

Design and Access and Heritage Statement

23 Euston Road, Kings Cross, London
NW1 2SB



Project Team

An experienced team of professional consultants have been engaged by the client to assist in the preparation of all supporting documentation comprising of:

- JMS Planning and Development Ltd
- Seary Architects Ltd



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1.0 Introduction



This Design and Access and Heritage Statement has been prepared by JMS Planning and Development Ltd in support of an application for a change of use from Use Class A2 to Use Class C1 with refurbishment and reconfiguration of existing ground floor and basement at 23 Euston Road, Kings Cross, London, NW1 2SB. It is intended that the application site will form part of the highly successful boutique Megaro Hotel which effectively wraps around the existing application site.

This Design and Access Statement should be read in conjunction with the planning application's supporting reports, drawings and accompanying material.



[Fig 1] Site Location Plan

2.0 Site Overview

Site Location and Context



[Fig 2] Site Plan

The application site comprises the basement and ground floor level of 23 Euston Road, Kings Cross, London, NW1 2SB which is a former Barclays Bank which is now vacant. The application site forms part of a four-storey building with a two storey mansard roof located on the west side of Belgrove Street.

The application site is located on the junction of Euston Road (A501) and Belgrove Street opposite King's Cross St Pancras Railway Station. The site is encompassed by the Megaro Hotel which sits above and wraps around the vacant former bank. The site can be accessed through the main entrance in the corner junction of Euston Road and Belgrove Street.

The application site was previously occupied by Barclays Bank which closed its branch at this location on 25 October 2019. Upper levels are occupied by the Megaro Hotel (Use Class C1).

The site is located within Floodzone 1 and therefore has a low probability of flooding.

Aerial View of the Site and Surrounding Area



Photographs of the Site



Belgrove Street View to the north



Euston Road View

Photographs of Surrounding Area



View over Kings Cross and St Pancras Station from the site



Belgrave Street view with Megaro and Belgrave Hotel






Access Storage at Belgrave House, opposite the site



Euston Road view towards the site

Transport Links and Access Arrangements



-  Site Access
-  Main Vehicular Road Connecting to the site
-  TFL Cycle Hire

[Fig 4] Transport and Access Arrangements

Public Transport Routes

The application site has a PTAL rating of 6b which is excellent.

King's Cross St Pancras Underground and Railway Stations are opposite the site serving the Circle, Hammersmith & City and Metropolitan, Northern, Piccadilly and Northern Lines and inter-city rail services to the East of England, Yorkshire, North East England and eastern and northern Scotland.

There are a number of bus routes which serve the area including bus routes 68, 168, 259, 17, 10, 59, 91, 46, 390, 30, 73, 476, 45, 205, 63 and 214. The nearest bus stop is located on Euston Road, a short walk from the site's entrance.

Pedestrian Routes

The site benefits from wide footways on the immediate vicinity and dedicated crossings if walking to/from the site on Euston Road.

Vehicular Routes

The site has excellent transport links facing Euston Road (A501) connecting to the A1, A5, A10 and A11 and further afield to the London Orbital Motorway (M25).

3.0 Site Evaluation

The application is principally for a change of use, but there are a number of key issues which have informed the design solution for the site's development.

Effectively, it balances the site's opportunities and constraints arising from the assessment of the site to deliver a development that achieves high quality design, is sustainable, is economically viable, provides improved visitors accommodation and enhances the established locality.

Site Opportunities and Constraints

Constraints

The principal constraints can be identified as:

- The need to retain the existing site layout and building fabric whilst improving the internal layout and on site; and
- The need to respect the site's location within a building identified as a positive contributor within the Kings Cross Conservation Area.

Opportunities

There are a number of opportunities afforded by the potential development of the site that are relevant material considerations in the evaluation of the proposals. In summary these are:

- Provides benefits to the general area through overall improvements to the appearance of this part of the building; and
- Brings back into use the vacant building and introduces passive surveillance to the site and local area.
- Removes existing road frontage and improves exterior of the site to help reduce previous anti-social behaviour.

Planning History

A review of the site's relevant planning history has been undertaken using Camden's online Planning Application search system.

The planning history for the site confirms that the site has been used historically as a Bank (Use Class A2) with the adjacent/surrounding use comprising a Hotel (Use Class C1).

Application reference	Proposal	Decision	Date
2015/2183/P	Replacement of existing 2 x Automatic Teller Machine (ATM) and alterations to existing windows all at ground floor level to accommodate internal equipment cabinets to Barclays Bank (Class A2).	Granted	10 July 2015
2014/3991/L	Display of four internally illuminated projecting lantern signs (Listed Building Consent)	Withdrawn	18 Jun 2014
2014/3844/A	Display of four externally illuminated projecting lantern signs (Advertisement Consent)	Granted	18 Jun 2014
2010/4862/P	Replace existing fan light sections of windows with new glass louvres to five ground floor windows the side elevation (Belgrove Street) of existing bank (Class A2)	Granted	09 Nov 2010

Application reference	Proposal	Decision	Date
2010/4797/P	Change of use of part ground floor and basement from financial and professional services (Class A2) to Hotel (Class C1) in association with existing hotel on upper floors, with ancillary bar at basement floor level and associated alterations, including installation of new hotel entrance on Belgrove Street and alterations to the existing Euston Road including alterations to fenestration details at ground floor level.	Granted	05 Nov 2010
2010/3952/A	Display of 1 X internally-illuminated projecting sign and 2 X internally-illuminated hanging signs (in windows) to front elevation and 2 x internally-illuminated fascia signs to front and side elevation of existing bank (Class A2)	Granted	16 Sep 2010
2010/3219/P	Installation of 4 external lights and formation of new opening in existing railings to side elevation and installation of 2 CCTV cameras on front elevation of existing bank (Class A2).	Granted	17 Aug 2010

Planning History Continues

Application reference	Proposal	Decision	Date
8600331	Infilling of basement area on Belgrove Street frontage to provide additional office space. Installation of a second automatic cash dispenser. Relocation of nightsafe to Belgrove Street together with formation of an access path	Granted	09 Apr 1986
CA/51/B	Erection at 23 Euston Road, NW1 of two sets of individually illuminated letters; each set reading "Barclays Bank"	Granted	09 Jan 1974
CA/51/A	Erection at 23 Euston Road of one illuminated single sided fascia sign on the splayed corner measuring 0.72m (2' 6") x 1.52m (5' 0") overall height 4.32m (14' 2"), colour blue with white eagle motif.	Granted	28 Sep 1973

Planning Policy

A review of relevant planning policy at national and local level relevant to design and access and heritage matters has been undertaken to inform the development proposal for the site.

National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019)

The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (February 2019) constitutes guidance for local planning authorities and decision takers. It is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications (paragraph 2).

The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development (paragraph 6).

Paragraph 8 confirms that there are three overarching objectives to sustainable development: economic, social, and environmental, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways.

Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

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 to make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is the effective engagement between applicants, communities, Local Planning Authorities and other interests throughout the process (paragraph 124).

Paragraph 126 confirms that plans and supplementary planning documents provide a framework for creating distinctive places, with a consistent and high-quality standard of design. However, their level of detail and degree of prescription should be tailored to the circumstances in each place and should allow for suitable degree of variety where this should be justified.

Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments 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; are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping; are sympathetic to local character and history; establish or maintain a strong sense of place; and 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 (paragraph 127).

Design quality should be considered throughout the evolution and assessment of individual proposals (paragraph 128) and permission should be refused for 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 (paragraph 130).

Paragraph 184 confirms that heritage assets 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.

In determining planning applications, Local Planning Authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, the level of detail should be proportionate to the asset's importance and no more than sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal and the significance (paragraph 189).

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 which is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance (paragraph 193).

Any harm to, or loss of, significance of a designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification (paragraph 194).

Where a proposed development would lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, 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.

Where a development proposal will lead to a 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).

The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application (paragraph 197).

Local Planning Authorities should not prevent the loss of the whole or part of the heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred (paragraph 198).

Local Planning Authorities should look for opportunities for new development within conservation areas 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). Subsequent paragraph 201 confirms that not all elements of a conservation area will necessarily contribute to its significance.

Development Plan

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that all applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The relevant development plan for the application site comprises The London Plan (Consolidated with Alterations Since 2011)(March 2016), and the Camden Local Plan (adopted 3 July 2017). In addition, Supplementary Planning Guidance including Camden Planning Guidance 1 – Design (2015) are relevant as well as the Kings Cross Conservation Area Appraisal.

The London Plan (Consolidated with Alterations since 2011) (March 2016)

Policy 7.4 (Local Character) confirms that development should have regard to the form, function and structure of an area, place or street and the scale, mass and orientation surrounding buildings and should improve an area's visual or physical connection with natural features. Buildings, streets and open spaces should provide a high-quality design response.

Policy 7.6 (Architecture) confirms that architecture should make a positive contribution. 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;
- d) not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of surrounding land and buildings, particularly residential buildings, in relation to privacy, overshadowing, wind and microclimate. This is particularly important for tall buildings;
- e) incorporate best practice in resource management and climate change mitigation and adaptation;
- f) provide high quality indoor and outdoor spaces and integrate well with the surrounding streets and open spaces;
- g) be adaptable to different activities and land uses, particularly at ground level;
- h) meet the principles of inclusive design;
- i) optimise the potential of sites.

Policy 7.8 (Heritage Assets And Archaeology) confirms, inter alia, that development affecting heritage assets and their setting should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to their form, scale, materials and architectural details.

Paragraph 17 confirms that, within the overarching roles the planning system ought to play, a set of core land-use planning principles should underpin both plan making and decision-taking. These principles include; inter alia: Conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations.

Paragraph 132 confirms 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. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification.

The Camden Local Plan (July 2017)

Policy CA1 (Managing Impact and Development) confirms that the Council will seek to protect the quality of life of occupiers and neighbours and will grant permission for development unless it causes unacceptable harm to amenity.

Policy A4 (Noise and Vibration) confirms the Council will seek to ensure that noise and vibration is controlled and managed.

Policy D1 (Design) confirms the Council will seek to secure high quality design and development. In particular, the Council will require development that, respects local context and character and preserves or enhances the historic environment and heritage assets in accordance with Policy D2 (Heritage). It requires development to be sustainable in design and construction and to comprise details of materials that are of high quality and complement the local character and integrity well with the surrounding streets and open spaces.

Policy D2 (Heritage) states the Council will preserve and, where appropriate, enhance Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings. The policy confirms the Council will not permit the loss 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.

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 to the proposal convincingly outweigh that harm.

In respect of 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. Preserves 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.

Camden Planning Guidance 1 – Design (2015)

Para 3.20 highlights that works to listed buildings are assessed on a case by case basis, taking into account the individual features of a building, its historic significance and the cumulative impact of small alterations.

Para 3.22 confirms that the Council has a statutory requirement 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. The Council will consider the impact of proposals on the historic significance of the building, including its features, such as original and historic materials and architectural features, original layout of rooms, structural integrity and character and appearance.

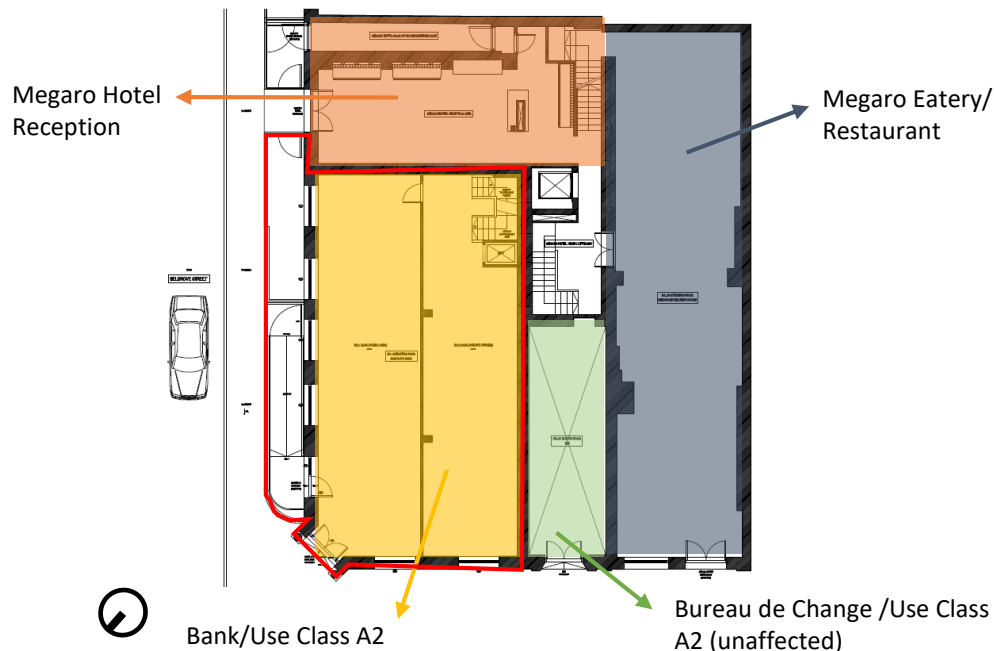
Para 3.23 confirms the Council's expectation that original or historic features are retained and repairs to be in matching material. Proposals should seek to respond to the special historic and architectural constraints of the listed building, rather than significantly changing them.

Para 3.26 notes that some works that are required in order to comply with the Building Regulations may have an impact on the historic significance of a listed building and will require listed building consent.

Para 3.29 recognises the role that the historic environment can play in reducing the impact of climate change. For example, reusing existing buildings could avoid the material and energy cost of new development. The Council seeks a balance between achieving higher environmental standards with protecting Camden's unique built environment.

4.0 The Proposal

The proposal seeks a change of use of the basement and ground floor from A2 (Bank) to C1 (Hotel) together with associated reconfiguration works at 23 Euston Road, Kings Cross, London.



[Fig 5] Ground Floor layout with current uses

The application site will form part of the Megaro Hotel which sits adjacent to and above the site. Notably, the freehold of the application site is owned by the parent company of the Megaro Hotel.

Historically the ground floor and basement of 23 Euston Road has been used as a Bank (Use Class A2). The use of the ground floor was split between that which was used as a public area and that which was used privately by the bank as offices/back of house.

The application site was previously let to, and occupied by Barclays Bank PLC. However, Barclays like most high street banks has recently undergone a wide branch closure programme and has closed this site.

A lift and stairs lead to the basement which was also used by the Bank with a staff room, male and female toilets and storage areas.

Broadly speaking the works necessary to facilitate the change of use would comprise the establishment of remodeling and refitting of internal restaurant space on the ground floor with tables and chairs, booths, seating for customers and a small bar area. There would also be the addition of a new external terrace area on Belgrave Street. The application site will therefore become part of the Megaro Hotel.

Works to the basement would be minimal comprising the reconfiguring of the existing toilets, staffroom and storage areas to provide extended male, female and DDA toilet facilities.

The external terrace area would comprise black painted metal railings, with hardwood timber trellis and hardwood timber planter boxes, surface mounted heater lamps and pink and grey retractable awning with signage.

The proposal would seek to retain existing hardwood timber entrance doors and frames with the existing fanlight to be replaced with clear glass and signage patterned film. A black painted metal framed clear double glazed hinged external door would provide access to the external terrace.

Overall it is considered that the proposal will result in an enhanced tourism offer with minimal design changes which will result in enhancement to the Conservation Area. This is expanded upon later within the Heritage Statement contained within this document.

Use & Amount

The site is currently vacant being previously occupied by Barclays Bank. Also occupying the ground floor of the wider building are the Megaro Hotel Reception, Megaro Eatery/Restaurant and Bureau de Change. The Megaro Hotel rooms exist on site on upper levels.

A change of use of the existing vacant Bank space including ancillary spaces at basement level are proposed to comprise a new hotel restaurant at ground floor level with the reconfiguration of existing toilets staffroom and storage areas to provide extended male, female and DDA toilet facilities at basement level which will form part of the Megaro Hotel.

In addition, a new external terrace is proposed where a ramp is currently located facing Belgrove Street. Notably, this is an extension to the existing outdoor space on site but will also renew an area which has suffered from drug dealing and other forms of anti-social behaviour.

The proposed restaurant will allow for a total of circa 75 inside seats and 14 seats in the proposed terrace. The area at ground floor level covers 144 sqm, terrace 34 sqm and WC/vestibule area at basement level covering approximately 187 sqm.

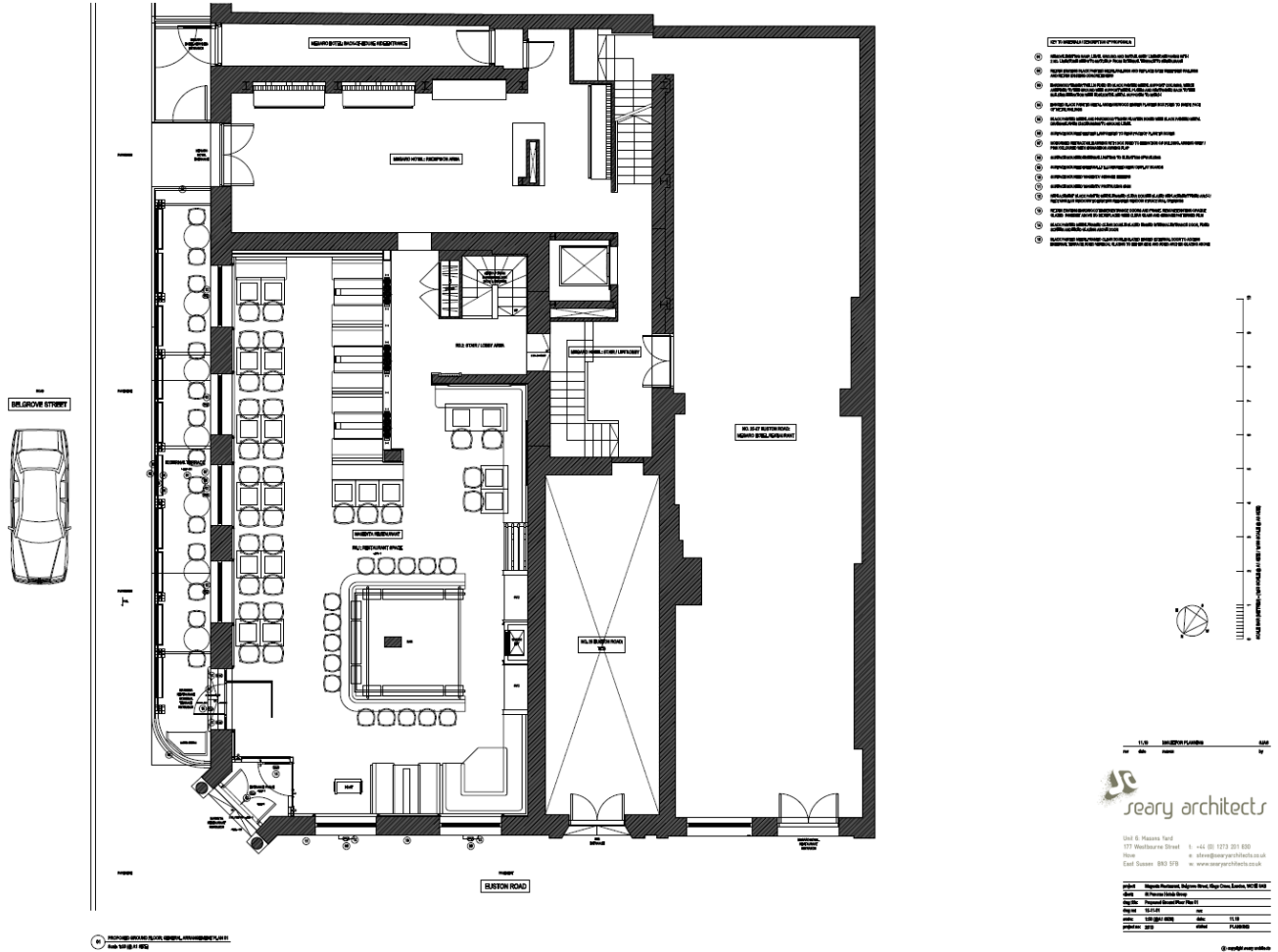
Scale and massing

The site is an existing developed site and the proposed change of use on site will not alter the scale and massing of the existing building.

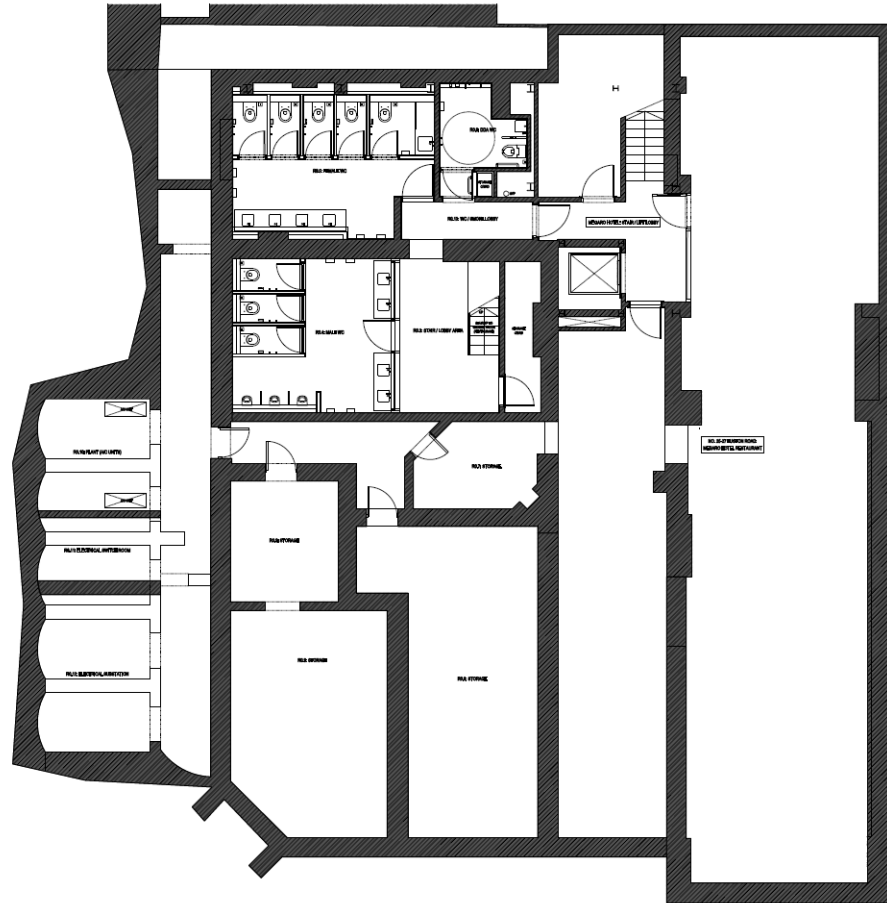
Layout

The layout of the proposed restaurant has been designed considering the existing site configuration and the immediate surrounding in order to ensure optimum circulation across the site.

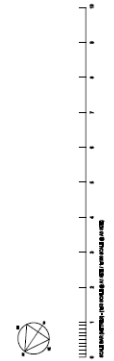
Detailed elements of the proposed development are illustrated on accompanying drawings prepared by Seary Architects with drawing ref: 15-11-01 and 15-11-02 submitted with this application.



[Fig 6] Proposed Ground Floor Site Layout



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Client	Shel & Associates Inc.
Architect	Seary Architects
Project Name	Proposed Basement Floor Plan
Scale	1/8" = 1'-0"
Date	1/14/14
Drawn by	SK
Checked by	SK
Project No.	1000

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[Fig 7] Proposed Basement Floor Plan

Appearance

The design of the proposed fenestration changes reflects the existing building, whilst creating an attractive upgrade of a high quality with inviting interiors. Window amendments will create visual interest within the development and creating a clean, welcoming environment which is modern, attractive and uncluttered.

Materiality

The proposed materials are shown on the supporting Schematic Design Document and Proposed Building Elevations submitted with this application.

The externals of the building would remain largely as existing, minor changes proposed would include surface mounted external lighting to side of building, surface mounted 'Magenta' signage letters and protruding sign and replacement windows within the existing window structure.

The proposal would seek to retain existing hardwood timber entrance doors and frames with the existing fanlight to be replaced with clear glass and signage patterned film.

A black painted metal framed clear double glazed hinged external door would provide access to the external terrace.

Materials to be used in the exterior of the building have been chosen in a colour palette that reflects and complements the colours and textures of the materials found in the local area to reflect local character and with the aim to establish a sense of unity and identity across the development.

High quality materials will be used in both the exterior and interior for their aesthetic value and to secure long-term durability and easy maintenance.

Interior Palette

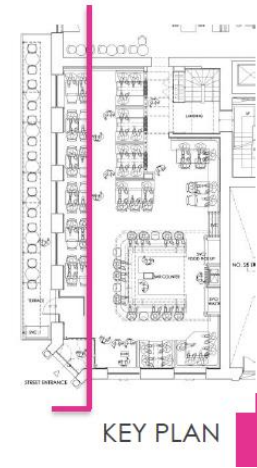




[Fig 8] Belgrove Street Terrace Elevation – Ground Floor



[Fig 9] Section view of the Proposed Interior



Internal CGI Sketch of Restaurant Area



Internal CGI Sketch of Restaurant Area



Landscaping

The site is an existing developed site within the Kings Cross area. The landscape strategy for the site is to incorporate an external terrace where a ramp is currently located and which out of hours suffers from criminal and antisocial activity.

The proposed external terrace area would comprise black painted metal railings, with hardwood timber trellis and hardwood timber planter boxes, surface mounted heater lamps and pink and grey retractable awning with signage.

Visually, the new terrace and associated landscaping will enhance the setting of this part of Belgrove Street and Kings Cross.

Refuse

Storage for refuse and recycling has been considered from the outset and designed to be fully integrated into the scheme.

It is proposed that the refuse store is located in a convenient, secure and accessible location within the curtilage of the property at basement level.

Community Safety

Consideration has been given to creating an attractive safe environment through the development. The proposed refurbishment will ensure that the vacant unit is back into beneficial use ensuring natural surveillance across the whole site and protect the safety of users of the site and wider community.

This application has significant community safety benefits as it will renew an area which is the focus of antisocial behaviour and which is often attended by the Metropolitan Police.

5.0 Accessibility

The applicant is committed to a policy of equality, inclusion and accessibility for those who live and visit the site and has strived to exceed all required standards and achieve a development that promotes inclusion and accessibility.

The provision of an accessible and inclusive environment has been an integral theme throughout the design process, from its initial conception to its current form. The concept of inclusive design seeks to remove barriers that create undue effort, separation or special treatment, which then enables everyone to participate equally regardless of gender, disability or age.

The proposed development will be fully accessible by public transport including underground and rail stations with TFL cycle stands located in the immediate vicinity of the site.

The application is located opposite King's Cross St Pancras Underground and Railway Station which serves the Circle, Hammersmith & City and Metropolitan, Northern, Piccadilly and Northern Lines and inter-city rail services to the East of England, Yorkshire, North East England and eastern and northern Scotland.

In addition, the site benefits from several bus stops in the vicinity serving bus routes 68, 168, 259, 17, 10, 59, 91, 46, 390, 30, 73, 476, 45, 205, 63 and 214.

The application site has a PTAL rating of 6b which is excellent.

The current access arrangements are well established on site. The proposal will use the existing access to the site located in the corner junction of Belgrove Street and Euston Road.

In respect to inclusive access, a second step-free access is proposed from the existing Megaro Hotel reception area on Belgrove Street.

In addition, the proposal includes the provision of improved WC facilities for males, females and an accessible toilet.

Services are therefore provided with access that meets the needs of those who are less able bodied, as well as those with pushchairs.

6.0 Secured by Design

The proposed development has been designed from the outset taking into consideration Secured by Design principles.

Landscaping on the site has been carefully considered to create clear, open and well-lit public spaces to encourage pedestrian flow and to enhance natural surveillance and a safe route for pedestrians during the day and at night.

All doors and windows will wherever possible, comply by Secured by Design accredited products. In addition, window standards specification will incorporate enhanced security performance of casements.

7.0 Heritage

In accordance with the requirements of the NPPF this heritage statement describes the significance of the heritage assets affected by the development proposal.

The purpose of this statement is to assist with the determination of the application by informing the decision takers on the effects of the development on the historic built environment. Value judgements on the significance of the heritage assets presented and the effects of the proposals upon that significance are appraised. This statement also sets out how the proposals comply with the guidance and policy of the NPPF and the local policy framework. Specifically, this assessment assesses the significance of the relevant designated heritage assets and the effects of the development upon them. Each of these matters is now considered in turn below.

The Significance of the Relevant Heritage Assets

The principal specific heritage asset that needs to be considered in this heritage assessment is the King's Cross Conservation Area within which the application site is located.

The significance of this asset is now considered below:

The King's Cross Conservation Area

The King's Cross Conservation Area was originally designated by the Greater London Council in March 1986 and later extended to the south of Euston Road in 1991 to include the area between Judd Street, Argyle Street, Swinton Street and King's Cross Road; and to the north west in 1994 to include the area surrounding St Pancras Gardens.

Development in the area started with the development of the hamlets of St Pancras and Battle Bridge during medieval times. These two settlements remained relatively isolated and surrounded by open fields until the mid-18th century. The construction of the New Road (now Euston Road) between Paddington and Islington acted as a catalyst for urban development and the road rapidly became London's northern boundary. During the early 19th century residential development in the area intensified following industrial growth in the area.

With the arrival of the railway on the area, good yards were built to the north of the Regent's Canal and Kings Cross came the busiest goods handling complex in Britain. After the completion of Kings Cross Station, St Pancras Station development started. In the Victorian era the two rail termini, their associated hotels and freight facilities dominated the area and served as a monument to the industrial power of London and the significance of the King's Cross.

By the turn of the 20th Century, most of the area was built out and any new development after this consisted of replacement of bomb-damaged properties in the late 1940's and the development of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link and Crossrail.

Today, the Kings Cross Area functions as a gateway to Central London with the two major stations functioning as major landmarks in the urban fabric of London. Whilst a large area of the Conservation Area is dominated by the stations, the streets to the south of Euston Road and to the north and west of St Pancras Garden are more characteristic of the general grain of development and land uses beyond.

Overall, there is a great variety in the character and appearance of the area as a whole.

The conservation area is divided into four sub-areas; St Pancras Gardens which is centred upon St Pancras Gardens; King's Cross/St. Pancras which forms the heart of the Conservation Area and includes both King's Cross and St. Pancras Stations; Euston Road which is dominated by King's Cross/St. Pancras Station and St Pancras Chambers and Gray's Inn Road which is characterised by a fine urban grain with broad consistency of building heights and materials.

The application site falls within the Conservations' Area Euston Road Sub-area which encompasses the buildings on the southern side of Euston Road and the junction with Pentonville and Gray's Inn Roads.

The area is dominated by King's Cross and St Pancras stations and St Pancras Chambers and includes retail and hotel premises fronting the main roads as well as Camden Town Hall and associated offices.

In regard to 23-27 Euston Road, the conservation area appraisal describes the building as a *“four-storey corner property, plus a mansard attic storey, with highly decorated elevations to both Euston Road and Belgrove Street. The ground floor is constructed of rusticated stone with alternating red brick and stone bays occupying the floors above. The building’s façades are highly detailed, particularly the corner bay, which includes an elaborately detailed porch above the main entrance and a carved crest above a third floor balcony. The red brick bays include arched stone window surrounds at first floor level, whilst the sandstone bays are decorated with carved crests flanking the second floor windows.”*

The site is considered to make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, where there is a general presumption in favour of retention of the building because of its architectural and historic interest within the area.

With respect to managing works within a conservation area, the appraisal section on changes of use states that the Council will consider a change of use that will

preserve the architectural features, original plan form and historic value of the building, will not damage its fabric and structural stability or adversely effect its setting. In regard to alterations to buildings and design, the appraisal confirms that any proposal should complement the appearance, character and setting of the existing buildings, historic parks and gardens (including cemeteries) and the environment as a whole.

Overall, the Conservation Area Appraisal states that new development should respect and enhance existing features and have a high standard of design, which should respect the character and appearance of the area.

Impact Assessment on Asset of Heritage Significance

The Kings Cross Conservation Area is a designated heritage asset. As such, an assessment of the impact of the application proposal on these designated heritage assets is required. An assessment of the impact of the application proposals is now considered below.

Impact on the Kings Cross Conservation Area

As a result of the site's location within a conservation area, National Planning Guidance and adopted Local Plan policy seek to preserve and enhance the quality of the conservation area. Policy D2 (Heritage) of the Camden Local Plan (2017) states the Council will preserve and, where appropriate, enhance Camden's heritage assets including conservation areas. Specifically, in respect of Conservation Areas, the Council will:

- a. Require that development within Conservation Areas preserves or, where possible, enhances the character or appearance of the area;
- b. Resist the total or substantial demolition of an unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a Conservation Area;
- c. Resist development outside of a Conservation Area that causes harm to the character or appearance of that Conservation Area; and
- d. Preserves 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.

Given the weight of Development Plan policy which presumes to protect the special character of heritage assets within the Borough, it is acknowledged that issues associated with heritage will be key in consideration of this application proposal. In this respect, it will be necessary for the application to consider the likely impact on the Kings Cross Conservation Area.

The proposed change of use will require minimal alterations to the external fabric of the building. As such, the proposal involves minor fenestration alterations which will not broadly alter the building's façade or overall alter the principal aesthetic of the building which is dominated externally by a mural installation by leading international art collective 'Agents of Change' which is one of London's largest pieces of street art.

The extension of the existing terrace area on Belgrove Street is proposed as well as minimal works to basement level, comprising the reconfiguring of the existing toilets, staffroom and storage areas to provide extended male, female and DDA toilet facilities.

Internally, to facilitate the change of use, the remodeling of the internal vacant space on ground floor level will require internal retrofitting with tables and chairs, booths, seating for customers and a bar. It is noted that all internal alterations are not subject to planning permission.

In this respect, consideration needs to be given to whether any of the proposed works, which form part of the planning application can constitute benefits to the conservation area. In this respect it is considered that there are a significant number of elements to the application proposal which provide for “real” benefits to the conservation area, namely the general enhancement and repair to the ground floor elevations of the site improving its visual appearance; and improvements to the external terrace creating a useable and enjoyable amenity space.

Overall, it is not considered that the proposal has any adverse visual impact on the streetscene and would therefore preserve and enhance the application site and its setting. Therefore, the proposed development is in line with the requirements of the NPPF, London Plan Policy 7.8, Local Plan Policies including Policy D2.

Conclusions on Heritage matter

It is considered that the proposal exerts no demonstrable harm to any neighbouring amenities and is in keeping with the character and appearance of the area, and no prejudice to the streetscene in Euston Road and 23-25 Euston Road which is considered a positive contributor to the conservation area.

Moreover, having assessed the relevant heritage assets and the impact of the proposal upon them, it is considered that the proposed works are sympathetic to the building and present no harmful impact on the significance of the building as no historic fabric is to be altered or harmed in the alterations. In addition, the proposal presents no adverse impact on the Kings Cross Conservation Area.

Conversely, it is considered that the refurbishment of the site and its façades will improve the townscape character of this particular part of Kings Cross.

8.0 Conclusions

This Design and Access Statement incorporating a Heritage Statement has been prepared by JMSP+D on behalf of Megaro Hotel Ltd in support of a full planning application for change of use of the ground floor and basement from a Bank (A2 Use Class) to a Hotel (C1 Use Class) together with associated reconfiguration and development works at 23 Euston Road, Kings Cross, London, NW1 2SB.

A change of use of the existing vacant Bank space including ancillary spaces at basement level are proposed to comprise a new restaurant at ground floor level with the reconfiguration of existing toilets staffroom and storage areas to provide extended male, female and DDA toilet facilities at basement level.

In addition, a new external terrace is proposed where a ramp is currently located facing Belgrove Street. Notably, this is an extension to the existing outdoor space on site.

The proposed change of use and associated works has been designed taking into consideration the site's opportunities and constraints, and consideration has been given to layout, scale, appearance and landscaping.

Access to and within the site has been carefully reviewed. It is considered that, based on the above, an appropriate and site sensitive design solution has been found, which accords with planning policy.

High quality materials will be used in both the exterior and interior for their aesthetic value and to secure long-term durability and easy maintenance.

Overall, It is considered that an appropriate and site sensitive design solution has been found with materials and design to reflect requirements and make a positive contribution to the area and streetscene with no detrimental effect on the Kings Cross Conservation Area.

On the basis of the above it is considered that planning permission should be granted.

