

4.18 The Metropolitan Police vacated the building in 2013. In terms of establishing the vehicular trips that would have been generated by the former Hampstead Police Station and the magistrate's court when it was fully operational, given that the appeal site has been vacant it has not been possible to carry out a survey of existing traffic movements. The TRAVL (Trip Rate Assessment Valid for London) and TRICS (Trip Rate Information Computer System) traffic databases are the industry standard systems for trip generation analysis. Both the TRAVL and TRICS databases have been interrogated however there is no data available in either database for these specific land use classes.

Comment: The Hampstead Police Station was in a state of decline and disuse from 2000 to its eventual closure in 2013. It has created virtually no traffic, pedestrian or otherwise, in the seven years since then.

The police divisions of Hampstead, Kentish Town and Holborn were amalgamated in 1999 (the Magistrates Court already had closed by this time). The Hampstead Police Station was deemed to "fall far below the standards expected of a modern police station, including lack of lift access and structural problems"ⁱ. The response team of 45 officers, who were "deployed in vehicles equipped with emergency lights and sirens"ⁱⁱ, was relocated to West Hampstead. The custody unit was closed that same year in 2000. Eventually in 2002, the Front Counter stopped being manned 24/7 and went to reduced hours.ⁱⁱⁱ.

There were plans to close the Hampstead Police Station as soon as 2002.

In 2005, surveyors had been appointed to find new offices for the Safer Neighbourhood Teams. In 2007, the Ham and High reported that the Met considered the building inaccessible and "not best located to serve the highest footfall of the communities" it serves.

4.19 Department for Education approached the property team at the Metropolitan Police Service for any indicative data on likely vehicle movements, but no responses were received.

4.20 According to Camden New Journal article (dated 18 June 2014) the Police Station was once staffed by 300 police officers, with a canteen, magistrates' court, and cells with 14 parking spaces provided at the rear. It is therefore a reasonable expectation that the former site use had the potential to generate a significant number of vehicle and person trips throughout a typical weekday and at weekends

Comment: Following the amalgamation in 2000, the only police that were permanently assigned to the Hampstead Police Station until its closure in 2013 were the neighbourhood police. In 2001, the local Sector Team "should have been an Inspector, Sergeant, 8 PC, though normal strength was 3 full-time PCs and 3 part-time PCs. On any given day there would be an average of 3 PCs available to patrol".^{iv}

It was the policy of the Met property managers to keep the station unoccupied: "In the meantime, as I noted again from my visit this week", wrote Stuart Banks in 2005, "there is considerable unused space at Hampstead and it would be good to ensure that this does not become occupied, so that options for disposal remain uncomplicated."^v

In 2006, Safer Neighbourhood Teams consisting of a sergeant, 2 PCs and 2 PCSOs were rolled out across London and the Hampstead SN Team and the Frognal & Fitzjohn's Team were both based at the station. Over the years, the number of officers assigned to SN teams was reduced and by 2018,

most teams consisted of 2 PCs and 1 PCSO. These officers would not have been issued with patrol cars.

In 2012, the Ham & High reported that the “near empty” police station was costing £90k to run over a 12-month period. Another Ham & High article that year noted that “only two depleted Safer Neighbourhoods teams were working out of the station”. It goes on to say: “But when the Metropolitan Police was reorganised, and Hampstead lost its status as a key police station, its force was gradually eroded to the point where staff struggled to man the front desk”.

4.21 At the request Camden’s Highways Officer a further transport survey of Kentish Town police station was undertaken on Wednesday 11th September 2019 from 0700-1900 to establish an indicative baseline figure for trip generation from the vacant Hampstead Police Station.

Comment: Kentish Town Station is not comparable to the former Hampstead Police Station from 2000 onwards. Kentish Town is the only 24-hour station in the borough with a front desk open 24 hours a day. All the borough’s response teams, those with response cars, operate out of the station. In addition, the team dealing with Camden’s night-time economy is based at Kentish Town.

4.22 Kentish Town Police Station was surveyed to generate 168 total two-way vehicle trips in a 12 hour period on a typical weekday as well as 169 total two-way vehicle passenger trips and 335 total two-way pedestrian/other modal trips. Full details are contained with the Highways Technical Note to Camden Council (Paul Mew Associates, September 2019).

Comment: Again, Kentish Town Police Station is not comparable.

4.23 Kentish Town Police Station measures approximately 2,415m² GIA and is very similar in size to the former Hampstead Police Station building which measures at approximately 2240m² GIA. This data is likely to underestimate the number of vehicle trips that would have been generated by the former Hampstead Police Station and magistrate’s court.

Comment: The Hampstead Police Station from 2000 to its closure would have generated minimal car traffic. None of the Safer Neighbourhoods officers have patrol cars. Foot traffic, given the number of neighbourhood police on duty at any one time would have been minimal as well.

The Front Counter was open part-time from 2002 to 2013 and though no surveys were conducted of those using the facility, local recollection is that the counter was mainly used by those living locally. There were alternative front counters in West Hampstead and Kentish Town and parking restrictions in Hampstead would have required those in cars to pay for parking. Furthermore, during this period, reporting crime either by phone or online was becoming easier. The Met Police launched the non-emergency number 101 in 2011 making it easier for people to report non-emergency crimes by phone. Reporting most crimes online also was (and is) an option. Contacting local Safer Neighbourhoods police was only possible by phone or email.

4.24 Notwithstanding, it is evident that the former site uses would have generated a steady stream of vehicle trips throughout a typical weekday whereas the school will aim to generate zero vehicle trips during the ‘school run’.

Comment: There is no evidence to support this claim.

4.25 On this basis the planning application can reasonably be considered to be compliant with Local Plan Policy C2 paragraph 4.33 and Local Plan Policy A1. The first reason for refusal is not justified, or indeed reasonably capable of justification.

Comment: Any traffic created by Abacus School is likely to be an increase on traffic associated with the Hampstead Police Station in the last twenty years.

ⁱ Briefing note, Supt Partnership Jim Busby, Camden, 7.11.2000

ⁱⁱ Busby note, as above

ⁱⁱⁱ Front counter hours reduced from 24/7 in spring of 2002 (Monday & Saturday from 10.30am-5.30pm and Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday from 7.30am-7.30pm)

^{iv} Chair's Report, Hampstead Sector Working Party, 3.12.2001

^v Stuart Banks Interim Assistant Director - Utilisation Asset Management and Utilisation Metropolitan Police, 5 August 2005