are currently operating from a shop in Great Russel Street. They wish to expand to the subject premises and to use it mainly to expand the mail order side of the business (Class B1).
- 1.3 Although the previous user was a B1 business and had been in occupation for over ten years, the authorised use of the premises was actually A1. Because the previous tenant no longer exists, we consider that it may be difficult to demonstrate continuous B1 use over the last ten years. Accordingly, we believe that the most efficient way to obtain the necessary authorisation for Coincraft is to apply for planning permission for change of use from A1 to B1.
- 1.4 Coincraft wish to make minor internal alterations/refurbishments to enable their business to function. The previous tenant installed a staircase between the ground floor and basement in circa. 2005, that replaced a previous lift. We cannot find a listed building consent for those works, although there is evidence of a Buildings Regulations application to the Council in 2009. It is therefore proposed to include these works (retrospectively) as part of the necessary listed building application, albeit they are now more than ten years old.
- 1.5 Accordingly, this planning statement is submitted in support of an application for full planning permission and listed building consent for:
- Change of use of ground floor and basement from Use Class A1 to Use Class B1 and associated internal alterations.*
- 1.6 The scope of the planning application comprises:
- Application form (full planning permission and listed building consent) and certificates
 - CIL form
 - Site Location Plan
 - This Planning Statement
 - Heritage Statement prepared by CgMs
 - Architectural Drawings prepared by Thirdway
- 1.7 Application drawings are as follows:

Drawing Title	Drawing Number	Revision
Lease Plan Ground Floor Plan	0727-0581	-
Lease Plan Basement	0727-0580	-
Proposed Ground Floor GA Planning Approval	18834-GF-GA	B

REPORT

Proposed Basement GA Planning Approval	18834-LGF-GA	B
Proposed Ground Floor Plan and Elevations	18834-GF-E01	A
Proposed Basement Floor Plan and Elevations	18834-GF-E02	A
Proposed Ground Floor Typical Shelving Details	18834-GF-E03	A
Proposed Floor Typical Shelving Details	18834-GF-E04	A
Proposed Typical Wall Finish Details	18834-00-WALL	A

- 1.8 This report is structured as follows: Section 2.0 sets out the application site context; Section 3.0 details the relevant planning history; followed by details of the previous tenant in Section 4.0. Section 5.0 sets out the development plan and 6.0, assesses the relevant planning issues against policy. Section 7.0 concludes the statement.

2 SITE CONTEXT

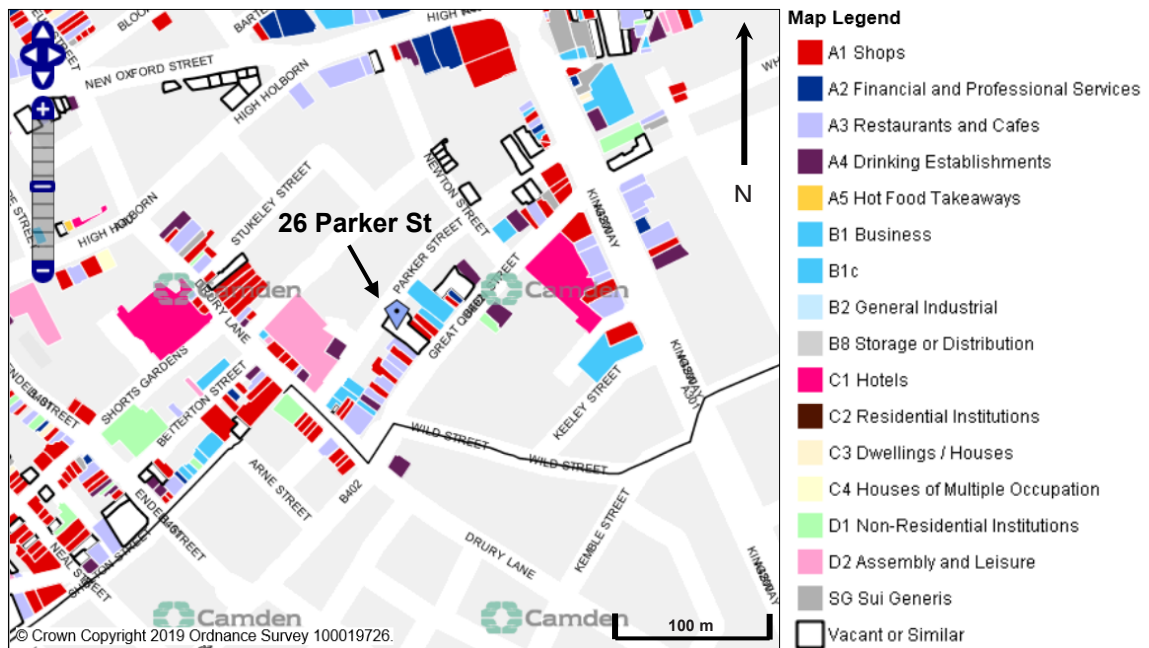
Property Description

- 2.1 The property is located on the south of Parker Street and comprises 54sqm on the ground floor and 337sqm in the basement. The basement extends from Parker Street to Great Queen Street (and also under no.28). Internally the floors are connected via a staircase. There is a large glazed frontage to Parker Street. The property forms part of the 4 /5-storey Grade II listed building which stretches to 30-31 Great Queen Street and includes 26 Parker Street.
- 2.2 The upper floors to Parker Street are in residential use and those above the basement to the rear are in use as a restaurant with its access off Great Queen Street.

Surrounding Area

- 2.3 Parker Street is a quiet 'back-street' mainly in residential and office use with very little ground floor active frontage. Indeed, the subject premises are the only A1 authorised use in this part of Parker Street.
- 2.4 However, beyond this part of Parker Street, are the very active streets of Great Queen Street to the south; Kingsway to the east; and Drury Lane to the west. These all form part of the busy Covent Garden and Holborn areas. There is to be found a very wide range of shops, restaurants, pubs, hotels, services and theatres. This is demonstrated in the Figure 1 below which is an extract from the Camden Retail Survey 2018.

Figure 1: Existing land uses in the surrounding area



Site Designations

- 2.5 The following heritage designations apply to the property:
 - Grade II Listed Building 30-31 Great Queen Street
 - Severn Dials Conservation Area
- 2.6 These matters are considered in the Heritage report by CgMs.

3 PLANNING HISTORY

Planning History Records

3.1 The results of the Council's online planning history search are shown in the table below:

Table 1: Online Planning Search Results

Reference	Description of Development	Date	Decision
2005/0449/P	Change of use and works of conversion from retail use (Class A1) to bar/restaurant use (Class A3) at ground and basement floor levels, including demolition of existing walls, installation of spiral staircase, bar area and kitchen, and associated works to pipework and ventilation ducting for wc's and kitchen areas.	30/03/2005	REFUSED
CA/1315/A	An internally illuminated double sided projecting sign having black and gold letters to read "S & H JEWELL ESTd 1830 ANTIQUE AND REPRODUCTION FURNITURE" all on a bronze ground. Overall projection 3'0" (0.9m), depth 2'0" (0.6m), overall height 10'0" (3.05m).	05/03/1970	GRANTED

2005/0049/P

3.2 The planning application for a change of use from retail use (Class A1) to bar/restaurant use (Class A3) was refused in 2005 for the following reason:

"The proposed change of use, by reason of its scale and location would be detrimental to local residential amenity and therefore contrary to policies RE2, EN5, TR1, SH10 and Sh18 of the London Borough of Camden Unitary Development Plan 2000 and Supplementary Planning Guidance for Central London (June 2004)."

3.3 The previous use is stated to be a furniture shop. The accompanying Planning Statement states that the ground floor was used as an antiques showroom; with storage and repairs carried out in the basement. This was clearly not a basic convenience type store of day to day importance to local residents.

CA/1315/A

3.4 Advertisement consent was granted in 1970 for signage pertaining to an Antique / Furniture shop.

3.5 It is noteworthy that planning permission was granted for change of use from retail (Class A1) to office use (Class B1) at ground floor level at 32 Parker Street in 2007 (2006/5195/P). The Officer's report states:

"Policy Team: Proposal would enhance the premises for the business user and would contribute to the function of the area.

Case Officer: On balance it is considered that the proposal would contribute to the function of the area. It must be noted that the site is within close proximity to a range of retail uses on Drury Lane and Great Queen Street. The loss of the retail unit would not reduce the range of functions for residents or businesses and would be considered acceptable."

4 PREVIOUS USER

4.1 Between 2005 and March 2018 the subject premises were occupied by London Fashion Workrooms. Although they have ceased trading their web site is still active and states that:

“We presently provide garment alteration services to 38 high-end London stores and many private clients. With 20 tailors on site we have the skills and personnel necessary to provide a one-stop service for all your needs.”

4.2 Their Facebook page states the business as being:

- Clothes shop
- Sewing and alterations
- Lifestyle service

4.3 The following websites refer to the business as:

- Findglocal.com - Tailors and Alterations
- Fashyas.com - Tailors and Alterations
- View.co.uk – Clothing Repairs
- Foursquare.com – Tailor Shop
- Companies-reviews.org - Tailor Alterations

4.4 London Fashion Workrooms ceased business and forfeited their lease early. Our client had to appoint bailiffs to gain access to the premises and thence to dispose of any assets. **Appendix A** contains a selection of photographs taken upon successfully entry. It can be seen that the basement largely comprises rows of sewing machines, rows of ironing boards, changing areas, mannequins, gondolas of clothes racks and artwork stations.

4.5 Our client’s Chief Operating Officer made regular visits to the premises in his management capacity. **Appendix B** contains a Statutory Declaration which confirms that the previous use was B1. Indeed, the lease restricted the use to offices.

4.6 Google Street view images for June 2012 and January 2018 are included in **Appendix C**. They show (in 2012) a projecting sign advertising the trade as: Specialists in Designer Garments/Alterations Repairs and Dry Cleaning. For January 2018 the shop window ‘display’ is almost bare.

4.7 The basement forms 86% of the premises, and was in active use, but neither it, not the ground floor, were accessible to the public.

4.8 The Use Classes Order 1987 as amended, defines Class A1 as:

Use for all or any of the following purposes—

- a. for the retail sale of goods other than hot food,*
- b. as a post office,*
- c. for the sale of tickets or as a travel agency,*
- d. for the sale of sandwiches or other cold food for consumption off the premises,*
- e. for hairdressing,*
- f. for the direction of funerals,*
- g. for the display of goods for sale,*

- h. for the hiring out of domestic or personal goods or articles,*
- i. for the reception of goods to be washed, cleaned or repaired, where the sale, display or service is to visiting members of the public.*

4.9 In our view, the previous user did not use the premises within Class A1, for a period of over ten years.

5 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

5.1 Coincraft is a family run business that has been operating in London since 1955. They trade in specialist coins, banknotes, medallions, antiques, books and other collectibles and have occupied their current retail premise at 44-45 Great Russell Street since 1976. Full details of their operation are available at their web site: <https://www.coincraft.com/>. They are a national and international business.

5.2 The continued success of Coincraft has created the need for a larger premise to enable the business to expand, and in particular to accommodate its growing mail order activity. A location close to the existing premises is desirable and therefore the search area was limited to Bloomsbury/Covent Garden. Following an extensive search over the last three years, the subject premises were identified as ideal.

5.3 The premises and location are ideal because:

- Right size
- 5 minutes walk from the existing premises
- Open plan basement
- Limited renovation required
- Immediately available

5.4 The proposed layout is shown on the application drawings and can be summarised as follows:

Ground floor

- Eight telephone/computer workstations (office style) dealing with the buying and selling of merchandise
- Creation of entrance lobby area; and new shelving

Basement

- Packing workstations
- Storage racking
- Accounts department
- Arts department
- IT room
- Strong room
- Staff welfare facilities
- Cleaning room
- New partitioning, storage units and shelving

5.5 This expansion will accommodate 15 jobs.

5.6 Opening hours will be those normally associated with B1 use including occasional weekend work.

6 DEVELOPMENT PLAN

- 6.1 In accordance with Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, planning applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 6.2 The adopted development plan comprises:
- London Plan (LP) – adopted March 2016; and
 - Camden Local Plan (CLP) – adopted July 2017.
- 6.3 The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – adopted February 2019, is a material planning consideration in planning decisions.
- 6.4 The NPPF includes a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraphs 10 and 11). This means *approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay*. We consider the above development plans to be up-to-date (save in respect of any deviance from the revised NPPF).
- 6.5 The key consideration of the London Plan is that the premises fall within the Central Activities Zone (CAZ) and Central London Area. One of the main *raison d'être* of the CAZ is the enhancement and promotion of its unique international, national and London wide roles, based on a rich mix of local as well as strategic uses and forming the globally iconic core of one of the world's most attractive business locations.
- 6.6 The nature of Coincraft fits with this role. It requires a central London location because of its specialist and international function.
- 6.7 The key Local Plan considerations are the loss of an authorised A1 use which is resisted by policy and its replacement with a B1 use. These are now considered.

7 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Loss of Class A1 Use

7.1 The key policy in this respect is Camden Local Plan policy TC3 (Shops outside of centres). This states that:

“...The Council will only grant planning permission for loss of a shop outside designated centres provided:

- a. alternative provision is available within 5-10 minutes’ walking distance;*
- b. there is clear evidence that the current use is not viable; and*
- c. within the Central London Area, the development positively contributes to local character, function, viability and amenity.”*

7.2 Paragraph 9.27 of the supporting text notes that part of the reason for the additional protection of A1 uses is in order to ensure that local shops are available for local residents, workers and visitors.

7.3 In this particular case there is no actual loss of A1 use because the unit was not in A1 use from 2005 to March 2018 and has been vacant ever since.

7.4 Nevertheless, we assess each of the criteria in turn:

Alternative Provision

7.5 The unit is located on a quiet ‘back street’ and is not within any of Camden’s designated retail centres. However, there is an abundance of alternative provision in the nearby centres of Holborn and Covent Garden. Furthermore, these areas not only offer a wide variety of shop types for the visiting shopper but also contain the essential convenience shops for the resident population.

7.6 Paragraph 9.26 of the supporting text expands on the 5-10 minutes’ walking distance and indicates this is within 400 to 800 metres. When this measurement is applied in the context of the application site, it is clear there is substantial alternative provision. This is shown on the map at paragraph 2.4.

Non-viability

7.7 Paragraph 9.26 of the supporting text notes that the Council will also take into account the viability of the premises for the existing use and in particular any history of vacancy in a shop unit and the prospect of achieving an alternative occupier. It also notes that the Council recognise that it is unlikely that all shops outside centres will continue to find an occupier due to the declining number of people shopping locally.

7.8 In recent years, retailers have had to adapt to the changing shopping patterns and as a result, many retail premises have become vacant or rendered redundant due to their location outside of the main retail centres.

7.9 The previous occupier went bust. As part of their marketing of the unit Farebrother received no interest from A1 users over a period of nine months. This is confirmed in the communication contained at **Appendix D**. The premises are in an isolated location with very limited footfall. The previous use was not A1. The vast majority of the premises are in the basement, with a relatively small ground floor presence, which is not conducive to an A1 operator.

7.10 The unit was also the subject of a change of use application in 2005 for a Class A3 use. The supporting planning statement includes details of 16 other interested parties who made enquiries regarding the property, of which only one wished to operate the premise under A1 use. Whilst the details are 15 years old, there is nothing to suggest that economic trends or site circumstances have changed; in fact, quite the reverse.

Positive Contribution to the Locality

- 7.11 The proposed use has been established in the area for decades. It provides a specialist collectors'/investors' service which is typical of central London. It needs to be located in this area, not far from the associated shop. Although there will be no visiting members of the public there will be pedestrian activity by way of appointment.
- 7.12 The proposal will bring back into use premises that have been vacant for over 14 months. Activity on the ground floor will be visible to passing pedestrians adding interest to the street scene. The use will be operated during normal business hours. There may be the possibility of a shop window display, but this needs to be considered in the context of security.
- 7.13 The proposal will refurbish, maintain and bring new life to this listed building, thereby preserving its contribution to the conservation area. It will provide significant new employment which in turn will support other retail and non-retail services nearby.
- 7.14 Accordingly, we believe that the three criteria for allowing loss of this 'theoretical' A1 use are met.

Principle of Class B1 Use

- 7.15 NPPF paragraph 80 (Chapter 6 - Building a strong, competitive economy) notes planning decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. It also notes significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.
- 7.16 The London Plan shows the subject premises as within CAZ. As such policy 2.10 advise boroughs to enhance and promote the special qualities that make this area unique.
- 7.17 Policy 2.9 (Inner London) notes the Mayor will, and boroughs and other stakeholders should work to realise the potential of inner London in ways that sustain and enhance its recent economic and demographic growth and ensure the availability of workspaces for the area's changing economy.
- 7.18 Policy 4.1 (Developing London's Economy) notes the Mayor will work with partners to enable the continued development of a strong, sustainable and increasingly diverse economy across all parts of London, ensuring the availability of sufficient and suitable workspaces in terms of type, size and cost and suitable environments for small enterprises.
- 7.19 Policy 4.2 (Offices) notes the Mayor will, and boroughs and other stakeholders should (a) support the management and redevelopment of office provision to improve London's competitiveness and to address the wider objectives of the Plan, including enhancing its varied attractions for businesses of different types and sizes including small enterprises.
- 7.20 Paragraph 2.31 of the Camden Local Plan notes the Council's aspirations for the Holborn area include provision of a mix of land uses, with offices and housing as the predominate uses.
- 7.21 Policy E1 (Economic development) notes the Council will secure a successful and inclusive economy in Camden by supporting businesses of all sizes and maintain a stock of premises that are suitable for a variety of business activities, for firms of differing sizes.
- 7.22 The existing use is already of a commercial nature. The premises, being largely basement, are most suited to a continued commercial use. That proposed would be compatible with adjacent uses. It would facilitate expansion of a local business, but one with an international reach, increasing employment. This accords with the national, regional and local policies for B1 use in this area.

8 CONCLUSIONS

8.1 Our conclusions are as follows:

- Whilst the authorised use of the premises is A1, the actual use from 2005 until the unit fell vacant in March 2018 was B1.
- Despite marketing since August 2018 there has been no interest from A1 users.
- That is because the unit is isolated in a 'back-street' location and has very limited ground floor space (the majority being in the basement).
- The prospective tenant is a well-established central London business with retail premises in Great Russell Street that wishes to expand its mail order department. This requires a location nearby.
- The proposed use is B1 and will accommodate 15 jobs. There will be no external changes to the property.
- The application meets the criteria tests for loss of a shop outside a designated centre under Local Plan policy TC3.

8.2 The proposal will bring back into use a vacant listed property; increase ground level activity and contribute to the functions of the CAZ.

Appendix A
Bailiff's Site Photographs











Appendix B
Statutory Declaration

DATED

2019

**STATUTORY DECLARATION
of Leslie Hutchinson
in relation to Ground and Basement Floor at
26 Parker Street, London WC2B 5PH**

I, LESLIE HUTCHINSON of The Royal Masonic Trust for Girls and Boys ("**RMTGB**") a company limited by guarantee company number 01705033 and a registered charity, charity number 1170336 of 60 Great Queen Street, London WC2B 5AZ, do solemnly and sincerely declare that:

1. I am the Chief Operating Officer of MCF and have been in that role since December 2015. Before I was Chief Operating Officer I was Chief Executive of RMTGB having joined RMTGB as an employee in the year 1988. RMTGB is the registered proprietor of the land comprised in registered title number 286303 being the property known as Ground and Basement Floors at 26 Parker Street, London WC2B 5PH ("**the Property**"), which is shown edged red on the plan attached hereto. RMTGB has owned the Property since 1926. I am very familiar with the Property, having been involved with its management since 1988.
2. The ground floor and basement of the Property was let by RMTGB to a company called Kerpar Ltd. in 2005. The Tenant used the premises to provide garment alteration services for clients. At ground floor there was a small customer reception area. I understand that garment alterations took place in the basement area which was also used as office and storage space. According to the lease agreement, the Tenant was not to use the demised premises or any part thereof otherwise than as offices.
3. The lease was renewed in 2015 and the Tenant continued to use the premises for the same purpose as before.
4. I am able to confirm that the staircase was added in approximately 2005.
5. I am duly authorised by RMTGB to make this declaration.

AND I MAKE this solemn declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true and by virtue of the Statutory Declarations Act 1835.

Declared at

On 10th April 2019
Before me,

ASHTONS SOLICITORS
90 Long Acre
Covent Garden
London WC2E 9RA



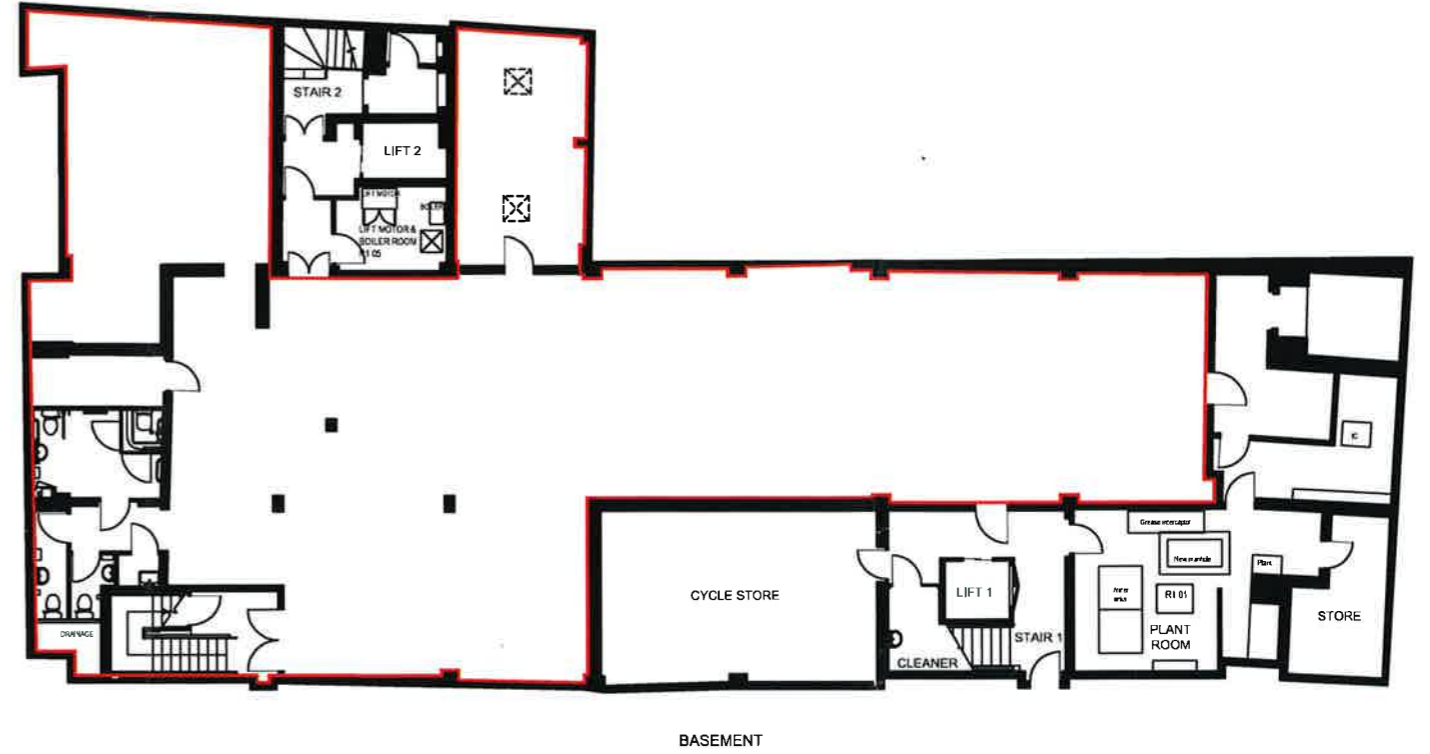
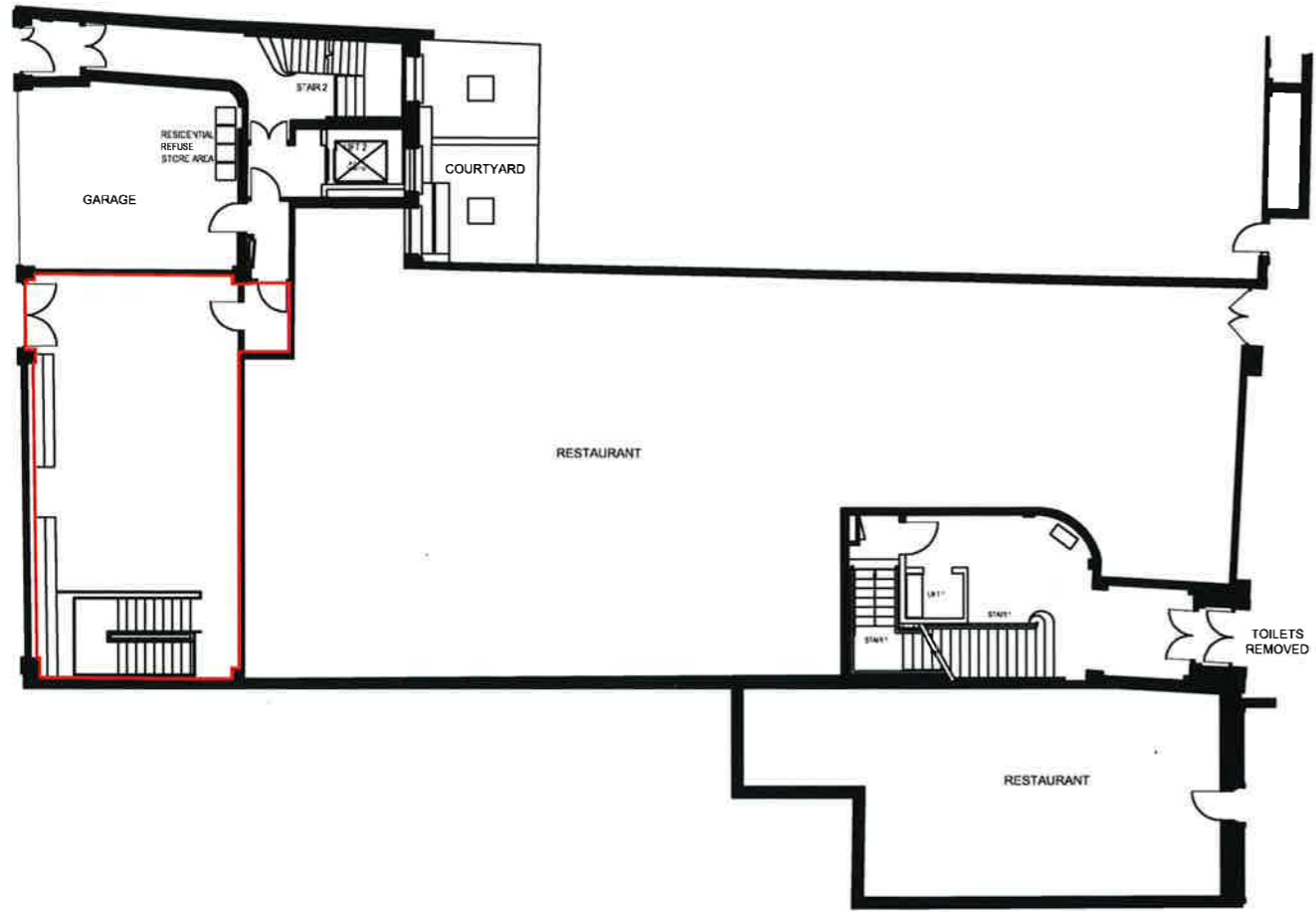
Signed



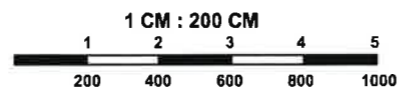
VIRESHI PATEL
SOLICITOR EMPOWERED TO
ADMINISTER OATHS

A commissioner for oaths or a solicitor empowered to administer oaths

26 PARKER STREET LONDON WC2B 5PH



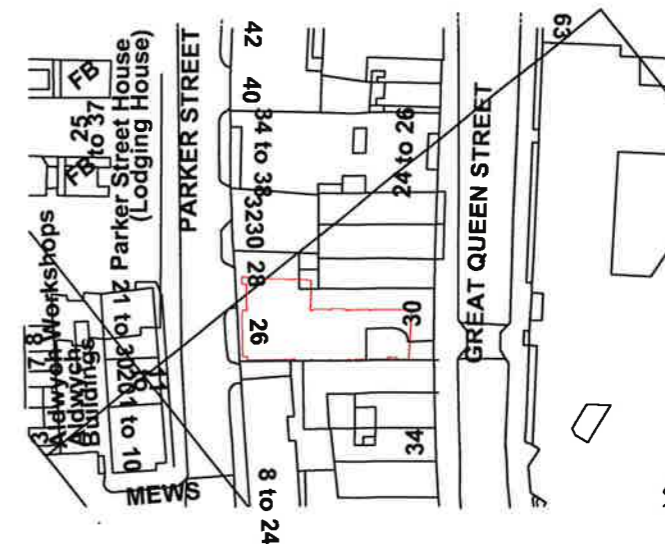
SCALE: 1:200 AT A3



SCALE: For the plan to be scale, the above scale bar

SCALE: For the plan to be scale, the above scale bar must measure correct when printed (for example 5cm)

ALL DIMENSIONS TO BE CHECKED ON SITE



LOCATION PLAN, SCALE 1:1250 ON A3

Appendix C

Parker Street, Google Street Views – 2012 and 2018

26 Parker Street – Google Street View October 2018



26 Parker Street – Google Street View June 2012



Appendix D

Communication from Farebrother

From: Neil Davies <NDavies@farebrother.com>
Date: 9 April 2019 at 17:23:09 BST
To: "Chris Hicks" <chris.hicks@rpsgroup.com>
Cc: Amy Brooks <abrooks@tandem-property.com>
Subject: 26 Parker St

Chris,

Further to your e mail to Amy I confirm that indeed we have been marketing 26 Parker St since August of last year . The interest has come predominately from non-retail uses and in addition to Coincraft we received an offer from a Gym Operator with interest from numerous others in this sector.

The reason for this is that Parker Street it is not a retail pitch.

Regards

Neil.
Neil Davies
Partner – Retail & Leisure
Farebrother

Tel: +44 20 7405 4545
Direct Line: +44 20 7855 3595
Mobile: +44 7714 469 035
Email: NDavies@farebrother.com
Web: www.farebrother.com
Address: 27 Bream's Buildings, London, EC4A 1DZ

Our firm is part of CORFAC International - Corporate Facility Advisors - an alliance of entrepreneurial commercial Real Estate firms that partner to deliver quality and experienced service locally, nationally and internationally.



**CELEBRATING 220 YEARS
AS REAL ESTATE SPECIALISTS**
PIONEERING SUCCESS THROUGH CHANGE

[CLICK HERE TO SEE HOW WE CAN HELP WITH YOUR PROPERTY REQUIREMENTS.](#)



FAREBF

A member



Subject

to

contract

Please consider the environment before printing this email

This email is from Farebrother. This email and any attachments are confidential and may contain privileged information. If you have received this email in error, please notify the sender by replying by email and then delete the email from your system. No responsibility is accepted by Farebrother for personal emails, or emails unconnected with the firm's business. This email and any attachments have been scanned for viruses, but it is the responsibility of the recipient to conduct their own security measures and no responsibility is accepted by Farebrother for loss or damage arising from the receipt or use of this email.