

Application No:	Consultees Name:	Received:	Comment:	Response:
2024/5613/P	Dartmouth Park Neighbourhood Forum	10/01/2025 20:43:59	SUPPRT	<p>Application 2024/5613/P No 2 Swains Lane</p> <p>Dartmouth Park Neighbourhood Forum (DPNF) supports this application.</p> <p>We agree with the response submitted by DPCAAC. This provides a detailed description of the problems associated with the development of the site over the past 3 years and concludes that the current proposal provides a satisfactory design.</p> <p>Enabling the completion of the work would enhance the appearance of the shopping street, provide 2 homes and a retail unit.</p> <p>Peter Wickenden DPNF</p>

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Response of DPCAAC

Since the original application in 2022, this project has faced a number of problems. It is a small site sandwiched between two very different buildings with a Flying freehold and several Party Walls. Throughout the project, Party Wall consents have proved difficult and costly. However, it is unfortunate that an 'architect' was appointed to manage the project who failed to produce adequate drawings and had poor communication with Council officers. This resulted in a refusal by the Council of a second application in August 2023 that had been designed to address a number of shortcomings.

InnervisionDesign and ABP Architectural Services were brought in to address the concerns raised by the Council and this has resulted in Application 2024/5613/P which was registered on 20 December 2024. The concerns related mainly to mitigating the risk of flash flooding, issues of domestic water consumption and the colour of bricks used in the part-built construction. There was also a need to rectify a design problem arising from an incorrect measurement of the height of the first floor of No 4 Swains Lane, which adjoins the site. This measurement had been included in the early design approved by the Council. If not corrected, it would have resulted in a misalignment of the first floor buildings of No 2 and No 4 Swains Lane.

InnervisionDesign has drawn attention to a misinterpretation of the legislation relating to internal water usage by the Council and concluded that this is not a valid concern. InnervisionDesign has also addressed the issue of flash flooding in detail. Several measures have already been proposed to address this problem. However, the DPCAAC would also suggest that the potential risk of flash flooding has largely arisen from the poor design of the Swains Lane Pedestrian Crossing. The North-South slope of the Crossing resulted in a paved slope towards the buildings on the South side of Swains Lane. This is exacerbated by the low height of the wall of the gutter to the East of the Crossing and by the fact that the first drain is some 20 metres East of (below) the Crossing.

ABP has had a more difficult task on the design issues. The DPCAAC accepts the arguments put forward by ABP on the brick colour. It's view is that the bricks used in the part-built structure would not have a detrimental impact on conservation grounds and should be accepted by the Council.

Also, ABP has proposed a design (drawing P600) to rectify the measurement problems in the design approved earlier by the Council. However, the DPCAAC would suggest further minor changes that would result in a better alignment of the first-floor windows as follows:

1. The soldier course lintel over the first floor opening sits immediately beneath what appears to be a string course. If one or other was omitted, the design would be rationalised and simplified. It might also be possible to align the head of the structural opening with that of the first floor window at No.4 Swains Lane.

2. The fixed light panels to either side of the French doors are rather wide. They should be reduced and the door widths increased to match those at second floor level.

3. For some reason the drawing introduces brick corbels beneath the first and second floor parapet

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copings, suggesting an overhang of approx. 200mm. They do not exist at second floor level in the original design and would create construction challenges without contributing positively to the design.

4. It is suggested that the first floor door/windows would be simplified and would match other adjacent units if the small top panes were omitted.

It is understood that the further changes 1-3 would be acceptable to ABP and consideration would be given to accommodating No.4.

Finally, this project has started some 3 years ago and the site is an eyesore in Swains Lane. However, other than starting again, it is unlikely that further improvements in design could be made.

While not ideal, the DPCAAC would support this proposal with the revised minor changes No 1-3. It is hoped that the work could be completed without further delay. It would offer additional residential accommodation and a retail unit that was not food-based which would provide a better balance in this small retail hub.

John Slater
DPCAAC
