

CS17. Making Camden a safer place

- 17.1 Crime and fear of crime is a primary concern for many of Camden’s residents and businesses, and can undermine people’s quality of life and well-being. Tackling this critical issue is one of the key challenges facing the Council and its partners. *A safe Camden that is a vibrant part of our world city* is one of the key themes of the Camden Community Strategy. Our challenge is to make Camden a safer place for local residents and those who work in and visit the borough, while making sure that it maintains the vibrancy that contributes so much to its character and success.
- 17.2 The level and type of crime and anti-social behaviour varies across the borough and areas of higher crime have been identified at Camden Town, King’s Cross, Bloomsbury, Covent Garden and Kilburn. The borough’s central location and thriving night time economy can be linked to a range of problems including alcohol and drug related criminal and anti-social activity. Development in the borough provides the opportunity to implement measures to improve community safety, in particular where development takes place in areas with relatively high levels of crime and anti-social behaviour.

CS POLICY

CS17 – Making Camden a safer place

The Council will aim to make Camden a safer place. We will:

- a) work with our partners to tackle crime, fear of crime and anti-social behaviour;
- b) encourage appropriate security and community safety measures in buildings, spaces and the transport system;
- c) require developments to demonstrate that they have incorporated design principles which contribute to community safety and security, particularly in areas with relatively high levels of crime, in particular Camden Town, King’s Cross, Bloomsbury, Covent Garden and Kilburn;
- d) ensure Camden’s businesses and organisations take responsibility for reducing the opportunities for crime through effective management and design;
- e) promote safer streets and public areas; and
- f) address the impact of food, drink and entertainment uses, particularly in Camden Town, Central London and other centres.

- 17.3 The Camden Community Safety Partnership has been established to reduce crime, disorder and nuisance in the borough. The Partnership is a network of organisations involved in community safety including the Council, various police organisations, the Camden Community & Police Consultative Group and the NHS Camden. The Partnership’s Strategy, Camden Safe, sets out its priorities and measures to make sure that everyone living in, working in or visiting Camden will be safer and feel safer, day and night. To help achieve these priorities, operational and working groups have also been set up to focus on priority areas and youth crime.
- 17.4 Consideration of how crime, disorder and fear of crime can be addressed is an important element in good design. This can create safe and attractive places to live and work, reduce the opportunity for crime and allow for better maintenance and management of buildings and spaces. The Council will require all development to include appropriate design, layout and access measures to help reduce opportunities for crime, the fear of crime and to create a more safe and secure environment. These



features should be incorporated into a scheme from the beginning of the design process; however, they should complement other key design considerations. All developments should also seek to design out risks from fire. The Council will expect development proposals to reflect the guidance in the government publication *Safer Places: The Planning System and Crime Prevention*. This will be particularly important in the borough's areas of highest crime and measures should reflect any crime and anti-social behaviour problems specific to the local area. Further information on designing safer environments is set out in the Council's Camden Planning Guidance supplementary document.

- 17.5 The design of streets, public areas, and the spaces between buildings needs to be accessible, safe and uncluttered. Careful consideration needs to be given to the design and location of any street furniture or equipment. The use of a site and the layout can have a major impact on community safety and the Council will seek 'active frontages' which attract people and allow streets to be overlooked. The Council wants to ensure that Camden's spaces and places can be used by all members of the community. People will make more use of high quality, safe streets and places and this increase in use will, in turn, increase perceptions of safety and reduce the opportunities for crime. Development which restricts movement into or through a scheme, such as 'gated' developments will not be permitted.
- 17.6 The provision of appropriate management and maintenance arrangements can play a key role in reducing the opportunity for crime and disorder and making the borough feel safer. The Council will seek the following measures:
- the use of Design and Access Statements, submitted with planning applications, to demonstrate how community safety issues have been addressed within development proposals;
 - contributions from large developments (that is, schemes of 10 homes or more, or sites of 1,000 sqm or more) to appropriate community safety measures;
 - the submission of a Crime Impact Assessment and lighting plan with planning applications, where relevant;
 - the use of local management agreements (secured through section 106 agreements or attached as a condition when the Council grants a license) to encourage owners/occupiers to take responsibility for potential impacts of their premises on their surroundings;
 - the maintenance of some interior lighting overnight, where appropriate, particularly within areas identified as having high levels of crime and other centres; and
 - the use of shopfront security measures that do not require external shutters or grilles of any kind. Further guidance on shop shutters is set out in the Council's Camden Planning Guidance supplementary document.



- 17.7 Camden’s food, drink and licensed entertainment premises contribute to the attractiveness and vibrancy of the borough but, particularly where there is a concentration of late night activity, there can be problems such as noise and disturbance, littering, anti-social behaviour, crime and violence. Alcohol related crime and late night disorder have been identified as significant issues in Camden Town and parts of Central London. The Council will seek to make sure that that food, drink and licensed entertainment uses do not, individually or cumulatively, cause harm to the local area. Please see CS7 – *Promoting Camden’s centres and shops and policy DP12* in Camden Development Policies for further details on our approach to managing planning applications for such uses. The Council has prepared more detailed planning guidance for Central London and the centres of Camden Town, Finchley Road/Swiss Cottage and West Hampstead, with particular focus on food, drink and evening entertainment uses. We will take these into account when assessing relevant planning applications in these areas. The Council will also use management and maintenance agreements with owners and operators to make sure that the areas outside of premises used in the evening economy are appropriately managed.
- 17.8 In addition to its planning functions, the Council also regulates premises that sell alcohol and provide entertainment and late-night refreshment thorough its actions as a licensing authority. The key objectives of Camden’s Statement of Licensing Policy include preventing crime and disorder, addressing issues of community safety and preventing public nuisance. We also seek to balance conflicting interests and recognise the wish of local people to live and work in a safe and healthy environment and the importance to the local economy and community of well-run leisure and entertainment premises.
- 17.9 Camden’s position in the centre of a major international city, its high profile, major transport interchanges and famous buildings and places make security an important issue in the borough. The Council will therefore expect the design of buildings, spaces and transport facilities to include appropriate and proportionate security and community safety measures.

Key evidence and references

- Camden Safe 2008 – 2011; Camden’s Community Safety Partnership Strategy;
- Camden Together – Camden’s Sustainable Community Strategy 2007 – 2012
- Camden Statement of Licensing Policy 2008
- Planning Guidance for Central London/Camden Town/Finchley Road/Swiss Cottage/West Hampstead; London Borough of Camden (various dates)
- Safer Places – the Planning System and Crime Prevention; ODPM; 2004
- The London Plan (consolidated with alterations since 2004); Mayor of London; 2008