

115 - 119 CAMDEN HIGH STREET



**115-119 Camden High Street,
London NW1 7JR**

**Heritage, Townscape Visual Impact
Assessment**

June 2019

Consultancy for the
Historic Built Environment

KMHHeritage

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This report has been prepared on behalf of Denmar (BVI) Holdings in support of a planning application for new development at No. 115-119 Camden High Street, London NW1 7JR.

Purpose

- 1.2 The purpose of the report is to assess the effect of the proposed scheme on the significance of No. 115-119 Camden High Street and other heritage assets in the vicinity of the Site and to measure that effect through a series of views and against national and local policies relating to urban design and the historic built environment.
- 1.3 This report should be read in conjunction with the drawings and Design & Access Statement prepared by Morris + Company and other application documents.

Organisation

- 1.4 This introduction is followed by an assessment of the history and significance of heritage assets in the vicinity of the site, and a description in Section 3 of the national and local policy and guidance that is relevant to this matter. Section 4 describes the proposed development and its effects. Section 5 assesses the proposed development against policy and guidance. Section 6 contains a conclusion.

Nomenclature

- 1.5 No. 115-119 Camden High Street is referred as the 'site' throughout this report. The proposals are referred to as 'the proposed scheme' or 'the proposed development'.

- 1.6 In 2015 English Heritage changed its name to 'Historic England' and a new charity, officially called the English Heritage Trust, took the name of English Heritage and responsibility for managing the National Heritage Collection of state-owned historic sites and monuments across England. In this report reference is made both to 'English Heritage' and 'Historic England'.

Author

- 1.7 The author of this report is Nick Collins MSc MRICS IHBC. Nick has twenty years' experience in the property sector, including most recently as a Director of the Conservation Team at integrated design consultants, Alan Baxter & Associates. Nick spent nine years at English Heritage as Principal Inspector of Historic Buildings & Areas where he led a specialist team of historic building inspectors, architects, and archaeologists on a wide range of heritage projects in East & South London. Previously Conservation Officer at the London Borough of Bromley, Nick began his career at international real estate consultancy Jones Lang LaSalle as a Chartered Surveyor. This experience has given Nick an in-depth understanding of the property industry, listed building and planning process, heritage policy and guidance and funding bodies.
- 1.8 Historical research and drafting for this report was undertaken by Anne Roache MA. Anne is a researcher with over 25 years' experience. She has worked for leading commercial organizations in the fields of property, planning and law. Anne has a specialisation in the archaeology, architectural and social history of London.

2 The site and its context

- 2.1 No. 115-119 Camden High Street is located in the Camden Town Conservation Area in the London Borough of Camden.

Historical background

The development of Camden and Camden High Street

- 2.2 The Parish of St Pancras, centered around the ancient St. Pancras Old Church, covered an area extending from Hampstead in the north to Tottenham Court Road to the south and equates roughly to the area covered by the London Borough of Camden today.
- 2.3 The late 17th century saw the fields north of Oxford Street begin to be built upon by the landowners such as the Bedford and Portman Estates. The construction of the New Road (now Euston Road) between Paddington and Islington from 1756 onwards, acted as a further stimulus for development on the northern edge of the Georgian city and a web of new streets began to spread northwards into the surrounding countryside.
- 2.4 The 1790s saw the creation of Somers Town on land owned by the Earl of Camden and development grew northwards. The fork in the ancient road which led from London to Hampstead and to Highgate - now known as Camden High Street and Kentish Town Road respectively - is recorded in maps from the 17th century onwards. A convenient stopping place for travellers, the Mother Red Cap Inn is noted here as well as The Britannia Hotel and Public House (known to have existed in 1777) which gave its name to the junction (fig. 1¹).

¹ 'New and accurate plan of London and Westminster, the borough of Southwark and parts adjacent viz. Kensington, Chelsea, Islington, Hackney, Walworth, Newington, &c. with an alphabetical list of 500 of the most principal streets with references to their situation', John Cary, 1792.



Figure 1: Somers Town and to the north, Britannia Junction, showing the Hampstead Road and the nascent routes of Kentish Town Road and Parkway, 1792

Camden Town

- 2.5 Camden Town stands on land which was once part of the manor of Kentish Town and was named after Charles Pratt, the first Earl Camden, who started its development in 1791. Beginning life as a handful of buildings beside the main Hampstead Road, its success as a major centre came with the success of the nearby Regent's Canal.
- 2.6 The Regent's Canal was completed in 1820, connecting the River Thames at Limehouse with the Grand Junction Canal in Paddington. The canal was lined with basins and wharves and its arrival was a major influence on the development of the built environment in its sphere of influence prompting an extensive development of canalside industrial buildings. Residential development in the area also intensified during this period with the surrounding fields being used for brick making ahead of large-scale house building. After the Second World War that the canal business went into decline and the last

commercial traffic had passed on the canal by the late 1960s, although it remained in use for leisure purposes

- 2.7 The influence of both the canal and the development of the nearby Regent's Park was rapid and by the time of Greenwood's map of 1827, the core of Camden Town had been developed within an enclave south of the Regent's Canal as far south as Crowndale Road. Large areas remain open fields (fig. 2²).



Figure 2: Camden Town, 1827

- 2.8 By the 1850s development had spread north along both Camden High Street and Kentish Town Road and the north-western railway depot, linking to Euston station (opened 1837), dominated the area to the south-west of Chalk Farm Road. By the time of the 1868 OS map, Camden was at the height of its Victorian success and

² 'Map of London, from an actual survey made in the years 1824, 1825 & 1826', Christopher & John Greenwood, 1827.

dense industrial and residential development dominated (fig. 3³).



Figure 3: Camden Town, 1868

- 2.9 By the end of the 19th century, Camden was a very mixed area with the well-off living close to these less so. Booth's map shows how the middle classes occupied the large houses fronting the main thoroughfares (red) whilst in the smaller streets behind, households ranged from comfortable (hatched red) to poor (blue). This was a fairly common pattern of tenure at this time (fig. 4⁴).
- 2.10 Along Camden High Street development created an architectural eclecticism that reflects most of the fashionable styles of the 19th century. There are examples more austere late 18th/early 19th century buildings of simple stripped back classical proportions with parapets and punched sash windows; red brick Queen Anne terraces with ornate dutch gables, soaring chimneys and brick detailing; Italianate 'gin palace' architecture rich in stucco detailing; and humble two storey shops.

³ OS Middlesex XVII (includes: Bethnal Green; City of Westminster; Finsbury; Holborn; Islington; London; Shoreditch; Southwark; St Pancras; Stepney.) Surveyed: 1868 to 1873 Published: 1880 to 1882.

⁴ Booth's Inquiry into Life and Labour in London (1886-1903). Online: <https://booth.lse.ac.uk> © 2016 London School of Economics & Political Science.

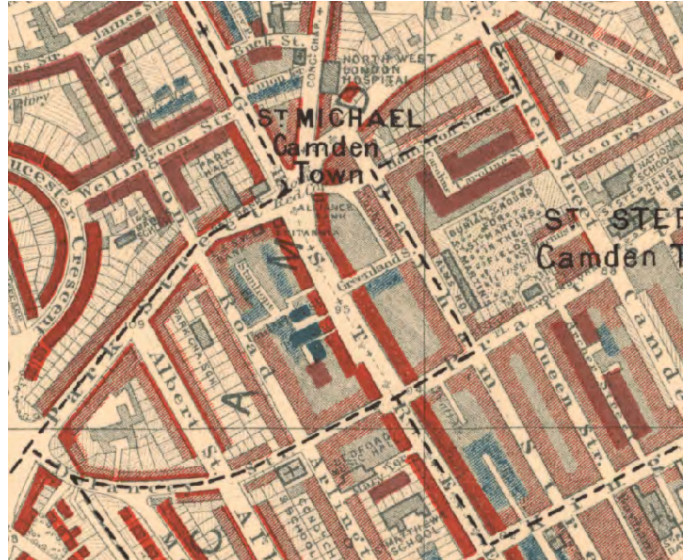


Figure 4: Camden Town, extract from Booth's Maps Descriptive of London Poverty, 1889

20th century

- 2.11 Camden Town Underground Station was opened in 1907 in Leslie Green's distinctive house style for his Northern Line stations of oxblood glazed tiles and bold arches also incorporating a mezzanine office floor. The station was bomb-damaged during the Second World War but later repaired. The station sits within the historic Britannia Junction an important junction of six roads. At this junction, on the site of a former dairy, was built a branch of the Midland Bank, the present structure was built after the original was destroyed during World War II bombing.
- 2.12 The pre-war period contributed a number of new buildings to the High Street, including the proposal site and also its neighbour, the former Burtons, at Nos.121-123 Camden High Street.
- 2.13 Camden Town - like most of central London - suffered many direct hits during the Blitz of the Second World War. Post-war reconstruction brought many Irish workers to Britain and Camden Town, in particular, became well known for its strong Irish community.

- 2.14 Following the establishment of Dingwall's music venue in an old warehouse beside Camden's canal locks in 1973, the first informal market was set up there in 1974. Gradually, various small markets began to be established on vacant sites all along the northern part of Camden High Street and have since grown to become a major tourist attraction attracting visitors from all over the world.
- 2.15 There are examples of post-war development -right up to the modern day – along the High Street, of varying scale, contextualism and quality.
- 2.16 The Wider Area
- 2.17 Behind Camden High Street, to the west, is Arlington Road. The road is typified by long terraces of mid-19th century housing with a stucco'd ground floor and two storeys above in stock brick with sash windows and stucco detailed surrounds. A corniced parapet hides the roof at eaves level.
- 2.18 However, close to the proposal site, and an anomaly amongst the otherwise mostly residential buildings is the former London County Council Electricity Substation that served the Tramways.
- 2.19 This building was erected in 1908 and designed by the Council's Architect's Department. It is of stock brick with stone bands and a slate roof with a chimney stack to the rear. Its front elevation is of most interest architecturally with a central entrance under a glazed tympanum with a rusticated ground floor.

No. 115-119 Camden High Street

- 2.20 No. 115-119 Camden High Street was built for Woolworth's in the inter-war period. It has a solid brick and stone two-storey slightly Art Deco inspired frontage with a long return along the north side of Delancey Street. The Woolworths store closed in January 2009 after the business went into liquidation.

- 2.21 There have been buildings on the site since the beginning of the 19th century. Greenwoods map of 1827 shows the area of the site named as Warren Place and Warren Street before Delancey Street was built (fig. 5⁵).



Figure 5: The area of the site, Greenwood's map, 1827

- 2.22 Delancey Street had been built by the middle of the 19th century linking through to Park Street (now Parkway). The OS map of 1870 shows the plots in more detail (fig. 6⁶).



⁵ 'Map of London, from an actual survey made in the years 1824, 1825 & 1826', Christopher & John Greenwood, 1827.

⁶ OS London (First Editions c1850s) XVI (Hampstead; St Pancras) Surveyed: 1870, Published: 1875.

Figure 6: The site, 1870

- 2.23 By 1895 many of the irregular shaped buildings have been consolidated and infill has occurred behind (fig. 7⁷).



Figure 7: The site, 1895

- 2.24 There is little change around the site in the 1913 OS map (fig. 8⁸).



Figure 8: The site, 1913

- 2.25 An aerial view of 1946 shows the new Woolworths store building on the current plot (fig. 9⁹) and the OS of 1952

⁷ OS London 1:1,056 - Sheet VII.22, Publication date: 1895.

⁸ OS London (1915- Numbered sheets) V.1 (Hampstead; St Pancras) Revised: 1913, Published: 1916.

⁹ EAW000624 ENGLAND (1946). A cityscape over Kentish Town, Camden Town, from the south-west, 1946. © Historic England.

the floorplate (fig. 10¹⁰). A photograph of 1952 offers a glimpse of the original frontage (fig. 11¹¹).



Figure 9: Aerial view, 1946



¹⁰ OS TQ2883NE - A (includes: St Pancras) Surveyed 1952, published 1953.

¹¹ Henry Grant 1952 © Henry Grant Collection/Museum of London.

Figure 10: The site, 1952



Figure 11: One man band outside Woolworths Camden High Street, 1952

- 2.26 The store's front elevation was modernised several times during its life and the store finally closed in January 2009 (fig. 12¹²). It has since been occupied by a branch of Sports Direct.

¹² Commons Wikimedia
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Woolworths_in_Camden.jpg



Figure 12: Woolworths, 2007

Heritage significance

Definitions

- 2.27 Statutory Listed buildings and the Camden Town Conservation Area are all ‘designated heritage assets’, as defined by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Locally listed building are ‘non-designated heritage assets’.
- 2.28 ‘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’. The English Heritage ‘Planning for the Historic Environment Practice Guide’ puts it slightly differently – as ‘the sum of its architectural, historic, artistic or archaeological interest’.
- 2.29 ‘Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the sustainable management of the historic environment’ (English Heritage, April 2008) describes a number of ‘heritage values’ that may be present in a ‘significant place’. These are evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal value.

Heritage context

Conservation area

- 2.30 No. 115-119 Camden High Street is located in the Camden Town Conservation Area which was first designated by Camden Council in November 1986 and extended in 1997 (appendix A). The Camden Town Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy was adopted on 4 October 2007.
- 2.31 The site is categorised as being a ‘positive building’ on the Conservation Area map.

Listed buildings and structures

- 2.32 No. 115-119 Camden High Street is *not* a listed building under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 *nor* is it on Camden's Local List¹³.
- 2.33 Figure 13 indicates the location of those listed buildings closest to No. 115-119 Camden High Street.¹⁴

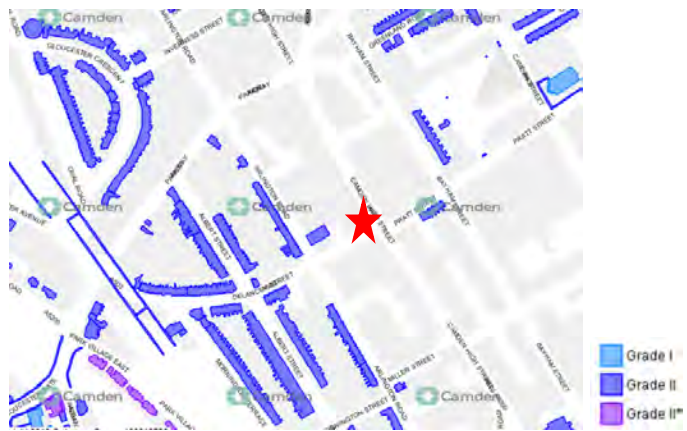


Figure 13: Location of listed buildings in vicinity of No. 115-119 Camden High Street (star)

- 2.34 The Camden Town Conservation area undoubtedly contains buildings of 'architectural' and 'artistic interest' (NPPF) or 'aesthetic value' ('Conservation Principles'). In respect of design, 'Conservation Principles' says that 'design value... embraces composition (form, proportions, massing, silhouette, views and vistas, circulation) and usually materials or planting, decoration or detailing, and craftsmanship'. The evolution of the area over a period of two hundred years has left variety of buildings of different age, style and quality. And this is articulated in the description given in the conservation area appraisal (below).
- 2.35 Similarly, in terms of Historic England's 'Conservation Principles' the buildings provide us with 'evidence about

¹³ Camden's Local List was adopted in 2015:

<https://www.camden.gov.uk/local-list>

¹⁴ London Borough of Camden: <https://www.camden.gov.uk/>

past human activity’ and by means of their fabric, design and appearance communicates information about its past. Subsequent alteration has not entirely removed the ability to understand this historical past although a number of the buildings in the area clearly detract from the overall character of the area.

- 2.36 Th significance of the conservation area is articulated through its special character and appearance. This is identified within the conservation area appraisal.
- 2.37 This part of the conservation area is summarised thus:
- 2.38 *The commercial area consists of a traditional wide shopping street linking the busy junction at Mornington Crescent to the eclectic and lively town centre at the heart of Camden Town. The focus of Camden town is Britannia Junction which acts as a hub and an important interchange, with busy, noisy, dynamic and diverse characteristics. This retail and commercial area is powerfully urban in character with few openings between the continuous building lines and an absence of public open spaces and soft landscaping.*
- 2.39 *Within this part of the Conservation Area there are two underground stations, an array of banks, restaurants, street markets, shops and stalls, signs and vehicles all existing within an historic architectural streetscape. The buildings reflect the diverse and changing architectural styles over the last two hundred years. Terraces of flat fronted early to mid 19th century houses now fronted by shops, mid Victorian stucco terraces, Victorian Gothic buildings, late Victorian and Edwardian red brick parades four and five storeys high with decorative gables, imposing banks, places of entertainment and public houses occupying key focal sites, and 20th century buildings all contribute to the wide ranging variety of architectural styles.*
- 2.40 It further notes that ‘The skyline boasts a greater variety of roof forms and chimney stacks. There is a broad range of building materials, with a prevalence of brick, but including natural stone, stucco polychromatic brickwork, concrete and instances of glazed tiles and faience’.

- 2.41 The Appraisal describes the area around the site thus:
‘There is a varied roofline on the west side of the street, between Delancey Street and Parkway, due to the presence of several two-storey buildings. On the north corner of Delancey Street at Nos 115-119, Woolworth’s has a solid brick and stone two-storey Art Deco inspired interwar frontage with a long return along the north side of Delancey Street. Immediately to the north at No 121, stands a former Burton’s shop, also in an interwar Art Deco style’.
The heritage significance of the Former LCC Tramways Substation, Arlington Road
- 2.42 The Grade II listed former Electricity Substation presents an elegant front façade to Arlington Street, however is an otherwise utilitarian building. It clearly has historical interest in representing an specific element of London’s transport network in the days of trams and this was inserted into the townscape in a high quality way. However, the building is an architectural anomaly in its immediate setting and therefore its context and setting are unique.
The heritage significance of 115-119 Camden High Street
- 2.43 No.115-119 Camden High Street sits on a corner site at the junction of Camden High Street and Delancey Street – two roads that date back to at least 1827, when they appear on the Greenwood Map of the area. At that time Delancey Street was known as Warren Place/Street.
- 2.44 The existing building is not the original one constructed on the site, but was built in the inter-war period for Woolworths. Whilst it fits the character as part of the eclectic mix of architectural styles that makes up the High Street in reality from street level, due to its relatively low height, it is dominated by its entirely modern and poor quality shopfront.
- 2.45 Delancey Street, whilst a secondary street is still important – and this is reflected in the continued architectural treatment of the pub on its southern corner (which is also

identified as a focal point on the street) where the quality and detailing returns from Camden High Street for its full length along Delancey Street – effectively giving it a double frontage in terms of architectural status.

- 2.46 The architectural treatment of No.115-119 Camden High Street ‘turns the corner’ for 3 bays at the upper floor and provides blind windows at ground level however it then a long blank and utilitarian elevation which provides a blank and uninviting frontage to the street (especially in comparison to the pub on the opposite side).
- 2.47 We believe that the contribution that the building makes to the overall character and appearance of the conservation area is as a building that typifies the eclectic mix of styles and ages, rather than specifically for any special architectural or historical merits.

3 The policy context

- 3.1 This section of the report briefly sets out the range of national and local policy and guidance relevant to the consideration of change in the built environment.

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

- 3.2 The legislation governing listed buildings and conservation areas is the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 ('the Act'). Section 66(1) of the Act requires decision makers to 'have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses' when determining applications which affect a listed building or its setting. Section 72(1) of the Act requires decision makers with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area to pay 'special attention... to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area'.

The National Planning Policy Framework

- 3.3 The revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 19 February 2019.
- 3.4 Chapter 12. of the National Planning Policy Framework deals with design: Achieving well-designed places. It begins
- 'The creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants,

communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process' (paragraph 124).

- 3.5 Paragraph 127 advises that 'planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:
- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
 - b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
 - c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);
 - d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;
 - e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and
 - f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.
- 3.6 Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework: 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' deals with Heritage Assets describing them as 'an irreplaceable resource' that 'should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can

be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.’¹⁵

Proposals affecting heritage assets

- 3.7 Paragraph 189 brings the NPPF in line with statute and case law on listed buildings and conservation areas. It says that:

‘In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.’

- 3.8 In terms of the local authority, paragraph 190 requires that they ‘identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset’s conservation and any aspect of the proposal.’

- 3.9 Further, ‘Where there is evidence of deliberate neglect of, or damage to, a heritage asset, the deteriorated state of the heritage asset should not be taken into account in any decision (paragraph 191).

- 3.10 Paragraph 192. In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

¹⁵ The policies set out in this chapter relate, as applicable, to the heritage-related consent regimes for which local planning authorities are responsible under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, as well as to plan-making and decision-making.

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Considering potential impacts

- 3.11 Paragraph 193 advises local planning authorities that 'When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.
- 3.12 Paragraph 194 continues, 'Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:
 - a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;
 - b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.¹⁶
- 3.13 In terms of proposed development that will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a

¹⁶ Non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest, which are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments, should be considered subject to the policies for designated heritage assets.

designated heritage asset, paragraph 195 states that ‘local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and
- b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
- c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
- d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use’.

- 3.14 It continues ‘where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use’ (paragraph 196).
- 3.15 In taking into account the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset the local authority should employ a ‘a balanced judgement’ in regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset (paragraph 197).
- 3.16 The NPPF introduces the requirement that ‘Local planning authorities should not permit the loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred (paragraph 198).
- 3.17 Where a heritage asset is to be lost, the developer will be required to ‘record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and

the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible' (paragraph 199).¹⁷

- 3.18 In terms of enhancing the setting of heritage assets the NPPF states that 'local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably. (paragraph 200).

Camden Council's Local Development Framework

- 3.19 Camden Council adopted its Local Plan in July 2017. The Plan sets out the Council's planning policies. It replaces Camden's Core Strategy and Development Policies planning documents (adopted in 2010).
- 3.20 Section 7 of the Plan deals with Design and Heritage saying that 'the Council places great importance on preserving the historic environment'.
- 3.21 Policy D1 Design says that:
- 'The Council will seek to secure high quality design in development. The Council will require that development:
 - a. respects local context and character;
 - b. preserves or enhances the historic environment and heritage assets in accordance with "Policy D2 Heritage";
 - c. is sustainable in design and construction, incorporating best practice in resource management and climate change mitigation and adaptation;

¹⁷ Copies of evidence should be deposited with the relevant historic environment record, and any archives with a local museum or other public depository.

- d. is of sustainable and durable construction and adaptable to different activities and land uses;
 - e. comprises details and materials that are of high quality and complement the local character;
 - f. integrates well with the surrounding streets and open spaces, improving movement through the site and wider area with direct, accessible and easily recognisable routes and contributes positively to the street frontage;
 - g. is inclusive and accessible for all;
 - h. promotes health;
 - i. is secure and designed to minimise crime and antisocial behaviour;
 - j. responds to natural features and preserves gardens and other open space;
 - k. incorporates high quality landscape design (including public art, where appropriate) and maximises opportunities for greening for example through planting of trees and other soft landscaping,
 - l. incorporates outdoor amenity space; m. preserves strategic and local views;
 - n. for housing, provides a high standard of accommodation; and
 - o. carefully integrates building services equipment.
- The Council will resist development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.'

3.22 Policy D1 also addresses Tall Buildings, Public Art and Excellence in Design.

3.23 Policy D2 Heritage deals with Camden's heritage assets. The policy says that:

'The Council will preserve and, where appropriate, enhance Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets

and their settings, including conservation areas, listed buildings, archaeological remains, scheduled ancient monuments and historic parks and gardens and locally listed heritage assets.’

3.24 In relation to designated heritage assets generally the policy says:

‘The Council will not permit the loss of or substantial harm to a designated heritage asset, including conservation areas and Listed Buildings, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- a. the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site;
- b. no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation;
- c. conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
- d. the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.’

3.25 The Council will not permit development that results in harm that is less than substantial to the significance of a designated heritage asset unless the public benefits of the proposal convincingly outweigh that harm’.

3.26 In relation to Conservation Areas the policy says:

‘In order to maintain the character of Camden’s conservation areas, the Council will take account of conservation area statements, appraisals and management strategies when assessing applications within conservation areas. The Council will:

- e. require that development within conservation areas preserves or, where possible, enhances the character or appearance of the area;
- f. resist the total or substantial demolition of an unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area;
- g. resist development outside of a conservation area that causes harm to the character or appearance of that conservation area; and
- h. preserve trees and garden spaces which contribute to the character and appearance of a conservation area or which provide a setting for Camden's architectural heritage.'

- 3.27 In relation to Listed Buildings the policy says:
'To preserve or enhance the borough's listed buildings, the Council will:
- i. resist the total or substantial demolition of a listed building;
 - j. resist proposals for a change of use or alterations and extensions to a listed building where this would cause harm to the special architectural and historic interest of the building; and
 - k. resist development that would cause harm to significance of a listed building through an effect on its setting.'*
- 3.28 In relation to Archaeology:
- 'The Council will protect remains of archaeological importance by ensuring acceptable measures are taken proportionate to the significance of the heritage asset to preserve them and their setting, including physical preservation, where appropriate.'
- 3.29 In relation to other heritage assets and non-designated heritage assets including those on and off the local list, Registered Parks and Gardens and London Squares the policy states:

‘The effect of a proposal on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset will be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, balancing the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.’

- 3.30 Sections 7 7.42-7.69 discuss the detail of the Council’s approach to implementing Policy D2 under the following headings: Enhancing the historic environment (7.42-7.43); Designated Heritage Assets (7.44-45); Conservation Areas (7.46-7.56); Listed Buildings (7.57-7.62); Archaeology (7.63-7.67); ‘Other’ and Non-designated heritage Assets (7.68-7.69).

4 The proposed development and its effect

- 4.1 This section of the report describes the proposed scheme for No. 115-119 Camden High Street and its effect on the heritage significance described in the previous section.
- 4.2 The proposed scheme is illustrated in the drawings and Design & Access Statement prepared by Morris+Co.

The proposed scheme

- 4.3 The proposed scheme is for the replacement of the existing building with a new hotel containing 80 bedrooms, 3 high quality new social rented houses, new shop frontage to Camden High Street and Delancey Street (with hotel entrance also on Delancey Street) and improved public space along Delancey Street.
- 4.4 The design has had full regard for the desire, articulated in the Conservation Area Appraisal that a '*key element of the character and appearance of the conservation area is its variety and eclecticism*' and that the new development should be '*high quality design and high quality execution*'.
- 4.5 The proposals have been borne out of a full analysis of the architectural styles, massing and status of the different buildings and spaces along the High Street. The proposal attempts to not only create a building of quality and integrity fronting Camden High Street, but also to re-engage Delancey Street with an active frontage that - like the pub opposite – recognises the importance of the street.
- 4.6 The choice of materials and detailing have been similarly chosen through a careful understanding of the different material palettes that makes up the buildings of the area and have been used in a way that complements and does not detract from the pub to the south.
- 4.7 The facades would be of red brick – as is found in many of the buildings nearby – and reflects the rhythm and 'grid' approach that the fenestration of these buildings gives to their elevations.

- 4.8 In the immediate environment around the proposal site there is a transition of architecture from Camden High Street to Delancey Street and Arlington Road.
- 4.9 The simpler early 19th/late 18th century buildings have a more stripped back aesthetic with a simple parapet at roof level and 'punched' windows in their elevation.
- 4.10 The building's mass has been arranged so that it steps down Delancey Street with the introduction of a chamfered façade at the upper levels as a tool to articulate the mass and also celebrate the creative way that brick is used to provide interest and variety across the conservation area.
- 4.11 The ground floor treatment has also been carefully designed to ensure maximum activity and vibrancy that will enhance both Camden High Street and also Delancey Street.
- 4.12 Full regard has been had for the wider context and townscape, and this has been tested through a series of viewpoints.
- 4.13 The views are shown in a baseline condition, followed by an image showing the proposed development. A commentary on the existing and proposed townscape conditions is provided.
- 4.14 Large scale images are provided separately with the application, the images below are for reference only.

View One

Baseline



- 4.15 View 1 is looking south down Camden High Street at the Britannia junction close to the Underground station. This is identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal as a position from which the long view south is important.
- 4.16 This view typifies the eclectic mix of ages, styles and materials that can be found on Camden High Street. This ranges from the red brick and terracotta 4/5 storey buildings on the eastern (left hand) side of the street in the foreground – which whilst all slightly different form a large relatively homogenous block - to the complete mixture found on the western (right hand) side – ranging from 2 to 5 storeys. Some buildings remain merely the width of the original plots, some are wider. The materials are a mixture of brick and render with pitched and flat roofs visible as well as those with only parapets visible.
- 4.17 In the distance the view is framed by one of the tower blocks fronting onto Harrington Square at Mornington Crescent.

Proposed



- 4.18 The view showing the proposed development demonstrates that in this key view to the south the proposal would sit entirely comfortably within the wider context and townscape. Its proportions and scale would not be out of step with the rest of the street and the step back will provide some variety that further typifies the street.
- 4.19 The red brick buildings to the left of this view are typical of those that have provided some of the design inspiration for the proposed elevations.
- 4.20 The view demonstrates that the proposal will not have a detrimental impact on the character of the conservation area but will preserve it in a positive way.

View Two

Baseline



- 4.21 This view is taken on the eastern side of Camden High Street at its junction with Greenland Street looking south.
- 4.22 Similarly to View One, this view illustrates the eclectic mix of buildings on the western side of the street, and is dominated in the middle foreground by the 5 storey Bedford House at 133 Camden High Street. The former pub, 111-113 Camden High Street, on the southern corner of Delancey Street can be seen sitting forward of No.115-119, which is set back at the upper floor.
- 4.23 The post war housing tower block appears in the far distance behind Camden High Street.

Proposed



- 4.24 The proposed view shows that the development would, again, sit comfortably within its street context. The set back to the north would create a comfortable connection with 121-123 Camden High Street and the scale is commensurate to Bedford House at No. 133.
- 4.25 The view of the corner of the former pub at No.111-113 Camden High Street is still visible, ensuring the architectural variety and interest of the street is retained.
- 4.26 The view demonstrates, again, that the proposal will not have a detrimental impact on the character of the conservation area but rather will positively preserve it.

View Three

Baseline



- 4.27 View 3 is taken from the south of the site, looking north west. The view is dominated in the foreground by the High Street and then the flank elevations of the former pub, No.111-113 Camden High Street and the flank elevation of No.133, Bedford House.
- 4.28 No. 115-119 Camden High Street is in the centre of the view, appearing disproportionately low within its immediate context – particularly as it is a corner building at the junction. The front elevation is dominated by the large and poor-quality shopfront which overwhelms the host building.
- 4.29 No.121-123 rises up, to the north, and slightly mitigating the considerable difference in height between No.115-119 and Bedford House.

- 4.30 This view is an example of where the variety of heights and scale does not create attractive streetscape and No.115-119 contributes to this failure.

Proposed



- 4.31 The proposed view shows the development sitting comfortably at the corner of Delancey Street and the High Street. Its scale and proportions are entirely in context with the neighbouring buildings, with its top floor set-back further softening its connection with No.121-123 to its north.
- 4.32 The quality and detailing of the proposed building can be properly appreciated in this view, as well as the rhythm of the bays and the endeavour at ground floor to 'turn the corner' and enliven Delancey Street as well as Camden High Street.
- 4.33 The proposal masks the unattractive flank elevation of Bedford House and its simple palette of materials means that the architectural exuberance of No.111-113 still dominate the foreground of the view.
- 4.34 The proposal will positively enhance this view within the conservation area.

View Four

Baseline



- 4.35 View 4 is looking to the west from Pratt Street towards Camden High Street and Delancey Street beyond.
- 4.36 The view is dominated by No.111-113 Camden High Street and its elaborate Italianate 'gin palace' architecture on the southern corner of Delancey Street and the High Street. In the foreground to the right, The Camden Head dates from the late 18th century.
- 4.37 No.115-119 Camden High Street can be seen in the middle distance visually just beyond the protruding front of The Camden Head – its long rear return seen on Delancey Street partly hidden by street trees.
- 4.38 Beyond that development rises in height as Delancey Street meets Arlington Road in the distance.

Proposed



- 4.39 In this view the proposed development sits to the left of the middle ground.
- 4.40 The view demonstrates how the articulation and rhythm of the fenestration sits comfortably with both the 18th century public house in the foreground and also Nos.111-113 Camden High Street. It also demonstrates how the architectural reference to a 'grid' works successfully in connecting the building to its surroundings.
- 4.41 The chamfered articulation of the upper floors of the Delancey Street elevation can also be fully appreciated – providing interest and variety, whilst the hotel entrance and wrapping retail frontage provides an active and open ground floor frontage to the street.
- 4.42 This image demonstrates that the scale of the proposed building sits entirely comfortably within its context.
- 4.43 Overall the proposal makes a positive contribution to this view.

View Five

Baseline



- 4.44 View five is taken from the junction of Delancey Street and Arlington Road looking east.
- 4.45 In the foreground of the view has, on the right, a typical 19th century end-of-terrace with classical proportions, plain detailing and a modern mansard roof extension. The elevations are painted brick. To the left is a modern interpretation of this building type, but with a flat roof. The development of the left continues along Delancey Street until it meets the back of Nos.115-119 Camden High Street, and follows the traditional form of 19th century terraced houses.
- 4.46 Where Nos. 115-119 Camden High Street can be seen it prevents a utilitarian and blank elevation that does not contribute to the experience of travelling or walking along Delancey Street.

Proposed



- 4.47 The proposed development will appear in the middle distance on the northern side of Delancey Street.
- 4.48 The classical rhythm of the fenestration continues the rhythm of the modern development in the foreground and the proposal steps down to meet it to ensure there are no large blank flank elevations.
- 4.49 The stepped articulation of the upper floors follows the rhythm of the bays of the lower floors but also adds interest to the Delancey Street elevation ensuring that it is not a monotonous view, but equally is subtly delivered.
- 4.50 The hotel entrance and opening up of the ground floor makes a positive contribution to the experience of passing along Delancey Street and the proposal makes an overall positive contribution to conservation area in this view.

View Six

Baseline



- 4.51 This view is taken from Arlington Road looking south east towards the Grade II listed former electricity substation for the London County Council tramways system.
- 4.52 The view primarily focuses on the dignified front elevation of the building but also shows the pitched slate roof of the sheds and their brick flank elevations as well as the blank rear elevation of Bedford House, No.133 Camden High Street behind.
- 4.53 It is clear that the architectural interest of the listed building is primarily in its street frontage rather than the rest of the shed.

Proposed



- 4.54 This image shows that the proposals will just appear above the rear shed of the Electricity Substation and will have no impact on an appreciation of its front elevation.
- 4.55 The proposal will sit amongst the other existing buildings and will not have an adverse impact on this view.

View Seven

Baseline



- 4.56 This view is taken from the junction of Plender Street and Camden High Street on its eastern side, looking north.
- 4.57 In the foreground, whilst the buildings on the western side of the High Street are still formed of a number of individual developments (of different ages and architectural detailing) they are more regular in scale and simpler in architectural detailing than those found further to the north.
- 4.58 The buildings start to step up in height at Nos. 97-99 Camden High Street, where the mansard roof can be seen above the buildings in the foreground.
- 4.59 In the far distance the flank elevation of Bedford House, No.133 Camden High Street can be glimpsed.
- 4.60 The eastern side of Camden High Street remains eclectic in terms of style – particularly the mock-tudor elevations of Nos.48-50 which can be glimpsed in the foreground on the right.

Proposed



- 4.61 This image demonstrates that in this view the proposals sit comfortably within the context of the buildings that surround it – between 97-99 Camden High Street and Bedford House.
- 4.62 The proposal in this view will preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area in this view.

Effect on heritage significance

- 4.63 Overall, the proposals as illustrated in the Design and Access Statement and as demonstrated in the views discussed above will make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 4.64 It will replace a building that's contribution would appear to be as an example of the eclectic mix of styles and ages within the conservation area, rather than specifically for any special architectural or historical merits. Any architectural qualities that the upper floor might have is largely undermined by the poor quality of the ground

floor shop unit – which now dominates and overwhelms the rest of the building.

- 4.65 We believe that the quality and consideration that has gone into the architectural language of the proposed building is far superior to the existing building which has detailing, where it still exists, that is typical rather than special for its time and significantly does not continue for the length of its return along Delancey Street – creating the blank and utilitarian return along that street. This can certainly not be regarded as positively contributing the conservation area.
- 4.66 As has been demonstrated, particularly in View Three, the existing building on the site appears disproportionately low in comparison to the surrounding buildings and this has the consequence of exposing the large unattractive flank elevation of Bedford House. The view is an example of where the variety of heights and scale does not create attractive streetscape and No.115-119 contributes to this failure.
- 4.67 The proposal will solve this negative consequence with a building that still sits comfortably within the scale and proportions of the surrounding townscape and will provide a ground floor that is a positive enhancement to both Camden High Street and the vibrancy of Delancey Street.
- 4.68 The architecture is designed to enhance all elevations and the active ground floor and chamfered upper floors along Delancey Street will provide a building that genuinely contributes and enhances the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 4.69 The proposal will have no detrimental impact on the nearby listed building.

5 Compliance with legislation, policy and guidance

- 5.1 This report has provided a detailed description and analysis of the significance of No. 115-119 Camden High Street and its heritage context, as required by Paragraph 189 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 5.2 In addition, the report also describes (in Section 4 ‘The proposed development and its effect’) how the proposed scheme will affect that heritage significance and townscape character. The effect is positive, and for that reason, the scheme complies with policy and guidance. This section should be read with Section 3.

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

- 5.3 The conclusion of our assessment, contained in previous sections in this report, is that the proposed scheme preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the Camden Town Conservation Area by virtue of the positive effect that the development will have on the setting of the conservation area and the nearby listed building. The proposed development thus complies with S.66(1) and S.72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

The National Planning Policy Framework

- 5.4 This report has provided a detailed description and analysis of the significance of 115-119 Camden High Street and its heritage context, as required by Paragraph 189 of the Planning Policy Framework.
- 5.5 The proposal satisfies paragraph 192 in making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
- 5.6 The proposed scheme complies with Paragraph 195 in that it conserves local heritage assets and does not

contribute to any substantial harm or total loss of significance to a designated heritage asset.

- 5.7 With regards to Paragraph 196, whilst the existing building has been identified as making a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area, we believe that that contribution is limited to being an example (amongst many) of the eclectic styles and buildings along the High Street and that any contribution is much reduced by the poor quality of the shop front and the utilitarian and blank side elevation to Delancey Street – both of which we believe make a negative contribution to the conservation area.
- 5.8 We therefore do not believe that its replacement will cause harm to the character and appearance of the conservation – particularly if replaced with a building of considerably higher quality – which we believe that this proposal offers – and also enhanced the character and appearance of the conservation area through its approach to addressing the streets at ground floor as well as the better articulation of all of the elevations at the upper floors. These should be regarded as considerable benefits to both the public and the conservation area.
- 5.9 The proposal provides the added public benefits of affordable residential accommodation and the sustainable optimum viable use of the site as well as improvements to the public realm on Delancey Street. We therefore believe that the proposals comply with Paragraph 196.
- 5.10 Even if the existing building is identified as a positive contributor and thus regarded as a non-designated heritage asset in its own right we believe that, as required by Paragraph 197, a consideration of the significance of the heritage asset and the effect of the proposal on it should lead the decision maker to recognise the wider benefits to the conservation area of the proposals outweigh its loss.
- 5.11 The proposed development certainly enhances and reveals the setting of heritage assets and preserves those

elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset as required by paragraph 200.

- 5.12 The proposed development also satisfies the requirements of Chapter 12, paragraph 127 of the NPPF which deals with design being both visually attractive and sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting.

Camden's Local Plan

- 5.13 As has been shown, and for the same reasons that are given in respect of the NPPF, the scheme would make a positive contribution to the surrounding townscape and also preserve *and enhance* the character and appearance of the conservation area and the setting of listed structures.
- 5.14 For these reasons, and those given earlier, the proposed development is consistent with Camden's Local Development Framework policies regarding demolition and new development in conservation areas.
- 5.15 With regards Policy D1 the proposals clearly provide a high quality design that respects local context and character and preserves and enhances the historic environment and heritage assets. It will also be sustainable in design and construction.
- 5.16 In terms of Policy D2, even if the Council believe that the loss of the existing building will cause 'less than substantial harm' to the conservation area we believe that this is more than outweighed by the quality of the proposed replacement, the improvements to the shopfront on Camden High Street and the activation of Delancey Street (including public realm improvements) as well as the provision of affordable residential and hotel accommodation in Camden.
- 5.17 In conclusion, we believe that the proposals will positively preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area and the setting of nearby listed buildings and thus comply with national legislation and

national and local planning policy with regards the historic built environment.

Appendix A: Camden Town Conservation Area



Source: <https://www.camden.gov.uk>



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