



185 CAMDEN HIGH STREET, CAMDEN, NW1 7JY PLANNING, HERITAGE, DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This application has been submitted on behalf of our client Wasabi Co. Ltd., for alterations to the existing shopfront at the abovementioned premises, together with the installation of 2 no. internally illuminated fascia signs and 1 no. internally illuminated projecting sign.

1.1 The planning application submission comprises the following material:

- Duly completed Advertisement Application Form;
- Completed Certificate B and copy of Notice as served;
- Completed Agricultural Holdings Certificate;
- Site Location Plan at scale 1:1,250 with the site edged in red;
- Existing Shop Front (Drawing no. DA2631-702);
- Proposed Shop Front (Drawing no. DA2631-704);
- Planning, Heritage, Design and Access Statement prepared by Icen Projects; and
- A cheque for £305.00 made payable to Camden Council.

2.0 APPLICATION PREMISES

- 2.1 185 Camden High Street, is a two storey building with basement, and was previously occupied by EAT.
- 2.2 The building dates from the 1920's and retains the original façade at first floor level. A modern glazed shopfront has been installed to the ground floor. The property is within the Camden Town Conservation Area, however it is not the subject of any statutory Listed Building Designation.
- 2.3 The premises are located near the corner of Camden High Street and Parkway – an area known as Britannia Junction. Britannia Junction is a busy intersection that provides a focus for Camden Town Centre. It is also a hub that affords views from the junction into the surrounding Conservation Area and along Camden High Street.
- 2.3 Wasabi will be one of many town centre uses in Camden High Street that contribute to the vibrancy and activity in Camden Town Centre and Britannia Junction, and will serve local residents, commuters, workers and tourists in the area..

3.0 PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 There is an extensive planning history of relevance to the subject proposals, which dates from the 1950s, and includes the following;
- LPA ref. J11/18/1/2275 – To install a new shop-front. Approved 21 June 1956.
 - LPA ref: J11/18/1/928 – The use of the first floor as a studio and workshop for the preparation of window displays. Approved 21 October 1965.
 - LPA ref: J11/18/1/10792 – Alterations to the shopfront. Approved 12 May 1971.
 - LPA ref: 8700195 – Installation of a new shopfront. Approved 04 March 1987.
 - LPA ref: 9380130 – Retention of internally illuminated fascia sign. Application deferred 08 December 1994.
 - LPA ref: 93801554 – Retention of advertisement display comprising five large externally illuminated polystyrene boots and painted letters reading 'Docklands' on the front elevation at the first floor and parapet levels. Application deferred 08 December 1994.

- LPA ref: AE9900700 – a) Continued display of internally illuminated fascia and projecting signs. b) Continued display of externally illuminated advertisements boards over first floor windows showing encapsulated life style images. c) Continued display of externally illuminated advertisement above first floor windows. As shown on drawing numbers: 01 and 02. Refused and appeal dismissed 07 November 2000.
- LPA ref: PE9900699 – Retention of a new shopfront. Application refused 06 April 2000.
- LPA ref: 2007/2551/A – Display of internally illuminated fascia sign and an internally illuminated projecting sign. Approved 09 August 2007.

4.0 THE PROPOSAL

4.1 The external alterations to these premises include:

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|-----------------|---|
| Front Elevation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Installation of new glazed shopfront with full height frameless glazing; - Retention of existing columns to be clad with white staron; - Reduce height of existing fascia and clad with white staron; - Installation of a single leaf frameless glazed entrance with brushed stainless steel handle and fittings; and - Installation of 2 no. internally illuminated fascia signs and 1 no. internally illuminated projecting sign (all in accordance with Drawing no. DA2631-704). |
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5.0 NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 5.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which came into effect on 27 March 2012, aims to strengthen local decision making and to reinforce the importance of up to date plans.
- 5.2 **Paragraph 17** sets out a number of core planning principles that should underpin decision taking, which include:
- To enhance and improve places;
 - To secure high quality design;
 - To promote healthy communities;
 - To conserve and enhance the natural environment;
 - To encourage the effective use of land; and
 - To encourage public transport, walking and cycling.
- 5.3 **Paragraph 56** of the NPPF states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people.
- 5.4 At **Paragraph 57**, the NPPF confirms that it is important to plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces, and wider area development schemes.
- 5.5 The NPPF continues at **Paragraph 60**, in stating that planning policies and decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles. Paragraph 60, does however state that development should seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness.
- 5.6 The NPPF also advises (**Paragraph 61**) that although visual appearance and the architecture of individual buildings are very important factors, securing high quality and inclusive design goes beyond aesthetic considerations. Therefore, planning policies and decisions should address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment.

- 5.7 In addition, **Paragraph 63** places great weight on outstanding or innovative designs, which help raise the standard of design more generally in the area.
- 5.8 At **Paragraph 67**, the NPPF clarifies that the display of outdoor advertisements can only be controlled in the interests of “amenity” and “public safety”, taking account of cumulative impacts.
- 5.9 Section 12 of the NPPF deals with the consideration of cultural heritage assets, and sets out the importance of being able to assess the impact of a development on the significance of heritage assets.
- 5.10 In terms of ‘significance’, Annex 2 of the NPPF defines this as the value of an asset because of its heritage interest. This interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic and can extend to its setting.
- 5.11 The ‘setting’ of a heritage asset is defined in Annex 2 as the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. A designated heritage asset is recognised by the NPPF to be a World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area.
- 5.12 The NPPF recognises that a balance needs to be struck between the preservation of the significance of a heritage asset and delivering public benefit.
- 5.13 With regard to conserving and enhancing the historic environment, **Paragraph 134** advises that *“Where development proposals will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use”*.
- 5.14 **Paragraph 128** states that in determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary.
- 5.15 With regard to designated assets, **Paragraph 132** states that the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be on its conservation. Distinction is drawn between those assets of highest significance and those of a lesser significance.
- 5.16 The NPPF identifies harm as being either substantial or less than substantial. **Paragraph 133** states that where the proposal would lead to substantial harm to the significance of a designated asset, consent should be refused unless the harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefit that outweighs that harm.
- 5.17 In cases where less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated asset is anticipated, **Paragraph 134** requires that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
- 5.18 In respect of non-designated assets, **Paragraph 135** requires a balanced judgement which has regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the asset.

The London Plan (July 2011) including Further Alterations to the London Plan (March 2015) and Minor Alterations to the London Plan (March 2016)

- 5.19 In July 2011, the Mayor published the replacement of the spatial development strategy for London – known as the London Plan. The London Plan is the overall strategic plan for London, and it sets out a fully integrated economic, environmental, transport and social framework for the development of the capital to 2031.
- 5.20 On 10 March 2015, the Mayor of London published Further Alterations to the London Plan (FALP); and on 14 March 2016, the Mayor of London published Minor Alterations to the London Plan (MALP). From this date, MALP & FALP are operative as formal alterations to the London Plan and form part of the development plan for London.

5.21 A number of design and heritage policies within the London Plan are relevant to the consideration of these proposals, and have been identified as follows:

- Policy 4.8 – Supporting a Successful and Diverse Retail Sector and Related Facilities and Services: states that the Mayor will support a successful, competitive and diverse retail sector which promotes sustainable access to the goods and services that Londoners need.
- Policy 7.2 – An Inclusive Environment: supports the principles of inclusive design which seeks to ensure that developments can be safely used by all, and are convenient, welcoming and realistic.
- Policy 7.3 – Designing out Crime: confirms that developments should reduce the opportunities for criminal behaviour and contribute to a sense of security without being overbearing or intimidating.
- Policy 7.4 – Local Character: states that developments should have regard to the form, function and structure of an area and should build on the positive elements that can contribute to establishing an enhanced character for the future function of an area.
- Policy 7.8 – Heritage Assets and Archaeology: advises that development should identify value, conserve, restore, re-use and incorporate heritage assets, and should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to their form, scale, materials and architectural detail.

Local Development Plan

5.22 The Local Development Framework for Camden comprises the Camden Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2010), the Camden Development Policies Development Plan Document (DPD) (2010), and the Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) (2013).

5.23 The Core Strategy (2010) provides the vision, objectives and spatial policies to guide development in the Borough up to 2025. The Development Policies and Site Allocations DPDs contribute towards delivering the Core Strategy by setting out detailed planning policies to use for determining planning applications, and by identifying land and buildings for future development, respectively.

5.24 The Policies Map accompanying the statutory development plan identifies the application site as being within 'Camden Town Centre' and the Camden Town Centre Conservation Area.

Core Strategy (2010)

5.25 The following Core Strategy (2010) policies, are considered to be relevant to the determination of the application proposals.

- **CS3 – Other highly accessible areas:** The Council seeks to promote appropriate development in the town centres, such as Camden Town, including shops, food, drink and entertainment uses. Such uses are to be of a suitable scale and character for the area and contribute to the community.
- **CS5 – Managing the Impact of Growth and Development:** The Council will ensure that development protects and enhances the local environment, heritage, and the amenity and quality of life of local communities, whilst also ensuring that the impact of developments on their occupiers and neighbours is fully considered.
- **CS7 – Promoting Camden's centres and shops:** Policy CS7 seeks to promote retail growth across the borough including Camden Town which is the boroughs' biggest centre with the largest range of shops and services. While the north of Camden Town Centre includes the vibrant retail areas surrounding the markets, to the south, including this site, the area contains more traditional 'high street' shops. Policy CS7 seeks to ensure that this part of Camden Town Centre remains primarily in retail use. Shopfronts and signage

should reflect the scale and character of Camden Town Centre and retain the distinct and varied character of the conservations areas.

- **CS14 – Promoting High Quality Places and Conserving our Heritage:** Policy CS14 advises that development should be of the highest standard of design that respects local context and character, and should preserve and enhance Camden’s heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas.

Development Policies (2010)

5.26 The following Development Policies are also considered to be of relevance to the determination of the application proposals:

- **DP12 - Supporting strong centres and managing the impact of food, drink, entertainment and other town centre uses:** Town Centre uses, including shops and markets, will be supported in these centres provided they do not cause harm to the character, amenity, function, vitality and viability of a centre. Proposals should add to the quality and attractiveness of a town centre.
- **DP24 – Securing High Quality Design:** Policy DP24 requires all developments to be of the highest standard of design, and will expect developments to consider, amongst other matters; the character and proportions of the existing building, and where alterations are proposed; the quality of materials to be used, and the provision of visually interesting frontages at street level.
- **DP25 – Conserving Camden’s Heritage:** Policy DP25 aims to protect the character of conservation areas within the Borough. It states that proposals should take account of conservation area statements, appraisals and management plans when assessing applications within conservation areas, and that these will only be permitted within conservation areas if they preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the area.
- **DP30 – Shopfronts:** Policy DP30 requires a high quality design that respects the existing character, architectural and historic merits and design of the building. New shopfronts should complement the design and quality of the neighbouring shops and streetscene. New shopfronts should contribute to a ‘cohesive streetscape appearance’ by retaining a consistent building line. Contemporary shopfront design will be supported in appropriate locations. Views into and out of a shop should be maintained at all times, with solid shutters not considered acceptable.

Other Material Planning Considerations

5.27 Due regard has been given to the following supplementary planning guidance:

- Camden Planning Guidance (CPG 1): Design (2015);
- Camden Planning Guidance (CPG 5): Town Centres, Retail and Employment (2013); and
- Camden Town Conservation Area appraisal and management strategy (2007).

5.28 Regard has also been given to the emerging Draft Camden Local Plan (2015). Although recently submitted for Examination, at the time of writing, the Plan has not been tested and therefore does not form part of the statutory development plan and can only be afforded limited weight.

6.0 HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

Policy

6.1 185 Camden High Street is located in the Camden Town Conservation Area. It is noted as a ‘positive building’ in the Camden Town Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA), and the unit itself is thought to date from the 1920s. The building sits in the Sub-Area 1 of the Conservation Area

and is part of the commercial high street character in this location, described in the CAA as 'busy, noisy, diverse and dynamic'.

The Building

- 6.2 The building has two storeys and three bays. At ground floor is a modern retail shop front, most recently housing a food retail business, with an overly large fascia above. At first floor level are three timber windows of twelve small panes, and above is a flat shelf, supported on consoles, rising to a square pediment with another smaller central shelf on smaller consoles. The building is constructed of brick, painted to the main elevation.

Current Shopfront

- 6.3 The current shopfront, which is slightly inset, is of modern origin, predominantly glazed with plain pilasters to each side and a central double doorway within an aluminium surround. There is no traditional stall riser, but a very shallow riser exists as part of the window surround. Above this, the current fascia signage is attached as a long 'false' fascia to a much wider and dominant integral fascia, which is also modern. In addition to the fascia signage there is an externally lit projecting sign to the right of the fascia.
- 6.4 Camden High Street is architecturally diverse, and buildings range from two to five storeys while fascia and signage heights and scales also vary. This diversity in style is part of the character of the conservation area, but there are cases where a more incongruous feature, such as the wider fascia to 185 Camden High Street, may have a more negative impact.
- 6.5 In the case of 185 Camden High Street, the shop front has no material or historic relationship with its host building, though it does not detract from its positivity; however, the wide fascia does serve to unbalance the proportions of the host building, and has a jarring effect in the streetscape. At best the shop front makes a neutral contribution to the Conservation Area.

Proposed Shopfront

- 6.6 The proposed alterations to the shop front have been designed to reflect both the modernity of the use within, and the aspirations of Wasabi, whilst taking a sympathetic approach to the host building and its character.
- 6.7 The full height glazing at ground floor level will allow removal of the incongruous fascia board which currently exists, and will respond sensitively to the 'eclectic' (as described within the CAA) architectural qualities of the host building. The existing pilasters will be retained and clad in white, and it is proposed that the upper storey of the building be given a simple refurbishment of white paint; this will be a benefit to the wider Conservation Area, providing a much smarter though still dynamic appearance.
- 6.8 It is proposed to apply additional signage to the building, and to retain an illuminated projecting sign at the right hand side of the shop front. At ground floor level, individually illuminated lettering will be applied to the shop window. To the pediment, a circular illuminated sign will be fixed, below the area of the central shelf and consoles. It is considered that although the additional signage will change the appearance of the building, it will fit within its context of commercial vibrancy, and reflect the historic environment present in Sub Area 1 of the Conservation Area.
- 6.9 In relation to national and local policy, the proposal has respect for local context and character, and in line with the requirements of CS14, preserves and enhances the Conservation Area. The proposals also align with development plan policies, specifically DP25, and as per the requirements of the NPPF will cause no harm to the heritage asset of the Conservation Area. Indeed, the general refurbishment of the elevation is viewed as a benefit.

7.0 DESIGN ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 The application site is located with a frontage to Camden High Street, within a streetscene that includes retail, restaurant and entertainment uses within the immediate vicinity. In addition, there are a number of prominent feature buildings surrounding Britannia Junction, and the public realm is characterised by advertisements, traffic controls, pedestrian safety barriers, street furniture, street traders, and historic public conveniences.

- 7.3 The footprint and bulk of the existing building is to be unaltered by these proposals, with the main external changes being made in order to refurbish the building in line with Wasabi's corporate branding.

Shopfront Design

- 7.2 It is proposed to install a new glazed shopfront with full height frameless glazing to the premises, whilst retaining the existing columns to be clad with white staron. It is also proposed to reduce the depth of the oversized fascia panel, to be more in-keeping with neighboring premises. The new reduced height fascia will also be clad with white staron to create a continuity of materials.
- 7.3 A new single leaf frameless glazed entrance door, with brushed stainless steel handle and fittings will also be installed, providing level access to the premises.
- 7.4 The proposed shopfront, by way of its high quality modern appearance and retention of certain 'traditional' features (i.e. the columns and reduced height fascia), will be in-keeping with the character and appearance of neighboring commercial premises, and will ensure views into the interior of the premises are provided to maintain an active frontage in this location, in accordance with Policies DP30.
- 7.5 The proposed entrance door will provide level access to the premises, and will be complete with brushed stainless steel features, to ensure a high quality finish, in accordance with Policies DP24 and DP30.
- 7.6 Overall the modern design and high quality finish and materials will complement the character of the surrounding area and the Camden Town Conservation Area, in accordance with Policies DP24 and DP30 of the Camden Development Policies DPD (2010).
- 7.7 There are also no security shutters proposed and thus, the shopfront is also consistent with the objectives of DP30 specifically in relation to shopfront windows and security.

Advertisements

- 7.8 It is proposed to install 3 no. internally illuminated signs to the exterior of the building. All three illuminated signs are to be lit by discreet internal LED lighting, to ensure that the means of illumination (no greater than 650 cd/m²) is not unduly visible and prominent. The detail and location of each of the signs is set out below.
- 7.8 A circular 'Wasabi' logo sign will be sited on the front elevation of the building, above the first floor window lintel, and will measure 1.6 metres in diameter. The sign will feature a dark green, white and red sushi design against a white background with a light green outer ring.
- 7.9 At street level the 'Wasabi Sushi & Bento' sign will be hung internally behind the glazed shopfront, with dimensions of 1.2 metres (W) by 0.8 metres (H). It is also proposed to install 1 no. internally-illuminated circular projecting sign with the Wasabi 'sushi' logo. The sign will be 0.6 metres in diameter and project 0.72 metres from the shopfront. It is comprised of an aluminum frame with Perspex to either side that will feature a dark green, white and red sushi design against a white background with a light green outer ring. The proposed signage matches similar projecting signs in the existing streetscene.
- 7.11 The advertisements proposed will not result in a proliferation of signage to the detriment of the character and appearance of the surrounding area and the advertisements will create a lively atmosphere of colour, variety and interest, and thus make a positive contribution to the visual environment.
- 7.12 The proposed signage will not be detrimental to highway, safety or residential amenity and is considered acceptable in terms of scale, design, appearance and materials.
- 7.13 In addition, all of the proposed signage would be unobtrusive within the street scene and would preserve the character and appearance of the Camden Town Conservation Area, in accordance with Policy DP25 of the Camden Local Development Policies (2010).

7.14 By virtue of the relationship between the unit and the street scene, the form of development within the surrounding area and the size, scale, and design of the advertisements, the proposal will not appear incongruous, and therefore will not result in a detrimental visual impact on the character and appearance of the streetscene or conservation area. It is therefore considered that the proposal complies with Camden's Local Development Plan.

8.0 ACCESS ASSESSMENT

8.1 The planning application seeks several minor alterations/improvements to the existing access arrangements to the building that constitute external alterations. However, it does not propose to alter any vehicular access/egress to the site from a public highway.

8.2 The existing entry door will be removed and a new frameless glazed single entrance door installed, which will allow level access from the street.

9.0 CONCLUSIONS

9.1 The proposal accords with the relevant national, regional and local planning policy and guidance and will:

- Be of an appropriate design, using suitable materials which will seek to preserve and enhance the conservation area;
- Not have an adverse impact on highway, safety or residential amenities; and
- Improve access arrangements for pedestrians including those with disabilities.

10.2 To conclude, the proposed shopfront alterations to 185 Camden High Street will not only improve the general appearance of the building but will assist in enhancing the general appearance of the surrounding area.

10.4 Taking account that the proposal accords with the pertinent planning policy and guidance and, seeks to improve the overall appearance and commercial viability of the premises, we believe that there is no principal objection to the proposals.