

FAQs – Section 73 (S73) Amendment for the Canada Water Development

What is a Section 73 (S73) amendment?

A Section 73 (S73) amendment is a type of planning application that allows changes to an approved planning permission without altering the fundamental nature of the development. It enables adjustments to reflect updated regulations, economic conditions or design improvements, while maintaining the original vision.

Why has British Land applied for a S73 amendment?

Since the original planning approval, two major external factors have affected the project:

1. New fire safety regulations – The Building Safety Act 2022 requires all residential buildings over 18m (seven storeys) to have a second staircase, affecting designs.
2. Economic pressures – the combined impacts of Covid-19, Brexit and global economic changes have increased construction costs by over 30% and raised interest rates, making many developments across the UK less, or sometimes completely unviable.

Along with many other developers and local authorities, including Southwark Council, who are facing these challenges, we're revisiting our planning permissions to address these and ensure that homes, jobs, infrastructure and public spaces can still be delivered. As we continue to review the original planning permission, it is also possible that additional amendments are brought forward to address specific zones/plots within the development.

What could change?

The S73 amendment does not change the overall vision for Canada Water, but proposes:

- Adjustments to building heights and massing to accommodate second staircases while maintaining the number of homes.
- A review of the Section 106 (S106)* agreement to ensure funding for infrastructure, affordable housing and local benefits remains viable.

The amendment helps deliver the original masterplan within new safety and financial realities.

*A Section 106 agreement (often called an S106 agreement) is a legal agreement between a developer and the local council, made as part of the planning permission process. It is used to ensure that a new development benefits the local community and helps to reduce any impacts the project might have. These benefits could include infrastructure improvements, green spaces and affordable housing, all of which are being delivered at Canada Water.

What won't change?

The core principles of the development will stay the same, including:

- A mix of uses, with new homes, shops, leisure facilities, and workspaces still to be delivered.
- No reduction in open green spaces, community spaces, or commitments to invest in transport improvements.
- Key public spaces, such as a new town square, a public park, and a revitalised Canada Dock.
- A new high street at the heart of Canada Water, shaping the town centre.

- Street layouts designed to keep the area open and accessible throughout the development.

Will the amount of public open space be reduced?

No, the S73 amendment does not reduce the amount of public open space within the Canada Water development.

British Land remain committed to 35% of the development being open space, equating to about 12 acres, and the planned public spaces will remain a key part of the development, providing places for recreation, relaxation and community activities.

Key commitments

- 12 acres of new open spaces will be delivered.
- A 3.5-acre central park remains part of the plan, offering a vital recreational space.
- The 700m park walk will connect different parts of the development through landscaped areas.

What has the Canada Water development delivered so far?

Since planning approval, the project has already delivered:

- 79 affordable homes, including council homes for Southwark Council at 7 Roberts Close (Plot K1), with an additional 186 market homes to come at The Founding (Plot A1)
- Marker Way, a new pedestrian and cycle route connecting Deal Porters Way with Lower Road
- Corner Corner, a multi-use space where food, culture and community can come together
- The new Canada Water Leisure Centre, opening this spring

- The revitalised Canada Dock wetlands, including the 170m Rafter Walk, and the Discovery Pond, which is currently under construction.
- Dock Office Gardens, a public open space to the rear of Three Deal Porters and our Dock Offices – soon to be joined by new retail units and the Canada Water Leisure Centre.
- Over 120 long-term jobs for previously unemployed Southwark residents, supported by Canada Water Connect
- Over 80 apprenticeships providing skills and employment opportunities
- £13m contribution to deliver a spacious new ticket hall, a new entrance to ease congestion, and step-free access for the first time at Surrey Quays station
- Medium-term use of space for projects including TEDI-London, learning space the Paper Garden (with Global Generation), local business incubator Thrive (with Tree Shepherd), community space T&T2 (with Time and Talents), Art of Isolation gallery (with local artist Rod Kitson), and Charity Bike Shop (with Cycling Fighting Cancer).

What will the Canada Water development deliver in the future?

If approved, the next phase of the development will deliver:

- A major town centre with new shops, restaurants, leisure, and community space
- around 3,000 new homes
 - New workspace for up to 20,000 jobs across various industries. This includes affordable workspace at discounted rent for 15 years, supporting local startups and small businesses
- 12 acres of new public open spaces, including:
 - A 3.5-acre park, providing green space for leisure, recreation and biodiversity

- A new town square
- 16 new pedestrian-friendly streets, designed in line with Healthy Streets principles to prioritise walking and cycling
- A new police hub in collaboration with the Metropolitan Police
- A health centre
- A further £20m of investment into transport improvements
- Tens of millions in revenue for Southwark Council through Council Tax, business rates, the Community Infrastructure Levy and the New Homes Bonus.

HOUSING

Will the number of homes planned for Canada Water change?

No, the total number of homes planned for Canada Water will not change because of the S73 amendment. We are still aiming to deliver around 3,000 new homes.

To make space for second staircases, some homes have been removed from the original designs on each floor. The S73 application proposes adding these homes back by adjusting building heights and massing, so they are re-provided at the top of buildings.

Without these changes, our ability to deliver any housing would be severely constrained at a time when the UK, and particularly London, is facing a critical housing shortage.

Is there a shortage of housing in the UK and London?

Yes, both the UK and London are experiencing significant housing shortages:

- Nationally: The UK faces a housing shortfall of approximately 4.3 million homes, a gap that would take nearly a decade to eliminate even if a new house were built every minute.
- In London: The situation is particularly acute, with over 336,000 households currently on waiting lists for social housing—the highest figure in more than a decade and accounting for 25% of England's total. Additionally, more than 183,000 Londoners are homeless or living in temporary accommodation arranged by their local boroughs.

Addressing this crisis requires building significantly more homes of all types — not just affordable or social housing. Increasing the overall supply of homes, including market-rate housing, is essential to meeting demand. When supply keeps up, it can ease competition, reduce pressure on prices, and improve affordability across the board.

That's why the S73 amendment is important: it helps ensure we can still deliver the full number of homes originally planned — including social housing — while meeting updated safety standards and responding to today's economic conditions.

How will the amendment impact the delivery of affordable housing?

The S73 amendment will result in a reduction in the number of affordable homes compared to our original vision. This is not a choice British Land has made lightly, but a response to the external economic and regulatory challenges we face.

One of the key pressures introduced by the Building Safety Act 2022 is the requirement for second staircases in all residential buildings over 18m. This

significantly reduces the amount of internal space available for homes, making it necessary to adjust building heights and massing to maintain the number of homes planned.

At the same time, construction costs have increased by over 30% since 2020, driven by factors such as Covid-19, Brexit and inflation.

In response, British Land are working in collaboration with Southwark Council and the Greater London Authority (GLA) to explore all available options to ensure that affordable housing remains deliverable. This includes looking at government grants and funding streams, which will allow us to pool resources and secure the best possible outcome for the community.

We have already demonstrated our ability to produce high-quality, sustainable affordable housing by delivering 79 affordable homes, including council homes, for Southwark Council at 7 Roberts Close (Plot K1). The S73 amendment is an essential step in making sure the development can still provide more of these much-needed homes, including affordable housing, while complying with updated regulations.

BUILDING HEIGHTS

Why are tall buildings being proposed?

Tall buildings have always been part of the Canada Water Masterplan, which was approved in 2020. They help deliver the number of homes needed while making efficient use of land that also support new public spaces, shops, workspaces, and community facilities.

As part of our Section 73 amendment to the Masterplan, some buildings are now proposed to be taller. This helps the development continue to meet its original goals while adapting to updated building regulations and wider economic challenges.

The Building Safety Act 2022 requires all residential buildings over 18 metres (around seven storeys) to include a second staircase. This reduces the internal floor area available for homes. By slightly increasing the height of some buildings, we can re-provide that space—ensuring:

- The number of homes originally planned is retained, including homes of all types
- New safety standards are met without compromising design quality or public spaces
- The Masterplan continues to make the most of a central London location to meet housing need

Will the taller buildings significantly change the development?

The increase in height will change aspects of the development, particularly some local and longer-distance views. However, the changes remain within key planning guidelines, including the protected line of sight between St Paul's Cathedral and Greenwich Observatory. The fundamental structure and character of the Canada Water Masterplan remain unchanged.

The street layouts, key public spaces, and the design of the town centre remain unchanged, helping to maintain the original vision for a welcoming, accessible and well-connected neighbourhood. The proposed adjustments to height have been made carefully are necessary to respond to updated building regulations and economic pressures while still delivering the homes and spaces the area needs.

Have taller buildings been assessed for their impact?

Yes. An Environmental Statement (ES) was submitted as part of the application, assessing wind impacts, daylight, sunlight, overshadowing and townscape considerations. The studies confirmed that:

- The overall impact remains in line with the previously approved masterplan.
- Daylight and sunlight levels for existing properties remain within acceptable limits for an urban setting.
- Overshadowing impacts are minimal and public spaces, including Canada Dock and Southwark Park, will not be significantly affected.
- Wind assessments have been conducted to ensure pedestrian comfort, and mitigation measures will be introduced if necessary.

TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

How will transport infrastructure be improved?

British Land is investing £33m in transport improvements to enhance connectivity and capacity in the area. These improvements are designed to support both new and existing residents, businesses and visitors, while ensuring that the local transport network remains efficient as the development progresses.

What is that investment being spent on?

- Upgrading Surrey Quays station - a £13m contribution has been made to Transport for London (TfL) to fund improvements, including the construction of a new station entrance to increase capacity and passenger flow. Importantly TfL have also confirmed an increase in the frequency of Windrush Line trains from 16 to 18 trains per hour
- Investing in Canada Water Station - with more workspace and employment opportunities coming to Canada Water, the way people use Canada Water Station will naturally shift, with more people both living and working in the area rather than commuting to jobs elsewhere. This will help to rebalance

peak-time congestion and improve overall transport capacity. To support this, we will make a £2.6m financial contribution towards Canada Water Station for extra staffing and internal improvements to create more space. Extra staffing will be brought in progressively over time as the development is built out.

- New bus routes – two additional bus routes will be introduced to improve public transport coverage and provide more options for local travel with space for 6,600 extra passengers and 20 buses per hour between Canada Water and London Bridge (AM peak).
- Enhanced cycling infrastructure – 4.1km of new walkways and cycle paths across Canada Water, along with 10,000 bike spaces and three Santander cycle hire stations.

Future projects, such as the Bakerloo Line extension which we are helping to fund with 75% of our Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), will provide additional transport options and help manage demand in the wider area.

PUBLIC SPACES AND SUSTAINABILITY

Will the amount of public open space be reduced?

No, the S73 amendment does not reduce the amount of public open space within the Canada Water development.

British Land remain committed to 35% of the development being public open space, equating to around 12 acres, providing places for recreation, relaxation and community activities. These will include:

- A 3.5-acre central park, offering a key recreational space at the heart of the development.
- A 700m park walk that will connect different parts of the development through landscaped areas.

- A new town square the size of Leicester Square
- The revitalised Canada Dock wetlands, including the 170m Rafter Walk, which was completed last year.
- Dock Office Gardens, completed September 2024, acting as a leafy retreat to the rear of Three Deal Porters by the Canada Water Leisure Centre entrance.

JOBS AND SKILLS

Will the community still benefit from training and employment opportunities?

Yes, the community will continue to benefit from plenty of local initiatives and employment opportunities as part of the Canada Water development.

The development has already enabled over 120 previously unemployed people to find jobs through Canada Water Connect, and this focus will continue. Founded through a partnership between British Land and leading business charity ELBA, Canada Water Connect puts people and expertise on the ground to make connections between residents, businesses, schools and charities, the construction companies building the development, and businesses that will establish themselves here.

For more information on job and skills opportunities, go [here](#) (link to jobs page).

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

How has the local community been engaged with about the S73 amendment?

We aim to keep the local community up to date through a range of channels (newsletters, e-newsletters, social media and more) and provide opportunities for people to ask questions or provide feedback.

For the S73, British Land launched an engagement programme to ensure that the community was well-informed about the proposed changes and had opportunities to provide feedback. This included:

- Public exhibitions and virtual engagement: a virtual exhibition was held over a two-week period between Monday, 25 November 2024 and Sunday, 9 December, attracting over 576 unique visitors. This allowed residents to access information and provide feedback at their convenience
- In-person consultation events: two public consultation events were held in a local venue, engaging directly with 343 individuals
- Stakeholder engagement: meetings were conducted with local councillors, Members of Parliament, and representatives from Southwark Council, ensuring that local leadership was involved in discussions on the proposed changes
- Direct outreach: flyers and newsletters were distributed to over 14,000 homes and businesses, providing updates on the proposed amendments and opportunities for engagement.

Through these engagement activities, British Land heard a range of perspectives from the community.

Some of the key findings include:

- Support for ensuring the project remains on track so that homes, jobs, and public benefits can still be delivered.
- Responses were evenly split: 44% of respondents *agreed or strongly agreed* that the proposed changes would benefit the local community, while 44% *disagreed or strongly disagreed*; 12% were neutral
- Benefits to the local community, including jobs, investment, and services, was the area of greatest interest, with 60% of respondents saying they were “very interested” and 29% “interested” in this topic area.

- A sentiment test at the in-person exhibitions using green, yellow and red stickers found that 83.3% were happy with the proposals, 12.5% unhappy, and 4.2% neutral.
- Strong interest in key topics, including building heights, transport capacity, and affordable housing delivery.
- Recognition of the broader challenges the development is responding to, such as new safety regulations and wider economic pressures.
- Questions about public space, environmental impact, and access to community facilities, with residents keen to understand how these will be delivered in future phases.

Some quotes from feedback forms include:

- *“Really excited to see all the new developments and businesses in the area/community.”*
- *“I think expanding upwards is a very good idea - more housing is always a win if transport infrastructure is improved in line with increase”*
- *“I don’t object to increased heights as long as commitments to the community are maintained”*
- *“I agree with complying with new Building Safety requirements”*

You can find out further information on the feedback by viewing the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) [here](#).