

Paddington Green Police Station  
2 – 4 Harrow Road, London, W2 1XJ

# Heritage Statement

**Montagu Evans**

March 2021

**Berkeley**  
Designed for life

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# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Montagu Evans LLP on behalf of Berkeley Homes (Central London) Ltd (“the applicant”) in support of an application for the redevelopment of Paddington Green Police Station, 2-4 Harrow Road, Paddington, London W2 1XJ (“the site”). The site is located in the City of Westminster (“the Council”).

1.2 The description of development is:

*“Demolition and redevelopment of the site to provide three buildings, providing private and affordable residential units (Class C3), commercial uses (Class E), flexible community/affordable workspace (Class E/F.1), provision of private and public amenity space, landscaping, tree and other planting, public realm improvements throughout the site including new pedestrian and cycle links, provision of public art and play space, basement level excavation to provide associated plant, servicing and disabled car and cycle parking, connecting through to the basement of the neighbouring West End Gate development.”*

1.3 The Statement should be read in conjunction with the Environmental Statement: Volume 2, Townscape Visual Built Heritage Impact Assessment (TVBH) prepared by Montagu Evans LLP in support of an application for planning permission for the site.



Figure 1 - Site Location Plan. Source: Squire & Partners Design And Access Statement

## 3.0 STATUE AND POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 The site is located within the Central Activities Zone, near its north-western edge. Policy 2.15 (Town Centres) of the London Plan identifies that the CAZ and town centres are the main foci of intensification. The Site is located with the North Westminster Economic Area as designated in Westminster's City Plan (2016), which includes 4 of the 5 most deprived wards in Westminster. Of relevance to the proposals, Westminster Policy S12 encourages development that improves the quality and tenure mix of housing, addresses the severance caused by the Westway (A40) and Harrow Road (A404) and improves public realm.
- 3.2 The site is located adjacent to, but outside the Paddington Opportunity Area (OA); so London Plan Policy 2.13 (Opportunity Areas) does not apply to the Site. The Harrow Road/Westway forms the northern boundary of the OA.
- 3.3 The Heritage ES Volume appendix 1.1 contains a comprehensive list of the relevant Statutory requirements and Development Plan policies which are applicable to the site and the proposals, so these are not repeated in whole here. In general terms, there is a strong statutory and policy presumption in favour of the preservation of listed buildings and conservation areas, whilst the protection of the non-designated heritage assets has less weight in the planning balance. The policies of particular relevance are examined below.

### London Plan (2021)

- 3.4 Policy HC1 (Heritage Conservation and Growth) states that proposals affecting the setting of heritage assets should conserve their significance and identify enhancement opportunities by integrating heritage considerations early on in the design process.

### Westminster City Plan (2016)

- 3.5 Policy S25 (Heritage) recognises Westminster's historic environment. The policy states that:

*"Recognising Westminster's wider historic environment, its extensive heritage assets will be conserved, including its listed buildings, conservation areas, Westminster's World Heritage Site, its historic parks including five Royal Parks, squares, gardens and other open spaces, their settings, and its archaeological heritage."*

### Saved policies of Westminster's Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (2016)

- 3.6 DES 9 (Conservation areas), DES 10 (Listed buildings) and DES 12 (Parks, gardens and squares) are relevant to the proposals presented in this application. Consideration has been given to these policies throughout the design process and are reflected in the design mitigations outlined earlier in this statement.

### Emerging Westminster City Plan (2019 – 2040)

- 3.7 The new Westminster City Plan will be a new borough-wide planning and regeneration strategy guiding development up to 2040. Once finalised and adopted, it will replace the saved policies of Westminster's Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (2016) and the Westminster City plan (2016).
- 3.8 WCC submitted the new City Plan to the Secretary of State on 19th November 2019 for Independent Examination, the final stage in the plan adoption process. The Examination took place in September and October 2020. The Inspectors identified a number of modifications required to make the Plan sound. WCC consulted on these modifications between November and January 2021. The final Inspector's Report was published on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2021, within which it was concluded that the Plan is now sound subject to the main modifications being adopted. The new Plan is therefore at an advanced stage and now holds weight in decision making, as set out in a statement by the City Council also dated 19<sup>th</sup> March 2021. This statement also sets out the intention to adopt the Plan at the next full Council meeting, which is expected to be in April 2021, after the date of submission of this application.

3.9 Policy 38 (Design Principles), Policy 41 (Building height), Policy 43 (Public realm), Policy 39 (Heritage), Policy 40 (Townscape and architecture) are particularly relevant to the BHTVIA. Policy 39 states that development must optimise the positive role of the historic environment in the Westminster's townscape and economy. This policy has been considered in the design process.

# 2.0 HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

- 2.1 The proposals have been produced in an iterative design process in consultation with Westminster City Council through the pre-application process as set out in the Planning Statement, Design and Access Statement and Statement of Community Engagement submitted with this application. Historic England have been approached as part of the pre-application engagement, but do not wish to be consulted at pre-application stage .
- 2.2 The design includes a number of mitigation measures which seek to reduce the potential effects on relevant heritage assets and enhance the setting and ability to appreciate the heritage value of the site. These include the following:
- The proposed development replaces the existing police station building, which is 17 storeys (ground +16) on the Edgware Road frontage consisting of a 3 storey podium and 14 storey tower above, 8 storeys (ground + 7) on the Paddington Green frontage, with a 1 storey link between the east and west buildings. This existing building is an imposing concrete 'urban fortress' with an impenetrable façade to the street. The existing building is unattractive and disused, aside from a small element of office space at the western end of the site. The redevelopment of the former Police Station will enhance the immediate setting of the site, including Paddington Green Conservation Area as well as longer range views, because it will replace a poor quality building with three buildings of high architectural quality and improved public realm;
  - The tallest element of the Proposed Development (Block K) of 32 storeys (ground + 31 storeys) is located at the junction of the Westway/Harrow Road and the Edgware Road. The latter is a Roman road, and remains a major route north from London. The former is a major route into central London from the west. Block K is therefore located at a junction of metropolitan importance, where the Westway descends to street level as one enters central London. Draft Policy 41 of the Intend to Adopt City Plan recognises the gateway function of the site. This primarily has a townscape function but the location for Block K is also less sensitive in heritage terms that the part of site to the west.
  - The next tallest element (Block I) of 18 storeys (ground + 17 storeys) is located on the Paddington Green, so responds to this large open space. The scale steps down from Block K to respond to the more sensitive heritage context to the west (Paddington Green and Maida Vale Conservation Areas, refer to ES chapter for greater context and detail).
  - The scale of the development has been significantly reduced in height through the pre-application process. The tallest option presented to the GLA and the Council was 42 storeys for Block K and 35 storeys for Block I. While the GLA considered this scale to be acceptable, the Council had a different view, so the proposed height has been substantially reduced in response to Officer comments, which has reduced the potential effect on nearby heritage assets.
  - The design of Block J of the proposed development draws inspiration from the existing mansion blocks and is a continuation of the historic typology in the neighbouring areas and within neighbouring West End Gate.
  - The appearance of the tallest elements (Block K) in the mid and long range views, especially those from Maida Vale, have been carefully considered. The use of a light tone materiality is visually recessive.

## HERITAGE ASSETS

- 2.3 Section 3.0 of the TVBH ES Volume provides an overview of the historical development of the local area and an in-depth appraisal of the significance of heritage receptors which could be potentially affected by the proposed development, and the contribution of their setting to this significance. This was based on documentary research, a desk-based review of OS maps, and site surveys. The level of detail is proportionate and sufficient to understand the potential impact on their significance, consistent with paragraph 189 of the NPPF

2.4 The northern half of Newcastle Place, which is within the redline boundary, is located within Paddington Green Conservation Area (CA), so there is potential for a direct effect on the CA, and a setting effect on the rest of the CA. There are 6 other conservation areas located in the wider area. These are:

- Maida Vale Conservation Area;
- Lisson Grove Conservation Area;
- Bayswater Conservation Area;
- Regent's Park Conservation Area;
- St John's Wood Conservation Area; and
- Molyneux Street Conservation Area.

2.5 There are also a number of other designated heritage assets nearby and in the wider area. Those judged to have potential to be affected by the proposed development are listed below:

- Church of St Mary (Grade II\* listed);
- Marylebone Lower House North Westminster Community School (Grade II\* listed);
- The Children's Hospital (Grade II listed);
- 17 and 18 Paddington Green (Grade II listed);
- Westminster Arms Public House (Grade II listed)
- Nos. 4-16 (even) Warwick Avenue and No. 20 Howley Place (Grade II listed)
- Hyde Park Registered Park and Garden (RPG); and
- Regent Park RPG.

2.6 The location of these receptors is illustrated on a heritage receptor map included at Appendix 1.4 of the ES volume.

2.7 Section 6.0 of the TVBH ES Volume provides an assessment of the impact of the proposed development on the heritage assets listed above.

2.8 The TVBH ES Volume finds a Minor Adverse impact to the following assets:

- Listed properties on Warwick Avenue

2.9 The Heritage ES Volume finds no or a neutral impact to the following assets:

- Hyde Park RPG;
- St John's Wood Conservation Area;
- Maida Vale Conservation Area;

2.10 The TVBH ES Volume finds a Negligible beneficial impact to the following assets;

- Church of St Mary (Grade II\* listed);

- Lisson Grove Conservation Area;
- Regent's Park Conservation Area; and
- Regent's Park RPG.

2.11 The TVBH ES Volume finds a Minor Beneficial impact to the following assets;

- 17 and 18 Paddington Green (Grade II listed);
- The Children's Hospital (Grade II listed);
- Paddington Green Conservation Area; and
- Bayswater Conservation Area.

2.12 The TVBH ES Volume finds a Minor – Moderate Beneficial impact to the following assets:

- Marylebone Lower House North Westminster Community School (Grade II\*)

2.13 The assessment of the listed properties in Warwick Avenue and fronting Paddington Green, the Paddington Green Conservation Area, and Maida Vale Conservation Area are expanded on in this report, where effect of Minor scale or above have been identified, or where the proximity to the site means the assessment merits further explanation.

**Nos. 4-16 (even) Warwick Avenue and No. 20 Howley Place (Grade II)**

2.14 The heritage value of the listed buildings is derived from their group value and architectural interest of the terrace as an attractive row of 19th century properties associated with the development of Maida Vale and Little Venice.

2.15 The proposed development would be visible in the background of the view from Blomfield Road at View 35, above the roofline of the listed terrace, in conjunction with the existing WEG Block A, over a distance of approximately 820m. The setting of the listed terrace has a uniform historic character, so this would be a detrimental change. The change to the setting as a whole would be minimal; the listed buildings would still be understood as an attractive group, set within a quiet, suburban context which reflects the contemporaneous development in this part of the Conservation Area.

2.16 Whilst a perceptible change, it would not significantly affect the appreciation of the significance of the listed buildings. There would therefore be a low degree of less than substantial harm to this grade II terrace. This is the only harmful effect identified to designated heritage assets as a result of the proposed development.

**Paddington Green Conservation Area**

2.17 The heritage value of the Conservation Area is derived from its special interest focussed on Paddington Green, St Mary's Churchyard and gardens and the peripheral development which borders the Square. Its built form is of mixed quality, comprising 19th century development to the north as well as larger scale post-war development. The site is located to the south-east of the CA, and the northern part of Newcastle Place, is within the site and CA.

2.18 The wider context of the CA is changing; considerable development is being undertaken to the south in the Paddington Basin OA, and within the CA at West End Gate.

2.19 The former Police Station comprises a 2-3 storey podium with 8 storey element on Paddington Green, with a 17 storey tower at the junction between Edgware Road and the Westway. There is therefore already large scale development of poor architectural quality on the site. The site is largely disused. The poor design quality of the existing building and its lack of use detracts from the setting of the Conservation Area.



- 2.20 The proposed development will increase the scale of development to between 15 and 32 storeys in the immediate setting of the CA, with an 18 storey tower on the Paddington Green frontage.
- 2.21 Views 17&17W and 32 (presented in the Heritage ES Volume section 8.0) from within Paddington Green indicate that the proposed development will change the skyline and increase the sense of enclosure of the east side of Paddington Green. There would also be light effects on the CA during the night. The proposed development would be seen in conjunction with other large scale development at West End Gate and Paddington Basin.
- 2.22 The mature trees within Paddington Green would partially screen and filter views of the proposed development, to reduce the visual effect of the increase in scale, especially in summer.
- 2.23 The quality of the architecture will be of much higher quality than the existing building on the site. The design of the new buildings has been carefully considered to respond to the tone and texture of the mansion block buildings which surround Paddington Green, sitting comfortably within the wider masterplan.
- 2.24 The proposed development will bring the site back into beneficial and viable use, and improve the economic vitality of the area. The use of the new building would be appropriate to its context, and its well-articulated form would be an attractive addition to the setting of the CA, seen in conjunction with development of a comparable scale. The direct effect on the Conservation Area in Newcastle Place would introduce public realm enhancements to create a green, urban oasis with a green artery linking Paddington Green and Edgware Road. This would enhance the character and appearance of the CA.
- 2.25 Although the proposed development would introduce a noticeable change and improvement in the setting of the CA and in the public realm of Newcastle Place within the CA, the effect on the value of the CA would be a slight enhancement, given the buildings of historic and architectural interest that make up the CA would be unaltered.

**Church of St Mary (Grade II\* listed)**

- 2.26 The setting of the church is defined, principally, by its churchyard, and mature trees, which partially screen views out to the surrounding townscape. It is contained to the north by the Westway, a heavily trafficked thoroughfare, and to the east by emerging taller development which contributes to a sense of containment.
- 2.27 There is no historic or functional relationship between the site and the Church, and the site at present makes no contribution to its setting.
- 2.28 The immediate setting of the church, comprising the established open space of the churchyard and Paddington Green, would not change.
- 2.29 Views of the church towards the west take in the remnants of the historic townscape within its context. Towards the east, regeneration in the environs of the Regent's Canal has contributed to a more varied setting, with taller elements towards Edgware Road.
- 2.30 The modern development at Paddington Green to the east is a prominent feature, set within the wider expanse of mixed, predominantly 20th century development in the wider townscape, and filtered through the mature trees within Paddington Green. The proposed development would be seen against this context, and would not considerably affect the character of this setting, or views out from the church.
- 2.31 Whilst the proposed development would be a noticeable improvement in the setting of the receptor, it would replace the former Police Station, which is large scale development of indifferent architectural quality, with a high quality new architecture, and would be experienced in conjunction with the existing taller development in the environs of Paddington Green.
- 2.32 The sculpted form and articulation would contribute to a considered composition which sits comfortably within its context, and would be an attractive feature where it is seen in the setting of the church.
- 2.33 Although these constitute positive effects on the setting of the Church of St Mary, the proposed development would have no effect on the ability to appreciate the heritage value of the listed Church, because the relationship with the Green and churchyard would be unchanged.

- 2.34 The proposed development would have preserve the ability to appreciate the heritage value of the receptor, or upon the contribution made to that value by setting i.e. no harm.

#### **The Children's Hospital, 17 and 18 Paddington Green (all Grade II listed)**

- 2.35 The Children's Hospital is located on the east side of Paddington Green and was built in 1895 to designs by HP Adams. It is a red brick 3 storey building with red terracotta dressing and a C20 extension. It is listed mostly for the tile pictures inside the Outpatients Department. Nos. 17 (owned by the applicant) and 18 Paddington Green are located on the same side of the Green as the Children's Hospital, and are a pair of late Georgian townhouses in London stock brick of 4 storeys plus a basement. These listed buildings are located adjacent to each other, in close proximity to the site, which is also located on the east side of Paddington Green, to the south.
- 2.36 The proposed development would replace the large unattractive former Paddington Green Police Station with a high quality development comprising a number of taller buildings. These taller buildings would introduce a contrast in scale and materials to the setting of the listed building, but this would not undermine the ability to appreciate the heritage value of the listed buildings, which is primarily their intrinsic historical and architectural interest. The way the proposed development would appear as part of the setting of the receptors is presented in views 17 and 32 in section 8 of the TVBH Volume of the ES.
- 2.37 The setting of these listed buildings already includes modern development of a similar scale in West End Gate and Paddington Basin. The proposed development would appear in the backdrop of existing modern residential development to the east of the listed buildings, and these would provide a transition making the jump in scale less stark. Overall the proposed development is considered to provide a slight enhancement to the setting and significance of the listed buildings, because it would replace an unattractive, disused building with a development, of considerably improved architectural quality.

#### **Marylebone Lower House North Westminster Community School (Grade II\* listed)**

- 2.38 Marylebone Lower House North Westminster Community School was constructed in 1959-60 by the London County Council to designs by Leonard Manasseh. It is constructed from reinforced concrete with a steel framed hall. It is grade II\* listed primarily for the architectural interest of the design.
- 2.39 The setting of this receptor is primarily characterised by the schoolyard and surrounding residential streets. The proposed development will appear above the left of the roofline of the school. This is shown in View 31 in section 8 of the TVBH Volume of the ES.
- 2.40 The proposed development would form a noticeable addition in the setting of the listed building. At this distance, c. 200m to the north-east, it would be possible to appreciate that the proposed building is of high quality with highly articulated elevations that would provide texture and visual interest. The setting of the listed school already includes modern development of a similar scale, and the existing WEG Block A is visible above the roofline on the right of view 31. The proposed development would appear in the backdrop of existing modern residential development.
- 2.41 Overall the proposed development is considered to provide a slight enhancement to the setting and significance of the listed school, because it would be possible to appreciate the architectural quality of the proposed building at this distance, which is a similar architectural idiom as the modernist design for the School.

#### **Maida Vale Conservation Area**

- 2.42 The Maida Vale Conservation Area derives its heritage value principally from its leafy, suburban character, comprising attractive, high quality dwellings built principally between 1830 and the mid-1860s. It is a large CA, and abuts the Paddington Green CA to the south, where its setting has a fragmentary character.
- 2.43 The size and arrangement of the CA means that the proposed development would not be experienced from within large swathes to the north and east in particular. The effect of the proposals on visual amenity is considered at Section 8.0 of the Heritage ES Volume.

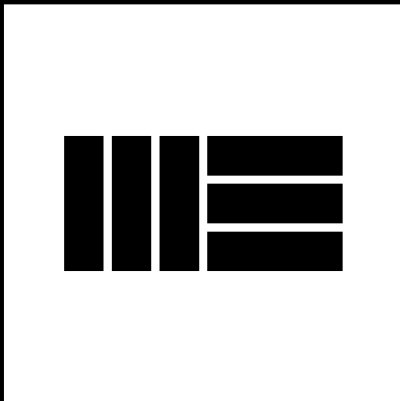
- 2.44 Considerable modern development in the environs of the site forms a notable element of the CA's setting, including the tall buildings cluster at West End Gate to the south. The juncture of old and new comprising the historic residential buildings and the more distant tall buildings of the modern, world city form a key characteristic of the experience of the CA, and the visitor is aware of views towards ongoing development at the city centre, in the environs of Harrow Road, the Westway and Edgware Road.
- 2.45 The site is located within an area of modern development to the south-east of the receptor. The site at present is an unattractive building which does not contribute to the special interest of the Maida Vale Conservation Area in any way.
- 2.46 The proposed development would change an element of the setting of the CA by introducing a tall building which would be visible in views south-east from parts of the CA, including along Harrow Road. The elegant form of the building will add a building of high quality design to the horizon, and mark the location of the junction with Edgware Road; a destination of importance.
- 2.47 The viewpoint selection (presented in the Heritage ES Volume section 8.0) aims to illustrate the maximal effect on the CA. In view 6 from Westbourne Park Road Bridge, the proposed development would be a noticeable feature, and would be seen with the existing development at West End Gate. There would be visual coalescence with Westmark Tower in view 6, which would increase the perceived mass of the proposed development. There would be a similar effect from the nearby view, from the junction of Westbourne Terrace Road Bridge and Delamere Terrace (view 36).
- 2.48 In view 35 from Blomfield Road the upper storeys of Westmark Tower are visible above the listed terrace at 4 and 6, 8 and 10, 12 and 14, and 32 and 16 Warwick Avenue. The proposed development would be visible adjacent to Westmark Tower, which would appear as a single mass.
- 2.49 Nevertheless the proposed development would not be visible from within the majority of the CA, including from the canal basin at Gloucester Terrace/ Cleveland Street (as illustrated by view 7) and Clifton Villages (view 37).
- 2.50 Where the proposed development is visible it would be seen in the context of existing modern and tall development at West End Gate, and given the fairly limited extent of the visual effects, would not affect the intrinsic heritage value of the historic ensemble within the CA, or the visitor's ability to appreciate that value i.e. no harm.

# 4.0 CONCLUSION AND POLICY COMPLIANCE

- 4.1 The northern half of Newcastle Place, which is within the redline boundary, is located within Paddington Green Conservation Area (CA), so there is potential for a direct effect on the CA, and a setting effect on the rest of the CA, and other heritage receptors in the vicinity. Great weight has been given to the conservation of heritage receptors affected by the proposed development. The significance of the majority of designated heritage assets would be preserved by the proposed development.
- 4.2 The conclusion of the heritage assessment is that there would be a harmful setting effect on a grade II listed terrace in Warwick Avenue (Nos. 4-16 (even) and No. 20 Howley Place), because the proposed development would appear above the roofline of the listed terrace, in an area of uniform historic character. The harm would be limited, less than substantial (as defined by the NPPF) and at the lower end of the scale.
- 4.3 It is recognised that any degree of harm to a designated heritage asset is of great weight in the planning balance, albeit its limited degree is relevant in the weighing exercise required by paragraph 196. The Planning Statement prepared by Turley identifies the considerable public benefits of the scheme and carries out the weighing exercise.
- 4.4 The assessment identifies some modest beneficial setting effects of the proposed development, because it will replace a large, unattractive and disused building with a development of high architectural quality in superior materials, albeit of larger scale. The setting and appreciation of the significance of Paddington Green Conservation Area and the listed buildings fronting the Green, and the grade II\* listed Marylebone Lower House North Westminster Community School, would be slightly enhanced by the proposed development. The public realm enhancements to Newcastle Place would have a direct beneficial effect on the Paddington Green Conservation Area. The Rottingdean judgement has clarified that any such benefits to designated heritage assets are of great weight in the planning balance.
- 4.5 The pre-application feedback from the Council on heritage matters has been limited, for example it did not form part of the formal pre-application response dated 15 February 2021. However, we understand that in email correspondence with Officers, they have explained that they consider that the scale would harm the setting of several heritage assets, including the Maida Vale and Paddington Green Conservation Area and grade II\* Church of St Mary, however this harm is felt to be less than substantial.
- 4.6 Our conclusion differs as a result of a difference in professional judgment. Our assessment identifies slight positive effects on the Paddington Green Conservation Area and grade II\* Church of St Mary, and no harm to the Maida Vale Conservation Area. Our conclusion derives from the following considerations. First, the proposed increase in scale will be experienced in the setting of existing tall buildings at WEG and Paddington Basin. Second, the existing building on the site, the former Police Station, is itself a large building (with 8 storey and 17 storey elements) but of poor architectural quality and disused. Third, its replacement with buildings of high design quality and public realm enhancements would therefore be a positive change, despite the increase in scale.
- 4.7 Nevertheless if the Council continues to conclude that the proposed development causes less than substantial harm to these designated heritage assets, it would inevitably be at the lower end of the scale, given the public realm enhancements and improved design quality of the proposed building. Whilst the harm would be of great weight in the planning balance, it would need to be weighed against the considerable public benefits of the proposed development, as required by paragraph 196 of the NPPF. The Planning Statement prepared by Turley identifies the public benefits and carries out this weighing exercise.
- 4.8 During pre-application discussions the Council requested that the reuse of the decorative bas relief panels on the sides of the former Police Station be explored, potentially in the subway to Merchant Square. We note that the former Police Station is not located in a Conservation Area, nor has it been identified as a non-designated heritage asset during pre-application discussions. The panels could therefore be removed without the need for planning permission. However, the applicant is content to work with the Council to find an alternative location for these panels elsewhere in the immediate locality, to be secured by planning condition.
- 4.9 In conclusion, the proposals comply with all relevant national and local planning policy on the historic environment, including Policy HC1 of the London Plan, S25 of the Westminster City Plan (2016), and Policy 39 of the Draft City Plan.

In granting planning permission for the application, the Council would be discharging its statutory duty with respect to section 72(1) and section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990), subject to the consideration of public benefits set out in the Planning Statement.

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