

**ADVICE from Primrose Hill Conservation Area Advisory Committee**

12A Manley Street, London NW1 8LT

18 December 2019

**Pre-app advice: 40 Chalcot Road, formerly 'L'Absinthe'**

RS reported on his meeting today, 18 December, with Lindsey O'Hagan and Andrew O'Hagan on proposals for the refurbishment of the ground and lower ground floors of 40 Chalcot Road, formerly 'L'Absinthe', as 'Sam's café'. The Committee's discussion was informed by drawings provided by the applicant. We are grateful to the applicant for the drawings.

The formal status of the proposals is not clear. Although an application has been lodged, it is not yet (rechecked 24 December 2019) registered with Camden so far as the public record is concerned. It was noted that Josh Lawlor has been allocated the project as planning officer. The Committee agreed to offer its advice as 'pre-app' advice at this stage.

The major changes to the exterior of the building were described as follows.

1. The opening of the rear door on Fitzroy Road to provide step-free access to the ground floor restaurant space. The Committee would seek to ensure that this did not lead to noise nuisance for residential neighbours. The essentially residential nature of Fitzroy Road is in contrast to the primarily commercial ground floor frontages on the relevant section of Chalcot Road. The present rear door is to the kitchen: how would deliveries be organized in the proposed arrangement?
2. The replacement of the front area steps with an open grated tread stair was welcomed, as was the removal of the timber platform to the front area. There would be no objection to lowering of the sill of the front area window, subject to acceptable details of the proposed frame.
3. The importance of the existing shop windows was noted: their retention, with stall risers and other fascia details, is important to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Their restoration, following enforcement action and the dismissed appeal, in 1985-86 was noted. The contrast to the tiled stallrisers which characterised the former butcher's shop opposite was noted. Guidance on signage and lighting for traditional shopfronts in the conservation area should be followed.
4. The reorganization of the vents and extracts on the roof of the existing back addition was welcomed, subject to the submission of acceptable alternative proposals.

Internally, the step-free ground floor and provision of a ground floor wc was welcomed. A separate store for waste and recycling at the lower ground floor was also welcomed.

An agreed CMP would be anticipated.

The Committee would expect to advise on materials and details as they are developed.

The Committee was aware of the varied fortunes of restaurants and cafes on this site, and would welcome a successful café on this corner again.

The Committee is happy to discuss the proposals further if that would help.

Richard Simpson FSA, Chair