

53-55 Prince of Wales Road London NW5 3LL

PLANNING AND DESIGN STATEMENT

WITH PHOTOGRAPHS AND SUSTAINABILITY INFORMATION



Alterations to existing shopfront and insertion of 2 x roof lights (to facilitate change of use from commercial to residential sought separately under Class MA, Part 3, Schedule 3 of the GPDO 2015).

DEVELOPMENT IS FOR EXTERNAL BUILDING OPERATIONS ONLY

February 2024

Reference: PP-12787310

Introduction and site description

1. The application site consists of a small, single-storey commercial unit (Class E) most recently used as a plumber's supply store and currently vacant.
2. The commercial unit is situated between 51 Prince of Wales Road to the east (a residential dwelling), the railway viaduct to the west, and the rear garden of 2 Hadley Street to the south. Across the road from the site in question, there is a small terrace comprising six houses numbered 40 to 50 Prince of Wales Road, along with Kentish Town West station.
3. The application site is therefore located in a predominantly residential area. Correspondingly, the application site or any adjoining properties are not subject to any site-specific designations such as town centre, an industrial/employment area, or a primary or secondary shopping frontage.
4. Furthermore, the application site is not situated within a conservation area, nor is it locally or statutorily listed. Permitted development rights related to Part 7 ('Non-domestic extensions, alterations etc') of Schedule 2 of the General Permitted Development Order 2015 (as amended; the GPDO 2015) have not been revoked due to an Article 4 Direction or previous planning permissions.

Proposed development

5. The proposed development consists of external building operations only, namely:
 - (i) The insertion of two skylights on the flat roof of the existing building;

These will not be visible from the public realm and concealed behind the existing parapets. They would also likely benefit from permitted development rights under Class A, Part 7 of the GPDO 2015.

- (ii) Alterations to the existing shopfront, consisting of the relocation of the existing door within the same elevation and the installation of higher-quality replacement timber windows;

These modifications will enhance insulation with double-glazing and facilitate natural ventilation while preserving the overall appearance and proportions of the existing shopfront (which may be more accurately described as ordinary windows rather than a traditional shopfront).

6. The removal of the existing security shutters (largely subjected to graffiti) has not been referred to in the development description, firstly because such operations can be regarded as part of the aforementioned "alterations," and secondly because it seems that the installation of these security shutters never had planning permission in the first place. Consequently, their removal will reinstate the former appearance of the property.

7. The proposals also entail removing the current signage. However, such actions are not categorized as 'development' under Section 55 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Instead, they fall under Section 220 of the Act ('Regulations controlling display of advertisements'), as well as the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007. Consequently, the removal of existing signage has not been included in the development description. These operations, including any replacement signage, could be carried out without requiring planning permission. Nonetheless, removing the existing signage is deemed to enhance the appearance of the building, particularly considering its current state of being painted over and subjected to graffiti.
8. This current application for planning permission solely concerns building operations and does not involve a change of use (material or otherwise). However, it is noted that a change of use of the premises from commercial to residential is granted 'in principle' under Class MA, Part 3, Schedule 3 of the GPDO 2015 subject to confirmation as to whether or not 'prior approval' is required from the Local Authority.
9. A separate application has been made under paragraph MA.2.(1) of Part 3, Schedule 3 of that Order for a determination as to whether the prior approval of the authority will be required for the a change of use from commercial to residential; however, such matters do not form part of the current application for planning permission, which pertains to building operations only and must be assessed as such.

Design and appearance

10. The existing building generally exhibits a run-down appearance, both internally and externally. While the window openings on the front elevation could technically be termed a 'shopfront,' their actual appearance resembles ordinary window and door openings more than a true shopfront.
11. This situation is further exacerbated by the presence of unsightly security shutters, which, even in the 'open' position, cover the top part of the existing windows and do not appear to have planning permission. Additionally, the existing signage has been partially painted over, with the remaining advertising pertaining to previous businesses no longer operating from the site.
12. Overall, the exposed elevations of the building, both presently and historically (referencing historic street view imagery from Google), lack architectural merit.
13. The proposed alterations to the front facade will involve the insertion of higher-quality, timber-framed, double-glazed windows with similar overall proportions to the existing fenestration. Together with the removal of the existing security shutters (which partially obscure the existing windows), these alterations are considered an improvement over the current situation. Relocating the existing door, which already has a rather residential appearance, towards the middle of the facade will also help

'break up' the existing fenestration and give it a less cluttered appearance.



Front elevation in 2024 (supplied by applicant)



Front elevation in 2016 (from Google Streetview)

14. The proposals also aim to strike a balance between retaining a facade primarily consisting of window openings and acknowledging the site's location within a predominantly residential neighbourhood, which is not subject to any site-specific designations within the Camden Local Plan (e.g., protected shopping frontage, etc.). In other words, the proposals seek to allow the facade to blend in with its residential surroundings while maintaining the overall appearance of the existing 'shopfront.'
15. On balance, the altered appearance of the front facade is considered similar enough to the existing appearance to have no negative impacts on visual amenity. In fact, the proposed development is deemed to have, at worst, a neutral impact on the appearance of the existing building and streetscape, or, at best, a positive impact.
16. Finally, it is noted that the proposed skylights would be concealed behind the existing parapets and would have no impact on the appearance of the property.

Impact on neighbouring amenity

17. The alterations proposed to the front elevation will have no material impact on adjoining properties as the amount of glazing is largely similar to existing.
18. The proposed horizontal skylights will provide views solely towards the sky and, as a result, will not have any adverse effects on neighbouring amenity. In addition, the insertion of skylights could be carried out without the need for planning permission under Class A, Part 7 of the GPDO 2015.

Impact on highways

19. The current application for planning permission is for building operations only and does not involve a change of use, material or otherwise. The proposed development will therefore not have a material impact on highways.
20. Access will remain directly from the public highway via a door identical to the existing one (with the same width and inward-swing). Nonetheless, it is worth noting that by relocating the existing door away from the edge of the building towards the centre, visibility between customers leaving the building and the public footway is enhanced, and the door becomes more noticeable to passersby. However, in the absence of a change of use, such matters are ultimately too trivial to be considered material to planning.

Sustainability considerations

21. The proposed development is minor in nature, comprising alterations to an existing building that will be retained. The introduction of double-glazing will significantly enhance the energy efficiency compared to the current single-glazed, poor-quality

windows. Additionally, creating discrete window openings where previously fixed-shut windows existed will decrease the reliance on mechanical ventilation.

22. Overall, the proposals are deemed to have a positive impact on sustainability.

23. *Additional photographs overleaf.*



Interior (2024)



Exterior (2024)



Side elevation (2024)