

61 CAMDEN HIGH STREET

LONDON

NW1 7JL

PLANNING AND HERITAGE STATEMENT

FEBRUARY 2020



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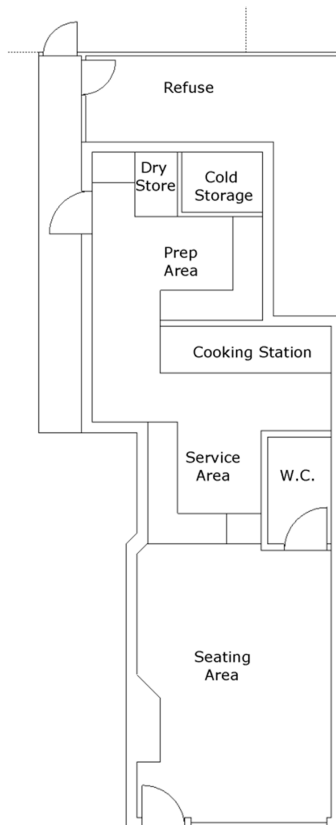
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Ordnance survey licence 100057356 (if applicable).

1.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 1.1 The application proposes the change of use from a vacant pawn broker (sui generis) to a restaurant / takeaway (Use Class A3/A5).
- 1.2 The proposed hours of trade are 11am to 11pm throughout the week.



2.0 REASONS FOR THE PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The unit is one of a terrace of commercial premises at ground floor level with residential and office uses above. It is currently not trading, but was most recently run as The Money Shop, a pawn broker. The 2015 changes to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) moved uses that offer short-term high interest loans from Use Class A2 into sui generis classification; albeit such previous A2 uses retain the permitted changes of use and prior approval options that were available previously.
- 2.2 The unit is of a fair size and is well located to complement the shopping function of this parade of shops, by providing a quality restaurant offering around 20 covers at any one time, with takeaway service also available. The hours of operation will respect the surrounding environment; and are proposed from 11am until 11pm.
- 2.3 It has long been accepted that shopping is much about the experience as the goods that are on offer and facilities to eat provide an added incentive for customers to visit their local shops rather than overly rely on internet deliveries, the “click vs brick” consideration.

3.0 THE SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA – CONTEXT OF DEVELOPMENT

3.1 The application site is located on the west side of Camden High Street in a busy run of shops that stretch between Camden Town and Mannington Town Underground Stations and beyond.

3.2 A desk based survey of the parade, between Miller Street and Delancey Street, was undertaken using the latest imagery of Google Streetview (July 2019); in summary the findings were:

Address	Occupier July 2017	Use Class
57 Camden High Street	Suits Direct	A1
59 Camden High Street	Camden Beauty Spa	A1/D1
61 Camden High Street	Money Shop	SG
63 Camden High Street	Camden Vape	A1
65 Camden High Street	British Heart Foundation	A1
67 Camden High Street	Ryness	A1
67A Camden High Street	7 Day Store	A1
69 Camden High Street	42 Beans	A1
71 Camden High Street	Mr Leo	A1
73 Camden High Street	Scope	A1
75 Camden High Street	Kodak Express	A1
77 Camden High Street	Camden Dental Centre	D1
79 Camden High Street	White Kitchen	A3/A5
81 Camden High Street	Cancer Research UK	A1
83-85 Camden High Street	Paddy Power	SG
87 Camden High Street	Best One	A1

89 Camden High Street	Oxfam	A1
97 Camden High Street	Vacant	A2
99 Camden High Street	Mei Leaf	A1
103-105 Camden High Street	AcuMedic	D1
107 Camden High Street	Cashino	SG
109 Camden High Street	Camden Maharani	A3
111-113 Camden High Street	The Blues Kitchen	A3/A4

3.3 Therefore it can be concluded that the character of the parade whilst obviously commercial in nature has a very strong retail presence supported by other functions toward the north, such as Camden Maharani and The Blues Kitchen.

3.4 This stretch of shops falls within the Primary Shopping Frontage and a look at the Use Class A1 offerings reveals a high percentage of charity shops and Use Class D1 clinical services.

4.0 PLANNING STATEMENT

4.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that applications for planning permission must be determined with regard to the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Since 27 March 2012, all Development Plan policies should be in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). It is therefore appropriate to consider the development proposals compliance with the NPPF as well as the Development Plan.

National Policy

4.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was first published on the 27th March 2012 prior to being superseded entirely in July 2018. This document sets out the Government's objectives for the planning system, placing sustainability at the heart of national planning policy and explaining that it should be considered as a golden thread running through decision making.

4.3 The NPPF puts an emphasis on the importance of supporting economic growth and ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to encourage growth and not to act as an impediment. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth through the planning system.

4.4 The NPPF also states that local planning authorities should promote competitive town centre environments recognising the importance of supporting their vitality. It states that decisions should aim to create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder and the fear of crime do not undermine community cohesion, which increased natural surveillance provides.

4.5 The proposal seeks to replace an unused sui generis pawn broker with a restaurant and takeaway focusing on a healthier product using steam grilled chicken and employing an anticipated six full-time employees with scope for the same number of part-time opportunities. Adding to the local economy and arguably supporting more jobs than a retail operator could and certainly more than The Money Shop would have been capable.

4.6 The proposed open hours are 11am until 11pm through the week. This would give the restaurant the flexibility and presence to establish itself. It is not expected that footfall would significantly increase, but nonetheless having an active unit adds to natural surveillance and has been found to decrease the fear of crime whilst the takeaway services would similarly encourage footfall to this part of Camden High Street.

Local Policy

- 4.7 The Camden Local Plan was adopted in 2017, it sets out the vision for the city and the policy criteria for applications. The Local Plan acknowledges that it *“will promote the most efficient use of Camden’s land and buildings while also seeking to improve the quality of our environment, protect the amenity of occupiers and neighbours and meet its other planning objectives. It is important that development delivers not only homes, but also employment space together with the services and facilities that are needed to maintain and create healthy and sustainable communities where nobody gets left behind and everyone has a chance to succeed.”*.
- 4.8 The application site is located within a defined primary frontage. Policy TC2 Camden’s centres and other shopping areas specifies that planning decisions will seek to *“protect the primary frontages as locations with a high proportion of shops (A1) in order to maintain the retail function of the centre”*. However, in this case the existing percentage of the A1 units in this collection of shops is around 60% retail but nonetheless the proposal does not result in the loss of an A1 unit and therefore there is a neutral impact resulting from the scheme in this regard.
- 4.9 The restaurant will retain an active frontage and is considered to enhance the vitality of the area by introducing greater choice. In the wider area there are some eateries, but the proposal is not considered to conflict with those uses and certainly can only be considered to compliment the services on offer within the parade it is located. Policy D1 states that part of good design is promoting healthy choices and therefore is to be encouraged.
- 4.10 The cooking process of steam grilled chicken by comparison to other cuisine creates far less odour than other *“fast food”* and is much healthier, but nevertheless an appropriate extraction system will be fitted with a management plan for filter servicing. This will exit to the rear and go through the rear building before emitting at the height of the flat roof there. The distance to sensitive neighbouring premises is considered to be more than adequate to ensure that there is no impact on amenity through odour, whilst the extraction equipment itself will be internal and therefore will not present as a noise nuisance.
- 4.11 The proposed change of use is considered to meet the policy requirements within the Local Development Plan when taken as a whole.

5.0 HERITAGE STATEMENT

5.1 The site is located within the Camden Town Conservation Area. The surrounding area is largely characterised by commercial properties with residential streets common to the west.

5.2 The National Planning Policy Framework states that applications should describe the significance of any asset affected by the proposal. As set out in the Camden Town Conservation Area Appraisal:

“The commercial sub area consists of a traditional wide shopping street linking the busy junction at Mornington Crescent to the eclectic and lively town centre at the heart of Camden Town. The focus of Camden Town is Britannia Junction which acts as a hub and an important interchange, with busy, noisy, dynamic and diverse characteristics. This retail and commercial area is powerfully urban in character with few openings between the continuous building lines and an absence of public open spaces and soft landscaping. Within this part of the Conservation Area there are two underground stations, an array of banks, restaurants, street markets, shops and stalls, signs and vehicles all existing within an historic architectural streetscape. The buildings reflect the diverse and changing architectural styles over the last two hundred years. Terraces of flat fronted early to mid 19th century houses now fronted by shops, mid Victorian stucco terraces, Victorian Gothic buildings, late Victorian and Edwardian red brick parades four and five storeys high with decorative gables, imposing banks, places of entertainment and public houses occupying key focal sites, and 20th century buildings all contribute to the wide ranging variety of architectural styles.”

5.3 More specifically for Camden High Street it states:

“The businesses at the southern end of the High Street have seen some economic decline over the last thirty years or so, while the more northern part around Britannia Junction and towards the canal have generally prospered. As a result, in the southern part a small number of properties are empty, and several are not occupied on their upper floors.”

5.4 In keeping the unit in operational use the LPA can be confident that the state of the building will not fall into a state of disrepair.

5.5 Within the terrace of 49-61 Camden High Street the appraisal considers that these buildings are positive contributors to the Conservation Area. These were originally high Victorian brick houses and despite the application site (and neighbouring no.59) being painted over are collectively still considered to be a good example of structural polychromy.

- 5.5 The NPPF describes the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation, as well as attracting new development that makes a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. The reuse of these premises will see investment into the building and prevent it falling into a state of deterioration.
- 5.6 The development would therefore not have an adverse impact on the character of the building or the CA as a whole. By introducing a new use it is considered to have a neutral impact in terms of the significance of the CA. As the proposal would not have an adverse impact it is policy compliant throughout the Local Development Plan generally.

6.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

- 6.1 This statement has sought to highlight the benefits of granting the change of use to an A3/A5 unit. The relevant policies have been analysed and even when more stringent criteria involving the loss of A1 have been assessed it is considered they have all been satisfied.
- 6.2 The applicant is willing to discuss any conditions that the council may have so that a positive recommendation can be achieved.