

2.2 Local planning policy context

This section should be read with Gerald Eve's Planning Statement and the Townscape, Heritage and Visual Impact Assessment by Peter Stewart Consultancy.

The site does not fall within any existing growth areas or area plans and is not covered by a neighbourhood plan. The site is not within a conservation area or in the corridor of any designated views. There are no natural environment or open space designations on the site and it is not within Camden Town centre and it does not have any protected frontages. St Pancras Commercial Centre is not the subject of a site allocation.



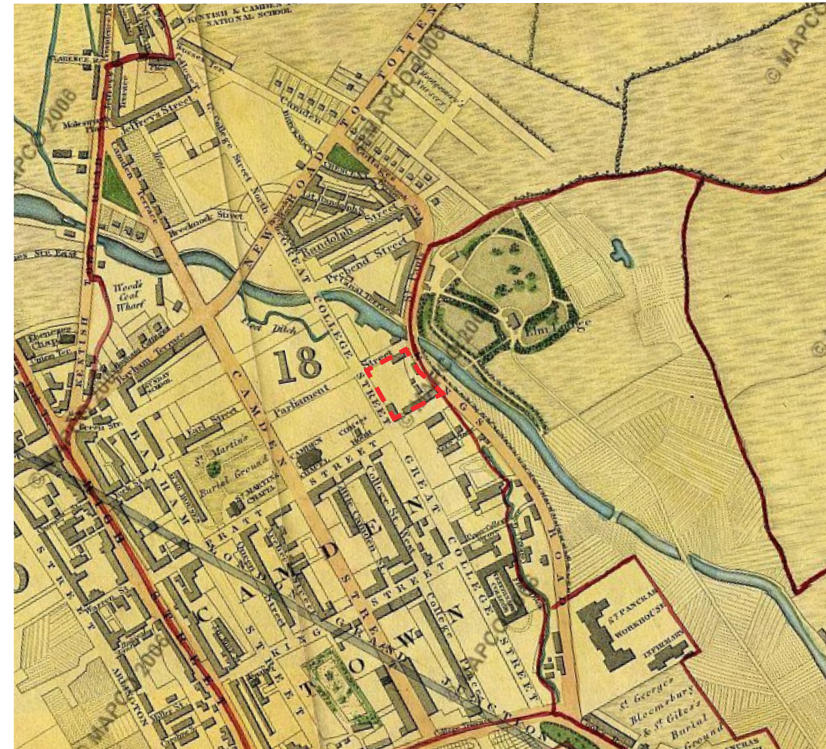
View of the existing St Pancras Commercial Centre looking north on Royal College Street

2.3 History and conservation

Camden Town was laid out by Charles Pratt in 1791 following an Act of Parliament in 1788 that allowed the development of fields north of the centre of London. Leases for some 1400 homes were sold and developed along a predetermined grid of streets. This Georgian plan for the city incorporated churches and public houses alongside residential neighbourhoods and parks with few large-scale industrial structures. Many of the buildings have changed but the grid is still felt in this part of London and gives a scale for the buildings and streets.

The consistency of this grid was disrupted by the construction of the Regent's Canal in 1816 and subsequently by the construction of railway lines into Euston in 1837. These developments coincided with a general trend for dedicated industrial buildings at the start of the nineteenth century. Several wharves developed to make use of the canal including Bangor Wharf and Star Wharf adjacent to the site.

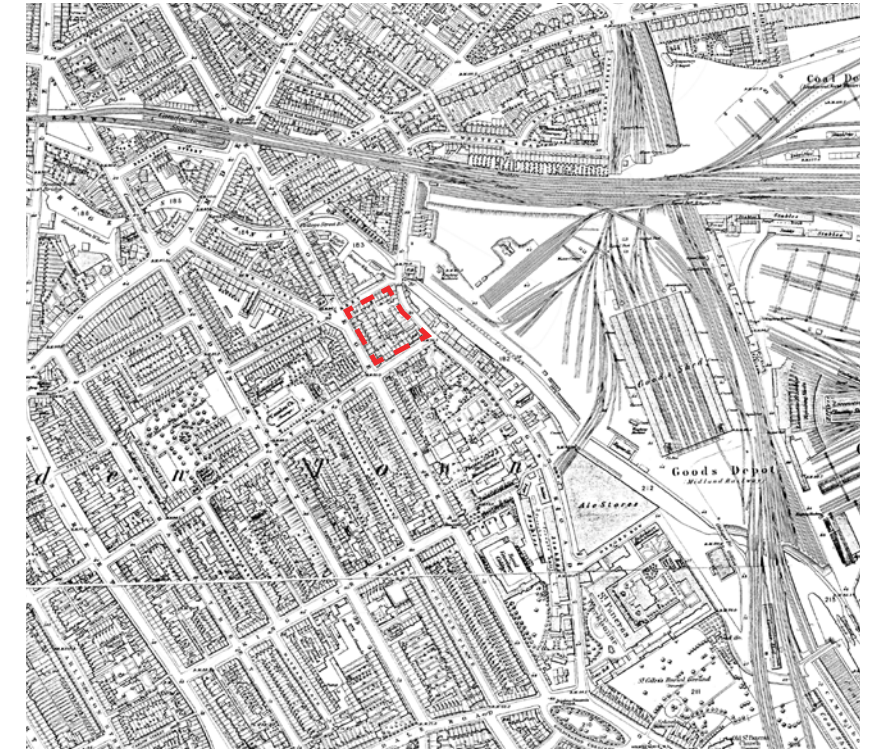
Alongside the growth of dedicated industrial buildings connected to major infrastructure, this part of London attracted institutional buildings in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries including the Royal Veterinary College. By the turn of the twentieth century, the scale of buildings was increasing with five and six storey mansion blocks and conspicuous public houses on street corners. These changes resulted in the character of the site today with Georgian and Victorian housing, large Victorian institutions and substantial apartment buildings on Royal College Street and larger developments on post-industrial sites along St Pancras Way. The site itself was used during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries for housing, fish processing and a local power station. The existing buildings on the site date from the mid-1980s.



The 1834 'Survey of St. Pancras' shows the Regent's Canal which was completed in 1820, the Veterinary College and St Pancras Workhouse (now hospital).



1898 Booth Poverty Map shows the 'well to do' areas (red) close to the park and the more mixed areas of 'poor' (blue) and 'ordinary' (pink) communities towards the railways.



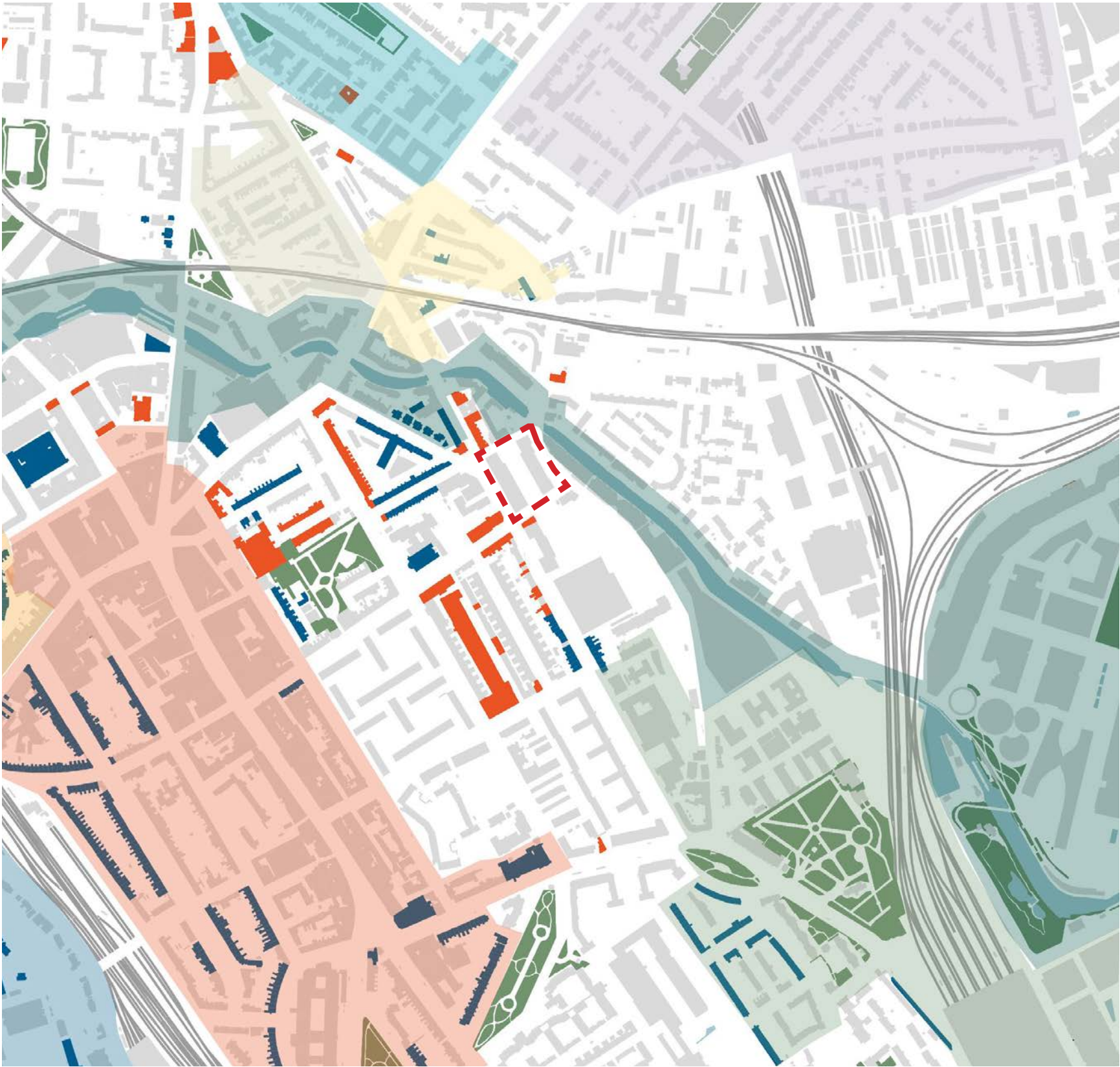
The arrival of the railways between 1850 and 1870 radically changed the area. 1870 OS map.



OS Map from 1910 shows the expansion of the industrial areas around the railways.

The site is not part of a Conservation Area but is directly adjacent to the Regent's Canal Conservation Area. The proposals are respectful of the surrounding environment and are consciously designed with the scale of existing canal side buildings in mind. Our proposals will allow more people access to use and enjoy the canal. The site is not within the curtilage of any nationally listed buildings although the project will be visible from 165-181 Royal College Street, which are Grade II listed, and from 32-53 Georgiana Street which are also Grade II listed. None of the three public houses adjacent to the site are nationally listed but The Prince Albert Public House and the Golden Lion Public House are both locally listed. Recent development along the canal has set a new scale. For example 22-24 St Pancras Way is a seven storey building, 16 St Pancras Way has six storeys and the Travis Perkins development rises from seven to eleven storeys.

- KEY**
- Listed buildings
 - Locally-listed buildings
 - Regent's Canal
 - Camden Broadway
 - Jeffrey's Street
 - Camden Square
 - Rochester
 - Camden Town
 - Regent's Park
 - Kings Cross and St Pancras
 - Primrose Hill



Map indicating Conservation Areas

2.4 Local character

The design team have made a careful survey of existing buildings in the neighbourhood as a precursor to developing a design concept for the proposed building. Immediately adjacent to the site are three public houses made primarily of brick with white detailing, large windows, strong string courses, projecting cornices, and intensely coloured red or green tiles. Looking more widely, there are several six-storey buildings including Goldington Mansions, Centro Buildings and St Pancras station that are predominantly red with details picked out in white or buff. Made of brick and stone, these facades are characterised by a strong horizontal organisation of large windows separated by structural piers. The roof levels are set back and clad with grey slate or with lead. This part of Camden also contains interesting ex-industrial yards and mews spaces enclosed by buildings of varying heights.



The Constitution Public House opposite the north east corner of the site



St Pancras Station



Goldington Mansions, 500m south of the site



The Centro Building, 100m west of the site



Left The Golden Lion Public House opposite the south west corner of the site



Right The yard of Lymehouse Studios on Lyme Street, 120m north west of the site

2.5 Possible futures

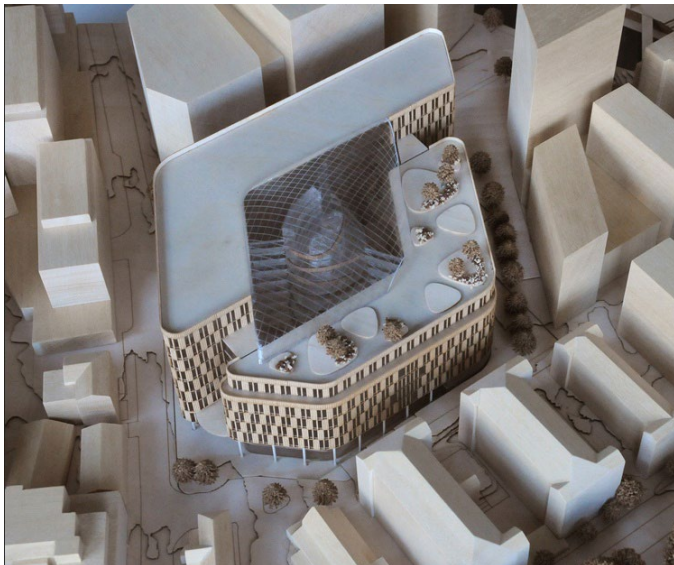
St Pancras is changing partly in response to the ongoing redevelopment of King’s Cross and partly because of grassroots organisations and local planning policy which are encouraging greater porosity and new mixtures of uses. There are significant new developments and buildings under construction at the junction of Camley Street and the canal. The Camden and Islington NHS Foundation Trust are developing proposals to redevelop the St Pancras Hospital site. Ted Baker recently received planning permission for the redevelopment of the Ugly Brown Building. In early 2016, One Housing applied for the redevelopment of Bangor Wharf, they were refused permission and an appeal also failed in 2018 and One Housing are understood to be preparing alternative plans. Outline proposals have been made in the past for the redevelopment of the Parcellforce site on the south side of Pratt Street although the status of this scheme is not known.

The proposals described in this report respond both to the existing context and were drawn up with an awareness of these permitted and potential future developments.

Site	Name	Proposed uses	Area m²	Status
01	Camden Goods Yard	573 residential units	14,719	permission granted
02	St Pancras Hospital Site	Mental health PCT administration Affordable and market housing	21,750	competition, pre-planning
03	Agar Grove Estate Regeneration	Regeneration New build mixed use	49,362	permission granted, under construction
04	Ted Baker Site	Commercial development Hotel, 69 residential units, retail and office headquarters	11,400	permission granted
05	Bangor Wharf	Employment floorspace and residential	1,810	permission refused
06	Royal Mail	Mixed use with employment floor space and new permanent residential	205	site allocation
07	Pratt Street	New electricity substation, employment and/or community floorspace, new permanent residential	217	B8



Site 01



Site 02



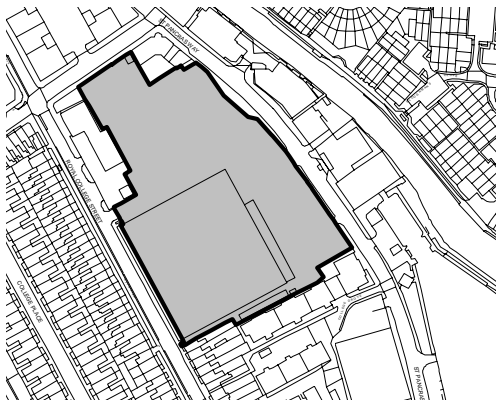
Site 03



Site 04



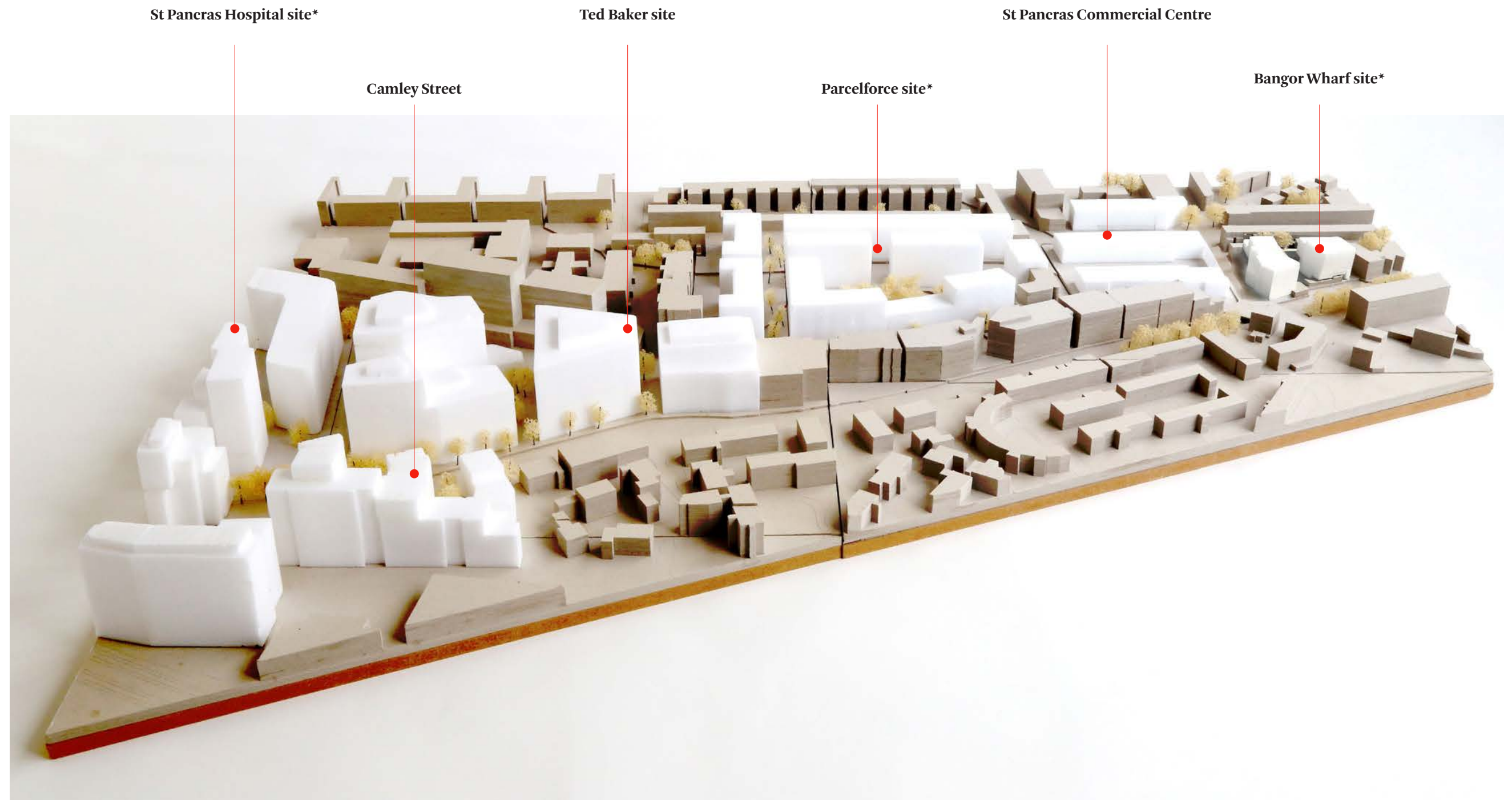
Site 05



Site 06



Site 07



Model of permitted and proposed developments in St Pancras

** Proposals marked with an asterisk are speculative based on available information*

2.6 Existing building and land use

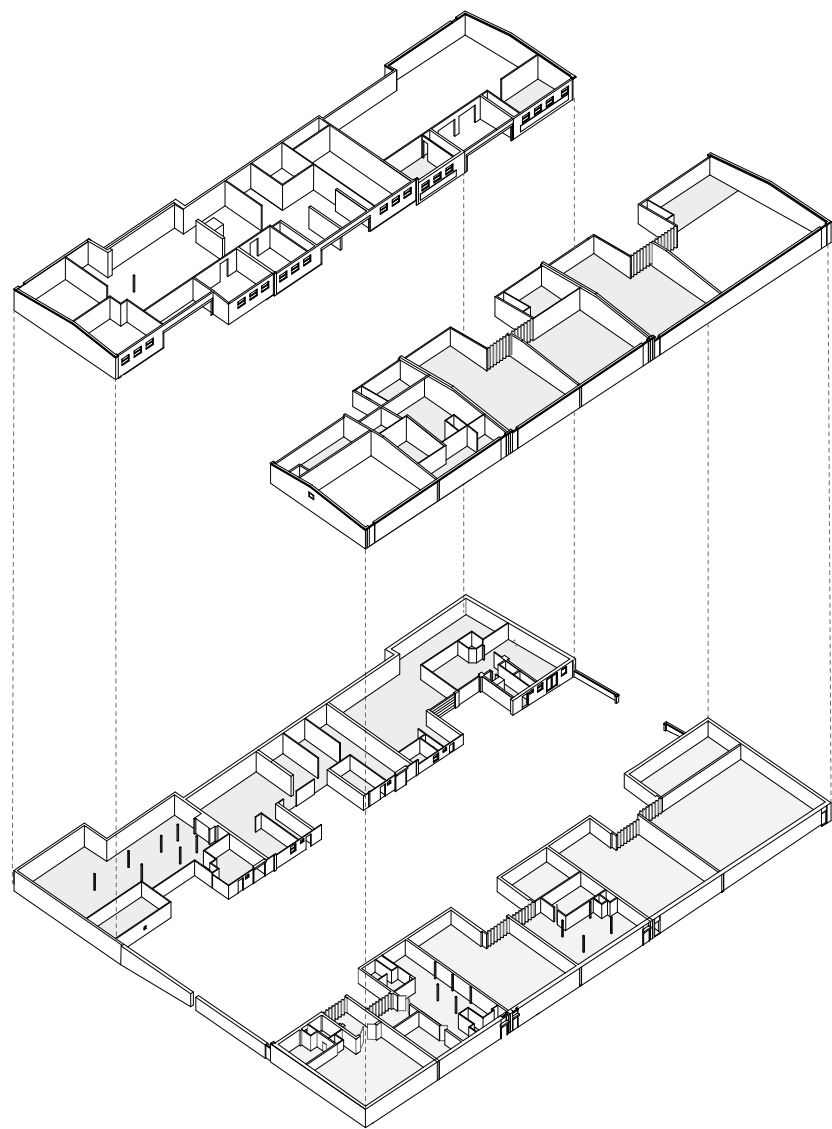
The existing buildings are accessed from Pratt Street to the south via a single opening in an otherwise uninterrupted red brick wall. The site comprises twelve double-height light industrial units which were constructed in the 1980s and are split into two separate blocks. The units themselves provide approx. 3,196m² (GIA) of employment space, including internal mezzanines, on a site that measures approximately 4,900m². On the east side, the facade is set back from the pavement resulting in an area of unused grass. The east elevation is dominated by power supplies and twelve externally-mounted condensers. The elevations on all four streets are blank apart from five fire escape doors and two high level windows on Royal College Street and six fire escape doors and one blocked up window on St Pancras Way. The site is outdated and does not live up to its full potential. Its redevelopment provides an opportunity to deliver significant local benefits.

Unit	Tenant	Activity	Use Class	Area m²
01	Tube Lines	Infrastructure	B1(c)/B8	350
02	Rexal UK	Trade counter	B1(c)/B8	374
03	Woseley UK	Trade counter	B1(c)/B8	372
04	Cable London	Telecoms	B1(c)	374
05	Aimimage	Video equipment	B1(c)/B8	369
06	Aimimage	Studio	B1(c)/B8	243
07-10	Vacant (formerly Wasabi)	Catering/storage	B8	665
11-12	Market	Trade counter	B1(c)/B8	449
			Total	3,196

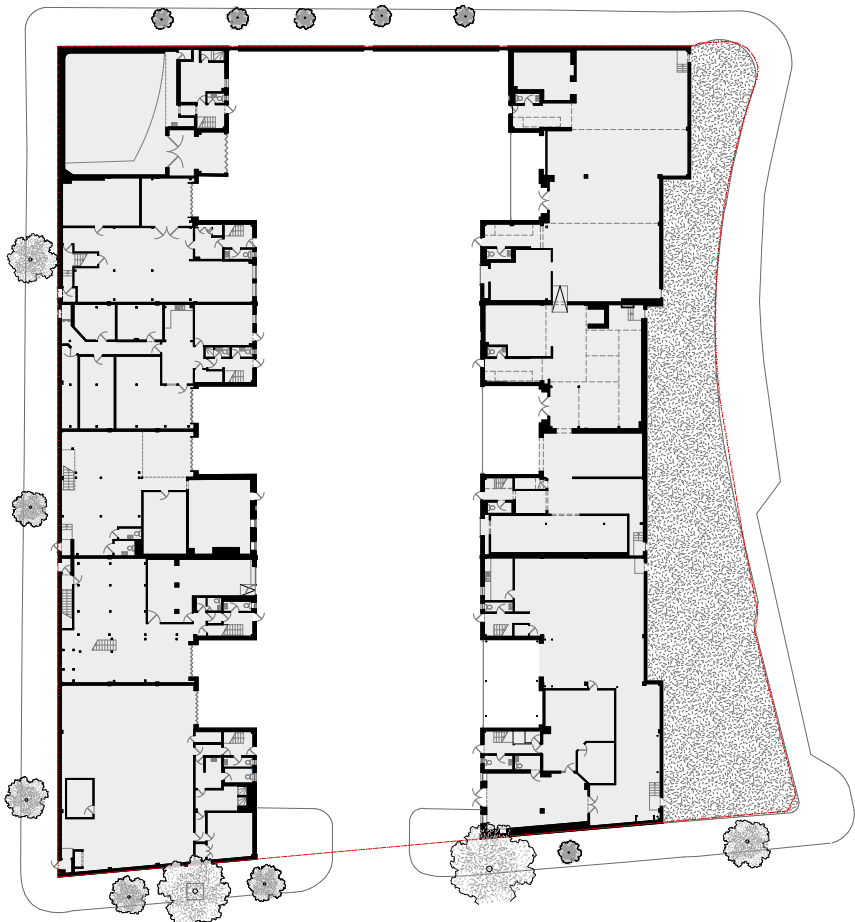


Existing site layout

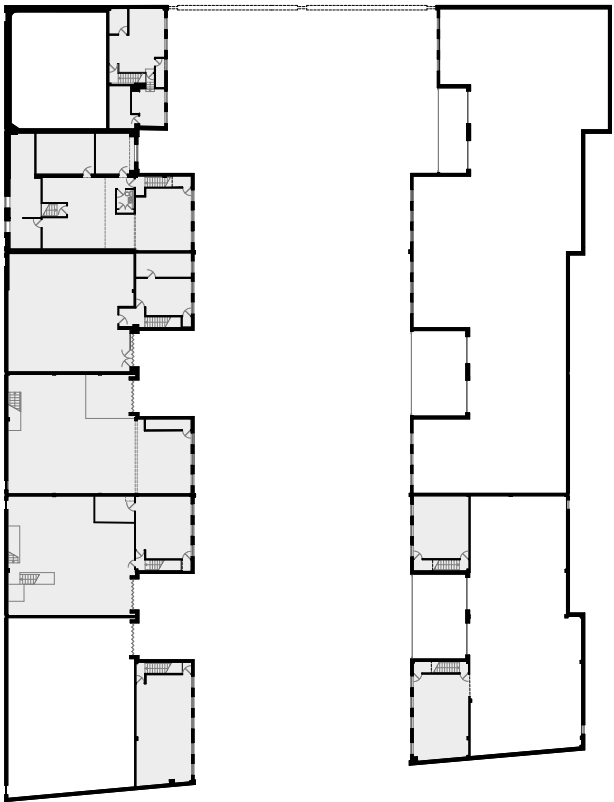
The existing building provides B1(c) and B8 space for tenants including an electrical wholesaler, studio spaces and a production kitchen for Wasabi. One unit is used by emergency response vehicles but is understood not to be critical infrastructure for emergency planning. None of the existing uses fall within use class B2. The building was originally divided into twelve units although some of these have been combined by tenants. The units share a large central yard dominated by vehicles and parking.



Existing site layout



Existing building ground floor plan



Existing building mezzanine floor plan



Existing central yard

2.7 The physical condition of the site

A series of surveys and investigations of the existing site have been carried out. The site slopes from a high point in the north east corner of 26.521 AOD to a low point in the south east corner of 22.751 AOD. This drop of 3.77m across the site has significant implications for the design of the ground floor and basement which are explored later in this report. A separate flood risk assessment and an archaeological desktop study form part of the application. The design team have undertaken an air quality assessment and its recommendations have been adopted in the proposals.

An arboricultural report forms part of the planning application. There are fourteen existing trees on the site including five semi-mature Japanese privet trees on Georgiana Street, one whitebeam and two rowan trees on Royal College Street and six trees on Pratt Street including one substantial wild cherry. The Ecology Consultancy have assessed the site and the existing habitats are of low ecological value with some limited potential for breeding birds, bats and invasive plant species. Proposals for ecology and biodiversity are contained in the sustainability section of this report.

An acoustic background noise survey has been undertaken and forms part of the planning application. The background noise levels are relatively high and the detailed design of the envelope of the apartment buildings and of rooftop plant will take account of this. A road safety audit was prepared in February 2019 and has been used to develop the transport strategy which is also included with this application.



Georgiana Street looking west



St Pancras Way looking south



Pratt Street looking east



St Pancras Way looking north



St Pancras Way looking south

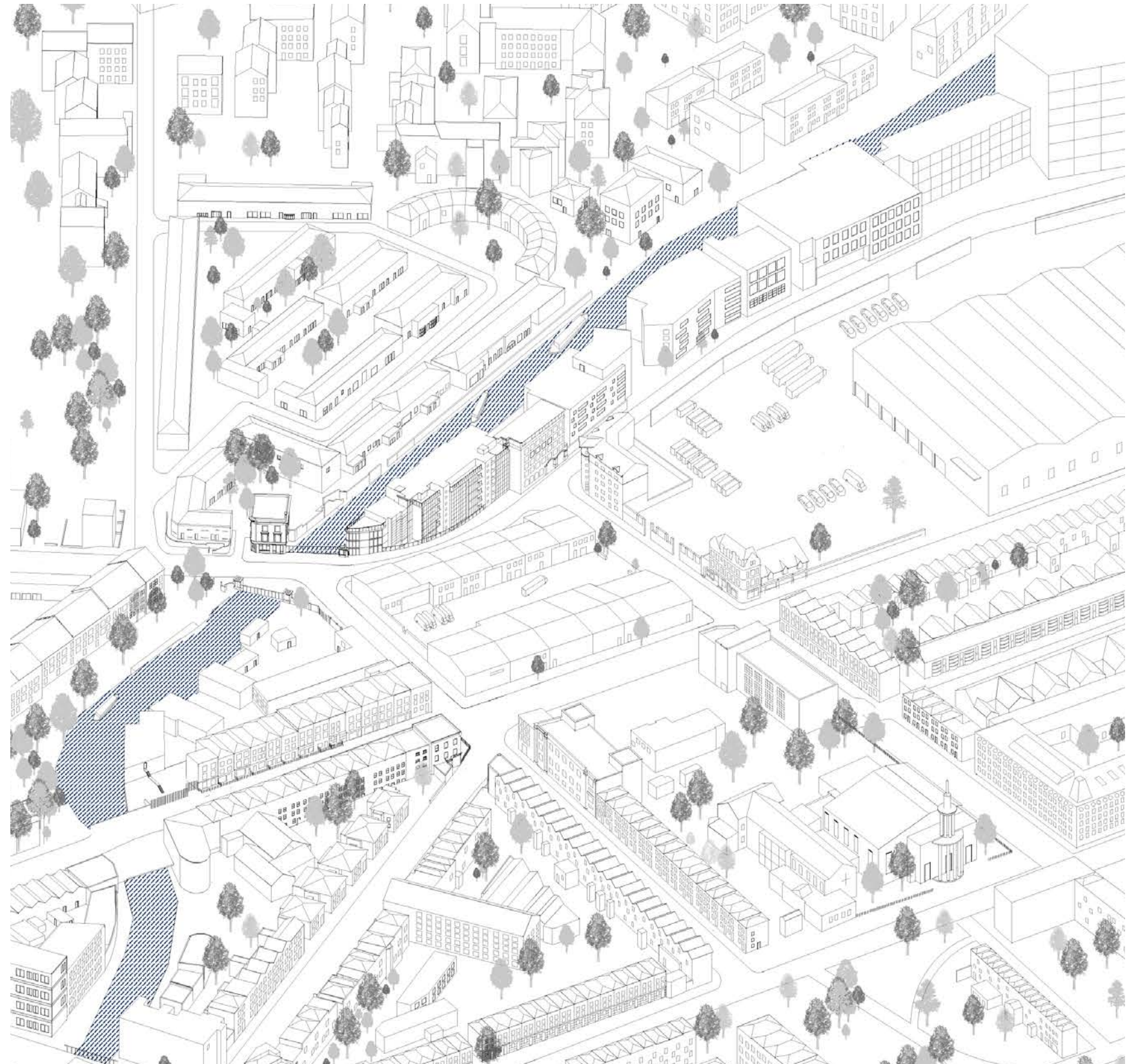


Georgiana Street looking east

3.1 Strategic appraisal of development site

The site is currently developed at a very low density and there is an unusual opportunity to build new workspace and housing on the site without reducing the amount of existing light industrial space. The site is wholly owned by Camden Property Holdings and managed by W.RE and the last of the existing leases will come to an end in summer 2020. With local distributor roads on two sides, and underground and overground stations nearby, the site has excellent transport connections. Recent market activity suggests that there is substantial local demand for office and light industrial space notwithstanding the supply of space in King's Cross. Informal feedback suggests that some of the existing tenants would be keen to return to the site once the new building is complete and the applicant has no objection to this in principle. The existing building is ageing, is of poor quality, and does not meet contemporary expectations for good daylighting and low energy use. The existing site has a history of below ground contamination and is of low ecological value – there is an opportunity to remediate the site and to make a sustainable new development that increases biodiversity.

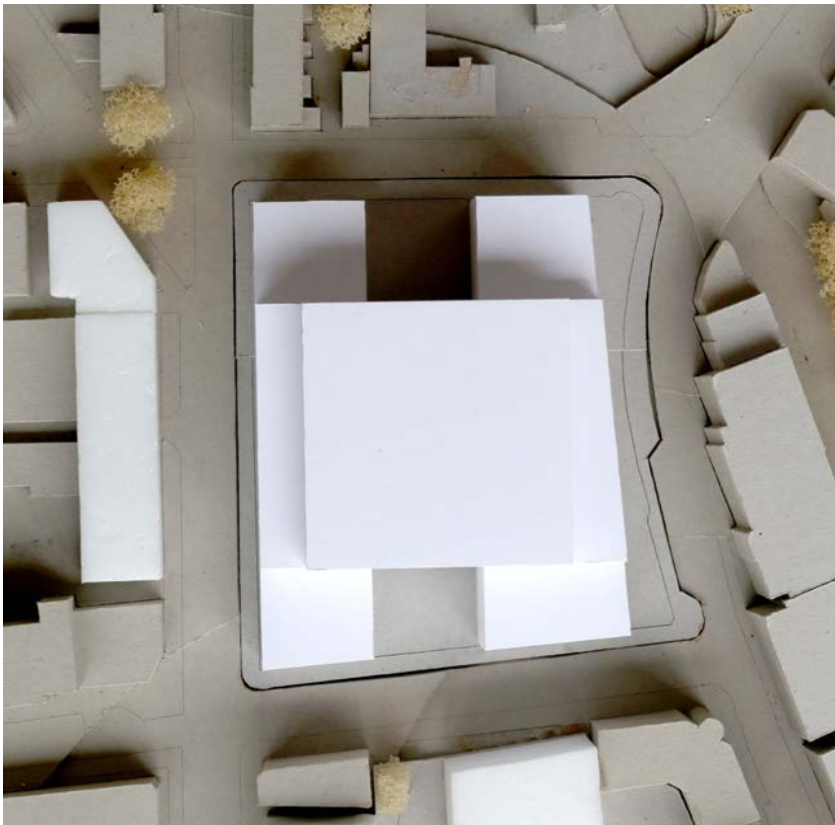
The scheme has been the subject of a socio-economic impact assessment which predicts a major positive impact on the local economy including an increase in spend at local businesses of up to £2.0m and an increase in business rates revenue of up to £1.8m. We estimate that the proposals could support up to 1,200 more jobs than the current building. In addition, thirty-two new homes will be provided, of which 44% will be affordable by unit number.



Existing building in context

3.2 Brief and design development

When W.RE acquired the site there had been some pre-application dialogue between LBC and the previous owner about a courtyard block development. Caruso St John’s original proposal was for an industrial and office building with four wings arranged in an H shape with a concentration of space in the centre. This proposal took advantage of the dimensions of the site and created a central street on the ground floor that serviced light industrial units. During initial pre-application discussions, LBC suggested including housing as part of the proposals. After examining several options, the design team divided the site into three structures with two residential buildings on Georgiana Street and one office building on the south side of the site accessed from Royal College Street. The apartment buildings are separated from the office building by a partly-pedestrianised space which provides a walking route and a landscaped amenity space for residents. These proposals were discussed with LBC in December 2018 and during 2019 detailed modifications were made to the scheme to arrive at the design described in this report.



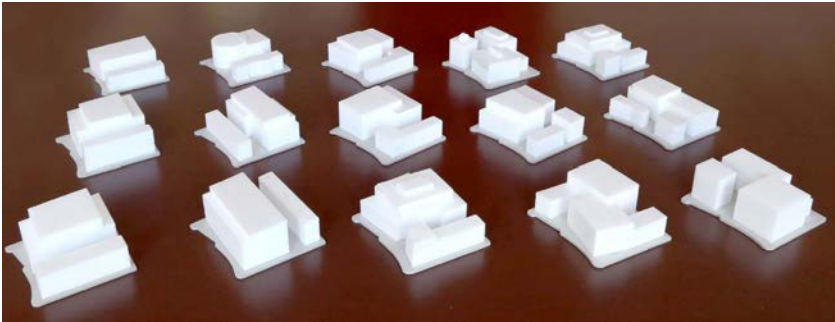
Scheme presented at Pre-Application Meeting 10 Jul 1028

Key characteristics

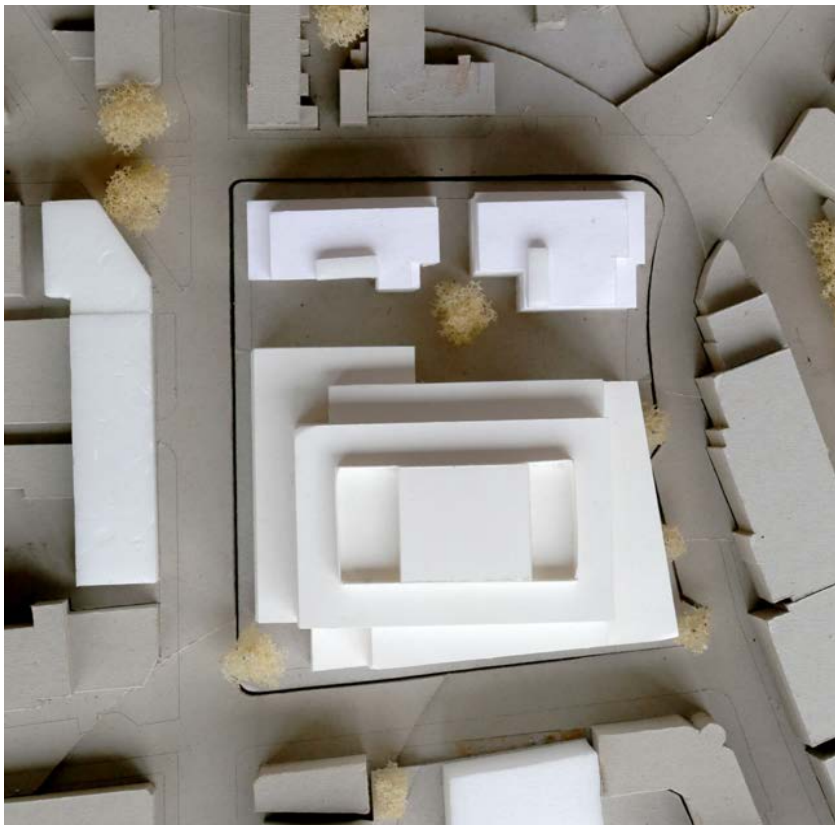
- Single building combining light industry and office space
- Covered service street
- A tiered form with low wings to the north
- Access from Pratt Street and exit to Georgiana Street

Key comments

- Introduce housing - specifically on the north west corner of the site
- Divide into several buildings
- Reconsider access strategy
- Concerns over the pedestrian route also being used for servicing
- Acknowledgment that light industrial use (B1(c) creative/makerspace) is more compatible with residential uses than general industrial (B2)



Early foam massing options



Scheme presented at Pre-Application Meeting 04 Dec 1028

Response to previous meeting

- Site divided into three buildings
- Servicing via a turntable in the south facade of the office building
- The form of the office building is asymmetrically tiered with an open corner
- A pedestrian route and public space separates the buildings and provides access to the housing

Key comments

- LBC call for the residential entrances to be from Georgiana Street
- The turntable servicing is rejected as unworkable and LBC advocate a one-way servicing route through the development
- LBC suggest an L-shaped building on the north-west corner of the site
- The stepping of the building is welcomed but LBC suggest replacing the open corner to the south west with a stronger corner design
- LBC seek more differentiated elevations relating to the streets