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Supporting Camden's Communities

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Chapter



Improving health and well-being

10.1 Planning can play a pivotal role in influencing key health determinants.

10.2 In Camden, many people are living in poor health for many years of their lives, and the gap in healthy life expectancy between the poorest and richest parts of the borough continues to widen. On average, those living in the most deprived areas spend 20 years of their life living in poor health and die around 10 years earlier than those living in the least deprived areas.

10.3 We know that health is intrinsically linked to early life experience, education, employment, housing, leisure, and the local environment – otherwise known as the social determinants of health. These are the social, cultural, economic and environmental factors that shape the conditions in which we live.

10.4 This policy seeks to ensure that development in the borough considers local issues relating to health and well-being at an early stage in the planning process in order to positively improve outcomes for the people of Camden.

Policy SC1

Improving Health and Well-being

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- A.** The Council will continue to work closely with its partners to improve the physical and mental health and well-being of all people who live, work in, study in and visit Camden, and reduce health inequalities.
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- B.** To support healthier communities and reduce health inequalities in Camden the Council will expect development to:
1. be designed to support good health and well-being, minimise adverse impacts on health and well-being, and reduce health inequalities;
 2. provide a healthy living and working environment;
 3. support healthy and active lifestyles;
 4. be safe and accessible for all;
 5. promote social and economic inclusion; and
 6. contribute towards the provision of new or improved health facilities, in line with the North Central London's Integrated Care System requirements, where required.
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- C.** Health Impact Assessments must be undertaken for all major applications; for non-major applications that the Council considers would have the potential to give rise to significant adverse health impacts; and for non-major applications involving sensitive uses.
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- D.** Health Impact Assessments should be undertaken at an early stage in the design process and should make clear that the design of the proposed development makes the healthiest choice the easiest choice.
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10.5 The Council's ambition is to make Camden the very best place to start well, live well and age well. To support this ambition the Council has produced the Camden Health and Well-being Strategy 2022 – 2030. The strategy sets out the shared principles, long term ambitions and short term priorities of the Council for improving health and well-being and reducing health inequalities.

10.6 Central to the Council's strategy is the 'population health' approach, which seeks to improve physical and mental health, promote well-being and reduce health inequalities across an entire population. This approach focuses on the social determinants of health and well-being and highlights the importance of creating a collective sense of responsibility across organisations and within communities to reduce inequalities and promote good health.

10.7 The Local Plan has a significant role to play in delivering the Council's Health and Well-being Strategy. Health considerations are therefore integrated into all aspects of this Plan and many measures set out in other policies will play a part in promoting population health and well-being and addressing health inequalities, for example by:

- promoting good quality, well designed, affordable and accessible housing to reduce overcrowding, improve living conditions and support health and well-being (Policies D1 (Achieving Design Excellence), D3 (Design of Housing), H4 (Maximising the Supply of Affordable Housing) and H6 (Housing Choice and Mix);
- requiring developments to contribute to the mitigation of and adaption to climate change, to reduce the impact of extreme weather events such as flooding and heatwaves on health (Policies CC1 – CC11 in Chapter 8 (Responding to Climate Change));
- ensuring that buildings and places are designed to promote healthy behaviours and be inclusive and accessible to support the needs of different groups in Camden (Policies DS1 (Delivering Healthy and Sustainable Development), D1 (Achieving Design Excellence), SC1 (Improving Health and Well-being) and SC2 (Access for All);

- protecting existing, and requiring the provision of new, social infrastructure to support communities, aid integration and reduce loneliness (Policy SC3 Social and Community Infrastructure);
- promoting healthy lifestyles, increased physical activity and improved mental health through the design of new development (Policies DS1 (Delivering Healthy and Sustainable development), SC1 (Improving Health and Well-being and D1 (Achieving Design Excellence));
- protecting existing and securing the provision of new and enhanced open space, play and sports facilities (Policies SC3 (Social and Community infrastructure) and SC4 (Open Space));
- securing investment in active travel (Policies T1 (Safe, Healthy and Sustainable Transport) and T2 (Prioritising Walking, Wheeling, and Cycling));
- ensuring that developments are designed to reduce crime and the fear of crime, and improve community safety (Policy A2 (Safety and Security));
- promoting a stronger local economy, recognising the links between income and health (Policy IE1 (Growing a Successful and Inclusive Economy));
- improving and creating better access to education, training and employment (Policy IE1 (Growing a Successful and Inclusive Economy));
- supporting healthy eating by improving access to healthier food choices and increasing opportunities for food growing (Policies SC5 (Food Growing) and IE7 (Hot Food Takeaways)); and
- managing the impact of development on health (Policy SC1 (Improving Health and Well-being) and reducing exposure to poor air quality with the aim of improving health (Policy A3 (Air Quality)).

Development and health

10.8 The creation of healthy environments will be a key consideration for the Council when assessing planning applications and the Council will expect applicants to take into account the needs of different groups when designing schemes to ensure they meet the needs of Camden's diverse communities and are inclusive and accessible.

10.9 New development has the potential to support significant improvements in health, but can also have considerable adverse impacts on health if it is inappropriately located, designed, constructed and/or operated.

10.10 To ensure that development promotes and positively contributes to a healthy living environment, development will be expected to consider both positive and negative health impacts at an early stage, prior to the submission of a planning application, with actions to enhance positive impacts and mitigate negative impacts identified. Health Impact Assessments will be an important tool for this.

Health impact assessments

10.11 A Health Impact Assessment (HIA) helps to ensure that health and well-being is properly considered as part of the planning process. The scope of a HIA will vary depending on the size of the development and its location. A HIA should identify the likely health impacts of a development and include measures to improve health outcomes and address negative effects and inequalities. The HIA should also include evidence to demonstrate that the design of the proposed development makes the healthiest choice the easiest choice.

10.12 Health Impact Assessments should be undertaken for all major applications. Major applications are regarded as developments of 10 or more homes (including student housing) or a non-residential development with a floorspace of 1,000 sqm or more. For mixed use developments,

major developments are regarded as a proportional combination of homes and non-residential floorspace. HIAs for developments of 100 homes or more, including student housing, will be expected to include details of the engagement they have undertaken with local health and community stakeholders and how their input has influenced the development. Further information on HIAs can be found in Camden Planning Guidance on Amenity and the Mayor's Social Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document, and developers will be expected to have due regard to this.

10.13 Health Impact Assessments will also be required for non-major applications considered to have the potential to give rise to significant adverse health impacts and for non-major developments involving sensitive uses such as education, health, leisure or community facilities, publicly accessible open space, hot food take aways, betting shops and in areas where air pollution and noise issues are particularly prevalent.

10.14 Health Impact Assessments should be undertaken at an early stage in the design process and the results should be used to refine and inform the design and layout of the proposed development, to maximise the positive impacts, and minimise and mitigate adverse impacts on the health and well-being of both the existing and future population. Health Impact Assessments should make clear that the design of the proposed development makes the healthiest choice the easiest choice. Where recommendations are made in a Health Impact Assessment, these will be secured by planning condition.

10.15 As part of the process of undertaking a Health Impact Assessment, applications will be expected to consider potential suicide risks associated with the built environment, particularly in relation to tall buildings and structures, in accordance with Policy A2 (Safety and Security).

Health facilities

10.16 The North Central London Integrated Care System (NCL ICS) covers five boroughs; Camden, Islington, Barnet, Enfield and Haringey. It brings together local health and care organisations, local Councils and the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector to work in joined-up ways to improve health outcomes for residents and tackle inequalities that currently exist. Within the Integrated Care System an estates team is responsible for all NHS health care buildings and facilities and must be consulted on any proposals for new or replacement public health care buildings in Camden.

10.17 Policy DM1 (Delivery and Monitoring) and the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan set out the infrastructure requirements for the borough over the Plan period, including many that relate to improving health.

10.18 Policy SC3 (Social and Community Infrastructure) specifically states that we will resist the loss of community facilities (which includes health facilities), unless a replacement facility that meets the needs of the community is provided, or where evidence demonstrates that the facility, or similar facility, is no longer required.

10.19 We will seek contributions towards supporting existing or providing for new health facilities from developments which create an additional need for health services. In assessing additional need, the Council and NHS partners will use the NHS London Healthy Urban Development Unit's Planning Contributions Model to assess the health service requirements and cost impacts of new residential developments. We will also expect applicants to liaise with NHS partners early on in the design process to identify what mitigation is required in particular circumstances.



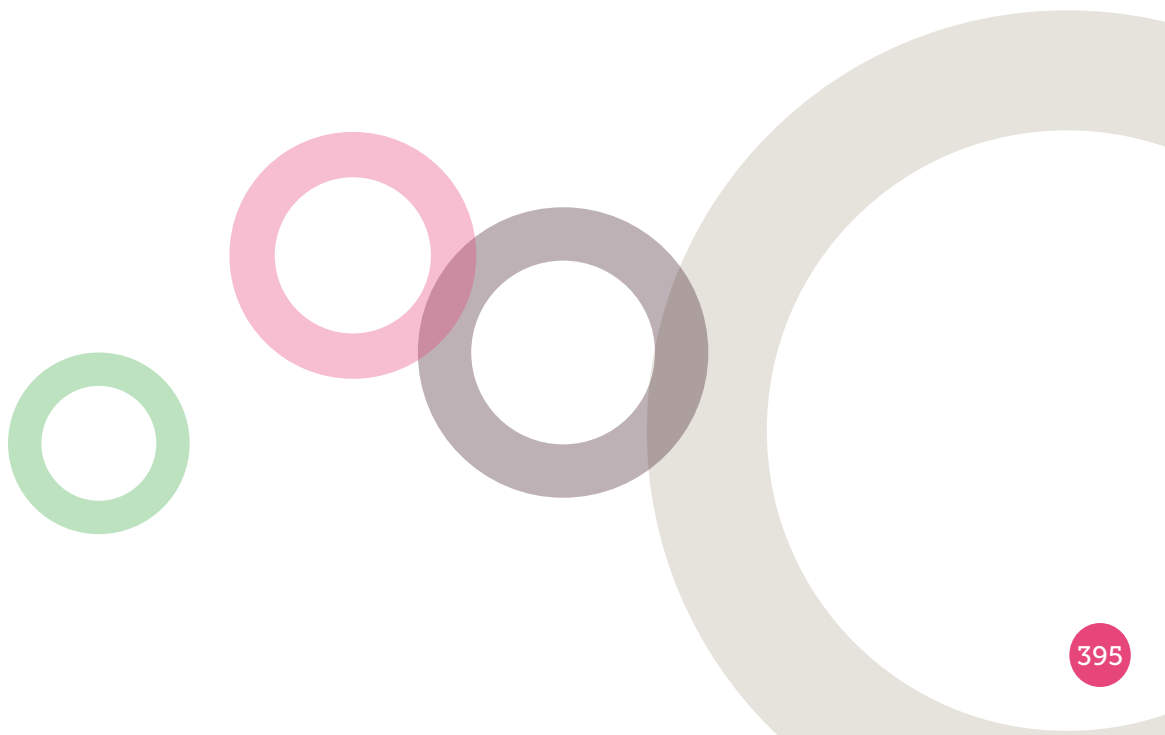


Access for all

10.20 Good access and inclusion benefits everyone. However, many people are disadvantaged by poor access to facilities, buildings and spaces, with d/Deaf and disabled people, neurodiverse people and older people particularly affected.

10.21 The Council has committed to work towards being an Accessible and Friendly Camden. This builds on the World Health Organisations Age-Friendly Communities approach and aims to benefit all those who, irrespective of label, or identity, feel excluded from living a good life in Camden.

10.22 For planning this means incorporating accessible and friendly design principles, such as better lighting and welcoming places to rest, making public spaces comfortable for residents and fostering positive connections between people of all ages.



Policy SC2

Access for All

- A.** The Council will seek to ensure that developments are designed to promote access and inclusion, and that the barriers which prevent everyone from accessing facilities and opportunities are removed. The Council will:
1. expect all buildings and places to meet the highest practicable standards of accessible and inclusive design so they can be used safely, easily and with dignity by all in accordance with Policy D1 (Achieving Design Excellence) and Policy SC3 (Social and Community Infrastructure);
 2. require accessible and adaptable housing to be provided in accordance with Policy D3 (Design of Housing);
 3. expect housing and mixed use development schemes to incorporate dementia friendly measures;
 4. expect new social and community infrastructure to be located where it is easily accessible to those who will be using it, in accordance with Policy SC3 (Social and Community Infrastructure);
 5. expect streets, public spaces, and routes between buildings to be designed to be fully accessible, with clear, easy to read signage in accordance with Policy T1 (Safe, Healthy and Sustainable Transport) and Policy T2 (Prioritising Walking, Wheeling and Cycling);
 6. expect development to avoid street clutter and ensure that street furniture, including phone boxes and advertisements, is located to allow the unobstructed movement of people, wheelchairs, mobility scooters and pushchairs;
 7. expect major developments, and those providing new public space, to consider the sensory needs of neurodiverse people and where appropriate make provision for quiet areas that are safe, welcoming and accessible;
 8. ensure that water fountains and free publicly accessible toilets suitable for a range of users, including d/Deaf, disabled and blind people, are provided, where appropriate, in new or enhanced open spaces and public places;
 9. expect play areas to be designed and constructed to meet the physical and sensory needs of d/Deaf, disabled, blind and neurodiverse children and teenagers;
 10. encourage the provision of public transport in Camden that is easily accessible to everyone in accordance with Policy T3 (Public Transport); and
 11. secure car parking for disabled people in accordance with Policy T5 (Parking and Car Free Development).
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Accessible buildings

10.23 Many people experience difficulties in using buildings as their access needs are either ignored or considered too late in the development process to ensure inclusive design principals are included.

10.24 The Council will expect all buildings to meet the highest practicable standards of accessible and inclusive design so they can be used safely, easily and with dignity by all. As accessibility is influenced by perception, as well as physical factors, buildings should also be designed to appear, as well as be, accessible.

10.25 Appendix 2 sets out a number of measures which, if implemented successfully, should create an inclusive and accessible environment.

10.26 Access arrangements should be considered and addressed from the beginning of the design process as they are an integral aspect of building design. Overcoming access barriers at a later stage in the project can result in a building or space that is not inclusive and may be inaccessible to many people.

10.27 We will require a Design and Access Statement for new developments in accordance with D1 (Achieving Design Excellence) to show how the principles of inclusive design, including meeting the specific needs of d/Deaf people, disabled people, blind people and neurodiverse people, have been integrated into the proposed development and how inclusion will be maintained and managed.

10.28 The Council will balance the requirement to provide access with the interests of conservation and preservation. We will seek sensitive and creative design solutions to achieve access for all, to and within listed buildings. Policy D5 (Historic Environment) sets out our detailed approach to development affecting listed buildings and other heritage assets.

Streets and places

10.29 Making sure that people can move through streets and places easily and safely is as important as making buildings themselves accessible. The Council will therefore expect improvements to be delivered for all users, recognising the diverse needs of different groups, to ensure good access and circulation arrangements, including improvements to existing routes, surfaces and footways.

10.30 In recognition of Camden's growing older population, the Council also strongly encourages the inclusion of dementia friendly design. Design can have an impact on the ease with which people with dementia are able to navigate around or through an area by lighting (avoiding deep shadows), materials, clear signage, distinctive buildings and use of colour.

10.31 As part of this, care should be taken to ensure that routes around buildings are clear and free from obstruction, especially to the entrance. Any obstructions should be made clear and avoidable, for example by changes in surface texture. The Council's approach to delivering safe, healthy and sustainable transport and prioritising walking, wheeling and cycling is set out in policies T1 and T2 of the Local Plan. The Camden Streetscape Design Manual and Camden Planning Guidance on Design also provide further guidance on this issue and developers will be expected to have due regard to this.

Public toilets

10.32 Public toilets are a vital facility and are especially important for certain groups including disabled people, older people, people with babies and young children, pregnant women and people with particular health conditions. Access to public toilets gives people more confidence to move around the borough and spend more time in a place or space.

10.33 The Local Plan safeguards public toilets as 'social and community infrastructure' in accordance with Policy SC3 (Social and Community Infrastructure).

10.34 The Plan promotes the provision of free, publicly accessible toilets suitable for a range of users in new or enhanced social and community infrastructure and open spaces, in accordance with Policy SC2 (Access for All), Policy SC3 (Social and Community Infrastructure), Policy SC4 (Open Space) and Policy D1 (Achieving Design Excellence).

10.35 The London Plan requires large-scale development, defined as being those that are open to the public, and large areas of public realm, to provide and secure the future management of free publicly accessible toilets suitable for a range of users, and free 'Changing Places' toilets. The Council will therefore seek the provision of public toilets in accordance with the London Plan and have identified specific site allocations where public toilets will be sought.

Public transport

10.36 The Council aims to increase the attractiveness of public transport by creating networks which make people feel safe, link to all parts of the borough and enable use by everyone including disabled people. The provision of public transport allows independence in travel choices and is vital to those without access to, or without the means to use, a car. The Council's approach to supporting the provision of public transport in Camden is set out in Policy T3 (Public Transport).

Parking

10.37 While the Council encourages the use of public transport and promotes car-free schemes in line with sustainable development objectives, we recognise that some disabled people rely on private motorised transport. We will therefore require relevant planning applications to demonstrate how the needs of disabled drivers have been addressed. Where appropriate, the Council will support provision of disabled parking and drop-off facilities which are integrated with public transport facilities. The Council's approach to parking is set out in Policy T5 (Parking and Car Free Development).

Accessible homes

10.38 The Council believes that new housing should allow less mobile residents to live as independently as possible. Accessible homes give them greater choice about where to live and mean people are less likely to need to move when they become less mobile. The Council's approach to accessible and adaptable dwellings and wheelchair user dwellings is set out in Policy D3 (Design of Housing) and in Camden Planning Guidance on housing. Developers will be expected to have due regard to these.





Social and community infrastructure

10.39 Social and community infrastructure can help to enhance quality of life and social cohesion, improve personal health and well-being, reduce social isolation, instil a sense of community identity and belonging, and help reduce crime and anti-social behaviour.

10.40 The term “social and community infrastructure” in this section refers to a wide range of infrastructure that provides a service to the community. This includes:

- childcare;
- education;
- adult learning and training;
- healthcare;
- emergency services including police stations;
- civic uses;
- youth provision;
- laundrettes;
- community halls and meeting places for the principal use of the local community;
- libraries;
- places of worship;
- play spaces;
- public toilets;
- indoor and outdoor sports and recreation facilities;
- public houses (see Policy C4 (Public Houses)); and
- cemeteries, crematoria and burial spaces.

10.41 This list is not intended to be exhaustive and other facilities may also be considered to provide social and community infrastructure.

10.42 Policy SC3 sets out the Council’s approach to the protection and provision of social and community infrastructure in Camden. A list of social and community infrastructure projects to be delivered to support development in Camden is set out in the Council’s Infrastructure Delivery Plan. Area and site-specific infrastructure needs are also set out in the Plan’s area-based policies and site allocation policies, and in other Development Plan Documents, Neighbourhood Plans and Area Frameworks.

Policy SC3

Social and Community Infrastructure

- A.** The Council will work with its partners to ensure that social and community infrastructure is developed and modernised to meet the changing needs of Camden's communities and support the delivery of services.
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Provision of new or improved Social and Community Infrastructure

- B.** The Council will seek planning obligations to secure contributions towards new and improved social and community facilities and services to mitigate the impact of development.
- C.** The Council will support the provision of new, improved and extended social and community infrastructure where proposals:
1. meet the needs of the intended users and promote community integration and inclusion;
 2. are designed to be safe, inclusive, welcoming and accessible for all in accordance with Policy SC2 (Access for All) and Policy D1 (Achieving Design Excellence);
 3. do not have an unacceptable impact on amenity in accordance with Policy A1 (Protecting Amenity). Proposals that may have a significant impact on the amenity of neighbours should be accompanied by a community use plan;
 4. satisfactorily address the impacts of changes to the balance and mix of uses in the area, including the cumulative impact of schemes with planning permission or awaiting determination;
 5. maximise opportunities for shared use and co-location of facilities, where practical;
 6. are accessible to the community they are intended to serve by sustainable modes of travel;
 7. provide free, publicly accessible toilets (including Changing Places toilets, where appropriate), baby change, Wi-Fi and drinking water facilities, where practical; and
 8. can demonstrate to the Council that funding arrangements are secured for the future maintenance and management of the facility.
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Policy SC3

Social and Community Infrastructure

Protection of existing Social and Community Infrastructure

- D.** To safeguard social and community infrastructure in Camden, the Council will:
1. ensure existing social and community infrastructure is retained, recognising their benefit to the community, including protected groups, unless:
 - a. a replacement facility is provided. Any facility must be of at least equivalent quality, quantity and accessibility to that of the existing facility, and must meet the needs of the local population, or its current, or intended users; or
 - b. it can clearly be demonstrated to the Council's satisfaction that the existing facility is no longer required on site. The Council will expect the developer to provide marketing and vacancy evidence for a 12 month period to assess continued demand for the existing use and all other suitable social and community infrastructure uses that could be accommodated on the site. Where it has been demonstrated to the Council's satisfaction there is no reasonable prospect of a social or community use, then our preferred alternative will be the maximum viable amount of affordable housing.
 2. take into account listing or nomination of 'Assets of Community Value' as a material planning consideration.
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Meeting the need for community infrastructure

10.43 It is important that new development does not place unacceptable pressure on existing community facilities and that there is sufficient provision to support new residents. It is also recognised that some community facilities serve a catchment extending outside the borough boundary and that the needs of residents in adjoining boroughs will also need to be considered, where appropriate.

10.44 The Council will seek section 106 planning obligations, where necessary, to ensure that the additional demand a development places on existing community infrastructure and services is met. When using Section 106 agreements, the Council will take into account viability as a factor in determining the types of facilities or services that are required and the timeframe in which these can be delivered.

Provision of new, improved or extended social infrastructure

Meeting the needs of the intended users and wider community

10.45 Providers of new, improved or extended social and community infrastructure are encouraged to engage early in the development process with ward members and local communities, including any Neighbourhood Forums covering the area. This ensures that local people can meaningfully input into a scheme's development and that new provision meets the needs of both the intended users and the wider community. The process undertaken should be detailed in the Design and Access Statement accompanying the planning application. Further guidance on Design and Access Statements is set out in the supporting text to Policy D1 (Achieving Design Excellence) and in Camden Planning Guidance on Design. Developers will be expected to have due regard to these.

Design for all

10.46 Where new floorspace is provided, applicants should submit plans showing the proposed design, layout and fit out as part of the planning application, unless the Council agrees that this is not required. Plans should demonstrate that the development achieves the highest practical standards of accessibility, safety and inclusion and provides a welcoming environment for all. For further information on accessibility and safety please see Policy SC2 (Access for All), Policy D1 (Achieving Design Excellence), Policy A2 (Safety and Security), and Camden Planning Guidance on Design and on Access for All. Developers will be expected to have due regard to these.

10.47 Some community facilities offer particular support and safe environments for protected groups and/or communities both in Camden and the wider area. However, a range of barriers can prevent protected groups and communities from accessing social and community infrastructure, for example sports and leisure facilities. Planning and design have an important role in addressing these barriers and ensuring that new developments create environments that are welcoming, inclusive and accessible for all.

10.48 Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council is required to assess the impact of policies against the 'protected characteristics' of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion, sex/gender and sexual orientation. The Council will therefore expect proposals for new social and community infrastructure to take into account the needs of these protected groups, as part of the design of the scheme, to ensure that the development meets the needs of all.

Impact on amenity

10.49 The scale and intensity of the use of some social and community facilities can lead to adverse impacts on residential amenity. This is principally related to the movement of large numbers of people at certain times of day, which can give rise to impacts such as noise and air pollution, and create pressure on the transport system. Proposals that may have a significant impact on the amenity of neighbours should be accompanied by a community use plan, detailing the use and a list of the activities proposed; for example, services of worship, clubs and meetings, and the likely number of people attending, the number of staff, proposed hours of operation and any use management measures proposed.

Balance and mix of uses in the area

10.50 The Council will ensure schemes satisfactorily address the impacts of changes to the balance and mix of uses in the area, including the cumulative impact of schemes with planning permission or awaiting determination. Further guidance on managing impact on amenity is set out in Policy A1 (Protecting Amenity) and Camden Planning Guidance on Amenity, and developers will be expected to have due regard to this. Hampstead and Belsize Park have a very high concentration of schools where significant issues exist concerning the ‘school run’. The Council will refuse applications for new, or the expansion of existing, schools in these areas, unless it can be demonstrated that the number of traffic movements will not increase, in accordance with Policy A1 (Protecting Amenity) and T1 (Safe, Healthy and Sustainable Transport).

Shared use and co-location of facilities

10.51 To help sustain and improve access to community facilities for Camden residents, the Council will expect applicants to fully assess opportunities to co-locate different services or activities in one site or premises. The Council will also seek opportunities to improve access to facilities through agreements allowing the shared use of a facility by the wider community or increased hours of community access where this is practical. This provides a cost-effective, and sometimes the only viable, means of addressing deficiencies in provision and reduces the need to

travel. For sports facilities, the Council will expect consideration to be given to the programming provided on the site in order to maximise sports development outcomes for the borough (e.g. improved access for local clubs).

Accessibility

10.52 The Council will assess the accessibility of a new or extended facility for its intended users based on the evidence provided in the Design and Access Statement that should accompany the planning application.

Facilities

10.53 To meet the needs of Camden’s diverse communities, the Council will expect social and community facilities to, where practicable, provide accessible toilets (including Changing Places toilets where appropriate), baby change facilities, Wi-Fi and drinking water. These facilities should be free to use and publicly accessible.

10.54 Changing places toilets are larger than standard accessible toilets with extra features and more space to meet users’ needs. Changing Places toilets give severely disabled people and their families the opportunity to visit public places which they otherwise would not be able to and can therefore make a significant difference to their quality of life.

Maintenance and future funding

10.55 The sustainability of the funding arrangements for new community facilities, including maintenance and management, is a serious concern. The Council will seek assurances that floorspace will be used by community groups in perpetuity and will negotiate the provision of subsidised rents where this is necessary to ensure that a facility meets its intended needs. Where the Council is unable to enter into an agreement to meet the ongoing revenue costs of a facility itself, we will expect the applicant to demonstrate how the future of the facility will be secured.

Safeguarding community facilities

10.56 Community facilities are vulnerable to pressure from uses which attract higher land values and once they are lost cannot easily be replaced. The Council will seek the retention of community facilities except in defined circumstances. This includes where there is suitable replacement provision secured through the use of a planning obligation. We will assess whether the accessibility of the replacement provision satisfactorily addresses the needs of the facility's users and how this addresses relevant plans or programmes of re-provision of public sector bodies. In exceptional cases, the Council may seek a financial contribution based on the cost of providing a replacement facility. The Council will expect replacement facilities to be of a sufficient size and design quality to facilitate the successful operation of the community use.

10.57 There may also be circumstances where a community use, either wholly or in part, is no longer required in its current use. In this instance, the applicant will be expected to demonstrate to the Council's satisfaction that the loss of the facility would neither create nor add to a shortfall in provision for the existing community use and, if it would not, that the facility is unable to address a need for any other community use in the local area. The Council will require marketing and vacancy evidence covering a 12 month period to show that the premises have been offered at a reasonable charge to community groups or voluntary organisations. The Council has set out further details in Camden Planning Guidance on community uses, leisure facilities and pubs, and developers will be expected to have due regard to this. The loss of a facility may also be acceptable where this forms part of an asset management strategy of a public or voluntary body and the loss is necessary to allow the service to continue operating successfully, for example where a facility is underused or no longer fit for purpose.

10.58 Where an alternative community use cannot be found for the existing facility, the Council will seek the provision of affordable housing as its preferred alternative use. Community facilities generally have a relatively low capital value compared with housing sites. Given this, we will seek the maximum reasonable amount of affordable housing in accordance with Policy H4 (Maximising the Supply

of Affordable Housing), having regard to financial viability. We will expect the proportion of affordable housing to reflect the value of the development site in its former community use.

Laundrettes

10.59 Laundrettes are a commercial operation but nevertheless perform an important community function. They are a sui generis use, meaning that planning permission for alternative uses must be sought from the Council. Currently, there is a permitted development right allowing a change of use from a launderette to housing, but to protect laundrettes, the Council has introduced an Article 4 direction removing this right so planning permission is still required.

10.60 There is a very small supply of laundrettes in the borough, which is desirable to retain given their essential role in supporting people living in smaller and shared accommodation. We will expect applicants proposing the conversion of a launderette to show there has been a thorough search for an alternative launderette operator via marketing of the property. The Council will also request the applicant to provide evidence that the continuing operation of the launderette is no longer viable, including the provision of recent trading accounts for the existing launderette.

Assets of community value

10.61 The Council supports communities wishing to nominate 'Assets of Community Value' (ACV). These are a building or piece of land which currently, or in the recent past, furthers the social well-being or cultural, recreational or sporting interests of the local community and is realistic to think it could do so in the future. The Council will formally register the asset if it meets statutory criteria. In the event the owner decides to sell a locally listed asset, a local group can trigger a six month moratorium on the sale giving them time to raise the funds to purchase it (sometimes referred to as a 'right to bid'). Owners are required to consider community bids, but are not compelled to accept them.

10.62 The Council, when determining planning applications involving loss of community facilities, will treat the listing of an Asset of Community Value as an indicator of local support and evidence that it furthers the social well-being and interests of the community.



Open space

10.63 Camden benefits from a wide range of public open spaces. These spaces perform an important environmental and social role.

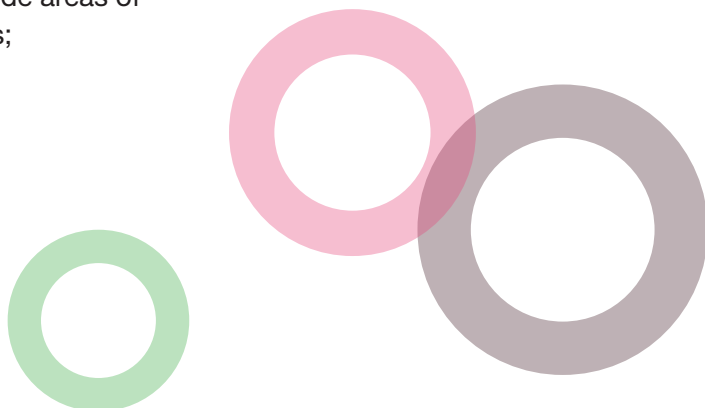
10.64 They support biodiversity; help to tackle the climate emergency; and provide a variety of areas in which to relax, socialise, connect, play, enjoy sport and take part in physical exercise. This benefits health and well-being, and reduces feelings of social isolation.

10.65 The term “public open space” in this section refers to open space that can be used and enjoyed by all the community. It is distinct from privately accessible open space such as private or communal gardens or balconies that do not ordinarily provide access for everyone. Public open space includes, but is not limited to:

- Metropolitan Open Land, including Hampstead Heath and adjoining areas, Regent’s Park, Primrose Hill/Barrow Hill Reservoir, and Highgate Cemetery/Waterlow Park/Fairseat;
- green amenity spaces, such as formal or informal parks, squares, gardens or other landscaped areas, which could include areas of natural or semi-natural green spaces;

- active spaces, such as areas of grassed or artificial surfaces providing opportunities for sport and recreation;
- civic spaces;
- housing estate amenity areas;
- formal and informal areas of play;
- natural and semi-natural spaces, including areas formally recognised for their nature conservation value;
- historic cemeteries, churchyards and other burial spaces; and
- waterways, including the Regents Canal.

10.66 There are over 290 public and private spaces designated on the Local Plan Policies Map. Policy SC4 sets out the Council’s strategy for protecting existing and supporting the provision of new open spaces.



Policy SC4

Open Space

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- A.** The Council will protect, enhance and improve access to Camden's public open spaces, to promote health and well-being, enhance biodiversity and make space for nature within Camden.
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Protection of open spaces

- B.** To protect Camden's open spaces the Council will:
1. protect all designated public and private open spaces shown on the Policies Map and in the accompanying schedule, unless:
 - a. the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
 - b. an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space or land to be surplus to requirements; or
 - c. the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use.
 2. safeguard amenity space on housing estates while allowing flexibility for the re-configuration of land uses. When assessing development proposals, we will take the following into account:
 - a. the effect of the proposed scheme on the size, siting and form of existing amenity space and the functions it performs;
 - b. whether the amenity space is replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility for residents; and
 - c. whether the public value of retaining the amenity space is outweighed by the benefits of the development for existing estate residents and the wider community, such as improvements to the quality and access of the amenity space.
 3. resist development that would be detrimental to the setting, use and enjoyment of designated open spaces;
 4. exceptionally, and where it meets a demonstrable need, consider small-scale development on open space, which is associated with the use of the land as open space and contributes to its use and enjoyment by the public; and
 5. conserve and enhance the heritage value of designated open spaces and other elements of open space that make a significant contribution to the character and appearance of conservation areas or to the setting of heritage assets.
-

Policy SC4

Open Space

Provision of new and enhanced public open space

- C.** To secure new and enhanced public open space and ensure that development does not put unacceptable pressure on the borough’s network of public open spaces, the Council will:
1. require developments that meet the thresholds set out in Table 11, to contribute to the provision of public open space in accordance with the following standards:
 - a. Residential (all types) - 9 sqm per occupier;
 - b. Commercial development and higher education - 0.74 sqm per worker;
 - c. Student accommodation - 9 sqm per single room and 18 sqm per double room, multiplied by a factor of 0.75;
 2. give priority to securing new public open space on-site. Provision off-site, near to the development, will only be considered acceptable where it can be demonstrated to the Council’s satisfaction that provision on-site is not achievable;
 3. seek developer contributions to deliver improvements to existing public open space using Section 106 agreements where an applicant can demonstrate to the Council’s satisfaction that it is not feasible to provide public open space on-site or off-site, in accordance with criteria C2. We will secure planning obligations to address the additional impact of proposed schemes on public open space taking into account the scale of the proposal, the number of future occupants and the land uses involved;
 4. ensure developments seek opportunities for providing private amenity space;
 5. give priority to play facilities and the provision of amenity space which meets residents’ needs where a development creates a need for different types of open space;
 6. tackle deficiencies in public open space through enhancement measures; and
 7. seek temporary provision of public open space where opportunities arise.
-

Policy SC4

Open Space

Design and management of public open space

- D.** To ensure that new or enhanced public open space is designed and managed to a high standard the Council will:
1. ensure that all new or enhanced public open space is designed, where appropriate, to:
 - a. support health and well-being and be safe, welcoming, inclusive and accessible for all;
 - b. be multi-functional;
 - c. connect to and integrate with the wider green infrastructure network and townscape/landscape, to increase access for people, promote habitat connectivity and support species migration;
 - d. be adaptable to, and mitigate the impacts of, climate change particularly in relation to addressing overheating and managing flood risk in accordance with Policy CC8 (Overheating and Cooling) and Policy CC10 (Flood Risk);
 - e. support native and priority species;
 - f. provide opportunities for physical activity and play;
 - g. provide free, publicly accessible toilets suitable for a range of users; and
 - h. provide opportunities for community food growing in accordance with Policy SC5 (Food Growing);
 2. require developments that provide public open space to make provision for its long-term management and maintenance, and be managed in accordance with the principles set out in the Mayor's Public London Charter; and
 3. require major applications that include public open space to be accompanied by a detailed landscaping scheme and landscape management plan.
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Protection of public and private open space, outdoor sports facilities and amenity land on housing estates

10.67 It is important that the Council protects the public and private open spaces designated on the Local Plan Policies Map, as well as areas of amenity land on housing estates with the potential to be used as public open space. They are a limited resource and highly valued by the community. Camden's open space designations include outdoor sports provision, including playing fields and ancillary facilities, which the Council will seek to protect, maintain and enhance. The loss of an open space will only be acceptable where the tests set out in Policy SC4 (Open Space) are met.

10.68 Camden has many large housing estates with extensive areas of amenity land. These areas have generally not been formally designated as open space but constitute a potential resource for providing enhanced public or communal open space. The Council wishes to protect this land, while allowing for the reconfiguration of open space and other land uses across estates where significant public benefits have been demonstrated (for example, the provision of new homes, schools and other community benefits), in particular for residents of the estate. The Council will consider whether such schemes provide equivalent or better provision in terms of the quality and quantity of usable open space and secure improvements to the accessibility and range of uses. This can bring enhancements where land set within housing estates is of poor quality, badly arranged or offers limited value in terms of open space functions for which it can be used.

10.69 The success and viability of open spaces is closely linked to the scale, character and quality of the adjacent townscape and development. We will resist proposals which would affect the use and enjoyment of an open space through detrimental changes to its setting. This includes changes to the space's appearance or character, its microclimate, levels of external light or noise pollution, overshadowing, overlooking, and disruption to views in or out of the space.

10.70 When assessing proposals that would involve the loss of open space, it must be demonstrated to the Council's satisfaction that there is an exceptional need for the development and that it is associated with the use of the land as open space. Any development should be of the minimum size necessary to address the identified need. We will resist proposals which would be detrimental to the setting, public's use and enjoyment of the open space. The Council will seek replacement provision elsewhere to compensate for the loss.

10.71 Extensions and alterations to existing buildings on open space should be proportionate to the size and volume of the original building. Proposals seeking the change of use of an existing building should also be sensitive to the role and function performed by the open space. The poor quality of an open space will generally not be accepted as a reason for its partial development to fund improvements as, once built on, the open space is lost to the community for ever.

Open spaces with historic value

10.72 Many of the borough's designated open spaces are located within conservation areas or are designated as heritage assets. This includes 'London Squares', which are protected for their leisure and recreational value by the London Squares Preservation Act 1931, and non-designated heritage assets identified on the Council's 'Local List' or through neighbourhood plans. Furthermore, 14 of the borough's open spaces are Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest – significant designed landscapes registered by Historic England.

10.73 Open spaces can positively contribute to a conservation area's character and the setting of heritage assets. The Council will have regard to conservation area appraisals and management plans, the National Heritage List for England, the Greater London Historic Environment Record and other appropriate sources when establishing the contribution made by open spaces to the historic environment.

10.74 The Council will encourage the management of registered parks and gardens and London Squares to maintain and, where appropriate, enhance their value and protect their setting. The Council will consult with Historic England over proposals affecting these parks and gardens. The Council will also encourage the restoration of registered parks and gardens and London Squares to enhance their value, where appropriate.

New and enhanced open space

10.75 Development in the borough will lead to increased use and pressure on our existing open spaces. The Local Plan therefore seeks to secure sufficient open space with the capacity to meet the additional demand arising from new development (including changes of use). The Council will seek on-site provision of open space from new developments wherever possible.

10.76 Developments will be required to contribute to the provision of public open space in accordance with the standards set out in Table 11.

10.77 Where it is demonstrated to the Council's satisfaction that on-site provision is not possible, the Council will seek other forms of open space contribution, giving preference to off-site provision capable of meeting the needs generated by the development. This includes securing public access to existing open spaces, such as land around housing estates and large private spaces. The Council will seek Section 106 planning obligations, where it is legitimate to do so, to ensure that the additional demand a development places on existing open spaces is met. Where the Council negotiates a planning obligation, we will apply the standards set out in criterion C1 in Policy SC4 (Open Space).

10.78 Where new open space is provided, it should take into account the characteristics of the site and the local context. This includes existing street patterns and pedestrian routes. The open space should be easy to use by people of all ages. It should also consider the particular barriers that can be experienced by people with physical and sensory impairments in accordance with Policy SC2 (Access for All) and must be safe and secure for everyone in accordance with Policy A2 (Safety and Security). An important consideration will be the long-term ability for a space, including landscaping, planting, street furniture and surfaces, to be managed effectively and for demands on natural resources to be minimised where relevant.

10.79 In densely developed areas, when it is not possible to provide open space on site, we will consider use of a financial contribution to create usable spaces within the public realm, for example through the widening of pavements or creation of pocket parks, as this can be an effective means of achieving a range of environmental and quality of life benefits. These measures may also contribute to the implementation of conservation area management plans, for example, the installation of sympathetic lighting or restoration of pavement materials.

10.80 Provision for outdoor sports facilities, including playing fields, will also be sought within the overall requirement of 9sqm per residential occupier where an opportunity for provision arises. Where a development provides public facilities for outdoor sports this can contribute to the 9sqm standard, subject to a balanced mix of public open space being provided.

10.81 Where a development generates a need, the Council will give priority to securing suitable provision of play space for children and young people and an appropriate level of amenity space for the occupiers of a development. Play space provision will be expected to comply with the London Plan standards and designed to be welcoming, safe, accessible and inclusive for a range of ages and needs, in particular disabled and neurodiverse users.

10.82 Camden Planning Guidance on open space provides further detail on how financial contributions for open space provision will be calculated for individual schemes. It also sets out our expectations in relation to the maintenance of open spaces. Developers will be expected to have due regard to this.

Table 11 | Open Space Standards

Development type	Threshold	Public open space provision
Residential (all types)	11 or more additional dwellings or exceeds 1,000 sqm (gross internal area).	9 sqm per occupier
Commercial development	Developments of over 1,000 sqm of floorspace/or on a site with an area greater than 1 hectare that are likely to increase the working population of the borough. This will be applied to any employment use which falls within Use Classes E(c), E(g), B2 and B8.	0.74 sqm per worker
Higher Education	Developments of over 1,000 sqm of floorspace/or on a site with an area greater than 1 hectare of floorspace for Higher Education institutions will be treated on a case-by-case basis. There will be a presumption that these developments make a contribution towards the needs they generate.	0.74 sqm per worker
Student accommodation	Student housing schemes creating an additional 11 or more units/rooms or occupiers	9 sqm per single room and 18 sqm per double room, multiplied by a factor of 0.75

Temporary provision of open space

10.83 Sites awaiting development can sometimes make short term contributions to open space provision. We will strongly support the temporary use of cleared sites for public open space during the construction period where this can meet local needs. Such sites also provide a potential location for local food growing projects (see Policy SC5 (Food Growing) below).

Design and management of public open space

10.84 Where a development creates new or enhanced public open space, the Council will expect this to be designed and managed in accordance with Policy SC4 (Open Space), having regard to other policies in the Plan including Policy D1 (Achieving Design Excellence), Policy SC2 (Access for All), Policy SC3 (Social and Community Infrastructure); Policy A2 (Safety and Security), Policy NE1 (Natural Environment), Policy NE3 (Trees), Policy NE2 (Biodiversity) and Policy SC5 (Food Growing).

10.85 Where developments provide public open space on the site, applicants will be expected to demonstrate to the Council how the proposed scheme will be managed to meet the requirements of the Mayor's Public London Charter, through the submission of a management plan. A commitment to implement the requirements of the Charter's principles, and the agreed management plan, will be secured through a Section 106 agreement. Camden's Public Open Space CPG and London Plan Guidance on the Public London Charter set out further guidance on what details would be expected to be set out in a management plan and developers will be expected to have due regard to this.

10.86 All major applications that include public open space must be accompanied by a detailed scheme for landscaping, which should include proposals for long-term maintenance and landscape management, which will be secured by a condition attached to the planning permission and/or by legal agreement.





Food growing

10.87 Domestic and community food growing has many benefits, including improving the sustainability of food production, increasing access to healthier food, providing opportunities for healthy outdoor activity and enhancing Camden's network of green spaces.

10.88 Food growing can also enable socialisation and the learning of new skills, having a positive impact on the health and well-being of residents. Encouraging and enabling more residents to grow food is an integral component of the Council's food mission, which aims to ensure that everyone in Camden eats well every day with nutritious, affordable and sustainable food.

Policy SC5

Food Growing

- A.** The Council will support food growing and community food growing in Camden to ensure that residents have access to nutritious, affordable and sustainable food. The Council will:
1. protect existing allotments and community gardens for food growing;
 2. seek to secure the on-site provision of suitable space for food growing by residents as part of all major housing developments and mixed use developments incorporating housing. Where provision cannot be made on-site, a financial contribution will be sought to deliver off-site community food growing projects;
 3. encourage commercial developments to include provision for local food growing;
 4. support the use of incidental open space on housing estates and other open space areas for community food growing, where this does not conflict with other policy objectives or land use priorities;
 5. support the temporary use of vacant or under-utilised sites in the borough for community gardening and food growing projects where this does not conflict with other policy objectives or land use priorities; and
 6. encourage developments to include landscaping that includes plants and trees that produce fruit, nuts or seeds.
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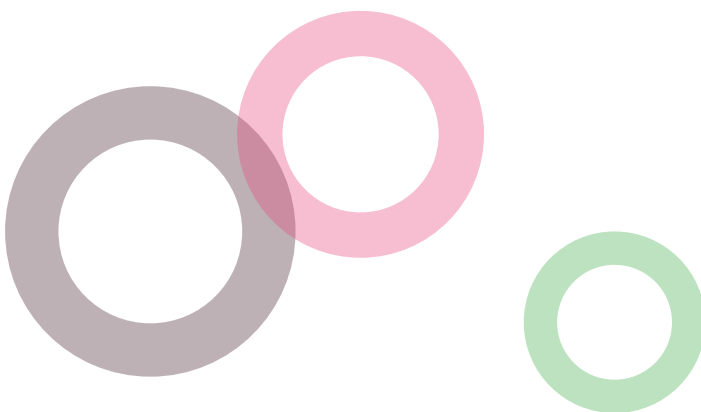
10.89 Housing developments and mixed use developments incorporating housing should seek to create and include flexible space that is suitable for food growing. This will be sought as part of the overall open space requirement generated by a development, in accordance with Policy SC4 (Open Space). The inclusion of food growing opportunities in new developments should extend beyond the conventional provision of gardens and allotments to include the creative use of roofs, walls and balconies where external space is limited; the provision of community gardens; and landscaping that includes plants and trees that produce fruit, nuts or seeds, rather than ornamental trees and shrubs. Where provision cannot be made on site, a financial contribution will be sought to deliver off-site community food growing projects. Furthermore, where applicable, the Council will also encourage commercial developments to include provision for local food growing, for example through the use of basements or roof spaces for urban farms.

10.90 Wherever food growing space is included in a development, consideration should be given to issues such as exposure to the elements; drainage; soil quality, contamination and depth; solar orientation and overshadowing; water supply and the appropriateness of species planted to ensure suitable conditions are present for its meaningful use by residents.

10.91 In some cases initiatives such as the use of incidental open space on housing estates for food growing may not require planning permission. This would depend on its scale and form, and the extent to which it would change the character and function of the open space. The acceptability of such proposals would also depend on the impact on the availability of open space for general amenity use by residents.

10.92 Green roofs can provide opportunities for food growing, if structurally suitable, and can accommodate both growing beds and greenhouses. Local food growing spaces should incorporate sustainable landscape principles and practices, including effective water management, efficient energy use and use of sustainable materials.

10.93 Where provided, the identified space for food growing will be secured through a planning condition or section 106 Agreement.





Cultural facilities

10.94 Cultural facilities, such as museums, libraries, theatres, galleries, cinemas, live music, nightclubs, comedy, and dance venues contribute enormously to Camden's attractiveness as a place to live, visit, work and study.

10.95 They can have significant value for education and learning, and many of these facilities are linked to the wider development of Camden's large sector of creative industries or contribute to the borough's evening and night time economy. The presence of a strong and diverse cultural offer is a draw for investment from businesses and organisations seeking a location in a dynamic and creative environment. They also contribute to the quality of life of residents, and some facilities are significant draws for visitors and tourists. Indirectly, they create wider economic benefits for hospitality and retail uses.

10.96 The opportunities for people of all ages to enjoy and participate in cultural activities can have a significant bearing on their ability to fulfil their individual and collective creative potential and provide connection with others. They are also important in terms of developing a sense of belonging, pride in place and the representation of local cultures. For some residents, these facilities provide a pathway into employment and a long-term career.

10.97 Cultural facilities in Camden are clustered in both the West End and Camden Town. The area of 'Theatreland' in Camden includes cinemas, theatres and night-time venues. Camden Town has long had a vibrant evening and night-time economy, particularly live music, with iconic venues including The Roundhouse, Koko and The Jazz Cafe. Significant cultural venues beyond central London and Camden Town include Kingsgate workspace, Camden Arts Centre, JW3, Hampstead Theatre, The Forum and the Scala. Examples of smaller spaces are The Horse Hospital in Bloomsbury, The Camden People's Theatre and Akademi. Camden's cultural offer includes a wealth of original, experimental and alternative programming, providing representation for diverse voices and narratives.

10.98 Policy SC6 sets out the Council's planning policy approach to supporting cultural facilities in Camden.

Policy SC6

Cultural Facilities

Protecting cultural facilities

- A.** The Council will protect existing cultural facilities and manage the impact of adjoining uses, applying the Agent of Change principle.
- B.** The Council will resist the loss of existing cultural facilities unless:
 1. it can be demonstrated to the Council's satisfaction that there is no longer a demand for the facility. The Council will expect the applicant to undertake a marketing exercise for at least 12 months to demonstrate that there has been a comprehensive search for alternative cultural and leisure uses for the site; and
 2. replacement facilities of at least equivalent quality are provided on-site, or within the vicinity, which meet the needs of Camden's communities; or
 3. the use can be delivered from other facilities without leading to or increasing any shortfall in provision and it has been demonstrated that there is no demand for another similar use on the site; or
 4. it has been demonstrated that there is no realistic prospect of the premises being used for a similar purpose, i.e. another cultural use, in the foreseeable future.

New cultural provision

- C.** New and expanded cultural facilities will be supported in accordance with the following approach:
 1. Large-scale facilities should be located in the Central Activities Zone or Camden Town provided any impact on amenity is mitigated in accordance with Policy A1 (Protecting Amenity).
 2. Smaller facilities would be appropriate anywhere in the borough provided they do not have an adverse impact on their neighbours, the surrounding area or the local community. This includes demonstrating to the Council's satisfaction that any impacts on the highways network or public transport would be acceptable.
 3. New and expanded cultural facilities should seek to reflect Camden's history, culture and diversity.
- D.** Where a proposal includes a new or relocated cultural facility, or additional floorspace, the Council will require the applicant to provide the following:
 1. an assessment of potential impacts on the continuing operation of existing cultural facilities nearby;
 2. evidence demonstrating how the proposal contributes to the delivery of local arts and cultural strategies; and
 3. details of shared use / daytime use of the facility by other cultural or community organisations, including on a temporary / 'meanwhile' basis.

Cultural and arts projects

- E.** The Council will secure section 106 contributions to help fund place based cultural and arts projects linked to the regeneration of centres and estates, in appropriate circumstances.

Protecting cultural facilities

10.99 Cultural facilities are vitally important for their social and economic roles and contribution towards making Camden an attractive and vibrant place to live. However, because of differences in land values, they can be placed under pressure for conversion to other land uses, despite continued demand for the existing cultural use. [The adopted Camden Evening and Night-Time Strategy](#) highlights the significant numbers of music venues that have permanently closed in London and the disproportionate impacts this can have on certain communities (e.g. LGBTQ+). The Strategy also identifies the importance of providing a welcoming, inclusive and safe environment for all with cultural facilities helping to deliver more family-friendly, affordable and non-alcohol based experiences. We will therefore seek to retain existing cultural facilities unless there is evidence that can demonstrate to the Council's satisfaction that there is no prospect of the space supporting a cultural use.

10.100 Where proposals would involve the loss of a cultural facility, we will expect the applicant to demonstrate to the Council's satisfaction that there had been a search for alternative cultural uses for the site through a marketing exercise. The marketing exercise should be undertaken over a period of not less than 12 months and be based on a realistic price or rent which is supported by the Council. Further information on this is set out in Camden Planning Guidance on Community Uses, Leisure Facilities and Pubs and developers will be expected to have due regard to this.

10.101 We will also seek to protect supporting facilities where they are linked to the successful operation of venues, for example small studios, rehearsal rooms or equipment stores.

10.102 Exceptionally, there may be justification for relocating a facility to an alternative location in the borough. Where this is proposed, the Council will request evidence showing how this would impact on users of the facility. It is recognised that the long-term use of premises for specific cultural uses can underpin the significance of heritage assets. Where this applies, the retention of the existing cultural use at its current premises will be the Council's preferred option. Where proposals impact on existing cultural uses, the Council will ensure that their function and role is not diminished or put at risk by any of the proposed changes.

New cultural provision

10.103 New provision will be supported according to the scale and impact of the scheme. Large facilities (2,500 sqm or more) should be provided in suitable locations in the CAZ where there are existing concentrations of evening and night-time uses or in Camden Town. Smaller facilities may be appropriate anywhere subject to the impacts on neighbouring uses being shown to be acceptable. The Council will resist proposals for new or enhanced cultural facilities where they give rise to significant impacts on residential amenity, in accordance with Policy A1 (Protecting Amenity). New and expanded facilities should have regard to the vision and objectives set out in the [Camden Evening and Night-time Strategy](#).

Cultural and arts projects

10.104 Traditionally, public art contributions have been secured for permanent art works to add to an area's distinctive character, to create visual interest and commemorate people and events. This remains a relevant and legitimate use of developer contributions and contributions will continue to be sought through applying the Local Plan's policies on design (see D1 (Achieving Design Excellence)). Increasingly however, cultural and arts projects are being used to support wider town centre renewal and estate regeneration. These projects involve local artists and arts and cultural providers, and can cover multiple sites in an area. They can also be delivered through partnerships with schools and organisations working with young adults, and elderly or disabled people. Given the multiple benefits for communities of being involved in these projects, including learning and skills opportunities, direct participation and the impact on well-being, the Council may seek section 106 contributions in relevant circumstances towards the delivery of cultural and arts projects in Camden's communities.





Public houses

10.105 Public houses (pubs) play an important community and cultural role. As places where members of the community meet and gather, they support social well-being and strengthen community cohesion.

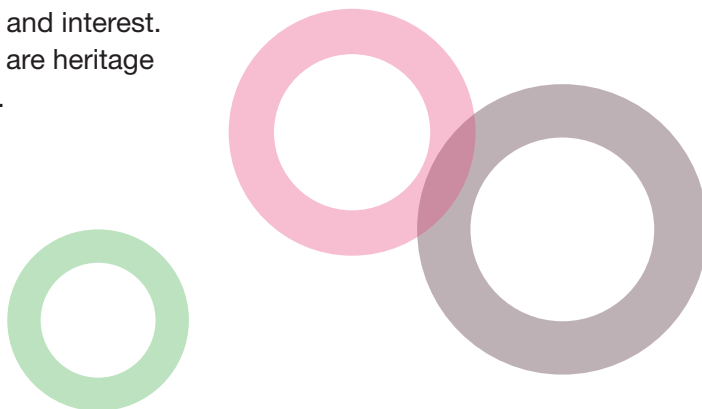
10.106 They sometimes provide important community meeting space and host local meetings, events and entertainment. Some pubs also support Camden's social diversity by providing a valuable support function for vulnerable or easier to ignore groups.

10.107 In some areas, the community pub provides a hub for socialising with friends, making new contacts, exchanging ideas, celebrating important occasions and staging large gatherings including live music, theatre and comedy nights. Some of the most interesting and unique pubs attract customers from a wide catchment area and may be important to a protected group defined under the Equality Act 2010 or in terms of their tourism value.

10.108 Many pubs contribute to local culture and identity, and this is often closely related to a pub's long-standing presence in the street scene. The closure of a pub can lead to the loss of an area's vibrancy as well as harming its diversity and interest. Some pubs are important because they are heritage assets and architecturally distinguished.

10.109 Pubs also have an important economic function in contributing to the vitality of town or neighbourhood centres. Pubs support local employment and entrepreneurship, provide valuable work experience for young people, and support jobs in the wider economy through their supply chain.

10.110 National planning policy recognises that public houses, along with other community facilities, enhance the sustainability of local communities and should be safeguarded and retained for the benefit of the community while allowing them to develop and modernise in a sustainable way. They are a 'sui generis' use meaning they are not in any planning use class and a planning application is needed for changes from a pub to any other use (for example to shops or residential).



Policy SC7

Public Houses

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- A.** The Council will seek to protect public houses which are of community, heritage or townscape value.
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- B.** The Council will not grant planning permission for proposals for the change of use, redevelopment and/or demolition of a public house unless it is demonstrated to the Council's satisfaction that:
1. the proposal would not result in the loss of a pub which is valued by the community (including protected groups) unless there are equivalent premises available capable of meeting the community needs served by the public house; or
 2. there is no interest in the continued use of the property or site as a public house and no reasonable prospect of a public house being able to trade from the premises over the medium term.
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- C.** Where a public house is converted to an alternative use, the Council will seek the retention of significant features of historic or character value.
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- D.** Applications involving the loss of pub floorspace, including facilities ancillary to the operation of the public house, will be resisted where this will adversely affect the operation of the public house.
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- E.** Where it has been demonstrated to the Council's satisfaction that a public house can no longer be retained, the suitability of the premises for alternative community uses for which there is a defined need in the locality should be assessed before other uses are considered. If the pub is a heritage asset, it should be conserved in a manner appropriate to its heritage significance.
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- F.** Where new public houses are proposed, these should be located on appropriate sites in the Central Activities Zone and in the borough's town centres, subject to the requirements of other policies in this Plan.
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Protection of valued pubs

10.111 Policy SC7 (Public Houses) allows flexibility by supporting development where it would not be contrary to the interests of the economy, historic environment or community. The overall aim is to ensure that the Council is able to protect all of its public houses which provide a significant benefit or value to the local community, including access to a range of facilities; that public houses of historic and cultural value are conserved and enhanced according to their significance; and that the vibrancy and vitality of Camden's centres and local economies are sustained.

10.112 The Council will determine whether a proposal would result in the loss of a pub with community, cultural or heritage value. A 'community pub' predominantly serves a local residential community or a 'protected group' (for example the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender communities) which may have a catchment wider than the local area. There may be a justification for protecting a pub which does not meet this criterion if it is the last facility capable of meeting the local community's needs and could conceivably do so in the medium term.

10.113 It is important that the local community have a say in whether pubs are protected. The Council may require an applicant to fund a survey to establish the views of the community, including members of protected groups where appropriate, on the loss of the public house. The methodology and content of the survey would need to be agreed in writing by the Council and be funded by the applicant. If a pub is registered as an Asset of Community Value, a survey will not be required to demonstrate to the Council the community value of a pub, as that has already been established by that designation.

10.114 Where the proposed development would result in the loss of a valued pub, the Council will require evidence setting out alternative public house provision in the local area or for the community, including information on the location, size, range and quality of facilities, taking account of any unimplemented planning permissions for the addition or loss of public houses. The availability of alternative premises will only be considered where they meet equivalent needs of the community, such as performance spaces, meeting rooms or a beer garden. The loss of a pub cannot be overcome by the availability of other public houses if it leads to the loss of pub facilities or services of particular value to the community.

10.115 The Council will also require applicants to fund a marketing exercise to demonstrate whether there is a demand for the pub at a realistic rent or freehold value which is 'free of tie'. The Council will expect a mounted sales/letting board to be provided throughout the marketing period to draw the community's attention to the marketing exercise. At the applicant's expense, the Council will require a qualified licensed leisure chartered surveyor independent of the selling agent to confirm that the rental and freehold value of the pub used in the marketing exercise is reasonable.

10.116 The Council will require applicants to demonstrate to the Council's satisfaction there is no reasonable prospect of a pub being able to trade from the existing premises in the medium term. We will require details including rents, turnover figures and other factors relevant to a pub's viability including the style of operation, hours of opening, supply of food and availability of meeting and event rooms. Applicants should set out what operating models have been used to help sustain or improve the pub's potential. Further details about the marketing exercise and viability assessment for pubs are set out in Camden Planning Guidance on Community uses, leisure and pubs and developers will be expected to have due regard to this.

10.117 Many pubs are valued for their architectural interest, historic fabric and contribution to the character and townscape value of the local area, for example through their distinctive signage, windows or fittings. They can also support local arts and culture providing low-cost performance space. Pub gardens can be particularly valued for providing communal open space in the built-up area.

10.118 Where the Council is satisfied that it is no longer possible for a public house use to be found for the premises, we will seek the retention of significant features which contribute to the building's character and heritage value.

10.119 A significant number of pubs in Camden have been recognised as Assets of Community Value, which provides the community with an opportunity to raise funds to make a bid to acquire the designated asset.

Partial loss of a public house

10.120 The partial loss of a pub and/or ancillary facilities (for example beer gardens, parking, function rooms and ancillary residential accommodation) may be detrimental to its character, community value or future viability. Outdoor amenity spaces, gardens, cellars and parking areas attached to pubs can be subject to pressures for residential development. These changes can lead to a pub becoming less profitable and as a consequence, more vulnerable to further redevelopment, potentially leading to a pub being lost altogether. In determining whether the loss of floorspace is acceptable, the Council will take into account the effect of changes to the pub's layout and reduction in its trading area on its continuing ability to operate successfully, and consider the effects of such changes in sustaining a viable pub. We will expect landlords / operators to consider suitable complementary uses that enable the continued successful operation of the pub, such as 'bed and breakfast' accommodation.

10.121 In some cases, the introduction of sensitive uses, such as permanent residential accommodation, will be subject to the Agent of Change principle. This means that the Council will expect the applicant to consider how the existing pub operates (for example its licensing terms, the use of outdoor areas etc.) when mitigation measures are being designed. The onus will be on the applicant to ensure that a non-ancillary use does not lead to pressure for the pub to materially alter its operations. The full costs of the mitigation will need to be borne by the applicant.

