



1 Example Street London SW1A 1AA

PLANNING STATEMENT

On behalf of Example Developments Ltd

Wren

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Contents

1	Executive Summary	5
2	Introduction	6
	2.1 Purpose and scope	6
	2.2 The application documents	6
	2.3 Structure of this Statement	6
3	The Site and Surroundings	8
	3.1 The Site	8
	3.2 Boundary relationships and neighbours	8
	3.3 Access and servicing	8
	3.4 Streetscape and public transport context	8
4	Planning History	10
	4.1 Applications relating to the Site	10
	4.2 Relevance of the planning history	10
5	Consultation and Engagement	12
	5.1 Pre-application discussions	12
	5.2 Community consultation	12
6	The Proposed Development	13
	6.1 Description of development	13
	6.2 Residential accommodation	13
	6.3 Design approach	13
	6.4 Materials, access and servicing	13
7	Planning Policy Framework	15
	7.1 The statutory duty	15
	7.2 The development plan	15
	7.3 National policy and guidance	15
8	Planning Assessment	17
	8.1 Principle of development	17
	8.2 Heritage and design	17

8.3	Residential amenity	18
8.4	Transport and sustainability	18
8.5	Planning obligations and the Community Infrastructure Levy	19
9	Planning Balance and Conclusion	21
9.1	The planning balance	21
9.2	Conclusion	21
Appendix 1 Schedule of Accommodation		23

1

Executive Summary

- 1.1 This Planning Statement is submitted by Wren on behalf of Example Developments Ltd in support of a full planning application for the change of use of the vacant upper floors of 1 Example Street, London SW1A 1AA, to provide four residential units, together with a single-storey rear extension, the repair and reinstatement of the front elevation, and associated works. The active commercial ground floor is retained.
- 1.2 The proposals return long-vacant floorspace to productive use as new homes in a highly accessible, sustainable location, without any loss of commercial floorspace. They have been carefully designed to respond to the reasons for the Council's refusal of an earlier scheme at the Site in 2020: the rear dormers previously found to be harmful have been omitted, the additional accommodation is achieved within the existing roof volume and by way of a subordinate rear extension, and a full Heritage Statement now accompanies the application.
- 1.3 The scheme accords with the development plan read as a whole. The principle of residential use is strongly supported by the policies on housing delivery and the effective use of land; the design and heritage approach preserves the character and appearance of the conservation area and delivers heritage benefits through the repair of the front elevation; and the technical assessments demonstrate compliance with the relevant amenity, transport and sustainability policies. The single low level of less than substantial heritage harm arising from the rear extension is clearly outweighed by the substantial public benefits of the scheme.
- 1.4 For the reasons developed in this Statement, the planning balance falls decisively in favour of the grant of permission. It is respectfully requested that planning permission be granted, subject to appropriate conditions.

2

Introduction

2.1 Purpose and scope

2.1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Wren on behalf of Example Developments Ltd ("the Applicant") in support of a full planning application at 1 Example Street, London SW1A 1AA ("the Site"). Its purpose is to identify the statutory and policy framework relevant to the determination of the application, to describe the Site and its context and the development proposed, to record the pre-application engagement undertaken with the Council, and to assess the proposals against the development plan and the other material considerations engaged. The planning balance is drawn together at the concluding section, where the case for the grant of permission is set out.

2.1.2 This Statement is a material consideration in the determination of the application. It does not repeat the technical evidence contained in the accompanying specialist assessments but instead draws that evidence together and explains, as a matter of planning judgement, why the proposals are considered to accord with the development plan read as a whole and why permission should be granted.

2.1.3 This is a specimen document. The address, applicant, council, planning references, policy numbers and all figures are illustrative and do not relate to any real site, application or development plan. It is provided so that a prospective client can see the structure, depth and tone of the planning statements that Wren prepares.

2.2 The application documents

2.2.1 This Statement should be read alongside the full suite of application documents, including the Design and Access Statement, the Heritage Statement, and the technical assessments addressing daylight and sunlight, transport, drainage and sustainability. Together those documents provide the design, heritage and technical evidence base to which this Statement cross-refers, and each is listed on the application form and the covering letter that accompany the submission.

2.3 Structure of this Statement

- 2.3.1 Following this introduction, Section 2 describes the Site and its surroundings and the planning designations that apply to it. Section 3 sets out the relevant planning history and explains its significance for the present proposals. Section 4 records the pre-application and community engagement undertaken. Section 5 describes the proposed development in detail. Section 6 identifies the statutory framework and the development plan and national policies engaged. Section 7 assesses the proposals against each of the main issues in turn, and Section 8 draws the planning balance and sets out the basis on which permission is sought.



Figure 1.1 Site Location Plan

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3

The Site and Surroundings

3.1 The Site

- 3.1.1 The Site comprises a mid-terrace property on the eastern side of Example Street, extending to approximately 180 sq m. The existing building is of three storeys with a pitched slate roof, constructed in the early nineteenth century in yellow stock brick with painted stucco detailing to the ground floor. It presents a symmetrical two-window-wide frontage to the street, with a traditional timber shopfront at ground floor and sash windows to the upper floors set within a regular vertical rhythm of openings. The ground floor is in active commercial use, while the first and second floors are vacant and were last used as ancillary storage. To the rear the building has a two-storey closet wing and a modest garden of approximately 40 sq m enclosed by brick boundary walls of around 1.8 m in height.

3.2 Boundary relationships and neighbours

- 3.2.1 The Site adjoins No. 3 Example Street to the north and No. 1a to the south, both of which are terraced properties of comparable age, scale and construction. The shared party walls run the full depth of the principal building, and the rear closet wing abuts the boundary with No. 3. The rear garden backs onto the gardens of properties fronting the parallel street to the east, with the nearest habitable-room windows of those properties some 22 m away across the intervening garden land. These relationships are relevant to the assessment of daylight, sunlight, outlook and privacy, which is addressed in Section 7 and in the accompanying technical assessment.

3.3 Access and servicing

- 3.3.1 Pedestrian access to the commercial unit and to the upper floors is taken directly from the Example Street frontage, which is a two-way street subject to a 20 mph limit with controlled parking on both sides. There is no off-street parking or vehicular access serving the Site, in common with the remainder of the terrace. Servicing and refuse collection take place from the street frontage in accordance with the established pattern for the parade, and deliveries are made on-street within the loading restrictions that apply.

3.4 Streetscape and public transport context

- 3.4.1 Example Street forms part of a coherent nineteenth-century terrace of consistent building line, plot width and roofline, which the Council's conservation area appraisal identifies as making a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area. The prevailing scale along the street is three to four storeys, with active commercial frontages at ground floor and residential accommodation above — a pattern that the proposals seek to reinstate at the Site. The Site benefits from a high level of public transport accessibility, with several bus routes on the adjoining main road within 200 m and an underground station approximately 400 m to the north-west; for the purposes of this specimen the Site is assumed to record a high public transport accessibility level. It is not within an area at risk of flooding and, for the purposes of this specimen, is assumed to lie within a conservation area and within Flood Zone 1.

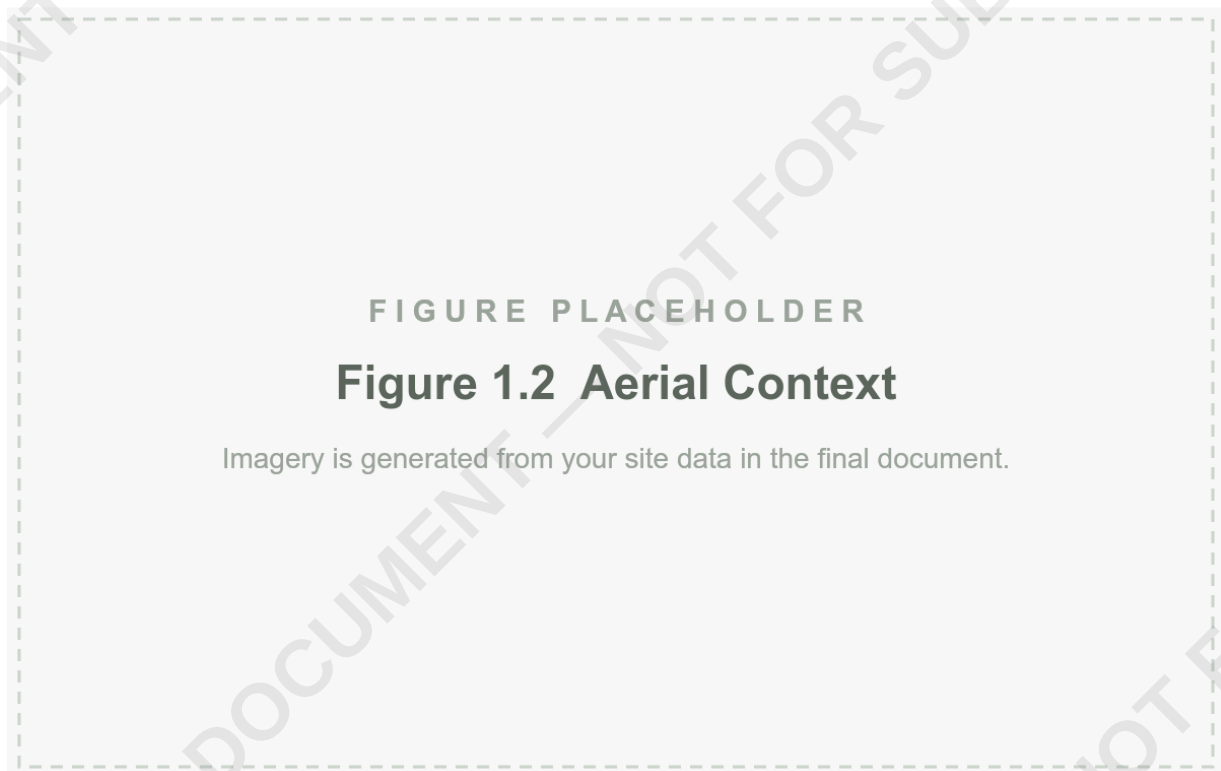


Figure 1.2 Aerial Context

Source: Mapbox / Maxar

4

Planning History

4.1 Applications relating to the Site

4.1.1 A search of the Council's planning register was undertaken in preparing this specimen. The relevant (illustrative) planning history of the Site and, where material, of the immediately adjoining properties, is summarised in the table below.

Table 4.1: Planning history of the Site

Application ref	Date	Description	Decision
98/00014/FULL	1998	Installation of replacement shopfront and internal alterations.	Granted
04/00001/FULL	2004	Erection of single-storey rear extension.	Granted
12/00002/ADV	2012	Display of fascia and projecting signs to shopfront.	Granted
20/00003/FULL	2020	Change of use of first and second floors to two residential units, with rear dormers.	Refused
21/00004/-PREAPP	2021	Pre-application advice on residential conversion of upper floors.	Advice issued

4.2 Relevance of the planning history

4.2.1 The planning history is a material consideration and is directly relevant to the present application in two respects. First, the 2020 refusal (ref 20/00003/FULL) establishes the Council's previous concerns with a residential conversion of the upper floors, and the reasons for that refusal frame the design development of the current scheme. The refusal turned on two matters: the design of the proposed rear dormers, which the officer considered to be excessive in scale and harmful to the roofscape of the conservation area; and the absence of any heritage assessment against which the impact on the significance of the conservation area could be judged.

4.2.2 The proposals now submitted respond directly to each of those points. The rear dormers that were previously found to be harmful have been omitted altogether, and the additional accommodation is instead achieved within the existing roof volume and by way of a subordinate single-storey rear extension that sits below the level of the neighbouring boundary walls. A full Heritage Statement now accompanies the application, providing the significance assessment that was previously found wanting and demonstrating that the revised scheme would preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area.

- 4.2.3 Second, the earlier grants of permission for the shopfront and rear extension (refs 98/00014/FULL and 04/00001/FULL) confirm the Council's acceptance in principle of an active commercial ground floor and of a modest rear addition of the scale now proposed. The pre-application advice issued in 2021 (ref 21/00004/PREAPP) is addressed in Section 4. Taken together, the planning history demonstrates that the outstanding issue is not the principle of residential use of the upper floors but the detailed design and heritage response, both of which the current proposals resolve.

5

Consultation and Engagement

5.1 Pre-application discussions

- 5.1.1 A pre-application enquiry was submitted to the Council and written advice was issued (illustrative reference 21/00004/PREAPP). The advice was broadly encouraging of the principle of returning the upper floors to residential use, recognising the contribution that the reuse of vacant floorspace would make to the Council's housing supply and to the vitality of the parade. It identified several matters for further consideration before an application was submitted: the detailed design and scale of the rear extension in the light of the 2020 refusal; the proposed residential mix and the standard of accommodation, including the provision of amenity space; the daylight and sunlight relationship with neighbouring occupiers; and the servicing, refuse and cycle parking strategy.
- 5.1.2 Each of those matters has been addressed in the design development of the scheme and is cross-referenced in the assessment at Section 7. The rear extension has been reduced in scale and simplified in form; the residential mix has been settled at four units, each meeting the nationally described space standard; a daylight and sunlight assessment has been commissioned and accompanies the application; and a refuse and cycle parking strategy has been developed in accordance with the Council's standards. The Applicant is grateful for the constructive advice received and considers that the application responds to it in full.

5.2 Community consultation

- 5.2.1 Public consultation was undertaken in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement. Neighbouring occupiers on Example Street and the adjoining streets were notified in writing, and an informal drop-in event was held at which the proposals were displayed and members of the design team were available to answer questions. The responses received were broadly supportive, with several respondents welcoming the reuse of the long-vacant upper floors and the associated repair of the front elevation.
- 5.2.2 The principal concern raised related to the potential for disturbance during the construction period, in particular from construction traffic and noise. That concern is addressed through the proposed Construction Management Plan, which would be secured by planning condition and which sets out the arrangements for construction hours, deliveries, and dust and noise control. No objections were raised to the principle of the residential use or to the design of the scheme as revised.

6

The Proposed Development

6.1 Description of development

- 6.1.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the change of use of the first and second floors from ancillary storage (Class E) to residential use (Class C3), the erection of a single-storey rear extension, and associated internal and external alterations including the repair and reinstatement of the front elevation. The description of development has been agreed with the Council's case officer and is set out on the application form. The commercial unit at ground floor is retained in its existing use and is unaffected by the proposals, save for the reconfiguration of the entrance arrangements to provide an independent access to the residential floors.

6.2 Residential accommodation

- 6.2.1 The proposed development would deliver four self-contained residential units: two one-bedroom, two-person units and two two-bedroom, three-person units, arranged over the first and second floors. Each unit has been designed to meet or exceed the nationally described space standard, and the full schedule of accommodation, including gross internal areas, is provided at Appendix 1. Every habitable room is served by an openable window providing adequate daylight, outlook and ventilation, and the internal layouts locate living accommodation to the front and rear elevations to secure a good standard of amenity for future occupiers. Each unit is provided with private or shared amenity space in accordance with the Council's standards, and cycle storage and refuse facilities are provided at ground floor level.

6.3 Design approach

- 6.3.1 The design has been developed to conserve and enhance the significance of the building and the wider conservation area, and to respond to the reasons for the 2020 refusal. The principal front elevation is retained in its entirety, with its traditional shopfront, sash windows and detailing repaired and reinstated where necessary using appropriate materials and methods. No alterations are proposed to the front roof slope, and the previously refused rear dormers have been omitted. The additional accommodation is achieved within the existing roof volume, lit by conservation rooflights to the rear slope, and by way of the single-storey rear extension, which is clearly subordinate to the host building and legible as a modern addition.

6.4 Materials, access and servicing

- 6.4.1 New external fabric would be finished in materials that complement the traditional palette of the terrace — facing brickwork to match the existing, painted timber joinery, and natural slate to any new roof — while the rear extension is expressed in a restrained contemporary manner using a complementary brick and large-format glazing. A step-free entrance to the residential floors is provided from the street frontage, and the internal circulation has been designed to be accessible in accordance with Part M of the Building Regulations. The scheme is car-free, reflecting the Site's high public transport accessibility and the controlled parking regime on Example Street; secure, covered cycle parking and enclosed refuse and recycling storage are provided at ground floor level, sized in accordance with the Council's adopted standards, with refuse collection taking place from the street frontage in the established manner.

7

Planning Policy Framework

7.1 The statutory duty

- 7.1.1 Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requires that, in dealing with an application for planning permission, the local planning authority shall have regard to the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that the determination be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In addition, where development affects a conservation area, section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 imposes a duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area, a duty to which the courts have held that considerable importance and weight must be given.

7.2 The development plan

- 7.2.1 The development plan comprises the relevant strategic and local plan documents adopted by the Council, together with any neighbourhood plan in force. For the purposes of this specimen, the policies principally engaged are illustrative and are identified as follows: Policy H1 (housing delivery and the effective use of land); Policy H4 (residential standards and space standards); Policy D1 (design quality and character); Policy HC1 (heritage and conservation areas); Policy DH2 (residential amenity and daylight/sunlight); Policy T3 (sustainable transport, car-free development and cycle parking); and Policy SI1 (sustainable design and energy). The proposals have been designed to accord with each of these policies, and the manner in which they do so is set out in the assessment at Section 7.

7.3 National policy and guidance

- 7.3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework and the Planning Practice Guidance are important material considerations. The Framework's presumption in favour of sustainable development is set out at paragraph 11, and for decision-taking this means approving development that accords with an up-to-date development plan without delay. The Framework attaches particular importance to making effective use of land, including the reuse of vacant and underused floorspace within built-up areas (Chapter 11), and to securing well-designed places (Chapter 12). In relation to the historic environment, paragraph 215 requires that where a proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, that harm be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. Each of these considerations bears directly on the determination of this application and is addressed in the assessment that follows.

8

Planning Assessment

8.1 Principle of development

- 8.1.1 The principle of returning the vacant upper floors to residential use is strongly supported by the development plan and national policy. Policy H1 and Chapter 11 of the Framework attach particular importance to making effective use of previously developed land and to the reuse of vacant and underused buildings in accessible locations, and the proposals would bring long-disused floorspace back into productive use as four new homes without any loss of commercial floorspace at ground floor. The Site occupies a highly accessible, sustainable location within an established mixed-use frontage, and the reintroduction of residential accommodation above an active shop reinstates the traditional pattern of the parade that the conservation area appraisal identifies as a positive characteristic.
- 8.1.2 The 2020 refusal did not take issue with the principle of residential use, and the pre-application advice confirmed the Council's in-principle support. The outstanding matters at that time related to design and heritage, both of which are resolved by the current scheme. The proposals accordingly accord with the development plan's strategy for housing delivery and the effective use of land, and this consideration weighs substantially in their favour.

8.2 Heritage and design

- 8.2.1 The proposals have been designed from the outset to preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area, in fulfilment of the statutory duty under section 72(1) of the 1990 Act and in accordance with Policy HC1, Policy D1 and Chapter 12 of the Framework. The accompanying Heritage Statement assesses the significance of the conservation area and of the building's contribution to it, and concludes that the retention and repair of the front elevation, the omission of the previously refused dormers, and the subordinate form of the rear extension would together preserve – and in respect of the front elevation enhance – the significance of the heritage asset.

- 8.2.2 The Heritage Statement identifies a low level of less than substantial harm arising from the rear extension, at the lower end of the spectrum. In accordance with paragraph 215 of the Framework and the guidance in the case law, that harm attracts considerable importance and weight and falls to be weighed against the public benefits of the scheme in the planning balance at Section 8. The Statement also identifies heritage benefits arising from the repair and reinstatement of the front elevation and the securing of a viable long-term use for the currently vacant floors, which weigh in favour of the proposals. Overall, the design represents a considered and policy-compliant response to a sensitive context.

8.3 Residential amenity

- 8.3.1 The impact of the proposals on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers, and the standard of amenity for future occupiers, has been assessed against Policy DH2 and Policy H4. The submitted daylight and sunlight assessment, prepared in accordance with the Building Research Establishment guidelines, demonstrates that the proposals would not give rise to any material loss of daylight or sunlight to the habitable rooms of neighbouring properties, the retained separation distance of some 22 m to the rear being well in excess of that at which harm would arise. The single-storey rear extension sits below the neighbouring boundary walls and would not give rise to any material overbearing impact, loss of outlook or overshadowing.
- 8.3.2 In relation to the future occupiers of the proposed units, each unit meets or exceeds the nationally described space standard, is dual-aspect or otherwise well-lit, and benefits from private or shared amenity space in accordance with the Council's standards. Appropriate separation and screening ensure that no unacceptable overlooking would arise between the proposed units and neighbouring properties. The proposals accordingly accord with the relevant amenity policies of the development plan.

8.4 Transport and sustainability

- 8.4.1 The transport implications of the proposals have been assessed against Policy T3 and the Framework's transport policies. The change of use of the upper floors generates no material change in vehicular trip generation compared with the lawful use, and the Site records a high public transport accessibility level with a range of bus and underground services within convenient walking distance. The scheme is car-free, which is appropriate in this highly accessible location and consistent with the controlled parking regime on Example Street; a condition preventing future occupiers from obtaining on-street parking permits can be imposed to secure this. Secure cycle parking is provided in excess of the minimum standard, and refuse and recycling storage is provided in accordance with the Council's requirements.

- 8.4.2 In relation to sustainability, and in accordance with Policy SI1 and the Framework, the proposals adopt a fabric-first approach to energy efficiency that is compatible with the retention of the historic building, improving the thermal performance of the fabric where this can be achieved without harm to significance, and incorporating efficient building services. The reuse of an existing building represents an inherently sustainable form of development, conserving the embodied carbon of the existing structure. The proposals accordingly accord with the sustainability policies of the development plan.

8.5 Planning obligations and the Community Infrastructure Levy

- 8.5.1 The proposals have been considered against the tests for planning obligations set out in Regulation 122 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 and in the Framework, which require that any obligation be necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms, directly related to the development, and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to it. Given the modest scale of the scheme — four residential units achieved through the reuse of existing floorspace — no site-specific infrastructure requirement arises that would need to be secured by a planning obligation, and the matters identified through consultation (construction management and car-free occupation) are properly and adequately secured by planning condition rather than by a section 106 agreement.
- 8.5.2 The development would be liable to the Community Infrastructure Levy to the extent that it creates additional floorspace, calculated and collected by the Council in accordance with its adopted charging schedule, and the Applicant acknowledges that liability. There is accordingly no outstanding obligations issue that would weigh against the grant of permission, and the scheme makes its proportionate contribution to infrastructure through the Levy.

FIGURE PLACEHOLDER

Figure 2.1 Site Constraints

Imagery is generated from your site data in the final document.

Figure 2.1 Site Constraints

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FIGURE PLACEHOLDER

Figure 2.2 Comparable Applications within 500 m

Imagery is generated from your site data in the final document.

Figure 2.2 Comparable Applications within 500 m

Source: planning.data.gov.uk / PlanIt

9

Planning Balance and Conclusion

9.1 The planning balance

9.1.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that the application be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. For the reasons set out in the assessment above, the proposals accord with the development plan when read as a whole: the residential use is strongly supported in principle by the policies on housing delivery and the effective use of land; the design and heritage approach preserves, and in respect of the front elevation enhances, the character and appearance of the conservation area; and the technical assessments demonstrate compliance with the relevant amenity, transport and sustainability policies.

9.1.2 The proposals give rise to a single, low level of less than substantial harm to the significance of the conservation area, arising from the rear extension, which is required by paragraph 215 of the Framework and the case law to be given considerable importance and weight. That harm is, however, at the lower end of the spectrum, and it falls to be weighed against the public benefits of the scheme. Those benefits are substantial: the delivery of four new homes on previously developed land in a highly accessible and sustainable location, contributing to the Council's housing supply; the repair, reinstatement and long-term securing of a building that makes a positive contribution to the conservation area; the reuse of long-vacant floorspace and the associated support to the vitality of the parade; and the heritage benefits arising from the works to the front elevation.

9.2 Conclusion

9.2.1 Weighing the identified public benefits against the low level of less than substantial heritage harm, and giving that harm the considerable importance and weight the law requires, the balance under paragraph 215 of the Framework falls decisively in favour of the grant of permission. The proposals accord with the development plan read as a whole, and there are no material considerations that indicate that permission should nonetheless be withheld; on the contrary, the material considerations reinforce the case for approval.

9.2.2 In accordance with section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the National Planning Policy Framework, it is respectfully requested that planning permission be granted, subject to such conditions as the Council considers necessary and reasonable, including the Construction Management Plan and the car-free condition referred to above.

Prepared by

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Signed

Date



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This Planning Statement has been prepared by Shonaïke Finance Ltd for the use of Example Developments Ltd in connection with the applications described at Section 1. It may not be relied upon by any other party or used for any other purpose without the prior written agreement of Shonaïke Finance Ltd. The opinions expressed are given in good faith on the basis of the information available at the date of preparation.

APPENDIX 1

Schedule of Accommodation

The schedule below sets out the gross internal area of each proposed unit against the applicable nationally described space standard. Each unit meets or exceeds the standard.

Table A1.1: Schedule of accommodation

Unit	Floor	Type	GIA (sq m)	NDSS minimum (sq m)	Tenure
1	First	1B2P	52.0	50.0	Market
2	First	2B3P	63.0	61.0	Market
3	Second	1B2P	51.0	50.0	Market
4	Second	2B3P	64.0	61.0	Market