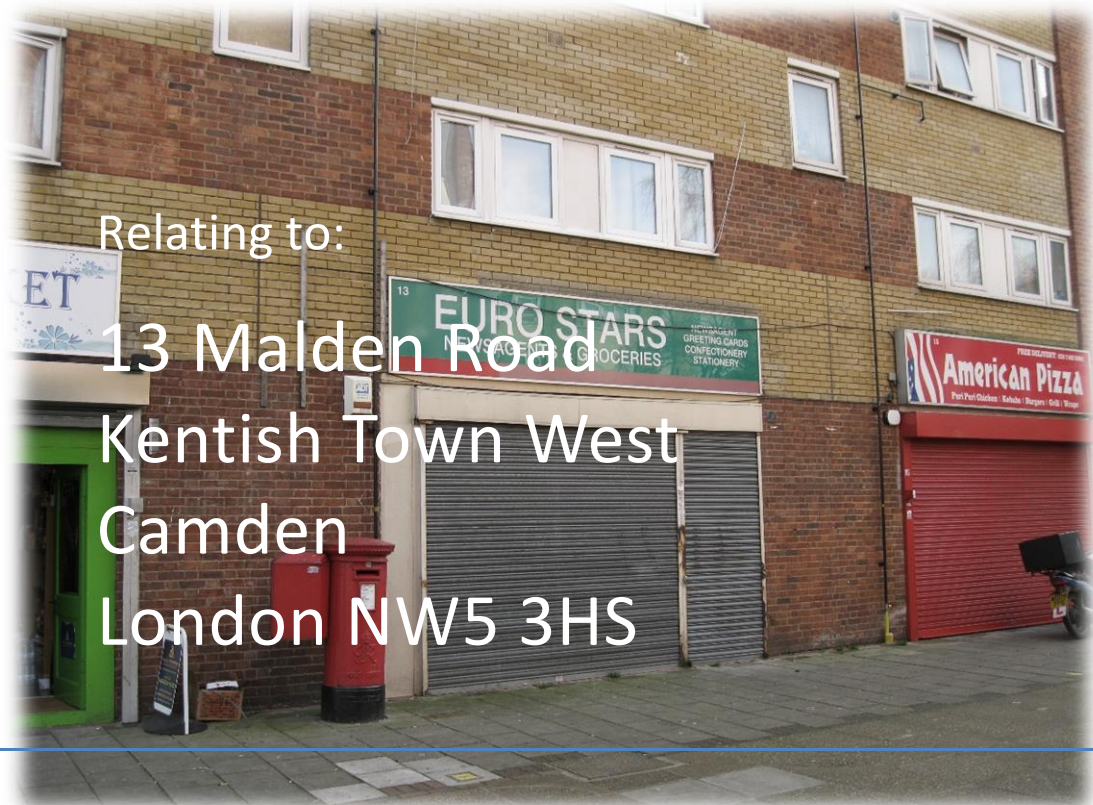


Heritage Surveys Limited

Design and Access Statement



Ref: SEB/223

Version: 1

Report date: 30 May 2014



Identification photograph

View of 13 Malden Road (Former Euro Stars newsagent), NW5 3HS

View From Estate Precinct

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Appendix 1

Schedule of Photographs

1 Introduction

1.1 General Introduction

This design and access statement is prepared in support of a planning application to change the use of the existing disused retail unit (A1) at 13 Malden Road into an office (B1) for Camden Federation for Private Tenants. The former shop is located in the ground storey of part of the Leysdown block, an existing 6 storey residential block comprising 5 stories of residential (1 – 30) property over retail units. The existing shop has been empty for many years.

The change of use proposals will retain the appearance providing accommodation for Camden Federation of Private Tenants (CFPT), comprising an open plan office, meeting room, kitchen and WC facilities.

The existing space has proved not to be readily lettable as a going retail concern. This proposed change of use presents an opportunity to use redundant space effectively for Camden residents and improve the local amenity by removing a void unit. Increased foot fall may also benefit immediately adjacent businesses.

1.2 Plans

Proposed plans and elevation drawings are included within the application pack, submitted on-line via the Planning Portal.

1.3 Existing Block

Leysdown appears to be of 1970s “cross wall” construction with cavity walls and coloured band face brickwork to the majority of elevations, with the ground floor north elevation predominantly storey height shop fronts. The structure probably also includes a concrete frame.

Windows to the flats above the shops were probably metal framed type, but have been replaced in PVC. The rear ground floor retail unit’s windows have high level steel Crittall type windows with timber doors (photo 2 - Appendix 1), some with either folding security grilles or external security bars and mesh.

The residential accommodation to the upper levels of the block are accessed via security doors on an access control system. Ground floor retail units have their own direct access off the estate pathways, front and rear. Small yards are provided to the rear. At the subject unit this has been used as antisocially as a rubbish tip and was a health and fire hazard until recently cleared (Photos 2, 3 and 4).

2 Use

2.1 Planning History

The property is a circa 1970's purpose-built residential block of flats, Nos 1 - 30, over retail units.

We note the windows were replaced under an application ref PEX0000822 approved in December 2000.

2.2 Residential

The block is located in a mixed use development and adjacent to mixed commercial and residential properties in Malden Road and Prince of Wales Road.

No changes are planned under this application in respect of the residential units.

2.3 Retail - History

The existing block and the retail units were built circa 1970 to provide retail services for new estate. No 13 was let circa 1971 as a newsagent, tobacconist, and confectioner with a Post Office Counter. This use continued under various leases.

Circa 2004/05 the Post Office Counter was closed as part of the Post Office shutting many small counters within retail units. The business subsequently struggled and the tenant fell into rent arrears such that the shop repossessed for non-payment of rent on 23/8/06.

Since then the shop has been empty, now approaching 8 years. It has been marketed on the council's website and with 'To Let' board on the premises. Over this period, there has been sporadic interest from business tenants, as below, but none have proceeded to a completed letting.

- October 2008 – Electrical shop & DIY tools
- May 2010 – ladies gym (subject to planning)
- March 2011 – freight forwarding, travel agency and money transfer
- July 2012 – charity shop
- June 2013 – barber

Since then there has been very little interest for retail use. The premises are in poor condition internally and recently were stripped out back to shell for safety reasons. The rear yard became an unofficial dumping ground with rubbish and debris building up to well over a metre in height representing a fire and health risk (Photos 2, 3 and 4). This has also been recently cleared but vandalism of the unit persists with rear windows all now damaged.

The property is sited in a retail location with few trades not covered. Furthermore along Malden Road itself and blocks such Cheriton, and Queens Crescent there are other units apparently unlet (Photos 7 and 8).

Current adjoining uses on the local precinct include a hairdresser, chemist, pizza takeaway, sale of ethnic goods, internet café, convenience food store, and hire of DIY tools.

2.4 Conservation Area

The property is not located in a Conservation Area, but is adjacent to West Kentish Town Conservation Area, the west boundary of which is on Malden Road.

2.5 Proposed Development

The proposals are to convert the shop unit into a premise suitable for Camden Federation of Private Tenants (CFPT). The unit will have an open plan office and meeting environment, a small kitchenette and accessible WC. A store room will be included. The premises benefit from level access.

CFPT is one of only two funded groups in London representing the views and interests of private tenants.

Run by and for private tenants, CFPT was set up in 1980 as a mutual support group to help them organise and campaign for their rights. CFPT has been funded by the Council as a “tenant’s voice” organisation for the majority of that period, highlighting a recognised and ongoing need for their existence and work.

Around a third of the borough’s households are now made up of private tenants, and at the current rate of growth this figure is expected to become even higher in the coming years. CFPT also work with housing association tenants and private leaseholders.

Over the past 34 years, CFPT have developed an excellent understanding of the needs of private tenants by being a user-led organisation that is run by its members, and by hosting regular meetings, conferences and consultation events for tenants. They have also helped and supported private tenants to expose and deal with some of the worst landlords, agents and housing conditions in the borough.

The use of 13 Malden Road moves the organisation physically closer to major private rented sector “hotspots” in the borough. Should the change of use be permitted CFPT plan, after their move, a major leaflet drop across the area to alert tenants to their existence, and to invite them to a “come and meet” the organisation event.

Staff numbers soon to be: 1 full time, 2 part time and they also have a team of volunteers who help with a variety of different tasks.

2.6 Context within the Local Development Framework

It is acknowledged that Development Policy DP 10 sets out to seek to protect shops outside centres by only granting planning permission for development that involves a net loss of shop floor space outside designated centres provided that:

- d) alternative provision is available within 5-10 minutes' walking distance;
- e) there is clear evidence that the current use is not viable; and
- f) within the Central London Area, the development positively contributes to local character, function, viability and amenity.

The applicant considers that all three of these criteria are met with alternative provision for shops easily within 5 minutes' walk; the current use is not viable given almost 8 years at trying to re-let; and the proposed use will offer a benefit to Camden tenants and the local amenity, removing a void unit and reducing risk of associated antisocial behaviour. The increase in footfall may also provide a tangible benefit to adjacent local retail businesses. Currently this shop unit offers no benefit to the community at all. The new use will provide a useful service for residents, as a community facility, in line with DP para 10.8.

2.7 Accessible Design

The property will be accessible via a level access main entrance door and include an accessible unisex WC.

Paths and roadways nearby facilitate disabled access. The property is well served by public transport.

2.8 Parking

No changes are proposed to parking arrangements on the estate and this precinct. There will be room for bicycle storage in the rear yard.

3 Accommodation Amount and Layout

3.1 Entrance and Access

The conversion will provide one self-contained office unit accessed directly from estate footpaths front and rear.

3.2 Ground Floor

The proposal is that the accommodation will comprise;

- Main entrance door at ground floor level accesses into open plan office/meeting space.
- Open plan kitchenette.
- Accessible WC.
- Open yard area to rear for cycle and refuse storage etc.

The gross internal floor area is 64 m² with a rear external yard of approximately 15.75 m².

4 Scale and Appearance

4.1 Proposals Generally

The external appearance of the building will be retained as far as possible to maintain the character of the block and estate generally.

No extension is proposed to the building footprint.

4.2 Roof

Not applicable, the existing block roof will be retained.

4.3 Walls

The external walls will be retained as existing.

4.4 Window and Doors

The shop front will be overhauled and repainted.

The rear windows are high level and will be replaced in PVC with similar opening styles as existing, along with a new timber or GRP security door set.

4.5 External Areas, Landscaping and Signs.

The existing estate roads and footpaths serve the building and are not required to be altered for this proposal.

The rear yard area will be retained, and the rear gate repaired and decorated.

A new non-illuminated fascia sign is proposed to the front to replace the existing redundant Euro Stars sign.

5 Access and Transport

5.1 Vehicular Transport

No changes to estate roads and pavements proposed.

There is scope for cycle storage.

The area is well served by public transportation.

6 Conclusions

6.1 Conclusion

13 Malden Road is a disused retail unit that has been empty for approaching 8 years and attempts to let it have failed. There appears to be an over supply of small retail units in the area (see photos 7 and 8) and it is likely that the unit will remain unoccupied for a long time encouraging antisocial behaviour.

The proposal is to convert it from A1 to B1 office type use for Camden Federation of Private Tenants (CFPT). This will benefit the overall appearance of the precinct and remove a void and associated antisocial risks that go with it.

The level/low gradient estate and surrounding road lends itself well to provision of accessibility for visiting tenants.

The conversion work is almost all internal and can be executed in keeping with the building's age and style.

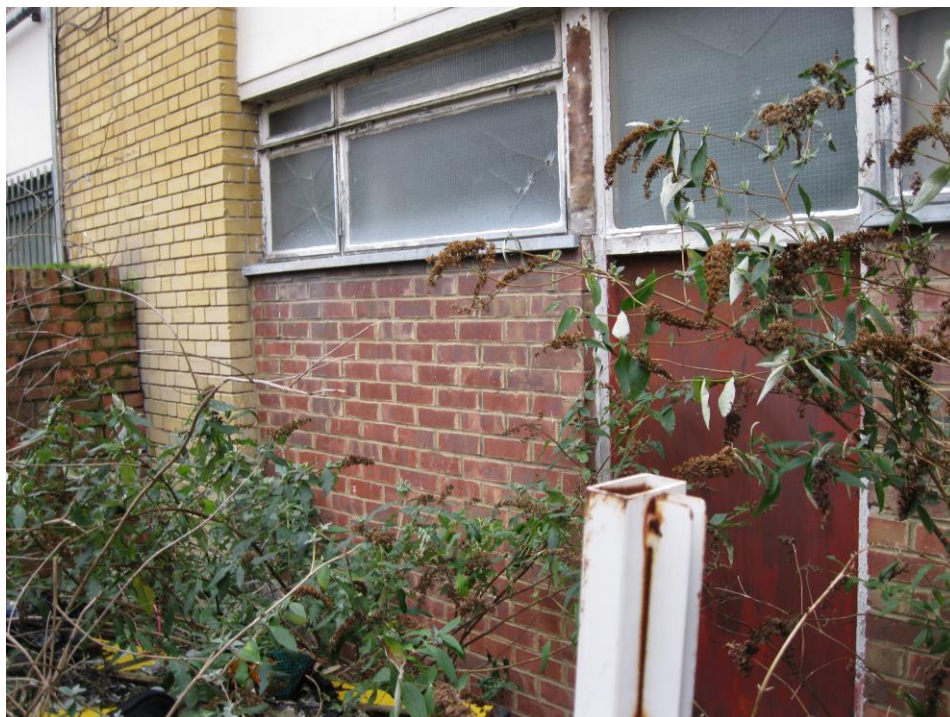
The proposal to convert this part of the building into an office use will provide a useful facility to Camden residents, without any adverse effect on the character, function and amenity of the precinct and the area. The applicant believes that criteria d), e) and f) of DP 10 are met and it would be more beneficial to allow this change of use than to leave the premises empty in the longer term.

Appendix 1

Schedule of Photographs



Photograph 1 Front Elevation



Photograph 2 Rear Elevation and yard



Photograph 3 **Rear Yard**



Photograph 4 **Rear Yard**



Photograph 5 **Internal prior to strip out**



Photograph 6 **Internal Damage**



Photograph 7 Shuttered shops at Cheriton



Photograph 8 Shuttered shops at Cheriton