



# Design & Access Statement

*72 Hampstead High Street, London NW3 1QP*



## Summary

- The change of use at 1st floor from retail (Class A1) for the provision of a separate commercial unit (Class B1 / A2).
- Associated internal reconfiguration and minor refurbishment works to the façade including new windows to Perrin's Court.

## Background and Context

This application relates to a Grade II listed building, comprising basement, ground, first, second and attic floor levels. The property is located on the South side of Hampstead High Street with the junction of Perrin's Court. The adjacent buildings along Perrin's Court, namely Nos. 2, 4, 6, 6a and 6b are Grade II listed.

The front of the property forms part of the Hampstead High Street core retail zone.

The building at basement, ground and first floor levels are in 'Class A1' retail use. The main shop is located at ground level facing Hampstead High Street, with underused storage at Basement level (currently accessed via a hatch and ladder) and an underused ancillary area at First floor.

At second and third floor level, the building is comprised of a 'Class C3' self-contained residential unit, accessed via Perrin's Court. Whilst the applicant also owns this apartment, no works are being proposed under this application.

The building is a patchwork of dates and styles, ranging from the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century neo-Georgian red brick façade facing the High Street, an early 19<sup>th</sup> century brown brick return to Perrin's Court. To the rear is an unsightly mid 20<sup>th</sup> century rendered extension facing onto Perrin's Court.

### **Over time the interior has been heavily altered and has no original features remaining.**

**Previous approved works to the second and third floor apartment uncovered some unusual elements within the building fabric. Much of the second floor is in fact in-situ reinforced concrete construction with downstand beams. We have since discovered that the building was rebuilt in 1965 following fire damage, which explains the unexpected construction and the lack of any original features. Little or no historical fabric remains, with the exception of the brick return to Perrin's Court.**

**All stairs and partitions are modern additions.**

## Listed Building Status

72 Hampstead High Street is a Grade II listed building.

The description reads as:

Grade: II  
Reference No: 798-1-75526  
Date of listing: May 14 1974

### Description:

Terraced house with later shop. Early C18, refaced mid C20 in Neo-Georgian style and extended at rear. Red brick front with plain brick band at 1st floor level; original brown brick return with floor bands to Perrin's Court. Tiled roof. 3 storeys 3 windows. C20 shopfront. Upper floors have flush framed 2-pane sashes with exposed boxing. Thin brick cornice beneath parapet. Old lead rainwater head. Return with early C19 doorway having an incised surround with rectangular stops and panelled reveals; intersecting cusped tracery fanlight. INTERIOR: not inspected.



## Conservation Area

72 Hampstead High Street is located within the Heath Street / Hampstead High Street sub area of the Hampstead Conservation Area.

## Neighbourhood Planning

72 Hampstead High Street is located within the area covered by the Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan.

## Relevant Past Applications

Previously granted Planning and Listed Building permissions relating to 72a Hampstead High Street (extension and refurbishment of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor maisonette)

2012/5622/P  
2012/5623/L  
2013/4067/L

Previously granted planning and listed building consent (now lapsed) regarding the change of use at 1<sup>st</sup> floor from retail to residential.

2013/7598/P  
2013/7659/L

Withdrawn Planning and Listed Building applications regarding the change of use at 1<sup>st</sup> floor from retail to residential.

2019/5232/P  
2019/5829/L



## Project Brief

### RETAIL UNIT

The current arrangement is underused and dilapidated and does not suit the needs of either the owner or occupiers. The retail tenant has now vacated and the owner is now looking to refurbish and upgrade the building.

Previous retail tenants have used the first floor level as a kitchen and meeting area, ancillary to the main use of the retail element at ground floor level. The storage area in the basement is currently accessed via a hatch and ladder within the sales area and is underused as a result.

72 Hampstead High Street has the benefit of prime retail frontage and forms an important part of the high street. It is important for the vibrancy of the high street that the unit is occupied and our client's letting agents have advised that the unit would be more desirable and able to attract a wider range of tenants without the 1st floor ancillary space.

As it stands, the 1st floor is perversely larger than the ground floor sales area, despite being unnecessary considering the basement storage area. Furthermore, our client's letting agents have confirmed that potential tenants view the 1st floor as a liability as the space would not be fully utilised, despite being liable for business rates, heating, repairs etc.

The first floor comprises approximately 64m<sup>2</sup> and is gradually slipping towards a state of disrepair due to its underuse. This is not good for the long-term viability and maintenance of the building, which is particularly relevant given that it is Grade II listed.

#### *Principle change of use:*

The site is located within the core-shopping frontage in the Hampstead Town Centre. There is a general push in Camden's policy and guidance to preserve A1 use within town centres, specifically within core shopping frontages. This proposal would see the existing shop at ground floor level retained with only the ancillary storage/office space above converted to office / commercial space.

For more than the last decade the 1st floor has been empty and underused, most recently by EE and before that by Jaeger. One of the primary objectives of the Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan is to keep Hampstead's local economy vibrant and to preserve local jobs, however, it is abundantly clear that the 1st floor at 72 Hampstead High Street has not contributed in any way towards any jobs or vibrancy.

The existing first floor is not publically accessible and it is not considered that its conversion would harm the function or viability of the existing retail unit to continue operating. Therefore a change of use of an appropriate nature should be considered acceptable.

The proposal does not loose active retail space at ground floor level.

#### *Retail unit viability:*

Retail space is divided into areas used to display products for sale and non-selling areas necessary for the functionality of the shop, such as stockroom and staff area. The ideal ratio is a majority selling area, although this would obviously fluctuate depending on the type of business. As a rule of thumb, approximately 60% of the shop should be sales area, 20% may be lost to circulation and ancillary, while the remaining 20% should be stockroom.

#### **Existing:**

**Sales area as a percentage of total area: 27%**

Circulation as a percentage of total area: 36%

Storage as a percentage of total area: 37%

The retail unit is unsustainable in its current form due to the perversely small sales area compared to back of house. This will lead to small independent shops being unable to afford the unit, or, the landlord not receiving enough income per square foot to adequately maintain the fabric.



- 1) This proposal changes the dead space at first floor level from retail to office / commercial use, thereby reducing the excessive back of house areas and improves the ratio of sales area to ancillary. The additional employment created will benefit the vibrancy of the high street.
- 2) The basement storage area is currently difficult to access via a hatch and ladder in the ground floor sales area. We propose to open up and reuse the existing basement to ground floor stair, currently covered over by the sales area floor. This will improve access to the basement storage area and will vastly improve its usefulness.

## COMMERCIAL UNIT

Commercial accommodation at first floor level within retail centres is appropriate and has been traditionally established within Hampstead High Street.

The proposed commercial unit would comprise an increased 67.7sqm at first floor, primarily due to the relocation of the stair into previously unused partitioned space.

The proposed commercial unit is accessed via its own separate entrance door at street level in Perrin's Court, thereby avoiding a reduction in primary frontage on Hampstead High Street.

The additional employment will benefit the vibrancy of the high street.

Policy EC1 of the Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan supports provision of commercial use at 1st floor level. This is further supported by the following explanatory paragraphs:

7.12 The Plan supports sustainable development that helps retain jobs and encourages a vibrant mix of shops and services.

7.13 There is also a lack of office space with vacancy rates lower than in the West End, as noted in the Camden Office to Residential Impact Study of 2013.

7.16 One factor in the health of Hampstead's retail businesses is the existence of businesses located in the spaces directly above shops. The people who work in businesses in Hampstead are customers for other businesses, such as restaurants and cafes.

### *Waste:*

Given that the existing building occupies the entire site, it is not possible to provide dedicated waste storage.

## Relevant Issues regarding listed building consent and original features

### 1. Hampstead High St Façade:

No substantial work is being proposed to the Hampstead High Street façade, with the exception of window refurbishment as noted on our proposed elevation drawing.

### 2. Perrins Court Façade:

No substantial work is being proposed to the Perrin's Court façade, with the exception of window refurbishment, replacement and enlargement as noted on our proposed elevation drawing.

We propose to replace the 3No. low quality, single glazed 1960s timber windows on the first floor, with dark grey powder coated aluminium windows to match those already existing on the second and third floors.

### 3. Internal Arrangement:

As mentioned previously, the building was completely gutted by fire, with internal floors, partitions and the rendered extension to Perrin's Court rebuilt in the 1960s. As such no original fabric remains internally, leaving more freedom to reconfigure the internal layout.

- Basement: Omit redundant WC to increase usable storage space. The current basement is awkward to access via a hatch and ladder in the ground floor sales area. The basement will be reconnected with its existing staircase (still present in the basement but roofed over), instead of being approached via a ladder and hatch.
- Ground Floor: Removal of the 1960s partitions to allow improved access to the basement storage area and increase the usable sales area. Access to the ground floor, currently via 1960's stairs cutting through the back of the shop, will be relocated underneath the access to the second floor, allowing more space in the shop.
- First Floor: Reconfiguration of the 1960s partitions to create a separate commercial unit. The floor will be upgraded to improve the fire and acoustic performance between the retail unit and the new commercial unit. All fire, acoustic, and thermal upgrades will match or exceed current building regulations at the time of construction.

## Access

Access to the retail storage area in the basement will be greatly improved by the reuse of the disused stair.

Access to the proposed commercial unit will be via its own individual entrance on Perrin's Court. As a first floor conversion within an existing building, access to the commercial unit will be via a stair.

The site has a good level of accessibility by public transport and has a Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) of 4.

Due to a combination of the existing building using the entire footprint of the site, the existing retail unit at ground level and access via a single flight of stairs, we are unable to provide the commercial unit with separate bicycle storage.

Access to the retail unit will remain unchanged.



## Site Photographs



View from Hampstead High Street



View from Perrin's Court



1<sup>st</sup> floor retail tea point - underused space and partitions running into windows (photo showing previous use)





Disused 1<sup>st</sup> floor retail ancillary space (photo showing previous use)



Disused 1<sup>st</sup> floor retail ancillary space – bars and meters across High Street windows (photo showing previous use)



Retail basement storage area (photo showing previous use)



Existing hatch access to basement storage (photo showing previous use)