

Planning - Development Control  
Camden Council  
Camden Town Hall  
LONDON  
WC1H 8ND

Dear Sir/Madam

**PROPOSED INSTALLATION OF A SHOPFRONT AT 213-219 CAMDEN HIGH STREET, LONDON, NW1 1BT**

Please find enclosed an application for planning permission for the proposed installation of a shopfront at 213-219 Camden High Street, London, NW1 7BT. The application premises are unlisted but are located within the designated Camden Town Conservation Area.

The application proposals are very modest in nature, and simply comprise the installation of a replacement shopfront within the very south-eastern section of the Camden High Street frontage of the application premises. The existing shopfronts on the remainder of these premises are to remain *in situ*, with no alterations proposed. The existing shopfront on this part of the application premises comprises timber doors with metal shutters, all painted black. They currently contribute nothing positive to the host building, the local street scene, nor the wider conservation area. The host building and the existing shopfronts on it are all modern in age, design and materials. The proposed shopfront would comprise a double-glazed, metal-framed, glazed door and a similarly detailed window.

The proposed replacement shopfront is considered to enhance the appearance of the existing shopfront, the host building, the local street scene and the character and appearance of this part of the designated conservation area. The position of the access door would remain very similar to the left-hand side door on the existing shopfront. The proposed shopfront alterations would enhance the appearance of the premises, through the use of more appropriate detailing, proportions and materials. Appropriate solid-to-void dimensions would be retained. The proposed shopfront alterations are detailed within the accompanying application drawings and details.

From the information available on the LPA's on-line planning records, in terms of the planning history of the application premises, most recent and relevant to the application proposals was the approval of application 2012/1250/P on 19/04/2012 for the installation of white aluminium window frames and white stall risers to the majority of the shopfronts on the wider premises.

The premises are currently unoccupied and vacant. They have been vacant since 22/04/2021. They were previously used as part of a wider retail unit, occupying the ground floor of these premises. The proposed use would also be retail and, consequently, there is no requirement for a formal change of use planning application for this use of the application premises.

The proposed replacement shopfront is required by the applicant to allow for the operation of a retail use (Class E) use of these premises.

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Finding an alternative use for these vacant premises will ensure the commercial viability of these commercial premises which will help ensure the continuing maintenance and upkeep of the premises for a publicly accessible use that will generate local employment, economic activity and assist the vitality and viability of this part of Camden.

The 2023 Framework reiterates the presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11) which requires development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan to be approved without delay. Where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, permission should be granted unless in conflict with the 2023 Framework. The 2023 Framework also requires LPAs to approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way and to work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible (all paragraph 38).

The 2023 Framework requires planning policies and decisions to help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development (paragraph 81).

The 2023 Framework requires planning policies and decisions to promote social interaction and opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other (paragraph 92). The 2023 Framework adds that in order to provide the social and recreational facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces and meeting places, such as public houses (paragraph 93).

The 2023 Framework states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development (paragraph 126). Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments function well and add to the overall quality of the area; are visually attractive; are sympathetic to local character and history, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change; create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places; optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development and support local facilities and transport networks; and create safe, inclusive and accessible places that do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience (all paragraph 130).

The 2023 Framework requires that heritage assets are conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance (paragraph 189). Heritage assets should be put to viable uses consistent with their conservation and development should make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness (paragraph 190). Development proposals should avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal (paragraph 195). In determining applications, LPAs should take account of: the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness (paragraph 197). When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation, irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance (paragraph 199). Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification (paragraph 200). Where a development would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use (paragraph 202).

The Development Plan for the application site comprises the London Plan (2021) and the Camden Local Plan 2017.

Policy GG1 of the London Plan concerns building strong and inclusive communities and this requires growth to be inclusive and seeks to ensure that changes to the physical environment achieve an overall positive contribution to London. Good quality community spaces, services and amenities are encouraged to strengthen communities, increase active participation and improve social integration. Specifically, Policy GG1 seeks to ensure that streets and public spaces are consistently planned for people to move around and spend time in, in comfort and safety.

Policy GG5 of the London Plan concerns growing a good economy. Its goals include conserving and enhancing London's global economic competitiveness through, amongst others, ensuring that London's economy diversifies and promoting London's role as a 24-hour city.

Policy D4 of the London Plan covers the delivering of good design. Its primary focus is rightly upon larger scale development proposals.

Policy D5 of the London Plan addresses inclusive design. Included within its goals are that proposals should be able to be entered, used and exited safely, easily and with dignity for all.

Policy HC1 of the London Plan covers heritage conservation and growth. Development proposals affecting heritage assets and their settings should conserve their significance by being sympathetic to the asset's significance and appreciation within their surroundings.

Policy D1 of the Local Plan concerns design. This policy requires high quality design in new development, which respects the local context and character and preserves or enhances the historic environment and heritage assets.

Policy D2 of the Local Plan addresses heritage. This policy resists proposals resulting in the loss or substantial harm to designated heritage assets. Development within conservation areas is specifically required to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area.

Policy D3 of the Local Plan specifically concerns shopfronts. This policy requires a high standard of design in new and altered shopfronts.

Policy TC2 of the Local Plan promotes successful and vibrant centres throughout the borough to serve the needs of residents, workers and visitors.

The visual and design implications of the application proposals are considered to be acceptable. The proposed shopfront is considered to result in appropriate and sympathetic development which respects the visual characteristics of the host building, this site itself, the local street scene context and the character and appearance of the designated conservation area. The proposed shopfront is considered to enhance the appearance of the ground floor frontage of this part of the application premises and greatly improves upon its current vacant and unused appearance. It is considered that the proposed shopfront is sympathetic to the overall character of the host building and would respect the character of both the host building and the wider conservation area, enhancing the current appearance of the ground floor of this part of these premises. The choice of materials is also considered to be sympathetic in nature and would help enhance the appearance of the application premises. Given this, it is considered that the application proposals at least preserve the existing character and appearance of the designated conservation area, but they should be considered to actually enhance the character and appearance of this designated heritage asset.

The application premises will provide a valued retail facility within this part of Camden. In order to remain economically viable, commercial uses need to have an appropriate street presence. The proposed shopfront will be a critical element in the public presence of the intended retail business at this location. The application proposals will help support the economic viability of the retail use of these premises, which

will allow public access into these premises and would directly contribute to their continuing upkeep and maintenance. Furthermore, the application proposals would also help to ensure the economic viability of this commercial retail business, that will provide direct and indirect employment and will generate local economic activity. The application proposals should be considered as a key element of the applicant's investment into the viability, maintenance and upkeep of these premises.

For all of the above reasons, the application proposals are considered to be compliant with the relevant national, regional and local planning policy requirements summarised above. In accordance with the 2023 Framework's presumption in favour of sustainable development, the application proposals should therefore be approved without delay.

This application is accompanied by the required Design and Access Statement, together with the necessary plans and details of the application proposals. We trust you have all the necessary information to validate and register the application but please contact us if further information is needed.

Yours faithfully,

**Bidwells.LLP.**

**Enclosures.**