

# Planning Statement

5-13 Leeke Street, London WC1X 9HY

September 2019

# Contents

---

1.	Introduction	3
2.	Site and surroundings	6
3.	Planning history	9
4.	Proposed development	10
5.	Pre-Application Engagement	13
6.	Planning policy	14
7.	Planning assessment	16
8.	Summary and conclusions	26

---

**Client**

Paul Hamlyn Foundation

**Our reference**

GUYL3001

September 2019

# 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of the Paul Hamlyn Foundation (PHF) to support an application for planning permission for the following description of development at nos. 5- 13 Leeke Street, London WC1X 9HY in the London Borough of Camden (LBC):

*Demolition of 13 Leeke Street; erection of new B1a office building at 13 Leeke Street forming extension to 5-11 Leeke Street; and construction of new additional rooftop storey at 5-13 Leeke Street for additional B1a floorspace.*

- 1.2 The proposed development will improve and enhance the existing office facilities of PHF by demolishing and replacing the substandard building at no. 13 Leeke Street and replacing this with a high quality contemporary extension to the existing PHF headquarters. Further work and amenity space will be delivered through an additional rooftop storey on the existing buildings at nos. 5-11 Leeke Street to significantly increase the floorspace available to the charity, while adding new architectural interest within the townscape.
- 1.3 The applicant, PHF, is one of the largest independent grant-making foundations in the UK. The charity has a particular interest in social justice, including supporting young people and a strong belief in the importance of the arts. The Foundation also provides a range of working facilities for other charities at the site, thereby making a substantial contribution to the success of LBC's voluntary and community sector (VCS).
- 1.4 PHF's headquarters has been located on Leeke Street since 2012 and PHF has historic links to Camden. PHF was established by the successful publisher Paul Hamlyn, who started selling books in Camden from 1949. PHF's current premises are inadequate in size and constrain the full potential of the organisation and its ability to support other charities, including many in the local area.
- 1.5 The whole site is owned by the applicant and is comprised of:
- Nos. 5-11 Leeke Street: two three-storey office buildings of mid to late 19th century date, constructed of yellow stock brick with red brick detailing.
  - No. 13 Leeke Street: a narrow two-storey brick building with a sloping roof and large Crittall-style windows. The building is vacant but its lawful use has been C3 residential since 2010. An extant planning permission secured at appeal permits demolition of the building and replacement with an office extension to nos. 5-11. The redevelopment of no. 13 for office floorspace is therefore already permitted.
- 1.6 The site lies within the Kings Cross St Pancras conservation area but Leeke Street contains no listed buildings. It is a quiet cobbled side street within the heavily trafficked King's Cross gyratory road system. The street links King's Cross Road to Wicklow Street and traverses railway tracks linking King's Cross-St Pancras station to Farringdon station.

- 1.7 No. 13 Leeke Street was previously B1 office until its change of use in 2010 and a change of use application reference 2019/3267/P to restore the former land use is awaiting determination. The premises have lain vacant since August 2016 and were sporadically occupied prior to this. The residential unit is substandard due to failing to meet minimum space standards, a single aspect north-facing orientation, lack of external amenity space, absence of space for refuse and recycling, and lack of cycle parking.
- 1.8 In 2018, the applicant successfully appealed (Appeal Ref: APP/X5210/W/18/3205121, dated 1 November 2018) against a decision of LBC to refuse planning permission for a change of use from C3 to B1a use at no.13 Leeke Street, demolition of the existing building and construction of a new larger building on the plot (Ref 2017/4707/P, dated 18 August 2017). This extant permission is an important material consideration in the assessment of this application.
- 1.9 The applicant is now bringing forward a wider scheme in order to optimise the site and deliver new floorspace in an architecturally bold yet holistically considered manner. The scheme will deliver additional office space, which will be used by the charity as offices and meeting space in furtherance of its objectives and in support of the local VCS. It is considered that the proposal represents high quality design that preserves and enhances the conservation area and all relevant heritage assets.
- 1.10 Pre-application advice has been sought from LBC on the principle and design of the scheme. Officers have welcomed the principle of an expanded office headquarters for PHF at the site through construction of a new extension and additional rooftop storey. Design and conservation officers have provided constructive input into the evolution of the scheme and supported the ambitious architectural vision of the architects.
- 1.11 An acoustic report and structural survey are included within the application to ensure that proposed development is compliant with the related provisions of the Development Plan.
- 1.12 This Planning Statement has been prepared to assess the proposed development against the Development Plan and all other material planning considerations. This statement considers heritage matters.
- 1.13 This Statement should be read in conjunction with the documents outlined below:
  - Planning Application Form, prepared by Turley
  - Certificates and Notices, prepared by Turley
  - Cover Letter, prepared by Turley
  - Location Plan and Block Plan, prepared by Guy Stansfeld Architects
  - Existing Plans, Sections and Elevations, prepared by Guy Stansfeld Architects
  - Proposed Plans, Sections and Elevations, prepared by Guy Stansfeld Architects

- Design and Access Statement (incorporating Sustainability Statement), prepared by Guy Stansfeld Architects
- Acoustic Report, prepared by Emtec
- Construction Method Statement, prepared by Conisbee
- Statement on PHF's origins and charitable work, by PHF

1.14 The structure of this Planning Statement is as follows:

- Chapter 2 – Site and surroundings
- Chapter 3 – Planning history
- Chapter 4 – Proposed development
- Chapter 5 – Pre-application advice
- Chapter 6 – Planning policy
- Chapter 7 – Planning assessment
- Chapter 8 – Summary and conclusions

## 2. Site and surroundings

### The site

- 2.1 Leeke Street is located within the King's Cross ward of LBC in central London. It is a narrow thoroughfare formed of two distinct parts linked together by a Network Rail bridge over railway tracks beneath. The site is located on the longer section of the street, which terminates on King's Cross Road (A201), the boundary between the London Boroughs of Camden and Islington.
- 2.2 The site is owned by PHF and used as its organisational headquarters. PHF was established by the successful publisher Paul Hamlyn, who started selling books in Camden from 1949. The Foundation's current premises are inadequate in size and constrain the full potential of the organisation and its ability to support other charities in the local area.
- 2.3 Nos.5-11 Leeke Street is a Victorian yellow stock brick building in B1 office use that has been occupied since 2012 by PHF in their capacity as one of the UK's largest grant giving charities. It is understood that the building was historically in use as a fire station and the large openings at ground floor level necessary for fire vehicles can still be read in the building.
- 2.4 PHF have invested to improve its HQ building and space is also provided, free of charge, to other charities who would find it extremely difficult to afford the cost of such office space in the central London area. An amenity area is provided on the rooftop of the building for the use of employees.
- 2.5 The smaller element of the site at no.13 Leeke Street is a narrow two-storey brick building with a sloping roof and large Crittall-style windows. The building has had a residential use since 2010 but has been sporadically occupied and now lies vacant. The front building façade was constructed around 2011 in yellow stock brick and is of limited architectural merit.
- 2.6 Prior to its change of use, no. 13 Leeke Street was in B1 use (see planning approval reference 2010/0057/P). It was associated with the existing neighbouring building at nos. 5-11 Leeke Street and is identified within LBC's records as ancillary space for the larger building. The plans from prior to the change of use show an interconnecting doorway between nos. 5-11 Leeke Street and no. 13 Leeke Street.

### The surroundings

- 2.7 To the east of the site is a residential property and a motorcycle repair business. Beyond is King's Cross Road.
- 2.8 To the west of the site adjoining no. 13 Leeke Street is a brick warehouse building with a pair of large doors on to the highway.

- 2.9 Across Leeke Street from the site is a mix of two, three and four storey buildings constructed at different times with a variety of materials and in varying architectural styles.
- 2.10 King's Cross Road is a very busy route forming part of the Transport for London road network. It links with Euston Road as one part of the extensive King's Cross gyratory system. However, Leeke Street is a quiet cobbled road with very limited traffic as there is no access for motor vehicles over the bridge. The site benefits from exceptionally good transport connectivity with a very wide range of local, national and international destinations accessible by public transport from nearby. The PTAL is 6b – the highest possible level.
- 2.11 The surrounding area is a vibrant part of central London that is continuing to undergo a considerable amount of change and redevelopment, including at King's Cross station and the Argent site at the King's Cross railway lands to the north. The regeneration of the wider area has resulted in a growth of artistic and cultural industries relocating in the area, as identified in the Camden Local Plan.
- 2.12 Within a short walking distance of the site are a wide variety of commercial, community and residential uses that are expected within the CAZ. These include:
- private residential homes, student housing and hostels for homeless people;
  - a range of large, medium and small sized office developments;
  - a substantial variety of retail uses, pubs and restaurants along King's Cross Road, Pentonville Road and further afield;
  - cultural and creative uses including the Gagorian art gallery at the rear of the site, the Joint music studios located between Leeke Street and Field Street; and Heatherwick Studios at nearby Willing House, and
  - community uses such as the Ethiopian Christian Fellowship church on King's Cross Road, and the PHF building itself, which provides space free of charge to charitable organisations.
- 2.13 The existing buildings on site are not listed but lie within the King's Cross St Pancras Conservation Area. The following listed buildings are located in the wider area:
- Nos. 173-179 King's Cross Road (Grade II)
  - Former Welsh Congregational Union Chapel, Pentonville Road (Grade II)
  - Willing House and attached hall with railings, nos. 356-364 Gray's Inn Road (Grade II)
  - No. 75 Wicklow Street (Grade II)
  - Cobden Buildings, no. 128 King's Cross Road (Grade II)

- 2.14 The closest listed buildings are at nos. 173-179 Road but the site cannot be seen from this location.
- 2.15 Kings Cross conservation area covers a wide and varied area stretching from Camden Town in the north to Bloomsbury in the south. The area south of Euston Road containing the site was added in 1991. As identified in the LBC statement, the conservation area is characterised by major infrastructure, areas of redevelopment, and great variety in character and appearance. Sub-area 4, which contains the site, comprises a mix of early 19th century terraces and larger scale institutional buildings.
- 2.16 Nos. 5-13 Leeke Street are identified as positive contributors to the conservation area in the statement. However, it is clear that this designation does not apply to no. 13 given it was only constructed around 2011 and therefore was not subject to the relevant conservation audit by LBC (this was the position taken by LBC when it allowed change of use in 2010 - see officer's report for application reference 2010/0057/P).



### 3. Planning history

3.1 Key planning activity relating to the site can be found on the LBC website, which is the principal information source for this chapter.

3.2 The following notable applications have been made at no.13 Leeke Street:

- **2019/3267/P:** Change of use from residential use (Class C3) to office use (Class B1a). Awaiting determination.

Note: This application for change of use is to enable temporary occupation of no. 13 for office space, in advance of the redevelopment proposed under this permission.

- **2017/4707/P:** Change of Use from C3 to B1 and redevelopment of site, to provide office space linked to nos. 5-11 Leeke Street. Granted on appeal November 2018 (ref APP/X5210/W/18/3205121).

- **2010/0057/P:** Change of Use of side extension/garage from B1 to C3. Granted 2010.

3.3 Additional significant applications have been made for units located at nos.5 - 13 Leeke Street:

- **2013/5854/P:** Erection of new pergola at roof level, and installation of decking and planters to existing roof terrace of office building (Class B1). Granted 2014.
- **2011/2857/P:** Installation of 5 x roof lights to north-facing roof slope, 13 x solar panels on south-facing roof slope, portions of insulated lead cladding to rear glazed roof, 10 x roof vents to rear roof, external roller blind and extract outlet to rear glazed roof to existing office building (class B1). Granted 2011
- **2010/6860/P:** Installation of replacement windows on rear elevation at second floor level, alterations to rear roofslope associated with proposed internal lift and provision of windows behind existing roller shutters on part front elevation at ground floor level to existing office building (class B1). Granted 2011

## 4. Proposed development

4.1 Permission is sought for the following development at the site:

*Demolition of 13 Leeke Street; erection of new B1a office building at 13 Leeke Street forming extension to 5-11 Leeke Street; and construction of new additional rooftop storey at 5-13 Leeke Street for additional B1a floorspace.*

4.2 There are three main elements to the proposal:

- **Demolition of no.13 Leeke Street.** The current building is a two-storey building that is now vacant but was previously in C3 residential use. The substandard nature of the unit has been accepted by the Planning Inspectorate and permission has been granted for its demolition and replacement by new office floorspace, under appeal reference APP/X5210/W/18/3205121, dated 1 November 2018. A change of use application is also awaiting determination at time of writing under reference 2019/3267/P.
- **Erection of new B1a office building at no.13 Leeke Street.** Permission for the construction of an office building at the site was granted under the aforementioned appeal reference APP/X5210/W/18/3205121. It is proposed to erect a three storey building in red brick to tie in to the accent courses at the main building at nos.5-11. Windows will be metal framed to harmonise with the proposals for the additional rooftop storey.
- **New additional rooftop storey.** A new fourth storey extension will be constructed in a lightweight form with metal cladding. Corten steel will be used to visually link the new storey to the existing building, whilst reading as a distinct element to the historic host building beneath.

4.3 The architecture of the proposal will provide visual interest to the streetscene while reflecting the varied industrial character of the conservation area.



**Figure 4.1: Proposed front façade**

- 4.4 The materiality and scale of the additional rooftop storey will integrate the three different structural elements at the site that were originally separated into three buildings. However, the individuality of each façade will be respected through a distinct approach to each new element, as set out in further detail in the Design and Access Statement, prepared by Guy Stansfeld Architects.
- 4.5 In total the floorspace at the site would rise from 887.7 sqm (GIA) to 1141.75 sqm (GIA). This would represent an increase of 254 sqm (GIA). There would be an increase in office space of 297 sqm, accounting for the change of use of no. 13. However, the extant permission allows for no. 13 to be redeveloped for office space and indeed for a new building of 88 sqm to be constructed. The current proposal would deliver 94 sqm of office space at no. 13; the office uplift of 6 sqm at no. 13 (compared to the extant permission) and the uplift of 204 sqm at nos. 5-11 (from the new storey) would total an effective office uplift of 210 sqm as a result of the present proposals.
- 4.6 The space will be used by PHF for meeting rooms and desk space for employees and other charities, thereby improving its ability to deliver upon its organisational objectives.
- 4.7 The existing building at nos. 5-11 Leeke Street benefits from a rooftop terrace that provides external amenity space for PHF employees and visitors. Unfortunately this area is only accessible via stairs, which prevents its use by people in wheelchairs or with mobility problems. It is proposed to re-provide this amenity space on top of the new storey, however, it will be accessible via lift.
- 4.8 A new area of plant enclosure is to be discretely constructed in the centre of the new roof to house air condensers for the completed development. The units will be located within a louvred screen that will limit noise impact upon surrounding occupiers. A green roof will also be provide on the western part of the roof.
- 4.9 A new canopy is proposed at the current building's main entrance at ground floor level. This will be constructed in corten steel to provide a visual link to the new rooftop extension.

4.10 Additional cycle parking provision will be created alongside the existing cycle spaces in the ground floor of nos. 5-11 Leeke Street. 4 no. new spaces are proposed based on London Plan requirements to supplement the existing 8 no. spaces. In future a total of 12 cycle parking spaces will be offered within a secure environment to staff and building visitors.

4.11 In summary, the following planning benefits arise from the proposed development:

- An increase in office floorspace at a tightly constrained site with high transport connectivity. This will deliver new B1(a) floorspace in its own right and will deliver new floorspace to further the operation of PHF as a significant charitable organisation.
- A high-quality architectural extension that integrates the site while delivering a bold and interesting new addition to the townscape.
- A scale of development that sits comfortably within the varied scales of the surrounding townscape.
- Greater levels of accessibility to allow full use of the building by people with disabilities.
- A new rooftop terrace to provide amenity space for office workers and visitors.

4.12 Please see the accompanying Design and Access Statement, prepared by Guy Stansfeld Architects, for a more detailed consideration of design issues.

## 5. Pre-Application Engagement

- 5.1 A request for pre-application advice was submitted in September 2018. The initial submission related to the roof extension to nos.5-11 Leeke Street only. A meeting was held on 29 November 2018, on site, with Planning Officer, Ben Farrant.
- 5.2 The initial submission was discussed at Camden's Design Surgery on 11 December 2018. In response to comments received, a revised proposal was produced; this incorporated the redevelopment of no.13 Leeke Street. A meeting was held with Urban Design Manager Ed Jarvis on 5 June 2019, to discuss the revised proposals.
- 5.3 Following this pre-application engagement, the council's position is as follows:
- The proposed design is acceptable in terms of architectural approach and detailing.
  - The amended proposal has been reviewed and found to be acceptable by Camden's Design Surgery and by the Planning Team Leader.
  - There are no objections to the (amended) scheme presented at pre-application stage.
  - Sustainable design comments have been received and clarified in relation to this minor scheme.
  - Cycle parking will be required within the development, in relation to the floorspace uplift.
  - Camden will seek a Construction Management Plan and CMP Implementation Support Contribution and also obligations in relation to Economic Development, including with regards to local employment and procurement.
  - The Met Police confirmed that it has no objections or comments in relation to Secured by Design, because the scheme does not alter the building entrance.

## 6. Planning policy

6.1 Planning applications are to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan (unless material considerations indicate otherwise).

### Adopted Development Plan

6.2 The adopted Development Plan for the site comprises:

- London Plan (2016)
- Camden Local Plan (2017)

6.3 The following documents are material considerations in the determination of this application:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2018)
- Planning Policy Guidance (PPG)
- LBC Supplementary Planning Documents and policy guidance
- Mayor of London's Supplementary Planning Guidance
- Draft London Plan (consolidated with changes) (2019)

### Emerging Development Plan

6.4 The NPPF states that the weight that can be given to policies increases as the plan becomes more advanced, and taking into account the extent of unresolved objections and the degree of consistency with the NPPF as a whole. More clarification is given in PPG, which states that a refusal on the grounds of prematurity will seldom be justified where a draft Development Plan document has yet to be submitted for examination.

6.5 A new draft version of the London Plan was published in November 2017 and subsequently submitted for Examination in Public (EIP) in July 2018. A consolidated version with changes following examination was published in July 2019. The draft Plan places a strong emphasis on making the best use of land, including the prioritisation of the delivery of high-density places on brownfield land that is well-connected by existing or planned Tube and rail stations (Policy GG2).

6.6 The draft London Plan has now completed EIP and is anticipated to be adopted in 2020, subject to the Examiner's Report and any potential intervention by the Secretary of State. It is a material consideration for the purposes of this application and will gain planning weight as it proceeds through the examination and subsequent adoption process.

### Neighbourhood planning

6.7 There is no adopted or emerging Neighbourhood Plan covering the site.

## **Planning designations**

6.8 The following planning policy designations are in place at the site:

- Central Activities Zone (CAZ) / Central London Area
- King's Cross St Pancras Conservation Area
- Viewing corridor from Kenwood gazebo to St Paul's Cathedral (the building and proposal sit well below the relevant height)

## 7. Planning assessment

- 7.1 This chapter assesses the proposed development in the context of the policies from the adopted Development Plan and other material considerations.

### Loss of residential

- 7.2 No. 13 Leeke Street is vacant but was last in residential use. It is owned by PHF. The proposal involves the demolition of the building at no. 13 and the construction of a lateral extension to the office at nos. 5-11 Leeke Street.
- 7.3 Planning permission 2017/4707/P was granted at appeal for no. 13 Leeke Street, for:
- Demolition of existing building and erection of new three storey building with brick façade and erection of a two storey roof and rear extension. Change of use from residential house (Use class C3) to office space (Class B1) in conjunction with the existing use at 5-11 Leeke Street*
- 7.4 Planning permission 2017/4707/P remains extant until 4 November 2021 and is a significant material consideration.
- 7.5 In addition, there is a pending planning application (ref. 2019/3267/P) for a change of use of no. 13 from residential to office, which will allow temporary office accommodation until the redevelopment under the present submission is permitted and implemented.
- 7.6 The proposed loss of residential accommodation and change of use to office on the site is therefore acceptable by virtue of both the considerations that led to approval of the appeal scheme [and change of use application] and given the material consideration of the extant planning permission [s].
- 7.7 Policy H3 states that the council will resist development that would involve a net loss of residential floorspace; this would not be the case with this application given the extant permission[s] for loss of this (substandard) residential floorspace.

### Proposed office use

#### London Plan

- 7.8 The London Plan seeks to support and promote the distinctive and crucial contribution to London's economic success made by central London and its specialist clusters of economic activity (Policy 4.1 (Ad)). As part of this, a significant demand for office supply is identified of 2.3 million sqm (net) in the CAZ. Boroughs are required through their LDFs to enhance the environment and offer of London's office locations in terms of physical attractiveness, amenities, ancillary and supporting activities (Policy 4.2 (Ba)). Development should also support sustainable transport objectives, for example, by reducing the need to travel by car (Policy 6.1). It is thus clear that there is strong support at strategic level for an expansion of office space in locations such as Leeke Street.



- 7.9 Policy SD4 of the draft London plan, concerning the CAZ, seeks to reinforce the role of the CAZ as a location for office floorspace of varying kinds. Part B states “The nationally and internationally significant office functions of the CAZ should be supported and enhanced by all stakeholders, including the intensification and provision of sufficient space to meet demand for a range of types and sizes of occupier and rental values.” It is thus clear that the proposed development is fully in line with the emerging direction of policy at strategic level given its contribution to this objective.
- 7.10 This is reinforced by the draft plan’s recognition of the economic importance of agglomeration of offices supporting creative industries in the CAZ (para 2.4.6). This section specifically states “A supportive policy approach to the wide variety of business space requirements, quality and range of rental values is essential to enable these sectors to flourish and for small and medium-sized enterprises to fulfil their economic potential”.
- 7.11 In addition, Policy SD5 rebalances expectations for the balance between office and residential in the CAZ by comparison with the current London Plan. A greater emphasis is placed on encouraging office development. Part A states that “New residential development should not compromise the strategic functions of the CAZ.” Part H states that “Residential development proposals should not lead to a loss of office floorspace in any part the CAZ unless there is no reasonable and demonstrable prospect of the site being used for offices and/or alternative provision is made for the provision of net additional office space near the development”. Moreover, the ‘strategic function’ of the CAZ, set out in paragraph 2.4.4 of the draft London Plan, does not include residential.
- 7.12 Moreover, Part L of Policy SD4 states that “Development of social infrastructure that meets the distinct needs of the CAZ should be supported.” The statement provided by PHF for this appeal and the content of this SoC indicate the contribution that the proposal will make towards this policy objective, and provide further justification for this appeal.
- 7.13 Overall, the London Plan and draft London Plan support the proposal, recognising that office use needs to be protected and intensified within the CAZ, and that (in the draft plan) this is a priority above residential.

#### **LBC Local Plan**

- 7.14 LBC’s Local Plan provides strong policy support for delivery of new office space at suitable locations within the Borough.
- 7.15 LBC’s most recent Annual Monitoring Report (2016/17) states that “the last 7 years have seen a loss in office (B1 use class) floorspace of approximately 10,197 sqm”. This is a significant loss. The Council is now seeking to deliver 695,000 sqm of office floorspace within the Borough by 2031 (Policy G1). The proposed development will make a contribution to this target and support the operation of an existing office.
- 7.16 This loss of office has prompted LBC to issue a number of Article 4 Directions removing office-to-residential Permitted Development rights. The CAZ is currently exempt from these rights due to a national exemption; however, LBC has introduced an Article 4 Direction to protect offices in its part of the CAZ from change of use to residential

when the national exemption expires. Indeed, given the concern that now exists in Camden about loss of office space to residential (as demonstrated by the policies of the Local Plan and the aforementioned Article 4 Directions), it is unlikely that the 2010 decision to allow change of use from B1 to C3 at no.13 Leeke Street would have been approved if it had taken place a few years later.

- 7.17 Policy G1 (a) also states that the council will support development that makes best use of its site, taking into account quality of design, its surroundings, sustainability, amenity, heritage, transport accessibility and any other considerations relevant to the site. Part (f) identifies that one of the most significant locations for growth will be at highly accessible locations in Central London, i.e. places such as the appeal site.
- 7.18 Furthermore, the Local Plan points out that “Camden also attracts mid- and small-scale creative organisations. These often cluster together in tailored buildings, for example Cockpit Arts and Kingsgate Workshops, or in certain parts of the borough, such as the wider King’s Cross area, which contains over 300 small cultural and creative industries” (para 5.2). The proposal is for office development in the King’s Cross area that will support an organisation that is focused on using arts and creativity to support the local community, which falls within scope of this aspect of the Local Plan.
- 7.19 Support for the proposed office development is also provided through Policy E1, which aims to secure a successful and inclusive economy in Camden by creating the conditions for economic growth and harnessing the benefits for local residents and businesses. This policy gives particular support to small and medium sized enterprises (such as PHF) in part (a) and seeks to maintain a stock of premises that are suitable for a variety of business activities, for firms of differing sizes, and available on a range of terms and conditions for firms with differing resources (d).
- 7.20 Although the Borough anticipates growth in office space overall in coming years, this is due to the delivery of large floorplates at the King’s Cross regeneration area, which are not generally suitable for SMEs and charities. CPG ‘Employment sites and business premises’ acknowledges that “a substantial proportion of the projected supply is likely to consist of larger floorplate, corporate office space in the Kings Cross and Euston areas which are generally out of reach of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)” (para 13). The guidance goes on to state that “We will support the retention and/or re-provision of employment space in other parts of the borough, particularly where this consists of space that is suitable and affordable for micro and small businesses and particularly where this space is suitable for our growth and other important sectors and business clusters.”
- 7.21 Another relevant aspect of Policy E1 is that new office development is directed to the growth areas, Central London, and the town centres in order to meet the forecast demand of 695,000sqm of office floorspace between 2014 and 2031 (f). Indeed, while large office development is expected in the King’s Cross regeneration area and Euston, “smaller scale office development will also occur at other sites across Central London” (para 5.26). In summary, the Local Plan specifically directs small scale office development of the kind proposed to locations such as Leeke Street in the CAZ.
- 7.22 Furthermore, Policy E1 (gii) states that LBC will support proposals for the intensification of employment sites and premises where these provide additional employment and

other benefits in line with Policy E2. This also provides support for the appeal scheme as an existing employment site will be intensified and enhanced in order to support employment and bring other benefits.

- 7.23 As also pointed out in the Local Plan para 5.9, “Small businesses often seek premises that have flexible terms like shorter leases, layouts that can adapt as the business grows or changes and networking space to interact with other small business or to meet with clients. Therefore, as well as safeguarding existing employment sites, we will seek the provision of innovative new employment floorspace in developments that will provide a range of facilities including: flexible occupancy terms; flexible layouts; studios; workshops; and networking, socialising and meeting space that will meet the needs of a range of business types and sizes”. The proposed scheme delivers exactly the sort of enhanced provision at nos. 5-13 Leeke Street that is desired through this policy.
- 7.24 Further guidance on the Council’s approach to employment premises is provided in Policy E2, which protects existing employment premises and supports their expansion. In particular, there is policy support for smaller businesses. The policy states that the Council will consider higher intensity redevelopment of premises or sites that are suitable for continued business provided that: (c) the level of employment floorspace is increased or at least maintained; (d) the redevelopment retains existing businesses on the site as far as possible. Both these conditions are fulfilled by allowing the expansion of the existing PHF office into no. 13 Leeke Street.

## **Community and wellbeing**

### **London Plan**

- 7.25 London Plan Policy 3.1 states that “Development proposals should protect and enhance facilities and services that meet the needs of particular groups and communities” (B). The Plan goes on to envisage a “London that provides equal life chances for all its people, enabling them to realise their potential and aspirations, make a full contribution to the economic success of their city – and share in its benefits – while tackling problems of deprivation, exclusion and discrimination that impede them” (para 3.3). The proposed development will make a significant contribution to this planning policy objective, as described in the statement supplied by PHF, including through the charitable work of the organisation and through its support for local charities, including by offering free use of the facilities at Leeke Street.
- 7.26 Part L of Policy SD4, of the draft London Plan, states that “Development of social infrastructure that meets the distinct needs of the CAZ should be supported.” The statement provided by PHF for this appeal and the content of this SoC indicate the contribution that the proposal will make towards this policy objective, and provide further justification for this appeal.

### **Local plan**

- 7.27 Local Plan Policy C1 states that the Council will improve and promote strong, vibrant and healthy communities through ensuring a high quality environment with local services to support health, social and cultural wellbeing and reduce inequalities. It is considered that the proposed provision of expanded workspace for an organisation

that supports young people, the arts and migrants, so that individuals can overcome disadvantage, will make an important contribution to this key policy objective.

- 7.28 Moreover, Policy C2 states that the Council will work with its partners to ensure that community facilities and services are developed and modernised to meet the changing needs of the community and reflect new approaches to the delivery of services. More specifically, part (d) states that the Council will facilitate multi-purpose community facilities and the secure sharing or extended use of facilities. While it is acknowledged that the proposal is for B1 office space, PHF is a charity and it should be noted that the new provision will help PHF continue to support local charitable organisations free of charge through access to the facilities. It is therefore considered that Policy C2 provides additional justification for the appeal.
- 7.29 LBC has recently adopted a planning guidance document 'Planning for health and wellbeing' that forms a material consideration. This states that "Social and economic inequality in the Borough is clearly related to having a good job, which brings benefits in addition to material wealth: people who are in good employment have better physical and mental wellbeing than people who are not. Poor pay or insufficient hours, temporary work, insecurity and the risk of redundancy or job loss are related to poorer health. Development opportunities play a part in the local economy, providing the spaces and infrastructure for employment, and helping deliver the skills and training needed to develop the workforce" (para 1.28). By virtue of the provision of spaces for charities working to address worklessness, promote opportunities, and address disadvantage, the proposal clearly contributes to the objectives of the Council in tackling inequality and promoting health and wellbeing.
- 7.30 In addition, the Camden Planning Guidance document 'Community uses, leisure facilities and pubs' states that community facilities and services "can help to enhance quality of life, improve personal health and well-being and deliver a sense of community. The Council wants to ensure a growing population does not have an unacceptable impact on the provision of these facilities" (para 1.5). As the population grows within Camden and housing supply is increased accordingly, it is thus an expectation of LBC that supporting community infrastructure, such as provided by PHF, be able to keep pace.

## **Policy H2**

- 7.31 In total the floorspace at the site would rise from 887.7 sqm (GIA) to 1141.75 sqm (GIA). This would represent an increase of 254 sqm (GIA). There would be an increase in office space of 297 sqm, accounting for the change of use of no. 13. However, the extant permission allows for no. 13 to be redeveloped for office space and indeed for a new building of 88 sqm to be constructed. The current proposal would deliver 94 sqm of office space at no. 13; the office uplift of 6 sqm at no. 13 (compared to the extant permission) and the uplift of 204 sqm at no.s 5-11 (from the new storey) would total an effective office uplift of 210 sqm as a result of the present proposals.
- 7.32 The trigger for policy H2, in the Central London Area, is additional floorspace of more than 200 sqm GIA. On this basis policy H2 is triggered but by a very marginal amount.
- 7.33 However, the development serves a public purpose, as allowed for within H2 e.: the Paul Hamlyn Foundation is a Registered Charity which provides a range of valuable

services within Camden and across the country. On this basis it is clear that policy H2 does not require housing in addition to office space on this site.

- 7.34 It should also be noted that the site is constrained and that the sole purpose of the development is to increase the floorspace available to the charity, so that it can expand its HQ to support its charitable activities; any fettering of this would render the scheme useless to the needs of the charity and would require the charity to search for alternative premises. This is relevant with regards to criteria a., b. and g. of policy H2.
- 7.35 Ultimately, in accordance with part j. of the policy, a positive approach to this minor extension would better meet the objectives of the Local Plan, which contains substantial support for charitable sector organisations, and would also support wider corporate aspirations of the Council.
- 7.36 The Statement by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, submitted with this application and in support of the previous appeal, sets out the Foundation's charitable activities and the importance of its links with and history within Camden. The Foundation provides funding support for a number of charities that the council also supports. The Foundation is also an active member of the Knowledge Quarter, which is supported by Camden.

## **Design and heritage**

### **Design, scale and massing**

- 7.37 Policy 7.6 (B) of the London Plan contains a series of relevant considerations for the proposal. Of particular importance, the Plan requires that buildings and structures should (a) be of the highest architectural quality, (b) be of a proportion, composition, scale and orientation that enhances, activates and appropriately defines the public realm, (c) comprise details and materials that complement, not necessarily replicate, the local architectural character, and (i) optimise the potential of sites. 7.6 (Bi) is clear on the need to optimise development in central London locations, while integrating into the surrounding built form.
- 7.38 Policy D1 broadly reflects the same design considerations as its equivalent in the London Plan and the same points as above are considered to be relevant in meeting the policy requirements.
- 7.39 Pre-application advice has been obtained from the council's planning, design and conservation officers about the proposals. The design team most recently met with Ed Jarvis, Urban Design Manager, on 5 June and he was supportive of the design principles, subject to an appropriately detailed level of information to be submitted with the planning application, with regards to materials and design detail/construction.
- 7.40 In terms of scale, a single storey addition to the building is considered appropriate. The design, scale and materiality respond to the proportions of the existing building, such that the proposed additional storey reads as a rooftop element and not as part of the lower original façade.
- 7.41 The use of the new roof top for external amenity space will not be substantially visible from the surrounding area. Visibility of the terrace is limited by the height of the

building and the width of the street. Furthermore, the area is enclosed by railings that are set back from the roof edge and designed to harmonise with the materiality of the extension beneath, thereby ensuring the amenity space is sensitively integrated into the townscape.

- 7.42 The side extension (on no. 13) shares some commonality of materials and design but is subtly different from the additional storey, which protects the legibility and primary significance of the original building.
- 7.43 The materials and design area also approached distinctly between the new storey above nos. 5-7 Leeke Street and that above nos. 9-11 Leeke Street, with an appropriate degree of distinction between these buildings, which were originally separate, whilst achieving a cohesive design through commonality of materials. The choice of corten steel responds to the red-brick detailing within the original buildings.
- 7.44 The submitted DAS sets out the design rationale in further detail. The proposed design is of high quality in terms of contextual sensitivity, architectural detailing and materials. The proposal complies with London Plan policy 7.6 and Camden Local Plan policy D1.

#### **Heritage**

- 7.45 The site sits within the King's Cross Conservation Area, Gray's Inn Road sub-area. The council's Conservation Area Statement 22 – King's Cross - addresses this area. King's Cross is a gateway into central London via the rail, canal and road networks. Leeke Street is a narrow enclosed street, surfaced with granite setts, which connects King's Cross Road and Wicklow Street. The sub area has a mix of uses but is predominantly historic commercial terraced properties of 3 storeys but with a degree of variation, including some taller and more modern buildings. The sub-area has a fine urban grain and relatively consistent scale and materials palette.
- 7.46 The Conservation Area Statement notes that nos. 5-13 Leeke Street are unlisted buildings which make a positive contribution to the area. No. 13 Leeke Street appears to be erroneously included, given this is a modern building (which has an extant permission for demolition). Nos. 5-11 originally formed two separate buildings. Both buildings are three storey, including ground. There is a consistency of materials and proportions, albeit there is a step up in floor levels and parapet height between nos. 5 and 11. The building is operated as a single entity by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation and the external ground floor treatment makes this apparent and legible.
- 7.47 The proposed additional storey would be appropriate and subservient to the host building and would therefore not undermine the positive contribution of the building to the conservation area. The proposed replacement to no. 13 Leeke Street would be a high quality design and would make a positive contribution to the conservation area, replacing the current building which is of no architectural merit. The proposals would therefore preserve the character and appearance of the King's Cross Conservation Area and would comply with policies D1 and D2 of the Local Plan, as well as with the National Planning Policy Framework. The heritage assets, including the Conservation Area and the locally listed buildings, would be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, through a development which respects local context.

## **Sustainable design**

- 7.48 The scheme is a minor non-residential development of less than 500 sqm. Details of the energy strategy are provided as a dedicated section within the DAS. The proposal complies with CLP policies CC1 and CC2, and the guidance contained within Camden Planning Guidance – ‘Energy efficiency and adaptation’, to the extent that these apply to small minor schemes.
- 7.49 The design of the proposal has followed the energy hierarchy to secure the maximum feasible CO2 reduction beyond Part L of the 2013 Building Regulations. As described in the DAS’ Sustainability Statement, the measures will include renewable technologies, specifically reinstatement of photovoltaic panels to the roof and use of solar thermal panels.
- 7.50 There are no CO2 reduction targets for minor schemes; however, CO2 should be reduced where feasible. This reduction will be delivered by application of the above renewable energy technologies.
- 7.51 Measures to reduce overheating and follow the cooling hierarchy have been proposed by the scheme architect. Operable windows are proposed throughout the new development to allow opportunities for cross-ventilation, help to avoid overheating and reduce requirements for air-conditioning. Furthermore, where cross ventilation is not possible, mechanical ventilation will be provided to the single aspect spaces at ground and first floor levels of the side annex.
- 7.52 The proposal includes a sedum roof on top of no. 13 Leeke Street, which will add to biodiversity and also provide some drainage attenuation benefits.
- 7.53 The proposed development will minimise environmental impacts through efficient fabric and the use of renewable technologies, plus the provision of a planted roof. The optimisation of an existing site within a central urban area is a sustainable form of development in itself.

## **Transport**

- 7.54 The site is located in a high accessible location in the Central Activities Zone close to the major interchange of Kings Cross-St Pancras and numerous walking and cycling routes.
- 7.55 Local Plan policy T1 (Prioritising walking, cycling and public transport) and CPG7 (Transport) highlight that adequate cycle facilities should be provided as part of new development in relation to any uplift in floorspace.
- 7.56 Policy T1 and Camden Planning Guidance ‘Transport’ defer to GLA cycle standards, with an additional allowance for 20% beyond London Plan standards. The London Plan requirement is for 1 space per 90 sqm plus 1 space per 500 sqm for visitors. This equates to 3.5 spaces. Adding 20% this gives a figure of 4.2; therefore, the policy requirement is for 4 spaces.ccy

- 7.57 As part of its commitment to encouraging greater environmental sustainability, the applicant proposes to provide 12 cycle parking spaces for staff and visitors at the site in the existing ground floor garage at nos. 5-11 Leeke Street. Users of the cycle parking spaces will have access to existing shower facilities located close by on the ground floor.
- 7.58 The proposed cycle parking provision meets the current policy requirement and will facilitate employees and guests to cycle to the site and avoid more polluting forms of transport.

### **Noise from plant**

- 7.59 The Development Plan requires that development should not cause unacceptable adverse impacts upon the amenity of neighbouring properties. In particular, Policy A4 of the Camden Local Plan seeks to ensure that noise and vibration is controlled and managed in relation to specified thresholds.
- 7.60 Submitted with this application is an acoustic report, prepared by Emtec, which provides results of a 24 hour noise survey and an assessment of the noise control measures required to minimise the noise impact of new external plant proposed as part of the scheme. The survey was conducted on 10/11 July 2019. There are both residential and commercial occupiers in the vicinity of the site.
- 7.61 It is proposed that the seven air cooled condensers used by the existing building are relocated into a new enclosed plant area at the centre of the new roof. An additional three condensers of the same type are also needed given the larger floorspace at the completed development. The plant will be located within an acoustic louvre screen to attenuate their noise impacts on the surrounding area. At present, there are no such mitigation measures at the existing building.
- 7.62 The conclusion of the acoustic report is that noise from the external plant will comply with Camden's planning policy requirements should the proposed mitigation measures be included in the development scheme. It is therefore considered that there will be no unacceptable noise impacts from the proposals.

### **Structural report**

- 7.63 Accompanying this application is a Construction Method Statement, prepared by Conisbee, which outlines the construction methodology that will be used in delivering the scheme. The objective is to provide certainty that the proposed development can be delivered safely without adverse impact on the structural integrity of the existing building or other buildings in the vicinity.
- 7.64 The report provides an analysis of the structural integrity and materiality of the existing buildings at nos. 5-13 Leeke Street. It further describes the proposed method by which demolition of no. 13 Leeke Street will take place and the new extension and rooftop storey will be erected. Furthermore, the document includes a proposed sequence of construction and includes a series of sketches.



- 7.65 Conisbee find that the relatively modest (albeit complex) works necessary to deliver the development scheme can be undertaken without undermining the structural integrity or stability of the existing nos. 5-11 Leeke Street or the surrounding buildings. It is concluded that the proposed construction methods are sound, and will therefore be compliant with the expectations of Camden Council.

### **Planning obligations**

- 7.66 The applicant has considered its obligations under Local Plan policy in order to ensure that the proposed development complies with the council's expectations.

### **Construction management**

- 7.67 LBC has requested a Construction Management Plan, on the basis that the site is located on a narrow road in the Central London Area. This reflects Local Plan Policy A1, which seeks to protect the quality of life of occupiers and neighbours during and following development. The policy states that impacts of the construction phase, including the use of Construction Management Plans, will be a factor of consideration in preventing unacceptable harm to amenity.
- 7.68 The applicant is agreeable to providing a Construction Management Plan (CMP) to help ensure that the development will be constructed in a safe and efficient manner without having a severe impact on the surrounding transport network or the amenity of neighbours. This can be secured through a Unilateral Undertaking and will be based on the council's CMP template and associated guidance.
- 7.69 The applicant is also agreeable to pay a CMP Implementation Support Contribution in accordance with the pre-application advice provided by the council.

### **Economic development**

- 7.70 The council has provided a list of planning obligations that would be sought by its economic development team if the scheme is approved. These include work experience placements, apprenticeships and local recruitment.
- 7.71 The applicant will review these proposed obligations during the application determination period, once more detailed information has been provided by the council. The applicant is agreeable to obligations where these are found to meet the statutory tests within the Community Infrastructure Regulations.
- 7.72 Dependent on the final agreed obligations, it is considered that a Unilateral Undertaking would be suitable to secure any such obligations.

## 8. Summary and conclusions

- 8.1 The application for planning permission at the site is for demolition of the existing building at no. 13 Leeke Street and construction of a new office extension to nos. 5-11 Leeke Street on the plot, plus the addition of a new rooftop storey across nos. 5-11 Leeke Street, to provide enlarged enhanced office space, with existing external amenity space re-provided above.
- 8.2 The applicant, PHF, is an important Camden charity that requires this additional space in order to continue to operate successfully as a grant-giving charity and expand its operations, including its offer of free workspace to other charities on the subject site.
- 8.3 Loss of the vacant and substandard residential unit at no.13 Leeke Street has already been permitted via appeal and an application for change of use from C3 residential to B1 office use is awaiting determination at time of writing. The principle of redeveloping no. 13 for office is therefore established.
- 8.4 The application represents a holistic and comprehensive approach to providing increased office space at a constrained site with different architectural elements present. The extension will integrate the site while providing bold architectural expression that respects the host building while adding a distinct new visual feature to the townscape. This design has been developed in consultation with design and planning officers at the council, who are supportive of the scheme.
- 8.5 The site is located within the King's Cross Conservation Area and the proposals are considered to appropriately reflect the varied character of the location and to preserve all heritage assets. The scale and materiality sit comfortably within the existing built form that surrounds the site. The scheme will preserve and enhance the conservation area through high quality design.
- 8.6 The proposed development has been assessed against the provisions of the Development Plan and other material considerations. It has been found that the scheme will bring important planning benefits to the site in accordance with local planning policy while meeting all relevant planning requirements. These benefits include the provision of new office space in the Central London Area, suitable for a range of occupiers, the improvements thereby delivered specifically to the Head Quarters of an important local and national charity and the introduction of a high quality new piece of architecture within the King's Cross Conservation Area.
- 8.7 Planning permission should be granted to allow PHF to expand its operations and support the important charitable endeavours that take place at the site and to provide additional high quality office space within Camden.

84 Theobald's Road  
London  
WC1X 8NL

T 020 7851 4010