

**3-5 Bedford Row and 3-5 Jockey's Fields, London**

**Planning Statement**

**October 2022**

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**Appendix 1 Planning History**

**Appendix 2 Market Report**

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared to support an application for Full Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent for 3-5 Bedford Row and 3-5 Jockey's Fields. The description of development is:

*“Internal refurbishment of 3-5 Bedford Row and 3-5 Jockey's Fields for continuing commercial use of the building (Class E), together with external alterations to all elevations, and the erection of roof extensions at fourth, third and second floor levels, roof terraces at levels four and three and basement courtyard garden, green roofs, cycle parking, waste/recycling storage, plant, and other associated works.”*

- 1.2 The application is submitted on behalf of Frogmore (FREPA Bedford Row Limited), which is the freehold owner of the building having acquired it earlier this year.

### Application Documents

- 1.3 This Planning Statement describes the application site, surrounding area and planning history in Section 2 and the proposed development in Section 3. Section 4 refers to the planning policy context and Section 5 provides a planning assessment having regard to the key considerations. A conclusion is provided at Section 6.

- 1.4 This Planning Statement should be read in conjunction with the application forms and ownership certificate, Community Infrastructure Levy forms, drawings, and the following supporting documents:

- Design and Access Statement, prepared by HUT Architecture.
- Heritage Appraisal, prepared by The Heritage Practice.
- Housing Study, prepared by Daniel Watney LLP and HUT Architecture.
- Sustainability Statement, including a BREEAM Pre-Assessment, prepared by Elliot Wood Partnership.
- Energy Statement, including a Low Carbon Feasibility Study, prepared by Elliot Wood Partnership.
- Flood Risk Assessment, prepared by Elliot Wood Partnership.
- Drainage Strategy, prepared by Elliot Wood Partnership.
- Fire Statement, prepared by Bespoke.
- Structural Report, prepared by Elliot Wood.
- MEP Report, prepared by Cream Engineering Services.
- Draft Construction Management Logistics Plan, prepared by Milestone.
- Workplace Travel Plan, prepared by Milestone.
- Noise Assessment, prepared by RBA Acoustics.
- Daylight and Sunlight Report, prepared by Point 2.

### Pre-application Consultation

- 1.5 The application has been preceded by two meetings with Planning and Conservation and Design Officers and the receipt of broadly supportive written guidance. A meeting has been held with Historic England and in February it confirmed that it does not wish to raise any objection. A site visit was undertaken with the Bloomsbury Conservation Area Advisory Committee in August, following which the Committee advised that they had no comment on the proposal.

## 2. Site and Surrounding Area

- 2.1 The application site has the highest PTAL rating achievable of 6b, with the nearest underground station being Chancery Lane, a 5-minute walk away. The location is predominantly commercial, and the immediately neighbouring properties are in office use. Bedford Row has a Georgian character, albeit several properties have been largely or partially rebuilt, or heavily altered over time. Jockey's Fields has also been subject to significant change from a mews serving properties on Bedford Row, and now includes a variety of styles and scales of building along its length.
- 2.2 This office building of 2,685sqm GIA is located at the southern end of Bedford Row. It has a frontage to Bedford Row in the style of a three Georgian townhouse, over basement, ground and three upper storeys. This connects via a modern, narrow, and unattractive link over basement, ground and one storey to a Jockey's Fields element, which comprises basement floorspace and car park accessed via metal gates at street level and a ramp, ground and two upper storeys and has a mews style.
- 2.3 The building lies within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area and is grade II listed. However, it was bomb damaged during World War II, rebuilt in the early 1960s as referred to in the Heritage Appraisal, and has been altered again up to the 1990s including through the addition of partitions, staircase, and service core alterations and when a filing storage area was created within a covered basement car park. A schedule of the site's planning history is at Appendix 1.
- 2.4 No original fabric remains, and the building is essentially a facsimile. The building's surviving significance is derived from the contribution that the facsimile front facade makes towards the group value of the Bedford Row terrace. The Historic England list entry is for the group of seven Georgian style terraced houses along the street, rather than an individual entry for this building.
- 2.5 There is plant spread externally across the site and an unsympathetic roof top structure and stair core on top of the Bedford Row element are visible from Gray's Inn Garden to the east which is a grade II\* registered park. The Jockey's Fields façade and mansard top floor (also with a plant structure on top) are of poor quality, and this element of the site is a storey lower than the adjoining property to the north which has been extended in the past.
- 2.6 The building has a long association with office use, however, is disjointed with a complicated and highly cellular internal layout, multiple mis- matched levels, low floor to ceiling heights in part, limited natural light, poor sustainability credentials (the EPC rating is E) and is in a very poor state of repair. It was last refurbished in 2005. It has been vacant for approximately two years and there has been little interest from occupiers despite a comprehensive marketing campaign offering reasonable and flexible terms by two agents.
- 2.7 The feedback received has been that occupiers would prefer the space if the floor levels were better aligned, if external amenity areas such as terraces were available, if a new passenger lift was installed in the Jockey's Fields side of the building, and if the building was substantially refurbished and reconfigured to future proof its environmental credentials. In short, it is not well suited to modern office requirements and is fast becoming obsolete, particularly given an on-going structural shift in demand and expectations following the pandemic. Further information on the building's shortcomings and the market context is provided at Appendix 2.

### 3. The Proposed Development

- 3.1 Full details of the proposed development are provided in the Design and Access Statement. The scheme responds to current office market requirements to bring the building back in to use, as well as to the building's heritage and to most recent planning policies and standards.
- 3.2 The office floorspace will be upgraded and refurbished. Modern partitioning will be removed to provide open floorplans and flexible space to meet a range of requirements.
- 3.3 A single storey, set back extension will be provided to Bedford Row in a form that reflects the butterfly roofs and 'chimney' features along the wider terrace. New rear closet wings, which were original features lost from the building and are common along Bedford Row, will be reinstated to conceal plant and a fire escape. The existing mansard to Jockey's Fields will be remodelled to a shear elevation. A single storey mansard extension above, and a light-weight extension to the connecting link, will bring their height to broadly the same as the neighbouring building to the north, and to the established height of Jockey's Fields more generally. These sensitive extensions will optimize the site's potential. A total of 3,390sqm GIA of floorspace will be provided. This will be an uplift of 705sqm.
- 3.4 The building's external elevations will be refurbished. The windows on the Bedford Row façade will be replaced with like for like double glazing, the downpipes realigned with the former party walls and brick work soot washed to blend to a greater extent with the rest of the terrace. The street level railings will be repainted. Traditional coach type door openings will be provided at ground floor level to Jockey's Fields, the existing metal gates to the street replaced with a set of solid timber doors, the upper floor windows replaced, down pipes realigned, and the elevation soot washed to provide a utilitarian, mews character.
- 3.5 A courtyard garden at basement level will replace the existing car parking and ramp. External roof top terraces are also proposed, together with the amenities now expected by occupiers such as a dedicated cycle entrance, storage for 34 bicycles, and shower facilities together with a central refuse collection area, and a new lift/core within the Jockey's Fields element. The building's sustainability credentials will be improved through accommodating elements including green roofs and PV panels, and the M&E upgrade generally to improve energy efficiency.

#### 4. Planning Policy Framework

- 4.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this case, the Development Plan comprises the London Plan (2021) and the Camden Local Plan (2017).
- 4.2 Material considerations include the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which was last updated in 2021, together with the Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (2011), Housing CPG (Camden Planning Guidance, 2021), Design CPG (2021), Energy Efficiency and Adaption CPG (2021) and the Employment Sites and Business Premises CPG (2021).
- 4.3 The planning policy context is interlinked with a statutory requirement that the desirability of preserving features of special architectural or historic interest be considered in assessing an application for Listed Building Consent.

#### Designations

- 4.4 The Council's policy map shows that the site is subject to the following designations:
- Central Activities Zone (CAZ)
  - Central London Area.
  - Bloomsbury Conservation Area.
  - Strategic View Wider Setting Consultation Area - Background (Protected Views 5A.2 and 6A.1).  
The proposed development will not exceed the 52.1m AOD threshold of this view and therefore, this designation is not relevant.
- 4.5 Key related policies are referred to in Section 5.

## 5. Planning Assessment

5.1 The following section provides an assessment of the proposal against the key planning considerations.

### **The Principle, Heritage Considerations and Design Generally**

5.2 Paragraphs 184 and 185 of the NPPF refer to the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable use consistent with their conservation. London Plan Policy HC1(C) and Policy D2 of the Local Plan state that development proposals affecting heritage assets should be sympathetic to the assets' significance.

5.3 Section 12 of the NPPF sets out the Government's guidance for achieving well designed places generally. Policies D2 and D3 of the London Plan together with D1 of the Local Plan seek high quality design which respects the local context and character, preserving or enhancing the historic environment.

5.4 3-5 Bedford Row and 3-5 Jockey's Fields is a vacant, grade II listed office building. Whilst it has a long association with office use, it was last in use approximately two years ago. The building has been marketed by two agents, unsuccessfully. The direct feedback from occupiers has been that the building is not well suited to modern working practices or expectations because it is disjointed, has a complicated internal layout and multiple, mis-matched levels, has no external amenity space and has very poor sustainability credentials.

5.5 The fundamental objective of the development, as guided by the heritage policies of the NPPF, London Plan and Local Plan and in the context that policies for the CAZ also support and protect employment sites, is to bring the vacant heritage asset back into use as an office, to ensure that it is conserved, and its significance is preserved. To achieve a new letting/s, improvement to the quality of office accommodation is critical and therefore should hold great weight.

5.6 The detail of design has been heritage-led. The building was bomb damaged during World War II, rebuilt during the 1960s and has subsequently been altered. Accordingly, there will be no loss of historic fabric, or any feature of demonstrable historic significance. Most works to improve the office floorspace will be internal or to the centre of the site, which have a low significance, and will not be visible from the public realm.

5.7 The reinstatement of closet wings and the single storey, set back extension to the Bedford Row element will tidy and improve upon the plant and roof top structures that currently exist and will be invisible from Bedford Row. The 'chimney' features may be glimpsed from a distant view- point from Sandland Street, albeit these are typical features of the wider terrace and help to distinguish the party-walls between properties. The extensions to the Jockey's Fields element and to the light- weight connecting link will be subservient to Bedford Row and will be to the same height broadly as the building immediately neighbouring to the north.

5.8 The surviving significance of the building is derived from the contribution that the facsimile front façade to Bedford Row makes to the group value of the terrace. This will be preserved and enhanced through the making good of elements that have previously been lost or compromised. This includes the realignment of the downpipes and through the intended soot wash. Similarly, the Jockey's Fields elevation has taken into the account the original character of the street as a mews, which will be reinforced through appropriate scaled new features.

5.9 The Heritage Appraisal concludes that the proposal will preserve and enhance, the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building for these reasons. The same conclusion applies to the character and appearance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area and indeed, the setting of Greys Inn Garden. The high-quality design proposed is also consistent with the more general design policies of the Development Plan.

### **Land Use**

5.10 At paragraph 81, the NPPF places significant weight on supporting economic growth and productivity taking account of local business needs. Policies SD4 and E1 of the London Plan state that the nationally and internationally significant office functions of the CAZ, within which Bedford Row lies,

should be supported including through intensification. Policies E1 and E2 of the Local Plan indicate that new office floorspace and jobs will be directed by Camden towards Central London. The Employment Sites and Business Premises CPG (2021) seeks to protect existing employment sites, set in the context that there has been a net loss in office floorspace from the Borough over the past decade particularly of older, poor- quality office stock. Indeed, since the pandemic there has been a 'flight to quality' trend emerging.

- 5.11 Accordingly, the revitalisation of the office floorspace at the application site to secure reoccupation and its extension by 705sqm should be welcomed.

### **Local Plan Policy H2**

- 5.12 Local Plan Policy H2 states that in the Central London Area, where non- residential development is proposed involving additional floorspace of more than 200sqm the Council will seek 50% of all additional floorspace to be self- contained housing. Accordingly, the impact of integrating 352.5sqm of market housing into the scheme has been assessed and is set out in the Housing Study. The policy test is whether such provision on- site would be practical, or whether housing would be more appropriately provided off- site.
- 5.13 Policy H2 indicates that greatest scrutiny will be given to proposals larger than this, where the additional floorspace is 1,000sqm or more. The assessment is subject to several considerations H2(a) to (j). The Housing Study concludes that the integration of housing in any configuration on- site would be so fundamentally deficient against the policy criteria of H2, particularly H2(d), (h) and (j), that it would clearly be impractical.
- 5.14 An assessment against all of the criteria of H2 is provided in the Housing Study. H2(d) refers to whether self-contained housing would be compatible with the character and operational requirements of the proposed non-residential use. The fundamental purpose of the development is to secure the future of the grade II listed building, as an office following a prolonged period of vacancy. The introduction of housing into the scheme would add complexity, significantly compromise the quality and usability of the office floorspace, be greater in embodied carbon because of the additional core, plant, structural and partitioning requirements, consume greater energy and perform worse through BREEAM assessment. It would be contrary to the overarching objective to bring the building back in to use, and direct occupier feedback that the existing office floorspace is currently poor quality, sub-divided and lacking in its sustainability credentials. There would be little improvement to the non-residential use which is the purpose of this application.
- 5.15 H2(h) refers to the impact of a mix of uses on the efficiency and overall quantum of development. The inclusion of housing into this scheme would be extremely inefficient and wasteful of space. The overall scheme efficiency would range from only 63% to 67% depending on the location of the residential, in comparison with 73% for the application scheme and similar efficiency achieved in other recent refurbishments and extensions in Bedford Row. This is due particularly to the additional technical requirements necessary to deliver mixed- use, including a second core, large sprinkler tank and substation. There would be no meaningful uplift in usable office accommodation and therefore, no contribution towards the Council's policy aim to increase offices and jobs within the CAZ. The amount of usable housing that would be created would be one or two units, which would be de-minimis in the context of the Council's annual housing target and well below the four that the House CPG expects be delivered by the target floorspace, as a further indication of the level of inefficiency. Its quality would also be deficient against the principles of the CPG
- 5.16 H2(j) refers to whether an alternative approach could better meet the objectives of the mixed- use policy and the Local Plan. Given the impact that on- site residential provision would have on the amount, quality and layout of the office space, overall scheme inefficiency, the de-minimis quantum and poor standard of market flats that would be delivered, negative impact on sustainability and the potential issues of noise, disturbance, and lack of privacy that future residents could be subject to, the on- site provision of residential accommodation is not the optimal solution in this case.
- 5.17 The applicant does not own any other available properties in the Borough and the Council has recently accepted (through decision ref. 2022/1817/P in relation to 105-121 Judd Street) that this reason renders the delivery of off-site housing unfeasible.



- 5.18 Policy H2 states that where on- site and off- site options have been explored and it is demonstrated to the Council's satisfaction that no appropriate site is available for housing, the Council may accept a payment in lieu of provision, fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development proposed and secured by planning obligation. For non-residential schemes, a rate of £1,500sqm GIA will generally be applied to shortfalls in the provision of market housing. It is considered that this is the most appropriate approach in this case and that a valuable financial contribution will be made, capable of being directed by Camden to its priorities, such as its investment programme in affordable units.

## **Sustainability**

- 5.19 Section 14 and Paragraph 152 of the NPPF identify the role that planning plays in transitioning to a low carbon future. In accordance with the London Plan, Local Plan and the Energy Efficiency and Adaption CPG, a Sustainability Statement and Energy Statement has been submitted with this application. Improvement against the existing poor performance has been identified as a critical aspect of attracting new occupation.
- 5.20 The approach to refurbish and extend the building accords with the latest circularity policies which seek to maximise material re-use and minimise embodied carbon. A strategy has been developed to achieved BREEAM 'Excellent', in accordance with Policy CC2 of the Local Plan. This will include at least 60% of the credits in the energy section, 40% of credits in the materials section and 60% of credits in the water section. Ecological value will be improved through the green roofs and external amenity spaces proposed. PV panels are proposed among other improvements which will achieve London Plan targets for carbon dioxide emissions.

## **Consideration of Neighbouring Amenity**

- 5.21 Policy A1 of the Local Plan and the Amenity CPG indicate that the Council will seek to ensure that the amenity of neighbours is protected. As the immediately adjoining properties are not residential, the proposed external terraces will not impact on residential privacy or overlooking, and there will be no daylight, sunlight or overshadowing issues arising from the development as concluded in the Daylight and Sunlight Assessment. A Noise Assessment has been submitted and concludes that plant noise levels will be within the required criteria of the Council. The Structural Report concludes that there will not be any impact on neighbouring properties through the works.
- 5.22 A draft Construction Management Plan has been prepared and commits to the provision of regular updates to the site's neighbours and that noisy work be limited to specific times of the day, with appropriate arrangements made for site deliveries.

## **Other Considerations**

- 5.23 Paragraph 109 of the NPPF states that development should only be refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe. Local Plan Policy T1 aims to promote walking, cycling and public transport use. 34 covered, secure, fully enclosed, and easily accessible cycle storage spaces together with shower and changing facilities will be provided which do not current exist, to encourage sustainable transport to and from the building. This provision meeting the standards of Policy T1, CPG Transport and Table 6.3 of the London Plan. A Workplace Travel Plan forms part of the application. The development will be car-free given the site's high PTAL rating and short walking distance to nearby stations.
- 5.24 A Planning Fire Safety Strategy has been submitted with this application to demonstrate compliance with Section D12(A) of the London Plan. The fire safety objectives and requirements of the development have been defined and will inform the design, construction, and life of the development in line with the relevant Building Regulations.

## 6. Summary and Conclusion

- 6.1 3-5 Bedford Row and 3-5 Jockey's Fields is a vacant, grade II listed office building that was last in use approximately two years ago. The building has been marketed by two agents, unsuccessfully. The direct feedback from occupiers has been that the building is not well suited to modern working practices or expectations because it is disjointed, has a complicated internal layout and multiple, mis-matched levels, has no external amenity space and has very poor sustainability credentials.
- 6.2 Planning policies for listed buildings and for the Central Activities Zone and Central London Area which support and protect employment sites, collectively indicate that significant weight should be given to securing the building's reuse for office purposes.
- 6.3 Accordingly, the fundamental objective of the development, as guided by the NPPF, London Plan and Local Plan is to improve the accommodation to bring the building back in to office use and to ensure that it is conserved, and its significance is preserved.
- 6.4 The detail of design has been heritage-led. There will be no loss of historic fabric, or any feature of demonstrable historic significance. The extension to the Bedford Row element will be invisible from Bedford Row. This surviving significance of the building, which is the contribution that its facsimile front façade makes to the Bedford Row terrace, will be preserved, and enhanced through the making good of elements that have previously been lost or compromised. The extensions to the Jockey's Fields element and to the connecting link will be subservient to Bedford Row and will be to the same height broadly as the building immediately neighbouring to the north. The mews character of Jockey's Fields will be reinforced through appropriate scaled new features.
- 6.5 The proposal will preserve and enhance the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building, the setting of Greys Inn Garden and the character and appearance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.
- 6.6 The revitalisation of the office floorspace at the application site to secure reoccupation and its extension by 705sqm will contribute towards the Council's policy aim to increase offices and jobs within the CAZ.
- 6.7 On- site housing sought by Local Plan policy H2 would be clearly impractical. It would be contrary to the objective of the development and have a negative impact on the amount, quality, and layout of the office space together with overall scheme efficiency. The quantum of market flats that would be delivered would be de-minimis and poor quality. It would negatively impact on the scheme's sustainability credentials, including through greater embodied carbon and energy consumption and worse BREEAM performance. Future residents would be subject to potential issues of noise, disturbance, and lack of privacy. The most appropriate approach is instead, a valuable financial contribution capable of being directed by Camden to its priorities, such as its investment programme in affordable units.
- 6.8 The approach to refurbish and extend accords with the latest circularity policies which seek to maximise material re-use and minimise embodied carbon. The building's sustainability credentials will be improved through accommodating elements including green roofs and PV panels, and the M&E upgrade generally to improve energy efficiency. Careful consideration has been given to protecting the amenity of the site's neighbours and the scheme accords with the Council's design and environmental standards generally.
- 6.9 The application accords with the Development Plan and therefore merits approval.

**Appendix 1: Planning History**

| Application reference | Description  | Decision date                        |
|-----------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| 2005/2259/L           | The installation of mechanical plant at roof level, alterations to the lift shaft involving the partial demolition of internal walls and alterations to the ground floor lobby.  | Approved<br>12/08/2005               |
| 2005/2257/P           | The installation of mechanical plant at roof level.  | Approved<br>12/08/2005               |
| 9270210               | The erection of new partitioning to third and part second floor and the construction of a filing storage area within the covered lower ground floor car park area as shown on drawings nos 203708 03B and 04B.   | Approved<br>21/01/1993               |
| 9201351               | Construction of filing storage area within covered car park area. (Plans submitted).   | Approved (date unknown – circa 1993) |
| 9170199               | Internal alterations as shown on drawing numbers SI/9133/8'D` SI/9133/9'C` and SI/9133/14'B` revised by letter on 5 and 20 December 1991 and 17 January 1992.  | Approved<br>05/02/1992               |
| 9100956               | New windows to internal link block courtyard facade. (Plans submitted)   | Approved (date unknown – circa 1991) |
| 9170156               | Alterations to courtyard link block and new internal office layout as shown on drawing numbers C (31) 01 C (31) 02 L (-- ) 01 L (-- ) 02 L (-- ) 03 PH (-- ) 01 PH (-- ) 02 PH (-- ) 03 PH (-- ) 04 PH (-- ) 05 PH (-- ) 06 PL (-- ) 01 PL (-- ) 02 SO 1 and SO 2. | Approved<br>29/10/1991               |
| 9000204               | Refurbishment of building including alterations to staircase service core restoration of roof lights facades and pavement railings as shown on drawing numbers 73/01C and revised by letter dated 18th June 1990.  | Approved 22/08/1990                  |
| 9070084               | Refurbishment of interior re-arrangement of staircase and toilets. Renovation to facades and pavement railings. as shown on drawing numbers 73/01C and revised by letter dated 18th June 1990.   | Approved<br>22/08/1990               |
| 8770028               | Erection of a mansard roof extension as shown on drawing number 952-04.  | Application refused<br>01/04/1987    |
| 8602264               | Erection of an additional storey at roof level to provide office accommodation as shown on drawing number 952.04. Appeal received against refusal of permission  | Appeal dismissed<br>09/03/1988       |
| 852/101               | Use of cast-iron Fraser Ellis Pipes and heads (in place of lead pipes and heads as shown on drawing No. 852/101) on the front elevation of these properties  | Approved<br>04/08/1964               |
| 26728                 | Use as offices with a basement car park.   | Approved<br>29/06/1964               |
| 100617/9321           | Use as offices with a basement car park, approves the details show on the plan Regd. No. 9321 (your drawing No. 852/230) - viz. details of main doorway and iron gates with grille, and revised details of the front elevation to Jockey's Fields.                 | Approved 29/11/1963                  |
| 23247                 | The rebuilding of Nos. 3, 4 and 5 Bedford Row and Nos. 2, 3 and 4 Jockeys Fields, Holborn, for use as offices with a basement car park.  | Approved<br>23/03/1961               |
| 100617/1265           | The redevelopment of the sites of Nos. 3, 4 and 5 Bedford Row and Nos. 3, 4 and 5 Jockeys Fields, Holborn, by the erection of a building of basement, ground and part two- and part-three upper storeys for use as offices with a basement car park.               | Refused<br>12/07/1960                |

## Appendix 2: Market Report

**3-5 Bedford Row & 3-5 Jockey's Fields  
London, WC1R 4TF**



**Marketing Report**

October 2021

REPORT PREPARED FOR:  
**Frogmore's Fund FREP4**

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## Introduction

### 1 Scope

- 1.1 Daniel Watney LLP have been instructed by Frogmore Fund FREP4 (t/a Frogmore) to prepare a report in support of their planning application to extend and refurbish the subject property

### 2 About Daniel Watney

- 2.1 Daniel Watney is a Central London property consultancy established in 1859. Today we are a limited liability partnership of chartered surveyors and property consultants who help developers, owners, investors and occupiers get the most out of their property.
- 2.2 Daniel Watney has significant experience as agency in Central London and in particular the area immediately surrounding the Subject Property.
- 2.3 This report has been prepared by Charlie Browne, Senior Associate Partner in the Commercial Agency team.

## Market Commentary

### 3 Central London Offices

- 3.1 The global pandemic has had a significant impact on the Central London office market. The most pertinent and obvious impact across the sector is a structural shift in demand for commercial space. One factor heavily influencing this shift is the changing role of offices.
- 3.2 The recovery has been slow, having been disrupted by further national lockdowns and inconsistent policies from the UK Government and internationally. The roll out of the vaccination programme has supported the recovery in the office market. The last quarter was the best in terms of take up of office space since the start of the pandemic, however, is still well below the 10-year average.
- 3.3 The role of the office was changing already as flexibility, sustainability and staff wellbeing increased in importance over recent years, and these trends have accelerated since the pandemic began. The office has changed for many and this has influenced demand and a number of trends are emerging. First, there is clear evidence of a 'flight to quality' with occupier demand focussed on 'best-in-class' accommodation and anything that falls below band this is disproportionately negatively discounted.
- 3.4 To be considered 'best in class' there are a number of criteria that need to be met:
- a) Contiguous open plan floor plates;
  - b) Fully refurbished with new efficient M&E;
  - c) Well provisioned end of travel facilities;
  - d) Outside space;
  - e) ESG credentials
  - f) Accessibility;
- 3.5 Of those listed, there are b) to e) are of particular importance in a post-pandemic environment, with occupiers increasingly reliant on alternative means of transport (i.e. not public transport), seeking buildings where fresh air ventilation is high, and outside space is available for staff to escape the office environment. ESG credentials are also increasingly important to businesses and their choice of property being a means of demonstrating their commitment as well as meeting current and future regulations.

## The Building

### 4 Description

- 4.1 The property comprises a pair Grade II listed mid terrace office buildings, constructed in 1961. In its existing configuration provides 24,617 sq ft (NIA) of offices arranged over basement to 3<sup>rd</sup> floor. The office accommodation is split further across two buildings linked by a 3<sup>rd</sup> element at basement, ground and 1<sup>st</sup> floor levels.
- 4.2 The offices are accessed via a main entrance off Bedford Row with a secondary access via Jockey's Fields. The main core is located within 3-5 Bedford Row housing a central stair and the only passenger lift. A narrow staircase is located within 3-5 Jockey's Field providing circulation between floors and secondary means of escape.

### 5 Shortcomings

- 5.1 In our opinion the property has numerous shortcomings as an office building in its existing configuration and form.
- 5.2 This configuration impacts upon the usability of the building. The property is currently arranged in 3 distinct parts: Bedford Row, Link building and Jockey's Fields.
- The floor slabs vary significantly between Bedford Row and the rest of the building. Creating multiple level changes that prevent the creation of open plan office space that meet current occupational requirements.
  - The structural arrangement of walls and cores follow the pattern of the 3 individual parts of the property and are a significant barrier to creating open plan flexible office space.
  - The existing office space is heavily partitioned and natural light levels are significantly reduced throughout the building as a result.
  - The M&E systems is defunct and in need of full replacement across the property.
  - Access to the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floors of Jockey's Fields from the main Bedford Row entrance is only possible by crossing through at basement, ground or 1<sup>st</sup> floor which have level changes.
  - The link at 1<sup>st</sup> floor level is narrow and given it is required to link the two buildings it has limited use as open plan offices.
  - The only lift is in Bedford Row, therefore, the separate letting of Bedford Row is unfeasible.
  - Jockey's Fields and the Link cannot be subdivided.
  - There is no lift access to the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floors within 3-5 Jockeys Field or 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the Link building. (c4,600 sq ft or 20 of the building)
  - The building does not comply with DDA regulations, there is no formal provision via the main entrances and the internal floor level changes prevent access to most of the building for wheelchair uses.
  - There is a lack of outside space to create desirable tenant amenity.
  - The car park basement undercroft is unused and not required by tenants in this location.
  - The lower windows in the lower ground floor are set back from the outside (looking to the undercroft) and natural light is limited in parts.
- 5.3 Aside from the configuration there are key elements that fall short of the expectations for a lot of businesses. At present there are no outside areas (i.e. terraces) and the end of travel (e.g. bike storage and showers) facilities are limited.

## Marketing to Date

### 6 Marketing Initiatives



- 6.1 The existing owner appointed joint agents agent's BNP Paribas Real Estate (BNP) and Alexander Reece Thompson (ART) to market the subject property. The subject property was first launched to the market on in October 2020 by the existing owners agent's BNP Paribas Real Estate (BNP) and Alexander Reece Thompson (ART). The marketing initiatives included:
- Marketing particulars (copies attached as Appendix I);
  - Listed on agent websites
  - Listed on property portals:
  - Agents Insight
  - CoStar
  - Realla
  - Estates Gazette
  - LoopNet
  - Rightmove
  - Proplist
  - Agent to agent marketing;
  - Direct mailing to local occupiers
- 6.2 The building was offered to the market on both a freehold or leasehold basis to appeal to both owner occupiers and occupiers seeking to lease the accommodation.
- 6.3 A rent of £27.50 per sq ft was quoted in its existing condition or available as a 'pre-let' subject to a refurbishment. The building was also offered on a split basis and on 'terms by arrangement'.
- 6.4 In our professional opinion, the property has been marketed effectively. By marketing on both a freehold and leasehold basis to both owner occupiers and traditional leases. The quoting rent is significantly lower than the majority of local competition thus making the opportunity appealing to a variety of businesses.
- 6.5 Moreover, the marketing initiatives have demonstrated flexibility to potential occupiers in both the length of lease (by marketing on 'terms by arrangement') and also the condition of the property with the landlord prepared to undertake refurbishment to suit and occupiers needs.
- 6.6 Lastly, the property was marketed by two agencies, on a joint-sole agency basis. BNP is an international property consultancy and therefore has wide reaching coverage and this is complemented by ART a smaller London centric businesses. Appointing 'little & large' agencies is a tried and tested method of marketing offices to ensure that as many bases as possible are covered.

## 7 Responses

- 7.1 An interest schedule showing the feedback / responses from parties that enquired is set out below.

| Date   | Occupier/Sector     | Comments   |
|--------|---------------------|--|
| Feb-21 | Serviced Office     | Configuration does not suit their requirements             |
| Feb-21 | Education           | Pursued an alternative building                            |
| Feb-21 | Serviced Office     | Configuration does not suit their requirements             |
| Feb-21 | Media               | Offered on part, however subsequently withdrawn            |
| Mar-21 | Barristers          | Configuration and state of repair did not suit their needs |
| Mar-21 | Serviced Office     | Floor plates did not suit                                  |
| Jun-21 | The Irish Consulate | Seeking better quality space                               |

- 7.2 You will note that between the two agencies, during the 12 months of marketing a single offer was received, and this was for 3-5 Bedford Row only. This offer was later withdrawn.
- 7.3 The lack of offers and feedback above clearly demonstrates that the building in its existing form does not suit modern office occupiers. The agents marketing the premises commented:

*We believe that the lack of offers is down to the configuration of the building. Feedback we have received includes that occupiers would prefer the space if the floor levels were better aligned, if external amenity areas such as terraces were available, if a new passenger lift was installed in the Jockeys Fields side of the building, and if the building was substantially refurbished and reconfigured to future proof its environmental credentials.*

## Summary

### 8 Assessment

- 8.1 In our professional opinion, the subject property falls well short typical requirements of office occupiers. A simple refurbishment would not overcome the shortcomings outlined above –this is shown by the lack of viewings at less than 1 per month, and the feedback from the tenants that viewed who had the option of taking the accommodation on a refurbished basis. Ultimately the layout, level changes and accessibility issues were too much to overcome.
- 8.2 The structural shift in demand following Covid-19 has only exacerbated the shortcomings highlighted within the report with occupiers placing greater weight on the presence of outside space, ESG credentials and open plan space.

## Appendix 1

### Marketing Particulars



**Alexander  
Reece  
Thomson**

**ECONOMICAL OFFICES  
TO LET**



**3-5 Bedford Row & 3-5 Jockey's Fields, London, WC1R 4TF  
Approx. 23,521 Sq. Ft. / 2,185.10 Sq. M. (NIA.)**



## Location

The property is on the east side and at the southern end of Bedford Row which runs in a north to south direction between Theobalds Road and Sandland Street in the heart of the "Midtown" district of central London. Bedford Row consists largely of attractive period buildings originally developed in the 18th Century, the majority of which are occupied by Solicitors and Barristers.

Jockey's Fields comprises an attractive garden area with mature trees, which abuts Grays Inn Gardens and Grays Inn Square, one of the four Inns of Court. The area is well served by public transport with Chancery Lane (Central line) and Holborn (Piccadilly and Central lines) stations both within a short walk of the property. Mainline stations including Blackfriars, Farringdon and Charing Cross are easily accessible via public transport. Numerous bus services serve the area.

## Description

The subject property comprises three Georgian townhouses fronting Bedford Row which extend via a link building and connects with the Jockey's Fields Building to the rear. The buildings benefit from frontages on Bedford Row and Jockey's Fields. The available space must be taken as a whole, comprising of (3-5 Bedford Row) which provides a total of 11,880 sq. ft / 1,103.70 sq. m. and the rear building (3-5 Jockey's Fields) which provides 11,641 sq. ft / 1,081.40 sq. m of accommodation.

## Amenities

- Central heating and part comfort cooling / VRV air-conditioning;
- Automated passenger lift;
- Car Parking for approximately 3-4 cars;
- Combination of suspended and plastered ceilings;
- Combination of raised floors and perimeter trunking;
- Male and female toilet facilities.

**TERM:** New lease/s available from the Landlord on FRI terms. Short or long term tenancies are available.

**RENT:** Upon Application

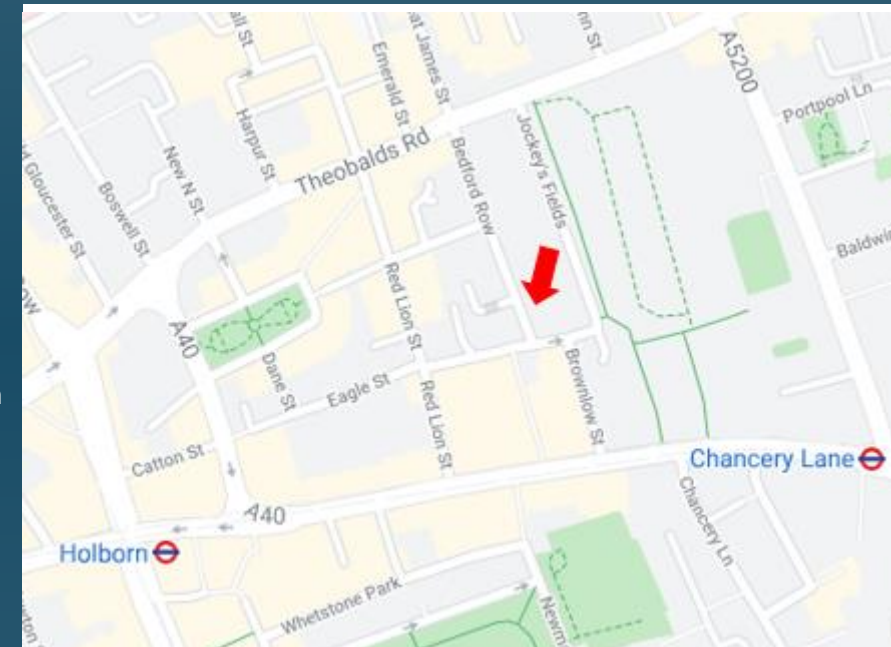
**BUSINESS RATES PAYABLE:** To be Confirmed

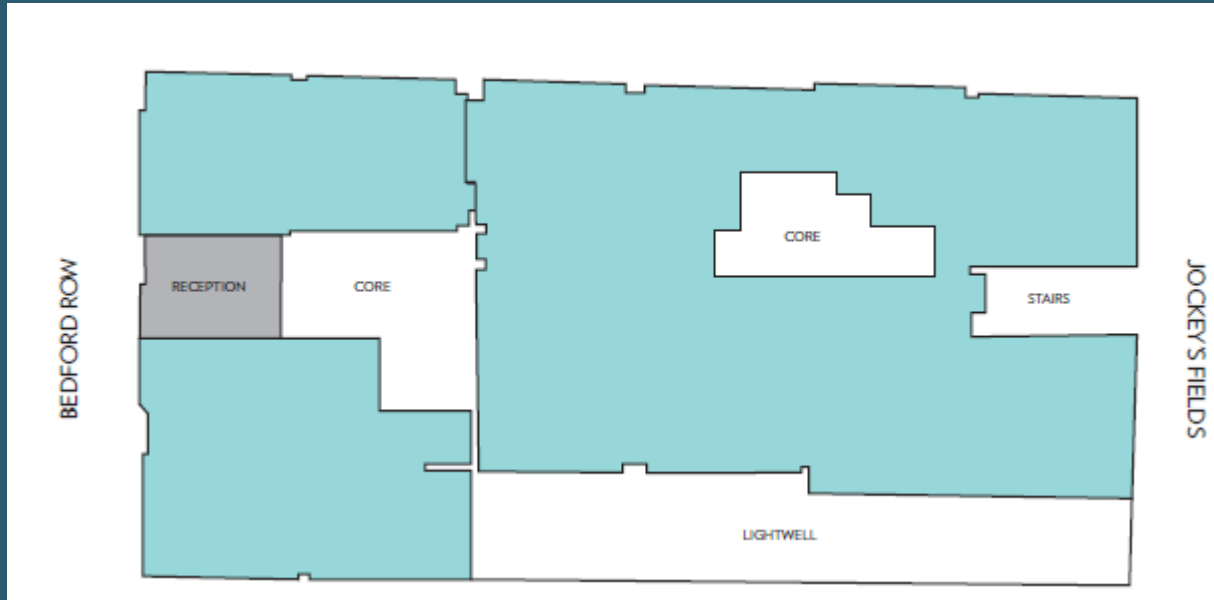
**EPC: Grade E(116)** – Full EPC available on request.

## SUBJECT TO CONTRACT

Particulars are submitted for guidance only and do not form part of any contract. Applicants must rely upon their own enquiries upon all matters relating to properties they intend to acquire. All floor areas quoted are approximate. All terms are exclusive of Value Added Tax.

**SUBJECT TO CONTRACT**





Ground Floor Plan



Second Floor Plan

| Bedford Row                     |           |               |                |
|---------------------------------|-----------|---------------|----------------|
| Floor                           | Use       | sq ft         | sq m           |
| Third                           | Offices   | 2,285         | 212.3          |
| Second                          | Offices   | 2,340         | 217.4          |
| First                           | Offices   | 2,340         | 217.4          |
| Ground                          | Offices   | 1,093         | 101.5          |
| Ground                          | Reception | 1,247         | 115.9          |
| Lower Ground                    | Office    | 2,142         | 199.0          |
| Lower Ground                    | Vaults    | 433           | 40.2           |
| Sub-Total                       |           | 11,880        | 1,103.7        |
| Jockey's Fields & Link Building |           |               |                |
| Second                          | Offices   | 2,295         | 213.2          |
| First                           | Offices   | 3,552         | 330.0          |
| Ground                          | Offices   | 3,899         | 362.2          |
| Lower Ground                    | Offices   | 1,026         | 95.3           |
| Lower Ground                    | Storage   | 869           | 80.7           |
| Sub-Total                       |           | 11,641        | 1,081.4        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                    |           | <b>23,521</b> | <b>2,185.1</b> |

There are 5 car parking spaces located at lower ground floor level accessed from Jockey's Fields.

\*Please note that these plans are not to scale and are for illustrative purposes only





**T Alexander  
Reece  
Thomson**

Please contact the  
sole agents to view:

**ART Surveyors**

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020 7034 3395  
[sebnorman@artsurveyors.co.uk](mailto:sebnorman@artsurveyors.co.uk)

**Oliver Hayes**  
020 7034 3390  
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**SUBJECT TO CONTRACT**

**Image Showing 3-5 Jockey's  
Fields, situated to the rear of  
3-5 Bedford Row**





AVAILABLE TO LET

## 3-5 Bedford Row, London WC1

London, UK



**BNP PARIBAS  
REAL ESTATE**

Office for rent, 11,641 - 23,521 sq ft, £27.50 psf

To request a viewing call us on 0207 338 4000

For more information visit <https://www.realla.co.uk/m/50023-3-5-bedford-row-london-wc1r-4bu>

Rob Rooney  
robert.rooney@realestate.bnpparibas

Philip McKenna  
philip.mckenna@realestate.bnpparibas



## 3-5 Bedford Row, London WC1

London, UK

To request a viewing call us on 0207 338 4000



The property is available to lease in its entirety or can be let in two separate self contained units. Available at £27.50 psf in its current state or the Landlord will consider undertaking a substantial refurbishment, at a rent to be agreed.

### Highlights

- Central heating and part comfort cooling
- VRV air conditioning
- Automated passenger lift
- Car parking for approximately 3-4 cars
- Combination of suspended and plastered ceilings
- Combination of raised floors and perimeter trunking
- Male and female toilet facilities

### Property details

|               |                                    |
|---------------|------------------------------------|
| Rent          | £27.50 psf                         |
| Building type | Office                             |
| Sizes         | 11,641 to 23,521 Sq ft             |
| Lease details | New lease direct from the Landlord |

| Unit                            | Size sq ft    | Rent psf | Rates psf | Total pa             | Status    |
|---------------------------------|---------------|----------|-----------|----------------------|-----------|
| Bedford Row Building            | 11,880        | £27.50   | £22.00    | £588,060.00          | Available |
| Jockey's Fields & Link Building | 11,641        | £27.50   | £22.00    | £576,229.50          | Available |
| <b>Total</b>                    | <b>23,521</b> |          |           | <b>£1,164,289.50</b> |           |



### More information

[Visit microsite](#)

<https://www.realla.co.uk/m/50023-3-5-bedford-row-london-wc1r-4bu>

### Contact us

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Quote reference: RENT-50023

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