

Applications 2016/0255/P and 2016/0489/P,
117 Kentish Town Road: response

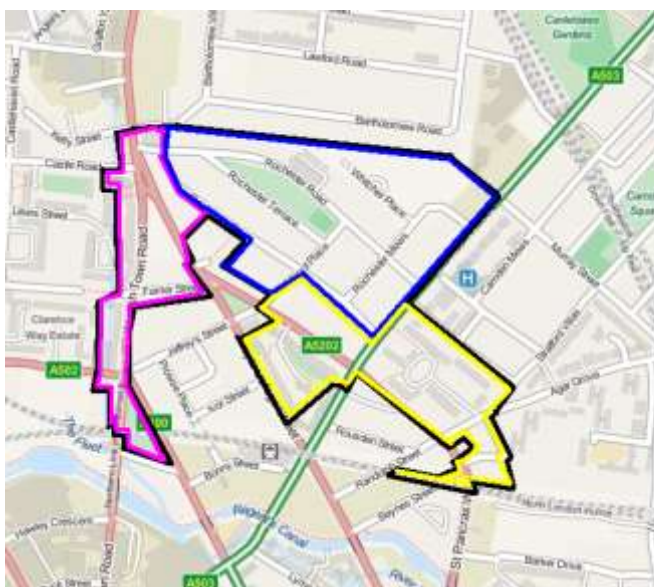


Shopfront view

We welcome proposals for regeneration of this site, particularly for improvements that will enhance the historic and commercial character, but in conformity with Camden's planning guidance.

No. 117 Kentish Town Road is included in the proposed enlarged Rochester Conservation Area submitted to Camden Council in January 2016 and available from the conservation officer.

The premises are also within Kentish Town Centre, Kentish Town Neighbourhood Forum area and Kentish Town Archaeological Priority Area (the site is on the bank of the River Fleet).



Proposed enlarged Rochester conservation area



Fleet River

[*Conservation statement*] Nos. 111-117 form a symmetrical terrace of moderate Gothic Revival (or perhaps Flemish) style, in red brick (no. 117 alas painted white) at the front and London stock at the back. Corbels and cornices remain within the entablature of the shop fronts. Some windows retain original sash timber frames. There are sharply pitched roofs either side, with equally pitched dormers in the central pair and on all four at the back. There is a tall chimney stack between Nos. 115 and 117, retaining chimney pots, and visible single kitchen stack at the rear (marred with a steel vent).

No 117 is directly adjacent to the row Nos. 119-127, two-storey buildings that are locally listed as part of Providence Place. This is an historic area for Kentish Town, with the view southwards recorded by Hieronymous Grimm, the Swiss artist, in a watercolour in 1772 (John Richardson, *Camden Town Book*, 2007, fig 151):



Nos 111-117 front



Nos 117-111 rear

Previous planning history

The Design Statement should report that application PE9800164R1 gave approval for the “rear extension to the ground floor retail unit, the installation of a new shop front and works of conversion including the erection of a first floor rear extension to provide two self contained, one bedroom, residential units above”. There has also been approval (in 2014 / 2015) for an attic roof room with skylights.

It is of concern that the plans in 2015 approved three rear skylights, while the present picture (above) shows four.

Application form

It is of concern that the application form is partly inaccurate or incomplete:

Q7: provision must be made for waste

Q12: the premises lie within 20m of the River Fleet

Q15: there is a tree in the adjacent rear garden, No 115.

Q16 Provision must be made for trade effluent. How will cooking oils be disposed of?

Q18: Note that the space stated in the application does not include the garden.

Q19, 20: In this Secondary Frontage near residential property, state the expected staff numbers (eg for provision of rest rooms, toilet facilities etc) and opening hours.

Development - extensions

It is of concern that Camden’s application guidance is not fulfilled:

Section 1b: Plans and Drawings – Specific Requirements –

- on rear extensions: *the plans should show the garden walls to side and rear, and proposed elevations from the neighbouring perspective.* The plans submitted do not show the back walls or views from neighbours.

- on shopfronts: *section of security grilles or shutters, if proposed, indicating the location of the shutter box and canopy* [grilles are advised by Camden]

- on installation of plant, flues, ventilation, extraction or air conditioning equipment requires plans, elevations and sections to

- *Show equipment, ducting and acoustic enclosures or screening on plans, elevations and sections* – is sufficient information provided?
- *Show the location of neighbouring windows on drawings cross referenced to the acoustic report* – what attempt has been made on this?

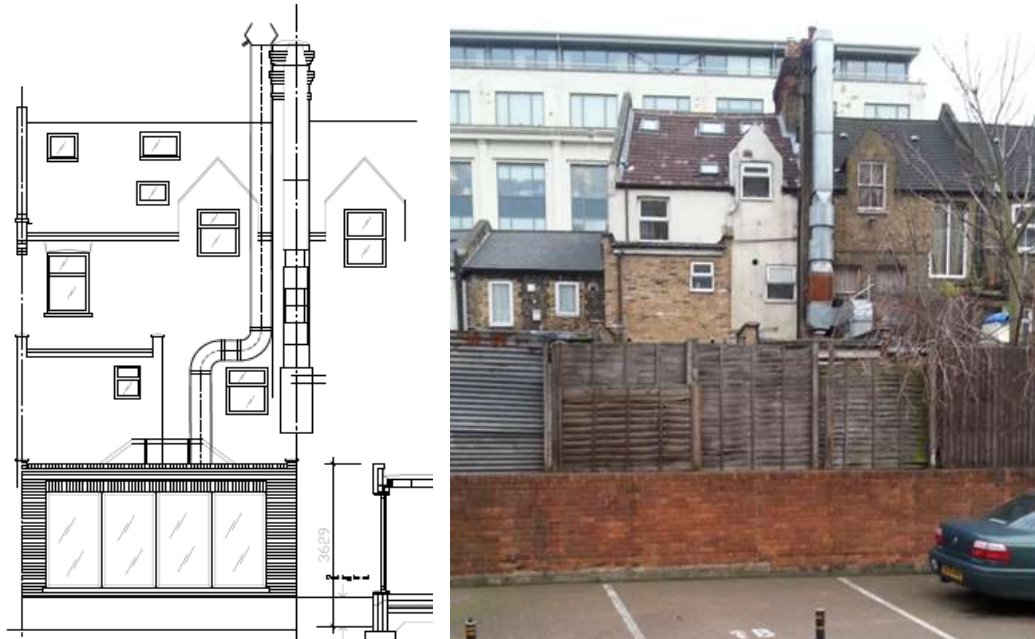
The Acoustic Report has significant deficiencies:

1. The report does not include restaurant ambient noise 'because the restaurant is not open yet'. Yet the application proposes to allow guests into the open back garden 'to smoke'. What estimate was made of this noise?
2. The report does not describe receptor sensitivity because 'the distance of the nearest dwelling has not been determined'. Yet, there are clearly known residences in the upper floors of No. 117 and neighbouring buildings.
3. The report has made recordings in the back garden 'deemed to be similar to those at the proposed ventilation outlet', yet the consultant did not erect a ladder to measure at the actual position proposed for the end of the vent.
4. The report mentions casually "An air conditioning unit positioned at the rear of the neighbouring 119 Kentish Town Road contributed to the ambient noise levels." [Assume this is a mistake – it is No. 115 which has the chimney, from a restaurant kitchen, not No. 119.] The gardens back onto open space of the estate, which has low noise levels (no cars). Could closely adjacent ventilation pipes produce 'beats' or other potentiation?
5. The report says "the least attenuation will be at the location of the fan inside the building" but gives no estimate of this location internal noise impact on staff and customers.
6. The report assumes continuous use but this is not necessarily optimum for energy efficiency and cost. What is the probability of irregular use?

The ground floor proposed plan indicates a significant decrease in back garden due to the new extension. *What proportion of the whole back garden is to be lost?*

Visual obtrusion of the ventilation pipe is of concern.

As is shown in the rear elevation plan, there is a ventilation pipe from neighbouring No. 115, *but there is no record in planning for approval of this extraction system.* However, it appears to run up the brick back chimney that, in many houses nearby built in the nineteenth century, led from the rear kitchen. Could both ventilation pipes be placed inside this existing brick chimney, if lined?



The proposed vent spoils the back view of the Victorian (unfortunately white-painted) London stock house and clings uncomfortably to the chimney. The backs of this row of houses in Kentish Town Road are visible from Castle Place, which is the service road of the Castlehaven estate. Could there be a casing that would enhance the rear view?

Guidance CPG5 Town Centres, Retail and Employment

The application should demonstrate conformity:

3.15 Sensitive Frontages are:

- streets on the edge of the town centre with commercial activities on the ground floor and homes above; and ... it is in these streets that there is likely to be the greatest conflict between late-night activities and the amenity of local residents.

Roof-light

The roof-light be on the proposed extension should be of sanded glass and without opening, to reduce annoyance to the residents above for light and noise.

Opening hours

3.21 Opening hours granted through planning consents for food, drink and

entertainment uses in [Secondary Frontages] are likely to be more restricted than those for similar activities within the Main Shopping Frontages because of the proximity of residential properties

Use of the back garden:

5.14 ... “making tables and chairs available in the garden... However, such extensions can cause problems such as ... placing noise-generating customer areas directly adjacent to residential accommodation. Where the Council considers that there may be potential for harmful expansion without permission, it will use planning conditions to limit the floorspace accessible to customers...

5.15 ...Particular issues that may result from the creation of smoking areas includes the visual impact and the noise impact associated with people congregating and smoking in outdoor areas near residential properties.

Usage for A3

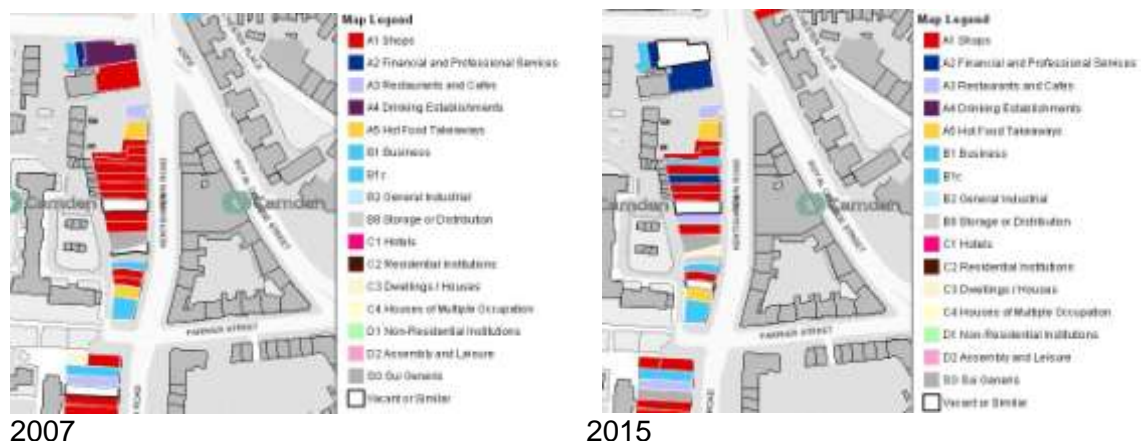
The premises were A1 in Camden’s Retail Survey in 2007, though with A3 use recorded sometimes thereafter. It remains Camden policy that

3.18 A maximum of 30% of premises in [secondary] frontage may be food, drink and entertainment uses.

3.46 The Council will generally resist proposals in Secondary Frontages that would result in:

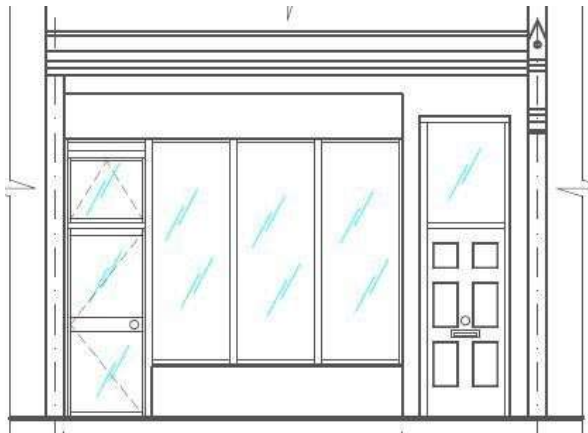
- less than 50% of the premises being in retail use
- more than 3 consecutive premises in non-retail use

Although occupancy in the row has been generally good, there has been a further diminution of A1 premises over time:



This should be considered in the Council’s decision.

CPG 1 Ensuring good Design: shopfronts

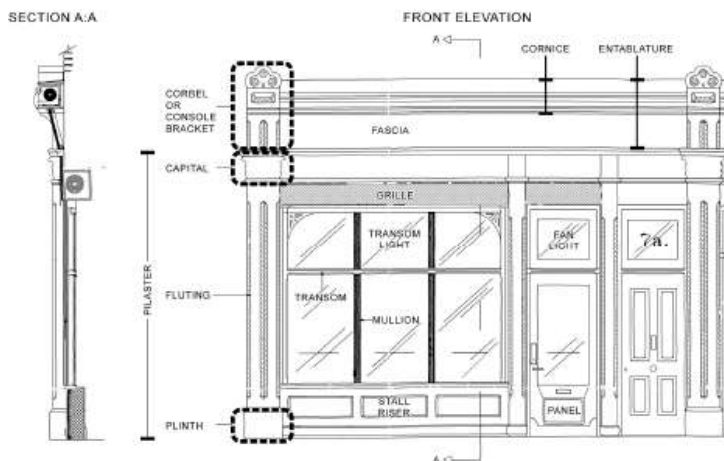


Existing



Proposed

The proposed shop front does not meet Camden's guidance, and should reflect the 200-year history of this line of buildings (Providence Place) which were not demolished at the widening of the road in 1880 (compared with those opposite).



CPG1 says:

- Pilasters and corbels should be placed on both sides, in line with solid wall, to emphasise their function
- Stallrisers (solid elements below shop windows... at least 300mm high) should be ... incorporated
- “*Folding shopfronts are not generally acceptable ... they erode the appearance of the shopfront, and can increase disturbance to neighbouring properties, particularly in the case of food and drink premises*”.

The proposed folding windows must be rejected.

- Traditional materials ... timber ... [are] the most appropriate for new shopfronts
- Proposals should be accompanied by full details of materials, finishes and colours (or sample and specification cards).

The application form says the windows will be PVC. In this building of around 150 years age, adjacent to locally listed buildings (Providence Place) and proximal to three conservation areas (Jefferys, Rochester, Kelly), the original windows were wood: the replacements should also be wood. PVC has poor visual impact – both inside the restaurant and for external views.

It is welcome that the proposers have previously incorporated some of these design elements into their existing restaurant:

