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## Design & Access Statement

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91 & 91a Regent's Park Road, London NW1 8UT

PLANNING APPLICATION

June 2018

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## 1.0 Introduction

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**Alexander Martin Architects** have been appointed by Mr. Zamain Keshwani to prepare & resubmit a planning application for the proposals relating to ***91 & 91a Regent's Park Road, London NW1 8UT***. The following Design & Access Statement describes the new proposals for the property. Planning permission is sought for the following development:

Either:

**A two storey extension located above the existing ground floor Primrose Valet Laundromat, with minor external modifications to the retail entrance, and a rear dormer extension to the existing roof of the Primrose Corner Post Office.**

**Internal reconfigurations to the existing 2 residential units to create in total 4 residential units.**

Or:

**Layout alterations to two existing residential units and the creation of two new residential units within a new two-storey rear extension and roof dormer extension. Minor external modifications to the Primrose Corner Post Office and Primrose Valet Laundromat.**

The existing site at Nos. 91 & 91a comprises a four storey plus basement building, containing retail (A1) at basement and ground floor (Post Office and Laundromat) and two residential flats (C3) above.

The proposal seeks to upgrade the existing retail entrance to the Laundromat, with an upward extension to add a further two residential units. Associated bicycle storage will be provided at ground floor entrance and street level.

While there is no change to the amount of retail A1 space, the extension would provide an additional 97m<sup>2</sup> GIA of C3 residential accomodation, and 16.7m<sup>2</sup> GIA of common area and circulation. The scheme would improve the retail street frontage along Erskine Road as well as providing enhancements to the facade of the existing Primrose Corner building.

This **Design & Access Statement** is produced in conjunction with an *Addendum* to this main report.

Prior to this, an 'Historic Environments Report' was provided by *Donald Insall Associates*, and a Daylight/Sunlight Report was provided by *Abitar* in relation to a previous application (2017/5663/P) which we have since withdrawn following the Local Authorities' recommendations. Much of the Historic Environments Report remains relevant to this application.

Following feedback and comments from Camden Council and various public consultees including the Primrose Hill Conservation Area Advisory Committee, we have developed a revised scheme which aims to address any previously held concerns.

The full list of submitted existing / proposed drawings and supporting documents are as follows:

**Existing drawings:**

- LOC-001 Location Plan - 1:1250 / 1:500 @A3
- Ex-100 Existing Lower Ground Floor Plan - 1:100 @A3
- Ex-101 Existing Ground Floor Plan - 1:100 @A3
- Ex-102 Existing First Floor Plan - 1:100 @A3
- Ex-103 Existing Second Floor Plan - 1:100 @A3
- Ex-104 Existing Third Floor Plan - 1:100 @A3
- Ex-105 Existing Roof Plan - 1:100 @A3
- Ex-200 Existing Third Floor Plan - 1:100 @A3
- Ex-201 Existing Third Floor Plan - 1:100 @A3
- Ex-202 Existing Third Floor Plan - 1:100 @A3
- Ex-300 Existing Section AA - 1:100 @A3
- Ex-301 Existing Section BB - 1:100 @A3

**Proposed drawings:**

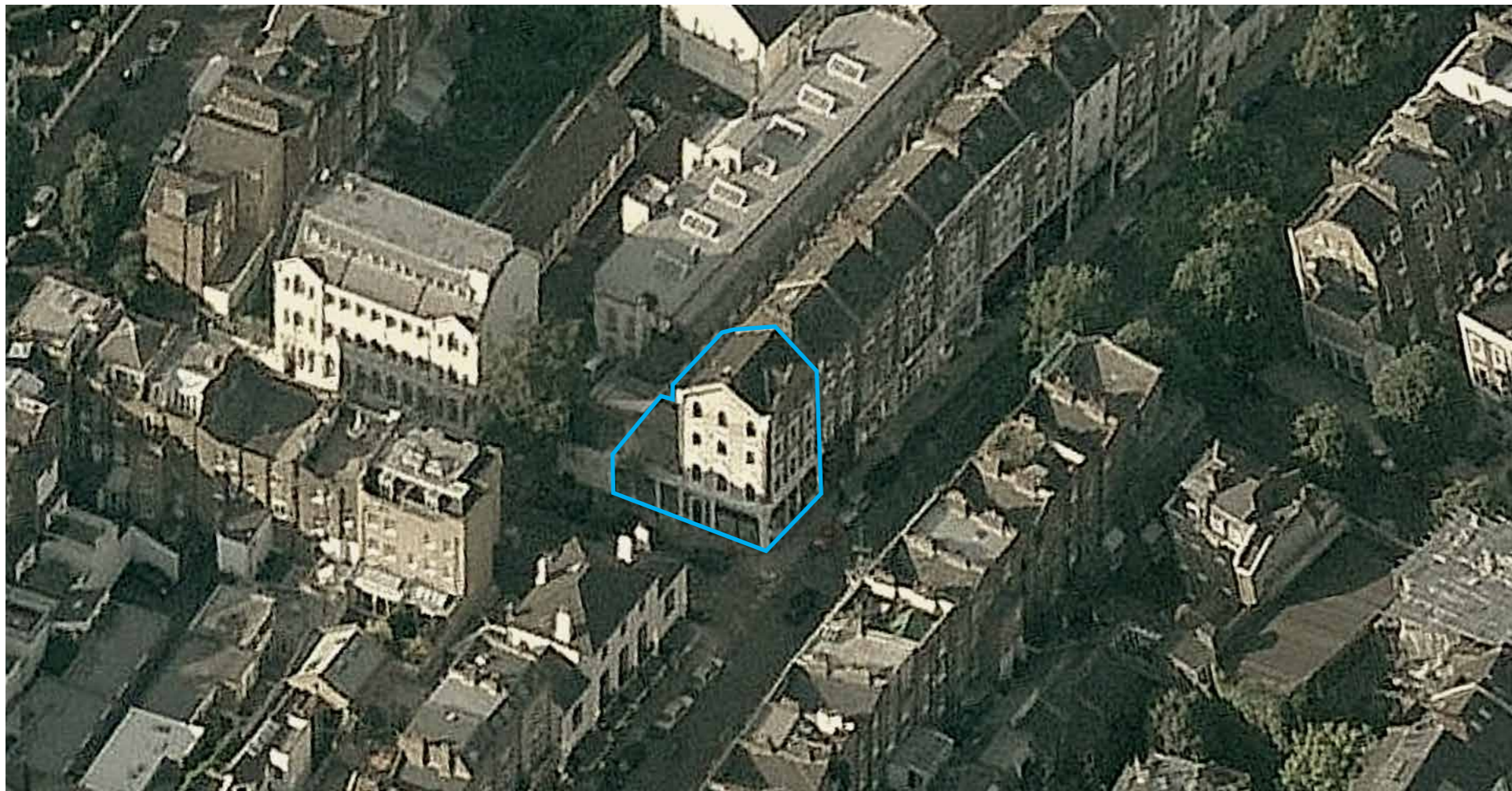
- GA-101 Proposed Ground Floor Plan - 1:100 @A3 - Rev A
- GA-102 Proposed First Floor Plan - 1:100 @A3 - Rev A
- GA-103 Proposed Second Floor Plan - 1:100 @A3 - Rev A
- GA-104 Proposed Third Floor Plan - 1:100 @A3 - Rev A
- GA-105 Proposed Third Floor Mezzanine Plan - 1:100 @A3 - Rev A
- GA-106 Proposed Roof Plan - 1:100 @A3 - Rev A
- GA-200 Proposed South East Elevation - 1:100 @A3 - Rev A
- GA-201 Proposed South West Street Elevation - 1:200 @A3 - Rev A
- GA-202 Proposed South West Elevation - 1:100 @A3 - Rev A
- GA-203 Proposed North West Elevation - 1:100 @A3 - Rev A
- GA-204 Proposed North East Elevation - 1:100 @A3 - Rev A
- GA-300 Proposed Section AA - 1:100 @A3 - Rev A
- GA-301 Proposed Section BB - 1:100 @A3 - Rev A
- GA-302 Proposed Section CC - 1:100 @A3 - Rev A
- GA-110 Areas Schedule - Rev A



Location of 91 Regent's Park Road



Aerial view of site



Aerial view of 91 Regent's Park Road looking towards North

## 2.0 Context

### 2.1 Site Plan & Location

#### 2.1.1 The Site

Built in 1868-1870, 91 Regent's Park Road is located within the administrative area of Camden City Council to the north-east of Primrose Hill. The building stands on the corner as 2 connected and adjacent volumes (No.91 Post Office & No.91a Laundromat). The Post Office corner building occupies 2 principle frontages on both Regent's Park Road and Erskine Road.

The larger volume of the Primrose Corner Post Office comprises a four storey plus basement building containing A1 retail at basement and ground floor and two C3 residential flats above. This building is an end-of-terrace property and features two prominent gable ends to the front and side elevations. There are a series of ornate pillars, decorative pilasters and classical stucco pediments. It is constructed in london yellow stock brick - some of which is exposed and some of which is finished in un-painted render. There is a hipped roof and projected eaves with some brickwork string course detailing.

The smaller, adjacent volume consists of a single storey building facing the street frontage of Erskine Road. This is connected back to the larger building at ground floor level and is occupied by the Primrose Valet dry cleaning business.

The Post Office has been identified as a shopfront of merit and an important contribution to the Primrose Hill Conservation Area

#### 2.1.2 Location

Regent's Park Road is located to the north of Regent's Park, and is the principal road that curves down from east to west towards the eastern side of Primrose Hill. The road can be described as commercial in character with shops, cafes and small businesses. The site sits within one of the three dominant terrace groups in the northern section of Regent's Park Road.

## 2.2 Site Photographs

2.2.1 The following photographs show views of the existing building from both Regent's Park Road and Erskine Road.



1. Corner view of No.91 from Regent's Park Road





2. Westerly view of No.91 Regent's Park Road



3. View of No.91 & No.91a street frontage from Erskine Road

## 2.2 Site Photographs (External Views)



4. View of construction work behind Leeder House adjacent to No.91



5. Street view of No.91 & No.91a on Erskine Road



6. Close-up view of No. 91 facade facing Regent's Park Road

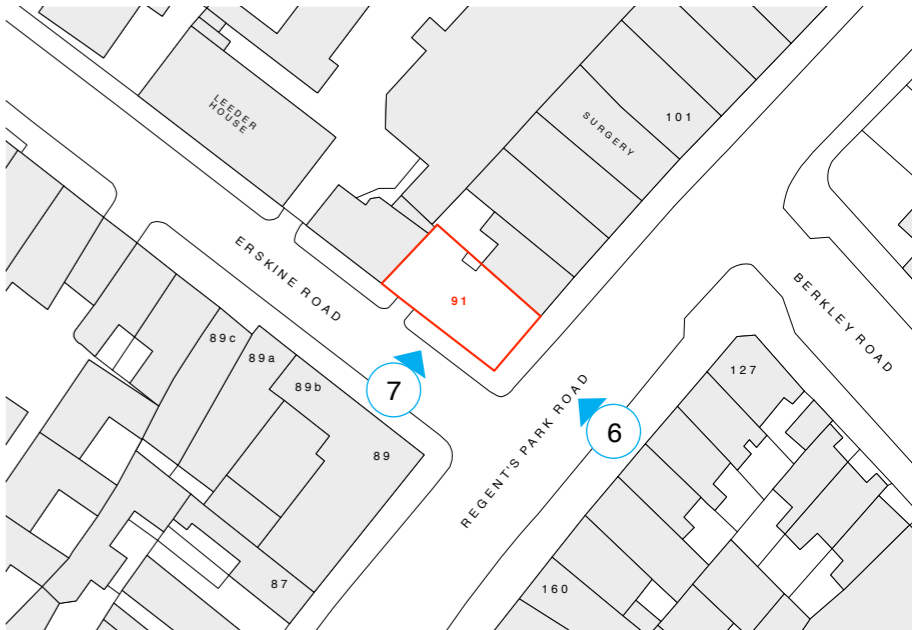


7.1 Close-up view of No. 91 facade facing Erskine Road



7.2 Close-up view of No. 91a facade on Erskine Road

2.2 Site Photographs (Facade)





8. Rear elevation view of neighbouring terraces from roof of Primrose Valet



8.1 Rear elevation across neighbouring terraces

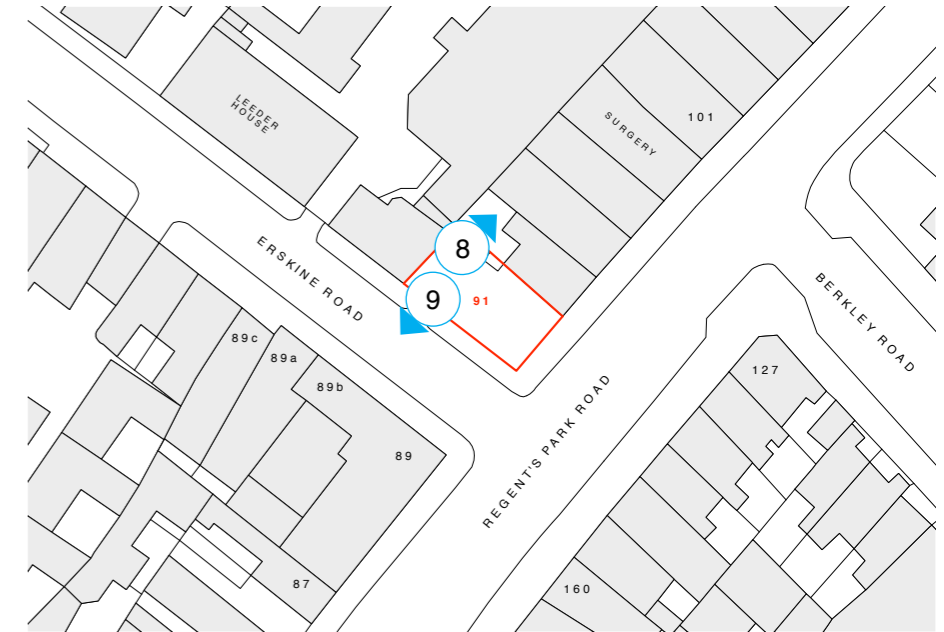


8.2 View overlooking neighbouring rear ground floor roofs



9. View looking towards Erskine Road from the roof of Primrose Valet

## 2.2 Site Photographs (Rooftop of Primrose Valet)





Lower Ground Floor



1st Floor Flat Living/Dining Room



Ground floor Post Office



2nd Floor Flat Living Room



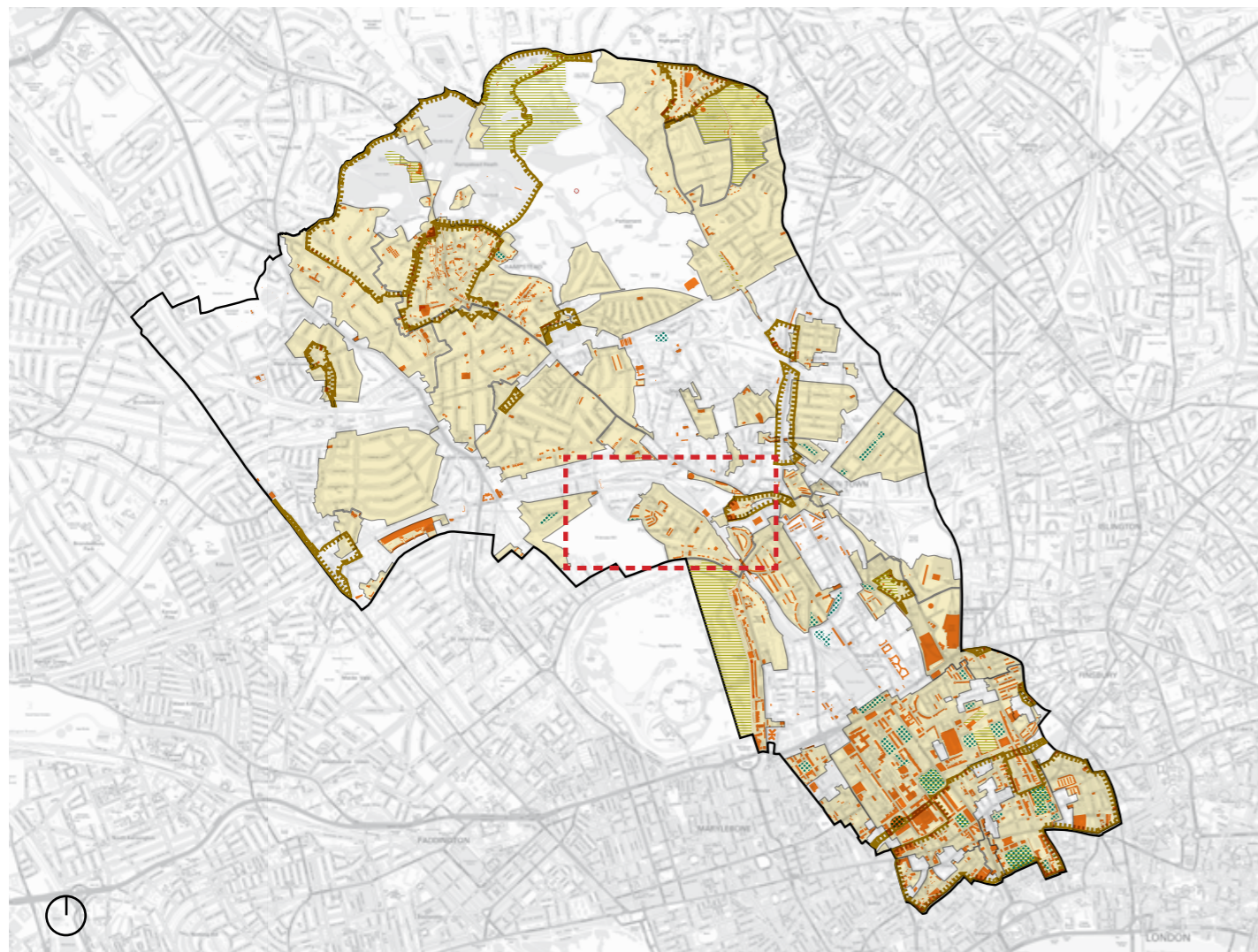
Communal stairs









Top Floor Bedroom

## 2.2 Site Photographs (Internal Views)







- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
|  Conservation area            |  London Squares                           |  Borough boundary |
|  Listed building              |  Gardens and Squares of Historic Interest |  |
|  Archaeological priority area |  |  |



The Primrose Hill Conservation Area

#### Key

-  91 Regent's Park Road
-  Outline of the Primrose Hill Conservation Area

## 2.3 Planning

### 2.3.1 Conservation Areas

Since 1985, the site sits in the Primrose Conservation Area - within Sub Area 3 "Regent's Park Road North".

According to the Primrose Hill Conservation Area Statement, No. 91 Regent's Park Road is one of two prominent corner buildings that define the entrance to Erskine Road. It makes a positive contribution to the conservation area.

### 2.3.2 Listed Buildings

No.91 is not listed and there are no listed buildings in the immediate vicinity.

### 2.3.3 Planning History

In October 2017, AMA submitted a planning application **2017/5663/P** for a more contemporary three-storey scheme which was withdrawn following recommendations for refusal from Planning Officer Kristina Smith at Camden City Council.

Having carefully taken into consideration feedback from the Local Authority, as well as comments from the public consultation, including the Primrose Hill Conservation Area Advisory Committee, we have developed a revised scheme that we believe addresses any previously-held concerns.

The planning history for No. 91 Regent's Park Road prior to this is fairly limited and largely relates to alterations to the roofscape and minor alterations to the shopfront. There is currently planning permission granted in 20/08/2014 for the *Installation of rear dormer and 2 rooflights to the front roof slope* **2014/1720/P**. This has yet to be executed.

However, in the immediate surrounding site area, there are a number of approved developments undergoing construction on site. More specifically, these relate to:

- Works to Leeder House on 6 Erskine Road, involving demolition, a roof extension, alterations to the elevations and change of use.
- The demolition and rebuilding of the adjacent caretakers building to house a new electrical substation and refuse area.

#### 2.3.4 Planning Policy Context

The Statutory Development Plan under which these proposals will be considered includes the following documents:

- The London Plan (2015)
- LDF Core Strategy and Development Policies
- Camden City Council Planning Guidance (2011/2013/2015)
- Primrose Hill Conservation Area Statement (2000)

Additionally, material consideration will be given to the guidance set out within the National Planning Policy Framework (2012) ("The Framework"), the National Planning Policy Guidance ("NPPG") and supplementary planning guidance documents prepared by both the GLA and Camden City Council. Both the Camden Council Planning Guidance 1 (CPG 1) and Development Policies (DP24/DP25) contains guidance on extensions, roof level alterations and shopfronts which has been taken into consideration.

Policies CS6 and DP2 of Camden's LDF encourage the provision of new dwellings within the borough. Our proposal retains and improves the quality of the mixed use development, offering additional dwellings in a sustainable location. There is no change to the size of A1 retail floor space on the Ground and Lower Ground floors, allowing both units to continue operating as normal. This is consistent with the aims of the Camden Development Policies.

In addition to this, our proposed improvements to the Primrose Valet shopfront and facade of the Primrose Corner Post Office provide an enhancement to the street frontage along both Erskine Road and Regent's Park Road.

Material considerations have been taken into account in accordance to the guidance set out within the policy documents. A palette of high quality materials of stock brick, natural stone, lead and high quality glazing have been selected to maintain the established character and appearance of the area.

#### 2.3.5 Planning advice

Some notes on reasons for refusal were received from Planning Officer Kristina Smith on the 15/01/2018 via email, in relation to our previous planning application 2017/5663/P which has since been withdrawn. The two main issues noted by her were design and impact on amenity:

##### ***“ Design***

- *The addition of further height above ground floor level is considered unacceptable. The existing Laundromat reads as a rear garden infill structure and marks the transition from the primary street to the secondary street, thus maintaining the hierarchy of street pattern and allowing pattern of development to be understood, as per the opposite side of the street. The proposed extension would mask this relationship and compete for dominance with No.91. It is not a subordinate addition as required by design guidance (CPG1).*
- *The loss of the highly visible, historic rear elevation of the positive contributor is not supported. Neither is the loss of the gap which, as stated, allows the street development pattern to be interpreted, and neither is the loss of views through this gap, giving an openness that is an important characteristic of the conservation area.*
- *The detailed design is at odds with the historic environment with large and stark fenestration and an incongruous glazed link. The mansard roof is not characteristic of the area.*
- *The dormer is not a subordinate or sympathetic addition to the roof slope and would be prominent in views from Erskine Road. This would be an additional design related reason for refusal.*

##### ***Amenity***

- *The extension would have an overbearing and unneighbourly impact on the rear windows of the nearest residential property at No.93 Regent's Park Road.”*

Within this report and accompanying drawings, we hope to have addressed these points through a series of key design changes and justified arguments.

- Firstly, we have dropped the proposed extension over the Laundromat by a full storey. This significantly reduces the scale and massing and ensures that it definitively reads as a subordinate addition and does not compete for dominance with No.91. By

doing so, the hierarchy of street pattern is maintained by this step down in height and contrast with the corner building.

- We have shown through photographic and 3d analysis that a significant gap (approx 16m) and meaningful view of the rear elevations is still maintained given the larger than usual gap here in the townscape which was not originally planned. This is a unique case on Erskine Road and is not directly comparable with other streets in the area.

- We have also proven that there are a number of examples within the Primrose conservation area where similar 'gaps' have been either infilled or partially obscured through extensions of over a single storey, thus contradicting the Local Authorities' stance on this matter.

- *Donald Insall Associates* have clearly stated within their Historic Environment Report that the supposed 'historic rear elevations' of Nos. 93-109 which the council refer to are in fact “...secondary.. and mediocre elevations..” which are “...plainer and of less significance” than others in the area. Any potential partial obscuring of views would be mitigated through the good design of an extension that enhances the view and would “...cause no harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area”

- We have omitted the glazed link and retained much of the fenestration detail, proportions, and rhythm of the existing Primrose Corner building that is in-keeping with the historic environment. The existing proportions of the Laundromat have also been retained. There is no mansard roof, and we have translated the proportions of the pitched gable form of the Primrose Corner building onto the proposed extension in a manner that reads as consistent and complementary.

- We have also offered a number of significant heritage improvements to the existing building, shopfronts and streetscape which need to be taken into consideration in the context of this application. The series of improvements and repairs that we propose would in Donald Insall's opinion result in a “...significant enhancement to the non-designated heritage asset and in turn the Conservation Area; aligning with Camden's policies (D1 on Design and DP30 on shopfront design). This proposal would not only 'optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development' but also 'respond to local character and history' as required by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 58, 60) and by Camden's policies (CS13, CS14

*and CS17). Therefore, overall, the character and appearance of the Primrose Hill Conservation Area would be preserved."*

### 2.3.6 Pre-application advice

Pre-app advice was received in 29/03/2016 from Jennifer Chivers of Camden Council Planning Department, (2015/7163/PRE) for a different three-storey scheme for this site, through a previous agent.

The advice given contains some relevant points to this application, which we have considered in this revised design. It has been identified in the previous pre-app response that the main issues for consideration in the proposed development and extension on this site are:

- Principle of development
- Design
- Residential Accommodation
- Residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers
- Transport and Parking
- Trees and landscaping

#### PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT - EXTENSIONS

*"The rear elevation of the [exisitng] building and of the terrace of building is clearly visible from Erskine Road south east elevation. The backs of the terrace clearly maintain the original uniformity. Any extension at upper floor levels would reduce and remove this view and open nature to the rear. Any extension at the level would be highly visible and have a harmful visual impact on the wider conservation area, both when viewed from the busy thoroughfare of Regent's Park Road and Erskine Road..."*

We have responded to this in the previous section.

#### DESIGN

*"...Policy DP25 'Conserving Camden's Heritage' states that within conservation area, the Council will only grant permission for development that 'preserves and enhances' its established character and apperance. Council Planning Guidance 1 Design states that extensions should*

*be subordinate to the original building in terms of scale and situation unless the specific circumstances of the site, such as the property or its particular design would enable an exception to this approach."*

By dropping down a full storey, the proposed rear extension is subordinate in scale and form to the host building whilst also appropriate in the context of Erskine Road, which is characterised on the north side by buildings of varying heights and scales, and with a larger than usual gap between buildings.

The proposal offers a series of heritage improvements to enhance the condition and visual appearance of the existing corner building which is currently left in a poor state and in need of repair, upgrade and refurbishment.

Remedial works and investigative tests can be undertaken to remove the unfinished render and reveal the original brickwork and detailing beneath. The sash windows, pediments and stucco detailing will be overhauled and made good where neccessary.

Careful attempts have been made in the massing, fenestration and details of the proposed extension to preserve and relate to the proportions of the host building so that the extension reads as contiguous, yet subordinate addition. Further information on this is provided in the next section.

#### RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION

The provision of new dwellings within the borough is encouraged in accordance to both policies CS6, DP2 and Camden's LDF.

Our proposal offers a substantial improvement on the quality of accomodation to the exsting flats above the Post Office, while providing an additional 2 units of much needed residential accomodation in a sustainable location. We have closely followed the London Plan Policies 3.5 and 3.8 to ensure a varied mix of flat sizes while conforming to the space standards set out in the technical guidelines.

A breakdown of the accomodation sizes is given in the later section of this report.

#### RESIDENTIAL AMENITY OF NEIGHBOURING OCCUPIERS

Careful consideration has been made in the massing and fenestration of the proposed extension to minimise potential overlooking issues with immediate properties - notably No. 93 Regent's Park Road. The window openings on the North-West elevation have been positioned as to take advantage of the northern diagonal aspect of the site from the proposed extension.

The main front elevation of the proposed extension faces south-west onto Erskine Road. It receives direct sunlight during the late afternoon/early evening in the Winter months and during midday/early afternoon in Summer. The rear of the building receives indirect sun during the Summer months.

A Daylight and Sunlight Report was comissioned and submitted with our previous application which shows the impact of the proposed development on occupiers of surrounding properties, in line with the BRE guidelines. Given that this new proposal has further reduced the extension by a full storey, this will have only lessened any impact on the daylight and sunlight for the surrounding properties.

#### TRANSPORT, PARKING & HIGHWAYS

*"Policies CS11 and DP17 support cycle provision and Camden's parking standards for cycles states that one cycle parking space is required per residential unit. Changes to the London Plan recently adopted require two cycle spaces to be provided for each residential unit in a secure and accessible location."*

Our proposal provides sufficient secure cycle spaces to meet these requirements. Cycle provision is provided both on-street immediately outside the Primrose Valet Entrance, and inside the secured entrance lobby to the residential units.

It has been noted that the site has a PTAL rating of 4 and is easily serviced and accessible by public transport, within 10 minutes walking-distance to Chalk Farm tube station. The site is also close to main bus routes and cycle hire facilities. Policies CS11, DP18 and DP19 require developments in this location to be car free. As such, no additional car parking spaces will be provided.

Details of refuse storage are included within this document. There is currently a daily refuse collection in place on the site.

## TREES AND LANDSCAPING

*“There is an existing street tree to the south of the site on Erskine Road pavement. If the scheme was considered acceptable in all other respects details of the tree protection measures would be required to be submitted with any future application to demonstrate that the trees would not be adversely affected by any future development”*

The existing medium-sized Birch tree immediately in front of the Primrose Valet Laundromat will not be adversely affected by the development. The development does not extend forward of the existing building line. Any necessary tree protection measures will be in place, to be secured by planning condition.