

**DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT INCORPORATING THE HERITAGE STATEMENT  
REPLACEMENT STAIR GROUND FLOOR HABITAT, 196 TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD**

**Historic context and significance**

The entire Heals building complex is designated as of special architectural and historic interest at grade II\* placing it within the category of the nation's most important listed buildings, (top 8%). Historic England's list description includes Habitat at 196 Tottenham Court Road in the listed for the Heal and Son listing.

The Habitat building was originally constructed in 1962 as an extension by Fitzroy Robinson to the Heal's Building. Habitat occupied the extension from c.1983. Controversially, after a Public Inquiry, Conran and Partners removed the curved glass from the, (reduced), Heal's shopfront and reinstated the original flat glass pattern from 1916. The Habitat shopfront was left unchanged and the curved glass remains in place today.

The special interest of the building is therefore acknowledged to be the façade and the curved glazing, which forms part of the composition of the Heal's building immediately to the east of Habitat. The interior of Habitat is of no special interest.

The interior of Habitat is a modern shop fit-out and it does not contribute to the special interest of the building. The interior is characterised by contemporary fixtures and fittings of a modern retail outlet.

**Design and Access**

The requirement for a replacement stair arises from Home Retail Group's upgrading of the interior of Habitat to improve the retail experience. The refit of the retail space forms part of a wider improvement of the Heal's building, which includes the re-positioning of the Habitat entrance, following permission for a new entrance to Heal's. These improvements are proposed to enhance the retail experience to both Heal's and Habitat, which are both iconic anchor furniture retailers on Tottenham Court Road.

**Proposed Design**

The proposed replacement stair will continue to provide customer access to and from the ground to the basement floor. The proposed stair is of a more classic design than the existing stair. The existing stair has a minimalist appearance and is constructed from polished metal handrails with glass guard panels. The proposed stair will feature closed tread steps and anodised aluminium banisters with a timber handrail.

**Access**

The proposed stair will provide access at three points of the existing aperture which allows access between the ground and basement floors. The stair will have closed treads which is safer than an open

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tread stair, as the stair case will be used by children under five years of age a closed tread is significantly safer. Disabled access is unaffected by the proposals.

#### **Planning Policy Context**

Section 16 (2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states:

*'In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority or the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses'.*

Paragraph 137 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that opportunities should be sought for development that enhances or better reveals significance.

The interior of Habitat does not form part of the special interest of the building for which the building has a Grade II\* listing. The retail fit out is a modern interior which does not contain any features that contribute form the special interest of the building.

Given that the proposed location of the stair will occur in an insignificant part of the building that is a highly functional retail space, it is not considered that any harm will be caused to the designated heritage asset. The proposals therefore comply with the relevant clauses of Camden's Development Policies (2010-2025) **Policy DP25 'Conserving Camden's heritage'** with clause f) which states that the Council will only grant alterations to a listed building where it considers no harm would be caused to the special interest of the building.

#### **Conclusion**

The proposals are required to enable effective circulation between the ground and first floor. The proposals will require the replacement and reorientation of the stair in the existing aperture. The area of the proposed works is not considered have any significant or harmful effect in terms of the special interest of the listed building.

To this end the proposed works will not harm the special interest of the building and the detailed design of the stair is reflective of the desire to improve the retail experience. It is also in accordance with Part K (Protection from falling, collision and impact) of The Building Regulations 2000.