

# The Hampstead Neighbourhood Forum

9 March 2013

Objection to: Planning application No. 2018/0613/P,  
38, 39 and 40A Hampstead High Street LONDON NW3 1QE

The Hampstead Neighbourhood Forum objects to this Plan on two main points: the loss of retail space to residential would be unacceptable and the design of the proposed façade would be detrimental to the Hampstead Conservation Area.

The proposal is contrary to emerging Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan, which has now passed examination (we anticipate Council approval later this month).

The Plan identifies loss of retail/business space in Hampstead as a serious issue. HNP Policy EC1 (4) states: "Where permission is required, the change of use of space in Class A or B1a uses at first floor or higher above shops to residential occupation will not be supported unless it can be shown that there is a long history of vacancy."

## **Loss of valuable retail/business space**

38, 39 and 40a Hampstead High Street is a prime frontage identified in Camden Planning Guidance 5 and the first floor restaurant space is an integral part of the business.

Contrary to the applicant's submission, the first floor is a well-used public space and important to the profitability of the current tenant, Café Rouge. It is used on a near daily basis as a venue for meetings, private parties and events. Having lost of number of pubs in recent years, there are very few similar spaces to hire in Hampstead. Furthermore, losing this space would jeopardise the viability of the current business and therefore be contrary to Local Plan TC2.

Over the past few years, Hampstead has seen a loss of a number of retail premises to residential and other business uses. In this particular proposal, the conversion of retail space to residential on the first floor would result in a permanent loss of retail/business floor space in Hampstead. Our study of primary frontages in Hampstead in 2016 revealed that less than a quarter of the first floors above the ground level frontages were commercial premises. Most of the rest were residential.

## **Damage to the conservation area**

The proposal for a new door in the front elevation would seriously damage the balance and pleasing symmetry of the current façade, noted in the Hampstead Conservation Area Statement as making a positive contribution to the area.

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This proposal would be contrary to the emerging Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan EC2 Contributing Positively to the Retail Environment, points 1, 2 and 3. This policy reads:

## **Policy EC2: Contributing positively to the retail environment**

1. New shop fronts or alterations to existing shop fronts will be supported where the proposals respect the proportions, rhythm and form of original frontages. Where possible lost original features, such as unpainted surfaces, pilasters, corbels, glazing bars, part-glazed doors and fascias should be restored.
2. The retention of any shop front that is noted in the Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Strategies will be encouraged.
3. Any shop front of historical or architectural quality should be retained, even if its use has changed.
4. Security measures that do not detract from the streetscape, including toughened glass and the strengthening of shop fronts will be supported. External security shutters, grilles or meshes will not be supported.
5. All “house-style” signage should be sensitively adapted to the streetscape.
6. Internally illuminated projecting signs will not be supported. Signage should either be non-illuminated or externally illuminated, though “halo lit” or illuminated letters may be acceptable if subservient to the general design.
7. Where possible timber fascias should be used on traditional shop fronts with either painted lettering or applied individual letters of another material.
8. Excessive signage will not be supported and generally signage should be limited to one fascia sign and one projecting sign at ground level.

We urge Camden to reject the current proposal.

Sincerely

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