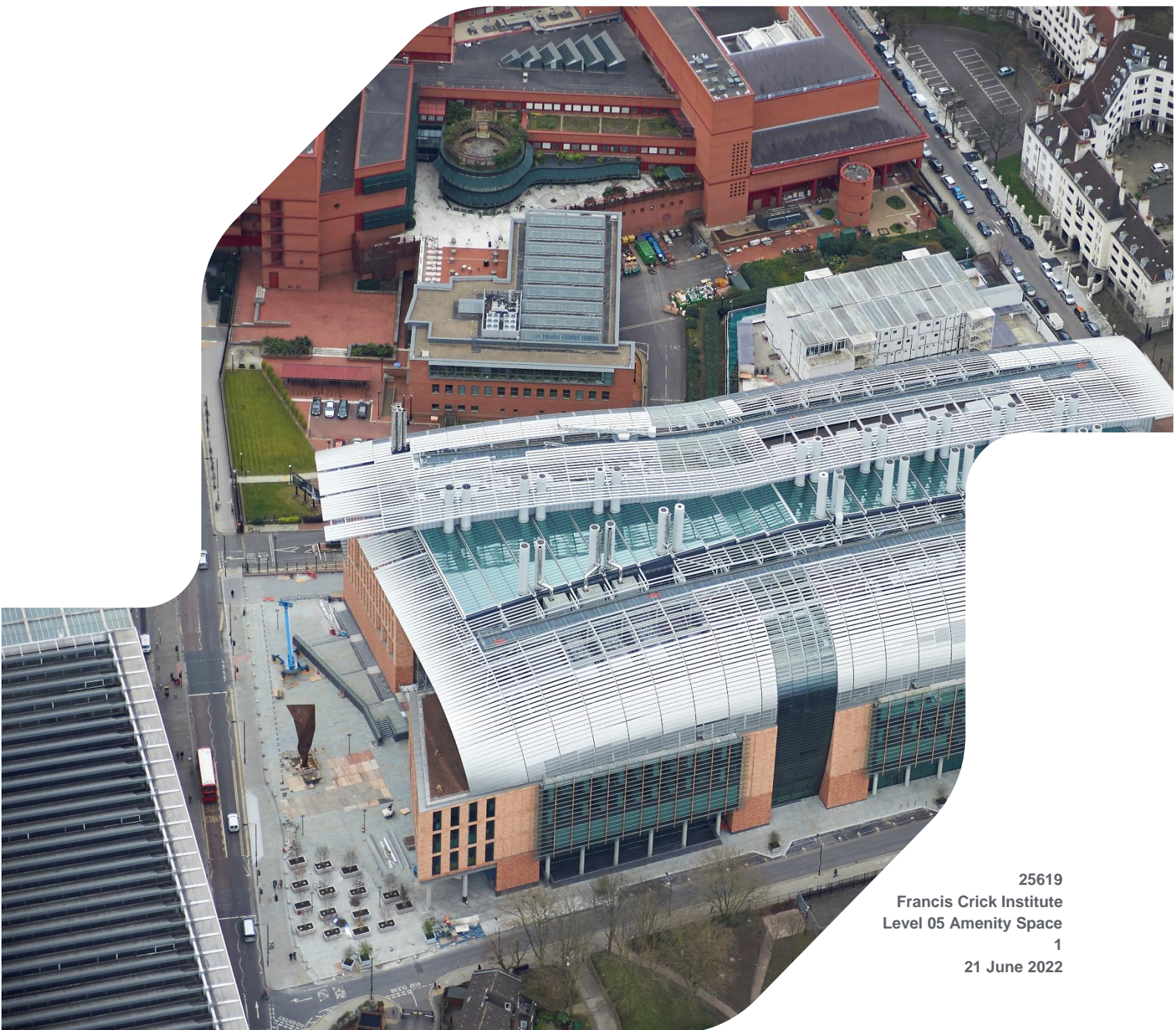


# FRANCIS CRICK INSTITUTE LEVEL 05 AMENITY SPACE

## Planning Statement



25619  
Francis Crick Institute  
Level 05 Amenity Space  
1  
21 June 2022

## PLANNING STATEMENT

### Document status

Version	Purpose of document	Authored by	Reviewed by	Approved by	Review date
1	Planning	Paul Willmott			June 2022

### Approval for issue

Paul Willmott	Signed	21 June 2022
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# 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared to accompany an application for the establishment of a staff amenity area on the flat roof of Level 05, at the eastern end (Midland Road end) of the Francis Crick Institute, Midland Road, London, NW1 1AT.
- 1.2 The application comes about because of two events. The first, the need identified through the recent pandemic to provide external secure amenity space for staff working in the Crick on a day-to-day basis. The second, resulting from the loss of amenity space immediately opposite the Crick, within the Purchase Street Open Space. This area is now being developed for residential purposes, but which was intended to serve the Crick's needs.
- 1.3 In submitting these proposals, the Francis Crick Institute ('The Crick') has been sensitive to the fact that the existing terrace comprises a 'Brown Roof' which, within the original planning permission for the building, was intended to attract local wildlife and be colonised over time by a succession of plant and animal species, adding to the biodiversity value of the area. The brown roofs also formed part of the sustainable drainage scheme for the building.
- 1.4 The application therefore explains how the existing brown roof is performing, having been established more than 5-years ago, how within these proposals it is to be retained and enhanced, and how improvements to the overall biodiversity will meet not only the original expectations for the roof but also result in biodiversity gain, as required by planning policy today.
- 1.5 Overall, the submitted material shows how these proposals will enhance the original specification and confirms that the sustainable drainage scheme incorporated into the brown roof will not be impacted by the proposals. It also considers other environmental impacts, having regards to neighbouring sensitive uses, particularly to the north.
- 1.6 The various Reports and supporting information submitted with this application, and where applicable the methodologies behind them, were discussed and agreed with officers through the Council's formal pre-application process and in follow-up correspondence/engagement. Together they demonstrate how these proposals have been designed to reduce any impacts arising from the proposed development and how they meet policy requirements.



## 2 SITE & SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1 The Level 05 terrace, to which this application relates, forms part of the wider Francis Crick Institute, a biomedical research centre located within the administrative district of the London Borough of Camden. The Crick sits on a site of approximately 1.9 Hectares bound by Ossulston Street to the west, Brill Place to the north, Midland Road to the east and the British Library to the south.
- 2.2 The location of the Level 05 terrace is illustrated in Photo 1.
- 2.3 The site lies adjacent to the King's Cross Conservation Area, whose boundary extends to include a small part of the public realm at the north-eastern corner of the application site, at the junction of Brill Place/Midland Road. The Grade I listed St Pancras Station and former Midland Grand Hotel lie close to the site. None of these areas are impacted by the proposals.
- 2.4 To the northeast of the site is a small residential area accessed through Neville Close and a new tower block, Brill Place Tower, is being erected on the northern side of Brill Place, within part of the Purchase Street Open space. To the south is the British Library, who have recently submitted their own proposals for the development of land between the main library buildings and Dangoor Walk, which runs along the southern side of the Crick. These proposals do not affect any of the surrounding areas or known potential plans.
- 2.5 The site benefits from excellent public transport links and has a Public Transport Accessibility Level of 6b. St. Pancras International is approximately 50m to the east, King's Cross Station approximately 200m beyond and Euston Station is approximately 300m away to the west along Euston Road.
- 2.6 The building is some 91,000 sqm of which the Level 05 terrace comprises 161 sqm. The terrace area is identified in the photo below.

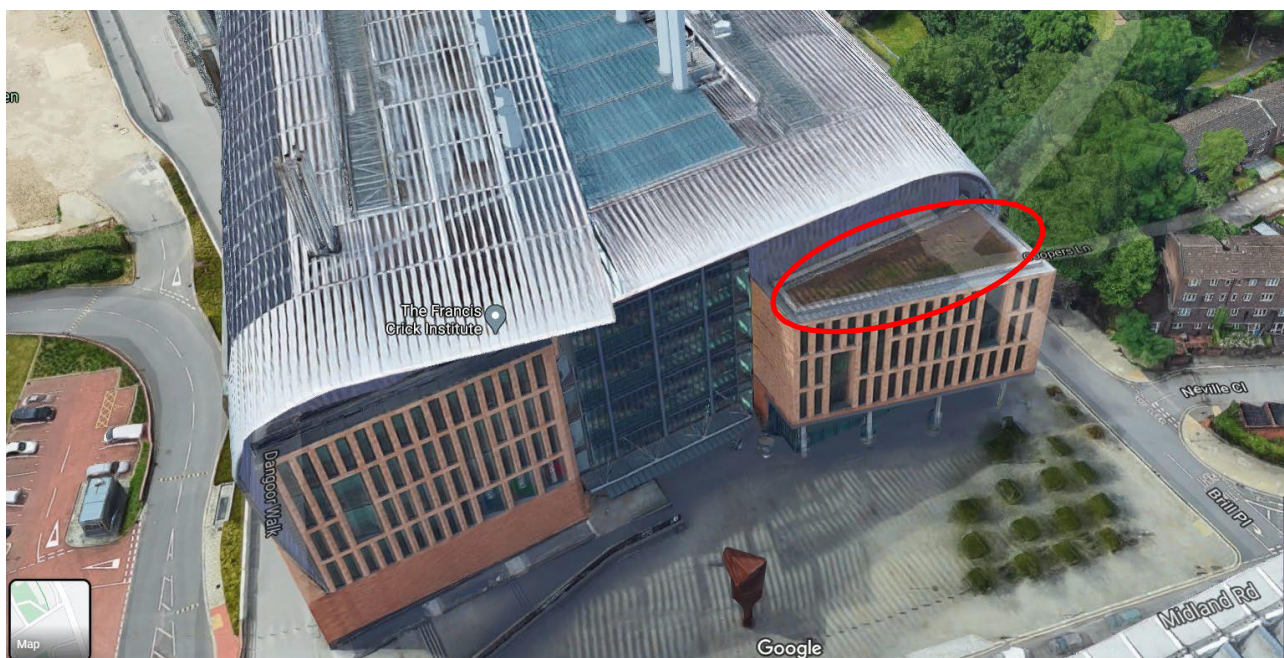


Photo 1 - Location of the proposal.

Source: Google

### 3 PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 There is only one planning application of direct relevance to these proposals, and that is the original Planning permission (2010/4721/P) for the development of The Crick. This was granted in March 2011 for:

*“Development to provide a biomedical research centre including laboratory and research space, lecturing and teaching space, exhibition space and a communal facility; landscape public open spaces; a new pedestrian route between Midland Road and Ossulston Street; a service entrance off Brill Place and a relocated vehicular access from Midland Road to serve the British Library”*

- 3.2 The permission incorporated 365sqm of brown roofs.

- 3.3 Numerous conditions were attached to the original planning permission, but Condition 5 related specifically to brown roofs, as identified on the approved drawings, and required that:

*“full details in respect of brown roofs proposed in the areas indicated on the approved roof plans including substrate and sections shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority before the relevant part of the development commences. The buildings shall not be occupied until the approved details have been implemented and these works shall be permanently retained and maintained thereafter”.*

- 3.4 The implementation requirement of the condition was discharged on 26 September 2012 under Reference 2012/4034/P.

- 3.5 As part of the original planning application, the intent was that the brown roofs would attract local wildlife to the site and to provide opportunities for the nesting of swifts and swallows and for bats. They were also designed to include recycled substrates which would be colonised over time by a succession of plant and animal species, adding to the biodiversity value of the area.

- 3.6 The brown roofs were also designed to form part of the sustainable drainage scheme for the Crick which was described in Chapter 5 of the EIA, para 5.91 as follows:

*Two SUDS elements will be provided on site – brown roofs and geocellular attenuation. There are two roof zones at level 5 and 6 where a brown roof is feasible and so the provision will be limited to these areas. Three underground attenuation tanks will be provided to attenuate the discharge to the public sewers (to a total rate of 40 litres/sec). These tanks will provide quantity control and on-site run-off management. The quality control will be provided by the brown roofs and silt traps in the external gullies and channels.*

- 3.7 The EIA also commented that:

*The landscape design for the site has been developed following the recommendation for ecological enhancement provided by the ecology team. As such, the Proposed Development will incorporate trees, shrubs, brown roofs and bat and bird nesting boxes in the building façades.*

## 4 THE PROPOSAL

### Context

- 4.1 Events of the past two years has resulted in The Crick re-evaluating the wellbeing needs of its staff and recognising that it must provide amenity opportunities for staff within its own complex away from laboratories and breakout/collaboration areas, which are the primary areas outside laboratories.
- 4.2 As part of its original planning application, The Crick made a significant contribution through its S106 agreement to the improvement, maintenance and upkeep of existing open spaces in the vicinity of the development, with these monies being targeted in particular at the Purchase Street Open Space (see S.106 Definitions). The negotiations at the time intended that Crick employees would use the Purchase Street Open Space, to the northern side of Brill Place, and this was one of the influences for the crucible design for the building and the curtain walling in the centre of the Brill place frontage, opposite the open space.
- 4.3 The development of Brill Place tower has placed increased demand on the Crick to provide amenity space for staff in the vicinity of where they work. With the Purchase Street Open Space no longer effectively being adjacent to the main entrance, and therefore no longer convenient for staff, The Crick has looked to see how their existing flat roofs around the building, and the open spaces below the roof profile, might be adapted to provide the necessary facilities.
- 4.4 The Level 05 area, due to its size, proximity to working areas, and the existence of a lift allowing those with disabilities access to it, was identified as a suitable area.
- 4.5 Recognising the role of this area as a brown roof, discussions were held with the Council over the potential to deck over the existing brown roof, whilst retaining its integrity and that of the embedded SuDs system.
- 4.6 This would enable the brown roof to retain some of its ecological capacity in accordance with the original sustainability vision. The science around landscape planning/architecture and biodiversity has evolved considerably since The Crick's application in 2010 and specialist from both professions have worked together to mitigation the impacts of the proposals, as well as enhance and increase the overall biodiversity levels. This mitigation and biodiversity enhancements will be achieved through several methods, ranging from the intensification in use of existing areas, achieved by using plants with a high bio-diversity ration, the incorporation of new landscaping on and around the level 05 decking, but also in other areas around the building including the incorporation of planters etc at Level 02, at the western end of the building.

### The Proposal

- 4.7 This application seeks permission for:  
*"The installation of a permeable deck above the existing brown roof on the eastern end level 05 terrace, together with a refreshment kiosk under the roof eaves, provision of perimeter planters, glass safety screen and additional landscaping"*
- 4.8 The application is accompanied by the following supporting documents:
  - Planning Application Forms
  - CIL Liability Forms
  - Planning Statement
  - Design & Access Statement
  - Preliminary Ecological Assessment

## PLANNING STATEMENT

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- Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment
- Noise Report
- Drainage Statement
- Existing Elevations
- Existing Plans
- Proposed Elevations
- Proposed Plans
- Proposed Section
- Planting Plan
- CGI's of existing and proposed views along Midland Road



## 5 PLANNING POLICY

- 5.1 This section provides a brief overview of the planning policy and guidance which is of relevance to the proposed development. The statement demonstrates how the development complies with key objectives of planning policy and guidance at a national and local level.
- 5.2 In accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), planning applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Under Section 38(2), the development plan for any area within Greater London comprises the Spatial Development Strategy and the development plan documents (taken as a whole) which have been adopted and approved in relation to that area.
- 5.3 The statutory development plan in the London Borough of Camden relevant to the Proposed Development comprises the following:
- The London Plan 2021 (“London Plan”)
  - Camden Local Plan 2017 (“Camden LP”)
- 5.4 According to the Local Development Scheme (August 2021), Camden Council were to undertake an initial assessment of policies within the adopted Local Plan in late 2021 with work on a partial or full review of the Plan anticipated to commence in early 2022 but no detail is currently available.
- 5.5 Material considerations include:
- National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (“NPPF”)
  - Camden Design SPG 2021
- 5.6 Please see below a summary of the relevant planning policies.

### Development Plan Policies

#### Design and Sustainable Construction

- 5.7 London Plan Policy D3 (Optimising site capacity through the design-led approach) states that all development must make the best use of land by following a design-led approach that optimises the capacity of sites. Policy D3 sets out that development proposals should:
- Enhance local context by delivering buildings and spaces that positively respond to local distinctiveness through their layout, orientation, scale, appearance and shape, with due regard to existing and emerging street hierarchy, building types, forms and proportions;
  - Deliver appropriate outlook, privacy and amenity;
  - Provide conveniently located green and open spaces for social interaction, play, relaxation and physical activity;
  - Be of high quality, with architecture that pays attention to detail, and gives thorough consideration to the practicality of use, flexibility, safety and building lifespan through appropriate construction methods and the use of attractive, robust materials which weather and mature well; and
  - Provide spaces and buildings that maximise opportunities for urban greening to create attractive resilient places that can also help the management of surface water.
- 5.8 London Plan Policy D5 (Inclusive Design) requires development proposals to achieve the highest standards of accessible and inclusive design by:

- Providing high quality people focused spaces that are designed to facilitate social interaction and inclusion;
- Be convenient and welcoming with no disabling barriers, providing independent access without additional undue effort, separation or special treatment; and
- Be able to be entered, used and exited safely, easily and with dignity for all.

5.9 Camden LP Policy C6 (Access for all) seeks to promote fair access and remove the barriers that prevent everyone from accessing facilities and opportunities. The policy states that the Council will expect all buildings and places to meet the highest practicable standards of accessible and inclusive design so they can be used safely, easily and with dignity by all.

5.10 Camden LP Policy A1 (Managing the impact of development) confirms that planning permission will not be granted for development that causes unacceptable harm to amenity. The Council will ensure that the amenity of communities, occupiers and neighbours is protected and take into consideration outlook, sunlight/daylight, artificial lighting levels, transport impacts, noise and odour.

5.11 Camden LP Policy D1 (Design) places great emphasis on high quality design in development. Camden Council will require that development:

- Respects local context and character;
- Is sustainable in design and construction, incorporating best practice in resource management and climate change mitigation and adaptation;
- Comprises details and materials that are of high quality and complement the local character;
- Is inclusive and accessible for all;
- Promotes health;
- Is secure and designed to minimise crime and antisocial behaviour;
- Incorporates high quality landscape design and maximises opportunities for greening (for example through planting of trees and other soft landscaping); and
- Carefully integrates building services equipment.

5.12 The Council will resist development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.

5.13 Explanatory paragraph 7.23 emphasises that private outdoor amenity space, including roof terraces, can add significantly to one's quality of life and applicants are therefore encouraged to explore all options for the provision of new private outdoor space.

### Natural Environment and Biodiversity

5.14 London Plan Policy GG3 (Creating a healthy city) states that those involved in planning and development must plan for improved access to and quality of green spaces, the provision of new green infrastructure and spaces for recreation.

5.15 London Plan Policy G5 (Urban Greening) encourages development proposals to contribute to the greening of London by including urban greening as a fundamental element of site and building design, and by incorporating measures such as high-quality landscaping.

5.16 London Plan Policy G6 (Biodiversity and access to nature) advises that development proposals should manage impacts on biodiversity and aim to secure net biodiversity gain. This should be informed by the best available ecological information and addressed from the start of the development process.

5.17 Camden LP Policy A2 (Open Space) encourages developments to seek opportunities for providing private amenity space. Further information on amenity space is provided in explanatory paragraph 6.49 where roof terraces are referenced and identified as being greatly valued.

5.18 Camden LP Policy A3 (Biodiversity) states that the Council will assess developments against their ability to realise benefits for biodiversity through the layout, design and materials used in the built structure and landscaping elements of a proposed development. The Council will also seek to improve opportunities to experience nature, where such opportunities are lacking, and expect development proposals to incorporate additional trees and vegetation wherever possible.

### Sustainable Drainage

5.19 London Plan Policy SI 13 (Sustainable Drainage) states that development proposals should aim to achieve greenfield run-off rates and ensure that surface water run-off is managed as close to its source as possible. There should also be a preference for green over grey features, in line with the following drainage hierarchy:

- 1) Rainwater use as a resource (for example rainwater harvesting, blue roofs for irrigation)
- 2) Rainwater infiltration to ground at or close to source
- 3) Rainwater attenuation in green infrastructure features for gradual release (for example green roofs, rain gardens)
- 4) Rainwater discharge direct to a watercourse (unless not appropriate)
- 5) Controlled rainwater discharge to a surface water sewer or drain
- 6) Controlled rainwater discharge to a combined sewer

5.20 Development proposals for impermeable surfacing should normally be resisted unless they can be shown to be unavoidable, including on small surfaces such as front gardens and driveways.

5.21 Drainage should be designed and implemented in ways that promote multiple benefits including increased water use efficiency, improved water quality, and enhanced biodiversity, urban greening, amenity and recreation.

5.22 Camden LP Policy CC2 (Adapting to climate change) advises that all development should adopt appropriate climate change adaptation measures such as:

- Promoting new appropriate green infrastructure;
- Not increasing, and wherever possible reducing, surface water runoff through increasing permeable surfaces and use of Sustainable Drainage Systems; and
- Incorporating bio-diverse roofs, combination green and blue roofs and green walls where appropriate.

5.23 Camden LP Policy CC3 (Water and flooding) requires development to:

- Incorporate water efficiency measures;
- Avoid harm to the water environment and improve water quality;
- Consider the impact of development in areas at risk of flooding (including drainage); and
- Utilise Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) in line with the drainage hierarchy to achieve a greenfield run-off rate where feasible.

## **Material Considerations**

### National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

5.24 The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 20 July 2021. It is the document which sets out the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement

of sustainable development and that there are three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways. These are:

- An economic objective;
- A social objective; and,
- An environmental objective.

5.25 At the heart of the NPPF is a clear presumption in favour of sustainable development and there is an expectation for local authorities to plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development and to approve proposals which comply with an up to date development plan as quickly as possible, and where there are no relevant policies, to do so unless there is a clear reason for refusing or which would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

5.26 Paragraph 174 of the NPPF advises that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing sites of biodiversity (Para 174(a)), minimise impacts to the environment and providing net gains for biodiversity, including 'establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures' (Para 174(d)), preventing new and existing development from contributing to unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability and help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality (Para 174(e)) and remediate and mitigate degraded land where appropriate (Para 174(f)).

5.27 When determining applications, applications should be refused if significant harm to biodiversity cannot be avoided or mitigated against, and applications that conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported (Para 180).

### [Camden Design SPG 2021](#)

5.28 Camden is committed to excellence in design and the SPG advises that schemes should consider, amongst other criteria, the following:

- The context of a development and its surrounding area;
- The design of the building itself;
- The use and function of buildings;
- Using good quality sustainable materials;
- *Creating well connected public spaces and good quality public realm;*
- Opportunities for promoting health and well-being; and,
- *Opportunities for improving the character and quality of an area.*



## 6 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 The principal issues associated with this application are whether the proposals will:

- Affect the original purpose of the brown roof at Level 05 as an area seeking to encourage biodiversity and to provide a sustainable drainage scheme to serve the building.
- Result in an increase of biodiversity over the existing brown roof having regard to its expected performance in 2010 and in its current state.
- Lead to any adverse impacts on neighbouring properties, including specifically the residential uses to the north.
- Impact the overall street scene and views of the building generally.
- Comply with other policies of the statutory development plan.

In this section of the Planning Statement, we are taking each aspect in turn.

### Original Purpose of the Brown Roof

6.2 As part of the original planning application, the brown roofs were provided with the aim of attracting the local wildlife, and specifically black redstarts. The design included recycled substrates which it was hoped would be colonised over time by a variety of plant and animal species, adding to the biodiversity value of the area. The roofs also incorporated a sustainable drainage system, designed to manage water attenuation from the roof of the building.

6.3 In bringing forward the current proposals, the Crick was aware of its obligations under Condition 5 to the original planning permission that required/s:

*“Full details in respect of brown roofs proposed in the areas indicated on the approved roof plans including substrate and sections shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority before the relevant part of the development commences. The buildings shall not be occupied until the approved details have been implemented and these works shall be permanently retained and maintained thereafter”.*

The first part of the condition was discharged on 26 September 2012 under Reference 2012/4034/P but the second element to the condition requires it to be retained and maintained thereafter.

6.4 Firstly, it should be noted that when the original proposals for the Crick were being brought forward, the level of technical knowledge associated with both green and brown roofs was at a very early stage and consequently there were no performance targets or requirements attached to the permission, only the requirement to retain and maintain the roof as approved.

6.5 Secondly, the Level 05 brown roof also form part of the sustainable drainage scheme for the Crick which was described in Chapter 5 of the EIA, para 5.91 as follows:

*“Two SUDS elements will be provided on site – brown roofs and geocellular attenuation. There are two roof zones at level 5 and 6 where a brown roof is feasible and so the provision will be limited to these areas. Three underground attenuation tanks will be provided to attenuate the discharge to the public sewers (to a total rate of 40 litres/sec). These tanks will provide quantity control and on-site run-off management. The quality control will be provided by the brown roofs and silt traps in the external gullies and channels.*

6.6 Having regard to both provisions, the Crick recognised that it would need to look carefully at both the brown roof itself and the drainage scheme. Retaining the purpose of these and improving biodiversity became the primary focus for the design evolution which is reflected in this

submission. The approach was discussed with Officers through the pre-application process and the issues and methodology of approach agreed in advance. The key element was to ensure that not only would the proposals preserve the biodiversity contribution that the existing brown roofs provide but also to ensure that the proposals led to a net gain to meet policy requirements, in addition to preserving the sustainable drainage scheme.

- 6.7 The proposals, as illustrated on the accompanying plans, have had specific regard to these factors. The design vision has sought to minimise impacts on the existing brown roof and to ensure that the drainage scheme is completely unaffected by the proposals. The design, as described in the Design & Access Statement, retains both the brown roof and drainage scheme through the creation of a frame above the existing brown roof on which metal permeable decking will be laid. This decking will be permeable, so that rainwater can pass easily through it to the brown roof and drainage tanks below. Within the surface areas will be cut out and planted with high value biodiversity flora, as detailed on the landscape plans, and the decking itself will be able to be lifted to maintain the brown roof, drainage scheme and landscaping below. In areas plants will be used that will grow through the decking. Furthermore, planters (the majority of which will be moveable) will sit on the deck adding further landscaping and biodiversity components.
- 6.8 In agreement with the Council, three studies/reports were commissioned that accompany this application. These reports are:
- A detailed and comprehensive Preliminary Ecological Appraisal;
  - A Biodiversity Assessment; and,
  - A Drainage Statement.
- 6.9 These provide technical assessments to underpin the design vision, as described above, and assess whether the proposals would affect the original role and purpose of the brown roofs, in accordance with their original intent, as well as assessing the effectiveness and contribution that the existing brown roof provides. They also set out how biodiversity will be improved by the proposals and confirm that the existing drainage scheme would not be affected.
- 6.10 The surveys show that parts of the existing brown roof have failed given the height of the building and the orientation of the elevation in which the level 05 terrace is located. This has occurred despite ongoing maintenance efforts by the Crick, and principally due to a lack of sunlight falling on the brown roof. Much of the brown roof being in shadow from the barrel roof structure above. Whilst elements of the existing brown roof have sustained a degree of flora growth, the design of the building itself, which were factors not known when the Crick's own design was evolving, has meant that the roof has failed to achieve the original intent for it.
- 6.11 As set out in the Ecological Assessment, opportunities for nesting will be enhanced through:
- Provision of Woodstone built-in open nest box and/or 2HW Schwegler nest boxes designed specifically for black redstarts.
  - More common boxes, such as 1SP Schwegler Sparrow Terrace or Vivara Pro Seville woodstone nest boxes to be installed around level 02 and 05 and in the street garden.
  - Installation of an insect box within Level 05.
- Bird boxes will be installed on the existing biodiverse roof, underneath the new terraced area and/or within the street-level gardens, and predominantly facing the northeastern side of the building to avoid the strongest sunlight and the wettest winds.
- 6.12 This submission therefore complies with the following policies:
- Camden LP Policy D5 (Inclusive Design) – by providing a high quality people focused amenity space designed to facilitate social interaction and inclusion, whilst be convenient and welcoming, as well as accessible to all staff in a practicable and safe manner.

- Camden LP Policy A1 (Managing the impact of development) – These proposals seek to provide greater amenity space for staff working in the Crick and to replace that which has been lost through the development of the Brill Place Tower. The location is in an area that meets the design criteria set out in the policy.
- London Plan Policy G3 (Creating a healthy city) and G5 (Urban greening) – The proposals seek to enhance an existing underperforming brown roof in addition to adding more urban-greening through new and improved high quality landscaping. It also provides access to the staff of the Crick to a new amenity area that will benefit their health and wellbeing.
- Camden LP Policy A2 (Open Space) – the proposals directly respond to this policy which promotes the provision of new private open space, including that to serve employees, and the supporting paragraphs, specifically paragraph 6.49, refer to the benefits of roof terraces and identifies them as being greatly valued.
- London Plan Policy SI13 (Sustainable drainage), Camden LP Policies CC2 (Adapting to climate change) and CC3 (Water and flooding) – These proposals do not affect the existing sustainable drainage scheme operating on level 05 and have been designed to ensure that the new decking is wholly permeable and does not affect the efficiency of the scheme. No additional run off will be created by the proposals either.

6.13 In addition, the proposals do not impact the existing condition 5 as the existing brown roof will continue to be retailed and maintained under these proposals.

### Biodiversity

- 6.14 As part of this submission a Biodiversity Assessment has been prepared to demonstrate that these proposals will leave biodiversity in a better state than before. The approach to, and methodology for, this assessment was agreed with the Council's Ecology Officer as part of the pre-application process.
- 6.15 The purpose of the Level 5 brown roof, as set out in the original planning application for the Crick, was predominantly to provide habitat for black redstarts. However, owing to the height of the building and elevation of the Level 5 terrace, part of the roof had failed to establish due to a lack of sunlight and the prevailing wind directions.
- 6.16 Notwithstanding this, it was agreed with the Council's ecologist that the condition of the roof should be taken to be that of which should be present, if the habitat had succeeded as originally intended, under the original planning approval, rather than the poorer condition that it was now demonstrating.
- 6.17 On this basis the existing brown roof would be graded a moderate habitat condition. However, as the conditions do not favour the establishment of an green roof system here (nor is it likely they would ever, owing to the wind and heavy shading), the true grading of the roof falls within the 'fairly poor' category as a result.
- 6.18 The proposals are that the existing biodiverse roof will sit below a metal grate system. The existing brown roof will be enhanced with a species mix which aims to provide a more intensive roof area. This will comprise a range of groundcover and grass species (similar to wildflower mounds), as outlined in the landscaping plans. It is expected these areas will grow up through a wider metal grate system (as illustrated on the accompanying drawings).
- 6.19 Species here have been chosen to be of specific benefit to wildlife and include a range of pollinators. The management of these areas will include regular watering and maintenance, to ensure establishment of the intended species, along with periodic weed removal (as necessary). These areas will be monitored on an annual basis for the first five years following establishment, to ensure they are performing as intended.

- 6.20 These measures will increase the existing brown roofs habitat condition to fairly good.
- 6.21 Areas of introduced planting will also be included as part of these proposals along the southern boundary of the Level 5 terrace. These areas include species which have been chosen with biodiversity in mind and include a variety of pollinators (both native and non-native). Introduced planting however is, by default, given a habitat condition of poor.
- 6.22 Overall, the existing biodiverse roof and hardstanding achieved a score of 0.06 biodiversity units. Following the implementation of the proposals, comprising the refurbishment and retention of the existing biodiverse roof; the planting of new select areas intensive green roof areas, and shrub planting, the outcome would be a gain of +5.34%.
- 6.23 Having regard to the development plan, this would meet the requirements of:
- London Plan Policy G6 (Biodiversity and access to nature) – in that the proposals result in a net gain in biodiversity levels on what is a difficult and challenging site/proposal.
  - Camden LP Policy A3 (Biodiversity) – where the Council expects developments to achieve a net gain over the existing situation. The policy recognises that biodiversity gain is achieved through a variety of measures, whereas in this case the ability to do so is limited to primarily the enhancement of existing landscaping and the introduction of new planting.

### Potential Impacts on Neighbouring Properties

- 6.24 Careful consideration was given to the potential impact that these proposals might have to those occupying the residential properties to the north of the site, specifically those in Coopers Lane, Neville Close and in the Brill Place Tower, which is currently under construction.
- 6.25 The proposed terrace benefits from the shielding effect that the existing barrel roof provides along its northern elevation, dropping to below the proposed surface level of the decking. This screens those properties in Coopers Lane and in Brill Place Tower from any effects arising from light seepage, albeit none is expected.
- 6.26 Along the remainder of the northern side of the terrace, the amenity area has been pulled back by an area of substantial raised landscaping to reduce any visual impact for those in Neville Close and/or looking down Midland Road (north to south). This is illustrated on the CGI's submitted with the application.
- 6.27 As such, none of the properties will be impacted by views of the terrace, and this includes those in Brill Place Tower due to the landscaping area along the northern boundary and on the north-eastern corner.
- 6.28 It should be noted that no light columns are proposed as part of the development and all lighting, less the existing elevation flood lighting, will be low level built into the seating and planters. As a consequence, there is unlikely to be any light pollution/seepage from the terrace area.
- 6.29 Consideration has also been given to noise issues and the application is submitted with an acoustic report.
- 6.30 That report found, having carried out a baseline noise monitoring survey and prepared associated noise models that noise related to the proposed uses does not pose a material constraint to the operation of the proposed amenity areas.
- 6.31 However, as set out in the acoustic report the assessment was carried out on the basis that the terrace, once in operation would only be used during the following hours:
- 08:00 – 22:00 hours from Monday to Friday; and
  - 09:00 – 20:00 hours at weekends and bank holidays
- 6.32 The assessment also factored in the likelihood that ambient background music and the occasional use of PA system for potential talks /speeches would occur within this area and that some



amplified music might also occur. The assessment identified that the predicted noise emissions from amplified music and amplified speech fell significantly below the existing background noise levels at the neighbouring sensitive receptors and in assessment terms the impact was 'negligible'.

- 6.33 The assessment concluded that noise related to the proposed uses does not pose a material constraint to the operation of the proposed amenity areas.
- 6.34 As such, in term of the requirements of Camden LP Policy A1 (Managing the impact of development) there would be no adverse impact on the residential properties to the north, or elsewhere, from an acoustic, light or visual context.
- 6.35 Whilst the acoustic assessment demonstrates that the impact of the proposals would be negligible on properties to the north, including situations where amplified voice and music might be used, and as such it would not be justifiable to impose a condition on the use of the terrace, the Crick would accept a condition that reflects the detail in paragraph 6.23 above.

### Impact to the Street Scene

- 6.36 In developing this submission, the Crick has also had special regard to the architectural merits of the building and its position in respect to the wider street scene. It is an iconic building that has won a number of architectural awards and accordingly it has been necessary to ensure that these proposals do not detract from that. As set out above, the layout of the proposed terrace has had regard to these elements.
- 6.37 The raised planting beds are set back 1400mm from the existing balustrade and back from the inside edge of the maintenance path that runs alongside the safety balustrade. Low level lighting is to be used to reduce light spill, and having regards to long distance views, the only structure is the proposed kiosk, to be located in the eaves of the barrel roof. This will be of a material and colour that will blend in with the existing building and make the kiosk indiscernible when viewed from afar – the only visual plain in which it will be seen.
- 6.38 Regard was also given to those building in the vicinity that had the ability to look across the proposed terrace, rather than looking up to it from road level. The adjacent building, St Pancras International, was the only principal building at the same height as the terrace and with direct views towards it. Given the nature of the station use, it was not considered that it would be adversely affected by the proposals, and the St Pancras building itself would also shield the terrace from longer distance views.
- 6.39 Consideration was also given to Brill Place Tower where views are oblique in nature, but the existing roof would shield the terrace. Consequently, it was also considered that the tower would not be materially impacted by the proposals either.
- 6.40 Overall, the proposed terrace has been designed to minimise the impact to the street scene and the application is accompanied by 2 sets of existing and proposed CGI's to demonstrate this point.
- 6.41 This complies with the following policies:
- Camden LP Policy A1 (Managing the impact of development) – due regard has been given to issues of outlook, lighting, noise and on the general street scene.
  - Camden LP Policy D1 (Design) – the design, through the setting back of the amenity area from the edge of the existing brown roof has had regard to the local context and character of the building and its status as a building of architectural interest. This approach has also maximised the opportunity for greening whilst retaining all of the existing features.
- 6.42 It should be noted that the proposals also include the installation of a fall arrest system around the edge of the existing brown roof, in the inside of the maintenance path. This comprises a cable that runs a few centimetres above the existing surface level to which individuals attach a safety

wire. This is a general safety improvement to the building and is not a requirement arising from these proposals.

### Other Issues

6.43 These proposals also comply with the following policy requirements:

- Camden LP Policy C6 (Access for all) – although the proposed amenity area is located at the front of the building, the approach to access has had regard to the requirement of both able and less able people. Access is via both stairs and lifts and floor levels have been designed to provide for those using mobility devices, including wheelchairs, with level access and inclines better than the minimum required standards.
- Camden LP Policy A1 (Managing the impact of development) – Comments on how the proposals complies with this policy for occupants is set out above. In addition, consideration has been given to how the proposals might impact the amenities of neighbours and the wider communities. The design has been set back from the edge not just for safety reasons but to ensure there is no impact on the overall street scene. A detailed acoustic report has been prepared and submitted with the proposals that demonstrates that there would be no adverse impact on noise sensitive developments around the building.
- Camden LP Policy D1 (Design) – these proposals have stayed true to the original design principles of the Crick building. The approach has had regard to the context of the building in the townscape and on the local environment. It has sought to minimise those impacts. The design caters for all within the building who will use this space and it is a direct response to health and wellbeing needs of staff; identified through the Covid pandemic and arising from the loss of adjacent space caused by the development of the Brill Place Tower.

6.44 In addition, it supports and adheres to the guidance set out in a variety of Supplementary Guidance such as:

- Camden Design SPG 2021.
- National Planning Policy Framework.
- National Planning Policy Guidelines.

## 7 CONCLUSION.

- 7.1 This application seeks to establish a staff amenity area on the flat roof of Level 05 at the eastern end of the Francis Crick Institute, fronting Midland Road.
- 7.2 The existing roof is a designated brown roof which formed part of the original planning application for the Crick and was identified primarily to provide a site for the nesting of Black Redstarts. However, the Crick has failed to meet its biodiversity objective due to the height of the roof, wind conditions over the site and the fact that the brown roof sits in shade, due to the design of the roof extension above.
- 7.3 Accordingly, in addition to providing the amenity provision, the proposals have had regard to the original intent and do not propose the loss of the existing brown roof but rather seek to enhance it and give it a new lease of life, augmented with additional planting. Overall, the proposals see a net gain in the biodiversity level of the site through these enhancements to an existing area of landscaping.
- 7.4 This will be achieved by enhancements to the brown roof itself and then decking over the brown roof with permeable metal panels through which plants can grow. Planters, on the new decking will augment the brown roof refurbishment but also serve to create a barrier between the amenity area and the edge of Level 05, reducing any impact on the neighbouring properties to the north, and to the general townscape/street scene.
- 7.5 Consideration has also been given to the potential impacts of the development in terms of noise and light seepage on adjoining properties, including future residents of Brill Place Tower, and these would be negligible at best.
- 7.6 Overall, we would commend these proposals to you and highlight that they meet the provisions of the statutory development plan, and do not compromise any provision of acknowledged importance. Accordingly, we trust that the Council would consider these proposals favourably and grant planning permission.