

2024/5469/P - 24 Neal Street

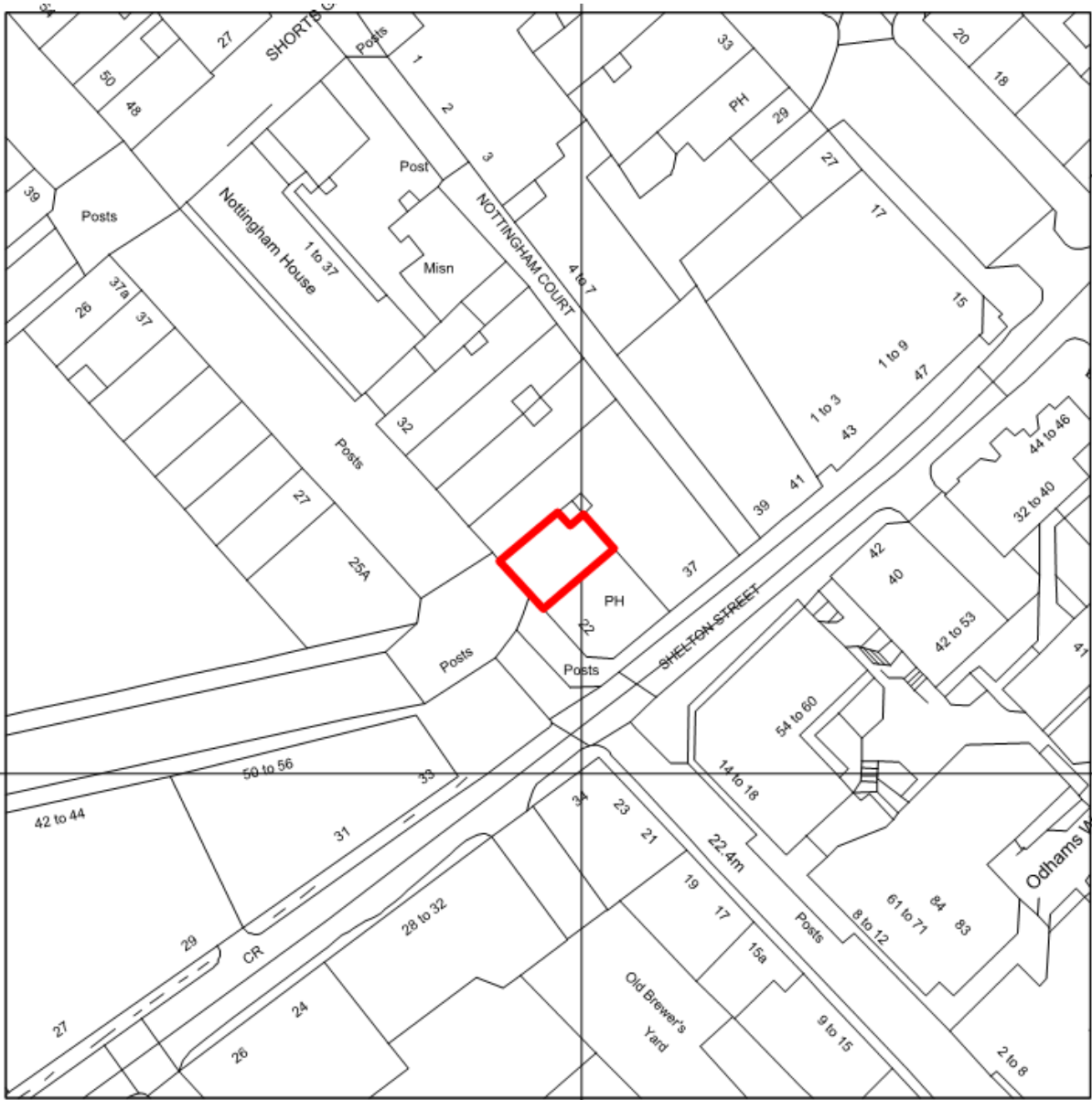


Photo 1 – existing shopfront at application site



Photo 2 – immediate streetscene at application site



Delegated Report (Members Briefing)		Analysis sheet		Expiry Date	13/02/2025
		n/a		Consultation Expiry Date	19/01/2025
Case Officer			Application Number		
Tony Young			2024/5469/P		
Application Address:			Drawing Numbers		
24 Neal Street London WC2H 9QW			See draft decision notice		
PO 3/4	Area Team Signature	C&UD	Authorised Officer Signature		
Proposal					
Replacement of shopfront including alterations to glazing pattern.					
Recommendation	Grant Full Planning Permission				
Application Type	Full Planning Permission				

Responses

Adjoining Occupiers and local groups:	No. notified	0	No. of responses	02	No. of objections	02
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Summary of responses	<p>A <u>site notice</u> was displayed on 24/12/2024 (ending on 17/01/2025) A <u>press notice</u> was advertised in a local newspaper on 26/12/2024 (ending on 19/01/2025)</p> <p>Covent Garden Community Association (CGCA) responded objecting to the <u>original</u> proposals as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. <u>Shopfront alterations</u> - the proposal shopfront should be replaced by a traditional wooden shopfront with a stallriser. The proposed shopfront alterations fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area and would have a harmful effect on its significance.2. <u>Signage</u> - the proposed blade sign should be replaced with one made of painted wood, be a hanging sign (preferably from iron brackets) and not internally illuminated. The proposed blade style of projecting sign does not complement the historic building, nor the setting of the conservation area, particularly along Neal Street. <p>Seven Dials (Covent Garden) Conservation Area Advisory Committee (CAAC) responded objecting to the <u>original</u> proposals, summarised as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">3. <u>Shopfront alterations</u> - the proposed shopfront is angular and very modern, so detracting from the immediate surroundings and conservation area. The adjacent Crown & Anchor Pub, with its curved arches, was at least anchored by imitations of sympathetic arches in the existing shopfront. <p>Officer response:</p> <p>In light of concerns raised by the local amenity groups to original proposals, as well as, concerns expressed by the Council, the applicant amended the proposals (see 'Revised proposal' section below - paragraphs 1.3 to 1.7).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. & 3 <u>Shopfront alterations</u> – whilst a timber shopfront would have been preferable, the proposed shopfront as revised is considered appropriate as a replacement for an existing modern shopfront and uses similar materials, as well as includes a stallriser (see section 3, 'Design and appearance' below for further details). The existing curved mullions are contemporary imitations, installed around 2020, and are considered to bear little relationship with the adjacent public house that might otherwise require their retention (see paragraph 3.7 to 3.8 below for further details).2. <u>Signage</u> - the advertisement application has been withdrawn as the revised signage would now be non-illuminated (rather than internally illuminated), so benefiting from deemed consent. An Informative has been added to the decision notice to this effect.
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Site Description

The application site comprises a ground floor and basement retail shop located on the eastern side of Neal Street (see Images 1 and 2 below).



Images 1 & 2 – application site location & photograph of existing shopfront

The site is located within the Seven Dials (Covent Garden) Conservation Area. The conservation area covers an area that encompasses the streets around Seven Dials and others to the north-east. Its broader significance is derived from the evidence it provides of the seventeenth century urbanisation of the area following the establishment of Covent Garden Market.

The application site is recognised within the Seven Dials (Covent Garden) Conservation Area Statement (adopted in 1998) as a building which makes a positive contribution to the conservation area. It is noted that the ground floor frontage is not identified as being a shopfront of merit.

Though the site is not listed, there are several Grade II listed buildings located to the north-west along the opposite side of Neal Street.

Relevant planning history

Application site

2018/3388/P - Installation of replacement shopfront to existing retail unit (retrospective). Planning permission granted 22/12/2020

8900450 - Continued use of ground floor and basement as a retail shop including the retention of a new shopfront and projecting canopy blind. Planning permission granted 17/05/1990

Relevant policies

National Planning Policy Framework 2024

London Plan 2021

Camden Local Plan 2017

- A1 - Managing the impact of development
- D1 - Design
- D2 - Heritage
- D3 - Shopfronts
- C6 - Access

Draft Camden Local Plan

The Council has published a new Draft Camden Local Plan (incorporating Site Allocations) for consultation (DCLP). The DCLP is a material consideration and can be taken into account in the determination of planning applications which has limited weight at this stage. The weight that can be given to it will increase as it progresses towards adoption (anticipated 2026).

Camden Planning Guidance

- CPG Design (January 2021) - chapters 1 (Introduction), 2 (Design excellence), 3 (Heritage) and 6 (Shopfronts)
- CPG Amenity (January 2021) - chapters 1 (Introduction) and 2 (Overlooking, privacy and outlook)
- CPG Access for All (March 2019) - chapters 1-6

Seven Dials (Covent Garden) Conservation Area Statement (adopted October 1998)

Assessment

1. Proposal

1.1 Original proposal

1.2 The original application proposals sought planning permission at the application site for shopfront alterations as shown in Image 3 below.

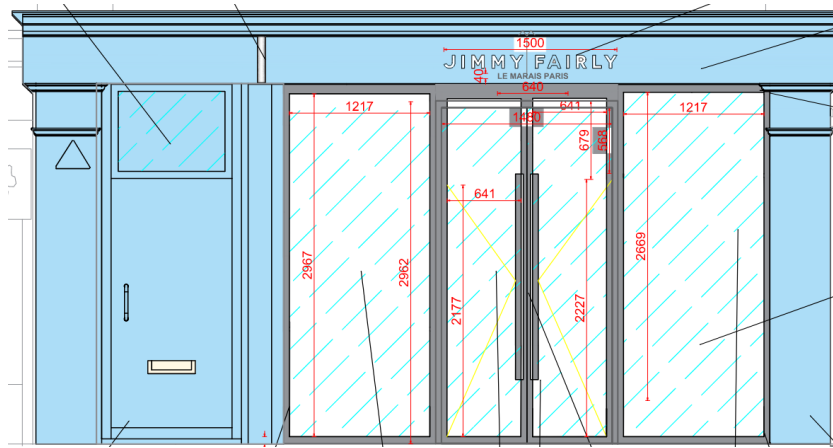


Image 3 – original proposals for ground floor shopfront (drawing extract)

1.3 Revised proposal

1.4 Following concerns raised by a number of local amenity groups (see 'Consultation summary' section above), as well as, by the Council, the applicant amended the proposal and provided revised drawings as shown in Image 4 below:



Image 4 – revised proposals for ground floor shopfront (drawing extract)

1.5 The amendments included a proposed reduction in the height of the central entrance door and introduction of a glazed top-light above, along with a stallriser which would run along the lower part of the frontage. Proposals to install an awning were also omitted from the revised drawings and no longer form part of the amended scheme.

1.6 Revisions also show the proposed fascia and projecting signs to be altered from an originally proposed internal method of illumination to being entirely non-illuminated. On this basis, the signage proposals are considered to benefit from deemed advertisement consent and do not require formal determination by the Council. Consequently, an associated advertisement consent application (2024/5504/A) has been withdrawn and does not form part of any consideration given in this report.

1.7 As such, the following assessment has been made based solely on the planning application proposal as revised, giving due consideration to its own individual merits, and taking into account the particular site context, including all relevant planning history, policies and guidance, as well as, any responses received from interested parties.

2. Assessment

2.1 The principal considerations material to the determination of the planning application are:

- the design and impact of the proposals on the character and appearance of the host building, streetscene and wider Seven Dials (Covent Garden) Conservation Area;
- the impact of the proposal on neighbouring amenity; and
- the impact of the proposal on biodiversity

3. Design and appearance

3.1 Local Plan Policy D1 (Design) establishes that careful consideration of the characteristics of a site, features of local distinctiveness and the wider context is needed in order to achieve high quality development in Camden which integrates into the surrounding streets and townscape.

3.2 Local Plan Policy D2 (Heritage) states that the Council will only permit development within conservation areas that preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the area. This is supported by the Seven Dials (Covent Garden) Conservation Area Statement (adopted in 1998).

3.3 Local Plan Policy D3 (Shopfronts) states that the Council will consider the existing character, architectural and historic merit, design of the building and its shopfront; its details and materials; the relationship between the shopfront and the upper floors of the building and surrounding properties; and the general characteristics of shopfronts in the area.

3.4 While a previous version of the shopfront was noted as being of merit within the Seven Dials (Covent Garden) Conservation Area Statement in 1998 when the statement was first written, it is noted that the shopfront has long since been replaced at least once in the past. The shopfront may have been altered and replaced in 2008, however, it was certainly replaced by a more modern shopfront around 2020 following the grant of planning permission (2018/3388/P).

3.5 Therefore, while a shopfront of timber would have been preferable, the proposed use of aluminium for the frame would broadly match the existing material of the current shopfront which would be replaced. The proposed design as revised also retains decorative and structural features more common in traditional shopfronts, such as, pilasters, console brackets and entablature. The proposed design also removes an existing inward opening casement window within one side panel, so restoring some welcome visual symmetry and balance in appearance to the shopfront.

3.6 Additionally, following concerns raised by the local amenity groups, amendments were made by the applicant to reduce the height of the central entrance door and install a glazed top-light above, along with a stallriser which would run along the lower part of the frontage. Proposals to install an awning were also omitted from the revised drawings and no longer form part of the amended scheme. All amendments are considered to provide welcome revisions and improvements to the design of the originally proposed scheme.

3.7 The CAAC also expressed concern in regard to proposals to remove curved mullions from the upper parts of the existing frontage as they were viewed as being sympathetic in appearance to curved arches present in the adjacent Crown & Anchor Public House. However, as acknowledged by the CAAC, the existing mullions are contemporary imitations, installed around 2020, and are considered by Council officers to bear little relationship with the adjacent public house that might otherwise require their retention.

3.8 Notwithstanding this, the modern, simple design of the proposed shopfront as revised does not detract from the character and appearance of the adjacent public house. However, it is noted as relating more closely to the existing adjacent shopfront on the other side of the host unit (no. 26 Neal Street). The proposed shopfront as revised would also appear fairly typical and in keeping in design terms with other contemporary frontages along the wider parade of retail units in this part of Neal Street (nos. 28-42) which are located on the same side of the street and which are all similarly unlisted.

3.9 In regard to the row of Grade II listed buildings and shopfront situated opposite the application site to the north-west (nos. 29-43 Neal Street), although the proposals would involve alterations within their settings, it is noted that the proposals relate solely to the ground floor shopfront of

the host building and would not be harmful to or obscure any significant architectural or historic features of either these listed buildings, their settings or to the host building.

- 3.10 As such, the impact of the revised proposals would be limited and the proposed alterations would not diminish the ability to understand or appreciate the significance of the listed buildings or their settings, nor would they be detrimental to the settings of any other listed buildings situated within the wider locality.
- 3.11 Overall, therefore, the proposed alterations are considered to preserve the character and appearance of the host building, streetscene and wider Seven Dials (Covent Garden) Conservation Area, and would not be harmful to the settings of any listed buildings. As such, the proposed development is acceptable in design terms in general accordance with Camden Local Plan Policies D1 (Design), D2 (Heritage) and D3 (Shopfronts), and all relevant guidance.
- 3.12 The proposal would preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area overall. The Council has had special regard to the desirability of preserving the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, and nearby listed buildings, their setting, and their features of special architectural or historic interest.

4. Amenity

- 4.1 Policy A1 (Managing the impact of development) seeks to protect the amenity of Camden's residents by ensuring the impact of development is fully considered and by only granting permission or consent for development or alterations that would not harm the amenity of communities, occupiers and neighbouring residents.
- 4.2 The revised proposal would not cause any harm to residential amenities at the host or neighbouring properties, particularly given the minor nature of the alterations to an existing shopfront. The replacement shopfront is also noted as retaining the existing level access to the unit.
- 4.3 As such, the revised proposal is considered to accord with Local Plan Policies A1 (Amenity) and C6 (Access) and all relevant guidance, and is acceptable in amenity terms.

5. Biodiversity

- 5.1 Local Plan Policy A3 (Biodiversity), in support the London Biodiversity Strategy and the Camden Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP), seeks to ensure that the Council maximises opportunities for biodiversity in and around developments in order to deliver a net gain in biodiversity and a range of wider environmental benefits. It is noted that the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirement came into effect for major applications on 12/02/2024, and for small sites on 02/04/2024. However, there are a number of statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the BNG condition does not always apply. These are summarised by way of an informative attached to this decision.
- 5.2 In this case, based on the information provided, there is no requirement for the approval of a Biodiversity Gain Plan as the development falls below the de minimis threshold given it would not impact an onsite priority habitat and it would impact less than 25sqm of onsite habitat with biodiversity value greater than zero and less than 5 metres in length of onsite linear habitat.

6. Recommendation

- 6.1 It is therefore recommended that planning permission be granted.

The decision to refer an application to Planning Committee lies with the Director of Regeneration and Planning. Following the Members Briefing panel on Monday 24th February 2025, nominated members will advise whether they consider this application should be reported to the Planning Committee. For further information, please go to www.camden.gov.uk and search for 'Members Briefing'.

Application ref: 2024/5469/P
Contact: Fast Track TY
Tel: 020 7974 2687
Email: Tony.Young@camden.gov.uk
Date: 18 February 2025

Development Management
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Phone: 020 7974 4444

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Project Entity Ltd
42 Gainsborough
MILBORNE PORT
DT9 5BD

DRAFT

Dear Sir/Madam

DECISION

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)

Full Planning Permission Granted

Address:
24 Neal Street
London
WC2H 9QW

DECISION

Proposal:
Replacement of shopfront including alterations to glazing pattern.

Drawing Nos: Site location plan; P26 (dated 04/02/2025); P27 (dated 04/02/2025); P28 (dated 17/02/2025).

The Council has considered your application and decided to grant permission subject to the following condition(s):

Condition(s) and Reason(s):

- 1 The development hereby permitted must be begun not later than the end of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In order to comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Site location plan; P26 (dated 04/02/2025); P27 (dated 04/02/2025); P28 (dated 17/02/2025).

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interest of proper planning.

- 3 All new external work shall be carried out in materials that resemble, as closely as possible, in colour and texture those of the existing building, unless otherwise specified in the approved application.

Reason: To safeguard the appearance of the premises and the character of the immediate area in accordance with the requirements of policies D1 and D2 of the London Borough of Camden Local Plan 2017.

Informative(s):

- 1 The display of non-illuminated signs as shown on the revised drawings are considered to benefit from deemed advertisement consent, as defined by Schedule 3, Part 1, Class 5 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007, and therefore, do not require formal determination by the Council in the form of an advertisement consent application.
- 2 Your proposals may be subject to control under the Building Regulations and/or the London Buildings Acts that cover aspects including fire and emergency escape, access and facilities for people with disabilities and sound insulation between dwellings. You are advised to consult the Council's Building Control Service, Camden Town Hall, Judd St, Kings Cross, London NW1 2QS (tel: 020-7974 6941).
- 3 This approval does not authorise the use of the public highway. Any requirement to use the public highway, such as for hoardings, temporary road closures and suspension of parking bays, will be subject to approval of relevant licence from the Council's Streetworks Authorisations & Compliance Team, 5 Pancras Square c/o Town Hall, Judd Street London WC1H 9JE (Tel. No 020 7974 4444). Licences and authorisations need to be sought in advance of proposed works. Where development is subject to a Construction Management Plan (through a requirement in a S106 agreement), no licence or authorisation will be granted until the Construction Management Plan is approved by the Council.
- 4 All works should be conducted in accordance with the Camden Minimum Requirements - a copy is available on the Council's website (search for 'Camden Minimum Requirements' at www.camden.gov.uk) or contact the Council's Noise and Licensing Enforcement Team, 5 Pancras Square c/o Town Hall, Judd Street London WC1H 9JE (Tel. No. 020 7974 4444)

Noise from demolition and construction works is subject to control under the Control of Pollution Act 1974. You must carry out any building works that can be heard at the boundary of the site only between 08.00 and 18.00 hours Monday to Friday and 08.00 to 13.00 on Saturday and not at all on Sundays and Public Holidays. You must secure the approval of the Council's Noise and Licensing Enforcement Team prior to undertaking such activities outside these hours.

- 5 Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Informative (1/2):

The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 ("1990 Act") is that planning permission granted in England is subject to the condition ("the biodiversity gain condition") that development may not begin unless:

- (a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
- (b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

The local planning authority (LPA) that would approve any Biodiversity Gain Plan (BGP) (if required) is London Borough of Camden.

There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply. These are summarised below, but you should check the legislation yourself and ensure you meet the statutory requirements.

Based on the information provided, this will not require the approval of a BGP before development is begun because it is below the de minimis threshold AND impacts less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat with biodiversity value greater than zero and less than 5 metres in length of onsite linear habitat).

++ Summary of transitional arrangements and exemptions for biodiversity gain condition

The following are provided for information and may not apply to this permission:

1. The planning application was made before 12 February 2024.
2. The planning permission is retrospective.
3. The planning permission was granted under section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the original (parent) planning permission was made or granted before 12 February 2024.
4. The permission is exempt because of one or more of the reasons below:
 - It is not "major development" and the application was made or granted before 2 April 2024, or planning permission is granted under section 73 and the original (parent) permission was made or granted before 2 April 2024.
 - It is below the de minimis threshold (because it does not impact an onsite priority habitat AND impacts less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat with biodiversity value greater than zero and less than 5 metres in length of onsite linear habitat).
 - The application is a Householder Application.
 - It is for development of a "Biodiversity Gain Site".
 - It is Self and Custom Build Development (for no more than 9 dwellings on a site no larger than 0.5 hectares and consists exclusively of dwellings which are Self-Build or Custom Housebuilding).
 - It forms part of, or is ancillary to, the high-speed railway transport network (High Speed 2).

6 Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Informative (2/2):

+ Irreplaceable habitat:

If the onsite habitat includes Irreplaceable Habitat (within the meaning of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024) there are additional requirements. In addition to information about minimising adverse impacts on the habitat, the BGP must include information on compensation for any impact on the biodiversity of the irreplaceable habitat. The LPA can only approve a BGP if satisfied that the impact on the irreplaceable habitat is minimised and appropriate arrangements have been made for compensating for any impact which do not include the use of biodiversity credits.

++ The effect of section 73(2D) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990

If planning permission is granted under section 73, and a BGP was approved in relation to the previous planning permission ("the earlier BGP"), the earlier BGP may be regarded as approved for the purpose of discharging the biodiversity gain condition on this permission. It will be regarded as approved if the conditions attached (and so the permission granted) do not affect both the post-development value of the onsite habitat and any arrangements made to compensate irreplaceable habitat as specified in the earlier BGP.

++ Phased development

In the case of phased development, the BGP will be required to be submitted to and approved by the LPA before development can begin (the overall plan), and before each phase of development can begin (phase plans). The modifications in respect of the biodiversity gain condition in phased development are set out in Part 2 of the Biodiversity Gain (Town and Country Planning) (Modifications and Amendments) (England) Regulations 2024.

In dealing with the application, the Council has sought to work with the applicant in a positive and proactive way in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework. The council publishes its adopted policies online, along with detailed Camden Planning Guidance. It also provides advice on the website for submitting applications and offers a pre-application advice service.

You can find advice about your rights of appeal at:

<https://www.gov.uk/appeal-planning-decision>.

Yours faithfully

Chief Planning Officer