

**22 -26 Vine Hill, 7 Warner Yard and 14 Rosebery
Avenue, EC1R**

Planning Statement

March 2021

SPRING

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of the applicant, Vine 1 & Vine 2 Limited, in support of a full planning application at 22 -26 Vine Hill, 7 Warner Yard and 14 Rosebery Avenue, EC1R (“the site”).
- 1.2 The application seeks planning permission for alterations to the existing offices, including external alterations, infilling of existing staircases to create a small area of new office floorspace and insertion of new pavement lights, works to the courtyard to provide cycle storage and replacement plant (“the Proposed Development”).
- 1.3 This Statement sets out the background to the site, outlines the proposals and assesses how these comply with the relevant planning policy and guidance at local and national level.
- 1.4 This report should be read alongside the Design and Access Statement, application drawings and an Environmental Noise Report submitted as part of the application.

2. SITE DESCRIPTION & BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The site is located towards the southern boundary of the London Borough of Camden bounded by Vine Hill, Rosebery Avenue and Warner Yard.
- 2.2 The site is approximately 500m from Chancery Lane Tube Station and Farringdon Tube and Train Stations.
- 2.3 The site comprises of three different units, 22-26 Vine Hill, 14 Rosebery Avenue and 7 Warner Yard.
- 2.4 The demises form part of the basement levels of an Edwardian purpose-built block of residential flats and extends onto the brick vaulted arches underneath Rosebery Avenue and newer extension onto Vine Hill.
- 2.5 The location and the site and its setting can be seen in Figure 1 below.



Figure 1

- 2.6 Figure 2 below shows existing external images of the site from different viewpoints.



Figure 2

- 2.7 The image below is an extract from the Proposals Map and shows the site allocations. The site is located in the Hatton Garden Conservation Area and is not a listed building nor an unlisted building of merit. However, the building fronting Rosebery Avenue is noted as a building that makes a positive contribution.

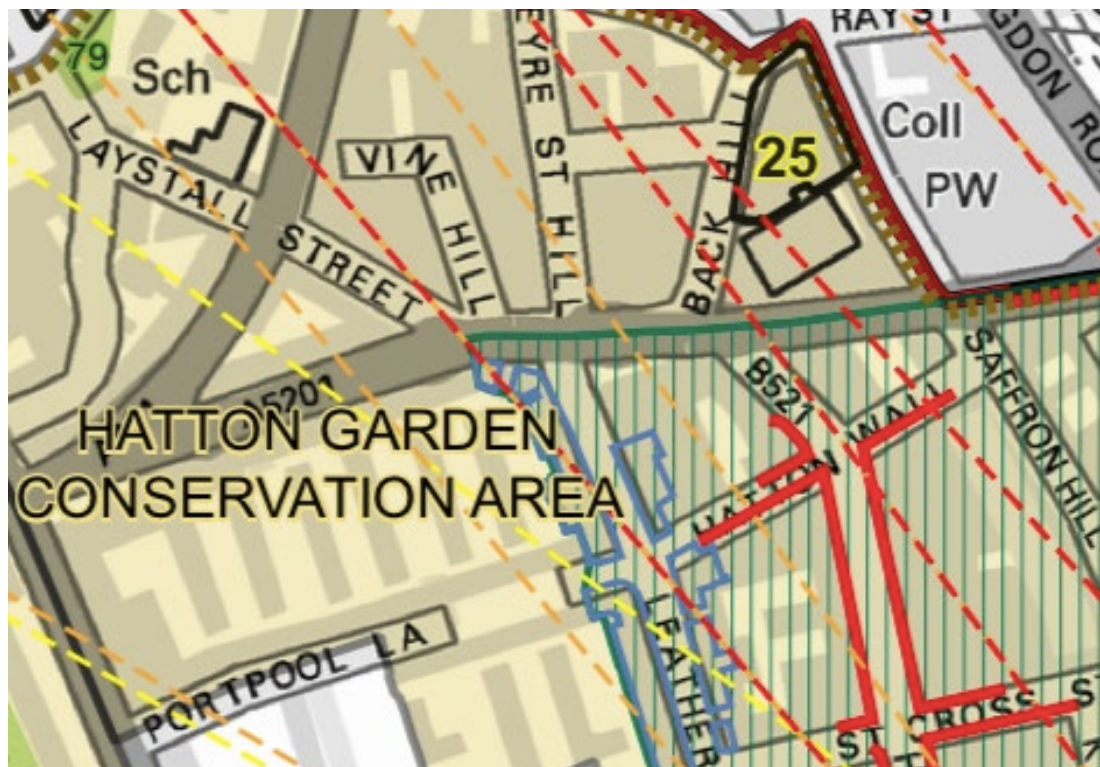


Figure 3: Proposals Map Extract

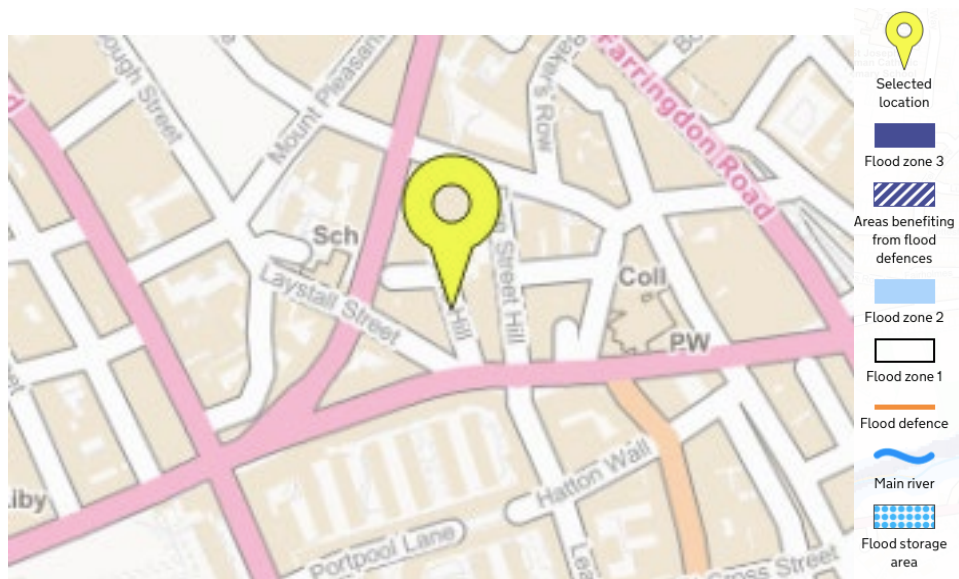


Figure 4: Flood Risk Map

2.8 The site is not located in a flood risk zone.

Planning History

2.9 A comprehensive review of the Statutory Register of Planning Applications held by the Council has been carried out and below is a summary of the site planning history.

- On 13th November 1990 permission was granted to change the use of 12 and 12A Rosebery Avenue, 6 Warner Yard and 22-26 Vine Hill from warehouse to warehouse, light industry with ancillary sales and offices.
- On 8th March 2019, a certificate of lawful use was granted (2018/6275/P) to use the basement and ground floor areas for B1 purposes.

Relevant Planning History in the Surrounding Area

16 Warner Street, London, EC1R 5HA

- 2.10 Application ref. 2015/5584/P – Various alterations at ground floor level including the reinstatement of entrance onto Warner Yard, lowering of windowsill, replacement of existing windows and doors and replacement of existing pavement light with a glazed rooflight – Granted 16th November 2015.
- 2.11 The above application is relevant as is located further along the same terrace block as the site and was for similar works. The application included exterior alterations and also replacement of the pavement light with a larger rooflight. That proposal was said to improve the character and appearance of the host building and wider Hatton Garden conservation area.
- 2.12 Chapter 3 will now briefly summarise the application proposals.

3. APPLICATION PROPOSALS

- 3.1 The Design and Access Statement submitted with the application provides full details of the proposals.
- 3.2 The works involved include
- (i) a new Vine Hill entrance
 - (ii) replacement of the existing windows, alterations to the sizes of some of the existing openings, and the cleaning of the exterior to expose the underlying brickwork
 - (iii) the infilling of two existing staircases to Rosebery Avenue to create 25 sq.m of the new office floorspace, new “pavement” lights (these are in a front courtyard rather than to the pavement) and provision of defined spaces for the existing bin storage
 - (iv) a new cycle store within the courtyard and
 - (v) the replacement of plant.
- 3.3 The current building is in poor condition and these improvements and internal refurbishment will bring the building up to a modern standard.
- 3.4 Chapter 4 will now outline the planning policy context for the site.

4. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 4.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning decisions to be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.2 The Statutory Development Plan comprises of regional policies with the Mayor’s London Plan, adopted March 2021 (herein referred to as “LP”), and at a local level the London Borough of Camden Local Plan adopted in 2017.
- 4.3 The Courts have held that the Government’s statements of planning policy are such ‘material considerations’ which must be considered, where relevant, in decisions on planning applications.

National Planning Policy Framework

- 4.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (“NPPF”) was published by the Department for Communities and Local Government in February 2019 and is a material consideration in planning decisions.
- 4.5 The Framework says at paragraphs 7 and 8 that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles:
- an economic role – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
 - a social role – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and
 - an environmental role – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.
- 4.6 Paragraph 10 states that so sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 4.7 Paragraph 80 states that planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.
- 4.8 The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment in the NPPF. Paragraph 124 states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

- 4.9 At paragraph 131 the NPPF stipulates that in determining applications, great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.

National Planning Practice Guidance

- 4.10 On 6 March 2014 the DCLG published the National Planning Practice Guidance (“NPPG”) web-based guidance. As it takes the form of guidance, rather than a statement of policy, it is assumed that it has less weight than the NPPF.

REGIONAL PLANNING POLICY – THE LONDON PLAN (MARCH 2021)

- 4.11 The London Plan 2021 is the Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London. It sets out a framework for how London will develop over the next 20-25 years and the Mayor’s vision for Good Growth.
- 4.12 The Plan is part of the statutory development plan for London, meaning that the policies in the Plan should inform decisions on planning applications across the capital. Borough’s Local Plans must be in ‘general conformity’ with the London Plan, ensuring that the planning system for London operates in a joined-up way and reflects the overall strategy for how London can develop sustainably, which the London Plan sets out.
- 4.13 The proposal has taken into account the most relevant LP policies and guidance affecting the proposals for the building. LP policies are referred to, where relevant, in Section 5 (Planning Policy Assessment) of this Statement.
- 4.14 In addition to the LP, the Mayor has produced more detailed strategic guidance of issues, which cannot be addressed in sufficient detail in the Plan, through SPG documents. This does not set out any new policies but provides guidance of policies established by the LP.
- 4.15 The following policies from the LP are considered relevant to the proposals: -
- Policy E1 Offices
 - Policy E2 Providing suitable business space
 - Policy D1 London’s form, character and capacity for growth
 - Policy D3 Optimising site capacity through the design-led approach
 - Policy D4 Delivering good design
 - Policy D5 Inclusive design
 - Policy D14 Noise
 - Policy HC1 Heritage conservation and growth
 - Policy T5 Cycling

LOCAL PLANNING POLICY***Camden Local Plan (2017)***

- 4.16 The Local Plan was adopted by the Council on 3 July 2017 and has replaced the Core Strategy and Camden Development Policies documents as the basis for planning decisions and future development in the borough.
- 4.17 The following Local Plan Policies are considered relevant to the determination of these proposals: -
- D1 – Design
 - D2 - Heritage
 - A1 – Managing the Impact of Development
 - A4 – Noise and Vibration
 - E2 – Employment Premises and Sites

Camden Planning Guidance Documents January 2021

- 4.18 Camden Planning Guidance (CPG) provides advice and information on how the Council will apply their planning policies.
- 4.19 The adopted CPG documents can be 'material considerations' in planning decisions. However, they have less weight than the Local Plan or other development plan documents.
- 4.20 The latest CPG documents were approved by Council on 15 January 2021 following consultation.
- 4.21 Relevant CPG documents to this application include:
- Access for All;
 - Air Quality;
 - Design; and
 - Energy efficiency and adaption.

Other Material Considerations

- The Hatton Garden Conservation Area Appraisal (August 2017).
- 4.22 The next section will consider the key planning issues in respect of the application proposals.

5. PLANNING POLICY ASSESSMENT

5.1 The material planning issues associated within this application include:

- Principle of Development
- Design and Access
- Impact on the Hatton Garden Conservation Area
- Environmental Noise
- Highways

5.2 These issues are assessed below.

Principle of Development

5.3 The NPPF at Paragraph 80 states that planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt.

5.4 The London Plan at Policy E1 states that Improvements to the quality, flexibility and adaptability of office space of different sizes (for micro, small, medium-sized and larger enterprises) should be supported by new office provision, refurbishment and mixed-use development.

5.5 Policy E2 of the Camden Plan 2017 is protective of employment sites. The proposed refurbishment will ensure the continued use for employment. There is no increase in space involved in this application.

5.6 It is therefore considered that the principle of the continued use of the site for employment use acceptable and that the refurbishment and upgrading of the building and floorspace will be supported by planning policies at all levels.

Design and Access

5.7 The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment in the NPPF. Paragraph 124 states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

5.8 Paragraph 130 of the NPPF advocates that development should make use of the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, and in instances where poor design fails to take advantage of such opportunities to improve the environment, permission should be refused.

5.9 At paragraph 131 the NPPF stipulates that in determining applications, great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.

5.10 LP policies D1, D3, D4 and D5 relate to ensuring that development respects the local character of the area, promotes high quality public realm, and ensures that the architecture makes a positive contribution to a coherent public realm, streetscape and wider cityscape.

- 5.11 At a local level Policy D1 Design, states that the Council will seek to secure high quality design in development. The Council will require that development: respects local context and character; preserves or enhances the historic environment and heritage assets and matters of sustainability; uses high quality materials, integrates with its surroundings, is inclusive; is secure and other matters.
- 5.12 The existing facades are to be retained and improved throughout with the existing brickwork cleaned up. Some of the existing windows will be enlarged and windows will be replaced. The increased windows will improve the natural light into the existing offices.
- 5.13 Given the age of the building and its orientation, access for all is a challenge. There is currently a cramped access down a flight of metal basement stairs from Rosebery Avenue and a garage type entrance from Warner Yard. New entrance receptions at Vine Hill and Warner Yard are proposed with internal alterations [which fall outside of the scope of the application] which will create improved access to the building.
- 5.14 The two existing staircases to the offices on Rosebery Avenue will be removed. New pavement lights, rooflights and landscaping are proposed to Rosebery Avenue to provide natural light to office areas below. A small area of additional office floorspace is created as a result of this change, at 25sq.m.
- 5.15 The removal of these staircases also reduces the potential for amenity impacts to the existing residential at ground floor, and focuses the access to the offices from Vine Hill and Warner Yard.
- 5.16 As outlined in Chapter 2 of this report it is noted that planning permission has been granted close to the site for a similar proposal for pavement lights. This alteration also provides an opportunity to improve the frontage of the building by delivering enclosures for the existing residential refuse. This will have a positive impact on the appearance of the existing building from the Rosebery Avenue elevation.
- 5.17 The improvement to the existing yard, and the provision of cycling parking within this area, will provide an enhanced outlook from the offices. This area has been designed to have regard to the proposed Ragged School development proposals.
- 5.18 A new M&E strategy is proposed throughout the building to provide fresh air and heating and cooling.
- 5.19 It is considered that the current proposals would meet the policy requirements of Policy D1 and would deliver a significant enhancement to the existing building, both in terms of the quality of space for tenants and the external appearance of the site.
- 5.20 The applicant has had regard to the CPG Access for all dated March 2019. The improvement to entrances proposed in this application will enable a level access and in the internal works the applicant will be providing an accessible WC.
- 5.21 The proposals are therefore considered to continue to adhere to the objectives of the NPPF, London Plan and Local Plan policies and would deliver a high quality scheme.

Impact on the Hatton Garden Conservation Area

- 5.22 Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that, in the determination of an application, ‘special regard’ is given to ‘the desirability of preserving

a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.'

- 5.23 Paragraph 189 within the National Planning Policy Framework requires the applicant to describe the significance of the heritage asset including any contribution made by its setting.
- 5.24 Paragraph 190 of the NPPF expects local planning authorities to identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset).
- 5.25 As the NPPF indicates, in considering a development proposal, what has to be assessed with regard to the setting is the effect that any change to the setting from the development would have on the heritage significance of the asset concerned.
- 5.26 Paragraph 192 states that in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:-
- *"The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation*
 - *The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*
 - *The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness."*
- 5.27 Paragraph 193 states: *'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, irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.'*
- 5.28 Paragraph 193 further states 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.
- 5.29 A proposal should not lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset unless it can be demonstrated that the harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits (paragraph 195).
- 5.30 Policy D2 is focused on heritage. It is stated the Council will preserve and where appropriate enhance Camden's rich heritage assets and their settings including conservation areas.
- 5.31 Policy D2 is further supported by CPG Design dated March 2019. The applicant has had regard to that CPG in particular its guidance on detailed design and use of materials.
- 5.32 The property is situated in the Hatton Garden Conservation Area. A conservation area appraisal is dated August 2017. The application site is in sub area 1 of the appraisal. It is noted that the architectural character of this area is derived from its large impressive late nineteenth century housing blocks.
- 5.33 It is not a listed building nor an unlisted building of merit. However, the building fronting Rosebery Avenue is noted as a building that makes a positive contribution.

- 5.34 This application seeks to refurbish the existing building and any external alterations will use appropriate materials of the highest quality. It is therefore felt that the current proposals to Vine Hill and Warner Yard will enhance the conservation area.
- 5.35 The alterations to the Rosebery Avenue elevation will provide a positive enhancement to this building, rationalising the ground floor and simplifying the appearance of the building through the removal of the staircases and new waste storage areas.
- 5.36 It is therefore concluded that there would be no harm to the Hatton Garden Conservation Area and that the proposed development would 'preserve and enhance' its setting, in compliance with Section 16 of the NPPF.

Environmental Noise

- 5.37 The London Plan Policy D14 states that development proposals should avoid significant adverse noise impacts on health and quality of life as a result of new development. Also, that development proposals should mitigate and minimise the existing and potential adverse impacts of noise on, from, within, as a result of, or in the vicinity of new development without placing unreasonable restrictions on existing noise-generating uses.
- 5.38 Local Plan Policy A1, Managing the impact of development, states that the Council will grant permission for development unless this causes unacceptable harm to amenity.
- 5.39 An Environmental Noise Report has been submitted in support of this application. The report advises that the proposed replacement plant would not give rise to any concerns in respect of residential amenity.
- 5.40 Given the above, it is considered that the proposed development would cause no significant impact on environmental noise, in accordance with the London Plan and Local Plan policies.

Highways

- 5.41 The proposals remain unchanged in respect of servicing and refuse strategies.
- 5.42 The existing building does not include any cycling parking provision. Any cycle parking provided on site is temporary and provided by the existing tenant rather than the landlord.
- 5.43 The application proposals seek to provide a more permanent cycle parking arrangement and 18 secure spaces are providing within the courtyard. This is the maximum number of cycle parking spaces that can be accommodated within the site boundary given the constraints on external space, and is a significant improvement over the existing situation.

Sustainable Development

- 5.44 In summary, it is considered that the proposed development would meet the objectives of the NPPF and Local Plan and would constitute sustainable development.
- 5.45 As outlined above, there are no adverse impacts associated with the proposals which would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the scheme.

6. CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 In summary, the application seeks full planning permission for the full refurbishment of the building; physical works to the exterior and the creation of a cycle store.
- 6.2 The works involved include (i) a new Vine Hill entrance; (ii) replacement of the existing windows, alterations to the sizes of some of the existing openings, and the cleaning of the exterior to expose the underlying brickwork; (iii) the infilling of two existing staircases to Rosebery Avenue, new “pavement” lights (these are in a front courtyard rather than the pavement) and provision of defined spaces for the existing bin storage; (iv) a new cycle store within the courtyard and (v) the replacement of plant.
- 6.3 As demonstrated within this Statement the proposals accord with planning policies at all levels.
- 6.4 The proposed works will bring the building up to a modern standard and improve the light levels within the office floorspace. The scheme also improves access to the building.
- 6.5 The proposed development would 'preserve and enhance' the setting of the Hatton Garden Conservation Area, in compliance with Section 16 of the NPPF.
- 6.6 In summary, it is considered that the proposed office refurbishment would meet the objectives of the NPPF and the three dimensions of sustainable development. As outlined above, there are no adverse impacts associated with the proposals which would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the scheme. We therefore urge the Council to approve the current application without delay.