

**FOXTONS**

**242 KENTISH TOWN ROAD, LONDON  
NW5 2AB**

**PLANNING STATEMENT**

**MAY 2015**

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Statement has been prepared by Montagu Evans LLP to accompany an application for planning permission and advertisement consent at 242 Kentish Town Road, London, NW5 2AB. These applications are submitted on behalf of Foxtons.

1.2 The application for planning permission is for:

*“alterations to a shopfront and the installation of four air conditioning condensers on the roof of the ground floor rear extension.”*

1.3 The application for advertisement consent is for:

*“the installation of one externally-illuminated fascia sign and one internally-illuminated projecting sign.”*

1.4 The Statement provides an analysis of the proposed scheme in light of current planning policy.

1.5 Planning permission is not sought for a change of use of the premises as it lawfully falls under Class A2.

## 2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

### The Application Site

- 2.1 The application site (the “Site”) is located on the eastern side of Kentish Town Road and opposite the junction with Holmes Road. It is approximately 150 metres south of Kentish Town Road Underground Station. The general location is shown on **Figure 2.1** below.

**Figure 2.1 – General Location of Application Site**



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- 2.2 The basement, ground and first floor of the Site were last occupied by the Citizens Advice Bureau who have vacated the building.
- 2.3 The premises form part of a wider five storey Victorian terrace (230 – 248 Kentish Town Road). Part of this terrace (238 – 248 Kentish Town Road), which includes the Site, is locally listed by the London Borough of Camden.
- 2.4 The terrace is made of a grey brick and contains stucco detailing. Iron railings run horizontally across the first floor of the terrace.
- 2.5 The shopfront contains a cornice, decorated corbels and pilasters. Within this framework, there is a wooden fascia and a wooden stallriser. The glazing is divided by

a thick mullion located to the north of the entrance door. The transom light is covered by wooden panelling.

- 2.6 All signage on the shopfront has now been removed. There was previously a non-illuminated fascia sign on the fascia board and a non-illuminated projecting sign fixed to the mullion in association with the use of the premises by the Citizens Advice Bureau.
- 2.7 The shopfront is painted in a dark blue colour.
- 2.8 A photograph of the shopfront and the host building is shown on **Photograph 2.1**.

**Photograph 2.1 – Photograph of Application Site (April 2015)**



**The Surrounding Area**

- 2.9 The surrounding area is varied in terms of architectural style with a mixture of Victorian terraces, post-war buildings and late-twentieth century developments.
- 2.10 In terms of shopfronts along the terrace of which the premises form part, there is no consistent style.
- 2.11 For example, the premises at 246 Kentish Town Road and 230 Kentish Town have each evolved overtime from the amalgamation of two units and have lost traditional features such as pilasters and corbels which are found on other shopfronts along the terrace. Other notable shopfronts include 236 Kentish Town Road which contains two fascia boards which are set above a silver aluminium shopfront with a security shutter box and 244 Kentish Town Road which contains an over-large fascia board (in

comparison to neighbouring shopfronts) and a projecting canopy providing cover for outdoor seating.

2.12 In terms of signage, there are a variety of fascia signs which differ in size and method of illumination. The majority of projecting signage along the terrace is internally-illuminated (250-254, 248, 238, 236 and 230 Kentish Road). The projecting signage also varies in terms of its siting on each shopfront (some are located on pilasters whilst some are located on the fascia board at different levels).

2.13 In conclusion, despite the Site forming part of a wider Victorian terrace, in terms of shopfronts, there is no prevalent style or consistency in this part of Kentish Town Road. Signage is generally quite varied with a range of styles including both illuminated and non-illuminated projecting signs.

### **Planning History of the Site**

2.14 A search of the Council's online planning history records shows that there has been no recent changes to the shopfront.

### 3.0 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

#### The Proposed Shopfront

- 3.1 The proposed shopfront would maintain the historic structure of the ground floor by preserving the cornice, corbels and pilasters. These would be cleaned and redecorated. The existing timber fascia would also be retained and repainted.
- 3.2 The glazing would be framed by a rendered surround. At its junction with the floor would be a stainless steel stallriser.
- 3.3 There would be a full-height brushed stainless steel door handle with a stainless steel letterbox behind the door handle. A frosted glazed band would run along at the top of the glazing.

**Figure 3.1 – The Proposed Shopfront**



Source – Icewit Design Partnership

#### The Proposed Signage

- 3.4 Signage bearing the 'Foxtons' name would be applied to the fascia in individually-applied black lettering. This would be a maximum of 0.4 metres high.
- 3.5 The signage would be externally-illuminated by a slim-line powder-coated aluminium LED trough light which would project 0.1 metres out from the building. The signage would be illuminated at 250 candelas per square metre.
- 3.6 A projecting sign is proposed 2.5 metres above ground level and would be 0.6 metres wide by 0.9 metres high (an area of 0.54 sq m). Whilst it is proposed that the signage

would be internally-illuminated at 75 candelas per square metre, only the yellow Foxtons logo – the letter F in a circle – would be illuminated.

- 3.7 An example of this type of signage is below (**Photograph 3.1**).

**Photograph 3.1 – Example of Foxtons Projecting Sign and Bonded Letters**



**The Proposed Air Conditioning Condensers**

- 3.8 In association with Foxtons' occupation of the basement and ground floor, four air conditioning condensers are proposed on the roof of the existing ground floor rear extension. These would be housed in an acoustic enclosure.
- 3.9 The condensers would be switched off during night-time.
- 3.10 The location of the proposed condensers can be observed on Drawing PL-03 which is submitted with this application.

## 4.0 ASSESSMENT AGAINST PLANNING POLICY

### The Development Plan

4.1 The London Borough of Camden's development plan comprises the following documents:

- London Plan (Consolidated with Alterations Since 2011) (2015);
- Camden Core Strategy (2010);
- Camden Development Policies (2010);
- Camden UDP Saved Policies (2006); and
- Fitzrovia Area Action Plan (2014).

4.2 The Camden UDP Saved Policies and the Fitzrovia Action Plan do not contain any policies that are relevant towards the determination of this application. As such, these documents will not be discussed any further.

### Site-specific Considerations

4.3 The Site is located in the designated Kentish Town Town Centre and within an Archaeological Priority Area.

4.4 Neither of these designations, however, are relevant towards the application proposals.

4.5 The terrace of which the premises forms part of (238 – 248 Kentish Town Road) is locally listed by Camden as a 'non-designated heritage asset'. The local listing states that the building has architectural and townscape significance.

4.6 The Site is not in a conservation area.

### General Planning Policies

#### Design-related Policies

4.7 **Policy 7.6** (Architecture) of the London Plan states:

*"B) Buildings and structures should:*

*a) be of the highest quality architectural quality;*

*b) be of a proportion, composition, scale and orientation than enhances, activates and appropriately defines the public realm; and*

*c) comprise details and materials that complement, not necessarily replicate, the local architectural character."*

- 4.8 **Policy CS14** (Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage) of the Camden Core Strategy (2010) strives to ensure that Camden's places and buildings are attractive, safe and easy to use by:

*"a) requiring development of the highest standard of design that respects local context and character."*

#### Shopfront Policies

- 4.9 **Policy DP30** (Shopfronts) of the Camden Development Policies (2010) document sets out the Council's specific policy on shopfronts. It states that when considering proposals for shopfront development, the Council will consider:

*"a) the design of shopfront or feature;*

*b) the existing character, architectural and historic merit and design of the building and its shopfront;*

*c) the relationship between the shopfront and the upper floors of the building and surrounding properties, including the relationship between the shopfront and any forecourt or lightwell;*

*d) the general characteristics of shopfronts in the area; and*

*e) community safety and the contribution made by shopfronts to natural surveillance."*

#### Noise Policies

- 4.10 **Policy DP28** (Noise and Vibration) of the Camden Development Policies (2010) states that:

*"The Council will only grant permission for plant or machinery if it can be operated without cause harm to amenity [sic] and does not exceed our noise thresholds."*

- 4.11 Camden's noise thresholds for plant and machinery states that plant noise at one metre from the nearest sensitive façade must be 5dB (A) less than the lowest measured background noise level.

#### **Material Considerations**

##### Camden Planning Guidance (CPG) 1 - Design

- 4.12 The proposal has been designed with reference to **Part 7** (Shopfronts) of CPG 1 – Design. **Paragraph 7.11** states that:

*“Shopfront alterations should respect the detailed design, materials, colour and architectural features of the shopfront and building itself. The following will need to be considered:*

- *Historic, locally distinctive or characteristic shopfronts which contribute to the townscape should be retained. In some cases, the reinstatement of missing features will be encouraged;*
- *New shopfronts should be designed as part of the whole building and should sensitively relate to the scale, proportions and architectural style of the building and surrounding facades;*
- *Shopfronts forming part of a larger new development should be considered as an integral part of the overall design; and*
- *Standardised “house-style” frontages may have to be amended in order to harmonise with the surrounding context and respect the building, particularly in conservation areas and for listed buildings.”*

4.13 **Paragraph 7.12** states that:

*“The window display is the main visual element of a shopfront. Shop frontages should be largely glazed to maintain a window display rather than creating a solid frontage (including obscured glass) which will be discouraged.”*

4.14 In respect of signage, **Paragraph 7.14** states that:

*“Properties should only have one main fascia sign and one ancillary projecting or hanging sign per street frontage, although two projecting signs may be appropriate in cases of large shopfronts stretching across two or more shopfronts.”*

4.15 In respect of illuminated advertisements, **Paragraph 8.12** states that:

*“the type and appearance of illuminated signs should be sympathetic to the design of the building on which it is located. The method of illumination (internal, external, lettering, neon, etc) should be determined by the design of the building. Illuminated signs should not be flashing or intermittent, whether internal or external.”*

4.16 **Paragraph 8.15** relates to projecting signs and states that:

*“Internally illuminated box signs are discouraged. Generally, the internal illumination of individual letters, rather than the whole fascia or projecting sign on a shopfront, will be more appropriate.”*

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012)

- 4.17 The NPPF includes a presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 4.18 **Paragraph 9** of the NPPF states that pursuing sustainable development involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as to people's quality of life, including (but not limited to):
- making it easier for jobs to be created in cities, towns and villages;
  - replacing poor design with better design; and
  - improving the conditions in which people live, work, travel and take leisure.
- 4.19 **Paragraph 60** of the NPPF states:
- “Planning policies and decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles.”*
- 4.20 **Paragraph 135** of the NPPF states:
- “The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that affect directly or indirectly non designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.”*

## **Assessment of the Proposals**

### Shopfront and Signage

- 4.21 The proposal retains the existing cornice, corbels and the pilasters which would have been authentic features of the original shopfront. These will continue to provide the architectural framework for the shopfront. This complies with Part 'a' and Part 'b' of **Policy DP30** (Shopfronts) of the Camden Development Policies (2010) and **Paragraph 7.7** of CPG 1 (Design) which require proposals to take into account existing character, architecture and historic merit.
- 4.22 Within this framework, render would surround toughened, frameless planar glass windows which, as well as being attractive, will not be obscured by shutters outside of trading hours meaning that passers-by will be able to look inside. It will also provide an active frontage along this part of the High Street and increase the amount of natural surveillance. **Paragraph 7.12** of CPG 1 (Design) supports shop frontages that are largely glazed as they can help maintain window displays. In this regard, the proposal offers a vast improvement on the existing shopfront.

- 4.23 Part 'd' of **Policy DP30** (Shopfronts) of the Camden Development Policies (2010) requires proposals to take into account the general characteristics of shopfronts in the area. Our study of this part of the High Street (**Section 2**) demonstrates that there is no distinctive design approach to shopfronts in this location. As such, we consider that a simple and sleek design set within a framework of traditional features is appropriate in this instance.
- 4.24 In respect of **Paragraph 135** of the NPPF, by virtue of the retention of all original features on the shopfront and through no proposed works being undertaken to the upper facade, we are of the view that there will be no loss to the significance of the non-designated heritage asset.
- 4.25 Signage would be very discreet with individually-cut lettering attached to the fascia board at a maximum height of 40 cm high. This would be externally-illuminated with a modest level of illumination.
- 4.26 The projecting sign would be in part internally-illuminated to a brightness that should be acceptable in a town centre location and which should not cause disturbance to amenity.
- 4.27 We consider that the proposal is consistent with **Policy CS14** and **Policy DP30** of the Borough's policies and with London Plan **Policy 7.6**. It is also consistent with the principles set out in the Council's CPG 1 – Design.

#### Air Conditioning Condensers

- 4.28 The application is supported by a Noise Impact Assessment Report produced by Environmental Equipment Corporation Limited.
- 4.29 The predicted noise levels have been calculated at the closest noise sensitive window, the window on the western façade of the residential property at 25 Wolsey Mews.
- 4.30 In order to achieve the noise limits set by the policy, the Assessment recommends an acoustic enclosure providing 8dB noise reduction.
- 4.31 By incorporating the noise enclosure into the proposals, the Assessment concludes that predicted noise levels will meet the requirements of **Policy DP28** (Noise and Vibration) of the Camden Development Policies for the daytime and evening periods. The condensers will be switched off during night-time.
- 4.32 The location of the condensers and the acoustic enclosure can be observed on Drawing PL-03 which is submitted with this application.

## 5.0 CONCLUDING REMARKS

- 5.1 This application seeks planning permission for alterations to a shopfront and the installation of associated signage at 180 Kentish Town Road, NW5 2AE. Permission is also sought for the installation of four air conditioning condensers on the roof of the ground floor rear extension.
- 5.2 In our view, the proposed shopfront will represent an improvement to the existing shopfront and will improve the appearance of the host building and wider terrace. The alterations to the shopfront are simple and sleek which in turn promote greater emphasis on the cornice, corbels and pilasters - the traditional features that contribute towards the shopfront's prominence and part of the building's character.
- 5.3 The Noise Assessment concludes that with the inclusion of acoustic housing, the predicted noise levels will be below the background noise levels set by Camden's noise policy.
- 5.4 We consider that the proposal will have a positive effect on the local area and it will be a welcome refurbishment to the shopfront and the host building. In our view, the proposal will therefore satisfy the relevant local plan and London Plan policies as well as the general aims of the 2012 NPPF to achieve improvements to the quality of the built environment and to replace poor quality design with better design. We therefore commend this application to the Borough for approval.