

Monmouth Planning Limited

45 Monmouth Street, London, WC2H

Planning, Design and Access Statement

Introduction

This Planning Design and Access Statement has been prepared on behalf of Veja UK Ltd in support of the planning application, listed building consent application and advertisement application submitted to the London Borough of Camden in support of the refurbishment works proposed at 45 Monmouth Street (The Site).

Approval is sought for the installation the alterations to the existing shopfront, installation of a new door to the Seven Dials apex, repainting of the shopfront frame and the display of new signage at 45 Monmouth Street.

This statement has been prepared by Monmouth Planning Limited and details the planning case for the proposed development. This statement provides an assessment of the scheme against the Council's Local planning policies.

This statement should be read in conjunction with the relevant information submitted to accompany the applications comprising:

- Completed application form and ownership certificate;
- Existing drawings
- Proposed drawings
- Photographs
- Heritage Impact Assessment
- CIL Form

This Planning Statement is structured as follows:

Section 2: Site Context.

Section 3: Relevant Planning History.

Section 4: Proposed Development.

Section 6: Planning Policy Overview.

Section 7: Planning Policy Assessment.

Section 8: Conclusion.

Site Context

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.

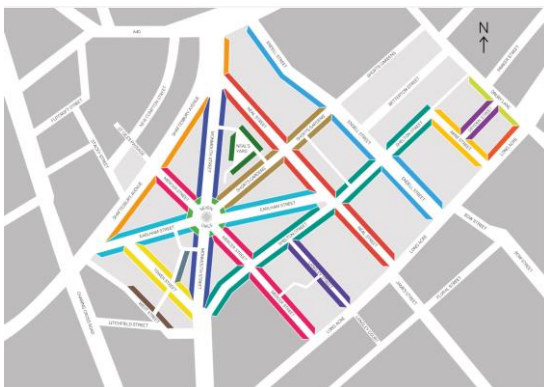
The building was listed Grade II in November 2016. It is also located within the Seven Dials Conservation area and seven dials local centre. Whilst the shopfronts are neat and unobtrusive, they are not original to the building, and it is arguable that the area and skyline round The Dials is what creates the character.

The site forms one of the seven streets of the Seven Dials area which converges at the roughly circular central roundabout, at the centre of which is a column bearing sundials. This is the only building out of the 7 that does not have an entrance on the apex. There is also a variety of shopfronts in this area and an eclectic mixed of signage displays in place within the immediate proximity of the proposal site.

Photograph 1 – 45 Monmouth Street



Location Plan – 45 Monmouth Street



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

Proposed Development

This application seeks planning permission, listed building consent and consent to display and advert for the following:

Alterations to the existing shopfront:

- *Replace front window on the apex corner to create a new frameless glass panel entrance door. Frame to be painted to match upper level critical windows.*
- *Replace entire entrance frame on Monmouth Street to create a new door behind left hand frame.*
- *Paint all existing frames to match upper level critical windows from red to charcoal/black*

Advertisement consent is sought for:

- *Replacement of the 2 existing hanging signs with 2 new illuminated projecting signs*
- *Small sign for logo on Monmouth street elevation*

Please refer to drawing package prepared by Ebba Architects and heritage statement prepared by Marin O'Rourke for further details.

Planning Policy Overview

Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this instance the development plan for the Camden Council comprises the National Planning Policy Framework (2021), The London Plan (2021), and Camden Local Plan. For the purposes of this application, we have referred to the Council's Local Plan policies as set out below.

London Borough of Camden Development Plan

Policy A1 Managing the impact of development

Policy D1 Design

Policy D2 Heritage

Policy D3 shopfront's

Policy D4 Advertisements

CPG – Adverts (2018)

CPG – Design (2021)

Planning Policy Assessment

Internal alterations

Ground Floor

Minor internal alterations are proposed which will form a separate application. These minor alterations are shown on the drawings to show context for the external alterations, but a separate listed building consent application will follow shortly.

Shopfront

Front Elevation

The existing shopfront is not believed to be original and is of modern materials which is red in colour. As a result, it contrasts with the more elaborate traditional shopfronts on other units in this area. Overall, this results in a discordant appearance to the shopfront that appears somewhat incongruous within the street scene.

Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 ('the LBCA Act') requires that "In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority or the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses."

Whilst there is no statutory duty to take account of effect on the setting of a conservation area, local policy requires that development within conservation areas preserves or, where possible, enhances the character or appearance of the area.

Furthermore Chapters 12 and 16 of the NPPF require great weight be placed on design quality and the preservation of designated heritage assets including their setting. Paragraph 196 of the Framework establishes that, where a development leads to less than substantial harm to the significance of a

designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.

The upgraded shopfront provides for better access and is more inviting and active for the public, along with the careful colour selection that ties in with the upper floors, meets the needs of this business and provides an attractive space that contributes to the social and economic functions of the area, in accordance with the above policies.

Design, Access And Heritage Assessment

Design

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

The proposal aims to celebrate the diversity and individuality of the independent businesses that characterise Seven Dials, while at the same time restoring order, proportion and materiality in keeping with the architecture and design intention of the historic building. The proposals include the sensitive upgrading of the existing shopfront and display of new signage. These changes are being carried out to support the new incoming tenant unit. As demonstrated above, it is considered that the proposed works would preserve the special architectural and historic character and appearance of the listed building and conservation area, in accordance with the statutory duties set out in Sections 16, 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and local policies A1, D1, D2, D3 and D4.

Heritage

At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development and it emphasises the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets.

Please refer to the submitted heritage statement in support of the application. Overall, it is considered that the proposals would not cause any harm to the significance of the listed building or the conservation area. Notwithstanding this, we also consider the heritage benefits this scheme would bring in accordance with paragraph 202.

Heritage benefits of the proposed scheme include:

- the existing shopfronts are of low significance.
- the proposal will improve the relationship with the upper floors.
- the proposal will bring about public benefits.
- the proposal has looked for opportunities to better reveal and enhance significance.

In addition to the heritage benefits the proposals will also improve the commercial viability of the unit, contributing towards the long-term conservation of the listed building in its optimum viable use. The living buildings have seen many changes over the years and the proposed changes will allow the building use to continue for many more. The proposals would therefore meet the tests for sustainable development outlined in the NPPF insofar as they relate to the historic environment.

The proposals would also accord with Policies D1, D2 and D3 and Policy HC1 of the London Plan and would ensure the beneficial long-term and optimum viable use of this building, and they accord with

sections 16, 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and are therefore, considered to be acceptable in design and heritage terms.

Access

It is desirable to maintain or improve disabled access where it is feasible to do so.

The existing entrance will be amended slightly. It is proposed to replace the entire frame to create a new door behind the left-hand frame. The hinges and handle are to be painted to match the frame which is to be painted to match the upper level critical windows.

A new entrance is proposed on the corner of the shopfront by replacing the existing overly large window and will consist of a frameless glass panel door in keeping with the style of the existing shopfront.

Signage

Signage significantly contributes to the vibrancy of the street. The sign is the public face of the shop. It is essential and desirable that each sign is customised individually. The alignment, arrangement and materiality of the signs respond to the host building and is carefully conceived to integrate with its proportions and features. As there is no defined fascia, new signage on the Monmouth Street elevation and 2 projecting signs are proposed to allow for adequate branding.

The projecting signs are made from white opaque plexiglass with brushed stainless steel trim. Fixed into brick with brushed stainless steel wall bracket. They will be externally illuminated by x2 surface mounted LED spotlights in black powder coated finish. The signs are 600 x 600. The main VEJA signage will be made from 5mm thick steel plate painted in black to match the surrounds.

CPG Advertisements states that 'Good quality advertisements respect the character and appearance of the surrounding area. As a general guide, the most satisfactory advertisements are those which take into account the character and design of properties and surroundings. All signs should serve as an integral part of the immediate surroundings and be constructed of materials that are sympathetic to the surrounding area.'

Policy D4 (Advertisements) of the Camden Local Plan 2017 states that applications for advertisements will be supported where they 'a. preserve the character and amenity of the area; and b. preserve or enhance heritage assets and conservation areas'.

The proposed advertisements in terms of their size, scale and prominence in the streetscene, would result in an appropriate addition (not too dissimilar to that which currently exists) which would preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the host building and is in keeping with the streetscene, in accordance with policies A1, D1 and D4 of the London Borough of Camden Local Plan 2017."

Schedule of works

- Upgrade shopfront (minor works to improve access to the unit and cosmetic changes to the colour to respect incoming tenants new branding.)
- Install new signage (2 new replacement projecting signs and a small sign on the side elevation)

Sustainability Statement

Sustainability

The proposal complies with the ethos that retrofit can also enable existing and historic buildings, including listed buildings such as this to remain fit for purpose and in active use when sensitively adapted and upgraded.

By taking a coordinated or 'whole building' approach to planning and delivering an upgraded shopfront which ties in with the upper floors is more cohesive than a separate piecemeal measure.

The proposals are small scale in nature but deliver a more practical outcome to the shopfront which assists with the vitality and longevity of the shopfront.

The Contractor will adopt the principles of the 'Considerate Constructors Scheme' and will hopefully be a local contractor that will limit travel to and from the site. Wherever possible renewable and locally sourced materials will be specified.

Conclusion

The high street is a living entity. Shop-uses change, branding changes, ownership changes and security requirements change. These factors manifest themselves in the shopfronts and have informed the current arrangements.

Permission is sought for the minor external refurbishment of the existing shopfront and new signage to support the incoming tenant and their branding. The works will significantly enhance the long-term future of this listed building and will ensure the future use of the building is sustained. Overall, it is considered that the proposals will enhance the contribution this building makes to the conversation area.

On the basis of the above we trust officers will agree that the proposals are acceptable and are in accordance with national and local planning policies as demonstrated above.