

CHANGE OF USE APPLICATION FOR THE SMITHFIELD GENERAL MARKET BUILDINGS

Planning Application Submission

Document no' 1

PLANNING STATEMENT

Including:

**PLANNING POLICY STATEMENT
HERITAGE STATEMENT
PROPOSED CONDITIONS
STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

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By SAVE BRITAIN'S HERITAGE
And
THE VICTORIAN SOCIETY

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PLANNING POLICY STATEMENT

RELEVANT POLICIES

1. The relevant planning policies are as follows:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) March 2012
- The London Plan, Greater London Authority 2011
- The City of London Corporation's Core Strategy September 2011
- The City of London Corporation's Character Summary and Management Strategy Supplementary Planning Document for the Smithfield Conservation Area September 2012
- Policies for the protection of the London Borough of Islington's and London Borough of Camden's designated heritage assets

LAND USE

2. The proposal is for change of use of the ground floor of the General Market and Annex to provide 7,345 square metres of A1, A3, A4 and A5, assembly and leisure (D2), and sui generis uses including markets, theatrical performances, live music performance storage and provision for pedestrian access, cycle parking facilities, and associated works.. No change is proposed to the first floor accommodation (formerly ancillary offices) or the basement. The Red House, Iron Mountain and Engine House (lavatory block) are repaired and mothballed. The basement is retained as car parking, storage and servicing, as existing, including access for Crossrail construction operations.

3. The site lies within the Central Activities Zone (CAZ) and within an Area of Intensification (AOI) as defined by the London Plan. The proposals comply with the AOI's intention to see broader improvements to the public realm and the development of a mix of uses within the Farringdon/Smithfield area.

4. The amount of retail space proposed is above the threshold of 2,500 square metre threshold stipulated in paragraph 26 of the NPPF and policy 4.7 of the London Plan and thus requires sequential testing in terms of the impact on existing shopping centres and the predicted demand for new retail.

5. There is little scope for expanding the existing Principal Shopping Centres in the City. Given the location within the AOI, the retail use is unlikely to detract to a significant degree from current retail locations within the City, or in Islington and Camden, but would provide new facilities of benefit to workers, residents and visitors to the area. The proposal would not detract from the existing Principal Shopping Areas and would thus comply with Policy CS20 in the City Corporation's Core Strategy.

6. The City of London Retail Study 2010 estimated a need for an additional 14,000 square metres of retail floorspace before 2016 and a further 43,000 square metres between 2016 and 2021. The proposal will help to achieve these targets. The significant anticipated increase in footfall from Thameslink and Crossrail at Farringdon will further mitigate any trade draw from established retail centres.

SUSTAINABILITY AND ENERGY

7. The retention, repair and re-use of the existing buildings and fabric is the most sustainable and energy-efficient option for the site.

ACCESS

8. The proposals re-open and re-use the existing pedestrian entrances to the buildings. With the exception of the existing stepped entrance at Harts Corner, all the entrances provide level access from the street to and through the ground floor areas of the buildings, with excellent permeability between streets.

TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT

9. The site is exceptionally well served by public transport, Farringdon station being the intersection of Thameslink, the Metropolitan and Circle Line and (under construction) Crossrail. There are numerous bus routes nearby. Given the historic servicing requirements of the buildings by vehicles when it was a wholesale market, and the generosity in width of the surrounding streets, including West Poultry Avenue, it is not anticipated that there are any traffic or transport policy implications for the proposed use of the site.

HERITAGE

10. The proposals retain and repair the existing buildings. Given that the General Market, Annex, Red House and Engine House make a significant contribution to the character and appearance of the Smithfield Conservation Area and to the setting of adjacent listed buildings and neighbouring conservation areas it follows that their

retention and repair will preserve and enhance the existing designated heritage assets.

11. New shop fronts and signage are proposed for the ground floor retail units. A sample design is proposed, traditional in nature, but it is expected that the details will be a reserved matter as part of planning permission.

HERITAGE STATEMENT: SMITHFIELD GENERAL MARKET, ANNEX AND RED HOUSE

The General Market and associated market buildings complete the magnificent run of market buildings designed by Sir Horace Jones, the City's surveyor, which since the destruction of Les Halles in Paris, are the finest parade of market buildings in Europe. Though the Poultry Market was rebuilt after a fire it is now a listed building and the whole group form a major piece of significant townscape on a large scale, dominating a historic quarter of London.

The General Market was built 1879-1883, the Annex 1886-1888. Horace Jones' buildings represent a high point in the design of public markets both for their large and imposing interiors and splendid and festive street architecture. An important evolution in terms of both architecture and technology is visible here. The General Market and associated Fish Market (Annex) complete the story using patent Phoenix columns to cover even larger spans. Both the General Market and Fish Market (Annex) are among the finest covered open air spaces in the Capital, complementing the other great markets which have been successfully preserved, notably Covent Garden, as well as Leadenhall and the Smithfield Meat Market which continues in use thanks to significant investment by the City Corporation.

The interiors in particular have a very strong and robust character, both the Phoenix columns and the lattice trusses and parallel top-lit roofs supported on distinctive flying arches. These are the 19th century equivalent of the gothic vaults in our great medieval churches and castles. The central dome was carefully rebuilt after the war and the well-ordered roofscape seen from above is exceptional of its kind. Indeed it now forms a fifth facade visible from many vantage points around, notably Hobburn Viaduct, which with the fourth pavilion now reconstructed, offers a model restoration of an important Victorian townscape.

There is a consistent palette of materials throughout all of Jones's market buildings. Set within the strong cohesion provided by consistency in bulk, massing and materials the subtle dialogue between Italianate and French Renaissance styles separated by the nearly 20 years provides a strong sense of balance and interest. The Red House (1898-1899) was completed a little later with reference to Horace Jones's market buildings. It has an impressive double row of blind arches and is one of the earliest Cold Stores in the country.

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

We are publicising a consultation event for our scheme which will be held on December 17th between 14:00 and 18:00 at 70 Cowcross Street, EC1M 6EJ.

Our team will be available to answer any questions and attendees will be encouraged to fill in feedback forms on the development, the results of which we will make available to the City of London.

PROPOSED CONDITIONS

We propose that the following details are treated as reserved matters:

1. Travel Plan

- A Travel Plan will be prepared and implemented in consultation with TFL and the City of London to ensure that the mode choice assumptions are achieved and maintained.

2. Pedestrian Access and Crossings

- No dedicated crossings of Charterhouse Street, West Smithfield, Snow Hill or Farringdon Road currently exist within the immediate proximity of the application site.
- The scheme will necessitate the construction of new pedestrian crossings of all of the surrounding roads. We propose to fund such works and will work closely with the City of London, TFL and other local businesses and groups to devise an appropriate plan.

3. Acoustic Report

- There are no noise sensitive properties near the application site and the repair and refurbishment works will not pose a significant disturbance to neighbouring commercial properties. Any uses that include regulated entertainment and amplified or non amplified music will be subject to a separate license application.

4. A4 Uses

- The precise mix of A1, A3, A4, A5 and sui generis uses will vary in seasonally in accordance with demand. We propose that a cap of 20% of the net lettable floor area is applied to A4 uses.

5. Toilet Facilities

- Toilet facilities. We propose that the scale, location and design is submitted as a condition to any permission that is granted.

6. Drainage

- We propose that a full survey of the existing system is undertaken as a condition of consent for the scheme.
- We propose to connect toilet facilities and drains from kitchen areas to the existing drainage system, a survey of which we propose to submit as a condition for the scheme

7. Plant and Extract Arrangements

- Natural ventilation will be utilised by A3 and A5 businesses whenever suitable. Extract ducting will also be routed through the existing chimney flues.

8. Shopfronts

- All of the hoarding that covers the existing shop fronts on the perimeter of the General Market building will be removed and the original shopfronts reinstated.
- New shop fronts on West Smithfield and West Poultry may be considered at a future stage but they will not form part of this application.

9. Waste and Recycling Plan

A waste management which details the waste storage facility and management policy will be created in consultation with the City of London submitted as a reserved matter.