

Planning Report:

The Legal Café: 81 Haverstock Hill, Belsize Park

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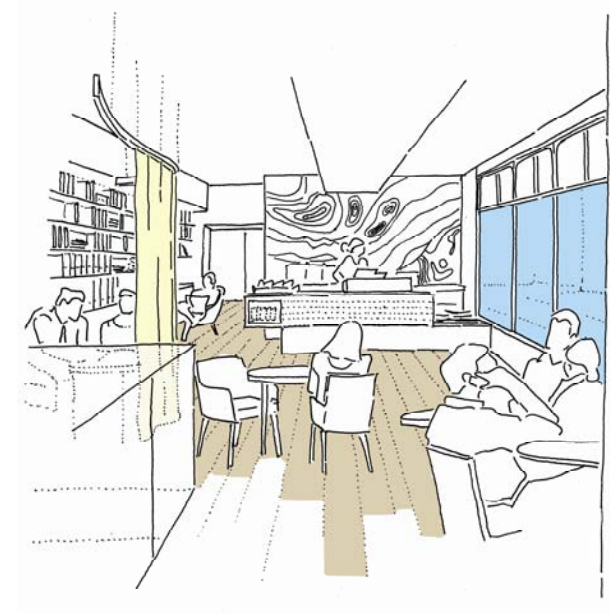
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1.0 Design Statement:

Location:

The Legal Café is located at 81 Haverstock Hill, Belsize Park, on the corner of Steele's Road and Haverstock hill close to the nearby underground stations of Belsize Park and Chalk Farm.

Description of existing use and proposed use: Retention of A1 use class

The Legal Café replaces the position of the Nine Schools Oriental furniture Store which has ceased trading at that location. The previous use dealt in oriental furniture containing both areas for sales and display as well as an administrative office area. The basement contained a small kitchenette facilities and bathrooms on both levels. There is a small storage area which opened out onto a small light well.

Ground Floor:

The ground floor contains a café counter serving cold sandwiches, cold drinks and coffee to the general public. It retains the large glazed street frontage on both streets in its present form.

The front area of the café includes space for 4 tables each seating 4 people. There is also some high level counter/desk space provided.

As part of its café function the Legal Café will have the following catering equipment:

Coffee machine maker, sink for washing up and rinsing items, cold cabinet storage for sandwiches, cakes, cool drinks fridge, microwave area, service till for cash.

Basement:

The accommodation at basement level consists of a library, retail display area for books, larger tables for seating bigger groups, toilet facility and a storage area. The basement will function as a more formal seating area should people require a space for large meetings.

It is to be noted that this 'Legal' function of the café is intended to be ancillary to the primary café use. No formal business will be conducted on the premises in the sense that business will not revolve around correspondence by telephone, letter or email. (i.e.: not B1 use). It is merely a space whereby the public can informally consult Legal council.

Further description of Legal identity for Café:

The Legal Café at 81 Haverstock Hill will be an informal place where the catchments communities of Belsize Park, Hampstead, Chalk Farm, Highgate, Camden Town and surroundings can seek legal consultation at a low cost with local lawyers. Both barristers and solicitors, experts in different fields, will be available in the café to discuss, mediate and resolve problems, before the need for expensive processes such as litigation or arbitration arise. Consultations can extend to contract or legal document interpretation.

The Legal Café can additionally be used as a safe haven, or neutral ground to facilitate the resolution of and mediate disputes between, for example, neighbours or local shop keepers and property construction. The Legal Café will not engage in criminal law advice or consultations.

The facilities at the café will include a legal library, photocopying and internet access to assist its customers/clients with their consultations e.g. sending composing legal letters, completing and sending legal forms and evaluating legal documents and legal research.

The Legal café at 81 Haverstock Hill is fitted out in a comfortable living room style with a café style similar to Starbucks or Costa Coffee. This will both facilitate informality and open discussion, cutting out the intimidating atmosphere of a solicitor's office or barrister's chambers.

The café will have specialist subject surgeries e.g. housing construction and matrimonial planning. The legal experts could be booked in advance, or by chance be available at the café having a coffee. An administrative assistant will assist customers with their requirements. It is not intended that the legal café will be a professional office or carry out complex transactional legal work or handle complex disputes. It will not compete with local lawyers at all and is not like a solicitor's office.

If the legal café feels a particular consultation or problem extends beyond its remit or those of its lawyers it will suggest a referral. To this extent the legal café could and should be a referral club for local lawyers with particular local expertise. Local lawyers should and will get to know the legal café.

It will be an advantage at least at the early stage of deciding whether customers need to engage in legal relations, disputes or contracts to better understand their rights and options, be aware of costs and generally better understand their position by having a preliminary consultation with the legal café. The café will charge consultation fees with customers/clients at varying rates against a menu of requirements. The café may charge a referral fee to local solicitors to whom it refers work.

The independent lawyers providing advice and consultations at the legal café are responsible for the advice they give and not the legal café. The legal café at 81 Haverstock Hill will always keep customers and clients affairs confidential

Staff:

The Legal Café will be staffed by professional, good quality lawyers who have a wide experience of general commercial law. Such staff will additionally have easy access to a much wider list of local lawyer's expert in their fields, who might be brought in to assist on a particular issue or subject. There will also be a staff member working in the café to serve food to customers.

Material alterations and streetscape:

As part of the new works there will be some minor alterations to the interior of the café. These will include the removal of some partition walls and some new partition walls to be built as indicated on the attached plans. The construction of the counter will be attached to the existing electrical supply and the new sink will be connected to existing drainage and water supply. There will be a change of lettering on the exterior of the building to reflect the new business and no further external lighting or illuminated signage will be added. There will be no extensions to the building as the entire project consists of an interior alteration.

As the café will not be serving hot food and will be retaining its A1 use, we will be seeking to obtain a Certificate of Lawful Use for the reasons outlined above.

Please refer to attached drawings of the ground and basement showing existing and proposed uses and a three dimensional sketch showing the ground floor layout of the café.



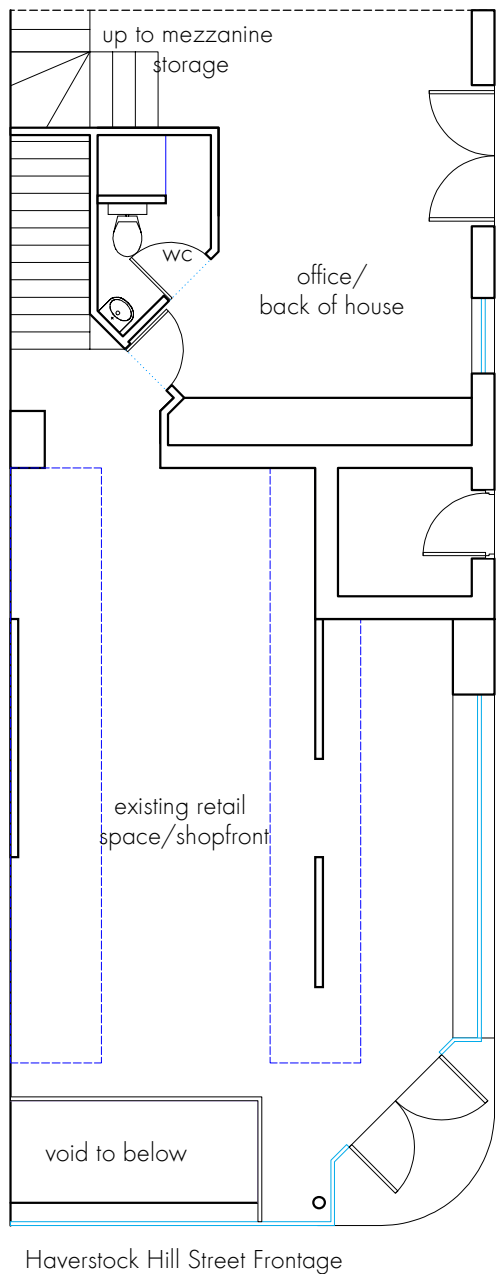
Aerial Photograph showing location



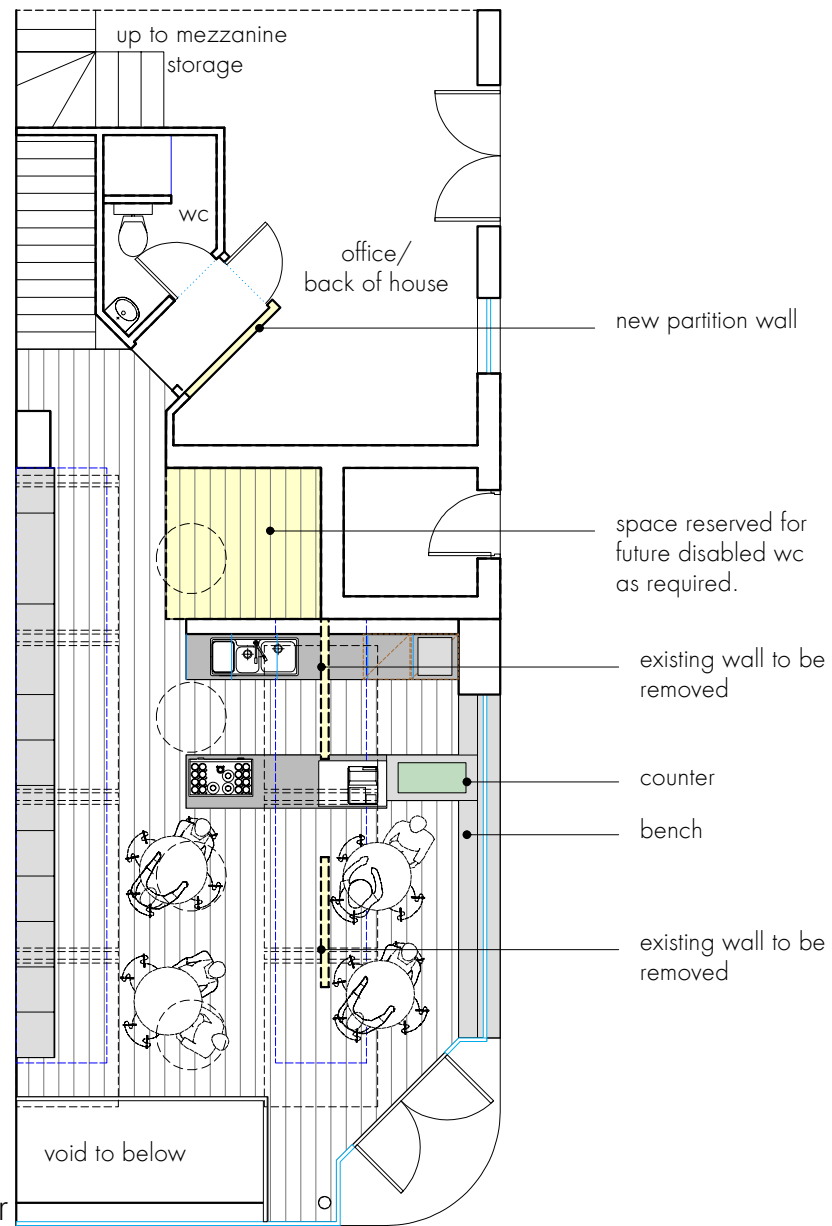
Corner view of existing street frontage

The Legal Cafe: 81 Haverstock Hill, Belsize Park
SK 000 Date: 08.08.06

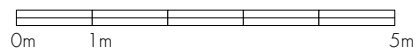
Existing Ground Floor Plan



Proposed Ground Floor

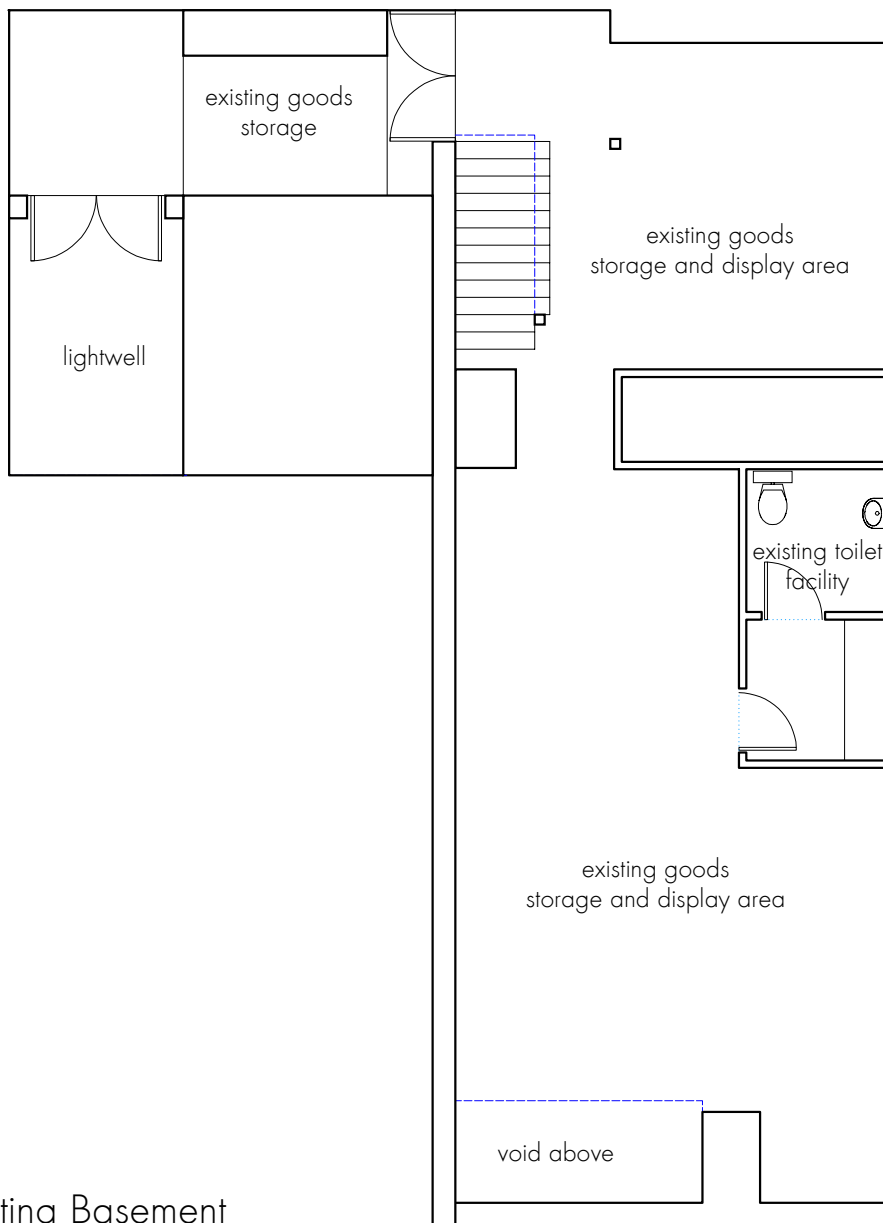


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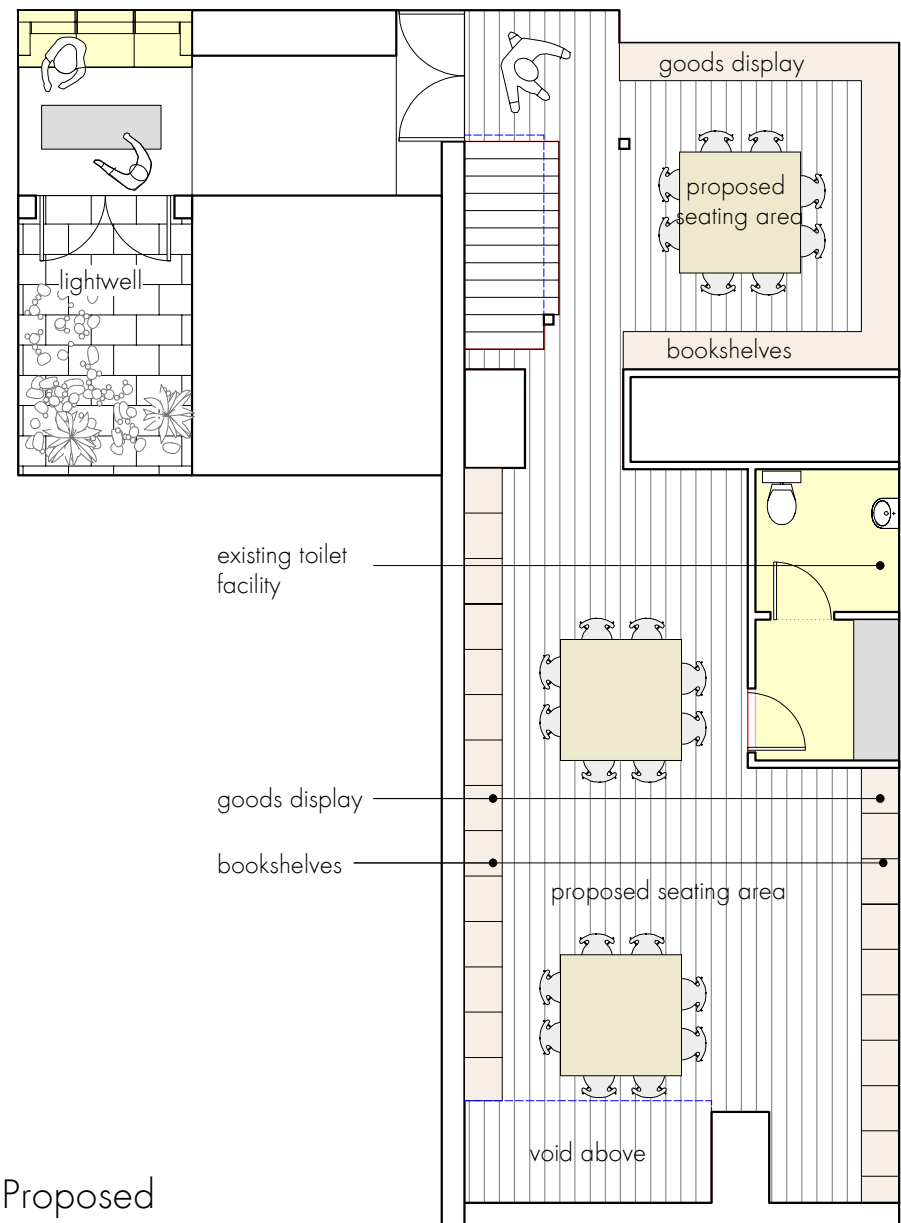
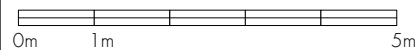
THE LEGAL CAFE
GROUND FLOOR PLANS: SK001
9 August 2006
SCALE 1:100 @ A4

REVISION



Existing Basement
Floor Plan

KEY



Proposed
Basement Plan

THE LEGAL CAFE
BASEMENT PLANS: SK002
9 August 2006
SCALE 1:100 @ A4

REVISION