

Camley Street Neighbourhood Forum

London NW1 0XA

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Jill Kingaby
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Examination Ref: 02/JK/CSNP

By email and post

Dear Ms Kingaby

Camley Street Neighbourhood Plan Examination

I write as secretary of the Camley Street Neighbourhood Forum, and on behalf of the Forum, in response to your letter of 28 November 2019 concerning the Camley Street Neighbourhood Plan. In it, you listed six questions to which you were seeking responses. These responses are set out below.

QUESTION ONE

In your letter you state that: *'... there are allegations that the CS E1 and E2 policies lack general conformity with the development plan and fail to meet the Basic Conditions'*.

In making this observation you draw attention to a number of the respondents who suggest that these two policies are too restrictive. Based on this commentary, you ask the Forum to suggest revised policy wording to address the issues.

In order to respond appropriately to your request and to address the Basic Conditions it is – we would suggest – necessary in the first instance to clarify the status of the draft London Plan.

Camden Council's local authority representation suggests that limited weight should be given to the draft Plan as *'...there is still a long way to go until the new London Plan can be finalised'*.

In the context of this comment, we would refer you to the Regulation 16 response submitted on behalf of the Greater London Authority dated 25th October 2019.

The response confirms that the Draft London Plan was published for consultation on 1st December 2017 and the Draft London Plan consolidated suggested changes (following examination hearings) on 16th July 2019. The letter confirms that the final new London Plan is anticipated in winter 2019/20.

As set out in the GLA's letter: '...the publication of the final new London Plan will form part of the Camden and the neighbourhood forum's Development Plan and will contain the most up-to date policies. Given the timing it is likely that the neighbourhood plan will need to be in general conformity with the new London Plan. In addition, the Draft London Plan and its evidence base are now material considerations.'

Thus, contrary to Camden LPA's suggestion, the New London Plan is at an advanced stage and – given the timetable set out in the GLA's letter – is likely to become part of the statutory Development Plan at around the same time the Camley Street Neighbourhood Development Plan is finalised.

Given this position and given requirements of paragraph 29 of the NPPF, the CSNDP should anticipate the draft Plan's adoption and therefore should be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the existing and draft London Plans and the Camden Local Plan (2017).

The draft London Plan and its associated evidence base places emphasis on protecting and increasing industrial floorspace and in this regard gives strong support to the policies of the CSNDP that seek to retain and intensify industrial uses, and confirms that such an approach would be in line with the draft new London Plan policy E4.

The GLA states that the evidence base that underpins its policy position has confirmed that over the period 2001 to 2015 more than 1,300 hectares of industrial land (including SILs, LSIS and Non-Designated Industrial Sites) were released to other uses. The letter confirms that this loss was well in excess of previously established London Plan monitoring benchmarks set out in the Mayor's Land for Industry and Transport SPG, and goes on to state that recent 2017 research by the GLA has indicated that there will be positive net demand for industrial land in London 2016 to 2041, mostly driven by strong demand for logistics to service growth in London's economy and population.

Table 6.2 of the draft London Plan places Camden in the 'retain capacity' industrial category where boroughs should seek to intensify industrial floorspace capacity. It is also identified as a Central Service Area, which means that there should be a focus on the provision of essential services to the Central Activities Zone (CAZ), and – in particular – sustainable 'last mile' distribution / logistics, 'just in time' servicing, waste management and recycling and land to support transport functions. Given this, draft London Plan policies E4 and SD4M prioritise light and general industry (B1c and B2), storage and logistics / distribution (B8), flexible (B1c/B2/B8) hybrid space, and low-cost industrial space for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises in order to meet these critical needs.

The GLA's letter confirms that the Camley Street Neighbourhood Area is located directly adjacent to the CAZ and: '...therefore is well placed to serve the strategic needs of London's core commercial area'. In such locations policy E4 prioritises the retention, enhancement and provision of additional industrial capacity.

In the context of the emerging policies of the London Plan and as part of the preparation of the CSNDP, the Forum consulted a number of the larger industrial occupiers located within the CSNDP area. The feedback from this consultation, which was submitted as part of the Evidence Base to the CSNDP, confirmed that the existing industrial sites support a number of businesses that provide essential services to the Central Activities Zone and locally within Camden (notably in food distribution). The area benefits from a location close to its suppliers and clients. Many of these businesses have existed for a long period, and have well established supply lines.

Thus, the wider evidence base of the GLA and the Forum's own survey results demonstrate the importance to the operation of the CAZ of the existing employment land and of the sorts of businesses these sites support. Hence the reasons why policies CS E1 and E2 contain the wording they do.

In the context of Camden's designation as a 'retain capacity' borough, Policy E7 of the draft London Plan encourages the intensification of existing industrial sites through the introduction of small units, development of multi-storey schemes, the addition of basements and the more efficient use of land through higher plot ratios.

The policy goes on to state that mixed-use or residential development on non-designated industrial sites should be supported where there is no reasonable prospect of the site being used for the industrial and related purposes set out in Part A of Policy E4, OR it has been allocated in an adopted local development plan document for residential mixed-use development, OR industrial, storage or distribution floorspace is provided as part of mixed-use intensification.

Dealing with the issue of 'no reasonable prospect', the draft London Plan requires the submission of evidence, which should include:

- strategic and local assessments of demand;
- evidence of vacancy and marketing with appropriate lease terms at market rates suitable for the type, use and size (for at least 12 months, or greater if required by a local development plan document), and where the premises are derelict or obsolete, offered with the potential for redevelopment to meet the needs of modern industrial users;
- evidence that the scope for mixed-use intensification with industrial users has been explored fully.

The industrial sites that comprise the CSNF area at the present time are fulfilling a very important role in meeting the needs of businesses that serve the operational needs of many central London activities. The Forum wants to protect and encourage the role and function of these existing industrial sites. At

the same time, however, the Forum wants through the CSNP to create the conditions whereby this industrial land can evolve, modernise and intensify as envisaged by policy E7 of the London Plan.

All of the objections submitted by Camden as landowner and as the planning authority, and by the other landowners, point to a perceived lack of flexibility in policy EM1 and EM2, which might hinder the ability of the sites to accommodate other employment and priority uses.

Camden Planning in its response confirms that whilst the Council does not want to see a reduction in the overall employment floorspace on the sites, a requirement in the CSNP policies to re-provide all of the existing B1c, light industrial and B8 storage floorspace could place constraints on the ability of the sites to provide a mix of uses, including new housing and other employment space.

As set out above, it is not the intent of the Forum to frustrate the potential of these sites to deliver additional uses and functions, with the proviso that the sorts of businesses that have an important and symbiotic relationship with the CAZ are able to remain within the area, and that the area is capable in the future of accommodating other industrial occupiers who have similar needs to be located close to their customers.

Such uses include light and general industry (B1c and B2), storage and logistics / distribution (B8), flexible (B1c/B2/B8) hybrid space, and low-cost industrial space for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises in order to meet these critical needs.

The approach taken is entirely consistent with the policies of the London Plan and the Camden Local Plan.

Policy CS EM1

Based on the various consultee responses and in order to accommodate the flexibility sought, the Forum has looked again at its policies and confirms that in the context of the wording of the draft London Plan it would be prepared to make the following changes in relation to criteria a) and b) of policy CS EM1:

- a) Must ensure that the amount of employment floorspace present on a site is maintained and preferably increased.*
- b) Must ensure that a significant proportion of any new / replacement employment floorspace should meet the varied operational requirements of light and general industry (B1c and B2), storage and logistics / distribution (B8), flexible (B1c/B2/B8) hybrid space, and low-cost industrial and related space for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises.*

In relation to criterion EM1 c), the Forum is of the view that the wording is entirely consistent with the policies of the existing and draft London Plans and Camden's Local Plan (policy E1), and hence meets the Basic Conditions.

Criterion EM1 d) requires all new B1c floorspace to be provided at average Greater London rental rates. The Regulation 16 responses suggest that this requirement goes beyond what planning policy is capable of influencing.

The Forum notes the comments made by the Panel at paragraph 439 of the Report of the Examination on the draft London Plan. The Panel recommended the deletion of a reference to 'an appropriate range of rents'...'because whilst that may be a beneficial consequence, attempting to control rental levels of market properties is not justified or consistent with national policy'.

Policy E4 of the draft London Plan does, however, require provision to be made for the varied operational requirements of low-cost industrial and related space for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises. Given this, the Forum has expanded criterion EM1 b) to make provision for such space as part of any redevelopment / intensification scenario and in so doing proposes the deletion of criterion d).

Criterion EM1 e) requires that all other B1 floorspace supplied as part of any redevelopment scheme should provide the maximum viable amount of affordable workspace.

Both the draft London Plan and Camden's own policies make provision for the inclusion of affordable workspace, where viable.

Based on Camden's recommendations, we would suggest that e) be reworded as follows to bring the policy in line with strategic policies:

e) A proportion of other B1 floorspace provided should be provided at affordable rents, where viable.

In relation to the final paragraph of CS EM1, which refers to the use of a specialist provider for office and light industrial, the Council as planning authority suggests that this is too narrow and is not in general conformity with its approach.

The Council suggests the following wording as a replacement:

'Where affordable workspace is provided on-site, management by a specialist provider may be appropriate to support existing and small businesses. The provider must be identified prior to implementation of the development in order that the space caters for specific needs.'

We confirm that this wording is acceptable to the Forum.

Given the above we confirm that the Forum proposes that Policy CS EM1 be amended as follows:

Policy CS EM1– Employment Floorspace Provision

Development proposals involving the redevelopment and/or intensification of existing employment sites:

- a) **Must ensure that the equivalent amount of employment floorspace present on a site is re-provided and preferably increased in a proposal.**
- b) **Must ensure that a significant proportion of any new / replacement employment floorspace should meet the varied operational requirements of light and general industry (B1c and B2), storage and logistics / distribution (B8), flexible (B1c/B2/B8) hybrid space, and low-cost industrial and related space for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises.**
- c) **Must consider providing additional class B uses for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), where feasible, a proportion of which should be suited to meeting both start-ups and move-on space; and**
- d) **Must ensure that a proportion of the employment floorspace is provided at affordable rents, where viable.**

Where affordable workspace is provided on-site, management by a specialist provider may be appropriate to support existing and small businesses. The provider must be identified prior to implementation of the development in order that the space caters for specific needs.

Policy CS EM2

The primary objection levelled at this policy is the requirement that: ‘...those existing businesses within the NP area that both offer employment opportunity to Camden residents and support the functioning of the CAZ should be offered equivalent replacement space as part of the business and industrial space provision of any redevelopment proposal...’

Camden’s planning department suggests that the stipulation implied by the words ‘equivalent replacement space’ be removed as it: ‘...prevents consideration of other light industrial formats and other employment uses that the local plan has identified as appropriate in the Plan area, nor does it consider the compatibility of this floorspace with other priority uses such as housing’.

In the context of what has already been said above, the Forum confirms that it would be prepared to accept the following amendments to Policy CS EM2:

In support of LB Camden Local Plan policy E2, those existing businesses within the NP area that both offer employment opportunity to Camden residents and support the functioning of the CAZ should be offered appropriate alternative space, either as part of the business and industrial employment space provision in any redevelopment / intensification proposal, or on another suitable alternative site. This offer should be made to those businesses at rental levels that are commensurate with open market light-industrial rental levels, whilst ensuring that business

continuity is ensured as far as possible (which will be managed by planning obligations).

When these businesses wish to remain on site, efforts should be made to retain and integrate them into any redevelopment scheme.

The businesses meeting the criteria at the time of adoption of this plan are listed in the reasoned justification below.

Should any of these businesses wish to relocate outside the NP area, the total net floorspace vacated should be offered to other comparable business and industrial operators at comparable average Greater London light-industrial rental levels.

QUESTION TWO

The Forum does not believe that the submission of the Neighbourhood Plan is premature. Correspondence with Camden Council's Planning Policy team confirmed that Camden's SPD was timed deliberately to follow the submission of the Neighbourhood Plan; reference made to a Camden masterplan within Fraserview's representation is not to a Council proposal/document. The SPD is also expected to cover a wider area than that covered by the Neighbourhood Plan, taking in much of the area to the west and south, into St. Pancras Way and close to Somers Town. The Council also offered an opportunity to the Forum to comment on a draft version of the SPD to ensure that the two documents could exist together.

In line with the Town and Country Planning Act, neighbourhood development plans, once adopted, form part of the development plan and as such are given greater weight than supplementary planning documents or guidance. Furthermore, as neighbourhood plans move through the adoption process they gain greater weight. Therefore, as drafted, the Neighbourhood Plan 'sits' higher within the Local Development Plan than the draft SPD.

The Neighbourhood Plan makes reference to the emerging SPD and also to the Council's strategic aspirations for the 'Camley Street area' set out within the Local Plan at Policy G1.

QUESTION THREE

It would be our view that re-aligning Policy HO1 with the new London Plan would be in conformity with the most up-to-date policy, and that the Camden Plan would need to realign itself in due course. We have proposed a redrafting of the policy wording and the supporting text as a result of this, and have incorporated suggested text from Camden Council's representations at the end of criterion b). The proposed text is at Appendix One.

In respect of HO2, we propose that the home working criterion c) from HO1 should come over to this policy. The main objection to HO2 came from the Camden (Assets) team; we believe that the Camley Street area is, by proximity and nature, similar to the CAZ in character and justifies the approach taken.

Camley Street is only just outside the CAZ, and in close proximity to major change at King's Cross. Proposals should be tested for their viability through the planning system, and the comments about a lack of realism don't mean, in our view, that the aspirations for the Plan should be pulled back.

QUESTION FOUR

The Forum challenges the need to respond to concerns regarding specific policies where they are not relevant to compliance with the Basic Conditions Statement, which this consultation (Regulation 16) pertains to.

Changes made to the plan at the pre-submission stage sought to strengthen and broaden the transport options available within the area, including increasing the use of the canal as a movement corridor and promoting better wayfinding and cycling routes. The area is unusual in having the very limited vehicular accesses it has, but the plan seeks to make the most both of the options just mentioned and of the more muted opportunities for access and egress to, through, from and around the area for many forms of transport, whilst acknowledging the central location close to King's Cross, accessible for residents and employees.

The Forum requested clarification on the Mayor of London's critique of Policy CS DQ3. The response that was provided to the Forum on the 25th October 2019 appears supportive of the approach taken within the Neighbourhood Plan. It reads: 'The policies that require the preservation of historic assets and views are also supported along with the inclusion of the plan of the strategic views which shows the height thresholds and its reference in the draft Tall Buildings policy.'

In response to the specific concerns raised by Historic England on parts i) and j) of Policy CS DQ3, the Forum recognises and respects the need to preserve views to St Paul's Cathedral. Figure 47 is provided alongside Policy DQ3 identifying where the strategic views lie in relation to the Neighbourhood Area, and the indicative masterplan identified on Figure 46 was developed in line with the respective viewing corridors and maximum heights set. There has not been a detailed masterplan exercise undertaken for the Neighbourhood Area as part of the Neighbourhood Development; therefore it is not possible to provide visual representations as requested. However, the Forum suggests that an additional criterion be added to Policy DQ3 requiring all new developments including tall buildings to provide 'accurate visual representations that illustrate the impact of the development on the strategic views crossing the NP Area'. Policy CS DQ3 provides all the strategic context around the consideration of tall buildings, such as the long-distance sight lines, the aspirations for activity along Camley Street and the need for legibility and connection, from which a more detailed examination of specific proposals can begin.

QUESTION FIVE

There is no reference to specific uses within the policy text itself to commercial premises, only community facilities and social infrastructure. As such the policy as worded is 'operable' and does not require modification on this basis.

The supporting text could be amended to remove any misleading reference to

retail and commercial services / facilities as per Camden's Asset Team's response (paragraphs 2.31-2.35).

A definition for 'social infrastructure' is given within the Policy Objective text (para 6.8.1), and as such the Forum does not think it is necessary to further define this term.

QUESTION SIX

We have updated the map at Figure 1, and the revision is separately attached.

Yours sincerely

John Richmond
Secretary, Camley Street Neighbourhood Forum

Appendix One – Revised Text: Policy CS HO1 – Affordable Housing Provision

[New text in italics, removed text in strikethrough]

Policy Objective

Whilst Policy CS HO1 applies across the Neighbourhood Area, the Forum believes that the identified mixed-use area on figure 45 provides an excellent opportunity to maximise the delivery of housing that is affordable to people on low to moderate incomes. The Forum considers that the mixed-use area, given the existing land ownership position, provides the opportunity to explore different and more innovative funding models to put the delivery of affordable housing and other social benefits at the heart of any redevelopment scenario, rather than profit maximisation. The Forum has developed and tested a number of alternative development scenarios and produced viability models. These models demonstrate that it would be feasible to deliver affordable housing within the mixed-use area of between 50% and 100% affordable. In addition, there is a view that a substantive amount of the housing should be for families in order to meet assessed local need.

Policy CS H01 – Affordable Housing Provision

Where ~~appropriate~~ *required*, developments proposing a residential element will be expected to contribute to the borough's affordable housing need by (as defined by ~~LBC Local~~ *new London Plan Policy H4 H5*):

a) Delivering the maximum viable quantum of affordable housing on site *and aspiring to achieving up to 100%. On the London Plan's 'fast track' route, this means at least meeting the thresholds below:*

- *a minimum of 35% with a minimum of 50% on publicly owned land and 35% on all other land and an aspiration of achieving 100%*
- *50% for public sector land and within Non-Designated Industrial Sites*
- *outside the fast track system, or in failing to meet the above thresholds on the fast track approach, Viability Assessments will need to be submitted in support of schemes, which will be subject to scrutiny and made publicly available;*
- *the desired affordable mix is 60-70% London Affordable (or similar) rent, 40-30% London Living Rent (or similar).*

b) Providing a range of different unit sizes and housing types, including three- and four-bedroom *homes suitable for families, and homes suitable for older people and people with disabilities. homes suitable for families, adaptable units for older people and suitable housing for those with a disability subject to locally assessed need.*

c) Innovative housing design that supports home working will be encouraged [MOVE TO POLICY H02]

Conformity with other policies

Local Plan: H1 d (Maximising the Housing Supply), H2 (Maximising the Supply of Self-contained Housing from Mixed-use Schemes) and H4 (Maximising the Supply of Affordable Housing).

London Plan: 3.3 (Increasing Housing Supply), 3.8 (Housing Choice), 3.10 (Definition of Affordable Housing), 3.11 (Affordable Housing Targets) and 3.12 (Negotiating Affordable Housing on Individual Private Residential and Mixed-use Schemes).

Draft New London Plan: GG4 (Delivering the Homes Londoners Need), H1 (Increasing Housing Supply), H5 (Delivering Affordable Housing), H7 (Affordable Housing Tenure), H8 (Monitoring of Affordable Housing) and H13 (Build to Rent).

NPPF: Chapter 3 (Plan-Making), Paragraphs 20a & 30 and Chapter 5 (Delivering a Sufficient Supply of Homes), Paragraphs 61-64.

Supporting information

Policy CS H01 expects new development to provide accessible and inclusive housing, with a particular focus on providing larger family units and housing for disabled and older people.

The vision for the CSNDP builds on Camden's Local Plan Policy H1, which states that the housing supply in the borough will be maximised 'where sites are underused or vacant, expecting the maximum reasonable provision of housing that is compatible with any other uses needed on the site'. *Affordable housing will be required on sites where the number of new homes provided exceeds the thresholds established at Policy H4 of the Camden Local Plan.*

The Forum also appreciates the value of mixed communities, people of different ages, income levels and ethnicities and feels that a properly apportioned ratio of social and intermediate products should be arrived at through a process of negotiation with council officers, taking as a starting point the ~~60:40~~ 70:30 tenure split as set out in *Local London Plan Policy H4 H6, assuming the remaining 40% falls within the provision under the London Affordable Rent (criterion A3)*. This includes the notion of providing accommodation for middle-income households who are in danger of being squeezed out of Camden. The NPPF 2018 provides a definition for affordable housing: 'housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local works)'. The CSNDP concurs with the Local Plan that any sort of owner occupation, including shared ownership, is likely to be beyond the means of the vast majority of residents. For this reason, the Forum proposes to retain the highest possible proportion of new housing for London affordable rent and intermediate rent (including London living rent) (by habitable room), with a clearly stated aspiration for 100% affordable units, and a minimum expectation of 50% on publicly owned land and 35% on privately owned land, subject to viability, in line with the threshold approach set out within draft London Plan policy H6.

The housing policies set out in this document are in conformity with national, regional and local planning policy. A viability study has been prepared by AECOM in accordance with the Planning Practice Guidance and non-statutory guidance such as 'Viability Testing Local Plans' (Local Housing Delivery Group, 2012). It demonstrates that a mixed-use scheme providing 50% affordable housing is viable where it includes an element of shared ownership products within the mix.

The Plan's intention is to encourage housing that is genuinely affordable, and it seeks ~~60~~ 70% of all affordable units to be London affordable rent. The remaining ~~40~~ 30% should maximise the delivery of intermediate rent. The viability assessment included scenario and sensitivity testing, which explored how a higher proportion of affordable units would be viable, including a reduced level of profit assumed upfront. This potentially allows for an alternative delivery model to accrue long-term value in perpetuity (e.g. such as a community land trust model).

The desire for the improved provision of housing for families derives from a wider recognition that the neighbourhood would benefit from a more mixed community, including new residential development, to make the area more 'family-friendly'. Whilst the area is residential in parts, the housing stock is made up of predominantly smaller units (flats and apartments) and therefore not suited to growing households. This was verified by the 2011 census data, which showed that the neighbourhood area had a lower proportion of 'married or same-sex civil partnership couples' than in Camden overall. The data also

highlighted a significant problem with overcrowding.

~~*For this reason, the CSNDP builds on policy 3.8 in the adopted London Plan, which treats the provision of affordable housing as a strategic priority and supports findings in Camden's Strategic Market Assessment.*~~

Camden's Strategic Market Housing Assessment identifies a mix of dwelling sizes, two- and three-bedroom homes (followed by homes with four bedrooms or more) as being the housing types for which there is the greatest need within the borough and the Neighbourhood Area. As such, there is an expectation in policy CS H01 that any new affordable housing provided within the Neighbourhood Area must provide a mix of units, including family-sized units. However, in line with the draft London Plan Policy H12, a flexible approach to unit size mix will be taken in the case of intermediate and market housing tenures, subject to identified local need.

The Camley Street Neighbourhood Area

The Neighbourhood Area was formally re-designated by LB Camden in 2019. The extent of the Neighbourhood Area is shown below.

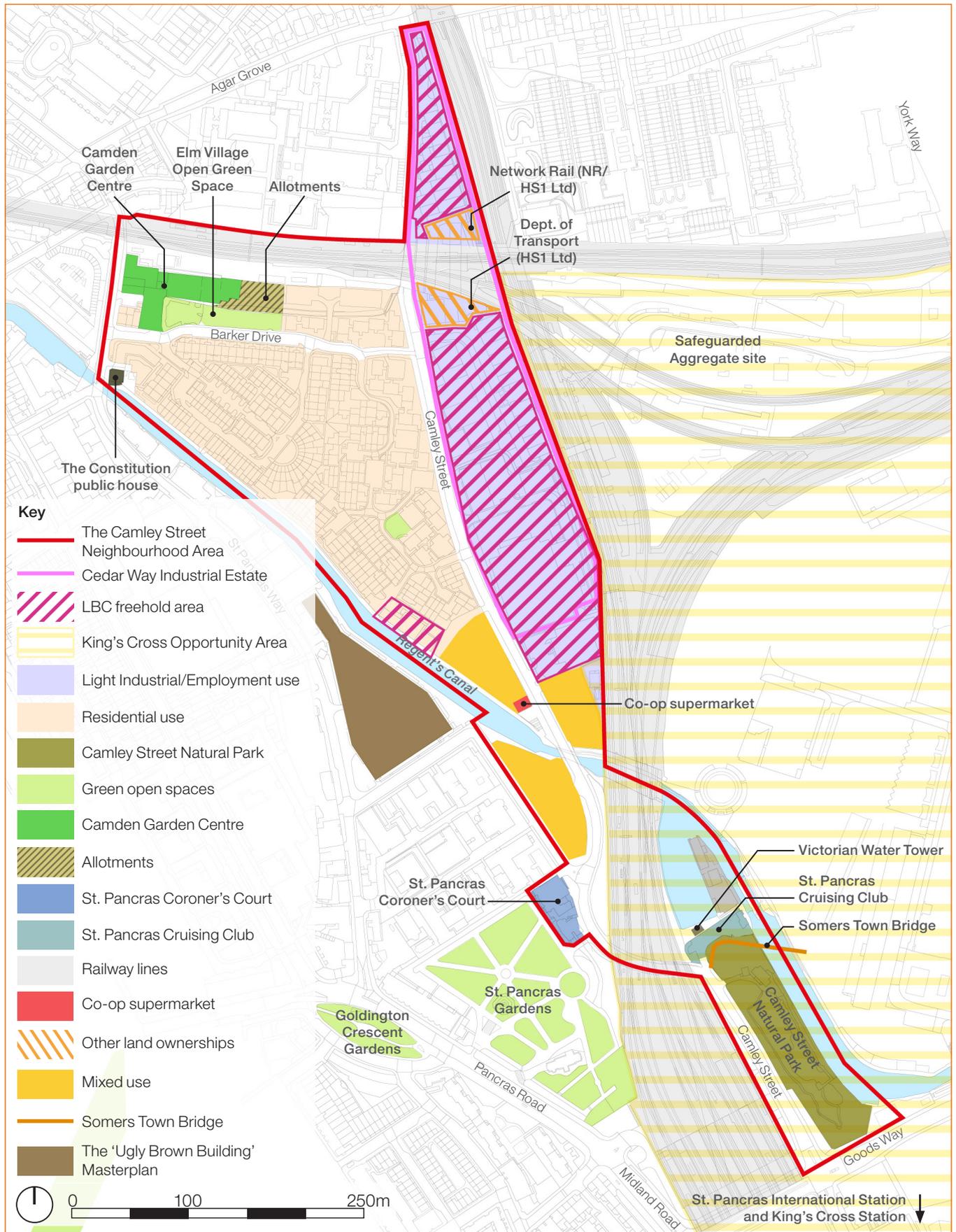


Figure 1: The Camley Street Neighbourhood Area (NB: Land ownership boundaries are not exact)