



MICA

Norfolk House Retail Unit

123-128 High Holborn

Amended Shop Front design

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1.0 Planning policy & guidance

Camden Local Plan 2017

Policy D3 Shop fronts

The Council will expect a high standard of design in new and altered shop fronts, canopies, blinds, security measures and other features.

When determining proposals for shop front development the Council will consider:

- the design of the shop front or feature, including its details and materials;
- the existing character, architectural and historic merit and design of the building and its shop front;
- the relationship between the shop front and the upper floors of the building and surrounding properties, including the relationship between the shop front and any forecourt or lightwell;
- the general characteristics of shop fronts in the area;
- community safety and the contribution made by shop fronts to natural surveillance; and
- the degree of accessibility.

The Council will resist the removal of shop windows without a suitable replacement and will ensure that where shop, service, food, drink and entertainment uses are lost, a shop window and visual display is maintained.

Where an original shop front of architectural or historic value survives, in whole or in substantial part, there will be a presumption in favour of its retention. Where a new shop front forms part of a group where original shop fronts survive, its design should complement their quality and character.

Camden Design Guidance - January 2021

Access

All new build shop units and shop fronts should be designed to be fully accessible to everyone.

Entrance doors should be accessible to all, particularly wheelchair users and people with limited manual dexterity. 1000mm minimum clear door width in new buildings and 775mm door width in existing buildings where a new shop front or alterations to a shop front are proposed.

Shops that have a change in level from pavement to shop floor surface can usually incorporate ramped access into or within the shop. Exceptions preventing a ramped area to be created may include the presence of structural beams or floor slabs.

Entrances

The design of the entrance door and doorway should be in keeping with the other elements of the shop front.

Solid bottom panels of shop front doors should align with the stall riser. Where there is a transom, the top of a door should align with it.

Any existing decorative tiling should be retained.

Recesses

Where there is an existing shop front recess - often found in older traditional shop fronts - these should be retained.

However, new recesses in shop fronts will be strongly discouraged due to their potential for attracting anti-social behaviour.

Traditional horizontally-operated lattice security gates can in some cases be employed to protect recessed shop entrances, but they should not extend across windows. Removable timber or metal lattice style shutters are often more appropriate on traditional shop fronts.

Figure 3. Shopfront elements

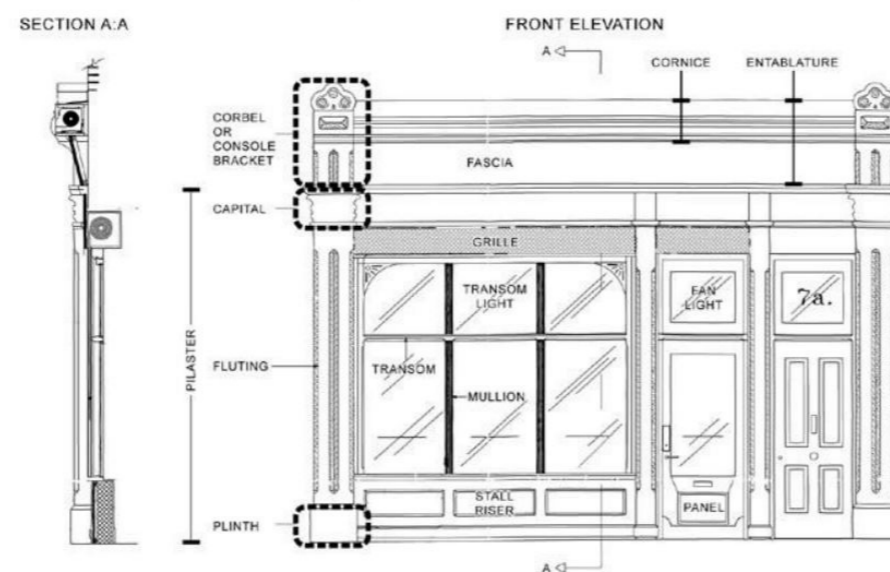


Figure 4. Good design in a traditional shopfront - section and elevation



Fascias

Fascias should be of a suitable size and proportion in relation to the building and should not normally extend above the cornice or below the capital where this would upset the overall balance and proportions of a shop front or the parade in which it is located.

Fascia signs should not obscure or damage existing architectural features. Deep box fascias which project beyond the shop front frame should be avoided.

Lettering on fascia signs should be proportionate to the scale of the shop front. To aid identification, fascia signs should include the street number of the premises.

Where a shop front and fascia extend across two or more shop unit bays, the removal of any intervening pilasters is not considered acceptable as it would:

- weaken the frame's visual support to the upper floors; and
- disrupt the character and rhythm of a shopping frontage created by the widths of individual shop fronts.

Lettering on fascia signs should be proportionate to the scale of the shop front. Main fascias should also be of a suitable size and proportion in relation to the building and should sit between cornice and shop front itself and should not project above or below the cornice level obscuring upper floor or shop windows.

Fascia and box signs should not obscure or damage existing architectural features.

Stall Risers

Stall risers should be retained where existing and generally should be incorporated to any new shop front on a period buildings.

Where stall risers are provided, they should be at least 300mm high or to the top of the pilaster base or door panel and faced in appropriate materials for the context. They should not provide ledges that can be sat upon. Glazing should be brought to the front of a stall riser.

Colour and materials

Materials should be chosen for their durability and appropriateness to their location.

Traditional materials such as timber, stone and render will be the most appropriate for new shop fronts in conservation areas and listed buildings.

More contemporary materials such as colour-coated steel, aluminium and bronze instead of timber may be appropriate depending on the building and its location.

2.0 History & Heritage

Original Building

Norfolk House is an extremely fine Edwardian building, which was designed by H Percy Adams and Charles Holden in circa 1904. Charles Holden joined the Percy Adams practice in 1900 and was the Principal Designer for the practice for the rest of his career within that practice.

The building bears similarity to three contemporary buildings that he designed, namely the Law Society Library (1903-1904) in Chancery Lane, the former British Medical Association building, now called Rhodesia House, located in the Strand (1907-1908) and Evelyn House, 62 Oxford Street, which was constructed in 1908 to 1910.

The original plans indicate that the ground and basement retail space in Norfolk House were conceived as four independent units, each separated by North-South axis spine walls.

The original elevations suggest that three of the four bays along High Holborn were left unfinished, allowing tenants to construct their own shop fronts within the openings of the stone piers and cornicing. This interpretation is further confirmed by the adjacent image.

Though shopfronts did not form part the original building, the original plans indicate an intention towards centrally located double door entrances to the retail units which are flush to the street rather than recessed.

The three windows along Southampton Place, and the singular window bay along High Holborn, located adjacent to the corner entry, appears to match the existing windows as they are today.



Norfolk House, High Holborn Image. 1905



Norfolk House, Southampton Place Image. 1905



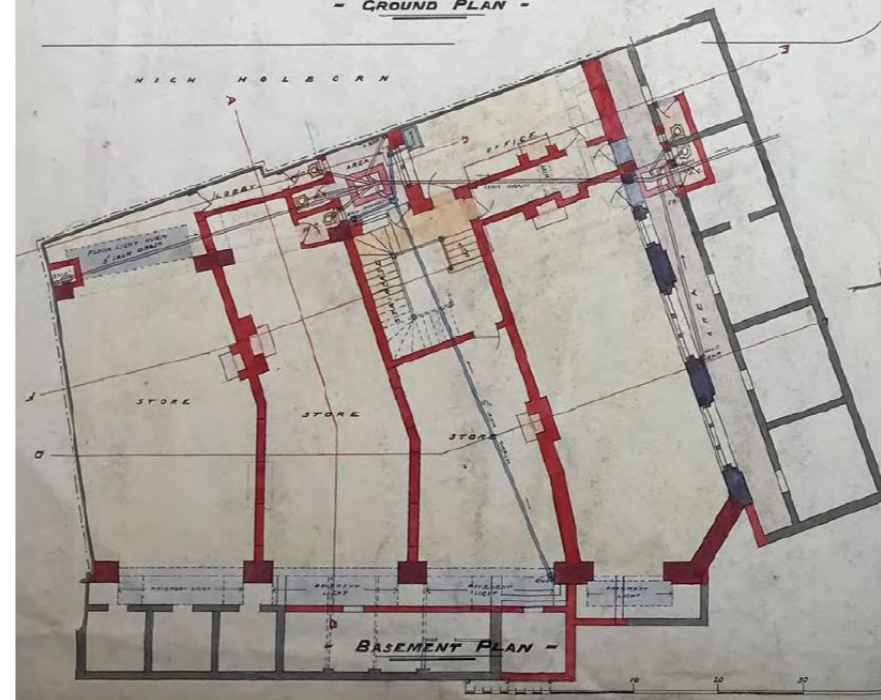
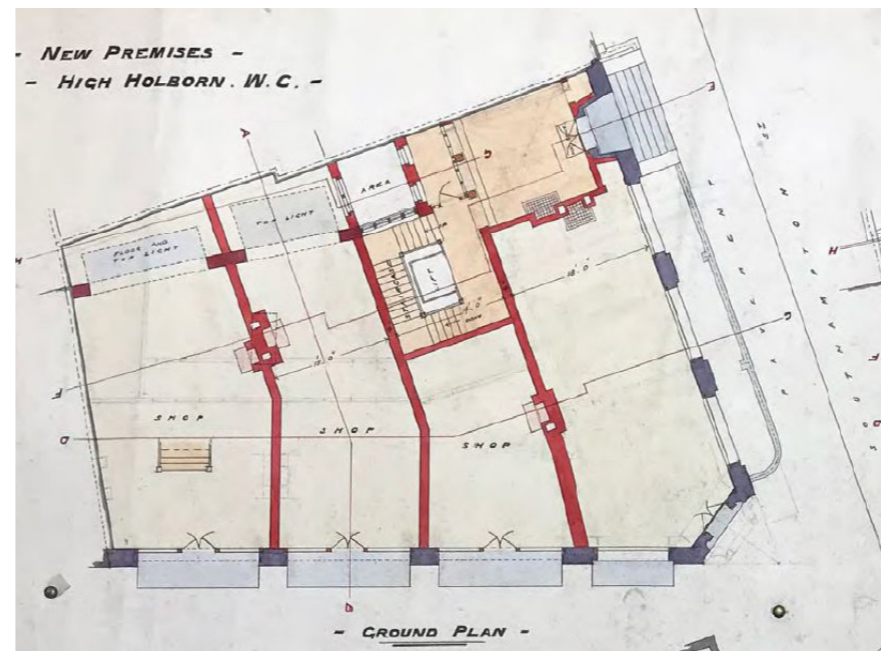
Norfolk House, Image. 1905



N Percy Adams Elevation, High Holborn



N Percy Adams Elevations



N Percy Adams Ground (above) & Basement (below) Plans



N Percy Adams Sections

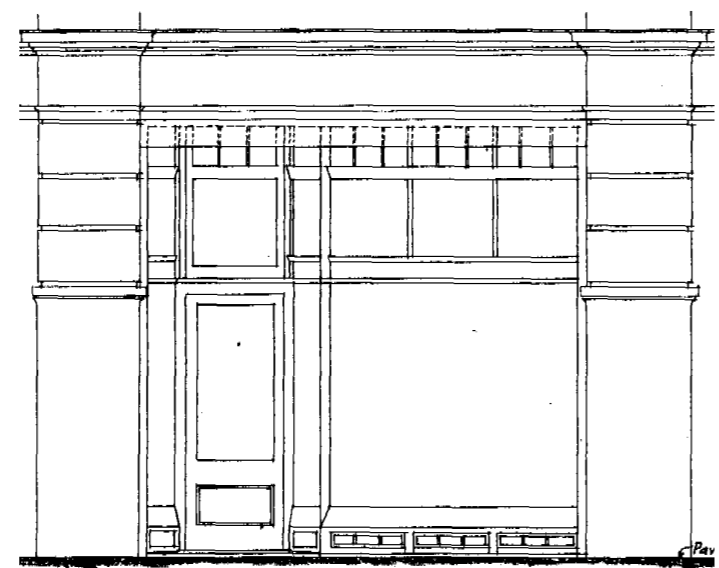
3.0 Historic Shop fronts

Historic Shop front - Bay 01

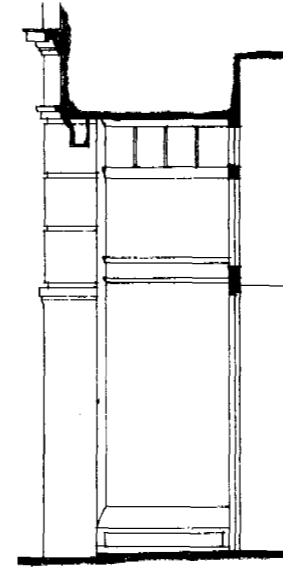
The image, and drawings below present the first known shop front configuration for Norfolk House. Whilst it is the first known shop front type, with drawings and images to support, it is not known to be the original design. It is likely to have been one of many, two of which are known, in keeping with the intention of the shop fronts to be interchangeable to suit the occupants. We currently have no information to inform of historic shop front arrangements and appearance, if any, in the adjacent bays.

The shop front, which is located within the bay of 129 High Holborn, shows an off-centred, recessed entrance door, with an adjacent shop front window, stall riser, and advertisement which is fixed onto a high level fascia, which expands above the stone cornice.

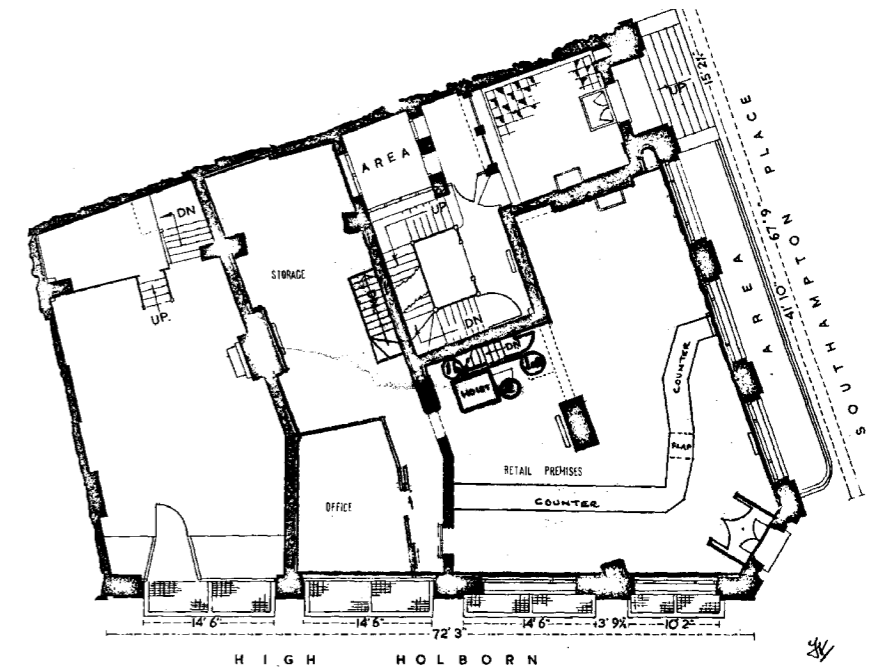
The adjacent drawings display the plans and elevations of this configuration of the unit.



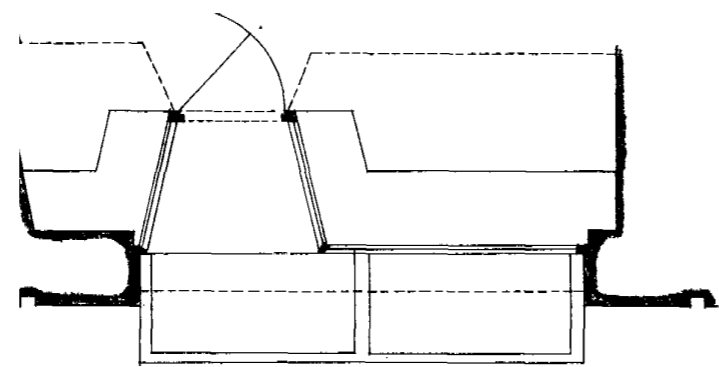
• ELEVATION •



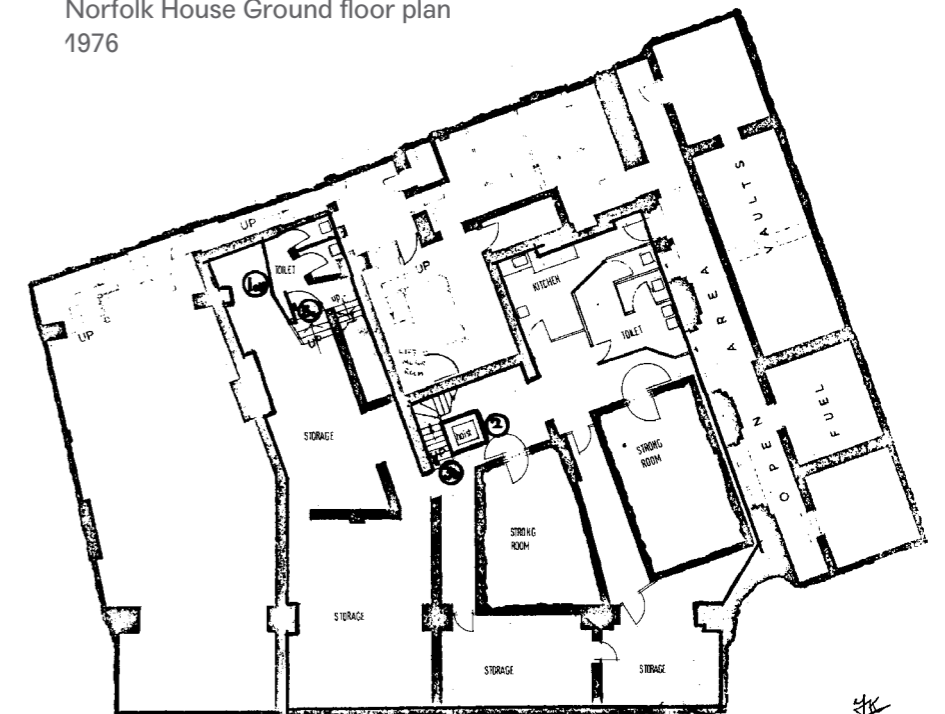
• SECTION •



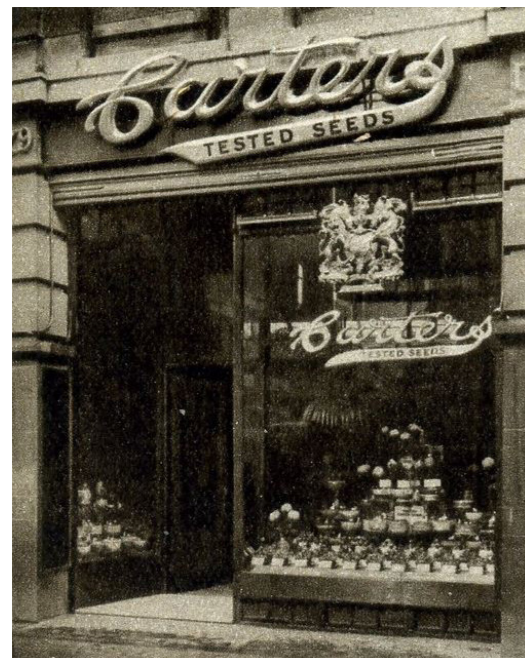
Norfolk House Ground floor plan
1976



• PLAN •



Norfolk House Basement plan
1976



129 High Holborn shop front Image,
Norfolk House, 1937

129 HIGH HOLBORN • LONDON

129 High Holborn shop front drawings,
Norfolk House, 1976

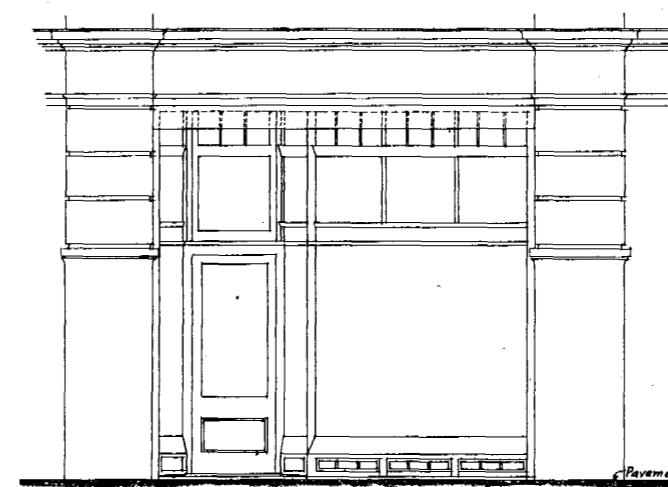
1976/1977 Facade Alterations

In 1976, an approved application was made to make alterations to the shop front the bay of 129 High Holborn. These works included the removal of the off-centred, recessed entry door and window bay. This was with hardwood framed, glass shop front with and half-moon fan light window above a centrally located door which sat flush with the glazing line.

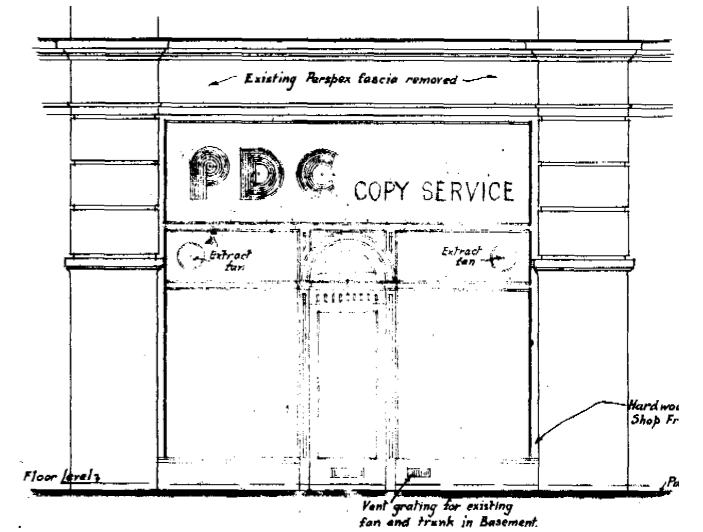
The image below, dated 1976, shows the shop front condition of 129 High Holborn, prior to these works being carried out. By this date, shop fronts in the adjacent bays of 128 and 129 High Holborn had already been replaced with a window and stone infill as is present today.



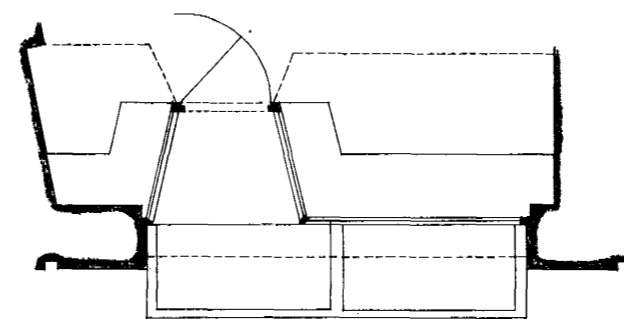
High Holborn Ground floor elevation. Image dated 1976.



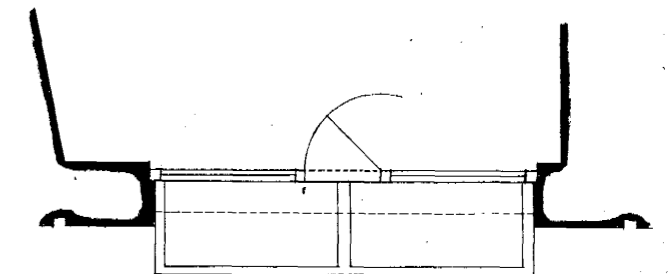
1976 Application. High Holborn Existing Elevation



1976 Application. High Holborn Proposed Elevation



1976 Application. High Holborn Existing Shop front plan



1976 Application. High Holborn Proposed Shop front plan

4.0 Design Testing

Historic Shop front

The drawing below shows an accurate reinstatement of the shopfront shown in the 1937 photograph

This shop front includes a recessed entrance, with a timber single door, glazed window bay, high level transom lights, and a stall riser. The exact original material is not known.

As noted on the previous page, we currently have no known information of historic shop front types in the adjacent bays. The same design approach has therefore been applied to all three bays.



Figure 01 - Historic Edwardian 'Carter Seeds' shop front with recessed entrance

Amended historic Shop front

The drawing below shows an amended interpretation of the historic shop front, with the entrance door brought forward to align with the window bay.

Both versions of this design approach fail to relate to the architectural character of the building as a whole and would result in a conflict with Camden's shop front guidance.

Having a recessed entrance is not reflective of the original plan and the shop front guidance advises against their introduction.

The proportions of the shop front fail to align with the proportions of the adjacent window, which presents an original form, nor does it relate to the windows on the upper floor levels.

Furthermore the framing detail would not be historically accurate. We would have to propose a detail which proportionally fits the scale of the opening, rather than match the framing detail of the original window which we can currently do as we are matching the design to the size of the opening.



Figure 02 - Historic Edwardian 'Carter Seeds' shop front with Entrance door brought forward to be flush with the window bay

5.0 Amended Design

Amended Design Overview

The design team have reviewed the approach to reinstate the historic Edwardian shop fronts. It is considered that such an approach is not suitable to take forward for the following reasons:

-An accurate reinstatement would require a recessed entrance which is unwanted and poses security risks.

-An amended shop front with the entrance brought forward and off-centered is not authentic to the historic design.

-Charles Holden's original left Bays 01 - 03 empty, therefore intended that these be designed separately, and therefore did not form part of the original design. He did however draw centrally located double doors which we have referenced in our design approach.

-The only known evidence of historic shop fronts is within Bay 01. This was the Edwardian 'Carter Seeds' entrance. This was later adapted to form the 'copy service' shop front which incorporated a centrally located entrance door with a half moon fan light above. Applying the historic Edwardian shop front to Bays 02 & 03 would therefore not be historically authentic.

The proposed design has been amended, following further review of historic shop front design principles, and Camden's planning design guidance. The amended design can be seen across the page (figure 03). Summary of the changes below:

-Incorporation of a stall riser, 400mm high.

- Solid panel at the foot of the timber entrance door to align with the stall riser.

Policy and Design Guidance Response

Access

The entrance doors have a clear opening width of 775mm as required by Section 1B of the Building Regulations Part M & Camden SPG - Design Jan 2021.

Recesses

The shop fronts do not incorporate a recessed entrance.

An accurate reinstatement of the Edwardian 'Carter Seeds' shop front would have incorporated a recessed entrance which is not deemed appropriate, and is strongly discouraged in Camden's design guidance.

Stall Risers

The design has now been amended to incorporate a stall riser, 400mm high with glazing at the front. This conforms with the Camden SPG which suggests a minimum 300mm height.

Entrances

The proposed design incorporates timber, double doors which will be in keeping with the new shop front, and existing adjacent timber windows.

The amended doors incorporate a solid bottom panel which aligns with the stall riser.

Fascias

No amendments to the existing stone fascias are proposed.

Colour and Materials

The proposed shop fronts are made of timber, with detailing to match the existing, original windows.

Windows

The proposals include removing the existing granite surrounds and sills and replacing with glazing to increase visibility in and out of the unit.

The glazing has been divided, to match the profiles of the original windows with transom lights, and a half-moon fan light above the entrance doors.



Figure 03 - Amended proposed shopfront with stall riser and solid panel at base of entrance doors

6.0 Shopfront design which currently forms part of the application for planning and listed building consent



Shopfront design which currently forms part of the application for planning and listed building consent

