

Monmouth Planning Ltd

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Camden Council
Planning Department
5 Pancras Square
London
N1C 4AG

16th August 2023

Dear Sir/ Madam,

**Interior refurbishment and alterations to the to the ground and lower ground floor levels of the Grade II Listed property
45 Monmouth Street, London, WC2H 9DG**

Planning portal ref- PP- 12394977

On behalf of our client, Veja UK Ltd, we write in support of the application submitted via the planning portal for a number of detailed works to the Grade II listed building in order to support internal works to assist with the incoming tenants fit out of the unit.

To assist the Council in the consideration of this application we enclose with this letter the following documents:

- Application form
- Certificates
- Site location plan
- Existing and Proposed plans
- Photo Schedule
- Structural Details
- CIL Form

This supporting cover letter also sets out the planning policy consideration of the works and includes a section on the Design & Access and Heritage Statement for the proposal.

The planning application fee has been paid separately online via the planning portal.

The site

The application site is located at 45 Monmouth Street on the corner of Seven Dials, Monmouth Street and Mercer Street.

This five-storey, brick faced office and retail building fronting the south side of The Dials defines the corner of Mercer Street and Monmouth Street. It has formal elevations to all three street frontages and forms the northern apex of Terry Farrell and Partners Phase II Comyn Ching Triangle development of 1985-1995, which includes nos.45-51 (odd), Monmouth Street and nos. 29-31 (odd), Mercer Street.

The building was listed Grade II in November 2016. It is also located within the Seven Dials Conservation area and seven dials local centre.

The internals are considered to be of modern construction.

Relevant Planning History

The following recent relevant planning history for 45 Monmouth Street has been obtained from London Borough of Camden online planning website. Only applications relating to the ground and basement floor and exterior the site have been referred to below:

- 9301032- 45 Monmouth Street WC2- Installation of shop frontages to Monmouth Street Mercer Street and Seven Dials elevations as shown on drawing numbers 220/5P and 6P. 16-08-1993- Approved.
- 380124- 45 Monmouth Street WC2- The display of two externally illuminated hanging signs (dimensions 800mm x 625mm) at fascia level on the Monmouth Street frontage and the Seven Dials Corner as shown on drawing numbers 220/5P & 6P and 180/SS/1 16-08-1993- Approved
- 9100930- 45 Monmouth Street WC2- The change of use from retail to purposes within Class A2 as specified under the Town & Country (Use Classes) Order 1987 as shown on drawing numbers CC2B/3201C & 3202D. 15-08-1991- Refused

Proposal

This application is made regarding the internal alterations of the property only. Listed Building consent is sought for:

“Internal refurbishment and alterations to the ground and lower ground floors to provide new services and floor & ceiling finishes. Opening up of the 2 floors and the facilitation of a lift, with other ancillary facilities.”

It should be noted that the proposals do not seek to increase the gross internal area of the building.

The proposed works are detailed on the lower ground and ground floor plans, the main works include the installation of the service lift between the floors, installation of new services such as air supply ducts, ac units all internal within the existing plant enclosure, opening up of the wall between the lower ground and ground floor to reinstate access to the lower ground floor, removal of the internal advertisement boxes, Refurbishment of the space to provide new wall coverings, flooring etc, installation of new beams to address the new incoming tenants requirements for the space.

Design and Access

The proposals are set out in the drawings prepared by Ebba Architects, this includes details of the proposed works and materials proposed.

Vidal Sassoon has occupied the shop since 1993; some six years after the building was completed, as such it is considered that upgrading of the unit is necessary for the unit to survive and compete against other units in the local area.

Internal alterations are also proposed to provide and remove flexible partition layouts together with changes to the ceilings and floors. These amendments are considered not to affect the heritage within the building. To enable the building to accommodate the incoming tenant the lower ground works also include upgrading the facilities and providing lift access from the ground floor into lower ground.

Access will remain as existing. A new access is proposed but forms part of a separate application which has been submitted in tandem with this application for a new shopfront.

Heritage Statement

The Seven Dials development was laid out in in 1692 by Sir Thomas Neale and contains terraced housing and shops of the 17th to 19th centuries. For most of its life, since the 18th century, the triangular block was known by the name of its occupant; the hardware shop of Comym Ching.

Between 1985-7, the Comyn Ching Triangle was regenerated by Terry Farrell & Partners in a seminal project. The scheme involved the restoration of historic buildings, the knitting in of contextual modern additions and the creation of a central court. The scheme marked a change from the post-war practice of site clearance to facilitate modern development.

The Terry Farrell Partnership scheme demonstrated a respect for local mixed-use character, conservation of historic fabric and new Post-Modern interventions. Its responsive to established character was widely hailed as demonstrating how new and old could together promote a rich streetscape.

In November 2016, the heritage significance and value of the Comyn Ching Triangle project was recognised by being Listed Grade II. The heritage significance and townscape value are also recognised by the site being included in the Seven Dials (Covent Garden) Conservation Area.

The listing description is extensive and comprehensive however does not refer to any of the internals.

The vast majority of heritage assets are in private hands. Thus, sustaining heritage assets in the long term often requires an incentive for their active conservation. Putting heritage assets to a viable use is likely to lead to the investment in their maintenance necessary for their long-term conservation.

The existing unit was previously occupied by Vidal Sassoon since approximately 1993 but has been stripped out and left as an empty unit. There appears to be very limited heritage details within the unit itself. The removal and addressing of many of the later additions are also considered to enhance the historic building.

Schedule of works

- Upgrade the unit internally to make it more useable for the incoming tenant.

- Meet current standards and increase accessibility

Planning Policy Considerations

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the statutory Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Planning policy operates at national, regional and local levels. At a national level Central Government adopted the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in 2021. The statutory Development Plan for the site comprises the London Plan (2021) at a regional level, and Camden Local Plan (2017) at a local level.

At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision taking.

The internal works are considered to enhance the longevity of the unit without compromising the heritage value, as such the proposal is considered to be an acceptable contemporary reworking of the unit. The fit-out proposals will improve facilities, layout and quality of fittings. It is considered the proposals will provide significant benefits in the form of preserving the Grade II listed building through allowing it to provide a much improved and refurbished higher quality space, with improved facilities and accessibility. The proposals ensure that the design is sensitive and respects the heritage of the building and the conservation area. The proposals not only future proof the building but enable it to provide public benefits including employment and accessible spaces.

The application scheme is based on an understanding of the significance of the site and satisfies the national and regional policies for the historic environment in the NPPF and the London Plan, in addition to the local policies and guidance issued by Camden Council, namely policies D1, D2 and the Design CPG.

Conclusion

This application represents an opportunity to significantly enhance and upgrade the unit to meet with current modern needs. The proposals promote high quality design and sensitively respect the local context and character and preserve the Grade II listed building and the Seven Dials Conservation Area.

We trust you have all the information required to determine the proposal, however, should you require anything further or wish to discuss any of the enclosures please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Yours faithfully

Lucy Pitham

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